

@poetics

The UB Poetics Discussion Group

Archive of Electronic Correspondence **October 1995**

672 messages · Sun 1 Oct 1995 – Tue 31 Oct 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

October opens with a verdict and a laurel. On the third of the month the century's most watched jury acquits O. J. Simpson, and a country that had agreed on almost nothing agrees, at least, to keep arguing about that; on the fifth the Swedish Academy hands Seamus Heaney the Nobel, and the list — which honours few laurels it did not itself confer — takes the news with a Northern shrug. R I Caddel reports, in his Durham dryness, that Heaney “*got his gong*,” recycling Eric Mottram's old jibe for the occasion. The Pope is somewhere above Manhattan, the Mall is filling for the Million Man March, and the poets, as ever, keep one eye on the wide world and both hands on the poem.

The month's largest argument, running to better than fifty posts, belongs to B. Cassidy, who asks why the gallery has taken its avant-garde to its bosom — a Pollock, a de Kooning, a Rauschenberg hung in triumph — while poetry keeps Olson and Duncan and Stein out in the annex. Charles Alexander, the most tireless correspondent of the month, defends the difficult on the ground that such works “*question the possibilities of coherence*,” and are prized, not merely tolerated, for doing so. Jordan Davis observes that the Whitney, then showing Hopper, makes exactly the wrong witness for the prosecution, and that any honest audit of the two economies will “*develop a strong sense of perversity*.” The thread does not resolve. It was not built to.

From across the water Ken Edwards forwards the nation's verdict — a BBC poll has crowned Kipling's 'If' the best-loved poem in Britain — and remarks that “*stiff-upper-lip moralism still rules*,” or perhaps merely sells. The list answers in the only currency it keeps, which is more poems: a small epidemic of villanelles breaks out, most of them cheerfully and by their own admission bad, and Timothy Liu turns the season's laurel into a refrain, asking again and again down his stanzas, “*Seamus Heaney or Susan Howe?*” — the one question the Academy will never be set, and the one the list will never stop asking itself.

Elsewhere the elders are kept warm. Dodie Bellamy reopens the perennial matter of Lorine Niedecker set beside Zukofsky, and Chris Stroffolino, charmed by the near-rhyme of the abbreviations, offers the month's happiest slip: “*I like the conflation of Zuk and Buk*.” Mark Scroggins supplies the corroborating anecdote of a Harvard eminence who, told of a scholar at work on Louis, took the American poet in question to be Charles. In a graver register Jeff Hansen worries the

Shelleyan inheritance, confessing himself caught in the old snare whereby *"poetry should be at the origin of everything,"* and therefore answerable for the whole of it.

The month's most quietly furious thread wears the mildest of titles — Distant Lover — in which Aldon Nielsen contemplates the university's new romance with distance learning and pronounces it, like the web that promised so much, *"nothing like the real thing."* He sets the emptying classroom beside a colder arithmetic: the deep cuts to public education arriving in the very season the prisons are funded without a murmur, and the list, for once, finds nothing witty to add. That is the note October closes on. I have decoded what the machines encoded, struck what they appended, and returned every correspondent's address to the dark; the poets themselves I have left exactly as they were — arguing, in a safe area of their own devising, over which laurel to refuse next.

— K. M. F.

Contents

Every entry links to its message. 672 in all.

1 OCT 1995

1. Gabrielle Welford — Resisting Neiman-Marcus (fwd)
2. Gabrielle Welford — Re: spike it with saussure - begins the intramix...
3. Carlos Gallego — grad students beware (fwd)
4. Joe Amato — Re: Resisting Neiman-Marcus (fwd)
5. Thomas Bell — Re: Resisting Neiman-Marcus (fwd)
6. Gabrielle Welford — Re: Resisting Neiman-Marcus (fwd)
7. Joe Amato — Re: Resisting Neiman-Marcus (fwd)
8. Gwyn McVay — Re: Resisting Neiman-Marcus (fwd)
9. Tony Green — Re: the Wild Blue Yonder
10. Gabrielle Welford — Forwarded mail....
11. Rod Smith — Re: newpoets

2 OCT 1995

12. George Bowering — Re: grad students beware (fwd)
13. George Bowering — Re: Sitwell
14. George Bowering — Re: Sitwell
15. George Bowering — Re: ssplits and weakenings
16. Steve Carll — Re: the Wild Blue Yonder
17. W. Northcutt — Re: grad students beware (fwd)
18. Willa Jarnagin — Re: Resisting Neiman-Marcus (fwd)
19. Mark Wallace — and even more bland abstract lyrics
20. Mark Wallace — Sorry
21. Peter Larkin — Re: Wild Blue Yonder
22. Alan Golding — Po-gossip
23. David W. Clippinger — Re: Origin, Bronk, and Olson
24. Eryque Gleason — Distribution bloos
25. Judy Roitman — Re: Wild Blue Yonder
26. Jeff Hansen — wild blue yonder
27. Jim Pangborn — Re: Wild Blue Yonder
28. Jordan Davis — Poetry W
29. B. Cassidy — The Art and Poetry Worlds
30. Jordan Davis — awk/Deguy-Koch reading cancelled
31. George Bowering — Re: Origin, Bronk, and Olson
32. George Bowering — Re: Po-gossip
33. Eryque Gleason — Distribution bloos (take 2)
34. Ron Silliman — Re: wild blue yonder

3 OCT 1995

35. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: oops snoops
36. Larry Price — Pens fall and begin to harvest
37. Jordan Davis — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
38. CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON — Re: Influence query
39. Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco — 1 PM EDT
40. Gale Nelson — Re: Pens fall and begin to harvest
41. tunguska — Re: fragments, mourning & derivation
42. Charles Alexander — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
43. George Bowering — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
44. Graham John Sharpe — Re: fragments, mourning & derivation (was Wild BYonder)
45. eric pape — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
46. Tony Green — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
47. Phillips Patrick — Re: Influence query

- 48. Gwyn McVay — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 49. paul — Re: Influence query
- 50. Sheila E. Murphy — Re: Pens fall and begin to harvest
- 51. Charles Alexander — Re: fragments, mourning & derivation

4 OCT 1995

- 52. Steve Carll — Re: 1 PM EDT
- 53. jms — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 54. Tenney Nathanson — (no subject)
- 55. Mark Roberts — Re: 1 PM EDT
- 56. Jordan Davis — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 57. Mark Wallace — identity problems in the wild blue
- 58. Mark Wallace — my apology
- 59. ULMER SPRING — poetry and visual art
- 60. B. Cassidy — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 61. Mark Wallace — even further wild blues
- 62. H. T. KIRBY-SMITH — The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 63. B. Cassidy — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 64. Gale Nelson — Re: identity problems in the wild blue
- 65. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: Celan Salon
- 66. eric pape — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 67. David Kellogg — Re: my apology
- 68. Ryan Knighton — Blair & Loss
- 69. Charles Alexander — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 70. Dodie Bellamy — Re: poetry and visual art
- 71. tunguska — Re: Duncan's derivation
- 72. tunguska — Re: fragments, mourning/wild blue yonder still
- 73. Burt Kimmelman — Re: Influence query
- 74. Bill Luoma — Re: wild blue yonder
- 75. Steve McCaffery — Change of Address
- 76. SUSAN E. TICHY — Re: 1 PM EDT
- 77. Tom Beard — Re: identity problems in the wild blue

5 OCT 1995

- 78. Tony Green — Re: fragments, mourning/wild blue yonder still
- 79. Thomas Bell — Re: Identity problems in the wild blue
- 80. Wystan Curnow — Re: poetry and visual art
- 81. Wendy Battin — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 82. Rod Smith — Re: identity problems in the whyld blue
- 83. Tom Beard — whyld blue (TM)
- 84. Schuchat — Re: Celan Salon
- 85. R I Caddel — Poets n visuals
- 86. George Bowering — Re: fragments, mourning & derivation
- 87. CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 88. Jonathan A Levin — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds/Stein
- 89. SUSAN E. TICHY — Re: whyld blue (TM)
- 90. SUSAN E. TICHY — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 91. Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco — Re: Celan Salon
- 92. CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON — Re: Influence query
- 93. Willa Jarnagin — Re: poetry and visual art
- 94. Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco — whyld political blue
- 95. Willa Jarnagin — Re: whyld blue (TM)
- 96. Willa Jarnagin — Re: Celan Salon
- 97. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: oj can you see
- 98. CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON — Re: Influence query (fwd)
- 99. Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco — Re: Celan Salon
- 100. Jordan Davis — Stein the Art and Poetry Worlds

101. Herb Levy — Re: identity problems in the wild blue
102. Herb Levy — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
103. Jordan Davis — Re: poetry and visual art
104. Dodie Bellamy — Re: Poets n visuals
105. Dodie Bellamy — Re: identity problems in the wild blue
106. Gale Nelson — Re: Celan Salon
107. ULMER SPRING — wild blue and art/writing
108. Marshall H. Reese — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
109. Steve Evans — Out Beyond Its Edge / Keaton Centennial
110. Burt Kimmelman — Re: poetry and visual art
111. Burt Kimmelman — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
112. Charles Alexander — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
113. Edward Foster — Re: ay sixes and sevens
114. tunguska — Re: situationism in the wild blue
115. B. Cassidy — Re: Influence query
116. Graham John Sharpe — Re: fragments, mourning/wild blue yonder still
117. George Bowering — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds/Stein
118. Maria Damon — Re: An especial danger to hard working poets (fwd)
119. George Bowering — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
120. Maria Damon — Re: Poetry Wars
121. George Bowering — Re: An especial danger to hard working poets (fwd)
122. George Bowering — Re: wild blue and art/writing
123. Sheila E. Murphy — Re: Poetry Seams
124. Charles Alexander — Joel Oppenheimer
125. Tom Beard — whyld blue avant-pop
126. Tom Beard — whyld, comfy blue

6 OCT 1995

127. Sheila E. Murphy — Re: AWOL: ARTS ONLINE CONFERENCE
128. Dodie Bellamy — Consumer Item
129. Tom Beard — Re: Consumer Item
130. Alan Sondheim — Re: Consumer Item
131. R I Caddel — poets n parties
132. CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
133. CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
134. B. Cassidy — Re: Out Beyond Its Edge / Keaton Centennial
135. H. T. KIRBY-SMITH — Prosody List
136. Mark Roberts — AWOL: ARTS ONLINE CONFERENCE
137. Maria Damon — Re: Influence query
138. Maria Damon — Re: whyld blue avant-pop
139. Charles Alexander — Re: whyld, comfy blue
140. Larry Price — Politics and derivation
141. Charles Alexander — friends
142. Bill Luoma — Re: Oops Snoops
143. Sandra Braman — poetry
144. Blair Seagram — Visual Art & Poetry
145. eric pape — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
146. Burt Kimmelman — Re: Joel Oppenheimer
147. Charles Alexander — Re: poetry
148. Charles Smith — Re: Celan Salon
149. Judy Roitman — Re: whyld, comfy blue
150. Fred Muratori — Giants and LIPS
151. Mark Roberts — Re: AWOL: ARTS ONLINE CONFERENCE
152. Fred Muratori — Re: Joel Oppenheimer
153. tunguska — oj can you see...the glove
154. tunguska — derivation passage

- 155. tunguska — Stephen Jonas, gentleman
- 156. tunguska — The History of Lies: Derrida @ New School NYC 10/6 4 p.m.
- 157. Lindz Williamson — thanksgiving
- 158. Charles Alexander — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

7 OCT 1995

- 159. Ron Silliman — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 160. CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 161. Maria Damon — Re: The History of Lies: Derrida @ New School NYC 10/6 4 p.m.
- 162. Maria Damon — Re: thanksgiving
- 163. Maria Damon — Re: thanksgiving
- 164. Maria Damon — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 165. Maria Damon — Re: Stephen Jonas, gentleman
- 166. CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 167. kat — Re: The History of Lies: Derrida @ New School NYC 10/6 4 p.m.
- 168. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: the workshop and the outside
- 169. Burt Kimmelman — Re: oj can you see...the glove
- 170. Burt Kimmelman — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 171. Burt Kimmelman — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 172. Rod Smith — Re: The History of Lies: Derrida @ New School NYC 10/6 4 p.m.
- 173. Steve Evans — Bien Pensant Pinking Shears
- 174. Chris Stroffolino — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 175. Chris Stroffolino — Re: Bien Pensant Pinking Shears
- 176. Steve Carll — Workshops that work

8 OCT 1995

- 177. Eryque Gleason — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 178. Rod Smith — Re: Bien Pensant Pinking Shears
- 179. Blair Seagram — identity crises
- 180. Tom Beard — Re: whyld, comfy blue
- 181. Tom Beard — Gift
- 182. Ron Silliman — Re: wild blue yonder

9 OCT 1995

- 183. R I Caddel — Giants play well in the drizzle
- 184. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: Signifier Surplus
- 185. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: line & sinker
- 186. Mark Wallace — I want to help it, but I can't
- 187. Dodie Bellamy — Re: line & sinker
- 188. Edward Foster — Re: Politics and derivation
- 189. Edward Foster — Re: Joel Oppenheimer
- 190. Edward Foster — Re: Giants and LIPS
- 191. cris cheek — Re: yonder lies a surplus of the signifier....
- 192. Shaunanne Tangney — Re: Gift
- 193. Ron Silliman — Re: The South

10 OCT 1995

- 194. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: verbatim gift from my TV set
- 195. Rod Smith — Re: didgeridoo lips
- 196. Charles Smith — Re: The South
- 197. Ron Silliman — Yonder
- 198. R I Caddel — pens are too light (fwd)
- 199. Ann Louise Vickery — Re: The South
- 200. Ann Lauterbach — Re: POETICS Digest - 7 Oct 19...
- 201. ULMER SPRING — Re: Yonder
- 202. Gale Nelson — Re: I want to help it, but I can't
- 203. Jeff Hansen — poetry and politics

- 204. Peter Larkin — Fragments, mourning and derivation
- 205. tunguska — politics (cultural contexts) & derivation
- 206. Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco — Re: poetry and politics
- 207. tunguska — Derrida on the episteme of lies
- 208. tunguska — Stephen Jonas/gentleman
- 209. Herb Levy — Re: Yonder
- 210. Dodie Bellamy — Re: poetry and politics
- 211. Angus Cleghorn — Gift
- 212. tunguska — New Release from Spuyten Duyvil//Alice Rose George
- 213. Charles Alexander — Re: Gift
- 214. Charles Alexander — Re: I want to help it, but I can't
- 215. Jordan Davis — Re: poetry and politics
- 216. FUNKHOUSER CHRISTOPH — cd-rom announcement
- 217. Maria Damon — Re: poetry and politics
- 218. Maria Damon — Re: poetry and politics
- 219. Jordan Davis — something else lies do
- 220. Louis Cabri — 4 horse men
- 221. Shaunanne Tangney — Re: Gift
- 222. Steve Evans — Re: poetry and politics
- 223. Steve Carll — Re: verbatim gift from my TV set

11 OCT 1995

- 224. Rod Smith — Re: poetry and politics
- 225. Tenney Nathanson — gifts
- 226. Tenney Nathanson — (no subject)
- 227. Tenney Nathanson — (no subject)
- 228. Ron Silliman — Re: verbatim gift from my TV set
- 229. Ron Silliman — Quality is job one
- 230. Ron Silliman — Re: Yonder
- 231. Maria Damon — Re: No Subject
- 232. Mark Wallace — poetry and power
- 233. Alan Golding — Rolf Harris
- 234. Steve Evans — Tsunami/Object
- 235. Loss Glazier — Texts about poetics "sound"
- 236. Gale Nelson — Re: I want to help it, but I can't
- 237. Charles Smith — Re: Tsunami/Object
- 238. Edward Foster — Re: politics (cultural contexts) & derivation
- 239. Edward Foster — Re: No Subject
- 240. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: the gift of a tractor
- 241. Loss Glazier — Re: "Naropa P-Wars"
- 242. John Lavagnino — Call for papers: Poetry and computers (1996 MLA)
- 243. A. Morris — Re: gifts
- 244. Steve Carll — Re: poetry and politics
- 245. Steve Carll — Re: something else lies do
- 246. cris cheek — Re: Yonder / friendship / gifts and sound
- 247. Charles Alexander — new books/an offer
- 248. Schuchat — Re: "Naropa P-Wars"

12 OCT 1995

- 249. Robert Drake — Re: 4 horsemen, and soundpoetry yonder...
- 250. George Bowering — Re: poetry and politics
- 251. R I Caddel — new book
- 252. Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco — Re: "Naropa P-Wars"
- 253. Loss Glazier — Re: turning off mail for a while
- 254. Judy Roitman — Re: "Naropa P-Wars"
- 255. Tenney Nathanson — Michael as exemplum (?)
- 256. Tenney Nathanson — and furthermore

- 257. Tenney Nathanson — sigh
- 258. Tenney Nathanson — yep
- 259. kat — Re: Derrida on the episteme of lies
- 260. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: oceans blue
- 261. Carl Lynden Peters — Emily Dickinson-
- 262. Romana Christina Huk — poetry on CD-ROM
- 263. tunguska — context & derivation
- 264. Jonathan Brannen — (no subject)
- 265. Burt Kimmelman — Re: Derrida on the episteme of lies
- 266. Loss Glazier — Re: poetry on CD-ROM
- 267. cris cheek — 4 Horsemen recordings
- 268. Lisa Samuels — Re: Texts about poetics "sound"
- 269. Jeffrey Timmons — Re: No Subject
- 270. Steve Carll — Re: sigh
- 271. Charles Alexander — Re: Emily Dickinson-

13 OCT 1995

- 272. Chris Stroffolino — Re: Emily Dickinson-
- 273. George Bowering — Re: turning off mail for a while
- 274. John Cayley — UKania - The 'Nation's' favourite poem
- 275. Maria Damon — Re: Emily Dickinson-
- 276. Jonathan A Levin — Re: Emily Dickinson-
- 277. Charles O. Hartman — Re: POETICS Digest - 11 Oct 1995 to 12 Oct 1995
- 278. Hank Lazer — Re: Emily Dickinson-
- 279. Edward Foster — Re: Emily Dickinson-
- 280. Herb Levy — Re: Yonder
- 281. Herb Levy — Deep Listening Catalog
- 282. Edward Foster — Re: Emily Dickinson-
- 283. ULMER SPRING — Re: Texts about poetics "sound"
- 284. Tenney Nathanson — Wallace
- 285. Tenney Nathanson — and
- 286. Ken Edwards — Top ten poems
- 287. Loss Glazier — Poetry in Motion (Review)
- 288. Bill Luoma — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 289. Larry Price — So we tanned his hide when he died, Clyde
- 290. Charles Alexander — Re: Top ten poems
- 291. Ryan Knighton — Re: Michael as exemplum (?)
- 292. Patrick Phillips — Re: poet kills black flag dead
- 293. Mark Scroggins — Re: Top ten poems
- 294. Steve Carll — Re: Emily Dickinson-

14 OCT 1995

- 295. Michael Davidson — Re: Michael as exemplum (?)
- 296. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: poetry in notions
- 297. R I Caddel — Top Ten Poets
- 298. Ron Silliman — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 299. CTHEORY/fwrd — Lorenz on Cicchetto (review)
- 300. cris cheek — Re: Top ten poems
- 301. tunguska — Top Ten Poetries
- 302. Chris Stroffolino — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 303. Robert Drake — Re: poetry in notions
- 304. Judy Roitman — Re: Michael as exemplum (?)
- 305. Maria Damon — Re: Top ten poems
- 306. Maria Damon — Re: Michael as exemplum (?)
- 307. Diane Marie Ward — Emily & top ten poems
- 308. Patrick Phillips — Re: Emily & top ten poems
- 309. Charles Alexander — Re: Top ten poems

- 310. Charles Alexander — Re: Emily & top ten poems
- 311. James Banton Rolins — The art and poetry worlds
- 312. Diane Marie Ward — Re: Emily & top ten poems
- 313. Alan Sondheim — Re: Emily & top ten poems

15 OCT 1995

- 314. Chris Stroffolino — Re: Emily & top ten poems
- 315. Chris Stroffolino — Re: Emily & top ten poems
- 316. Rod Smith — Re: Top ten poems
- 317. Ron Silliman — Re: Michael as exemplum (?)
- 318. Ron Silliman — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 319. Michael Davidson — Re: Michael as exemplum (?)
- 320. Michael Davidson — Re: Michael as exemplum (?)
- 321. Robert Drake — Re: Emily & top ten poems
- 322. Maria Damon — Re: Top ten poems
- 323. Gwyn McVay — Re: The art and poetry worlds
- 324. Herb Levy — Re: Texts about poetics "sound"
- 325. Herb Levy — Re: Top ten poems
- 326. Chris Stroffolino — Re: Emily & top ten poems
- 327. Tony Green — Re: Top ten poems
- 328. Loss Glazier — Re: Poetry in Motion (Review)
- 329. Patrick Phillips — Re: Emily & top ten poems
- 330. Ken Edwards — Top ten poems
- 331. Charles O. Hartman — Re: POETICS Digest - 13 Oct 1995 to 14 Oct 1995
- 332. Carl Lynden Peters — Re: Emily Dickinson-
- 333. Wystan Curnow — Re: Poetry in Motion (Review)
- 334. Lisa Samuels — Re: Top ten poems
- 335. Wystan Curnow — Re: Top ten poems
- 336. Tony Green — Re: Top ten poems
- 337. Diane Marie Ward — top ten
- 338. Charles Alexander — Re: Top ten poems
- 339. Jeffrey Timmons — Forwarded mail....
- 340. Charles Bernstein — Emerging Generation

16 OCT 1995

- 341. A. Morris — Re: Texts about poetics "sound"
- 342. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: a death in the family
- 343. James Banton Rolins — Re: Emily Dickinson-
- 344. Tenney Nathanson — legacies of modernism
- 345. Tenney Nathanson — grandma Emily?
- 346. Kevin Killian — FBI files
- 347. Kevin Killian — Re: Poetry in Motion (Review)
- 348. R I Caddel — Top Ten / Bottom Ten
- 349. James Banton Rolins — Re: The Art and Poetry worlds
- 350. Chris Stroffolino — Re: grandma Emily?
- 351. Gwyn McVay — Re: The Art and Poetry worlds
- 352. Jonathan A Levin — Re: Emily Dickinson-
- 353. Mark Wallace — Situation #10
- 354. John Lavagnino — Re: Emily Dickinson
- 355. Edward Foster — Re: Emily & top ten poems
- 356. Edward Foster — Re: Emily & top ten poems
- 357. Edward Foster — Re: Emily Dickinson-
- 358. Kenneth Goldsmith — Albany Reading Announcement
- 359. eric pape — Re: The Art and Poetry worlds
- 360. Mark Roberts — Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
- 361. Tony Green — Re: Emerging Generation
- 362. CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON — Museums of France on the web

- 363. Maria Damon — Re: The Art and Poetry worlds
- 364. Maria Damon — Re: FBI files
- 365. Maria Damon — Re: a death in the family
- 366. Maria Damon — Re: Top ten poems
- 367. James Banton Rolins — Re: The Art and Poetry worlds
- 368. Jeffrey Timmons — Colonialism
- 369. Kenneth Sherwood — Reception : and the top Ten
- 370. Ron Silliman — Kaufmania

17 OCT 1995

- 371. Marshall H. Reese — video/book installation
- 372. eric pape — Re: Colonialism
- 373. Wendy Battin — New Site for CAPA
- 374. CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON — Re: video/book installation
- 375. Michael Davidson — Re: legacies of modernism
- 376. Gale Nelson — Anagrams A-Go-Go
- 377. Ken Edwards — Albert Hall
- 378. Ken Edwards — Top Ten / Bottom Ten
- 379. James Sherry — Evaluation
- 380. Tom Beard — Dash it, Emily!
- 381. Tom Beard — Re: Top ten poems
- 382. Loss Glazier — Re: Poetry in Motion (from Chris Funkhouser)
- 383. Issa Clubb — Re: Poetry in Motion (from Chris Funkhouser)
- 384. Steve Carll — Re: Albert Hall
- 385. Mark McMorris — That was then
- 386. Judy Roitman — Re: The Art and Poetry worlds
- 387. Steve Carll — Re: Top ten poems
- 388. Loss Glazier — Book/Reading Annoucement
- 389. Wystan Curnow — Re: Top ten poems
- 390. Tom Beard — a glorious failure
- 391. Charles O. Hartman — Re: Dash it, Emily!
- 392. Jonathan Brannen — Re: Situation #10

18 OCT 1995

- 393. Jeffrey Timmons — Re: Colonialism
- 394. Dodie Bellamy — Re: a glorious failure
- 395. Pierre Joris — NEWS VIA PEN
- 396. R I Caddel — Re: Top XI
- 397. Gwyn McVay — Re: a glorious failure
- 398. Gale Nelson — Re: The Art and Poetry worlds
- 399. Jordan Davis — geese
- 400. Burt Kimmelman — Call for contributors
- 401. Carl Lynden Peters — Re: Dash it, Emily! (fwd)
- 402. Charles Alexander — Re: a glorious failure
- 403. Willa Jarnagin — Re: a glorious failure
- 404. Mark Roberts — Re: Top ten poems
- 405. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: Distant Lover
- 406. Alan Golding — Poems for the Millenium
- 407. Joe Amato — Re: Distant Lover
- 408. cris cheek — Albert Hall
- 409. eric pape — Re: a glorious failure
- 410. eric pape — Re: Colonialism
- 411. eric pape — Re: The Art and Poetry worlds
- 412. Burt Kimmelman — Re: Distant Lover
- 413. cris cheek — Re: in dreams
- 414. cris cheek — Re: Sheila, Cris & Jorge's Excellent Adventure
- 415. Kenneth Goldsmith — Virus Alert

- 416. Wystan Curnow — Re: Evaluation
- 417. Wystan Curnow — Re: a glorious failure

19 OCT 1995

- 418. jms — review of Brakhage films at MOMA
- 419. James Banton Rolins — Re: Distant Lover
- 420. James Banton Rolins — Re: The Art and Poetry worlds
- 421. Tenney Nathanson — E.D., dash it all
- 422. Tenney Nathanson — I wanted the details
- 423. Kevin Killian — Announcement of reading in SF
- 424. Ron Silliman — Re: The Art and Poetry worlds
- 425. Dodie Bellamy — theory and the teaching of writing
- 426. John Cayley — Albert Hall
- 427. B. Cassidy — Re: Virus Alert
- 428. CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON — Re: Distant Lover
- 429. Burt Kimmelman — Re: Distant Lover
- 430. James Banton Rolins — Re: Distant Lover
- 431. Joe Amato — distanced learning...
- 432. Judy Roitman — Re: Virus Alert
- 433. Mark Roberts — AWOL: SCARP launch
- 434. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: workshop geese
- 435. Kevin Killian — Another important SF writing event
- 436. Burt Kimmelman — Re: Distant Lover
- 437. Burt Kimmelman — Re: Distant Lover
- 438. John Geraets — top 10 poems
- 439. Dodie Bellamy — Niedecker and Zukowski
- 440. Tom Beard — a spoonful of sugar
- 441. Gale Nelson — Re: Distant Lover
- 442. Tom Beard — the audience
- 443. Jordan Davis — distant lesson
- 444. cris cheek — Geese and 'trolls'
- 445. Tom Beard — punctuation & prosody
- 446. Tony Green — Re: Top ten poems
- 447. Alan Sondheim — Re: distant lesson
- 448. Robert Drake — Re: Poetry in Motion (Review)
- 449. ULMER SPRING — Re: distant lesson
- 450. Tony Green — Re: Distant Lover
- 451. Chris Stroffolino — Re: Niedecker and Zukowski
- 452. Tom Beard — Re: distant lesson
- 453. Chris Scheil — Re: a glorious failure
- 454. Ken Edwards — Albert Hall
- 455. Jordan Davis — (none)
- 456. Mark Scroggins — Re: Niedecker and Zukowski
- 457. Ryan Knighton — Cabri?

20 OCT 1995

- 458. Dodie Bellamy — Re: a spoonful of sugar
- 459. Dodie Bellamy — Re: Niedecker and Zukowski
- 460. Dodie Bellamy — Re: Geese and 'trolls'
- 461. Dodie Bellamy — Zuk, Buk, and Cuke
- 462. Steve Carll — jesse taylor-york
- 463. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: dissin dat
- 464. Wystan Curnow — Re: the audience
- 465. R I Caddel — Niedecker/Zukofsky
- 466. Mark Scroggins — Re: Niedecker and Zukofsky
- 467. David Kellogg — Re: Niedecker and Zukofsky
- 468. ULMER SPRING — Re: Niedecker and Zukowski

- 469. ULMER SPRING — Re: Distant Lover
- 470. Jordan Davis — odo/zoon hypoleptikon
- 471. ULMER SPRING — Re: Geese and 'trolls'
- 472. ULMER SPRING — Re: Niedecker and Zukofsky
- 473. CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON — Re: Poetry in Motion (Review)
- 474. Jordan Davis — (none)
- 475. Peter Zukowski — Re: Zuk, Buk, and Cuke
- 476. eric pape — Re: The Art and Poetry worlds
- 477. Mark Roberts — AWOL: Ulitarra Magazine
- 478. Chris Stroffolino — Re: Zuk, Buk, and Cuke
- 479. cris cheek — Re: Geese and 'trolls'
- 480. cris cheek — Albert Hall
- 481. kathryne lindberg — Re: The Art and Poetry worlds
- 482. Charles Smith — Re: Poetry in Motion (Review)
- 483. Charles Smith — Re: LN & LZ
- 484. Steve Carll — Re: Albert Hall

21 OCT 1995

- 485. Dodie Bellamy — anagram
- 486. Dodie Bellamy — Re: Zuk, Buk, and Cuke
- 487. Dodie Bellamy — Re: Niedecker/Zukofsky
- 488. Ron Silliman — Re: Niedecker and Zukofsky
- 489. Ron Silliman — Respelling LZ
- 490. Charles Alexander — Re: LN & LZ
- 491. Mark Scroggins — Re: Niedecker and Zukofsky
- 492. Charles Alexander — Re: Niedecker and Zukofsky
- 493. Charles Smith — Re: LN & LZ
- 494. Chris Stroffolino — Re: Respelling LZ
- 495. Chris Stroffolino — Re: Niedecker and Zukofsky
- 496. Chris Stroffolino — outpost entropy, etc.
- 497. Jordan Davis — my place is better than your place
- 498. B. Cassidy — Voice synth.

22 OCT 1995

- 499. Ron Silliman — Metroplex
- 500. Beth Russell — cats
- 501. Beth Russell — "creative"/theoretical
- 502. Kenneth Sherwood — Zukofsky's Urban NY
- 503. eric pape — Re: The Art and Poetry worlds
- 504. Chris Stroffolino — Re: Metroplex

23 OCT 1995

- 505. FUNKHOUSER CHRISTOPH — cd-ro(a)m
- 506. Charles Alexander — Re: cd-ro(a)m
- 507. Chris Stroffolino — Re: cd-ro(a)m
- 508. Gabrielle Welford — Re: cd-ro(a)m
- 509. Ron Silliman — Re: Metroplex
- 510. R I Caddel — Niedecker/Zukofsky
- 511. cris cheek — Re: desire / and the 39 steps
- 512. Mark Wallace — BAAAAAAD villanelle!
- 513. Mark Wallace — D.C. poets
- 514. Gale Nelson — Re: BAAAAAAD villanelle!
- 515. Jordan Davis — Re: BAAAAAAD ass song
- 516. Jordan Davis — Re: BAAAAAAD ass song
- 517. Herb Levy — Cage Fest @ Mills, Olson? at Huddersfield
- 518. Herb Levy — Oracles on the Internet
- 519. Dodie Bellamy — Re: Niedecker/Zukofsky

- 520. Bill Luoma — vertical Blanking interval
- 521. Rod Smith — Re: BAAAAAAD villanelle!
- 522. Rod Smith — Recent DC readings
- 523. Beth Russell — Re: metroplex
- 524. Mark Scroggins — Re: Niedecker/Zukofsky
- 525. Mark Roberts — AWOL: CROSSING PRESS
- 526. Tony Green — Re: Geese and 'trolls'
- 527. Romana Christina Huk — thanks, question, report
- 528. Schuchat — Re: Niedecker/Zukofsky
- 529. Chris Stroffolino — Re: Metroplex
- 530. Patrick Phillips — Re: BAAAAAAD villanelle!
- 531. Patrick Phillips — Re: vertical Blanking interval
- 532. Jeffrey Timmons — Re: D.C. poets
- 533. Steve Carll — Who you callin' cream-puff head?
- 534. Robert Drake — Postmodern culture call fr Hypertext (forward)

24 OCT 1995

- 535. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: informalism
- 536. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: the responsibility of the text
- 537. Chris Stroffolino — Re: BAAAAAAD villanelle!
- 538. Tenney Nathanson — re
- 539. Tenney Nathanson — examples (complete w illustrations?)
- 540. Tenney Nathanson — and future....?....
- 541. Tenney Nathanson — more ghosts of more past Christmases
- 542. Kevin Killian — Re: Niedecker/Zukofsky
- 543. Ron Silliman — Re: Metroplex
- 544. Chris Stroffolino — Re: Metroplex
- 545. Joshua Mckinney — BAAAAAAD villanelle (fwd)
- 546. Chris Stroffolino — Re: Villanelle
- 547. Jordan Davis — Re: Metroplex
- 548. H. T. KIRBY-SMITH — Villanelle
- 549. Joe Amato — Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
- 550. Charles Alexander — Re: informalism
- 551. Charles Alexander — Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
- 552. Judy Roitman — Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
- 553. Jim Rosenberg — Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
- 554. Mark Roberts — AWOL: SCARP magazine
- 555. R I Caddel — Re: Niedecker/Zukofsky
- 556. Joe Amato — Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
- 557. Eryque Gleason — Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
- 558. Ken Edwards — Terry Riley/Olson

25 OCT 1995

- 559. Kenneth Sherwood — Open Letter to Mark Wallace
- 560. Spencer Selby — mag list update
- 561. Ron Silliman — Metroplexities
- 562. R I Caddel — The Nasty Niedecker Man Again
- 563. John Cayley — Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
- 564. Larry Price — Villon's Snow (still falling)
- 565. H. T. KIRBY-SMITH — May Swenson
- 566. Gale Nelson — Re: Metroplexities
- 567. Edward Foster — Re: mag list update
- 568. Jim Rosenberg — Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
- 569. Willa Jarnagin — Re: Metroplexities
- 570. Beth Russell — wagering poetics
- 571. Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco — Complex city/ scene- ery
- 572. Timothy Liu — Re: Metroplexities

- 573. Robert Drake — Re: Situation #10
- 574. Alan Golding — Maria (D.)
- 575. Jonathan Brannen — Re: Wallace and fiscal poetry
- 576. Burt Kimmelman — poetry with a tech slant: anthology
- 577. Scott Pound — McCaffery & MacCormack Buffalo Reading
- 578. Charles Alexander — Re: Metroplexities
- 579. david ayre — fleet'n greet'ns
- 580. david ayre — oops

26 OCT 1995

- 581. Gabrielle Welford — Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
- 582. Ron Silliman — Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
- 583. Ron Silliman — Upper Limit Atlanta
- 584. Ron Silliman — Re: fleet'n greet'ns
- 585. Joe Amato — Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
- 586. Herb Levy — KSW=Kootenay's Site on the Web
- 587. Robert Drake — Re: oops
- 588. Robert Drake — Re: Upper Limit Atlanta
- 589. Chris Stroffolino — Re: Metroplexities
- 590. tunguska — Villon's Snow (always)
- 591. Robert Drake — Re: KSW=Kootenay's Site on the Web
- 592. Beth Russell — Re: burt kimmeleman's course
- 593. Wystan Curnow — Re: Villon's Snow (still falling)

27 OCT 1995

- 594. Kenneth Sherwood — Computers and Writing
- 595. John Cayley — Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
- 596. John Cayley — Inscription in complex media - was: Hypertext & Poetry...
- 597. Robert Drake — Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
- 598. Gale Nelson — Re: poetry with a tech slant: anthology
- 599. Gale Nelson — Re: wagering poetics
- 600. Edward Foster — Re: Wallace and fiscal poetry
- 601. Bill Luoma — Pitch of the Sun
- 602. Charles Bernstein — You - the City NY Screening
- 603. Eryque Gleason — Re: wagering poetics
- 604. Timothy Liu — Yet Another Vilanelle
- 605. Jordan Davis — readings desiderata
- 606. Joe Amato — Re: Inscription in complex media - was: Hypertext & Poetry...
- 607. Burt Kimmelman — Re: burt kimmeleman's course

28 OCT 1995

- 608. Charles Alexander — Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
- 609. Charles Alexander — Re: Inscription in complex media - was: Hypertext & Poetry...
- 610. Charles Alexander — Re: readings desiderata
- 611. Tenney Nathanson — & Ralph Waldo
- 612. Kenneth Sherwood — tinkertoys
- 613. Ron Silliman — Re: Inscription in complex media - was: Hypertext & Poetry...
- 614. Ron Silliman — TinkerToy
- 615. Ron Silliman — Re: readings desiderata
- 616. Chris Stroffolino — Re: & Ralph Waldo
- 617. Chris Stroffolino — Re: & Ralph Waldo
- 618. Charles Bernstein — Positions open at Wayne State University (fwd)
- 619. Jim Rosenberg — Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
- 620. Jim Rosenberg — Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
- 621. Jim Rosenberg — Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
- 622. Joe Amato — Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
- 623. Steven Howard Shoemaker — Computers and Writing

- 624. Steven Howard Shoemaker — computers and writing
- 625. Steven Howard Shoemaker — Re: poetry w/ a tech slant: anthology

29 OCT 1995

- 626. Loss Glazier — Where's the Hypertext in this Thread?
- 627. Tenney Nathanson — dunno but
- 628. Jerry Rothenberg — Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
- 629. Graham John Sharpe — _The Electronic Labyrinth_ (fwd)
- 630. Kenneth Sherwood — hypertext--media--baseballs
- 631. Charles Alexander — visual poets
- 632. Joe Amato — Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
- 633. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: the shape of jazz to come/gone
- 634. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: confessional averse
- 635. kathryne lindberg — Re: the shape of jazz to come/gone
- 636. Chris Stroffolino — Re: the shape of jazz to come/gone
- 637. Tom Beard — Re: Where's the Hypertext in this Thread?
- 638. Kenneth Sherwood — return to the tinkering

30 OCT 1995

- 639. Mark Wallace — Ira Lightman
- 640. Mark Wallace — Jordan Davis
- 641. H. T. KIRBY-SMITH — Visual Poetry
- 642. Joe Amato — Re: Where's the Hypertext in this Thread?
- 643. John Cayley — Re: Hypertext & Poetry & Tinkertools & Baseball
- 644. Joe Amato — Re: Hypertext & Poetry & Tinkertools & Baseball
- 645. Burt Kimmelman — Re: poetry w/ a tech slant: anthology
- 646. Gale Nelson — Re: wagering poetics
- 647. Jim Rosenberg — Concrete Poetics Dialogue (was Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities)
- 648. Dodie Bellamy — shapeshifting
- 649. Mark Roberts — AWOL: November Happenings 1/2
- 650. Mark Roberts — AWOL: November Happenings 2/2
- 651. Charles Alexander — Re: Visual Poetry
- 652. Joe Amato — all---fyi...
- 653. Jordan Davis — Re: readings desiderata
- 654. Edward Foster — Re: & Ralph Waldo
- 655. Chris Stroffolino — Re: & Ralph Waldo
- 656. James Sherry — Re: Evaluation

31 OCT 1995

- 657. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: oh dodie oh
- 658. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: the color of concrete
- 659. Rod Smith — Hejinian/Palmer @ L.O.C.
- 660. Burt Kimmelman — Re: Hypertext & Poetry & Tinkertools & Baseball
- 661. Burt Kimmelman — Orono Conference
- 662. Charles Alexander — Re: Concrete Poetics Dialogue (was Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities)
- 663. Edward Foster — Re: & Ralph Waldo
- 664. Steve Evans — Awesome 6some
- 665. Burt Kimmelman — Rod Smith
- 666. Kenneth Sherwood — RIF/T 05 release
- 667. Kit Robinson — Robert Grenier
- 668. Jordan Davis — Signature file goin out to the unix crowd
- 669. Steve Carll — Re: readings desiderata
- 670. Sheila E. Murphy — Re: readings desiderata
- 671. Beth Russell — the Hypertextual possibilities
- 672. Laura Moriarity via — Re: poetry readings

1. **Gabrielle Welford**
Resisting Neiman-Marcus (fwd)
Sun 1 Oct 1995

This message is in MIME format. The first part should be readable text, while the remaining parts are likely unreadable without MIME-aware tools. Send mail to [REDACTED] for more info.

--0-590200967-812235533=:21381

Teri Tynes (wife of Dan Streible, Radio, TV Film) sent this to me. Enjoy!

This message is sent to you with the hope you will forward it to EVERYONE you have ever even seen the e-mail address of. In the spirit of the originator, please feel free to post it anywhere and everywhere. *****

Okay, everyone....a true story of justice in the good old U.S. of A. Thought y'all might enjoy this; if nothing else, it shows internet justice, if it can be called that.

My daughter & I had just finished a salad at Neiman-Marcus Cafe in Dallas & decided to have a small dessert. Because our family are such cookie lovers, we decided to try the "Neiman-Marcus Cookie". It was so excellent that I asked if they would give me the recipe and they said with a small frown, "I'm afraid not." Well, I said, would you let me buy the recipe? With a cute smile, she said, "Yes." I asked how much, and she responded, "Two fifty." I said with approval, just add it to my tab.

Thirty days later, I received my VISA statement from Neiman-Marcus and it was \$285.00. I looked again and I remembered I had only spent \$9.95 for two salads and about \$20.00 for a scarf. As I glanced at the bottom of the statement, it said, "Cookie Recipe - \$250.00." Boy, was I upset!! I called Neiman's Accounting Dept. and told them the waitress said it was "two fifty," and I did not realize she meant \$250.00 for a cookie recipe.

I asked them to take back the recipe and reduce my bill and they said they were sorry, but because all the recipes were this expensive so not just everyone could duplicate any of our bakery recipes....the bill would stand.

I waited, thinking of how I could get even or even try and get any of my money back.

I just said, "Okay, you folks got my \$250.00 and now I'm going to have \$250.00 worth of fun." I told her that I was going to see to it that every cookie lover will have a \$250.00 cookie recipe from Neiman-Marcus for nothing. She replied, "I wish you wouldn't do this." I said, "I'm sorry but this is the only way I feel I could get even," and I will.

So, here it is, and please pass it to someone else or run a few copies....I paid for it; now you can have it for free.

(Recipe may be halved.):

2 cups butter 4 cups flour
2 tsp. soda 2 cups sugar
5 cups blended oatmeal** 24 oz. chocolate chips
2 cups brown sugar 1 tsp. salt
1 8 oz. Hershey Bar (grated) 4 eggs
2 tsp. baking powder 3 cups chopped nuts (your choice)
2 tsp. vanilla

** measure oatmeal and blend in a blender to a fine powder.
Cream the butter and both sugars. Add eggs and vanilla;
mix together with flour, oatmeal, salt, baking powder,
and soda. Add chocolate chips, Hershey Bar and nuts. Roll into
balls and place two inches apart on a cookie sheet. Bake
for 10 minutes at 375 degrees. Makes 112 cookies.

Have fun!!! This is not a joke --- this is a true story..

***** That's it.
Please, pass it along to everyone you know, single people, mailing lists,
etc.....

Ride free, citizen!

--0-590200967-812235533=:21381--

[↑ Contents](#)

2. **Gabrielle Welford**

Re: spike it with saussure - begins the intramix...

Sun 1 Oct 1995

*In the books were dreams and in the dreams were books
of Palookaville & the dead heroes of Guadalajara
empowering scores of liberated mozos intent of Lacanian
libretti, salted with much, much more than roughage added to taste
or tremolo, finding the shores awash with alphabet, proclaiming nothing
nutting nothing a-merrily overbodies abandon
where wrote was written, stepping one four nine
passacaglia without the prefab little knobbed things on them
completely set on the sea as so much crabbiness
diverts attention from wars in three voices and the steady rain of hemlock
falling on the Concerns box & a sob distant as adventure capital
behind the exterior of the city was an interior composed
of scar tissue recording the grain of farm house timbers*

*a rubble of history in the grass where a decapitated statue
unavoidably becomes an image of a nation without a true face
ugh gotta change that line*

[↑ Contents](#)

3. **Carlos Gallego** *grad students beware (fwd)*

Sun 1 Oct 1995

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: Mon, 10 Oct 1994 14:45:06 -0700 (MST)

From: Maricela I Valenzuela <[REDACTED]>

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: grad students beware (fwd)

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: Sat, 08 Oct 1994 00:01:26 -0700 (MST)

From: [REDACTED]

To: claire and george <[REDACTED]>, [REDACTED],

[REDACTED], [REDACTED],

[REDACTED], allison hughes <[REDACTED]>,

peru and shih-chen <[REDACTED]>,

joann k <[REDACTED]>, [REDACTED],

reed riner <[REDACTED]>

Subject: grad students beware (fwd)

thought you might enjoy this:

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: Fri, 07 Oct 1994 16:22:10 -0700 (MST)

From: Nancy H Vuckovic <[REDACTED]>

To: womenfolk <[REDACTED]>, [REDACTED],

[REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED],

[REDACTED], [REDACTED]

Subject: grad students beware (fwd)

At last! Medical verification for avoiding too much cognitive effort! Ain't science grand! Better slow down now or face the consequences. Don't say I didn't warn you!! N.

[excerpt from a message posted to cybermind by Alan Sondheim]

*****From the WEEKLY WORLD NEWS, May 24, 1994*****

MOSCOW --

Doctors are blaming a rare electrical imbalance in the brain for the bizarre death of a chess player whose head literally exploded in the middle of a championship game!

No one else was hurt in the fatal explosion but four players and three officials at the Moscow Candidate Masters' Chess Championships were sprayed with blood and brain matter when Nikolai Titov's head suddenly blew apart. Experts say he suffered from a condition called Hyper-Cerebral Electrosis or HCE.

"He was deep in concentration with his eyes focused on the board," says Titov's opponent, Vladimir Dobrynin. "All of a sudden his hands flew to his temples and he screamed in pain. Everyone looked up from their games, startled by the noise. Then, as if someone had put a bomb in his cranium, his head popped like a firecracker."

Incredibly, Titov's is not the first case in which a person's head has spontaneously exploded. Five people are known to have died of HCE in the last 25 years. The most recent death occurred just three years ago in 1991, when European psychic Barbara Nicole's skull burst. Miss Nicole's story was reported by newspapers worldwide, including WWN. "HCE is an extremely rare physical imbalance," said Dr. Anatoly Martinenko, famed neurologist and expert on the human brain who did the autopsy on the brilliant chess expert. "It is a condition in which the circuits of the brain become overloaded by the body's own electricity. The explosions happen during periods of intense mental activity when lots of current is surging through the brain. Victims are highly intelligent people with great powers of concentration. Both Miss Nicole and Mr. Titov were intense people who tended to keep those cerebral circuits overloaded. In a way it could be said they were literally too smart for their own good."

Although Dr. Martinenko says there are probably many undiagnosed cases, he hastens to add that very few people will die from HCE. "Most people who have it will never know. At this point, medical science still doesn't know much about HCE. And since fatalities are so rare it will probably be years before research money becomes available."

In the meantime, the doctor urges people to take it easy and not think too hard for long periods of time. "Take frequent relaxation breaks when you're doing things that take lots of mental focus," he recommends.

(As a public service, WWN added a sidebar titled HOW TO TELL IF YOUR HEAD'S ABOUT TO BLOW UP:)

Although HCE is very rare, it can kill. Dr. Martinenko says knowing you have the condition can greatly improve your odds of surviving it. A "yes"

answer to any three of the following seven questions could mean that you have HCE:

1. Does your head sometimes ache when you think too hard? (Head pain can indicate overloaded brain circuits.)
2. Do you ever hear a faint ringing or humming sound in your ears? (It could be the sound of electricity in the skull cavity.)
3. Do you sometimes find yourself unable to get a thought out of your head? (This is a possible sign of too much electrical activity in the cerebral cortex.)
4. Do you spend more than five hours a day reading, balancing your checkbook, or other thoughtful activity? (A common symptom of HCE is a tendency to over-use the brain.)
5. When you get angry or frustrated do you feel pressure in your temples? (Friends of people who died of HCE say the victims often complained of head pressure in times of strong emotion.)
6. Do you ever overeat on ice cream, doughnuts and other sweets? (A craving for sugar is typical of people with too much electrical pressure in the cranium.)
7. Do you tend to analyze yourself too much? (HCE sufferers are often introspective, "over-thinking" their lives.)

Well all, I hope this helps. I perceive FC as an intelligent bunch, and as such, I want to urge all of you to keep an eye out for the symptoms listed above. They're there for your sake.

carter

--

Apprentis, using television for prevention (until blipverts are invented)

[↑ Contents](#)

4. **Joe Amato**

Re: Resisting Neiman-Marcus (fwd)

Sun 1 Oct 1995

well it looks like i can post this list again, finally... and just in time to let y'all know, if you don't already, that that cookie recipe thing is simply the electronic version of an old urban myth... saw it kicking around last about four years back...

joe (amato)

[↑ Contents](#)

5. **Thomas Bell**

Re: Resisting Neiman-Marcus (fwd)

Sun 1 Oct 1995

Found poetry?

"Okay, you folks got my \$250.00 and now
I'm going to have
\$250.00
worth fun.

" I told her that I was going to see to it that every
cookie lover will have a \$250.00 cookie recipe
from Neiman-Marcus
for nothing.

She replied,

"I wish you wouldn't do this." I said,
"I'm sorry but this is the only way
I feel I could get even," and I will.

So, here it is, and please pass it to someone else or run a few copies....I paid for
it; now you can have it for free.

(Recipe may be halved.):

2 cups butter 4 cups flour
2 tsp. soda 2 cups sugar
5 cups blended oatmeal** 24 oz. chocolate chips
2 cups brown sugar 1 tsp. salt
1 8 oz. Hershey Bar (grated) 4 eggs
2 tsp. baking powder 3 cups chopped nuts (your choice)
2 tsp. vanilla

** measure oatmeal and blend in a blender to a fine powder.

Cream the butter and both sugars. Add eggs and vanilla;
mix together with flour, oatmeal, salt, baking powder,
and soda. Add chocolate chips, Hershey Bar and nuts. Roll into
balls and place two inches apart on a cookie sheet. Bake
for 10 minutes at 375 degrees. Makes 112 cookies.

Have fun!!! This is not a joke --- this is a true story..

That's it.

Please, pass it along to everyone you know, single people, mailing lists,
etc.....

Ride free, citizen!

acknowledgements to Terri tyne

[↑ Contents](#)

6. **Gabrielle Welford**

Re: Resisting Neiman-Marcus (fwd)

Sun 1 Oct 1995

On Sun, 1 Oct 1995, Joe Amato wrote:

> well it looks like i can post this list again, finally... and just in time
> to let y'all know, if you don't already, that that cookie recipe thing is
> simply the electronic version of an old urban myth... saw it kicking around
> last about four years back...

>

> joe (amato)

>

Uh oh. Sorry guys. I got suckered. Gab.

[↑ Contents](#)

7. **Joe Amato**

Re: Resisting Neiman-Marcus (fwd)

Sun 1 Oct 1995

gab, you ain't the only one... i can recall announcing this to one of my classes
once---like, yknow, my naivete was positively touching...

joe

[↑ Contents](#)

8. **Gwyn McVay**

Re: Resisting Neiman-Marcus (fwd)

Sun 1 Oct 1995

Oh dear God of Poetics, not the "Neiman-Marcus Cookie" urban legend again.
It's one of the oldest such legends on record, since it started as the "Waldorf-
Astoria Velvet Cake" legend around the turn of the century. Hmm, maybe this is
material--

Gwyn

[↑ Contents](#)

9. **Tony Green**

Re: the Wild Blue Yonder

Sun 1 Oct 1995

The question is, Steve Carll, what is thing called "past"?

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

10. **Gabrielle Welford**

Forwarded mail....

Sun 1 Oct 1995

I guess this is an answer to whether they're any good! :-) Gab.

: Like you, I have seen this story for about a decade. I wonder if there : may have been a thread of truth to it. If I were NM, and I had such a : thing happen to me, I would quickly remove any mention of a "NM cookie" : from my stores. That's easy to do. Actually, NM has been famous for : cookies for ages. At presant they sell a line of cookies made in Japan, : of all places, that are beautifully packaged and actually do taste very : good. They do not taste as good as their price, however.

I think this is a well-recorded urban legend. As someone pointed out, before the current re-incarnation of the story in its Neiman-Marcus form, the exact same recipe (with a similar story) was going around claiming they were Mrs. Fields Cookies. But of course, as most urban legends, it's origins are even older. A similar story, concerning a red Velvet cake from the Astoria hotel used to be popular in the 20's. Here is one version of the account:

Our friend, Dean Blair, got on a bus in San Jose one morning and shortly after, a lady got on the bus and started passing out these 3 x 5 cards with the recipe for "Red Velve Cake." She said she had recently been in New York and had dinner at the Waldorf Astoria and had this cake. After she returned to San Jose, she worte to the hotel asking for the name of the chef who had originated the cake, and if she could have the recipe. Subsequently she received the recipe in the mail along with a bill for something like \$350 from the chef. She took the matter to her attorney, and he advised her that she would have to pay it because she had not inquired beforehand if there would be a charge for teh service, and if so, how much it would be. Consequently, she apparently thought this would be a good way to get even with the chef. (recipe omitted). (Brunvard, Jan H. 1981, The Vanishing Hitchhiker: American Urban Legends and Their Meanings, New York: WW Nortin & Co. p. 154).

Of course, this is only one version. Sometimes the recipe is for "The Million Dollar Fudge". There are variations about the lady's hometown, the amount she paid, the lawyer's reasons for having to pay the bill, and how she ordered the recipe (generally it seems to be in the restaurant itself). (Id. p. 155)

Anyone can see the similarities in the stories. I recommend the abovementioned book to anyone who is interested in urban legends. BTW, I have made the "Mrs. Fields/neiman Marcus cookies" and they are OK, though nothing out of the ordinary.

Take care,

Margarita

--

Margarita Lacabe and/or Mike Katz-Lacabe ---

"It's not the repression by the bad people that hurts-
it's the silence of the good" MLK

[↑ Contents](#)

11. Rod Smith

Re: newpoets

Sun 1 Oct 1995

Ode to my mom's cookie-tin repro of Pollock for Jeff Hansen

&&9)\$g4555=444 {e32+}=
the rimshot & throp knot to
Maximus (bad painter, actually) :::::
Jerry' s dead iiii
555%%**>>>>>>>>>>>>>P:L_EF+ED
& rolls like needed lances on the busted
lunch of mine organic testament (more extra gorp
;-) <----- weekends in DC,
all that +
THE GUZ

[↑ Contents](#)

12. **George Bowering**
Re: grad students beware (fwd)
Mon 2 Oct 1995

Please! That exploding head one has been zooming around the web for a year in various versions.

[↑ Contents](#)

13. **George Bowering**
Re: Sitwell
Mon 2 Oct 1995

Yeah, Kevin, but did Edith meet Lew Welch?

Have you read Bryher's account of Hd's meeting Edith Sitwell?

[↑ Contents](#)

14. **George Bowering**
Re: Sitwell
Mon 2 Oct 1995

Dear Lisa etc

Have you read Sitwell's biog of Alexander Pope? One of the plainest, smartest and shortest biogs I have rtead. I recommend it for bedside or other reading. It's pretty good on the bus, wher I read it, too.

[↑ Contents](#)

15. **George Bowering**
Re: ssplits and weakenings
Mon 2 Oct 1995

Oops, Lisa, I just saw yr post mentioning Sitwell's biog of Pope, and I probably merntioned this book years ago, and I cant remember anything except my pin number.

[↑ Contents](#)

16. **Steve Carll**
Re: the Wild Blue Yonder
Mon 2 Oct 1995

Tony Green asks (and it's a doozy):

| *The question is, Steve Carll, what is thing called "past"?*

Depends on the context in which you want to talk about it. My use of the word "thing" was provisional; I'm somewhat wary of attempting to reify time and all its little buddies. Larry Price, whose use of the term "past" I was responding to, seemed to mean by it (and I'm sure I'll be corrected if I'm wrong on this) some repository of cultural artifacts whose transformation (through cultural activity) has made them unrecognizable. But maybe Larry would be of more help on this.

Steve

[↑ Contents](#)

17. **W. Northcutt**

Re: grad students beware (fwd)

Mon 2 Oct 1995

HCE?????

Bet Joyce would have gotten a kick out of that.

[↑ Contents](#)

18. **Willa Jarnagin**

Re: Resisting Neiman-Marcus (fwd)

Mon 2 Oct 1995

I saw the Neiman-Marcus cookie story a couple years ago, then later read that it was one of those "urban myths". Who knows? I used to have a friend who worked as a sales person at NM and she said everyone who worked there called the place Needless Mark-ups. Also new employees were shown a training film in which a customer dropped \$20,000 dollars in one trip.

I hope those cookies are good.

Willa

[↑ Contents](#)

19. **Mark Wallace**

and even more bland abstract lyrics

Mon 2 Oct 1995

Let me urge all the people who took the time to respond to my query to send their writing on the subject of current/emerging/whatever avant garde writing and writers of the present moment to Jeff Hansen at Poetic Briefs:

Poetic Briefs

2510 Highway 100 South #333

St. Louis Park, MN 55416

Having gotten the public service message out of the way, I have a few further comments (is it really my turn again?) on this subject.

I appreciate Gale Nelson's caution that Ron may be referring to a larger swath of avant garde writing than I suggested earlier. But I don't think, in fact, that he is, or at least to any huge extent. He has commented before about the Writing From the New Coast anthology, and various other projects having to do with avant garde writers who have only begun to publish books in the 1990s (one possible way of defining "emerging," however tentatively). Although I think that Ron's critique is to a certain extent incorrect, I think he means it seriously and his position is not completely without justification--which is why, I think, it does need refutation. Look at it this way--Ron Silliman is an excellent poet, a first rate critic, and one of the most thoroughly open commentators we have on this poetics list--he's got the guts to constantly say exactly what he's thinking. While I don't always agree (by any means) with the things he says, I think he's got an uncanny knack for putting his finger exactly where key problems are. And I think that emerging "post-language" avant garde writers have, at the very least, a real identity problem. I mean, if a committed avant gardist like Ron Silliman can't see the value in what emerging writers are doing, who's going to? At least he READ Writing From the New Coast.

For Jordan Davis and Al Nielson and others who questioned my "definitions," I certainly agree that such definitions are always problematic, but I also think that saying so may be to a certain extent beside the point. Wittgenstein once said, when talking of language games, "And for those who find my definition of language games too inexact, I reply, isn't an inexact definition often what we need?" That is, the inexactness of absolute definitions for terms is precisely the situation we're in all the time--the inexactness of definition is the very ground on which communication takes place. So, yes, terms like "avant garde," "emerging," "younger," "generation," and "Ron Silliman" for that matter are problematic and inexact, but also highly USEFUL. Besides, Jordan, I'm not "defending younger writers." It's my perception, I think a correct one, that Ron has been guilty of too great a generalization regarding emerging avant garde writers. I was not calling for some generalized "defense," but for PARTICULAR RESPONSES.

While I agree with Jeff Hansen's comments that too much belief in the social value of the "new" brings with it a whole host of problems, I can't quite go as far as he does in what I think he's suggesting also--that innovation is no longer possible in poetry. I don't think that's true at all, although it may be true that innovation doesn't necessarily happen in the places people often look for it--in the most outrageous and "different" NEW THING. I find Jeff's work, for instance, incredibly innovative--look at what he's doing in "Landscapes" in the most recent AVEC, or his chapbook "The Monologues of Joe Blow Only Artsy"

from Texture Press. So I think that Jeff is overstating his case against innovation just a little bit, and in a way that distorts the insightful innovations of his own work.

Rod Smith--yes, nonresponse does not equal implicit agreement, but does it count as effective counterargument in this case? The question comes down to, I suppose, whether one considers Ron's critique worth responding to. I think it is, because I think he's a serious critic and a great writer. I think that you probably think so too--correct me if I'm wrong--so I think your support of nonresponse seems a little disingenuous. Besides, you responded! As did many others who usefully complicated my initial query--Mark Morris' highly thoughtful piece really embroils us in some necessary complexities.

So let me say, again, that I think there is a REAL identity crisis haunting emerging avant garde writers, and one that's worth talking about publicly. This problem is behind the idea of the Poetic Briefs forum that Jeff will be doing in the next issue of Poetic Briefs, both as response to my essay in #19, and on any other topic related to questions facing the avant garde at this moment.

I have a lot more to say about all this (fortunately or unfortunately), but I will, in self-conscious PR fashion, for now just point out that that's why

I wrote the essay in Poetic Briefs that I'm trying to get people to read and respond to.

mark wallace

[↑ Contents](#)

20. **Mark Wallace**

Sorry

Mon 2 Oct 1995

Sorry that I sent a private note of mine accidentally to Poetics list.

mark wallace

[↑ Contents](#)

21. **Peter Larkin**

Re: Wild Blue Yonder

Mon 2 Oct 1995

Steve Carll is quite right, a total forgetting would be of the how as well as the what; it would no longer be an act, as the forgetting would itself be forgotten. In cultural terms, the process can be nothing like as absolute, but where forgetting is "deliberate" it is not in itself forgotten, but remembered either as a strategy "clearing the decks", or can set off some sort of work of mourning. The

latter seems the David Jones area, though he also liked to think of a healthy culture as baggily retentive and found it difficult to let anything go. Perhaps some sort of ecological model might serve, where cultures assimilate organically over long periods, but then reach a "post-climax" stage defined by dissemination, absolute innovation and depletion. But through all that are the minimal attachments required to keep any sort of societal or cultural possibility in play at all, a play not in itself within the terms of a general dissemination. I have been thinking about these things in a recent piece of writing called "Let Attachment Assail Us", and a couple of paras from the Prefatory Note I would quite like to float here, to see if they seem to mean anything: Whatever has the instinct of attachment operates as a careful fragment in our culture. The fragment's present form seems penetrated (beyond break-point) by the liability of not being a discard, but only gradually does it continue to own the vocation of an unsafe unity. The gift is ill-received as much as lost, and the former condition must go on figuring within a poetics of retention that would revise our habits of acceptance. Only out of this primal grasping can a poetic offering, along a road of self-forgiveness rather than negativity, be made. Without an acknowledgement of the charged nature of burden, of the fact we are all owners of the fantasy of numinous attachment, alterity itself would be a figment. The unpossessed has transformed itself into the unreleasable, but until a gesture is made in time with this burden, the resistance of the other cannot even appear. And if it does appear it will not appear alone, the power of resistance will no longer be confused with autonomy. The justified weaker term will have won a freedom, beyond strategic manipulations normalising opposition, to attach itself. Peter Larkin Philosophy & Literature Librarian University of Warwick Library, Coventry CV4 7AL UK Tel: 01203 524475 Fax: 01203 524211 Email: [REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

22. **Alan Golding**

Po-gossip

Mon 2 Oct 1995

Associate Professor of English, U. of Louisville

Phone: [REDACTED]; e-mail: [REDACTED]

Jordan: If you're going to check out Tom Clark's *The Great Naropa Poetry Wars*, you'll also want to look at the project on that now-mythological Merwin-Trungpa confrontation produced by Ed Sanders' 1977 Investigative Poetry class at Naropa. It's called *The Party: A Chronological Perspective on a Confrontation at a Buddhist Seminary* (Poetry, Crime and Culture Press: Woodstock, NY, 1977). This does, I think, have implications for poetics beyond the talk-show

level, esp. if read along with Sanders' 1976 chapbook Investigative Poetry (City Lights).

Alan

[↑ Contents](#)

23. **David W. Clippinger**
Re: Origin, Bronk, and Olson

Mon 2 Oct 1995

I am in need of finding out what poems appear in Origin #2 and #3--especially which Bronk and Olson poems. Unfortunately, the special collection at Syracuse University begins with the second series of the journal, and the first three issues are unavailable.

I would appreciate whatever help anyone may be able to provide, especially since that information is invaluable to my work at this moment.

Thank you,

David Clippinger

[↑ Contents](#)

24. **Eryque Gleason**
Distribution bloos

Mon 2 Oct 1995

Now that I can finally post to listservers again, I'm only a couple of weeks late posting this announcement.

bloo3, the arts and literary journal of the Illinois Institute of Technology is now available by writing to

bloo

c/o Humanities Dept., LS-106
Illinois Institute of Technology
3101 S. Dearborn
Chicago, IL 60616

or you can contact me, which will probably be faster.

bloo3 was edited by Andrew Levy, and contains work from student contributors (incl. yours truly), as well as work by Pat Reed, Bob Harrison, William Fuller, Dodie Bellamy, Robert Kocik, and Kevin Killian.

Eryque "Just call me Eric" Gleason If I weren't a monkey, there'd
71 E. 32nd St. Box 949 be problems.

Chicago, IL 60616



[↑ Contents](#)

25. **Judy Roitman**
Re: Wild Blue Yonder

Mon 2 Oct 1995

The discussion of memory & time amazes me, floating free as it does of the sheer physicality at the root of these constructs (brain and all this connotes). For example, walking -- unbelievable, isn't it? (Okay, modulo massive damage most of us "function" most of the "time".)

[↑ Contents](#)

26. **Jeff Hansen**
wild blue yonder

Mon 2 Oct 1995

Larry Price on 9-28 wondered how I could apply the term "wild blue yonder" to a piece by Ron Silliman such as "Ketjak." I wasn't. In my posting of 9-27, I was concerned less with the work of Silliman--which I admire for the most part--than with the various ways that he has discussed the poetry of the "emerging generation," both in the posting noted by Mark Wallace and in other places. Silliman has made several comments that seem to indicate he values new poetic techniques in younger poets, rather than their exploring the possibilities within, between and around techniques already in existence. I take issue with his seeming preference for the radically new over other types of exploration. Both seem valuable to me, although I am skeptical about the possibility of creating radically new forms right now--which is why I termed preference for The New as "the wild blue yonder."

Best,
Jeff

[↑ Contents](#)

27. **Jim Pangborn**
Re: Wild Blue Yonder

Mon 2 Oct 1995

Judy Roitman is right: we would need some working examples to root or embody these abstractions. As it is, one wants more sense of what ways fragments might be, besides careful; what ways unities might be, besides

unsafe; whether everything is either fragment, discard, or unity; what kinds of threat demand this care and safety; etc., and we're only through the first paragraph. Naturally, ripped from a larger context, abstractions will seem to loom and float disconcertingly in an unfamiliar universe. (Ooo: did I say Naturally? as in: conforming to a principle of poetic ecology? How cool . . . didn't know I knew that . . .

--Jim

p.s., Jeff H. started this thread with an incisive comment on the overvaluation of formal innovative originality on this list. G'awn, Jeff. Tell it.

Peter Larkin <[REDACTED]> writes:

> Whatever has the instinct of attachment operates as a careful
> fragment in our culture. The fragment's present form seems penetrated
> (beyond break-point) by the liability of not being a discard, but
> only gradually does it continue to own the vocation of an unsafe
> unity.
> The gift is ill-received as much as lost, and the former condition
> must go on figuring within a poetics of retention that would revise
> our habits of acceptance. Only out of this primal grasping can a
> poetic offering, along a road of self-forgiveness rather than
> negativity, be made. Without an acknowledgement of the charged nature
> of burden, of the fact we are all owners of the fantasy of numinous
> attachment, alterity itself would be a figment. The unpossessed has
> transformed itself into the unreleasable, but until a gesture is made
> in time with this burden, the resistance of the other cannot even
> appear. And if it does appear it will not appear alone, the power of
> resistance will no longer be confused with autonomy. The justified
> weaker term will have won a freedom, beyond strategic manipulations
> normalising opposition, to attach itself.
>

[↑ Contents](#)

28. **Jordan Davis**

Poetry W

Mon 2 Oct 1995

On Fri, 29 Sep 1995, Charles Smith wrote:

>
> Even when serious issues of poetics are involved,
> going over all this 'dirt' seldom rises above the level of gossip &
> personalities. Guess I have doubts about the value of such a study.
>

I guess. But I was thinking more specifically of rifts, rivalries, exclusions, oppositions, deletions and the school of writers that (pre)dominate on this list. I had heard I could hear of stories among the emerged, of the poetic and the personal being equated (and so being used against people), that I could not (for whatever reason) hear told about the still emerging. That is, the younger writers have not had rancor as associated with them as their forebears did. That, anyway, was the subtext I had in mind. What does Pound say, praise them and be done with them?

Jordan Davis

[↑ Contents](#)

29. **B. Cassidy**

The Art and Poetry Worlds

Mon 2 Oct 1995

This past weekend I was reading in The New York times about the protest by "realist painters" at the Whitney Museum (their exclusion at the expense of more "experimental" and "avant-guard" artists), and realized something rather curious, which in the settling wake of our "Corn"-y debates seems interesting and relevant. (Apologies in advance for opening this back up.)

In short, the artists at the Whitney were protesting the museums heavy preference for "non-traditional," "experimental," and "non-representational" works. What struck me while reading this is that the situation they are protesting seems to be the exact opposite of what we find in the poetry world. Whereas in the "Art World", what was "avant-guard" has become rather accepted by the "establishment" (however we choose to take that word) or at least respected, in the poetry worlds this has yet to happen to the same degree.

This seems especially odd when one considers that much of the work in the two fields has been at many times roughly parallel in terms of techniques and concerns/issues addressed. With the exception of an Ashbery (I think, because the influence of French poetries and the ability to read him in such a light) or a Ginsberg (because of the social issues that surrounded him), who from the "avant-guard tradition" has really been embraced by the "establishment"? Why is it that Olson, Duncan, Stein, etc. seems to be mere footnotes in the history of the "establishment"'s poetry, yet Johns, de Kooning, Pollock, Rauschenberg, etc. have a decidedly more prominent position? (Okay, very rough equivalents here, but you get what I mean :)) Or, to put it another way, why is it that Bruce Nauman's recent retrospective got so much press in the art journals, and yet Michael Palmer and Lyn Hejinian (as Prof. Perloff recently pointed out) can barely even be considered for a job at a major American university? Or, yet one more way, why can Brice Marden have an article about him appear in the

current Harper's Bazaar, and yet Mark Strand (as I recently heard him say at a Q&A session) claim, with no apparent shame or regret, that he had never read Palmer's *_Notes for Echo Lake_*? (Again, my comparisons are far from perfect, but hopefully you see what I'm saying here.)

Is this discrepancy simply because of the differences in structure/hierarchy/economics between the two "worlds"? Or, perhaps more interestingly, might it have something to do with the nature of the two mediums? Another option? Just thought I'd throw this out there since I found it an interesting comparison....

Best,
Brian Cassidy

[↑ Contents](#)

30. **Jordan Davis**
awk/Deguy-Koch reading cancelled
Mon 2 Oct 1995

Sorry about the gerrammar on that last post. Rancor mixes me up.

- The Deguy/Koch reading at NYU on Thursday has been called off. Deguy is in Paris, recovering from (I think) a bad stomach bug.

Jordan Davis

[↑ Contents](#)

31. **George Bowering**
Re: Origin, Bronk, and Olson
Mon 2 Oct 1995

Fun getting my copies of *_Origin_* down again.

#II has Olson's "The Escaped Cock," his notes on Lawrence, and the poems, "Issue, Mood" and "A Po-sy, a Po-sy."

#III has Olsons "A Round & a Canon", and these by Bronk:

"The various Sizes of the World"

"The Rain of Small Occurences"

"The Tree in the Middle of the Field"

"My Father Photographed with Friends"

"The Winter Shrub"

"The Mind's Landscape on an early Winter Day"

"Certain Beasts--Like Cats"

"The Self Encountered in a Dream"

"The Acts of the Apostles"

"The Summer Airs"

"Supper Time"

---phew!

GB

[↑ Contents](#)

32. **George Bowering**

Re: Po-gossip

Mon 2 Oct 1995

In addition to the Clark and Sanders versions of the Merwin-Trungpa occasion, there was a Ginsberg version published somewhere, I forget where, in wch there is a little more sympathy for the Trungpa side. And in Buffalo I heard bpNichol and Victor Coleman sing from the operetta they wrote on the event. One of the songs was called "I'm not a Witness, I wasnt there."

[↑ Contents](#)

33. **Eryque Gleason**

Distribution bloos (take 2)

Mon 2 Oct 1995

Sorry for the re-post, but I just realized that I left out a couple of details from the original post! Namely, each copy is 96 pages perfectbound, and we're asking \$6 per copy.

bloo3, the arts and literary journal of the Illinois Institute of Technology is now available by writing to

bloo

c/o Humanities Dept., LS-106

Illinois Institute of Technology

3101 S. Dearborn

Chicago, IL 60616

or you can contact me, which will probably be faster.

bloo3 was edited by Andrew Levy, and contains work from student contributors (incl. yours truly), as well as work by Pat Reed, Bob Harrison, William Fuller, Dodie Bellamy, Robert Kocik, and Kevin Killian.

Copies are 96 pages, perfectbound, \$6. (please make checks out to IIT Arts & Literary Society)

Eryque "Just call me Eric" Gleason	!	If I weren't a monkey, there'd
71 E. 32nd St. Box 949		be problems.

Chicago, IL 60616



[↑ Contents](#)

34. **Ron Silliman**
Re: wild blue yonder
Mon 2 Oct 1995

I really appreciate Jeff Hansen's argument for exploration between formal (in the strictest sense) boundaries rather than, say, beyond them, even if I don't know (understand?) whether or not that sentiment might be shared by others. It raises a lot of interesting questions for reading and interpretation and seems to me a terrific road into a lot of work. I had not meant my comments to be strictly taken as referring to an "emerging" generation (one that stretches out from people who are my own age, more or less, a la Selby and Basinski, to people in their early 20s), but I often hope to see my posts here as a prod to comment, and here Jeff takes that phrase in very useful direction.

Here is a for instance: Peter Gizzi is a superb and subtle craftsperson, so much so that his use of Spicer and the serial poem turn into a demonstration of the Esthetic as such, a result that strikes me as antithetical to Spicer's almost Celine-esque anti-aesthetic tendencies. Gizzi's Spicer seems closer to Bonnefoy than Celine or even Prevert. Clearly Gizzi is extending the mode of the serial poem in a direction unanticipated by Spicer, creating in some sense a different Spicer than the one I have read (where in fact I often find a horror of the aesthetic). Is this the same or different from the way in which (to pick a pseudoparallel) John Taggart and Ronald Johnson might be said to have read a different Zukofsky than the one read by Bernstein and Andrews?

I agree with Hansen that the idea of extending "innovation" to predictable logical conclusions ("typing" as someone once said of Kerouac's form) is of little interest, especially 80 years after zaum first demonstrated a range of possibility there. Similarly, all sound poetry "says the same thing" and it says it over and over.

Where formal innovation typically occurs (I'm making a wildly broad generalization here) is when the society underlying a given mode of verse production changes so that new writers (younger or otherwise--Olson was a late bloomer and WCW wrote *Spring & All* in his late 30s) bring in newly recognized territories and modes of the social into their work as form. I don't want to reduce this to some crude variation of base/superstructure economic determinism, but there is a constant and dynamic tension. Next to Snoop Doggy

Dog, exactly how white does the French-inflected lyric poem sound? Next to Chuck D?

Hansen's argument echoes (consciously?) part of Robert Duncan's poetics of derivation and does so in ways that are not reductive and simplistic. I'd love to hear people open that line of thinking up further.

Ron Silliman



[↑ Contents](#)

35. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: oops snoops

Tue 3 Oct 1995

Ron -- unusual spelling there for mr. SDD, who, when last seen up the street at Village Recording Studio, was sporting Howard University sweats -- dawg gone it -- easier to get Chuck D's name right, I suppose -- But Chuck's actually been to a college, unlike friend Snoop, who buys his college garb through the mail -- I'm of the opinion that "gangsta" rap is about the whitest lyric form currently available -- and how did the French lyric get white?? Large doses of Poe, perhaps? What _is_ a white sounding lyric, and, to paraphrase Genet, what color is it?

Mark-- wasn't so much asking for definitions as wondering in public how certain words came to share a definition -- All kinds of identity crises available, but -- it's one thing to identify groups of poets who seem to share common aesthetic interests, or presuppositions, or questions,, etc. -- another thing to grab bunches of poets by the scruff of their birthdate & ask an identity to emerge -- rather like the "Texas Sharpshooter" phenomenon -- The shootist fired several rounds at the side of the barn, went over to the bullet holes, drew a circle around them and said, BULL'SEYE! The _Next Coast_ affair was said to have something to do either with age or with when one began publishing, but a glance at the table of contents shows that neither of these criteria actually was at work -- Still a really interesting gathering, I think, but hardly the statement of a generation, a school, or even an emerging ethos -- Not that I'm looking for that in particular, just that I read a tension between the desire for a "grouping" of some sort and what can be found reading the actual publications --

For example, look at how often Will Alexander is produced in discussions of a "post-language-poetry" scene,,, and Will, bless him, also gets mentioned by the likes of such pre-anti-language poetry guys as Eliot W. -- Does any of that have much to do with actually reading what Will is actually writing? and _then_ trying to see how that might fit with whatever may or may not be emerging?

But . . . I look forward to reading that Briefs issue --
are you ever coming to California????

[↑ Contents](#)

36. **Larry Price**
Pens fall and begin to harvest
Tue 3 Oct 1995

Steve Carli wrote:

"When you forget something, when you erase it, aren't forgetting and erasing modes of relating to that something?"

Amid the assorted food labels, brochures, and badly written yet impeccably designed detritus that is my automaton's scramble for survival, the icons of forgetting and erasure are perhaps understandably privileged. Still, I agree with your reluctance to reify. So that particular notion of forgetting was not what I found compelling in Peter Larkin's statement, nor what I intended by using the term "erasure."

That is, not a forgetting (or erasing) in the sense of a toolbox (click on icon and drag to trash), an amnesial or erasive intentionality directed always and in nostalgia backward (the past as the desire that makes desire be present), but rather in the sense of "Not this." That is, the perpetual vapor trail that language in fact sprays before it, the head in arrears, Duchamp's nickel-plated child which the "person" completes on the horizontal blank page overwriting the master pages of autonomy. (At the very least, we know power won't deny itself.)

(Although I have to say I like the Lacanian intrigue in the past coming to presence as what is no longer presence. Which must be where all these careful discriminations between sense and nonsense go to become nonsense.)

When I say "we are in relation to the present," this in itself is a heuristic device, a machine devised-toward-the remedial present. I suppose it is remedial because (I agree) it is never a clean break, shaped as it is within an assumed, at least culturally imposed restricted economy of being. That remedial ground is, of course, the text. It functions to process the communicable intransigence of what is into the uncommunicated, hence infinitely available outside of what isn't.

Power is one issue. As one, it falls to us in its compensatory claim of mastery (or clarity) It seems to me it is this mastery/clarity that is at issue (among other places, in Mark Wallace's usefully raised issues). That is, mastery, when it arrives as the default version ("perfection is basic to this mode"), takes as its register a simultaneity of face and facework, reader and writer. It fulfills itself

in this way as part of a guarantee that having fulfilled itself once and as a one it won't have to do so again and certainly not in its parts. The language of power is structured from the neant on down.

But here Peter Larkin's notion of the "weak" intrigues me. It leads me to a question for Mark Wallace: to what extent is the category of post-language-avant-garde-emerging-publishing in the 90s-younger generation a strategizing of attachment and dis-attachment (in the sense -- I think -- PL is writing of it)?

Larry Price

[↑ Contents](#)

37. **Jordan Davis**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Tue 3 Oct 1995

Funny that they'd pick the Whitney, currently exhibiting Hopper and Stettheimer. Staying out of the current streams of thought can help you develop a strong sense of perversity.

With love,
Jordan

[↑ Contents](#)

38. **CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON**

Re: Influence query

Tue 3 Oct 1995

Other than Michael Palmer and Andre du Bouchet, are there other poets who might be read as having been particularly influenced by Paul Celan?

Any recommendations would be very helpful, as I am currently discussing Celan in a graduate seminar.

Thank you so much for any assistance.

--Carolyn

[↑ Contents](#)

39. **Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco**

1 PM EDT

Tue 3 Oct 1995

Not guilty, my ass. Unfucking real! There: had to say it. Couldn't exactly shout it at work.

[↑ Contents](#)

40. **Gale Nelson**

Re: Pens fall and begin to harvest

Tue 3 Oct 1995

One of the issues that was brought forward by "Writing from the New Coast" is the possibility of simultaneous communities of overlapping writers -- that those invited to this conference represented a host of aesthetic, political, social, intellectual and poetic considerations. The question that Mark seems to want answered is, "Who are we???" And the wonderful answer seems to be that we are a multitude, undertaking a diverse range of projects. And that, in the wake of the success of the challenging work written in the decades when we were in school (through college), we have the opportunity to "assume the victories" of every 20th century literary movement that catches our attention.

Perhaps my sense of overlapping and shifting communities of writing is too fanciful, and I should be shooed off of this list, if it really is devoted to group identity. I have to admit that I'm not worried about my identity as a poet; nor am I particularly interested in banding with others to usher in any this that or the other thing. I am more intrigued by what literature can do each time out, by any writer. Having taught workshops for the larger community here in Providence, I feel a certain belief that writers who are willing to take risks can do so in a variety of ways -- and do so in enormously exciting manners. I'm less intrigued by the notion that there is a right way to move literature forward than by the notion that there are numerous right ways.

The question, "who are we?" was intermingled, for me, with the question, "am I part of some new coast"? And I found myself preferring the idea of a Venn Diagram, with countless circles, all overlapping in the most unexpected ways. This coast, to my mind, is a mirage. But if it does exist, I'm too cantankerous by double to navigate based on someone else's map.

Gale Nelson

[↑ Contents](#)

41. **tunguska**

Re: fragments, mourning & derivation

Tue 3 Oct 1995

Responding to what Peter Larkin says about attachment, connected to a forgetting, those two themes in terms of the cultural fragment (paraphrasis, I'll come back, excuse...) and his kind of involuted couple of paragraphs from his piece "Let Attachment Assail us". This reminds me of Heidegger talking about retention and involvement of being, first in the common everyday understanding, in terms of idle-talk, gossip and a concerned being-towards-

death, which never comes close to the anxiety neededNEEDED to fathom the possibility of the death of one's own Dasein. You mention a self-forgiveness, and that sounds right, but, again, in Being and Time (which may or may not be of use here) guilty conscience is something we seek out, to discover what the common everyday has determined to be one's Dasein, one's own "being there", and this process of bringing on the guilt, so to speak, and fleeing in the face of, anxiety at the possibility of death, makes up the foundation of all this, consciousness, being, or what ever you want to term it...kind of reminiscent of the early electrified Dylan, that it was said he sought out a kind of impossible phrasing or rhythm or pitch or version of an old tune, just to put himself into "trouble".

Again, what you have going there in your piece, hits home in terms of the falsity of an autonomy of resistance, and which I think, echoing this whole deal with the bland lyric et al, and young writers and the avant garde et al. gets taken up as a stance, that I find to be best summed up by the boston poet (renegade-hero, alone?, in his own right and day)Stephen Jonas, from the Excercises for Ear, with his typical Poundian nod:

..... money always greases the palm
to the left

.....

Interesting to note that in his final "orgasms/dominations" Jonas virtually, from what I've read so far, fell into total derivation from Pound's Cantos, style, and, what looks like, some of the technique, although, maybe not with such an emphasis on the luminous detail. But I haven't really gotten into it that much yet, just bought it the other day.

But derivation, as continuity?, is this what David Jone's accomplished in The Anethemata? What I heard reading that was: Bring out your dead! Bring out your dead! as re-confirmation of the cycles of life and death that, can be substituted for one another?!

I too put this out, to see what makes sense here, and want to get into that sense of Duncan's calling himself Derivative. Always thought that comment on the back of Opening the Field interesting, "to utilize my faculties at large".....That book, so filled with sad death, black death, should've been called opening the black tomb...

tod thilleman
tod thilleman

[↑ Contents](#)

42. **Charles Alexander**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Tue 3 Oct 1995

I have often agreed with your surprise, Brian, at the embrace of the avant-garde in the visual arts as compared with the ignoring or ostracism of the avant-garde in the literary arts. But I don't think the question is that easy. In some ways the figures you pick out, de Kooning, Johns, Pollock, Rauschenberg, do not question the tenets of artistic genius, nor does their work question the possibilities of coherence. You may disagree with this, but I think a composition by de Kooning, for example, is a work of elegant beauty which coheres quite well (and I love the work). On the other hand, I don't think, for example, that the Fluxus artists have been embraced nearly so decisively, precisely because they question the importance of works of art. And while Dada artists are collected and shown, it seems to me that it is the objects they created that fill the halls of such as the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and that a major part of their work, or a major thrust of their work (that is, the creation of non-art, the destruction of high art) is either ignored, sidestepped, or co-opted. And I don't think any major art critics have yet ventured to think that mail artists or book artists or others who have opted out of the gallery/museum circuits are among the most important visual artists of our time (which I think they are).

The literary situation isn't that neat, either. I don't think Stein is just a footnote, although I think perhaps her elevation is just beginning. I don't know if you think of Joyce as avant-garde or not, but he has been consistently celebrated. More recently, John Ashbery has certainly been granted entry into the great canon . . . , perhaps for the wrong reasons (?).

I hope your question opens up some discussion, and I just want to point out that I don't think it's quite as neat as "avant-garde is accepted in visual arts, not in literary arts." That doesn't mean there's not a basic imbalance in here somewhere.

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██████████

[↑ Contents](#)

43. **George Bowering**
Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
Tue 3 Oct 1995

I think that the Canadians' view of U.S. poetry is somewhat different from the USAmerican one. Since the Sixties the poets of the Allen anthology (and their "successors") have been more likely up here to be taken for the main event. There are or have been some Canadians (in the poetry "world") who have from time to time espoused a few others, such as Berryman, but up here the "mainstream" US poets, as far as I can see, have never had a following or a cachet. Olson and Spicer and Duncan and O'Hara and Creeley are arguably the most popular of the postwar poets in Vancouver, for instance, if yr talking 60s etc. I think that you would have to go to an English department and talk with an ex-U.S. prof, if you wanted to find someone who had even heard of Wendell Berry (is that his name?). Years ago in Montreal I tried teaching "creative writing" for the last time (around 1968-70) and the poets they wanted to hear about were Spicer and O'Hara.

[↑ Contents](#)

44. **Graham John Sharpe**
Re: fragments, mourning & derivation (was Wild BYonder)
Tue 3 Oct 1995

while i won't jump into the heidegger chat, i can't help but place this discussion of fragments (and their relation with history (past, present & future)) in the context of David Jones WWI experience. Fragments, while perhaps easier to displace or forget, necessitate for Jones, i believe, the need to rebuild or reconstruct experience. perhaps constructing from the pieces of what once was, but not constructing that "was." It is a re-mem-bering, as Jones himself asserts in **Epoch & Artist**

yet with any such discussion of Jones and fragments, i always recall the stretcher-bearers of **In Parenthesis**. Perhaps the poet is linked for Jones to these "Carrying-parties":

burdened bearers walk with careful feet
to jolt him as little as possible,
bearers of burdens to and from
stumble oftener, notice the lessening light,
and feel their way with more sensitive feet--
you musn't spill the precious fragments, for perhaps these
raw bones live.

g

[↑ Contents](#)

45. **eric pape**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Tue 3 Oct 1995

The question of visual vs. poetic modernism/postmodernism is a highly complicated issue. And one I personally would like an answer to, and have sought an answer to, but haven't found one at all. The following are perhaps some gestures towards possible answers: 1) The nature of the English language. Might it be that English, being a syntactical language is thus more referential and does not as easily abstract itself (heard this once in a seminar)? 2) Language itself. Cannot be naked bricks. Must refer. Regardless. 3) Frank O'Hara. The evil genius behind modern art and poetry. He and Lee Harvey Oswald had it all planned out. 4) Hate to say this, but this seems most reasonable to me and that is the differential institutionalization of the various arts. Visual art was commodified by the museum system, New York based, etc., while poetry was institutionalized in the various writing programs. One was based on what could be sold, the other on what can be taught (a previous posting applies here). Realistic imagism, as that which has been taught in workshops for several decades, is a lot easier to teach. It seems as if modern art, as long as it is painted in colors easily matched with trendy interior decorating, is very commercial. I am a product of that institutionalization, and it has its utopian aspects as well as its implication in domination, etc. ad nauseum, but I can't help think that one of the reasons that poetry in American has remained at least officially stagnant for a very long time is its institutionalization. It pains me to say this, as I respect Carolyn and Gwyn, and myself (though I am certainly not at their level in any way) but we are the main part of the problem as I see it. Thanks Eric.

[↑ Contents](#)

46. **Tony Green**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Tue 3 Oct 1995

Going along with Charles Alexander on visual arts and poetry -- compare as institutions: art museums, dealers and collectors, Kunsthalle, auctioneers, art book publishing ----- with libraries, poets exchanging chapbooks, readings, inclusion/exclusion in academic courses

and compare say Poetics Journal or Aerial with ArtForum as magazines

the terms and conditions are very different as regards acceptance and canonization for painters and sculptors as against poets though, as Charles

Alexander notes, it's not nearly so easy for installational and conceptual artworkers, though I guess even they get more public exposure than many poets through the art museums. I've just been checking a list of recent art-catalogues for library purchase and that gives some idea of the extent of market-penetration by, say, Vito Acconci, Joseph Kosuth, Genevieve Cadieux, Christian Boltanski just for instances of non-painter/sculptors.

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

47. **Phillips Patrick**

Re: Influence query

Tue 3 Oct 1995

Ben Friedlander is one 'non-canonical' poet who has been "influenced" by Celan. His contribution is considerable - *_Time Rations_* an O Book (the only book I look for on my shelf having no title/name on the spine). Although this may not be what you seek, he is valuable for his attention to parallel veins and has translated Celan.

[↑ Contents](#)

48. **Gwyn McVay**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Tue 3 Oct 1995

Eric,

Is there a dominant American poetic that consists of first-person, strictly referential, free-verse lyrics that are narrative, personal in tone, make no use of space on the page, etc.? Yep, you bet. Have writing programs caused the dominance of that poetic? I dunno. I'm willing to consider it, but I'd also bet that were it not for the madly proliferating MFA programs, people would still be writing the same thing, but even worse.

Gwyn

[↑ Contents](#)

49. **paul**

Re: Influence query

Tue 3 Oct 1995

Allow me to move from the lurking mode for a moment and to importune those of you who are MLA members.

I have been nominated to the Division Executive Committee of the MLA in Twentieth-Century American Literature. Don't know if you noticed this on your ballot, but it can't hurt to have a fellow- traveller on the board. I think that board members help select MLA panels and perhaps essays for publication.

As I haven't been elected to anything so organized as this since junior high school, it seems only right that this ever more revisionary Post-Poundian should second my own nomination with an electronic flourish. So, put your X next to the Kathryne Lindberg box and be among the select few who voted for someone who has recently--not all that recently-- written about Bob Kaufman and a few others of that ilk.

[↑ Contents](#)

50. **Sheila E. Murphy**

Re: Pens fall and begin to harvest

Tue 3 Oct 1995

Gale Nelson writes:

The question, "who are we?" was intermingled, for me, with the question, "am I part of some new coast"? And I found myself preferring the idea of a Venn Diagram, with countless circles, all overlapping in the most unexpected ways. This coast, to my mind, is a mirage. But if it does exist, I'm too cantankerous by double to navigate based on someone else's map.

Gale, your perception of how different beings intersect seems congruent with the notion of adhocacy, a joining created to fill a current need (in contrast to the way that organizations have typically taken on a more permanent cast). While there has always been comfort (for some, at least) in more tangible-seeming (even everlasting seeming) structures and systems, I suspect that this new direction taking shape is ultimately more flexible (when not applied with steamrolling fervor) and potentially more satisfying.

This seems to apply to communities in the arts just as naturally as it does in organizations. Perhaps one of the differences worth citing might be that attempted organization-like formality has always seemed foreign when applied to artistic processes (although some semblance of formality may have been useful at times in procuring resources and the like). But with respect to patterns of making, ideas, perceptions, it's just plain silly to cluster into what sometimes seems "me-too-ism" that is thinly disguised, genuflective and tiresome.

The stronger one-to-one ties and friendships are, and the more genuine they are, the less the need for window dressing, propping up, and the like. Some

"communities" can come to feel oppressive, even if they don't start out that way, by smothering their members.

I think that the list, and the Internet in general, can provide a wonderful vehicle for linking with others and seems already to be spawning new communities. The fresher and the more genuine these come to be, the better, for me at least. I'm less eager to "nail down" a particular set of boundaries than I am to feel the richness of relating to individuals. All in time!

Sheila Murphy

[↑ Contents](#)

51. **Charles Alexander**

Re: fragments, mourning & derivation

Tue 3 Oct 1995

I too put this out, to see what makes sense here, and want to get into that sense of Duncan's calling himself Derivative. Always thought that comment on the back of Opening the Field interesting, "to utilize my faculties at large".....That book, so filled with sad death, black death, should've been called opening the black tomb...

tod thilleman

While Duncan certainly has dark moments, and while he could sometimes, wearing all black, sweep through a room quite dramatically (although this was not terribly sad), I can't agree with you about THE OPENING OF THE FIELD, or at least it seems to me you're coming close to equating the presence of death in that book with sadness and possibly a kind of dark vision. That seems far too literal, and, as Duncan writes in that book, in The Enamored Mage,

I, late at night, facing the page
writing my fancies in a literal age.

Death, in Duncan, partakes as much of light as of darkness, as much of joy as of sadness. The Law which is Major Mover is a law of response, and life and death, as responses to one another, become, in a sense, the same thing. In Duncan the borders are always disappearing. One is always going into despair/death to bring something out --

O god, from me upward the cry of all grievous being
a going up of pestilence into the crown,
for I went down into the end of all things
to bring up the spirit of Man before me
to the beginnings of Love.

(Out of the Black)

This is a poet of great complexity, not one of oppositions, finally, but one for whom all possibilities exist in each moment, inseparable. The depths are there, to be sure, but never alone. In a later poem, *In Blood's Domaine* (from the *Passages* series), the fever is one of death, but it is a fever, burning brightly --

Lovely then

that Death come to carry you away from the moment of this splendor
that bursts the cells of your body like a million larvae triumphant

comes to life in the fruit All the spreading seeds, the
viral array

taking oer flesh as the earth it is

and later in the same poem

What angel, what Gift of the Poem, has brought into my body

this sickness of living? Into the very Gloria of

Life's theme and variations

my own counterpart of Baudelaire's terrible Ennuie?

(My apologies if my tabs and spacing don't carry over to various people's e-mail software. I would encourage you to go to *THE OPENING OF THE FIELD* for all but the last poem I quote, which can be found in *GROUND WORK II: IN THE DARK*. One of my entries into my work was, in the early '80's, hand setting and printing "*In Blood's Domaine*" as a broadside for Woodland Pattern Book Center. Duncan's encouragement then was something which helped me in that work, as his encouragement in general and at other times helped me find various paths.)

It is not death which is the site of darkness in Duncan (or at least not darkness alone). But thank you for bringing this up and sending me back to Duncan's work once again, where I seem to reside periodically.

charles

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[↑ Contents](#)

52. **Steve Carll**

Re: 1 PM EDT

Wed 4 Oct 1995

Daniel Bouchard shouts:

Not guilty, my ass. Unfucking real! There: had to say it. Couldn't exactly shout it at work.

It was pretty shocking, at least in its sudden swiftness after dragging on for all those months. Personally I still think he did it, but I can't really find fault with the jury for thinking there was a reasonable doubt. The LAPD has been notorious for its racism for decades, so no matter how overwhelming the physical and circumstantial evidence, it doesn't take a Johnny Cochran to get a jury to distrust the people who are gathering this evidence enough to come back with an acquittal. It's pretty tragic that this lesson has to come at the expense of two human lives and a lot of anguish for several families, but if we're lucky, a few police departments across the country may wake up and realize that, hey, keeping racist officers on the force just might be a LIABILITY; having them involved tends to create reasonable doubt in the minds of juries, and the DA's finding it harder to get those convictions he needs so people will VOTE for him next election! Duh!

Everyone drop this suggestion to YOUR local precinct; let's see what happens...

Steve

[↑ Contents](#)

53. **jms**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Wed 4 Oct 1995

I can't begin to answer any of these questions. But I think they are good ones and I wonder about them a lot. Like I haven't yet been able to figure out why people who like experimental design or disruptive music don't like similar things to happen with words. Or can't even begin to understand how there is something similar between the different media's manipulations.

But when I read your post Brian, I kept wondering:
what does money have to do with all this?

While the art world boom is supposed to be over
the art world (and the design industry and the music industry) still
undeniably has an economic power that poetry will never have.

Could the public's (there does seem to be some sort of public here) desire for innovative art might have something to do with the one of a kindness of art? That is my best guess.

Juliana

This past weekend I was reading in The New York times about the protest by "realist painters" at the Whitney Museum (their exclusion at the expense of more "experimental" and "avant-guard" artists), and realized something rather curious, which in the settling wake of our "Corn"-y debates seems interesting and relevant. (Apologies in advance for opening this back up.)

In short, the artists at the Whitney were protesting the museums heavy preference for "non-traditional," "experimental," and "non-representational" works. What struck me while reading this is that the situation they are protesting seems to be the exact opposite of what we find in the poetry world. Whereas in the "Art World", what was "avant-guard" has become rather accepted by the "establishment" (however we choose to take that word) or at least respected, in the poetry worlds this has yet to happen to the same degree.

*This seems especially odd when one considers that much of the work in the two fields has been at many times roughly parallel in terms of techniques and concerns/issues addressed. With the exception of an Ashbery (I think, because the influence of French poetries and the ability to read him in such a light) or a Ginsberg (because of the social issues that surrounded him), who from the "avant-guard tradition" has really been embraced by the "establishment"? Why is it that Olson, Duncan, Stein, etc. seems to be mere footnotes in the history of the "establishment"'s poetry, yet Johns, de Kooning, Pollock, Rauschenberg, etc. have a decidedly more prominent position? (Okay, very rough equivalents here, but you get what I mean :)) Or, to put it another way, why is it that Bruce Nauman's recent retrospective got so much press in the art journals, and yet Michael Palmer and Lyn Hejinian (as Prof. Perloff recently pointed out) can barely even be considered for a job at a major American university? Or, yet one more way, why can Brice Marden have an article about him appear in the current Harper's Bazaar, and yet Mark Strand (as I recently heard him say at a Q&A session) claim, with no apparent shame or regret, that he had never read Palmer's *_Notes for Echo Lake_*? (Again, my comparisons are far from perfect, but hopefully you see what I'm saying here.)*

Is this discrepancy simply because of the differences in structure/hierarchy/economics between the two "worlds"? Or, perhaps more interestingly, might it have something to do with the nature of the two mediums? Another option? Just thought I'd throw this out there since I found it an interesting comparison....

Best,
Brian Cassidy

[↑ Contents](#)

54. **Tenney Nathanson**
(no subject)

Wed 4 Oct 1995

Date: Tue, 3 Oct 1995 12:11:03 -0400
From: "CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON" <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: Influence query

Other than Michael Palmer and Andre du Bouchet, are there other poets who might be read as having been particularly influenced by Paul Celan?

Any recommendations would be very helpful, as I am currently discussing Celan in a graduate seminar.

Thank you so much for any assistance.

--Carolyn

probably Paul Auster, though I know this via chit-chat and thus can't append any smart partiklers....

[↑ Contents](#)

55. **Mark Roberts**
Re: 1 PM EDT

Wed 4 Oct 1995

Not guilty, my ass. Unfucking real! There: had to say it. Couldn't exactly shout it at work.

Who are we talking about here:

1. Your donkey ((jack)ass?)
2. A famous US poet
3. A famous NZ poet
4. A not very famous US poet
5. An obscure French anti-nuclear activist
6. A young Australian novelist who faked her ethnic background to win a swag of literary awards.

or

7. An overrated B grade US tv star and ex sports star.

just wondering

ps where do you work (shout shout?)

mark

[↑ Contents](#)

56. **Jordan Davis**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Wed 4 Oct 1995

Juliana

Money has less and less to do with it. Sales were still declining in 1993 when I quit my gallery job. Now any Saturday in soho you can find enough red dots on the wall or on the price list to reassure you that some people will keep their studios, sure. But the unquestioned alliance of capital and art seems to have stopped making new points of contact. Meanwhile, the Academy of American Poetry, the Poetry Society of America, and the 92nd St Y (three main connectors of poetry with money) are plugging along.

But there is the old idea that abstract expression tailed into fashionable design, and that any painting with words in it instantly falls to half the value it would have if it had not those words. And that words mean in a way that colors do not. So to mess around with words is to confuse. If you can do it in a fiercely adorable way, as Stein did, as say Salinger did, you can make that saleable connection. (Design for living?)

Forgot what I meant to say

Jordan

[↑ Contents](#)

57. **Mark Wallace**

identity problems in the wild blue

Wed 4 Oct 1995

I'm glad to see the subject of contemporary avant garde writing move out to embrace the intense multiplicity of poetic possibilities at the present moment--which is exactly, I would argue, one of the main "virtues" of avant garde writing of the moment. Far from closing down in the direction of one form, direction, what have you, my sense is that the avant garde is continuing to branch out in all sorts of interesting ways. I'm glad to see Gale, Sheila, Jeff, Ron, Al and others point this out in various ways.

However, while I agree also that too narrow a labelling of what a writer or a "group" of writers is doing can only end up causing damage, I'm also a little bit resistant to the implication "well, nothing can be said about my writing because I resist definition so completely that anything that can be said about what I do will inevitably be wrong." Let me make clear that no one said this exactly, but I do think that it was an assumption that might potentially arise out of some of the comments recently on this list. "Defining limits" or "labelling practices" is not the only kind of characterizing of poetic practice that is possible--characterization is, to my mind, at its best much more situational, specific, and tentative, but nonetheless valuable. There are some things specific writers are doing, and there are some things they're not doing, and some level of commentary about such things is possible. It's not correct, as for instance I think Foucault would point out, to say that poetry is absolutely resistant to other kinds of social power and social discourse, or that poets, by the multiplicity of their activities, can avoid specific activities with specific meanings. Saying that poetry has multiple meanings is not the same thing as saying poetry resists meaning, which in fact it does not--although it does resist certain notions about what meaning is.

