

@poetics

The UB Poetics Discussion Group

Archive of Electronic Correspondence

May 1995

634 messages · Mon 1 May 1995 – Wed 31 May 1995

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

The bells of a hundred European cities ring on the eighth for the fiftieth anniversary of a war's ending; on the seventeenth Jacques Chirac takes the keys to the Élysée; and in Oklahoma the rubble is still being sifted for the last of the dead. The list, as ever, keeps its own weather. Buffalo in May 1995 attends not to the century's anniversaries but to a single stubborn word — the Real — and, alongside it, to the older and funnier question of what a poem is even made of.

The month's largest room is opened by John Byrum, who wants to know *"How much Real is transformed via poetry?"* — a question he confesses he first glimpsed at the bottom of a ten-foot sewer trench. Ryan Knighton answers by way of Spicer's *After Lorca*: poetry does not transform the real so much as correspond with it, carrying it across, one lemon made to answer another. Gary Sullivan declines to argue at all and simply mails in a poem, a refusal of the real dressed as an epistle.

The metaphysics is punctured, reliably, by mischief. Ron Silliman posts to Edward Foster a message whose entire body reports *"That Was Four Lines,"* and George Bowering, refusing to be out-quibbled, wonders aloud whether four lines might not constitute a quatrain. The comedy has a serious neighbour in the aleatory thread, where H. T. Kirby-Smith remains magnificently unpersuaded that chance is a method, conceding only that *"Banging on pot lids is fun to listen to"* for a few minutes before one longs to shout *Encore* and go home.

Yet the chance operations find their defenders — John Cayley describing pieces that learn phrases from their own readers, the discussion circling Cage, rhyme, and the humble random-number generator as three names for the same nerve. Beneath all of it runs the month's most searching question, which Jordan Davis poses without fuss: *"What do we mean when we call someone's work sentimental?"* Jim Rosenberg answers with a definition drawn frankly from his fear about his own writing — the dread that a poem is too much the emotional substance of a single, unreliable self.

It is fitting, then, that the argument should end not in a verdict but in a poem. Sullivan's refusal closes on the things that *"will never take place,"* and for once the list has quarrelled its way clean past quarrel into song. I have set the letters in their true order, hidden the addresses and telephones behind their black bars, and left the poem standing exactly where I found it, its trench and its stars intact.

— *K. M. F.*

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- 477. Michael Boughn — Re: Really real Martha
- 478. Jorge Guitart — art after art
- 479. Jim Pangborn — Re: The Etymology of Things
- 480. Edward Foster — Re: Yo, Ed
- 481. Edward Foster — Re: Yo, Ed
- 482. I.LIGHTMAN — Re: mail by the megabyte?
- 483. I.LIGHTMAN — some Lorca
- 484. Edward Foster — Re: desire / and the 39 steps
- 485. George Bowering — Re: Really real Martha
- 486. George Bowering — Re: Yo, Ed
- 487. Ryan Knighton — Re: Yo, Ed
- 488. Marshall H. Reese — republicans threaten artists
- 489. Mark Wallace — Poetic Briefs is not dead
- 490. Don Cheney — radio commercials
- 491. Alan Sondheim — Re: Yo, Ed
- 492. Hank Lazer — Re: yo, ed, boring?
- 493. cris cheek — crisis
- 494. Ryan Knighton — Re: Yo, Ed
- 495. Wystan Curnow — Re: Yo, Ed
- 496. Wystan Curnow — Re: Yo, Ed
- 497. M. Magoolaghan — Re: Poetic Briefs is not dead
- 498. Robert Drake — legislative alert (forward)

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- 499. Lindz Williamson — Re: Yo, Ed
- 500. John Byrum — Re: art after art
- 501. John Byrum — Re: Yo, Ed
- 502. Mark Roberts — Poetry happenings: London, UK, July 1995
- 503. Marisa A Januzzi — in vitro...
- 504. Jake Berry — Re: yo, ed, boring?
- 505. Jake Berry — Re: John - next steps after art
- 506. english is mandarin --Tom Raworth — Re: Poetry happenings: London, UK, July 1995
- 507. Charles Alexander — Re: art after art
- 508. Ernesto Grosman — Rift: On Translation
- 509. Michael Boughn — Re: Really real Martha
- 510. Ron Silliman — Re: 2 announcements
- 511. David Ball — Re: Rift: On Translation
- 512. Carl Lynden Peters — Re: yo, ed, boring?
- 513. Carl Lynden Peters — Re: art after art
- 514. Edward Foster — Re: yo, ed, boring?
- 515. Edward Foster — Re: Yo, Ed

- 516. Ryan Knighton — Re: yo, ed, boring?
- 517. Ryan Knighton — Re: radio commercials
- 518. Sheila E. Murphy — Art, etc.
- 519. Carl Lynden Peters — Re: Yo, Ed
- 520. Mark Roberts — Re: radio/tv commercials
- 521. Steve Carll — Re: The Etymology of Things
- 522. John Byrum — Re: John - next steps after art
- 523. Tony Green — Re: radio/tv commercials
- 524. John Byrum — Re: art after art after art

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- 525. Charles Alexander — Re: art after art after art
- 526. John Byrum — Re: yo, ed, boring art past art?
- 527. John Byrum — Re: art after art after art
- 528. Charles Alexander — loss of the name/art & sacrifice
- 529. Charles Alexander — loss of the name/art & sacrifice
- 530. Ron Silliman — Re: art after art after art
- 531. Jim Pangborn — Re: Art, etc.
- 532. David Ball — ANNOUNCEMENT (self-promotional)
- 533. Herb Levy — Re: art after art after art
- 534. M. Magoolaghan — Re: art after art after art
- 535. Carl Lynden Peters — Re: art after art after art
- 536. Carl Lynden Peters — Re: yo, ed, boring art past art?
- 537. Carl Lynden Peters — Re: Art, etc.
- 538. Sheila E. Murphy — Re: art after art after art
- 539. Jordan Davis. — where were you born
- 540. Sheila E. Murphy — Re: Art, etc.
- 541. Reginald Johanson — yo, ed
- 542. Carl Lynden Peters — Re: Art, etc.
- 543. Reginald Johanson — yo, ed
- 544. Andrew Joron — ed's new book
- 545. Blair Seagram — Re: Warhol and irony
- 546. Blair Seagram — Re: Total Irony
- 547. Carl Lynden Peters — Re: where were you born
- 548. Blair Seagram — Re: What happens next
- 549. Alan Sondheim — Re: where were you born

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- 550. Lindz Williamson — Re: Warhol and irony
- 551. Jim Rosenberg — Sentiment
- 552. Charles Alexander — Re: Sentiment
- 553. Charles Alexander — Re: Art, etc.
- 554. Kevin Killian — Re: Sentiment
- 555. John Cayley — real real

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- 556. John Byrum — Re: loss of the name/art & sa...
- 557. John Byrum — Re: loss of the name/art & sa...
- 558. John Byrum — Re: art after art after art
- 559. Carl Lynden Peters — Re: loss of the name/art & sa...
- 560. Carl Lynden Peters — Re: Art, etc.
- 561. Carl Lynden Peters — Re: loss of the name/art & sa...
- 562. Carl Lynden Peters — Re: Art, etc.
- 563. Tony Green — Re: really Real Andy
- 564. Carl Lynden Peters — Re: really Real Andy
- 565. Chris Stroffolino — milo deangelis
- 566. Tony Green — Re: art after art after art

- 567. Tony Green — Re: some Lorca
- 568. Mark Roberts — Re: some Lorca
- 569. Tony Green — Re: Actually actual?
- 570. Gary Sullivan — Re: milo deangelis

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- 571. Carl Lynden Peters — Re: art after art after art
- 572. Gary Sullivan — Re: art after art after art
- 573. Chris Stroffolino — Re: Actually actual?
- 574. John Geraets — Re: art's after
- 575. Kevin Killian — Re: Art, etc.
- 576. Wystan Curnow — Re: art's after
- 577. Jake Berry — Re: art's after - John
- 578. english is mandarin --Tom Raworth — New Web site
- 579. Jim Pangborn — Re: Art, etc.
- 580. Ryan Knighton — Re: Art, etc.
- 581. Carl Lynden Peters — Re: Art, etc.
- 582. Carl Lynden Peters — Re: art's after
- 583. Jonathan Brannen — Re: The Etymology of Things revisited
- 584. Jonathan Brannen — Re: Actually actual?
- 585. Charles Alexander — Re: The Etymology of Things revisited
- 586. Stephen Galen Cope — DIU (Long Post Warning)
- 587. Stephen Galen Cope — DIU (continued)
- 588. Stephen Galen Cope — DIU (continued)
- 589. Stephen Galen Cope — DIU (continued)
- 590. maria damon — Re: Actually actual?

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- 591. John Geraets — Re: art's after
- 592. Gary Sullivan — AUNTIE HEGEMONY & UNCLE POE
- 593. Chris Stroffolino — Re: milo deangelis
- 594. Edward Foster — Re: Yo, Ed
- 595. Edward Foster — Re: Art, etc.
- 596. Edward Foster — Re: Art, etc.
- 597. Edward Foster — Re: Art, etc.
- 598. Edward Foster — Re: Sentiment
- 599. Edward Foster — Re: Art, etc.
- 600. Jim Pangborn — Re: Art, etc.
- 601. Hank Lazer — Re: art's after
- 602. Marisa A Januzzi — Re: where were you born
- 603. Jim Rosenberg — Re: Sentiment
- 604. Carl Lynden Peters — Re: Yo, Ed
- 605. Carl Lynden Peters — Re: art's after
- 606. Carl Lynden Peters — Re: art, etc...
- 607. Kevin Killian — Re: Sentiment
- 608. Federation Sand — Cyanosis Publication Party in SF
- 609. George Bowering — Re: some Lorca
- 610. George Bowering — Re: Sentiment
- 611. Tony Green — Re: art's after
- 612. Tony Green — Re: Actually actual?
- 613. Tony Green — Re: really Real
- 614. Mark Roberts — AWOL: fourW magazine
- 615. FUNKHOUSER CHRISTOPH — satan
- 616. maria damon — Re: Sentiment
- 617. maria damon — Re: Actually actual?
- 618. maria damon — Re: Sentiment

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- 619. John Byrum — Re: loss of the name/art & sa...
- 620. John Byrum — Re: Art, etc.
- 621. John Byrum — Re: Actually actual?
- 622. John Byrum — Re: art after art after art
- 623. Steve Carll — really actual yoed
- 624. Jake Berry — John, Hank - Re: art's after
- 625. Michael Boughn — AHP
- 626. Edward Foster — Re: where were you born
- 627. Edward Foster — Re: Art, etc.
- 628. Gary Sullivan — from PARADOX AND EVOL
- 629. Gary Sullivan — Summer is here...
- 630. Carl Lynden Peters — After Art: Last Words
- 631. Tony Green — Re: art after art after art
- 632. Jonathan Brannen — Re: Actually actual?
- 633. Jonathan Brannen — Re: Actually actual?
- 634. Mark Roberts — (no subject)

1. **Wystan Curnow**

Re: cordelia

Mon 1 May 1995

I'm with you Chris. I used to have this beef at dept meetings: why is it Shakespeare gets equal time with the rest of literature. That was the curriculum, THE CANON for a time. Not so much any more. I complained but the students...no. And now we have SHAKESPEARE ON FILM and do they beat the doors down to get into that. Wystan.

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2. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: cordelia

Mon 1 May 1995

Well this maybe doesn't mean anything in terms of generalities and/or may say more about me than about the ostensible subject matter but i've taught both contemporary poetry and Shakespeare and the 'average person' seems to get Shakespeare more than the poetry i teach, now maybe if I taught say Gerald Stern (gag) rather than say Carla Harryman or Jack Spicer they'd get contemporary poetry more. Furthermore, they don't necessarily GET the lingo of Shakespeare but "get" the story and so they walk around with this illusion of understanding it which contemporary poetry doesn't give them---which may actually be WORSE!

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3. **Mark Roberts**

(no subject)

Mon 1 May 1995

MAY HAPPENINGS

Australian Writing OnLine

AWOL Happenings. A monthly guide to readings, book launches, conferences and other events relating to Australian literature both within Australia and overseas. If you have any item which you would like included in future listings please contact AWOL on email [REDACTED] or write to AWOL, PO Box 333, Concord NSW 2137, Australia. AWOL postings are also available by snail mail - please contact us for details.

Unfortunately the May Happenings list contains mostly information relating to NSW events. We hope to expand the list to be fully national by the next posting in June.

NSW

SYDNEY

***** BOOK LAUNCHES *****

Marcelle Freiman's first collection of poetry. titled "Monkey's Wedding" (Island Press, Sydney) will be launched by Heather Cam. Upstairs at Gleebooks on May 16th, 6.30 for 7pm. (address Phone number)

Island Press is a small co-operative press which has been publishing poetry since 1975. The motivating force behind it is Phillip Hammial, whose book "Just Desserts" (Island) is to be launched on June 3 at the Courthouse Hotel, Newtown. The third member of the Island triad for 1995 is Carolyn Gerrish, whose collection "Learning to Breathe Under Water" (Island) will be published later in the year.

***** READINGS *****

SYDNEY

4th Monday of each month.....FUTURE POETS SOCIETY 8pm Lapidary Club Room, Gymp Bay Road, Gymp. Details phone Anni Featherstone (02) [REDACTED].

Every Tuesday POETRY SUPREME 9pm Eli's Restaurant, 132 Oxford Street, Darlinghurst. Details phone/fax (02) [REDACTED]

1st and 3rd Wednesday POETS UNION, 7pm The Gallery Cafe, 43 Booth Street, Annandale Details phone (02) [REDACTED]

2nd Wednesday.....WOMEN WRITERS' NETWORK 7.30pm, NSW Writers' Centre details Ann Davis (02) [REDACTED]

4th Wednesday.....LIVE POETS AT DON BANKS MUSEUM, 7.30pm 6 Napier Street North Sydney. Guest Reader plus open section. \$6 includes wine. Details phone Sue Hicks or Danny Gardiner (02) [REDACTED]

Every Thursday.....POETRY ALIVE 11am-1pm, Old Courthouse Bigge Street Liverpool. Details phone (02) [REDACTED].

1st Friday.....EASTERN SUBURBS POETRY GROUP 7.30pm Everleigh Street Waverly. Details phone (02) [REDACTED].

2nd & 4th Saturday.....GLEEBOOKS READINGS 2pm Gleebooks 49 Glebe Point Road Glebe. Details Nick Sykes (02) [REDACTED]

3rd Sunday.....POETRY WITH GLEE: THE POETS UNION AT GLEEBOOKS. 2-4pm, 49 Glebe Point Road Glebe. \$5/\$2 Details Nick Sykes (02) [REDACTED]

Every Sunday.....THE WORD ON SUNDAY 11.30pm Museum of Contemporary Art Circular Quay \$8/ \$5. Details phone (02) [REDACTED].

REGIONAL

ARMIDALE 1st Wednesday 7.30pm Rumours cafe in the Mall. Details phone James Vicars (067) 73 2103

WOLLONGONG 2nd & 4th Tuesday 7.30pm Here's Cheers Restaurant, 5 Victoria Street, Wollongong. Details phone Ian Ryan (042) 84 0645

WAGGA WAGGA Tuesday May 9 8 pm at Firenze Italian Restaurant, 67 Johnston St, Wagga Wagga, (ph 069 214211) READINGS by John Foulcher (poet, Canberra), Susan Varga (biographer, NSW), Peter Bakowski (poet, Melbourne) plus 'Open Mike'

ALSO AT WAGGA WAGGA Wednesday 10 May 7.30 pm at Booranga, the Riverina Writers' Centre at Charles Sturt University, EDITING WORKSHOP conducted by John Foulcher

Weekend Workshop 13/14 May on Screenwriting conducted in association with Australian Writers' Guild at Booranga, the Riverina Writers' Centre at Charles Sturt University. Tutors include Steve J. Spears, Charlie Strachan and Ian David

For details about Wagga Wagga events contact David Gilbey ph. 069 332465, fax 069 332792 email [REDACTED]

LISMORE Stand Up Poets 3rd Tuesday 8pm. Lismore Club, Club Lane. Details phone David Hallett (066) 891318.

NEWCASTLE 1st Sunday Illuminating Tales at the Commonwealth Hotel Union/ Bull Streets Newcastle. Details phone Bill Iden (049) 675 972

3rd Monday Poetry at the Pub. Newcastle Bowling Club, Watt Street. May 15 special guests North Sydney Live Poets. Details phone Bill Iden (049) 675 972

** CONFERENCES **

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY/JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY

QUEENSLAND STUDIES CENTRE ANNUAL CONFERENCE - 8-9 JULY

WAR'S END?

August 1945 marked the end of the most harrowing and transforming collective experience in the history of modern Australia. How much of the 'old' Australia came to an end with the cessation of hostilities, and how much continued as before? What different meanings did the War's end have for different groups and institutions in Australian society?

The Queensland Studies Centre will be holding its annual two-day conference, in association with the History Department of James Cook University, in Townsville, on 8-9 July of this year.

The conference will be interdisciplinary in scope, embracing military, social and cultural history; politics and political economy; literary and cultural studies. Papers exploring any of the following aspects of the topic would be welcome:

- * literature and the arts
- * education and social policy
- * Aboriginal and ethnic communities
- * women's history
- * military and social history
- * politics and industrial relations
- * journalism and the media

Venue: Townsville, Queensland.

Date: 8-9 July, 1995.

Enquiries to

The Queensland Studies Centre (Director, Patrick Buckridge)
Faculty of Humanities
Griffith University
Nathan QLD 4111.
Ph.: (07) 85 5494 Fax: (07) [REDACTED]
E-mail: [REDACTED]

Association for the Study of Australian Literature

ASAL
2-7 July 1995
Adelaide

The 1995 ASAL conference will be held at the historic Institute Building on North Terrace in the heart of Adelaide.

Keynote Speaker:

Paul Carter, author of *The Road to Botany Bay* and *Living in a New Country*.

Dorothy Green Memorial Lecture:

Drusilla Modjeska, author of *Exiles at Home* and *Poppy*.

Enquiries: Phil Butterss, Department of English, University of Adelaide, Adelaide 5005.

Ph: (08) [REDACTED]. Fax: (08) [REDACTED].

Email: [REDACTED]

(The 1995 ASAL program is available on AWOL's WWW link. Address <http://www.anatomy.su.oz.au/danny/books/index.html> then click on Australian Writing OnLine)

EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR STUDIES ON AUSTRALIA

Third conference: Copenhagen, October 6-9, 1995

Conference theme: Inhabiting Australia: The Australian Habitat and Australian Settlement.

The conference aims to bring together contributions from a wide range of disciplines, from architecture to zoology. Papers which take up the theme from cultural, historical, social, scientific, literary and other perspectives are invited.

Registration forms will be distributed by the beginning of January, 1995.

Deadline for registration, May 1, 1995.

Further information available from Conference organisers:

* Bruce Clunies Ross (45) 35 32 85 82 internet: [REDACTED] *
Martin Leer (45) 35 32 85 87 internet: [REDACTED] * Merete
Borch (45) 35 32 85 84 internet: [REDACTED]

Copenhagen University, Department of English
Njalsgade 80, DK-2300 Kobenhavn S

Tlf. (45) 35 32 86 00
Fax (45) 35 32 86 15

* Eva Rask Knudsen
Wiedeweldtsgade 50, st.
2100 Copenhagen O.
(45) 35266025

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4. **Chris Stroffolino**

gimmicks/"poetry" that's got nothin' on zimmerman

Mon 1 May 1995

Awhile Back, Mark Wallace complained (or STATED) that a poet needs THEORY these days if s/he wants to teach. Either that or a really good hustler. Of course if one's a good hustler, why would one WANT to teach ? So, it seems this issue is coming up again. We see the SHAKESPEARE issue--and we see the ELECTRONIC and "audio/visual" culture issue... yes, poetry is not enough academically--one needs some kinda GIMMICK. Yeah, man, I DO like Bob Dylan (as a poet) better than Gerald Stern (who's may safe whipping boy,

a metonymy for many others, many parts of me)--but there are so many silly hybrids out there. And not only that Allen Ginsberg has a LOUSY voice! And not only that the Brannagh version of MUCH ADO could have been much better... It's all way to "middle brow" isn't it? It is far more fun (tis a far far better thing) to go to a loud thrash like concert and come back and read something like Wallace Stevens than to try to pretend that "poetry" that ain't got nuthin' on zimmerman, is more soulless than even your basic garage band IN ADDITION to being something that doesn't hold up under repeated readings, is going to be something we should like....heavy yawn "I used to be disgusted now I try to be amused...." CS

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5. Andrew Joron

Dirt

Mon 1 May 1995

More evidence of life beyond SPD: Today I received a chapbook in the mail (such free exchanges of publications being our own form of samizdat) which delighted & astounded me: *_Dirt_* by Jim Leftwich (Luna Bisonte Prods, 137 Leland Ave., Columbus OH 43214, no price), saddle-stapled, tan cover w/ mutant calligraphy in green ink, containing 14 pp. of rapturous, recombinant "neo-prose" made partly of words you won't find in any dictionary:

by rave brome scalp ledge has to that's. ark of retuse
bathe. mesquite quota bort livid noel. elute is part of
as, ring our cyme rust sea. to refuge the then of steel.
thyme for knot he umbels in a cord, soft of sap, a
silence salt as wheels sleep. seem the graphs of scalpel
port. dash sharp shred dome, touch moat inhalation.
exhale advertiseachine, if you splinter a game with mah.
epos hade smear seta rasp. dial roil youth texture
prayers wisp evil ration into which.

Throughout the book, Jim is "morphing" morphemes with the speed of sound, maybe a verbal equivalent of saxophonist Evan Parker's circular breathing technique. *Here's* what poetry is like without SPD (I like SPD and am glad it exists, yet it has many limitations which less institutionalized, more grassroots forms of poetic interchange can & should circumvent.)

Andrew Joron

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6. **Chris Stroffolino**

who wrote this???

Mon 1 May 1995

The other day I found some poems laying on a quite boring quasi-suburban street in a tiny town that only has CHAIN bookstores (and some used) Suprisingly, the poem isn't totally hideous....and in some ways resemble H.D. There are four poems: "OLD MATH" "THE SEA OUTSIDE" :THE HIATUS" and "BREAKTHROUGH"---- I am curious if any one knows who wrote them?
BREAKTHROUGH

Fields migrate into gold
the sea sprawls out of its chains

the scene's torn
the light patched

water cuffs the air
while the bay laughs
starlings sown like grain

with a knowing wink of dark
an airplane crosses noon

the equinox leaps
through the clock

clouds fall upwards
the moon feels tall
the sky keels south
what blooms is the wind

I want to say there's something really goofy about these poems, and maybe I'm only stopped because it may have been written by someone I'm SUPPOSED to like---Yes, SPENCER, what's in a name? But what is poetr supposed to do? to be? Chris

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7. **Mn Center For Book Arts**

Re: intro oral & visual cultures to poetics @once!

Mon 1 May 1995

Bravo to Chris Funkhouser! for pointing out the idiocy of seeing poetry more or less only as print, even though he admits that print has various important values. As one of the print book makers he values, I must say that I agree wholeheartedly, and have also committed my own work to various media, from taped to electronic to print. Radio has received some of the most valuable,

although it doesn't add up to a lot of hours. And I had one of my greatest revelations when, after a long period of being disturbed about the closure (books are closed for 99.9% of their lives, but I'm sure someone will dispute that statistic) of print, I simply realized that, once read, a work is never closed. So, while I'll continue to make books which can be held and read (or at least as long as it doesn't seem too insane to use paper, and, if it gets to that point, I do know how to make paper), I hope to also keep on getting work into other media which I hold as no less valuable, some of them media for which we have yet to discover their sensual characteristics.

charles alexander
chax press

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8. **Mn Center For Book Arts**

Re: Dirt

Mon 1 May 1995

Thanks, Andrew Joron, for the excerpt from DIRT. But I think that, not only is Jim Leftwich morphing morphemes, he's sounding phonemes, something I've been finding, lately, more rare and more valuable. The value of DIRT is not fully experienced without sounding the work, and not only hearing/sounding, but feeling the mouth make those sounds. It's physical work of the highest order. Thank you for pointing it out. I think I'd like to find the book's physical equivalent of THAT.

charles alexander

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9. **John Byrum**

Re: Not definition 2

Tue 2 May 1995

Tzara: all words are forgotten limitless

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10. **John Geraets**

Zen & lango

Tue 2 May 1995

A friend who likes Leslie Scalapino's material asks about how Zen may figure in her writing practice.

I notice names like Steve Benson, John Cage, Alan Davies, Jackson Mac Low, Leslie Scalapino and Armand Schwerner in *Beneath a Single Moon* (ed. Kent Johnson & Craig Paulenich), which is an anthology of Buddhist/Zen/Poetry related poets.

If Zen (or another spiritual) practice has a part in your writing, or you know of material that may be interesting in this regard, please let me know.

My friend and I thought maybe the porousness of language writing may be a very spiritual thing. But, as I say, would welcome any information, thoughts you may have.

John Geraets



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11. **Spencer Selby**
Re: who wrote this???

Tue 2 May 1995

Dear Chris,

Poetry is supposed to be and do.

what blooms is anonymous
when clouds feel goofy
in your paradox of
knowing it's alright

Love,
Spencer

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12. **Hank Lazer**
Re: Zen & lango

Tue 2 May 1995

John Geraets--

On Zen & poetry & Leslie Scalapino. Funny you should ask. You might want to take a look at the writing of Norman Fischer (recently elevated to the status of zen abbot -- based in San Francisco). His most recent book, from Chax, *PRECISELY THE POINT BEING MADE*, is quite marvelous. And zen-nish. I mention Norman in connection with Leslie because the two of them are currently writing back and forth, a series of poems and letters that definitely do

push & pull around zen practice. You might try writing directly to Leslie Scalapino or to Norman if you're interested in looking at this exchange-in-progress.

Hank Lazer

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13. **Tom Mandel**

Re: who wrote this???

Tue 2 May 1995

What looms is synonymous
(whence gouges yield clues free)
It's tight all night
(in your arid box of lowing)

Tm

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14. **Federation Sand**

Intro & Question

Tue 2 May 1995

Hello everybody,

I'm new to this list, though a few of you may know(of) me...I publish the paper and web versions of the magazine _Cyanosis_ the second issue of which is recently out. Submission guides are available via e-mail (but one should see the publication before submitting). #1 is \$8.00 for a sample. #2 is \$10.00, they're 8.5x11, perfect bound, B&W #1=112pp, #2=212pp. Work by (2) Selby, Albon, Daniel Davidson, Gary Sullivan, Marta Dieke, Jeff Conant, John McNally, Steven Schutzman, Ben Marcus, Brian Schorn, and many others...a lot of very unusual graphic material as well as interviews with a robticist, a photographer and a nuerosurgeon!

That aside (please pardon the plug)...a little about myself/interests and a question:

I'm interested in most art forms, the relationship between science/art and the psyche. My writing is concerned primarily with what I would call 'shifts of attention' wherein refocussing of attention provides for a reinterpretation of the relationships between beings, objects and events. I would classify myself as a poet concerened both with metaphysics and music, passionately, sometimes violently involved with questions of the nature of being.

Well...that sure sound pretentious in retrospect!

And now a question to the list...

I need help locating both Brian Schorn and Ben Marcus, if anyone knows anything about the whereabouts of these two helions I'd be glad to receive such info so that I can get them their contributor copies of the recent issue...

I look forward to some inspiring interactions with ya'll

Darin De Stefano

Cyanosis Web Site: <http://www.slip.net/syszero/syszero.html>

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!:: REMEMBER YOUR FIRST CELL ::!



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15. **George Bowering**

Re: cordelia

Tue 2 May 1995

Re CXhris Stroffolino's message of May 1.

Who is Gerald Stern? Is that an in-joke?

One knows some of the work of Harryman, and one has been reading/teaching Spicer since 1963.

But one has never heard of Gerald Stern. I thought that was the name of that New York radio morning guy with the long hair.

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16. **George Bowering**

Re: Small Press Traffic

Tue 2 May 1995

Not only was Pound being ironic in that advice to give up poetry, as there's nothing in it---he was quoting his figure who stands in for Arnold Bennett.

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17. **cris cheek**

Re: and desire / the 39 steps

Tue 2 May 1995

your terms are a couch to me. streams glowing rust under grounds provide
means of transports out of sight. arguments overtaking home thorough honey
from voices caught in several 'minds' - those outcrops from the desert plain that
flower her e

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18. **Robert A Harrison**

Hermetic Gallery Visual Poetry Show

Tue 2 May 1995

There's been a change in plans for the Visual Poetry show to take place at the
Hermetic Gallery in Milwaukee, WI.

The new deadline for work is August 1, 1995.

The show will now run from August 25 to September 30.

Submissions preferred in but not limited to 8 1/2 by 11 format.

Send work to

Bob Harrison & Nick Frank

PO Box 11166

Milwaukee, WI 53211

Thanks

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19. **Tony Green**

Re: cordelia

Tue 2 May 1995

Hi Chris Stroffolino, I too walk around with illusions of understanding things,
like Shaks plays & posts on the net. I crave true understandings, but have to
make do with what I've got.

Sadly, I find, often, not true enough.

What to do?

When will I ever learn?

Best wishes,

Tony Green,
e-mail: [REDACTED]
post: Dept of Art History,
University of Auckland,
Private Bag 92019,
Auckland, New Zealand
Fax: 64 9-[REDACTED]
Telephone: 64 9 [REDACTED] ext. 8981 or 7276

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20. **Tony Green**

Re: Zen & lango

Tue 2 May 1995

Dear John Geraets,

Richard von Sturmer is back in Auckland for a couple of months, another good person to ask about Zen and poetry. I'll get you his snail-mail address.

Best wishes

Tony Green,
e-mail: [REDACTED]
post: Dept of Art History,
University of Auckland,
Private Bag 92019,
Auckland, New Zealand
Fax: 64 9-[REDACTED]
Telephone: 64 9 [REDACTED] ext. 8981 or 7276

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21. **Tony Green**

Re: Zen & lango

Tue 2 May 1995

Dear John Geraets,

Your list does not include Philip Whalen ? (& too obviously omits? a large part of the Beat generation and friends of disembodied Kerouac....)

Best

Tony Green,
e-mail: [REDACTED]
post: Dept of Art History,
University of Auckland,

Private Bag 92019,
Auckland, New Zealand
Fax: 64 9-
Telephone: 64 9 ext. 8981 or 7276

[↑ Contents](#)

22. **George Bowering**

Re: Real men read hardware poetry

Tue 2 May 1995

In Canada it is not unlikely to find that men who work with wood also read (and write) poetry. David Phillips is a terrific poet who works as a carpenter. Bob Fones is a very good poet who works as a carpenter. Bob Rose (who has moved back to Wash. State) is a good poet and carpenter, and here in Vancouver once worked at a wooden shipworks. I have poems by and bookshelves by both Rose and Phillips in my house.

[↑ Contents](#)

23. **Mn Center For Book Arts**

Re: Zen & lango

Tue 2 May 1995

Just to correct Hank's note on Zen, Leslie Scalapino, & Norman Fischer, for John Geraets, that Norman's PRECISELY THE POINT BEING MADE is co-published by Chax & Leslie's O Books. Norman is a Zen monk and teacher, and yes, Leslie is exuberantly interested in his work, and is in dialogue with him in her work. In January they gave a talk together in San Francisco.

Hi, Hank

charles alexander

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24. **Edward Foster**

Re: and desire / the 39 steps

Tue 2 May 1995

until you reason, nothing darkens sight. in this demonic pleasure, transport overtakes the green regard, no desert but an intimate despair that doubles as delight. in this the voice is single until he is here, thus imitate my fear.

[↑ Contents](#)

25. **beard**

Re: Zen & lango

Wed 3 May 1995

Richard von Sturmer is back in Auckland for a couple of months, another good person to ask about Zen and poetry.

Tony,

I think Riemke Ensing has an interest in Zen, if only as part of a general interest in Eastern aesthetics:

The Katherine Mansfield Signature as Zen Painting

```
<pre>
```

No doubt about that fine down line turning
up the tail end of a winter
branch. Definitely
Niten's *Shrike* and maybe Tohaku
is there making mountains
in the morning mist.

(Ignore the <> bits, they're just HTML codes for italics and so on.)

Bernadette Hall's poetry has been described as having a 'Zen-like concentration on the spiritual behind the real', and of course Baxter was introduced to Zen by his son Hoani. It's just a stab in the dark, but my reading of *Autumn Testament* leads me to think that Baxter was about to renounce Catholicism in favour of something resembling Zen Buddhism before he died.

Tom Beard

=====

Tom Beard

"There was a way out of here..."

Auckland, New Zealand

=====

[↑ Contents](#)

26. **Ron Silliman**

Re: Gerald Stern

Wed 3 May 1995

Gerald Stern is a poet in his 60s who I believe teaches in Florida these days. He was one of the first academic free verse writers of the post WW2 era to define a style that was pointedly "non Iowa City" but no more interesting (to my eye) for it. He has had a profound (perhaps devastating) influence on poets whose work I have some fondness for, such as Jack Gilbert (the Yale Younger Poet of the early 60s who attended Spicer's Magick Workshop) and Linda Gregg. Betwixt the three there's a whole little Gerald Stern cult out there somewhere. He occasionally does commentaries on NPR where he seems primarily to be Andrei Codrescu without the professional accent.

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27. **Ron Silliman**

Re: Zen & lango

Wed 3 May 1995

Thinking of the influence of zen buddhism (and other traditions of buddhism also) on poets like Alan Davies and Jackson Mac Low, I also thought of how (if I have my facts straight) Alan was brought up in the Seventh Day Adventist tradition, as was John Taggart, another poet with both a strong spiritual and strong puritan streak. One could of course ask these questions of other traditions as well....

Kathy Acker and Hannah Weiner, for example, both have had significant encounters with hindu traditions.

Also, while we're noting zen poets, Alan Senauke, a priest at the Berkeley Zen Center, was a NY School poet (trained by Koch et al at Columbia where he co-edited an anthology of student writing that was pretty lively, called The Cinch, as I recall) and later a bluegrass musician. Steve Abbott died at the hospice run by Whalen's group in SF.

Ron

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28. **Robert Drake**

Re: poetry and the electronic

Wed 3 May 1995

i'd encourage everyone who publishes work to consider adding their information to the UPC's WWW site, by filling in the following templates & returning them to me, luigi,

at:



lbd

all this talk about puttin' stuff on the net makes it sound hard-to-do & scary, but it's not. it does take a little time, which lots of us are short on. so here's a stab at distributing the work, & making it less threatening...

okay, so here's 2 "templates" to use to construct publisher's pages for the Electronic Poetry Center. There are 2 parts here: the first part is a "publisher's page", which will present overall information about your press plus a list of publications that you have available. the second part is a template that you'll fill out for each individual title--if you have 5 titles, you'll need to make 5 separate copies, one for each title. in practice, readers will see the first page describing the press, and the list of titles will be "hotlinks", allowing them to select and jump to the information about the specific title.

How to do it:

^^^^^^^^^^

-->instructions relating to filling in these templates are enclosed between rows of asterix *****, just like this intro is. you can delete the instructions, or i will.

-->the bits of information on the templates that you've gotta fill in are [enclosed in brackets]--just replace all the stuff in brackets (& the brackets themselves) with the appropriate info. for example, i'd replace:

<H1>[NAME OF YOUR PRESS--all caps]</H1>

with:

<H1>BURNING PRESS</H1>

ignore, _but leave in place_, all the other stuff ("<HTML>" etc.-- that's the formatting stuff, and it becomes invisible to the reader when they're viewing the document; other text is just the framework into which you're fitting your information--change it as appropriate). some of the data may seem redundant--but different parts are used by the system in different ways... trust me.

after you're done, send it all back to me, i'll do a little cleaning up (and installing the links), and send it on to Loss for inclusion in the EPC.

this is an experiment, & i'll be interested to see how it works. if you have any questions, just write me (luigi) at:

██████.

asever

lbd

start of "publisher's page" template:

<HTML>

<TITLE> [Title of Document--usually your press name] </TITLE>

<H1> [NAME OF YOUR PRESS--all caps] </H1>

<BODY>

[put a general description of your press here;
history, mission, editorial perspective, etc.

<P>

it can go on for several paragraphs if you wish--
put "<P>" at the _beginning_ of every paragraph,
just as i did at the beginning of this paragraph.]

<HR>

***** the next
section will become the "hotlist"--a list of the titles you're describing, each of
which will "link" to each of the separate titles' descriptions & samples.

ignore all the gibberish--replace the bracketed "[title #1]" etc. with the titles &
authors as you want them to appear (i did the first one as a model). you can
add as many titles as you wish-- just duplicate the whole line & follow the same
format. and there's a bracketed space available for publication date, optional
but helpful... *****

<P>

<H2>Titles Available from [your press name here]:</H2>

 James Joyz: USELESSYS (1904)

 [author #2]: [TITLE #2] ([date #2])

 [author #3]: [TITLE #3] ([date #3])

 [author #4]: [TITLE #4] ([date #4])

 [author #5]: [TITLE #5] ([date #5])

<HR>

<P>

For further information about [your press name here],
or to place an order, contact:

<P>

<H3>[your name]

[your street address]

[your city/state/zipcode]<P>

</H3>

or email:

<P>

<H3><ADDRESS>[your email address]</ADDRESS></H3>

<HR>

Back to EPC's Publisher's Bookshelf

</BODY>

</HTML>

end of "publisher's page" template

***** start of
"publication page" template; you'll need to make one of these for _each_
publication you listed under "Titles Available from Press" section, above:

<HTML>

<TITLE>[Title of Document, "Author: TITLE" (ie Joyze: USELESSYS)]</TITLE>

<H1>[Author of Book: Initial Caps]:</H1>

<H1>[TITLE OF BOOK: ALL CAPS]</H1>

<BODY>

[put a descriptive blurb about the book here; style content etc...
keep in mind that this may potentially reach a VERY diverse audience,
many of whom have _not a clue_ about things you take for granted...]

<P>

again, you can go on for several paragraphs if you wish--
perhaps quotes from some reviews (one paragraph @)?--
as before, put "<P>" at the _beginning_ of every paragraph.]

<P>

<H3>About the Author:</H3>

[an optional short bio &/or list of other publications...
like sed, almost _anybody_ might wind up reading this,
might help clue some folks in...]

<HR>

the next section should contain a sample of work from the book.
it will appear _exactly_ as typed, in standard monospaced font,
so type it in as you wish it to appear: spacing, indents, line-
breaks etc...

feel free to give a substantial taste of the author's work--
bytes are cheap--i'd suggest duplicating the heading information
(<H3>[POEM TITLE] by [Author]</H3>) for each poem, if you
include more than one.

<P>

some work (audio-poetry, concrete poetry, etc.) may not be able
to be represented adequately in plain-ASCII text formats.
if that's the case, contact me (),
& i'll work with you to get it right...

<P>

<H3>[POEM TITLE] by [Author]</H3>

<H4>From the book [Book Title]</H4>

<P>

<PRE>

[the poem (or other sample from the publication) goes here:

roses are read
violets are too
i'd write about tansy
but charlie sed it's taboo

(end ov poem)]

</PRE>

<HR>

<P>

<H4>[BOOK TITLE] is available from [your press name here] for [book price,
postpaid].</H4>

For further information, or to place an order, contact:

<P>

<H3>[your name]

[your street address]

[your city/state/zipcode]

</H3>

<P>

or email:<P>

<H3><ADDRESS>[your email address]</ADDRESS></H3>

optional bit if you're willing to consider trades--

tailor it to fit your individual terms...

<P>

The publisher is willing to consider trading with other publishers
or authors for this title--contact her via email to make specific
arrangements...

<HR>

Back to list of titles available from

[your press name here]

</BODY>

</HTML>

end of "publication page" template

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29. **Hank Lazer**

Re: Gerald Stern

Wed 3 May 1995

I'm not joking, Ron, and others. There are two Sterns (Gerry). One is Jerry Stern who does commentaries on NPR. He's a fiction writer based at Florida State. Gerald Stern, who usually teaches at Iowa, and who taught here at Alabama, is a poet who works in emotional saturated long lines, has a reputation as a hip jewish version of Whitman, etc. Wins lots of awards. Was a childhood buddy of Jack Gilbert (as for Ron's sketch on influence, it could go the other way, Gerry idolizes Jack and vice versa). Gerry's career got a late start with Lucky Life when Gerry was perhaps in his early to mid forties. Since then,

an avalanche of books. He's a "dramatic" reader, very popular with the MFA gravy train, much anthologized, awarded, and in some circles powerful.... etc. etc.etc.

Hank Lazer

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30. **cris cheek**

Re: poetry and the electronic

Wed 3 May 1995

I'd just like to openly thank Bob Drake for his very workable templates. Also of course to Loss at the EPC and all those who have pegged away at this discussion.

It'll be intriguing to watch the publisher sites flourish over the next couple of months as we get to grips with making the mistakes - but put the information up on-line.

sincerely terrific intervention Bob

love

cris

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31. **Kit Robinson**

ZenLang

Wed 3 May 1995

Reply to: ZenLang John Geraets, The visiting Chinese scholar Zhang Zing (sp? - Hank?) told me he is working with two groups of poets in China--a "language" group, with interest in parallel developments here, and a zen group, whose work is naturalistic and lyrical. According to Zhang, these groups are basically antithetical, with no overlap. He was surprised when I told him about the common ground here (Fischer, Davies, et al.) Subsequently, I wrote a brief essay for Zhang on Zen & poetry, focusing on my own practice and quoting a couple of koans from the Gateless Barrier (Mumonkan). I can send it to you if you like. Kit Robinson

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32. **I.LIGHTMAN**

aleatoric composition, using chance

Wed 3 May 1995

Hallo everyone,

I just wanted to float a topic, because Ron mentioned Jackson MacLow, and we've been talking about Zen. I'm very interested in aleatoric composition, in New Music Composition, famously with John Cage, and also in writing, famously also with Cage as well as MacLow and others. I'd be really interested in anyone off or on list discussing with me (and informing me over) some things that have been interesting me. Mostly: how is chance conceived?

Does it have to be random?

Does the artist have to turn over the work to chance, for it to be proper aleatoric work? Karlheinz Stockhausen uses chance as part of his process, generating values within a composition he's set up, letting chance set up the composition but putting in his own values, editing afterwards etc. If chance is a kind of experimentation, where is the research write-up? Shouldn't there be at least some, sometimes?

Also: can chance be oracular?

If one is consulting an oracle, the I-Ching, the Tarot, isn't it potentially sacrilegious to use it to generate non-ego, randomness etc? Isn't it a bit colonialist, like picking up the I-Ching on one's travels and using it as a toy? How much interest is there, or recognition, of artists using aleatoric methods as a kind of rune casting, to produce something more true, that surprises and sobers her/him?

I'd very much appreciate anyone's thoughts - especially you, Herb, as we've been talking a bit about this privately, and I'd really like to hear your New Music background come in, or you, Cris, ditto, or any of us who have been talking from the mystical side of agnosticism rather than the athiest secular side,

Ira

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33. **Kit Robinson**

Reading

Wed 3 May 1995

Reply to: Reading

James, Bill, Tony, Marisa, Kenny, Marc, & others in or near NYC,

I will be reading with Joe Elliot at:

The Mazer Theater of the Educational Alliance

197 East Broadway (corner of Jefferson St.), New York

██████████ ext. 394
Sunday, May 14, 4 p.m.
Hope I see you there.
Kit Robinson

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34. **David Ball**
Re: Zen & Iango
Wed 3 May 1995

I would include Philip Whalen in just about ANY positive list...
INCLUSIVE WHALEN-FAN

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35. **Ryan Knighton**
Re: aleatoric composition, using chance
Wed 3 May 1995

I too love this subject, as it happens. What interests me is the role of agency. It seems, as with Jackson M., that the removal of agency, if that is possible, calibrates as much chance as Oulipo does by setting strictures, by heightening agency. Any thoughts on this paradox? Or is it just a paradox to me?

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36. **Chris Stroffolino**
Re: cordelia
Wed 3 May 1995

Dear George Bowering--- I used to think Howard Stern was better than Gerald Stern, but then he helped get Pataki elected. Gerald Stern is a kind "Iowa School" poet who didn't get famous until he was mid-50's or so but has won over the "mainstream" "unpolitical" "suburban" proletariat crowd in many ways. When I was in college he read. The editor of my college poetry magazine was absolutely OBSESSED with him....he has a poem that ends with the lines: I lean on my right side for words And on my left side for music (something like that) this just knocked her out, for some reason i'll never understand...anyway, ironies of ironies, I read with the guy in Phila. in 1987....He would tell the "story behind the poem"--I wrote this when i was sitting on the back porch while my family was inside watching t.v." then he'd begin the poem, "I was on the back porch and my family was inside watching T.V." even my then 15 year old sister thought it was absurd....we preferred Paul

Westerburg who had just released "Pleased To Meet Me"--- "One foot in the door, the other foot in the gutter The sweet smells that you adore. I think I'd rather smother...." Hope this answers your question.....Chris Stroffolino

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37. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Gerald Stern

Wed 3 May 1995

Hank---Gerald Stern as a "hip jewish version of Whitman"---he's about the opposite of hip i thought....not that hip should be a standard... but though people tend to like his "bodily disgust", I never heard him called "hip"--he's pretty much the paradigm of conventional. Phillip Levine and James Tate may be "hip" enough to redeem them from blandness, but Stern???? Explain. I agree with you about the MFA gravy train, though. Somebody in Phila., once referred to the "Gerald Stern poetry mafia." Yours, Abby Hoffa

[↑ Contents](#)

38. **George Bowering**

Re: cordelia

Wed 3 May 1995

Well, you cant fault Shakespeare for not developing female characters, either, L. Because the idea of a character in literature had not yet been invented. Now that we dont believe in them any more, we should be able to read Shakes better than people could 50 years ago. Maybe not, but it seems as if it should be true. But I do agree with you that Shakespeare's sonnets are a dream. One could take them for a year to a desert isle and survive on them.

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39. **Alan Sondheim**

Re: Gerald Stern

Wed 3 May 1995

When this discussion started, I thought you were all talking about Gerd Stern, who founded USCO and did some prescient writing in the 1970s - any idea where he is now?

Alan

On Wed, 3 May 1995, Chris Stroffolino wrote:

Hank---Gerald Stern as a "hip jewish version of Whitman"---he's about the opposite of hip i thought....not that hip should be a standard...

but though people tend to like his "bodily disgust", I never heard him called "hip"--he's pretty much the paradigm of conventional. Phillip Levine and James Tate may be "hip" enough to redeem them from blandness, but Stern???? Explain. I agree with you about the MFA gravy train, though. Somebody in Phila., once referred to the "Gerald Stern poetry mafia." Yours, Abby Hoffa

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40. **Tenney Nathanson**

Re: POETICS Digest - 1 May 1995 to 2 May 1995

Wed 3 May 1995

Charles (A), Hank (L) et al: does Leslie actually, ahem, sit? Also: anybody have a sense of how to make the zen stuff engage the Baudelaire/Benjamin stuff in her Trilogy? I've done a rudimentary version of an article on the latter aspect of the book, but ducked the former as too lengthy for what I had room (or smarts) for. Current hunch is that Benjamin's Theses (on History) will be best avenue. But suggestions/queries very welcome.... Tenney

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41. **Susan Schultz**

2 announcements

Thu 4 May 1995

TinFish, a journal of experimental poetry, with an emphasis on work from the Pacific region, welcomes contributions. Please write to the editor, Susan M. Schultz, at 1422A Dominis Street, Honolulu, HI 96822, or Dept of English, 1733 Donaghho Road, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, 96822. The first issue will be free to anyone who asks for a copy (and you can do this over email). Please spread the word. And many thanks to those who responded to my earlier query.

While I'm at it, let me advertise the publication, in June, of a group of essays, _The Tribe of John: Ashbery and Contemporary Poetry_, from the University of Alabama Press, which I edited. Contributors include Charles Altieri, Charles Bernstein, Bonnie Costello, Donald Revell, Andrew Ross, and John Shoptaw. The book offers new readings of Ashbery's work, as well as investigations of the cultural contexts of contemporary American poetry.

Susan S.

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42. **John Cayley**

Re: aleatoric composition, using chance

Thu 4 May 1995

A similar thread came up in the experiwhat? discussions and I'm repeating some remarks from previous posts.

'In this day and age' we can no longer ignore the possibilities of working in 'real time' when composing **using** chance.

The machine allows us to generate results and adjust processes fast enough for there to be subsequent composition of the procedures themselves, such that these procedures may be adjudged/selected/devloped for their richness.

Processes can also be open-ended, feeding back into themselves. I have a new piece that learns phrases selected from generated text by the reader. The reader's copy of the piece is changed irreversibly by adding selections. Since the generative process is based on frequencies of collocations (word juxtapositions) the piece will eventually be dominated by phrases selected by the reader. (It would probably also eventually choke on the amount of text generated and selected. BTW this is probably also properly 'chaotic' -- literary turbulence slowly drawn towards a 'strange attractor', nudged into place by the reader.)

The aleatory is here being **used** and **composed** sometimes by the reader.

Cris and Ira, I know, have seen the work I have done for Macintosh machines and which moves in this direction.

Other references -- I don't think they been mentioned yet -- are: Charles O. Hartman & Hugh Kenner (yes, **the** Hugh Kenner) *_Sentences_* by Sun & Moon, 1995 (I've just rec'd it) which prints results from applying O'Rourke & Kenner's 'Travesty' program and Hartman's programming of Mac Low's diastic method (v. similar to my own 'mesostic hologograms'). Neither can we ignore the Fluxus and Emmett Williams, esp. say, his 'ultimate poetry' (*_A Valentine for Noel_* etc.)

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43. **Sheila E. Murphy**

Re: aleatoric composition, using chance

Thu 4 May 1995

>Hallo everyone,

>

>I just wanted to float a topic, because Ron mentioned Jackson MacLow, and

>we've been talking about Zen.

> I'm very interested in aleatoric composition, in New Music
>Composition, famously with John Cage, and also in writing, famously also
>with Cage as well as MacLow and others.
> I'd be really interested in anyone off or on list discussing with
>me (and informing me over) some things that have been interesting me.
> Mostly: how is chance conceived?
>
>Does it have to be random?
>
>Does the artist have to turn over the work to chance, for it to be proper
>aleatoric work? Karlheinz Stockhausen uses chance as part of his process,
>generating values within a composition he's set up, letting chance set
>up the composition but putting in his own values, editing afterwards etc.
>If chance is a kind of experimentation, where is the research write-up?
>Shouldn't there be at least some, sometimes?
>
> Also: can chance be oracular?
>
>If one is consulting an oracle, the I-Ching, the Tarot, isn't it potentially
>sacrilegious to use it to generate non-ego, randomness etc? Isn't it a bit
>colonialist, like picking up the I-Ching on one's travels and using it as
>a toy? How much interest is there, or recognition, of artists using
>aleatoric methods as a kind of rune casting, to produce something more true,
>that surprises and sobers her/him?
>
>I'd very much appreciate anyone's thoughts - especially you, Herb, as we've
>been talking a bit about this privately, and I'd really like to hear your
>New Music background come in, or you, Cris, ditto, or any of us who have
>been talking from the mystical side of agnosticism rather than the athiest
>secular side,
>
>
>Ira

Ira, A few thoughts in response to the topic you've floated. When trust supplies the foundation for engagement with chance practices, miracles can happen. The process seems to require a complete letting go to work as it can (note the absence of "should"). I became wildly interested in 12-tone music during my undergrad studies in music theory and composition. And later in writing set up structures or configurations that could serve as containers (not strong enough and at the same time too strong a word) that released me from multitasking on infrastructure and sound or meaning.

I'm most interested in chance practices by Jackson MacLow and others, partly because of what happens when confidence and the wide open possibilities intersect.

The establishing of arbitrary (but are they?) structures that one finds or invents for generative practice can lead to very worthwhile findings. I don't mean to preach my interest, as you obviously have yours. Just a quick say so. Glad to be thinking about this again and again.

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44. **Mn Center For Book Arts**

Re: cordelia's westerbergian, stern as hell

Thu 4 May 1995

Chris Stroffolino writes,

we preferred Paul Westerburg (sic) who had just released
"Pleased To Meet Me"---
"One foot in the door, the other foot in the gutter
The sweet smells that you adore. I think I'd rather smother...."
Hope this answers your question

When I moved to Minneapolis year before last I thought, at first, that Paul Westerberg being here and from here was one of the rare saving graces. I've found a few more, but he's still near the top.

charles alexander

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45. **Ron Silliman**

Re: Gerald Stern

Thu 4 May 1995

Hank,

The idea of two Gerald Sterns is too cruel to imagine,

Ron

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46. **Hank Lazer**

Re: Gerald Stern

Thu 4 May 1995

Yes, Ron, two Sterns is more stern a world than one ought to have to inhabit....
I could tell stories (see G. Stern in panel discussion in What Is a Poet?--

interactions with C Bernstein etc)) -- but value the use of my kneecaps, knowing how rough the poetry mafia can be.

Hank

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47. **Hank Lazer**

Re: ZenLang

Thu 4 May 1995

Kit--It's Zhang Ziqing (who is a scholar based in Nanjing at Nanjing University--a wonderful person). He has some translations and a brief essay on the New Zen Poets in the current Talisman.--Hank

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48. **Hank Lazer**

Re: Gerald Stern

Thu 4 May 1995

Chris--I agree with your take on "hip" & GStern--I meant the term ironically, as if it were a jacket blurb (with which I am in disagreement). Personally, I find most of his work formulaic safe effusiveness, the finger pointing too insistently to the sensitive poet's own tears... -- Hank

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49. **Hank Lazer**

Re: POETICS Digest - 1 May 1995 to 2 May 1995

Thu 4 May 1995

Tenney--Hello! Sorry, I don't know the answers to your questions. Might try writing directly to Leslie....

Hank Lazer

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50. **Madeline Gins**

Recipients of Poetics Digest

Thu 4 May 1995

Please send me an updated list of the recipients of Poetics Digest.

Thank you

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51. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Gerald Stern

Thu 4 May 1995

Of course there's two Charles Bernstein's two (so maybe that cancels out the two Gerald Sterns ha ha)...the other one edited a punk poetry zine in the late 80's in Illinois called "Cops Hate poetry"--I lost touch with him. I know there's two David Shapiros's two--the more famous one got upset I'm told when he found out the lesser one got published because he used the name.....Ah. The name game....and happy 25th anniversary of the Kent State Massacre everyone!!! (It's April. No, May. it's May--- as Frank said). CS

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52. **H. T. KIRBY-SMITH**

Aleatory Poetry

Thu 4 May 1995

As I understand it, John Cage uses --in his poetry-- an arbitrary sequencing to guarantee perpetual freshness and spontaneity--to force the poetic genius constantly to invent for itself and assert itself in new ways.

If that's not quite right, perhaps all the better. After all, we are not talking about reaching agreement on anything.

But what occurred to me some time ago is that in poetry written in the language we speak, call it English or American, the use of rhyme does the same thing. What a crazy thing, rhyme! What an irrational thing to do! To pick a word not for its meaning but just because it happens to sound the same as another word! Especially to do so in this language where rhyme words are so much harder to find than in Italian where everything feminine rhymes with everything else feminine.

Using rhyme is like using the random-number generator in a computer. It automatically introduces irrationality or unpredictability--if you want it to. For example, would it ever occur to anyone to write a poem in which one went from "moon" to "pantaloon" in the space of a few words. And as far as I can remember no one has.

Or "Prester John's Balloon." In this case someone has.

The problem may be that over the centuries the irrationality has been squeezed out, and we need new and fresh sources of nuttiness. Too many dried up peels and husks lying around--"June", "croon", etc.

There's nothing wrong with Cage's theory; it's just the practice. Banging on pot lids is fun to listen to for a few minutes. Has anyone ever shouted out "Encore!"

at the end of Cage's piece that requires nothing but a few minutes of total silence?

For real inventiveness try May Swenson's poem, "The Watch." Its organization is determined by an irrational principle as well. Or perhaps it would be better to say, its lines are dislocated by a new type--found only in that poem--of random-number machine.

Tom Kirby-Smith
English Department
UNC-Greensboro
Greensboro NC 27412
Phone: [REDACTED]

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53. **Mark Wallace**
announcing Aerial #8

Thu 4 May 1995

Aerial #8, special issue "Barrett Watten: Contemporary Poetics as Critical Theory," edited by Rod Smith, is now available from Edge Books.

Contributors to the discussion on Watten's work and influence include Bruce Andrews, Peter Baker, Daniel Barbiero, Manuel Brito, Steve Benson, Bruce Campbell, Joseph Conte, Daniel Davidson, Michael Davidson, Alan Davies, Ron Day, Jerry Estrin, Norman Fischer, Allen Fisher, Carla Harryman, Lyn Hejinian, Kevin Killian, Jackson Mac Low, Bob Perelman, Kit Robinson, Leslie Scalapino, and George Tysh. The issue also features writing by Jack Spicer and Victor Shklovsky.

Aerial #8 (304 pgs., ISBN 0-9619097-4-9) is available for \$12.50. Please direct all payments and correspondence to:

Rod Smith
Aerial
Edge Books
P.O. Box 25642
Washington, D.C. 20007

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54. **Mark Wallace**

Kevin Killian, please ring me via e-mail

Thu 4 May 1995

Kevin Killian, will you please contact me over e-mail at the address listed on this posting--I have the information you requested, but don't have access to your e-mail address.

Mark Wallace

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55. **William Slaughter**

Re: Gerald Stern

Thu 4 May 1995

Two Gerald Sterns, two David Shapiros, and--for the record--two William Staffords. The poet and the editor (of MODERN FICTION STUDIES). The poet, early on, used his middle initial, "E," and the editor, later on, used his middle initial, "T." I wonder what _difference_, if any, the initial-ing made?

Bill

William Slaughter



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56. **Herb Levy**

Re: aleatoric composition, using chance

Thu 4 May 1995

Since <silence>, the John Cage mailing list, is lately (& sometimes interestingly) bogged down with bibliographic issues regarding the provenance of various scores by Cage in chronological order, I guess it makes sense to discuss chance composition here.

Ira raises asks the question <Does it have to be random?> In most ways I think the question is more accurately stated <_Can_ it be random?>. I don't think it can be entirely random though there are certainly a wide range of how much the expected sound or word can be avoided.

Once a composer or poet or whoever has selected the gamut or aggregate upon which the change processes are to operate, once the composer or poet has decided how to interpret the chance operations, there are enough elements of taste and choice involved to eliminaate any true, or at least total <randomness>. Rather, the chance elements allow the artist to arrive at an

array of events and structures that are not prescribed by an individual's sense of taste or rules. In music this may include the rules of melody or harmony, in poetry, rules of syntax or discourse.

(There is, BTW, a very good book on Cage's compositional processes called <The Music of John Cage> by James Pritchett, published by Cambridge University Press. At least those of you at colleges and universities should be able to get it from a library. As may be clear to those of you who have heard and not just read about Cage's music, there is often a structure to it, and sometimes its an audible one. These structures simply don't fit any of the standard musical syntaxes. Does this sound familiar to any poets out there?)

In, say, <Music of Changes> for solo piano, or <Concerto for Prepared Piano and Chamber Orchestra, John Cage uses the I Ching to order events, etc. but he is selecting from a range of (very small) events he has previously composed. In later works, such as <Atlas Eclipticalis> or (much later) <Etudes Borealis>, star charts are used as the original source material for "randomly" selecting notes, but Cage determines how the charts are used and follows this system with a degree of rigor.

In other works, say <Music Walk> and <Fontana Mix>, performers use materials provided by Cage to generate a score from which they perform. In these cases, Cage has very little control over the actual sonic outcome of the work, but he has some control over how the sounds are chosen.

But very few of Cage's works are this free and, in many ways, he was always in control of his music, he simply was not using the same systems as others were to structure his music. In fact, he rarely used the same system more than a couple of times to generate his music. It's this constant move toward looking for new systems, rather than getting into a stylistic schtick, that I find most appealing about Cage's music.

In Cage's poetry, his choice of source materials give the works form and content to a great extent. His various writings through Thoreau and Finnegans Wake are about the source materials, as are his later Norton poetry lectures, etc. In his writing he was more upfront about the fact that he made choices about how much of the source material to keep and how much to discard in following through his formal structures.

In the various methodical writings of Jackson Mac Low, his selection of the gamut of choices, works in similar ways. But, perhaps because he works primarily as a writer, Mac Low has a wider range within his poetry than Cage and isn't as simply dependent on formal decision structures.

As to Stockhausen, Ira, I don't see how your description of his use of chance is much different than the way most artists have of trying stuff out and seeing if it

works. (Our back channel mail about new music has only let me know that my turntable needs a new part, so I still haven't listened to the Stockhausen I have on hand lately.)

As to the colonialism implicit in the use of the I Ching by tourists for non-oracular divination. Well, as far as Cage goes, does it make it any better if it turns out that Cage simply broke things down into no more than 64 categories and used coins and or yarrow stalks to determine which of the 64 categories to select?

Cage rarely used the oracular text of the I Ching to determine his artistic choices. I'm not sure how late it was developed but someone eventually wrote a computer utility that randomly generated so in the later years, he wasn't even using the tradition means of divination to determine which of the categories to use.

There's plenty more to say, but I'll save it for now & see how others respond.

- Herb Levy

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57. **Herb Levy**

Re: aleatoric composition, using chance

Thu 4 May 1995

On Wed, 3 May 1995, Ryan Knighton wrote:

I too love this subject, as it happens. What interests me is the role of agency. It seems, as with Jackson M., that the removal of agency, if that is possible, calibrates as much chance as Oulipo does by setting strictures, by heightening agency. Any thoughts on this paradox? Or is it just a paradox to me?

Ryan Knighton -

Maybe we're thinking of different aspects of Mac Low's work, but I think both Mac Low and (some, at least, of) the Oulipians are doing similar things. I don't see the distinction you're making between chance and strictures, when you look at the actual systems in use. If you gave an example it might help me understand what you mean.

For instance, I'm not sure that I see a functional difference between, say selecting words by the position of letters from a certain index word or phrase, or others of Mac Low's strategies and selecting, say the seventh word after a noun in the dictionary. They're both ways to get around using the easy ways of writing that standard syntax allows us/forces us to fall into.

- Herb Levy

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58. **Edward Foster**

Re: ZenLang

Thu 4 May 1995

kit robinson: re: zhang ziqing and the chinese "new zen poets" see his essay and translations in the new talisman.

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59. **Tony Green**

Re: Gerald Stern

Thu 4 May 1995

Well remembered Chris Stroffolino. I'll observe a two minute silence for Kent, Ohio. Tom Beckett once showed me where the site had been levelled by the University so that there is no physical geographic trace anymore. Here our university capping parade that year was marked by hundreds of black armbands, students and staff. I have a namesake in England, Anthony Green, R.A. I once wrote to him suggesting he change his name as I had exhibited paintings publicly before him (humorously as I thought) but got no reply. So recalling Henri Matisse's action in the same circumstances -- adding a hyphen between the two names, I changed my by-line to Tony Green. I toyed with the cumbersome "Anthony S.G.Green" for a while. The result is confusion in library catalogues. And in London there are people who still think I painted Anthony Green, R.A.'s pictures. We're talking trade-marks and trade-practices here. I have a friend who has exhibited paintings and published writing under three different names so far.... The proper-name problem extends wider than we might think.

Best

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60. **Marisa A Januzzi**

/advertising agency/

Thu 4 May 1995

H.T. Kirby-Smith's interesting post about the "irrationality" of rhyme as a way of organizing poetic choices brings the discussion of chance composition, in a way, to rhetoric. Did anyone else see the piece in the NYTimes about the susceptibility of the brain, to rhyme? In other words there are reasons babies

love to hear recitations of Dr. Suess. (Lyric as cry for Mama, as Barbara Johnson might say.)

I composed a long poem with a friend using dice. We were delighted with the results, but predictably maybe, no one was very interested in reading the whole thing. I mean the (inexistent) (?) metapoem was more interesting than the poem, and we who did it were more excited than anyone who read it....

Please send aleatory energy to an 87 year old man you don't know, who's about to undergo surgery....

Thanks everyone
Marisa

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61. **Dr L.A. Raphals** **Twelfth Night**

Thu 4 May 1995

To my mind that heart-stopping moment when Viola realized what has happend beats anything in Hamlet (better theatre too).

-- Lisa Raphals

On Wed, 3 May 1995,
George Bowering wrote:

Well, you cant fault Shakespeare for not developing female characters, either, L. Because the idea of a character in literature had not yet been invented. Now that we dont believe in them any more, we should be able to read Shakes better than people could 50 years ago. Maybe not, but it seems as if it should be true. But I do agree with you that Shakespeare's sonnets are a dream. One coulkd take them for a year to a desert isle and survive on them.

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62. **Tony Green** **Re: aleatoric composition, using chance**

Thu 4 May 1995

Try: " Chance " operations in the arts commonly involve the selection of materials by locating the intersection of (usually) two systems, e.g. sounds, spaces, durations, words, phrases -- with -- finite sets of numbers.

Note: although all possible results of these operations could be produced by computer-processing (provided the numbers involved are limited), the effect is usually to select one or more) of the available possibilities. In this way the

selection(s) are put beyond the range of what might be selected by unaided brain-power.

Thus large intersecting systems are pitted against deliberate choice.

The purposes for such designs vary from user to user and, judging by the elaborate descriptions of process provided by Jackson Mac Low (to which one or other of the Charles Bernstein's has drawn attention before "me", one of the Anthony Green's), the purposes also vary with each individual occasion of use.

What is clearly still deliberate and purposive is the positioning of the "artist" and of the "audience". This purposive character is apt to confuse those who regard only the "chance" of the procedures, thus neglecting artist-work-audience relations.

Intrstng, no? as ever a Formalist reading taken alone is ineffectual -- because it lacks a Contextual reading (i.e. social/political) & round we go again, folks.

Best
it erst

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63. **cris cheek**

Re: 2 announcements

Thu 4 May 1995

TinFish, a journal of experimental poetry, with an emphasis on work from the Pacific region, welcomes contributions. Please write to the editor, Susan M. Schultz, at 1422A Dominis Street, Honolulu, HI 96822, or Dept of English, 1733 Donaghho Road, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, 96822. The first issue will be free to anyone who asks for a copy (and you can do this over email). Please spread the word. And many thanks to those who responded to my earlier query.

Hi Susan, might not be possible for your to post overseas, budget - wise , but if it is I'd love to see a copy of TinFish and will show others.

Cris Cheek
85 London Road South
Lowestoft, Suffolk NR33 OAS
UK

Also btw, I've just been sent the exchange between Silliman and Corn re-Parallel Tradition on CAP-L (which I missed). Your name crops up in the posts but I don't have your post itself. You wouldn't happen to have a copy of what you contributed that you could e-me? And what was the Enslin poem which instigated all of that?

Love
cris

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64. **cris cheek**

Re: poetry and the electronic

Thu 4 May 1995

Yes Loss, 'we're' with you.
Let's see how the templates work out.

love and love
cris

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65. **Wystan Curnow**

Re: Aleatory Poetry

Thu 4 May 1995

Dear Kirby, Re-rhyme. Don't worry so. Look at Charles Bernstein, the
one at the net, always ready to serve poems which get from 'moon' to
'pantaloon' in the space of a few words, and he's not the only one surely. The
outlook for rhyme seems very good to me right now. As to 'june' and 'croon'--
don't write them off. Someone will come along, singing

Mr Beggar & Mrs Davy--
Looney and CRUNEY,
I made a pome out of it,
Havent smoked Luney
 & CruneY
In a Long Time.

Dem eggs & dem dem
Dere bacons, baby,
If you only lay that
 down on a trumpet,
 'Lay that down
 solid brother

'Bout all dem
 bacon & eggs
Ya gotta be able
 to lay it down
 solid--

All that luney
& fruney

or something like with more of the same in choruses to follow ending

William

Carlos

Williams

in itself quite a rhyme.

Wystan

Curnow

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66. **John Byrum**

Re: aleatoric composition, us...

Thu 4 May 1995

Ira,

Some random remarks on your interesting questions about chance.

In a sense, all composition is to greater or lesser degrees chance-generated. The conscious mind believes it is orchestrating things during writing, making decisions, determining themes, etc, but often directions, lines of investigation, phrases, words, etc., just pop in, get writtne down, edited, etc. These then lead in directions not originally envisioned...

Many so-called "chance-generated" texts (by Cage, Mac Low, myself, and others) use very strictly structured methods to arrive at word choices, line lengths, etc, etc. Cage's computer-generated mesostics, for example. Coin tosses, dice throws, I Ching, random numbers keyed to dictionary entries are all examples of structured approaches to opening the composition to "outside" forces not usually thought of as directed by consciousness.

However, if one's sense of self includes the world (self as an "expanded field" taking in "eveything"), these methods simply use other strategies, forces, or parts of the world-self to formulate or generate the text. "The world is speaking through the pen or keyboard" is a natural feeling. Strictly speaking then, chance is not random, but directed in at least three ways:

- through the conscious mind apparently but not completely in charge of its choices.
- by using structured methods of text generation chosen and set into motion by the conscious mind.
- by allowing "natural forces" (such as gravity or random numbers) to "have their say" in the outcomes of the above structured methods.

Hopefully others will also have ideas on this subject.

John

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67. **George Bowering**

Re: Gerald Stern

Fri 5 May 1995

Speaking of two Gerald Sterns, etc.

Peter Quartermain is on this list but Peter Quartermain isn't.

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68. **Ryan Knighton**

Re: aleatoric composition, using chance

Fri 5 May 1995

Herb Levy--

In response to your response I see what you mean. There is some similarity in what I see as a distinction, given your index and syntax example. Perhaps I'm thinking of particular poems/works. For example, Cage's piece wherein he set the trip beams in a bank(?) and connected each one to a note or chord. I see this as not unlike Mac Low's "Antic Quatrains", the computer program configured to create words derived from the subject, which happens to be a name. In both cases, the parameters of the poetic occasion are established by the poet, but the system is autonomous in its movement and development--chance takes over, or at least a semblance of chance insofar as control has been relinquished. But in Oulipo, or Ashbery, sometimes, the strictures force the poet to work within the system parameters, not leave and watch it go. It's an exercise in anti-intention, a work against the sprawl of ego. In this case, you might consider Ashbery's Popeye sestina, which I just recently read. I hope this at least approaches an explication of what I meant. Sorry about the typos.

Best,
Ryan

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69. **Wystan Curnow**

Re: Gerald Stern

Fri 5 May 1995

Dear bill, Did you used to live in New York? I knew a William Slaughter there once, tenth avenue I recall. But seriously you people you've ALL got doubles, at least. There's a good number of Robert Duncans in the Auckland

phonebook, most of them with collections to their name I'll be bound. But what about those lonely people who have their names all to themselves. Spare them a moment's thought. Is there, I ask you Bill, and everyone else who is listening, is there another living Wystan out there (forget about the Curnow). So far as I know there's only me. Help! the one and only Wystan

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70. **Herb Levy**

Re: Aleatory Poetry

Fri 5 May 1995

Tom Kirby-Smith's post on rhyme as a <defamiliarization> (not the term he used) technique is a useful one.

Formal constraints, whether they're older ones like rhyme or rhythmic structure, or newer ones like Mac Low's or the Oulipians, can serv as a kick in the butt to a writer. The trick is for the writer to stay surprised while trying to focus on what she wants to say and having to follow a set of rules can keep both the surprise and the dsired statemnt in a interesting tension. And, as Kirby-Smith notes, it's rare that rhyme alone can do that anymore, for either the writer or the reader.

