

@poetics

The UB Poetics Discussion Group

Archive of Electronic Correspondence

May 1998

780 messages · Fri 1 May 1998 – Sun 31 May 1998

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

May 1998 is a loud month in the world — India detonates its device in the Rajasthan desert and Pakistan readies an answer, Frank Sinatra dies, Suharto falls in Jakarta — but the list, gloriously deaf to nearly all of it, spends the month absorbed by a smaller and stranger noise: the stammer.

The season's central thread is a poetics of disfluency. David Bromige, glossing Peter Quartermain on Bob Grenier, supplies the month's finest coinage — *“the stutterance of utterance”* — and observes that the subject, like a berry in some poem of Snyder's, only grows bigger the longer one looks at it. Stuttering, stammering, the poetics of the stammer: in the broken word the list discovers an entire aesthetics.

Alongside it runs the perennial question of how one judges the new. Michael McColl worries that when an experimental poem offers *“no paraphrasable content,”* the oldest and most widespread tool of evaluation simply falls away. Mark Wallace, more sanguine, wagers that the techniques for reading such work can be taught to almost anyone with *“about three hours of close attention.”* In the thread next door the formalists and the oralists trade their accustomed fire.

The month mounts its defenses, too. Stung by a magazine's assumption that *“Spicer is unimportant and unknown,”* Mark Prejsnar rises indignantly to the poet's honor against the bloated professoriate; elsewhere the scene-reports thread files dispatches from actual rooms — sound poetry in Toronto, the Four Horsemen, Michael Snow at the keys — and a cheerful company gathers round Frank O'Hara's 'In Memory of My Feelings' to map, one poster says, the terrain of identity.

It is a wholly characteristic month: the wider world going up in test-fire and obituary while the list bends studiously over the smallest unit of speech, insisting that how a word breaks is a serious matter — perhaps, some days, the only serious matter. I have set the letters in their order, drawn the black bars across every address and telephone, and left the stammer exactly where May left it: mid-syllable, and unashamed.

— K. M. F.

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- 472. Herb Levy — Re: Martin Bartlett (per Herb Levy's scene update)
- 473. Tom Orange — Some poems by Jeff Clark
- 474. Tom Orange — John Hawkes
- 475. Dougolly — Re: formalists, orators
- 476. morpheal — Re: The Answer
- 477. George Bowering — Re: scene reports, please
- 478. George Bowering — Re: POETICS Digest - 16 May 1998 to 17 May 1998
- 479. George Bowering — Re: John Hawkes
- 480. Robert Archambeau — Re: formalists, oralists
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- 483. Susan Wheeler — Re: Harry Partch Instrumentarium (fwd)
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- 486. dee morris — Re: John Hawkes
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- 489. David Kellogg — Re: formalists, oralists
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- 491. Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher — nature/poetry...
- 492. Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher — sustainability...
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- 494. Carolyn Guertin — Cool Site of the Day
- 495. Mark Weiss — (no subject)
- 496. Taylor Brady — Re: scene reports, please
- 497. Taylor Brady — Small Press Collective alias
- 498. R. Gancie — homeostasis & intolerance
- 499. Steve Shoemaker — Re: formalists, oralists
- 500. dbkk — Anne Carson at SPT
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- 502. acgold01 — Juliana's query
- 503. michael corbin — Re: Anne Carson at SPT
- 504. BETSY ANDREWS — Re: formalists, oralists
- 505. Steven Marks — Re: Anne Carson at SPT
- 506. charles alexander — Re: nature/poetry...
- 507. Steve Shoemaker — Re: formalists, oralists
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- 509. Bradford J Senning — Ashbery

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- 510. Franklin Bruno — scenery port
- 511. George Bowering — Re: John Hawkes
- 512. JDEBROT — Re: Ashbery
- 513. JDEBROT — Re: Ashbery
- 514. Miekal And — Re: nature/poetry...
- 515. Miekal And — Re: nature/poetry...
- 516. Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher — nature/poetry...
- 517. daniel bouchard — (no subject)
- 518. Charles Bernstein — Black Lightning (forwarded announcement)
- 519. morpheal — Re: Seinfeld as Culture Hero
- 520. Karen and Trevor — signing on

- 521. k. lederer — NYC reading in a week
- 522. Charles Bernstein — Re: signing on
- 523. charles alexander — Re: nature/poetry...
- 524. Keston Sutherland — david golumbia
- 525. Peter Baker — Appropriation for Use
- 526. Lawrence Upton. — Re: London events? bookstores?
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- 528. R. Gancie — 'the self'
- 529. louis stroffolino — question
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- 531. Jonathan Brannen — Temblor
- 532. Laura E. Wright — ashbery etc.
- 533. J. Kuszai — Partch & Travesty
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- 536. morpheal — Re: forwarding lists
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- 545. Wendy Battin — Re: Travesty etc
- 546. henry — Re: stuttering, stammering
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- 549. Alan Myouka Sondheim — The Turning and Embracing of Nikuko and Jennifer
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- 564. Mark Weiss — Re: Alexander and Stroffolino's questions
- 565. Don Byrd — Re: stuttering, stammering
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- 568. R.Gancie/C.Parcelli — autopoiesis, homeostasis & the delineation of 'self'
- 569. morpheal — Re: Alexander and Stroffolino's questions
- 570. George Bowering — Re: stuttering, stammering
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- 587. Barbara Langhorst — Re: stuttering, stammering
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- 598. morpheal — Re: autopoiesis, homeostasis & the delineation of 'self'
- 599. morpheal — Re: A Megalamorial Day Miscellany [Einstein and megalomania ?]
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- 606. morpheal — Re: essence of medium [universe made of vibes]
- 607. morpheal — Re: essence of medium [corollary to previous article]
- 608. Maria Damon — Re: the poetics of the stammer
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- 610. Dean Taciuch — Chaos and poetry
- 611. Billy Little — Re: A Megalamorial Day Miscellany [Einstein and megalomania ?]
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- 613. ScoutEW — Re: Chaos and poetry
- 614. morpheal — Re: culture heros
- 615. Gwyn McVay — Re: New (American) Poets stumming
- 616. Karen Kelley — Re: the poetics of the stammer
- 617. Kathy Lou Schultz — Re: New (American) Poets
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- 625. Maria Damon — Re: New (American) Poets stumming
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- 628. Dean Taciuch — Re: the poetics of the stammer
- 629. Billy Little — local
- 630. morpheal — Re: Megalamorial Miscelany II [Or: Beasts one and all.]
- 631. ScoutEW — Re: the poetics of the stammer
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- 636. morpheal — Re: Megalamorial Miscelany II [Or: Beasts one and all.]
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- 639. Susan Wheeler — Re: the poetics of the stammer
- 640. Don Byrd — Re: the poetics of the stammer
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- 642. toddbaron — Re: Laura Moriarty
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- 644. Matt Kirschenbaum — Re: Chaos and poetry
- 645. Karen Kelley — Re: the poetics of the stammer
- 646. morpheal — Re: F.W.Taylor v. Wittgenstein & Adorno [philosophical incentives]

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- 648. Mark Prejsnar — Re: Spicer in Lingua Franca
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- 650. Michael Magee — Re: the poetics of the stammer
- 651. Stephen Cope — Re: the poetics of the stammer
- 652. ken|n|ing — synaesthetics
- 653. AERIALEDGE — Re: the poetics of the stammer
- 654. R. Gancie — deeply we enquire
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- 656. Christina Fairbank Chirot — Re: A stutter to the Russians
- 657. William Burmeister Prod — Re: Lorca
- 658. Alan Myouka Sondheim — a poem
- 659. morpheal — Re: bytes & rights
- 660. Christopher W. Alexander — miles aside
- 661. ScoutEW — Re: a poem
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- 663. Charles Bernstein — Close Listening & for less

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- 664. louis stroffolino — Re: Byrd's reply 2 Alex and droffolino's quest
- 665. Mark Salerno — Arshile #9 and Upcoming Event
- 666. ScoutEW — Re: Byrd's reply 2 Alex and droffolino's quest
- 667. ScoutEW — Re: a poem
- 668. Alan Myouka Sondheim — Re: a poem
- 669. jarnot — Bernadette Mayer book
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- 671. Chuck Stein — Re: Byrd's reply 2 Alex and droffolino's quest
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- 673. Safdie Joseph — Re: mythology
- 674. Irving Weiss — URL change
- 675. Mark Weiss — Re: mythology
- 676. Gary Sullivan — Permission
- 677. R. Gancie — As a youth doomed to be the incarnation of Carl Friedrich von Weizsaecker
- 678. Jordan Davis — some other poetics of summer
- 679. Carrie Etter — Berkeley readings?

- 680. Mark Weiss — (no subject)
- 681. Maria Damon — a nice announcement

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- 682. Alan Myouka Sondheim — NAKED ALAN AND NIKUKO NAKED COPY AND RUN AROUND SOME FILES
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- 684. Chuck Stein — mythology
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- 686. DANIEL L. COLLIER — Re: <no subject given>
- 687. morpheal — Re: mythology [followed by DADA, deconstruction, and silence]
- 688. Erik Sweet — Re: mythology [followed by DADDY, construction, and silence]
- 689. Chuck Stein — Re: mythology [followed by DADA, deconstruction, and silence]
- 690. Maria Damon — Re: The Bloated Professoriate (vs. Spicer)
- 691. David Kellogg — Re: The Bloated Professoriate (vs. Spicer)
- 692. henry g — Re: The Bloated Professoriate (vs. Spicer)
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- 694. lee ann brown — Re: Wmsburg room
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- 700. M. L. Weber — call for prose submissions by women
- 701. Brian Clements — _Best Texas Writing 1_ available

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- 702. dbkk — Vs. Spicer
- 703. Dan Machlin — Hofer/Machlin atZinc
- 704. George Bowering — Re: The Bloated Professoriate (vs. Spicer)
- 705. nuyopoman — RapPo
- 706. F. W. Perrella — 5_trope - Web Del Sol
- 707. rsillima — Spicer, Kirkus, etc
- 708. Susan Wheeler — Book Party
- 709. Erik Sweet — Bookstores for Cheap
- 710. Maria Damon — Re: Vs. Spicer
- 711. Maria Damon — Re: Spicer Review
- 712. Mark Prejsnar — kenning..a review
- 713. Douglas Barbour — Re: Spicer
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- 715. Mark Prejsnar — Jonathan Brannen..
- 716. morpheal — Re: mythology [followed by DADDY, construction, and silence]
- 717. William Burmeister Prod — Re: Vs. Spicer
- 718. R. Gancie — 'the study of the self has been objectified'
- 719. Erik Sweet — Re: mythology [followed by DADDY, construction, and silence]
- 720. Mark Weiss — Re: Spicer Review
- 721. MAYHEW — How to be great
- 722. DANIEL L. COLLIER — Re: Spicer Review
- 723. Kristen Gallagher — pound online?
- 724. Brian Clements — McHenry query
- 725. joel lewis — f.yi.
- 726. Marcella Durand — June readings at Poetry Project
- 727. Peter Balestrieri — Quo Vadis?
- 728. david bromige — re : susan wheeler's book (party)
- 729. toddbaron — Re: Love of (g-d)
- 730. Billy Little — Re: Byrd's reply 2 Alex and droffolino's quest
- 731. Billy Little — Re: How to be great

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- 732. Tom Orange — Quo Vadis?
- 733. Otis Rush — (no subject)
- 734. Alan Myouka Sondheim — of the third
- 735. sylvester pollet — (no subject)
- 736. Maria Damon — Re: Quo Vadis?
- 737. charles alexander — permission
- 738. Erik Sweet — Robert Duncan
- 739. david bromige — quo vadis alan sondheim
- 740. R. Gancie — enlightenment
- 741. Nada Gordon — Re: Quo Vadis?
- 742. charles alexander — Re: Quo Vadis?
- 743. david bromige — Quo uncomfortable Vadis?
- 744. Hugh Steinberg — Re: Fwd: 12 tones for Anton's bones (fwd)

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- 745. Stephen Cope — Fwd: 12 tones for Anton's bones (fwd)
- 746. Alan Myouka Sondheim — Re: Quo Vadis?
- 747. Tosh — Re: Fwd: 12 tones for Anton's bones (fwd)
- 748. Alan Myouka Sondheim — situating
- 749. Simon DeDeo — Re: Quo uncomfortable Vadis
- 750. Alan Myouka Sondheim — racism, etc.
- 751. Chris [Steve] Piuma — Re: Fwd: 12 tones for Anton's bones (fwd)
- 752. Tosh — 12 tones for Anton's bones
- 753. Tosh — Webern
- 754. George Bowering — Re: Fwd: 12 tones for Anton's bones (fwd)
- 755. Peter Ganick — Re: Webern
- 756. Alan Myouka Sondheim — last call
- 757. Peter Ganick — Re: Webern
- 758. rsillima — Fabulous article in SF Examiner
- 759. Maria Damon — Re: Fabulous article in SF Examiner
- 760. Nada Gordon — Re: Quo uncomfortable Vadis?
- 761. louis stroffolino — Re: Quo Vadis?
- 762. Simon/Piombino — Feedback
- 763. Alan Myouka Sondheim — Re: Quo uncomfortable Vadis?
- 764. morpheal — Re: mythology: wandering from techno war to Pakistan's new nukes
- 765. Mark Weiss — Re: Webern
- 766. R. Gancie — universal quantifier
- 767. Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher — Re: Quo uncomfortable Vadis?
- 768. Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher — Re: Fabulous article in SF Examiner
- 769. Laura E. Wright — Re: Fwd: 12 tones for Anton's bones
- 770. Laura E. Wright — Re: situation uncomfortable
- 771. Erik Sweet — Re: last call
- 772. Erik Sweet — Re: mythology: wandering from techno war to Pakistan's new nukes
- 773. david bromige — George Bowering's encrypted poetry
- 774. morpheal — Re: mythology: wandering from techno war to Pakistan's new nukes
- 775. groberts — Alan's Feedback
- 776. Henry Gould — Re: Quo uncomfortable Vadis
- 777. Schuchat Simon — nomuko and tabeko
- 778. Kathy Lou Schultz — dodie & kevin: my s/heroes
- 779. Susan Wheeler — SF Examiner
- 780. Rebecca Weldon Sithiwong — Quo uncomfortable Vadis?

1. **Loss Pequen~o Glazier**

Cayley & Glazier in Buffalo

Fri 1 May 1998

For those near the el-nino-induced tropics bordering Lake Erie: John Cayley & Loss Pequen~o Glazier will be reading at the Cornershop Gallery, 85 Lafayette St. in Buffalo on Weds. May 6th at 8 p.m.

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2. **J Kimball**

The East Village Poetry Web, Volume One

Fri 1 May 1998

For your May Day (and thereafter) viewing and reading....

The
East
Village
Poetry
Web

....an anthology that plays expansively with notions of "east" and "village," not to mention "poetry and art."

In the art category, you will find:

Stills and a script extract from the new film "Let's Do Talk," screenplay by John Collick and Paul Davies;

Mariko Mori's photos from "Made in Japan";

ink-and-gouache images of "Cold Mountain" by Brice Marden;

and Michiko Ishii's sawdust-and-paste dolls reliving a boyhood "Fight" of the 1950s.

As for verse, Volume One of The East Village Poetry Web includes the following.

Harry Mathews [Three Women]; Xue Di [3 Poems]; David Trinidad [3 Poems]; Nada Gordon [2 Poems]; Jesse Glass [4 Poems]; Simon Schuchat [At Baoshan]; Andrea Brady [2 Poems]; Jack Kimball [The I-Thing]; Forrest Gander [4 Poems]; Toshi Ishihara [2 Poems]; Linda Reinfeld & Toshi Ishihara [The Game of 100 Poems]; Araki Yasusada [7 Poems]; Alan Myouka Sondheim [4 Poems]; Kent Johnson [Orientalist Haibun]; Scott Watson [3 Poems]; and Cid Corman [Another Handful].

You will find The East Village Poetry Web at these URLs.

In the US: <<http://www.theeastvillage.org>>.

In Japan: <<http://interserver.miyazaki-med.ac.jp/~east/village.htm>>.

Choose the site that works better for you. And enjoy!

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3. **F. W. Perrella**

Web Del Sol - Pantheon Page

Fri 1 May 1998

You are invited to visit the Pantheon Page at Web Del Sol.

<http://webdelsol.com/writ-tab.htm>

Twenty-five writers are featured there, encompassing a variety of literary styles and viewpoints. You can sample their fiction and poetry, read biographical information on each author, and you can provide email feedback on each author's work. Your comments are much encouraged.

Web Del Sol is a many-layered website, seeking to highlight the best literary work available by featuring authors, literary works, and zines, either print or e-based. You are invited to visit, browse, learn, enjoy.

Anne Perrella

Web Del Sol

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4. **Michael Coffey**

Re: Spicer, surrealism, born on date -Reply

Fri 1 May 1998

Poetry is the business of surrealists who cannot benefit from poetry.

Now

that I understand.

-- Fred M.

i've been thinking a lot about surrealism myself lately as i have been preparing a manuscript for Coffee House Press. I have decided to begin the book with a kind of surreal baedekker of a poem that nominally takes a traveler the length of New York State "in Robert Motherwell's Car." I liked the poem but didn't understand it (meaning I didn't know how to talk about it, not that anyone asked!), until i realized that it had a surreal structure rather than a surreal surface. It is made up of mostly realistic utterances, but a three-stanza structure that runs through the thirteen parts looks more rational than it is. In any event, not to explicate my own damm poem do i write this, but rather to offer two things about surrealism. One is a quotation by Ashbery, which actually

found its way into my "In Robert Motherwell's Car", which goes like this (the "it" of the first line being surrealism; it is from an Ashbery essay:

*Like all revolutions, it substituted some
new restrictions for old ones.... Real freedom would be
to use this method when it could be
of service and correct it.... Sexual liberty,

[Breton] proclaimed, meant every conceivable
sexual act

except for homosexuality

[Rene Crevel, Rene Crevel, Rene Crevel],* wrote Ashbery.

elsewhere, Ashbery mentions that Crevel committed suicide because of his fear
of being outted, i believe...

the second is a paraphrase of Wallace Stevens, which has really troubled me:
something to the effect that surrealism's major drawback is that it favors
invention over discovery.

one might ask what it is that stevens "discovered" in his poems; to me, he
invents a singularly strange, beautiful, intellectual space full of funny sounds
and musical instruments and corpulent plenipotentiaries. But perhaps for
Stevens, these places were discoveries, that he didn't feel that he made them
up, but found them. This seems such an important question to me...

m coffey

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5. **Herb Levy**

Re: fresh

Fri 1 May 1998

Joe Safdie writes:

*I found amusing the latest SPD flyer
that arrived at my house, with a blurb from the book editor of the San
Francisco Chronicle, Patricia Holt (but that's another story) -- something
to the effect of "SPD has books by poets who really don't care if you
understand them or not!" I thought it was a slightly curious thing to
advertise . . .*

I know Joe & I often don't read things the same way, but my flyer reads "almost
indifferent to whether you 'like' it or not". In my lexicon, at least, liking
something is far different from understanding it. I think I'd probably shoot
myself if I had to "understand" everything I "liked," but hey, maybe that's just
me.