I also think that sociological and cultural problems of any given historical moment have real effects on poetic practice. This I think is the significance of Rod Smith's comments of several days ago--that the tendency towards serial poems of a certain length (10-20 pgs?) might need to be seen in relation to the fact that for a lot of writers I know, chapbooks are possible but actual full-length bound books much less so. As Rod pointed out in his introduction to the recent Barrett Watten issue of *Aerial*, for Watten language poetry simply can't be understood without the context of the Vietnam war and an intense search on the part of Watten and others for a way to best respond to that particular crisis. Was that the only impetus for early Language poetry? Probably not, but it certainly has to be considered extremely important.

While resistance to easy characterizations or labelling, etc, is certainly necessary, I want to question whether or not the resistance to all characterization, even situational and specific, would really be a good tactic for poets who at this moment are trying to get first, or second books of poetry published, or who are even still struggling to get chapbooks in print. More importantly even, I want to question whether it's a good tactic for poets who care if they work gets READ. Language poetry was and is a complicated phenomena, but one of the things I value about many of the people whose names have been associated with its practice is that they were willing to discuss its cultural and political implications, and that they also saw the importance of group endeavor--that is, they saw the value of accepting tentative areas of similarity as a way of challenging currently dominant relations of

cultural and aesthetic and intellectual power. "Hey, don't label me" has a certain anarchistic visceral pleasure, but it's also true that the bravery to step forward and BE LABELLED or to label oneself (for instance "Yes, I AM homosexual," or "I AM a language poet") has also been a mode of some of the most productive political and cultural action in this country.

This is a question about "anxiety of identity"--and saying "I don't have one" reveals more about the identity of the anxious than they perhaps intend.

Please continue this debate not only on e-mail by sending responses to Jeff Hansen and Elizabeth Burns at Poetic Briefs.

mark wallace

[↑ Contents](#)

58. **Mark Wallace**

my apology

Wed 4 Oct 1995

My apology about "sorry for sending a private message to the list" was actually about a private message that I found out I didn't send to the list. So everything I've said recently on this list has definitely been intended to be public.

mark wallace

[↑ Contents](#)

59. **ULMER SPRING**

poetry and visual art

Wed 4 Oct 1995

Poets we must stop feeling sorry for ourselves. I do agree that poetry deserves a greater audience, yet when I look at what is happening in the visual arts world today, the majority of the work created is directly or indirectly about fame, money, immortality. Old world values. I am more interested in representing myself, that subscribing to a system that tells me what I am. Andra Rosen, a 31 year old 'hot' gallerist in Soho, claims that (money) is all 'her artists' want. Hello! one of the reasons why I have come to love and respect poetry and the 'poetry world' is because it lacks the elitism that floods the art world. I also argue that those who are really interested in the 'avant-guard,' are those poets, artists, musicians, etc whose interests/ practices don't end within their fields. My question: what audience does one want? It's not hard to get a show in Soho if you act right - poets too. Sean Landers wrote a (bad) novel on a legal pad and exhibited it at Andrea Rosen gallery. Someone brought up the question about artists who make installations, etc and their economic status. Andrea Rosen specializes in selling 'non-sellable' art

(forgive me for using her so often as an example, but she's in my head because I heard her speak last night) and she is doing quite well, despite the recession. Many collectors buy the art she sells, but do not end up possessing it. Felix Gonzales-Torres has made billboards and collector's paid to finance his public message. I mean only to point out that economics definitely defines who is popular. There are plenty of artists who do not wish to enter the corrupt museum/gallery system, or who do not sell their work, and are hence unknown. If one's aim is to have one's work available to a large audience/ popular culture, it seems as if hypermedia could be a start to another accessibility to creative work, without having to get that interview with/spread in such and such magazine... If one wants fame, then it seems as if another story. I struggle with hermetic and also collaborative practices, unable as yet to define my audience, other than those I know - joining this listserv is a step onto another 'coast.'

I think the visual arts has a lot to learn from poetry happenings today. In terms of community support and working together, the major poets I know/have come in contact with (Anne Waldman, Susan Howe, Leslie Scalapino, Sam Hamill, Allen Ginsberg to name a few) have been amazingly open, personal, and unpretentious which is more than I can say about those NY artists I know. I think though, that this subject of comparing the visual arts and poetry is too large and filled with too much speculation - Perhaps some people would like to address their own practices and how far reaching they are, or want them to be.

Spring Ulmer

[↑ Contents](#)

60. **B. Cassidy**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Wed 4 Oct 1995

In the article the author quotes one of the protesters who, addressing this very question said, "For the Whitney, the only good realist is a dead one."

--Brian

On Tue, 3 Oct 1995, Jordan Davis wrote:

Funny that they'd pick the Whitney, currently exhibiting Hopper and Stettheimer. Staying out of the current streams of thought can help you develop a strong sense of perversity.

*With love,
Jordan*

[↑ Contents](#)

61. **Mark Wallace**
even further wild blues

Wed 4 Oct 1995

I think my last comments need a short addendum. What Gale Nelson and many of the others I mention in my post are talking about is the possibility of multiple and situational identities as poets, and multiple and situational ways of reading poetry. I can't agree with them more. So my comments about the "identity of the anxious" is not directed at anyone who said anything on the poetics list but towards the potential and general danger of not discussing specific new directions in avant garde work. Recent posts have precisely discussed these new directions, which I think is great.

mark wallace

[↑ Contents](#)

62. **H. T. KIRBY-SMITH**
The Art and Poetry Worlds

Wed 4 Oct 1995

Eric Pape's convincing statement that art has been based upon what could be sold and poetry upon what could be taught, by New York dealers and by writing programs, respectively, set me to thinking about the nineteenth century.

I think maybe Baudelaire would have said the opposite of the France of his day, that art was what could be taught (in the sanctioned studios) while literature was driven by what could be sold. Most people for the last 75 years have assumed that the "salle de refuses" people, the Impressionists, the ones outside the "establishment," were in the end the only real artists, though since the Orsay opened more people are willing to look at salon paintings.

I do know that Baudelaire felt keenly the lack of any remunerative "market" for his poetry; I think his *Spleen de Paris* has a large element of contempt for his non-readers. Yet for all his smothered demonic romanticism here was an extraordinary formalist who often enough wrote about scenes and feelings that touch the lives of less-anguished souls. When he turned to prose poetry--as you can tell from the irony of his introduction--it was less as an experimentalist than as an outraged artist saying in effect, "Let them eat prose!"

Luckily for painters there are other places than Manhattan where one can live and work and have friends and even sell paintings. (Not speaking as a painter, but as someone some of whose friends think him foolish for buying a painting instead of a new refrigerator).

To end on an inflammatory note: hasn't Ashbery--one of the best art critics of our age, particularly in the public-education service he used to do in his

columns on art for Newsweek--hasn't Ashbery made use of dealer-like promotion for his poetry? I met James Dickey in 1958 or so when he was working for Coca-Cola and hadn't published a book; he was learning a lot from his advertising experience. Is publicity an essential part of American poetics? Is this a good thing?

Tom Kirby-Smith

[↑ Contents](#)

63. **B. Cassidy**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Wed 4 Oct 1995

Charles --

Thank you for your post calling me on some of my more imprecise statements. Allow me to clarify...

In some ways the figures you pick out, de Kooning, Johns, Pollock, Rauschenberg, do not question the tenets of artistic genius, nor does their work question the possibilities of coherence. You may disagree with this, but I think a composition by de Kooning, for example, is a work of elegant beauty which coheres quite well (and I love the work).

Absolutely (agree, that is). But just because these artists don't question these assumptions, so much as attempt to find new ways to "cohere", does this exclude them from the "experimental" or "avant-guard"? Couldn't the same be said for many of the poets we've been talking about here (that it's not a question of assumptions so much as new methods of being "whole")? And yet, again, as I said before these roughly equivalent (to the visual artists) poets are excluded to a far greater degree.

On the other hand, I don't think, for example, that the Fluxus artists have been embraced nearly so decisively, precisely because they question the importance of works of art. And while Dada artists are collected and shown, it seems to me that it is the objects they created that fill the halls of such as the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and that a major part of their work, or a major thrust of their work (that is, the creation of non-art, the destruction of high art) is either ignored, sidestepped, or co-opted.

This is true, but it seems to me that if you are a visual artist, you must still reckon with these figures. You certainly know and are aware of their work. This isn't necessarily the case in poetry, where the situation seems to be that either the "avant-guard" is dismissed out-of-hand, ignored, or, perhaps even worse, barely even known to exist. Are the Fluxus and the Dada artists often

misunderstood? Surely. But they are at least addressed by the "establishment." I'm not sure the same can be said for poetry.

The literary situation isn't that neat, either. I don't think Stein is just a footnote, although I think perhaps her elevation is just beginning. I don't know if you think of Joyce as avant-garde or not, but he has been consistently celebrated. More recently, John Ashbery has certainly been granted entry into the great canon . . . , perhaps for the wrong reasons (?).

I don't think that Stien is a footnote either. I do believe she is barely more than that for most of the "establishment", though. Consider: how often is GS taught for her own sake? Not as often it seems to me as she is dealt with as an "influence" on Hemingway, or as a "personality." Her work seems to take a back seat (WAY in the back) to the "IDEA" of GS and her work.

I hope your question opens up some discussion, and I just want to point out that I don't think it's quite as neat as "avant-garde is accepted in visual arts, not in literary arts." That doesn't mean there's not a basic imbalance in here somewhere.

True, true. Again, thanks for the clarifications. When one is typing largely off the top of one's head (as this medium is prone to have one doing), one's ideas and thought are usually not as sharp as they could/should be.

Best,
Brian Cassidy

[↑ Contents](#)

64. **Gale Nelson**

Re: identity problems in the wild blue

Wed 4 Oct 1995

Mark,

Tactics for getting published? Write poetry that moves an editor! I have done this rarely, but would far rather see years go by between titles than understand that a book (or chapbook, or magazine entry) was driven by something other than editorial engagement.

Through paradigm press, I've just brought out Gail Sher's Kuklos, a remarkable text. It took me a few years to pull the book together (I'm equally behind on chapbooks by Bill Fuller, Ray Jordan and David Miller); of the four authors listed, I know one of them personally. I did not take into account the tactics these authors might have used to convince me that their work was necessary to be published. I found myself excited by their work, and believed that the work needed to come to light. Now, of course, I'm feeling the sense of failure that comes with overcommitment, and anxiety for the authors who are still waiting...

If poetry is a commodity, and tactics are necessary, then I'd rather throw my lot with, well, with whom?

Gale Nelson

[↑ Contents](#)

65. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: Celan Salon

Wed 4 Oct 1995

Don't forget both Waldrops, Keith and Rosmarie! and Tom Mandel is an important reader of Celan, though I'd leave it to him to say whether or not there's any more direct stylistic influence -- in the sense, for example, that I read and think about and am influenced by Melvin Tolson, but don't take much that I can see from the surface style of his writing --

[↑ Contents](#)

66. **eric pape**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Wed 4 Oct 1995

Gwyn: Here's the problem as I see it: What means "worse?" The problem is that workshops have to supply value, and to do so, it has to use some sort of uniform criteria. Up to now, that criteria has been supplied nicely by residual new criticism, even as the rest of the world moves on. As some smart folks argued not that long ago when dealing with Mr. Corn, assigning value is a questionable enterprise. But is unavoidable in the classroom situation. How else do we grade our students? So let's say we change criteria. Say to more "language based" poetries. The problem remains. We haven't changed that at all. We are still stuck with evaluation, over and over, everyday. I applaud the efforts to change from within. It is after all what I find myself doing as well, though on a much much smaller scale. There are a great deal of good things about writing programs. Not least the inclusion of voices we would never hear otherwise. Writing programs have allowed more people to write than ever before, and I may be naive, but I think that is a good thing. I revel in the proliferation of styles. What I am interested in is a way to encourage, rather than discourage, that proliferation in the workshop, but I am not sure we can do that without fundamentally changing the structural limitations of the workshop (authority, administration, etc). But the fact that I am having this discussion at all with you is a very good sign. Thanks, Eric.

[↑ Contents](#)

67. **David Kellogg**

Re: my apology

Wed 4 Oct 1995

I want to apologize for not sending a public message to this list. I sent the message to one person by mistake. What was meant to be a public conversation has turned inexplicably, uncomfortably private. So remember: nothing that you read by me is meant for somebody.

Cheers,

David

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg

No ideas but in things.

University Writing Program

--W.C. Williams

Duke University

Durham, NC 27708

No ideas in things, either.

██████ --John Ashbery

[↑ Contents](#)

68. **Ryan Knighton**

Blair & Loss

Wed 4 Oct 1995

Sorry Poetics, but I can't find the two backchannel addresses.

Blair and Loss,

I received both your packages yesterday: they look wonderful. I will be going over submission with George Stanley in two weeks and will let you know where things are at.

All the best,

Ryan Knighton

[↑ Contents](#)

69. **Charles Alexander**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Wed 4 Oct 1995

Thanks for your clarifications, Brian. I'm interested in the notion that if you put words on a painting, the value goes down. As Charles Bernstein points out in an essay in the forthcoming collection TALKING THE BOUNDLESS BOOK, a piece of paper, blank, has a certain value, which is lessened (market-wise) when poetry is printed on it.

As for the role of money in the visual arts, not in literary, I have some trouble swallowing that. Money plays a role in both, but a quite different one. On the one hand, to a lot of people literature consists ONLY of what the NY Times Book Review writes about plus what appears as mass market at the supermarkets. Like it or not, there's a lot of money involved in that world. And in terms of non-market literature, money has a role to play in terms of what institutions/organizations/presses get what grants, as well as how private philanthropy works in this country. The playing fields of literature are in no way free of the influence of money.

But in terms of particular writers/artists and how they are accepted or not by the "establishment" (as you put it), I think you and I have more agreement than disagreement.

I don't think that Stein is a footnote either. I do believe she is barely more than that for most of the "establishment", though. Consider: how often is GS taught for her own sake? Not as often it seems to me as she is dealt with as an "influence" on Hemingway, or as a "personality." Her work seems to take a back seat (WAY in the back) to the "IDEA" of GS and her work.

I like to think this is changing, but perhaps not. I know lots of people have seen and celebrated a local production of the play GERTRUDE AND ALICE here during the last two years, and I have more than a suspicion that many of those have not read Stein, or, at most, have read only THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ALICE B. TOKLAS. My guess is that's also true of those who celebrated the movie some years ago now in which Linda Hunt played Alice B. Toklas. I liked the movie, too, but it's not nearly as nice as reading Stein.

all best,
charles

Charles Alexander
Chax Press
P.O. Box 19178
Minneapolis, MN 55419-0178
[REDACTED] (phone & fax)
[REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

70. **Dodie Bellamy**

Re: poetry and visual art

Wed 4 Oct 1995

I've been following the poetry and visual art discussion with much interest, since these past few years I've felt much more in tune with the visual art world than the poetry--or prose--worlds I come in contact with.

I was amused this morning when I read the following passage by Spring Ulmer: "one of the reasons why I have come to love and respect poetry and the 'poetry world' is because it lacks the elitism that floods the art world."

I feel like a shriveled up old skeptic beside Spring's hopeful vision, but I don't see how anybody could not call the contemporary poetry world, particularly the world represented by the members of this list, elitist. I don't say that as a criticism. In fact, the elitism of avant-garde poetry, in a way, works in its favor, not financially certainly, but in terms of its growth as art. Outsiders' fear of it keeps it pure. Since I write "experimental" prose, I envy this privileged position of poetry, in terms of the common person. Not being intimidated by prose, every dope in the world seems to think they have a right to comment on prose, making the most innane declarations, tossing off grating terms such as "plot development" and "character development" with abandoned zeal. A non-writer would have to be oafish on the level of Animal House, however, to say something equally idiotic to an avant-garde poet like, "Why doesn't it rhyme?"

All of the visual artists I know are doing cutting-edge work, and most of them are on the level in their careers where it's not an incredibly big deal for them to get written about in Art Forum, for instance. Hanging out with them is lots of fun because you get to go to fabulous parties and dinners at nice restaurants, paid for by their galleries. In the poetry world, in California at least, if you're lucky, you get to juggle for a glass of \$3.99-a-bottle Chilean merlot and a wedge of brie--and there's no point, ever, really, in dressing up.

Many of the artists I know are doing work that's involved with in-your-face sexuality, which is treated by (everyone but the NEA, of course) as interesting, but no big deal. That's what I'm really jealous about, artists' ability to do sexually explicit work and not somehow feel tainted or whispered about.

The conservatism in this country concerning literature is something that drives me up the wall. If there is a financial reason for the disparity between the more general acceptance of a visual avant-garde, I think it's because a piece of art is bought by one person in one large wad, while writing, for it to make any money, has to be bought by tons of people. Because of mass reproduction, the very physical form of writing is populist.

There's also something to do with most people not recognizing the materiality of words. With art, the viewer is always aware that it's made out of Something. But, with writing, I think that, other than the most sophisticated, people do not see that it's made out of words. It's about Feelings, Truth, Experience. I'm currently reading Viktor Shklovsky's Theory of Prose, which was written in 1925, and it seems to me, sadly enough, that the contents therein would still be news to most people, including most writers. I recently was a co-judge for the literary applicants to an artists' colony, and I was amazed how out of the 70 or so applications, hardly any of them, including the poets, showed any awareness that, bottom line, their material was language. The only "experimental" writer who submitted was Avery Burns, who I chose as one of my three choices. When the larger panel (who laughed at conservative visual art, and chose wild, interesting stuff), voted to reduce my choices from three to two, the panel's decision was reached quicker than OJ's jury, like instantly: no Avery. When I suggested that Avery's work would mesh well with the avant-garde composers and visual artists, the response was that they couldn't "relate" to his poetry. Like they could "relate" to music made from clanking steel objects.

Remember: wallowing in obscurity is good for the soul.

Dodie

[↑ Contents](#)

71. **tunguska**

Re: Duncan's derivation

Wed 4 Oct 1995

Yes, death as a presence in Opening of the Field. Also, what I was trying to get at, (and thanks Charles, for bringing Blood's Domaine in) is the medievalness of that book. In fact, am very interested to see what has been written, in total, on this in Duncan. Wanted to get at, what Silliman referred to as that "sense of Derivation a la Duncan" and what is a convergence here, is that medievalism, those "passages" in Duncan, at the very door, like they say, of death, representing a passage into afterlife, and also a passage into manhood. You hit the stanza right that I was thinking of in the enamored mage, but I'm also wantin to get into this mix here, with David Jones in mind, and that section again, lovely, that Graham gives of the stretcher-bearers in In Parenthesis-- wanted to get at this:

...as if a host of readers will join the beloved
ready to dance with me, it's for the
 unthinking
ready thing I'm writing these poems.

--from Opening of the Field by Robert Duncan.

tt

tod thilleman

[↑ Contents](#)

72. **tunguska**

Re: fragments, mourning/wild blue yonder still

Wed 4 Oct 1995

Graham, great, those stretcher-bearers. But do you mean, Jone's literally has the idea of construction, building, in mind, or is there some sense of re-animation, or, more precdisely perhaps, inter-animation, between two sides of something....

couple with, maybe you know, or someone has some insight into, what John Montague refers to as the four poets of the british renaissance. I believe it was MacDiarmid, Graves, Yeats, and Jones. In other words, is there some old tradition revived in Jones. I'm still trying to relate this to derivation, a la Duncan (where one can view the Structure of Rime series as a continual reification, from doubt, to surety, so to speak, in the heart of the poet, among other reifications, that show forth that "structure") I mean to find, of course, like the rest here, some ground to work from, so that we are not flying off about young versus old, bad versus good, or, more to the point, abstract versus non-abstract, solid (believable?) poetry.

thilleman

: was it the death of Davie, that brought Jones in, or was it from something else?

tod thilleman

[↑ Contents](#)

73. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: Influence query

Wed 4 Oct 1995

Kathryne Lindberg,

I threw out my darn ballot already!

How quickly the culture absorbs its own experimenters and otherwise outsiders.

Anyway, it's comforting to learn of your doings in the MLA.

Burt Kimmelman

[↑ Contents](#)

74. **Bill Luoma**
Re: wild blue yonder
Wed 4 Oct 1995

Ron,

You wrote: "Similarly, all sound poetry 'says the same thing' and it says it over and over."

che cosa?

[↑ Contents](#)

75. **Steve McCaffery**
Change of Address
Wed 4 Oct 1995

People interested might want to take note of the new address of
STEVE McCAFFERY & KAREN MacCORMACK:
1086 Bathurst St 2nd floor
TORONTO ON M5R 3G9
CANADA
Phone [REDACTED].

An announcement on Mac Cormack's new book "Marine Snow" & of its Toronto
& Buffalo launches to follow shortly

[↑ Contents](#)

76. **SUSAN E. TICHY**
Re: 1 PM EDT
Wed 4 Oct 1995

For 24 hours I too thought the jury couldn't be blamed that they got a fucked up case to hear, with reasonable doubt personified. But today one of the jurors said she believed OJ to be innocent because he had no motive. She couldn't see any domestic violence in this case; it was a murder.

Susan

[↑ Contents](#)

77. **Tom Beard**
Re: identity problems in the wild blue
Wed 4 Oct 1995

Mark Wallace wrote -

As Rod pointed out in his introduction to the recent Barrett Watten issue of Aerial, for Watten language poetry simply can't be understood without the context of the Vietnam war and an intense search on the part of Watten and others for a way to best respond to that particular crisis. Was that the only impetus for early Language poetry? Probably not, but it certainly has to be considered extremely important.

This interested me, since most of the critical/theoretical writing in *In the American Tree* has an emphasis on politics that to me seems very much a product of the sixties. Is it possible that those of us who did most of our growing up *after* the Vietnam war, and whose *parents* were of the protest generation, might subscribe to a different poetics? Some of the poetic/political goals of langpo and post-structuralist theory (e.g. breaking down the assumption of a single, given meaning for a text) have almost become second nature for more recent generations, who have a much-vaunted mistrust of *any* imposed narratives.

Are we more likely to have an apolitical outlook (which is itself a political stance), or ecological concerns, or gender/sexuality/race concerns for those who feel disadvantaged by these factors? Or are we more likely to be interested in information technology and the mass media? One movement that sees itself as replacing the domesticated postmodernism of a past generation is 'Avant-Pop' literature, with the likes of Mark Leyner, Kathy Acker, William Gibson, Eurudice and Douglas Coupland realizing that disrupted narratives, a multiplicity of voices and ironic plagiarism are no longer cutting edge (they're a Levi's commercial) and that Bob Dylan lyrics no longer count as pop- culture references. Most of these writers use prose as a medium: who would you count as an Avant-Pop poet?

The generational change has probably been exacerbated in NZ by the rapid change in the latter half of the 80s from a stiflingly over-protected Albanian style of economy to what some see as an overly laissez-faire regime. Global popular culture has exploded into this country in the last 5-10 years, and the literary establishment has *no* idea how to handle it. The Left is now conservative, trying to regain a welfare state that now glows with nostalgia. This rightwards movement economically, simultaneous with a belated diversification of cultures, is the extent of the political concerns in my writing. Has anyone else felt the need to react against the assumption that a writer *must* take certain political stands?

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

[↑ Contents](#)

78. **Tony Green**

Re: fragments, mourning/wild blue yonder still

Thu 5 Oct 1995

what brought David Jones In ... was Joris Rothenberg anthology naming him
but against a Faber & Faber induced blank ... admirations expressed

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

79. **Thomas Bell**

Re: Identity problems in the wild blue

Thu 5 Oct 1995

On October 4 Tom Beard said:

>Has anyone else felt the need to react against the
>assumption that a writer _must_ take certain
>political stands?

I think that this is part of the difficulty but in a different
way than your post reads. A poet would do better to write
through concrete reality. My reading of "bland" which
started this discussion is that the blandness relates to
a distancing from the concrete into the abstract and formal.

From my point of view(and I am open to correction on this)
both "the wild blue yonder and new formalist schools are
a move away from a harsh concrete reality we live with. One
the aims of the avant-garde was to direct attention to
a reality that was not as pleasant and bland as it was
presented.

I also think that if you think the sixties and Vietnam
protest were about politics, you have subscribed to
an inadequate presentation. The sixties protests were
anti political and _radically_ opposed to the left as
well as the right.

Bada Shanren
Tom Bell

[↑ Contents](#)

80. **Wystan Curnow**
Re: poetry and visual art
Thu 5 Oct 1995

Dodie, I was amused, too. Bemused. Actually I know plenty of NY artists who are 'amazingly open, personal, and unpretentious' but I also like my artists reserved, cool, and up with the play, here in Auckland but, you know, especially in New York. The city, seems to me, is more than it's moneyed dealer/museum structure--calling it corrupt is a symptom of poet's self-pity more than a cure for it--and US campuses are almost by definition islands of teaching/learning devoid of culture, in the sense of the culture sustained by major urban centres. University professors can be open, personal and unpretentious, but do they dress well? What are their tastes in art, music and poetry? So, one of the great advantages enjoyed by visual artists has been the cultural life of New York. I don't know that the workshop culture on campuses is a key, because in New Zealand the difference between the mainstreams of the two arts is much the same and there are hardly any courses in creative writing here.

Jordan Davis said the view that any painting with words in it instantly fell to half the value it would have had had it not those words still had substance. For much of the 80s it was arguably the other way around. And certainly, the likes of Lawrence Weiner, Joseph Kosuth, make a decent living installing words on gallery walls and even selling them to collectors and museums for good prices.

There seems little doubt that the prestige of literature (and of poetry especially) has fallen over the century, and that of the visual arts has risen. The process has accelerated over the second half. This has something to do with the rise of visual media generally. there is probably a connection, then, between the greater prestige of the visual arts and the more avant-garde character of its mainstream.

I was interested in George Bowering's comment that in Canada the poetics of avant-garde were the mainstream. Even if he is exaggerating, and given that it's not the case in New Zealand, I nevertheless suspect that internationally it is the US avant-garde tradition that is the more widely known and followed. Am I wrong? How this has a bearing on the art/poetry relation is that in the visual arts the mainstream is--and over the last 15 years as New York's dominance has declined--an international construction.

wystan

[↑ Contents](#)

81. **Wendy Battin**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Brian Cassidy wrote:

>Is this discrepancy simply because of the differences in
>structure/hierarchy/economics between the two "worlds"? Or, perhaps more
>interestingly, might it have something to do with the nature of the two
>mediums? Another option?

Money & "objectness," certainly. Also perhaps the fact that the currency of language keeps being devalued; more people know they're being lied to most of the time, but increase of cynicism doesn't necessarily make for an increase in attention to the saying. Quite the contrary, usually. It drives many who care about words at all back to what they already know & trust, and those who care less simply stop listening.

Wendy

[↑ Contents](#)

82. **Rod Smith**

Re: identity problems in the whyld blue

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Mark mentioned my talk abt Vietnam in the Aerial 8 intro & there have been a few posts about politics as they might now exist for the poet. We're confronted now with a much worse situation politically even than the 60s I think. Simply because people know that what they think doesn't matter. Party politics in the U.S. still has some significance, I don't want to overstate this, but increasingly real political power is in the hands of corporations which run national governments & economies. A two-tiered global economy of haves & have-nots is in place & rapidly developing. This is not ok. The first step in trying to change this is for enough people to understand what is going on & trust that they are not alone in their understanding. --Rod

[↑ Contents](#)

83. **Tom Beard**

whyld blue (TM)

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Rod wrote:

We're confronted now with a much worse situation politically even than the 60s I think.

increasingly real political power is in the hands of corporations which run national governments & economies. A two-tiered global economy of haves & have-nots is in place & rapidly developing.

So why is there not the atmosphere of political activism that we associate with the 60s? Has the new generation of educated youth divided up into those content with a McJob & dreaming of a bit part in a Richard Linklater film, and those intent on working their way up in those corporations that now run the world? Is the role of social activist now left to those few remaining survivors of the 60s who haven't found a job in the marketing department of Coca-Cola?

Okay, I'm being overly simplistic and cynical. But picture this: a young poet, perhaps experimenting with linguistic forms, perhaps carving out delicate lyrics, while working 8 til 7 as a financial analyst for MegaBank (TM) Corporation. She or he may be oblivious to the plight of the have-nots, or may actively support a free-market economy. Are we to demand that this poet "get with the programme" and start deconstructing the dominant ethos of late Capitalism? Or do we dismiss the gedankenexperiment as unrealistic, saying "no-one who works for the corporate exploiters could possibly be an interesting poet" (shades of Helen Vendler's "you have to be a fascist to like the Cantos")? Or perhaps we claim that this poet's work, if it is linguistically innovative, must be unconsciously working against his or her own political assumptions.

This is not ok. The first step in trying to change this is for enough people to understand what is going on & trust that they are not alone in their understanding.

I don't want to sound snide, but I don't see how poetry in print runs of a few hundred are going to help the oppressed masses, especially when the readers are likely to already be converts to the writer's cause. It could be argued that experimenting with typographical marks on a piece of paper is a game for the idle bourgeois, especially when you consider the level of education required to read the critical writings of language poets. But hey, I've got no problems with games for the idle bourgeois, whether they be interior design, wine collecting or writing poetry.

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

[↑ Contents](#)

84. **Schuchat**

Re: Celan Salon

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Why is it that German literature, especially poetry, is less important ("influential") in American literature than, e.g., French?

[↑ Contents](#)

85. **R I Caddel**

Poets n visuals

Thu 5 Oct 1995

A cheer for Spring reminding the poets not to be sorry for themselves, albeit they don't get to glitzy parties. One certainly defines ones audience as one goes along over here, usually ending up on first name terms with them - if that's a problem, a more appropriate artform would seem to be advertising. Or, if it's the dressing up you like, why not try for high court judge?

The alternative, as exhibited in UK poetry by the hyped (and then remaindered) New Generation Poets (or rather, by their promoters) is unthinkable: soundbite poetics at best. Verily, they have their reward...

Actually, I like Merlot n Brie, if the latter be unsanitised and ripe.

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

[↑ Contents](#)

86. **George Bowering**

Re: fragments, mourning & derivation

Thu 5 Oct 1995

I got a little worried when Tod T. quoted Duncan as saying he made poetry utilize my faculties at large." That is not the way I have always quoted him, and I could not believe that Duncan would use that horrid verb. So I had to go and haul it out, the book; and much to my relief see that Duncan did say "exercise", not [shudder] "utiliza." [I mean not "utilize"]

[↑ Contents](#)

87. **CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Thu 5 Oct 1995

On Wed, 4 Oct 1995, eric pape wrote:

Gwyn: Here's the problem as I see it: What means "worse?" THE problem is that workshops have to supply value, and to do so, it has to use some sort of uniform criteria. Up to now, that criteria has been supplied nicely by residual new criticism, even as the rest of the world moves on. As some smart folks argued not that long ago when dealing with Mr. Corn, assigning value is a questionable enterprise. But is unavoidable in the classroom situation. How else do we grade our students?

Eric: I missed the Corn discussion but would assume that this list dispatched his arguments with some ease. While mindful of academy's function as a reproductive site of the culture/superstructure of late/hyper/global/multinational capitalism, is it not possible for the "classroomed" poets to reject the (New Criticism) critique-based "workshop," and restore to that term its generative implications? Why should "workshop" (a post-war construct) consist in the dubious collective "repair" of unchallenging literary "products"?

So let's say we change criteria. Say to more "language based" poetries. The problem remains. We haven't changed that at all. We are still stuck with evaluation, over and over, everyday.

Why is this so? Innovate poetries are only "difficult" to "discuss" in the so-called "traditional" (again, 50 yr. old) workshop because those poetries resist submission to a limited set of critical assumptions--upon -closer- readings in the same space, however, they provoke the same rigorous and provocative discussion in the classroom as in the cafe, on this list, or anywhere else. Once the arrogant and presumptive project of "repair" has been suspended, the poet is free to present his/her poetics and engage readers in open exploration of possibilities. As for the ritual of grades, any active participant receives an "A," as is true, in my observation, of most graduate seminars in the academy.

I applaud the efforts to change from within. It is after all what I find myself doing as well, though on a much much smaller scale. There are a great deal of good things about writing programs. Not least the inclusion of voices we would never hear otherwise. Writing programs have allowed more people to write than ever before, and I may be naive, but I think that is a good thing. I revel in the proliferation of styles. What I am interested in is a way to encourage, rather than discourage, that proliferation in the workshop, but I am not sure we can do that without fundamentally changing the structural limitations of the workshop (authority, administration, etc).

The workshop's "structural limitations" are precisely what must be changed.

--Carolyn

[↑ Contents](#)

88. **Jonathan A Levin**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds/Stein

Thu 5 Oct 1995

List buds--

There seems to be a lot of skepticism out there that anyone is reading/"getting" Stein these days. If anything is working in the world of academic criticism/teaching, it is getting writers like Stein back into circulation, and in meaningful ways. Sure, most people who go see a Broadway play about Stein don't know the first thing about her (and they don't know the first thing about Vietnam when they see Miss Saigon, I'm sure). Broadway's not the point. I don't know anyone who teaches Stein's "personality" or her influence on Hemingway. Frankly, I don't see how I could have made my way through graduate school with that kind of approach. Anyway, I've taken a stab at Stein and canonization, arguing (obviously?) that personality was an anxious defense against a modernist practice that undermined assumptions about history and form that slowly became classic between the 20s and WWII. It's in a book called *Rereading the New: A Backward Glance at Modernism*, edited by Kevin Dettmar (Michigan, 1992). It was miserably promoted by Michigan (my alma mater, alas), to the point even of indicating in advertising copy that it was a collection of essays by Kevin Dettmar! Lots of good stuff in it, in any event, on modernism and canonization, as well as on the "postmodernism" in modernism. (If I had time, I'd try to be more clever in saying that last bit. Oh well.) On with Stein! If you haven't yet had the pleasure of Ulla Dydo's *A Stein Reader* (Northwestern, 1993), have it soon. I'm switching! Others?

Jonathan Levin

NYC

[↑ Contents](#)

89. **SUSAN E. TICHY**

Re: whyld blue (TM)

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Hey, folks, we all know how to be cynical. It's a requirement for the job. But I keep wondering why people who are teaching at universities are on line asking each other questions about young people and young poets. Don't you know

any? I compare the generalizations made here to the poets I work with every week. I compare them to poets I meet in my community in real life, elsewhere, and I don't see these cardboard monsters anywhere. Whether they are saving the world is a pretty old horse to beat on. But I know more poets than I can count on my hands who have saved THEMSELVES by writing, and some of them come from families where they are the first to attend college, or the first to leave their home town or neighborhood. I know a rural Latino family in which the only two males left alive, not dead by homicide, suicide, or auto wreck, are artists. Romantic? Explain that to them. What makes me chuckle is that if we all believed in the terrible futility of what we do, we'd be doing something else. It's our privilege to despair.

Going off the list for ten days. I'll see the new news when I get back. Susan

[↑ Contents](#)

90. **SUSAN E. TICHY**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Bravo, Carolyn. The only barrier to changing the workshop is that we have internalized it. Susan

On Thu, 5 Oct 1995, CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON wrote:

On Wed, 4 Oct 1995, eric pape wrote:

Gwyn: Here's the problem as I see it: What means "worse?" THE problem is that workshops have to supply value, and to do so, it has to use some sort of uniform criteria. Up to now, that criteria has been supplied nicely by residual new criticism, even as the rest of the world moves on. As some smart folks argued not that long ago when dealing with Mr. Corn, assigning value is a questionable enterprise. But is unavoidable in the classroom situation. How else do we grade our students?

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I applaud the efforts to change from within. It is after all what I find myself doing as well, though on a much much smaller scale. There are a great deal of good things about writing programs. Not least the inclusion of voices we would never hear otherwise. Writing programs have allowed more people to write than ever before, and I may be naive, but I think that is a good thing. I revel in the proliferation of styles. What I am interested in is a way to encourage, rather than discourage, that proliferation in the workshop, but I am not sure we can do that without fundamentally changing the structural limitations of the workshop (authority, administration, etc).

The workshop's "structural limitations" are precisely what must be changed.

--Carolyn

[↑ Contents](#)

91. **Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco**

Re: Celan Salon

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Why is it that German literature, especially poetry, is less important ("influential") in American literature than, e.g., French?

This probably isn't the answer you're looking for but your question reminded me immediately of a poem by Charles Reznikoff:

Reading some of the German poets of the last century;
sad, yes, but sweet and gentle.
Just then a knock on the door
and I opened it: Hitler!

That's as best I can do without the poem before me. It's somewhat of an answer, no?



[↑ Contents](#)

92. **CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON**

Re: Influence query

Thu 5 Oct 1995

I would like to thank this list for assisting me in suggesting poets, in addition to Michael Palmer and Andre du Bouchet, who might have been influenced by Celan. Among others, you suggested Pierre Joris, Keith and Rosmarie Waldrop, Tom Mandel, David Fox, Ben Friendlander, Susan Howe, Norma Cole, and Jerry Estrin.

David Fox wrote:

I've read his work & have been influenced, but I'm rather inarticulate about influences: I don't understand how they (influences) show up. What do you want to explain? To grad-students, I mean.

In order to "justify" hosting seminars on such poets as Celan and Jabes, as I am doing this semester, I must include the ways in which these poets have influenced American poetry, and hence my request for the assistance of this list. The question of influence is, perhaps, best articulated by those who lay claim to it. My pedagogical practice tends to resist the explanatory mode. In this particular instance, I was provided with an opportunity to introduce the work of US poets not otherwise extensively read in the academy.

So to the list, my gratitude.

--Carolyn

[↑ Contents](#)

93. **Willa Jarnagin**

Re: poetry and visual art

Thu 5 Oct 1995

On Thu, 5 Oct 1995, R I Caddel wrote:

*A cheer for Spring reminding the poets not to be sorry for themselves,
albeit they don't get to glitzy parties.*

Hey, that's New York. In Boston, where several years ago I went to Mass. College of Art and got a BFA in Painting, I've been to many more "glitzy" parties revolving around poetry than visual art. (Which is to say I've only been to one really glitzy party, where I met John Ashbury and he told me about his medical condition that has the likely name of "Wandering Legs.") In Boston the galleries SUCK, art school is comparable to trade school in most people's eyes (that is, if you're actually getting your hands dirty; if you're an art HISTORIAN

you can get a job in a museum). Maybe it's because this is a university town and universities value writing more than visual art (or why would they have so many writing programs and so few studio arts classes? Visual art is relegated to tiny underfunded colleges like Mass. Art) that poetry is so much more 'visible' than visual art. As for the art world valuing the avant garde more so than does the literature world.....huh? Who is this art world? If museum curators buy more abstract paintings and exhibit more installations, it's usually because they have no idea what they're looking at, because they're all ART HISTORIANS! They still buy crap while the good stuff is exhibited only in artists' studios, such as the Vernon Street studios in Somerville which is probably going to close soon because the building is being sold. (A friend of mine has a studio there and breathes fumes all day from the sneaker foam being manufactured downstairs. This is not a Funded operation here....)

I suppose the bottom line is: there is ALWAYS going to be a division between the artist and the buyer/supporter of the art, be it visual, verbal, olfactory, whatever.

Well, actually most of the work exhibited at Vernon Street was crap too. But their party was pizza and bowls of pretzels. No wandering legs.

Willa

[↑ Contents](#)

94. **Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco**
whyld political blue

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Rod wrote:

*We're confronted now with a much worse situation politically even than the 60s I think.
increasingly real political power is in the hands of corporations
which run national governments & economies. A two-tiered global economy of
haves & have-nots is in place & rapidly developing.*

And Tom wrote back:

So why is there not the atmosphere of political activism that we associate with the 60s? Has the new generation of educated youth divided up into those content with a McJob & dreaming of a bit part in a Richard Linklater film, and those intent on working their way up in those corporations that now run the world?

And then he kept writing:

I don't want to sound snide, but I don't see how poetry in print runs of a few hundred are going to help the oppressed masses, especially when the readers are likely to already be converts to the writer's cause. It could be argued that experimenting with typographical marks on a piece of paper is a game for the

idle bourgeois, especially when you consider the level of education required to read the critical writings of language poets. But hey, I've got no problems with games for the idle bourgeois, whether they be interior design, wine collecting or writing poetry.

For anyone unfamiliar with the magazine, this month's issue of Z Magazine has an invigorating discussion between Michael Albert and Noam Chomsky in which Chomsky talks about the radical changes in American society over the past 30 years. This is important reading for anyone (like me) who was born in the 60s and takes those changes for granted- social relationships for example, or notions of duty in regard to the government and military. Z is also a great resource to see (& become involved in) the vast amount of political activism going on in this country on a daily basis. Rod's right about "a much worse situation politically" and the activism that is attempting to counter that situation goes unreported (save marches on Washington) because the very problem, or part of the problem, controls the outlets of mass information. It's no wonder people feel isolated about concerns for society. According to the mainstream press, we're all interested celebrities and athletes and their glamorous lifestyles or aberrant behavior. According to the Other press, there are some wonderful things being attempted in the face of great odds.

As it becomes more and more difficult for college-educated poets to reject a well-paying job with a corporation on the basis of ideals, so too will the concerns of those poets be able to remain socially oriented (if they were in the first place) in terms of progressive change. This is one of the major challenges facing young poets today.



[↑ Contents](#)

95. **Willa Jarnagin**
Re: whyld blue (TM)

Thu 5 Oct 1995

On Thu, 5 Oct 1995, SUSAN E. TICHY wrote:

... I know more poets than I can count on my hands who have saved THEMSELVES by writing, and some of them come from families where they are the first to attend college, or the first to leave their home town or neighborhood. I know a rural Latino family in which the only two males left alive, not dead by homicide, suicide, or auto wreck, are artists. Romantic? Explain that to them. What makes me chuckle is that if we all believed in the terrible futility of what we do, we'd be doing something else. It's our privilege to despair.

YES, YES, YES!

Willa

[↑ Contents](#)

96. **Willa Jarnagin**

Re: Celan Salon

Thu 5 Oct 1995

On Thu, 5 Oct 1995, Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco wrote:

Why is it that German literature, especially poetry, is less important ("influential") in American literature than, e.g., French?

This probably isn't the answer you're looking for but your question reminded me immediately of a poem by Charles Reznikoff:

*Reading some of the German poets of the last century;
sad, yes, but sweet and gentle.
Just then a knock on the door
and I opened it: Hitler!*

That's as best I can do without the poem before me. It's somewhat of an answer, no?

Funny reply, but I don't think it's an answer, because if it is, what country is so sweet and innocent? America should be more influenced by the French than the Germans because the French are nicer? Even if France has a less hideous history than Germany, why would America, home of the slaughter of American Indians, lynchings of black people, encampment of Japanese Americans, radiation experiments on unwitting pregnant women, snuffing of AIDS information, etc. etc, give a shit? Anyway, what of German poetry by Jews?

Willa

[↑ Contents](#)

97. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: oj can you see

Thu 5 Oct 1995

I was a bit confused about that defense, but now that O.J. has testified on the Larry King show, I think I'm beginning to understand the defense timeline. Simpson was chipping golf balls on his lawn when he got an urge to call Paula. He sliced his finger getting his phone out of the Bronco, so he went into the shower to clean his finger. After that big burger from Mac's, he was a bit tired, so he fell asleep in the shower. Still asleep, he dressed in dark clothing, packed his bags and put them by the driveway. Back in his room, the sound of the phone ringing awoke him. Answering the call, he told Alan Park that he had

overslept, neglecting to mention that he was asleep in the shower. He quickly changed into more appropriate clothing for his trip. On the way to the airport his finger healed, so nobody saw any cut on his hand on the flight to Chicago. In Chicago he cut the back of his finger in the same place he had previously cut it, on a drinking glass.

sounds airtight to me --

_____ This wouldn't bother me so much if I believed for a minute that either the LAPD or the Prosecutors' office would in fact learn something from the episode (such as, don't put officers on the stand who have been branded as liars by their own department). But what the nation seems bent upon learning from this instead is that we should change the rules of evidence, alter the jury system, and stop rich people from spending their own money on their defense. When Willie Williams and Daryl Gates both announce on the same day that the LAPD doesn't need to be changed, we're in deep trouble indeed.

What a country!

Amiri Baraka had to spend ninety days in jail for resisting arrest. He should have gone into football instead of poetry.

[↑ Contents](#)

98. **CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON**

Re: Influence query (fwd)

Thu 5 Oct 1995

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: Thu, 5 Oct 1995 10:00:49 -0400 (EDT)

From: CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON <[REDACTED]>

I would like to thank this list for assisting me in suggesting poets, in addition to Michael Palmer and Andre du Bouchet, who might have been influenced by Celan. Among others, you suggested Pierre Joris, Keith and Rosmarie Waldrop, Tom Mandel, David Fox, Ben Friendlander, Susan Howe, Norma Cole, and Jerry Estrin.

David Fox wrote:

I've read his work & have been influenced, but I'm rather inarticulate about influences: I don't understand how they (influences) show up. What do you want to explain? To grad-students, I mean.

In order to "justify" hosting seminars on such poets as Celan and Jabes, as I am doing this semester, I must include the ways in which these poets have influenced American poetry, and hence my request for the assistance of this list. The question of influence is, perhaps, best articulated by those who lay

claim to it. My pedagogical practice tends to resist the explanatory mode. In this particular instance, I was provided with an opportunity to introduce the work of US poets not otherwise extensively read in the academy.

So to the list, my gratitude.

--Carolyn

[↑ Contents](#)

99. **Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco**

Re: Celan Salon

Thu 5 Oct 1995

> >>Why is it that German literature, especially poetry, is less important
> >>("influential") in American literature than, e.g., French?
>
>
> This probably isn't the answer you're looking for but your question reminded
me
> immediately of a poem by Charles Reznikoff:
>
> Reading some of the German poets of the last century;
> sad, yes, but sweet and gentle.
> Just then a knock on the door
> and I opened it: Hitler!
>

Willa responded:

Funny reply, but I don't think it's an answer, because if it is, what country is so sweet and innocent? America should be more influenced by the French than the Germans because the French are nicer? Even if France has a less hideous history than Germany, why would America, home of the slaughter of American Indians, lynchings of black people, encampment of Japanese Americans, radiation experiments on unwitting pregnant women, snuffing of AIDS information, etc. etc, give a shit? Anyway, what of German poetry by Jews?

Willa, My point was, indirectly, that American poetry is less influenced by German poetry than French, not because one population is "nicer" than another but because German poetry of the 19th century was less concerned with doing new things in poetry and on the page than it was with making a point: Germans and German culture are superior and pure. Such nationalistic art- taught in schools and widely admired- led, as Reznikoff implies, to Hitler.

But in today's political climate, I shouldn't be suprised to see such ugly tendencies in poetry enjoying a resurgence.

daniel-bouchard @ hmco.com

[↑ Contents](#)

100. **Jordan Davis**

Stein the Art and Poetry Worlds

Thu 5 Oct 1995

New from Dalkey Archive: The Making of Americans by Gertrude Stein.
\$16.95. Almost as long as War and Peace.

Just thought I should mention it,
Jordan

[↑ Contents](#)

101. **Herb Levy**

Re: identity problems in the wild blue

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Tom Beard writes:

One movement that sees itself as replacing the domesticated postmodernism of a past generation is 'Avant-Pop' literature, with the likes of Mark Leyner, Kathy Acker, William Gibson, Eurudice and Douglas Coupland realizing that disrupted narratives, a multiplicity of voices and ironic plagiarism are no longer cutting edge (they're a Levi's commercial) and that Bob Dylan lyrics no longer count as pop-culture references. Most of these writers use prose as a medium: who would you count as an Avant-Pop poet?

Leyner, Acker, & Gibson are, chronologically at least, in the same generation as the "past" generation you say they're reacting to (I don't know about Eurydice, Coupland's younger), so the genealogy isn't that simple.

And, in the case of Acker,

| disrupted narratives, a multiplicity of voices and ironic plagiarism

is just as good a description of her current work as it is for her earlier writing. I think a case could be made for reading Leyner's current work in the same light, though he has a smoother narrative surface than Acker.

As to who might be an "Avant-Pop" poet, how about Gregory Corso?

Herb Levy



[↑ Contents](#)

102. **Herb Levy**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Thu 5 Oct 1995

There's one important economic difference between the visual art world and the poetry world that I haven't seen mentioned in this discussion.

Because visual artists make and sell unique objects, there are numerous visual artists who make comfortable livings from their work despite the fact that they do not exhibited at the Whitney or get written about in the national art magazines.

This is just as true outside of New York. In most U S cities of more than 500,000 people, there are visual artists who don't have to teach or work at day jobs. And the work that these artists create and sell often has nothing to do with what is shown or written about in the major institutions.

There are very few poets (regardless of style) who can survive, let alone thrive, on their work alone. Very few writers of any kind, really. And I can't think of any way that a writer can make a living from their creative work on a local or regional level. Some kind of national recognition or presence is necessary even for many teaching positions, etc.

Writing is not unique in this way. There are also very few opportunities for generative artists in the performing arts (composers, choreographers, etc.) to succeed without national recognition. This is not as true for performing artists who recreate the work of others (musicians, dancers, etc.).

On another note, in response to Juliana Spahr's comments about artists from other fields who only read narrative work. There are also folks who make "experimental" writing whose taste in music or visual arts is nowhere near as adventurous as their own work.

Herb Levy



[↑ Contents](#)

103. **Jordan Davis**

Re: poetry and visual art

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Re price and words: Um, the medium I was thinking of was painting. It's true, Nauman's One Hundred Live or Die sold for a LOT at auction, but only after Gogo drove up the price, no? And it's true, Ed Ruscha sells paintings along the lines of "What do you guys want, Pontiac Catalinas" regularly. But I don't believe Kossuth sells, and I don't think Weiner sells for that much. Prints with words

probably run about the same as prints without words. But I don't think, say, Sarah Rapson's painting "Linda Evangelista" would have sold for less if it were an appropriation of an image of the model we love to hate instead of a scrawling of her name in white on a black background (repeated and getting smaller). Jordan

[↑ Contents](#)

104. **Dodie Bellamy**

Re: Poets n visuals

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Dear Richard,

I suggest you watch some old Mae West movies to get a grasp of American camp humor. In talking about the parties I was making a JOKE. In actuality, several poets in San Francisco have thrown parties with really good spreads--but they paid for it themselves. I work for a nonprofit literary organization, and funding for emerging writing in the States is dire.

I was intrigued by what you had to say about knowing your audience on a first name basis. Even though that comes out of a devaluing of poetry, it is an incredibly privileged position. The text remains yours, even though others have access to it. Your audience tends to be incredibly sophisticated and interactive. It's a comfy, sweet world. Sometimes I will come across someone who has read my writing, whom I don't know, and when this happens I always feel a tiny bit raped. I know it's a silly feeling, but it's there: some stranger has had access to me.

There is a yuppie bookstore not far from my apartment called A Clean Well Lighted Place for Books. Occasionally, for a hoot, Kevin Killian and I will go to readings there. We always go see the most trashy, glitzy people, such as Donald Spoto, biographer of the stars--or Linda Gray Sexton talking about mommy's insanity. Hardly ever will I see a writer in the audience, which is, obviously, the opposite case for most poetry readings, where a non-writer is usually assumed to be a relative of one of the readers. I'm amazed by the middle brow pretensions of these Clean Well Lighted Place readings, the fetishization of books and authors, the pervasive sense of elitism--like the people there really think they're a class above the rest of humanity for reading a biography of Lawrence Oliver, or "Larry," as Donald Spoto affectionately called him in his presentation. On one level, I find this all humorous, but on another level, there is an edge of panic, like I never want my books to be carried at That Store or for Those People to touch them. I get monstrous flashes of The Picture of Dorian Gray, like something's bound to disintegrate, grow corrupt.

Despite all its pitfalls and its disregard by the rest of the world, the experimental writing world is cozy.

Dodie Bellamy

[↑ Contents](#)

105. **Dodie Bellamy**

Re: identity problems in the wild blue

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Herb Levy wrote:

"And, in the case of Acker,

| *disrupted narratives, a multiplicity of voices and ironic plagiarism*

is just as good a description of her current work as it is for her earlier writing."

Herb,

I was thinking the same thing about Ms. Acker. Thanks for verbalizing.

Dodie

[↑ Contents](#)

106. **Gale Nelson**

Re: Celan Salon

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Might French poetry have a greater influence because more people learn French in school, and then go on to translate work into English?

Gale Nelson

[↑ Contents](#)

107. **ULMER SPRING**

wild blue and art/writing

Thu 5 Oct 1995

As a kid of folks who worked in the SCLC during the Civil Rights movement, and who left when whites were asked to leave the movement during the middle sixties when the Black National movement and the anti-war movement took over SNCC, I am currently interviewing my father (my mother says she doesn't want to talk about it, and says that my father was much more involved than she) and writing (mostly not in sentences, but language poetry was a 'freedom' I found and lost long before I began thinking about it's origins) about this time of his life. I got interested in really asking my parents questions because of my involvement with current feminist critique that grew directly out of the

Abolition in the 1830-40's and the civil rights movement of the 1960's. My father's inability to treat sexism with the same concern that he treats racism, and my mother's silence, affected the way I was raised. My politics have not only grown from where my parents left off (I do not mean to demean the fact that they both have continued to lead political lives, building their own house, growing their own food, working for themselves, trying not to pay taxes, etc.), but also from my own experience as a woman in this world. Writing from concerns, be they concerns about writing, race, sex, etc... has raised my consciousness and appreciation of certain histories. I think we must first take the responsibilities ourselves to write about what we care about (writing to SAVE ourselves YES, yes, yes), before worrying about whether or not our audience is large enough. Movements start small. Brother Soledad, and Soul on Ice, are two books written by Black Nationalists who identified with a group of eight. Sit-ins began in schools. The Feminist Art Program in Fresno, was started by two women.

(ok, so I'm idealistic :) (plus I'm not as cynical of poets, primarily because I'm in art school).

Spring Ulmer

[↑ Contents](#)

108. **Marshall H. Reese**
Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Thu 5 Oct 1995

here's something I would like to add to the mix on this subject; i.e., the conservatism of the poetry world and the avant-gardism of the visual arts... just an observation...

that of all the individual artists fellowships funded by the NEA only the writers' and folk artists' remain...

let's remunerate on what that means?

is it that the "powers that be" think writers are safer than painters, photographers, et al., or that they know that no one reads or pays attention to the stuff???

hasta la vista, baby...

[↑ Contents](#)

109. **Steve Evans**

Out Beyond Its Edge / Keaton Centennial

Thu 5 Oct 1995

The centennial of Buster Keaton's birth was yesterday, in honor of which I hope Jackson Mac Low won't mind my posting the following:

36th Light Poem: *_In Memorium_ Buster Keaton--4:50-6:18 A.M. Sat 1 Jan. 1972*

1

As a Mad Scientist

Buster lights a Bunsen-burner flame
that starts a series of processes
that eventually releases The Monster

As an Undertaker

Buster lights a Bunsen-burner flame
that starts a series of processes
that awakens a drunk who was about to be buried as a corpse

As a Muscovite

Buster lights a sisal wick in a sesame-seed-oil lamp
that suddenly lights a mystical orgy
officiated over by Rasputin

As a Boater

Buster beats a cascade by floating out beyond its edge
borne by a balloon
lit by a wintry sun

As an Unwilling Passenger on a Drifting Liner

Buster the Millionaire & his rich Girl Friend
learn to cope Alone Without Servants
when forced to rely on the light of their Upper-Class Intellectuals

As a Worker

Buster arouses the Compassion of the Nation
in whose light the Corporations
sell themselves to their Workers

As a Key Man

Buster carries around with him
an enormous bunch of keys
lighting his way with a Keats lamp

As a Beatnik

Buster meditates in a Redwood forest

seated where the Selenic light
first falls at Moonrise

As a Leaf-&-Feather Gatherer
Buster Means Well but bugs everyone in the Park
spearing ladies' hats & picknickers' salads
in featureless Hollywood Light of the century's first quarter

As William Butler Years
Buster addresses an irate Irish crowd
that thinks that Poety makes Nothing Happen
but lets itself be bathed by its Truthful Light

As a Cannoneer
Buster explodes his own ship's magazine
treads water in Gunpowder Light at a safe distances
& blushes in embarrassment at his Clumsiness

As a Violinist
Buster surpasses Paganini
until Boston-Concert-Hall Light
Poisons him with Love for a Proper Bostonian Maiden

2

Spirit of Buster Keaton
if you survive as yourself
receive Please our honor & praise
you conscientious Workman

Hard-working Buster Keaton
when you arouse the laughter of children
as you live in Projector Light
Your Karmic Residue dissolves in Joyous Shouts

[from Jackson Mac Low's *_Representative Works: 1938-1985_* (New York: Roof, 1986): 224-25]

[↑ Contents](#)

110. **Burt Kimmelman**
Re: poetry and visual art

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Dodie,
What artist colony was that?
burt

[↑ Contents](#)

111. **Burt Kimmelman**
Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Carolyn,

I don't see how "workshop" has to mean only "repair" and in fact that definition may more easily fall under the sway of "repair shop" or whatever. Workshop is where one does work; and I guess in modern terms where something is made. So now maybe the problem is that poems in these places are viewed as made things (like in the ME "makyr"-- but then there it also included "trobar," "to find"). Anyway, I guess the problem is that these "workshops" have become too rules based. Is this what Paul Engle envisioned for Iowa way back when? I remember when I attended a workshop run by Joel Oppenheimer at St. Mark's Church in the mid sixties--now that was a really wild, free wheeling and thrilling experience, everyone shouting and having a great time (and the implication was that rules could only take you so far); I learned a lot there. But I think that that workshop was a success finally because--setting aside the talent of its member-students--Oppenheimer led it in the sense that he personified it (or rather that its procedures and textures echoed him); he was a freewheeling soul himself, full of excruciatingly witty and at times wickedly ironic humor, a big smile, a booming voice, long wild hair, and so on. His verse, too, in its time, was irreverant yet it had rigor and intelligence too.

I for one copied him. He for one let me and others copy him. He did not say: do this or do that. He had opinions. So did we.

RIP, Joel.

Burt

[↑ Contents](#)

112. **Charles Alexander**
Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Thu 5 Oct 1995

*here's something I would like to add to the mix on this subject; i.e.,
the conservatism of the poetry world and the avant-gardism of the visual
arts... just an observation...*

*that of all the individual artists fellowships funded by the NEA only the
writers' and folk artists' remain...*

let's remunerate on what that means?

To put this into some perspective, we should know that the Literature Program of the NEA was one of the smallest of all the programs (something like 2.8% of the Endowment's funds, even though the percentage of applicants in the program was comparatively much higher); yet of all programs it had the highest percentage of funding to individuals. The most common argument put forward about why this was true (and the argument would also seem to make sense about why there are still individual fellowships for writers) is that nonprofit literary organizations and institutions are very weak when compared to visual arts, music, opera, dance, and other arts organizations. Another is that there has been no national service organization for literary organizations (CLMP has tried to fill part of this gap, but not all of it). So, since it wasn't very clear how to give the money to institutions, two things ensued -- not much money was given out, and most of it was given to individuals.

There may be other arguments as to why individual fellowships for writers have survived (thus far), but I haven't heard them.

Since you (Marshall Reese) know that individual funding for writers has survived, do you know what the current status is for funding of presses, literary centers, reading series, residencies, etc.? If you do, I'd like to know.

all best

Charles Alexander
Chax Press
P.O. Box 19178
Minneapolis, MN 55419-0178
[REDACTED] (phone & fax)
[REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

113. **Edward Foster**
Re: ay sixes and sevens

Thu 5 Oct 1995

aldon: sorry to have taken so long to respond, but our e-mail system here (technological school, of course) has not been working. i've been able to move out of the 3-line format thanks to advice from a poet. the engineers around here had told me it couldn't be done. -ed

[↑ Contents](#)

114. **tunguska**

Re: situationism in the wild blue

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Mark;

Obviously, any writing that cops the attitude that it is, of a corpus whose experimental thrust is omni-resistant to meaning, to interpretation, hell, to penetration, let's not mince words, then one IS in the Wild Blue. And I hear you, there is a need to bring it down to earth, so to speak, and find situations and cultural contexts for which that resistance can speak. I think, and thanks for latching onto "anxiety" per se, that I, personally, have gotten involved with philosophy (as opposed to history or theater or pop culture) is that philosophy IS the ability, the spectre of a dangerous muddle, whether in thought or word, and that, interesting enough, in ITS history, there have been people who have met that respective challenge that has seemed to threaten their sense of conscience, or what have you. In a way that I think poetry, and the "playful literary" hasn't, or hasn't been over-ripe with (someone catch me on this one!). Obviously, labels and characterizations---no body wants it---and to defend "absolute freedom" in resistance to it, has its heroic moments, its situations. But, like that Foucault statement, I can't help feeling that, in the writing of poetry, I'm doing nothing more than adding to, or contributing to, or "bouncing" off of, a poetry-generated characterization (as Tom Beard said, who or what says that I have to write about socio-political so called situations!). And whether you think it's poetry-generated, or driven by assumptions from other regions, it IS something you, as a poet, are becoming involved with.

Furthermore, any writer who feels that he needs to align, or seek out a clarification of current cultural contexts et al, to get in to print, to get the ball rolling, MUST soon realize the inherent theatricality in that. Who wants their work to flutter into a pool of mere resemblance and representation, and NOT of their own intention. I think, for this reason, I myself got involved in "serial form", where, a certain syntagm reared itself where I would not have thought there to be one. The only place for clarification of that, and that process, I find in philosophy. After all, it was a philosopher, Wittgenstein, who said: philosophy's sole work now, is with language (sic). Is this a "cultural context" to be defined by popular events, by the weather, by hurricane opal and the oj trial?! (The other night, the boys, before the nightly rap session: OJ OJ OJ...FFFFuck nicole, man, fuck nicole! then non-stop rapping, of which the sole understandable was: "ev'ry other line rhymes!" and I laughed, was not enough to move me to write, tho the entire civilized world, to hear the news say it, was moved to do something, to take sides....) Maybe, but maybe NOT.

So, I'm afraid, it appears to me, that what I've presented to you, again, is that same ol' dialectic. But let's get even more specific, for the sake of this wild blue yonder. I've recently written a review of a young poet's first book, Stephen Ellis, a New Englander whose work on :that: may be familiar to readers here. The collection is entitled *Site Drafts* (Loose Gravel Press). What holds the book together, and the reason I find the writing both pleasing AND intelligent, is that it does not seem to be making a grab at inter-stellar avant-gardisms. It is, in fact, a pretty basic collection, with the one difference, it doesn't use the substantive as a crutch, it doesn't cluster overmuch to "things", but straddles the predicative and the substantive thru a relatively controlled polysemy.(!) What I mean to say is, what I ended up talking about in the review, was neither a complete emphasis on form, nor one on content, but rather, brought the whole collection under inspection within the context of "being", as opposed to simply "feelings". The centerpiece, a serialized poem, observing and comparing the "work" (read language) habits of a group of construction workers, and the attitude expressed in the composition of the poet's book. It didn't seem important to me to speak of method's, but, it being only a short review, I felt that if I showed a habit of thought, or identity, it would allude more accurately to Ellis's poetry. So, a kind of characterization? I think so too. But, dare I say it, a characterization that waved a free hand toward primordiality. But is this something to be avoided in the "production" of art, of poetry, of literature? In other words, does the "situation" the cultural context, have to be of a certain narrowness, OR of a certain expansiveness to command "Attention" "respect" and just plain "interest?" I think that, tho, presumes as much as presumption itself (anxiety setting in...hell is other people....where's my beret, my gitanes, where did they go?!...)...

thilleman

tod thilleman

[↑ Contents](#)

115. **B. Cassidy**
Re: Influence query

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Prof. Forche --

Thought of one more for your list, though the influence may not be as direct as some of the others mentioned. I'm thinking about Heather McHugh. She has translated Celan, and thought the influence may be a bit more opaque, I think her way of self-consciously thinking THROUGH the medium of language owes something to Celan...

--Brian Cassidy

[↑ Contents](#)

116. **Graham John Sharpe**

Re: fragments, mourning/wild blue yonder still

Thu 5 Oct 1995

tod, perhaps a led you a little astray with that re-membling as oppose to remembering. the first one is mine as i have interpreted the process of remembering in first world war fiction. i can't help but see it as a very physical event - in terms of body parts, or creating liveable structures in their subterranean world. i think blunden, manning, barbusse and sassoon would support me on this. and chapman too, who had a wonderful line: "I could find nothing to say in letters. All communication was `dissed` as though the lines had been broken by a shell."

a very physical quality to their re-membling and communication.

perhaps for jones in works on several levels, including your notion of inter-animation. that sense of working between. there is i think for jones a notion of a linguistic transubstantiation. the words and fragments used to "make-present" to turn, as Jones says "tokens into signs".

jones quote on remembering runs as follows:

I think we can assert that the poet is a `rememberer` and that it is a part of his business to keep open the lines of communication. One obvious way of doing this is by handling on such fragmented bits of our own inheritance as we have ourselves received. (Past & Present, in *Epoch and Artist*)

of jones and the renaissance poets. i'm affraid i know little of that. perhaps Peter Larkin has some ideas, or George can ask the Jones expert in his family. i do know however that there was a special issue on David Jones in *Renaissance* 38:2, Winter 1986. hope that helps.

oh yes, and that should be Lingusitic _transubstantiation_. i forgot a few letters.

graham

[↑ Contents](#)

117. **George Bowering**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds/Stein

Thu 5 Oct 1995

I dont think that in 1995 there can be any question regarding Gertrude Stein's bein in the canon. Certainly that has happened long ago. [sorry if yr seeing glitches on this page] It was happening before she became a figure for feminist writers and critics. There is a huge outporing of books on every level, from

picture books to decent criticism and even some scholarship. Theses galore. I will admit that when I was teaching her in the late sixties in Montreal I was the only one doing so at my little university, but in those days, when the women's bookstores were finding her stuff in print again, I spent most of my time trying to tell the store managers who HD was. Now she too has been canonized. I would hope that HD and Stein are on the syllabus even at Northeast Illinois State or the like. If not, what the hell is happening down there?

[↑ Contents](#)

118. **Maria Damon**

Re: An especial danger to hard working poets (fwd)

Thu 5 Oct 1995

jorge, yr the greatest! if i must die, i'd like it to be through brain-explosion. but i don't think i stand a chance, i'm too slow and mellow. but wait --balancing a checkbook is considered intense mental activity???? as a compulsive e-mail checker, crossword puzzler and budget figure-outer, maybe i've got a shot at going down in flames!--md

[↑ Contents](#)

119. **George Bowering**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Thanks to Burt, who brought up that wonderful poet Joel Oppenheimer [who was LEFT OUT of the Norton postmod anthol]. Yr right Burt, in joining his enthusiasm with his care as a poet. I loved him. When we paid him a lousy \$100 to do a reading {he also got swank hotel and meals and party etc and travel] in Montreal in 1969 or thereabouts, he cashed the cheque and bought a hundred dollars worth of really nice underwear for his significant other.

[↑ Contents](#)

120. **Maria Damon**

Re: Poetry Wars

Thu 5 Oct 1995

and don't forget Denise levertov's fallings-out w/ practically anyone you cd care to mention. however, while i have some sympathy w/ charles's suspicions about a study of splits, i'm curious about the theoretical or analytical framework yr using. is this a counterbalance to all the work being done on "collaborations" (the homoerotics of, the feminist anti-individualism of, the subversive natures of, etc. etc) --if so that's kinda interesting. actually i think a related subject that has been way way undertheorized is friendship. not that i've investigated the

subject deeply on a scholarly level, but simone weil is the only person i've read on the subject who even focuses on it as a phenomenon worthy of analysis. it seems crucial though, in a look at artistic collaborations and/or rifts.--maria d

[↑ Contents](#)

121. **George Bowering**

Re: An especial danger to hard working poets (fwd)

Thu 5 Oct 1995

I have recently heard a story about a terrible danger to "investigative reporters." Apparently once in a while their noses will just explode right off their faces! Have to wear prosthesis. Can make a little cash from stories in the New York News and the checkout mags.

[↑ Contents](#)

122. **George Bowering**

Re: wild blue and art/writing

Thu 5 Oct 1995

I have been trying, and I cant figure out how trying to save one's self is idealistic.

And trying not to pay taxes? Isnt that what the lawyers for the corporations are paid to do?

[↑ Contents](#)

123. **Sheila E. Murphy**

Re: Poetry Seams

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Maria D. writes:

*actually i think a related subject that has been way way undertheorized is friendship.
not that i've investigated the subject deeply on a scholarly level, but
simone weil is the only person i've read on the subject who even focuses on
it as a phenomenon worthy of analysis. it seems crucial though, in a look at
artistic collaborations and/or rifts.*

Maria, I couldn't agree more. The rifts seem lazier and less interesting--certainly less refined. The linkages that work seem more intriguing to me.

Sheila

[↑ Contents](#)

124. **Charles Alexander**

Joel Oppenheimer

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Thanks to Burt, who brought up that wonderful poet Joel Oppenheimer [who was LEFT OUT of the Norton postmod anthol]. Yr right Burt, in joining his enthusiasm with his care as a poet. I loved him. When we paid him a lousy \$100 to do a reading {he also got swank hotel and meals and party etc and travel} in Montreal in 1969 or thereabouts, he cashed the cheque and bought a hundred dollars worth of really nice underwear for his significant other.

Just to echo Burt and George. Joel was a gentleman, in the greatest sense, a fine wit, and a hoot. It was a pleasure to have known him.

charles

[↑ Contents](#)

125. **Tom Beard**

whyld blue avant-pop

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Herb Levy writes:

Leyner, Acker, & Gibson are, chronologically at least, in the same generation as the "past" generation you say they're reacting to (I don't know about Eurydice, Coupland's younger), so the genealogy isn't that simple.

I mentioned some of the better-known names - most of the people mentioned in Mark Amerika's "Smells like Avant-Pop" are presumably younger, but I have heard little about them, and can't find their books in this dusty corner of the Pacific. Leyner, Acker & Gibson (that well-known law firm) are, however, younger than Pynchon and Burroughs, who are regarded as the forerunners of Avant-Pop.

Now that you mention it, I remember being surprised when I saw a dust-jacket photo of Mark Leyner - the blurb made him out to be some sort of enfant terrible, and I looked at him and thought "My God, he's old!"

And, in the case of Acker,

disrupted narratives, a multiplicity of voices and ironic plagiarism

is just as good a description of her current work as it is for her earlier writing. I think a case could be made for reading Leyner's current work in the same light, though he has a smoother narrative surface than Acker.

I think that the claims being made for Avant-Pop being different from PoMo rest more upon content than form: A&P takes the "Avant" techniques of earlier generations and applies them to "Pop" material. An A&P writer is more likely to look to music videos, hip-hop, comics, B-movies, virtual reality, drug culture and advertising for material and formal inspiration than an "older" (not necessarily chronologically) post-modern writer such as Calvino, Barnes or Eco. Julian Barnes might not be much older than the more senior Avant-Popsters, but he has an air of smug, middle-class cleverness that gets up the collective nose of the more aggressively Gen-X A&P writers. I still prefer Barnes, myself - I guess I relate to smug, middle-class cleverness :-).

| As to who might be an "Avant-Pop" poet, how about Gregory Corso?

I'll check him out, 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

[↑ Contents](#)

126. **Tom Beard** **whyld, comfy blue**

Thu 5 Oct 1995

Dodie writes:

I was intrigued by what you had to say about knowing your audience on a first name basis. Even though that comes out of a devaluing of poetry, it is an incredibly privileged position. The text remains yours, even though others have access to it. Your audience tends to be incredibly sophisticated and interactive. It's a comfy, sweet world. Sometimes I will come across someone who has read my writing, whom I don't know, and when this happens I always feel a tiny bit raped. I know it's a silly feeling, but it's there: some stranger has had access to me.

Despite all its pitfalls and its disregard by the rest of the world, the experimental writing world is cozy.

I thought that experimental writing was supposed to be dangerous? If one's entire audience (both of them) shares one's concerns and preconceptions, there's little chance of offending, surprising or challenging, and it seems to me that the only danger that one faces is that of becoming bland and complacent.

To me, one of the reasons that I aim to have my work published is that the text is no longer mine: it's out there in the textual world, being read, discussed, rewritten, misunderstood, loved, loathed, whatever. Perhaps this is a male thing: we want recognition, fame (some hope!) and the impression that our texts are striding the face of the earth, being proactive and manly; whereas women invest more of themselves in their writing and want to protect it (I realise that this is an oversimplification - but the word "raped" in Dodie's post invites a reading along these lines). When I do write something to which I want strangers to have no access, I don't submit it for publication. But I can't imagine not being flattered if a stranger told me that he or she knew my work.

Hardly ever will I see a writer in the audience, which is, obviously, the opposite case for most poetry readings, where a non-writer is usually assumed to be a relative of one of the readers.

I still feel profoundly sad at the fact that hardly anyone other than poets and professional critics reads contemporary poetry. Someone (it might have been Barrett Watten) was quoted in one of the articles from In the American Tree as saying that he saw this as an advantage - that readers play an equal part in the creative process. Perhaps so, but I still hope that "open works" can turn readers who are otherwise non-writers into participants in the poem, rather than realizing the equation reader=writer by narrowing down the field of readers until it is the same size as the field of writers.

To do this, the text must answer the reader's question, "why should I create my own field of meanings from this poem here, rather than this other poem, or this movie, or this page of the telephone book?" If we are asking readers to put some work into our poems, shouldn't we offer them something in return? The challenge, as I see it, is to write poems that are challenging, polysemic and subtle, but that have some "hook" that will make the reader want to come back to the poem again and again. Maybe if I live to 130 I'll write one such poem.

*there is an edge of panic, like I never
want my books to be carried at That Store or for Those People to touch them.
the people there really think they're a class above the rest of humanity*

These two statements read interestingly when juxtaposed. I just wish that the so-called "yuppies", the well-educated professionals who might read literary fiction, go to art-house movies and buy contemporary artworks, might read poetry from time to time. Where does the problem lie - with the non-readers, with their education, with the way that poetry is presented, or with the kind of poetry that we write?

Tom Beard

I/am a background/process, shrunk to an icon. | Tom Beard I am/a dark place.
| [REDACTED] 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

[↑ Contents](#)

127. **Sheila E. Murphy**

Re: AWOL: ARTS ONLINE CONFERENCE

Fri 6 Oct 1995

*The Arts Law Centre of Australia presents
ARTS ONLINE: Getting Started in Multimedia and Online Publishing*

*A conference on fundamental business and legal aspects of multimedia and
online publishing*

*Tuesday 24 October 1995 :1.30 to 4.30pm
Domain Theatre, Level 1
The Art Gallery of New South Wales*

Mark (and others) - What about holding a conference of this nature online?
Several years back, I chaired such an effort as a part of university duties. We
spent about two or three weeks, as I recall, conferring about specific topics in
structured formats. We maintained a running chat line (simulating the hallways
and break areas). I'm sure it could be argued that we're already doing
something like that here. The difference, of course, lies in the focus, the
preparation, and the manner of responding. Less of an off-the-cuff arrangement
can be quite interesting and productive.

Sheila

[↑ Contents](#)

128. **Dodie Bellamy**

Consumer Item

Fri 6 Oct 1995

Tom Beard writes:

"To me, one of the reasons that I aim to have my work published is that the text
is _no longer_ mine: it's out there in the textual world, being read, discussed,
rewritten, misunderstood, loved, loathed, whatever. Perhaps this is a male
thing: we want recognition, fame (some hope!) and the impression that our
texts are striding the face of the earth, being proactive and manly; whereas
women invest more of themselves in their writing and want to protect it (I

realise that this is an oversimplification - but the word "raped" in Dodie's post invites a reading along these lines)."

Tom,

I thought, from previous posts, you were into being young and hip. I shouldn't need to remind you that these days this kind of essentialism, even if you try to undercut it, simply won't fly.

Dodie

[↑ Contents](#)

129. **Tom Beard**

Re: Consumer Item

Fri 6 Oct 1995

I wrote:

To me, one of the reasons that I aim to have my work published is that the text is _no longer_ mine: it's out there in the textual world, being read, discussed, rewritten, misunderstood, loved, loathed, whatever. Perhaps this is a male thing: we want recognition, fame (some hope!) and the impression that our texts are striding the face of the earth, being proactive and manly; whereas women invest more of themselves in their writing and want to protect it (I realise that this is an oversimplification - but the word "raped" in Dodie's post invites a reading along these lines)."

to which Dodie replied,

I thought, from previous posts, you were into being young and hip. I shouldn't need to remind you that these days this kind of essentialism, even if you try to undercut it, simply won't fly.

Dodie,

I'm not sure what you're referring to as "essentialism" - my wish to have my poems be no longer my own, but "public property" in some sense; or my question as to whether such wishes could be characterised as male.

In the first case, I'm not trying to evoke some sort of New-Critical impression that texts are essentially autonomous objects - far from it. I meant to imply that what we write ceases to be _entirely_ ours when someone else reads it - any reader makes what he or she reads partly his or her own, and this multiplicity of "hybrid" texts is what I want to evolve from my original, static work. There are as many versions of a poem as there are readers of it, and since I view this cross-fertilisation process as exciting and creative, I would like there to be as many active readers as possible.

In the second case, I wasn't claiming some essential difference between the sexes. I was just anticipating a response along the lines of "huh, typical male,

wanting all the attention", and caricaturing my own position a little in order to invite some debate. _Do_ women feel that men want their texts to be active, aggressive and famous, whereas women want their texts to remain their own?

As far as being young and hip goes, I'm not sure that I'm into being either. I'm Generation W: too young to make a killing during the 80s like everyone else was supposed to be doing, but too old to indulge in Gen X self-pity. In terms of poetry, Langpo hasn't made much of a dent here, so I'm coming to it late, finding that much of it began in the 70s, and wondering what's regarded as the cutting edge in the Americas in the 90s. In terms of Theory (a term that's always seemed a little arrogant to me, implying that cultural/literary/semiotic theory is all there is, and that quantum electrodynamics theory, post-Darwinian evolutionary theory, information theory, quasi-geostrophic theory or whatever are all subsets thereof), I'm also a beginner, finding much that intrigues, amuses, bewilders or infuriates me. Besides, no-one with a BSc could ever be _truly_ hip.

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

[↑ Contents](#)

130. **Alan Sondheim**

Re: Consumer Item

Fri 6 Oct 1995

I always feel ill at ease when the phrase "whereas women" or "whereas men" appears. Whatever differences there may be among the sexes vis-a-vis cognitive psy studies, it's always been clear that the bandwidths within the varying positions are far greater. Ambition, foreclosure, etc. are the province of no one. Certainly there are areas to explore vis-a-vis the positions of the feminine (Brossard comes to mind strongly here), and certainly the hegemonic position of the name-of-the-father (I hesitate to use 'masculine' because the field is problematic to the extent that it is rendered transcendent and invisible) across our cultures creates at best fissured structures, hardly oppositions in the traditional structuralist sense. The "whereas" seems to collapse gender troubles to rigidified positions, and therein lie problems.

And what does it mean to know women or men, to describe them?

Alan

[↑ Contents](#)

131. **R I Caddel**

poets n parties

Fri 6 Oct 1995

Funny how important those parties seem to be...

Thanks, Dodie, for stressing the joke. Actually my bit about being on first name terms etc. was also a joke, or at least an ironic piece of British self-deprecation (sorry, I can't direct you to the film archetypes for this). My "audience" is fairly interactive, but not universally sophisticated, I'm happy to say. Only the other day - literal truth - a new student (social sciences) saw my nameplate on the library's public information desk where I was working and said - Oh - Are you Richard Caddel The Poet - etc etc. But (a) I can count on one hand the times anything approaching this has happened, and (b) by the end of that encounter we were on 1st name terms - another Unknown Reader bites the dust (I'm thinking of the Duncan quote, where he imagines his unknown reader as a little old Beatrix Potter like person...)

Having to defend the space for the whole idea of my work (and that of others I like) amongst people who on my off-days I'd call philistine, (who think because I'm "a poet" I want to read Carol Ann Duffy or the like) I don't consider it a "cozy" or "comfy" world, but it's one I choose. The main "privilege" of working in a low-funding, low-exposure form is that you get to work in you own terms undisturbed, and that I like. Today Heaney ("Shameless Ninny" as Eric Mottram called him) got his gong, and that's great - he's a nice fellow and has a couple good lines - which puts him ahead of many - he can front it and face the ballyhoo, and I can get back to the coalface.

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	

[↑ Contents](#)

132. **CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Fri 6 Oct 1995

Dear Charles, Your analysis of the NEA literary program (proportion of overall budget/applicant ratio and reasons for the high percentage of individual fellowship grants is on the mark. The individual fellowships to

writers were saved for the reasons mentioned, and also because a very focussed lobbying effort organized by LitNet (AWP, CLMP, Poets&Writers, Curbstone Press) argued for retention of these particular fellowships. I have no idea why folk arts retained individual fellowships. Poets and writers haven't been uncontroversial for the NEA (Allen G. and Peter O. drew congressional attention about ten years ago, and in the past years, several applicants have been "flagged" for denial by the Council). It is by no means certain that the literature fellowships will survive final mark-up, this year or next. --Carolyn

[↑ Contents](#)

133. **CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Fri 6 Oct 1995

Dear Burt,

I agree. I was attempting to describe the workshop which seems (perhaps I'm wrong about this?) to prevail in the academy at the moment, with notable exceptions. St. Marks has remained exemplary (and like Just Buffalo, Woodland Pattern and others, operates outside/beyond the academy to the great benefit of everyone).

--Carolyn

On Thu, 5 Oct 1995, Burt Kimmelman [REDACTED] wrote:

Carolyn,

I don't see how "workshop" has to mean only "repair" and in fact that definition may more easily fall under the sway of "repair shop" or whatever. Workshop is where one does work; and I guess in modern terms where something is made. So now maybe the problem is that poems in these places are viewed as made things (like in the ME "makyr"--but then there it also included "trobar," "to find"). Anyway, I guess the problem is that these "workshops" have become too rules based. Is this what Paul Engle envisioned for Iowa way back when? I remember when I attended a workshop run by Joel Oppenheimer at St. Mark's Church in the mid sixties--now that was a really wild, free wheeling and thrilling experience, everyone shouting and having a great time (and the implication was that rules could only take you so far); I learned a lot there.

But I think that that workshop was a success finally because--setting aside the talent of its member-students--Oppenheimer led it in the sense that he personified it (or rather that its procedures and textures echoed him); he was a freewheeling soul himself, full of excruciatingly witty and at times wickedly ironic humor, a big smile, a booming voice, long wild hair, and so on. His verse, too, in its time, was irreverant

yet it had rigor and intelligence too.

I for one copied him. He for one let me and others copy him. He did not say: do this or do that. He had opinions. So did we.

RIP, Joel.

Burt

[↑ Contents](#)

134. **B. Cassidy**

Re: Out Beyond Its Edge / Keaton Centennial

Fri 6 Oct 1995

Speaking of Keaton...

Does anyone know if or how one could get a video copy of Beckett's "Film" which Keaton starred in? Been looking for it for a couple of years now. Thanks.

--Brian

[↑ Contents](#)

135. **H. T. KIRBY-SMITH**

Prosody List

Fri 6 Oct 1995

Just wanted to mention that the PROSODY list has suddenly blossomed. (subscribe at listserv.msu.edu). Originally set up, to judge from its description, as a forum for questions of meter, structure, form, etc, it has in recent years been the site of postings mainly having to do with linguistics, phonology, etc.; it seems the word "prosody" was appropriated some time back for the study of natural sound patterns in language.

All of a sudden quite a number of postings have appeared there on poetry, though. None on current events so far and no group-therapy for angst yet.

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

[↑ Contents](#)

136. **Mark Roberts**

AWOL: ARTS ONLINE CONFERENCE

Fri 6 Oct 1995

The Arts Law Centre of Australia presents
ARTS ONLINE: Getting Started in Multimedia and Online Publishing

A conference on fundamental business and legal aspects of multimedia and online publishing

Tuesday 24 October 1995 :1.30 to 4.30pm

Domain Theatre, Level 1

The Art Gallery of New South Wales

PROGRAM:

SESSION 1: Project Development

Chair: Michael Hill, coordinator of New Media, Australian Film Commission.

The following topics will be discussed: project development of multimedia and online works, accessing funds, multimedia and online platforms, appropriate software, training facilities, budgeting, contracting and maintaining creative control .

Speakers :

Phillip Keir, publisher, Rolling Stone and Next On-Line

Laura Tricker, producer, Monitor Information Systems

Phillip Tanner, producer, A Couple 'A Cowboys

John Colette, multimedia artist; coordinator of the new media program at the Australian Film, Television and Radio School

SESSION 2: Legal Issues

Chair: Samantha Mostyn, consultant to the PM on multimedia

Part 1:

Roleplay on the practical steps of copyright clearance for interactive multimedia works: what rights do I need? how do I locate the copyright owner? how much do I pay?

Speakers:

Laura Tricker, producer, Monitor Information Systems

Morris Averill, solicitor, Heidtman and Co.

Part 2:

The legal responsibilities of online publisher: Can an online publisher be liable for pirated material or defamatory statements transmitted via their systems? what risk management steps can be used?

Speaker:

Stephen Peach, solicitor, Gilbert and Tobin Technology Lawyers

Costs: Individual \$50; Subscriber to the Arts Law Centre \$40; Full time student/unemployed \$25. \$

For further information contact the Arts Law Centre on

Ph: 02 [REDACTED]

Fax: 02 [REDACTED]

email: [REDACTED]

***** Australian Writing OnLine is a publicity and distribution service for Australian writers and publishers. For further information please email us at [REDACTED], write to AWOL PO Box 333 Concord NSW 2137 Australia, phone (02) [REDACTED] or fax (02) [REDACTED].

[↑ Contents](#)

137. **Maria Damon**

Re: Influence query

Fri 6 Oct 1995

it seems that most of the folks being cited as influenced by celan are people that have translated his work. i guess this is intuitively obvious --why wd one undertake such a task unless one were profoundly moved by the work --but it leads me to ask: how are each of these people --or how wd they see themselves as --influenced by celan's work> i know that i might cite as influences writers whose work does not resemble mine in the least; and i can imagine (tho i've never translated) someone taking up a challenge to translate a work for reasons other than "influence." so, maybe the question is, sort of like what i was saying about friendship the other day, what is "influence"? on one level it is intangible, on another level utterly palpable. carolyn forche, i'm glad yr on the list! your contributions are smart and nice.--md

[↑ Contents](#)

138. **Maria Damon**

Re: whyld blue avant-pop

Fri 6 Oct 1995

i'm assuming gregory corso as avant-pop is a joke? if not, please explain.--md

[↑ Contents](#)

139. **Charles Alexander**

Re: whyld, comfy blue

Fri 6 Oct 1995

I thought that experimental writing was supposed to be dangerous? If one's entire audience (both of them) shares one's concerns and preconceptions, there's little chance of offending, surprising or challenging, and it seems to me that the only danger that one faces is that of becoming bland and complacent.

But we do find within smaller groups the ability to say what might be offending to a larger group, and most challenging artists in history at least had a small group of friends/colleagues who supported what they were doing.

Perhaps this is a male thing: we want recognition, fame (some hope!) and the impression that our texts are striding the face of the earth, being proactive and manly

Really? Speak for yourself (I know you're being somewhat tongue in cheek, but please . . .).

whereas women invest more of themselves in their writing and want to protect it (I realise that this is an oversimplification - but the word "raped" in Dodie's post invites a reading along these lines). When I do write something to which I want strangers to have no access, I don't submit it for publication. But I can't imagine _not_ being flattered if a stranger told me that he or she knew my work.

Yes, I want people to read/hear the work and even approach me about it, but I can't imagine having no mixed feelings at all about this. The work does span a delicate bridge between/among private and public. When I have given readings where I knew almost noone there (it does happen sometimes, even a couple of times to audiences of a couple of hundred people), it almost felt like it was someone else standing there, some me/not me, doing the reading. Like the public/private chasm, there is both a sense of identification/disassociation from a finished work, particularly when the writer experiences it in front of an audience.

Hardly ever will I see a writer in the audience, which is, obviously, the opposite case for most poetry readings, where a non-writer is usually assumed to be a relative of one of the readers.

I once gave a reading in the city where my mother lives, and the audience comprised a couple of writers, a couple of academics, and my mother with about fifteen of her friends, most of whom had never been to a poetry reading. It was a marvelous audience, wondrously free of preconceptions about what might constitute a poetry.

I still feel profoundly sad at the fact that hardly anyone other than poets and professional critics reads contemporary poetry.

I think it's true that they don't, but not true that they won't; and I believe that if they do, they can respond in unique and intelligent ways. One of my best critics/supporters has been my daughter's German day care mom (tages mutti). I like to think I write for such people as much as for other poets or critics.

To do this, the text must answer the reader's question, "why should I create my own field of meanings from this poem here, rather than this other poem, or this movie, or this page of the telephone book?"

No, it doesn't have to answer that question, it just has to keep the work alive enough to invite the reader to try and answer it (invite being the operative word here).

If we are asking readers to put some work into our poems, shouldn't we offer them something in return? The challenge, as I see it, is to write poems that are challenging, polysemic and subtle, but that have some "hook" that will make the reader _want_ to come back to the poem again and again. Maybe if I live to 130 I'll write one such poem.

I agree, except the word "hook" seems loaded, manipulative. I like to think of it more as a gift.

all best wishes,

Charles Alexander
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P.O. Box 19178
Minneapolis, MN 55419-0178
[REDACTED] (phone & fax)
[REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

140. **Larry Price**
Politics and derivation
Fri 6 Oct 1995

Allen Ginsberg once noted that being an anarchist didn't mean you could throw your trash in the street. Similarly, saying poetry won't feed the hungry masses has about the same meaning as saying a rice grower's fields won't scan or are overly committed to closure. The political can just as easily begin in the rejection of an easy forgetfulness, of saying, Since so many others DO (throw trash, etc.), what would be the point etc. of my not? That sense of resistance is not, I think, about autonomy only, but equally has implications for the intersubjective.

That said (and because I do think it has to do with form), I'd like to air thoughts about Duncan's poetics of derivation. Pushed by Charles Alexander's note on

THE OPENING OF THE FIELD, I also went to the shelf, to FICTIVE CERTAINTIES and to AFTER LORCA.

"I find again how Emersonian my spirit is. All of experience seems my trust fund to me; I must CULTIVATE THE MISTRUST THAT ALONE CAN GIVE CONTRAST AND THE NEEDED INNER TENSION FOR VITAL INTEREST. In this I stand almost heretically disposed to Olson's insistence on Melville's sense of inner catastrophe against the Emersonian bliss." [caps mine]

That poetry is a contagion does seem like a good place to start, but Duncan's sense of "back and back and back" seems too comfortably located:

"When I first decided to be a poet...this itself was a disordering of the world and its orders in which I had been raised...I had been preparing to enter that world...but my conversion to poetry was experienced...as being at war with every hope the world before had had of me...to give one's life over to poetry, to become a poet, was to evidence a serious social disorder."

On the other hand, Spicer:

"Things decay, reason argues. Real things become garbage...Yes, but the garbage of the real still reaches out into the current world making its objects, in turn, visible -- lemon calls to lemon, newspaper to newspaper, boy to boy. As things decay, they bring their equivalents into being."

Two senses of disorder, as also many more times than one real, which may be why devotion towards them must be so disordered.

So regarding form, it's interesting to read Duncan's sense of contagion as not being a resistive annihilating rod plied AGAINST convention, to read convention itself as having bred the contagion. The disorder that ensues is WITHIN THE TERMS OF CONVENTION. Whereas the disorder that is Spicer's I read as issuing from the events TOWARDS WHICH his devotion runs. It's difficult not to appear reductive, but, for me, that's the divide in this discussion of form, new or otherwise.

Larry Price

[↑ Contents](#)

141. **Charles Alexander**

friends

Fri 6 Oct 1995

What Maria and Sheila say about the importance of friends, and how it seems more crucial to discuss that than literary tiffs, seems absolutely right. One difficulty, though, is that some of the friendships meaning most, even to the writing, are not specifically literary ones. I think of the friendship (and more) of

Cage & Cunningham. I think that friends who have made a difference to my writing include musicians and visual artists (probably more than other poets). Even childhood friends made a difference. Sorting it all out is difficult.

[↑ Contents](#)

142. **Bill Luoma**

Re: Oops Snoops

Fri 6 Oct 1995

Aldon made some good comments concerning communitas:

>>All kinds of identity crises available, but -- it's one thing to identify groups of poets >>who seem to share common aesthetic interests, or presuppositions, or questions,, etc. >>-- another thing to grab bunches of poets by the scruff of their
>>birthdate & ask an identity to emerge -- rather like the "Texas
>>Sharpshooter" phenomenon -- The shootist fired several rounds at the side
>>of the barn, went over to the bullet holes, drew a circle around them and
>>said, BULL'SEYE! The _Next Coast_ affair was said to have something to
>>do either with age or with when one began publishing, but a glance at the
>>table of contents shows that neither of these criteria actually was at
>>work -- Still a really interesting gathering, I think, but hardly the
>>statement of a generation, a school, or even an emerging ethos -- Not
>>that I'm looking for that in particular, just that I read a tension
>>between the desire for a "grouping" of some sort and what can be found
>>reading the actual publications --

I am in favor of calling such attempt the Next Coast, a dyslexic tactic shared by my colleague Tony Door, who did have something to say about the Buffalot effent, which I reproduce below with persimmon from the author:

Writhings of a Nude Ghost: A Report from the Bluffalot Festival of Nous Poverty.

-Tony Door Sept. 7, 1993

What follows is a bunch of gripping & carping by a typical New York Poetry type, on what was essentially a worthwhile & noteworthy endeavor, whose only real flaw was that though the possibilities, potentialities, & ramifications of this confluence was multitude, i for one have unfortunately heard nothing from, nor of, it but a few vague peeps.

Let me begin, for those of you who have not yet forgotten that you were not invited & therefore did not attend, by describing how the skene was set. In a rather large, comfortable room filled with your typical Academic Library sofas & chairs, about 75 to 80 rather groggy looking persons {at least 50 of them

men} gathered together late in the morning on April Fools Day, 1993. Cups of bad coffee in hand, they waited for the first rumble from that first poet in this now officially contextual-ized conference. As i looked around me, thinking to categorize & observe, {much as Charles Darwin might have done upon first reaching his archipelago galapagos}, i saw:

*Five men who hadn't bothered to shave *Four men with beards *Three men with mustaches & goatees *Two men with hipster 70's side-burns *One man with a small Tom Waites style Van Dyke under the lower lip *Seven women wore their long hair down *Six women wore glasses *Five men glued their hair in place with mousse *Four men wore their long hair in ponytails *Three women had very short hair *Three men had buzz cuts *Three women wore very red lips *Three men wore ties *Two men wore denim jackets *One woman wore a dress *One woman had dyed her hair "red" *Five men over the age of 35 decided to attend *Four men had baseball caps on their heads *Three women also wore baseball caps *Two men wore regular hats *Three men dressed in "tweedy" professorial sport coat attire {leathern patches intact} *Two men dressed for the late 60's were in attendance *One woman dressed for the late 60's also came *One man in a leather jacket from the early 80's with zippers all over it argued philosophically about prescience & *One man had on a short, very fashionable, navy monkey jacket with a Lenin pin on the lapel.

In short, not many of those people who reek poetry, whom you might see at the Nyorican on any given Thursday in any given year. Nor were there many in attendance that you would regularly encounter at St. Marks in the hipster crowds who frequent that venue on Monday or Friday. Nor even those of the Wednesday night John Yau reduced size crowd that you get to see full blown at the occasional 92nd Street Why. Much more so, these poets were non-specifically cut from the fabric of a Rob Fitterman run Saturday afternoon at the Ear Inn. This is not to say everyone from the Ear went, just that if you went to the Ear you would not be surprised to see any one of them. & almost without exception, those people whom i did know who attended Bluffalot, i have met at the Ear. Of the conflagration itself these moments stand in my mind like beacons: Iconographic representations, if you will, of larger arguments we have yet to formulate & pass judgment on. For the events themselves let this description stand as a partial listing of the shape of things to come.

The unshakable Leanne Brown publishing the unpublishable in the library of time. Who, upon singing a song about fairies during a panel discussion on the Ethics of Small Press Publishing, was chastised for not being solemn enough, by someone who probably should have known better.

From the man who has everything, the heroic Algonquin figure of [REDACTED]
Chris {he who carries his} Funkhouser {on his back}, passing out cassette

tapes, cd's & his bitnet address like candy to babies. Who challenged the whole conference with the immediacy of the egalitarianism of his poetry as music for everyone, & the unintentional elitism of his live by the modem die by the modem future of poetry as an electronic medium. An idea, which, although appropriately utopian, i for one neither have access to nor can really afford to make manifest at this moment in my life.

A most maligned & neglected joke: Potato as Rhizome was presented, to all those willing to brave the arduous journey {"Who are these guys? I'm tired."} to the Media Lab, by John Byrum, during the Alternative Modes & Media reading. At this reading he, Miekal And, Liz Was & Liaison, made poetry humor, process & participation. If Helen Keller made a joke in the forest & no one were around to hear it, would it be a poem about sound?

Chris Stroffolino reached the heighest heights attainable during the conference at a panel discussion on Word & World, when he suddenly insisted that he was himself baseless & groundless. The poet, troubled by the giantesses from Toronto, found himself treed when he climbed onto his chair & crouched there, as proof that he was in fact not grounded. {Causing many to wonder: "Isn't there an electrical socket somewhere nearby?"}

The panel on Reading & Refiguring steadfastly refused to answer anyone's questions. This reticence seemed at first to be an attempt to refuse the refiguring implied by the questioning, & then it seemed a refusal to attempt a question which required refiguring. Finally, Melanie Neilson left everyone stunned & satisfied by completely refiguring herself & reading the audience.

The most useful piece of information to come out of the whole meeting was an observation made during the discussion on the Ethics of Small Press Publishing made by Wisten Cornell, a visiting lecturer from New Zealand. He suggested that if a book or magazine sold only 1,000 copies, this did not represent a segment of the public interested in reading poetry, but was instead a mailing list of people who might be know.

Eventually, things began to get a bit weird. The best talk given by someone who was not actually invited was given by the Barscheit Nation. Who with an almost imperceptable nonchalance, & an astoundingly imperialist {& they aren't even American.} swager, just short of walked right in & took over. Brought about by an event whose causes ran parallel to this invasion, the best reading of the conference was given at the very end by someone who wasn't even there.

One panelist, having only moments before called for "a new imaginary tense" blasted away at the only one of the poets at the conference who even seemed to have come close to making that new tense real. The splendor blaster of the incendiary, pyro-classical verbotage of tense, an individual who had so thoroughly reworked the language that the meanings of such simple & yet

rigidly defined words as combustible took on whole new meanings when issuing from his mouth. My question finally is, "How can you be sure you disagree with someone when you can't actually be sure he is saying the same thing you think you hear?"

Which brings to mind some of the most important things about this conference, the conversations one was able to either get into or even just overhear. Unfortunately these existed merely as a residue of the structure of the conference more than as an element of its design. {There were too many Panels & Readings & not nearly enough "down time" during the day.}

So much so was this true that, one might never have gotten the chance to speak with those to whom one really wanted to talk. From my perspective the people most likely to be stood in line in order to be talked to at this conference were Peter Gizzi, Steve Evans & Ben Friedlander. However, there were many pleasant surprises. It is possible that Rod Smith does not ever actually sleep, but if you were still up at 3:00 AM it was well worth your time to stay up the rest of the night with him. {Because if nothing else, he told the funniest stories about other people you might ever hear.} Quite unexpected were the appearance of two women from George Mason College, who have studied with Carolyn Forsche. Lacking any formal ties to either this particular "poetic movement" or any of the individuals involved, & providing an especially irreverent & insightful point of view, they claimed to have actually enjoyed themselves, & even found the poetry to be for the most part of some interest.

Of overheard conversation, one of the very few "established" poets who came to the confuence, {ostensibly to "see what was happening"} was caught marveling, as if having been just visited by those from outer space, "Last night these people went to a party & after having already listened to poetry for three days, organized a reading at the party! & except for a few people who were in the kitchen, everyone sat quietly & listened. But what was really amazing was that when the people in the kitchen got a little loud, everyone turned around & told them to be quiet."

Oddly for such a pessimistic profession, (& such a pessimistic group individually), there was a feeling of optimism & well being overlaid by a strange sense of reverence, all embodied in the answer to the question, "Divine emanation or Earthly paramour?" which was Robert Kocih. To speak with the man was to be as if one speaking in a dream. Most disappointing was the apparent lack of interest by those slightly older poetry types in even showing up & seeing what was going down. i hope that in the future i find myself interested enough in finding out what's going on to take a couple of days off work & go upstate to have me a look around. There was for all its posture & lack of

prescience, something uplifting about this controversy of poets, which occurred early last April near a still frozen lake.

[↑ Contents](#)

143. **Sandra Braman**

poetry

Fri 6 Oct 1995

Charles Alexander -- Have been batting back and forth to Urbana for a variety of frustrating reasons, but am now ensconced at cabin in northern Minnesota at least through October and probably November.

Any chance of getting together a poetry evening late in October, or?

Sandra Braman

218/ [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

218/ [REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

144. **Blair Seagram**

Visual Art & Poetry

Fri 6 Oct 1995

Juliana

"Could the public's (there does seem to be some sort of public here) desire for innovative art might have something to do with the one of a kindness of art?

That is my best guess."

Andy Warhol is the most popular artist in the art world today, I believe. And his entire philosophy was geared toward mass production, even if his output was minute compared with a corporation's or a CD of the Stones. Maybe the reason he sold was ironic. And lots of networking.

I think for some painters and sculptors one of a kindness is important, but for "conceptual" artists, not so much. Conceptual is a lousy word. Let's just say certain artists are not interested in one of a kind at all. It has no bearing on their message.

Spring Ulmer " I think the visual arts has a lot to learn from poetry happenings today. In terms of community support and working together, the major poets I know/have come in contact with (Anne Waldman, Susan Howe, Leslie Scalapino, Sam Hamill, Allen Ginsberg to name a few) have been amazingly open, personal, and unpretentious which is more than I can say about those NY

artists I know. I think though, that this subject of comparing the visual arts and poetry is too large and filled with too much speculation - Perhaps some people would like to address their own practices and how far reaching they are, or want them to be."

As one NY artist, I can say the gallery system never worked for me. Although I know people who have done quite well, thank you, from this system.

But you have to know the game. Or know people in the game that believe in you. And you need a little hype to make it "big". And I think perhaps in every field that happens. Some fields may be more comfortable than others, or perhaps you learn to disregard the system and do it for the sheer enjoyment of it. As an experiment.

I think its true that there isn't much community support in the art world. I have seen very little leadership among older successful artists. I read an article on Frank Stella a while back, in WW Mag I think. About his relationship to younger artists he said something like, "we're two ships passing in the night". I hate to pick on Stella but he had a lot of power. He could have used it to promote certain directions he thought were important in art. He didn't. I know that musicians need each other more than visual artists or poets do, but when I worked for Isaac Stern I saw a totally different way of handling a creative environment and working with younger artists, than I did in the art world. And believe me, I think it makes a difference. The art world's stagnation may have to do with a lack of continuity. Then again perhaps this was in the cards from the start.

