

@poetics

The UB Poetics Discussion Group

Archive of Electronic Correspondence

September 1994

18 messages · Wed 7 Sep 1994 – Wed 28 Sep 1994

An electronic mailing-list archive

University at Buffalo, State University of New York

A reading edition. For each post the author's name, the subject, and the message are foregrounded, and the date is kept but subdued. Machine headers, encoded attachments, and the repeated listserv routing that once framed every message have been cleared away; email addresses, telephone and fax numbers, and similar personal contact details have been redacted.

Editor's Introduction

Kristen M. Fabians

September is a thin month, and I have chosen not to pad it. Eighteen letters — the fewest of any month I have set — arrive across three weeks of early autumn with the air of a room half-emptied for the new term: a reading announced, a video screening, a compact disc advertised from the Ear, and, threaded among them, the last embers of the summer's long argument.

Peter Quartermain rakes those embers with a weary litany — “*priesthoods, anthologies, bookshops*” — as if to concede that the questions of July and August will not be settled by anyone here, and perhaps ought not to be. Michael Boughn supplies the month's mordant flourish, relaying that poets have been “*officially declared 'miserable'*” by some authority or other, a verdict the list receives with its usual blend of umbrage and delight.

It is a caretaker's month, the list keeping its own lights on between larger seasons — and there is a quiet fitness in finding, tucked into one of these notes, a paper newly lodged at the Electronic Poetry Center. Even in its idlest weeks the archive was busy becoming itself. I have gathered the eighteen as carefully as I would have gathered ninety, on the principle that a quiet month, faithfully kept, tells you something the loud ones cannot.

— K. M. F.

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1. **Sandra Braman**

Re: mundanity

Wed 7 Sep 1994

Charles -- Just back from 6 weeks in South Africa that included some of the most extraordinary experiences of my life, wandering around the thornveldt of KwaZulu.... How does one get a copy of your paper "Provisional Institutions: Alternative Presses and Poetic Innovation" mentioned in an August note of yours to the UB Poetics list? Haven't forgotten your suggestion to throw a net entry onto the list, as things settle down here will try to do so thoughtfully.

Sandra Braman

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2. **Loss Glazier**

Re: mundanity

Wed 7 Sep 1994

Sandra,

This paper is available at the Electronic Poetry Center, in the "Library," under Bernstein.

(If you need instructions I'll be glad to send them to you directly.)

Loss Glazier



Charles -- Just back from 6 weeks in South Africa that included some of the most extraordinary experiences of my life, wandering around the thornveldt of KwaZulu....

How does one get a copy of your paper "Provisional Institutions: Alternative Presses and Poetic Innovation" mentioned in an August note of yours to the UB Poetics list?

Haven't forgotten your suggestion to throw a net entry onto the list, as things settle down here will try to do so thoughtfully.

Sandra Braman

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3. **peter quartermain**

Anthologies priesthoods and bookstores (still!)

Sun 11 Sep 1994

I've been off-line for the last six weeks or more, so I'm probably flogging a dead horse. But I've always been a bit

surprised that ANY bookstore would sell to such a specialised taste (passion?) as poetry, especially given the brouhaha with which our institutions (of whatever persuasion, and to one of which I belong) surround it. As Charles Watts told everyone, the only decent (poetry) bookstore in this part of the world, Proprioception Books, has closed its doors (but is still there on-line. The university bookstores in this town are pitiable if not offensive in their determination to sell books (which means that for them the whole point of running a book shop is to move the inventory, at a profit, not keep a book store, book resource, for readers to browse in; the textbook and the T-shirt is all they care about); and the trade bookshops know that poetry is not their bread and butter, so as a rule their offerings (except for more or less conventional Standards [Shakespeare, the Todd Emily Dickinson, Rod McKuen], and the occasional local book stocked on compassionate grounds) are dull, more or less Hallmark Cards.

