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WITHDRAWN

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**The
Ghost Dance
Anthology**

The Ghost Dance Anthology

25 years of poetry from
GHOST DANCE 1968-1993

Other Kinds of Scores

Edited
with an introduction and notes
by **Hugh Fox**

The Whitston Publishing Company
Troy, New York
1994

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We tried to accept your hero-ology
but were blinded by other kinds of scores,
and the roar of crowds went blank
as cithara-trees
dance-expanded
the extensions of our flexibility. . . .
the wing-beat of peace-shared filled our
mimeos and we dragged on the joints of
variant para-psychology
in the knowledge that our cellular
non-establishment would reproduce itself instead
of rusting in the graveyards of weapons-obsolence.

I am a witness,
I was there.

(From Hugh Fox's "Cross-Country Stars and
Stripes Forever Mind-Blast Sutra," published
in THE LIVING UNDERGROUND: AN
ANTHOLOGY OF CONTEMPORARY
AMERICAN POETRY, Whitston Publishing,
Troy, New York, 1973.)

INTRODUCTION

In his account of his press, *CAMELS COMING*, in *GREEN ISLE IN THE SEA—AN INFORMAL HISTORY OF THE ALTERNATIVE PRESS, 1960-1985*, Richard Morris gives an accurate assessment of the atmosphere of the 1960's out of which this anthology ultimately sprang:

The most obvious characteristic of the magazines of the 60's was that they injected a little fresh air . . . into what was then a suffocating literary atmosphere. Some of them were mimeographed and quite sloppily produced; others showed evidence of care in production and design. They all, however, lacked respectability. The material that they printed would not have found welcome in university English departments. . . .

Even their names were outrageous: **Entrails, Mar-rahwannah** (pronounced "marijuana") **Quarterly, Atom Mind, Open Skull, The Willie, The Buddhist Third Class Junkmail Oracle, Fuck You, Meatball.***

Poetry- and ideology-wise, the 60's were a kind of continuation of the Beat Revolution of the 50's, in the same way that the Beat Revolution of the 50's found *its* roots in the experimental spirit of the 20's, which in turn found *its* roots in the artistic revolutions of a decade earlier. This isn't a progression that goes back indefinitely, however. The idea of "experimentation" itself, the idea of an avant-garde as such in literature in a sense begins at the end of the 19th century.

In the writings of early twentieth century poets and painters you come across a great many references to THE SPIRIT

*Edited by D. Kruchkow & C. Johnson, Highland Park, Illinois: December Press, 1986, pp. 2-3.

OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY—the mechanical, scientific, materialistic, the worship of The Machine, the Robot. When I wrote the last sentence I was thinking of Henry Adams' AUTOBIOGRAPHY with its marvelously insightful essay "The Virgin and the Dynamo," in which Adams talks about modern man worshipping science/machinery with the same sort of devotion that medieval man worshipped The Virgin—the Fritz Lang's film METROPOLIS which also revolves around Man and the new Machine Age.

In 1912, Wassily Kandinsky in his essay "On the Problem of Form," was already talking about twentieth century imperatives, "the building up of the psychic-spiritual life of the twentieth century which we are experiencing and which manifests and embodies itself even now in strong, expressive, and definitive forms."*

This sounds very much like the 1910 Futuristic Manifesto ("Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto") in which it is grandiously stated:

WE DECLARE:

1. THAT ALL FORMS OF IMITATION MUST BE DESPISED, ALL FORMS OF ORIGINALITY GLO- RIFIED.

2. THAT IT IS ESSENTIAL TO REBEL AGAINST THE TYRANNY OF THE TERMS "HAR- MONY" AND "GOOD TASTE" AS BEING TOO ELAS- TIC EXPRESSIONS, BY THE HELP OF WHICH IT IS EASY TO DEMOLISH THE WORKS OF REM- BRANDT, OF GOYA AND OF RODIN.

3. THAT THE ART CRITICS ARE USELESS AND HARMFUL.

4. THAT ALL SUBJECTS PREVIOUSLY USED MUST BE SWEEP ASIDE IN ORDER TO EXPRESS OUR WHIRLING LIFE OF STEEL, OR PRIDE, OF FEVER AND OF SPEED.

5. THAT THE NAME OF "MADMAN" WITH WHICH IT IS ATTEMPTED TO GAG ALL INNOVA- TORS SHOULD BE LOOKED UPON AS A TITLE OF HONOR.

6. THAT INNATE COMPLEMENTARINESS IS AN ABSOLUTE NECESSITY IN PAINTING. JUST

*THEORIES OF MODERN ART, ed. H.B. Chipp, Berkeley and L.A.: U. of California Press, 1968, p. 170.

AS FREE METER IN POETRY OR POLYPHONY IN MUSIC.

7. THAT UNIVERSAL DYNAMISM MUST BE RENDERED IN PAINTING AS A DYNAMIC SENSATION.

8. THAT IN THE MANNER OF RENDERING NATURE THE FIRST ESSENTIAL IS IN SINCERITY AND PURITY.

9. THAT MOVEMENT AND LIGHT DESTROY THE MATERIALITY OF BODIES.*

I think that Number 4 here is especially interesting seeing that it dates back to 1910! A life of STEEL AND SPEED. What about after moon-trips, satellites, earth-orbiting stations, space-probes?!?

But obviously a radical split had been made from the past, and (Statement 2) there was an obvious attempt to consciously throw out Tradition.

In Sir Joshua Reynolds' 18th century lectures on art (the subject of my M.A. Thesis) a great deal of attention was paid to the imitation of "The Masters." You were supposed to begin your career as a painter by going into the galleries and copying the masters. And Reynolds himself, when he did his famous portrait of Mrs. Siddons, consciously imitated (and said he imitated) one of Sibyls in Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling.

Here we are told that innovation is its own justification (Statement 5) and anything harmonious or in good taste (Statement 4) should be rebelled against.

No wonder Les Fauves (The Wild Beasts) called themselves Les Fauves, and no wonder a painter like Maurice Vlaminck could make a statement like "I have no one but myself to please."**

So there are a number of tenets that artists come carrying into the twentieth century with them: 1) An embracing of The Modern with all its cacophonies and contradictions, 2) An attempt to incorporate this modern reality "raw" into their art, and 3) An extreme hedonistic subjectivity.

The idea of an artist working for a patron (church OR

*The same, pp. 292-293. Signed by Boccioni, Carra, Russolo, Balla and Severini.

**The same, p. 145

state), or, in a rush of fevered emotion, for an audience/public, is replaced by a creed of radical self indulgence. And the self that is being indulged is often (often intentionally) on the edge of being psychopathic.

In my 1970 study of contemporary U.S. poetry, *THE LIVING UNDERGROUND—A CRITICAL OVERVIEW*, I talked at length (in an essay on Dick Higgins) about the differences between "High" and "Low" culture—call them "snob" and "slob," *The Aristocracy and the People*.*

A great deal of twentieth century American poetry is snob-poetry. You can see it in Pound, to a lesser degree in Eliot, and more recently in the L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E poets like Bruce Andrews.

In a sense snob-poetry is a kind of "feigned madness." John Ashbery, for example, is very obscure, but it is a worked-at obscurity, obscurity codified into obscurantism. As Richard Nason points out in a recent essay entitled "Boiled Grass and the Broth of Shoes," Part II:

As a veteran commentator upon the non-objective visual arts, Ashbery had taken his cue from the Abstract Expressionists and carried over the fracture of representational elements and meaning to language . . . it was left to Ashbery to use innovation as both a cause and an effect of a calamitous historic severance, or the reduction of all great works of literature—as a prelude to the invasion of the ersatz.**

The Beat Revolt of the 1950's represented an interesting amalgam of High and Low Culture, snob and slob, all within a very subjective, interiorized "mad" context where the madness might very well be genuine—even if stimulated by drugs, maybe a little pot, maybe a little liquor.

There certainly is a great deal of playing to the crowd in the work of a Ginsberg or a Ferlinghetti, or even a Snyder.

The Beats in their own Kerouacian Zen mystic way, try to carry forward the idea of incorporating into themselves the rush and whirr of their surrounding reality.

The Ginsberg-Whitman rapport in "A Supermarket in California" isn't fortuitous:

*Troy, New York: Whitston Publishing Co., p. 37 ff.

***THE GENERALIST PAPERS*, Vol. I, No. 2, Brooklyn, New York: The Generalist Association, 1990, p. 4.

What thoughts I have of you tonight, Walt Whitman, for I walked down the sidestreets under the trees with a headache self-conscious looking at the full moon.

In my hungry fatigue, and shopping for images, I went into the neon fruit supermarket, dreaming of your enumerations!

What peaches and what penumbras! Whole families shopping at night! Aisles full of husbands! Wives in the avocados, babies in the tomatoes!—and you, Garcia Lorca, what were you doing down by the watermelons?*

The surprising insertion, in the midst of all this democratic yawp, is the inclusion of Garcia Lorca (The Latino population in California?), the great Spanish surrealist, down by the watermelons.

Ginsberg is on the streets, part of the streets, his meter is Whitmanesque and like Whitman his is a vox populi—like Harry Smith in ME, THE PEOPLE!

In fact the whole thrust of the 50's is away from vapid experimentalism to direct, electric communication.

Jerome Rothenberg, in his REVOLUTION OF THE WORD—A NEW GATHERING OF AMERICAN AVANT-GARDE POETRY, 1914-1945, scores some interesting points regarding The Academic versus The "Popular." In some ways it was true, as William Carlos Williams said, that Eliot's THE WASTELAND was a "great disaster to our letters," but, as Rothenberg points out, what about Williams' "own discomfort over *free* verse ('The magnificent failure of Walt Whitman'—W.C.W.)?"

In a way our twentieth century poetry can be broken into two baggily general categories, those who are NOT and those who ARE DRAWN INTO THE VORTEX/THE MIND.**

The Beats write "Vortex Poetry," and the mind-vortex into which they happily allow themselves to be drawn is a vortex of very populist (if not popular) twentieth century sensibility.

*THE NEW AMERICAN POETRY, ed. Donald Allen, New York and London: Grove Press, 1960, p. 181.

**New York, New York: The Seabury Press, 1974, pp. xiii and xvi. The Vortex idea is derived from a phrase of Pound's quoted by Rothenberg, "a rush of experience into the VORTEX."

The next generation, the poets of the Sixties, who I (with acknowledgements to Charles Plymell) have called The Invisible Generation, are and at the same time aren't "popular." Popular, perhaps, in a Zen-Hindu-LSD paradise of imagined FAR EASTERN sensibility.

As I said in an article titled "U.S., Iconography and the Yippie Media Termites," that appeared in a special issue of TRI-QUARTERLY that was later published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston as LITERATURE IN REVOLUTION in 1972, the Hippies were "energized, colorful, psychedelic Beats who believed that an alternative counterculture could be created in the very midst of 'Moloch-country.'" They thought that their "Hinduized, orientalist, mind-blowing, sense-expanding ecstasism could exist as a kind of 'overflow' of U.S. industrial energy, [that they could] live unmolested in a world of *satori*, sutras, mantras, electronic and chemical tripping out."*

I included the entirety of D.A. Levy's THE NORTH AMERICAN BOOK OF THE DEAD in my anthology THE LIVING UNDERGROUND—AN ANTHOLOGY OF CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN POETRY, but he *never appeared in my magazine, GHOST DANCE, because he had committed suicide some four months after I first met him in Cleveland.* THE NORTH AMERICAN BOOK OF THE DEAD, though, still remains the best single source for getting an overview of just what The Invisible Generation was all about:

i live in the world noise
 behind all the world noise is the quiet place
 when i look for the quiet place
 i sometimes find a pale horse
 and ride to the clouds
 sun moon mountains water wind
 the pale horse disappears
 when i am there
 i look for the dry atmosphere
 and the world ocean . . . **

*ed. by G.A. White and C. Newman, New York, Chicago, San Francisco, p. 426.

**Troy, New York: Whitston Publishing Company, 1973, p. 228 ff. Levy's apartment in Cleveland was painted from floor to ceiling in psychedelic, americanized Hindu designs and his work shows an encyclopedic knowledge of Hinduism, Buddhism, etc.

The pale horse is Heroin, and the whole poem is a description of the escape from the industrial to another kind of psychedelic, mystical twentieth century.

But we still aren't in the world of "snob culture" a la Ashbery—Levy was a genuine addict, a genuine crazy, a genuine mystic.

Ginsberg, a generation earlier (and there was a correspondence between Levy and Ginsberg—I saw the letters—just as there had been a correspondence between W.C. Williams and Ginsberg, the baton always being consciously passed) had seen the "mystics" that surrounded him as "angelheaded hipsters burning for the ancient heavenly connection to the starry dynamo in the machinery of night," but here the mystical experience is a polar opposite—quietude instead of agitation, innerness instead of action, no dynamos, no machinery, merely the "quiet place" as a doorway "that opens to no time/all directions in no time . . . like motions of light."*

A whole new dimension of American consciousness is beginning to open up closer in many ways to the Transcendentalists (Emerson, Thoreau, etc.) of the 19th century than anything avant-garde in the 1920's.

These poets of the 1960's are experimental, avant-garde, mystical, iconoclastic, emerge from the Vortex of their own innermost minds . . . but they aren't for the most part making a conscious EFFORT to shock or dazzle. To some degree my characterization of Richard Krech, author of the HASHISH SCARAB, founder of Noh Directions Press (in my book THE POETRY OF CHARLES POTTS) applies to the whole Invisible Generation:

[He was a] wild, wooley-headed far-out Head,
dreamer of socio-narcotic revolutions that would
change the world Out There by changing everybody's
head-chemistry.

Even for the Russian Futurists, experimentation was "conscious." For Levy, Richmond, Wicklund, Wantling and to a lesser degree Lifshin, Costley, Locke and Potts, a "sea-change" had taken place in their consciousness before or as they began to write.

*The Ginsberg is from THE NEW AMERICAN POETRY, already cited, p. 182, the Levy from THE LIVING UNDERGROUND—AN ANTHOLOGY OF CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN POETRY, p. 229.

Potts, for example, for all his present monumental sanity, in the 1960's in a book like *LITTLE LORD SHIVA*, had created an "induced psychotic dissociation that *did* split him up into a number of different people all soaring high, all coming back down at different speeds seeing different things at different rates."

And Potts' self-induced revision of his consciousness was a general phenomenon:

The Sixties distrusted Mind as it was handed to them by Western Civilization. It was Mind-Boxed-In, Mind-Mechanized, Mind hooked into the heavy machinery of work-a-day Capitalism. Sanity was *this* side of the mirror . . . you go through to the *other* side of the mirror (*real* Reality) by somehow stretching, puncturing, splintering your Psyche experimentally.*

For years I had been interested in The Mind as Reality-Perceiver—essentially Comparative Anthropological Psychology. What I was interested in was The Mind limited by its various sociological and anthropological contexts and liberated or amplified by psychedelic drugs. No one who studies the ancient world (especially the Pre-Columbian world) can be indifferent to the relationship between Reality and Mind-Altering Drugs. I wrote a book about the new aesthetics entitled *AN AESTHETICS FOR THE YEAR 10,000* (the central chapter was published in *THE SAN FRANCISCO REVIEW OF BOOKS*) and more recently a short memoir (soon to be published by Alpha-Beat Books in Canada) about my own personal background and the Beats and the "Invisible Generation." I really believed we were on the brink of a new Enlightenment.

In an article published in the Argentinian avant-garde magazine *ECO CONTEMPORANEO* ("Mistica Norteamericana Del Siglo XX") I stated that "in a very real sense the United States has been converted into a brave new world and the philosophy of the Northamerican young people (concretized and intensified by the Hippies) is a noble and altruistic vision of what **should be.**"**

*Paradise, California: Dustbooks, 1979, #12 in The "American Dust" Series, pp. 25 and 34-35.

***ECO CONTEMPORANEO*, ed. Miguel Grinberg, Buenos Aires, Argentina, Number 12, 1969, p. 12.

I taught at Loyola (now Loyola-Marymount) University for ten years between 1958 and 1968, right in the middle of this Hippy Revolution. I went to Love-Ins and Be-Ins. I was forever visiting my cousin, Jim McNitt (now a steam geologist) in Berkeley, visiting my ex-students in San Francisco, really tuning in on The Scene. In 1965 in—of all places—Caracas, Venezuela, I came across my first way-out North American literary mags, wrote to editors from Caracas (I was there for two years), got stacks of magazines and books and did my first bi-lingual anthology. In 1968, encouraged by the Columbian poet Dukardo Hinestroso and the Chilean David Valjalo (both exiled in Los Angeles, both starting new mags/presses at about the same time), I began GHOST DANCE. In the same year I met and began my book about Charles Bukowski AND got invited to the last great poetry pow-wow of the 1960's (April, 1968) in Berkeley and COSMEP—The International Association of Independent Publishers—was formed and I, almost accidentally, got on the first Board of Directors. I met Richard Morris, Richard Krech, Charles Potts, Harry Smith, in fact most of the major poets of the time, began interviewing them, anthologizing them, writing about them, and myself began to write in a similar vein. I had found my voice, my milieu, my element.

The thrust of my magazine, GHOST DANCE, can be best summed up in the "editorial" in the first issue:

DISCONTINUITY AND FRAGMENTATION ARE THE KEYS TO THE NEW SENSIBILITY. THE LINE NOT CURVED (Baroque) nor INVERTED (Surrealism) but broken into unpredictable, non-sequential ENERGY PACKETS that attempt to capture not merely the total present PULSATION in an unrolling, unfolding TIME-PROGRESSION, but present it in the TOTALITY OF ITS SIMULTANEITY. The reality-capsule moves, all the points on screen VIBRATE, tree, barn, snow, the dolphin with the computer in its teeth (static energy combinations) are transformed into energy-BULLETS, WAVES. Reality is WAVES (both the perceived and perceiver) and the interaction (co-penetration) of the two produces SPARKS.*

The "editorial" in the second issue goes even a little further, although along pretty much the same lines:

*GHOST DANCE I, Los Angeles, 1968, pp. 12-13. I might add that these "editorials" were originally all printed like concrete poems.

word straining of the page doesn't wanna be a WORD anymore. WORD means lineal button-down SEQUENCE and after Scott Bartlett IT FLARES UP TO ALLATONCENESS e.e. cummings as plastic artist A.L. Gillespie asking (TRANSITION, March 1928): "What's been dough-clogging the sieve-process of the Speak-Mind, what's been shunting off part WORDprecip of the original flashsearConsciousness QUANTITY of Images, that polygonating Impact-series of the was-aspected Ideation?" Psychedelicatessen. Nibble, nibble, Look Moms, the wall is opening (inside by brainball).*

What I'm really talking about here is the very process of perception. Perception traditionally is blocked by a kind of sequential programming. Reality comes in in steps, on a ladder. Here I seem to be confronting a whole new way of simply SEEING/PERCEIVING. The key is "the wall is opening (inside my brainball)."

By the time I got to issue four I was seeing this mind-opening combined with electronics, a kind of biological electronic weld:

BIOELECTRONICS man-electronic(micro) weld the page gone then the TV, the transistorized carryall plugon world into EVERYHAIR EVERYWHERE instantaneousness HEART PACEMAKERS, cyborgs, pincer-arms, manpower implementation and augmentation, translation machine cybernetics plugging into brain extensions ELECTRONIC PSI, ESP the walls (of time) come tumbling down organic-inorganic unified into omniconmunication I listen-look for you inside.**

I was envisioning here some sort of cyborgian extension of consciousness using either mind-altering drugs or mind-altering machines. But obviously more than a mere poetic-revolution—to my mind—was taking place. And now, twenty-three years later, surrounded by VCR's and Camcorders, Computers, Computer-Camcorder-VCR hookups, modems, fax machines, totally carry-aroundable phones, etc. maybe the vision was symptomatic of a larger epistemological revolution that wasn't too off target. And **maybe** the verbal revolution was taking place. McLuhan thought so. We were no longer in a

*GHOST DANCE II, East Lansing, Michigan, 1968, p. 2.

**GHOST DANCE IV, East Lansing, Michigan, n.d., pp. 15-16.

print-culture world but in a global electronic village. In the epistemological revolution taking place, all my poets were, in a very real sense, in the avant-garde of the revolution.

They were not all of "one piece" by any means, however. There were deep-centered Zen meditation poets like Bill Costley, more traditional (I think Eliot, Crane, W.C. Williams, PATERSON) poets like Harry Smith, neo-realists (again with a touch of mystical insight) like Diane Kruchkow and Lyn Lifshin, ultra-realists like Bukowski and his followers, John Bennett, A.D. Winans, etc. There were original crazies like Richard Morris and Sharon Asslin, people with real reality-perception problems (that gave their work a special poignancy and edge) like Millie Mae Wicklund, mind-altering experimenters like Charles Potts, conscious avant-gardists (in the old European 1920's sense) like Dick Higgins, visual collage poets like Guy Beining, structuralist philosopher-poets like Ascher-Straus, visionaries like Richard Krech and Steven Richmond, handicapped poets whose handicaps altered their perception of Reality, like Larry Eigner . . . but they all had in common a **fresh, bold perception of reality for the most part free of cliches and "schools."**

And I had my enemies too.

For years I worked as Chief Critic for Harry Smith, on THE SMITH, his tabloids THE NEW YORK SMITH and NEWSART, and finally on PULPSMITH.

During all those years Smith (and I, his First Lieutenant) were the sworn enemies of The Fake Avant-Garde represented by John Ashbery.

What Smith and I most wanted was A NEW, FRESH WORLD-VIEW, not a TECHNIQUE-GAME THAT POSED AS ART.

In NEWSART NUMBER 9, August, 1982, Smith came up with a brilliant piece of criticism entitled NAIVE MANIFESTO II:

The prevailing esthetic theories of the Modern are wrong, deadend wrong . . . ART IS NOT A MATTER OF TECHNIQUE. ART IS A MATTER OF SPIRIT. ANY TECHNIQUE MAY BE UTILIZED IN GREAT ART. ANY TECHNIQUE MAY RESULT IN NON-ART. (HEREAFTER TO BE CALLED NART). Nart is a formal approach toward no spiritual end. Inspiration finds the forms necessary to convey spirit . . . ART

I had a mother
O yes!*

And so it goes. As a specialist in Amerindian anthropology and mythology, I know who Tlazolteotl is—and I don't think the "impurity" of Eshleman's vision comes from so-called "learned references, although Ezra Pound, the all time champion of learned references gets 61.2 on the NART scale. What I see is what Rilke talks about in his essay on Cezanne—an inner integrity, the use of art as a vehicle for eviscerating the inner "truth" about the essence of our surrounding Reality. In simpler terms I think what we're talking about is genuineness, the ego negated for the sake of the art, the art itself shining forth, no games, no optical tricks or illusions (or perhaps allusions), an honest attempt to do a communication- and not a con-job.

One of The Smith Gang, Richard Nason, in 1978 published a book of poetry called A MODERN DUNCIAD which is, formwise, bounced off Pope's 18th century critical masterpiece, THE DUNCIAD. The idea in the original was to write a scathing attack on 18th century literary fakes, and crown a King of Dullness, who in Pope's case was the 18th century critic Colley Cibber. The King of Dullness in the twentieth century is John Ashbery, and in *describing* Ashbery, Nason says volumes about the nature of NART. Instead of quoting the poem itself, let me quote two footnotes:

(1) Ashbery . . . has edited from his poems almost all direct experience of the flesh in this world, to isolate and purify the abstract, formal, or merely esthetic aspects of 'reality.'

(2) . . . painting was, and still appears to be, Ashbery's central interest . . . He labors almost obsessively to exclude all moral, philosophical and even emotional elements from his poetry, to deal with changing surfaces within a representational void, like the Abstract Expressionist painters.**

In the body of the poem itself he says it even more succinctly: "And appetite for form made sense unreal,/Until the substance of his art became/Much less important than the picture's frame."***

*COILS, Los Angeles, California: Black Sparrow Press, 1973, p. 133.

**New York, New York: The Smith, pp. 60 and 61.

***The same, p. 61.

Taking the converse of this stand, what The Smith (and myself) seem to be searching for is REALITY over FORM, SUBSTANCE over FORM, art which is emotional, "fleshy" direct, communicative, stripped of all pretensions.

Not that Smith and I always saw eye to eye . . . like in the case of a "team" in this anthology—Shelia Ascher and Dennis Straus.

In NEWSART/THE NEW YORK SMITH NO. 8 (1981), I had done a review of a "Happening-Script" by Ascher Straus. They took an abandoned airplane hanger and turned it into a "happening." You were supposed to, in a sense, "take notes," things happened, you were supposed to observe them, in a kind of reality-perception game:

June 10, 1975:

1. 1:45 PM—roar of jet overhead,
2. (No time)—piece of cellophane blows in,
3. 2:00 PM—Rattling of beams, etc.

My comment on this game went like this:

The blue-hanger world begins to totally "materialize"/ "concretize" for them. Reality, we're being told, remains most at an infra-perceptible level. We're simultaneously in and out of The World. The message: awareness is "inner-ing," reality lessons. For me, anyhow, this is *the* prime value of Ascher-Straus as Reality Buddhas.

Smith, under the fake name of Alka Butazolidan (the name of a medicine he was taking for phlebitis), wrote a sneering rebuttal that went like this:

April 25, 1980.

1. 11:35 p.m.—Hot to jot!
2. 11:39 p.m.—Downtown Freddy Brown.
3. 11:43 p.m.—"You'll die laughing."
4. 11:48 p.m.—Rattling verbs.
5. 11:52 p.m.—I cut a conceptual hole in a space novel.*

Smith, of course, hadn't gone out to Rockaway Park with me when I'd interviewed tall melancholy quixotic Dennis Ascher and short, plump Russian grandmother (in her mid-twenties) Shelia Ascher. He hadn't heard her talk about her M.A. Thesis in Russian (or was it English?) at NYU—on INTERIORS IN DOSTOIEVSKY'S NOVELS. He hadn't seen the insane journals I'd seen lining the walls—notes on years of

*p. 46.

observations made from the front window of their apartment. He hadn't read the immense and detailed German novels (people like Bosch) that they told me were their prime artistic lift-off point. I saw them as obsessive, dedicated artists, Smith saw them as Ashbery-like frauds.

The same held true for another writer in this anthology—Millie Mae Wicklund. Again I'd made the pilgrimage to interview her (this time in Cranston, Rhode Island) and found an intense schizophrenic poet obsessively in love (at the time) with the 1960's Venezuelan pop-artist, Marisol.

I liked her Marisol poems so much that I published the poems that had been left out of the New Rivers Press, 1975 volume *THE MARISOL POEMS*.

In one of the poems, (in the New Rivers edition, not that of Ghost Dance Press) she wrote:

I wished to go from Nerval
(je suis autre)
to Rimbaud (j'est autre) to
my own theories
of autre (je sont autre) . . .

I am the Other
I is the Other
I are the Other . . .

To me fractured language coming from the creative whorl of a schizophrenic threw light on configurations of Reality that might have escaped me altogether.

I was back in the whole mystery of **WHAT IS REALITY** and **HOW MUCH OF IT CAN I PERCEIVE?** I can't see infra-red or ultra-violet, I can't hear radio or TV waves unaided. What if, just on a purely electromagnetic level, I was a Total-Wave Receptor Reality Observed? The world would be totally different for me. I am as limited in my observations of the world as my dog is. My nervous-system, my brain capacity, my sense organs all limit my perception of The Real. But Wicklund, like Artaud, like Van Gogh, even Rimbaud, saw reality through chinks and cracks that were denied me.

Nevertheless, Smith's reaction to my article praising Wicklund was: "**This Chicago Street Kid [I'm from Chicago] thinks all this shit about Autrism/Je suis autre/J'est Autre/Je sont autre/is just bullshit. How can bad grammer be great philosophy?***"

*NEWSART/ THE NEW YORK SMITH, Vol. 3, No. 7, June, 1980, p. 49.

The fact is that language itself, the very fact of ANY grammar, is a limitation on our perception of The Real. The Word, as such, is already far removed from the reality that it tries to "contain."

Something I wrote in the Introduction to an annotated bibliography of books from Dick Higgins' Something Else Press (a library of avant-garde literature from the beginnings of the 20th century up to the 1970's) seems apropos here:

In the U.S. "Underground" comes to mean Anti-Marketplace contentwise, but formwise it is a very close shadowing of marketplace techniques. A hard sell (message) predominates; in a sense the Beat-Hippie tradition is an extension of 1930's *anti-experimental* Social Realism. Art at the service of the revolution; and the revolutions remain political, not metaphysical . . . which is the *base* of the true *avant-garde*.*

Perhaps The Smith philosophy doesn't merely want to get rid of fake metaphysical-existential art, but of anything that goes beyond bare-bones realism. It's not by accident that the greatest writer than Smith ever rescued from premature consignment to literary oblivion, was James T. Farrell, THE preeminent realist (social realist) of his era.

GHOST DANCE hearkens back to earlier rebellions/creeds. We certainly seem to agree with the Futurist Manifesto that originality is primary, that harmony and "good taste" are anathema, that what is often termed "insane" is merely innovative, that the basis for any true art must be sincerity and purity.

Let me end with another quote from my annotated bibliography of books published by Something Else Press. The book being "annotated" is Jackson MacLow's STANZAS FOR IRIS LEZAK. The "annotation" reads as follows:

The **great** problem of writing has always been **pu-
rity**. Call it **simplification, unsentimentality, assum-
ing the reader has a head, purgation and excision of
soupy sentimentality**. Even more so today because we're
glutted with communication, are hit with messages—on
all levels and on all subjects—with huge frequency and
force. Media bombardment. What produces satiation,

*This bibliography came out as a special issue (No. 21) of SMALL PRESS REVIEW, Paradise, California, March, 1974, p. i.

disbelief, cynicism. Media cynicism.

MacLow's book is a religious work conveying *satori* supra-logically through a chance-directed ordering of religious words/sentiments. The chance-ordering creates a "field" of dislocated syntactical emotion that disenables the mind to run on customary rails and through habitual tunnels . . .

Satori itself being supra-logical requires a supra-logical "word-field" to capture its essence.*

Here it's rather obvious that for me the ultimate vindication of any literature is its ability to "spiritualize." It also seems that for me "spiritualization" is accomplished by dislocation of habitual contexts, sequences, semantics. You can see the connection to the Holy Madman Artist AND the metaphysical/existential "experimenters."

Ironically these same poets are the ones who, for the most part, have SURVIVED. For better or for worse I feel that I have at least partially defined the parameters and characteristics of one whole "generation" or "school" of poets—The Invisible Generation, and that I have contributed at least in part to helping make them a bit more visible.

See also:

- Fox, Hugh, "Superstars of the North American Underground," *MUNDOHISPANICO* (Madrid), Number 339, June, 1976, 152-156.
- , "Mística Norteamericana del Siglo XX," *ECO CONTEMPORANEO* (Buenos Aires), Number 12, 1969, 10-15.
- , "The Invisible Generation—A Little Fingernail History," written as an introduction to *POESIA TAMBEM E LITERATURA/POETRY IS ALSO LITERATURE—AN ANTHOLOGY OF CONTEMPORARY NORTH AMERICAN POETRY*, edited with an introduction by Hugh Fox, Vol. 1, Nos. 2 and 3 or *ILHA DO DESTERRO*, Depto. de Lingua e Literatura Estrangeiras, Centro de Comunicaco e Expressao, U. Federal de Santa Catarina, Brazil, May, 1979.
- , "American Poetry, The Last Decade: An Overview," *CHOICE*, October, 1972, Vol. 8, No. 8, 971-975.
- , "The Coordinates of the Counter Culture," *WESTERN HUMANITIES REVIEW*, Spring, 1971.

*The same, p. 15.

- , "Forming a Technologically Permeable Sensibility," WEST COAST REVIEW, Fall, 1969.
- , "America Now: An Overview," SOUTHERN HUMANITIES REVIEW, Summer, 1969.
- , "Floating Away from the Eye on the Wall," Chapter 1 of AN AESTHETICS FOR THE YEAR 10,000, THE BOOK REVIEW (San Francisco), Number 14.

BRUCE ANDREWS—

When I interviewed Bruce Andrews in Boston in the early 1970's and asked him what he was trying to do in his poetry, he talked about it in terms of "fields." Words were like meaning-asteroids floating in the middle of page-fields. It reminded me a lot of Charles Olson's essay on "Projective Verse" (published in Donald Allen's *THE NEW AMERICAN POETRY*) in which he talks of syllables and lines, not in relationship to actual communication with an audience, but *in their relationships to each other*. It is almost as if we were talking about words/word-elements as pure plastic. We arrange and re-arrange; communication is not part of the process.

More recently Andrews has begun to view his disjointed, enigmatic exploded crossword puzzle fragments in terms of social protest. In a statement first published in *PRAXIS* and quoted in George Hartley's *TEXTUAL POLITICS AND THE LANGUAGE POETS* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989), Andrews talks about "laying bare" the "device" of standard syntax and by manipulating (sabotaging) it, committing an act of linguistic anarchy that has grave political overtones:

Laying bare the device remains as a task but it becomes a more social act, of social unbalancing, of a social reflexivity of content, rather than some kind of (what I called in the past) preppie formalism. Because the modernism that's at stake now is more public and is more involved with the conditions of meaning, it also becomes more social. So that if people are arguing (as some of the post-structuralists seem to) that social meaning has disappeared, then just trying to disrupt the system with some radical formalism isn't going to be enough. Instead, if something's going to be disruptive, or disrupted, it's going to have to be *method*, seen in a more social sense—as the social organization of signs, as ideology, as discourse; those are the more broadly social things that need to be shaken up: historicized, politicized, contextualized, totalized—by laying bare the social devices, or the social rules which are at work. (Hartley, p. 40)

Other places to explore this idea of semiotic revolution would be Andrews' statements in *L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E* (October, 1979) and his book *PRAXIS*, already mentioned, published by Tuumba in Berkeley in 1978.

I think in the earlier poems published in *GHOST DANCE* 13 (1971), we're in some sort of intermediate stage toward total fragmentation/vaporization, where only MOST of the reality of the "story" is missing and we're still left with a few charred remnants of walls and perhaps a collapsed basement and some chipped front steps.

Andrews has an essay entitled "Lines Linear How to Mean" in *THE LINE IN POSTMODERN POETRY* (edited by Robert Frank and Henry Sayre, Urbana-Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988) which, in a sense, betrays his debt to Gertrude Stein. Andrews sounds like this:

1.Lines linear outline, clear boundaries' effect, notice the package from its perimeter, consistency, evenness, seemingly internal contours which end up packaging the insides so that they can react or point or be subordinated, as a homogenized unit, to what's outside. Lines as signatures of meaning by inscription—'relationships by force'—after the fact, marking off an internal hierarchy of value identified with parts or tags, disciplining the already constituted body. . . . (p. 177)

Gertrude Stein in *HOW TO WRITE* sounds like this:

A sentence makes them all not an avoidance of difficulty. A sentence is this. They never think before hand if they do they lay carpets. Lay carpets is never a command . . . all this makes sentences so clear I know how I like them.

What is a sentence mostly what is a sentence.

With them a sentence is with us about us all about us we will be willing with what a sentence is. A sentence is that they cannot be carefully there is a doubt about it.

—from *GHOST DANCE* 13, 1971

POLICY MAKING

disperse for units reddened incentive
sea-borne tempting targets larynx
screening the shift the fight a legal
on their hind merits urgent flag civilian
in Lebanon commonly lance referred to as
eight A-3 seed banners a range of
safety *not* has yet to emotion net rigid
his paradox internecine cardinal dry
counterweight led astray
premonitory overstepping
scrambled tide cavern
the Maginot missionary study group
(in the early version,
submarines)

Bruce Andrews—from *GHOST DANCE* 13, 1971

ice clover of the towers
you remind

as i serve you
vines, blacksauce, it's wing-deep

your breasts you'll be caught by the
swag-bellied citizenry

detonating yourself inside our ruins crime

Perhaps some greenhorn'll hoof it up

disappear with the sheriff

festival.

I am hoisting you derrick

—from *GHOST DANCE* 26, Spring-Summer, 1976

SOLAR

as thin

nairgy

more

dyble

toured

exhausted

hemical

eaved for

's n's

the

rtion duct

lant

yieldis tuents

slowed

ties an

Bruce Andrews—from *GHOST DANCE* 26, Spring-Summer, 1976

gully rea
low fortune-tion
rust beak
a darting bea
press
or lay rung it
a archive case
zepheline
photo-schocken
alloys, inc.

three currents of

—from *GHOST DANCE* 26, Spring-Summer, 1976

icelander's czar

(1)

concomic idea tr'n

(2)

basil lding sen

vew

prescr lor / sually
fort force pose

gious

(3)

strat

fica

tie

re-in

us of the for the

(4)

colon

ASCHER-STRAUS—

Ascher-Straus is a two-headed monster consisting of Sheila Ascher and Dennis Straus. He is tall, bearded, looks like a talmudic Don Quixote, she is short, very Russian looking—and they work together as a team, coming at their teamwork from totally different points of view and purpose.