Anyway, for better or for worse, lots of (perhaps most) readers, viewers, listeners, etc. of art in its various forms DON'T get the same thing the artist puts into it, especially with "weirder" stuff. It doesn't mean they don't "understand" it.

The real problem isn't "understanding" but rather how to get people (both in the audience AND at the creative end of things) to realize that it may be okay to respond to something without worrying about being "right."

I'm just now getting around to looking through the hundreds of posts that accumulated in my poetics folder while working through tax season & for the following week or two that I was computerless. I'll just go back to deleting & shut up now.

Bests,

Herb

Herb Levy



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6. **Herb Levy** *requisite self-promotion*

Fri 1 May 1998

Two Web sites that I'm involved with that may be interest to some of you folks with time on your hands.

The annotated tour I did for Arts Wire of new music online has been significantly revamped, greatly edited, rethought, etc. with lots of additions:

<<http://www.artswire.org/Artswire/www/awtour/herb/index.html>>

And a relatively new online only "radio" station that offers six or seven hour-long programs each week of interesting music including the dull variety of new music that I select for them (in RealAudio):

<<http://www.antennaradio.com/>>

Herb Levy



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7. **Henry G** **Stevens & surrealism**

Fri 1 May 1998

My guess is (wiser heads correct here) that Stevens was serious when in his poems & aphorisms he asserted that reality (with a capital R maybe) is inherently poetic, and that art and poetry are a kind of natural, organic-integral process involving an encounter and mimesis or response to that reality. This is what he means by "discovery" - the realist or experiential aspect of poetry. Art as a "natural" process too complex for the "inventions" of various facile or fashionable methods.

This seems related also to the obscurity/difficulty issue raised recently. "Lyricism, music, song" are indirect or metaphorical indicators of specifically poetic effects; that is, these words when assigned to poetry mean something different than when assigned to music. There is a particular radiance in poetry which results from a synthesis of meaning, rhythm, sound. Wit, feeling, meaning, structural development produce direct EFFECTS which "come across" to the reader or audience. Oftentimes it seems to me the "inventions" of "experiment" and obscurantism are uncritically accepted as progressive, avant-garde, "new", etc. without taking into account these specific synthetic values - what poetry traditionally is and does. I know many of you have heard this from me before... & I know there are equal dangers from the other extreme - producing texts and poems that are merely rhetorical & conventional based on the demand to "get it across"... - Henry Gould

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8. **Douglas Barbour** **Re: poems for the millennium vol. 2**

Fri 1 May 1998

Joe Amato's level-headed post on this seems to me, after I too have only had time to take a gander at the anthology, to make all the right points. but I have enjoyed all the talk about the anthology, & feel it signals actually how important both volumes are. i found it fascinating how 'new' & 'fresh' (to borrow from another thread) my poetry students found volume one -- so much writing from the end of the last century & the beginning of this one that they didnt even know existed. i think vol 2's range of material from other languages will perform the same way for many readers (certainly there are a lot of wriers in there I dont know, & am grateful the editors have provided introductions).

a lot of FISH in that ocean...

=====

Douglas Barbour
Department of English
University of Alberta
Edmonton Alberta T6G 2E5
[REDACTED] FAX: [REDACTED]
H: [REDACTED]

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|                             |                               |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| APARICION                   | APPARATION                    |
| Si el hombre es polvo       | I man is dust                 |
| Esos que andan por el llano | Thos who go through the plain |
| Son hombres                 | Are men                       |
| Octavio Paz                 | (trans. Charles Tomlinson)    |

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## 9. **morpheal**

### **Re: Spicer, surrealism, born on date -Reply**

Fri 1 May 1998

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*one might ask what it is that stevens "discovered" in his poems; to me, he invents a singularly strange, beautiful, intellectual space full of funny sounds and musical instruments and corpulent plenipotentiaries. But perhaps for Stevens, these places were discoveries, that he didn't feel that he made them up, but found them. This seems such an important question to me...m coffey*

I believe that you would have to study Carl Gustav Jung's psychological theories, and methods, in order to define what is "invented" and what is "discovered" in Surrealism. Jung would, I think, have claimed that Stevens "discovered" that space and its inhabitants, similarly to how various manifestations of the archetypes, forming a universal and personal mythology are to be discovered in the human psyche (arising from the collective unconscious and the personal unconscious) where they take on a life of their own, quite apart from intentional, deliberate, invention.

I do not see how anyone can really do any kind of credible study on surrealism without having a good understanding of Freudian and Jungian psychology.

M.

[↑ Contents](#)



10. **Judy Roitman**  
***Another KS reading***

*Fri 1 May 1998*

---

Patrick Doud & John Moritz

7:30pm

Thurs. May 7

1116 Louisiana (Canterbury House)

Lawrence KS

Reception follows.

----- Judy Roitman  
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas |  
memory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days."  
[REDACTED] | fax: [REDACTED] | Larry Eigner,  
1927-1996 ----- Note new area  
code -----  
http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/  
-----

[↑ Contents](#)

11. **Lisa Samuels**  
***Re: Stevens, surrealism, 'discovery'***

*Fri 1 May 1998*

---

in reply to michael coffey --

didn't stevens mean something like a distaste for what we'd call proceduralism?  
whether or not his remark contains insight about =surrealism=, it certainly  
indicates the rush of meeting language in its gifting domain (cf. some recent  
remarks here on the 'nature' of poetry, what it feels like to write it). i feel sure  
stevens enjoyed poetic trances, brief and sustained, that felt like discovery,  
however much we want to say that he was the co-shaping medium.

lisa samuels

>>you wrote:

the second is a paraphrase of Wallace Stevens, which has really  
troubled me: something to the effect that surrealism's major drawback is  
that it favors invention over discovery.

one might ask what it is that stevens "discovered" in his poems; to me, he  
invents a singularly strange, beautiful, intellectual space full of funny sounds  
and musical instruments and corpulent plenipotentiaries. But perhaps for

Stevens, these places were discoveries, that he didn't feel that he made them up, but found them. This seems such an important question to me...

m coffey

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12. **ScoutEW**

***Would like submissions...for a new magazine...***

*Fri 1 May 1998*

---

I would like submissions for a new magazine I am doing .. "Tool a Magazine" will be out in July with its first issue and so far great poems by Jordan Davis, Katy Lederer and many more will be in the first issue. This is going to be a tri-monthly affair, dedicated to poetics and essays concerning poetry..if you would like to send something please do, If we decide to print something we will email you back and tell you.. Erik SWEET PO Box 3125 Albany NY, 12203  
Scout [REDACTED] Gary Sullivan I know you want to send something!!!! thanks all.....

[↑ Contents](#)

13. **ScoutEW**

***Arizona out there...?***

*Fri 1 May 1998*

---

Anyone on this poetics list who is currently living out there in Arizona!!! if you feel nice enough to backchannel me.. I have some questions about your great state...just drop a line ..or anyone who has the down low on the desert dream state.. Question of the day....I am working on Olson's Proposed poem "West" I am very interested in Cabeza de Vaca's trip on foot with Esteban across the southwest and his powers to heal..also on hopi myth of the first people who came from the caves...any info on this would increase my satisfaction and make an already crappy day wonderful. erik sweet

[↑ Contents](#)

14. **Billy Little**

***Re: Arizona out there...?***

*Fri 1 May 1998*

---

Haniel Long's interlinear to cabeza de vaca is a neglected masterpiece  
i don't remember, is that a pen name, cabeza de vaca--empty head?

[↑ Contents](#)

15. **Safdie Joseph**

**Re: Arizona out there...?**

Fri 1 May 1998

On Cabeza . . . if you haven't seen Haniel Long's "interlinear" (speaking of "writing through"!) of imagined letters from Cabeza to the king of Spain, published by Frontier Press in the early 70s, that might be a place to start.

-----  
From: ScoutEW[SMTP: [REDACTED]]  
Sent: Friday, May 01, 1998 9:38 AM  
To: [REDACTED]  
Subject: Arizona out there...?

Anyone on this poetics list who is currently living out there in Arizona!!!  
if you feel nice enough to backchannel me.. I have some questions about your great state...just drop a line ..or anyone who has the down low on the desert dream state..  
Question of the day....I am working on Olson's Proposed poem "West" I am very interested in Cabeza de Vaca's trip on foot with Esteban across the southwest and his powers to heal..also on hopi myth of the first people who came from the caves...any info on this would increase my satisfaction and make an already crappy day wonderful.  
erik sweet

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16. **William Burmeister Prod**

**Re: Arizona out there...?**

Fri 1 May 1998

Haniel Long's interlinear to cabeza de vaca is a neglected masterpiece  
i don't remember, is that a pen name, cabeza de vaca--empty head?

That sounds like a nice homophonic xlation, but cabeza de Vaca -----> "cow's head"

[↑ Contents](#)

17. **groberts**

***Stevens and surrealism***

*Fri 1 May 1998*

My favorite "surrealist" moment in Stevens occurs in "Esthetique du Mal": don't have the poem handy now, but the passage goes something like, "the paratroopers fall, and as they fall they mow the lawn" etc..

I wonder if Stevens would have written the line if he had known of riding tractor mowers...hmm.

Gary R.

[↑ Contents](#)

18. **Marc Nasdor (by way of Charles Bernstein <[REDACTED]>)"**

**<[REDACTED]>**

***A Tribute to Allen Ginsberg - Thursday 5/14/98***

*Fri 1 May 1998*

-----  
PLANET NEWS: A TRIBUTE TO ALLEN GINSBERG  
-----  
-----

Thursday, May 14, 1998

7:00 p.m.

Cathedral of St. John the Divine

Amsterdam Avenue at 112th Street, Manhattan

Admission Free

Information: [REDACTED]

email: [REDACTED]

<http://www.con2.com/~marc/ginsberg>  
-----

FEATURING:

AMIRI BARAKA

PATTI SMITH

THE FUGS

PHILIP GLASS

NATALIE MERCHANT

ANNE WALDMAN

SONIA SANCHEZ

PEDRO PIETRI

DAVID DELLINGER  
JAYNE CORTEZ  
ED SANDERS  
DANNY SCHECHTER  
STEPHAN SMITH  
BOB ROSENTHAL  
ANDY CLAUSEN  
ATEVEN TAYLOR  
DAVID GREENBERG  
+ SPECIAL GUESTS

-----

Allen Ginsberg's groundbreaking and visionary work provided inspiration to poets and political activists throughout the world for five decades. To honor Allen's spirit and to celebrate his life, his poetry and his social commitment, this tribute will feature a three-hour program of poets, musicians and activist speakers who wither worked closely with Allen or were influenced by him.

Allen Ginsberg was renowned for his ability to inspire people to work for a better world. We hope that this event will advance Allen's progressive ideals as we enter a new millenium. Besides performing their own original materials, some of the participants will be performing Allen ginsberg's poems and songs, including a few previously unpublished pieces. The event will also include informational tables by groups promoting humanitarian causes which Allen endorsed.

The tribute Organizing Committee is being chaired by the poet Ed Sanders, and coordinated bt Bob Rosenthal, Ginsberg's longtime assistant and current Trustee. For further information and event updates, please call [REDACTED], or email the organizing committee at [REDACTED]

Hope to see you there. Come early, as the event may be crowded. Doors open at 6:00 p.m.

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## 19. **Charles Bernstein**

### **Welcome Message**

*Fri 1 May 1998*

---

Rev. 2-1-98

(This message is sent out to all new and renewing subscribers and it is sent out to the list at the beginning of every month)

---

Welcome to the Poetics List

&

The Electronic Poetry Center

sponsored by The Poetics Program, Department of English, Faculty of Art &  
Letters, of the State University of New York, Buffalo

Postal Address: 438 Clemens Hall, SUNY, Buffalo, NY 14260

---

<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc>

---

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1. About the Poetics List
2. Subscriptions
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7. The Electronic Poetry Center (EPC)
8. Poetics Archives at EPC
9. Publishers & Editors Read This!

[This document was prepared by Charles Bernstein  
(██████), Loss PequeñoGlazier  
(██████), and Joel Kuszai (██████).]

---

Above the world-weary horizons  
New obstacles for exchange arise  
Or unfold, O ye postmasters!

1. About the Poetics List

The Poetics List was founded in late 1993 with the epigraph above.

There are presently almost 600 subscribers.

Please note that this is a private list and information about the list should not be posted to other lists or directories of lists. The idea is to keep the list to

those with specific rather than general interests, and also to keep the scale of the list relatively small and the volume manageable.

individual posts of participants are sent directly to all subscribers, we continue to work to promote the editorial function of this project. The definition of that project, while provisional, and while open to continual redefinition by list participants, is nonetheless aversive to a generalized discussion of poetry. Rather, our aim is to support, inform, and extend those directions in poetry that are committed to innovations, renovations, and investigations of form and/or/as content, to the questioning of received forms and styles, and to the creation of the otherwise unimagined, untried, unexpected, improbable, and impossible. **We also encourage subscribers to post information on publications and reading series that they have coordinated, edited, published, or in which they appear (see section 9 below).** (THIS MEANS YOU).

Please keep in mind that all posts go out immediately to all subscribers, and become part of an on-line archive. *Posting to Poetics is a form of publication, not personal communication.* Participants are asked to exercise caution before posting messages! While spontaneity of response may seem the very heart of the list at its best, it also has the darker side of circulating ideas that have not been well considered (or considered by another reader -- editor or friend). Given the nature of the medium, subscribers do well to maintain some skepticism when reading the list and, where possible, to try to avoid taking what may be something close to a spontaneous comment made in the heat of exchange as if it were a revised or edited essay ("Let the Reader Beware!").

The "list owner" of Poetics is Charles Bernstein. Joel Kuszai is list manager. For subscription information contact us at

██████████.

---

## 2. Subscriptions

Subscriptions to Poetics are free of charge. But we ask that you subscribe with your real name and we reserve the right to request additional information, including address and phone number. All subscription information you supply will remain confidential.

message, with no subject line, to:

██████████

the one-line message should say:

{or}

(replacing Jill Jillway with your own name; but note: do not use your name to unsub)

We will be sent a notice of all subscription activity. Please allow several days for your new or re-subscription to take effect.

\*

If you are having difficulty unsubscribing, please note:

Sometimes your e-mail address may be changed slightly by your system administrator. If this happens you will not be able to send messages to mail. To avoid this, unsub from the old address and resub from the new address. If you can no longer do this there is a solution if you use Eudora (an e-mail program that is available free at shareware sites): from the Tools menu select "Options" and then select set-up for "Sending Mail": you may be able to substitute your old address here and send the unsub message.

The most frequent problem with Subscriptions is bounced messages. If your system is often down or if you have a low disk quota, Poetics messages may get bounced. Please try avoid having messages from the list returned to us. If the problem is low disk quota, you may wish to request an increase from your system administrator. (You may wish to argue that this subscription is part of your scholarly communication!) You may also wish to consider obtaining a commercial account.

In general, if a Poetics message is bounced from your account, your subscription to Poetics will be temporarily suspended. If this happens, simply resubscribe to the list in the normal manner, once your account problem has been resolved.

All questions about subscriptions, whether about an individual subscription or subscription policy, should be addressed to the list's administrative address: [REDACTED]. Please note that it may take up to ten days, or more, for us to reply to messages.

---

### 3. Cautions

Please do not post to the list personal or backchannel correspondence, or other unpublished material, without the express permission of the author. Copyright for all material posted on Poetics remains with the author; material from this list and its archive may not be reproduced without the author's permission, beyond the standard rights accorded by "fair use".



The Poetics List has a 50 message daily limit. If more than 50 messages are received, the listserver will automatically hold those additional messages until the list is manually unlocked, usually the following day. While it is difficult to prescribe a set limit on the number of daily, weekly, or monthly posts for any subscriber, please keep this limit in mind. If you plan to respond to multiple threads, it is generally preferable to consolidate your reply into one message. While relevant excerpts from a post to which you are responding may usefully be appended to your reply, please do not include in your new post the whole text of a long previously posted message.

Please do not send attachments or include extremely long documents in a post, since this may make it difficult for those who get the list via "digest" or who cannot decode attached or specially formatted files.

In addition to being archived at the EPC, some posts to Poetics (especially reviews, obituary notices, announcements, etc.) may also become part of specific EPC subject areas. Brief reviews of poetry events and publications are always welcome. (See section 7.)

Please do not send inquiries to the list to get an individual subscribers address. To get this information, see section 6.

If you want someone to send out information to the list as a whole, or supply information missing from an post, or thank someone for posting something you requested, please send the request or comment to the individual backchannel, not to the whole list.

---

#### 4. Digest Option

The Listserve program gives you the option to receive all the posted Poetics message each day as a single message. If you would prefer to receive ONE message each day, which would include all messages posted to the list for that day, you can use the digest option. Send this one-line message (no subject line) to

  
set poetics digest

NOTE:!! Send this message to "listserv" not to Poetics or as a reply to this message!!

You can switch back to individual messages by sending this message:

set poetics mail

---

## 5. Temporarily turning off Poetics mail

Do not leave your Poetics subscription "active" if you are going to be away for any extended period of time! Your account may become flooded and you may lose not only Poetics messages but other important mail. You can temporarily turn off your Poetics subscription by sending a message to "██████████"

set poetics nomail

& turn it on again with: set poetics mail

When you return you can check or download missed postings from the Poetics archive. (See 8 below.)