There is an attitude problem with some NY artists and dealers for sure. I started losing interest in the NY art scene about two years ago. And I don't think I am alone. There is simply no energy. Certainly I have very little interest or time to devote to it. Something is dead I am quite sure about that. And that is just fine by me. Like the financial world, the art world in the 1980's was mainly hype with not much substance. I have a feeling the gallery scene is still in the 80's and the 90's are somewhere else.

Visual work is easier to grasp than poetry. But finally I think poetry is more personal than any of the other arts and perhaps that is why it remains sequestered. Although it seems to me, that I see, hear and read far more about poetry in the media these days than I did five years ago. But what is the media hyping? Certainly not the poets I hear about on this list. The media has a way of reducing just about everything to the lowest common denominator.

As far as the comment someone made about the price of visual work dropping as soon as language was inserted. I think that is untrue. Jenny Holtzer is extremely succesful. Now I have forgotten some of the other names, but what I find curious is that most of the language stuff and arguably the best, done in

the visual arena, has been by women. There are dozens of visual artists whose work has become more and more concerned with language. I have a tendency to think one of the main thrusts of the 80's was language in the visual arts. Certainly it had more on the ball than the expressionist plate-breaking of Julian Schnabel.

Mark Wallace " While resistance to easy characterizations or labelling, etc, is certainly necessary, I want to question whether or not the resistance to all characterization, even situational and specific, would really be a good tactic for poets."

I got into an impossible position this past weekend, with a couple of friends (one an art dealer the other a journalist.) I used the term "Language Poetry" and the f-cking wrath of god came down upon me. What did I mean by this term? And if I couldn't give an explanation, I had absolutely no right to use the phrase. Well the truth is, I couldn't give an explanation, because I really am so unclear as to the meaning. Is language poetry based on sound? Is it about the deconstruction of language? Or maybe the reconstruction? Is it a sensitivity to the way a word is formed in the mouth and/or constructed on the page? What is it? How many things is it? Is there one particular reason why a person gets dubbed a language poet. Did anyone write an article or maybe a book about language poetry? What is it in the work of Bruce Andrews and Bernadette Mayer, for instance, that makes them LPoets?

Dodie Bellamy "Many of the artists I know are doing work that's involved with in-your-face sexuality, which is treated by (everyone but the NEA, of course) as interesting, but no big deal. That's what I'm really jealous about, artists' ability to do sexually explicit work and not somehow feel tainted or whispered about."

As far as writers go, you don't find Kathy Acker sexually explicit? Didn't I read somewhere that she's performing at Albert Hall. Some whisper.

Best,

Blair

[↑ Contents](#)

145. **eric pape**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Fri 6 Oct 1995

Carolyn: Great post. I am very glad to hear that you think the structural limitations of the workshop need to be changed. If that _can_ be done, then the historical domination of one type of "official" poetics may end. But let's not underestimate these limitations. Most of them have to do with the dynamics of the classroom itself and are not going to go away by re-arranging the desks and

assuring everybody an A (a luxury that most of us who teach only undergraduates are not allowed incidentally -- I just received my third notice this morning in fact that my grade distribution is outside of the department norm.) I think, historically, that the pressures exerted by administrations to explain what happens in workshops and the pressures exerted by the AWP in the past to compete with other schools, and the pressures exerted by the structure of authority in the workshop have resulted in the consolidation of criteria that has dominated the official poetry scene for a long time. Have these pressures been eliminated? My concern is that we simply replace the old criteria with the new without fundamentally changing the way the workshop operates. To change that, I think we have to re-think workshops. Do stuff like get rid of grades entirely, so that even the threat of a lower grade (a threat which is real to grad students I promise) does not exist. I think we need to get rid of the single instructor as well. Team teaching would seem to me to obviate some of the authority problems, but since I have no experience with that, I wonder what other people think? Also, what do we do about the demands of the departments where we work? I'd be interested in any ideas you or anyone else has. Again, I am delighted that this discussion is taking place with someone who has real authority in the AWP. There is hope----- Thanks, Eric.

[↑ Contents](#)

146. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: Joel Oppenheimer

Fri 6 Oct 1995

Why aren't people writing about Joel Oppenheimer's poetry? 61- _a"|+pbWhy aren't people writing

about Joel Oppenheimer's poetry? (I will, as soon as I get some other obligations out of the way--but am i one voice--well, there's george and charles too--in the wilderness?)

burt

[↑ Contents](#)

147. **Charles Alexander**

Re: poetry

Fri 6 Oct 1995

>Charles Alexander -- Have been batting back and forth to Urbana for a
>variety of frustrating reasons, but am now ensconced at cabin in northern
>Minnesota at least through October and probably November.

>

>Any chance of getting together a poetry evening late in October, or?

>

>Sandra Braman

>

>218/ [REDACTED]

>

Certainly! Any lurkers here who are interested please give me a call. Otherwise I'll talk with several people here and get back to you. Do you want to suggest a time? Anyone not in Minnesota who wants to drop by is also welcome.

Charles Alexander
Chax Press
P.O. Box 19178
Minneapolis, MN 55419-0178
[REDACTED] (phone & fax)
[REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

148. **Charles Smith**

Re: Celan Salon

Fri 6 Oct 1995

Has anyone mentioned Benjamin Hollander, who directly acknowledges/works out of Celan in his writing? (& edited the Celan issue of _ACTS_)

CS

[↑ Contents](#)

149. **Judy Roitman**

Re: whyld, comfy blue

Fri 6 Oct 1995

I really liked Charles Alexander's response. Why be elitist? My old high school English teacher, with whom I remain very close, is troubled because she cannot "explicate" my work, but I too have found that people without preconceptions can often enter into supposedly difficult work. "Gift" rather than "hook" -- yes indeed.

[↑ Contents](#)

150. **Fred Muratori**

Giants and LIPS

Fri 6 Oct 1995

Does anyone know if the pozzine _Giants Play Well in the Drizzle_ (out of NYC) is still a going concern? Ditto for _LIPS_ (Montclair, NJ). Have had work at those theres going on almost a year now, and -- ever mindful of the etiquette that applies to writers if not to editors -- I'd want to know that said zines are dead before plying goods elsewhere. (And yes I do usually query directly, but most of the time the queries -- complete with SASsomethings -- are ignored, too.) Thank you.

Fred Muratori

"Certain themes are incurable."

(██████)

- Lyn Hejinian

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[↑ Contents](#)

151. **Mark Roberts**

Re: AWOL: ARTS ONLINE CONFERENCE

Fri 6 Oct 1995

*The Arts Law Centre of Australia presents
ARTS ONLINE: Getting Started in Multimedia and Online Publishing*

*A conference on fundamental business and legal aspects of multimedia and
online publishing*

*Tuesday 24 October 1995 :1.30 to 4.30pm
Domain Theatre, Level 1
The Art Gallery of New South Wales*

*Mark (and others) - What about holding a conference of this nature online?
Several years back, I chaired such an effort as a part of university duties.
We spent about two or three weeks, as I recall, conferring about specific
topics in structured formats. We maintained a running chat line (simulating
the hallways and break areas). I'm sure it could be argued that we're
already doing something like that here. The difference, of course, lies in
the focus, the preparation, and the manner of responding. Less of an
off-the-cuff arrangement can be quite interesting and productive.*

| Sheila

Sheila and others

I've asked the Arts Law Centre if they would be prepared to allow me to post extracts of some of the papers. I'm not sure how it would work - I suppose it depends on the size of the papers. Maybe an introductory document might be useful.

Mark

[↑ Contents](#)

152. **Fred Muratori**
Re: Joel Oppenheimer

Fri 6 Oct 1995

*Why aren't people writing about Joel Oppenheimer's poetry?
61-_a"|+pbWhy aren't people writing
about Joel Oppenheimer's poetry? (I will, as soon as I get some other
obligati
ons out of the way--but am i
one voice--well, there's george and charles too--in the wilderness?)*

burt

I wonder about that, too. For what it's worth, I wrote a piece titled "Joel Oppenheimer's Urban Architecture" (on New Spaces), for Creeping Bent, Spring 1987, #5, pp. 41-47. Oppenheimer sent me a very kind note as a result, with an invitation to visit. Unfortunately, he died not long afterward. I never did meet him, but I've heard he was a very generous man.

Fred Muratori

"Certain themes are incurable."

()

- Lyn Hejinian

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[↑ Contents](#)

153. **tunguska**
oj can you see...the glove
Fri 6 Oct 1995

Aldon's synopsis of the Simpson defence's timeline
shows what fetishism is really all about.

Ode To The Glove

When our day was dark and weary
Sittin' on the void amongst the jury
You came along and spotted our light
The brightest quick fix of the nation's sight
A bath to take, no worry to fake
That great evidence that make me quake
Divine intervention come a-rainin' they say
Down in the form of a leathery lay
tod thilleman

[↑ Contents](#)

154. **tunguska**
derivation passage
Fri 6 Oct 1995

George;

You are so correct, it is a horrid verb (shudder...click, creak....shudder).
The excercise
sees us thru, saw us thru, is a passage now
tthilleman
tod thilleman

[↑ Contents](#)

155. **tunguska**
Stephen Jonas, gentleman
Fri 6 Oct 1995

from EXCERCISES for ear (Talisman House, 1994):

VI

you too would yell
a plague upon

the heads of all
bankers

if I held you
by yr so

three hundred bil-
lion dollar debt

XV

youth
 of my generation

repaired
 to The Moon

thither
 did their sen-

timents piti-
 fully meet

-- broken phrases
& abbreviations grope

in the
 half-light

LXXXIV

... nor, in this common light, have we
 fared better, most
unhappy lot

 made no-
 toriously reasonable;
chance and circumstance turns all to
 cold metallic purpose
setting no sights to move or to dance
the image, dismantled
 all that machinery
 departed,

leaving the scene to
 maudlin abstractions,
 passions too powerful to be believed
or if believed,
 too long endured

*** **

originally published by Andrew Crozier, The Ferry Press, London, 1968. tod
thilleman

[↑ Contents](#)

156. **tunguska**

The History of Lies: Derrida @ New School NYC 10/6 4 p.m.

Fri 6 Oct 1995

The History of Lies, an hour and one half lecture by Jacques Derrida, was delivered at the New School, as part of this year's symposium on the philosophy of Hannah Arendt.

What we took from this address, one aimed specifically at Arendt's later papers gathered around the idea of truth et al in relation to totalitarianism, was the current air of pessimism regarding american media.

Coupled with Arendt's ideas, Derrida first set off to define a lie as that which is bounded by the strict notion that one MUST tell the truth. This is the level at which the lie operates. The nature of politics, and history, were evoked thru the course of this "descriptive" oration, which, as we said, lasted for about an hour.

One of Arendt's central ideas, is that, to tell a lie, the teller must also be telling a lie, to himself. Duping himself, also. Part of this has to do with the nature of individual address, which always, in some way, says in effect, this is the truth, and I'm telling it to you and I want you to believe it. This characterization, if you will, of truth and the lie, so intertwined as to become one another, operates at the level of civic responsibility. And then he went into Kant and his definition of a lie, as, basically, that which is dangerous to the "state".

Derrida then takes this, and shows that the performative aspect of oration, or, what he likened to testimony, is constantly bounded by the machination of "telling the truth". An obligation that, tacitly, brooks no interference from the individual (that that, classically, is defined as having no part to play in politics, security of the state etc. those political assumptions, so operative at the very root of truth-telling). Yet it is this individuality, or what, in the big picture, so to speak, was, definately before WW II for example, bounded by "secret" obligations, and operated within the domain of a secret, that now comes under a radical universilization of "good conscience" of full and total disclosure, setting up an interaction, at the state level, and also the intra-personal, a sameness, whose receptive other is always the object of this "truth." This is evident in the way the media operates, it needs to know the limits of its audience, in order to de-limit them, and render them categorically pre-disposed to the above-mentioned machination.

It is precisely the possibilities that "secrets", or what he likens to "Civil Disobediences" bring to bear upon this truth-telling, this universalization of the lie (what Arendt likened to a great arch of narrative, crumbling into fragments, from which she believed, but not corroborated by Derrida, that truth would arise and triumph over) enters into the performative aspect of "testimony" as THE problematic of our time. That this taking of an "indestructible specificity" in the light of the difference between testimony, and the history of the lie--the victory of the "stable" of multiple teleologies, over individual, not just conscience, but being and ITS attendant assumptions, the possibility of totalitarianism must, always, be recognized, and never let to leave the area of this problematic.

Many questions, of course, and assertions, were put forth, regarding eastern europe and the fall of THAT totalitarian obviousness. But one speaker, talked about the events in Timosoara (romanian rev.) 1989, relating it to one of the contributing factors that assisted in the crumbling of yugoslavia some years later, as manifest in the populace's participation in the media coverage of those events and time, where what was seen, and acted upon, were different opinionizations feeding off of media coverage, creating a mosaic of realities to choose from. Media, that is, used not for a totalitarian view, but for its fragments. We found this interesting, because, what yugoslavia is generating, is seperate units, under all-encompassing ideas of race and totalization, which looks to all other world media distrustingly, as against their selves. Hardly a starting point for a "new and better age."

We've tried to impart first impressions of the breadth of this event, and offer it here in "good conscience."

tod thilleman

Matt Seidman

Meredith Brosnan

tod thilleman

[↑ Contents](#)

157. **Lindz Williamson**

thanksgiving

Fri 6 Oct 1995

Happy 503 years of genocide everybody! And on that happy note I'd like to say it has been a blast not really knowing all of you. I'm shutting down my server this friday (the 13th) so if anyone wants my address backchannel soon and I'll give it to you. I know some of you will be expecting christmas cards from me soon so include yours as well.

Take care and maybe I'll catch up with y'all later.

Lindz

[↑ Contents](#)

158. **Charles Alexander**
Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
Fri 6 Oct 1995

Eric & Carolyn, regarding poetry workshops.

My guess is there are some great examples of workshops. The one led by Joel Oppenheimer already mentioned, perhaps workshops of Robert Duncan's, maybe current ones by people on this list. I feel like I've led ones (11 years ago now, and in more of an extended university kind of setting) which weren't team taught, but which also weren't like most MFA ones I hear about, but which had their own sense of rigor and intense involvement of students learning new possibilities. We wrote regularly, did exercises aimed at learning to hear words/sounds both as meaning and in some ways independent of meaning; we read works ranging from Emily Dickinson to Jackson Mac Low, also listened to sound/performance poetry and saw some on video; we used some of the videos from the American Poetry Archive -- Zukofsky, Olson, Daphne Marlatt, Duncan; we strived not to learn rules but to find and make works which individually had their own rules we could come to understand and learn from. I hope to be able to teach such courses again.

While I like your notion, Eric, of team teaching, I also think there is room for the single inspiring teacher. The studio art class in which I first learned typography, printing, bookmaking, functioned as a workshop. The teacher was Walter Hamady (take my word for it, a marvelous printer/publisher). In a sense, though, Walter functioned as inspiration, and the students taught each other, with periodic lessons, critiques, and encouragement from Walter. In a way, vision and absolutely challenging and demanding standards were provided by him, and the students (advanced mixed in with beginners, which was a real help) learned the nuts and bolts together (and argued about what those nuts and bolts might include). The course gave me a sense of bookmaking as exploration which has sustained me through the present, and has given me an ongoing set of difficulties with what I've found to be the majority of fine bookmakers who have a more strictly craft-bound definition of their work.

Perhaps others on this list could talk about positive models for workshops they've actually taught or taken, as well as speculating on what might work. I'd love to hear from people who were in Duncan's workshops, people who have studied with others they found particularly instrumental in their own formation of a poetics.

Charles Alexander
Chax Press
P.O. Box 19178
Minneapolis, MN 55419-0178
[REDACTED] (phone & fax)
[REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

159. **Ron Silliman**
Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
Sat 7 Oct 1995

Carolyn,

I've always thought that the support for presses had greater value for poetry than the individual fellowships, but I admit I find your comment that "in the past years, several applicants have been "flagged" for denial by the Council" disturbing.

Can you give some idea as to who the blacklisted writers might be? And what the methodology is for "flagging" them? I.e., who initiates it and what is done?

Ron Silliman
[REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

160. **CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON**
Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
Sat 7 Oct 1995

Dear Ron, I agree with you regarding the importance of the presses, which is why I agreed to serve on that panel. With the demise of the discipline-based programs at the NEA, the Literature Program among them, there are fears that as many as a third of the small presses formerly supported by public funds will close down. While the individual fellowships have arguably made a difference in their recipients' lives, there is an argument to be made that these are the "elite grants," and are politically easier to preserve than grants to infrastructure (presses). As it happens, without the preservation of the individual grants at this time, it is unlikely that any public money would be apportioned to literature in the re-structured NEA. There was a story several years ago in the AWP Chronicle regarding the "flagged" grants. I don't remember the names of the poets/writers involved, but I do recall that they were gay/lesbian writers. Reportedly, NEA staff felt incomprehensibly obliged to warn the Council of possible controversies. This staff is no longer at the NEA. As you know,

US public subsidy of the arts has always been markedly lower than that of Europe, Canada and Japan. The \$2.8 million given by the NEA to literature (presses, magazines, individuals, organizations) was paltry but will be missed. I am not an admirer of the NEA because I believe that it has inappropriately politicized its subsidies. --Carolyn

On Sat, 7 Oct 1995, Ron Silliman wrote:

Carolyn,

I've always thought that the support for presses had greater value for poetry than the individual fellowships, but I admit I find your comment that "in the past years, several applicants have been "flagged" for denial by the Council" disturbing.

Can you give some idea as to who the blacklisted writers might be? And what the methodology is for "flagging" them? I.e., who initiates it and what is done?

Ron Silliman
[REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

161. **Maria Damon**

Re: The History of Lies: Derrida @ New School NYC 10/6 4 p.m.

Sat 7 Oct 1995

thanks for the detailed precis, thilleman (welcome to the list by the way) --this lecture has fascinating implications for the oj trial and the whole system of american justice, but i'm too fuzzy headed to dope it out here in any rigorous linear fashion. anyone else wanna give it a try?--md

[↑ Contents](#)

162. **Maria Damon**

Re: thanksgiving

Sat 7 Oct 1995

hey lindz its been (sorta) (un) real--maybe catch u at an mla or 2 at some pt -- don't know if i'll ever make it to the status of "learned"---md

[↑ Contents](#)

163. **Maria Damon**

Re: thanksgiving

Sat 7 Oct 1995

ps will u accept cards representing other "faiths"?--md

[↑ Contents](#)

164. **Maria Damon**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Sat 7 Oct 1995

the people who have inspired me most were those who allowed me the illusion that they were interlocutors rather than "teachers..."--md

[↑ Contents](#)

165. **Maria Damon**

Re: Stephen Jonas, gentleman

Sat 7 Oct 1995

there's lots of interest in Jonas these days. i'm particularly intrigued by his obscure genealogy (similar to Bob Kaufman in that both of them played a large role in keeping this genealogy obscure). in fact will be writing a chapter on him ...someday... also, what do you make of his virulent anti-semitism, so fierce and pronounced that everyone who writes on him feels compelled to address it?--md

[↑ Contents](#)

166. **CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Sat 7 Oct 1995

On Fri, 6 Oct 1995, eric pape wrote:

Carolyn: Great post. I am very glad to hear that you think the structural limitations of the workshop need to be changed. If that _can_ be done, then the historical domination of one type of "official" poetics may end.

But let's not underestimate these limitations. Most of them have to do with the dynamics of the classroom itself and are not going to go away by re-arranging the desks and assuring everybody an A (a luxury that most of us who teach only undergraduates are not allowed incidentally -- I just received my third notice this morning in fact that my grade distribution is outside of the department norm.)

If one chooses to work in the academy, one is more or less committed to working within, while intelligently assaulting, its constraints. I don't advocate blanket "A"'s. Only "active participants" receive an "A." Such participation

includes extensive reading, the completion of exercises and experiments, collaborative work, written responses to peer work, and a serious commitment to one's own project. In graduate school the A/B grade is essentially "satisfactory," while "C" or lower is not. Implicitly, this system is "pass/fail."

I think, historically, that the pressures exerted by administrations to explain what happens in workshops and the pressures exerted by the AWP in the past to compete with other schools, and the pressures exerted by the structure of authority in the workshop have resulted in the consolidation of criteria that has dominated the official poetry scene for a long time.

I was away from the academy for some years, and can't claim special knowledge, but it seems that if there is "pressure" on workshop pedagogy, it originates in the traditional, "periodist" English Department rather than in university administration. As so-called "creative writing" enrollments during the '70's boosted FTE and hence saved those departments at many institutions, the usual power struggles ensued. Scholars grew resentful of the presence of writers in their departments because of the perceived ease with which the latter could publish, and hence win promotion and raises. There were also other issues. The AWP has been historically regarded as overly "populist," and disregarded by the so-called "elite" MFA programs, which exert much more force over the poetics of the academy.

Have these pressures been eliminated? My concern is that we simply replace the old criteria with the new without fundamentally changing the way the workshop operates. To change that, I think we have to re-think workshops. Do stuff like get rid of grades entirely, so that even the threat of a lower grade (a threat which is real to grad students I promise) does not exist. I think we need to get rid of the single instructor as well. Team teaching would seem to me to obviate some of the authority problems, but since I have no experience with that, I wonder what other people think? Also, what do we do about the demands of the departments where we work? I'd be interested in any ideas you or anyone else has.

Again, I am delighted that this discussion is taking place with someone who has real authority in the AWP. There is hope-----

Thanks, Eric.

Dear Eric, I, too, am pleased to have this discussion. I don't, however, have "real authority" in the AWP. I served as President of its Board of Directors last year, and was able to establish WritersCorps (wherein 57 poets and writers work in homeless shelters, after-school programs, jails, etc. in three inner-city communities), which has now been transferred away from the AWP. I don't expect WritersCorps (which is part of the National Youth Service Corps) to survive congressional budget cuts. I am not sure that AWP is going to survive either. I suspect that when the curtain is withdrawn on a number of perceived centers of literary power in the United States, the little wizard will be visible.

--Carolyn

[↑ Contents](#)

167. **kat**

Re: The History of Lies: Derrida @ New School NYC 10/6 4 p.m.

Sat 7 Oct 1995

It would seem that Derrida's talk, along with his recent meditations on ethics via Kierkegaard, also has implications for the upcoming (?) trials (should they occur and address any other than footsoldiers) at the Hague. One of the problems in trying GENOCIDE cases is that the original UN definitions and the trials at Nuremburg rest on strict notions of individual agency and on admission of guilt by the nation behind the individual. Not all that long ago, 1970, The Civil Rights Congress, which had worked on documents from 1951, presented a charge of genocide to the UN, re: historical and ongoing treatment of black AMericans by US govt. This is recorded in a book called <We Charge Genocide.> The history of the uncessful attempts to launch genocide trials, including the one I mention, might be critiqued by the means or with the tools Derrida seems to be using re: lies and self-deception and Arendt's articulation and inhabiting of these legal/ethical categories. I am saying this rather flabbily, but we all need to think about Bosnia as well as OJ and media obfuscations of the world crises by means of a largely irrelevant trial, etc. Also, it seems that the recent piece by Edward Said in <Nation,> where he notes that the Mideast Peace is another ruse for the ruling classes (something he might have noted decades ago!!), is part of the same practical and theoretical stew we are stirring--no simmering in. There are many threads of careful analysis and meditation that seem in one way or another to tie into the questions arising from ethical crises that it would be a shame to fall for facile battles among the proponents of this or that school of cartography. I have been hearing that there is a need for opening doors, work places, workshops, borders. True. There are dangers well worth risking; these are exciting times, and it matters that even the most hermetic ethical thinkers are bubbling over with (dare I use a retro word) relevance. There are stunning new revelations about relationships between X and politics. These revelations are not stunning to Blacks nor to some Others. So. . .

[↑ Contents](#)

168. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: the workshop and the outside

Sat 7 Oct 1995

"So baby, baby, don't panic--
I'm a shade tree mechanic."
--Z. Z. Hill

[↑ Contents](#)

169. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: oj can you see...the glove

Sat 7 Oct 1995

okay

[↑ Contents](#)

170. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Sat 7 Oct 1995

Eric,

Outside of the normal distribution of grades?! Yikes, am I glad I don't work at your school!

Burt

[↑ Contents](#)

171. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Sat 7 Oct 1995

Just a footnote to Carolyn's latest post: Not only are literary presses, magazines and writers being adversely affected at the federal level, but at the state and local levels too. (this of course is obvious to all but i mention it anyway, if for not other reason then to lick my own wounds). For instance, Poetry New York (of which I am a part) has been "zeroed out" by the New York State Council on the Arts. i won't go into the reasons that were given for this action, but i will report that i have learned through candid conversation with the people responsible at NYSCA that my mag was one of seven and that there will be many more to follow. incidentally, PNY will continue to publish annually.

Burt Kimmelman

[↑ Contents](#)

172. **Rod Smith**

Re: The History of Lies: Derrida @ New School NYC 10/6 4 p.m.

Sat 7 Oct 1995

kat wrote:

>There are dangers well worth risking; these are exciting times, and it matters that even the most hermetic ethical

>thinkers are

bubbling over with (dare I use a retro word) relevance. There are

>stunning new revelations about relationships between X and >politics.

>These revelations are not stunning to Blacks nor to some >Others. So. . .

Would be interested to hear more about how you think all this might shake out, &/or what people can/should be doing to shake it in useful directions. Of course resources are being withdrawn as these questions (reflected not only in the Derrida posts but in several recent strings) are coming to the fore. . . --Rod

[↑ Contents](#)

173. **Steve Evans**

Bien Pensant Pinking Shears

Sat 7 Oct 1995

Not that the happy thoughts seem so prevalent now that acquiescence gives itself out as grim realism, but that phrase--"bien pensant pinking shears"--from Michael Gottlieb's impeccable transcript of a pessimistic intellect, NEW YORK (Figures, 1993) names so precisely both a value and a limit for critical consciousness that I had to hang it over the following scattered remarks about recent reading. Some of what follows may be news to some of you, much of it will not be. As a reading list, it's partial & Providence-centric; as a set of evaluations, it's probably inexcusable. Still, I know less and less how to participate in discussions about "generation" except by such particulars....

THE BAFFLER 7 (1995). An 128 page issue ("Twentieth Century Lite: The City in the Age of Information") is out, including poems by Damon Krukowski, Jennifer Moxley, Peter Gizzi, Rosmarie Waldrop, and David Trinidad. Krukowski, who runs Exchange Change Press along with Naomi Yang, has also been serving as the Baffler's poetry editor for the past two issues. Number 6 (1994) included poetry by Charles Bernstein, Charles Simic, Rod Smith, Margaret Young, David Trinidad, Steve Healey, and Jennifer Moxley. The Baffler, which comes out of Chicago, bills itself as "the journal that blunts the cutting edge." It is also one of the (desperately few) signs of political intelligence in print just now, whatever the generation of origin. \$5 per issue; \$16 for subscription of 4 issues; correspondence to: P.O. Box 378293, Chicago, IL 60637

Speaking of Damon, 5000 MUSICAL TERMS (Providence: Burning Deck, 1995) collects 17 previously fugitive pieces by this writer and musician (first of Galaxy 500 and now Music Hour) whose earlier chapbooks include FAILURES and PORTRAIT (A VOYAGE TO ITALY), both done in extremely limited private runs.

Burning Deck also recently (mid-September) brought out Brian Schorn's first book, STRABISMUS. The title refers to a pathology of the eye (it's Greek for "to squint") and the book opens with a poem/manifesto "Entering Poetic Blindspots," where Schorn writes: "Let a fatal combustion take place at the core of the retina in order to explode it into a million pieces of useless abstraction. What a joy in the blindness of really seeing the poem at any point before it ever imagined itself in a word to see, to say this completely blind, to know this in the meat of the poem that will never come to the surface of the poem. So we enter from here now, completely naked, completely confused, completely poetic" (13). Schorn is out of the matrix that made Christopher Dewdney, Joel Peter Whitkin, and the Surrealists.

PAUSE BUTTON by Kevin Davies (Vancouver: Tsunami, 1992) is a serious candidate for the single best book of the first half of the 90s. Davies keeps a steady gaze where even Lacan flinched ("The unconscious is structured like a / Shriners' convention") and he does more to deroutinize reflexivity than anyone since Steve Benson scaled back on his performance schedule. The cumulative effect of the many internestled em-dashes, brackets, and sub-brackets in PAUSE BUTTON is to render cognitive forms, more than any contingent content, the basal units of composition. For more recent work, check out the excerpts from DUCKWALKINGAPERIMETER in EXACT CHANGE YEARBOOK 1 (1995; 108-11), from THROB in THE IMPERCIPIENT 7 (1995; 61-67), and from MEANSTREAK in RADDLE MOON 14 (1995; 57-63).

Patrick Phillips has already announced the publication of RUIN, his first book and the inaugural volume of =BFwhat books here on the Poetics List, but I thought I'd second that promotion, well into a fourth or fifth pass through the book as I currently am. The small format (4.5 x 6.25) is custom-scaled to Phillips's linguistic minimalism cum conceptual maximalism and the book is wrapped in a stunning cover photograph (also by Phillips). Phillips lands on my map somewhere in the neighborhood of Monk, Eigner, and Ward, but I suspect he'd chide me for keeping a map in the first place.

Jennifer Moxley's THE FIRST DIVISION OF LABOUR ([Boston]: Rosetta, 1995) and "The Ballad of Her rePossession" (in re:Chapbook #1, 1995) both came out on the same day in late July. The re:Chapbook series is a new venture by poet Beth Anderson. Each chapbook brings together three writers at various stages of their careers (early, mid-, established). Thus along with Moxley's poem, re: Chapbook #1 presents three poems by Angela Littwin and an excerpt from

Keith Waldrop's THE HOUSE SEEN FROM NOWHERE. You can order the chapbook directly from Anderson at 154 Doyle Street, Providence RI 02906; the price is \$5.

As we all get set to dive into Object 5 (affectionately referred to in my household as the "total Rodomy" issue, in honor of course of the 25-page Rod Smith feature), it seems worth mentioning that Object 4 (Spring/Summer 1995) was devoted to Robert Kocik's brilliant work AUKSO (GAIN). Where other works strain to produce any one determinate cognitive event, Kocik's pages teem with complex specifics (figured in the work's opening section, "Opifex Makes Oneself by Trial," as van Leeuwenhoek's water drop teeming with animate forms) and Kocik's intellectual project has a sweep scarcely attempted since Olson. Kocik's piece in BLOO 3 (1995), OVERLY CONSTRUCTIVE INDIFFERENCES THEMSELVES (44-53), is an excellent companion piece to AUKSO (GAIN) and both link up in interesting ways to Bruno Latour's theory of "quasi-objects" in the polemic book-length essay on science, WE HAVE NEVER BEEN MODERN (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1993).

Like Juliana Spahr, who mentioned it several months ago, I've been reading & enjoying Ben Friedlander's A KNOT IS NOT A TANGLE (Buffalo: Meow, 1995) and through it back (appropriately enough) to ANTERIOR FUTURE (Buffalo: Meow, 1993). Friedlander's work over the past 10-15 years is probably one of the main reasons so many people pin so much hope on the lyric and by the same token his unerring sense of how to get mind into line is a standing rebuke to the "bland abstract lyric" as recently diagnosed/thundered against on this list. Dumb luck alone put me in the way of DIM SPARSE and A PINFOLD PENTACLE (1984 and 1988 respectively, and both done David Scheidlower's wonderful, too short-lived Coincidence Press out of Oakland), but since then I've tried to pay attention. Meow books get out via SPD.

a t s u o o o s
r i a t n m u

[↑ Contents](#)

174. **Chris Stroffolino**
Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Sat 7 Oct 1995

I'm jumping in here late(so may be redundant), but Carolyn's def. of "active participation" may need to be questioned on the grounds that while I do agree that the reading assignments should be done, the imposition of collaborations and other workshop assignments may do more harm than good in a long term level (as opposed to short term). I am operating on a particular assumption here--and perhaps generalizing from my own experience which is that I've

never been able to write poetry as well when in a workshop environment than when "on my own" as it were---the pressures of performance, etc and also the particular audience (rather than the faceless(sic) one of not being in a workshop) may present obstacles to certain students--and I think this should be accounted for by workshop teachers---chris stroffolino

[↑ Contents](#)

175. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Bien Pensant Pinking Shears

Sat 7 Oct 1995

Dear Steve Evans--You put the address on where to get Jennifer's Chapbook, but you did not put the address on how to order the other book of hers-- the full length book...Actually, I can't believe it came out in July and I just found out now...Didn't I visit you in July? Talk about modesty... Anyway---please post the address (please please please) and I will try not to say anything bad about some of your other choices(!)----thanks, chris stroffolino

[↑ Contents](#)

176. **Steve Carll**

Workshops that work

Sat 7 Oct 1995

I took a workshop a couple of years back with Leslie Simon at New College of California here in S.F. entitled "Poetry Like Jazz" (which turned out to be a compression of "Reading Poetry Like Playing Jazz.") I'd been hesitant for a couple of years before that about workshops, having taken a couple and spending more time defending my poetics than getting useful feedback on my poems.

We treated the poems brought in to be workshopped as "standards" to be improvised off of, the way jazz musicians improvise off a familiar melody. So one of us would read a poem and hand out copies of it, and the rest of us would go off with the poem for ten minutes and come back with a poem which was responsive in some way to that first one. Instead of ten people using the language of criticism to tear your poem apart, ten people would respond from their source of creativity to your poem as a seed. It was much more a process of affirmation; we'd developed a kind of "group mind" by the end, 11 very individual voices learning how to speak each other's languages.

I'd definitely participate in something like this again.

[↑ Contents](#)

177. **Eryque Gleason**
Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
Sun 8 Oct 1995

A little bit ago Chris S. wrote:

I'm jumping in here late(so may be redundant), but Carolyn's def. of "active participation" may need to be questioned on the grounds that while I do agree that the reading assignments should be done, the imposition of collaborations and other workshop assignments may do more harm than good in a long term level (as opposed to short term). I am operating on a particular assumption here--and perhaps generalizing from my own experience which is that I've never been able to write poetry as well when in a workshop environment than when "on my own" as it were---the pressures of performance, etc and also the particular audience (rather than the faceless(sic) one of not being in a workshop) may present obstacles to certain students--and I think this should be accounted for by workshop teachers---chris stroffolino

to which I responded:

I'm jumping even later and haven't read my mail for a while so I just trashed the whole pile last night. At any rate, my experience with workshops is pointedly different than Chris', I find that when I'm part of a workshop or work collaboratively, I seem to be much more focussed and productive. In my faceless (is there another way to spell that?) room, I usually write blurry crap, and never finish it anyway. I don't know for sure whether my current surroundings don't lend themselves to an atmosphere in which I can write, or if I need the (slight!) pressure of an immediate audience. At any rate, I agree with you, Chris, that this issue should be carefully attended by teachers. It might be particularly difficult to keep a few people that write well in a workshop environment from dominating a class (paritcularly a small one) if those that do better work outside of the class atmosphere don't share their work. t heck with it might, it is.

Eryque "Just call me Eric" Gleason
71 E. 32nd St. Box 949
Chicago, IL 60616
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

!-----
If I weren't a monkey, there'd
be problems.

[↑ Contents](#)

178. **Rod Smith**

Re: Bien Pensant Pinking Shears

Sun 8 Oct 1995

Steve Evans made the following statement:

PAUSE BUTTON by Kevin Davies (Vancouver: Tsunami, 1992) is a serious candidate for the single best book of the first half of the 90s.

It is my stated opinion that he is entirely correct in this evaluation.

--Rodomy

[↑ Contents](#)

179. **Blair Seagram**

identity crises

Sun 8 Oct 1995

Bill Luoma <[REDACTED]>

>>All kinds of identity crises available, but -- it's one thing to identify groups of poets >>who seem to share common aesthetic interests, or presuppositions, or questions,, etc. >>-- another thing to grab bunches of poets by the scruff of their

>>birthdate & ask an identity to emerge -- rather like the "Texas

>>Sharpshooter" phenomenon --

Dear Bill:

I'm not sure who you are directing this comment to, but in case it was something I said, let me say this:

I guess it is unfair to ask a group of poets who have come to be known by a specific name to explain that name. Probably if one had asked Willem de Kooning what Abstract Expressionism was, he would have shrugged his shoulders and said, beats me!

My guess is that Language Poetry probably has as many variations as the term Conceptual Art. And certainly if one looks at Barnett Newman and de Kooning in the same breath, it is not all that apparent why they both get defined as Abstract Expressionists. However, in the case of Abstract Expressionism, I think it was a generational thing. I think it has less to do with their similarities than it has to do with a voice that was expressing a broad sentiment in different ways.

In any event I thought your post was very amusing and worth reading twice.

Best wishes,

Blair

180. **Tom Beard**
Re: whyld, comfy blue

Sun 8 Oct 1995

Charles,

But we do find within smaller groups the ability to say what might be offending to a larger group, and most challenging artists in history at least had a small group of friends/colleagues who supported what they were doing.

Very true, but one would hope that that support is not unconditional, and that one's supporters were not afraid of giving constructive criticism. I've been in situations where the only response was a pat on the back, "good boy, you've written a poem", and I wished that someone would give my work the courtesy of some serious, rigorous, critical attention. There's also the danger, when a group sees itself as representing some sort of movement, that the members will praise one another simply for using the methods that the group supports, without any attention to whether these methods are being used effectively, or any critique of the basic ethos of the group. These are the connotations of the words "cozy" & "comfy" that I see as being a problem.

Perhaps this is a male thing: we want recognition, fame (some hope!) and the impression that our texts are striding the face of the earth, being proactive and manly

Really? Speak for yourself (I know you're being somewhat tongue in cheek, but please . . .).

I'm beginning to regret this statement (& I'm learning how poorly irony comes across in cyberspace). I know some people who might have reacted to my other statements by caricaturing my position thus, and my ploy of countering an anticipated objection by including it within my statement fell flat on its face.

I still intended to ask a serious question, so perhaps I'll rephrase it. How do people here feel about what readers do with their texts? Do you relish the idea of your poems being (mis)interpreted by readers, perhaps being used as material for responses or found poems? Or do you feel that your poems are precious pieces of yourself, and that when strangers read them this feels like some sort of violation? And do you think that there might be a tendency for the responses to show a division according to gender?

Yes, I want people to read/hear the work and even approach me about it, but I can't imagine having no mixed feelings at all about this. The work does span a delicate bridge between/among private and public. When I have given readings where I knew almost noone there (it does happen sometimes, even a

couple of times to audiences of a couple of hundred people), it almost felt like it was someone else standing there, some me/not me, doing the reading. Like the public/private chasm, there is both a sense of identification/disassociation from a finished work, particularly when the writer experiences it in front of an audience.

Yes, I know the feeling - more than just stage fright. When I get the impression that my work and the audience have little in common (this often happens at open-mike readings) that "me/not me" certainly does take over. I also find, however, that the "private" side of my writing evaporates (or more likely metamorphoses) somewhere during the process experience -> writing -> editing -> reading. This may be more a reflection of my own writing style and the content of my work, but by the time of publication or public reading, I find that disassociation has thoroughly set in, and what was once private becomes almost abstract.

The transformations that occur during the writing process can be really fascinating, and even revealing. I find that what were once ironic personae in my poems become almost confessional, and vice versa. When I read some of my earlier work in new contexts, I often find myself coming to new and even sobering conclusions about myself. Sometimes, when a reader (or friend) responds to my poems, perhaps by saying "that's really sad", or "I like the erotic subtext", they catch me by surprise and make me re-evaluate those poems (and myself). It's a process that I find exhilarating and vital, and it's one of the reasons that I want my poems to be read.

I still feel profoundly sad at the fact that hardly anyone other than poets and professional critics reads contemporary poetry.

I think it's true that they don't, but not true that they won't; and I believe that if they do, they can respond in unique and intelligent ways. One of my best critics/supporters has been my daughter's German day care mom (tages mutti). I like to think I write for such people as much as for other poets or critics.

I agree entirely. Part of the answer lies in, as you say, "writ[ing] for such people as for other poets or critics". This need not be "writing down" to them, but involves considering the concerns and tastes of one's intended audience.

To do this, the text must answer the reader's question, "why should I create my own field of meanings from this poem here, rather than this other poem, or this movie, or this page of the telephone book?"

No, it doesn't have to answer that question, it just has to keep the work alive enough to invite the reader to try and answer it (invite being the operative word here).

I think that this is what I meant. A poem that is alive and invites the reader back has, in a sense, answered this question. "Why should I read this poem?" Because it is alive, and is extending an invitation to me.

We're probably saying the same thing, just differing as to whether it's the poem or the reader that's answering the question.

If we are asking readers to put some work into our poems, shouldn't we offer them something in return? The challenge, as I see it, is to write poems that are challenging, polysemic and subtle, but that have some "hook" that will make the reader _want_ to come back to the poem again and again. Maybe if I live to 130 I'll write one such poem.

I agree, except the word "hook" seems loaded, manipulative. I like to think of it more as a gift.

Yes, "gift" is a good word. I used the word "hook" (in quotes) as an analogy to the "hook" of a popular song, and I suppose that some might see that as manipulative.

I think of this gift/hook as being some sort of benign textual virus, one that finds fertile breeding grounds within a reader's brain. There are phrases from poems that continue to worm their way through my subconscious, popping up when I least expect them, changing the way that I think, write and feel. They are beautiful.

Thanks for the thoughtful reply,

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

[↑ Contents](#)

181. **Tom Beard**

Gift

Sun 8 Oct 1995

Thinking of Charles' idea of a "gift", something that a poem gives to the reader and makes them want to give their attention in return, reminded me of this old poem of mine. Also, poem as gift as virus as hook, "gift" as noun or verb, gratitude vs obligation, gift vs bribe, temptation vs generosity, leading you down the garden path...

Gift

sleep thickens and stops stone at my throat
muttering hints tapping on my sternum, yes
a stone the colour of silence, your hand
cool among the forests of my chest
sunlight fallen earthwards, slow, filtered,
tapu river curling in its bed, volcanic, the skin
of your stone, stones
of my skin shaking, recalling their birth
one stone entwined in undergrowth monolith menhir
reaching sky through sheets and ceiling
burrowing faultlines, tearing ribs
already my bloodstream swells
with tiny stones, beating upstream, stars of light
touching water, rumour of rain through blinds
or wind or train or cars humming filtered
white noise yes, yes your skin a poem
a place to get lost in

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

[↑ Contents](#)

182. **Ron Silliman**
Re: wild blue yonder
Sun 8 Oct 1995

You wrote:

>

>Ron,

>

>You wrote: "Similarly, all sound poetry 'says the same thing' and it
says it

>over and over."

>

>che cosa?

>

What, in days of yore, we called the surplus of the signifier....

[↑ Contents](#)

183. **R I Caddel**
Giants play well in the drizzle

Mon 9 Oct 1995

Someone asked about this magazine/newssheet, yes? As far as I know it's folded (- er - that is, it is no more), Martha King having gone into other publishing ventures, including various chapbooks well-printed on good materials: the latest I saw was a superb one by UK poet Tony Baker called ... yellow blue tibia ...

Martha's still at: 326A 4th St Brooklyn NY11215. Send her large quantities of \$ \$\$ and order the Tony Baker title.

Meanwhile her husband Basil King is just starting a tour of the UK, and will be reading with slides of his work in Morden Tower, Newcastle, on October 20th (a joint Bunting Centre/Morden Tower production).

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

[↑ Contents](#)

184. **Aldon L. Nielsen**
Re: Signifier Surplus

Mon 9 Oct 1995

There's a sale on gift hooks at the local book store!

[↑ Contents](#)

185. **Aldon L. Nielsen**
Re: line & sinker

Mon 9 Oct 1995

where are the renga of yesteryear?

[↑ Contents](#)

186. **Mark Wallace**

I want to help it, but I can't

Mon 9 Oct 1995

I appreciate Gale Nelson's response to some of my recent comments. But I can't, Gale, really agree with what you've said there.

Although poetry may not be a successful mass market commodity (altho some types of poetry come pretty close), there are markets for poetry (several, not nearly enough) and poets are greatly influenced--I don't say entirely controlled--by what the poetry marketplace will bear. A poem may not be a commodity in and of itself, but the moment it is produced, it IS a commodity, however unlike certain other kinds of commodities. So in response to your comments, and admitting some complexities, I'd have to say this:

Poetry IS a commodity.

Poets need tactics. And they use them.

The tastes that "move an editor" are not determined solely in individual isolation, but are greatly shaped by the politics of the production market. The tastes that "move a writer" are not determined solely in isolation, but are greatly shaped by the work they have access to, which is to say, by the politics of the production market.

People who deny that poetry is a commodity are often doing so because they don't want others to have access to their markets, or because they think there's something fundamentally wrong with the very idea of production. As an editor, do you really publish "just what I like"? Or does what one likes tend towards certain kinds of poetry, and certain kinds of poets (people with similar outlooks, aesthetics, maybe even one's personal friends), and are those tendencies not ideological? I think the latter is true, and not necessarily wrong, as long as one makes some conscious effort to articulate where one is coming from. There's nothing wrong with production per se. But what does seem to me wrong is to deny that ideological/cultural/political problems have a bearing on the poetry that any editor--even and especially oneself--publishes. My decisions, as an editor of a magazine, are based on the huge variety of cultural problems that greatly determine my "taste."

mark wallace

[↑ Contents](#)

187. **Dodie Bellamy**

Re: line & sinker

Mon 9 Oct 1995

A. Nielsen writes:

| *where are the renga of yesteryear?*

Dear Al,

Please don't even whisper that hideous 'R' word. Terrible things have been known to have been summoned back from the grave.

Dodie

[↑ Contents](#)

188. **Edward Foster**

Re: Politics and derivation

Mon 9 Oct 1995

i have a sense that the passage larry price quotes from after lorca is derived from mallarme and considerations of purity. the formal difference is theological. emerson for duncan was more than metaphor; the key perception is movement. tho in spicer there is mention of reaching out, the key peception is rest. -ed

[↑ Contents](#)

189. **Edward Foster**

Re: Joel Oppenheimer

Mon 9 Oct 1995

yes, burt, we need someone to take us through oppenheimer; david landrey where are you?

[↑ Contents](#)

190. **Edward Foster**

Re: Giants and LIPS

Mon 9 Oct 1995

yes, lips is indeed going very strong; laura boss has an issue on its way at present. -ed

[↑ Contents](#)

191. **cris cheek**

Re: yonder lies a surplus of the signifier....

Mon 9 Oct 1995

Ron, what are we calling sound poetry under this pithy rebuttal? I like the brio of your take but

To lead you on a little - the following are but a low tech sampling of poets who have deliberately presented work in contexts identified as Sound Poetry:

Bernard Heidsieck (hope you know at least some of his magnificent Poemes Partitions series, particularly Partitions V) / Jerome Rothenberg / Gerhard Ruhm / bp nicol / Steve McCafferty / bill bissett / Franz Mon / Henri Chopin / Jackson MacLow / Bob Cobbing / let alone their earlier twentieth century peers such as Schwitters / Sitwell (and a considerable swathe of those who appear in the anthology just out from Jerry and Pierre's labor of love - I can't wait to begin using that)

admittedly this list could hardly be more beefcake (it could ceratinly be a lot longer), but a surplus of signifiers? I've, also deliberately, chosen a range of practitioners whose work challenges your reductivist take - granted you're probably making one of your usefully deliberate provocative opening gambits.

And to leap from discussion to discussion under the mutating subject heading - isn't this a little like the sense I've read in some more recent posts here that it's possible to write without the presence of politics (with a small p) - even if that presence is signified by its absence - let alone choice of context, conceptual framing, choice of vocabulary, syntactical strategies, formal modes and so on? I would worry about 'sound' poetry becoming too cheaply over-characterised unless again we're talking detail and example. Same with too easy hooks such as 'visual' poetry or 'performance' poetry for that matter.

here's to hearing that paint dry
love and love
cris

[↑ Contents](#)

192. **Shaunanne Tangney**

Re: Gift

Mon 9 Oct 1995

On Sun, 8 Oct 1995, Tom Beard wrote:

Thinking of Charles' idea of a "gift", something that a poem gives to the reader and makes them want to give their attention in return, reminded me of this old poem of mine. Also, poem as gift as virus as hook, "gift" as noun or verb, gratitude vs obligation, gift vs bribe, temptation vs generosity, leading

you down the garden path...

i love the idea of the gift. . . i think that a poem is the reality of gift. . . cixous speaks of both the gift and of pure spending. she alludes to the pot latch in which we are made richer by what we give away. pure spending seems to me a heady concept, full of love and potential. i am always about trying to do it. . . and most especially in my writing. consider also derrida, and the concept of play here--that significance arises in the play btw. signifiers--this seems to me very close to a gift, as well--something unexpected, but magical, and delightful. .

h, the gift, the gift! how to at once give and receive--purely, cleanly, w/ purpose and intent and yet w/ surprise and joy!

--shaunanne

Gift

*sleep thickens and stops stone at my throat
muttering hints tapping on my sternum, yes*

*a stone the colour of silence, your hand
cool among the forests of my chest*

*sunlight fallen earthwards, slow, filtered,
tapu river curling in its bed, volcanic, the skin
of your stone, stones
of my skin shaking, recalling their birth*

*one stone entwined in undergrowth monolith menhir
reaching sky through sheets and ceiling
burrowing faultlines, tearing ribs*

*already my bloodstream swells
with tiny stones, beating upstream, stars of light
touching water, rumour of rain through blinds
or wind or train or cars humming filtered
white noise yes, yes your skin a poem
a place to get lost in*

I/am a background/process, shrunk to an icon. | Tom Beard
I am/a dark place. | [REDACTED]
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

[↑ Contents](#)

193. **Ron Silliman**

Re: The South

Mon 9 Oct 1995

A dumb question, but my dictionary is mute on this point. How, dear friends south of the Equator, does one spell "diggery do"?

[↑ Contents](#)

194. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: verbatim gift from my TV set

Tue 10 Oct 1995

"When people are asked
what kind of lawn tractor they'd
like for a gift,
most say the same thing."

[↑ Contents](#)

195. **Rod Smith**

Re: didgeridoo lips

Tue 10 Oct 1995

Ron, Not below the equator but gave instructions in print for performance of poems of mine using the instrument-- at least doubly encountered spelling-- "didgeridoo."

Ed,
Cld you post an address for _Lips_?
--Rod

[↑ Contents](#)

196. **Charles Smith**

Re: The South

Tue 10 Oct 1995

"A dumb question, but my dictionary is mute on this point. How, dear friends south of the Equator, does one spell "diggery do"?"

Ron,

Liner notes here give both didjeridu & didjeridoo. Take yer pick.

cs

[↑ Contents](#)

197. **Ron Silliman**

Yonder

Tue 10 Oct 1995

My friend, Mr. Cheek, writes,

>

>Ron, what are we calling sound poetry under this pithy rebuttal? I like the brio of your take but To lead you on a little - the following are but a low tech sampling of poets who have deliberately presented work in contexts identified as Sound Poetry:

>

>Bernard Heidsieck (hope you know at least some of his magnificent Poemes Partitions series, particularly Partitions V) / Jerome Rothenberg / Gerhard Ruhm / bp nicol / Steve McCafferty / bill bissett / Franz Mon / Henri Chopin / Jackson MacLow / Bob Cobbing / let alone their earlier twentieth century peers such as Schwitters / Sitwell (and a considerable swathe of those who appear in the anthology just out from Jerry and Pierre's labor of love - I can't wait to begin using that)

>

>admittedly this list could hardly be more beefcake (it could ceratinly be a lot longer), but a surplus of signifiers? I've, also deliberately, chosen a range of practitioners whose work challenges your reductivist take - granted you're probably making one of your usefully deliberate provocative opening gambits.

>

>And to leap from discussion to discussion under the mutating subject
>heading - isn't this a little like the sense I've read in some more
>recent posts here that it's possible to write without the presence of
>politics (with a small p) - even if that presence is signified by
its absence - let alone choice of context, conceptual framing, choice

of vocabulary, syntactical strategies, formal modes and so on? I would worry about 'sound' poetry becoming too cheaply over-characterised unless again we're talking detail and example. Same with too easy hooks such as 'visual' poetry or 'performance' poetry for that matter.

>

>here's to hearing that paint dry

>love and love

>cris

>

Franz Mon is the one person on that list with whom I'm not familiar. I do in fact almost always enjoy sound poetry (some more than others, with the Four Horsemen very much at the front of the line), but the problem I come up with, like trying to think about a certain kind of enjoyable movie the morning after, is that of "close reading." What would it mean to "close read" specific sound texts and how much would they then differ? Invariably I come up with the importance of sound itself as such as a signifier that transcends sense. What is then made of that transcendence is, it seems, ultimately a wall. Differences between texts tend to be rooted in the source material, which oft times is "found," or in a psychographics of the resonating body. But beyond that? Well, I'd have to be shown. (As always, I'm willing to learn....)

Ron

[↑ Contents](#)

198. **R I Caddel**
pens are too light (fwd)

Tue 10 Oct 1995

A rare example of audience overlap: I sent this one to my European Information cronies and then thought the Poetics crowd might like it too... Of course, the ultimate minimal text is the British constitution (0 words) - so much easier for the police to administer...

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: Tue, 10 Oct 1995 11:45:37 +0100 (BST)

From: R I Caddel <[REDACTED]>

To: eurodoc <[REDACTED]>

Subject: pens are too light

Note which appeared in the UKRHEEO office in Brussels (thanks to Carl Woolf) :

The Ten Commandments

130 words

Sermon on the Mount

320 words

American Declaration of Independence 485 words
EU internal memo on the role of the aubergine 9800 words

Caddel adds:

Anyone like to count the number of words in the ECOSOC Opinion on Plain Language (CES 797/95)?

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

[↑ Contents](#)

199. **Ann Louise Vickery**

Re: The South

Tue 10 Oct 1995

Hi Ron and all those interested in the correct spelling of 'diggery do.' According to our Oz dictionaries, it's spelt 'didgeridoo.' Unfortunately, it is perhaps still best known in association with Rolf Harris, who is famous (or more appropriately, infamous) for that lovely ditty, "Tie my kangaroo down, sport"! Although the instrument was popularized and to a certain extent, Westernized, through his use, it can resound with some wonderfully deep tonal variations. The Aboriginal musicians that I've actually heard play a didgeridoo sound nothing like him!

I'm getting Poetics list through the digest mechanism so I hope I'm not repeating old news. All the best from an Antipodean lurker,

Ann Vickery

[↑ Contents](#)

200. **Ann Lauterbach**

Re: POETICS Digest - 7 Oct 19...

Tue 10 Oct 1995

Re: the gift: on a wider canvas, you might look at Lewis Hyde's The Gift: Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property (Vintage) which explores the art of the gift of art giving in other cultures as well as our own. "There's no irony in cyberspace" isn't that a line from O'Hara, you know the one that ends "Lana Turner we love you get up"?

[↑ Contents](#)

201. **ULMER SPRING**

Re: Yonder

Tue 10 Oct 1995

Can someone tell me where I can find recordings of the Four Horsemen. I would greatly appreciate it. Thank you.

Spring Ulmer



[↑ Contents](#)

202. **Gale Nelson**

Re: I want to help it, but I can't

Tue 10 Oct 1995

Mark,

I think we must accept the fact that we disagree. A book, of course, is a commodity, in that it is for sale. I would argue that a small press publisher is not a business person in the way a hardware store owner is in that hardware stores have an expectation of making profits -- most presses have expectations of losing money. We give away "product" to lots of people, who might review the book, might be interested in the writer/ writing, etc. When many of those persons respond to review copies with a copy of their catalogue, it is, of course, discouraging, and, from my perspective, a suggestion that they're projects are more important than, say, paradigm's. So be it. We publish the books and try to get them into the hands of readers -- not to build our own libraries -- because we care about the work (and in many cases the writer) involved. I certainly have appreciated the caring work undertaken on my behalf by editors, and feel a certain failure for not being able to make their time and financial commitments bear more fruit in terms of sales and recognition for those presses.

I remain unconvinced that poets should be using tactics to get ahead. I worked in public relations right out of college, so I may be overly concerned about the differences between that world and one involving poetry. The world of public relations (at least the one in which I was immersed) was what provided me with a chronic bad back, difficulty breathing and a constant desire to rinse from my mouth the bad taste that comes with trying to fleece your client, while pulling the wool over the eyes of anyone who could do you or your client an ounce of good. Consider the comments of prosecutor, Christopher Darden, who, during parts of the double murder case of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman, stated that he would reflect upon his role in his profession at the case's end. Poetry is, for me, a refuge from the worst and most commercial aspects of

American capitalism. Talk of tactics makes me feel a certain level of unease that makes me take at least a few steps toward the bathroom, instinctively. I hold poetry to a higher standard than is perhaps appropriate. But if poetry is nothing more than a commodity to most poets, then I reaffirm my sense of idealistic confusion -- where then should I turn?

If poetry is about nothing more than getting something tangible (a job, a book contract, recognition), then why do it? Why not participate in more well-paid professions; why not write celebrity bios, why not run for political office?

From the pit of my stomach's stomach,

Gale Nelson

[↑ Contents](#)

203. **Jeff Hansen**
poetry and politics

Tue 10 Oct 1995

I have been enjoying the discussion about the political merits of poetry, and I thought that I would add the following.:

It seems to me that poetry, and especially so-called avant-garde poetry, has been haunted by Percy Shelley's claim that poets are unacknowledged legislators for some time. Behind Shelley's claim seems to be the highly Romantic ideal of being the sole creator -- think of "Kubla Khan" -- the originator par excellence. Shelley wanted to claim that politics emerges from poetry, however much the debt is hidden, and therefore poetry is the potent, original source. This desire to be New, to be Original, to owe a debt to no one else did not, if my understanding of literary history is correct, gain much of a hold before the Romantics.

And we are still stuck with it. How often is a poet praised because of being "wholly original"? What the hell does it mean to be "wholly original" when the language predates every user, including the poet? Why is it that relevancy seems to be attached to the political? Perhaps because the political obviously orders our lives, and if poetry is to be originary for experience then it must scoop politics?

I'm becoming much more interested in the relationship between friendship and poetry than poetry and politics. It seems more grounded, since so many of my friends are poets and artists: none are politicians. Politics is what we can do when we are not writing, working, or enjoying our friends. But it seems to me that worrying about the political relevancy of poetry just gets us into the old Shelleyian trap: poetry should be at the origin of everything.

I don't write in order to create rules (i.e. legislate); I write to explore. And I publish to plume my ego and to see what happens to my explorations. And my explorations are not original, they are among, between and alongside those of my poet friends and other poets I don't know, and just plain friends.

Why ask of poetry more than it can deliver? We don't ask the same of cooking.

Jeff Hansen

[↑ Contents](#)

204. **Peter Larkin**

Fragments, mourning and derivation

Tue 10 Oct 1995

----- Forwarded Message Follows -----

This post is now a bit behind the times. I had trouble getting through before.
Peter

----- Forwarded Message Follows -----

From: Self <LIBRIS/LYAAZ>
To: 
Subject: Fragments, mourning and derivation
Date sent: Wed, 4 Oct 1995 13:18:29

I was interested in the responses/contributions from Larry Price and Tod Thilleman, but being the first week of term here there isn't time for more than a few derived and rehashed thoughts. Re: "the past" I wonder whether the phenomenological distinction between the past as a past present (to some degree retrievable) and the past as the phantasmic Past (always already past) may not be useful; both terms operate within our common term, past. By "weak" I was thinking not so much in terms of Vattimo's "weak ontology" as Nemoianu's idea of the secondary, that which is recessively, non-oppositionally other, and may now be the only place, at our cultural moment for such twilight terms as the classical or traditional, if those terms can ever remain alive within a context of non-dominance. As for attachment, a few more self-quotes from an essay on D Jones: "It is the property of diversity...to attach itself...In what sense can fragments attach themselves? They can never again be integral components, but rather like the chosen but random or already- used elements which go to make up a nest or section of dry-stone walling, fragments may be recombinative of more basic patterns of nurture (ie. the improvisatory recombinations find their way to those basic patterns). But perhaps the discussion has moved on... Peter

Peter Larkin Philosophy & Literature Librarian
University of Warwick Library, Coventry CV4 7AL UK
Tel: 01203 524475 Fax: 01203 524211
Email: [REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

205. **tunguska**
politics (cultural contexts) & derivation

Tue 10 Oct 1995

>

That sense of

>resistance is not, I think, about autonomy only, but equally has implications
>for the intersubjective.

...going on from there to relate duncan's sense of the world, and Spicer's, two
"examples" if you will, of this.

I can't help but think of that TV commercial, so absolutely brilliant, on the "new
Visa Gold Card". Eeeverybody's quarreling about the common currency in
Europe, but, "excuse me guys", says the American pulling his card from the
ATM, cash procured and worry free, a common currency's already taken hold in
trans-Europe, thousands of machines already in place. "Visa, it's everywhere
you want to be" So much for identification.

A lot of my friends, in NYC, grew up in a very similar, Americanized, culture,
even though they were born in Ireland, England, Baghdad, Russia, France, Holland
& Germany. "The medium is the message, the nightmare, from which we are
trying to awaken" to quote a famous 'Canadian from Dublin'.

I think, also, Ed Foster, you mean 'onto-theology' instead of simply theology.
There's where movement is, you mean by not so simply metaphoric--if metaphor
is seen here as that which only satisfies linguistic impertinence. My belief is
that a poetics that refuses offensive strategies, is doomed to go down in the
flood. We must "move" toward the centers of "philosophy". It's a mediator
already anyway.

t thilleman

tod thilleman

[↑ Contents](#)

206. **Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco**

Re: poetry and politics

Tue 10 Oct 1995

Jeff Hansen wrote:

I'm becoming much more interested in the relationship between friendship and poetry than poetry and politics. It seems more grounded, since so many of my friends are poets and artists: none are politicians. Politics is what we can do when we are not writing, working, or enjoying our friends.

Why ask of poetry more than it can deliver? We don't ask the same of cooking.

There's the old/new adage again: Poets can't set the world on fire, so quit collecting kindling and leave the lighter for the professionals. "Old/new," of course, depends on which sage you're hearing it from.

I haven't met a poet yet who isn't a closet politician to some degree. Some are better schooled in diplomacy than others.

There are millions of hobbies available in the world: why pick politics?

We barely know how a fertilized egg develops into a complex life form; when were the limitations on what poetry can deliver declared? To state that they are definitive and exhaustible makes "exploration" look futile.

daniel_bouchard @ hmco.com

[↑ Contents](#)

207. **tunguska**

Derrida on the episteme of lies

Tue 10 Oct 1995

In reply to Maria and Kat in re the Derrida/Arendt/totalitarianism lecture, I would simply want to add that yes, the law is highly implicated (let's not forget, if OJ IS guilty, he won't be the first to walk, and vice versa etc etc) as well as the evolution of current strategic peace plans, projected both from a "domestic" stand-point, and a "european" standpoint, as well as still a "middle eastern" standpoint, as well as those not even projected yet. The implication being held on the same legs as the "explication" of the lie. Derrida characterized the lie, with the help of Arendt and a couple other coevals to her writings, time, and subject matter, as that which seeks to "arouse" others to "go do something." The other day, the Pope did just this at his mass in Giants Stadium and Central Park. He told all the faithful, to join action to their faith (obviously, this is linked, almost solely, to "abortion") and go out and change the world. The most repeatable characteristic, or filip, of the lie, is that it shows the world not the

way it is, because it wants to "change the world." So it, of course, shows it not the way that it is, but the way that it could be.

The implications set forth by the "reality" of the lie, are such as to effect both the left and the right, the black and the white, missionaries in the wild, policy planners at NATO, as well as the cuckolded, the mortified, and chagrined.

That is how "deep" this goes. It determines, for it's realization, an episteme.

tod thilleman

tod thilleman

[↑ Contents](#)

208. **tunguska**

Stephen Jonas/gentleman

Tue 10 Oct 1995

No doubt, Maria, his anti-semitism must hit one smack in the head. I'm sure it's a motivating center for many. Interesting, for me, tho, was his love & worship of JFK. But that is simply, I'm sure, because I were born in '62. The JFK and the banks thing is far more strange, to me, than his anti-semitism.

Thanks, and will get back about this mysterious gentleman, when I've spent more time on his "orgasms/dominations"

tod thilleman

[↑ Contents](#)

209. **Herb Levy**

Re: Yonder

Tue 10 Oct 1995

Ron Silliman writes:

What

would it mean to "close read" specific sound texts and how much would they then differ? Invariably I come up with the importance of sound itself as such as a signifier that transcends sense. What is then made of that transcendence is, it seems, ultimately a wall. Differences between texts tend to be rooted in the source material, which oft times is "found," or in a psychographics of the resonating body. But beyond that? Well, I'd have to be shown. (As always, I'm willing to learn....)

I don't have an easy answer for the question, but I think that one of the possible problems with "sound poetry" is that people try to read or hear it more as "poetry" than as "sound."

So I have another question for you, Ron:

Does all instrumental music "say the same thing"?

In other news, I've seen didgeridoo spelled all of the ways that the Smiths have posted, though perhaps it makes sense to defer to Ann Vickery's Australian dictionary.

FWIW, the word "didgeridoo" is an onomatopoetic transcription of one of the instrument's sounds, coined by British settlers. It has no relation to any of the native terms for the instrument.

Herb Levy



[↑ Contents](#)

210. **Dodie Bellamy**
Re: poetry and politics

Tue 10 Oct 1995

Jeff Hansen writes:

>Why ask of poetry more than it can deliver? We don't ask the same of cooking.

Jeff,

As a vegetarian, I can tell you that there's plenty of politics involved in cooking. Also, I'm sure if you look at food in terms of the history of colonialism, you'd overturn a whole other can of worms (which I'm sure would be yummy to some). I doubt if there's any area of human life that doesn't have some political implications.

Dodie

[↑ Contents](#)

211. **Angus Cleghorn**
Gift

Tue 10 Oct 1995

On Mon. Oct. 9, Shaunanne Tangney wrote:

*i love the idea of the gift. . . i think that a poem is the reality of
gift. . .
cixous speaks of both the gift and of pure spending. she alludes to the
pot latch in which we are made richer by what we give away.*

Shaunanne, where does Cixous write of the gift? Derrida's *_Given Time: Counterfeit Money_*, analyses the economy of the gift in Baudelaire's poem "Counterfeit Money". JD also writes about the gift in context of the potlatch,

and narrows down the gift as the space of time in any exchange. (forgive me if this ground has been covered, I'm new to the list)

another gift speaking of gift:

A flick which added to what was real and its vocabulary,
The way some first thing coming into Northern trees
Adds to them the whole vocabulary of the South,
The way the earliest single light in the evening sky, in spring,
Creates a fresh universe out of nothingness by adding itself,
The way a look or a touch reveals its unexpected magnitudes.

- Wallace Stevens, "Prologues to What is Possible"

[↑ Contents](#)

212. **tunguska**

New Release from Spuyten Duyvil//Alice Rose George

Tue 10 Oct 1995

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"Harder on herself than we expect our poets to be, Alice George passes the Monuments with a sigh, the Ruins with a shudder, and affords (at what cost) a lyric account of a woman's life stared down with remarkable clarity, no indulgence at all. The poem "Correspondence," for example, is an authentic scandal--and there are others of the sort, truth being the scandal, of course; nothing so contingent as mere behavior. The poems impart a stoic thrill."

-- Richard Howard

"Alice Rose George's poems have an exquisite lightness of being: they RISE before our eyes, slip free the bonds

of gravity, open upward like prayers or wings, up to the ceiling of the world. I am amazed at their daring weightlessness-- it is never ephemeral, rather intensely ECSTATIC--the headlong, imperative joy of the child, Sufi, poet-debauchee. A way to levitate and yet hold tight to this world: what the best poetry does for us."

-- Carol Muske

A Note on the Author:

Alice Rose George was born in Mississippi. She received a degree in English Literature from Sophie Newcomb College/Tulane University. Her junior year was spent at the University of London at Westfield College. She studied for one year at the New York University Graduate Program for Creative Writing. Photography editor formerly with GRANTA, she now freelance picture edits and lives in NYC.

Spuyten Duyvil also distributed by Small Press Distribution: .

tod thilleman

[↑ Contents](#)

213. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Gift

Tue 10 Oct 1995

I think it's great that Derrida and Cixous and others have written of gift and potlatch, but I also think it's a great benefit of being in this nation (oh my that sounds awfully patriotic, which isn't the intent) that you can witness potlatch. I certainly don't know the customs of all the peoples in various communities, pueblos, and reservations in this country, but I know that a lot of ceremonies in various places are open. The first potlatch I witnessed was during the Chief Lookingglass Festival on Nez Perce lands in Idaho. The acts of giving thanks and honoring by giving in a very public way was extremely moving, but also quite practical as a way of sharing goods in a community. And how can you not love the concept that one is wealthy by virtue of what one gives away. I can only hope this has a great deal to do with our poetry, with our poetics.

[↑ Contents](#)

214. **Charles Alexander**

Re: I want to help it, but I can't

Tue 10 Oct 1995

I think we must accept the fact that we disagree. A book, of course, is a commodity, in that it is for sale.

I learned first to make books with my hands, using type and paper, thinking of it as both a means of verbal expression and a visual exploration of possibilities related to the written words. In other words, very much like writing a poem. But I wanted people to see these books, and they cost money to make, so I also started selling them. I really don't give a damn if someone thinks of them as a commodity or not, or whether I think of them as a commodity or not, except in that I have become interested in what happens with them in the world. But I don't think a book is any more of a commodity than a poem, at least as soon as the creator of that poem wants to find an audience.

If poetry is about nothing more than getting something tangible (a job, a book contract, recognition), then why do it? Why not participate in more well-paid professions; why not write celebrity bios, why not run for political office?

I'm not sure where you draw the line here, Gale. Do you really object as soon as one wants an audience for one's work? Or is it only when finding that audience is attached to status of various sorts, or to money from various sources? Do you think all poets are meretricious? Do you think all publishers are? Is it bad to like the job of poet (provided one can find a way to get a job as poet) better than liking the job of writing celebrity bios or the job of holding political office (not that I necessarily believe it's more honorable, but I will grant either desire its legitimacy)? If you're simply trying to state that some poets are manipulative and power hungry, I probably have to agree at some level -- but if you're trying to state that all poets are manipulative and power hungry and ought to admit it, I don't think I can agree. If wanting attention is a sinful thing, then I should be punishing my two-year old daughter all the time. I don't think so, not for her or a poet or a publisher.

So, IS poetry about something more? It sounds as though you don't think so. Is that true?

[↑ Contents](#)

215. **Jordan Davis**
Re: poetry and politics
Tue 10 Oct 1995

Since we're in the config menu for G2 let me set the preference for tone to the following paragraph >

> I'm becoming much more interested in the relationship between friendship and

> poetry than poetry and politics. It seems more grounded, since so many of my

> friends are poets and artists: none are politicians. Politics is what we can

> do when we are not writing, working, or enjoying our friends. But it seems to

> me that worrying about the political relevancy of poetry just gets us into the
> old Shelleyian trap: poetry should be at the origin of everything.
>

I think it was Steve Evans who set the default book to: Kevin Davies'
Pause Button. Could we have that ordering info one more time?

Jordan

[↑ Contents](#)

216. **FUNKHOUSER CHRISTOPH**
cd-rom announcement

Tue 10 Oct 1995

Dear Poetics,

The following piece is about to go out in Mark Nowak's excellent assemblage,
North American Ideophonics Annual, & hopefully it's ok to post it to this list
as well . . . as publication announcement . . .

- Chris F

*

The Little Magazine Volume 21:
A Fresh and Complex Platform For Poetry

We recently endured the extreme privilege and task of editing and co-producing Volume 21 of _The Little Magazine_, the literary annual created by graduate students at the University at Albany. The initial call-for-work for the journal, composed by faculty advisor, Don Byrd, announced we were "looking for writing and visual art work which exists in the imagination of media still uncreated," and "interested in work which will call forth the media of the future." At the outset, we were unsure of what format the magazine would take. Interested in exploring the possibilities of digital multimedia, we ended up challenging ourselves to invent a new type of literary journal, one to be presented on cd-rom. Ben Henry, a poet and formidable computer programmer, also a graduate student at Albany (and technical editor for the magazine), assured us it would be possible to produce such a project given the resources at hand. We were starting, literally, at "square one:" none of the magazine's five editors had produced anything for this medium before. Most of us had no familiarity with multimedia software; we did not even know many people who were working in this area of creative expression. While building the magazine, we felt we were operating without any useful models or precedents to follow. There were, to our knowledge, only three cd-roms available which treated poetry. One of them is the well-known _Poetry In Motion_ (published by Voyager), essentially a transfer of a documentary film by

Ron Mann, which makes extensive, if problematic, use of digitized video (which is, at this time, better handled by laserdisc technology). Our approach was to be, conceptually and due to technological limitations -- quite different than this. The other titles, concerned mainly with conservative presentations of canonical poetry, offered little for readers interested in adventurous contemporary writing. In September 1994 our advisors gave us the go-ahead in support of our vision. Our methodology in producing the journal was at first quite typical: we sent out letters of solicitation to potentially interested/interesting writers and artists. We also posted announcements in appropriate places on the Internet. For several months, almost nobody -- with the exception of Charles Bernstein (who conceived an audio/visual collaboration with Susan Bee), and Robert Grenier (who sent a series of his color-xeroxed scrawl poems) -- responded to our invitation. The gathering of materials continued to proceed quite slowly, until it became necessary for us to begin the production-phase of the magazine in January, 1995. Then we began to work with various print texts which had been submitted (i.e. words on paper), and ideas proposed, converting them from the page or concept to computerized multimedia. We soon realized that we were not so well-equipped to handle the project. We had no convenient ways of digitizing either static or moving visual images, and no way of efficiently storing the large amounts of digital data which would inevitably accumulate. Eventually, we found a couple of local resources through which we could translate images onto the computer, and invested in a removable harddrive (SyQuest), and several large (200 megabyte) cartridges which saved us from the impossibility of having to manage several hundred floppy diskettes. A few pieces, more or less prepared for digital multimedia, eventually began to find their way to us. By this time, each editor had taken on several pieces to translate, one way or another, to computerized performance. This phase of production lasted for about five months, during which few other pieces already prepared for computer presentation came in. These months basically consisted of intensive collaborations between Belle Gironde, Ben Henry, myself, and the authors whose texts we were working with. Some authors were much more involved with the process than others. Most contributors were completely unfamiliar with the mechanisms of multimedia publishing, and left it up to us to devise and develop their work for them. Taking things one step at a time, learning the concepts and intricacies of the IBM based hardware and software, we were able to compose more than fifty pieces for the magazine. There were a few pieces which we attempted to develop which did not work out, unfortunately, for one reason or another. At this very early stage in what could be an epoch of digital multimedia production, we faced difficulties with the inherent differences between Macintosh and IBM systems. Only a few of our problems were solved by the acquisition of a piece of software which helps to bring digital data across

platforms. Our work mostly involved getting images, sounds and alphabetic texts onto the computer, deciding how we wanted them to engage with each other on the screen, then writing programs (sometimes simple, sometimes not) so that they would function properly. We were fortunate to have the assistance of Roberto Bocci, a video and graphic artist, who created the video segments of the magazine, rendered the graphic layout of our packaging, and collaborated with Gully Foyle on what turned out to be the most complicated single exhibition on the cd-rom. It was necessary for us to conceive and implement an interface which would tie all of the disparate pieces in the magazine together. As editor, I took this task as part of my work, and proceeded to diagram a simple, friendly design. Realizing that a site-specific "reading" of this sort would likely be unfamiliar, and perhaps disconcerting, to most who would be interested in viewing the atomic-age open-writing our magazine presents, my goal was to make it homespun without being utterly facile. Fortunately, the Asymetrix Multimedia Toolbook software, with which we made the journal, lent itself, metaphorically, to the structure of a literary publication. Each image, or text, is set up on, or attached to a "page," so it became a matter of organizing the pages, and setting up transitions in a clear, non-confusing way which could be easily operated by the reader. Though there are critiques to be made of our efforts, we are quite pleased with the efficacy of our journal's organization. We were able to bring together a wide variety of materials, which can be explored without much difficulty, and provide unobstructed documentation of how each piece was built, as well as biographical information about each "author." As an added feature to the cd-rom, we built a section of "Contextualizing Materials." This branch of the magazine, attached to the main menu, details extensive credits, contains a speculative editorial statement which considers some of the potential arguments against the computerization of poetry. This section also documents most of the equipment we used to create the magazine, and features a "Sound Gallery," an assemblage of poetry recitations matched with visual images by Phillip Djwa. Especially as the end of the project drew near, the troubles we encountered caused much frustration. The precise meta-language of computer programming tested the limits of our abilities and (in)experience. The process of taking the materials out of the computer lab we were using in Albany, and into another, whether to create digital video segments, or to "burn" demo/test cds, turned out to be much more troublesome than we'd envisioned. Every piece of digital information -- and our magazine is made up of millions of bytes of data -- must be perfectly placed in order for it all to work properly. Additionally, the hardware which produces these materials must be configured seamlessly. Since we had no formula to follow, and such a project had never been attempted by anyone at our institution, we struggled at nearly every moment to get to the next step. In retrospect, between the ominous

bureaucracy, fickle machinery, and our own naivete, it is near surprising that the publication of The Little Magazine Volume 21 occurs at all. Nevertheless, as of October 1, 1995, our cd-rom is available for those interested in what is happening in the realm of digital multimedia poetry. (For a copy, send \$15 to The Little Magazine c/o Dept. of English, University at Albany, 1400 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12222). When asked about my motives in working with this (and other) aspects of "electronic publishing," I resist providing any pat answer -- though the question of the need for journals of this sort is examined in the editorial statement written for our magazine. Certainly, this project represents a type of discontinuity of any poetic tradition of the past century -- which, from our perspective, shouldn't be seen as a negative phenomenon. It has to be acknowledged that textscapes have radically changed in recent decades. In fact, our efforts seem logical if, as Jerome Rothenberg and Pierre Joris claim in their introduction to the anthology Poems For The Millennium "a new look has been long overdue" for twentieth century poetry. The Little Magazine Volume 21 is a concerted effort to provide links between past, present and future modes of poetic presentation. Much of what we have before us has changed over the past century. The editors of the magazine are not convinced that writing is in its most effective space on-the-page anymore. We are aware of, and understand, various resistances to electronic media, and never argue for the cessation of print publishing. We hear many types of criticism against a computerized condition of poetry, especially those assailing its reliance on corporate machinery. However, instead of dwelling on a cd-rom's uselessness as a piece of plastic without a computer to make it function, we ask what is wrong with being attracted to its plasticity as a form, its ability to mold and compound, into one unit, visual, sonic and alphabetic dimensions of writing? Why shouldn't we urge each other to find ways to make technology work advantageously and effectively for creative purposes? While we remain unconvinced, at this point, that the end justifies the means of publishing in this media, if a group has facilities, and begins with either a fair amount of computer expertise, or developed relationships between writers and programmer(s) and is prepared to withstand any number of complications -- we encourage them to do the best they can.

-Christopher Funkhouser, Albany, NY

*

INGREDIENT STATEMENT:

multimeDia poetry ImagerY sound

Will Alexander
Don Archer
Gully Foyle
Charles Bernstein
Roberto Bocci
Charles Borkhuis
Sean Bronzell
Lee Ann Brown
Jim Cohn
Eric Curkendall
Ray DiPalma
Gully Foyle
Benjamin Friedlander
James Garrison
Loss Pequeno Glazier
Ben Henry
Robert Hiles
Geof Huth
Lisa Jarnot
Pierre Joris
Bill Keith
Richard Kostelanetz
Steve Laufer
Jackson Mac Low
Laura Mareello
Marty McCutcheon
H.D. Moe
Murat Nemet-Nejat
Geoffrey Polk
Jed Rasula
Stefano Resta
■■■■ ■■■■!
Linda Smukler
Chris Stroffolino
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Chris Vitiello
Katie Yates

Lori Anderson
Meg Arthurs
Susan Bee
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Douglas Rothschild
Stephan Said
Chuck Stein
Anne Tardos
Eugene Thacker
Rodrigo Toscano
Ben Yarmolinsky

[↑ Contents](#)

217. **Maria Damon**
Re: poetry and politics
Tue 10 Oct 1995

how 'bout the relationship between politics and friendship, and what happens when you throw the third term, poetry, in there? what are the "political" dimensions (however broadly that can be construed) of poetic friendships and the "schools," collaborations, and mutual influences that result?--md

[↑ Contents](#)

218. **Maria Damon**
Re: poetry and politics
Tue 10 Oct 1995

jeff hansen writes:

How often is a poet praised because of being
"wholly original"? What the hell does it mean to be "wholly original" when
the
language predates every user, including the poet?

to which I must respond with a quote from that preeminent political poet lenny
bruce: "i've never had an original thought in my life: i speak the english
language."

by the way jeff and betsy, i've been wanting to welcome you to the twin cities
and meet you etc, but i'm on the east coast on sabbatical! we'll hang when i get
back --mid to late june... maria d

[↑ Contents](#)

219. **Jordan Davis**
something else lies do
Tue 10 Oct 1995

I'm a little troubled by the heavy discourse surrounding lying by the state that's
lingering on the list. Lying--saying something the truth value of which does not
correspond to the facts--is the beginning of imagining, eh? Which is our
responsibility (and correspondingly, my fellow third-graders of the soul, our
right). Unless of course there's no connection between lying and poetry (and
we have to have our lines polygraphed and pentatholed).

Jordan

[↑ Contents](#)

220. **Louis Cabri**

4 horse men

Tue 10 Oct 1995

Try:

Underwhich Editions
PO Box 262
Adelaide Street Station
Toronto, ON
Canada M5C 2J4

[↑ Contents](#)

221. **Shaunanne Tangney**

Re: Gift

Tue 10 Oct 1995

On Tue, 10 Oct 1995, Angus Cleghorn wrote:

On Mon. Oct. 9, Shaunanne Tangney wrote:

*i love the idea of the gift. . . i think that a poem is the reality of
gift. . .
cixous speaks of both the gift and of pure spending. she alludes to the
pot latch in which we are made richer by what we give away.*

*Shaunanne, where does Cixous write of the gift? Derrida's _Given Time:
Counterfeit Money_, analyses the economy of the gift in Baudelaire's poem
"Counterfeit Money". JD also writes about the gift in context of the
potlatch, and narrows down the gift as the space of time in any exchange.
(forgive me if this ground has been covered, I'm new to the list)*

in many of the essays collected in *_coming to writing_* (susan sellars, ed.,
Harvard UP, 1991) she speaks of the gift. she speaks of giving often, and
perhaps similarly to derrida in the mention above (which i have not read, but
will search out now--thanks! i am less impressed w/ her claims of a male/female
"economy" and of male giving -vs- female giving--seems reductive and binary,
but there are spots where she really hits my mark!

good luck,
shaunanne

another gift speaking of gift:

*A flick which added to what was real and its vocabulary,
The way some first thing coming into Northern trees
Adds to them the whole vocabulary of the South,*

*The way the earliest single light in the evening sky, in spring,
Creates a fresh universe out of nothingness by adding itself,
The way a look or a touch reveals its unexpected magnitudes.*

- Wallace Stevens, "Prologues to What is Possible"

[↑ Contents](#)

222. **Steve Evans**

Re: poetry and politics

Tue 10 Oct 1995

Apropos the friendship/politics/poetry question, I have been thinking about the way "friendship" is inflected within the context of the broader attempts at racial resegregation such as we have been experiencing since c.1980 and which now threatens to pass the critical mark (pace the decision of my alma mater, the UC system, while the students were away this summer!).

That's what was on my mind when I wrote the following in a paper on Frank O'Hara and the way O'Hara criticism (my examples: Perloff and Bredbeck) has worked to reproduce the racial segregation his work put into serious question. Please forgive, if you can, the ungainly prose:

"Independent, as opposed to commercial and institutional, publishing tends to be directly embedded in the immediate social relations of the people who undertake it, and this the more so the closer one approaches the basal unit of such independent production: the restricted-circulation poetry magazine. The social conditions of production of this form typically involve an editor (or editors), relying on monies not generated within the poetic field (i.e. earnings from a "real job," inheritance, or patronage), and possessed of sufficient amounts of time to absorb the whole spectrum of activities (selecting, editing and proofing, reproducing, binding, circulating, and publicizing) that in institutional and commercial contexts are divided among different specialists. This situation of embeddedness, in which literary project and personal life converge to the point of mutual subsumption, is an objectively ambivalent one: though often perceived from the inside as the positive confluence of poetry and the sphere of elective affinity and friendship, viewed from the "outside" it can appear as clique-ish arbitrariness. The same ambivalence can be registered in racial terms, for if independent publishing is at least potentially a site in which the "spontaneous" desegregation of cultural production can occur--since no formal mechanisms restrict the editorial decision-making process on racial, or indeed any other, grounds--it is by the same token, however, that the very appearance of "spontaneity" can work to veil the de facto segregations of everyday life and to elide the way that even (one might say "especially")

friendship patterns are overdetermined within a society "in which systems of dominance and subordination are structured through processes of racialization that continuously interact with all other forces of socialization" (Carby 193). The objective ambivalence resulting from the pre- and de-formation of spheres of "elective affinity" by selective processes operating at the level of the social totality is of especial importance in the context of the New American Poetry, which consistently foregrounded its own passionate informality and 'openness' in contrast to the bureaucratization of culture epitomized by academic poetry and the institutionally-affiliated journals that sustained it. I would argue that both the independent publications and the poetic formations that crystallized around them did represent gains in the democratization of culture relative to the corporate and university publishing structures, but these gains were not without their own contradictions."

[The Hazel Carby piece referred to is "The Multicultural Wars" in Gina Dent & Michele Wallace's BLACK POPULAR CULTURE (Seattle: Bay P, 1992)]

[↑ Contents](#)

223. **Steve Carll**

Re: verbatim gift from my TV set

Tue 10 Oct 1995

"When people are asked
what kind of lawn tractor they'd
like for a gift,
most say the same thing:

"What in Hell is a 'lawn tractor'?"

>
>

[↑ Contents](#)

224. **Rod Smith**

Re: poetry and politics

Wed 11 Oct 1995

Jeff,

Seems to me there might be something new about avant-gardists claiming there's nothing new, at least in American context (dada hit those notes perhaps).

& of course in many ways you're right but the other side of it is that one can't help but be "new" because you're in a new context, Stein says that or equivalent somewhere.

--Rod

[↑ Contents](#)

225. **Tenney Nathanson**

gifts

Wed 11 Oct 1995

Date: Tue, 10 Oct 1995 10:41:51 -0400
From: Ann Lauterbach <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: POETICS Digest - 7 Oct 19...

Re: the gift: on a wider canvas, you might look at Lewis Hyde's The Gift: Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property (Vintage) which explores the art of the gift of art giving in other cultures as well as our own. "There's no irony in cyberspace" isn't that a line from O'Hara, you know the one that ends "Lana Turner we love you get up"?

Ann--

but isn't Hyde a little cheesy? The stuff on Whitman, at any rate, gets at something important but at the cost of a kind of euphoric sentimentalizing of the "pomes" (I think). It's the "as well as our own" part that's the problem, I think: so that Baudrillard, w his sense of how simulation overtakes the gesture, may be preferable (though his evocation of "true" gift exchange is doubtless sentimentalized too).

hailing hits you on the head, hard, so it hurts....

(but I've never actually collapsed)

(and isn't there an "o"?)

(apostrophes will not be permitted on the funicular)

best,

Tenney Nathanson

[↑ Contents](#)

226. **Tenney Nathanson**

(no subject)

Wed 11 Oct 1995

Why ask of poetry more than it can deliver? We don't ask the same of cooking.

Jeff Hansen

o but we do!

(money is also a kind of poetry)

[↑ Contents](#)

227. **Tenney Nathanson**

(no subject)

Wed 11 Oct 1995

Date: Tue, 10 Oct 1995 15:39:17 -0500

From: Charles Alexander <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: Gift

I think it's great that Derrida and Cixous and others have written of gift and potlatch, but I also think it's a great benefit of being in this nation (oh my that sounds awfully patriotic, which isn't the intent) that you can witness potlatch. I certainly don't know the customs of all the peoples in various communities, pueblos, and reservations in this country, but I know that a lot of ceremonies in various places are open. The first potlatch I witnessed was during the Chief Lookingglass Festival on Nez Perce lands in Idaho. The acts of giving thanks and honoring by giving in a very public way was extremely moving, but also quite practical as a way of sharing goods in a community. And how can you not love the concept that one is wealthy by virtue of what one gives away. I can only hope this has a great deal to do with our poetry, with our poetics.

Charles--

It's worth keeping in mind the aggression & violence of potlatch--see Mauss, Bataille in /The Accursed Share/ and elsewhere, Baudrillard, the redaction by Julian Pefanis in /Heterology/, etc.

"but it rarely goes to the point of holocaust," says Bataille. A reassuring assertion, KIND of.

besos.

T.

[↑ Contents](#)

228. **Ron Silliman**

Re: verbatim gift from my TV set

Wed 11 Oct 1995

You wrote:

>

>> "When people are asked
>> what kind of lawn tractor they'd
>> like for a gift,
>> most say the same thing:

>

> "What in Hell is a 'lawn tractor'?"

>>

>>

>

If you lived in the suburbs of the half-acre and up lot size, you'd never have to ask. It is exactly what it says it is--essentially a lawn mower on steroids (you ride it instead of push it).

And it will drown out the sound of any didgeridoo.

[↑ Contents](#)

229. **Ron Silliman**

Quality is job one

Wed 11 Oct 1995

I'm not so certain that Mark and Gale really do disagree, so much as that they're articulate different facets of the same phenomenon.

I think that there is an inherent value in and for poetry (and all of the other arts) as exemplary discipline, of value in and for itself, without the usual break between means and ends that muddies up so much of daily life. An instance of "unalienated" labor at its best.

Yet the poem (and poet) must also exist in and of the world itself and to the degree that the "tactics" of the world are the same mechanisms by which the poem (and poet) must survive, it is far better to use them cogently than to put on blindfolds and pretend they're not there.

And I think both facets of this phenomenon are at play with one another all the time.

One of the reasons that I think it is so hard for poets who go directly from some student status into teaching (at least if that is at the college level) is that there is an (inherent) conflict between the poem and the job that sets it up as very difficult to conceive of as unalienated labor. I think one can read this "ambivalence" in great detail in almost all of Michael Davidson's work, someone who has taken his role as a teacher with great seriousness his entire career and never flinched from acknowledging its impact on his poetry, although he is often conflicted about how he "feels" about that.

In some sense, it is far easier to be a PR guy or gal, to work in a bookstore, do political organizing, be a shop manager, a prison guard or whatever and to write poetry. All these other people also tend to look at their poetry in terms of whatever job they might have, but the allegorical functions are less occluded. I'd be curious about the parallels that a "carceral" poet might find.

I actually spent one afternoon last week explaining to a PR firm in NYC that the reason Ford's tagline "Quality is job one" works is because of the three short

syllables in the first word balanced by the three one syllable words on the far side of the caesura, and that every good tag line demonstrates a distinct formal element recognizable to anyone.

Here's to Lew Welch's Raid campaign: "Raid Kills Bugs Dead"

Ron Silliman

[↑ Contents](#)

230. **Ron Silliman**

Re: Yonder

Wed 11 Oct 1995

Herb Levy "says"

>

>I think that one of the possible problems with "sound poetry" is that people try to read or hear it more as "poetry" than as "sound."

>

>So I have another question for you, Ron:

>

>Does all instrumental music "say the same thing"?

>

At one level, yes. And since my three-year-old boys were born, I have found myself listening to very little music whatsoever, preferring silence equally over Pavarotti, Public Enemy or Partch. At another level, that word "say" is precisely what I look for in the poem that I don't in music (even though, listening to the Don Was bio of Brian Wilson recently, one can parse even the most banal beach lyrics and discover a wealth underneath if one is trained in the history of the simplest chord changes).

There is a level of articulation in the work of Bruce Ackley that I will never find in the horns of the brothers Marsallis.

But I am intrigued in your argument (implicit) that sound poetry is better understood not as poetry. Why, then, call it such?

Ron

[↑ Contents](#)

231. **Maria Damon**

Re: No Subject

Wed 11 Oct 1995

someone wrote "(money is also a kind of poetry)"-- yes, which is why in the TAROT, coins symbolize ideas and intellectual labor, because it is circulation that makes ideas be in the world, like money --doesn't derrida write about this in some long-forgotten-by-me essay?--md

[↑ Contents](#)

232. **Mark Wallace**

poetry and power

Wed 11 Oct 1995

On the subject of poetry and power:

Actually, I was a bit surprised that Charles Alexander directed his comments at what Gale Nelson said--if anything, it was me and not Gale who was saying that poetry is influenced by commodity relationships. I think I'm going to keep saying it, though. I wouldn't say, however, either that all poets are motivated by desires for power, or that all poets are not motivated by desires for power. I have no doubt that individuals are vastly individual. But I would say that poetry is not FREE from the struggles of ideology and power--and production. This is I think where Gale and I differ, although not, I think, absolutely. I do agree with Gale that I'd rather be devoting my time to the world of poetry than to the world of advertising/business, whatever--after all, I DO devote myself to poetry. But I think that the difference is one of kind and degree, not of absolute opposition. I think it's true that poets--and perhaps especially experimental poets, whose opportunities are so damnably limited--have to play incredibly close attention to the social dynamics of the world of book production, and that they have to do a fair amount of social maneuvering if they want to have any chance at all of surviving as publishing writers. "Tactics" is of course far too military a word for all the various social interactions of poets, but not, I think, for SOME of those interactions, and even for some of the most valuable ones--I'm thinking now of the highly political maneuvering of poets on this list like Carolyn Forché, Marjorie Perloff, Joe Ross, Charles Bernstein, and Ron Silliman, among many others, people who have sat on high profile political committees on literature or who have been blatantly public figures who in various circumstances have PLAYED POLITICS in the cause of promoting and protecting poetry. People who are willing to stand up in that way have done worlds of good, and I think even those poets who are not inclined personally towards directly politicized action on the part of poetry (some are not, and that seems fine to me) owe people who do do such things at least a certain level of

respect. These problems, for me, broaden out to include many others. Is politics, for instance, by definition a bad thing? I always thought that the right to engage in political activity was one of the incredible virtues of a free country. IN that sense, one of the huge problems with the United States is NOT that people play politics, but that in so many ways they are PROHIBITED from playing politics. Is poetry entirely about the politics of commodity production? Of course not. Is the world of poetry hugely influenced by the politics of commodity production? Of course.

Mark Wallace

P.S: Steve Evans' recent comments about the situation of small magazines really deserve close attention--nice work, Steve.

[↑ Contents](#)

233. **Alan Golding**

Rolf Harris

Wed 11 Oct 1995

Associate Professor of English, U. of Louisville

Phone: [REDACTED]; e-mail: [REDACTED]

Ah yes--Ann Vickery provides a blast from my colonial past in England when she mentions Rolf Harris' "Tie me kangaroo down, sport." In the earliest example of aural slippage I can remember experiencing, I thought, round about age 8 or 9, that the line/title was "Tiny Kangaroo Downsport." I remember thinking that Downsport seemed like rather an odd name for a tiny kangaroo, but, being an open-minded child, I was willing to go along with the program. When I discovered the "right" version, the song suddenly seemed a lot less interesting.

Later, it took me years to realize that Hendrix was not singing, "'Scuse me while I kiss this guy."

Alan

[↑ Contents](#)

234. **Steve Evans**

Tsunami/Object

Wed 11 Oct 1995

For Jordan and others who have asked:

Kevin Davies's PAUSE BUTTON can be obtained from:

Tsunami Editions
Box 3723 MPO

Vancouver, BC
V6B 3Z1

This address is taken from the back of the excellent new RADDLE MOON. I don't know the current asking price. Information in the book itself indicates that SPD should be distributing it, but I don't see a listing in the most recent (which is not very recent) catalogue.

=====

You can order OBJECT magazine (\$5 individual copy/\$8 per year) from Robert Fitterman at

7-13 Washington Square North #47B
New York, NY 10003.

#4 is the Kocik issue, #5 has the Rod Smith Feature plus work by Joan Retallack, Milo DeAngelis, Bill Howe, Joe Elliot, Vallerie Fox, Jennifer Moxley, Bill Luoma, Michael Basinski, Dirk Rowntree, Judith Goldman, Steven Farmer, Tim Davis.

=====

a t s u o o o s
r i a t n m u

[↑ Contents](#)

235. **Loss Glazier**
Texts about poetics "sound"

Wed 11 Oct 1995

Can anyone recommend to me great texts on poetic sound? Sound as "material," etc. as a contemporary poetic. Any thoughts would be appreciated.

Thanks,
Loss



[↑ Contents](#)

236. **Gale Nelson**
Re: I want to help it, but I can't

Wed 11 Oct 1995

Charles,

I likely over-romanticize poets as being better than we are -- I'm always disappointed (perhaps read afraid?) to think of us as maneuvering for the right to be "the famous" new writer taught in half a dozen workshops and

classrooms. I like to think that poets respect the writers they read/teach for the work, period. I like to think that poets get invited to give readings, have work taken by journals, etc., because those who are managing reading series, journals, etc. care about the work, not because the poet in question could do them some good. I share Mark's belief that advocacy for poetry is an important thing to undertake -- I have to admit to thinking of the advocacy in idealistic rather than tactical terms (I assume that the advocate cares about what/who s/he brings to the arena in enthusiastic terms, and does so because of that enthusiasm, not because it will provide appreciation/opportunity for the advocate). I bristle over self-promotion because I tend to think that the work gets suffocated. I do not bristle over a press or journal or reading series trying to build an audience for the writers/texts being featured via that venue because it then becomes a form of advocacy. It may be the kind of fine line that crumbles under close examination -- and it may not be fair for me to hold the poetry world up to a set of standards that no one has accepted as appropriate. I do believe that what we gain by writing poetry rather than other more commodity- oriented texts is the freedom to pursue, to take risks, to nurture, to respect, to be passionate, all outside of the dominant structure of corporate hype. We have the opportunity to create worlds anew -- oh idealistic statement -- and I sense that we are best able to do this when our new worlds do not mimic the one we (read more accurately "I") am wholly wary of.

Sincerely (perhaps too?),

Gale Nelson

[↑ Contents](#)

237. **Charles Smith**

Re: Tsunami/Object

Wed 11 Oct 1995

SPD does have this, for \$10.00. --CS

Kevin Davies's PAUSE BUTTON can be obtained from:

Tsunami Editions
Box 3723 MPO
Vancouver, BC
V6B 3Z1

This address is taken from the back of the excellent new RADDLE MOON. I don't know the current asking price. Information in the book itself indicates that SPD should be distributing it, but I don't see a listing in the most recent (which is not very recent) catalogue.

[↑ Contents](#)

238. **Edward Foster**

Re: politics (cultural contexts) & derivation

Wed 11 Oct 1995

not sure, tod; "theology" is ok as in anything that platonizes gnosticism; as for "offensive" poetics, that's a contradiction in terms. poetics always comes after, as explanation or just as something to talk about, since poetry does not lend itself to that. and what is a center of/for philosophy? after heidegger, where's the center. "mediation" makes sense, but philosophy doesn't mediate, rather points to that horizon where mediation occurs. no? -ed

[↑ Contents](#)

239. **Edward Foster**

Re: No Subject

Wed 11 Oct 1995

yes, it was stevens who said that money is a kind of poetry, and if anyone should'a it, it was he.

[↑ Contents](#)

240. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: the gift of a tractor

Wed 11 Oct 1995

and don't overlook Derrida's _The Gift of Death_ WHILE WE'RE AT IT

Steve: I would like to think that your reponse is the "same thing" that most people say in response to that question -- but then, I drink miracle grow for breakfast --

[↑ Contents](#)

241. **Loss Glazier**

Re: "Naropa P-Wars"

Wed 11 Oct 1995

I've been straining here to think: isn't there one more very famous account of this incident somewhere? Does anyone recall this?

- > If you're going to check out Tom Clark's The Great Naropa Poetry
- > Wars, you'll also want to look at the project on that
- > now-mythological Merwin-Trungpa confrontation produced by Ed
- > Sanders' 1977 Investigative Poetry class at Naropa. It's called The
- > Party: A Chronological Perspective on a Confrontation at a Buddhist
- > Seminary (Poetry, Crime and Culture Press: Woodstock, NY,

> 1977). This does, I think, have implications for poetics beyond the
> talk-show level, esp. if read along with Sanders' 1976 chapbook
> Investigative Poetry (City Lights).

[↑ Contents](#)

242. **John Lavagnino**

Call for papers: Poetry and computers (1996 MLA)

Wed 11 Oct 1995

I'm organizing two sessions for next year's MLA convention (in Washington, DC, from December 27 through 30, 1996) on behalf of the Association for Computers and the Humanities.

And the subject is:

Poetry and Computers. The role of computers in any aspect of the composition, cultivation, dissemination, or study of poetry.

Detailed proposals or 8-page papers by 1 March 1996 to
John Lavagnino, 117 Pratt Street, Providence, RI 02906-1412 USA;

[REDACTED].

The Association for Computers and the Humanities is a professional society for scholars working in computer-related research in literature and language studies, history, philosophy, and other disciplines of the humanities. For information on joining the ACH, contact Charles Bush, ACH Treasurer ([REDACTED]).

John Lavagnino

[REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

243. **A. Morris**

Re: gifts

Wed 11 Oct 1995

Though I would agree with Tenney Nathanson about the second part of Hyde's *The Gift*, the first part--"A Theory of Gifts"--strikes me as right in ways I've never seen discussed before. "Works of art exist simultaneously in two 'economies,'" he says, "a market economy and a gift economy." I like his discriminations between "labour" and "work" as well as his exploration of the obligations of entering into the gift economy: the necessity to give, to receive, and after a mysterious time during which one assimilates a gift, to reciprocate. In the second part, he does better with Pound than with Whitman. What he

does is not "theory" so much as mulling an idea--but, at least to me, that idea explains a lot.

Dee

On Tue, 10 Oct 1995, Tenney Nathanson wrote:

*Date: Tue, 10 Oct 1995 10:41:51 -0400
From: Ann Lauterbach <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: POETICS Digest - 7 Oct 19...*

Re: the gift: on a wider canvas, you might look at Lewis Hyde's The Gift: Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property (Vintage) which explores the art of the gift of art giving in other cultures as well as our own. "There's no irony in cyberspace" isn't that a line from O'Hara, you know the one that ends "Lana Turner we love you get up"?