But (unlike Don Byrd) about 60% of what I spend on books goes on poetry, about 10% on journals and magazines -- this is because the University of British Columbia Library tends to buy the work of dead rather than living poets (which makes life very hard for students; it also makes anthologies, including those so much abused on this e-mail the last month or three, very useful and indeed valuable resources indeed; ANY kind of water is welcome in a desert). I spend less than 10% (more like 3%) on criticism and literary theory (I have a hard time indeed reading either, but the library buys lots [mainstream]). Some of the poetry I buy is from local used-book stores (very good ones), or when I travel; most is mail order. My

favourite of these is Am Here Books, P.O.Box 574, Philo, California 95466, which only sells poetry -- the last catalogue as I recall was about 2500 titles by poets last-name-initial-E; three pages of Theodore Enslin, about the same of Larry Eigner. They're weak on little press stuff that's still in print (go to SBD) but really good on hard to find stuff. Unlike most bookshops, they seem to care more for the living than for the dead. With the American dollar costing about \$1.40 Canadian, they are expensive to anyone north of the 49th; in yankee dollar terms their prices are very good, occasionally astonishingly cheap. They also run catalogues of Little Magazines, one letter of the alphabet at a time. The best British (exclusively poetry) booksellers are Alan Halsey, 22 Broad Street, Hay-on-Wye, Hay-on-Wye, Nr. Hereford; and Peter Riley, 27 Sturton Street, Cambridge CB1 2QG.

As for the whole question of priesthoods, anthologies, bookshops, and markets, I'd only add that I have been told (and I believe it to be true) that Rupert Murdoch, Australian much loved by Margaret Thatcher, owner of and despot over those extremes of the British Press, the (now more-or-less downmarket) London Times and the Sun, has (as proprietor of Paladin Books, a branch of Harper-Collins) ordered that all poetry books published by Paladin be destroyed by which he means burned (and therefore NOT sold off or remaindered) immediately -- these books include The New British Poetry edited by Gillian Allnut, Fred D'Aguiar, Ken Edwards, and Eric Mottram; and the three volumes so far published of the Paladin Re/Active Anthologies (edited by Iain Sinclair): Volume 1 is Future Exiles: 3 London Poets (Allen Fisher, Bill Griffiths, Brian

Catling); Volume 3 is The Tempers of Hazard (Thomas A. Clark, Barry MacSweeney, Chris Torrance) -- I don't know what the second volume is. Really generous selections: 150 pages of Fisher, for instance; 130 of Clark. There's no doubt in my mind that these books could have been enormously influential in shaping possible British poetries, with a real chance of breaking through the moribundity of the Times Literary Supplement and the Schools Examination Boards, Antony Thwaite and James Fenton and their dreadful ilk, but it is clear that the market for girlie pictures in the newspapers is more lucrative, along with gay bashing, paki bashing, and similar cherished English customs.

It's all very depressing (whether what I hear about Murdoch is true or not --can anyone out there confirm or refute?); I draw comfort of a sort from the reflection that the letters of William Cowper in the closing years of the eighteenth century (which I've just been reading) reflect a poetry scene in most particulars scarcely distinguishable from that within which we live, though on a somewhat smaller scale. The sheer enthusiasm of my students for the work of the living, no matter where found, especially for the turbulent and disrespectful (no matter what specie and species), suggests that (like love) it don't matter too much [if at all] who you read, but how. Mischief and passion never made money, but they do find and found their own life.

End of sermon.

Peter Quartermain

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4. **Michael Boughn**

Miserable poets

Wed 14 Sep 1994

I thought the latest from the Toronto Globe and Mail might be of interest out there:

"Last year, poets were officially declared 'miserable' by Kentucky University psychiatrist Arnold Ludwig, who studied 1,000 eminent people, including poets W.H. Auden, Rupert Brooke and Sylvia Plath. Poets are five times more likely to be depressed than scientists, he found, and 15 times more prone to the condition than soldiers."

(Could it be from watching what the scientists and soldiers are up to?)

And then, to cheer you up:

"Seiko, the Japanese watch company, has repaired England's most famous church clock, on The Old Vicarage of Grantchester. In 1912, Rupert Brooke immortalized the motionless dial with: 'Stands the church clock at ten to three? / And is there honey still for tea?' Two years after the First World War, the clock started working again, reports The Observer, but it failed again in 1992. (Old timers recall that, in 1910, Brooks' clock had actually stalled at a quarter to eight -- but there are fewer rhymes for 'eight.'"

Smile, everybody.

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5. **James Sherry**

Re: Anthologies priesthoods and bookstores (still!)