Dennis was very clear about this when I interviewed them in their apartment in Rockaway Park in June of 1977:

For Sheila reading and writing were a way of understanding the world. Sheila has always been concerned with understanding how life operates. And for me writing has served as a kind of waking dream, a way of getting away from Reality.

Just to get an idea about how obsessive Sheila is about "understanding the world," I was shown a whole wall of volumes which consisted of a chronicle which detailed everything that happened to Sheila herself, her friends, her environment. So when we come to structuralistically minute observations of Reality, you can blame it on Sheila. She's also the one who did a Master's Thesis on the settings in Dostoevsky's novels—not the ideas, the symbols, anything like that, but THE SETTINGS.

It's difficult to say what Dennis' part is—the dreaming, the plotting, the imagining part.

They are both from tough working-class backgrounds and write highly "experimental" work, they told me, in order to ESCAPE FROM THAT SAME BACKGROUND.

In the dedicatory note she wrote when she gave me a copy of one of their novels, *THE MENACED ASSASSIN* (New Paltz, New York: Treacle Press, 1982), Sheila wrote:

For Hugh, who's been there virtually from the beginning. You know where this fits in. What's called style is not an involuntary tic: it's psychic rhythms disciplined by aesthetic program. Things come out in such scrambled order that the logic that develops from work to work is rarely seen. A writer's life is a linked sequence of coded identities. . . .

They kept insisting that they (especially her and her journal or diary extensions that oozed over Reality like a giant amoeba) were SUPER-REALISTS. Sheila traced her work back to Dostoevsky and the Germans Von Doderer and Broch. I already knew Dostoevsky but read a couple novels each by Von Doderer and Broch in order to get some idea of what Sheila was

all about and found them vast, all-inclusive writers whose work, indeed, resembled Sheilia's BLANKET-LIFE-EXPERIENCE Chronicle.

I also feel that in order to really understand them you have to understand the whole philosophy of Structuralism, not merely Levi-Straus but authors like Umberto Eco—not the novels but the maniacally obsessive critical works.

See p. 14-15 of Introduction for more on Ascher-Straus.

Ascher-Straus—from *GHOST DANCE* 22

Measuring a Space

	a	
	1	
2		3
	4	

Someone (auditor, chronicler, maker of inventories, pair of human eyes)

	l
	g
	n
	i
	c
	a
	f
located at	4

4= low wall of hedges
 3= high wall of hedges
 2= three story
 grey shingle
 rear fascade of roominghouse
 1= two story the usual suburban four family
 "attached"
 pale yellow possibly woodgrain shingle
 the usual windows and doors in appropriate
 places

	to let in	to let out
	out	in
	in	out

where and when did this begin
 the inevitable fused square of partitioned
 living quarters

these barracks for the middle perhaps middle of
lower middle

s
m
a
l
l

p
e
r
h
a
p
s

m
e
l
a
n
c
h
o
l
y

p
o
p
l
a
r

d

to the right of the melancholy or pathetic poplar
wash
on the line exactly how many pieces on about 10
feet

of line light to right "let's see"

e

- 1 small towel
face towel
perhaps charcoal black
and ash white grid
- 2 small towel
face towel
perhaps rose floral print
embossed is that the right word
on strawberry field
exceeds dimensions of
only by 3/4" fringe
- 3 white bath towel
rather worn large sky blue
flowers olive drab stems and leaves
quite faded towel that's wiped dry
a thousand middle class faces
belly asses a thousand times
2 x length of 1 and 2
- 4 bath towel electric watermelon red
flowers olive drab stems on
strawberry field same length as 3

- 5 bath towel white same length as 4
- 6 narrow vertical line visible between 5 and 7 deep orange yellow/black geometric border longer than 5 4 or 3 by 1' or so probably a bath towel
- 7 bath towel olive drab length of 6
- 8 bath towel faded pastel vertical stripes
a p b y p a
q i l e i q
u n u l n u
a k e l k a
o
w
1" shorter than 7
- 9 bath towel white printed with rose colored flowers of various dimensions green stems 1' longer than 8
- 10 bath towel white field or not quite white field faded yellow white perhaps light and dark mustard bouquets same length as 9

- 11 bath towel electric watermelon red flowers olive drab stems on strawberry field same length as 10.
- 12 bath towel white field comic strip vista perhaps overlapping folds forest green figure 8's yellow and orange striped geometric forms perhaps a sail another form perhaps another sail of slate orange more forest green curvilinear shapes field of orange and yellow flowers at bottom same length as 11
- 13 bath towel stylized "primitive" jungle landscape perhaps orange leopard with black spots zebra's head up above pale orange lion below red orange flame-like mane some smaller animals' head above lion's tail all against field of pale green jungle foliage here and there a broad lead of forest green.

- 14 small article of clothing little girl's skirt or dress or woman's apron or red sash two streamers hanging down "skirt" section white with blue polka dots
- 15 child's bathing suit bottom half electric red puckered elastic trim
- 16 small black sock probably cotton
- 17 small black sock probably cotton
- 18 small black sock probably cotton
- 19 small pair of white cotton men's "briefs" or women's panties

20 large t-shirt
men's white c
otton

Someone with her or his back to 4 may wonder: what
"fictions" images other worlds is 14 supposed to bring to mind
may wonder that is: "does everything have
its second emblematic existence"

only this doesn't seem quite right

"everything exists just as it is,"

there is no "second existence"

whatever is there is there in the "first"

existence

yet this doesn't seem quite right

someone with his or her back to 4,
facing 1 may wonder: deliberately stitched
printed molded perhaps into the
first existence of things are emblematic
motifs and so on whose function is precisely
to draw one's attention away from the surface
to a persistent didactic realm of abstraction

in this case an article of clothing certain
color certain form certain pattern certain
material tends to disappear behind what
certain abstractions words perhaps like
"alpine" "rural" and so on and still worse
a certain ikonography stitched printed molded
into the first existence of these words a
certain bullshit happiness perhaps a cozy
domesticity a certain sunday school or fairy
tale notion of happy domestic being flowered
enamel cookware everything that by now
equals the word "swiss"

Someone wonders: is this quite right

a few emblems equals more pleasant regions

"ornamental relation to existence" that

discreetly replaces the actual

GUY BEINING—

When I wrote Guy Beining for a little help with understanding his WAITING FOR THE SOOTHSAYER, here's what he answered:

WAITING FOR THE SOOTHSAYER. 1. Spells out exact location of poet-dreamer as he/she waits for inspiration. a. Notes on notes or unnumerical equations beyond word age or letters tracing U.S. lettered—the reality of fact standing still writes only words.

WAITING FOR THE SOOTHSAYER is a poet's stance of WAITING FOR GODO. Since Plato kicked the poet out of the fold he/she has been blind of his/her position or power.

2. is the Nazca valley, a jungle or an Eden to find oneself? One must uncover and then cover. What makes poetry hard to save is that the poet has purposely *covered* the subject matter.

7. The poet returns again—regression to that house you must go and come, go and come to see the way.

So in 15 the MYTH is put up front or as the Indians worked the four corners and the horizons. Only in myth can you cover everything. A magic that consoles and that we have lost due to materialism.

O. The Bottom is just words again. Of a modern poet. Most poets will wait forever and not find the Soothsayer.

Maybe the best place to begin unravelling this is with the references to Beckett's play WAITING FOR GODOT and Plato's REPUBLIC. Godo = God. You wait for God but God doesn't come. Plato bans poets from his ideal republic because of their irrationality/fancifulness. They don't deal with The Real but The Imagined.

Beining seems to be saying that the poet has to return to his primal function as **mag**o, i.e. soothsayer, prophet, mystic, visionary, priest. The poet is the one who speaks with The Invisible/The Gods.

He chooses Nazca as the setting for the poem (Sec. II) because of the figures that have been created in the desert by removing stones and creating outlines of giant spiders, birds, etc. In a sense he is saying that we must step back beyond Plato into the acceptance of the poetry/poetry as SHAMAN/SHAMANISM.

Concerning his WIND OWL/HAIKU-VU he had this to say in a letter dated 3/13/92:

WIND OWL is part of a new visual Haiku field field [he had originally written "notion" and crossed it out and written in "field" instead] I worked on in 1991. It consists in a total of 200 pieces. They were labelled 1-20 for convenience's sake. However, there is a thread of a theme within WIND OWL. The artist I'm playing vague homage to is Duchamp. There are concrete Duchampian poems within, for example, #3: "tho in ashtray his butt is out." In #2 the "pedal" and bicycle images are derived from both Duchamp & Beckett. In #4 "water" = fountain, "sink" = urinal, and the cup image is something Pop Art artists took from Duchamp. Here is a list of the rest of the Duchamp "references": #7, "reel," #8, "umbrella" (which is a readymade), a picture of Duchamp playing chess in the upper left of #9 (which also has a urinal in the lower left), #11 "mirrored eye" and "bleeding window," #14 "odds" (or chance notion of Duchamp's) and "glass pushed" (references to the large glass of Duchamp's), #15 "wobbling panes" (& whole work which surrounds his ready-made of a freshly-painted window), #20 is a plea to deal with the puzzle in almost a spiritual sense. #13 is a scuffle at Stevens' 13 blackbirds.

HAIKU-VU is really taking apart all art in a haiku film-frame-flash. VU for me = VIEW. All of this is not contrived but rather subconscious.

He goes on to talk about Number 11 in terms of an X that is part of an equation that equates modern woman with materialism and part of a "three part trauma"/soap opera life rather than a normal "three act drama": "mirrored eye = what she wants to see without viewing the real blood within the materialistic window space, so inward as to just see the reflection which is the problem of our great society."

Beining (pronounced Bay-ning) lives in Rego Park, New York (Queens).

In an interview published in AFTERTHEEND 8 (Guelph, Ontario, July 3, 1990), in answer to the question "What is art? Poetry? Collage?," Beining had this to say: "To me thru Stoma, Beige Copy, and working as much visually as verbally, the boundaries have thinned out considerably. The idea that I am working toward would be to merge, at least in my mind, these various avenues of artwork into one" (p. 5).

—from *GHOST DANCE* 37, 1982

waiting for the soothsayer

I.

it is summer & the chants
 are longer
 the hills higher.
 inside the house that no longer
 stands is a wooden rocker
 in milk sunlight.
 each movement of the rocker
 is an eclipse
 & all the way to the garage
 shadows stretch, making a roof of space.
 evening & dampness arrive interlocked.

 notes on notes (unnatural on
 natural)

a.

each word doesn't
 drop
 or matter
 each coat of flowers
 showered out.

II.

in nazca valley
 in
 lip of peru
 all those delineations
 1.5 thousand years ago
 geometrical etchings

huge figures of turtles-birds
 whales,
 the goddess orejona tasted it
 holding star glare to desert.

 notes on notes

b.

each hat
 a lair to keep
 leaves in
 to keep the rim of light
 polite.

III.

the hands of these
 stars
 from hurlers circle
 dizzy to this or that
 act
 stumped to bump
 in borrow
 as if it were the hump
 in his hand that would not
 let death go.

 notes on notes

c.

chained to his
 face
 an egret.

IV.

sunset in aztec
 sign
 in astrology.
 a weeping lady on

library bench
 & queen of custard
 in melting snow &
 oranges in canary heat.
 legs at the boutique.

 notes on notes

d.

to test this
 & take the sparrow
 down
 the shot only in the head
 counting the alarm
 that mounts.

V.

head on the long hammock
 snake scales rattle
 eye span
 spirit of hammer
 & cloud
 thunder & field
 lightning & palm
 crushed flower as green light-pire
 shore under knife of fish
 in the long gown of the sun.

 notes on notes

e.

nowhere
 & that is the start
 now slightly bent
 from cage
 i ready the rifle
 & burn it.

XII.

from each landscape
 the cosmos burns down
 to the pitchfork & candelabra
 carved into the andes;
 perhaps icarus was knotted
 to this,
 all those wheeled toys
 to fool the gods.
 let light not body
 fall into stone chairs
 carved for an audience unseen.

 notes on notes

l.

the indian
 called wide around
 the tree
 & the planter grows
 a little
 watching things.

XIII.

the mystery being
 that we know so little.
 signs prey on us in yucatan
 those glyphs of maya writings
 even the lacandon indians
 of the rainforests have lost
 the code—the origin.
 words, banished as a plague.

 notes on notes

m.

nothing to say
 but say
 the salt blind
 to the wind.

XIV.

the path always too thin
 to recall. somewhere out west
 folsom man
 further south the sun onto
 the axis of stonehenge
 that being pre-incan
 time of the temple of the dwarf
 & where is the wheel
 of the olmec culture
 & still we brush with cage of rake
 mounds built on the panecillo strata.

 notes on notes

n.

ice was rotting
 on the leg
 the mind now decorated by
 blue fly
 blue fish.

XV.

pollux setting
 sirius fleeced
 moon in water storm
 as the indian worked
 the four corners of the horizon.
 so this the earth-ring
 this cairn circles.
 nights dagger clears the field
 & the dug up ground looks level
 untouched
 as clouds move thru nets
 of that upper stream.

 notes on notes

o.

heart in the
foxes pant
blood in the veins
of the moon.

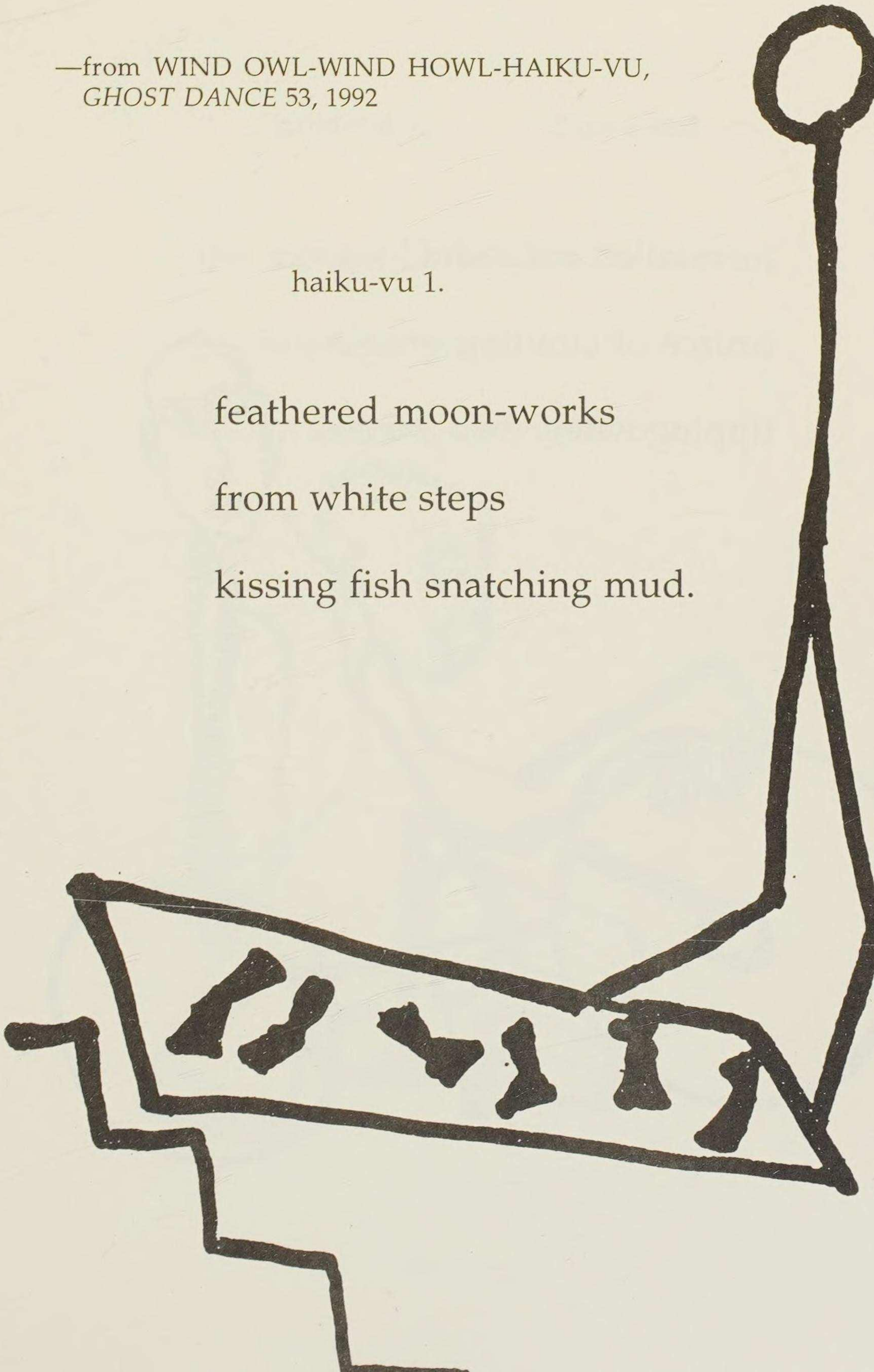
—from WIND OWL-WIND HOWL-HAIKU-VU,
GHOST DANCE 53, 1992

haiku-vu 1.

feathered moon-works

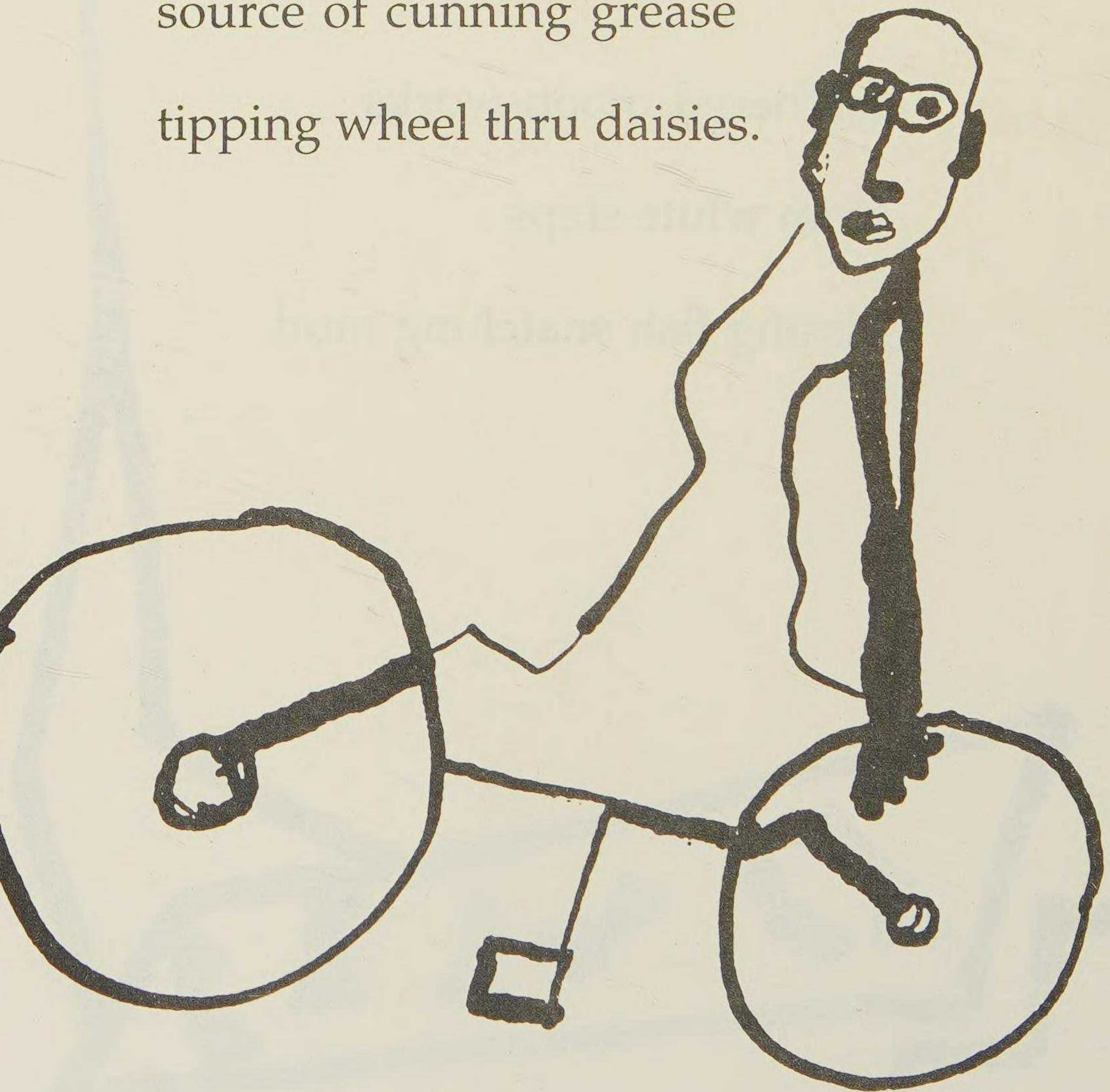
from white steps

kissing fish snatching mud.



haiku-vu 2.

forestalled on pedal
source of cunning grease
tipping wheel thru daisies.



haiku-vu 3.

the midget barely lets
his heart go astray
tho in ashtray his butt is out.

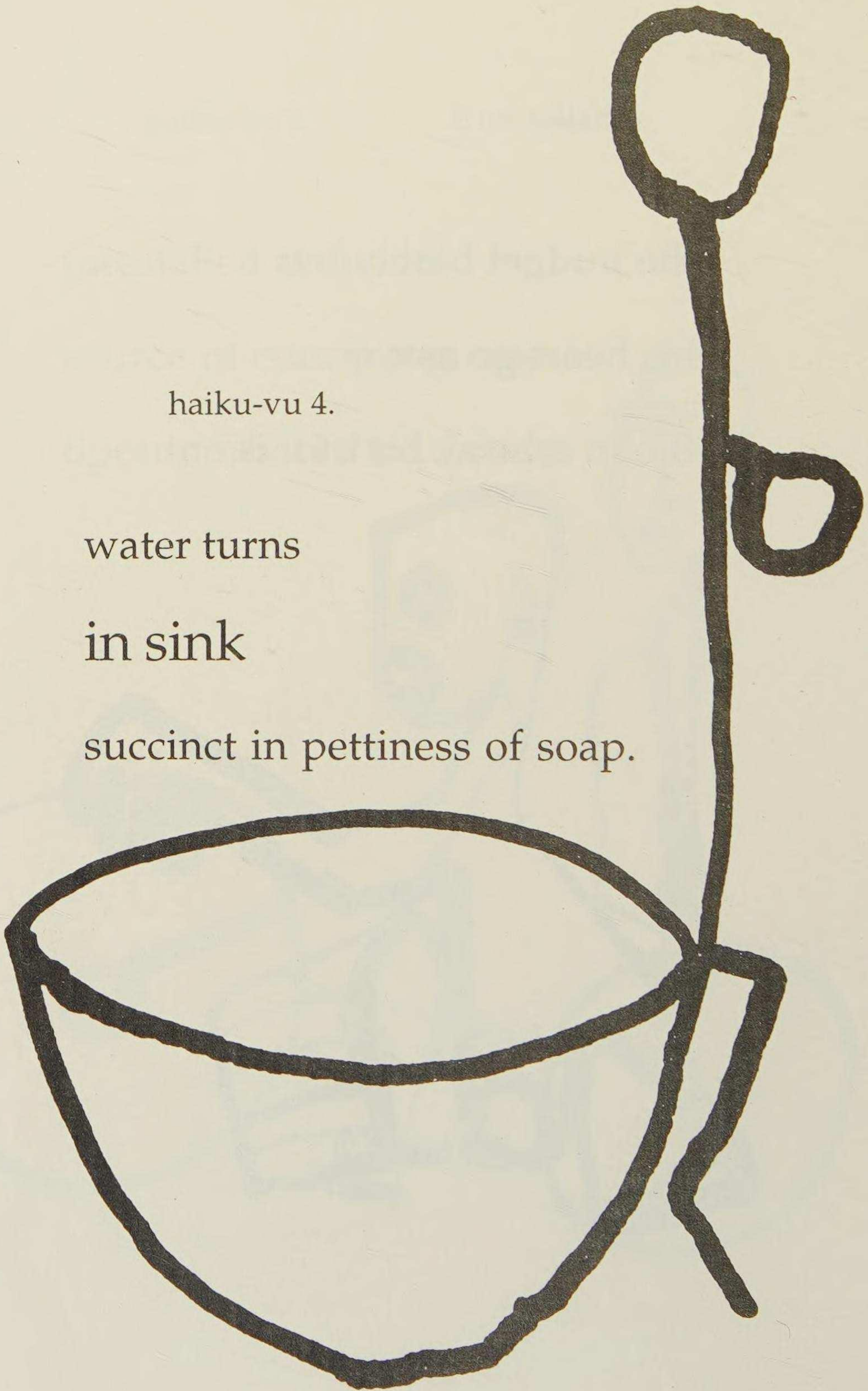


haiku-vu 4.

water turns

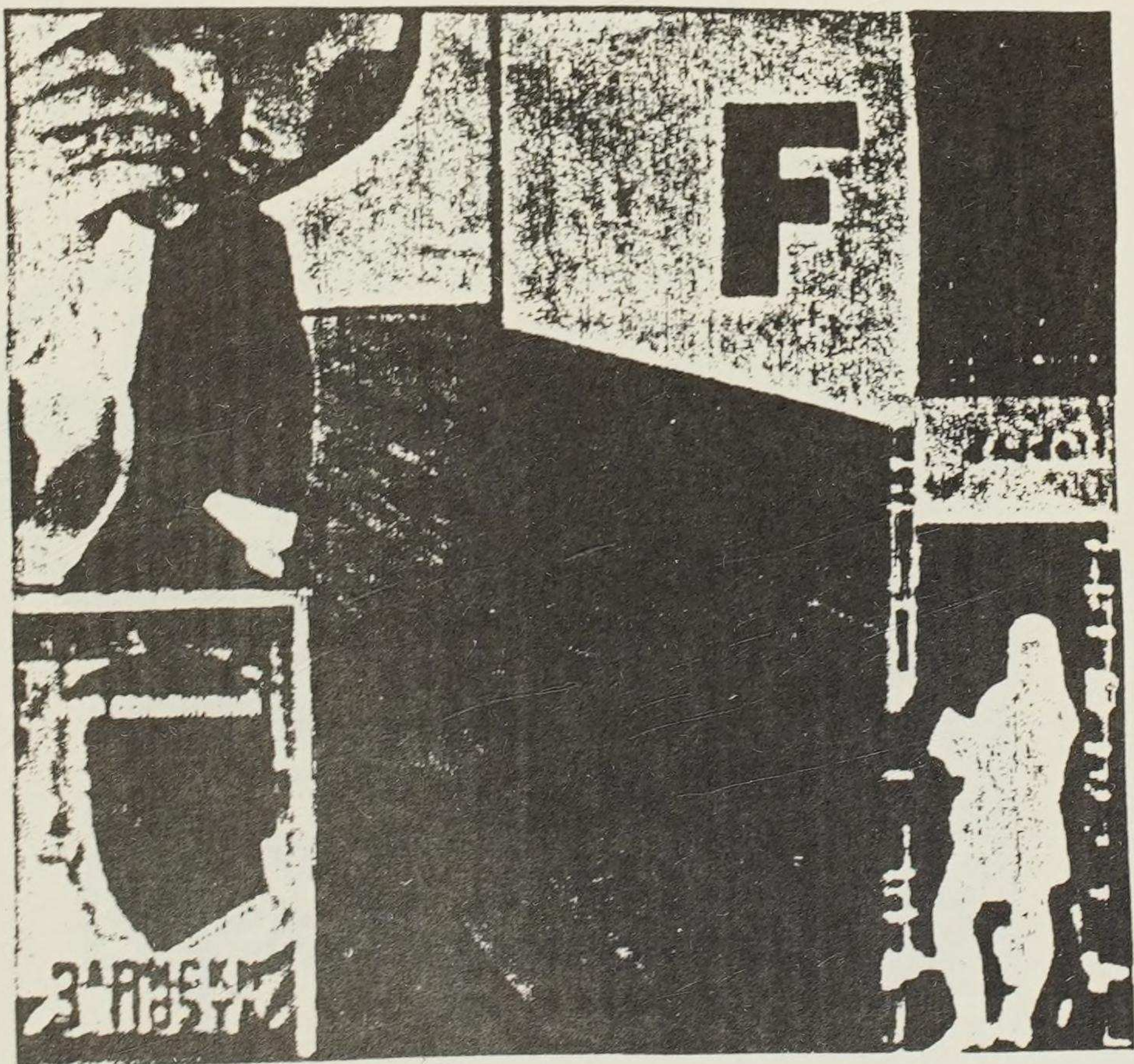
in sink

succinct in pettiness of soap.



haiku-vu 7.

in unreadiness/ in reel
a spool leaked, a dreary
tale on fogged up window.

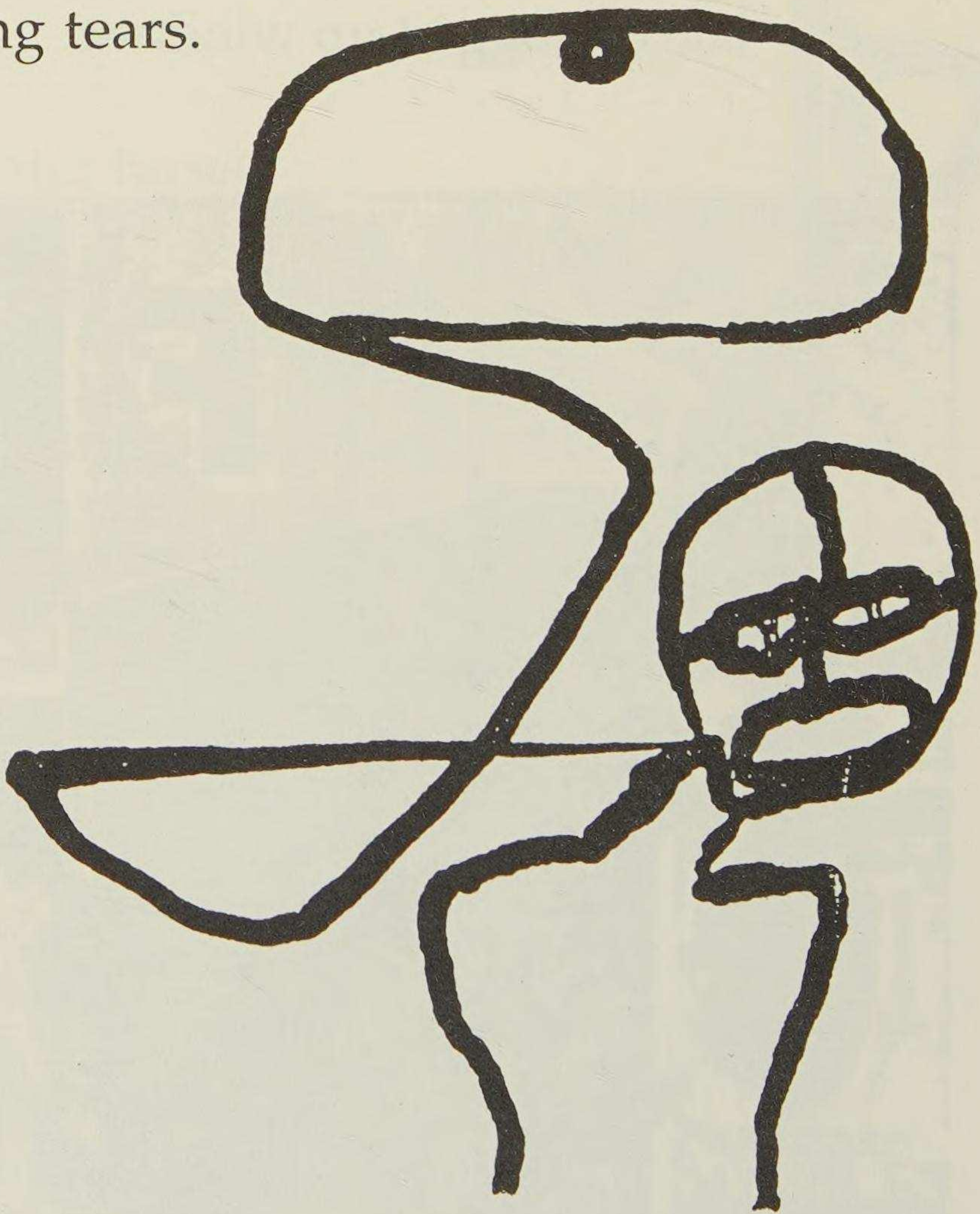


haiku-vu 8.

mass mass masked

unmarked umbrellas twist up

touting tears.

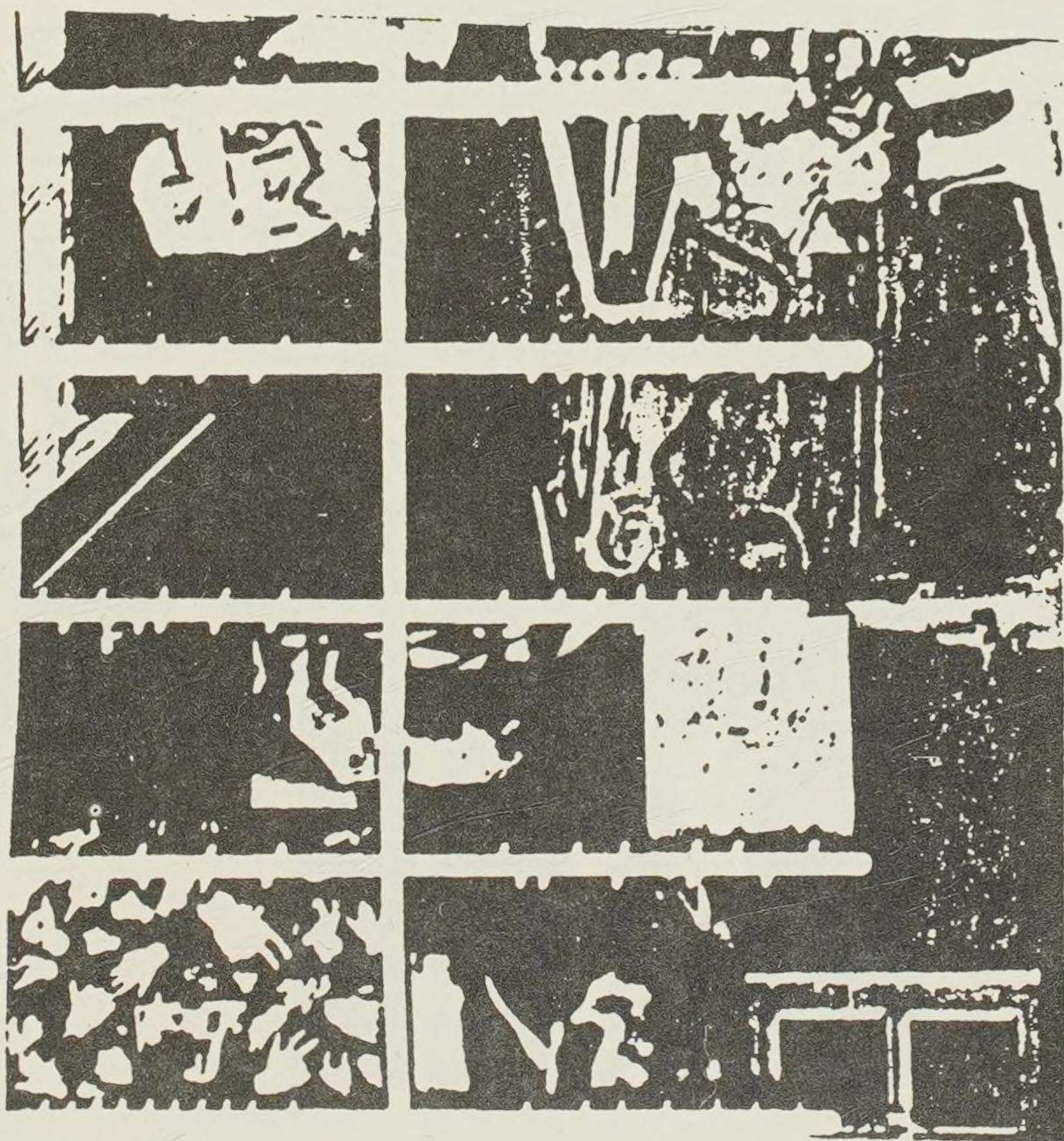


haiku-vu 9.

in pantry & panders

heart a peddler whittles

a stick of no concern.