To paraphrase a sentiment from George Perec's author's note at the end of <La Disparition> (since I don't have the recently published translation at hand, my own loos translation DOES include words containing the letter <e> and doesn't pars quite rightly>:

<And by carefully defining evrything formally, genrally having it just keep looking more natural or producing quiet realism, sentences turn unnaturally vital when xamining your zen-do.>

Or something like that.

Making <sentences turn unnaturally vital> <by carefully defining everything formally> is what poetry is all about, isn't it?

- Herb

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71. **Herb Levy**

Re: Gerald Stern Gerald Stern

Fri 5 May 1995

This thread reminds me of the jazz record store that used to advertise that their stock covered the whole history of jazz from George Lewis to George Lewis.

- Herb

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72. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: chance

Fri 5 May 1995

read Marcel Duchamp.

c

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73. **maria damon**

Re: Aleatory Poetry

Fri 5 May 1995

forgive my ignorance: who are the Oulipians?--maria damon

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74. **R.I.Caddel @ durham.ac.uk**

No Change

Fri 5 May 1995

Good to read the Exact Change Annual, with its fine selection of UK poets introduced by Tom Raworth (Scully, Walsh, Mellors, Marriott etc). And to note his comments on the ways in which such writers are still excluded from attention by the dominant literary culture in the UK. And to note the publicity which Carcanet (who publish it over here) put out for it, which mentions not one of the poets in Raworth's bit, nor Raworth himself, and indeed glosses over the presence of UK poets in the publication, in favour of the "How exotic it all is" approach. It's nice to have the evidence distributed with the assertion.

"For you and me it's better to be unknown - to do our work" Weiners to Fanny Howe, op. cit. p350. No Change.

x	x x Richard Caddel,	E-
mail: R.I.Caddel @ durham.ac.uk	x x Durham University Library,	Phone:
0 [REDACTED]	x x Stockton Rd. Durham DH1 3LY	Fax: 0 [REDACTED]
x x	x x	"Words! Pens are too light.
Take a chisel to write."	x x	- Basil Bunting
x x	x	

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75. **I.LIGHTMAN**

aleatoric composition using chance

Fri 5 May 1995

I've been away for a day, so want to say thank you to everyone who responded to my floated questions. I got to read through the whole discussion this morning, including seeing my own fresh - I kind of didn't make clear that I do use aleatoric methods a lot myself, and may have come across, in my politeness, as a bit more naif than I am. But I'm really satisfied to see so much good introductory discussion of chance, which I'm no good at providing myself.

John Cayley's right that I've seen his work. It's very lovely, using interactiveness and hypertext, so that the lovely looking text slowly materialises word by word on the screen, and as it does, one can interact and make some choices to randomize it. Which is great, a great use of a kind of chance, kind of "editing with chance", which is a bit like what Cage does with source texts, as Herb pointed out.

The emphasis I'd like to add to this discussion, however, is less about chance in the process of composition or editing/reading, and more about chance in the process of personal growth as a person, in the artist or reader, not necessarily both. Ashbery once said that he finds his favourite, or most relevant, parts of books by opening them at "random". I kind of want to talk about writing as horoscope, maybe the artist does it cynically but it cues the reader, or maybe the artist uses the process as a kind of personal horoscope and it also, or instead, cues the reader.

Sheila E. Murphy said, among many other things: "when trust supplies the foundation for engagement with chance practices, miracles can happen. The process seems to require a complete letting go to work as it can... I'm most interested in chance practices because of what happens when confidence and the wide open possibilities intersect."

Sheila, thanks for this, I agree that, as you really kindly put it, we are "preaching different interests", but, still, thanks. I would draw some attention, for my own purposes, to words that link to a dominant culture of chance (that I don't want to lump you in) that I'm critical of, not because I don't like it, but because *I* don't want to be subsumed into it or confused with it (as you show, the best approach is for us all to see we're preaching differently, but I don't always get this from other chancers). The words I'd look at are "trust", "complete letting-go" and "confidence". Of course, your (very seriously taken) phrase, "miracles can happen" allows for so much room and open-mindedness that I think I'm picking up on the phrasing, not the practice. But the issues I want to raise here are: what is trust, does it involve trusting the process to throw up only bearable miracles (what happens if it wants to say to you "go

onto the streets" or "murder the President" - and what if history then showed that by murdering the President a whole awful world crisis would have been avoided?); does complete letting-go involve suspending emotional or intuitive response to the process as it is happening, even if the best message or work might have been produced (people often hold their breath when doing any kind of oracular work, does this equal the biggest sin of all reading, waiting for the message and not observing form, context and means of production?); is confidence intimacy, a sense of invulnerability, or a sense of "this is a path, and I must take it, and take the consequences" inspired courage?

I really clicked with what H. T. Kirby-Smith said about rhyme being an aleatory process, and in fact I came to aleatory process as an inveterate rhymmer, hoping to find some of the same specific pleasure which, as Sheila says, are not what most chancers are in it for. Thanks, H.T., for bringing this in. It raises for me the possibility that one could produce a work of art by aleatory means, and yet pass it off, and have it have the effect of, intentional, ego-written, lyric. Which was what I was trying to say about oracles, and perhaps the idea of the muse. It's like, sometimes when I write a piece that is more written by the requirements of the form, I wind up with a product that I think "that's what I was *trying* to say". In such a procedure, I don't think of my conscious mind as something narrow but as something a little bit blocked and needing unblocking.

This is kind of what Herb says about my description of Stockhausen's use of chance: "I don't see how... (it's)... much different than the way most artists have of trying stuff out and seeing if it works". But I think my, and Stockhausen's, framing of this is oracular or religious. Stockhausen, after all, believes he has been reincarnated from an earlier life on the planet Sirius (if I could, I'd make a Star Trek: The Next Generation episode where the Enterprise visits Sirius and proves Stockhausen was telling the truth, since there are so many episodes in that series that take alien infiltration very seriously). Stockhausen has always talked of a higher calling, and being the servant, or channel, of higher forces. I'm very interested in this framing of chance. Whenever I've seen anyone do any oracle consulting, or rune-casting (and I do it a lot myself, and get results that have often been very powerful for me), you can see the ones who don't do it with seriousness, and then they get jumbled results and then pooh-pooh the whole discipline - and like all spiritualists/psychics, I would say that you get out what you put in. Where might Hannah Weiner's clairvoyant word-seeing come into all this?

Herb, your defence of Cage is admirable, and interesting, but didn't he sell himself, just a tad, on the guru aspect (like Pound with chinese culture) of recommending the Buddhist way of life - and, as I said before, we have been talking about Zen...

John Byrum interestingly says "all composition is to greater or lesser degrees chance-generated", but perhaps what I've been arguing is that all composition could also be said to be written as intentional lyric - in that there's so much incidental daily detail in a lot of lyric, so much extra randomness. John goes on to say "if one's sense of self includes the world (self as an "expanded field" taking in "everything"), these methods simply use other strategies, forces, or parts of the world-self to formulate or generate the text". But I want to ask a little bit about what is "self" and "text" in this formulation; can they be active as well as passive, not simply being open-minded & taking things in & seeing one's connection to the world, but **using** that perspective - not just to recommend it to others, not all of whom may be receptive, but to **act** on it, directing others if they won't direct themselves. And similarly what is "text"? Is it to be perceived largely, in all its connections, as a formal metaphor to describe and convey the world; or might it also be a flare intuitively put into the world by the artist following a sense of higher calling, presenting to one or many readers a fragment you didn't think you were offering, that has an impact on destiny?

I'm thinking of these kinds of interaction between art (and prophecy involves art) and the world. Do they interest anyone?

Ira

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76. **William Slaughter**

Re: Gerald Stern

Fri 5 May 1995

Dear Wystan...

and, as you say, everyone else who is listening.

I've never actually met another WS, though I know from turning the pages of phonebooks, including NYs, that we are many. And I take it for granted, as you do, that I'm not the only one of us who has a collection. I do get calls, from time to time, having to do with a somewhat different kind of collection. There's at least one of us, WSs, out there somewhere who doesn't pay his bills. I don't think I can be of any help to you, Wystan. So far as I know you ARE the only living Wystan, Auden being dead, but I'm quite sure others know better. Aren't you? I hesitated to mention Stafford in my original post and I hesitate to mention Roethke in this one but I am posting from Seattle. In "In a Dark Time" Roethke asks the question: "Which I is I?" That IS the question, isn't it? And, having asked it, I'll return to my own sure silence. Bill.

On 5 May 1995 [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear bill,

Did you used to live in New York? I knew a William Slaughter there once, tenth avenue I recall. But seriously you people you've ALL got doubles, at least. There's a good number of Robert Duncans in the Auckland phonebook, most of them with collections to their name I'll be bound. But what about those lonely people who have their names all to themselves. Spare them a moment's thought. Is there, I ask you Bill, and everyone else who is listening, is there another living Wystan out there (forget about the Curnow). So far as I know there's only me. Help!

the one and only

Wystan

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77. **Don Cheney**

Zen and Langwhich Poetry

Fri 5 May 1995

Zen and the Art of Ron Silliman:

27. Your existence is not a condition of this work. Yet let me, for a moment, posit it. As you read, other things occur to you. You hear the drip of a faucet, or there's music on, or your companion gives a sigh that represents a poor night's sleep. As you read, old conversations reel slowly through your mind, you sense your buttocks and spine in contact with the chair. All of these must certainly be a part of the meaning of this work.

from "The Chinese Notebook"

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78. **Herb Levy**

Re: aleatoric composition, using chance

Fri 5 May 1995

On Thu, 4 May 1995, Ryan Knighton wrote:

Herb Levy--

In response to your response I see what you mean. There is some similarity in what I see as a distinction, given your index and syntax example. Perhaps I m thinking of particular poems/works. For example, Cage's piece wherein he set the trip beams in a bank(?) and connected each one to a note or chord.

I haven't heard this piece, but if, as I assume, it's a musical piece for dancers, there are a lot of composer choices of which sounds are heard by movement in which sector of the grid. Since at least most if not all of the time, dancers will

have to move through adjacent grid sectors, there are quite strict constraints on the order of events. These constraints are further limited by Cage's choice of which sounds to trigger by light beams in which sector. Not knowing the piece, I don't know what sounds were selected, but given these restraints this kind of technology could be used to produce a fairly tonal, harmonically simple sounding work or an extremely dissonant one. Because of the kind of technology involved, it's likely that this work was made in the sixties or late seventies, and given Cage's history, it probably would have been <noisy> by the standards of <normal> music. But there's nothing in the formal structure that requires it to be so.

In fact, tonal music is so strictly rule-based that it is relatively easy to put together computer algorithms to create works within a particular style. As a parlor trick, Mozart once wrote a short piece for solo keyboard in which the order of the measures was to be selected by throwing dice. The formal constraints of harmonic progressions are such that it doesn't sound <random>, but, atleast on the level of movement from measure to measure, it is exactly random.

I see this as not unlike Mac Low's "Antic Quatrains", the computer program configured to create words derived from the subject, which happens to be a name. In both cases, the parameters of the poetic occasion are established by the poet, but the system is autonomous in its movement and development--chance takes over, or at least a semblance of chance insofar as control has been relinquished.

In <Antic Quartrains>, Mac Low used a computer to somehow manipulate anagrams on the letters of Anne Tardos' full name as derived in <A Vocabulary for Annie Brigitte Gilles Tardos> (My copy of the text in <Bloomsday> is not clear about how the words were selected or ordered.) Isn't this a lipogram (an ancient form revived by various Oulipians, in which a writer uses only words that do not contain one or more specific letters) on those letters that are not found in Tardos' name? While their vocabulary is odd, to my ear each quatrain is a parseable sentence. Mac Low even uses a standard lipogrammatic ploy by several times replacing the word <of> with the odd, but recognizable <o'>.

In other words, I just don't see Cage or Mac Low standing back from some kind of runaway train that happens to be spewing out words or sounds in its wake. What they are doing is exactly writing with <anti-intention, a work against the sprawl of ego> as you put it below in your description of Ashbery or the Oulipo group. And, in fact, Cage often described his work in quite similar phrases.

I just don't see a clear place to draw the kind of distinction you want to make. I think it's just a continuum & not some formal opposition.

But in Oulipo, or Ashbery, sometimes, the strictures force the poet to work within the system parameters, not leave and watch it go. It's an exercise in anti-intention, a work against the sprawl of ego. In this case, you might consider Ashbery's Popeye sestina, which I just recently read. I hope this at least approaches an explication of what i meant. Sorry about the typhos.

*Best,
Ryan*

Bests,
Herb

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79. **peter quartermain**

Re: Gerald Stern

Fri 5 May 1995

Now which Peter Quartermain would that BE, George?

In message Thu, 4 May 1995 22:25:14 -0700,

George Bowering <[REDACTED]> writes:

> Speaking of two Gerald Sterns, etc.

>

> Peter Quartermain is on this list but Peter Quartermain isnt.

>

Peter Quartermain
128 East 23rd Avenue voice and fax [REDACTED]
Vancouver
B.C. e-mail: [REDACTED]
Canada V5V 1X2

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80. **Sheila E. Murphy**

Re: ZenLang

Fri 5 May 1995

> Reply to: ZenLang

>John Geraets,

>The visiting Chinese scholar Zhang Zing (sp? - Hank?) told me

>he is working with two groups of poets in China--a "language"
>group, with interest in parallel developments here, and a zen
>group, whose work is naturalistic and lyrical. According to
>Zhang, these groups are basically antithetical, with no overlap.
>He was surprised when I told him about the common ground here
>(Fischer, Davies, et al.) Subsequently, I wrote a brief essay for
>Zhang on Zen & poetry, focusing on my own practice and quoting
>a couple of koans from the Gateless Barrier (Mumonkan). I can
>send it to you if you like.
>Kit Robinson
>

Kit, I'm replying on the list, suspecting that many others may have interest in the essay that you referenced. Would you be willing to post it here, or to share it backchannel with me? Thanks very much.

Sheila Murphy

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81. **Federation Sand**

ZenLang

Fri 5 May 1995

Hmmm....well there seems to be significant interest in this topic of people who sit zazen and write poetry, or people who write poetry to people who sit zazen and write poetry or....? :)

I've been sitting zazen pretty seriously (i.e every day and some full day and two or three day seshin once in a while) for about five years. I would definitely say that it's 'influenced' my writing. I don't consider myself a buddhist (in fact, some of why i sit is wrapped into the question of 'what' i am...i think 'who' is irrelevant until the first one is better explored). I think in general that zen is vastly misunderstood (yes, even more than that) by those who do not practice it regularly (and even by some who do!). Though it is clearly repeated that talking about it is nearly useless, it is simultaneously true that human beings, being talking machines, HAVE to talk about it (whoops! here I am!).

I feel personally that my spirituality, both within the zen paradigm and without are a profound part of the reason, passion and form(s) of my writing. These, coupled with my experiential explorations, recollections, musings and emotings form the core of my inspiration and content. Writing is a mystical act for me, it is an 'ordinary' opening into the energetic realms of psyche and un/sub conscious mind, where the separations fade to fog and then to a ringing silence! A silence which is moving as though one had become the water in the river, without knowing the concepts of water or river. (When it's at its best)

Even when it (my writing) is at its worst or most difficult, I recognize the symbolic power of the act itself and take joy in my ability to join with the poetic and prosaic elements of self and other.

Happy to answer other queries on this subject...

Darin De Stefano

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82. **cris cheek**

Re: aleatoric composition (longish)

Fri 5 May 1995

Noting what's been posted to this subject to date a first stumble into the thicket as requested:-

1. Among many influences MacLow identifies - in Vort 8 (Stein, Schwitters, Duchamp via Cage, Maciunas) 'equally important . . . were Pound's use of economic, historical, and other text materials in 'The Cantos'.' So, it's the choosing and the processing of materials under compositional pressure which is particularly cogent to his earlier work exploring the possibilities of 'chance'. Of course he doesn't always compose using chance. In fact he has probably constructed chance-like collocations into his overall linguistic desire to an extent sufficiently influencing all of his writing - much as Burroughs' experiences with cut-ups have altered his. (oooh oooh - these boiling waters here).

I would agree with Herb about the idiosyncratic (subjective) aspects of 'choosing one's ground' that mitigate against attributions of 'randomness' being used as a basis for criticism of chance-generated or chance-impacted or chance-controlled works. (one thing I felt on Cage's death was how utterly ludicrous the accusations were of his having denied or erased individuality / subjectivity - levelled at him through banal parrotic obituaries in the British press - quite the opposite, his work had tested the vacuousness of such a project and proved it false).

The careful choosing of ground is very important it would seem in minimising the possibilities of generating meaning that one really! did not 'want' - I'm thinking here of conversations I've had, for example with Allen Fisher, about the creation of unchallenged oppressive meanings and whether MacLow ever edits / rejects or intervenes in his works on such bases. In the Vort 8 issue he clearly says that some of his chance poems, as well as intuitive ones, are 'revisable'. And I realise, Ira, that this begins to touch onto your question of producing 'something more true, that surprises and sobers her / him' - but with an extra twist. I've got to agree with Sheila, from my own limited experience in

chance-compositional related matters, that the full range from mundane to utterly extraordinary (in relation to primary expectation / intention) can and does become present.

2. In conversation Jackson once gleefully told me of how his use of frequent instructions to the performers regarding tone and attitude and so on had enabled him to achieve 'indeterminacy through overdetermination'. This is a strand that is of particular interest to me. There might be some correlation to be explored with composers of the 'new complexity' such as Brian Ferneyhough.

3. Phrases that have come up in this discussion which I 'like' are Ryan's 'heightening of agency' - Tony's 'purposive character' in relation to positioning and Herb's question 'Can it be Random?' which seems worth asking once more before the onward wash of this list deletes it.

4. I would agree with John Cayley about the possibilities of composing using chance in real time being comparatively under-explored. I would certainly recommend John's hypertext book 'Unbound' in this respect. It's a terrific piece of work that simply writes (adds) the reader's reading into itself as the reading progresses. And each reader can choose (opt for, in a hands on response) to create a more or less collocational versioning which is explored in dynamic tension alongside and inside the 'original' linear texts. His composition makes chance generation from the materials he provides available to every reader in a real time improvisatory engagement through the act of reading. An extension of the opportunities offered by every book? 'Unbound' is a fascinating multilogue, with the machine acting as exquisite interpreter. Huh? I can't believe I just wrote that! So I'll re-post John's own description:

Processes can also be open-ended, feeding back into themselves. I have a new piece that learns phrases selected from generated text by the reader. The reader's copy of the piece is changed irreversibly by adding selections. Since the generative process is based on frequencies of collocations (word juxtapositions) the piece will eventually be dominated by phrases selected by the reader. (It would probably also eventually choke on the amount of text generated and selected. BTW this is probably also properly 'chaotic' -- literary turbulence slowly drawn towards a 'strange attractor', nudged into place by the reader.)

5. Ira, am I mis-reading you, deliberately? Isn't the often exhaustive documentation of procedures presented alongside the poems (the results of the implementation of the procedures) in MacLow's work in itself a research write-up? What other format do you envisage such taking?

expecting this topic to run far further - bamboozled for now
love
cris

83. **Sheila E. Murphy**
Re: aleatoric composition, us...

Fri 5 May 1995

John Byrum wrote:

>

>In a sense, all composition is to greater or lesser degrees chance-generated.

> The conscious mind believes it is orchestrating things during writing,

>making decisions, determining themes, etc, but often directions, lines of

>investigation, phrases, words, etc., just pop in, get writtne down, edited,

>etc. These then lead in directions not originally envisioned...

>

>Many so-called "chance-generated" texts (by Cage, Mac Low, myself, and

>others) use very strictly structured methods to arrive at word choices, line

>lengths, etc, etc. Cage's computer-generated mesostics, for example. Coin

>tosses, dice throws, I Ching, random numbers keyed to dictionary entries are

>all examples of structured approaches to opening the composition to "outside"

>forces not usually thought of as directed by consciousness.

>

>However, if one's sense of self includes the world (self as an "expanded

>field" taking in "eveything"), these methods simply use other strategies,

>forces, or parts of the world-self to formulate or generate the text. "The

>world is speaking through the pen or keyboard" is a natural feeling.

> Strictly speaking then, chance is not random, but directed in at least three

>ways:

>

> - through the conscious mind apparently but not completely in charge of

>its choices.

> - by using structured methods of text generation chosen and set into

>motion by the conscious mind.

> - by allowing "natural forces" (such as gravity or random numbers) to

>"have their say" in the outcomes of the above structured methods.

>

>>

>

John's remarks remind me that after using consciously selected chance methods, one's writing habits may expand, such that the exercises employed are not required in quite the same way. For me, patterns add discipline that is inherently cumulative. There's a little of Houdini in this process, in that (in some time types of chance applications)one creates obstacle courses that one does not exactly escape, but rather include the surrounding material.

I've heard some writers say, for example, about some of the experiments, such as those that Charles Bernstein recently shared on this list, that as you engage with them, these methods more naturally become a part of one's "own" methods. (An inadvertent acquisitive suggestion!)

I find the use of chance methods invigorating at least. And I am delighted by so many of the results of that process in the work of other writers.

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84. **John Cayley** *aleatoric composition*

Sat 6 May 1995

Tony Green:

What is clearly still deliberate and purposive is the positioning of the "artist" and of the "audience". This purposive character is apt to confuse those who regard only the "chance" of the procedures, thus neglecting artist-work-audience relations.

An important point, although the artist's actual (as opposed to 'intended') audience is indeterminate. Even the abdication of agency -- something which does interest me -- implies an attitude to and a particular form of engagement with even this form of literary production which the artist presumably continues to view as such.

Which leads on to the OuLiPo, which had/?has an attitude to 'chance' that was at best ambiguous and more often hostile. I think it is possible to maintain a distinction between the application of arbitrary strictures (anything in rhetoric really from lipograms and sestinas to rhyme and metrics) and the use of (typically) random number generation to determine the actual selection and recording of words/phrases/sentences (where the medium is literary).

The OuLiPians wish to *overcome* the restrictions. Someone in the grip of aleatoric processes wants to follow them and see where they will go.

Of course the distinction is never so clear. Arbitrary is arbitrary and it's a matter of 'chance' that the artist (arbitrarily) applies a set of strictures, however cleverly she overcomes the problems. Chance procedures are always applied to previously structured and/or composed material and the way they are applied is also chosen.

| *the way they are applied ...*

Once again: the machine you're sitting in front of is now a very flexible tool for the composition of chance.

John Cayley Wellsweep Press [in Chinese HZ:]
1 Grove End House 150 Highgate Road London NW5 1PD UK
Tel & Fax: 0 [REDACTED] Email: [REDACTED]

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85. **jena**
CHAIN #2
Sat 6 May 1995

Now available:

Chain/2: Documentary

Edited by Jena Osman and Juliana Spahr

The second issue of Chain questions the supposed neutrality/objectivity of documentary forms. The concerns of this issue are: in what ways does the topical world filter through language? how do creative forms actually capture an event, a person, a place? The work included highlights the way we use language/image to cut up our experiential encounters so as to (re)see them.

Contributing writers and artists: Alicia Askenase, Lutz Bacher, Merle Lyn Bachman, Dodie Bellamy, Celia Bland, Pascale-Anne Brault, Sherry Brennan, Laynie Browne, AnJanette Brush, Kathe Burkhardt, Juanita But, Catalina Cariaga, Norma Cole, Leslie Davis & Hoa Nguyen, Connie Deanovich, Dubrovka Djuric, Sally Doyle, Maggie Dubris, Carrie Moyer & Sue Schaffer, Ann Erickson, Liz Fodaski, Darcy Frey, Susan Gevirtz, Phoebe Gloeckner, Lyn Hejinian, Lisa Hoke, Akua Lezli Hope, Karen Kelley, Ike Kim, Basil King, Andrew Levy, Walter Lew, Tan Lin, Pamela Lu, Lori Lubeski, Kimberly Lyons, Kevin Magee, Paul Maurice, Katie Merz, Douglas Messerli, Harryette Mullen, Aife Murray, Susan Smith Nash, Sianne Ngai, Erin O'Brien, Alix Pearlstein, M. Nourbese Philip, Stephen Ratcliffe, Susan Rosenberg & Jacob Wisse, Leslie Scalapino, Jenny Scobel, Eleni Sikelianos, Rod Smith, Meredith Stricker, Nathaniel Tarn, HT, Rodrigo Toscano, Nicola Tyson, Cecilia Vicuna, Anne Waldman, Hannah Weiner, Karen Yasinsky, Susan Wheeler, Alexander Zane, Janet Zweig.

Chain/107 14th St./Buffalo, NY 14213

\$10 for one issue (6"x9", 250 pp.)

Make checks payable to UB Foundation.

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86. **Carl Lynden Peters**

chance & theology

Sat 6 May 1995

what abt chance and theology? seems to me there's a relation there.

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87. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: theology nd chance

Sat 6 May 1995

or rather a theological reading of chance seems appropriate, and worth pursuing. which brings us back to Marcel Duchamp.

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88. **George Bowering**

Re: Aleatory Poetry

Sat 6 May 1995

Message mainly for Maria Damon. The writers of OuLiPo were and are descendents of the great Raymond Roussel (also claimed by the Surrealists as a source) who challenged one another to perform literary acts of recombinant composition. You have perhaps heard of Italo Svevo's *_If on a Winter's Night a Traveller_*. In recent times it has been the most popularly successful OuLiPo work. I reccomend the feat of Georges Perec, who wrote an entire novel without using the letter e. It has recently been published in English, if you prefer that, in the U.S. A. Other prominent OuLiPo writers are Raymond Queneau and Harry Mathews. There has always been an association between poets of the New York so called school and the OuLiPo guys. Some of this association you can find in your old copies of *_Locus Solus_*, which was itself named after a great OuLiPo work.

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89. **Carla Billitteri**

Re: Aleatory Poetry

Sat 6 May 1995

errata corrige: italo calvino -not svevo- wrote *_if on a winter night...._*
calvino, by the way, was friend of perec and queneau and translator of both.
queneau's writings -like calvino's- stand at the convergence of the oulipo
poetics and a variety of playfully engaged meta-reflective narrative that

looks back at voltaire's and diderot's productions -- good euroreadings
if anyone is interested (but not svevo -that is altogether something else)

Carla Billitteri



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90. **Ron Silliman**

Re: ZenLang

Sat 6 May 1995

Darin De Stefano writes:

>

>

>I've been sitting zazen pretty seriously (i.e every day and some full
day

>and two or three day seshin once in a while) for about five years. I

>would definitely say that it's 'influenced' my writing. I don't
consider

>myself a buddhist (in fact, some of why i sit is wrapped into the

>question of 'what' i am...i think 'who' is irrelevant until the first
one

>is better explored).

When Kit and I spoke with Zhung Zhiqing last year, he identified a practice that
is common in the People's Republic among the intelligentsia. The practice is
called chi kung, which roughly translates into "breathing practice," and
amounts to a completely secularized version of sitting zazen. It's so common
that it does not distinguish the zen poets, for example, from the "language"
ones there.

Ron

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91. **Ron Silliman**

Re: Aleatory Poetry

Sat 6 May 1995

You wrote:

>

> forgive my ignorance: who are the Oulipians?--maria damon

>

The Society for Potential Literature, a wonderful internationalist
literary "school" out of Europe -- Jacques Roubaud (whose name I may be

misspelling), Georges Perec, Italo Calvino and Harry Matthews have all been associated with this phenomenon.

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92. **Charles Alexander**
Not all chance, not at all??
Sat 6 May 1995

In part trying out a new program for e-mail and more, in part thinking about the conversations on aleatory composition, in part wanting more poems on this forum, here:

This is the year 1997 and there
are gale winds in the west, never
a note played in discontent and

in a place where animals play
the imagined margins soar with letters
flung at odd intervals and ink
spills a clear running relevance
moved to safer particles, absolved.

These are the words the heart makes
forgetting its injunction to exercise
while floating, fingers succumb to
the temptation to imply themselves
or another, waiting, presumptive.

Do not argue, I want to say, there
is not enough time, I don't even know
what thought might bring the third day
and something beats now, wanting
only to be subject, object too, yours.

What will the hospital say, the treadmill,
another language of not knowing, as if
anything else were possible, today or
another time, invisible, flags from porches
forego the year, the skin, the tissue.
We are flying on the ground.

charles alexander

charles alexander
chax press
minnesota center for book arts

phone & fax: [REDACTED]
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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93. **B. Cass Clarke**

honor

Sun 7 May 1995

The Ballroom

1.

the important thing: to keep yr backbone straight
the distance between this image
 & the one
inside the coffin

to clean the fungus under yr fingernails
just before you descend the grand staircase
this image & the other
the poised head pivoting
gently on the topmost bone of the spine
the smile

the important thing"
never to turn around when a shadow
falls across the threshold
the image that I put on with my rings

2.

I wonder what birds sing at yr bedroom window
in the morning?
All night my bed is borne by six faggots in ties & tails
Baron de Charlus among them
 all night long
they jog along to receding cemeteries
swaddled in mist, where disillusioned cows
browse out the summer,
 when the morning comes
it takes a while to relocate the sun
which in fact is, or shd be,
 in the region of yr hair.
to brush the dust of graveyard off my shoulders
slip the flesh & skin neatly over my skull
descend the brilliant staircase
 brilliantly

I wonder what cats yowl at yr bedroom window
nights
when I browse in a wagon thru the streets

3.
there has been no bloodshed, the chandelier
does not need to fall; the windows
are made of crystal

Mozart was seen capering thru the kitchen
door & down a road that leads thru a
hole in space.

my hoop swings lightly, my hands

rest lightly on yr shoulders.

do I need to tell you?

between my brain & gullet a pain
is becoming articulate

approximately a toothache
it corresponds to another pain
elsewhere.

why do I still keep thinking of the rain?

I edge to the kitchen window, the white lawn
spread w/a red & white cloth, sparkles w/dewdrops
beasts amble to the edge of it, simpering.

in the vicinity of my navel wells a strawberry cake

I am pregnant with pink icing

& I smile

my hoop swings out, I place my hands
on yr shoulders . . .

[a gift to readers: The New Handbook of Heaven by Diane di Prima, The Poets Press, 1963] --this was the poem that sent me looking further-

B. Cass Clarke



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94. **Gabrielle Welford**

Call Your Senator Free at EXXON's Expense (fwd)

Sun 7 May 1995

This looks intriguing...

Gabrielle

Here's an 800 number that actually works and lets you call congress. It was set up by some big business group that wants to destroy regulations on the environment. But anyone can use it to call their senator and urge them not to cut Pell Grants and the Student Loan Interest Exemption. PASS THIS ON!! the number is [REDACTED].

From: "[REDACTED] EFFECT EFFECT" <[REDACTED]>

Date: May 5, 1995

An ad in today's Washington Post provides a TOLL-FREE number for calling congress to lobby against environmental laws. However, anyone can call, give some basic who/where-from info to an interactive recording, and be connected directly to their state Senator's office to comment on anything that they want!

the number is [REDACTED]

The service is intended to promote Sen. Dole's (R-industry) bill S. 343, which will gut environmental protections. But I just used it to register my opinion to Senators Helms and Faircloth that "the bill goes too far, protecting corporations at the expense of ordinary citizens," and urging them to vote against it and come up with something "better" (a frightening thought if they really try to do it).

The toll-free number will likely be turned off once S343 is voted on, so use it now and use it often.

The phone bill will go to your "friends" at the Alliance for Reasonable Regulation, working to increase corporation's freedoms to poison everyone. Sponsors include the Chemical Manufacturers Association, the National Association of Manufacturers and the Grocery Manufacturers Association.

*This posting made possible by info from Mark Robinowitz
([REDACTED])*

*Have Fun Y'all,
David Waller*

--

----- This message |Help using
the mailing lists [REDACTED] was sent using|General discussion list [REDACTED]
the NAGPS |To reach NAGPS officers [REDACTED] email server. |
Subscribe/remove/etc. [REDACTED] |NAGPS Services Board
[REDACTED]

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95. **H. T. KIRBY-SMITH**

aleatory poetry

Sun 7 May 1995

Another good example of disruptive limitation or randomizing is what Marianne Moore did with syllabics. It was wonderfully absurd--making poems in which every single stanza had lines with exactly the same pattern --the same number of syllables for each corresponding line, such as 13, 23,11,9,9,22. I just made that up but look at "The Monkeys" or many another of hers. There is no way to know what the pattern is other than counting on your fingers. But for her it provided a dislocative framework that compelled unusual choices.

Dylan Thomas --I couldn't believe this when I first heard it-- did the same thing for most of the lines in each stanza of "Fern Hill." Even nuttier, the first poem in his COLLECTED POEMS has a pattern whereby the last line rhymes with the first, second with sceond-to-last, on in to the middle of the approx 50-line poem where there is a couplet. He worked very hard at it and someone told me he was hurt when nobody noticed what he had done.

But as for rhyme, probably everyone should quit using it for five hundred years and then take it up again. It was a silly accident to start with. The Norman Conquest caused rhyme. All that's needed to explain that is a 500-page fotnote.

But here is a rhyme for Marisa, who probably already knows it--it was Theodore Roethke's favorite, I think--

Hinx

Minx

The Old Witch Winks

The fat begins to fry.

There's nobody home

But jumping Joan

And Father and Mother and I.

Tom Kirby-Smith

English Department

UNC-Greensboro

Greensboro NC 27412

Phone: [REDACTED]

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96. **Tom Mandel**
Re: Aleatory Poetry
Sun 7 May 1995

George Bowering refers to...

"your old copies of *_Locus Solus_*, which was itself named after a great OuLiPo work"

... which may be a little misleading to some. *_Locus Solus_* is a novel by the aforementioned Raymond Roussel, a guide to the estate and collections of the novel's main character (whose name escapes me just now).

Roussel's compositional methods, wonderfully curious, are described in his "How I Wrote Certain of My Works" -- fairly easily available, but I can't tell you where as I write.

Perhaps, also, it is a little misleading too to think of OuLiPo as coming out of Roussel exclusively, as the group is devoted to an open set of procedural writing techniques whose forebears are equally to be sought in late Latin pattern poetry as well as in mathematical modeling in all fields. Jacques Rouboud, one of the leading Oulipiens, is a prof. of math for example.

The very great writer Georges Perec (whom I had the good luck to meet in Paris when I lived there more than twenty yrs ago) was an early member of OuLiPo and recruited Harry Mathews, but I think the group was founded by Raymond Queneau (?)

For those who don't know Perec's work, the novel without "e" is called *La Disparition* (translated as *Avoid*), and there is also one written using e as the only vowel. Surely his greatest work, and one of the most amazing works of writing I've ever encountered, is "*La vie, mode d'emploi*," translated as "*Life, A User's Manual*." I would also recommend "*W, or Memories of Childhood*" and "*A Man Asleep*" -- indeed just about anything he wrote.

Perec died in 1982 (of lung cancer, aged 46). Harry Mathews wrote a wonderful memoir of his friend, but - continuing the bibliographic bibliogaffes of this post - I can't remember the title and can't find the book on my shelves. Continuing interest will prompt a more thorough search (wearing my glasses for example).

Venue de l'imperceptible
convexite' de l'oeil
-- ce par quoi on sait que la terre est rond --
l'eternite' est circulaire
mais plate

GP, from *L'eternite'* - Orange Export 1982

Tom Mandel

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97. **maria damon**

Re: Aleatory Poetry

Sun 7 May 1995

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group writes:

> Message mainly for Maria Damon. The writers of OuLiPo were and are
> descendents of the great Raymond Roussel (also claimed by the
> Surrealists as a source) who challenged one another to perform
> literary acts of recombinant composition. You have perhaps heard of
> Italo Svevo's *If on a Winter's Night a Traveller*. In recent times
> it has been the most popularly successful OuLiPo work. I recommend
> the feat of Georges Perec, who wrote an entire novel without using
> the letter e. It has recently been published in English, if you
> prefer that, in the U.S. A. Other prominent OuLiPo writers are
> Raymond Queneau and Harry Mathews. There has always been an
> association between poets of the New York so called school and the
> OuLiPo guys. Some of this association you can find in your old copies
> of *Locus Solus*, which was itself named after a great OuLiPo work.

thanks george: it turns out i've read most of the works you mention, including perec's *la disparition*, which i came across in paris in 1973 or 4 when i was fresh out of high school, but i didn't know until now that they constituted a "school" with a name. just goes to show, when yr young and just following your literary instincts, how much intellectual capital you can miss out on! like, also, that year, i took classes from a guy who went religiously to lacan's weekly lectures and passed the info on to us --we read *ecrits* etc., but i never knew the word "lacanian" until i got to grad school some 8 yrs later, where it turned out that not only was there a whole apparatus of prestige set up around using the word "lacanian" --but what my colleagues were talking about and attributing to lacan had so little in common with what i thot i'd read and heard that if not for the name and the book titles, i would never have guessed it was the same guy. now tht i'm a jaded academic, i wish i had some of that innocent fresh take on ideas texts and language back!--again, thanks for the info, and just a friendly reminder to one and all myself most of all, "un coup de des n'a jamais aboli le hasard."

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98. **maria damon**

Re: Aleatory Poetry

Sun 7 May 1995

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group writes:

> Message mainly for Maria Damon. The writers of OuLiPo were and are
> descendents of the great Raymond Roussel (also claimed by the
> Surrealists as a source) who challenged one another to perform
> literary acts of recombinant composition. You have perhaps heard of
> Italo Svevo's *_If on a Winter's Night a Traveller_*. In recent times
> it has been the most popularly successful OuLiPo work. I recommend
> the feat of Georges Perec, who wrote an entire novel without using
> the letter e. It has recently been published in English, if you
> prefer that, in the U.S. A. Other prominent OuLiPo writers are
> Raymond Queneau and Harry Mathews. There has always been an
> association between poets of the New York so called school and the
> OuLiPo guys. Some of this association you can find in your old copies
> of *_Locus Solus_*, which was itself named after a great OuLiPo work.

by the way, what does OuLiPo stand for? when it's written thus, it has the air of an anagram of sorts.--md

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99. **maria damon**

Re: Aleatory Poetry

Sun 7 May 1995

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group writes:

> errata corrige: italo calvino -not svevo- wrote *_if on a winter night...._*
>
> calvino, by the way, was friend of perec and queneau and translator of both.
>
> queneau's writings -like calvino's- stand at the convergence of the oulipo
>
> poetics and a variety of playfully engaged meta-reflective narrative that
>
> looks back at voltaire's and diderot's productions -- good euroreadings
>
> if anyone is interested (but not svevo -that is altogether something else)
> Carla Billitteri
> [REDACTED]

as long as i've got u all on the line, what's the connection with voltaire? diderot
too, though i can begin to intuit an answer there.--maria d

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100. **Gabrielle Welford**

Re: aleatory poetry

Sun 7 May 1995

> But as for rhyme, probably everyone should quit using it for five
> hundred years and then take it up again. It was a silly accident to
> start with. The Norman Conquest caused rhyme. All that's needed to
> explain that is a 500-page footnote.

>

Maybe rhyme, but not reason. Or maybe too much reason.

Gabrielle



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101. **I.LIGHTMAN**

being chancy with charles alexander's garden

Sun 7 May 1995

never forgetting do safer
today at are to
discontent not I might
at forgetting is its
wantdo the
day the d
1997 its are or are
plamargins of
to to margins a what
the time the odd
gale time discontent might is
animals injunction waiting year know the
I where the to play waiting
not the and is
and the discontent
bring thought this the
the these is discontent at
heart and something to where bring
there floating
imagined might in

note
what and soar
day
flung spills

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102. **Kenneth Sherwood**
Oulipo en Anglais

Sun 7 May 1995

The fortuitious turn of topic toward "Oulipo" gives me the chance to mention that the next Rif/t (Transpoesis issue) will carry Katheryn McDonald's translation of Jacques Roubaud's first book of poems:

E (or 'sigma')

\
\
/
/

(to be added to the role, send "sub e-poetry Your Name" to "" [w/o quotes], or check out the hypertext version of Rift04 at the Electronic Poetry Center next week)

E 1967 (sigma, 18th letter of the Greek alphabet) incorporates directions for aleotoric reading, though it's unclear to me if the poem was also composed by chance, or what exactly the structures/ strictures of composition are.

[See next post for Roubaud translator Katheryn McDonald's introduction.]

Ken Sherwood




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103. **Kenneth Sherwood**
Roubaud / brief introduction

Sun 7 May 1995

Katheryn McDonald

Translator's Introduction (ROUB04.01 /RIFT04.01 (c) 1995)

Jacques Roubaud's poetry moves in two directions at once. It is resolutely complicated, structured by mathematical symbols and many-optioned choices. This is poetry that draws attention to itself as language, offering the reader the opportunity to move blocks of it around, structure a book as she pleases. The re-combinatory, repetitive conception of poetry-as-words contrasts with the alternative, also present in Roubaud's work, of a healing poetry, expressive of grief or joy. The dual aspect that characterizes Roubaud's poetry is in place from his first published book of poems, *_E_*, which appeared at Gallimard in 1967. This volume presents itself in a dry and very formal manner, presaged by the mathematical symbol that serves as the book's title. The poems themselves are at the intersection of several formal constraints: the movement of white and black markers in a game of *go*; the structure of a sonnet of sonnets; finally the order imposed by the poems' physical presence in a book of poetry. The possibility of re-ordering the poems of *_E_*--presented as an integral part of the work--presumes the idea of these poems as a sort of game. Their configuration can be changed, indeed is constructed around the possibility of change, according to previously delineated rules. It is these rules that open the book, under the heading "mode d'emploi de ce livre." But across these poems, divided into paragraphs marked by mathematical symbols, seemingly simply the markers in a complex and formal game, we hear a very personal cry of loss at the death of a brother, and the troubled search of a poet coming to terms with the place of poetry in relation to his own life.

Jacques Roubaud sets up the parameters of his search in the first complete movement of *_E_*, which is the first sonnet of sonnets. His "conclusion" is a departure for the rest of the book. Although each poem can stand alone, the sonnet can also be read as a suite. The reader can follow the movement of thought that unfolds as the poet moves from rejection of the outside world through an interrogation of language, concluding with an acceptance of that world through the medium of his own past. --Katheryn McDonald

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104. **Tom Mandel**

Re: Roubaud / brief introduction

Sun 7 May 1995

Jacques Roubaud and Georges Perec, under a single pseudonym, published an introduction to the game Go in the sixties (?).

Roubaud's "Some Thing Black," a very beautiful book, is available from Dalkey Archive, as is his "The Great Fire of London," a long novel.

Harry Mathews memoir of Georges Perec is called "Le Verger" (The Orchard). Written in French it was translated by the author and I remember having seen the translated edition -- but where?

The memoir is written in a form inaugurated (to my knowledge) by the late Joe Brainard; discrete paragraphs each begin "I remember." Perec had read Brainard's work of that title and loved it and wrote a work himself in the same way. Harry Mathews memoir is well worth reading even for those who don't know Perec's work or his; it is a moving indication and example of friendship.

Tom Mandel

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105. **Tom Mandel**

Ouvroir de Literature Potentielle: OuLiPo

Sun 7 May 1995

... means Workshop of Potential Literature -- in response to someone's question. But I may have already posted this translation; sorry, if so.

Tm

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106. **Charles Alexander**

Re: being chancy with charles alexander's garden

Sun 7 May 1995

Dear Ira:

Thank you. What you chancily did with my garden is marvelous.

all best,
charles

charles alexander
chax press
minnesota center for book arts
phone & fax: [REDACTED]
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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107. **Aldon L. Nielsen**
Re: Theme for the Oulipians
Sun 7 May 1995

Maria -- I'm running late & see that your questions has already been answered -- but thought you would like to know that there was an English language Oilipo anthology pubd. in '86 by U of Neb. Press -- Titled *_Oulipo: A Primer of Potential Literature_*, edited by Warren F. Motte. It's in many libraries, but has also been remaindered & is thus available CHEAP! There was also a special Oulipo issue of some arts mag. last year edited by Harry Matthews, I think the only American member of Oulipo, the title of which I can't remember -- but when I get back to my office next week I'll post the info. to you

& for the Jazz fans -- I've always heard an "accidental" echo in Roland Kirk's "Theme for the Eulipians" -- listen to it and think of this note by Perec:

A considerably diminished echo of these vertiginous preoccupations seems to me to resound still in the case of the lipogram.

Somebody once threatened to give me a fat oulipo.

--aldon

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108. **Robert Kelly**
Re: Oulipo en Anglais
Sun 7 May 1995

No, wait, it's not a flaming sigma,
it's an EPSILON.

Roberto , el greco

(and there are trans. from [epsilon] in Paul Auster's fine anth of a decade back,
some by me and some by my betters)

RK

=====
==

Robert Kelly
Division of Literature and Languages, Bard College
Annandale-on-Hudson NY 12504
Voice Mail: [REDACTED] Box 7205
[REDACTED]

On Sun, 7 May 1995, Kenneth Sherwood wrote:

*The fortuitious turn of topic toward "Oulipo" gives me the chance to mention that the next *Rif/t* (Transpoesis issue) will carry Katheryn McDonald's translation of Jacques Roubaud's first book of poems: *_E_* (or 'sigma')*

\
\
/
/

*(to be added to the role, send "sub e-poetry Your Name" to "██████████" [w/o quotes], or check out the hypertext version of *Rift04* at the Electronic Poetry Center next week)*

E 1967 (sigma, 18th letter of the Greek alphabet) incorporates directions for aleotonic reading, though it's unclear to me if the poem was also composed by chance, or what exactly the structures/strictures of composition are.

[See next post for Roubaud translator Katheryn McDonald's introduction.]

Ken Sherwood

██████████
██████████

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109. **Robert Drake**
Re: Oulipo en Anglais
Sun 7 May 1995

for those interested in Oulipo, and Queneau particularly, there's an online version of his "a story as you like it" online at:

<http://fub46.zedat.fu-berlin.de:8080/~cantsin/Welcome.html>

i'm not certain, but i believe this is the first extant example of what is now commonly known as "hypertext", w/ interactive multiple examples, etc...

lbd

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110. **Ryan Knighton**

Re: rhyme

Sun 7 May 1995

I don't think rhyme is a simple, ugly or simply ugly issue at all. What about Levertov's various kinds of rhymes and rhyming. In one essay she explains how rhyme chime and echo are the signatures of the mind's return, the ceaseless movements of perception which are invariably "intently haphazard". Perhaps the typical end rhyme is a dead issue, but I think, as in Levertov, its face and function is evolving.

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111. **Jed**

Re: Gerald Stern

Sun 7 May 1995

Wystan--my sympathies, but you did have W(ystan) H. Auden for namesake once upon a time. You do prompt me to wonder what names have to do with our perspectival inclinations. I mean, do the Mary Jones and Bill Smiths of the world feel a deep intuitive solidarity with those around them, their own names mirrored back with some regularity? Or is it the pinch of the uncanny? I can only wonder, as I know literally all the people in the world named Rasula (less than a dozen), because the name comes from a few mailboxes on a dirt road in central Finland, a place name adapted by ancestor immigrants because they took it (rightly) that it would be less mangled in pronunciation than the patronymic, which was Jaskari. Not that being named Jed is any less singular, although I have met a few--most recently in Seville last summer, of all places.

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112. **Jed**

Re: Aleatory Poetry

Sun 7 May 1995

Maria-- to adjust George Bowering's note on OuLiPo slightly, that's Italo Calvino, not Joyce's buddy Italo Svevo.

There's a handy collection of Oulipian manifestos edited and translated by Warren Motte, published by U. Nebraska about

6 or 8 years ago, if you're interested.

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113. **beard**

Charles Alexander / Canadian sound poets

Sun 7 May 1995

In part trying out a new program for e-mail and more, in part thinking about the conversations on aleatory composition, in part wanting more poems on this forum, here:

Bravo Charles! It looked like this was turning into a poetics forum without poetry. Your poem engaged my brain and senses, and above all, it's memorable. If a text is a picnic where the author brings the words and the reader brings the sense (Todorov?) then the words have to be tasty enough to make the reader *want* to come to the picnic. Too many "open" works turn up with a tossed salad of withered celery, stale croutons, mouldy turnips and week-old brussels sprouts. You brought smoked salmon and a bottle of Kumeu River Chardonnay - thank you.

> ... ink
>spills a clear running relevance
>moved to safer particles, absolved.
. .
>These are the words the heart makes
>forgetting its injunction to exercise
>while floating, ...
. .
>
>and something beats now, wanting
>only to be subject, object too, yours.
. .
>another language of not knowing, as if
>anything else were possible, today or
>another time, invisible, ...

On another subject, there's a couple of Canadian sound poets giving a reading here next week: Douglas Barber and Stephen Scobie. Is anyone on the list familiar with their work? I haven't experienced much sound poetry (does this mean that everything else is un_sound poetry?) apart from Edwin Morgan ('The Loch Ness monster's song' etc), so I'm intrigued, but I wonder whether anyone has any opinions on these particular poets.

Thanks,

Tom Beard.

I/am a background/process, shrunk to an icon. | Tom Beard I am/a dark place.
| █████ I am less/than the sum of my parts... | Auckland, New Zealand I
am necessary/but not sufficient, | <http://metcon.met.co.nz/> and I shall
teach the stars to fall | nwfc/beard/www/hallway.html

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114. **George Bowering**

Re: Aleatory Poetry

Sun 7 May 1995

Yikes, did I write Italo Svevo? I dont think that Svevo made many joues at all, though he was an interesting man. I mean how many other writers have a bookstore named after them, I mean a bookstore that uses up a city block? Calvino, exactly. I think that his most amazing project was _The Path of Crossed Destinies_ if that's what it is in English.

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115. **George Bowering**

Re: Gerald Stern

Sun 7 May 1995

Yep, my wife's name is Luoma, and I think they took that name from the place they lived in Finland too. Maybe Bill wd know that.

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116. **George Bowering**

Re: Roubaud / brief introduction

Sun 7 May 1995

If I remember correctly, the Mathews text _The Orchard_ was published by Bamberger Books. I'm sort of 67% sure.

I published 2 years ago a memoir done in the same fashion for the great painter Greg Curnoe, killed on his bicycle. Called it _The Moustache_, made proper homage to Mathews, Perec and Brainard.

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117. **George Bowering**

Re: aleatory poetry

Sun 7 May 1995

It would seem to me that it is impossible not to use rime in poetry, although I have heard some dreadful stuff and seen some dreadfgul stuff in magazines that seems to give it a try. Hell, I bet somebody with a good ear could even do interesting stuff with rime at the ends of lines.

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118. **George Bowering**

Re: Aleatory Poetry

Sun 7 May 1995

Tom Mandel is certainly right in his praise of Perec. I have some friends at University of Queensland, and they apparently did not see him when he was there for a little while.

By the way, the name of the guy who owns the estate in Roussel's *_Locus Solus_* is Martial Canterel, I think. I am not sure that we can call it a novel, but what the hell, why dont we?

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119. **George Bowering**

Re: jazz/music

Sun 7 May 1995

Dear Herb,

I havent got any further with my enquiry about Don Ayler. I went to Black Swan Records, Pickering's store, and it was kaput, a few forlorn posters on the window, but empty inside. Phew.

I will try to phone Ken, and if I get something, I'll post it. Pickering, by the way, is the only person I know who has a better Paul Bley collection than mine.

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120. **Ted Maier**

Re: rhyme

Mon 8 May 1995

Regarding the rhyme thread:

KEEPING THE RHYME

By stress and syllable
by change-rhyme and contour
we let the long line pace even awkward to its period.

The short line
we refine
and keep for candor.

This we remember:
ember of the fire
catches the word if we but hear
("We must understand what is happening")
and springs to desire,
a bird-right light
sound.

This is the Yule-log that warms December.
This is new grass that springs from the ground.

--Robert Duncan, _The Opening of the Field_

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121. **Tom Mandel**

Re: jazz/music

Mon 8 May 1995

Sure, what the heck, lets...

I've wondered whether Martial Solal took the name from
Roussel, amalgumming Martial Canteral and Locus Solus.
Thots?

Tm

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122. **H. T. KIRBY-SMITH**

rhyme

Mon 8 May 1995

As to the impossibility of writing poetry without rhyme, well there was this fellow named Bill Williams and this guy named Olson and then there was someone a while back who wrote an epic poem--Homer, Milton, Vergil--that didn't have any rhyme--as a matter of fact Milton called it this "troublesome bandage [sic]"--and then there was a long time back Horace and Sappho and then there was a whole lot of people who wrote plays in blank verse and I don't remember seeing a rhyme in Ginsberg but who knows what he is capable of?

Tom Kirby-Smith
English Department
UNC-Greensboro
Greensboro NC 27412

Phone: [REDACTED]

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123. **Jordan Davis.**
pathos and chance

Mon 8 May 1995

Do aleatory methods ever yield anything people tend to save and go back to?
Aren't novels basically rule-based systems? Aren't we going one too many
differentials out?

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124. **Kevin Killian**
Directory assistance

Mon 8 May 1995

Does anybody have Dennis Barone's e-mail address? He **must** have one.
Thanks,
Dodie Bellamy

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125. **Kevin Killian**
Looking for . . .

Mon 8 May 1995

Anyone with the RL addresses of Jackson MacLow and Denise Levertov.
Please! Thank you!
-Kevin Killian

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126. **cris cheek**
chance / trust

Mon 8 May 1995

Hi,
Some of the Vocabulary being used for this subject is in danger of becoming
conflated into dangerous goo:

Religious / Miracles / Trust / Oracular / Horoscope / Reincarnated / Consulting / Prophecy and such are being inveigled into these discussions and I want to know more about what they mean to differing people. I'm going to need convincing that such terms can be useful tools of communication either today or tomorrow. Don't they convey an overbearing excess baggage?

I'm not at all suggesting that certain words can't be used. Just that it might be more user-friendly to adopt or co-opt other words through which to discuss what they are being used to signify - rather than clogging the discussion with ballast which is vague unless clarified at some considerable length.

Many such terms invoke a 'higher' sense or power. This immediately opens a huge and prickly discussion. 'Higher' than what - 'higher' than whom? Let's get particular here please. I'd be just as worried by anyone using chance methods in the understanding that by so doing they can by-pass or somehow circumnavigate subjectivity (taking what's been said about curbing the sprawl of the ego into account here) as by the assertion that one accept 'fate' as dictated by a horoscope constructed by rote to the extensive purposes of political manipulation as documented in 'Religion and the Decline of Magic' by Keith Thomas (an important book on the subject from the viewpoint of 16th and 17th century England - wicca, astrology, Protestant rationality and Magic from which, opening that book at 'random' I quote 'the medieval church thus did a great deal to weaken the fundamental distinction between a prayer and a charm, and to encourage the idea that there was virtue in the mere repetition of holy words' or 'the very impenetrability of the formula helped to give it its power').

There is also a tremendous difference between a 'conscious' exploration and the unquestioning acceptance of either a doctrine or of a meaning generated by a system whose pre-determined fashionings are taken at the simplistic face value of being defended as necessary merely because they validate the integrity of the method. In other words it is equally reprehensible to invoke chance or trance as an excuse. Perhaps an incisive discussion could be revealed by paraphrasing Jackson Pollock 'mistakes don't exist'. What do you feel about that?

In these meanings there is a difference as you pointed out between the secular and the 'other' 'wise'.

How about

prescience / consciousness / attention / interference / energies / transferral / occurrence / attenuation / exquisation

love, truth and beauty
the weasel - cris

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127. **Jed**

Re: Aleatory Poetry

Mon 8 May 1995

Happy birthday to Ron Silliman --I think I've got that right, May 8th Ron? Last of your forties? It also happens to be Gary Snyder's 65th birthday today, AND Thomas Pynchon's (not 65 though). An all around poetry birthday week in fact: Charlie Simic, Chris Dewdney, Jorie Graham, Michael Palmer, Norma Cole, and Bernadette Mayer all in the next couple days.

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128. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Aleatory Poetry

Mon 8 May 1995

Birthdays----and Jennifer Moxley is the 12th of May i think, and
Brett Ralph the 13th (with Stevie Wonder and Peter Gabriel) ah, be
bullish on amerika! cs

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129. **Herb Levy**

Oulipo (Sorry I'm late)

Mon 8 May 1995

I was away from my computer for a while, so I missed out on any real-time action in the big, big OuLiPo LoveFest here on <Poetics>. I mostly just want to say, as they do all too often on talk radio shows, <ditto>.

But I did also want to mention that David Bellos, who has translated most of the Perec that's now available in English, has also written a biography of Perec. It's no stylistic gem, but it is full of interesting OuLiPo lore.

- Herb

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130. **Herb Levy**

Re: jazz/music

Mon 8 May 1995

On Mon, 8 May 1995, Tom Mandel wrote:

| Sure, what the heck, lets...

*I've wondered whether Martial Solal took the name from
Roussel, amalgumming Martial Canteral and Locus Solus.
Thots?*

Tm

Or perhaps his parents were early members of the Swiss/Canadian based cult that committed suicide en masse a while back. Wasn't that <the Army of the Sun>, or some such?

- Herb

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131. **Herb Levy**

Re: aleatoric composition using chance

Mon 8 May 1995

Amidst the flurry of postings about who the Oulipians were, Ira Lightman's response Friday to the aleatory/chance thread he'd started a day or two before, seems to have been ignored.

Or maybe I'm the only one who has trouble with Ira's posting. Let's see. If this seems like it's heading too far into the music & isn't of interest to folks here, please let me know.

Ira, as I read your posts on this topic, you have some difficulties with Cage's use of chance and have posited Stockhausen's use of chance as a model that, in your eyes, is somehow more effective. To help me see the distinction you are drawing here, could you please give a specific example of what you see as Stockhausen's use of chance, so we can discuss how the two differ.

I'm not exactly sure what your issues with Cage are, though you clearly have some concern about his commitment to Buddhism. But in your posting you describe some aspects of Stockhausen's spirituality in detail and then dismiss Cage's as selling

himself, just a tad, on the guru aspect (like Pound with chinese culture) of recommending the Buddhist way of life.

This is hardly a fair way to compare the two, especially given Stockhausen's own efforts to proselytize both musically and spiritually, so again, could you please give some specific examples so we can discuss how the two differ.

My concern is that very few people on <poetics> seem to have any sense of Stockhausen's work at all, and most people, even the erudite folks here, have little more than the odd received mis-information about Cage's work.

Without getting a clarification of what you mean in your characterizations of both artists, I don't see much here besides the fact that you clearly respond more favorably to Stockhausen's work than to Cage's.

I'd like to know more. When I want to compare top ten lists, I read <rec.music.classical>. I look forward to a deeper discussion here.

- Herb

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132. **Carl Lynden Peters**

chance, chanson, chant

Mon 8 May 1995

MARCEL DUCHAMP MARCEL

DUCHAMP MARCEL DUCHAMP MARCEL
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DUCHAMP MARCEL DUCHAMP

thanks,
carl

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133. **Herb Levy**

Re: jazz/music

Mon 8 May 1995

Dear George -

I'm sorry to hear of the closure of Black Swan, though it had changed quite a bit over the years, there were still things there which I couldn't find elsewhere. In fact, I think I got my LP of Bunting reading <Briggflats> there.

Ah, well, there's already been much talk about the lamented demise of various book stores on <poetics>, do we now begin elegies for records shop closings as well?

Anyway, this is the time of year when it's hard to get through to Ken Pickering, 'cause of planning for the DuMaurier Festival. I called him a week or so after your posting about the Aylers (about something else, actually) & haven't heard back yet.

I will see him when I'm in Vancouver for BlaserFest '95, though. I look forward to meeting you then as well.

Of course, that last <you> is a shifter including everyone reading this message on <poetics>.

- Herb

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134. **Tony Green**
Re: Aleatory Poetry
Mon 8 May 1995

Chris Stroffolino-- by chance I share a birthday with Delacroix and Wittgenstein, so that makes me a brainy painter --not.

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135. **Tony Green**
Re: Oulipo en Anglais
Mon 8 May 1995

Re- R .Kelly's note on sigmas and epsilons. The " E " (epsilon) AT DELPHI? as in Plutarch's essay?

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136. **Wystan Curnow**
Re: rhyme
Mon 8 May 1995

Dear H.T.,

As to the fellow, he rhymes like this:

In houses
the priceless dry rooms
of illicit love
where we live
hear the wash of the
rain--

There
paintings

and fine
metalware
woven stuffs--
all the whorishness
of our
delight
sees
from its window
the spring wash
of your love
the falling
rain--

and as for your guy, he rhymes like this:

I, MAXIMUS OF GOUCESTER, TO YOU
Off-shore, by islands, hidden in the blood
jewels & miracles, I, Maximus
a metal hot from boiling water, tell you
what is a lance, who obeys the figures of
the present dance

etc., etc. But this you know already?? if you say this ain't rhyme, what you're really mean is it ain't in regular metre. Rhyme is actually one of the conventions of 'free verse', so what might be of interest then are the rules of its distribution. Back to you.

Wystan

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137. **maria damon**

Re: Aleatory Poetry

Mon 8 May 1995

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group
writes:

> Happy birthday to Ron Silliman --I think I've got that right, May 8th Ron?
> Last
> of your forties?
> It also happens to be Gary Snyder's 65th birthday today, AND
> Thomas Pynchon's (not 65 though). An all around poetry birthday week in
fact:

> Charlie Simic, Chris Dewdney, Jorie Graham, Michael Palmer, Norma Cole,
and
> Bernadette Mayer all in the next couple days.

i'm thrilled to know there are so many fellow taureans whose work i admire.
we're not generally known as a super-creative sign, so i'm always glad of
evidence to the contrary.--maria d

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138. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: chance/trust

Mon 8 May 1995

cris, hi: pollock was right on the mark when he said that. but then he was a
high thinking painter, too.

take care,
carl

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139. **Carl Lynden Peters**

To all appearances...

Mon 8 May 1995

are there any duchamp -- sorry to keep bringing him up -- experts out there, --
i'm a duchamp fanatic, that can tell me what this sentence means. it's from his
brief, very, very brief but oh God so brilliant lecture on "the creative act":

"To all appearances, the artist acts like a mediumistic being who, from the
labyrinth beyond time and space, seeks his way out to a clearing."

i get the mediumistic part of it, which i interpret as the artist as shaman, but
what does he mean: "... the labyrinth beyond time and space, seeks his way out
to a clearing." ???

i'm starting to think about this sentence in relation to benjamin's essay "the
destructive character," i think, primarily because of my focus on the word:
"clearing."

i'd appreciate any insights you may have.

thanks for this,

carl

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140. **Tony Green**
Re: Aleatory Poetry
Mon 8 May 1995

Maria, add Shaks to yr list of creative Taureans -- even if Cordelia was a bit of a mess, as some think. Trad date of birth 23 April (conveniently St George's day) best

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141. **Susan Clark**
Re: Looking for . . .
Tue 9 May 1995

Hi Kevin

I have Mac Low, street tel and fax, if you want to email me "backchannel".

Susan [Clark]



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142. **Sheila E. Murphy**
Re: Aleatoric Spree
Tue 9 May 1995

Responding to a couple of points recently made in the general subject area of aleatoric procedures:

Since someone's referenced the comparison between Stockhausen and Cage, I'd have to say that, on reflection, the pairing of these individuals seems unlikely, perhaps a chance occurrence in itself.

Initially positioned as a departure from tradition, 12-tone music easily evolved into an alternative classical system of its own. In spite of its detractors (seems that every gesture needs to spawn some little mosquito of a battle), 12-tone music gathered clout, probably because of its packaging and therefore susceptibility to surface understanding.

As a part of studies in music theory and composition, we were assigned to create in this vein, and I remember fondly the making of charts, and the kinds of discoveries they helped spawn. These later factored into some of my chance procedures in writing, providing ways to turn out equivalent disposable containers (as distinct from focusing on more traditional foundry).

I think it was Chris who suggested that a scope (or an ear trumpet?) might be applied to the squishy vocabulary that has slithered out of this discussion.

Having been responsible for some of the language, I'll just say that the concern with it represents a fair call.

The only thing in response might be this: I don't look upon chance procedures as the components of a religion. The process and the results are engaging and stimulating enough to warrant some excitement, I think. But in a bigger picture, I believe there is a spectrum that runs from expectation and surprise, with chance as one form of expression representing heavily the surprise side. Compositional methods and procedures comprise the respected instrument, or an extension of whatever instrument we might construe for making. The "woo woo" factor is not a stopping place, but is hard to ignore sometimes.

The more one makes a place for chance occurrences in one's writing, the less of a fuss needs to be made about it. I know I'm not unique in doing this without announcement. While some works wind up being named after their progenitor (the method), many just slip by and arrive wearing other nomenclature. It just depends upon the sort of birth announcement that seems warranted.

I don't mean to denigrate any focus on this subject, because it represents a stimulating aspect of writing. But, finally, the process can't be islanded off on its own and looked at independent of the creative process. That would mean a partial view of the actual process.

Sheila Murphy



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143. **George Bowering**

Re: Aleatory Poetry

Tue 9 May 1995

Hey, I share a birthday with Woody Allen. I wonder about the implications.

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144. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Aleatory Poetry

Tue 9 May 1995

tony green--sure the self is a construction (though some times it feels further away than others i guess) and the collagist aspects of ontology "might as well" be seen only in impersonal terms of "religious"/"miracles"/"oracular"/and the economic term cheek used, nonetheless I was born the day Ginsberg wrote Death News about WCW, (3-20-63), and share the day with Spike Lee, Mr. Rogers, Ovid/Ibsen/ that woman who does Piano jazz but whose name i forget/Hal Linden/ Jerry "Amos

Moses" Reed/and Jerome Rothenberg's wife.... Hey Silliman does this make me a NY school poet????? CS

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145. **George Bowering**
Re: Aleatory Poetry
Tue 9 May 1995

Dont forget Robin Blaser's birthday this week.

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146. **George Bowering**
Re: jazz/music
Tue 9 May 1995

Naw, I figure Martial Solal took his name from the Roman writer and the west coast shrub, only he spelled salal wrong.

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147. **Chris Stroffolino**
Re: Aleatoric Spree
Tue 9 May 1995

I'm wondering if there is a certain "unwritten law" of an "interpretative community" informing the discussion on aleatory music and conferring on it a certain legitimacy denied to more lyrically based forms such as punk and rap and grunge and blues and 60's rock...Because to talk about rock it seems to talk about "hybrids" that isn't as sophisticated lyrically as poetry nor is as sophisticated musically as Stockhausen etc. and thus is low culture and worse, it SELLS! (and either there is envy or contempt of such)...and if we put poetry in dialogue with rock lyrics surely poetry can not be said to aspire to "THAT KIND OF MUSIC"....movies, theatre, theory, painting....of the "sister arts" to poetry rock music ain't one of them..... I saw Joan Retallack read the other day she said that Emerson gave her an early authoritative defense of "inconsistency"--- And then there was an accessibility panel and I asked Bill Luoma if he considered "angst" more "accessible" than "flippancy"....and he said "angst, unless you are....."(he named someone here from the New York scene, it doesn't matter who. The point is he gave a quick answer.) Yours from the gossip beat, Chris

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148. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Looking for . . .

Tue 9 May 1995

On Mon, 8 May 1995 18:01:37 +0100,

Kevin Killian <[REDACTED]> wrote:

>Anyone with the RL addresses of Jackson MacLow and Denise Levertov.

>

>Please! Thank you!

>

>-Kevin Killian

>

>

Kevin, I'm not certain what an RL address is. I have Jackson's home address,

42 North Moore St.

New York, NY 10013

and I have his phone & fax number, which are the same number, [REDACTED]. I don't have an e-mail address.

I don't have anything for Denise Levertov, but I thought she was, at least part of the year, a member of the faculty at Stanford, so you might try her through the English Department there.

And let me know what an RL address is.

all best,

charles

charles alexander

chax press

minnesota center for book arts

phone & fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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149. **Kevin Killian**

Re: birthdays

Tue 9 May 1995

I don't understand this birthdays thing, but.....

I was born on the same day as Jimmy Hoffa.

Top that.

Dodie Bellamy

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150. **Charles Alexander**
addresses

Tue 9 May 1995

Sorry, I meant to send my last message direct to Kevin Killian, and hit a wrong key, sending it to all of poetics. My embarrassed apologies to all, particularly to Jackson. Unfortunately one can't retrieve e-mail before delivery.

charles alexander
chax press
minnesota center for book arts
phone & fax: [REDACTED]
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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151. **Mark Wallace**
two of everybody

Tue 9 May 1995

I like this idea of there being more than one of everybody. I've now figured out that it's true in my case two.

The Mark Wallace who makes consistently intelligent comments is me. The foolish, overbearing one is the other guy.

But if that's true, how come I like the other one better?

I'll have to ask him.

mw

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152. **H. T. KIRBY-SMITH**
rhyme

Tue 9 May 1995

It is helpful if one wants to chime in about rhyme to take time to watch out for what it isn't. For example, "live" and "love" echo one another but what you have is consonance, not rhyme. Rhyme has to do with vowel sounds being the same or losely similar, followed by one identical consonant sound. Beyond that are all the degrees of slant rhyme, quasi-rhyme, and assonance. Some of the most remarkable inventions along this line are in Sylvia Plath's pre-Daddy poems,

written about 1956-1958. I don't think I have ever in my life used the word "Protean" before but that describes rhyme to me.

Edmund Wilson once made up something called "reverse rhyme"--i.e. in one line you ended with "grab" and the next with "brag" or "barge"--I think. It made no sense at all but did sound pretty funny.

Since there are only a limited number of combinations of sounds in any given language there are always going to be rhyming words. To point out accidental, or even semi-intentional echoing is like pointing out the dandelions in a lawn. Yeah, they are there all right and they look pretty. But they planted themselves.

Tom Kirby-Smith
English Department
UNC-Greensboro
Greensboro NC 27412

Phone: [REDACTED]

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153. **H. T. KIRBY-SMITH**

Williams poem

Tue 9 May 1995

Just wanted to acknowledge seriously my gratitude to Wystan for putting on the Williams poem. I don't know why it wasn't one of my favorites before but it is now. You know, Williams was enormously admiring of Keats when he was a teenager and his earliest poems were Keats imitations. In this poem I think that we see a progression of interwoven sounds much like Keats at his best--the Keats of "To Autumn." Both H.D. and Williams, it seems to me, took things that had been ancillary to Romantic poetry and extrinsic ornament in some Victorian poetry, and made them organically functional in their own poems. It doesn't seem to me there are any rules for what they did; but I do think that we can look at what they did and arrive at a consensus, or at least a set of overlapping perceptions, as to what they did.

Tom Kirby-Smith
English Department
UNC-Greensboro
Greensboro NC 27412

Phone: [REDACTED]

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154. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: unsolo locus

Tue 9 May 1995

but there are also "your old copies of _Locus Solus_ the mag.! not to be forgotten; name drawn from same novel Tom describes. ed. by Ashbery, Mathews, Koch & Schuyler out of Paris in early 60s. Check your nearest univ. library to see if they have a copy. Some good work in the mag that wasn't reprinted in later books.