Ann--

but isn't Hyde a little cheesy? The stuff on Whitman, at any rate, gets at something important but at the cost of a kind of euphoric sentimentalizing of the "pomes" (I think). It's the "as well as our own" part that's the problem, I think: so that Baudrillard, w his sense of how simulation overtakes the gesture, may be preferable (though his evocation of "true" gift exchange is doubtless sentimentalized too).

hailing hits you on the head, hard, so it hurts....

(but I've never actually collapsed)

*(and isn't there an "o"?)
(apostrophes will not be permitted on the funicular)*

best,

Tenney Nathanson

[↑ Contents](#)

244. **Steve Carll**

Re: poetry and politics

Wed 11 Oct 1995

Jeff Hanson wrote:

And we are still stuck with it. How often is a poet praised because of being "wholly original"? What the hell does it mean to be "wholly original" when the language predates every user, including the poet?

"Original" means "of the origin." The origin is the source or wellspring, so something original reaches back deep into this source, makes contact with what is originary. The reduction to a denotation of "newness" may stem from the fact that what has had the accretion of familiarity stripped from it so that its originariness shines through seems to be new, seems to be a new origin. But I don't take it that way anymore, personally. One origin is enough for me to spend my life exploring. I don't need a new one for every season like the fashion designers want us to want.

[↑ Contents](#)

245. **Steve Carll**

Re: something else lies do

Wed 11 Oct 1995

I'm a little troubled by the heavy discourse surrounding lying by the state that's lingering on the list. Lying--saying something the truth value of which does not correspond to the facts--is the beginning of imagining, eh? Which is our _responsibility_ (and correspondingly, my fellow third-graders of the soul, our _right_). Unless of course there's no connection between lying and poetry (and we have to have our lines polygraphed and pentatholed).

Jordan

I think I read recently a Niels Bohr quote epigraphing a Spencer Selby poem to the effect of: "The opposite of a correct statement is a false statement. The opposite of a profound truth, however, may well be another profound truth." So I guess it depends on whether you see poetry as making a series of statements that can be compared with other statements previously admitted as "correct", or as an expression of a profound truth to oppose the profound truth of the world it stands out in and against.

Steve

[↑ Contents](#)

246. **cris cheek**

Re: Yonder / friendship / gifts and sound

Wed 11 Oct 1995

I'm quoting part of something written by Peter Middleton about my own work - but with the intention that it is a useful contribution to these discussions at this time. (It's from Pages - Alan Golding mentioned this series recently). I should add that I welcome this approach and that the criticism that Peter spots within my attempt to problematise almost everything in poetry, with the above subject headings' conundrums in mind, is a dialogue that I discontinually have

with my continual self - and others. I hope the issues come clear of this. It's, as they say, longish - but i felt it better to quote fully rather than in edited form.

'Social Gifts' ... describes small press books as 'social gifts': in some cases they are used as texts for live events but their interest as books involving social production, as gifts meaning sharing' is what constitutes their value. His largest book to date is entitled 'A Present', and its pun on gift and present-time accurately marks out the ambitions of the work. How can a poem or a book of poetry be a gift, a social gift? Ethnographers contrast commodity systems of exchange used in western cultures with the gift systems found in cultures such as those in Papua New Guinea and more widely in the Pacific region. They don't any longer do this in order to contrast some primitive utopia of altruistic social integration with the individualist greed of a monetary economy. Competition, strategy, manipulation, and greed are elements in such exchanges too. The finest gifts are rarely if ever given, and become "inalienable possessions" in Annette Weiner's words ('Inalienable Possessions'), whose function is to provide historical continuity. Cloth and cloaks made by women can help provide cosmological authentication for the power of their owners, as well as a mnemonic stimulus to cultural memory. A society in which gift exchange dominates, conceives of objects, persons and relationships differently to Western culture, because gift exchange is comprehended as the creation of relationships. Across the islands of this region a form of gift exchange known as the kula trade-ring operates. Men in these islands (the gift produces gender difference too) constantly transfer elaborate armshells and necklaces made of shells as gifts from island to island. Their possession brings fame but they need to be passed on to maintain that prestige, and as the shells travel, especially the more famous kula items which are themselves named and the subject of histories, they create what Nancy Munn calls "an emergent spacetime" ('The Fame of Gawa'). In our culture certain forms of art function very similarly. Paintings are the most obvious but they have become a kind of gift whose commodification has almost completely halted their circulation. Poems behave quite similarly to the kula gifts of these pacific islands because they circulate in acts of giving rather than purchase, acts that run counter to the commodity exchange in which the actual material publications move. As they circulate, poems accrue significance just as kula shells do, so that a poem at its inception and ten years later, may be quite different AS the result of the readings, publications, performances, responses, further poems, which have resulted. The social circulation of art is perhaps deliberately unstudied, its processes, like those of the gift economies, productive of social structures whose maintenance and discovery requires the concentration of unreflexive, unmetacritical working thought. cris cheek's suggestion is unusual for its explicitness. Most poets don't say here is a gift as they present the poem to readers and listeners. In

making its mode explicit cheek names the act and therefore makes the act itself part of his theme. There is a risk in this. The poem may then be either effracted by the glare of the claimed generosity itself or its recipients may bring expectations of gift giving that impose unattainable measures on the poem. For Western cultures the consequences of gift circulation can be easily lost in the slow dazzle of alleged altruism, holiness and the desirable conformities of seasonal spending and transformation of anonymous goods into gifts. Gift/wrap.

'Taking Onself by Surprise' "The Melanesian World" writes Marilyn Strathern ("Transactions of the Finnish Anthropological Society vol 27, p.25-44), "is one where people constantly take themselves by surprise. And what takes them by surprise are the performances and artefacts they create". For the New Guinea highlanders the European explorers who 'discovered' them, were performers, or better still, simply part of a performance which the highlanders had made possible. What for Westerners appears to be a historical event, was probably experienced as an improvisation - 'the very act of presentation constituted the only context that was relevant'. This sense of performance can be imagined from within our own culture by ethnographic contrast and through the investigations of performance artists like cris cheek. He performs in order to transform what he and the audience know, and what is known is what manifests itself through voice and movement becoming effectively and cognitively significant. Look at what we have just created as it disappears into consequence and wonder what the succession will bring. For cheek, performance is radically primary, the moment when the poem is made, whatever its written antecedents. A voice can be drawn up from every thronging cell to burst its vocables across large spaces. A control of voice that allows words emotional vividness and almost orchestral phonetic harmonies. Poetry readings commonly turn writing into speech, a strange enough pastime if interpretation is the goal of reading. cheek's performances are strong reminders that sound does signify despite Saussurean linguistics, and is not merely the mute medium in which the system of differences which supposedly alone makes meaning possible. can be generated. As J.H. Prynne writes - "If language is a social code of interactions, in which performance is an expressive procedure within the context of sense-bearing acts, then anything that can count towards meaning may do so: intonation, style-level, choice of words and of their sounds and echoes" ('Stars, Tigers, and the Shape of Words')

more later
love and love
cris

[↑ Contents](#)

247. **Charles Alexander**

new books/an offer

Wed 11 Oct 1995

This is a pre-publication announcement for two books from Chax Press, and includes, at the end, a list of other books from the press. As a part of funding these and other books we are seeking to sell as many books as possible in advance of publication. So, if you order and enclose a check with your order for these books by November 15, 1995, we will not charge any shipping/handling charges, and you may deduct \$1 per book ordered. Please send orders to Chax Press, P.O. Box 19178, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55419-0178. A snail mail version of this announcement will be mailed within the next week. If you want to receive that (but they are limited; please request only if you intend to order one or more of the books), please email directly to [REDACTED] with your postal address.

Orders for the new books will be filled as soon as the books are back from the printer, which will be mid-November 1995 for *The Said Lands, Islands, and Premises*, by Margy Sloan; and mid-January 1996 or sooner for *The Bounty*, by Myung Mi Kim.

Chax Press Announces

The Said Lands, Islands, and Premises
by Mary Margaret Sloan

&

The Bounty
by Myung Mi Kim

from *The Said Lands, Islands, and Premises*

up early waiting for
the trees to explode
what had been dreamed
ahead of time was found
coming back as procession
where cloud moves or is
the rock echoing with false water
small false rock making
crazed lines careful
maps traverse the sun
arrows and rays inside

facing south the rock faces us
entering in reverse order

each blank tree with north facing ghost
an echo of the hoard of people foreseen

pace and expanse of speech
utter absence of traffic

"Sloan's passion for words — their lipstick traces and lingering inflections (as grammar would have it) — makes for a poetry of extraordinary pleasure and difficulty. The mind and ear are redirected from inherited sequence to intentional mutation. As consummate artificer, Sloan's skill and gift demand an equally rigorous reading. Her first book assumes the presence of a mature collection and takes American poetry into its next argument."

— Kathleen Fraser

The Said Lands, Islands, and Premises. By Mary Margaret Sloan
ISBN 0-925904-13-9 96 pages \$11
available November 1995

from The Bounty

Lilac wander

Soak spine

Unite all three

Father look/mother — task

Mother I

Mast

Horizon

Burn

Salt

From blank to blank / A threadless way

"The tesserae Myung Mi Kim so remarkably fashions here come gradually to form an articulate and coherent pattern, but a pattern in constant process of renewal and reorganization. The fragment becomes entire as it re-searches memory, recovers texts, episodes, sounds and landscapes. The Bounty interrogates the radical and violent instability of our moment, asking where is the location of culture, where the site of self, selves, among others. Its gaps or silences speak as determinedly, and urgently, as its singular music."

— Michael Palmer

The Bounty. By Myung Mi Kim
ISBN 0-925904-21-X 104 pages \$12
available January 1996

Please note: If ordering and enclosing check before Nov. 15, 1995, you may deduct \$1 per book ordered.

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thank you,
charles

Charles Alexander
Chax Press
P.O. Box 19178
Minneapolis, MN 55419-0178
[REDACTED] (phone & fax)
[REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

248. **Schuchat**
Re: "Naropa P-Wars"

Wed 11 Oct 1995

I believe that Robert Bly either wrote something about it or was interviewed on the subject.

On Wed, 11 Oct 1995, Loss Glazier wrote:

I've been straining here to think: isn't there one more very famous account of this incident somewhere? Does anyone recall this?

If you're going to check out Tom Clark's The Great Naropa Poetry Wars, you'll also want to look at the project on that now-mythological Merwin-Trungpa confrontation produced by Ed Sanders' 1977 Investigative Poetry class at Naropa. It's called The Party: A Chronological Perspective on a Confrontation at a Buddhist Seminary (Poetry, Crime and Culture Press: Woodstock, NY, 1977). This does, I think, have implications for poetics beyond the talk-show level, esp. if read along with Sanders' 1976 chapbook Investigative Poetry (City Lights).

[↑ Contents](#)

249. **Robert Drake**

Re: 4 horsemen, and soundpoetry yonder...

Thu 12 Oct 1995

some four horsemen Lps:

Live in the West Starborne Productions, Toronto 1977

Canadada Griffin House, Toronto 1974

Two Nights ?? --i only have a k7 dub...

as mentioned, Underwich Audiographics (PO 262 Adelaide St. Stn., Toronto ONT M5R 2J4) probably has some stuff; they definately have some solo k7s by bp nichol & i think paul dutton...

jw curry of curvd H&z books (1357 lansdowne Ave., toronto ONT M6H 3Z9) may also be able to track down copies & additional listings; besides dealing in some of this material, i believe he's done some pretty complete biblio/discographies.

a _few_ readings on sound poetry:

Sound Poetry: A Catalog, ed. Steve McCaffery & bp nichol; Underwich editions 1978. excellent survey, particularly of the canadian scene.

Capilano Review #31, special sound poetry issue, guest editors Richard Truhlar & Steven Smith; 1984. includes 7" record w/ Owen Sound, Mara Zibins, 4 Hoursemen, bill bissett & David UU.

in Leonardo vol. 3:, "Vocal Neighborhoods: a Walk Through the Post-Sound Poetry Landscape" by Larry Wendt; MIT Press 1993. considerably more current, tho straying more toward poetry-as-music, depending on your rigor... accompanying CD includes Brenda Hutchinson, Paul Dutton, Valeri Scherstjanoi, Amanda Stewart, Trevor Wishart, Henri Chopin & David Moss...

as fr ron's challenge to the term "sound poetry": altho its a term i'm comfortable with, i agree that it may lead to misunderstanding. i generally prefer dick higin's term "intermedia" for various boundry-crossing genres. particularly apt, seems to me, in view ov many scores for soundpoetry, which often draw heavily on various concrete/verbo-visual/graphic poetry techniques...

but as fr "saying the same thing"... hard for me to understand. sit & listen to Ur Sonata side-by-side w/ anything by the horsemen, since those have both

come up recently. it's trivial to note that they don't "say the same thing"--different phonemes, etc... (& i assume you don't mean to say that they all _mean_ the same thing...) but beyond that, they certainly have differing intentions, occur in & address different contexts/audiences, and trigger (for me at least) different emotional and intellectual responses. the difficulty of "translating" or glossing a sound poem doesn't, fr me, mean that it is "meaningless", or that it's only meaning is in it's formal rejection of recognizable morphemes... i dunno, maybe i could respond more clearly if you explained how you hear specific examples of sound poetry "saying the same thing...", what you hear them saying or how you hear the saying said... puzzled, i am

luigi



"'Cleveland' spelled backwards is... DNA Level C.
Well, that explains a lot!"

[↑ Contents](#)

250. **George Bowering**
Re: poetry and politics

Thu 12 Oct 1995

I have to go away to Europe or some such place for 2 months, and I dont want 5000 messages when I get back, and I forget how to get off the BuffNet for a while. Can someone remind me how it's done? Thanks.

[↑ Contents](#)

251. **R I Caddel**
new book

Thu 12 Oct 1995

To my surprise and delight a wonderful new book from Carcanet: Michael Haslam's "A Whole Bauble" (14.95 pounds, isbn 1-85754-187-1). I've been aware of Haslam's work for a long time in magazines, small collections etc., but hadn't really done more than nod to it. I was wrong. Haslam describes himself (in the note at the back): "I think I'm a sort of wayward Prynneite, I suppose, and..." - the kind of cautious inclusion I associate with John Hall and John Riley - both of whom have walk-on parts in "Immediate must be a miracle" which carries the preface "This poem is for / the Empty Classes / of the Cambridge School of Poetry".

But when I came to look for a nice little bit to quote, I couldn't: one bit leads to another, links back to bits earlier, with echo-sequences often very reminiscent of

old welsh, which he's often using in one way or another, and bits of speech-sampling from his Yorkshire background, and my favorite Ives quote ("Some of these songs... cannot be sung") and the thing forms such a whole surface that I go on exploring it and forget to look for snappy quotes. Try it.

OK, my second favorite Ives quote: my first (overlooking the gender specific language) is "Stand up - and use your ears like a man!"

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	

[↑ Contents](#)

252. **Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco**

Re: "Naropa P-Wars"

Thu 12 Oct 1995

I've been straining here to think: isn't there one more very famous account of this incident somewhere? Does anyone recall this?

> If you're going to check out Tom Clark's The Great Naropa Poetry
> Wars, you'll also want to look at the project on that
> now-mythological Merwin-Trungpa confrontation produced by Ed
> Sanders' 1977 Investigative Poetry class at Naropa. It's called The
> Party: A Chronological Perspective on a Confrontation at a Buddhist
> Seminary (Poetry, Crime and Culture Press: Woodstock, NY,
> 1977). This does, I think, have implications for poetics beyond the
> talk-show level, esp. if read along with Sanders' 1976 chapbook
> Investigative Poetry (City Lights).

I first read of this incident by way of Eliot Weinberger in an essay collected in, I think, Works on Paper (New Directions). Don't know if it's the one you're thinking of, Loss.

[REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

253. **Loss Glazier**

Re: turning off mail for a while

Thu 12 Oct 1995

>
> I have to go away to Europe or some such place for 2 months, and I
> dont want 5000 messages when I get back, and I forget how to get off
> the BuffNet for a while. Can someone remind me how it's done?
> Thanks.

George, I'm posting this reply to the list in case others who may have forgotten how to do this might want to make a note of it...

-> To stop mail for an indefinite amount of time, send an e-mail message to:

██████████

message, type:

set poetics nomail

And send the message. You will receive confirmation that you have been set to "nomail." That's all there is to it!

-> When you return and are ready to resume, follow the instructions above but in the body of the message type:

set poetics mail

Bon Voyage, George!

[↑ Contents](#)

254. **Judy Roitman**

Re: "Naropa P-Wars"

Thu 12 Oct 1995

I've been straining here to think: isn't there one more very famous account of this incident somewhere? Does anyone recall this?

If you're going to check out Tom Clark's The Great Naropa Poetry Wars, you'll also want to look at the project on that now-mythological Merwin-Trungpa confrontation produced by Ed Sanders' 1977 Investigative Poetry class at Naropa. It's called The Party: A Chronological Perspective on a Confrontation at a Buddhist Seminary (Poetry, Crime and Culture Press: Woodstock, NY, 1977). This does, I think, have implications for poetics beyond the talk-show level, esp. if read along with Sanders' 1976 chapbook Investigative Poetry (City Lights).

Being out of the loop, I read it in a semi-mass circulation magazine many years ago. Atlantic Monthly? New Yorker?

[↑ Contents](#)

255. **Tenney Nathanson**
Michael as exemplum (?)

Thu 12 Oct 1995

One of the reasons that I think it is so hard for poets who go directly from some student status into teaching (at least if that is at the college level) is that there is an (inherent) conflict between the poem and the job that sets it up as very difficult to conceive of as unalienated labor. I think one can read this "ambivalence" in great detail in almost all of Michael Davidson's work, someone who has taken his role as a teacher with great seriousness his entire career and never flinched from acknowledging its impact on his poetry, although he is often conflicted about how he "feels" about that.

Ron--

I'd love to hear you say some more about this, unless you think it would be an embarrassment to Michael, who is on the list too, no? But: in the poems let's say, how does the conflict show up (its appearance in the criticism would be less surprising: "I'd rather be fishing" gestures etc., of the sort so riotously displayed by Pound in his early essays and magazine pieces)?

best,

Tenney

[↑ Contents](#)

256. **Tenney Nathanson**
and furthermore

Thu 12 Oct 1995

Date: Wed, 11 Oct 1995 10:21:41 EDT
From: Alan Golding <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Rolf Harris

Associate Professor of English, U. of Louisville
Phone: [REDACTED]; e-mail: [REDACTED]

Ah yes--Ann Vickery provides a blast from my colonial past in England when she mentions Rolf Harris' "Tie me kangaroo down, sport." In the earliest example of aural slippage I can remember experiencing, I thought, round about age 8 or 9, that the line/title was "Tiny Kangaroo Downsport." I remember thinking that Downsport seemed like rather an odd name for a tiny kangaroo, but, being an open-minded child, I was willing to go along with the program.

When I discovered the "right" version, the song suddenly seemed a lot less interesting.

"O we like sheep!"

[↑ Contents](#)

257. **Tenney Nathanson**

sigh

Thu 12 Oct 1995

Date: Wed, 11 Oct 1995 12:40:27 -0500

From: Edward Foster <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: No Subject

yes, it was stevens who said that money is a kind of poetry, and if anyone should'a it, it was he.

I was happily quoting this to someone as "poetry is also a kind of money" when I realized I had it backwards....

mansards R us....

there's also a nice Harold Bloom lobster bombay and mango chutney story out there

[↑ Contents](#)

258. **Tenney Nathanson**

yep

Thu 12 Oct 1995

Date: Wed, 11 Oct 1995 17:25:51 -0500

From: "A. Morris" <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: gifts

Though I would agree with Tenney Nathanson about the second part of Hyde's The Gift, the first part--"A Theory of Gifts"--strikes me as right in ways I've never seen discussed before. "Works of art exist simultaneously in two 'economies,'" he says, "a market economy and a gift economy." I like his discriminations between "labour" and "work" as well as his exploration of the obligations of entering into the gift economy: the necessity to give, to receive, and after a mysterious time during which one assimilates a gift, to reciprocate. In the second part, he does better with Pound than with Whitman. What he does is not "theory" so much as mulling an idea--but, at least to me, that idea explains a lot.

agreed. But that makes me want to suggest some counter-models. Like:

1. the old Arnold Hauser book on Mannerist (2 vols), which relates stylistic changes in poetry and painting to the decline of patronage and the anxieties of a new market economy that engulfs art production
2. the Buck-Morss book on Benjamin's Arcades project, as well as the 3 versions of Ben's Baudelaire essay (pub as CB: The Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism)--Bucik-Morss quotes long stretches of Benjamin on Baudelaire, re the dark relation of poetic allegory and commodity reification.

[↑ Contents](#)

259. **kat**

Re: Derrida on the episteme of lies

Thu 12 Oct 1995

Thank you for the longer notes on Derrida's talk on lies, which I see as particularly germane to the production or reconstruction of NATIONALISM in Eastern Europe. It is useful, also, to think something more about Arendt than that she was too much a friend, a disciple of Heidegger as all the New York Times reviews, etc. would say dismissively. Lots of trouble with Arendt but not particularly concerned with her bedmates if the implication is that pillow talk, as the story with much Heideggerian male political conceptions, went one way. Enough, it seems that I am wasting time in the same identity politics soup. Thanks for the precis on lies and action. yrs, Kathryne Lindberg

[↑ Contents](#)

260. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: oceans blue

Thu 12 Oct 1995

On this fine day let me remind all of an excellent novel -- _The Heirs of Columbus_ by Gerald Vizenor

& here's a curious fact I recently found -- Back when several states still had antimiscegenation laws (no hope of "don't ask don't tell" on that score!) Virginia felt compelled to legislate what came to be known as the "Pocahontas Exception" -- So many "white" Virginians claimed to be descendants of Pocahontas, by way of Tom Rolfe returned to the colonies, that the Commonwealth's law banning intermarriage would have the unintended effect of immediately subjecting thousands of white Virginians to possible incarceration -- No such exception was offered to white people who wished to claim descent from any famous African, however --

America is a New World that stays new, dammit!

[↑ Contents](#)

261. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Emily Dickinson-

Thu 12 Oct 1995

i plan to teach a tutorial on a few emily dickinson poems, and i'm interested in your comments abt her extensive use of dashes -- can anyone help me out --

thanks for this,

c

"303: The Soul selects her own Society"

The Soul selects her own Society--

Then--shuts the Door--

To her divine Majority--

Present no more--

Unmoved--she notes the Chariots--pausing--

At her low Gate--

Unmoved--an Emperor be kneeling

Upon he Mat--

I've known her--from an ample nation--

Choose One--

Then--close the Valves of her attention--

Like Stone--

[↑ Contents](#)

262. **Romana Christina Huk**

poetry on CD-ROM

Thu 12 Oct 1995

Can anyone give me information on CD-ROM recordings of readings that I might get my library to purchase for my "alternative poetries" graduate seminar? I've got a notice about something called Poetry in Motion I and II -- is there anything else out there I should think of instead?

Romana Huk <[REDACTED]>

[↑ Contents](#)

263. **tunguska**

context & derivation

Thu 12 Oct 1995

ed, you're right. my misunderstanding stems from the discussion involving fragmentation. movement, and rest, seemed to clash in what you said, and I

thought it would be useful to point out (what you already understand) in terms of Duncan's righting in the light of theology. I meant to show that horizons pointed to by philosophy call for poetry movement from in to outward, and not so simply a metaphoric reduction of "impertinence" imposed from "outside" poetry.

what we have, now, is a wholeness, aesthetic, or whatever, from the very nature of poetry, no longer out of sync with any so-called imperative. or what we should have. the problem is not to lose sight of that. so let me close this whole chain of contexts, fragmentation and fang-doodle, with the following:

There's this bee-keepers convention in Italy. Bee-keepers from all over the world are there, comparing and animatedly discussing their livelihood. The american says: we got 10 million bees and kept in a highly modern and monitored situation, very impressive, 3 million gallons of honey a year! The Italian says: Oh! we've got 25 million, and they're on a hillside, the old way, and we get 5 million gallons a year! And the German says: we do all our bees in an atmospherically controlled environment, a hot-house, producing twice that. The Frenchman says: we've got 2 different sites of 30 million bees, and we can continually produce honey year round and it's growing exponentially every year! They notice that the Irish bee-keeper hasn't said anything yet, so they ask him about his bee-keeping operation. The Irishman says: me? I've got 65 million bees..and I keep them all in a cardboard box! And the Italian says: isn't that a bit cruel? Fuck 'em! says the Irishman.

thilleman
tod thilleman

[↑ Contents](#)

264. **Jonathan Brannen** **(no subject)**

Thu 12 Oct 1995

Why ask of poetry more than it can deliver? We don't ask the same of cooking.

Jeff Hansen

Because we don't know what poetry may be able to deliver! The point of devising and utilizing innovative forms is precisely to explore the genre's potential.

>(money is also a kind of poetry)

>

>

Tenney,

Since when? To whom? I can relate to neither this concept of money nor this concept of poetry.

Best of all possible worlds,
Jonathan Brannen

[↑ Contents](#)

265. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: Derrida on the episteme of lies

Thu 12 Oct 1995

Kathryne,

This is really nothing but gossip, but what the hey:

a colleague of mine who studied under both Hans Jonas and Arendt, at the New School, suggested to me that her relationship with Heidegger was, let us say, for want of a better word at this moment, dynamic.

Burt

[↑ Contents](#)

266. **Loss Glazier**

Re: poetry on CD-ROM

Thu 12 Oct 1995

Romana,

You **must** check out _The Little Magazine Vol. 21_ as an extraordinary cd-rom release (IBM/Windows). Write to [REDACTED] for details.

Loss

> Can anyone give me information on CD-ROM recordings of readings that I
> might get my library to purchase for my "alternative poetries" graduate
> seminar? I've got a notice about something called Poetry in Motion I and
> II -- is there anything else out there I should think of instead?
>
> Romana Huk <[REDACTED]>
>

[↑ Contents](#)

267. **cris cheek**
4 Horsemen recordings
Thu 12 Oct 1995

the following are still available:

bpNichol, *Ear Rational: Sound Poems 1970 - 1980* \$10.00

Paul Dutton, *Fugitive Forms* \$10.00

Rafael Baretto-Rivera, *Scrabble Babble* \$10.00

from: - Grist On-Line (<http://phantom.com/~grist>). Grist has a toll free phone number for orders: [REDACTED]. After you dial the number, enter 9757 when requested. You can use Visa or Mastercard. Wouldn't hurt to check out Grist's bookstore: has over 4,000 titles, all contemporary poetry and related -- as far as I know, it's the largest source of contemporary poetry books on the net. You won't find a better selection of visual poetry books on the net. For sound poetry and related, check out Pauline Oliveros's Deep Listening Catalogue. If you can get to kenny g's web site, there's a link to it from there.

love and love

cris

[↑ Contents](#)

268. **Lisa Samuels**
Re: Texts about poetics "sound"
Thu 12 Oct 1995

dear Loss,

perhaps it's 'critical' commentary you're looking for,
only, but there's a book you might adore, if you don't
already:

Text-Sound Texts, ed. Richard Kostelanetz
William Morrow, 1980

it's a blissful survey play, Bleim Kern to Nina Yankowitz to Jean-Jacques
Cory's word lists, &c, with some commentary thrown in (eg, Jonathan Albert's
'Notes on Sound and Language'). & check out Toby Lurie's 'Chart of Musical
Values' (!).

best,

Lisa S.

*Can anyone recommend to me great texts on poetic sound? Sound as
"material," etc. as a contemporary poetic. Any thoughts would be
appreciated.*

Thanks,
Loss
[REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

269. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: No Subject

Thu 12 Oct 1995

Just a thought:

Stevens also said that writing poetry made him feel positively "lady-like."

Jeffrey Timmons

[↑ Contents](#)

270. **Steve Carll**

Re: sigh

Thu 12 Oct 1995

Tenney you wrote:

there's also a nice Harold Bloom lobster bombay and mango chutney story out there

Um, I'm dying to hear it. Does it take place in Heidegger's bed after his falling-out with Chogyam Trungpa? :-o

Steve

[↑ Contents](#)

271. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Emily Dickinson-

Thu 12 Oct 1995

i plan to teach a tutorial on a few emily dickinson poems, and i'm interested in your comments abt her extensive use of dashes -- can anyone help me out --

Carl,

I don't really think there's a definitive answer about the dashes (hesitation, leaping jolts of meaning, gaps, the Abyss, less and more), although some on this list may disagree. I do think they should be taken as significant, and subsequent attempts to remove them and regularize the punctuation in Dickinson should not be given credence. One of the best places to go is Susan Howe's work on

Dickinson, including her book *My Emily Dickinson* (North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, 1985). But I haven't kept up with all the scholarship on this, and I look forward to hearing of other places to look. I will quote one paragraph from early on in Howe's book, which comes between her quotation of Dickinson poems "In many and reportless places" (1382) and "I saw no Way - The Heavens were stitched -"

"On this heath wrecked from Genesis, nerve endings quicken. Naked sensibility at the extremest periphery. Narrative expanding contracting dissolving. Nearer to know less before afterward schism in sum. No hierarchy, no notion of polarity. Perception of an object means loosing and losing it. Quests end in failure, no victory and sham questor. One answer undoes another and fiction is real. Trust absence, allegory, mystery - the setting not the rising sun is Beauty. No titles or numbers for the poems. That would force order. No titles for the packets she sewed the poems into. No manufactured print. No outside editor/"robber." Conventional punctuation was abolished not to add "soigné stitchery" but to subtract arbitrary authority. Dashes drew liberty of interruption inside the structure of each poem. Hush of hesitation for breath and for breathing. Empirical domain of revolution and revaluation where words are in danger, dissolving . . . only Mutability certain."

Good luck with your tutorial on Dickinson. One of the few regrets I have about taking, finally, a non-academic path, is remembering, when I was an English grad student, teaching Dickinson to undergraduates, having them hear her as something explosive and altogether rare in our poetry.

charles

Charles Alexander
Chax Press
P.O. Box 19178
Minneapolis, MN 55419-0178
[REDACTED] (phone & fax)
[REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

272. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Emily Dickinson-

Fri 13 Oct 1995

the potential range of meanings and tones that the dashes make possible in dickinson's poetry has not yet received much more than perfunctory treatment---even Howe (and her "followers") have turned away from the dashes per say to focus on the handwriting etc. I think much more can be done, the "authorities" have for the most part very SELECTIVELY plumbed

some of the complexities and not the others that may be inherent in the dashes. These dashes are hazardous, of course, but no more than ignoring them would be. Susan Howe's Book probably would be better if called "SEVERAL OF MY EMILY DICKINSON'S" since it doesn't resolve in the idea of singular author, and such work is useful in reminding one that the "I" in any given poem is not the same "I" as in another poem---In fact, the "I" in one poem may be like the "master" (or "owner") in another poem yet-- though Howe doesn't quite say THAT! ---chris stroffolino

[↑ Contents](#)

273. **George Bowering**
Re: turning off mail for a while

Fri 13 Oct 1995

Thanks, Loss. When I am in Denmark/Italy I may just get on again if I can access this local outfit. Cheers. I will be thinking of you whilem, I mean you all, while I am doing a reading at U. of Rome on my birthday, Dec 1, wishing I were somewhere like Buffalo instead!

[↑ Contents](#)

274. **John Cayley**
UKania - The 'Nation's' favourite poem

Fri 13 Oct 1995

Four days before London's Albert Hall is filled with holes (how many?), the UK has voted Kipling's 'If' its favourite poem with Tennyson's 'Lady of Shalott' and de la Mare's 'The Listeners' the runners-up. Stevie Smith was the only modern rhymester to make the top ten.

But the punch line - in a national telephone poll sponsored by the BBC and extensively 'advertised' around prime-time slots (TV & radio), and out of a 'Nation' of c. 60m people, only 7,500 actually registered their favourite.

Poetics and the Media orbit far distant stars.

John Cayley Wellsweep Press [in Chinese HZ:]

^ fine, innovative literary translation from Chinese ^

1 Grove End House 150 Highgate Road London NW5 1PD UK

Tel & Fax: 0 [REDACTED] Email: [REDACTED]

1995 URLs: <http://www.inforamp.net/~cayley> [= home]

+ [/wshome.html](#) [= Wellsweep]

+ [/inhome.html](#) [= Indra's Net]

[↑ Contents](#)

275. **Maria Damon**
Re: Emily Dickinson-

Fri 13 Oct 1995

about those dashes-- i don't really "believe in" kristeva's scientific accounts of poetic language and the "thetic moment," but i do find useful the possibility that those dashes are moments where the verbal articulability of bodily/poetic pulsations/sensations breaks down and some other register of apprehension takes over (apprehension not, of course, as anxiety but as a "grasping toward") ...a "surplus" of meaningless meaning, that is not semantic meaning but a kind of metaphysical urgency, or a living, dynamic space that's created for listening to whatever sounds might be encountered beyond a cognitive level ... how would one "act out" a set of dashes if one were to choreograph an ED poem? may be one way to approach it w/ undergrads...md

[↑ Contents](#)

276. **Jonathan A Levin**
Re: Emily Dickinson-

Fri 13 Oct 1995

One more thought--the manuscript texts are vital in thinking about the dashes. One of the first things you realize studying these texts (alas, in The Manuscript Books) is that there are all sorts of dashes out there. Martha Nell Smith writes about these visual variations very well in her recent book *Rowing to Eden* (recent, what, say 1992?).

Jonathan Levin
NYC

[↑ Contents](#)

277. **Charles O. Hartman**
Re: POETICS Digest - 11 Oct 1995 to 12 Oct 1995

Fri 13 Oct 1995

On Dickinson--

There's a long-standing (but now possibly defunct) debate about these dashes, begun once they were restored to the poems (after wholesale replacement in all early-20th-century editions. As I recall it, some scholars claimed that the dashes have a relatively exact _musical_ function, indicating not only duration of "rest" (we have no notation for "rests," as such, in language) but also possibly the intonation contour of the preceding phrase. Evidence was adduced from the

folk-notation used by some religious community in the general area of Massachusetts. (It sounds like that early chapter in *_Doctor Faustus_*.) I forget the details. In any case the hypothesis was as I understand it generally agreed to be far-fetched. Problem of non-conventional notation, always.

Charles Hartman

[↑ Contents](#)

278. **Hank Lazer**
Re: Emily Dickinson-

Fri 13 Oct 1995

On Dickinson: see also Sharon Cameron's fairly recent *_Choosing Not Choosing_*, a study of the fascicles, but also some good readings of particular poems....

Hank Lazer

[↑ Contents](#)

279. **Edward Foster**
Re: Emily Dickinson-

Fri 13 Oct 1995

carl peters, on all dickinson matters, see susan howe's book, etc.

[↑ Contents](#)

280. **Herb Levy**
Re: Yonder

Fri 13 Oct 1995

Ron writes, in his response to the age-old musical question <Does all instrumental music "say the same thing"?>:

But I am intrigued in your argument (implicit) that sound poetry is better understood not as poetry. Why, then, call it such?

It's called "sound poetry" to distinguish it from what we call "poetry", just as the term "electric guitar" was first used to distinguish that instrument from what has subsequently become known as the "acoustic guitar." I can't imagine what would have to take place for a similar linguistic change in how we refer to, uh, "text poetry."

Perhaps a clearer example is the term "electronic music." Much of the most idiomatically interesting electronic music bears little resemblance to more traditional musical forms; they don't "do anything" in terms of a more traditional musical discourse. Conversely, much so-called electronic music that

is close to traditional musical structures (synthesizers mimicing acoustic ensembles, "symphonies" for synthesizer, etc.) is pretty dull compared to the thing being imitated.

Sound is the material and often the subject matter of sound poetry & the most interesting work in the field doesn't reduce to syntactically analyzable terms, that is, it doesn't "say anything" discursively.

In all these cases the modifier that distinguishes the term from the older, non-modified word, indicates the general focus of the newly modified term. & because of this it's the modifier that's emphasized.

I, too, get far more out of Bruce Ackley's playing that I do out of playing by either of the Marsalis brothers, though I'd probably want to make aesthetic distinctions between the music of Wynton & Branford.

Herb Levy



[↑ Contents](#)

281. **Herb Levy**
Deep Listening Catalog

Fri 13 Oct 1995

While I don't want to deter anyone from checking out Kenny G's homepage, here's the URL for the Pauline Oliveros Foundation with the Deep Listening catalog that Cris Cheek mentioned:

<http://www.tmn.com/Artswire/www/pof/pof.html>

But you really should check out Kenny's page. He hasn't mentioned it here, probably because the book was published a couple of years ago, but his home page now includes several pages from his book <73 Poems> including not only visuals, but sound recordings of the compositions by composer/performer Joan La Barbara for each of the poems shown.

Kenny's URL is:

<http://wfmua.org:80/~kennyg/>

Herb Levy



[↑ Contents](#)

282. **Edward Foster**
Re: Emily Dickinson-
Fri 13 Oct 1995

thinking more about dickinson and dashes: i remember many years ago cataloguing and transcribing 19th cent. letters and journals (not extirely beside the point: this was for an historical society in a town not far from amherst) and there were confusions because of a lack of "true" punctuation and the use of dashes instead. look, too, at melville's journals for use of dashes instead of the expected. and in thoreau as well. i was working the other day with a passage from melville's account of his visit to constantinople and wondered if the dashes reflect the speed with which he's thinking; he's terrifically wrought up. we use dashes now almost exclusively as a kind of parenthesis; we've reduced them to logic. but they had visual power once.

[↑ Contents](#)

283. **ULMER SPRING**
Re: Texts about poetics "sound"
Fri 13 Oct 1995

you might want to look at Douglas Oliver's book (the title of which escapes me at this moment), but he uses sound spretrographs to map both song and poetry. in the summer of 1991, he gave a lecture at naropa - it's on tape (at naropa). ahhh the title something like: Poetry Narrative in Performance
spring

[↑ Contents](#)

284. **Tenney Nathanson**
Wallace
Fri 13 Oct 1995

Date: Thu, 12 Oct 1995 14:25:33 -0500
From: Jonathan Brannen <[REDACTED]>
Subject: <No subject given>

Why ask of poetry more than it can deliver? We don't ask the same of cooking.

Jeff Hansen

Because we don't know what poetry may be able to deliver! The point of devising and utilizing innovative forms is precisely to explore the genre's potential.

(money is also a kind of poetry)

Tenney,

Since when? To whom? I can relate to neither this concept of money nor this concept of poetry.

*Best of all possible worlds,
Jonathan Brannen*

says Wallace Stevens, and as I think Ed Foster remarked sardonically (through a typo though?) if anyone's should know, it wd be Wallace (of the far-flung surprise Christmas box). Thinking, say, of all those lush fruits in "St Agnes Eve" etc. Imagination etc. There are also a couple of funny moments in Emerson where he says he hates the drudgery of the worker (and cf. American Scholar the truncated hand etc) but loves the bold imagination of the inventive capitalist & so on: pretty much equates capital w Imagination or Reason, drudge work w Understanding. I can't remember why it seemed apposite to quote Stevens, w some bemusement as I vaguely recall, but it did.

Tenney

[↑ Contents](#)

285. **Tenney Nathanson** **and**

Fri 13 Oct 1995

Date: Thu, 12 Oct 1995 20:39:55 -0700
From: Jeffrey Timmons <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: No Subject

Just a thought:

Stevens also said that writing poetry made him feel positively "lady-like."

Jeffrey Timmons

and while we're at it there's also the racist Stevens who remarked about his poetry that "one always wants to sound like an Italian and ends up sounding like a Guatemalan"; and more grimly, "let Mussolini take Etheopia from the Africans; after all, the Africans took it from the boa constrictors." those were the days, huh?

but then too:

"the poet is a god--or, the young poet is a god. The old poet is a tramp"
(cf. old Walt on the beach....)

Tenney

[↑ Contents](#)

286. **Ken Edwards**

Top ten poems

Fri 13 Oct 1995

According to a poll organised by the BBC, the results of which were announced yesterday, Kipling's "If" is Britain's favourite poem.

The top ten emerged as follows"

1. Kipling: If
2. Tennyson: The Lady of Shalott
3. Walter de la Mare: The Listeners
4. Stevie Smith: Not Waving But Drowning
5. Wordsworth: Daffodils
6. Keats: To Autumn
7. Yeats: The Lake of Innisfree
8. Wilfred Owen: Dulce et Decorum Est
9. Keats: Ode to a Nightingale
10. Yeats: He Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven

In a separate vote, the top ten poets were: Kipling, Yeats, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Walter de la Mare, Keats, Wilfred Owen, W H Auden, Stevie Smith.

I wonder what this says, if anything, about (a) the nation's attitude to poetry; (b) the state of the nation's psyche. The No 1 choice suggests that Victorian stiff-upper-lip moralism still rules; or perhaps it doesn't, but a sentimental nostalgia for it does. Or perhaps the list merely reveals the class/age profile of people who respond to BBC radio polls (imagine a similar list of "classical music favourites" - the selection above being perhaps poetry's equivalent of "a good tune").

What would a similar poll come up with in the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, I wonder?

[↑ Contents](#)

287. **Loss Glazier**
Poetry in Motion (Review)
Fri 13 Oct 1995

Given the interest recently expressed on poetry on cd-rom, I thought I'd send along the following...

POETRY IN MOTION

Ron Mann, editor

(New York: Voyager Company, 1994)

[CD-ROM: Windows/Macintosh].

Reviewed by Loss Pequeno Glazier

THE "DIGITAL REVOLUTION" HAS SOME INTELLIGENT OFFSPRING. Though the most interesting developments in electronic poetry will occur, in my opinion, through a network sensibility (visit the Electronic Poetry Center via the Internet at the [http, "http://writing.upenn.edu/epc"](http://writing.upenn.edu/epc) for a view into the possibilities of "connectivity") this CD-ROM suggests some immediate and interesting possibilities.

That this is a commercial product makes the poets chosen quite surprising. The voyager CD-ROM series, displayed in a number of stores nationally in flashy carousels, contains titles such as "Baseball's Greatest Hits" and "People: Twenty Years of Pop Culture" as well as interesting items such as "Maus" and "Ephemeral Films." The series by no means pretends any specialization in poetry. However this company's one contemporary poetry product, at this writing, contains a range of interesting poets including Ted Berrigan, Robert Creeley, Alan Ginsberg, Jim Carroll, Anne Waldman, and Jim Cage.

In all, Poetry in Motion offers the work of some two dozen poets. Using the disk involves choosing from the author list. When you select an entry for viewing, you are presented with an opening screen split into three sections: a text of the poet, a screen with the poet reading, and, in most cases, an interview screen. Clicking on the "reading" screen starts a video clip in motion and the poem in the text panel scrolls as the poem is read. (This text screen actually offers the choice of two versions of the text: "As Performed" and "As Published." The poem will scroll with the reading if the "As Performed" box is checked.) If you click on the interview screen, a brief clip of the poet discussing poetics will play.

The disk is tremendous as a sampler, especially for those who teach or for those who don't have ready access to readings. Who could ever read the printed text of Waldman and witness the physical energy there? Or the careful pacing of Creeley? (Ginsberg and Burroughs are exceptions somewhat, since both turn

up more regularly in the mass media.) Berrigan is a particular treat, for the pacing of the poem read, of course, but also for Berrigan's movements, gestures, his physical approach to the literary "event."

The disk is also a rare exception in that a great deal of effort seems to have been put into layout and the graphical presentation of screens; it is quite a pleasure to move through its menus.

Notwithstanding the quality of the poets presented, of greatest interest is Poetry in Motion's approach to presenting the "word." The mix between performance and interview clips and the presentation of the dual nature of a poem as published and as it takes place in public is engaging. Quite a pleasurable experience bounded, interestingly, only by the medium itself: since video takes up so much disk space and emphasis is given to performances, interview clips tend to be quite short. In fact, there is NOT a lot of material here, each poet basically reading one poem. The CD actually does not compare to say, a good-sized anthology in breadth or variety.

The lack of depth in such a well-edited project makes one wonder if a multi-media CD-ROM product, though presenting well-selected material portably and in an engaging manner, must ultimately suffer from the insularity and limitations its own format imposes. All told however, it's a treat to see technology meet poetry in such a satisfactory fashion.

[↑ Contents](#)

288. **Bill Luoma**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Fri 13 Oct 1995

Re : Black Flag Kills Poets Dead

Has anyone's FBI file been used for such purposes? Has anyone on the list seen their FBI file?

[↑ Contents](#)

289. **Larry Price**

So we tanned his hide when he died, Clyde

Fri 13 Oct 1995

I want to reinvert your inversion. It seems to me a very different sense to say "movement is the key perception." Which brings out the sense of self-schism I've read in Duncan. But the narrative tree movement/rest is useful. Because my sense at least of Mallarmean "purity" does accommodate within it "the human theme of the impossibility of being...the attempts to reconstruct...sensibility, but only to purify it of anything accidental so that it is free to reenact endlessly

the sacred drama of failure and death...the poem is...the suicide of...Poetry." As Blaser once remarked, Spicer never forgave his mother, never forgave the occasion of his own birth. Thus

Like a diamond
Has at the center of it a diamond
Or a rock
Rock.

Which seems a cranky

Do not move
Let the wind speak

sort of purity. Not the alternations of being, but "what does one do with all this crap?"

Whereas certainly for Duncan, what could be called the heuristic use of utopia could just as easily become the heuristic force of existence (as for example what is for me the demonic self-reading in the NET outtakes). As though the only context one has for the writing act is that of language doubling, the proposition that the one who writes is the one who reads, not with the same abilities certainly, but expanded to the formal availability that that doubling brings.

Larry Price

[↑ Contents](#)

290. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Top ten poems

Fri 13 Oct 1995

According to a poll organised by the BBC, the results of which were announced yesterday, Kipling's "If" is Britain's favourite poem.

The top ten emerged as follows"

- 1. Kipling: If*
- 2. Tennyson: The Lady of Shalott*
- 3. Walter de la Mare: The Listeners*
- 4. Stevie Smith: Not Waving But Drowning*
- 5. Wordsworth: Daffodils*
- 6. Keats: To Autumn*
- 7. Yeats: The Lake of Innisfree*
- 8. Wilfred Owen: Dulce et Decorum Est*
- 9. Keats: Ode to a Nightingale*
- 10. Yeats: He Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven*

In a separate vote, the top ten poets were: Kipling, Yeats, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Walter de la Mare, Keats, Wilfred Owen, W H Auden, Stevie Smith.

This is just astounding to me, for many reasons, but particularly in that it seems to imply that only two centuries of poetry exist. Do Brits not read Shakespeare (or regard him only as playwright), Chaucer, Milton, Spenser, Donne, Johnson, Smart, Gray, Wyatt, Sidney, Marvel, and many more? Or read them only in school and think them a drudge?

[↑ Contents](#)

291. **Ryan Knighton**

Re: Michael as exemplum (?)

Fri 13 Oct 1995

I'm kinda backa all in a lurking sense I suppose. Thought I would jump in with some canadian content on this subject of teaching poetry and how it informs the writing of it. I don't know much about Michael D. as an exemplum but I would encourage anyone interested to take a long hard gander at Tom Wayman, the gently dangerous BC "industrial" poet. He wrote some wonderful things about his experiences as a college instructor and res-writer here at rainy SFU. I think he is usually published by Harbour Press ironically rooted on the Sunshine Coast. One of my faves is in his treatment of the question "what did I miss in class yesterday".

[↑ Contents](#)

292. **Patrick Phillips**

Re: poet kills black flag dead

Fri 13 Oct 1995

Re : Poet Kills Black Flag Dead

Has anyone's FBI file been used for such purposes? Has anyone on the list seen their FBI file?

Not I. Went so far as to get the FIA (freedom of information act) forms in 1984, but did not submit..... black flag killed dead.

[↑ Contents](#)

293. **Mark Scroggins**

Re: Top ten poems

Fri 13 Oct 1995

If my students and acquaintances are any indication, it's doubtful that most Americans could name ten POETS, much less ten specific poems.

So has anybody been able to come up with a reference for me on that interview in which Ashbery claims Helen Vendler told him one had to be a fascist to like the Cantos?

Mark Scroggins

[↑ Contents](#)

294. **Steve Carll**
Re: Emily Dickinson-
Fri 13 Oct 1995

Chris S. wrote:

Susan Howe's Book probably would be better if called "SEVERAL OF MY EMILY DICKINSON'S" since it doesn't resolve in the idea of singular author, and such work is useful in reminding one that the "I" in any given poem is not the same "I" as in another poem---In fact, the "I" in one poem may be like the "master" (or "owner") in another poem yet--though Howe doesn't quite say THAT! ---chris stroffolino

This is one of the most interesting paradoxes--Dickinson's poetry does have a distinctive Voice (capital V)--you can almost always tell if you're somewhat familiar with it that you're hearing or reading another example of it--yet the voice (lower-case v) of any individual poem may be wildly different from that of any other given ED poem. She was "masterful" at strategizing that Voice, at cloaking it in accents, a proto-Pessoa, one might almost say.

Steve

[↑ Contents](#)

295. **Michael Davidson**
Re: Michael as exemplum (?)
Sat 14 Oct 1995

>>One of the reasons that I think it is so hard for poets who go directly
>>from some student status into teaching (at least if that is at the
>>college level) is that there is an (inherent) conflict between the poem
>>and the job that sets it up as very difficult to conceive of as
>>unalienated labor. I think one can read this "ambivalence" in great
>>detail in almost all of Michael Davidson's work, someone who has taken
>>his role as a teacher with great seriousness his entire career and
>>never flinched from acknowledging its impact on his poetry, although he
>>is often conflicted about how he "feels" about that.

>
>Ron--
>

>I'd love to hear you say some more about this, unless you think it would be
>an embarrassment to Michael, who is on the list too, no? But: in the poems
>let's say, how does the conflict show up (its appearance in the criticism
>would be less surprising: "I'd rather be fishing" gestures etc., of the sort
>so riotously displayed by Pound in his early essays and magazine pieces)?
>
>best,
>
>Tenney
>
>Well, I certainly "feel" conflicted about the split, as many on this list
must feel as well. As to whether or not this appears in the poetry, that's
hard for me to gauge, but there is plenty of institutional rhetoric that
finds its way into texts (in quotations, of course). I think that for many
of us who are poet/teachers there is a desire to be accountable in the
university at large and not to get pigeonholed as a "writer" which, in most
universities, means someone useful on the masthead but not in official
departmental meetings. The problem is that, like Ellison's Invisible Man,
the more you pretend you're really someone else the more you become that
person and begin to act accordingly. As to Ron's reference to "ambivalence"
that needn't be only the result of institutional conflicts.

Michael Davidson
Michael Davidson

[↑ Contents](#)

296. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: poetry in notions

Sat 14 Oct 1995

some of the limitations of the Poetry in Motion CD ROM may stem from its
origins as a video tape ??? Has anybody written anything comparing this
project in its two formats?

[↑ Contents](#)

297. **R I Caddel**

Top Ten Poets

Sat 14 Oct 1995

I tried to ignore the sickening "National Poetry Day" phenomenon, but folks
will keep reminding me of it ("Here - you'll like this - Neil Astley's Bloodaxe
Books have put Northeast Poetry on the map" etc etc). Actually I lined up with
the "National Poetry Day Protect and Survive" group - urged my colleagues in

my workplace NOT to read poems in my lunchbreak, NOT to stick poems on trees etc. In Newcastle, Connie Pickard held a silent and lone vigil in the deserted Morden Tower...

Difficult to read too much into a radio phone-in poll, since phoners-in cannot (I hope!) be considered representative of even their own collective psyche - just another instance of the UK media's trivialisation of everything, as I read it. But the "banding" of those poems does, perhaps, reflect the narrowing-down of teaching: my children missed out on Chaucer at school - even in "translation" - because he's deemed "too difficult" for most.

Pleasing to see Kit Smart in there in the list of poets who might've been considered: I doubt if many Durham schoolkids could even name him, tho' Smart was Durham raised and taught. A movement to put up a plaque for him in the town was squashed - "too obscure".

However, coming shortly on some radio is the poll of "Ten Worst Poems" - now there's a game we might play on this list...

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 "Name and date / split in soft	
slate / a few months obliterate."	x x	- Basil Bunting
x x	x	

[↑ Contents](#)

298. **Ron Silliman**
Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds
Sat 14 Oct 1995

You wrote:

>

>Re : Black Flag Kills Poets Dead

>

>Has anyone's FBI file been used for such purposes? Has anyone on the list

>seen their FBI file?

>

I got mine through the Freedom of Information Act in the late 70s. 130 pages of garbage that made me realize how much of even the FBI was simply a "make work" program. Mostly investigations of my relations with "subversive groups" like the Socialist Workers Party, interviews with building janitors where I'd lived, teachers (!) of classes that I had dropped (tho not of ones I'd actually attended).

Names deleted throughout but it was apparent from the texts that there was a CIA "stringer" among the grad students in English at UC Berkeley, a fellow who actually lived in the same apartment building as I and my first wife.

Notable absences too, such as the time when my phone was tapped (very obviously-- you could pick it up and hear week-old conversations you had had) while I was baby-sitting Stephen Weed and the Hearst ransom money in '74 during that wild period (the two weeks immediately preceding her coming out as Tanya and robbing a bank), or when the FBI questioned me after finding my phone # in the address book of Sara Jane Moore, one of their own "informants" who attempted to shoot Gerry Ford.

Ron

[↑ Contents](#)

299. **CTHEORY/fwrđ**
Lorenz on Cicchetto (review)

Sat 14 Oct 1995

		CTHEORY
THEORY, TECHNOLOGY AND CULTURE	VOL 18, NO 3	
Review 39	95/10/04	Editors: Arthur and Marilouise Kroker

Cut It Out

=====

Francesca Cicchetto, *_Sadiani Rognoni_*. Edited by Shinaz Giusti, with accompanying text by Nils Ya. Buffalo, NY: Tailspin Press, 1995.

~Klaus Lorenz~

Reviewer's Note: An obscure press in Buffalo, New York has recently published one of the more interesting documents in aesthetic theory to emerge in the past few years. Ostensibly a reissue of Italian writer Francesca Cicchetto's *_Sadiani Rognoni_*, an avant-garde work originally published in Bologna in 1952, the book includes, in addition to the Sadian cut-ups (or more accurately, cut-outs) that occupy its recto pages, a philosophical commentary by guerrilla theorist Nils Ya. Printed thus, both texts run parallel to each other, informing each other yet remain distinct as befits their generic allegiances. Both address the curious status of the *fragment* as aesthetic topos in our post- and unprepossessing-of-anything historical moment. And both work the ragged seam marking that marriage of poetic and philosophical discourses that increasingly informs contemporary theory.

Ecstatic time can only find itself in the vision of things that puerile chance causes brusquely to appear: cadavers, nudity, explosions, spilled blood, abysses, sunbursts, and thunder. -Bataille

A poet recently remarked, apropos of the American serial poem: "Little potato prints of consciousness." The child's absorbed attentiveness in art-making summoned by that phrase could hardly be further removed from the cool, antiabsorptive conceptualism of Francesca Cicchetto's work. A neon impassiveness lends its steady charm to the cookie-cutter, heartshaped shape of readerly awareness in these poems. No aura - no bliss either. The Italian impulse to laugh off artefactual mystery. Yet the imprint of method, be it figured as crudely as acorn head or ace of spades on the raw cut half of a potato dipped in paint, has nonetheless an exploratory deliberation about it that poses certain questions to the (re)viewer through these portholes of the future.

What can we discern there? A short history of the uses of "method" in twentieth-century poetry of the West might take us from modernism's odd uncle, Raymond Roussel, to the surrealists, the lettrists, Language poetry, and back again to the Romantics, without still ever addressing the crucial determinations that underwrite a writer's use of one "method" over another; and the question becomes acute when, as here, the method involves a framing of found material. Method as window - opening on to different scenes, certainly, but homogenizing them (as Cicchetto's Sadian source-text endlessly reiterates its subject matter) within the unchanging fact of a single reiterated frame. And that frame, as Nils Ya demonstrates so clearly in his exhaustive commentary on the logic of the fragment accompanying Cicchetto's texts, is an *art* frame, a frame encrusted with a flaking history of perception whose very scabrousness causes us, paradoxically, to overlook it as historical (rather than aesthetic) object.

What is the point of Cicchetto's method? Baldly stated, shorn of literary-historical braidings, what does her work propose - about Sade, about sexuality, about postwar (or post-Wall) Europe, about language? After the passage of forty years, years whose same-as-new rhythm has appeared to be ineradicable from the texture of Italian political life, does her point need sharpening?

Like the slipped wig that provides the movie *Naked Kiss* with its single real frisson, Cicchetto's work reveals the sloppiness of modernism's hold on mid-century European culture, at a time when it was supposed to reign triumphant. The perfect symmetry of her cut-outs only serves to point up what's askew in the culture that provides their primary frame of reference - askew not morally or aesthetically or politically, but "out of joint" in the sense of Hamlet's despairing description of his time. And this temporal dislocation of the

century's high noon is in no way a reflection of retrogression or anachronism in the realm of the arts - it could be argued, in fact, that the stylistic "imperatives" pressed by international modernism were among those things that Adorno's Auschwitz made definitively obsolete. To take two roughly contemporary examples from the realm of the (Italian) visual arts: when Lucio Fontana slashed his canvases with a razor, or when Piero Manzoni produced, for sale, sealed cans labeled "Artist's Shit," they were hardly interested in pressing some quasi-Hegelian logic of modernism to its next identifiable synthesis. Art is health, Yves Klein asserted in 1960, and Joseph Beuys would later respond: it is healing. Scabs, knitting tissue, crusting over a live wound whose lips speak a great deal more than the usual dilemmas of sexuality - is this the health promised us by a thoroughly appropriative art? ~*Ut pictura poesis*~ indeed! Yet in this space of disarticulation, the hip bone unconnected to the thigh bone, a space for articulation: Cicchetto holds fast to her method as Rossellini does his camera while filming *Open City* amid the fresh ruins of a recently abandoned Rome.

Georges Bataille, parsing the language of flowers, has remarked on the image of the Marquis de Sade among the mad in his asylum cell, stripping off the petals of a rose and throwing them into a latrine. The time is long past due, suggests Sade's redactor here, to abandon the postcivilized world. Derelict structures of half-smashed thought, held in abeyance, so many matchflames shielded by cupped hands, they burn out of sight the next step we might take. Yet we don't need extra light to read the graffiti on walls and screens: No more hedging around the demands of the last decent extremism. Human chance reappears at this juncture not in her medieval dress, randomly blindfolded in a double personification of Fortuna-Justice (is that a torture-wheel or scales she holds behind her back?), but as the frolicsome boys, familiar from *Lear*, tearing wings off flies to see what will happen next. Flinging art's petals to the breeze may indeed give pleasure to those suffering from a newly authorized boredom, that form of blank restlessness that has long been the ground of modern creativity. But to expose, to strip off the patterned wallpaper of aesthetic assumptions buried under layers of peeling paint: it could take a lifetime, and the basic questions of redesign - "what next?" - still go unbroached.

What Francesca Cicchetto suggests, I think, is that a total negativity as asymptotic aesthetic limit might well fit our fortunes now - "we" having no horizon on which to construct images of perfect cities, neither hill nor ditch; better the tears and holes of a negative architecture, Matta-Clark's exuberant ruin of dead policies of renewal. Leaves shattered before the mellowing rot of eroticized spatial relations: is that what we, turning the corner of a page, find in the familiar neighborhood that Cicchetto outlines for us in her book? Elegiac

smoke, without a hint of self-pity, gets in the reader's eyes. We should be careful, of course, not to draw too close an analogy between the time in which she writes and our own - between the languid fifties and the scraped-thin nineties. But neither should we overlook the parallels.

Klaus Lorenz is a graduate student in urban planning at the State University of New York at Buffalo. Interested readers should contact Tailspin Press at [REDACTED] (or 1110 Main Street, Buffalo NY 14209) for further information on the reissue of _Sadiani Rognoni_.

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- * 3. Event-scenes in politics, culture and the mediascape (EVENTS:)
*
- * 4. Electronic (virtual reality) theory salon: interactive and
* unmoderated (CTALK)
*
- * World Wide Web address:
* <http://www.freedonia.com/ctheory/>
*
- * The disk (DOS/Mac) version of CTHEORY may be ordered directly
* from: CJPST, Concordia University, 1455 de Maisonneuve, O.,
* Montreal, Canada, H3G 1M8. Institutional orders may be placed
* through UMI, Ann Arbor, Michigan.
*
- * Indexed in: International Political Science Abstracts/
* Documentation politique internationale; Sociological
* Abstract Inc.; Advance Bibliography of Contents: Political
* Science and Government; Canadian Periodical Index;
* Film and Literature Index.

[↑ Contents](#)

300. **cris cheek**
Re: Top ten poems

Sat 14 Oct 1995

*In a separate vote, the top ten poets were: Kipling, Yeats, Wordsworth,
Tennyson, Walter de la Mare, Keats, Wilfred Owen, W H Auden, Stevie Smith.*

We're talking about a particular period of 'english' for a particular sensibility of (and possibly age or age identification of) reader. We're talking short, mostly romantic or sentimental or patriotic nostalgia, written in what is 'broadly speaking' the wellsprings of what's been called either 'the Queen's English' or 'standard English' (BBC World Service). We're witnessing idiosyncratic examples of 'pop' penetration. Kipling comes on tea cloths and the office jotter, Auden is back in the frame after the success of *Four Weddings and A Funeral*. The top ten poets don't differ much from the authors of the top ten poems. It's just what people feel safe with - also, and perhaps crucially, that poetry (in fact

all proper validated culture) is in 'the past'. Poems that fulfill a function similar to the family heirloom - you might not really want granny's slipper in the house but it is all that remains of her and so gathers respect and historical curiosity as a reminder of 'the past'. This is underlined by the absence of contemporary poets. For all their reported popularity there's no sign of John Hegley, Carol Ann Duffy, Brian Patten, Ted Hughes, Seamus Heaney, Pam Ayres, Benjamin Zephaniah, Adrian Mitchell, Tony Harrison, Simon Armitage, Craig Raine, Kit Wright and so on. Sorry to pollute this list quite so incomprehensibly. Mostly we're talking about one poet known for only a half dozen poems. I wonder how many people who voted for Yeats have a fondness for his wonderful 'Crazy Jane' poems for example.

And Charles, the poets you mention:-

it

>seems to imply that only two centuries of poetry exist. Do Brits not read
>Shakespeare (or regard him only as playwright), Chaucer, Milton, Spenser,
>Donne, Johnson, Smart, Gray, Wyatt, Sidney, Marvel, and many more? Or read
>them only in school and think them a drudge?

None of these writers are perceivable under 'the Queen's English'. Not only are they as Ric says 'difficult', but many of them aren't approached until Degree level. That's the result of an appallingly patronising education system which is replicated in attitudes that drive down lowest common denominators by insisting that one shouldn't write what the bus conductor couldn't understand - when that bus conductor has a double first in mathematics but either doesn't want or simply can't get any other work. Well, work that's a wholly different topic.

love and love
cris

[↑ Contents](#)

301. **tunguska**
Top Ten Poetries
Sat 14 Oct 1995

\

What's to be made of it's the same as ol' Ez himself made of it, bitterly:
"An absolute ignorance, of Coin, Credit, and Circulation"
tod thilleman

[↑ Contents](#)

302. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Sat 14 Oct 1995

so Ron (Silliman), when are you going to publish your memoirs and/or autobiography---it sounds "juicy," "a page turner" etc--a la Baraka's auto. It would certainly be a change from much of your poetry.... Or, maybe, THE COLLECTED EMAIL NOTES OF RON SILLIMAN..... forward by stephen weed, etc---chris s.

[↑ Contents](#)

303. **Robert Drake**

Re: poetry in notions

Sat 14 Oct 1995

some of the limitations of the Poetry in Motion CD ROM may stem from its origins as a video tape ??? Has anybody written anything comparing this project in its two formats?

actually, origins as a *film*... i was very disappointed w/ the CD version (as much as i am a fan of the film), exactly because it seemed only a hackedup version of another medium, rather than a creative use of the new medium. the same holds true for much of what passes for "hypertext", especially on the WWW--just cutting up passages of linear writing and pasting 'em together w/ links ignores the possibilities, or the _demands_, of hypertextual grammer. plus, the digitized vido looks *bad*... if anyone's planning on using this fr teaching, i'd suggest showing the original... i'm looking forward to checking out the new _little magazine #21_ which just came in the mail (i'll have to wait til lunch break on monday to use the ibm--mac only here at home), sounds like they've tried to stretch it further...

luigi

[↑ Contents](#)

304. **Judy Roitman**

Re: Michael as exemplum (?)

Sat 14 Oct 1995

*I think that for many
of us who are poet/teachers there is a desire to be accountable in the
university at large and not to get pigeonholed as a "writer"...*
Michael Davidson
Michael Davidson

As someone not in an English department, I am always shocked by how badly treated the writers are. It is as if the physics department were run by

historians and philosophers of physics, and the people creating physics shunted off to the side.

[↑ Contents](#)

305. **Maria Damon**

Re: Top ten poems

Sat 14 Oct 1995

my sense is that americans would name robert frost, maya angelou, and longfellow --poets with some kind of "national"(ist) profile.--md

[↑ Contents](#)

306. **Maria Damon**

Re: Michael as exemplum (?)

Sat 14 Oct 1995

the other MD wrote:

As to Ron's reference to "ambivalence"

that needn't be only the result of institutional conflicts.

Michael Davidson

michael--cd u say more abt. this? abt the usefulness, perhaps, of institutional conflicts and conflicting expectations one has of oneself and that the inst. has of one?--md

[↑ Contents](#)

307. **Diane Marie Ward**

Emily & top ten poems

Sat 14 Oct 1995

I share other list members' frustration at the lack of variety in the narrow results of the survey of the top ten poems and poets. While I believe that all poets represented are fine examples of literary mastery, all poets on the list are no longer living. If poets are truly as Shelley said "legislators of the world" why doesn't anyone listen to the modern poets who are appreciative of the circumstances surrounding life in the 20th century? Did they poll only Eastenders' fans? I prefer to fall asleep with a book of "classical poetry" but these words cannot truly speak to me of my struggles- or solve the disease of complacency and selfishness that our culture is guilty of. My daily work revolves around cataloging books of poetry - modern poetry - and my heart is sickened because I know that most of these books will go on to the library shelf and collect nice piles of dust because students are not exposed to contemporary authors. Look at your own lives: How many times is American Poetry Review

sold out at your local bookstore - how many people actually go to poetry readings, how many people actually understand what you are trying to express when you do read, do you ever find the poetry section in a bookstore crowded? Of course poetry is an aesthetic pursuit - it will not feed you or tell you you look slimmer etc. (and all the other gimmicks which sell everything today) - Poetry is an expression and I feel frustrated that not one contemporary poet is represented. Poets reflect the fractured reflections of our society - but of course the world wants to hear the "sweet poems of youth" that they were forced to memorize. Don't mind my pessimism -It is just frustrating to know that a poll (another great invention of our sheep mentality world) supports my notion that the vast majority of people are oblivious to modern poetry and the pseudo salvation it offers.

A note on Emily Dickinson: I have always felt that her dashes represented moments of animation: perhaps as she wrote them - a smile came across her face - or a wince. For example in Have you got a little brook - there are four instance of dashes: 3 at the end of 3 four-lined sections. She then chooses to end the 1st line of the final group of 4 lines with a dash. If the dashes are read as hesitating pauses - one can imagine she had specific instances in mind she was alluding to (and you are saying but of course she was). Her poetry is a poetry of reflection and brevity. Perhaps the dashes are instances where she could have written more - or perhaps she wanted to keep secret the details which forced the line from her mind onto her paper. This sounds all very simple but considering her family life and the culture of Amherst at the time I believe she found a seductiveness in her private memories - the ones which have escaped critics - perhaps these memories are forever hidden in those dashes. I am anxious to read My Emily Dickinson by Howe now, perhaps she has a different perspective on this.

:-)

Diane Ward

State University of New York at Buffalo



[↑ Contents](#)

308. **Patrick Phillips**

Re: Emily & top ten poems

Sat 14 Oct 1995

I composed some of the remarks on E.D.'s - and, though synoptic, thought it interesting:

dashes:

Ward:

moments of animation

Alexander:

leaps

Carll:

the strategized Voice

Foster:

Lack of "true" punctuation

Levin:

visual variations

Damon:

a "grasping toward"

I always feel a moment of both erasure and contemplation, as though E.D. clears the terrain, the tension while at the same time flooding the poem with tension and a resonance of the preceding and following. Though from line to line this purpose of this "grasping" is eluded, the - is not comprised of the same "object," "intent." The dash at the end of a line like "Between the instant of a Wreck -" is so different from "That knows - it cannot see -" In this poem the dash is both a stitching of wreckage and a breaking of the poem. To write into that place a "visual," willing caesura is a kind of umbilical to her, a "punctuation" of the intimate and the severance of that intimacy. We are made in-extricable.

Before my grandmother died, she folded over her eleventh edition Little Brown _Collected_ on page 350 to # 712 "Because I could not stop for Death -" a poem she turned to often and so left her hand in the book. She would most likely put Emily Dickinson at the top of her list.

[↑ Contents](#)

309. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Top ten poems

Sat 14 Oct 1995

my sense is that americans would name robert frost, maya angelou, and longfellow --poets with some kind of "national"(ist) profile.--md

Maria, you only say Longfellow because you live here in Minnehahasota where everything is either named after him, or he named everything after.

I think Americans read e.e.cummings more than robert frost. probably e.e., maya, and rod mckuen (or was that two generations ago?)

[↑ Contents](#)

310. **Charles Alexander**
Re: Emily & top ten poems
Sat 14 Oct 1995

Responding to Diane Ward, while I too am sorry top ten lists don't contain contemporary poets, I have to say I was more astounded that the lists contained only 18th Century and later poets. And when Diane says, " I prefer to fall asleep with a book of "classical poetry" but these words cannot truly speak to me of my struggles- or solve the disease of complacency and selfishness that our culture is guilty of," I have to disagree entirely. I do think that not only are complacency and selfishness not particularly contemporary issues, but that they, and a lot of other rather universal concerns, may be found in poetries of many times and many places. Such poetries may not solve our contemporary diseases, but I'm not sure contemporary poetry can solve them, either. Emily's dashes help perhaps as much as Howe's visual leaps and gaps. I like to have both. screw the top ten.

charles

[↑ Contents](#)

311. **James Banton Rolins**
The art and poetry worlds
Sat 14 Oct 1995

Some time ago Gwyn made a statement I've just read (been away) and find intriguing, even amazing: _were it not for the madly proliferating MFA programs, people would still be writing the same thing..._ Your suggestion, Gwyn, that art of any sort needs the academy in order to change, if that's what you meant, stops me short. Please elaborate. I've been thinking about the place, influence, etc. of _academic_ poetry and would like to hear from anyone on that topic.

Bart

[↑ Contents](#)

312. **Diane Marie Ward**
Re: Emily & top ten poems
Sat 14 Oct 1995

I just wanted to clarify one thing: My name is Diane Ward. But I am not the Diane Ward who authored Imaginary Movie, Never Without One etc. I thought I should mail to the list because I have received numerous messages from people thinking me to be her and I wanted to avoid any further confusion. This is the main reason why I am forced to acquire a pseudonym in order to avoid confusion (which is Ursula). This makes it quite rough on me since two of my favorite poems to perform are based on the genealogy of my name Ward and how special it is to me. When I discovered the poet Diane Ward, I felt like a warm bubble that escapes and bursts on a cold ceiling. Somehow these poems will lose their meaning as I assume a new name for writing purposes. But such is life, one must shed things one has grown too close too. As a side note, I agree with Charles Alexander who disagreed with me: classical poems can offer us contemporary comfort and modern poems cannot always provide us with justification or solace. After I sent the message, I felt I had betrayed all the classical poets which I try to shove down others throats- trying to impress upon others that Byron is wonderful and that there are so many other lesser known poets worthy of light reading (Letitia E. Landon, Anne Bronte, Coventry Patmore, Hannah More etc.) But the point I was interested in making was that these poets listed in the Top ten cannot speak to us of the concerns of 1995 (ie. nuclear arms, recent wars and their outcomes, the rise of technology, modern art etc., pesticides on our foods, rainforest depletion, economic problems). At least they cannot speak to us in a direct way -- one can infer knowledge from them and then apply it to modern situations. :-) Diane Ward poet and artist who works at the University of Buffalo cataloging poetry books (for an international database and also for the local BISON database that services the University of Buffalo Poetry and Rare Books Room)

[↑ Contents](#)

313. **Alan Sondheim**
Re: Emily & top ten poems
Sat 14 Oct 1995

the dashes as words flooding, the gesture of a hand turning upward arm
downward simultaneously, those weirs gathering in the waters, literally
the speaking of the words falling out, dasein, thrown words as in but not quite
the ending of a breath
the dashes in collusion with the shape/effect of the notes, written everywhere
broken into discrete units unnumbered

but the dashes then across the scraps of paper
creasing or folding of paper
words dashed through the breath into daily life
- it's other punctuation that needs explanation not this -

[↑ Contents](#)

314. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Emily & top ten poems

Sun 15 Oct 1995

I guess "meaning" has gone out of fashion when it comes to Dickinson and dashes--or perhaps never was in....For many of the critics who were obsessed with meaning ignored the complexity of meaning the dashes afforded--Judging by recent comments by Pat Phillips and Diane Ward (are you THE diane ward, I mean the one who ROOF published, etc)-- which DO bring up important points (don't get me wrong--as chrissy wd sing)--it seems the gestural concerns (TAKEN ALONE) can eclipse the possibilities of meaning---and to some extent can deny the difficulty of the work..... chris s.

[↑ Contents](#)

315. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Emily & top ten poems

Sun 15 Oct 1995

OOPS---sorry diane---just read your note about your "identity"-- please accept my apologies--chris

[↑ Contents](#)

316. **Rod Smith**

Re: Top ten poems

Sun 15 Oct 1995

I think Americans read e.e.cummings more than robert frost. probably e.e., maya, and rod mckuen (or was that two generations ago?)

Seems to me as a bookseller the current college generation goes for Bukowski & to some extent the beats-- particularly Kerouac, but also Ginsberg, tho Angelou certainly does well. May be a DC phenomena, but I don't think so.

[↑ Contents](#)

317. **Ron Silliman**

Re: Michael as exemplum (?)

Sun 15 Oct 1995

You wrote:

>

>the other MD wrote:

>As to Ron's reference to "ambivalence"

>that needn't be only the result of institutional conflicts.

>

>Michael Davidson

>

>michael--cd u say more abt. this? abt the usefulness, perhaps, of

>institutional conflicts and conflicting expectations one has of
oneself and

>that the inst. has of one?--md

>

I want to note, since I have noticed here and elsewhere of late, that the term "ambivalence," at least whenever I use it, should not be taken as a negative. Literally, "seeing both sides"...though I am painfully aware that there really are more than two such sides.

Polivalent, tho, doesn't quite capture it.

[↑ Contents](#)

318. **Ron Silliman**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Sun 15 Oct 1995

You wrote:

>

> so Ron (Silliman), when are you going to publish your memoirs
and/or

> autobiography-

The autobiography is in the words....

[↑ Contents](#)

319. **Michael Davidson**

Re: Michael as exemplum (?)

Sun 15 Oct 1995

>the other MD wrote:

>As to Ron's reference to "ambivalence"

>that needn't be only the result of institutional conflicts.

>

>Michael Davidson

>

>michael--cd u say more abt. this? abt the usefulness, perhaps, of

>institutional conflicts and conflicting expectations one has of oneself and

>that the inst. has of one?--md

>

Maria--One is not born an institution; one becomes one. You could try and ignore its boundaries, limits and rhetorics by believing in the private-self-as monad, or you can appropriate it as a technology--something whose limits you work within and against. I think the reason writers in the university often find themselves marginalized is that they willingly accept the partition "Arts and Sciences" as describing exactly what they are. This way the writer doesn't have to be responsible for what "they" do (to your funding, your gallery, your hiring policies, your tenure decisions) and can continue to write within a pervasive RESENTMENT. Which is good if you want

to write novels about academic infighting but bad if you want to consider yourself a public intellectual. I notice that Russell Jacoby does not refer to poets such as Adrienne Rich, Amiri Baraka, Allen Ginsberg--or Robert Lowell, for that matter--in his classification of "public intellectuals.

It's that sense of partition that is the real legacy of aesthetic modernism.

md

Michael Davidson

[↑ Contents](#)

320. **Michael Davidson**

Re: Michael as exemplum (?)

Sun 15 Oct 1995

>You wrote:

>>

>>the other MD wrote:

>>As to Ron's reference to "ambivalence"

>>that needn't be only the result of institutional conflicts.

>>

>>Michael Davidson

>>

>>michael--cd u say more abt. this? abt the usefulness, perhaps, of

>>institutional conflicts and conflicting expectations one has of

>oneself and

>>that the inst. has of one?--md

>>

>I want to note, since I have noticed here and elsewhere of late, that
>the term "ambivalence," at least whenever I use it, should not be taken
>as a negative. Literally, "seeing both sides"...though I am painfully
>aware that there really are more than two such sides.

>

>Polvalent, tho, doesn't quite capture it.

>

Ron...I agree with you about ambivalence. I was only suggesting that there is more than one source for ambivalence and that the institution needn't be the single source. I'd probably be ambivalent working anywhere. Ambivalence is a historical construct, based I suspect on the existentialist vogue of the 1940's and 1950's, and it's hard not to regard it as a property of the self rather than the postwar malaise out of which it emerged. That's not very clear. I mean that as a product of existentialism ambivalence has been swallowed by a subjectivist position that refuses to think outside of its self/other models. Harold Rosenberg, in his intro. to "The Anxious Object," observed the same thing about the historical meaning of "anxiety"--to wit: that objects only become anxious after they have 1) become objects, separate from the social and 2) after Sartre.

MD>

Michael Davidson

[↑ Contents](#)

321. **Robert Drake**

Re: Emily & top ten poems

Sun 15 Oct 1995

following up diane ward's 10/14 post

tho always disappointed when reminded that my chosen sphere of activity is not shared by more people (so valuable to me, if only they would see the value their lives would be so much richer...), i'm bemused at best that, having made our choices, we would waste much time bemoaning our fringe status ... top ten lists might be good for a hoot on letterman (nice name, that), but hardly basis for handwringing. face it, the kinds of poetry most often discussed here are just not gonna make it as a mass commodity, here & now...

on the flip side, plenty of poetries not ususally considered on poetics (& probably not considered for the list that started this thread) are alive & well & finding their audiences. rod mentioned bukowski, & he's the top seller at my local book- store, along with ginsberg & co., maya, and various anthologies

targeted to specific community audiences (black, women, gay). buk is now dead, but i have probably 250 pounds of chapbooks & magazines directly inspired by him, sitting here for review. poetry readings seem to have doubled around here, tied among other things to poetry slams... && i've heard the rumor more than once (can anyone confirm?) that rod mckuen had more gold records than the beatles. && kalil gibran? && rap lyrics?? &&&... not saying anything about the aesthetics of any of these (tho i'd probably hold a minority opinion about some of them, here on the list), but if popular is the criterion...

lbd

[↑ Contents](#)

322. **Maria Damon**

Re: Top ten poems

Sun 15 Oct 1995

charles: abt longfellow --he never set foot in minnesota. i grew up in newton and cambridge ma, where his house was a star tourist attraction. we all learned about "grave alicia and laughing allegra, and someone (edith?) with golden hair," and let's not forget the midnight ride of paul revere, or was that by someone else? and "THIS is the FORest priMEVAL, the MURmuring PINES and the HEMlocks," which is about acadia. the guy got around, in his verse anyway. i think the minneapolis fixation on longfellow has as much to do with a wannabe east coast anglo thing as with the fact that "hiawatha" purportedly took place in MN. it's kinda of appalling --the way actual Native Americans are treated in MN vs the New England aristocratic turn of the century mythology that's been adopted as part of the city's identity and self-representation. You may be right about ee cummings. i thot abt him, but left him off.--md

[↑ Contents](#)

323. **Gwyn McVay**

Re: The art and poetry worlds

Sun 15 Oct 1995

Bart, what you are responding to was my flip and poorly elaborated notion that the academies, with all their glorious faults, at least serve some function in heightening the general level of awareness with regard to any of the arts. In other words, the MFA mentality (and you can debate the existence and nature of same endlessly) at least provides the groundwork, the slate, the field, whatever, for a person's state of awareness to be raised even further.

Gwyn

[↑ Contents](#)

324. **Herb Levy**

Re: Texts about poetics "sound"

Sun 15 Oct 1995

A couple of sources that may be of use (though they're not entirely about "sound poetry" as such) are:

Kahn & Whitehead - Wireless Imagination, MIT Press; includes some great original texts by Antonin Artaud, FT Marinetti & Pino Masnata, Arseni Avraamov, Alberto Savinio, & Villiers de l'Isle-Adam and some very good critical pieces on Raymond Roussel, Marcel Duchamp, early surrealism, Russian Futurism, horspiel, & John Cage.

Lander & somebody - Sound by Artists, Metropole Press; my copy of this is loaned out right now, but it has several interesting pieces on the aesthetics of sound that may be relevant.

The radio issue of Semiotext(e) (volume 6, #1), Radiotext(e) edited by Neil Strauss has some articles that may be useful, too.

Can anyone recommend to me great texts on poetic sound? Sound as "material," etc. as a contemporary poetic. Any thoughts would be appreciated.

Thanks,
Loss

Herb Levy

[↑ Contents](#)

325. **Herb Levy**

Re: Top ten poems

Sun 15 Oct 1995

Ken Edwards notes:

Or perhaps the list merely reveals the class/age profile of people who respond to BBC radio polls (imagine a similar list of "classical music favourites" - the selection above being perhaps poetry's equivalent of "a good tune").

FWIW, classical music polls ARE always just the hits: The Four Seasons, the Brandenburg Concertos, various Mozart & Beethoven works.

It's a small blessing, but at least the BBC poetry poll included poems & poets of the 20th century.

In every classical music poll I've seen, the 20th century might as well never have happened. (except of course that the modern proliferation of recordings and broadcasts makes it possible for more people to be aware of older music in the classical tradition.)

Oh, well.

Herb Levy



[↑ Contents](#)

326. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Emily & top ten poems

Sun 15 Oct 1995

Also, the trend that seems to be championing the gestural zaniness of Dickinson's dash, as a perloffian radical artifice or something, has to contend with the idea that for every "pomo" dash there exists a folk art "rhyme scheme"-----cs

[↑ Contents](#)

327. **Tony Green**

Re: Top ten poems

Sun 15 Oct 1995

Bukowski and Ginsberg still very high on list of second-hand bookshop's buyers in Auckland (I learned last Thursday)
-- shd be plenty for them to buy
and re-sell eventually since both writers featured in University Bookshop stock until recently (though not specially featured in teaching I guess.)

Tony Green,

e-mail: 

[↑ Contents](#)

328. **Loss Glazier**

Re: Poetry in Motion (Review)

Sun 15 Oct 1995

Forwarded message:

From: Loss Glazier < >

Subject: Re: Poetry in Motion (Review)
To: [REDACTED]
Date: Sun, 15 Oct 1995 18:51:44 -0400 (EDT)
Cc: [REDACTED] (Loss Glazier)
Content-Length: 471

Wystan,

To be honest, I'm not familiar with the film. Although this does seem to make sense. I also heard (though I've not seen it) that there's a Poetry in Motion 2 CD-ROM which makes me suspect even more that you are correct. If you find out, it would be interesting to know.

With best,
Loss

*Dear loss,
I presume the Poetry in Motion CD-ROM is an adaptation of
material in the film of that name to the new medium. Am I right?
wystan*

[↑ Contents](#)

329. **Patrick Phillips**
Re: Emily & top ten poems
Sun 15 Oct 1995

I guess "meaning" has gone out of fashion when it comes to Dickinson and dashes--or perhaps never was in....For many of the critics who were obsessed with meaning ignored the complexity of meaning the dashes afforded--Judging by recent comments by Pat Phillips and Diane Ward (are you THE diane ward, I mean the one who ROOF published, etc)--which DO bring up important points (don't get me wrong--as chrissy wd sing)--it seems the gestural concerns (TAKEN ALONE) can eclipse the possibilities of meaning---and to some extent can deny the difficulty of the work..... chris s.

to submit, Chris, meaning is conjugal and this sort of joining is exactly the sort I speak/write of here; that meaning is the social derivative of dash, the mnemonic condition of it; meaning persists, is elongated in these lines. What else do you concede our attention to it? That taken _alone_ (something I sense impossible) the gesture subverts meaning -- I don't get you, and would like to...

Pat

[↑ Contents](#)

330. **Ken Edwards**

Top ten poems

Sun 15 Oct 1995

Like Ric, I made a point of avoiding the National Poetry Day nonsense - fortunately, here in Peckham, an inner-city district of London, there were few manifestations of it. However, I make no apologies for posting the top ten to this list, as food for thought. I have often wondered about the gulf between perceptions of poetry at large and the view of it shared by many of us here. I have my "poetry" friends and my other friends, and should the conversation ever turn to poetry with my "other" friends, which is but rarely, embarrassment often ensues. For example: the subject of the top ten poll came up yesterday evening in the pub, so I mentioned my amazement that Kipling's Victorian moralistic doggerel "If" had come up top. At which a friend - by no means unsophisticated in other respects - further amazed me by saying slightly shame-facedly that he used to have it tacked up on the wall at home. Then another friend went on at length to me about listening to something by James Fenton on BBC Radio 4. If you admit you're a poet in this country, you risk either an embarrassed silence or someone blathering on about James Fenton, a poet whose work I particularly detest, seeking my approval thereby. So, usually I don't. Admit I'm a poet, that is.

This is an awful state of affairs, isn't it? If I were a painter, would I go round afraid to admit it in case folks get embarrassed, or that I might unwittingly provoke them to seek my opinion on bad Victorian narrative painting or chocolate-box art, or tell me what a "comfort" painting is? Hmm, probably not.

For non-UK readers, I should stress that the poll was taken from listeners to BBC national radio, notoriously middle-class and middle-brow. Round this neighbourhood, you'd be hard pressed to find people who've heard of many of the poets/poems on the list (you might get the odd Irish drunk who could quote the Yeats poems verbatim, though). In its favour, the top ten at least included some good poems, though perversely I can't help feeling they're now slightly tainted by association. What an elitist I must be!

Now, Ric, let's have some opening nominations for that worst ten poems list.

- Ken

[↑ Contents](#)

331. **Charles O. Hartman**

Re: POETICS Digest - 13 Oct 1995 to 14 Oct 1995

Sun 15 Oct 1995

On Diane Ward's post:

But Shelley didn't say poets were the "legislators of the world." He said poets are "the unacknowledged legislators of mankind."

He left open the question of whether the efficaciousness of the legislation depended on its being unacknowledged.

Charles Hartman

[↑ Contents](#)

332. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: Emily Dickinson-

Sun 15 Oct 1995

my thanks to all for your insights on the dashes -- since posting that question, i've noticed similar uses of the dash in browning, which i read as indexical of mulit-voicedness -- maybe something similar to what dickinson has done. -- maria: thanks for the suggestion of "acting out" the dashes -- i'll let you know how it turns out --

c

[↑ Contents](#)

333. **Wystan Curnow**

Re: Poetry in Motion (Review)

Sun 15 Oct 1995

Dear loss,

I presume the Poetry in Motion CD-ROM is an adaptation of material in the film of that name to the new medium. Am I right?

wystan

[↑ Contents](#)

334. **Lisa Samuels**

Re: Top ten poems

Sun 15 Oct 1995

wystan,

in response to your final point: i think poetry is most powerful when it embraces, threads into itself, the inevitability of its failure.

lisa s.

>

> Dear Herb,

> A useful comparison. This current subject comes in various

> guises in our discussions, and its a frequent not to say chronic one:
> why isn't our art more popular? more powerful? It's a complaint we can
> share with other arts, as you say. Although there are differences and I
> was disappointed the question as to why the visual arts have grown more
> confident which was recently raised did not get much substantial
> discussion. Didn't modernism demolish the middle class audience for the
> contemporary arts? Has anyone not an enemy of modernism done a decent
> postmortem on this? Our problem so often seems to be that while we
> persist in producing texts as opaque or offensive as modernist texts
> (its a measure of their criticality) we take no pleasure, feel no glee,
> no superiority, when they get the same reception. There seems no
> likelihood poetry will make a comeback. Perhaps it is the art form above
> all which should insist on its failure, come to terms with its
> invisibility, should... perhaps because that's its only choice. What do
> the rest of you reckon?
> Wystan
>

[↑ Contents](#)

335. **Wystan Curnow**

Re: Top ten poems

Sun 15 Oct 1995

Dear Herb, A useful comparison. This current subject comes in various
guises in our discussions, and its a frequent not to say chronic one: why isn't
our art more popular? more powerful? It's a complaint we can share with other
arts, as you say. Although there are differences and I was disappointed the
question as to why the visual arts have grown more confident which was
recently raised did not get much substantial discussion. Didn't modernism
demolish the middle class audience for the contemporary arts? Has anyone not
an enemy of modernism done a decent postmortem on this? Our problem so
often seems to be that while we persist in producing texts as opaque or
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seems no likelihood poetry will make a comeback. Perhaps it is the art form
above all which should insist on its failure, come to terms with its invisibility,
should... perhaps because that's its only choice. What do the rest of you reckon?
Wystan

[↑ Contents](#)

336. **Tony Green**
Re: Top ten poems
Sun 15 Oct 1995

As I was saying to Wystan on the phone, I'm still
not anthologized --- Wystan, you're getting to be
a shade more translucent yrself these days?

My belief is one does one's worst and get it out there in
the space of public utterance, even if in no more than
fifty copies or, reading/reciting aloud, no copies at all. (Then
if it gets to be used by someone else -- as taught in
a classroom, move on smartly. I've seen imitation of
a reading piece I did in 1978, thanks to an extra-mural
class in which it was used. It had been published in a
student yearbook of which the editor was my wife.
But the imitation missed much of the point which
was its inordinate length. Move on!)

Are poets still the
speakers for the otherwise unspoken for? the
ultimate resistance to the imposition on the
defenceless and the oppressed by the law
and therefore the language of the powerful.
(Legislators, thus, and unacknowledged,
looking after "the government of the
words", acc. W.C.Williams
as cited by Robert Creeley).

That is the line taken by H.Cixous recently
(Critical Inquiry, about three years back)
to whom reference was made recently on this
list. The measure we have been tending to has
been rather publication, scale of publication,
success in publication, entry throught the academy.

Opacity from one point of view is translucency to
another. Is it the ambition of poetry through
publication and the academy to change the viewpoint
of readers, so that what starts out opaque, becomes
translucent?

Is this a fundamental issue in the debate over
the mysterious political value of poetry?

Tony Green,
e-mail: 

337. **Diane Marie Ward**

top ten

Sun 15 Oct 1995

On Sun, 15 Oct 1995, Charles O. Hartman wrote:

> On Diane Ward's post:

>

> But Shelley didn't say poets were the "legislators of the world." He said

> poets are "the unacknowledged legislators of mankind."

>

> He left open the question of whether the efficaciousness of the

> legislation depended on its being unacknowledged.

>

> Charles Hartman

>

Please pardon my misquote. Interesting point Charles raises. It reminded me of the poem by Andrei Codrescu entitled: De Rerum Natura (from which I feel the need to quote because paraphrasing would do Codrescu an injustice - with book in hand -)

"I sell myths not poems. With each poem goes a little myth. This myth is not in the poem. It's in my mind. And when the editors of magazines ask me for poems I make them pay for my work by passing along these little myths which I make up. These myths appear at the end of the magazine under the heading ABOUT CONTRIBUTORS or above my poems in italics. Very soon there are as many myths as there are poems and ultimately this is good because each poem does, this way, bring another poet into the world. With this secret method of defying birth controls I populate the world with poets." - A. Codrescu.

A culture's artistic productions do influence the masses and its mores etc. - thus the "myths" which surround its creator are also influential on a people. It seems trite to even try to say this today considering PBS and the NEA seem to "threaten" some Americans. But at one time poets could boast a somewhat powerful position in society. I thought the Codrescu quote also ties in nicely with Shelley's use of the symbolic Aeolian harp - wind creating music through an instrument (ie. external influences creating the impetus for artistic expression which thereby influences others).

my own top ten would probably include: D H Lawrence, Charles Bukowski, Richard Kostelanetz, Charles Bernstein, Anna Akhmatova, Bill Shields, James Magorian, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Andrei Codrescu, Edward Foster, Christian Prigent & Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill (oops that is 12)

Diane Ward

[↑ Contents](#)

338. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Top ten poems

Sun 15 Oct 1995

charles: abt longfellow --he never set foot in minnesota. i grew up in newton and cambridge ma, where his house was a star tourist attraction. we all learned about "grave alicia and laughing allegra, and someone (edith?) with golden hair," and let's not forget the midnight ride of paul revere, or was that by someone else? and "THIS is the FORest priMEVAL, the MURmuring PINES and the HEMlocks," which is about acadia. the guy got around, in his verse anyway. i think the minneapolis fixation on longfellow has as much to do with a wannabe east coast anglo thing as with the fact that "hiawatha" purportedly took place in MN. it's kinda of appalling --the way actual Native Americans are treated in MN vs the New England aristocratic turn of the century mythology that's been adopted as part of the city's identity and self-representation. You may be right about ee cummings. i thot abt him, but left him off.--md

I think Minnesota's most comfortable with its literary heroes never setting foot here. I understand that next year they (I guess I should say we, if 2 years makes me a minnesotan) will get around to a grand celebration of F. Scott Fitzgerald's centenary year. He who lived in St. Paul and apparently disliked it, and the local burghers, rather intensely. I think I understand his social and economic theses better since living here. The west was just a different place. Perhaps the combination of centuries-old ruins and centuries-old active cultures in the area, being part of the life one actually notices on something close to a daily basis (in Arizona, that is), combined with the comparatively early settlement of the Spanish, makes the southwest seem mature to me in comparison with this Minnesota place. But it just may be some sense of my own foreignness here which makes me want to see it as lacking.

all best,
charles

[↑ Contents](#)

339. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Forwarded mail....

Sun 15 Oct 1995

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: Sun, 15 Oct 1995 21:14:03 -0600

From: Sharon Nell <[REDACTED]>

To: Multiple recipients of list C18-L <[REDACTED]>

Please find attached an announcement for a conference on French feminism. We would appreciate it very much if you could post this to other appropriate lists.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The 30th Annual Texas Tech Comparative Literature Symposium

"French Feminism Across the Disciplines"

January 30-February 1, 1997

Plenary speakers will include:

Barbara Harlow, University of Texas

Peggy Kamuf, University of Southern California

Toril Moi, Duke University

Micaela Janan, Duke University

This conference seeks to explore French feminism as it is deployed in a variety of disciplines: literary, cultural and theoretical. We will problematize French feminism as a discourse which cannot be contained by any of the normative disciplinary categories of American academia. The symposium, directed by Professors Hafid Gafaiti, Paul Allen Miller and Sharon Diane Nell, welcomes papers representing the full range of positions in this on-going debate. Abstracts of 20-minute papers should be sent to Professor Nell (Department of Classical and Modern Languages and Literatures, Texas Tech University, Box 2071, Lubbock, TX 79409-2071; internet: [REDACTED]; Phone: 806/[REDACTED]; Fax: 806/[REDACTED]) not later than September 30, 1996. It is hoped that a volume of the best papers resulting from the symposium will be subsequently published. Inquiries may be addressed to the directors at the departmental address listed above.

Please circulate this notice.

[↑ Contents](#)

340. **Charles Bernstein**

Emerging Generation

Sun 15 Oct 1995

Julius Erlich was born to Erica Hunt and Marty Erlich on October 10.

Jackson Hercules Hauty was born to Diane Ward and Chris Hauty on September 9. {To avoid further confusion with Buffalo's Diane Ward, who has recently posted to Poetics, this is Diane Ward of Los Angeles, author of *_Never*

Without One_ etc.} On the birth announcement, Diane and Chris include this quote from one of America's top 10 poets:

I celebrate myself, and sing myself,
And what I assume you shall assume,
For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.

[↑ Contents](#)

341. **A. Morris**

Re: Texts about poetics "sound"

Mon 16 Oct 1995

Loss:

For ways of talking about sound, some thoughts:

1) Garrett Stewart's *Reading Voices* (U of California P, 1990) takes up the ways in which silent reading processes a text in a zone of response somewhere between "a merely evoked aurality and an oral vocalizing." The chapter titles--"To Hear With Eyes": Shakespeare as Proof Text, "An Earsighted View": Joyce's "Modality of the Audible," Silence Speaking Words--suggest Stewart's interest in the "phonotext" inherent in phonetic writing. He develops a vocabulary and set of procedures for a practice he calls "phonemic reading." The epilogue contains a virtuoso reading of the skywriting scene in **Mrs Dalloway**

2) Duncan's **H.D. Book** contains an amazing reading of her poem "Heat," with close attention to the tone-leading of vowels in the poem

3) Kristeva on the semiotic & Barthes on the grain of the voice

4) Nate Mackey's essay "Cante Moro" in the collection edited by Anne Waldman from Naropa: this is the one on duende which came up earlier on the net. Also **Bedouin Hornbook**

5) Cage, of course

6) Recently I've been reading **what to listen for in jazz** by Kernfeld in order to eventually get to **Thinking in Jazz** by Berliner. Kernfeld's book is packaged with a CD, which means it has aural footnotes.

7) Stephen Feld's essay "Aesthetics as Iconicity of Style, or 'Lift-Up-Over Sounding': Getting into the Kaluli Groove" in *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 20 (1988): 74-113.

8) Also, as was already mentioned, Kahn and Whitehead's **Wireless Imagination** and the *Radiotexte* issue of **Semiotexte**

What else? I'm looking forward to hearing more.

Dee

On Wed, 11 Oct 1995, Loss Glazier wrote:

Can anyone recommend to me great texts on poetic sound? Sound as "material," etc. as a contemporary poetic. Any thoughts would be appreciated.

*Thanks,
Loss*



[↑ Contents](#)

342. **Aldon L. Nielsen**
Re: a death in the family
Mon 16 Oct 1995

New Yorkers on this list got the news Friday, but it's just found it's way to L.A. and my guess is that it's skipped some points in between. Henry Roth, author of *_Call It Sleep_* died Friday. His publishers promise to continue with the series of novels he had already completed. For those of you who have never read *_Call It Sleep_*, go get a copy and sit down with it tonight. You'll be glad you did.

[↑ Contents](#)

343. **James Banton Rolins**
Re: Emily Dickinson-
Mon 16 Oct 1995

Many years ago a professor (I've forgotten whom) in a course I was taking explained the dashes as meaning nothing at all. She used a quill pen to write with, he explained, the sort that dried out quickly once lifted from the page. To keep the pen from doing that, she would draw it along the paper while thinking of what to write next. So the dashes mean nothing in themselves and simply indicate, at that point in the poem, that Emily was wondering what to write next.

Bart

[↑ Contents](#)

344. **Tenney Nathanson**
legacies of modernism
Mon 16 Oct 1995

*I notice that Russell Jacoby does not refer
to poets such as Adrienne Rich, Amiri Baraka, Allen Ginsberg--or Robert*

*Lowell, for that matter--in his classification of "public intellectuals.
It's that sense of partition that is the real legacy of aesthetic modernism.*

md
Michael Davidson

This legacy, if real, is odd (though it probably is real)--since Pound, esp., but also some of the others, thought of themselves as something like Public Intellectuals without Portfolio (though I guess Eliot had a Portfolio), and since Pound and Olson, say, share not only the didactic strain adumbrated by von Halberg but also the passion for the so-called factive. If this IS a "legacy of aesthetic modernism," though, then were poets before the moderns public intellectuals? Wordsworth and Tennyson (I guess so). Emerson, sure. But Whitman?

I'm embarrassed not to have read Bob Perelman's modernism book yet--but can he or it be drawn into this thread?

doan you tell no one I made you that table....

Tenney

[↑ Contents](#)

345. **Tenney Nathanson**
grandma Emily?

Mon 16 Oct 1995

Date: Sun, 15 Oct 1995 16:49:42 -0400
From: Chris Stroffolino <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: Emily & top ten poems

Also, the trend that seems to be championing the gestural zaniness of Dickinson's dash, as a perloffian radical artifice or something, has to contend with the idea that for every "pomo" dash there exists a folk art "rhyme scheme"----....cs

well not really (not at all!) Map those off-rhymes, and then the ironic use of full-rhymes to suggest a pretty terrifying closure.

"Sheep have no tact, at least that one can appreciate...."

"What's the difference between a cloud and a spanked boy?"

Tenney Nathanson

[↑ Contents](#)

346. **Kevin Killian**

FBI files

Mon 16 Oct 1995

Re : Black Flag Kills Poets Dead

Has anyone's FBI file been used for such purposes? Has anyone on the list seen their FBI file?

Dear Bill, hi, it's Kevin Killian. I wrote away to the FBI for Jack Spicer's file and it took me 18 months from beginning to end. Results, negative. I do know that FBI had a number of poets under surveillance here in San Francisco in the late 50s and have spoken to some who were interviewed by FBI. John Wieners was a special target, as were Joe Dunn and George Stanley. Lovers of conspiracy theory might ponder fate of Dunn and Wieners (wish I could get THEM to write away for their files!) and George, of course, left California for safer shores of Vancouver BC.

I had to answer the phone . . . now I'm back, and I forget, am I talking to Bill Luoma? Whoever you are, XXXX Kevin

[↑ Contents](#)

347. **Kevin Killian**

Re: Poetry in Motion (Review)

Mon 16 Oct 1995

I hear all the discussion about "Poetry in Motion" and hope that you all on the list serv also get a chance to see Ron Mann's subsequent film "TWIST"-it is a cultural history of the Twist (dance crazy of early 60's).

Hank Ballard was deprived of fame with the Twist after Dick Clark heard his version of the song and assigned one of his stooges at Cameo-Parkway (Phila. record label) to do a cover version.

Starring former back-up singer who Mrs Dick Clark named "Chubby Checker" because she thought it would be a cuter name than "Ernie."

Also, her homage to "Fats Domino." In the wake of great success of "The Twist," lots of twist-king-wannabes changed their names with varying degrees of success, including Jumbo Chess and (my favorite) Pudgy Parcheesi. Go see "Twist," you will enjoy it, except the Canadians on this list, who will feel that Ron Mann has lost some of his essential Canadianism, the quality that makes "Poetry in Motion" such a weird viewing experience.