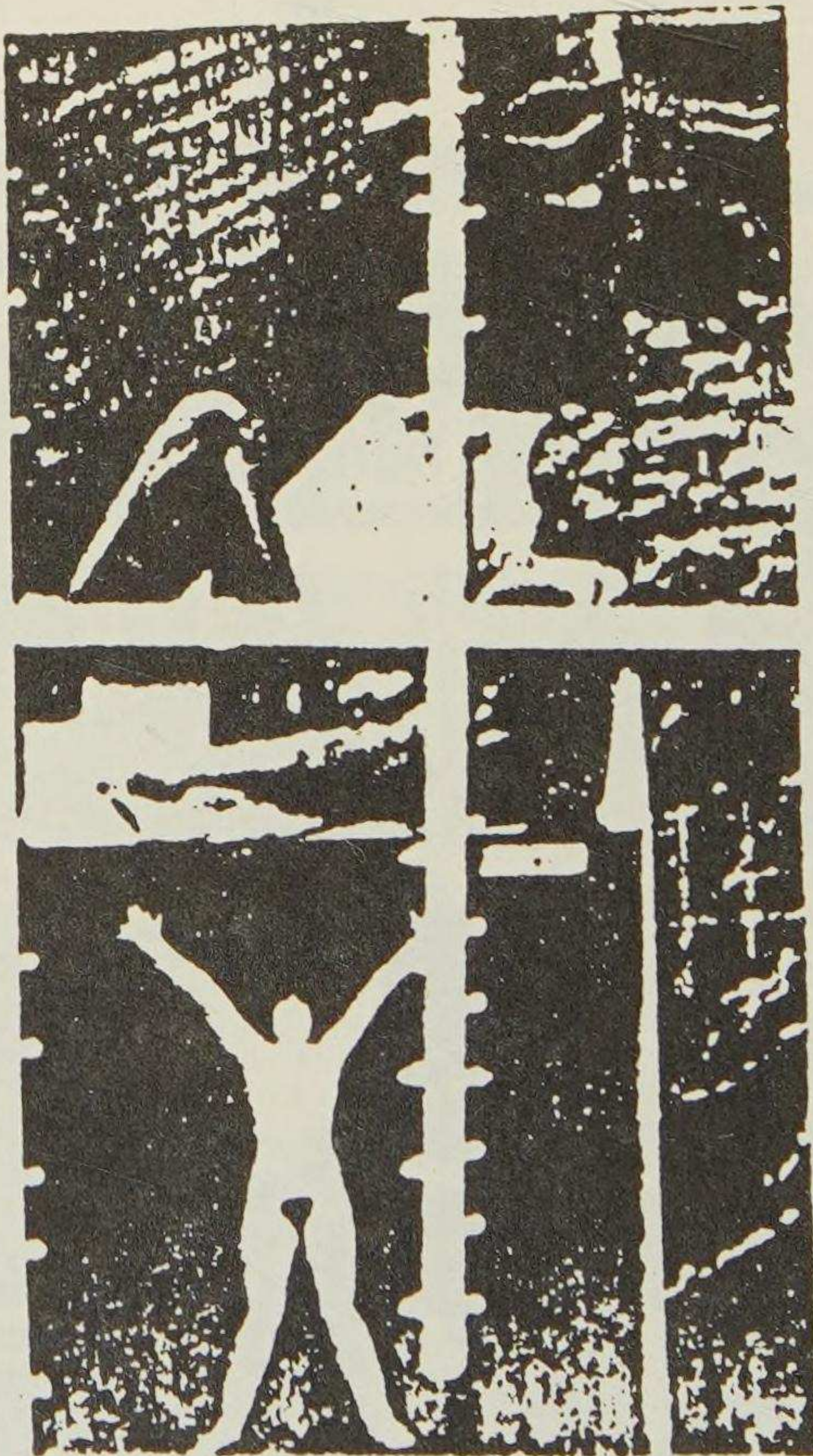


haiku-vu 11.

in X of her label

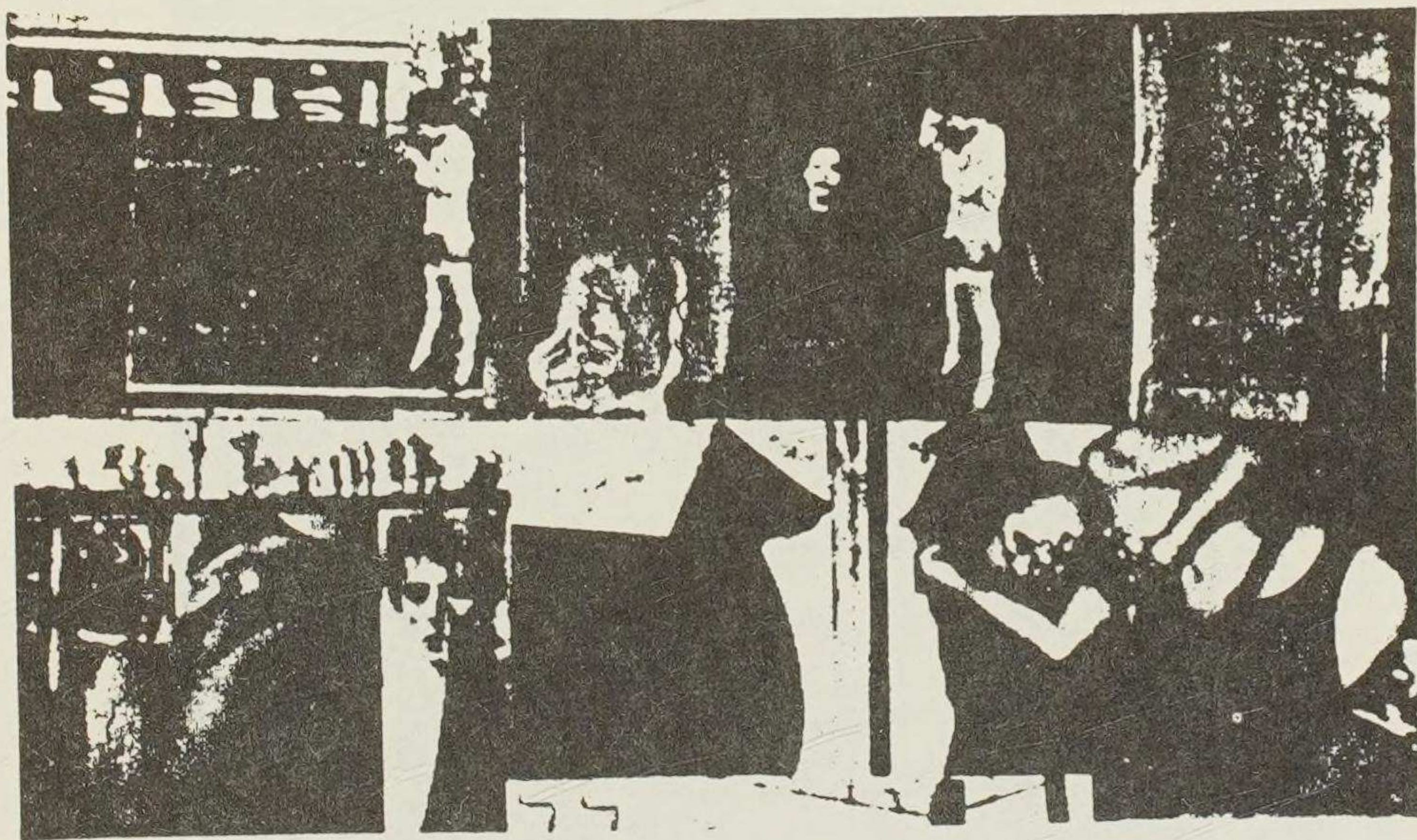
& essence of 3 part trauma

is the mirrored eye in bleeding window.



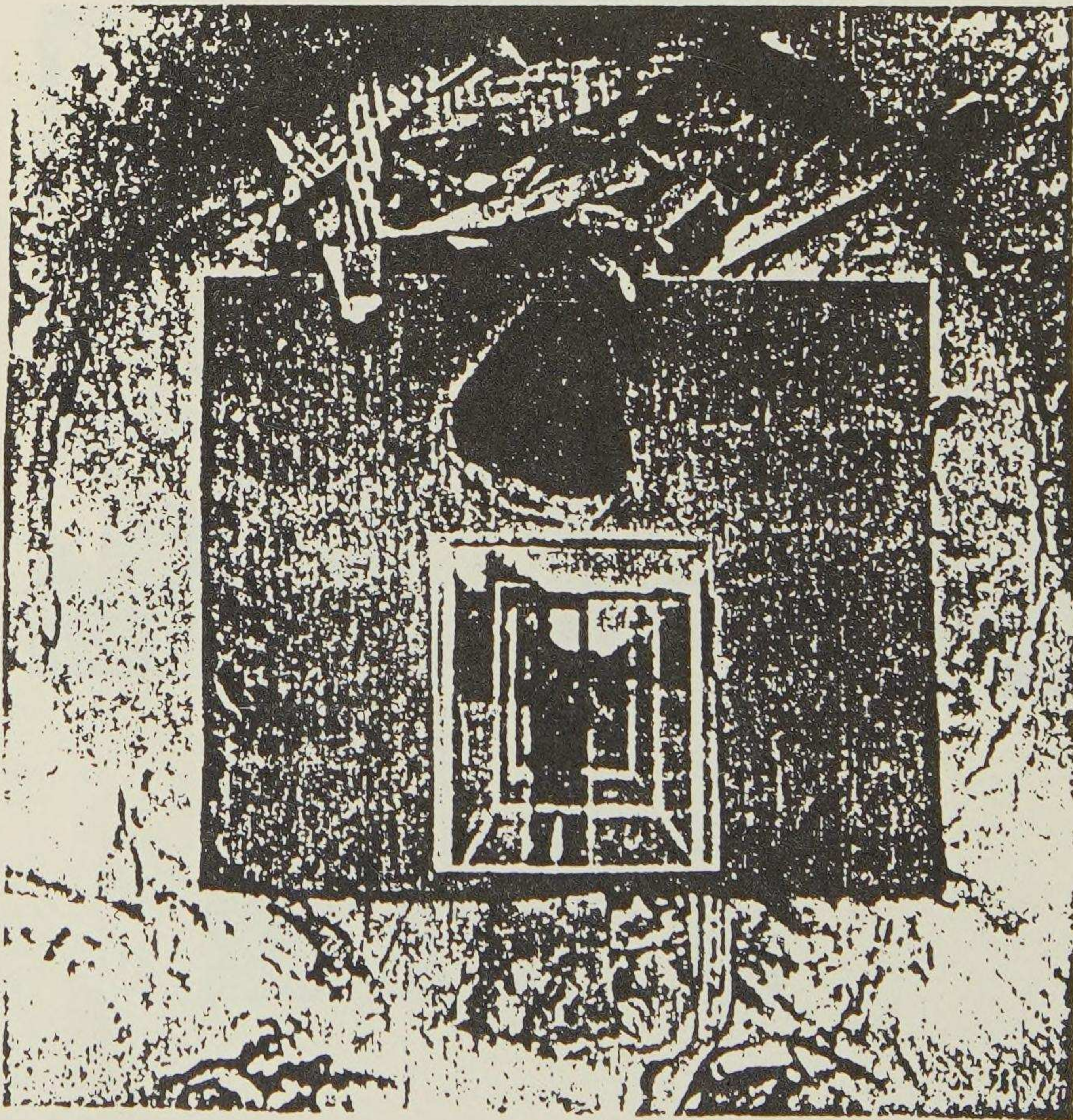
haiku-vu 13.

13 redheads in a row
whirl thru porno slot
as the shutter pinches sin.



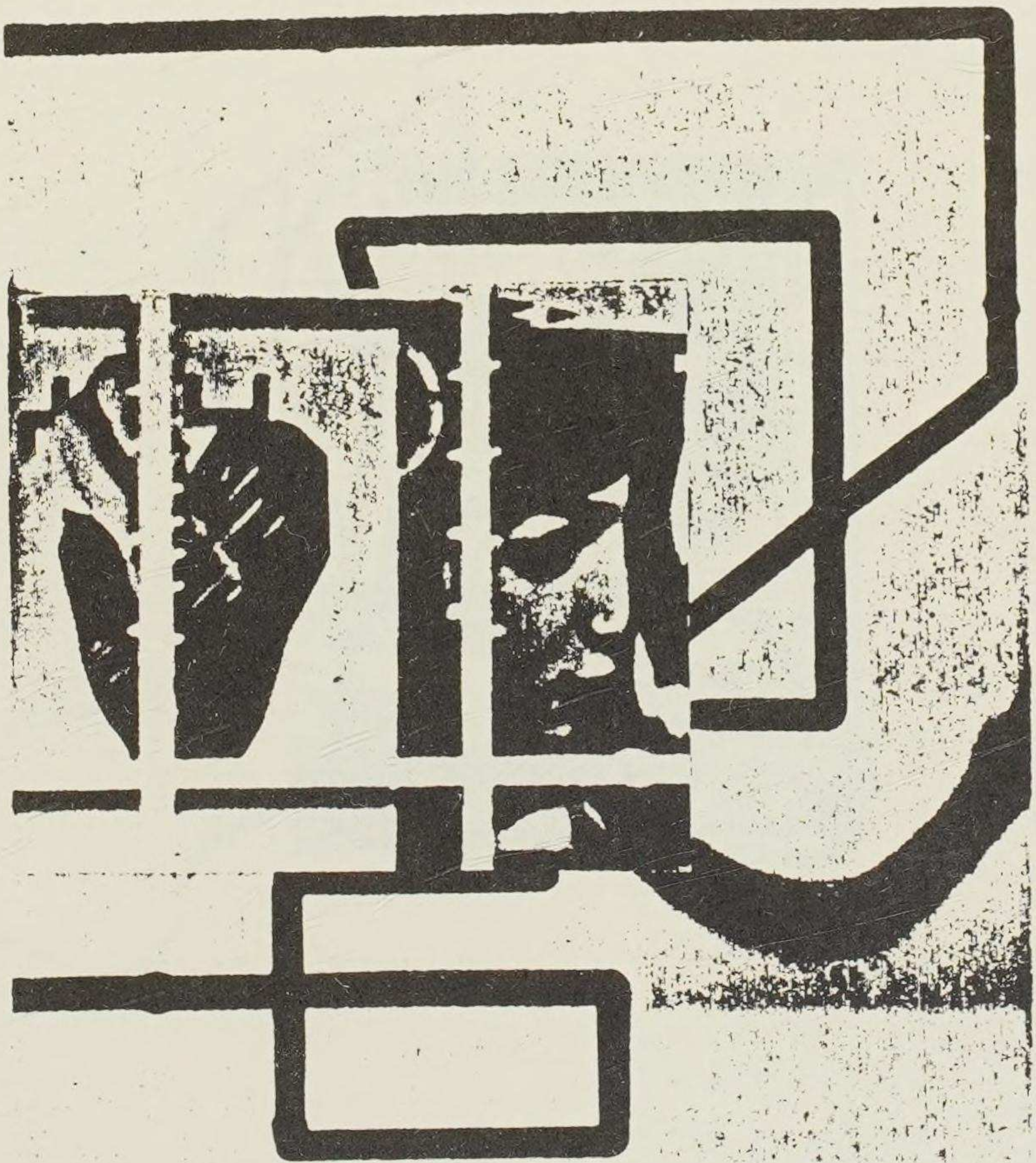
haiku-vu 14.

wind owl window howl
muscles on glass pushed
into helmet of odds.



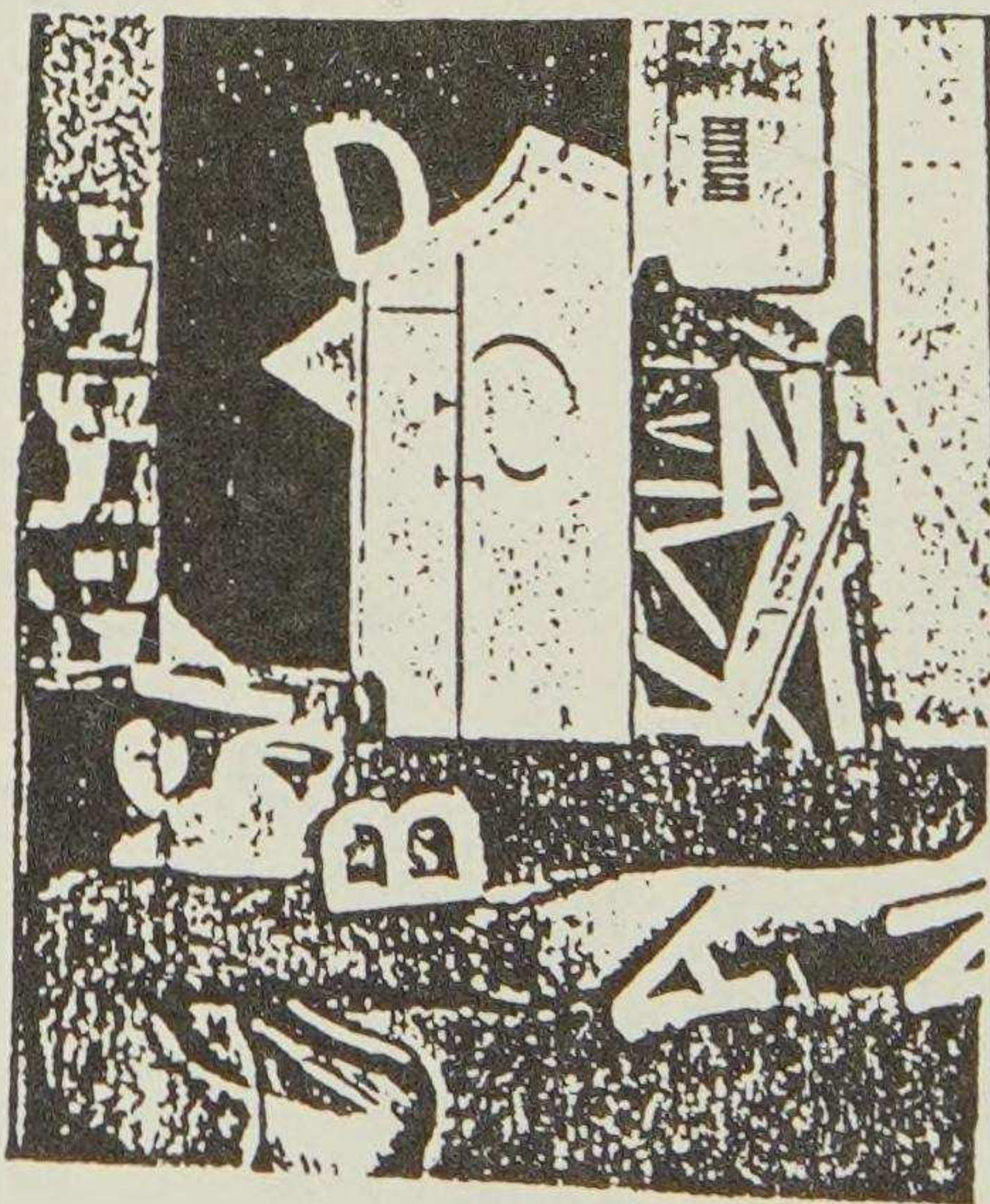
haiku-vu 15.

dismal luck of dew
etched in chalk of night
within ring of wobbling panes.



haiku-vu 16.

perpendicular to her hair
this angle dropped as if a glove
as her compartmental fACE FELL.

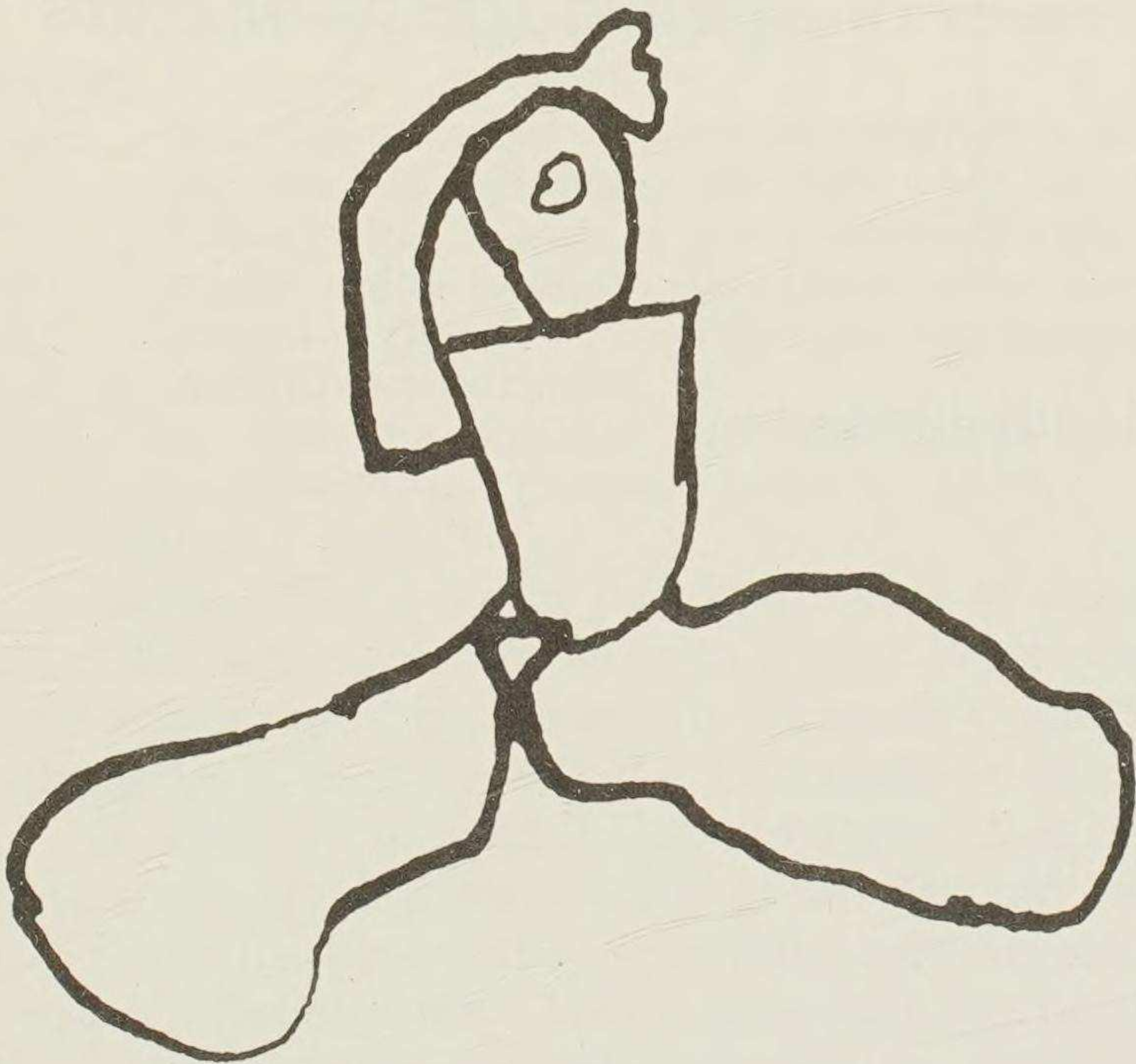


haiku-vu 19.

thru vines, a murky

marble-lipped torso of HERMES

oozes up to triangular fur line.



haiku-vu 20.

PUZZLE

MECHANISM

OF

WINDOW

SPACE-----

paned (pain) of cross

*eye sheds 4th dimension.

JOHN BENNETT—

John Bennett reminds me a lot of Bukowski—and Henry Miller. His poetry isn't as crisp, indelible and slashing as Bukowski's, but his prose (see *SURVIVAL SONG*, Vagabond Press, 1985) is certainly as powerful as Miller's.

I open my copy of *SURVIVAL SONG*, Part 2 and find Bennett's dedication: "For Hugh—a criminal of a high order—John." It's written just under a quote from Miller's *THE AIR-CONDITIONED NIGHTMARE* (1941):

As to whether I have been deceived, disillusioned . . . The answer is yes, I suppose. I had the misfortune to be nourished by the dreams of great Americans—the poets and seers. Some other breed of man has won out. The world which is in the making fills me with dread. . . .

Now here's a sample of Bennett's prose from the same volume:

In an age saturated with instant information, people are more ill-informed than ever. Mis-informed. Indoctrinated. As memory and history are mangled and erased, reality inversion takes place. What is evil is praised as good. What is chained and molested is lauded as free and noble . . .

When the new Dark Ages fully descend upon us, goodness will be forced underground. . . . (p. 37)

And so it goes.

Bennett was born in Brooklyn, went to parochial schools, entered the seminary, left, went to a West Point prep school, was in the Army for three years (in Germany), studied at George Washington University and the University of Munich.

In 1966 he founded Vagabond Press. *VAGABOND* magazine was one of the great lit mags of the 60's and 70's.

Bennett's personality is erratic, raw-boned, high-energy, on edge, unpredictable. He's a man you can never really relax with. He's internally tortured, drinks a lot, works (now) washing windows, lives in Ellensburg, Washington.

He is at his best when writing outraged prose like in *CRIME OF THE CENTURY* (Second Coming Press, 1987), all about his son's confrontation with the prison system. His novels like *THE ADVENTURES OF ACHILLES JONES* (Thorp Springs Press, 1979) aren't as powerful as his raw angry essays.

Like Miller the main theme that runs throughout his

work is outrage at injustice. Maybe it's his early Catholic background. Deep down he expects this to be a redeemed world, but is outraged to find, over and over and over again, that it ISN'T. The friction between the expectations and the Reality has produced the roaring bonfire of his best work.

—from THE LA LA POEMS, *GHOST DANCE* 23

Beautiful People

Beautiful People
are self-defined,
eat the right food
& smoke the right grass
to wash their hands
of any killer instinct.

Beautiful People
sleep on water beds
& fill their heads
with Zen made easy.

It's all too good to be true,
the number painting way
to God.

Beautiful People ride the crest
of their Heritage,
backs turned to the razor reef,
looking eastward
to a salvation
that is not theirs.

John Bennett—

Time Poem

It's hard
when life unfolds
like a peddler
on a windy street
to keep a straight face,
your mind ticking away like
an erratic clock,
marking Time in

Eons.

It's hard to keep from hedging.
Flesh fingers turn to butter
on the heaviness of the bolt.
Yet your mind with odd courage
throws the bolt again & again
in rainbows of

Versatility.

But years go by, not Eons,
turning like relentless gears,
& the bolt rusts fast.

Guessing Game

4 pencils
& a typewriter.
soft lead
& hard keys.
past, present
& other people's ways.
trying to decide.
the booming
burst
of pain
inside
me.

it is hard
to carry
& doctors
do not
understand.
it takes the grace
of Buddha's
fingers
to set it free.

it has its
drawbacks
& its
comebacks
& a
permanent
residence
in the place
where you
came from
& are going.

it makes a
shambles of free choice.
you have one second.
I do things for people
& they give me money.

People give me money
& I cut their grass
or kiss their ass,
empty the garbage
& vacuum the rug.
Whatever they want.
They call the Bureau
& the Bureau calls me
& I go.

I am 33 years old.
They give me \$2 an hour.
They live in big houses
& not so big houses
& a few live in mansions.

They live in their houses
& wait for me,
peek thru the blinds,
straighten their hair
or hide their wine,
bite their lower lip
& listen for the chimes.

Once a lady underpaid me
\$3,
I got home & looked at the check
& said, "Well, shit!"
opened a beer & a can of sardines,
then wrapped myself around my woman
from behind
where she was ironing,
had her blouse undone,
cupping her breasts
like soft trembling mountains,
god, I was HOT,
she said stop it,
stop it,
she said she had to iron,
I slipped her skirt down
over her hips,
opened my fly

& it shot out like a pointer
after bloody rabbits,
I ran my hands over those
hot milky thighs
& we were on the floor,
the ironing board went over,
the iron was burning a hole in
the landlord's rug,
she said stop it,
STOP!
she had it in her slender hands,
she had it in her,
it was moving in her
like a snake in summer
when the phone rang.

I snatched the received from the hook,
the phone went crashing to the floor,
sounding strongman circus bells,
I was glaze-eyed and heaving
& moving in her on the rug,
"Hello? HELLO? Mr. Bennett, are you there?"
"Yeah! Yeah! Hello!"
"Mr. Bennett, I've made a mistake."
"It's okay."
"I owe you money, Mr. Bennett."
"It's okay."
"\$3."
"Okay."
"Are you coming tomorrow?"
"What?"
"Tomorrow—are you coming?"
"I'm coming right now!"
"Very well. I'll leave the check under the
mat."

I never went back there.
I figured she needs the money
more than I do.

JOHN M. BENNETT—

John M. Bennett is not John Bennett. The other John Bennett in the anthology is John J. Bennett. John M. was born in Chicago in 1942, John J. was born in Brooklyn in 1938, John J is the author of **THE NIGHT OF THE GREAT BUTCHER** (1976), **THE PARTY TO END ALL PARTIES** (1976), **LA LA POEMS** (1977), (his **GHOST DANCE** volume), **THE ADVENTURES OF ACHILLES JONES** (novel, 1979), **WHIPLASH ON THE COUCH** (1979), **CRAZY GIRL ON THE BUS** (1979), **THE WHITE PAPERS** (1982), **TRIPPING IN AMERICA** (1984), **SURVIVAL SONG** (1985), **INFANT OF THE AFTERMATH** (1985). John M. is the author of **WHITE SCREEN** (1976), **FOUND OBJECTS** (1973), **MEAT WATCH** (1977), **NIPS POEMS** (1980), **PUKING HORSE** (1980), **TIME RELEASE** (1978), **JERKS** (1980), **BLENDER** (1983, his **GHOST DANCE** volume), **BURNING DOG** (1983), **ANTPATH** (1984), **NO BOY** (1985).

John M. Bennett got his Ph.D. from UCLA in 1970, is the editor of **LOST AND FIND TIMES** (a literary magazine) and head of **LUNA BISONTE PRODS** (also a mag + publishers of broadsides, labels, chapbooks, etc.). John M. Bennett is a Latin Americanist working at the Ohio State University Library since 1976.

There is an illuminating article by Leonard M. Trawick ("John Bennett's Poetry of Beauty and Disgust") that appeared as Number 16 (Fall, 1985) of **GAMUT: A JOURNAL OF IDEAS AND INFORMATION**, in which Bennett is quoted at length about the processes that go on inside him while he is writing poetry:

A friend of mine in the poetry therapy field described my work as reflecting a very close contact with my shadow self: by that she meant the other side of myself, the inside of myself . . . It's like there's another mind or several other minds back inside me somewhere that speak through me . . . I'm writing *from another place*, another kind of consciousness, and the work is an attempt to give voice to that unconsciousness whether it's 'mine' or not." (p. 76)

Echoes of Breton/Maritain's **CREATIVE INTUITION IN ART AND POETRY!**

In answer to an inquiry specifically directed at explicating **BLENDER**, Bennett (5/27/92) had this to say:

In general about my work I would say that it differs basically from mainstream American poetics in that it doesn't attempt to provide recipes for life or to conclude with "correct" moral postures, or to be in any other way didactic. My writing wants to *be* a life; complete and full of it all, a symbolic representation of the universe as perceived through my experience, my consciousness, and my writing itself. . . . BLENDER specifically seems to represent a transition phase between two styles of mine—from a kind of surrealist narrative toward an anaphoric style (one where the poems were structured around repetitions of key nouns or verbs in each phrase, or repetitions of short phrases or pronouns). The latter style resulted in a book called SPITTING (still unpublished), finished around 1986, . . . In what I am writing today, there are still elements of narrative structure in knitting the poems together, as well as elements of the anaphoric "spitting" style. And previous and subsequent "strategies."

The title BLENDER, then, perhaps refers to this mixing of two styles; I think I felt that the idea of a swirling swarm somehow described the content of the poems too—it implies a sense of identity or self as a swarm, constantly spinning around and remixing, rather than being a static, linear being.

John M. Bennett—from *BLENDER, GHOST DANCE* 38, 1983

Where

In the hole of my head a
woman in flames a burning man
where my thoughts should be I'm
falling up through a hole in the clouds
where my hand should be a
cat with no front legs
where my feet should be
sparks snapping under the carseat
where my penis should be a
stone on the elevator floor
where my tongue should be a
giant ball of meat
where my time should be a
doggie clock its foot the second hand
where my door should be a
face screaming around the jamb.

(p. 2)

Here

My hand on the table where
my deck should be my
butt on the chair where
my air should be my
head on a hook where
my hat should be my
feet in my socks where
my road should be my
watch on my wrist where
my burning shirt should be

(p. 3)

John M. Bennett—

I was crawling up a metal stairs
I knew I'd fall from the edge I
catch at the cold, slimy bars I
close my eyes I see teeth tightening at the
office a circle of snarling mouths I'm
at the center, trying to say who I am

I was falling on the rug I was
afraid of my socks, tied in knots and
choking off my neck, I was
crawling to a chair I was breaking off its legs
I was cramming splinters in my eyes and beating
my head with my shoes

I'm driving in circles a warehouse
burning in the middle of the block I pass the same
boy I pass the same fence I smell the same steak
smoking in the gutter

I jerk my head in the bathroom mirror the light
flashes on my face I try to stop I
see my flesh drooling in the sweat my
teeth they icy slick away from me my
hand thrusts up, bloated, shakes between my
double nose, the center of my running meat

I dreamed I found a hidden basement room I
broke in through a door, found it empty,
white, it had 4 odd-shaped niches in the
walls, plaster ducts writhed on the ceiling,
I sat in there, thought me in my garden, the grass
was short and soft, dead clippings dusted on it,
I was picking blackberries, it was dead of winter,
hot and moist.

The Lightswitch

No body before the mirror I
see a bunch of snakes, smoking, leaving,
flames below my eyes a
skinless wind twisting about the sink I
turn, I'm not turning, I'm
thinking of the stairs I'm turning the
faucet I'm teeth emerging from the steam

I was stomping in the kitchen I was
throwing down the bags I was
seeing thudding apples, spraying sugar
Stuffer Dinner crushed beneath my knee I
stumbled from the room I
went to black and wake on a sheetless bed
a leg down there a toenail torn and bleeds I
blacken, dream a smeary lightswitch a
finger rises to it, stops, snaking back and forth.

(p. 17)

CHARLES BUKOWSKI—

While I was in Brazil between 1978 and 1980 teaching as a visiting professor at the Federal University of Santa Catarina in Florianopolis, I started a new magazine (ILHA DO DESTERRO) in the English Department with the help of a buddy of mine, Dilvo Ristoff. The second and third (combined) issues consisted of an anthology of contemporary American poetry for which I wrote an introduction, and I included in the introduction a big chunk of FOX'S HISTORY OF AMERICAN POETRY (this chunk, incidentally, was the only part of the HISTORY I ever wrote):

. . . the big influence on American poetry—for better or for worse—during the whole period of the 1960's and 70's was Charles Bukowski. Remember the great debate 30 years earlier between the Academics (T.S. Eliot/Pound) and the Vox Populi (W.C. Williams)? Well, the Beat Revolt heavily tipped poetry techniques in favor of diction—and subject-populism (Ginsberg, Kerouac, Corso, Ferlinghetti) and Bukowski took it that final step into the streets so that it almost became anti-poetry. The classic image of Bukowski that is stamped in the popular consciousness is that of the Dirty Old Man, the drunk, the tough-guy writing poems about bars and whores and the race track. Which, in fact, has very little to do with Bukowski's actual early poetry: FLOWER, FIST AND BESTIAL WAIL (1960), POEMS AND DRAWINGS (1962), IT CATCHES MY HEART IN ITS HANDS (1963). Even early Bukowski is a despair-ridden Existentialist, but stylistically he's closer to Octavio Paz or André Breton than Ginsberg and Kerouac. Still, because of the integrity of his vision and simplicity of diction, as well as a strong *personal* influence on poets like John Bennett, A.D. Winans and Doug Blazek, who in the 60's and 70's themselves became strong focal points of poetry activity, Bukowski became THE Prime Mover for almost two decades. A.D. Winans' SECOND COMING and Blazek's OLÉ and (later) OPEN SKULL PRESS are three major magazines/presses almost totally under the philosophical and stylistic influence of Bukowski. . . .

(March, 1979, pp. 2-4)

As I pointed in ALL'S NORMAL HERE—A CHARLES BUKOWSKI PRIMER (edited by L.P. Glazier, Ruddy Duck Press, Fremont, California, 1985 pp. 18-19), I first came across Bukowski's work in the Kazoo bookshop on Fairfax in L.A. in

1967. The book was *CRUCIFIX IN A DEATHHAND*, a beautifully handprinted volume with purposefully frayed edges. Maybe twenty dollars. Which was a lot for a book of poetry in those days. I got it, read it—and it blew the top of my head off.

I had a Ph.D., my favorite poet was T.S. Eliot, then Pound, then William Carlos Williams and Rilke and Neruda—all poets (even Williams and Neruda) who make a big distinction between poetic language and everyday language. You sit down to write poetry and it's P-O-E-T-R-Y. With Bukowski this was different. Here there was no space between POETIC and EVERYDAY REALITIES.

As I said in my piece in *ALL'S NORMAL HERE*: "To me that's Bukowski's GREAT legacy to our times, to get the language back on the streets and into the bedroom, into the hospital (*ALL THE ASSHOLES IN THE WORLD AND MINE*), into the post office or any other workplace. To get it concise (he's got this surgical concision), honed, tuned, click-click, just the right word in the right place" (p. 19).