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155. **cris cheek**

birthdays

Tue 9 May 1995

I'm turning over a new year on Thurs 11th. Feeling pretty and bullish. Must be the May buds. There, even my friends don't know - but now I've just told strangers - well, what do all those people who don't write poetry do? Who notices their passages?

love cris

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156. **Joe Amato**

Re: birthdays

Tue 9 May 1995

well speaking of may babies---i was born on the 31st., which brings an end to my fourth decade as a twin (love boasting about how i share this day with whitman)...

posting this to the list is so-----

i'm not proud////

hey kali, what about tu? or should i hush up?

joe

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157. **Jim Rosenberg**

chance / choice spaces

Tue 9 May 1995

re Jackson Mac Low:

Jackson once told me (perhaps this is common knowledge) that he started using chance operations because he was concerned that his writing had become too sentimental. He stopped using chance operations -- because he found the writing too sentimental!

re Cage:

The thing that has always blown my mind about John Cage is that back in the '30s -- long before the technology of electronic music existed -- he understood that it was coming, that technology would exist that would allow any sound theoretically possible to actually be heard, and thus needed a basis for composing music based on the geometry of sound itself. Before Cage, composing music meant creating instructions either for the singing human voice or for manipulating a particular (read ideosyncratic to each particular culture) set of historical artifacts known as musical instruments. Cage enumerated the dimensions of sound: pitch, timbre, loudness, duration, morphology (more typically called envelope these days, I think). His confrontation with the world of sound was whole, was total, was so completely central that this "acoustical" point of view has influenced hundreds of composers who might deny vehemently any aesthetic connection with Cage.

Chance is a mechanism for providing answers; the composer provides the questions. Cage would constantly explore to find the geometry of the *choice space* to know how to formulate these questions. (It is one of the many paradoxes of work with chance operations that chance is a more effective method of filling a choice space than choice ...) E.g. he would constantly go to musicians and ask them to show him the whole range of everything they could do with their instrument -- working out the dimensions of that musician's practice.

What are the dimensions of the choice space of language? Of language itself? John's mesostics leave this as a question not really undertaken. The very word 'dimension' sounds odd with respect to language. What do we do with syntax? How many dimensions are there to syntax? The question sounds very odd. Yet *dimension* is exactly the kind of thing you seek in doing chance operations: the scale against which to apply the random number. In fact, Cage's mesostics did not apply operations to language, but to *text*. In the face of an intractable choice space one retreats to a much more tractable space, the space of text *finding* operations. It gave me no pleasure at all when I was told that John used one of the programs I wrote for him every day -- for years on end -- instead it leaves me with a haunted sense of unease. What would we think of John Cage as a composer if he had written no other music than the pieces for radios? Had stuck to the exact identical method making pieces for radios for years at a time?

So we are back to the question: what is the geometry of the choice space of *language* -- the total space of all conceivable circumstances of language, text or no text. I don't have an answer, would never claim to have even *started* on an answer.

--

Jim Rosenberg

<http://www.well.com/user/jer/>

CIS: 71515,124

WELL: jer

Internet: [REDACTED]

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158. **I.LIGHTMAN**

working papers from chancy gardiner

Tue 9 May 1995

From: CPCMB::P280 "I.LIGHTMAN" 7-MAY-1995 17:25:30.88

To: P280

CC:

Subj: numbers

14, 56, 75, 46

129, 34, 8, 65

19, 76, 87, 93

34, 56, 83, 57

79, 64, 24, 1

97, 53, 75, 3

5, 57, 8, 71, 50

23, 56, 67, 9

45, 65, 29, 40, 91

27, 86, 53, 35

9, 86, 19, 93, 2

25, 58, 73, 4, 90, 12

35, 65, 47, 8

87, 24, 95, 80, 26, 73

84, 51, 37, 2

6, 66, 19

94, 92, 01, 03

12, 49, 83, 19, 34

54, 6, 99, 80, 24, 94

7, 62,

28, 93, 18

16

91, 6, 30
97,
33, 39

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159. **I.LIGHTMAN**

working papers from chancy gardiner (2)

Tue 9 May 1995

From: CPCMB::P280 "I.LIGHTMAN" 7-MAY-1995 17:33:34.25

To: P280

CC:

Subj: mumble

1 This 2 is 3 the 4 year 5 1997 6 and 7 there
8 are 9 gale 10 winds 11 in 12 the 13 west, 14 never
15 a 16 note 17 played 18 in 19 discontent 20 and

21 in 22 a 23 place 24 where 25 animals 26 play
27 the 28 imagined 29 margins 30 soar 31 with 32 letters
33 flung 34 at 35 odd 36 intervals 37 and 38 ink
39 spills 40 a 41 clear 42 running 43 relevance
44 moved 45 to 46 safer 47 particles, 48 absolved.

49 These 50 are 51 the 52 words 53 the 54 heart 55 makes
56 forgetting 57 its 58 injunction 59 to 60 exercise
61 while 62 floating, 63 fingers 64 succumb 65 to
66 the 67 temptation 68 to 69 imply 70 themselves
71 or another, waiting, presumptive.

75 Do not argue, I want to say, there
83 is 84 not 85 enough 86 time, 87 I 88 don't 89 even 90 know
91 what 92 thought 93 might 94 bring 95 the 96 third 97 day
98 and 99 something 100 beats now, wanting
only to be subject, object too, yours.

What will the hospital say, the treadmill,
another language of not knowing, as if
anything else were possible, today or
another time, invisible, flags from porches
forego the year, the skin, the tissue.
We are flying on the ground.

charles alexander

charles alexander
chax press
minnesota center for book arts
phone & fax: [REDACTED]
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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160. **I.LIGHTMAN**
chance / trust crisis to object

Tue 9 May 1995

> "get particular here please. I'd be just as worried by anyone using chance methods in the understanding that by so doing they can by-pass or somehow circumnavigate subjectivity (taking what's been said about curbing the sprawl of the ego into account here) as by the assertion that one accept 'fate' as dictated by a horoscope constructed by rote to the extensive purposes of political manipulation as documented in 'Religion and the Decline of Magic' by Keith Thomas (an important book on the subject from the viewpoint of 16th and 17th century england - wicca, astrology, Protestant rationality and Magic from which, opening that book at 'random' i quote 'the medieval church thus did a great deal to weaken the fundamental distinction between a prayer and a charm, and to encourage the idea that there was virtue in the mere repetition of holy words' or 'the very impenetrability of the formula helped to give it its power')."

Waal, sometimes there is. What if you look at the huge number of daily and weekly and monthly magazines that carry horoscopes - that makes not a unitary astro-church producing one horoscope which clearly I would be an idiot to read as if it linked me with all Aries - no, it makes a range of magazines, and I might find a Daily Mail, or a Times, or a Cosmopolitan, in a train carriage or the street or a friend's or a rival's house, and *that* issue's horoscope in *that* magazine that I don't normally read might be instructive on *that* day. (As it is, I also find that the Aries horoscope in the Pink Paper, the free lesbian weekly, is pretty reliably right about my life). Plus one can hardly say that a horoscope one has generated for oneself by chance methods (eg my favourite game is picking a book off the shelves, a page number, a line number, then a sequence of numbers - eg, 2, 5, 1, 8 - and writing down the 2nd then 5th then 1st then 8th word on that chosen line, and seeing what message you get - I did my procedure on Charles' poem >thanks for the thanks, Charles< by noting swiftly that his poem had 100 to 150 words and then switching to a blank screen and writing a poem of numbers in that range, then going back and substituting each number for the word at that point in Charles' poem - I'll post my working papers in a minute - then trying to edit the result, goofing up and producing, by chance

interaction with the machine, the poem I sent to the list) has been imposed by a totalising state or religion. You can say that I am acting as if I wanted to be subject to a regime that took away my decision-making will and let me off responsibility for my fate, but it aint that way for me - I often bicker with most new Age people and astrologers, because, in fact, they prove to have very fixed beliefs about how one should act and use chance methods to come to what they probably would have advised you or themselves anyway - advice which may well, as Cris indicates, partake of suspicious "higher" agendas, like "love money", "put your family ahead of society", or "I recommend you sign up for a course of twenty sessions with my friend the expensive Shaitsu counsellor, and don't forget to remind him about my cut... I mean, to tell him I sent you". But so do many people have such higher agendas, based on complicity with bullying power blocks/capitalism/ anti-intellectualism/anti-emotionalism - that isn't an issue of figuring chance as a divining instrument, not part of the language or logic. There are plenty of groups that use words like

"prescience / consciousness / attention / interference / energies / transferral / occurence / attenuation / exquisation"

and fuck you over, bully you, want you to join their church; sometimes, in the context where such "hypocrisy" (if one links language with behaviour) operates behind the nice words, it is an act of dissent, not high church, to use words with a religious "history", to keep things unorthodox thus creative

truth is beauty is easily reordered

Ira

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161. **I.LIGHTMAN**

Re: rhyme

Tue 9 May 1995

I think Thom Gunn's rhymes in "The Man With Night Sweats" do more for AIDS awareness than William Carlos Williams or any others (like myself soon) with doctorates, not as a spoonful of sugar on the medicine going down, sometimes what is good about the ear is the way it circulates widely, the bloody nose for the bleeding heart bellying up,

Ira

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162. **I.LIGHTMAN**

Re: Aleatoric Spree

Tue 9 May 1995

I sent a run of messages this morning, then got more to respond to afterwards, so sorry for sending this one too:

I want to respond to Chris Stroffolino, and Sheila and Herb - like all of you, I don't want to bash any kind of music, or just state idle preferences. Like you say, Herb, so many say things about Cage who don't seem to know the music but, rather, the seemingly graspable aesthetic theory. And like you say, Chris, there's a lot of snobbery vs punk, pop, amplified guitars etc. And like you say, Sheila, the twelve tone system can just solidify into another classicism (though will it survive as such, is this a kind of sulky - bad for them - intransigence?).

All I want to do is quiz some of the oppositions that underlie loyalty to *one* kind of music at the expense of all others, not keep saying "Stockhausen" over & over till everyone listens to him or ignores me. One of my first posts to the list, Herb, was to say like you that Cage is too readily appropriated, and seems to stand for some very narrow-minded avant-garde approaches to music in non-musicians; or, in other words, if a poet doesn't want to put in the hard work involved taking music seriously, he/she can say "I like Cage" and thus, in one foul swoop, justify never wanting to listen to pre-Cage classical music or any New Music done by those who differ from Cage eg (for my tastes) Boulez and Stockhausen AND (in the same swoop) seem to be into avant-garde music by being a fan of John Cage. Let me rush to say that this formulation does not apply, in the slightest, to you Herb, or any of the others who have posted about Cage on this list in this discussion, there's been some wonderful discussions of sound and texture, which are issues for poets(?) too.

I guess it's like the discussion on rhyme too, in that I don't believe one strikes a blow against the establishment by being anti-rhyme (ie consciously teasing a reader who wants rhyme) or "anti-classical", since there's a hugely dominant hatred of most classical music by people afraid to engage with it, so it seems to me, except via a few of the greatest hits (in this case, Chris S., I would worry about popularity, not that one thing is popular but that it is used in an Eighties way, to justify streamlining out more marginal things, and there is this love of say melody that inspires lazy record producers to ignore soundscape, bass, and polyphony in order to produce a sound] Beavis and Butthead can headbang too - though I think Beavis and Butthead are cool). So it doesn't worry me that twelve tone music might get classical, except in so far as you get music that suits the intellectual rules of musicologists and don't move me or nuthin'.

Chris S, me, I like Alternative Television, Boulez's settings of Rene Char, Bjork, Sleeper, Mo Tucker's first solo album, Stockhausen's Samstag. I really like

silence and I really like noise. Some people really like delicacy and are dillweeds about noise; some people love noise and can't cope with lack of a beat or oddity or silence. I'm not anti punk, but I am anti anything that thinks it's outdated everything previous when all that means is you can't be a fan and also listen to anything previous; I also think this society of mine lacks for nothing punk, rude, harsh, anti-bourgeois, yet lacks all the time in gentleness, open ears, complex thinking; so, at the moment, I turn to classical music to be challenged by the way it's complex, intense, yet grounded in the ability to be still - then I might make art that is nothing like classical music, but still has these things, which this society of mine lacks. Oh, and I write in a guitar band that uses rhythm (even if it is sometimes 7/8) and limited chords (even if some do come from Stravinsky), and lyrics out of Language Poetry but also Liz Phair. And I try to be open to what others are doing, and encourage those who cross the boundaries as I describe them, cos I never felt that much encouragement or recognition of my attempts by anyone older than me.

I think Pound was right that poetry mustn't stray too long from music(s); if the poet only buys into one music, especially one that sells itself as superceding all others, things ossify quickly,

Ira

p.s. anyone who doesn't want to read Herb and me talking about Cage and Stockhausen should leave this message here...

Herb, I agree with you that Stockhausen proselytises too, I was only making that jibe in response to your earlier message suggesting one might think of Cage's use of the I-Ching just in terms of numberm] , and it wouldn't be such an issue then; and I was just responding that (since I think Cage *does* use the I-Ching mostly as a number system) that the question remained of being a bit of a guru and yet not being part of a complex sacral system, but in fact an easily grasped rite in isolation. I don't mind Stockhausen being a guru, because I think he's very serious about setting up a complex sacral system that' one cannot grasp quickly or easily.

Anyway, fulfilling your kind request, here's some specific examples of Stockhausen's aleatoric work:

Discussion of Klavierstück XI, from Stockhausen, by Michael Kurtz, trans Richard Toop, Faber, London, 1992:

"Nineteen groups of notes - all derived from the same basic principles, whereby the pitches and the rhythmic structures are interrelated - are distributed irregularly over a sheet of paper measuring 53 by 93 centimetres. The pianist is to look 'without prior intent' at the sheet of paper, and begin with whatever group his or her eye happens to light on first. Tempo, dynamics and mode of

attack are free. At the end of each group is a tempo indication, a dynamic level and a mode of attack, all determining the way the next group (again, selected by a random glance) is to be played." (pp 86-87)

Stockhausen interviewed in "Towards a Cosmic Music", Element Books, Shaftesbury, Dorset, England, 1989:

"We know from tradition that composers' moments of intuitive inspiration have constantly been seen as decisive. Viewed intellectually, that is 'indeterminacy' in terms of tradition. From the standpoint of intuition, however, which is also a human experience albeit little utilised today, the outcome involves a highly specific 'determined' music."

(my commentary - I love this, it looks like paradox, but it is a way of saying that one movement often begins with pseudo-explanations of what it is doing, simply in order to get the new vibe out there, to get people to engage with the art, take it seriously, feels its shape and texture and resonances - sometimes you even need to kid *yourself* you have (intellectual) "reasons", when you are simply letting historical change occur through your ministry; like all those sci-fi time-travel films where we share in the sense of the good guys forcing a crucial historical event which we know in the future went really well - "Backbeat", the film about the Beatles, for example)

"For the moment there are only very few such musicians, completely dedicated to their work which they don't just see as a job - musicians of extremely great sensitivity ready to follow intuitive inspiration. They must also carry out specific preparatory spiritual exercises before they play. Their entire way of life must be dedicated to this kind of intuitive music. They can't drink a beer and then start playing five minutes later, unaware of their responsibility"

(This interests me, especially the not drinking beer, where I *agree* with Cage on the value of macrobiotics and care over one's intake and what specific foods *do* to one's state; I'd cross-reference this with the point that this doesn't have to mean "don't listen to other music" as the composer himself wrote a piece sampling national anthems and letting them interact with each other)

"my music is absolutely dependent on intuitive players capable of working in a group...a traditional string quartet doesn't offer any comparison since it plays rationally determined music... in free Jazz and in other traditions, such as Indian music, there are, however, always rules, schemata, etc., providing a framework for 'improvisation'. A group of musicians playing *purely intuitively* is an innovation in *all* traditions."

(Cris Cheek has said this before on this list about much improv)

"In my Aus Den Sieben Tagen pieces, the musicians sometimes play for forty minutes on the basis of two or three sentences. The music provides spiritual

orientation derived from the text. The players are much more relaxed than if I demand that they rehearse for a week when they would have to work much harder, physically and intellectually, to decipher something that I encoded in the eye language of musical notation. The written directives bring them into more direct contact with intuition than paper covered with notation."

(Sometimes it is not a question of expanding the syntax *on the page*, but of giving that task a rest and opening up the current syntax of musicality in writers or writing in music or performance or the life of the artist or reader, their horoscopes and paths)

"That's xactly what's involved in intuition. Musicians establish a direct link with intuition by way of my texts. In the years ahead I must investigate whether, for instance, a specific written instruction leads to a specifically archetypal music - as compared with another instruction. How can we discover ways of regulating the process of intuitive music making?"

1969, pp.35-39

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163. **cris cheek**
chance / trust cris to object

Tue 9 May 1995

Ira, I'm not down on chance at all. And I'm susceptible to dowsing.

However to say that -

*it is an act of dissent, not high church,
to use words with a religious "history", to keep things unorthodox thus
creative*

evades the question about meaning. Are we each in a hermetically sealed world-corridor of mirrors gleefully transgressing (dissent rapidly becoming a norm) or are we in clusters of suchlike each replicating, within the music of the spheres of its own codes, a whole - the ballroom mirror ball of the Divine Santa Maria della Bolognese?

The secondary list of words was there to re-inforce exactly that request for context and use. Yes, we can play the 'good - bad' substitution inversions and the punk nazi regalia sneers BUT you underline my question acutely by saying, and I agree with you the -

*fuck you over, bully you, want you to join their church; sometimes,
in the context where such "hypocrisy" (if one links language with behaviour)
operates behind the nice words*

It's not a corner Ira shop, it's a let's get specific in the cause of which I'd also support Herb re the assertions towards Stockhausen and Cage. Ok - I 'm off into the bathroom now to sing a couple of verses of 'FEELINGS'.

yours in perpannuity, from your loving trust object 'the self' luther von beatty

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164. **Ryan Knighton**

Re: two of everybody

Tue 9 May 1995

read george's "little me". i guess when george reads it there's three of him.

ryan

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165. **John Keeling**

Thank you

Tue 9 May 1995

Dear Jim,

Your package arrived in the mail yesterday and I want to send along my gratitude. Although I have only glanced at "Diffractions" I think it looks very very interesting. I will be bothering you with more detailed responses in the future if you don't mind.

In any case, I'm swamped right now but did want to thank you so much for your poetry.

best wishes,

john keeling

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166. **Tony Green**

Re: unsolo locus

Tue 9 May 1995

I note apropos Roussel and New York that J Ashberry wrote intro to M Foucault ^ Death and the Labyrinth: the world of Raymond Roussel^ trans Charles Ruas, Athlone Press 1987.

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167. **Tony Green**
Re: Aleatory Poetry
Tue 9 May 1995

To Chris Stroffolino et al, birthdates on homepages bring in cards and presents (chapbooks, perfects, hardbacks, book tokens)?

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168. **Tony Green**
Re: birthdays
Tue 9 May 1995

Dear chris, happy passage to you, etc

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169. **Sheila E. Murphy**
Re: birthdays
Tue 9 May 1995

I'm turning over a new year on Thurs 11th. Feeling pretty and bullish. Must be the May buds. There, even my friends don't know - but now I've just told

strangers - well, what do all those people who don't write poetry do? Who notices their passages?

love cris

Happy birthday, Chris! I've often wondered what non-writers do in general, not to mention in recognition of passages!

Sheila E.

>

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170. **Patrick Phillips**
Re: birthdays
Tue 9 May 1995

May 1's "my day" - a haymarket, lawyer fest here in the U.S., May Day has crept back into an undercurrent of discontent/content. The Bacchanalia of signs. May pole, bar pole, step up to the bar, barred from representative gov. (or saddled with it.) I was born on International Workers Day, International Lawyers Day

(hokum), and the day of fertility rituals - as you say Chris, vat Irony... that who of history... what who?

in all fatness

Pat

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171. **maria damon**

Re: Aleatory Poetry

Tue 9 May 1995

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group writes:

> Maria, add Shaks to yr list of creative Taureans -- even if
> Cordelia was a bit of a mess, as some think. Trad date of birth 23
> April (conveniently St George's day) best

thanks but shaks is apocryphal --or jsut about everything about "him" is, no? hey I gotta question passed on from someone else, who remembers a street poet of

greenwich village circa 1050-60s who had a poem called Religion

In the winter I'm a Buddhist

In the summer I'm a nudist.

that's it in its entirety. I told my friend i'd ask around to find out who this might be --any ideas?--maria

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172. **Gary Sullivan**

Oracular Editions (fwd)

Tue 9 May 1995

Everyone:

What follows is an ad for a cassette of spoken word material some of you might be interested in. Erik Belgum, who put the cassette together, is also interested in trading with presses, etc. His e-mail address is:

[REDACTED]

Here goes:

The Oracular Editions (OED) cassette label, dedicated exclusively to the spoken word, has just released Oracular Editions #1, an audio anthology of spoken word performance, audio art, soundtexts, poetry readings, etc. Oracular

Editions #1 contains works by Paul Dutton, Robert Gregory & Jason Gibbs, John M. Bennett, Richard Kostelanetz, Alex Ferguson, Philip Blackburn, Warren Burt and Nicolas Collins. Price: \$10 (includes shipping).

In addition to the ongoing series of audio anthologies, future projects include a series of experimental short stories produced for radio and a series of documentary tapes covering often discussed, but seldom experienced, natural language phenomena such as glossalalia and Tourette's Syndrome.

Please direct all orders and inquiries to: Erik Belgum, Oracular Editions, 3010 Hennepin Avenue South, #74 Minneapolis, MN 55408 USA

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173. **George Bowering**

Re: birthdays

Tue 9 May 1995

Hey, my kid brother Jim was born on May 31, 1949, and he isnt at all like Whitman.

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174. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Aleatory Poetry

Tue 9 May 1995

Well, Dodie, Sean Killian is born on the Marquis DeSade's birthday (6-2-95), and he wouldn't be if he were related to Kevin.... later, Abby Hoffa...

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175. **George Bowering**

Re: rhyme

Tue 9 May 1995

It has been a long time since I have heard of rime's being identified with a pairing of words that have the "same" vowel and "same" last consonants. I remember that my highschool teacher (who was from England) used to tell us that. She also mentioned all those fictions we had to learn: slant rime, half rime, quarter rime, assonance. Etc. I always wondered whether half rime included 12/13 rime. But to limit the term rime to cloud and proud is a little strange after all these years after Duncan, etc. I think that that definition would make some sense to the people in the rumoured "new traditionalist" or whatever those US poets are called's netlist.

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176. **cris cheek**

Re: No Change

Tue 9 May 1995

It's nice to have the evidence distributed with the
>assertion.

I saw the yearbook and was surprised that Schmidt was running with it. Glad to have your spot on rejoinder as to his real interest with it.

I've just published Miles Champion's first book 'Sore Models' and have an Allen Fisher 'Civic Crime' - don't know if you've seen that. Eager and happy to trade with you if you're up for that stuff.

love

cris

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177. **George Bowering**

Re: rhyme

Tue 9 May 1995

I think that I know what the problem is in this discussion with H.T. Kirby-Smith. Says "I don't remember seeing a rhyme in Ginsberg." Now, in my experience, one is much more likely to HEAR a rime. And one hears a lot of it in Ginsberg. As to Williams, well, he and H.D. were the 2 Modernist poets who taught me a sense of rime, and my actual (later) teacher was Robert Duncan. I strongly suggest reading his great serial poem, "The Structure of Rime." Or go back to page 51 of _The Opening of the Field_, to read "Keeping the Rhyme"

By stress and syllable
by change-rhyme and contour
we let the long line pace even awkward to its period.

The short line
we refine
and keep for candor.

This we remember:
ember of the fire
catches the word if we but hear
 ("We must understand what is happening")
and springs to desire,
a bird-right light
 sound.

This is the Yule-log that warms December.
This is the new grass that springs from the ground.

...

Or listen to the first line of the Pindar poem and explain how it is not singing with rime.

---I think that W.T. is taking the concept of endrime and giving it the term rime. That is, to my mind, like taking iambic pentameter and calling it rhythm.

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178. **George Bowering**

Re: jazz/music

Tue 9 May 1995

Got a message from Susan Clark (the poet, not the actress), who said that Black Swan is in business at another address; she says that the new place looks less funky, and she didnt recognize the people working there, but I am going to check it out.

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179. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: second epistle to the oulipites

Tue 9 May 1995

Maria & other interested parties --

here's the info. on that mag. I mentioned earlier --

the January/February 1994 issue (#99) of *_New Observations_*, guest edited by Harry Mathews and Lynn Crawford, is a special "Oulipo * Oupeinpo" issue--

"Oupeinpo" stands for *Ouvrir de Peinture Potentielle*

lots of good stuff here -- my own favorite being Thieri Foulc's "New Observations on Harry Mathew's Face"-- though Queneau's "The Foundations of Literature" will be of special interest to those (and you know who you are) who follow the study of mathematics and poetry.

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180. **Robert Drake**

Re: second epistle to the oulipites

Tue 9 May 1995

forgot to mention, too, that Martin Gardner devoted one of his "Mathematical Recreations" columns in Scientific American some years back to Oulipo--was my first introduction, & praps easier to dig out than most...

lbd

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181. **braman sandra**

Starfish Cellular

Wed 10 May 1995

Signing off while I wander for a month.... so a few parting words.... Sandra
Braman

STARFISH CELLULAR

Organization, but every now and again an arm
walks
away,

grows its own brain,
mouth and
feeds.

At some point the change comes.
At some point the swift.

Timing is everything, worn down
elephant estrus, sixteen weeks,
and in between the bulls go
mad

Fielding the warrant
Star directory
Star cellular

There is the warrant dormant.
The bench warrant, the desk, the warrant court-
martial.

"Nothin' feels better than blood on blood."

The heart, as an organ, responds
to being cut open with "irritability,"
it is said to be
"unforgiving," wild dreams, and thrashing,
voice scat over
night.

Collateral facts

Dispositive facts

Evidentiary facts

Fabricated fact

Fact question

There, gathering the sheaf,
long skirt damp and arms as wide as
tai, tai, tying Texas,
the leaves of cases,
bundled, a memory complete.

Starfish organizational.
We are at that point
of evolution
when the child I love most strongly is
most probably NOT to be my
own. Starfish gestational.

Starfish investigatory.

Surviving cellular. Surviving New Jersey and
heirloom brass turned green;
putting the warrant out,
wanting that protection. "I'm going to keep
moving on," he said, and
walked away.

Sandra Braman

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182. **Ron Silliman**
Re: Aleatory Birthdays
Wed 10 May 1995

Sorry Jed,
I turn 49 in August. (Isn't it obvious that I'm a Leo?)
Ron

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183. **Gary Sullivan**
Funding for the arts (fwd)
Wed 10 May 1995

Dear Minnesotans:

What follows is a forwarded message that may interest you. All others, I apologize for clogging this list w/this, but this is the quickest way I could think of to impart this info:

The Minnesota Legislature has recommended a modest increase in arts funding. The legislation, however, is still vulnerable to the veto pen of Governor Arne Carlson. Please call the governor's office today (May 9) or tomorrow (May 10) at [REDACTED] to express your support for the arts appropriation. When you get the governor's answering machine, leave a message something like the following: "My name is ----- and I live in -----. My phone number is -----. Please support the legislature's recommendation for increased arts funding."

If many of us call, we can make a difference. Thanks.

--Lane Stiles

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184. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: lyric and/or

Wed 10 May 1995

Chris S. -- found your nearly immediate move from interesting remark re: lyric to a radical narrowing of the question to just a few forms of music odd -- and the opposition even odder, as most poets & critics of my acquaintance (an admittedly unrepresentative sampling) seem, if anything, obsessed with punk and rap (though they may argue that the audience produces "resistant" readings) and most listen to Stockhausen too!

ok, so maybe they only have one Stockhausen recording -- but he doesn't usually include lyrics anyway,,, so you got to make up your own words,,, but you can dance to it -- and I usually make up my own words to popular recordings anyway 'cause most of the lyrics printed on the sleeve are so pathetic, but then I do that with Wagner as well, cause I don't speak German --

This isn't exactly aleatoric, but some of my poetry has its origins in my misunderstandings on first hearing of a piece of music -- as on the occasion, while driving through the streets of D.C. with Rosmarie Waldrop some years ago, when I could have sworn the gospel song playing on the car radio was titled "Rise and Annoy the Lord."

but I'm not usually so orhpic -- and milk light isn't good for your eyes --

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185. **Andrew Joron**

against quietism

Wed 10 May 1995

In celebrating the virtues of Zen and the Aleatory, I'm afraid we may be losing sight of the still-important notion of struggle, as opposed to the Zen idea of accepting whatever the Aleatory hands out. I would rather validate an Activist stance in both poetry & politics, and promote the idea that the Real is something to be transformed. The Aleatory in this light becomes a provocation rather than an end-point. It's only through resistance that we are led to wonder.

-- Andrew Joron

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186. **Herb Levy**

Re: Aleatoric Spree

Wed 10 May 1995

Ira -

Those Stockhausen quotes are quite useful, thanks for providing them. I'll respond to them after I've had a chance to to hear some of the music.

I'm afraid, though, that no amount of listening, to Stockhausen or otherwise, will help me understand some aspects of your posting entitled <Aleatoric Spree>, particularly the section about the spiritual side of Cage and Stockhausen.

I find it interesting that you make these statements directly after warning people that the following section may be too specifically musical for general readers of <poetics>. As you say elsewhere, <we were, after all, talking about Zen>.

In any case, I'm asking for further help & clarification from you here. There's a lot that I simply don't understand in your posting.

On Tue, 9 May 1995, I.LIGHTMAN wrote:

*All I want to do is quiz some of the oppositions that underlie loyalty to *one* kind of music at the expense of all others, not keep saying "Stockhausen" over & over till everyone listens to him or ignores me. One of my first posts to the list, Herb, was to say like you that Cage is too readily appropriated, and seems to stand for some very narrow-minded avant-garde approaches to music in non-musicians; or, in other words, if a poet doesn't want to put in the hard work involved taking music seriously, he/she can say "I like Cage" and thus, in one foul swoop, justify never wanting to listen to pre-Cage classical music or any New Music done by those who differ from Cage eg (for my tastes)*

Boulez and Stockhausen AND (in the same swoop) seem to be into avant-garde music by being a fan of John Cage.

You're projecting an awful lot of your position onto my own brief statements.

One, I really don't care if someone else's taste in music, poetry, food, or whatever is <narrow-minded> or not. It's hard enough to take responsibility for one's own taste, let alone that of another. If someone chooses to listen only to Cage or Mozart or Presley, why do you care?

Two, these days I think most avant garde/intellectual posturing in regard to music revolves around artists like Brian Eno, or noise bands like Einstürzende Neubauten or Crash Worship. Cage's music isn't hip enough for most poseurs (this may be somewhat different in England, but, if I can believe what I read in *The Wire*, not too much so.)

Three, While we seem to agree that Cage's music is often misunderstood, I really think this is more often true for those who dismiss his music. Can you provide sources for the kind of misunderstanding you mean?

Let me rush to say that this formulation does not apply, in the slightest, to you Herb, or any of the others who have posted about Cage on this list in this discussion, there's been some wonderful discussions of sound and texture, which are issues for poets (poets?) too.

Very flattering, perhaps, but before you <rush to say> anything of the sort here, you really should know more than you can about my taste in music.

<large cuts here>

I think Pound was right that poetry mustn't stray too long from music(s); if the poet only buys into one music, especially one that sells itself as superceding all others, things ossify quickly,

That parenthetical <s> and the semi-colon indicate how much you're stretching here. It really isn't clear that the paraphrase from Pound supports your views. & could you please quote a source where Cage says his music supercedes all others.

Ira, you then continue with a comparison of the spritual beliefs of Stockhausen & Cage. But you don't compare them using equal terms. As I said above I am most uncomfortable with and unclear about this part of your argument. I look forward to your guidance in how to read the following:

*Herb, I agree with you that Stockhausen proslytises too, I was only making that jibe in response to your earlier message suggesting one might think of Cage's use of the I-Ching just in terms of numberm] , and it wouldn't be such an issue then; and I was just responding that (since I think Cage *does* use the I-Ching mostly as a number system) that the question remained of being a bit of a guru and yet not*

being part of a complex sacral system, but in fact an easily grasped rite in isolation.

Unless I totally misread you here (& this is a very convoluted statement so I admit this could be the case), you seem to be saying that Cage's use of a Confucian text, the I Ching, primarily as a tool, somehow calls into question his belief in Buddhism. Could you please explain how this is so? Further in this sentence you seem to imply that Buddhism is not a <complex sacral system>, Cage's belief in Buddhism is not <complex>, or, that Cage's sense of Buddhism can be too easily grasped by his audience. Could you please clarify which, if any, of these readings you meant. If you mean that Cage's belief in Buddhism is not complex, how you mean this & how do you know this? If you mean that Cage's sense of Buddhism is too easily grasped by his audience, how do you mean this, how do you know this and why is it Cage's fault?

I don't mind Stockhausen being a guru, because I think he's very serious about setting up a complex sacral system that one cannot grasp quickly or easily.

I will readily agree with you, regardless of what you meant in the previous sentence, that Stockhausen's sense of the spiritual cannot be easily grasped. Can you explain why you think this is a good thing? Are you criticizing Cage for not devising his own <complex sacral system>?

I'm still confused by much of this & I'd appreciate help in clarifying these points.

Bests,

Herb

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187. **R.I.Caddel @ durham.ac.uk**

No change / exchange

Wed 10 May 1995

DEAR CHRIS, I'm always up for swaps - let me know what you'd like - how about Roy Fisher's It Follows That (Pig 1994) with its nice fable "A Modern Story" where Fisher dreams he's made a fortune out of running poetry competitions and vanity presses, and ends up buying the Arts Council of Great Britain at a knockdown price. Or strictly, doesn't, because, as he says, he's a straight businessman by that stage.

I couldn't possibly tell you the story about how Oxford refused to publish that poem in one of their RF collections...

RHYME: Bunting spent much of the back end of his life on an intensive investigation of Welsh rhyme, which he described as "all the things that hold

poetry together" - including assonances, alliteration, half-rhyme, slip-rhyme, and other patterning devices way beyond the formalist straightjacket - but then, he also wrote: Follow the clue patiently and you will understand nothing - which, of course, is where chance comes in.

BIRTHDAYS: congratulations to all concerned, and to their familiars. I share July 13th with John Clare, John Dee and Julius Ceasar (depending on how you split the year with the old calandar). To date my global conquest achievement is low, my black magic distinctly poor, but I'm doing ok on the lyric environmentalism and insanity.

x x Richard Caddel, E-mail: R.I.Caddel @ durham.ac.uk x x Durham University Library, Phone: 0 [REDACTED] x x Stockton Rd. Durham DH1 3LY Fax: 0 [REDACTED]
x x "Words! Pens are too light.
Take a chisel to write." x x - Basil Bunting
x x x

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188. **H. T. KIRBY-SMITH**

Ginsberg's rhymes

Wed 10 May 1995

You know, if you listen real hard to HOWL it is really a series of Petrarchan sonnets.

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189. **Michael Boughn**

Re: Rhyme

Wed 10 May 1995

For those interested in following through on the rhyme question, three places come immediately to mind: Donald Wesling's **The Chances of Rhyme** tracks the history of it's definitons and usages from the 18th to the 20th c's; Kenneth Burke's "On Musicality in Verse" (in **The Philosophy of Literary Form**) distinguishes some of it's amazing diversity; and TVF Brogan in **English Versification 1570-1980** discusses significant linguistic issues. He, in fact, argues, that rhyme is not a "literary device" at all, but a crucial linguistic strategy "in reduplication and word-formation". His point being "poetry is not made out of language; poetry _is_ language."

All of this really goes to back up George's points that what we call "full rhyme" is only a minor manifestation of rhyme, and that it functions in profound and incalculable ways as a fundamental organizing power of language itself.

Mike
[REDACTED]

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190. **maria damon**

Re: Starfish Cellular

Wed 10 May 1995

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group
writes:

> Signing off while I wander for a month.... so a few parting words....
> Sandra Braman
>
>
> STARFISH CELLULAR
>

thanks sandra for that lovely meditation. reminds me of january chris
funkhouser and i rescued a starfish lying on the median strip of a beachside
road --dropt by seagull no doubt --still thick intact and living. we drove by i sd
stop wasnt that a starfish on the rd, we turned back, i made chris pick it up and
we walked it down to the ocean's edge. it felt like an augur, auspicious no less,
but of what i know not. --maria damon

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191. **maria damon**

Re: Aleatory Birthdays

Wed 10 May 1995

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group
writes:

> Sorry Jed,
>
> I turn 49 in August. (Isn't it obvious that I'm a Leo?)
>
> Ron

aw rats! after all that.

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192. **Alan Sondheim**

Re: Rhyme

Wed 10 May 1995

I've constantly wondered about the presence of rhyme and alliteration (for example Anglo-Saxon) anywhere - it would seem to have a cognitive basis - I wonder what could be traced in neural circuitry? Neural networks utilize repetition, similarity, competition; combine these elements with the frame problem (beginnings and endings of structures like line endings), and rhyme could indicate neurally a conclusion and a reinforcement of sound that interplays with the symbolic as well. In which case, rhyme would emerge out of the Kristevan chora (what a sight!/ site!), the *_matter_* of language (as in Deleuze's *_matter_* of cinema), simultaneously deflecting/ground the poem in the inchoate...

Just thinking out loud here -

Alan

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193. **H. T. KIRBY-SMITH**

Paul Christenson on Olson

Wed 10 May 1995

In his book CHARLES OLSON: CALL HIM ISHMAEL, Paul Christenson wrote:

As Olson became convinced that the success of the open poem lay in its being a model of expanded consciousness, he gradually abandoned interest in those other features of his original poetic: the emphases of breath and ear on the generation of lines and syllables in the poem. In fact, in the second triad of the MAXIMUS, these vestiges of artifice, the play of sound and the rhythms of line lengths, disappear altogether. [88]

At the beginning of the book, Christenson wrote: "It is a pleasure to thank those who joined me in celebrating the life and work of a great poet . . ." It therefore seems reasonable to believe that the first quotation above was not intended as hostile criticism. It seems to me an accurate description of the poetry.

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194. **Jordan Davis.**

affect[ed/less]ness

Wed 10 May 1995

anybody up for a little polyvalent montage?

JD

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195. **Edward Foster**

Re: against quietism

Wed 10 May 1995

quietism. and, really, when one comes right down to it, is there any reason, not self-indulgent or moral, to slip off the planet? why so? and does that implicate the poem? andrew, there can be struggle, tho why? there's no real outside what's said.

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196. **George Bowering**

Re: Starfish Cellular

Wed 10 May 1995

MUSING ON SOME POETS

Those poets, heads coming out of collars,
advised us, showed us how to hold paper and look good,
did we sometime grow tired of them, those
who lived for us,
died for us,
rotted under ground for us,
are still
so we may move.

Not friends, really, not teachers,
poets, whose names glittered when we were alone,
whose books dropped like gleaming newborn calves into our unsteady
hands,
did we read them as if pulling shavings off our souls,
never stepped out of the Pacific combers with shine on morning face,
never twisted body out of grip of coal giant ogre
save with inspiration of our poets,
and who knows what our
means?

What are we now besides older;
a young man newly graduated from university,
black gown still on him said I envy you and your friends,
you got to make the last ones,
there isnt anything to make now, or no one knows what there is.

I said it seems that way but there is always something,
and I showed him my teeth through yellow beer.

Do we old farts say thank you every genuflecting morning
to those poets with agate names who showed us their synapses?
Nowadays the young want us to love the earth,
And I never say out loud to them that my dear old people
Are columns of earth, walk around, sit in chairs,
discard cigarettes and write thatUs left of poems.
They were low lights between mountains visible
To the evening gaze, they were evaporate mornings,
They are not mulch but stones in the earth, they are not
specimens but the authors of words should be whispered inside a dark
bowl
from Siena.

I have no remaining skill for form,
just feel words jostle each other in doorways on the way out, sit
here this
evening remembering a former life, IUm with friends
all lovely all restrained by hope, all agreed without saying so
Qthose poets gave us a way to waste our lives
saying useless things, smiling indulgently at each otherUs personal
diaspora,
carrying mismatched goodies on the way to the grave,
trip, fall into hole, write on dirt walls
a first and last sonnet,
solving all, coming to rest, combing hair, adjusting socks,
kissing no one but the image of Jesus, disbursing mind as if it were
mercury,
listening for the voices to arrive with the worms.

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197. **Carl Lynden Peters**
Re: To all appearances... (fwd)
Wed 10 May 1995

a friend of mine just wrote me this. i'm passing it along for any duchamp fans
out there: tony, what do you think:

*"To all appearances, the artist acts like a mediumistic being who, from
the labyrinth beyond time and space, seeks his way out to a clearinbg."*

*Labyrinths have often signified the human's journey through the various
"twists and turns" of life to the centre, the source of all things and all*

inspirations beyond time and space, the realization of perfection,...

In a related way, the labyrinth may signify a journey towards an ordeal to be faced at the centre of the labyrinth, and then the challenge of finding one's way out on the journey of maturation, to the source The myth of the legendary bull-human, the Minotaur at the centre of the Cretan labyrinth, is powerfully of this type.

Strikingly, references to mediumistic beings generally refer to shamans. (This links back, of course to Tim's work and the book Skin, Bones and Stones [exact title?].) In general, it would mean the transcending of material conditions (time and space) to commune with the divine, receive inspiration, ...

Also, the shamanistic act is done in service for the collective group and humanity. Duchamp may have had this in mind in this subtle, yet powerful way, in the identifaction with the artist.

The clearing will definitely be a transformed and transmuted place on coming out from the labyrinth -- very much a place of creativity, and it would awaken and instill the drive for profound expression.

Thus in outling the above, I would say that this statement from Duchamp, is very powerful, compact, and comprehensive, providing a key to us on the deeper how and why of creative work.

(Penelope Doob Reed, a York U. English professor, has written a helpful book on labyrinths/mazes, The Idea of the Labyrinth from Classical Antiquity through the Middle Ages, 1990. I have heard of another book, The Maze in the Mind and the World, by Donald Gutierrez, but I have not read it.)

carl

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198. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: lyric and/or

Wed 10 May 1995

aldon---since many of the things i was questioning about preconceptions about "popular lyrical music" were "between the lines" of the discussion (or "only in my mind"), let me consider, for instance, a quote i heard attributed to Robert Kelly that claims that while rock lyrics are like looking in a mirror, poetry breaks the mirror.... (end quote--sic). Now, this of course makes poetry more like "aleatory" music than lyrics....and is a valuable distinction up to a point but one could argue the chance elements in many songs, the mixed metaphors even in tin pan

alley (or songs like "chek to cheek" about "cares" vanishing like a gambler's winning or is it loosing streak), and the alea that occurs (perhaps unintentionally---but in this day of "author constructs" and authors as FALLACIES this shouldn't matter, right?) when the "sentiments" of the lyrics seem to clash with the melody they are "couched" in....These phrasings, and lyrical hooks, can teach one much about "craft"---and about the enigmatic power of cliches....and also why three chords and their "lyrical equivalent" are not necessarily "naive" as they might seem.....Now, sure, maybe I wouldn't have meditated on the "double entendres to be found in songs like Tom Wait's "Time," Suzanne Vega's "Marlene On The Wall" or even whether the Moody Blues intended quotes around "Just what you want to be/You'll be in the end" had they appeared in poems rather than in melodies that one rides through the silence... but then I'm not one of those who agrees with the Literary Historian who calls the "olde English Ballad" a "hybrid" form either...It's only such from a specialized perspective that sees music and words as essentially distinct. The point I'm trying to make is that it seems why there is so little attention devoted SERIOUSLY to rock songs is that it's ultimately harder to discuss than either poetry or instrumental music in isolation is....(and i certainly don't claim to have found a way to do so, but I am curious about moves towards it). Chris Stroffolino

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199. **Herb Levy**

Re: lyric and/or

Wed 10 May 1995

Chris -

I don't want to spend too much space on yet another of the music issues popping up here, but you may want to look at <Feminine Endings> by Susan McClary for a couple of chapters looking at Madonna and Laurie Anderson from the point of view of words set to music.

And don't forget songwriter/actor/painter Martin Mull's favorite question during interviews (it apparently came up with some regularity):

Which do you write first, the words or the lyrics?

- Herb

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200. **maria damon**

Re: birthdays

Wed 10 May 1995

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group writes:

> May 1's "my day" - a haymarket, lawyer fest here in the U.S., May Day has
> crept back into an undercurrent of discontent/content. The Bacchanalia of
> signs. May pole, bar pole, step up to the bar, barred from representative
> gov. (or saddled with it.) I was born on International Workers Day,
> International Lawyers Day (hokum), and the day of fertility rituals - as
> you say Chris, vat Irony... that who of history... what who?
>
> in all fatness
>
> Pat

happy birthday. in minneapolis, may day is THE big holiday of the year, the leftist and pagan countercultural equivalent to christmas --there's a big parade and pageant with larger-than-life size puppets which yearly acts out the rescue and resurrection of the tree of life by the sun, who comes rowing across a lake. then all the puppets and paraders dance to a jazzy version "you are my sunshine"-- all the while, off to one side, a platform with the haymarket martyrs hanging in effigy reminds one and all of that part of history. like christmas or the high holidays, its when everyone gets high emotions about who theyre going to run into at mayday (old lovers , family, etc), whose brunch they got invited to , etc., all the kids have sparkles and face paint and the little girls wear tiaras and may-pole like wands, everyone brings blankets and picnics in the park where the parade ends --etc. someone shd write something cultural studiesish about it. it's very charming and rough-hewn, and personally i can't stand it.--maria

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201. **David Ball**

Re: Ginsberg's rhymes

Thu 11 May 1995

Yeah, *sure* HOWL is "really a series of Petrarchan sonnets." What isn't?
BALL FROM MISSOURI

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202. **Andrew Joron**

outside the sign

Thu 11 May 1995

Dear Ed, when you write "There's no real outside what's said" should I understand you to be in agreement with that famous statement of Derrida: "Nothing exists outside the sign" ? Would poetry exist if there wasn't something real that always manages to defeat or elude signification? I think we are moved to transform language poetically in the direction of the unsayable. And our means to do so is an active principle which you, in a different context, invoked recently: "the subversive imagination."

-- Andrew Joron

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203. **I.LIGHTMAN**

Re: Aleatoric Spree

Thu 11 May 1995

Herb,

Without flattery, you are great. I retreat. All apologies,

Ira

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204. **Herb Levy**

Re: Aleatoric Spree

Thu 11 May 1995

Ira -

I didn't want to beat you into retreat or submission. You really _haven't_ been very clear about the distinction you're trying to draw.

While I'm often blunt, I am sorry that my honest requests for clarification were read in this way.

- Herb

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205. **cris cheek**

Re: Stockhausen and aleatoric composition

Thu 11 May 1995

Thought it might be worth posting some other Stockhausen (anybody tuned into wonderful English band Stock Hausen and Walkman yet?) quotes. He has rather come to dominate the chance discussion and quite unfairly in my opinion as he has little to do with it. And I do want this thread to meander further.

'Sung sounds are individual "organic" members of the more comprehensive "synthetic" sound family. At certain points in the composition, the sung sounds become comprehensible words; at others, they remain pure sound values; between these extremes there are various degrees of comprehensibility of the word. Whenever speech momentarily emerges from the sound-symbols in the music, it is to praise God (Daniel 3, "Song of the Men in the Fiery Furnace"). (Notes for 'Gesang der Junglinge' - 1955/56)

'... the voice of a boy in the unfamiliar surroundings of electronic sounds. Suppose you would find an apple or an ashtray on a distant star. What is so common here takes on magic there.'

'... in Kurzwellen, the players react, while they are actually performing, to completely unforeseeable events which they receive on short-wave radios. I composed the process of transformation: HOW they react to what they hear on the radio; HOW they imitate and modulate it, transpose it in time - longer or softer; WHEN and HOW and HOW OFTEN they play synchronously or alternately, in duos, trios or quartets; HOW they call and invite one another to hear 'together' an event wandering for a long period of time among them, to let it shrink or glow, to compress it or expand it, to darken it or to lighten it, to concentrate it or to decorate it playfully. What could be more general, more suprapersonal, inclusive, universal, instantaneous than the 'broadcasts' that become musical 'material' in Kurzwellen? How can we break out of the sealed world of radio waves that encase our globe like a musical retina? Does not a great deal of what we receive on our short-wave radios already sound as if it came from quite different spaces, beyond speech, reportage, "music", morse code?' (Stockhausen, translated by Rolf Gehlhaar in 1968)

These are just two examples but they illustrate Stockhausen as being more concerned with the borders between Composition and Improvisation than with chance and aleatoric procedures - for me. He goes on to use terminology such as 'human spirit', 'unity', 'higher unity', 'preconsciousness', While not being totally humourless (obvious paradoxes such as musical retina aside) I find the invocation of such 'concepts' (without definition to focus their use) to be a party to utopian mystification. Quite honestly I enjoy listening to these earlier pieces (including in addition 'Mikrophonie I' and 'Mikrophonie II' and 'Mantra') but am

bugged by his increasingly mystical justifications. I feel that Stockhausen really wants to retain CONTROL whilst appearing to be offering a generous and improvisatory space to his musicians and chipping away at the block of creator's absoluteness which was the hard scree of sixties art politics fashion. In fact he often comes across as being self-important - not at all as humble as he might have tried to act. I found this to be especially true of him 'in person'.

Any takers on Miles Davis, Sun Ra or Hermeto Pascoal and more rough hewn humourous dynamics? And then what about chance? Hasn't this discussion been hovering in differentials between 'aleatoric compositon' and extemporisation / improvisation?

cris

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206. **Charles Bernstein**

The List Itself (2): How to Unsub and Other Stories

Thu 11 May 1995

In the "Welcome" message for this list I give a misleading instruction on how to unsubscribe to the list. To do this send a one line message (no subject line) to [REDACTED]:

do not include your name in this command.

You can temporarily stop getting mail (for example if you will be off line for a while) by sending this message:

set poetics nomail

and then get mail again by:

set poetics mail

this is easier than subbing and unsubbing

& y'all know about:

set poetics digest

which can be turned off by "set poetics mail"

I hope this is all correct! Let me know if not.

As of today, there are 222 subscribers to Poetics.

I want to add my thanks to Loss Glazier for the pioneering work he is doing with EPC. As things are getting tougher at SUNY, I know there is a greater

squeeze on him at his official library job. While EPC is exactly the sort of thing a public university should be committed to supporting, Loss's work on EPC is all on his own time -- as, of course, is much of the work of the other editors and publishers, and poets, hereabouts.

If you haven't checked into EPC via WW or lynx, I encourage you to do so, and to let us know what you think:

URL=gopher://writing.upenn.edu/hh/internet/library/e-journals/ub/rift

You will find a month by month archive of the Poetics List going back to the December 8, 1993, announcement of Robin Blaser's *The Holy Forest* and taking us through March 1995. Loss has spent a good deal of time reformatting this archive to make it easier to read and to search (we also had to manually put together the files for the first several months of Poetics).

AND just out -- the new *Rif/t*, which I assume most of you get by direct subscription, but which is also available at the EPC. Especially recommend in the hypertext versions.

One final note, especially to those who don't post much: PLEASE post information on your recent publications, books or articles or works just out or immediately forthcoming. There are some people on the list who have had books out in the past few years but never announced them here. Now is the time!

V*i*r*t*u*a*l*i*y y*o*u*r*s,

--Charles Bernstein

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207. **Edward Foster**

Re: outside the sign

Thu 11 May 1995

andrew, yes, but the big D. (a voice outside my house from the start) said it was all writing. to me, anyway, augustine was wrong; "signification

" isn't it. we don't mean, tho critics try. the phrase is leonard's, but i love subversion, so agree.

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208. **John Byrum**
Re: against quietism
Fri 12 May 1995

The first & arguably only systematically aleatoric piece produced through me was titled GENERATOR & eventually led (via twists & turns) to my deciding to do GENERATOR Press.

How much Real really gets transformed via poetry?

Corollary: How much Real really gets transformed via poetry in the USA?

Is it like Beckett's heap of sand grains blown one by one in the wind?

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209. **John Byrum**
Re: Aleatoric Spree
Fri 12 May 1995

It is important to virtually evaginate hamburger

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210. **Ryan Knighton**
Re: really Real
Fri 12 May 1995

John Byrum throws out the question "How much Real is transformed via poetry?"

I favour Spicer's idea of correspondings, as put in "After Lorca". The idea that the real is not in poetry, but that poetry creates corresponding times and places. It carries the real across making this lemon correspond with your lemon. I suppose there isn't transformation happening, as the real is not being treated, but seeking some kind of agreement, maybe.

By the by, did anyone catch today's interview with the translator of Perec's eless work? It was on CBC this morning.

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211. **David Ball**
Re: The List Itself (2): How to Unsub and Other Stories
Fri 12 May 1995

this is one of the "Other Stories". Since you point out that "some people on the list...have books out in the past few years but never announced them here" --I'm one of them, with the great visionary Henri Michaux, thus:

DARKNESS MOVES: AN HENRI MICHAUX ANTHOLOGY 1927-1984

Selected, translated and presented by David Ball

University of California Press, 1994

342 pages

Selections from all Michaux's major collections. 30 pp. of plates (b&w, unfortunately--choice of Michaux's drawings and paintings).

\$30 well worth it.

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212. **Alan Golding**

Self-promotion

Fri 12 May 1995

Associate Professor of English, U. of Louisville

Phone: [REDACTED]; e-mail: [REDACTED]

Thought some of you might like to know of my recent book publication, which arrived in my own hot little hands this Wed: From Outlaw to Classic: Canons in American Poetry (Univ. of Wisconsin Press). \$52.00 cloth (!! I thought of trying to claim it's cheap at the price, but . . .), \$19.95 paper.

Alan

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213. **Michael Boughn**

Re: Olson and rhyme

Fri 12 May 1995

Forget Christensen, here's Charlie Hissself:

Astride
the Cabot
fault,

one leg upon the Ocean one leg
upon the Westward drifting continent,

to build out of sound the wall
of a city

. . . (from Max III.37)

and later

Each Night is No Loss, It is a daily eclipse,
by the Earth, of the Sun

the universe unfolded in sound, light
is only the drum--the hourglass--of the earth's atmosphere
not the sun which is an orange lozenge
nailed on blackness above our air, sound first
even before color of the darkness and the blue
or green or red, of eyes, night itself
only an eclipse by the earth of the sun, so air
or night conducts as dreams: we are
wrapped in the elephant's
skin, all the outside of
all above deadly
destruction which the species now craves
wrapping itself in impenetrable garments
& chasing in little cars motion
of a receding
universe, rushing
to return, helplessly in time, out of time, outside
the lucky
sky, dancing
Ganesh, all cock
and axe, Him in
skin, right foot stamp on
Sloth, fear-not
any thing, left foot lifted--_gaja_
--delight

(from Max III.78)

Say those last 8 lines real carefully and you can begin to hear "the universe unfolded in sound" and glimpse the wall of his city

Mike



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214. **cris cheek**

Re: and desire / the 39 steps

Fri 12 May 1995

now is the season for light. lines of hot skin and leisure spills. exhuberant buds
trumpet green domestic slips breath between scented wet fingers. beneath
beach - houses cooked by profusions of moss over failure a midsummer fog
forms allure

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215. **cris cheek**

Re: and desire / the 39 steps

Fri 12 May 1995

fear not. and captains of restraint. chances are honey that hover jack home.
uncurling ferns will occupy this caption writ in red. a rude calling its voice out
past the melting poles to bloom. bruising his life from him.

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216. **Sheila E. Murphy**

Re: New Publications

Fri 12 May 1995

At Charles Bernstein's suggestion, here are two publications I'll make you
aware of: one half new; the other, just off the press:

PURE MENTAL BREATH was brought out by Gesture Press at the end of 1994.
Features photography by Blaine Spiegel and Poetry by me. 81 pages of text.
Ordering information: Nick Power, Editor. Gesture Press 68 Tyrrel Avenue
Toronto, Ont. Canada M6G 2G4. Price in U.S. is \$12.00, I believe. And \$15.00
Canadian, if I'm not mistaken. AVAILABLE THROUGH SMALL PRESS
DISTRIBUTION.

A CLOVE OF GENDER by yours truly just emerged from Stride Press. 158
pages. Ordering information: Rupert Loydell, Editor. Stride Press. 11 Sylvan
Road, Exeter, Devon. EX4 6EW England. English price 7.95, so I assume the
U.S. price will be about \$16.00, but don't have final information yet.
AVAILABLE THROUGH SMALL PRESS DISTRIBUTION.

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217. **cris cheek**

Re: chance/trust

Fri 12 May 1995

*cris, hi: pollock was right on the mark when he said that. but then he
was a high thinking painter, too.*

*take care,
carl*

Hi Carl - as one Duchamp 'fan' to another - in what ways can thinking be
'high' painting?

love and love
cris

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218. **Wystan Curnow**

Re: chance/trust

Fri 12 May 1995

Dear Cris 'n Carl, Just to extend this to another generation of high thinking-- as in 'high steppin' I took it--Sigmar Polke, and his famous HOHERE WESEN BEFAHLEN: RECHTE OBERE ECKE SCHWARZ MALEN! (Higher Beings Command: Paint the top right hand corner black!) c.1966. Apart from these words, the canvas is blank except for its black corner on the top right. he also did a painting of flamingos which was accompanied by the following text (it was in german) I stood in front of the canvas and tried to paint a bunch of flowers. Then I received from higher beings the command: No bunches of flowers! Paint flamingos! At first I tried to continue painting. But then I realised that they meant business.

Wystan

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219. **Robert Drake**

Re: Self-promotion

Fri 12 May 1995

alan--

could you give us a bit more info about your "Outlaw to Classic..." release?

lbd

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220. **Gary Sullivan**

Re: really Real

Sat 13 May 1995

On Fri, 12 May 1995, Ryan Knighton wrote:

John Byrum throws out the question "How much Real is transformed via poetry?"

I favour Spicer's idea of correspondings, as put in "After Lorca". The idea that the real is not in poetry, but that poetry creates corresponding times and places. It carries the real across making this lemon correspond with your lemon. I suppose there isn't transformation happening, as the real is not being treated, but seeking some kind of agreement, maybe.

Dear Ryan:

REFUSAL OF THE REAL

The world must be mediated by art--fat
Inklings, cruelty to admire, & tears
Falling into lines of human habitation.
Why is the highway straight? The easier
To carry battle-goods across the Rock-
ies. Day breaks through this thin lens,
From our mouth to yours, the taste of a
Piece with the style. There are only two
Kinds of people in this world: Those
Herding animals & those of us clinging
To buses, sweet noise wrapped around
Our every neck. Waking up a thousand
Times a day, we just move along, fists
Full of beer, bees, whatever. Rattling
Light, the mouth a birdcage, words birdshot through this stable world of
mostly solid objects, always jumping out of
Hand. Head spinning down the spine& what else can you do? It's not about
accumulation, & it's really nothing like
Love; It's about change drilling up through the earth, flower noise,
intense levels of energy below particularities on a
Shelf fanning out by itself. Are we willing to accept any
situation--however false--and make it true? Any piece of writing
Patterned to the effect that everyone is everywhere in bondage, this
substitution of language. But where will we go to-
Night? You were watched as you took this upstairs to your room, if
that gives you any idea; the brightness of a forgotten
Sun is placed gratis at our disposal. Countless are the beauties of land
& sea we've already seen, shining brilliantly in the
Light of our eyes. Take a little sun, & make love when you want to make
love, however long it's kept. Pool ideas into
Mail, literally, & grow vague. The stone's poisonous vapors are as yet
unspent, and bees & moths lay dead in such
Heaps that we cannot see the color of the earth beneath. We don't have to
get every detail. Do we? To the sides of the
Road, the country is flat, the soil dry & rectangular. We are, as far
as we know, the only ones here. The only thing the
Matter with this is that, when we leave, "it" will still be here. Its
direction. What separates men is not a question, but
Water, smiles against each evened shore. Someone to stand with for a
distance. Someone twisting through every previous
Example. Dreams & memory on the stairs, other windows facing it--yet this
still fails to explain how objects fly through

Air, burst into flame: that is, fails to explain (a) anything, and/or (b) what, if Anything, we can do about it. To insist, On anything, whoever's driving, whoever's giving signals, we laugh with our Teeth, veer earthward toward its feeble Salute. Back on our back, the battle echoing overhead near the exit. The waters Part; a belch shakes you; a lot of talk Follows. Silence is convincing, a bond. The infinite trembling of stars mocking Emptiness, indifferent to our beseeching Hands, careless of the consequences of What could never, will never take place.

Yours,

Gary

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221. **Jake Berry**

Re: really Real

Sat 13 May 1995

"How much Real is transformed
via poetry?"

Poetry is the unfolding courses of the real. Jack Foley, in his STANZAS FROM DJERASSI says,

to stay
at the edge
of blackness
to
keep
faith
with
light

Poetry is the real projecting in one of the million directions into the unknown, shedding light, advancing outward. Poetry is the real at the threshold, authenticity before reality checks in.

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222. **Jake Berry**

Re: chance/trust

Sat 13 May 1995

re Duchamp, and chance/ trust,
imagine this space without the projection

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223. **George Bowering**

Re: Ginsberg's rhymes

Sat 13 May 1995

If you read aloud, in Latin, and carefully, I think that you will find that Petrarch was writing free verse.

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224. **Kenneth Goldsmith**

call for spoken word/sound-text works

Sat 13 May 1995

I am a producer and DJ at a New York radio station, WFMU-FM 91.1. We are 100% Freeform and 100% Listener-Sponsored. (For what it's worth, for the past 4 years Rolling Stone has named us as the best radio station in the US).

I run a weekly show featuring spoken-word, sound-text works, New Music, and experimental pop. Good spoken-word/sound-text work is hard to come by and I would like to encourage all who engage in this activity to send me tapes, CD's, LP's, reel-to-reels, or DAT's for broadcast.

Kenneth Goldsmith
611 Broadway #702
New York, NY 10012 USA
ph/fax [REDACTED]

I have already featured the _Live At The Ear Inn_ CD several times as well as work by Jackson Mac Low, Joan La Barbara, Gregory Whitehead, Jacki Apple, Alison Knowles, Coyle & Sharpe, Ulla Dydo on Gertrude Stein, Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound, James Joyce, Decio Pignitari, David Antin, Wildman Fischer, John Cage, Allen Ginsberg, Marcel Duchamp, Paul Dutton, Richard Klein & Mark Hosler, Negativland, Derek Bailey, Henri Chopin, F.T. Marinetti...the list could go on forever but you get the point. I tend to broadcast stuff that I love over and over.

I am also interested in getting my hands on historical/obscure recordings for airplay. If anyone knows of great resources for this sort of material please contact me.

Thanks,

Kenneth

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225. **Gary Sullivan**

Re: really Real

Sat 13 May 1995

Whoops! Sorry about the totally fucked up formatting job. Those "90=" dealies were *not* intentional. (But, admittedly, they're real.)

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226. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: chance/trust

Sat 13 May 1995

hi cris,

lets not even think in terms of painting, but to paraphrase levi-strauss, art's only as good as it thinks.

take care,

carl

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227. **Carl Lynden Peters**

known/real/unknown

Sat 13 May 1995

--just to add this to the discussion on poetry and the real ("jouissance!"), is any one familiar with this essay by canadian artist vera frenkel: "Benign Ignorance"? it first came out in a 1977 edition of what was then artscanada (now canadian art, i think). "Benign ignorance can be described as a state of unfocused awareness that permits us to link the confusing world with the deep metaphoric formulations inside us which are strategies for its apprehension. To reach these and give them form in art requires setting knowledge aside, reclaiming it later as necessary. It follows from this that a work of art is as good as the amount of knowledge and ignorance it holds in balance. The more conflicting knowledge a work can hold suspended in a transforming ignorance, the better it teaches us to see" (27).

interesting to note that the opening epigram is lionel kearns' great concrete poem: "The Birth of God."

carl

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228. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Polke

Sat 13 May 1995

Wystan,

--enjoyed _reading_ Polke's painting, as you articulate it. He's a radical painter, because he doesn't think like a painter

take care,

carl

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229. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: Nothing

Sat 13 May 1995

Here we go again, to paraphrase our memoriuos ex-president, Ronald X.

Please! Before anyone again refers to the notoripus "nothing outside the text" line, go read Michael Berube's discussion of the translation of that line in his book _Public Access_, (Verso eds.)

For a long list of philosophers who have had something to say about nothing, see the Encyclopedia of Philosophy, where nothing is summed up rather nicely.

Ed, is Derrida still outside your old house, or did he follow along to the outside of your new place?

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230. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: promoting self & other

Sat 13 May 1995

lbd -- Alan's probably already answering your call for a description, so I will simply add a testimonial. I have heard Alan present individual sections of his critical study of anthologies over recent years, and the work has been consistently insightful and valuable. I would think it just the thing you'd like to read, given your historicizing efforts in poetry.

& a plug of my own --

Writing between the Lines: Race and Intertextuality. pub'd last Summer by U of Georgia Press at an unconscionable price (but cheaper than Alan's hardback!) -- not yet in paper so look for it in the library at your nearest college. -- next one will be in simultaneous paper & cloth from Cambridge,, next year.

Do all Sun Ra fans know that the peculiar address he published some years ago in Nate Mackey's Hambone is now available on CD, along with a concert from the same era, ?? title is Live from Sounscape, on DIW.

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231. **kathryne lindberg**

Re: Olson and rhyme

Sat 13 May 1995

I can't seem to remember right off hand, bookless, where Olson uses "postmodern." Jamming to finish a piece of cyberspace before Johnnt Mnemonic comes out at the local cinema, I hope you will forgive this simple query. My flu prvents my crossing town to get the book from the office. So, where does Olson use the term "postmodern" for his now? Thanks. By the way, his engagement of Norbert Wiener is most interesting and not.

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232. **cris cheek**

Re: Aleatoric Spree

Sat 13 May 1995

| *It is important to virtually evaginate hamburger*

John I'd like to take issue with you on this matter but I agree. More ple3ase. Nothing but admiration.

love

cris

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233. **Bob Perelman**

Re: Olson and rhyme

Sat 13 May 1995

As I remember, Olson uses postmodern in a letter to Creeley in 1951 (52?); in Vol 1 (Vol 2?) of their correspondence. On some scrap of paper somewhere I may have the page number; I looked it up once.

Bob Perelman

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234. **kathryne**
Re: Olson and rhyme

Sat 13 May 1995

Thank you, Bob, I think I do have those letters here at home, too. Good to hear your voice; I am sure Olson would say "voice." Perhaps I shouldn't, then. I am hoping that I find another of those paper scraps if it turns out not being the correspondence. Pretty sure, though, it's not the "Mayan Letters." I'll give this a shot.

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235. **Marisa A Januzzi**
atavistic ref. to rhyme...

Sun 14 May 1995

Stein's
lines
misaligning
chime
inclining
rhymes

Words for H.T. Kirby-Smith, explainer of Dylan Thomas poems (I thought the lines in "Fern Hill" got small at the belly of each stanza to connote navel-gazing, but wondered what I was missing)

speaking of revenance

Does rhyme give a structure to nostalgia?

Does anyone read Edna Millay any more ("We were very young, we were very merry") whose work typifies the problem, but also occasionally breaks out of it?

Bye for now--

--Marisa

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236. **Alan Sondheim**
Re: atavistic ref. to rhyme...

Sun 14 May 1995

Well, I read Edna, on the ferry and elsewhere, and don't find a problem there, it's still east-village now.

If rhyme gives structure to nostalgia, I'd think it's on the level of repetition in neural networks at the first, also the infolding or implicate order of the poem, collapse into auto-fetishization, neither sound nor meaning: not-language, incantation. But the buildup of a structure in the mind, and not memory in the sense of recall, but in the sense of the fit of a frame.

Would always read Edna. By the way, some of her best work is in her translations from Baudelaire. Not Baudelaire, not Edna, but definitely late-night, like the Smiths who are playing in this room as I write.

Alan

On Sun, 14 May 1995, Marisa A Januzzi wrote:

*Stein's
lines
misaligning
chime
inclining
rhymes*

Words for H.T. Kirby-Smith, explainer of Dylan Thomas poems (I thought the lines in "Fern Hill" got small at the belly of each stanza to connote navel-gazing, but wondered what I was missing)

speaking of reversion

Does rhyme give a structure to nostalgia?

Does anyone read Edna Millay any more ("We were very young, we were very merry") whose work typifies the problem, but also occasionally breaks out of it?

*Bye for now--
--Marisa*

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237. **Kevin Killian**

body metaphors

Sun 14 May 1995

Anyone else interested in the chances writers take in using metaphors about the body?

Ira

Ira,

Totally, totally.

I learned how to write about the body from gay men, I learned how to write about my own body from gay men. I remember reading a passage in one of Kevin's pieces where he compares his penis to the logo of a world's fair--and it was like click, shift--I got it. And my writing changed right there on the spot.

I'm not sure how to describe it, but it's certainly not about description, or equivalences even. The text as its own seductive surface.

XOX,
Dodie

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238. **H. T. KIRBY-SMITH**

Maximissima

Sun 14 May 1995

If you read Petrarch's sonnets in Italian in just the right way they sound exactly like Olson, especially the famous one in which he addresses Laura as "cara maximissima."

Tom Kirby-Smith
English Department
UNC-Greensboro
Greensboro NC 27412

Phone: [REDACTED]

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239. **I.LIGHTMAN**

Re: really Real

Sun 14 May 1995

Gary Sullivan, you are the *best*! Thanks for the poetry, Ira

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240. **I.LIGHTMAN**

Re: Aleatoric Spree

Sun 14 May 1995

Herb (and Cris)

As I said, thanks for all the stuff you posted about Cage, which has been really illuminating; and thanks to John Byrum whose post on Jackson MacLow, chance

and sentimentality was great, as Cris has already said (to me anyway). I hope you don't really mind that I'm retreating, it's what I **want** to do.

I'm a fan of lots of MacLow's Pieces of Six book, don't know about "sentimentality" as what I think is likeably found or avoided, **in** the text, I thought sentimentality was a good description of the hopes and claims invested in the genre at the point MacLow ducked it, I like the freshness, the feeling of discovery, in the Pieces of Six. But one thing that's been on my mind since I read it has been the way that in the explicit sex scene in the book MacLow uses phrases like "then I was inside her", and I'm amazed that explicit sex scene language thus seems to evade MacLow's concern elsewhere through the book to see language as surface sometimes, to take metaphors literally and explore why metaphors have mystified themselves into realist "descriptive" language.

I mean, surely he doesn't mean his entire body from head to toe **was** inside a sexual partner's entire body from head to toe, especially without specifying how this happened! Transporter beam, phase-shift?

Anyone else interested in the chances writers take in using metaphors about the body?

Ira

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241. **Ryan Knighton**

Re: really Real

Sun 14 May 1995

Well I guess this is aleatoric realism. thanks for the wonderful reply.

Gary Sullivan writes:

*Whoops! Sorry about the totally fucked up formatting job. Those "90=" dealies were **not** intentional. (But, admittedly, they're real.)*

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242. **Ryan Knighton**

Re: body metaphors

Sun 14 May 1995

i loved Nichol's Selected Organs for this reason. Teh body was a narrative into itself.

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243. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: it's hard to get the news

Sun 14 May 1995

This morning's LA Times Book Review reprints a poem by Rae Amrantrout! You New Yorkers can get the LA Times even if you can't find the book.

Also -- re: Olson's postmodern -- think the early parts of the ND Selected also use the term -- book is at office, so I can't check till tomorrow.

