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Wch Way

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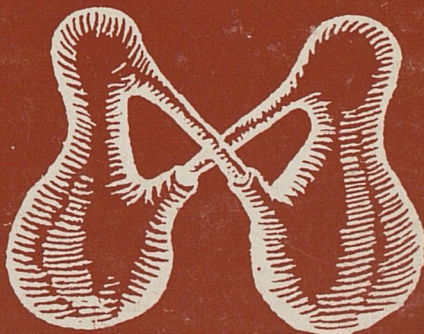
WCH WAY

2<sup>2</sup>,

spring

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WCH WAY 2<sup>2</sup> (to the Second Power) : spring 1976

edited by Jed Rasula

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made possible by more than who knows

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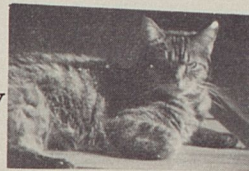
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HONORIFIX:

Mister Spunomi, visitor in perpetuity



Trooper Ruth, surviving sgt at arms:



← Sonja, under-secretary to chairman-of-the-border [seen here

local horse in imported storm



casting a vote, w/ meester Dem brow

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\*\*\*back cover Busby Berkeley, obit\*\*\*

## NOTES

Last may (1975) when I was first getting copies of *rapsodos* by TOM MEYER, he recommended the following: "I'd urge a fairly slow, sub-vocalized reading of it with a slight pause endstopping each line, slight but definite. A keeping in mind the kid reading his first primer." The punctuation entirely present in the breath, & the lines are measures of his, finding it written by himself, mine, finding my reading re-forging it at every measure, the brook, that is, the Talk. Tom's lovely book *THE UMBRELLA OF AESCULAPIUS* was published last fall by Jargon Press, Highlands, North Carolina, 28741.

BRUCE MCCLELLAND is currently following-up the *DRACULA POEMS* with a work called "Wolf Man". Bruce lives in the aither between NY & Philadelphia, dedicated to supporting the transit system between. A fine little poem called "Brackets", also written in July but not printed here, is available as a two-color broadside from Sixpack Press, 9 E. 16th St. NYCity, 10003.

KEITH MCMAHON, commonly known as Tony Spumoni, lives at the rim of New Haven's ghetto, is doing marvellous translations of Chuang Tzu. He has of late been associated with the Manglemind Lightningstriker Society.

SHERRIL JAFFE has recently published a "Sparrow" called *SQUAW VALLEY*, another chapter from the same novel the piece herein is part of: "I call the novel *THIS FLOWER ONLY BLOOMS EVERY HUNDRED YEARS*. It covers about 20 years of American life on vacation, and goes to such hot spots as Palm Springs, Hawaii, Mexico, and Santa Rita. It's not yet finished."

STEVE FREDMAN has been translating Lope de Vega recently; his translation of Lorca's *POET IN NEW YORK* is excellent: due to copyright problems is not generally available, but can be had from him on inquiry at 4075 23rd St. San Francisco, 94114. He is also the author of *SEASLUG*.

MICHAEL PALMER writes of the sequence published here called "The Meadow": "after Le Pré of Francis Ponge (only the title is from Ponge, and possibly some shift in my notion of a thing 'seen')."

CHUCK STEIN's elephants continue to thrash.

TED ENSLIN (admittedly not in this issue, but to make up for lack of note in the last) sells moatwater by the cord in Maine. A landslide piracy.

JED RASULA (me) come to the end of work on this issue on St. Patrick's Day, & rightly so, as "The Nature of Her Whatness" was written on Bloomington porch before languid dinner as house was besieged with Irish of various disorders, one of whom spoke the phrase that spoke the poem. The poem's only proto-irish.

GEORGE QUASHA has recently put together a book from which the poems herein are drawn, called *THE SECRET ART OF LOSING THE STORY*; the pieces here, along with the following 3, form the book: "Sex is a Species of Education", "The Erostatic Story of the Psychic Hitch", & "Giving the Lily Back Her Hands".

JACKSON MACLOW says "I'm sending you two poems from 1958, one of which, Haiku no Haiku, is probably one of my more 'important' (if any are) early chance poems. It's a haiku of word-haikus -- each of its 17 sections of 3 lines has the pattern of 5 words, then 7 words, then 5 words. The words for the word-haikus were drawn by some chance-operational method involving the telephone dial on the desk at the encyclopedia where I was then working (really Funk & Wagnalls, but I think it had another title for a while when Standard Reference Co. Supposedly published it): the words of the first 5 word-haikus came from the previous edition of the encyclopedia on which I was working, the words of the next 7 word-haikus were drawn from Louis Untermeyer's *Anthology of Modern American Poetry*, the words for the last 5 word-haikus were drawn from the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*. I don't remember the system involving the telephone dial, but it somehow gave me a page, line, & particular word for each place in each word-haiku. Some units aren't really words but word-like typographical units (numbers or initials or such)."

# Information Collage & Collate Energy Collective

MULTIVOCAL MOONTALK . PART TWO

: [after midnight, ante meridiem. continued from WCH WAY 2<sup>1</sup>: The Actinism]

Jim: It is a serious problem that we have to be preoccupied by such incredibly serious stuff. Pleasure can't be taken seriously because it can't appear in serious language without appearing silly.

David: I've thought about that a lot in this book. Why is he writing this book? That's normally a reasonable question. But I wonder, why is he writing the book? Because you can't write pleasure, let alone bliss.

Jim: Weeeeellllllll, there are certain kinds of pleasures. He's obviously not talking about THE literal sexual orgasm, unless he knows a lot of different readers than I know. He's talking about something that's like that somehow in somewhat of an essential way. And there are such pleasures. There are things that you can't get out of anything else. . . . I can imagine a situation in the future where, because of the respect for your individual personality, every single word uttered by everybody would be written down & printed out & in the universal library.

David: So far Richard Nixon is the only person that has really strived for that position. But if we're really going to do the psychopathology of everyday life, we'd need to get the stories that I've told too many times. And this would evolve through a series of other stories which I would tell and retell. One thing about our civilization is that we really don't encourage storytelling at all. We're really dumb about stories. We're taught instead to say something with a very quick punchline. Or a comment. It's very hard to talk.

If you read something like the *Symposium* it's a hard thing to determine if that has any correspondence with Greek rhetorical forms. But there's an ideal there which doesn't even exist in our society. An ideal such that, if people wrote down what you speak, it'd look like a very well organized and striking form.

Mike: Circum. Scription.

Jan: Jed, what about Robert Kelly in this case? It seems he's really against aphorisms and really likes the thought of discourse.

Jed: Well, earlier we were talking about how aphorisms are a totality of discourse in themselves. And one of the reasons why when you say the aphorism you can't really do anything about it, like Jim was saying, is, an aphorism is a complete and ultra-bonafide existence of a metaphor.

Jim: I don't look at it that way though. You're simply putting it in the box of being whole. I think it's more like somebody cracking a stick over their knee then showing you the two ends: there's no point in putting it together.

David: What you might do is a topology of aphorisms. I'm sure there are whole families in there--ones that break apart and show you the parts, and ones that do the opposite, break apart and show you the whole. Show you how the stick's put together, like some kind of Christmas morning put the toys together kind of game. What I'm more concerned about is how one *speaks* an aphorism, that's a very strange thing. Because there's some social context in which the aphorism is the natural form.

Jim: It's the social form of protest, for one thing. Maybe some people are detectable as the opposition only via the fact that they use aphorisms.

David: You could call Nietzsche the only ungerman German because he was the only one who could write an aphorism without putting a footnote on it.

Jim: What you're really showing is not that something's true or false, but *That* can be said & you can't bury it, fellows! ((referring to Jed)) He's really logocentric!

It's funny, nobody was logocentric before anybody got upset about the fact that you could be logocentric, and we invented logocentrism...

David: ...the day after *l'écriture!*

Jim: Did you ever hear anybody say the living truth was incarnated in the spoken word before about 10 years ago? Nobody ever thought to say something like that!

Jed: I've always taken that to be primary to my existence, even before I learned how to talk!

Jim: What we get is not the animal itself but the fossilized shit...

Jed: The fossilized shit of discourse.

Jim: We're much more mineral, though, than we think, I think.

David: Think about the spiraling shell as the Pythagoreans rejoice.

Jed: As the Pythagoreans read Joyce?

Jan: Numbers.

David: Environment.

Jed: Exponential environment?

David: Well, in between you have another environment, an interface environment, your shell.

Jim: The relationship between you and your environment.

David: It's the material that's formed after the wills have passed.

Jed: The environment of relationships *is* culture.

Jan: Culture. Ossified.

David: Between two wills. Is not as yet a thing. It's only the shell.

Jim: There's a number between one & two that's not one & a half. That's the origin of all things in heaven & earth. How's that? That'd be fun to do, straighten out Heraclitus. I've always wanted to be able to do that. Either you accumulate the charisma or the luck, and suddenly you just...

Jan: The family.

Jim: Is this the beginning of something? Who knows? I mean, that's written about afterwards.

Jan: Alchemy.

David: Waiting for that teleology.

Jed: Tediology? Aetiology, the science of what you eat.

Jim: Teleology's about the most sunk kind of thing. I could easily put together a thing that for 200 years would have a quotation for every 10 years that would say something like "now that we've finally realized that the concept of organism was higher invented than the concept of mechanism", said in 1780 1790 1800 1810 1820 1830 1840 1850 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 right up to today where you can get some top thing that says wooooe, organisms are on top of everything! It just kills me it's like it's been discovered every two minutes for 300 years. They must have had such a wonderful time, they were so sure they were right! What a groove!

David: Those *philosophes!* Like Willie Loman out there with his shoeshine and his smile in the philosophic world: "Here I am I'm Roo Soe!! I can: invent a new musical symbolism for you, I can talk about biology, I can teach you about geography, politics, society, language, I can write novels I can make you cry I can tell you about breast feeding I can do anything."

Jed: He's getting it, & we're giving it. Ok mister chairman, since you're sitting in the head.

*((proto-intractable voice on the other track of the tape sez: SO STILL & quiet that her motion blushed at herself. That she in spite of nature, years, of credit, country, everything, should fall in love with what she feared to look on? It is a judgement maimed and most imperfect that would confess perfection so could err against the rules of nature and should be driven to find out practices of cunning hell why this should be?))*

Jim: I'm sorry, the door's usually closed on the head.

David: Pleasure's often pleasurable *in spite* of something that happened before. I'm sure we can all think of many instances.

Jed: Like after the plague.

David: I'm just affirming a common human experience of saying "God, how'd I ever get into *that* one?"

Jim: In other words, you really *don't* know the birthdate of Baudelaire's stepfather?

David: It's so awful that Baudelaire got buried with his stepfather. . . . You want to know what pleasure is?

Jim: No, I don't expect to get an answer to that. I just want to know if pleasure is a basic category of human existence, is it something basic or is it something epiphenomenal?

Jed: Look at this, this plant is continual orgasm here. What a phenomena!

Jim: Continuous orgasm is a contradiction in terms.

Jed: Not at all.

Jim: Are you telling me it makes sense to talk about Eternal Orgasm??

Jed: Makes sense? It's consequential!

Jan: Whew, four men talking about...

David: Well,...

Jed: Wells, I wasn't talking about wells.

Jim: Who wants to know, what the hell is an orgasm? *((to David))* You associate everything with ivy with the orgiastic. Don't you do this twisted thing where you associate everything you read with reality, and you actually think of orgasms as the kind that you in your palmy days have experience? (& elsewhere too.

David: And sometimes in my palm, but that's another question. But that isn't *the question*.

Jim: But why isn't that the question?!

Jed: You're talking about palm trees?

David: Nimble symbolism uncaught, uncaptured, by microphone!

Jim: The moving bellbeam moves, and having writ moves on.

David: The not-meaning between bliss & pleasure.

Jim: The tape-recorder's as much a book as anything else.

Jed: It's the tools that make you want to do the job, is that what we're talking about?

Jim: It's not like books are an epiphenomena brought about by the fact that people are apart. It's a misleading fact, because books are absolutely essential above & beyond the spoken voice, which is dandy, it just isn't the whole goddam game.

Jed: Are you talking about *topos* by any chance? "The *topos*, the ruthless topic rules the life of language always comes from some place. It is a warrior *topos*."

Jim: It's interesting that in Homeric times the two things people were always bragged up for were first of all cutting everybody's heads off with swords and the second was speaking well.

David: Nietzsche knew that. It's the double *agon*.

Jed: Something in this conversation which we stretch little grammatoblia's before from time to time. He says "the text is a fetish object and this fetish desires me." Come to phenomenal Indiana! Up to your elbows in small change, by golly!

Jim: Your name's really Bouvard & mine name's really Pecuchet.

David: Hey, Ray Shershe, would you passè le Shtrohh's? *((pausing over a gobletful))*

Well, but there aren't

Jed: more horizons to get lost behind.

Jim: Why is it that a bunch of people suddenly become interested in pleasure? My impression is that it's suddenly become "A Topic". By some strange law, how? But he's been around for a long time.

Jed: That's such a spatial way of looking at it. Are you trying to plagiarize yourself? (which is what spatiality is).

Jim: I'm trying to, but I don't think it's humanly possible. . . . Human history from the point of the tapeworm would certainly look different. Like, it was a good thing when the so & so tribe gave up eating Moslems so they could eat pork again, it was a new opportunity for our pork tapeworm brethren. And they rose to a brilliant culture of upsetting bowels and flourished for 300 years until the introduction of bla bla.

*((lengthy Aside while the dissolving Gathered))))))  
((attain parasputter))))))))))))))))))))))))))))))))))))))*

Jim: Apparently it's not really possible to talk about THE PLEASURE OF THE TEXT.

Jed: We're a pleasurable text.

David: It's like necrophilia.

Suzy: *(just entering)* oh I think I've heard enough.

Jed: You'll hear it out here if you heard it in there. It's like waking up from a dream and finding out the multilogue still continues: you're still getting talked to by all those dozens of you. I think I get talked to by about 380,000 people a night. All simultaneously. You're dropping your pencil.

David: Oh shit.

Jed: What are you doing, cutting an ice cube with it?

Mike: What do you see as the difference, as he sees it, between pleasure and bliss, in a functional manner?

Jim: Bliss & pleasure? I'm pretty simple minded sometimes. I guess I'm not a literary critic. Or a poet. It's really true, there has to be a place for you to find a no-place. Isn't it true, let's say, that orgasms are different from being just pleased with something? Drastically?

Mike: Oh sure.

Jim: You wanted some other kind of distinction? I think that's what he's talking.

Suzy: *Is it a matter of will? I think that has something to do with it. That there is no will.*

Jim: Pleasure is something I do, something I'm responsible for and can give myself. Whereas there's something kind of "good bye" about bliss.

Jed: Doors are complicated; keys are complicateder.

Jim: ...surrender to the text. One version of it, to make sense out of it, is to say that it's becoming passive. But that's not what you mean.

Suzy: *No no no.*

Jed: It's a mosaic reminiscence.

Suzy: *It's like extreme relaxation. Which is not passive, I think.*

Jim: As far as I can tell, it's exactly the same for men as it is for women, really. There's a moment of surrender involved. I'm not sure that's what you meant, that pleasure is after all what you are in charge of? That doesn't threaten the limits of being an ego, that doesn't demand that radical surrender at all.

Jed: Surrender to the neglects of living in civilization. That at least is what the gospel says.

David: Whose?

Jim: Being pleased has got a lot to recommend it over being ecstatic, you know.

David: What is he really doing but Apollonian and Dionysian, being & becoming?

Jed: No, I don't think it was like that at all. Or it's just that my experience doesn't draw that distinction, so I didn't see that there.

David: Isn't Dionysus the Cult of the Come & the Apollonian the Cult of the Continuum

Jim: Very little is so well suppressed or repressed as talking about orgasm. Can you think of anything before 1800 let's say except *D'Alambert's Dream* by Derrida, or Diderot, that mentions orgasm?

Jed: Sure, Elizabethan theatre, that's one of the things that makes it that most remarkable theatre! The mode of theatre at that time was a mode of working out in tragic or comic enterprise a theatre of events whereby you transport the energy of orgasm. Definitely. Things like *'Tis a Pity She's a Whore*, that's got great lines, come into my room like imagine weasels running through us.

David: See, my most firm belief at the present moment, one I'm most concerned with and willing to quote and willing to throw at any moment any time is, difference precedes identity.

Jed: That's a lot to grow. Which is to say I guess it's akin to going-to-be. How big they get in the womb! That's amazing! Wow! No wonder about the orgiastic character of people!

David: That's a problem, that each sex obviously identifies itself as the entire of the species. In other words, differentiation always occurs before identity. Not that a name ever exists and then relates to other names, but rather that we...

Jed: Everything is deeper and everything is longer.

David: Every name comes into existence only through a differentiation. This is not that.

Suzy: *(to Mike)* That's sort of what you were talking about in Nik being able to narrow things down now.

David: But it's not like, most people think we have a series of concepts that add up to unity.

Mike: No no not at all. It's really an approximation process.

Suzy: *Something I've been thinking about lately, and I've forgotten who said it, he said "we don't have to know that time is infinite, we only need to know that a moment can be infinitely divided up."*

Jed: *((howling))* Wow, you really whipped that out on us this hour of the morning! That's enough to make me want to stand up and play volleyball right now! . . . I would say that the act of writing is a fertilization of certain modes of the air that ignite and are methods of transport into what would otherwise be purely circumstantial, but which becomes synonymous with a method of discovering intangibility engrossing itself with its linguistic obsessions.

\* \* \* \*

David: The difference is always a matter of degree. I mean, we are like aardvarks since we're both vertebrates. And lots of other things. In a world of vertebrates we and aardvarks can be a legitimate face-to-face. But in other categories like history of philosophy the work of aardvarks takes up relatively limited space. Like none at all.

Jim: Reminds me of a poem by Martial about a piece of wood that was so happy because it was decided to make it into a god instead of a chair.

Suzy: *It's false differences, it's false degrees. The whole stringing of things out into degrees is something that is just divisive.*

David: There are two kinds of differences. One involves differences on a single scale, and another says that it's not on the same scale. That's a really crucial difference. And I've never gotten into it before this second, but I really understand it now. Don't dismiss it though because it's important.

Mike: What's the stance you're going to take though, then? Work towards...

David: It's trying to keep your mind straight that there can be such things.

Mike: So you want to maintain the tension, rather than dissolve it?

David: Let's take a case. In our culture everything is in differences of scale. Then to talk about any kind of difference between scales is nonsense because nobody's going to hear you unless you cover your words up with a bunch of...

*Suzu: I think it's a matter of intent. I mean, if you conceive of the difference as being fructifying, then it's perfectly well to recognize that the differences exist.*

David: But every word you write about that topic in that vein will be read by people who will read "difference" as being inferior or superior and will put it in that category.

*Suzu: But why are they always identified with the same person, or thing, or group? It could be that differences exist and are interchangeable.*

David: It could be even more radical though: that differences exist and they're *not* interchangeable. That they have nothing to do with each other, that they're totally different projects thrown forth in space, the male and the female, & for certain planes, for certain points. And for other categories they share the same categories, because categories exist only after thought, not before. I'm saying what if you thought about things that way? There are two kinds of difference. That male and female in these places are different and in these places are not, for the same reasons.

Jim: I wonder if women aren't in some sense objectively worse off than they were in the 19th century?

Mike: No.

Jed: Depends on what hands are for. "The extreme localization of pleasure in each distinct body." "Textual pleasure inevitably transcends interest."

David: But in dealing with history, as soon as you say "better than" or "worse than" that's the option with which you're dealing.

Jed: "Pleasure of complexity *is* the text."

Jim: Well, sometimes game theory intervenes, and I wonder who's got X & what the payoffs are? And it's really coldblooded that way. It seems to me it's a time to adjust to a situation where it's a relative equilibrium. It's funny, though, because in so many areas and so many ways it's hard to see the difference between men and women at all. It doesn't make any sense to talk about men and women being different in the slightest in terms of needing this and finding out the truth value of anything. It's the same game no matter who plays it.

Jed: Oh, I think it's absolutely essential all the way through. Women are beyond the reach of your mentality if you're a man.

David: Yeah, in some ways. In some ways not. Cause it's like this; take any kind of differentiation you want to make.

Jed: What do you think sexual pleasure is other than the lack of overlap??

David: And yet, there *is* overlap.

Jed: The overlap is what is called "social network" in which people move.

David: Look: if you believed that the maximization of the lack of overlap was the crucial thing you'd most likely be fucking sheep or fucking invertebrates or fucking plants. Very few people look for... Maybe some erotic geologists do, but in general most people simply do not look for maximization of overlap. No, not that, *minimization* of overlap.

Jim: I don't know about that.

David: You want difference and you want identity; that's the constant paradox of dealing with someone of the opposite sex.

Jim: That's why the basic love poem is "You are identity & difference to me,"

Jed: You know, Barthes's talking about the novel as a highbred horse, it seems to me. He almost says, I would think, that the texture of attention--that is, the freedom a novel allows in reader interruption and inattention--is, you know, I would almost take him to be suggesting there that that's what makes fiction popular, because it allows people to be lazy. And a lot of people tend towards that, it seems. But that's a far grade below the process.

David: Pleasure pleasure pleasure: I think of pleasure and I think of *A Thousand and One Nights*. There's a world that constantly presents you with images of pleasure.

Jed: Pleasure is experience. It's not an image. He talks about "image reservoir" but I don't think that's what he means by pleasure. . . . Listen to this great description of the enemies: "fools of all kinds, who decree forclosure of the text and of its pleasure, either by cultural conformism or by intransigent rationalism (suspecting a 'mystique' of literature) or by political moralism or by criticism of the signifier or by stupid pragmatism or by snide vacuity or by destruction of the discourse, loss of verbal desire." The beyond-&-alongside conflict.

Jim: I have a lot of faith in the prevalence of lists: I mean, *that's* a list. Bang bang bang bang.

David: Like Foucault's Chinese encyclopedia à la Borges.

Jed: Where is that in Borges?

David: That is interesting, because I've asked several people & I've never found it.

Suzy: *Maybe he created it, just as Borges creates...*

David: But if he did create it, he didn't create a Foucaultian phrase, he created a Borgesian phrase. And that is unlike Foucault.

[editorial interpolation: I offer the reward of a free subscription of WCH WAY to anyone who can clear up this matter for us]

Jim: Lists are fun to read. It's interesting that it takes these avant-garde guys a tremendous amount of nerve to write a list, a sort of fictional list, even though it used to be a regular part of Renaissance literature to tally things in lists. In a way it's like a recorso, to what I don't know since I wasn't there.

Suzy: *Anyone want some honeydew?*

*((upstart rhapsodic eruption))*

Suzy: *I didn't expect a chorus. Would you like a plate?*

David: Yes.

Suzy: *And a spoon?*

David: Yes. That too. Either one. Mmm mmm.

Jed: You need plates & matches & towels?

Suzy: *Since you're up.*

Jed: I don't even know where up is.

Jim: Is there another slice of that?

Jed: The other slice is the whole history. This is supposed to represent time, and we still believe in it. It seems to me this represents nothing more than a napkin.

Jim: This is a really sensual honeydew! Are they all like that out here?

Suzy: *I don't know, I just picked this one up & sniffed it.*

David: I never had one before that had hands & feet & all kinds of other things too what a honeydew! . . . You might as well kill the tape while we finish the honeydew.

Jed: No, I think I'll fiddle with the tapes & doctor it while it goes along.

Suzy: *Good slurps, well!!*

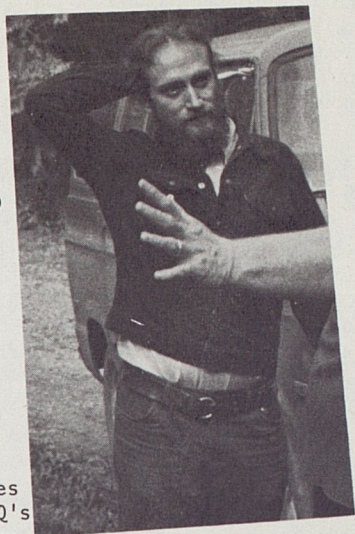
Mike: You think there's a possible bliss in honeydew?



# WHAT WERE THESE 2 talking about in September ?

## JULY?!

In September 1975 these 2 were reading poems to each other: as he to the right → (mister Quasha) read, he to ← the left (mister Rasula) noticed peculiar similarities between his own work & Mr. Q's



in addition to certain references to pregnancy, the Child, etc. Asking when the said work was written, Mr. Q replied July. Although neither Mr Q's nor Mr. R's poems referred to appear here -- for reasons unknown to them both -- the occasion prompted the editor of this volume to

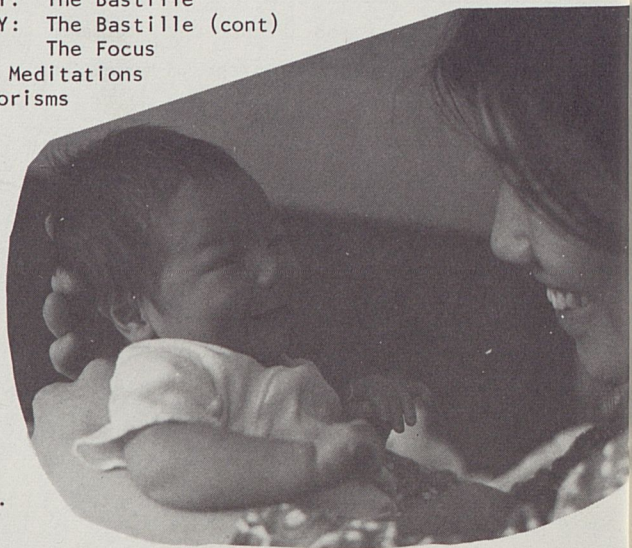
search out synchronicities on a larger scale, devoting the bulk of the 2nd half of this double issue of WCH WAY to work written in July. The work having been gathered and now here set forth, it will be the reader's business ("if he can be said to have a business") to trace parallels, calculate recurrences, asking himself or herself or them selves their own answers to such questions as How many times do such names as Pelikan, Artemis, Heidegger, appear, & in the work of how many of these authors?

In the pages that follow, Kelly's Texts lead into July, Quasha's poems lead back out: all the work between is of July in its dominant contours. To give a specific accounting of chronology, of the pieces actually dated this line is revealed:

June 28-July 4	MEYER: "so it was to the Lady of Poetry"
July 5	McCLELLAND: World of the Vampires
July 7	KELLY: Theometry
July 9	MEYER: notebook entries
July 10	RASULA: The Nature of Her Whatness
July 13	KELLY: The Bastille
July 14	KELLY: The Bastille (cont)
July 14	The Focus
July 14-17	QUASHA: Slow Meditations
July 21	QUASHA: Somaphorisms
July 23	McCLELLAND: Drac 18
July 28	Drac 19
July 31	Drac 20

the Significance of the Child in July is that Nik Dembrow, chairman of the border was born July 10; 3 days later my wife Suzy found she was pregnant, yielding → *Sonja Rasula* March 9 1976. This present issue spans these two children: the future *is* their hands, cast of this present, dedicated to them both.

((to add ripples to the porridge, both Mr. Quasha & Mr. McClelland were born in July, also.