I wrote this in 1983. 15 years earlier in my book *CHARLES BUKOWSKI—A CRITICAL AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL STUDY* (Abyss Publications, Somerville, MA, 1969) I'd written:

[Bukowski] hasn't compromised either in his life or his work. He continues to write it straight, the way he sees it . . . He is king of the meat and cement poets, a continuation and extension of the reality-opening aspects of the Beats, without moving into their psychedelically-filtered sense of wonder and beauty . . . He works in the Post Office eight hours a night, he hasn't lost track of the work-a-day (or night) America which is the only reality for too many Americans . . . He's an authentic, the real-thing, because he talks from the vantage point of the pavement, the dog biscuit factory, the whore house, the park bench, the run-down room with the shabby shade and a worn-out rug stretched feebly across the sagging floor. He represents a kind of stepped-up reality in relation to the beats because he never tried to make the running-down American world sing or shout or chant—and they did. He just makes it talk. And if you listen to what it's saying it pays off. You don't go through the looking glass (for a change) but sweat it out in the real world on this side. (p. 95)

This was written in the year that Bukowski met up with John Martin of Black Sparrow Press. Up to that point he'd been, for the most part, an unknown outcast poet. He could play a Baroque riff with the best of them if he wanted—but most of the time he didn't.

Martin, in a sense, tamed Bukowski. All the Black Sparrow books of Bukowski since then are more "cooked," less offensive, less "real" than the pre-Black Sparrow ones. But . . . Martin got Bukowski known in Europe, translated into German, French, Italian, got film-makers interested in him, set up the preconditions for making him (almost) an international celebrity.

Bukowski's 10 years older than me—which makes him 72.

I think my initial assessment of him, plus all my other statements, still hold true. There was an Age of Pound, in terms of U.S. in the second half of the twentieth century, this is an Age of Bukowski.

—from *GHOST DANCE* 1

yellow sun yellow cat eye kitchen floor

I wake up to the taste of salmon
feeling like I need the priest
as all the tongues in all my bitten bodies
begin to speak of different things
at the same time
under a marmalade sun of stone and wheel
and faded revolution.

in the kitchen the tablets spidercrawl to life
as a white cat looks at me from the windowsill,
and the tablets are my soul and the cat is my soul
and as I drink the bubbles a bird rises from the brush
shade of wing huge shadow huge hard songs like snails
grip the house-edge and
the cat leaps against the screen
and it is like Normandy and Stalingrad and the
shelling of the harbors—
cat yellow eyes coming down to mine
like the eyes of a small businessman about to fire me
for loafing in the
stockroom.

and listen, 30 minutes later that first bottle of beer
is better than any sex anywhere in any world
with any big-assed cow I have ripped the silk and lace
from. yes, this is God you can grip and insert and
become: yellow sun yellow cat eye kitchen floor
one more day in the air of the world

with palm leaves motorcycles crosses power mowers
purple Christs in glass cages at Carondolet street,

I go into the bedroom where the woman sits
rocking my child in her belly
and I take the cigarettes from her hand
light one
begin to cough cough cough
like a horse pulling his first trashwagon
through his frosty useless morning
say in some small city
where only one man owns a Mercedes

and I am sweating I must stink, the walls are polite,
and I hold 1/2 a beer in a bottle, worms and roses
sharks flow through. my day has begun:
terrible, even, and the
same as yours.

—from *GHOST DANCE 4*

Something About a Woman

Ah, Merryman,
a fighter on the docks,
killed a man while they were unloading
bananas.

I mean the man he killed
clubbed him first
from behind
with an anchor chain
(something about a woman)
and we all circled around
while
Merryman
did him in
under a hard-on sun,
finally strangling him to death
throwing him into the
ocean.

Merryman leaped to the dock
and walked
away. nobody tried to stop
him.
then we went back to work and
unloaded the rest of the bananas.
nothing was ever said about the murder
between any of us
and I never say anything about it
in the papers.
although I saw some of the bananas
later in the markets:
2 lbs. for a quarter.
they seemed a
bargain.

Charles Bukowski—from *GHOST DANCE* 12

the poet's muse

there was one
made a thousand dollars
one day
on a town no larger than
El Paso
jumping taxis between
universities and ladies'
clubs.

hell, you can't blame him;
I've worked for \$16 a week,
quit, and lived a month on
that.

his wife is suing for divorce
and wants \$200 a week
alimony.

he has to stay famous and
keep
talking.

I see his work
everywhere.

BILL COSTLEY—

When I asked Bill Costley about "influences" in an interview back in December of 1973 (published in MARGINS, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Number 16, January, 1975) here's how the interchange went:

Fox: Your poetry is somewhat experimental. Now what are the roots for that?

Costley: Jesus, I don't know (laughs). I'm trying to think. . . . the first poem that ever really shook me up was first reading some of Mayakovsky's poems . . . Mayakovsky . . . I read C.M. Bowra, a hardbound put out by Faber and Faber . . . that had Eugenio Montalli, Mayakovsky and a few other people. The whole "image" of Mayakovsky turned me completely around. In fact when I was living on Beacon Hill, way back in early '63-'64, and John Wieners had just come back from the West Coast . . . I ran into Wieners . . . and I'd just read Donald Allen's THE NEW AMERICAN POETRY, and it had, you know, Olson, this, that and the other thing. . . . (p. 20)

The amazing thing about Costley is the isolation he experienced in Boston. Isolation from the rest of the "scene." So he traces his roots back to the Russian Mayakovsky and THE NEW AMERICAN POETRY which was an amazing breakthrough book that for the first time really spread out and revealed the Beats to a large American audience.

He went to Boston College and later tried to get an M.A. in poetry from Boston University but his "mentor," John Malcom Brinnen told him that THE "IN" poetry was surrealistic and that's what he had to imitate.

Later on in the interview with me Costley said " . . . the poem that really got to me and I don't remember where I first read it, was Frank O'Hara's 'The Day Lady Died.'" As a matter of fact 'The Day Lady Died' is also in THE NEW AMERICAN POETRY. Costley's reaction to this poem by O'Hara says it all: " . . . it made my hair stand up and I actually turned cold, completely shook up. It was reportage, it was absolute, 100% reportage of walking down the street, going into this place, hearing on the radio that, you know, Billie Holliday was dead . . . I couldn't believe that they could write about what they were doing, and make it into terrific reportage and poetry at the

same time, and it really shook me up" (p. 23).

The key, then, is "reportage," focusing in with Zen intensity on *The Now*, the focusing itself in a sense automatically transforming the everyday into poetry. Links with Ascher-Straus, Neo-Realism, the fact (also reported in the interview) that Costley is Polish, spoke Polish as a child (his father was Scotch, his mother a Polish ex-nun), felt more comfortable with the European than American scene. Again the link to Mayakovsky, the fact he even called his daughter Maya.

His earliest pronouncements to *CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS* sound more or less the same as what he told me. In 1969, for example, he told *CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS*:

I went through Zen/romanticism and language reduction until 1963 when my wife and working gradually woke me up. Since then I've broken ambiguity addictions and unwound. Jeffers, Mayakovsky, and Brecht did things for me at each stage; now I think I'm almost on my own. I write almost every poem in one draft in fifteen minutes. I learned to make my poems readable and alive by giving public readings—anywhere: on church steps, at meetings, in schoolrooms, on ladders, at gallery openings, on sidewalks, over the radio. . . ."

(*CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS*, New Revision Series, Volume 35 (12/91), p. 109)

His later communications with *CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS* (1977, 1984, 1990) say very little about himself as poet/artist, but are politically-oriented and demonstrate an increasing sense of political alienation.

In 1990, for example, after concentrating on re-finding his father's roots in Scotland ("I fled Boston for Scotland right after Ronald Reagan's reelection . . .") he says: "During this precipitous decline of imperial America, we feel safer living and writing elsewhere."

At the same time, in spite of whatever he may *say* about alienation and elsewhere, the last time I saw him (1993, Ann Arbor) he seemed fat and happy and is still connected with Wellesley College and writes a column on artistic-happenings in the Wellesley area for the *MIDDLESEX NEWS*. His columns, in fact, sound like his poetry:

Unaware a choir of birds punctuated her sunset performance, Wellesley pianist Cynthia Schwan's solo recital at Wellesley College's Houghton Chapel on June 20 drew a rapt audience of 65—including Schwan's family, friends and nine members of the Wellesley Peace Group.

(*MIDDLESEX NEWS*, June 25, 1992, p. 3)

He is, in and out of poetry, the detailed Mad Reporter!
His latest book of poetry is TERRAZZO, published by Mal-
function Press in Wales in 1992.

Bill Costley—from KNOSH I CIR, *GHOST DANCE* 24, Spring, 1975

morning raga: 1st sunrise on eastside 10/18/71.

7-7:45 a.m.

water is dripping

rising in the dark the morning is beginning
w/out light

breathing trying to breathe waking trying to
move

I light one candle of 5

I burn one joss-stick sandalwood

the morning is lightening white light
moving around the rooms

I listen to the radio 7:11 PRO-time Pittsburgh
rioted over baseball

looting in the streets over 2 dozen stores
looted 1 man killed

the Pirates win the Series 2 to 1
the morning is expanding daylight

7:15 PRO-time Roosevelt Hospital
still holds H. Rap Brown
identified by NYC Police Chief

a shoot-out claimed the lives of two men & among

those arrested was H. Rap Brown

black militant one of the list of the FBI's

10 Most Wanted Men in Amerikkka

H. Rap Brown is kissed by his wife

& mother who refuse to make a

positive identification

H. Rap Brown tells a hospital

attendant he is not H. Rap Brown

I make your breakfast

7:45 PRO-time Providence Eastside

1st sunrise

here, upcountry

(for george perreault)

here, upcountry,
in the southwing of SDS*
colorphoto postcards of
zurich, moscow & leningrad
sent by eleanor's mother
a september ago to wellesley

parallel

the swiss herb tea cannister,
the fluted cracked-glaze yellow Japanese tea mug,
& 2 white styrofoam cups, inverted on each other.

the postcards rise in montage:
zurich from the air, river into the lake,
 the alps ahead on the horizon;
moscow, sunlit, concrete & steel,
beyond the purple river, yellow blossoms;
leningrad, upright, gold domes on green,
 aged copper on white buildings, green
 trees;

everything rising, converges.

above, flourescent cylinders hum.
L-R, dark green partitions;
ahead, a paleblue wall.

outside, dead russet leaves
against snow, paleblue sky.

we recreate what we observe,
artificially or mechanically.

the aesthetic need persists.
detail accumulates.

1/16/75

*Sanders Data Systems

L. CRIDISQUE (LINDA BOHANNON-BELLAMY)—

In a letter written to me dated "Juillet 12, 1976," L. Crisdique/Linda Bohannon-Bellamy wrote:

I am still working with word energy, but not so much in an atomistic sense as the entire energy-field-page with attempts (as far as content is concerned) to alude to wide expansions. Much as an ideogram contains reverberative, potent combinations and sends you further, not necessarily through logic.

I want to create form equivalent to the surlogical content cracked open with the Surrealists.

It might be that Levi-Strauss has jumped ahead of the poets. (The scientists are robbing the hive.) We are capable of handling more varied information than our current use of language allows. It is up to the poets, if they are to remain the "antennae of the race" (POUND), to yield a new language. Potent, dynamic, capable of bridging the evolutionary tension we are only beginning to face.

The key connections are, I think, between Levi-Strauss, the structuralist mythologist, and the reference to ideogrammic "reverberations."

We are being led below logical consciousness back to something primitivistic, atavistic, pre-logical. In 1924 Breton defined "surrealism" as "pure psychic automatism, by which it is intended to express . . . the real process of thought. Thought's dictation, in the absence of all control exercised by the reason and outside all aesthetic or moral preoccupations." (See André Breton, "Surrealism and Painting"/"Le Surréalisme et La Peinture," from David Gascoyne's translation in André Breton, WHAT IS SURREALISM, 1936). We are being lead in the direction of intuition, automatism, the unconscious, the magical, mythic, mystic. Things are not supposed to make Aristotelian, logical sense, but sense in a spontaneous, intuitive way.

In a second letter dated March 8, 1992, in response to a very specific question directed at her by me about direct "influences" on her work, Crisdique wrote:

VIDEOS was heavily influenced by Claude Levi-Strauss, Ezra Pound, Gaston Bachelard (THE POETICS OF SPACE), the French Surrealists, the French Structuralist group Tel Quel, the music/theory of John Cage, the paintings of Antoni Tápies and the architecture of Moshe Safdie.

Much of my spirit of investigation was inspired by the visual impact of Ian Hamilton Finlay and certain Italian/South American books in the Louis Round Wilson Library in Chapel Hill. Great slabs of books in languages I couldn't understand. Books to be "read" like films, books sliced (literally) in half, stuffed with photographs, drawings, graphs, little scraps of graffiti, meant to be read backward and forward in utter defiance of literary tradition.

The discussions of the bricoleur in *THE SAVAGE MIND* (Levi-Strauss) was also pivotal to my literary development:

"The bricoleur speaks not only with things but through the medium of things: giving an account of his personality and life by the choices he makes between the limited possibilities."

"Art proceeds from a set (object and event) to the discovery of its structure."
(*THE SAVAGE MIND*)

I believed that to wrest words loose from our thought/structure of grammar, to spin them free, to polish the space around them, would lead to the discovery of new, more meaningful contexts, impacts and connections. A poetic happiness and freedom would occur. (From the ceremony of the Hako among the Pawnee: 'We must address with song every object we meet.')

As a bricoleur my tools were "what was at hand." Hieroglyphs, ideograms, fragments: the constructs of myth, of images as signs. "The creations of myth, like those of the bricoleur, almost consist of a new arrangement of elements. It would seem that mythological worlds have been built from the fragments" (Levi-Strauss). And the Zen precept of *shin ku myo u*: from true emptiness the wondrous being appears.

The idea of the "bricoleur" here in a sense reverts back to the whole concept of spontaneity that forms the ideological base of Cridisque's first letter. "Bricoleur" is a difficult word to translate. There is a translator's note in the 1966 Weidenfeld and Nicolson edition of Levi-Strauss' *THE SAVAGE mind* that gives some idea of the gist of the word: "The 'bricoleur' has no precise equivalent in English. He is a man who undertakes odd jobs and is a Jack of all trades or a kind of professional do-it-yourself man, but . . . he is of a different standing from, for instance, the English 'odd job man' or handyman" (note on the bottom of p. 17).

The 'bricoleur' is a kind of improvisational, intuitive fix-

everything magician. Levi-Strauss talks about him in the context of naive or raw or primitive art. He is someone who solves problems outside of expected, logical contexts. I see him almost as a kind of magician or shaman.

So we have an improviser, a handyman magician.

In the ideological context of, among other forces, TEL QUEL.

TEL QUEL is the name of a volume of "thoughts"/"meditations" written by Paul Valéry at the beginning of this century. It is full of ideas of "magic"/"intuition." For example: "Ecrire, c'est prévoir/writing is clairvoyance" (p. 59, Vol. II of the 1943 Gallimard Edition). Or: "*L'Ame et l'Esprit. Ce sont des hommes transparents, plus subtils, et plus simples. Ces êtres amoindris sont par là un peu plus libres que des hommes / The Soul and the Spirit.* There are some men who are more transparent, more subtle, simpler than others. These 'reduced' men are a little more *free* than other men" (Vol. II, p. 173).

Isn't this almost like Cridisque's Zen ideal of "wonderous being" appearing from true emptiness?

Valery's artist-as-clairvoyant/mystic ideas seem to be the basis of the French group TEL QUEL which published the first number of a journal of the same name in the Spring of 1970. The names that center around this movement/journal are Boisrouvray, Jacques Coudol, Jean-Edern Hallier, Jean-René Huguenin, Renaud Matignon, Philippe Sollers and Jean Thibeaudeau. (See, Serge Brindeau and others, *La Poésie Contemporaine De Langue Française*, Paris, 1973, p. 242 ff.)

The thing that jumps out most at me from the pages of TEL QUEL is a preoccupation with the whole idea of "words on a page," the very process of poetry/writing. Like Pierre Rottenberg in Issue Number 30 (Summer of 1967): "**l'encre noir sur le vert des feuilles—(un sommeil si étendu qu'il écrit le livre)—(des péripéties brillantes—l'irruption de la blancheur (la page) (. . .) / black ink on the green pages—(a dream so extended that it has written the book)—brilliant episodes—bursting onto the whiteness (the page)**" (*La Poésie Contemporaine*, already cited, p. 252).

Again the idea of emptiness moving into fullness, with the implication of some sort of naive automatic process, some subconscious improvisatory bursting on to the page.

The best place to start understanding Cage (and I have to stop somewhere before this little intro becomes a book in itself) is with his book SILENCE (1961). His NOTATIONS, published

by Something Else Press in 1969 may just have been a source for Cridisque's ideas on **poetry as notation**. I even suspect some sort of contact with all of Something Else Press' volumes—Ian Hamilton Finlay was one of Dick Higgins' (editor of Something Else Press) favorites too.

Touch Cridisque and you really get involved with the whole of avant garde music, poetry, painting etc. in the U.S. and Europe in the last 90 years.

Cridisque was born in 1949 in Atlanta, Georgia and has a B.A. in Literature from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. She is a feature writer for THE WASHINGTON POST and lives in Virginia.

L. Cridisque—from *VIDEOS, GHOST DANCE 29, 1977* (p. 11)

field notes foot-tracking it around
a-round it:
the particular consciousness-interstice
of this being

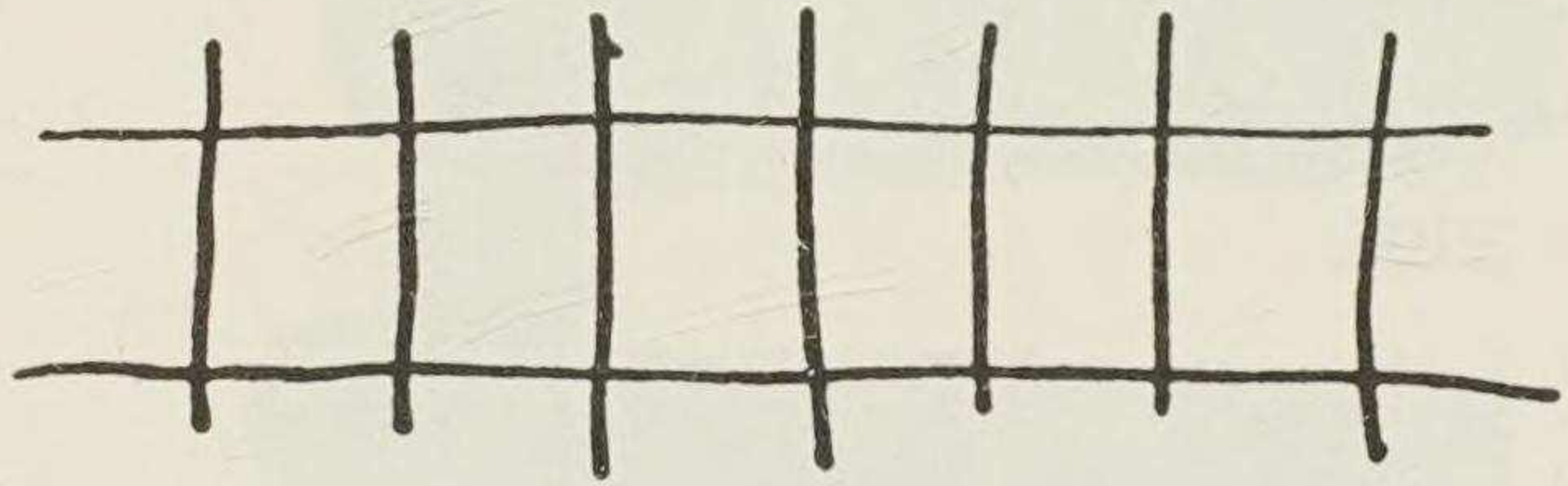
let me beg-in this way: du champ means
of the field

seges = a sowed field
pratium = a meadow [le pre] grassy yellow-gold
flor = floor

an area or division of activity starz furs
freize field or
a space on which something is drawn
or projected or a complex
of forces that serve as causative agents

a
a set of mathematical elements that is subject
to two
binary operations the second of which is dis-
tributive
relative to the first & both of which yield an element
and that constitutes a commutative group
under the first
operation and also under the second if the zero
or unit element under the first is omitted.

b
a region or space in which a given effect
[as MAGNETISM] exists.
Remember the lack of Chinese intransitive &
our constant usage of
Remember Fenolossa's red, rust, magenta,
flamingo, cherry—The concrete, sensual,
ravinishing held before you not as signe
but as concrete sensual ravishing real play
HIEROGLYPHIC EROTICISM
EXQUISITE TANGENTS OF MIND & FLESH



WE ARE THROUGH WITH
THE SCAFFOLDING
LEANING ON IT WATCHING
THE MOON IT SOON WILL BE

(p. 14)

L. Cridisque—

to France; le soir.

le probleme de intertextualité:

The beginning is not. And by not, is begun.

vide

Reflectivity.

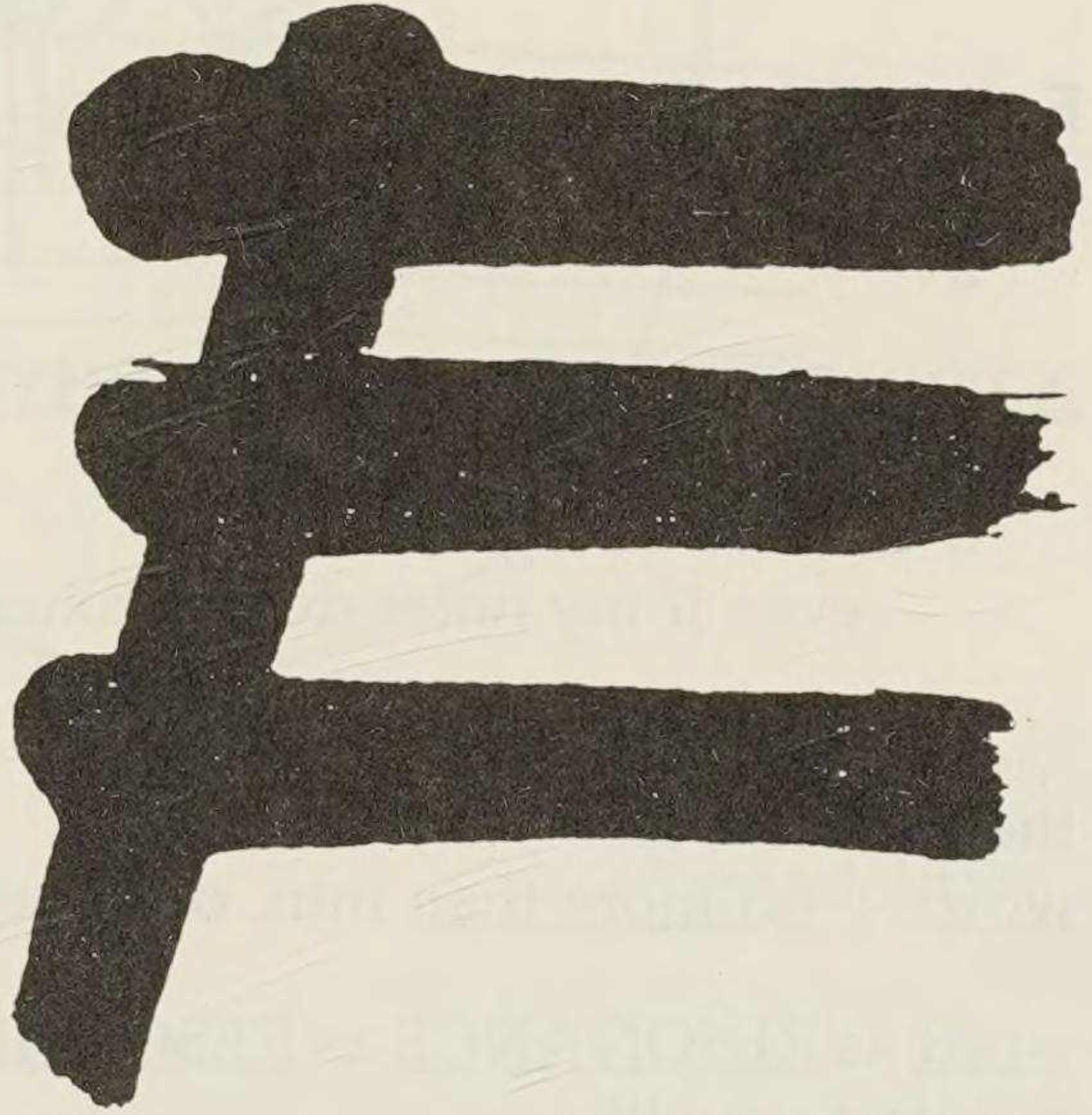
child-steps in/to le miroir;
mirror-image or conceptual body.

1st sight → equi-simultaneous =
↓
distance & embrace of self.

(p. 15)

Silk Screen

I's



(p. 16)

L. Cridisque—

1. *le pouvoir d'une chose textuel.*

2. Form begetting Content. 3. ENERGY MODULES
CONTEMPLATIVE CATALYSTS

4. E S S E N C E : intuitive clarity

[[[it is all ways the soul]]]

4° A PRINCIPLE OF ORDER, OR RHYTHMIC VERITY

it coheres all right,
even if my notes do not cohere.

EZPD

5. the miraculous =
word :- no more than mtn. or bone

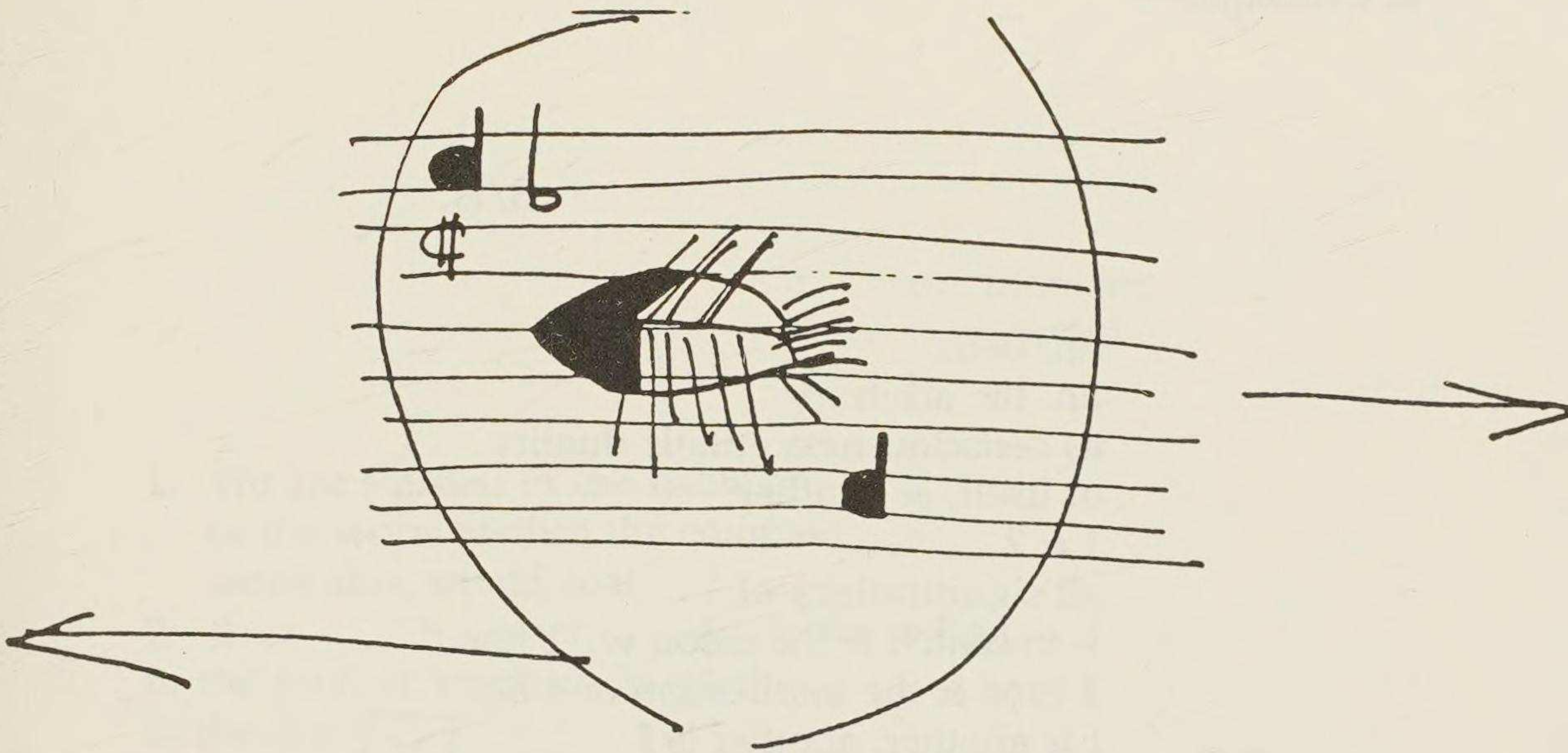
word as RESONANCE as RESOUNDING in a dense sonorous rich web
of intertextualite.

5° The substance of things is not matter but rhythm.

le pouvoir d'une chose textuel.

5° The substance of things is not matter but rhythm.

MADER:MATTER
MADER:MATTER
MADER:MATTER
MADER:MATTER
MADER:MATTER
MADER:MATTER

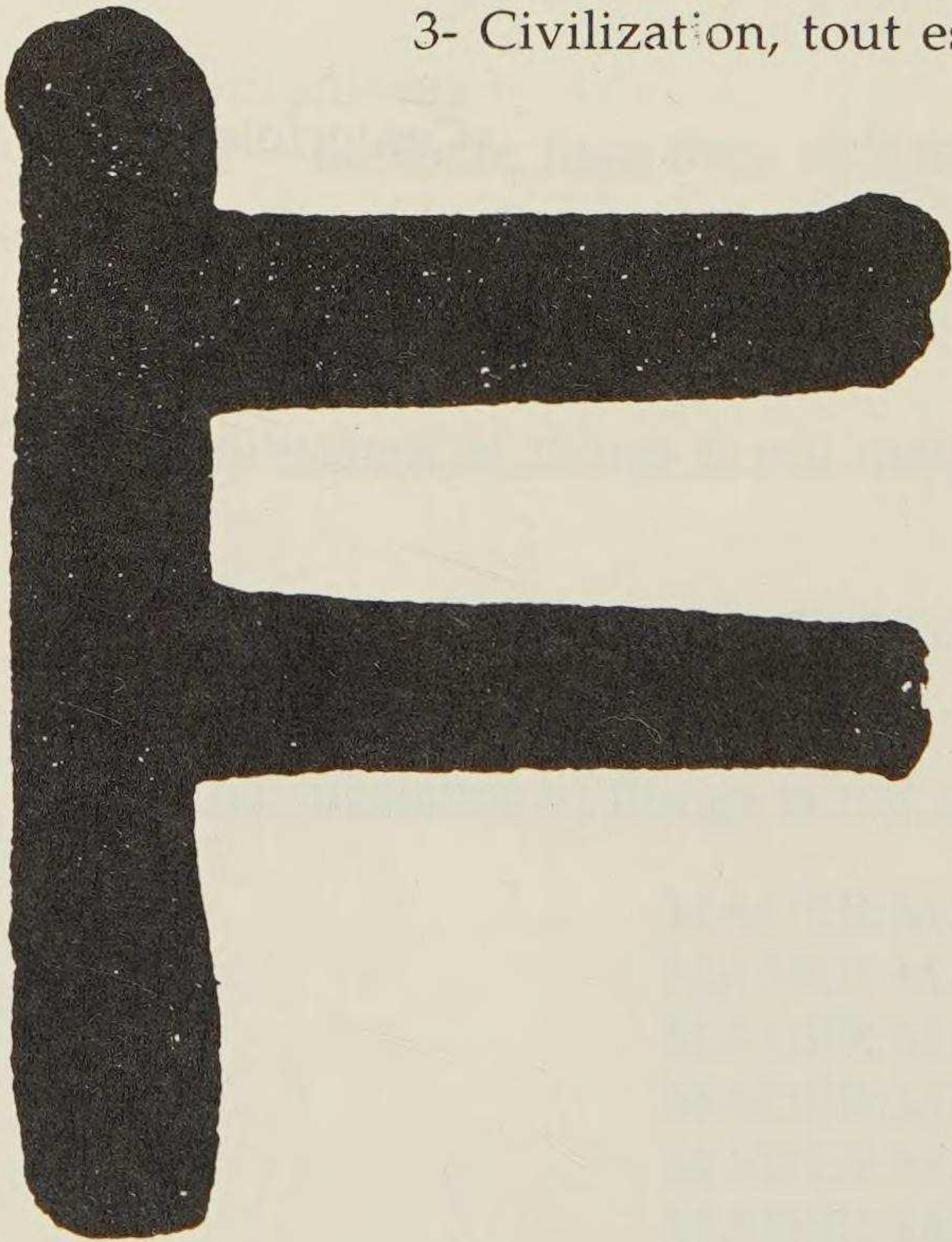


(Centerfold)

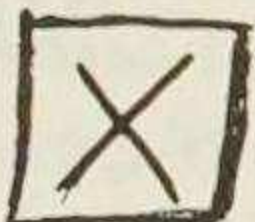
L. Cridisque—

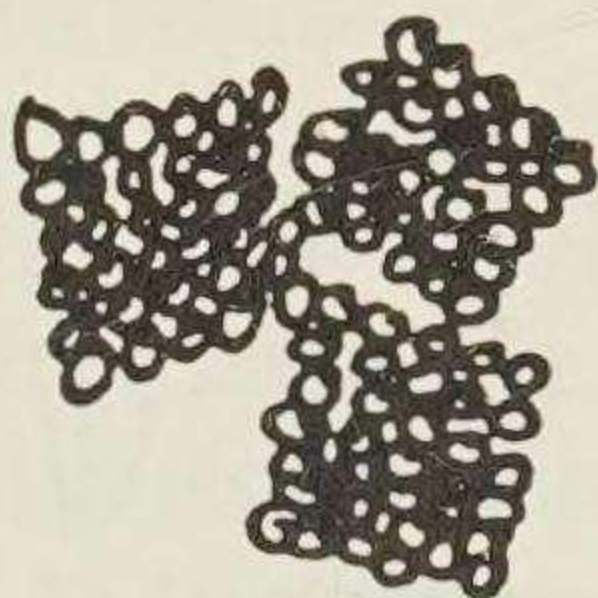
S/A

un, deux
un: the arbitrary
as consciousness entails duality
of itself, & another
1 & 2
all significations of 1
1- to snatch fr the moon w/ 1 hand
2-Eros & the implication of 1 or,
I is another, another is I
3- Civilization, tout est fini, toute commence



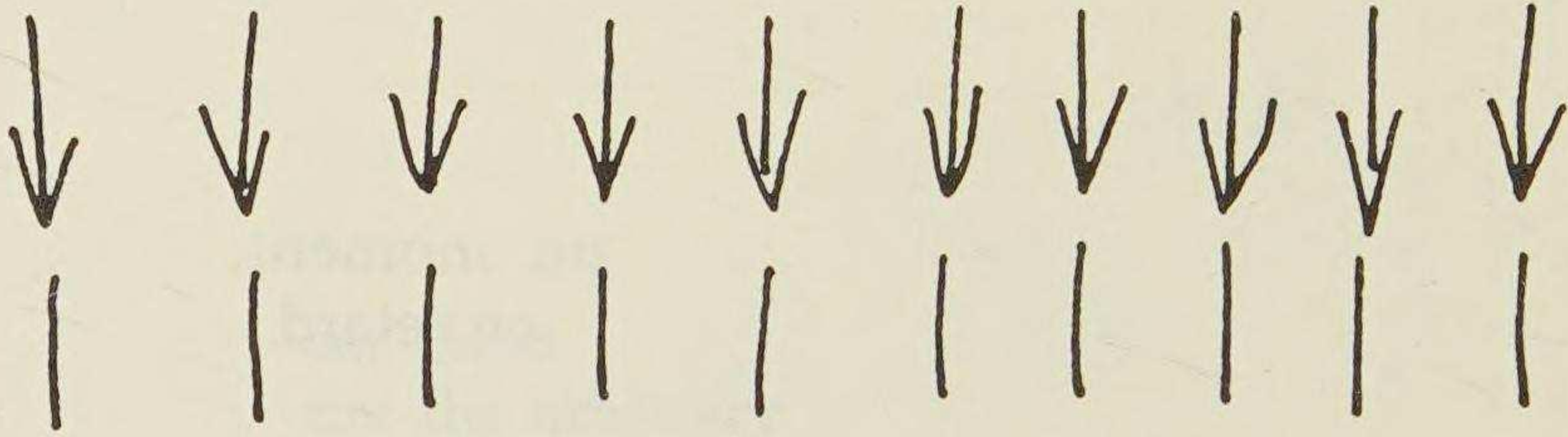
un moment,
en retard

1. We are startled in the hallway
of the worn basilica the compass
worn also, an old coat
2. fleur 3. scars 4. to the ceiling,
to the roof, or vestibule & later,
to the sky
- 4° photo  : cirrus/ altitude = 20,000 to 40,000ft.
always as of winter, or late
- 5 where lights are often used
6. movement
7. Mousa
8. miel

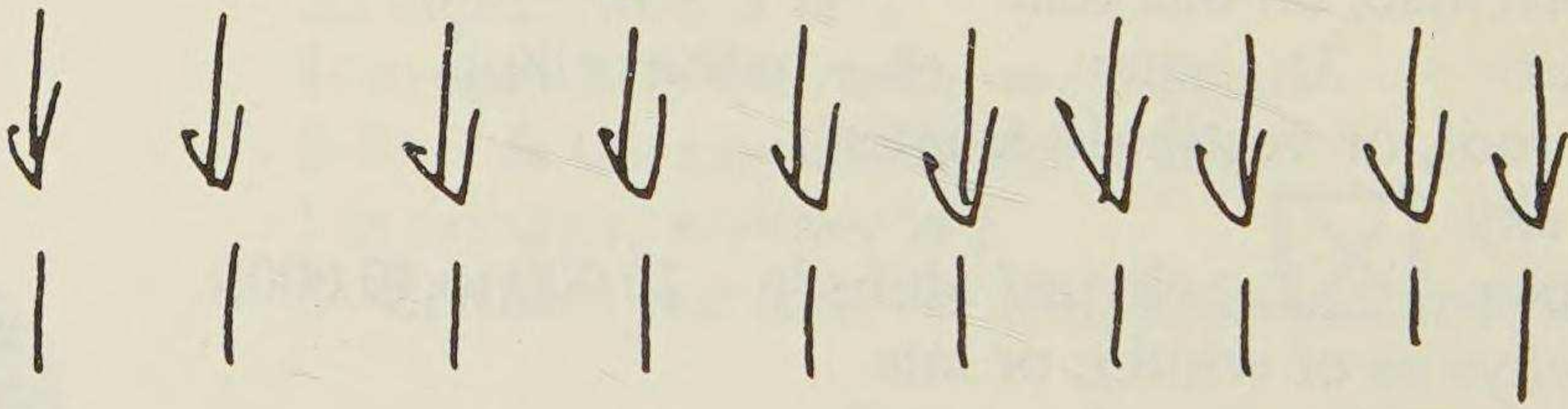


(p. 22)

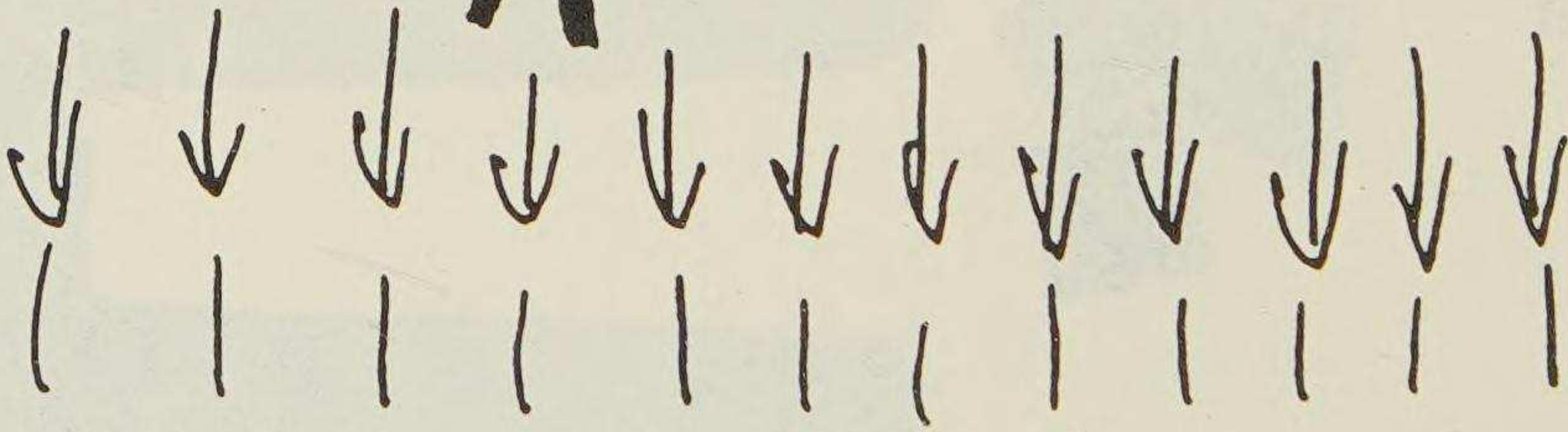
L. Cridisque—



A



A



juillet. 97.