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244. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: really Real

Sun 14 May 1995

Is it just me, or when others see this discussion "really Real" does that song "Spanish Harlem Incident" start dancing in one's (I'll say) head ---"So I can know if I am really real." chris

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245. **Tim Waples**

Re: really Real

Sun 14 May 1995

According to Chris Stroffolino:

>

- > Is it just me, or when others see this discussion "really Real" does that
- > song "Spanish Harlem Incident" start dancing in one's (I'll say) head
- > ---"So I can know if I am really real." chris

Chris: It's just you. For me, it's Van Morrison's "You're My Woman," which goes extra-heavy on the reallys. That's how you know it's poetry.....Tim

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246. **George Bowering**

Re: really Real

Mon 15 May 1995

I dunno about all that talk re songs that remind one of the "really real". I haven't spent much time listening to kids' music, so I have always tried to get the real somewhere else.

Like Randolph Scott movies!

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247. **George Bowering**

Re: Olson and rhyme

Mon 15 May 1995

I am curious as to whether Olson's Catholicism influenced his use of the term "postmodern" 44 years ago---because the Church used the terms "modernism" and "postmodernism" before the First World War.

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248. **Kevin Killian**

Re: really Real

Mon 15 May 1995

It's very difficult and bizarre to keep seeing all these subject lines with the word Real in them, capitalized no less, since, as most of you don't seem to know, that is the name of my Talsiman House book. These subject lines make me feel very definitely unreal.

Real.

It's a word I've thought a lot about. I don't see how it could pass from anyone's lips or slip off the tips of anyone's typing fingers, without the deepest of irony.

That's my two cents.

Dodie Bellamy

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249. **maria damon**

Re: Olson and rhyme

Mon 15 May 1995

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group writes:

> I am curious as to whether Olson's Catholicism influenced his use of
> the term "postmodern" 44 years ago---because the Church used the
> terms "modernism" and "postmodernism" before the First World War.

Interesting! can you give us more information on this? in what context?--maria
d

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250. **Bruce Comens**

Re: promoting self & other

Mon 15 May 1995

First the other: Poetics list readers will likely enjoy Doug Gunn's new book of stories, *The Invention of Violence*, available for \$11.95 with free postage and handling from Cinco Puntos Press, 2709 Louisville, El Paso, TX 79930, of [REDACTED]. 160 pages of work, blurbs by Creeley and Olson (Toby, not Charles): "I know of no other recent writer whose language has captured the world with such authenticity. Reading Douglas Gunn's fiction, I think of John Berger on van Gogh: 'Wherever he looked he saw the labour of existence; and this labour, recognized as such, for him constituted reality.'"

Now the self: *Apocalypse and After: Modern Strategy and Postmodern Tactics in Pound, Williams, and Zukofsky*, pub. 1995 by the University of Alabama Press. \$24.95 in paper (blurbs included)--and it actually seems to be available in the Borders Book Chain.

I agree with Charles (Bernstein, not Olson): there should be more of this. Awkward as it is to plug one's own work, it's good to hear directly about others' books.

Bruce Comens

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251. **Tom Mandel**

Re: unsolo locus

Mon 15 May 1995

Yes, let me concur about Locus Solus; this magazine, along with Art & Literature, is (to me) the most essential reading of the sixties.

Tom Mandel

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252. **Edward Foster**

Re: really Real

Mon 15 May 1995

this misreads Spicer and the privilege of correspondence. correspondence is neither creation nor transformation but recognition. even emerson, however absorbed he was with mutability, knew that. nor is there seeking, which is academic, willed.

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253. **Kevin Killian**

Re: really Real

Mon 15 May 1995

*yes --and to add to the maze of allusions, remember "it's got to be REAL"
as the
theme song of Paris is Burning, in which the criteria for winning drag-contests
was "realness" --i.e. successful simulation --to the point of boundary-blurring
--calling "reality" into question. --then there's also the california version,
where "real" the adjective functions as "really" the adverb, so that things are
"real real."*

Very excellent, Maria.

--Dodie

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254. **Edward Foster**

Re: New Publications

Mon 15 May 1995

the new talisman books include Gerrit Lansing's _Heavenly Tree / Soluble Forest_, Joseph Donahue's _World Well Broken_, and Gustaf Sobin's _Selected Poems_, all in bookstores now or soon. so they're there, reason for joy!

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255. **Edward Foster**

Re: Nothing

Mon 15 May 1995

well, aldon, D is hard to shake, and yes, he did try camping out there on the street, screaming, there's no outside the house, to whomever come who may, so we bundled him for recycling, which, given his ideas, was exactly what he deserved.

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256. **Robert Kelly**

Re: Olson and rhyme

Mon 15 May 1995

My guess is that Olson would have known vaguely of the "Modernism" the Church berated at the turn of the Century, that French thing with its English influences, but I don't think that knowledge would have shaded his sense of Modernism as the Joyce/Pound thing. (I can't in fact locate in my reading or memory any period of Olson's life when he studied _as_ a Catholic; his

schooling was secular, and I never noticed the aura of Catholic academic intellectualism about him. And Modernism was not something inveighed against in church pulpits so much as in editorials in the Catholic press. Though Modernism was _always_ a bad name.)

As far as I can tell, Postmodernism was first used by the Revd Bernard Iddings Bell, an Episcopal divine buried a mile from me. I've seen the reference, it dates to well before the man in the street thought of Modernism in any but the ecclesiastical, Gallican, anti-ultramontane position.

=====
==

Robert Kelly

Division of Literature and Languages, Bard College

Annandale-on-Hudson NY 12504

Voice Mail: [REDACTED] Box 7205

[REDACTED]

On Sun, 14 May 1995, George Bowering wrote:

I am curious as to whether Olson's Catholicism influenced his use of the term "postmodern" 44 years ago---because the Church used the terms "modernism" and "postmodernism" before the First World War.

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257. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: Olson and Catholicism

Mon 15 May 1995

Just a note:

I don't believe he discusses Olson, but Paul Giles' Catholic Fictions is a good source on the influence of catholicism on such figures as Fitzgerald, Warhol, and, even Mapplethorpe (if I'm remembering correctly).

Jeffrey Timmons

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258. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: really Real

Mon 15 May 1995

this misreads Spicer and the privilege of correspondence. correspondence is neither creation nor transformation but recognition. even emerson, however absorbed he was with mutability, knew that. nor is there seeking, which is academic, will

ed.

no. to re-cognize is to create. ok, it's to re-create. there are no artists

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259. **David Ball**

Re: unsolo locus

Mon 15 May 1995

I agree: Locus Solus great journal. Having a poem in there pleases me still.

YOUNG IN THE SIXTIES

aka David Ball

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260. **Edward Foster**

Re: really Real

Mon 15 May 1995

back to that really Real, if in fact "prose invents--poetry discloses," does it follow that the Real is that which does not alter? I think Spicer's lemon is a nice twist on Mallarme's flower not in any

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261. **maria damon**

Re: really Real

Mon 15 May 1995

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group writes:

> It's very difficult and bizarre to keep seeing all these subject lines with
> the word Real in them, capitalized no less, since, as most of you don't
> seem to know, that is the name of my Talsiman House book. These subject
> lines make me feel very definitely unreal.
>
> Real.
>
> It's a word I've thought a lot about. I don't see how it could pass from
> anyone's lips or slip off the tips of anyone's typing fingers, without the
> deepest of irony.
>
> That's my two cents.

>

> Dodie Bellamy

yes --and to add to the maze of allusions, remember "it's got to be REAL" as the theme song of Paris is Burning, in which the criteria for winning drag-contests was "realness" --i.e. successful simulation --to the point of boundary-blurring -- calling "reality" into question. --then there's also the california version, where "real" the adjective functions as "really" the adverb, so that things are "real real." --maria d

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262. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: really Real

Mon 15 May 1995

yeah tim and then there's "I've Been Working" which repeats the word "woman" I think 8 times in crescendo succession....

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263. **Ron Silliman**

Re: really Real

Mon 15 May 1995

It's the real thing. It's Coke.

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264. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: really real postmodernity

Tue 16 May 1995

Ah, yes -- there it is, just as I remembered it -- on pg. 44 of the ND Olson Selected Writings, in the piece titled "Quantity in Verse, and Shakespeare's Late Plays," Olson refers to "a man as post-modern as Lawrence . . . !!! Jarrell had by that time already used the word, indicating to us that Altieri didn't really have to "Enlarge the temple" that much to get his guys in --

Second most annoying phrase of my sixties youth -- heard at high school with some frequency -- "It was real!"

store near my office sells "real margarine"

and that was to have been "Armantrout" in my last, not "Amrantrout," which would be some evil conflation of David and Rae, a mistake I would not want to make -- sorry Rae; you can call me alan nelson next time we meet, like evrybody else does,,,,

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265. **Lindz Williamson**

Hola

Tue 16 May 1995

I'm back from Mehico and my cross Canada adventure. Picked up a copy of Caprice in a Used book store on Queen St. Nice cover, did you pick it out George? Might pop into pub night on Friday, tell me if you're leaving town this weekend Ryan. Joanne's coming by tomorrow to get the low down on my travels. Can someone fill me in on the latest list topics so I can catch up?
Thanks

Lindz

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266. **John Byrum**

Re: Aleatoric Spree: HAMBURGER

Tue 16 May 1995

Chris:

Re the virtual evagination of hamburger line I let out awhile back: would love to comment on it but now can't remember the specific message it was addressing. Do you?

Best,

John

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267. **Tony Green**

Re: against quietism

Tue 16 May 1995

Andrew Joron writes 10 May: "celebrating the virtues of Zen and the Aleatory, I'm afraid we may be losing sight of the still-important notion of struggle, as opposed to the Zen idea of accepting whatever the Aleatory hands out. "I would rather validate an Activist stance in both poetry & politics, and promote the idea that the Real is something to be transformed. "The Aleatory in this light becomes a provocation rather than an end-point. It's only through resistance that we are led to wonder."

There is an old dubious myth that "acceptance" must be somehow passive. "Working with the given" (i.e. not wishing for the stars, accepting the actualities) wd be an attitude that could be useful. I don't know whether that is

out of accord with Buddhism or Taoism, but it sounds like a sensible way of carrying on.

I'm off out again for a few days, thought I'd drop by and pick up the mail (119 posts). Sandra Braman's been here for South Pacific Economic Conference and gone and I forgot to buy her a hokey-pokey ice-cream

And this is what I find when I come back in?

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268. **Tony Green**

Re: To all appearances... (fwd)

Tue 16 May 1995

Dear Carl,

I've got no further with the labyrinth that Duchamp specifically mentions which is the one "beyond space and time". The puzzle is not what is a labyrinth but what is Marcel doing beyond the frame of space and time, and trying to find his way out of that. I can only guess that this is a recognition of a state of consciousness, from which he has to find his way out, to the particulars of these dimensions of the world.

" the realization of perfection "... ??

.

>

> Strikingly, references to mediumistic beings generally refer to shamans.
> (This links back, of course to Tim's work and the book Skin, Bones and
> Stones [exact title?].) In general, it would mean the transcending of
> material conditions (time and space) to commune with the divine, receive
> inspiration, ...

>

Who knows?

>

> The clearing will definitely be a transformed and transmuted place on
> coming out from the labyrinth -- very much a place of creativity, and it
> would awaken and instill the drive for profound expression.

>

> Thus in outling the above, I would say that this statement from Duchamp, is
> very powerful, compact, and comprehensive, providing a key to us on the
> deeper how and why of creative work.

>

> (Penelope Doob Reed, a York U. English professor, has written a helpful
> book on labyrinths/mazes, The Idea of the Labyrinth from Classical

> Antiquity through the Middle Ages, 1990. I have heard of another book, The
> Maze in the Mind and the World, by Donald Gutierrez, but I have not read
> it.)

carl

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269. **John Byrum**
Re: really Real, really
Tue 16 May 1995

I got glimpses of the really real when I used to work in construction, standing at the bottom of a 10-foot deep trench installing sewer pipe.

Now I get glimpses of same seeing torn-apart bodies of deer, dogs or other animals on the interstate on my way to work, also looking down at the dinner-plate.

Funny how the real tends to invade civilized life now & again. We usually manage just fine without it, though.

John

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270. **Tony Green**
Re: lyric and/or
Tue 16 May 1995

Dear Chris Stroffolino,
"...but knot for me".

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271. **Tony Green**
Re: Superleague
Tue 16 May 1995

Dear Mark Roberts,

There I was apologising for getting it wrong and being unreliable. I did hear it right first time, The Warriors has been signed by Rupert as a team (then they pretethey hadn't said it, which threw me. Moral never believe anything, even when you're in the room with them.)

Cheers

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272. **Tony Green**
Re: No change / exchange
Tue 16 May 1995

Dylan Thomas also made use of patternings close to Welsh bardic practice. An old friend, Robert Arnold, now dead, wrote abt this in convincing detail in the late 1950's. But, I think unpublished.

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273. **Ryan Knighton**
Re: really Real, really
Tue 16 May 1995

I find most movies are about the reel.

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274. **George Bowering**
Re: Hola
Tue 16 May 1995

Heey, Lindz; since yr using the whole network to write me messages, I have to remind you about what happens when you do that. When you mentioned that Willy was paying for brunch at Art's Cafe, it went out on the network, and dozens of hungry poets and professors arrived in Vancouver. Art had his limo at the airport, and Willy had to take out a small loan at the Bank of Montreal to pay for all those eggs and toast, etc! He;s really burned, so watch out for him on Friday at TPN.

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275. **George Bowering**
Re: promoting self & other
Tue 16 May 1995

People might forgive my latest novel called _Shoot!_, from Key Porter Books, Toronto. It will be coming out in the U.S. from St. Martin's, but I dont know when. The contract says, as they do, w/in 18 months.

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276. **Jonathan A Levin**
Re: Olson and rhyme
Tue 16 May 1995

Kathryne & interested folk:

I remember Joe Riddel saying it (Olson's use of the word post-modern, which I believe Olson was said to have hyphenated) was in The Special View of History, but not having a copy I can't say just where. Hope that helps.

Jonathan Levin

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277. **Prof. R. Prus**
Olson/postmodernism

Tue 16 May 1995

Olson uses the term postmodernism in a letter to Creeley in 1951. It appears in volume 7 of the correspondence (I don't have the book here to give the exact page). Randall Jarrell uses the term earlier (1948, I believe) in a discussion of Lowell's Lord Weary's Castle which he defines as "post or anti-modernist"

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278. **Alan Golding**
Outlaws, Classics, and others

Tue 16 May 1995

Associate Professor of English, U. of Louisville

Phone: [REDACTED]; e-mail: [REDACTED]

Dear all--

Since luigi posted his request for a bit more info. on From Outlaw to Classic on the list rather than backchannel, I thought I'd respond publicly, in case others are interested. If you're not--sorry, bear with me, it'll only be one paragraph.

So: the book's a fairly materialist (though not in any strictly Marxist sense) literary history of canonical issues in mostly twentieth-century American poetry. "Mostly" because one of the five chaps. goes back to the late eighteenth century, the rest focus on post-1900. "Materialist" in that it tries to come at questions of canonicity via engaging specific texts, conflicts, lives, institutional politics, etc. rather than via a more theoretical take; perhaps I can clarify by contrast--it's pretty much the opposite end of the spectrum from Barbara Herrnstein Smith's Contingencies of Value, Charlie Altieri's Canons and Consequences, or even much of John Guillory's work, wonderful though those books are in various ways. More like Cary Nelson's Repression and Recovery probably. Chap. 1 is a history of American poetry anthologies from the Revolutionary Period up to Weinberger and Hoover (only a few pages on these two, because the Hoover text wasn't even out when I went to press); chap. 2 argues for a synthesis of two models of canon formation, the aesthetic (briefly,

the argument that poets make canons--Vendler, Bloom, other) and the institutional (various forms of literary institution and those affiliated with them make canons). This chap. has an extended (though reasonably polite, I think) argument with Vendler and Blom that might appeal to readers of this list, and a section on the notion of self-canonization using Berryman as an example. Chap. 3: "The New Criticism and American Poetry in the Academy"--on the New Crit. construction of a modernist American canon--chap. sections are "Evaluation and the Institutional Politics of New. Crit.," "Amateurism, Professionalism, and the Poet-Professor," "The New Crit., Whitman, and the Idea of a National Poetry" (anti-Whitmanism as a factor in New Crit. canon-making), and a section on Brooks and Warren's Understanding Poetry. Chap. 4: "Little Magazines and Alternative Canons: The Example of Origin"--on the first series of Origin, and the place/role of little mags. in poetic canon formation. Chap. 5: "'Provisionally complicit resistance': Language Writing and the Institution(s) of Poetry"--on how we can situate LP in relation to certain aspects of contemporary institutional/critical politics, partly via "close readings" (remember them?) of two Charles Bernstein poems.

Jeez, I did go on, didn't I? Sorry. Aldon--thanks for the kind plug from elsewhere! It does feel awkward to plug one's own work, but personally I'm very grateful for the information I've gotten about other books the last few days, and hope everyone will keep this up.

Kathy L.--one early place that Olson used "pomo" is in a fall 1952 course description for the BMC catalog. However, the earliest use by CO that I have a note of handily is a letter to Creeley Aug. 9, 1951 (Correspondence vol. 7, p. 75). Maybe someone knows an earlier one. I don't have my notes on the unpublished essays to hand, and can't remember if "pomo" shows up there. Olson's use of the term wasn't the first use, period, and not even the first "literary" use, but I figure you know that.

Marisa--I even teach Millay. From Am. Lit. surveys to graduate seminars. But then I'm perverse.

Alan

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279. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: really Real

Tue 16 May 1995

can't argue with that.

c

uh-uh, carl. there's more to it than recycling.

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280. **Edward Foster**

Re: really Real

Tue 16 May 1995

uh-uh, carl. there's more to it than recycling.

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281. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: To all appearances... (fwd)

Tue 16 May 1995

Dear Carl,

I've got no further with the labyrinth that Duchamp specifically mentions which is the one "beyond space and time". The puzzle is not what is a labyrinth but what is Marcel doing beyond the frame of space and time, and trying to find his way out of that. I can only guess that this is a recognition of a state of consciousness, from which he has to find his way out, to the particulars of these dimensions of the world.

" the realization of perfection "... ??

hi tony, thanks for this. --it's the "beyond time and space" thing that throws me, too. altho i did take the article to a friend working in philosophy here, and he pointed out it's specific to Plato

take care,

carl

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282. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: really Real, really

Tue 16 May 1995

I find most movies are about the reel.

reminds me of Barthes. i'm assuming he loved the movies, too, all that grain and crackle and all. for me, tho, i have no trouble with the word real. it's like Bernstein says in his poem: "Only the real is real"

i just thot of andy warhol!

c

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283. **Edward Foster**
Re: really Real, really
Tue 16 May 1995

i, too, saw the real once, i think in egypt, but it might have been iraq. it was, however, an experience, i'll never forget. just to know, finally, that it was there, empirically, rising like dawn, suffusing the heavens, joy, all over the place.

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284. **Carl Lynden Peters**
Re: really Real
Tue 16 May 1995

>

> It's the real thing. It's Coke.

>

Andy Warhol is the real!, altho he did the soup cans

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285. **Jeffrey Timmons**
Re: really Real
Tue 16 May 1995

The REAL . . . although Real, can also be simulated. This message has been sponsored by

Jeffrey Timmons

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286. **Kevin Killian**
Re: irony
Tue 16 May 1995

Dear Dodie, I beg to differ! I don't think the Real can be or ought to be approached only through "deep irony." I capitalize the term to indicate that it possesses, for me, some kind of finality, sublimity even: as that which always, finally escapes representation. However you choose to interpret it, though, it makes a brilliant title!

-- Andrew Joron

Andrew,

I would never question the authenticity of your experiences, and I agree that those moments when representation breaks down are what make the rest of the druggery bearable. But, I don't see how this necessarily has anything to do with the real. I could call in a higher authority here and quote something, but I don't think quoting is much fun unless you tweak and twist the passage to the point of deformity.

How about an anecdote instead! I had drug flashbacks for a number of years and during these experiences I felt, on a gut level, how random and faulty are our capacities for filtering in the world.

The real is like god, Andrew, it will always elude you.

Dodie

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287. **FUNKHOUSER CHRISTOPH**
JACK KEROUAC SCHOOL OF DISEMBODIED POETICS

Tue 16 May 1995

Forwarded message:

Date: Tue, 16 May 1995 17:52:51 -0600 (MST)

From: Catherine Yates <[REDACTED]>

To: cf2785, [REDACTED]

Subject: JACK KEROUAC SCHOOL OF DISEMBODIED POETICS

Summer 1995 Program June 19-July15

Summer Faculty List

Abbott, Keith

Blaser, Robin

Berlin, Lucia

Berssenbrugge, Mei Mei

Bromige, David

Brown, Lee Ann

Bye, Reed

Cole, Norma

Collom, Jack

Corman, Cid

Cross, Elsa

Ducornet, Rikki

Fischer, Norman

Fraser, Kathleen

Frym, Gloria
Guest, Barbara
Hamill, Sam
Hawkins, Bobbie Louise
Hejinian, Lyn
Henderson, David
Hintze, Chistian Ide
Hollo, Anselm
Huerta, David
Krysl, Marilyn
Kutik, Ylya
Kyger, Joanne
McElroy, Colleen J.
Mikolowski, Ann
Mikolowski, Ken
Notley, Alice
Penberthy, Jenny
Patton, Julie
Rakosi, Carl
Rodney, Janet
Smith, Willie
Tarn, Nathaniel
Taylor, Steven
Tedlock, Barbara
Tedlock, Dennis
Schelling, Andrew
Seko, Julie
Selby, Hubert
Sikelianos, Eleni
Strauss, David
Sze, Arthur
Waldman, Anne
Waldrop, Rosemarie
Wang, Ping
Warsh, Lewis
Warshall, Peter
Wilson, Peter Lamborn
Yates, Katie

Introduction and History

The Summer Writing Program in Writing and Poetics at the Naropa Institute is a month-long convocation of students, scholars, fiction writers,

Buddhist teachers, Sufi anarchists, feminist scholars, poets and translators. In dialogue with renowned practitioners of the poetic arts, students confront the composition of poetry and prose. Each summer practitioners of visual and performance arts join poets and fiction writers in collaborative situations. Faculty and students meet individually and in small groups, so that beginning and experienced writers find equal challenge in the program. Participants work in daily contact with some of the most accomplished and notoriously provocative writers of our times - scribes and performers currently charting the directions American writing is taking. The tradition emphasized belongs to the "outrider" or left-hand lineage, which operates outside the cultural mainstream - a heritage of powerful scholarship and counter poetics. Guest faculty change weekly, magnetizing the summer program into a forum that confronts, responds to and intensely challenges a range of writing practices and scholarly methods. As political and ecological crises intensify across our planet, the writer's role raises troubling questions. Bard, "unacknowledged legislator," prophet - or marginal word monger? The program provides three distinct forums which address these concerns: writing workshops directed by guest and resident faculty; daily lectures, readings and colloquia; and faculty-student interviews in which writings are discussed in face-to-face intimacy. The summer program developed out of the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics, founded in 1974 by Allen Ginsberg and Anne Waldman. 1995 is the Summer Program's 21st year. Regular features include a month-long fiction track, MFA lectures by distinguished faculty, and an ongoing examination of the environmental, cultural, and linguistic crises occurring on our North American continent. Open to any interested participant, the Summer Writing Program also serves each year as a third trimester for the Naropa Institute's accredited MFA degree track. Students from other institutions or degree programs may elect to attend the month-long program with a six-credit option (for BA credit) or eight-credit option (MFA credit). Masters level credit requires permission of the program directors.

from the Summer Catalogue

* Week One

****The Poetry of Lust of Love Sam Hamill** The poetry of lust and love...is rooted in spiritual longing, as demonstrated by the poetics of Sappho and the amatory poems of the Greek anthology and the classical poets of India, China, and Japan. Drawing on these traditions, we explore the erotic lyrical imagination from a layman's Zen perspective, including a look at the poetry of several Zen masters.

****Illuminating Inscapes Katie Yates** Writing is an expression which takes textural knowledges and puts it into a textual form. Attention will be focused

on the maitri rooms which we will take to represent a study of/in sensory experience. Writing and collage are the vehicles for this study. This is an intensive investigation of the forms the artists seize to carry the weight of intellectual acuity inside the extraordinary space of creativity.

****Both, Both Anne Waldman** This is a workshop inviting "negative capability." We explore how jumpy imagination and eye and emotion work through various writing experiments that embrace contradiction: being silent, being ambitious, being noisy, being deceptive. What's hidden/what's revealed? Writing on top of writing. Can you ever really sit still?

****Writing, Walking Andrew Schelling** "I wish to speak a word for Nature, for absolute freedom and wildness--." That's how Thoreau began his essay on walking. Naturalists, contemplatives, artists, poets, from Ice Age Magdalena to T'ang Dynasty China to 20th century nuclear-powered America have gone to the forests and mountains to find fresh thought and language. We go to local mountain trails to practice a variety of procedures--direct observation, cut-up of texts, study of field manuals. Also dream states--particularly for those accustomed to higher altitudes. The dakinis of poetry conceal themselves in solitary places. We "send back our embalmed hearts only as relics--."

Week Two

****Paradise, or the Theory and Practice of Poles**

Lyn Hejinian

A course on "extreme latitudes," literal and figurative.

****Distilled Spirits**

Wang Ping

This course explores how to translate your life into fiction. We consider the way culture limits and distracts us and how we liberate ourselves in writing from cultural and psychological boundaries.

****Chinese Poetics**

Arthur Sze

This workshop incorporates various aspects of Chinese poetics, including a brief look at poems by: Chang Chi, Li Po, Wang Wei, Li Ho, and Li Ch'ing-chao, as well as discussion of the I Ching.

****Sound Poems Ide Hintze** This course involves exercises with the voice: working beyond the alphabetic code. Students compose two and three-voice poems, choric and phonetic poems. Emphasis is also placed on the performance uses of audio and video.

Week Three

****One's-Self I Sing Steven Taylor** Everybody sings. Why? For thousands of years, poetry, history and the law were sung, but this practice did not cease with the development of writing. Culture, the story we tell ourselves about ourselves about who we are, is performed in our relationships, political systems, rituals, and in our art works. Song provides a forum for the negotiation of identity. How do songs locate subjects in the framework of subjection? How does song performance reproduce, problematize, negotiate, or change subject positions in structures of dominance? The class listens to music and discusses readings.

****Introduction to Letterpress Printing**

Julie Seko

This class introduces letterpress printing. Students learn the history of fine printing, setting type, locking type, operating the press and work in small groups to design and produce broadsides.

****The Cut-Up Technique Anselm Hollo** This offering includes a discussion of the "cut-up technique" introduced by William S. Burroughs and Brion Gysin, its antecedents in the visual art forms of montage and collage (Eisenstein, Schwitters), and Dadaist methods of composition (Tristan Tzara). It also examines its refinements and ramifications in the OULIPO group's compositional theory and practice. Students create some texts of their "own" by various related means.

Week Four

****This Side of Memory Norma Cole** For centuries of lyric address--from Dante's "intelletto d'amore"(Vita Nuova) to Roberto Tejada's "love's social intellect" (The Gauntlet)--something has been going on record involving these terms. WHAT ABOUT THIS GENEALOGY? Each of the three seminars are structured around a brief introduction and a lot of reading together and discussion in order to explore the geometry of love, social and intellect: and how their relations and tensions motivate and shape, along with memory and song, what we agree to call lyric. Students are encouraged to choose and bring work to be included in the discussion.

****How to Read-How to Write Lee Ann Brown** As readers, we are always writing and as writers we are always reading. When we read, we actively produce our own unique interpretation of that text. Our own poetry can be read (and written) as a map of our readings (or misreadings) of other writer's words and of the world. What would happen if we used Gertrude Stein's book "How to Write" as a composition manual? Her "Poetry & Grammar" as a grammar primer? What are our own ideas, beliefs and feelings about syntax, punctuation, grammar, the alphabet--the very building blocks of language? We read from great models for plans of study such as Pound's "ABC's of Reading,

Zukofsky's "A Test of Poetry" and Ed Sander's "Investigative Poetics." This class serves as a forum for students to work out their own plans and structures for long-term readings and writing projects.

****The Third Image David Levi-Strauss** The Third Image is what can happen between words and images. A short history of this phenomenon is presented from hieroglyphs and illuminations to multimedia and we write into, on, and around images found and made. "What I love is the relation of the image and the text...The way poets used to enjoy working on difficult problems of versification. The modern equivalent is to find a relation between text and images." Roland Barthes

****Method and Madness**
Rosemarie Waldrop

This class includes readings and practice in methods for generating and manipulating ("translating") texts. We draw on procedures of Dada, Surrealism, Oulipo, Cage, Mac Low, etc. while keeping in mind the need to give an occasional nudge to any rule or constraint to keep them from becoming mechanical.

****Current Poetic Music Alice Notley** We discuss American poetic music at present, with a view towards how one improves one's own sound and line creating variety, individuality, and pleasure. There is in-class writing and assignments. Special attention is paid to measure and music in longer narrative and hybrid works.

***Sexing the Poem Eleni Sikelianos** Language is a skin: I rub my language against the other. It is as if I had words instead of fingers or fingers at the tips of my words (Barthes). The song: first music from the first voice of love (Cixous). Regardless of the subject or treatment, writing; language; has an eros. We are full of "luminous torrents" which are then traced onto the page. Pleasures of the text: words off in the mouth, fill the ear; they form within and spill from the body/field. With erotogeneity in mind, we write, we read. Not writing erotica, but writing corporeal--to inject a little jouissance back into the poem.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT*

Max Regan: [REDACTED]

Monika Edgar: [REDACTED]

Katie Yates: [REDACTED]

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288. **Andrew Joron**

irony

Tue 16 May 1995

Dear Dodie, I beg to differ! I don't think the Real can be or ought to be approached only through "deep irony." I capitalize the term to indicate that it possesses, for me, some kind of finality, sublimity even: as that which always, finally escapes representation. However you choose to interpret it, though, it makes a brilliant title!

-- Andrew Joron

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289. **John Byrum**

Re: really Real Andy

Wed 17 May 1995

Dear Carl,

> It's the real thing. It's Coke. (from Ron Silliman's recent message)

>

Andy Warhol is the real!, altho he did the soup cans (from your recent message)

Andy also did the Disaster paintings, skulls, Mao & lots of other celeb portraits, and all kinds of other neat stuff too. Go to Pittsburgh, see the stuff. Now that's a great museum!

John

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290. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: the reality check is in the mail

Wed 17 May 1995

this represents itself as being a real post from aldon nielsen; however, it is not. it is from ed foster. you can tell 'cause it is three lines.

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291. **Lindz Williamson**

Re: really Real Andy

Wed 17 May 1995

On Wed, 17 May 1995, John Byrum wrote:

> Dear Carl,

>

> > It's the real thing. It's Coke. (from Ron Silliman's recent message)
> >
> Andy Warhol is the real!, altho he did the soup cans (from your recent
> message)
>
> Andy also did the Disaster paintings, skulls, Mao & lots of other celeb
> portraits, and all kinds of other neat stuff too. Go to Pittsburgh, see the
> stuff. Now that's a great museum!
>
> John
>
Yes! Warhol is really real. He's the only one that admits art isn't art
unless it has streaks and smudges. Imperfection is the real art of being
artistic.

Lindz

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292. **Marjorie Perloff**

Re: POETICS Digest - 15 May 1995 to 16 May 1995

Wed 17 May 1995

On the Postmodern from Olson on, etc.: I still think one of the best places to look for discussion of this is in the very first issue of BOUNDARY 2, which has, among other things, David Antin's symptomatic essay on the postmodern. Read today, this represents a Utopian phase, very different from the way the term postmodern was used later. the issue in question appeared in 1972. I've tried to trace the term and comment on its development in a piece in CRITICISM, Summer 1993 that I first gave at Charlie Altieri's conference on PoMo along with Kathryne Lindberg and others at U-Wash. a few months earlier. I was amused to see that although most people here haven't read it, it's been translated into Italian in a new poetry journal called BALDUS.

Whatever the case, the term is used today almost antithetically from what was the case in Olson (for sure!) and even antithetically from Antin's positive description of the postmodern as everything new, cutting edge, avant-garde, exciting, anti-formalist, etc etc etc.

I agree with Aldon Nielsen that it's time we scrapped it!

Marjorie Perloff

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293. **Gary Sullivan**

Ern Malley: A Real Cut-Up

Wed 17 May 1995

Reading the following course description (from Chris Funkhouser's forwarding of Naropa material) ...

****The Cut-Up Technique** Anselm Hollo This offering includes a discussion of "cut-up technique" introduced by William S. Burroughs and Brion Gysin, its antecedents in the visual art forms of montage and collage (Eisenstein, Schwitters), and Dadaist methods of composition (Tristan Tzara). It also examines its refinements and ramifications in the OUILIPO group's compositional theory and practice. Students create some texts of their "own" by various related means.

... and the current discussion re: "Real," makes me want to yammer on uncontrollably about a recent (4 days ago) "groovy book" find: *The Darkening Ecliptic*, by "Ern Malley," published in Melbourne, Australia in 1944. "Ern Malley" was a pseudonym made up by two Australian poets (whose names aren't in this booklet) who wanted to "expose" "the sham" of "modernism," the sort of thing being published in Australia at that time through Max Harris' magazine *Angry Penguins*. These two poets got together one afternoon and composed 16 poems (using what sounds like Ye Olde Berrigan Methodology), and then spent the next couple of days fleshing out "Ern"'s "life." Here's a sample description of their technique, in their own words: "We produced the whole of Ern Malley's tragic life-work in one afternoon, with the aid of a chance collection of books which happened to be on our desk: the Concise Oxford Dictionary, a Collected Shakespeare, Dictionary of Quotations, etc. "We opened books at random choosing a word or phrase haphazardly. We made lists of these and wove them into nonsensical sentences. "We misquoted and made false allusions. We deliberately perpetrated bad verse, and selected awkward rhymes from a Ripman's Rhyming Dictionary. "The alleged quotation from Lenin in one of the poems, 'The emotions are not skilled workers,' is quite phoney. "The first three lines of the poem 'Culture as Exhibit' were lifted as a quotation from an American report on the drainage of breeding-grounds of mosquitoes."

Here were their "rules of composition":

"1. There must be no coherent theme, at most, only confused and inconsistent hints at a meaning held out as a bait to the reader. "2. No care was taken with verse technique, except occasionally to accentuate its general sloppiness by deliberate crudities. "3. In style the poems were to imitate not Mr. Max Harris in particular, but the whole literary fashion as we knew it from the works of Dylan Thomas, Henry Treece and others."

So, after making 16 poems as per above specs, said poets sent a letter (allegedly from Ern's sister Ethel) to Max Harris, with a couple of poems. The letter gave a brief account of Ern's life & death (to Grave's disease -- which isn't fatal), stating that the poems were found by Ethel while going through Ern's belongings. Harris took the bait, asked for more poems, and "Ethel" sent the whole batch. The poems were printed, with a laudatory preface by Harris, in the next issue of Angry Penguins. Then, the hoax was leaked to the press. Angry Penguins sold out very quickly. So, Harris then decides to reprint the whole manuscript, his laudatory preface, and a facsimile of Ethel's initial letter to him, as a 48-page booklet, wanting (I guess) to both take advantage of the sudden popularity of "Malley" as well as to try to "save face." (This lovely, lovely booklet begins with an introduction by Harris, which concludes: "...we do not wish to express an opinion either on the literary merit of the poetry or on the value of the hoax. These matters will be fully dealt with in the succeeding issue of Angry Penguins [God, if I could find a copy of *that*!], and all it is desired to do here is to present, to as wide a public as possible, the works of Ern Malley and the introductory material that was originally published with them.") Now, w/out further ado, here's the last 18 lines from Ern Malley's "PETIT TESTAMENT," a **thoroughly** entertaining cut-up from the 40s:

It is something to be at last speaking
Though in this No-Man's-language appropriate
Only to No-Man's-Land.
Set this down too:
I have pursued rhyme, image, and metre,
Known all the clefts in which the foot may stick,
Stumbled often, stammered,
But in time the fading voice grows wise
And seizing the co-ordinates of all existence
Traces the inevitable graph

And in conclusion:
There is a moment when the pelvis
Explodes like a grenade. I
Who have lived in the shadow that each act
Casts on the next act now emerge
As loyal as the thistle that in session
Puffs its full seed upon the indicative air.
I have split the infinitive. Beyond is anything.

Apologies to everyone previously familiar with Malley. Everyone else, if you're interested, a book was published maybe a year or two ago called The Ern Malley Affair, which details the events, and, I think, includes most or all of the material in this booklet. Jonathan Brannen -- what were the names of the

two poets? (I knew to pick up _The Darkening Ecliptic_ because Jonathan had, only a month prior, been telling me about _The Ern Malley Affair_, which he'd just read.)

TO SUM UP: _The Darkening Ecliptic_, by Ern Malley (Adelaide, 1944) ...

GROOVE FACTOR: A perfect 10.

Yours,

Gary

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294. **Tenney Nathanson**

Re: POETICS Digest - 15 May 1995 to 16 May 1995

Wed 17 May 1995

Just want to second Marjorie's plug of the early Antin piece on pomo. I guess it is utopian. But what I remember (cf. Beckett's *Belaqua*) is the refutation not the proof: the essay is really smart and vitriolic about the bad version of American new criticism's use of Eliot--Snodgrass, I think it is, gets called a rebirth of "A Shropshire Lad" masquerading as the legacy of modernism. Worth the price of admission. Altieri's take on so-called so-called workshop poetry (/Sense and Sensibility/) is wonderfully smart and vitriolic. Antin's piece is much nastier and even more fun. It's not always necessarily right, but it's a ride.

here's to gorgonzola!

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295. **Ron Silliman**

Re: really Real

Wed 17 May 1995

This discussion of the "real" (if we can call it that) reminds me of the one time in my life in which I "heard" silence...at dawn in Death Valley at Zabriskie Point, no breeze, not even a lizard stirring. That was 23 years ago and it still remains a profound memory in my life.

Ron Silliman

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296. **Herb Levy**
Re: Ern Malley & others
Wed 17 May 1995

Gary Sullivan's description of the <Ern Malley> business ties in nicely with a discussion I was having on the back channel before my computer died last week (please save me from stupid <intelligent> batteries) about the implications of the use of an unacknowledged pseudonym with a false, and provocative, biography.

My position was that the poems were pretty good regardless and that the whole project fell into the tradition of avant garde identity-play. My correspondent was less sure and took some offense at some of the implications.

Who is being tricked, about what, and how much does it matter if the poems seem pretty good?

Any comments?

- Herb

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297. **Herb Levy**
Re: the reality check is in the mail
Wed 17 May 1995

On Tue, 16 May 1995, Aldon L. Nielsen wrote:

*this represents itself as being a real post from aldon nielsen; however,
it is not. it is from ed foster. you can tell 'cause it is three lines.*

Nice try, but the look and feel is all wrong, on my computer at least. It came in as two lines not three and wasn't broken up in the middle of words like ed foster's postings usually are here. It's also not as compacted as his postings are.

So who is this <really> trying to imitate Aldon Nielsen trying to imitate ed foster, anyway?

- Herb

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298. **peter quartermain**

Olson and postmodern

Wed 17 May 1995

I've come into this thread late, so I may be repeating an earlier message from someone else. If so, please bear with and excuse me.

Robin Blaser, in the process of writing notes on his correspondence with Olson for the Minutes of the Charles Olson Society, tells me (and he got it from Ralph Maud who got it from George Butterick) that Olson adopted the term postmodern ("we are the post-modern") from Arnold Toynbee, who attaches the term to the year 1875 in A Study of History, volume ONE (1933), p. 171. Olson probably (according to Butterick via Maud via Blaser -- though there is no record of Toynbee in Olson's reading as compiled by and according to Maud) took it from Somervell's abridgment of the first six volumes of Toynbee's A Study of History (1946) page 39, where Toynbee's graph of chifting civilisations labels, in single quotes, the period "1875 - ?" as "'post-modern' ?"

Full documentation of this (and a great deal else besides) will be in the next issue of the

Minutes of the Charles Olson Society,
published by Ralph Maud at
1104 Maple Street

Vancouver BC Canada V6J 3R6
and available for a modest fee from the Society at that address.

PeterQ

Peter Quartermain
128 East 23rd Avenue voice and fax [REDACTED]
Vancouver
B.C. e-mail: [REDACTED]
Canada V5V 1X2

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299. **Tom Mandel**

Re: really Real

Wed 17 May 1995

For another take on the real and realism, try my

"Realism" published by Burning Deck in 1991, and its title poem in particular.

Tom Mandel

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300. **kathryne**

Re: Outlaws, Classics, and others

Wed 17 May 1995

thanks, Alan. It seems like forever since I have seen you, but your book will be present in one of my grad. student's independent study.

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301. **Charles Watts**

Recovery of the Public World

Wed 17 May 1995

>

From: Charles Watts <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Panels, Panelists, Readings at the Recovery of the Public
World Conference, June 1-4, 1995

THE RECOVERY OF THE PUBLIC WORLD: A CONFERENCE AND POETRY
FESTIVAL IN HONOUR OF ROBIN BLASER, HIS POETRY AND POETICS.
JUNE 1-4, 1995, AT EMILY CARR INSTITUTE OF ART AND DESIGN,
GRANVILLE ISLAND, VANCOUVER, B.C. SCHEDULE OF EVENTS.

PLEASE NOTE THAT AS OF TODAY, MAY 17, 1995, ALL SEATS FOR THE
CONFERENCE PANELS, THE BANQUET, AND THE OPENING NIGHT EVENTS
HAVE BEEN FILLED.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN PLACING YOUR NAME ON A WAITING LIST,
PLEASE CALL THE INSTITUTE FOR THE HUMANITIES, SFU, [REDACTED],
AND LEAVE YOUR NAME AND A TELEPHONE NUMBER; PERSONS ON THE
WAITING LIST WILL BE CALLED IN THE EVENT OF CANCELLATIONS,
FIRST COME FIRST SERVED.

THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE ALREADY REGISTERED SHOULD RECEIVE A
LETTER OF RECEIPT IN THE REGULAR MAIL, TELLING YOU WHEN AND
WHERE TO PICK UP YOUR REGISTRATION PACKET (IN THE FOYER OF THE

THEATRE, EMILY CARR INSTITUTE OF ART AND DESIGN, BEGINNING THURSDAY MORNING, JUNE 1ST, AT 8:30 A.M.), AND INCLUDING A COPY OF THE CONFERENCE SCHEDULE.

IF YOU HAVE SENT IN A REGISTRATION FORM AND A CHEQUE ONLY VERY RECENTLY, IT MAY NOT HAVE BEEN RECEIVED IN TIME BEFORE THE SEATS WERE SOLD OUT. IF THAT'S THE CASE, WE'LL CONTACT YOU TO LET YOU KNOW THAT WE WILL HOLD YOUR CHEQUE AND PUT YOUR NAME ON OUR WAIT LIST (UNLESS YOU PREFER THAT WE SEND YOU BACK YOUR CHEQUE).

THERE ARE STILL PLENTY OF SEATS FOR THE SATURDAY AND SUNDAY EVENING READINGS AT THE FREDERIC WOOD THEATRE, UNIVERSITY OF B.C., JUNE 3RD & 4TH, 8 P.M. TICKETS FOR THESE TWO READINGS ARE AVAILABLE AT DUTHIE BOOKS OUTLETS -- DUTHIE BOOKS DOWNTOWN, 919 ROBSON ST, VANCOUVER, B.C. [REDACTED]; DUTHIE BOOKS WEST FOURTH, 2239 W. 4TH AVE, VANCOUVER [REDACTED]; & DUTHIE BOOKS UNIVERSITY BRANCH, 4444 W. 10TH AVE, VANCOUVER (604) [REDACTED]. TICKETS FOR THE SATURDAY & SUNDAY NIGHT READINGS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE AT BLACK SHEEP BOOKS, 2742 W. 4TH AVE, VANCOUVER [REDACTED].

THANKS TO ALL OF YOU ON THIS LIST, CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS AND PEOPLE WHO HAVE REGISTERED FOR THE CONFERENCE, FOR HELPING TO MAKE THE RECOVERY OF THE PUBLIC WORLD THE FESTIVAL IT PROMISES TO BE.

The following is the schedule of events at the Recovery of the Public World Conference and Poetry Festival in honour of Robin Blaser, to be held at Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design, Vancouver, B.C., June 1st through fourth, 1995, together with the names of people who will be taking part:

Thursday, June 1st, 8:30 a.m. - 9:25 a.m. Conference registration; pick-up of registration packets and other conference materials, in the foyer of the theatre at Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design.

Note: all panels & lunchtime readings will be held in the theatre at Emily Carr.

Thursday, June 1st, 9:30 a.m. - 12 noon. Panel: COMPANIONS: SELF, OTHER, COMMUNITY. Chaired by Jenny Penberthy and Charles Watts. Panelists: Michael Boughn, Daniel Burgoyne, Clayton Eshleman, Peter Gizzi, Michael McClure, Kristin Prevallet, Nathaniel Tarn.

Thursday, June 1st, 12 noon - 1:15 p.m. Lunch break.

Thursday, June 1st, 1:15 p.m. - 1:55 p.m. Reading in the theatre, Emily Carr. Readers: Deanna Ferguson, Aaron Shurin, Dorothy Trujillo Lusk.

Thursday, June 1st, 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Panel: COMPOSITION & PERFORMANCE. Chaired by Daphne Marlatt & Phyllis Webb. Panelists: David Bromige, Peter Middleton, Jed Rasula, David Sullivan, Phyllis Webb.

Thursday, June 1st, 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Opening of the gallery exhibit, IN SEARCH OF ORPHEUS: SOME BAY AREA POETS & PAINTERS, 1945-1965. In the Charles H. Scott Gallery, Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design.

(Thursday, June 1st, 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Dinner break.)

Thursday, June 1st, 8:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. Festival opening, the theatre, Emily Carr. Opening address by Charles Bernstein. Readings by Charles Bernstein, Norma Cole, Daphne Marlatt, Michael Palmer. Performance by Catriona Strang and Francois Houle. Michael Ondaatje introduces Robin Blaser, who will give a talk. Doors open at 7:30 p.m.

Friday, June 2nd, 8:30 a.m. - 9:25 a.m. Conference registration, continued.

Friday, June 2nd, 9:30 a.m. - 12 noon. Panel: 'NO LONGER OR NOT YET': TRANSLATION & THE RECOVERY OF THE PUBLIC WORLD. Chaired by Norma Cole and Michael Palmer. Panelists: Colin Browne, Hilary Clark, Pierre Joris, Susan Vanderborg, Pasquale Verdicchio.

Friday, June 2nd, 12 noon - 1:15 p.m. Lunch break.

Friday, June 2nd, 1:15 p.m. - 1:55 p.m. Reading in the theatre, Emily Carr. Readers: Bruce Boone, Andrew Schelling, Pasquale Verdicchio.

Friday, June 2nd, 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Panel: HETEROLOGIES. Chaired by Susan Howe and Nathaniel Mackey. Panelists: Steve Dickison, Michele Leggott, D.S. Marriott, Leslie Scalapino, Andrew Schelling.

Friday, June 2nd, 7:30 p.m. - midnight: The Banquet, A FEAST OF COMPANIONS, honouring Robin and invited guests. At Heritage Hall, 3102 Main Street, Vancouver. A salmon barbecue catered by Brian DeBeck. Hosted by Kevin Killian and Ellen Tallman. Stories, music, greetings, poems. Hilarity for all at Heritage Hall!

Saturday, June 3rd, 9:30 a.m. - 12 noon. Panel: ETHICS & AESTHETICS.

Chaired by Lisa Robertson and Jerry Zaslove. Panelists: Michael Davidson, Robert Hullot-Kentor, Paul Kelley, Andrew Klobucar, David Levi Strauss, Anne Waldman.

Saturday, June 3rd, 12 noon - 1:15 p.m. Lunch break.

Saturday, June 3rd, 1:15 p.m. - 1:55 p.m. Reading in the theatre, Emily Carr. Readers: David Bromige, Norman Finkelstein, Jed Rasula.

Saturday, June 3rd, 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Panel: POETICS: THEORY & PRACTICE. Chaired by Charles Bernstein and Miriam Nichols. Panelists: Rachel Blau DuPlessis, Alan Golding, Steve McCaffery, Tom Marshall, Miriam Nichols.

Saturday, June 3rd, 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Dinner break.

Saturday, June 3rd, 8:00 p.m. - midnight: Reading at Freddy Wood Theatre, University of British Columbia. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. Readers: Peter Culley, Michael Davidson, Rachel Blau DuPlessis, Clayton Eshleman, Robert Hogg, Susan Howe, Pierre Joris, Kevin Killian, Joanne Kyger, Steve McCaffery, Michael McClure, Karen Mac Cormack, Nathaniel Mackey, D.S. Marriott, Peter Middleton, Jerome Rothenberg, George Stanley, David Levi Strauss, Nathaniel Tarn, Anne Waldman.

Sunday, June 4th, 9:30 a.m. - 12 noon. Panel: EROS & POIESIS. Chaired by Bruce Boone and Sharon Thesen. Panelists: Kevin Killian, Daphne Marlatt, Peter Quartermain, George Stanley, Alan Vardy.

Sunday, June 4th, 12 noon - 1:15 p.m. Lunch break.

Sunday, June 4th, 1:15 p.m. - 1:55 p.m. Reading in the theatre, Emily Carr. Readers: Susan Clark, Peter Gizzi, Michele Leggott.

Sunday, June 4th, 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Panel: POETICS: FORM & STRUCTURE. Chaired by Pauline Butling and Wystan Curnow. Panelists: Charles Altieri, Pauline Butling, Don Byrd, Joseph Conte, Norman Finkelstein.

Sunday, June 4th, 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Dinner break.

Sunday, June 4th, 8:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. Festival and conference finale, at Freddy Wood Theatre, University of British Columbia. Readers: E.D. Blodgett, George Bowering, Michael Ondaatje, Lisa Robertson, Leslie Scalapino, Sharon Thesen, Fred Wah, Robin Blaser.

Please note that program times may vary slightly; the list of persons reading is also subject to some change.

Please note also that some pre-conference events have been planned, including a reading and talk by Michael McClure in the new Special Collections and Rare Books rooms at the W.A.C. Bennett Library, Simon Fraser University, Wednesday, May 31st, time to be announced. There will also be a reading by Karen Mac Cormack at the Kootenay School of Writing, 112 West Hastings, Vancouver, at 8:00 p.m., Wednesday, May 31st.

Changes in this program will be announced as they are confirmed.

Registration fees for the conference are as follows:

Entire Package, including panels, readings and banquet: \$100; students and fixed incomes: \$60.

Panels and readings only: \$80; students and fixed incomes: \$40.

Banquet only: \$25.

Please pay in Canadian funds. If this proves difficult, however, international money orders in U.S. funds for the equivalent amount at current exchange rates will be accepted.

Please note that seating for this conference is limited. If you plan to register for the conference and/or the banquet, it is advisable to do so by the beginning of May. Additional tickets to the Saturday and Sunday night readings will be available at some Vancouver bookstores and at the door on the evening of the reading; admission: \$10, \$5 for students and fixed incomes.

ACCOMMODATION: Some Recommended Hotels.

The Sylvia Hotel: 1154 Gilford St, Vancouver, BC V6G 2P6, tel: (604) [REDACTED]. Regular rates: \$55-\$95 plus 17% tax.

The Buchan Hotel: 1906 Haro St, Vancouver, BC V6G 1H7, tel: (604) [REDACTED]; Fax [REDACTED]. Rates: \$75-\$85 plus 17% tax.

The Granville Island Hotel: 1253 Johnston St, Vancouver, BC V6H 3R9, tel: [REDACTED]; fax [REDACTED]. Rates: \$150-\$195 plus 17% tax. N.B. Hotel rates are in Canadian funds.

More inexpensive accommodation:

Simon Fraser University Campus Accommodations: 212 McTaggart-Cowan Hall, Burnaby, BC V5A 1S6, tel [REDACTED]; fax: [REDACTED].

Dorm single: \$19-\$29. Dorm twin: \$48.30. Townhouse unit: \$105.80. On the SFU campus, Burnaby Mountain, about 30-40 minutes' drive to the

conference site.

University of British Columbia: 5961 Student Union Boulevard,
Vancouver, BC V6T 2C9, tel: [REDACTED]; fax: [REDACTED]. Suite
for 3: \$95; for 2: \$74; for one: \$56. Single: \$24-\$32. Twin: \$48. On
the UBC campus, about twenty-thirty minutes' drive to the conference.

Other inexpensive accommodation listings available on request.

To register or for further information, write to The Recovery of the
Public World, c/o The Institute for the Humanities, East Academic
Annex, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C. V5A 1S6; tel (voice
mail): [REDACTED]; fax: [REDACTED]. Or you can reach me by
e-mail at the following address: [REDACTED]

Charles Watts
for the organizers,
The Recovery of the Public World

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302. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: really Real Andy

Wed 17 May 1995

On Wed, 17 May 1995, John Byrum wrote:

Dear Carl,

It's the real thing. It's Coke. (from Ron Silliman's recent message)

Andy Warhol is the real!, altho he did the soup cans (from your recent message)

Andy also did the Disaster paintings, skulls, Mao & lots of other celeb portraits, and all kinds of other neat stuff too. Go to Pittsburgh, see the stuff. Now that's a great museum!

John

Yes! Warhol is really real. He's the only one that admits art isn't art unless it has streaks and smudges. Imperfection is the real art of being artistic.

Lindz

wow! glad to see all those warhol fans out there! i just finished an article on frank o'hara, and in it is quoted o'hara's thots on warhol. sounds like he didn't much care for warhol. that's kind of interesting

carl

[↑ Contents](#)

303. **Hank Lazer**

Re: four poems

Wed 17 May 1995

Four for Larry Eigner

1

from childhood you remember

not the consecutive

his voice emphatic

as if it mattered

she seemed there & not

and so you to

your son

urging the next

to learn it

hawk with squirrel in talons

2

after all the singing faces, you
with your mouths out of sight
among the singing faces you
are walking away having said no
among the turning faces yours
the shadows retiring unto itself
after all the facial arpeggios dip
& descend with your mouths
out of sight pianissimo to
whisper to echoing silence

3

he had now
in no way
had it it
ran though his
hands his mouth
made representations
it was all
along beside
& through & of
he had no toe hold

4

 there had been these
exact iterations
 in
 or after an interval
not the cumulus drama
 but the indifferented
 or nearly so
 gray
 befriending / partnering
 sudden utterances

Hank Lazer

[↑ Contents](#)

304. Edward Foster

Re: the reality check is in the mail

Wed 17 May 1995

```
aaaaaaaaallllllllllllllddddddddddddoooooooooooooooooooooonnnnnnnnnnnnnn,  
three looks like  
tttttttttttttttttttttttttttttthhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhiiiiiiissssssssssssss  
ssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssss!!!!!!
```

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305. Edward Foster

Re: really Real

Wed 17 May 1995

ah, ron, yes, silence. i remember zabriskie point, but the sands were shifting,
the hawks were hooting. no, for me, it was the north pole when santa's helpers
took a break in all that tap-tap-tap and you could almost feel the heart of light,
the silence

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306. **Gary Sullivan**

Re: Herb Levy & Tom Mandel

Wed 17 May 1995

Dear Herb (& Tom, a few words re: your & Dan's Absence Sensorium conclude this): As you're probably well aware from your back-channel discussion, "authenticity" and "value" are hardly cut & dry. I've given a lot of thought to these issues and have never reached any comfortable (static) position with respect to either. When I was in college 10 years ago, I perpetrated a kind of "hoax" of my own -- though my intentions were relatively benign compared to "the Ern Malley affair." I had developed a pretty serious crush on one of the editors of the university's "experimental poetry" magazine. This was many years before I'd begun reading & writing poetry w/any seriousness. At the time, I didn't much appreciate the kind of work published in this magazine. But, I had a crush on one of the editors, and was too shy to try (as a "normal" person might) to simply engage her in conversation. I assumed she wouldn't have any interest in me because I didn't (then) write poetry, or for that matter, know anything *about* poetry. I got it into my head that, if I could write poetry like the work in this editor's magazine, she might suddenly become "interested" in me, or at the very least, it might be a way to see that our

paths would eventually cross. I decided to study the poems in her magazine and try to make up some of my own, using pretty much the techniques described by Ern Malley's creators. I cribbed from much less "lofty" sources; took material from things found in the San Francisco *Chronicle*, mostly from the crossword puzzle. My roommate at the time was a poet whose work had been in this magazine, and he knew how I felt about the editor, as well as about the magazine's contents. So, I told him my plan, and showed him my poems. He liked the poems, felt I could probably get the magazine to publish them, but said that it was a mistake for me to look at them as "hoaxes." I went ahead and submitted the poems, and two of them were published. I think my friend then told the editors that I considered my poems "hoaxes," but nothing much ever came of that, as I think the editors (rightly) felt that it didn't matter much how *I* felt about the poems, as they were, by the standards of the people writing for & reading that magazine, perfectly appropriate things for someone to be writing. The poems I wrote for that magazine I *still* don't think much of, think they were failures even by that magazine's standards (which favored, as Dodie might call it, "seductive surfaces"). But, I don't disrespect the people who thought enough of them to publish them. The magazine valued a particular aesthetic, an aesthetic I value today, and I'd supplied them with work that more or less "worked." I picked up the Ern Malley book because Jonathan had given me a great description of the whole "affair," but also because, at that time, Jonathan had read me some of "Ern"'s poems, which I actually *liked*. But, then, my liking them is -- for better or worse -- linked up to the fact that I know what the poets' intentionality was. I think they failed (well, obviously) to "expose" the "sham" of "modernism," but I really appreciate their work, in part, because of I guess you could call it the "high spirited nature" of the project. The poets were having fun, & the finished product *is* a lot of fun to read. But, of course, Max Harris (*Angry Penguins*'s editor) had no idea the poems were pranks, was appreciating them by whatever standards he might have brought to an appreciation of, say, Eliot. And that does make me wonder, maybe about Eliot's notion of the "objective correlative" -- I've never thought much of that, and reading Ern Malley's work, which was accepted not for its "high spirited nature," but for the "seriousness" & "depth" of the work; well, I think even less of Eliot's theory (if not his poetry; though, admittedly, I don't care much for either). When Dodie Bellamy speaks of the "seductive surface" of writing -- well, that's pretty much what Malley's work offers me. Heck, it's to a great extent what Shakespeare's sonnets offer me. I certainly don't ultimately care whether or not Shakespeare's Sonnets were begun as an attempt to convince Henry Wriothesley to marry -- though, reading (say) Robert Giroux's *The Book Known As Q* does indeed amplify my overall appreciation for the work. (Even though much of what Giroux says is, ultimately, speculation.) The poets of the Romantic period who valued Thomas Chatterton's hoax created their own

standards for an appreciation of that work, standards that didn't exist as such in Chatterton's time. Likewise, we live at a particular point in time wherein people like Jonathan and I (& lots of others I'll bet) can appreciate the poems of Ern Malley *as* poems, above & beyond what I'd call the "pre-game hype." When Ted Berrigan composed a fake interview with John Cage, & a panel including Susan Sontag awarded it "Best Interview of the Year" (or something like that), well, when it came out that the interview had been a hoax, there wasn't a lot of hullabaloo about that. Likewise, when I discovered that transcripts of three Japanese "poet/scholars" discussing Ron Silliman's work and the Japanese tradition of renga in an issue of *Aerial* a couple years back was a hoax, I thought no less of the editor who'd published them. (I myself had enjoyed the transcripts prior to knowing they were fake.) I agree with Dodie that "the real" is hardly an easily pinned down thing, "place" or value. "Authenticity" isn't a black & white issue. I'd bet anyone on this list could, using OULIPO techniques on found material, come up with a "memoir" that'd win first prize in one of The Loft's annual contests. (They're a local, very conservative, literary center.) Likewise, the people at the Loft could probably use whatever methods to generate a series poems, sign 'em "Charles Bernstein," and get a number of magazines to publish the stuff *as* Bernstein poems. This brings us back, I think, to questions about the ultimate value of theory -- at least as used by readers as a method of entry into any particular work. If I determine that Eliot was wrong, that no such thing as an "objective correlative" exists, does that mean his poetry's unreadable? I don't think so. If I believe that "objective correlative" is valid, does that mean that his work is any good? Hardly. If "the author is dead," in part by virtue of the fact that one's "authenticity" is never above question, then, isn't by the same token *theory* also "dead"? What, besides "personal taste" do we -- and I mean collectively -- have left? Anything? Everything? Tom Mandel, even better than your poem "Realism" (in terms of this topic) is the poem you've just written with Daniel Davidson, *Absence Sensorium*. I love it. Would you post some of it for poetics readers, or at the very least talk a little about how you & Dan generated it? It's fascinating to me how you used the poem -- which contains a lot of personal material (as well as, according to Dan, a lot of bogus, made up autobiography) -- to collapse, each of you, into this singular-voiced text. Wonderful work. Ciao for niao, Gary

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307. **Marisa A Januzzi**

Re: really Real

Wed 17 May 1995

Hello--

Hope and think I've got this right-- it's a message to Kevin Killian, who said on poetics something to the effect that "contemporary writers will be judged on how they responded to the AIDS crisis"-- and also for Dodie Bellamy, whose work "responds"--

I just wanted to let you know that I taught a series of plague texts at the end of my humanities class-- response to plagues being the best index of 'humanity' maybe-- and it was the most engaging and emotional experience. Boccaccio's DECAMERON back to back with ANGELS IN AMERICA and Jim Powell's It Was Fever That Made The World.

My students really dove in. Some of them volunteered time. Anyway I have been remembering what you said and I wanted to thank you.

--Marisa

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308. **Sheila E. Murphy**
Re: Ern Malley & others

Wed 17 May 1995

Herb's comment of 5/17:

Who is being tricked, about what, and how much does it matter if the poems seem pretty good?

reminds me of a fellow music student during college who could imitate the voice teacher who was a marvelous mezzo soprano, deliciously proficient at operatic work. The student was of the ilk who had raised goofing off to the level of a fine art. She took great delight in playing with her Dana Carvey-like capability in the vocal department.

But all that time, I kept wondering just what it meant that Jill could do all of this. What was the difference between her and the vocal teacher? Many theoretical ones, plus the root versus derivation thing. But for sound quality, no diff at all.

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309. **George Bowering**
Re: really Real

Wed 17 May 1995

Just a question without malice.

Is Jane Austen usually judged by the way she responded to Napoleon's invasions?

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310. **George Bowering**

Re: POETICS Digest - 15 May 1995 to 16 May 1995

Wed 17 May 1995

I think that when Olson was using the term post the modern, he was thinking about history, about something we could in some terms call post-historical, or at least historical as redefined by his famous BM lecture.

For the turn of the century Catholic church it seems to have meant, Modernism, the attempt to gether 19thC science and Darwinism into the same system with biblical-liturgical teaching. It was condemned by the Pope, the same Pope who wanted to get the Jews out of Jerusalem.

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311. **Reginald Johanson**

Really real

Wed 17 May 1995

I'm new to the list, so I thought I'd address a question without mischief.

It's a question my brother asked Ryan Knighton when we were getting drunk and having a problem with the really real and what it was and meant. My brother works with street kids. I think the whole problem was needlessly abstract for him. He simply asked, "But what do you do in a crisis?"

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312. **Tom Mandel**

Absence Sensorium

Wed 17 May 1995

I don't know how much I want to say about this poem that no one but Dan and I have seen -- altho I read some from it at the Poetry Project in January, and I believe Dan has read part of it aloud too in San Francisco at some point. Certainly, I can comment on how we were able to collaborate: I mean that it was made much easier by the net, in that we sent our work to each other by email, but this is not much of a point to make. Some of you will know that I make a living in the networking industry (consulting and selling internetworking gear and configuration services and developing information architectures for on-line implementation - well, I don't actually *do* the latter but exploit the talents of others [if you

like] and my own conceptual abilities such as they remain), but none of this entered into our writing of AS.

I don't think Gary meant any load on the word "bogus" when he said that bogus autobiographical material was part of the poem, but I don't think it's the right word - some is imagined, or someone else's autobiography is sketched, but most of it is "real," including a lot that might not be taken as such.

The poem is out being read for publication (at least I hope it is being read!) and for whatever reason it feels awkward to say too much about it and at least a little premature to "print" any of it here - tho maybe we'd feel differently in a while, or maybe Dan feels differently than I right now; I haven't checked and I will.

most of it is "real," including a lot that might not be taken as such.

The poem is out being read for publication (at least I hope it is being read!) and for whatever reason it feels awkward to say too much about it and at least a little premature to "print" any of it here - tho maybe we'd feel differently in a while, or maybe Dan feels differently than I right now; I haven't checked and I will.

(oops I just cut/pasted the same bit twice. shit)

This external description begins to seem a little silly; I guess I could give you two stanzas, from different parts of the poem. (just give me a second...)

finally. But in what ways can these windings
connect with thought? Beginning
not as modern but as here, or so says my
body leaning from this chair.
Embracing fiction, a functioning desire
makes for strange and wonderful ceremony,
like the salve of tongues and language in my ear

...

A straight score crossed the window

between the alley and his basement room
where the pane had been quietly removed. His
mattress, soaked in blood, twisted off its box spring.
Interior walls of the rooms were pocked with
bullet holes, trajected inward. No outward
facing holes -- the dead don't fire.

and

Turn and turn it; everything is in it.
Bridge made of cracked glass whose edge
defies you to cross. Winter,
copying in your notebook
the recipe for a color long unseen
amid objects glinting on your desk. Yet, know:
its color may still appear.

...

Is the world still glowing?
Is the night still making rounds?
Is something still pushing up ahead of us,
whittling out the unimaginable?
I sit here and sip my tea
the most ordinary act I can think of,
moon spinning 'round my body.

...

I can offer no adequate exclusions;
we all live in the same lie,
breathe in the same atmosphere.
So it becomes a question
of participation and resistance, or
simply participation.
I most heartily recommend the former.

words spoken by someone else
what sympathies ruled the hunt
what we heard in confidence, and soon forgot
whose tongue turned then, or was stopped,
words slurred, gait canted, spirit spinning awry,
that it's not our life to rise
nor ours to fall. Not to listen. Not to speak.

More than a couple....

Tom Mandel

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313. **John Byrum**
Re: really Real Andy

Wed 17 May 1995

Lindz:

Yes! Warhol is really real. He's the only one that admits art isn't art unless it has streaks and smudges. Imperfection is the real art of being artistic. (your recent message)

For me, Warhol's work is sheer surface, utter blank, which (precisely in that surface blankness) holds many depths for our guesses (i.e., interpretations, feelings, desires) to plunge into. His work is empty/ full, impersonal, machinelike, and very humanly alive/anguished, all at once. It is facade, mask, fake, and a multiply-faceted portrait of a consciousness attempting to come to terms with a singular interpretation of our current situation, a sort of existential commodification.

John

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314. **John Byrum**
Re: irony and the Really real

Wed 17 May 1995

Dodie concluded a message to Andrew with the following:

The real is like god, Andrew, it will always elude you.

Dodie

I agree that the real can always seem elusive (allusive??), but think that all our experiences must finally be the Real. After all they are all we have, call them what you will. No need to bring in some notion of a "transcendent" "Real" as somehow more "real", because that is also comprehended under our "experience". We choose the words and the feelings that we bring to them are ours also.

John

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315. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: four poems

Wed 17 May 1995

dear hank--enjoyed your eigner tribute...and then i got worried....DID HE DIE? If so, could you illuminate us? Thanks, Chris

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316. **Gary Sullivan**

Re: Absence Sensorium

Wed 17 May 1995

Dear Tom:

Thanks for that. I hope at some point you will feel more comfortable talking about the piece en length -- it's a very rare kind of collaborative poem I think, lots in the first person (& some material in the second person), and very (this is probably the wrong word too) "sincere." (No wonder you liked *_Locus Solus_* -- a whole HUGE issue devoted to collaborations!) I hope I didn't put you on the spot asking you to write about it "prematurely." I'm used to corresponding w/people who don't get books published, most of 'em, so the notion of "premature" w/respect to finished work is kind of a foreign one to me. (Dan said that the version of the poem he sent me was "finished" -- I've read earlier drafts of it, too.) But, your situation is different, & also, there's another writer involved, so I'll respect that.

By the above parenthetical, please note that people other than you & Dan **have** read this; also because I run w/a generally unpublished pack, we tend to do a lot of "manuscript exchanges" -- meaning, er, um, I believe maybe there're a few **others** ('sides me) who've read *_AS_* as well. (Oh, now, I'm sure they'll be buyin' the book version too, when it comes out. I definitely will.)

"Bogus" not at all loaded. I use a lot of bogus autobiographical material myself, & not because I have any Big Ideas about identity blurring, but because sometimes the bogus stuff **is** "real." (I'm from California, Tom; thus "bogus.") (Dude.)

Yours,

Gary

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317. **Chris Stroffolino**
Re: irony and the Really real
Wed 17 May 1995

LindZZZZZZZ---I am off for Washington D.C. to read a school prayer this weekend ("ON Your Knees, Citizen") and remember when i lived there in '83-'84 a huge graffiti mural that on a side of a wall (not one of those lamo 'official' ones either that said "Art Is Anything You Can Get Away With"--Andy Warhol....

(there should be a '

')' after 'either' and before 'said'....

I wonder if it's still there...and what's become of the artist...CS

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318. **Gary Sullivan**
Re: really Real Andy
Wed 17 May 1995

Dear John:

Your take on Warhol sounds very much like Carter Ratcliff's (a wonderful poet, by the way; just picked up his *Fever Coast* at Woodland Pattern). Ratcliff wrote one of those Abbeville Moderns or Contemporaries or Whathaveyous on Warhol -- check it out if you've not yet seen it. You'll like, I think. Gold cover, w/a Marilyn repro.

Yours,

Gary

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319. **Gary Sullivan**
Re: Really real
Thu 18 May 1995

On Wed, 17 May 1995, Reginald Johanson wrote:

It's a question my brother asked Ryan Knighton when we were getting drunk and having a problem with the really real and what it was and meant. My brother works with street kids. I think the whole problem was needlessly abstract for him. He simply asked, "But what do you do in a crisis?"

Dear Reginald:

I work at the Legal Aid Society of Minneapolis/Housing Discrimination Law Project. The people who come into our office for help/advice are living in public

housing, most receiving various forms of welfare/General Assistance/SSI benefits. When I began working there, I assumed there was little correlation between my writing/editing life and the lives of either the people who came in for help, or the lawyers who help them deal with various issues of the law. I assumed that existence for these people was not "needlessly abstract" in the way poetry, writing & theory can be.

Not one of the people who comes into our office isn't in what most of us on this list (or anyone) would call "a crisis." Being locked out of their apartments (life or death in winter in Minnesota). Being denied benefits they need in order to purchase food. Being turned away from housing because of race, disability, etc.

Not "needlessly abstract"? I was wrong.

These people's lives, the issues they are (at the time they come in to us) dealing with aren't at all simple, nor can they be solved (typically) by any simple means. Because most of what Legal Aid offers people is *advice* (as opposed to representation, which is saved for only those cases which might seemingly "drag on" in court), and because this advice, being able to act on this advice, requires a clear understanding of what tend to be "needlessly" abstract as well as complexly verbose laws, I'd hesitate to ever suggest that these people do not, in times of crisis, have to deal with "needlessly abstract" issues.

I'd say, in fact, that these people, perhaps because their crises tend to be more let's say "immediate" than the crises poets & writers face (or create or ourselves), they tend to deal w/"needlessly abstract" issues incredibly well -- they have to, otherwise, they're even worse off.

Life -- at no level -- is simple. & that ain't something I read about in any book.

Yours,

Gary

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320. **Gabrielle Welford**

Phoning White House to Save the Trees of Life (fwd.)