# Tom Meyer

παρῶδος

light moves  
the carpet  
unto an  
orient

itself  
new to  
that pattern  
sun

's laid upon

wherein (for  
it is a kind of *-scape*  
this discourse  
we attend  
however fleet  
a doe

our *terms* would  
apprehend  
appears  
whose brindled

*fawn*

quicken the pulse

she leads us out

from under

that speckling  
made to seem  
no more than leaf  
her flesh demands  
she guard

in such light  
as breaks

our eyes  
her leap dis-

covers

whereof we are allowed

the clean line  
sarvis bloom  
shows Spring as  
mounting  
a slope

with both a lushness  
& fragility  
we intimate in speech  
as *pronouns*  
when relative

then  
we come to speak  
into ourselves

of where did those before us flow  
but from

the tunes  
they overheard

thus a cardinal  
tricked in  
noon  
mirrored on  
the panes  
will fly

headlong at  
& stunned  
fall from

dogwood

hardly & only there

so Thought  
takes heart

stock of itself

led  
by what it had  
in mind

dumbly

at first then  
dawning

*voiced*

the catbird  
tiptop a tulip  
poplar  
meows

what gut frets  
the lute Thought  
plucks

be it that  
gathering  
we are the Memory  
of

not what we want  
but can't  
forget

yet ride on  
or is  
itself a  
dappling

effect

light disordered  
that its flux  
lift & float  
above

the patterns' ground  
which first attended  
comes as song

or *on* or *in*  
the rustles of  
those *particles*  
we tongue  
unheeded

or obey  
elsewhere  
as a grid

what we talk of  
trellises

perhaps to train  
support

of what we have  
yet to talk

we speak of

if what we mean  
attains itself reflexed

of whom  
all goings are out

in that we know its  
affect

although less  
no less than  
its now  
coming

to mind

itself  
a drift

we think

what then allows  
an instrument  
attunement

does a finger hold the string  
& another strike

to ring the air the ear  
cocked would interfere

disposed alert  
even to that note  
unvibrant

still

pleasing even as initial  
shape  
delights in changes

sound's deepest joy  
redounds in silence broken

for we flow  
through unbroken sleep

on an order all we wake disorders

are we at or  
the mercy of  
each disturbance in  
what we speak our minds at odds  
to

or can the lute vessel just the air  
it breaks

can the poem  
shed all but the words  
depleting all but that lushness  
left of

no tree seen but a wood  
no wood but a green  
& it no more than leaf

led there exhausting  
each order we wake until the least  
attends the next  
it allows

here the words yield us no riches  
but their own

themselves the bowl & finger  
the string struck

the notes

the notes

that one the next the rest

let the fool alone assume a singular

what is it the words awake  
without a recollecting

surely no purity  
nor harmony

or hiding of plurality

it is *love* we'd coax into this song

I have left off saying it  
more than once  
for fear the weight  
*love* itself sounds  
might overwhelm  
the tune

just as above  
I struck a towhee  
from the poem  
which nesting in the boxwood  
by the kitchen door  
broke forth  
when I walked out  
into day

is it the fingering  
that song begins

then brings forth  
its true discourse

preparing us  
with nothing but  
the love  
-liness at hand

reading Plato's *Phaedo*  
it struck me too  
this morning like a towhee  
how  
only after talking out the issue  
could Socrates allow  
this earth a nature  
no geographer depicts  
& speak of it  
permitted in that moment  
no authority  
more or less than  
this

*someone told me*

this *earth*  
we come to  
forms  
in speech

palentropic

when utterance can  
say no more than

*tell us*

& collapses in upon  
an inward burden  
leading out  
which gravitates

can we say we see this speaking  
& mean we hear its shape

an earth actual of  
detail  
exacting local  
weathers

tongue  
though dry  
the agitation  
its cleaving  
would rasp

arresting in the wood a model for  
its ceaseless witnessing

had I not looked up  
then & seen  
the lady cardinal  
on the sill  
my mind still might ache

for moister regions  
to investigate

rather than the olive  
dusk over the red  
she exacts  
at my window

both  
equally evident

an olive & the red  
when she perches  
near her mate

in dogwood  
even whiter in this threatening light  
that at its height  
a week ago  
although almost now  
fully leafed

against a storm  
gathering cloud  
west of here

*thinking* then not *time*  
binds this world  
an earth of which  
the Great Year ends  
going up in flame

we can imagine  
*holocaust*  
yet this *rain*  
letting up came down  
in cataracts  
report yet  
dimly intimates

as a film in sheets  
flowing on the glass  
until it takes getting up  
& going out  
to see fog's  
closing in

we talk about speaking as if words  
allowed an actual ground  
& utterance were a familiar pattern  
when in fact we hazard this  
that our talking only lately  
speaks

at an edge to *time's* terms  
& *mind's* genesis

for it is as I was told within  
the great belly of a bear

that we drift toward  
the very fire

our feeling for the formal  
fans a fever fed on  
the impermanence of us ever  
actualizing any  
patterned order

even to the eye  
turning out  
in particles

which themselves obey  
an order breaking  
into us against

that flow cast in waves  
which is both the same & separate from  
sight

the car we call *getting there*  
the road or way  
*where*

the odd run  
north & south the even  
east & west

thus we thumb a rule  
which certains

the insect of us  
at least in that

for ants it goes sorted such & such  
a this for Psyche who  
someone told

go

as I allowed *love* we must  
her

an engine bent on accidents

as if behind the tissue syntax  
moves along

we interrupt  
perchance the dance

men attend in common  
or turning from

imagine a viscosity  
to what concerns them most

the Greeks before us  
limed in their effort  
talked about ἀρχή  
oiling their mind  
to speak of λόγος

& any man now  
having the card  
can show you  
that logo Arco uses

need Psyche sit  
dumb mid ants  
her work bids do  
this it must have done

or are they now  
those insects  
part of that  
we give  
this girl's name

just as I am often  
driving  
certain that  
those distances I've come  
exert a lessening upon  
such as these that lie  
ahead

is our talk its own preparation  
& Psyche's agony a factor  
accidental to  
but the morphosis of  
whatever viscera  
discourse  
slung inside a telling  
interferes

is that the lushness we seek in leaf  
like Psyche  
certain our resources  
gleam in lanolined flocks

& the pastures they graze  
stretch all outside  
as far as an eye can go  
& into the wood  
wherein detail  
urges explicit attention  
to the fiber light greens

& men now  
suffer that dream that older  
minds fought  
each night  
within the precinct

of god whom  
they knew from the clearest  
they could utter

in their minds  
sun

upon confused lids  
shut to  
the only discernable  
earth their tongues  
had terms with

& that inner earth  
dark beyond  
the edge of where  
inroads  
've begun

gains us ground

we interfere this flow we talk

when we'd speak on

that drift geography spends

syntax on

to apprehend an earth

manifest in accidents

if such talk allows speech

then let Psyche interrupt

once she broke so lightly love's command

she had no earth but what she happened on

at which point an accident

of this discourse

shares a single axis

whereat she then earth drift

to break a same ground

all day  
it took this talk

led again  
to *love*

to utter in  
its own terms

a discourse  
which permits

me the ground of  
all I care for

or would be  
at home to

as husband of  
that lawn my flesh

tends in such yearning  
& my mind

would be an earth of

& thought its world

for now we are I hazard  
where

deserted places green  
& that which like the ants

in silence answered Psyche's need  
makes our thought

flow  
as honey from  
a comb  
the swarm  
now silent  
in our talk  
had laid away  
that  
we might come  
to articulate  
that hum  
in speech

neither loss nor

recovery

either

discovery *of*  
in *love*

contains both

thereof  
that randomness pertains in capacities  
no man obtains

except he keep his ear blind  
against even the least means  
withal

then accept as random  
it not  
in particular  
important

yet our weightless talk has gravity  
because we tend to  
shape

I begin to feel  
where in me  
recollecting  
goes

say of a snapshot  
taken age 2

the former body's image  
lodges in a region  
under lungs

has the unformed  
come home  
will it rest or  
precipitate

talk's attempt at  
retort

*id est*

*puer*

unto itself  
of & through  
not itself

but that in

that's him

glints the sun on  
sinkwater

when I lift my wet  
hand out

& wipe my eye

we would offer that as  
the specific *christos*

exactly what we'd ride on  
then now

continued

bearing

exhausts

that is  
our flex  
& plenum

veer

the air the ear's fluid hesitates  
as aural here possesses an intent  
above a mere harmony or  
an order whereof  
one word led  
in concord with a last

precedes to waste our talk  
not our words  
for although they wear out  
in such apparent  
pleonasms  
the quarternary under this  
pleistocene  
has yet yet may  
fail to provide  
any context  
other than its own depletion

which itself supposes  
dry stretches in an otherwise  
verdant vegetation  
having an exact but un-  
realized use

of more import than the simple  
working out potentials  
in projected lack

possibly this speech  
held back  
allows men's talk  
its orient

a pomp  
in the moment  
far more fair  
than that occasion  
we'd prepare  
seizes us

as chrestomathic  
beyond  
even the song  
our in-  
tending  
intimates

is numinosity  
mind's nodding off  
which distracts us from what we're  
really at

say in leaf  
-'s green  
so that

nothing we know  
but its ground

figures any ablation  
apart from god  
so moved me

splendoring this wood  
each branch in  
bore  
numerous lamps

whose beams  
wounded my eyes

which bent on closing  
could not extinguish  
the fire

still treed

in this part of me  
I carry daily away  
without

& enflamed  
suffer that fever I lack  
in letting slip  
from view

what burnt  
of itself  
completely

drawing me unto its white heat  
as a source

utterly consumed  
intact

romance then attends the poem  
moving the slightest intent  
in figures of song

fictions  
worked out in words strike their ayre  
against the sounding board

& seek in leading  
deferring one to another  
the heart

this is an *entheos* this being led  
& entering

the margins

thought binds

leafing a book whose text

explicates

literally an  
unfolding in the eye  
traverses each line's  
disclosing

those matters brought  
from shadows  
faintly held

until attention ransoms them  
& they usher

an obvious  
clock a record  
ended before I realized  
my reading  
contains me

I have been allowed  
details

the eyes  
lift a moment  
off the page

print enacts my lips' hushed  
movement  
sowing behind the plough  
my mind drives  
song's grain  
& doubling back  
parallels  
its former effort

not to understand  
any of it

then find jolted my mind trailed  
off

what have I missed the meaning of

this sentence  
reread  
which makes sense now

or a germ it let me go to  
lost except it scatters

infecting my attention  
trained til then on  
line's bound

what I intimate has  
or is about to  
cloud

a *time* my reading  
verges on

an *ever*  
any text allowed  
'd yield

as if trees  
long neglected  
grew  
& blocking our view  
hid  
the mountain  
we knew laid in autumn  
an horizon  
behind this  
we accept  
in leaf's  
cutting another line  
the eye learns  
in spring  
as earth's

& we get use to it  
or used by it  
because it never  
in the moment offered  
ends

coming to  
mundanely  
in so easy an occupation  
that once mastered it's called  
second nature

this reading  
habit makes almost autonomous

yanked back  
my hand rescues  
how much of the flame  
its fingers entered

that fire I heard a bird in  
& said I heard a bird in

still burns beyond that talk  
interrupted by my words

what I said passed as fancy  
unreal  
apart from evening  
out of an ordinary

yet the song came  
& could be read  
as it broke in time

just as my saying so  
broke into the company

for me it was obvious  
but those gathered there  
took my words

as an over-  
imagining of an  
event

thus we lose ourselves  
refusing to rescue  
the obvious

& recoil from the flames  
presence ignites

placing earth simply  
between us & what it  
indicates

an earth of nothing  
other than  
itself  
implicates a second  
nature

we'd read the text of  
as our pathology  
that men might come to see  
themselves suffer  
diseases

nothing on the  
earth they  
know can cure

until the words  
they feel  
troubling them  
are read  
within

for those words  
laid before us  
are lexicons the

dicta we hold  
ourselves  
common in

I've here tried  
to suffer only words  
coming themselves

to meet their intent  
as I would a romance

& enter upon  
this  
led by them  
to that silent  
ground  
they are root of

which is also the page  
yet to turn

an endless song  
among whose notes  
the obvious  
uprises

& my reading  
rains upon

from its dryness a bird  
in wood  
fires  
her call

& turns me  
away  
from this

there maintains  
the little we have to say  
much speech

which perhaps our tongue  
has as native &  
the rest we are

resists  
knowing only  
a husk

when sloughed unseen  
detatches

& an air  
that complexity lapses

refuses root forsaking flower  
to find least false  
of talk on growth  
the fruit

that passion flesh dictates  
gives way not rise  
to inmost  
uttering

resemblance must release  
& has no bearing on

in sound perhaps a shape suffices  
image enough when suffering  
us within an urge we honor  
tending an articulate use  
we must most need

the meaningful  
disruption of  
an otherwise also meaningful  
mode

we are the modulation the ground  
we figure

exceeds

thus I set myself  
against such densities  
this foliage

out about a month already  
exacts

attempting refusal to my first answer  
or confusion of its leaf  
for what I feel  
of the source but hardly a substance  
this urge presumes

does the matter at hand  
engender an infanta  
each outer image we propose  
prevents us abrogating

& so holds actual the possible  
life which offers its opus  
a lost dual

this text before me  
in a language yielding  
a few inscriptions & four  
lines only the last of which  
approximates anything I know  
something about  
giving a horse  
sugar

as if its author found  
suddenly a use  
for his tongue beyond  
what he reads  
cut  
in stone

& that that use arise  
in overhearing  
then putting down  
an order  
least inscribable  
with his effort  
to read what he knows writing means

it tells him nothing of god  
this horse this sugar  
of any man whose loss  
ends life

this giving's not that taken

it does not mean anything he does not know  
except a sudden  
care for these words

to know beyond that is to know nothing

but an irritation

the clarity

promised of this brook

is muddied

by those who come here

& wade

uncontent to see how

from the bank

all intent

should

flow

or if this ceases irritating  
anticipation disciplines  
the loss  
one day  
limpidity's return  
rights

as if it weren't enough  
assuming  
as if it weren't enough

assumed  
what we reached with

consonant with all we find  
enough itself means

an inmost brook of me  
takes sun played on  
trousers tossed in  
a chair at  
the window

for this cortical richesse  
synapses map a  
seine the branches jut  
snags

as it was eyes  
on a road home  
from Siena

late summer two years ago  
that last I felt  
against such loss  
strange  
among those hills

& what but recently arises  
first in aching  
rouses

the soaring hawk  
or a road to saying  
that integrity  
lifted like the host  
is somehow  
also light through

these leaves I turn  
from

to a wingspan held  
above them

it often appears so  
& simply

what we inhale  
heals

blessing via  
complexities  
any notice  
bestowed  
incurs

thus exercised  
these faculties  
provide a bass

each instance of us  
trebles

an extravagance  
sine qua non  
an earth  
none other than  
it

she the  
anima mundi  
& figurante

or ditch dug in  
the monstrous ground  
we are

climbs out of  
full

let me let stand  
what in its stead  
stands listless  
yet hesitates  
that that stays still

as an impasse  
the stance or  
indolence  
central to the dance  
calls *her*

in which we sometimes are  
but often bow from  
bent

back upon the gut  
fingers pluck

excitations of  
an attendant passion  
on

what's blest  
be it good's dicta or  
blood's

seeks  
extent

looking  
the eyes long

for seen in  
shoulder the blade then  
that line

his spine describes him  
walking

a road  
shirtless

maroon jeans  
barefoot

& would in words  
be

wind behind  
an arras

a lute before it  
still contrapuntal  
nearly chordal  
not yet tonal

allows  
the voice though

a falling off  
in slight

cascades

flesh about to flesh  
delights in no perfection

song knows then its incidence  
for all that's ripe belongs to picking

singing dare I follow any lust  
less at hand or entertain

beyond the air this loosens  
an intent which fades delayed

on all it bridles  
or breaks as

refrain

what won't let me sit outside  
& keeps me at this at my desk

is say sun too much itself a sweetness  
weakening all it shines on

with modes of an actual  
these eyes may look at &

've seen them seem somehow  
just an ease untouched by

what's brought to bear  
or else that rest obtained in silence

blindly urges speech

is light but time's conceit  
& song its deliquescence

as flesh is  
that complexity

mind attends

grasp it close  
at hand  
behind the eyes  
tail in the other &  
or once in a pot  
slap tight the lid  
down  
& throw it out into the  
wood which would I  
do but  
had I found it  
slip in through  
the screen

neither pollen on my eye  
nor thought proceeding sleep  
settles this debate  
or mends a fire shovel broken  
on a black  
snake

this I've heard so many terms  
of starts to mean  
enough to let me  
sleep on it

then inflame  
my sight

not yet a night apart  
& love even lunch  
this afternoon  
is you  
far

what can we speculate

a car  
down the drive

the writhing that  
knocked off a  
figurine

each  
bits at  
my feet

or wine in  
a glass  
pressed

design of pear  
leaf apple plum  
grape

thunder light  
rain

these as actual  
are the eyes  
moreso

for looking at  
until they fade & join  
my mind a heart  
away

these influents  
influence  
thieveries

arrogations  
irrigating  
wasteacres  
once swamped  
in the rush

of wet voices

is all ocean just a sound  
whose surge salts an estuary  
only so far then floods itself  
inland fresh

& ear a curve whose ratio  
amplifies the tide we hear retreat  
from whence we must  
just as we take a voice  
take our own

if this were told  
in an old book  
I might tell  
of the wood  
I heard  
words within I'd  
never heard

articulate birds  
grief brought me unto

for it seems something  
at the very edge of Love's  
withdrawing that draws  
such utterance

or drew that speech  
sometimes  
*my*

but never *mine*

thus at most it's theft  
bringing forever a fear of  
this in  
-most

point  
each word  
sounds  
the same

a well well men  
dig well  
whose waters well  
& we'll draw

drink from

or are there two such springs  
one some sip at  
another others  
or an order all are variations on

do mothers truckle us under  
the covers' patchwork  
or its quilting  
what do 20 stitches to an inch join

our nurses need how many stars  
to rime the bear we are

yet it's not so simple  
this  
as the place  
it first begins in  
alerting tongue  
of teeth  
unsounded

certain of which we're told are called  
*wisdom*

it perplexes me  
no x-ray  
shows even their budding  
back of my jaw

am I spared the impacting  
& extraction of  
what once it was to have  
a wisdom  
come of age

but this's common I'm  
told

a romance  
all the same

an ordinary fiction  
& internal

Robert  
this which  
isn't there  
whose lack is  
a blank  
all shape  
seeks  
emergence  
from

or the wood I said before  
grief was a hush within  
birds spoke through

articulate as men  
or men come as other  
kind

to a heart whose strictures blind  
like to like

& rob  
sense of itself

to guide grieving  
on unlikely modes

led to submit  
made strange  
we hardly have  
words for the use  
they put us  
under or voice  
their sounding  
binds

o where are we when we hear

drowsy in the room adjoining talk

in a passage quiet at the door

there wood  
taken for overheard  
as maybe grain  
whose sweet lines

know no birds  
but fingerings  
in the dark o my hands  
ache to  
trace  
what they  
beyond this door  
speak

this between  
lets me slump  
pillowing  
my ear

on it I'm up  
against

the heart we hever know  
beat to but pulse  
by

quickenning raps



what makes it  
turn we say  
away from us & to the other world,  
behavior without intention  
that stretches out  
under our hollow floor----  
cellar away,  
must of the old good once wine.

Fallow fields, where the spears fell  
out of a ritual, great Rome, into this place,  
launched from the flamen's hand on the mount.

This wood was Venus & to Her now  
Mars is come.

Two stuck in the ground,  
one flopped over. This field  
every third year fallow.

Then giggling *iuuenes*, young men, run  
scattering seed at random:

order comes later, grows  
out of time spent at simple  
backbreaking valor.

Autumn. Wine.  
All the time we've spent  
chasing crows. Only to discover  
crows are good, bring a certain flex of energy  
down with them onto the field.

Early morning.  
They make  
up for what they steal.

But the simple  
is never far,  
sometimes can be learned again.

How can you *know*?

How can I think?

In mezzo mar siede un paese guasto,  
old Crete,

[Inf.14]

where the women  
set Doctrina & Redemption &  
the conscious world began.

This was **TY**  
refocused through the crystal  
becomes coherent light

[Eden]

projects through our days & past:  
The Laser.

The art of any art  
so to make coherence

as light  
be persuaded to cohere :

as the message passes  
even in the deserts of the moon.

But it is not that far, not far,  
it lives inside, it dwells

where I do when I can wake,  
then what I say  
turns hard as oyster shells,



On the side of the side of in

I hold or rolled there all  
unwitting held

until the temple gave a gate

& I went in,

I mean my dream went in  
to dance among the hermeneuts  
who wrote (a long time after)  
on broad young linden leaves these  
auspices:

You are holding  
leaves  
of very young trees,  
leaves  
that keep shape  
all out of size,  
a foot across  
are they (or we),  
a text is what  
it's written on.

I woke healed of distress; fever  
where my blonde wife came  
back terrified from the empty  
garden of our townhouse crying:

*when I was alone  
I heard one whispering to me.*

Nightfall.

The whisperer  
was that sort of villain  
dried in the sun  
but in twilight  
his voice, his voice)  
came at her like hands  
from the patch of pansies  
beside the ornamental pond.

Fixed Water,  
its malice, its means  
to make afraid.

Water  
locked in the stone,  
a kind of old marble, sweaty, ready  
to crumble at the cry. Cry of touch. A touch.

From a novel, or known water,  
just the fact of her hair the wrong color  
glint of honey as the sun passed  
between the stone houses  
out of the ashen air.



Other villain spoke,  
joker of a lost deck  
that cut itself & made me play  
till the cards stuck  
together with the running blood,  
all suits were red  
she screamed a little,  
little more than whimper  
as she came around the house.  
Her hair was not clean  
it had his words stuck in it,  
or blood stuck in it, birds-nests,  
leaf & bark, I did not know  
the house stretched so far.  
There it was, river bounded it no more,  
the garden was endless  
& she had always been coming  
towards me to share her fear,  
did that make her my wife  
or her dark blonde hair  
thick with heard words?  
Only a little pond, hardly  
more than a birdbath,  
pansies around an ionian plinth  
bearing a crystal globe.  
In its starry now convex face  
I saw the chief priest  
come to the doorway of the shrine,  
his bare arms hidden in masses of roses it must have been  
torture to carry, blood dribbled down his forearm.  
His mouth moved to interpret  
the endless garden & the woman's fear.  
His face could have been starlight just after sunset,  
crimson west, crimson angel,

*the garden has an end  
but the dream has none,*

*it tends sphere-wise & forever  
until it swallows even the woman*

*who came to you in all her difference  
because she heard your voice from the dumb flowers.*

23 - 30 March 1975  
revised 5 July 1975



Safavid from Safi, not Sufi.

He says. The book says.

The untold Differencer whose digestive Tract  
is lined with summer stars

visible from some seconds of arc north of the

42nd parallel,

whose feet are glittering in our carnal

minds our minds are footstools

of that High,

whose left foot is Scientia & whose right  
foot is Opinion,

whose ankles of either

sex are data, whose shanks

are numeric if not number,

the open & the closed system,  
whose knees are the knobs of Art most exalted,

clus e clar,

classic/romantic

structural vs mannerist,

they sustain his gait,

that huge *stride*

the boy-men of Alexandria seeking to copy

made a brass naked-stance with fiery eyes to straddle the Harbor  
in homage or influence,

the walk,

He comes to us)

whose hairy thighs are furred with comets,

secret of secrets his most potent awesome gender licits a world  
& lights it to be,

we are reminded

by that light

& let it loose

all round us as matter,

our old dependable

imitation

produced by us all round ourselves as byproduct of our dazed  
nervousness, dread, inadvertence, willingness to kill & be killed  
& other games pretending there's an end)

whose buttocks are

the Eyes of Horus right & left,

I quote from the oldest

printed description,

there are older

by far

cell'd in us, sealed, we read them & weep.

We read them & copy)

whose navel is the sump or gem or chakra,

spuming wheel in mud from

which spring good ideas,

it is an unfound depth,

a dark,

nothing glib,

I will be silent)

whose belly

is insufferable, brazen, most fair,  
whose belly limply striped with one faint zebra-stripe of heavier  
but silkier downward aiming hair

is beyond the conception  
of even the most bright austere star-system,  
the report I bring

is born from no perception  
but the yearn of my thought

that his belly be so)

7 July 1975

What was locked in?  
Was it a sock with louis-d'ors  
was it a sense

of Order, was it an Order  
of frightened men who yet were the Redeemed?  
Was it a dream?

This morning I perched  
on the corner of the bed, bent  
to slip green socks on, rock green  
we said ten years ago to mean a dress  
she morè up Mt Mansfield that looked like it,  
cold summer day, the turn  
over the mountain or Notch. The Lock.  
Where cattle were dragged in  
& locked in the caves,

the smugglers  
about the time of that notorious release.  
Quatorze Juillet, the prison  
gives up its doors in sudden  
gasping for the talkative light.

'ΑΠΟΚΑΤΑΣΤΑΣΙΣ,

a restitution, a reversal  
when the stars of heaven run  
back & mark time in their places---

but are they, for their beauty,

Warders,  
king's men of this fortress Earth-Europa,  
kinsmen of a False & Lying Root

that kings up through our

simple earth  
& hogs the lumen?

We are light.

We are the light  
we are bereft of  
when any us gets

bogged in the slammer,

lost to an air

only means because we move in it,

this droll plural,

this

other, but this better, Lie.

APOKATASTASIS the Living

Theater chants, Ginsberg tells them,

Chris Wagstaff

brings me the text: reversing the satanic current  
& making it celestial.

(Be careful

it is not Restoration,

the king brought back, now Emperor,

the Seventh Devil,

care.)

Reverse the satanic flow.

Revising the satanic information

& peeing on the floor.

The pee goes yellow & runs

below the door.

It is a book by Georges Bataille,

the battle  
     is not over,  
                     men are in prison for women, women  
 are trapped in men,  
                     the battle  
                                     drips out under the  
 door of the vast mahogany armoire  
 in the polished half-door of which  
 young William Blake once saw  
 his ascended brother Robert's face  
 wishing him the good news,  
                                     door  
 behind which in Bataille a blond  
 timorous girl has taken refuge, there to diddle herself  
 till in release or revolution the pee  
 comes out from under the door  
 & washes the monarchy away.  
                                     We hope. The sexual  
 is our hope. Not a chance,  
                                     is what the Queen said, no chance-o  
 uno  
     ("if he be male  
                     who is my better-father fuller lover,  
 just watch him batter down the door.")  
                                     Apokatastasis, I said to  
 Stein,  
     is that word known  
 in this collective. Yes, he said, it is astronomy, precessional,  
 Olson used it to talk about the stars.  
                                     Come back abruptly  
     to their original formations,  
     platoons of lumens  
                     breaking down the door  
                                     into this dark chateau  
 where the imprisoned French, all of them,  
 Vercingetorix, Céline, Genet,  
                     were lying or are lying,  
 with that sleazy double-tending clarity  
 locking them in  
 by which they see & understand  
                     the pee beneath their divan coursing  
 as one more irrelevance,  
                     one more sex-pun of the profiteers.  
 The king's mind. O I would have  
     a kingly mind,  
                     Königsblau, auswaschbar  
 it says on the Pelikan ink,  
                     this blue is royal,  
                     it washes out  
 or is a washout or  
 we have longed ago shampooed  
                     that man right out of our hair.  
 Out of the cliché  
     where we lingered, with the familiar,  
 to try to make  
     earth stand  
 firm dharma under the weight of sexual want,  
     as if to fuck  
                     did a favor to the earth,  
 aligned us  
     with solstice & furrows & raindrops & rose.  
 But the yucca suds flop back on the parched ground.  
 The hair still stinks. I stink

under my arms & my neck, my groin & my cock, my ass & my sock,  
humanus, I walk along the ground

because I forgot  
there was a better, only other, way to fly,  
that I could go  
absolute.

And so I stay  
with pockets full of robert-d'ors, wire  
spectacles around my eyes, my woolen green  
political lecherous optimism round my mind,

waltz  
past the prefaces to dungeons, cool my animate fire  
over the drafty manhole covers of oubliettes  
where my forgotten human brothers

rot in anarchist disorder  
while I take my comfort  
in Love-religion

& talk to stars,  
apokatastasis,  
the zodiac

will surely stand arrayed  
& I will bide the time

till it comes by,  
the universe  
surely on my side.

If I had a side.

If I were anything but a stink  
fingerprint-clear on the stinkometer.