Wed 14 Sep 1994

In reply Peter's message about bookstores, a discussion which I have not been following nad hence might repeat what someone else has said:

Why do we need bookstores or for that matter printers, binders, shippers, distributors, jobbers or any of that other market infrastructure for delivery of the text to readers.

Not that we need to do away with them entirely. They serve a purpose for books which fulfill the volume sales requirements of the market in terms of margin and visibility. They can deliver, because of the mature technology, a vast array of difficult and lengthy materials. What they cannot do is fulfill the purposes of writers whose books only sell a few copies.

As an alternative, books can be delivered direct to the user using this carrier as a base. We will have "bugs" to work out and ergonomic issues to improve, but at least we will move toward liberating ourselves as writers and readers from a market place which as Peter points out is restricting our access.

I don't really think the issue of whether Murdoch actually pulled the plug on some of "our" work is that critical. The restrictions, the censorship is based in the market structure and the market-place model.

Besides, with desktop publishing and hyper text software we can extend our range on the screen in a way we couldn't easily control on the page.

I hope to put together a program in the near future with the help of Patrick Phillips and others at Segue to look at the possibilities of not chasing the chimera of acceptance by a market oriented to mass sales and censorship of alternative discourses. Grist is a good step. This list is a good step. Now let's go the next step and look carefully at the issue of the necessity of moveable type.

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6. **Mn Center For Book Arts**

Re: Anthologies priesthoods and bookstores (still!)

Wed 14 Sep 1994

Ah, the sermon, a form of the poem I rather like. Thank you, Peter. I know about Am Here, but would love to hear from others about mail order sources for books which are very good. Isn't Asphodel in Ohio primarily a mail order shop?

One other note, of an entirely different order. I've been an advocate here and elsewhere for the book as a carrier of meaning, i.e. the book in its form, shape, design, materials, etc., as a partner with its text. There aren't many working in this area, and now there is one less. Steven Kranz, in Tucson, Arizona, who began as an intern with Chax Press about six years ago and ended up helping with many books, newsletters, etc., and whose own Ring Multiples put out several marvelous books to view and, more importantly, think about, recently took his own life. He left a unique body of writing, drawings, and book arts works which, unfortunately, not many have seen. He shall be missed. And just yesterday I also heard that another book artist, Kent Kazuboski, in Philadelphia, who made and illustrated several quite wonderful books by various printers, also took his own life.

I know that most on this list will not know these two, which is also unfortunate. But I still thought their passing needed to be noted. The last book, very small in size, sent to me by Steven Kranz, had a vellum-like pink and white wrapper and was printed on a laser printer (Steve was fond of making books in very inexpensive and quick ways) yet was, in a unique way, both quirky and elegant.

Its title is PRESSURIZED LINES, and it presented the following text, two sections per recto page, with versos blank --

testing high pressure
 solenoid actuations
late one Friday night

flow & no-flow: the
 motto of the Hydraulic
Systems Engineers

the test chamber, the
 test stand, the flowmeters, the
pressure transducer

photographs should show
 any visible damage
the valve has suffered

allow two minutes
 maximum for system to
stabilize pressure

the isolation
 mounts are resilient &
triple redundant

no degradation
 of slide & sleeve during the
endurance testing

install pinlock &
 verify actuation
at flowmeter five

revise this data
 sheet to also measure &
record valve leakage

maintain conditions
 & measure ambient noise
levels in the booth

the fatigue test &
 the vibration test & then
the high impact shock

the final total
 system calibration is
now in compliance
fasteners shall be
 torqued & lockwired as seen
in the large drawing
the valve in question
 incorporates features which
are not specified
no evidence of
 external leakage other
than a slight wetting
shift the selector
 valve & verify valve shift
continuity
this particular
 valve design incorporates
stroke over-travel
identify how
 the lowest volume is to
be determined here
the check valve has a
 cracking pressure of 2 to
8 psig
the transient noise
 acceptance criteria
are stated herein
the steady state &
 transient structureborne noise
tests are almost done
zero flow cannot
 be quantified nor can it
even be measured

Goodbye, Steve

love,
charles

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7. **Carla Billitteri**

poetry reading

Thu 15 Sep 1994

P * O * E * T * R * Y R * E * A * D * I * N * G

JEFF GBUREK

&

LEE FOUST

at the fabled Central Park Grill
on Main St near Amherst

Saturday the 17th of September 7:30 p.m.