Thu 18 May 1995

Thought ye all might be interested in this.

Gabrielle

██████

The Rescissions Bill (rescinding large parts of last year's Federal; budget, including massive cuts in aid to college students, environmental enforcement, etc.) is now before the President. ****IT INCLUDES A PROVISION CALLED THE "SALVAGE" RIDER** THAT REQUIRES THE SALE OF SIX BILLION BOARD

FEET OF LUMBER FROM THE NATIONAL FORESTS IN THE NEXT TWO P
YEARS, AND PROHIBITS ALL COURT CHALLENGES AND NULLIFIES ALL
ENVIRONMENTAL-PROTECTION LAWS THAT MIGHT PREVENT THIS
DESTRUCTION.** The White House has said the President is considering
vetoing the bill, partly because of this provision. The White House has added
this issue as Question # 2 on its daily opinion survey. There follow simple
instructions for calling the White House -- a 15-second call, unless you want to
talk to a live person -- to register your opinion on this.

The White House has now added the "salvage" rider to the list of questions
for
which they are conducting a survey.

This question is number 2 in a series. YOU CAN NOW CALL THIS LINE
24 HOURS A DAY, SEVEN DAYS A WEEK. CALL IMMEDIATELY,
ASK YOUR FAMILY AND NEIGHBORS TO CALL. REGISTER YOUR
VOTE!



After this number answers, you press (1) and (1) to enter the survey (listen to
the operator and respond). After the first question, the second question will be
on the timber "salvage" rider. You will be asked if you support the rider (hell,
no!) or oppose the rider (press 2). If you call between 9-5 M-F, East Coast time,
you can also stay on the line and at any time in the survey, press O for an
operator (chance to record a vote in the mechanical survey and talk to a real
person). If this message sounds confusing, don't worry, once you try it, you'll
find it is really very easy, and takes only 10-15 seconds of your time, once you
are connected.

REMEMBER, THIS LINE IS OPEN 24 HOURS A DAY, SO YOU NO
LONGER HAVE TO WAIT FOR EAST COAST BUSINESS HOURS

Don't give up!

ONLY YOU CAN CONVINCE THE PRESIDENT TO VETO THE
RESCISSIONS BILL--AND THE TIMBER RIDER

CALL NOW!

And please forward this message wherever you can.

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321. **Gary Sullivan**

addendum

Thu 18 May 1995

The parenthetical statement in second to last paragraph of post to Reginald Johanson should read "(or create **for** ourselves)."

Also, Reginald: I can't emphasize enough how wrong (not to mention condescending) it is suppose the poor are a "simple lot." I know you didn't mean anything bad by it, but then, I'm sure none of the writers who've created "simple" poor (or working class) characters out of "pity" "nostalgia" "romanticism" or whatever (& they always seem "symbolic" of something, don't they?) meant anything bad by it, either. The poor are just like you & me, Reg, they just have a lot less money.

But don't take my word for it. Read Dambudzo Marechera's *_Mindblast_* or Bob Kaufman's *_Solitudes Crowded with Loneliness_* if you think life at the (economic) bottom is simple or that people who find themselves (temporarily or permanently) "there" have less going on in their skulls (or read any less) than Harold Bloom or whoever, Raymond Carver et al. to the contrary.

Okay. I'll shut up now.

Yours,

Gary

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322. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: really Real Andy

Thu 18 May 1995

ya, he's the best only after duchamp.

in fact, one of the very few who got him right. or maybe half right

carl

> > Lindz:

>

> Yes! Warhol is really real. He's the only one that admits art isn't art

> unless it has streaks and smudges. Imperfection is the real art of being

> artistic. (your recent message)

>

> For me, Warhol's work is sheer surface, utter blank, which (precisely in that

> surface blankness) holds many depths for our guesses (i.e., interpretations,

> feelings, desires) to plunge into. His work is empty/ full, impersonal,

> machinelike, and very humanly alive/anguished, all at once. It is facade,

> mask, fake, and a multiply-faceted portrait of a consciousness attempting to
> come to terms with a singular interpretation of our current situation, a sort
> of existential commodification.

>

> John

>

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323. **Marisa A Januzzi**

Re: really Real

Thu 18 May 1995

A response without malice: you'd be surprised. Beyond the usual undergraduate rejections of her work as being devoid of labor, war and sex (!), there are the new and unusual readings which move the peripheral detail of, for instance, the sugar plantations in Antigua which fuel the local economy to the center of *Mansfield Park*.

BTW, I didn't intend that message for the whole list-- the one about plagues! But I did mean what I said. Partly it was triggered by hearing an emotional reading from Powell's book *It was Fever That Made The World*.

--Marisa

On Wed, 17 May 1995, George Bowering wrote:

Just a question without malice.

*Is Jane Austen usually judged by the way she responded to
Napoleon's invasions?*

[↑ Contents](#)

324. **Ron Silliman**

Re: The REAL Ern Malley

Thu 18 May 1995

Gary,

re your comment:

>

> When Ted Berrigan composed a fake interview with John Cage, & a panel

>including Susan Sontag awarded it "Best Interview of the Year" (or

>something like that), well, when it came out that the interview had been a
>hoax, there wasn't a lot of hullabaloo about that. Likewise, when I
>discovered that transcripts of three Japanese "poet/scholars" discussing
>Ron Silliman's work and the Japanese tradition of renga in an issue of
>_Aerial_ a couple years back was a hoax, I thought no less of the editor
>who'd published them. (I myself had enjoyed the transcripts prior to
>knowing they were fake.)

And I, of course, was taken in by these same folks in their translation of an imagined poet in the Conjunctions "translation" issue -- the Japanese follower of Spicer & Barthes -- even posting an enthusiastic note here (which I think Luigi-Bob may have reprinted in Taproot). But it doesn't erase the fact that these are genuinely interesting poems, regardless of their ambiguous relation to "authenticity."

How does this differ from, say, someone like Curtis Faville in the 1960s who would do a flawless "take" on anyone (Stanzas for an Evening Out remains a pretty great book, even tho in some ways it's an anthology of Curtis' own enthusiasms, a "reading" in Dahlen's sense of the word of the poetry of that time)?

Ron Silliman



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325. **Ron Silliman**

Yo, Ed

Thu 18 May 1995

That
Was
Four
Lines

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326. **Ron Silliman**

Re: really Real Andy

Thu 18 May 1995

I saw the big Warhol retrospective at the Chicago Art Institute a few years back and was taken with how well his work has stood up over time, whereas

Rauschenberg seems to me as dated as Life Magazine covers from the 1950s, utterly limited and only of historical interest. Warhol remains not only the most political artist of his generation, but surprisingly one most committed to visual values in his work. My guess is that it will still look pretty damn great in another 50 years, when all the media hype will have faded.

Ron Silliman

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327. **Kevin Killian**

Re: The REAL Ern Malley

Thu 18 May 1995

Dodie, I hope you'll forgive us for continuing to use the word "Real" in subject headings, despite our knowledge that it freaks you out, what with your book title & all. (& it's a wonderful book, I think.) But, you know, taking the word for your title doesn't take the word out of circulation otherwise -- & I can't imagine you'd believe that'd ever happen, anyway ...

Gary,

I do think the sun rises and sets in my you-know-what. But with a girl like me, Gary, you can use any words you want.

Love,

Dodie

[↑ Contents](#)

328. **Ron Silliman**

Re: Absence Sensorium

Thu 18 May 1995

Tom,

Didn't know Dan had email. What's his address?

The excerpts look great, but you are one big tease! Post the whole thing!

Love,

Ron

[↑ Contents](#)

329. **Ron Silliman**

Re: four poems

Thu 18 May 1995

Hank,

They're wonderful. This is a great way to use the list. It's terrific.

Ron

PS, "facial arpeggios"?

[↑ Contents](#)

330. **Tom Mandel**

Re: Absence Sensorium

Thu 18 May 1995

I didn't mean to overreact to the word "bogus" - and I shd have recognized the california spin on the word (I spent 2 decades there myself), but maybe others wdn't have either. In any case, there's really nothing there that looks like it's personal that isn't. I.e. the poem is constructed; the life is not.

Tom Mandel

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331. **Tom Mandel**

Re: The REAL Ern Malley

Thu 18 May 1995

Just to concur with Ron Silliman re: Stanzas for an Evening Out by Curtis Faville. A kind of NY school ne plus ultra, in which the poet writes himself into a corner with paint that 'll never dry. Curtis Faville wrote no more (unless I'm wrong: anyway, it shd read "has written").

I guess too that the news (just reached me; always the last one unless it's abt gadgets or cars, then I'm the first one - and I recommend my methods) of the imaginariness of that Japanese Spicer-following personally-blistered avantgardist poet whose family died in a-bomb blast doesn't take away from the interest of the poems - imagined poems by imagined poet - but it does give one a slightly lugubrious sense of the imaginers' character given the material they used.

Tom Mandel

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332. **Tom Mandel**

one big tease

Thu 18 May 1995

Ron,

I'd be kind of surprised if the other 220 participants here wanted to find a 100+ page poem in thier emailboxes! But I'll ask Dan what he thinks (& if he wants to come out of the email shadows).

Love,

tom

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333. **Aldon L. Nielsen**
Re: Ern Malley's antecedents

Thu 18 May 1995

similar episode in U.S. -- the Spectra Hoax -- look up those ole spectral poets -- they may be the last remaining unrecovered modernists!

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334. **Aldon L. Nielsen**
Re: the reality check bounces

Thu 18 May 1995

well, of course it made two lines (in three sentences) instead of three. you may have noticed that ed's 3 liners often wrap around to 4 or 5. the subject heading is a clue as to who really wrote it. I didn't.

[↑ Contents](#)

335. **Gary Sullivan**
Re: The REAL Ern Malley

Thu 18 May 1995

Dodie, I hope you'll forgive us for continuing to use the word "Real" in subject headings, despite our knowledge that it freaks you out, what with your book title & all. (& it's a wonderful book, I think.) But, you know, taking the word for your title doesn't take the word out of circulation otherwise -- & I can't imagine you'd believe that'd ever happen, anyway ...

Ron & Tom, please, please, could one or either of you (or anyone else w/the goods) please deliver more in re: Curtis Faville? The publisher of his *_Stanzas_*? The year it was published? More about the work? What little's been said about him has got my fingers all itchin', & when my fingers are all itchin' ... well, I'll leave the rest to imagination.

The Japanese poet/scholar hoax: Well, Tom, I think you're right to question the hoaxter's character. I don't know the hoaxter myself, but I've heard (from a

friend of his) that the hoax was *racially* motivated: specifically, this guy decided he could get things published more easily in the States if he came up with an "ethnic" persona to attach to the work. Assuming the person who told me that ain't lyin', it is indeed troubling.

It is true that, at least as far as nonprofit presses go (ones that rely heavily on grants for continued operation), manuscripts by otherwise unknowns who have Asian or Hispanic or Native American sounding names are going to get pulled from the slush pile for immediate consideration -- the publicly supported arts, including funding orgs, largely in response to public pressure, practice a kind of affirmative action. But, what the hoaxer didn't seem to take into consideration was *why* affirmative action's being practiced, what lead to that: specifically, the fact that very few presses (especially smaller & independent ones) publish people they don't know (either personally, or as in "have heard of"). And anglos tend to know mostly other anglos.

To me, the hoaxer has proven nothing we didn't already know; and not only that, has shown himself to be either unaware of (or unsympathetic to) larger social issues. This doesn't mean that his poems are no good, or uninteresting, but that yes, Tom, this specific instance is a particularly troubling one; while I feel no disrespect for the editors (or readers) taken in by the hoax (being again one of the readers taken in), my feelings w/respect to the hoaxer -- assuming, again, that my source for this info about his motives ain't lyin' (& who knows?) -- is quite another story.

Yours,

Gary

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336. **Gary Sullivan**
Re: Absence Sensorium

Thu 18 May 1995

Tom:

Assuming it'd be okay w/Dan, maybe you could, instead of posting the poem (which is quite long) here (since some people's e-mail only holds so much, reportedly), maybe you could get it set up in the EPC center, so interested people could read it there?

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337. **Lindz Williamson**

Re: really Real Andy

Thu 18 May 1995

On Thu, 18 May 1995, Ron Silliman wrote:

> I saw the big Warhol retrospective at the Chicago Art Institute a few
> years back and was taken with how well his work has stood up over time,
> whereas Rauschenberg seems to me as dated as Life Magazine covers from
> the 1950s, utterly limited and only of historical interest. Warhol
> remains not only the most political artist of his generation, but
> surprisingly one most committed to visual values in his work. My guess
> is that it will still look pretty damn great in another 50 years, when
> all the media hype will have faded.
>
> Ron Silliman
>

I've done a couple studies on Warhol and I am totally amazed by his ability to manipulate. His art goes beyond the silkscreen. He was a business man first and then an artist. He did 100 portraits of German business men and their families for \$25 000 each which he admits were not art. Along the same line he made the Skull serious as a pure fluke and everybody raved about his genius. (in case anyone does know the print he took a photo of a skull and the shadow produced was in the shape of a baby's head) He did prints to bring home the bacon to support the " family" and then he did "art"

What I admire is Interview, it is or was one of the greatest entertainment magazines. Andy was a sort of Martha Stewart of the Pop generation; he sold a lifestyle. He told us what was hip and cool and made Studio 54 and the Factory places we'd died to go to. Even his work in film and video was incredibly influential and revolutionary for the time. The Philosophies of Andy Warhol is one of my favorite books, it doesn't matter that he didn't write it, he thought of it, and that's enough.

Lindz

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338. **Gary Sullivan**

Re: really Real Andy

Thu 18 May 1995

On Thu, 18 May 1995, Ron Silliman wrote:

I saw the big Warhol retrospective at the Chicago Art Institute a few years back and was taken with how well his work has stood up over time, whereas Rauschenberg seems to me as dated as Life Magazine covers from the 1950s, utterly limited and only of historical interest. Warhol remains not only the most political artist of his generation, but surprisingly one most committed to visual values in his work. My guess is that it will still look pretty damn great in another 50 years, when all the media hype will have faded.

Ron, I agree that Warhol'll definitely be remembered (& thought & spoken highly of) for a long, long time. But Rauschenberg ... "dated"? "Utterly limited"? "Only of historical interest"?

Dude. That is like, totally bogus. I mean, ruhly. Reminds me of when the Jess retrospective came to the Walker & a friend of mine, when I asked him "You go check this shit out, man?" replied: "Oh, that's just 60s 'trippy' art." *Pardohn, eskyoozay*?!?

Anyway, that stuff about the Rausch-man, them's fightin' words! But, fortunately for you, I smoke too much, & you could easily keek mah ass if it came down to that. (I do plan to quit, tho, & when I do, I'll have lots of pent-up energy to release ...)

Caio baby,

Gary

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339. **Gary Sullivan**

Re: Ern Malley's antecedents

Thu 18 May 1995

On Thu, 18 May 1995, Aldon L. Nielsen wrote:

> similar episode in U.S. -- the Spectra Hoax -- look up those ole spectral > poets -- they may be the last remaining unrecovered modernists!

Aldon, MORE ON THIS, POR FAVOR! Names, dates, pub's, secondary materials, etc.!

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340. **Herb Levy**

Re: The REAL Araki Yasusada

Thu 18 May 1995

Looking back at yesterday's post about poetic hoaxes, in my haste to delete a couple of sentences that mentioned my back channel correspondent without permission, I also deleted Araki Yasusada's name, but yeah, that's who we'd

been discussing, the same "poet" brought up by Gary Sullivan, Ron Silliman, and Tom Mandel.

I still don't have the details entirely straight. Clearly the post-WWII Japanese avant garde group is fake, but I've also been told that the trio of contemporary Japanese writers who "translate" the poems are also fake and the whole thing is the work of one person.

Does anyone have more information on this?

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341. **Herb Levy**

Re: Ern Malley, Nancy Sinatra, & Bette Midler

Thu 18 May 1995

Sheila Murphy's music school anecdote reminds me of some recent legal landmarks in intellectual property law.

In the late sixties or early seventies, Goodyear Tire asked Nancy Sinatra if they could use her recording of <These Boots Are Made for Walkin'> in a TV ad. She declined and they hired someone who sounded just like her. Nancy Sinatra sued and lost, she hadn't written the song and had no ownership rights.

In the 1980s, Pontiac, I think, asked Bette Midler if they could use her recording of <Do You Wanna Dance> in a TV ad. She declined and they hired someone who sounded just like her. Bette Midler sued and won, because her vocal style was recognized as her artistic property which had been infringed.

Of course, we all know many other, far more creative, uses of other people's material. But it's interesting to note the laws pertaining to these issues aren't made by people who know or care about the history of collage and artistic appropriation.

- Herb

On Wed, 17 May 1995, Sheila E. Murphy wrote:

Herb's comment of 5/17:

Who is being tricked, about what, and how much does it matter if the poems seem pretty good?

reminds me of a fellow music student during college who could imitate the voice teacher who was a marvelous mezzo soprano, deliciously proficient at operatic work. The student was of the ilk who had raised goofing off to the level of a fine art. She took great delight in playing with her Dana Carvey-like capability in the vocal department.

But all that time, I kept wondering just what it meant that Jill could do

*all of this. What was the difference between her and the vocal teacher?
Many theoretical ones, plus the root versus derivation thing. But for sound
quality, no diff at all.*

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342. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: really Real Andy

Thu 18 May 1995

>
> On Thu, 18 May 1995, Ron Silliman wrote:
>
> > I saw the big Warhol retrospective at the Chicago Art Institute a few
> > years back and was taken with how well his work has stood up over time,
> > whereas Rauschenberg seems to me as dated as Life Magazine covers from
> > the 1950s, utterly limited and only of historical interest. Warhol
> > remains not only the most political artist of his generation, but
> > surprisingly one most committed to visual values in his work. My guess
> > is that it will still look pretty damn great in another 50 years, when
> > all the media hype will have faded.
>
> Ron, I agree that Warhol'll definitely be remembered (& thought & spoken
> highly of) for a long, long time. But Rauschenberg ... "dated"? "Utterly
> limited"? "Only of historical interest"?
>
> Dude. That is like, totally bogus. I mean, ruhllly. Reminds me of when the
> Jess retrospective came to the Walker & a friend of mine, when I asked
> him "You go check this shit out, man?" replied: "Oh, that's just 60s
> 'trippy' art." *Pardohn, eskyoozay*?!?
>
> Anyway, that stuff about the Rausch-man, them's fightin' words! But,
> fortunately for you, I smoke too much, & you could easily keek mah ass if
> it came down to that. (I do plan to quit, tho, & when I do, I'll have
> lots of pent-up energy to release ...)
>
> Caio baby,
>
> Gary
>
right on!, gary. raushenberg is a genius!
c

[↑ Contents](#)

343. **Kevin Killian**

Re: one big tease

Thu 18 May 1995

Tom, Ron, Dan if you're listening, & all others:

*I for one would absolutely like to find such a 100-page poem in my mailbox.
But then I find 100-page poems rather frequently in my real mailbox. But
please post it. Those who want to delete, delete with glee.*

And I'll second Ron and others on the terrific four poems, Hank. Thank you.

charles

Charles,

While I appreciate your enthusiasm, some of us do actually PAY for our internet access, pay by the megabyte for mail. I think Gary's suggestion of posting the memory monster with the EPC center is a kinder solution.

Dodie

[↑ Contents](#)

344. **Andrew Joron**

drugs

Thu 18 May 1995

Dodie, I think we're in agreement on the elusiveness of the Real.
And gazing on that vanishing point is definitely a drug-like
experience! In fact, your mention of drugs puts me in mind of
one of my favorite passages from Bernstein's *_Artifice of
Absorption_*, where he says

poetry does have a mission to be as powerful as
the strongest drug, to offer a vision-in-sound
to compete with the world we know so that we can find
the worlds we don't.

Interestingly, he goes on to say that "there are no limits
language cannot reach," which to me is another way of confirming
that language **does** have limits (all of which can be reached).
What lies beyond those limits? Perhaps Duchamp's "labyrinths
outside of space and time."

-- Andrew Joron

[↑ Contents](#)

345. **Edward Foster**

Re: Ern Malley's antecedents

Thu 18 May 1995

actually some of the lines in the spectra poems are pretty terrific. his chinese translations aside, i don't think bynner ever did better.

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346. **Hank Lazer**

Re: eigner, address, reality

Thu 18 May 1995

First, since I am in touch with several of you (and via subscriptions!--Talisman, Taproot, etc.), and since my mail gets re-routed and only sometimes delivered, my new address:

Hank Lazer
2945 N Hampton Dr
Tuscaloosa, AL 35406-2701

Same phone #, same e-mail, same humid city.

#

Chris--On Eigner. Sorry for the scare. Larry is well. I spoke this morning with Jack Foley, who lives near Larry and is in touch with him daily, and Jack confirms that Larry is doing fine. But you did pick up the tone/mood all too well. The sadness, elegy, tragedy creeping into these poems has to do with my father, who is 68, a year older than Larry, and is dying of leukemia. I will be going out to California (Carmel) in a couple of weeks to be with him. Larry's poems, which I've liked for quite some time, helped me out. And I suppose that Larry's work--its ability to enact quick shifts of mind, almost word by word--is for me familiar and kin. I've been working in a ten-line form for nearly a year now, and I find myself re-examining poets who have done well with a short line form--Creeley, of course, but lots of others, Niedecker, Plath, Oppen, Dickinson, Susan Howe--and went back to Larry's *Selected Poems* (1968?). In my group of four, #2 begins with two lines from Larry's *Selected Poems* (p. 25). But to the point: sorry for the scare, and Larry is well. OK, then, to write tributes to the LIVING?

Hank

#

To those interested in the "real"--I've been reading through bpNichol's *Martryology* (all 9 volumes reissued & available from Coach House, or, through

the dreaded distributor Consortium) and found in Book 5 near the end an amusing reference to the REAL's cousin, "reality":

asleep (later) i dreamt
me & all my friends these past 12 years
headed out to eat at THE REALITY
found it closed & boarded
upset because REALITY was not where they supposed it to be
i couldn't understand them
told them this was always happening
'REALITY is always closing down
opens up again
somewhere else'
woke smiling & laughing
sensing some solution

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347. **Ryan Knighton**

Re: addendum

Thu 18 May 1995

I'm sorry if this is unwarranted, but it seems Gary and Reg are discussing, or positing, two discussions bound by a gap. I'm not sure if Reg was implying anything about class situation and the abstract. When REg and his brother and I were having this chat, his brother was essentially asking me if, in a crisis of some kind, like the fact i'm losing my vision, I take my theories about the page and poem and apply them elsewhere in my life. The fact that he works with street kids was incidental. Or maybe I'm missing to what Gary was responding. Gary?

Best,
Ryan

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348. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: really Real Andy

Thu 18 May 1995

I saw the big Warhol retrospective at the Chicago Art Institute a few years back and was taken with how well his work has stood up over time, whereas Rauschenberg seems to me as dated as Life Magazine covers from the 1950s, utterly limited and only of historical interest. Warhol remains not only the most political artist of his generation, but

surprisingly one most committed to visual values in his work. My guess is that it will still look pretty damn great in another 50 years, when all the media hype will have faded.

Ron Silliman

"...one most committed to _visual_ values in his work..." (my emph.): what's that mean? in 50 yrs his work will still be great because it _is_ great

carl

[↑ Contents](#)

349. **Jordan Davis.**

United Artists Sale

Thu 18 May 1995

50% OFF--SALE ON SELECTED UNITED ARTISTS TITLES

Judyism by Jim Brodey * \$5.00
The California Papers by Steve Carey * \$4.00
Personal Effects by Charlotte Carter * \$6.00
The Fox by Jack Collom * \$4.00
Columbus Square Journal by William Corbett * \$5.00
Smoking in the Twilight Bar by Barbara Henning * \$5.00
Poems for the Whole Family * \$7.00
Head by Bill Kushner * \$5.00
Love Uncut by Bill Kushner * \$6.00
One at a Time by Gary Lenhart * \$5.00
Songs for the Unborn Second Baby by Alice Notley * \$5.00
Fool Consciousness by Liam O'Gallagher * \$5.00
Cleaning Up New York by Bob Rosenthal * \$4.00
Political Conditions/Physical States by Tom Savage * \$7.00
Along the Rails by Elio Schneeman * \$6.00
Echolalia by George Tysh * \$7.00
Selected Poems by Charlie Vermont * \$4.00
Blue Mosque by Anne Waldman * \$6.00
Information from the Surface of Venus by Lewis Warsh * \$6.00
The Maharajah's Son by Lewis Wawrsh * \$5.00
Clairvoyant Journal by Hannah Weiner * \$5.00
The Fast by Hannah Weiner * \$6.00

Deduct 50% from all orders. We will pay postage on all pre-paid orders over \$10.00. Make check payable to United Artists Books, Box 2616, Peter Stuyvesant Station, New York NY 10009. (Say you saw it on the Poetics List.)

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350. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: POETICS Digest - 15 May 1995 to 16 May 1995

Thu 18 May 1995

On Tue, 16 May 1995, Marjorie Perloff wrote:

Whatever the case, the term is used today almost antithetically from what was the case in Olson (for sure!) and even antithetically from Antin's positive description of the postmodern as everything new, cutting edge, avant-garde, exciting, anti-formalist, etc etc etc.

I agree with Aldon Nielsen that it's time we scrapped it!

Are practices too diverse to be generalized about or is there a sense in which we can describe something--roughly or not equivalent to pomo--without using the term we feel should be scrapped?

Jeffrey Timmons

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351. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: irony and the Really real

Thu 18 May 1995

On Wed, 17 May 1995, John Byrum wrote:

I agree that the real can always seem elusive (allusive??), but think that all our experiences must finally be the Real. After all they are all we have, call them what you will.

Forgive me for editing the comments as I have done I am intrigued by this discussion of the real, but must insist upon my earlier statement that The Real Can Be Simulated. I'm thinking of an anecdote or an example of this . . . but in the mean time . . . doesn't John's post suggest . . . albeit in my own twisted reading of it . . . that there is the possibility that are experiences are not necessarily the real? It's this possibility that I believe opens the door for simulations of the real, even the replacement of the real by simulations. I'm trying to think of an example . . . a Baudrillard-sort of example . . . any suggestions?

Jeffrey Timmons

[↑ Contents](#)

352. **Charles Alexander**

Re: one big tease

Thu 18 May 1995

Tom, Ron, Dan if you're listening, & all others:

I for one would absolutely like to find such a 100-page poem in my mailbox. But then I find 100-page poems rather frequently in my real mailbox. But please post it. Those who want to delete, delete with glee.

And I'll second Ron and others on the terrific four poems, Hank. Thank you.

charles

charles alexander

chax press

minnesota center for book arts

phone & fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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353. **George Bowering**

Re: The REAL Araki Yasusada

Thu 18 May 1995

Speaking of which: who wrote _The Complete Poetical Works of T.E. Hulme_?
And who wrote T.E.H.'s claim that EP had exaggerated his age?

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354. **George Bowering**

Re: really Real Andy

Thu 18 May 1995

I saw a reference to Martha Stewart in some comioc strip, and now I see her referred to on the Buffnet.
Who is Martha Stewart?

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355. **George Bowering**

Re: Yo, Ed

Thu 18 May 1995

This is
a qua-

train, n'
est pa?

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356. **George Bowering**

Re: really Real

Thu 18 May 1995

I guess I have, over the years, heard writers and books reviled for not writing about what they didnt write about. It doesnt make sense to me. I get the picture of a person who is interested in, say, labor struggle, condemning books that were not about labor struggle. Of course, I am interested in baseball, and so I started reading Jerome Charyn, and Fee Dawson.

I still dont really know how Marxism can be a theory used to apply to literature. I can see how it can be used to discuss economics, and that one might, in writing about economics, have a chapter about the economics of book-publishing, or economics as visioned in a novel. But is a Marxist reading of Pound any more sensible than an Imagist reading of the Politburo?

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357. **Jordan Davis.**

Re: really really really

Thu 18 May 1995

Poetry Society of America

15 Gramercy Park, NY NY 10003 * [REDACTED] * Fax [REDACTED]

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT DIANA BURNHAM

EVERY DOG HAS ITS DAY: POEMS BY WRITERS' DOGS

On Wednesday, June 7th (raindate, June 8th) poets and their dogs will gather to read dog persona poems. The event will begin at *6:30 p.m. in Madison Park, near the James Dog Run, Fifth Avenue at 24th Street, New York.* Dogs welcome. Free admission, bring a blanket, reception to follow (dog treats and people treats). Writers Mark Doty, Anderson Ferrell, Pamela Hadas, Honor Moore, Gerald Stern, and Terese Svoboda will all read poems "by" and about dogs, as will Commissioner of Parks, Henry Stern. Amy Hempel, co-editor of the forth-coming *Unleashed: Poems by Writers' Dogs* (Crown Publishers Inc., 1995) will introduce the participants.

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358. **Reginald Johanson**

real classist assumptions

Thu 18 May 1995

Gary--it seems that in responding to my brothers question, or the framing of that question, I have been mistook. Thanks Ryan for clarifying, but that's not completely it either. I don't really have anything to say about the "poor" one way or another. I thought the detail about my brother's profession was relevant because the debate--and I know I'm a late comer to it so excuse the presupposition--only rarely touched on those moments when the real is constellated so powerfully that there is no opportunity for reflection, only action, response. And in those moments the Hamlet question about real or not real does, in fact, seem needlessly abstract. Those are the moments of definition, of consequence, after which there is no going back. These are moments in which class is irrelevant. I interpreted my brother's question as coming out of his work because I happened to know, from other conversations with him, that when he deals with people in crisis he is dealing with people who have staked a great deal on a notion of the real, and that that stake is often a matter of life and death. If we survive our initial investment in a notion of the real, we can go back and evaluate it. IF we survive. And so the question is still the same: what do you DO in a crisis?

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359. **Jim Pangborn**

postpostmodernism

Thu 18 May 1995

I like the fact that there is a word "postmodernism": it figures forth the possibility that there might be significant, systemic differences between our time--our culture(s), our attitude(s) toward history--and that of, say, Oscar Wilde.

I say "might be," though: postmodernity stands for me as a possibility, not a fact. For one thing, as we've seen, when one tries to date its inception, it recedes. I think the latest is 1847? How about the French Revolution, come to that? (Just kidding: revolution itself seems pretty much a modern thing.) More importantly, it eludes precise definition, or at least we don't agree on one.

So I'll continue to use the term, all due respect to Marjorie Perloff to whom very much respect indeed is due, all the while admitting that I/we don't know for sure whether it names something (here comes the kicker:) real. It's important to keep admitting the extent of our ignorance, to whatever small extent we can really know it--oxymoron intended.

Bruno Latour has written interestingly on this topic. He argues that *_We Have Never Been Modern_* in the sense that what he calls "the constitution of modernity" is itself unworkable, and "modern" people have always adhered partly to premodern constitutions anyway. Consistency, or as some have put it, hideous purity, has never been imperative in such matters **except** according to the (bogus) modern constitution. Of course, if there is "really" no modernity, where does that leave POSTmodernity? Ans: Limbo limbo lim-BO. Do we contradict ourselves? Very well.

Concepts of this type are tools. If J-F Lyotard or Charles Olson or Pope Homogeneous III invents a nail gun, does that "contradict" hammers? Ridiculous notion. Nor does it prevent someone from using the flat of a monkey wrench to drive nails. Just so the work gets done. Does confused and sometimes contradictory wondering about our place in history get anything accomplished? Poets and fictioneers had better hope so. It's part of our job.

--Jim

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360. **Alan Sondheim**

Re: really Real Andy

Thu 18 May 1995

What is a great work of art.

What is visual value.

Are great works of art those works which are considered to be great works of art.

Why are some works of art great and other works of art not great.

I tire quickly of Warhol, quickly of Rauschenberg. They seem the death of the 50s and 60s to me. Am I wrong. Am I wrong to not recognize a great work of art as a great work. Could it be that "great" is problematic in this context.

Perhaps one needs to look further at art and then at aesthetic systems. Perhaps I need gusto.

Everyone has favorites. For me, nothing beats Sue Williams or Jenny Holzer at the moment, her Lustmord. But I wouldn't know about great.

Alan

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361. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: really Real Andy

Thu 18 May 1995

On Thu, 18 May 1995, George Bowering wrote:

*I saw a reference to Martha Stewart in some comioc strip, and now I
see her referred to on the Buffnet.
Who is Martha Stewart?*

Oh, I'm on this one: Martha Stewart, if I'm not mistaken, is a writer of cookbooks (or is it gardening? or both) and she's become something of a icon for a particular generation (who shall go nameless). She's also made the transition to public television. Catch me if I'm wrong.'

Jeffrey Timmons

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362. **Robert Drake**

announce: _tribe of john_ [ashbery]

Thu 18 May 1995

this will be old news to some here, but...

The Tribe of John: Ashbery & Contemporary Poetry, Susan
Schultz, ed; Univ. of Alabama Press. 280 pp., \$28.95.

TOC:

(Part 1: New Readings of Ashbery)

"Typical Ashbery"--Jonathan Morse

"Ashbery as Love Poet"--Charles Altieri

"Coming Full Circle"--JA's Later Poetry

"JA's Landscapes"--Bonnie Costello

(Part 2: Explorations of Influence)

"The Absence of a Noble Presence"--John Koethe

"Purists Will Object: Some Meditations on Influence"--
Donald Revell

"Nimbus of Sensations: Eros and Reverie in the Poetry o
JA and Ann Lauterbach"--James McCorkle

"A's Menagerie and Anxiety of Affluence"--John Gery

"Periodizing A and His Influence"--Stephen Paul Miller

"Fossilized Fish and the World of Unknowing: JA & William
Bronk"--John Ernest

(Part 3: A & Postmodern Poetics)

"Taking the Tennis Court Oath"--Andrew Ross

"The Music of Construction: Measure & Polyphony in A
and Bernstein"--John Shoptaw

"Afterword: The Influence of Kinship Patterns upon Perception
of an Ambiguous Stimulus"--Charles Bernstein

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363. **Charles Alexander**

Re: really Real Andy

Thu 18 May 1995

Is it cookbooks from Martha Stewart? I thought she was some arbiter,
somewhere between the middle class & the very rich, of taste in interior design
and furnishings. But my sense is admittedly murky on this point. I did once see
a television commercial in which she had cut up credit cards (American
Express) & put them back together, mosaic-like, at the bottom of a swimming
pool. Very real.

charles alexander

chax press

minnesota center for book arts

phone & fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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364. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: really Real

Thu 18 May 1995

On Thu, 18 May 1995, George Bowering wrote:

| *But is a Marxist reading of Pound any more sensible than an Imagist
| reading of the Politburo?*

Ha. That's great, an Imagist reading of the Politburo. I'd see it something
along the lines of WCW's poem about the firetruck and the number five . . . I
don't recall the poem's title (The Great Figure? hm):

I saw a red star

Upon the granite spire

something like that . . .

Jeffrey Timmons

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365. **John Byrum**

Re: irony and the Really real

Thu 18 May 1995

Dear Jeff,

I agree that simulated experiences are as "real" as "real" experiences. We could also agree that our "real" experiences are "simulated"; i.e., "simulations" of events in some sense "external" to our "experience". This is getting deep into the intertwining convolutions of epistemology & ontology & definitions of terms, though.

Best,

John

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366. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: really Real Andy

Thu 18 May 1995

What is a great work of art.

What is visual value.

Are great works of art those works which are considered to be great works of art.

Why are some works of art great and other works of art not great.

I tire quickly of Warhol, quickly of Rauschenberg. They seem the death of the 50s and 60s to me. Am I wrong.

--ya, in this instance i take issue to that. my recent rethinking of the duchamp ready-made, dada over all, has caused me to re-examine warhol's work. i've always felt the relation between he and warhol profound. i wish i could go on abt that right now, but am in a rush. i'd like to come back to this tomorrow

--Holzer is wonderful too. what are yr thots on smithson? any comments. a real blending of science and art in those 2. relating to this, is anyone familiar with jack burnham's 73 or 74 book *The Structure of Art* ???

for me, CARL ANDRE is still the most important sculptor of our time. but that's a completely personal opinion. well, sort of. he's really had a big influence on me and my critical thinking

carl

Am I wrong to not recognize a great work of art as a great work.

Could it be that "great" is problematic in this context.

*Perhaps one needs to look further at art and then at aesthetic systems.
Perhaps I need gusto.*

*Everyone has favorites. For me, nothing beats Sue Williams or Jenny
Holzer at the moment, her Lustmord. But I wouldn't know about great.*

Alan

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367. **Carl Lynden Peters**

***Returned mail: Host unknown (Name server: ubvm.cc.buffalo: host
not found) (fwd)***

Thu 18 May 1995

>
> the brief messages re duchamp (written, i think, mostly by me, but
> anyway), warhol, raushenberg... are making me think of conceptual art.
> has any one read joseph kosuth's landmark essay (came out in the 70's i
> think and is in gregory battcock's anthology_Idea Art_), "Art After
> Philosophy I and II ??? it's his best work, in my critical judgement
>
> to add to that, jack burnham has a piece in it which came out before The
> Structure of Art: "Problems of Criticism." in it he begins to foreground
> his re-reading of levi-strauss and introduces his - what would you call
> it - sign inversion theory (?), the culturalization of
> nature/naturalization of culture. i wrote my part of my masters thesis on
that, so with respect to American art, i'm very interested in what was
done in soho in the 60s and 70s

carl

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368. **Tony Green**

Re: lyric and/or

Thu 18 May 1995

" And there's no knot for me " but the k is silent.

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369. **Gary Sullivan**
Who you are in a crisis
Fri 19 May 1995

Dear Reginald:

Many thanks for your clarification of your brother's question. I'm sorry I misread it; there wasn't much to go on -- what I read was a leap between "works with street kids" and "what do [we] do in a crisis?" & from there, began projecting, mainly things *I* used to think. My apologies (very real) for then being Mr. Preacherman.

Anyway, the question, as you've reframed it, is an excellent one.

I don't think there is any one answer to the question "what do you do in a crisis" -- even postulating the same crisis across the board for a number of "fairly similar" people. I also am not convinced that, at that moment, you're not w/out speculation, even "theory."

Here's an anecdote, though maybe inappropriate given that it wasn't quite as immediate as having a gun to the head (though it was similar). My wife & I, on our honeymoon (in Brooklyn -- a lover's paradise) were on a rush hour subway train that suddenly stopped, & then the driver came over the intercom to tell us there was a fire on the tracks ahead & that he was "shutting off the air." Almost immediately after that, the tunnel filled with black smoke, and people from the car in front of us began to force their way (difficult, as crowded as it was) into our car. As they did that, smoke began pouring into our car. People began screaming, panicking, some praying. More smoke poured into the car & it got to the point where we couldn't breathe. I can't describe the looks on people's faces. I "knew" we were going to die, and the first image that popped into my head was of the friends we were staying with, and realizing THEY DIDN'T KNOW WE WERE DOWN HERE. The second image was of all of us in the train, lying in heaps on each other, dead -- the "thing" whoever first reached us would find. I began to scream to Marta that I loved her, over and over. I'm an atheist. I don't believe in life after death. But I do believe in love. And I loved -- and still do love -- Marta very, very much. So, at that moment, what became important to me was that she *know* that I loved her, that she had *been* loved. I felt that Marta had a kind of "object permanence" problem, that even though she'd married me, she didn't *really* believe I'd love her, be there, our whole lives together. So, it became crucial to me to GET THIS INFO ACROSS TO HER. It was physically impossible to hold her (too many people, crammed in) or to somehow PHYSICALLY impart this "information," so I used language, screamed over & over "I LOVE YOU! I LOVE YOU!" Then, it became impossible to scream any more, & I basically just resigned myself to death -- which itself didn't seem like such a bad thing at that moment. Or, that was the scenario I was playing in

my head. Marta tells me that, after I stopped screaming "I LOVE YOU!" I began screaming sort of a coarse, hoarse noise of some kind -- which I don't at all remember doing.

It was a crisis, and some of what I did during that crisis, I did based on earlier (& immediate, actually) thought, speculation, opinion, & theory. I don't know if this is an appropriate anecdote w/respect to your brother's question, because I didn't feel that there was any way "out" of the situation, that we had any options. Everyone on the train basically just waited the situation out, covering their faces with scarves, some passing out, a couple of people died. (Two, I think.)

I didn't bring any speculation about "poetry" to this event, but I did bring (I think) a belief in the power of language, which is obviously related. If I had come to that situation with a complete disillusionment or mistrust of language, I don't think I'd have tried to get Marta to believe that I loved her by merely *saying* it. (Would I, if I didn't believe in the power -- or ability? -- of language, have believed in love?)

I say this based only on the above experience, but I think it's interesting that, when faced with death, the need to "communicate" (or "connect" if you're uncomfortable w/"communicate") became THE MOST IMPORTANT THING TO DO. Which is no different than my "every day" life, writing, reading, & publishing. (Or, for that matter, as a secretary/ receptionist at the L.A.S.)

Yours,

Gary

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370. **Lindz Williamson**

martha

Fri 19 May 1995

On Thu, 18 May 1995, Jeffrey Timmons wrote:

On Thu, 18 May 1995, George Bowering wrote:

I saw a reference to Martha Stewart in some comioc strip, and now I see her referred to on the Buffnet. Who is Martha Stewart?

Oh, I'm on this one: Martha Stewart, if I'm not mistaken, is a writer of cookbooks (or is it gardening? or both) and she's become something of a icon for a particular generation (who shall go nameless). She's also made the transition to public television. Catch me if I'm wrong.'

Jeffrey Timmons

to quote my roommate "Martha is the guru of easy living". She will aid you in all your fine dining, decorating and entertaining needs. She has packaged a beautiful lifestyle and feeds it to the public in her tasteful magazine Martha Stewart's Living. She is every housewife's nightmare, but I love her.
Lindz

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371. **Lindz Williamson**
martha again

Fri 19 May 1995

On Thu, 18 May 1995, Charles Alexander wrote:

> Is it cookbooks from Martha Stewart? I thought she was some arbiter,
> somewhere between the middle class & the very rich, of taste in interior
> design and furnishings. But my sense is admittedly murky on this point. I
> did once see a television commercial in which she had cut up credit cards
> (American Express) & put them back together, mosaic-like, at the bottom of
> a swimming pool. Very real.
>

Sorry but I'm a big fan, it was botticelli's birth of venus done in credit cards on the bottom of the pool. It's really funny if you know the size of a Martha Stewart Home project.

Lindz

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372. **Steve Carll**
Re: really really really

Fri 19 May 1995

Poetry Society of America

*15 Gramercy Park, NY NY 10003 * [REDACTED] * Fax [REDACTED]*

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT DIANA BURNHAM



EVERY DOG HAS ITS DAY: POEMS BY WRITERS' DOGS

*On Wednesday, June 7th (raindate, June 8th) poets and their dogs will gather to read dog persona poems. The event will begin at *6:30 p.m. in Madison Park, near the James Dog Run, Fifth Avenue at 24th Street, New York.* Dogs welcome. Free admission, bring a blanket, reception to follow (dog treats and people treats).*

*Writers Mark Doty, Anderson Ferrell, Pamela Hadas, Honor Moore, Gerald Stern, and Terese Svoboda will all read poems "by" and about dogs, as will Commissioner of Parks, Henry Stern. Amy Hempel, co-editor of the forth-coming *Unleashed: Poems by Writers' Dogs* (Crown Publishers Inc., 1995) will introduce the participants.*

Woof.

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373. **Ryan Knighton**

Re: Yo, Ed

Fri 19 May 1995

-
-
-

- is this four or eight lines

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374. **Ryan Knighton**

Re: really Real Andy

Fri 19 May 1995

what the hell, why not ask it all, while we're at it. Not just is there such a thing as a great work of art, why not is there scuh a thing as *a* great work of art. Can it be removed from the anxiety of influence (get a load of my dimples)

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375. **John Geraets**

re- drugs

Fri 19 May 1995

Andrew,
I enjoyed the lovely way the words you quoted
from Charles Bernstein sounded. But then I got
stuck. How is poetry druglike - and how on
earth does it open up worlds?

I've gone right off greatness and insight and
longevity in poems. Poetry ain't such clean
business, don't know why it's so often
wanted to appear that way.

John Geraets



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376. **Ron Silliman**

Re: Curtis Faville

Fri 19 May 1995

Stanzas for an Evening Out (was?) published by L Publications (Curtis' own press, which also brought out the Blue is the Hero, Berkson's selected poems) in both hard and paperback in 1977. 203 pages. I think that Small Press Distribution may still carry it. Otherwise, Faville lives in Kensington (just north of Berkeley, tho technically part of Contra Costa county), works in SF for the Social Security Administration in a job he's had for 20 years at least, although there was a break in there as his wife was in Japan for a few years.

Faville was a Berkeley student who, like Watten, went to Iowa at Grenier's behest around 1970. He published L magazine there for awhile before coming back to the Bay Area. He's always avoided readings like the plague (and poets, generally, finding them flawed in ways that poems presumably aren't).

Lyn published a second, smaller collection called (I think) Wittgenstein's Door (an allusion to LW's attempt as an architect for his sister's house, a phenomenon that Faville seems to have followed in designing his own home with the aid of the fellow who wrote A Pattern Language). I don't think he's written in at least a decade.

Faville is such a chameleon in his writing that it's difficult to pick a characteristic sample, but here are two short ones to give a flavor:

POEM

What is a pause
before the cause ceases
to be a river. It is

never the muscle of
ARM & HAMMER BAKING SODA.
America was a horse.

IOWA

Prehistoric
farm
collection.

The fussiness of that final period is an absolutely identifiable Favillism, come to think of it. There's a long poem in the book, "Aubade," which may be the best Schuyler poem that Jimmy never wrote. When I was editing In the American Tree, Faville's "critiques" of other poets in his poems was something I thought about including long and hard. If that book was one poet thicker, Faville would have been it.

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377. **Ron Silliman**
Re: really Real Andy
Fri 19 May 1995

Rauschenberg has always struck me as somebody who included the "pretty" in his work just in case you didn't like the ideas. But over time neither wear that well.

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378. **Ron Silliman**
Re: one big tease
Fri 19 May 1995

Dodie,

>

>While I appreciate your enthusiasm, some of us do actually PAY for our
>internet access, pay by the megabyte for mail.

Netcom is \$19.95 per month for all you can eat, full internet access & 40 hours of free "prime time" (M-F, 9:00 AM to midnight) that I never once have come close to using up (but then I'm most often up and doing this, like now, at 6:00 AM). Don't pay by the message or the MB!

Maybe Tom could "back channel" us who want to read the whole thing.

Ron

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379. **Michael Boughn**
Really real Martha

Fri 19 May 1995

George:

Martha is the reigning queen of the bourgeois domestic. She arbitrates all matters of taste, as others have indicated, from dinner to drapes: a kind of Miss Manners of decor without the humor.

Don't tell anybody, but at Christmas we used her recipe for turkey with a pomegranate glaze and sausage stuffing. It was good, but, man, juicing those pomegranates was a pain in the butt.

Best,
Mike



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380. **maria damon**
Re: really Real

Fri 19 May 1995

But is a Marxist reading of Pound any more sensible than an Imagist
> reading of the Politburo?

both are sensible, and may, if done sensitively, yield fabulous mind-altering results. marxist theory in the humanities social sciences and physical sciences, or in general as a way of understanding the everyday, i think, will turn out to be far more powerful --as a humane critique --than marxism the "dictatorship of the proletariat" whose experiments in eastern europe have foundered in the last years.--maria d

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381. **Jonathan A Levin**
Re: martha again

Fri 19 May 1995

According to the cover of my May 13 issue of New York (Martha pictured holding lovely wooden basket with gardening tools): "She's Martha Stewart and You're Not: Go ahead, snicker. But that crazed blue-chip perfectionism has

made her the definitive American woman of our time." Yikes. But she's always funny with Letterman.

Jonathan Levin

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382. **Kali Tal**

CFP--1995 Sixties Generations Conference

Fri 19 May 1995

!!!CALL FOR PAPERS!!!

1995 SIXTIES GENERATIONS CONFERENCE

An Interdisciplinary Conference of
Scholars, Activists and Artists

October 5-8, 1995

Western Connecticut State University
Danbury, Connecticut

Proposals due: July 15, 1995

I invite you to join us for the third annual Sixties Generations Conference: From Montgomery to Viet Nam on October 5-8, 1995. Last year over 400 scholars and students joined us at Western Connecticut State University to hear more than one hundred presentations by academics, activists, and artists. The Sixties Generations Conference is a showcase for intelligent and lively academic work in a variety of disciplines and studies fields, but what makes it special is the interdisciplinary emphasis and the collegial atmosphere. We've demonstrated that mixing academics with artists, crossing disciplines, and spanning generations fosters a creative and collaborative excitement that can't be matched. Our evaluation forms showed that over 95% of those who attended last year will be back in 1995. Here are some comments we received:

"The Conference provided a rare opportunity to not only learn from scholars and artists but to engage in fruitful discussion that multiplied the impact of the meetings many times over. The organization and administration of the conference was superb and the facilities excellent. What was most gratifying was how so many of the scholars and artists in their lives and work sought to cut across traditional boundaries of gender, academic disciplines, and even of age: there was a

lively mix of younger students and scholars and well-established teachers and professors. I look forward to next year's meeting knowing it will be a highlight of my academic annual activities."

"The conference was an outstanding mix of scholars, students, artists, participants, participant-observers, etc. One could sample informal networking and heavy-duty scholarship. The interactions of panels and audience was lively and informative. Keep it up!"

"I particularly appreciated the interdisciplinary nature of the conference. If not unique, it is extremely rare. Vietnam veterans, scholars, antiwar activists, artists, musicians, and writers all dealing with the same subject--in a better society, Vietnam Generation would be recognized and nurtured as a national resource.

We remain committed to interdisciplinary work and to seeking diverse presentations. We particularly encourage the participation of those traditionally under-represented in academic discourse, and we do not shrink from controversial topics. In addition to soliciting work from traditional disciplines, we enthusiastically invite presentations in African American Studies, Chicano Studies, Women's Studies, Native American Studies and other studies programs.

This year we have broadened our international perspective. Grants from the Ford Foundation and the Asia Resource Council have enabled us to arrange the attendance of three Vietnamese scholars at the 1995 conference. Duong Tuong is Viet Nam's leading art critic and the translator of *Gone With the Wind* and other modern American fiction; he is currently working on translations of Flannery O'Connor. He was associated with Ha Noi's "Prague Spring," the Literary Humanism movement of the 1950s. Hoang Hien is the teacher and critic of Viet Nam's doi moi (perestroika) writers. He was the teacher of Bao Ninh and Duong Tuong, the two Vietnamese war novelists who have published in English in the U.S. Huu Ngoc is Viet Nam's senior cultural journalist, formerly editor of the Foreign Languages Publishing House, author of the first Vietnamese language book on American civilization. These scholars were invited to participate by Viet Nam Generation, Inc. editor Dan Duffy, who has lived and worked in Ha Noi for nine months setting up our program of translating Vietnamese literature into English, and Viet Nam Generation publications into Vietnamese.

We know that most of the best work at conferences is done between sessions, when people get the chance to talk, to share stories, to set up collaborations. So we do our best to make sure that there is plenty of time for these activities--we arrange for meals to be available at the conference site, set up a lounge for refreshments, and keep coffee and tea available all day long. We also arrange evening events--our Sixties style coffeehouse reading was so successful last year that we will do it again, breaking it up into two nights of poetry, fiction, multimedia and performance art.

As usual, we are doing all this work on a shoestring. Viet Nam Generation, Inc., is a literary and educational nonprofit which cannot yet afford to salary its staff. This conference has been supported entirely by volunteer efforts, the registration fees of participants and by our book sales. The facilities are generously provided by Western Connecticut State University. We know that many conferences can afford to waive fees for those presenting papers, but we cannot. We do waive fees for those who would not otherwise be able to participate, and we do our best to find alternative housing for those who cannot afford hotel rooms. We're committed to the notion that no one should be turned away for lack of funds. To meet this goal we rely on support from those who do have funds-faculty members or others with full-time positions and decent incomes. In fact, we encourage you, if you can afford it, to pay an extra registration fee to cover someone else with fewer resources.

We also encourage you to subscribe to our journal, Viet Nam Generation, a forum for interdisciplinary written work on the war. We publish many of the Sixties Generations Conference papers in the pages of the journal, which is now entering its seventh volume year. Your support enables us to continue our efforts.

Part of our philosophy is that we do not rank those who attend the Sixties Generations Conference-there are no "stars" here; we don't even put your institution on your name tag. We have no "keynote" speakers or "special" sessions. Those who attend don't do it for their c.v. They do it-and we do it-because the work we all do is vital, because we believe in an alternative to the rest of the deadly dull gatherings which pass for conferences in academia, and because we are dedicated to building a community of scholars, activists, and artists who can support each other in our work.

I look forward to seeing you in October.

Kali Tal

Sixties Project & Viet Nam Generation, Inc.

18 Center Rd., Woodbridge, CT 06525

203/[REDACTED]; fax 203/[REDACTED]

email: [REDACTED]

home page: <http://kalital.polisci.yale.edu>

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383. **cris cheek**

a genuine alt.fan.silliman for Ketjak

Fri 19 May 1995

I've been borrowing Ron Silliman's Ketjak from Cris Cheek (ah poetry as contraband, I'm sending this message from Cris' account because I'm handing

the book back personally, in best hand-delivered condition) and *adoring* it. I'd already read Tjanting, What and Paradise with great pleasure and stimulation, but Ketjak is mindblowing, elegant in design, perfect in minute detail. So, cutting to the chase, could anyone sell me or swap me a copy? In return for the effort, here is a brainteaser: is there one (the only one I could find) proof-reading error in the following sentence, or is there some lyricism sneaking in....:

"When Zukofsky debuted Reich's Violin Phase on the west coat, the first person to stomp out was Mario Savio" (Ketjak, p.21)

For anyone who doesn't know, sentences from earlier paragraphs nearly always get repeated (sometimes fascinatingly revised) in later paragraphs in the book. In this case, the sentence appears without the possible typo, only as

"The first person to stomp out, when Zukofsky debuted Reich's Violin Phase in the west, was Mario Savio" (p40).

Was this use of the word coat "for" coast" especially put in, as a deliberate apparent mistake, for the attentive to notice?

Anyone have a copy, though?

Ira



48 Gloucester Street
Norwich NR2 2DX

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384. **cris cheek** ***more on Ketjak***

Fri 19 May 1995

I'm back at Cris Cheek's terminal, with a few more words about Ketjak, which I've now read through to the end - apologies if anyone's posted about it since I last posted, I don't know how to retrieve new mail on this machine! Just noting a few more features of this wonderful book.

First, I saw another possible typo reading today in Cris' car, but didn't have a pen (it was around p.55-60), thought I'd marked the page with a train ticket, but now can't find the typo. However the page I'd marked I had to re-read thoroughly, and only by this aleatoric reading accident did I discover the occurrence of the sentence "Revolving door" in *mid-paragraph*, on p.61. As even cursory readers of Ketjak will know, "revolving door" is the sentence that usually begins each paragraph of the book - yet this means that the book rebels against its own system and again tests the alertness of the reader. Moreover,

two big sentences recur *within* the last paragraph, even after this occurrence of the "revolving door" sentence, thus breaking the system of having sentences recur *once* from paragraph to paragraph, ie breaking the parallelism of paragraphs or indeed the pattern that makes a paragraph a paragraph eg "let a paragraph, in Ketjak, be a collection of sentences that includes one of each of the sentences of a previous paragraph, sometimes reworked, plus new sentences new to the book so far"; this rule is also broken early, as not all the sentences from an earlier paragraph recur in the next paragraph every time.

Oh, the big sentences that recur within the last paragraph, after, as far as I've noticed the last (buried) incidence of the sentence "revolving door" are:

"Dark brown houseboats beached at the point of low tide - men atop their cabin roofs, idle, play a dobro, a jaw's harp, a 12 string guitar - only to float again when the sunset is reflected in the water of Richardson bay" (p.63)

"Dark brown houseboats beached at the point of low tide - men atop their cabin roofs, shirtless and in overalls, idle, play a dobro, a jaw's harp, a 12 string guitar - only to float again when the sun is reflected in Richardson bay" (p.68)

AND

"We stopped for hot chocolate topped with whipped cream and to discuss the Sicilian Defense" (p.63)

"We stopped for hot chocolate topped with whipped cream, and to discuss the Sicilian Defense" (p.72)

I also really like the way that the paragraphs don't expand uniformly, they sometimes contract, as do the sentences that recur. I also like the way that the system is broken sometimes by making the base not only number/formalism, but also, more "conventionally", imagism and poetry of place. One of the first sentences to appear is, for example, "fountains of the financial district" and then "fountains of the financial district spout"; this then gets returned to not always as a *sentence* but as a *description*; there are later sentences where is described someone passing a fountain, or through a financial district, just as there are many different sentences describing refuse collectors and coastal Bay Area scenes. In other words there isn't the initially likely-looking structure of "let a paragraph of Ketjak only include sentences that do not add together at all as a description of a scene", which Ron brilliantly argues is an automatism and fetish on the part of most idle paragraph and sentence makers, in *The New Sentence*, which must be resolutely avoided in order to draw attention to its omnipresence; in Ketjak, Ron both does draw attention to the sentence and the paragraph, but does also "lapse", which is tinglingly exciting, like a moment of melody in the middle of a free improvisation! Not purist or systematic-to-the-point-of-missing-an-opportunity.

"Stood there broke and rapidly becoming hungry, staring at nickels and pennies at the fountain's bottom." (p.58)

"We walked through the financial district at midnight, the street deep between these buildings , a film crew working down an alley, artificial twilights, pausing as we passed to stare at great tapestries in bank lobbies" (p.59)

"The fountain forms a geometry of the particular, five waterfalls, six spouts, all of which arrive in the general pool" (p.66)

"I sat atop the fountain, which, at midnight, was shut off, all concrete and still pools of water" (p.87)

"The tenor sax is a toy" (p.60 and throughout)

"The tenor sax is a phallus or cross" (p.92 - penultimate page in the book - pathos in concluding moment of Silliman book, read linearly, scandal! NOT!)

I don't want to detract from the incredible abstract skill with the sentence per se in *Ketjak*, trying out everything, trying out wonderful sonic patterns and artificial hilarious rhymes - it is moment by moment really fulfilling to read, for versatility and for detail of observation - Sorry to write a rave review twenty years after composition date and seventeen after publication date, but I just wanted to supplement my endorsement of the (I think, affectionate) recent *Alt.fan.silliman* adventure with some detailed appreciation - and also to demonstrate the qualities of a work that is formal and experimental but also human and non-programmatic - to show what I think is the unbudgeable and unignorable sea-change that stereotyping and ignoring the actual works of "Language Writers" (as, as I've said - and now got into trouble for in Cambridge and London [people have blanked or eyeballed me at events] - , avant-garde British poetry is doing) ignores, making for ignorance.

Ira Lightman

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385. **kathryne**
Re: really Real

Fri 19 May 1995

Marxisms proliferate, due in part to the fact that Marx had a great deal to offer many interpretive machines. There is no one Marxism, and, indeed, reading Marx's American essays recently, I can say again that there might well-as with most of us?--be more than one Marx.

The question of the never-achieved "dictatorship of the proletariat" is a different kettle of fish. The recent arguments, about to turn bloody as soon as Jameson's book on Derrida comes out, about spectres of Marx and

COMMUNISM (site specific to Eastern Europe, mostly) seem a kind of prosthesis for more direct and current engagement.

I don't guess this is at all a response to the post to which it is attached. But I feel a bit steamed by our present (inter) national spiral into meanness and reaction, and dead guys like Marx can only help a bit more than vain arguments over which Marxism is correct//WAS possible.

Still, one lives, in a sense by engaging the fight indirectly, poetically. By the way, I hear that all of Whitman's recently discovered notebooks are available on-line. I hear the spectre of Pound screaming for joy. Oh, my, there are ghosts--and there are ghosts--dancing spectrally in this machine.

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386. **Jorge Guitart**

no leo mas

Fri 19 May 1995

after sampling recent mail (having been away for a while) i have decided to delete without reading any further messages that show on the Subject line the words Really, Real, Andy, Martha, or Stewart, or any combinations of those words, in the conviction that i will not be missing anything relevant, entertaining, or important.

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387. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: hoax spectral

Fri 19 May 1995

Gary -- don't have any of the info. here at the moment, but there was a book about "The Spectra Hoax" pub'd some decades ago that lingers in many libraries; I seem to remember Yvor Winters or folk of his ilk being involved -- at any rate, it was a parody of modernist movements that, like many such parodies, turned out to be far more interesting as a phenomenon than anything else the poets involved ever did -- several "fake" spectrists were created, and their poems appeared in a number of mags & newspapers before the ruse was revealed --

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388. **maria damon**

Re: Yo, Ed

Fri 19 May 1995

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group writes:

> na,
> words
> qua
> train

blue
note,
thought-
trains

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389. **Edward Foster**

Re: Yo, Ed

Fri 19 May 1995

na,
words
qua
train

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390. **Edward Foster**

Re: Yo, Ed

Fri 19 May 1995

depends on the number of fingers you're counting with.

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391. **Jim Pangborn**

Re: really Real Andy

Fri 19 May 1995

re: Marvelous Martha, really--

Her teevee show and magazine are titled "Martha Stewart Living"; the "content" is anything from cooking to home furnishing to gardening, including lots of tips on how to put an old-money veneer on a nouveau- bourgeois (there--I said it) lifestyle. Tag line: "It's a *good* thing."

She's easy to despise, except that a lot of those things *are* good, as such things go. The latest mag features a troutfishing camping trip into the wilds of Idaho: pretty pictures, the poop on avoiding hassles with bears, and, of course, recipes for fresh-caught trout, skillet scones, and on and on. Sounds yummy, don't it?

She doesn't come from old money (would someone who did go on TV with it?), more or less inventing herself and her gig as she's gone along, a Horatio Alger story for our time. Impressive, my research on this topic, eh? Actually my wife subscribes.

--Jim

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392. **Tom Mandel**

Hank's 4 poems

Fri 19 May 1995

... which I read and enjoyed a lot and then forgot to report that back to you, Hank, and to you, Oh List. good goin'

Tom Mandel

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393. **Tom Mandel**

mail by the megabyte?

Fri 19 May 1995

I left the bay area a year or so before the internet craze hit, but I'd have to agree that paying for mail is pretty unusual. Dunno who "sirius.com" is, but there has to be a better way than that. You can get a list of access providers from pdial (let me know; I'll send you the email address -- or maybe somewhere here can supply it in the meantime).

Tom Mandel

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394. **Herb Levy**

Re: mail by the megabyte?

Fri 19 May 1995

On Fri, 19 May 1995, Tom Mandel wrote:

> I left the bay area a year or so before the internet craze hit, but
> I'd have to agree that paying for mail is pretty unusual. Dunno
> who "sirius.com" is, but there has to be a better way than that.

> You can get a list of access providers from pdial (let me know;
> I'll send you the email address -- or maybe somewhere here can
> supply it in the meantime).

>

> Tom Mandel

>

Two places I know of to get a list of dial-up services are as follows:

Internic (because of their address structure I assume they have some
information for providers outside the US)

<ftp://is/internic.net/infoguide/getting-connected/united-states/internic-us-
provider-all>

or via web

<http://www.internic.net/internic/provider.html>

or you can try

Providers of Commercial Internet Access (POCIA) (I don't know if they have
info about providers outside the US.)

<ftp://ftp.teleport.com/vendors/cci/pocia/pocia.txt>

or via web

<http://www.teleport.com/~cci>

or for e-mail, you can send a <blank message> to

<[REDACTED]>

Both of these lists are organized by telephone area code and include some
information about rates, etc. for most providers in most areas. There are cheap
providers in most areas, but you often get what you pay for.

I won't go into the problems with my provider, <eskimo.com> which I assume
operates from someone's closet in a suburb north of Seattle. I'll just say that it
is _ridiculously_ cheap.

I hope the above addresses are useful to anyone looking for cheaper and/or
better on-line service.

Bests,

Herb

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395. **Loss Glazier**

Re: one big tease

Fri 19 May 1995

| Maybe Tom could "back channel" us who want to read the whole thing.

Or contact me and see what we might put up at the EPC!

Loss

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396. **Sheila E. Murphy**

Re: martha

Fri 19 May 1995

If I'm not mistaken, Martha Stewart appears on the cover of the current NEW YORK magazine, with the caption "She's Martha Stewart and you're not." Or did I dream this?

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397. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: really Real Andy

Fri 19 May 1995

>

> what the hell, why not ask it all, while we're at it. Not just
> is there such a thing as a great work of art, why not is there
> such a thing as *a* great work of art. Can it be removed
> from the anxiety of influence (get a load of my dimples)

>

--duchamp said it's all art. like emotions. good emotion, bad emotion.
good art, bad. it's art

carl

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398. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: irony and the Really real

Fri 19 May 1995

On Thu, 18 May 1995, John Byrum wrote:

| I agree that simulated experiences are as "real" as "real" experiences. We
| could also agree that our "real" experiences are "simulated"; i.e.,
| "simulations" of events in some sense "external" to our "experience". This

is getting deep into the intertwining convolutions of epistemology & ontology & definitions of terms, though.

Yes, and rather confusing too. I'm interested--as if it hadn't already been said--in how the real comes to be a sublime category of experience or, rather, of roping off of experience as unmediated by . . . ideology or other means of perceiving or creating experience. I've been reading Judith Butler's *Bodies That Matter* recently and am intrigued at her claim that sex is enunciated and culturally produced--and not essential or biological. That producing sexual difference is a way of maintaining social order. I'm reducing But what is interesting is how the real is produced as somehow outside of cultural production--much as Butler suggests sex is--when it is as mediated as any other thing. Consequently, as John suggests, epistemologically and ontologically these categories--the real and the simulated--come to stand in the place of each other (it gets confusing, I know).

Jeffrey Timmons

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399. **Tom Mandel**

Re: one big tease

Fri 19 May 1995

I'll ask Dan what he might want to do abt putting AS online.

Tom Mandel

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400. **John Byrum**

Re: Rauschenberg

Sat 20 May 1995

Ron's recent post:

Rauschenberg has always struck me as somebody who included >the "pretty" in his work just in case you didn't like the ideas. But over time neither wear that well.

Ron,

Rauschenberg couldn't really paint very well (& he certainly couldn't draw in any academic sense), which may be one reason among many that he took to assembling junk and then silkscreening all sorts of photos. But in his earlier years he could slather a blob of paint so exquisitely on a piece of canvas that it meant nothing & everything. Those paint dithers evoke (for me at least) nothing but the paint, send-ups of ab-ex pieties, assisted readymades (i.e., he MUST have just found them somewhere), randomness of the non-human, &

both inspired and purposeless play, all at once. No one else has managed such blank/full soulfulness in paint smears.

In his later years, of course, his quick laying-on of paint fields among the silkscreens came to look pretty lame.

John

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401. **Steve Carll**

Re: irony and the Really real

Sat 20 May 1995

Jeffrey Timmons writes:

On Thu, 18 May 1995, John Byrum wrote:

I agree that simulated experiences are as "real" as "real" experiences. We could also agree that our "real" experiences are "simulated"; i.e., "simulations" of events in some sense "external" to our "experience". This is getting deep into the intertwining convolutions of epistemology & ontology & definitions of terms, though.

*Yes, and rather confusing too. I'm interested--as if it hadn't already been said--in how the real comes to be a sublime category of experience or, rather, of roping off of experience as unmediated by . . . ideology or other means of perceiving or creating experience. I've been reading Judith Butler's *Bodies That Matter* recently and am intrigued at her claim that sex is enunciated and culturally produced--and not essential or biological. That producing sexual difference is a way of maintaining social order. I'm reducing But what is interesting is how the real is produced as somehow outside of cultural production--much as Butler suggests sex is--when it is as mediated as any other thing. Consequently, as John suggests, epistemologically and ontologically these categories--the real and the simulated--come to stand in the place of each other (it gets confusing, I know).*

Butler's claim reminds me of Foucault's, that "we must not place sex on the side of reality and sexuality on the side of confused ideas and illusions...against the machinery of sexuality the strong point of the counter-attack should not be sex-desire, but the body and its pleasures" (*History of Sexuality* Vol. 1, 157).

Steve Carll

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402. **Steve Carll**

Actually actual?

Sat 20 May 1995

It might be fruitful to think back to the roots of "real" in the Latin *res*, or "things". Now I know Silliman doesn't trust etymology, but I feel that traces of the original "readings" of words still lurk in the (back)ground of a historical word's meaning as much as the more current readings and misreadings of it. Hiedegger points out in view of this origin that the real is the set of properties which belong to res, to a thing, whether or not the thing actually exists. Reality and actuality are thus not necessarily the same.

I think of reality as being the way actuality is constructed for us, or expressed by and through us. The real *as* the actual is that highly elusive space that Andrew and Dodie have been speaking of, but (I have to hope) every reality opens out into actuality someplace.

The relation of poetry to the real could be seen then as an attempt to a) mirror, b)create, c)transform the actual by means of the real. The poem establishes some kind of reality which, with varying degrees of "success", holds open that opening in the reality in which it finds itself, so that the actual can be beheld.

Also--to Jeffrey Timmons--it might be said here that the real is already a kind of simulation of the actual (unfortunately, since this assertion is so abstract, anything could be an example of it, and every example could be challenged.)

Steve

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403. **John Byrum**

Re: next steps after art

Sat 20 May 1995

Carl writes in a recent message:

--duchamp said it's all art. like emotions. good emotion, bad emotion. good art, bad. it's art

carl

Has anyone read Suzi Gablik's The Re-Enchantment of Art?

What comes after art? What might art evolve into?

Perhaps all our involvements, all our experiences, multiply feeding into the continuous flow of our lives... a continuously heightened awareness..?.. what forms would this take, what could we become?

John

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404. **John Byrum**
Re: irony and the Really real

Sat 20 May 1995

Jeffrey, in your last message you concluded with:

...But what is interesting is how the real is produced as somehow outside of cultural production--much as Butler suggests sex is--when it is as mediated as any other thing. Consequently, as John suggests, epistemologically and ontologically these categories--the real and the simulated--come to stand in the place of each other (it gets confusing, I know).

Jeffrey Timmons

Jeff:

Perhaps our notion of the Real descends from ancient fears about what lurks outside the campfires and later the walls of the compound... danger.

John

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405. **Susan Clark**
... for Dodie B.

Sat 20 May 1995

Dodie,

Could you please send me your email address. Here comes that phone call.

... and others who may have peeked at this "private correspondence," wouldn't it be wonderful if everyone signed their notes with email addresses so we could talk about things irrelevant to the list backchannel?

Apologies for taking up your boxes' spaces in this instance, all.

Susan Clark



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406. **Kevin Killian**
Re: mail by the megabyte?

Sat 20 May 1995

Ron, Tom, Herb,

Thanks for your concern over my access provider situation, but really, really, do you think this is a suitable topic for the poetics listserv? I must say I feel somewhat patronized here, would have felt less so if you'd each written to me backchannel.

Honestly, guys, I'm capable of handling my internet situation. My other listserv, Women On-Line, gives me lots of support in treading the male dominated waters of the net. They say, by the way, the figures have changed for 9 to 1 to 2 to 1, as far as the male/female percentages go.

I pay \$15 a month for unlimited access and sadistic customer service at Sirius- and 1mb e-mail. I could camp out on this thing if I wanted to. Actually, last month I know I went over the 1-mb limit and they didn't charge me extra. Plus you get to go to coffee parties in the Haight with other Sirius customers.