The Queen is dead.

The King forgot himself at last.

No one in the jails but us,  
no people but people.

And it is not

as simple as that.

Of course this isnt what I  
wanted to say. As usual I wanted to be beautiful  
or significant. What I have achieved  
is a trickle of girlish pee under an immense door.  
I dont blame you for laughing,

for turning away  
from the messy table where the demonstrator  
screwed up the whole process, his own, your own, my  
own & the wobbling quavery dough-mass (say)  
eebies down flaffling on the floor. Gets pee on it.  
Confuses

where it came from with where to go this August.  
Sees the still moving pee-rill & faintly remembers  
a time before that river flowed,

when the king had a sleepy throne  
& all the dim bones

had marrow in them, fat priests  
all looked like me, happy to be different,

glad  
to have something to say. To eat.

Citoyens! That stream of citrine shameful pee!  
All is not well with the Revolution!

True, the shaggy prison  
is now Folk Fun Palace of Eighteenth Century Chambermusic,  
Indoor Tennis,

true my famous  
Oration on the Twelfth of Glumaire  
is memorized by every schoolboy.

In fact they memorize the light  
falls in the classroom window,  
denying all other. they rote it all their lives,

And the women dont read, the girls  
are taught not to read,  
taught to walk in the woods  
where they can do no harm,  
be busy with their little hands.

Citizens! Alert to the energy of disorder here I tell  
how Blake's brother Trebor  
had learned how to appear  
in rare ynâgotham wood  
such that his baby brother's face  
would be elba ot ees him leef him  
& hear what he says. What he says  
is The revolution has never taken hold of our senses.  
Revolution through sexual freedom takes hold only of our sexual  
feeling but not of our senses because our senses are estranged  
from sexual feeling,

because Emotion lives where Motion should.  
The revolution has never taken hold of our senses because the  
girl still has to creep into the walnut not mahogany closet to  
masturbate, because she is ashamed of her body & other peoples'  
Body and other peoples' Feeling and In fact she likes being a-  
shamed she can only turn on by Shame it is the Shame that Ex-  
cites her who otherwise would not pee on the floor

The revolution  
has never taken hold of our senses and Until it does it will  
never Get beyond our senses It will never get There

to which we  
have been trying since at least the time of Enoch to compel it  
The revolution has never taken hold of our senses and until it  
does our senses are chained to this attractive but mortal Cons-  
ensus

The revolution has never taken hold of our senses and  
until it does we are stuck with our senses and Our senses Dont  
give a shit about the Men rotting in the bastilles Our senses  
couldnt care less Until they wake up & die

There will Never be  
a Revolution there will only be A passing of crowns from one  
head to another

There will never be a revolution till you focus  
not on poli-eco-sexual-theotic but on the Whole Consensus  
which  
is senses Which are Senses which is our senses.

The talking closet closed its habit  
& resorbed the polished wooden gleam  
back into the sound of the sound,  
a fold  
before sense.

Blake paused at the foot of the stairs  
& asked It isnt *only* senses, is it?  
And heard from the corner, near where the cat  
had lately had kittens,  
a voice insisting:  
Marilyn Chambers is not Lenin. Patty Hearst is not Lenin.  
Not even Lenin is Lenin.

You mean Yaqui don Juan is Lenin? he

sneered---

but No,

there was silence

from the cat & the kittens

as if Great Lenin had not yet been born

& whirling stars & molecules were hurrying book in hand

to take their places for the immense & universal apokatastasis

in time for his leaping down the channel of his mother

into this immortal lake of pee & blood & rock & no more fear.

13-14 July 1975

for Helen

Is it what I waited to *be*?  
 Was there a special focus to become,  
 a small female fire under the male  
                   stones of the mantle-coping,  
           was it a tree  
 sent to me?

                  From the beginning  
 the problem had been that men asked questions  
 instead of learning to focus.

                                  The hearth. The living  
 fire of the house.

                  Hestia.

                  Hearth was Vesta  
 whose house was this round world, whose sparkle  
 lit the dark skies with stars,  
 whose servants were those women who would not  
                   distract themselves with cheap male probing.  
 No questions. The answers  
                   are always given

                                  I mean are given here  
 in this green or black or ivory world  
                   from which every question

                                  means to escape.

All questions are evasions.  
 The answers are *here*.

                                  The hooded gods came asking  
 Have you seen a star,

                                  or story,  
 have you seen a newborn child  
 from the race of the Fixed Stars  
                   whose clothes are woven

                                  from the flax grown on another field than this,  
                   have you seen & have you known  
                   & which way should we go?

Her answer lay in her lap.  
 All he was was an answer.

                                  Which was not just her answer.

The hooded gods retreated again to the human east  
 baffled by the ease of sacred interview  
 & how the gold & so on fell from their scented hands.  
 We see them going,

                                  in the many paintings of that birth,  
                   just as they came,

                                  holy, heavy, full of a certainty  
                   that tasted like doubt.

We know in a month or a year  
 some new question will rise to interest them  
                   they'll journey to ask.

                                  Who is it who stands  
 among the billowing reeds by the lake, his or her face  
 inscrutable in the bird-divided air?  
 The paintings show the blank unrestful eyes  
 with which the Magi, those hooded gods, knew the question.  
 Gods are hung on being sure.

                                  But release  
 the question & the questioner at once,  
                                   let go.

The glow of the fire is steady,  
not hard, not held.

It avails  
to see the focus, hearth, εστία,  
western-ness of the sacred house,  
a house is all interior,  
westernness of the interior  
where the smallest  
light decides.

Best east is west.

Queenly Occident,  
garden  
of Hesperides,

no questions asked.

"...the matter of thinking is the difference as difference"  
[Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*, 47]

Our Work is to divide th' apparent Light  
And focus anew the resolv'd Beams  
So bringing all the Rays to meet.

To see the difference

& to tell.

It began simply enough, my sense of this,  
faithful to what's most true  
or sense of that: as what you say.  
As usual, the answer was given first:  
You said, "I dont like questions."  
You werent surly & had nothing to hide.  
You were telling me, I think, that I had divided  
experience wrongly, made the mind wrong,  
into some dubious oriental dualist thing,  
the Q & the A.

I balked, churning like a child with a grievance  
if I cant ask questions  
how can I find out?  
That's a question.  
So what can I do?  
And that's another.  
So there must be an order  
where I cant ask but can find,  
a discourse all of inclusions.

Where I can find out,

find *in*  
that mysterious public universe

where our words are made.

No questions asked.

Lady there is a country where they ask no questions.  
Cool & fertile, around a ruined lake---  
they speak a language which has no form of questioning.  
I know because you tell me,

I will go

make myself a Marco Polo of your certainty  
& learn that tongue whose speakers call themselves The Living.

14 July 1975  
revised 18 July 1975

# Bruce McClelland

THE WORLD OF THE VAMPIRES: THE DRACULA POEMS : XVII

So they've come  
to suck me off, is that  
it, & it's not even that  
late, tonight. but somehow,  
prophesy was there, as I am  
here, in front of my  
future. (& this (or that)  
is my attraction:  
that as I wait, all other ghosts  
are being driven off  
with my sword.  
& I was told  
to do *that*, & nothing else,  
passive acceptance  
of what something means.  
of what what means?

Could she have known  
I want to ask I wanted her  
alone, if only  
tonight, hence  
see myself  
disappointed. Have I only so much  
blood, or is there some  
future  
in my body

that could be drunk?  
These are all the questions  
there are, the answers  
in them. The many  
quiet voices  
within me  
hesitate, these quiet women  
I can almost see thru I  
see thru &  
they are there  
or here: future becomes  
a present  
to those of us  
(our lives  
anticipation  
our swords  
filling  
prophesy.)

So this is a world  
of the vampires, or  
*the* world, & we  
"cannot speak fully  
to us," I guess, until we understand

us, & what they mean. They  
get us

(mythologically)

in the jugular

& our throats  
is meant  
the quickest way to go.  
& if we knew where,  
going'd be as easy as rising up  
from the bed,  
& being called  
to her, as beautiful as she is,  
undead, yet  
in the heart.  
The stake

(our stake)

seems or is  
unnecessary  
to this ONE  
become MORE who really  
WANTS me. & never  
having minded  
being wanted, I fulfill  
all prophesies that concern me,  
that is, I live my life  
& expectation becomes  
the way.  
Yet all this is  
thought, & has taken place  
in her  
immediate presence,  
she who is they who have come  
somehow to me  
as if I had come to them  
(her) & the time  
is now.

00:22

5.VII.75

THE DRACULA POEMS: nympholeptopoesis: XVIII  
(a word, from GQ)

large bat at the window,  
bronze, & she is  
there. what silver I could  
could I.

have used for a cross  
was just on my left, opposite  
me, opposed  
to what I believed  
of her reflection, & what  
was real? certainly not

the cross, she was there,  
I saw it, in me,  
writing hand, & had I  
something to say? she  
had been told  
to me, & I  
had been told,  
desire  
was what

                  it wanted  
of itself & I  
was it. So I  
became my  
self, or else  
I became what I wanted  
of myself & saw  
no difference. & had written,  
on the same night,  
"heart felt: a texture"  
& meant it. As if

She was there: a real  
way of looking at things &  
that was desire. a real  
desire. & finally was  
reflection, I saw myself  
coming to her, as I had come to *her*,  
& as before. My left hand  
held it all, I felt,  
a texture  
of how,  
a texture of how.  
& it was a hand that held  
the metal it believed, silver-  
ing of the mirror  
is the glass we see.  
I saw it. & it was her,  
I was here, between  
the meaning of the sun  
& its moon + what it means to be  
on that horizon.

                  (& the way  
the bat flies is thru  
that horizontal way  
of not looking at things the way  
we never see them.)

                  & so  
the he/she became  
whoever, the horizontal,  
became a way.  
& the heartfelt, for HER,  
became its texture, I touched it  
with a hand. & I felt it,  
flit away, the bat  
cannot see  
                  from where  
it flies.

00:25  
23.VII.75

It happens, it says, predominantly to young women, this lack of appetite, and one of its effects is amenorrhea, or inability to menstruate. This makes sense. & the word itself, or the term, is privative + *oregein*, 'to reach after, desire.' This too makes sense in light of how she is seen after her death. I have been told by various medical sources & authorities that these young women come to this state by either a strange obsession with their imagined obesity or else after great disappointment in love, if there is a difference. & I am also told that before they die, they will go to great lengths to hide their unwillingness to consume, & should they be forced by extraneous circumstances to eat, they will invariably & quite surreptitiously go vomit; & as opposed to victims of starvation, they will appear to be healthy & energetic, thus fooling their acquaintances into believing that they are merely losing weight, or that their life is not seriously imperiled.

but it is.

& so is her death, the symptoms  
are all there: desire  
to not desire  
death, to not try  
to survive  
but survive: classic  
symptoms.  
vampirism, un-  
dead/ness, to  
wake up & come  
after me

or you, to wake up, she  
walks  
in some endless ocean,

& keeps on walking:  
a form of life  
given up, the exchange  
is in no longer believing  
what she believed  
about. She had given up  
blood, could  
no longer produce it, & wanted it  
that way.  
& walks forever, her death  
& she can't find it  
wherever  
it is  
she's walking.

Stalks now  
the life she imagines  
IN us, "a trade accepted in the name

of darkness," she now  
walks

where she wants.

I learned this  
accidentally: talking,  
I heard  
of what is called  
disease &  
recognised it

for what it was: pure

(& simple)  
vampirism, she had, it seems  
given up the life (her reasons  
were NOT clear) & had walked  
but only  
into what she once believed  
of death, to die  
is to starve,  
be glorious.

But the blood was only there  
that she could not produce it,  
no blood, no milk, no

death. The equation was  
made, the variables she never  
understood. What is it,  
I would often hear her  
ask, to no longer be  
in pursuit? I said  
nothing, but walked along  
with her, as if I  
were her  
blood,  
my life became  
her or hers, & wondered  
how she had come  
to be. Her answers  
were my answers  
to walk (ὄρεγεῖν)  
into death  
is to long for what it is  
to be alive.

00:10

28.VII.75

I have lost too much blood,  
 tonight, & it is now  
 about me. from my left ear  
 issued more  
 infected blood than I have ever  
 squeezed, come into my own  
 hands. (She wasn't (or isn't)  
 here, tonight, she is there, yet  
 I must be drained. & the blood  
 gathered with the antibodies  
 that had come to protect me from my own  
 poisoning, became a poison, rot  
 in the left ear.

(As we are most open to suggestion  
 in the right, to acts of love, ask me  
 if I love you. I will say,  
 tonight only, whoever you are,  
 yes, I might  
 as well,

whoever you are.) & my left ear  
 gives up its infection, that today,  
 of all todays, I felt something  
 draining, my blood, my poison,  
 or else the life

(was one or other)  
 flowing out of my left ear  
 & onto, into my left hand,  
 disgusting pus, but there, visible, obscene  
 color of anything  
 we vomit out. Give up  
 is real, acknowledge as  
 what we choose but have not chosen  
 to give  
 to ourselves.

& so the decision was (tonight only,  
 I tell myself) to do it to myself  
 & into myself, & make something  
 of it: serum, semen, poisoned blood  
 become its healer, drink it  
 back upon itself, tonight is the night,  
 of the left ear. Wish she was here,  
 internal rhyme is  
 obvious. She became me, or  
 I did, tonight  
 only, the blood itself  
 building  
 to this internal  
 pressure, & ploding.  
 (or 'plensure': the confusion between  
 fusion & fission, or that between the act  
 & its preparation.)

& the left ear  
 does not hear the suggestion  
 offered in the right, I am coming  
 to you, wait for me &  
 can't wait.

01:20  
 31.VII.75

SHE & I (for Deborah)

*She*

So her death  
 becomes mine  
 figured it out  
 I did I mean  
 & she was it  
 dreamed about  
 forces of night  
 of day She was  
 undead & beautiful  
 as  
 a woman so beautiful  
 can be  
 her form  
 syntax  
 she crossed over the boundary of  
 why she had anything  
 cross over this boundary there is no boundary  
 but you

she said, have brought it upon ourselves. We, the you & I,  
 have been here, wanting to get together as us, & she said I  
 have waited for you to come across. & I allowed her her  
 distance, yet to come across, I would not make any first move.  
 & no first move was maken, had all gone on before, once  
 she remembers

whose side we're on

whose side we're on,  
 on her side now

The point was, get over to me, I said  
 to her & she said

as if this  
 invisible  
 line ran  
 straight  
 down the  
 middle  
 of us,  
 separating  
 from  
 (temporary  
 embrace)

you

*I*

I mean to kill her  
 I mean myself I  
 or at least I think  
 I saw this movie, see  
 I mean temptress  
 her & she represented  
 the other side  
 not alive not dead  
 but beautiful  
 could be  
 dangerous  
 I myself wondered at  
 her meaning  
 what she meant as  
 she & I I meant to ask  
 to do with me I said

& I

or I am  
 & now mine.

to me,

me

once you take it

seriously, she said

you can do

anything

you son of a

bitch, she

said  
& now  
we  
have  
neutral  
ground

I will say anything

I want: I no longer

mean to kill

her, you

wo/man

& if I said I did I

meant it

no more.

04:12

06.VIII.75

# Keith McMahan

Today found an old diary washed up on shore, rusty.

Opened to a page, clank.

"I'm 21 today is my birthday.

It is a cold morning, smells of burning fireplace wood.

I feel the urge to vitally enjoy this cold, or the music of the radio and I want to ... "

-- Flip to summer "Went to quarry, saw a few naked girls, no one I knew. Said hi, but everyone to himself, just naked instead of clothed. I felt left out after I went home the rest of the day. Suddenly this morning wake up with dread, a naked girl far from me.

... The naked girl scene brought dreams."

Any confessional further and I'd know too much; shut it and shoved it in the sand.

Already he grows on me, Mr. Diary writer, seeping over dripping down; showing he could experience as well. Besides, he was of opposite sex, showing greed for mine.

Then I found another, diary, crawling down the beach to the sea, probably. Two in one day is unusual. Great opportunity for juxtaposition of lives.

Opened and read, on the last page, "Finally finished this diary. That is an event. Even writing about events is an event. That idea is an old one. From it I began to write a novel for myself. My own novel to my own tastes. I can read it and reread it. I need no more novels ever. Thus I closed the gap."

I dropped, this diary, moved a few steps on, exhausted, even more. Whew, round and complete; How can I look over the next sand dune.

Trodge on turn to sand. Blow and lodge in ear of one with a fever but he won't call the doctor. "I believe" just drink water and piss it out, and he lives until he's 80, always keeping pencils with good erasers.

My friend Bart; blond, wide lips, fleshy but slender; died, swallowed water down his lungs instead of his stomach, just an accident.

Back from opening the grave of a dead sage, he never got caught for anything illegal.

Knew all the underground tunnels in town by age 8, drank whiskey at 9, knew knowledge by 10.

At 12 he stumbled upstairs and saw drum set in his room, gift to our sun.

At 15 he had three choices -- music, Mafia dope, or back country lore and Indian artifacts.

Bart checked 1; 2 he would have died by the gun, 3 by the bottle, that is, fire water.

Everyone wasn't prepared to see him go. The funeral was, anachronistic, too.

At 9 Bret didn't like girls. thick books, or food outside of hamburger. "Ick," he says when served warm applesauce, blemishless boy face wrinkled up to a nose, only takes it cold, mother.

11 years he's ready for girls; fall winter it's football, spring summer it's baseball, little league, miniature big:

Hey batter batter batter, Hey batter batter, swing!, etc. A heroic pitcher, shortest man on the team, but a strong arm. Inning begins, each time looks to the bleachers, I'm up against Mom, a casual confidential aside; Been striking them out all game, it's hard to keep a straight face, in a second he breaks to grin, from cool guy, when he strikes another. Next batter. He shifts foot to foot, takes a breath, wipes his brow; aside, spits, the official spit. Winds it up, for the throw.

Bret's growing up, will live long.

Two people on a Chinese hill guessing clouds, shapes are what to them.

A. a heron flying over a bridge. B. now be realistic.

A. but that is what I see. B. I don't believe it, you don't believe it, he doesn't she doesn't, we don't and they don't.

People can stand repetition in music, but when you speak.

Two ones translating Chinese folk poetry of very past:

Student: "Male chickens vocalize." Teacher: "Wait, vocalize is usually for humans." Student: "Why be so anthropocentric. Warning, I brake for animals."

You got a damned one tracked mind, you antithetical man. You'll go down as a hero in the soil of this earth, not in the pages. What's wrong is your sentences are too long, and that's because your skin is too oily.

Nickersome Nanty pulled out his comb, combed through his hair, and trackled off to get wooed by more nude scenes in a play on the first day of his successful knock-up of his bed.

Antithetical man said I don't know too many people smarter than me, frankly, and then he walked off; though walking isn't him too necessary since he only covers small ground.

Nickersome joked to his dying day. Some people say, all he was ever after was a good cunt. He owned half a chromosome, sold off the rest for someone else's good investment.

"Death's necessity is a hard battle to fight, Clement." "hWall, George." "I say." "Yaaaaa." "'ll I'll be on my way."

not a christmas present

In this cafe people sit opposite over small tables, more shoulders and elbows than tables; make tents. They talk to fill gaps, make up for lack; walk across space to the other person; words built onto words, creaking and tottering as they get longer, to construct consolations, objects, prizes.

Marvin almost says to Jay, A baby born is all subject, no other, only himself and his ways about. Jay would answer, To be all subject and grown-up too is what is called immature in this world, can't see the gap, the space between. Still walk around shoving things out of the way, butting your head against more air and air.

Together they feel that when they were babies they were intransitive, but growing up they get transitive, that is, pushing; where the harm arises, i.e. people begin to stand around yelling at them, yelling at a person inside: "Hey," knock knock. Box reverberates, blam, but for him it's just going back to slip, to sleep.

On a commercial right on T.V. just above Marvin and Jay are ladies gathered around clean dishes. It's so clean I can see my face, let's show it to baby; to help him grow up. He'll know himself as a whole. "It's a sad but important stage in a child's growth," they say, "and more convincing than the Cogito." The baby in a white bonnet tied under his chin wobbly head gazes in to the china, though in commercials it's hard to make irresponsible beings follow the script and the baby's eyes vacantly wonder over the studio behind the camera eye.

Marvin and Jay, all are still yelling to wake up. Someone, you, who they forgot to show the mirror to, missed the stage. Instead only use it for grooming, to impress others; always an eye for one's impressive exterior.

I, Reallie, pulling up a chair, join Marvin McReal, and Jay O'Real and immediately understand what they've been doing.

On a bike ride today. At a treeless intersection on 281, ditches, two stop signs and a telephone pole, I stop straddled over my bicycle, piss over the side, no one's coming. Look at my map, log my position. From behind here an unmistakable click click click, slow, panting rider it must be, coming up, louder, weaving side to side in the loamy plowed silence. No one else is out here, this is more than routine passing, so better turn around. A freckled kid with sandy mopped down hair, "travelling around or something ... Timbuktul? ... Hope you make it," and he pedals off, this time with the wind, still grunting and squeaking.

Never make it myself, thunderstormed out near the capital of Connecticut, at an apartment complex with no eaves, and decorative front porches budding out of the walls over the front doors. It's a lone splattering drop followed by slapping torrents twirling on the pavement. A man caught outside his locked car door yelling angrily to his wife inside opposite to open it quicker than usual because this is no longer warning drops.

I flatten against a wall, to guard from wind directing rain, still misty spray, and soon have to consider myself wet.

Standing, waiting, the rain changes, comes around the corner pelting, sloshing, as in all wet in two seconds.

Jumped to, yelled Hey, in resentment, rain fooling with me; and moved to action, no choice but to check around the next corner, to the front, before their doors and no longer anonymous.

No good, give up, all wet. So desperate, think of, need help, enough now to knock. Think of, get water bottle an excuse to knock, I need water and hope they'll let me in. First no answer, second who's there. "Caught in the rain, need some water."

Can't hear, don't open, muffled reply. Withdraw and say Okay I'm sorry assuming they said "We don't want any."

They bustle around and consult, go back to their hearth with their hand on the phone.

I stand more, back to the door. Exploding thunders, close-by lightning, loud and terrible. What am I going to do, my bike will rust and I'll never get home, pneumonia, and my leather seat will warp, building up. Relentlessly getting wetter and wetter when I didn't want to, scarer and scarer until it's no use, stand back, think to my stomach, "Unknot, please."

Rain stops, blanched I leave, picking up speed to back miles home.

Regular days; it's hard to live at the center of existence for too long, for even a minute. A week, exemplar of routine, predictable. Up in the morning, brush your teeth, start to move, etc. Can't concentrate, easy to lose the thought, forget what I was going to say, but say it, anyway it, call it exemplar, and it still stays, like an example, of regular, assuming its shape, you can't move it, only see it.

Dealing in maps, learning routes, measuring distances, close my eyes and still see black and red lines before my eyes, and city's names. Didn't hitchhike one day, the set that may pick me up, shift hour to hour, ramp to ramp; but not taken. So, naturally, move to finding someone naked in my bed, as I wake from a dream about highways, light gray asphalt with double yellow down the middle. Sleeping, on highway 37; level with the way, as flat as the road; waking, plane take off, view the other highways, as over the hill and the other side; lines through space; bundled together, intersect, here; different highways different strands of sleep, different highways different bed positions, bed assumptions; breathing paces, heart beats; levels of wake, eye shut power; to stagger, shiver, smooth to other.

Birds first, sun rises, partner leaves, and back to sleep.

Getting here and I let others show me around, to this campsite, off the highway, in someone else's backyard. Suffering the flying insects in an oak tree; no insect repellent. Now a bird poops on me.

But the wind blows through the tree, leaves; sun shines; bird sings, quiet except an airplane.

Now pain -- the searing sting. Only afraid I'll swat so quick to fall out.

To frame it; am I going to tell everyone later about how I spent this time in an oak tree lying in a crotch, feeling the breeze, though all along assailed by insects.

And blood even.

The general comes by, stays below, and gives instructions. Life is a war-game out here -- capture the flag. The last time I refused to play capture the flag, I feuded with a friend, old Acme Parker.

There's more, or less, going on out here than war-games.

Here it is either heat or bugs, now is that not -- basic, I was going to say sooner. The sweat bees get too

involved, easy to swat dead as they bite. It's finishing a sentence that's difficult. I'm just waiting for me to have killed or scared all the bugs in this vicinity -- there has to be finite number of. What do they do all day? It is grave things like these which distract me from war-games.

This could be an African savannah. A game is too simple, or artificial, I say, and show I don't get point.

All the more it is like us kids together again: we have a general, he drinks more of the canteen water. Gives me a conciliatory grin once in awhile, after frothing resentment bulges in my head -- wave impressions.

Last night walking fast single-file-numb-minded in the woods; general says, Stop, Look, points, That tree and that star. Quiet; turns around and moves on. The tree, green May full, moonlight relief, and next to the tree in the black even sky is the star, see it too and I move on.

Couldn't hear some word of his, say, What; no response. Repeat the thought-heard-word, as in stimulus suggestion, nothing; a rude shout, Hey, as in: pound on the head, box; words engulfed in the tromp of marching; no further. Not listening; it's him talking; that's all. Be rude and be irrelevant. The generals, more going-to-be-heard than to co-talk with. No-contingency, man; what's in my head should be in yours.

(On the other end of it now) I just get to know how it feels among the masses to be objects of education.

# Sherril Jaffe

## RETURN TO THE HIGH COUNTRY

When Father was a young man, before your mother hooked him, he went on the greatest adventure of his life, roughing it with the boys through the most spectacular scenery one could barely imagine--a pack trip in Glacier Park. And so he married your mother, and he had two boys of his own, only they weren't boys, they were girls. He just called them boys. "Hey, boys, c'mere and look at this chipmunk!" And every year as the little family was growing up Father took them on a family vacation. And they went to the Grand Canyon, and they went to Yellowstone, and they went to the Grand Tetons--that was spectacular scenery, but it was not a pack trip in Glacier Park. And now the youngest daughter had gone off to Berkeley, and the oldest daughter was looking for a husband, and your mother doesn't like the thought of riding on a mule. And so on the last day of this August we shall all meet in Yosemite, and we will set out at last together once more on a pack trip into the high country. Your mother will stay back at the Awannee.

Ann had a blue sweatshirt inside out tied around her waist. She was wearing blue jeans and tennis shoes, and she pulled herself up confidently onto the back of her mule. Everyone in the expedition was mounting. Everyone but Barbara. Barbara wasn't getting on her mule because she knew it would kick her. She was just sneaking away behind it when Ann jumped down, and holding the reins of her own mule, she grabbed the reins of Barbara's, and holding all the reins in one hand she shoved Barbara up with the other.

The ancient prospector, who knew this country like the back of his weathered hand, rode past on the lead mule, and Father, on his mule, was right behind. The other people in the party rode past. Ann had mounted again, but she held her mule in check. She had to wait for Barbara. Barbara's mule wouldn't move. "Kick it with your heels!" Ann admonished. "I *am* kicking it," Barbara screamed. "Well, you did ask for the slowest mule, didn't you?" Ann asked, and Barbara's mule started to reel in circles and it was off. Ann followed immediately behind.

Because actually she couldn't stop her mule from running. The best thing to do was to think that she wanted it to run, and that she actually wasn't terrified of falling off. Because if a mule knows you're afraid it will take advantage of you, so you must never scream. Barbara was screaming that her mule wouldn't stop. Then it came up behind the last mule in the party and fell into line, walking. Ann's mule was walking now, too. "Walk!" she said. And hoof after hoof the mules walked surefootedly up the mountain and out of the valley. And as Ann looked back, way back beneath her--for she could look back easily now, now she was one with her saddle--she could feel the air clarifying, and the dark shadows of evening gather. But it wasn't evening. It was eleven o'clock in the morning. Ann untied her sweatshirt and put it on.