---

## 6. Who's Subscribed

To see who is subscribed to Poetics, send an e-mail message to e-mail message blank. In the body of your e-mail message type:

review poetics

You will be sent within a reasonable amount of time (by return e-mail) a rather long list containing the names and e-mail addresses of Poetics subscribers. This list is alphabetized by server not name.

or try:

review POETICS by name

review POETICS by country

which will give you the list alphabetically by name or a flawed list by country (since all ".com" and ".net"s are counted as US)

\*Please do not send a message to the list asking for the address of a specific subscriber.\*

---

## 7. What is the Electronic Poetry Center?

our URL is

<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc>

The mission of this World-Wide Web based electronic poetry center is to serve as a hypertextual gateway to the extraordinary range of activity in formally innovative writing in the United States and the world. The Center provides access to the burgeoning number of electronic resources in the new poetics including RIF/T and other electronic poetry journals, the POETICS List archives, an AUTHOR library of electronic poetic texts, and direct connections

to numerous related electronic RESOURCES. The Center also provides information about contemporary print little magazines and SMALL PRESSES engaged in poetry and poetics. And we have an extensive collection of soundfiles of poets' reading their work, as well as the archive of LINEbreak, the radio interview series.

The EPC is directed by Loss Pequeño Glazier.

---

## 8. Poetics Archives via EPC

Go to the EPC and select Poetics from the opening screen. Follow the links to Poetics Archives. You may browse the archives by month and year or search them for specific information. Your interface will allow you to print or download any of these files.

Or set your browser to go directly to:

<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/poetics/archive>

---

## 9. Publishers & Editors Read This!

PUBLISHERS & EDITORS: Our listings of poetry and poetics information is open and available to you. We are trying to make access to printed publications as easy as possible to our users and ENCOURAGE you to participate! Send a list of your press/publications to [REDACTED] with the words EPC Press Listing in the subject line. You may also send materials on disk. (Write file name, word processing program, and Mac or PC on disk.) Send an e-mail message to the address above to obtain a mailing address to which to send your disk. Though files marked up with html are our goal, ascii files are perfectly acceptable. If your word processor will save files in Rich Text Format (.rtf) this is also highly desirable

Send us extended information on new publications (including any back cover copy and sample poems) as well as complete catalogs/backlists (including excerpts from reviews, sample poems, etc.). Be sure to include full information for ordering--including prices and addresses and phone numbers both of the press and any distributors.

Initially, you might want to send short announcements of new publications directly to the Poetics list as subscribers do not always (or ever) check the EPC; in your message please include full information for ordering. If you have a fuller listing at EPC, you might also mention that in any Poetics posts.

Some announcements circulated through Poetics and the EPC have received a noticeable responses; it may be an effective way to promote your publication and we are glad to facilitate information about interesting publications.

---

END OF POETICS LIST WELCOME

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20. **Mark Wallace**

***what's difficult***

*Fri 1 May 1998*

---

Hey Mark Presjnar:

Thanks for your comments about the dialogue piece Jeff Hansen, Stephen-Paul Martin, and I wrote for Central Park magazine on the subject of "difficulty" in avant garde poetry, and for your comments about my other work.

I do have to say, though, that when you suggest that I "expand on" Stephen-Paul Martin's point about the inherent "difficulty" of much contemporary writing, it seems odd that you would say that about that piece, because the point that you say in your post that I am making is precisely the OPPOSITE of the point I was making there. Which is curious, I suppose, given the subject of "difficulty" that is at stake here.

In that essay, I disagree with Stephen-Paul Martin's assertion that "difficulty" is one of the main goals of the texts we are writing about, and writing--I say that the idea that such work is "difficult" is one of the pieces of cultural baggage that writers of avant garde work have absorbed all too often--one of our main "pretensions," I believe may be the word I use. Sorry to quote myself here, but I believe I say also that, "There is nothing inherently difficult about such works; there is just something unfamiliar." I go on to say that I believe that most people can learn to understand "avant garde" poetry with about several hours (say, 3) of training, which is much less training, of course, than they have received in how to read newspapers and novels.

Given all this, I'm not sure how you could have read me to be saying that what I am interested in in avant garde work is its inherent difficulty, and so would be curious to know why you think that's what I was saying.

But perhaps I am misunderstanding you in what seems to me your misunderstanding of me.

It's amazing that what's so simple can often be so difficult.

Mark Wallace

*Fri 1 May 1998*

Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca [Cow-head!]; his real name, as far as I know. Harvey Brown reissued Long's book in a beautiful Frontier Press edition in 1969. A few years ago PBS ran a film about CdeV's journey--a bit heavyhandedly 'epic,' but a nice surprise.

[↑ Contents](#)

*Fri 1 May 1998*

*Mark Wallace*

Not training. Un-training.

----- Judy Roitman  
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas |  
memory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days."  
[REDACTED] | fax: [REDACTED] | Larry Eigner,  
1927-1996 ----- Note new area  
code -----

<http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/>

---

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23. **Safdie Joseph**  
***Re: The Meaning of Meaning***  
*Fri 1 May 1998*

---

Herb is right on the wording of the SPD flyer. But I must confess I'm still puzzled about the choice of that quote to advertise a bookstore! If the purpose of said quote was to advertise their broad selection of poetry, is it really effective to say "52% of the poetry in our store was written by poets who are almost indifferent to whether you like it or not"? I mean, I'm not IN advertising anymore, thankfully, but surely there's other selling points for this fine institution!

And furthermore (and I'm GLAD, by the way, that Herb and others read things differently than me, it's what makes the existence of this list such an odd comfort at times), how is saying, as Herb does here

> I think I'd probably shoot myself if I had to "understand" everything I  
> "liked,"  
>

any different than the "old saw" (Judy Roitman) of "I may not know anything about art, but I know what I like"? As was pointed out to me by my Humanities 101 teacher some 25 years ago, so does a cow.

Perhaps it's difficult to talk about these matters without raising the spectre of the intentional fallacy. Herb goes on to say:

> Anyway, for better or for worse, lots of (perhaps most) readers, viewers,  
> listeners, etc. of art in its various forms DON'T get the same thing the  
> artist puts into it, especially with "weirder" stuff. It doesn't mean  
> they  
> don't "understand" it.  
>

At no time in my conscious adult life have I EVER advanced the view that a perceiver of art necessarily takes away -- nor should take away -- what the artist put into it! My question is a simpler one: to "like" something, doesn't one in fact have to have SOME notion (however erroneous) of what it MEANS? Of what it means to THAT PERSON?

I mean (!), I just didn't understand Judy earlier in the week (nor Mark Prejsnar's subsequent cheers) when she talked about an audience member

coming up to a poet and saying something to the effect of "I don't know what you meant, but I sure did like it!" (because it had that certain "je ne sais pas")?

Perhaps my misquotation of the flyer got us off on the wrong tangent; I wasn't accusing anyone of cultivating obscurity for obscurity's sake. And I know (before Mark tarnishes me again with being "commonsensepo") that there are other kinds of meaning besides the purely linguistic. One wouldn't, for example, talk about MUSIC this way. But even with the music I like, there's an understanding (again, perhaps an erroneous one) -- a sensitivity -- to what I feel the musician and/or composer is doing. I humbly submit that without some sort of this sensitivity on the audience's part, art can't exist. Art must be perceived. Perception demands understanding. Like it or not.

(Welcome back, Herb!)

---

On a totally unrelated matter -- can someone please tell me who performed the pop song with the lyrics

"Only kind of love is stone . . . blind . . . love.  
With your blind love . . . stone blind love"

I'd be forever indebted for a backchannel with this information.

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## 24. **George Bowering**

***Re: cabeza***

*Fri 1 May 1998*

---

| *i don't remember, is that a pen name, cabeza de vaca--empty head?*

Nope, Billy. Vaca means cow. As in vaquero: cowboy, or as you USAmericans say, "buckaroo."

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

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25. **David Baratier**

***A contrapuntal universe of baseball***

*Fri 1 May 1998*

---

Spicer's collected 1945-46 appears as an edition of one selected by one given to one then published by eight people in an edition of many after the author left this mortal coil. It's the eight men out deal all over again. Compare the anadiplosis in baseball. So it's entirely separate of aesthetics, rather formed from contextuality in a quirk.

Hey kids rock and roll

Dave Baratier

PS: comfort and fun with lashings. depending upon the thickness of the wood and the size of the project they can be made with binder twine, cord, or rope.

RE: I am much interested in this "moral problems like baseball" you say Spicer's oyez selected brought on. Is this the problem of choosing of aesthetics of excluding? Are they problem of reading other people's work, writing your own work, figuring out what work works, what?

[↑ Contents](#)

26. **MAYHEW**

***a very difficult avant-garde poem***

*Sat 2 May 1998*

---

This is from my "homage to creeley" series:

VII

I have wrecked the goddamn big car  
you were planning  
to write yr brilliant poem  
about

forgive me  
the darkness sur-  
rounds us and  
I did not know your name

Jonathan Mayhew  
Department of Spanish and Portuguese  
University of Kansas

████████

████████

[↑ Contents](#)



27. **Herb Levy**

**Re: The Meaning of Meaning**

Sat 2 May 1998

---

Joe Safdie writes:

*how is saying, as Herb does here*

*I think I'd probably shoot myself if I had to "understand" everything I "liked,"*

*any different than the "old saw" (Judy Roitman) of "I may not know anything about art, but I know what I like"? As was pointed out to me by my Humanities 101 teacher some 25 years ago, so does a cow.*

Quite different, Joe. But then I think a response like "that's great, what the fuck is it?" is an excellent response to a work of art, especially "experimental" work, work outside what is considered the common practice. That's why I say again & again on this list, as I did in what I wrote earlier

*The real problem isn't "understanding" but rather how to get people (both in the audience AND at the creative end of things) to realize that it may be okay to respond to something without worrying about being "right."*

Understanding is overrated and more important in an academic setting than in the experience of art as such. If there's not going to be a test on iconography, a general sense of awe is a perfectly acceptable response to, say, the Ghent altar piece. What stands in the way of people "appreciating" "experimental" art works is not that the work is so "weird" it's that teachers etc. in school after school have drummed into them not only that that they have to understand something, but that these are the ways in which you can understand it. The result is that people don't know how to deal with their responses to work that doesn't work in the ways they've been taught to recognize.

Unless you're an artist looking for technical ideas, a critic, or a student studying for a test, understanding is, literally, the last thing you need to do with a work of art. Before you get to that point, emotional and/or visceral responses are not only useful, they're necessary. & that's very different from anything that might be called "understanding."

What makes something poetry (or more generally, art) are exactly those things that don't make immediate sense, the things that can't be summarized or translated. Texts that lack this, that are when heard read aloud, indistinguishable from simple direct prose (like those perfect epiphany poems and other expository narratives broken up into "poetic" lines that come out of workshops), seem to me to be little more than journalism. The proper response to this kind of writing is "so that's what happened" or "hey, thanks for

explaining that to me." If that's what you're looking for from art, you can get plenty everyday for fifty cents at any news stand.

*One  
wouldn't, for example, talk about MUSIC this way. But even with the music I  
like, there's an understanding (again, perhaps an erroneous one) -- a  
sensitivity -- to what I feel the musician and/or composer is doing. I  
humbly submit that without some sort of this sensitivity on the audience's  
part, art can't exist. Art must be perceived. Perception demands  
understanding. Like it or not.*

We obviously agree that "Art must be perceived." But to say

*Perception demands understanding. Like it or not.*

while very dramatic & all, is absurd. (What model of how the brain works did you learn?)

If anything you have it exactly backwards. One can't understand something without having perceived things about it, but you can certainly perceive things you don't understand.

What was that sound?

Herb Levy



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28. **s. kaipa**

***I n t e r l o p e : a journal of asian american poetics and issues***

*Sat 2 May 1998*

---

ANNOUNCING THE PREMIER ISSUE OF:

I n t e r l o p e  
a journal of asian  
american poetics  
and issues

Featuring work by : TINA CELONA  
WARREN LIU  
HOA NGUYEN  
AMAR RAVVA

For the first issue--

Please send \$3.50 (US Dollars only please) to: I n t e r l o p e

Summi Kaipa, ed.  
824 E. College St.  
Iowa City, IA 52240

  
If you would like to subscribe--send \$10.00 for 3 issues  
or \$12.00 for 4 issues.

I n t e r l o p e is a journal of poetics which seeks to publish innovative Asian  
American poetry--work which challenges the tradition of American and/or Asian  
American poetry.

Unsolicited manuscripts of poetry or essays are welcome. Please send between  
6-10 pages of work via regular mail or email to above address.

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## 29. **Aviva99999**

### ***East Village Poetry Site***

*Sat 2 May 1998*

---

Someone kindly posted a URL for an East Village poetry zine or site or  
something and before I could do more than be enticed by the table of contents,  
my system did something illegal. Of course, I had to shut down, and somehow  
lost both the post and the URL. Does anyone still have it? Thanks, Aviva

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## 30. **Garrett Kalleberg**

### ***Third Friend***

*Sat 2 May 1998*

---

May 2, 1998

A day late and a dollar short but still The Transcendental Friend.

Divine Love, impersonal Force, third Eye--"Grace" is this month's entry in the  
Critical Dictionary, by Jonathan Skinner.

This month's Bestiary, edited by Eleni Sikelianos, features work by Alice Notley,  
J. Skinner, and Marcella Durand.

The Dialectic returns from vacation with a snapshot of ontological  
equivocation--perceived--and captured--in the moment of its realization by  
Duncan Dobbelmann.

Built on Orhan Pamuk's The Black Book and Leonard Schwartz's earlier  
contribution, this month's Mote layer, "Devoured, Cleansed", is by Heather  
Ramsdell.

This issue's Project --"Forms and Hand-Carved Panels"--is by an anonymous  
artisan.

The first and second issues of the Friend are available from the Files page.

For general and contact information turn to the Contact page. And if you haven't done so already, please take a moment to Subscribe to the Friend (it's free).

Garrett Kalleberg

mailto: [REDACTED]

The Transcendental Friend can be found at:

<http://www.morningred.com/friend>

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### 31. **David Baratier**

#### ***Mean(ing)***

*Sat 2 May 1998*

---

The aesthetic intramural coherence among the words, phonemes, and morphemes of a literary work in accordance with the referent object (emotion etcetera) implied conferment upon internal consistency of their closed system (page or chosen media) of interrelations. There's plenty more like baseball contributing to a lack of meaning, anomie. But then should we allow discussions of sociologists on the listserv?

Be well

David Baratier

E-mail with address for free Langpo decoder ring. Great for those friends and that family "who don't understand you" (sorry, first 10 responses only)

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### 32. **Jerome Rothenberg**

#### ***Re: poems for the millennium vol. 2***

*Sat 2 May 1998*

---

I'm sitting here listening to Herb Levy's remarkable internet radio site (what a gift what a gift) and thinking at the same time to put down a few words in thanks and response to Joe Amato's message of the other day. Like Pierre I've held back from responding to the various comments - except for irritation with the original one from Ron - and will likely never get around to doing it fully, but I'm grateful over all and am more in agreement than not with what's been said.

The tough thing with this one is that we knew from the start that as an anthology (and I mean a largely \_contemporary\_ anthology) it had to be a flawed book, and we knew too that there was no way that it wouldn't be read as an anthology in that sense. For me, though - and I'm sure this holds for Pierre as well - it was conceived, like other gatherings of mine or his, as something

else: an assemblage as a pulling together of poems & people & ideas about poetry & much else in the words of others and in our own. That imago - that representation of where we've been and what we've lived thru - is something in fact that I would stand by - like any poem. (It's also why we've allowed ourselves to end the book - as epic poem replete with histories & voices - with two poems of our own.) I've written about all of that that some number of times - going back to a piece on anthologies in L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E - and there's also an available talk from the Orono conference on 1950s poetry in which I lay out many of the issues around anthologies in general and this assemblage in particular. You can check it out through the EPC (<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/rothenberg/50s.html>), where it's clear, I think, that I'm offering a critique that seems obvious to me and not much different from what Joe and others have been saying.

About some of the more specific questions that Joe raises:

The omission of "more mainstream poets" was a deliberate aspect of this work, which an "anthology" as such might even so have included - since our intention, as Pierre and I have stated elsewhere, was to construct a work whose imagined center was what was elsewhere treated (if at all) as a marginalized periphery. Other omissions, when viewed as an anthology, were of course more painful to us, though there was an attempt for the mapping's sake to place some of these in commentaries or to bring them forward as translators, say, where that was possible. (Spicer, since his name has come up so often, would be one such example.) In the matter of inclusions - the other side of this coin - I would call specific attention to the poets and artists around Fluxus, some of whom are as vital to my sense of the times in question as any other configuration in the book. Thus we've given a prominent space to Mac Low and Cage but equally to Emmett Williams, who I gather from further correspondence with Ron would be absent from his own imago mundi (though I ascribe no "deeply cynical" motives or "bad faith" to such an absence). We have also foregrounded a particular work by Robert Filliou and regret not having been able to do as well by Dick Higgins or George Brecht, while still managing in this instance to bring them in.

Joe notes also that volume two is more configured around "clusters" than around "movements" or "schools", which it is and is therefore very much an aspect of our sense of the times in question. Anyway we take the matter up in our introduction, and we indicate that the clusters chosen are representative but in no sense inclusive. The two American ones - out of a total of eight such configurations inserted in the two galleries that constitute the book's principal divisions - are the Beats (early) and the Language Poets (later), with other U.S. groupings represented in lots of different ways. The featured foregrounded ones outside the U.S. are the poets of the Vienna Group, the Arabic Tammuzi

poets, the Cobra poets and artists (Holland, Belgium, Denmark), concrete poetry as a broader international configuration, the Japanese "postwar poets", the Italian Novissimi and others, and the Chinese Misty Poets. And in addition there are two made-up clusters - of oral (not specifically pop) poetry and of machine & computer poetry. All of this makes a kind of picture but couldn't possibly pretend to completeness either outside or inside the categories in question. (And again, I go into this in more detail in the Orono piece, and Pierre and I discuss it briefly in the Introduction.)

On the "duplication" question - i.e. the carry-over of some poets from volume one to volume two - Joe recognizes this as obviously "deliberate," but wants to know "the terms of this deliberation." In brief there's a recognition that the dividing line between the two volumes and times is, like all such lines, very dubious, and that the work of any number of older poets continued to break new ground through the 1940s and beyond. So we added one particular section of "continuities" (somewhat like the "forerunners" in volume one) that brought in late works by most of those on Joe's list (Paterson, the late Pound Cantos, Breton's Ode to Fourier, Ekelof's Mölna Elegy, Zukofsky's "A," Neruda's Macchu Picchu, & so on) as a kickoff to what would follow. In addition we did an opening Prelude (subtitled, after Duncan, "In the Dark") that set up a number of "postwar" poems that gave a sense of political and social and psychic underpinnings for the whole assemblage - including some late Akhmatova and a segment of Artaud's "To Have Done with the Judgment of God." The others Joe mentions as carry-overs turned up in the "Book of Origins" section of volume one, which was a non-chronological distillation of the kinds of things I had tried to map in other anthologies, with Duncan, Césaire, Schwerner, Ortiz, Olson, and others being shown as translators or otherwise connected to the drive to reinterpret the sources and range of poetries that the century has opened up. (Spicer as translator [in a very special sense] of Lorca also appears in volume one.) In a followup to this observation, Joe notes that the duplications consist of 22 men and 4 women, which is accurate, but shouldn't obscure the fact that as the book moves on, the gender balance shifts radically until by the end (and without really pushing it) six of the last eight entries (Scalapino, Vicuña, Bracho, Iskrenko, O'Sullivan, and Cha) are women. And the poetics of gender is taken throughout as one of the significant and necessary breakthroughs of our time.