The Women's On-Line listserv is having a brunch in Mountain View soon. Why don't the members of the poetics listserv ever get together and eat? I visualize a memo tacked on a bulletin board at the Blaser Conference. POETICS
LISTSERV BREAKFAST.

Doesn't it make your mouth water?

Dodie

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407. **maria damon**

Re: Actually actual?

Sat 20 May 1995

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group writes:

> It might be fruitful to think back to the roots of "real" in the Latin
> *res*, or "things".

just a random comment --when this msg flashed on my screen, i initially read it as "it might be frightful..."--md

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408. **Blair Seagram**

Re: POETICS Digest - 17 May 1995 to 18 May 1995

Sat 20 May 1995

I agree that the real can always seem elusive (allusive??), but think that all our experiences must finally be the Real. After all they are all we have, call them what you will.

Forgive me for editing the comments as I have done I am intrigued by this discussion of the real, but must insist upon my earlier statement that The Real Can Be Simulated.

.) In his book "The Concept of Irony with Constant Reference to Socrates" Kierkegaard states that irony in its simplest instance is to say the opposite of what is meant. The inner and the outer do not form a harmonious unity, for the external is in opposition to the internal.

Kierkegaard plots three points which describe the beginning, the middle, and the end of the career of irony. The first is its inception in the figure of Socrates. The second is its illusory zenith in the Romantics, from which Hegel coins his dialectic of opposites (i.e. Romantic Irony). This is where I would situate Ortega.* And the third is the point at which irony disappears, having gone through a metamorphosis by way of experience, resulting in self-mastery.

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409. **Blair Seagram**

Re: POETICS Digest - 17 May 1995 to 18 May 1995

Sat 20 May 1995

2.) Published in 1925, Ortega Y Gasset's essay called "The Dehumanization of Art" maintains that among other things, modernism tends to "be essentially ironic"

In the section "Doomed to Irony", Ortega continues, "It is not that the content of the work is comical...To look for fiction as fiction, which we have said modern art does, is a proposition that cannot be executed except with one's tongue in one's cheek.. Art is appreciated precisely because it is recognized as farce....Thanks to this suicidal gesture art continues to be art, its self-negation bringing about its preservation and triumph."

Nor is this ironical reflection of art upon itself new as an idea. *In the beginning of the last century a group of German romanticists, under the leadership of the two brothers, Schlegel, pronounced irony the foremost aesthetic category their reasons being much the same as those of our young artists.... Art has no right to exist if, content to reproduce reality, it uselessly duplicates it. Its mission is to conjure up imaginary worlds. That can be done only if the artist repudiates reality and by this act places himself above it. Being an artist means ceasing to take seriously that very serious person we are when we are not an artist."

And finally Ortega maintains that "to the young generation art is a thing of no consequence. I do not mean that the artist makes light of his or her profession, but they are of interest precisely because they are of no transcending importance."

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410. **Blair Seagram**

Re: POETICS Digest - 17 May 1995 to 18 May 1995

Sat 20 May 1995

#3) Present in all forms of irony is the understanding that the phenomenon is not the essence, but the opposite of the essence where the essence is defined as the IDEA or thought and phenomenon is defined as the medium and in the case of Socrates the rhetorical word.

If, when I speak, I am conscious that what I say is my meaning, and an adequate expression of my meaning, and if I assume that the person to whom I am speaking understands perfectly what I have said, then I am bound by what I have said. That is, I am positively free. Furthermore, I am bound in relation to myself and cannot detach whenever I wish. This is an identity.

If, on the other hand, what I say is not my meaning or the opposite of my meaning, then I am free both in relation to myself and in relation to others. That is, I am negatively free.

With irony the subject is always seeking to get outside the object and this is done by becoming conscious, at every moment, that the object has no reality. The subject constantly retires from the field and proceeds to talk every phenomenon out of its reality in order to preserve their negative independence of everything.

With doubt, on the other hand, the subject tries to destroy the phenomenon in order to get at the essence. The subject seeks to penetrate the object and the misfortune consists in the fact that the object constantly eludes him or her.

It might be said that doubt is for philosophy what irony is for the personal life. Just as the philosopher claims no true philosophy is possible without doubt, so one may say that no authentic life is possible without irony.

One might think that since irony is conscious of the fact that reality has no existence, it was a type of religious devotion. In religious devotion the relationship to the world loses its validity, but only insofar as the reality of God asserts absolute reality. Irony however, is nothingness. It is a deadly stillness that returns to haunt and jest. If irony is not a type of religious devotion, neither is it a form of hypocrisy, for hypocrisy belongs to the moral sphere and irony to the metaphysical.

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411. **Blair Seagram**

Re: POETICS Digest - 17 May 1995 to 18 May 1995

Sat 20 May 1995

4.) Irony in terms of the BIG picture differs in quality from the irony discussed thus far. In this sense irony directs itself against the whole given actuality or essence of a certain time and situation, which has become alien for the ironic subject and lost all validity.

Just as the world spirit throughout every age is within itself, so individuals within an age must follow the actuality which presents itself to them. Hegel remarked: " All dialectic accepts as valid what shall become valid as if it were valid and allows the internal destruction to develop within it. Such is the universal irony of the world. " To a certain extent every world historical turning point must exhibit this formation.

An individual may be world historically justified and at the same time without authority. And just as his or her lack of authority must make them a sacrifice, so the fact that they are historically justified makes them a triumph. That is to say they triumph by becoming a sacrifice.

As the new comes forth we meet three types of individuals:

1. The Prophetic Individual.
2. The Tragic Hero.
3. The Ironic Subject.

The prophetic individual does not possess the future but envisages it and imitates it. He or she cannot assert it because they are lost to the time in which they live. The tragic hero fights for the new and endeavors to destroy what for him is vanishing actuality. The ironic subject displaces the old and shows us all its imperfections. For him or her the given actuality, having lost its validity, has become an imperfect form where everything constrains. The ironic subject does not work hand in hand with their age, like the prophet, but rather has advanced beyond it and opened up a front against it. That which shall come is hidden from him or her.

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412. **Blair Seagram**

Re: POETICS Digest - 17 May 1995 to 18 May 1995

Sat 20 May 1995

5.) Just as historical actuality is a criteria in Kierkegaard's concept of irony, so too is actuality for the individual. In so far as the individual remains ironic he or she is negatively free and thus, unassimilated into a larger context and unable

to feel the responsibility of consequences, the ironic subject is unable to fulfil his or her task as an acting individual.

The last stage in the life of irony is when its truth is revealed as the mastered moment. Shakespeare is considered the great master of irony. There is neither too much nor too little, so everything receives its due. Irony is not present at some particular point in the poem, but omnipresent in it, so that visible irony in the poem is ironically mastered. This renders both the poet and the poem free. However, because a poet is successful in mastering irony in the moment of artistic production does not mean he has mastered irony in actuality.

Usually the personal life of an artist does not concern us in regard to his or her work, but in the case of irony it is of some relevance. If an artist steps outside the label of genius, they will become, in some measure a philosopher. In which case their work will not have a mere external relation to him or herself, but rather the artist will see in a particular work, a moment of their own development.

It was in this respect that Goethe's life as a poet was so great. For Goethe irony was, in the strictest sense, a mastered moment, a spirit ministering to the world.

Once it has been mastered, irony undertakes a movement in the opposite direction. It now limits, renders finite, defines and thereby yields truth, actuality and content. Hence if one must warn against irony as a seducer, one must praise it as a guide.

Any question as to the eternal validity of irony can only find its answer through an investigation into the sphere of humor. Humor contains a much deeper skepticism than irony...but humor also contains a much deeper positivity than irony.

Notes on Irony, mainly from Kierkegaard

I had to do this and I promise never to send such a long thing again. By the way I couldn't get a subject line for some reason, so I let it go. Blair

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413. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: Spectra-scope

Sat 20 May 1995

Ed's memory is again better than mine -- It was Whitter Bynner at the heart of the Spectra hoax -- the book I read about the hoax (back at the neighborhood library when I was in Junior High and libraries could still afford to have books

for kids to read) was compiled by William Jay Smith (a thoroughly despicable person), who also edited Bynner's complete works some years ago.

Does Jorge really delete mail he suspects of being uninteresting? How dull!

after some tries at composition by erasure and found poetry, I decided to try a different tack. I began attempting to smuggle lines of my own composition into the published works of others. Since I was having such trouble finding anyone to publish a book of poems under my own name (a trouble I still have) this also got my "work" circulated more rapidly. I started small. First I planted an allusion to my own first chap book inside a prose piece by Juan Felipe Herrera. This now appears on page 16 of his book *Night Train to Tuxtla*, from U of Arizona Press, one hell of a good book with or without my contribution. Emboldened by that success, I went on to write several passages of Toni Morrison's *Playing in the Dark*, my first such spectral best seller. I have on several occasions attempted to smuggle my work inside Joe Ross's poems in progress, but he keeps finding them and editing them out before publication. Who will be my next target???

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414. **Gary Sullivan**

Re: Blair Seagram's post(s) on irony

Sat 20 May 1995

Dear Blair:

No need to apologize for the length of your post, and I genuinely hope you *break* your promise never to post anything that length again.

I have a question, probably very mundane (covered elsewhere?), about mimesis: isn't structure (or form), by its very nature, "mimetic"? It occurred to me, while reading Ira's wonderful reading of *Ketjak*, that structure (or form, or "frame" even) is the one thing all works of art (including wholly "conceptual" artworks) have in common. No duh, but it struck me for some reason. & then, it immediately struck me that, well, for an artwork to have a structure, doesn't that alone make it "mimetic" of "reality," however (& by whomever) that "real" is structured?

In other words, no work of art, whether actualized or at any point of conception, is "another world." While our ideas of how the world is "structured" vary from age to age & from person-within-an-age to person-within-an-age, the notion of an underlying structure -- whatever differences we might have about the specific attributes -- seems across the board unquestioned/unquestionable. Since the one defining characteristic of "the world" we all might agree on is

that it *is* (however, even randomly) structured -- how can there *be* "another" world?

Yours,

Gary

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415. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: Actually actual?

Sat 20 May 1995

On Sat, 20 May 1995, Steve Carll wrote:

I think of reality as being the way actuality is constructed for us, or expressed by and through us.

Yes, Steve, I agree with your comments, especially as you bring up Foucault in light of Butler, but I would--just for sake of furthering this line of thought--suggest that part of Butler's thesis (and Foucault's, if I am not mistaken) is that we don't simply think but are thought. In your example for instance, actuality is not simply constructed for us, by us, but has the emphasis you suggest when you say it is constructed through us. That is, it thinks us. The real--oops--the ACTUAL thinks us, not necessarily we it. This, of course, is scary. But then again, reading the newspaper the other day when Ralph Reed and his Republican hench-men (The Real?) were out in force was scary too. My point? Perhaps I'll defer to Richard Rorty here and repeat his idea that the real is out there and we have no access to it--all we have is our descriptions of it, descriptions that come and go through time, descriptions that are perceived as better or less suited to accounting for particular phenomena in the world. Poetry--Art (and I'll include science here)--are those areas of imaginative experience where those descriptions are forged. I need to jump over to the Gasset stuff and follow this up

Jeffrey Timmons

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416. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: irony and the Really real

Sat 20 May 1995

On Sat, 20 May 1995, John Byrum wrote:

Perhaps our notion of the Real descends from ancient fears about what lurks outside the campfires and later the walls of the compound... danger.

Yes, perhaps. And if that were the case then our fears would be a strange conglomeration of real (I feel funny using this word now) and the imagined. I mean, not all the time are fears . . . given validity by their object. Sometimes what lurks out there isn't there. Sometimes it is though. What I find interesting about this sort of observation about experience (real, actual) and the imaginary (fears, creativity) is that there is sense in which one might say that John's fears give rise to the condition of creativity itself. I wonder, though, if this isn't a masculine conception of creativity? That is, perceiving it as developing out of a response to a perceived threat (I'm thinking of Cixous in *Castration and Decapitation*). Anyway, thanks for the thought, John.

Jeffrey Timmons

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417. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: POETICS Digest - 17 May 1995 to 18 May 1995

Sat 20 May 1995

On Sat, 20 May 1995, Blair Seagram quoted Gasset, I believe, to the effect:

Art has no right to exist if, content to reproduce reality, it uselessly duplicates it. Its mission is to conjure up imaginary worlds. That can be done only if the artist repudiates reality and by this act places himself above it.

This is essentially a modernist position, one I find a bit too hubristic for my taste. Perhaps I'm missing the overall gist of Blair's posts by latching onto this fragment, but I do so because I am interested in not only how there is a phenomenological desire to explain the world--accompanied by the ironic inability and rejection of being bound to doing so--as well as a desire to "transcend" the world. What I find disturbing is that the first position--which I like--is accompanied in modernist formulations of the function of art by a desire that seems to me to smack of aestheticist withdrawal from the phenomenological (otherwise known here as the real or actual). I want to be able to maintain that sense of irony that remains sceptical about verbal descriptions of the world--and here Rorty's irony is more relevant to my concerns than the modernists Blair alludes to (Gasset)--while being able to maintain contact with the world. I desire not transcendence. I was reading Ashbery's *Three Poems* the other day and am reminded of a section near the end of the second poem about just this idea--I'll track it down if anyone's interested in how JA handles this dilemma. I am also reminded of Whitman's sentiment in *Song of Myself* where he says something to the effect of being mad with desire to be in contact with the earth

Jeffrey Timmons

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418. **Gary Sullivan**

Re: Ira/Cris

Sat 20 May 1995

...or, Cris, were those enthusiastic _Ketjak_ posts you "doing" Ira?

Just finished Michael Heyward's _The Ern Malley Affair_, which Jonathan kindly lent me, & now I'm in a world of doubt.

The book, btw, is incredible, includes trial transcript material -- after Ern Malley was revealed to be a hoax, Max Harris was put on trial for publishing "obscene" or "indecent" work. Harris is forced to do a wonderful close reading of Malley's work while on the witness stand, in which both prosecuting attorney and Harris refer to Malley as tho very real (again, after the hoax had been made public).

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419. **Loss Glazier**

Poet/Artist "Collaboration"

Sat 20 May 1995

I'm interested in recommendations on writings that specifically address poet/artist *active* collaborations. That is, what would be called a "true" or active collaboration versus what might be more of a kind of "mere" illustrations with text.) Can anyone recommend articles or other works that explore this distinction?

Thanks,

Loss

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420. **maria damon**

Re: Poet/Artist "Collaboration"

Sat 20 May 1995

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group writes:

> I'm interested in recommendations on writings that specifically
>
> address poet/artist *active* collaborations. That is, what would
>

> be called a "true" or active collaboration versus what might be
>
> more of a kind of "mere" illustrations with text.) Can anyone
>
> recommend articles or other works that explore this distinction?
>
> Thanks,
>
> Loss

hi loss, this isn't exactly what you were asking about, but i want to plug an extraordinarily beautiful intermedia book anyway, Excerpts from Dictee for Dictee, by Walter K. Lew. It's a response to Theresa Hak-Kyung Cha's book Dictee; walter's bk started as an essay for a volume of criticism on the piece, but he came to feel that using standard critical language and form wd violate Cha's project, so what evolved was what he calls a "critical collage," a series of textual fragments from Dictee and its various intertexts, as well as his own notes etc., and film stills, photos and charts that evoke and resonate with broad and specific themes in Dictee. All 350 copies are signed with his blood, thus actualizing one of Cha's wordplays, "sangencre," which dramatic sight led to some copies being returned after purchase on the buyers' mistaken assumption that the smear indicated a flawed copy. So it's more of a living artist/poet collaborating with a dead one (more so than Spicer/Lorca...)...md

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421. **Tom Mandel**

Re: Poet/Artist "Collaboration"

Sat 20 May 1995

No articles to offer, but fyi the poet Beth Joselow and the poet I will be in Moscow next month visiting the Moscow Studio- an international visual arts studio founded by the

(ooops) Washington artist Dennis O'Neal. We'll be undertaking collaborative projects with a couple of Russian artists (in my case, it looks like I'll work with the 'paper architect' Yuri Avakkumov).

I think this will be rather true than mere, but hey, who knows? The idea is to do silk-screen books in small editions. Yuri's fantastic conceptual work I find thrilling; I'm writing

poems in the form of ladders (line-rungs and line-poles) in preparation.

Tom Mandel

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422. **Tom Mandel**

Re: Poet/Artist "Collaboration"

Sat 20 May 1995

...I terminated that message with finger not mind, meaning to continue by saying that Beth will be working with Pavel Makov of Ukraine. Beth visited the studio abt 18 months ago, but it is my maiden voyage.

Tom

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423. **Tom Mandel**

Re: Absence Sensorium

Sat 20 May 1995

Re: Absence Sensorium online...

Dan Davidson and I agree that this is a great idea, and we want to pursue it. At present, however, AS is out - being read for publication; we can't think about an alternative or additional publishing paradigm (i.e. online) until we know whether our potential publisher is interested in printing AS, in which case that person surely would have a say in determining the best way(s) to distribute the work.

So... we are asking for the chance to come back to you, Loss - perhaps as soon as a month from now, perhaps sooner - and discuss this some more. Thank you for encouraging this idea (and, to take the occasion, for all the good work of the EPC).

Tom Mandel

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424. **Steve Carll**

Re: really Real

Sun 21 May 1995

kathryne writes:

>But I feel a bit steamed by our present (inter) national spiral
>into meanness and reaction, and dead guys like Marx can only help

>a bit more than vain arguments over which Marxism is correct//WAS possible.

>

>Still, one lives, in a sense by engaging the fight indirectly, poetically.

>By the way, I hear that all of Whitman's recently discovered notebooks

>are available on-line. I hear the spectre of Pound screaming for joy.

>Oh, my, there are ghosts--and there are ghosts--dancing spectrally in

>this machine.

>

>

I agree; I think any approach that, however well-thought-out in its political philosophy, doesn't ground and frame itself in compassion, and acknowledge the importance of listening, won't slow the spiral.

Let's not give up the ghost! :) (uh-oh; did i really use a smiley?)

Steve

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425. **John Byrum**

Re: Actually actual?

Sun 21 May 1995

Excerpt from Jeffrey Timmons' recent posting:

Poetry--Art (and I'll include science here)--are those areas of imaginative experience where those descriptions are forged.

Jeff, I agree with you here in at least two senses:

Forged as in Joyce's "forged in the smithy of the soul"; and forged in the sense of "inventing a fictitious story, a lie, etc." and "to fabricate by false (I would rather say by metaphoric) imitation." (Random House Dictionary of the Eng Lang definitions of "forge" sense 1)

And of course metaphors work by relating/comparing two pictures or areas of the language network; i.e., one picture gets mapped onto another. And obviously, not all the "points" or aspects of one picture align or map onto those of the other picture. Hence metaphors are not actually "false" comparisons, but dreamlike yokings-together which produce a third body (or picture), allowing us to draw new insights, make new and further connections between areas of language and experience we previously thought were relatively unconnected, etc.

John

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426. **John Byrum**

Re: POETICS Digest - 17 May 1...

Sun 21 May 1995

Jeffrey Timmons concludes a recent post with:

I am also reminded of Whitman's sentiment in Song of Myself where he says something to the effect of being mad with desire to be in contact with the earth

Jeffrey Timmons

To that we might reply: "Dammit Walt take your shoes off."

John

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427. **John Byrum**

Re: Poet/Artist "Collaboration"

Sun 21 May 1995

Loss writes in a recent post:

I'm interested in recommendations on writings that specifically address poet/artist *active* collaborations. That is, what would be called a "true" or active collaboration versus what might be more of a kind of "mere" illustrations with text.) Can anyone recommend articles or other works that explore this distinction?

Thanks,

Loss

Visual poetry collapses this "collaboration" into a single presentation embodying both visual and language modes/elements. See, for example, "CORE, A Symposium on Contemporary Visual Poetry", edited by John Byrum and Crag Hill, GENERATORSCORE Press, 1993.

To forestall any requests for copies, I need to say here that the first edition is sold out, but Crag & I are contemplating a 2nd expanded edition.

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428. **George Bowering**

Re: Actually actual?

Sun 21 May 1995

It has always seemed to me that the notion of the "real" and the notion of "truth" are both things that have to be defined by the arguer, that they are both philosophical propositions, and that they are specific to each arguer's frame. That thing that (seems to?) happens when you cut your hand thru the dustmotes in the window sun shaft is what I refer to as the "actual," and hope that whatever the arguments, ut happens. I.e. it could be real or it could be a platonic simulacrum.

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429. **George Bowering**

Re: martha

Sun 21 May 1995

Hey, this Martha Stewart may be on the cover of a regional magazine, NEW YORK MAG, but I havent seen her on the cover of, say VANCOUVER magazine. I now know where she is, but I still dont know who she is.

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430. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: next steps after art

Sun 21 May 1995

Carl writes in a recent message:

*--duchamp said it's all art. like emotions. good emotion, bad emotion.
good art, bad. it's art*

carl

Has anyone read Suzi Gablik's The Re-Enchantment of Art?

What comes after art? What might art evolve into?

*Perhaps all our involvements, all our experiences, multiply feeding into the
continuous flow of our lives... a continuously heightened awareness?...
what forms would this take, what could we become?*

John

hi, john, that's an interesting post. i think hegel (i'm not exactly certain, tho) said art would collapse and become philosophy. i've had several discussions recently with some friends here in philosophy, and it may be the reverse that's true or true. philosophy into art. but then there's kosuth: "art after philosophy"

the genius of rauschenberg, cage, even warhol i think is that they erase the boundaries between art and life -- sounds godawfully cliché, i know, and like burnham writes in "problems of criticism," the question is no longer what is good art and what is bad art, but why isn't everyone an artist?

take care,
carl

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431. **Charlotte Pressler**

Kiosk #8

Sun 21 May 1995

K I O S K #8 just published.

Yearly subscription: \$6.00 to
KIOSK
c/o English Department
306 Clemens Hall
SUNY at Buffalo
Buffalo, NY 14260.

Issue #8 includes:

Fiction/prose by Robert Creeley, Richard Russo, Mark Jacobs, Bonnie Jo Campbell, Bill Morris, Howard Saunders, and Susan Raffo.

Poetry by Jake Berry, Jeff Gburek, Richard Hague, Richard Roundy, Nava Fader, Wendy Kramer, Joseph Conte, Loss Pequen~o Glazier, Carl Dennis, John Marvin, Bill Tuttle, Celia White, Kristen Ban Tepper, Joel Kuszai, Nico Vassilakis, Cacy Forgenie, William Howe, Ike Kim, Jorge Guitart, John M. Bennett, Valerie Marek, and Jena Osman.

Photographs by Mark Maio, Martin J. Desht, and Jim Clinefelter.

Poetics list subscribers are invited to submit work for issue #9. Fiction, poetic prose, poetry, visual poetry, photography, and collage/photomontage are all welcome.

We'll be reading from November 1995 through February 1996. The fiction editor for issue #9 is Jon Pitts; the poetry editor is Charlotte Pressler; the

editor-in-chief is Lia Vella. Write us (address above) or send e-mail if you have questions or want guidelines.

Thanks to all contributors, and to outgoing editors Mary Obropta, Robert Rebein, and A.M. Allcott.

Charlotte Pressler/[REDACTED]/SUNY at Buffalo

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432. **Steve Carll**

Re: Actually actual?

Mon 22 May 1995

On March 20, George Bowering wrote:

It has always seemed to me that the notion of the "real" and the notion of "truth" are both things that have to be defined by the arguer, that they are both philosophical propositions, and that they are specific to each arguer's frame. That thing that (seems to?) happens when you cut your hand thru the dustmotes in the window sun shaft is what I refer to as the "actual," and hope that whatever the arguments, ut happens. I.e. it could be real or it could be a platonic simulacrum.

I agree, although the definers of these propositions are not always arguers (I prefer to do so as a "discourser" or something like that, myself). But it is interesting that, frame-specific as they are, these notions are intercommunicable, that there is a significant overlap between my frame and yours because both are concerned with the actual in a fundamental way.

Steve

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433. **Steve Carll**

Re: Blair Seagram's post(s) on irony

Mon 22 May 1995

Gary Sullivan writes:

I have a question, probably very mundane (covered elsewhere?), about mimesis: isn't structure (or form), by its very nature, "mimetic"? It occurred to me, while reading Ira's wonderful reading of _Ketjak_, that structure (or form, or "frame" even) is the one thing all works of art (including wholly "conceptual" artworks) have in common. No duh, but it struck me for some reason. & then, it immediately struck me that, well, for an artwork to have a structure, doesn't that alone make it "mimetic" of "reality," however (& by whomever) that "real" is structured?

*In other words, no work of art, whether actualized or at any point of conception, is "another world." While our ideas of how the world is "structured" vary from age to age & from person-within-an-age to person-within-an-age, the notion of an underlying structure -- whatever differences we might have about the specific attributes -- seems across the board unquestioned/unquestionable. Since the one defining characteristic of "the world" we all might agree on is that it *is* (however, even randomly) structured -- how can there *be* "another" world?*

Yours,

Gary

It seems like if structure is something that underlies(and so transcends) the world, though, if the world is (passive) structured, couldn't this structure just as easily express itself in an otherworld that accesses different structures than are possible in our world, or accesses them in combinations impossible here?

Andrew Joron, help!

Steve

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434. **Steve Carll**

Re: Actually actual?

Mon 22 May 1995

| On Sat, 20 May 1995, Jeffrey Timmons wrote:

I would--just for sake of furthering
>this line of thought--suggest that part of Butler's thesis (and
>Foucault's, if I am not mistaken) is that we don't simply think but are
>thought. In your example for instance, actuality is not simply
>constructed for us, by us, but has the emphasis you suggest when you say
>it is constructed through us. That is, it thinks us. The real--oops--the
>ACTUAL thinks us, not necessarily we it. This, of course, is scary. But
>then again, reading the newspaper the other day when Ralph Reed and his
>Republican hench-men (The Real?) were out in force was scary too. My
>point? Perhaps I'll defer to Richard Rorty here and repeat his idea that
>the real is out there and we have no access to it--all we have is our
>descriptions of it, descriptions that come and go through time,
>descriptions that are perceived as better or less suited to accounting
>for particular phenomena in the world. Poetry--Art (and I'll include
>science here)--are those areas of imaginative experience where those

>descriptions are forged. I need to jump over to the Gasset stuff and
>follow this up

You don't think it's scary to think that "the real is out there and we have no access to it", but it is scary to think that actuality thinks us? (I agree that Ralph Reed et al. are scary). To me, that we are thought implies no lack of freedom, only the acknowledgement that we are produced (produced like produce, not produced like products) as part of an organic process called "the world". This can indeed be scary sometimes, but if it lies at the roots of what we are, we are deeply involved in it, and access is always possible, not by attempts at "explaining" the world or "transcending" it, but simply by allowing it to unfold in our presence, since it will unfold anyway regardless of our participation. This is another way of maintaining contact with the world. Thanks for your response; I think we agree more than we disagree on this question...

Steve

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435. **Wystan Curnow**

Re: Poet/Artist "Collaboration"

Mon 22 May 1995

Dear Loss, Such articles may be hard to find. I have had some *
experience* of collaboration. I have involved myself with the work of a New
Zealand conceptual I think is the tag to use artist named Billy Apple, which is
not his (real) name for about 15 years, first as an art critic but also in recent
times as poet, but all through as a consultant you might say, so that no work of
his got into the public arena without its going through a process which involved
my participation. Meanwhile, I continued to write as a critic about the work.
Complicated.

The collaborations concern a series works called Tales of Gold. The first
group were text silk-screened in black on largish sheets of gold pacificated
steel. A diagram of golden rectangle divisions was silk-screened on this and the
text occurred within each area, with the type reducing in size in proportion--this
was all done with a computer--so that the text in the smallest rectangle is
almost unreadable. The sheet was then cut into the seven parts, each with its
segment of text, and the work was sold in pieces--although some buyers were
quick enough to buy a whole work before the piecemeal process began, and
some quick re-sale activity also occurred--although hung as a unit. After that we
stopped cutting the sheets up. The texts are stories concerning gold, my
versions of tales told by others. I have read these at readings, sometimes
projecting slides of the work. We plan to publish a book designed so as to
duplicate some of the results of the passivated steel works. I would not have

written these pieces were it not for this artist's interest in the meaning of gold, the golden rectangle and the life. I am also, however, confused about my relation to his work as a whole. What I have described represents one of the clearer moments but these occur against a background of not knowing the extent of my responsibility for his work. I published something on this called 'Working with Billy Apple', in *SPLASH*, in 1985, but so much has happened since then it only tells part of the story.

So it seems to me there are ad hoc collaborations, chance meetings, then there are these on-going relationships which I consider especially interesting: conceptual art, oddly (?) has produced a few double acts: like Marina Abramovic and Ulay, like Gilbert & George, Clegg & Guttman, and are you there Madeline Gins?--Arakawa and Gins--I was pleased to read your message to the net, I have just come back from Sydney and Imants Tillers who has your new book of course since you sent it to him, HELEN KELLER OR ARAKAWA which I'm anxious to read. And in some of these a division of roles is apparent, and sometimes that is a matter of the media sometimes not..... I am eager to hear of the experience others on the net have had, whether ad hoc or not.

Wystan Curnow

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436. **Blair Seagram**

Re: Gasset and Kierkegaard on irony:

Mon 22 May 1995

Dear Jeffrey:

P.S. About the quote I cut off and gave you no credit for. Originally I put your initials there but for some reason they got lost in the transfer. Even so, using initials is pretty relaxed I'm sure. Also, all those * =20Us * in #2 on Gasset. I thought that was some poetic technique people were using. One of Kenny Goldsmith's posts on the Top 10 kept saying =20, so I thought he was trying to say, forget 10, let's go to 20. Now I find out it's unix doing its second conversion of quotes, the first being a U.

Gasset and Kierkegaard on irony:

(I'm not too keen on Gasset.)

There are ideological differences, as witnessed by Ortega identifying himself and modernism with 19th century Romantic Irony, by way of the Schlegel brothers, who both Kierkegaard and Hegel had great disdain for.

Socrates was irony as INFINITE ABSOLUTE NEGATIVITY. And yet it was irony at work within a given time and situation. This concrete view of irony through

historical actuality is understood by both Hegel and Kierkegaard as authentic. And even though Hegel did not see in Socrates what Kierkegaard did, Kierkegaard gives credit and thanks to Hegel for illuminating the deceptive irony present in certain 19th century romantics. Nineteenth century Romantic Irony was not practiced or conceived as a present moment that was to be displaced by a new moment. Rather it condemned and denounced every philosophical standpoint without investigating any. It negated all historical truth to make room for a self-centered truth. It was not subjectivity that arose, but subjectivity raised to the second power.

There is an interesting essay on Goethe that Ortega Y Gasset was asked to write at the time of Goethe's centenary. In the essay he assails Goethe for taking the easy way out in life, for allowing his talents to degenerate into hobbies rather than struggling to make his ideas realized in a more profound way. He criticizes Germany for romanticizing Goethe as the quintessential classicist, the same way Kierkegaard criticizes 19th Romantics for not connecting their ideas to the truth in front of them.

I appreciate your remarks about the dilemma between transcendence and irony. Am I to take it you're not into transcendence but you are into Rorty's book on irony? What was it called? The book was in my vicinity at one point, but I forget the gist. What is it?

As far as JA's take on irony or whatever it was is concerned, I'm interested!

take care, Best wishes

Blair

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437. **Blair Seagram**

Re: POETICS Digest - 20 May 1995 to 21 May 1995

Mon 22 May 1995

Dear Gary:

Thanks for your message. Are you asking me whether structure isn't itself a form of imitation or representation. Or are you saying that we make sense of things by creating a structure which is isomorphic with respect to our dna. That the distinction between inner and outer is negligible. That the work of an artist is no different than the life they live, both exist in the same continuum. That every artist must confront the world through a frame of reference. Please comment.

I'm not sure whether this has anything whatever to do with your second point but I don't think about another world, I know I'm in this one. In this world of

mine, there is transcendence or at least the possibility for it. Now I may be ignorant of some argument which might convince me otherwise, however I am certainly open to hearing it.

take care, Best wishes

blair

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438. **Jake Berry**

Re: next steps after art

Mon 22 May 1995

John, Perhaps the next steps after art would be the observations of the various ways by which we create what unfolds as the dominant strata of our lives. documentaion would serve no purpose except to ackledge that we are are aware of it. of course there would be perhaps modes of the process that would function as post-poetic or post-art that would produce something that would be exchanged as items, as books, painting and other document forms are now. The idea though would be a general enhanced field of awareness that would require a broader perspective than is currently in practice.

Just a reaction,

Jake

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439. **Ron Silliman**

Re: Actually actual?

Mon 22 May 1995

I used to love (and quote often, probably with greater accuracy than I'm about to here) Williams' comment from Spring & All,

The perfection of forms as additions to nature.

Now, 25-30 years later, that seems too passive, simply cumulative. Now I would rewrite it:

The perfection of forms as interventions in nature.

And I'm not so sure about that word "perfections" either.

Ron Silliman

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440. **Jim Pangborn**
The Etymology of Things
Mon 22 May 1995

To those still reading posts on "the real," etc.--

The history of "reality" is indeed scary, but I find it even spookier to look up "thing" in the Oxford English Dictionary, there to find that the origin of that word in English is inseparable from issues of authority, power, and the arbitrariness thereof. A thing is whatever authority (king) designates as an object worthy of attention & discussion. Which came first, the object or the attention? OED doesn't say, can't say, nor can you nor I, because to do so would require a god's-eye view of the world. Our confusion over these "things" may well be in-built, permanent. That's as real as it gets, no?

--Jim.

Maria Damon observes:

>In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group
>writes:
>> It might be fruitful to think back to the roots of "real" in the Latin
>> *res*, or "things".
>
>just a random comment --when this msg flashed on my screen, i initially read
it
>as "it might be frightful..."--md

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441. **Jim Pangborn**
Re: POETICS Digest - 17 May 1...
Mon 22 May 1995

According to the allegedly groovy Firesign Theatre (mordant, hilarious, but irritatingly moralistic late-60's satirists), Guru Lethar Ji says:

"If you want to get closer to the Earth,
sit down."

May 21 John Byrum notes:

>Jeffrey Timmons concludes a recent post with:
>
>I am also reminded of Whitman's sentiment in Song of Myself
>where he says something to the effect of being mad with desire to be in
>contact with the earth
>

>Jeffrey Timmons
>
>To that we might reply: "Dammit Walt take your shoes off."
>
>John

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442. **Jim Pangborn**
Re: next steps after art
Mon 22 May 1995

Mon, 22 May, Jake Berry <[REDACTED]> writes, in part:
>
>John,
>Perhaps the next steps after art would be the observations of the various
>ways by which we create what unfolds as the dominant strata of our lives.
>documentaion would serve no purpose except to ackledge that we are are
aware
>of it. . . . The idea . . . would be a general enhanced field of awareness
>that would require a broader perspective than is currently in practice.
>
>Just a reaction,
>Jake

This is a pretty good description of at least part of the socially useful work good art already does. Like most utopic projections, it tells us something about ourselves, now--in this case right elegantly.

--Jim

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443. **Chris Stroffolino**
Re: eigner, address, reality
Mon 22 May 1995

dear hank--of course it's okay to write tributes to the living...
it's just that it's so rarely done in a MOVING way...
anyway thank you for the clarification.. chris stroffolino

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444. **Gary Sullivan**

To Steve and Blair: Re irony

Mon 22 May 1995

Dear Steve & Blair: The gesture may be meant and/or read as ironic, negative, but the fact of the gesture is genuine, positive: the structure's the one thing you can't not mean. (Maybe that's why they call it "the means.") The "impossible" or "otherworld" for us living, is absolute silence, complete negation, total irony. We can't be "in" such a state any more or less than we always are, though we can, strategically, give or create for ourselves the illusion of its "presence." (Or "nonpresence," if you want.) Carter Ratcliff's argument for Warhol, if I remember, was that the pieces were completely empty of meaning, & as such, put the viewer "in touch" with "the void"--that one state of being that humans never fully experience while alive. (We get intimations, thru art, contemplation, near-death experiences, etc.) Ratcliff was, I think, arguing that Warhol's works were "transcendent" in that respect, because they were fully expressive of that "otherworld." But his argument never took into account the specific structures of Warhol's pieces--which aren't themselves valueless. One can speak of the physical properties of his Brillo boxes, of their shape. So, Warhol is postulating (as he's negating) existence, giving a thing precise value (as he's emptying it of value). Marjorie Perloff talks about the *structures* of Duchamp's ready-mades, invests them with aesthetic values--values they certainly have whether or not intended by the maker/user. Duchamp said that he chose his ready-mades by virtue of their aesthetic neutrality, but Marjorie's sense was that Duchamp wasn't being completely honest w/us. I disagree, at least w/respect to his ready-mades, though that doesn't negate the argument that these things aren't w/out aesthetic value. I think Duchamp was after what Ratcliff credits Warhol as achieving. (What was that line someone posted about "out of the labyrinth..."? I think this might be what that was referring to: the labyrinth being existence, out of the labyrinth being entrance into that "otherworld.") Xavier Villaurutia's *_Nostalgia for Death_*--Paz thought that title "too cute" or "clever"--but it makes perfectly reasonable sense to me, reading those poems; he's nostalgic for a state prior to (& post-) being, writes poems in an attempt to evoke absolute silence. Art meant (or said) to evoke the "otherworld" (silence, negation, total irony) is trafficking in illusion, & requires faith on the part of the audience member (if not necessarily on the part of the artist). The artist in this sense is a magician of sorts, the audience reduced to a state of awe or artificial innocence. In this sense, all art works in the same general way: creating the illusion of something not really (or not provably) there. What Ratcliff gets from Warhol, how he talks about getting it, and Ed Foster's "Poetry Has Nothing to Do with Politics" (about evoking silence) both sound very much

like Fiction Writing 101: "Believable characters" is simply substituted with "the void" or "emptiness." Both require conscious attention to "craft." Anyway. My main point I guess was that "total irony" is impossible, that only the creation of the illusion of "total irony" is possible. Artists do not--ever--completely negate the general idea or value of "art." By being artists, creating art, with however much irony, they're still positing art in general as a "positive," whatever the message or meaning.

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445. **Loss Glazier**

Re: Poet/Artist "Collaboration"

Mon 22 May 1995

Visual poetry collapses this "collaboration" into a single presentation embodying both visual and language modes/elements.

I thank everyone for their responses. It is interesting, though, isn't it, that though we have a clear "sense" of this

(i.e., a collaboration is when an artist and poet work together, etc., for a sort of joint goal rather than the text being superimposed or vice versa)

that no citations for articles or statements have clearly emerged?

I had hoped that there would be _something_ in print or online... since I thought there'd be some definitive +ground+ for this...

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446. **Wystan Curnow**

Re: The Etymology of Things

Mon 22 May 1995

Dear Jim Pangborn, On this list we have wolfgang staehl, initiator of The Thing, a mainly art net discussion group which I believe pre-dates the setting up of this list. Before we add this to our collection of SPOOKY words maybe Wolfgang will come forward with a different etymology. Unless I am wrong The Thing has its origins in the early political history of the British Isles, pre-Celt? and is the name for a gathering at which issues of social and religious moment were discussed, weddings held and so on. In large part a discussive occasion/place which is to say a precursor to the net, this list, etc. Am I right, wolfgang? Wystan Curnow

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447. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: next steps after art

Mon 22 May 1995

Mon, 22 May, Jake Berry <[REDACTED]> writes, in part:

John,

Perhaps the next steps after art would be the observations of the various ways by which we create what unfolds as the dominant strata of our lives. documentaion would serve no purpose except to ackledge that we are are aware of it. . . . The idea . . . would be a general enhanced field of awareness that would require a broader perspective than is currently in practice.

*Just a reaction,
Jake*

This is a pretty good description of at least part of the socially useful work good art already does. Like most utopic projections, it tells us something about ourselves, now--in this case right elegantly.

--Jim

...like poetry, science and religion

carl

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448. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: To Steve and Blair: Re irony

Mon 22 May 1995

*Marjorie Perloff talks about the *structures* of Duchamp's ready-mades, invests them with aesthetic values--values they certainly have whether or not intended by the maker/user. Duchamp said that he chose his ready-mades by virtue of their aesthetic neutrality, but Marjorie's sense was that Duchamp wasn't being completely honest w/us. I disagree, at least w/respect to his ready-mades, though that doesn't negate the argument that these things aren't w/out aesthetic value. I think Duchamp was after what Ratcliff credits Warhol as achieving. (What was that line someone posted about "out of the labyrinth..."? I think this might be what that was referring to: the labyrinth being existence, out of the labyrinth being entrance into that "otherworld.")*

this is the quotation from "the creative act": "to all appearances, the artist acts like a mediumistic being who, from the labyrinth beyond time and space, seeks his way out to a clearing."

i think it's important to note that any "aesthetic" (a much improperly used word today) value that one places on the ready-mades is more revealing of the epistemological preferences of the viewer than it is of duchamp himself. that's not to suggest there isn't the tongue-in-cheek mentality operating throughout his project (clearly that adds to his "indifference" strategically). but i don't understand suggestion that duchamp wasn't being completely honest with us. duchamp was warhol before even warhol was warhol. both are important shamen. but it seems awkward to name them as shamen. as one who has gone thru art school at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, i still contend that the majority of readings re the ready-mades are wrong. i think koons has had a lot to do with that

- > Anyway. My main point I guess was that "total irony" is impossible,
- > that only the creation of the illusion of "total irony" is possible.
- > Artists do not--ever--completely negate the general idea or value of
- > "art." By being artists, creating art, with however much irony, they're
- > still positing art in general as a "positive," whatever the message or
- > meaning.
- >

...duchamp made art. he also made non-art. that's how i perceive the famous large glass

even the mona lisa didn't really make much sense to me until he completed it with the 'tash

carl

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449. **Jeffrey Timmons**

The Feminine

Mon 22 May 1995

On Sun, 21 May 1995 [REDACTED] wrote:

| *What would a feminine conception of creativity look like?*

Again, I don't know, but I have an idea. I recreate here--if you're not familiar with it--some of Cixous's statements.

She suggests an "affirmation of difference: the constitution of a feminine not defined in reference to the masculine; it would be an "economy" defined by forms specific to women: "a regime, energies, a system of spending not necessarily carved out by culture. A feminine textual body is recognized by the

fact that it is always endless, without endin: there's no closure, it doesn't stop, and it's this that very often makes the feminine text difficult to read. For we've learned to read books that basically pose the word "end." But this one doesn't finish, a feminine text goes on and on and at a certain point the volume comes to and end but the writing continues and for the reader this means being thrust into the void." A feminine text "takes the metaphorical form of wandering, excess, risk of the unreckonable: no reckoning, a feminine text can't be predicted, isn't predictable, isn't knowable and is therefore very disturbing." Just a few suggestions of a direction for an answer to your question. For all the claims of essentializing sexual difference, though, I find cixous interesting. And yes, men can write the feminine--poets, though, not novelists. According to her....

Jeffrey Timmons

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450. **Robert Drake**
Re: Poet/Artist "Collaboration"

Mon 22 May 1995

Visual poetry collapses this "collaboration" into a single presentation embodying both visual and language modes/elements.

I thank everyone for their responses. It is interesting, though, isn't it, that though we have a clear "sense" of this

(i.e., a collaboration is when an artist and poet work together, etc., for a sort of joint goal rather than the text being superimposed or vice versa)

that no citations for articles or statements have clearly emerged?

I had hoped that there would be _something_ in print or online... since I thought there'd be some definitive +ground+ for this...

loss--

already in the mail to you is the issue of TapRoot devoted to CoLaboration... personal reflections by various folks who'd done collaborative projects, plus samples. published 5 years ago, it's covers a pretty proscribed area ov th field, embarrassing what i didn't know at the time that it appeared. still, the bibliography has +150 entries...

asever

luigi

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451. **John Byrum**

Re: next steps after art

Mon 22 May 1995

In a recent message, Carl Peters concludes with the following:

>the genius of rausneberg, cage, even warhol i think is that they >erase
>the boundaries between art and life -- sounds godawfully cliché, i >know,
>and like burnham writes in "problems of criticism," the question is >no
longer what is good art and what is bad art, but why isn't >everyone an
artist?

Carl,

I don't think the people you mention "erase the boundaries between art and life", but they may blur them a bit by integrating aspects of each in the other. My notion of erasing the boundaries would be more like conceiving your entire life and all your thoughts and experiences as art. But even that is not really what I want to mean, if for no other reason than that if everything is subsumed under the one category, art, then you have basically a superfluous category (categories are meaningful or useful only in relation to other categories). I may mean something like realizing the complexity and interwoven unity in multiplicity of everything, but that sounds suspiciously academic and even religious in overtone, so that's not quite it either. In fact, I think I mean I don't have the words yet to say what I mean.

I do have the feeling that continuing to make art (i.e., writing "poetry" and publishing it, or making visual art, etc) may not really accomplish all that I/we want to accomplish. And I don't mean just social change or changes in our ways of thinking, although those are certainly worthwhile changes to strive for. I just don't think that art is finally that effectual in doing that. (Of course I continue to believe that art accumulates small changes over time which can lead to shifts in the culture.) But, the culture is becoming ever more adept at swallowing any artistic production whole and commodifying thus neutralizing it. Our productions can have an effect in our small circles of readers/correspondents (such as this discussion group, and the readers of our small presses) and change can build and evolve and even leak out slightly, but will probably never become a significant factor in the culture at large.

Enough rambling. This is a conflicted subject for me.

John

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452. **John Byrum**

Re: next steps after art

Mon 22 May 1995

Dear Jake,

Thanks for your thoughts on the next steps after art.

Could it be that we might discontinue making art as it is currently understood because we finally realize that its forms and modes of understanding can no longer express quite what we want to say?

And what would we do then? Not an Art Strike. That's not what i mean it all. And is simply living it without producing documents or relics somehow going to be enough?

We need a new idea of a supple communication fine-grained enough to accommodate a wide range of new approaches. We need to somehow re-think the entire enterprise. Art has become mere decoration.

John

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453. **John Byrum**

Re: next steps after art

Mon 22 May 1995

Following are some replies to my question about the next evolution "after art":

>

> Mon, 22 May, Jake Berry <[REDACTED]> writes, in part:

> >

> >John,

> >Perhaps the next steps after art would be the observations of the various
> >ways by which we create what unfolds as the dominant strata of our lives.
> >documentaion would serve no purpose except to ackledge that we are are
aware

> >of it. . . . The idea . . . would be a general enhanced field of
awareness

> >that would require a broader perspective than is currently in practice.

> >

> >Just a reaction,

> >Jake

>

> This is a pretty good description of at least part of the socially useful
> work good art already does. Like most utopic projections, it tells us

> something about ourselves, now--in this case right elegantly.
>
> --Jim
>

| ...like poetry, science and religion
| carl

This is good thought here, but perhaps we need to somehow try to think outside received categories like poetry, art, science or religion. All these modes of enquiry have their own pre-conceived notions and filters. We just might need new ones.

John

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454. **John Byrum**

Re: To Steve and Blair: Re irony

Mon 22 May 1995

Gary Sullivan concludes a recent message with:

Artists do not--ever--completely negate the general idea or value of "art." By being artists, creating art, with however much irony, they're still positing art in general as a "positive," whatever the message or meaning.

Gary,

Can people evaginate "the general idea or value of "art""? i.e., turn it inside out so that its former inside becomes the whole world of our experience, thoughts, desires...

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455. **George Bowering**

Re: martha again

Tue 23 May 1995

Okay, according to that regional magazine, this Martha Stewart is "the definitive American woman of her time." But who is she? Or, what does she do? Is she a shrink? A professor? An actress? A Politician? I have heard of a lot of American (sic) women of our time, but I have never, before this netstuff, heard of her. Is it the fact that in New York they take what happens there to be the real U.S. the way the U.S. calls all their sports winners the "world champions"?

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456. **George Bowering**

Re: Really real Martha

Tue 23 May 1995

Thanks, Michael, for telling me a little abt this Stewart woman. I take it that she comes on TV and in regional NY magazines telling people recipes and furniture placement?

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457. **George Bowering**

Re: Yo, Ed

Tue 23 May 1995

I wanted to write a
line

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458. **Steve Carll**

Re: The Etymology of Things

Tue 23 May 1995

Jim Pangborn writes:

The history of "reality" is indeed scary, but I find it even spookier to look up "thing" in the Oxford English Dictionary, there to find that the origin of that word in English is inseparable from issues of authority, power, and the arbitrariness thereof. A thing is whatever authority (king) designates as an object worthy of attention & discussion. Which came first, the object or the attention? OED doesn't say, can't say, nor can you nor I, because to do so would require a god's-eye view of the world. Our confusion over these "things" may well be in-built, permanent. That's as real as it gets, no?

-Jim.

My `_Dictionary of Word Origins_` says that "The ancestral meaning of *thing* is 'time': it goes back to a prehistoric Germanic *thingam, which was related to Gothic *theihs* 'time,' and may come ultimately from the Indo-European base *ten-* 'stretch' (source of English "tend", "tense", etc.) In Germanic it evolved semantically via 'appointed time' to 'judicial or legislative assembly.' This was the meaning it originally had in English..."

So, while the word may be bound up with power and authority, the way power and authority bind up everything they come in contact with, it's also bound up with something that eludes power and authority: time, which is more fundamentally grounded.

Steve

459. **Steve Carll**

Re: The Feminine

Tue 23 May 1995

Jeffrey Timmons writes:

Again, I don't know, but I have an idea. I recreate here--if you're not familiar with it--some of Cixous's statements.

She suggests an "affirmation of difference: the constitution of a feminine not defined in reference to the masculine; it would be an "economy" defined by forms specific to women: "a regime, energies, a system of spending not necessarily carved out by culture. A feminine textual body is recognized by the fact that it is always endless, without end: there's no closure, it doesn't stop, and it's this that very often makes the feminine text difficult to read. For we've learned to read books that basically pose the word "end." But this one doesn't finish, a feminine text goes on and on and at a certain point the volume comes to an end but the writing continues and for the reader this means being thrust into the void." A feminine text "takes the metaphorical form of wandering, excess, risk of the unreckonable: no reckoning, a feminine text can't be predicted, isn't predictable, isn't knowable and is therefore very disturbing." Just a few suggestions of a direction for an answer to your question. For all the claims of essentializing sexual difference, though, I find Cixous interesting. And yes, men can write the feminine--poets, though, not novelists. According to her....

Jeffrey Timmons

I think it's precisely this fact that indicates that Cixous is not essentializing sexual difference; she makes very sure to say the "feminine" and not the "female"; both men and women incorporate all of those qualities called "masculine" and all of those called "feminine", but in different "mixtures", I'll call it on the fly here. It's only through various processes of cultural history that the masculine has come to seem so exclusive and "desirable" in men only and the feminine for women only.

What is intriguing is this notion of writing "engendering" itself; not only that it situates itself along a sort of spectrum of gender, but that it can do so independently of the identity of the writer, and effectively so when the writer is able to abandon his/her identity to the writing.

By the way, I once saw Cixous and she mentioned Shakespeare and Genet as convincing writers of the feminine voice--& Shakey in the character of Cleopatra, no less!

Steve

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460. **Jim Pangborn**

Re: The Etymology of Things

Tue 23 May 1995

Steve Carll <[REDACTED]> writes,

*My _Dictionary of Word Origins_ says that "The ancestral meaning of *thing* is 'time': it goes back to a prehistoric Germanic *thingam, which was related to Gothic *theihs* 'time,' and may come ultimately from the Indo-European base *ten-* 'stretch' (source of English "tend", "tense", etc.) In Germanic it evolved semantically via 'appointed time' to 'judicial or legislative assembly.' This was the meaning it originally had in English..."*

So, while the word may be bound up with power and authority, the way power and authority bind up everything they come in contact with, it's also bound up with something that eludes power and authority: time, which is more fundamentally grounded.

Steve

The OED says pretty much the same as the above. The word comes into English, though, out of the mouths of kings saying "OK, here's what we have to sit down and discuss now." One of the earliest recorded instances is in *_Beowulf_*, just so. Perhaps, in the Old Scandinavian whence it derives, it signifies something more democratic. If so, I'd be glad to hear it. Who would know?

To be precise, wouldn't we have to say that the "time" that's cognate with this convocational "thing" means something more like what we mean when we say "appointment"? This was way before Heidegger, Augustine, or any of the other heroes of abstract thought who represent time as so "fundamentally grounded."

I don't want to exaggerate the importance of these word-origins. Time passes, regimes come and go, and the originary violences (if such they were) of our social order recede in importance beside our prospects for freedom and justice. My comments on "thing" were intended to lend another voice to an ongoing theme, though the point is as often forgotten as raised in the larger discussion here: our things, the very shapes of our attention, are haunted by authorities long dead and discredited. The implications of this are variously under discussion here, under several headings.

--Jim

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461. **Edward Foster**

Re: Yo, Ed

Tue 23 May 1995

Williams

is

bor-

ing

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462. **Jorge Guitart**

boundary between art and life

Tue 23 May 1995

quoting from an old poem

the boundary between art and life looks like a frame

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463. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: next steps after art

Tue 23 May 1995

This is good thought here, but perhaps we need to somehow try to think outside received categories like poetry, art, science or religion. All these modes of enquiry have their own pre-conceived notions and filters. We just might need new ones.

John

john, hi: this may be an unfair question for anybody but can you expand on that. this is an important issue. one of the ways i've hit upon that challenges these modes and pre-conceived notions is through working within an interdisciplinary context. i see this as especially relevant in regards to my study here in the university. looking forward to further exchange on this topic

take care,

carl

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464. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: next steps after art

Tue 23 May 1995

Could it be that we might discontinue making art as it is currently understood because we finally realize that its forms and modes of understanding can no longer express quite what we want to say?

And what would we do then? Not an Art Strike. That's not what i mean it all. And is simply living it without producing documents or relics somehow going to be enough?

We need a new idea of a supple communication fine-grained enough to accommodate a wide range of new approaches. We need to somehow re-think the entire enterprise. Art has become mere decoration.

John

...or go underground

c

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465. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: next steps after art

Tue 23 May 1995

hi, john,

point well taken in regards to the erasing vs blurring the boundaries distinction. once again, if i can refer to burnham's essay and offer a loose paraphrase, art, at least on the psychic level, allows a culture to remain in contact with its boundaries facing nature. that's always struck me as such an important definition, for lack of a better term, of art and the purpose underlying art. on one level, tho, i think there does exist that erasing of distinctions between art and life in that there is a certain state, call it a frame of mind, that you come to and there is no more art, there's no need for it, it ceases to exist. maybe that relates to transcendence, which is something i take very seriously but then, on the other hand, there is the "work" of art. my notion of the _work_ of art is that it's an indexical sign -- crudely, indexical of something sacred

i disagree with respect to your notion of the failure of art to inspire change or a realignment of consciousness. maybe that's just over-wrought idealism on my part (hell, there's a phrase!), but it's something i've taken a lot of heat over...

...i think you hit on the essence of art, tho: "I may mean something like realizing the complexity and interwoven unity in multiplicity of everything, but that sounds suspiciously academic and even religious in overtone..."

right on!, i think; and what's wrong with sounding those over-tones: suspiciously academic and even religious. i'm convinced that that's how i'm perceived. maybe not the religious part, but for sure the other. i presented a paper on bpNichol's poetics in april in which i attempted to work within his texts of bliss by inventing and writing my own text of bliss, and the result was performance-like, altho it wasn't no performance but the real thing. suffice it to say it didnt go over very well, altho, in the final analysis, i did my job. and it signifies to me that i might be on to something here, but that's another discussion altogether

'to go beyond the point where it is even neces-
/sary to think in terms of words'

--bpNichol (_TM bk 4_)

take care,
carl

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466. **Don Cheney**
The concrete poem
Tue 23 May 1995

This is a (partial) transcription of a Home De(s)pot radio commercial. This commercial seems more serious about its poetry tie-in than a previous h.d. (another poetry tie-in?) commercial.

[clears throat]

[microphone feedback sound]

"The Concrete Poem by A.C. Benningfield

Concrete by the yard

Concrete by the foot

I mix it, I mix it

I mix it, man [sound of page being turned]

When my forms hold tight

And the mortar's just right

I mix it, I mix it,

I mix it, man"

[Home Despot blurb -- jazz style bass in the background -- the textual tie-in to poetry being "passion"(?): "at h.d. we're as passionate as you are about the building materials you use" wow! another tie-in ("building materials")! wouldn't Shklovsky have loved (or have written!) that!]

"Concrete so clean
Concrete so cool [microphone feedback sound]
I mix it [microphone feedback sound]
Man, can I mix it"

(more home despot blurb)

Don Cheney



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467. **George Bowering**

Re: Yo, Ed

Tue 23 May 1995

The bored
are
boring

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468. **Lindz Williamson**

bored

Tue 23 May 1995

> The bored
> are
> boring
because
they should be
bowering,
Oops
I mean
writing.

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469. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: Yo, Ed

Tue 23 May 1995

On Tue, 23 May 1995, Edward Foster wrote:

Williams
is
bor-
ing

Seriously?

And so is life....

Jeffrey Timmons

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470. **cris cheek**

Re: desire / and the 39 steps

Tue 23 May 1995

This hour of pungent lilacs comes my friend - the hour of honeysuckle bees and peonies. Silver and violet clouds thread jags from 'core' disguise. A lockbird slang wounds blur gathering dark. Time flinging its things onto that copper hook.

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471. **Ryan Knighton**

Re: Yo, Ed

Tue 23 May 1995

pro
fun
ditty

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472. **Patrick Phillips**

Re: The Etymology of Things -> Instances

Tue 23 May 1995

Jim and Steve's discussion of power and "things" judicial has another parallel found recently in an essay I've been reading by Castoriadis in "Thesis Eleven" 24 "The State of the Subject Today." Just that "time," "thing" draw an etymological/use similarity in Castoriadis' use of "instances." In reference to Freud's use of "instanz" as conflicts between opposing instances, or the

multiplicity of "psychical persons." Instanz as Freud meant it carries a juridical flavor and "instance" in French can have this same "authoritative" connotation. But we can use time and thing to get at the meaning of instance. In this (an) instance, some "thing" takes "place" at a particular "time" - instance is a situation.

What concerns me is not that these words have a juridical, or power-based etymology - this is not really surprising but that the "instance" of "things" (human) act at all "times" within this "juridico-administrative space." That we "take our place" in this space along side/within words as a mode of being points not to an etymological root, as Jim rightly points out, but out to a connotative function of the state in word-use. Lest we forget that speaking is a "state"-ment.

This is what I've always thought R. Grenier meant by I HATE SPEECH. That the "multiplicity of psychic persons" taken in/taking up a poetic critique of "state" as "juridico-administrative" enterprise can intervene in this juridical (be-it democratic) process of "state"-ment. That there is a conflict between opposing instances (the juridical and the "liberatory") of the word, of "statement" and that the highlighting of this conflict is a process of intervention.

As an aside, I like Ron's update of "addition" to "intervention" in -

| *The perfection of forms as interventions in nature.*

I'm not sure that even "form" is permitted here though Ron. You have said something like "Perhaps poetry is not a form at all but an activity."

So, in this instance, we act.

This haphazardly said, someone really must do a clear analysis of the successes and failures of this "project" of intervention.

Pat Phillips

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473. **John Byrum**

Re: next steps after art

Tue 23 May 1995

Carl,

thanks for your perceptive points on "the next evolution of art".

your bpNichol quote "to go beyond the point where it is necessary even to think in terms of words" is one aspect of my notion of the next evolution. words (language) oversimplify, place thick outlines (cuts) around pieces/parts of our

fluid thoughts & perceptions. They straitjacket our imagination of the possible as much as they propell it.

And, I don't think silence is the only alternative to words.

John

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474. **John Byrum**

Re: next steps after art

Tue 23 May 1995

Carl,

I agree that attempting to think outside categories may be THE issue currently. Interdisciplinary studies linking formerly isolated areas of inquiry has been an invaluable method with many bright results (such as chaos theory in physics). However, at this point i'm trying to imagine jettisoning the notion of categories, trying to forget most things, opening the mind amid an emptiness, and simply being in that awhile to see what floats up. I have a friend (a visual artist) who has been letting go of language in various ways (for instance by not speaking for days at a time and just thinking) for quite awhile now and then returning. Lately, she sits in her studio and thinks as she does things in her sketchbooks which she insists are not drawings. (Though they look like what you or I would call drawing) And she says she doesn't remember most of what she does or thinks about during these hours. She and I have developed a distinction between "thought" (which is conscious, ego-directed) and "thinking" which is unconscious, multi-dimensional, the tips of which surface as "thought". This might be something like what I mean. But there aren't words for it (or may not be or at least i haven't found them yet). Best,

John

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475. **Gary Sullivan**

To John Byrum, re: Mere Decoration, etc.

Tue 23 May 1995

Dear John:

Can't resist this re: your "Art has become mere decoration":

WHITE LILY

Hungry and humming in the world's weeds
I staggered aimless into focus & generally
avoided work. My life was bearable

tho I never slept, grew incoherent
with the excellence of art, which gave me
peace. I could have worked. Why didn't I work?
Instead, at 19, I found savage friends
a tribe, who clothed me & gave me money
to be serious, my obscurity
part of the atmosphere. "I'm beating my brains out"
"I'm stuck." We fucked for hours after the funeral
slept in hammocks, woke to drink coffee
& read. Osamu Dazai's NO LONGER HUMAN
and the complete works of Philip K. Dick.
We went in on THE WRITER'S MARKET
treated everyone as audience, our lives
an exiguous silver flood of action seen at a distance
went to, & abandoned, the university
& did what we did outside. We learned
to tell lies, to tread dangerously on everything
that moved. We insisted on ourselves w/smoke
in the blood, redeemed all bogus weight
for cruder pleasure. I wish that today was yesterday.
Today, when all tendency is "mere decoration"
I'm unpopular everywhere because they expect nothing
either way, accept me or reject me, not this.

* * *

I actually didn't take that "mere decoration" from your post, but from a statement Ron Silliman made in Lally's None of the Above anthology of 1976. (There's a great photo of Ron in there, too -- long hair, 'burns, "blues" sunglasses, outstanding (what?) Panama hat? I think? (Ron?) -- 'stash, OUTRAGEOUS stripes goin' on in the pattern of his shirt, cup of coffee (I think?) gripped tightly (will he throw it at the photographer?), posture all aslouch, but an *energetic* slouch -- to put it in plain English: the dude is lookin' like Charles Williford's younger, more intense brother.)

Anyway, that word "evaginate" again: Well, you know who I've always thought fits this description? Bern Porter. He's still alive, as far as I know, still one of the most active mail artists in the world (art created w/the understanding it'll be received, experienced & then likely dumped in the wastecan -- tho I'm sure there's a few well-meaning U's of Anyplaces that're archiving the stuff). The guy gave up a fairly stable life as a nuclear physicist (I'm sure that's not the technical name for what he did), published books for a while (including Robert

Duncan's first), wrote the Sci-Art Manifesto, made plans for works of art that've never been created, put together a number of books of founds that very few people have probably ever seen (tho they've got an outstanding number of 'em at Woodland Pattern), opens his FRONT LAWN every summer to -- what? -- spontaneous art activity (or "non" activity?) of some kind, and has managed to never have been taken seriously or spoken of by any academic -- at least, not that I've seen (please don't ruin my day by telling me someone's doing their thesis on him), & when you mention his name to people, your response is typically a perfect blank stare. (Tho, I've been surprised on more than one occassion.)

I don't know if he fits your description, John. But if anyone's managed to "turn 'the general idea or value of "art" inside out so that its former inside becomes the whole world of our experience, he's the most likely candidate I can think of off the top of my head for anyone who's ever come close. Well, him and Jack Smith, what I'm learning (or deceiving myself into believing I'm learning, I should say) about him.

Actually, there are undoubtedly hundreds of others, thousands, perhaps, sprinkled all over the world.

But we're fetishists, John. The artproduct -- we can't get around it -- whether it's the artpiece, or the account.

Yours,

Gary

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476. **Steve Carll**

Re: The Etymology of Things

Wed 24 May 1995

Jim Pangborn writes,

our things, the very shapes of our attention, are haunted by authorities long dead and discredited.

--which is beautifully put and certainly something (oops!) I feel as well. I guess what I was reacting to was a sense that words, which must inevitably enter a historical culture that includes power and authority, cannot also open (or at least point) out of power structures. I don't see it that way, although it's certainly not as easy as "language always transcends power-structures." But your other point--that it's tricky to go mucking about with word-meanings from thousands of years ago--is also well-taken.

Steve

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477. **Michael Boughn**

Re: Really real Martha

Wed 24 May 1995

No, George, you haven't quite got it yet. *Martha Stewart Living*, as her magazine is called, is a major international publication. I'm looking at the November 1994 issue (where the turkey recipe came from). Defending her "Calendar" ("Martha's Calendar" it's called) she writes in "A Letter from Martha": "I know that the calendar is full, but it is full so that it can coax all of us into balancing our lives so that there will be time to plant daffodils, cook a special meal, or collect old-fashioned Christmas ornaments. For me, 'living' is filling my day with activity that is meaningful, productive, and interesting. I truly believe that organization, deep-seated curiosity, and attention to what's really important will give each of us fuller and more special lives."

Philosophy for the nineties.

Also included are tips on winterizing the garden, canning brandied pears, grouting and caulking, and a guide to her TV show.

Let me know if you're interested in the turkey recipe.

See you next week, I hope.

Mike

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478. **Jorge Guitart**

art after art

Wed 24 May 1995

Art after art will sacralize all ***truly artistic*** After Art projects. It has happened before and it will happen again. Trust me. (I have a Master's degree in Science and credits enough for another in Fine Arts.)

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479. **Jim Pangborn**

Re: The Etymology of Things

Wed 24 May 1995

Thanks, Steve, for showing me how my first post on this topic seemed much more pessimistic than I actually feel. Your response points up a problem in academic discourse that troubles me greatly, tho. I write of how a certain term is or seems "spooky" or "haunted," and people naturally take it as a call to

abandon the use of that term. The thing is, "thing" is indispensable. Its troubling political dimension (I won't call it baggage, since that term paints a false picture of how words work) will not go away, but neither does it necessarily always dominate. Power and hierarchy are ubiquitous, but they certainly aren't every"thing"! I would respectfully ask that poets and other artists resolutely confront the things that bid to needlessly dominate us (and by opposing end them? heh heh . . . good luck!) and also that they (we) resolutely believe, even if utopically, in freedom. Of course, I can't tell y'all what to do. But yes, folks, this **is** about poetics.

Steve Carll writes, beginning by quoting me:

our things, the very shapes of our attention, are haunted by authorities long dead and discredited.

--which is beautifully put and certainly something (oops!) I feel as well. I guess what I was reacting to was a sense that words, which must inevitably enter a historical culture that includes power and authority, cannot also open (or at least point) out of power structures. I don't see it that way, although it's certainly not as easy as "language always transcends power-structures." But your other point--that it's tricky to go mucking about with word-meanings from thousands of years ago--is also well-taken.

Steve

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480. **Edward Foster**

Re: Yo, Ed

Wed 24 May 1995

re:
ing
see
Spicer

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481. **Edward Foster**

Re: Yo, Ed

Wed 24 May 1995

boring
something
new,
George?

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482. **I.LIGHTMAN**

Re: mail by the megabyte?

Wed 24 May 1995

Great message, Dodie!

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483. **I.LIGHTMAN**

some Lorca

Wed 24 May 1995

Hallo all, I thought I'd post the opening speech from a translation I've been commissioned to write (for no fee!), from Lorca's first play, *Bad Dream of the Butterflies* (cos I'm quite proud of it, and it took about a week, maybe forty hours, of solid focussed concentration and work):

ESTEEMED guests: the show you've come to see's minor and unsettling - sadly someone grasps for the full moon, and winds up his hands full of shards from a broken heart.

LOVE perplexes and shocks men all the time. Love is set tonight in a closeted orchard, where long ago lived bugs - who we show nibbling their way through peaceable and settled lives. The bugs contentedly existed, only to suckle on dew and breed awe of their gods into their young. They loved, and believed in, a natural love only concerned with HOW to love. Like grandfather to father, father preached it to son, like an ancient pure pearl the first in the family line got handed by God. Like the LOVE that relaxes and takes the POLLEN all the time from the unstinting flowers to come into the air, so natural love accepted their surrender in the sweet fumes of grass.

BUT there was one bug one day who grasped at a radical love, who had an intuition to rework things for himself. Working perhaps through poetry a literature student of the few who ever go for a walk forgetfully left in a field, the bug earnestly swallowed lines like "I want the one I can't have, and it's driving me mad...." Oh, how I entreat all my esteemed guests not to litter the countryside with their purchases: if they find out the sincere who have not become deadened like us, our overdone cliches can actually do them over.... Words that ask who MADE the God who made the heavens can DESOLATE those who think with the guru absent.

COME useless words, register a sincere life thus was lost, love was DEATH.

THE ENDLESS portering of the scythe to us by Mr Skull and Bones! It is a primal image our holy books have copywrit, moral: the caress that makes the head spin secretly turns the handle on Death's Door; Cupid's got his feet up in

the spacious cockpit of the Death's Head; roses, kisses and pining clad a blade to finish you off.

A VETERAN Shakesperean fairy who escaped to the living wood pulp of a real heath, and still flutters about with his cane, is the one who gave Mr Lorca the plot, one dusky equinox when the herd were all indoors in bed. So did our spooky show come to be rendered! WE'VE nearly got to it, but first I ask of you all the SAME favour that the heath-sprite asked Mr Lorca that dusky equinox when the herd were all indoors in bed: really explore where you STAND, on these refined utopian bugs swanning about in grass. Who ARE Europeans, with all our drinking "problems" and "human nature", to recoil from these tranquilly closeted and merry vermin taking in the sun in the morning? What DRIVES you so to be rid of these of nature's simpletons? WHO CANNOT SEARCHINGLY love gravel and vermin cannot feel God's reign!

The veteran fairy said these words especially to the poet: "Coming is the flora and fauna's reign. Men blunder about God's creation but the fauna and flora stay always in God's light. Lorca, tell these men LOVE is born in sameness of PASSION in all the walks of life. Sameness in what ripples the flower in the air and the big star. Sameness in the words that spout cool in a water fountain and echo in the same key in the big sea. Lorca, make them humble, equals we all are in Nature." And no more would the veteran say.

SO, ON with the show! STRUGGLE with your reflex tittering at these bugs, these seeming children, seeming unmanly. And if tonight's at all instructive, go to the heath to give your thanks: to the veteran fairy with the cane, tranquilly taking in the dusk, while the herd are all indoors in bed.

Federico Garcia Lorca

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484. **Edward Foster**

Re: desire / and the 39 steps

Wed 24 May 1995

pungent in clear water, grasp the root, velvet, sweet. all words they tell us to forget, and so transform oneself, empirical in wit, and dry. the real pearl moves from root to tongue, as fingers (dark) releave the core

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485. **George Bowering**

Re: Really real Martha

Wed 24 May 1995

Jeez, Mike, how did anyone in NY etc know how to do anything around the house before this Martha person showed them? No wonder my place is a mess, terrible garden, lousy meals, etc. I have been using Paul Blackburn as a guide.