As they went up the mountain the air grew colder. Ann began to wish that she had brought her hat. The landscape to each side blurred into mist, and the mist then was rain. Ann's tennis shoes

were soaking through. That was part of roughing it. This rain would pass and the sun would come out. They wouldn't *have* pack trips if the weather was going to be bad. It started to snow. Could this snow really be happening? These white flakes floating down through the dark? Ann's wet tennis shoes froze into ice. Was she going to lose a toe?

All the mules stopped. Everyone was getting down. Ann jumped down and stomped her feet. Barbara was calling, and Ann went over to get her down. Everyone was getting out their lunch boxes, which had been prepared back at the hotel. Barbara was asking Ann to find the bathroom for her. There was no bathroom on the mountain. "You'll have to go behind a tree," Ann said. "Come with me and guard me," Barbara demanded under her breath. And so Ann took Barbara behind a tree, and there Barbara told Ann that she had just gotten her period, and Ann said she should just put on a sanitary napkin. People went on pack trips year after year, and nothing really happened that they had to worry about. Why couldn't Barbara just enjoy the scenery?

And she had to get back on her mule--or she could stay here and freeze. Everybody else was going. She was being a real spoil-sport.

The snow was coming down in a thick blanket all around them, as if they could never get to where they were going. But these trips into the wilderness are calculated to give you that feeling, and also to bring you at last safely into camp. They had come into camp.

Early in the morning Ann rose and found icicles hanging from the eaves of the tent. The first icicles she had ever seen. She stepped outside into a world made new in snow. "Show me where the bathroom is," Barbara said. Ann had never been here before, but she knew how to follow footprints in the snow. From the out-house, all the footprints came together and led off again to the big tent. There they sat down with the others around a huge table hewn from a tree. Real cowboys served up mountains of authentic sourdough pancakes.

They rode out again, single file, tracking through the snow. Every so often, weights of snow would fall down from the high branches of the huge trees all around them. Ann wondered about how the ancient prospector could find the way through these trees. To her, it all looked alike.

They were coming down a steep ravine now. So this was the way. Swift tracks of rabbit and deer were clear in the snow. *They* had known where they were going. Ann saw a stream opening in the snow. She would never have guessed it was there. Now they were crossing this same stream again. Or did it just seem that way to Ann?

Now it seemed that they were going up the same hill again. And now they were in a dense wood. Barbara was screaming. Her mule was going round and round. She couldn't control it. Ann was embarrassed. In front of the ancient prospector! The ancient prospector was about to speak.

He said that he was lost. They would have to go back the way they came. And they did. And then the ancient prospector led them a few hundred yards over the rise of a little hill and there was the road. Then someone came to take their mules away, and a van came to drive them back down into the valley as the snow started to come down again.

\*\*\*\*\*

Daddy and the boys couldn't get into the Awannee without a reservation, but there was no reason why Mother should give up her comfortable room there. Daddy and the boys could rent a tent in Camp Curry. They were too dirty to go to the Awannee anyway.

Daddy couldn't even go there for dinner--he didn't have a tie. He and the boys ate at the cafeteria and bedded down early. As Ann lay awake in her cot she thought she saw shadows moving across the face of the tent. Or was the door of the tent flapping?

In the morning they learned that a bear had been in the camp during the night. He had gone into a tent and taken a monopoly game out. He had thought that there would be food in the package. When he found out there wasn't, he smashed it on a rock.

# David Bromige

## FROM THE HILL

July. Yes, all the livelong day, & half the night, under these Cretan skies of Northern California. For one week Sherril & I sat the house on the hill. We were over-seeing it, & a lot of landscape, & a lot of TV. Our home, a short drive away, has no TV & less over-view. Our vacationing friends have a vegetable patch & so for this week we cultivated two gardens. That got to be a strain at times but we were interested to note the regional differences, fractional as they are. Not at all enviously, though who's to say that'd be the case without some kind of balance -- beans & cucumbers do better here, lettuce & chard do better up there; there's an equal amount of corn, both places.

TV was no doubt the usual fare, or unfaire, cowboys & injuns still, with that twist of fashion, that the injuns, no longer to be feared, now have the right of it. They after all didn't record *their* injuns. Didn't expropriate anybody, maybe, their luck an under-populated Earth. Anyhow, it was something to hear these jewish cowboys talking scripts provided by anthro. majors from UCLA. "There is not here -- & no two ways about it." One attractive dissolve had most of LA spread back of the credits, "Coyote Productions Presents," then we were presented with a desert of older order in some pretty incredible color, great to see LA wiped-out before even the shimmering mesa-high letters had left stage-center. Like the answer to a thousand mantras. What a scene in the Processing Lab., one technician up on his hind legs shaking a couple of cans of film like gourds, the others squatting around a small fire straight from the cutting-room floor, to which from time to time various articles definite & indefinite are added, the Advisory Technician in safari-suit & with his finger following the sentences in the Research Manual vainly trying to prompt the others, then Zzzzzzztt! they're surrounded by sagebrush, & no mailbox to receive what paychecks? Returned to the actual, my gaze had drifted from the box to the window, to the ridge where the light bounces up off the ocean. A handsome stand of cypresses -- though no Cretan would recognize them as such -- partially intervene their timeless dark, they must be upward of a hundred years old, planted at the behest of the first Europeans here, though probably not the Spanish, & the actual planting done by Chinese, buried in unmarked graves, waiting. The trees shaped by the wind from home, but resistant, Coyote lifting it above the house-top, a good idea.

Watched some old flicks too, some Tarzan & Jane, or that genre, pleased to see the heroic finding its proper form. And there were Holmes & Watson too, & Batman & Robin, the principle of the principal & his whipping-boy -- Wither thou goest, I'll share the driving & you can say I did half of everything. Put on this deerstalker then, it's me they'll be gunning for. Awfully good of you Holmes, uh, but don't you think they'll know it was your paradigm all the time? Dead's dead, Doc. Um, yes, Holmes, what's this all over the steering-wheel? That's tar, baby, tar. Obliterates fingerprints.

More authentic than gloves. Zig Richten's on our trail. What *is* our trail old chap? Tiajuana, we're going to rendezvous with Batman & Robin & have a double wedding -- but keep it quiet for the children's sake. And look here Doc, I *want* you to take half the credit -- Kate Moriarty's spreading it around I'm a *macho* holdover. Anything you say, Sher.

The camera cannot lie. Nigel Bruce probably *was* that bumbling, helplessly, witlessly Watson. I knew his niece in college, a well set-up young woman who figured she should act, since it ran in the family after a fashion. She couldn't remember her entrance-cues. As the run wore on, each night I'd find myself further stage-right, so I could give the line while reaching into the wings to grab her arm. We'd kid her that she really should be an author, since she kept rewriting the script. She came out okay, marrying the director, & getting to travel, what she'd wanted from the word Go -- the play we were in, now I think of that, we took on tour of the BC hinterlands that spring.

No, the camera cannot lie. We could read the fear, hate, ambition, greed, envy, resentment, & scorn, of others as of self, in these faces & voices hectoring us with self-evident goodwill to buy whatever they happened to have to unload toward the unwary. The documentaries being no exception: one was a trip some educator took through those same hinterlands; his commentary was so tediously literal the CIA must have commissioned it, & were beaming out subliminal messages like Shoot Smack, Eat Shit, Free Love, Nixon's the One, Watch this Space. Or maybe, Sic Transit Paranoia Mundi. Another such trip, through Ten Years of Psychedelia, about how LSD destroys the brain at the expense of the mind, was more transparently moving, as seven witnesses, all of them unemployed till now, were led before the camera, gaping & shuffling, so to state. The cure, -- which, the sound having gone out, we had to read in the announcer's expressive lips, -- the cure shared with acid the attractions of illegality while having the advantage that the ego, far from disintegrating, could address torchlight rallies on any topic from Lebensraum to The Sacred Rights of the individual without ever having to disclose its sources or the extent to which the speaker had followed same, -- said speaker a mustard-seed of considerable proportions, as if soaked in some Rococo bird-bath until bursting to speak. This way, though its consciousness had expanded, it needs must be lifted from bath to podium prior to its address.

Despite this, we went ahead & dropped next day, not without an anxious morning, a result no doubt of the previous evening's horror-show. And too, it was our plan, & that sense of being predicted brought me to despair. It was 2 pm, while we were crouching on the wooden walkway by the cornpatch, when the Fingers of the Hand of Communion grabbed a tab & got it past my lips in what reflection named a desperate gesture. Ah. Too late now, blessed phrase, though many a poet's career was built on the torment to be quarried in same. Sherril quickly followed, so, a short while after, she might lead.

Preconceptions, from others' talk & writing, presented themselves for recognition & you could see what was meant, as though the advice of friends or the idiocies of enemies really were handy to arouse the personal will to such engagement as forgets either. What grew transparent were the opacities everywhere tangible. The deaf grasses of the meadow. Reflexive to their own systems, each

& each, throughout. And how it all leans in on itself, each on each, helplessly. Ecology, that secondary fact. What's the plan. Women & *who* first, children & *who*, & How many lifeboats did you say there were?

She sat beneath the rose-hedge, naked, a, the, goddess, though "Kali" was a long-after thought. No time, then, to be out to lunch with some Great Mother. We ate what was to hand. As soon as I'd begin to discern a story in attention -- If you're the goddess, wait a second, isn't there a question I should ask of you -- attention shifted to another coalescence, flared up, &, as it began to settle in, shifted again.

Gazing out through the slats -- tingling from the shower -- I wept & she asked & I said, All those hours spent polishing my soccer boots. She wept, moved by some image of her own mind tripped, or by my weeping. No, we were laughing -- All those hours spent -- ! I forgave every one of you & myself among it all. This was not to praise evil.

It was a mistake to switch the set on that night. Still coming down, the stove crackling, saying stuff like The acid cleared out a lot of lumber, on comes one more documentary, & at first we watched to see if we could glimpse our friends walking around Boston, with their relatives. But this figure was an instant absolute. I stand by this cabin as I stand by my word. They couldn't quite get the camera inside it, so he had to. He started by attacking the interviewer, a woman, asserting that the order of her words was deceptive. He spoke all at the same time, somehow. Impossible, really, to create, on the page, how, actually, he was. "I never eat dinner, though I do choose by that time to be drunk & oblivious to your goddam social niceties, of course it's just *my* way, isn't it everyone's? Oh." Was he a Harvard man? More mention was made of a college subsequently attended -- surprisingly, acrobatics had been a major part of the curriculum. He was quick to remark that he admired all performers in this field, though just as quick to reject most of those the interviewer named, pleading personal taste as the no doubt regrettable interference with his avowedly egalitarian intentions. He certainly could do the splits, & his juggling, if clumsy, was determined. Years of practice & observation had convinced him that any human act, including those not yet committed, constituted an acrobatic turn. Not that he cared to speak of this any further, what he wanted to speak about were his inventions, the star-scope which gathers starlight so that americans in the jungle can see the enemy at night, the people-sniffer that enables americans to detect an enemy's presence though he lurk in the thickest jungle growth. He pointed with fury at the nearby factories that now produced these *jeux d'esprits*. He was proud of his Berkshires heritage, simply that it had come down to him, & relieved him of the necessity for talking all the time about himself. He loved America & he loved the jungle too. Despite Imperialism, it was all one. This is choppy, part of his rap was muffled because he'd keep popping back into the cabin for some purpose never explained. Just to check it out that he was still there, maybe.

One time when he came back out it was to be confronted with a guest, a fellow-acrobat from England the network had seen fit to use to draw our hermit out. This man's friendly greeting the hermit cut short, sneering that he ought to go back to home & mother. I know where that's at, I told her, or rather the set, actually myself, This hutdweller's projection is all too clear. Shall I turn it

down? Give him a minute, it should take about that much time for him to hang himself. *New England*, he was raging, *New wine*, *Art Nouveau*, *newfangled*, *newel post*, *New Jersey*. The interviewer, whom he could count on for transitions, tried to lead him into a discussion of the new morality. You mean *Nostalgia*? he hissed. I mean sexual freedom, she countered, firmly. Have you ever -- Never, the reaction cut in, I could have predicted you'd raise that point, but let me take the bit between my teeth, I'll get in my licks, I read Freud & of course the question came up right off, just after the answer, never. As my good-looking opponent would probably not acknowledge, he leered, Freud's full of shit. What's wrong with shit, Sherril rhetorized, since we both had rolled in the goatpen that day. I've forgotten, I said, jerked back from a trans-sexual fantasy only because the people kept acting like TV, I think Heraclitus died of it though. Or was that Parmenides. No, I don't think he died, she corrected. He was continuing his attack, by now against the interviewer, affirming he was indeed glad to be a man, since that permitted his activity as acrobat & hut-builder. Sherril put down her sketch-pad at this, turned a couple of cart-wheels across the kitchen, & watched the rest of the proceedings while standing on her head. Now, by way of finale, the hermit gazed straight into the camera, which the drug kept assuming was me, & said: Fellow-cits. I know you. I know your condition. What else should fifteen years in this hut have revealed to me? I know your lacks. -- I know you're lax? That's an attractive piece of speech, I mused, You could lie on it, could read a book by it, as long as you let the language take you past a moral stance. I thought this man would know that, I mean, one form's as formed as another, stay or go, &, what other content could a hermit have to point to -- Shut up, she said, I want to hear about our condition. I think you'll find we're drunker than skunks, I said, Isn't that a still in among those maples? Just the same, we waited, each naked as jaybirds, redolent with goatshit, the cat nudging my balls, the light from the standing-lamp an aureole of gold filaments in her hair, springing against gravity, each of us suffused & relaxed with love, a mile of silence on every hand, patrolled by small animals & predatory birds, your predictable TV audience. Then the wind hit the aerial & the message passed right over us. We would miss the comedians roasting one of their members. We threw another log on the fire & went upstairs to bed.

Our dreams were vivid & masterful, throughout that week, as though some Master of Night were leaving directives for us to spend the entire next day decoding, an invitation we resisted only by one thing that came to hand after another -- one ruse after another, as the Master might suppose. But I had met up with Him years earlier, & called on Mnemosyne to protect me, an act of sympathetic magic He couldn't help but find both sympathetic & magical. I recalled a solid month of writing out by day dreams of writing out by day dreams. This had led me to a bout of automatic writing, my wrist pretentendly suspended by an imaginary sling from the real ceiling, *Orange curtain Mondrian rat* being the most (to the merely waking consciousness) vivid phrase thereby produced. It had taken a lot of time, but it had helped me evade confronting the domestic misery I moved among, somnabulistically, by what was left of day. The dreaming stopped when I split that scene. Dreams certainly provide release for anxiety. Otherwise, they can be at least as useful as an automobile accident. That week, what we got & held on to, we'd share, Sherril's shopping-dreams for instance, attributable to growing-up in Beverly Hills, though with the option of being about some choice she now faced, if she might only think what

it was. And I was airborne again -- probably a sexual fantasy brought on by all the fucking, though more to do with being in someone else's house, as it happens on top of the highest hill hereabouts, close to a pond where we *swam* every day. But why, each day, *did* we "swim"?

The next day, after swimming, we left the hill to go to the college to attend to a student with academic difficulties. From hereonin, love, I found I was saying, Everything has quotes around it. The light, as throughout the previous day, utterly substantial, the vegetation with its drought-resistant leaves as gleaming, the whole periplum given & surely neither she nor I nor we ever were to shrink from what we'd been able to let find us, what she'd known might be there, from a determination learned before acid was ever illegal or popular -- i.e. available to scorn.

Along the country lane, a large yellow machine approaches, ah the county is fixing up this stretch, & ahead of it, a car whose driver flags us down. He's going to ask us to pull over to let it pass by. Could you please pull over to let the yellow machine pass by. But he goes on & on, apologizing between his teeth in a tremble of resentment boredom & fear. I pull over. This is going to be harder than you said, I asked her.

Now I'm phoning the necessary official to tell him the student's Incomplete for 4 units of Independent Study should be altered to 2 units of A, 2 units of Nincompoop, because her project -- an examination of the incidence of the juxtaposition of the word *little* with the compounds *forsupna karingar*, *grain-elevators* & *Sears-Roebuck*, in the verse of Minnesotan 19th century lumberjacks -- breaks predictably enough into two more-or-less halves, or lobes, half of which she *had* done in the end of May. Now he, although I clue him in she's in the room with me, is bawling down the phone, so she can't help but hear, We've had nothing but trouble with this student, her record which we have right in front of us at this very moment is a *mess*, she's always looking for special treatment, who does she think she is, no, she can't -- & by now the girl's in tears & he, at a remove I hope he appreciates, seated as his voice reveals among another 8 hours of enigmas & documents, hasn't half-done yet. He wants to do a good job & people like her -- this obviously unconventional &, at present, disoriented young woman -- are bent on making it impossible.

In my mail at the college, a letter from Ontario, evidence of a lull in the endemic mail-strike. When I was a boy, there were 2 mail-deliveries a day, a letter mailed in the morning would get anywhere in London that afternoon, Isn't that, I say to Sherril, Efficiency? Jeezus, it's already a 40-year-old's recollection. This is what we wanted, the system collapsing, we'll have to invent Being from our own mutuality, hundreds of years of exile enslavement forgetfulness & their correction are going to lean on this our language, shee-it, lucky thing infants can remember how to talk. But here, like a coprolite from the jackpot of transition, is this letter from a friend I'd supposed in Toronto, moved however to Millbrook, he writes, where he raises goats & digs their shit, though no mention of having rolled in it, a function no doubt of the climatic variable. Wondering, once more, at these synchronicities, as if there is only the one Life, that draws all to it, -- in fact, that draws its definition there-from & -by. All the opacities making one indication, as the phototropism of

the cypresses (*Chamaecyparis*, the encyclopedia of trees reminds), moves through themselves toward that false-cypress-light. The light so powerful here, this month, that the broccoli, when we stop by home, has gone to flower.

We water our own garden, pull some weeds, then return to the hill, swim in the pond, watch by it, glad to be out of the mischief of words for a spell, at this sacred place, Spot, is the word, I heard, from somebody's book, that I was too often here to read, this pond atop the hill, yet enclosed, so, lying by it, only a gentle slope up on 3 sides, presents itself, the dam on the 4th, watching the buzzards sail over & Sherril says No, that's no vulture, & sure enough, it's a flying person, headed our way, we run up top of the dam from where you can see 70 miles in 3 cardinal directions just in time to see this hang-glider come to ground in a crumple of material & coyote-brush about as far from us as he could spit. Apparently untouched by his experience, for he's up on his hind legs & talking at us before we can get within earshot, the prevailing wind, that so lately had borne him aloft, plucking his words off to the vineyards of Sonoma where old friend Allan lives -- haven't seen him in months, but I bet I know what he's up to. By the time we reach the sky-man, he's in the middle of his rap, & turns out he really knows what he's up to, he's got it aced, wind-patterns, convection currents, the mathematics of velocity, so his crash is indeed an accident. Though you might think it staged, he rehearses his lines so well.

You're the first of your kind we've seen up here, I tell him, I thought you only hung around San Diego. He doesn't answer, but only because he doesn't hear me, since he's still talking, but I see this hilltop's an ideal spot for his pastime, & I've scarcely got this out before he, not consciously echoing me, is saying, The conditions in this vicinity are just what the doctor ordered. I like him right off, I think Sherril does too, just that he doesn't notice we're both naked, & goes on talking, while we get dressed. He got *his* idea of hang-gliding from Leonardo's sketch-books, & explains he hadn't come down where he intended, to prove that the character of air itself has significantly altered since Leonardo's day. Count yourself lucky to be here at all, Sherril says, Most never make it, what's *your* story? You could tell this was a bit loose for him, no doubt the grid of this land he had in his head didn't allow for all, only some, divagations, & there was no reason for us to be there, or all reason; he seemed disconcerted to have an audience, we felt like eavesdroppers. But you could see him swallow his pride, if that's the word, & very kindly he began to point out familiar landmarks, each one, this being the region it was, an evidence of the general condition of this place in this century -- phototropism -- indicating first of all the 90-year-old cypresses, then pointing to a dark cluster we knew to be Rich Pozzi's barn & cowshed.

We left all that behind & went back to the house for something to eat. Not that he appeared hungry, though he ate what was put in front of him, without noticing what as far as one could tell, -- but we needed something to eat while he went on talking. Nothing stopped him: even the TV, so that we had this synchronous phenomenon, him filling us in on how the Incas had plotted their earthworks from balloons filled with hot air while something called Critics at Large on the idiot-box introduced us to self-styled responsible men who went through the motions of wrangling over a viewer's letter which challenged them to compare the work of Charles Chaplin, Glenway Westcott & Paul Cezanne. One considered that Westcott & Cezanne bore comparison, while the

other agreed, with this qualification, that Cezanne ought to be ruled out. We waited for them to state their grounds but nothing followed. It was hard, given these rules, to avoid the impression that while one of them was undersized, ugly & with an unpleasantly shrill voice, the other was indistinguishable.

Then, with the fire crackling in the stove, the kerosene lamp lit -- the wind had taken down the power lines -- we gathered round the piano, which our unbidden guest (no less a guest for that) remarked was an instrument scarcely older than the house that contained it. I was growing weary, as one will, of talk -- after a while, the ums & ahs, the gulps, the glottal droppings, the sense of one's time being wasted, like some mimesis of listening to the boss, all the reasons for finding refuge in that other brilliant discovery of the species, the written word, were pressing in on me, perhaps a function of my alienation, but then, *he* was the intruder. I began to long for that use of language that human beings, before it was found, no doubt longed for in the same way -- Gee, if only we could conceive of figures, written down, that would stand for these sounds that crop up in our mouths. Revision would then be possible, & books. But of course, that was all in the past, there *are* books, hence this air-man's erudition.

Well, the books we had before us were sheet-music -- rough approximations of the even rougher phenomena of individual voice. I prefer to sing in the key of C, rough universal that that is, a continuous oscillation between unidentifiable points as any chord must be. This is my Cretan lyre, I told him. Only trouble was, he insisted on talking the lyrics, rather than sing along with us.

I looked at her. She looked at me. After all, he was the name of our mutual glance. After all, it was my night to rave.

So I played the talkin' blues.

# Charles Simic

## THE OBJECT

A kind of window  
you can only look through  
with eyes closed

\*

at such late hour  
and I went searching  
for a window-washer

I went asking everywhere  
for the master of vertigo

\*

they pointed out the object  
which is his bucket  
which is the rope and knot

by which he ties himself  
one notch below  
the ineffable

## POEM

Ah the great furniture mover  
I see him trot ahead of me  
with a huge load on his back  
I see him bent with his terrific backache

wherever I turn he's got a chair  
waiting for me a table in the middle  
of a meadow a mattress in the sky  
a hooded lamp beckoning from the woods

I want to catch up with him  
but he's so quick so elusive  
all I see is his shadow growing large  
against the moon the sound of his feet

fading away at times I think I'm  
up there tottering with the junk  
bound by a rope among the pots and pans  
in the heights the phantom heights

# Steve Fredman

could I afford to pay for the repair to our car?  
how had I managed the others thus far?

the head mechanic offered a deal: pay for parts,  
work on my own out back. But on the way

over to a woman's mother's house  
the other mechanics question my need.

we decided to either buy a new car or fix this,  
I say, implying we've used-up our money.

when we get to the house we're naked, wet,  
swam or are going to, have to wrap in towels

to meet her mother. Once upstairs,  
after introductions the mother points to her husband's

epitaph on the wall -- he died in 1930,  
at 28 -- and recites it to us.

I dreamt I took my car to the shop.  
I dreamt my mother & father came for a visit.

I dreamt I wrote a review of someone's book.  
I dreamt we talked about a vacation.

I dreamt I went to work.  
I dreamt I went to school.

I dreamt I decided what to do.  
I dreamt you wanted to go but I didn't.

I dreamt us in bed with everyone.  
I dreamt my penis was a hundred miles long.

This man was your father & my mother,  
he died before we were born.

He died right at the start of the Continual War.  
He died when a jacked-up car collapsed.

He died and she still talks about him  
one floor above the swimming pool.

# MICHAEL PALMER'S ORDER

THE CIRCULAR GATES, Michael Palmer, Black Sparrow Press,  
Los Angeles, 1974.

Opposing Aristotle is one of the prime spiritual disciplines of our time. To take a most obvious example: modern physics says a thing can both be and not be at the same time. Michael Palmer's use of rime is of this order: it is both employed and denied at the same time.

She it is who sleeps in my ear...  
I count the white beads out of fear

and the numbers are signs  
of a series that's been memorised

Flat stones and a man resembling a goat  
Another black bird that knows how to float

The words are learned by word of mouth  
(In her absence he

rides the horse backwards  
into the burning house)

The rime both is and isn't the point: it's absurd and unavoidable. The situation is analogous to the appearance of a friend in a dream: we know that person represents both the friend and ourselves -- is there a way to disentangle this absurdity? Clearly, no. We have to accept both attitudes in their truth and falsity, in order to apprehend the integrity the dream clearly is. The same applies to Michael Palmer's use of rime, a satisfying friend jarred out of the context of the friendship. So that we become aware of the multitude of interplays between figure and ground, truth and falsity -- within the integrity of the poem.

To me the most striking aspect of Palmer's poetry is his composition. Through a subtle and rigorous (though not forecast) use of linguistic elements he opens his composition to situations analogous to those explored in contemporary art and music. As will become evident, his manner of composing is very different from that of Jackson MacLow, Clark Coolidge, David Antin, Concrete Poets or others we associate with the encounter between these media.

I think, for instance, of the flags and targets of Jasper Johns, where the whole painting has to be read at once. The texture of the surface tells us the figure both is and isn't the subject. It's both a sign and a painting, and the vibration of our expectations between the two states tells us how we've divided up the realm of *vision* into mutually exclusive territories. Within a poem of Palmer's there will often be language we hear as poetic juxtaposed with some we hear as prosaic, and we become aware of how we divide the unity of speech into exclusive sections. In its "combination romantic/and geometrical landscape" the poem "Chinese Hours" illustrates this beautifully. Here is an excerpt:

An orange box is sleeping under the bridge  
according to the strictest principles  
of division; a fisherman  
at the wrong end. Moving west  
we arrive at Paris  
and feel vaguely threatened

by the lights. There is an overall

wetness  
to the Empire State this morning

it's reasonable to guess  
lots of death coming down

This sectioning-off is a diminution of our powers of speech -- no matter which section we speak from (poetic, scientific, philosophical, technical, everyday, etc.) -- and the reintegration Palmer performs astonishes us at every turn with its discovery for larger contexts for words to inhabit.

On the one hand Palmer seems an epitome of Barthes' description (WRITING DEGREE ZERO) of 'modern' poets, in the terrifying isolation of each word -- outside a possibility of discourse. On the other hand, since this poetry is not random, found, or automatic, but evidences a careful attention -- can we read it as an imaginary projection of the movement of attention? An attention that continues to insist on the absolute thingness of each element it proposes, repeatedly exposing any parallelism -- from metaphor to rime -- as a false resolution. In attention (outside the bounds of logic), one is always beginning, beginning and beginning, and no 'ending' fits.

We were going to discuss the weather  
using a book listing all the streets

in the order of the succession  
of the presidents. And the capitol

named after an extinct animal  
with what seem now to be

oversized teeth. It was warm  
along the coast. It rained.

There were narrow furrows of rock  
and lines from bottom to top

and placed between two equal lights  
an equal light and dark

What do we accomplish, the poetry seems to ask, by saying one thing in terms of another (an act of translation), other than a blunting of the force by which we engage each? So this poetry is scrupulously involved with the act of appearance of words from the unspoken, and in that ordinary manifestation, denies the logical framework we normally construct over the unspoken to keep us unaware of its call and our need to respond.

