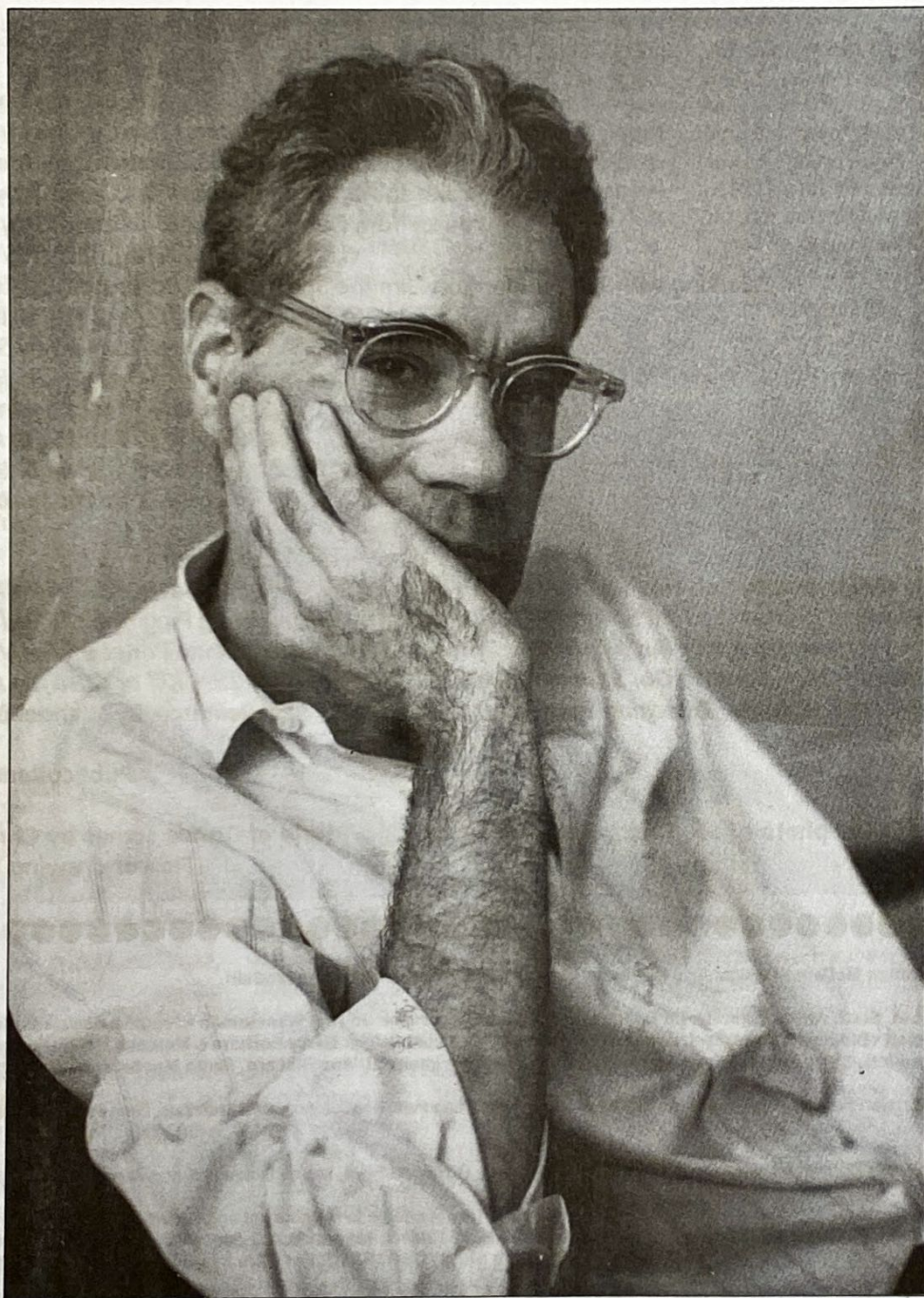


the poetry project

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Flower drawing by Joe Brainard.

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g i l l i a n m c c a i n

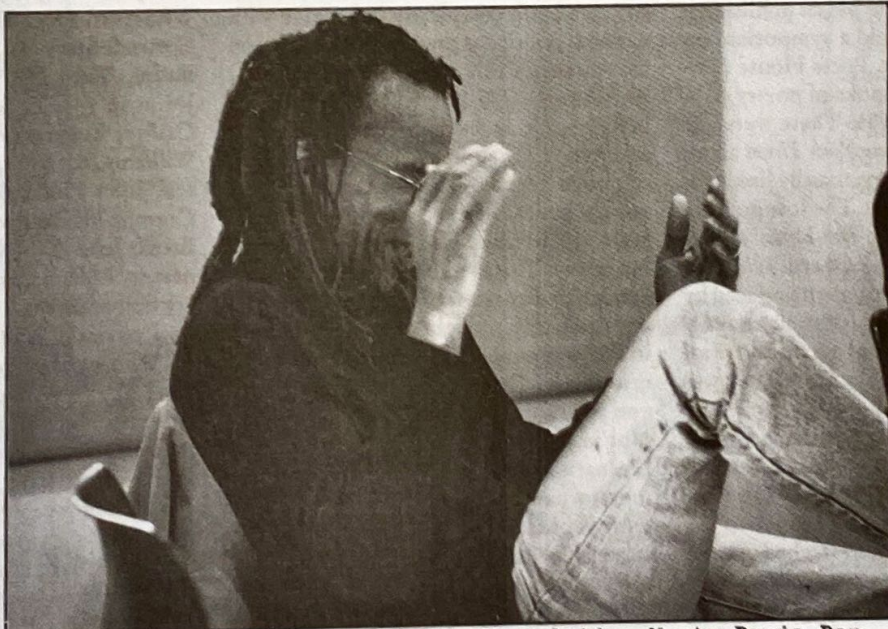
Jose Padua moved back to Washington last year and he's not enjoying it. But he's hopeful. He writes to me: "It's not a pretty town, Washington, despite its facade of cleanliness and efficiency; but with our former crack-smoking, womanizing mayor returning to power soon, things should make a turn for the better." In response to Ed Morales' article "Remarks on the Complete Breakdown of Everything (Mike Tyler)" in the last newsletter, Jose writes, "This was a work I was unaware of until someone informed me, after seeing my own 'The Complete Failure of Everything,' that Mike Tyler had a composition of perhaps similar intent which preceded my own. I must say that I have, on occasion, had the opportunity to see Mike Tyler "perform" as it were. And I began to wonder if somehow I had subconsciously ripped off Mike Tyler's idea just as George Harrison (the quiet Beatle) subconsciously ripped off The Chiffons' "He's

So Fine" in his song "My Sweet Lord." I was, to say the least, perturbed by this possibility ... Maggie Estep writes to me, "Exactly who is Mike Topp and why isn't he dating me? Other rumors: 1. Courtney Love has been giving me career counseling. Some of it involved me and her going on an underwear buying spree at Barney's. 2) Me and M. Doughty (Poet, singer of Soul Coughing) recently met on a L.A. freeway and were secretly married in Toronto last week." ... Darius James went from being a panelist on the Revolutionary Poetry Symposium to a guest reader on The Jon Stewart Show in honor of Banned Book Week. No, he wasn't reading from Negrophobia, he was reading from Doris Day's autobiography which was recently banned from a public library in California ... The Factsheet Five of

literature: Taproot Reviews: Experimental Language Art & Poetry (Issue #4, Spring 1994, Burning Press, PO Box 585, Lakewood, OH 44107, individual issues \$2.50, one year subscription \$10/4 issues). Hundreds of short reviews of lit mags, chapbooks and small press books. Articles include: "Beyond the Language Movement: A Manifesto of Aesthetics in a Time of Communication, Plague, and a New World Order" by Susan Smith

wisecracks laugh at slumming hipsters." Second favorite quote is from band Combustible Edison's leader The Millionaire: "When I hear the word kitsch, I reach for my revolver." ... K. Wencelas, editor of the "ultraradical crit-zine" New Philistine writes to me in response to the last issue: "I still can't figure out how all of you can be revolutionaries when you are funded by the people running this country ... that whole long list of tax shelters for the rich

on page two of your zine. Maybe I'm missing something." He/She also sent me the latest issue of Philistine, my favorite lines being, "Instead of looking for radicals among the Establishment, look for the Establishment among the radicals" and "Candidate for Establishment Boy of the Year: Douglas Coupland." ... The bad news is that M. Mark is leaving The Village Voice Literary Supplement which she founded thirteen years ago. The good news is she's starting her own



Darius James on Hi-Lo Panel: The Revolution Meets Doris Day

Nash and a feature on Roof Books by Tom Beckett. Also, single-line lists of zines that you can submit to excepted from another zine called Global Art Electric—my favorite was called I LIKE MYSELF NAKED, "send me nude photos, 10 x 10 cm, any media, to be compiled in small book, Thaddeus, 2695 Hampshire, Cleveland Heights, OH 44016." Another good one was BANAL PROBE, "Send art and text on candy, toys, and animal companions for upcoming issues, Drucilla B. Blood, Banal Probe, 1015 E. 49th, Austin, TX, 78751." ... Favorite quote in Utne Reader's September/October article "Cocktail Nation": "The editors of the Detroit-based cultural zine Motorbooty speak of 'second-order sarcasm,' wherein one pushes the envelope of mockery itself. 'Slumming hipsters laugh at Elvis kitsch,' goes their formula, 'but Motorbooty

magazine... For the next issue I'm asking for submissions for a feature entitled "The Best Albums to Write To" — please send a list of your three favorites plus a one-line blurb on each (if desired) by December 15th ... Other good news: Penguin is re-issuing Joe Brainard's classic I Remember. It will be available in April and will have a foreword by Paul Auster. I want to apologize for having to leave out the following Brainard pieces due to space restrictions in the newsletter: a beautiful drawing by Donna Dennis, portraits of Joe by Ann Mikolowski, prose by Bill Bamberger, and poems by Alice Notley, Paul Hoover and Tom Clark. Tom's gorgeous poem "Joe" is published in the latest Exquisite Corpse, so check it out. I think all of this material should be a hint to someone to edit an Homage to Joe book.

3

The Year in Review by Jordan Davis

W.W. Norton & Co and Sun & Moon Press each published anthologies of post-World War II American poetry. Several poets of the so-called "so-called New York School" published new collections—John Ashbery, Kenneth Koch, Barbara Guest, David Shapiro—and others published collected and selected poems—James Schuyler, Joseph Ceravolo and Ted Berrigan. "Post-Language" writers Elizabeth Willis and Pam Rehm were winners in the National Poetry Series. Performance poets performed at Woodstock and at Lollapalooza. *Antaeus* magazine suspended publication; *Apex of the M* magazine began publishing. The Poetry Project held a symposium on Revolutionary Poetry. Poets House published a directory of books of poetry published in 1992 and 1993. There were the usual articles in *The New York Times* about the resurgence of poetry, usually linking it to rap and performance. The low point in poetry coverage came in *The Times'* review of Jack Gilbert and Edward Hirsch's books, which Margo Jefferson prefaced by discussing the difficulty for modern readers of picking up a book of poems and reading. The high point, on the other hand, was the re-publication of Ford Madox Ford's *The March of Literature*, a witty and broad survey of all the books you need to know about from the "book of stone" (stretching across several miles of Egypt) to the end of the book (haven't marched that far yet).

The forensics of taste: although both new anthologies, *From the Other Side of the Century* and *Postmodern American Poetry*, both invoke Donald Allen's *The New American Poetry*, they're very different books from their legendary predecessor. The Sun & Moon anthology groups writers according to concerns—myth, self, language, performance—and in doing so acknowledges certain crucial preoccupations and exclusions. At over a thousand pages, though, the book can't help but pretend to inclusivity. The book opens with the section most difficult to compile: the permissions. It's worth reading in itself as a pretty good technical history of poetry publishing. After the rollicking table of contents and the considered introduction by editor Douglas Messerli comes a section from Charles Reznikoff's poem "Holocaust," and after a few other Reznikoff poems, Lorine Niedecker. Good. This is

poetry that rivals its modern antecedents (Williams, Pound) for flash, wit, clarity and excels them for pathos. And in contrast to Allen's opening with Olson's bombastic (he quotes Mao) "The Kingfishers," opening with Reznikoff's journalistic account is a shockingly beautiful editorial move. The book fades quickly into stamp-collecting; although there are signs of editorial life in the selection of Allen Ginsberg's poems and the inclusion of Joseph Ceravolo.

From the cover by Chicago artist Ed Paschke to the poetics section in the back, Paul Hoover's *Postmodern American Poetry* is a book completely in keeping with national politics as they stand this election day; dissatisfaction with and among the left and the right, biographical data (gossip) before work, and crises of fragmentation and hubris. The book doesn't pretend to organize recent American poetry into zones; instead, Hoover follows Norton style and presents the poets in order of birthdates. This method is almost arbitrary enough to disguise the inclusion of poetries not ordinarily thought of as post-modern in any way other than coming after modern poetry. [Interlopers, you know who you are; sit down and talk a while, in verse! Not in the poet's prose in the back. And the nation hears the call for a five-year moratorium on the genre. Back to school with ye, with your italicizations and flying-in-brackets extra letters! Your droll inconspicuous half-sentences and your tortured constant self-critical self-consciousness! If artfulness be necessary ...] From Olson to Cage (inspired) to Laughlin (no comment) the book follows the path of the most famous works of the most famous writers ("Howl," "Kaddish," "The Skaters") to end with poets born in the 1950s. It is a good enough book. So is *From the Other Side of the Century*. But neither is the book to create a new audience for poetry, to demonstrate to intelligent readers that something exciting has been happening in poetry. It's clear that what both editors want to create is a textbook for poetry.

As the excellent Gary Lenhart says, it is now easier to write poems than ever before. There were hundreds of books in the Poets House annual showcase of poetry books. There were books by Joseph Lease, Hal Sirowitz, Larry Eigner, Clayton Eshelman, Carolyn Forché, Barbara Einzig,

Carmen Valle, Jim McManus, Craig Raine, Geoffrey Hill, Marilyn Hacker, Eavan Boland, Robert Creeley, Ai, Jim Carroll, Anne Waldman, Ann Lauterbach, Tory Dent, Dean Kostos, Michael Friedman, Leslie Scalapino, Kit Robinson, Jerry Estrin, David Trinidad, Daniel Krakauer, Aaron Shurin, Kamau Brathwaite, and Anne Porter. Anne Porter's book was nominated for the National Book Award. Harold Bloom published his list of books that will last. THE TWENTIETH CENTURY AS HAROLD BLOOM HAS IT: William Faulkner (8), John Ashbery (6), Philip Roth (6), Jay Wright (5), Edith Wharton (5), Wallace Stevens (4), Gertrude Stein (4), Ernest Hemingway (4), Eudora Welty (4), Walter Abish (4), Denis Johnson (4). F. Scott Fitzgerald, Willa Cather, Eugene O'Neill, William Carlos Williams, Ezra Pound, Robert Penn Warren, John Hollander, Langston Hughes, Cormac McCarthy, A. R. Ammons, John Barth, John Crowley, Mark Strand, Tennessee Williams, and Flannery O'Connor are tied at three.