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486. **George Bowering**

Re: Yo, Ed

Wed 24 May 1995

see

zoo

cow

ski

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487. **Ryan Knighton**

Re: Yo, Ed

Wed 24 May 1995

simply

this evening

stretched canvas

o'er tired eyes yawing to focus

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488. **Marshall H. Reese**

republicans threaten artists

Wed 24 May 1995

Ligorano/Reese

67 Devoe Street, Bklyn, NY 11211

For Immediate Release Contact: Nora Ligorano/Marshall Reese

fax/phone [REDACTED]

Republican National Committee threatens artists over use of
RContract with AmericaS

Did you know that the Contract with America is a registered trademark? ThatUs right. In yet another sign that the rights of free debate and public discussion are under attack, the Republican National Committee has threatened artists

Nora Ligorano and Marshall Reese over the use of the name RContract with AmericaS in their latest artwork.

Last month the artists presented their new limited edition of RContract with AmericaS underwear in an installation at the Center for Book Arts in New York City. The new art piece follows the artistsU successful edition of the Bible Belt. It continues their fascination with producing wearable art that addresses political topics, as well as their concerns about the packaging and marketing of political ideas.

Their new limited edition artwork consists of 120 signed and numbered pairs of mens and womens briefs. The artists have recontextualized the RepublicansU Contract with America by screen printing it on the seats of mens and womens cotton underwear. The face of Newt Gingrich adorns the crotch. The Associated Press reported on the art work after the artists sent pairs of the underwear to President Clinton, Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich and other elected officials in Washington, D.C.

Allison Fahrenkopf Brigati, the Republican National Committee Associate Chief Counsel, wrote the artists Rto discontinue [their] unauthorized use of the Contract with America logo and text immediately.S

The ACLU Arts Censorship Project and cooperating attorney Elizabeth McNamara of the law firm Lankenau, Kovner and Kurtz have written to Ms. Brigati that Rthe art project is a classic example of political satire. Each limited edition work is accompanied by a statement explaining the message intended by its creators. The combined impression is clearly humorous, and obviously meant to parody the Contract with America. Such a limited use on what is not a commercial product but rather an art work carrying the strong political speech message of its creators, we believe, constitutes protected political expression.S

For more information, contact
Ligorano/Reese by phone or fax at



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489. **Mark Wallace**
Poetic Briefs is not dead
Wed 24 May 1995

For all those who have expressed confusion or concern as to what is happening with Poetic Briefs:

PB has been put on temporary hold due to financial reasons, but expects to be in operation again as soon as possible. Do not assume your subscription has run out, or leap to other dire conclusions.

Mark Wallace

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490. **Don Cheney**
radio commercials

Wed 24 May 1995

there's another commercial on the radio here in san diego
and i don't know what it is a commercial for but every time
i hear it all i really hear is:

"...more on sale..."

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491. **Alan Sondheim**
Re: Yo, Ed

Wed 24 May 1995

[7m [4m [5m pure
[7m [4m [5m intru-
[1m sion/scion
[0m

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492. **Hank Lazer**
Re: yo, ed, boring?

Wed 24 May 1995

so mush descends
upon

a read wheel
barrow

glazed with brain
water

beside the fried
chicken?

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493. **cris cheek**

crisis

Wed 24 May 1995

I'm forwarding some selections from posts on Ht-Lit that might be of interest to readers here in relation to recent discussion under this subject: -

I believe it was Stuart Moulthrop who first observed, in his introduction to J. Yellowlees Douglas' I HAVE SAID NOTHING, that there seem to be an exceptional number of car crashes and dismembered bodies in serious hypertext fiction. Collisions feature prominently in:

Michael Joyce, AFTERNOON

J. Y. Douglas, I HAVE SAID NOTHING

Monica Moran, AMBULANCE (Electronic Hollywood)

Michael van Mantgem, COMPLETING THE CIRCLE (Eastgate, in press)

and less prominently in

John McDaid, UNCLE BUDDY'S PHANTOM FUNHOUSE

Dismembered bodies appear in:

J. Y. Douglas, I HAVE SAID NOTHING

Monica Moran, AMBULANCE

Kathryn Cramer, IN SMALL AND LARGE PIECES

Shelley Jackson THE PATCHWORK GIRL (Eastgate, in press)

and the threat of dismemberment, or at least puncture, pervades

Mary-kim Arnold, LUST.

Moulthrop's VICTORY GARDEN includes a car chase (suggesting crash) and explosion (suggesting dismemberment).

Note that neither the authors nor the audience of these works include the adolescent boys whose preoccupation with violence is proverbial; I think it safe to assert that these works are totally unlike Mortal Kombat and its kin.

Why **are** there so many crashes and body parts?

Moulthrop, in his introductory essay to I HAVE SAID NOTHING, suggests that the crash enacts the hypertextual breaking of the line. Dismemberment, too, might by extension reflect the dismemberment of the unitary text through which a richer hypertext may emerge.

Mary-kim Arnold, in the course of a really remarkable reading and lecture at the "Serious Hypertext" symposium in Boston last weekend, suggested that the

violence of these images reflects the effort required by women to wrest the tools of writing from (predominantly male) control and bend them to their purposes.

Kathryn Cramer, in an earlier "Serious Hypertext" meeting in Ann Arbor, had noted instead the importance of violent expression in writing for and by women, in horror and literary fiction and well as in literary hypertext.

If I understand Diane Greco's viewpoint correctly in her forthcoming hypertext, CYBORG: ENGINEERING THE BODY ELECTRIC (also in press), the theme of dismemberment arises naturally from the female construction of the body, and from the cyborg's resistance to the masculinization of technology.

In an offhand, improvised remark during a recent talk at Gettysburg, I myself ascribed crashes and dismemberments alike to the hypertext writer's desire to disrupt surfers, browsers and grazers, to grab the reader and shake her and get her to STOP and PAY ATTENTION.

(These summaries to terrible violence to the arguments advanced by their original authors, and I do urge readers to refer to their writings and not to rely on my flawed readers).

Why **are** there so many crashes and so much dismemberment?

(Mark Bernstein of Eastgate)

While I can understand women feeling that it's reflective of their experience, I think we all, male and female, are experiencing and metaphorising our own losses in this move to digital space. Hypermedia is a very disembodied communication. And we've lost our books, which were physical experiences, extensions of our bodies as well as our minds. Perhaps we are representing, even mourning our past.

And we are also perhaps trying to free the reader from the old ideation patterns: crash! and cut off your expectations. Crash!: crisis, and things don't have to act according to normal. Time shifts. Perception shifts. Awareness expands. Crisis may be more easily and accurately portrayed in hypertext because the experience (which most of us have had) of a crash/crisis is multilinear. It does make sense to evoke this in the reader, although it seems clearly in danger of becoming a cliché, doesn't it.

(Ellen Chait)

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494. **Ryan Knighton**

Re: Yo, Ed

Wed 24 May 1995

no,n no, george: it's

sea

zoo

cough

ski

see

zoo

cow

ski

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495. **Wystan Curnow**

Re: Yo, Ed

Wed 24 May 1995

Dear Ryan,

earth's

the diff-

erence

Wystan

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496. **Wystan Curnow**

Re: Yo, Ed

Wed 24 May 1995

Dear george,

is that

LN

see

zoo

Yst

an

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Mark Wallace

Michael Magoolaghan ! untraceable wandering/
University of Washington ! the meaning of knowing
Dept. of English !
Box 354330 ! Susan Howe, "Articulation of
Seattle, WA 98195-4330 ! Sound Forms in Time"
[REDACTED] !

!

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498. **Robert Drake**
legislative alert (forward)
Wed 24 May 1995

Update: -Bill is on the Senate floor

-Please act to help Leahy stop the Exon censorship bill

PETITION TO HELP SENATOR LEAHY STOP THE UNCONSTITUTIONAL
COMMUNICATIONS DECENCY ACT

May 19, 1995

PLEASE WIDELY REDISTRIBUTE THIS DOCUMENT WITH THIS BANNER
INTACT

REDISTRIBUTE ONLY UNTIL June 9, 1995

REPRODUCE THIS ALERT ONLY IN RELEVANT FORUMS

Distributed by the Voters Telecommunications Watch (██████)

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----- THE TIME IS NOW

HELP SENATOR LEAHY STOP THE EXON COMMUNICATIONS DECENCY
ACT

The Senate is expected to on vote the Communications Decency Act (CDA,
a.k.a. the Exon Bill) within the next three weeks.

The Communications Decency Act, in its current form, would severely restrict
your rights to freedom of speech and freedom of expression online, and
represents a grave threat to the very nature and existence of the Internet as we
know it today. Without your help now, the Communications Decency Act will
likely pass and the net may never be the same again.

Although the CDA has been revised to limit the liability of online service
providers, it would still criminalize the transmission of any content deemed
"obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy, or indecent," including the private
communications between consenting adults. Even worse, some conservative
pro-censorship groups are working to amend the CDA to make it even more
restrictive.

Currently, Senator Exon is negotiating with pro-censorship groups and
commercial entities that would be affected by the CDA. The voices of Internet

users must be heard now. We need to demonstrate that we are a political force to be reckoned with.

In an effort to preserve your rights in cyberspace, Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) has introduced the only legislative alternative to the Communications Decency Act. Senator Leahy is willing to offer his bill as a substitute for the CDA, but needs your support behind his efforts.

Senator Leahy's legislation would commission a study to examine the complex issues involved in protecting children from controversial content while preserving the First Amendment, the privacy rights of users, and the free flow of information in cyberspace.

----- ANOTHER PETITION?

Yes. With a strong showing of support from the net.community, Senator Leahy can offer his bill as a substitute for the Communications Decency Act when the Senate votes on the issue later this month. Senator Leahy needs and wants to demonstrate to his colleagues in the Senate that the net.community is behind him in his efforts. We must rise to the task and demonstrate that we will not sit idly by as our rights are threatened.

Senator Leahy, a strong civil liberties advocate, has been the Senate's most vocal critic of the Exon/Gorton Communications Decency Act, and has taken a leading role in defending the rights and civil liberties of Internet users. Senator Leahy has taken a great political risk in representing the interests of Internet users on Capitol Hill. The time has come for us to show our appreciation and our support for his efforts.

The previous petition against the Communications Decency Act generated over 108,000 signatures, and was instrumental in Senator Leahy's decision to offer his alternative. As the Senate moves to vote on the CDA, we must act quickly to ensure that our collective voice continues to be heard.

----- WHAT IS LEAHY PROPOSING?

Senator Leahy's bill, S. 714, would direct the Department of Justice and the Department of Commerce to commence a 5 month study to examine:

- * Current law enforcement authority to prosecute the distribution of pornography over computer networks;
- * Whether any additional law or law enforcement resources are necessary;
- * The availability of technological capabilities, consistent with the First Amendment and the free flow of information in Cyberspace, to protect children from accessing controversial commercial and non-commercial content;

* Ways to promote the development and deployment of such technologies.

After conducting the study, the Justice Department must report to Congress on its findings, and, if necessary, recommend changes in current law.

Leahy's bill represents the only substantive legislative alternative to the Communications Decency Act, and will buy important time to have a detailed and rational discussion about the issues involved in protecting children from controversial content, and avoid the rush to censorship which is occurring now on the Senate Floor.

Without a strong show of support for Leahy's bill, the Communications Decency Act is very likely to pass.

----- WHAT CAN I DO?

Please Sign the petition in support of Senator Leahy's alternative. There are two ways to sign:

1. World Wide Web:

URL:<http://www.cdt.org/petition.html>

Please follow all instructions carefully. Please also put a link to this page on your homepage.

2. email:

send email to [REDACTED].

Please provide the following information EXACTLY AS SHOWN.
INCORRECT SUBMISSIONS CANNOT NOT BE COUNTED!

Be sure that you make a carriage return at the end of each line

Your Name

Your email address

Are you a US Citizen (yes or no) (** IF NO, skip to last line)

Your Street Address (** USE ONLY ONE LINE)

Your City

Your State

Your Zip Code (**VERY IMPORTANT)

Country

PRIVACY POLICY: Information collected during this campaign will not be used for any purpose other than delivering a list of signers to Congress and compiling counts of signers from particular states and Congressional districts. It will not be reused, sold, rented, loaned, or available for use for any other purpose. All records will be destroyed immediately upon completion of this project.

--- sample email submission ---

To: [REDACTED]
From: [REDACTED]
Subject: signed

Every Body

[REDACTED]

YES
1111 State Street, Apt. 31 B
Any Town
CA
94320
USA

--- sample email submission ---

Multiple signatures will not be counted, so please only sign once.

----- THE PETITION STATEMENT

We the undersigned users of the Internet are strongly opposed to the "Communications Decency Act" (Title IV of S. 652), which is currently pending before the Senate. This legislation will severely restrict our rights to freedom of speech and privacy guaranteed under the constitution.

Based on our Nation's longstanding history of protecting freedom of speech, we believe that the Federal Government should have no role in regulating the content of constitutionally protected speech on the Internet.

We urge the Senate to halt consideration of the Communications Decency Act and consider in its place S. 714, the "Child Protection, User Empowerment, and Free Expression In Interactive Media Study Bill", an alternative approach offered by Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT).

Signed:

----- SIGNING THE PETITION

FROM FIDONET OR FTN SYSTEMS

To sign the petition from FidoNet or other FTN systems, create a netmail message to your local UUCP host. Search the nodelist for the GUUCP flag, and use the address of that system:

To: UUCP, [GUUCP system's address here. "To:" name MUST be set to UUCP]
From: [you]
Subject: signed

To: [REDACTED]

Every Body

██████████

YES

1111 State Street, Apt. 31 B

Any Town

CA

94320

USA

[Message starts on 3rd line. The second "To:" line with the internet email address MUST be the first line of the message body, and the blank line following that is REQUIRED. Mail will not be delivered by the gateways without it.]

If you are unsure whether your FTN has an Internet gateway, or suspect it may use something other than a GUUCP nodelist flag, ask your network coordinators.

----- PETITION RATIONALE

We oppose the "Communications Decency Act", sponsored by Senators James Exon (D-NE) and Slade Gorton (R-WA), for the following reasons:

- * It criminalizes the transmission of constitutionally protected speech, including the private communications between consenting individuals;
- * It would violate privacy rights by protecting system administrators who take steps to ensure that their networks are not being used to transmit prohibited content, even if those steps include reading all messages, in violation of the Electronic Communications Privacy Act (ECPA).
- * It fails to account for the unique characteristics of interactive media, including the tremendous control users have over the content they or their children receive.
- * It would give the Federal Communications Commission jurisdiction over online speech by giving the FCC authority to establish rules governing the distribution of content online;

The Internet and other interactive communications technologies offer a unique opportunity for the free exchange of information and ideas, and embody the very essence of our nation's democratic traditions of openness, diversity and freedom of speech.

As users of these technologies, we know perhaps better than anyone that there are other, less restrictive ways to protect children from controversial materials while preserving the First Amendment and the free flow of information.

Senator Leahy's bill provides an opportunity to address the issues raised by the Communications Decency Act without restricting the free speech and privacy rights of users.

----- FOR MORE INFORMATION

Petition updates will be posted to appropriate newsgroups and other forums on a regular basis.

To have the latest status report sent to you automatically, send email to:

██████████

If you have specific questions, or if you are interested in mirroring the petition page, contact Jonah Seiger <██████████>

Other petition related information can be found on the CDT petition page.

URL:<http://www.cdt.org/petition.html>

For More information on the Communications Decency Act issue:

Web Sites

URL:<http://www.cdt.org/cda.html>

URL:<http://www.eff.org/pub/Alerts/>

URL:<http://www.panix.com/vtw/exon/>

FTP Archives

URL:<ftp://ftp.cdt.org/pub/cdt/policy/freespeech/00-INDEX.FREESPEECH>

URL:<ftp://ftp.eff.org/pub/Alerts/>

Gopher Archives:

URL:<gopher://gopher.eff.org/11/Alerts>

URL:<gopher://gopher.panix.com/11/vtw/exon>

Information By auto-reply email:

If you don't have www/ftp/gopher access, you can get up-to-date information from the following autobots:

General information on the CDA issue

CDA issue

██████████ with the

██████████ Current status of the

██████████ Chronology of events of the CDA issue

subject "send events"

LIST OF PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

In order to use the net more effectively, several organizations have joined forces on a single Congressional net campaign to stop the Communications Decency Act.

In alphabetical order:

Californians Against Censorship Together
[REDACTED]

Center For Democracy And Technology (CDT)
[REDACTED]

Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF)
[REDACTED]

Feminists For Free Expression (FFE)
[REDACTED]

Florida Coalition Against Censorship
[REDACTED]

Hands Off! The Net
[REDACTED]

National Libertarian Party
[REDACTED]

National Public Telecomputing Network (NPTN)
[REDACTED]

National Writers Union (UAW Local 1981 AFL-CIO)
[REDACTED]

Panix Public Access Internet
[REDACTED]

People for the American Way
[REDACTED]

Society for Electronic Access
[REDACTED]

The WELL
[REDACTED]

Voters Telecommunications Watch (VTW)
[REDACTED]

If you would like to add your organization to this list, contact
Shabbir
Safdar at VTW <[REDACTED]>

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499. **Lindz Williamson**

Re: Yo, Ed

Thu 25 May 1995

> see
> zoo
> cow

> ski
>
don't forget
chicken

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500. **John Byrum**
Re: art after art
Thu 25 May 1995

we have a very narrow definiton of art which needs to be opened out & reopend out again all the time.

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501. **John Byrum**
Re: Yo, Ed
Thu 25 May 1995

zoos
&
cows
kant
ski
see
saw
say

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502. **Mark Roberts**
Poetry happenings: London, UK, July 1995
Thu 25 May 1995

I am forwarding this request to the list in the hope that someone may have some information about poetry events in the UK (london) during July. You could either email David directly, or post to the list and I'll forward it.

Thanks

Mark Roberts

From: "DAVID GILBEY" <[REDACTED]>
Organization: Charles Sturt University
To: [REDACTED]
Date: Thu, 25 May 1995 14:46:26 GMT-10

Subject: Poetry happenings: London, UK, July 1995
Priority: normal

Dear Mark,

I'm heading off to London for a couple of weeks in July, 3 - 20. Do you know of any poetry or writerly happenings there then. Or who I could contact?

Cheers,

David

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503. **Marisa A Januzzi**
in vitro...

Thu 25 May 1995

Flash:

In the window

of the Grolier in Cambridge:

Niedecker letters to Zukofsky (\$59?!)

and Joe Donahue's latest next to

Ed Foster (on Black Mountain) next to

Gerrit Lansing

had to leave the letters for now but in addition snagged some op Parker

Tyler some Christopher Logue some Coffey (thank you Peter

Quartermain)(thank you, day in Cambridge)(and you too poetics list!)

They take Visa! ---Marisa

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504. **Jake Berry**
Re: yo, ed, boring?

Thu 25 May 1995

Hank, You've got WCW spinning in his grave, and I love it. Not to knock the good Doc. But this rewrite is a yowling howling invitation to ludic heaven. Thanks.

Jake

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505. **Jake Berry**

Re: John - next steps after art

Thu 25 May 1995

John, You're absolutely right, we must get beyond these categories and the assumptions that attend them. It is almost as if the label poet, or painter, or whatever is a means of dismissing the entire project. We could attempt radical new mediums, but we see what happened with 'happenings'. They quickly became just as classified as anything else. And you're right, an Art Strike is not the answer, since those who are profiting from the system as it is will not strike, at least most of them will not. So all you have is people assuming they have more power than they do, and the mindset that produces these power games is precisely the origin of the problem to begin with. Nothing is resolved. Going underground, as, who was it, I'm sorry, I can't remember who, suggested, is a possibility as long as we don't call ourselves underground poet, painters etc. Duchamp said the solution for the great man of art for tomorrow is to go underground. (I paraphrase, but I think that's the sense of it.) Finally we must move beyond our own sense of self individually, to move beyond our own tendency to rely on easy categorization and description and beginning from that point we might produce a way of living, thinking (or other mental states), and externalized modes that would be the next step. Though being post-art they would not be seen as steps after, as in post-modern, but as something entirely other in relevance to anything that had gone before. Sorry to ramble so long, that's my take on it. Today, at any rate.

Jake

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506. **english is mandarin --Tom Raworth**

Re: Poetry happenings: London, UK, July 1995

Thu 25 May 1995

I was in London and Cambridge last month, and picked up a few flyers about readings there just for interest's sake: only two seem applicable here:

POETS/WRITERS readings--"bi-weekly, Mondays 8pm, plus added special events". At the east/west gallery, 8 Blenheim Crescent, London W11. Ladbroke Grove Tube. 4 pounds/2 pounds 50 p concessions. For information, phone (0181)-[REDACTED]. Looking at the schedule for the next couple of months it lists:

June 12. FIRST IN A SERIES OF TALKS ON BRITISH SMALL PRESSES OF THE 60'S AND 70'S: 1. Trigram Press: run by poet Asa Benveniste, published Tom Raworth, Jack Hirschman, J.H.Prynne, David Meltzer, Lee Harwood. Talk

with John Latimer Smith by Pip Benveniste, followed by films of Trigram poets reading.

June, date t.b.a.: Ed Dorn reading.

July 12: Fran Landesman: poet, songwriter, humorist; her songs recorded by Ella Fitzgerald, Shirley Bassey.

July 17: Gavin Selerie: poet, critic; work included in *_New British Poetry_* (Paladin 1988), reads from recently completed work *_Roxie_*; and Miles Champion: new poet whose work has been praised by John Ashbery; reads from *_Sore Models_* (Sound and Language 1995).

--- I saw Champion read in Cambridge, & he's certainly worth seeing--rather influenced by Raworth in the incredible speed at which he reads, I'd imagine. Anyways, I also have a flyer for the SubVoicive reading series: unfortunately it looks like there's not much for the month of July, but I'll type this in anyways for those who might be interested:

SubVoicive readings, at The Three Cups, Sandland Street, Holborn Tube; Admission 4 pounds/2 pounds concs. To confirm details phone Robert Sheppard at (0181) [REDACTED].

6 June	Bill Griffiths
20 June	Latin American Evening presented by Will Rowe
27 June	Gilbert Adair and Lawrence Upton
4 July	Bob Cobbing
12 Sept.	Aaron Williamson
26 Sept.	Spencer Selby & Gavin Selerie
10 Oct.	John Muckle & poet t.b.a.
24 Oct.	Tim Fletcher & poet t.b.a.
7 Nov.	Allen Fisher and Adrian Clarke

(Never seen any of these authors read, but I did pick up a cassette of Allen Fisher reading, called *_Scram_*, at Compendium Books, which is very good.)

OK: hope this is of some assistance. --Nate Dorward ([REDACTED]).

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507. **Charles Alexander**

Re: art after art

Thu 25 May 1995

From John Byrum,

"we have a very narrow definiton of art which needs to be opened out & reependout again all the time."

After Duchamp, after Cage, WHO has a very narrow definition of art? Although I'd be interested in points of view who found even those artists with a narrow point of view.

Why define (divine, de-vine) art at all? I had a teacher once who wanted to define it, admittedly awkwardly, as "anything seen in an art-seeing context." But what's the line between art and non-art? and why?

charles

charles alexander

chax press

minnesota center for book arts

phone & fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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508. **Ernesto Grosman**

Rift: On Translation

Thu 25 May 1995

To retrieve RIFT...

gopher://writing.upenn.edu/hh/internet/library/e-journal/ub/rift

Send contributions or correspondence to:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From RIFT, the translation issue.

QUESTIONNAIRE/CUESTIONARIO

*How would you define translation? As a process or as product?

*Who is translating?

*What is being translated?

*Do you consider some texts to be untranslatable? If so, how would you describe the obstacle?

*Isn't the idea of "version" a funny place for the translator to be left in?

*When see some of your own texts translated into a different language from the one you wrote them in, what kind of relation would you established between the two of them?

*Is it true that today there are fewer people translating? If so, why?

*What does it say about our present situation that translation seems to occur almost only when the "original" material is has been canonized within its own culture?

*And what would be the possible relation between this kind of selection and that other relationship between imperialism & translation?

*Are you ready to accept translation as another way of writing?

*When you or somebody else refers to a text as illegible, what do you does she/he mean by that? Do you see any connection between the notion of a text being illegible and the task of translation?

*Do you think of some texts as more worthy of a translation than others? Could you elaborate on it?

*Would you say that you translate a text or a person?

*Do you consider yourself a translation?

*Could you imagine life without translation?

e.l.g.

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509. **Michael Boughn**

Re: Really real Martha

Thu 25 May 1995

So, George, exactly what kind of glaze does Blackburn recommend for turkey?

Mike

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510. **Ron Silliman**

Re: 2 announcements

Thu 25 May 1995

Effective June 5:

Ron Silliman & Family

116 Biddle Road

Paoli, PA 19301

██████████ (work)

██████████ (probable home #)

Email remains ██████████

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511. **David Ball**
Re: Rift: On Translation
Thu 25 May 1995

No, I can't imagine life without translation, translation of many kinds, process, product, lifeblood of literature, way of understanding--anyone can add to this list, & I'll be with her/him all the way. As Baudelaire said (in French), "How is it that any human being in reasonably good health can go without eating for two or three days--without translation, never!"

INTENTIONALLY INACCURATE TRANSLATOR

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512. **Carl Lynden Peters**
Re: yo, ed, boring?
Thu 25 May 1995

Going underground, as, who was it, I'm sorry, I can't remember who, suggested, is a possibility as long as we don't call ourselves underground poet, painters etc. Duchamp said the solution for the great man of art for tomorrow is to go underground. (I paraphrase, but I think that's the sense of it.)

Finally we must move beyond our own sense of self individually, to move beyond our own tendency to rely on easy categorization and description and beginning from that point we might produce a way of living, thinking (or other mental states), and externalized modes that would be the next step. Though being post-art they would not be seen as steps after, as in post-modern, but as something entirely other in relevance to anything that had gone before.

Sorry to ramble so long, that's my take on it. Today, at any rate.

Jake

jake: that was me, i think, paraphrasing duchamp's idea to go underground. i guess a similar notion is barthe's "death of the author" and foucault's neat idea to publish books without the author's name printed across them. anonymity. that entails a great sacrifice, but may be one way of subverting the western box. sacrifice. but that's were the prophecy is

carl

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513. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: art after art

Thu 25 May 1995

this may relate, tho indirectly:

SEVEN:

G.

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.G

thanks,

carl

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514. **Edward Foster**

Re: yo, ed, boring?

Thu 25 May 1995

so much pretends
within

a red po
tato

glazed with
honey

beside the fried
chicken.

i mean, hank, would YOU trust a doctor? let's get a second opinion.

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515. **Edward Foster**

Re: Yo, Ed

Thu 25 May 1995

NOT
boo
cough
ski

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516. **Ryan Knighton**

Re: yo, ed, boring?

Thu 25 May 1995

so much for depending
upon

a red fire
truck

glazed by
heat

inside
the burning station

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517. **Ryan Knighton**
Re: radio commercials
Thu 25 May 1995

George's and my friend Willy likes the van advertising
"Blind Cleaners". Brilliant.

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518. **Sheila E. Murphy**
Art, etc.
Thu 25 May 1995

Maybe the discussion of post-art needs no more(?) A perfect time, it seems to me, to add something.

Art seems principally an orientation capable of accommodating, being with, transforming, ignoring (pick your verb!) any raw material. Another possibility is leaving the raw material right there and having something different from (or perfectly identical to) it in mind. It's all something about state of consciousness, not unlike homeopathy, whereby the greater the distillation, the smaller the actual substance, the higher the frequency. And in that practice, "like cures like." (wonderfully enough)

Something else about art is not a necessary condition, but certainly associated: human competence. Anybody out there know of, hold deep affection for, Thomas Gilbert's HUMAN COMPETENCE? 1960 was the year, if I'm not mistaken. It's performance technology stuff, but moves all over the scape in relation to doing things well. It's not necessary to agree with Gilbert. It's only a pleasure to breeze around the subject of things done well and what makes various practices "good." A brave book, running counter to the mediocrats.

Art offers an avenue that makes having discipline a tremendous bonus. You get to choose your time, your materials, your path, whether or not to have a destination, whether to make it palatable. (Or maybe anyone is powerless in relation to these things?)

Well, I've made a short story long, that's clear. Let's just say that what comes after art is higher frequency. And with each of these, the possibility of greater pleasure, greater clarity, more subtle movement (thought or physical). Or absolutely nothing at all.

SEM

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519. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: Yo, Ed

Thu 25 May 1995

ed
rhymes with
dead

[↑ Contents](#)

520. **Mark Roberts**

Re: radio/tv commercials

Thu 25 May 1995

You know with just one look
we've got the world's best chook

MR

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521. **Steve Carll**

Re: The Etymology of Things

Thu 25 May 1995

Jim Pangborn writes:

*Thanks, Steve, for showing me how my first post on this topic seemed much more pessimistic than I actually feel. Your response points up a problem in academic discourse that troubles me greatly, tho. I write of how a certain term is or seems "spooky" or "haunted," and people naturally take it as a call to abandon the use of that term. The thing is, "thing" is indispensable. Its troubling political dimension (I won't call it baggage, since that term paints a false picture of how words work) will not go away, but neither does it necessarily always dominate. Power and hierarchy are ubiquitous, but they certainly aren't every"thing"! I would respectfully ask that poets and other artists resolutely confront the things that bid to needlessly dominate us (and by opposing end them? heh heh . . . good luck!) and also that they (we) resolutely believe, even if utopically, in freedom. Of course, I can't tell y'all what to do. But yes, folks, this *is* about poetics.*

Right on. I very much believe in "retrieving" language from these spectres of power that tend to haunt it. Sometimes this involves an attempt to delve back to its (the?) source, and sometimes it involves puahing envelopes of meaning out to places they've maybe never been before.

Steve

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522. **John Byrum**

Re: John - next steps after art

Thu 25 May 1995

Excerpt from Jake Barry's recent message re next steps after art:

>Though being post-art they would not be seen as steps after, as in
>post-modern, but as something entirely other in relevance to >anything that
had gone before.

Jake,

Many thanks for your message. I agree completely with all your comments and particularly with the excerpt above. We each need to discover our own ways of proceeding, ways which will be largely or even entirely "other" than anything which could be called "art". Some may be communicable and others may not. Some may include production, others may not.

John

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523. **Tony Green**

Re: radio/tv commercials

Thu 25 May 1995

What cd be better than a petit poussin?

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524. **John Byrum**

Re: art after art after art

Thu 25 May 1995

Excerpt from recent message by Charles Alexander:

After Duchamp, after Cage, WHO has a very narrow definition of art? Although I'd be interested in points of view who found even those artists with a narrow point of view.

Why define (divine, de-vine) art at all? I had a teacher once who wanted to define it, admittedly awkwardly, as "anything seen in an art-seeing context." But what's the line between art and non-art? and why?

charles

charles alexander

chax press

Charles,

Thanks for the difficult questions in your reply. I think many people have underlying "expectations" of what art has come to mean in our culture. These expectations differ among individuals of course, but most do distinguish some of their experiences as belonging to an art context and others which do not. Perhaps I'm asking if it is possible for us to think of all of our experiences as art, which would have the effect of eliminating "art" as a separate category of experience in our lives. If everything is "art", then nothing is "only art" (i.e., non-functional esthetic experience), but the rich complexity and interwoven unity in multiplicity of esthetic experiences could be lived in all aspects of our lives, and not only those bits of our lives spent in producing and consuming "art" as it is currently our enculturated habit to do.

Art has meant different things in different cultures and times, and has not been a separate category in many. I'm asking if it is possible for us here and now to so completely open the notion of art out into all aspects of our individual and social/cultural existence that it would to all intents and purposes disappear; i.e., become an inseparable component of the textures of our living.

I'm aware this sounds utopian and/or simplistic. It is.

John

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525. **Charles Alexander**

Re: art after art after art

Fri 26 May 1995

John, I hope what you want is possible, i.e.

"I'm asking if it is possible for us here and now to so completely open the notion of art out into all aspects of our individual and social/cultural existence that it would to all intents and purposes disappear; i.e., become an inseparable component of the textures of our living.

I'm aware this sounds utopian and/or simplistic. It is."

I'm not certain it would be either utopian or simplistic. Sometimes it would be terrible. It would always be living, which is complex, not simplistic.

For some people, living is already close to this. I am not certain that such living is better or truer than any other, but it does seem to move in a direction which feels true to me. For many people, art simply doesn't exist, it's not part of their consciousness. This does not necessarily mean that their "individual and social/cultural existence" is any less integrated with art than if they were more aware of art.

I feel like I'm confusing the possibilities here rather than clarifying them, so I will stop.

so much descends
upon red real
ballerinas

grazing with refrain
and potters

astride the wide
thick lens

charles

charles alexander
chax press
minnesota center for book arts
phone & fax: [REDACTED]
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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526. **John Byrum**

Re: yo, ed, boring art past art?

Fri 26 May 1995

Carl,

Excerpt from your reply to Jake B:

>jake: that was me, i think, paraphrasing duchamp's idea to go underground. i guess a similar notion is barthe's "death of the author" and foucault's neat idea to publish books without the author's name printed across them. anonymity. that entails a great sacrifice, but may be one way of subverting the western box. sacrifice. but that's were the prophecy is

carl

Publishing books without the author's name is a beginning, but may not go far enough. Maybe our lives should or even could become what we hoped our books would be.

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527. **John Byrum**

Re: art after art after art

Fri 26 May 1995

Charles,

Yes! We don't need the lens of art to move toward what I think I'm after. All that's needed is an open, enquiring mind which will not settle for received habits of thinking.

I'll stop before further muddying also.

John

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528. **Charles Alexander**

loss of the name/art & sacrifice

Fri 26 May 1995

" . . . foucault's neat idea to publish books without the author's name printed across them. anonymity. that entails a great sacrifice, but may be one way of subverting the western box," as John Byrum says.

A good friend in Tucson, Larry Evers, asked me several times in the mid to late 1980's, during discussions of language poetry and its decentering of authorial personality and identity in the work (I'm not certain anymore that there is any such decentering), if there was a movement away from the person to something like "language itself," why the authors didn't just publish texts without their names attached. Larry works with oral Native American traditions, living ones, where, although contemporary singers and drummers and dancers do make their own contributions to the tradition, such personal ownership of the work is just not part of the system. I never had a good answer for him. I am not quite ready for such anonymity, and few I know are. Perhaps we are just part of the western box.

charles

charles alexander

chax press

minnesota center for book arts

phone & fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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529. **Charles Alexander**
loss of the name/art & sacrifice
Fri 26 May 1995

Apologies . . . In my last post I attributed a statement about "foucault's neat idea to publish books without the author's name printed across them. anonymity . . ." to John Byrum, when I had read John excerpting it from a message from Carl Peters. So it is Carl's.

charles alexander
chax press
minnesota center for book arts
phone & fax: [REDACTED]
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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530. **Ron Silliman**
Re: art after art after art
Fri 26 May 1995

| *After Duchamp, after Cage, WHO has a very narrow definition of art?*

Checked out the CAP-L list lately?

There is no avant-garde. Merely folks who got left behind...

(That's a quote but I forget the source.)

Ron Silliman

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531. **Jim Pangborn**
Re: Art, etc.
Fri 26 May 1995

Sheila, thank you for your intervention in the afterart discussion. Art, however one defines it, is not going to go away anytime soon. I think John and Jake are "after" something that already exists, though there could and maybe should be more of it--and I think Charles A. agrees. Charles is right, too, that attempts to define art usually lead more to muddle than to clarity.

(I wonder, while we're on the subject: where are the voices opposed to generalizing about art? Is there no one here who thinks poetics is something fundamentally different from the principles of painting, the principles of music, etc?)

But I say, if there's a muddle let's jump right in. If I may, Sheila, pick apart one of your sentences, "[a]rt seems principally an orientation. . . ." This term implies a map or world, a topos in which one might wander. The political dimension of life seems that way too: left and right, for example, amount fundamentally to orientation, to facing. In the case of the political "sphere," orientation is vis a vis something like history, the ongoing account of where "we" are headed. Classically, conventionally, it's progress for progress's sake on the left, order for order's sake on the right, although these have gotten truly muddled now. In art, what might correspond to these specific axes of orientation?

You write of "accommodating, being with, transforming, ignoring (pick your verb!) any raw material" or "leaving the raw material right there and having something different from (or perfectly identical to) it in mind." What sort of thing in mind? To what end(s), specifically?

"It's all something about state of consciousness, not unlike homeopathy, whereby the greater the distillation, the smaller the actual substance, the higher the frequency." This is intriguing. I don't believe in homeopathy-- it seems a rather wishful mysticism--except in the sense of vaccine, of "what don't kill you makes you stronger." But what is "frequency," and why is its being "higher" a good thing?

Further, is art's progress always toward the more subtle?

I think the generalizable part of art is made of questions, not answers--a matter of balances, some of which you enunciate well: regarding competence and discipline, for example. Art plays with these as it works with them, throwing the very distinction work/play into question. As Kant points out, it throws the concept of purpose or destination into question. Also delectation. Also power.

Far from making a short story long, you/we have only grazed the surface. Oscar Wilde, in the intro to *Dorian Gray*, warns us not to go below that surface, that terrible danger waits there--but then again, he may have been just kidding. Heh heh.

--Jim

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532. **David Ball** **ANNOUNCEMENT (self-promotional)**

Fri 26 May 1995

You can hear HENRI MICHAUX at BIBLIO'S in NYC (Church St. betw. Lispenard & Walker) on Wednesday evening, May 31 at 6:30. And David Ball.

That is, David Ball is reading, mostly from DARKNESS MOVES, his big Michaux anthology, but also some of his own work.

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533. **Herb Levy**

Re: art after art after art

Fri 26 May 1995

On Fri, 26 May 1995, Ron Silliman wrote:

After Duchamp, after Cage, WHO has a very narrow definition of art?

Checked out the CAP-L list lately?

There is no avant-garde. Merely folks who got left behind...

(That's a quote but I forget the source.)

Ron Silliman

Yes, CAP-L seems only to respond to obituaries or the "major" prizes. But that seems to be it's function; few folks over there (including those who are "here" too) didn't rise to the occasion of discussing Michael Palmer or Ezra Pound when their names recently came up there.

(At virtually the same time there were about 20 posts on <poetics> nominally about Gerald Stern. But, then, that's something else again. They just don't have much "fun" over on CAP-L. Who _were_ they discussing while Martha Stewart was explained to death here.)

But be careful when you start talking about <folks who get left behind>, 'cause a lot of that may just be fashion or name-checking.

Consider this: there are an awful lot of people these days for whom the term <avant garde> means warmed-over 1960s-70s art with drum machines and/or body piercing added.

Or did us old farts just get left behind?

Herb

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~~~~~

535. **Carl Lynden Peters**  
*Re: art after art after art*  
 Fri 26 May 1995

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536. **Carl Lynden Peters**  
**Re: yo, ed, boring art past art?**  
Fri 26 May 1995

---

mallarme said this: "all earthly existence must ultimately be contained in a book" (from "the book: a spiritual instrument") -- i love that, too: the bk as spiritual\_Instrument\_!

carl

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537. **Carl Lynden Peters**  
**Re: Art, etc.**  
Fri 26 May 1995

---

*Art seems principally an orientation capable of accommodating, being with, transforming, ignoring (pick your verb!) any raw material.*

"The creative act takes on another aspect when the spectator experiences the phenomenon of transmutation; through the change from inert matter into a work of art, an actual transsubstitution has taken place, and the role of the spectator is to determine the weight of the work on the esthetic scale" (Marcel Duchamp: "The Creative Act"). --apologies fr keeping the duchamp quotes going. he's so important, i think, to our continuing interests in and theorizing of poststructuralism.

yr title, "Art, etc.," reads to me like a poem! just wanted to add that.

take care,  
carl

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538. **Sheila E. Murphy**  
**Re: art after art after art**  
Fri 26 May 1995

---

*hi, ron: i've always lovd that quote. it's edgard varese: "there is no avant-garde. there are only people who are a little late."*

Carl, You've just brought back the memory of the piece by Varese for flute alone, entitled "Density 21.5." Lots of nice percussive thumps in there with keypads. And I love the quote.

Thanks. Sheila

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539. **Jordan Davis.**  
***where were you born***  
*Fri 26 May 1995*

---

Poetics (and anybody else)

It seems to me you might have some ideas about some things that have been bothering me for a while.

What do we mean when we call someone's work sentimental?

What is the relation between poetry and capital?

How do readers of ths list know when a work of theirs is finished/complete/abandonable?

How do we know when a work is good?

Curious in and from NY

Jordan

PS Happy Memorial Day

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540. **Sheila E. Murphy**  
***Re: Art, etc.***  
*Fri 26 May 1995*

---

Jim, Glad to have your interested and interesting response. Point on orientation as concept is well taken.

*You write of "accommodating, being with, transforming, ignoring (pick your verb!) any raw material" or "leaving the raw material right there and having something different from (or perfectly identical to) it in mind." What sort of thing in mind? To what end(s), specifically?*

This has to be unknown a priori, I believe, or the process satirizes itself. My position (there goes that old geography again!) on the matter relates to an observation that there's a consciousness that "takes in" or somehow juxtaposes with another substance (or being, or consciousness). And when that happens, anything can happen on the continuum that runs from heavy manipulation at one end to complete absorption at the other (I'm willing to haggle on the determination of what those ends might be!). So I wouldn't want to say "to what ends," because that would spoil the surprise, itself a necessary condition for worthwhile art, as I perceive it. (I am continuum-happy today. I like the extreme surprise end of the spectrum running from expectation to surprise.)

*I don't believe in homeopathy--  
it seems a rather wishful mysticism--except in the sense of vaccine, of "what don't kill you makes you stronger." But what is "frequency," and why is its being "higher" a good thing?*

Homeopathy (not to be confused with any variety of less precise alternative health areas) is actually the antithesis of allopathic medicine, which is the prevailing "drugs and knives" kind of medical practice that people have grown accustomed to in our culture. There's a statue to Dr. S. Hannemann in Washington, D.C., the individual who brought about the practice of homeopathy. The practice is quite scientific. It lost the war that made the American Medication Association version of medicine the one that reigns.

I'm not using the word "frequency" haphazardly. Higher frequency is, in general, a more desirable state on account of its correlative greater accuracy, clarity. More precise attunement to events, movement, and just plain stodgy mass.

Not an expert in homeopathy, I'm just an interested consumer and supporter (No longer do I seem to need it for what it helped me address, a plus for the practice!) I do NOT profess expertise, but I've read a great deal about it, examined with fascination the Materia Medica on which it is based.

You may or may not know that in rural parts of Europe, homeopathic doctors would be able to visit people maybe only once per six months or so. The remedies (as they are called) would be provided to people who would benefit from them long-term, on account of the relative power of the substance, as it would have been "found" as right for the individual, not the condition (Allopathy addresses a cold as a cold as a cold. Homeopathy would give you a different remedy from what would be given me for the same condition.)

I don't mean to transfer the topic to homeopathy, as this was simply a bridge to our REAL focus. But I think it's important to mention some things about the concept.

Your point that:

| *Further, is art's progress always toward the more subtle?*

adds to this point, I think.

| *I think the generalizable part of art is made of questions, not answers--a matter of balances, some of which you enunciate well: regarding competence and discipline, for example. Art plays with these as it works with them, throwing the very distinction work/play into question. As Kant points out, it throws the concept of purpose or destination into question. Also delectation. Also power.*

Jim, I appreciate your perspective and what you've added to my sketching! I agree about the questions versus answers. I'll give your eyes and my fingers a rest just now.

Sheila

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541. **Reginald Johanson**

**yo, ed**

*Fri 26 May 1995*

---

flip  
flop  
and  
fly

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542. **Carl Lynden Peters**

**Re: Art, etc.**

*Fri 26 May 1995*

---

re the definition of art -- that's easy: anything made with the working unity of hand eye and mind. no mystery there whatsoever. the simplest thing in the world: art. however you write it or conceive it. writ with a small a or write large with a big A. low art. high art. mind is everywhere.

carl

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543. **Reginald Johanson**

**yo, ed**

*Fri 26 May 1995*

---

so many  
renege upon  
  
promises made  
under the blue lights  
  
over the curried chicken

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544. **Andrew Joron**

**ed's new book**

*Fri 26 May 1995*

---

It was reported on the list yesterday that Ed Foster's new book was sighted in the window of Grolier's (alongside Joe Donahue's new one). I'd like to report that I have received, in my non- virtual mailbox, and to my great pleasure, a copy of Ed's new book, *\_All Acts Are Simply Acts\_*, published by Rodent Press in Boulder (\$7). The book itself is a beautiful artifact, with letterpress cover, perfectbound. Inside, the work, poems and prose poems, span a range from the

caustic to the gnostic. On the surface, the writings are possessed of meditative calm, while their deep structure roils & boils with recurring motifs of alchemy & loss. Such lines resound: (from "Basic Rules") "It is the sacred work of poetry to let the violence through . . . The universe is not consistency but radical confusion, and poetry opens there the crevices through which this can be seen." YES! In fact, all of the poems in the book are confirmations of these "Basic Rules" -- like Benjamin's *Angelus Novus*, bearing witness to cataclysms both historical & personal, they are renderings of something that's been rended. The book collects poems from two of Ed's previous chapbooks, *\_The Space Between Her Bed and Clock\_* and *\_The Understanding\_*. Among the new poems are two co-translations from the Russian (of Zhdanov). Here's a quote from one of them: "Dying nations are driven away, but before they vanish like clouds in a storm, they tear the leaves from the trees.

All that indifference in your face will pass.

The bird will cry out.

The leaves will be torn away.

Your hand will leave its trace."

There's an almost Gothic sensibility that is active in this work, an awareness of "dark transcendence" and "intricate release" which I was not expecting, although maybe it's explained by what Ed calls, on the final page of the book, his "New England ways" -- the ways of Poe, repossessed from Baudelaire?

It's a definitive collection, which I hope defeats Spicer's dictum, quoted in the book: "No one listens to poetry." Or was this supposed to be poetry's salvation?

-- Andrew Joron

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## 545. **Blair Seagram**

### ***Re: Warhol and irony***

*Fri 26 May 1995*

---

Gary Sullivan wrote:

Carter Ratcliff's argument for Warhol, if I remember, was that the pieces were completely empty of meaning, & as such, put the viewer "in touch" with "the void"--that one state of being that humans never fully experience while alive. (We get intimations, thru art, contemplation, near-death experiences, etc.) Ratcliff was, I think, arguing that Warhol's works were "transcendent" in that respect, because they were fully expressive of that "otherworld." But his argument never took into account the specific structures of Warhol's pieces--which aren't themselves valueless. One can speak of the physical properties of

his Brillo boxes, of their shape. So, Warhol is postulating (as he's negating) existence, giving a thing precise value (as he's emptying it of value).

Dear Gary:

What you say about Warhol sounds very good. And I know Carter Ratcliff was crazy about him. At least he was before he wrote the book. And maybe he was afterwards as well. I always wondered about that. I didn't read the book, but I did take a class with Ratcliff at the time he was writing it.

The more I know about Warhol, the more I like him, on the whole. I think he did some great stuff. For me, he was able to take certain European values and push them in an American way, more than any other artist in America. It's the fact that he made movies, did a magazine, was open to the society at large. If you like, was more like a Renaissance artist, and when I say that I should add a court artist. An artist to "high society" which he so craved to be accepted by. And which he finally was.

There was nothing intellectual about Warhol. The fact that we have all these theories about him, is irrelevant to the man. What I like about that, is his irreverence for the angst driven world that went before him. I once saw a TV program that interviewed many blue chip artists around Warhol's generation. After listening to Warhol, they all sound so puffed up and full of it. Warhol was funny and in a way straight forward.

Having said all this, there is something about Warhol that disturbs me. Something about the way he could treat people around him. I know there are those who would agree with me and I know there are those who loved him and believe he didn't have a mean bone in his body. I never knew Warhol, but I have met his business manager Fred Hughes. And I know Fred truly loved the man and I know that without Fred, Warhol would never have hit the big time like he did. Meeting Fred Hughes was like meeting the other half of Warhol. After that things fit together for me much better. And what I think about Hughes, is that he may be a tough business man, but he is also totally open to people and ideas. And in fact was probably far more generous than Warhol. Warhol could be odd about money, really tight I understand. Whereas Fred would straighten things out, make them fair. And I know some people, like Bob Colacello, got hurt by both Hughes and Warhol and finally quit Interview, where he had been the editor for 13 years, because Andy and Fred wouldn't let him own any part of the magazine he had busted his ass for.

It's stuff like this which is disturbing. It's the fact that Warhol rose while so many of those around him burnt out. I think if I had been in Warhol's little circle I would have been destroyed. I guess Warhol didn't mean to do it, but he had a way of bringing down those around him. It's almost eerie. If you were around

Warhol and a creative person, you had to be very, very careful not to be seduced and in so doing become a sacrifice.

I read an interesting article once, that criticized Warhol for remaining an adolescent. It went on to say that the grid of America, the finely knit fabric of our society was being destroyed by people like Warhol. There was no continuum. There were those at the top and those at the bottom and nothing in between to connect the two. The only way to identify with the top was through an image. Something like a bottle of Heinz Ketchup. I may not have that quite right. But the point was, Warhol did not encourage real communication or depth. It was all a glorious facade, glamorous and full of starlight and hollywood, although I admit he had his darker moments.

Enough said

BS

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546. **Blair Seagram**

***Re: Total Irony***

*Fri 26 May 1995*

---

Total irony may not be possible in art because art exists within a frame of reference that is suppose to be outside the so-called objective world. We make a space and say what happens here is not the world of everyday 'reality" but may be a reference to it.

Okay, fine. But I'm with Kierkegaard that total irony can exist and did exist in the figure of Socrates, who died because of it. He could have saved himself, but chose to go down by irony, leaving us with a type of irony, we call "Socratic". Another type is "dramatic" irony.

Bye for now!

BS

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547. **Carl Lynden Peters**

***Re: where were you born***

*Fri 26 May 1995*

---

*Poetics (and anybody else)*

*It seems to me you might have some ideas about some things that have been bothering me for a while.*

*What do we mean when we call someone's work sentimental?*

--i would say we mean it's self indulgent.



| *What is the relation between poetry and capital?*

--huge question. with i guess zillion answers. what immediately comes to mind is that there isn't one. if you write poetry that's what you do. if you want to sell it then you figure out a way of selling it. and if you cant, then you just get another job. but hopefully you still write poetry because that's what you're compelled to do.

| *How do readers of ths list know when a work of theirs is finished/complete/abandonable?*

--intuition. you know. you just know.

| *How do we know when a work is good?*

--intuition. intellect also. but that has its roots in intuition.

| *Curious in and from NY*  
*Jordan*

| *PS Happy Memorial Day*

--take care,  
carl

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548. **Blair Seagram**  
***Re: What happens next***  
*Fri 26 May 1995*

---

Dear John:

I've been thinking about your post to me last week and since I am a little late getting to my messages this week, I am only now coming across your posts to the list, concerning this concern.

I think you are right. Something must change. More on this later.

blair

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549. **Alan Sondheim**  
***Re: where were you born***  
*Fri 26 May 1995*

---

On Fri, 26 May 1995, Jordan Davis. wrote:

| *Poetics (and anybody else)*  
*It seems to me you might have some ideas about some things that have been bothering me for a while.*  
*What do we mean when we call someone's work sentimental?*

That it thrusts backwards with a whisper, that it is a memory of what we once called truth.

| *What is the relation between poetry and capital?*

The list itself, professionalization of writing, is a guarantee of poetry as a discursive formation, power following, capital yes or no depending on congressional weather.

| *How do readers of this list know when a work of theirs is finished/complete/abandonable?*

For me when the thought runs out, no room for insertion, when the caress couples as a closed manifold.

| *How do we know when a work is good?*

When it is finished and complete.

Alan

Caught down and out NY

| *Curious in and from NY  
Jordan*

| *PS Happy Memorial Day*

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550. **Lindz Williamson**

***Re: Warhol and irony***

*Sat 27 May 1995*

---

It was all a glorious facade,  
glamorous and full of starlight and hollywood, although I admit he had  
his darker moments.

Yes Blair, that's it that is the beauty of it all. We bought into it. He packaged it  
and made millions and we called it art. If I could do that I would be so happy.

Lindz

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551. **Jim Rosenberg**

***Sentiment***

*Sat 27 May 1995*

---

Jordan Davis:

> What do we mean when we call someone's work sentimental?

The fear that the work is too much comprised of the emotional substance of a single self; the fear the emotional substance of that self is unreliable.

(Please note this is meant as a \*personal\* definition of what I would mean in pronouncing \*my own\* work too sentimental.)

--

Jim Rosenberg

<http://www.well.com/user/jer/>

CIS: 71515,124

WELL: jer

Internet: [REDACTED]

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552. **Charles Alexander**

***Re: Sentiment***

*Sat 27 May 1995*

---

I appreciate Jim Rosenberg's sense that his definition of "too sentimental" is a personal one related to his own work, but still, when he says that to say a work is "too sentimental" is to express

"the fear that the work is too much comprised of the emotional substance of a single self; the fear the emotional substance of that self is unreliable,"

more questions are raised.

How comprised is "too much comprised?"

What is the "emotional substance of a single self?" -- although I like the conjoining of the words "emotional" and "substance."

How does one determine what is unreliable? Is anything entirely reliable?

charles

charles alexander

chax press

minnesota center for book arts

phone & fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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553. **Charles Alexander**

**Re: Art, etc.**

Sat 27 May 1995

---

If I might muddle things even more, since Jim P. says I probably agree with some of the things he and Sheila are saying about art. I'm involved, because I do various sorts of things I consider art, with his question,

"Is there no one here who thinks poetics is something fundamentally different from the principles of painting, the principles of music, etc?)"

I've made music and studied it and used it in writing in various ways, I've made visual art in the form of books and prints, and collaborated with many far more involved in the visual arts, as well as with dancers and composers. I think that these various arts are different from one another, possibly even radically different, but not fundamentally different. I usually shy away from wholistic/holistic definitions like Carl's that art is what involves hand, heart, and mind. But I do think all of these arts involve utterance, silence, space, movement, structure, context, and other concepts in common, though how these concepts achieve form may be quite different. I am also certain that there may be more variation within an artistic practice than among various artistic practices. For example, my work in language has more to do with Steve Nelson-Raney's work in music than it has to do with Dana Gioia's work in language.

charles

charles alexander

chax press

minnesota center for book arts

phone & fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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554. **Kevin Killian**

**Re: Sentiment**

Sat 27 May 1995

---

Jim Rosenberg:

*The fear that the work is too much comprised of the emotional substance of a single self; the fear the emotional substance of that self is unreliable.*

Jim, Jim, Jim,

Lots of us are afraid of our emotions, but it's beyond me to think of an "emotional substance" that \*is\* reliable-or to see that as a problem.

Dodie Bellamy

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555. **John Cayley**

***real real***

*Sat 27 May 1995*

---

A very late addition to this thread. Not really a hoax, but worth checking out:

John Peck's *\_Poems and Translations of Hi Lo\_*

...one reviewer referred to 'Hi Lo' as Peck's (I think this was the neologism:) 'alteronym'. An interesting way to put it.

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556. **John Byrum**

***Re: loss of the name/art & sa...***

*Sun 28 May 1995*

---

Charles,

Guess I should read all posts before replying. Thanks for cleaning the heads on this one.

John

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557. **John Byrum**

***Re: loss of the name/art & sa...***

*Sun 28 May 1995*

---

Dear Charles,

I did not put the following into this discussion:

>" . . . foucault's neat idea to publish books without the author's >name printed across them. anonymity. that entails a great sacrifice, >but may be one way of subverting the western box," as John Byrum >says.

someone else did. Can't think now who it was. Perhaps this person will remind us both (sorry). I did quote from this passage in a previous message though.

Best,

John

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558. **John Byrum**

**Re: art after art after art**

Sun 28 May 1995

---

Quote from recent message from Ron Silliman:

*After Duchamp, after Cage, WHO has a very narrow definition of >>art?*

*Checked out the CAP-L list lately?*

*There is no avant-garde. Merely folks who got left behind...*

*(That's a quote but I forget the source.)*

*Ron Silliman*

Forked over the price of a VCR lately? Images get easier & easier.

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559. **Carl Lynden Peters**

**Re: loss of the name/art & sa...**

Sun 28 May 1995

---

hi, john: that was me again. it happens a lot. anonymity, i mean. it's an accomplishment!

take care,

carl

*Dear Charles,*

*I did not put the following into this discussion:*

*" . . . foucault's neat idea to publish books without the author's >name printed across them. anonymity. that entails a great sacrifice, >but may be one way of subverting the western box," as John Byrum >says.*

*someone else did. Can't think now who it was. Perhaps this person will remind us both (sorry). I did quote from this passage in a previous message though.*

*Best,*

*John*

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560. **Carl Lynden Peters**

**Re: Art, etc.**

Sun 28 May 1995

---

...my mind's eye

...my imaginary hand

..."as writing is the thing/ carries the whole soul forward"

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561. **Carl Lynden Peters**

**Re: loss of the name/art & sa...**

Sun 28 May 1995

---

>

> hi, john: that was me again. it happens a lot. anonymity, i mean. it's an

> accomplishment!

>

> take care,

> carl

> >

>

...rather, an \_Art\_

c

*Dear Charles,*

*I did not put the following into this discussion:*

*" . . . foucault's neat idea to publish books without the author's >name printed across them. anonymity. that entails a great sacrifice, >but may be one way of subverting the western box," as John Byrum >says.*

*someone else did. Can't think now who it was. Perhaps this person will remind us both (sorry). I did quote from this passage in a previous message though.*

*Best,*

*John*

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562. **Carl Lynden Peters**

***Re: Art, etc.***

*Sun 28 May 1995*

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---

"Is there no one here who thinks poetics is something fundamentally different from the principles of painting, the principles of music, etc?"

---

what follows are some quotations from joseph kosuth's essay "Art After Philosophy I and II" (first published in *\_Studio International\_*, oct. and Nov.; it's also in Battcock's anthology *\_Idea Art\_* 1973):

-

"Indeed, it is nearly impossible to discuss art in general terms without talking in tautologies... what art has in common with logic and mathematics is that it is a tautology; i.e., the 'art idea' (or 'work') and art are the same thing..."

-

"It is necessary to separate aesthetics from art because aesthetics deals with opinions on perception of the world in general... Above all things Clement Greenberg is the critic of taste. Behind every one of his decisions is an aesthetic judgement, with those judgements reflecting his taste. And what does his taste reflect? The period he grew up in as a critic, the period "real" for him: the fifties."

-

"But in the philosophic tabula rasa of art, 'if someone calls it art,' as Don Judd has said, 'it's art.'"

-

"All art (after Duchamp) is conceptual (in nature) because art only exists conceptually."

-

"Art "lives" through influencing other art, not by existing as the physical residue of an artist's ideas."

-

"Works of art are analytic propositions. That is, if viewed within their context -- as art -- they provide no information whatsoever about any matter of fact. A work of art is a tautology in that it is a presentation of the artist's intention, that



is, he is saying that that particular work of art is art, which means, is a definition of art."

-

"I do not make art," Richard Serra says, "I am engaged in an activity; if someone wants to call it art, that's his business, but it's not up to me to decide that. That's all figured out later."

-

"Formalist criticism is no more than an analysis of the physical attributes of particular objects that happen to exist in a morphological context... Formalist art is only art by virtue of its resemblance to earlier works of art. It's a mindless art. Or, as Lucy Lippard so succinctly described Jules Olitski's paintings: 'they're visual Muzak.'"

-

carl

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563. **Tony Green**  
***Re: really Real Andy***

*Sun 28 May 1995*

---

Thinking of Carl Lynden Peters' recent comments, after returning from a break from the List, especially this thing about Art.

I would like to insert an alternative possibility into the discussion. Duchamp and I hope Kosuth are covered by it. Theatre and Music arts come in as performance:-

My hypothesis is that Art is Cunning and it is Wit in Europe before about 1660: Beauty confuses everything after about 1660. Aesthetics, then (not so long ago and now, can be founded on assessments of an action on the social in which widespread delusions are seen to be just that. (The notes on irony are very useful.

Representations of all kinds in text and image and in performance can be measured by their sometimes enduring interest to those of us who encounter them who value them when we want to do something effective ourselves.

Beauty is one among many devices, like realism  
is a device, in this account of Art. Contents, Forms, Chance  
Procedures are all devices or instruments, not criteria for value.

[A note apropos C.Olson's Post-Modern. Isn't it the case that his location of the Modern is somewhere around 500 B.C.? (Someone will remember, at present I

can't think of Chapter and Verse. The discussion is in any case somewhat broader than that regarding modern as industrial revolution in its steam phase onwards....

The difference between pre- and post- 1660 in this proposal is the difference between say a painter making devotional images, received as such before 1660, and the academies of painting then turning same into museum pieces, as instruction in how to produce fitness and beauty. So doing, the said images cease to be received as devotional images and become Art as we are now accustomed to it.

My point is that what we call Art, is something we have detached from its occasions of social functioning. We have also detached it from its craft/guild methods of instruction, over a relatively short period of time. And that it has taken a whole lot of struggle in the 19th and 20th centuries to maintain whatever is left of our knowledge of how to be effectively Cunning and Witty.

(I say "we", I wish I could say "they".

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---

564. **Carl Lynden Peters**

***Re: really Real Andy***

*Sun 28 May 1995*

---

ya, \_cunningly straight forward... tony: your comments are much appreciated at this end. they relate to a course i'm taking on 17th c prose and verse. my main area of focus is herbert's pattern poetry: image and text/ unity in duality

got a run now, but more on this later

take care,  
carl

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565. **Chris Stroffolino**

***milo deangelis***

*Sun 28 May 1995*

---

I have this vague memory (I wasn't really paying attention to this thread) that a couple of months ago there was some kind of discussion on Milo DeAngeli (FINITE INTUITION-sun and moon, 1995) on this list-- My vague recollection was that there were alot of people deriding him as either sexist or elitist or something. Does anybody remember the nature of that discussion? Or debate? Is anybody who participated in it still on this list for the summer? I ask, because I'm writing a review and I am curious what

others said....(or even what others may say-- coz I guess it's possible I was imagining the whole thing---) (i mean "merely imagining")---chris stroffolino

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566. **Tony Green**

**Re: art after art after art**

Sun 28 May 1995

---

dear Herb & other old farts on the list,  
isnt it just great to watch the young folks do it all again thinking  
it's for the first time...heh heh (wheeze wheeze

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567. **Tony Green**

**Re: some Lorca**

Sun 28 May 1995

---

I. Lightman's translation of May 24 : What's that mean for Lorca: "sweet fumes of grass" -- fumes? What does the Spanish text have there?

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568. **Mark Roberts**

**Re: some Lorca**

Sun 28 May 1995

---

I. Lightman's translation of May 24 : What's that mean for Lorca:  
"sweet fumes of grass" -- fumes? What does the Spanish text have there?

Before the car was invented LA's air pollution could have been described as  
"sweet fumes of grass" I suppose

MR

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569. **Tony Green**

**Re: Actually actual?**

Sun 28 May 1995

---

A PARADOX?

You only get the real picture when you see it without the  
intervention of any thought or imagination or projection  
or analysis.

Or

You only get the real picture when you see it with the continuation of thought and imagination and projection to the point where you see it as something that has furnished you with the occasion for what you have just accomplished thereby. What you have accomplished is, precisely arriving at this conclusion.

The position of subject in relation to the real in one account has to be blank, in the other full, in the sense of having completed a process.

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570. **Gary Sullivan**

***Re: milo deangelis***

*Sun 28 May 1995*

---

Dear Chris:

I think Bernstein posted a brief selection from an essay (included in the S&M book?) on this list a couple of months ago. "Deriding him"--that would've been me. Not for being sexist or elitist. For a statement (this is from memory) like "Perhaps there can be no great poet who has not produced a serious study of some previous great poet." I took Bernstein's quoting that particular passage but doing so as part of an ad for *\_Finite Intuition\_* to be Charles's way of entering into the (then ongoing) debate about "theory" without soiling his pantlegs.

I don't remember everything I said, but it came out of that quote, which I thought (& still think) was bullshit. Not for being elitist -- elitism doesn't bug me. But simply that it isn't true -- assuming everyone agrees on what a "great" poet is (good luck) -- that to be a "great" poet, you necessarily produce a serious study of another, previous, "great" poet. (& this is coming from someone who *\*writes\** about poets I think are "great," & who plans on writing about more of them.)

Spencer also responded to the quote from the ad; and, again, while I don't remember the specifics, the argument wasn't either that DeAngeli was being sexist or elitist. (I don't think it was, anyway.)

*\*Limited\**, maybe. And this criticism, Chris, limited to the contents of the brief, posted quote. (He may be a perfectly wonderful poet or essayist for all I know.)

Yours,

Gary

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571. **Carl Lynden Peters**

**Re: art after art after art**

Mon 29 May 1995

---

*dear Herb & other old farts on the list,  
isnt it just great to watch the young folks do it all again thinking  
it's for the first time...heh heh (wheeze wheeze*

...what's old is new again, eh

C

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572. **Gary Sullivan**

**Re: art after art after art**

Mon 29 May 1995

---

On Mon, 29 May 1995, Tony Green wrote:

*dear Herb & other old farts on the list,  
isnt it just great to watch the young folks do it all again thinking  
it's for the first time...heh heh (wheeze wheeze*

Dear Buffy, Tad, Biff & other Teen Team-ers,    Isn't it just sooper deelux having for role models a generation who in all earnestness & with all evidence to the contrary refer to themselves as "Generation 1," and who are simultaneously dismissive of our own ludicrous notions? [Reaches for gum, pulls out fresh stick.] Wow! I just realized! Buffy ... this is \*double\* bubble! Does that mean, like, "second generation"? That is so coool. What? Whaddaya mean "Awreddy Been Chewed"?

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573. **Chris Stroffolino**

**Re: Actually actual?**

Mon 29 May 1995

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Less McCann & Eddie Harris---"Real compared to what?"

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574. **John Geraets**

**Re: art's after**

Mon 29 May 1995

---

Two questions intrigue me are, what is art without quality, and, what is art with quality removed? This clear?

John Geraets



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575. **Kevin Killian**

**Re: Art, etc.**

Mon 29 May 1995

---

Ryan Knighton:

*To define is an  
animation of what is already alive and hunted.*

It's nice to see somebody making some sense around here, Ryan.

Dodie Bellamy

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576. **Wystan Curnow**

**Re: art's after**

Mon 29 May 1995

---

Hi John,

The only great teacher I ever had was Morse Peckham. Among his one liners were: 'the function of criticism was to postpone value judgement'

Does that answer your question, or one of them?

Wystan

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577. **Jake Berry**

**Re: art's after - John**

Mon 29 May 1995

---

John,

I know its an old question. But how do we define quality?

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578. **english is mandarin --Tom Raworth**

**New Web site**

Mon 29 May 1995

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I've recently been working at putting some information about the U.K. small-press poetry scene online--as far as I can tell (from a glance at the links here at Buffalo) this info is not otherwise available. The URL is:

<http://ac.dal.ca/~ndorward/homepage.html>

This is still under construction, but does include: info on small press books, pamphlets and journals; specialist bookdealers and distributors; and poetry events and readings. There is also a fairly comprehensive bibliography of J.H. Prynne. More presses, books, bibliographies, etc. will be added as I pull stuff down from the shelves.

Any comments, questions, additions, corrections, etc. etc. would be much appreciated. Also, any suggestions about presentation and cosmetics would be welcome: I'm using a VT100 term., and it looks fine here, but I was dismayed to see it look rather different & occasionally wrong on MOSAIC-- made a few fixes, but need to know if there's any more trouble.

Nate Dorward ( [REDACTED] )

"Clan destiny rules OK" --Alan Halsey.

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579. **Jim Pangborn**

***Re: Art, etc.***

*Mon 29 May 1995*

---

26 May 1995 15:49:47 -0400 (EDT) Carl Lynden Peters < [REDACTED] > writes:  
>

>re the definition of art -- that's easy: anything made with the working  
>unity of hand eye and mind. no mystery there whatsoever. the simplest  
>thing in the world: art. however you write it or conceive it. writ with a  
>small a or write large with a big A. low art. high art. mind is everywhere.  
>

Ah Carl . . . so you think it's easy . . .

Well, art is no mystery, true. \*Definition\* is tricky, tho.

Moment to moment, we all (I bet) use the Jesse Helms method for sorting art from not-art: I know it when I "see" it. ("See" is figurative here, of course--a metonymy. But signifying \*what\*, exactly? (No need to answer right away!)) You're right that art is fundamental, not a thing that needs to be explained in terms of other, supposedly more basic things.

Terms like "working unity" sound like bedrock common sense, which in itself is grounds for suspicion, but let's let that pass. Blind people do sometimes make art, and so do hand-icapped ones. Even the incurably split-minded may, as far as I know, do this thing too. Therefore the definition you offer is, if true, practically all metonymic, wherefore the terms "hand," "eye," and even "mind" all cry out for further definition. That's what all this babble has been about: perhaps not the simplest thing after all. The \*best\* one does in response to this problem is make more art, maybe in the form of poetic images and aphorisms

like the one you have offered above. But those of us who teach are called upon to explain, to define, as best we can. My students have been trained to expect facts, sadly--not koans. (Of course I set them koans too, but I want to let them \*feel\* they get their moneysworth of facts.)

In order to be useful, a definition has to be reasonably complete. What about memorability, for example, which finds no place in your formula? And why imply a focus on the product ("-thing made") when it's the process that obviously constitutes the heart of the matter? That is, if it has a heart. . .

With the sound of one eyelid winking,  
--Jim

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580. **Ryan Knighton**

***Re: Art, etc.***

*Mon 29 May 1995*

---

Hmm,

Well, it seems to me, sometimes, like when I don't sleep, like now, for lack of a better example, that a "definition" of art is better served, as Creeley writes, when it is as large as its infinitive: i.e. "to define". There seems to be something silent in the infinitive, or perhaps imperative, which compels art to to grow, break, contradict and continue like an Escher (sp?) work (his schtuff is more like a defintion, defining, if it's a good day). To define is an animation of what is already alive and hunted. Whew! I think I can sleep now.

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581. **Carl Lynden Peters**

***Re: Art, etc.***

*Mon 29 May 1995*

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>

> 26 May 1995 15:49:47 -0400 (EDT) Carl Lynden Peters <[REDACTED]> writes:

> >

> >re the definition of art -- that's easy: anything made with the working

> >unity of hand eye and mind. no mystery there whatsoever. the simplest

> >thing in the world: art. however you write it or conceive it. writ with a

> >small a or write large with a big A. low art. high art. mind is everywhere.

> >

>

>

> Ah Carl . . . so you think it's easy . . .



>

> Well, art is no mystery, true. \*Definition\* is tricky, tho.

>

---

jim, hi: --i didnt say that. of course it's a mystery. it's the greatest mystery in the world. nor did i say it's easy. i said it was simple. which it is. simple. thoreau: life is fretted away in detail. simplify. simplify. of course it has to be simple. but not too simple

---

*Moment to moment, we all (I bet) use the Jesse Helms method for sorting art from not-art: I know it when I "see" it. ("See" is figurative here, of course--a metonymy. But signifying \*what\*, exactly? (No need to answer right away!)) You're right that art is fundamental, not a thing that needs to be explained in terms of other, supposedly more basic things.*

*Terms like "working unity" sound like bedrock common sense, which in itself is grounds for suspicion, but let's let that pass. Blind people do sometimes make art, and so do hand-icapped ones. Even the incurably split-minded may,*

---

--my comment wasnt meant to be read that way. you're over simplifying my words here, to risk a contradiction. a paradox on the metaphorical plane.