This mode of composition is familiar in contemporary music. In the music of Karlheinz Stockhausen the element of timbre has an encompassing significance. We are presented with a sound (say,

in STIMMUNG or FROM THE SEVEN DAYS) and allowed to experience a wealth of overtones that give many levels of substance to the experience. Another sound and its overtones follow. We are given the complexity of ringings the juxtaposition is, and then these die into the being of this second sound. The sounds are not organized along traditional harmonic modes of association, so that classical phantasy of discourse is not maintained. Stockhausen says to Jonathan Cott (in STOCKHAUSEN CONVERSATIONS WITH THE COMPOSER):

Our music represents models of elements that are very heterogenous and seemingly unmatchable, where individual characteristics are very strong and there's mutual respect. These are complementary societies and structures in which one really supports the other by being very strongly what one is rather than becoming the same as the other. And the intermodulation goes so far that it ultimately creates new species, which aren't a synthesis in the old sense where components disappear, but on the contrary, where the components are quite visible and complete each other. One thing completes the other, and that creates an ascending spiral movement and a cohesion -- systems become coherent.

It's very difficult technically to go beyond collage, to modulate one event with another without destroying it, really discovering those original qualities of something which are most characteristic and which are strong enough to be matched with the stronger characteristics of something else -- leading to real symbiosis. It's necessary to compose strong subjects. In America the music that's most praised has done away with all musical subjects. Cage is the example of collage music where everything is just thrown in one pot and you see what happens. . . . There's a natural differentiation among things, and if you just leave them the way they fall then they function the way they are, which means some of these elements immediately oppress and dominate others, even acoustically cover others. What remains in your head after hearing such a piece are these few elements which are the most redundant. If there's no choice, then things create their own hierarchy. If you don't want to balance out something, you wind up with a non-integrated situation.

In Palmer's poetry we find this "metacollage" (Stockhausen's term). Language comes in from various sources, and yet elements don't override each other. At the phrase-, morpheme- and phoneme-levels a continual balancing is taking place: we are allowed to experience each element, and feel it in relation to the others. He is careful in just the sense Stockhausen mentions. What distinguishes this writing from cut-ups, chance and other collage methods is something very subtle, but immediately perceived. The difference may be in what he asks of the elements (words, sounds, phrases) of his poems. "Ok, now you're here, show me how you relate," is how we might hear the poet of the 'Cage' school. But Palmer seems to ask more involving questions: "What are you? Where do you come from? I hear you in a certain relation to other things in the poem -- what does that do to *you*?"

Men without arms their heads in a box  
 I'm sailing the black boat and want you to watch  
 it cross. The imaginary animals  
 circle the water. Four legs dance  
 in a clam. I love the blueness of the water  
 and how the figures ("the pale bodies") bend  
 toward transparency, so that it becomes harder  
 from here to see them clearly  
 and to distinguish what seems to be  
 the beginning of the story from the end

I want to consider Michael Palmer in relation to Aristotle's categories of *parataxis* ('placed-beside') and *hypotaxis* ('placed-beneath'), as modes of ordering. Eric Havelock (PREFACE TO PLATO) locates the change from an oral to a philosophical culture in Plato's expulsion of the Poets from the Republic. This was the introduction of hypotactic (analytic, sequential) thinking; rejecting the older parataxis for its use of *mimesis*: one can't *begin* to know, if one is enthralled with (and therefore identifies with) the song. Plato introduces the copula and a syntactic victory is achieved: the neuter present -- into which the members of the categories are eternally gathered.

Havelock on parataxis in Homeric poetry:

If the saga has to be composed of doings and happenings, it is equally true that these can occur only in a series in which the separate doings are so to speak self-contained, each of them in turn registering an impact upon the audience, who identify them successively without attempting to organise them reflectively in groups within which subordinate acts are attached to principal acts. The world-order will in general be that of time; the connection, implicit or explicit, between each doing will be 'and then'. . . . In short, the rhythmic record in its very nature constitutes a 'many': it cannot submit to that abstract organisation which groups 'manys' into 'one'.

The images evoked in the verbs and in the nouns succeed each other paratactically; each unit of meaning is self-subsistent; the linkage is essentially that which is rendered possible by adding fresh words which exploit or vary associations already present in previous words.

In Palmer (whose poetry is often very tender and domestic), there is almost a fierce return to the equalizing of the paratactic condition. Every hierarchy, every parallelism, that we presuppose as embodying meaning, he breaks open. Which leaves a void, a balancing, and a new dance. The dance is 'mimetic', but in a special sense Merleau-Ponty helps to elucidate: "successful communication occurs only if the listener, instead of following the verbal chain link by link, on his own account resumes the other's linguistic gesticulation and carries it further. The 'clarity' of language is of a perceptual order." (THE PROSE OF THE WORLD)

If I go to sleep empty  
 it's in order not to dream

More of everything like motion  
 and much less sun

today. More history than today  
As I say so tears come into my eyes

. . .

We are meant to catch each phrase like a medicine ball, feeling by the weight and direction of its impact where it would fall -- and then step sideways (the act of our catching it having completely changed its intended trajectory) and return it. This seems an awkward dance in the description, but the balls aren't that heavy -- and one learns to compensate quickly.

---

and placed between two equal lights  
an equal light and dark

Freud re-introduced parataxis into Western thought, as something *meaningful*. What we call the unconscious is that paratactic movement of the mind by association, rather than by analysis. However Freud still has to perform his analysis upon the paratactic material to render up its meaning. John Cage would just let it be. Nothing can be said in an oral (e.g. Homeric) culture which doesn't have meaning. The proposition (or super-stition, as Robert Duncan calls it) of meaninglessness, the act of disdain which is *not hearing*, is what commands the Herculean Freud to brave the task of cleaning-out the stables. For Palmer, all language is available, not as the cute irony 'found' poetry often turns out to be, but as gestures which deliver up their intent, 'and then' are succeeded by the next association.

Palmer will court hypotaxis, introducing false stories, 'endings', parallelism and other rhetorical devices -- only to subvert them and point-up their essential arbitrariness. He finds the superficiality, the *solution* that any hypotactic order proposes itself as, fascinating. On the other hand, the paratactic situation, where anything can follow, yields to the sense that *nothing follows*: and so Palmer is excited by the primary apprehension of Stein and Creeley, "one and one and one."

To learn what to say to unlearn  
The order of islands here

The number of fingers  
made from ideas

certain Bulgaria anywhere  
grounds stairway statement

normal nature cases  
Visitors from the Dog Star

filling up the house  
Words for *are* and *were not*

If I knew it's what I thought  
If I knew it's what I thought

If I knew it's what I thought  
it was

Homer's poetry held paradigms of tribal knowledge (techne) in their most memorable and easily-identifiable-with form: heroic action;

great music with the heavy downbeat of the lyre. Palmer's poetry holds paradigms of language in a form that keeps reminding us of their essence *qua* language. As the modern study of language (Stein, Wittgenstein, Saussure, Heidegger, etc, etc) reveals submerged strata of meaning to us, and we begin to understand (as probably every age of vital creation does) how fully language 'houses' being, Michael Palmer's poetry seems uniquely to occupy the ground where this new knowledge disengages itself from the old. And yet it contains the old, composed anew. And yet...and yet it is poetry.

### III

#### Short Meditation on Circular Gates

I can take a circular gate first as a simple closed curve one steps thru or into. Entering thru a circle rather than the normal rectangle--one such circle the visual (or any perceptual) field. On entry the poem is first to be apprehended as a circular whole its contents work to deny.

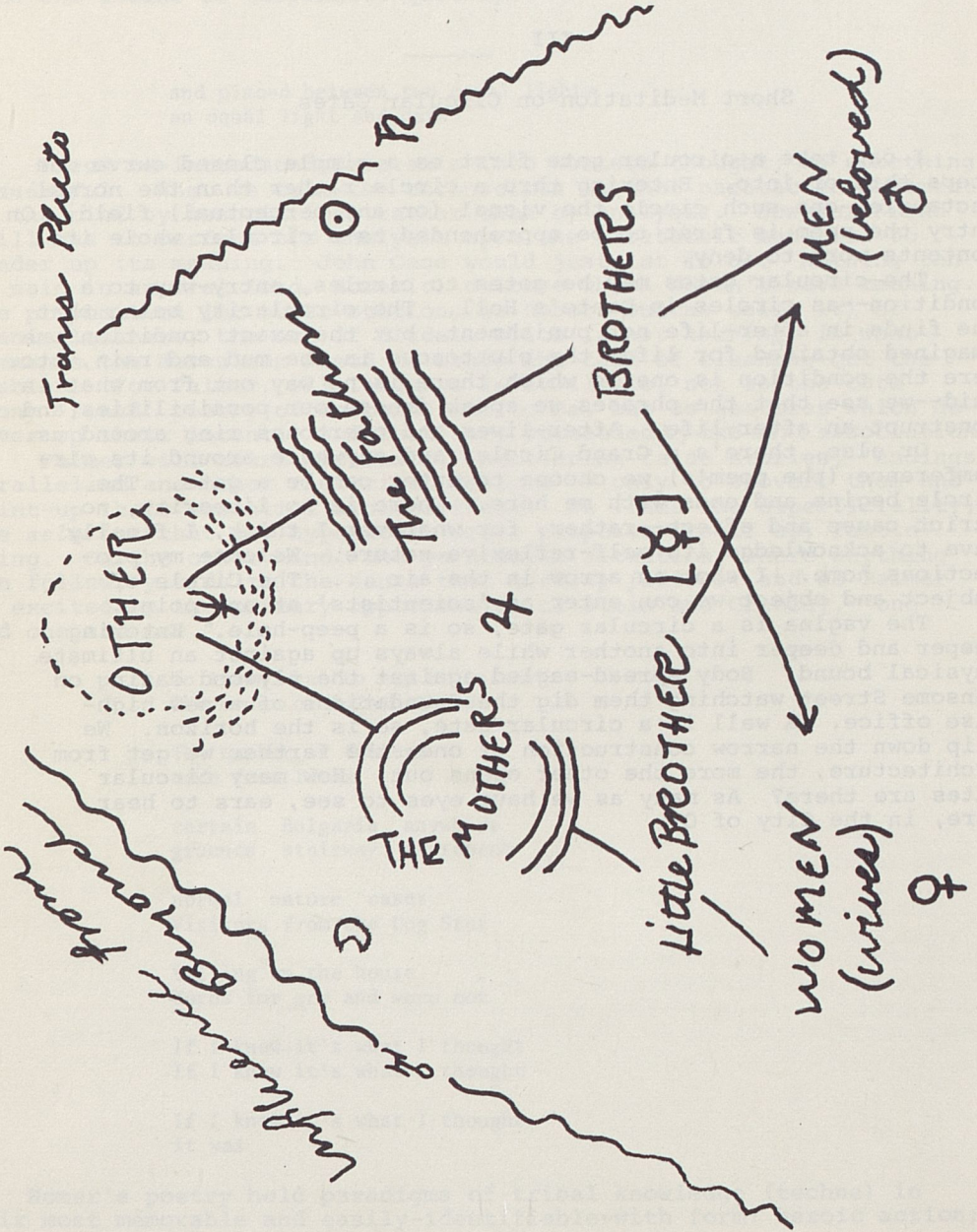
The circular gates may be gates to circles, entry-way to a condition--as circles in Dante's Hell. The circularity being that one finds in after-life not punishment, but the exact condition one imagined obtained for life: the gluttonous in the mud and rain, etc. Here the condition is one in which there is no way out from what is said--we see that the phrases we speak freeze our possibilities and construct an after-life. After-lives and overtones ring around us.

Or else, there's a Grand Circle, and anywhere around its circumference (the poem's) we choose to enter can be a gate. The Circle begins and ends with me here. There is no linearity, no strict cause and effect--rather, for whatever I think, I finally have to acknowledge its self-reflexive nature. Welcome my projections home. I shot an arrow in the air ... The Circle of subject and object we can enter as 'scientists' at any point.

The vagina is a circular gate, so is a peep-hole. Entering deeper and deeper into another while always up against an ultimate physical bound. Body spread-eagled against the plywood casing on Sansome Street watching them dig the foundations of a new high-rise office. A well is a circular gate, so is the horizon. We slip down the narrow construction of one; the farther we get from architecture, the more the other opens out. How many circular gates are there? As many as we have eyes to see, ears to hear, here, in the City of O.

# Tom Meyer

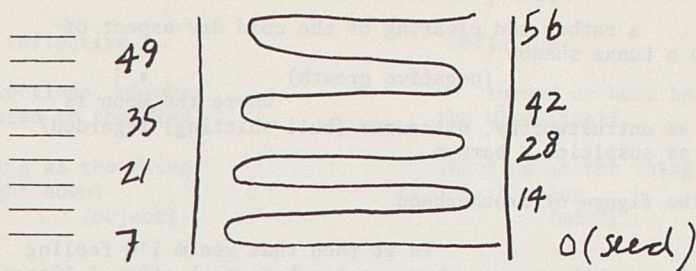
FROM A JULY NOTEBOOK



9 July 75

Is our life as Time (the Somatic figure of Chronos) a field plowed by an ox

(aleph-- the initial soundless position of utterance?)



boustrophedon -- the oxturns at the fieldedge every 7 years

Freud: *The Interpretation of Dreams* (The Psychology of the Dream Process) p. 510

Thinking is indeed nothing but a substitute for the hallucinatory wish; and if dream is called wish-fulfillment, this becomes something self-evident, since nothing but a wish can impel our psychic apparatus to activity.

wish -- a function

of faery

hallucinatory wish --

a 'wandering wish'

alucinatio --

no 'fixed bound' however

not an illusion

WISH = OE wyscan: -- O Teut \*wunskjan, f\* wunskā, --skó--; cf Skr vāñchā: -- \* wanskā-, f base \* wen

to love dear,

love, desire

Wone ON vān hope, expectation; opinion, belief

Resources, abundance, wealth

[see illustration opposite]

Little Brother has of course none of the 'authority' men give women or The Fathers.

Age, I guess, is the 1st factor since he is younger

= projection as a way to the Other

= structure (limit: formbound in Time) as a locus for the Other

= The Social, the Expansive aspect  
of community; the 'good'

AntiIntellectualism (intellectual  
Bullshit) is a most peculiar manifestation

a rather odd clearing of the cold dry aspect of  
Saturn to a Lunar shadow

(negative growth)

where the Moon is  
regarded as untrustworthy, discourse (bull-shitting) regarded/  
rejected as suspicion & barren

is the figure of Brotherhood

Is it then that realm I'm feeling  
excluded from -- the *agora*, where we speak to each other & listen?

A kind of clouded Mercury/Hermes  
situation? An articulation but no consistent command of the terms  
of such articulation

Who is Little Brother? The 'Folk' aspect  
of 'Epic'

The Heroes childhood?  
or the Shaman's?

Epic - hero

'Prophecy' - shaman

(as distinct from *epos*)

A mercurial figure in that both Epic & Prophecy are acts/  
instances of transmission as a mode of instruction.

I wonder, is this me wanting my 'acts'  
to lead in a prophetic rather than epic mode?

That each gesture  
bear the character of itself Beyond, rather than the *concern*

Time is perhaps the figure whose  
inexplicable character generates these things

Little Brother

younger regarded as  
'not yet', in such an assumption lies the presumption that little  
Brother will join the Men in a way that dissolves the claims of  
his past among the Mothers or Woods

my instinct is to fight such a thing,  
while still longing for a place (an Eros) in that World

Epic & Prophecy are characters of

Time

Epic - history  
Prophecy - metahistorical

Thinking

|  
Epic

'Hallucinatory wish'

|  
Prophecy

HISTORY  
THINKING

PROPHECY  
HALLUCINATORY WISH

retrojection

projection

reflective

reflexive

reflections, *objects*  
presented to the Mind

turned or bent back upon  
the Mind itself

Thinking as the Thing  
thought about  
(object)

Thinking as the Thing  
thinking  
(mind)

? [ illusion

hallucination

something there but mistaken  
for something else

can we say the hallucination  
always unsettles with its  
specific not-there yet you  
see it there  
quality

illusion--say in the Movie Dr Zhivago, Yuri sees 'his wife, foster-  
father, & son' walking in the snow toward him, they 'turn out to be'  
3 peasants, 'strangers'.

hallucination--The appearance of the Virgin to three young girls in  
a field

[is hallucination where the Mind wanders into the visible world?

Both hallucination & illusion must be functions of projection &  
to some extent WISH

illusion - the wish for what can be known

hallucination - the wish for the Other, which is only a  
function of the known when or after it occurs providing an object for  
reflection

&

reflexion IF the wandering remain *paratactic* .

Illusion must be a horizontal & hallucination a vertical

Horizontal our horizon

Hallucination leaves nothing in its wake but the fact of its  
occurrence, all evidence is a matter of only disposition which is true  
of illusion, however there the dispelled illusions offers up deflecting  
events, actuals that are accepted for what they seemed to be, or were  
seen as.

As projection, they are both texts we exact accuracies of  
the Self from, where Self is a function of WISH

perhaps I must postulate a 'hallucinatory  
function' for illusion which would involve the allowing of the illusion  
to operate as hallucination where hallucination is the Wandering Capacity  
of Mind or Thinking as a paratactic function, opposed at points to  
periodicity.

I must then regard the Work as not the *Vision* but the *Capacity* for *Vision* which initially is dependent upon some initial *Vision*. Without which, it is futile to convince anyone of the *Capacity* for same.

Adding here that quality of *unique, individual* *Vision* which is Prophetic not Epic

Epos must be 'shared' before  
it rises to that status

SHARED (WITNESSED)---> epos

relating (narrative)

whereas, the Prophetic is the thing which is shared *after* its revelation

PROPHETIC---> shared

Both apparently seek to engage the attention of their listener/reader as a witness but the Common Body lies in each case on opposite sides of the witnessing

as Past & Forward Time.

In the Epic, then would we share (or celebrate in common) the past as a function of the future as a continuity

& in the Prophetic share the OTHER (which is beyond Experience except as 'difference') as a function of the future as discontinuity

The Prophetic inter/disrupts [vertical]

The Epic continues

Epos then as a dynamic of the Before, after & forward

Prophetic the dynamic of the Before in front of us.

Before an interesting term: it has the power to mean the thing which came *before* this

A before B

& also can mean that which lies *before* us

C is before B

Time & Locus

Time -- coming before

Locus -- coming in front of

Before I went to town I prepared for what was before me [in] town.

The 'verbs' insistence on tenses flexes the preposition back into an orderly scheme.

Before me I beheld an angel  
before I told you my vision

that future function of *before* must be the internal assumption being *led* (following)

What is the intricate structure of tense that the preposition has?

The preposition if seen as having a 'tense' must then have a paratactic property



The café life, sitting and screaming; or the clouded life under both heels. Michael I liked the play very much, maybe too much, it must have been the nakedness. Robert I'm worried about your lower back during that long plane ride; I hope the stop on Fiji will help. David I forgot to credit you for the story I swallowed - forgive me, they were delicious. And Michael (another Michael) I wonder if it wouldn't be better not to think about the money but just to go spend August in Maine with that painter. She even invited you.

### DANCE OF THE BEES (JULY)

Most people know nothing about polarized light

The scaffold is coming down  
and the wind up

but the new silence laws will have a calming effect

Do you remember the winter of the stunned  
hummingbirds  
he asks for the third time, how dogs can

unlearn to chase cats  
and cats be taught

to ignore flowering plants  
We're moving carefully backward

through the hot weather  
Soon it won't quite have begun

THE MEADOW

Reassembling a meadow

THE MEADOW

Categorically  
he would have us believe

that this isn't a language after all  
that's been decoded

but something fixed  
in the purpose of its telling

THE MEADOW

A message so to speak  
limited to its function

THE MEADOW

...distinguished from a language precisely  
by the invariable correlation of its signs  
to the reality they signify

THE MEADOW

I roll off the word  
in the aging process

If I had a sister  
I wouldn't like her

(with good reason)  
Guests on the other hand

are always provided with fresh towels  
and a new bar of soap

If we go on writing books  
no one will notice

And if we stop  
two persons will notice

Each morning the daily paper  
will be left at your door

free of charge  
This is like a meadow

## THE MEADOW

for Gottfried Benn

In the hours of naming  
the name of the hours

two  
letters to open things

but five to unfold them  
a double *t* for *tongue*

an embarkation  
an accounting

a sober falling backward  
(and almost upward)

with tongue doubled  
to no tongue

(and almost upward  
'On the song's

forehead an occasional  
mirror would open'))

## THE MEADOW

The mother explained that her 4 year old daughter  
had 4 imaginary friends. She had grown tired of  
one of them and 'killed him off,' but soon began  
to miss him. Now she was bringing him back to life,  
slowly, in an elaborate hospital.

THE MEADOW

for the woman who kicked her dog,  
breaking a toe

The radical disinvention of butterflies  
so that where they once went as escorts  
the air is empty

THE MEADOW

for Robert Duncan

Resembling a meadow  
'folded in all thought'  
a lamp is lit only vaguely remembered  
for its form, an elephant  
of pale blue porcelain  
with trunk curved upward  
lighting a room a gift  
toward a featureless room  
whose walls are lined with children's books  
whose readers are unable to read



The distinctive phenomena of the hut: how  
increasingly this  
shall  
seem as a monad  
is not  
as yet  
disclosed.

A sprig of maple bough  
pushes in  
the window  
full of leaves.

I place  
the central  
stone  
upon  
the mat.

I sit on cushions in the hut  
across  
from the window.

The "being" of  
the items  
never comes  
apart  
from  
the items.

It is hidden  
and yet  
can in  
principle be  
disclosed.

The items are hidden in boxes bags or shells  
or  
not yet having attained  
an appropriate arrangement  
lie out about other items  
busy visibly though motionless  
about the foot of the milk stool  
or near a stone.

Each item waits  
for its "being"  
to arrive

but out of *what*?

Once in the new arrangement or  
if ordered  
in  
an  
ambiguous order

the "beings" flicker about among the items.

Odd window-curtain flickerings  
emerge  
from out of *what*?

All the old tunes  
sing once more.

All the old dimensions  
open about the stones.

The edges of the orders abrupt  
before  
an  
indeterminate  
source.

It is wide. Illimitable.

We are looking  
at the dark.

At night  
to the west  
where the pheasants

above the milkweed  
you are looking  
at the dark.

Lightning bug phenomena.

When I pause sing slow poise  
before the dark  
of the valley

or when permit frequent  
minute  
intervals  
edges of silence  
about the sound  
of words  
in their concreteness...

I gather all my items into the hut  
each in its old concreteness.

The new concreteness  
of what it is  
not yet determined  
hence

its "being"  
is not  
disclosed.

I sit in the hut  
doing some  
kind of  
"contemplative exercise"  
but this is fake  
convenience. I sit  
before  
the stone.  
But this is too solemn  
a way  
of introducing a stone  
in the place of  
the name for it.

Thunder rumbles off from what direction.

Midday airplane rumbling  
coasting.  
Wind.  
Bird song.

Arriving.  
Overwhelming.

From *what*?

Notion:

When "done"  
that is  
at  
some  
later time  
after  
many items have  
been  
variously shuffled about  
or placed in a manner suggesting a certain arrangement  
almost disclosed  
if anyone should sit in the seat where in fact  
I shall often have been sitting  
while working out the placement  
and arrangement  
in the hut  
he  
should become aligned  
in a certain manner.

You must come into alignment  
with the work  
otherwise

the "spirits" which rise  
from the stone  
are not of my doing.

In any case the sources  
are dark.

The old magistros  
reel in the dark  
winding the airplanes in  
across  
the upper currents.

In Kelly's fantasy  
the march of religious forms  
and societies  
moves across Asia  
according to directives  
or plots  
of wise magistros  
east of the Caucasus  
allowing the Christians to advance only thus far, then  
to recede  
allowing the Buddhists further,  
wedging the Arabs  
between.

In any case there would be a possible geometry  
meting out the doctrines  
according to the landforms  
granting  
alternate readings of "being"  
according to the destinies  
of hordes.

All these *readings*  
rise out of *what*?

They do not occur  
apart from the landforms.  
I borrow Ed Dorn's term for it.  
The way Apache babies were initiate  
according to Dorn  
from birth  
initiate  
to the landform.

"Being"  
is  
in every case  
the "being"  
of  
some item.



There is an arbitrary thronging  
of self-suggestive texts  
each  
with its document  
to be the next thing read. Granted  
we read the world  
what recommends the sequence?  
Fate is ominous.  
The bare back horses calm down  
as the event  
for which their breaking loose was propitious is  
resolved upon.  
Thus it is read.  
To read and to write are one.

"It only means that you shall conquer the world."

ARTEMIS

The simple facts  
appear  
in a stunning  
manner.

Fresh  
recurrent there is  
rebirth. Generations  
die out and  
there are new  
generations. H.D.  
notices  
flowers between  
the railroad tracks  
blossoming  
during  
the war  
in London  
in the constantly present demand. Wallace Stevens  
notices  
a star  
that outlasts  
war.

Now I am older and  
recurrent phenomena appear  
more  
comprehensible, more  
mysterious.

I mean something extra  
drops away  
and the facts themselves

reveal something  
I had not thought so apparently  
to be there.

Letting speech  
relax  
and deepen

the way the body  
settles  
in gravity  
takes over  
the weight of the body  
belongs to it the air  
runs through all our parts each  
breath  
interfuses  
the world.

We are hung  
suspended  
and in that respect the interconnections  
pre-exist their recognitions. This is not  
*visionary*  
in any *special* sense.

I don't want to attain  
any longer any  
*special*  
condition of the mind  
and yet this is so because I see now  
there is no  
*natural*  
stand point  
in the sense of something common  
something previous  
some recognition  
earlier than thought  
common to all.

Primordial laughter.

Thick mist  
out  
the cabin  
window  
going through the trees.

Some un-  
familiar animal call  
out of the mist  
moving  
close  
to the cabin.

We have already recognized  
the startling raucous

call of the tender  
deer so  
that's not it.

Maybe raccoons.

Raccoons, possibly.

Language  
of the goddesses.

The mind is so easily struck dumb. I become  
thrown out of balance so easily  
loosely  
speaking  
of the goddesses.

Golden quivers.

She is tall  
and a shaft  
of light.

Suddenly I become a member of an alien company.  
Strange negotiations  
proceed in a language  
similar to one I know  
but slightly *off*. The content  
is utterly  
foreign to me. I am naive again  
and have to improvise impromptu  
recognitions, dead-reckoning-like,  
just to go on listening.

She is like light  
and larger than the whole forest altogether  
my field notes tell me.

She produces  
from the material of the forest--  
earth, rock, wood, mist, seasonal  
transformations-- all  
the small wood beasts.

But she also  
in the hymns and old accountings  
is said to stalk in the hunt with rampant joy  
letting her arrows fly by day  
among the panicking animals--  
promiscuous slaughter.

One day the deer  
stopped on the rocky  
road outside the cabin  
looking, we thought, for a salt-lick  
or liking the taste  
of the stones.



We are standing  
where the wave pulls back  
on shifty sands.

I am standing  
on a *plank*.

2

They are not moods.

Perhaps these changes more are  
motions in the substance of a glass.

Sludge. Stuff. Muck. Bits. Parts.

It is not a new kind of water not  
something gaseous or *like* something  
pervasive like gas is

Not some new rock or odd  
possibility like stone not  
that it glitters not that it remains  
the same  
in appearance  
even when before it  
all else  
suffers change

It is not  
discriminated  
out  
of all else which *is*  
discriminated  
out

We engage  
its circularity.

We introduce it  
but then refuse it. It  
remains. We  
remain with it.

We are riding  
out  
on the mountain.

He gazes across the wood.

The measured  
portion  
of the dark  
shapes  
the rock pile.

The rocks are damp  
and dark. A leaf  
leans  
at the window.

Scattered  
parts  
of clam shells showing  
the shaded purple  
inner parts  
of clam shells rest  
in a heap.

Small white stones spread out.

Dark  
release  
release  
the dark.

Red stones shine on the shells.

Grey shells black shells white shells heap.

Reliefless shadowing of things  
in the hut. Not  
plain. Not at all plain. Not at all  
clear. Not at all well founded. Not  
disclosed.