About Auden, whose name surfaces a couple of times in these discussions, I don't know if I have much to say. He was in fact going to be included in the third gallery of volume one - with commentary & all - but we were thwarted (as with Eliot and David Jones) by the economics of permissions and let it go at that. I was also inclined - though I don't know if I speak equally for Pierre here - toward Dylan Thomas and even Robert Lowell. That was both volume one and

volume two stuff, I suppose, and maybe it should also be pointed out, regarding volume 2, that our first draft of the manuscript counted up to something like 1200 pages, but to start to talk about cutting-floor strategies strikes me as both defensive on our part and offensive to those so cut. (And this is the reason why I, like all of you, hate anthologies.)

I want to note also that the book was completed more than two years ago - publication having been held up by the pace of permissions and the difficulties of production and design. In the interval since - and increasingly over the last year - we've become aware of the incredible activity in visual and hypertext domains spurred by the new technologies. The section on machine and cyber poetry that Joe mentions approvingly would correspondingly be much fuller if we were going at it now. Even so, I think that getting whatever we got into the present mapping was/is a matter of some importance and one that will lead to other assessments and reassessments. That's all that such a small section could do anyway - much like that on oral poetry: a vast territory that I thought had to be in the book, even if limited to a handful of examples of the kinds of language work (not just "song writing" either as Ron describes it) by contemporaries of ours not elsewhere considered as poetic equals. (I.e., if Hugo Ball's "Karawane" is a poem - and it is - so is Ella Fitzgerald's more complex variations on "Lady Be Good," which we didn't manage to transcribe, or Dizzy's "Sabla y Blu," which we did. So the point of that inclusion is directed at our own assessments of sound poetry, say, when they decline to recognize related "masterworks" outside of literature itself.)

Finally: a couple of things that have appeared or will be appearing on the internet: Jack Foley's review of volume two at <http://www.hooked.net/~jalsop/jfucmod.html>, and the introduction and table of contents for volume two through the EPC (coming up). It's our hope that the presence there of many many issues and searchings will be apparent as a basis for what we've done rather than the selection of poets with which, if that was all there was to it, we couldn't possibly succeed.

ps. Exact Change has just brought out a photo reprint of *Revolution of the Word* (with a changed cover by Marcel Duchamp), the anthology of U.S. poetry between the two world wars that I did back in the early 1970s. It certainly supplements (and in a few instances directly prefigures) the present one -- though more clearly (to my mind) an anthology rather than an assemblage or some such creature. Some of the really striking figures here (A.L. Gillespie, Jolas, Arensberg, von Freytag Loringhoven, Harry Crosby, Mina Loy) are rarely presented elsewhere -- even more the case when the book was originally published.



Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher wrote:

- >
- > am embroiled in my own institutional nonsense here, but having just
- > yesterday rec'd vol. two of the jerry/pierre anthology, i wanted to take
- > this opportunity, and the unforgiveable speed of this medium, to toss in a
- > few all-too-hasty remarks by way of reopening this thread:
- >
- > (1) first and foremost: if you simply pick up the book and flip through
- > its contents, it should be clear that this is a vast and in some ways
- > unprecedented effort... my first thought was---no doubt like some of
- > you---that so & so had been excluded, and that so & so had been included...
- > and my list of so & so's on both sides of the exclusion/inclusion coin
- > would have included many more mainstream poets, simply b/c i believe it
- > important to try to bring disparate communities of poets together, if only
- > to squabble (i worry a bit that some may not come to this volume b/c of
- > obvious exclusions)... but there can be no denying that the range of volume
- > two is considerable... and that the editors are to be congratulated once
- > again...
- >
- > (2) that said, i note in flipping through that the book does not seem to
- > offer as clearcut a configuration of 'schools' and 'movements' as did
- > volume one... is this simply an impression?---or is volume two configured
- > more around clusters?... for what it's worth: i had my dozen or so (again,
- > engineering/science major, creative writing) students paw through the
- > volume a bit, and their first observation was that it didn't designate
- > movements (e.g., modernism, surrealism, etc.) as did the first volume...
- > for what it's worth, i say... now, i anticipated that this volume would be,
- > by its very nature, more controversial, in trying to approach the
- > impossible present with an eye or two toward the impossible future...
- >
- > (3) i haven't had a chance to really spend any time with editorial
- > apparatus---i've only skimmed through... but i want to offer here a quick
- > list that i formulated---not a list of exclusions (or omissions), but of
- > inclusions... in fact, of duplications (of a sort)---those authors whose
- > work is reproduced both in volume one and in volume two (not the same
- work,
- > of course---and apologies for any bean-counting errors):
- >
- > akhmatova
- > artaud
- > breton
- > cesaire



> duchamp  
> duncan  
> ekelof  
> eshleman  
> h.d.  
> jables  
> joyce  
> mac low  
> macdiarmid  
> michaux  
> neruda  
> olson  
> oppen  
> ortiz  
> paz  
> pound  
> sabina  
> schwerner  
> g. stein  
> stevens  
> williams  
> zukofsky  
>  
> (22 men, 4 women)  
>  
> what i'd want to know from jerry/pierre, if it isn't already noted in the  
> editorial apparatus, is whether and to what extent this duplication was  
> itself a matter of extended deliberation... well---to be more precise, b/c  
> i'm sure it \*was\*---what were the terms of this deliberation?...  
>  
> (4) it's true that auden, spicer, and many others have been excluded from  
> volume two... at the same time, i note that spicer and auden and many  
> others DO appear in the commentary sections... and this is in fact  
> significant, not only from a teaching perspective, but in terms of  
> developing historial context... i wonder whether jerry/pierre intend  
> someday to produce an index for the volumes that might include all of those  
> poets mentioned in the commentary sections?... i think this would be  
> extremely useful...  
>  
> (5) given my own specific interests, it was nice to see a section on  
> "cyberpoetry," to see someone like jim rosenberg finally get his due, and  
> to see folks like don byrd and michael joyce credited for their

> contributions to late 20th century thought... i know of many, many talented  
> folks who might also have been included here, but again i regard the drift  
> of the anthology as not so much to territorialize as to provide a sense of  
> openings... and a sense is just that---a sense, even with u of california  
> backing... in other words, the editors as i see it are using a powerful  
> academic press in order to advance an unorthodox and polemical  
> understanding of poetic possibilities... and like, why the hell not?... i  
> like it, for example, that readers are referred in volume one to seek  
> eliot's \_the waste land\_ elsewhere...  
>  
> (6) i've had a chance to read over jonathan mayhew's brief review of the  
> anthology, and i do think jonathan's is an even-handed critique, given the  
> brevity of his review---and we all know that no book is beyond critique...  
> i encourage those of you who are interested to have a look at what jonathan  
> is saying... at <http://www.ellavon.com/>  
>  
> anyway, again, all too hasty and for what it's worth... and i need to say  
> here, again, that i think jerry and pierre are to be congratulated for  
> another superb volume...  
>  
> all best,  
>  
> joe

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### 33. **Hugh Nicoll**

#### ***Re: East Village Poetry Site***

*Sat 2 May 1998*

---

You will find The East Village Poetry Web at these URLs.

In the US: <<http://www.theeastvillage.org>>.

In Japan: <<http://interserver.miyazaki-med.ac.jp/~east/village.htm>>.

h.

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### 34. **J. Fuhrman**

#### ***Re: : challenge vs. difficulty (Tate)***

*Sat 2 May 1998*

---

If people have moved on from thinking about the Tate piece, I'm sorry but...  
What interested me about Kirch's review was the distinction I think he is

making between "difficulty"(usually. of surface) and "challenge"( usually of content.) This distinction seems to go against what I imagine most of us think of as "form" in poetry (FORM is CONTENT-- as olsen, creely et al. said.) Still, I found Kirch's argument convincing. Are there contemporary poets who it makes sense to talk about in this way? What would this way of viewing allow us to see? What would it force us to miss? As a side note: Has anyone else seen Tate read after years of reading him? What was interesting about the experience for me was how different the poems were performed? When I read them at home the line between what is funny and what is tragic is thin? Yet when he reads, it seems clear that some lines are "funny/absurd" and others are "serious/sentimental." The reading was a disappointment to me because... I don't know.. the poems seemed less complex, somehow less interesting. I felt I had been somehow misreading them all along.

On Thu, 30 Apr 1998, louis stroffolino wrote:

*In response to TRACE---I guess I read Kirsch differently  
(I disagree with his review but for different reasons than trace).  
I think he's using the word "challenge" positively and lamenting  
what he sees as a lack of that "challenge" in Tate. Kirsch, as I  
see it, seems to lament the "19th century role" of poet as consoler  
and comforter which he detects "beneath" the seemingly modern  
disjunctive aleatory qualities of the poetry he's discussing.....  
Now, whether he's ACCURATE about that is one thing  
(in the first place, I don't quite know what he means about the  
19th century poet of comfort and consolation: Baudelaire?  
Dostoyevski [i know, not a poet] speaks of his writing as  
"corrective punishment", I see that in much of Dickinson,  
Shelley, etc. too)  
Kirsch, of course, poses a reductive dichotomy  
between "challenge" and "comfort" (but, then, critics and  
scholars on both sides of the fence have been rewarded for  
such rhetorical maneuvers for quite some time now....)*

*I also wonder about the phrase "retreat from the rigors of  
the world". I think Kirsch finds such a stance terrible,  
and Trace (who thinks Kirsch craves that kind of poetry)  
also finds it terrible, or ethically unsound.  
But sometimes the world does not come in the form of RIGORS  
(rigors unmixed), and then such a "retreat" is not really  
a retreat....*

*c*

On Thu, 30 Apr 1998, trace s. ruggles wrote:

And, Kirsch's conclusion is:

*.. And this, finally, is Tate's message to us: the little*

.. pleasures of "pure ordinariness" make all the pain  
.. worthwhile. The poems in "Shroud of the Gnome" are often  
.. difficult; but with a message like that, they cannot be a  
.. challenge.

Is Kirsch apologizing for Tate's poetry? Ah, if only the *\_message\_* is  
good, you can forgive the poet for being *\_difficult\_*!

And, get this:

.. But while poets today may still use modernist techniques --  
.. free association, surrealism, complex allusion -- the  
.. modernist temper is gone; poetry has to a large degree  
.. resumed its 19th-century role as a comfort and consolation,  
.. a retreat from the rigors of the world.

So, the 20th century was but a little diversion in the grand stream of  
POETRY which gave the POETS a few neat little tricks to use, but THANK GOD!  
we're back to comfort and consolation! So, please quit being so difficult,  
y'all, and give me some nice little lines I can fall asleep to...

--trace--

At 8:39 AM -0700 4/30/98, you wrote:

Now Mayhew has caused Mayhem in the mind  
i keep by a bar serving coors  
and is reminding me of that terrible kool and the gong sang  
(DIGRESSION: i listen to rap when cars pass, and i heard this line  
"LIKE THE CAT WHO KILLED VERSACE" yesterday, can anybody  
NAME THAT TUNE)  
anyway, when i first read this quote i thought it was  
"Tate is trying to make words FLESH again"  
ah, the materiality of the word meets the  
school of disembodied poets

-----  
Well, one could take Mayhew's problem further---  
if the avoidance of cliché is now a cliché  
then everything is permitted (which is a cliché too)....

But when we speak of the issue of "making language fresh"  
(or however you want to express a similar impulse),  
i guess there's a question involved about WHO you want  
to do that for? And I wonder if there's a way to avoid  
the possibility that someone will find "too obscure"  
and "meaningless" what another person finds "too cliché"----  
no matter WHAT kind of poem you write.....  
chris

On Thu, 30 Apr 1998, MAYHEW wrote:

*From a review of James Tate in the "New York Times Book Review," by one Adam Kirsch:*

*"Like the even more nonsensical  
Language poets, Tate is trying to make words fresh again, to  
restore the glow that is  
rubbed away by advertisements and professional jargon and  
simple day-to-day  
repetition. Thus the reader discovers these deadpan  
absurdities: "Please don't taunt the  
scrivener. . . . / No muffins permitted in the aviary." Or:  
"my studies, Retro- /  
gression and the Requiem Shark, to name but one area.""*

*The problem is that this idea of "making words fresh again" is itself a tired commonplace. I also find the phrase "the even more non-sensical language poets" hilarious. Apart from this, the review does have some insight.*

*Jonathan Mayhew  
Department of Spanish and Portuguese  
University of Kansas*



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### 35. **michael corbin**

#### ***Re: Arizona in here***

*Sat 2 May 1998*

Daniel Zimmerman wrote:

>

*Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca [Cow-head!]; his real name, as far as I know.  
Harvey Brown reissued Long's book in a beautiful Frontier Press edition  
in 1969. A few years ago PBS ran a film about CdeV's journey--a bit  
heavyhandedly 'epic,' but a nice surprise.*

Perhaps the *\_Relacion\_* of de Vaca and, its companion volume the *\_Devastation of the Indies\_* of Bartolome de las Casas are fresh poems for our late imperial romances. After walking through Northern-hemispheric deserts and renouncing the low-intensity conflict blood rituals there can be late twentieth century hope.

But maybe not. I've always wondered about the Karankawas. Is it possible to remember them now?

Recommend John Sayles latest cinematic effort *\_Men with Guns\_*. An american release in spanish (dialectos nativos, mestizo too) with english subtitles. A somewhat didactic allegory (no more so than *\_Matewan\_* or any of Sayles work), somewhat based on Francisco Goldman's *\_Long Night of White Chickens\_* not unrelated to the passions of de Vaca and de las Casas, and you and me kimo sabe. The central character struggles with, lets call it, de vaca-ism, and its possibilities now.

In other related news:

Requiescat in pace Bishop Juan Gerardi Conedera, you who were beaten to death last week. And who remembers Guatemala? Is it even possible now? You survived the 80s, a 36 year civil war, Reagan, only to be killed now speaking of human rights. Nunca mas mi padre. You spoke of the devastation of los indios, Nunca mas.

And in still other related poetry news (or as elegist Rodnee Keng said during the LA poetry riots, "Can't we all just get one big anthology")

#### NUEVAS VIOLACIONES EN CHIAPAS

El Centro de Derechos Humanos "Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas" denuncia ante la opinión pública nuevas violaciones a los derechos humanos en el Estado de Chiapas de las que ha tenido conocimiento:

1. Dos auxiliares de este Centro de Derechos Humanos, quienes prestan su servicio social, fueron el pasado sábado 11 de abril asaltadas en el centro ceremonial maya de Palenque. Después de este hecho han sido hostigadas y seguidas en la Ciudad de San Cristóbal de Las Casas y, finalmente, sujetos desconocidos entraron en la habitación de su hotel mientras estaban ausentes sustrayéndoles documentos personales. Los hechos constan en la averiguación previa 204/18/98.

2. De acuerdo a la información de la Comunidad "10 de abril", el pasado 14 de abril de 1998, unos 800 elementos las policías de Seguridad Pública y Judicial Federal, Ejército Nacional Mexicano y agentes del Instituto Nacional de Migración, realizaron un operativo en donde detuvieron al joven José Alfredo López Méndez de 17 años de edad y a tres noruegos de nombres Nora Lanfelan, Laura Itzen Esten y Kaja Langelano. La detención se llevó de manera arbitraria y el procedimiento para su expulsión fue nuevamente ilícito, toda vez que no se les permitió tener abogado en los interrogatorios y no tuvieron oportunidad de alegar nada en su defensa. Para esta agresión la policía uso de gases lacrimógenos y disparos al aire y fueron guiados por indígenas de la región

vestidos con el uniforme de la Policía de Seguridad Pública (usurpando funciones).

3. Al concluir el operativo de detención los elementos de dichas corporaciones, según la propia versión de la comunidad saquearon la tienda cooperativa sustrayendo de ésta bienes por un monto de \$ 109,325.00 pesos y dinero en efectivo por más de \$ 170,000.00 pesos. Este tipo de prácticas no son extrañas ni nuevas, vale la pena recordar el saqueo de casas y tiendas que la policía perpetró en San Pedro Nixtalucum, en el Bosque en marzo del año pasado.

4. El día de ayer 15 de abril el Juez 2º de distrito Roberto Alejandro Navarro Suárez se rehusó a recibir el  
amparo que promovía la defensa de los Srs. de TOMAS SANCHEZ LOPEZ,  
MIGUEL HERNANDEZ

PEREZ, ANTONIO RODRIGUEZ JIMENEZ, ANDRES GUTIERREZ  
HERNANDEZ,  
FIDELINO CRUZ

MENDOZA, MANUEL HERNANDEZ PEREZ Y CESAR RODRIGO NUÑEZ  
OLIVA,

detenidos ilícitamente

el día 13 de abril en el municipio de Ocosingo, sin dar explicación  
jurídica alguna.

5. El pasado 13 de abril, a media noche, presuntos elementos de la policía Judicial Federal incursionaron en el poblado Santa Catarina, municipio de Sabanilla y con disparos al aire intimidaron a la población.

Este Centro constata el rápido deterioro de los derechos humanos en el Estado y hace un llamado urgente al gobernador a que ponga fin a la escalada de represión, libere a los prisioneros injustamente detenidos e indemnice a los pobladores de la comunidad "10 de abril" por los daños ocasionados por elementos de las policías.

De igual manera reitera este Centro que no es posible el establecimiento del Estado de Derecho violando derechos humanos o creando un clima de represión.

mc

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36. **Miekal And**

***Re: requisite self-promotion***

Sun 3 May 1998

---

Herb Levy wrote:

each week of interesting music including the dull

> variety of new music that I select for them (in RealAudio):

how about a little cornelius cardew or the seattle improviser's orchestra (whose name I forget) which Jeffrey Morgan organized?