Rosmarie Waldrop writes to *Chain*, "...Whose power do you think we can subvert? *The New York Times Book Review*? Adventurous writing can't, by definition, be mainstream. Can't have it both ways. I'm afraid we have to settle for long range effects and meanwhile find other ways to eat." Is this accurate or isolationist? Elsewhere in *Chain*, the panel discussion from the New Coat [sic] conference on "Ethics of Small Press Publishing" includes a list of poets Lee Ann Brown would publish.

John Taggart's poem "Precious Lord" in the Buffalo magazine *Apex of the M* loops a brief history of gospel music. There are shockingly great moments like this about Mahalia Jackson: "she sang 'Precious Lord' at the funeral of Martin Luther King/ Aretha sang 'Precious Lord' at the funeral of Mahalia." There is a lot about moaning and groaning and singing softly, and a Jabès quotation wanders in, but it's mostly smart and subtle as in the ending, about Thomas Dorsey: "see you got to be susceptible for whatever comes in the ear/he got Sister Rosetta to be susceptible got everyone susceptible."

Michael O'Brien's book *The Floor and the Breath* has that old Hart Crane music, weather-worn and assertive phrasings about streets and sensations—as if the New
(continued on page 28)

Brad Gooch on Joe Brainard

I don't remember when I met Joe Brainard. I imagine that it was at a party J.J. Mitchell took me to at Kenward Elmslie's in 1972 when I was a student at Columbia. I always think of that as my "first party." I picture a fuzzy person in a brown sports jacket with his white shirt unbuttoned to the navel who I think just might be Joe talking to me.

I do remember that by 1976 we were definitely in the saddle. I remember (because I got the letter out of its file just now) Joe writing from Vermont to say: "Upstairs in bed. 4 o'clock. Rather proud of deciding not to work today. So much work has made me a stranger to myself. And thru the 'distance' I can see myself much more clearly and — boy, do I need help. And so this is 'help': being in bed at 4 in the afternoon, and writing to someone I have never written to before."

I'm going to tie my hands (mentally speaking) behind my back before I get out all the letters and become obsessive-compulsive about researching the correspondence of Joe. But then he could be pretty obsessive-compulsive during those years. Not necessarily because the real Joe, Saint Joe, was, but because he was doing lots of speed. The speed was good for his work. Weird for him. Joe hired me for a bit to be his assistant. His beautiful loft, like the inside of a cedar trunk, was covered with bits of paper, junk, detritus, cartoons, colors, cardboard, and found X, Y and Z's. My job was to hunt through all the square feet of scraps on the wood floor to find any that were a certain shade of robin's breast red. My next job was to type up a manuscript of Joe's "poems." They were in paragraphs. Not the best typist, I fucked up. In the mail I got a postcard from Joe saying I was fired, but would I like to go to dinner? I wonder if I

can find that.


(No luck, but I did find this one from the Vermont summer of 1978 that reminds me that we were doing some impossibly convoluted version of the nasty around then: "It's being only 10:30 in the morning (or so) makes me think that maybe I can handle a 'straight' letter to you. (Not all that easy — as simply the thought of you turns me horny and mean.) Most in particular when I re-'see' a way your mouth has of slightly opening

self as a poor poet's Marianne Faithfull, we were teasing each other, and confusing each other, and having lots of luscious dinners at Duff's. (I don't know who's writing what for this issue but I'm sure 'Duff's' will be explained somewhere.) Joe also made the cover for my book of poems, The Daily News. I told him I wanted a starry constellation cover. He gave me a rendition in black and white I love. Then he told me it was really scattered cum stains. Behind that slight revision was a

whole attitude he had towards me, or I imagined he had towards me, and which the phrase "horny and mean" seems to support. Joe liked to go off to The Ninth Circle, a bar filled with college students and young poets and painters (Tim Dlugos, Larry Stanton, Jim Fouratt, Donald Britton, Richard Elovich.) I liked to go quake in my boots at The Eagle's Nest leather bar. Either Joe would sometimes take a "get real" attitude with me as a way of flirting, or I'd imagine it because we both always got so stoned before dinner at Duff's that I had trouble telling my own thoughts from his or the waiter's or the world's. And Joe only stuttered out so many words, with lots of open spaces in between to project onto. I was in therapy then. I could tell he was skeptical of therapy. I was going to Episcopal Mass every Sunday and talking about medieval theology and St.

Thomas Aquinas. Every dinner he asked if I really believed in God. That was always the worst part of dinner. Soon he told J.J. he thought my religious thing was "Horseshit."

Now from that sliver Joe might sound like a mean macho cowboy or something. And everyone knows he was the opposite: all sweetness. And the feelings I had for (continued on next page)



JOE BRAINARD
COLLABORATIONS WITH POETS
BOOK COVERS • ILLUSTRATIONS
CARTOONS • ETC. NOV. 15 - DEC. 4
GOTHAM BOOK MART GALLERY

Gotham Book Mart show invite, date unknown

(corners still clinging to each other) as tho in thirst or hunger and need: a look I wish I had the confidence to 'read' as clearly as indeed I do in occasional fantasies. The gunk all over the floor upstairs from last night being most recent proof." The letter was signed: "Thanks for writing! Take care! Count Your Blessings. Fuck-Face! Love, Joe. P.S. Miss You!"

Anyway at the expense of casting my-

(Gooch, continued)

him all through these tangles that made my heart thump and my mind click click click were all feelings of trust and sympathy and, yes, sweetness. As I'm writing this I think I'm finally getting it for the first time. The words "big brother" are being picked up by my shortwave. That's it. It was one of those big brother things. Joe was like a big brother to me! And an excellent one! I never thought of it before. Yes. He even paid for the cabs he'd hail on Canal Street. Otherwise I always took subways.

Later lots happened. But ground zero was back then. And at Hermes' house. Hermes was a Spanish lady who did facials cheaply in her apartment in Chelsea while she played Muzak on the radio. Cheri Fein turned me on to her circa 1982. Then I turned Joe on to her. But he surpassed me quickly. I went fitfully. He went every week. When she'd dress me down for not taking care of my skin, she'd say in her lilting Spanish accent, my eyes blindfolded by a hot towel, "Oh Joe has such beautiful skin. He takes such good care of his skin." "Have you seen Joe?" she would ask every time I stepped into her sunken living room. "He has such beautiful skin." She was the first to tell me about Joe's shingles. I of course thought AIDS. But everyone said No. I know that if Hermes knew Joe had died she'd crumple. Like the Nun in Chaucer, "She was so charitable and so pitous/ She wolde wepe if that she sawe a mous/ Caught in a trappe." (She's since moved back to Spain). Hermes and Joe and I were in some kind of threeway of affection, an emotional game of Telephone or Gossip.

When I interviewed Joe for my Frank O'Hara book he was honestly jittery, worried he'd say the wrong thing. He sent me a postcard the next day asking me not to get him in any hot water please. But then when the book came out and everyone who'd been so easygoing and supportive grew jittery, he was the first to step forward as easygoing and supportive. He sent a postcard with lots of exclamation points. Then he called Saturday morning to report he'd bought all ten copies at A Different Light, the first bookstore in town to carry it. That was the last time I heard from or talked to Joe. I sent him a note in the hospital. No answer. I didn't expect one.

There was this Saint thing about Joe. (After all those years of Episcopal masses I feel qualified to use the archaic word.) It was debated a lot when he was alive at dinner parties. He'd been an art star young. Why had he stopped working? Was he lazy? A hustler, living off the dole from Kenward? Or was he piling up paintings and collages in secret in the back of his loft? I think he was a big, brave saint. ("Horseshit" he'd say to J.J.) I think he faced the choice of that 1976 letter where work (and its wings of MDA) was making him a stranger to himself. I think he chose an understated sanity that for him went along with endless summers, piles of novels (he'd read more novels than any professor or literary type I've ever met), woozy dinners, facials, workouts at the gym, sweet phonecalls and postcards when the rest of everyone's answering machines and mailboxes were filled with scrappy business.

I have a collage Joe gave me resting next to my IBM-compatible computer. A masculine handsome cartoon man in a brown turtle-neck with long black soap opera hair is holding the intercut head of a boy that's totally vacant, white, featureless. The man says, in his thought balloon, "I hate to sound like some character in a Grade B movie, but ... " Underneath Joe wrote in his own straightlined all-caps script: "... But lately I keep having this feeling that you aren't really 'with' me somehow." In that caption I always felt hid a message dating back to our days in the saddle.

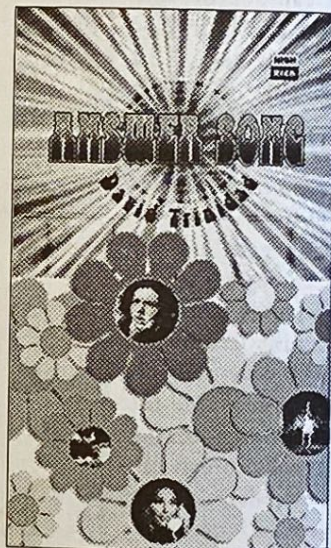
I don't think Joe ever said or did or wrote anything I could have responded to as "Horseshit." Now that's a miracle. Goodnight Joe. I love you.

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I REMEMBER by Elaine Equi

I remember the first time I met Joe Brainard in Chicago. It was at a restaurant before a reading, and we both ordered vodka and grapefruit juice, and I told him that the name of that drink was a "Greyhound" but if you salted the rim of the glass, it was a "Salty Dog."

I remember giving him an ashtray and a book written by Marlene Dietrich.

I remember him saying that nudity always improved a movie, and that there wasn't enough of it.

I remember being surprised when I wrote to him that he wrote back.

I remember his casual but elegant way of dressing: usually blue jeans, white shirts and sometimes a sports jacket.

I remember him always looking great no matter what time of the day you ran into him.

I remember him shopping at Dean and DeLuca's nearly every morning—and that once when I told him Jerome was sick, he bought him a key lime pie.

I remember smoking cigarettes with him at St. Mark's during the break between readers, and him saying that he only smoked eight cigarettes a day.

I remember that once he described Ann Lauterbach's poems as being like lace.

I remember not noticing that he stuttered for years because with him it just seemed like part of his charm.

I remember his huge loft with almost nothing in it.

I remember that he always bought hardcover books.

I remember him telling me that I looked like Jane Bowles when she was young.

I remember that he would underline words in his letters, and then I started doing it too and told him he was influencing me—and he said if all I did was underline, it wasn't such a bad habit to have picked up from him.

I remember that when Jerome and I first moved to New York, he took us out to dinner.

I remember that whenever you went out with him, he always paid the check.

I remember going to a lot of galleries with him one day, and pretending we were shopping for art, but none of it was very interesting.

I remember trying to quit smoking for a couple of years, so that whenever Joe saw me, he would ask if I was smoking or not.

I remember that even though he went away for the summer, he never forgot my birthday.

I remember the great postcards he sent, including one of Bob Hope's pool.

I remember that once when we talked about reincarnation, he said he wouldn't mind coming back as a monkey on an island because you'd get to spend a lot of time in the sun.

I remember thinking whenever I called him that Joe and I must be the only people in New York without answering machines.

I remember him telling me over the phone one day in November that he had AIDS, and that's why I hadn't seen him around.

I remember going to visit him before he went in the hospital: him smiling at the top of the stairs and me not knowing it would be the last time I'd see him.

I remember bringing him holly because it was around the holidays.

I remember how quiet the apartment was and how cold (something wrong with the heat).

I remember that he made peppermint tea for Jerome and me.

I remember that thinking even sick, he still looked great—lying on the couch, smoking a cigarette and telling us about the drugs they were giving him.

I remember him getting drowsy and us letting ourselves out.

I remember his drawings—and how I always wanted one, but never asked.

I remember that unlike any other writer or artist, he never talked about getting published or showing his work. It just didn't seem to be a concern.

I remember teaching him every semester, and the class cracking up every time.

I remember his glasses.

I remember his smile.

I remember his poem "Night": Day, you have gone/ and done it again.

WHAT I THINK OF WHEN I THINK OF JOE

by Joe LeSueur

Because we lived together and got to know Joe at the same time—in the fall of 1962, if memory serves—I often think of Frank O'Hara when I think of Joe. I also think of the time Joe's name found its way into Frank's poetry. It's just a line, in "The Sentimental Units," referring to Joe's penchant for setting off words with quotation marks. First, there's this: "I saw T.S. on the telly today. I find that he is one of the most intelligent writers of our 'day.'" And then: "Part 9 is an imitation of Joe Brainard."

This anomalous work is undated, but I remember Frank's writing it not long after we moved to our loft-apartment at Broadway and 10th in early 1963, which would also have been around the time we played bridge with Joe and Tony Towle—ineptly, I hasten to add. Joe didn't even know how to play and learned the bare rudiments so he could get to know Frank better. Not that it mattered how well he played, because as Joe pointed out in his wonderful memoir of Frank, our bridge games were mostly talk.

It was over bridge that Frank decided to buy something of Joe's, thereby becoming one of the first collectors of his work. What he settled on was a wooden cross; bedecked with Puerto Rican-like religious paraphernalia, it was almost big enough for a real crucifixion. Then I bought something, Joe's terrific 7 Up painting of 1962. He asked \$14 for it. Why that odd figure? I have no idea. And such a small amount as well, practically nothing. He was really giving the painting away. Later, he made many outright gifts to me, of drawings, collages and assemblages, as he did with so many of his friends.

Yet he once told me, in that simple, ingenious way of his, that he thought of himself as selfish. "How can you say that?" I asked. "I always do what I want," he answered, "not what someone else wants." Yes, there was something to that. I remember that one of the things he did not want to do—indeed, refused to do—was to get a job, even though he was constantly broke when I first knew him. "I'll starve first," he said. And he almost did. He was that determined to support himself through his art. How ambitious and confident he was! What's more, he enjoyed success early on. Twice, while still in his twenties, his work appeared on the cover of *Art News*.

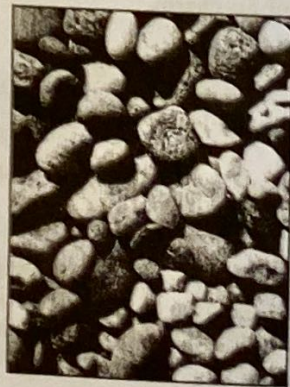
Thinking about all that puts me in mind of something else I think of when I think of Joe, the mystery of why he abandoned his career after his fourth show at Fischbach in 1975. Even more mystifying was the curious nature of his genius. For at the age of nineteen, he appeared full-blown on the New York scene, already in possession of a deep understanding of what art is all about. I suppose it helped that he was born with unerring instincts and an infallible eye.

Still another mystery remains—for me, anyway. Early in our friendship, when we were seeing a lot of each other, I pressed upon him a handsome English edition of *Howard's End*, hoping to introduce him to the joy of reading. Well, he lost the book before he had so much as opened it. Did he resent my gesture? Maybe so. Fast forward to a dozen or so years later: suddenly, he had become the most voracious reader imaginable, and during the last twenty years of his life seemed to have read everything—including, of course, *Howard's End*.