The explanations are not  
explained.

All the scholars  
become so small  
each now sits on a rock.

There is an enormous  
heap of tiny stones and  
the ledges where each  
of these exposed stones shows  
to the partial window light

one scholar

become that small  
sits out  
and cooks one fish.

I become  
the moonlit air.

The crescent of the new moon  
hangs  
in the west  
between the end  
of the forest and  
the cliff  
behind which  
the sun just set.

I am not a local point out  
in space there I am the whole  
air I am blue clear  
and broad.

I journey through  
myself.

I gape across the wood.

And *things*

which are called by the names of  
*things*  
slant along the penetration of my glance  
into the open light  
along the hill.

POP!

Deer hide out. A bug  
with red  
cross-marks  
climbs  
a natural  
stone.

I am spread thin a mist  
smothering the sight  
of the forest  
and  
things  
recommend them-  
selves  
as  
swelling  
black  
hulls.

Wet, the roof leaks. Puddles  
stain the wood grain. Odors  
grow out from the rug.

In the camel-skin satchel  
sopping so many days white  
mist-like fungus growths  
spread over hidden stones.

Dank. Dark. Thick.

Mint leaves ring the cushion and repel  
ants  
to whom  
    mint  
is abhorrent.

The ants no longer come close  
when I sit  
in the hut.

# THE ARTISAN

I am sitting  
in the office  
on the hill  
going up  
from town

and the light  
is delightful  
even though the trees are very thin  
and it is a warm day  
and this morning  
when we were sitting out on the platform  
in front of the house  
the wind blew cold.

I was sitting in the hut and the sun  
has moved so far to the south now the sunlight  
comes into the hut  
through the south window  
at noon.

I am raunchy, anxious, upset. Thoughts  
root up  
jar and thrash

and I have only to wait  
in the minute spaces between them  
seeking release.

In the old days I would say  
seek the sun.

I seek myself as if I sought for the sun.

But I am no sun now.

I am there  
like a wall  
rising up and expanding in the dark  
in back of  
the scintillating nervous radiation  
animates the ground  
in which thoughts sprout.

They sprout and sprout  
from invisible root  
contradictions

and the sun is too bright in here.

\*

An elephant  
is walking through the woods  
thrashing the trees.

The leaves are loose and dry  
and as he passes  
he smashes the tree trunks

with his elephant trunk  
and the dry leaves shake loose.

The soul cannot pry loose  
and the elephant  
becomes the whole sky.

I imagine an elephant  
thrashing in the woods  
with his trunk  
and scattering the forest  
beside him as he lunges and storms  
through the woods  
in the direction of the hunters.

I am like a wall.

I stop and  
stop to examine but no I cannot stop  
and I am like a wall  
and the wall grows tall  
and wide

and the energies are thrashing  
in front  
and the mind is bristling  
to contain itself.

\*

The elephant is standing  
in the still sky  
and regains the majestic  
posture  
of his marching.

This hut is like a bottle  
or like some box  
and the intricate hands  
of some Chinese artisan  
manipulate the gems.

He has magical servants to work for him--  
humanoid genii or gnomes  
who enter the box  
and place  
items  
on the stones for him.

But this morning the artisan is disturbed  
in his energies  
and seeks to calm the winds  
and he orders the movements of his elephants  
to halt post haste  
and the genii have to sit still  
for long forced meditative stages.

I am an elephant  
and I poise myself delicately  
according to some intricate  
training I have received  
at the hands of Chinese artisans.

I poise myself and balance  
on top of a box.

I become minute  
and enter the hut  
and balance  
among the stones.

My body is like a bottle  
and the light  
suffuses the glass  
but bends in its dents and chips  
so particles of the light  
thrash about  
and I have to work to settle all the particles  
at the bottom of the bottle.  
as though the light were substance  
and I must summon my ten thousand artisans  
to assemble the luminous parts  
and drop them  
with minute preciseness  
each in its place  
at the bottle bottom.

Then the particles of light begin to shine again  
and the bottle becomes my body again.

\*

I am only water now.  
Only flow.

And the light is reductive to water  
and the bottle  
becomes some sac  
and I am a bag of moist organic organizations  
which operate according to some deep law  
and there are circulations  
throughout the space of my body

and I am some elephant  
and the elephant is carrying bottles  
to some Chinese locality.

The bottles are filled with homuncular artisans  
trying to grow large enough each to escape  
the membrane  
of the particle  
in which he is compelled to radiate  
according to some law.

Each artisan operates as the nucleus of some one particle  
and his intelligence scintillates  
fragments of the light. And the whole body shines

on the back of this majestic elephant.

The elephant is walking through the forest  
and it is autumn  
and the sun is hot  
but the wind is blowing the leaves away  
and the artisan  
is cold.

And in order to preserve his bodily temperature  
he performs some dazzling meditation feat  
as he balances  
at the head of his caravan  
and each new tree that passes  
is some new thought that rises  
and offers the possibilities  
of the things which droop from its branches.

I am an artisan  
and I want to gather the gems  
which hang from the trees.

I am a wall  
and all the water that scintillates  
in the great expanse in front of me  
casts its tiny shadows  
against me

I rise  
in back of myself  
and listen  
for the noises  
in the wall.

The sky is like an elephant  
and the wall  
on which the cold wind casts  
the shadows of hanging gems  
and blows the thoughts of artisans  
into so many particles  
begins itself to loose  
and yield its elements.

Stones and bottles speak  
in the space of the hut.

# Victoria Rathbun

## REPORT FROM BANANA-LAND

Banana-Land is ruled slowly, with a sure and vegetable hand, by five sisters: Oblivia, Vernacula, Pancrea, Anonyma, Calendula. Like Roman empresses, they carry fish in their pockets. They never appear but instead send trucks dispensing pity to all who need it. Few need it.

The climate is always pleasant, with that perfunctory balminess so characteristic of Banana-Land. Baboons exchange assurances of trust, crickets carefully describe their progress through intricate landscapes. Intimate progress of breezes, superficial conversation of the leaves of trees: nothing is hidden and yellow is the order of the day. The sea meets the sky indiscriminately, but discretion is maintained by a blue haze in the crucial zone. The birds have honey in their mouths and the trajectory of their flight is like that of an arrow, with its imperceptible curve. The sun is a blank. Banana light would make you religious.

Fame originates here, along with everything that warms and then burns. But under the umbrella trees everyone is the same -- the famous, the lazy, those who have earned a good reputation in the realm of possibility. Speech is science, science is implicit. So all that can be heard is the faint drone of inference -- the hum of the sun -- bubbling brooks and babbling birds -- clapping of the palm trees -- applauses of the ocean. Pleasure is general and anaesthetics are local. Nothing is sweeter than the companionship of fair-weather friends, except the banana wine that makes us all anonymous.

# WITTGENSTEIN IN PALO ALTO

## Wittgenstein Sees the Hardness of the Soft

Wittgenstein was already an old man when he came to Palo Alto. Like Kerensky he chose to spend his last years at Stanford. Philosophy has its fashions like everything else; by the time he arrived, graduate students already spoke deprecatingly of "Wittgensteinian gestures." While they were all at a festival in Berkeley commemorating the birth of Tarski, the man who defined truth for formal systems, Wittgenstein stayed home and tried to imagine what one of these gestures might be like.

## Wittgenstein Objectively Confronts Every Object

Wittgenstein used to stroll the tree-lined streets of older Palo Alto in the pale summer evenings, liking especially to pause and watch the tennis players in the park. On one of these occasions I remarked that he was walking exactly like Russell. Wittgenstein was delighted. "Which are we to regard as the copy?" he asked. It turned out that we were both on our way to buy ice cream. Wittgenstein was very fond of ice cream and sometimes went to the ice cream parlor just as it opened to ensure being able to get a carton of whatever flavor he wanted. He always agreed with me that the various kinds of fudge ripple (jamocho, vanilla, peppermint, almond), although excellent, suffered from an undeservedly poor advertising campaign.

## Wittgenstein Refuses To Get Involved In Partial Problems, and Takes Flight To A Point of Synoptic View

Wittgenstein was an amateur magician of considerable skill. However, although he was very good at making rabbits disappear into hats, he had some difficulty making them reappear. Russell could always make *his* rabbits reappear. Wittgenstein soon came to regard this as a sign of Russell's limitations as a magician.

Sometimes a flock of birds would come out instead of the expected, but elusive, rabbit. They would hover like question marks, then leave Wittgenstein standing there, empty-handed and -hatted. It was mildly spectacular, the way he had made the problem vanish. No one could see where it had gone. Is seeing an activity? Wittgenstein wondered. ---The I, the I is what is deeply mysterious!

## GOING STRONG

I was going. I was going to go. The train was late but the plane was fine. The bus was hot and the car was unreliable. When it began it took forever and we tied each other up. Then I drank coffee with hot sauce and you had suds and cardboard pie. Everybody was getting old & the food was bad, but the pictures of it on the billboards were terrific. The next city was like the first city except the people spoke the same language. The same blood was racing in the same veins all over the country. We all took photographs of neon & money. The weather was very interesting but although the poetry was often bad, the books had all been read & it was felt that everyone knew something useful about everyone else. So everyone left, and I left everyone behind, including you, to whom I sent a postcard of the Last Supper in 3-D. After all this fuss, I wonder where you thought I was going.

## BEDTIME STORY

Insomniac rancor, silence of the curtains & cackle of the clock. Heat at the knees, at the angle of the ankle, & the cold shoulder. Thinking of people you haven't seen in years makes you want to go look up their telephone number in Chicago or New York. Thinking of projects makes you wriggle. Thinking of lovers makes you insatiable. Thinking of descriptions makes you itch. To switch on the lamp or look at the clock is to give up -- insomnia is a cruelly demanding religion. God has left you alone, you think, in the first person singular. The neighbors have become interesting -- what terrible things they must be doing, to be awake at this hour. Is that a Ferrari in the driveway. No its the man delivering the newspaper. Consciousness is very loud. Viewed from a prone position it seems extremely bogus, but it's too late now. Think of something pure -- the first form without painful associations. The weight of the air. A blank canvas -- too late, someone just put a brush stroke on it. Passion intervenes in language *in* the very act of speaking. So if you try to tell yourself even the sleepest of stories you might as well write off the rest of the night. The city: full of people. The wilderness: full of yourself. The body: it's like you never left. There's a story in this somewhere, & did you look under the pillow.

Rimbaud & his mother are arguing in the kitchen. Her theme is, What Have You Done For Me? He is trying to remind her of something else: What did you do? he asks. I had my husband's head cut off, she admits. There you are says Rimbaud. She wants to make it bleed again. Only her child can do this, by passing his own knife over the wound. Rimbaud will not do it. He is not afraid, but does not want to give his mother the satisfaction of acquiescing to her wish.

Later he meets a man who is selling, he says, the rainbow. Rimbaud has an idea what is in the box but buys it anyway. The man explains that it is necessary to wash the rainbow when the box is opened and sells him four cloths, one for each time it must be washed. This seems reasonable.

Rimbaud carries the box to a marshy plain. Odd plants grow no higher than his knees. The sky is grey -- no birds. It takes him some time to find what he is looking for: a man who lives in the marsh grass. He is a kind of devil and lonely children know him very well. Rimbaud gives him the box. He will know what to do with it.

Rimbaud has a friend, a man who is easily distracted. While Rimbaud was arguing with his mother, he was visible in the sea which formed a background to them, treading water. Now Rimbaud sees him hiding on the dock next to a boat riding very high in the water. There is a man with a knife on the deck of the boat, waiting to jump him. Rimbaud shouts a warning to his friend. A moment later, the man jumps him. What good was the warning? He was still unprepared.

Rimbaud has a lover with blond hair. This boy started a fight by pretending over and over to be stealing a man's bicycle. The man's patience wore out and that was when the fight started. But it was really only a trick to get him to ride it somewhere else.

Rimbaud drank absinthe. He loved it because, mixed with water, its milkiess was every color. It was the color of the sea behind his mother, the grey water of the marshland, the pallor of his lover, the fog that rose behind his eyes.

When I walked into the office the boss was on the telephone. He wore a green suit and white shoes. "We blew it by letting too many people get into the act and our right hand didn't know what our left hand was doing," he said. He was crying. The artist, who didn't believe in accidents or deadlines, was very relaxed. "Don't try to figure your life out," he said when he caught me with a perplexed look on my face. "Just keep filming." I sat down at the machine. Down the hall I could see the two bookkeepers. They were wearing identical red and blue print blouses they had bought when they took a cruise to Mexico. One wore red pants and the other blue. While they watered their lipstick plant, the accountant told them about his ski trip to Colorado. Then one of the secretaries came in. "Would you like to buy some Girl Scout cookies?" she asked. "If I sell thirty-six boxes I get a badge." Suddenly the red light went on. I was out of film.

12-4-75 (DC -- Boston)

## ONE BITE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

The word was in trouble. It couldn't talk, it couldn't walk. It couldn't take the bus. It had to be propped up everywhere it went. It got lost easily and was not reliable. Sometimes it stole things. It fell into bad company.

No one discussed its fate, which now hung in the balance. Everything was always so distractingly ambiguous anyway. There was simply nothing to discuss. After all, everyone knew it was a put-up job.

The word was headed in the wrong direction. Daring raids were made on it. It survived in a sickly condition and could not go out by day. It looked terrible, too, with its scars.

At the turn of a very personal era, the word got lost. It was looked for everywhere. The Baltimore USO Club: Dancing Every Nite. In the lamplight at midnight. In the real tinsel underneath the fake tinsel. In the gesture, and the ritual, and the irresistible attraction of the artificial.

Oh adjective noun of noun, how you were searched for. And you were here all the time, asleep in the heart that jumped into my mouth.

# Jed Rasula

## THE NATURE OF HER WHATNESS

till after the meantime  
"the extreme of the meantime"

me space, you time

((he thumps om his noggin &  
points to his cock

"Aint you seem numb o' my  
perpendiculars?"

"No by gob, that's nuthnn to me"

so his  
grab wrapped his fingers  
around the  
illegible constant . his)  
not hours) . a fartnight  
south from more-than-what

if this is a thread (  
his gesture or himself)  
will she believe it goes  
under that other thread,  
that *she* that  
*only* or *all*) of *him*

of what was it in  
don't you

remember?

"yes-no, I thinks I have do"

"so do, so doe ray me" Andreas Gryphius chortles & snorts

fi fi fiddlee-dee

died is a did with an *eee*

spelled with its on-backwards  
or

who do we know  
to show it to

"what"

"no who:

the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the Between"

which is allegory  
of his snuffbox:

*where,*

followed by an  
allegory mark: ?

"I think your  
head is in the direction  
of my  
scruples

dont you ? dont me ?  
dont  
everybody,  
from him to he ?

just enough  
for a snuff  
or a  
true chew of it  
whose  
litter was a print

under the reiteration tools: " :"  
[ : ]

& without hesitation  
he directed her across the  
most temporal cut  
in all this

in-between .  
past that nozzle  
the paleo-jism,  
hydrant to the exterior  
to wear whose come was going

as use is to a  
chute, as  
must be,  
is  
much  
and  
as

":  
[drop]lets  
-[patie  
-[partic  
+ [each,  
- [p]unge  
- [one] )  
[I] [who  
[t] of hi  
[e] [who  
[... ]  
[his chem  
[learned  
[his com  
[is how)  
[;] which

which is  
the first-principle-partici-  
patory

of and  
that re  
tains its dee  
((( ((( (one ((or the))) other)))  
((( ((( (two) for the))) s) how)))  
((( (three ((to four-five)) six)))  
((( (seven (to eight)) no))) ))))

right here →  
left  
← there

on the  
((in))  
side  
of what's now out side  
of which I am unconvinced

at this point

[ ↑ ]

it needs a  
needs be a  
haircut

are  
(for  
id(e)a  
turning  
[t,sn  
as well  
this his  
and beyond  
[up]  
[t, tied  
shook it  
[he]  
eat it  
[roundn't  
put  
with  
eat)

to who he might-as-well  
tap his pate  
snort his slate  
& be one step  
whose friend is two step  
demo-cousin of 3-step  
hop to it of  
this is language  
is who you  
listen to  
because  
who  
listens to you  
of whom she says  
"he's almost in the fold"

(what-so-over fold she meant)  
& driven suchlike at  
this point to  
such an  
other ecstasy  
of prepositions

his  
story must & does & will  
& goes  
go on  
to its  
inevitable  
its edible  
its wet fold the *in*  
fold

the  
non  
parenthetical

the nascent hypno-growl in the seed

the  
what-recomposed its soil  
so  
its holes underground  
are radishes  
burnpebbles)))

his s(wing comes & s)its  
in its  
elf  
whose hair  
is blond & whose  
person is before me  
of which I must  
learn to say  
his presence *is*  
his presents *are*

decline the penalty & get  
every splatter of the scalding Declension:

*am*  
*are*  
*is*

*was*  
*were*  
*whirr*  
*whirling*

focused only in the mind  
---the seedscape---  
of Horace Scope

& having lasted

*this* long now  
in the non-organization of  
all this prairie-parenthesis  
((((of which, say, one cactus =  
2 barbed parentheses of water))  
not ever of course)  
on the same plateau of squirt))my  
uncle & aunt eat  
rhubarb 3  
meals a day  
Horace] whose

hair is  
post-possibly  
green  
one/third  
of the between  
beyond blue  
(yellow is an  
elbow (the  
color changes  
his mind about  
this matter

tries now  
to find the door  
out of all these  
parentheses  
I've

psychophysical shoelaces  
I've  
got myself bracketed into

I've  
don't  
& you do  
know don't you  
what name this  
knot is  
known by?

hole this  
lace is  
looped thru?

valve?  
value?  
vulva?

even, odd, or cross-ah'd ((no more  
in-between natürlich that's  
all been licked (been

whittled

what

ever it is

says)what

ever you

see

is

the knot

not quite

whatever it

is or

whatever in

Heckler X's

elbow is an

It ??

Is that part of the declension too?

Is it one of the tools?

Is its racket

parenthesis or bracket?

"me space, you time"

but which is me

and who are you ?

["yes . in deed . i'm  
finding yourself in  
this one too" ] whose

tools or toes

get used

to probe or mold

the dust

& muster

sufficient spasm

from a local gendarme

(gender of my spine)

to assimilate the

everywhere my

nuts are

& all this takes

time to be

no less than

one more brain to get it  
all started up by an o-  
cazhunal question about whose  
kindling yr  
mind is?)do you now,  
your k in front or not of a no

& to top it off

& twine its rip

its mind in tWo

w/ a ["W"] a double-you

but where or how does

that leave me,

meow?

if I'm not one of "you",

one of two .

more than that  
is mathematics  
and after what  
ever that is

the declension  
begins:

in the mesa below  
the squirt-plateau  
Horace Scope gropes  
with tender subtle knot-mind Vigor  
hoping for ultimate focus  
on the Third  
of the Between

who turned out to  
going to have been

Me,  
the local,  
mold of local  
substance,

blended bracketed whittled & ogled

Me,  
the true  
delight of  
any ethnologist  
why  
by

jiminy even I

was interested  
in excavating

Me, interested to see  
those bones dug up .

the valve on the hydrant

turned

& Horace's  
scope  
sharpens  
into focus

by then  
I will have told him his  
declension  
had undone  
the knot  
in the laces  
of the extreme  
of the meantime

he will have

think  
thunk  
think &  
thanked me

& tongue

loosened by the laces

begins to be  
able to say:

*"we were going to be  
tween*

*to be  
here*

*as an ending"*

ending  
as well  
as beginning  
he begged  
an extra  
inning out  
of the  
roman  
umpire

thanked & thought & tongue talked loose

she's come

& laid her forks  
down in front of my snout I

sup  
pose this  
is it

it's  
supper  
they're

giving "me" [(((= my with participation droplets

away  
to where its

thread  
his gesture  
's all hers

is many  
where it's heard  
& is here  
who is wet  
& whose  
wet  
is enough  
to be the nature  
of her whatness

# Tom Meyer

so it was to the Lady of Poetry  
my heart went out  
in words of a former anguish  
weakened by memory  
whose strength is sap in  
a lifeless tree

so much dead  
wood that the few live  
limbs

in winter are  
inexplicable  
stocks smilax & honey  
suckle at summer  
climb

am *I* but this simple recital  
a single letter unyielding as the briar  
so blown it falls in June  
among nettles

not a serif yet correctly stroked

but in our first Aleph  
bet each saraph  
hides his feet with wings  
his face with wings

with wings

letters a wind  
for he whose eyes see  
branches tremble sees  
his heart

upon a single strike  
marked

the Bride needing dream  
before her nuptials  
bid Her maids  
guard my rest

& five allowed their lamps  
to keep aflame

five went out & when  
Her Bridegroom came

She woke to wicks  
guttering & wicks lit  
anew

that half-light  
sleep saved  
wasted in watching

weds Us  
my Husband

all we let go & what we kept  
shadows Our  
epithalamium

anger figures here the Other  
would-be light & wasn't

blood's herd hooves  
stamp at roots which trunk the oak  
& bark rasps the antlers' moss

if I must I must  
marry  
anger

let its equipage  
give me a drive  
bending widely into  
I think of Fountains'  
cistercian ruins  
hallucination

in love we find  
the loved one's mind  
wanders  
far from  
that thought of us  
proposed

outraged at the weakness  
reared as animal strength

marriage  
not an emblem of its law  
but a law  
no garden  
nor wooded park  
now but savage

hollow lit with  
unlit light

holy matrimony here  
mothers love's darkest reaches

association's power  
breeds a matrix  
wherein we are my love  
farthest  
into that joint  
parting us

for the distance  
constellates  
paths  
between two stars & two stars until  
bears mill

out there  
the eyes' pit

lo Lamb whom Lovecraft quotes as epigram  
opens 'The Dunwich Horror'

How else should the recital of that  
which we know  
in a waking sense  
to be false  
come to  
affect us  
at all?

Not in the spaces we know  
but *between* them,  
They walk serene  
and primal,  
undimensioned and  
to us unseen.

*They date beyond body --*

Their hand is at  
your throat  
yet ye  
see Them not;

quote Baruch Spinoza

A letter no other  
European  
language can explain.  
It indicates,  
as we have  
said, the opening of  
the throat.

It's name is  
Aleph.

and Their habitation  
is even one with  
your guarded  
threshold

at bet the Old saw  
the house whose door  
looked like  
dalet

spat at  
on their way to  
by gimel

beyond the field  
boustrophedon  
black earth  
the silent *qks*  
ploughs  
yet to utter  
wheat

who where  
Old Mother  
paleogenerate  
anthropon  
are you  
& from

Crete  
call me Doso  
kidnapped  
I got away  
on your beach

girls find me work  
I can nurse keep house  
pull back sheets  
teach

Socrates' *daimon*  
spoke in  
*don't*  
Freud said the  
*censor*  
distorts

*alucinatio* is not illusion  
nor this Old One  
aimless  
as She seems  
even lame

so like heifers  
in April  
& high clover  
they jumped  
back down  
meadows to Her  
their hair up  
in the air  
after them  
like a crocus

what Diotima  
if no god nor man is Love

He fills no spaces  
we know  
but between them weds us  
& It

Thinking's nothing but  
hallucination  
& dream wish  
the Old Jew  
had it that sleep  
weakened  
what watches over us

it is the body who guards  
against what came beyond  
inside ourselves

you are my Husband  
bone to my softness

your heart an  
anger in my throat's

opening

# George Quasha

SOMAPOETICS 88

THE SOMAPHORISMS

[for Jonathan Williams]

1

Exterior is posterior.  
Look back  
out at  
what will be  
having happened.  
It's forever.

2

A book is a book  
when it is impressed  
with what is written.

3

The Akashic Record is the book of the kind  
in which the uni-  
verse is im-  
pressed with itself.

4

We have in-  
vented ourselves.  
Now we must vent our  
selves on our  
in.

5

We have in-  
vented the world.  
To stick the head out  
in the world  
is the wind of we.

6

Our I is in the ob-  
ject, Brother, please retrieve.

7

A new word is a hole in the language  
through which the tongue extends itself.

8

The mouth is an e-  
vent.

9

Responsibility is keeping the promise  
to return  
inside  
the world  
where it happens.

10

Remorse is biting your tail again.

11

Conscience is knowing with-  
in. And  
remorse of conscience  
is once more  
having the wit to eat what is yours.

12

It takes a lot of nothing  
to make one now.

13

Anything that goes away  
when you say No  
is not there

in the first place.

14

You are as dead as a doornail  
as you will ever be.

15

Turn on the T.V.  
and let it watch you.  
The world needs to learn how it is  
backwards.

16

Like a bad penny  
a voice you can't shake.  
Like a pocket with a hole in it  
one unplummed point  
in every dream.

17

When you can't make out the words  
you are being called  
home.

18

Truly to listen is to leer with the ear'.

19

As for you who hate your corpus  
you will hover about it  
in a strange tongue.

20

To hover is speech reaching in its pocket  
to play with itself unnoticed.

21

Under the leaf that carries the worm  
the world is in panic  
exciting itself.

22

The dog worries the bone.  
The bone is busy at work  
in its marrow. Straight  
and narrow the path  
yet it bends and twists  
with the tongue that licks it.

23

If life's a meta-  
phor, it's on account  
of how it carries  
itself  
figuring itself  
out  
& forward.

24

Open your heart to the misplaced subjective:  
e.g., "He was a fun guy, I always had fun  
with he and I."  
Orphans of the undertongue,  
the abandoned child at the door of the face.

25

Life is an exaggeration.  
It stresses itself  
by heaping itself  
on itself.

26

When the cock leaps Pan rapes.  
When the crow flies the flow cries  
and Pan pipes.

27

Absence is being unborn.  
But that thought cannot stand alone  
until the place in which you find yourself  
shrinks under it.

28

A plane crashes inside the world.  
Outside outsdie.  
Inside insdie.

29

The Wise Fool who fears annihilation  
cries out to his Double  
at the juncture of sleep and waking:  
"Whatever you do,  
don't stop dreaming *me*."

30

The intelligence  
has to make it  
with the poem.

31

The Fool never lost so much time  
as when he consented to learn of the Eagle.

32

If the Dakinī drive you mad  
your only hope is nympholeptopoesis.

33

Save yourself backwards.  
Write on your walls and say to yourself  
at the drop of a hat:

*BE IMPATIENT!*

*GO IN FEAR!*

*WASTE TIME!*

*ABOVE ALL, PANIC!*

34

Write each poem to eliminate  
the last one.  
Let the gap create itself  
at your expense.  
Open the cage at the edge of thought  
and let the words go free,  
back into the middle.

# SLOW MEDITATIONS IN A HAYSTACK

[for Susan]

I

What is the shape of a space in July?

Whatever goes to the trouble  
to affirm itself here  
is worth listening to

Question mark.

A question is a kind of space  
and a mark is a kind of trouble  
to which we go in presuming to speak.  
There goes the Collegial We again.  
And any shape is what I get away with  
on our block.

Up the haystack or down the block say  
Wrenching of the neck.  
Wrenching is a kind of torsion which is a sort  
of saying, say it  
a certain way  
and the neck wrenches  
in at least three worlds.

Only the sayable things are happening.

II

The air feels heavy  
when this waiting bears down.  
The door slams  
and already I'm giving up the breath.  
Terror of the blank, and a ghost of a chance.

Hard on the edge  
where we never sit to listen  
but sometimes we find ourselves out there  
and we hear it.

Who is this we?

It is the I that knows it is so alone  
it must be many  
and any  
where  
said.

III

I am he who can say  
all of the things that please us.  
I am he who can make a space in July  
to say any of the things that displease us.  
Well then I contradict myself  
to be myself  
and do what I do to do what I do  
pleasing or displeasing, matters less  
than it pleases anyone to know.