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37. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**

***Re: poems for the millennium vol. 2***

Sun 3 May 1998

---

jerry, thanx so much for your detailed response to (again) my hasty queries... i'm certain i'm not alone in finding much of interest and insight in what you say... one thing that leaps off the screen is the issue you raise re the "economics of permissions"---i had rather thought that this must figure someplace in such a big book... and it was interesting to hear too that the final product was hewn from an initial 1200 pp (and was in essence completed two years ago)... i'm fairly certain that the 1200 pp item would have eased certain anxieties (making vol. two a little larger than \_from the other side of the century\_), but there is after all something worthwhile in being a bit provocative (and i'm sure length was an economics issue as well)...

i don't like to reduce everything to matters of teaching, but after all i'm a teacher... and whatever one's feelings regarding anthologies, they can be handy in the classroom--- depending on the classroom (esp. coupled with a small press volume or two)... had i had volume two of \_millennium\_ i would have used it this past semester... thus far i've used vol. one of the \_millennium\_, paul hoover's \_postmodern\_ norton and ed foster et al.'s \_primary troubles\_... i've used each of these anthologies 'successfully,' albeit to somewhat different \*measures\* of 'success' (which right now i just don't have the time to detail---and i used these three anthologies with three different groups of students, so i can offer only 'case study' experience anyway)...

oh hey, and why not: i happen to enjoy flipping through anthologies---with my brain intact, of course... as long as one understands that anthologies are variously \*motivated\* collections, and as long as one (teacher, say) finds ways to support smaller publishing enterprises, i don't see a problem here (though i can imagine an argument re the way an anthology "comes at you," it seems to



me clear that the \_millennium\_ anthologies in particular address their own problematic nature in this regard)...

well like i say volume two is a heck of an accomplishment, thanx again  
jerry/pierre!...

best,

joe

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### 38. **Eurydice**

#### ***May Readings at Here (NYC)***

*Sun 3 May 1998*

---

Three upcoming readings in New York to attend - time, location, and will willing.

May 9

Heather Fuller

Heather Ramsdell

May 16

Deirdre Kovac

Rod Smith

May 23

Jean Day

Andrew Levy

All at "Here"; 145 Sixth Avenue (a block below Spring Street), New York;  
Saturdays at 3:00 p.m.; \$5 contribution.

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### 39. **Douglas Barbour**

#### ***Re: Rothenberg's commentary***

*Sun 3 May 1998*

---

Just a note to thank Jerome Rothenberg for such a calm yet committed commentary on his own process & the product that necessarily had to emerge from it. We all know there can be no perfect anthology; but it is good to have two so dedicated bricoleurs working to create 2 huge volumes of 'assemblage.' I know I've got my (most pleasant) work cut out for me in reading this huge text with the care it was put together with.

And, with regard to Herb Levy's comments, I'm pretty damned sure I'll enjoy a lot of it before I 'understand' it all, nor does that worry me. And, Herb, even in

the universities, some of us try to suggest that 'understanding' a poem is a lot less important than 'getting' it in all kinds of other ways. I do agree with you...

=====

Douglas Barbour  
Department of English  
University of Alberta  
Edmonton Alberta T6G 2E5