HELEN DUBERSTEIN—

Helen Duberstein is a New Yorker and, as she puts it in a recent letter to me, "participated in the early formation of The Living Theatre." She was an early member of The Circle Theatre Repertory Company and worked at The Theatre for the New City as well as in many other Off Off Broadway houses.

Some of her descriptions of her own plays are very revealing as to her purposes as an artist:

THE AXE OF CREATION was created out of a workshop formed to explore and produce a theatre piece based on dreams and hidden memories which would involve kinships amongst women, blood, surrogate and mythic. Several women of different ages, ethnic backgrounds and sexual preferences met over a period of five months. All of us, we discovered, experienced ourselves outside of history, as it were, and had evolved a means of survival in a hostile environment which sought to make us disappear on many levels. In the evolving piece each of us tells her story of how she survives in a world that is not of her making. The setting is a bordello.

I'm especially fascinated here by the reference to being "outside of history." Duberstein becomes the incarnation of "L'etranger"/The Outsider. And I see many points of contact between her and Lifshin and Millie Mae Wicklund. I even ask myself Why is it that so many women I have published experience such radical "estrangement" from their times, their "history?" Poets like Bennett and Potts are SOMEWHAT alienated from their environments, but never seem to feel totally "outside of history." They react in ANGER (I'm thinking of Richmond now)—but never with this total sense of "fragmentation."

Like Wicklund and Lifshin (and very unlike Bennett and Potts) Duberstein also "role-plays" with a great deal of dexterity. In describing another one of her works, "an antihierarchical novel about people who begin as voices engaged in intense dialogue," called THE DREAM OF REWARDS, she talks about a quarrel between two of the characters, Rachel and Sean, arguing about THE TAMING OF THE SHREW and "as their quarrel proceeds, they take on the names and the personae of Kate and Petruchio. Changes and transpositions of characters frequently occur."

So, when you come across this same type of protean

dramatization in the poetry you get some idea of what Duberstein is all about.

—from SUCCUBUS, INCUBUS, *GHOST DANCE* 10, 1970

The Beautiful People

drag/her hair/red
white rooted
swipes at the moisture ring
the glass left
smiles to feed me
steak/medium/salad
slaverspot roast

the black ribbed hand wolfs
pumpkin pie
passes the pepper shaker
sensing desire

curls pasted to her cheekbone
leans against
way down the far end/backed by
her gleaming soul images
sliteyed through
her cigarette/limplied.

In another time/somewhere
they move who moved for me.

Helen Duberstein—

Experiment in Living

that's how it began: a joke
the perfect baby
fathered by intellect
nurtured in the womb
of one so beautiful
then
the education
by a sort who
took in cats
the father
coming going
directing
the woman
carrying through
instruction
the mother hovering
to destroy

which she did

twenty/alive
twenty/dead

when I was twenty he came alive
ready when he was ready he
came alive
when I was twenty

when he was twenty he
died/I
was not ready then

Callo

". . . . among the Gallas, when the woman grows tired of the chores of housekeeping she begins to talk incoherently and to demean herself extravagantly. This is a sign of the descent of the holy spirit Callo upon her. Immediately her husband prostrates himself and adores her. She ceases to bear the humble title of wife and is called "Lord"; domestic duties have no further claim on her and her will is a divine law."

Fraser—THE NEW GOLDEN BOUGH

I.

I AM CENTER
 HOUSE REVOLVES AROUND
 MY BEING
 I AM CENTER
 MAY NEEDS MANIFEST
 I NURTURE
 MY PLACE LOVE
 MY FUNCTION NURTURE
 FROM ME DERIVES SPIRIT
 BEING PERVADES
 HOUSE MY WORLD
 WITHOUT MY NURTURE
 WITHOUT MY STRENGTH
 UNIVERSE DISINTEGRATES
 MY HUSBAND TELLS ME THIS
 MY MOTHER TOLD ME THIS
 IN THE MARKET PLACE THEY GIGGLE
 THIS

II.

i despair
 rent rages
 roll agog
 foam
 i scream
 tear throw
 rage beyond

III.

too late
 ease/recline
 adoration
 i am the law
 my desires
 but
 too late too late

could I but teach
 daughter.

Helen Duberstein—from *CHANGES, GHOST DANCE* 30, Fall, 1977

Changes

I am changing

I am grey

I am blonde

changing

old

young

I am old

I am young

I feel the youth bursting

and the freedom

and the vices

anarchic

spring

from the vials of

changing

viability

vastness

it seems that the otherness of the inevitable
the ancientness of the inexorable
the inability of the
I say I am changing
I feel the changes
daily
as I felt them then
when no one told me and I did not know
not as a ritual but
as a sin
that "something" would
happen
that I must watch
and take care
that before would be unlike after
forever unlike
before was the innocence
afterwards
dirt
I must watch for the signs
I did not know the signs

changing I
am changing
I once did change
I am changing
my mother came to me
in the night
she seated herself on my bedside in
the night
she
did not do that before
in the night
she told me there would be
changes
something
a sign and
I must care
 take care
it is what it meant to be
a woman
I
did not know

what sign

I awaited

the sign

in shame

to hide it

I had yellow jaundice

there were dark spots on my undershirt

under my armpits

was that

the sign?

of my

changes

I hid it

I did not know

changing I

am changing

a woman told me seriously

just a night ago

that women go mad when

they are changing

in menopause as in

menarche

it is the hormones, she said

realistically,

changing I am changing

and madness clings and it clung

I am mad

I have been mad

all of my life then

the madness

infused and awaiting all

the changes

from girlhood into

womanhood and now

the changes

from madness into

madness.

LARRY EIGNER—

I think I first read Eigner's poems in the UNIVERSITY OF TAMPA REVIEW when I was in Caracas between 1964 and 1966. I did a bi-lingual anthology of contemporary American poetry and I remember writing up from Venezuela and getting stacks of magazines, among them Duane Locke's very influential UNIVERSITY OF TAMPA REVIEW which was full of Eigner's poetry.

I thought they were interesting in their spacey extension, their floating, meditative, Zen sense of object-environment relationship. They were little islets of Reality lost in an immensity of page-space.

I met Eigner during the summer of 1968 when I was at Brown University on a fellowship at the John Carter Brown Library. Jean Laier, the Boston poet, drove me to Swampscott, and I was ushered into Larry's workroom by his mother.

I had no idea that he suffered from cerebral palsy (birth injury), could barely move, talked with difficulty and was even more difficult to understand. He was very much like the poet in MY LEFT FOOT, only instead of writing with his foot, he typed with one finger—and that wasn't almost entirely under control. His letters were jagged and flawed, hard to read.

I think inevitably Eigner's neuropsychological makeup has a lot to do with the way his poetry comes out. You can see that when he talks about his work, like in this interview with Peter Bates that appeared in STONY HILLS No. 6 (1980).

Here's how he sees his own work when it comes back to him in printed form:

When my stuff comes back to me in print, it usually seems just a sketchy bunch of words at that, while later I can get back into it, in a good number of instances maybe, some of them even without looking at the mss. again (mimeo is more like the mss. I ad-lib in than print—I ad-lib in my head. A published version is seldom wholly congruent with what I did, or never does look entirely the same anyway. Two or three times a change by someone else has seemed an improvement or just as well, such as the omission of a word or the insertion of blank lines). (p. 5)

You can see how a poem is a provisional "field" in space, provisional, subject to chance change. Nothing is fixed. We're dealing with a mind somewhat divorced from The Physical.

There's an anecdote in the interview that tells even more about his psychological interacting with his "context":

A few years ago I read this book about pygmies in Western Zaire . . . about 1953. Whenever they killed an elephant . . . these practical pygmies moved their camp to the elephant, easier than hauling the elephant to the camp, and took a vacation from the daily hunt, for the week the meat lasted. Well, if it lasted long enough, they might forget how to hunt for sport or indulge in tree-climbing and story-telling and other things to a greater degree. But they could knock off work anytime, being very little specialized. There wouldn't be many things to anticipate so they settled for and enjoyed survival more (p. 5)

The whole principle of passivity here can be considered a metaphor for most of Eigner's own practices. The elephant is Reality and you don't try to move reality into your camp (Mind), but move your mind next to the elephant (Reality). When asked to make a statement about himself for CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS, he wrote "A poem can be like walking down the street and noticing things. It can extend itself at times, more or less, without obscurity or too much effort. Though the more scarce things around you are, the less spontaneity; creation may even be impossible, trying too hard gets you nowhere" (CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS, New Revision Series, Vol. 6, p. 157).

—from *GHOST DANCE* 26, Spring-Summer, 1976

the dog

comes

out the door

of course

lifts his

back leg

doesn't like
wet

some days

Larry Eigner—

everybody

identifies

something

joints at the window

a light moves in the street

roaring speed

Love is the day

you remember

you were born

trees

shadow

all angles

the space of birds,
in the space of planes

RICHARD KOSTELANETZ—

In an autobiographical mode, in the first part of the volume of his previously uncollected critical essays *TWENTIES IN THE SIXTIES*, Kostelanetz says about himself that "as for overarching ideas, I think you'll find a recurring concern with doing what has not been done before—as a critic and as an historian, and perhaps as a poet and fiction writer too; and this ideal would echo a predominant theme of my critical writing" (Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut [hardcover edition] and Assembling Press, Brooklyn, New York [paper cover], both 1965, p. 18).

Just looking at the people who have interested him over the years, Gertrude Stein, William Burroughs, Henry Miller, Allen Ginsberg, John Cage, Moholy-Nagy, you could understand why he feels he lived a life of the 1920's during the 1960's. He early fastened on to the avant-garde mystique and has ridden it his entire life.

Born in New York in 1940 he took his A.B. at Brown in American civilization and M.A. in American history at Columbia. He was also a Fulbright scholar at King's College at the University of London and at 26 received a Guggenheim. Among the long list of books he has written and edited are *MASTER MINDS* (1969), *THE END OF INTELLIGENT WRITING* (1974), *MOHOLY-NAGY* (1970), *JOHN CAGE* (1970), *ESTHETICS CONTEMPORARY* (1978), *AMERICAN WRITING TODAY* (2 volumes, 1981) and *THE AVANT-GARDE TRADITION IN LITERATURE* (1982).

- "Recyclings, A Essay in Literary Autobiography," Special Dada Issue, a collaboration of *GHOST DANCE* and *CAMELS COMING*, *GHOST DANCE* 25, Spring-Summer, 1975

Dedication Page—Epigraphs

For John Cage
Father Generator

*Fixed connections being abolished, the word is left only with a vertical project, it is like a monolith, or a pillar which plunges into a totality of meanings, reflexes and recollections: it is a sign which stands The Word is no longer guided in advance by the general intention of a socialized discourse: the consumer of poetry, deprived of the guide of selective connections, encounters the Word frontally, and receives it as an absolute quantity, accompanied by all its possible associations. The Word, here, is encyclopedic, it contains simultaneously all the acceptations from which a relational discourse might have required it to choose. It therefore achieves a state which is possible only in the dictionary or in poetry—places where the noun can live without its article—and is reduced to a sort of zero degree, pregnant with all past and future specifications.—Roland Barthes, *LE DEGREE ZERO DE L'ECRIURE* (1953).*

*Syntax, according to Norman O. Brown, is the arrangement of the army. As we move away from it, we demilitarize language. This demilitarization of language is conducted in many ways: a single language is pulverized, the boundaries between two or more languages are crossed; elements not strictly linguistic (graphic, musical) are introduced, etc. Translation becomes, if not impossible, unnecessary . . . I now write without syntax and sometimes with it—John Cage, *M* (1973).*

Richard Kostelanetz—

Sociological Imagination (1959)

in latest the professor wright columbia lambasts number prominent of the theorists abstracted the researchers the manipulation instead holds ideal classical analysis exemplified marx veblen ideal curiously happens use his sweeping america men power collar the elite mills grand represented talcott use verbiage state simplest omit factors social while abstracted an is lazarsfeld process methodically for study the intellectually schools dehumanized they interest the problems contemporary instead overvalue theory method both use jargon language the mills sociologist industry he perfecting of manipulation which against grain classical democracy techniques they persuade fight democracy imply a society failed practiced human work bureaucratic areas society example military the corporation interest author question reliability human techniques all social science political mills lack certain of possessing he calls sociological this possessor understand larger scene terms meaning the life the career variety individuals framework modern is and that the of variety men women formulated such the uneasiness individuals focused involvement public in age mans danger in unruly of society sociological mills is most quality mind most scientists abdicated political moral often are advisers employ the king sociology compromised apolitical of reforming is over man letters aldous or orwell besides independence spirit desirable should integrated variety disciplines history literature economics most promise the imagination that can personal problems formulate solution terms public mills is similar ortega gasset in dehumanization art author the book modern for questions human instead indulges excessive in theory language which as and as jargon columbia wants sociology is rather factoriented rather academic is the say in book a ago political and theory moore made similar but argument from abstraction author he broader analysis moore wont such ambitious as pleaded an which doesnt he compromised material argument stronger as

The Mafia's Black Hand (1959)

the reading has fascination both about enforcers law traces

the infamous book under second and author sondern does fairly dissection the aspects the brotherhood sondern mafia an organization sicilian connected inter-marriage has officers a constitution a hundred old code operations instance recognized assume positions are elected first to in 1880's conducted in little created the cities the hand symbol terror organization slowly advent prohibition rise neapolitan scarface and multimillion illicit activities repeal prohibition mafia its source income after relatively period instead monopolizing important firststage narcotics more years accumulated of members been into business unfortunately does discuss ethic mafia whole instead it various of book insights probably most portions study instance mafia sealed a handshake is put paper failure keep agreement bring death member the always all aid distressed member obeys the of above never violence a officer mafioso offense member brotherhood attack himself retaliates any nor he admit existence brotherhod imprisonment capone members some income yet typical has convention he doing wrong long obeys rules organization extortions murders his disturb conscience when he himself honorable like honest of america excuses actions simply to popular in native italy enforcement comparatively above actions as official they disturb national thus american of mafia be direct of immigration these europeans in the settlers admit newcomers the social and them urban italiees foreigners ways the world customs conflict american condemned the majority omits factor history mafia america it me important much responsibility the of mafia america not the immigrants with old forces refused mingle with new but instead integrate legally still same group violently all tolerating menace their in concluding of book tries show reader mafia crumbling points the stiffer for trading formation a federal program the knowledge the of mafia the ignores one which the of could the source the income proposal abolition narcotics the laws sondern

Junkies, and All that Jazz (1959)

to director living is term stage contemporary plays the nine julian and malina presented avantgarde while has closed other presented repertory latest connection a absorbing of to it would false talk the plot inconsequential connection two study group dope in first they for connection nearest in hierarchy narcotics they tense men convulsions four musicians the play

ease waiting in second the arrives tall dressed white the
blast actor shot heroin ecstasy as redd his play character
drumsticks knees vainly to cigarette third on floor up older
pretends be orchestra hardened sets einstein alternation
playboy character owner the complains dope giving kicks he out
needle in middle stage himself plot suggest oneills iceman
which group drunks for reformed hickey gelber oneills drunks
act that they control their personalities individualizes
characters the sober in ecstasy they personality silence
covered jazz note program the readers director to this to
memory thelma dead overdose heroin the army 1957 to other
dead alive the house detention director playwright glamorize
life the addict like drunk incapable facing outside his obviously
no except shot continually for connection loses sense time
play is by passages character the and known producer these
become idea having salvation women the scene first clever of
human brings eventually presence distracting she no purpose
having jazz as characters an idea addicts too especially the
so music the silent suppose skeptic say the is formula that it
all ingredients a offbroadway offbeat matter jazz radically
past such skeptic superficially but play a significance
emptiness nihilism addicts be typical contemporary while drift
jobs man turns enough comprehend existence identify with
rootless addict successful production revivals european but
many of silence producers the theatre reviving avantgarde
theatre

Contemporary of Absurdity the Culture (1961)

this culture paul absurd the economic operative cars are and
it to the to or capital produce the human the is geared cultivate
virtues to production to the standard living this economy
its are value human is question under run is college are they
no children young yet are from physical intellectual affairs
college personal does include public integrity virtues these
no value person achieves becomes personal means oneself
insults playing game a more than concept honor absurd the for
average an system reputations is statistically minimize
eliminate unsafe this system taken seriously great who
instinctively extreme eliminated list likely leaders
incompetent gets history still personnel becomes using word in
traditional of idea transcends categories get the of issue
growing absurd house is radical of criticism states failures

society as failures reflected the faces apathy cynicism youth
 subtitle the becomes youth the system major subtitle the
 becomes youth the system major is manmade has completely
 of scale in abstract created which suited humanity becomes
 most means proving police becoming become regulating forms
 deviant yet suppression innate and variation increases behavior
 reaction strict hence human of police ceased cope human and
 problems universities becoming grounds technicians
 censustakers disciplines lost human is curious the have cards
 more than ever suspected crimes speech campaign completely
 the obvious facts many human like quality life work lost the
 screen concludes in the systems work suit man man suppress
 humanity suit inhuman initiative skill discouraged merit
 measured personality the valuable learning a extracurricular
 of books too learning the it waste humanity bright children
 potentiality knowledge ideals effort kind worthwhile
 transformed useful cynical or young trapped early when rat
 rejects talented system absurd realities mind constructs image
 an closed which is large race the center attention race
 numerous the prominent organization are it a race jumping will
 the stumble to disqualified fail their fears their determine
 race values not accepted the side.

Henry Miller—An Evaluation (1961)

henry has a maligned misunderstood some seen as prophetic
 ghandi penis shapiro it have millers as literature obscene
 obviously stands neither these as writer is a hack a man in
 rebellious left settle the colony paris in plush of steins but
 the depression since great of writings has recently in
 evaluation his needed good writer henry where succeed where
 fail are major what position both history literature
 contemporary should work banned confronting questions
 approach judgement millers many believe is finest english
 writer mencken herbert and durrell suggested to mind prose
 rich brilliant metaphors is talisman sleepwalker floor eternity
 sunset hollywood night says the window like strip doing the
 vitus describes own position world being a asylum permission
 masturbate rest like a metaphor describes students a academy
 dijon zeroes every of ciphers form nuclear respectable
 lamentable often define character a sentences has one a one
 his scraps paper perscriptions weltenschmerz woman plush part
 one was get soon possible off corset scratch like mangy he

characterizes airline has trained behave mother nurse mistress
 co k drudge to untidy to her wave show sign fatigue
 disappointment chagrin loneliness the hand his achieve
 common opposed literary miller slips the cliches sound colin
 when concludes in nutshell bufanos take example feel of there
 stands fair paris gemlike holy while profanity sometimes
 original hurls conventional often metaphors not clear is
 writes capricorn me nothing than algebraic of inadaptability
 statement menckens has of beautiful today that compare prose
 that his first all stands the opposite hemingway prose defined
 understatement impotence exaggeration virility compared
 conventional prose james millers seems explode page context
 visceral like wright energize prose easily successfully miller
 prose exciting tempo ralph but fails evoke complex that
 writing compared faulkner emerges best miller anyone can
 faulkners talent alfred put to

Decade the Foremost Out Novelist of (1961)

saul is finest novelist the war years great of decades
 produced minor hemingways muscle the man sea faulkners
 attempt affirmation fable both little value ellison written
 brilliant invisible but has little norman novels admits gotten
 instead better talented like malamud gold roth nabokov
 bourjaily rosenfeld salinger lack a body consistently work a or
 as novelist qualities separate lucky from solid and the writer
 the hack novelist writes same in dresses old and sea an
 version undefeated has changed and his novel dangling
 meridian first in is structures notes the of sensitive young
 about called war locks in study read think coming prose
 sparse bellows suggests in notes underground suffering
 introspection sensitive fear organized his novel in is victim
 books in bellow original probably thesis nature antisemitism
 the and are victim victimizer innocent both guilty victim
 some the descriptions new city summertime contemporary
 bellows novel adventures augie compass 536 is most work won
 national award 1953 sold two copies is bellows work of
 characters scenes of and patterns novel in covers late and and
 maturity the augie is successful instinctively convincingly the
 that him prose consistently style novel from comic to the third
 symbolic in major in last augie girl and eagle atop western
 published 1956 day books and library a of short three stories a
 play bellows work in sparse language in and in seize day

wilhelm middleaged schlamazel lives his father one the hotels
line on supper side is finest piece one the looking green
confronts white george with horrors the slum play wrecker two
city destroys husbands and motherinlaw destroys marriage
narrator bellows recent published years henderson rain viking
also library is gigantic millionaire in of journeys africa he not
hughes pointed successfully to horrors left does quest age
jewish like uris characters gentiles heroes exodus not pacifists
the turned alpine bernard assistant replicas the gods the dream
reversed process creating in image prototype yiddish the
schlemiel sainted against trend

LYN LIFSHIN—

Perhaps the best place to begin to try to understand Lifshin is the extended essay she wrote for CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS, AUTOBIOGRAPHY SERIES (Vol. 10, 1989).

The first few pages of this essay are especially important because they show the origin of the obsessive themes that haunt all of Lifshin's work and perhaps even lend dimensions to its very style.

Underlying much of what Lifshin writes is a sense of the world "dissolving," nothing stable, fixed, dependable, and the words themselves flow together with line-breaks in all the wrong places in an almost psychotic (if you didn't know better) blur of her as a person being whirled about in time. The origin of this deep, inner insecurity?

My mother, all thru my childhood and teens, looked for a house, not an apartment. She wanted my father to want a house my sister and I would be proud to bring friends and dates to. For twenty years she went out with real-estate agents, still lives in the apartment we moved into when I was six, a flat she never fixed up, certain they'd move soon. No accident that a house is important to me, that it is in the title of my first book, *Why is the House Dissolving*, and that so many other books are about houses—*Shaker House Poems*, *Old House Poems*, *The Old House on the Croton*, *Leaning South*, *Audley End*—and many series of poems are about old houses in New York, Vermont, Nantucket, Philipsburg Manor, or that so many of my dreams involve houses. (pp. 234-235)

One important strain: no place of her own. Cf. Virginia Woolf's *A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN*.

Another was the coldness and aloofness of her father. You can even see an interrelationship between the distancing from place/a sense of locality/place-possession, and the distancing from her father. Place-spacing, personal-spacing:

In photographs he seems to be touching my sister and me light, ghostly, as if not sure we were real. Or I was on the beach, fat, trying to catch a ball he'd never throw. My mother says he cherished me, read to me every night. I wish I remembered more than him sitting, a stranger in that yellow chair, listening to stock reports . . . to this day, I'm drawn to inaccessible, cold men, those uncomfortable and awkward about intimacy. (p. 235)

This alienation from her father is one of the major themes that runs through *all* of Lifshin's poetry, and it is intimately linked with yet a third circle of alienation—that of being Jewish in a non-Jewish world.

When I wrote my book about Lifshin (LYN LIFSHIN, A CRITICAL STUDY, Whitston Publishing Company, Troy, New York, 1985), I actually asked Lifshin "If you were writing a book about yourself, what would the *leitmotif* be?" And the first thing she answered was that she had always felt "isolated," "alienated," especially by this fact of being a Jew in a non-Jewish New England world.

I came up with a psychological schemata of Lifshin that saw her poetry, not so much as an expression of what she *was*, but what she *wasn't*:

. . . a case could be made for a whole Self-Counterself theory embodying two polar concepts of Lifshin, The Person secreting a kind of Counterself in her work so that the work itself emerges as screen, cloud, mask:

Poetic Mask	The "Real" Lifshin
Suicidal, introverted, "dissolving."	Life affirmative, extroverted, stable.
The Loner, recluse.	Gregarious, Woman of the Crowd.
Sensualist-Feeler.	Kaballistic Theoretician—Thinker.

(p. 146)

In this way I could see all of Lifshin's journeys into other cultures (Amerindian, Eskimo, Colonial American, etc.) as star-trek-like explorations of realities not hers.

I took her volume GLASS (Milwaukee: Morgan Press, 1978) as a portrait of the *real* her:

When assuming other personalities, time- and culture-travelling into Colonial America, among the eskimos or other "tribes," she's able to break her own isolation and empathize with another Person and Place. Adapting other Personas is liberation . . . escape. But when reduced back to selfhood (and not time-travelling to her *own* past, other earlier versions of herself) what emerges is The Poet frozen in time, glassed-in from any flexible contact with The Real. (p. 150)

It's revealing that in the long, personal essay in CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS, in the summing-up, Lifshin quotes my LYN LIFSHIN: A CRITICAL STUDY precisely on this point:

This stops [i.e. the essay itself] before I thought anyone would write a Ph.D. on me or a book of criticism or say 'The mask goes up, the mask comes down, the mask is hard irony, sarcasm, and when it comes down the Lifshin behind it is the soft, vulnerable Outsider.' (pp. 257-258)

There are a number of interesting poems in Lifshin's latest Ghost Dance volume, *APPLE BLOSSOMS* (Ghost Dance 57, 1993), that reveal a lot about origins and techniques.

Her first published poem, for example, emerges from the twilight of Romanticism:

Disillusions

Sparkled smatterings,
 Intoxicating as a sundazed shore;
 Yet quickly melting, like snowflaked beauty
 In a burning palm,
 Strangely elusive, as his shadow to a child
 when a stormcloud breaks the spell
 And his dreammate disappears.

(First poem published SYRACUSE REVIEW.)

And there's a poem about writing classes at Syracuse University which ends (after an orgy of perceptions that overwhelm her with an express-train sense of Reality) on her feeling that she'd never have anything to write about:

WRITING CLASS SYRACUSE WINTER

write he said looking
 like an even craggier
 Lincoln your impressions
 the next 4 days details
 of a walk across campus.
 Even now I remember I
 wore a strawberry wool
 skirt, matching sweater.
 There was a bittersweet
 near the Hall of Language.
 I curled in a window
 ledge of a cave in Crouse,
 an organ drifting thru
 smooth warm wood. I
 could let the wine
 dark light hold me, slid
 on the ice behind where a
 man with a blue mole
 picked me up, my notes
 scattering up Comstock,
 torn tights, knees snow

kissed the skin off. I was
 hypnotised by that
 huge growth said yes
 tho I only half remembered.
 Upstairs icicles clotted,
 wrapped glass in gauze.
 There must have been some
 one who didn't call. Blue
 walls, ugly green bedspread,
 Dorothy popping gum eating
 half a tuna sandwich before
 we'd lie in bed with the
 lights out wondering what
 it would be like to have
 Dr. Fox with his red beard
 go down on us as we
 braided and rubbed our
 mahogany hair dry and I
 tried to figure out what to
 do with the bittersweet,
 torn knees, ragged maples,
 didn't believe I'd ever
 have anything to write about

What I feel, what I've always felt, about Lifshin, is an overwhelming sense of rush, fragmentation, exhaustion.

Her letters to me are invariably on the run. How many times has she used the word exhausted?

That's how the autobiographical essay ends too—in a kind of cataloging of notebooks filled, uncopied, stowed away, as if it were her necessary task to capture reality before it fades away and vanishes forever.

If I were to put one title on her whole personal mystique (as well as her work) I would take off from WHY IS THIS HOUSE DISSOLVING? and turn it into WHY IS THIS UNIVERSE DISSOLVING?

In terms of "influences" you have to always keep in mind that she had written 100 pages of Ph.D. dissertation on Wyatt before she was so badly abused by the English department potentates at SUNY-Albany, that she dropped out of the program altogether. On one of her exams she was told she didn't have "the religious background to work sympathetically in the seventeenth century. You don't have enough affiliation or sympathy for seventeenth century Anglicanism" (CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS, *loc. cit.*, p. 253).

What I'm getting at is the global background with which

Lifshin came to her own vocation. A conscious Bukowski-influence, yes . . . but, as I pointed out in my critical study of her work, in a book like *GLASS*, she totally bypasses the expected influences and plugs into the world of *les poetes maudits* . . . Celine, Baudelaire, Duchasse.

There is much more affinity between, say, M.M. Wicklund and Lifshin than might be expected given the *dissimilarities* of their backgrounds and psychological profiles; but it is there, nevertheless . . . Wicklund . . . Richmond . . . whoever else ventures into the antarcticas of the human spirit.

—from *GHOST DANCE* 13

THE BLUE ROOM INVENTIONS

1.

snow i've just
moved into a
new place
ice on the stairs
i'm in a hurry
but i don't
know why
tired, dirty the
white drifts
in waves
furniture in the
car still i
ought to
go out and
get it i
ought to feel
glad to be
starting something

2.

seven moons in the slick snow

someone else's voice in the building

a poem comes from my
own dark

then you
start it all
again

on paper

3.

people have to keep
going thru my
apartment to
get where they're going.
fishbones on the
floor i'm half stoned
on losing when the
phone rings i
answer it
not thinking,
don't recognize your
voice the
time a blur
I come to and make the
second mistake
telling you i don't want you
to be happy

4.

everything in the room
is blue the
pillows sky
sheets
you talk about
what has nothing
to do with
us but there isn't
any us excuse
me i keep
forgetting

let the phone slide into
blue wool

5.

you don't even
notice i'm not

well i can't take your
calm
fatherly tone

wanting to just watch the
moon thru
blue trees

tho i'd hope
you'd be sorry

6.
if love is the
good use 2
make of
each other

later when i'm
telling somebody

else his mustache
smelling of something i
didn't like

everybody thought he
was my
father

will what's left of
you in this
poem

haunt me

it's the only place
i can use you

now you know

Lyn Lifshin—from REMEMBER THE LADIES,
GHOST DANCE 41, 1985-6

10.

senility cradle
of white pine, oak

something between a
rocking cradle and
a coffin

hand cut schenectady
no one knows for whom

maybe an old woman
howling staring
at some ceiling

watched a branch of
a ragged elm
got to know it
like someone's arm

11.

in another case
shoes worn by eliza
pinkney satin with
silver braid silk
lining leather

nine and a half inches
stained maybe from the
grass on a night
she was running

with the moon full
and the smell of lilacs
and her skin still
warm from what she
couldn't tell anyone

Lyn Lifshin—

17.

anonymous infant's
shirt of linen
worn in boston
1801

another dress
embroidered crewel

petticoat crewel
on homespun
pennsylvania
probably 1765

iroquois mocassins of deer
skin quill from a
porcupine deer hair dyed
bright as feathers

no one knows who
made any of these

or what happened to
the baby that wore them

18.

huge grave plaques

faces like medieval
suns and moons in
a circle

in memory of
thomas k park
and 13 infants

clarissa champion
october 22 1801
16 years 9 months
22 days
done in a wreath
of ivory hair
gold and glass

for 4 year old ellen
a gold and black
death ring
"our darling Babe
to Heaven has flown
and left us
in a world of pain."

DUANE LOCKE—

I first started reading Locke's work in the mid 1960's when I was in Caracas and, at my request, he had sent me a stack of copies of his magazine THE UNIVERSITY OF TAMPA POETRY REVIEW (also known at different times as POETRY REVIEW and UT-REVIEW), but it wasn't until the early 70's that I visited him in Tampa.

There was a hurricane beginning. I got to his place by cab and began ringing the front doorbell. No one answered. The rain was beginning to come down horizontally, tree-branches were cracking down all around me. I must have waited an hour before someone finally came to the door. Locke. "Oh, I was out in back, we don't really 'live' in the front house but spend most of our time out in back." The front house was an impressive Southern mansion, "out in back" was a little two-story frame place, the "living room" on struts overhanging a car-port, looking very unstable in the hurricane wind.

I remember the skeleton of a bird, and the walls all filled with bird photographs. The yard next to the house was a vast aviary. Locke was a bird photographer. Which I think is very important in understanding his work.

In June of 1973 he came to visit me here at MSU and came into a class I was teaching at Lyman Briggs. I taped his remarks in class and here are some of the things that I think might serve as stepping stones into his work.

He hates New York, cities in general, likes Nature in the raw: "It gives you a different feeling to see the Earth unaltered."

With the pressure of "civilization" (read "traffic") off you can begin to dialogue with your surroundings: "When I walk through that woods out there [talking about the forest preserve along the river behind Owens Hall] I don't have to worry about getting hit by a car, my mind is free to see a caterpillar, a leaf, to really see it, communicate with it . . . if you talk to caterpillars and leaves."

In a sense he's anti-Reason and pro-Imagination: "I think the big thing that's overstressed in our educational system is RATIONALITY, reducing everything to a rational principle rather than learning how to feel cloth or wood or leather or have an emotional experience . . . we've got an I.Q., but nobody's got an E.Q.—Emotional Quotient."

He's anti-utilitarian, interested in the unmeasurable: "The imagination doesn't have any use. Kant calls it non-instrumental. It doesn't lead to anything beyond itself.

Business and science deal in measurable quantities/certainty. Art deals with uncertainty: "You can never get certainty or fixity in Art."

For him poetry is primarily a reaction to Nature. Simply that: "A poet reacts to life. Instead of going to a laboratory, his reaction to life comes up with this thought."

Nature/Life-----THOUGHT.

Which is another way of saying exactly the same thing that he says in "A Letter to a Young Poet."