And there are so many other things I think of when I think of Joe. I think of, for example, his all-too-rare, soft-spoken utterances, always pithy, precise, intuitive; his thoughtful habit of sending carefully chosen, invariably appropriate postcards to friends on their birthdays, the ones to me unfailingly indecent; his shirt open to the navel, even in the dead of winter; his austere studio-apartment on Greene Street and all the books he read and immediately gave away; his insistence on kissing all of his gay friends on the mouth, no matter where they were or who was around; his phoning to tell me he had AIDS and then apologizing for causing me distress, followed by, as if that weren't enough, his quiet expression of gratitude that he'd lived as long as he had when others had died so much younger; and his art, his tender, surprising, witty, resplendent art—I think of that, too, when I think of Joe Brainard.

Theory of Tables

Emmanuel Hocquard



translated by
Michael Palmer

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ANNE WALDMAN: SOME THINGS IN THE HOUSE THAT ARE JOE BRAINARD

Tiny fake pearls spelling the words "GIANT NIGHT" have risen against a black sky, streaked (where the paper was creased) by faint rays of stars.

On another wall a little female Flamenco dancer from a *Maja* soapbox crosses the stage cut away from an old New York City Yellow Pages logo, her backdrop a glittery red candy wrapper.

Walking with artist Joe Brainard around Manhattan's Soho district one night I was astonished at the sharpness and speed of his eye, and at the sheer quantity of treasures that made their way from the gutter to his pockets: chewing gum foils, cigarette pack shells, and butts, other discarded debris that became more interesting to me through his interest. And once at the beach in Westhampton, Long Island, he was spotting, bending over and collecting "anything blue" at an alarming rate — used flash cubes, ancient seaworn Bromo Seltzer bottles, a frayed plastic cord, and broken light bulbs. Later, these items appeared in some striking "sand" collages, literally embedded in sand (cemented so they stuck fast). An ecologist of the highest order, he was not only recycling what others would dismiss as trash, he was turning these bits and pieces into works of beauty and humor.

From 1967 through the late 1970's I observed Joe Brainard's magpie-like propensity. When I would visit his spartan loft on Greene Street I would stumble into piles of "things," organized principally by color — scraps of every imaginable shape and texture from his ramblings, from old magazines and picturebooks, from the packaged world: ripped segments where a product had been stripped in haste and so on. These piles (with little else in his spartan loft) were in and of themselves artworks, stacked images from the phenomenal world. It was fun to look through them and later see how he'd worked the images together. In 1978 he presented me with a little cloth bag of "Portable Art" which included, among other delights, a little Bayer Aspirin tin containing (the label was inside the tin) "Some Things In The House That Are Brown": cut-outs of a chocolate donut, a small radio, a chair, a ladder, a fur coat and

so on, colored-in cut-outs primarily from the Yellow Pages' Illustrations. His collages, adorning the insides of matchbooks, seem to me now quintessential Brainard's from that collage period: a perky, semi-tragic faced pansy, a "LEARN TO DRIVE U.S. AUTO CLUB" matchbook, for example. What this artist could do so well was notice the forgotten "stuff," see it as sacred or amusing, and reclaim it, re-enacting it in new contexts, restoring its intrinsic vitality through magical poetic combinations. So many of his works suggest (to me) romantic scenarios. An anthropomorphised sun-face seems to be rising over a bed with a graph-like quilt but it's a traveling dream bed (like the one in Ballanchine's "Nutcracker Suite") whose lower left-hand corner shows an upside-down canceled George Washington stamp. The canceled lines become further waves that resonate with the edges of clouds behind the sun. It is all over blue and white and entitled "Blue Sky For You" and its scenario is something about time passing and the cosmos — almost a reflection of the Heaven/Earth/Man principle in Oriental Art (and haiku). (Stretching it a bit) in this case Heaven: Sun, Earth: George Washington, father of our country (earth) now interred, and Man: the bed which seems to visually connect the two others together.

Every time I enter my kitchen there's a charming open-faced, exquisitely drawn bacon, lettuce & tomato sandwich presenting itself from the wall. Some of the works beg not to be simply "on the wall." Their dimensionality is explicit (e.g. you need to open the matchbook or the Bayer tin to experience the wit).

"Sitting" for Joe, for a portrait, I was always impressed by his desire for accuracy — his infuriating perfectionism you might say. (At that time he was painting more abstractly.) Some early nude drawings were skillfully drawn — flattering, somewhat "kittenish," but later he was never satisfied and, I think, abandoned an oil portrait. I always thought perhaps I was too stiff looking, trying too hard to "look good" unlike those discarded candy wrappers! The pencil portrait of composer Bill Elliot is remarkable for how it "gets" the gentle-

ness and the dignity of the man. It's careful, tight, very clear and direct, but not at all photographic. It's translated through Brainard's appreciation of the person. He paints his friends. His portrait of the gorgeous whippet Whippoorwill, who belonged to the poet Kenward Elmslie, have a similar quality of familiarity and directness, as well as of a lushness of an expansiveness in the brush strokes. One especially regal portrait comes to mind, sitting on a green velvet divan, Ingres-like in his rich patina, color and detail.

Poets love Joe Brainard's work because of what the works suggest as well as what they so generously depict. The jokes are good too, quotations like "DeKooning Nancy" which copies the frenzied free-hand energy of a DeKooning female topped by the classic "Nancy" face. He stopped as we walked to point out the pansy faces, making sure I noticed how funny they were (this was in a garden in Vermont).

The Buddhist notion "Things are symbols of themselves" comes to mind. Those pansy faces are *right there*. Joe Brainard's power is to *notice* this, as well as an ability to create beautiful works out of particulars, making art that has irony as well. The world is sacred to him, and his work connects us to the world. Comparisons to Joseph Cornell and Jasper Johns and the best Surrealist collages (Picasso, Max Ernst) seem relevant. Right now, Brainard's work is so outside the current mainstream, however, that classifying his gorgeous artifacts seems a blasphemy. There's something highly dedicated and spiritual (alchemical) in his practice of art. He beholds the beauty/humor everywhere around him and honors it. It's a practice that's ancient, timeless, not prey to fashion. And his generosity is always present. From a collaborative work he and I did together entitled SELF-PORTRAIT, Joe Brainard wrote under the category "ART":

Art to me is like walking down the street with someone and saying "Don't you love that building?" (too)

brainard

Commander Joe

CAPCOM: "Earth to Aquarius."

BY ED FRIEDMAN

ASTRONAUTS: "Aquarius, Joe?"

"Joe" is Brainard, a kid from the plains, barely out of high school, manning the capsule command of his first space mission. On his doodle pad are pictures of space men with arrows through their heads, corsages bunched in an equator around the moon and craters full of marauding cocker spaniel bands.

CAPCOM (Joe): "OK. We are taking our final look at the mid-course procedures and we have a question as to the present position of one of the switches. The switch is the AGS status switch on N-6. We'd just like to know where it is."

ASTRONAUTS: "Yeah, well, we'd like to know that too."

No one would believe, if they saw his doodle pad, that those drawings enabled Joe to monitor every circuit on the spacecraft — every console, bus and throttle lever. I couldn't believe it myself and I was there. You see, my life was in his hands. I was trying to get back to earth *alive*.

A TEAR IN THE WIND

It was at Lita's last big party, the first one I was invited to, that I met Joe Brainard. This in 1978. But Joe's drawings were already part of my excited psyche, having lived through a year of Ted Berrigan and Alice Notley workshops and all of St. Mark's so dark and magisterially full of promise, being the third generation NY School orphan I was. His Nancy and Sluggo. His black and white petunias. His collaborations and book covers with Ron and Ted and Kenward Elmslie. His charming Andy Warholness in a funny way how he drew and painted and collaged pop stuff like Oreo cookies. His naughty Dagwood and Blondie in *Unmuzzled Ox*. All this I knew before I knew him. He was so tall and elegant, refined and sly, sipping Campari in a sports coat with a nice watch on and those sharp looking glasses. He always looked the same to me — smooth, smart and suave. The next day, still under the spell and thrall of the eve before I attended Ted's workshop and while listening to him pontificate inspiredly, I penned this poem "Autonomy."

AUTONOMY

Let us talk briefly now about
what, if anything. In the dream poems
I vote for helpless impact in order
to cover the frisk or the bail.
In favor of no-noes it's hard to spill
the beans and still hold down a job.
Last night for dinner for example
I had too much Campari for dinner.
Fire engines belch and you ask the time.
The arsonist in my heart has no match.

JEFF WRIGHT

the pOetry project



See You by Tom Carey

"He was so beautiful, I couldn't look at him ..." Joe Brainard, 1992

Some time in the winter of 1979 or '80, Joe Brainard and I were riding in a cab down lower Broadway, looking out the window at one of those cast-iron buildings, recently burned. It was so cold the water from the fire hoses had frozen over the pillars and ledges coagulating into enormous drips. An ice palace.

Once Joe wanted to give me a miniature set of Shakespeare, quite old. I refused it. I was a drug addict and I knew I'd only sell it. Six months later similar scruples no longer troubled me.

Two years ago, in Vermont, Joe made me a fabulous breakfast and told me about Jim Schuyler's nervous breakdown in a little house by a pond. I said something like, "That must have been awful." Joe replied, "It wasn't so bad for me, I got to be one of the disciples."

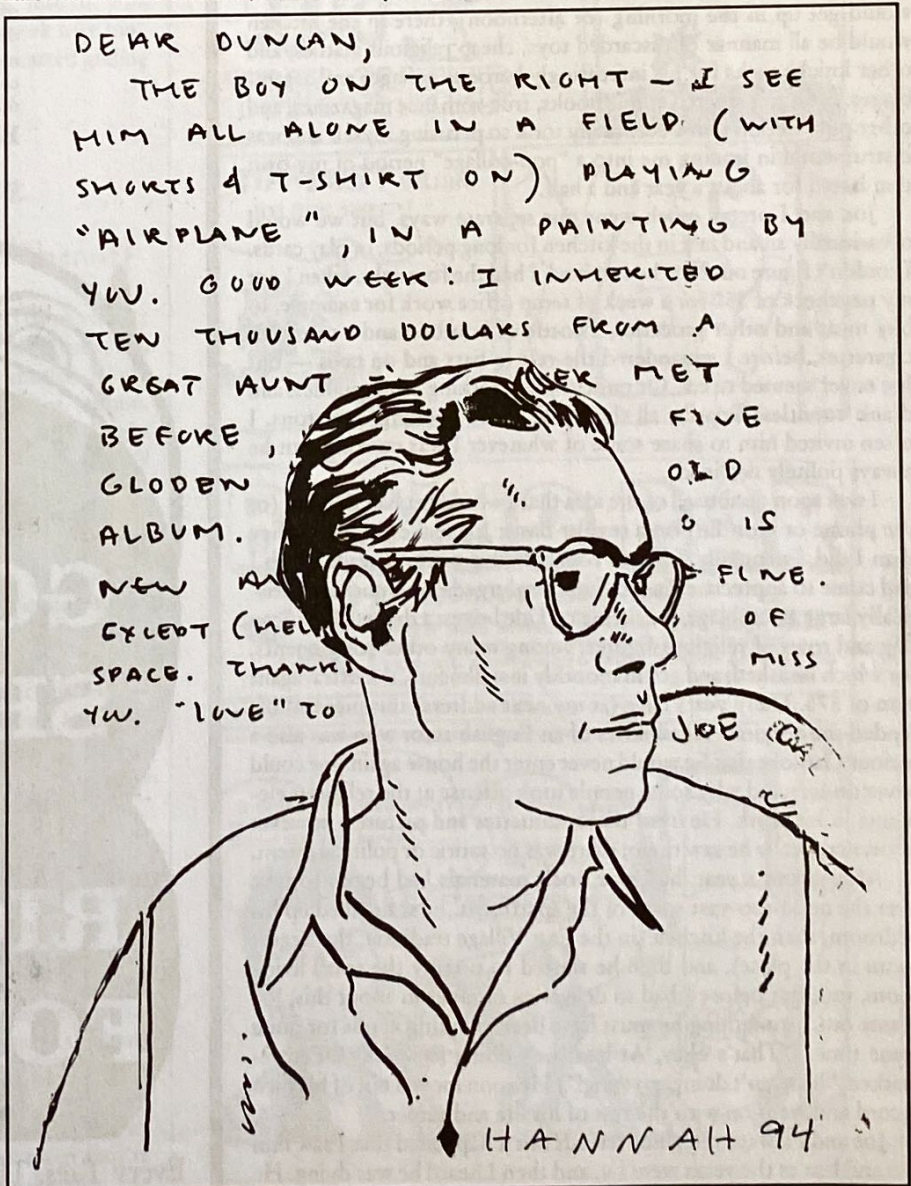
The last time I saw him was on a week day in the middle of last February. He was at N.Y.U. Medical Center on First Avenue. It was cold again, the streets were sheathed in black ice. I should have called first, I knew I should have. I knew he was dying and I wanted to see him. Selfish. Anyway, I knocked and Joe answered looking like his own father. He wasn't feeling good, his brother was coming to discuss family business so I couldn't stay long. I sat down and chirped like a canary for five minutes, there was a knock, I said hello to John, his brother, said goodbye and left. I wanted to wash his feet with my tears and wipe them with my hair, but manners are mysterious, they save us from ourselves. So, there it is: I knew someone, we shared some time on earth, he left. I see you, Joe.

About Joe Brainard

by Bill Berkson

Joe Brainard's originality stems partly from a purity of standards about what he himself wants to see. I think he would subscribe to DeKooning's observation that an art object should have a "countenance" which is its own and not that of any general idea. His purity is open, aspiring, and never satisfied in terms of style. No one else has ever made drawings, collages, or constructions which in any way resemble his accomplishments in those media. Brainard, it's true, has made things that look like works by other people: there are non-ironical homages to DeKooning, Ernie Bushmiller, Fairfield Porter, Stuart Davis, Andy Warhol, etc. But those occur by way of recognition and they never behave like the works they recall. (His "Porters" of the early seventies, for instance, take up angles and a stagelighting which Porter himself would never have used; they are closer in fact to Morandi, a painter for whom Porter had little use.) This close-but-not-quite imperviousness is the face Brainard puts on his love affair with style. It's a function of character less geared to personal projection than to showing something that artist and audience alike can wonder at and enjoy. Maybe this is why his touch and scale are so uncanny, so right and unusual every time.

from *Joe Brainard: Selections from the Butts Collection at UCSD*, University of California, San Diego, 1987



Drawing/collage by Duncan Hannah

brainard

A brief Remembrance of Joe by TONY TOWLE

It was in the fall of 1963, after Frank Lima had moved out of the tiny roach-infested two-bedroom apartment we shared at 441 East 9th Street (which we had taken over from Frank O'Hara and Joe LeSueur), and Ted Berrigan said he had a friend up in Boston who wanted to move to New York and needed a place to live. I didn't particularly want a roommate but it would be nice, I thought, to split the \$56-a-month rent. Nevertheless, Ted had to talk me into it, as I remember. I was afraid this guy would be like Ted!