██████████ FAX: ██████████

H: ██████████

~~~~~

APARICION

Si el hombre es polvo
Esos que andan por el llano

Son hombres

Octavio Paz

APPARATION

I man is dust
Thos who go through the plain

Are men

(trans. Charles Tomlinson)

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40. **Agent Sunshine, aka Eric Gleason** ***tribute in harlem thursday.***

Sun 3 May 1998

i heard a rumor of a ginsberg tribute reading in harlem this thursday. does anyone have more info?

thanks,
eryque

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41. **Bob Grumman** ***Understanding Poems***

Sun 3 May 1998

Just to confuse the issue of whether one need understand a poem to get anything important out of it, I say one does. However, I would add that there are all kinds of ways to understand a poem other than the verbal.

--Bob G.

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42. **Michael McColl**

Understanding and Evaluating Poems

Sun 3 May 1998

With experimental poems comes an interesting situation or problem with regards to evaluation. When there is no paraphrasable content, then at least one very widespread and traditional way to evaluate a poem is no longer possible, at least in the same way--that is to discern how sound and sense are in harmony or meaningful dissonance. It seems to me that the criteria for judging what's good and not so good must change when the experiment involves a conscious departure from paraphrasable content. Do such criteria exist?

Michael McColl

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43. **John Cayley**

Current (e)address for Fiona Templeton

Sun 3 May 1998

Can anyone give me the current address, ideally an email address, but snail also good, for Fiona. Thanks in anticipation. John

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44. **randy egest**

NEA/NPR Petition

Sun 3 May 1998

After extensive lurking, I found something that may or may not be appropriate fodder.

Sorry if it isn't, but it is vital and interactive!
And thanks for this great list
chris
(cut this sophomoric commentary out at leisure)

Friends-

Subject: NEA Petition

RE: National Endowment for the Arts, NPR, PBS Petition

Please keep this petition rolling. Do not reply to me. Please sign at the bottom and forward to others to sign. If you prefer not to sign please send to the e-mail address indicated or return to me. Thanks.

This petition is being passed around the internet. Please add your name to it so that funding can be maintained for the NEA, NPR & PBS.

Here goes:

This is being forwarded to several people at once to add their names to the petition. It won't matter if many people receive the same list as the names are being managed.

This is for anyone who thinks NPR/PBS is a worthwhile expenditure of \$1.12/year of their taxes, a petition follows. If you sign, please forward on to others (not back to me). If not, please don't kill it-send it to the email address listed here: [REDACTED] PBS,

NPR (National Public Radio), and the arts are facing major cutbacks in funding. In spite of the efforts of each station to reduce spending costs and streamline their services, some government officials believe that the funding currently going to these programs is too large a portion of funding for something which is seen as not worthwhile. Currently, taxes from the general public for PBS equal \$1.12 per person per year, and the

National Endowment for the Arts equals \$0.64 a year.

A January 1995 CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll indicated that 76% of Americans wish to keep funding for PBS, this percentage of people polled is surpassed only by national defense and law enforcement as the programs that are the most valuable for federal funding.

Each year, the Senate and House Appropriations committees each have 13 subcommittees with jurisdiction over many programs and agencies. Each subcommittee passes its own appropriation bill. The goal each year is to have each bill signed by the beginning of the fiscal year, which is October 1.

The only way that our representatives can be aware of the base of support for PBS and funding for these types of programs is by making our voices heard.

Please add your name to this list and forward it to friends if you believe in what we stand for. This list will be forwarded to the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States,

and Representative

Newt Gingrich, who is the instigator of the action to cut funding to these worthwhile programs.

*If you happen to be the 150th, 200th, 250th, etc. signer of this petition, please forward a copy to: [REDACTED].

If that address is inoperative, please send it to:

██████████.

This way we can keep track of the lists and organize them.

Forward this to everyone you know, and help us to keep these programs alive.

Thank you.

NOTE: It is preferable that you SELECT the entirety of this letter and
then COPY it into a new outgoing message rather than simply forwarding it.

-
- 416) Arlene Hamilton, Everett, WA
 - 417) Irina Rudakova, University of Washington, Seattle, WA
 - 418) Persephone Miel, Internews, Moscow, Russia
 - 419) Michael J. Mead, New York, NY
 - 420) Spiro C. Lampros, New York University, New York, NY
 - 421) Kelly Sheehan, Brooklyn, NY
 - 422) Henry Kimsey-House, Sebastopol, CA
 - 423) Cynthia Loy Darst, Los Angeles, CA
 - 424) David Darst, Los Angeles, CA
 - 425) Arline Berman, Atlanta, GA
 - 426) Laura Davis, Atlanta, GA
 - 427) Carole Billingham, Denver, CO
 - 428) Sonja M. Hansen, Seattle, WA
 - 429) Rebecca Crichton, Seattle, WA
 - 430) Cedron Sterling, Seattle, WA
 - 431) N'Shama Radha Sterling, Seattle, WA
 - 432) Jim Ekberg, Seattle, WA
 - 433) Carol Ruth Summers, Seattle, WA
 - 434) Ken Jenkins, Novato, CA
 - 435) Todd Stock, Los Gatos, CA
 - 436) Donald Rose, Los Angeles CA
 - 437) Tony Puryear, Venice, CA
 - 438) Eric Finke, Venice, CA
 - 439) Janet Forman, New York, NY
 - 440) Lynda Hansen, NY, NY
 - 441) Richard Weise, Nashville, TN
 - 442) David Madson, Albany, CA
 - 443) Rick Wise, Albany, CA
 - 444) Bill Rogers, Mendocino, CA
 - 445) Rita Hovakimian, San Francisco, Ca
 - 446) Tracy E. Longacre, San Francisco, CA

- 447) Anita G. Barfield, San Francisco, CA
- 448) Penelope M. Warren, San Francisco, CA
- 449) Edward G. Guggenheim, San Francisco, CA
- 450) Thao N. Lam, Riverside, CA
- 451) Antonio Rauti, Riverside, CA
- 452) Carlotta Domeniconi, Riverside, CA
- 453) Stephanie Fonder, Riverside, CA
- 454) Sohail Nadimi, Riverside, CA
- 455) Shirin Etessam, San Francisco, CA
- 456) Jahanshah Javid, Albany, CA
- 457) Haleh Nazeri, NY, NY
- 458) Larry Weissman, NY, NY
- 459) Hilary Herscher
- 460) Shena Patel
- 461) Steven Gutierrez
- 462) Simon Glick
- 463) Michael Gillespie, New York, NY
- 464) Janna Scott, Dallas, TX
- 465) Robert L. Cordell II, New York, NY
- 466) Colleen Theis, New York, NY
- 467) Karen Speer, New York, NY
- 468) James Karn, New York, NY
- 469) Raymur Walton, New York, NY
- 470) Martha Brice Gaillard
- 471) Martha Gary
- 472) Howard Stovall, Memphis, TN
- 473) Pat Mitchell, Memphis,
- 474) Tara McAdams, Memphis, TN
- 475) Robert Gordon, Memphis
- 476) Robert Freed, Richmond, VA
- 477) Babs Jackson, Richmond, VA
- 478) Michael Broyles, State College, PA
- 479) Ruth Silverman, Buffalo Grove, IL
- 480) Karen Primack, Silver Spring, MD>
- 481) George Hinds, Takoma Park, MD
- 482> Luc Leplae
- 483> Suzanne Rosenblatt
- 484> Mark J. Fraire, Madison, WI
- 485> Steve Barberio, Hopkins, MN
- 486> Kari Kjome, Minneapolis, MN
- 487> Peter Kjome, Grand Rapids, MI

- 488> Robert Driscoll, Jr., Pittsburgh, PA
- 489> Jonathan J. Dlouhy, Atlanta, GA
- 490> Ronda Respass, Atlanta, GA
- 490> Ronda Respass, Atlanta, GA
- 491> Ann Steck, Alexandria, VA
- 492> De Fischler Herman, Takoma Park, MD
- 493> Naomi Mara Hyman, Stevensville, MD
- 494> Patrice L. Leichter, Philadelphia, PA
- 495> Stuart Bogom, Philadelphia, PA
- 496> Dorel Shannon, Philadelphia, PA
- 497) Sandi Vito
- 498) Lou Freimiller
- 499) Cynthia Waters Spaulding, Philadelphia, PA
- 500) Sheila F. Waters, Gaithersburg, MD
- 501) Aissia L. Richardson, Philadelphia, PA
- 502) E.A. Kafkalas, Allentown, PA
- 503) Shirl Gower, Bethlehem, PA
- 504)Ysaye M. Barnwell, Washington, DC
- 505) Samuel A. Floyd, Jr., Chicago IL
- 506) Anne Dhu McLucas, Eugene, OR
- 507) John Potash, Sioux City, IA
- 508) Nina V. Fedoroff, State College, PA
- 509) Daniel J. Cosgrove, Pennsylvania Furnace, PA
- 510) Lincoln Taiz, Santa Cruz, CA
- 511) Richard Coplon, Santa Cruz, CA
- 512) Clare Greene, Santa Cruz, CA
- 513) Betsy Steele, Santa Cruz, CA
- 514) David Casper, Aptos, CA
- 515) Peggy Casper, Aptos, CA
- 516) William Settle, Aptos, CA
- 517) George W. Gilchrist, Seattle, WA
- 518) Ronald L. Rutowski, Tempe, AZ
- 519) Heather Cate, Tempe, AZ
- 520) Chris Bijalba; Chicago, IL

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45. **charles alexander**

Re: Understanding and Evaluating Poems

Sun 3 May 1998

At 03:05 PM 5/3/98 EDT, you wrote:

>With experimental poems comes an interesting situation or problem

>with regards to evaluation. When there is no paraphrasable content,
>then at least one very widespread and traditional way to evaluate
>a poem is no longer possible, at least in the same way--that is
>to discern how sound and sense are in harmony or meaningful dissonance.
>It seems to me that the criteria for judging what's good and not so
>good must change when the experiment involves a conscious departure
>from paraphrasable content. Do such criteria exist?

Seems to me one might begin from the definition of poetry as "language charged with meaning to the utmost degree." And one can compare 'experimental' poems and argue about such charge. Just as one may look at Thomas Hardy's elegy to Swinburne next to Pound's elegy to Swinburne and (I think) make a pretty argument that Hardy's is the 'better' poem. But is that all we're after. Do we really read poetry to determine which poems are better than others according to various criteria? Isn't it better to look at those poems, respond to them in a variety of ways, and try and come to a sense of why it is exciting or enlightening to read them?

Still, I'm not sure you couldn't look at the criteria you name above (sound and sense in harmony or meaningful dissonance) and apply it to experimental poems. I could imagine Mac Low's Light Poems standing up fairly well to such an analysis. I don't think "having paraphrasable content" is the only way a poem can exhibit "sense."

charles

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46. **Bob Grumman**

Re: Understanding and Evaluating Poems

Sun 3 May 1998

Oht-oh, looks like this thread gonna start heating up. Michael McColl speaks of poems with no paraphrasable content. I would claim that any poem without SOME paraphrasable content, if that's possible, is worthless--as a poem. But I'm pretty narrow in my definition of poetry as something semantic. If you're talking about some kind of "sound poetry" that has no verbal meaning, then, for me, it's music, to be judged as music is, but its variety of sounds and how they are used with and against each other. "Visual poetry" sans verbal meaning should similarly be judged by visual criteria, how their colors and shapes are used with and against each other.

I haven't been following this thread closely, so forgive me if I'm repeating some other fogey's much earlier remarks.

--Bob G.

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47. **David Baratier**

Re: Understanding and Evaluating Poems

Sun 3 May 1998

"With experimental poems comes an interesting situation or problem with regards to evaluation."

I was attempting to get at this with the earlier post mean(ing). The criteria starts to formulate and appear at the experience of the piece. In whatever medium. For me, in a successful piece, the criteria establishes itself on the basis of the experience. Examples: While experiencing Robert Grenier's *rhymms*, I found that the color linkings between the pages as well as the scrawl of the work lead to multiple parameters of possibilities of connective meaning. That's why we published a section. Each "word" on the page has many possibilities of interpretation. Each color has other possible polarities such as elements, energies, and other archetypal interpenetrations. It lead to questions of what the function of text and how it can impersonalize a love letter (see: What I believe / Transpirations/ Transpiring on O books) how handwriting relates to the mythic (see Duncan's selected essays) where does art & poetry reach demarcation etcetera. A successful piece flares to the mind an image of my current belief structure and brings it through a process of re-interpretation.

Another great example is transduction, as created by Joel Lippman in the 70's, an excellent example can be found in *_Prime Sway: a transduction of Primera Sueno by Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz_* by John M. Bennett (Texture Press). The piece tries to capture the phrenic or mental energy of the original without a pretending to be a literal translation. Questions of how all translations are translations over time (time of translation versus original time written) flare into the iris. The author adapts the text to fit their particular set of agendas (Pound: attacking usury, Paul Blackburn: fixation on sound, Robert Bly: to set meaning to one parameter rather than leave meaning as a polytokenal (for a great example see Vincente Alexandre's 20 poems tr. by Bly on his 70's press)). "Why set forth the false notion that agendas are not being forwarded" is a major aspect of *Prime Sway*.

There's others if you want some more.

Be well

David Baratier

News survey reveals 70% of bankrobbers are actually customers trying to get their money back

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48. **Travis Andrew Ortiz**

Atelos / _Bad History_ by Barrett Watten

Sun 3 May 1998

Bad History
by Barrett Watten

Atelos is pleased to announce the publication of _Bad History_ by Barrett Watten.

About the book: Postmodern American poetry can also be described as post Vietnam War poetry, and with _Bad History_, Barrett Watten has written a prose poem epic of the postmodern period. Begun on May 1, 1992 to mark the first anniversary of the Gulf War, but reflecting on that engagement as an extension of the Vietnam War, the book is addressed to a diverse array of events that mark the long era of that latter war. So the title section of _Bad History_ begins, "A bad event happened to me, but its having occurred became even more complicated in my thinking about it.... Take the War, for example; I no longer know for certain which war is meant.... It is always 'the era between two wars.' So there was a very long war before a period of time in which that war had just been over for a very long time--even though it took its place as immediately preceding that time. Then a very short war called that very long time into question--because suddenly time became something that had happened to me." Barrett Watten's powerful memoir of events of our time is a book about the making of history; he reminds us that history doesn't take place in vacancy; it happens to us.

About the author: Born in 1948, Barrett Watten came into prominence in the early 70s with publication of his first book (_Opera--Works_) and the founding of his highly influential magazine _This_ and This Press. _Opera--Works_, along with a number of other previously published works, is included in his recently published major collection, *Frame* (1971-1990), published by Sun & Moon Press. In addition to _Bad History_, Watten is the author of two other long poems, _Progress_ and _Under Erasure_, and a co-author of _Leningrad: American Writers in the Soviet Union_. A collection of essays on modern and contemporary poetics, _Total Syntax_, was published in 1984. He is the co-editor of _Poetics Journal_, and he teaches modernism and cultural studies at Wayne State University in Detroit.

About the project: Atelos was founded in 1995 as a project of Hip's Road. It is devoted to publishing, under the sign of poetry, writing which challenges the conventional definitions of poetry, since such definitions have tended to isolate poetry from intellectual life, arrest its development, and curtail its impact. All the works published as part of the Atelos project are commissioned specifically for it, and each is involved in some way with crossing traditional genre

boundaries, including, for example, those that would separate theory from practice, poetry from prose, essay from drama, the visual image from the verbal, the literary from the non-literary, and so forth. The Atelos project when complete will consist of 50 volumes; Bad History is volume 2. The project directors and editors are Lyn Hejinian and Travis Ortiz; the director for production and design is Ree Hall.

Ordering information: _Bad History_ may be ordered from Small Press Distribution, 1341 Seventh Street, Berkeley, CA 94710-1403; phone [REDACTED] or toll-free [REDACTED]; e-mail: [REDACTED]

Contact: Lyn Hejinian

Title: Bad History

Travis Ortiz

Author: Barrett Watten

fax: [REDACTED]

Price: \$12.95

e-mail: [REDACTED]

Pages: 168

Atelos

PO Box 5814

ISBN: 1-891190-02-4

Berkeley, CA 94705-0814

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49. **Henry Gould**

Re: Understanding and Evaluating Poems

Sun 3 May 1998

On Sun, 3 May 1998 15:05:17 EDT Michael McColl said:

>With experimental poems comes an interesting situation or problem
>with regards to evaluation. When there is no paraphrasable content,
>then at least one very widespread and traditional way to evaluate
>a poem is no longer possible, at least in the same way--that is
>to discern how sound and sense are in harmony or meaningful dissonance.
>It seems to me that the criteria for judging what's good and not so
>good must change when the experiment involves a conscious departure
>from paraphrasable content. Do such criteria exist?

Aren't the ancient categories of the "beautiful" vs. the "sublime" about such "departures from paraphrase"? The sublime - a conscious invocation of the awful, the terrible, the awe-inspiring - the OBSCURE, in other words, as opposed to the beautiful/harmonious. But the obscure is always contained within a meaningful narrative - or threatening (dramatically) to break out of containment.

This exciting "threat" is encapsulated in the poetry that strikes us the hardest - the most powerful because so beyond paraphrase. And yet the power is not in the jettisoning of meaning but in the gradual ascent of meaning toward - what? - revelation? Which can take not only the form of some suprarational image,

but also the passionate condensation of the aphorism or the proverb - reason, totally engaged.

Every poem should induce a paraphrase which is admittedly and utterly inadequate to its original. That's the "logical content" - only one aspect, but a necessary one. Even a poem which is only talking to itself is still having a conversation - and that's what the "logic" of it gets across.

And there must be a larger and deeper human conversation of which poems are a formal expression and ornament. A conversation which looks through reputations and prestige (cf. whatever poetry bk reviews are in this week's NY Times Bk Rev etc.) and reads in the light of the poetry of poetry of the world of poetry of poetry... not in order to condemn or pufferize but simply to read carefully, critically, humanly... - henry Gould

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50. **Joel Felix**
Bellamy Reading in Chicago

Sun 3 May 1998

For those around Chicago, Dodie Bellamy will be reading from "The Letters of Mina Harker" on Tuesday, May 5th, at 7:00 pm in an informal setting, ok my apartment, 1136 N. Milwaukee 2R Chicago. It's a great chance to meet Madame B. Please email me backchannel to confirm your seat. Egos checked at the door.

Joel Felix

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51. **Samuel R. Truitt**
ANAMORPHOSIS EISENHOWER

Sun 3 May 1998

PUBLICATION ANNOUNCEMENT

May 1, 1998

ANAMORPHOSIS EISENHOWER

by Sam Truitt

Lost Roads Publishers

CD Wright and Forrest Gander, editors

71 pages

\$12.00

ISBN: 0-918786-48-7

Available thru Small Press Distribution

Tele: [REDACTED]

Fax: [REDACTED]

eMail: [REDACTED]

Of ANAMORPHOSIS EISENHOWER:

"In the haunted fractal mirrow of Sam Truitt's sweeping and richly detailed ANAMORPHOSIS EISENHOWER, Ike melts into shape (supreme head allied poets elegiac). Here the rhythms arrive on "airborne chariots of JIVE," viz: "It is not too late to trade in our lives / For a brand new set of steak knives." Go ahead: read this book."

--Charles Bernstein

"Sam Truitt gives "mouth to outh resuscitation" to the ancient quest poem as he writes "to voyage is to become / Hysterical." In the maximal narrative loop of this book, Marilyn Monroe's skirt is perpetually going "whoosh" in an Eistenian vacuum where "the displacement of the figure is the form."

--Peter Gizzi

"If modernism wanted to conclude in minimalist perfections, the new age might be said to begin with a shattered crystals shards. Sam Truitt has assembled here a gorgeous trembling maximalism invested with erudition, tenderness, with a shimmering full deck, wild card and all: "Bright rapture in this dead town bounds like a rose / Among the broken bottles of a freight yard."

--Ann Lauterbach

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52. **Aviva99999**

Re: The Meaning of Meaning

Sun 3 May 1998

In a message dated 98-05-02 12:51:50 EDT, you write:

*emotional and/or
visceral responses are not only useful, they're necessary.*

there's so much =experimental= work, however, that seems to deaden, rather than enliven, visceral and/or emotional response. to have some kind of kinesthetic experience of the poem...or spirit-engaging experience of the poem...it seems necessary to offer the reader some stimulation in these areas. much of the =experimental= poetry i've read seems to dwell in a cerebral domain, which seems to me a different =landscape= than the visceral/emotional domains. of course, there are always exceptions; certainly, a cerebral/intellectual experience can ultimately generate a visceral/emotional experience...but not usually, as far as my own experience goes. making such distinctions between mind, body and spirit is risky and perhaps folly. however,

there's so much work out there that just leaves me passionless, intellectually numbed, and aesthetically bored. it seems to happen when the work is so incredibly =private= that i can't find any place in it to grab on to, or become engaged. it's not that i require total =absorption= in the work...i don't want all my responses packaged up for me, as if i were buying a =poem patty= at a fast food restaurant, but neither do i want featureless, textureless cardboard. i don't know...i haven't thought this through well enough to make myself clear, but i'm frankly very frustrated with poetry that makes zero effort to engage anyone but the writer.

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53. **Agent Sunshine, aka Eric Gleason**

Re: The Meaning of Meaning

Sun 3 May 1998

sometimes when i try to type workers it comes out "wordkers".

eryque

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54. **Thomas Bell**

Re: The Meaning of Meaning

Mon 4 May 1998

I felt the same for a long time until it 'hit' me that there was something in some that didn't 'deaden' a visceral and/or emotional response but rather brought (invited) the response directly without needing to go through my language (intellectual) channel. These some became many and then BANG ZOWIE. It's there if you look or feel and don't talk about same.
tom bell

*At 10:54 PM 5/3/98 EDT, Aviva99999 wrote:
In a message dated 98-05-02 12:51:50 EDT, you write:*

*emotional and/or
visceral responses are not only useful, they're necessary.*

there's so much =experimental= work, however, that seems to deaden, rather than enliven, visceral and/or emotional response. to have some kind of kinesthetic experience of the poem...or spirit-engaging experience of the poem...it seems necessary to offer the reader some stimulation in these areas. much of the =experimental= poetry i've read seems to dwell in a cerebral domain, which seems to me a different =landscape= than the visceral/emotional domains. of course, there are always exceptions; certainly, a cerebral/intellectual experience can ultimately generate a visceral/emotional

experience...but not usually, as far as my own experience goes. making such distinctions between mind, body and spirit is risky and perhaps folly. however, there's so much work out there that just leaves me passionless, intellectually numbed, and aesthetically bored. it seems to happen when the work is so incredibly =private= that i can't find any place in it to grab on to, or become engaged. it's not that i require total =absorption= in the work...i don't want all my responses packaged up for me, as if i were buying a =poem patty= at a fast food restaurant, but neither do i want featureless, textureless cardboard. i don't know...i haven't thought this through well enough to make myself clear, but i'm frankly very frustrated with poetry that makes zero effort to engage anyone but the writer.

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55. **Miekal And**
Re: release the strings

Mon 4 May 1998

this is a complete aside

Ive been on this list over a year & I cannot accept the fact that jordan & henry g are actually 2 different people. I know someday I will have to accept the fact, but just thot I wanted to announce what strange things email does to one's mind.

harry kemp

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56. **Jordan Davis**
release the strings

Mon 4 May 1998

A lot of dissonance about the paraphrasable part of poetry shuttling around already -- so -- to go along with Charles A, no, it's probably not a beautiful idea to rank poems as you read (viz. The Top 500 Poems from Columbia U Press -- which to be fair to Edith Hazen and what's his last name Nick the new Granger's guy is only an index of the most frequently anthologized poems). But Charles, I don't understand why compare Hardy favorably to Pound in order to dismiss Hardy.

There's a footnote in *_Works & Days_*, Bill Luoma's new book, in which he offers a reasonable working model for piecing out the meaning of non-syntactical work. By meaning I'm jogging alongside Dave baratier (I think) who seemed to be suggesting that the experience of the poem (the paths of meanings? not

merely prose straightahead meaning delivery units but the sound, and now ((print & after)) the visual, and of course the affect -- Aviva sometimes it can be difficult to locate the affect of non-syntactical work and sometimes it isn't there but take heart! sometimes it is viz. Tender Buttons, Solution Passage, When the Sun Tries to Go on, etc) the experience of the poem is the thing. Ha. Well not the thing but what you want the iodine or other marker to indicate. Is this poem really necessary? Not that anyone needs to think they're in a rationed situation, equities up 20% last year and the year before etc. Coff. Coff.

All right, to come back to a coherent prose style for just a few lines. Henry noted that the sublime was an attempt to escape the paraphrasable. Yes, but in this transcendental scheme, all one would need to paraphrase the sublime is a marker, say, an asymptote. The speaker of the poem, having surveyed the activity in the hillsides and on the avenues, ascends into a swoon i.e. collapses. Ron Padgett's poem A Man Saw A Ball of Gold: "Aye, it was a ball of gold" is it seems to me a parody of this idea that the sublime cannot be described or written, or at least a parody of conventional ideas of the sublime. So, to try to say something without invoking the Whitman Self-Contradiction Clause, it sounds as though the issue at hand for the evaluators of poetry is how to acknowledge the various ways a poem (a work?) can be beautiful (give the reader a feeling?) without putting too much emphasis on anything that would lead people to assume that the thing to do to give people feelings (be beautiful?) is to imitate the going style.

Of course we all know that jose feliciano is not Homer and feelings have already been replaced on the oldies stations by theories. Feelings you could substitute something else maybe, ideas? So long, objective correlative! Take care, melopoeia! Arrivaderci, projective verse. No ideas in things either.

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57. **henry**

Re: release the strings

Mon 4 May 1998

Jonathan Skinner's fascinating entry on "grace" in Transcendental Friend speaks to some of these "critical" issues (ie. what makes a poem beautiful, how do poems win us over without becoming purely intelligible, "semantic objects" and all that). Aviva is right too that it has something to do with poetry being more than some kind of disembodied verbal solitaire. - Henry G.

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58. **Mark Prejsnar**

Re: Stevens and surrealism

Mon 4 May 1998

always imagined machine guns figuring in that image, myself.

Esthetique du Mal was always my fav long Stevens. I was delighted one day to look in the execrable H. Vendler's book on Stevens (largely on his long things, I believe) and discover that she hates it, and didn't give it any space; a dismissive sentence or two. (That's my memory, anyway) It's nice to have one's judgments confirmed!

On Fri, 1 May 1998 [REDACTED] wrote:

My favorite "surrealist" moment in Stevens occurs in "Esthetique du Mal": don't have the poem handy now, but the passage goes something like, "the paratroopers fall, and as they fall they mow the lawn" etc..

I wonder if Stevens would have written the line if he had known of riding tractor mowers...hmm.

Gary R.

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59. **Henry**

Re: release the strings

Mon 4 May 1998

On Mon, 4 May 1998 08:15:52 +0000 Miekal And said:

>this is a complete aside

>

>

>Ive been on this list over a year & I cannot accept the fact that jordan

>& henry g are actually 2 different people. I know someday I will have

>to accept the fact, but just that I wanted to announce what strange

>things email does to one's mind.

>

>harry kemp

Don't worry, Harry - it's not you. Whenever Jordan writes in I try to respond in the same style. & whenever I write in Jordan tries to respond as himself. So there are really 2 Jordans, the original and the copy. This is also the origin of the subplot, for all you Shakespeareans out there. Put that in your sub-poetics & quibble! - Harry G.

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60. **Mark Prejsnar**

Re: what's difficult

Mon 4 May 1998

As always, I have to retrieve the stuff from my home, which is not where I have internet access; this is a pain in the neck

Essentially it is *just one sentence* , Mark, at the beginng of one of your contributions.

You pretty much echo what Martin has been saying. I think you do it just to establish continuity and flow; and yes I'm pretty well aware that the basic burden of your replies throughout the colloquium are *in opposition* to what Martin several times says, about poets wanting to be obscure. That's why that one sentence jolts a bit. No doubt I misread it, and didn't make enuff allowences for context. But that's how I remember it, and I'll be able to respond to you tomorrow, when it's possible to have the thing in hand.

Let me repeat that your contributions to the exchange are superb and I hope people do look at it.

It's pretty much Martin who is pushing this quaint idea; I just felt I shouldn't let you off the hook! given that I believed that in one sentence you sort of agreed with his statements. We'll see if I was reading carelessly. Probably.

I think the sentence I had in mind is indeed the one you allude to. It seemed to me that (in the context of Martin's comments) saying that "A-G" poets have absorbed and carry with 'em a "pretension" that their work is obscure...well, it sounded like what you meant was, that they imagine (and want) their work to be obscure. Now I'm getting a little closer to what's going on....I believe that one sentence of yours could be clearer, and that that's what we're both struggling over.

I suspect I made a dumb gaff, and should have just tarred S-P M. with that brush...(albeit i think your sentence isn't clear--but that could well be my stumbling, alone; not all that unusual!)

(signed)

inept in @lanta...

On Fri, 1 May 1998, Mark Wallace wrote:

Hey Mark Presjnar:

Thanks for your comments about the dialogue piece Jeff Hansen, Stephen-Paul Martin, and I wrote for Central Park magazine on the subject of "difficulty" in avant garde poetry, and for your comments about my other work.

I do have to say, though, that when you suggest that I "expand on" Stephen-Paul Martin's point about the inherent "difficulty" of much contemporary writing, it seems odd that you would say that about that piece, because the point that you say in your post that I am making is precisely the OPPOSITE of the point I was making there. Which is curious, I suppose, given the subject of "difficulty" that is as stake here.

In that essay, I disagree with Stephen-Paul Martin's assertion that "difficulty" is one of the main goals of the texts we are writing about, and writing--I say that the idea that such work is "difficult" is one of the pieces of cultural baggage that writers of avant garde work have absorbed all too often--one of our main "pretensions," I believe may be the word I use. Sorry to quote myself here, but I believe I say also that, "There is nothing inherently difficult about such works; there is just something unfamiliar." I go on to say that I believe that most people can learn to understand "avant garde" poetry with about several hours (say, 3) of training, which is much less training, of course, than they have received in how to read newspapers and novels.

Given all this, I'm not sure how you could have read me to be saying that what I am interested in in avant garde work is its inherent difficulty, and so would be curious to know why you think that's what I was saying.

But perhaps I am misunderstanding you in what seems to me your misunderstanding of me.

It's amazing that what's so simple can often be so difficult.

Mark Wallace

GWU:
<http://gwis2.circ.gwu.edu/~mdw>

EPC:
<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/wallace>

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61. **Mark Prejsnar**

a poem should not mean but bleed

Mon 4 May 1998

"It is not the business of poetry to be anything." Being primarily activity, poetry roils. It should act mostly through dynamism.. It uses words (phonemes, etc.) to hammer away at physical reality, to chip and damage it into history. **It should have no paraphraseable content** Poetry doesn't like you, why should it care what you think about it? (Only when it is so bad it's practically ceased to exist, can it be paraphrased) The ear is it's medium, the ear and the contingent facts of history. "The function of poetry is to waste excess energy."

(signed)

indeterminate in @lanta

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62. **Judy Roitman**

Re: Understanding and Evaluating Poems

Mon 4 May 1998

Nice piece by Charles Rosen in current NYRB on knee-jerk negative reactions to avant-garde music which deals with many of the issues in this thread, including the unfounded calumny that no-one wants to have anything to do with that stuff.

Uses word "understanding" throughout. In discussion of music, not poetry, so explication (except in programmatic music -- here is where the white swan dies, here is where the Titanic sinks) not relevant. "Understanding" must be understood more broadly.

----- Judy Roitman
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas |
memory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days."
[redacted] | fax: [redacted] | Larry Eigner,
1927-1996 ----- Note new area
code -----
http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/

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63. **Jordan Davis**

at the risk of offending

Mon 4 May 1998

Mark,

Roil on. I think we must have different things in mind by paraphrase.

Jordan

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64. **Michael Kelleher**
alyric mailer 5

Mon 4 May 1998

Poets and Friends,

alyric mailer 5

you follow

by

Heather Fuller

now up at

<http://writing.upenn.edu/AandL/english/pubs/spc/alyricmailer/alyric.htm>

Heather Fuller's book *_perhaps this is a rescue fantasy_* was published last year by Edge Books. She lives in Washington D.C., where she works at The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty.

Upcoming issues to feature Carrie Tocci, Stephen Mounkhal, Heather Ramsdell, Ben Friedlander and more.

Enjoy.

Mike

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65. **Robert Archambeau**
Re: Bellamy Reading in Chicago

Mon 4 May 1998

Joel,

Is there room for one more at the "informal setting"?

Bob

--

Robert Archambeau

Department of English

Lake Forest College

Lake Forest, IL 60045

<http://www.lfc.edu/~archamb/>

" on the end
of each decision stands a heretic"
--Michael Barrett

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66. **Judy Roitman**
Re: The Meaning of Meaning
Mon 4 May 1998

In a message dated 98-05-02 12:51:50 EDT, you write:

*emotional and/or
visceral responses are not only useful, they're necessary.*

*there's so much =experimental= work, however, that seems to deaden, rather
than enliven, visceral and/or emotional response.*

And a lot of other work too.

I cannot read, say, Susan Howe without feeling it in my bones. But I cannot
feel, say, any poet laureate in my bones at all.

----- Judy Roitman
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas |
memory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days."
[REDACTED] | fax: [REDACTED] | Larry Eigner,
1927-1996 ----- Note new area
code -----
http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/

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67. **Mark Wallace**
what's difficult--the offending sentence
Mon 4 May 1998

Mark:

Thanks for your response--it does clarify things somewhat. No need to
apologize for any kind of misreading--that's the way things on this list go, is it
not?

Here is the offending sentence, in context, from my piece with Stephen-
Paul Martin and Jeff Hansen:

"It seems to me that one of the biggest and most commonly shared
pretensions of avant garde writers is that our work is difficult and/or

unreadable. But I think also that one of the biggest presumptions of more mainstream writers (journalists, for instance) is that their work is easy to understand. My own experience leads me to believe that many of the techniques necessary to understand experimental literature can be taught, with about three hours of close attention, to reasonably intelligent college students who show any willingness to engage with such literature. Of course, if you're not willing to give three hours of your whole life to try to understand something, then your inability (or, let's be honest, unwillingness) to understand it is your own fault, not mine."

The first thing to say is that your post DID imply that the first sentence formed the basic argument of my whole piece--no need to worry that one anymore though, I take it as behind us. The second issue (and I suppose it's important, to you and me anyway), is how to read the first sentence, which I take it is what you took exception to.

I think, from the vantage point of several years (we wrote the piece in 1994), that sentence seems to me something of an overstatement, although yes, it was written mainly as a way of finding a transition between Stephen-Paul's section and my own. From my present vantage point, I guess I have no proof how broad any assumption of "difficulty" is across the avant garde--but I CAN give you reasons why it seemed to me so at the time.

Before I do that, I do also want to say that "difficulty" and "obscurity" and "unreadability" do NOT seem to me interchangeable words. I'm not against difficulty--I'm not even sure I'm against obscurity--but I think I would stress that some types of "difficulty" in reading are not such a bad thing, since a "difficult" text may in some cases simply mean a text that needs close and complex attention, and I can't see any problem with that. "Obscurity" I guess I would see as an attempt to make something hard to understand simply in order to make it hard to understand, rather than because the problems it raises are complex. That doesn't seem a good thing to me, although I suppose I can imagine an occasion when it might. "Unreadable" seems to me another term--I take it usually as a text in which some part of the piece can't be read (because the letters are covered up, say) as transparent conveyors of meaning, and so another way of "reading" (often a way of visually reading) becomes necessary.

What Stephen-Paul speaks of is the pride that some individuals do take in being able to read that which others claim they cannot read--and take that as a point of pride too easily. He uses his graduate school experience as an example, and talks about people who try to prove that they are smart by proving that they can read "difficult" books. In my experience, such a thing did happen all the time. Although I greatly enjoyed much of my experience as a graduate student at UBuffalo, pretensions about such matters were entirely common--

that may not have been true in your experience. There is, in graduate school (and outside?) a fairly pervasive problem of jockeying for position on the subject of how others perceive one's intelligence.

There is, I think, too easy a leap from his claims about graduate school to his claims about avant garde poets more generally, and I think, because I was trying to make other points at the time, I didn't perhaps deal with that issue in the detail it may have deserved. At the same time, though, I do NOT think that it's an easy given that the community of "avant garde" poets all have a conception of their work as "easy to read," although some perhaps do. I think the problem continues to exist as a problem--in a world in which claims about our elitism are thrown back at us constantly, there is still a need to watch out that we don't succumb too easily in believing in our own "difficulty" in the way that someone like Eliot, for instance, did. Which is, I take it, one of the points Stephen-Paul is trying to make.

So I would agree with you that my first sentence in that dialogue contains an assumption it can't quite prove. That is, it can't prove how actually widespread the problem that Stephen-Paul raises--have we too easily accepted a certain notion about difficulty?--and thankfully you for one have not accepted such an assumption, and many others have not as well. But I still think that sentence is right to the extent that I do feel that the "pretension" it mentions does exist, and is one that needs to be argued against, as opposed to being seen as a given. And the reason I felt I needed to respond to your post in the first place was because the rest of my piece does try to undermine the whole concept of "difficulty," but your post did not suggest that I had done so.

Thanks for giving me this chance to elaborate--

Mark Wallace