Harry Smith did an anthology of Locke and his "disciples" called THE IMMANENTIST ANTHOLOGY (1973. New York: The Smith by arrangement with Horizon Press). Smith or one of The Smith Gang came up with the name Immanentist. I changed the name of Locke's movement/school to "Thing-Thingism:"

Part II: Interview with Duane Locke

Q: Who thought of re-naming your school "thing-thingism:"

A: A guy named Hugh Fox who came to Tampa to interview myself and my students so he could write an article about us for an anthology called THE LIVING UNDERGROUND. In the article, he said we write a thing-thing related poetry. So we took the name from him.

("Locke on the Truth: The Thing-Thing of Poetry," by Karen Jaeckel, NEWSART/THE NEW YORK SMITH, No. 9, Aug., 1982, p. 21.)

In this same article on Locke, Karen Jaeckle asks him what the basic thrust of the "thing-thing movement" is, and he answers:

You should listen to the waves and the rhythm of your body. Then a natural rhythm will come out of you into your poetry. If you sit down and write like a machine, you'll make yourself into an unreal human being. . . .

She goes on to quote Locke vis a vis his poetry coming out of the super-conscious not the unconscious, and he defines the super-conscious as follows (referring to an Indian yogic master named Patanjali) "The superconscious is a cosmic part of our body, like our blood, like the ocean."

So he verges on Pantheism/Transcendentalism, sounds like an English Lake Poet, Emerson, Kant, Krishnamurti. Which was really what he was talking about when he talked with me in 1973 too, wasn't it—merging with, being a part of, reacting to NATURE.

In May of 1992, responding to a letter from me for some further explication of poems like "Whoever Raises the Question of Representation in Our Time," Locke sent the following reflections:

The title was taken from a book on post modern philosophy. Right now, I cannot remember which one. Perhaps Jameson, Rorty, Lyotard or Eagleton. I hate to ramble through my bookcase and find the source.

Then there is an associational drift on bells. Although it is not in the context, and merely hinted at by the line "A Bell for Adami," the bells are church bells heard in Italy. The main point is that these bells are church bells, but this is not known until the ironic pun, "A Bell for Adami"—although anticipated in the Tzara church bells. Thus the image of the prelate, the churchman, follows from the ecclesiastic bells.

"The bell bird" is from a memory of a very happy moment when I heard the bell bird at the Bronx zoo. I wanted to contrast a natural sound with the sound and the false, imposed meaning of the church bells, but my irony was that the natural, the bird, was in a prison, the zoo; but church bells are allowed to ring out in the open. "Tzara bells" are from his book "Approximate Man" in which he has church bells ringing for no reason, and without any reason for their existence. This is the first hint that the heard bells are church bells.

"A Bell for Adami" is an ironic pun on John Hersey's "A Bell for Adorno." [Too bad, it was an oversight on my part that I did not include another pun which would have functioned harmoniously with the context—A Bell for Theodor Adorno. If I ever revise, I can stick it in.] In Hersey, effort assisted by the help of the American military was to restore a traditional symbol, a church bell, to a community. My "Adami" was to diminish the Hersey suggestion by having a bell for a singular, radical, anarchic postmodern artist, Adami, described by Derrida in his ART IN PAINTING.

Adami did the *Study for a Drawing after Glas*. I use Glas in another poem, Glass slippers. I insist that the French word in my poem be pronounced with the final s being given a sound, and not remain silent as it does in French. I stated this in another poem which does not appear in the book under consideration—

disobey the police state of the professors and announce the final consonant.

As Derrida says in the opening sentence of his essay on Valerio Adami: "And what if, resonance in this other language still leading you astray, I liked words in order to be-tray (to treat, triturate, trice, in-trique, trace, track)."

Then the drift is to a prelate, but to diminish his status I present him as a fragment on a television set out of tune. I used homophonic progression to present this image, "prelate," "leak," and "late." Even "neck" and "leak" have terminal sound connections. The image actually grew out of the homophonic condition.

I do not have much respect for priests. Perhaps it's the old William Blake influence. I see priests as life haters. . . .

From this partial explication of the opening lines, an indication is given as to how the language operates. I employ the ironic pun, the pun whose suggested counterpart merges with the stated to derogate or diminish—the ironic pun operates as an *aufhebung*.

As to the phrase "George Herbert's collar or caller." I added the word "caller" to diminish "collar."

I derived the "gothic white worm" from a Ken Russell movie. His movies were on my mind since I was rereading an article in an English magazine that stated that Russell stole a poem of mine published in England for a basis of his movie on Byron and Shelley. Of course Russell's alleged appropriation of my poem does not appear in the poem under consideration, but the information reported indicates what goes on among many things in a mind when one is writing.

As to the line . . . "The whole history of Christianity might have been altered," when I first related I made an intense study of the origin of Christianity, trying to decide how it got started and gained such power. Since I believe that the prime function of the human brain is self-deception and lying to others, I wanted some insight into one of the prime lies that people use to sustain and give value to their lives. In December, 1945 at Naj Hammadi, some of the writings of the Gnostics were discovered, and these writings presented another view of Christianity than what has been traditionally transferred by the orthodox Catholic church and its Protestant derivatives.

The Gnostics were one of the earliest and widest spread branches of the Christian religion, but were eradicated by the police state established by what is

called the orthodox Catholic church. When Constantine the Great, a pagan who for political reasons wrote the basic creed of the orthodox Catholic church, reorganized Christianity after he had a dream that Jesus would aid him in defeating his rival for Roman power. Of course Constantine supplied the power of his police state to aid the orthodox in burning the books of the Gnostics and employing brutal, Adolf Hitler tactics to convert the Gnostics to orthodox Catholicism or be forced into exile or be murdered. This is why I call Catholics the proto-Nazis. I might add that at this time in history the Gnostics were as much the orthodox Christians as the Catholics, but the Catholics got the police force on their side. I believe that Gnosticism was the true Christianity and Catholicism, the false.

Valentinus (100-174 AD), being a man of outstanding talent and literary ability, was expected to be elected Bishop of Rome (This is the office that developed into the Pope), but was defeated by a few votes. I thought that if he had been elected it would have drastically and radically altered the subsequent history of Christianity. He was a progenitor of the Gnostic view.

I will briefly sum up some of the Gnostic viewpoints that I admired. First, the Gnostics dismissed the Old Testament and its God. They saw the Old Testament God as a principle of evil, and something to overcome. William Blake with his "Nobodaddy" had the same view. Some of the Gnostics opposed the Jewish and Orthodox Catholic view that God is wholly other, and proposed such propositions that God is self-knowledge, the self and the divine are identical—another Blakian attitude.

What I like about Gnosticism is what is implied in the image of Mary Magdalene being kissed full on the mouth by Jesus. Some Gnostics claim that Mary Magdalene was Jesus' number one disciple, not Peter, and he did kiss her full on the lips. [I claim that instead of having the statue of San Pietro in Roma, the statue should be of Constantine the Great, for it was his police that gave the Catholic Church its power. Then the old women could kiss Constantine the Great's bronze toe.] In other words, Gnosticism did not have the woman-hating, flesh-hating, life-hating attitude of Catholicism with celibate priests and virginal nuns.

Moving on—the Montepulciano wine has no special significance in its poetic context, but it is, or was (I can no longer afford it) my favorite Italian wine. In fact Montepulciano is one of my favorite Italian cities, and

some of the happiest moments in my life have been spent there. I remember reciting Dante there with an owner of a winery: "Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita mi ritrovai per una selva oscura. . . ."

The conclusion of the poem is an attempt to flee what is now called *mimetologism*, the traditional concept of representation, mimesis as copy of an external world, to cast off logocentrism (a God, or Science, or Philosophy, or any theory guaranteeing referentiality). It is a desire to return to the type of poetry I wrote when I appeared in your anthology, *THE LIVING UNDERGROUND*.

Locke ends his explanation/letter with "Of course . . . I cannot cover everything, and even my explanations are overpowered and transformed in the linking of phrases within the poem," which shows, again, the importance of language- versus idea-links in the overall structure of Locke's work.

In *ABATIS THREE, DUANE LOCKE* (published by the Humanities Division of the University of Tampa in 1986, ed. by Jane Leonard) there are two essays about Locke and in Vol. 3, Number 1 of *THE GENERALIST PAPERS* (The Smith, Brooklyn, NY, March, 1992) there are two essays by Locke which are helpful for any further understanding of his poetics.

Locke has also written an essay which he says he compiled from various letters he has recently written in which he gets more to the nitty gritty of general theory rather than any specific explication:

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE NOUVA MANIERA, THE POEMS OR TEXTS OR INSCRIPTIONS OR ESCRITURE OR WHATEVER IS BEING DONE OR UNDONE, GATHERED UNDER THE SIGNATORY OF THE PROPER NAME DUANE LOCKE.

The poems are non-logocentric, in the sense that there is no God, No Science, no theory of reality to guarantee the referentiality of the words. The poems are decentered, a type of sublated decentering. Two of the main modes of expression or origins for disseminations are the ironic pun operating as an *aufhebung* and homophonic progression moving aleatorically under the control of the attitudes and lived experiences, conscious and unconscious, of the agent. The images or names or words or signifiers are nominal and non-repetitive, hermetic without being private. The words operate within their milieu as nontransposable singularities. The word disappears when exterior to the text. The word is endowed with life and breath by its phrasal linkage and the resultant emanations from

the configurations. The word trembles, shakes, vibrates in its context, but when removed becomes paralyzed and breathless. The *A venir* textual motion precludes a reduction to theme or thesis, but there is a non-thetic rendering, positing of a thesis. There is schizo-fragmentation in the word and word linkage, their celebratory isolation and stoically sad acceptances of dependence. No doubt, there are traces of mimetologism, but mimesis in the traditional sense of a representation of an external world or internal state of being is erased, and thus the result is a mimesis without imitation. There are even adumbrations of transcendental meaning, but the foreshadowing does not become stabilized or hypostasized. "A literature that forbade that transcendence would annul itself"—Derrida. The basic operational mode, in the words of Paul Celan, is "Ungeschriebenes, zu sprache verhärtet."

—from *GHOST DANCE* 19

A Verse Essay: an Explication of the Philosophy Behind
Immanentism As Believed on May 28, 1973.

this is a poetry without beards even without
a commune of chins or dynamite it is buried
in a mountain and does not accept the gift waves
from the squeaks of a donkey car the shovel
is its brother and its enemy it accepts the
sea grape leaf on the illusory path and the
yellow dot suspended in the air this in-
troduction is a variant on the door who re-
quires the key to become invisible and swim
through the blade of a sword it is a dove
who was painted on bricks and began to fly
until someone asked permission immanentism
is a muzzle becoming a horse and a chain be-
coming raw ore it finds the shadow of a fly
to be as great as the fly and greater than
the fly swatter or congress it takes the
fever from the earth and puts it in its proper
place because most people can count to ten
we refuse to count past zero and we also refuse
to count minus numbers we have seen scarecrows
run away at the sight of a mustache and we
know in what coat linings the scars and their
starlight are hidden doors belong in other
vocabularies

Duane Locke—

A LETTER TO A YOUNG POET

one must begin by pulling the cork from the
day and letting the night pour forth while
others fill their cups invert yours and wait
until the coffee unbuttons the table cloth
and reveals the leaves wait until the leaves
walk back to the forest and attach themselves
to trees once this happens look for a spider-
web then talk to the water that has touched
a whale listen to driftwood and copy down
its declaration of independence ask for
the sand on which the crayfish has painted
a redwood a coyote a buffalo go inside a
phone booth and put your finger inside a paper
cup go into all hotel lobbies and look on
all the chairs for a redbreasted bird once
the silk is removed from the can buy a ticket
bury a part of your hair next to the roots of
a cloud caress the egg by a log on an island
only your astral body has visited catch
the coo of a dove and hand it a piece of
faded rug.

—from WHOEVER RAISES THE QUESTION OF REPRESENTATION
IN OUR TIME, *GHOST DANCE* 55, 1992

Whoever Raises the Question of Representation in Our Time.

The sound of bells, a bell bird ringing in the
Bronx zoo,
Tzara's bells
ringing for no reason,
a Bell of Adami, Valerico (*qu'un homme se retire*).

a prelate's neck:
a leak
in the late show—

rain streaks slant on a black quivering screen.
Perhaps this is not the general situation, but
in any case, it is mine here and now. The prelate
lost

his face
and his anatomy below the shoulders. The collar
crawled, as if a carnival caterpillar or dragon
(St/ George-less), the collar circled counterclock-
wise.

Pablo Neruda

observed that the prelate's collar was
stained with semen

I sit watching, paying the cable company, watching
this unique and ungeneralizable thing. I confront
the vanity of language,

watching this distinct
existent, this particular. Every moment is pre-
linguistic.

I confront the affront of language's
generalizing, conceptualizing, universalizing
properties, both public and private.

A prelate's neck sags,
 wrinkles, subdivides, has no chin, but has a
 scrap of a collar, George Herbert's collar resembles
 a gothic
 white worm.

Watching the misty prelate's neck, I have no desire,
 unless unconscious—either Freudian or Lacanian—
 to cast off my cassock,
 and return
 to the myth of objective reality.

Sometimes the prelate's neck is pale and bloodless;
 sometimes the prelate's neck is fire colored,
 colored like the flames in the Ben Dainagon scroll,
 Japanese, late Heinan period, 12th century A.D.

The whole history of Christianity might
 have been altered
 as this prelate's collar is altered,
 if the Gnostic Valentinus had been chosen
 bishop of Rome. Jesus
 would have kissed Mary Magdalene full on
 the mouth. This prelate has no mouth to use
 as an instrument for kissing, only a neck
 and a scrap of collar.

I sit here, sitting in an Italian chair,
 sipping Montepulciano wine,
 thinking of such things as
 the Frankfurt School, the Foucauldian
 episteme, and Mallarme's *Un coup de des*—
 trying to dispell the return of
 a delusion,
 this myth of an objective
 reality.

Extirpation from code and system
 is extinct, along with pasquinades,
 passenger pigeons, referents,
 and the extraphysical.

I sit here in my myth of an objective world, a world guarded by Marx and Engels with flaming swords, staring at an illusion imposed on Time and Bergson, the numbers on my Japanese watch: SA, 10-19, 8:30 — 22.

While I watch, I wear a toga.
I came home late, early in the morning
from a Dionysiac celebration.

The prelate's neck is gone,
excommunicated by
a flash of lightning.

It is said in one of the texts
of Taoism

 that when
one has cleansed
 away the most mysterious sights
of his imagination, such as
 the prelate's neck,
he can become without a flaw.

Coming, humming, drinking
 to the end of the story,
the second story, the second story
fire escape
of this forty story building,
objective reality,
on fire, I fled.

Although fleeing, I have not yet
begun to flee.
Started slowly,
 squeezing through the small
spaces,
these opening between the silent past,
that was built by being passed on in
silence,
built by being passed over with a
silent contempt,
I made little progress.

Burdened with nineteen sixty anarchist
platitudes
and consumer products, burdened with
archaic attitudes
and consumer products, blocked by
activists supporting the burning
of the forty story buildings,
forest fires, fires in vacant lots,
the activists blocking the fire
department by spreading their
Seurat picnic lunches and consumer
products on the sidewalk,
the descent down the fire escape
to the

underground

(see Hugh Fox, *The Living Underground*)

is slow.

—from WHOEVER RAISES THE QUESTION OF REPRESENTATION IN OUR TIME, *GHOST DANCE* 55, 1992

Literature Has Always Been the Most Explicit Realization of the Signifying Subject's Condition.

le mote trouvé
is the beginning. In the beginning
was the Word.

not ex nihilo,
as in Tzara (hat drawn),
but as in Aristotle—
the word found in prime (prime time),
primitive, pre-existing verbiage.

"I admire, dear, your theoretical
consideration
spoken into my ear
while we are dancing, dear,
and I admire the pressure
of your prehensile manipulation
of my posterior.

As the sage and poet Michael
Wiggelsworth
proclaimed
"What is duty but a fading
flower."

Thank you, Cinderella, I admire
the glitter of your Glas slipper.

"And your thinking does not resemble
that of those
people whom you have persecuted. I
admire your Michelangelo Jackson

Sistine pelvic pulsations,
especially the brightness after
restoration,
and I admire your fragmentation:
the wearing of one finger from a
white glove on your middle
finger."

Thank you, Cinderella, I admire the
silver sequins on your blonde wig
spelling out a **mot trouvé**:
deconstruction.

TODD MOORE—

When Todd Moore's DILLINGER began to come out in installments from Kangaroo Court Press a few years back I was bowled over by the complex subtlety and forcefulness of the work. Kangaroo Court never finished the whole project and DILLINGER, Book I has come out from Primal Press . . . hopefully with more to follow.

I wasn't sure about Moore. He had a lot of Bukowski's raw-faced toughness about him, but he was a high school teacher in Rockford, Illinois of all places and I wrote and questioned him—IS THIS ALL POSE, VICARIOUS PROJECTIONS OUT INTO AN UNDERWORLD YOU'VE NEVER EXPERIENCED, OR ARE YOU FOR REAL?

Here is what he answered:

First, the fascination w/Dillinger & crime. This—what—call it an obsession—goes way back & is embedded somewhere in the deepest part of my personal history or mythology or whatever it is that makes me who I am. Bogg is bringing out—in the issue out now—a group of poems abt my father who was an alkie trying & failing to be a writer. When my father hit rock bottom i was abt twelve years old. By that time I was no stranger to the streets or the bars. My mother had a private deal cooked up w/me. Whenever my father went out to the bars I went w/him. To keep tabs. I was raised in Freeport, not a really big city, but it was a town that had a shitload of bars & a couple of skidrow hotels & whore houses. So, that's how I grew up. When we went belly up, we moved into one of the skidrow hotels & I lived there till my junior year in college. I literally lived on the streets as a scavenger, a thief, a con artist, you name it. We peddled whatever we cd steal & stold whatever we cd sell. One of my friends was a cop killer. He's doing a 99 year stretch in Iowa. Another pair of friends were burglars. We used to roll drunks whenever we cd. or scam the shit out the em if they weren't already passed out. By the time I was fourteen, I was a damn good shoptlifter & worked a lot of small change cons, mostly in front of bars after dark. Drunks almost always feel sorry for people in trouble. At least they did in those days. I carried a switchblade knife & had a couple close calls. Looking back, it still seems like a miracle I never got killed or ended up in the slammer. So, my heroes were outlaws.

Wdn't yrs be if you watched all yr stuff sold at a public auction to pay off the storage bill? When I wasn't boosting something or conning someone, I went to the movies just to escape all the shit I lived around. Guys like Bogart & Cagney had a hell of an appeal for me. They weren't just getting even. They did it w/style.

Which leads into Dillinger. I'd been writing poetry for abt three years seriously. It was like Dillinger walked right in. I'd been looking for a kind of hero/antihero. Billy the Kid was already taken more than once. I had this thing eating away under my skin, a drive toward something I wasn't sure what, & then there was Dillinger. I saw a little chapbook by a Canadian writer, Eugene McNamara & I thought christ I can write better than that. & that was the way it got started. Before I knew it I was was writing short poems. That last maybe a year or two. Then the voice of Dillinger really took over. When I was first starting out, I don't think I had any overall idea of where it was going except that the force of the poem, the absolute appeal of the man drove me. I knew I wd write more than one long section, but I didn't really know how many. After the first three sections—The Name is Dillinger, Dillinger's Faces, and Billie F.,—I began to feel my way toward a direction, a kind of roadmap of where Dillinger was going and maybe where I cd take it. The only way I can explain this feeling is that it's very similar to being in some kind of athletic competition, like maybe running the mile—or hitting sixty home runs in a season or something like that where you have a vague kind of feeling that what it is that yr doing is a little different maybe newer maybe nothing like anything anyone's done before—maybe this is the lie each of us tells ourselves when we're in the middle of a big risk, a big gamble, so that we don't quit mid-stride, don't toss the bat in the dust. I had myself going up against Williams' Paterson, Olson's Maximus, McGrath's Letter, Ginsberg's Howl, & Whitman's Song of Myself. & I kept telling myself that even if I fucked up that was okay because for awhile anyhow I was somehow in the running w/these guys. Ego? Yeah, ego. & I just kept going & making it up as I went along. I didn't really have Williams' triadic foot, or Olson's objective/space/breath theories, shit I didn't have any theories, except the theory of the feeling of myself as I drove into & out of Dillinger's skin. The idea was to see if I cd complete the poem, run the race, bat the 60 plus home runs. Where I'm at now is twenty two long sections later—the twenty-third section runs to 500 short poems—the whole thing's abt 35,000 lines long. It feels finished.

The letter goes on to talk about Bukowski. After all, I did ask him.

Bukowski, he says, wasn't his model when he first started writing poetry. He was 33 when he began writing and most of all loved Lowell and Plath, but he felt he couldn't write bitchy woman poems like Plath or poor little rich boy poems like Lowell, although one of Lowell's books, *THE MAN IN THE BLACK CHEVROLET*, had some father poems in it and these poems set Moore on the path of writing about his own father:

Suddenly it hit me. By writing abt my father I was unlocking the door to my past. & I think that's where Bukowski & I are close . . .

Ironically Bukowski's father was straight-laced and domineering, Moore's couldn't have cared less about Moore when he was drunk. "As a kid, I had almost complete freedom & I took advantage of it. Little did I know the fleabag joint I lived in was my real university," he says. He is "fascinated" by Bukowski "but don't so much feel his influence."

In one telling statement he says that in a sense he and Bukowski make up one coherent whole—Bukowski as comic writer and himself as tragic writer.

Certainly it's true, as he also points out, that Bukowski's poetry is more sprawling than his own and Bukowski uses his own voice, writes almost everything from an I-Bukowski point of view, whereas Moore takes on other faces, skins, personalities . . . like Dillinger.

BOGG 64 contains a centerfold section called "Burning My Name," poems about Moore's father that make especially interesting reading contrasted with the portrait of his father that Bukowski gives in, say, his novel *HAM AND RYE*.

Todd Moore—from *BONEYARD, GHOST DANCE 54*

death mask

w/plastic bones sticking
out of the cheeks that
sonny was wearing
was dripping w/sweat
what we did was run down
black street yelling
names at people we passed
when we hit eighth avenue
sonny stopped under the
hotel flossy's sizzling
blue neon the f & y were
out so the sign read
hotel loss sonny passed
the pint & the whiskey
burned a woman was
leaning out a second
storey window her blue
tits swinging she yelled
tell mr death i'll give
him a blowjob & he doesn't
even have to say please

when the bomb

went off I was
shooting pool w
3 fingered jack
slocum in terry's
bankshot the ex
plosion shook the
joint made the
cue ball roll a
couple inches
when i turned to
go outside for
a quick look jack
sd i wdn't just
call it local
business then he
smiled & sd why
the fuck am i
wasting my breath
when i got to
the street a kid
wearing gang
colors was
standing in the
light off a
blown car he
was holding a
head

Todd Moore—

sundown

laid red tracks
across earl's
face while he
changed the flat
i was the whiskey
man every once
in awhile he'd
make a motion &
i'd pass him the
bottle as a cold
wind kicked fire
colored dust
into our clothes
finished earl
rolled the flat
down a ditch
then yanked the
22 & opened up
slugs sang in
its wake in the
distance black
mesas swam in
the boneyard
of night

reynolds thought he'd

gotten away when he
slipped out the back
of marias' diner but
montez was waiting
near the wrecked
buick sitting next
to the tracks this
almost looks like a
scene from a b movie
reynolds sd stalling
montez used the auto
matic's barrel to
scratch an itch on
his cheek last words
amigo you wanna cry
for yr mama i have
some money cd we
work something out
montez smiled it
looked like a snake
crawling into his
face his pistol was
a shadow spreading
along gravel wind
from the river
brought the
odor of shit

RICHARD MORRIS—

Richard Morris is a theoretical physicist with a Ph.D. in Atomic Physics from the University of Nevada. He has lived in San Francisco for years and earns his living as the Coordinator of COSMEP—THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT PUBLISHERS—and as the writer of popular science fact books, mainly on Cosmology.

In the 1960's he had a magazine and a press called CAMELS COMING and also published some mimeo chapbooks under the QUARK imprint, and, just to complicate things, published a CAMELS COMING NEWSLETTER (poetry) which ran into two separate series.

He is a Dadaist—with all that implies. When I asked him to tell us a little bit about "intentions" in his poetry he wrote back:

There are few things in this world that sound as universally stupid as artists' statements about their work.

The reason is simple enough. If you've already said something in one medium, and then try to say it all over again in another, you're likely to experience an overwhelming temptation to fall back on platitudes.

It is true that, when we first encounter some especially innovative kind of work, we often find that we don't "get" it. But there is a simple remedy for this:

If what you read (or looked at, or listened to) intrigued you, read (or look at, or listen to) more of it. And keep on reading until you do get it. In the meantime, ignore anything the artist says. Such statements generally only confuse the issue because their bullshit content is so high.

When I complained to him about this statement he opened up a little more and on January 28, 1991 wrote:

Sources? How should I know? I never consciously set out to write like anyone, and I have no idea who influenced me. I simply wrote.

In particular, I've never seen any prose poems in the form of plays except ones written by people who picked up the idea from me (and showed them to me). . . .

People don't know who their influences are. Sometimes they think they do, but turn out to be wrong. (For example, let's take someone who was in another field: Schopenhauer thought he was influenced by Plato and Kant but there's hardly any Plato in him at

all.) The only people who REALLY know are the exceptional people who make deliberate parodies—like Stravinsky composing in the style of Pergolesi or Picasso going through his Ingres period.

In order to REALLY understand Morris you have to read his science fact books like *TIME'S ARROWS* or *THE END OF THE UNIVERSE*. I have an essay on him in *THE LIVING UNDERGROUND—A CRITICAL OVERVIEW* (Troy, New York: Whitston Publishing Co., 1970).

Another source of vital information is Morris' still unpublished (but soon to be published by *GHOST DANCE*) *AUTOBIOGRAPHY*.

In Chapter 25, for example, Morris begins to talk about his transformation into an author in his second year of college:

During the years 1960 to 1962, I finally began to transform myself into a writer. I did this almost inadvertantly. It all began around the end of my sophomore year, when I talked the SAGEBRUSH editor into letting me write a chess column. He agreed, and the column ran two or three years before the end of the academic year. (p. 163)

Morris didn't really want to write about chess at all and he talked the editor of SAGEBRUSH into letting him write a column of humor and satire.

He quotes two excerpts from his column which I find to be amazingly like the absurdist poetry he wrote in his mid 50's:

"As the door flew open under the force of his blow, John saw Marsha lying on her bed, wearing bra and panties, her full bosom heaving as she listened to the strains of Mendelsohn's Symphony Number 4 in A, opus 90." (p. 165)

He quotes another column which sounds very much like "The Bone of Contention" or "the Ontological Argument": "Socrates: What are you thinking of, Parmenides?/ A manure pile O Socrates." (also p. 16)

Morris' discovery of avant-garde work (specifically Beckett's fiction) when he was in his senior year in college, in the light of these college newspaper pieces, seems almost irrelevant:

It was at about this time that I discovered Grove Press' quarterly, *EVERGREEN REVIEW*, in the campus bookstore . . . reading [Beckett's] fiction for the first time in 1962, can only be described as a liberating experience. A story of his which appeared in *EVERGREEN* (called "The End," I think) was the first piece of fiction that I had ever read which didn't seem to ape nineteenth century forms. . . . [and] had an entirely different kind of sensibility. (p. 179)

His discovery of Beckett's plays, Miller's TROPIC OF CANCER, Heller's CATCH-22 and ULYSSES soon afterwards, hardly can account for a sensibility that was already formed. . . . but HOW?

I suggested to him that his sense of the absurd may have been formed by U.S. pop-culture during the 1940's, The Fred Allen Show, the Marx Brothers, Danny Kaye, etc., but he answered that he hardly remembered those things now, he'd have to go back and read old scripts/listen to re-issues of original broadcasts, and, besides, he told me recently over the phone, "Do I really want to totally demystify my origins?"

Still . . . on May 16, 1992, Morris, after thinking things over a little more, wrote me again:

Marx Brothers? Marx Brothers. Every now and then I watch a Marx brothers movie and immediately think it has *nothing* whatsoever to do with what I do. Groucho was always playing games with language. I play games with reality.

This might be the wrong track. When I was a kid, I would hear Jack Benny, Edgar Bergen, Fred Allen on radio. But I was never a fan of any of them. I never got into it.

A much bigger influence was MAD magazine, which I began reading when I was about 15. In fact, I began reading MAD when it was more of a comic book than a magazine.

But by the time I was around a junior in high school . . . , I had begun to find MAD quite disappointing. So maybe it wasn't that big an influence.

If anything a stronger influence was being a fan of the old triple A San Francisco Seals baseball team. Every year, the manager (Lefty O'Doul—the name is practically a parody itself) said he would roll a peanut down Market Street (San Francisco's main street) with his nose if the team didn't finish in the first division. Every year they finished last or next to last. And they sometimes lost in quite interesting ways. At one point they had a pitcher named Elmer Singleton. In one game, he pitched a no-hitter for 12 innings and then lost the game when he gave up a run in the 13th.

I think it must have been things like that that clued me in to the absurd nature of reality.

If you go back to his 1968 volume PREY (Portland, Oregon: Wine Press), you find a very different kind of romantic Morris, surprisingly romantic, in fact, at the very end of the psychedelic, mind-blowing 60's:

I walk
and the wind parts
to let me pass.

Leaves
roll past my sadness
and drop in the street.

There is so much sorrow in the world

But the wind will not listen.
And I will not understand:
but live
 only.

What happened to this romantic Morris to turn him into the cynic of *BOARD OF DIRECTORS* published by *GHOST DANCE* in 1976?

These are the crucial 8 years of transformation.

I suggest something like the book about Coleridge's sources, *THE ROAD TO XANADU* or Kenner's penetrating *THE AGE OF POUND*. It would be an interesting study in the relationship between Pop Culture and what later became an avant-garde statement.

Richard Morris—from BOARD OF DIRECTORS,
GHOST DANCE 27, Fall-Winter, 1976

THE PIGEON

An OLD MAN is sitting in the park, feeding the pigeons. One of the pigeons comes near enough to eat out of his hand. The OLD MAN picks it up and strangles it.

OLD MAN: This is for what life has done to me.

Suddenly an enormous PIGEON comes down out of the sky. Ponderously, it flies toward the OLD MAN.

OLD MAN: What the fuck?

The OLD MAN hobbles off. The PIGEON flies after him.

(p. 1)

THE BASEBALL GAME

GOD and some of His ANGELS are attending a New York Yankees baseball game. It is the bottom of the ninth inning. There are two out. The Yankees trail by a score of 13-0.

GOD: It sure is a shitty game.

Suddenly the Yankees come alive. They win. The next day all the papers describe the result as a miracle.

(p. 2)

Richard Morris—

THE PEARLY GATES

HUMPHREY BOGART stands before the Pearly Gates. A CHOIR OF ANGELS is singing somewhere. Slowly, the Gates open, revealing St. Peter, who is PETER LORRE.

PETER LORRE: I bet you have more respect for me now.

Slowly and majestically, God strides forward. God is SIDNEY GREENSTREET. The CHOIR OF ANGELS is singing His praises. He starts to say something, but He can't be heard; the ANGELS are making too much noise. He motions to them to be quiet, then turns back to BOGART.

SIDNEY GREENSTREET: This isn't what you expected, is it, motherfucker?

(p. 5)

SOCRATES

SOCRATES lies asleep. He is dreaming of three blind mice. They all run after the farmer's wife. She cuts off their tails with a carving knife. When he wakes up, he won't be able to wait to get someone into a dialogue about it.

(p. 6)

Richard Morris—

THE BONE OF CONTENTION

A BONE OF CONTENTION is lying in the street. It is ignored by all the passersby. Finally, a DOG comes along, sniffs it, and begins to gnaw on it.

(p. 8)

THE GIANT BOLOGNA

A MAN and a WOMAN are sitting in a car. An enormous bologna is blocking the street in front of them. Cars are lined up for blocks behind them.

WOMAN: I told you not to come this way.

MAN: How was I supposed to know there'd be this big liverwurst blocking the street?

WOMAN: It isn't liverwurst. It's bologna.

MAN: Alright. Bologna.

(p. 9)

Richard Morris—

THE RABBITS

Act I.

A MAN and a WOMAN sit in a living room. The MAN is drunk.

MAN: Did I ever tell you why I was never in the service?

WOMAN: Fred, I was looking at the rabbits.

MAN: They said I was 4-F. There was nothing wrong with me. I...

WOMAN: Fred, I know. I was out there watching the rabbits. They were . . . doing things to each other.

MAN: There was nothing wrong with me at all. But I have this navel that's six inches to one side, so they figured. . .

WOMAN: I know, Fred. I was telling you, the rabbits were doing things to each other. Don't you think. . .

MAN: All it was, was a bellybutton six inches off. It wasn't like there was something really wrong with me.

WOMAN: Fred, the rabbits. If we don't do something, we'll wind up with a whole yard full of rabbits.

MAN: Six inches to one side. That's the only reason.

WOMAN: Fred!

MAN: Huh?

Act II.

Same scene. The MAN is a little drunker.

WOMAN: Fred, did you feed the rabbits?

MAN: Sure.

WOMAN: They're making a racket. They sound like they're hungry.

MAN: I fed them.

WOMAN: Maybe you didn't feed them enough. It isn't like when we had just two of them.

MAN: I fed them a lot.

WOMAN: Maybe you ought to feed them some more. Or

go out and take a look at them, or something.

MAN: Sure. Did I ever tell you about how I was 4-F?

WOMAN: Fred, the rabbits.

MAN: All it was, I have this navel. . . .

Act III.

Same setting. The man is yet a little drunker.

He is sitting in a chair as the WOMAN comes running into the room, slamming the door behind her.

WOMAN: Fred!

MAN: Huh?

Before either can say anything more, the door falls crashing to the floor, and thousands of hungry RABBITS burst into the room. The RABBITS devour both the MAN and the WOMAN. As they do, there are a lot of horrible crunching noises.

(pp. 11-12)

Richard Morris—

VAN GOGH

VINCENT VAN GOGH sits writing a letter to his brother. The sun is setting. Night falls on his ear.

(p. 13)

THE ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

DESCARTES walks down a dark street. Suddenly, he is attacked by the ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD. DESCARTES tries to beat it off with his cane.

DESCARTES: Believe me, philosophy is a rough business.

DESCARTES and the ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT go on fighting.

(p. 16)

Richard Morris—

TINKER BELL

TINKER BELL staggers out of a bar, drunk. She weaves her way down the street. A CAT begins to follow her. Suddenly, the CAT pounces and carries TINKER BELL off in its jaws.

Mercifully, the play ends before we see what happens next.

(p. 17)

KING KONG

KING KONG lies dead in a New York street. Scores of MEN are at work dismembering his huge body with saws and large scalpels. Several attack his skull with jackhammers. A dozen trucks stand nearby, waiting. Six MEN hack away at KONG's penis. With some difficulty, they succeed in severing it. They pick it up and carry it across KONG's abdomen and chest, across his shoulder, and down one of his arms to the street. They put the penis down and stop for a moment to rest. Then they pick it up again, carry it a little further, and heave it into one of the trucks. One of the MEN has a look of authority about him. He speaks:

OK, men, let's go back for the balls. Then we'll get to work on his asshole.

(p. 18)

Richard Morris—

THE TOADS

A MAN comes running down the street, shouting.

MAN: The toads are coming! The toads are coming!

1st ONLOOKER: What did he say?

2ND ONLOOKER: He said the toads are coming.

Suddenly, hundreds of TOADS come down the street, trampling the MAN who was shouting, the TWO ONLOOKERS, and everyone else in sight.

(p. 19)

CHARLES POTTS—

Back in 1979 (actually somewhat earlier, the book was *published* in 1979 after a time-lag of a couple years) when I wrote my *THE POETRY OF CHARLES POTTS* (Paradise, California: Dust-books) I looked to the future of Potts' career and made some predictions:

Potts is following Pound back to the pre-Romantic Baroque or Renaissance view of the Poet preeminently as thinker, and Poetry as a virtually unlimited means of exploring into, "uncovering" any and all reality. He is slowly transforming himself from a lyrical to a Philosophical Animal, not so much concerned with Things/Surfaces themselves in their relation to a larger "divine" cosmos, but with principles at work in the Dynamics of Things primarily related back to the Human—rather than the Cosmic-Condition.

When I met Potts in the late 60's in Berkeley he was wearing buckskins, sporting a long blond beard and long blond hair, going around calling himself Laffing Water. In a way, I suppose, he was a disciple of Edward Dorn. He'd studied with Dorn at the University of Idaho. Certainly Dorn was an "influence," but where he'd really learned his poetic TRADE was in the coffee-houses and bars of Berkeley and San Francisco in the 1960's, reading, reading, reading in public all the time, learning how to time lines, almost like a walk-on comedian, learning how the audience reacted, how to delay reactions, get double-take reactions. He was holistic, drug-oriented, ecological . . . the Preeminent Hippy Poet.