Jeff Gburek of Buffalo & more recently
the Bay Area & Florence has published
his work in *Dark Ages Clasp the Daisy Root*,
I Am a Child, *H2SO4*, and in his own magazine
'Aql. With Benjamin Friedlander he has
authored two pamphlets, *Myth* & *Prophecy*

Lee Foust of S.F. & now New York City recently
finished the first novel in a trilogy to be called
La Divina Vendetta. He is also a writer of poetry
and an intermittent translator. His prose has appeared
in *'Aql*. An unattributed version of Jabes's essay
on Dante appeared in the final issue of *Dark Ages
Clasp the Daisy Root*

Please come. As ever, there will be chicken wings after the bash.

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8. **Carla Billitteri**

poetry reading p.s.

Thu 15 Sep 1994

the cost, as usual, is \$3

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9. **Mn Center For Book Arts**

found & lost

Thu 15 Sep 1994

This message begins as a response to Peter Quartermain's "sermon" on
bookstores. Unfortunately it was returned to me, as I had some trouble with the

local e-mail service & my phone lines here. If, by chance, this did actually reach the poetics list, and I am now duplicating myself, I apologize - - -

Ah, the sermon, a form of the poem I rather like. Thank you, Peter. I know about Am Here, but would love to hear from others about mail order sources for books which are very good. Isn't Asphodel in Ohio primarily a mail order shop?

One other note, of an entirely different order. I've been an advocate here and elsewhere for the book as a carrier of meaning, i.e. the book in its form, shape, design, materials, etc., as a partner with its text. There aren't many working in this area, and now there is one less. Steven Kranz, in Tucson, Arizona, who began as an intern with Chax Press about six years ago and ended up helping with many books, newsletters, etc., and whose own Ring Multiples put out several marvelous books to view and, more importantly, think about, recently took his own life. He left a unique body of writing, drawings, and book arts works which, unfortunately, not many have seen. He shall be missed. And just yesterday I also heard that another book artist, Kent Kazuboski, in Philadelphia, who made and illustrated several quite wonderful books by various printers, also took his own life.

I know that most on this list will not know these two, which is also unfortunate. But I still thought their passing needed to be noted. The last book, very small in size, sent to me by Steven Kranz, had a vellum-like pink and white wrapper and was printed on a laser printer (Steve was fond of making books in very inexpensive and quick ways) yet was, in a unique way, both quirky and elegant. Its title is PRESSURIZED LINES, and it presented the following text, two sections per recto page, with versos blank --

testing high pressure
 solenoid actuations
late one Friday night

flow & no-flow: the
 motto of the Hydraulic
Systems Engineers

the test chamber, the
 test stand, the flowmeters, the
pressure transducer

photographs should show
 any visible damage
the valve has suffered

allow two minutes
 maximum for system to
stabilize pressure

the isolation
 mounts are resilient &
triple redundant
no degradation
 of slide & sleeve during the
endurance testing
install pinlock &
 verify actuation
at flowmeter five
revise this data
 sheet to also measure &
record valve leakage
maintain conditions
 & measure ambient noise
levels in the booth
the fatigue test &
 the vibration test & then
the high impact shock
the final total
 system calibration is
now in compliance
fasteners shall be
 torqued & lockwired as seen
in the large drawing
the valve in question
 incorporates features which
are not specified
no evidence of
 external leakage other
than a slight wetting
shift the selector
 valve & verify valve shift
continuity
this particular
 valve design incorporates
stroke over-travel

identify how
the lowest volume is to
be determined here
the check valve has a
cracking pressure of 2 to
8 psig
the transient noise
acceptance criteria
are stated herein
the steady state &
transient structureborne noise
tests are almost done
zero flow cannot
be quantified nor can it
even be measured

Goodbye, Steve

love,
charles

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10. **George Bowering**

Re: Africa

Mon 19 Sep 1994

Hey, Sandra, wow, Africa, eh? I read today about a new elephant safari outfit in Zimbabwe. You shoot the elephants but what you shoot ythem with is capsules of food covering that go splat and leave orange splats on the elephants. I wonder whether they get used to it and just walk calmly by with people splatting them. It'll get too easy. These are people who want to be Hemingway and Cousteau ayt the same time. Maybe we could outfit the US Army with orange splat guns and they can hold their annual invasions of small countries with orange splat guns! Hmmm, as we say up here.