```
/-----\ |
||      ||      ||      GWU:
||      http://gwis2.circ.gwu.edu/~mdw      ||      EPC:
||      http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/wallace      ||
```

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68. **Steven Clay**

Artists Books: A Critical Survey of the Literature

Mon 4 May 1998

<smaller>Announcing the publication of:

Artists Books: A Critical Survey of the Literature by Stefan Klima

The first and only published guide to writings on artists books this book contains five lucid essays and a carefully researched, thorough bibliography. An important reference tool for anyone interested in artists books.

Stefan Klima's text is an invaluable resource for anyone wishing to explore the development of critical debates on artists books. Beginning with documentation from the late 1960s Klima carefully charts the discussion of several central issues: the identity of artists books, their disputed origins, and their current status. His summary of debates is handled with the even-handedness of an outsider; he maps the sometimes fractious and frequently contentious dialogues among interested parties with scrupulous care. His bibliography is a thoroughly useful guide to the critical and historical texts. It has the advantage of being well focused on the topic and thus serves as an essential point of departure for any student, librarian, critic, or collector interested in pursuing the literature on artists books. A welcome addition to a steadily growing body of works in the field.

*Johanna Drucker.

Johanna Drucker is an artist, scholar and writer. She is the author of *The Century of Artists Books*, *The Alphabetic Labyrinth* and *The Visible Word* among many other books. She is an associate Professor at Yale University.

Stefan Klima was born in Oldham, England. He has a degree in art and a Ph.D in American Music. Currently Head of Fine and Performing Arts at the Beverly Hills Public Library Stefan Klima has been an observer of artists books since 1985. This is his first book.

\$17.95 (+ \$3 shipping, domestic + sales tax, NY only)

110 pages, paperback original

ISBN 1-887123-18-0

Publication date: May 10, 1998

Published by:

Granary Books

568 Broadway #403

New York City 10012



</smaller>

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69. **Mark Nowak**

Arthur Sze

Mon 4 May 1998

The inaugural reading in a series sponsored by *_Rain Taxi_* was held at the Weinstein Gallery on West 46th St. in Minneapolis last night to a packed house of over 50 people. Sze began by reading the poem "Streamers" from his last collection, *_Archipelago_* (Copper Canyon Press), then read two new sequences from his forthcoming (in the next few weeks, he told me) book, *_The Redshifting Web_* (which features new and selected poems from Sze, also from Copper Canyon). The crowd was energized, Sze read stunningly, with a huge Chuck Close self-portrait behind him (the gallery had up an entire show of Close self-portraits, maybe a dozen works in all--an amazing gem for such a small gallery in the upper midwest!). Summit brewery provided free post-event ales. A nice way to spend the Sunday night following the In the Heart of the Beast Puppet & Mask Theater's 24th annual parade & festival through the streets of Minneapolis.

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70. **groberts**

Padgett's sub lime pie

Mon 4 May 1998

Thanks Jordan for mentioning Ron Padgett in this context. I would say that his collection "The Big Something" is making, as the book's title suggests, a tart treat out of these topics of the sublime, meaning, understanding. See for another example, the poem "Poem":

When I am dead and gone
they will say of me,
"We never could figure out
what he was talking about,
but it was clear that he
understood very well
that modernism is a branch
that was cut off decades ago."

This parody of interpretation feeds into Lyotard's discussion of the sublime in his essay on "What is postmodernism?" The end of Padgett's "Poem" is a funny play on metaphor's of height and depth that rhetorical discussions of the sublime rely heavily on.

Gary R.

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71. **Carolyn Guertin**

First Arizona, now Texas...

Mon 4 May 1998

Following on the query about Arizona, I am planning a research trip to Texas. Could anyone out there answer some questions and/or provide some info about Austin? Please backchannel.

Thanks,
Carolyn

Carolyn Guertin, Department
of English, University of Alberta E-Mail: [REDACTED]; Tel/FAX: [REDACTED] Website:
<<http://www.ualberta.ca/~cguertin/Guertin.htm>>

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72. **ScoutEW**

Re: First Arizona, now Arizona.

Mon 4 May 1998

Jordan really is two people, no three....may be someday he will give me an answer about thursday! but really, I need some info on Arizona, because I may be moving there any of you nice arizonians please backchaNNEL me about what it is like in Tucson and or Phoenix, I trust you people and not the tourbooks!! I need rent prices, job market info, roadrunner sightings

o yes, and thank you all for contributions for "Tool a Magazine"

keep them coming

erik sweet

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73. **Keston Sutherland**

Re: The Meaning of Meaning

Mon 4 May 1998

| *cannot feel, say, any poet laureate in my bones at all.*

I agree with what your saying says, but also said is something which we can disagree with if remembering that it wasn't -always- this way, Dryden was laureate, as was Southey, they did give it to heroes a few times upon a time, nowadays however what a misfortune

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74. **Mark Prejsnar**

fascination of what's difficult, er, obscure, er

Mon 4 May 1998

Mark W.--

Thanx for your long and precise response. I don't think there's much to add; you have indeed clarified almost everything I/we brought up about the Central Park piece (...making some very helpful further theoretical points in the process). My only quibble (and it *is* very small) is with your sentence:

"I do NOT think that it's an easy given that the community of "avant garde" poets all have a conception of their work as "easy to read," although some perhaps do."

..I don't think most of us have a conception of our work as "easy to read," either! But the difficulties are simply those of encountering any interesting practice...(or they're on the same scale, rather): it isn't "easy" to encounter a late Beethoven quartet for the first time; for some people it isn't easy (on a number of levels) to encounter a Public Enemy record for the first! or a Munch painting or a Noh drama or...

This I take it is partly what you're getting at by differentiating the terms difficult, obscure etc. Ain't nothin' wrong (necessarily) with "not being easy." (No bawdy quips, please)

Thanx for the great exchange...

fascinated in atlantis.....

M.

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75. **David Israel**

Fiona Templeton

Mon 4 May 1998

John Cayley asks for Fiona Templeton's e-address. There is none such extant -- as Fiona mentioned abt. a week ago, circa her reading in DC; -- as to her immediate whereabouts, she's evidently ensconsed off in some rural Virginia (?) college, in some manner of residency . . . hopefully somebody else can give a finer (US postal) focus . . .

d.i.

///

Date: Sun, 3 May 1998 11:26:38 -0800
From: John Cayley <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Current (e)address for Fiona Templeton

Can anyone give me the current address, ideally an email address, but snail also good, for Fiona. Thanks in anticipation. John

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76. **henry g**

Re: Understanding and Evaluating Poems

Mon 4 May 1998

On Mon, 4 May 1998 14:45:36 -0500 Taylor Brady said:

>

>This seems to have some bearing on the issues of difficulty and understanding
>which prompted this thread, as what's at stake in various forms in these
>composers' works is an understanding of difficulty, complexity, etc. --
>generally

>held to be measures of what's worthwhile in the experience of art -- which has
>less to do with the listener's having acquired the requisite formal,
>musicological training needed to parse or paraphrase a multiply-articulated,
>historically-referential series of forms, and has more to do with a willingness
>to deal with that aspect of the musical situation which is less susceptible to
>paraphrase. For example, one of Tony Conrad's or Phill Niblock's long-
duration

>pieces gives up its secret fairly quickly: within the first two or three
>seconds,

>you start to hear those difference tones and beats, and you "get it." The
>question at that point is what one does with the remaining 45 minutes or so.
>Such

>work thus seems to propose a value for in-time experience which tends to be
>correspondingly absent in much late serialism.

>

>What does this have to do with poetry? How far can one push the
analogybetween

>the avant-gardes of different arts? I'm not really sure there's an answer to
>such

>questions, but as a means of pointing out the multiple degrees of difference
>which might be at stake here -- "there's difficulty and then there's
>difficulty"

>-- the musical situation as (mis)addressed in Rosen's article seemed an
>interesting aside.

This all seems very relevant. But the willingness to be open to difficulty - can it be separated from the "training" of the ear to hear it? The one leads to the other and vice versa.

Isn't there a border between music and poetry which is not a border? I mean regarding the "music of ideas" in poetry and "musical ideas". Poetry often uses the semantic element (the various "messages") as a foil for a musical development which has a perhaps inexpressible (un-paraphraseable) or even different meaning.

Is there a parallel between the "workmanlike" poem (in the terms of J. Skinner's current "T. Friend" definition, carefully-put-together but lacking "grace") and the making of purely conceptual art - I mean difficulty for its own sake, tours-de-force, exercises, art-as-intellectual game... the one (workmanlike) displays craft without grace; the other displays superlative craft (virtuosity) without grace. What is this mysterious grace that links the difficult and the beautiful, the simple and the complex, the heart and the mind? - Henry Gould

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77. **Taylor Brady**

Re: Understanding and Evaluating Poems

Mon 4 May 1998

Interesting, though, that Rosen's construction of the avant-garde seems to stall out somewhere in the 1960's: the grand-dads of Uptown serialism -- Babbitt, Carter, et al. Interesting because one might add to the conflict he details -- i.e., between the composer-advocates of musical modernism and the administrators and taste-makers who insist on a conservative understanding of the "classical" repertoire -- an account of the very real conflicts between, variously, uptown and downtown new music scenes, serialism and minimalism, "pure" Euro-derived "art music" and jazz- and pop-influenced compositions. While I'd join Rosen in his strenuous disagreement with the Lloyd Webber brother's contention that a small handful of modernist "dictators" are ruining music for the rest of us folks, I would point out that until very recently, in terms of access to educational institutions, grants, commissions, etc., these late modernists have "kept out," relatively speaking, the work of our various Meredith Monks, Pauline Oliveroses, Anthony Braxtons, Tony Conrads, etc.

This seems to have some bearing on the issues of difficulty and understanding which prompted this thread, as what's at stake in various forms in these composers' works is an understanding of difficulty, complexity, etc. -- generally held to be measures of what's worthwhile in the experience of art -- which has less to do with the listener's having acquired the requisite formal, musicological training needed to parse or paraphrase a multiply-articulated, historically-

referential series of forms, and has more to do with a willingness to deal with that aspect of the musical situation which is less susceptible to paraphrase. For example, one of Tony Conrad's or Phill Niblock's long-duration pieces gives up its secret fairly quickly: within the first two or three seconds, you start to hear those difference tones and beats, and you "get it." The question at that point is what one does with the remaining 45 minutes or so. Such work thus seems to propose a value for in-time experience which tends to be correspondingly absent in much late serialism.

What does this have to do with poetry? How far can one push the analogy between the avant-gardes of different arts? I'm not really sure there's an answer to such questions, but as a means of pointing out the multiple degrees of difference which might be at stake here -- "there's difficulty and then there's difficulty" -- the musical situation as (mis)addressed in Rosen's article seemed an interesting aside.

-- Taylor Brady

editor, Cartograffiti

<http://writing.upenn.edu/AandL/english/pubs/spc/cartograffiti>

(a publication of the Small Press Collective)

<http://writing.upenn.edu/AandL/english/pubs/spc>

Judy Roitman wrote:

Nice piece by Charles Rosen in current NYRB on knee-jerk negative reactions to avant-garde music which deals with many of the issues in this thread, including the unfounded calumny that no-one wants to have anything to do with that stuff.

Uses word "understanding" throughout. In discussion of music, not poetry, so explication (except in programmatic music -- here is where the white swan dies, here is where the Titanic sinks) not relevant. "Understanding" must be understood more broadly.

Judy Roitman | "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers!"
Math, University of Kansas | memory fails
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[redacted] |
fax: [redacted] | Larry Eigner, 1927-1996

Note new area code

<http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/>

<HTML> <BODY TEXT="#000000" BGCOLOR="#FFFFFF" LINK="#003399" VLINK="#006600" ALINK="#FF0000"> Interesting, though, that Rosen's construction of the avant-garde seems to stall out somewhere in the 1960's: the grand-dads of Uptown serialism -- Babbitt, Carter, et al. Interesting because one might add to the conflict he details -- i.e., between the composer-advocates of musical modernism and the administrators and taste-makers who insist on a conservative understanding of the "classical" repertoire -- an account of the very real conflicts between, variously, uptown and downtown new music scenes, serialism and minimalism, "pure" Euro-derived "art music" and jazz- and pop-influenced compositions. While I'd join Rosen in his strenuous disagreement with the Lloyd Webber brother's contention that a small handful of modernist "dictators" are ruining music for the rest of us folks, I would point out that until very recently, in terms of access to educational institutions, grants, commissions, etc., these late modernists have "kept out," relatively speaking, the work of our various Meredith Monks, Pauline Oliveroses, Anthony Braxtons, Tony Conrads, etc.

<P>This seems to have some bearing on the issues of difficulty and understanding which prompted this thread, as what's at stake in various forms in these composers' works is an understanding of difficulty, complexity, etc. -- generally held to be measures of what's worthwhile in the experience of art -- which has less to do with the listener's having acquired the requisite formal, musicological training needed to parse or paraphrase a multiply-articulated, historically-referential series of forms, and has more to do with a willingness to deal with that aspect of the musical situation which is less susceptible to paraphrase. For example, one of Tony Conrad's or Phill Niblock's long-duration pieces gives up its secret fairly quickly: within the first two or three seconds, you start to hear those difference tones and beats, and you "get it." The question at that point is what one does with the remaining 45 minutes or so. Such work thus seems to propose a value for in-time experience which tends to be correspondingly absent in much late serialism.

<P>What does this have to do with poetry? How far can one push the analogy between the avant-gardes of different arts? I'm not really sure there's an answer to such questions, but as a means of pointing out the multiple degrees of difference which might be at stake here -- "there's difficulty and then there's difficulty" -- the musical situation as (mis)addressed in Rosen's article seemed an interesting aside.

<P>-- Taylor Brady

editor, <I>Cartograffiti</I>

 http://writing.upenn.edu/AandL/english/pubs/spc/cartograffiti

[illegible]

-----EB7B99CF509817034A3B9330--

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78. **MAYHEW**
(mis)understanding poetry

Mon 4 May 1998

Different senses of misunderstanding come into play, especially when "paraphrasable content" is the issue. I understand Creeley or Scalapino pretty well; there's no problem here, though a paraphrase of "that they were at the beach" would be pretty much beside the point. When people says they don't understand such writing it means they don't understand the *poetics*. The paraphrase wouldn't help them much.

Other kinds of difficulty: references one needs a detailed commentary to explain. There is an essay by Davenport on Olson--all these people were recommending "The Kingfishers" to him, but it turned out noone knew what any of the reference were to. Noone knew who "Fernand" was.

Poems that you have to interpret the hell out of; that demand a sort of hermeneutical approach, because of the density of the language. This is a third category--Mallarme, Celan...

Jonathan Mayhew



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79. **RaeA100900**
Tony Lopez

Mon 4 May 1998

Dear World,

I'm trying to reach Tony Lopez sometime this week. Does anyone have an address?

Rae Armantrout

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80. **Peter Ganick**
potes & poets press

Mon 4 May 1998

recently potes & poets was at the point of being discontinued due to lack of funding and per-

sonal initiative, but a small source of income for the press has been found and i would like to announce that the press is soliciting manuscripts for a new chapbook series. potes & poets will however no longer publish perfectbound books and will probably phase out it's a.bacus series after the year 2000. since 1984, the press has published 43 perfectbound books (including 'the art of practice: 45 contemporary poets') and 114 issues of a.bacus (to date). most of these are available through small press distribution.

the chapbooks will feature new and younger writers, and will place special emphasis on experimental texts, collaborations, and writings by women. manuscripts are being solicited at this point and should be chapbook-length, challenging the boundaries of language (in all the senses of that word) and visual format.

email me for further information at [REDACTED].
send manuscripts to: peter ganick, potes & poets press,
181 edgemont avenue, elmwood ct 06110-1005.

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81. **Keston Sutherland**

Re: Tony Lopez

Mon 4 May 1998

Hello Rae. It is: [REDACTED]

x, k

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82. **Chicago Review**

Chicago Review Update

Mon 4 May 1998

The latest issue of Chicago Review (vol. 44, no. 1) is now out. Contents include:

- Retrospective section on Chicago poet Paul Carroll, with late poems and criticism, and a memoir by Paul Hoover
- Poetry by Tom Pickard, Michael Anania, Craig Watson, and Juliana Spahr
- Interview with Robert Duncan (1976)

--Essay by Alice Notley on Iovis I & 2.

This issue can be found in bookstores, or ordered directly for \$6. Subscriptions are \$15 to Poetics List members. Please reply via e-mail or US mail to the address below.

****Forthcoming in June: Martin Corless-Smith, John Koethe, Bill Griffiths, Colin Simms, Linh Dinh, Paul Vangelisti, Catherine Wagner, Jody Gladding, Ronald Johnson, and John Taggart on George Oppen****

Our Web site will be updated soon.

Thank you.

Andrew Rathmann
Editor, Chicago Review
5801 S. Kenwood Ave.
Chicago IL 60637-1794
ph/fax [REDACTED]
e-mail [REDACTED]

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83. **Pritchett, Patrick**
Re: Letters Not About Love

Mon 4 May 1998

Friday, May 1, Rachel Levitsky and I drove down to the University of Denver to hear Lyn Hejinian show a film, give a talk, and read some poems. We also gorged ourselves on mussels and bouillabaise at a very nice French restaurant -- but that+s another story.

Present at one or both portions of the event: moderator Cole Swensen, Bin Ramke, Rikki Ducornet, Mark Irwin, Beth Nugent, Jack Collom, Jennifer Heath, Michael Friedman, Anselm Hollo, Andrew Schelling, Bobbie Hawkins, Laura Mullen, Cedar Sigo and Jeni Olin. And a raft of grad students.

The film -- "Letters Not About Love" -- is remarkable. Directed by Jacki Ochs (incidentally, sister to Hejinian+s husband Larry Ochs, who himself provided a very powerful and haunting jazz score), it concerns itself with an exchange of letters between Hejinian and Russian poet Arkadii Dragomeschenko (sic) from 1988-1993. Ochs asked the poets to shape their correspondence around a set of words -- Home, Grandmother, Neighbor, Poverty, Book, Work, Violence, Window -- which she gave them. The results form a sustained dialogue/meditation on two cultures, two idioms, and ultimately, the nature of dialogue and language itself.

As the poets+ conversation progresses, it underscores the way language both encodes against loss, in a very daily and personal way -- the loss of a sense of place, the loss of memory, of the quotidian -- and is vulnerable itself to loss, to slippage. The letter figures both as a method of communication that creates its own self-contained and ongoing continuum and a form of expression anxious about its existence, about the sense of dislocation, physical and emotional, that the act of writing letters has always sought to overcome.

Throughout, the richness of Jacki Ochs stream of visual images, combined with the music of Larry Ochs, provides a continual counterpoint, adding additional layers of "language" to the spoken words (read by the actress Lili Taylor -- Lyn said that Jacki thought her voice too "girlish" - and dialect coach Viktor Hurd).

Afterwards, some of the discussion of the film (both public and private) focused on the erotics of letter writing: on the subtle tensions that pre-inhabit the word and guide it; on the richness and power of letter-writing as a genre, a genre too often relegated to the ghettoized status of "women+s writing." Hejinian spoke about "negotiating the gulf between words and things -- not to fill it [that gulf] -- but to enter it, as a realm of possibility -- a poetics of possibility..." An old White Russian woman who first read Arkadii+s letters for her warned her that he was a demon and wanted to possess her soul. And Lyn quoted Shklovsky: "the role of art is to kill pessimism."

"Letters Not About Love" is, of course, precisely and ironically about love -- about the eros of logos. And the logos of eros. It has been screened at a number of film festivals, received at least one award, but at present lacks a distributor. Lyn remarked that exhibitors were nervous about its "lack of an ending." (Haven't they read "The Rejection of Closure"?)

In the evening, Hejinian began her reading with a selection of twelve poems from "Oxhota" -- the section based on expatriate jazz musician Steve Lacy+s list of the 12 components of the Russian soul: Betrayal, Death, Conspiracy, Truth, etc., which Lyn says got a good laugh from her Russian friends.

This was followed by new work -- an appropriately sprightly and altogether enchanting poem called "Happily," a meditation on chance, sequence and agency:

"Is happiness the name for our involuntary complicity with chance?"

She closed the evening with a long portion from "A Border Comedy" (forthcoming soon from Sun & Moon). She described the genesis of this work as having arisen from her collaboration with Jack Collom in "Wicker," which having enjoyed so much she attempted to try on her own -- a kind of self-

collaboration where a line would be written, then put away to undergo some form of effacement -- and then added on to as if written by another.

"However lively the imagination it still benefits from contact with reality."

"But a man doesn't dump his mother in a horsepond just because it starts to rain."

Patrick Pritchett

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84. **Aviva99999**

Re: release the strings

Mon 4 May 1998

In a message dated 98-05-04 09:04:13 EDT, you write:

| *disembodied verbal solitaire.*

Henry, I like that phrase.

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85. **Aviva99999**

Re: The Meaning of Meaning

Mon 4 May 1998

In a message dated 98-05-04 11:32:49 EDT, you write:

| *And a lot of other work too.*

I read some Tony Hoagland stuff the other day and was reminded of another peeve I have...flat, prosaic language ambling its way toward embarrassingly mundane "epiphany." Obviously, it's not just certain "experimental" poems that "deaden."

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86. **David Baratier**

Re: Understanding and Evaluating Poems

Mon 4 May 1998

Thanks Jordan. In short, an important piece flares large (insert here) things into question without specifically weighing itself down in the concept that it intends to do such and such. If enough folks get something from the piece, or enough folks who become well known cite it as an influence-- then voila-- you have the next Homer of our baseballish generative socio-economic understanding.

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87. **Brian Lucas**

Faucheuse #2

Mon 4 May 1998

FAUCHEUSE #2 is handmade is 150 pp is 7x11 is writing by:

Jonathan Williams. Marc Bolan. Michelle Grangaud. Paul Metcalf. David Grubbs. Jordan Davis. Matthew Rohrer. The Magic Parade. Franklin Bruno. Guy Bennett. Jennifer Moxley. Catherine Wagner. H.O. Pessy-Winching. Chelsey Minnis. Warren Liu. Brian Lucas. Crystal Parks. William Shakespeare trans. Damon Krukowski. Peter Gizzi. Carole Darricarrere. George Perec. Patsy Tense. Anita Drinque. Julia Ward. John Yau. Michael Palmer. Garrett Caples. Giovanni Sandri. Geoffrey Gordon O'Brien. Martin Corless-Smith. El Malmar. Cybele Knowles. Michael mean Michael Gizzi.

With art by: Naomi Yang. Ron Padgett & George Schneeman. Brian Lucas. Guy Bennett. Giovanna Sandri. Crystal Parks. Paul Metcalf. Reese S. McOchs. too many if you wish please send cash \$8 or whatever you can plus or minus I don't quite care, day-mail shipping included in that 8, to:

Faucheuse 259-A Fair Oaks St San Francisco, CA 94110-2911

AN ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE GOOD FRIENDS OF IMMACULATE EVENING
FOR YOUR PLEASURE & MAY FESTIVALS this is

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88. **Peter Quartermain**

Re: Tony Lopez

Tue 5 May 1998

Rae:

Tony Lopez,
85 Green Close
Exmouth
Devon EX8 3Qa
England

email:



Peter

At 06:03 PM 5/4/98 EDT, you wrote:

>Dear World,

>