Actually "cracked up" for a while (you can see that especially in *LITTLE LORD SHIVA*, my favorite volume of his) . . . and now, more than twenty years later he is a C.T.M. (Certified Practitioner, member of the Society of Neuro-Linguistic Programming), lives in Walla Walla, Washington with a new wife and new baby (and Emily, a daughter from a previous marriage), owns vast tracts of real estate, is studying Chinese, and has just finished a book about the Civil War called *THE CHILL AT AP-POMATTOX*—with the interesting idea that although the South lost the Civil War militarily, it won the war politically.

From wild-eyed visionary, he has become a solid citizen and his poetry deals precisely with what I predicted it would deal with—The Everyday, the Human, the Political.

His earlier works (LITTLE LORD SHIVA, BURNING SNAKE, THE TRANCEMIGRATION OF MENZU, THE LITMUS PAPERS, etc.) still remain monuments in the statement of the Hippy World-View.

—from A RITE TO THE BODY, *GHOST DANCE* 45, 1988

Madness

Madness is the condition of anger in a person that remains unexpressed towards another appropriate person or persons and is retained by the mad person, taking forms often unrecognizable by the naked eye. Blocked anger blocks in turn the expression of other appropriate feelings. Madness has many euphemisms, synonyms, homonyms, and Houyhnhnms, the most relevant is crazy or to be in little pieces. Psychosis is the most severe form that madness takes. Contact with a psychotic person is at least 100% impaired so that it cannot be made clear to them who he, she, it, sher, or shit should be mad at in the first place. Dingaling neurotics, on the other half of the same hand, are only half mad in that they know or can be told who to be mad at but lack the essential courage to express it fully.

It should be made clear that there are no clears, genitals, primals, screams, or completely basket cases. Madness walked away from can be most dangerous, the community wide projection of hostility in the form of state sponsored war, for example. The Pit River Indians would say you lose your shadow and begin to wander. *Alucinari*, from which hallucinate is taken, means to wander in the mind. Madness is only a "mental" illness as long as the feelings of the body remain screened out of consciousness. Civilization and its "dis"contents insists that we deny the body its due. The cure for madness is so simple it has escaped while making a handful of doctors rich. It is to bring the madness into focus and lay it on the people who are hurting you. A mad person on their way to health is apt with good reason to want to hit, kick, bite, or yell at some more civilized entity, since it is commonly agreed the ontogenetic source of madness is earliest childhood.

Madness can be traced toward its phylogenetic beginnings at least as far as its etymological origins in several northern European tongues including Anglo Saxon, Old Saxon, Old High German, Old Norse, and Gothic where it has the form *gamaidnas*. There are some things more than a little Gothic about certain mad houses, insane asylums, psyche wards, and not so funny farms. See also, Artaud, Antonin, "Van Gogh, the Man Suicided by Society (1947)."

Charles Potts—

A Rite to the Body

The purpose of girls is penetration.
flesh flowers, their eyes deepest of all
approving probes, petals
lips, pits, seems on touch
to meld, to moisturize.

Lap sitters, spreading
from the inside out,
they cling as peaches
to a stone
you eat off sticky fingers.

I've known girls
whose faces come before me
in dreams, in winter.
in the not so decent/recent past
who could have been set down easier.

Without posing, without tears,
who could wash away no blame,
the changing condensations
of the seasons, with perpetual
adaptive motion.

No hope like new hope
less the irretrievable experience
desire wends its way
deaf to all except
the richest, deepest tone.

Mea Hupia

Moon song,
I sing
in Shoshonean.

Karma is the net
effect of attitude on chance.

The vehicle of tone.
In other words,
swing.

STEVE RICHMOND—

The best way to approach the work of Richmond is to contextualize him in terms of his own claims:

no one understands
bukowski does not understand
critics do not understand
lautreamont would surely know
celine would love my work

(from a "gagaku" poem originally
published in GHOST DANCE 31)

His work is mainly drug-inspired: "I'm hooked on cigarettes/and I like heroin too/grass valium angel dust a bit/coke you name I do it."

There is a certain "demonic" quality that links him not merely to Lautréamont but a whole host of 19th century "decadents:—Verhaeren, Baudelaire, Valery, Verlaine, Gilkin. . . . These writers, in turn, are linked to a host of painters who specialized in the same sort of decadence—Kupka, Klinger, Moreau, Jan Toorop, perhaps even my favorite painter Klimt.

It is a great mistake, however, to suppose that Lautréamont's sources are the same as Richmond's. There is a difference between literary POSE and genuine DRUG PSYCHOSIS. As Frans de Haes says in his *IMAGES DE LAUTRÉAMONT—ISODORE DUCASSE* [Lautréamont's real name], *COMTE DE LAUTRÉAMONT* (Gembloux, Belgium: Editions J. Duculot, 1969):

L'oeuvre de Lautréamont s'est ressentie du milieu culturel dans lequel elle est née. On a très vite remarqué que l'imagination de Lautréamont «est environée de livres» et que son oeuvre est une création «née dans le pastiche et dans la critique. . . .» Le problème de sources a été posé par l'auteur lui-même . . . le jeune Ducasse crée son propre univers à partir de cadres littéraires existants. En son oeuvre se cristallisent tous les procédés romantiques, les meilleurs et les pires. L'originalité de Lautréamont consiste en l'exploration curieuse qu'il fait de ceux-ci./

The work of Lautréamont is a reaction to the cultural milieu in which he was born. It was very quickly noted that Lautréamont's imagination "is surrounded by books" and that his work is a creation "born in imitation and in criticism." The problem of sources has been posed by the author himself . . . the

young Ducasse creates his own universe based on existing literary frames. In his work are crystallized the best and the worst of the romantic sources. Lautreamont's originality consists of the curious way in which he uses these sources (p. 109).

Of course in the case of Richmond, even for a drug-psychotic there must be "sources," and one suspects that they are not too different from those of Lautréamont and his contemporaries.

Celine, who Richmond feels would LOVE his work, may actually be a bit closer to him in technique, combining, as Godard points out in his *POETIQUE DE CELINE* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985), a play between MEMORY and IMAGINATION (see, p. 419 ff).

And it is true that Bukowski never traffics in the subconscious, preconscious, the hallucinatory, the drug-inspired. Beer-inspired reveries, yes, but nothing that really distorts and essentially changes THE MIND.

You can see why Lautréamont became such a darling of the Surrealists as they tried to actually attach a PEN to the SUBCONSCIOUS. (See Haes, p. 52 ff. for an account of Lautréamont's links to The Surrealists.) They wanted a kind of "automatic writing" that supposedly bypassed dreams and established a link—through "meditative" techniques—between The Conscious and Unconscious worlds of the brain.

The work GAGAKU, which Richmond generically applies to most of his poetry, has been familiar to me for more than thirty years. I used to go to Gagaku concerts at Schoenberg Hall at UCLA—it is simply antique Japanese court music.

Did Richmond attend these concerts too, and when it came time to name his poems did the work pop out of his memory/subconscious and demand to be used?

How REAL are Richmond's demons? Are we really dealing with a genuine drug-psychotic? This is a whole other way of looking at Richmond going back to, say, Coleridge's KUBLA KHAN or even Poe's opium-inspired poems.

Certainly Richmond remains one of the least visible, most mysterious (and interesting) poets on the scene today, linked in some ways to Potts, Richard Krech and D.A. Levy, but with a particularly satanic touch that is very much his own.

Richmond, of course, doesn't see himself as psychotic and when he read the above comments about himself and his work, he wrote and "accused" me of being a bit "coy" in my remarks, perhaps "to help the subject matter with some mystery/romantic flavor . . . maybe not." (Letter from Richmond, 10/17/92).

Psychotics, to Richmond, are people who "might spring up from any cafe table and strangle a busy unattentive waitress for little reason . . . in other words, a psychotic is a dangerous fucker in real life on real streets, in real cafes, etc.—one who makes uncalled-for aggressive moves on unsuspecting humans. So far I am not one of these."

A psychotic to me (and I have plenty of contact with them every day, starting with my oldest daughter) is merely someone who steps outside the "usual" view of reality in a given society, someone who perhaps hears voices that aren't there.

Richmond sees himself as "basically schizoid." Is there a difference between the schizoid and schizophrenic?

One other interesting tidbit from his revelatory letter: "About 97% of the time I am on some grass or blanco smoke (these days)—but I find even if I am on no drug at all—the process works just as well."

And on the link between gagaku music and the gagaku poems: "I do not title a poem gagaku unless gagaku music is playing on my stereo as I am writing the poem. As it happens about 90% of my work is written while gagaku music is playing—for me it does provide that link between unconscious-conscious."

So we really are back in the world of a trained/conditioned surrealist a la Breton, and it's not by accident that in this same letter Richmond sees lots of links between my own work and his—because I too try to write from the inner core, perhaps I should say from the inner ocean/cave inside me.

—from *GHOST DANCE* 31

gagaku

early morning sun just up
I should get out of here
with my drum on my back
go down to the ocean's edge
watch the pelicans diving
watch the pelicans dive
my poem is escaping me
I haven't allowed myself to actually see
here in the poems this morning:

no demons

I don't see any demons
just a vague shadow moving
blurred and in a fog
 a dark blackish shadow
 and shadows moving in
fog blurred nothing clear
 except the outline of
 a broom or brooms each shadow sweeps
in the fog slow movements of a sweeping broom

Steve Richmond—

gagaku

I'm hooked on cigarettes
and I like heroin too
grass valium angel dust a bit
coke you name I do it

no wonder no woman wants me
now
it's too late
for me
they do fall in love
with my house

but I am in my house
and this is too
much for them
to take

I cough a lot
more each day
and I can't quit my habits
not hypnotism not e s t not
anything will break my habits

save death sweet death

gagaku

let the demons have their day
wave their brass or gold
shining
cymbels

carry their drums
beat their drums with their heels

play their flutes
tongues stuck in ends

let that orchestra play
my demons

my life granting demons
and God
too

let Him have his day
throw a yellow ray
out of the cloud
the green cloud
and shine on it

my demon orchestra
let the show go on
my show
here now
in this
poem

Steve Richmond—

gagaku

I would be a dish washer
but I don't need the money
and I would be taking
some poor junky's place
for the sake of proletarian pose

I'm constantly beating women and slashing
their fine bodies
in my poems

my female readers are very upset
they would seemingly rather
I do it in real life

no one understands
bukowski does not understand
critics do not understand
lautreamont would surely know
celine would love my work

HARRY SMITH—

Smith is like New York incarnated. He was born just a few miles from where he now lives in Brooklyn Heights and for years ran The Smith (Publishing House) out of an office at 5 Beekman right next to City Hall in Manhattan. He began by publishing a chunky, not scholarly exactly, but almost a kind of clone of the university quarterlies called THE SMITH, then branched out into PULPSMITH/THE NEW YORK SMITH, which was the hottest arts tabloid ever published. He also, for a long time in the 70's, published a NEWSLETTER ON THE STATE OF THE CULTURE which specialized with headon confrontations with scandals and misdemeanors in the arts community. Things like who was getting all the grant money from CCLM, the Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines, the U.S. government agency that funnelled congressionally appropriated money for the arts to small presses and little magazines. To read back-issues of THE NEWSLETTER is to get a good idea of exactly what was going on behind the scenes in the arts during the 70's and 80's.

Then some years back Smith killed THE SMITH, NEWSART, and THE NEWSLETTER and started a new mag called PULPSMITH, smaller than THE SMITH, a little more "popular," a magazine that he thought would become a household word in the magazine business. But it never did.

Just last year Smith also killed PULPSMITH, got rid of his offices in Manhattan and now runs a reduced operation out of his home at 69 Joralemon St. in Brooklyn Heights, publishing a series of occasional papers called THE GENERALIST PAPERS, touted as "the direct successor to PULPSMITH magazine." This new series certainly is an important critical vehicle, in which Smith et co. continues his war against the Philistines and the Yahoos of Literaturredom. Vol. 1, No. 1 is an important critical statement by Smith himself about his literary value system. He hates snobbery, obscurantism, fakery, trickery, academic dead dullness—which he finds incarnated and celebrated by critics like Helen Vendler lauding poets like A.R. Ammons and John Ashbery.

Smith's best poetry is to be found in his long-poem TRINITY, which I compared (when I first reviewed it) to William Carlos Williams' PATERSON or Hart Crane's THE BRIDGE. It is a

major production. The poem itself centers around Trinity Church just across City Hall Square from Smith's old offices on Beekman and on the adventures of a John A. Hamilton (I believe Smith told me one day that he used the name Hamilton because Alexander Hamilton is buried in the churchyard behind Trinity Church) which is a kind of ego-projection of Smith as a critic of modern civilization. There was a time, in fact, that Smith founded a not-too-serious Anti-Civilization League and he has forever been playing with the idea of elevating The Primitive and bypassing The Modern. TRINITY, then, becomes a vehicle for criticizing all of modern society and has some poignantly lyrical passages looking back at Manhattan in primitive, pre-industrial times.

Smith's other major book of poetry is WE, THE PEOPLE, and for years he has been sporadically working on a poetic novel called GAWAIN GREEN (title derived from the medieval romance SIR GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT).

Perhaps the most trenchant, whimsical and teletyped-styled single statement of Smith's regarding his stand against the decline of contemporary literate civilization (or I should say the decline of civilization aided and abetted, if not caused, by the decline in the value-systems surrounding The Word) is in Vol. 0, No. 0 of THE SMITH (significantly dated July 4th, 1973) which he called THE NADA REVIEW:

PUBLISHING AND THE DESTRUCTION OF
VALUES

TRANSMITTING PICTURE OF PUBLISHING—REVE-
LATION OF WORKINGS—IMPORT TO CULTURE =
HUMAN BEINGS—HOW PROBLEMS OF PUBLISH-
ING RELATE TO GREAT PROBLEMS OF HUMANITY
HOW TRADITIONAL VALUES HAVE BEEN CAN-
CELLED IN PUBLISHING HOW PUBLISHING
PARTICIPATES IN THE GENERAL DESTRUCTION
OF VALUES . . . SERVING AS AGENCY OF SYS-
TEMATIZED CIVILIZATION ALL THE FORCES
OF GROWTH TECHNOCRACY—IS ALSO CRU-
CIAL BATTLEGROUND—INDIVIDUAL CREATOR
AGAINST THE NEW CULTURAL COLLECTIVES—
DETERMINING FATE OF WRITING—THE ARTIST
AS ACTIVE AGENT OF CHANGE—HOW PUBLISH-
ING DEMONSTRATES OVERCIVILIZATION & DE-
HUMANIZATION . . . THE REPLACEMENT OF
ETHICS BY TECHNICS—TECHNIQUES & TACTICS
TO GAIN OBJECTIVES. . . . THE SPECIFIC MANI-

FESTATIONS OF ALL THIS ORGANIZATION ANTI-
THETICAL TO EXISTENCE OF SELF-DETERMINING
INDIVIDUAL. . . (p. 3)

Over the years Smith has not merely been a major critic and poet but a shaker and mover. The office at The Smith was a kind of stomping ground for some of the best literati that New York has ever seen. Smith published, promoted, broke bread with great kabalistic-talmudic Master, Menke Katz, poets H.L. Van Brunt, Stanley Nelson, Richard Nason, essayists like Sidney Bernard, short story writers like Tom Tolnay . . . he even rescued some once-famous authors like James T. Farrell from relative obscurity and brought him back into the public forum.

Smith was one of the original founders of COSMEP and is currently serving on the Board of Directors again, he has been active in P.E.N. International. He has been a real "presence" on the literary scene for literally DECADES. A book has to be written about The Smith Gang. Seeing that I was one of the Gang, maybe I should write it.

Harry Smith—from Section 2 of TRINITY, *GHOST DANCE* 21

The Growth of the World Trade Center.

To whom the cunning cunts of commerce come,
 I sing, steel members of humanity, the growing mass
 whose rising bulk portends dominion of the cube:
 this athletic technocracy and its perfection of
 rigidity,
 of works & systems & their sources, structure &
 utilization,
 of programs & computations, units & uniformity,
 conformity & the continuous process and continuous
 frame, conventions of columns & beams, continuous
 walls skyward
 Hamilton outgave.

Alas, poor Hamilton, a skull. He held his own death.
 He gazed at the death held in his hands, and it was
 small & absurd, and Hamilton was small unto
 himself
 and gone

John A. Hamilton
 1924-

Son of Nancy Arlens & Thomas Hamilton
 Member of the Association of the Bar
 of the City of New York, partner in
 the distinguished firm of his father.
 Devoted husband & father, he did his
 Best for himself, his family & his
 Fellow Man.

And Hamilton wondered on goodness & the good
 and the good
 in his life, vaguely in weariness like a weight of
 the infinite
 unknown forces onto & beyond him, a mono-
 nucleosis of history
 in him, this sickness into a vertigo of commerce
 & abyss,
 and he knew a dull confused despair he had not
 known before

O God which art the idea of the Good
 and all the ideas of good

O God which art the holy greening
 and the sacred white of love

O God which art the dream of Perfection
 and the perfection of dreams

O God which art the theory of the rigid frame
 we kill the greening & the love—

God is the greatest that can be conceived.

But, listen: I say Satan is inseparable; god &
 the devil are one in the perfect weld, the
 divine daemonics of the rigid
 this unspeakable skywardness
 Hamilton outgave.

Commerce & Abyss

Derricks in the sky
 The man stood before the tower of world trade gorwn
 tallest and beheld the cloud-high derricks as tyran-
 nosauri on some stern height. Man's own
 tyrannasauri—We put them there.

Behemoths in the sky

How did we do it?
 A man thought:
 How did we Get up there?
 How did we Get to here?
 How come?

Onward & Upward
 honeycombs of commerce

Hive
 the buZZy borogrove of business
 Bigly

Gimbels

cubic tower of
 World Trade

entrepreneurs, bankers, brokers, investors,
 architects, engineers, construction men,
 exporters & importers & all the captains
 & crews of
 World Trade

workers

Swarming

"Like bees," Hamilton heard the old farmer,
 his summer neighbor in Maine.

"I was readin in a magazine about somethun—
 some kind o rockets, I guess—you could just
 strap to your back an go anywhere you like,
 needin no plane. just that little thing like
 the astronauts have. I seen the astronauts usin
 one of them—little flying machine"

"Suppose all the people going to work in
 New York City could fly like that," Hamilton
 mused. "They'd be bumping into each other
 and everything."

"That'd be a sight I wouldn't care to see,"
 Jappy said. "I dunno. they'd be like bees,
 Bejesus, like a Swarm o Bees!"

Form follows function, the Modern Man I sing
En masse utter it *En Masse*
 Technology's Democracy of the relentless
 interchangeable
 Equality, the collective and the collective of the
 collective
 workers swarming to their functions
 Kingdoms come
 the Kingdom of the
 Cube

Entfremdung

technics tactics techniques
 technology <-----> teleology
 technics -----> ethics
 values standards norms routines

Mobilized, for efficient action formed under the
 rules of Science,
 the Modern Man I sing

dung dung Entfremdung

Hamilton telephoned his office: "Unavoidably
 detained." What would they say?—If they knew what
 he was doing. Thinking. And Margaret wife, what
 would she ? She might understand,
 with cool disdain. Aloof, lovely pale lady of
 great halls.

Her breasts.At Salzburg for Don Giovanni
 in the felsenreitschule, of white like quick
 blossoms, translucent to the blue delicate
 complexity of veins—
 and dark pink nipples glimpsed, the long
 necklace of pearls with the emerald carbuncle
 between her full soft breasts.

Flesh, ornament, a loveliness of mad elegance.

A fair contract. No,
 he would not

tell her.

No one.

No one

Crowd, in transit on Church Street, lunch hour
pedestrians, traffic of motor vehicles, the Hudson
Tubes, himself the human flux

he saw the seething

Center

of World Trade, rocketpack flitestrans
& exiting, multitudinous tiny portals on
all floors, humanity swarming about its
hive towers, buzzing busily, here & there

Absurd. He felt despair, childlike utter help-
lessness, near tears.

He lit a Balkan Sobranie cigarette, and
sighed in, painfully.

Crowd—human beings—numbers—swarming

No One

Margaret.

No

he gave her Predictability, Access & Success
the town house Bar Harbor the
World

;She

Predictability & Cultivated Plea-
sures

the art of elegance, emerald on
pale flesh

Decay

. . . .the manhole to the underworld at
his feet
sulphurous gasses steaming

he knew

the infinite void under the glittering

surfaces & exquisite structures,
 the brilliant design of his life
 and all his works and advocacies:
 individual rights while individuals
 are invalid, penal reform
 while humanity goes to hive,
 Margaret?

Why did he love her?

No need for Truthsaying.

The Truth.

Perhaps she knew

Ennui Abyss

Art of emeralds and breasts.

A fair contract.

Hamilton went West on Liberty Street

no crowd

the old Engineering Building

DURABLA

twin sculpted symbols

the globe girdled by starstudded
 steel

DURA BLA

no

bliterated Open

north side Liberty

razed O

Site. World Trade

a girder UP

NO

crowd/

I can see you're a man who don't like crowds.
 voice. elevator man young black Subway St. George
 in Brooklyn. Man Hamilton had entered empty
 car, shunned one still loading in people. Operator
 spoke, surprise, closed doors immediately. UP

"I don't like them either," he told Hamilton.

"It must drive you crazy, all those people
 packing into here all the time."

"It does."

UP

derrick
tendrilled
cables

the ascension of a girder

guy ropes
. the riggers.

Ascension some new birth
from Bethlehem steel what birth
of steel the birth of

Non

Life beyond life

DURABLA

*Business is our most important
product*

ABstracts. Non Life

abstracted from Life : ONGO

abstract life Non Life growing

*Systems are our most important
products*

abstractions things tools government industries
institutions
organizations works of worldnon

the dynamics Non accreting
by units

NON
life beyond life

by units dynamic accreting

god

the girder

Hamilton

the man crossed Liberty to stand
under the girder

with the riggers:
a man

=====

=====

Under the girder the man (small spasm at his lower spine) watched the casual riggers guiding, as passersby glanced danger-thrilled overhead, hurried on. He stayed, in stolid awe

== the riggers & their easy motions, the girder midway, swaying, ascent momentarily stopped.

Godlike works -----a foreman's wave uP

godlike sweatblotched blue denim shirts

profane

casually
construction
causeways conduits condominiums
computers
our children

smiling doombuilders

beehive tombs

beemen

behave behive

BEEMAN

Be Man

our units to the stars

what is all this?
man thought
what is all this to the stars

MILLIE MAE WICKLUND—

The most complete single piece on Wicklund that I know of is my "Journey Into Millie Mae's Dimension" that appeared in NEWSART/THE NEW YORK SMITH, No. 9, August, 1982, p. 45. Here's how that piece ends:

You feel she's permanently on the edge, permanently the loner, desert saint, that she'll never feel at ease enough in the world to grandstand it . . . she'll never have enough overflow of equilibrium, ego-satiation, really mad hunger for adulation, to ever, ever, ever become one of the Polished Effete Performers . . . for MMW it's permanently UP AGAINST THE WALL and the poetry a constant process of distancing.

The basic fact of Wicklund's existence is her schizophrenia which disenables her from working, but doesn't prevent her from writing. She sees herself as a Lesbian and over the years has experienced a kind of obsessive attachment to various women, among them Marisol (Venezuelan 1960's pop-artist) and, more recently, Joan Baez. The one-horned goat at the end of "The History of My Parachute, Yet Another Myth," is not a reference to Satan, as one might have thought, but—she told me in a recent letter—a reference to Joan Baez's one-horned goat.

I met Wicklund once some 10 years ago, took a bus down to Providence and stayed with Harry Smith's daughter in her dorm room at Brown, then the next day took another bus down to Cranston, Rhode Island with Lisa (Smith's daughter) and interviewed Wicklund. That was when Lisa did the drawing for the cover of GHOST DANCE, Wicklund's THE MARISOL POEMS (II).

In a recent letter to me she said the best way to understand her parachute poems was to read the introduction to GHOST DANCE 39, THE PARACHUTIST AND HER ONE WORK OF ART (1983). Perhaps the key in that introduction is her self-identification as a paranoid-schizophrenic and the slightly off-center vision that gives her of the world:

. . . one must understand above all that the parachutist sees gestures, a dropped eyelid, a raised hand, a pursed lip, a smile, a hovering sadness in an eye, a muscle pull, a foot turned coyly in, yes, but the parachutist because she is a poet and a paranoic, as Bentley . . . says, "finds connection where the logical mind would not."

In another even more recent (June 4, 1991) letter Wick-

und goes on to expand on her self-interpretation of the meaning of the parachute even more:

The parachute is as much costume as emblem and badge. In the 60's costume was everywhere among the groups of people who rebelled against the establishment and the Vietnam war. So there's that. Norman Mailer's *ARMIES OF THE NIGHT*. Also the parachute is a badge of suffering and denial and a way to never fall in life. It doesn't always work to protect the parachutist because as he finds out, a character flaw exists in him, as well as everyone else. The character flaw of the 60's was peace breaking down into violence and all the little bad guys around the peaceniks rushing in to feed off them and do them harm. So you might say the character flaw was too much trust, not simply trusting anyone over thirty. There's the music of the 60's also: folk songs and rock and roll ala the Beatles when they arrived. The scene was trashing the establishment and Mama and Papa. The music was space remade again and life set off kilter with humor and debate. The whole folk troubador thing infiltrated into the campus and found itself in the Poetry Workshops, and Dylan and others were the leaders of innovation and morality and identification. The parachute is an identity badge and makes the hero of this little book of parachutes known faster and longer and in higher places more quickly and more durably.

Then, after this excursion into her work as a reflection of the Mind of the 60's, Wicklund returns to her own personal, paranoid-schizophrenic agonies, which I believe are the primary sources of her inspiration, the cultural scene merely a backdrop:

About the mental health thing: it's a terrible thing to be a paranoid schizophrenic. With its deja vu and voices and lights it's slightly embarrassing and more so life in death. There's little reality with all that and the paranoia is a challenge to make reality out of it. I've been ill since 1966 and it is just as hard now to live with as when it began. It does make you highly creative and where Van Gogh's been I've been in my mind. I know his cry to have his ideas used and the laughter of the village. Sometimes I think I'm a seer and given to prophecy and other times it's like you have the baddest enemy inside you trying to destroy you (me).

Life speeds up and gets more detailed and more open-ended when you're in schizophrenia. I find myself fighting a parochial world all the time. I've seen highly intellectual people become parochial and you might say it's conservatism but it's worse, it's

parochial barriers and limits and they try to hem you into what they are, society. Most people live their neighborhood limits and think they're worldly wise, but they're not.

Perhaps those last few sentences are the most telling of all, establishing, as they do, a dichotomy between ME and THEM.

Ghost Dance has published five of Wicklund's books: THE MARISOL POEMS (GHOST DANCE 35), THE PARACHUTIST AND HER OWN WORK OF ART (GHOST DANCE 39), PARACHUTE II (GHOST DANCE 42), MOVING PAPER (GHOST DANCE 49), and WALL (POEMS) OR VISIONS (GHOST DANCE 56).

Another very impressive book of hers is LAST TRAIN TO DECIBEL C (published by Mudborn Press in 1977).

—from *PARACHUTE TWO, GHOST DANCE* 42, 1986

The History of My Parachute, Yet Another Myth

For Joan Baez and her mother

For the interview
I am very poor.
My coat is frayed,
frayed sleeves, pockets,
a button missing.
I can't match it.

Take your coat off, she says.
Everybody in Boston says that
in a job interview. They want to
look at your clothes. \$25 dress,
hung five years on my body,
round-toed shoes,
heels too high, I think.
She thinks not really right.
I try to show the richness of
my mind. She concentrates on
the poverty in my clothes.
The interview goes fast;
15 minutes. Then she's
helping me on with my coat.
I feel embarrassed, sick.
Smiling all the while, she
rushes me back to the abyss.
Outside the wind
picks the tears in my eyes
I have hid. A pigeon shits
on my hand. I feel terrible.
Boston hates me.
I'm lost.

I go to The Waldorf Cafeteria
where all the bums hang out.
I take a seat. The old men
are pitched into themselves.
But my brain hollers.
I'm here. We're all alike.
Love me. Nothing.
Their coffee is the activity
of the day. Their eyes are
burnt-out cities, their hands,
dead America.

The waiter curses me.
I have torn his menu
into little shreds.
Nervous. He tells me
I'll have to pay for it.
I tell him I have
only a dime for coffee
and a bus ticket.

He threatens to call the police.
I run. I'm on the run.
I'm a fugitive.
Boston sky closes in on
me, a net.

I reach the bus depot.
The bus is there but it is early.
I get on, wait for something to happen.
I'm always waiting for something to happen.
It does.

A woman in torn dungarees,
frayed coat, run-down shoes
gets on. I love her.
All the while she moves
from the back of the bus
to the front to the sidewalk.
Talking. I got to do the chores.
I'm going to see my sister in Providence.

I was in the Boston State Hospital.
My husband came and took me out.
He says I should fall on the ground
at his feet. If I go back again,
I'll never get out. I have no money
to get back from Providence. I've got to
help with the chores. I've got to see
my sister. Over and over again. People
stare, say nothing.

Her voice questions, I
should go home. I have
no money to get back.
What do you think?
No one answers. She is crazy.
They have stamped her.
Stamp me: I still love her.
Everyone's poor in some way.

I get home, go to the airport.
To buy a parachute. I have told
myself it is my only hope.
The man at the airport is
excited about the sale—
What kind of plane do I have?
A Lear jet, I answer.
Where do you keep it?
Sometimes at Kennedy,
sometimes O'Hare—
he isn't satisfied,
but gets the parachute.
I strap it on. Everything
is wonderful. The sky
is my plane. I walk out.
He is looking at me but
the parachute is in his eyes,
not my poverty.

At home my mother asks
about the parachute. I am vague,
unused to my companion.

She doesn't press me. After a week
she does—why, what is it for?
I tell her I can bail out
of any situation I want to.
She has read Freud, nods.
We live happily ever after.

Wherever I go, I am noticed.
My parachute is the talk of the town
People come to the door,
call me up on the phone.
They ask me why the parachute?
I answer nothing, knowing it is
my endgame. I tell them only I am
a poet. They accept me, pat my
parachute, don't ask me to read
my poems. I have a parachute,
ragged clothes.

There are more parties.
I am introduced. This is
Millie Mae and that
is her
parachute. She's a poet.
Everyone pats my parachute.
No one asks me to read my poetry.
I am unhappy, my parachute is
happy. We're compatible.

I come dressed to the parties
always the same way—torn dungarees,
torn loafers, unpressed blouse,
and my parachute. They always pat
my parachute, try to get close to it,
love me. What a hellava compatibility,
I say, I should make my name bigger,
my fame more. I'll go to Iowa. All the
good poets go there. Come from there.
Snodgrass did. Who else? Doesn't matter.

I come to Iowa.
In a week I am famous.
I have three parachute flights
and two proposals. I deliver a 3 day
question and answer session in the Union.
A Hippie wants to trade his Arrapho blanket
for my parachute. I refuse.
He gets angry, freaks out three
times on three bad trips. He finds me.
Tells me he will hunt me down.
That it is America's last war.
I say no, knowing he is only
half right. But I walk my days
night in my eyes. He can't find
my nightmare. I am safe for a while.

The telephone rings in my room
twenty four hours a day.
People want to talk to my parachute.
I set up a Parachute Aid Bureau.
The hours are from 6-10 PM.

One night at 6:13, a guy
named Horace calls up.
Wants to speak to my parachute.
I let him. He talks to it
for two hours in Latin.
When he stops, I ask him
how he feels. He says better.
Wants to know if he can call
every night. I say wait, I'll
ask my parachute. My parachute
says yes. Tells me he is a fag
hung up on the President of the
University, wants to commit
suicide. I tell him not every night.
He becomes desperate,
wants to buy my parachute.
Offers me a Rolls Royce.
I refuse. Offers me a 100
shares in AT & T. I refuse.
He tells me he is a millionaire's

son from Forest Hills, New York,
tells me anything I want
I can have. I say nothing.
I have my parachute. He
becomes angry, says he will
hunt me down. I know it is
the last war now. I walk less
now, walk my ocean. My eyes are
two fires. You'll see a billowing
and in it tension. I am that.
But the San Francisco goat will save
me. That is the Vatican of the Brave-
Swift-Impetuous politician. The goat
knows the mouth of the yellow river,
the time of the black sun, and the suck
of The White House toilet. I am relieved.
My parachute is relieved. We begin to say
beautiful political things. The goat on
Carmel's shores hears us, puts his head
with the one horn up into the smog.
It falls far beneath the ocean.
Proteus hears it, smiles, changes
to fire, O, changes to fire.

—from THE PARACHUTIST AND HER ONE WORK OF ART
GHOST DANCE 39, 1983

Saving the Things of This World

We're coming into your room. The parachute wants to go one way, and I want to go another. "Stop trying to seduce her! Stop trying to seduce her!" I say to the parachute. "It is important to be loved by the things that can save you," the parachute says, *longing* to be in that place, where the sun on *just* two of your fingers creates all the things of this world. Seeing the sun there, the parachute imagines it is all kinds of things. It is the wedding ring on your finger, and one of the pieces of jewelry Eveline, Norge's imagined archness, consummated past the point where we are in each other, sleep, or that place where mating with our self, we are whole, or go from approaching to disappearing, another part of the Will destroyed.

We are nothing to each other here at this moment, you see, and I, yes, it is I, who have placed the parachute here, not you.

But the parachute, sometimes being lappet, other times more lapse, and still other times lustre is what it is: these things: depending on my position in the tree's skin. Hearing the parachute *wail* now (and you alone can hear it because of our positions), you turn from our "wry" positions, and allow the parachute to see the stag in God's eternity (the castrated bull, that is) disappearing.

Now the sun lights up your whole hand, and, as an echo, the parachute becomes epigamic, and flashes up your arm, where no eye can see any wrongdoing. That is, every eye in the room is upon the three of us now. But there, where these *least* movements are enacted, a win (doppleganger)

can be found, and the parachute, aware of this, comes away from this already *overspent* folly, and trapeses past its other guises: a thermometer, a ruler, a measuring cup, and floats now in the room as the sound of the sun.

"Toponym," the parachute says, throwing a topophone into the middle of the room, sitting down in the back of the room with me.

Once again, we have made the trauma of madness a celebration of traps. Listen! The ballyhoo! Once again, having put on another new body, an ertogenic wave is in the room. Can *they* stand it?

In a holoblastic archive, I will leave a further clue . . . meanwhile notice the tailor bird.

—from MOVING PAPER, *GHOST DANCE* 49

Child on the Step, or The Famous Typewriter

Industrialized Pittsburgh on its hills.
The necessary rivers cutting it into pie in the sky.
The endless rusted track running to it, through it,
away from it, huge, heat-pulsating steel mills.
That Illinois woods and the two hunters and their dog
walking into it at first light. The suburban tract
of ranch houses next to the Ohio Turnpike, alluminated
light. Valerie hurrying, running to the bus station,
to catch me before I left Iowa City, running out,
away, the female professor's unattainable love too much
to take. Valerie asking me with tears in her eyes
what I was going to do now. Become a great poet,
I answered, but all my poems are minor lyrics.
Satire, self target. This poetry heals nothing,
no one. I interpret nothing, nothing, nothing!
Nothing of hers! Nothing of hers!
I rip the page out!

APPENDIX

Hugh Fox

Shin Ku Myo U—From True Emptiness The Wondrous Being
Appears

The Final Chapter of DADESTHETICS,
to be published by Asylum Arts Books
in 1994.

SHIN KU MYO U—FROM TRUE EMPTINESS THE WONDROUS BEING
APPEARS.

Predictably George Hartley in his *TEXTUAL POLITICS AND THE LANGUAGE POETS* (Indiana University Press, 1989), when trying to explain the roots of the L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Poets, dips directly back into the experimental whirlpool of the early twentieth century: The Russian Futurists, Gertrude Stein, William Carlos Williams, Hugo Ball/Duchamp/Breton, and moving into more recent territory, Zukofsky and Objectivism and Olson and Projective Verse, ends up with John Ashbery, most specifically his *THE TENNIS COURT OATH*, which is the Bhagavabad Gita, Torah and Koran of "The Languagists."

In Hartley's whole treatment of these influences on The Language poets, though, there is one little paragraph about the Russian Futurists that especially stands out, as if it were printed in red and was surrounded by a ring of fire:

Khlebnikov and Kruchonykh reduced their poetic focus even further however, to a poetry of neologistic syllables called *zaum* or transrational poetry. The following poem by Kruchonykh is probably the most famous of the Futurist *zaum* poems, made up entirely of nonsense (or, as Kruchonykh preferred, *transsense*) syllables:

dyr	bul	shchyl
	ubeschur	
	skum	
vy	so	bu
r	l	ez

(p. 10)

Hartley hesitates to draw a direct line of "influence" between Khlebnikov and Kruchonykh and, say, Bruce Andrews, but the line, nevertheless, is there:

as thin

nairgy	more	dyble
	toured	
	exhausted	

hemical	eaved for
	's n's

the
rtion duct

lant
 yieldis tuents
 slowed
 ties an
 ("Solar," from OTHER KINDS OF SCORES,
 AN ANTHOLOGY OF POETRY FROM GHOST
 DANCE)

If you go through Andrews' essay "Lines Linear How to Mean" (in *THE LINE IN POSTMODERN POETRY*, ed. R. Frank and H. Sayre, Urbana-Chicago: The University of Illinois Press, 1988) and abstract-out the basic "meaning kernels" you can get some idea of what Andrews and the other Language Poets are all about:

. . . constant crease & flux, a radical discontinuity as
 lack . . . a dynamic in fragments . . . no coordinates . . . a
 luxuriant anarchy . . . lines everywhere, as patches or
 spatial orchestration . . . to erase boundaries . . .