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11. **George Bowering**

Re: Miserable poets

Mon 19 Sep 1994

Michael, yr clippings about poets did cheer me up because today I have been reading poems about Maud Gonne. Needed a pick me up. But I will be going to

hear Blaser in a bar tonight. I will probably have a hangover while teaching tomorrow. I'll consider that the fault of serial verse.

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12. **Charles Bernstein**
LIVE AT THE EAR (ad for CD)
Sun 25 Sep 1994

n o w a v a i l a b l e

LIVE AT THE EAR

edited by Charles Bernstein

a compact disc from

Elemenope Productions / Oracular Laboratories Recordings
conceived and produced by Richard Dillon

Digitally remastered archival recordings of 13 poets reading at New York's Ear Inn, with a 32 page booklet including substantial excerpts from the texts of the poems, photos, and brief statements from the poets.

Ideal for personal collections as well as for classroom use and course adoption.

Contents:

1. SUSAN HOWE reading from "Speeches at the Barrier," in Europe of Trusts. Recorded October 22, 1983. (6:41)
2. RON SILLIMAN reading from OZ. Recorded April 12, 1986. (6:01)
3. LESLIE SCALAPINO reading from "bum series" in Way. Recorded December 13, 1986. (4:52)
4. TED GREENWALD reading from You Bet. Recorded January 31, 1981. (6:05)
5. ROSMARIE WALDROP reading from Reproduction of Profiles. Recorded December 15, 1984. (6:01)
6. ALAN DAVIES reading "Shared Sentences" from Active 24 Hours. Recorded February 4, 1989. (4:42)
7. BARRETT WATTEN reading from Under Erasure. Recorded January 2, 1993. (5:45)
8. ERICA HUNT reading from "cold war breaks," in Local History. Recorded May 20, 1990. (4:28)
9. BRUCE ANDREWS reading "I Knew the Signs by Their Tents." Recorded March 12, 1988. (5:43)

10. HANNAH WEINER reading from Spoke. Recorded October 10, 1983. (5:40)
11. STEVE McCAFFERY reading from "The Curve to its Answer," variant in Theory of Sediment. Recorded January 11, 1985. (5:10)
12. ANN LAUTERBACH reading "Opening Day" from Clamor. Recorded January 4, 1992. (4:38)
13. CHARLES BERNSTEIN reading from "Dark City," in Dark City. Recorded January 4, 1992. (6:44)

HOW TO ORDER:

Send \$15.95 plus \$2 p&h to
Oracular Laboratory Recordings
Suite 2720 Gateway Towers
Pittsburg, PA 15222

for COD orders or further information call [REDACTED] or fax [REDACTED]

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13. **Chris Funkhouser**

Re: LIVE AT THE EAR

Sun 25 Sep 1994

Charles,

Thanks for the notice. I look forward to hearing the disc.

Wanted to let you (& others out there) know that we're working to make a cd-rom part of this years LITTLE MAGAZINE (the lit journal out of Albany) & are looking for work from anyone who thinks they might have it ready to go in this format.

If you've got ideas or suggestions, please get in touch.

Thanks again, Chris Funkhouser / [REDACTED]

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14. **Don Byrd**

(no subject)

Sun 25 Sep 1994

Chris--

do you know what happened to the copy of Stanford
Hum Review I gave to someone to xerox..

db

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15. **Marshall H. Reese**

Nora Ligorano & Marshall Reese video screening

Mon 26 Sep 1994

Bay Area Video Screening

7:30 PM, Wednesday, October 5, 1994

Pacific Film Archives/University Art Museum

2621 Durant Avenue

(Between College Avenue & Bowditch Street)

Admission: \$5.50 -- Discounts for Senior Citizens, UC Berkeley students & People with Disabilities

Box Office opens one hour before screening

For more information phone: [REDACTED]

New York artists Nora Ligorano & Marshall Reese will present a retrospective of their videotapes 7:30 PM, Wednesday, October 5, 1994 at the Pacific Film Archive, University Art Museum, Berkeley, CA.

Nora Ligorano and Marshall Reese have been far-ranging in their assaults on the right-wing culture war, the tyrannical nature of media, and the pall of consumerism. Videotapes, installation, sculpture, and expanded books have proved to be formidable tools for their many collaborative projects. Straight from their residency at the Djerassi Foundation, Ligorano/Reese will present videoworks and documentation covering recent installations, including their 45-foot photo/video mural at the Donnell Library in Manhattan.