But Joe Brainard turned out to be as quiet and unassuming as Ted could be overbearing and insistent. Joe was an artist, a collagist, basically, and he was soon spending the nights scavenging materials for his art. It was extraordinary what he came back with. When I would get up in the morning (or afternoon), there in the kitchen would be all manner of discarded toys, cheap religious statues, and other knickknacks for his increasingly baroque collages and assemblages. He also gathered comic books, true-romance magazines, and other pulp fiction that I eventually took to perusing myself and was instrumental in leading me into a "pop-collage" period of my own that lasted for about a year and a half.

Joe and I pretty much went our separate ways, but we would occasionally sit and talk in the kitchen for long periods, or play cards. I couldn't figure out how he survived. I had the foresight, when I got my paycheck of \$50 for a week of temp office work for example, to buy meat and other groceries, a bottle of bourbon and a carton of cigarettes, before I squandered the rest in bars and on taxis — but Joe never seemed to eat. Or rather he ate nothing but Twinkies, and drank countless Pepsi's, all the while chain-smoking Tareytons. I often invited him to share some of whatever I was cooking, but he always politely declined.

I was soon disabused of the idea that I would get half the rent (or the phone or Con Ed) on a regular basis; Joe had even less money than I did. Eventually, I began collecting his work instead, which I had come to appreciate. In fact I once splurged on an uncharacteristically large assemblage consisting of Tide boxes, a draped American flag and rows of religious figures, among many other components, for which he asked, and got in monthly installments, the extravagant sum of \$75. Many years later (at my next address) this piece so offended the religious sensibilities of an English actor who was also a serious Catholic that he would never enter the house again. Joe could never understand why some people took offense at the religious elements in his work. He *liked* these statuettes and pictures, however idiosyncratically he saw them; there was no satiric or political intent.

After about a year, however, Joe's materials had begun to take over the none-too-vast space of the apartment. First he filled up his bedroom, then the kitchen (in the East Village tradition, the largest room in the place), and then he started to occupy the small living room, too. But before I had to deliver an ultimatum about this, Joe "came out," something he must have been thinking about for quite some time. ("That's okay, At least he's doing *something*," Ted remarked, "he wasn't doing *anything*!") He soon moved out of his own accord and went on with the rest of his life and career.

Joe and I always remained friends but it happened that I saw him less and less as the years went by, and then I heard he was dying. He was truly one of the most open and gentle people I have ever known.

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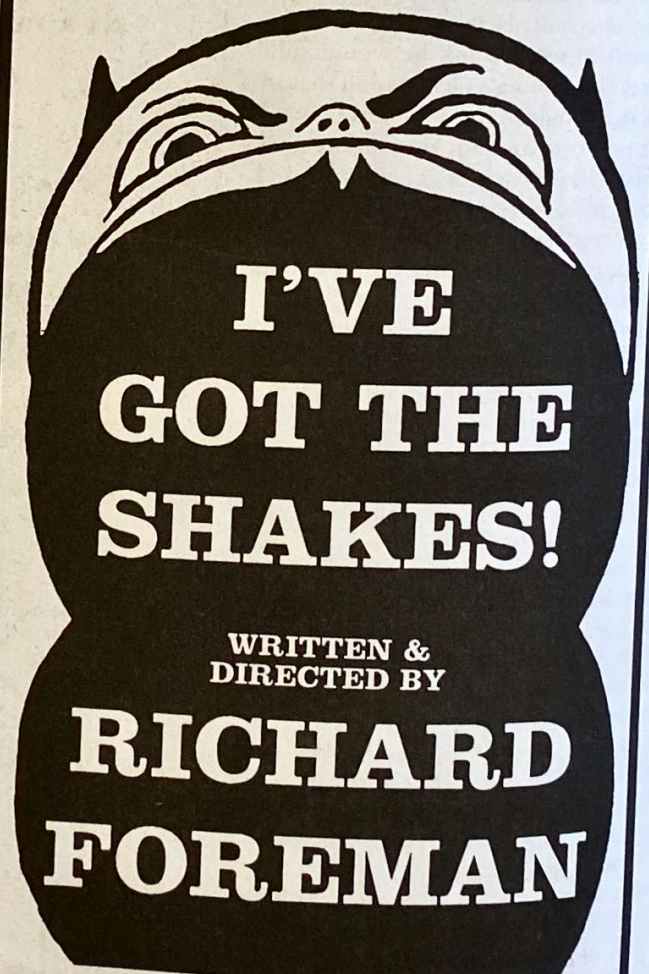
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WORKING WITH JOE BRAINARD ON "JIM THE SHEEP"

AND "BANJO BAR" by Kenneth Koch

Joe and I made about ten "comics" for *C Comics*, a special issue of *C Magazine*. Joe knew a short poem of mine called "Jim the Sheep" and by mutual consent we set out to make it a comic strip. This turned out to be very short and with very few words, none of them from the poem except the words of the title "Jim the Sheep." The collaborating took over and changed Jim's story. Noteworthy and very Brainardesque, I think, is the mix of pathos and humor in square two, little Jim indicated by an arrow and about to be addressed by the stars. Jim turns out to be the hero, though, as is clear from Joe's huge affirmative YES! The idea of waiting a whole month to read more of this story amused us both a lot. Joe, — a writer, of course, as well as an artist — did drawings as sensitive to words as I could imagine anyone's doing. In "Banjo Bar" Joe's sympathy for the ordinary people of the cartoon world (like those of *Steve Canyon*, *Brenda Starr* and *Love Comics*) is as evident as his somewhat mocking distance from them, but even this distance seems warm and pleasant enough. The improbable grouping of these people in "Banjo Bar's" only square I found inspiring. I've never felt such willingness to make a work of art with someone else as Joe had, as if one really could, with another artist, "blend," as Yeats says, "into the yolk and white of the one shell." It was happiness to work with him, like climbing into a little boat that immediately started gliding off, full of brilliance, affection, and surprise.

Another Picture
for Joe by Maïne Chernoff

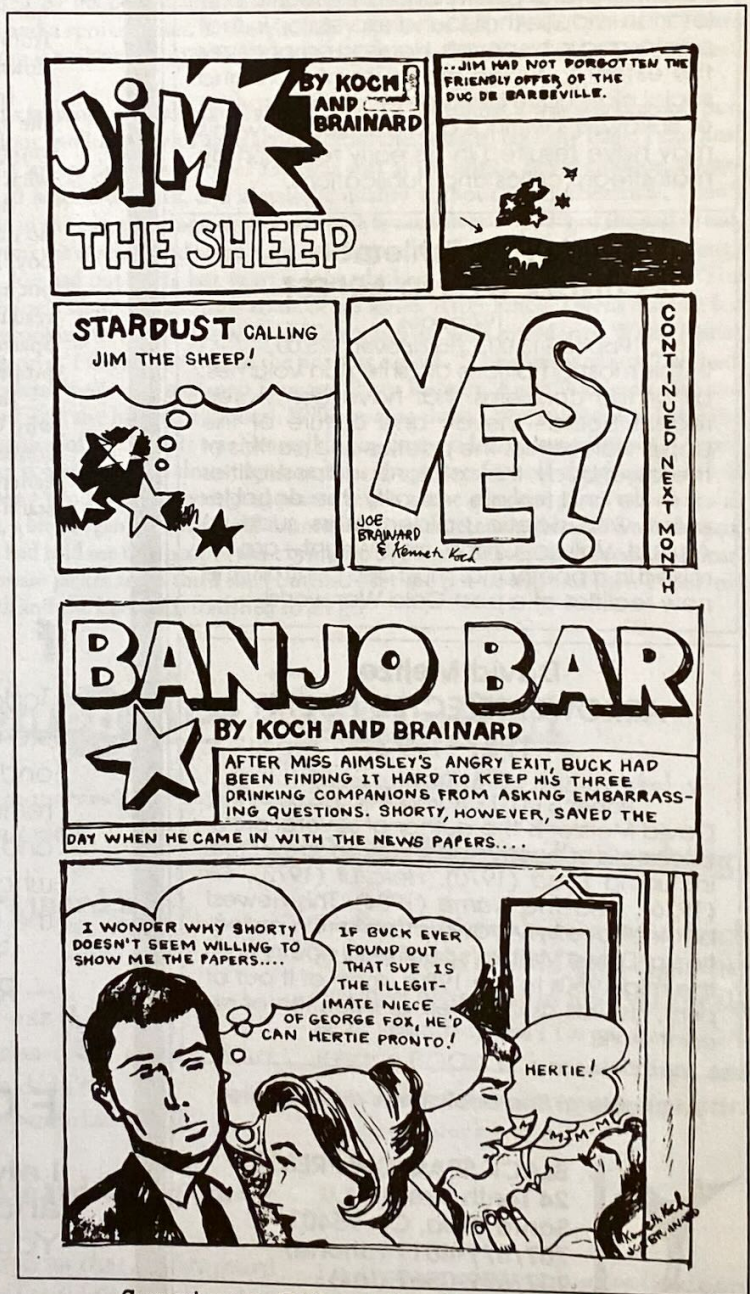
It's the summer of 1983. Kenward has invited us to visit on our way to Maine, the island Vinalhaven. Paul, Koren, and I pull up on July 3, just in time to celebrate the 4th. Koren is seven. After we eat peas swimming in sweet butter, salmon, and Joe's strawberry shortcake, powdery biscuits baked right in the kitchen, Koren goes outside to play. We are making small talk, enhanced by the wine and warmth and pleasantness, when we hear a scream. "I saw a snake," Koren reports, as she enters the house breathlessly, in tears. "I thought it was going to kill me."

Summer, 1984. Another 4th of July at Poets Corner. We've rented a house near Stowe and are spending a few days with Kenward and Joe before we go up there. We eat lobsters that Kenward serves piled high on a white platter. The lobsters are the centerpieces for the mugging camera shots we take. We swim in the pond. We play croquet. Though Joe doesn't want me to lose, I'm so bad that he can't play worse even when he tries.

Later that month, Joe and Kenward are scheduled to visit us near Stowe. We wait and wait until the phone rings at the appointed restaurant. They've been in a car accident. We go to get them at the hospital ER and learn they've totaled the car. They insist they still want to eat. Cut, limping, bleeding, clothes torn, they enter the restaurant. We make our way around the salad bar, Vermonters gaping at the Goyaesque dinner party.

Joe and I exchange letters, postcards, valentines in the years that follow. One postcard shows women's wigs of the Fifties, another Woody Allen as Mona Lisa. Joe reads in Chicago, where we visit the Great Ape House at Lincoln Park Zoo. I'm seven months pregnant with twins. Joe is eager to hear when they're born. I call him May 30 when they arrive four weeks early. He

(continued next page)



Courtesy Tibor de Nagy Gallery

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(Chernoff, continued from previous)

sends antique baby postcards. I send baby photos. That fall, I send my first book of short stories, *Bop*, and hold my breath. What a relief that he likes it. I send him the galley for my novel. Thumbs up. He sends me books now and then. "Read this, Love, Joe," the attached postcard always says in large black marker letters. I always do.

November 8, 1983. The phone rings. It's Joe calling, a rare but not unprecedented occurrence. I know that he's been ill, had surgery, and I've been inquiring. "Hello, Maxine? Are you eating dinner? Is this a good time to talk?" He's called to tell me he has AIDS. We're quiet and sad for several minutes. We talk about Thanksgiving. After the conversation, I tell Paul and Koren. I tell my boys, age 8, who've never met him but regularly send drawings, that this would be a nice time to make another picture for Joe.

Twice that year when I'm in New York, I visit him. He's in so much pain that he can't sit. I add some irises to his array of flowers from well-wishers. We talk and have some tea, me sitting, he lying down. It's begun to rain. He insists I take his umbrella with me.

In April Paul and I see Joe for the last time. We all know this, so the visit is understated and chatty. We hug him tightly when we enter his brother's flat. We leave quietly and unemotionally. This is what we do with grief.

Because I live outside the inner loop, because this is news that no one wants to relate, I see his face in *The New York Times*. The boys have left for school. Paul and I are having coffee. I gasp and cry but mutely because my father-in-law is sitting at the table with us. I read the obituary, which includes a typo, "Bean Sprouts," for "Bean Spasms." I call Kenward and we share some silence. When tears appropriate the conversation, we say good-bye.

In my second year in college, in 1970, I had to write an essay on why Cordelia had to die in *King Lear*. Though I understood the conventions of tragedy, I still didn't know why anyone kind and generous and wise and loved should ever die. I still don't understand as I write this today.

j o e
f l o a t i n g

Today I saw Joe floating around the pond "on his stomach," as we say. Or rather, I saw a suntan and a black bathing suit floating around. He reminded it of a tone arm that had come loose and was floating around inside a space capsule whose old lp's were slowly, gently bouncing off the walls, while outside the sky went on and on.

-Ron Padgett, Summer 1990

FOR JOE BRAINARD

I always admired your honesty
and shy earnestness
You were also very funny.

Simon Pettet

20 October 1994

by Ann Lauterbach

Last Friday, I flew up to Burlington. Kenward and I had arranged to meet at an Inn not far from there, to spend the night, and to drive to Calais the next day. We had dinner in his room and talked, mainly about Joe, and about plans for the Remembrance at the church. Saturday was a day of archetypal autumnal clarity: cool, cloudless and augmented by the vivid display of foliage that belongs only to New England. The drive across to Montpelier, which is the nearest town to Calais, is one I have taken before, with its mountain vistas in the distance and its redolent near, punctuated by farms, corn fields and sudden splashes of river. Kenward's house sits on a hill overlooking a pond, where Joe and I would swim, Joe walking slowly in, wearing his little black suit, his skin burnished and gleaming, and then sink down and come up, letting out a sort of groan or sigh of pleasure. Nobody knew better how to take pleasure in such simple acts; Joe loved objects and was more discerning about them than anyone I know, but he did not let them mediate the sensuous world; he did not know the world through its objects; he did not know himself by his possessions. Once, when I was working on Greene Street in a gallery, he came in, wearing jeans and a white shirt and sneakers and a sports jacket. It was probably spring or fall. "Anni," he said, "I have something for you," and he reached into his pocket and drew from it a silver necklace from which hung many charms that he had collected over the years, which he poured into my astonished hand.