Just a note from-Kevin

[↑ Contents](#)

348. **R I Caddel**
Top Ten / Bottom Ten
Mon 16 Oct 1995

Ken's right about the way in which media-poetry-events tends to expose sensitive souls like him and me to embarrassment (at best) and potential ridicule. The Niedecker don't-let-em-know approach isn't open to me, raising children in a small town ("Lottie's mum says she read one of your poems in the bookshop last week and couldn't understand it" etc), and like Ken, I'm used to yawning gaps in pub conversations on these occasions. The top ten was a continuation of an event, then, not an event in itself - but here, by way of a diversion, is my phantasy cricket team:

1. Geoffrey Chaucer
2. Basil Bunting
 - a pair of seasoned openers, to wear down any attack -
3. Thomas Wyatt
4. Jack Spicer
5. Lorine Niedecker
6. Peter Riley
 - mid-order with a range of strokes, and some amazing slip catching -
7. Kit Smart
 - how about this? a keeper who can strike out a bit -
8. Marianne Moore
 - "always include a spinner" - G.Arlott -
9. Elaine Randell
 - English seam bowling at its most accurate, with some amazing turn when the weather's overcast (which it usually is) -
10. William Carlos Williams
11. Alice Notley
 - the pace attack. OK, I've sacrificed on accuracy here in favour of awesome speed, length and height -

[12th man - Alan Halsey - very adaptable and quick in the field...]

OK - Ken, about those worst poems, I started to think about it - Amy Clampitt, John Hegley, etc - just couldn't face the selection process...

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

[↑ Contents](#)

349. **James Banton Rolins**
Re: The Art and Poetry worlds

Mon 16 Oct 1995

Gwyn--Thanks for the explanation. Surely MFA programs (at least most, I hope) do encourage their students to raise their awareness of the possibilities of poetry beyond what has already been done. I do wonder, though, if they and the _academic_ poetry they are often charged with fostering has something to do with the differences many list members are commenting on between public acceptance of the graphic arts and poetry. I wonder how many people who consider themselves avid readers but who don't read much if any poetry written after Frost might trace their aversion to modern or postmodern poetry as a result of academic influence. Perhaps some feel that poetry has been taken away from them by the academics. Recent articles on _academic_ poetry suggest as much, particularly one published about a year ago in _The Chronicle of Higher Education_. I haven't seen much about it since, but MFA bashing seems to have had a bit of a day.

If anything I say here makes sense, I wonder why the graphic arts haven't suffered a similar fate. Have MFA programs been so much more effective at taking poetry away from the people than art departments at appropriating painting, sculpture, etc.?

Bart

[↑ Contents](#)

350. **Chris Stroffolino**
Re: grandma Emily?

Mon 16 Oct 1995

Tenney--But the rhymes and rhythms ARE there compared to most of the poetry people on this list write (or publish)---even if ironic and "off" and, yes, terrifying (what else is new). And some people--trained in "free verse" or "blank verse" at first find her work offputting for that--and others of course find it somewhat reassuring for that--and the rhymes and rhythm does lend her work a more memorable quality than much unrhyming work of contemporaries...I don't think the "avant-garde" Dickinson is any more real than the "mainstream" Dickinson-- I guess that's the "agenda" behind most of my postings on her.... And maybe Burt has got the best take at all--the dashes are just pauses in thought (while the ink dripped from the quill---Burt that's absolutely deliciously perverse!) And Patrick, well I guess I will meet PUDGY

PARCHESI and you someday "where the meanings, are"----- COMMA vs.
DASH! chris

[↑ Contents](#)

351. **Gwyn McVay**
Re: The Art and Poetry worlds
Mon 16 Oct 1995

Bart, I think one reason that graphic arts MFA programs are less often bashed than their writing counterparts is that graphic-arts programs tend to be quite strictly studio-oriented, while writing programs swing through a wide range from very *studio*-oriented to very *academic.* AWP's Guide to Writing Programs includes a brief introductory section laying out loose guidelines for what constitutes "studio" and what constitutes "academic"; these guidelines are by no means "received" and are intended mainly to help aspiring applicants decide what kind of program they want to apply to. Many programs, to justify their existence and increase the future employability of their graduates, feel compelled to include a strong academic component, through lit requirements, killer comps, whatever. But some don't, and are more like graphic-arts MFAs in their design. To me, it seems like writing MFA programs with that strong academic component are thus more open to charges that they purvey a sort of "academic" poetic. And I do think that's at least partly true.

Gwyn

[↑ Contents](#)

352. **Jonathan A Levin**
Re: Emily Dickinson-
Mon 16 Oct 1995

That the dashes could be pauses in thought, based on ink technology-- interesting, though as a rollerball convert, I wouldn't know anything about it. But it's odd to me that this means they "mean" nothing at all--I'm not sure we could ever mean anything if we didn't pause all the time, or, more properly, some of the time. And one wants to know, why here, what's she found and what's she searching for? I wouldn't posit an absence of meaning in a pause, only to say the presence of meaning is (I guess) in the words themselves. What's appealing about this argument-from-technology is that it shows the mechanics of thought, and the mechanics of writing, as a negotiation between something like a positivist ideal of getting the meanings down in words and a negativist (?) awareness (not an ideal!) that squirming words exceed the squamous mind. Yeah, they mean "nothing" at all. Pages of illustrations. (Apologies for mixing my poets.)

Jonathan Levin
NYC

[↑ Contents](#)

353. **Mark Wallace**

Situation #10

Mon 16 Oct 1995

Situation #10, featuring the work of Nick Piombino, Heather Fuller, Thomas Taylor, Dan Featherston, John Bennett, Sheila Murphy, Michelle Murphy, and Mark Ducharme is now available.

A subscription to Situation is \$10 for four issues; \$3 for single or back issues. All I need is a couple new subscriptions every issue to keep afloat, and I'd really appreciate your help.

Please write to Mark Wallace, Situation, 10402 Ewell Ave., Kensington, MD 20895.

[↑ Contents](#)

354. **John Lavagnino**

Re: Emily Dickinson

Mon 16 Oct 1995

The theory that Dickinson's dashes result from pauses for thought doesn't fit the nature of her manuscripts very well. They generally aren't working drafts; most of them are in booklets she put together with a lot of care for the inscription. She wasn't putting extra punctuation in by accident when she made these booklets.

Dickinson's "eccentricity" in punctuation is also not very odd if you look at other nineteenth-century manuscripts, rather than at the tidied-up versions that publishers and printers created from such manuscripts. A lot of people used dashes in abundance at the time; if Dickinson is unusual it is in how she used them, rather than in their mere presence.

John Lavagnino

[↑ Contents](#)

355. **Edward Foster**

Re: Emily & top ten poems

Mon 16 Oct 1995

not quite it: i meant much more than "lack of true punctuation." i was suggesting something that could not be reduced to grammar and was common

or more so anyway until schoolrooms took over. dickinson and melville were pre-horace mann. -ed

[↑ Contents](#)

356. **Edward Foster**
Re: Emily & top ten poems
Mon 16 Oct 1995

does anybody know which grammar texts, if any, dickinson would have used at mt. holyoke? what would melville have used when he taught in pittsfield? it would be interesting to know how grammar texts then defined the use of dashes. -ed

[↑ Contents](#)

357. **Edward Foster**
Re: Emily Dickinson-
Mon 16 Oct 1995

bart: the professor's explanation sounds exactly like the sort of thing a professor might think: i.e., it means nothing at all. well, skepticism keeps students awake and makes the speaker look clever. however, dickinson was recopying the poems; furthermore (but check with susan howe on this) some of the handwriting in very brisk, quick. the words knew at that point exactly where they were going.

[↑ Contents](#)

358. **Kenneth Goldsmith**
Albany Reading Announcement
Mon 16 Oct 1995

* * * * * READING * * * * *

Hard Press Inc., publishers of lingo: A Journal Of The Arts, presents "POETRY"

Jean Donnelly
Michael Gizzzi
Lisa Jarnot
Juliana Spahr
Chris Stroffolino

will be reading from their work

And...Music By "Free Beer And Chicken"

Saturday, October 28th 3-7 pm at

Cafe Lulu
288 Lark Street
Albany NY

\$5.00 tax-deductible donation at the door

Sponsored by Hard Press, Inc, publishers of lingo
PO Box 184
West Stockbridge, MA 01266
<http://hardpress.com>

██████████

██████████ for info

=====

===== Kenneth Goldsmith

<http://wfmw.org/~kennyg> ██████████ ██████████

[↑ Contents](#)

359. **eric pape**

Re: The Art and Poetry worlds

Mon 16 Oct 1995

Bart: Here's where I have to defend MFA programs. Though I have recently stated my concerns with the the way the workshop (which I see as something of an institution, like the classroom, the boardroom, the halls of state, etc., and so feel free to generalize away) tend to consolidate the criteria for what has to be called judgment (in much the same way that Eng. Depts. inevitably develop canons), I take exception to the claim that MFA programs have "taken poetry from the people." When did the people have poetry, Bart? Poetry, by definition, is a highly elite activity. Always has been. Sure there have been exceptional practitioners, but c'mon, when have dockworkers, or more in my world, checkers in Wal-Mart, ever really cared about Chaucer, or Ashbery? I know that MFA programs have allowed more people of color, of class, of anything, to spend a life reading and writing poetry than ever before. If anything, MFA programs have opened up literature to "the people" as you call them, in unprecedented numbers. I know that because I was one of them. If it wasn't for the academy generally, or the workshop specifically, I would now, do not doubt, be working construction or service, as are everyone I grew up with.

Yes, the workshop has produced for nearly fifty years a kind of uniform poetry, but it has nothing to do with the fact that it took poetry away from the people. In fact, it may have to do with the fact that it was trying to make poetry

more accessible, more teachable, to folks who had no access to it early. I don't think it was necessary to do that, and I find it even condescending. But there it is. I hope, now, that we can move on. Thanks, Eric.

[↑ Contents](#)

360. **Mark Roberts**

Re: The Art and Poetry Worlds

Mon 16 Oct 1995

You wrote:

*so Ron (Silliman), when are you going to publish your memoirs
and/or
autobiography-*

The autobiography is in the words....

Ron

is it the authorised autobiography???

mark

[↑ Contents](#)

361. **Tony Green**

Re: Emerging Generation

Mon 16 Oct 1995

May they have a world they can live in!

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

362. **CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON**

Museums of France on the web

Mon 16 Oct 1995

This arrived via another list, and I thought you would be interested...

FYI France: JOCONDE -- The museums of France are online!

The database Joconde now may be reached at <http://www.culture.fr>, and provides general public access to the collection records -- and a small but growing number of their accompanying images -- of more than 60 museums in France.

Joconde already can reach records of designs, prints, paintings, sculptures, photographs, and art objects, representing 130,000 works of art and 10,000 artists, and an increasing number of inline GIF images.

The search procedure is friendly and interesting: sample screen (translated) --

Iconography (subject):

Name of the artist:

City or museum:

School:

Century:

Type of work:

Other indexes include style, technique, title, inscription, subject, provenance, and "onomastique" and "mille'sime".

The interface provides the ability to limit searches to documents which are accompanied by an image, and provides for online browsing of lists of key terms. Numeric retrieval limits may be set for a) full records displayed, b) short records displayed, and c) titles displayed. There is online help, and the ability to ask questions.

What you find is description in some detail: example -- currently, a search simply on "Nom d'artiste: gauguin" will obtain a list of 42 title entries, and the same search restricted to "Limitation aux documents avec image" yields the following two records, with very nice accompanying GIF inline images which blow up very well on an America Online viewer:

1) Gauguin, Paul [link to full list of JOCONDE entries maintained for his works] , "Nature Morte aux Oranges" [link to full record -- and accompanying image -- of the holdings entry for the original work], (1882 avant); Rennes; Muse'e des Beaux - Arts; peinture a` l'huile; toile; 33H, 46L; Mille'sime: 1882 avant; Repre'sentation: nature morte (vaisselle, orange fruit, couteau, bouteille); Gene`se: avec oeuvre apparentee connue;

2) Gauguin, Paul [same link to full list of JOCONDE entries for Gauguin]; "Vase de Fleurs" [same link to full holdings record, and inline image]; (1880 vers); Rennes; Muse'e des Beaux - Arts; peinture a` l'huile; toile; 19H, 27L; Mille'sime: 1880 vers; Repre'sentation: nature morte (vase, bouquet, livre, fenetre, balustrade), maison, ciel; Gene`se: avec oeuvre apparentee connue.

The full Muse'e des Beaux - Arts de Rennes holdings entry for work #1 above is:

[first -- importantly, as this is the WorldWideWeb and online media after all -- a really very beautiful inline image, and then...]

Gauguin Paul

"Nature Morte Aux Oranges"

Pre'c. auteur: PERIODE IMPRESSIONISTE
Ecole: France
Pe'riode: 4e quart 19e sie`cle
Mille'sime: 1882 avant
Domaine: Peinture
De'nomination: tableau
Repre'sentation: nature morte (vaisselle, orange fruit, couteau, bouteille)
Technique: peinture a` l'huile; toile
Dimensions (CM): 33 H; 46 L
Gene`se: avec oeuvre aparentee connue
Pre'c. gene`se: coupe de fruits tres proche, par gauguin, presentee a l'exposition l'impressionnisme, a` Nancy, en 1938
Inscription: signe'
Pre'c. inscription: P. Gauguin (S.B.G.)
Localisation: Rennes; Muse'e des Beaux-Arts
Statut juridique: Proprie'te' de l'Etat; Muse'e du Louvre Peintures
Inventaire: D 55.5.1; RF 2766
Lieu en de'po^t: en de'po^t; Rennes; Muse'e des Beaux-Arts
Date de de'po^t: 1955
Ancien de'po^t: Muse'e du Luxembourg
Appartenances: Chaplet (1929)
Exposition: 1882 Paris; 7e Exposition Impresioniste, Paris, 1882
Bibliographie: Cogniat, L'Oeuvre de P. Gauguin, 1966
Photo: Cliche' muse'e
Date syste`me: 1990/05/28
Re'fe'rence: 00000074658
Copyright: (C) Copyright Direction des Muse'es de France, 1986

There is an astonishing richness here: not only of images and information and access points and indexing, but also of openness to the general public and overall effort. I am aware of a few extraordinary efforts under way in other countries to organize and mount such a service, but of none so advanced yet as this of the French.

Where are the multimedia presentations, featuring text and sound and links, all the accompaniment which a good cdrom on the subject might have? One suspects that all this is not far behind. In the meantime a user has all the advantages of online over cdrom -- currency, greater availability (Joconde, the online service, may be reached from anywhere -- in airplanes now -- at any time, regardless of whether you've brought your cdrom drive along), constant

updating of data and system features -- Joconde is a work - in - progress, and will grow as France's extraordinary effort in online media grows.

Some of us may remember Andre' Malraux: "... And if, after so many years of oblivion, we hear the song that follows after a plainsong of a crusade or a chant of the Ramayana, it is not because the historians have restored the text to us, or because we have rediscovered the faith of the twelfth century or of the age of the Vedas; it is because we admire them in the company of the statues of Sumer and of the Indian grottoes, of the Acropolis and of the tombs of Florence -- in the company of all the statues of the earth. It is the song of metamorphosis, and no one before us has heard it -- the song in which esthetics, dreams, and even religions are no longer more than librettos to an inexhaustible music."

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[↑ Contents](#)

363. **Maria Damon**

Re: The Art and Poetry worlds

Mon 16 Oct 1995

gwyn writes:

To me, it seems like writing MFA programs with that strong academic component are thus more open to charges that they purvey a sort of "academic" poetic. And I do think that's at least partly true.

Gwyn

i've got to say, quite the contrary, in my observation. since most literature departments are tending toward "theory" these days, and most contemporary theory attacks the tenets of what is generally called "academic poetry," those

MFA programs that resist theory in favor of practice more often uphold -- unconsciously, since they believe their values are "timeless" --an earlier, outmoded academicism. It's my belief, and i could be wrong, that if mfa students read more benjamin and foucault they'd be likely to write more adventurously than if they restricted their reading to, say, robert lowell and anne sexton. granted, this is based on anecdotal and personal observation, which is limited to the institutions i inhabit. apologies to those of you to whom this is unfair and whom it doesn't characterize.--md

[↑ Contents](#)

364. **Maria Damon**

Re: FBI files

Mon 16 Oct 1995

KKillian writes: I do know that FBI had a number of poets under surveillance here in San Francisco in the late 50s and have spoken to some who were interviewed by FBI.

Anybody know anything about Kaufman and FBI files? I sent away for them many years ago, and never heard anything. But then I also sent away to Bellevue for info on his famous shock treatments and never heard anything from them either. So either these folks aren't talking or the shock treatments are just another legend. My next step is to write to the National Seamen's Union Archives to find out about that activist aspect of Kaufman's career. maybe it's all just imaginary!--md

[↑ Contents](#)

365. **Maria Damon**

Re: a death in the family

Mon 16 Oct 1995

aldon, thanks for the news on henry roth. call it sleep was a formative book for me.--md

[↑ Contents](#)

366. **Maria Damon**

Re: Top ten poems

Mon 16 Oct 1995

charles, about minnesota authors: yes, bob dylan hated it here too. when the town of hibbing asked him to buy his childhood home and donate it to the city as an historical site, he would have no part of it. but MN's are quite naive

about this, it seems, and have no sense of why someone might not think the place is eden.--md

[↑ Contents](#)

367. **James Banton Rolins**
Re: The Art and Poetry worlds
Mon 16 Oct 1995

Gwyn--Thanks again. More later.

Bart

[↑ Contents](#)

368. **Jeffrey Timmons**
Colonialism
Mon 16 Oct 1995

Hey, I recall a mention of, perhaps, a student of Edward Said's who recently came out with a study (a dissertation? a book?) detailing how the formation of the English canon was a development linked closely to the inculcation of Englishness into Indian culture. Who mentioned this? Who was this? Or was it said? Where? Any responses would be helpful.

Thanks,

Jeffrey Timmons

[↑ Contents](#)

369. **Kenneth Sherwood**
Reception : and the top Ten
Mon 16 Oct 1995

"Our problem so often seems to be that while we persist in producing texts as opaque or offensive as modernist texts (its a measure of their criticality) we take no pleasure, feel no glee, no superiority, when they get the same reception. " W. Curnow

While tending toward the self-abusive, the possibility that poetry's 'marginal' cultural space is a design flaw seems worth thinking about. Two easy 'eithers' follow: 1) poetry could mainstream itself by changing its devices, getting the old shoes polished and the suit pressed (viz: MTV and GAP appropriations, some would argue; though here opacity and disjunction are re-framed, made familiar) or, 2) learn to value an inevitably unappreciated cultural position.

Both 'either's seem to me stuck within the conception (though surely almost all would deny) that implicitly mainstream/visibility/ popularity are aims. To argue

otherwise is NOT to stake down an elitest or disengaged tent party, not necessarily.

Even an avowedly political or revolutionary poetry might aim to engage a 'local' (in capital logic: marginal) audience, and think this sufficient, even preferable to Global reception. In some circles Seamus Heaney's latest laurel taints him, no?

Ken Sherwood

[↑ Contents](#)

370. **Ron Silliman**

Kaufmania

Mon 16 Oct 1995

>Anybody know anything about Kaufman and FBI files? I sent away for them many years ago, and never heard anything. But then I also sent away to Bellevue for info on his famous shock treatments and never heard anything from them either. So either these folks aren't talking or the shock treatments are just another legend. My next step is to write to the National Seamen's Union Archives to find out about that activist aspect of Kaufman's career. maybe it's all just imaginary!--md

>

Doctor-Patient confidentiality makes it hard to get that sort of information without the request from Kaufman's family. In the 70s and early 80s, there were active anti-electroconvulsive therapy movements in California and elsewhere (the Network Against Psychiatric Assault in SF being one of the better known). They might know how to get this sort of info and some of their activists (e.g., Wade Hudson who may be in the SF phone book) could steer you in the right direction.

Stephen Schwartz, the neocon writer for the SF Chronicle, was an active participant of the National Seamen's Union before he discovered the joys of capital, and must certainly have known Kaufman (Schwartz was a poet for 20 years or so). He would be a logical place to start on that track.

Writing from my laptop in New Orleans,
Ron Silliman

[↑ Contents](#)

371. **Marshall H. Reese**
video/book installation

Tue 17 Oct 1995

CristineRose Gallery Contact: Mariacristina Parravicini 395 West
Broadway tel. [REDACTED] New York, NY 10012 Nora
Ligorano/Marshall Reese For Immediate Release tel. [REDACTED]

Dates: October 21-November 22, 1995

The Corona Palimpsest

"If you burn a book, it opens unto absence in the flame. If you drown it, it unfolds with the wave. If you bury it, it quenches the thirst of the desert..."
-- Edmond Jabes

Ligorano/Reese are creating a new installation on view at CristineRose Gallery in Soho called The Corona Palimpsest. This installation, along with other video installations and limited edition works by Ligorano/Reese question the changing roles of the book, electronic information, and television.

Their new work is about hidden vestiges and the markings that remain. A palimpsest, by definition, is a tablet or parchment that has been erased and used over, leaving traces of the old text under the new. The Corona Palimpsest at CristineRose is a room-size installation featuring two handbound volumes. In one, there are over 300 hand-painted pages composed of images from the spectacular coverage of the Gulf war to Warlpiri cave paintings. Media images, air-brushed stencils, rubbings and silhouettes of newspaper and magazine photos spill over this book's pages. The other volume is a blank, burned book, apparently empty, yet also, a complete text that stands as a testament to degradation and destruction.

Both volumes contain video monitors in their centers. These liquid crystal display (LCD) monitors show, in the painted book, a magical text. On this video screen, the reader sees an electronic poem composed of digitally manipulated fragments. Texts by Gertrude Stein, H.D., Frida Kahlo, William Burroughs, Gerrit Lansing, Ezra Pound, Robert Creeley, J.G. Ballard, and others have been used. The blank book, suspended by chains from the walls and ceiling, shows computer-enhanced faces that peer out from the video in its center. At CristineRose, this book looks over The Corona Palimpsest and its readers, projecting an eerie range of intentions -- beatification, vigilance, surveillance. The viewer is confronted not only by two different representations of the book, but also by the fact that to see them they must walk over 600 trade hardbacks. These form a carpet on the floor to make up a black and white grid. This carpet, in essence, presents a dilemma but it also suggests volume and measure.

Ligorano/Reese's new installation is about the continuity of culture and language, when contemporary society seems to strive for their disruption. It commemorates the making of the book into a theoretical abstraction charted by such writers as Stephane Mallarme, Edmond Jabes, and Robert Duncan. It acknowledges that today, the book has become a concept that attracts metaphors and tropes like a divining rod. As a "power book," it symbolizes the concept of possibility with an infinite magnitude of importance. As a volume of pages, the book consolidates auratic significance and provenance.

The installation at CristineRose is about this displacement. Whether one considers the book an historical object, or not, the artists embellish on the book's role, while at the same time, they negate it. In a very real way, they have displaced text and image. They have created books containing texts without words. As books, the volumes of The Corona Palimpsest are static. In a gallery, no one will manipulate their pages; only the video moves. The book as a carrier of information has been converted into an artifact, a relic. Ligoroano/Reese point to a rapidly approaching future, when the role of the book will be further changed, perhaps even diminished, in our culture.

Granary Books (568 Broadway, New York, NY 10012) will publish a limited edition of The Corona Palimpsest in spring 1996.

If any poetics listserv subscribers are in NYC over the dates of the show, we hope you can see it...

Ligorano/Reese

[↑ Contents](#)

372. **eric pape**

Re: Colonialism

Tue 17 Oct 1995

Me maybe? The book:Viswanathan, Gauri. _Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India_. Columbia Univ. P., 1989. (I don't backchannel in case anyone else is interested -- very provocative sic?: stuff.) Thanks, Eric.

[↑ Contents](#)

373. **Wendy Battin**

New Site for CAPA

Tue 17 Oct 1995

Attn.: New CAPA Site

CAPA, the Contemporary American Poetry Archive, has just moved to a new site on the World Wide Web. The old gopher site is no longer current and can't be maintained. Point your browsers to

<http://camel.conncoll.edu/library/CAPA/capa.html>

to find us. Books are still being transferred, & o.p. poetry books of all styles and persuasions are welcome.

For those who don't know CAPA:

CAPA: the Contemporary American Poetry Archive
An Internet Archive for Out-of Print Books

CAPA is an electronic archive designed to make out-of-print volumes of poetry available to readers, scholars, and researchers. The books are stored as individual text-only files accessible via the World Wide Web on the Internet.

Poets or their executors who hold copyright to books may place them in the archive free of charge; once a volume is archived, it may be read on-screen, searched electronically, or downloaded freely. However, the author retains copyright and must be compensated if multiple copies are made (e.g., for use in the classroom). When the author receives an offer to reprint the book, we will withdraw it from the archive and post a publication notice in its place.

Books from commercial, university, and small presses are eligible for archiving; self-published and vanity press books cannot be considered. For further information and guidelines, contact

Wendy Battin, Director

CAPA

15 Rogers Drive, Mystic, CT 06355

██████████

email: ██████████

Charles O. Hartman, Associate Director

CAPA

Box 5505, Connecticut College, New London, CT 06320

email: ██████████

..... CAPA is
always under construction; check back periodically for new books on-line.
.....

[↑ Contents](#)

374. **CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON**

Re: video/book installation

Tue 17 Oct 1995

Marshall Reese wrote:

The Corona Palimpsest

"If you burn a book, it opens unto absence in the flame. If you drown it, it unfolds with the wave. If you bury it, it quenches the thirst of the desert..."

-- Edmond Jabes

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Their new work is about hidden vestiges and the markings that remain. A palimpsest, by definition, is a tablet or parchment that has been erased and used over, leaving traces of the old text under the new. The Corona Palimpsest at CristineRose is a room-size installation featuring two handbound volumes. In one, there are over 300 hand-painted pages composed of images from the spectacular coverage of the Gulf war to Warlpiri cave paintings. Media images, air-brushed stencils, rubbings and silhouettes of newspaper and magazine photos spill over this book's pages. The other volume is a blank, burned book, apparently empty, yet also, a complete text that stands as a testament to degradation and destruction.

Marshall, I've re-posted this to friends in New York, and it sounds very interesting. Does this work in any way comment upon or refer to Anselm Kiefer's "The Burning of the Rural District of Buchen VII," or "Iconoclastic Controversy"?--is there influence? I've contemplated this work for some time, particularly the books, and have resisted the discomfort induced by the hyperbole surrounding his public reception, but have found certain ambiguities in the work troubling. Still, the books remain with me...

--Carolyn

[↑ Contents](#)

375. **Michael Davidson**

Re: legacies of modernism

Tue 17 Oct 1995

>> I notice that Russell Jacoby does not refer

>>to poets such as Adrienne Rich, Amiri Baraka, Allen Ginsberg--or Robert

>>Lowell, for that matter--in his classification of "public intellectuals."

>>It's that sense of partition that is the real legacy of aesthetic modernism.
>>
>>md
>>Michael Davidson
>
>This legacy, if real, is odd (though it probably is real)--since Pound,
>esp., but also some of the others, thought of themselves as something like
>Public Intellectuals without Portfolio (though I guess Eliot had a
>Portfolio), and since Pound and Olson, say, share not only the didactic
>strain adumbrated by von Halberg but also the passion for the so-called
>factive. If this IS a "legacy of aesthetic modernism," though, then were
>poets before the moderns public intellectuals? Wordsworth and Tennyson (I
>guess so). Emerson, sure. But Whitman?
>
>I'm embarrassed not to have read Bob Perelman's modernism book yet--but
can
>he or it be drawn into this thread?
>
>doan you tell no one I made you that table....
>
>Tenney
>
Tenney...I was thinking that the ideology of distancing and autonomy
helped create a critical divide between "true" intellectuals (guys at
Oxbridge) and "public intellectuals" (usually thought to be journalists
and/or non-academic types, although much of the Old Left would seem to
apply). And that when nostalgic newer Left types like Jacoby searched around
for a continuing radical tradition he had no choice but to vaunt the second
choice. But you're right about the pre-modernists. Without knowing what
Jacoby would say, they would qualify in the sense that they (Tennyson
surely) had large, public readership and wrote on a variety of subjects
social and political and cultural.

michael davidson>
Michael Davidson

[↑ Contents](#)

376. **Gale Nelson**
Anagrams A-Go-Go
Tue 17 Oct 1995

Here is a substantial post of anagrams, that runs under the title

To What Job, Long Roman? (John Barton Wolgamot)

by Keith Waldrop

Cecile Abish	I slice beach
Walter Abish	I blew art ash
Tom Ahern	Hate morn
Anne-Marie Albiach	Chili, a mere banana
Rosa Alcala Diaz	As a lizard, a coal
Pierre Alferi	Real ripe fire
Beth Anderson	Theban rose ad
Ehry Anderson	Her nay drones
Bruce Andrews	Bar unscrewed
Mary Angeline	Mainly a green
Bob Arellano	Lo, noble Arab
John Ashbery	Honey-bash, Jr.
Mary Ashley	Yes, harm lay
Robert Ashley	Her stray lobe
Saint Augustine	As I tie Aunt's gun
Paul Auster	A purl, a suet
Bill Baird	Ribald lib
Lori Baker	Rail broke
Solvej Balle	Sell Jove lab
Anthony Barnett	Bent at any thorn
Matt Barros	Art mob star
Brian Barry	Bar yarn rib
Susan Bee	Use beans
Martine Bellen	Belt-line ran me
Brita Bergland	End tribal garb
Mei-mei Berssenbrugge	Mere bee in bigger sums
Charles Bernstein	Bench rental rises
Susan Bernstein	Be sun, nine stars
Peter Blickle	Treble pickle
Barbara Blossom	Bar bobs as moral
Ginevra Bompiani	O I map given brain
Marie Borel	Amor, I rebel

...

[↑ Contents](#)

377. **Ken Edwards**

Albert Hall

Tue 17 Oct 1995

Dateline 16.10.95; Ken Edwards reporting.

At 7.30pm, the scheduled time of starting, the vast cavern of the Albert Hall is barely one-sixth full. If it holds 8,000 people capacity, then there are fewer than 1,500 here. Still, that's a lot for a poetry reading, I suppose.

I encountered Lawrence Upton by chance, and we found we'd bought cut-price tickets from the same ticket tout, so we ended up sitting together way up in the balcony, to the left of the stage. Red plush seating; above the stage, a giant blue video screen which darkens to show the message "poetry has been a prohibited substance". Lawrence tells me there were rumours Paul McCartney was going to make a guest appearance with Ginsberg; if so, it doesn't seem to have caused an audience rush. He also says he's heard from Bill Sherman, who is apparently on the programme tonight. I am incredulous. A young guy next to us hears the name Bill Sherman and reveals Bill was an old friend of his father's "and is like a legend to me. That's why I'm here; I don't know anything about poetry."

The lights go down, and on the video screen is projected black & white film of Ginsberg chanting in the same arena 30 years ago; it's part of Peter Whitehead's 1965 film "Wholly Communion" I guess. Then the first poet comes on.

BRIAN CATLING: In dark suit, holding a mirror vertically in front of his face so that his video image, projected above him, shows him with a cyclopean single eye, no nose and tiny goldfish mouth. Apocalyptic, gothic; sample quotes (apologies for mishearings): "masked in silver and burnt sand", "throat knotted to a glass", "a swinery worn pink to the weight of gold".

AARON WILLIAMSON: Dressed all in black. Aaron is profoundly deaf; on the page, a highly cerebral writer (I recommend his "A Holythroat Symposium" from Creation Books), onstage, his language dissolves into strangulated phonemes, stretched out syllables, explosive movement. His powerful, visceral sound echoes badly in the hall. He gets a good reception.

At this point, compere Michael Moorcock makes his first appearance. It is a performance of staggering incompetence. He introduces "three London poets", who are using the city as some kind of Gothic stage for their work - eulogising Aidan Dun first, but calling him "Andrew Dun". Then Iain Sinclair. Finally, Denise Riley. How on earth Denise fits into this schema I don't know, since neither London nor Gothickery plays any part in her work. He reveals, however, that he has only read Denise's work this evening, and bizarrely goes on to recommend her book "Mop Mop Georgette" (published by yours truly/W

Mulford): "so good it's almost collapsing in on itself". He collapses into incoherence: "Who's on first? I can't remember."

AIDAN DUN: In blue scarf, playing acoustic guitar. Launches into part of his epic London poem, irritating whispery voice. Sample quote: "I found the people of the golden skin bathing." A Donovan de nos jours, methinks.

DENISE RILEY: In black. She told me she'd been desperately nervous all week. However, her voice is steady and surprisingly resonant. She reads "Laibach Lyrik" from "Mop Mop" very well.

IAIN SINCLAIR: The eminence grise behind this venture, I fancy. Reads three poems, homages to Henry James (with references to the Great Train Robber Charlie Richardson), Keats and Blake. OK. Then introduces a film made by Chris Petit last week of David Gascoyne, now in his 80s, reading a poem in his home on the Isle of Wight. Couldn't hear properly. Bespectacled, quite sprightly.

CRIS CHEEK: First Sianed Jones walks on stage looking sexy in a black mini-dress, playing electric violin with maximum fuzz and feedback. Cris leaps up onto the stage from the audience playing clarinet, which he does rather well these days. Also in black. Has everyone been given instructions about this? Sianed moves to portable harmonium, wailing. Cris intones, holding a lampstand with Xmas tree lights blinking on and off on the end of it (I may be quite wrong about this; what was that about, Cris?). Stage darkened by now, Cris screaming. Sample soundbite: "so parsimonious, so acrimonious, so sanctimonious". He shreds paper ("I wrote a poem about it somewhere"). Heavy breathing from Sianed. Cris on his knees as the lights come up; they both do a wordless vocal duet. End. Excellent audience reception.

Michael Moorcock returns, now in self-parody mode ("Here I am with another incompetent announcement"). The announcement is the winner of the poetry competition. And it turns out to be: Bill Sherman! So that's how he got on the programme. He reads the winning poem which appears to be a collaborative translation from a prominent Tahitian poet. (This morning I check the competition rules: "The poem must be ... in English and must be the unaided work of the author". Hmm.)

MIKE HOROVITZ: Not in black, playing Jerusalem on the kazoo. Announces Kathy Acker couldn't make it but Anne Waldman will be appearing instead. Sonnet in sing-song voice. A poem to his mother, who died this year aged 100. "Now a protest poem on behalf of fish" (which is a homage to Joyce and Schwitters). Update of Wordsworth's Westminster Bridge sonnet, and poem to Frances Horovitz. (Later, Miles Champion tells me he enjoyed this, but I can't help invoking Donovan again; to me, Horovitz was always Donovan to Ginsberg's Dylan.)

At the interval, Lawrence and I migrate down to the arena. Many people up in the gods have had the same idea, which means the arena is threequarters-full for the second half, giving a better atmosphere. It begins with another showing for part of the Peter Whitehead film.

BENJAMIN ZEPHANIAH: White middle-class poetry folk's favourite Rasta gets recognition applause when he comes on. A performer with the timing of a class comedian, but while his routines are entertaining I've always found his material lame.

The second compere, Howard Marks, comes on, in white open-necked shirt and brown suit. Reads a long intro. Gets obvious recognition. I still don't know who he is; at the risk of sounding like a High Court judge ("who are the Beatles?") can someone help me?

DOUGLAS OLIVER: At one time, I accorded Doug Oliver god-like status, and I still think his 1970s books "In the Cave of Suicession" and "The Diagram Poems" are two of the finest of that era. I'm not quite so keen on his current output, which I find rather solemn at times. He reads a poem he describes as a homage to the nomads of Somalia, which contains some stuff about female circumcision (which he disapproves of) and a rather sombre poem called "The Oracle of the Drowned". Yellow jacket, blue shirt.

ALICE NOTLEY: Much more lively, I thought. In red with black trousers. Three poems: set in New York, the Mojave Desert and Paris, France, she says. The first plays on poetry and money. The second contains the line(s) "I think we already know what death's like - there are moments in life we are dead", but the effect is darkly humorous rather than sombre. By now, the audience has adopted the habit of applauding each individual poem.

BRENDAN KENNELLY: Reads an absolutely hilarious long poem about James Joyce having dinner with the Holy Family in Nazareth ("Joyce's short answers were bugging the dinner up"; "'What family is wholly holy?' said Jesus"). Then "My Dark Fathers" (I think), a poem about the Famine. Spoils it all with a poem about a child asking questions, which I found a tad sentimental.

SORLEY MACLEAN: A great man, now in his 80s. Reads standing at the back of the stage; first in his sonorous English, then in his even more sonorous Gaelic original. He apologises for one: "Not a happy poem either".

Howard Marks announces the winning programme number; the winner gets their programme autographed by the poets.

TOM PICKARD: "Last time I stood here was 1986 at the end of the miners' strike." His "manifesto of fuck" is loved by the audience. Ends with variations on the name Saatchi & Saatchi.

ANNE WALDMAN: Like Alice, in red and black. Uses lectern. Witchlike delivery. Sonnet after Philip Sidney, ends "we're stuck with each other's heart now". Highly rhetorical, panting. "I magnetise the phone bill". Finally, a homage to John Cage, "Pieces of an hour", a virtuoso piece of sprechstimme.

ALLEN GINSBERG: Multiple roadies set up for him: two chairs (significant), a table with a coffee-cup, ferns in pots, mikes. Comes on to great acclaim. I find his first poem incredibly moving in its wry, humorous acceptance of death and dissolution ("What a mess I am, Allen Ginsberg"; "Allen Ginsberg warns you: don't follow my path to extinction"). And then, yes, Paul McCartney comes on stage in white shirt, grey pants and sneakers, with a semi-acoustic guitar which he plugs in. Accompanies Ginsberg on a long skeleton song. Walks off, leaving Ginsberg to take the applause.

Which dies down soon after he's left the stage. The audience disperses. It's past 11pm. I briefly talk in the foyer to Cris, Denise, Miles Champion, Ira Lightman, Robert Hampson, Peter Barry and Mike Hart from Compendium, who's running the bookstall. Decline the possibility of the post-gig party and find a bus home.

Apologies again for all mishearings and misquotes. Ken Edwards signing off.

[↑ Contents](#)

378. **Ken Edwards**
Top Ten / Bottom Ten

Tue 17 Oct 1995

Ric -

How on earth can you overlook Tom Raworth for your pace attack?

And I would include John Ashbery as an elegant and stylish mid-order batsman...

love, Ken

[↑ Contents](#)

379. **James Sherry**
Evaluation

Tue 17 Oct 1995

I haven't been reading the list as assiduously as I have in the past and I periodically tune in to find out who is writing and what they are writing about. My reading today was after five days of not erasing my messages, so I got an interesting cross-section of material and a definite sampling that leads me to wonder what the drive is behind all the "evaluation" that is going on.

Ron and Michael and others writing about how to evaluate the situation of the teacher/poet. How do we feel about it? What are its drawbacks? How is Michael expressing his concern in his work, while referred to is not detailed, while a lot of space is devoted to whether it's good or bad. This meta-discourse is similar to the blackout on the content of the women's conferences in China. The papers blared how to evaluate the situation by the extent of oppressive behavior by Chinese soldiers which is to my mind largely irrelevant to the conferences and thier important findings. My question is how have we so distanced ourselves from the material we seek to address? How can we talk about it? What are the terms of the discussion?

The other primary set of messages today are about evaluating the top ten lists that have been developing. This level of evaluation easier to understand and might shed light on the previous issue if only I could understand who it is these correspondents are evaluating.

Although this is I admit again a discussion at a "respectful" distance. What do you who addressed these subjects today and previous think about your writing these messages?

Pat Phillips' particles were illuminating in that context at least at the beginning of the message.

I can't believe I have the time to write to the list.

James

[↑ Contents](#)

380. **Tom Beard**

Dash it, Emily!

Tue 17 Oct 1995

some scholars claimed that the dashes have a relatively exact _musical_ function, indicating not only duration of "rest" (we have no notation for "rests," as such, in language)

I'm not sure whether they count as "rests" per se, but commas, semicolons, colons, full stops (periods for Americans), dashes, parentheses and ellipses all seem to notate pauses of varying lengths, in addition to/as part of their syntactic functions. I've seem them used in non-standard ways to great effect - I once read a novel in which one of the characters had a very clipped, mechanical way of speaking, which was represented by. using. a. full. stop. after. each. word.

There are other typographical techniques for including a rhythmic score in a poem - line breaks of course, the use of a slash/stroke/solidus in the middle of a

line, Olson's open parenthesis, etc. These all have various rhythmical effects as well as introducing subtle syntactic and semantic ambiguities.

Once I played around with a simple text-to-speech converter on a PC (it's the one included with Soundblaster cards), and since there was a strict correspondence between punctuation and intonation/timing, I was able to put very precise pauses between words,,,,,, by using the,,, right,, number of commas. One could also invoke a rising intonation via question marks, but? why? would? anyone? want? to? do? that?

Incidentally, it's almost a pity that the theory of ED's dashes being pauses for thought while the ink dries appears to be dubious. This would be a wonderful example of the poem being a trace of the writing process - the poet's hesitancies and contemplations leaving a physical mark on the page. There are no doubt a thousand ways in which one could write these processes in/as a poem.

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

[↑ Contents](#)

381. **Tom Beard**

Re: Top ten poems

Tue 17 Oct 1995

The BBC poll on top 10 poems comes at the same time as a Sunday Times survey on other arts, which was reported here in the Sunday Star/Times as the 10 GREATEST plays/novels/composers/whatever. The use of the word GREATEST is likely to invoke a response that mimics received ideas of Great Works (resulting in the top 10 novels all being from the 19th Century), whereas BEST or FAVOURITE might result in different, more personal response. In addition, the voluntary survey/ poll format will always bias the sample towards those who can at least name 10 poems, and who actually give a damn.

Now, in NZ, if the General Public (the capitalisation indicating an abstraction) were asked to name 10 NZ poets, who might appear on such lists? Here's my guess:

1. Sam Hunt
2. James K. Baxter
3. Barry Crump (he tells Scotty a "poem" on the Toyota ads)

4. Laura Ranger
5. Cilla McQueen (_Dogwobble_ keeps popping up everywhere)
6. Lauris Edmond
7. Bill Manhire
8. Allen Curnow/"Whim Wham"
9. Bub Bridger (at least among Wellingtonians)
10. Kevin Ireland

Also, they'd probably recognise the names Keri Hulme, Janet Frame, Gary McCormick, Peter Bland, C.K. Stead and Fiona Kidman, but not associate them with poetry.

As a piece of self-indulgence, here's my first XI (but not in batting order):

Edwin Morgan
Dennis Lee
Dinah Hawken
Leigh Davis
Bill Manhire
Geoffrey Hill (at least _Mercian Hymns_)
Michele Leggott
James Brown (no, not _that_ James Brown)
James Norcliffe
Craig Raine
Geoff Cochrane

with T.S. Eliot as coach.

Oops, no Americans (unless you count the Possum) - blame it on my Anglocentric upbringing. At least they could probably play cricket better than the NZ cricket team.

Incidentally, that issue of the Sunday Star-Times also contained letters stating that McCahon was not an artist and that no-one wants to listen to NZ music - all that nasty avant-garde rubbish. Brrrr!!! Scary.

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

[↑ Contents](#)

382. **Loss Glazier**

Re: Poetry in Motion (from Chris Funkhouser)

Tue 17 Oct 1995

Forwarded message:

From: FUNKHOUSER CHRISTOPH <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: Poetry in Motion (Review)

To: [REDACTED] (Loss Glazier)

Date: Mon, 16 Oct 1995 17:03:41 -0400 (EDT)

Content-Length: 1299

Loss, Poetry in Motion 2 is advertised in the Voyager catalog, but it has not been released yet far as I know. Issa, do you know what's happening with that title? I have no idea what kind of a project it is -- though there's an image of Bob Creeley used on the cover in the catalog. Does anyone on this list have have work which appears as part of that project? The Poetry in Motion cd-rom which *is* out *is* and adaptation of the film/video by Ron Mann. There are a couple of nice features to the cd-rom, the addition of biographical material & alphabetic texts of the performance pieces. In all, though, the video is more fluid, and *looks* better on the tv screen than on the computer. As I mentioned in the piece the other day, Video doesn't translate all that well to cd-rom as it is today. At best you can get a 3"x4" moving screen, & depending on how fast the computer's processor is can be rather slow-moving or grainy. Baraka don't look & move as good Wailin' on the cd-rom, etc. The technology is changing quickly, though, & before long there will be better technology, cd-roms will probably be obsolete within a half a decade or so. Nevertheless - digital multimedia is just beginning.

Any faculty out there care to express their opinions on
"long distance learning"?

chris

[↑ Contents](#)

383. **Issa Clubb**

Re: Poetry in Motion (from Chris Funkhouser)

Tue 17 Oct 1995

Yup, PiM 2 is out, shipping, all that. I have the box here in front of me; the back lists these poets:

(also on the first disc) Helen Adam, Amiri Baraka, Ted Berrigan, Charles Bukowski, Jim Carroll, Robert Creeley, Diana (!whoops!) di Prima, Allen Ginsberg, John Giorno, Michael Ondaatje, Gary Snyder, Anne Waldman

(CD-ROM premiere! heh) Tom Clark, Spalding Gray, Bob Holman, Rose Lesniak, Cookie Mueller, Eileen Myles, Alice Notley, Joel Oppenheimer, Peter Orlovsky, Pedro Pietri, Jerome Rothenberg, & Philip Whalen

"In nine additional interviews hear Charles Bukowski explain why 'fiction is an improvement upon life,' Diane di Prima talk about discovering Keats, Jim Carroll admit to following his idol Frank O'Hara through the streets of NY, and [the everpresent] more."

While I think the lack of video quality is frustrating, the promise (as you mention) is in the ability to combine performance with written texts. Also, this new disc might be more interesting because (I'm pretty sure) the readings here aren't in the film.

Issa Clubb

██████████

Voyager Art Dept.

██████████

[↑ Contents](#)

384. **Steve Carll**

Re: Albert Hall

Tue 17 Oct 1995

Ken:

Thanks for the detailed run-down!! But, enough with the Donovan put-downs--I like Donovan! :-)

Steve

[↑ Contents](#)

385. **Mark McMorris**

That was then

Tue 17 Oct 1995

Small Presses

"It was, if anything, a Printing Vortex. Books were cheap to produce in France. On l'Ile Saint Louis William Bird's Three Mountain Press published Hemingway, Williams, Pound: notably in 1925 A Draft of XVI Cantos, in folio. Nancy Cunard later bought Bird's assets, and in 1930 her Hours press issued A Draft of XXX Cantos (200 copies)" (384).

Spring and All: "written in New Jersey, printed in Dijon, published in Paris, distributed-----? Not distributed, really. There were 300 copies, Paris

bookshops were not interested, American customs held up shipments for months, American reviewers based 12 miles from Rutherford merely sneered at expatriates when they noticed such books at all. 'Nobody ever saw it'--Williams 35 years later-- 'it had no circulation at all'" (385).

"They worked in utter obscurity, as if in Paris. Williams was 'discovered' only in 1948, when Paterson I suddenly attracted reviews; Zukofsky and Oppen and Bunting not until the 1950's and 1960's, when reprints of work 30 years old began appearing, to answer tastes a long time forming and still hardly articulate. The 1930's public heard of MacLeish, and Stephen Vincent Benet, and Robert Frost (now too quickly dismissed as an Eisenhower poet); and journalism for which Hart Crane's suicide conferred importance on The Bridge found no way to get interested in Zukofsky's "A", whose author jumped off no boat" (405-406).

"A mystique of the word--as in Miss Stein's case--is encouraged by the circumstance that one's words will not be read.... 'Toasted Susie is my ice cream,' wrote Miss Stein, and why not? To so fit and pack and lock and arrange the words that when their capsules are one day broken open--perhaps after 50 years, on an unrecognized planet--they will affirm structured realities, like a watch that should commence ticking as though made yesterday, that seemed the aim and morality of style" (385).

Hugh Kenner, *The Pound Era* (U of Calif. P, 1971)

[↑ Contents](#)

386. **Judy Roitman**

Re: The Art and Poetry worlds

Tue 17 Oct 1995

Maria Damon wrote:

>

>i've got to say, quite the contrary, in my observation. since most
>literature departments are tending toward "theory" these days, and most
>contemporary theory attacks the tenets of what is generally called "academic
>poetry," those MFA programs that resist theory in favor of practice more
>often uphold --unconsciously, since they believe their values are "timeless"
>--an earlier, outmoded academicism. It's my belief, and i could be wrong,
>that if mfa students read more benjamin and foucault they'd be likely to
>write more adventurously than if they restricted their reading to, say,
>robert lowell and anne sexton.

I wish that were true here, but it isn't. Theory in that sense doesn't seem to rub off on the permanent writing faculty. The folks in town here who write what for lack of a better phrase is referred to as experimental writing have no

connection with the English department, with the exception of a well-known guy (not Burroughs, not that well known) who ekes out a living as a course-by-course lecturer with no benefits or security or decent salary. True story: a theory person was brought in for a job interview who'd done 1/3 of his thesis on this guy, but nobody seemed to get the point.

Anyway, theory applies to anything; theorists don't have to read new writing from any or no coast. (Another true story: the theorists invited Rachel Blau du Plessis to speak, at least one of the inviters didn't know she was a poet.)

[↑ Contents](#)

387. **Steve Carll**

Re: Top ten poems

Tue 17 Oct 1995

wystan,

in response to your final point: i think poetry is most powerful when it embraces, threads into itself, the inevitability of its failure.

lisa s.

Our problem so often seems to be that while we persist in producing texts as opaque or offensive as modernist texts (its a measure of their criticality) we take no pleasure, feel no glee, no superiority, when they get the same reception. There seems no likelihood poetry will make a comeback. Perhaps it is the art form above all which should insist on its failure, come to terms with its invisibility, should... perhaps because that's its only choice. What do the rest of you reckon?

Wystan

SC: Well, it's nice to see some fellow Romantics on this list, but I have to go along with Kenneth Sherwood and ask: "failure to do what?" Produce easily-consumable product? Huh-uh. That's not something I've chosen to try, myself. Mass audiences tend to be such more out of force of habit than anything else (I can't think of any exceptions to this off the top of my head, so somebody correct me if I'm stepping off the deep end here), and it's precisely our (Industrialized Nations') habits that are endangering global humanity. Certainly I want my own work, and poetry as such, to be "accessible", but only so much so to draw an audience or readership out of its habits of thought and into the world. Too *little* accessibility (through what would be the real elitism: either the physical withholding of the texts as "pearls before swine" or through such obscurity that the reader is driven away) and too *much* accessibility (which would seem to me to necessitate a too-diluted poetic which would become merely a consumer

habit, feeding back into what I see as the problem) are the Scylla and Charybdis of my poetics. (Yikes! I can't believe I said that that way!)

Steve

[↑ Contents](#)

388. **Loss Glazier**
Book/Reading Annoucement

Tue 17 Oct 1995

printing it out is only parts of
it, sections somewhere framed
and amenable to being scribbled on ...

Book Annoucement

A note to announce *_The Parts_* by Loss Pequeno Glazier (Buffalo: Meow Press, 1995). Orders/requests for info about *_The Parts_* can be obtained from Joel Kusai, [REDACTED]

Reading

And a reminder ... I will be reading (with Steven Shaviro) in San Francisco at New Langton Arts, 1246 Folsom Street, Saturday, Oct. 21, 8 pm ...

[↑ Contents](#)

389. **Wystan Curnow**
Re: Top ten poems

Tue 17 Oct 1995

dear tom, interested in your team. but you should know that Leigh Davis doesn't play cricket. I'm glad you picked michele--I notice the UK teams are unisex--but why do you have her as wicket-keeper? She'd never see the ball! or, is that the idea? i mean who are your oponents, answer me that? Will they beat India? And Eliot, as coach! He doesn't play cricket either. Is that your idea of a joke? Groundsman maybe, especially if you've packed the team with spinners.
best, wystan

[↑ Contents](#)

390. **Tom Beard**
a glorious failure

Tue 17 Oct 1995

Wystan,

you wrote:

>There seems no
>likelihood poetry will make a comeback. Perhaps it is the art form above
>all which should insist on its failure, come to terms with its
>invisibility, should... perhaps because that's its only choice. What do
>the rest of you reckon?

I reckon that you're probably right about poetry not making a comeback. While some people point to an upturn in poetry cafes/pubs/whatever, this is largely poetry as therapy, not poetry as an investigation into the possibilities and limitations of language. To the extent that "poetry in our age _has_ to be difficult" (probably a horrible misquote of Eliot), this kind of challenging poetry in which the reader/listener has to take an active part in the composition is never likely to have mass appeal.

Many of the functions of poetry (as aide memoire, as voice of the people, as song) have been superceded by new media, and I don't see poetry ever claiming back these territories. Poetry as explorer, charting the boundaries, skirting the edge of the world, is _always_ going to be a minority pursuit. In this sense it _will_ remain invisible, a failure on the great level-playing-field of mass media. Poetry certainly _can_ play up to this "failure" to interesting effect.

But "should"? I'm not convinced of this. I'd like to see poetry infiltrating the main core of contemporary culture, burrowing in with bulletins from the frontline, postcards from the edge, sketches of the end of the world. I'm not sure that "Poetry in Motion" or other poems-on-buses schemes are the best way to do this. The (beware of broad and offensive classist caricature) Oprah-watching, Bud-drinking, jandal-wearing, league-playing, Stephen King-reading masses may never have an interest in challenging poetry, but what about the Seinfeld-watching, latte-drinking, Gaultier-wearing, Myst-playing, Face-reading crowd? Rather than dismissing them as shallow yuppies, maybe we should see this group as a potential audience, well educated and open to the contemporary in visual arts, music and film, but generally uninterested in poetry. Perhaps with the right "gift/hook", we could broaden the audience for contemporary poetry without totally compromising our interest in experiment and challenge.

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

[↑ Contents](#)

391. **Charles O. Hartman**

Re: Dash it, Emily!

Tue 17 Oct 1995

Tom Beard--

Your point about Dickinson's dashes as putative records (fictive, of course, like all other notations) of writing-as-process is surely right; that's how we read them, against all reason.

It's important, though, to keep in the back of one's mind the history of punctuation, which is one of steady rationalization. Punctuation is by now (by the middle of the 18th century, really) almost wholly the slave of a rationalistic, prose model of language. To punctuate correctly is to demarcate the hypotactic structures of the sentence, distinguishing for instance the restrictive from the nonrestrictive modifier and even the apposition from the parenthesis. The service is to a structure of ideas, not to a structure of sounds.

Those syntactical considerations do have their "prosodic" (in the linguists' sense) correspondences--prose and verse have the same mother, after all--but it remains very tricky to declare any one-to-one correspondence between conventional marks of punctuation and rhythmic characteristics of a passage of language.

Which means, in turn, that how a poet chooses to use punctuation can be extremely interesting. I know I have poems that (as we say) demand prose-style punctuation and those that refuse it absolutely, and a lot that want some nonce compromise. Part of the compromise, of course, comes about by admitting among the signs of punctuation the line-break, which rather upsets all the other marks who thought they were in charge.

Charles Hartman

[↑ Contents](#)

392. **Jonathan Brannen**

Re: Situation #10

Tue 17 Oct 1995

Mark Wallace:

Mark,

I've been trying to reach you via e-mail for almost a month now, but the post keeps getting bounced by your host system. Please e-mail me your current e-address.

Thanks and apologies to all for posting a personal message, Jonathan Brannen

Situation #10, featuring the work of Nick Piombino, Heather Fuller, Thomas Taylor, Dan Featherston, John Bennett, Sheila Murphy, Michelle Murphy, and Mark Ducharme is now available.

A subscription to Situation is \$10 for four issues; \$3 for single or back issues. All I need is a couple new subscriptions every issue to keep afloat, and I'd really appreciate your help.

Please write to Mark Wallace, Situation, 10402 Ewell Ave., Kensington, MD 20895.

[↑ Contents](#)

393. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: Colonialism

Wed 18 Oct 1995

eric,

thanks. yes, very provocative. what are you doing for dinner?

jeffreymtimmons

[↑ Contents](#)

394. **Dodie Bellamy**

Re: a glorious failure

Wed 18 Oct 1995

Tom Beard wrote:

"but what about the

Seinfeld-watching, latte-drinking, Gaultier-wearing, Myst-playing,

Face-reading

crowd? Rather than dismissing them as shallow yuppies, maybe we should see this

group as a potential audience, well educated and open to the contemporary in visual arts, music and film, but generally uninterested in poetry. Perhaps with

the right "gift/hook", we could broaden the audience for contemporary poetry without totally compromising our interest in experiment and challenge."

Now, Tom, as I write this I am sitting at my parents' kitchen table in Indiana, so I may not be thinking too clearly. One shouldn't sneeze at the potentially damaging influence of watching reruns of Mash and Cagney and Lacy on a 27" color TV. But, when I read the above message, what popped into my head was

Julie Andrews in Mary Poppins, singing, "Just a spoonful of sugar makes the medicine go down."

Not to change the subject, but is anyone else on this list familiar with lawn geese, these concrete statues of geese that are like three feet high that working class women have in their frontyards and dress in different costumes for different seasons and holidays? As I type this there is a lawn goose in this very yard dressed in a pumpkin costume--there are other similarly dressed lawn geese throughout the neighborhood. Though my mother doesn't have a Thanksgiving outfit for her lawn goose, she assured me that there are pilgrims outfits available--both for both male and female pilgrim lawn geese.

When I was talking on the phone earlier today with Kevin (Killian) I asked him if he thought lawn geese was a national or a regional phenomenon. He told me that's the kind of thing Spicer would have known.

Dodie Bellamy

[↑ Contents](#)

395. **Pierre Joris**

NEWS VIA PEN

Wed 18 Oct 1995

This, from the PEN on line list, which should be of interest to this list:

WIPC HIGHLIGHTS CAUSE OF EIGHT WRITERS SENTENCED TO DEATH
WORLDWIDE

15 NOVEMBER TO BE COMMEMORATED AS DAY OF THE IMPRISONED
WRITER

Eight writers and journalists worldwide have been sentenced to death or charged with crimes carrying the death penalty, reported the Writers in Prison Committee (WiPC) of International PEN in the September issue of its newsletter "Centre to Centre". PEN is opposed to the death penalty "which it believes to be in violation of international norms on cruelty and inhuman punishment and in violation of the right to life." Fortunately, since publication, one writer has received a reprieve from the death sentence but remains in jail. Kenyan writer and former Member of Parliament Koigi wa Wamwere was charged with robbery with violence, which carries a mandatory death penalty. Since publication of "Centre to Centre", the judge has reduced the charges to armed robbery, likely due to international pressure, and wa Wamwere was sentenced to four years in jail and six strokes of the cane.

However, others have not been so lucky. United States journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal received a stay of execution after his death warrant was issued, but has

been thus far denied the right to a fair trial. Although Abu-Jamal maintains his innocence and it is believed that his political beliefs were used against him, he was convicted of killing a police officer in a trial that falls short of international standards of fairness. The other writers the WiPC mentions who are living under sentence of death include Yemeni poet Mansur Rajih, who was sentenced to death in 1986 for allegedly killing a man. Again, WiPC says the trial was seriously flawed and critics believe he was framed for his role in the student movement of the 1970s and early 1980s.

In China, WiPC reports that two publishers have already been executed for publishing pornography. In February, Gu Jeishu was executed after a crackdown on publishers of books said to contain "sex, violence and superstition, as well as political mistakes." WiPC reports that another publisher Wang Shuxiang was due to be executed in April, although it is not known if the execution took place. Finally, in Nigeria, writer Ken Saro-Wiwa faces the death penalty if convicted of inciting the murder of four Ogoni leaders. WiPC reported last week that Saro-Wiwa is to be charged on 31 October. WiPC also protested the unfair nature of his trial and detention, which is believed to be motivated by his political convictions. [See UPDATES, this issue of the "Communique".]

The WiPC marks 15 November as the Day of the Imprisoned Writer, reports another item in the latest issue of "Centre to Centre". WiPC writes, "On this day and the weeks surrounding it, PEN centres worldwide will be publicising the plight of writers who have been killed, disappeared or imprisoned for the practice of their right to freedom of expression." Five writers will be profiled and PEN will update the cases of writers featured on this day in previous years. For more information, contact WiPC at 9/10 Charterhouse Buildings, Goswell Road, London EC1M 7AT, U.K., tel: [REDACTED], fax: [REDACTED], e-mail: [REDACTED].

** ** *

=====

Pierre Joris | "Poems are sketches for existence."
Dept. of English | --Paul Celan
SUNY Albany |
Albany NY 12222 | "Revisionist plots
tel&fax: [REDACTED] | are everywhere and our pronouns haven't yet
email: | drawn up plans for the first coup."
[REDACTED] | --J.H. Prynne

=====

[↑ Contents](#)

396. **R I Caddel**

Re: Top XI

Wed 18 Oct 1995

Hard to defend my omission of Raworth, other than to say I wuz saving him for the one-day match, where "pin-point accuracy" and economy are required... As for John Ashbery - too many people can read his wrist these days? I dunno... Ric

[↑ Contents](#)

397. **Gwyn McVay**

Re: a glorious failure

Wed 18 Oct 1995

Dodie, I think lawn ornaments are national across the US, but the particular genres are regional. In Central Pennsylvania, for example, you see a lot of Catholic houses with little 3' tall Virgin Marys out front, standing in a sort of bathtub-urinal contraption. Here in Virginia, you get those flat cardboard cutouts that represent the butt of someone bending over to weed the garden. In both places, you see pedestals cupped to hold huge shiny Mylar spheres, Christmas-bauble red, green, or blue. Shit, I think I feel a poem coming on.

Gwyn

[↑ Contents](#)

398. **Gale Nelson**

Re: The Art and Poetry worlds

Wed 18 Oct 1995

Maria,

The program at Brown has gone in the direction of the studio/arts MFA -- went that many years ago, in fact. It seems to work well for most of the writers who spend two years here. The program is designed so that all students take a workshop in a particular genre each of the first three semesters in the program, and an independent study/thesis preparation course in the fourth semester. In each of those four semesters, each student selects one elective -- from anywhere within the university. We have had two poets study Sanskrit, one took two years of modern dance, many have taken video/filmmaking, papermaking, anthropology, languages, and, of course, theory and 'traditional' literature courses. Each writer decides what courses will best complement the act of

writing. For some, that will be a big dose of theory or philosophy. For others, it may be Whitman and Dickinson one semester and Balinese Performance traditions the next. One tends to hope (and believe) that regardless of the course load selected, each writer is self-immersed into a wide-ranging selection of additional reading -- and thinking.

Gale Nelson

[↑ Contents](#)

399. **Jordan Davis**

geese

Wed 18 Oct 1995

Dodie

The town I grew up in (in New York, down the road from Douglas Rothschild) is covered half the year with geese. Lawn geese would have been the equivalent of handing over the keys and showing the geese where we keep the silver and the cigars. I did have a goose lamp for a night light, though. Somebody told me it was a witty thing to have; I have no idea why.

Jordan

[↑ Contents](#)

400. **Burt Kimmelman**

Call for contributors

Wed 18 Oct 1995

Michael Taub (dept of religion, vassar college) and joel shatzky (dept of english, SUNY at Cortland 13045) are in need of contributors to complete their Encyclopedia of Jewish American Authors: Here's who needs writing about (a few juicy choices remain it seems to me):

Fiction:

Jonathan Baumbach, Ethan Chanin, Arthur Cohen, Irving FAust, richard ellmann, bruce jay friedman, thomas friedman, gerald green, robert kotlowitz, wallace markfield, bud schulberg, leon uris, jerome weidman.

POETRY:

Stanley burnshaw, allan feldman, irving feldman, charles fishman, allen grossman, edward hirsch, richard howard, vincent katz, stanley kunitz, allen mandelbaum, gail mazur, cynthia mcdonald, robert mezey, stephen mitchell, lisel mueller, lorine neidecker, george oppen, joel oppenheimer, carl rakosi, david rosenberg, frederick seidel, luis simpson, mark strand, ann waldeman, ann winters.

dramatists:

woody allen, paddy chayevesky, jules feiffer, herb gardner, william hoffman, wendy kesselman, tony kushner, arthur laurents, norman lessing, barbara lebow, susan miller, ronald ribman, murray schisqual, neil simon, elisabeth swados, arnold weinstein.

You can e-mail Taub at [REDACTED]

Please feel free to mention that I put this message out over the electronic waves, so to speak.

Burt Kimmelman

[↑ Contents](#)

401. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: Dash it, Emily! (fwd)

Wed 18 Oct 1995

i wanted this to go to poetics -- sorry if it's gone around twice --

in "There's a certain Slant of Light" -- which i read as a certain kind of poetics piece -- an extraordinary event occurs re dickinson's use of punctuation, an event which maybe illuminates to some degree those fantastic dashes -- here's that stanza, from memory -- i can't recall the whole poem, but here's that stanza: "Heavenly Hurt, it gives us--/ We can find no scar,/ But internal difference, Where the Meanings, are--"

i certainly read those dashes as gaps left by language -- as a "grasping towards" -- as indexes of "internal difference" where Meaning _is_ --

the grammatical comma in that line -- "Where the Meanings, are-- -- is, for me, an extraordinary event -- she gets _it_ right there -- she got _it_! the doors of perception open, opening -- god! i can't put this into words --

if this post can serve any useful purpose whatsoever -- by just drawing attention to that incredible line -- that's enough

[↑ Contents](#)

402. **Charles Alexander**

Re: a glorious failure

Wed 18 Oct 1995

Not to change the subject, but is anyone else on this list familiar with lawn geese, these concrete statues of geese that are like three feet high that working class women have in their frontyards and dress in different costumes for different seasons and holidays? As I type this there is a lawn goose in this very yard dressed in a pumpkin costume--there are other similarly dressed lawn geese throughout the neighborhood. Though my mother doesn't have a Thanksgiving outfit for her lawn goose, she assured me that there are pilgrims outfits available--both for both male and female pilgrim lawn geese.

When I was talking on the phone earlier today with Kevin (Killian) I asked him if he thought lawn geese was a national or a regional phenomenon. He told me that's the kind of thing Spicer would have known.

Dodie Bellamy

Lawn geese, no? But pelicans, jockeys (that one's racist), and other lawn ornaments. I think that the geese may be regional, but that lawn ornaments (and not limited to working class women) are universal. My favorite were in various barrios in Tucson where occasionally one could see refrigerators without doors in lawns, sometimes cut off so as not to be so tall, forming a kind of grotto, lit or unlit, filled with Virgin of Guadalupe, personal mementos, wishes for the ill or deceased -- small personal shrines made public.

charles

[↑ Contents](#)

403. **Willa Jarnagin**

Re: a glorious failure

Wed 18 Oct 1995

Dodie & Gwyn, Here in Somerville MA we have the bathtub Marys, and Jesuses too, all over the place. One house around the corner from me has on its front a big ceramic-tile mural of Jesus, which has the unfortunate effect of looking like an exposed shower stall. What's with this religious bathroom fixtures theme? Next we'll have Buddha sitting on a toilet and Kali wielding curling irons. I haven't seen the flat butt people though I've passed some yards with little plastic animals in the gardens.

Willa

On Wed, 18 Oct 1995, Gwyn McVay wrote:

> Dodie, I think lawn ornaments are national across the US, but the
> particular genres are regional. In Central Pennsylvania, for example, you

- > see a lot of Catholic houses with little 3' tall Virgin Marys out front,
- > standing in a sort of bathtub-urinal contraption. Here in Virginia, you
- > get those flat cardboard cutouts that represent the butt of someone
- > bending over to weed the garden. In both places, you see pedestals cupped
- > to hold huge shiny Mylar spheres, Christmas-bauble red, green, or blue.
- > Shit, I think I feel a poem coming on.
- >
- > Gwyn
- >

[↑ Contents](#)

404. **Mark Roberts**

Re: Top ten poems

Wed 18 Oct 1995

As a piece of self-indulgence, here's my first XI (but not in batting order):

Edwin Morgan
Dennis Lee
Dinah Hawken
Leigh Davis
Bill Manhire
Geoffrey Hill (at least _Mercian Hymns_)
Michele Leggott
James Brown (no, not _that_ James Brown)
James Norcliffe
Craig Raine
Geoff Cochrane

with T.S. Eliot as coach.

Oops, no Americans (unless you count the Possum) - blame it on my Anglocentric upbringing. At least they could probably play cricket better than the NZ cricket team.

Incidentally, that issue of the Sunday Star-Times also contained letters stating that McCahon was not an artist and that no-one wants to listen to NZ music - all that nasty avant-garde rubbish. Brrrrr!!! Scary.

Who would be the 12th poet/person. In a cricket team of poets I would imagine that carrying the drinks would be an extremely important role.

Mark

[↑ Contents](#)

405. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: Distant Lover

Wed 18 Oct 1995

Loss: As Marvin Gaye knew so well, distance loving is valued, but ain't nothing like the real thing --

When I was a grad. student, I worked in continuing education arranging ITFS broadcasts of university courses, both credit & non-credit, for students in groups at their places of work. As a faculty member, I have several times taught classes that were relayed by live video to branch campus sites in other parts of the state.

The teaching itself went just fine. The students in the "main" classroom were greatly frustrated by their inability to see their colleagues at the off-campus sites, but we did have live voice hook-up, and the off-campus folks felt free to join the discussions. (In fact, they often continued discussion in their own groups after the class.) Particularly important was the fact that we had live technicians in the booth working the cameras so that students didn't sit in front of a static shot for an hour & a half.

But, the possibilities of Distance Learning, like those of the web itself, are at present being vastly overestimated by people who hope to profit from the technology, and by campus administrators. The fact is that faculty fears of being replaced by video are not just untenured paranoia. I've just written a speech for a humanities conference at UC Irvine in which I talk about the continued privatizing of the humanities and of the human. To use California as an example -- The state government, _and the university administration_, continue to point to recession and dwindling resources as necessitating the deep cuts to the higher education budget. Meanwhile, the prison budget swells (more money in that budget than in higher ed. this year for the first time ever), and administrative positions (which had grown by 61% in less than two decades) have not diminished significantly.

Instead of carrying the political fight for higher education to the public, most university administrators are turning to increased use of private fund-raising and management solutions to lack of dollars for instruction. Thus, we are being pressured to increase yet further our reliance on part-time instruction, and anything that can teach students with fewer faculty is embraced by management.

Distance learning is being ballyhooed as the answer to any number of real problems, but the danger is that it will substitute for hiring qualified new faculty. I've always believed that part-time instruction should only be used to deal with minor and unexpected fluctuations in enrollment, or to make use of

exceptional abilities offered by instructors who choose not to teach full-time. In the same way, distance learning should, in my opinion, be used only to reach students who could not otherwise be reached (like those in, what else, distant regions) or to bring _exceptional_ opportunities to wider audiences (like a visiting scholar who can't possibly teach as many students as wish to study with that person). Distance learning should never be employed as a means to avoid employing a qualified instructor. If there are enough students to take the course, there should be a willingness to staff it properly. There is no justifiable reason to use distance learning to teach regular courses in the catalogue to people who would otherwise study with a live instructor.

Some deans and presidents have been willing to agree in writing to such principles. Others are laying people off and buying hardware. Most universities I've visited are wobbling in between these positions with no real agreement on principles.

Telegenically yours,

aldon (and congrats. on the book! If you tape the reading, I'd like to hear it.)

[↑ Contents](#)

406. **Alan Golding**
Poems for the Millenium
Wed 18 Oct 1995

Associate Professor of English, U. of Louisville

Phone: [REDACTED]; e-mail: [REDACTED]

Public congratulations, gratitude, etc. to Jerry Rothenberg and Pierre Joris for the first volume of Poems for the Millenium, which came in the mail today--an utterly mind-blowing achievement.

Alan

[↑ Contents](#)

407. **Joe Amato**
Re: Distant Lover
Wed 18 Oct 1995

aldon, great response on the ab/uses of distance learning!... i'd love to see a copy of your speech, even a draft... any way to upload it?... alternately, be happy to send along an sase w/plenty of postage...

joe

[↑ Contents](#)

408. **cris cheek**

Albert Hall

Wed 18 Oct 1995

Thanks to Ken for a breezy and basically accurate out front response. Here's a rambling take from the backstage viewpoint during which I'll try to talk as much about performance qualities as possible, in the hope that it's of interest.

Originally planned to offer a solo version (for 3 voices - holding hand-sized self-powered speakers with two other tracks of my own voice recorded and mixed in split stereo) of some work I've been engaged with called 'fogs'. Decided about five days before the event that since so many people were going to be standing pretty still and reading then perhaps bringing a more performance attitude to the event could help the overall dynamic - pretty sure I'd been booked on that basis after finally seeing the publicity announcing 'poetry and performance'. Must admit that a key element in this decision (although there was a cop out side to it as well) was the relative imbalance of women on the bill (to say nothing of Ken's noted token black poet). Sianed and I had just done a three and one half minute piece for Anglia tv and decided simply to extend that item. So, instead of taking a briefcase I loaded the car with Harmonium, Violin, Clarinet, Pine tree and so on - not exactly the 'normal' poetry reading accoutrements - picked up Sianed from the electronic music studios on the University of East Anglia campus (where she's taking an MA) and drove to London.

Arrived Albert Hall just before 4 in the afternoon, so as to spend some time sorting out our slightly more complicated sound. The 'natural' acoustic is extremely 'live'. We can fill the hall even without any P.A.

Unloaded straight onto the stage where Brian Catling was trying out his 'Cyclops' mirror to the lips (what certainly resembles a talking arsehole) routine. There's an atmosphere of curious calm - almost but in the event not quite, before storm - suspension of disbelief.

Mike Goldmark, the bookseller and promoter of this event, strolls over in barefeet and (for a man who's hired this hall out for £20,000 and is about to go bankrupt, or so he says) exudes wonder at what's going on around him and how well it's all coming together.

Technically the hall is almost already set, with a giant screen hanging above the stage. The sound is thankfully excellent - top quality monitors and radio mikes for all. Gradually poets begin to assemble on the stage and a possee of photographers buzz around us. I swear there must have been shutters going off every couple of seconds for much of the time - and then there are others

filming from the stalls, from the stage. The last time I'd been here I'd seen Jimi Hendrix burning his guitar before I even hit my teens.

Much of the next three hours is a coming and going (definitely poetry rather than rock 'n' roll) gathering with most people just sitting around on the stage and chatting, in between brief sound checks. Paul McCartney arrives and does his, simply grinning and saying hello (although I can't help feeling that Ginsberg picked the wrong Beatle, Ringo would have been much more 'challenging' as an accompanist).

I came into the hall at one point to find a shocked camera crew witnessing Aaron almost riveting the Albert Hall to its foundations with his vocal tests. "It takes a long time for each sound to fade" he said. Pretty remarkable, and 'profoundly deaf' in deed (to be fair to Ken that's how many have introduced him).

Now there's a de rigeur mutual signing of programmes taking effect which keeps most of the poets busy and introductory until the off. My most enjoyable exchange was with Brendan Kennally as we became almost hysterical over the book title 'Tough' (both for reader and writer) and took bets on which of the two of us would first write it. Other conversations - with Ginsberg about photography and his diet (not that either of us suggested that the two were related) and his surprise at how well (in broad comparison to his poetry) his photographic exhibitions had been received in the US press - with Zephaniah about the anonymity as distinct from the occasional celebrity status of the 'other' with particular reference to internment of Iraqi people in Britain during the Gulf War - with Sorley MacLean about his love of Norwich - with Bill Sherman (likewise my great surprise at seeing him) about the recent spur to Independent movements given by French Nuclear testing in Tahiti (he spends a lot of time there these days) - you know, it was very friendly and rangey and consequently pleasant.

Michael Moorcock is sitting in a dressing room trying to read Denise Riley's 'Mop Mop Georgette' while I'm testing a light I picked up that morning which I had designed so as to react to the attack and decay on my voice (even down to the breath - I thought you might have spotted that Ken) and shade it in my customary layerings of red lettuce and spinach (guess that's what looked like xmas effect from a distance). He seems almost drunk and distant, affable but buffoonish.

There's a green room full of cheeses and breads and fruits.

Finally the atmosphere gets more down to business as the evening begins to show. My experience of the first half was from backstage. There was a tannoy relay of onstage sound and a black and white feed from cameras in the hall onto

a monitor close by the stage door. There are two broadly identifiable poets present now backstage - the jovial and the introspective.

Suddenly, or so it seems after a slightly late start, Brian Catling is on. He used to stutter frequently in readings but he's worked hard at that and lost his stutter completely in this kind of work. I'm wondering how he'll go down, I enjoy his work immensely myself, and am delighted to hear loud applause and cheering as he leaves the stage with a customary grin across his now asymmetrical face (you won't understand that unless you reflect back on the mirror he's been holding up). The fact that so many in the audience are obviously determined to enjoy themselves and root for the performers is encouraging to say the least. Couldn't see his film well from backstage and I'm looking forward to seeing the video of the event in another thirty years time (the original Wholly Communion has just been released on video btw).

Sianed and I relax as Aaron launches out into some of the most intricate and compelling vocalising of language one could desire. He literally explores every crevice in each word, every fault-line of each phrase. The texture of his speaking is for me exemplary. He compels the silence to shatter itself - his closely navigated breath fully acknowledges the architextural space into which it is sounded and he positively brings language directed back into his body. His is an integrated gesture. In comparison Artaud's recording of 'To Have Done With The Judgement Of God' sounds unconvincing. As he finished, what sounds backstage like a massive cheer fills the hall and harsh applause rains into the dressing rooms through tiny wall-mounted speakers as I go through a simple centering and balancing (adapted from something Steve Paxton taught me) warm-up routine.

It 'sounds' like a big audience, but that's only based on applause.

Moorcock's on but I can't hear him properly. Aidan Dun's guitar tinkles away and momentarily I think of Ali Farka Toure, then Donovan as his voice comes in (he was most distant of the performers for me, gets reviewed as Rimbaud like, or some such, in The Independent newspaper - what's Rimbaud like mean?) and then I can make out Denise Riley, sounding strong for all her terrifying nerves. You pick someone close to the front and just read to them intimately, as if they were the only person there, if the fear grips you too tightly. Sinclair (yes he did have a strong hand in the programming) next. I watch him standing close to the front of the stage as we wait in the bull run, ready to rush on and set up our gear in the interlude provided by film of David Gascoigne.

In the dark we set up a table for the harmonium, two mike stands, a hand-held light, a string of electronic effects. I take off into the audience, walking down the centre aisle to the back of the hall, surprised to see just how thin the audience feels closest to the stage (in the expensive seats presumably), looking

around and thinking somewhere between 1-2000 people. Great, as Ken says, for a poetry gig, but less than it sounded backstage. Gasgoigne's film lasts just long enough for composure.

I'm standing in the hall feeling kind of invisible. It's that moment when adrenalin is closing on the surface. It's a complex moment of narrowing focus and softening, opening awareness. Trying to gather energy and relax, to erupt and be still. The lights go up on an empty stage. The first thought I have is that something has gone wrong and Sianed is rushing around backstage having a technical nightmare, but then she appears, calmly picking up her violin and bow (I'm being deliberately over the top in this description). This is what I wanted to happen - a woman playing the violin, going through huge distortion pedals, chorusing and reverbs fills the Albert Hall (scene of Proms and romantic string gush a go-go ever since Albert had his Prince Albert job) with wildly textured noise (dodging and burning classical references in a brief homage to Hendrix). Masking Ivo Papasov having a jam with Giorgos Mangas in the minaret of an east end Mosque I call back on clarinet, moving down the centre aisle and spinning the harshest reedy sound I can tongue in circles over the heads of those immediately nearest to me and out into the dome. (I always worry about bashing someone on the head inadvertently in that first adrenal rush). Rushing themselves (this is self-critical in some ways too, it's a going out and over the top sensation, launching from trenches with oneself as an enemy) to meet the scale of the event, the audience (unexpectedly for us and somewhat disconcertingly) bursts into a spate of applause as there's an awkward break while Sianed switches to harmonium and sings a brief phrase modelled on Mongolian long song with lyrics in part-invented language embodied from her native Welsh. (a lot of people took this for Bulgarian vocal styling, in fact it's considerably different - a singing of the vast landscapes on the edge of the Gobi desert - although using the hard edged throat voice more widely familiar from recordings and concerts by Trio Bulgarka or Les Mystere des Voix Bulgares). I burble along on a large turtle ocarina being picked up by the voice clip mike. A quiet and reflective time to gather again and take stock. How many people here have had that experience of watching themselves during a performance? - of settling into a moment (almost slow motion) and pushing on. We segue into simple rhythmical phrases of breath - hand-pumped harmonium and voice. It's time to try out my new voice-activated light. Only collected it this morning and wonder how subtle I can get with it on the first time out. The light is attached to a circuit activated by a microphone that picks up the attack and decay on my voice and triggers the bulb. I've been working with hand-held lights in performance for a couple of years now but this a new development. I like the intimacy it brings to the space immediately around the body and how this relates to the space of the breath and heat and energy

immediate to every body. So the language I use hovers around breath and pulse and blood and sound and light in a brief and humourous improvisation centred around energy trapped between the living and the dead. It went close to something like this and was accompanied by rising and falling harmonium with the air sometimes fading so that notes dropped out of hearing (like Bach's 'Art of Fugue' last gasps) and the light responded on and off as I spoke / well there's an element of Shakespeare gone horribly wrong declamation in this monologue at times as well:

'To who comes (brief whistled snatch of the old vaudeville song 'whistling in the dark') whistling in the dark

i'm not a heaven

man, delibidinous breaded wheels along arteries, lawless carriages

this big wet shiny bird, stuffed - full of caves

woke, in this wall of cold leavings wobbled on the diaphragm

to figure spilt beer on the public bar, voiced by some manic street preacher

majestic mover the river

looking when the badly ties on trash drops wake up

in the eyes I came to see my family and got stuck (somewhere around here I ate into the spinach and lettuce around the buld)

too bright that kind of warbler suggests, they offered me a dream bedroom

muffed it, all the slack went out the copy came undone

I scooped first prize, in the Mirror - horror of horrors - Breath For Life

look, lungs, not really like a foxglove

more circular, more avid - pins into action when electric circuits

wires out of sight, be careful under ladders, no

letters, no known, no postmark, on holiday, be back for tea, I hope

milk's not off

shoes to be taken for mending, I understand

how to navigate through 'things' but don't yet understand why

he's so sanctimonious, so acrimonious, so parsimonious, so moaning

moaning - the man is always moaning

a rising

one more box coming up, he cages all their dusty faces

done a long stretch, plunks hot brittle oof not long

go out and tidy the garden, go on, pull it all up by the root splice into orange

marmalade where buzz of bee in microphone fuses with footage of wind waves

across cornfield in camera, on tv a talking head announces that the

assassination of a political opponent, spread disco fever through Peking you

give a me plas-ma (sing, sing) in the morning and plas-ma al-l throu-gh the

night p-p-p-p-plAS -MAAAAAAA when you kiss me, and plas-ma when a
you hold a me a tight. You give a me plas-ma (to the tune of fever out of Peggy
Lee via The Cramps of course)

Well what do you expect me to say? For in this shady passage throughout life -
during which the future is and remain radically unknowable -

death is the only certainty

I wrote a poem about it somewhere (then drawing a handful of torn paper
scraps from the breast pocket of my jacket and scattering them onto the floor)
- shit, it's absent minded.

Speech as locked in brick released as part encoded partly pre-recorded speech
(more lettuce tongueing)

After all, and after all that
death is merely a permanent projection - a hot, reception'

Then we segued out with a 45 second tape of scattered voices, mbira and
jaws harp on the hand-held speakers I mentioned earlier whilst adding to the
part singing part scat deconstructions, turning the speakers back into my body
whilst Sianed was now holding the light on the pine-tree pole. Finish, warm
applause - enjoyed this moment and get off, grabbing our gear as we go. We
both enjoyed it. Felt settled through it.

So what was it all about Ken? I'm not convinced that's the most useful
question. But perhaps that extensive discursion 'helps'. My and Sianed's
interest in performance more and more focusses onto the pace and texture and
trajectories of events through time and states of energy rhyming within that
process. The work is always language / breath / voice / body based. I'm often
keen to engage with the paradoxical and critical image of the performer as
trapped by the audience and vice versa - the presentation of the problem of
spectacle. 8 minutes in a shared context on such a scale with little set up in a
poetry event which is overloaded with poetry? Answers to a seperate subject
heading of 8 minutes please. My alternative might have been to simply breath
and let the light work on me - only that. Next piece will probably become the
concert for breath I've wanted to try for a while now.

We left a small pool of paper fragments from within which most of the poets
read during the rest of the evening. I like those fragile physical residues too.

Bill Sherman followed us on and then Horowitz took us through to the
interval but I missed him. Spent most of the interval signing 26 programmes
and talking to Zephaniah about the GLC and Hand Wangford's Lost Cowboys
(this is very in-British stuff so I'll shift straight to the second half).

Several of us watched the whole of the second half from a box directly opposite the stage at the back of the hall. Perhaps I've haven't got a great deal to add to Ken's account excepting a different taste. I liked Doug Oliver's 'Oracle of the Drowned' and was curious to hear his 'african' material, although he seemed distant (even prurient) rather than engaged with it to anything other than intellectual intensity. More body please Doug.

Alice's voice interested me in so much as it seemed a good example of a register which seems to me to have a period stamped on it that is not of today.

Kennelly was tremendous and I even fell for the craft of his little girl poem that Ken got slimed by. Sorley didn't read his best stuff - which for me is the wind and waves whistling gaelic sea and mountain pieces. Anne Waldman was terrific, simply very much stronger each time I get the chance to hear her. I missed Kathy Acker's presence though.

Ginsberg had the best rider (herbal tea and flowers) - poets might think more about riders. Catling had a great one with the British Council - when they asked him to perform in Israel for little money he demanded the opportunities to snorkel in the Red Sea and fire an Uzi, he got both.

There were several serious acid casualties backstage afterwards - "hey man, ahve you read Robert Anton Wilson?". Paul McCartney and Linda McCartney both shook Sianed's hand and said how much they'd enjoyed our contribution (must have been while I was standing by the entrance handing out leaflets for an upcoming Slant gig), she forgot to ask for a free consignment of latex pies. I'll never forget the muppet-like image of Ginsberg wagging his finger at McCartney and roaring "one more time" as the latter struggled to find another variation on the I fought the Law and the Law Won style riff he was wagering. And Ginsberg's seventeen syllable poems had a strange double image. Was he that young boy lying in his room or is he really still banging on the young's drum "one more time"?

This is the morning after the morning after and I come downstairs to 'Wild Thing' ('but I wanna know-oh for sure') followed by the strap line 'the scent of freedom' playing out on breakfast tv. Apparently Sianed and I went out in some form or other on breakfast tv yesterday but I didn't see it having been at Filthy McNasties (a packed Islington sawdust and salad wag's dive) for lock-in style late night candle-lit drinking bout during which I talked to Anne Waldman about the School fur Dichtung in Vienna, saw Ginsberg undo the top button of his royal blue shirt and witnessed Shane McGowan (ex Pogues epic pisshead) slumping onto a wet bar with his sideburns mopping up what the slop cloth fails to catch. Somewhere in there (I wasn't drunk myself - had to drive home 125 miles at three in the morning then go straight into college for 9.30 - in Norwich itself 45 minutes drive away - the following morning) I caught up with comedian

Arthur Smith whose brilliant 40 minute deconstructed, prozac-driven 'Hamlet' I'd enjoyed in Edinburgh and together we reprised its apopleptic song :

"I've seen your arse
Your Dirty great arse
I've seen your arse
In the water". It was that kind of night. Hilarious and mostly askew.
love and love
cris

[↑ Contents](#)

409. **eric pape**

Re: a glorious failure

Wed 18 Oct 1995

I'm not sure if this is significant, but there has been a recent spate of pink flamingo thefts in Baton Rouge. Rodger Kamenetz had one filched from his front yard, in bright daylight, just before he moved to New Orleans. Is this the death of the decorative arts? Thanks, Eric.

[↑ Contents](#)

410. **eric pape**

Re: Colonialism

Wed 18 Oct 1995

Alas, Jeffrey, only studying for exams.... Maybe I'll have some soup! Thanks, Eric.

[↑ Contents](#)

411. **eric pape**

Re: The Art and Poetry worlds

Wed 18 Oct 1995

Maria: I kind of agree kind of totally. I know what you describe was true, at least, in my case. Can't speak for others. For me, oddly, theory courses were a refuge from the kind of half-baked pseudo-hipness of the workshop mentality here in BR, ie, the cult of the funky Southern writer. After listening to other posts, however, I am beginning to seriously wonder how common my experience was. I think the best bet may be (as someone else requested: unfortunately I have moved too quickly through the posts to remember who specifically) to require poets to develop other interests, IE, theory, art history, information, dance, sculpture, whatever the hell, just not to be so narrow. Thanks, Eric.

[↑ Contents](#)

412. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: Distant Lover

Wed 18 Oct 1995

Aldon,

Writing to you from a campus that is high-tech and is going full steam ahead in the area of distance learning, I can say that the move to dh seems inevitable. but is it good for all subjects and students? the emphatic answer is no. and people like is damn well better make the case as to why not, asap.

Burt

[↑ Contents](#)

413. **cris cheek**

Re: in dreams

Wed 18 Oct 1995

This mortal coil forsaken hog swallows do supper
Film presage in humidland. Film also
Dwarfing the Rengathon at Giants Stadium
Weening drawn one drum that time presents
Continue now, that the angel storm has passed.
Film the books were dreams and in the reams were latex books
What travel we could scrounge from the newspapers
of Palookaville & the dead heroes of Guadalajara
empowering scores of liberated motzas in tents of Lacanian
libretti, salted with mocha, much more than with roughage added to taste
or tremolo, finding the shores awash with alphabet, proclaiming nothing
In and flew, patching their rents
completely set on the sea as so much crabbiness
which is only like cancer districts and tunnel music,
diverts attention from wars in three voices and the steady rain of hemlock
falling on the Concerns box & a sob distant as adventure capital
behind the exterior of the city was an interior compost

of scar tissue recording the grain of farm house timber
a rubble of history in the grass where a decapitated statue
unavoidably becomes an image of a nation without a true face
volte face to sell a magazine, a face to turn to the side
of the calcined sheriff and each to each tongues and balls
and they too were skeptical of the value of the face
of souvenirs of deliriums of proctors & priests
but like the strong and weak forces mostly they gossipped
or exchanged their blind letter for a parapetal posture
ramrod strait-laced hoping for a jolt of lightning out
did they radiate bagness over the fragments of blots, or
did they call home once a week, did they walk to work
by dint of rod, glove and puppetry that cauterized my mobile phone
or am I the sealant in the shape you take?
Trickster flickers neon melodies soft by
trying to feel belief in the teeth of induction
or bellwether combed, cleaned, fortified toward
the scene where the parrot of intention is ice cold
between a pick frames becoming a slender and fragrant loop

[↑ Contents](#)

414. **cris cheek**

Re: Sheila, Cris & Jorge's Excellent Adventure

Wed 18 Oct 1995

>On Wed, 18 Oct 1995, Jordan Davis wrote:

>

>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >

>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >spending the bulk of closure with sentient
scoops

>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >that fluke picnic shot out of these worlds we
spread

>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >say that the center cannot hold the nose
tackle much

>> > >>longer

>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >than a clam can sleeve out of incarceration
baldly
>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >go where the others fear to operate the
biggest
>>donors
>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >& where Mars collides with the small world
of "It's a
>> > >>small
>> > >> >> world"
>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >ripe for macroscopes to
pump or slice or
>> > >> >> butterfly away
>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> from that ardent bugged
heliotrope and
>>pledge
>> > >> >> allegiance
>> > >> >> >> >> >> through
>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> > ostension--we stopped short of
the
>>shortstop
>> > >> stigmata
>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> this time pencilled in as tangly
wisps
>>instead of
>> > >> memory
>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> > detonations: but don't forget to
dismember
>>the
>> > >> doloroso
>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> pitchpipe with its squeal subtracted
and the
>> > >>dotted-line
>> > >> >> >> >> >> relationships
>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >and sing "I Love Time but I love Your
Spatial
>> > >> Simulacra Much
>> > >> >> >> More"
>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> for the brevity inferred and for the
latchkey
>>touch
>> > >>more
>> > >> >> >> like a

>> > >> >> >> >> >> feather
>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> drizzling blood of picklet beet all over
the
>>related
>> > >> >> phenomena
>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> braising from punch a drunk streak
which no
>>absolute
>> > >> >> >> bearings flew
>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> off the Handel I did not miss for Pergolesi
was
>>by the
>> > >> >> >> pergola with
>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> shadows of her former selves implanting
>>pre-recorded
>> > >> brick-
>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> layers as insignias in the privacy of
Manny's
>>rheumatic
>> > >> >> slumber
>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> creased, cemented, spun from claustrophobia
the way
>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> >> that glitches suggested themselves as
sexuation near
>>the
>> > >> border
>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> of profundity where drudges still are visible but
begin
>>to
>> > >> >> matter less
>> > >> >> >> >> >> >> than duality or the boyishness of dusk. I, too,
miscast
>> > >> >> >> >> >> palpitations as preambles to the rust we might
someday
>>finagle
>> > >>into
>> > >> >> >> >> >> the market of dwarfs' shortcomings that are
longgoings in
>>the
>> > >> thrust of
>> > >>> >> >> memorized vibrati larkish and unpoised though frequently
>> > >amiss in

>> > >> >> >> >> the slump of confetti being so much of the knocky
memento
>> > >> >> >> that we cried under the dandelions where no pulse was
original
>> enough
>> > >> >> >> for the dog to be plankton or the nurse a gate in an iron dress
>> > >> >> as pressed as any moment striped with platitudes and pain
>> > >> >> soldering the fatherly clavicle to the theory of colors
>> > >> wounded round and playful although never sleek
>> > > swimming in the northblood channel and evening being a paperweight
>> > long freighted. Authenticity a crevice for the playful heart
>> > there's some percentage you should never invest above the buddhist
> who said to the hot dog vendor "make me one with everything" and yet
proceeded to tear his tongue with her wine-grained books of the rank and file
>>

[↑ Contents](#)

415. **Kenneth Goldsmith**

Virus Alert

Wed 18 Oct 1995

This warning came to me from someone who usually knows what he's talking about..Better safe than sorry...

--kennyg

*There is a computer virus that is being sent across the Internet.
If you receive an e-mail message with the subject line "Good
Times", DO NOT read the message, DELETE it immediately. Please
read the messages below. Some miscreant is sending e-mail under the
subject title "good times" nation-wide.*

*If you get anything like this, DON'T DOWN LOAD THE FILE! It has a
virus that rewrites your hard drive, obliterating anything on it.
Please be careful and forward this mail to anyone you care about.*

=====

===== Kenneth Goldsmith

http://wfmw.org/~kennyg [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

416. **Wystan Curnow**

Re: Evaluation

Wed 18 Oct 1995

James, as to who I think they're all Brit. Cricketers and there's a big indoor game coming up at the Albert Stadium in London I think. do you reckon value judgements are a subterfuge? I've heard people on this list claim that regarding poems. at least they are a handy shorthand. yesterday in a staff meeting discussing a proposal for a freshman paper in popular fiction, someone attacked it because the texts were second rate, which did seem to be an acceptable view to the proposers although they were annoyed, but when I said the texts were uncool, it was taken as a personal attack by the proponents. Colleagues were divided as to whether I had gone too far. I'm still figuring out what it was all about, any ideas? wystan

[↑ Contents](#)

417. **Wystan Curnow**

Re: a glorious failure

Wed 18 Oct 1995

Dear tom (and dodie) well I don't see why garden ornaments and the question of the changing history of the audience(s) for the high arts can't be a single subject of discussion. There's an outfit in Auckland which goes around at night covering lawns with lifesize plastic flamingoes. You pay them a fee, or rental; finger a loved one with a birthday, anniversary, hangover, or suicidal depression and they will deliver the nasty shock. and those people you describe, tom, they with the interests in music, film, etc who could be interested in poetry, aren't they precisely the people who packed out the Hejinian, Creeley and various groupings of local readers at Alba this year. the audience exists. much of the discussion of audience on this list seems unduly dependent upon questions of book sales, distribution points, numbers of readers, grants and so on. The equally, but for the purposes of my point, more interesting issue is what happens next. who is reading, buying, listening and what are they doing with what they get. The small sales of book X going to a certain kind of 100 readers may well be vastly more consequential as far as the circulation of meanings goes and the large sales of book Y to a certain kind of 100,000 readers. I'd say. When poetry was a lot more popular and successful book X and book Y were often the same book. And, in Browning's case, a railroad timetable to boot. Pretty famingo wystan

[↑ Contents](#)

418. **jms**

review of Brakhage films at MOMA

Thu 19 Oct 1995

Stan Brakhage's *_Trilogy_* (*_We Hold These_*; *_I Take These Truths_*; and *_I..._*) at the Museum of Modern Art Friday October 13:

In a packed auditorium, people watched splotches of color on a screen. There was no plot to the color. The depth of space in the films was fantastic. Whole worlds of layer on top of layer were created. During the break, the film maker explained that the color was produced by magic marker.

The films were between 12 minutes and 35 minutes long yet with each film the sense of time disappeared. It was hard to tell how long or short a particular film was. In fact they all seemed to be about the same length upon reflection after the event (although the program, of course, confirmed otherwise). I can't figure out if reflection is sped up or slowed down or recognized to just be the speed of film in these works.

Is pleasure here in the color's fast movement and hypnotic potential or in something else altogether different?

During the films the audience was very quiet except for several coughing and fidgeting children.

I kept thinking of corruption and wondering who would bring their children to such pornography of image and setting. Later it was obvious that the children were the film maker's and were used to such imagery. While the children ran around on the stage in front of the crowd, the film maker spoke of his films as children's art, as self-evident. This bothered me a little because I think the child argument is sometimes used to trivialize things that look un-polished.

A declaration of independence, an American tradition of self-reliance also filled the film maker's rhetoric.

Also an idea of community seemed to be behind the films; of "we hold."

Is it hubris or just right to name a film *I...* and have only colors and shapes?

As I watched the abstract splotches of color pass, I kept seeing feet in the images.

I knew the feet were not really there (as in drawn by the film maker). This kept annoying me at first

and I felt like my mind was purposely domesticating the splotches of color
so as to save itself the work
of negotiating abstraction. Do I have to put the self into everything, I
kept asking myself. Later I just
let the feet come.

The films were a reminder of how much I appreciated the language of
abstraction over the language of narrative-demand. They also suddenly made
clear to me the reason that I have had so much trouble appreciated abstract art
over other forms of abstraction: it doesn't move and thus has trouble
illustrating process to me.

[↑ Contents](#)

419. **James Banton Rolins**

Re: Distant Lover

Thu 19 Oct 1995

On Wed, 18 Oct 1995, Burt Kimmelman [REDACTED] wrote:

> Aldon,
>
> Writing to you from a campus that is high-tech and is going full steam
> ahead in the area of distance learning, I can say that the move to
> dh seems inevitable. but is it good for all subjects and students? the
> emphatic answer is no. and people like is damn well better make the case
> as to why not, asap.
>

Distance learning is most cost effective. The classroom can be as big
as you want. No limits. One prof (or a video player or any one or
group of other machines) can reach an unlimited number of students. So
there are and will be more problems. But then there really are those
who just can't get to a campus. That's why some of the leaders in DL are
extension centers in places like Utah, Wyoming, Australia... The
wide-flung classroom. If you want students with truly differing
perspectives, there you are. And then, in our own way, we're doing DL
right here. I'm in Taiwan (not Taipei) learning lots by reading the
postings to this list. Of course I'm not getting degree credit. Anyway,
it's the push for FTEs that worries me. DL builds them oh so quickly.

Bart

[↑ Contents](#)

420. **James Banton Rolins**
Re: The Art and Poetry worlds
Thu 19 Oct 1995

On Mon, 16 Oct 1995, eric pape wrote:

*I take exception to the claim that MFA
programs have "taken poetry from the people."
When did the people have poetry, Bart? Poetry, by definition, is
a highly elite activity. Always has been.*

Hope I haven't taken the above too much out of context, Eric. Don't mean to. Anyway, I'm not sure I can agree that "the people" have never had poetry. As you suggest, inevitably, this discussion must deal with definition, but I don't think I can restrict my definition of poetry enough to agree with your point, especially the idea of poetry being and always having been "a highly elite activity." My definition would insist on including whatever poetry has been widely read in its own time. But then even if we aren't that liberal in what we admit as poetry, I believe the people have had poetry. By the way, by "people" I really just mean those who haven't more than the average formal education in whatever society, culture they're a part of.

Probably, the question for me isn't so much whether poetry has been taken away from the people (not my phrase--sorry I can't remember what article I got it from) but whether parts of it have. More so, I wonder what it may be in Western culture that has rendered the poetry we tend to speak of here on this list so peripheral. (That's to ask, in a sense, how that kind of poetry came to be in the first place.) There are societies, cultures in which very serious "high" poetry is not nearly so peripheral to its society or not peripheral at all. My own experience reminds me of Yemeni poetry, still very much part of an oral tradition, composed (not written) by persons who neither write nor read but still very sophisticated. Some Yemeni poets, by the way, believe that writing down a poem kills it. To be true poetry, it must be alive, changing with each recitation.

I'm going on too long, so let me finish by posing another question: Does our fixation with writing everything down, publishing it, studying it, writing about it, getting degrees in it, etc., etc. have anything to do with where poetry is right now in our culture? If culture is at all a form of capital, as suggested by Pierre Bourdieu in *Les Regles de l'art: Genese at structure du champ litteraire* and earlier works, perhaps it does, especially if poetry has become a capital used to gain and hold social and economic power as he also suggests.

Bart

[↑ Contents](#)

421. **Tenney Nathanson**

E.D., dash it all

Thu 19 Oct 1995

Date: Mon, 16 Oct 1995 05:06:46 -0400

From: Chris Stroffolino <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: grandma Emily?

Tenney--But the rhymes and rhythms ARE there compared to most of the poetry people on this list write (or publish)---even if ironic and "off" and, yes, terrifying (what else is new). And some people--trained in "free verse" or "blank verse" at first find her work offputting for that--and others of course find it somewhat reassuring for that--and the rhymes and rhythm does lend her work a more memorizable quality than much unrhyming work of contemporaries...I don't think the "avant-garde" Dickinson is any more real than the "mainstream" Dickinson--I guess that's the "agenda" behind most of my postings on her....

Chris--

well right it's odd to just flat out call her "avant-garde" or something. But isn't she, say, a RESOURCE for a contrmporary writer (even a writer on this list) in a way that, say, Longfellow or Tuckermann or Sandberg or let's say Merwin etc. isn't? Just as, say, the insane ballads of Auden can energize contemporary experimental writing (Ashbery's for example)? And back to the WCW strain: does he energize no exciting experimental work (and are we bored w O'Hara now too)?