---

*as far as I know, do this thing too. Therefore the definition you offer is, if true, practically all metonymic, wherefore the terms "hand," "eye," and even "mind" all cry out for further definition. That's what all this babble has been about:*

---

it has to have wonder for me. else it aint art. simple!

carl

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582. **Carl Lynden Peters**

***Re: art's after***

*Mon 29 May 1995*

---

*Two questions intrigue me are, what is art without quality, and, what is art with quality removed? This clear?*

*John Geraets*

---

--the one is good art, the other bad art, but we've already been there, altho it's always a constant interest to me.

what abt those artists who/m go out of their way to make bad art! --like the brilliant advice sol le witt gave to eve hesse: :JUST DO BAD ART! DO SHIT! JUST DO SHIT! --and the work is so extraordinary...

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583. **Jonathan Brannen**

***Re: The Etymology of Things revisited***

*Mon 29 May 1995*

---

from THING IS THE ANAGRAM OF NIGHT by Jonathan Brannen  
(forthcoming from Texture Press)

the birds funtion as though reconvened on a prepared piano before a one-act monologue in the bifocal distance of a mutual landscape the channel currents are too strong for swimming too unsettled for water burial the churning body is speaking to fish who fail to grasp the urgent conceptual underpinnings of crisis intervention

if the order is not executed where is the shadow of its execution a man can pretend to be unconscious but conscious everry eternity is a measure of things eternal and every time of things in time it rests by changing stretched out along the light and shadow some sen- tences have to be read several times to be understood as sentences

look in the drawer where you think you will find it the drawer is empty you see a picture of a chair you are then told it represents a construction the size of a house now you seet it differently you don't see change of aspect you see change of interpretation no end but among words

birds prepared distance      currents grasp  
                 the executed      shadow  
                 stretched light  
                 represents  
  
too unsettled      for burial  
         crisisisexecuted      but conscious  
                 every time  
                 of things

sentences                      as sentences will  
find the drawer                      empty  
the size of change  
among words

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584. **Jonathan Brannen**

***Re: Actually actual?***

Mon 29 May 1995

---

"Nothing is real. Everything is permitted."

(quote from the leader of the assassins, can't recall his name at the moment),

Jonathan Brannen

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585. **Charles Alexander**

***Re: The Etymology of Things revisited***

Mon 29 May 1995

---

Jonathan Brannen revisits things, and in that revisiting finds a world, "no end but among words," yet the living of the words/work is among words and much more.

If this excerpt is telling, as I imagine it is, knowing Jonathan's work as a fine tuning/turning of the word and senses, I look forward to the Texture Press book and congratulate Susan Smith Nash at Texture for publishing it.

charles

charles alexander

chax press

minnesota center for book arts

phone & fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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586. **Stephen Galen Cope**

***DIU (Long Post Warning)***

Mon 29 May 1995

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This message rec'd from one Edgar Allen Poe (or a critic who goes by that name) w/ the request that I forward it here. It's rather lengthy, and the author has recommended

that it not be suffered through by those who find it irrelevant or otherwise out of place. Delete as you see fit...

5 / 29 / 95

### The Raving

Once upon a schoolday dreary one plus one  
was written clearly "what's the answer to  
this query?"

quoth the student, "I don't know"

Ah, distinctly I remember it was science in  
September when the teacher said "Remember?"

quoth the student, "I don't know"

And the weary, sad, uncertain social students  
listened while the teacher lectured like a preacher  
"Name a demographic feature"

quoth the student, "I don't know"

And in English never flitting always sitting  
as she teaches she asked the correct  
position of the words in a composition

quoth the student, "I don't know"

-a student

### THE ANTI-HEGEMONY PROJECT

A satire, pointedly such, at the present day, and especially by American writers, is a welcome novelty, indeed. We have really done very little in the line upon this side of the Atlantic--nothing, certainly, of importance--Kenneth Koch's clumsy poems and Mark Twain's after-dinner sketches to the contrary notwithstanding. Some things we have produced, to be sure, which were excellent in the way of burlesque, without intending a syllable that was not utterly solemn and serious. Poems, plays, fictions, essays, epigrams, and pop songs, possessed of this unintentional excellence, we would have no difficulty in designating by the dozen; but, in the matter of directly-meant and genuine satire, especially in or concerning verse, it cannot be denied that we are sadly deficient. And yet, let it be said, while we are not, as a literary people, exactly equal to "The Dunciad"--while we have no pretensions to echoing a Popish meter--in short, while we are no satirists ourselves, there can be no question that we answer sufficiently well as subjects for satire.

We repeat that we were glad to see this work of Mr. Funkhouser and company abroad on the Internet; first, because it was something new under the sun; secondly, because, in many respects, it was well executed; and, thirdly,

because, in the universal corruption and rigmarole amid which we gasp for breath, it was really a pleasant thing to get even one accidental whiff of the unadulterated air of \_truth\_.

For those unfamiliar with the AHP, a brief history is sufficient to give the satire's overall dimensions. In February of 1995, a series of news briefs, modeled in style and format on those of the "clari.\* news hierarchy," began to appear on Charles Bernstein's "Poetics List," which originates out of SUNY Buffalo. The contents of these items invariably reflected current goings-on on the Poetics List, and in the "poetry world" more generally. Many of these flashes were surreal, but some had an almost prosaic verisimilitude. In one, the loquacious Tom Mandel became a bounty hunter; in another, Ken Sherwood and Loss Glazier were called "Poetics Police"; in another, Language Poetry was blamed on tainted baby formula; in another, a "Save the NEA" effort was termed a cross-dressing fashion show. All of these interventions were identified as products of the "bleari.\* nooz hierarchy," and further attributed to "The Anti-Hegemony Project." With surprisingly little distortion, the various jargons of politics, fashion, crime, sports, and economics were used to explain the ideological workings of the Art of the Muse--and quite adequately. The point, as soon became clear, was simple: to show that poetry's sublime particularity is no such thing.

More remarkable than the AHP itself, however, was the utter silence which greeted these stories' sudden broadcast. Indeed, until an item appeared transforming Barrett Watten into a killer whale--adapted from an item on the film "Free Willy"--there was no public comment of \_any\_ sort. And even in this instance, in the chivalrous outcry of James Sherry, response was focused on the matter of authorship, the AHP's mysterious provenance having become a focal point for counter-critique. We say authorship and not source, for while the stories \_had\_ been posted from real accounts, the stories themselves were unsigned, and rumor began to circulate \_privately\_ that the true author--if such there was--was keeping himself (or herself) hid. Chris Funkhouser, from whose account many of the stories had been sent, quickly came forward to make a public statement, to the effect that "AHP" was a cooperative project. And soon enough, discussion died down again--or appeared to. Inevitably, however, the rumors themselves became subjects for AHP satire. In one, a tapeworm named "Benji" was said to have burrowed deeply into Charles Bernstein's personal computer; in another, attributed to CNN (the Co-Poetry News Network), AHP activity was blamed on a sentient robot gone mad on too much literature.

For the record, the AHP's interventions originated from the following persons' accounts, at the following institutions: Carla Billitteri, Nick Lawrence, and Martin Spinelli (SUNY Buffalo), Don Byrd, Christopher Funkhouser, and Belle Gironda (SUNY Albany), Sandy Baldwin (NYU), Stephen Cope (U.C. Santa

Cruz), Greg Keith (unaffiliated), Nada (unaffiliated). A few other accounts were also utilized, but as of yet we are unable to identify the owners.

But this was not the end. In a final hurrah, the AHP, after 12 days of relative silence, produced *\_en masse\_* a blitz of items of a different sort altogether. These appeared on the last day of Feb. and first of March, 1995. No longer taking the form of fake news items, these final messages were modeled on the adolescent chit-chat of the Internet's many Newsgroups--the 'Net's discourse of choice. Presented as postings to an imaginary group called "alt.fan.silliman" (the model, we believe, was alt.fan.madonna), this later set of AHP posts again used real names, and again satirized the goings-on on Poetics and in the poetry world. But where the "bleari" stories had adopted a sober language, and had appeared at discreet intervals, the "alt.fan.silliman" items flirted with incomprehensibility, and were so voluminous as to overwhelm altogether the Poetics List's normal flow of activity. (In a mere two days, there were 24 "alt.fan" messages. By contrast, across a period of 25 days, about 30 "bleari" messages had been generated.) This last onslaught, unlike the prior intervention, met with immediate outcry--an outcry that took two basic forms. *\_First\_*, it was said that the sheer volume transformed the AHP's satire into a theft of the airwaves; *\_second\_*, that the focus on Ron Silliman amounted to a smear campaign. In response, the AHP's defenders pointed out that the satires were in many ways a *\_tribute\_* to Mr. Silliman. (The aggrieved poet himself weighed in with a bemused admission that he *\_was\_*, all in all, tickled by the attention-- indeed, he responded to many of the "alt.fan" posts as if they had really been the outpourings of fandom.) The second critique --that the volume was inherently prohibitive of a fair exchange of ideas--was never directly countered, but in retrospect this point too seems debatable. To be sure, the swelling of traffic due to AHP intervention was sizable, but such swelling is itself within the bounds of predictable occurrence on a List. Moreover, when such swells draw criticism, it is usually on account of their *\_content\_*--a subject that Poetics still seemed unwilling to broach. The real source of ire was more probably something else --something never stated directly. The "bleari" satires, for all the

\* \* \* \* \*

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587. **Stephen Galen Cope**

***DIU (continued)***

*Mon 29 May 1995*

---

...The "bleari" satires, for all their vehemence, treated poetry and Poetics as a matter of some importance. The "alt.fan" items treated these same affairs as adolescent twaddle. Could it be that the "alt.fan" postings--

unlike the "bleari" items--wounded the vanity of the List as a whole, and not merely the figures named directly? So much, in any event, for history.

As a work of the imagination and otherwise, the AHP had many defects, and these we shall have no scruple in pointing out --although Mr. Funkhouser is a personal friend of ours, and we are happy and proud to say so--but it also had many remarkable merits--merits which it will be quite useless for those aggrieved by the satire--quite useless for any clique, or set of cliques, to attempt to frown down, or to affect not to see, or to feel, or to understand.

Its prevalent blemishes were referrible chiefly to the leading sin of appropriation. Had the work been composed professedly in paraphrase of the whole manner of our culture's self-satirizing discourse, we should have pronounced it the most ingenious and truthful thing of the kind upon record. So close is the copy, that it extends to the most trivial points--for example, the use of fancy, personalized sig. files in Newsgroup postings. The turns of phraseology, the forms of allusion, the use of the screen, the general conduct of the satire--everything --all--are the property of the culture as a whole. We cannot deny, it is true, that the self-satiric model of the discourse in question is insusceptible of improvement, and that the contemporary satirist who deviates therefrom, must necessarily sacrifice something of merit at the shrine of originality. Neither can we shut our eyes to the fact, that the appropriation, in the present case, has conveyed, in full spirit, the subliminal critical qualities, as well as, in rigid letter, the inadvertent elegances of the journalistic and chit-chat modes of the day. We have in the AHP the bold, vigorous, and semi-lucid prose, the biting sarcasm, the pungent opinionation, the unscrupulous directness, of the world beyond poetry. Yet it will not do to forget that Mr. Funkhouser et al. have been shown how to achieve these virtues. They are thus only entitled to the praise of close observers, and of thoughtful and skilful copyists. The analyses are, to be sure, their own. They are neither clari.'s, nor alt.fan.madonna's--but they are moulded in the identical mould used by these uncredited agencies of meaning.

Such servility of appropriation has seduced our authors into errors which their better sense should have avoided. They sometimes mistake intention; at other times they copy faults, confounding them with beauties. In the opening salvo, we find the lines--

The palace dispatched Crown Prince Gizzi and  
Crown Princess Willis on a Southern  
California tour three days after the quake.  
Following oblique criticism, the pair cut  
short their trip and returned to Rhode  
Island.

The royal attributions are here adopted from a clari. story about the Imperial family of Japan, frequent subjects of news stories; but it should have been remembered that Prince and Princess enjoy very different meaning when applied to the ordinary citizens of a modern democracy, than they do when applied to the Royal Family of Japan.

We are also sure that the gross obscenity, the slander --we can use no gentler name--which disgraces the "AHP," cannot be the result of innate impurity in the mind of the writers. It is part of the slavish and indiscriminating imitation of a culture inured to such sins. It has done the AHP an irreparable injury, both in a moral and intellectual view, without effecting anything whatever on the score of sarcasm, vigor or wit. "Let what is to be said, be said plainly." True; but let nothing vulgar be ever said, or conceived.

In asserting that this satire, even in its mannerism, has imbued itself with the full spirit of the polish and pungency of the extra-literary, we have already awarded it high praise. But there remains to be mentioned the far loftier merit of speaking fearlessly the truth, at an epoch when truth is out of fashion, and under circumstances of social position which would have deterred almost any man in our community from a similar Quixotism. For the dissemination of the AHP--an undertaking which brought under review, by name, most of our prominent literati, and treated them, generally, as they deserved (what treatment could be more bitter?)--for the dissemination of this attack, Mr. Funkhouser, whose subsistence lies in his pen, has little to look for--apart from the silent respect of those at once honest and timid--but the most malignant open or covert persecution. For this reason, and because it is the truth which he and his companions have spoken, do we say to him from the bottom of our hearts, "God speed!"

We repeat it:-- it is the truth which he and his committee have spoken, and who shall contradict us? They have said unscrupulously what every reasonable person among us has long known to be "as true as the Pentateuch"--that, as a poetic people, we are one vast perambulating humbug. They have asserted that we are clique-ridden, and who does not smile at the obvious truism of that assertion? They maintain that chicanery is, with us, a far surer road than talent to distinction in letters. Who gainsays this? The corrupt nature of our ordinary criticism has become notorious. Its powers have been prostrated by our own arm. The collusion between government and publisher, publisher and critic, critic and poet, poet and academy, academy and government, constitutes at once the most unbreakable ring of corruption, and the most vicious circle of ideological contamination, yet to become manifest in our letters. But to keep our comments focused on a single link in this chain: the intercourse between publisher and critic, as it now almost universally stands, is comprised either in the paying and pocketing of black mail, as the



price of a simple forbearance, or in a direct system of petty and contemptible bribery, properly so called--a system even more injurious than the former to the true interests of the public, and more degrading to the buyers and sellers of good opinion, on account of the more positive character of the service here rendered for the consideration received. We laugh at the idea of any denial of our assertions upon this topic; they are infamously true. In the charge of general corruption there are undoubtedly many noble exceptions to be made. There are, indeed, some very few magazine editors, who, maintaining an entire independence, will receive no books from publishers at all, or who receive them with perfect understanding, on the part of these latter, that an unbiased \_critique\_ will be given. There are even some editors who refuse backing from the Federal government (or any other granting agency) as well. But these cases are insufficient to have much effect on the popular mistrust: a mistrust heightened by late exposure of the machinations of \_coteries\_ in New York, San Francisco, and now all cyberspace--\_coteries\_ which, at the bidding of leading small press publishers, manufacture, as required from time to time, a pseudo-public opinion by wholesale, for the benefit of any little hanger on of the party, or well- "Fed" protector of the firm...

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588. **Stephen Galen Cope**

***DIU (continued)***

*Mon 29 May 1995*

---

...We speak of these things in the bitterness of scorn. It is unnecessary to cite instances, where one is found in almost every issue of a book. It is needless to call to mind the desperate case of Sherry--a case where the pertinacity of the effort to gull--where the obviousness of the attempt at forestalling a judgment--where the woefully over-done be \_roof\_ ment of that man-of-straw, together with the pitiable platitude of his production, proved a dose somewhat too potent for even the well-prepared stomach of the mob. We say it is supererogatory to dwell upon \_Our Nuclear Heritage\_, or other by- gone follies, when we have, before our eyes, hourly instances of the machinations in question. To so great an extent of methodical assurance has the \_system\_ of puffery arrived, that publishers, of late, especially author-publishers, have made no scruple of keeping on hand an assortment of commendatory notices, prepared by their men of all work, and of sending these notices around to the multitudinous potential reviewers within their influence, tucked within the pages of the book. The grossness of these base attempts, however, has not escaped indignant rebuke from the more honorable portions of the community; and we hail these symptoms of restiveness under the yoke of unprincipled ignorance and

quackery (strong only in combination) as the harbinger of a better era for the interests of real merit, and of American poetry as a whole.

It has become, indeed, the plain duty of each individual connected with our poetry, heartily to give whatever influence he or she possesses, to the good cause of integrity and the truth. The results thus attainable will be found worthy his or her closest attention and best efforts. We shall thus frown down all conspiracies to foist inanity upon the public consideration at the obvious expense of every person of talent who is not a member of a clique in power. We may even arrive, in time, at that desirable point from which a distinct view of our persons of letters may be obtained, and their respective pretensions adjusted, by the standard of a rigorous and self-sustaining criticism alone. That their several positions are as yet properly settled; that the positions which a vast number of them now hold are now maintained by any better tenure than that of the chicanery upon which we have commented, will be asserted by none but the ignorant, or the parties who have the best right to feel an interest in "the way things are." No two matters can be more radically different than the reputation of some of our litterateurs, as gathered from the mouths of the people, (who glean it from the paragraphs of magazines, and the screens of cyberspace,) and the same reputation as deduced from the private estimate of intelligent and educated persons. We do not advance this fact as a new discovery. Its truth, on the contrary, is the subject, and has long been so, of every-day witticism and mirth.

Why not? Surely there can be few things more ridiculous than the general character and assumptions of the ordinary critical notices of new books! An editor, sometimes without the shadow of the commonest attainment---often without brains, always without time--does not scruple to give the world to understand that he or she is in the daily habit of critically reading and deciding upon a flood of publications one tenth of whose title-pages he or she may possibly have turned over, three-fourths of whose contents would be Hebrew to his or her most desperate efforts at comprehension, and whose entire mass and amount, as might be mathematically demonstrated, would be sufficient to occupy, in the most cursory perusal, the attention of some ten or twenty readers for a month! What he or she wants in plausibility, however, is made up in obsequiousness; what he or she lacks in time is supplied in temper. Such an editor is the most easily pleased person in the world. He or she admires everything, from the fat anthology of Douglas Messerli to the thinnest chapbook of Jessica Grim. Indeed, such editor's sole difficulty is in finding tongue to express his or her delight. Every saddle-stitched pamphlet is a miracle--every perfect-bound book is an epoch in letters. The editors' phrases, therefore, get bigger and bigger every day, and if it were not for talking trash, we might very well accuse these persons of "doing the nasty."

Yet in the attempt at getting definite information in regard to any one portion of our poetic literature the merely general reader, or the foreigner, will turn in vain from print journals to cyberspace. It is not our intention here to dwell upon the radical and over-hyped hyper-textual rigmarole of the 'Net. Whatever virtues the 'Net may hold, they are ill-suited to the propagation or discussion of *\_poetry\_*, save in the satiric mode advanced by the AHP. And the demand that the AHP unmask itself rings especially hollow, resounding in the vacuous and unindividuated depths of cyberspace. Alas, the poetic discourse found on the 'Net is *\_virtually\_* anonymous. Who writes?--who causes to be written? A volley of names crisscrossing the world, with no more character than one expects of bums--drunks who seek out odd-jobs to earn the price of a bottle--*\_this\_*, we say, is the class of person who subscribes to our poetics lists. And who but a missionary could put up with such company? Who but an ass will put faith in tirades which *\_may\_* be the result of unwanted abstinence, or in panegyrics which nine times out of ten may be laid, directly or indirectly, to the charge of intoxication?

It is in the favor of these saturnine pockets of electricity that they are charged, now and again, with a good comment *\_de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis\_*, which may be looked into, without decided somnolent consequence, at any period not immediately subsequent to dinner. But it is useless to expect literary criticism from a "List" or "Newsgroup," however useful these may be as sources of information regarding tawdrier realities. As all readers know, or should know, these venues are sadly given to naught but verbiage. It is a part of their nature, a condition of their being, a point of their faith. A veteran subscriber loves the safety of generalities, and is therefore rarely particular. "Words, words, words" are the secret of his or her strength. He or she has one or two original notions, and is both wary and fussy of giving them out. Such a person's wit lies with his or her truth, in a well, and there is always a world of trouble in getting it up. Such person is a sworn enemy to all things simple and direct. He or she gives no ear to the advice of the runner--"*\_Put your toe to the starting line\_*," but either jumps at once into the middle of the pack, or breaks in through the ribbon at the finish, or sidles up to the race with the gait of a crab. No other mode of approach has sufficient profundity. When fairly into it, however, such a *\_runner\_* becomes dazzled with the scintillations of his or her own wisdom, and is seldom able to see a way out. Tired of laughing at these antics, or frightened by the spectacle, we shut off the argument altogether, with the computer. "What song the Syrens sang," says Sir Thomas Browne, "or what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among women, though puzzling questions, are not beyond *\_all\_* conjecture"--but it would puzzle Sir Thomas, backed by Achilles and all the Syrens of Heathendom, to say, in nine cases out of ten, *\_what is the object\_* of a thorough-going Poetis List posting.

Should the opinions quacked by our poetic geese at large, supplemented now and then by the bubblings of fish caught in the 'Net, should such opinions be taken, in their wonderful aggregate, as an evidence of what American poetry absolutely is, (and it may be said that, in general, they are really so taken,) we shall find ourselves the most enviable set of people upon the face of the earth. Our fine writers are legion. Our very atmosphere is redolent of genius; and we, the nation, are a huge, well-contented chameleon, grown pursy by inhaling it. We are *\_teretes et rotundi\_*--enwrapped in excellence. All our poets are Bards, good as Whitman and not yet gray; all our poetesses are "latter day Dickinsons;" nor will it do to deny that all our youthful enthusiasts are wise and talented moderns, of the Known and Unknown variety, and that every body who takes pen in hand to attack the canon, our Republic of Letters, is as great as Caesar, or at least great Caesar's ghost. We are thus in a glorious condition, and will remain so until forced to disgorge our ethereal honors. In truth, there is some danger that the jealousy of the rest of the world will interfere. It cannot long submit to that outrageous monopoly of all that is worth seeking "from the other side of the century," which the gentlemen and ladies of the scene betray such undoubted assurance of possessing.

But we feel angry with ourselves for the jesting tone of our observations upon this topic. The prevalence of the spirit of puffery is a subject far less for merriment than for disgust. Its truckling, yet dogmatical character--its bold, unsustained, yet self-sufficient and wholesale laudation--is becoming, more and more, an insult to the common sense of the community. Trivial as it essentially is, it has yet been made the instrument of the grossest abuse in the elevation of imbecility, to the manifest injury, to the utter ruin, of true merit. Is there any man or woman of good feeling and of ordinary understanding--is there one single individual among all our readers--who does not feel a thrill of bitter indignation, apart from any sentiment of mirth, as he or she calls to mind instance after instance of the purest, of the most unadulterated quackery in letters, which has risen to a high post in the apparent popular estimation, and which still maintains it, by the sole means of a blustering arrogance, or of a busy wriggling conceit, or of the most barefaced plagiarism, or even through the simple immensity of its fawning--fawning not only unopposed by the community at large, but absolutely supported in proportion to the vociferous clamor with which it is made--in exact accordance with its utter baselessness and untenability? We should have no trouble in pointing out, today, some twenty or thirty so-called literary personages, who, if not idiots, as we half think them, or if not hardened to all sense of shame by a long course of disingenuousness, will now blush, in the perusal of these words, through conspicuousness of the shadowy nature of that purchased pedestal upon which they stand--will now tremble in thinking of the feebleness of the breath which

will be adequate to the blowing it from beneath their feet. With the help of a hearty good will, even \_we\_ may yet tumble them down...

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589. **Stephen Galen Cope**

***DIU (continued)***

*Mon 29 May 1995*

---

...So firm, through a long endurance, has been the hold taken upon the popular mind (at least so far as we may consider the popular mind reflected in ephemeral letters) by the laudatory system which we have deprecated, that what is, in its own essence, a vice, has become endowed with the appearance, and met with the reception of a virtue. So continuously have we puffed, that we have at length come to think puffing the duty, and plain speaking the dereliction. What we began in gross error, we persist in through habit. Having adopted, in the earlier days of our literature, the untenable idea that this literature, as a whole, could be advanced by an indiscriminate approbation bestowed on its every effort--having adopted this idea, we say, without attention to the obvious fact that praise of all was bitter although negative censure to the few alone deserving, and that the only result of the system, in the fostering way, would be the fostering of folly--we now continue our vile practices through the supineness of custom, even while, in our national self-conceit, we repudiate that necessity for patronage and protection in which originated our conduct. In a word, the community of poets has not been ashamed to make a head against the very few bold attempts at independence which have, from time to time, been made in the face of the reigning order of things. And if, in one, or perhaps two, insulated cases, the spirit of severe truth, sustained by an unconquerable will, was not to be so put down, then, forthwith, were private chicaneries set in motion; then was had resort, on the part of those who considered themselves injured by the severity of criticism, (and who were so, if the just contempt of every ingenuous man and woman is injury,) resort to arts of the most virulent indignity, to untraceable slanders, to ruthless assassinations in the dark. We say these things were done, while the community in general looked on, and, with a full understanding of the wrong perpetrated, spoke not against the wrong. The idea has absolutely gone abroad--had grown up little by little into toleration--that attacks however just, upon a literary reputation however obtained, however untenable, were well retaliated by the basest and most unfounded traduction of personal fame. But is this an age--is this a day--in which it can be necessary to advert to such considerations as that the words of authors are the property of the public, and that the publication of these words is the throwing down the gauntlet to the reviewer--to the reviewer whose duty is the plainest; the duty not even of approbation, or of censure, or of silence, at

his or her own will, but at the sway of those sentiments and of those opinions which are derived from the authors themselves, through the medium of their written and published work? True criticism is the reflection of the thing criticized upon the spirit of the critic.

But *a nos moutons*--to the "AHP." This satire has many faults besides those upon which we have commented. The title, for example, is not sufficiently distinctive, although otherwise good. It does not confine the attack to an *English-language* hegemony, while the work does. Also, the individual portions of the satire are strung together too much at random--a natural sequence is not always preserved--so that although the lights of the picture are often forcible, the whole has what, in artistical parlance, is termed an accidental and spotty appearance. In truth, the parts of the satire have evidently been composed each by each, as separate themes, and afterwords fitted into the general project, in the best manner possible.

But a more reprehensible sin than any or than all of these is yet to be mentioned--the sin of indiscriminate censure. Even here Mr. Funkhouser and friends have erred through unthinking appropriation. They have held in view the sweeping denunciations of the news media, and of the juvenile spewings of the Internet. No one in his or her senses can deny the justice of the general charges of corruption in regard to which we have just spoken from the text of our authors. But are there *no* exceptions? We should indeed blush if there were not. And is there *no* hope? Time will show. We cannot do everything in a day--*We've only just begun*, as Karen Carpenter tells us, *to live*. Again, it cannot be gainsaid that the greater number of those who hold high places in our poetical literature are absolute nincompoops--fellows and ladies alike innocent of reason and of rhyme. But neither are we *all* brainless, nor is Yakub himself so white as he is painted. The AHP must read a little in Jabes' *Book of Margins*--for there is yet *some* difference between "*carte blanche* and *white page*." It will not do in a civilized land to run a-muck like a Zapatista. Mr. Evans and Miss Moxley *have* done some good in the world. Mr. Watten isn't *all* killer instinct. Mr. Silliman isn't *quite* an ass. Mr. Mandel and Mr. Sherry *will* babble inanely, but perhaps they cannot help it, (for we have heard of such other things,) and then it must not be denied that *at* an uncertain hour, / That agony return: / And till the ghastly tale is told, / The heart within them burns.

The fact is that our authors, in the rank exuberance of their zeal, seemed to think as little of discrimination as Jimmy Swaggart did of the Bible. Poetical "things in general" are the windmills at which they spurred their rosinante. They as often tilted at what was true as at what was false; and thus their lines were like funhouse mirrors, which represent the fairest images as deformed. But the talent, the fearlessness, and especially the *design* of the project, will

suffice to save it from that dreadful damnation of "silent contempt" to which readers throughout the country, if we are not very much mistaken, will endeavor, one and all, to consign it.

-Edgar Allen Poe

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590. **maria damon**

***Re: Actually actual?***

*Mon 29 May 1995*

---

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group writes:

> "Nothing is real. Everything is permitted."

>

>

> (quote from the leader of the assassins, can't recall his name  
> at the moment)

hassan i sabba,

>

> Jonathan Brannen

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591. **John Geraets**

***Re: art's after***

*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

Dear Jake, Carl, Wystan

Thanks for the comments.

Maybe like you're suggesting Wystan, I too feel the double cut of quality frees us from the labour of definition (judgement). Quality here suggests poetry is that which constantly is wishing to abnegate itself. I guess, then, poetry doesn't even like itself. It's what wants to rid itself of itself.

Now I'm really confused.

John

[REDACTED]

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592. **Gary Sullivan**

**AUNTIE HEGEMONY & UNCLE POE**

*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

Hey, kids: This chapter rec'd from one W.R. Titterton (or a biographer who goes by that name) w/ the request that I forward it here, and that it be re-forwarded to members of the AHP for fact-checking, and then on to the critic Edgar Allan Poe for a final proof. It's rather lengthy, but the author claims to have suffered greatly through it, & now asks the same of you. AUNTIE HEGEMONY & UNCLE POE by W.R. Titterton [This is the first portrait of the great Auntie Hegemony and her side-kick, Uncle Poe. The author knew neither personally, but watched them both at work and play.] [In these sentences Auntie and Uncle live again, in all their towering humanity.] This is the portrait of wise children. Matilda "Auntie" Hegemony was none of your Peter Pans who won't grow up and face their responsibilities. She was always aware of her responsibilities, and eager to face them; and she was always a child. In a way, Auntie did not grow at all--except in physical bulk. Writing of poetry world characters, she says that they don't progress, they don't change, they are there, as if eternal. If you turned a corner and met Mr. Watten, you would know just what he would look like and very much what he would say. So it was with Auntie. When I opened my e-mail, I was always expecting to see her striding towards me, a winged vision of jovial Victory; the big proud humble face, under the huge soft hat, puckered into a thoughtful smile behind the negligent pince-nez; a cigarillo sprouting from the corner of her mouth; well-crafted satires, entertainments and insults bulging from the pockets under the flapping coat. I hope you know what I mean by a child. I hope that you remember how Our Lord said: "A little child shall lead us." This big little child led me for many months, and she leads me now. I have said that Auntie Hegemony did not change. She did not. She changed her opinions, but not her beliefs. Well, let us say rather that, though she was a grown woman before she said "Credo in unum Deum," as a very small child she knew God. Even so, she -- and her companion, the equally God-fearing Edgar "Uncle" Poe -- were creatures of paradox; while their eyes were on Heaven, they plunged their very souls into Hell. Neither Virgil nor Dante accompanied them; they'd read neither thoroughly outside of school, and were, suitably, too embarrassed to seek practical guidance from either on such short notice. Once plunged into Hell, they shrieked and gasped at Simoniacs, Barrators, Hypocrites, Panders and Seducers, spat epithets at the Lustful and Gluttonous, fainted in terror on Level Five at their own Wrathful visages mirrored in Styx just below, but all of this willy nilly, as in reaction, or perverse Pleasure, giving no one, themselves included, any True or Complete Picture or Map of the Underworld. And lacking that, they lacked, simply put, The Way Out. Anyhow, it was meat and drink



to me to find a couple who loved discourse, but hated this discourse; who were ready to die for their calling, but not to lie for it, and who were of such blind passion that they cursed the denizens of Hell, forgetting where they had doomed themselves to spend their days and nights. I hadn't this particular "food for thought" since Laura (Riding) Jackson passed through, years ago. While Jackson's meals were comparatively bland, they occasionally nourished; Auntie's spicy noodles passed quickly through the system, the tea that accompanied even quicker; and what Uncle served up on his unannounced Memorial Day Picnic was leftovers, the spinach wilted, the milk soured. And so, as I say, there are Auntie and Uncle's lively jabs in fragments. That at present is all we can see; if they are either still among us, they've made no apparent attempts to strike up conversations or friendships with anyone but each other, though both vocally detest cliques. Uncle's final statement to the denizens of Hell was an unusually somber portrait of his own of Auntie Hegemony, casting his companion as America's Only Satirist, compared to whom he finds Twain scribbling, Koch stumbling, and is apparently ignorant of (or presumes irrelevant) the likes of Acker, Ackerman, Ahern, Anderson, Barthelme, Bergman, Berrigan, Black Bart, Bruce, etc., indeed a list thrice twenty-six and then some of merely Recent Practitioners of the Art. But then when one travels in such small cliques, one can imagine one's clever friends to have invented the Wheel. As a matter of convenience, Uncle casts the Other denizens of Hell as having been completely silent upon Auntie's arrival -- save one outburst -- forgetting that comments about specific newsjabs were indeed made, that at least one (should memory serve me) offered "Auntie was actually too kind [to me]." But this was from one (then) recently fallen, and not a terribly important soul at that. Neither does Uncle seem to have spent much contemplation on the nature of Auntie's newsjabs, that they were not presented as opening lines of a possible dialogue, but ends in and of themselves. Uncle seems to forget, again as a matter of convenience (perhaps in a weak effort to establish the newsjabs as vessels of Irrefutable Truth, or to cast Auntie as an Outsider, Other, her white sleeves unsoiled) that numerous posts of the same content (Hegemony, Blind Fashion, and the like), those posted as dialogue and involving actual people & events, *\*were\** commented on, some at great length, and with a good many denizens of Hell offering a variety of Opinion, Speculation, Rebuttal and Expansion upon them. That one finds it more rewarding to reply to Persons than to Bumperstickers, Banners, or News Bulletins, should surprise no one. That it surprised Uncle suggests that he, after a short time in Hell, grew as Vain and Uncontemplative as anyone in Dis. "Not everyone gets corrupted," as Muriel Hemingway tells Woody Allen (a Satirist, like his precursor Benchley, unknown or not considered as Important as Auntie to Uncle), but we are all of us human, and have occasion to lapse. But, now I come near to the time when I must bid good-bye to my

Auntie and my Uncle. I, who am a dry-eyed man, feel my eyes fill with tears for the first time in fifteen years. Auntie, Uncle, I have done this little \_portrait\_ in a rush white hot. Does it content you? Please God that it does not. As Karen Carpenter once sang ... ah, then, but you do know the words. --W.R. Titterton  
PS: Edgar, if you're reading this, your statement suggesting that criticism ought to \*be\* criticism (in the largest sense of that word), you'll find echoed in the summer issue of \_Exile\_ (a satire and review journal you've probably never seen) in an essay on just that topic by Gerald Burns. Contact Mr. Sullivan by e-mail should you ever care to read it.

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593. **Chris Stroffolino**

**Re: milo deangelis**

*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

Thanks gary for filling me in on the debate--- I think the quote you're referring to is "The Greek theoria signifies "reflection" but also "solemn embassy," "spectacle." And perhaps there can be no great poet who has not had theoretical insights into other great poets...." The way i see it (aside from the adjective "great"--maybe it should be GROOVY--) is very qualified and not prescriptive but an attempt to widen the range of the meaning of the word "theory" to include what perhaps is too derided as "loose talk," and thought "as such." Certainly Auntie Hegemony would be theory then---and not just because of certain overstatements---for instance one (in an article on Mandel that came out last week) that claims just the opposite of DeAngeli--that no true poet should or would (though could) squander his life away on textual exegesis...etc... Thanks, gary, for filling me in. Chris

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594. **Edward Foster**

**Re: Yo, Ed**

*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

carl, your lynes  
are petering out

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595. **Edward Foster**

**Re: Art, etc.**

*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

"mind is everywhere"? uh, carl, sounds like \_science and health with key to the scriptures\_.

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596. **Edward Foster**

***Re: Art, etc.***

*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

to pick up, sheila, on homeopathy, not strictly in terms of your exchange but generally in terms of literature; it's rather fascinating and deeply interworked w

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597. **Edward Foster**

***Re: Art, etc.***

*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

re: homeopathy as poetics: not writing as editing, avoidance, which is as the academic has it. rather to introduce exactly what poisons. poetry that is essentially editing (i.e., propositional) is poetry that denies transcendence. so we know.

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598. **Edward Foster**

***Re: Sentiment***

*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

What do we mean when we call someone's work sentimental? that it refers to that which it does not/cannot contain. i.e., it lies.

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599. **Edward Foster**

***Re: Art, etc.***

*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

to pick up, sheila, on homeopathy, not strictly in terms of you exchange but generally in terms of literature; it's rather fascinating and deeply interworked with 19th century aesthetics (cf. hawthorne). ted enslin knows a lot about this.

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600. **Jim Pangborn**

***Re: Art, etc.***

*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

Carl: (re: "Simplify! Simplify!")

Thoreau referred specifically to material culture--trains, telegraphs, all the little boxes into which we civilizands stow pieces of our lives--not to his writing, which he viewed as transcendent thereof. You think *Walden* is simple? Guess again.

I don't believe I distorted your words at all, the way I read them back to you. Of course I knew it wasn't what you *\*thought\** you were saying. You thought to contradict my assertion (not "mine" in the sense of original with me) that art's definition is constitutionally elusive, but instead you illustrated it very well, thank-you.

When you amend yourself to say "it has to have wonder for me . . . else it aint art" I simply couldn't agree more. That was my main point when this started. Wonder as a defining characteristic, however, has no explicit connection to your previous wording, and it is but one defining marker, not, as far as we can tell, a complete or exhaustive definition. And what in the world (or out of it, where so many imagine they can place themselves) leads you to characterize wonder as simple? Have a care, man.

If I might intervene a bit further, I take it that what you "meant" was something more like, "defining art is no problem for me because it's not my job--I can recognize art, make art, and that's enough." And that *\*is\** enough, provided it really isn't your job to try, knowing the historical difficulty, to define it anyway. Ignoring the historical difficulty won't make it go away.

With trepidation, because Silicon Diogenes is abroad in the land, --Jim

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601. **Hank Lazer**

***Re: art's after***

*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

John Geraets--

not rid itself [poetry] of itself  
but call itself into question  
ask that it change  
that its own disruption  
is part of its joy

Hank Lazer

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602. **Marisa A Januzzi**  
***Re: where were you born***  
*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

Ed Foster's book *\*is\** amazing and really engrossing, the poems tell intricate stories and ask to be read and reread and reread (and I'm just at the reread stage, so I can't say anything more articulate right now other than to thank the poet for doing this work on the page). The printed cover is really strinkin; whoever did it must have sacrificed the type to get so deep an impression, and I keep running my fingertips over it and wondering if that's an intended part of the text itself, which seems so much about pressure and touch and weight of past.

which brings me to sentiment: and Alan Sondheim's answer to Jordan: "thrusts backwards with a whisper, that it is a memory of what we once called truth"

It's a marked answer-- the "thrusts/backwards/truth" combo, I mean. Isn't this more like the meaning of "nostalgia"? (And also, doesn't it reinscribe the gender binary which usually comes into play, if only as an initial point of reference, whenever 'nostalgia' is invoked?)

There has to be a way to hold onto 'nostalgia' without being self-indulgent; in fact the nostalgic elements in a writer like...uh, Joyce...are what first made the self-indulgent (as in, high-wire wonderful) parts accessible for me.

But now I have a question-- a former student asked if it were possible for a writer to "write beautifully about absolutely nothing." I told him to try it... all the writers I could think of were writing "about" "nothing" qua something... language, absence, estrangement, silence. Can anyone think of a better response to this kid, I mean, beyond "try it"? "The bride is never bare" [more nostalgia]?!

so  
much  
de(e)pending

Marisa--

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603. **Jim Rosenberg**  
***Re: Sentiment***  
*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

Me:

> Jordan Davis:

> > What do we mean when we call someone's work sentimental?

>

> The fear that the work is too much comprised of the emotional substance of a  
> single self; the fear the emotional substance of that self is unreliable.

Dodie Bellamy:

> Lots of us are afraid of our emotions, but it's beyond me to think of an  
> "emotional substance" that *\*is\** reliable-or to see that as a problem.

The central issue is the singularity of self. We all do what we can to combat this problem; there are as many "solutions" as there are poets. For some it may mean a formal meditation program to transcend the physical limits of the self; for others it may mean process work or precompositional devices; for others using found material, or just plain spending a lot of time listening to found speech -- one could go on endlessly.

While I don't want to speak for Jackson Mac Low, when he told me that he both started and stopped using chance operations because of a concern with sentimentality, I believe he was trying to tell me that in the constant battle against singularity of self there is no free lunch: One cannot presume to have simply solved this problem once and for all time by a single act of invention.

I agree with you, Dodie, emotional substance -- per se -- is not a problem; what is a problem is where you see that emotional substance sticking out like bones from under the skin through gaps in what you had thought were reasonable efforts to work against the singularity of self.

--

Jim Rosenberg

<http://www.well.com/user/jer/>

CIS: 71515,124

WELL: jer

Internet: [REDACTED]

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604. **Carl Lynden Peters**

***Re: Yo, Ed***

*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

ya, back at ya

!

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605. **Carl Lynden Peters**

**Re: art's after**

Tue 30 May 1995

---

john, hi:

i always thot bp's comments on the death of the poem were profoundly insightful, consistent thruout his writing and a theme which might, on an other level, tell us something abt \_guilt\_, --something i hope to research further within the context of various on-going projects

take care,  
carl

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606. **Carl Lynden Peters**

**Re: art, etc...**

Tue 30 May 1995

---

hi, jim:

i can't recall for sure but i'm certain i didn't say that you "distorted" my words. i said that you over-simplified them. i can say that without the slightest fear of contradiction.

i think it was yeats who said: guessing is always more fun than knowing.  
wonder, again. there it is

take care,  
carl

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607. **Kevin Killian**

**Re: Sentiment**

Tue 30 May 1995

---

*Jim Rosenberg:*

*I agree with you, Dodie, emotional substance -- per se -- is not a problem;  
what is a problem is where you see that emotional substance sticking out like  
bones from under the skin through gaps in what you had thought were reasonable  
efforts to work against the singularity of self.*

I agree with what you're saying about the pitfalls of the singular self, but this violent eruption that you're describing here sounds wonderful to me, Jim.

Lover of the abject,  
Dodie Bellamy

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608. **Federation Sand**  
***Cyanosis Publication Party in SF***

*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

Hi everyone,

Just wanted to pass along an open invitation to the 2nd Cyanosis publication party. It's Friday, June 2nd at The Ghia Gallery 2648 Third St SF CA 95448

██████ info: ██████ (415)

You're all invited. There should be some extremely unusual readings and very unusual dance. \$5.50 at the door 7:30 pm till ??

If you're in the area, don't miss it!

Darin

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609. **George Bowering**  
***Re: some Lorca***

*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

Well, Garcia Lorca (to give him his Spanish surname) was a fan of Whitman, and perhaps a secret toker. Thus "fumes of grass"

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610. **George Bowering**  
***Re: Sentiment***

*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

Puzzled by Jim Rosenberg's message of May 27 (I have been away for an eye injury), in which he mentioned the work being "comprised of" emotional something. I dont understand trhe usage. How can something be "comprised of" something? Souldnt it be "comprised by" something?

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611. **Tony Green**  
***Re: art's after***

*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

Quality, John, in Poetry, is its entrance qualification for somebody's version of Literature.

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612. **Tony Green**  
***Re: Actually actual?***  
Tue 30 May 1995

---

Maria and Jonathan: Hassan is Abba.

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613. **Tony Green**  
***Re: really Real***  
Tue 30 May 1995

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More smileys please, Steve Carl

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614. **Mark Roberts**  
***AWOL: fourW magazine***  
Tue 30 May 1995

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AUSTRALIAN WRITING ONLINE is a small press distribution service and writers' resource service designed to help Australian writers, magazines, journals and publishers to reach a wider audience through the internet. As a first step we will be posting information and subscription details for a number of magazines and publishers to a number of discussion groups and lists. We hope to build up a large emailing list which includes as many libraries as possible. If you know of a list or discussion group which you think might be worthwhile posting to or, if you would like to receive future postings, please contact AWOL directly on [REDACTED].

AWOL also posts a monthly Happenings list. This is a guide to readings, book launches, conferences and other events relating to Australian literature both within Australia and overseas. If you have any item which you would like included in future listings please contact AWOL on email [REDACTED] or write to AWOL, PO Box 333, Concord NSW 2137, Australia. AWOL postings are also available by snail mail - please contact us for details.

Please note that [REDACTED] is a temporary address until we set up our own address sometime this year

\*\*\*\*\*

"fourW" .

"fourW" is a small literary magazine edited by David Gilbey from the School of Humanities and Social Science, Charles Stuart University, Wagga Wagga. The title apostrophises Wagga Wagga Writers Writers and while there's a particular

desire to publish new work from the Riverina, like all small magazines we consider and publish work from all over Australia (and overseas)

The most recent issue Number 5 contains new work by Dorothy Porter, Kate Llewellyn, Tim Thorne, Ken Bolton, Jeff Guess, Steve Evans, Adrian Caesar and many more - runs to more than 150 pages. We received about 400 submissions and managed to publish about 100. We don't pay (can't - no funding) but aim to produce a fairly classy looking mag. Deadline for this next issue - due out in the Spring - is 30 June.

Usually we like to receive MSS typed, double-spaced etc but you can send it email if you like.

order form cut here

\*\*\*\*\*

"fourW"

"fourW" is available for \$9.00 plus postage (email [REDACTED] to determine postage)

Name .....

Address .....

Mail this form, together with your payment to

David Gilbey, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga NSW, Australia 2678.

Further information is available from [REDACTED].

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615. **FUNKHOUSER CHRISTOPH**  
***satan***

*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

To the Owner of the Poetics List.

DEAR SIR AND KINSMAN.--Let us have done with this frivolous talk. The Anti-Hegemony Project accepts contributions from me every year: then why shouldn't it from Mr. Poe? In all the ages, three-fourths of the practitioners of the great art of parody have been regular devils, as my archives will show: then what becomes of the sting when that term is applied to the gifted Mr. Poe? The AHP's wares are accumulated mainly from the graveyards. Revisitation of an old crime and deliberate perpetration of a new one; for deceased's contribution is a slander of his heirs. Shall the AHP decline bequests because they stand for these offences every time and generally for both?

Allow me to continue. The charge most persistently and resentfully and remorselessly dwelt upon is, that Mr. Poe's contributions are incurably tainted by bad faith--bad faith proved against him most recently by Mr. W.R. Titterton. \_It makes us smile\_--down in my place! Because there isn't a writer in cyberspace who doesn't exhibit bad faith in the daily disparity between public and private opinion. They are all caked with bad faith, many layers thick. Iron clad, so to speak. If there is one that isn't, I desire to acquire him for my museum, and will pay Dinosaur rates. Will you say it isn't infraction of ethics, but only a kindly evasion? Comfort yourselves with that nice distinction if you like--\_for the present\_. But by and by, when you arrive, I will show you something interesting: a whole hell-full of evaders!

To return to my muttons. I wish you to remember that my bad-faith writers are contributing to the Anti-Hegemony Project with frequency: it is writing filched from the sworn-off public honesty; therefore it is the wages of sin; therefore it is my writing; therefore it is \_I\_ that contribute it; and, finally, it is therefore as I have said: since the AHP daily accepts contributions from me, why should it decline them from Mr. Poe--or Mr. Twain--who are each as good as I am, let Mr. Titterton say what he will?

SATAN.

\_May 30, 1995\_

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616. **maria damon**

***Re: Sentiment***

*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

*what is a problem is where you see that emotional substance sticking out like bones from under the skin through gaps in what you had thought were reasonable efforts to work against the singularity of self.*

--

Jim Rosenberg

CIS: 71515,124

WELL: jer

Internet: [REDACTED]

<http://www.well.com/user/jer/>

aren't bones showing thru under skin quite beautiful horrifyingly un"sentimental"? gaps are where beauty is, not in seamless prettifying... md-- it's the "flaws" that make my heart beat.

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617. **maria damon**

***Re: Actually actual?***

*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group writes:

> Maria and Jonathan: Hassan is Abba.

imagine: i can't read janine pommy-vega's Poems to Fernando anymore without that dumb abba song cantering thru my head. if everything were abba...i might cross over the line to the high-art crowd--oy!

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618. **maria damon**

***Re: Sentiment***

*Tue 30 May 1995*

---

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group writes:

> > Jim Rosenberg:

>

> >I agree with you, Dodie, emotional substance -- per se -- is not a problem;

> >what is a problem is where you see that emotional substance sticking out

> like

> >bones from under the skin through gaps in what you had thought were

> reasonable

> >efforts to work against the singularity of self.

>

> I agree with what you're saying about the pitfalls of the singular self,

> but this violent eruption that you're describing here sounds wonderful to

> me, Jim.

>

> Lover of the abject,

> Dodie Bellamy

amen to that, as i indicated in my own reply-button skirmish not 10 minutes ago. by the way dodie, do you know liz kotz? if so, tell me by back channel how to reach her please. we used to hang out in sf, then she wrote to me and i took 6 months to answer. so naturally i suspect the return address i used is no good.--abjectly sincere, maria d

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619. **John Byrum**

***Re: loss of the name/art & sa...***

*Wed 31 May 1995*

---

Carl,

Sorry I forgot so quickly your source. I lose track easily apparently. Usually think of what's called "myself" as a spreading field composed of brief glints of recognition melded with darker areas of "oh yeah" and lots of blank that never get known in any "recognizable" ways. But knowing is a deepness we aren't exactly familiar with or even always aware of. I'm satisfied with letting experiences percolate into aquifers deeper than can always be retrieved in the forms they had when they seeped in. They surface transformed in memory & my writing.

Best,

John

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620. **John Byrum**

***Re: Art, etc.***

*Wed 31 May 1995*

---

Carl,

Thanks for putting those quotes on art & aesthetics out. As usual, I find I agree and disagree with various points taken in various ways in all of them. And all of them are pertinent and provoking.

There is a point of view from which one can say that all our productions are "muzak" or decoration, just as there are other points of view from which one can say that any individual production has important contributions to make to our awareness of our situation. There is a point of view that allows us to state (and feel) that art is the production and embodied realization of difference, and of the intertwined difference (multiplicity) in unity. Everywhere is the center. Centers everywhere radiating. And etc.

John

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621. **John Byrum**  
***Re: Actually actual?***  
*Wed 31 May 1995*

---

I say the real is anything we go through, all our experiences. I say even what we imagine we cannot imagine is the real. What is unimaginable is equally real in its way as the pain we feel when we cut a finger or lose a loved one.

John

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622. **John Byrum**  
***Re: art after art after art***  
*Wed 31 May 1995*

---

*dear Herb & other old farts on the list,  
isnt it just great to watch the young folks do it all again thinking  
it's for the first time...heh heh (wheeze wheeze*

*...what's old is new again, eh  
c*

I'm appropriating my father's increasingly sagging jowls and death wheeze.

I'm taking on my mother's increasing forgetfulness as she grows older sitting alone in her apartment.

I see how each of us curls and coils through these little lettered curls & coils time & time again.

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623. **Steve Carll**  
***really actual yoed***  
*Wed 31 May 1995*

---

for hassan, tony green, etc.:

nothing  
to get  
hungabout

--Steve (fresh from Salt Lake City, no less!)

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624. **Jake Berry**

***John, Hank - Re: art's after***

*Wed 31 May 1995*

---

Yes, a definition of quality that I can agree with. The constant movement beyond, before that which is, is even set down. Artaud said, "x clear ideas are ideas that are dead and finished." This act then would be what's after art, and any poetry or any other form would reflect that, though there would be no absolute necessity to perpetuate the forms, or calling what results by any single label. The point is, as you said Hank, the disruption which is a joy, an exquisite agony I think. In our recent e-mail discussions, Jim Leftwich speaks of "proprioceptive gnosis", the nerves and muscle that drives, fuels the process. It is a form of living that discharges as poetry or paint, or any medium and under any name, or lack thereof - to constantly act beyond your own preconceptions, even beyond your own perceptions. In a sense, if it doesn't kill you a little its not worth living.

Jake

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625. **Michael Boughn**

***AHP***

*Wed 31 May 1995*

---

Welcome back, AHP, we missed ya! Really real missing . . .

Mike



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626. **Edward Foster**

***Re: where were you born***

*Wed 31 May 1995*

---

thank you, marisa. but the cover is wholly the work of brad o'sullivan, hand done on naropa press. typeface (with which i'm very pleased) is the choice of matt corry. one couldn't not ask for better work than what these terrific people gave.

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627. **Edward Foster**

***Re: Art, etc.***

*Wed 31 May 1995*

---

"The icon painting aims to convey not the face but the gaze." --Sergij Bulgakov

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628. **Gary Sullivan**

***from PARADOX AND EVOL***

*Wed 31 May 1995*

---

from PARADOX AND EVOL

by G.K. Bataille

Kim Urizen, trans.

In the midst of the rowdy imperial epic  
the blasted head flashes  
w/thrill on the lips. Each vein, a bayonet  
vibrates the latrine of the heart.

--Ted Swinburne

Why should a period of revolution lend a lustre to the arts and the world of letters? Few events in e-space have a greater symbolic value than the storming of the Poeticslist by Auntie Hegemony, despite the fact that the "storming" was itself symbolic. (Can one already inside the compound be said to have "stormed" it?) My concern here is not with the mode of her poetic realization, and the judgment must be that the realization is less poetic, more intellectual. The contemplative *\_sees\_*. (Note the homophonic "seize.") Auntie Hegemony is not so much great because of her published achievement as great because she is right. Her achievement deserves a homage less indiscriminate than it has yet been accorded; thus I do more than praise what she wrote: I praise what she knew. She cannot be praised too highly so long as praise is confined to what is praiseworthy. Her especial gift was her physical intuition of being; her especial triumph was her exploitation of paradox to embody that intuition. W.R. Titterton is a biographer, Uncle Edgar a critic, and both of their limits are those of their respective professions. To cast, oneself as with another, as "professional" -- and the biographer, the critic, neither is more or less a "professional" than the academic or the publisher -- is to cast limits. Titterton and Poe are both businessmen. Titterton is an idiot. Edgar, a bitter materialist. Auntie Hegemony decided on an event that was to shake, if not to deliver, the world. She appears to have employed the pipe used for emptying dirty water as a loud speaker and one of her many provocative actions was to yell out that the prisoners were being slaughtered. This was truly a liberation, but in the cryptic sense of a dream, a dream of "Evol" -- not quite Revolution or Evolution, not



quite Evil, the mirror image of Love (which is not Hate, but, simply, Evol). Q: Who is Satan? A: What is poetry? The grave filled in, sewn with acorns so that, in the future, the ground will be covered with vegetation ... is/isn't poetry. My lips move as I write it down as it happens ... is/isn't poetry. What do you want? ... is/isn't poetry. The Hegelian may say that an egg is really a hen, because it is part of an endless process of Becoming; the Berkeleian may hold that poached eggs only exist as a dream exists; since it is quite as easy to call the dream the cause of the eggs as the eggs the cause of the dream; the Pragmatist may believe that we get the best out of scrambled eggs by forgetting that they ever were eggs, and only remembering the scramble. But no pupil of Auntie Hegemony needs to addle hir brains in order to addle hir eggs; to put hir head at any peculiar angle in looking at eggs, or squinting at eggs, or winking the other eye in order to see a new simplification of eggs: A pose is a pose is a pose. The Auntie Hegemonist stands in the broad daylight of the brotherhood of women, the sisterhood of men, in their common consciousness that eggs are not hens or dreams or mere practical assumptions; but things attested by the authority of the Senses: Appose is appose is appose. All poets are amateurs, white gleams of water that shine suddenly like swords or spears in the green thickets. Can they honestly be compiled? --G.K. Bataille

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629. **Gary Sullivan**  
***Summer is here...***

*Wed 31 May 1995*

---

Dear Poeticslist People: Due to a combination of outside forces (specifically, good weather, bad finances and a backlog of things to attend to), I'll be temporarily unplugging my Internet package, including Poeticslist. I'll have e-mail for a couple more days at least (I have to cancel it by written request), if anyone wants to get in touch with me that way. Otherwise, my address is as follows: Gary Sullivan 1506 Grand Avenue, #3 St. Paul, MN 55105-2222 Note that the above is also the address for Detour Press. If you'd like to send poetry, fiction, drama, visual work, etc., for consideration, send it to that address, and state, specifically, that you'd like what you're sending to be considered for publication. (I get a lot of manuscripts in the mail, and a couple years ago made the mistake of "rejecting" something that hadn't been intended for publishing consideration.) So, please, be specific with your intentions, if you'd like your work considered for publication. Also, for those unfamiliar with the press, while I can't speak for my co-editor Marta Deike, I tend to be generally interested in work of "satirical nature." (Which isn't to say, strictly speaking, "satire.") Marta has her own interests w/respect to the press;

the things that we've published constitute a common ground or compromise (take your pick) of our combined interests. Also note: we are only able to publish 1 or 2 books a year; this limits the focus (and output) of the press considerably. We are not (obviously) New Directions. I owe several of you on this list books; if I promised you them and you haven't yet received them, you know who you are. I'll send them shortly when I can afford to. (Not too long, I hope.) I also owe a number of you responses to work, letters, etc.--you'll be hearing from me soon via snail-mail. We're interested in exchanging books for other books or magazines; so, anyone who wants any of the following, but would rather trade than buy, send your wares w/an explanation that that's what you're doing, or query first if you're more comfortable doing that. DARK DECADE, a novel (w/illustrations) by Johanna Drucker, 128 pp., 1995, \$10.95 FEAR & PHILOSOPHY, fiction by Stephen-Paul Martin, 128 pp., 1994, \$8.95 I SHOT THE HAIRDRESSER, fiction by David Gilbert, 128 pp., 1994, \$8.95 SOUND OFF, poetry by Spencer Selby, 64 pp., 1993, \$7.95 We have a couple of other books planned -- if they come out & I'm not on-line at that time, I'll have Spencer or someone post notices.

Have fun, everyone, and remember: THERE IS NO ULTIMATE AUTHORITY.

Yours,

Gary

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630. **Carl Lynden Peters**

***After Art: Last Words***

*Wed 31 May 1995*

---

BRANCUSI'S LADDER: T      a

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Tabu   rasa  
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631. **Tony Green**

***Re: art after art after art***

*Wed 31 May 1995*

---

Dear John Byrum, It's gone quiet this a.m. -- all the traffic going to Vancouver I guess. Yesterday, looking at The Death of Eudamidas and the Extreme Unction by Nicolas Poussin, it occurred to me to ask my students, some twenty of them, if any of them had ever been at a death-bed. Not one and nor have I and that makes it difficult to inhabit the figures of the paintings in the way the painter and his contemporaries could. The best I could manage that way was seeing my father barely conscious after his last stroke in London, full of the usual tubes and wires. The doctors had sat in committee and decided they had to leave all the gear in place. When he made a partial recovery he was not altogether pleased by their decision. Arguments about the real branch out in all directions from there.

Best wishes to you and Generator Press.

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632. **Jonathan Brannen**

***Re: Actually actual?***

*Wed 31 May 1995*

---

Maria,

Thanks for filling my memory lapse!

"Nothing is real. Everything is permitted."

hassam i sabba

adios,

Jonathan

[↑ Contents](#)

633. **Jonathan Brannen**

***Re: Actually actual?***

*Wed 31 May 1995*

---

tony and maria,

ABBA? high art?

how about a little reggae instead?

best, jonathan

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634. **Mark Roberts**

**(no subject)**

Wed 31 May 1995

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June Happenings

Australian Writing OnLine

AWOL Happenings. A monthly guide to readings, book launches, conferences and other events relating to Australian literature both within Australia and overseas. If you have any item which you would like included in future listings please contact AWOL on email [REDACTED] or write to AWOL, PO Box 333, Concord NSW 2137, Australia. AWOL postings are also available by snail mail - please contact us for details.

AWOL posts are archived on the WWW at the following address  
<http://www.anatomy.su.oz.au/danny/books/index.html> then click on Australian Writing OnLine.

\*\*\*\*\*

NSW

SYDNEY

\*\*\*\*\* BOOK LAUNCHES \*\*\*\*\*

Island Press is a small co-operative press which has been publishing poetry since 1975. The motivating force behind it is Phillip Hammial, whose book JUST DESERTS (Island) is to be launched by Leith Morton on 3 June at 3pm at the Courthouse Hotel, Newtown.

As part of Martin Smith's Bookshop's second series of 'Writers on the Beach' INKLINGS journal presents INKLINGS ON THE BEACH: READINGS FROM THE JOURNAL. Wednesday 28 June 1995 7pm at Ravesi's Hotel, Bondi Beach (corner Campbell Parade and Hall Street). Admission \$7/\$4 concession: Refreshments provided. INKLINGS gratefully acknowledges assistance from the NSW Writers' Centre, The Literature Board of the Australia Council and Martin Smith's Bookshop Bondi Beach.

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\*\*\*\*\* READINGS \*\*\*\*\*

SYDNEY

4th Monday of each month...FUTURE POETS SOCIETY 8pm, Lapidary Club Room, Gympie Bay Road, Gympie. Details phone Anni Featherstone (02) [REDACTED].

Every Tuesday...POETRY SUPREME 9pm, Eli's Restaurant, 132 Oxford Street, Darlinghurst. Details phone/fax (02) [REDACTED].

1st and 3rd Wednesday ...POETS UNION 7pm, The Gallery Cafe, 43 Booth Street, Annandale. Details phone (02) [REDACTED].

2nd Wednesday...WOMEN WRITERS' NETWORK 7.30pm, NSW Writers' Centre. Details Ann Davis (02) [REDACTED].

4th Wednesday...LIVE POETS AT DON BANKS MUSEUM 7.30pm, 6 Napier Street North Sydney. Guest reader plus open section. Admission \$6 includes wine. Details phone Sue Hicks or Danny Gardiner (02) [REDACTED].

Every Thursday...POETRY ALIVE 11am-1pm, Old Courthouse, Bigge Street, Liverpool. Details phone (02) [REDACTED].

1st Friday...EASTERN SUBURBS POETRY GROUP 7.30pm, Everleigh Street, Waverly. Details phone (02) [REDACTED].

2nd & 4th Saturday...GLEEBOOKS READINGS 2pm, Gleebooks, 49 Glebe Point Road, Glebe. Details Nick Sykes (02) [REDACTED].

3rd Sunday...POETRY WITH GLEE: THE POETS UNION AT GLEEBOOKS. 2-4pm, 49 Glebe Point Road, Glebe. Admission \$5/\$2 Details Nick Sykes (02) [REDACTED].

Every Sunday...THE WORD ON SUNDAY 11.30am Museum of Contemporary Art, Circular Quay. Admission \$8/ \$5. Details phone (02) [REDACTED].

#### REGIONAL

ARMIDALE 1st Wednesday 7.30pm, Rumours Cafe in the Mall. Details phone James Vicars (067) 73 2103.

WOLLONGONG 2nd & 4th Tuesday 7.30pm, Here's Cheers Restaurant, 5 Victoria Street, Wollongong. Details phone Ian Ryan (042) 84 0645.

#### WAGGA WAGGA

6 JUNE, 8pm, An Evening of WRITERS' READINGS, Firenze Italian Restaurant ph (069) 214211. JACKIE HUGGINS - aboriginal biographer: "Aunty Rita", POLONIUS POETS - from Canberra: Robert Verdon, Kathy Kituai, Francesca Rendle-Short and possibly Russell Irwin. MARK BRENNAN - first performance of his chamber opera for four voices. Admission: \$8, \$6 and \$5

JUNE 9, 7.30 pm, ABC Radio Riverina Studio: Local media identity, Jennifer Sexton will open the exhibition "LOOKING AT THE WORLD THROUGH WOMEN'S EYES" - a travelling exhibition of visual poetry. This is the fifth 'suitcase exhibition' originated by the School of Women Artists Network (SWAN) and allows local writers to submit works to be included as the exhibition tours (a kind of rolling stone that DOES gather moss). For information, contact Debra Luttrell ph 069 315488.

28 JUNE 7.30 pm, Booranga Writers' Centre at Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga. EDITING WORKSHOP - run by David Gilbey. Participants to bring recent work in multiple copies. Cost: \$12, \$10.

For details about Wagga Wagga events contact David Gilbey ph. (069) 332465, fax (069) 332792 email [REDACTED]

LISMORE 3rd Tuesday 8pm. Stand Up Poets, Lismore Club, Club Lane. Details phone David Hallett (066) 891318.

#### NEWCASTLE

1st Sunday... Illuminating Tales at the Commonwealth Hotel, Union/ Bull Streets, Newcastle. Details phone Bill Iden (049) 675 972

3rd Monday... Poetry at the Pub. Newcastle Bowling Club, Watt Street. Details phone Bill Iden (049) 675 972

\*\*\*\*\*

#### QUEENSLAND

##### Queensland Writers Centre Events

Exciting Writing: Reading of New Works at the Queensland Writers' Centre. 27 June 'The House is Live' with Maryanne Lynch, Daynan Brazil and Clive Williams. Chaired by Hilary Beaton. Queensland Writer' Centre, 535 Wickham Terrace, Spring Hill. 7.30 pm. Admission \$10 for QWC members. \$15 for non-members.

Proof Reading and Editing Skills. Susan Addison conducts a basic skills workshop at the Queensland Writer' Centre, 535 Wickham Terrace, Spring Hill on Saturday 3 June 10am-4pm. Admission \$40 for QWC members and \$70 for non-members. Phone (07) 8391243 for further details.

Illustrating for young people: a course for adults. Greg Rogers conducts this five week course starting on Tuesday 6 June at 5.30pm at Hamilton Library. A booking fee of \$10 for QWC members and \$20 for non-members applies. Contact the Queensland Writer' Centre, 535 Wickham Terrace, Spring Hill or any Brisbane City Council Library or phone (07) [REDACTED] for further details. This is a part of the Queensland Writers' Centre 'Writers in the Library' Project.

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#### \*\* CONFERENCES \*\*

##### GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY/JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY

QUEENSLAND STUDIES CENTRE ANNUAL CONFERENCE 8-9 JULY

WAR'S END?

August 1945 marked the end of the most harrowing and transforming collective experience in the history of modern Australia. How much of the 'old' Australia came to an end with the cessation of hostilities, and how much continued as before? What different meanings did the war's end have for different groups and institutions in Australian society?

The Queensland Studies Centre will be holding its annual two-day conference, in association with the History Department of James Cook University in Townsville on 8-9 July of this year.

The conference will be interdisciplinary in scope, embracing military, social and cultural history; politics and political economy; literary and cultural studies. Papers exploring any of the following aspects of the topic would be welcome:

- \* literature and the arts
- \* education and social policy
- \* Aboriginal and ethnic communities
- \* women's history
- \* military and social history
- \* politics and industrial relations
- \* journalism and the media

Venue: Townsville, Queensland.

Date: 8-9 July, 1995.

Enquiries to:

The Queensland Studies Centre (Director, Patrick Buckridge)  
Faculty of Humanities  
Griffith University  
Nathan QLD 4111.  
Ph.: (07) 85 5494 Fax: (07) [REDACTED]  
E-mail: [REDACTED]

\*\*\*\*\*

Association for the Study of Australian Literature

ASAL

2-7 July 1995

Adelaide

The 1995 ASAL conference will be held at the historic Institute Building on North Terrace in the heart of Adelaide.

Keynote Speaker:

Paul Carter, author of *The Road to Botany Bay* and *Living in a New Country*.



Dorothy Green Memorial Lecture:

Drusilla Modjeska, author of *Exiles at Home* and *Poppy*.

Enquiries: Phil Butterss, Department of English, University of Adelaide,  
Adelaide 5005.

Ph: (08) [REDACTED]. Fax: (08) [REDACTED].

Email: [REDACTED]

(The 1995 ASAL program is available on AWOL's WWW link. Address  
<http://www.anatomy.su.oz.au/danny/books/index.html> then click on Australian  
Writing OnLine)

\*\*\*\*\*

#### EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR STUDIES ON AUSTRALIA

Third conference: Copenhagen, October 6-9, 1995

Conference theme: *Inhabiting Australia: The Australian Habitat and Australian  
Settlement.*

The conference aims to bring together contributions from a wide range of  
disciplines, from architecture to zoology. Papers which take up the theme from  
cultural, historical, social, scientific, literary and other perspectives are invited.

Registration forms will be distributed by the beginning of January, 1995.

Deadline for registration, July 1, 1995.

Further information available from Conference organisers:

\* Bruce Clunies Ross (45) 35 32 85 82 internet: [REDACTED] \*  
Martin Leer (45) 35 32 85 87 internet: [REDACTED] \* Merete  
Borch (45) 35 32 85 84 internet: [REDACTED]

Copenhagen University, Department of English  
Njalsgade 80, DK-2300 Kobenhavn S

Tlf. (45) 35 32 86 00

Fax (45) 35 32 86 15

\* Eva Rask Knudsen  
Wiedeweldtsgade 50, st.  
2100 Copenhagen O.  
(45) 35266025

\*\*\*\*\*

SYMPOSIUM: (POST) COLONIAL FICTIONS: RE-READING ELIZA FRASER  
AND THE WRECK OF THE STIRLING CASTLE. University of Adelaide, 25-26  
Nov., 1995.

Contact: Kay Schaffer, Department of Women's Studies, 08 [REDACTED] direct, 08 [REDACTED] FAX, e-mail: [REDACTED]

Post-colonial studies within Australia have attempted to re-evaluate and re-write colonial history to include those people either marginalised or subjugated by the colonial process. This two day symposium will explore a different aspect of post-colonial discourse through the exploration of one of the best known events in Australian colonial history. In 1836 the 'Stirling Castle' was wrecked off the Queensland coast and many of the crew together with the Captain's wife, Eliza, were marooned on Fraser Island. Events surrounding the rescue of the castaways, in particular Mrs. Fraser, received international media attention. In the last 160 years the story of Eliza Fraser has become the subject of popular myth, fiction, opera, art, film and scholarly research in the areas of cultural studies, literature, history, anthropology, archaeology, women's studies, and the visual arts. (Post) Colonial Fictions will examine critically the Eliza Fraser saga by bringing together, for the first time, an interdisciplinary team of academics, authors, artists and members of the Fraser Island community. Discussions will include feminist analyses of the incident, textual and iconographic representations of Aboriginal people, and Eliza Fraser as a creative inspiration for the arts.

Speakers on 19th century ethnography, visual arts, and Fraser Island history include: Ian Mc Niven, Lynette Russell, Rod McNeil, Olga Miller, Elaine Brown; on 20th century cultural studies and Batdjala representations include: Kay Schaffer, Sue Kossew, Jim Davidson, Jude Adams and Fiona Foley. We are hopeful that the symposium will include an exhibition of Fiona Foley's works and a performance by University of Adelaide Conservatorium of Music students of the theatre opera: "Eliza Fraser Sings" (arranged by Peter Sculthorpe/libretto by Barbara Blackman).

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## CONTESTS & COMPETITIONS

The Mattara Poetry Prize is back, and is now known as the Newcastle Poetry Prize. As in previous years, the prize is \$10,000. This year we are looking for an unpublished poem or group of poems (not necessarily thematically connected) of fewer than 200 lines. There is a \$5 entry fee this year, and the closing date is 17 JULY 1995. The judges are Dorothy Hewett, Antigone Kefala and Paul Kavanagh.

To enter: Send 2 stamped addressed envelopes plus \$5 to:  
The Newcastle Poetry Prize  
Newcastle Community Arts Centre  
PO Box 5267D  
Newcastle West NSW 2302

No personal details should appear on the manuscript. Any enquiries can be directed to the Arts Centre on (049) 611696 or the English Department at Newcastle University on (049) 215175. Alternatively, e-mail Tim Dolin: [REDACTED].

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While every effort has been made to ensure that the information on this list is correct, AWOL recommends that you contact individual organisers to confirm details

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