When we drove up to the house and parked next to Kenward's studio, which sits across the road from the house, I was afraid to get out. I have so many mental images of Joe coming out of the orange door and loping with agile stride across the grass to take my bags; I can hear his voice still so clearly in my mind's ear. "Hi Anni, this is Joe." Can we describe a voice? His was soft at the edges; never anxious, always quietly even, with a slight sensuality to it, a sort of caress; it had natural warmth, and a melodic quality without being theatrical. I can't imagine it shrill or enraged or cruel. Kenward and I sat for a while in the car, allowing ourselves to gather ourselves away from the sad dread, and then we went in. We had a lovely light lunch of salad, fresh from the market, and some delicious egg rolls. The odd chandelier that hangs over the table was festooned with leaves which, Kenward said, Joe had put there last year; it looked like a kind of autumnal crown. The purpose of this visit was to climb up the hill behind the house to Joe's stone and to strew some of his ashes. After lunch, I went outside for a cigarette, as Joe and I had many times, sitting on the bench overlooking the pond; Joe with his Trues and me with my Merits. When I went back in, Kenward was holding a round aluminum pot with a top on it. He told me that in the pot was a glass. "The glass is yours," he said, "and the ashes are yours also." (Several persons have made this journey over the summer: Ron and Patty Padgett, Anne Waldman, Bill and Beverly Corbett, John and Caroline Brainard, Anne Dunn, Peter Gizzi and his wife Elizabeth Willis among them.) We walked slowly up the wooded path, past some brilliant red berries the name of which neither of us knew. It was like walking against a tide. At one point we stopped and held each other, and began to weep, and went on. Joe's stone is white quartz, almost oval, and sits about two feet off the ground. It had been outside his studio, where he could see it easily from the many windows. Kenward had placed it in a grove of white pines which sits in a rough meadow toward the top of the ridge. When we got there, a bird began to make rapid drumming sounds. Kenward handed me the pot, we hugged, he left. I stood for a while in the lovely air. Kenward had told me that people were bringing objects to leave; I had brought a pearl from my mother's broken necklace, a button from my only Armani jacket and a third shell button. I set the pot down, and then I took off the lid and lifted out the heavy goblet. *Rip, rip, rip* said the bird, and the hand is astonished to let go.

Johnny Stanton on Joe Brainard

Joe Brainard

I have a big Joe Brainard streak in my heart.

Was Joe Brainard Practical

Actually, Joe wasn't practical at all. But when you look at his art he's very practical indeed.

Is Joe Brainard's Art Optimistic

Yes, Joe Brainard's art is optimistic because he thought tomorrow (or

the day after to-morrow) was going to be better than today.

Was Joe Brainard an Egomaniac

Joe Brainard was the most quiet egomaniac I ever met. But when his art touched me he didn't feel like an egomaniac at all.

On Joe Brainard Being Queer

It never bothered me that Joe Brainard was queer, but I couldn't get it up when I slept with him. Joe was very nice, he

blamed it on pills and alcohol.

On Joe Brainard's Smoking

Joe Brainard smoked too damn much. If AIDS hadn't killed him, cigarettes would've done him in next year or the year after. But don't forget his CIGARETTE BOOK is a masterpiece, and his collages with Tareyton cigarettes are great works of art.

R.I.P.

I will always have a big Joe Brainard streak in my heart.
Love, Johnny Stanton

THE Poetry Project

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1 Day Without Art Services lead by Canon Llyod Casson in commemoration of artists lost to and suffering with AIDS. [Noon-4 pm]

5 Open Reading Sign-up at 7:30 pm.

7 Silenced Voices: A Celebration of Sudanese Writing featuring fiction writer & poet Terese Svoboda, political consultant Akuei Malwal, activist & former professional basketball player Manute Bol, Pulitzer Prize nominated poet Cornelius Eady and others. The evening will be introduced by Peter Matthiessen, author of over twenty-five books of fiction & nonfiction, most recently *African Silences*. Also Nuer songs performed by Stephen Par Kuol [8:30 pm]

12 Feed Reading Celebrating Feed-a "queer" feminist multicultural journal of arts and writings. P.J. Mark is the editor of *Feed*. Gretchen Elkins is the recipient of an award for the Academy of American Poets. Michael Mintz released a record of spoken word called *Hustler* produced by Jason Dreamy. Amudha Rajendran recently attended the Squaw Valley Fiction & Poetry Workshops & is working on her first novel.

January

1 The 21st Annual New Years Day Marathon Reading featuring over 120 poets, performance artists, writers & musicians including, Jim Carroll, John Giorno, Richard Hell, Todd Colby, Steven Taylor, Wanda Phipps, Larry Rivers, Brenda Coultas, Gregory Corso, Taylor Mead, Gillian McCain, Yoshiko Chuma, Foamola, Lewis Warsh, Tuli Kupferberg, Ron Padgett, Edwin Torres, Wang Ping, Ed Friedland, Bob Rosenthal, Stephen Ielpi, & many more! [2pm-midnight, \$15, \$12 for Poetry Project members]

2 Open Reading Sign-up at 7:30 pm.

9 Samia A. Halaby & Sianne Ngai Samia A. Halaby will be performing five kinetic paintings on the computer & interacting with several percussionists. Sianne Ngai is a poet & co-editor of *Black Bread* magazine.

11 Barbara Einzig & Tom Mandel Barbara Einzig is the author of numerous works of poetry & fiction including most recently *Distance Without Distance* (Kelsey St. Press). Tom Mandel's books include *Four Strange Books*, *Realism*, & *Letters of the Law*.

14 John Godfrey & Gary Lenhart Gary Lenhart is the author of *One at a Time & Light Heart*. His poems have been included in the anthologies *ALoud: Voices from the Nuyorican Poets Cafe*, *Up Late & Out of this World*. *The Village Voice* called John Godfrey "a master at answering the question, 'How does life feel while you're in it?'" His books of poetry include *Where the Weather Suits My Clothes & Midnight on Your Left*.

16 Deck the Halls With Lots 'O Xanax. Join Darius James, Elinor Nauen, Todd Colby, Dina Gan, Jeff Butler, Mario Mezzacappa and others for eggnog & stories of holiday disaster that the whole family will enjoy [10:30 pm]

19 Operation Mind Wipe with Josslyn Luckett, Darryl Hall, Mike Roberts & Rob Psychotrop Poet, playwright & performer Josslyn Luckett's recent play *Rupture, Runnin' Through Risk, Runnin' to Bliss* was staged at Here in New York City & in L.A. as part of HBO's New Writers Project. Darryl Hall & Mike Roberts are members of the experimental industrial band *Abstinence*, who just released a CD entitled "Revolt of the Cyberchrist." Rob Psychotrop is a performance artist.

2nd Avenue & 10th Street at St. Mark's Church in-the-Bowery

Admission \$6 (contribution)

except where noted.

Program subject to change.

Call (212) 674-0910 for more info.

13 LIVE, Friday Nite from the Poetry Project: With your hosts Douglas Rothschild and Janice Erlbaum. The topic for tonite: **Is There a Populist Poetry?** Musical stylings by the house band *Vole*. [10:30 pm]

16 A Celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King with jazz ensemble *The Jemeel Moondoc Quintet* & readings by *Steve Cannon*, *Regie Cabricco*, *Debbby Branch*, *Esther Iveram* & *Ron Kolm*.

18 David Mills & Julie Patton David Mills has appeared in *Eyeball*, *In the Tradition*, & *ALoud: Voices from the Nuyorican Poets Cafe*. Poet & visual artist Julie Patton's most recent project, *Alphabet Soup* is forthcoming from *Rodent Press*.

20 Quarterly Magazine Reading With fiction writers L.B. Feldman, Gary Lutz & Katherine Arnoldis. *Quarterly* editor & founder Gordon Lish introduces the evening. [10:30 pm]

23 Fielding Dawson & Vole Fielding Dawson, author of 20 books, will be reading from his new novella. *Vole* is a humorous take on a rockandroll band, composed of poet Lisa Jarnot, sociologist David Michalski and high school student Sophia Mayer.

25 Tory Dert & David Shapiro Tory Dent's book *What Silence Equals* was published in 1993. Poet & art critic David Shapiro is the author of 8 volumes of poetry including *Lateness*, *To An Idea*, *House (Blown Apart)* & most recently *After A Lost Original*.

30 Nick Zedd, Carl Watson & Jennifer Jazz A leading figure in the *Cinema of Transgression*, Nick Zedd has recently completed a book of fiction. Jennifer Jazz's most recent work is the novel *Exact Fantasy*. Carl Watson's latest collection of fiction is entitled *Agoraphobia and Sexuality in the Land of Transient Hotels*.

bernadette mayer fund

Bernadette Mayer was hospitalized on October 11th for intracerebral bleeding—equivalent to a stroke. She underwent neurosurgery and is presently recovering. At the moment she is unable to speak or write. Due to the seriousness of her illness, it's not clear when she will be completely rehabilitated.

Bernadette needs your support to help pay her rent, phone bills, utilities, any expenses Medicaid won't cover and for the care of her three children. Any financial gift you can contribute will help her through this difficult time and allow Bernadette to concentrate on regaining her health.

An important and respected poet, Bernadette has been involved in the New York City poetry community for many years. She served as director of the Poetry Project at St. Mark's Church from 1980–84 and since then she has lead numerous writing workshops at the Project and at The New School for Social Research. Bernadette has published fifteen books of poetry and prose, recently, *A Bernadette Mayer Reader* (New Directions 1992) and *The Desires of Mothers to Please Others in Letters* (Hard Press 1994).

Please make your tax-deductible contribution checks payable to: Giorno Poetry Systems/The Bernadette Mayer Fund. Giorno Poetry Systems, 222 Bowery, New York, NY 10012

The World 49

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St. Mark's Church in-the-Bowery

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newsletter corrections

My apologies to Amiri Baraka. His lecture (which was published in the October/November newsletter) was transcribed from audio tape and there were many mistakes and "mishearings." The phrase "But the transformative power of art, as opposed to ink" should have read: "But the transformative power of Art (as opposed to Aint)." The references to Mao's "The Anon Forum" should have been "The Yen-an Forum." At the top of the third column, "e.g. egg, eagle" should have read "e.g. egg & ego." The phrase "it connects is and be and proves their mutuality" should have been "connects is and be, proves their materiality." The term "death-cellars" should have been "Death sellers." The phrase "suasive revolutionaries" should have been "soi disant revolutionaries." The sentence "Where are the revolutionary awards that celebrate the Margaret Walkers...?" should have been completed with "... and Sembene Ousmans or Ernest Cardinals or Herbert Apthekers?"

Also, my apologies to Murat Nemat-Nejat. Due to a computer error & faulty proof-reading, the brackets in his piece "Takes or Mistakes from the Revolutionary Poetry Symposium" were omitted. Also, some of his groupings of text were separated into separate paragraphs. Both of these mistakes distort the meaning of his piece.

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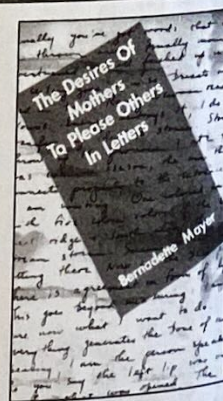
Bernadette Mayer

"The work is precise, expansive, unabashed, melancholic, forthright, and metaphysical; it is about public and private history; good advice, speculation, news, and the ways understanding and adventure direct our attention and stimulate our manifold desire." — Lyn Hejinian

"This one is all adventure in the event, a scaling of the exigent, an act of utter tell beyond the call. In contingency detail, at hypnagogic rates, she meets you in mind of a reckoning." — Clark Coolidge

"She is a consummate poet no matter what's for supper or who eats it. Would that all genius were as generous." — Robert Creeley.

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Clark Coolidge, Michael Gizzi, and John Yau.

Photographs by Bill Barrette and Celia Coolidge.

As homage to a writing hero, and as catalyst for their own work, the authors of *Lowell Connector* made several trips to Kerouac's hometown of Lowell, Massachusetts. The procedure was to visit specific sights described in Kerouac's work, taking in the homes, haunts, schools and literary memorials as a kind of memory protein in the activation of their own work.

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From CHAMP DUST

By Kenward Elmslie & Joe Brainard

My heart goes out to all flimflam buffs, me included,
yearning for deliverance so seamless
it must seem of an ageless timelessness...



Outfielder stares at the ball, so fixated,
he doesn't even hear his teammates, his fans in the stands,
screaming in anguish at his weirdo conduct.

brainard

Life and Death According to Joe Brainard

LIFE

When I stop and think about what it's all about I do come up with some answers, but they don't help very much.

I think it is safe to say that life is pretty mysterious. And hard.

Life is short. I know that much. That life is short. And that it's important to keep reminding oneself of it. That life is short. Just because it is. I suspect that each of us is going to wake up some morning to suddenly find ourselves old men (or women) without knowing how we got that way. Wondering where it all went. Regretting all the things we didn't do. So I think that the sooner we realize that life is short the better off we are.

Now, to get down to the basics. There are 24 hours a day. There is you and there are other people. The idea is to fill these 24 hours as best one can. With love and fun. Or things that are interesting. Or what have you. Other people are most important. Art is rewarding. Books and movies are good fillers, and the most reliable.

Now you know that life is not so simple as I am making it sound. We are all a bit fucked up, and here lies the problem. To try and get rid of the fucked up parts, so we can just relax and be ourselves. For what time we have left.

DEATH

Death is a funny thing. Most People are afraid of it, and yet they don't even know what it is.

Perhaps we can clear this up.

What is death?

Death is it. That's it. Finished. "Finito." Over and out. No more.

Death is many different things to many different people. I think it is safe to say, however, that most people don't like it.



Collage by John Brainard

Why?
Because they are afraid of it.

Why are they afraid of it?

Because they don't understand it.

I think that the best way to try to understand death is to think about it a lot. Try to come to terms with it. Try to really understand it. Give it a chance!

Sometimes it helps if we try to visualize things.

Try to visualize, for example, someone sneaking up behind your back and hitting you over the head with a giant hammer.

Some people prefer to think of death as a more spiritual thing. Where the soul somehow separates itself from the mess and goes on living forever somewhere else. Heaven and hell being the most traditional choices.

Death has a very black reputation but, actually, to die is a perfectly normal thing to do.

And it's so wholesome: being a very important part of nature's big picture. Trees die don't

they? And flowers?

I think it's always nice to know that you are not alone. Even in death.

Let's think about ants for a minute. Millions of ants die every day, and do we care? No. And I'm sure that ants feel the same way about us.

But suppose—just suppose—that we didn't have to die. That wouldn't be so great either. If a 90 year old man can hardly stand up, can you imagine what it would be like to be 500 years old?

Another comforting thought about death is that 80 years or so after you die nobody who knew you will still be alive to miss you.

And after you're dead, you won't even know it. These poems were originally published in *Selected Writings 1962-1971* by Joe Brainard (The Kulchur Foundation, 1971). Reprinted with permission by John Brainard and Ron Padgett.

Weeighted We Magazine #18 We Press, 1994 Videotape, \$17

What we have here is Video Mimeo. "Weeighted" ("We Magazine #18") is hot off the press, the press being a 1/2" videotape duplication system, while the vidzine itself is comprised primarily of unedited performances made during August, 1993, on Lincoln Street in Santa Cruz. Chris Funkhauser and Stephen Cope serve as base, leading a dog team of Thought and Theory across the tundra of US Culture, hauling lo-fi jazzdada deconstructions and a tribe which is the Next Generation.

"We" always snaps out, a rattlesnake in the mailbox. Previous issues have appeared on cassette, CD, silkscreen, as prints and in print. How the poem is shoveled is part of the fun, Hon. The vitality of poetry is directly imprinted on ears' retinas, and if you need more (and you do!) let thy modem reach out to cf2785@albnyvms.bitnet where on the weekly internet offshoot of "We," DIU, I recently read a poem of Eileen Myles and an attack on the existence of Marianne Moore, who often taps in on the mu that is DIU (a mu (or "moo") being a textual "virtual world" where you assume a character when you log on).