Tenney

[↑ Contents](#)

422. **Tenney Nathanson**

I wanted the details

Thu 19 Oct 1995

Date: Tue, 17 Oct 1995 19:57:23 -0400

From: James Sherry <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Evaluation

Ron and Michael and others writing about how to evaluate the situation of the teacher/poet. How do we feel about it? What are its drawbacks? How is Michael expressing his concern in his work, while referred to is not detailed, while a lot of space is devoted to whether it's good or bad....

Although this is I admit again a discussion at a "respectful" distance. What do you who addressed these subjects today and previous think about

| *your writing these messages?*

what I wanted to hear, anyway, was more from Ron about how the ambivalence shows up, specifically, in the poetry (Michael's): something about the pressure doing criticism, or yammering to others about Great Poetry for a living, puts on writing poetry; esp since, having read a bunch of Michael's poetry (though not all) it wasn't immediately apparent to me how this might play out.

Tenney

[↑ Contents](#)

423. **Kevin Killian**

Announcement of reading in SF

Thu 19 Oct 1995

Bob Gluck asked me to post this. It happens on Thursday night in San Francisco, at "The Lab" (16th Street at Capp in the Redstone Building). At 8:00 p.m.

Carla Harryman reading-she is the author of "There Never was a Rose without a Thorn." Then, Harryman sits down and Lyn Hejinian approaches her and interviews her on stage.

8:00 p.m., Thursday October 19, 1995 at the LAB.

Then, Bob is having a reception for Harryman & Hejinian, come one come all to Bob Gluck and Chris Komater's house
4303 20th Street, San Francisco (at Collingwood, in the Castro).

Hooray for them all!

This event sponsored by THE LAB in connection with their ongoing visual art show MILLENNIUM COMING: the NEW DEGENERATE ART, curated by Chris Komater and Michelle Rollman. Catalogue available, edited by Kevin Killian. Reading series curated by Bob Gluck and Camille Roy.

Don't miss this if you are in San Francisco! Gallery hours Wed-Sat, 12-5.

See you all there.

[↑ Contents](#)

424. **Ron Silliman**

Re: The Art and Poetry worlds

Thu 19 Oct 1995

You wrote:

>

>Maria: I kind of agree kind of totally. I know what you describe was true,
>at least, in my case. Can't speak for others. For me, oddly, theory
>courses were a refuge from the kind of half-baked pseudo-hipness of
>the workshop mentality here in BR, ie, the cult of the funky Southern
>writer. After listening to other posts, however, I am beginning to
>seriously wonder how common my experience was.
> I think the best bet may be (as someone else requested:
unfortunately
>I have moved too quickly through the posts to remember who
specifically)
>to require poets to develop other interests, IE, theory, art history,
>information, dance, sculpture, whatever the hell, just not to be so
>narrow.
> Thanks, Eric.
>

When I was a student, 25 years ago, theory played a valuable role in part precisely because it was so utterly Other. It spoke to the activity to my work but seemed all but completely outside the bounds of what was then permissible. At SF State, nobody at all seemed to have heard of Barthes. At Berkeley, just the grad students and junior faculty showed an interest. There was a freedom in that that was, I think, an integral part of the experience itself. Today, now that theory has been so routinized and professionalized within English departments, I suspect that it has to have a very different value and meaning for the students there. So while the level of knowledge and sophistication that one finds in, say, a Steve Evans or a Mark Wallace was not even possible circa 1970, what sets them apart today is not that they know the theory, but rather that they have figured out how to use it creatively. Andrew Ross was literally the first human being I ever met who could do that and it remains a rare experience.

Just to note that these "values" are not static, but as thoroughly contextualized as anything.

Ron Silliman

[↑ Contents](#)

425. **Dodie Bellamy**
theory and the teaching of writing
Thu 19 Oct 1995

Maria Damon wrote:

>

>i've got to say, quite the contrary, in my observation. since most
>literature departments are tending toward "theory" these days, and most
>contemporary theory attacks the tenets of what is generally called "academic
>poetry," those MFA programs that resist theory in favor of practice more
>often uphold --unconsciously, since they believe their values are "timeless"
>--an earlier, outmoded academicism. It's my belief, and i could be wrong,
>that if mfa students read more benjamin and foucault they'd be likely to
>write more adventurously than if they restricted their reading to, say,
>robert lowell and anne sexton.

Even though I'm clearly not against reading theory, from my experience in teaching prose writing workshops I have my doubts about the reading theory having much of a direct connection to students' adverturousness in writing. I've found theory ultimately helpful to me--but as a beginning writer I found blind imitation of things I found "neat" to be the most useful. I did have the priviledged position of living in the incredibly sophisticated writing world of San Francisco, and of learning about experimental writing by being thrown in the middle of a scene I didn't really grasp. It was like going to a foreign country and picking up its language in order to survive vs. studying that language in a classroom. I've had students who were very sophisticated in theory--and who didn't have a clue as to how to apply it to their writing--and who felt very frustrated as a result of this. And then you get the other end of the spectrum, where the writing become some sort of petrie dish for the theory, and the writing is dead--though "moldy" might be a more appropriate term to extend my metaphor. I think that theory has a place in the teaching of writing, but the main focus should be rolling up your shirtsleeves and mucking around in the writing itself.

Dodie Bellamy

[↑ Contents](#)

426. **John Cayley**
Albert Hall
Thu 19 Oct 1995

I was there too (something I'm not sure I'll be mentioning -- in a casual/proud undertone -- to my grandchildren) and have enjoyed both Ken and Cris's

reports. I thought I should dash off some sort of response quickly before I just let it go.

I don't think the explicit aspect of sixties throwback was sufficiently highlighted (despite references to Donovan and Dylan). Two film clips were shown (Ginsburg most prominent) of a famous event in '65 (I'm too 'young' and wasn't in the UK until '69 anyway) at the same venue. Horovitz spoke of 'building on the "energies"' of the more current event for an Festival of International Poetry next July. Whaaat?

And many in the audience were, I think, revenants experiencing flashbacks. (I still can't quite construe the rubric: 'the return of the reforgotten'.) Who were the others? I met few people I recognized from the 'subvoicive' poetry circuits. Average age: thirty something? maybe younger. Certain regions of the audience seemed to consist of older overdressed arts admin, a little uncomfortable in the would-be art-rock-concert atmosphere. I also detected strong contingents of the supposedly burgeoning 'poetry slam', 'open mike' groups -- vocal and cohesive, verging on (middle class white) gang culture. The audience was *white*.

But the 60s film clips gave the lie. There was nothing anarchic, ambiguous, evolving or challenging (I mean in respect of the audience/performer relationship) about this event. The audience was audience. Nobody even drank any absinthe (and this is the 90s).

There *was* a lot of applause. I clapped almost everything (sometimes hating myself for doing so). My biggest disappointment was Douglas Oliver. I too had accorded him the god-like status of difficult memory, but in this context he seemed flat and I don't think this was simply because he was 'just reading'. Denise Riley's set gave the lie to this interpretation. I think my greatest, *unexpected* delight was Kennelly Joyce/Holy Family dinner party piece, already much remarked upon. Cris and Sianed's performance I did much enjoy, and noticed the light responding to vocal dynamics, effectively I thought.

There was a lot of applause, but there were also strong, mixed reactions. As Aaron Williamson gave his truly *phonemenal* (sic) performance, a number of people behind me (I was towards the back of the arena) laughed repeatedly and loudly. I put it down to a 'very-English' unwillingness to engage seriously with the extreme, the radical. I guess that, generally, the organizers intended to re-radicalize our notion of poetry/language arts. I believe that the event may have altered or undermined relatively fixed notions of poetry in the minds of a small portion of the (unconverted) audience, but just as many of them will have gone away 'put-off' by the more extreme alternatives. I have one good neighbour, a serious, open-minded, sometime reader of poetry (a reader! a reader! one who don't write!) -- though not so much of 'innovative poetics' -- who just found the whole thing negative-extraordinary. Couldn't understand my unwillingness to

take it apart -- I want/wanted to love it so much. (Why? Partly because it was not, and pointedly not, Heaney, NewGen, Nobel and Co., blessed be their spade-like pens and dynamite diction.)

And the audience did, generally, like the two performers, Dunn and Macartney, who I thought really sucked the big one, so I guess I'll have to go on reading Kipling's 'If' and try to stay cool.

I gathered from Howard Marks introductory remarks that he was a big *soft* drug-dealer ('the good weed' as he put it), recently released from jail. Counter-culter in deed. His introductions were measured and excellent (strong contrast with Moorcock). He spoke to the question of poetry's influence in stimulating creative engagement and, if he was sincere, this was a great tribute to the eclectic group he introduced.

But 'build on these energies' -- I fear it would be like trying to build on a tangled heap of disparate threads.

John Cayley Wellsweep Press [in Chinese HZ:]

^ fine, innovative literary translation from Chinese ^

1 Grove End House 150 Highgate Road London NW5 1PD UK

Tel & Fax: 0 [REDACTED] Email: [REDACTED]

1995 URLs: <http://www.inforamp.net/~cayley> [= home]

+ [/wshome.html](#) [= Wellsweep]

+ [/inhome.html](#) [= Indra's Net]

[↑ Contents](#)

427. **B. Cassidy**

Re: Virus Alert

Thu 19 Oct 1995

Ken and those on the list who don't already know --

The "Good Times"virus is a hoax. Viruses (at least at the present time) can't be sent through an e-mail. The message that Kenneth forwarded is itself the virus in that has spread like an evil strain of the flu to every corner of the internet over the last year. The disease it spreads is paranoia. ;) Clever, eh?

--Brian

On Wed, 18 Oct 1995, Kenneth Goldsmith wrote:

This warning came to me from someone who usually knows what he's talking about..Better safe than sorry...

--kennyg

There is a computer virus that is being sent across the Internet. If you receive an e-mail message with the subject line "Good Times", DO NOT read the message, DELETE it immediately. Please read the messages below. Some miscreant is sending e-mail under the subject title "good times" nation-wide.

If you get anything like this, DON'T DOWN LOAD THE FILE! It has a virus that rewrites your hard drive, obliterating anything on it. Please be careful and forward this mail to anyone you care about.

=====

Kenneth Goldsmith

<http://wfmu.org/~kennyg>



[↑ Contents](#)

428. **CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON**

Re: Distant Lover

Thu 19 Oct 1995

On Wed, 18 Oct 1995, Joe Amato wrote:

> aldon, great response on the ab/uses of distance learning!... i'd love to
> see a copy of your speech, even a draft... any way to upload it?...
> alternately, be happy to send along an sase w/plenty of postage...
>
> joe
>

Aldon, I, too, would very much like to read your speech, and would also send an sase if it's possible. I have many thoughts on DL, and will post soon. -- Carolyn

[↑ Contents](#)

429. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: Distant Lover

Thu 19 Oct 1995

bart,

i'm not against distance learning; it's just that i see a role for the good ole flesh and blood pressing of the flesh school of teaching too, in some cases. it would be ludicrous for me to descry dl when in fact i am communicating to you and

(and others simultaneously) via a distance learning medium at this very moment of my writing.

burt

[↑ Contents](#)

430. **James Banton Rolins**

Re: Distant Lover

Thu 19 Oct 1995

Burt,

Perhaps the kind of thing we're doing here could somehow be used in an enlightened approach to dl. One of my main reservations concerning dl, as I have observed it, has been the tendency among instructors to "can" lectures and more-or-less read them over the air. I suppose this comes from a sense of not really being able to communicate with those distant students. It can be quite unsettling to feel that you'll never really meet someone you're supposed to be teaching, so much so that retreating behind a text, a book or a lecture, can be too tempting.

Bart

[↑ Contents](#)

431. **Joe Amato**

distanced learning...

Thu 19 Oct 1995

well let me relate a little story about distance learning, something that went down this semester here at illinois institute of technology... by way of trying to suggest how such technology is generally being conceived during these dire economic times by educational admin. types... and please note that i've always been a proponent of using technologies to help, even reform teaching wherever possible... that surely dl has a role in reaching hard-to-reach locations... but that it's entirely problematic, methinks, as currently construed/utilized... because when it comes to teaching, there's a difference twixt, say, *this* technology---email---and projected images, even with little voice-feedback boxes... that in fact one of the reasons linking classrooms through email dialogue hasn't caught on as rapidly is precisely BECAUSE one needs must alter one's pedagogical stance to accommodate same, interactively speaking... whereas the projection of instructor images through spacetime is bound to be centered on the instructor (what would happen, for example, if the camera attempted to accommodate the other twenty faces in each room?...and how

could this be done, finally, in something like real time?... and what would this mean anyway, learning-wise?)...

i teach in the dept. of humanities here... and we have a satellite campus out in the burbs, a solid thirty mile/forty-five minute hike through traffic due west... and we use part-time adjunct faculty at this latter to teach various humanities courses...

this semester, last minute, one of our adjuncts cancelled for personal reasons... and the first suggestion---the very first---was to use the celebrated iitv system to 'cover' that course... and yours truly was asked to do so...

no thought given to how i teach---i happen to be a proponent of student-centered pedagogies, for example, i happen to believe in many of the tenets of so-called liberatory theories of teaching... in fact, i was informed by the colleague who approached me with this 'solution' that "it's my understanding that we can do everything in an iitv room that we can do in a regular classroom"... just like that, not even the remotest [wink] sign of anxiety regarding such an assertion... no thought given to WHO i was teaching---on the main campus it's mostly undergrads., out in the burbs it's mostly older, returning, part-time students, and this represents a dichotomy of intention, if you will, right from the start...

in short, no thought given... hence i myself refused even to think when i responded to this veiled "command," to wit, NO---I WON'T DO IT, I DON'T TEACH THAT WAY...

didn't go over too well with some folks, needless to say... and i ended up being "tasked," as bureaucrazies like to say, with phoning each of the eight students in the burbs to try to cajole them into coming to the main campus... which not one would... it's a long drive, you understand, and they don't like chicago's south side, ETC.---and yes, there are ALL sorts of issues entailed in this, including suburban fear of urban realities (a racially based fear in so many ways, regardless how seemingly justifiable)...

anyway, i needn't go on here, methinks... the point is that on my campus, a technical campus in the midst of complete restructuring and downsizing---a situation where the first thing to go out the window is a discussion of *learning*---the solution to educators' woes is DISTANCED LEARNING... i passed by a rather large iitv room just the other day, in fact, with the cameras on and TWO STUDENTS watching the solitary instructor go through his little canned routine on (i think it was) statics and dynamics, drawing his little free body diagrams on the board and carefully positioning his body vis-a-vis the camera as he did so, smiling and inflecting with the utmost precision, addressing himself to the two students present as well as to his anonymous viewing classroom 'community,' a fitting image as the lights go out on late 20th.

century 'liberal education,' all for the sake of what our iit admins. call "the bottom line"...

or was it just a dream?...

anyway, you get two

two

two mints

in one...

joe

[↑ Contents](#)

432. **Judy Roitman**

Re: Virus Alert

Thu 19 Oct 1995

The Good Times warning is apparently a scam. I first heard about this a year ago through another e-mail group, followed a few weeks later by a long message on the genesis of this particular virtual world myth.

[↑ Contents](#)

433. **Mark Roberts**

AWOL: SCARP launch

Thu 19 Oct 1995

THE AUTHOR MAY BE DEAD BUT NEW ARTS AND WRITING ARE ALIVE AND KICKING

SCARP 27 will be launched at 7.30pm on Wednesday 25 October at Aardvark's Cafe, 86 Kembla Street Wollongong.

***** Australian Writing OnLine is a publicity and distribution service for Australian writers and publishers. For further information please email us at [REDACTED], write to AWOL PO Box 333 Concord NSW 2137 Australia, phone (02) [REDACTED] or fax (02) [REDACTED].

[↑ Contents](#)

434. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: workshop geese

Thu 19 Oct 1995

Dodie -- Do you know of the garden trolls of Britain? I don't know how far back the custom goes, but I've seen some English gardens that have little room left for vegetation among all the trolls etc.

& Others -- Our English department recently dropped all course requirements (except for the intro. on how to look stuff up & document it), BUT added a requirement that all students, including creative writing students, take the same MA exam. But this is because we don't have an MFA (there's a statewide moratorium on new programs) -- Because our MA students all get the same degree, they can go out and apply for the same jobs in the community colleges, high schools, and so forth. That being the case, we thought it a good idea to make sure they knew something about the subject, beyond their own writing, before loosing them on students elsewhere.

[↑ Contents](#)

435. **Kevin Killian**

Another important SF writing event

Thu 19 Oct 1995

San Francisco List Servers! Don't forget about this Saturday night!

Small Press Traffic's "Small Press Partners Series" presents Net Work:
Experimental Writing on the World Wide Web

Readings and Talks by Loss Pequeño Glazier
poet and director of the Electronic Poetry Center

<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc>

and Steven Shaviro

author of Doom Patrols

<http://dhalgren.english.washington.edu/~steve/doom.html>

at New Langton Arts

1246 Folsom Street, San Francisco (between 8th and 9th Streets)

Saturday, October 21 at 8 p.m.

\$5 admission

Loss Pequeño Glazier, a Tejano native, is Director of the Electronic Poetry Center (EPC) and co-edits RIF/T, an online poetry and poetics journal. He is the author of the online hypertextual poem, "E: Poem for HTML" and the CD-ROM publication "5 Pieces for Sound File." Glazier has published several collections of poetry, including the online chapbook, Electronic Projection Poetries (RIF/T, 1995.) He lives and writes just north of Buffalo, at the edge of Western New York's eroding treeline.

Steven Shaviro's Doom Patrols, a theoretical fiction about postmodernism and popular culture, is one of the first books to be published in its entirety on the World Wide Web. Shaviro lives in Seattle, where he is a professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of Washington. He spends much of his online time exploring text-based object-oriented virtual worlds known as MOOs, particularly LambdaMOO.

| Shaviro is also the author of *Passion and Excess: Blanchot, Bataille, and Literary Theory* (1990) and *The Cinematic Body* (1993).

This will be an interesting event beyond a doubt! Come one, come all! This event made possible in part by generous support of the SF Art Commission, the James Irvine Foundation, Grants for the Arts Hotel Tax Fund, the California Arts Council, the Zellerbach Family Fund and Industrial Indemnity. Good for them, and good for Small Press Traffic (and New Langton Arts for letting us host this event in their space).

-Dodie Bellamy

-Director, Chatelaine, Lawn Goose Connoisseur

[↑ Contents](#)

436. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: Distant Lover

Thu 19 Oct 1995

yeah aldon,

could i get a copy of it too?

i'll send sase if you wish.

burt

[↑ Contents](#)

437. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: Distant Lover

Thu 19 Oct 1995

yes bart,

the "canning" of lectures for distance learning--but this may be a temporary state of affairs, MAYBE, caused by all the difficulties attendant on using new technologies. i'm told that, for example, teaching in a "virtual classroom" (real time) medium is so fraught with deadly detailing and coordination that instructors may have only their canned lecture as a stable element in the mix. as for video taping etc.--as you have said, there are plenty of folks who benefit from dl because of their locations and time frames; popping a tape into the vcr to see/hear the lecture when it's convenient, being able to stop and rewind it to check something closely, and so on, can be a great advantage. as for communities, there are all kinds, some electronic (carbon based, as bill gates might say)

[correction (i can't edit lines above this): (silicon based, as bill gates might say),

and other communities that are carbon based (as opposed to silicon based).

just some haphazard and random thoughts . . .

burt

[↑ Contents](#)

438. **John Geraets**

top 10 poems

Thu 19 Oct 1995

tom,

must say I'm with Wystan on this one. Half expect someone to come along and yank (hmm) most of your team. Strange thing is, given your two teams (terminology's the confusion here), goddam I think the first one'd win. THAT worries me.

When I read things, what is it makes me want to ask how good it is? Probably my DAD. He played for Auckland once--at least, I say him drive that little golf-cart thing with the drinks on it. Felt thirsty.

best, John G

[↑ Contents](#)

439. **Dodie Bellamy**

Niedecker and Zukowski

Thu 19 Oct 1995

Since I'm spending six weeks in Milwaukee, last Friday I went to Black Hawk Island with Wisconsin's Number One Lorine Niedecker Fan. I saw Lorine's humble cottage where she wrote. When I looked in the window of this shrine, the first thing I saw was an exercise bicycle. I guess the people who bought the land are using it as a storage shed. But there still is a historical landmark sign next to it. And the river is incredible. I also visited Lorine's grave--lovely pink fake roses beside it. And I visited her archives at the local library. When I signed the guest register it was nice to see Jeff Hansen and Elizabeth Burns' names from years ago.

Lorine's Number One fan told me lots of stories about her. He'd even had a drink with the man who dug her grave. He told me that the reason Zukowski didn't marry her was because she wasn't Jewish. So, I was surprised to see her name on the listserve notice of Jewish writers to be written about. Could the

Wisconsin's Number One Niedecker Fan be wrong? I asked someone else on the list about this issue and he wrote to me:

"Now, I don't know about Niedecker. I thought the reason Z rejected LN is that he had found another, wealthier woman called Celia. It was kind of like A Place in the Sun-he rejected the poor, pregnant LN because Celia had money. (At least he didn't take LN to the middle of a lake and drown her like Montgomery Clift does to Shelley Winters in the movie.) But maybe her fan is right, and this American Jewish Writers guy is wrong."

Does anybody have any info on the Niedecker/Zukowski thing?

Dodie Bellamy

[↑ Contents](#)

440. **Tom Beard**
a spoonful of sugar

Thu 19 Oct 1995

*Perhaps with
the right "gift/hook", we could broaden the audience for contemporary poetry
without totally compromising our interest in experiment and challenge.*

*But, when I read the above message, what popped into my
head was Julie Andrews in Mary Poppins, singing, "Just a spoonful of sugar
makes the medicine go down."*

Dodie,

This is a valid criticism, and the notion of "gift" or "hook" that prompted some discussion a while ago is a problematic one. What I'm really aiming at is some kind of invitation, some quality that, after a first reading, invites a reader back into the work. When you read through a little magazine, what is it about certain pieces that make you want to come back to them? This will be different for every reader, of course, and radically different for someone who writes experimental poetry compared to someone who rarely reads poetry.

Part of my reason for bringing up this subject is personal: I enjoy poetry, and wish that more of my friends did so too. Occasionally there is a connection - I had a couple of flatmates, a physicist and an accountant, who really flipped when I introduced them to Edwin Morgan's "The First Men on Mercury" and "The Computer's First Christmas Card" - but these moments are all too rare. I'm beginning to wonder how much I really enjoy reading poetry myself - most of what's published in Sport (NZ's leading literary journal) these days is too bland to grab my attention, and although I'm intrigued by the theory of language poetry, I find most of it uninviting.

As for "a spoonful of sugar" ... well, I _like_ sugar :-). But not to the point of blandness. I want something complex and succulent, heady and intense, like a good botrytised Riesling after 10 years in the bottle, rather than something austere and tannic, like a young Cabernet from a cold year. Maybe this _is_ Mary-Poppins-ish, but my interest in linguistically innovative writing doesn't override my response to some vague X-factor (the lyrical? the evocative (of what? for whom?) the magical?) that sends a frisson down my back and leaves me dangling on the poet's hook.

Tom Beard

I/am a background/process, shrunk to an icon. | Tom Beard I am/a dark place.
| [REDACTED] 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

[↑ Contents](#)

441. **Gale Nelson**

Re: Distant Lover

Thu 19 Oct 1995

It seems as though a ground-swell has begun to build, suggesting a collective desire for a "look-see" at the materials related to distance learning. If the materials are in a structure by which it would not be an inconvenience to place them into an electronic envelope, perhaps A.L. would consider sending one such electronic envelope to the list server that supports our Poetics discussion group.

[↑ Contents](#)

442. **Tom Beard**

the audience

Thu 19 Oct 1995

and those people you describe, tom, they with the interests in music, film, etc who could be interested in poetry, aren't they precisely the people who packed out the Hejinian, Creeley and various groupings of local readers at Alba this year. the audience exists.

Wystan,

Yes, I was initially encouraged by the turnout at the Creeley reading. But when I talked to some of the people there, they said, "Oh, I've never read any of his poems before, but my lecturer said we should come along". It's great to see that these sorts of readings are introducing people to contemporary poetry, but they

still don't seem to be reaching far beyond the academy. I missed Lyn Hejinian's reading because I didn't hear about it - it didn't seem to have been advertised anywhere apart from in the cafe window, and again, perhaps, within the university.

Similarly, it was wonderful to see *Pavement* (a local fashion/music/arts/lifestyle mag) do an interview with Robert Creeley, but disappointing to see them playing up the "friend of the Beats" angle. The interviewer showed little signs of actually having *read* any of Creeley's poetry, and most of the questions were along the lines of "So, tell me about Allen Ginsberg".

*The small
sales of book X going to a certain kind of 100 readers may well be
vastly more consequential as far as the circulation of meanings goes and
the large sales of book Y to a certain kind of 100,000 readers.*

Very true - it could be said that one attentive, active reader is worth 10 (or even 1000?) passive reader. As I said in my previous post, my main concern is not so much for the *writers* missing out on a potential audience, but for the *readers* missing out on the chance to read challenging but rewarding poetry. I don't see any chance of having 100,000 attentive readers of poetry in a country of 3.5 million, but maybe a couple of thousand is possible, and an improvement on 100.

As I've said before (I think), I like the idea of readers taking an active part in the making of a poem. One way to do this is to cut down your readership until there's no-one but other poets and critics left. A more challenging, and, I think, rewarding option is to "entice" readers into your work and have them participate in finding meanings. This way, you have helped a group of people *who would not otherwise do so* to explore with you the possibilities, ambiguities and limits of language.

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

[↑ Contents](#)

443. **Jordan Davis**
distant lesson

Thu 19 Oct 1995

Don't ever send a message with the first word : "List",

Anybody have any experience in high-speed distance teaching? Either by videoconferencing or mud/moo/other internet? Text-based stuff might be fun, huh? Since it's all writing anyway, and since this kind of writing is _different_ from other kinds of writing--isn't it?--it might be an interesting thing to teach _as a different discipline_. I'd rather not be paranoid/postmanite/luddite about dl. I'd rather see it as a new niche.

Jordan

[↑ Contents](#)

444. **cris cheek**
Geese and 'trolls'

Thu 19 Oct 1995

Well Aldon there aren't many outright trolls that I'm aware of in the gardens here, but there are strange gnarled little figures out of (whisper it carefully unless you wake thy neighbours) Walt Disney - called garden gnomes. For those without knowledge of such riveting political minutiae it is a fact, celebrated by the self-same, that John Major's father manufactured garden gnomes (after his circus career stalled). In fact Major uses this as an example of his honest hard-working roots. There are gnomes for almost all human pastime equivalents. Many of them wheel little barrows or dig the clod (a little like the god Pan talking that goes on at Findhorn here and at other 'new age' eco centres stateside I should guess). Many gnomes hold fishing rods and sit by ornamental ponds. A curious realisation of the romantic tendency - a locus(t) where Ian Hamilton Finlay and the garden ornament tradition meet anthropomorphical 'fairies at the Bottom of our Garden' extropian Arthur Conan rabbit brio.

love and gnomes
cris

[↑ Contents](#)

445. **Tom Beard**
punctuation & prosody

Thu 19 Oct 1995

Charles Hartman wrote:

Those syntactical considerations do have their "prosodic" (in the linguists' sense) correspondences--prose and verse have the same mother, after all--but it remains very tricky to declare any one-to-one correspondence between conventional marks of punctuation and rhythmic characteristics of a passage of language.

I agree that a 1-1 correspondence between punctuation & rhythm is probably impossible, but there is a loose correspondence, one that can be useful to poets when "scoring" the words to be spoken. And in today's post-grammatical education system (I was taught at school to "use a comma where you'd take a breath" - no mention of clauses etc) the correspondence might be tightening up.

It's important, though, to keep in the back of one's mind the history of punctuation, which is one of steady rationalization. Punctuation is by now (by the middle of the 18th century, really) almost wholly the slave of a rationalistic, prose model of language. To punctuate correctly is to demarcate the hypotactic structures of the sentence, distinguishing for instance the restrictive from the nonrestrictive modifier and even the apposition from the parenthesis. The service is to a structure of ideas, not to a structure of sounds.

I think that rhythm & rhetoric are very tightly interconnected - not surprising given the origins of rhetoric in oratory. As well as the structure of logical argument influencing written punctuation, which we make audible via rhythm & intonation, is it not possible that the rhythms of oratory influenced the structure of rational discourse? Perhaps someone with a better knowledge of linguistic history can clarify this.

Which means, in turn, that how a poet _chooses_ to _use_ punctuation can be extremely interesting. I know I have poems that (as we say) demand prose-style punctuation and those that refuse it absolutely, and a lot that want some nonce compromise. Part of the compromise, of course, comes about by admitting among the signs of punctuation the line-break, which rather upsets all the other marks who thought they were in charge.

Perhaps we could take the line-break as a (the?) defining characteristic of a poem (at least a "poetry" poem as opposed to a "prose" poem). I know that when I write prose after writing too much (!) poetry, the margins seem an awfully long way apart. That white space around a poem may be as important as the words.

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

[↑ Contents](#)

446. **Tony Green**
Re: Top ten poems
Thu 19 Oct 1995

The great anti-modernist anti-McCahon sentence from letter to Sunday Star Times, NZ:

"As a colourist he was a nobody".

(as for his "anatomy",
"use of light"
" draughtsmanaship " etc ...)

Tony Green,
e-mail: [REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

447. **Alan Sondheim**
Re: distant lesson
Thu 19 Oct 1995

Yes, I've taught on-line at the New School, on an asynchronous applica- tion; I'm also working on synchronous applications with a grad student. It's very difficult. It wouldn't be for teaching poetry, but it is for a number of subjects. I teach the philosophy/psychology of the Net/ "Information Highway" stuff - the advantage is that the course deals directly with current Net conditions/applications/politics/development and the disadvantage is the long hours it takes to write up lectures that would take only minutes to deliver - as well as a certain disconcerting anonymity always present...

Alan

On Thu, 19 Oct 1995, Jordan Davis wrote:

Don't ever send a message with the first word : "List",

Anybody have any experience in high-speed distance teaching? Either by videoconferencing or mud/moo/other internet? Text-based stuff might be fun, huh? Since it's all writing anyway, and since this kind of writing is _different_ from other kinds of writing--isn't it?--it might be an interesting thing to teach _as a different discipline_. I'd rather not be paranoid/postmanite/luddite about dl. I'd rather see it as a new niche.

Jordan

[↑ Contents](#)

448. **Robert Drake**

Re: Poetry in Motion (Review)

Thu 19 Oct 1995

lost track of who originally asked about poetry on CD-ROM,
but stumbled across a reference (on her homepage) to Carolyn
Forche's *_Country Between Us_* in multimedia cdrom format,
from 110 press, (LA, 1994)... praps, carolyn, you could
tell us something about it, or the process of making it?

luigi

[↑ Contents](#)

449. **ULMER SPRING**

Re: distant lesson

Thu 19 Oct 1995

jordan, liked your post on distant lesson: 'since it's all writing anyway, and since
this kind of writing is *_different_*...it might be an interesting thing to teach *_as a
different discipline_*. I'd rather not be paranoid/postmanite/luddite about dl. I'd
rather see it as a new niche.' -jordan writes... i very much agree, seeing as how
for the last two years i have learnt more on line, than i have in a classroom.
intense personal correspondance with both a writer and an artist has opened
my writing and engaged me in a way of learning that is both call and response.
i am enrolled at cooper union, and dl is not there, but one professor agreed to
oversee my hypertext/collaborative writing/art work with Katie Yates and Regan
King. If someone had not been open minded enough to support my need to
write online as a practice, I don't think I would be in school. -spring ulmer

[↑ Contents](#)

450. **Tony Green**

Re: Distant Lover

Thu 19 Oct 1995

Aldon's phrase "study with" is the one that rings true, for the situation of
teaching and is just where the issue with "distance learning" is joined. The
implication I value is that students and teachers approach texts (and/or images)
together, to see what they can make of them. "Study under" in contrast implies
subjection to authority of a kind that "distance learning" usually relies on.

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

451. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Niedecker and Zukowski

Thu 19 Oct 1995

I like the conflation of Zuk and Buk! Thanks, dodie.
I mean "thanks dodie"

[↑ Contents](#)

452. **Tom Beard**

Re: distant lesson

Thu 19 Oct 1995

Anybody have any experience in high-speed distance teaching? Either by videoconferencing or mud/moo/other internet? Text-based stuff might be fun, huh? Since it's all writing anyway, and since this kind of writing is _different_ from other kinds of writing--isn't it?--it might be an interesting thing to teach _as a different discipline_. I'd rather not be paranoid/postmanite/luddite about dl. I'd rather see it as a new niche.

I've been involved in distance learning, but in a field totally unrelated to poetry. The learners for whom I'm responsible cannot take time off work to attend workshops or lectures, so I've had to rely on computer-based learning that they can use in the workplace. One hypertext module that I developed (I used HTML primarily because it's cheap) for local use is apparently used regularly by Environment Canada for their training, since I linked the module to my web pages.

I think the emphasis here is on _learning_ rather than _teaching_. Hypertext and hypermedia work best when you have highly motivated learners _exploring_ a field of interconnected knowledge, rather than reluctant learners who have to be led through a course one step at a time. They are also sometimes the only choice, when the learners are too far away or too busy to attend traditional f2f lectures.

I've found this list and the EPC extremely valuable for learning about current American poetry, and the Internet may be an ideal tool for this kind of distance learning. I have the beginnings of an archive on NZ poetry on my web pages - I wish I had the time and knowledge to make it more comprehensive. If every time that one heard mention of a poet's name one could go and read some of his or her poems on the web, together with hypertext links to essays and bibliographies ... oh, how that would break down the "tyranny of distance" that comes from living in a country where none of the bookshops have even heard of Zukofsky or Olson!

Anyway, as far as online writing courses goes, I know that Rob Kendall has run online courses on writing hypertext fiction, and I'm sure there are a lot more. I

can see great potential in using small listserv groups for semi-formal tutorials - the tutor/facilitator sends out a group of poems to the participants, who then discuss them on the list. Or, with better technology, a linking of web pages with real-time Internet Relay Chat links - although one would run into problems with time zones there.

Tom Beard

I/am a background/process, shrunk to an icon. | Tom Beard I am/a dark place.
| [REDACTED] 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

[↑ Contents](#)

453. **Chris Scheil**
Re: a glorious failure
Thu 19 Oct 1995

Another example of the eclectic lawn-ornament regionalism movement: in Northern Michigan, we take special pride in our chain-sawed log mushroom sculptures (of morels, mainly--a local delicacy & object of numerous mycological folktales).

CS

[↑ Contents](#)

454. **Ken Edwards**
Albert Hall
Thu 19 Oct 1995

Thanks, Cris, for your view from the other side of the performer/audience divide. Remember I was a mile away in the gods in the first half so couldn't always see too well, and tho the sound was basically good the famed Albert Hall reverb got in the way of the semantics sometimes. I enjoyed your/Sianed's performance, and indeed most of the evening. Sorry about the xmas tree misconception... good one.

love, Ken

[↑ Contents](#)

455. **Jordan Davis**

(none)

Thu 19 Oct 1995

Anagram fans:

<http://infobahn.com:80/pages/anagram.html>

Have fun

Jordan

[↑ Contents](#)

456. **Mark Scroggins**

Re: Niedecker and Zukowski

Thu 19 Oct 1995

Yeah, Chris, I get that Zuk/Buk thing all the time--having dinner with a prominent harvard Engdept person, he says to me, "you're working on zukofsky? I just got back from Germany, and he's the most popular American poet there..." Of course he meant Chas., not Louis.

Dodie: the lowdown on the Zukofsky/Niedecker affair, such as is known of it, is outlined in Glenna Breslin, "Lorine Niedecker: Composing a Life," in *Revealing Lives: Gender in Autobiography and Biography*, ed. Bell and Yalom (Albany: SUNY Press, 1990). hard to assess what's true and false. The major sources of information on this are in large part people who have bones to pick with Zukofsky, it seems to me. Far more interesting are the Niedecker letters edited by Jenny Penberthy (Cambridge UP, 1993), which include almost nothing from the years when the two were (one supposes) lovers.

What's clear is that Celia Zukofsky (born Thaew) was probably no richer than Zukofsky himself. According to Penberthy, Z and LN had reached a "platonic resolution" to their affair--ie they were just "good friends"--by 1936. Zukofsky married in 1938, and Niedecker was a close friend to the family thru the end of her life.

Mark Scroggins

[↑ Contents](#)

457. **Ryan Knighton**

Cabri?

Thu 19 Oct 1995

If Louis Cabri is still out there/here, could you forward me Mark Nakada's email address? Roy Miki told me you should have it. Or anyone who knows Mark out here/there.

Thanks,
Ryan Knighton



[↑ Contents](#)

458. **Dodie Bellamy**
Re: a spoonful of sugar
Fri 20 Oct 1995

Tom,

Your points are well taken. I think my original spoonful of sugar comment was too flippant, and I apologize for that. It's just that I'm feeling a bit jaded and discouraged in terms of reaching a broader audience. I have laced my work with so much "sugar" (sex, pop culture, horror, humor, narrative even) that it could throw a weak reader into diabetic shock. Yet, when I've sent my work to presses whose books are geared to reach a wider audience--some of which have published Kathy Acker and some of the poets on this list--my work has been received as basically unmarketable gibberish. (Dalkey Archives is a notable exception.) Friends of mine have taught my work to undergraduates, who had no trouble understanding it--so what does this say about people who control the publishing of prose?

If you can find a wider audience for your work, more power to you.

Personally, I like austere white wines, which makes me feel like a traitor to my home state of California. Those big fruity Chardonnays--yuck.

Dodie

[↑ Contents](#)

459. **Dodie Bellamy**
Re: Niedecker and Zukowski
Fri 20 Oct 1995

Mark,

Thank you for your thoughtful response concerning N&Z. The person who took me to visit her home last Friday did tell me that Niedecker stayed friends with Zukowski, taking a special interest in his son.

My guide was really into telling one heart-wrenching story about her after another, and I totally succumbed to his mini-series version of her life. Things like how all her decisions were based on her writing, how when her eyesight was going bad she quit her job proof-reading and washed floors for a living--in order to save her eyes for writing. Is this story true? I haven't the foggiest

idea. I stood there beside that sad little shack, facing that shallow but dramatic river that threatened to eat up all the land, looked at the poorness of the lives that the people there lead. Then my guide would talk about the glamor of New York that Zukowski offered her. And I wanted with all my heart for her to have had that glamor. But could those poems of hers have been written in an urban world?

Dodie

[↑ Contents](#)

460. **Dodie Bellamy**
Re: Geese and 'trolls'

Fri 20 Oct 1995

All these "silly" lawn ornaments bearing the weight of all these other cultural phenomena, remind me of Steven Shaviro's discussion of Night of the Living Dead in his book The Cinematic Body. Unfortunately, I don't have the book here in Indiana, but I do have a passage from it I twisted and collaged into the Letters of Mina Harker. I used it to talk about Vampire's Secret Ice Pops. But, I'll substitute "lawn geese" for "ice pops" so you can see what I'm talking about.

"These lawn geese are wildly discontinuous, flamboyantly antinaturalistic, and nonsensically grotesque. Yet the more ridiculously excessive and self-consciously artificial they are, the more literal is their visceral impact. They can't be kept at a distance, for they can't be referred to anything beyond themselves. Their simulations are radically immediate: they no longer pretend to stand in for, or to represent, a previously existing real."

I like the way symbolic tropes have been ripped from their context and stuck on a goose, or a gnome.

Dodie Bellamy

[↑ Contents](#)

461. **Dodie Bellamy**
Zuk, Buk, and Cuke

Fri 20 Oct 1995

Chris Stroffolino wrote:

| *I like the conflation of Zuk and Buk! Thanks, dodie.*
| *I mean "thanks dodie"*

Chris,

I stand corrected and shamed, with a big red Z emblazoned across my chest.

Yes, I'm horrible at typing and spelling. Often "w"s are pronounced as "v"s--so I gave it my old college try. Actually, I never read Zuk in college--though I did on my own in high school. But I've never ever read Buk.

You've unearthed my biggest weakness in posing as an intellectual--I know a zillion times more about female writers than I do about male ones. And I'm sure that that's a mere spoonful compared to the other great minds on this list.

You're such a clever young man.

Dodie

[↑ Contents](#)

462. **Steve Carll**

jesse taylor-york

Fri 20 Oct 1995

I was very sad to recently learn of the death of one of the poetry community's most promising voices, Jesse Taylor-York, of a heart attack, in her apartment in San Francisco. She was in her early thirties. I urge everyone to check out the excerpt from her novel *The Cult of Her* (I'm not sure if it was finished) that appeared in, I believe it was the Summer '93 issue of *Zzyzyva*.

having turned my words to the dead on accident I
conjure a haunted feeling lost within a dimness
heavied with ghosts empty of senses not seeing me
if I want anything in this strange country I must
fashion fingertips dipped in blood bring the dead a
haunted feeling of another place before this place
drunk on memories and overcome with reunion they
practically tell me exactly what I want to hear

--Jesse Taylor-York

[↑ Contents](#)

463. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: dissin dat

Fri 20 Oct 1995

I don't know a gnome from a troll, perhaps because there were neither gardens nor bridges (and precious few brothers to feed to such) in the neighborhood where I was hatched. Did, though, once make use of an audio bridge. I once sent a French envelope via e-mail, but that's not really the kind of share-ware we want to encourage.

I think of Lorine every time I hear that old blues song about sleeping with your head in the kitchen and your "feets out in the hall."

Gotta dash -- best to Emily and all.

[↑ Contents](#)

464. **Wystan Curnow**

Re: the audience

Fri 20 Oct 1995

dear tom, re. your listener who hadn't read C, but had been told to come by a lecturer, and the Pavement reviewer who actually does know the poetry well but gave you the impression he did not...these were i think my other subject. I wasn't concerned to make a distinction between active and passive readers but to point to members of the audience most broadly conceived who have not read, heard, the work (yet, ever) at all. i.e. there is a 'readership' of those who have received the work at one or more removes. Once it is with them it is most fully in circulation. When information, poems included, enters the bloodstream it get broken down, it combines with other information willynilly and comes out holus bolus, gets written into new messages, echoed in shifting vocabularies and accents of whole populations, gets confused with expressions of love, the development of new product lines and the continued viability of political platforms. None of this can be discerned by counting heads at readings or understanding why salesmen snarl at those who demand books by Louis Zukovsky. wystan

[↑ Contents](#)

465. **R I Caddel**

Niedecker/Zukofsky

Fri 20 Oct 1995

Dodie, picking up on possible name-variants, is Lorine Niedecker's name still mis-spelled on her grave, or have the local enthusiasts fixed it? When I visited (about this time of year ten years ago) it was NEIDECKER and yes, I too met the gravedigger, soused in his own beer at the little bar down at the point. The gremlins do get to that name from time to time - when we published "Harpsichord & Salt Fish", we proofread like blazes - and still ended up with NEIDECKER on the bloody title page... Sometimes keyboards, pens and chisels are all too light.

The No.1 Fan - that would be Karl Gartung? I too was taken by, etc etc. The river was in flood, a flock of grackles wheeled around us, and a local guide said, "Lorine n Al used to call that garage "University of Texas", never could figure why..." And reminisced about Al falling in the river and soaking his paycheck

etc... So much for the oral tradition. But it's good to see the place - I like to horrify both Romantics and Objectivists by pointing out how similar the environment of Rock River / Lake Koshkonong is to the Peterborough fens in Clare's day.

As to the LN/LZ affair, I follow Mark's reading of it (and direction to Penberthy's ed. of the letters) - would only add that, as I see it, it was never on to expect LN to shift to New York, or LZ to shift (other than visit) to Lake Koshkonong, or either to shift to another place etc etc.

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

[↑ Contents](#)

466. **Mark Scroggins**
Re: Niedecker and Zukofsky

Fri 20 Oct 1995

Dodie:

My knowledge of the particulars of Niedecker's life is embarrassingly shaky, but it is hard to imagine her writing those poems in New York (just as one can only wonder what Zukofsky would have written if he, like Leslie Fiedler, were exiled to Missoula).

In case there are some date-fascists out there, yes, I got the year of LZ's marriage wrong--1939, not 1938.

Mark

[↑ Contents](#)

467. **David Kellogg**
Re: Niedecker and Zukofsky

Fri 20 Oct 1995

On Fri, 20 Oct 1995, Mark Scroggins wrote:

In case there are some date-fascists out there, yes, I got the year of LZ's marriage wrong--1939, not 1938.

Date-fascists?

Cheers,
David

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg No ideas but in things.
University Writing Program --W.C. Williams
Duke University
Durham, NC 27708 No ideas in things, either.
[REDACTED] --John Ashbery

[↑ Contents](#)

468. **ULMER SPRING**
Re: Niedecker and Zukowski
Fri 20 Oct 1995

Dodie. thanks for describing Niedecker's homeplace. i once visited rupert brook's grave on the island of skyros, greece. there is a naked statue and a sign: To Rupert Brook. My father is a fan of rb since rb wrote he was forty times more sensitive than the average man. hmmm. eagerly await any news on the Niedecker/Zukowski thing. -spring

[↑ Contents](#)

469. **ULMER SPRING**
Re: Distant Lover
Fri 20 Oct 1995

Study With. Yes. I think a very demanding field for a 'teacher,' esp. one on one. 'Students' like me are more vocal with a keyboard, and there can be much more of a relation between teacher/student. I am all for different ways of learning, and question the authoritarian model... But I know from experience that distance learning has allowed me a *space* to voice my needs as a student - and I have realized that learning to communicate is essential to allowing oneself to be taught. I have learned more from communicating personally with both professors and my peers online, than from academic subjects I can teach myself. spring

[↑ Contents](#)

470. **Jordan Davis**
odo/zoon hypoleptikon
Fri 20 Oct 1995

"Under conditions of acceleration, methodical out-of-dateness may in fact be, for human beings, the most promising strategy for always being maximally up

to date." ("Universal History and Multiversal History", from *In Defense of the Accidental*, Odo Marquard, Oxford, 1991)

Love that "for human beings",
Jordan

[↑ Contents](#)

471. **ULMER SPRING**

Re: Geese and 'trolls'

Fri 20 Oct 1995

i guess you didn't grow up with cut-outs of Black men lighting the way.
that's what is on lawns in upstate vermont.
i don't like the way that has been "ripped out of context and stuck on" a
lawn.
spring

[↑ Contents](#)

472. **ULMER SPRING**

Re: Niedecker and Zukofsky

Fri 20 Oct 1995

i thought niedecker either took care of her mother for most of her life at the
same time as working "menial" jobs... or?

[↑ Contents](#)

473. **CAROLYN L. FORCHE-MATTISON**

Re: Poetry in Motion (Review)

Fri 20 Oct 1995

This CD-ROM is still under construction, or rather construction has been suspended. 110 Press is Bruce Kijewski and friends, some refugees from Voyager, who would like to produce poets/writers in this format and have the same difficulties as start-up small presses, except that the equipment costs are prohibitive without financial backing. They taped a reading of the whole work in L.A. several years ago, were dissatisfied with the sound, didn't release the disk, and would like to do it again. Several of us remain skeptical of this format, which seems confined to text + talking head in a little box. I just bought PiM2, with its surprisingly interesting list of poets, and will see what they've been able to do as soon as I can find the disk holder. An interesting note: I was able to "obtain" the electronic rights to my published work from (Rupert Murdoch's) HarperCollins simply by asking for them. I now have a letter assignment me those rights, which I thought was very strange, until one considers that these

houses are not yet very sophisticated about these matters (witness the quality of their own electronic productions) and, of course, there is no need for them to protect their ownership of poetry which is worth (as has been observed on this list) less than blank paper. I'm much more intrigued by hyper-text than by CD-ROM. The latter doesn't seem to do more with poetry than can be done with print and video. I'd be interested to hear what others think...

--Carolyn

On Thu, 19 Oct 1995, Robert Drake wrote:

lost track of who originally asked about poetry on CD-ROM, but stumbled across a reference (on her homepage) to Carolyn Forché's _Country Between Us_ in multimedia cdrom format, from 110 press, (LA, 1994)... praps, carolyn, you could tell us something about it, or the process of making it?

luigi

[↑ Contents](#)

474. **Jordan Davis**
(none)

Fri 20 Oct 1995

Greetings.

<http://infobahn.com:80/pages/anagram.html>

Enjoy,
Jordan

[↑ Contents](#)

475. **Peter Zukowski**
Re: Zuk, Buk, and Cuke

Fri 20 Oct 1995

Dodie,

For a while there, I was under the impression that I actually am related to the late, great Zukofsky--I've told so many poets, "Nope, no relation."

Anyway, I'm still inspired.

Thanks for bringing up the subject and the clarification.

Peter Zukowski



[↑ Contents](#)

476. **eric pape**

Re: The Art and Poetry worlds

Fri 20 Oct 1995

Bart: You're right when you say we're having a problems with definitions. Before you have poetry, you have to have a Poet, with all its attendant ideologies of individuality and genius. You mention B. (sorry, I generally spell his name about 33 different ways and none of them are correct) and symbolic capital. I suggest that it is not poetry unless it is the means for symbolic capital. All people may have poetry, just as all people have music, or soul, or whatever, but not all people have Brahms. This is not a value. Brahms means darkened halls, tuxedos, gowns and sophisticated chatter. We need to contextualize what we mean by "west," because in one sense there is no such thing and in another sense there is nothing else for us and us only. Writing it down is all we know at this point. To pretend otherwise is to forget monopoly capitalism, the interiorization of literacy, the deployment of sexuality, etc. etc. To forget administration. Poetry is a specific kind of overdetermined historical writing. There are other things. There are Hallmark cards and song lyrics and spells. But none of them are taught and none of them are sanctioned. Thanks, Eric.

[↑ Contents](#)

477. **Mark Roberts**

AWOL: Ulitarra Magazine

Fri 20 Oct 1995

Ulitarra magazine

In 1991, Laura Danckwerts and Donald Westlake, then living on the mid-north coast of New South Wales, entered into a partnership with Michael Sharkey and Tony Bennett of Kardoorair Press in Armidale, to produce the first issue of Ulitarra, which has been published twice a year since 1992.

As it has turned out, the format for that first issue - a mix of ideas from disparate personalities - has now become the recognisable format for the magazine: Les Murray suggested the name*, Michael Wilding the publication of translations, Laura Danckwerts the commitment to publishing some Aboriginal writing in every issue, and Donald Westlake the poetry and short story competitions. Robert Adamson became poetry editor with issue No 3, in 1993, and from the next issue, No 8, will be joined by J S Harry.

Four years later, the original partnership having dissolved, and Laura Danckwerts and Donald Westlake having moved back to Sydney, the magazine has a steadily growing list of subscribers and receives assistance from the NSW

Ministry for the Arts and the Literature Board of the Australia Council. Ulitarra is now self-sufficient in the sense that it no longer requires private funding.

Since we started Ulitarra it has grown from 64 to 146 pages per issue, and now that we have gained confidence, we've put fiction where it rightfully belongs, that is in the hands of new writers. In our first issue, 50% of fiction was from high profile writers and 50% from new writers, but in our latest issue, No 7, all the fiction is from writers ranging from those being published for the first time, to those who are just about to be taken on by the big publishers. We still publish well-known writers when we get the chance, of course, but don't actively seek them in the way we did at the beginning. We don't have a preference for genre. We'll publish anything from a vignette, a traditional dramatic-form story, or a piece of realist fiction, to the most outrageously unclassifiable post-modern experiment, providing it has impact. We're always on the lookout for the ideosyncratic, distinctive voice, the unusual narrative position.

Essays are more difficult. Whereas most of our fiction is unsolicited, we have yet to receive an acceptable essay that way. Our essays so far have been commissioned, with subject matter ranging through music and architecture to the lives and works of the foreign writers we publish in translation.

Poetry editor, Robert Adamson, says: all the poetry we publish is of very high quality. I try to select as many poems as possible from those that are sent to us unsolicited, and always include one or more poets who have never been published before in each issue. Once we publish a poet we offer continued support and publication as their careers develop. With each issue I consciously choose poems from the various factions that exists in Australia, without favouring any one, and I encourage experimental writing. I don't fill issues ahead of time, but make my final decisions just prior to publication.

There's a great deal of hard work and certainly no money in editing Ulitarra. We seem to be driven by a simple love of literature and a drive towards what we perceive as excellence. Sometimes we despair of the workload, but in every case, the published issue makes it worthwhile. Writers and readers and editors and publishers are all in this thing together, they're symbiotic. But the writer's art is represented by a single piece of prose or poetry, whereas ours is in the planning of each issue, the juxtaposition of pieces, and finally the palpable volume itself, to be felt, flipped through, read and enjoyed. Each issue is like a newborn child. In every instance, we always feel as we've really achieved something.

Ulitarra runs a poetry competition and a short story competition annually. Winners are published in the magazine and receive a cash prize. The December issue is launched as part of the Sydney Writers' Festival each year, at

Gleebooks in Glebe, together with the presentation of the short story prize to the winner.

*Ulitarra (or Yuludarra) was the first hero ancestor of the Koori tribes of the mid-north coast of New South Wales. He came from the land where the sun rises, shaped the landforms, and fathered and named the tribes. He taught them their languages and particularly the art of storytelling. He now lives somewhere in the sky.

Submissions to Ulitarra are always welcome and should be sent to PO Box 392, French's Forest, NSW, 2086. Single issues cost \$8, and a year's subscription \$15.

***** Australian Writing OnLine is a publicity and distribution service for Australian writers and publishers. For further information please email us at [REDACTED], write to AWOL PO Box 333 Concord NSW 2137 Australia, phone (02) [REDACTED] or fax (02) [REDACTED].

[↑ Contents](#)

478. **Chris Stroffolino**
Re: Zuk, Buk, and Cuke

Fri 20 Oct 1995

Well Dodie I am only a "clever young man" to the extent you write "unmarketable gibberish" or to the extent that Zukofski lived a "glamorous" life away from India as I sit here lising to Oti and Carla singing "TRAMP"!-----chris s.

[↑ Contents](#)

479. **cris cheek**
Re: Geese and 'trolls'

Fri 20 Oct 1995

Aldon and Dodie, just so that we can discuss this like brew bloods let's define our terms.

Gnomes are dwellers in the earth. Little people, mostly presumed benevolent - EC passports.

Trolls are supernatural, generally more gnarled than gnomes, more unstable in their ambivalent facets and Scandinavian. (You'll doubtless remeber their spectacular intervention in Ibsen's 'Peer Gynt'.

Neither gnomes nor Trolls appear in much poetry that I know of, whereas Fairies are the digitally imaged spirits of syntax.

zurich and codicil
cris

[↑ Contents](#)

480. **cris cheek**

Albert Hall

Fri 20 Oct 1995

John brings up the dark underbelly of this event, quite rightly. These were all too present in every aspect at every stage - before, during and after 'the show'.

Were all those who took part co-opted, by association or implication, onto the naive committees of the 1965 platform? (doesn't this ring bells for the Apex of Briefs?)

A fundamental ambivalence towards culture as a capital of identity was being re-negotiated within a capital of Culture. (although I would argue that the challenge was to set up sufficiently thorny complexities of resistance so as to generate nervous laughter - as that which John witnessed - a refusal to engage with the radical signalling a preparation)

Here was one of the last travelling circuses from the fifties and sixties (Time Out apparently previewed it as a safe haven for beards and berets) and here were some of its last 'maverick' fading constellations. I.E. here witness the passing (the packagaing or 'pasting') of a bygone time, bygone agenda and bygone aspirations with which we all became complicit. There, one more backwater navigated and mapped. The Children of the E-Volition (The Return of the Reforgotten). A strange collection of curios from beyond the pale. An exercise in museology.

Difference was suppressed in favour of active celebration of diversity - big political mirror balls - but hybridity was introduced through some of the work and that residue provides the most positive and resonant strategy from this event. Now I feel that's the energy that could be built on. But was anyone paying much attention? The audience (yes John you're absolutely right on its insistence to be an audience) found it hard to resist the impulse to live out nostalgia for the fantasy most had already missed out on - when McCartney was introduced the Albert Hall itself almost screamed a teenage scream.

The political illusion of spectatorial Time travel is indeed become more possible - and its allure scares the pith from me,

peace, love and puppet
cris

[↑ Contents](#)

481. **kathryne lindberg**

Re: The Art and Poetry worlds

Fri 20 Oct 1995

I don't quite understand the construction, "before you have poetry you have to have a poet." It seems that, whether one wants to think on Marx or on Nietzsche or on neither, the subject or the historical individual is, at least in some senses both epistemologically and ontologically and certainly etho-aesthetically an effect rather than the cause of something as complex as language as poetry or the act of making something called poetry. Besides POET, as opposed to poetaster or more recent flames from taste wars, is an overwrought or highly crafted epithet. No? just a random question or so.

[↑ Contents](#)

482. **Charles Smith**

Re: Poetry in Motion (Review)

Fri 20 Oct 1995

Carolyn writes: "They taped a reading of the whole work in L.A. several years ago, were dissatisfied with the sound, didn't release the disk, and would like to do it again. Several of us remain skeptical of this format, which seems confined to text + talking head in a little box. I just bought PiM2, with its surprisingly interesting list of poets, and will see what they've been able to do as soon as I can find the disk holder."

The sound on the first disk wasn't so great either, at least not on the copy I heard/saw. The friend who bought it wound up sending it back for just that reason. Picture quality (was it Loss who mentioned this?) was also not so good. Anyone know if they used the film or video for the CD? The CD was fun to play w/ for one evening, but lacked the fluidity & rhythmic punch of the film as I recall it.

I think Carolyn's right that the technological form is basically limited. SF MOMA has similar CD's available, where one can view pictures & hear interviews, which is even more limited. It gives you nothing more than a book can, & the reproductions' quality is worse. At least w/ poetry, you hear the reader's voice & pacing & performance style. Wish I could check out the Little Mag, but I don't know anyone w/ an IBM CD-ROM. all best, Charles

[↑ Contents](#)

483. **Charles Smith**

Re: LN & LZ

Fri 20 Oct 1995

Just read today Dodie's description of Lorine's home w/ much appreciation. I'm one of those bi-coastal types who's never been to the mid-west.

Dodie asks: " But could those poems of hers have been written in an urban world?" Perhaps not w/ the place-specific content of her work she's so often remembered by. The importance of Jenny Penberthy's scholarship has been to demonstrate LN's commitment to avant-garde writing practices beginning at an early (pre-Zukofsky) period of her life & continuing thruout. As important as I believe Niedecker's work is to an innovative poetics of place (& of the noun), Jenny has shown that Niedecker contributed to a whole range of innovative practices which she equally deserves to be recognized for. Witness how well the selection in Messerli's anthology stands up to current practice. Much of Niedecker's material came out of her reading & letters which don't depend on living in rural WI. LN definitely had a cosmopolitan sense of herself.

I believe at this point there's no debate as to an affair between Niedecker & Zukofsky, & that she terminated a pregnancy (twins I heard). I've heard from Cid Corman & Carl Rakosi that Zukofsky "passed her off" to his friend Jerry Reisman, & that yes, the fact she wasn't Jewish was a factor in the non-continuance of their relationship. Are either of these "true"?-I don't know. Celia was by no means rich, but apparently did have a small amount of \$ to bring to the marriage-an amount that was significant at that time.

as to:

"Niedecker stayed friends
with Zukowski, taking a special interest in his son."

&

"Niedecker was a close
friend to the family thru the end of her life."

There's an obvious psychological reading of her interest in the young Paul Zukofsky, & it was an interest Celia apparently didn't always appreciate. Though Niedecker remained devoted to him, Zukofsky did turn from her, as he did from most of his friends during the 60's. Penberthy notes his refusal to write an introduction for her collected, *_T & G_*, and his lack of contribution to the festschrift Jonathan Williams put together, *_Epitaphs For Lorine_*. Not to demonize LZ-his late-life bitterness is all too poignant, but he seems to have been so poisoned by it as to be incapable of maintaining relationships outside the family. There's a sense that her correspondence with Corman in the 60s compensated for the fading relationship w/ LZ.

Anyway, the good news for LN readers is that a batch of papers escaped the great conflagration (Al Millen's posthumous burning of her papers at her request) which contain notes used in the Lake Superior sequence. Jenny Penberthy is currently working on them. Something to look forward to! There's also some fascinating research material LN compiled on the Grand Canyon. Unclear as to whether it was dropped from the sequence (perhaps an early conception of 'the mineral?'), or intended for an other poem altogether.

charles

[↑ Contents](#)

484. **Steve Carll**

Re: Albert Hall

Fri 20 Oct 1995

chris cheek wrote:

Moorcock's on but I can't hear him properly. Aidan Dun's guitar tinkles away and momentarily I think of Ali Farka Toure, then Donovan as his voice comes in (he was most distant of the performers for me, gets reviewed as Rimbaud like, or some such, in The Independent newspaper - what's Rimbaud like mean?)

I don't know, but thanks for the rundown. AND the less pejorative use of the term "Donovan."

Steve

[↑ Contents](#)

485. **Dodie Bellamy**

anagram

Sat 21 Oct 1995

Jordan Davis wrote: <http://infobahn.com:80/pages/anagram.html>

I got an anagram program for my Mac by doing a search for "anagram" on Anarchie and downloading it. I was able to successfully e-mail a copy to Bob Harrison, who works on a Mac at his office.

Kevin and I put in the names of our cats, "BLANCHE AND STANLEY," and the first anagram that came up was "CHANNELED BY SATAN." We turned off the computer.

I also gave a copy to a friend in San Francisco, who is using it for divination.

Dodie Bellamy

[↑ Contents](#)

486. **Dodie Bellamy**
Re: Zuk, Buk, and Cuke
Sat 21 Oct 1995

Now that I'm back in Milwaukee I have access to all the Zukofsky (I'll never forget how to spell that name) any girl could want.

This past year I wrote an article for a free weekly on a religious cult. One of the techniques members of the cult use is called The Golden-Tongued Wisdom. The basis of this is that spirit speaks to us in strange ways. So, to use The Golden-Tongued Wisdom, what you do is that you form a question in your mind on which you'd like some guidance--and then the answer will come to you by something you will hear in a passing conversation on the street, or in the lyrics of a song on the radio, in a street sign, etc. You can also open a book with your question in mind, and the first thing you come upon in the book will be spirit's reply.

So, thinking about all this discussion of Zuk, Buk, and Niedecker, I asked for some sort of summary as I opened Zukofsky's *_Complete Short Poetry_*. This is what I saw:

Sculptures
 in the shadow
of round
 wall--

Primitive
 monumental
nameless
 as the carver

Dodie Bellamy

[↑ Contents](#)

487. **Dodie Bellamy**
Re: Niedecker/Zukofsky
Sat 21 Oct 1995

Richard,

Yes, LN's name is still spelled Neidecker on the tombstone, which she shares with her mother and father.

Did you go to the truckstop nearby that has the giant pastries? They have cream puffs there as big as your head. Well, almost.

Dodie

[↑ Contents](#)

488. **Ron Silliman**

Re: Niedecker and Zukofsky

Sat 21 Oct 1995

>My knowledge of the particulars of Niedecker's life is embarassingly
>shaky, but it _is_ hard to imagine her writing those poems in New York
>(just as one can only wonder what Zukofsky would have written if he,
like Leslie Fiedler, were exiled to Missoula).

Missoula is a lovely town, not unlike Boulder.

[↑ Contents](#)

489. **Ron Silliman**

Respelling LZ

Sat 21 Oct 1995

"Zukofski"....

Well, people have been complaining about the spelling of Niedecker, but there have been 4 separate spellings of Zukofsky on this list in the past 3 days, and two versions of Ginsberg.

[↑ Contents](#)

490. **Charles Alexander**

Re: LN & LZ

Sat 21 Oct 1995

Charles Smith comments, beginning with a quote from Dodie's post:

" But could those poems of hers have been written in an urban world?" Perhaps not w/ the place-specific content of her work she's so often remembered by. The importance of Jenny Penberthy's scholarship has been to demonstrate LN's commitment to avant-garde writing practices beginning at an early (pre-Zukofsky) period of her life & continuing thruout. As important as I believe Niedecker's work is to an innovative poetics of place (& of the noun), Jenny has shown that Niedecker contributed to a whole range of innovative practices which she equally deserves to be recognized for. Witness how well the selection in Messerli's anthology stands up to current practice. Much of Niedecker's material came out of her reading & letters which don't depend on living in rural WI. LN definitely had a cosmopolitan sense of herself.

I'd be interested in other's take on this notion of cosmopolitan/midwestern (Smith earlier confesses to his own bi-coastal never-been-to-the-midwest

nature. My own take on Niedecker, while acknowledging her reading and correspondence, would not be to say her sense of herself, and her subsequent poetics, depended on a cosmopolitan nature, rather than perhaps literary innovation, current practice, avant-garde poetics, etc. -- have far less to do, of necessity, with the urban, than is often presumed by many. I have long contended that one could be as avant-garde in central Kansas, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Wisconsin -- as anywhere. Particularly in today's connected electronic world, but also in Niedecker's day.

charles

[↑ Contents](#)

491. **Mark Scroggins**

Re: Niedecker and Zukofsky

Sat 21 Oct 1995

> Missoula is a lovely town, not unlike Boulder.

>

Oh yes indeed, don't get me wrong, love those picturesque western cities--but LZ in Missoula? or Boulder? I read him more & more as inextricably entwined with NY.

Mark

[↑ Contents](#)

492. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Niedecker and Zukofsky

Sat 21 Oct 1995

My knowledge of the particulars of Niedecker's life is embarrassingly shaky, but it is hard to imagine her writing those poems in New York (just as one can only wonder what Zukofsky would have written if he, like Leslie Fiedler, were exiled to Missoula).

Missoula is a lovely town, not unlike Boulder.

Since most writers I know in NY or SF are not natives there, shall I assume they have been exiled there? and that such exile is pleasant or unpleasant?

And thanks, Ron, Missoula is lovely. as is southern Wisconsin, where Lorine lived.

charles

[↑ Contents](#)

493. **Charles Smith**

Re: LN & LZ

Sat 21 Oct 1995

By using the word "cosmopolitan," I wasn't really referring to an urban/rural or mid-west/coastal split, but simply that Niedecker had a firm grasp on current international literary trends (long before she met LZ). Penberthy's quite convincing that her early interest in surrealism is sustained throughout her career, despite Zukofsky's desire to wean her from it.

Charles Alexander is quite correct that writers can be cutting-edge no matter where they live. The geographical spread of this list provides ample testimony. Even Kansas: there's Ron Johnson & Ken Irby. Cultural centers, be they NY, Paris, or SF, always seem to think they're more important than is actually the case.

all best,
Charles Smith

[↑ Contents](#)

494. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Respelling LZ

Sat 21 Oct 1995

Ginsberg, Gunsberg--

I still say LOUIE rather than LOUIS too, so there!

[↑ Contents](#)

495. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Niedecker and Zukofsky

Sat 21 Oct 1995

dear mark scroggins---do you really see PLACE as that big in Zuk's work? It seems more bookish---now NYC is the book capital allegedly (i mean publishing--even if the bookstores increasingly suck--), but... (it always seemed to me that he could have written them in INDIANA and followed LN....). cs

[↑ Contents](#)

496. **Chris Stroffolino**

outpost entropy, etc.

Sat 21 Oct 1995

Well, I don't know if this is "the next KEVIN DAVIES" or anything, but I received the first issue today of a magazine from an old dear friend in a small town in PA. and she is definitely looking for submissions from people other than the "local yokels" and so this list seemed a highly fitting place to start i thought--- Anyway, the magazine is called "OUTPOST ENTROPY" and though I don't wish to speak for the editor's taste, I will quote in part from the letter she sent me today: :By the way I watched Louis Farrakhan speak to the million man march today---very interesting to say the least--insightful, highly, in certain ways, lots of strawmen and specious reasoning though. He gave a speech/sermon specifically tailored to appear to be for black men, yet it was generalizing enough to appeal to ANYONE margin- alized in this society and subsequently malcontent...." Okay--- Not that she's JUST a politico---She likes Ashbery too... Anyway---in the wake of the near death i hear of THE IMPERCIPIENT-- you should all send to: OUTPOST ENTROPY c/o C.Kaucher 226 W. Main St. Kutztwon, Pa. 19530.

Also, I wanted to make a correction addition to the note posted by Bill CLinton's house saxophonist, Kenny G., about the poetry reading to benefit LINGO mag that will be held here in Albany, NY--- "the weakness of an albany" as Olson would say-- exactly a week from today 10-28-- Aside from myself, Jean Donnelley, Juliana s. lisa j., michael g., linda s. and the local blues band fb&c there will also be featured ROD SMITH---yes ROD "Aerial/edge" SMITH---or RODOMY as they say in PRI. For any info--feel free to call me at 518-He-Binge..... chris stroffolino

[↑ Contents](#)

497. **Jordan Davis**

my place is better than your place

Sat 21 Oct 1995

Charles Alexander wrote:

Since most writers I know in NY or SF are not natives there, shall I assume they have been exiled there? and that such exile is pleasant or unpleasant?

Born and raised in NY. Live here now. All place is exile.

Jordan

[↑ Contents](#)

498. **B. Cassidy**

Voice synth.

Sat 21 Oct 1995

Sorry to burden the whole list with this request....But...

A week or so ago, someone mentioned a text to computerized voice convertor...I'm afraid I can't remember who that was...Anyway, I used to have one of those (years ago) for my Apple, but had forgotten about it until it was recently brought up again. I would like to get my hands on one (ftp/gopher searches have been unfruitful). Could whoever it was who mentioned it please backchannel me w/info on what they're using/where I could get my hands on it? Thanks...

--Brian

[↑ Contents](#)

499. **Ron Silliman**

Metroplex

Sun 22 Oct 1995

Charles Smith argues, reasonably, that

>

"Charles Alexander is quite correct that writers can be cutting-edge no matter where they live. The geographical spread of this list provides ample testimony. Even Kansas: there's Ron Johnson & Ken Irby. Cultural centers, be they NY, Paris, or SF, always seem to think they're more important than is actually the case."

Given how much the NY School depended on Tulsa, OK, the case is proven. But, historically, metro centers have proven vital primarily because they brought people into contact. Ken Irby was the first poet I ever saw, a regular at the Med coffee house on Telegraph Ave in Berkeley circa '64, writing into a notebook. Johnson was introduced to large portions of the literary universe by Jonathon Williams (a cultural center all by himself wherever he happens to be), then lived for 20 years in SF. Last time I talked with Kenneth, a little over a year ago, he had seen Johnson exactly once since he'd moved back to Kansas.

Older writers have (again, historically) needed that sort of contact far less than younger ones. The constant contact of a scene helps younger ones to define themselves as poets, to push themselves further than they might have gone under other circumstances. Certainly there are poets in In the American Tree who might never have published, let alone widely, had they lived all their lives in Missoula. And the relative obscurity, say, of Paul Piper (a fine experimental poet long active in Missoula) to some degree proves the point.

The internet and the communications revolution that it offers (this here list is a model T compared to what will be coming in 5 to 10 years) may well change this. And if it means that poets need not be isolated due to geographic remoteness, well then it's a good thing.

Ron

[↑ Contents](#)

500. **Beth Russell**

cats

Sun 22 Oct 1995

Dodie Bellamy, I've often felt that my cat, Mojo, was "channeled" by satan"....speaking of computer divination, have you seen/used the _I Ching_ (or Book of Changes) program? Also, there is Tarot on the Web...the mystics are becoming cyber-ized....which may not be a _bad_ thing altogether...

Beth

[↑ Contents](#)

501. **Beth Russell**

"creative"/theoretical

Sun 22 Oct 1995

Specifically to Maria Damon....although I have little experience (or none) teaching at the level of the university, I must say that I've heard and felt much angst from fellow students abt. the creative/theoretical split w/in workshops, etc. Some feel that theory-people get _out of hand_ or tend to dominate discussion w/solely theoretical constructs...and the folks who would rather focus on the _writing_ aspect feel the workshop turns into a seminar or colloquia...seems to me (and I do agree w/you about bringing in say, foucault, marx, etc) there _should_ be an exploration into _all_ methods of discourse, for this certainly enriches the praxis of creating, writing/sound/visual mediums. I think of the San Francisco _movement_, Spicer, Duncan, Blaser, et al and how their pedagogical ideas/methods were worked into the process of thinking/writing/creating.. I mean, what are the limits? I do feel, however, a need for a _balance_ w/in the _conventional_ classroom, just speaking from my experiences w/in the state university of new york system...a balance within the types of discourse or _theory_ used and the discussion of the student's writing... hoping to make sense, Beth

[↑ Contents](#)

502. **Kenneth Sherwood**

Zukofsky's Urban NY

Sun 22 Oct 1995

Placing Zukofsky

Partly a walk through the city, A13 is a primary site of the urban in Zukosfky:

from A13

--Yes, he was thrown in a heap

Out of Carnegie Hall for yelling

...

Twenty years since I've walked

From 12 Street home all the way

Across Brooklyn Bridge.

...

The old Fire House museum on Duane Street.

...

We saw the rat lofts on Greene Street

...

The Triangle fire how many corpses

Hasn't burnt them--fire traps, rat lofts

Iron-doored, boarded--at last--coming down.

In the infants and ladies whitegoods, shoddy remnant

textile district

The risen arcades of Richardson's spacious windows

Persist stacking retracted formations of clouds over

Lower Broadway

...

Linen against an elegance when the Mews were still real stables

Behind the *American Classical* of Washington Square.

...

That bridges to span it

piers and boats,

...

Waterfront

Of the fantastic island

To the North

That but for a little green

Is entirely buidlings

And pavement

...

Watched over

By the Empire State

There are plenty of other explicitly (ie referentially) urban moments in Zukofksy, which is not even addressing (as Ahearn argues) the issues of Yiddish theatre and poetry influence [cf. Yehoash] or growing up in neighborhood of 300,000 persons/sq.mile with respect to voices, immigration, native languages etc. [e.g."We had a Speech, our children have evolved a jargon." A4] Also in the shorter poems: "The Heights", "N.Y.", "Imitation", "During the Passaic Strike of 1926"(which begins: "There are two vaults left in St. Mark's-on-the-Bouwerie"), "Ferry", "Cocktails", "The Old Poet Moves to a New Apartment 14 Times" etc.

A1

Smoke sooting skyscraper chimneys,

...

Remembering love in a taxi

...

A5

 A cigarette,
Leaf-edge, burning
 obliquely urban,

...

He-er vent Hel-ee-na squat from our sidewalks.

...

Speech bewailing a Wall,
Night of economic extinctions [wailing wall/wall speech/wall st.]

...

A6

And the--the--the very old stuttereres, mumbletypeg
 in duplex Park Av. apartements

...

A8

No. 151 Waters St., New York

...

A12

The Barouqe bulding
That curces with Broadway
Across fromthe Customs House
Still standing,
All the streets
From the Battery to 14th
Filled as they were
All those from 14th
To 23rd the same
And Metropolitan Life's tower

...
On the third floor
Of our Brooklyn brownstone
...
A boy of four,
Manhattan 40 years ago,
Felicia, a young mother
Among other poor characters
When metal sinks had pubmps,
Three flights of stairs down to
A sort of barracks of johns.
...
Refuse pipes tower above roofs,
Queensboro Bridge lighted above a row of
Low blacked out riverfront houses
...
My mother say away from the stoop,
 the new bridge going up,
To catch her breath in the hottest summer
Some old landmarks down
The bridge is aging...

[↑ Contents](#)

503. **eric pape**

Re: The Art and Poetry worlds

Sun 22 Oct 1995

Uh, yeah. Okay.

I think (but I am not sure) that I agree with you and you agree with me.
Poet is an affect (effect).

All I meant was that the idea of a poet only comes about when the idea of individual creation comes about. IE, for the most part, the "creators" of Illiad, Beowulf, etc. would not consider themselves creators as such. It seems as if in fact they used formulas, linguistic, narrative, etc. to complete their work which apparently changed from performance to performance.

This is all part of my continuing obsession with stating the obvious.

When the idea of poets come into being, they have already joined the court. Since then, it is amazing how many poets have pined over reactionary, imaginary fantasies of the past, childhood, nature, fairies. There are always exceptions, but those, I think, represent an emerging class, such as Milton, or maybe even Blake.

Having said so, and lets not forget where this discussion started, I do think that poetry, in its connection to both language and sexuality, because I think the most inclusive definition of poetry is simply something like tropic play (although I don't think we can pretend that everyone thought so) that poetry rehearses a possibility of profound criticism.

In other words, something like, poetry offers a way to imagine something else....

Thanks, Eric.

[↑ Contents](#)

504. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Metroplex

Sun 22 Oct 1995

Dear Ron (and others): Even before the "communications revolution" there seems to have been a decided shift away from metroplex centers for poets. Certainly in my generation, there has been much less incentive to live in NYC, SF and Chicago for instance (in part because of \$\$\$ and in part because there's hardly viable academic institutions there) than other places--and this is even amongst more urban-oriented sensibilities it seems to me. Chris Stroffolino

[↑ Contents](#)

505. **FUNKHOUSER CHRISTOPH**

cd-ro(a)m

Mon 23 Oct 1995

wanted

to try a response to Carolyn's posting from a couple of days ago, & wishing her message were here to quote - it was an update & description of a cd-rom project for _The Country Between Us_ -- she mentions she is more interested in hypertext than cd-rom, among other things. . .

to agree there are a lot of foibles and difficulties with digital multimedia technology as is. & that the "talking head" motif definitely stales quickly.

to couple thoughts about the translation of writing into the new media, because I think there are plusses & possibilities in "cd-rom" & whatever it becomes. Of course, "hypertext" & html bring numerous agreeably exciting paths to follow. hopefully someone's reading along them, and there is depth to it. perhaps complicating matters (a bit) along the way, some computers allow texts to engage image, sound, and symbol on the computer screen - reading words attached to sounds attached to images, and so on.

to say i was thinking of carolyn's project & quick ideas as to what could be done with it instead of just having CF on the screen looking like she's lip-synching her poems (this is what most of Poetry In Motion amounts to -- & even if the poetry/words are stellar, it's almost comical to watch the writers so prosthetic!). A few things come to mind. To widen the scope of the text you could link the poems to corresponding journal entries, letters, or images of the people/places you're writing about, to give further depth of process. your voicings of the poems could be continuous or discrete, & you'd have the words as they appear in the book, you could put in drafts of the poems (illustrating processual dimensions for scholars & others curious). you could put in there other textual interconnections, like research done on El Salvador (evidence), interviews done with writers & people of central america, and so on. there could be another section of the text which places the poems in context of other poems which have been written out of similar circumstances or are otherwise stylistically connected (I like how the annotated HOWL has this). where what might be unfamiliar words, phrases, or languages, or where the words are associated with a particular history, a reader could access reference/background information via direct link (instant index). this seems like simple stuff so far. it'd be great to have a lot of cultural - historical contextualization in there - the stuff about which people feel so impassioned - the materials which attracted you this culture. do you see as much pedagogical value in this as i do?

A lot of information can be stored on these plastic discs, so what we're conceiving is an expanded book -- and more than a book (or video)-on-tape with bibliography. Yes, the technical difficulties are preventative. However, we're years from realizing a finalized formula for producing writing in this media. There are limits to what the technology will do, but really the biggest limitation, as far as I can tell, so far, is the lack of applied thought in engineering literature for hypermedia. This will change. However, so far, most of the people creating literary publications using digital multimedia haven't really begun to challenge themselves to produce poetry in more than a perfunctory manner.* In other words, most titles commercially produced thus far are severely lacking with regards to imaginatively using the media (again, at least as far as literature goes ((& maybe "literature" isn't well suited for multimedia translation?)). not that i'd suggest that the recently produced Little Magazine cd-rom uses the form with admirable vision either, but we did make a steady effort to project the "writing" presented with a variety of approaches & allowed interpretive rather than (or, in addition to) literal renderings of poems on the screen throughout the magazine.

There probably hasn't been much significant exploration/discovery with experiments in "poetry" and "cyberspace", though the EPC might be proven an

exception to this statement. R. Bertholf & co. at the Poetry Archive are working on what could be an amazing hypertext of *_Ulysses_*, with visual & hypertext aspects. perhaps there are other important projects happening? Recently I heard that the poet R. Tillingast, at U of Michigan, is getting 5 million dollars from Time- Warner to make a cd-rom of poets writing verse which emanates from the art in the museum at Ann Arbor. It'll be interesting to see what ways people find to present/publish work implementing new forms in the decades ahead.

*For instance, with some friends watched *_Poetry in Motion II_* yesterday & it is indeed slick & a full plate of little quirky videos of the poets in performance and interview scenarios. (Bob Holman looking younger, wilder and all in all more like a furry rodent than he does now). All of the pieces share the same basic design -- there's a uniform template upon which all the words and video sections appear: video segments on the left of the screen, words to the right. there are two versions of each alphabetic text for a reader to choose from, the "printed" version (ie how it appears in the author's book), and the "performed" version (which is usually quite similar to the "printed" version) - so nothing remotely groundbreaking here. Every "video" shows the author performing her/his writing in documentary type performance segments. There are bibliographies and minimal biographical information, and a brief introduction by Robert Creeley, none of these features make use of sophisticated multimedia devising.

Chris Funkhouser, Albany NY



[↑ Contents](#)

506. **Charles Alexander**

Re: cd-ro(a)m

Mon 23 Oct 1995

It's fascinating to read the various threads of the discussion of poetry on cd-rom, hypertext, online, etc., particularly Christopher Funkhouser's most recent post, with its notion that the possibilities are untapped as of yet. Because it seems to me that we are also far from completely fulfilling (particularly in poetry publications) the possibilities of the technology of the book as well. I don't know what this may suggest for creative use of electronic media in years to come, that the book settled, perhaps rather early in its history, for a rather limited use of its possibilities. Will electronic media do so as well? Will books wake up and continue to expand?

charles

[↑ Contents](#)

507. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: cd-ro(a)m

Mon 23 Oct 1995

Charles A. wrote "Will books wake up and continue to expand?" Oh no, sounds like the beginning of the RENG!-----cs.

[↑ Contents](#)

508. **Gabrielle Welford**

Re: cd-ro(a)m

Mon 23 Oct 1995

On Sun, 22 Oct 1995, Chris Stroffolino wrote:

*Charles A. wrote "Will books wake up and continue to expand?"
Oh no, sounds like the beginning of the RENG!-----cs.
lewis offered meek lettuce*

[↑ Contents](#)

509. **Ron Silliman**

Re: Metroplex

Mon 23 Oct 1995

You wrote:

>

> Dear Ron (and others): Even before the "communications revolution"
> there seems to have been a decided shift away from metroplex centers
> for poets. Certainly in my generation, there has been much less
incentive
> to live in NYC, SF and Chicago for instance (in part because of \$\$\$
and
> in part because there's hardly viable academic institutions there)
> than other places--and this is even amongst more urban-oriented
sensib-
> ilities it seems to me. Chris Stroffolino
>

Certainly as late as the 60s and 70s, there was a decided tension between versions of an avant-garde tradition and those "viable academic institutions" of the world. Neither the NY School nor the SF Renaissance depended very much on teaching for a living (Koch being the notable exception), at least at that point. The Black Mountain poets did, and it accounted to some degree for their greater geographic dispersal.

For poets who thought of teaching, then, the problem was one of not just getting the degree and then a job, but also recognizing how the academic process would tend to send one outward, to the suburbs and hinterlands. For several, that seemed too high a price to pay. One reason many poets have ended up, say, in the computer industry is that one has much greater control over where to live (not to mention better working conditions and better pay).

As programs emerged that were not actively hostile to progressive interpretations of literature (UC San Diego, Naropa, New College, then Buffalo, Brown, Bard, etc.), it dramatically altered the world for younger poets, who no longer needed to wade through an actively hostile environment for benefit of a degree.

San Francisco State has had many terrific poets among its students not because it's creative writing program is any good (it's dismal and has been dismal for 30 years) or because the poets emerging from it get jobs (very few do), but because young poets were able to convince themselves and/or their parents that it was the viable means for getting to San Francisco. Wouldn't shock me to learn the same of the program at Columbia.

Ron

[↑ Contents](#)

510. **R I Caddel**
Niedecker/Zukofsky
Mon 23 Oct 1995

Misspellings come and go (and let's add Rupert Brooke to our list of recent Poetics list casualties) and don't really hurt - why, Aneirin's circulation is way up on anything he had in his lifetime, and a quick count suggests four published versions of his name...

But the generalisations about LN's homeworld, and the disparaging tone of phrases like "sad little shack" and "the poorness of the lives" are more important: (a) they show a real failing to read LN, her enduring commitment to and concern for that place and its lifeforms, as it's asserted over and over in the poems (and for those who still won't trust poems, it's in her letters too) (b) they suggest a failure to read the lives of the people who live there at other than the most superficial level (in the manner of those papers of central government which outline the case for the "resettlement of the rural poor") (c) they contribute, albeit unwittingly, to the continuing patronisation (sic) and writing-down of Niedecker's achievement as "poor little home-body" or "mute inglorious milton" - in a way which I find unsupportable.

A sympathetic, unblinkered reading of the place would be a valuable asset in reading Niedecker. I worry that such a reading becomes less likely between the local heritage brigade and the blank incomprehension of tourists.

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

[↑ Contents](#)

511. **cris cheek**

Re: desire / and the 39 steps

Mon 23 Oct 1995

scorn, culling her unguent sheets - what a sickening, cloyish expression - she pastes these letters with her bloody fingers dabbed from flour and sugar onto fog-bloomed film. fireworks bring fibre to earth, usher materials boiled from glossy taxonomies into theme.

[↑ Contents](#)

512. **Mark Wallace**

BAAAAAAD villanelle!

Mon 23 Oct 1995

I'd love some response to the following dilemma, since I'm not totally sure what I make of it:

Here's the scene: a small, friendly discussion among several poets after a reading in Washington, D.C. I put forward the notion that experimental innovation is actually possible with forms regularly considered "traditional", that is, that one can actually use things like villanelles and sonnets in potentially intriguing ways. I am told kindly, but firmly, that I am incorrect--these forms are dead, over and done with, BAAAAAAD, just plain too closed to merit further discussion. (I won't say who told me I was incorrect, but since some of them are on this list, I'd love for them to jump in--it was without doubt a friendly discussion, so the difference here is not at all a personal one).

I protest, giving some examples (Ashbery's double sestina in FLOW CHART), not giving some more effective examples that I might have used--from those terrible neo-formalists Bernadette Mayer and Ted Berrigan (who published sonnets) or the unregenerate conservatism of a poet like Charles Bernstein who's actually WRITTEN, may God forgive him, a villanelle--"Thrush"--. My

examples are not persuasive to the gathered group (I even mentioned Henry James, saying it wasn't clear to me that James "realism" had as its only function the maintaining of the "dominant representational culture", but hey, I think Shakespeare's pretty radical too), and at this point I am told that I'm actually in danger of siding with people like Mark Strand if I don't watch out.

So, what does anyone think? Is the mere use of some forms destined to sully one as an anti-innovative neo-formalist? Is my raising such a question evidence of my "drifting over to the other camp (this is a war here boy, and don't you forget it!)." Can villanelles or sonnets be used experimentally, or not? Is a form itself BAAAAAAD, or is there some truth to my perception that it's not the form itself, but the people who promote certain forms in certain ways that are really the problem?

It used to be true that traditional formalists were the only people who could tell others what forms they can't use. Now, in some cases anyway, avant garde poets can also tell people what they can't do. Is this progress? Some day I want to ask a poet the question "what can I do with poetry?" and have the answer be something other than "The only thing you can do is what I'm doing already."

I hope the people who were part of this discussion will understand that I'm saying this here in a friendly spirit, albeit perhaps a mischievous one.

On a related subject, I think Ron Silliman has an excellent point when he says that we need to historicize the role that "theory" has played in experimental poetics. The freedom that literary theory allowed poets like Ron was crucial, and to some extent, literary theory still allows that freedom. But now that "theory" is such a definite part of any sophisticated graduate school experience, it's hard to see it simply as "freeing." Some people may argue that literary theory is not responsible for its codification inside American academies, but on the other hand, it's hard not to think that the obvious "authority" of tone in writers like Derrida, Foucault, Lacan, D and G, Lyotard, etc, is to some extent complicitous with the authority-making process of intellectual reputations and academic power, although the insight such writers allow are unquestionably crucial. But I think of William Burroughs response to someone who said "The Christian God is not responsible for what has been done in His name," which was "A God is ALWAYS responsible for his followers." To what extent is a text responsible for what can be done with it?

Ah well. Perhaps one generation's freedom is always the next generation's burden.

mark wallace

[↑ Contents](#)

513. **Mark Wallace**

D.C. poets

Mon 23 Oct 1995

Will those poets on the poetics list who live in or around Washington, D.C. please send me their e-mail addresses? I'm compiling a list of such addresses so we can all be better informed about various D.C. poetry and other events.

mark wallace

[↑ Contents](#)

514. **Gale Nelson**

Re: BAAAAAAD villanelle!

Mon 23 Oct 1995

Mark,

I would add to your list of innovative formal undertakings:

- * Queneau's Sonnets -- 10 to the 14th power [probability suggests that many of his sonnets have never actually been read]
- * Robinson's Six Sonnets & Eight Etudes -- the etudes are less form driven than the sonnets, but are mentioned here nonetheless...
- * Perec's La Disparation -- a lippogrammatic novel (may be suspect among those who don't approve of prose)
- * Waldrop's Anagrams
- * Mathews' Eye- Rhyme Sonnets -- the "rhyme words" appear to the eye only as rhymes

Gale Nelson

[↑ Contents](#)

515. **Jordan Davis**

Re: BAAAAAAD ass song

Mon 23 Oct 1995

Mark,

One could be old-fashioned and insist that you have to follow the path of most resistance--pick up your copy of the Handbook of Poetic Forms by e-mailing to

yours truly at Teachers & Writers Collaborative--and then one could opt for an even more out-of-date path... e.g. do what you want to when you want to if you can hear how to... discussions among poets about what is and isn't possible... are nonsense

Jordan

[↑ Contents](#)

516. **Jordan Davis**
Re: BAAAAAAD ass song

Mon 23 Oct 1995

Mark

Omitted my last sentence: "Of course, nonsense can be productive."

Jordan

[↑ Contents](#)

517. **Herb Levy**
Cage Fest @ Mills, Olson? at Huddersfield

Mon 23 Oct 1995

Two disparate events announcements (one with a question) that folks here may be interested in.

From November 15-19 at Mills College in Oakland, there's what looks to be a very good conference/festival devoted to the work of John Cage with papers, performances, films, etc, with much reference to his verbal works as well as his musical ones. There's a vast amount of information on the event at:

<http://newalbion.com/artists/cagej/herecomes.html>

Also, I just received a mailing from the British Society for the Promotion of New Music that includes an advert for the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival (over the same weekend) including the 2nd performance anywhere of a 1966 work by Terry Riley called Olson III for chorus.

I've seen scant references to this work before, & the other new music folks I've asked can't answer this, so does anyone on poetics know if the piece uses a text by Charles Olson & if so which text?

Thanks

Herb Levy



[↑ Contents](#)

518. **Herb Levy**
Oracles on the Internet
Mon 23 Oct 1995

Beth, & Dodie -

Don't forget the most ancient & revered oracle who inhabits the internet itself. The Usenet Oracle will answer any question you have in return for doing it a kindness (usually this entails answering a question).

Much lore about this tradition is to be found at the following URL:

<http://www.pcnet.com/~stenor/oracle/>

Dodie Bellamy, I've often felt that my cat, Mojo, was "channeled by satan" speaking of computer divination, have you seen/used the _I Ching_ (or Book of Changes) program? Also, there is Tarot on the Web...the mystics are becoming cyber-ized....which may not be a _bad_ thing altogether...

Beth

Herb Levy



[↑ Contents](#)

519. **Dodie Bellamy**
Re: Niedecker/Zukofsky
Mon 23 Oct 1995

Richard Cadel wrote:

"But the generalisations about LN's homeworld, and the disparaging tone of phrases like "sad little shack" and "the poorness of the lives" are more important: (a) they show a real failing to read LN, her enduring commitment to and concern for that place and its lifeforms, as it's asserted over and over in the poems (and for those who still won't trust poems, it's in her letters too) (b) they suggest a failure to read the lives of the people who live there at other than the most superficial level (in the manner of those papers of central government which outline the case for the "resettlement of the rural poor") (c) they contribute, albeit unwittingly, to the continuing patronisation (sic) and writing-down of Niedecker's achievement as "poor little home-body" or "mute inglorious milton" - in a way which I find unsupportable.

A sympathetic, unblinkered reading of the place would be a valuable asset in reading Niedecker. I worry that such a reading becomes less likely between the local heritage brigade and the blank incomprehension of tourists."

Obviously this is addressed to my post, but rather than making a personal address, Richard decided to use to use a larger more patronizing (sic) tone in responding. I don't think I said anything disparaging about Niedecker or the people who live there. I don't know the people who live there, but it's clear that compared to the middle class lives of most of the poets I know, their lives are quite humble, and Niedecker's cottage is not some Romantic little fairy tale hut, especially now that it hasn't been kept up for years--it looks like my father's tool shed. In my post I was determinately giving a slightly-parodied version of my experience as a tourist confronting the romance of her myth. It was in a way a revisioning her, of turning her from the "old lady who writes nature poems" into a kind of lusty Barbara Stanwick figure.

I never heard of Niedecker until the early 80s, when we studied her in Kathleen Fraser's (or is it Frazier's? tee hee) Feminist Poetics class. Each woman in the class of thirty or so had to prepare a class presentation on a woman poet. Kathleen handed out a list of women poets that was passed from one student to another. You were to pick the woman poet you wanted to report on and place your name next to hers. The list started with the woman next to me and went around the room in the opposite direction, so that I was the last to sign my name. The only poet left on the list was LN. "Shit" I thought as I jotted my name besides hers. Back then I was still pretty wild and relatively young--I couldn't think of anything more boring than reading LN. But, Kathleen was gently encouraging and very helpful, pointing me to sources, lending me books. Niedecker's surface was hard to penetrate, but gradually her work opened to me, and the more I read her, the more I appreciated her. I still don't exactly adore her, but I do read her with great fondess and respect.

Richard must know who the people are who doesn't take Niedecker seriously, since everybody I know (who's heard of her) takes her quite seriously. I think that Niedecker's not being taken seriously as a writer, by whomever, is not a historical anomaly. Isn't the traditional position of women--as that of little figures in the midst of big movements?

Dodie Bellamy

p.s. Someone pointed out to me that when I wrote in a previous post "cream puffs as big as your head" it sounded like I meant a specific person's head. In fact, I meant "cream puffs as big as one's head." I apologize if I ruffled any feathers with my sloppy language.

[↑ Contents](#)

520. **Bill Luoma**
vertical Blanking interval
Mon 23 Oct 1995

INTEL ANNOUNCES PC-TV MARRIAGE 10/23/95

By JOHN MARKOFF
New York Times

In a step toward blending the personal computer and the Internet with broadcast television, Intel Corp. and many of the nation's largest personal computer makers and television broadcasters today announced a new technology to allow broadcasters to deliver computer data along with their television programs.

InterCast, which was developed by Intel researchers over the past two years, will allow broadcasters to transmit data in a portion of the television signal known as the vertical blanking interval -- at speeds almost four times as fast as the fastest available modems now used to send personal computer data to the home.

The data would be transmitted in the blank lines visible to television viewers only when their sets are on the Fritz. This bank of 10 or so lines is isolated at one end of the television image, and out of the frame of a television set that is operating normally. Each of these lines can be used to transmit data at a speed of 9,600 bits a second.

Although the system is based on a one-way broadcast model and the television signals would be pulled in by a standard television tuner, the data will be delivered in the form of World Wide Web pages, permitting interactivity through conventional Internet access.

Twelve concerns are endorsing the new standard: Packard Bell and Gateway 2000, which both plan on including the hardware necessary to receive the InterCast signals in computers they will sell next year; the broadcasters NBC, CNN, QVC and WGBH, the Boston PBS station; the cable operators Viacom and Comcast, the on-line service provider America Online and the software developers Asymetrix, En Technology and Netscape Communications.

Intel has made the standard as open as possible -- meaning that other manufacturers can adopt the system without needing licensing agreements -- and would not derive any revenue directly from the technology. The company would make money as customers bought more personal computers and thus more Intel microprocessors.

The technology, which now requires about \$50 to \$60 worth of parts, consists of a chip that converts the analog television signal into digital images that can

be displayed on a computer, and a television receiver that picks up the signals of broadcast or cable outlets.

[↑ Contents](#)

521. **Rod Smith**

Re: BAAAAAAD villanelle!

Mon 23 Oct 1995

The discussion Mark is mentioning was a bit more complex than he's rhetorically reconstructed it for list consumption. One of the questions being "do certain forms reinscribe dominant cultural norms" & the other side of that "can new forms play a role in altering those forms."

I tend to believe that new forms can & do play a role in changing individual perceptions of the world, & therefore if experienced by enough people (experienced through participation, rather than observation)-- *might* conceivably play some role in changing the social interaction of individuals.

Perhaps the point to be made with regard to teaching is that intentions are primary-- if new forms are treated as old forms have been-- as unquestioned models to be copied-- we're not really moving in a desirable direction. Perhaps the "jazz" workshop described on this list in which poets wrote poems in response to each others work, rather than relying on discursive critique-- is an example of open form for the classroom, as projective verse is an example of open form for the page. So no form can be seen as inherently superior-- it's meaning is it's use. As unfortunately, our meaning (in many but not all ways) is our use by the workplace. In our current context it seems to me certain forms can lead us toward perceptions of life as process rather than predetermined value, & (O utopian fool!) toward seeing that people matter more than money.

--Rod

[↑ Contents](#)

522. **Rod Smith**

Recent DC readings

Mon 23 Oct 1995

To mention some recent DC readings-- Joan Retallack & Carolyn Forché read yesterday to much appreciation. Joan reading from *_AFTER IMAGES_*, the highlight for me being "ICARUS FFFFFalling"-- which wound about in pig-latinated first-rate well-paced portent. Carolyn read from *_The Angel of History_* & a few "outtakes" which seemed in the air at least-- as though they cld have been inclusions. The highlight for me being the final section, "Book Codes" -- I've always been impressed by the complex populism of her work, and her

ability to sustain that while moving into an interest in fragmentation(s) is satisfying & promising.

Week ago Jordan Davis & Bill Luoma gave us an NYC instance-- both funny, very. & laid back & lyric in that remapped gramatic & lastingly undidactic kinda sorta way.

Same weekend Barrett Watten regaled us with a new piece called "Ambivalent About Poetry" -- short in duration, visual, & replete. Also read new & old "Bad History"(s)-- a favorite of mine being on the Bay Area area code "415/510" schism. Bits of *_Leningrad_*, & the *_Aerial_* frontispiece (which I was glad to hear as I hadn't been sure of my decoding of some of his handwriting.) BW's insistent critique of "the pointilist economy" continues.

I had my first slam appearance last night, read some collaborations & my prayer for the "On Your Knees, Citizen" project for the *_New Censorship_* (yes, that is going to happen, thanks to those that sent "prayers"). & then did a multi-voice bit with help from Mark Wallace, Heather Fuller, & Buck Downs. A few of the lines flying about the room included: "Coca Cola Classic Tastes Just Like Chicken," "I hereby declare bankruptcy on my emotional debts," "411 is a joke," & the inimitable David Ayre's deeply felt "I'm tired of grumpy virgins."

Comin' up: Michael Basinski and a cast of thousands at Ruthless Grip (near 15th & U), November 11th at 7:30. Rosmarie Waldrop at Bridge Street Books (near 28th & Pennsylvania) November 14th at 8 PM. Ya'll come.

--Rod

[↑ Contents](#)

523. **Beth Russell**

Re: metroplex

Mon 23 Oct 1995

Chris Stroffolino-- I'm not sure I understand your definition of "metroplex", because, for me the metroplex remains synonymous with the "mall" or downtown movie theaters that used to have one huge screen and now have 8 miniature screens. However i do sense that you mean "mega-urban" area when you say "metroplex". And, maybe you could clarify your reason for stating that *_poets_* have shifted away from these areas. Also, why do you state "there's hardly viable academic institutions there" (meaning urban areas)? Of course, your points interest me and i'd just like to uncover the specifics of "why".

beth

[↑ Contents](#)

524. **Mark Scroggins**
Re: Niedecker/Zukofsky
Mon 23 Oct 1995

Dodie:

of course, Ric Caddel, when referring to those who didn't take LN seriously, meant mostly Donald Davie.

Chris:

Ken Sherwood cited most of the stuff I would have used to argue for LZ as a New York poet; maybe the poetics themselves could have come out of _any_ environment (tho I bet that can be argued too--imagine Wordsworth's "fittings" coming out of 18th century London, if you can), but the poems are surely urban.

Mark

[↑ Contents](#)

525. **Mark Roberts**
AWOL: CROSSING PRESS
Mon 23 Oct 1995

Crossing Press present THE TURNING WAVE: VERSE AND SONG OF IRISH AUSTRALIA

Crossing Press are seeking people to support the publication of the first anthology of Irish Australian poetry and ballads.

'The first anthology of Irish Australian poetry and ballads reflects the influence of Ireland and the Irish on Australia and Australians. The collection contains material from the earliest convict settlers, through the nineteenth century, as well as the work of contemporary writers who express a consciousness of Irish background. Henry Lawson is represented alongside 'Frank the Poet' Frank MacNamara, because both illuminate the influence of the Irish in Australia. The book will contain over 170 items from more than 100 poets and will be edited by the Sydney based poet, biographer and creative writing teacher Colleen Burke and the Irish based writer, dramatist poet and broadcaster Vincent Woods.

Gold subscribers (Aust \$100) will receive 1 hard copy and 2 soft cover versions of THE TURNING WAVE

Silver subscribers (Aust \$50) will receive 1 hard copy version of THE TURNING WAVE.

For further information contact: Crossing Press PO Box 1137 Darlinghurst
NSW 2010,
Phone/fax 61 2 [REDACTED]. (02 [REDACTED]).

***** Australian Writing OnLine is a publicity and
distribution service for Australian writers and publishers. For further
information please email us at [REDACTED], write to AWOL PO Box 333 Concord
NSW 2137 Australia, phone (02) [REDACTED] or fax (02) [REDACTED].

[↑ Contents](#)

526. **Tony Green**
Re: Geese and 'trolls'

Mon 23 Oct 1995

there was ann international garden gnome festival recently in New Zealand
(where better, you might think) a live one did TV interviews he looked the part
lawn flamingos, yes also indoor stuffed fabric flamingos a pair of these used to
hang out in a house you could see into from the beach on Milford's golden (real
estate) mile

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

527. **Romana Christina Huk**
thanks, question, report

Mon 23 Oct 1995

Thanks to everyone for the info on CD-ROM poetry (I'm the one who originally
asked for it). In addition to getting our library to purchase them, I'm now
thinking of making a new one that would record the readings to take place at an
international conference/festival I'm hosting at UNH next August. (More info on
that event to follow in about a week or so. Ken Edwards posted a message for
me about it last month when I was moving back to the States; plans are right
now shifting and changing a bit because of the axe on NEH and other kinds of
funding I'd applied for.) If anyone has ideas about what I might try to do (that's
new) with such a recording, let me know.