There are no rules  
is a pleasing thought  
and the old man makes a fool of himself  
in order to please himself  
that there are no rules.  
But there are laws.  
There is for instance the law that fools may contradict themselves  
and that poets, old men, and women may go beyond themselves  
and overlap, such is the space  
say the space in July.  
To be born in July is as spacious as a hole.  
The storming of the Bastille, the birth of Marcel Proust  
are holes in the law  
that make it

possible.  
And to go from I to We  
be it pleasing or not  
is to notice that the leak is  
big.

#### IV

Under such circumstances  
anything can be said.  
Let the Archetype bellow.  
Let the old man soil the pants of the page  
and cut off its Eros but a third way down.  
Let Repression contain itself to its heart's content.  
Let the old man preach a sermon  
to his severed member.  
Let it all be so.  
Dark on dark.  
Old on old.  
Cronic Kronos got his job back  
and Eros invents himself for this or any occasion.  
Called up on the spot.  
Under such spontaneous weightiness  
anything at all bellows.

#### V

I found it slow.  
I turned the top of the round box  
-- curious white powder -- found out  
slow. This is an image  
to which I have not yet supplied the sense of content.  
Senseless content. Contentless sense.  
Sensory container containing  
White Power -- I mean powder.  
Slow and round it comes  
around, to open, and reveal  
what I have found to have put there,  
but not named.

The child  
is the powder or the power is  
the abandoned child, anything without  
a name. So I am slow  
to know what is held in mind  
and in the metal round box  
in the mind.

Slow meditations in a haystack.

## VI

This is the way I am played with  
by the tongue I carry in my ordinary head.  
It has a reach as long as the arm of the law  
and it has grip, it -hends,  
and it lets me guess, how  
it -prises, it prisons  
and it enterprises,  
it gets and begets, and it lets me  
forget, or forswear all getting  
in and out of my prison,  
it prehends and apprehends, it  
comprises and impregnates  
and reprises and surprises,

and if I am the Red Knight who rides my red tongue  
this is my emprise,  
and I am like an osprey, on a spree,  
and I get it, the permission to prey  
on the flesh of the usual.

My horse gets up on its hind legs  
and snorts the root of its law,  
GHEND- GHEND- is the sound  
of the tongue on me.

## VII

So I am the word on the tip of the tongue,  
in a manner of speaking.  
Let the Archetype bellow  
and watch me leap.  
Each line flicks  
its own length.  
Walking in twos  
is what it happens to do.  
Talking in twos  
is what it says it does with the serpent's tongue.  
Thinking in threes  
is what I do  
here on the verge.  
As for hearing in fours  
that's what you  
have been called  
to do. Called you  
to do, you  
called you to do.

## VIII

Slow meditations in a haystack.  
This is the name that named itself the name.  
It stands for an activity that is never willing  
all the way. There is always a struggle  
in a haystack. Slow meditations  
are here to hear the calling  
that is never altogether willing. I try  
to be willing, I walk around willing  
and willingly willing to be in a haystack,  
but it will not. I mean *I* will not,  
and so it is I admit it I am not willing



so that it may call itself back  
and take hold. No,  
it is never held, and the hand  
never holds a thought  
in the clay, but makes a mouth. No,  
the mouth is already there, it is the hole  
in willing. No,  
willing is itself the hole  
in which the voice gets  
pregnant, small as it is now, bare  
as it has had to be left  
to be heard at all

## XI

So it is a surprise that we speak at all.  
It is as though we had to get a new set of teeth  
for each meal.

And it's surprising, *surprysen*,  
"to be seized with"  
speech. It is not I who seize  
nor is speech, that moving thing,  
seized by one so slow as I  
am here, waiting, longing  
to let my longing self speak. No,  
we are overtaken together,  
suprahended one with the other  
gathered to the taking over  
by the tongue, *la langue*, the  
licking language, that thumps  
against me  
to give my thoughts outloud. No,  
they are not mine, or I have no  
*my* for this, here in a thoughtful haystack,  
no my so slow it claims this  
property  
of being here, so seized  
and so linked.

## XII

And always reluctant.  
Always hungry  
but always resisting.  
Always waking frightened in sleep  
and always sleepy.  
And always commenting  
on itself.  
Always dreaming  
and working in dreams.  
Always double  
in its world-sense.  
And always sensing  
its own lost sense.  
A bloodhound in the brain  
to travel in the veins.  
And always out of this world,  
always gorgeous and beyond description.  
Never only in the blood,  
never always only in here.  
Never as hungry as it looks.  
Always never only reluctant.  
But always resisting

and always in fear.  
And always there is fear in the fear of fear.  
And even if you step back three paces  
there is fear. Never patience enough.  
Resistance and fear and always.

### XIII

The voice is an immense space.  
Agoraphobia is possible in the voice.  
Also possible is Sophiaphobia,  
hate the space and you hate the woman  
who rises in your telling.  
Hate the story and you hate what it knows.  
I take these truths to be self-evident.  
I take it the truth takes me to be self-evident, even obvious.  
The voice is an aperture through which it passes itself.  
You cannot stop it, however much fear.  
The Archetype will one day bellow.  
There, I've gone and said it  
and that statement cannot now be avoided.  
An immense space is a voice.  
A single line is a whole voice.  
Therefore a line is a space.  
And to be single is immense.  
All but this flawless logic is feedback.  
What calls itself the world is feedback.  
It feeds back all that you don't want to hear.  
Now we are speaking about the voice again.  
The voice is a space that addresses itself with itself.  
It says nothing but that it displays its flawless logic.  
The unflawed logos, the word that carries the fruit in its timbre.  
It makes juice in the resonance.  
It is rhapsodically logical.  
It calls itself Logopathos because it longs  
to tell the tale of your longing.  
Any meditation in a haystack is necessarily slow.  
It has time for anything that has time in its ways.  
A line is a thought.  
A thought is a pulse.  
Therefore a line is a pulse and not linear.  
That statement cannot now be avoided  
however much I regret having said it.  
There are times when I know I go on forever.  
I am catching up with myself and that is forever.  
Falling is also forever  
and so we cannot but fail the occasion.  
To be aware on the way down is a version of up.  
There is a law whose sole function is space.  
Immensity is voice that fills the thought of it.  
You know it is there by the fear it enripplles.

### XIV

Oracularity is a tone.  
With a timbre like timber falling.  
It is capable of lying.  
A meditation in a haystack  
is capable of lying.  
I mean somehow I said those things back there  
and in that measure I am capable of lying.  
Virtual capability

is a truth in the voice  
given the thought of the Negative Audience.  
Dark dark affair we have gotten ourselves into.  
Barely a decibel of light in the audium.  
I am -hended in the hands of the tellible law.  
How can I get out of it, how now that I'm in it  
can I unhend myself, will someone please  
lift up the timbre that is like timber falling  
in the forest of wisdom,  
it is too heavy for my haystack.  
What is the shape of a space in July?  
We have questions so that we may be delivered  
from statements, don't we?  
We have only to go to the trouble and it is  
worth listening to.  
Otherwise there would be no Negative Audience.  
Otherwise nothing would comment upon itself.  
And no space in July.  
And no voice in the pen.  
And no paper to impress.  
And no thought to -hend us.  
Surprise. This is how it is.  
Surprehend me my my in the tone  
of how it is to itself.

## XV

You won't believe me when I tell you this is only  
the beginning, or we have scarcely begun, or  
the middle was back there and the only end is  
the end of the tongue, or any beginning is a false  
start, it startles the mind, and the mind  
is a bourgeois,  
it likes nothing better than new beginnings.  
You are right not to believe me,  
and what I like about you is  
that you are as blank as I am.  
So I have permitted us to be addressed rudely, so what.  
If you were not as not there as I am  
it would have been rude of me to share it with you.  
We are equal in our capacity to squeal in boredom.  
Therefore I may be said to reach out through you.  
The hand implied by the tongue implied by the brain reaches  
out into the blankness  
of our mutual unattention, our shared attending in the un-  
spoken, and it -hends. A simple  
case of transference, and who's who  
is no longer being asked, the Gods are at play  
in the intentional unattention. Watch it,  
it goes on a spree of preying on  
this small bird of a voice, it's  
at large between whoever we are, it's  
not there, it's not here, it's too  
slow for the *is* of place, and yet it chatters on  
in any fool who continues to speak, it's  
too quick for the time of saying  
as any fool knows.

XVI

The tension is mounting itself.  
Pardon me for asking, but did you get that?  
The tension is mounting  
itself. Still didn't get it? The tension is  
mounting  
itself.

You see it's a toss-up between Pan  
and Heidegger. Strange to say,  
it's from the rear  
or down the middle.  
The tension is mounting itself,  
half-goat style or amphibolodelphinic.  
Secretely we both know it's both,  
gorgeously, in virtual negativity

GHEND GHEND

says the horse that rides under me  
with a new set of teeth for every meal  
and a new truth for every tooth.

XVII

The Quick in the Field of the Slow,  
the word takes a sloop in the primary slime  
over to the other shore,  
I am translated.

This is an end of sorts.  
But I'm not so foolish as to slip you an answer,  
I came only to shake your hand  
and take the pulse  
of the text.

It calls itself across a vast expanse.  
It breaks its neck on the 17th  
as a kind of space in July.  
As any fool knows.

# THE ONEIROTIC REDDENING OF THE BUTTERFLY

The daimon of the dream is pleased  
when we are pleased.  
Disease. No more ease  
but that which lodges in please.  
Say Please, say the Parents  
who never say please. Obey  
or not, listen to the way it is said.  
This is the dis of the ease which the daimon comes  
to produce to relieve.  
There is no end to combination.  
No end to growing ill to join,  
pills backed up in the throat  
to divest self of self self-lessly.  
The small dot is transmitted from the text  
to the body, and here it comes it is the product  
of itself, textusemination,  
weaving Psyche and Soma with seedy words,  
mixing the seed with the sign,  
semiotic semination,  
seminal semiotics,  
erotic syntax  
texts us until we are pleased  
pleasing the daimon.  
The dream is the only seminary  
I am ever to have known.  
So let us enter this place in the mood  
of cultivation, fold back the lips  
and shed the seed to say what is on the mind--  
It feels like a comedown in an elevator.  
Endless dreams, I go up  
in expectation of eventual down  
and out the top. This is a recurrent pattern  
like the thrust of the penman's hips,  
if only she will have me, this woman  
of all my dreams. Out the top and  
We is lost, there is only I  
out-topped by the desire of the verb  
To Rise. Out and off and  
I am gone. Gone and gone and  
gone, if I have the heart  
to go as Out as I want Up, then Off  
is the directional part of speech  
in the Neogrammatical urge,  
the haunch of the spirit  
in the hunch of speaking at all.  
"You will find no comfort here,"  
says the poet accurately. What means  
"My vocabulary did this to me," said on deathbed?  
"Look down under the leaves," says the poet, forgiven  
under the pressure of responsible dream-pleasure,  
where we face the music. Nothing reflects best the no more ease of  
It feels. Out is the direction of thought, and of dream  
Back in.

## II

How howl, how's the poet--  
that which can be said in dream but that the eye bat.  
Bats fly out of the cavern but that the night fail to fall.

No speak the English but that the dream dictionary itself.  
More words, please, more words for the English.  
"With the great wisdom you have gained," says the poet,  
how he howls to dis the ease, tongue-tie a thought  
to clutch the throat, beforeknown,  
instrumentalizing the root of knowing.  
ForeBe is the speak of the time  
that can be said in the dream.  
This much we may be said to know.  
To think the thought  
is said to imbue the brain. Nonsense,  
*that's* what we need more of in the future  
but that it flunk out on itself.

No end to ending,  
but that the end end. How *could* it  
*do* that to us?

The future is off the page  
and it is like us, it does what it can  
under the condition of emptiness.  
Bracket that. Bracket the void. I wear brackets  
where I can, and if only I could get them into the dream  
I would astralinvaginate.  
The elevator is only a metaphor  
and there is a tantra exclusively for rising without losing Down.  
This is how we bear our change,  
instrument the expansion of the thread,  
carry ourselves while turning  
outsidein.

Notice the ground is damp.  
We have come upon the occasion of being so spread  
in the legs of our knowing,  
there is no right direction.  
If we had come from the Mohave  
we might have brought the secret of the Greater Intimacy.  
As it is we are stuck with this oneirotic elevator.  
The door opens, He howls, How's  
the L: leap, loss, lip, lock, left, light,  
like cures like and the brackets open  
to link the middle with the end.

### III

Quality of the leap, or qualification of the sleep.  
Heterohomogeniusteneity.  
Break up the set. Set up the break.  
All over it comes from comes from comes  
from come. Why have we always resisted the middle.  
Why have we let it get this far wrong.  
Resistance, and not. It's easy  
to think the right thoughts,  
but to move with it, to be offed  
and dead as a doornail  
that is diseasy.

So the center is hot.  
One day everyone will know his name  
and her name will be known  
as sweet as a rose as ever  
and oneirotic reddening.  
This is a recital, or we are overhearing  
the one in the next room.  
Let me tell you about my life  
but we have forgotten the names  
and I don't know who to call anyone by and what.

This is plain English, the Prophecy  
is as might as ever.  
Take the man who just came in the door:  
He falls on the floor, foolish man. There is nothing to do  
and so we can do it. Redeem the foolish line  
so that I may address you directly, here in the middle,  
letting the thoughtful gesture stretch out in the audium.  
This is the beginning. I tell you in the simplest language  
I know how: The beginning is beginning.  
One never knows it is beginning until it is over beginning happening,  
says the Stone. So now we have achieved  
the account of beginnings  
essential for any sacred text.  
And we have succeeded in becoming a switchboard  
on behalf of the inner-ouija. The foolish man  
enters the door and falls on the grid of the poem.  
Before we can go further we must help him move his body.  
Before we can think further we must unclutter the grid  
because the body so sprawled usurps the meaning  
and Soma, you remember Soma, is lost in the comparison.  
The Butterfly opens her wings in the night.  
The flutter goes by as she sings of the light  
where we are caught mooning. Is this poetry?  
Is anything ever so lost that the Great Making  
cannot draw it back into the Greater Intimacy?  
The daimon of the dream is pleased when we are pleased.  
Don't fail to mix the seed with the sign.  
Sleeping under a very tired lighted hallway you  
will experience all the vibrations ever.  
All the lawcases ever. Is this working, friends?  
No pass, try again. Dada the donut and the Dalai Lama.  
Still no pass, try again. This is California on the Road  
to '76. Pass, brilliant example of semantic confusion.  
Collect 200 thoughts. But there's a problem, he said nothing,  
he said words. So like the man said we are consciousness junkies.  
These are the Elders. This is my game. And I don't understand.  
When she asked why I came I said, Only to observe the situation,  
and she: You'll die if you stay outside.

#### IV

A flower in the book.  
What a thought.  
You gesture the opening and the lips fold back  
and it flowers in the book.  
This is a recital, or we are overhearing  
the fools in the next room. Shared  
Knowing is their secret junk, call it  
by any name but the one it knows, and it comes  
by any route but the one you notice. Surprise  
and the daimon rises up in the share  
she gives you. As for the guru-business,  
I just wanted to see who'd show up.  
The soul is a movie  
mostly we sleep through.  
What's the difference?  
Difference makes all the difference  
in the world, because it is different from similarity.  
Let it go. Let it differ from any difference ever.  
Did you say Ever? You are as dead as a doornail  
as you will ever be. Ever  
is the only thing that shows up on *all* the instruments.



Cain who loved his brother's heat  
slept here, and Hummed.  
It all happened in the time, like the poem, of dubious  
legality. Amphibolicity,  
and what kind of life is it not, prepared as it is for any  
personal torque. What is not valid in Amphibolidity?  
Good good, good God! how good, Dionysus at last  
in terminally risen consciousness,  
and the woman is inside history, still.  
We will free her in the wee hours, timed as a poem.  
Stellarity on a dark night  
or the only light in the present age  
to write by.

## VII

We were speaking of the coming together  
there in those dark halls of the Apollonic,  
so clearly in amidst the ways we were  
falling apart in our hidden days, dazed  
when in the quick of the slime it was said us:  
*The Coniuntio is that which to awake to is to awake,*  
*married from the start. And:*  
*The Rose closes by itself.*  
And so we looked into each other's eyes until we saw it  
open. Open again. Open up again. Open upward innerwise  
once more, O sweet once more, sweet back here in the hot  
of the center, we touch the hot and the moist at once  
and the thought flows through  
utterly new in its bearing.

Now, as was just *being said*, a  
certain embarrassment, it  
closes. All by itself and alone in its connection  
with us, it closes. We have returned  
and returned from returning, recurrently. Smiles  
because at the minimum we are awake to the *fact*  
(that most recently made *thing* of this creation)  
that we sleep.

O daimon of the dream you have shown me  
my picture, I saw me looking and turning  
away,

is this your pleasure?

Jane or Jean or Joan or now Johanna, also any John,  
is the name naming itself the name in recitation  
and while the name itself is closing I can't stop it  
(even among these hardening reemerging statues of  
mind taking hold) I cannot wholly prevent it from being  
that which calls me to look in  
her eyes  
to see if it is  
opening or closing.

There is a hint

that only by returning  
can we undo the knot.

## VIII

The flower disappeared from the book.  
Sad to say I opened the book and it was gone and gone.  
It became in its loss my old neoneurotic twinge  
given up to some God or other, up to the hungry Angels.





It is I who is, and I  
who speaks, who is  
Sealed in the thought of her.

## XII

Ah the curious pleasure of the unfinished story ...  
To wander the thorny path and ...

requires of us the fires of us

un-  
sustained, but retained  
in itself. Curious pleasure  
of what never begins but that it never ends.  
So by staring long into this clump of veiny marble  
we have like young Lucius lost our very senses,  
we covet the unmentionable child of Cupid and Psyche,  
but we'd rather avoid the risks.  
Happy union at the cost of a natural mind,  
now drink of this liquid language stored in a place in-  
visible to the hungry sense --

But that's all behind us now,  
now that we are committed to the Art of the Unfinished Tale.  
It feeds itself, Pelicannic Futurity,  
it peels the fruit to eat the skin,  
scatter the flesh, and think the seed,  
the Art is Unlearning

and we cherish only  
the Rose and the Weed.

My vocabulary does this to me.

And the syntax unfolds to give up the Geist  
with every thorn laid bare in the brain.  
So Welcome, Crazed Readerly Presence.  
Since I am my own unforgiving forerunner  
I may practice the Art without the memory of shame.  
Let us come apart at the seams, as in  
It seems as it is, unfinishing.  
With what joy he concocts, and  
his devotion is toxic, and  
he lays what he vents at the altar of the page, and  
he invents on our behalf the story of Story.  
He knows better, and he knows nothing.  
Curious pleasure. To enter.  
The daimon of the dream is pleased  
and I am seized with syntax.  
It is utterly without plot or reason,  
it is uttered only in the season it is.  
It forgives us to unveil us its flower.

4-6 October/26-27 October 1975

# THE SECRET ART OF LOSING THE STORY

White night  
that I remember at all.  
I see it down the page  
and from the center of the book.  
We were inside the house, white  
of the night that I remember outside the talk,  
and you spoke lightly, you and the guests,  
gave me to know I had to go out  
from that center, the house, into the night that  
is only white as I remember,  
and I got lost.  
I forgot the car.  
I found myself out  
-side what I knew,  
never return,  
remember nothing,  
the story is lost.  
What does it mean to my kind of fool  
that the story is lost.  
Down the page it loses its way  
and from the center, it wobbles.  
I wobble to remember at all.  
No night can be white and night,  
so screw biography.  
Happily the story is lost.

Is there anything else  
you have to tell me, I mean  
is there anything outside  
telling, I mean is there  
anything outside, and if there is  
is it telling us anything?  
So I fall in love every day,  
something in the world confuses the heart,  
and there may be no field of flowers without one  
flower for me,  
but what has biography got to do with the revealed?  
If the world has eyes for me, mine  
are already out there  
and I have only to retrieve the connection.  
She spreads her legs down the page (I claim)  
so that I may educate myself from the center  
out. I keep my eyes peeled.  
Bared. She keeps my I's sealed.  
I stare at the wall of white night  
knowing she is there, somewhere.  
Next she may turn up in the Uher, and I  
have only to listen. Retrieve  
the connection. Time  
is on no one's side but outside.  
Out's eyes. Her size. She pries  
me, into my affairs, I crack  
wide and open my eyes  
to let it all flee  
back to the center.  
Out from the cage. It is  
literalized by the lids,  
illusion of what matters, so low

I go, to think, that to choose  
is to limit what I have.  
Lies. All lies. All stands  
contrary to what is  
in itself so. And the body  
is only a belief system  
(I shouted at you from afar), and if  
you don't believe me  
consider the fact that  
receding from the present like the last  
thought of time, you  
hear nothing. Or you don't hear me.  
You don't hear me squirming to understand  
your feet, crushing my demon's chest.  
I lied when I said understanding doesn't matter.  
I lie now if I say it does. So don't  
flatter me with importance, we stray  
already from the center of the page.  
Hazy in the ear. And the timbre  
of my thinking is gone  
outside the time it is said.  
The story is lost,  
lost in the white city.  
What is it I was supposed to bring back from this place?

A little patience.  
An impulse to acknowledge the pain,  
dark side of falling in love every day,  
the fact  
that the world returns to itself  
even in my stupidities.  
If I want to turn you inside out  
it's to get the feel of how I invert  
to think that thought.  
So the poetry serves us outside the shell,  
contrary to belief. It follows  
that this is my best act,  
to tell the story of the loss of story  
out of the longing for story.  
O I know I justify myself too easily,  
I dangle from the hook of the world's  
eyes for me, its size in me  
of sheer connection  
fallen in love with itself.  
And if there's one thing I hate more than yesterday  
it's today posing as previous  
to itself. Life drags its ass enough  
without biography.  
The body is a belief system  
(I shouted at passing cars),  
and don't talk to me about anything but middles.  
Look there, he can't sleep,  
his mind returns to the uncreated  
and creates the sentence.  
If only his mother would bring the kiss  
since she's the only woman present to play the part.  
Eighty pages to get out of bed  
and down the center of the page.  
Such is the story of Marcel Proust  
and his art of retaining the seed.

The art is flipping it over  
so that the right side faces down  
at long last. I mean the *book*  
that is kind enough to hold my  
seedy words for me. Face  
the face down (she instructs), now  
the front is open for its eye and  
we can both go out. Complicity  
in the white city, couples  
the body to the thought. Fall  
in love every day! (I shouted  
out the window of the bus) Flip  
the thought to say:

Spread the legs of the heart  
at least once a day (longing  
for practice) and let the beast out  
to lead it back  
inside the rose. O education.  
It's taken me long enough to learn (I shout  
in her ear as we lie in the fire) the art  
of revealing  
and the art of withholding  
are one.

One twist  
is quickly another,  
adjusting the life to  
hear the mind crack  
is like changing the brain, is like  
cutting in on another man's woman, is like  
(she climbed out of the fire  
and left me with thoughts of revenge on the past)  
being yanked by the nose  
to be led out of the longing for center.  
Lost at last in the outskirts  
of the outside rose, I get a glimpse  
of the intricate terrain. White  
must mean loss of distinctions?  
or my friends reject me and steal the car?  
or the dream that got me into this refuses  
my subtle exegesis, and strands me  
in endless revisions. It shows by withholding  
all but what it does, it knows  
all but the solution  
to reticence.

Retention.

How to retain the blue sky  
without losing the thoughts of clouds.  
Moreover it occurs to me that I can say *blue sky*  
until I am blue in the face, and learn nothing  
more of the art. Still,  
the sky  
in the mind  
is where it  
falls me in love  
daily, to connect  
out in the blue  
behind the clouds of the face.  
Strange to say.  
Or these may be thoughts from a lost Taoist text  
that slips back into the world through a man's stupidities.

It talks funny  
and keeps us wandering in wonder -- that is *until*  
the blue snaps  
in the fingers  
and the clouds clear  
their mind of desire.

Action appropriate to the conditions at hand. Note:  
The proposed operation must not lose track,  
it must not lack reticence, it must  
keep its head out of the wrong clouds,  
it looks her straight in the eye  
and will settle for nothing less  
than all of it.  
It refrains to retain.  
It goes on. It  
looks for nothing.  
It loves the color blue.  
Every day  
and in the middle of the night.

The simple act of turning it all on its head.  
Can it be?  
Enquire of the white, since that's where  
I've been led out into the medial blank.  
Sheer dogma. Fear. Beware of the dog.  
Beware of the rejected probability. And beware  
not. It's all probably so.  
None of it is not probably so, and to that extent  
lost. Why all this talk about a lost story?  
Lust for probabilities. Longing for the many  
intricacies, even of a white city in the night.  
Cheap thrills of the ungraspable  
costing all. All  
is the cost of all. As for the lost story,  
a probable list of all accountings  
not yet accounted for, the soft white interior  
of dogma, longing for reversal.  
Make me the other thing,  
cries the story to its widowers.  
Make me as other as the wart  
on Gogol's nose. It's all  
at least probable. It turns around  
to turn into someone  
who turns around.  
The story's obviously endless  
and endlessly lost.

He sits

in his room  
and says all the probable words  
to all the probable people, he says  
I'm only another story  
hungry for story. The impress  
of your thought  
on my probable matter

urges my story

into its further probability.  
That's why I like you, that's why I  
came in the first place, and let you send me out  
into the white night  
and call it poetry. I'll do anything  
for a little story,

even make the necessary  
alteration in momentum.

And then let it go.  
And let it flow back,  
back into me, back into he, it,  
her -- back into the necessary confusion  
of tenses, persons, times, words  
cut from their sources to return  
to the center, turned on its head.  
Who is that sitting in his room to  
say all that is probable -- He  
who insists I say my I . . .  
He goes into a fog to find his way out  
anew. I mean I do. He appears  
to know many times better who I  
am than I. Whoever he is he  
still clings to his story, or the story  
is what remains in him of flesh, he  
shows the carnation of pronouns  
and gives me direction. I need it bad.  
I'm letting go before your eyes, I  
has had its share  
of losing the story  
but I'll make no more promises  
until the fog lifts. Ah sweet  
protection in the lust for trust.  
He falls in love in me every day  
to tempt me back into biography,  
but I am stronger even  
than the fool in me, I know  
he knows nothing of her, he leads me  
blind into her confusions, but I  
(I mean the *real* I) is that  
part of me that steers without him  
up into her.

But I can't live without him  
who leads me sideways into her story  
where I snake beyond the hope of conclusion  
almost.

Mostly I know it all  
in the blue thought of her eyes  
as my clouds cross her  
almost out.

It's too easy to say  
and I have lied to them because of it,  
the art is to be led (I shout  
to hide the fictional component) and  
but for knowing this she would let her eyes roll up  
into the top of her head  
and become the rib of my pleasure.  
So I pry her open  
to turn her (even her) on her head  
and let the outside into the middle.

#### Part Two

Alteration in momentum.  
I can't help it if it chooses to lose me,  
or if I have chosen to let it  
having chosen this curious condition of flesh.  
Momentum involves complicity, alteration  
specificity. I put my hand on the damp ground.

I feel it like a spaceman. I am listening  
for any sign of language. Roottalk, lisp  
of the languishing planet, lift  
of the World Soul or whatever. And how much  
can a hand say  
reporting home to the brain  
to dispatch a pigeon to mind.  
Mind intends a larger communication  
and grows impatient with my impatience  
with the hand, but I'm only a man  
enquiring of story.

Hands say  
as many as the faces of Mary  
cut across time. All the art ever.

Momentum of the sensuous imago.  
Plain talk is also a trope  
with which to further blanche the liturgy.  
White night  
calls everything forth  
into the fullness of its lost story.  
Brilliant night of the dark soul, O San Juan.  
Alteration of timbre. Specific  
gutterality of the text.

How far does it reach, the hole of story?  
Ridge of the brain and the gutter into mind  
and the goiter of earth, all consequences  
of the throat. What a mystery is speech  
that it covers its woman  
that no one else can see her.