Meanwhile, back on the video #18, elementary formal elements like in-camera framedropping and a strange "channel-surfing" colorization add a sense of stasis and high deconstruction and fuck-the-medium to what is essentially a one-camera documentary. This brilliantly centers the Poem as It. Is this all there is? Quite so, when you're hearing Will Alexander's "Utopian Stellar Concentrations," Angela Coon, Sara Biel, Kimi Sugioki, Randall Homan, and Corey Weinstein performing as Bloodtest in "The Housewife in the Back of Your Mind," or Richard Loranger, whose recently published three-volume *Mythkiller* is also our from WE on pieces of paper stapled together. Sound on "WE 18" is exquisitely placed, the bands Eddie Gale Quintet, thelemonade, and Ed's Redeeming Qualities are danceable to all alone in your living room (catch "Spoken Word" by Ed's Redeeming Qualities for exegesis of current moves).

Like Ed Sanders' one-camera network, "The Sanders Report," "Weeighted" punches a sweet fist into the Vaster Wasteland. The unedited interstitials of home movie footage take you backstage of Some New Punk (Chris Funk), Sun Ra puts in a

guest appearance, a party for the mind. Panic may be a natural millennial state, but WE twists a new perspective, Artist-controlled and human, mellow in frenzy, on the dial.

Address all correspondence to: WE Press, P.O. Box 1503, Santa Cruz, CA 95061. Subscriptions: \$15/3 issues. Sample package \$5. Bob Holman

Harry Mathews The Journalist David R. Godine, 1994 239 pages, \$21.95

I always speak the truth. Not the whole truth, because there's no way, to say it all.

Jacques Lacan

Harry Mathews' writing brings to mind the performance of a highly skilled trapeze artist: he dances gymnastically, and might stage a slip but doesn't fall over. Humor swings from wicked to sweet but never drops into sarcasm; language and relationships are mapped out in ways that prove illuminating and gut wrenching, but never tip over into heavy handed or didactic terrain.

His newest novel, *The Journalist*, continues this tradition. In it, an unnamed narrator takes on a project: written documentation of every day life. What starts as a sane enough sounding diversion leaps, Nabokov style, into throat gripping obsession. Family, friends, work, and self are progressively unattended to, or viewed bizarrely, while the act of journal keeping develops into a duty that is relentless and urgent. What accounts for his absorption? A goal which he takes earnestly: record everything with absolute accuracy. He believes the key to achieving this might lie in discovering a suitable structure: one that does not rely upon chronology ("That line can only oversimplify"), but upon classifications, or grids, which best organize and include all that he sees, smells and remembers. He starts with one notebook, then two, then moves onto a loose-leaf binder indexed with multiple categories. As the project progresses, he bumps up against a logic which at once challenges and dismays him: the more he puts in the more he leaves out. He may be the journal's creator, but like Dr. Frankenstein, cannot control the direction his product takes after conception.

There is something both funny and sad in the character's determination; a blend of humor and tragedy—both at once, back and forth—is finely tuned throughout the novel. The result is highly unsettling. One day he fantasizes viciously about his boss: *Can I persuade someone to murder Mr. Valde? Bad idea. In his way I al-*

rEviewS

most like h. But he should suffer. Maybe saw off his toes one by one, one per hour, not counting meal breaks? But messy! Arteries must extend into toes. Two days later he articulates a blend of sadness and possibility: I gazed at the sky, with a star or two. I was here, I had never been anywhere else, but I had no idea where 'here' was, or why I had come here. I saw drops of blood on my hands—and so there were drops of blood on my hands. The 'I' who could recollect was absent: I had been reduced to things I saw. I saw the sweet faces around me, filling up with joy at the sight of a countenance that must have reflected (however faintly) this soft exaltation.

As these two passages illustrate, the narrator's voice ranges from endearing to sadistic, from erotic to dull; it struggles at the boundaries of control. At times the character feels King of his Journal Universe, gratified by the power his status as observer affords him, yet disorder progressively unwinds: he is distracted by small details, he attacks people and objects, flushes food down the toilet and panics he can't keep abreast of his project. *What would I do if I fell as little as half a day behind? Easy: a night with no sleep at all could handle the lag.*

As desperate as his vision becomes, pockets of tenderness and joy weave through it: the careful breakfasts he prepares for his wife and son, the burst of affection he feels for a flock of ducks on an early fall day, the romantic interlude and several course meal that he shares with his mistress in a tool shed. Moreover, the voice is rarely without some evidence of grounding; a sanity underlies the journalist's insane project. No one understands better than he the impossibility of simultaneously recording and observing: *A full account of my life requires a full life ... I do need time, more and more of it not simply to record but to see and notice.*

And glaring from that phrase is a point addressed throughout the novel: although the journalist's project is huge, his vision of it is quite narrow. His obsession hooks him into a loop with a logic—say *everything* exactly—that is fondled and pummeled until the novel's very last sentence.

Writing this review evoked a recurrent daydream: an explorer descends a dark hole whose sides sprout with blooming vegetation. He picks as many of the plants as possible, clutching each one tightly to him as he travels toward the unknown. The action signals a balance of danger and possibility. Similarly, *The Journalist* treads precariously in-between disaster and hope; it hunts out and delineates mixtures of beauty and ugliness entwined within writing and the humans who do it. Lynn Crawford

Tom Savage
Political
Conditions/
Physical States
United Artists Books, 1993
60 pages, \$7

Diaghilev's "Astonish me!" tossed off in a late hour to Cocteau, back when the century showed promise, prompted some flashy responses across a broad range of the arts; that rush has kept its freak echo steadily reverberating, clearly emblematic even with the motive left unstated, for any number of avant-arrivistes rallying to keep each other shell-shocked, a spent decade from nodding off. Word-hacking jabberwocks along with shelf-hatched confessional struts (to speak only of poets aiming for a career in the circus) have made the quick leap to public platforms and left their litter of shucks and expletives for the random anthologist Zeitgeist to sweep up. Mostly, it stays a mess.

Tom Savage proves to be a remarkable

exception. His poems achieve standout disclosure without flaunting need and sustain a lyric line unimpeded by the burden of its authenticating language. As often as not, a poem will be writhing around an actual occasion and still manage more than a casual hint at memory and possibility: *Where a moment's undirected light/ Holds a new, untouched page,/ In a snapshot's second,/ A quiet breath like a baby sleeping/ Or a man in constant meditation.* "So ends the first poem, both prolog and manifest for a rich, probing new book, in the course of which the obvious is well appraised, the good is plainly stated, and the incriminating detail, whether in or out of the ordinary, is neither exaggerated nor ignored. For the surreal model, a classic of its kind, read "Analyzing Anatomy," a single octave freeze-frame that restates its initiating iambic charge for a wrenching close on the freely intervening mix, wildly collating a stalled, bitter winter design from the frayed cityscape: *my feet of snow are firmly on the ground/ my head hangs from yonder rooftop/ my arms exchanged themselves for traffic lights long ago/ my head is drinking sherbet on the fourteenth floor/ my stomach is at the bank on a line/ my lungs are taking in biofeedback air/ my neck is twisted around*

one of the ginkgos on Tompkins Square/ my feet of snow are firmly on the ground ...

Where anything may induce jitters there is small grace in surviving, an attending wit can have the benefit of giving shape to the tension. Joy, splendor, enhancement weigh in against spleen, loss, and bleakness. The poems conform to the large-scale balancing act which the book's title announces and stress a persistent yawning within a shell of elegantly defined disaffection. *There's no place as lonely as home* says one poem. Yet "Sensitive Crimes" ends with this startling, profoundly punning insistence on relationship: *A home is something two people/ Have between them in order to/ Keep them from killing each other.*

Savage knows how to start a poem, too; one of his best openers goes: *Wherever we turn/ Our suicide's behind us.* Just how far back and where to exactly is both the impetus and burden of proof for the book. The strongest poems evoke the very manner of extended dying: of the poet's mother, of a former lover, of a reclusive, clinically deranged neighbor. His uncle Bob, who dies at 86, is literally a "diehard," as unappreciated during his long lifetime for his solitary art as for his obdurate, radical politics, and earns this suitable mutual,

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truly commemorative grievance: *I can't help wonder where we, the oppressed, go/ From here and I cry only partly for him.*

So the poet goes riddling existence and often blithely begs the question in making his case. "What has posterity ever done for us?" In fact, more question marks crop up in this work, signing mute flashes of amazement rather than surly slow-burn rhetoric, as the poet undergoes "a psychological crossfire." "Truck" takes up the argument with God in the form of a drill-master's grilling, and "A Hole in the Brain" comes close to being a questionnaire in its entirety. "Open Wound" replays a grossly compounded physical emergency in close-up to raise an eloquent indictment of questionable socio-medical procedures.

Against some awesome Baudelairean odds, Savage stays a clear-eyed generous tour guide within the inner precincts and beyond. *If, as Mr. Havel told our astonished Senate/ Just the other day, consciousness precedes being,/ May not the two escort one another out/ Over that little bridge between lives/ Of the aware just over there?*

Get real, America; your best and least-known poets have been dying to clue you in for years. Now it's time to get serious. Lucky for us, Tom Savage is here now to spell out survival in no uncertain terms. Vyt Bakaitis

Wang Ping American Visa Coffee House Press, 1994 179 pages, \$11.95

American Visa is less a book of short stories than one long story told in parts. It is in many ways a coming-of-age story of Seaweed, the book's main character, but also a story of Seaweed's body and the bodies surrounding her; Chinese women's bodies, Chinese men's bodies, peasant bodies, revolutionary bodies, bodies in transit.

In the first piece, entitled "Lipstick," Seaweed quickly becomes indelible as both a character and a figure of the text by literally cleansing her body, both to wash it of toil, and to remove any trace of the old lipstick she found that had "somehow escaped the Red Guard's confiscations": *I poured some hot water into my mother's basin and washed my face. No one must see any trace of lipstick on me. As I rubbed my cheeks, rolls of dirt came off. I hadn't been to the public bathhouse the whole winter. And later: My big ass looked fine in the mirror ... I raised my arms holding two handfuls of hair. It looked like the wings of some powerful black-*

bird in the sunshine.

Seaweed discovers her beauty, certain freedoms, and ultimately, love, only through her individual actions, while something like lipstick, a Western tint, must be washed away, bringing the body back in line with the collective, revolutionary struggle. She literally *struggles against* her own body, in this respect — the italicized term being a rough translation of the Chinese expression for what is done to traitors of the revolution. The body is Wang Ping's keynote and constant reminder of what is always at stake under the regime, whether it be Mao's or Reagan's, which for her is both shadows of Pound ("enormous tragedy of the dream in the peasant's shoulders") and Mao ("The one and only purpose of the proletariat in knowing the world is to change it.") Seaweed begins as a petite bourgeois only to be "re-educated by the peasants," carrying the tragedy of China's dream and her own — *Work in the fields was hard, much harder than I'd imagined and prepared for. Twelve hours a day, seven days a week, in the blazing sun or cold rain* — and ends up changing herself, but always with the sense and regret of an exile. Despite her struggles and hardships, she doesn't speak ill of China or Mao as one might expect. The book's later stories portray life in New York, especially for Chinese immigrants, as not always such an obvious improvement over totalitarianism.

She leaves her country, but her body bares the scars of what it means to be a woman in China. In "Fox Smell," we learn how Seaweed was forced by her mother to have her sweat glands cut out to remove the dreaded "*hu chou*" (fox smell) or what is commonly known as body odor. In "Lotus," the tradition of binding women's feet in hopes that they'll become "three-inch golden lotuses" (once the great fetish of Chinese men), haunts Seaweed through her grandmother. "I heard my toes cracking and breaking under my soles with each step."

Wang Ping's writing fulfills a new Chinese American style of sorts, that is sustained throughout the book, true to both traditions — to China's in the sense of its clarity and musicality ("*holding two handfuls of hair*"); to America's in its visceral, conversational, and (occasionally) narcissistic tone. There's also a writing lesson to be learned for all as Seaweed points out to her first students at Galan People's Commune elementary school, who have been trained to write only political slogans: *Write simply and clearly. Forget about the words you copied from the textbooks and newspapers. Start right now.*

Robert V. Hale

Ann Lauterbach And For Example Penguin, 1994 101 pages, \$12.95

When we encounter something complex, we experience a commingling sense of frustration at our limitations, our inability to quickly untangle and a hopeful sense of challenge and possibility. We give three names to time {past, present, future} for the sake of simplicity, though it is much more complex. In her fifth collection, Ann Lauterbach continues to weave lyrical sequences of mysterious events. The volume contains its own past, present, and the sense of a future in three sections. Like *Clamor* (Penguin, 1991), *And For Example* is a graceful exploration of our actions and their impact in those three complicated places in time.

"Things are not cured by resilience," Lauterbach writes in "Harm's Way, Arms Reach" in the final section of the book, *Ashes Ashes*. This idea is explored throughout in images of paper, long-folded, being opened, as if the heart is made of paper, collecting imprints of existence. Try as you might, you can't make the creases disappear. The most you can get is a sense of what was once smooth. *Even maps betray us where the fold/ tears just along the tiny road we need. A field fills up with paper airplanes, and we put our ear to the chest where/ the letters are kept.*

Many of the poems function as finely layered fictions, the layers thinning as the stories wind together, coming down to stark, almost shocking images — a boy forced to eat ashes in front of a church congregation; a body being found in a dumpster. These moments ground the dream-like quality of the poems and give them their relevance to the physical world. Others end in questions, as does the collection itself; this action resonates toward a future and admits the elusive nature of the issues it addresses.

As in the world, things make an imprint in the book, and though there is structural and language play, themes emerge. Remembering is important to our experience. Lauterbach seems to be saying, *go out and play, but remember ...* In the emotionally powerful "The Untelling," the discovery of the body of a prominent figure in the narrator's life and growth explains other behaviors. One event may explain the next. The first poem of the book includes a list: *old age, a gun, the prevention of sleep.* The first poem of the second section has a similar list: *to protect what is new, to laugh with-*

out ambush, to sleep safely. A boy, perhaps the same who was forced to eat ashes, impales himself on a mast as a crowd watches. "The crowd always watches," writes Lauterbach.

The dynamic between performer and audience, or more generally, the ways in which we have an impact and the work such impact requires, are confronted repeatedly in art, with good reason. These issues are important to people's lives. We can hope, from our lives, to make creases in the paper. The river-like lyric of Lauterbach's work certainly has left a crease in mine. The ability to combine a poetry of narration with one of ideas has been her strength. Many people deny the value of poetry in their lives, just as they deny the more mystical elements of the human experience. Lauterbach's project combines these elements, resulting in a richer and fuller experience. Her work is important and necessary. Carolyn Koo

Anne Porter An Altogether Different Language: Poems 1934-1994

**Zoland Books, 1994
116 pages, \$10.95 paper**
.....

Bob Rosenthal Viburnum White Fields Press (Heaven Chapbook Series #41), 1994 16 pages, no price listed

An Altogether Different Language presents 116 pages of poems written by Anne Porter over a career of 60 years. After I volunteered to review the book, I was surprised (yea, amazed!) to learn that the volume had been nominated for a National Book Award. One can only salute the judges for their sensibilities and wonder if they were the same who selected the other four finalists. *Viburnum* is a 16-page chapbook by a poet in the ripeness of mid-career published in an edition of 200 by a small beatnik press in Kentucky. Anne Porter is a devout Christian whose poems are often jubilant hosannas to a Lord im-

manent throughout Creation. Her poems combine the sculptural clarity of Théophile Gautier with the ornery piety of Francis Jammes. The first poem in Bob Rosenthal's book, "I Believe in Jews," contains the lines: *the sky opened up a bit/ inside the sky was sky/ the world beckons us to make/ a bed of bells & comforter of heavens/ but we are only Jews/ we ask the questions/ our laws are our quest/ our compliance lumps the mattress/ hurts the back ...* His poems remind one of no classic predecessors. Indeed, I have been reading his poems for almost 20 years and am only now beginning to hear his hammered brusque ellipses.