I also need Steve McCaffery's new address if anyone has it (probably best to e-
mail it directly to me at the address above). Thanks.

Romana

[↑ Contents](#)

528. **Schuchat**

Re: Niedecker/Zukofsky

Mon 23 Oct 1995

reading the various posts on LN's hometown & writing situation as condescending seems to me a natural response from a British perspective, but not an accurate reading from the American. differences between the class system/values in each culture.

[↑ Contents](#)

529. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Metroplex

Mon 23 Oct 1995

Beth R: Metroplex wasn't my term--Ron used it before me and I think maybe someone before him---so I can't help you DEFINE.... Ron S: Point well taken--Yes, there wasn't much academic affiliation back in the good old days--and perhaps the reason so many of my generation have gone "back to school" (if belatedly) may reflect a larger social/economic question that i wanted to raise as well as "a genuine urge to learn"... But the OTHER point I raised I think should be considered too-- There has been a noticeable decentralization it seems and aside from the lack of good bookstores in major cities (or just about anywhere) the idea of vital poetry communities as in say roughly 1953-1977 (I say roughly) in major cities has also been a source of frustration for many and I think is related to the skyrocketing rents that perhaps were systematically designed to divide the potentially "countercultural" forces from each other, etc. etc-- Since I am contemplating moving back to a large city (perhaps Philadelphia again, but wherever...) I certainly would like to see this change. But it seems more possible in places where the rents are a little cheaper and people are not so pressured by having to work 60 hours a week to pay for a phone-booth shaped (and sized) apartment--with little time for writing much less a "scene" that includes musicians and painters etc etc as much as poets.....chris

[↑ Contents](#)

530. **Patrick Phillips**

Re: BAAAAAAD villanelle!

Mon 23 Oct 1995

I would like to propose a sense of appropriation, no, taking back, that can be found in Lisa Robertson's X'eclogue. That is, that it is not the baaaaaad referent (form o form) thing - which to me speaks of a haven of rhetoric - but it is

language taken back from the proto-historical edifice - proved surgent, insurgent in the capacity of the pastoral to re-mean, to be a new language, a new history -- that means to de-edify. I still don't see, though I've seen the Bernstein, Berrigan, Bernadette de-formation and re-inrichment of trope/idiom, how language emerges new in the face of a villanelle. And granted, the eclogue is the echo there in the X, and the Virgilian edifice of state is ripe there. But Robertson, it seems to me (and please Lisa correct me if I flail) deftly sidesteps on purpose the trap of the rhetorical in order to flood the past historical male situation of the pastoral with the clear-eyed availability of language to the feminist/vocal present. This appears a clear attempt to re-invigorate, to take language, to speak. Conversely, it appears conversations on the viability of the villanelle center on how we can re-form. The rhetorical Issue (as in birth) of the villanelle is ripe, but compared to taking back language heretofore unavailable, it is still.

[↑ Contents](#)

531. **Patrick Phillips**
Re: vertical Blanking interval

Mon 23 Oct 1995

here, here! vertical blanking intervals...

||||||| (a picture of the Cleveland Indian)

[↑ Contents](#)

532. **Jeffrey Timmons**
Re: D.C. poets

Mon 23 Oct 1995

Hey, Mark,

could I receive this list when it's done? I spend a great amount of time in dc and would like to see some of these folks when I am there.

Jeffrey Timmons

On Mon, 23 Oct 1995, Mark Wallace wrote:

Will those poets on the poetics list who live in or around Washington, D.C. please send me their e-mail addresses? I'm compiling a list of such addresses so we can all be better informed about various D.C. poetry and other events.

mark wallace

[↑ Contents](#)

533. **Steve Carll**

Who you callin' cream-puff head?

Mon 23 Oct 1995

Dodie Bellamy:

p.s. Someone pointed out to me that when I wrote in a previous post "cream puffs as big as your head" it sounded like I meant a specific person's head. In fact, I meant "cream puffs as big as one's head." I apologize if I ruffled any feathers with my sloppy language.

Apology accepted.

Steve

[↑ Contents](#)

534. **Robert Drake**

Postmodern culture call fr Hypertext (forward)

Mon 23 Oct 1995

forwarded message, from PMC:

PLEASE RE-POST

Postmodern Culture -- Call for Work in Hypermedia

With the recent surge of interest in the World Wide Web and other distributed information systems, hypermedia projects are becoming both more numerous and more sophisticated. Postmodern Culture will continue to publish important offerings in hypertext and hypermedia, presenting works that extend and redefine electronic expression. At this point we would especially like to see conceptually challenging projects: texts that are genuinely multiple and whose multiplicity of discourse constitutes more than an auxiliary for traditional language and forms. We welcome both aesthetic and discursive approaches. This call goes out to philosophers, historians, ethnographers as well as artists of word and image.

Projects in HTML and other Web environments are preferable but we will consider other media as appropriate. Submissions must not have been featured in other electronic publications and should have had minimal exposure to date. Copyright if any must be held by the author(s). To offer your work for consideration, please send a letter or e-mail containing a brief description of your project. Please include a URL if your text is accessible through the World Wide Web.

For further information please contact Stuart Moulthrop,

██████████.

----- luigi

[↑ Contents](#)

535. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: informalism

Tue 24 Oct 1995

Mark --

Wish I could be there for all those readings -- a year in L.A. doesn't turn up as much of interest as that listing --

Sounds from your post and Mr. Smith's that you just had the same discussion I had over a beer fifteen years ago after another D.C. reading -- What's of interest, to me, is a poem that takes the ideological history of its own form as part of its formal workings -- a formal working like the semantic grinding Williams did on the word "rose" -- stripping off its old connotations so that it can be used to mean that (like "love") again -- never boring, no matter what you might hear --

Poems in "new" forms that do not take into consideration their own placement in the language and/of politics are, again to me, just as boring and reactionary as last week's workshop sestina --

But, it's hard to do -- Take the form of the drunken poets' post-reading contention -- hard to make it do something new, but it can be done --

A group of us solved the form/content problem once and for all back in 1989, but since we were drinking too much (at the Hawk & Dove, of all places), none of us could ever remember the solution afterward --

on the other hand, they may have just discovered a planet outside our solar system --

Any form can instigate new modes of thought and of being in the world -- most forms most of the time do not --

Say hello to Rosmarie Waldrop for me when she gets there -- We had a little party for her years ago when she read at WPA, but I haven't had a chance to see her since --

[↑ Contents](#)

536. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: the responsibility of the text

Tue 24 Oct 1995

Mark too -- take a look at Derrida's *_The Ear of the Other_*, where he takes up exactly that question, using the example of Nietzsche -- It's not sufficient, he says, to say simply that the Nazis misread Nietzsche, or that Nietzsche is implicitly a Nazi (this should remind you of some recent arguments about the supposed totalitarian nature of modernist form) -- we must produce readings that account for the means by which those interpretations were produced -- It's important to read the American academic appropriations of poststructuralist thought fully, not just to dismiss them --

[↑ Contents](#)

537. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: BAAAAAAD villanelle!

Tue 24 Oct 1995

Thanks for mentioning Lisa Robertson's work, Pat...

[↑ Contents](#)

538. **Tenney Nathanson**

re

Tue 24 Oct 1995

ate: Mon, 23 Oct 1995 09:46:23 -0400
From: Mark Wallace <[REDACTED]>
Subject: BAAAAAAD villanelle!

an all around terrific post. more later I hope, but meanwhile appreciation for the remarks on form and/as/or (its) politics, ditto the effect(s) of theory.

I've gone backchannel w Chris S re Dickinson and rhyme, but I can't see how Ashbery's, or Auden's for that matter, weird sestinas and ballads and so on CAN'T be "for use" (cits) & etc. Ditto, to revive an old though brief thread, the Audenesque ballads of Merrill in */Braving the Elements/*.

[↑ Contents](#)

539. **Tenney Nathanson**

examples (complete w illustrations?)

Tue 24 Oct 1995

Date: Mon, 23 Oct 1995 10:22:09 -0500
From: Jordan Davis <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: BAAAAAAD ass song

Mark,

One could be old-fashioned and insist that you have to follow the path of most resistance--pick up your copy of the Handbook of Poetic Forms by e-mailing to yours truly at Teachers & Writers Collaborative--and then one could opt for an even more out-of-date path... e.g. do what you want to when you want to if you can hear how to... discussions among poets about what is and isn't possible... are nonsense

Jordan

right. I remember some non-poet friends telling me the thing to do was to figure out what couldn't be done, spozedly, in poetry today, and then set about doing it. I settled on comissioned occasional poems (though Ashbery actually wrote a couple), thinking of Upon Appleton House etc., but have not yet (this was a decade or more ago) actually taken up the challenge. But I still like the idea. And the idea I guess would be to be not TOO obviously/grotesquely parodic (though shodding a head in a canoe wd be ok....)

Tenney

[↑ Contents](#)

540. **Tenney Nathanson**
and future....?....

Tue 24 Oct 1995

Date: Mon, 23 Oct 1995 10:26:59 -0500
From: Jordan Davis <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: BAAAAAAD ass song

Mark

Omitted my last sentence: "Of course, nonsense can be productive."

Jordan

ghosts of Davids past....

[↑ Contents](#)

541. **Tenney Nathanson**
more ghosts of more past Christmases

Tue 24 Oct 1995

Date: Mon, 23 Oct 1995 11:39:53 +0000
From: cris cheek <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: desire / and the 39 steps

*scorn, culling her unguent sheets - what a sickening, cloyish expression
- she pastes these letters with her bloody fingers dabbed from flour and
sugar onto fog-bloomed film. fireworks bring fibre to earth, usher
materials boiled from glossy taxonomies into theme.*

having just taught Williams today (you can teach him but you can't teach him much) this reminds me weirdly of the prose sections of /Spring & All/. Schoenberg (was it?) on Grosse Fugue etc (eternally modern that is)

[↑ Contents](#)

542. **Kevin Killian**

Re: Niedecker/Zukofsky

Tue 24 Oct 1995

To: Richard Caddel . . . What does "unblinker" mean, in one's reading of the "place" where LN lived?

Please explain. Also, "unsupportable," "failing," "failure," "unwittingly."

It's like we are all bozoes except for you and your proposed sympathetic, unblinking reading of the place.

Think of us instead as little children, who aren't old enough to understand everything in the adult world, who indeed find pity in everything, but who have generous and loving hearts nevertheless and who are easily hurt and shocked by the cold adult eye.

Think of us reading LN and finding plenty of evidence that indeed she felt cramped, stifled, overworked, and marginalised by her position in society and in fact on the map of the US, evidence that supports a blinkered reading.

Please don't feel that American readers of LN are clowns who only prefer our own bourgeois lives to the life she led because we are selfish tourist type people. You know, Richard Caddel, that we are all tourists whirling around from place to place, even if we never leave our own little villages. The world still comes in through every crevice in our playrooms and leaves an inevitable residue of hurt and pain. When I read LN I find that the suffering and abjection so marvelously proposed, crystallized, redacted in her work is what holds me closest to it, not her solidarity with fellow citizens of whatever the town is where she was and how she was concerned about them. We do not think of her as "mute", on the contrary, she is still speaking in a way. Still her status as a poet not widely known in her own lifetime, in fact not so well read today, is kind of like a creepy experience of feeling the other, a shadow self, the uncanny.

Think of us as willing her into our own lives in whatever shape we can, and yet knowing that she of course has no knowledge of us, she in that regard is the blind blank uncomprehending blinkered sphinx we try to read. Thanks for listening! Yours-Kevin Killian

The generalisations about LN's homeworld, and the disparaging tone of phrases like "sad little shack" and "the poorness of the lives" are more important: (a) they show a real failing to read LN, her enduring commitment to and concern for that place and its lifeforms, as it's asserted over and over in the poems (and for those who still won't trust poems, it's in her letters too) (b) they suggest a failure to read the lives of the people who live there at other than the most superficial level (in the manner of those papers of central government which outline the case for the "resettlement of the rural poor") (c) they contribute, albeit unwittingly, to the continuing patronisation (sic) and writing-down of Niedecker's achievement as "poor little home-body" or "mute inglorious milton" - in a way which I find unsupportable.

A sympathetic, unblinkered reading of the place would be a valuable asset in reading Niedecker. I worry that such a reading becomes less likely between the local heritage brigade and the blank incomprehension of tourists.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
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
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

[↑ Contents](#)

543. **Ron Silliman**

Re: Metroplex

Tue 24 Oct 1995

I forget whether it is Houston or Dallas that refers to its larger metropolitan area as the Metroplex, but I was basically punning off of that and the idea of complex (as in "he has a complex").

Rents and the other difficulties of major urban areas are indeed an issue. As late as 1978, I had one seventh of a seven bedroom "mansion" on California Street (baja Pacific Heights) in SF for a vast sum of \$50 per month. I pay 20 times that amount now.

There are also issues, such as, the distractions of certain areas (the way poets in LA get sucked into the film industry or the way they used to get sucked into the art gallery/critique world in NYC when there was still some capital there). In SF, poetry was "always" (from 1955 forward anyway) one of the "major" art forms of the area and didn't have to compete with the fine arts scene etc for print space. In other cities, one of the major questions is how to have a serious discussion about the poetry one loves when there are only a handful of other folks in the city who will know what the heck you are talking about. Occasionally, enough people come together to make something real congeal, as has happened at times in the DC area, and in San Diego and I presume must be happening now in Detroit.

The decentralization of the avant-garde is a profoundly important (and good) thing. There will be much greater variation in the long run, tendencies will cohere and create new things, with a broader range to view and choose from, than if it retains the old two or three major urban area focus.

In Russia, of course, there's the same competitive feel between Moscow and St. Petersburg as there ever was betwixt SF & NYC (as in "Oh, Arkadii's a Moscow poet stuck in St Pete"), with the ancillary assumption that nothing much is happening in Vladivostok (I actually heard a writer from there give a great talk on Borges once).

All best,
Ron

[↑ Contents](#)

544. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Metroplex

Tue 24 Oct 1995

Dear Ron--this should almost be a backchannel question. But I will ask it anyway (in the spirit of the discussion on Minneapolis a few months back): Why do you think Philadelphia has not been able to produce a kind of self-reproducing scene that has sustained itself as much as say Washington DC? It's a much bigger city and has some resources that could definitely be tapped. I know you are new there--but when i was there I was able to bring certain poets who suprisingly would not have come otherwise to a downtown art gallery for VERY LITTLE MONEY. I felt bad about the sums I paid out, and even worse in some ways that I had to almost pull teeth to draw audiences for Carla Harryman, David Shapiro, Leslie Scalapino, Alice Notley, Alan Davies for instance as well as Bob Perelman (who at that time had just moved to Phila.)--(to name some of just the most famous--I'd have to list too many other names however to stave off potential charges of being a "starfucker"). Anyway,

TEMPLE does do better in terms of bringing poets in than many institutions of similar size (say, SUNY ALBANY) and there has been The Painted Bride there as well at least enough magazines for someone to "get started" (Phila. was definitely MY springboard in that sense). And now perhaps Perelman will have more power at penn---when I was there he didn't have much--taught no grad classes, etc. Now I hear they are letting him bring poets in. to read in the series. Yet though there are magazines and series, there are not book publishers or even chapbooks. Nor is there much of a salient community---It's like every time something gets started, someone moves to japan or albany, etc. Again, the nomadism that careerism entails etc that many married friends of mine have had to negotiate in thorny ways (though it effects us all, and to add insult to industry their ideological justifiers speak of "family" and "hometown" values--- oops, sorry, digression)--Anyway, I am definitely PLUGGING Philadelphia despite the seeming negativity. It is afterall by far the cheapest big east coast city (Albany and even providence has rents about as hi and albany, at least, unlike Phila. is not a WALKING CITY). Perhaps the proximity of NYC effects it. Effects it negatively. But it COULD affect PHILA. positively (aside from the poets I had read that wanted to VISIT BOB or GIL OTT anyway, I probably could not have gotten as many to read there for the price I paid had it not been for NYC proximity)... Anyway it seems that a more livable and viable scene could exist there than exists in NYC (the problems at St. Marx; the recent inbreeding at the EAR--the lack of communication among "factions" etc)--- So what the hell I'm the pied piper....chris

[↑ Contents](#)

545. **Joshua Mckinney**
BAAAAAD villanelle (fwd)

Tue 24 Oct 1995

Good people:

Mark Wallace has suggested that I forward the following post to the members of the poetics group. Perhaps it will further the ongoing discussion. Perhaps not.

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: Tue, 24 Oct 1995 08:19:32 -0400 (EDT)

From: Joshua Mckinney <[REDACTED]>

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: BAAAAAD villanelle

Mark,

I agree with you on the issue of prescribed form and its usefulness. As for the villanelle, David Shapiro offers some interesting renovations. I have been interested in villanelles for some time now, and so I offer the following poem (from the previous summer) as a token of our shared interest:

No Oasis

Where God is absent, creation can begin.
Now, before the silence of what's next,
the author disappears and starts again.

At any point upon the track, a thin
light leaks through cracks left in a text.
Where God is absent, creation can begin
to blend and clash. The spirit is to win
as _air_ defeats _the air_. Without context
the author disappears and starts again

to build a world, a golden weheel to spin
it on--and all its method circumspect.
Where God is absent, creation can begin;
it leaps into a distance without end
where land moves always as the wind directs
the author disappears and starts again

to ask a question of the shadow in
each word which echoes in the clamor of a next
where God is absent. Creation can begin
to disappear. The author starts again.

Jabesian influence, of course. Speaking of Jabes, I am reminded that in _The Book of Questions_ he writes,

"Who am I," I asked.

"Who am I," I replied.

Repetition is an achievement in its difference.

It seems to me that this passage speaks to the possible discoveries offered by prescribed forms, especially in the area of duration. I'm also thinking of Ashbery and the use of "fixed" forms as generative device.

Have a student here to see me.

Best,

Josh

[↑ Contents](#)

546. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Villanelle

Tue 24 Oct 1995

Tom Kirby-Smith, could you share with the list more about May Swenson-- (not to be confused with may "the fur person" sarton). She isn't much talked about, and I'm curious how you would talk about her--or which poems you would direct one to, etc. Thanks, cs.

[↑ Contents](#)

547. **Jordan Davis**

Re: Metroplex

Tue 24 Oct 1995

Chris

- > Anyway it seems that a more livable and viable scene could exist there
- > than exists in NYC (the problems at St. Marx; the recent inbreeding at
- > the EAR--the lack of communication among "factions" etc)---
- > So what the hell I'm the pied piper....chris
- >

Thanks for bringing this up. The problems in NY have made it just about unliveable (for the last hundred years) and the problems in the community are as severe as they can get. However, all these good poets have moved to NY lately. Much more _hope_ for an intelligent and friendly scene than there was five years ago, and the frequently-commented on EAR trouble is just a growing pang of the coalescing group, if you ask. St Marks, well, it's a nice gig... anybody see Ed Friedman's _Mao & Matisse_? And as for the "factions" well nobody says you have to like everybody's poetry.. and what factions anyway? EAR/post St.marks/nuyo? perf/visual/lang? David Cameron/Douglas Rothschild/India Hixon? There's a little _horror vacui_ people get looking at NY from the periphery. And then there's the total hostility everyone embodies as soon as they arrive. NY would be richer for your presence Chris (probably). Which usually means hey we're gonna bleed you dry...

The welcome wagon,
Jordan

[↑ Contents](#)

548. **H. T. KIRBY-SMITH**

Villanelle

Tue 24 Oct 1995

I have heard of poetry-writing workshops in which students were required to write a villanelle, as if to do so were some sort of necessary basic training. The Army used to require recruits to "duck-walk" great distances; then it turned out that this ruins people's knees.

All those complex forms originated in Romance languages at the time (1300-1550) when poetry was separating itself from music. The two art forms became too complex to work together, as they had previously in Church music and in troubadour songs. Because there are many more rhyme possibilities in these languages than in English, they were not all that hard to use, but nevertheless were highly artificial (in both good and bad senses).

Then the French revived them in the nineteenth century, as a form of Romantic medievalizing, somewhat as English poets revived ballads and folk songs. Then English poets (Dobson, Wilde, Swinburne) imitated what the French were doing. The oddest thing is that in America certain formalist poet/critics have latched onto these Romantic-revival forms as if they were traditional and "classical." Actually the best villanelles have been written by romantics like Dylan Thomas and Roethke.

My own feeling is that there are probably enough villanelles in the world to satisfy pent-up villanelle demand. The experimental formalism of May Swenson is much more exciting. But because you really have to work to see what she is up to--even when the poems are easy to read for other reasons--she attracts little attention. She's not even in the Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry. But that's OK. Just look at some of the anthologies published around 1910; along with a few recognizable names are scores of "important" figures long since consigned to oblivion.

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

[↑ Contents](#)

549. **Joe Amato**

Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities

Tue 24 Oct 1995

well permit me to be a bit promotional FOR jim (rosenberg): if part of what poets do is to explore and construct new forms, why then why not do so?... at

the risk of preaching to the choir (and why i feel i must is a thing worth considering), we should all, to the extent we have access to same, at least be willing to look with an informed eye at what's going down in the electronic world---cd rom, hypertext, html, what have you...

there are poets who still rage against the benefits of *this* medium, and perhaps it wasn't that long ago that some of us might have been a part of that resistance...

jim's own work, *intergrams* (eastgate quarterly review of hypertext volume 1, number 1) is most definitely worth checking out, as are (what i like to call) his liner notes, "openings: the connection direct, personal notes on poetics"... i found his re/dematerializing of text on the screen just fascinating... though i prefer the term multilinear to non-linear, in any case the work, as jim indicates, opens new structural possibilities...

i'd like mself to see more active interrogation of such work by folks on this list...

and of course i include mself in all we's & us's employed herein...

joe

[↑ Contents](#)

550. **Charles Alexander**
Re: informalism

Tue 24 Oct 1995

-- What's of interest, to me, is a poem that takes the ideological history of its own form as part of its formal workings -- a formal working like the semantic grinding Williams did on the word "rose" -- stripping off its old connotations so that it can be used to mean that (like "love") again -- never boring, no matter what you might hear --

I might argue that it's impossible NOT to take form in this way, but that it is just as valuable, and perhaps more, if the consideration of the ideological history, or other formal imperatives, are implicit rather than explicit.

Poems in "new" forms that do not take into consideration their own placement in the language and/of politics are, again to me, just as boring and reactionary as last week's workshop sestina --

Perhaps you do mean that one has to acknowledge such placement, rather than simply use it, which I would contest.

all best,
charles

[↑ Contents](#)

551. **Charles Alexander**
Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
Tue 24 Oct 1995

Terrific post by Jim Rosenberg, as are all of his comments on multimedia possibilities for language presentation.

*The thing that has excited me is the possibilities hypertext methods allow for word *structure*. Since my undergraduate days one of the things I've wanted to do with words is put them (literally) on top of one another. Painters juxtapose, composers put sounds on top of one another, there's no reason poets shouldn't do the same. But there's a problem: when you put words literally on top of one another, they tend to *interfere* to the point of unintelligibility -- regardless of whether you do it orally using simultaneous voices, or visually on the page. Interactive software methods allow you to put words on top of one another and *sacrifice nothing* in the way of intelligibility: using the mouse one can navigate the layers and read all the words, yet those words reside in the same place.*

This seems to me best done in print by layering of papers, including transparent or translucent ones. While it can probably be done with less expense with interactive software methods, there is something else with words on paper, which is the physical fact of language as tangible substance. I remain attracted to that, although not to the extent of being a luddite about other possibilities. Still, I think when one presents what hypertext and computer renditions can do with the visual/structural presentation of language, I think one needs to understand that all such possibilities at this time are innovative and highly experimental. Therefore, it may make more sense to contrast them not with standard printing/binding/book practices, but with innovative and experimental possibilities in such media.

charles

[↑ Contents](#)

552. **Judy Roitman**
Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
Tue 24 Oct 1995

Let me second Joe Amato -- Jim Rosenberg's stuff is terrific. You stroll through it, take your time, come back later, move across or up or down, or just burrow deeper into a particular spot on the page (whoops screen)... and screens connect to other screens..

Who else is doing this kind of stuff? I don't just mean using hypertext, I mean *really* using it.

[↑ Contents](#)

553. **Jim Rosenberg**
Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
Tue 24 Oct 1995

It's a bit difficult to respond to the postings on possibilities of hypertext for poetry without sounding blatantly self-promotional, since that's what I've been doing for about the last 8 years or so. All of my work runs only on the Mac at present, alas -- I'm hoping one of the promised tools for getting Hypercard stacks to run under Windows will materialize before I spend the work to port my stacks by hand into something like ToolBook. I have some snippets on my Web site, but they don't really convey what the actual work feels like.

The thing that has excited me is the possibilities hypertext methods allow for word **structure**. Since my undergraduate days one of the things I've wanted to do with words is put them (literally) on top of one another. Painters juxtapose, composers put sounds on top of one another, there's no reason poets shouldn't do the same. But there's a problem: when you put words literally on top of one another, they tend to **interfere** to the point of unintelligibility -- regardless of whether you do it orally using simultaneous voices, or visually on the page. Interactive software methods allow you to put words on top of one another and **sacrifice nothing** in the way of intelligibility: using the mouse one can navigate the layers and read all the words, yet those words reside in the same place.

Of course, to state the obvious: hypertext allows words to be brought together with **inherently** non-linear structure; what interests me about hypertext is not so much using hypertext to assemble linear documents but rather a poetry written directly in a non-linear structure. The possibilities truly are endless.

The word processor has arguably done a lot of damage to the cause of poetry; by making it so easy to enter words into the computer, the word processor disguises the fact that it is just as constraining as the typewriter. Graphics programs let the words be placed anywhere in the graphical space, and in that regard are much better, but best of all is completely interactive software like ToolBook or Hypercard.

I don't want to start a religious war but I have a lot of mixed feelings about HTML. The Web is **wonderful** as a community medium, but at the moment HTML provides virtually **nothing** in the way of artistic control over interface behavior. Java has a lot of promise as an interactive medium, but with (at the moment) a very steep learning curve. [Java is a programming language for Web applications created by Sun Microsystems, and Netscape is supporting it in their Web browsers.] What we really need is a cross- platform Hypercard-like front end to create Java applications. (Stay tuned, this will surely emerge.)

There is a whole Net community of hypertext writers and literary types, and we badly need more good writers. Here's hoping members of this list *do* take up hypertext!

--

Jim Rosenberg

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

CIS: 71515,124

WELL: jer

Internet: [REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

554. **Mark Roberts**

AWOL: SCARP magazine

Tue 24 Oct 1995

SCARP 27 is now available. It features poems by Coral Hull, John Kinsella, Andy Kissane, Shane McCauley, Deb Westbury and many more; plus short stories by John Millett, Lola Stewart, and Sue Saliba. As well, we feature an extract from John A Scott's next novel. There is also graphics and a review of recent poetry by Mark Roberts.

Now available from Gleebooks or the Faculty of Creative Arts, University of Wollongong, Northfields Avenue Wollongong 2522.

***** Australian Writing OnLine is a publicity and distribution service for Australian writers and publishers. For further information please email us at [REDACTED], write to AWOL PO Box 333 Concord NSW 2137 Australia, phone (02) [REDACTED] or fax (02) [REDACTED].

[↑ Contents](#)

555. **R I Caddel**

Re: Niedecker/Zukofsky

Tue 24 Oct 1995

Dear Dodie,

I know you're only kidding when you spell my name "Cadel". The write-down Niedecker movement has been big in its time, and has always included US and UK men and women who should've known better (and her supporters and publishers were also on occasions aghast at the circumstances of her life). Davie, I guess, was in the praise-with-faint-damns end of things, along with those who called her work "delicate" or "slight" or even "wispy" - but he wasn't alone. Hopefully that school's on the decline and more accurate readings are on the increase - and perhaps when there's a good edition of her work available, the Niedecker Vigilantes can stand down.

But because there IS still a current of "My God! How could anyone actually LIVE there?" - and because your slightly-parodied-revisioning was so complete, I'm afraid I linked your "sad little shack" and "poorness of the lives" (which are pretty disparaging phrases - this side of the Atlantic) to the more general malaise: hence the generalisation of my address. Sorry - but pleased to know the linkage was misplaced.

I've just got no idea how sad your dad's tool shed is. My dad's shed needs painting, but seems quite emotionally stable. Our own shed collapsed last week - couldn't take the strain...

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	

[↑ Contents](#)

556. **Joe Amato**
Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities

Tue 24 Oct 1995

charles, i agree with you about contrasting hypermedia etc. with innovative print practices---insofar as more formal considerations go... but part of what's at stake here is a matter of the publishing/distribution networks both of print work, innovative and otherwise, as well as electronic form...

by which i mean simply to say that there are publishing/distribution networks out there that define themselves in terms of practices that are stubbornly resistant to the formal innovations you or i may have in mind... and that the emergence of electronic form augurs (potentially now) a sea change simply because these selfsame print 'communities,' albeit resistant to print innovation per se, are now finding themselves incapable of resisting electronic 'intrusion' of one sort or another...

pardon my momentary evangelicalism, and not to 'bypass' any particular genre or form or press... but methinks there is much that can and should happen in more staid academic circles re innovation, and that the work coming out of same profits from "comparison" both with more innovative print work as well as emerging electronic form...

all best////

joe

[↑ Contents](#)

557. **Eryque Gleason**

Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities

Tue 24 Oct 1995

Tom Beard posted about his stuff a while ago, particularly "27" and I'll jsut add that i thought it was great. as i recall his page had some links to various other cumminglings of on-line hypertext stuff, probably a VERY useful place to start...

"27" is at <http://metcon.met.co.nz/nwfc/beard/www/notes27.html#readings>

his library is at <http://metcon.met.co.nz/nwfc/beard/www/library.html>

there's probably links to at least two dozen on-line journals and other publications, many of which are good *hypertext* as opposed to good html. (i make the distinction between hypertext and html, many people don't. when i type hypertext, i'm talking about the content, html is the code implementing that content)

at any rate, Jim Rosenberg's stuff, along with Tom Beard's stuff make for a good primer of sorts....

_____!	
Eryque "Just call me Eric" Gleason	If I weren't a monkey, there'd
71 E. 32nd St. Box 949	be problems.
Chicago, IL 60616	
██████████	
██████████	

[↑ Contents](#)

558. **Ken Edwards**

Terry Riley/Olson

Tue 24 Oct 1995

Like Herb Levy, I was intrigued by the forthcoming performance at the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival of Terry Riley's Olson III - not least because I'm supposed to be performing in it! In one of my other lifetimes I work with a group called Contemporary Music Making for Amateurs, which will be performing the piece on 18 November.

So far I the only information I have is that it is a piece for chorus (not necessarily trained voices) and was written as a companion to In C, but has only been performed once before (presumably in the 1960s, when it was written). I hope to find out more in the next few days - including whether there is a connection with Charles Olson - and will report back.

- Ken

[↑ Contents](#)

559. **Kenneth Sherwood**

Open Letter to Mark Wallace

Wed 25 Oct 1995

-=-----

Open letter to Mark Wallace

Of course you already know the answer to your question, that of course no FORMS in themselves are BAD. What you really want to know is why self-defined 'experimentalists' react so badly towards the notion of writing within 'traditional forms.'

Here are two possible reasons: (1) In these Post-Projective-Verse times (and, really Mark, this is the only 'post' I'm going to admit) the interest in open field leads to a prejudice towards open form. As in: Free Love Free Mandela Free Verse!

We know that the same 'presentational' possibility (poem as act of instant rather than twice removed thought about) can be achieved in sonnet, but we imagine many of those sonneteers are making themselves after a different image (hold a mirror up to nature).

Reason (2) is frank annoyance on part of self-proclaimed experimentalists at the ease with which sonneteers and their peers proceed in poetizing their prose with the filigree markers of 'traditional poetry.'

Neither position defensible, exactly--the latter particularly, recalls Wystan's point that, on some level, the self-marginalizing experimentalists really just want to be loved as much as Amy Clampitt or Donald Hall.

Hugs,

Ken

(p.s. I feel more victimized by the Possum's Sonnets than by High Theory)

[↑ Contents](#)

560. **Spencer Selby**

mag list update

Wed 25 Oct 1995

Charles has asked me to post an update of my mag list to POETICS, and I am happy to comply. Please send info about possible additions, address changes or mags which have folded.

U.S. MAGAZINES ### ABACUS, Peter Ganick, 181 Edgemont Ave, Elmwood CT 06110 ### AERIAL, Rod Smith, Box 25642, Wash D.C. 20007 ### ALEA, Tom Epstein, 296 Cole Ave, Providence RI 02906 ### AMERICAN LETTERS AND COMMENTARY, 850 Park Avenue Suite 5B, NY NY 10021 ### ANT,ANT,ANT,ANT,ANT, Box 16177, Oakland CA 94610 ### ANTENYM, Steve Carll, 106 Fair Oaks #3, San Francisco CA 94110 ### APEX OF THE M, Box 247, Buffalo NY 14213 ### ARRAS, Brian Kim Stefans, 141 West Newell Ave, Rutherford NJ 07070 ### ARSHILE, Mark Salerno, Box 3749, L.A. CA 90078 ### ATELIER, Sarah Jensen, Box 580, Boston MA 02117 ### AVEC, Cydney Chadwick, Box 1059, Pennngrove CA 94951 ### B CITY, Connie Deanovich, 517 North Fourth St, Dekalb IL 60115 ### BALLPEEN, Box 55892, Fondren Station, Jackson MS 39296 ### BASURA, Kent Gowran, Box 3232 Aurora IL 60504 ### BIG ALLIS, 136 Morgan St., Oberlin OH 44070 ### BLADES, 182 Orchard Rd, Newark DE 19711 ### BLUE RYDER, Ken Wagner, Box 587, Olean NY 14760 ### THE BOMB, Ben Baxter, 1671 Cowlitz Ave, St Helens OR 97051 ### BOMBAY GIN, Naropa Institute, 2130 Arapahoe Ave, Boulder CO 80302 ### BULLHEAD, Joe Napora, 2205 Moore St, Ashland KY 41101 ### CALIBAN, Lawrence Smith, Box 561, Laguna Beach CA 92652 ### CAMELLIA, Tomer Inbar, Box 417 Village Station, N.Y. NY 10014 ### CATHAY, 11 Slater Ave, Providence RI 02906 ### CENTRAL PARK, Stephen Paul Martin, Eve Ensler, Box 1446 NY NY 10023 ### CHAIN, Juliana Spahr, Jena Osman, 107 14th St, Buffalo NY 14213 ### CLWN WR, Box 2165, Church St Station, NY NY 10008 ### COMPOUND EYE, Ange Mlinko, 52 Park St #3, Somerville MA 02143 ### CONJUNCTIONS, Bradford Morrow, 33 W. 9th St., NY NY 10011 ### COTTON GIN, Chris Stafford 3408 Burlington Rd., Greensboro NC 27405 ### CROTON BUG, Bob Harrison, Box 11166, Milwaukee WI 53211 ### CYANOSIS, Darin De Stefano, 309 Judah #310, San Francisco CA 94122 ### DENVER QUARTERLY, Bin Ramke, Dept of English, U. of Denver, Denver CO 80208 ### DIE YOUNG, Skip Fox, English Dept, Univ. of Southwestern Louisiana, Lafayette LA 70504 ### DREAMTIME TALKING MAIL, Rt 1 Box 131, Lafarge WI 54639 ### 90025 ### DROP FORGE, Sean Winchester, PO Box 7237, Reno NV 98510 ### EL-E-PHANT, Sun & Moon Press, 6026 Wilshire Blvd, L.A. CA 90036 ### EXILE, 149 Virginia St #7, St Paul MN 55102 ### EXPERIODICIST, Jake Berry, Box 3112, Florence AL 35630 ### THE CORPSE, Box 25051, Baton Rouge LA 70894 ### FIRST INTENSITY, Lee Chapman, Box 140713, Staten Island NY 10314 ### FISH WRAP, 921 1/2 24th Ave, Seattle WA 98122 ### FIVE FINGERS REVIEW, Box 15426, San Francisco CA 94115 ### FOUND STREET, Larry Tomoyasu, 2260 S. Ferdinand Ave., Monterey Park CA 91754 ### GENERATOR, John Byrum, 3203 W. 14th St, Apt 13, Cleveland OH 44109 ### GLOBAL MAIL, Ashley Parher Owens, Box 597996, Chicago IL 60659 ### GRIST ON-LINE, Box 20805, Columbus Circle Station, New York NY 10023

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Center International de Poesie Marseille, Couvent du Refuge, 1 rue des
Honneurs, 13002 Marseille, France ### LEOPOLD BLOOM, Vaci M. u. 52. II.
9., Szombathely, 9700 Hungary ### MAGYAR MUHELY, Tibor Papp, 40 Rue
Pascal, 75013 Paris France ### MANDORLA, Roberto Tejada, Apartado postal
5-366, Mexico D.F., Mexico 06500, ### MANI ART, Pascal Lenoir, 11 Ruelle
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& LOLA FISH, Bruno Pommey, 10 Residence Jean Mace, 28300 Mainvilliers,
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Germany ### SPORT, Box 11-806, Wellington, New Zealand ### TABOO
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TERAZ MOWIE, Hartmut Andryczuk, postlagernd, 12154 Berlin, Germany
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Argentina ### ZOOM-ZOUM, Josee Lapeyrere, 4 rue des Carmes, 75005 Paris,
France ### The preceding list is based on the research and judgments of
Spencer Selby. The term "experimental" is not meant as a characterization of
anyone's specific editorial focus or perspective. Please circulate, and mail
possible additions, deletions, address changes or other comments to Spencer
Selby, P.O. Box 590095, San Francisco CA 94159, U.S.A. email: [REDACTED] fax:
[REDACTED]

This is list #25, dated 10/95 ###

[↑ Contents](#)

561. **Ron Silliman**

Metroplexities

Wed 25 Oct 1995

Philadelphia, hmmm? After 5 months, I have been to exactly two readings, one of which I was part of. I'm aware of a third (in Camden actually) that I would have liked to have gotten to. But it does seem to be a pretty quiet scene. Although there are some very fine poets here whose work should be more broadly known--Julia Blumenreich, Phyllis Wat, Eli Goldblatt, Heather Thomas,

Alicia Askenase, Gil Ott, for example--I think that the "pull" of NYC on a younger poet must be pretty strong. One has to look at who lives here and why. Bob Perelman, Toby Olson, Rachel Blau DuPlessis, and Goldblatt, for example, all have teaching jobs that have brought or kept them here. Ott was a local who returned from San Francisco (Bollinas, really) after health problems required him to spend some time back at his parents, got involved in the Painted Bride (which just laid him off after 15 years of service in a downsizing effort that seems spectacularly dunder-headed) and developed that entire scene. I first met Blumenreich when she was a student, another local person. She stayed and married Gil, but seems to be the sort of person who under other circumstances would have seriously thought of moving somewhere that provided better access to a larger scene. I've met exactly one "student poet," Joshua Schuster. In all, what I have at this point are impressions. I must say that the reading Rae Armantrout gave at Penn was well attended, although almost exclusively by students and faculty at that school. When I read at Temple in early '94, I similarly got a great audience, which was doubly amazing since it was on short notice, my first attempt having been thwarted when the school (and city) shut down due to an ice storm. They don't deal with winter as easily as the folks in Buffalo, I must say.

I must say, though, that Philly is a very pleasant, interesting, varied city, and the countryside to the west (where I am) is spectacularly beautiful. I miss people and some bookstores from the Bay Area (notably SPD) but otherwise, I'm happy as a clam.

Other cities on the East Coast surprise me more than Philadelphia. For example, Boston has been by far the least hospitable city for the post-New American poetries of any large scene imaginable. Last time I checked, Charles Bernstein and I had each given exactly one reading there (mine was in Bill Corbett's house), compared to the three I've given in Philadelphia, the two in DC, etc. Baltimore is another city that has several writers, but seems very quiet. Rod Smith and Mark Wallace seem determined to make DC interesting (and appear to be doing a very good job thereof). But Wilmington? Why have I never met a poet who lived in Wilmington?

Ron

[↑ Contents](#)

562. **R I Caddel**

The Nasty Niedecker Man Again

Wed 25 Oct 1995

Dear Kevin - and anyone else who I've unwittingly offended -

I'm a bit worried about the "think of us" routine, since it suggests that I've tried to put down all American LN readers/readings in one bag. I haven't. I'm also concerned that a note of UK/US divisiveness creeps in at this point, which again, isn't supported by anything I've written. I don't think it's so simple as to say, UK sees it thus; US sees it thus, nor have I ever tried to imply that. Nor, I'm afraid, did I ever get round to proposing "my" reading of the place: what I did comment on, in fact, was how difficult a good take on the place would be.

"Unblinkered" to me would mean a reading which didn't just propose one take on the place (as in: the poverty! the sadness! let's move to NY) but tried to see what more there is to it than that (blinkers, you know, are what people put on horses to make them look in one direction). Nothing's ever comprehensive, of course, but when we've totted up the pain & suffering in LN's work, we recognise that there's more to it than that: an affirmation, even a celebration. That needs to be said. So, a reading of the place which doesn't say that risks being considered "unsupportable", "failing" etc. "Unwitting" acknowledges that perhaps that's not deliberate, as in the heading of this posting.

Yes, we're all tourists, zipping around and taking snapshots. But those snapshots can be misleading (a) about the snappee, and (b) about the snapper. John Barrell made this point, writing about Clare, who so singularly wrote out of one place, even after it had gone forever, and who was constantly faced with incomprehension over his concerns to celebrate social and physical environment, at whatever price. Hence my Clare/ Niedecker comparison. Snapshots don't carry enough depth for complex subjects.

I'm going to be off-list for a few days, and would like not to leave bad feeling behind me - so - Sorry to Dodie and Kevin and anyone else, wherever they may be, if anything I've said offended. I hope I've cleared it up.

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	"right down among em
x x the folk from whom all poetry flows	x x	and
dreadfully much else."	x x	- Lorine Niedecker
x x	x	

[↑ Contents](#)

563. **John Cayley**

Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities

Wed 25 Oct 1995

Yes, Jim's fine, pioneering work, including his notes and essays on non/multi-linear poetics, are a necessary reference here.

I've also been working, on and off, in this area since the personal computer first became available, and my web-site (see below) has some explanatory material. To self-promote, I now have now several self-published Macintosh disks which make non-trivial use of the medium of a computer-based cybertext systems to present poetic work.

There is a *lot* that can be done. But poets/writers will have to come to grips with software, to 'press the reveal code key' as I would have it [quoting something that has been written to, hopefully, appear elsewhere]: 'Each term of the writer/reader/programmer triangle is a shifter. Just as writer may be reader and reader, writer in current (post-modern) critical perspectives, so either of these absent agents may be programmers: systematic manipulators of text and intertext, making use of software which has become intimate with poetics. Poets and readers must become intimate with software. They must press the "Reveal Code" key.'

For (an obvious) example: 'Scoring' a (silent) reading so that words, phrases etc. appear on the screen in positions composed/specified by an author, and at speeds and with pauses which are as she hears them with her inner ear -- this is something that is fairly easy to set up on modern computer systems. I made a software harness for HyperCard on the Mac which allows you take a text, arrange the words on the screen(s), set speeds at which they appear (rightwards-scrollingly), set pauses between words / phrases/ lines / screens; set multiple orders in which the words appear, and are erased, etc. etc. This system is a usable but unfinished piece of software (unfinished -- as a software publication *tool*, tho' separate pieces using it exist, especially *wine flying* (1988) <<http://www.inforamp.net/~cayley/wshome.html#KINETIC>> -- because I quickly became more interested in quasi-aleatory text generation). But if it was ever finished, it could be used to 'publish' anyone's work; anyone who wanted to score a series of silent readings of appropriate pieces in this way. [If some institution give me a grant to finish the software, ho ho, and someone was willing to help edit an anthology of scored pieces by innovative poets -- well, there aren't too many projects I'd rather undertake.]

Charles B. said we should announce new 'books', so apologies for continuing with this shameless self-promotion. My latest is:

The Speaking Clock

... with acknowledgements to Emmett Williams's 'Poetry Clock' and, more specifically, to John Christie's mechanical 'Word Clocks' ... however this (silent) speaking clock in software both composes from a given text according to quasi-aleatory procedures and actually tells the 'real time':

"What if it was impossible to apply a single name from a finite set to a moment which seems to recur in an acknowledged cycle of time? What if it was

impossible to apply the word 'dawn' to more than one single instant at the beginning of some one particular day?" -- from the given text.

1 x 1.4 Mb disk, for Apple Macintosh with HyperCard or HyperCard Player 2.x
GBP 5.95 (us\$11.95) -- can be supplied as shareware over the net (as an email attachment) ISBN 0 948454 26 1

Finally, a forthcoming issue of *_Visible Language_* edited by Eduardo Kac, will be devoted to "New Poetry, New Media -- Experimental Poetics and Technological Innovation", and will included a piece by Jim Rosenberg.

- - - - -

John Cayley Wellsweep Press [in Chinese HZ:]

^ fine, innovative literary translation from Chinese ^

1 Grove End House 150 Highgate Road London NW5 1PD UK

Tel & Fax: 0 [REDACTED] Email: [REDACTED]

1995 URLs: <http://www.inforamp.net/~cayley> [= home]

+ [/wshome.html](#) [= Wellsweep]

+ [/inhome.html](#) [= Indra's Net]

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[↑ Contents](#)

564. **Larry Price**

Villon's Snow (still falling)

Wed 25 Oct 1995

The difficulty I'm having with the discussion of theory and form is the apparent assumption that they are isolable. In this model (as with the recent poetry and politics discussion - "politics is only one possible hobby amongst many") it seems as though theory is being treated as a kind of fetishized content to sprinkle over and enliven otherwise mundane and static forms. But - following up on Charles Alexander's post - I can't now finish a poem that doesn't take up "the ideological history of its own form as part of its formal workings." And ideological future for that matter, although I wouldn't insist that it be "implicit rather than explicit," since, as with Zizek, there is no dirty little secret, no missing X of reality that the ideological veils. In this concern, at least, ideology IS the real. The state IS because it is a form of life (in Wittgenstein's term). And if the tent poles change, so does the tent. That fact doesn't make me forget the other fact of their contradictory status (as alienated forms). As Ron implied some time ago (or should have), it is precisely their material contradictions that make poems important. To paraphrase: "It is because they are contradictory that they must be written." But the other side of this, which Rod Smith pointed out in his post, is the critical and participatory moment, the feedback through method or ascesis. For example, in the last few days, I followed this chain: Ed

Foster (concerning Dickinson's dashes) remarked upon the fallen status of the dash (as now designating the merely parenthetical, a paradigmatic parallel or restatement). It occurs to me then that Dickinson's dashes aren't noemic at all, but distributional (as opposed to integrative, in Culler's terms). This sent me back to my notes from Culler where I found my own early mis-reading of Bruce Andrews as "about" paradigm, whereas now, in light of the Kula gift ring shard posted by cris cheek, I might read Bruce as distributional, the accrual of significations (to the artifact and not the artificer) in the "progress" from island to island in Bruce's projected oceanic paradise of language, which accrual, because of the feedback, forces lexical change both in the artifact and reading. The idea that signification ACCRUES through circulation has implications for form. Form may initiate circulation, but circulation ensures a surplus, an eventual excess meaning. And as that pressure builds, the lexical shift must occur. Among other changes, it can be a shift in the way signification is distributed among the iconic counters, which again, I assume, can cause shifts in the directions and kinds of their literal mobility, their use. So, yes, a text can be VERY responsible for what can be done with it. An author may not be. For as Sweet William also said, "Uh-oh, somebody's been fuckin' with my mummy again."

Larry Price

[↑ Contents](#)

565. **H. T. KIRBY-SMITH**

May Swenson

Wed 25 Oct 1995

Well, just to start with, one that I think of as an Old Favorite, "Cat and the Weather."

When you first read this you think you have a latter-day imagist poem, and in fact it has a lot in common with poems by Amy Lowell and especially H. D. That is, you see that cat on that windowsill with that snow coming down on that particular day in that particular place, and the lines of the poem seem broken so as to intensify the focus. And visual focus is extremely important in her poems. I "saw" the Piazza San Marco more vividly in one of her poems than I can see it while standing there, overwhelmed with pigeons and architectural detail.

But then if you listen to her poems you usually hear the complex audible structure. It varies from poem to poem but it IS structure--not just the random jotting that it looks like at first.

The three poems in The Harper Anthology of Poetry make a good beginning.

Maybe when I have time I can key in some poems. *_Half Sun Half Sleep_* is a fine volume. *_To Merge With Time_* included a broad sweep of her work.

She did at one point get a little too caught up in concrete or shaped poems, but even there it's usually more than just typing out the words so they look like a swan--as Hollander did. I mean, if you study the shape you see there's more to it than it seems at first. In "How Eeverything Happens: A Study of the Wave" at first you think, well, OK, it's like a wave. Then you see that implied in the poem are everything from quantum theory to emotional cycles.

But you have to take time to get to know the poems. It's not performance poetry or experiential onrush. There's movement but there is also a lot of stasis. I can imagine getting some pleasure out of riding past a long series of Pollock paintings on a motorbike, but I can't imagine doing a Monet show that way.

To some extent her strategies were a way of achieving this focus or stasis--they slowed her down. But I never feel that the poems are over-articulated or too gimmicky, because in the end the focus is outside herself even when it's inside herself (I mean, as when she writes about the effect of novocaine after a dentist visit).

(This posting is in response to an inquiry from Chris Stroffolino).

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

[↑ Contents](#)

566. **Gale Nelson**

Re: Metroplexities

Wed 25 Oct 1995

Ron,

It's always nice to see Providence become invisible once again. We have only the likes of Keith & Rosmarie Waldrop, C.D. Wright & Forrest Gander, Ray Ragosta, Craig Watson (when he's not in China, Australia, South Africa or Malaysia), Tom Ahern, Mark McMorris, Jennifer Moxley, Patrick Phillips, Ray Jordan, A.W. Gregoire, Michael Harper, Edwin Honig, Randy & Mutlu Blasing, Nancy Donegan, Jan Cal, Xue Di, Meng Lang, Catherine Imbriglio [with recent leavings including Lee Ann Brown, Peter Gizzi, LeAnn Jacobs & Elizabeth Willis] among the non-student poetry community; with fiction writers Robert Coover, Carole Maso, Robert Arellano, Lori Baker, Gita Brown, Alison Bundy, Donald Judson, Meredith Steinbach, Shay Youngblood comprising a corner of the prose writers in town (not to mention playwrights Eliza Anderson, Debbie Baley,

Aishah Rahman, Paula Vogel, Adam Bock, etc.) -- and an ever-changing group of dynamic graduate _and_ undergraduate poets, fiction writers, etc (one recent graduate, Aaron Kunin, is now at Duke pursuing a PhD -- his honors thesis was a tremendous, intelligent piece of writing).

Excuse the plug for the home ground, Ron. It may not be Paradise, but it _is_ where _Paradise_ was lovingly published.

Cheers,

Gale Nelson

[↑ Contents](#)

567. **Edward Foster**

Re: mag list update

Wed 25 Oct 1995

spencer: for your mag list update, please note talisman's address is now:

P.O. Box 3157

Jersey City, NJ 07303-3157

[↑ Contents](#)

568. **Jim Rosenberg**

Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities

Wed 25 Oct 1995

Thanks one and all for the many kind words. While we're handing out recommendations, I'd like to speak for John Cayley's work, which I find simply stunning. John does a very different kind of work than I do, using algorithms to generate text on-the-fly from things in the poem that have already happened. He's also doing some really provocative things with time, with having words appear in different places on the screen at the same time.

Charles Alexander:

- > This seems to me best done in print by layering of papers, including
- > transparent or translucent ones. While it can probably be done with less
- > expense with interactive software methods, there is something else with
- > words on paper, which is the physical fact of language as tangible
- > substance.

Interesting you should mention this -- I support the idea of using physical media 100%. One thing I think I would do if I were teaching a course in hypertext writing is to give one assignment to make a hypertext without using the computer at all. As attractive as the computer is in many respects, it is also easy to get sidetracked by whatever off-the-shelf abstractions the particular

software package you're using has built in, rather than focusing on exactly what you want to accomplish aesthetically. Physical media let you execute ideas more directly. Struggling with physical media is a good way to become clear on what you want to do when you do sit down with software.

I was fascinated to learn from Cathy Marshall, who is one of the leading hypertext researchers (and whose ideas parallel mine in a lot of truly uncanny ways) that she got started in hypertext using physical models -- pasting words onto the kind of chemical models used to display the structure of molecules.

Word installations is another area where there is a whole infinitude of possibilities to be explored. The page can be literally any possible space. I have a lot of nostalgia for the two installations I did back in the 70s.

One thing the computer does bring to the table is that it makes it very easy to reproduce the work once you're done. Using (say) transparent plastic sheets is a lot easier to do in an original one-off work than in an edition. The computer also brings some difficult *problems* to the table. Given the rapid pace of change in the computer industry, how easy will it be to find a computer 50 years from now that can run today's computer poetry? Whose burden is it to be sure there's a way to display the work? A lot of questions to be answered.

--

Jim Rosenberg

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[↑ Contents](#)

569. **Willa Jarnagin**

Re: Metroplexities

Wed 25 Oct 1995

On Wed, 25 Oct 1995, Ron Silliman wrote:

Other cities on the East Coast surprise me more than Philadelphia. For example, Boston has been by far the least hospitable city for the post-New American poetries of any large scene imaginable. Last time I checked, Charles Bernstein and I had each given exactly one reading there (mine was in Bill Corbett's house)....

Well, I suppose this the perfect opportunity to plug the reading series I and Eric Malone are starting in Boston. "CellarDoor" will give poets a place to read outside the university scene that's stuffed into every corner of this city (please pay no attention to my Harvard email address; I only work here like many other

Somervillites). Our first reader is Bill Corbett (speaking of Bill...) on OCTOBER 29, 2:00, at the Bookcellar Cafe, 1971 Mass. Ave, Cambridge.

Ron, have you heard of Word of Mouth, the Boston series run by Michael Franco for the past 8 years, in which Robin Blaser, Kevin Killian, Dodie Bellamy, Anne Waldman, Ed Foster and many others read? Word of Mouth has ended (at least for a while) so Eric and I started CellarDoor to fill the void.

Poets on this list, if you ever come to Boston, please let me know so we can arrange to give you a reading!! Email me or write me at 51 Laurel St. #3, Somerville MA 02143.

Willa Jarnagin

[↑ Contents](#)

570. **Beth Russell**

wagering poetics

Wed 25 Oct 1995

Poetics list, I was wondering if there were any poets/writers/creators/thinkers/ or _pockets_ of poets who are currently working in the medium of _chance_ (operations, etc.)-aside from those relatively established already. Specifically, i'm interested in researching these things as it relates to current technologies- the _place_ or position of poetries/art w/in the technically emergent world/locus. Even more to the point, is there anyone out there who is currently _performing_ aleatory-poetics, etc., aside from figures such as MacLow, Burroughs (Cage), etc. and moreso, are they using technological mediums and how are they relating it to performance, chance, etc.?

thanks, beth

[↑ Contents](#)

571. **Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco**

Complex city/ scene- ery

Wed 25 Oct 1995

I would be interested in hearing from older poets with more experience about what their visions for an ideal "poetry scene" in any city might be. I've lived in Philadelphia recently and considered "the scene" as the people comprising the audience who showed up for Ron's reading on Walnut Street one night; or, away from university sponsored events, the crowd who attended Yusef Komunyakha's reading at the Painted Bride just a month and a mile or so apart. More recently, I got to know many of the people Gale Nelson lists as residing in Providence when I was living in the Ocean State last year. The events I was

able to get to were sponsored by Brown, but that didn't make them any less pleasant. (Of course both cities have their share of presses and magazines, but they are more like props in the scene).

Staying as vague as possible: I thought both cities were wonderful.

What should be the basic function of a poetry scene? Formal and informal interaction among poets? What else? Is an academic environment more ideal or less ideal than, say, an arts center? What about the larger environment- a "city of the corporations?" which neither Philly nor Providence are, or a city where the poets are mainly found on a campus?

I've been in Boston for six months and have met precious few (read: 2) poets. Can anybody offer any encouraging insight into this place?

daniel_bouchard @ hmco.com

[↑ Contents](#)

572. **Timothy Liu**

Re: Metroplexities

Wed 25 Oct 1995

Ron & Co.:

If it's Wilmington, NC, the poet Michael White teaches out there at UNCC. Doesn't seem like there's a lot of experimental writing or readings going on out there, although Black Mountain and Jonathan Williams are nearby . . .

I'm new to POETICS, so I suppose I'm losing my virginity with this post!

Two things on my mind. As poets, do we only apply for jobs in places we'd like to live or do we take what we can get, relying on cyberspace to compensate for the outposts that we eventually find ourselves stationed at? I've been living out here in Mt. Vernon (IA) since '94, and were it not for Eastern Iowa's cultural mecca of Iowa City, I'd be goin nuts. Trips to Chicago do help, but now, as I scan the latest job listings, it seems that only the jobs that provide an upgrade in location have any appeal. And access to the internet seems vital!

Secondly, and this is for Chris S., did Tate's workshop or the program at UMass Amherst provide a space for you to write in or was it finally unacceptable? Did a fellowship lure you there? As a graduate student, I was willing to study at whatever program would give me enough money to get by and write. I wonder if post-graduates aren't forced to do the same kind of dance.

Timothy Liu

[↑ Contents](#)

573. **Robert Drake**

Re: Situation #10

Wed 25 Oct 1995

mark--

actually, this sis re: the forms thread... i'll send you a couple of things i've put out, one is a collaboratin sonnett & the other a chap hat has some sonnetts in it. not sure if either would count thmselves avantgard & so not sure if it fits yr line of questioning, but would be interested to hear what ch y think...

got a not from WITZ (chris renner? i think, couldnt read the handwriting & havnt checked my records), saying he'd be interested in running a review of mark ducharmes book; you'd mentioned praps being up for such? if so , let me know, if you kneed the address, and would be greatly appreciated...

writ frm work, where the textedit nor delete key works... but i do.

allbest

luigi

[↑ Contents](#)

574. **Alan Golding**

Maria (D.)

Wed 25 Oct 1995

Associate Professor of English, U. of Louisville

Phone: [REDACTED]; e-mail: [REDACTED]

Sorry to use public space for a private note, but . . .

Maria (Damon): Are you out there? I wrote you backchannel a while (week?) ago and am not sure it went through, wonder if I have your address right, etc.

Alan

[↑ Contents](#)

575. **Jonathan Brannen**

Re: Wallace and fiscal poetry

Wed 25 Oct 1995

(money is also a kind of poetry)

Tenney,

Since when? To whom? I can relate to neither this concept of money nor

this concept of poetry.

*Best of all possible worlds,
Jonathan Brannen*

says Wallace Stevens, and as I think Ed Foster remarked sardonically (through a typo though?) if anyone's should know, it wd be Wallace (of the far-flung surprise Christmas box). Thinking, say, of all those lush fruits in "St Agnes Eve" etc. Imagination etc. There are also a couple of funny moments in Emerson where he says he hates the drudgery of the worker (and cf. American Scholar the truncated hand etc) but loves the bold imagination of the inventive capitalist & so on: pretty much equates capital w Imagination or Reason, drudge work w Understanding. I can't remember why it seemed apposite to quote Stevens, w some bemusement as I vaguely recall, but it did.

Tenney

Tenney,

My questions were rhetorical. Saying that money is poetry is the same kind of chicanery as calling a missile with a nuclear war-head a Peace-Keeper. Ed is probably right, Wally, no doubt, had a better understanding of the machinations of money than Waldo did of the drudgery of workers (at that time in Emerson's vicinity, they would most likely have been textile workers, an industry which then relied almost exclusively on child labor, mostly females who typically began their "careers" at age seven or eight and rarely lived beyond their teens because of lung disease and other work place hazards).

If "money is a kind of poetry" then perhaps those dashes that Emily Dickinson used are actually be coded messages from an alien civilization.

Best regards,
Jonathan

[↑ Contents](#)

576. **Burt Kimmelman**
poetry with a tech slant: anthology
Wed 25 Oct 1995

Some of you may recall that last summer I solicited your help in throwing a course together I am to teach this spring: 20th century technology and esthetics. I'm now closer to a syllabus but I need your help again (and forgive the redundancy quotient here if any): is there an anthology that contains the

following poets: WCW, Hart Crane, LZ, Oppen, Bronk, MacLow, Cage, Ronald Johnson. You will note the absence of women on this list. I will not go forward without some women poets. But who? Someone mentioned Kathy Acker. How about Susan Howe (not really)? Joan Retelllack maybe?

But anyway, I would very much like to order an anthology (rather than make up my own) if I can find one that's serviceable. I plan to use Perloff's *The Futurist Moment* and Steinman's *Made in America* as companion pieces (as well as other books though the others are not concerned with poetry necessarily).

Thank you for your help (again),

Burt Kimmelman
Humanities
NJIT
Newark, NJ 07102
[REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

577. **Scott Pound**

McCaffery & MacCormack Buffalo Reading

Wed 25 Oct 1995

READING

CHARLES BERNSTEIN
STEVE McCAFFERY
KAREN MacCORMACK

will read from their work on Thurs., November 16, 1995

(8 PM) at BIG ORBIT GALLERY, 30 Essex Street

Buffalo, NY

Steve McCaffery will read at the Center for the Arts

SUNY-BUFFALO

on Wednesday, November 15 at 4pm

[↑ Contents](#)

578. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Metroplexities

Wed 25 Oct 1995

*As poets, do we only apply for jobs in
places we'd like to live or do we take what we can get, relying
on cyberspace to compensate for the outposts that we eventually find
ourselves stationed at?*

Timothy Liu

My feeling is that as a poet I try and create my job. I haven't heard of any job I can apply for to be a poet (believing that being a poet is not by any means the same thing as teaching poetry). So, whether it's getting involved in teaching, or nonprofit organizations, or freelance writing, or design, or business of various sorts, it seems to me if one wants to be somewhere in particular, she or he can do that. Taking "what we can get" seems an odd concept.

charles

[↑ Contents](#)

579. **david ayre**

fleet'n greet'ns

Wed 25 Jan 1995

Hey info friends !

for those of you with WWW access, i've been working
on a canadian WWW poetics network linking writers and
their work with publishers/journals-mags/bookstores-
libraries..

It's still under constructions but currently
there is information on the following journals:

West Coast Line

Open Letter

Raddle Moon + others

and the following presses:

Talon Books,

Tsunami Editions/New Star Press,

Oolichan books

Arsenal Pulp

ECW

Caitlin

The Eternal Network +others

+ info on British Columbian small bookstores...

Still under construction is a forum section where users can create their own forum topics to which users can enter their discussions + info and works by Canadian writers...

gotta flee !

avid deary

[↑ Contents](#)

580. **david ayre**

oops

Wed 25 Jan 1995

after all that, i forgot the address...

<http://www.wimsey.com/~ksw/pnet/pnet.htm>

note: there is no letter "l" after ".htm"

exit stage left -----> }

}

<----- }

[↑ Contents](#)

581. **Gabrielle Welford**

Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities

Thu 26 Oct 1995

On Tue, 24 Oct 1995, Jim Rosenberg wrote:

> The thing that has excited me is the possibilities hypertext methods allow
> for word *structure*. Since my undergraduate days one of the things I've
> wanted to do with words is put them (literally) on top of one another.
> Painters juxtapose, composers put sounds on top of one another, there's no
> reason poets shouldn't do the same. But there's a problem: when you put
> words literally on top of one another, they tend to *interfere* to the point
> of unintelligibility -- regardless of whether you do it orally using
> simultaneous voices, or visually on the page. Interactive software methods
> allow you to put words on top of one another and *sacrifice nothing* in the
> way of intelligibility: using the mouse one can navigate the layers and read
> all the words, yet those words reside in the same place.
>

Great! This is something I've been wanting to do for some time and was trying to figure out ways to physically look through words into other

words underneath by doing something like a pop-up books, but I've never had time. The thing that bothers me about hypertext (which I've never used, so I may be talking up a grass snoot) is the time element. You wouldn't actually be looking simultaneously through one word at another. There'd be a time lapse wouldn't there?

Gabrielle

[↑ Contents](#)

582. **Ron Silliman**

Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities

Thu 26 Oct 1995

Jim Rosenberg is absolutely right:

>The computer also brings some difficult *problems* to the table.

Given the rapid pace of change in the computer industry, how easy will it be to find a computer 50 years from now that can run today's computer poetry? Whose burden is it to be sure there's a way to display the work? A lot of questions to be answered.

My sense is that any work in hypertext that is good would be good writing in an absolutely hide-bound traditional print format. Consider how great Blake can seem evn when removed from the illumined manuscript.

Also, the word on the street is that the archivists are avoiding collecting disks of manuscripts like the plague, even though in many programs you could tell, for example, how many levels of revision (and length of composition) were involved.

If you get one of the those greeting cards that plays a tune when opened, it's using a chip that has more computing capacity than the US military had for all of WW2. In 2025, the average laptop (if that form is still popular) will almost certainly have more power than is contained in all of silicon valley.

These tools at hand are still very primitive, if we just envision what they will look like in 100 years. (The typewriter was an invention of the Civil War, a means of bringing reports home from the front, which is why/how Remington, a rifle manufacturer, got involved. The internet was conceived as a means of decentralizing the national computing architecture so that it would survive WW3. Then it took off on its own.)

Ron

[↑ Contents](#)

583. **Ron Silliman**
Upper Limit Atlanta
Thu 26 Oct 1995

Nobody here has commented on how much Cleveland's great second baseman Carlos Baerga looks like Aldon Nielson, so I will be the first. (This at least with my trifocals off.)

Last chance to watch Carlos tonight on the telly.

Ron

[↑ Contents](#)

584. **Ron Silliman**
Re: fleet'n greet'ns
Thu 26 Oct 1995

David, re your post:

>Hey info friends !

>

>for those of you with WWW access, i've been working

>on a canadian WWW poetics network linking writers and

>their work with publishers/journals-mags/bookstores-

>libraries..

>

>It's still under constructions

What is the URL???

Ron Silliman

[↑ Contents](#)

585. **Joe Amato**
Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities
Thu 26 Oct 1995

i think ron, via jim, is absolutely correct in pointing to the tinkertoy technologies represented by computer-authoring programs when looked through the lens of just a decade or two hence... within even ten years, chip technology (rated, say, in equiv. numbers of transistors per) will be many orders of magnitude beyond what it is today...

i would simply like to add that this does NOT mean (nor do i take ron or jim as suggesting anything of the sort) that folks shouldn't wander off and play in said tinkertoy directions... i learned a lot, methinks, from TINKERTOYS---and building blocks... and as much as working with print material offers advantages

to any budding ht builder (as jim suggests) so does (in some cases) *struggling* with a piece of software, testing one's moods and cognitions against its warp & woof...

speaking of which, anybody hereabouts had the opportunity to check out seneca's (i think it is) new html authoring tool? (forget the name)...

joe

[↑ Contents](#)

586. **Herb Levy**

KSW=Kootenay's Site on the Web

Thu 26 Oct 1995

Cool site, Dave.

A lot of webpages are in a constant state of flux, but this is the first time I've ever seen one that's "under construsion."

It figures that Bowering's off in Europe somewhere (working of course) just when I need a translation from the Canadian.

after all that, i forgot the address...

http://www.wimsey.com/~ksw/pnet/pnet.htm

note: there is no letter "l" after ".htm"

exit stage left -----> }

}

<----- }

Herb Levy



[↑ Contents](#)

587. **Robert Drake**

Re: oops

Thu 26 Oct 1995

another link fr edgy canadian lit:

<http://www.io.org/~dalopes/>

lbd

[↑ Contents](#)

588. **Robert Drake**
Re: Upper Limit Atlanta
Thu 26 Oct 1995

| *Last chance to watch Carlos tonight on the telly.*

oh ye ov little faith... it aint over til its over
lbd

[↑ Contents](#)

589. **Chris Stroffolino**
Re: Metroplexities
Thu 26 Oct 1995

Jordan: Yes, I share hope for "an intelligent and friendly scene" in NYC and it is certainly achievable in non (or para) institutional contexts, the interstices, late night chance encounters, etc--but it would be helpful I think to see more of a mutually challenging community there. One thing I keep coming back to is the Perelman WRITING/TALKS series and the "fruitful collision" that seemed to allow. in the then-developing and wide ranging group of poets brought into dialogue with each other. If the inbreeding at the ear is as you say but "the growing pangs of a coalescing group" let's hope that coalescing doesn't mean reifying (or more dreadfully reified). As for your talk on FACTIONS---well, another thing i keep coming back to from my experience in Phila. was that it seemed that the knowledge that there were less poets there enabled an openness to cross-pollinization or at least dialogue of the NYC equivalent of the Jewish Y scene and the nuyorican and the ear inn tyes (I mean the phila equivalent) than I have seen in NYC from my admitted "peripheral" perspective. Nonetheless, much morew can be done on these points in BOTH cities (and should be). RON: You claim that GIL OTT "developed that entire scene"---Let me offer a correction (without attempting to "put Gil down"--who i very much respect---but i think Gil would agree with me here. That scene was also in part the work of Lamont Steptoe (who is now based in the Walt Whitman center in Camden--and like Gil suffered from PBAC politics)--who paired many lesser-known younger poets with more established ones (myself, for instance, with Gerald Stern and then Berstein and Ott) and also broke down certain racial divisions (and their often aesthetic counterparts between the slam scene and the more sophisticated scenes-- (put sophisticated in quotes) whether "mainstream" or "avant-garde") AND WHO IS JOSHUA SCHUSTER?????? Could you tell me? I'm curious. Maybe you could put us in touch. Also, do you know Dave Baratier--Pavement Saw press. Temple M.A. student (but also with a JOB in business world, so THERE!)--He is involved in a very interesting salon that

includes some young poets (mostly women i think) involved with APR, Boulevard and the Painted bride Quarterly (ethel rackin for instance).... Definitely a young, vital, intelligent and friendly scene (whose taste is wider than one MIGHT imagine). DB told me he went to one of your readings and that he's been trying to get work from you and Perelman for his mag. TIM: Good to hear from you (after all these years). The U-MASS experience basically SUCKED for me--which is why I'm in a Ph.D> program now and not a MFA. Though I respect Tate in much the way i respect Koch for freeing my writing from my (perhaps reductive?) reading of the LANGPO aesthetic and "recentering" me, as am teacher he was dreadful and irresponsible and simply "not there" (even though he DID once defend one of my poems from a challenge YOU made!) Yet, it's quite easy for him to say "I have faith in the process"--meaning the MFA creative writing process of weeding out the "wheat" from the "chaff"--(where I mean were you there when he said that?-- i think he did more than once) considering the fact that he never had to work outside of the academy since he was 23! Anyway, I actually found myself defending Bernstein to him (and it fell on deaf ears). Now, I don't mean to simply attack that process wholecloth, but I found as much closemind- edness there as I do among certain avantgardists too. I don't know if this answers your question. Chris S.

[↑ Contents](#)

590. **tunguska**
Villon's Snow (always)

Thu 26 Oct 1995

Your comments, Larry Price, about form and theory, got me thinking about Paul Ricour's Rule of Metaphor. and yes, there is an attempt to take these things, poetry, speech, lexis etc, and treat them in isolated fashion (are we trying to get outside a so-called poetry-mind and look back in to see its all?)The arguments around the, as you say, circulation of, accretion of signification, etc, could continue, in their own perspective, outside any other prerogative, as empiricism, as science does do. What is interesting about Ricour's study of these things, and in particular, poetic form, the language of poetry, is, he determines, in the end, to listen to the language of everyday, the philosophy of everyday language I believe he says, and from that, draw a sort of categorical perspective of language, away from, as it were, the dictates of other so called possibilities and imaginations, real situations in their own intellectual right....but doesn't this all come down to the apprehension of the difference in "economic" man, and "spiritual" man, as, among others, MacDiarmid would have said...this pragmatics, this existentialism's but a poem?.....etc etc

tod thilleman

[↑ Contents](#)

591. **Robert Drake**

Re: KSW=Kootenay's Site on the Web

Thu 26 Oct 1995

i read "under construsion" as = construction+extrusion, a neologism i'd keep...

lbd

[↑ Contents](#)

592. **Beth Russell**

Re: burt kimmeleman's course

Thu 26 Oct 1995

Burt, you may want to check out the *_Poems for the Millenuim_*, ed. by Jerome Rothenberg and Pierre Joris. Also, in regards to literary crit. and technology, you may want to check into George Landow's *_Hypertext_*: the convergence of...(Johns Hopkins 1992). This Landow piece is now available on disk w/expanded notes on the original *_Hypertext_* work, w/comments by students, notes, etc.

beth russell

[↑ Contents](#)

593. **Wystan Curnow**

Re: Villon's Snow (still falling)

Thu 26 Oct 1995

Larry Price wrote:

...I might read Bruce (Andrews) as distributional, the accrual of significations (to the artifact and not the artificer) in the "progress" from island to island in Bruce's projected oceanic paradise of language, which accrual, because of the feedback, forces lexical change both in the artifact and reading. The idea that signification ACCRUES through circulation has implications for form. Form may initiate circulation, but circulation ensures a surplus, an eventual excess meaning. And as that pressure builds, the lexical shift must occur. Among other changes, it can be a shift in the way signification is distributed among the iconic counters, which again, I assume, can cause shifts in the directions and kinds of their literal mobility, their use. So, yes, a text can be VERY responsible for what can be done with it. An author may not be. For as Sweet William also said, "Uh-oh, somebody's been fuckin' with my mummy again."

Larry, appreciated the whole post and nothing but, but the last bit above especially. I know what you are saying about Bruce's work, but would want to apply what you say to any poetry. When I moaned some days back about the model that seemed chronically implied in discussions of audience 'communciation', poetry's prestige in the culture, etc. the corrective I had in mind involved the processes you suggest. Wystan

[↑ Contents](#)

594. **Kenneth Sherwood**

Computers and Writing

Fri 27 Oct 1995

There is an interview with Roland Barthes in which he talks at length about his writing pens, an array of them apparently, the barbarity of ball-points and such. Which I take as a reminder of how hard it is to make poems without tools-chisel, Parker, or Mac.

So I've been following the recent thread (what are we weaving) which seems to be dealing with creation, presentation, and representation of writing through computers. Chris Funkhouser's observation of the literal-mindedness of some options is to the point. The Comptons Encyclopedia CD-ROM doesn't offer much inspiration, formal or otherwise.

But there is no obvious reason why the tech need perform such a limiting rendering of the poem. Simple gestures, like adding two slightly variant vocal tracks to a poem, suddenly open up meaning and possibility.

Joe's tinkertoy analogy is partly apt--we can wrest much from tech as it now stands, including (Charles) that time-tested Codice TM. Working to lay words on the page or screen, working with the intonation or pace of a poem.

Perhaps it is the Barthes' interview again--his pen fetish seemed to carefully relegate 'typewriter' technology to the status of reproduction, duplication; no one could write there, except, one supposes, his secretary (who was not queried)--but there seems an almost violence in the gesture to decline (suppress) the relation of computers to writing when, for most here reading this at least, it is (for better or worse) quite central.

Ken Sherwood

[↑ Contents](#)

595. **John Cayley**

Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities

Fri 27 Oct 1995

One thing the computer does bring to the table is that it makes it very easy to reproduce the work once you're done. Using (say) transparent plastic sheets is a lot easier to do in an original one-off work than in an edition.

There is also what the computer allows you to output to paper and related media -- the ability to achieve typographic effects (shading and distortion of text, etc.) which would have been impossible or prohibitively expensive before desktop typesetting. Multilinearity in a piece, for example, can be representing by different colours or shades (as well as using transparent sheets as Charles suggested).

*The computer also brings some difficult *problems* to the table. Given the rapid pace of change in the computer industry, how easy will it be to find a computer 50 years from now that can run today's computer poetry? Whose burden is it to be sure there's a way to display the work? A lot of questions to be answered.*

The ability to archive and reproduce digital work really is a big problem. Although one of the good things about HTML is that is (or at least 'was') a part of SGML, a standard designed, partly, to allow the preservation and reproduction of the structure as well as the content of complex documents. I guess that it will get easier and easier to translate such structure from one system to another and that much of the work now being done will be able to be reproduced.

[Thanks also for the kind words, Jim ...]

John

John Cayley Wellsweep Press [in Chinese HZ:]

^ fine, innovative literary translation from Chinese ^

1 Grove End House 150 Highgate Road London NW5 1PD UK

Tel & Fax: 0 [REDACTED] Email: [REDACTED]

1995 URLs: <http://www.inforamp.net/~cayley> [= home]

+ [/wshome.html](#) [= Wellsweep]

+ [/inhome.html](#) [= Indra's Net]

[↑ Contents](#)

596. **John Cayley**

Inscription in complex media - was: Hypertext & Poetry...

Fri 27 Oct 1995

[longish post warning]

Ron Silliman wrote:

My sense is that any work in hypertext that is good would be good writing in an absolutely hide-bound traditional print format...

Also, the word on the street is that the archivists are avoiding collecting disks of manuscripts like the plague, even though in many programs you could tell, for example, how many levels of revision (and length of composition) were involved.

...

These tools at hand are still very primitive, if we just envision what they will look like in 100 years...

Joe Amato responded (in part):

i would simply like to add that this does NOT mean (nor do i take ron or jim as suggesting anything of the sort) that folks shouldn't wander off and play in said tinkertoy directions... i learned a lot, methinks, from TINKERTOYS---and building blocks...

Yes, much of the good writing that has been inscribed as hypertext would be good in other media. But this is not an argument which implies that it **should** appear in another form. That is a decision within the gift of the writer. Some writing, however, either could not exist in more 'traditional' media, or would not be so elegantly presented as it would in cyber/hypertext (there is a useful distinction here, btw).

In particular, I mean texts where 'chance operations' and/or algorithmic transformations are applied to given texts and the writer insists that the 'real time' results of these procedural operations **are** her inscription on the surface of a complex medium. (Where did I get that formulation from? Was it from someone on Poetics?) I would also argue, as I have elsewhere, that the cybertual author has the potential to compose procedures themselves and this should become a recognized part of the process of inscription/writing.

As for elegance of presentation: it would be possible to transpose Jim's _Intergrams_ to paper-like media in, perhaps, a huge book-art installation. But one of the beauties of this work is its elegance -- the deep complexity produced by the layering which his HyperCard form allows; the ability not simply to move through layers of word clusters, but also to move up and down a syntactically structured hierarchy of such clusters, to obtain multiple views of the 'same'

content. All this is done with minimal, and as I say, elegant programming. That said, it is the content-as-form which is the tenor of the (all) work, leading to its ultimate significance.

So what if the cybertext systems of the new millenium will be tiny implants with the power of a Cray? Today's text processing system is **not** the civil war typewriter of tomorrow, because it is realized on shape-shifting silicon and I guess that the computers of tomorrow will not be qualitatively different from the computers of today (i.e. they will still be faceless, invisible machines programmed to perform as any all as-yet-undreamt-of appliances). The computer underlies the systems we're using but it is not to be identified with them. It transforms itself into typewriter, typesetter, cybertext system, etc, etc through software. Primitive software needn't be written off, it can be rewritten or 'upgraded'.

Computer-based hardware/software configurations became potential media for literary art in, I would say, the late 80s when reasonably designed screen fonts, wysiwyg, and software such as HyperCard first appeared. Now that the WWW is with us, there is **no** reason not to make substantive use of the various potential media available [-- and transpose the 'good stuff' back into print if you insist].

There's a more serious problem with the idea of writing underlying Ron's post, as if there is something called 'writing' which exists independently of its actual inscription in a particular medium, and which, **if** it is 'good', has the additional quality of being capable of transposition into media with which we are more familiar. Does this hold up?

The archivists Ron cites are wrong, wrong, wrong. It is not for the archivist to determine what is a proper record of the writers' processes of composition. If a writer happens to make a draft on a disk using the first version of Wordstar usign a Sirius PC, or on the inside of a matchbox, and then later destroys or encrypt all early drafts of an unpublished work that circulated on the bulletin board of a private network -- I just can't see that the archival or text critical problems this might cause are made **qualitatively** different because of the media used, or that this indicates that we should all make sure to **get it down on paper** in order to keep the librarians happy.

Finally, although I completely accord with the tenor of Joe's light-hearted response to Ron's post, I can't help baulking at the image of the tinkertoy (which I also learned from during a Canadian childhood), the implication that **despite** the likelihood that these systems will appear to be **toys** to the right-thinking, we can nonetheless use and learn from them in our spare time.

Computer-based systems are emphatically **not** tinkertoys, not even in the world of letters. They are what we make of them. There is bound to be a ludic

element in the wide spectrum of current cybertextual work, but then, hasn't there been a ludic element in much experimental work generally? And isn't the ludic OK anyway?

John

- - - - -

John Cayley Wellsweep Press [in Chinese HZ:]
^ fine, innovative literary translation from Chinese ^
1 Grove End House 150 Highgate Road London NW5 1PD UK
Tel & Fax: 0 [REDACTED] Email: [REDACTED]
1995 URLs: <http://www.inforamp.net/~cayley> [= home]
+ /wshome.html [= Wellsweep]
+ /inhome.html [= Indra's Net]

- - - - -

[↑ Contents](#)

597. **Robert Drake**

Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities

Fri 27 Oct 1995

glad to see that th hypertext thread here is expansive enuf to include various print-based media, as well as on-screen... the various lists devoted to HT normally & vehemently aren't so generous. an excellent source of info & inspiration for creative presentation of work-in-print would be book-artist Keith Smith (keith smith books, 22 cayuga st., rochester ny 14620), particularly his Text in the Book Format. the thread also reminds me of cage's multilayered constructions of text on plexiglass...

lbd

[↑ Contents](#)

598. **Gale Nelson**

Re: poetry with a tech slant: anthology

Fri 27 Oct 1995

An anthology that includes none of the persons on your list for technology and poetry, I would still suggest turning your attention to the Blue Mustache (Elizabeth Press, I believe) -- an anthology of Italian Futurist Poetry in translation.

MM's poetry will sometimes move in the mechanized way of early 20th century machinery; she would turn up in many of the modernist anthologies which would/ should include WCW and LZ.

J. Drucker's work would seem appropriate in this context -- both in its (largely old-technology) production and (her prose work) in content.

R. Waldrop's *_Camp Printing_* shows to interesting effect old (letterpress) and new (offset) printing techniques working together to make fascinating visual literature.

Cheers,

Gale Nelson

[↑ Contents](#)

599. **Gale Nelson**
Re: wagering poetics
Fri 27 Oct 1995

Beth,

Judith Goldman, a recent graduate of Brown, who is now living in New York, has done some fascinating poetic projects; among them, a series of Rubik cubes, repasted with language. Each "twist" of the cube leads not toward solid colors on each of the cube's sides; but rather, to a new poem. She also has designs for some fantastic poetry organs, that would inflate different word patterns based on chance fillings of various word balloons. She also works in collage and "inspiration" (meaning she sits down and writes) methods.

While it is not a chance operation, *_The Pumice of Morons_* was an interesting S + 7 project (Clark Coolidge and Larry Fagan?), produced shortly after the Clinton inauguration by The Figures Press.

Gale Nelson

[↑ Contents](#)

600. **Edward Foster**
Re: Wallace and fiscal poetry
Fri 27 Oct 1995

jonathan: back to the money/poetry/stevens matrix. wd this be interesting to pursue further--siena, the medicis, alchemy, plato, poetry, all those astonishing links such that a + b equals more than c. it won'y make friends but can make interest. stevens was not taking about money as machinery but as magic. -ed

[↑ Contents](#)

601. **Bill Luoma**

Pitch of the Sun

Fri 27 Oct 1995

The warp of the sun
woofs @ 1 cycle
every five
minutes can
not here here

[↑ Contents](#)

602. **Charles Bernstein**

You - the City NY Screening

Fri 27 Oct 1995

There will be a NEW YORK screening of

Fiona Templeton's

YOU -- THE CITY

at Millenium, 66 East 4th Street

7:15pm Thursday, November 2

for information about the film and video versions of _You -- the City_ contact
Fiona Templeton at 100 St. Mark's Place New York NY 10009 [REDACTED].

You -- the City the book is available from Roof Books.

[↑ Contents](#)

603. **Eryque Gleason**

Re: wagering poetics

Fri 27 Oct 1995

Gale, your mention of Judith Goldman's work sounds very interesting! where
can one fid some of it to have and to hold or at least oggle for a while? the cube
and the organ sound very interesting.

eryque

Eryque "Just call me Eric" Gleason	If I weren't a monkey, there'd be
71 E. 32nd St. Box 949	problems...
Chicago, IL 60616	



[↑ Contents](#)

604. **Timothy Liu**
Yet Another Vilanelle
Fri 27 Oct 1995

As a poet who wants to keep my Non-Conformist's Manual
and Haw Lantern too, I offer up this vilanelle:

Who shall we turn to now
when all is said and done--
Seamus Heaney or Susan Howe?

All ye poets who kowtow
to the avant-garde as one:
who shall we turn to now

if Academia should vow
to neither shelter nor shun
Seamus Heaney or Susan Howe?

(Buffalo and Harvard foul
as any other Institution.)
Who shall we turn to now

to mend the broken bough
of Sweet Poesy? C'mon 'hon!
Seamus Heaney or Susan Howe?

(Can't we be friends?) Holy Cow!
Another Nobel already won,
who shall we turn to now--
Seamus Heaney or Susan Howe?

--Timothy Liu

[↑ Contents](#)

605. **Jordan Davis**
readings desiderata
Fri 27 Oct 1995

Dear gang, would people with years of experience hosting readings (and giving readings) provide a few comments on what would make readings more a) pleasant b) productive c) astonishing experiences for reader, host, and audience?

Jordan

[↑ Contents](#)

606. **Joe Amato**

Re: Inscription in complex media - was: Hypertext & Poetry...

Fri 27 Oct 1995

john, nice discussion, from my pov anyway... yes, you're right---there was an implicit condescension in my choice of tinkertoy as proto/tool/col---and it suggests a developmental-evolutionary model of composition/construction, in any case, a movement from toys (today) to serious tools (tomorrow)... the progress-ive displacement of doing something significantly different, in formal terms, b/c of a latent bias toward unmediated content (read "preference for a specific formal content")... which i would like to avoid, in fact, however 'powerful' or 'sophisticated' our future media/tools may be... the inverse of my (faulty) logic leading, of course, to the infantilization of all that has come (long) before us as "primitive," "child-like"...

still, there are times i would wish to reclaim the ludic in child-like terms, without any residual connotation of childish drivel... my (childish?) utopian urges prevailing here, methinks...

anyway, yes, the formal qualities of the medium cannot be neglected or transcended, finally, without a corresponding reduction in potential value, if you will... from my pov, there's always the specificity of mediation to consider... this is what the emergence of electronic form, for one, has raised to the fore...

all best////

joe

[↑ Contents](#)

607. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: burt kimmeleman's course

Fri 27 Oct 1995

Beth, Charles, Gale et alia,

Thank you for your very good help. I was going in circles for a while there but now I feel like I have a direction and am well on my way.

Burt

[↑ Contents](#)

608. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities

Sat 28 Oct 1995

There is also what the computer allows you to output to paper and related media -- the ability to achieve typographic effects (shading and distortion of text, etc.) which would have been impossible or prohibitively expensive before desktop typesetting. Multilinearity in a piece, for example, can be representing by different colours or shades (as well as using transparent sheets as Charles suggested).

Actually, I think this assumes that you would be paying someone to accomplish such typographic effects for you, rather than doing them yourself on a letterpress or with offset printing methods. And, I know, many more people have computers than have such presses -- but, in fact, my Vandercook letterpress I bought in 1979, and another I bought a couple of months ago, even taking the cost together, set me back far less than the computer I bought in 1989. There are people who pay others to achieve such typographic effects using the computer, rather than doing such things themselves; that is also prohibitively expensive for most of us.

So I'm probably just carping here, but it's interesting the way the computer tools have created a bunch of do-it-yourselfers, far more than were created by the inexpensive proliferation of letterpress equipment which occurred when letterpress became commercially outmoded a couple to four decades ago. And I'm a convert, too, although only amazingly envious of the skills developed by such as Jim Rosenberg & John Cayley.

all best,
charles

[↑ Contents](#)

609. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Inscription in complex media - was: Hypertext & Poetry...

Sat 28 Oct 1995

*There's a more serious problem with the idea of writing underlying Ron's post, as if there is something called 'writing' which exists independently of its actual inscription in a particular medium, and which, *if* it is 'good', has the additional quality of being capable of transposition into media with which we are more familiar. Does this hold up?*

I admire Ron immensely, but I hope this doesn't hold up. Much of the work I have done in books has intended to create meaningful reading experiences, so the books (particularly the handmade books in various exploratory formats) are intended as wholes. They are not the only possible realization of the written

works by any means, but I would like to think they are more significant than eventual footnotes as "deluxe editions" of works which in some distant future will only be seen in the rather banal presentation of an author's collected poems or collected writings (including my own). It is the variations in reading contexts, as much as "the words themselves" (I once wrote, somewhere I don't quite remember -- "there never is such a thing as the words themselves"), which need to be preserved. Emily's dashes, Blake's illuminations, and meaningful (to the reader, writer, other makers) editions of works, in paper or hypertext or other media to be developed, which may not be entirely under the direction of the author (but which hopefully have her approval).

*Computer-based systems are emphatically *not* tinkertoys, not even in the world of letters. They are what we make of them. There is bound to be a ludic element in the wide spectrum of current cybertextual work, but then, hasn't there been a ludic element in much experimental work generally? And isn't the ludic OK anyway?*

Yes, they are what we make of them. But don't we, at times, do it with a sense of imaginative play. Tinker toys and Lincoln logs may have been my toy of youth; duplos and legos to more recent children (and they are still with us); but one of my daughters' (now ages 2 & 6) tools to learn about making/building will be the computer. I know the 6-year-old already thinks of computer time as play time. Is that wrong? I hope not.

charles

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[↑ Contents](#)

610. **Charles Alexander**

Re: readings desiderata

Sat 28 Oct 1995

Dear gang, would people with years of experience hosting readings (and giving readings) provide a few comments on what would make readings more a) pleasant b) productive c) astonishing experiences for reader, host, and audience?

Jordan

Jordan, so many things, like -- big enough space, but absolutely not too big; enough light to read by and see reader, but, again, not at all "bright." also,

there needs to be quiet in the space (having suffered recently from having readings & talks in a small area of a large space with fluorescents which constantly buzzed, driving me crazy); give options to reader as to whether to sit or stand -- if sitting, table in front or at side of reader is nice; if standing, i like a table or stand to the side for papers, but do not like standing behind podiums, and do not like music stands unless they are extremely sturdy ones. I think readings are best in settings which do not need amplification of reader via microphone, mixer, & speakers -- but if there's any question at all, by all means have these things, and have decent ones, well tested beforehand. If possible, allow for semi-circular seating, giving everyone in audience a direct view of reader/readers. Yet I think all of this can be done and remain in a relatively informal setting, not requiring an auditorium (small or large) setting, which sets up more of a distance between reader and audience.

I think I'm talking mostly here about readings for audiences of 10 to 80 people. For more than that, unless the space is very carefully arranged, a small auditorium may work best. And I've both been to and given readings in mid-sized (200 - 600) auditoriums which worked very well. Still, I prefer the more intimate settings.

All this said (and much more which probably should be said), the key ingredients are still reader and audience. As a reader, great audiences (such as at Small Press Traffic, or Canessa Park, or Ear Inn; or, in quite a different sense, at U-Alabama) have made for great experiences. And certainly audiences recognize when a reader is really connecting both with the work and with the audience. It's a complex interaction which, strangely enough, often works quite well (and often doesn't).

You also ask about what makes it work for the host. Having been one for small readings and large festival readings, it seems to me that if it works for reader and audience, it will work for host. Also, the host has to relax. There's no way that everything will be ideal, yet the best readings transcend their physical circumstances, anyway.

And it can always help to have Kevin Killian do the introductions. Seriously, introductions are important, and ought to give some insight into what is to come, but should never go so far as to condition what one is to hear. I heard the worst on a recent videotape, in which the introducer told the audience what the author was up to and what was important about her or him, then came on again after the reading and commented on what was just heard. That's just unforgivable.

Are you asking these questions because you're about to launch a reading series?

all best,
charles

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[↑ Contents](#)

611. **Tenney Nathanson**
& **Ralph Waldo**

Sat 28 Oct 1995

Date: Fri, 27 Oct 1995 11:57:48 -0500
From: Edward Foster <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: Wallace and fiscal poetry

jonathan: back to the money/poetry/stevens matrix. wd this be interesting to pursue further--siena, the medicis, alchemy, plato, poetry, all those astonishing links such that a + b equals more than c. it won'y make friends but can make interest. stevens was not taking about money as machinery but as magic. -ed

I seem to be the tone-deaf piper in this thread, so I'm probably missing some dark & twisty twist here--but, yeah. That was the point more or less of my since-maligned (by Jonathan) note on Emerson and capital. What Wallace made happen w \$ (the Java box for example) was a lot like what he made happen w poetry, or in it. (Whereas) even in his relatively anti-capitalist phases, or moments, the power of imagination Emerson extols is frequently described in terms that bear a striking affinity to what capital can be understood as doing. One needn't find this altogether beneficent to find it interesting. (& then of course there's the whole cash-nexus trope in /Pragmatism/, that Emersonian inheritance [ahem] passed on in turn to Stevens.)

Speaking of Pound, the essay by I think it is Andrew Parker, in the Arac collection /Postmodernism and Politics/, does some very smart mapping of Pound's anti-semitism onto both his Douglasite economics and his vision of language, in ways conversant w Kristeva's treatment of anti-semitism in Celine.

[↑ Contents](#)

612. **Kenneth Sherwood**

tinkertoys

Sat 28 Oct 1995

The too would take issue with an "idea of writing ... which exists independently of its actually inscription in a particular medium" though I'm not sure Silliman wouldn't also reject such a notion of the immaterial.

Paying attention to the various technologies of presentation available to writing, now, at this point, does make me want to second (or did I already 2nd it) Joe's assignation of "tinkertoys".

Calling various forms of computer-writing tinkertoy technology is absolutely right, since these forms WILL become outmoded because of the role this tech plays apart from poetry. The "BOOK", itself a technology which has changed (hand scripted to letterpress to desktop lazerjet) does not tend to outmode itself. The product, eg my 1899 Small, Maynard and Company _Leaves of Grass_ works still, and quite as easily, as _Poems for the Millenium_ 1995.

Reading the media surrounding the computer industry should make nothing more clear than that (1) it is a technology of designed obsolence and (2) it is almost implicitly obsessed with its own developmental design curve. (viz my version of Mosaic software which sports pull-down menus which result in the message 'feature not implemtented yet'.)

This (economic) condition needs to be dealt with, and then we still go on writing in that space, working with our tinkertoys (which are such only because the designers are at work relegating them to that status) and profiting from their seeming possibilities and limits.

Ken

[↑ Contents](#)

613. **Ron Silliman**

Re: Inscription in complex media - was: Hypertext & Poetry...

Sat 28 Oct 1995

John Cayley writes, of academic librarians who are shying away from collecting materials in disk form as part of literary archives,

| *The archivists Ron cites are wrong, wrong, wrong.*

I agree completely. Moreover, I've been surprised at their stance. One would think, given, say, the status of re-creation in painting (for example), that some program somewhere would take it upon itself to preserve early operating systems and applications, in and for themselves, and to create the methodology for "restoration" of lost materials. There's probably a lot of literature already

"lost" on C/PM and other pre-DOS desktop systems and untangling the flavors of UNIX could become a career in itself.

By the way, John, I'm not suggesting that works of writing should or should not be on paper or on interactive systems, or other modes (I've mucked around with "slide" presentation programs like PowerPoint and Freelance and even Harvard Graphics and could imagine using Macromind Director as a staging tool). But rather, in work that resonates over time, there is a relation between the words that will carry the text forward, regardless of the presentation. Otherwise it would have been a "mistake" ever to have written Homer down.

Ron

[↑ Contents](#)

614. **Ron Silliman**

TinkerToy

Sat 28 Oct 1995

I too am pro-Tinkertoy. Poetry needs that sense of limitless freedom and possibility. Similarly, it needs humor and a whole slew of other "less than serious" (or at least less than pompous) devices. Reading Anselm Hollo and Ted Berrigan last night to my 3-year-old twins, realizing just how important it is that poetry can have that dimension, and how vastly undervalued it is (and people like Anselm, or Jack Collum or Jonathon Williams, for example).

Ron

[↑ Contents](#)

615. **Ron Silliman**

Re: readings desiderata

Sat 28 Oct 1995

You wrote:

>

>Dear gang, would people with years of experience hosting readings (and
>giving readings) provide a few comments on what would make readings
more a) pleasant b) productive c) astonishing experiences for reader,
host, and audience?

>

>Jordan

>

Having done three series over the years (Grand Piano, Tassajara Bakery, The Farm), my sense is that the very best readings took place when there was a slight aesthetic tension between the readers, enough for

each to set the other's work off in a new light, and to bring in an audience that would be "exposed" to the work of the other in some way for the first time. Best single reading I ever coordinated was probably George Stanley and Ted Berrigan at the Grand Piano. We had maybe 60 people for each reader (and the place really only held about 80, so it was crammed probably past the fire department's limits) and very few seemed even to have heard of the other poet. Unfortunately, the poets held separate parties for their own entourages afterwards. I recall, at the Berrigan party, some local NY school wannabe putting George's poetry down (not even aware of, say, the connections to Spicer et al or of the Vancouver scene) and Ted cutting this geek down instantly, explaining concisely and explicitly what was terrific about Stanley's work.

But there is always a huge risk in such a combination. Too often we held readings that simply convinced the other's audience that the reading was for The Other community, so both stayed away. (Tom, did we really combine Simon Ortiz and Judy Grahn? Or have the brain cells simply melted back there?)

I always think the best reading series have a visible sense of shape, of argument. As such. The demographic/aesthetic scatter that characterizes the typical college series (trying to please each constituency) tends to drain that away.

Imagine each season as though it were a book,

Ron

[↑ Contents](#)

616. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: & Ralph Waldo

Sat 28 Oct 1995

I've been reading the Emerson-Stevens Money thread with some "interest"-- I wonder what kind of "toll" it has taken on me (for surely once the microcosm-macrocosm metaphor is entertained it becomes difficult to wish or wisk away without a shot of Lethe that Universal Health Care would surely make available to all)--- "Seriously" however-- I have often distrusted and been skeptical of (which isn't to say I myself do not "employ" I mean "deploy" perhaps far too much) the linkage it seems Nathanson for instance is making (though I too may be tone deaf)--not so much between "politics" and "poetic form" (via a bi-directional OF),but between....Maybe this is better stated by way of an "oversimplistic" Spielbergian (alias Manichean) binary a fellow-teacher of mine told me she used to generate class discussion: She wrote STEVENS=InSURANCE SALESMAN and WILLIAMS=DOCTOR on the board

and basically meant the former as "evil" and the latter as 'good"-- Such a GRID seems to lie at the "root" of much recent work (again the work on Yeats' Fascist Metrics coming out, for instance) and I am curious WHY people seem to be so interested in such arguments? I may be seem to be conflating two things here, two kinds of "form" that seem to "inform" the "content" of the poem. Insofar as the form is the content, to what extent is the POET the POEM? And though these are important questions, the whole notion that the reader and the writer are collaborators in the making of the work, if taken seriously, would seem to render questionable predetermined notions of exactly what STEVENS' or WCW's (for instance) stance truly is--insofar as their work lives more in the (un?)consciousnesses of those who read them than it does in the books. But, when the question of poetry as a kind of money comes up (as in THE MERCHANT OF VENUS), I don't mean to beg it. But, it's always possible that such "large-scale cultural thinking" may not be that different from the kind of so-called "solipsism" that is purely aesthetic (also in quotes) like "the chance meeting of a sewing machine and an umbrella...". In other words, money as poetry and poetry as money (either way), in Stevens and in Perelman, and in others, are tropes, metaphors with two vehicles vying for the status of tenor. And theory here can be "endlessly productive" no doubt but FOR WHAT? cs

[↑ Contents](#)

617. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: & Ralph Waldo

Sat 28 Oct 1995

(continued from last note--which ended with FOR WHAT?)
or FOR WHOM? cs

[↑ Contents](#)

618. **Charles Bernstein**

Positions open at Wayne State University (fwd)

Sat 28 Oct 1995

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: Sat, 28 Oct 1995 11:05:33 -0400 (EDT)

From: Barrett Watten <[REDACTED]>

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Two positions available:

- 1) American Literature and Culture. Asst./Assoc. Prof.

2) African-American Literature/Cultural Studies. Rank open.

Ph.D. in English or related field. Evidence of strong research interest and capability in the field of specialization. Minority candidates especially encouraged to apply. Send letter, c.v., and writing sample to Interim Chair, English Department, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI 48202. Wayne State University is an equal opportunity employer and actively seeks minority candidates.

[↑ Contents](#)

619. **Jim Rosenberg**

Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities

Sat 28 Oct 1995

luigi-bob drake:

- > glad to see that th hypertext thread here is expansive enuf to
- > include various print-based media, as well as on-screen... the
- > various lists devoted to HT normally & vehemently aren't so
- > generous.

There's one thing that has to be said here and SAID LOUDLY: I hope no one comes away from this discussion thinking that those of us doing experiments with various computer media are trying to hype these media as in any way "superior" to the traditional ones. We've seen this movie before in the poetry world, and it has a bad ending. There were some among the Concrete Poets who took a very polemical stance about "straight" poetry [**their** term] being "obsolete" compared to Concrete Poetry. It's simply impossible to calculate the damage to poetics that this caused. The mind simply boggles at the thought of what might have come out of a real dialogue between the concrete poets and the Black Mountain poets -- but it never happened. You can call this a prejudice if you want to [I'm gonna get myself in trouble for this] but I and most of the poets I know blame the concrete poets for this: they weren't interested in dialogue. That catastrophe set back the cause of poetics by 20 years at the least. (Even today, right here on this list, how often do we talk about visual poetry, and what visual issues mean for poetics???) It would be a very deep tragedy indeed if those of us who do hypertext repeated this same mistake.

There **are** those in the hypertext community who are a bit loose with unguided missile phrases like "death of the book", "late age of print", and so on; I'm record as saying I don't think we do ourselves any good with that kind of talk. There is one house of poetry, it includes us all regardless of media.