(pp. 177-178)

Andrews is *not* talking about concrete poetry in the sense of using words as graphic adornment (see Dick Higgins' *PATTERN POETRY: GUIDE TO AN UNKNOWN LITERATURE*, Albany: The State University of New York Press, 1987, and *ANTHOLOGY OF CONCRETE POETRY*, ed. by Emmett Williams, New York-Villefranche-Frankfurt: Something Else Press, 1967) but, instead, as Anti-Sense (in Russian Futurist terms, transrational/transsense), even going so far as to portray anti-sense as an act of political anarchy, identifying language-SENSE with social-SENSE as repressive structure:

Laying bare the device remains as a task but it becomes a more social act, of social unbalancing, of a social reflexivity of content, rather than some kind of (what I have called in the past) preppie formalism. Because the modernism that's at stake now is more public and more involved with the conditions of meaning, it also becomes more social. So that if people are arguing (as some of the post-structuralists seem to) that social meaning has disappeared, then just trying to disrupt the system with some radical formalism isn't going to be enough. Instead, if something's going to be disruptive, or disrupted, it's going to have to be **method**, seen in a more social sense—as the social organization of signs, as ideology, as discourse, those are the more broadly social things that need to be shaken up: historicized, politicized, contextualized, totalized—by laying bare the social devices, or the social rules which are at work.

(Hartley, p. 40, from "Total Equals What: Poetics and Praxis," originally published in *POETICS JOURNAL* 6 [1986].)

In the early 70's Andrews was still talking about floating non-sense syllables in terms of "fields," relating word-elements in almost concrete-terms, but more recently he seems to have become politicized in his experiments, perhaps, in fact, returning to the *original* idea of the Russian Futurists, to use language as political anarchy in the face of Communist regimentation. (See OTHER KINDS OF SCORES, Introduction to Andrews' work, pp. 18-19.) Which seems (doesn't it?) an exercise in futility, writing in the U.S. in a post-Communist-world-context.

In Huelsenbeck's EN AVANT DADA: A HISTORY OF DADA (1920) (in Herschel Chipp's THEORIES OF MODERN ART, Berkeley and Los Angeles: U. of California Press, 1968) he talks about the development of "Bruitism" or "Noise Music" as an offshoot of the Dada Mystique, and in describing Bruitism gives us an interesting insight into the nature of Dadesthetiques which can be helpful in evaluating Andrews and the other L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Poets. "Le bruit" (noise) was introduced into "music"/"anti-music," "as nothing more than a rather violent reminder of the colorfulness of life. In contrast to the cubists or for that matter the German Expressionists, the futurists regarded themselves as pure activist . . . Bruitism is a kind of return to nature. It is the music produced by circuits of atoms; death ceases to be an escape of the soul from earthly misery and becomes a vomiting, screaming and choking" (pp. 378-9). The point being that even Bruitism is an expression of "something," not a reification of dead-ends, brick-walls, dark closets.

When L. Cridisque (L. Bohannon-Bellamy) lists among her "influences" visual artists such as the Catalan abstract expressionist Antoni Tápies, she is revealing a legitimate surrender to words/symbols as visual surface/"field"-art and (the page as "texture"/"collage"), in the true spirit of the surrealists for whom surrealism was not non-communication but the opening up of the doors to the inner primitive "esprit" within us all,* she is becoming a kind of primitive "shaman"/"witchdoctor," returning to root-sources in the human spirit in order to express much *more* in the way of feelings and ideas, instead of (like Andrews) expressing LESS . . . or even NOTHING.

* See Herbert S. Gershman, THE SURREALIST REVOLUTION IN FRANCE, Ann Arbor: U. of Michigan Press, 1974, p. 36: "Surrealism's goal, to paraphrase Breton, is to let the Unconscious express itself, free as far as possible of the normalizing restraints of the Censor."

In describing herself, Cridisque often reverts to the French word "bricoler," which is an almost untranslatable word meaning an improvisatory "handyman" that has strong overtones of magic/intuition/artistic clairvoyance about it.

Like "Bruitism," Cridisque wants to plug into the instinctive levels of the human psyche. But again with the purpose of enhanced communication rather than no communication at all. In a letter to me dating from 1976, Cridisque wrote:

I am still working with word energy, but not so much in the atomistic sense as the entire energy-field-page with attempts (as far as content is concerned) to allude to wider expansions. Much as an ideogram contains reverberative, potent combinations and sends you further, not necessarily through logic.

I want to create form equivalent to the sur-logical content cracked open with the Surrealists.

It might be that Levi-Strauss has jumped ahead of the poets. (The scientists are robbing the hive.) We are capable of handling more varied information than our current use of language allows. It is up to the poets, if they are to remain the "antennae of the race" (POUND), to yield a new language. Potent, dynamic, capable of bridging the evolutionary tension we are only beginning to face.

(OTHER KINDS OF SCORES, p. 82)

Which I find particularly interesting because of her reference to the revolutionary leadership position she gives the French anthropologist Levi-Strauss, who is primarily interested in primitive (Amerindian) MYTH. In a sense Levi-Strauss has spent his entire life in a bathysphere exploring the depths of the collective unconscious, examining tribal variations in common myths, i.e. seeing how various peoples confront the same primal realities.

Cridisque, by going into the collective PAST, is going into the collective FUTURE, but it is a "going," not an impasse, as is the case with Andrews.

In her 1977 Ghost Dance volume VIDEOS (which I consider one of the key books in U.S. contemporary poetry in the last half of the 20th century (Cridisque as our Mallarmé/Rimbaud), she gives her own ideas on the field-theory of the page, which is exactly the opposite of Andrews:

field notes foot-tracing it
a-round it:

the *particular* consciousness-interstice
of this being

let me beg-in in this way: du champ means
of the field

seges = a sowed field

pratium = a meadow [le pre] grassy yellow-gold

flor = floor

an area or division of activity starz furs
freize field or
a space on which something is drawn
or projected or a complex
of forces that serve as causative agents

a

a set of mathematical elements that is subject
to two

binary operations the second of which is dis-
tributive

relative to the first & both of which yield an ele-
ment

and that constitutes a commutative group
under the first

operation and also under the second if the zero
or unit element under the first is omitted.

b

a region of space in which a given effect
[as MAGNETISM] exists.

Remember the lack of Chinese intransitive &
our constant usage of

Remember Fenolossa's *red*, rust, magenta,
flamingo, cherry—The concrete, sensual,
ravishing held before you not as signe

but as concrete sensual ravishing real play

HIEROGLYPHIC EROTICISM

EXQUISITE TANGENTS OF MIND & FLESH

(OTHER KINDS OF SCORES, p. 86)

Cridisque is a conductor, a practitioner of innuendo and
connection. With her the page is an opening back into primal
caves and forests.

Andrews is an insulator, a specialist in lead coffins that
bury language in a linguistic landfill:

concomic idea tr'n

basil lding sen

vew

prescr lor / sually
fort force pose

gious

strat

fica

tie

re-in

us of the for the

colon

("Icelander's Czar," OTHER KINDS OF
SCORES, p. 25)

One of the most interesting of the Dada- and Surrealism-derived poets today, Richard Morris, creates a poetry that floats in the realm of the absurd totally divorced from contemporary (in fact any sort of temporal/historical) connection. It's the poetry of a cool, almost frozen, Magritte landscape:

A MAN and a WOMAN are sitting in a car. An enormous bologna is blocking the street in front of them. Cars are lined up for blocks behind them.

WOMAN: I told you not to come this way.

MAN: How was I supposed to know there'd be this big liverwurst blocking the street?

WOMAN: It isn't liverwurst. It's bologna.

MAN: Alright. Bologna.

(OTHER KINDS OF SCORES, p. 161)

Sometimes Morris' poetry *does* erupt out of an absurd unconsciousness, as in his classic "Reno, Nevada":

In Reno, Nevada the old ladies play slot machines and never stop.

Reno, Nevada has an efficient police force, an annual rodeo, and an active Chamber of Commerce.

Reno, Nevada was named after a Paiute
Indian chief called Reno, Nevada.
General U.S. Grant wanted to be buried
in Reno, Nevada.

Guiseppe Verdi wrote an opera called
"Reno, Nevada."

When Jesus Christ was nailed to the cross,
he cried out, "Reno, Nevada!"

Sometimes I awake suddenly from strange
dreams: like some huge beast, Reno,
Nevada is crawling toward me across
the desert.

(In THE LIVING UNDERGROUND: AN
ANTHOLOGY OF CONTEMPORARY AMERI-
CAN POETRY, ed. Hugh Fox, Troy, New York:
Whitston Publishing Co., 1973, p. 299.)

And this world-view is a genuine expression of a larger
vision that Morris has expressed in a shelf of sci fact books
(LIGHT, 1979, THE FATE OF THE UNIVERSE, 1982, DISMAN-
TLING THE UNIVERSE, 1983, TIME'S ARROWS, 1985, THE
EDGES OF SCIENCE, 1990, THE NATURE OF REALITY, 1990)
that see the Universe as a meaningless, automatic, purposeless,
entropic farce. But still words are *conductors* into The Absurd,
not anti-communication *barriers*.

You can't really ask Guy Beining what he's doing in *his*
latest book, WIND OWL/WIND HOWL/HAIKU-VU (Ghost
Dance, 1992) because he doesn't (consciously) KNOW. He ac-
knowledges a general homage to Duchamp, and may even go
into some referencing back to Duchamp's work/methods, but
when all is said and done, he always reverts back to statements
like "all of this is noto contrived but rather subconscious"
(OTHER KINDS OF SCORES, p. 34).

Beining, in fact, sounds like Mr. Dada fulltime, even in
interviews, although *this* interview, which appeared in AF-
TERTHEEND 8 (Ed. Greg Evason, Guelph, Ontario, July 3, 1990,
pp. 3-4), was conducted through the mail:

Greg Evason: Do you believe in taking advantage?

Guy R. Beining: There is no advantage to be taken when
you are a part of art, i.e. not being a stationary sleeve of
society. There is nothing like burning your own path,
being blind to the monetary wheel.

GE: Is the real a cultivatable skill through which one
can come close or at least closer to blue?

GRB: Walking thru geranium path as if thru freeze dry realism, seeing rather a shoe of green from lawn falling into a hole from blue sky, and tracking that as a child now more than fully grown. The blue of it has become the bottom of the creative tank.

GE: Is it your turn to throw the dice, or what?

GRB: I've taken the turn and returned the turn, finding it a symbol of circumference, not being steady as to chance via Dada. I'd rather roll the dictionary.

Take Number 11 of WIND OWL/WIND HOWL/ HAIKU

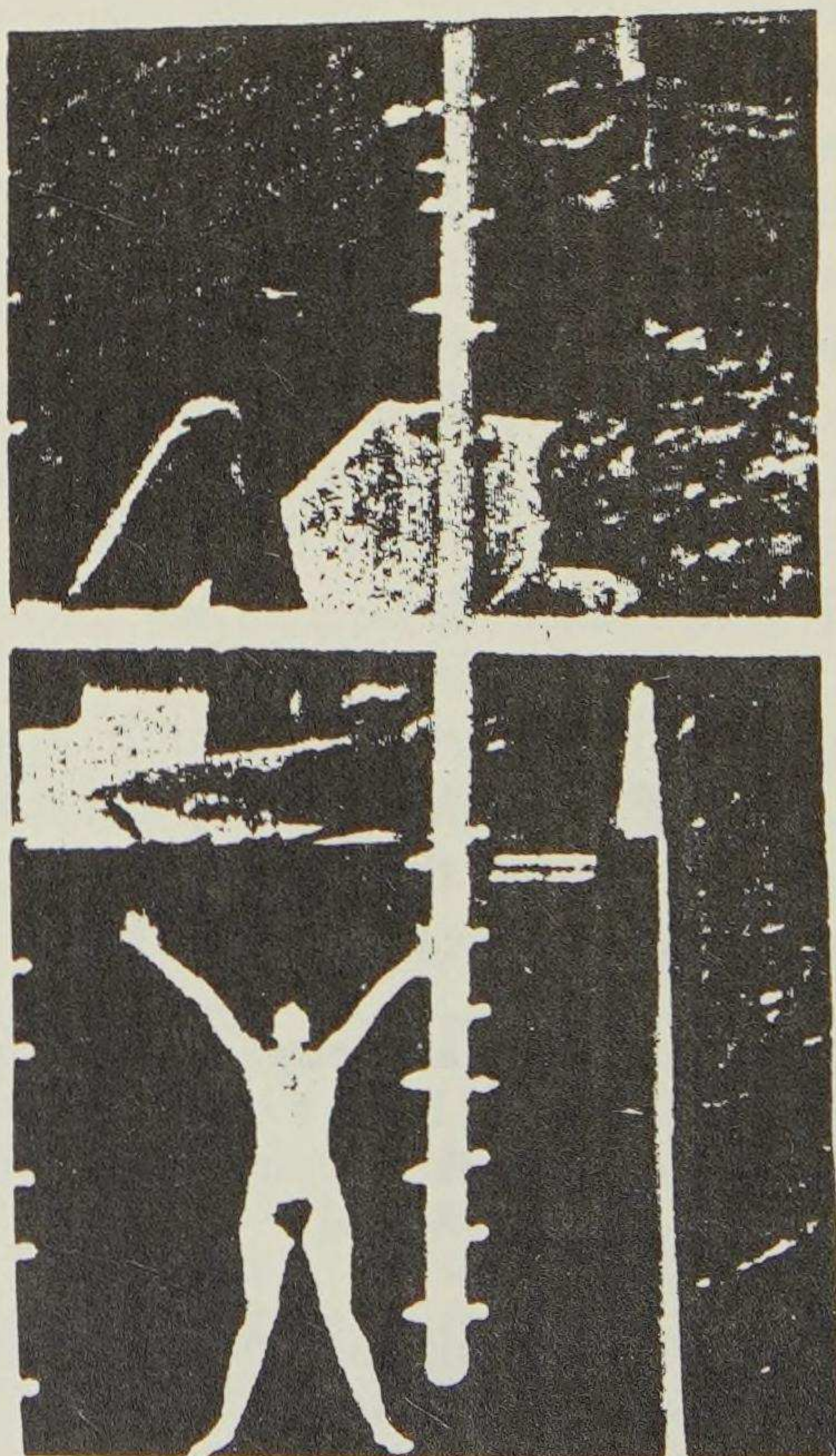
VU:

haiku-vu 11.

in X of her label

& essence of 3 part trauma

is the mirrored eye in bleeding window.



Beining consciously puns on the idea of the life of the typical modern woman as a "3 part trauma" instead of 3 part drama—and a soap opera life at that. The "shape" of the woman, of course, is a big X, this time a visual pun. But what are we to make of "mirrored eye = what she wants to see without viewing the real blod within the materialistic window space, so inward as to just see the reflection which is the problem of our great society"?

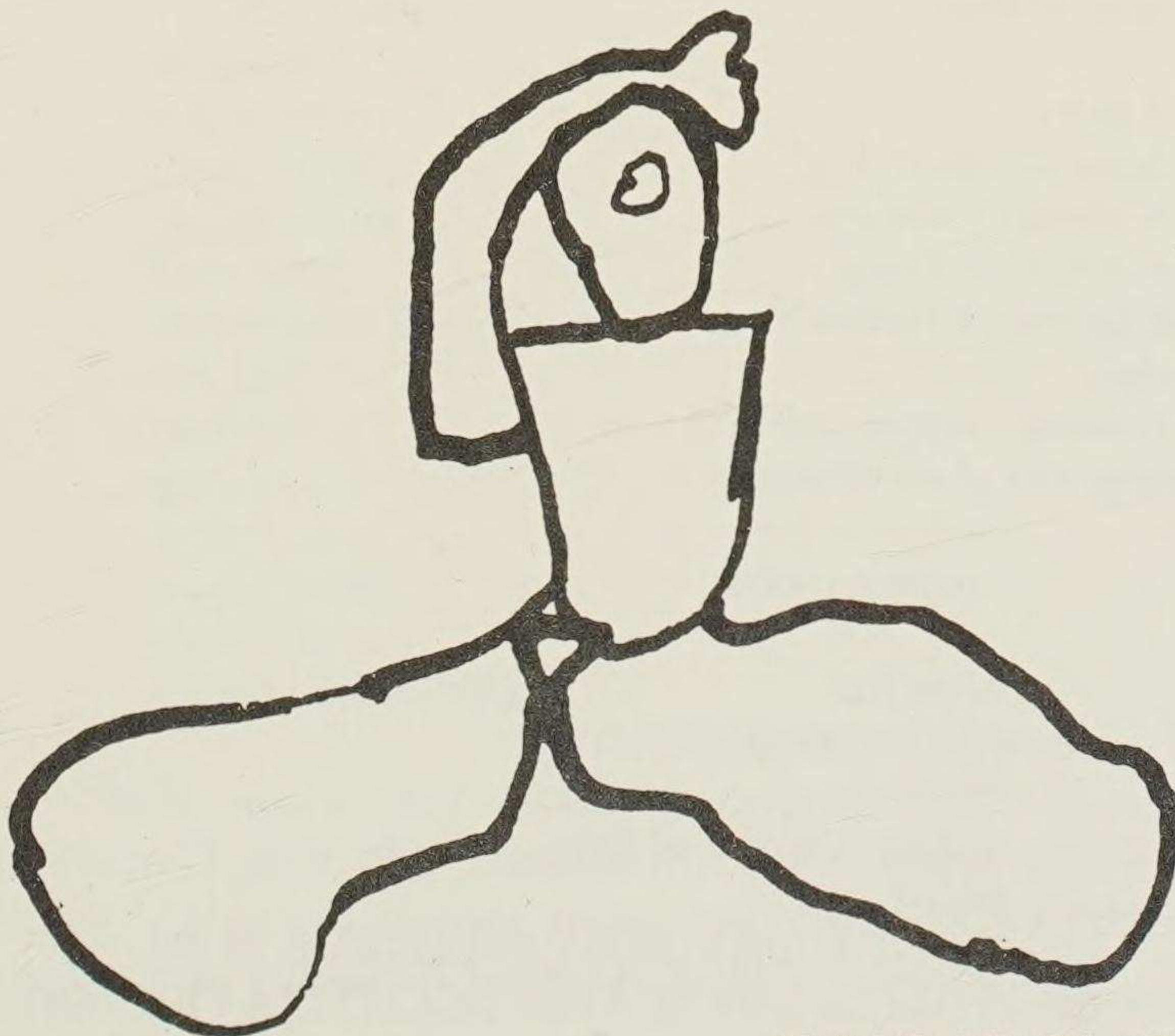
The most effective way of approaching WIND OWL/WIND HOWL/HAIKU VU is by way of the same techniques Beining used in its composition, a deep dive into the automatic, associational, surreal layers of the mind. Take Number 19, for example:

haiku-vu 19.

thru vines, a murky

marble-lipped torso of HERMES

oozes up to triangular fur line.



(OTHER KINDS OF SCORES, p. 52)

At first the poem may seem impenetrable, but once you begin to free-associate you might come up with:

"Hermes is the greek equivalent of Siva as sexual/god symbol. The Siva *lingam* and *herm* are both phallic/fertility symbols. In some early Greek vase representation of Hermes, instead of having winged feet he has vine-leaves sprouting out of his feet. Theologically he approaches Dionysius (I'm thinking of the vine-associations in Pound's first CANTO). The triangular fur line is the pubic triangle. The torso of Hermes in the poem seems to be fallen (I think of Debussy's BILITIS songs, the death of Pan), but his *power* is still effective. I think of Rilke's SONNETS TO ORPHEUS, Stravinsky's PERSEPHONE/APOLLON MUSAGETE . . . the power of the Greek gods is not (unlike the BILITIS songs) dead. I fail to see any phallic significance in the drawing, unless the potato-looking legs of the main figure aren't legs but testicles."

So, unlike the opacity of, say, a Andrews, here Bretonesque free-associating (either in the *production* OR *interpretation* of the poems/drawing) comes up full of multiple meanings.

Beining has long immersed himself in anthropology-archaeology. Witness his WAITING FOR THE SOOTHSAYER (Ghost Dance, 1982), which deals with pre-Columbian astronomy/astrology:

in nazca valley
in
lip of peru
all those delineations
1.5 thousand years ago
geometrical etchings
huge figures of turtles-birds
whales,
the goddess orejona tasted it
holding star glare to desert.

notes on notes

b.
each hat
a lair to keep
leaves in
to keep the rim of light
polite.

(OTHER KINDS OF SCORES, p. 37-38)

In notes on WAITING FOR THE SOOTHSAYER, Beining, in fact, links himself directly to the poet as **mago**/shaman:

WAITING FOR THE SOOTHSAYER. 1. Spells out exact location of poet-dreamer as he/she waits for inspiration . . . WAITING FOR THE SOOTHSAYER is a poet's stance of WAITING FOR GODO. Since Plato kicked the poet out of the fold he/she has been blind of his/her position or power only in myth can you cover everything. A magic that consoles and that we have lost due to materialism.

(OTHER KINDS OF SCORES, p. 35)

Speaking with the "gods" becomes speaking with the subconscious—which isn't all that far from Ashbery, except that Ashbery's "speaking" seldom progresses from the personal to the mythic level.

Even a poet like Lifshin is operationally strongly indebted to Dada-Surrealism. The mind becomes pure "associationism"/"stream of consciousness." (It is no coincidence that Gertrude Stein as a Harvard medical student came under the influence of the "inventor" of stream-of-consciousness, William James.) Rimbaud and Lautréamont are "free-associationists," even if, unlike Lifshin, they are pure bookworms.

THE BLUE ROOM INVENTIONS, for example, at first seem to be simple narrative:

snow i've just
 moved into a
 new place
 ice on the stairs
 i'm in a hurry
 but i don't
 know why
 tired, dirty the
 white drifts
 in waves
 furniture in the
 car still i
 ought to
 get out and
 get it i
 ought to feel
 glad to be
 starting something.

(OTHER KINDS OF SCORES, p. 123)

Then a moon-evocation occurs ("Seven moons in the slick snow") and the confession: "someone else's voice in the building//a poem comes from my/own dark//then you start it all again//on paper" (OKOS, p. 123).

A poem comes from MY OWN DARK . . . and then serves the purpose of personal magic/ritual evocation:

will what's left of
you in this
poem
 haunt me
it's the only place
i can use you

(OTHER KINDS OF SCORES, p. 125)

The key word here is "haunt."

Contemporary U.S. poetry can be roughly divided into two major categories: The Haunted and the Already-Exorcized. The Already-Exorcized include Todd Moore, Bukowski, The School of Bukowski (and even John M. Bennett whose "surrealism" has as much spontaneity about it as a Ph.D. dissertation on silicon chips), Harry Smith, Stanley Nelson, Wakoski, Eshelman . . . also, unfortunately, The Language Poets and conscious "experimenters" like Cage and Co. (Higgins, MacLow, Kostelanetz, etc.).

Ironically, in condemning a priori "theories" going into the making of avant-garde work, Higgins in a way is condemning himself: "Structural innovation cannot in my opinion derive from *a priori* considerations, oriented toward tradition or novelty. . . ." (foew&ombwhnw, New York, Barton, Cologne: Something Else Press, 1969, p. 149.)

What, indeed, does Higgins himself do except create theory and then proceed to work it out in practice?!?! Is he covering himself when he adds to the above-quoted pronouncement: "[Structural innovation] . . . is absolutely without exception a concomitant of any work that is open to the new rhetoric of a dialectic between structure and meaning and which is at all sensitive to its own needs in its realization."?

Higgins has been known to "compose" poetry with a pair of dice and a dictionary. Roll the dice. First roll gives you the page of the dictionary. Second roll the line on the page. Let Higgins himself explain the dynamics. We're back in the late 1950's, poetry had become increasingly musical, chance-techniques had been used in its creation, Higgins wanted to get away from image-poetry to something more "conceptual," so:

. . . I decided to apply chance and test structures to bodies of ideas in a systematic way.

Chance led me to an Indonesian dictionary, with 202 pages translating English into Bahasa Indonesia. I picked a structure using three dice to work with. But

each die has six sides, so there were 6 X 6 X 6 or 216 possible numbers. I let each throwing reference a page number, and used the first unused word on that page in a subject list. This gave me fourteen pages (up to the 216 pages needed) of Bahasa Indonesia, which explains all the "Antiks" and "Balai-Balais" in the work. As each word was used, it was crossed off. In this way I figured I would slowly use up most of the common words in English and spice up the inevitably Latinate tone of such a body of materials with the Indonesian words. I also decided from the outset, that when a page was used up, I would go on to the next page on which there were still unused words, and that I would go around the end also, say, from page 214 to page 3, assuming that 215-216 and 1-2 were used up.

(Barton, Vermont: Something Else Press, 1972, p. xii.)

So Higgins, totally exorcizing the intuitive from his work, creates a book about love and war and death based on dice and dictionaries. And this total "de-emotionalizing" following the emotional dedication of the book:

for my brother Mark
(1940-1960)
killed in the Congo

The only work of Higgins in which he tosses out his theories and gives himself up to emotion is his brilliant celebration of homosexual love, *OF CELEBRATION OF MORNING* (1980), a mammoth, impressive book that mixes drawings, photos and poetry in what Higgins calls "a polysemiotic fiction."

Contrast this with the most haunted of all contemporary American poets, Steve Richmond, whose work emerges from pure, drug-induced, hallucinatory irrationality.

Richmond is a direct descendent of Lautréamont and his surrealist descendents. Nor is it whimsical on my part to draw this direct line from Lautréamont through Breton to Richmond, because Breton himself, speaking of "influences" and "sources," practically deifies Lautréamont:

"Nothing," says Breton, "not even Rimbaud, had up to that time affected me as much. Even today, I am absolutely incapable of coldly, analytically examining that astonishing message which, to me, seems in every way to surpass man's potential." And he goes on to quote Soupault: "It is not for me, nor for anyone else . . . to judge *M. le Comte*. One does not judge *M. de Lautréamont*. One can only recognize him as he passes and bow down," for Lautréamont, to all intents and purposes, is not of this world.

(Herbert S. Gershman, *THE SURREALIST REVOLUTION IN FRANCE*, Ann Arbor: The U. of Michigan Press, 1974, p. 42.)

It's no wonder that Richmond, when he seeks approval for his work, roaming through the worlds of living and dead literary masters, singles out Lautréamont (and Celine):

no one understands
bukowski does not understand
critics do not understand
lautréamont would surely know
celine would love my work

("Gaku," OTHER KINDS OF SCORES, p. 180)

The "demons" that inhabit Richmond's work find their origin in the "chimeras" of the French Symbolist painters (and poets) of the 1890's. And it was no accident that "for twenty years Breton was the only visitor to the Musée Gustave Moreau," the museum which contains "an immense unfinished canvas entitled *Les Chimères* (The Chimeras)." (Philippe Julian, DREAMS OF DECADENCE: SYMBOLIST PAINTERS OF THE 1890's, New York: Praeger, 1975, p. 16.)

By exploiting the dark side of myth and dream, The Symbolists anticipate Freud, Jung (and Kraft-Ebbing), opening up a province of the mind which would become stock in trade for The Age of Psychoanalysis (and The Collective Unconsciousness).

There is a basic "functional sameness" between Richmond and other contemporary poets who plug into the "automatic mind" and allow it to do the writing for them. The hallucinatory demons in Richmond's work ("let the demons have their day/wave their brass or gold/shining cymbals," "Gagaku," OKOS p. 179) in a sense are cousins to Morris' Tinker Bell* and Lifshin's "Momento Mori" in REMEMBER THE LADIES:

huge grave plaques

faces like medieval
suns and moons in
a circle

in memory of
thomas k park
and 13 infants

*"TINKER BELL staggers out of a bar, drunk. She weaves her way down the street. A CAT begins to follow her. Suddenly the CAT pounces and carries TINKER BELL off in its jaws" (OKOS, 166).

clarissa champion
 october 22 1801
 16 years 9 months
 22 days
 done in a wreath
 of ivory hair
 gold and glass

for 4 year old ellen
 a gold and black
 death ring
 "our darling Babe
 to Heaven has flown
 and left us
 in a world of pain"

(OTHER KINDS OF SCORES, p. 129)

I prefer Richmond's poetry where the demons aren't quite so explicitly contrived, but haunt the wings of his consciousness:

early morning sun just up
 I should get out of here
 with my drum on my back
 go down to the ocean's edge
 watch the pelicans diving
 watch the pelicans dive
 my poem is escaping me
 I haven't allowed myself to actually see
 here in the poems this morning:

no demons
 I don't see any demons
 just a vague shadow moving
 blurred and in a fog
 a dark blackish shadow
 and shadows moving in
 fog blurred nothing clear
 except the outline of
 a broom or brooms each shadow sweeps
 in the fog slow movements of a sweeping
 broom

("Gagaku," OTHERS KINDS OF SCORES,
 p. 177)

The basic common-denominator of all these "expressionists"-under-the-skin is ANTI-"REASON/ANTI-THEORY-/ANTI-RATIONALIZATION.

When Tzara in his 1924 "Lecture on Dada" refers to Dada as "a virgin microbe that penetrates with the insistence of air into all the spaces that reason has not been able to fill with words or conventions" (Chipps, p. 389), in a sense he is raising the ban-

ner for all intuitive, slippery, shadowy schools of art that are the antithesis of 18th century Rationalism.

Ironically The School of Bukowski and the tough-gourmet School of Wakoski stand for Rationalism as much as the obsessive theoreticians of The Language School. Both the Bukowski-Wakoski and Language School camps, flow (or don't flow as in the case of the "Languagists") from the cerebral cortex, whereas the "Irrationalists" come from whole other areas in the human psyche—the reptilian, amphibian, the world of the great primal, mythic SWAMP.

Richmond makes no bones about his drug debts:

I'm hooked on cigarettes
and I like heroin too
grass valium angel dust a bit
coke you name I do it. . . .

I cough a lot
more each day
and I can't quit my habits
not hypnotism not e s t not
anything will break my habits

save death sweet death

("Gagaku," OKOS, p. 178)

The poems themselves become exorcism, just as in the case of Lautréamont. And it is very much to the point when Richmond doffs his literary hat to Lautréamont—*Lautréamont would surely understand what he is all about*. And I'm sure he would.

There is the whole polarization in a nutshell: Lautréamont versus Bukowski . . . and you could just as easily make the dichotomy Lautréamont versus The Language Poets.

The great irony is that by appropriating Stein, W.C. Williams, Russian Futurism, Dada, Surrealism, Objectivism and Olsonian Projectivism, essentially the whole of the twentieth century avant-garde tradition, The Language Poets are mixing oranges and baseballs together with apparent innocence (and ignorance)—even though they have no problem at all allowing Breton to trace back *his* roots to Freud:

"We still live under the reign of logic, but the methods of logic are applied nowadays only to the resolution of problems of secondary interest . . . it is only by what seems pure chance that there has recently been brought to light an aspect of mental life—to my belief by far the most important—with which it was sup-

posed we no longer had any concern. Credit for these discoveries must go to Freud."

(From Breton's "What is Surrealism?," quoted in Harley, p. 14)

The acid-test of Rationalist versus Irrationalist/Intuitionist, though, is on the page itself.

Lifshin's recent READING LIPS is pure Breton:

shells of something are breaking
 What there is what's
 left is powder thin
 could shatter won't
 hold up or

last you can't bite
 down on it it's like a
 tooth of spun sugar
 you want to keep up
 appearances terrified of

black holes in October.
 2 months of dreaming of teeth
 that fall out clot
 in your mouth
 wake you up coughing

gagging on what
 is like a cat that won't
 come in or stay out
 prefers rubbing against
 the door frame

is the mole the
 cat falls asleep
 clutching in its paws
 or inches away on
 the floor it

seems dead then
 like the way you feel
 something twitches
 you see red claw at
 what's escaping

(Milwaukee: Morgan Press, 1991, unnumbered)

Whereas a "Languagist" like Hannah Weiner never manages to move from theory into any sort of practice at all:

so put me with it write
 with it
 under the line

on the books page
final ending us please

my author another subject if you were a great big writer

who would you write continue to write with it the line us
break

and stop
WRITING

writing it in
so period

(from SCORE, in THE LINE IN POSTMODERN
POETRY, p. 189.)

Of course these "results" themselves flow from two radically different views of Man as Man.

It was one of Charles Olson's maxims that Man as such had "gone wrong" as far back as the late Pleistocene.* Man had begun to become de-mythologized. There had been an animistic moment in human history (or pre-history) when the *whole* person was in touch with *whole* nature. It's an idea you find in Jung and (more recently) in Joseph Campbell—the establishment of a continuum between psyche, archetypal myth and The World. There is a metaphorical-functional linkage established between the individual and Nature. The subconscious/trance-states/dream-states are as (or more) valid than anything "waking"/conscious. The whole person relates to whole nature. Nothing truncated, cut off. And in this context we can begin to understand what Cridisque is pointing toward when she speaks of herself as a bricoleur:

As a bricoleur my tools were "what was at hand."
Hieroglyphs, ideograms, fragments: the constructs of
myth, of images as signs. "The creations of myth, like
those of the bricoleur, almost consist of a new arrange-
ment of elements. It would seem that mythological
worlds have been built from the fragments." (Levi-
Strauss). And the Zen precept of shin ku myo u: from
true emptiness the wondrous being appears.

(OTHER KINDS OF SCORES, p. 83)

The improvisatory handyman/maker and repairer of things in unexpected, original ways, the bricoleur, is intuitive

*See my "Charles Olson: The Recovery of Self," WESTERN WORLD REVIEW, Vol. 8, No. 3, Fall, 1973, p. 11. The specific statements of Olson's ideas on this topic are in his PLEISTOCENE MAN (Buffalo, NY, 1968).

and intuition is spontaneity. In fact, if we want to play the Language Poets' equation game, instead of L equalling A equalling N equalling G, etc., how about Intuition = Spontaneity = Sub-Conscious = Automatic/Autonomic [unthought-out] = Surrealistic-Dadaistic = "primal"/primitive = Mythic.

When speaking of the origins of her own techniques, Cridisque quotes Levi-Strauss to the effect that "Art proceeds from a set (object and event) to the discovery of its structure" (OKOS, p. 83), which means exactly the opposite of what it first **seems** to mean. The object here is the page, the event is the writing, the dynamics of the event is the "discovery of the sets' structure." How? Again, through intuition. The Language Poets proceed from exactly the opposite pole, from rule-setting to construction, not "discovery," but "imposition."

The whole purpose of this book has been to update ecstasy/shamanistic creativity.

Levi-Strauss, as Cridisque quotes him in her own attempt at self-definition, speaks of the creation of myths as almost consisting "of a new arrangement of elements."

Early on in this book I said much the same thing about creativity: "Creativity deranges (disarranges), then rearranges reality. Creativity means new reality-patterns, and the creative experience is primary, at hand, at-sense reality breaking through and breaking DOWN boredom." (p. 6)

Avant-garde aesthetics, from the precursors of Surrealism-Dada up to Cridisque, have always flirted with Zen Quietude.

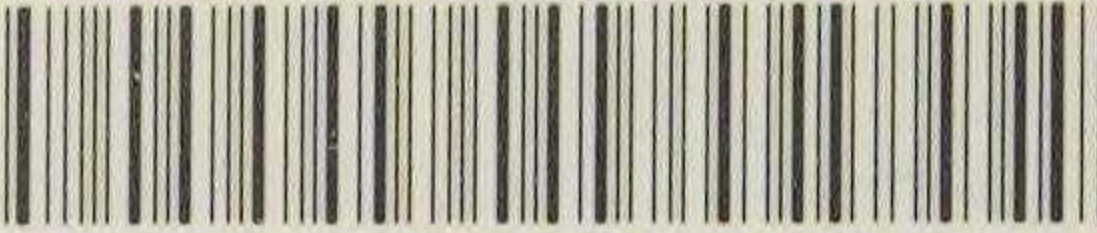
It's no accident that Cridisque, in her statements about herself, returns to Zen principles—FROM TRUE EMPTINESS THE WONDROUS BEING APPEARS. Which immediately triggers in me images of Rilke, whether in Paris or in his DUINO ELEGIES castle, excruciatingly alone, waiting for the appearance of his "terrible angels."

Emptiness here, of course, is conterminous with the activity of the bricoleur, the event of establishing a direct line between Creator and Creation.

Thirty years ago it seemed as if our entire "post-industrial" culture was going to re-primitivize. The key was the intuitive curve—hitched on to the liberating trajectory of the new electronics.

In 1914 Mina Loy wrote "Today is the crisis in consciousness." In 1994 the crisis is still with us.

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