Examining the role of the artist in contemporary society, *Acid Migration of Culture* (1994) transformed the library's facade into an enormous dictionary of artistic terms.

An earlier work, *The Bible Belt* (1992) featured a specially prepared videotape encased in a doctored Bible. In this tape a televangelist hawks consumerist virtues and a belt emblazoned with bold letters spelling "JESUS."

Black Holes/Heavenly Bodies -- HELL (1982, 15 min.) is a high-tech nightmare in which violence and mediocrity are the potent background noise. Several other works will be exhibited, along with their newest *30 Aphorisms* (1994, 3 min.) an image processed look at language and the abstraction of images.

The artists will be present and will also show examples of their limited edition artists books and slides from their work in progress *The Corona Palimpsest*.

-- Steve Seid, University Art Museum/Pacific Film Archive

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16. **Marshall H. Reese**

Eunice Lipton readings in SF & LA

Mon 26 Sep 1994

Eunice Lipton Readings

EUNICE LIPTON reads from her book ALIAS OLYMPIA: A Woman's Search for Manet's Notorious Model and Her Own Desire, new in paperback (Meridian/Penguin) on:

Sept. 29 BLACK OAK BOOKS, 7:30 PM, 1491 Shattuck Ave.,
Berkeley, CA [REDACTED]

Oct. 2 A DIFFERENT LIGHT, 7:30 PM, 489 Castro St.,
San Francisco, CA [REDACTED]

Oct. 4 SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE, 7 PM, Br. Kyran A.V. Room,
Moraga, CA

Oct. 6 SISTERHOOD BOOKS, 7 PM, 1351 Westwood Blvd.,
Los Angeles, CA [REDACTED]

ALIAS OLYMPIA has been hailed by The New York Times as a "wonderfully digressive blend of art history and autobiography," by Lucy Lippard in the Woman's Review of Books as, "The most original book to emerge from myh feminist art generation," by The Financial Times of London as "a clever, unorthodox, enthralling book which combines criticism and fiction in elegant symbiosis."

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17. **mnamna**

info on your discussion

Tue 27 Sep 1994

To whom it may concern,

I'd like to be part of your discussion if possible and wanted to know where it is I could hook up with it. I'm mailing cause I'm not real sure how to get there otherwise. Thanks

Jeffrey Timmons
mnamna

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18. **sysop**

ANNOUNCEMENT

Wed 28 Sep 1994

Please post the following announcement to your list or publication.

Thanks,



GRIST ON-LINE NEWSLETTER

You may receive the first Grist On-Line Poetry Newsletter devoted to publisher news and the sale of poetry publications by sending an e-mail message to:



(30.1k ASCII Text), or



(13.7k self-extracting zipped ASCII Text)

A special offer from Light and Dust Books and 20% discount on selected Black Sparrow Press titles are among the special offers in the first issue. It also contains previously unpublished poems by David Ignatow and James McCrary.

GRIST ON-LINE BULLETIN BOARD

The Media Lists at Grist On-Line BBS contain more than 3,500 poetry, experimental fiction and related criticism and non-fiction books on paper from independent and trade publishers as well as works in a variety of other formats--files for downloading, files on diskette, CDRoms, Videos. All may be ordered online with VISA or Mastercard. The BBS may be accessed at  twenty-four hours a day.

If you have published poetry, we would like to invite you or your publisher to send lists, catalogs or review copies of books so that your titles may be included in the Grist On-Line Media Lists.

Send to:

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Columbus Circle Station,
NY, NY 10023-1496.

Or you might be interested in our ability to charge for downloading files of any type or format. This means that you can offer files of your poems or other works for sale (or for free) in the GRIST On-Line Media Stores. Write to  for more information about this possibility.

GRIST On-Line #6 (the magazine) will feature work by Jackson Mac Low and Charles O. Hartman and will be available shortly.

If you want to receive the Newsletter, the Magazine, or Announcements automatically as they are issued, send an e-mail message to [REDACTED] saying in the body of the message:

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and/or subscribe Magazine
and/or subscribe Announcements

To discontinue any of the above, say unsubscribe.

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