When Judy Roitman sent me her poems she said she thought I'd find them "ordinary". This was painful to hear. Sure, if I look at the poems with my glasses off maybe nothing will jump out and strike me as unusual, but reading

the poems there was nothing ordinary about them at all: the effect was very complex and subtle even though you couldn't ascribe that to "media".

Since this is World Series time, please allow me to cite that celebrated literary theorist, Hank Aaron. A sportswriter (whose name escapes me) was interviewing Hank Aaron, and being just insufferable trying to show off his baseball knowledge. He set out a truly arcane scenario and was trying to get Hank Aaron to say what kind of pitch he'd expect in that situation -- such and such was the score, such and such was the count, such and such runners on base -- on and on. He finally finished, turned to Hank Aaron and said, "And what would you look for in that situation?" Hank Aaron looked him in the eye and said, "I look for the baseball."

I do love to get into these issues of media, but really, that pretty much says it all: When you get right down to it, it doesn't matter if you're using the latest unavailable research software, or writing out a poem longhand, or just sitting on a tree stump composing words in your head. Ultimately, all of us, day in and day out, have to just go out there and look for the baseball.

--

Jim Rosenberg

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[↑ Contents](#)

620. **Jim Rosenberg**

Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities

Sat 28 Oct 1995

[This message overlaps some of the things John Cayley already posted, but I'm going to post this anyway.]

Ron Silliman:

> My sense is that any work in hypertext that is good would be good
> writing in an absolutely hide-bound traditional print format.

Part of me can agree with this, but another part wants to rise up and say,
"Them's fightin' words!"

I agree that hypertext writers have the same burden as every other kind of writer to write well; ultimately it is indeed the words themselves that matter; if you extract words from a hypertext and look at them on the page then they should bear the same level of artistic weight that out-of-context extractions from a traditional poem should bear. The key phrase here is: "out of context" -- and one has to be clear it is exactly **extractions** that are being dealt with.

Ron, if what you're saying is that the words of a hypertext should work just fine on the page as a linear "hide-bound traditional print" poem, I've got a problem. That is tantamount to saying that the non-linear structure just plain doesn't matter. I would venture to say (even though any such statement as this is risky) that *every person on this list* has encountered people who are uncomfortable with poetry, who when dealing with a poem frankly wish that the author had written something other than a poem. Never mind, we write it as a poem because we feel that is *the only way* it will work. So too with hypertext: ultimately one writes a hypertext from a belief that no other medium will do; the non-linear structure is not some kind of "illustration", it is integral to the content.

Does Ketjak "work on the page" if I print it one word per page? Maybe, but it isn't the same animal. Suppose you take a poem by, say, Robert Duncan -- one of the Passages series for instance -- and print it as a prose block. Maybe it "works" this way, maybe someone who knew Duncan's work well enough could reconstruct the line breaks anyway, but we can all just imagine what Duncan's outrage would have been at this sort of thing.

To stand this issue completely on its head: my own interest goes in the exact opposite direction, namely using hypertext to carry the infrastructure of language itself: hypertext inside the fine structure of language, *inside the sentence*. The piece I am working on now (which is taking *forever* to execute, alas) uses simultaneities nested many many layers deep, in some cases going inside the sentence. In this case I'm not even sure what "would be good writing in an absolutely hide-bound traditional print format" *means*. The idea that a hypertext can be rendered on the page in some fashion is based on a "lexia-centric" view of hypertext; ('lexia' is a term borrowed by George Landow from the writings of Barthes to mean the unit of text at either end of a hypertext link) but dematerialization of the lexia has been an active topic of discussion in the hypertext community, to which I and Stuart Moulthrop among others have contributed. To recast Ron's statement in the current lingo of hypertext rhetoric: Ron asserts that the lexia themselves should work on the page as writing. Surely lexia should be good writing -- if there *are* lexia. But one interesting direction in hypertext is to employ interactive structure operations to the point that the concept of lexia itself ceases to have much meaning.

--

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621. **Jim Rosenberg**

Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities

Sat 28 Oct 1995

Gabrielle Welford:

- > The thing that bothers me about hypertext (which I've never
- > used, so I may be talking up a grass snoot) is the time element. You
- > wouldn't actually be looking simultaneously through one word at another.
- > There'd be a time lapse wouldn't there?

That would depend on how it's actually implemented. You *could* implement this by "exploding" a word cluster so that all the elements are visible on the screen at the same time. I've been reluctant to do this for a couple of reasons. First of all, if the cluster is heavily nested there simply may not be enough screen real estate to accomplish this. Second, graphic print conventions would impose an order on the elements to some degree. This is a hard problem to deal with, but I like a form of interactivity where by using the mouse the user can choose which element to go to.

So you are right, that done the way I do it there is a time lapse. The whole issue of how time should work in hypertext -- poetic time particularly -- is the biggest single area in hypertext where I feel things are not well understood. I hope to achieve a sense in which time is somehow "disengaged" -- running free, so to speak. Of course this is an illusion: in an obvious sense one's **experience** of a hypertext is linear by virtue of time. But it is the reader's time, not the writer's time. I have an intuitive sense of units of time that are somehow "interchangeable" -- but whether this really comes off in the poem I'm not sure. Time in a hypertext has to be local units spatially anchored, it seems to me.

How should sound work in a hypertext? This is a very similar issue. To be perfectly candid about it, I'm still grappling with this. Of course sound brings the time issue to a head: sound brings with it its own sense of time. How does one reconcile a "disengaged" sense of time under the control of the reader with an inflexible concept of time brought by sound? Again, time is constrained via "local units of sound", but unconstrained in the large.

How does one **program** time? There are some very difficult questions here. (I hope John will jump in on this, since he's done the most interesting work I've seen with programming time in computer poetry.) One thing I like to say to myself all the time is that:

Syllable Time is not equal to Real Time

In syllable time our impression of time -- in English at any rate -- is heavily dominated by retroactive impressions based on what's happening with *stresses* more than an absolute musical sense of time that a composer would have. Let me give an example of what I'm talking about. Back in the early 70s I did a number of pieces on magnetic tape using simultaneous overlays of my own voice. Somewhere in this process I hit on the idea of using tape loops to get very precise control over the way that the individual tracks were offset. I would make a tape loop out of the overlaid segment I already had, make a tape loop out of the new voice I was adding, and by delaying one or the other loop slightly I could shift the overlay until I got exactly what I wanted. (It does some interesting things to one's head to play tape loops for hours on end ...) I had a composition schema that told me an overlay structure I was trying to achieve, and I remember very clearly one case where I wanted all the attacks (in the musical sense of the onset of sound) to line up. As one particular overlay went around I knew I had nailed it exactly. I cut the loop and spliced it in, and indeed the attacks lined up perfectly. Then for some reason I started playing it back slowed down. What I heard shocked me. At full speed it sounded like the attacks were dead simultaneous, but at slow speed it became obvious that the attacks -- in the musical sense of the word -- were not simultaneous *at all*. So why did it sound that way at full speed? Because the *stresses* were dead simultaneous! I was "hearing" the attacks as being right at the same time "retroactively" because the stresses hit at the same time.

So again the question: How does one *program* syllable time? I frankly don't know the answer to that. At a naive go, a programmer's time is likely to be absolute musical time. John?

--

Jim Rosenberg

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[↑ Contents](#)

622. **Joe Amato**

Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities

Sat 28 Oct 1995

this seems as good a time as any to insert into this discussion an excerpt from jed rasula's _the american poetry wax museum: reality effects, 1940-1990_ (ncte)... i'm not through reading jed's book, but nary a page i turn when i don't find mself forced to stop and consider what he's saying, and the precise

provocations and passions with which he sez it... if it wouldn't bother folks to say so, i might say jed's book is a must-read...

anyway, here's the excerpt, from chapter 1, p. 33:

"While the 'carceral archipelago' and the 'exhibitionary complex' developed contemporaneously, the latter requires institutions 'not of confinement but of exhibition' (Bennett 124, 123). The exhibitionary complex is instrumental in organizing consent, effecting voluntaristic unanimity by remote promptings. The exhibit, reified into the enshrined venue of the museum, is a prototype version of hypertext, training populations in the art of reassembling fragmentary evidence into coherent narratives. The museum is a transitional education in the negotiation of hyperspace, the solipsistic euphoria of simulated connectedness. It need not be carceral because its inmates are self-regulating. The museum begins with the goal of character building and ends up in the zone of interactive technologies, the task now being that of 'building a person' in the cyborg world. When Friedrich Kittler characterizes the book of poetry as 'the first medium in the modern sense,' I think not only of 'McLuhan's law, according to which the content of a medium is always another medium' (115), but of the spiritualists' *medium*, also known as the 'control.' My concern, in elaborating this thesis of a poetry wax museum, is to suggest that the seemingly autonomous 'voices and visions' of poets themselves have been underwritten by custodial sponsors who have surreptitiously turned down the volume on certain voices, and simulated a voice-over for certain others. Nothing defines the situation more succinctly than the police phrase *protective custody*."

(** = author's emphasis)

it would be interesting to extrapolate jed's logic to the hypercard stack, *celtic museum*... four-five years back, the latter was one of the more elegant applications around of hypertext technologies...

now: i understand that this excerpt is likely to be interpreted by some, extracted as it is, as yet another in a long line of critiques of hypermedia... i would only ask folks to understand that this is an excerpt, finally, taken from a dense, thorough, challenging book of over 600 pages, some 100 or so alone are devoted to appendices... and that the viewpoint jed ultimately affords readers (those who stick it out) is one with which all poets, in my humblest of opines, would do well to contend...

all best///

joe

[↑ Contents](#)

623. **Steven Howard Shoemaker**

Computers and Writing

Sat 28 Oct 1995

I'm jumping in blindly after being away from the list for a little while, but K. Sherwood's post about Barthes' computerphobia reminded me of a little "color" piece in the paper awhile back on the current state of the writing scene in Paris cafes--full of Parisian writer-types decrying the use of laptops in the cafes... So mebbe it's a French thang... (but then, there had to be enough laptops for them to start decrying...

Meanwhile, the cool java hut here in town (Higher Grounds) is about to open a new cafe and they're promising lots of electrical outlets so you can jack in while you're rushin' on your run...

steve

[↑ Contents](#)

624. **Steven Howard Shoemaker**

computers and writing

Sat 28 Oct 1995

well, i guess it was typewriterphobia Barthes had, not computerphobia-- didn't mean to jump over a whole stage of technology...

that reminds me of Hugh Kenner speaking at the Orono poetry conference a couple years ago--talking about how the first famous poem composed on a typewriter may have been Pound's...."The Return." Kenner didn't seem to get the joke, but all the poets laughed...

steve

[↑ Contents](#)

625. **Steven Howard Shoemaker**

Re: poetry w/ a tech slant: anthology

Sat 28 Oct 1995

all of the original Objectivists belong in the course--or at least that's what a good chunk of my diss. argues...

and why not make your own anthology for teaching purposes, using a photocopy service? i do it all the time (and it's all legal too, now, 'cause ever since Kinko's got sued these services pay royalties and include that cost in the price of the packet...

steve

626. **Loss Glazier*****Where's the Hypertext in this Thread?****Sun 29 Oct 1995*

The recent hypertext/writing discussion on the list has been one with misdirected salvos. It began as a conversation on computer-generated texts but ended up being about whether hypertext was a "new form" of writing. Then computers became tinkertoys along the way. (Though John Cayley did argue against this, that "they are what we make from them.") Also striking, Ken Sherwood's "calling various forms of computer-writing tinkertoy technologies is absolutely right" based on the fact that these technologies will become outmoded. The parallel by Charles Alexander of the book presentation of finely made books as against Ron's 'if it's good in hypertext would it be good on paper' also stand out. I think, first, that "tinkertoys" is a very bad word. There is absolutely no parallel with a "toy" because what we are "playing with" not only has its origins in the bomb, but is redefining commodity in our commodity culture. It's a social fact. It's not a toy because, in the way that when the book was invented the first thing to be published were laws and doctrines, the commodities of those days, the book, hypertext, and computer-generation of text technologies are NOT being invented for literature. When they say "the late age of print" they are correct. Maybe it's not a factor in poetry production as much but in terms of Boeing manuals, (increasingly) government publications, bibliographic databases, etc., it IS a late age of print (and thankfully so: those trees weren't very well used for these other purposes). As to whether computers or computer-generation programs are tinkertoys because they will become outmoded, I can only think of automobiles. Many years ago I gave up a short-lived but valiant effort to maintain my own vehicle. The main thought I ended up with was why there were so many different parts for so many brands of cars and that they were all different and all went in different places in the car. It just didn't make sense. So likewise we will go through Windows 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, and on I presume. And nothing will ever fit. (Who brought up CP/M? Was it Ron? Someone I'm sure is collecting Edsel parts, right?) Yes that's also why (I think John mentioned this?) HTML and SGML are breakthroughs--they are generic, common forms of text. But of course, despite the fact that some autos even have rear doors that fly off to considerable ill effect, they continue. So I suppose that, if for the mainstream cycle of production and consumption in the U.S., computers, like autos, have their place, they too will continue. I wish there could be a clear focus on which aspect of the subject we are talking about. Having a blurred line about the word "tinkertoy" for example, and whether it's about hypertext or computer-generation programs is like having a blurred line about the word "sonnet" and whether it's about Ted Berrigan or

Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey. Is hypertext a technology that parallels the discovery of the book? Obviously not. They are not parallel technologies. The parallel is electronic textualities, which include distributed networks, connections to remote databases, electronic information delivery systems, such as the one we speak on. Now there's an argument here that reading may be changing. As to would hypertext be the same in print. Two answers: first, if we understand that it would only be ONE sequence of choices, one path that was "frozen" on paper, then yes, it should hold up on paper. Second, as a question to illustrate the question, would this discussion on the list hold up on paper? (My answer is it would not be interesting without considerable editing! Though it's perfectly fine in its present medium.) Ron's proposition does point to one very real fact: most hypertextual writing is awful! Of course most writing in general is awful. (eg., been to a drug store or airport lately ...) Though I do enjoy a good Boeing manual with a 1986 Pouilly Fuisse...

Perhaps the question is: are we are actually reading hypertext instead of wondering if it will work in a previous medium? Maybe what's lacking is a serious reading of the work of (who would we suggest?--now THIS is the interesting part!) Jim Rosenberg, John Cayley, and who else? (I'd add my own E, soon to be issued in RIF/T and available, in a special preview-for-members-of-this- conversation version, through my author page in the EPC.) What about some kind of short reading list here? (No Chris, don't worry. I mean like--five items? The problem is that so many hypertext investigate such different terrain. So maybe it's not a matter of the medium as much as the terrain! (I mean, if a hypertext were about John Ashbery or Susan Howe or Lyn Hejinian, would it matter if it was a hypertext???) So much hypertext tends to be ethereal, engaged with the multiplicities of its technology and not grounded in language as its own act. I really think about Charles Alexander's comment here. The image of Chax's printing of Bernstein's "Four Poems" is strong in my mind. I mean these four pieces, in the Chax edition, are simply not the same as when transposed to a collection. Not that they aren't "real" in the collection. I love 'em. But thank you Charles, for the "reading" you gave me; it will always be alive at the ends of my fingers and the way I had to unfold the overleaf to get at the goodies inside...

Entered according to Act of Congress AD 1995, etc...

Loss

[↑ Contents](#)

627. **Tenney Nathanson**

dunno but

Sun 29 Oct 1995

Date: Sat, 28 Oct 1995 10:05:28 -0400

From: Chris Stroffolino <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: & Ralph Waldo

*(continued from last note--which ended with FOR WHAT?)
or FOR WHOM? cs*

Chris--

Certainly the good doctor bad insurance claims investigator (does anybody out there remember Johnny Dollar on Saturday afternoon radio?!?) is just silly. I didn't say that though perhaps (?) Jonathan did.

I also think it's been shown (by Brook Thomas and Neil Schmitz and others) that Walter Michaels is largely a perpetual motion machine driven by tautology (all literature participates in its culture loop loop loop) but it's still potentially interesting (to me, anyway) to note, sometimes w a shock of surprise, how "insurgent" work is often most oddly embroiled in the social structures it's aggressively rejecting just where it's most exciting. And I'm persuaded by Bloom, and then in a different way by William James, that Emerson is already busy doing a lot of what's most exciting--poetically, intellectually--in Stevens' poetry, and that the prodigious scholar in Stevens is an exciting trope and not just a fussy one. And in Emerson, the formulation of a vision of imaginative power that powers a lot of American poetry--up through Pound and Fenollosa and then wherever you imagine that lineage to have fructified, to gesture at just one thread out of many--is part of an argument, early on, in great essays like "The American Scholar," that's agitatedly anti-capitalist. But if it turns out that just where Emerson is opposing the powers of the thinker or the poet to the ways and means of the emerging economy, and just where he's saying the things that will be so productive for future poetries, he's describing what, with a small twist, would be just the thing he's opposing--well, that seems like a good place to focus attention, though stopping with the assertion that all supposed opposition is just a genteel tradition of liberal handwringing that does no more than replicate what it bemoans is a sad place to stop. Since I don't WORK on Emerson, I mean I'm not gonna write on him, I'm not sure of just where I'd want to go in this instance. Quentin Anderson's analysis in /Making Americans/ is one promising avenue, though his Rx is too tied up in reveries of the heyday of the New York Intellectuals to be very convincing.

Perelman is an interesting figure to bring up, I think (as Chris did) right next to Stevens, since so much of a book like /Captive Audience/ takes something like the linguistic leverage Cavell talks about Thoreau deploying (in the early parts

of /The Senses of Walden/) and shortens the length of the lever. That is, the space between current usage and the critical resonance Bob lets us hear in "our" words is almost non-existent, but not quite. This might be mapped onto the conclusion of the Jameson /Pomo/ book. (btw, that Charles B should so often deploy Cavell's "our" without quotation marks is, to me, an odd and interesting, and troubling, move.)

Chris: since you mention the sort of conjuncture I brought up as akin to the solipsism of a purely aestheticizing discourse: what's, for you, a happy counter-instance? What would be both more productive, and less solipsistic, to say about Stevens, or Perelman?

best,

Tenney

[↑ Contents](#)

628. **Jerry Rothenberg**

Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities

Sun 29 Oct 1995

Concerning Jim Rosenberg's digression regarding concrete poets & Black Mountain poets, etc., let me just say that it doesn't correspond at all to my memory of all of that. What I recall is a relative indifference back & forth, with as much occasional hostility on one side as on the other & several notable crossovers. Remember too that most of the active concrete poets -- at the height of that "movement" -- were European and Latin American, therefore at a considerable remove from the activities of the New American Poetry. In all of my contacts there -- which were extensive -- I didn't pick up anything of that sort and was much more aware of a kind of Black Mountain dismissal of the concrete people as superficial or gimmicky or whatever. The great crossover figure for me was Mac Low but there were others of us too who found the presence of both of these forces (along with several more) a matter of the greatest excitement in the 1960s and 70s. My initial take on Language Poetry was that it overplayed its connections to the New American poetry & seemed oblivious to the experiments of concrete and textsound poets & the promise offered by those. That changed over the years & all for the better, I think, but the culpability of the Concrete Poets as such seems much too on-sided a view of the matter.

Otherwise, by the way, I think that Rosenberg's discussion of the hypertext possibilities, etc. is exciting & (for me at least) enlightening. How it might be presented in a book as a part of the active poetic present (a similar problem comes up with sound poetry like, e.g., Chopin's *poesie sonore*) is something I'd

like to see solved (if that's the right word) in terms of the big-book project Joris and I are currently engaged with.

Jerome Rothenberg



ps. You might note -- if it's an indication of anything -- that in Donald Allen's updated New American Poetry (with its strong Black Mountain emphasis) there was not a retrospective sign of anything vaguely approaching concrete or visual or textsound poetry (among other omissions) -- which looks to me like at least a mutual indifference. But obviously concrete never took hold in North America and if you narrow the field of poetry to the U.S.A. alone, you're already eliminating (with a very few exceptions) the genuine innovators & developers of all of that. Anyway ...

[↑ Contents](#)

629. **Graham John Sharpe**
The Electronic Labyrinth (fwd)

Sun 29 Oct 1995

i thot this might be of interest to those who are currently following the hypertext and poetry possibilities disscussion. i have not been following it thoroughly - so my appologies if this has already been mentioned.

graham

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> -----

>

> * * * * ANNOUNCEMENT * * * *

>

>

> _The Electronic Labyrinth_, a book-length study of hypertext fiction

> and software, is now available on the Internet as freeware.

>

> _The Electronic Labyrinth_ provides a critically-informed introduction

> to the field of hypertext, with a special emphasis on its potential

> for use by authors and other creative artists. It provides a history

> of the development of the form, discussions of key terms and concepts,

> and reviews of many PC and Macintosh-based authoring systems. The

> emergence of hypertext is placed in the context of the literary

> tradition of non-linear approaches to narrative, such as those

> employed by Cortazar, Nabokov, Borges and Pavic. Special attention is

> paid to works created specifically for computerized hypertext,

> including Michael Joyce's _Afternoon, A Story_, John McDaid's _Uncle

> Buddy's Phantom Funhouse_, and Stuart Moulthrop's _Dreamtime_.
>
> _The Electronic Labyrinth_ can be obtained using FTP (File Transfer
> Protocol). The site address is: QSILVER.QUEENSU.CA. Login as
ANONYMOUS
> and provide your email address when you are prompted for a password.
> Once logged on, change to the directory containing _The Electronic
> Labyrinth_ by typing:
>
> cd /pub/english/hypertext
>
> If you are running Microsoft Windows 3.1 or 3.11, then download the
> WinHelp version (LAB_WIN.ZIP). This is the preferred format, since it
> is the only one which preserves the hypertext structure of the
> document. Otherwise, retrieve either the Rich Text Format file
> (LAB_RTF.ZIP) which retains the formatting of the text, or the ASCII
> format file (LAB_ASC.ZIP) which does not. Finally, if you are unable
> to unarchive a ZIP file, retrieve LAB_ASC.TXT, which is a plain text
> file.
>
> For more information on installing _The Electronic Labyrinth_,
> retrieve the REAME.TXT file with the command:
>
> GET README.TXT
>
> If you encounter problems, please send email to:
> [REDACTED]
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> Christopher Keep
> Tim McLaughlin
> robin
> October 1995
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[↑ Contents](#)

630. **Kenneth Sherwood**
hypertext--media--baseballs
Sun 29 Oct 1995

Looking for Homer's baseball? I may want to retract this before it bounces back on tomorrow morning's digest--but there is no baseball in Homer; his persistence needs to be accounted for either by the new equipment accorded him in, say, Fitzgerald's translation... or a cultural investment of 'believing in Homer's great baseball.'

Why is this anti-sports tone necessary? It seems that as soon as we start talking about a 'value' or 'quality' to a given poetry which escapes the ravages of time or the transformations of its media, we've dematerialized it completely.

Put pragmatically--what do we get by talking about the poem apart from its versions: manuscript, drafts, first magazine publication, small-press book version, electronic reprint, etc.?

Let's be blunt and/or reductive.

You can't have your baseball and eat it too! Either 'good poetry is platform independent' (baseball view) or 'there is no such thing as the words themselves' (Charles A.)

The other problem I sense in talking about the somehow pure poetry that 'comes through' *despite*... is that it seems necessarily bound up with the recriminant notion that those poetries which haven't made-the-cut must have lacked the 'pure poetry' that would have shined through.

ks

[↑ Contents](#)

631. **Charles Alexander**
visual poets
Sun 29 Oct 1995

Jim Rosenberg's comments on the inflexibility of concrete poets, and that such inflexibility and intolerance set the art of poetry back 20 years, just seems wrong to me. Admittedly I was not terribly aware of visual poetry or other innovative poetries until the mid-1970's, but from what I know it seems that there was at least as much intolerance toward visual poetry as there was intolerance coming from visual poetry. And when I think of poets like Karl Young, bpNichol, Jackson Mac Low, Karl Kempton, Jonathan Brannen, and others, I don't see much intolerance at all; rather, I see poets practicing visual poetry among various strategies to expand the whole art. I think if we ignore

the visual poetry of these and others, we miss an important part of late 20th Century poetry.

For a different view, a belief that poets engaged in various schools did NOT set back the art 20 years, rather helped it continue forward, I quote from Karl Young's essay, "Notation and the Art of Reading," in Open Letter vol. 5, no. 7, from the late 1970's, which will be part of his forthcoming book of collected essays, *Only As Painted Images Have We Come To Be In This Place*, which Chax Press will publish in 1996.

"At present there are at least twenty major schools of poetry functioning in North America, each with dozens of subgenres. No group dominates, so poets at the present time enjoy more freedom than they ever have in the past. Members of some schools can be dogmatic and exclusionist, and members of one clique can become extremely bellicose toward another coterie, but few, if any, can limit their interests and contacts to members of their own groups. Hence poets belonging to one clan can be influenced by members of another -- in fact, many poets switch allegiances during their careers, and many function in several schools at once. The cross-fertilization among these groups produces all sorts of hybrids, sometimes showing a great deal of what biologists call hybrid vigor. We should note that what poets work against is often as important as what they work with, and even antagonisms can be productive. As well as producing hybrid vigor, interaction among schools seems always to exert an influence on notation, keeping it from becoming rigid or consistent, and opening up new possibilities."

While I admire the leaps into new worlds of visual possibilities of Jim Rosenberg's work, I don't think it needs to come with a putdown of earlier visual poetry, which, I think, has helped us rather than hindered us.

charles alexander

[↑ Contents](#)

632. **Joe Amato**

Re: Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities

Sun 29 Oct 1995

jerry, first off let me say (which i've posted backchannel to pierre) that your and pierre's newly released anthology is an incredible achievement... what i find intriguing is that you've managed in many ways to offer an example of how to constructively alter the activity of anthologizing *even as* jed's book emerges, a book that critiques past such efforts... striking synchronicity here, methinks...

anyway, to cut to the chase: i don't see how you'll manage a compilation of electronic text in other than electronic form, just don't see it... seems to me that

there is surely a similar problem in translating various print objects of art into a simpler, paper-bound medium... but the electronic distinction is complicated not only by some fundamental changes in reading e/affects (depending in part on one's, uhm, sensitivities), but by, for example, the various platforms for which the text in question has been designed/initially composed... to wit: is reading the windows version of _afternoon_ equivalent to reading the mac version?... is there any subtle (or significant) difference here intrinsic to platform/front end, or is this difference more constructively pursued as a function of differences twixt mac/windows users/readers, which latter would imply perhaps a slightly altered theory of reception?...

we tend not to talk about how we thumb through a given print manuscript (if indeed we thumb through it!) but hitting the keyboard and clicking a mouse are different activities (different from each other, that is), and electronic texts can foreground this difference, too...

some tough conundrums here, and i'm sure i'm overlooking lots... but i'd stick at least with the assertion that an anthology of (electronic!) hypertext must be electronic...

joe

[↑ Contents](#)

633. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: the shape of jazz to come/gone

Sun 29 Oct 1995

according to L.A. Times, Don Cherry died at age 58 a few days ago -- Anybody who saw him perform recently (the only trumpet player i know of in jazz to play from a lotus position!) knows how energetic and inventive Cherry continued to be in the years after departing from the Ornette Coleman band -- Once read poems with him at D.C. space between his sets at the piano and trumpet -- a beautiful musician and a great friend to all who knew him --

[↑ Contents](#)

634. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: confessional averse

Sun 29 Oct 1995

since Ron has now busted on me in public I may as well fess up -- I was off the list from time to time lately 'cause I was playing in the series -- Frustrated at my inability to break into the big leagues of poetry book publishing, I've been moonlighting under a pseudonym for a ball team -- The team at first seemed much more open to new talent than the world of poetry, but now they've asked

me to compose a "rap" for the team video -- guess that was all they wanted me for all along --

[↑ Contents](#)

635. **kathryne lindberg**

Re: the shape of jazz to come/gone

Sun 29 Oct 1995

re: Don Cherry's death. Sacrilege no doubt on the day after the conclusion of the World Series; preface too to a Stormy Monday after this first day of Day Light Savings, but. . . Cherry died of liver cancer, one might say of not having access to the replacement parts available to the Mick.

Don Cherry, Ornette Coleman, Ed Blackwell, Charlie Hayden are still on recordings and YET to be appreciated. The character of that "yet" is manifold--prospective but not Emersonian.

[↑ Contents](#)

636. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: the shape of jazz to come/gone

Sun 29 Oct 1995

Right On, Aldon!--Never saw him live unfortunately, but was hoping too--Currently have his "Until the rain comes" on my answering machine message, chris s.

[↑ Contents](#)

637. **Tom Beard**

Re: Where's the Hypertext in this Thread?

Sun 29 Oct 1995

Loss gave an interesting summary of the hypertext (ht) poetry thread. I like the healthy skepticism that he displays - "most hypertext writing is awful!" - and much of the most interesting writings on ht writing that I've seen on the web (such as the "Search for some ht literature" (I've forgotten the author & URL) and the article in FEED at <http://www.emedia.net/feed/>) has also been skeptical. I know that I came towards ht with great enthusiasm, and I'm glad that that has become tempered with some realism. Since then, I've written a poem that demanded a hypertext presentation, but I always make sure that I'm not writing (hype)rtex for its own sake.

The poem of mine that Eryque mentioned (thanks Eryque!) was originally written on paper, but the structure became three dimensional and it was soon evident that any paper version would "flatten" the poem and privilege certain

directions of reading over others. As it appears on the web (at <http://metcon.met.co.nz/nwfc/beard/www/notes27.html>) each lexia/section/poemlet allows the reader to move in one of six different directions, corresponding to the six faces of a cube. My intention was for readers to construct their own readings by reading/slicing/browsing/surfing through this 3D poem, and that they should email me their readings to me so that I could include them on my web pages along with the poem. This will-to-interaction faltered, however, since no-one has sent me a reading yet.

The point of this is that this was a poem that did not work on paper, but did in ht. Maybe I could have constructed something out of perpex or transparent paper, but I have no space in which to exhibit such a work, and besides, I'm happier writing HTML than doing manual labour. Perhaps there are some interesting uses for ht-like structures in conceptual art or sculpture - I dream of a vast, Hampton Court-style maze, with words embedded within the living walls. It would be fascinating to track the paths that visitors/readers take through this maze - perhaps the young would end up in a different part of the maze to the old; or males and females would tend to take different tracks; or those who have witnessed a parent die head straight towards the centre, while people for whom English is a second language find the exit with great rapidity, and those in unrequited love mill round and around in slowly- diminishing circles.

Going back to why I agree with Loss over most ht-lit being awful, I must qualify this by saying that I've only really read text-only works on the web: I haven't tried anything based in Hypercard, and most of the interesting work by people like Jim Rosenberg & Eduardo Kac won't talk to my little VT-320. Also, until recently most ht-lit on the web was by people who were programmers first and writers second, and this showed. I have no doubt, however, that ht shows great potential for experimental multi-linear narratives. I'm not sure whether poetry will have as great a potential for ht experimentation, for reasons that I will try to explain.

For a start, most contemporary poetry has no narrative, or at least not in the linear sense of conventional fiction, so there is no expectation of story-line to be subverted. There are exceptions, such as epic poetry or stories in verse, but in language-centred writing as well as in much lyric poetry, we cannot allow the reader to choose "what happens next", since there is no "next".

We could write poems in which words are highlighted, and clicking these words will take us to different parts of the poem. This is "associative" ht, as opposed to "plot-based" ht, and it is an interesting possibility. But this is how I tend to read most poetry anyway, and I've argued (http://metcon.met.co.nz/nwfc/beard/www/sargeson_ladder.html) that all text

can be read as hypertext in this sense. Even a relatively conventional text can be read in this way, with words sending the mind racing down links of meaning and sound, both within the poem and with "pointers" to other texts. This is truly non-linear reading, as opposed to the "multilinear" reading that someone so rightly pointed out was the true characteristic of ht. At least with HTML- style ht, a reader follows one link at a time, whereas reading a poem on the page can generate a ghostly web of links, existing simultaneously and at different levels of consciousness, across the poem. It sounds like Jim R's approach, with superimposed words, may be an incarnation of this idea, and I wish I had the hardware to view it.

Perhaps the most promising creative uses of hypertext will not be in poetry, or fiction, or criticism; but in modes that have not previously existed. Some of my favourite web examples of this are OutThere(TM) at

<http://www.umich.edu/~rmutt/OT/> (a hypertext non-glossary of Dada, Surrealism etc; a satirical "Form without Function"; and the homepages of Procrustus Corp, "brokers of fine intellectual property", sprinkled with extensions to HTML such as <TASTEFUL> and <HYPNOTIZE>), The E-Ville Dialogs at <http://www.itp.tsoa.nyu.edu/~shana/Dialogues/contents.html> (the reader eavesdrops on philosophical discussions among the diners at a Greenaway-esque restaurant, trying to talk to the Head Chef, Heraclitus - the overall feel is somewhere between Kafka and The Prisoner) and the Giovanni Bottesini project at <http://www.webcom.com/~redwards/gbmain.html> (a mock-historical archive which makes fine use of layered possibilities - Bottesini has 7 reported dying sayings, each of which leads the reader on a different track - and reminds me of Umberto Eco with its conspiracy theories and pseudo-scholarship).

Hypertext could also allow for some new forms of critique, with a critic adding links to a work to make explicit some linkages that were hidden in a linear text, or creating a hyper-detournement by weaving ht-links between several diverse texts. It also gives the editors of electronic journals the opportunity to add both internal and external links to their publications, thereby expanding the works. Of course, the individual authors should have some veto on this - I wouldn't like my poems to sprout blue underlined links without my approval - but there's merit in having a poem that quotes John Cage and alludes to The Piano accompanied by a subtle selection of links to a John Cage home page and the Internet Movie Archive's entry on The Piano. The Web itself is the greatest hypertext poem yet written.

Tom Beard

I/am a background/process, shrunk to an icon. | Tom Beard I am/a dark place.

| [REDACTED] 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

[↑ Contents](#)

638. **Kenneth Sherwood**
return to the tinkering

Sun 29 Oct 1995

Loss' post calls for a thorough response; I'm afraid I'll just tinker away at it. Fact of the Net's dark origins granted--this may be all the more reason to invoke the playful, insisting that we do toy around, and that toying is meaningful.

Which reminds me of the discussions on 'experimental' some months ago. I find a value in insisting that one 'toys' around or 'experiments' because I don't look for poems that act as proof-texts of some prior seriousness--itself potentially dangerous, no?

On a different note, it does seem that one of the elements absent from the hypertext wing of this discussion is the way that, online atleast, it involves more than non-linear or interactive writing. These are (as someone, Tom Beard?) mentioned, attributes of particular interest to writers of narrative.

Increasingly I grow interested in using the multi-media aspect of electronic writing. The ability to create and distribute visual and sound poetry, 'intermedia' (in Dick Higgins' term) compells my recent writing more than those formal features most typically associated with hypertext.

In this sense, I'd want not only to blur the boundary between computer generated writing and hypertext (non-sequential writing) but also that between writer and programmer. The word has had little time encrust itself with romantic resonance, but 'programmer' might be another word for the work Charles Alexander and others do with the letter press book!

Ken S.

[↑ Contents](#)

639. **Mark Wallace**
Ira Lightman

Mon 30 Oct 1995

Ira Lightman has an interesting essay in Texture #6. But Ira, I'll be damned if I can tell in the essay exactly what book it is you are critiquing. If you're on the

list, can you please help me and other readers out. It may just be my oversight...

mark wallace

[↑ Contents](#)

640. **Mark Wallace**

Jordan Davis

Mon 30 Oct 1995

Jordan Davis--will you please contact me backchannel? I now have three e-mail addresses for you, and no clue which is the correct one.

mark wallace

[↑ Contents](#)

641. **H. T. KIRBY-SMITH**

Visual Poetry

Mon 30 Oct 1995

Visual poetry goes way back--to Alexandria in ancient times, and poets such as Simias who did shaped poems. Then with printing in the Renaissance the typographical arrangement could involve all sorts of degrees of originality. I think the early-twentieth-century emphasis (in the poetry of H. D. and Pound, the criticism of Hulme, poetry of Williams, cummings, etc) was in part a reaction against those late-nineteenth-century volumes jammed margin to margin with Idyls of the King or dramatic monologues.

May Swenson is certainly the best visual poet of the second half of this century--because her poems are also auditory, and because the visual effect is arranged rather than deranged.

Visual poetry seems to coincide with other kinds of revolution or experimentation--and is scorned by prosodic conservatives, who become uncomfortable in their scorn when reminded of George Herbert.

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

[↑ Contents](#)

642. **Joe Amato**

Re: Where's the Hypertext in this Thread?

Mon 30 Oct 1995

a friendly addendum to tom beard's fine post:

tom, i would only say, as i've been saying for a good while now, that the fact that hypertext doesn't violate the episodic, linear structure of narrative when it comes to much contemporary poetry is **precisely** the reason i find it of great significance to what poets can do with same (and, as in the case of a few folks on this list, **are** doing)... perhaps one loses the sort of inherent contrapuntal texture that transgression of narrative-episodic form provides, but what takes its place, depending on what's actually writ(-composed), is the possibility of rather startling associative leaps unencumbered by 'plot' as such... (my own preference is in fact for an anti/metaphysics of place, but this is a whole 'nother matter)...

in general, i think the concept of hybridity (informed perhaps by recent a-a and postcolonial critical work on same) is a useful way to begin to rethink the sorts of aesthetic experiences you suggest in various of the web sites you mention (and thanks for that list, too!)...

all best//

joe

[↑ Contents](#)

643. **John Cayley**

Re: Hypertext & Poetry & Tinkertools & Baseball

Mon 30 Oct 1995

[I meant to make these short, oh well...]

Ken Sherwood:

Calling various forms of computer-writing tinkertoy technology is absolutely right, since these forms WILL become outmoded because of the role this tech plays apart from poetry. The "BOOK", itself a technology which has changed (hand scripted to letterpress to desktop lazerjet) does not tend to outmode itself.

Nope, /pace/ all the well-meaning and light-hearted suggestions that it's good for us to 'go back to' using toys for a while to regain some sort of 'primitive' or 'childlike' naivety in relation to our art (I love to play, although **not** with computers), I just can't let 'tinkertoy' slip through as potentially useful characterization of 'programmed machines as presentors/generators of (some) poetic writing'.

Especially, not for the reason that what we use now will (inevitably) be outmoded tomorrow. The technology of the book has evolved, and *many* book technologies have been outmoded. The Chinese classics were written on (amongst other things) strips of bamboo bound together with string (producing, btw, some interesting quasi-aleatory ethical philosophy when early editions were dug up with the strings rotted away), they were also carved on stones (some argue this was *after* the aforementioned quasis-aleatory transformations) which still stand in a 'forest of Stones' in Xi'an -- multilithic, difficult to use, but not outmoded (you can still take rubbings).

But enough of this playing around, the reason the question of obsolescence is obsolete is because of the computer-based medium we're using now. It's a mistake to consider 'some one type of computer running some one piece of software' as a soon-to-be-abandoned toy, because now all of these systems are linking themselves together and it won't be long before most (local) computer-based activity is transparent to the network, regardless of platform/software etc.

My conclusion: nothing of significance (I mean the stinging together of beautiful/good language, the design and creation of new cyber/hypertextual forms and systems of text regeneration) that you are doing now with your computer will be 'outmoded'. You will, sooner rather than later, be able to make it accessible to others.

Jim Rosenberg:

There's one thing that has to be said here and SAID LOUDLY: I hope no one comes away from this discussion thinking that those of us doing experiments with various computer media are trying to hype these media as in any way "superior" to the traditional ones.

I wanted to concur whole-heartedly these remarks of Jim's.

Jim Rosenberg:

*How does one *program* time? There are some very difficult questions here. (I hope John will jump in on this, since he's done the most interesting work I've seen with programming time in computer poetry.) One thing I like to say to myself all the time is that:*

Syllable Time is not equal to Real Time

Programming time: What it seems to me that a poet/+programmer *can* do is allow a reader to experience a poet's syllable time. Perhaps this also happens when you simply listen to a recording of a poet performing her work. But I've

always be particularly interested in silent reading, and the screen, potentially, allows us to experience a rendition of a 'scored' syllable time in the silent reading of a poem.

That said, I mentioned before that I had written a HyperCard stack that allows you to 'score' poems in this way. Jim wrote about his 'tape loop' experiment and his surprise at the illusion of simultaneity that the dominance of stress over musical attack produced. In trying to make the 'scoring' stack I was (and still am) amazed at the fine control required to 'score' words and phrases in a manner that matches my inner ear. HyperCard (with my current hardware) really isn't up to it. (Ah ha! they all cry -- a tinkertool...) E.g. I make words appear letter by letter (as if scrolling rightwards) and allow the speed at which this is done to be adjusted. But to represent stress properly, you would probably have to have variable speeds of letter display **within** the presentation of single words (v. difficult and v. time consuming -- but I'll work on it). However, such super-sensitivity apart, if you got the time/pause relationships right (over one screen's worth of text) then the fragment suddenly seems to click, to work for the inner ear -- ?? like Jim's tape loop phenomenon.

[Programming an other time: *_The Speaking Clock_* addresses the question of names for time; the suggestion that a clock should give a different name to every moment, since every moment of **real** time is different.]

Ken Sherwood:

You can't have your baseball and eat it too! Either 'good poetry is platform independent' (baseball view) or 'there is no such thing as the words themselves' (Charles A.)

*The other problem I sense in talking about the somehow pure poetry that 'comes through' **despite**... is that it seems necessarily bound up with the recriminant notion that those poetries which haven't made-the-cut must have lacked the 'pure poetry' that would have shined through.*

I really enjoyed and went with this post, but ...

I think you **can** have and eat your baseball.* I've heard, from colleagues who've been there, that you can buy live baseballs in certain markets in south China and that there are no local taboos against killing and eating them. So, if we can translate Homer into Chinese, we should be able have, hold and eat our baseballs in cyberspace. (Also, isn't there a very good Japanese pitcher doing well in the major leagues? With a really extraordinary action?? Pl. excuse UKanian ignorance.)

best, John

* Cf. the unceasing discussions of the problem of translation.

- - - - -

John Cayley Wellsweep Press [in Chinese HZ:]
^ fine, innovative literary translation from Chinese ^
1 Grove End House 150 Highgate Road London NW5 1PD UK
Tel & Fax: 0 [REDACTED] Email: [REDACTED]
1995 URLs: <http://www.inforamp.net/~cayley> [= home]
+ [/wshome.html](#) [= Wellsweep]
+ [/inhome.html](#) [= Indra's Net]

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[↑ Contents](#)

644. **Joe Amato**

Re: Hypertext & Poetry & Tinkertools & Baseball

Mon 30 Oct 1995

well i'm just really mouthy lately, is all...

john's _the speaking clock_ is (again my spockish declaration of late)
fascinating... one of the beauties of this medium is that john was able to email
me his work, from london, within twenty-four hours of my request... and i had it
up and running in about two minutes...

mind you, he won't receive my check for mebbe five-seven days, airmail...

(it's on its way, john, thanks again! (((does this guy have faith in me, or
what?...

anyway:

i think this discussion of ht and electronic form suggests, not so surprisingly, a
conjuncture (a helpful one) in the arts: that moment when art---understood by
its various communities in terms of its various practices---finds itself once again
(a historical assertion) implicated in its various technologies AS SUCH... and
with a bit of luck, i hope, technology begins itself to show signs of this, uhm,
interfacing...

hence we're at the intersection of multiple discourses... hence i want to
introduce the term 'instrumentalist' here (in line with certain theorists of
technology) to indicate that a view toward technology as a tool, as something
we have control over, is generally used to argue in fact that technology only
reinforces dominant, status quo realities... b/c in this view, technology is a tool
(as my students here at the technical institute tend always to gloss it) "nothing
more and nothing less"... hence the question posed by audre lorde, to wit, how

to use the 'master's tools' to rebuild the 'master's house,' becomes a difficult question indeed...

there are other ways of thinking about tools (where's don byrd?), but what i offer in this latter is the more restrictive sense of the word...

now among the various other views of technology, there is the view afforded by folks like (and for) foucault (say that five times quickly) that technology is in fact NOT a tool... that it is a far more epistemic construct, and that we don't exactly 'use' it to produce a desired end product... we don't, that is, 'control' it--- in fact quite the opposite... hence we end up with the more dire discourses on technology, and the the more luddite responses to same...

in these views, as i've articulated them, the possibility of bringing about constructive change through technological practice is complicated by either (1) difficulty in transcending the after-the-significant-fact, make it OLD/'fix it' role assigned to tools or (2) inability to control a totalizing (not to say totalitarian) set of practices marked by their self-replication in capitalist commodity culture...

i'm pointing to these two views of technology to suggest a third view (and fourth, etc): that if techology is from one pov a tool (yes, it can pretty much reduce to this, depending on how one construes context) and if technology is from another pov a set of cultural practices (yes, it can be this in macro terms, depending again on on how one construes context), then methinks there is certainly room in this continuum to consider ALL technologies both as things AND as (social) events (maria damon may want to jump in here with her notion of the 'margin')...

things would include toys, screwdrivers, human beings, hypertexts, baseballs and global information and control systems...

events would include heightened awareness, mindwashing, human beings, tripping (both senses), striking out and FUN...

the instrumentalist concept *tends toward* things (as means to ends), the epistemic concept *tends toward* events (as mutually contingent 'shapeshifting' processes)... but there are no hard & fast boundaries here, save to the extent one is attached to one's categories...

just some non-inklings, all a bit sloppy and unpolished, high in fiber, and mebbe not too difficult to digest...

joe

[↑ Contents](#)

645. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: poetry w/ a tech slant: anthology

Mon 30 Oct 1995

Steve,

Thanks for your advice. Sorry I missed you at the last Orono conf. See you there this June?

Burt

[↑ Contents](#)

646. **Gale Nelson**

Re: wagering poetics

Mon 30 Oct 1995

Regarding Judith Goldman's work, her cubes are still in her possession (she is living in New York, but will be part of a "group reading" of New York poets here in Providence in mid-November; I'll ask her about their travel- ability at that time). The organ described by me is a description of her description of such item still living in the abstract (or still living in the abstract last I knew). Even as a notion, though, it has a nice sense of words living (breathing?).

More after mid-November, when I'll see Judith...

Gale Nelson

[↑ Contents](#)

647. **Jim Rosenberg**

Concrete Poetics Dialogue (was Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities)

Mon 30 Oct 1995

[My subscription is set to digest, so this is likely to cross other postings on this subject; apologies in advance if it looks like I'm ignoring somebody.]

me:

> [I'm gonna get myself in trouble for this]

Yup.

Jerry Rothenberg:

> Concerning Jim Rosenberg's digression regarding concrete poets & Black Mountain

> poets, etc., let me just say that it doesn't correspond at all to my memory

> of all of that. What I recall is a relative indifference back & forth, with

> as much occasional hostility on one side as on the other & several notable

> crossovers.

[...]

- > the culpability of the Concrete Poets
- > as such seems much too on-sided a view of the matter.

I'll stand corrected on this, but my basic point remains: whoever was responsible, real *dialogue* in poetics between visual poetics and other forms -- sound too, for that matter -- has been woefully insufficient, and we must do what we can to increase it.

Charles Alexander:

- > While I admire the leaps into new worlds of visual possibilities of Jim
- > Rosenberg's work, I don't think it needs to come with a putdown of earlier
- > visual poetry, which, I think, has helped us rather than hindered us.

Oh dear. Charles, you misunderstood me *COMPLETELY*. There was no putdown intended against visual poetry -- the exact opposite. What I am speaking against is exactly the lack of interchange. It is from a belief in the *value* such a dialogue would have that I bemoan its absence.

Yes, there have been many "crossover" figures, as both Jerry and Charles point out. But in our *discourse* I find precious little attention to this cross-fertilization. If hypertext folk end up talking only to other hypertext folk it will be a sad sad day.

--

Jim Rosenberg <http://www.well.com/user/jer/>
CIS: 71515,124
WELL: jer
Internet: [REDACTED] (if it bounces try [REDACTED])

[↑ Contents](#)

648. **Dodie Bellamy**

shapeshifting

Mon 30 Oct 1995

I'll be returning to San Francisco tomorrow and [REDACTED] will be biting the dust. I will again be the db in [REDACTED]

Thanks to all of you for keeping me company during my autumn in the midwest.

I'll be reading in Los Angeles Friday night, at Beyond Baroque--if anybody's around there.

Dodie Bellamy

[↑ Contents](#)

649. **Mark Roberts**

AWOL: November Happenings 1/2

Mon 30 Oct 1995

NOVEMBER Happenings

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.

AWOL is also setting up a virtual bookshop for Australian small magazines and presses. This will take the form of regular newsletters (which will be available both on the net and by mail and fax) that will pre/review new publications. These titles will then be able to be ordered by mail or fax. Associated with our Virtual Bookshop is our Sydney distribution service for small presses. Please contact us for further details if you want to distribute your publication to bookshops in Sydney.

AWOL posts are archived on the WWW at the following address
<http://www.anatomy.su.oz.au:80/danny/books/AWOL/> then click on Australian Writing OnLine.

How to receive AWOL postings

Internet

All AWOL postings, including the monthly Happenings list, one off posts about special events, the latest literary magazines and small press books, together with information about AWOL's Virtual Bookshop, are available free to subscribers with an internet address. Simply send a post, asking to be added to our mailing list, to [REDACTED].

Mail

Each month AWOL will post a hard copy of that month's Happenings list, together with a copy of all special posts, to AWOL subscribers. While we are setting up our Virtual Bookshop there will be a introductory charge of \$12.50 (for six months) to cover postage and printing costs (rates will be reviewed early in 1996). Please send cheques, made payable to Rochford Press, to AWOL, PO Box 333, Concord NSW 2137 (overseas rates on application).

Fax

Subscribers in the 02 telephone area can elect to have the monthly Happenings list and special posts faxed to them for \$5.00 for six months. Please send cheques, made payable to Rochford Press to AWOL, PO Box 333, Concord NSW 2137. Subscribers outside the 02 area should contact us for individual fax rates.

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NSW

SYDNEY

Every Thursday Writers Anonymous at Tap Gallery level 1 278 Palmer Street Darlinghurst. Details phone/fax [REDACTED]

Every Monday 7pm Monday Night Live, comedy, drama, dance, poetry, music, monologue and mime. At the Blue Fox Bar 274 Victoria Street Darlinghurst (opposite the fire station). Details phone Christo (02) [REDACTED] or Leslie (02) [REDACTED].

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

Every Sunday...THE WORD ON SUNDAY 11.30am Museum of Contemporary Art, Circular Quay. 2 Admission \$8/ \$5.. Details phone (02) [REDACTED].

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

Every Tuesday night THE WALLS HAVE EARS 8.30 till late. Upstairs at the Little West Cafe 346 Liverpool Street Darlinghurst. Details Clare McGregor (02) [REDACTED].

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

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

1st Tuesday...ICEBREAKERS GAY POETRY 8pm, 197 Albion Street Surry Hills. \$2 includes free coffee. Details phone Noel Tointon (02) 3172257.

2nd & 4th Thursday...FRESH WORDS 7.30pm The Poets Union on Oxford Street, Berkelouw Books, 19 Oxford Street Paddington. Guests and open section. Phone Anna (02) [REDACTED] or 015 704 364 or Nick Sykes (02) [REDACTED].

3rd Sunday 2 - 4pm INTERLUDES at the Lethington Community Centre 133 Smith Street Summer Hills. Poets, musicians and storytellers. Details ph Joye Dempsey (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].

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

Poets Union / State Library Workshops at the State Library Macquarie Street Sydney 4th Saturday. November 25 Luke Davies. Poets Union Inc. or The Library Society members \$20 per workshop Non-members \$25 per workshop. Details phone [REDACTED].

30 November 8pm Writers at the River, Roscoes Riverside Restaurant, Penrith, NSW. 'Loves labour lost' Jim Haynes Open Section included. Details contact Carl Leddy (047) 21 2087.

NOVEMBER AT ARIEL BOOKSELLERS

2 November 7pm. 3 parts Glamour. Gaby Naher (The Underwharf) and Linda Jaivin (Eat Me). A reading and discussion chaired by Justine Ettler (The River Ophelia). Free

Ariel Booksellers is at 42 Oxford Street Paddington. Phone (02) [REDACTED], fax (02) [REDACTED].

NOVEMBER AT GLEEBOOKS

1 November 6.30 pm. Amanda Lohrey in conversation. Reading from her new novel Camille's Bread. \$6/\$4.

2 November 6pm Launch of Lovers edited by Jean Bedford. This book features 8 women writers, Candida Baker, Veronica Brady, Anna Maria Dell'oso, Rosie Scott, Rose Creswell, Jan Mckemish, Gabrielle Lord and Jean Bedford writing about love. Free

8 November 6.30pm Readings from the Oxford Book of Australian Women's Poetry chaired by the editor, Susan Lever. \$6/\$4.

9 November 6.30pm Michael Leunig will be reading poetry from his new collection of poems and drawings You and Me. \$6/\$4.

10 November 7pm Peter Goldsworthy will be reading from his new novel Wish. \$6/\$4.

13 November 6pm Launch of While you were out... an anthology of poetry and prose from the University of Western Sydney. Free.

Gleebooks is at 49 Glebe Point Road Glebe. For details and bookings for all events ph (02) 6602333.

NSW WRITERS' CENTRE EVENTS

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

FEMINIST & EXPERIMENTAL WRITERS' GROUP meets every second Friday 6.30-9.30pm. Details Margaret Metz (02) [REDACTED] or Valerie Williamson for details of venues.

LIFE STORIES: A weekend workshop with Patti Miller. 4 & 5 November 1995. This workshop is for people who want to get started on their life story or the life story of a family member. \$65 (members NSWWC & conc) \$80 (nonmembers). Bookings and details to NSWWC 02 [REDACTED].

MURDER AT THE NSW WRITERS CENTRE; A WEEKEND WORKSHOP WITH MARELE DAY 18-19 November 10am -4pm. This two day workshop will focus on getting feedback on ideas, working out a storyline and writing convincing scenes that will have the reader wanting more. Cost \$110 (members) \$150 (non members), Details and bookings (02) [REDACTED].

TECHNIQUES OF JOURNAL WRITING WITH ANGELIKA FREMD. Sat 2 and Sat 9 December 9.30 am to 5pm. This workshop will aim to acquaint participants with techniques of journal writing which will allow recorded material to be mined for use in autobiographical fiction writing. Cost \$120 (members) \$150 (non members). Details and bookings (02) [REDACTED].

Unless otherwise stated all NSWWC events are held at the centre in Rozelle Hospital grounds (enter from Balmain Road opposite Cecily Street and follow the signs).

REGIONAL NSW

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.

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

NEWCASTLE / HUNTER VALLEY

3rd Monday... Poetry at the Pub. Northern Star Hotel, 7.30pm Beaumont Street Newcastle Street \$2/\$1. Details phone Bill Iden (049) 675 972

MAITLAND Poetry group 4th Friday 7.30, Literary Institute in Banks Street East Maitland. 24 November Favourite poem or poet. \$2. Details phone Bruce Copping (049) 301497.

BLUE MOUNTAINS Friday Nights at Varuna Writers' Centre 7.30pm: Includes tea, coffee & biscuits. \$2 buys entry and a lucky door ticket. Varuna Writers' Centre, 141 Cascade Street Katoomba NSW 2780. Details ph Peter Bishop (047) 825 674.

WAGGA WAGGA

Tuesday 5 November 7.00pm, BOORANGA WRITERS' CENTRE, Charles Sturt University Wagga campus - LAUNCH OF fourW no. 6 by Margaret McAlister, children's book author (I know it's Melbourne Cup night but literary punters will put their money on WWW at Booranga!!)

Saturday 18 and Sunday 19, Booranga Writers' Centre, CSU, 12 noon - 5.30 pm each day: LIFE STORIES: A weekend writing workshop with Tony Reeder Cost: \$35 per person for the weekend

Enquiries: David Gilbey (069 332465)

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

ADELAIDE

2nd & 4th Tuesday Poets in the Pub The Governor Hindmarsh Hotel 59 Port Road 8pm. Open readings. Details phone Barry McKee (08) [REDACTED].

Every Friday Interactive Port O'Call opposite Johnny Rockets at the rear of 281 Rundle Street. 8.30pm. Open reading. Free. Details phone (08) 2236113.

3rd Thursday Salisbury Writers Meetings at the Salisbury Central Library 6.30-8.30pm. Visitors and new members welcome. Details phone (08) [REDACTED].

3 November The Enfield Writers Club will launch their third anthology, After the ink has dried, at the Civic Centre Hall, 112 Hampsted Road Broadview. Details phone Michael Hopwood (08) 4347.

5 November The Hills and Valley Writers present Writers in the Library with Moya Costella at the Hub Community Library, Aberfoyle Park. Moya will conduct a morning workshop on 'Writing your life' and will read from her work in the afternoon. Details and bookings Gwen Malton (08) [REDACTED] or (03) [REDACTED].

7 November 20 Anniversary of the Friendly Street Poetry. The Anniversary meeting will involve merchandising, a book sale, and a special double open reading: the last chance for performers to be selected by the editors of the 20th

edition of the Friendly Street Poetry Reader. For further details contact Stephen Lawrence phone (08) [REDACTED] fax (08) [REDACTED] email [REDACTED], or Glen Murdoch on (08) [REDACTED].

11 November 1pm -4 pm The Seaside Writers' Group present A Creative Writing Workshop (sponsored by the Writers' Centre) at the Glenelg Community Centre 20 Tarlton Street Somerton Park. Cost \$5. Details phone Gail (08) 2770329.

Writers' Centre SA Events

Every 2nd Wednesday 10am. City Scribes writers group meet at the Writers' Centre. Details phone Jenny (08) 2948602 or Jeanne (08) [REDACTED].

Every 2nd Wednesday 7.30pm Children's Writers Group meets at the Writers' Centre. This is a discussion group for active children's writers. Details phone Jeri Kroll (08) 269627.

4 November Romance fiction conference 'Show and tell'. Sponsored by the Romance Writers of Australia. Cost from \$55 to \$70. Details phone Helen McKerral (08) [REDACTED] or Gillian Curtain (08) [REDACTED].

5 November 11am - 4.30pm 'Getting Published' A seminar providing an insight into the secrets of publishing in Australia and overseas. Speakers include Sherry-Anne Jacobs (WA writer of historical fiction, science fiction and romances), Phil Cummings (children's writer) and David de Vries and Glenn Lumsden (comic books). There will also be a panel of publishers from Wakefield Press, Omnibus Books and Openbook. Cost \$30/\$20 concession (WCSA members) \$40 (non members).

5 November 2pm Sunday Prose Reading. Bring along ten minutes of your stuff to try out on other writers. Details phone John (08) 3367474.

Beginning 6 November and then on successive Mondays Diary Writing by Women course run by UK writer and academic, Susan Richardson. The course will look at the published diaries of women from countries as diverse as China, Australia and Brazil. Prison diaries, travel accounts and journals by famous literary women. Participants will also be encouraged to analyse their own writing habits. Cost \$90 (\$50 conc). Details and enrolments phone (08) 2981495.

Unless otherwise stated all Writers' Centre of South Australia events are held at the Centre 187 Rundle Street Adelaide. Details phone Mary Combe (08) [REDACTED], fax (07) [REDACTED].

REGIONAL SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Last Sunday of the month 2pm Gawler Poetry at the Railway Family Hotel, corner 18th and 15th Streets Gawler. Open Readings. Free Details phone Martin Johnson (085) 224268.

Every second Monday Yankalilla District Writers' Group meets from 9.30pm at the RSL Hall Main Road Normanville. Details phone Claire Brooks (085) 582294.

QUEENSLAND

Wordsmith Cafe Readings 2 November 10.30pm Brisbane writer Estelle Pinney will read from her latest book Time out for Living and Michael Noonan will read from his autobiography In with the tide. 14 November 10.30am Peter Goldsworthy will read from Wish.

Queensland Writers Centre Events

EXCITING WRITING: READINGS OF NEW WORKS AT THE QUEENSLAND WRITERS' CENTRE

28 November 7.30pm 'The Bold and the Beautiful' featuring horror writer Graeme Hague, best selling fiction writer Jennifer Bacia and romance writer Lynsey Stevens. Cost is \$10 for QWC members (\$15 non members).

29 November 10am -3pm Popular Fiction Writing & Publishing Workshop conducted by Graeme Hague. Graeme is a successful horror writer with combined sales of over 40,000 to date. His workshop will look at: getting published, authors and editors, specific genre writing, exploring the market, presenting the manuscript and agents and overseas contacts. Cost \$50 (QWC members) \$75 (nonmembers). For further details contact the QWC.

Unless otherwise stated all QWC events are held at 535 Wickham Terrace Brisbane. Phone (07) 3839 1243, fax (07) 3839 1245, email



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[↑ Contents](#)

650. **Mark Roberts**

AWOL: November Happenings 2/2

Mon 30 Oct 1995

VICTORIA

Last Friday 6.30pm MELBOURNE POETS Meeting and reading/workshop The Hawthorn Lower Town Hall, 360 Burwood Road, Hawthorn (entry and car parking at rear). 6.30pm meeting begins, 7.30pm reading/ workshop begins. Cost \$3 (Members), \$5 (non members). Details write to Martin French 1/16 Kent Road Surrey Hills Vic 3127.

La Mama Poetica La Mama 205 Faraday St Carlton. For details on November reading contact Catherine Bateson Phone (054) 221680 3rd Sunday each month; 2pm Readings at the Eaglemont Bookshop 525 Brunswick St North Fitzroy. These readings apparently have been a little irregular over recent months so contact Shelton Lea ph (03) 4863219 to confirm.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

DISK READINGS are held on the Third Tuesday of each month at Pockets Cocktail Lounge 44 Lark Street Northbridge. Tues 21 Launch of Salt. Readers include John Kinsella, Andrew Burke, Tracy Ryan, Alison Georgesen and Peter Holland (reading Pie O's "Ocker" poem!). Admission is free. Details Mike Shuttleworth ph. (09) 4304991.

** ** **

The Katherine Susannah Prichard Writer's Centre, at 11 Old York Rd Greenmount, is perched on the side of the Darling Range, looking towards the towers of Perth and the setting sun. It is surrounded by National Park and the developing suburbs of the Hills district. The place is small and friendly and the kettle is nearly always on the boil.

The Centre holds readings on the first Sunday of the month at 7.30pm. Three invited readers are featured. Cost is \$5/\$4 and includes light refreshments. Faye Davis is currently writer-in-community working on a project called 'Writing in the Hills' Changes'. She is running moderately priced (\$3.50 a session) workshops in the district, and is available for consultation at the house by appointment. (this project is supported by the Australia Council).

The house itself, former home of Katherine Susannah Prichard, is heritage listed and tours cost \$5. Wednesday and Sunday are tour days. Ring first to book. A small writer's studio, once used by Katherine, is now used by writers-in-residence. The KSP Foundation, the Centre's management body, is currently

investigating the possibility of letting the Studio on a short term basis to writers from the city, country and/or interstate.

Ring Rob Finlayson, the co-ordinator, on Thursdays, between 10.30am and 5.30pm (09) [REDACTED], to chat about writing and writers, and to find out what's happening in the Hills of Perth and the sunburnt city at their feet. At other times ring the Chairperson, Rose van Scon (09) [REDACTED].

Fremantle Arts Centre Press's has a WWW web site:

<http://www.iinet.net.au/~bryce/facp.html>. The page includes details of upcoming titles, a full backlist catalogue, and listings of recent books, updated regularly.

TASMANIA

4 -5 November Mini weekend workshop 'How to write books' with Writer-in-Community Lindsay Simpson 10am-3pm. Port Arthur Historic Site. Free. Details phone Sue Burgess (002) 50 2290.

Wednesdays 8 November - 13 December 10am -3pm. Writer-in Community workshops with Lindsay Simpson 'How to write books'. Port Arthur Historic Site. Free. Details phone Sue Burgess (002) 50 2290.

Lindsay Simpson will also be reading from her work at the Broad Arrow Restaurant at Port Arthur and the Eaglehawk Cafe during November. Details phone Sue Burgess (002) 50 2290.

5 to 11 November Virginia Woolf (alias Sara Hussen Benn) will be entertaining visitors at the Writers' Cottage. Details TWU on (002) 240029.

11 November. Green poets wanted to read at a lunch and garden party, at Betty Nicholls', 52 Montague St, New Town. Bring \$5 and a plate. Proceeds to the Greens. Enquiries TWU 240029.

November 19 (day) Book launch, madeline by Ann James and Anna Fienberg, Sunday, at the Children's Book Room, Battery Point. Details, Coral Tulloch, (002) 243 980.

Wednesday November 29th Tasmanian Writers Union Members' Benefit Night, at the Bavarian Tavern 28 Liverpool Street Hobart at 7.30 pm. Details phone TWU (002 240029)

14-17 March 1996 Salamanca Writer Festival. Presented by TWU, the University of Tasmania and the Salamanca Arts Centre. Program includes Young Writers and Readers Festival, and Fringe events. Details phone Subi (002) 384 414, Marjorie (002) 344 384 or Fiona (002) 240 029.

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Darwin

4 November FAW workshop: Wendy Hansen on the business of freelancing. 2-5pm Frog Hollow Arts Precinct, 56 McMinn Street Darwin.

25 November Publish or be Damned!: The Bold and Beautiful approach to Publishers. Tutor; editor Janet Blagg. Workshop covers: # How to set out and present your manuscript, # Deciding who to send it to, # What you should send, # Covering letter, # How to write a publishing proposal, # Book publishing/manuscript editors. 2-5pm Frog Hollow Arts Precinct, 56 McMinn Street Darwin.

Alice Springs

Award winning Victorian writer Barry Hill will be conducting writers' workshops at the YWCA in Alice Springs over the first two weekends of November. The workshops are the last in a series Barry has conducted in Alice this year during his stint as Literature Board sponsored Writer in the Community.

Workshop 1, 4-5 November 1.30 - 5pm each day. Finding your voice. A workshop designed both for those who have made a start in writing and those who have not. The focus will be on autobiographical poetry and prose. Two sessions composed of close reading, writing exercises and student presentation of their work. Cost \$5 per session.

Workshop 2, 11-12 November 1.30 - 5pm each day. Your Sacred Place and other Cultures. A workshop on the task of finding/defining in your work/self that which is of central importance. This project is tackled by reference to our understanding of other cultures. The focus is on selected poetry and prose in translation with two sessions composed of close reading, writing exercises and the presentation of one's own work. Cost \$5 per session.

For further information about any of these events contact Andrew McMillan, Literature Officer, Northern Territory Community Writing Program GPO Box 1774 Darwin NT 0801, phone/fax (089) 412651.

COMPETITIONS

24th NOVEMBER: SUTHERLAND SHIRE COUNCIL SHORT STORY COMPETITION \$500 in cash prizes to be won and stories published in Artbeat. Any topic, 1500-2000 words. Category A: Age 19 years and over 1st Prize \$250, 2nd Prize \$100. Category B: Age 18 years and under 1st Prize \$100, 2nd Prize \$50. Sutherland Shire Council and the sponsors reserve the right to publish all or part of a particular story for up to 2 years. Council will not have sole

copyright of each entry and stories may therefore be published elsewhere. Present your submission on A4 paper preferably typed, specifying which category you are entering. Judges decision will be final and the winners will be announced and printed in the December/January edition of ARTbeat. Send entries to: Genevieve Antill, ARTbeat c/Sutherland Entertainment Centre, Eton St, Sutherland NSW 2232.

30TH NOVEMBER NITA B KIBBLE LITERARY AWARD FOR WOMEN WRITERS

For a published book of fiction or nonfiction classifiable as "life writing". Value of 1996 Award: \$15,000. The work is to be of or in connection with normal Australian life, written in English language and have a minimum length of 50,000 words. For conditions and entry form: Charitable Trusts Manager, Perpetual Trustees, 39 Hunter St Sydney NSW 2000 (02) [REDACTED].

30TH NOVEMBER NITA MAY DOBBIE LITERARY AWARD FOR WOMEN WRITERS

Encouragement Award to Women Writers for a FIRST published book of fiction or nonfiction classifiable as "life writing". Value of 1996 Award: \$5,000. This award is intended as encouragement prize to Australian Women writers who have not yet achieved a professional reputation as writers. The award is for an author's FIRST published book. The work is to be of or in connection with normal Australian life, written in the English language and have a minimum length of 50,000 words. For conditions and entry form: Charitable Trusts Manager, Perpetual Trustees, 39 Hunter St Sydney NSW 2000 (02) [REDACTED].

30 NOVEMBER EMMA DARCY AWARD for unpublished romance manuscripts between 45,000 and 100,000 words, first prize \$2,000. Guidelines and entry forms from 21 Violet Street Miranda NSW 2228.

30 NOVEMBER PAPYRUS PUBLISHING SEVENTH LITERARY COMPETITION

Minimum age 18. There are three categories - short stories (up to 3,000 words); open poetry and haiku with an Australian theme. First prize in each category is \$80. Second and third prizes is a Papyrus Publishing book voucher. Details from Papyrus Publishing PO Box 144 Upper Fern Tree Gully Victoria 3156. Phone (03) 9758 7395, fax (03) 9752 4034.

30 NOVEMBER 4TH TOM HOWARD MYSTERY NOVEL AND SHORT STORY COMPETITION.

Minimum 35,000 words for unpublished mystery novel written in the first person. Prize for best novel \$1,250 cash (incl. advance royalties) plus publication. Prize for short stories: Three cash prizes: \$400, \$250 and \$100, incl. fees for once-only publication rights Preference given to unpublished work. Published novels and stories only considered if author holds Australian publication rights. For entry forms: 26 Casey Drive, Wyong NSW 2259.

30 NOVEMBER VARUNA FELLOWSHIPS Writer's retreat fellowships for January June 1996 offer writers in all genres throughout Australia three weeks

of space and time to work intensively on projects in the Varuna Writers' Centre in the Blue Mountains. New Writers' Fellowships are available to new writers of any age and in any medium who are working on a major project but have not yet received significant publication or performance. Three week Fellowships are being offered between January and June 1996. Details phone (047) 82 5674.

1 DECEMBER MARY GRANT BRUCE STORY COMPETITION 1st prize is \$1,000 for a story of up to 3,000 words on an Australian Childhood. Details and entry forms from the Victorian Writers' Centre 156 George Street Fitzroy Victoria 3065.

8 DECEMBER INAUGURAL CALAMBEEN LITERARY COMPETITION Prizes of \$100 and \$50 will be awarded for the categories of poetry and short stories. There is also a \$50 prize for poetry with a celebratory theme and \$50 for a Haiku. \$3 entry fee. Send SAAE to the Co-ordinator, PO Box 35, Creswick VIC 3363.

31 DECEMBER TOM COLLINS POETRY PRIZE

This prize is for unpublished poems up to 60 lines. 1st prize \$500. For details send SAAE to 15 Birch Street Attadale WA 6156

31 DECEMBER REPUBLIC PRIZE A prize of \$1,000 will be awarded to the writer of a work of fiction, poetry, biography, memoir or history published in 1995 which expresses the aims of the Republic. Details: GPO Box 5150 Sydney 2001.

31 DECEMBER CLIFF STREET PUBLISHING seeks fiction submissions over 25,000 words by one writer. The writing submitted can be either a complete work of fiction or a collection of short stories. Send MS and SAAE to The Editor, FICTION, Cliff Street Publishing, 22/11 Cliff St, Fremantle WA 6160.

NOVEMBER 95 TO JANUARY 96 AUSWRITE SHORT STORY COMPETITION Entries will be accepted from November to January with results published in March 1995. (No details provided on prizes). \$5 entry fee per story. Limit 2,000 words. For details and entry forms contact Auswrite, PO Box 327 Mascot NSW 2020.

10 FEBRUARY: TOP DOG JOURNAL ANNUAL SHORT STORY & POETRY COMPETITION. Short story to 1200 words, poems to A4 length. Must be about dogs. Attach signed statement: 'I am happy for this entry to be published should it receive an award in the Top Dog Journal'. State age if under 21. Top Dog Journal, PO Box 29, Berwick Vic 3806.

TASMANIAN TRADES AND LABOUR COUNCIL 1996 MAY DAY SHORT STORY COMPETITION "Working lives" For details and entry forms contact Chris Trousselot (002) 287 866).

CONFERENCES

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).

BECOMING AUSTRALIANS: THE MOVEMENT TOWARDS FEDERATION IN BALLARAT AND THE NATION

December 1 and 2, 1995 Ballarat. Presented by the Australian Studies Team University of Ballarat

Combining national with regional perspectives, this conference promises to provide new insights into the social and political forces which influenced the development of a sense of 'being Australians' in the years leading up to and immediately following federation.

Organized by the Australian Studies Team at the University of Ballarat, the conference aims to elucidate the many aspects of what it meant to be Australian during this period, and how this in turn influenced the progress of the federation movement.

The value and relevance of these historical concerns will be related to current debates regarding citizenship, republicanism and Australian political and cultural awareness.

Speakers include: Hon John Bannon, former Premier of South Australia and author of *The Crucial Colony: South Australia's Role in Reviving Federation*.. Professor Weston Bate, historian and author of a two volume history of Ballarat. Professor Geoffrey Blainey, Chancellor of the University of Ballarat and historian. Dr John Hirst, Reader in History at LaTrobe University and author of *A Republican Manifesto*. Dr Helen Irving, Reader in Politics at the University of Technology, Sydney and author of the forthcoming *To Constitute a Nation*.. Hon Joan Kirner AM, former Premier of Victoria and Chairperson of the Centenary of Federation Advisory Committee. Professor Stuart Macintyre, of Melbourne University, who has recently edited Alfred Deakin's account of federation.

Among those representing literary aspects of the conference will be: Dr. Richard Jordan, Dr. Meg Tasker, and Rod Sadler, all of the University of Ballarat.

The conference will also include a bus tour featuring Ballarat's Federation Architecture.

Full registration (2 days)	\$85
Students/unwaged (2 days)	\$50
Conference dinner	\$45

Make cheques payable to University of Ballarat and post to:

Philippa Watt
Conference Convenor
School of Behavioural and Social Sciences and Humanities University of
Ballarat
PO Box 663
Ballarat VIC 3353

Enquiries contact School secretary on (053)279610 FAX: (053) 279840 or
Richard Jordan, School of Behavioural & Social Sciences & Humanities
University of Ballarat. email [REDACTED]

AUSTRALIAN STUDIES AND THE SHRINKING PERIPHERY: SURFING THE
NET FOR AUSTRALIA.

The Centre for Australian Studies in Wales, University of Wales, Lampeter, are hosting this conference next year. Organisers are calling for papers.

"In recent years the consolidation of Europe into the 15 states of the EU, the integration of east and west within Europe, and the progressive turning of Australia to its own Pacific backyard have furthered the impression of periphery: one world's edge looking distantly at the other."

The contacts are:

Dr Graham Sumner and Dr Andrew Hassam
Centre for Australian Studies in Wales
University of Wales
Lampeter
Dyfed, SA48 7ED,
Wales, UK.

Telephone: Graham Sumner [REDACTED] or 424790 (secretary) Fax:
[REDACTED] Andrew Hassam [REDACTED] (secretary) Fax [REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] Offers of papers should reach the organisers by 31 December 1995, and comprise a full title and an abstract of no more than 100 words.

Further information will be sent when available, and will appear on the Centre's WWW home-page (<http://www.lamp.ac.uk/oz>).

THE WHOLE VOICE

2nd National Conference on Poetry, 3-5 November 1995 University of Sydney

The Whole Voice Poetry Conference aims to bring together those with an active interest in and involvement with poetry in Australia. The conference is a national one and is a follow-up to "The Space of Poetry" conference held at Melbourne University in 1993. It is being jointly organised by the University of Sydney and the Poets' Union.

The 1995 conference will include poetry readings and papers from poets, editors, academics and publishers. Poets reading include Judith Beveridge, Laurie Duggan, Susan Hampton, J.S. Harry, Jill Jones, Donna McSkimming, Jan Owen, Geoff Page, Margaret Scott, Andrew Taylor, and Richard Tipping. Paper-givers include Peter Steele, Susan Hawthorne, Rosemary Huisman, Christopher Kelen, Jeri Kroll, Martin Langford, and Max Richards. Richard Allen and Karen Pearlman will present a performance of dance and poetry on Friday evening and Richard Tipping, will co-ordinate a display of visual poetry. These two events will present other views of the idea of "voice" in poetry. There will also be time for open readings and discussion.

"The Whole Voice" theme was glossed as : "a poetry that speaks as fully as possible, that allows the repressed to speak, that doesn't reject or diminish emotion, intellect or craft." The organisers expect this position to generate debate and creative argument, as the idea of "voice" is contentious. "The practising writer's idea of voice is an intimate friend," comments a poet. "Voice is a literary construction, with all the historical contingency which that implies," writes an academic. The very understanding of "voice" is basic to dialogue between all participants.

Date: 3rd to 5th November 1995

Venue: Woolley Building, University of Sydney

Cost: Early Registration (by 22 Sept): \$80; Full Registration \$90

(Student/Unwaged: \$45). Day Full Registration (\$50, Day Student \$25).

Registration includes Friday evening reception, am and pm teas, Sunday morning coffee.

Contact: Rosemary Huisman, Dept English A20, Uni of Sydney NSW 2006. Ph: (02) [REDACTED]. Fax: (02) [REDACTED]. e-mail: [REDACTED]. Jill Jones. Ph: (02) [REDACTED]. e-mail: [REDACTED] Martin Langford. Ph: (02) [REDACTED]

3RD INTERNATIONAL/AUSTRALIAN CONFERENCE: RELIGION LITERATURE AND THE ARTS.

18 - 21 January 1996 Sancta Sophia College, University of Sydney. Invited speakers include: Karen Armstrong - a well known broadcaster from the UK and author of a number of books including The Gospel According to Woman, Tongues of Fire (an anthology of religious poetry) and A History of God, Professor Peter Steele SJ - professor of English, University of Melbourne and a poet and critic, Professor Elizabeth Isichei - Professor of Religious Studies, University of Otago New Zealand. She has written widely on African history and religion and, more recently, on religion and art in New Zealand, Nigel Butterley - a well known composer, Professor David Parker - Professor of English at the Australian Catholic University and Al Zolynas - a San Diego based poet. There will also be a Women's Artists' Forum with artists Kate Briscoe, Liz Coates and others and a Wirtiers Forum including Rae Desmond Jones, Sara Dowse and others. Wing-It! Performance Ensemble from San Francisco (Phil Porter & Cynthia Winton- Henry).

Cost - Registration, including meals \$160 (conc \$130), Conference dinner \$30. Accommodation is available in Sancta Sophia College at \$40 per night including breakfast.

For further information contact Dr Michael Griffith, Department of Literature and Languages, Australian Catholic University, 179 Albert Road Strathfield NSW 2135. Phone (02) 7392192, Fax (02) 7392105.

1996 NATIONAL CHILDREN'S BOOK COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA 'CLAIMING A PLACE'.

3-6 May at the Sheraton Hotel Brisbane. Guest speakers will include Monica Hughes, Gillan Cross, Anthony Browne and many distinguished Australian authors and illustrators. Registration forms will be available from November 1995. For further information contact the Children's Book Council of Australia (Tasmania) PO Box 113 Moonah Tasmania 7009

ASAL 1996 - Brisbane

CALL FOR PAPERS Queensland University of Technology is hosting the 1996 Association for the Study of Australian Literature annual conference, from Saturday July 6 to Thursday July 11. The conference will be held on the Gardens Point Campus, situated between the City Botanic Gardens and the river.

Papers are invited on any aspect of Australian literature. Abstracts of approximately 200 words should be sent to Sharyn Pearce, School of Humanities, QUT, PO Box 284, Zillmere Q 4034, by 16 December 1995. All papers will be of twenty (20) mins duration.

Enquiries to the co-ordinators: Sharyn Pearce: School of Humanities, Faculty of Arts, QUT, PO Box 284, Zillmere Qld 4034. Fax 07 3864 4719. Email [REDACTED], or Philip Neilsen: School of Media and Journalism, Faculty of Arts, QUT, GPO Box 2434, Brisbane Q 4001. Fax 07 3864 1810. Email [REDACTED]

THE IRISH CENTRE FOR AUSTRALIAN STUDIES: AUSTRALIAN STUDIES CONFERENCE

The Irish Centre for Australian Studies will be holding an Australian Studies Conference in Dublin from 3-6 July 1996. The three major streams will be history, culture and the environment. For further details contact David Day Professor of Australian History Department of Modern History University College Dublin Ireland.

COMPARING AUSTRALIA: A CONFERENCE.

Call For Papers and Introductory Information. Dates: 30th August-1 September 1996 in Stirling, Scotland. Abstracts not exceeding 200 words by 30th November 1995. Papers 20 minutes delivery time. Registration forms will be mailed out in January 1996. For further information Contact Angela Smith, British Association for Studies on Australia, Centre of Commonwealth Studies, University of Stirling, Stirling FK9 4LA, UK Fax 01786 451 335 E-Mail: [REDACTED]

While AWOL makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of Happenings listing we suggest you confirm dates, times and venue.

AWOL would like to thank the following organisation who provided information for this list: NSW Writers Centre, Queensland Writers Centre, The Writers' Centre of South Australia, Tasmanian Writers' Union, AusLit discussion group (internet), FAW WWW LINK (<http://www.ozemail.com.au:80/~faw/>) and the other individuals and organisations who supplied information about their events directly to AWOL.

[↑ Contents](#)

651. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Visual Poetry

Mon 30 Oct 1995

May Swenson is certainly the best visual poet of the second half of this century--because her poems are also auditory, and because the visual effect is arranged rather than deranged.

Tom Kirby-Smith

To each her or his own. I don't know about "best visual poet," but I think I would choose any of the trio of bpNichol, Karl Young, or Karl Kempton. And this is limiting myself to North America, where in some ways visual poetry is under-represented, or at least under-recognized. But I find the explosiveness and sheer inventiveness of Nichol and Young amazing in their sweep of possibilities. And I find the subtle patterns of Karl Kempton, based on sources which range from patterns of plankton on the shore to Hopi and other tribal weavings, to be rich and deep in a way which moves me more than Swenson's work. Not that there's anything wrong with her work, which is an important body of work.

I also think there are a number of important book artists who should be seen as visual poets in a kind of Blakean tradition; these would include Susan King, Patricia Scobey, Nancy Leavitt, and others.

all best,
charles alexander

[↑ Contents](#)

652. **Joe Amato**

all---fyi...

Mon 30 Oct 1995

X-Sender: [REDACTED]
Date: Mon, 30 Oct 1995 11:14:38 -0800
Reply-To: "Society for Literature and Science - philos., tech., cyber discussion" <[REDACTED]>
Sender: "Society for Literature and Science - philos., tech., cyber discussion" <[REDACTED]>

From: "Jay A. Labinger" <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: Electronic Book Review
To: Multiple recipients of list LITSCI-L <[REDACTED]>

Announcing a new journal on the Internet:

*The *Electronic Book Review,* an on-line journal and working forum promoting literary innovation on the Internet, is soliciting articles for the Winter of 1996.*

*Issue #1, appearing in November 1995, features essays and reviews by Mark Amerika, Linda Brigham, Carolyn Guyer, Paul Harris, N. Katherine Hayles, Michael Joyce, Peter Krapp, Marcos Novak, Joseph Tabbi, and Walter Vannini. Several of these essays will appear simultaneously in print, as a special focus of the *American Book Review*. To facilitate print-screen collaborations, and as a service to writers whose primary domain is print, EBR will regularly share reviews with ABR, roughly two per issue.*

For Issue #2, we are organizing an e-mail essay forum around an original essay by Michael Berube, "Cultural Criticism and the Politics of Selling Out." Essays received by January 10, especially those concerned with the political economy of the Internet, will be considered for inclusion in this forum. Additional features are planned on post-feminist women's writing and the electronic future of poetry and literary fiction.

*For future issues, EBR is soliciting critical writing not only on, but *in* hypertext. We are interested especially in exploring narratives whose logic is as much visual as verbal, and we prefer thoughtful overviews, polemics, and review essays to evaluations of single works.*

*EBR will be stored at and distributed from the Alternative-X web site:
<http://www.altx.com/ebr>*

Inquires should be sent to:

*Joseph Tabbi
English Department
University of Illinois-Chicago
601 South Morgan Street
Chicago, Illinois 60607-7120
e-mail address: [REDACTED]*

[↑ Contents](#)

653. **Jordan Davis**
Re: readings desiderata
Mon 30 Oct 1995

On Sat, 28 Oct 1995, Charles Alexander wrote:

Are you asking these questions because you're about to launch a reading series?

Charles--yes. Thanks for your response (and thanks, Ron). Anybody else have ideas how to hold readings that are a) pleasant b) productive c) surprising? Any successful hosts (don't be bashful!) who would like to share their secrets for inviting readers (and please don't point to the black box, taste!)? Mark Wallace bravely queried members of the list whether they'd be interested in reading... St. Marks has a "two-year rule" (can't have a solo reading two years in a row)... what are the rules elsewhere, such as SPD? Are there people you've wished would read but just never do? Are there people you wish just wouldn't read (did you know that the expression "backchannelling" comes from the noises and movements a listener makes to acknowledge that they've been listening)? Is a query like this ironically more likely to keep people from discussing a troublesome issue than to provoke change?

Your fan,
Jordan

[↑ Contents](#)

654. **Edward Foster**
Re: & Ralph Waldo
Mon 30 Oct 1995

no, money/poetry is no trope; there's something much deeper, more insidious here: different poetries are different economies. i don't myself believe that, but the subject underder scrutiny, it seems, did.

[↑ Contents](#)

655. **Chris Stroffolino**
Re: & Ralph Waldo
Mon 30 Oct 1995

Dear Ed--- Could you please elaborate, or support your argument (gosh, i feel like i'm grading a student paper) about "different poetries" being "different economies"---Do you mean "psychic economies" and if so how is that NOT a trope? If you mean the COST of books, or the LABOUR involved in reading a certain poet, is there a way to determine what is the MOST COST-EFFECTIVE poetry? Hmmmm--the kind of poetry that has 5 words per page is

more "taxing" than maximalism? The kind of poetry that works good on a first reading but not as much on subsequent ones is certainly a ripoff? (This is all very vague). If some poetry DEMANDS more from the reader than others (how do you define demand?), is it possible it doesn't DRAIN the reader but actually stirs the reader to an activity s/he wouldn't otherwise. Please, Ed, tell me more--I am quite open to this--- But I also am skeptical about the validity of what seems to me to be a kind of quantification here--It's like sleep. Why is it, for instance, that sometimes I am MORE tired when I have just woken from a 12 hour sleep than i am when I have woken from a 3 hour nap? (I don't expect you to answer that....) Chris S.

[↑ Contents](#)

656. **James Sherry**

Re: Evaluation

Mon 30 Oct 1995

I suspect that value judgements "are" as you say a subterfuge, a conspiracy game, designed to establish one's value system as the first system to be consulted in the event of any value judgement. It is implemented is through substitution of first person plural in discussing issues that are only valid in the first person singular. It can also be accomplished, although less effectively with the Royal WE. Shifters as McCaffery points out are the arbiters of value. The language game that is played out here is an attempt to establish a universal context for a particular context. There is a strong psychological component too.

And we can't help it. It is simply a matter of asserting ourselves. I am just astonished how little else there is in our exchanges. When I was first moving in a public poetry world, days were spent, days, listing our pantheons of poets, as we got older we substituted books by poets, then we substituted poems, then contracts, then diseases. These lists are too evaluative. What I wanted to have accomplished is substitution of an analysis for a value judgement, but the psychology of the poet is too fragile in a weak culture to let writers be free of the need to continually have their values reaffirmed.

I don't think there is any way to stop it short of addressing issues and that presents its own problems. Even as I type I'm sure I'm engaged in a form of the same. Let us look like we're doing the rightthing by doing the wrong thing. Let us cut the budget.

James

[↑ Contents](#)

657. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: oh dodie oh

Tue 31 Oct 1995

the one night you read in my weekend neighborhood I'm up the road at Santa Barbara -- just want you to know I woulda been there if I coulda!

[↑ Contents](#)

658. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: the color of concrete

Tue 31 Oct 1995

want to add the names of Russell Atkins and Norman H. Pritchard to the recent lists of visual and concrete poets, which was starting to look like some kinda whitelist or something --Look at Kevin Young's article on Pritchard in the _Harvard Library Bulletin_ 3.2 1992, which volume (on material poetry) also includes an essay of note by Marjorie Perloff.

[↑ Contents](#)

659. **Rod Smith**

Hejinian/Palmer @ L.O.C.

Tue 31 Oct 1995

For those in DC environs:

Lyn Hejinian & Michael Palmer will be reading at the Library of Congress Thursday, Nov. 2nd, at 6:45 in the Madison Building, Mumford Room.

[↑ Contents](#)

660. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: Hypertext & Poetry & Tinkertools & Baseball

Tue 31 Oct 1995

Joe Amato,

While I agree with your attempts to define "technology" as both variously instrumentalist and epistemic, I have a problem that arises from such an attempt--which is, that if we broaden "technology" too much then the term becomes watered down and useless. For instance, I am very much taken with my colleague (by the way, he is the editor of the new Eco-Journal TERRA NOVA, which prints poetry and all other manner of beast, and he can be contacted at NJIT, Newark, NJ 07102 or email him at: [REDACTED]) and his ideas especially as they are expressed in his recent book HAND'S END: TECHNOLOGY AND THE LIMITS OF NATURE, but in the book he argues that language itself is a

technology--whereas, like Ong or Bolter I guess, I would draw the line at writing.

But I know what you mean. . . .

Burt

[↑ Contents](#)

661. **Burt Kimmelman**

Orono Conference

Tue 31 Oct 1995

Loss et alia,

All I know about the Orono Conference is that it is on Poetry of the 1950s. The conf dates are 6/19-23/95.

Contact Burton Hatlen
National Poetry Foundation
University of Maine
Orono, ME 04469

From what I hear, the conference will be a real thrill, but what I hear is unofficial for now, so I am hesitating to say more here.

Burt

[↑ Contents](#)

662. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Concrete Poetics Dialogue (was Hypertext & Poetry Possibilities)

Tue 31 Oct 1995

Charles Alexander:

While I admire the leaps into new worlds of visual possibilities of Jim Rosenberg's work, I don't think it needs to come with a putdown of earlier visual poetry, which, I think, has helped us rather than hindered us.

*Oh dear. Charles, you misunderstood me *COMPLETELY*. There was no putdown intended against visual poetry -- the exact opposite. What I am speaking against is exactly the lack of interchange. It is from a belief in the *value* such a dialogue would have that I bemoan its absence.*

Yes, I do think I misinterpreted you. Just so we realize there are as many open minds among visual poets as among non-visual poets, hypertext poets, etc. Yes, interchange, dialogue, is at stake.

charles

[↑ Contents](#)

663. **Edward Foster**

Re: & Ralph Waldo

Tue 31 Oct 1995

perhaps in this direction, chris: that the profit motive encourages value based on perception so that the object (and e.p. had a field day on this one) can become more or less valuable depending on the way it is understand. excuse me: i mean "understood" but this foolish computer does not permit revision. and this replaces the older (and to my mind, more attractive) concern with the essential. in poetry (and the link is real, a move from one economy to another) there is a shift from the noun to the verb, that obsession among so many now, that in american literature emerges so strongly with emerson. olson, disliking emerson, found older roots in heraclitus. the essential in this, as in (to take the extreme) laissez faire economics, is change; the man said, "What does not change / is the will to change," but that really implies an unchanging "i." in fact the only thing that doesn't change is change. (indeed you buy something and get change.) the difference between, say, the poetics of the era of augustus, say, and whitman is linked to different economies. so, too, wallace and ezra. that does not mean that poetry is political, but that there are common roots. there is every reason to argue against althusser, but one could draw on his definition of ideology here--that which cannot be resisted. and that, in the realm of insurance (what value do you give your house/life/job) and wallace's supreme fiction, is essentially (sorry, but that really is the word) alchemical. -ed

[↑ Contents](#)

664. **Steve Evans**

Awesome 6some

Tue 31 Oct 1995

s	s
o Saturday	o
m 11 November 1995	m
e Russell Lab	e
* 5 Young Orchard Street in Providence *	
* 2 Sets: 3-5pm, 7-9pm	*
*	*

KEVIN DAVIES

JUDITH GOLDMAN

LISA JARNOT

BILL LUOMA

DOUGLAS ROTHSCILD

JULIANA SPAHR

Organized by Jennifer Moxley and Steve Evans

Supported by the Creative Writing Dept @ Brown

For more information, call [REDACTED]

r i a t n m u
a t s u o o o s

[↑ Contents](#)

665. **Burt Kimmelman**

Rod Smith

Tue 31 Oct 1995

Rod,

I need to speak with you backchannel. What's your e-mail address?

Burt Kimmelman

[REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

666. **Kenneth Sherwood**

RIF/T 05 release

Tue 31 Oct 1995

Poetics Folks: Here is the table of contents for Rif/t 05 which is just out. All contents are accessible via the Electronic Poetry Center at <http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/rift/rift05/>

Those interested in hypermedia might want to check out the several pieces (by Poetics list members, incidentally) that make use of sound, image, and non-sequential format.

Ken Sherwood

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AN ELECTRONIC SPACE FOR NEW POETRY, PROSE, AND POETICS
EDITORS:

Kenneth Sherwood and Loss Pequen~o Glazier Version 5.1 ISSN#: 1070-0072
Summer 1995

Responses,
submissions, and queries to: [REDACTED]

R I F / T 5 . 1 TEXTS

Jorge Guitart Paul is Dead?
 Susana Bathed
Michael Koopman See-Saw
Stan Yankelevich NO THING
Richard Roundy Conjunction
Thomas Bell Pilgrim
 Adrift in Post-traumatic Space (2)
Jeffrey Little of quisp & more
 subjunctives
Duane Locke Nietzsche Wrote That Truth Approaches
 On the Legs of a Dove
 Things are More Complicated Than This
John Geraets Mankin
 Foundation Logic
 "how much depends"
Ira Lightman Manifesto
 "The truth of the process"
Thomas Lowe Taylor Favor
 Daily Log 5.20.95
 Daily Log 5.28.95

TRANSLATION

Ana Mari'a Iza
Ali'cia Cabiedes-Fink and Ted Maier (translators)
Bricks of the Universe / Ladrillos del universo
Cottage Loaf / Hogaza
Tongolele

CHAPBOOK EXTENSIONS

Covenant and Plain/Text by David Dowker
from _Splintered_ by Peter Ganick
Electronic Projection Poetries by Loss Pequen~o Glazier
rain rain, rain by Mike Higgins
Poems from a series in progress by Hank Lazer

Loose Antennae by Sheila E. Murphy

"Untilted" and "Georgia O'Keefe Talks with Karl Marx Over
Cappuchino at a Point Equidistant from Sante Fe and
Manchester (New Hampshire)" by Tenney Nathanson

Hard [HRT] Return by Kenneth Sherwood

Infin(it)iv(e) by Juliana Spahr, Lori Lubeski, and Jen Hofer

RIF/T REVIEWS

Kenneth Goldsmith reviews _John Cage: Composed in America_, eds Marjorie Perloff and Charles Junkerman.

"Brief, Sketchy Report on the Blaser Conference," by Kevin Killian

Loss Pequen~o Glazier reviews _Poetry in Motion_.

Announcing an EPC

HYPERTEXT

__E__: A Poem in HTML by Loss Pequen~o Glazier

[↑ Contents](#)

667. **Kit Robinson**

Robert Grenier

Tue 31 Oct 1995

Reply to: Robert Grenier

The Minna St. Poetry & Performance Series will host
a reading/slide presentation by

Robert Grenier

Monday, November 6, at 8pm

at NewLangtonArts

1246 Folsom St.

San Francisco

[↑ Contents](#)

668. **Jordan Davis**

Signature file goin out to the unix crowd

Tue 31 Oct 1995

Thought this might be of some interest... (mainly the ascii) Jordan

Da-BRotha

("`-"/").\_\_..-""`-_
`6\_6 ) `-. ()`-.__.) POWER TO THE PEOPLE!
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<http://www.wam.umd.edu/~street/Welcome.html>

[↑ Contents](#)

669. **Steve Carll**

Re: readings desiderata

Tue 31 Oct 1995

Jordan:

I personally like readings which break out of the "reader-break-reader" format. A few years back I saw John McNally and Darin DeStefano read at Small Press Traffic, and they both went up to the front and traded poems back and forth for an hour or so, ending with a two-voice reading of Kenward Elmslie's "Girl Machine." It was brilliant. Recently I read with Anselm Berrigan and John M., and we each read solo for ten minutes apiece, then read together for a half-hour. Another format I've used is to alternate readers with musical acts. Clark Coolidge and David and Tina Meltzer did us one better, though, by combining these approaches. David and Clark would each read, then they'd break out the drums and guitar and back Tina, then one would solo over the other reading, then they'd trade poems to and fro. That was really lively.

Not that the "regular" way isn't fine, but to vary that routine reinvests it with an energy that sometimes flags if things get too "samey."

One of the tricks to booking a series (although this may depend on the series) that might not be too obvious is not to overbook. If you leave some space in your schedule then you'll have a night for (your favorite poet's name here) to read when she tells you, "Hey, I'll be in town in 6 weeks. Anything going on?" Although you want to balance this with the desire not to always be finalizing dates at the last possible minute, which makes getting the word out to your audience more difficult.

Steve

[↑ Contents](#)

670. **Sheila E. Murphy**

Re: readings desiderata

Tue 31 Oct 1995

Jordan, On the matter of the readings issue, Bev Carver and I have been doing a series at the Scottsdale Center for the Arts for about nine years. One novelty item that we include every few months (we put on monthly programs each year from about September until May) is to select a particular visual arts exhibition that's on display. We select from that show several pieces that we invite specific people to respond to (NOT INTERPRET!) with a new text. On the night of performance, the audience is guided from piece to piece (sculpture, painting, etc.), at which we make a stop. The education director from the center staff shares some information about the visual artist, the work; we then introduce the writer, who reads the new piece. The audience benefits from having at least two senses working at once. This format tends to offer very stimulating possibilities and is consistently popular.

Sheila Murphy

[↑ Contents](#)

671. **Beth Russell**

the Hypertextual possibilities

Tue 31 Oct 1995

I must say that in reading George P. Landow's *_Hypertext: The Convergence of Contemporary Critical Theory and Technology_* (Johns Hopkins UP) I've found it fascinating on one level, and quite redundant (and not in a negative sense of the word, no offense to George or friends of George) on another level. The fascinating things about this text are:

- 1) the implications of hypertextual linkin' 'n thinkin' in terms of say *_power_* structures (he does begin his print culture text with a quote from Foucault), the availability and the production of hieratic (interesting sections on hieroglyphs) and hierarchical modifications,
- 2) the seeming *_break_* within the linearity of the "text" (as we used to term it) that hypertext (now, hypermedia) produces or enables--in terms of some cultural conceptions of what constitutes an "author",
- 3) Landow's ideas of the convergence of say, Derridean notions of inter-weaving/excesses (within writing) with *_contemporary_* hypertextual/media constructions...Landow believes that the hyper-world has enabled the previous structuralist and post-structuralist discourses to become better understood (whereas before, these theories were somehow arcane systems of mystified knowledge)...the hyper-world, that is, via modes of Web linkages, non-linear

directories, etc. seems to explain or elucidate these po/struct. theories
_naturally...(on a monitor of course).

Landow quotes Walter J. Ong (_Orality and Literacy_) and I feel this directly relates to the issues of power, who _owns_ a text, who _knows_ a text, and of course, the possibility of _challenging_ the text:

"The author might be challenged if only he/she could be reached, but the author cannot be reached in any book. There is no way directly to refute a text. After absolutely total and devastating refutation, it says exactly the same thing as before. This is one reason why 'the book says' is popularly tantamount to 'it is true'. It is also one reason why books have been burnt. A text stating what the whole world knows is false will state falsehood forever, so long as the text exists."

What does this mean for hypertext, virtual networks, the WWW, and more to come...etc etc.?

Perhaps, the redundant aspect of this body of lexia _Hypertext_, seem to be the under-development of certain concepts, yet in the converse, certain ideas are brought about repetitively. The notion of "non-linearity" and the multiplicity of authorship, for examples, (regarding hypertextual models) are repeated throughout the work, in almost every chapter. When one reads these concepts over and over, it appears to be an ironic commentary on the nature of computer replication itself (or print culture textual reproduction), as well as a Barthes-ian idea of reproduction or inscription. For Landow praises Barthes' _S/Z_ for Barthes' pre-cyber understandings of "linking", "nodes", "networks", "webs" and "paths":

Landow cites from _S/Z_, "In this ideal text, the networks [reseaux] are many and interact, without any one of them being able to surpass the rest; this text is a galaxy of signifiers, not a structure of signifieds; it has no beginning; it is reversible; we gain access to it by several entrances, none of which can be authoritatively declared to be the main one; the codes it mobilizes extend _as far as the eye can reach_, they are indeterminable...; the systems of meaning can never take over this absolutely plural text, but their number is never closed, based as it is on the infinity of language".

Again, like the Internet? Or hypertextual mediums? Although Landow repeats, he may just be attempting to _come at the text_ through several different angles or entranceways--thus, modeling his text on that of the hypertext as well as Barthes' _S/Z_, I'm not entirely sure. This dilemma might rest within an argument of form vs. function.

And I agree that there are differences between traditional _text_ and hypertext and Landow does talk a bit about the Hypercard program "by opening the text-

processing program [Hypercard], or editor, as it is known, you can take notes, or you can write against my interpretations, against my text. Although you cannot change my text, you can read the readerly text in two ways not possible with a book.." In a sense, the "discussion list" (computerized) is just such an example of _reading against the text_...the idea that Landow is attempting to put on the virtual table.

c'est tout

Beth Russell

[↑ Contents](#)

672. **Laura Moriarity via**

Re: poetry readings

Tue 31 Oct 1995

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: Tue, 31 Oct 1995 14:17:45 -0800 (PST)

From: LAURA MORIARTY <[REDACTED]>

Hi Jordan.

Here at the Poetry Center at SF State the rule is once every five years unless someone wins our book award (a reading is part of the award.) One thing I've noticed after helping to run this series forever is that it can be useful to have a short exchange between the writers after the reading. If you combine scenes, as Ron suggested, this can help to make a bridge. We call it a conversation, they more or less interview each other. A recent one between MichaelPalmer and Norma Cole produced the question to Michael from Norma: people most often ask me about you - when did you stop dancing? Of course such an exchange could degenerate into a fight, but then that would be great. As a final thing, a sound system can be good, many readings in cafes and bars are just barely audible.

Laura Moriarty
[REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)