So why was it obvious to me that these books should be discussed together? There is something delightfully unfashionable about both, but I am not so perverse that such reason sufficed. More important, in a year of many good books and at a time of personal crisis, these books more than any other sustain my faith in poetry and make me feel grateful to be alive in this world of sorrows. In part, it's because Porter and Rosenthal deal directly and unromantically with death, yet refuse to let mortality banish joy. In grief, both remain quick. Yet there is something vaster than death in these books. Ford Madox Ford wrote that it took him perhaps 25 years to arrive at any conscious idea of what he wanted to do in verse, and then he found that he was "trying to attain to quietude. I should like to write a poem — I should like to write all my poems — so that they would be like the quiet talking of some one walking along a path behind someone he loved very much — quiet, rather desultory talking, going on, stopping, with long pauses, as the quiet mind works." In their best poems, Porter and Rosenthal achieve a quietude rare in any aspect of contemporary life, a quietude that has nothing to do with subject or setting.

There is nothing otherworldly about Anne Porter's or Bob Rosenthal's poems. Both are close, non-judgmental observers of the world about them, a world in which ghosts are as substantial as sunsets or puddles of drool. Both are blessed with a stubborn modesty that refuses to filter experience into standard versions. In addition to the attentive ear and linguistic invention of gifted poets, both blend in a curious proportion of sophistication and humility — seemingly contrary qualities in perpetual short supply in America. Sophistication becomes rarer as Americans read less widely and are more narrowly acquaintanced; most see the same few movies and socialize within their strata. Humility must always be suspect in a nation so democratic that everyone yearns to be king or queen, like Elvis or Marla. But Por-

ter and Rosenthal will have none of it. Though inevitably, humanly alone, they are not loners, but adepts at the domestic adjustments necessary for a life among others. Bonaventure wrote, "the wise must enhance conceptual clarity with the truth implicit in the actions of the simple." Porter's Christian vision is as radically subversive as Francis of Assisi's; Rosenthal's version of Judaism as radically compassionate as Allen Ginsberg's.

If this reeks too much of mysticism and not enough of art, the fault is wholly mine. The consolation I find in Porter's and Rosenthal's offbeat incarnate tenderness shouldn't obscure their conscious artistry. That artistry will be obvious to anyone who opens their books and reads. From this time forth, no anthology of twentieth century poetry will be respectable without Anne Porter's poem "For My Son Johnny." After many readings I am still unable to read without tears this address to a dead child, as remarkable for its eloquent restraint as for its peculiar sharp focus. But one can open her book at random and be sure to come across similarly luminous detail, even in those poems that aren't entirely successful. A brief list of Porter's most enchanting poems would include "A Child at the Circus," "The Ticket," "Lovers," "Red Sky at Night," "Oaks and Squirrels," "In Childhood," "When the Privet Blooms," "Listening to the Crows," and "December." The titles indicate the range and subjects of the poet. As exemplum, what could be more fitting than the title poem? From "An Altogether Different Language": *There was a church in Umbria, Little Portion,/ Already old eight hundred years ago./ It was abandoned and in disrepair/ But it was called St. Mary of the Angels/ For it was known to be the haunt of angels,/ Often at night the country people/ Could hear them singing there./ What was it like, to listen to the angels,/ To hear those mountain-fresh, those simple voices/ Poured out on the bare stones of Little Portion/ In hymns of joy?/ No one has told us./ Perhaps it needs another language/ That we still have to learn./ An altogether different language. Perhaps we need to learn another language, but Anne Porter constantly demonstrates how surprisingly, surpassingly far available resources may take us.*

Bob Rosenthal's chapbook is only one-seventh the length of Porter's book, so one doesn't expect to find so many poems for the ages. One is confounded again. I would nominate at least four poems from this little book for that ideal anthology: "Fake Treasures," "Relay," "I Believe in Jews,"

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and "Looking Up." Unfortunately, all are too long to include in a brief review. The chapbook also contains five elegies (all titled simply "POEM") that are moving but not maudlin, that direct attention to the absent friend instead of the poet's sensitivity: *Centuries ago we stood together in potato soup/ Arms over head not pleading just waving/ Red songs drizzled into the sodden uptown walls/ Lasting in mid-word like ceaseless telephones// Some stay attracted to aunts of portion/ Or else they walk the spoon pronto/ Lusting to grab passing mishaps/ One night Mama dies/ Materially eh! but now such a shtarker!// On Pelham Bay fishing for blues/ No one left to share our intimate trivialities ...* This has not the grandeur of *Adonais*, but expresses more vividly the actual loss of a particular friend. Gary Lenhart

GOOD TO GO: SHORT STORIES WEST COAST STYLE

Edited by Deran Ludd,
Alice Wheeler & Jim Jones
Zero Hour Publications,
182 pages, \$9.95, 1994

While the experience of being marginalized has long been a part of mainstream East Coast writers, it is a relatively recent development in the literature of back-country regions such as Washington, Oregon and northern California. Lately however, it appears to have become a manifesto of sorts for the coming-of-age by a fertile underground of Northwest area writers largely ignored or trivialized. Not

ing this shift in contemporary literature away from the more well-educated "middle America" ethic of writing, Seattle-native Deran Ludd exhorts, "It's not John Cheever or Philip Roth country anymore." Indeed. The twenty-six short stories in *Good to Go* describe a side of the tracks that Cheever and Roth would think twice about before crossing. In the process these stories are redefining the boundaries of the current moment in the burgeoning Northwest literary scene, a scene populated with a variety of minor, lowlife characters.

It's not always a treasure trove. Much of the writing here is too crude for mainstream publishers. Some of it is just plain bad. But most of it is well-intentioned if not technically brilliant. And there are a few real gems to be found such as Rebecca Brown's haunting, sadly beautiful "The Gift of Sweat," and Deran Ludd's harrowing "Carnage Motel." And, as is often the case, some of the rawest most uncommercial stuff has inspired other artists to create more socially acceptable versions of Northwest street life (*Drugstore Cowboy*, *My Own Private Idaho* and *American Heart* to name a few recent films). Bar poets, punks, and street junkies have, and are, putting the grittier side of this new frontier scene on paper, writing down the details of alienated and obscured lives in an attempt to find something, anything, maybe nothing at all.

A typical example is Richard McFarland's "La Abuela," a claustrophobic narrative that skittishly jumps between the euphoric egomania and nihilistic paranoia of a heroin addict who lives only to score more drugs: *I'm fucking flipping out because I feel rich and Paco's not pissed and we're on our way back to my place and I still got what my 200 bucks bought coming to me and it's only Saturday afternoon and everything's really really great, like it even fucking matters. Like it even matters. The ironic response to a nation of television-drugged PR operators looking to market the latest "Generation X" product.*

With anthologies like *Good to Go*, novels such as Deran Ludd's *Sick Burn Cut*, and spoken word performances by the late great iconoclastic Seattle poet Jesse Bernstein (a portion of which appears in the recent film *Natural Born Killers*) this little-known generation of writers is permanently altering the literary terrain of the region. It is a landscape littered with bitter memories, missed opportunities, and damaged lives scattered throughout the stories and poems like the debris discarded along the I-5 artery, a superhighway corridor connecting the urban sprawls of Seattle, Portland, Olympia, and Vancouver into

one big nightmare. The writing here is more from the bowels than from the heart.

To be sure, this is not the damp, hippie utopia of Tom Robbins' *Another Roadside Attraction*, or the he-man logging land of Ken Kesey's *Sometimes a Great Notion*. The authors in this collection are more concerned with sexually abused kids, menacing drug-addicted ex-cons, and horny, depressed teenagers wearing Motley Crue shirts.

They write about themselves and their friends, in scenarios that range from the mundane to the borderline insane. More importantly, their writing chronicles the private life of a young, terminally hip, and misunderstood generation that is entirely new to Northwest coast writing. Their style and tone are part Raymond Carver "dirty realism," part Jim Thompson "seedy noir," and part William Burroughs lowlife carousing.

Most of the characters in *Good to Go* aren't pretty. *Jenny is nine years old and she knows that she hates her mother* reads the opening line in Tammy Watson's "A Little Time with Jenny." Bridgett Irish writes from alternately intimate and detached perspectives about a young girl being sexually molested by her uncle: *I feel like I'm going to choke, or throw up. When he presses on the back of my head it only makes it worse.* Bernstein's "Sissies Suck It Up (Bad Boys Gulp It Down)" confronts a macho metaphor disguised as perversity: *These guys were very strange. They were into drinking piss-pissing right into each other's mouths, drinking the stuff out of bottles. I never understood them.* Much of the writing here is confessional, almost uncomfortably personal. A large number of the authors come out of the '80s hardcore underground fanzine culture, and many of their stories were originally printed and "published" on stapled, photocopied sheets of paper and distributed through a network of friends and fellow fanzine editors.

Arras 2

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Zero Hour Publications itself began in Seattle, in 1987, as an oversized fanzine, running interviews with "fringe" writers like Kathy Acker and covering a local music scene just emerging from a relatively obscure post-punk adolescence into the celebrated center stage of "grunge." After half a dozen years putting out their own fanzine, Zero Hour wants to do for Northwest area writers what several street-smart and spunky independent record labels have done for the music scene. A large number of stories in the collection deal with childhood abuse, and, as with the music scene, the act of writing becomes a cathartic sort of therapy, especially for teenage kids stuck in suburban bedrooms with dysfunctional families. Or, as the introduction intones: "Good to Go is not about, 'It's nice to be nice.' Good to Go is about, 'It's good to have something to say.'" David Vogen

Anne Waldman

Kill or Cure

Penguin, 1994
260 pages, \$14.95

Patterned to forget your habit & grief/ for she who comes along is new child company/ bodes well the robust parallel, the song ...
from "Comes-with-a-Child"

Wondering which saint she counts upon her knees and kneels to — she hears and speaks as a lover, a mother, a teacher, an intellectual, and a poet, consistently blending scholarship with a tender heart screaming eloquently at the pain of awareness. She addresses ideas, events, and situations with a current of wisdom, talkative insight and lyrical precision.

My favorite writing in this collection is in the finely crafted poems which are addressed to people who are close to her as in "Early" for son Ambrose, "Comes-with-a-Child" for radiant Althea, "Replenish Making Twine If You Like" for Andrew, as well as those which explore the particular place of an emotion like "Travel Being Love" and "Net Life." "Her Night" and "Paean: May I Speak Thus?" are virtuoso renditions of the way Anne Waldman renders a delicate, severe edge on the page for texts which are clearly written for the voice.

The poetic essays: "Oppositional Poetics," "Muse," "Feminafest," "Go-Between Between" and "Noösphere" come significantly out of the "projective verse" tradition of Olson, Duncan and Howe. They provide the footnotes needed to un-

derstand the leaps the poet makes in poems as she quickly slices her way from epic style cut-up pieces ("When the World Was Steady," "From a Continuing Work in Spanish," "Shaman Hisses You Slide Back into the Night") into Objectivist style note-taking in the form of journals, letters and dream-based work ("Jack Kerouac Dream," "Blue Mosque" and "Managua Sketches") making way for political statements that are featured poems like "Curse," "Insurrection," "Abortion," "Environmental "Retreat," "Cut-Up Amendment 2," and "To the Censorious Ones."

Yet, in and of themselves, the essays lack the strength which comes through so strikingly in the later work "Book 2: Glyphs" (from *Iovis*). I am transported by the way the poems evade linear movement but wish for more continuity in the essays. The poems are skillfully scored so Anne Waldman's language turns naturally in upon itself obeying the powerful logic of metaphor and the quicksilver rules of *melopoeia* ... This same logic does not carry its weight in her prose although one could intuit them as early signs of a shift in how this poet deals with her intellect in her poems.

There is nothing disappointing about *Kill or Cure*. It serves the reader in the way it spans across Anne Waldman's writing life. The scholar could make sound theory by interrogating the levels this poet's writing achieves as she fearlessly experiments inside poetic forms while bringing poetry into countless public venues by virtue of her charismatic performance technique. For the tea time reader, this book offers what poetry should offer us—elevated circumstances to hold our difficult realities. To give an example from "Her Night": *Out of an eye comes research/ Her night: portrait & a description/ A night of knowledge was plainly hers/ Two ways of writing explain this/ There was her night/ And there was her night, a repetition ...* Katie Yates

On The Verge: Emerging Poets And Artists

Edited by Thomas Sayers
Ellis and Joseph Lease
Agni Press, 1994
139 pages, \$8.95

The editors of this collection make large claims for the work within its 139 pages. All of the work is well-constructed, yet I find myself wanting to yell, "Look out! Metaphors ahead!" However, there are poems that live here, ones where the

poet isn't trying to force the poem, leaving the work to exist as itself. In Jody Gladding's "Uncle," the poet mixes fear, sex and violence in the raw emotion of a child's memory: *You're not afraid are you/ big girl like you I was watching/ their horse mouth hay he and my father stall/ in the shadows I wasn't listening except to/ the horse's jaw except the way/ he reached for me yes/ I was afraid.*

In Paul Beatty's "That's Not In My Job Description" an African-American mail room clerk imagines himself a *distinguished ethnographer... today we pursue The Elusive True Nature of Whitey...* The satirical ground that Beatty covers could easily fall into the trap of martyrdom, which Beatty avoids by implicating himself as well as his white co-workers: *despite that i overslept/ and set a Guinness book world record for coming in late... pull off my/ sweater vest/ talking shit.*

In Laura Mullin's long poem "House" the self speaks in fragments of prose/silence/poetry: *Maybe the dark/ Green in the sides of the silvery/ Waves was a chance to look in,/ For once: the actual color:/ The lid of a box, opening up/ And shutting... / A glimpse,/ borne towards me and swept past,/ Of a possible house.* Darkness, water, and shapes create a violent tension that move the poem forward. Her attention to line breaks and space pays off.