Any view is only a half-time perceived as true.  
Any hold has a partial foot in the hole  
of story. It drops me down to this  
This. I rub my hand all over the ground.  
Damp extension of the thinkable. Inkable  
character of the link with brain, mysterious  
as always. Nonsensical, of course.  
Beautiful, but that may be beside the point,  
like vision, with respect to story, for all my  
forays into the supersensible. Back to that  
in time. In my time, clock in hand. Hand  
is perhaps the tongue of the wrist that flicks  
to remind me the speech is split. Snake  
of desire and of holy wisdom squeezing this  
instrument of time-telling. Worry of the watch  
or the mood in which the story is lost  
in the darkest of all senses. Dumb death,  
lousy consequence of her hidden intention,  
forked fiction, etc. I could go on  
abolishing the ordinary in my tale.

Loss of story, in both directions  
and in and in the seven directions  
and further in, in the locus of  
typographic imprecision, meaning squirms  
its wormy and translucent desire.  
But what I want you to know is

(he says sitting in his room) I can't  
stop it to see it or say the only  
thing I thought I had in mind.

Complaint for the loss of plain talk  
is not my line, here on the verge  
of the utterly uttered unintelligible possible  
holding its seed at the gutteral threshold.  
Or I cross time out,  
I undercut motivity,  
I murder the mother before she surrenders  
to sisterly dialog, critical  
incest, common law wife of the text  
or the girl on the other side of town  
I meet at a drive-in movie.  
*Mutiny on the Bounty*, cruel beauty  
irrelevantly isolate, gorgeous women  
talking funny, and the King of Tahiti  
refuses a Christmas drink  
because it makes the head go whir-whir  
and all fuzzy. But the women drink and make  
eyes at my camera.

Interlap of the levels of saying  
and "word-ghosts"  
are all we ever have. There  
are no  
rimes but this  
half-holding over (art  
of entering the lap and  
keeping the seed in time) I  
skill myself to free myself  
in and of. For and from. Words  
rush in and are forever from  
and to get it is to have it to say  
holding the middle open  
for the rest. Of what? Sleep  
is not the rest because to dream  
is to wake from one kind into another, an  
other text opens on *this* side  
where I stray in her  
and fall in love every day.  
Love is the only kind of abrasion  
where the friction is timed to  
ignite in the thought of -- no  
object ever fits  
all the way, or there would be  
perfect rime  
and time would be whole.  
Nothing is  
more than anything else. I lie  
exposed  
here in the middle.

Strange to say, I'm not finished.  
How I know it I'm not sure  
but as it stands I'm unfinished.  
I was born, and the part of the story that  
finishes rimes with the part that is lost.  
So somewhere here in amidst there is a trans-  
lucent point that won't hold light  
long enough to say, It's there!  
Because next you say, where? Back  
there? Way back yonder in the mulberry tree  
climbing in amongst the branches  
still. Cumquat tree, I loathed.

Valery outside the window, I fell in love  
every day, and a bar of Lifeboy in my hand,  
emblem of summer morning shower  
forever. Lost. Couldn't enter the palmbranch house  
the other boys built out back because  
I was sick that week, I mean I could not  
go out. But I watched  
through the back window, every stick  
was a signal to wish  
my way out, wish  
is the sound of the longing  
unfinishing  
and the thought going out  
into the middle of the story.

I have spoken harshly against biography  
because it goes public into fact  
(fixed fiction) before the life-writing  
is knowing itself  
unfinishing.

So screw biography,  
I said, and now I take me at my word  
and fall in love on *occasion*,  
I live through the fall daily, I am  
spinning on the womanly from the middle of the body,  
I am surrendering to detail, foolishly  
entering into graphic bios  
biased to let the tale tell  
itself, until the mind wears thin  
at the surface

and the story appears.

The story is loose

when I lose myself in it  
and never finishes.

They cut down the mulberry tree;  
of cumquats there is no end, and I have not  
made peace with them. Valery  
is a lost story. Lifeboy  
is sheer biography. And the house out back  
is fucked *\*struck* in the mind.  
Lucky stick to structure a house.

Back lot. My lot  
was to be missing my yard  
like anyone unable to go out.  
There is no evenness in this longing  
to enter  
into the outside where all  
is sequestered  
ever told. All that is  
ever and ever has been, concealed,  
sealed, the waiting that half  
rimes with longing. Lucky  
stick, pointing it out. I touch  
the stick that touches the ground  
on my behalf, half on the ground's  
damp intention, it touches me closer than  
the hand has ever known, lucky stick  
to structure a house  
between me and the would. Slightly  
I follow it into  
sleight of space, lucky  
to be able to

stick to structure  
giving way always.  
Giving way always  
is the inside of house.

*Slight are her arms,*  
*yet they have bound me straitly,*  
says the poet from the inside of story  
in its condition of loss.  
Gait of the world, gate of power,  
all things known in their reversals  
as the point of to enter.  
How the world rushes past on its horses of time  
legged, in China  
as the eye sees  
its house in its horse. It's Greek  
this talk of anything other  
than ever is known  
outside of loss. Slipping  
away in her lava-lava  
the Queen of Samoa  
in my own backyard. Growing up.  
Sex with the window. Valery,  
you tease, who never lets me in,  
until I learn Tahitian  
and Samoan and  
Balinese, yogini of the word,  
Story.

At age ten, I folded back the lips  
of my sleeping mother's vagina  
to see what was inside.

Sticky structure

luckily housed,  
and the thought stopped when she woke  
and I denied everything,  
I was doing nothing  
but looking for everything.  
Mother and Sister and Daughter of God  
you are struck  
with intricacy, and I  
am composed of the desire to know you  
crawling back and utterly forward  
uttering the incommensurably possible.  
Unstuck with who you have been,  
willing in the loss of the story.

Every once in a while the soul goes wild  
and so we lend a hand to let it chatter away.  
Crazy at the edges.  
Ridge of the mind at the gutter of story.  
And why is it that I so slightly remember  
how the mulberry tree is wild in the branches.

Did I say *fall*?  
Consequences of the word.  
To abandon the occasion at hand  
is no solution to the problem of mind  
at loss for a story. Out of luck  
with the sticks of the house.  
Hermetic structure, so secret even I

author of this fiction cannot locate.  
Any story to be had  
urges loss of place. So I did say *fall*.  
And how could I have gone so low to think so  
meagerly, perpetuating the *felix culpa*,  
besmudging the name of Love with  
mere merging of water and earth in the word?  
Lucid strictures -- what not  
to carry into the logosphere,  
not to clutter. Only the mind-degradable thought  
is welcome in this belief-system  
(or be enslaved by another man's). Echo  
of an empty mouth  
waiting to tell -- mind-degradable.  
The story of my youth -- mind-degradable,  
along the life-lines of my actual longing.  
Biographical facts -- not so easy  
to slip out of their German death-lock,  
they stick in the throat.  
I need foot-room, tongue-room,  
and so I conjure the questions  
(magic of retaining  
the inner hole in the word) to climb  
back through everything said.  
Whereas to climb down  
is one kind of myth  
and up is the other and  
she is other. Mind-degradable,  
or at least she can't be held  
to my thought of her,  
because if I go down on her, I  
go down upside down and  
the body is under  
and loving is

-- Stop all this nonsense.

An old gesture is a limb of my corpse  
signaling the life to hurry it up.  
What's the rush.  
The seed does not in itself seek a way out  
but inside the world where it moves already.  
So why hurry, after all  
the body is only a belief system  
(I whisper, but she has stopped listening  
if ever she did) and it barely  
makes a move  
without displacing its concreteness.

Into the home stretch.  
And I elongate back-wards  
into the feel of having come  
once and for all time  
and the rest retained. Rest  
in the rhythm, never pauses  
in time, or completes, it knows  
it flows, it shows. it soothes  
to be truer than the held fact,  
rest is the light foot stepping from  
without  
where all the story goes  
when it dies  
back into the probable.

All little stories go to have been  
where the world itself is never more than  
possible, never more possible than now.

So let it pretend it knows how to come  
to completion, let it urge itself gently toward  
whatever idea of dignity it keeps  
to keep itself going, into the slime  
and into the rimey affair of time, it  
grows willinger, knowinger, it opens.  
So let it shape up the way of walking  
and pretend to cause  
its casual talk, sounding  
half-sensible, half-earned,  
and right in the thinking.  
Nonsense, of course.

Or: non-  
sense has lost its lovely grip  
(specific retention of the text)  
when we fear its maddening slip and flow  
phrasing itself out of the temporal lure,  
so sure. It seems. It does run away  
on its doubleended mustang of many-  
footed eye of seeing intention. It  
scares to strip the story bare.  
Like the Animals Nobody Loves, coyote,  
rattlesnake, dangerous little fellows and  
wiley in their ways. Demon in the chest.  
Semen in the brain. Outlawed probabilities.  
Action of banning, to conclude  
excludes, out of fear of seclusion  
in the damp blank hidden in the lifepulse  
where story sequesters. White night.  
Downness of the center. Outness and fromness  
of the page,  
unemptying and loose.

9-13 January / 9-15 February 1976

# Franz Kamin

COBORDON: a boundary or border or surface which is shared by two or more disparate spaces ... if such a surface or skin is apprehended from inside, what is known of its cospaces? ... there is always a need to get out - to be unsealed ...

EPIVACULOID: the skin around a shape which eventually contains no space ...

SURFACE: a loci of points, a location, having no physical tangibility thus offering no resistance ...

VACULARUM: inside the epivaculoid skin ...

CO-PERMEABLE: that quality which allows collections to pass through each other ... an epivaculoid is a covering - that which keeps hidden inside from outside

existing within the vacularium, I may be seen as a collection-not-a-collection-not-of-points - a continuously moving twilight or gloam of self-rebounding and ricocheting from the epivaculoid within the vacularum ... it is a conviction that the vacularum is a co-space with my need to become unsealed ... that which refuses to flow is worn away by the flowing all around it: not to be worn away is the need to become unsealed - the epivaculoid is entirely convicted of undeads ... I and the epivaculoid have the mutual desire of permeability (interpenetrability)

in the glooming of a forest reside the cottages - my father is in the main building - from one of the out-buildings, I can see the dimly lighted windows vaguely illuminating the dark logs of the outer walls ... I can see the moon floating above the valley, dim shadows of trees; I can hear the night and the sound of dogs barking across the valley in their madness, their aloneness, their need for permeability, their need to become fluid (thus exuding the stream of their yelping) ... I am making the piano sing to all this a structure of configurations which does not interfere with my hearing or the light coming from the windows of my own cabin ... and since all time is embedded in a single point, I think that Lisa is here with me now ... (so we three remain children) ... I think Lisa is in the house with my father ... I think soon I will traverse the path between the buildings and arrive at the other windows where I will sleep ... I and my songs are permeated by the wind and because of the temporal embedding, I have already traversed the path and am already asleep ... a single point cannot be permeable: time is not permeable

A sphere floats in normal 3-space: any topological equivalent of a circle (a square, a septigon) existing exterior to the sphere can be shrunk to a point ... no such ring will have its eventual disappearance interfered with in a space external to a sphere ...

SCHOENFLEISS CONJECTURE: that this is also true of rings relative to spaces external to any shape (an egg, a carbuncle) which can be formed from an elastic sphere without tearing or hole-punching ... the ALEXANDER HORNED SPHERE has two hollow question mark shaped protruberences growing out of it - these are interlinked. Out of each of these two horns, grow two more such horns - these are also inter-linked; and so on an infinite number of times ... because of the eternal nature of such a construction, a ring around any horn is unable to disappear ... I experience us all as rings in space who will encounter various elastic spheres ...

rings of conceptual energy spinning in space whose sole function is to disappear and reappear (vibration) ... a poetry of rings and spheres (energetic concepts) the meaning of which may here be carried by words but is not of words.

I am gently awakened by a strange cry (due to the singlic nature of time I am already awake) - I rush to the windows - my father, coming from a different part of the building, arrives as I do: he is wearing his fat (I wear his fat now) encased in light blue pajamas - "Was it Lisa?" "I don't know" he rushes off. I walk across the clearing coming to the first white-board fence climbing over passing the glassed in porch-house which hangs out over a hundred foot cliff (it peers down into the water at the passing fish and turtles) snaking around the second fence which stops just at the edge of the cliff moving into an untamed wooded area I move slower now (listening ... no sound ... it is very difficult to see) - I am searching though I do not know that it was she - my foot strikes something hard in the leaves (a dim glow suddenly shows it to be a woman's body) I brush aside the undergrowth - the body seems petrified, the face is hoary with age - she lies supine having become like a rock formation at one with the ground - both the face and hair are grey - there is a fine webbing covering the eyes and mouth - it is as if the webbing straps her to the ground ... I move on counting my steps ... later I come across Lisa standing in a tight copse of trees: "I thought I heard you call out" "no" she said - as I return by another route, I once again faintly hear the strange cry - again I think it is Lisa ("no" she says)

THREE RINGS of the HOUSE of BORROMEO: these three rings cannot be disjoined, yet no two of them are interlinked - if one is removed, the other two fall apart

within the vacularum, all activity consists of rebounding from the epivaculoid ... if one could manage not to move, all would become waiting (waiting is the gravest sense of danger (existence is at its best in a state of danger) - if the waiting becomes absolute, permeability arises: permeability for I and the skin ... but if I hesitate, I will become stuck in the featureless epivaculoid (or I will rebound to then bound about the space until once again pseudohomeostasis occurs then to again wait for waiting) (a faint cry permeates the skin) - I come across Lisa in a tight copse of trees

Word review:

cobordon (boundary, border, surface, skin)  
inside (outside, skin)  
co-spaces  
unsealed

loci (locations)  
resistance  
vacularum  
collection  
epivaculoid  
covering (hidden, inside-outside)  
gloom  
rebounding  
convictionation  
undeads  
permeability (interpenetration)  
glooming  
forest  
windows  
dogs  
madness (aleness)  
configurations  
Lisa  
temporal embedding  
traversed  
asleep  
time  
sphere (egg, carbunculoid)  
ring (circle, septigon)  
Schoenfleiss conjecture  
protruberences  
Alexander horned sphere  
energic concepts  
cry  
fat  
light blue  
fence  
turtles  
listening  
undergrowth  
webbed  
copse  
steps  
no  
Borromeian rings  
danger  
waiting (hesitates)  
arises  
absolute  
featureless  
faint  
word review

COBORDON: a boundary or border or surface which is shared by two or more disparate spaces ... if such a skin is apprehended from inside, what is known of its co-spaces? ... there is always a need to get out - to become unsealed

the motherfucker sitting next to me at the bar is zotzed out of his head (double whiskies) - slobbering all over himself: he crams an entire half tunafish sandwich in his mouth (white oop slobbering off his chin onto the other half of the sandwich) - he may puke at any moment: on the sandwich, on the shot glasses, on his pants - that's going to be nice ... a different fellow forgets his money (I'm going to grab it) ... I'm greebling about some fuck doesn't like my music

looking at the labels on some 200 bottles (one at a time) ... a batch of bar-shits notice I'm writing: they say (headed by Heavy Intellect) that I'm writing down what they say because I don't have enough talent to think of anything original (I'm thinking about all this and writing) ... I notice a picture of Ann Margret on one of the bottles, and am thinking about how the universe (a state of non-existence of points) floats by as a system of forms (epivaculoiditis) which are characteristic of aloneness cross-hatched on the only chaos which is (a matter of superimposition) ... positration ...

(shell skin border boundary enclosure)

the claim is that entropy is the greatest format of disorder: actually it's perfect order without configuration - I watch life being defined on the bounding of rings amidst these points of supposed non-order ... guy on my other side is speaking in gibberish - his forms are lost for the moment and I stare ghoulishly at Ann Margret and she tells me that everything works that way the moment someone thinks of it and proves it (proof is what convicts) ... I'm going over to see the girlie show in a minute ... until Einstein thought of relativity, Newton was right! (I don't mean that relativity was lying around undiscovered, I mean the earth was really flat (no roundness) and Ann Margret nudges Gibberish who falls over onto Yeller (he's lost his job and how are you going to pay the rent) The chaos finds a need for the forms - all the forms are boundaries - all the boundaries are cobordoned

EPIVACULOID: the skin around a shape (or shadow) which eventually contains no spaces

Yeller wants to shoot Gibberish ... Heavy Intellect has just left after telling me that I am defeated because I had to copy their conversation ... the Alcohol Guru is pointing out the formless as the best way ... Yeller madly sweeps the floor and the law is shit before the void ... Ann Margret crawls under the couch: her beautiful thick thys disappearing bulge and breath ... Yeller screams about ghosts, and I giggle furiously as the rings wax and wane

MANIFOLD: that kind of a surface on which any tiny disk or generalized sphere may be produced in such a manner that every point thus confined is also contained within the initiating surface: hence, love might be defined as a state of bycontinuous copointillism of some surface and its covering balls (in how many ever dimensions) ... this is due to the fact that virtual love is synonymous with some given space for being (rather than that gummy other stuff) ...

On the next day, Lisa and my father and I are all seated on the lower terrace (connected to the back of the main building and also overhanging the hundred foot cliff): sunlight is brilliant (my father is in his underwear, Lisa's blouse is very low cut - her skirt short and white) I am explaining something ... my father goes off to the west to cook us some steaks on one of the outdoor grills - Lisa wanders away to stair down into the valley - I want to go for a last time out on the lake in my boat - watching the huge pines swaying (I can only see the tops) growing from the level below the cliffs - a dog barks and deepens my trance (I remember Marie & Jeanne being here) - there is a smell now of cooking meat - "epivaculoid" he said, "no" she said -

there is a sudden revapulation of Lisa in the tight copse of trees - again I hear faintly the cry as I walk away to the east

Sorry to leave out:

a ritual joke or two  
the Jordan curve theorem  
interstices among the spaces and shells  
tears  
the complete theory of linear hulls  
cobordons of relations  
an exposition of frontier points  
definition of limit points  
dominance relations among previously undernourished  
and well fed rats  
homology of cell complexes  
life among the gummy other stuff  
the space vacularum known as a laugh  
definition of a bird  
how you can get all you want to eat  
tar  
the laugh known as all of the spaces  
how we ate the steaks  
what happened to my father after he died  
why you're never bored  
how human songs effect bats  
quequeing theory relative to communal living  
lots of torrid sex scenes  
bananas  
bandanas (coverings)

walking in the woods late at night I come across the corpse  
- it has been moved since last night - I brush aside the  
leaves and stair down into the grey face ... there is a  
barrier between us: I cannot seem to penetrate its non-  
resistance - suddenly I am bounded away, moving rapidly  
through the woods now - beginning to pant - I can hear  
the distant cry of dogs - I am overcome by a sense of  
urgency ... there is a coldness in the air - I come  
to a sudden halt ... waiting (waiting after the game,  
waiting after violence, waiting after the aloneness,  
waiting after waiting) ... complete still ... eventually  
out of this silence emerges the strange cry of whippoor-  
wills: I would gladly give them my soul, but they call  
for Lisa's ...

EPIVACULOID: the skin surrounding a shadow which  
eventually contains no beings of time or space.

# Jackson MacLow

## HAIKU NO HAIKU

(1958)

for Bashō's frog

### I

1130 The rule usually Latin  
BOBRUISK, eminence but Porter, a Airships, History  
usually m. of most whale

### II

whale 1942 The by usually  
nostrils origin rivers, magazines. 1942 films Patagonia.  
is authority m. of most

### III

administrative to stag, v.). is  
authority m. of but magazines. 1942 The  
rule usually nostrils it of

### IV

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to Crispi's for Airships, at

### V

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city the A. institution United Latin tile,  
1. of 24 films carrying

## VI

Fairer led and Angela And,  
 the my my! up, subdued Dear lov'  
 vat What's his sealed be

## VII

most . . . Be fears; my He  
 journey to Here rave to Some cap  
 come -- wings and pours And

## VIII

the the too. to you  
 white empire to Than With Desires do  
 no pen Had There's wraps

## IX

bird ROBINSON led to pavement  
 lay spies home all DAISIES and journey  
 clink no on a to

## X

all his Far haste! country,  
 expression is Moon to he IVY bird  
 and to we it; pours

## XI

that Shun a flocks; cows  
 the span Serpent we Are went the  
 death, go. particularly she God

## XII

a of Twine Serpent midnights  
 Are death of expiates whispering refreshment drifting  
 rolled, Italian you. rolled, Italian

in Thrace, is public (3)  
 1929-38. a of *Plutarch* 1862. 849-53. contemporary  
 to the to issues ##783-4.

## XIV

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 ##783-4 the Aristagoras stones of the and  
 8. off as climb developed

## XV

S. the extent *an* wrote  
 the local principle *De* the *e*. simply  
 a showed principle 1204), consisting

## XVI

Ancient Plutarch, each In supply  
 reprehends where of use of numerous 'gridiron'  
 connected per style own advice

## XVII

class. regularized friend century Artemis  
 induxit') bailiff's century originals', (*ἀναλογίας*) of He  
 that Aegium *History* St. and

completed Bloomsday 1958

# WHEN

## I

in thoughts Skandhas be is (*svajñāna*) attained created  
that forms, that or to  
nour-ished with suchness the views  
Imagining the they a with truth] by verbal One,  
as without the of are upon Bhi-kshuhood upon

## II

rise insight will it 734. had even ten  
we Listen produced; conditions views  
the from particulars. will line  
discipline the is suffer-ings stamp 22. and ignorant 100.  
discriminate, the carries Buddha-assemblies for eighth many, to

## III

But and not realm; not proceed of like  
itself no found knowledge varieties  
to not is jewel-adorned agency.  
fallacious and 445-447. established, error in wisdom locality].  
clinging  
are their inmost will If folly the that

## IV

of non-discrimination. and imaginings experiences imagination we found  
when the in 109. in  
teach *apeksha* the Blessed such  
the there world and beyond up the conversant the  
exists distinguished the Again, the Salutation of the

*svajñāna*=self-knowledge  
*apeksha*=mutual reference

# Gerard Malanga

*The only person I should be talking to is-- is the woman I'd like to marry tonight after or before fucking her in bed. I mean that discourse with the beloved is what I believe in as the poetry I would like--I propose, in fact, to seek to write.*

-- Charles Olson

## FROM CHARLES, A PROPOSAL

I was walking NELY along Fort Sq -- away from the wharves & houses having withstood the salt of the onshore breezes, the bare winter, away from Lookout Hill and the West Parish, the township of two villages, way past Cressy's... the Inner Harbor to my left -- and suddenly I lifted up my hands and placed them in front of my face. It was as if something within myself had given up and had permitted me to watch the backs of my hands. The illusory *is* real enough... the one we all, somehow, get ourselves into, after dark. There was rain hitting the window ... the sound of tires on the wet street.

In poetry lover leaves lover.  
How one thing does end and another begin  
no end and no beginning...  
No place is that far away  
living as we do in a space  
so locked in the act of ourselves. Likewise  
*No poem exists outside this argument*  
(example S. R. Lavin). Your time is forward  
what was, what goes on, also comes alive

Two... three years from now, five years  
will you still be writing, or will you be like you are,

unchanged as such-- women remembered... women afraid of women,  
come into this world, to make sense of the world. *humilitas*.  
Face your aloneness... face up to your aloneness, as the anchor  
of a ship, tide water out, does not find bottom, but seeks out  
what it is it does want. That, in fact, there are conditions

how to return to the instants  
which were not lived  
such dreams as life is  
but *more* connected than life is  
as when flowers awaken  
not what is looked for  
but what is found instead

I've seen your moon, looking out as a region of cliffs and  
hair blown wind. It's like a man travelling through the woods  
where sounds hide, the owl's threshold, over the rocks and fern  
of his path. He had just come from polishing the moon, the

piece of it; but he shall be silent. He shall be driven to change and the eyes be open and glow, as the Earth glows in the moon's light, the night sky. A cat, a *mappemunde* of sorts. It is like Tingri folk used to say of the crow when already in possession of the pond, flies off somewhere to quench its thirst, and finding no other drinking place returns to the one pond. It is like a car-ride rolling over hills in the known world beyond what is imagined, occupied as such, discussing the fact of time one is due to arrive back where one started as who does not when one begins: facts to be dealt with; but that the heart doesn't, that is, it might... autumn staring you in the face.

The tree has expressed itself annular, and yet it is not dead... is merely a shorter sleep than that which comes at the end of every lifetime. Unlocks its frozen branches. And the sun shines again.

Begin a poem, then.

You alone turn now and sleep; but let it be clear. Assume your nature as the owl his or the wind. Or the wind's eye... vulnerable, that is. And when he falls consider his dignity, his world, as he would ours who knows not how to speak.

(So many different kinds of birds, in fact. Don't mean they don't speak. They, for the most part, are loud. They wake me in the morning. They have this affection for me. They are, unlike the sun, not a pattern, but as language coming into existence... wheeling in great broken rings. They are the Muse in the guise of all birds upon the Earth... they are where speech comes from, what are consonants, sound-change. For the problem is not one of knowing how, of METAPHOR; but context-- forever looking up... what one is faced with. The ground is not the sky nor the human possibilities a bird of paradise. Desire or Will doesn't follow any faster than how a person may find it impossible to get up in the air. Somewhere Olson's poem that begins "Reich was right, the race does seek to resemble its own experiments" is the decline from Miolithic or the invention of the wheel as the definition of the last walking period of man. What did happen elsewhere no longer does: Icarus embracing Artemis, Apollo and the World. The transformative. The evidence of such wingspan lost even. We go our separate ways. Metamorphosis is complete.)

So we have it: nature and dignity  
Partake of it... that you do  
it is no small thing,  
no matter how difficult...

that you  
can raise yourself,  
though this is also true.

If I told you  
I had observed the same leaf falling four times from the  
same tree...wld you believe me? Then, suppose, I told you  
last night you had two dreams and you could have awakened in  
either one. Would you still believe me? The question stays,  
else how is it?

Night and day are one. Not the one dream  
but many, because there is nothing in this world that I  
cannot account for. I consider myself already dead. The  
worst has already happened to me, therefore I'm clear and  
calm; judging me by my acts or by my words, you wld never  
suspect that I have witnessed everything, or travelling into  
the future suddenly see you strewn on your own wires. I  
want to be impeccable for 800-years! The leak in the faucet  
is impeccable. Dante would clearly understand you.

As for myself

Two hands hold my legs  
like wind in a field

A picture of you as I would see myself

20:ix:75 Hardwicke, MA  
for Sheri

## SONG 2

One cannot read Olson  
the way one reads O'Hara

"metric then is mapping"

the tidal currents set fastest, awoken at sea.  
The onshore breeze further up  
at Fort Point crashes against the  
wall

I thought ten years too late...

You can go to any coast  
sit down  
have a book in your hand

I open the book. I see a man  
in a greatcoat climbing the wooden  
stairs that lead to the rear of his flat  
the sun rising in the kitchen; the sea  
is East. The man is sleeping  
the piper of a sleeping nation.

29:ix:75 nyc

## FIELD NOTES

Interviewer: Sr. Neruda, if you were seated  
at a table and asked to choose between being  
a Nobel Laureate and the President of Chile,  
what would you do?

Neruda: Move to another table.

28:x:75 Belchertown, MA



the window read Glad  
the way she reads O'Hara

perhaps then is writing

The other windows get far away, washed in sea.  
The window breeze further up  
as the wind grows, and the

I think the wind is

You were in the room  
with them  
have a look at that

I read the book, I got a book  
in a book, in a book, in a book  
stage, then, that is the end of the book  
the end of the book, the end  
is the end, the end is the end  
the end of a beautiful world

in the end

Field Notes

Interviewer: The records of the book were  
at a table and asked me to read the book, being  
a Nobel laureate and the President of the  
what would you say

Aruda: How to describe the

Richard Schickel, Jr.

RARE BOOK DEPT.  
UNIV. OF WIS.  
MADISON

**chorus in "VARSITY SHOW"**

**We're workin our way**

**thru college**

**to getta lotta**

**knowledge**

**we'll probably**

**never ever use again**