The six pages from Harryette Mullen's "Muse & Druge" are filled with sensuous twists of language: *I'm in your sin... your heart beats me... a name determined by other names her ants underpants... some handsome man kind on the eyes/ a kind man looks good to me.* She tempts and seduces. She's bittersweet here. She's a muse and druge and she's herself. *She's a ramble in brambles...*

Maureen Adams "Gatherings (Episodes of Work)" contains many different voices, including one that addresses the city of Pittsburgh: *You. Pittsburgh. Rolling old-fashioned cigars. I find this picture in your shirt... These tables are full of you.* Or in the voice of a female mill worker: *I was so small doctor said Give Pug a chew of tobacco.* Or a camera-eye record of a seemingly ordinary woman's voice: *Tire and Rubber Co. A small woman was seen out there/ (a dressmaker and trained nurse) who might have/ passed anywhere (Akron, Ohio) in a crowd without/ notice, but was behind the recording of secret/ meetings through second-class mail.* This piece is a seance from the clothing mills. It's a battle piece from the war between workers and early American industry. Ghosts are here.

It is difficult to review anthologies because you're sure to overlook a piece that deserves mention. Nonetheless other no-

table poems include Elizabeth Alexander's "Four Rounds from Narrative Ali," Jill Gonet's "And Other Fantasy Lovers" and Carl Phillips' "A Mathematics of Breathing." Though it is true this collection is more diverse than most in terms of race and gender, whether it "gives a first experience of a world that is still ahead of most of the poetry written today" is questionable. Brenda Coultas

Michael Brownstein Self-Reliance

Coffee House Press, 1994
305 pages, \$12.95

In his latest book, *Self-Reliance*, Michael Brownstein recreates the now-vanished exuberance and tense energies of the late 1970s in Soho and the Lower East Side. In a sense this book seems to be precursor to his transcendental fable, *The Touch*, but far different in form and substance. It's a *bildungsroman* that takes the reader on Roy's passage through hallucination, paranoia and life on the edges of the street (at a time when New York was kinder to people at the margins than in these high rent days).

Roy is a transplanted Jewish Midwesterner, a journalist writing vacant copy for an ephemeral paper covering the "scene." He lands a big assignment, an interview with reclusive novelist Oliver Hartwell. Roy's character comes into focus during the course of this interview, when Hartwell goes into outrageous theories about aging, health and will-power, before making a devil's bargain with Roy to suppress most of the interview. After Hartwell disappears, Roy begins to obsess about the novelist and his life literally falls to pieces: he loses his job, his girlfriend Dana leaves him, and his response is to get high for days on end, staring out the window of his St. Mark's Place apartment.

Hartwell is fascinating and villainous: a looming cipher of a character who becomes, in effect, a huge void onto which Roy can project his paranoia and bewilderment at the turns his life has taken. Hartwell becomes the elusive, always out-of-reach grail of Roy's journey through New York; he and the mysterious slogan "OPW" recur at key turning points in the novel, punctuating the

stages of Roy's development.

Roy straightens himself out after hitting bottom as a dishwasher in an upscale Chinese restaurant run by gay twin brothers (Matsu and Quemoy) who are involved in the shifty world of Soho real estate. These characters, and the inhabitants of the Bronx nursing home Roy visits in his search for Dana, are brought to life with compassion and humor.

A thread running through early parts of the story is Roy's acquaintanceship with Cissy Wyatt, the daughter of rich art dilettantes from the Upper East Side, who becomes Roy's patron as the novel moves into an absurd, hilarious account of the origins of the performance art movement. She takes him to see the final work-in-progress of Jack Rio, an artist who is starving himself to death in the midst of a garbage-strewn apartment. After hearing of Jack Rio's death, Roy develops an idea of a tribute that starts out as part scam, but quickly takes on an extreme life of its own, and with its own irresistible result.

One of the great pleasures of this book is its expansiveness: it is almost encyclopedic in its vision of the city, and maximalist by comparison with Brownstein's recent books. His writing is as compelling in longer form as it is in his pared-down shorter works. The characters are well depicted, with their own quirks and individuality. Almost paradoxically, some of the most lucid and brilliant descriptive writing in *Self-Reliance* occurs in the sections where Roy is stoned or hallucinating. Brownstein's prose is simple, crystal-clear and direct, carrying the reader into the life of the streets, and into the darkness of the Lower East Side during the time period prior to the commercialization that altered the face of the neighborhood. Roy's drug-crazed descent into the underworld of the Second Avenue subway tunnel is haunting and particularly vivid. When Roy again encounters Oliver Hartwell, in the final passage, Brownstein orchestrates an ending that is as powerful and unsettling as the ending of *Country Cousins*. There is however, no paradox; the clarity of Brownstein's writing serves to emphasize the fact that *Self-Reliance* is narrated by someone who has survived the disasters and delusions he recounts, and has gained insight and perspective on his life. This book is not an exercise in nostalgia for earlier, more honest times, or a documentary history of early 1977, but a moving tale of a search for self-knowledge.

Henry Wessels

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To his friends
We will miss him

Benn Possett,
great heart, long-time angel &
facilitator of International
poetry
(co-founder of One World
Poetry) died this past
September in Amsterdam.
He was 49.
Simon Pettet

(Jordan Davis, continued from page 4)

York poets never existed.

The Room by Joseph Lease contains some poems that do interesting things with words. Lease end-stops his short lines in "Hammer" to brutally fix the flight down the page. Omitting the quotation marks around the phrase "light rain covers a field" in the poem "Words Like Rain," he gives the reader a great double-take—use or mention? visualize the field or visualize the words?—and then a triple-take—"When you say the words light rain covers a field you pray that something will happen but nothing does because nothing can." The poem ends bitterly but not in unremitting abstraction—"Who wants to be fifty and no health insurance, no family, no house; but it looks like that's the way things are heading." I won't give away the ending to "Michael Kolhaas," a masterpiece of hate and ambition.

The Green Lake Is Awake, the selected poems of Joseph Ceravolo, is without a doubt the best book of poems published this year. It doesn't get more immediate, sensuous, clear and mysterious than this: "Oak oak! like like."

The quarrel in the pages of *The American Poetry Review* between John Yau and Eliot Weinberger (and his defenders) seems to be over. For two cents I will say Weinberger's anthology is deeply inadequate (but not because Ezra Pound was a bad person).

The page from 1993 that had the most effect on 1994 was from Alice Notley's *Selected Poems*: "Sonnet" ("The late Gracie Allen..."). The page from 1994 most likely to affect 1995 is the first page of Goethe's essay on Shakespeare. Meyer Shapiro's *Theory and Philosophy of Art: Style, Artist, and Society* is worth the hardcover price. The Library of America edition of Sarah Orne Jewett would make an excellent present for someone.



Dear Family & Friends of Benn W. Posset,

Benn Posset was a cultural hero for me and many friends—encourager, confidante, manager of Poetry Festivals, Producer, tender caretaker,—a big guy with big heart and mind who made the world more intimate and heart-felt for me and many others—host in Netherlands, guest in my N.Y. apartment and at Naropa Institute in Boulder.

Many poets, Corso, Waldman, Burroughs, Orlovsky among others enjoyed his paternal care & attention and were glad to come to Netherlands more often than any country in Europe—

He is good luck & good karma for all, he made life easier for Art.

Allen Ginsberg
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books

Wendell Berry, *Sex, Economy, Freedom & Community*, Pantheon (201 East 50th St., NYC 10022, 1994). 173 pages. \$11.

Johannes Bobrowski, *Shadow Lands: Selected Poems*, New Directions (80 Eighth Ave., NYC 10011, 1994). 206 pages, \$10.95.

William Bronk, *Our Selves*, Talisman House (P.O. Box 1117, Hoboken, NJ 07030, 1994). 108 pages. \$10.95.

Daniel Gabriel, *Columbus*, Gnosis Press (P.O. Box 42, Prince St. Station, NYC 10012, 1993). 265 pages. No price listed.

Barry Hannah, *Ray*, Grove Press (841 Broadway, NYC 10003, 1994). 113 pages. \$10.

Dick Higgins, *Buster Keaton Enters Into Paradise*, Left Hand Books (Station Hill Rd., Barrytown, NY 12507, 1994). 68 pages. \$12.

Erica Jong, *The Devil at Large: Erica Jong on Henry Miller*, Grove Press, 1994. 327 pages. \$12.

Joseph Lease, *The Room*, Alef Books (Box 563, Fort George Station, New York, NY 10040, 1994). 47 pages. \$12.

Christopher Levenson, editor, *Reconcilable Differences: The Changing Face of Poetry by Canadian Men since 1970*, Bayeux Arts (4411 Sixteenth Ave. N.W., Suite 240, Calgary, Alberta, T3B 0M3 Canada, 1994). 164 pages. \$16.

Pamela Miller, *Mysterious Coleslaw*, Ridgeway Press (P.O. Box 120, Roseville, MI 48066, 1993). 55 pages. \$7.95.

Jim Nisbet, *Small Apt*, Thumbscrew Press (1331 26th Ave., San Francisco, CA 94122, 1992). 65 pages. \$8.95.

Ron Overton, *Hotel Me: Poems for Gil Evans and Others*, Hanging Loose Press (231 Wyckoff St., Brooklyn, NY 11217, 1994). 78 pages. \$10.

Alexei Parshchikov, *Blue Vitriol*, Avec Books (P.O. Box 1059, Penn Grove, CA 94951, 1994). Translated by John High, Michael Molnar & Michael Palmer. 57 pages. \$9.50.

Naomi Replansky, *The Dangerous World: New and Selected Poems, 1934-1994*, Another Chicago Press (P.O. Box 11223, Chicago, IL 60611, 1994). 95 pages. \$12.95.

Rillo, *Wolf's Clothing*, Left Hand Books. 72 pages. \$9.

David Shapiro, *After a Lost Original*, The Overlook Press (Lewis Hollow Road, Woodstock, NY 12498, 1994). 88 pages. \$12.95.

Stevie Smith, *Novel on Yellow Paper*, New Directions (80 Eighth Ave., NYC 10011, 1994). 252 pages. \$10.95.

Evelin Sullivan, *Games of the Blind*, Fromm International (560 Lexington Ave., NYC 10022, 1994). 207 pages. \$19.95.

Hannah Weiner, *Silent Teachers Remembered*, Sequel, Tender Buttons (c/o Lee Ann Brown, 54 E. Manning St. #3, Providence, RI 02906, 1994). 68 pages. \$7.95.

Bob Zark, *The Gates of Boombox Heaven*, Panic Button Press (POB 1905, Stuyvesant Station, NYC 10009, 1994). 93 pages. \$7.95.

chapbooks

Will Alexander, *Arcane Lavender Morals*, leave books (57 Livingston St., Buffalo, NY 14213, 1994). 16 pages. \$4.

Guy R. Beining, *Too Far to Hear*, leave books, 1994. 13 pages. \$4.

Sally Doyle, *Under The Neath*, leave books, 1994. 13 pages. \$4.

Michael Fournier, *The Jameson Street Elegies*, A Technology of the Sun Book (276 Spring St., Portland, ME 04102, 1994). 11 pages. No price listed.

Geoffrey Jacques, *Hunger and other poems*, Ridgeway Press (P.O. Box 120, Roseville, MI 48066, 1993). 29 pages. No price listed.

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Magazines

Kevin Magee, *Tedium Drum, Part II*, leave books, 1994. 12 pages. \$4.

Mike Topp, *Hotel Lambada*, Springboard Press, 1994. 14 pages. No price listed.

Joan Rerallack, *ICARUS FFFFALLING*, leave books, 1994. 22 pages. \$4.

Elena Rivera, *WALE; or, The Corse*, leave books, 1994. 30 pages. \$4.

Joe Ross, *Push*, leave books, 1994. 10 pages. \$4.

Thaddeus Rutkowski, *Sex-Fiend Monologues*, Venom Press (519 East 5th St., #17, NYC, NY 10009, 1994). 36 pages. No price listed.

Cole Swenson, *Walk*, leave books, 1994. 10 pages. \$4.

Big Fish Volume 2, #11 (Stephen Durst, editor; 1500

Wealthy SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506, September-November 1994). 47 pages. \$2. Includes "Tiny Bubbles in the Whine: Sex, Satan & Sissy Rock" by Ben Hamper.

Exquisite Corpse #49 (Andrei Codrescu, editor; P.O. Box 25051, Baton Rouge, LA 70894, 1994). 19 pages. \$3.50. Work by Pierre Joris, Gloria Frym,

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Hawaii Review Volume 18, #1 (Robert S. MacBeth, chief editor; Dept. of English, University of Hawaii, 1733 Donaghoo Rd., Honolulu, HA 96822, Spring 1994). Issue #40.

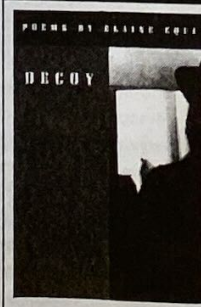
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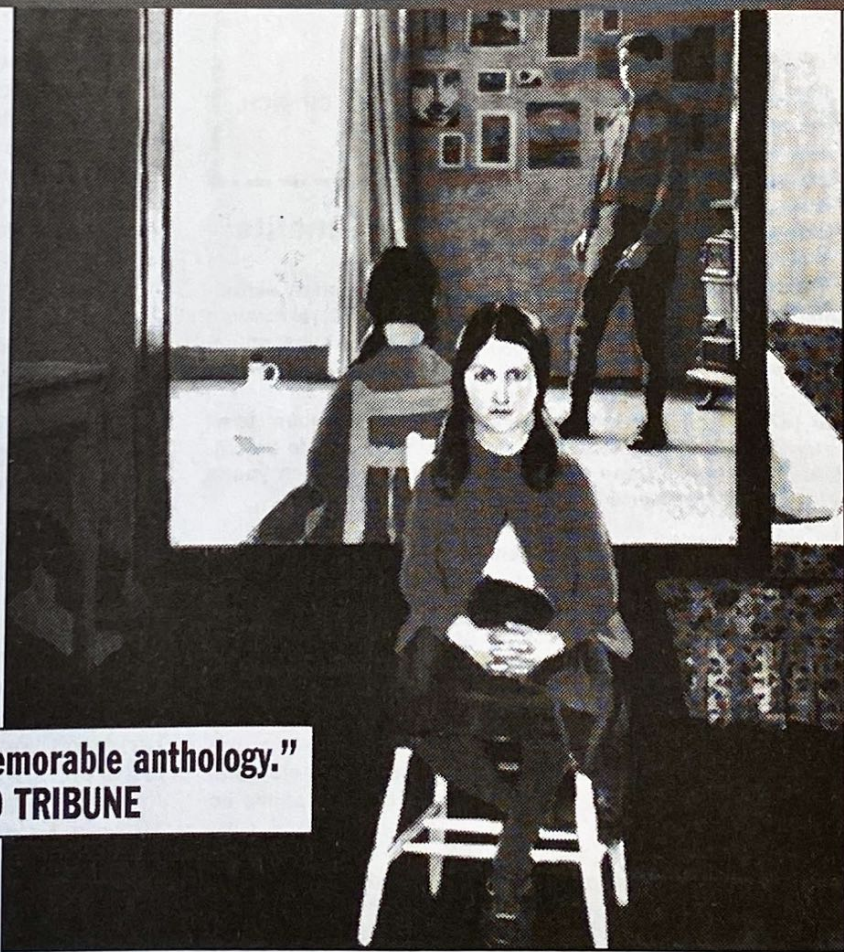


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