```
> I'm trying to reach Tony Lopez sometime this week. Does anyone have an
>address?
```

 $\succ$

> Rae Armantrout

 $\succ$

+

Peter Quartermain

846 Keefer Street

Vancouver

B.C.

Canada V6A 1Y7

Voice : XXXXXXXXXX

Fax: [REDACTED]

+

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89. **joel lewis**

f.y.i.

Tue 5 May 1998

*** 12 names too many, German court rules

An attempt by a German mother to give her 10-month-old baby son 12 forenames was blocked Monday by a court which ruled that a child could only have a maximum of five names. The 27-year-old housewife wanted to name the boy Chenekwahow Migiskau Nikapi-Hun-Nizeo Alessandro Majim Chayara Inti Ernesto Prithibi Kioma Pathar Henrike so that he would grow up "in the cultural spirit of the times." But the Duesseldorf court said that in choosing the names the mother, whom it did not name, had not fulfilled her "Vornamenbestimmungspflicht" - an obligation to make clear what people should call her child. See <http://www.infobeat.com/stories/cgi/story.cgi?id=2553998203-c30>

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90. **louis stroffolino**

SHK 9.0423 *Caliban and Sycorax: Moons of Uranus (fwd)*

Tue 5 May 1998

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

Date: Tue, 5 May 1998 10:40:00 -0400

From: "Hardy M. Cook" <[REDACTED]>

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: SHK 9.0423 Caliban and Sycorax: Moons of Uranus

The Shakespeare Conference: SHK 9.0423 Tuesday, 5 May 1998.

From: Mark Perew <[REDACTED]>
Date: Monday, 4 May 98 16:55:42 GMT
Subject: Caliban and Sycorax: Moons of Uranus

Cornell University News Service

Contact: David Brand
Office: [REDACTED]
E-Mail: [REDACTED]

FOR RELEASE: May 1, 1998

Caliban and Sycorax: Astronomers propose names for their two recently discovered icy moons of Uranus

ITHACA, N.Y.-Cornell University astronomer Philip Nicholson and his colleagues have proposed names for the two recently discovered moons of the planet Uranus. They are Caliban and Sycorax, both characters in Shakespeare's play "The Tempest." The names are likely to be approved by the International Astronomical Union.

The astronomers detail their discovery of the two moons in a report in the April 30 issue of the magazine Nature. They confirm that Caliban and Sycorax are the faintest planetary moons yet imaged by ground-based telescopes. The discovery of the two moons was reported on Oct. 31 by Nicholson and colleagues Joseph Burns, professor of engineering and astronomy at Cornell, Brett Gladman of the Canadian Institute for Theoretical Physics at the University of Toronto, and J.J. Kavelaars of McMaster University, Canada.

The team used light-sensitive semiconductors, called charge-coupled devices, attached to the 5-meter Hale telescope on Mount Palomar, Calif., to track the irregular, or non-circular, orbits of the two moons. Regular satellites orbit near a planet's equatorial plane. The two moons are the first irregular satellites discovered around Uranus.

Both Caliban and Sycorax, the astronomers write, are unusually red in color, which suggests a link with the recently discovered populations of comet-like bodies called trans-Neptunian objects, which orbit the sun beyond the orbit of Neptune, and Centaurs, which cross the orbits of the outer planets.

Both trans-Neptunians and Centaurs, say the researchers, have a wide range of reddish colors, perhaps resulting from the bombardment of their organic-rich icy surfaces. Nicholson says this bombardment could be from cosmic rays or from the sun's ultraviolet radiation. The methane on the moons' surfaces, he says, would be "cooked" by the radiation into hydrocarbons, showing up as a dark red through a telescope's filters.

The two moons, say the researchers, are presumed to have been captured by Uranus early in the history of the solar system. "My guess is that the moons were once trans-Neptunians and they became Centaurs and were captured by Uranus and became satellites," says Nicholson. Since the newly discovered moons are likely to have been captured by Uranus soon after its formation, the Nature article notes, "their physical properties may provide clues to conditions in the early solar system."

The process of capture could have taken two forms, Nicholson says. The moons could have been trapped by Uranus gravity as they came close to the planet. Another theory, he says, is that in the early days of the solar system Uranus might have been surrounded by a gaseous nebula that would have caused a drag on the objects' movement as they came close to the planet.

Nicholson estimates that Caliban, the smaller of the two moons, has a diameter of 60 kilometers (37 miles) and is orbiting Uranus at an average distance of about 7.2 million kilometers (4.5 million miles), taking 1.6 years to complete one revolution. Sycorax, he estimates, has a diameter of 120 kilometers (74.5 miles) and takes 3.5 years to complete one orbit of Uranus at a mean distance of about 12.2 million kilometers (7.5 million miles) from the planet. However, he says, Sycorax has a much more elliptical orbit than Caliban, bringing it as close as 6 million kilometers (3.7 million miles) to the planet.

The composition of the two moons, says Nicholson, "is probably a plum-pudding mixture of rocks and ice."

All 15 previously known satellites of Uranus lie on fairly evenly spaced, nearly circular orbits. Most recently Voyager 2, in 1985 and 1986, discovered 10 small, dark inner moons.

Jupiter has eight known irregular satellites, of which the last, Leda, was discovered in 1974. Saturn has one, Phoebe, discovered in 1898, and Neptune has one, Nereid, discovered in 1949.

To see images of the two newly discovered moons of Uranus, go to Gladman's page on the World Wide Web at <http://www.cita.utoronto.ca/~gladman/uranus.html>.

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91. **MAYHEW**
homage to creeley VIII
Tue 5 May 1998

VIII (shallow image)

As I say to my friend
freezing to death in the ancient waters
of Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota:

"The darkness surrounds us
like naked stones
escaping in silence.

What are we to do?"
I buy some farm equipment
and sink into bitterness.

He says:
"For the love of sorrowing gods
throw me a life-jacket."

Jonathan Mayhew

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92. **Maria Damon**

Re: homage to creeley VIII

Tue 5 May 1998

At 10:58 AM -0500 5/5/98, MAYHEW wrote:

>VIII (shallow image)

>

>As I say to my friend

>freezing to death in the ancient waters

>of Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota:

>

>"The darkness surrounds us

>like naked stones

>escaping in silence.

>

>What are we to do?"

>I buy some farm equipment

>and sink into bitterness.

>

>He says:

>"For the love of sorrowing gods

>throw me a life-jacket."

>

>

>

>Jonathan Mayhew

as my old grad school advisor, master of the one-word comment, used to scribble, "apt." did u know that the word "lake" is etymologically related to a "depression covered with water"?

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93. **KENT JOHNSON**

Technique

Tue 5 May 1998

In a recent post, Mark Wallace wrote:

"My own experience leads me to believe that many of the techniques necessary to understand experimental literature can be taught, with about three hours of close attention, to reasonably intelligent college students..."

Mark:

I find the above statement intriguing, and I was hoping you could elaborate, particularly since I'm planning to teach from *Poems for the Millennium*. What are those reading techniques necessary to understanding experimental literature? How do you teach them? How would they be different from "techniques" applied to understanding "non-experimental" work? Are such techniques a sufficient means for having an "understanding" of "experimental" poems? And if they're not sufficient (I assume you wouldn't think they are?) would you see them, even, as *what is most important* to understanding?

These techniques, do they equally work for Celan as for Berssenbrugge? For Zukofsky as for Spicer? For Bracho as for Mac Low? Some techniques for some writers and not for others? For some works and not for others?

Too many questions, but I'm asking because I frankly don't feel like I employ any particular technique when I read the above writers, nor do I necessarily ever feel like I "understand" them, since any sense of understanding I gain of the poetry I most admire is always sliding and shifting. I've always felt fairly OK with this, but your position would imply that I, for one, didn't learn what I could have learned. And it would have only taken me three hours! ("Well, shit," as Elizabeth Barret Browning says somewhere in *Sonnets from the Portuguese*...)

It might just be that I'm not understanding your sense of the tricky term. But when you teach experimental literature, what is it you would like your students to "understand"?

really curious,

Kent

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94. **Herb Levy**

Re: Responses to the Rosen essay

Tue 5 May 1998

(Something weird's happened to my out box, but it doesn't seem as if this went out. Sorry if this is a duplication.)

Taylor Brady's right that Charles Rosen is thinking strictly along "uptown" lines, but, hey, what would you expect from a concert pianist who wrote THE book on sonata form. It's not like he hangs out at Roulette or the Knitting Factory.

Brady goes on to write:

For example, one of Tony Conrad's or Phill Niblock's long-duration pieces gives up its secret fairly quickly: >within the first two or three seconds, you start to hear those difference tones and beats, and you "get it." The >question at that point is what one does with the remaining 45 minutes or so. Such work thus seems to >propose a value for in-time experience which tends to be correspondingly absent in much late serialism.

Actually I think Niblock's music takes substantially longer than a few seconds to "get," though that may be all it takes to learn the vocabulary he's using. Once you've tuned into the beating & difference tones, each of his works has a distinctive shape of tension & release, built entirely from these basic elements. The structure of the beat patterns are the musical form of each of his works. If you're aren't "getting it" this larger structure, I'm not sure why you'd want to bother staying in a room with it playing, unless drones are just your thing.

Of course, the real way to hear his music is in the full Music and Film installation (on solstices at Experimental Intermedia in NY or frequently touring to odd art spaces around the world) - many hours of two or three films (gorgeously shot footage of people working usually, though there's one of a series of sunsets, and a few others) shown simultaneously while one piece of music after another is played much louder than you would at home, giving the sound a very physical feel. The music becomes something you're walking in the midst of, rather than simply hearing.

Conrad's music seems to me to be less about this kind of spatial thing & more just about the simple, small number, pitch ratios of just intonation and how dissonance can work within that system. Niblock's intervals won't resolve to small number ratios in this way, the pitches are much too closely packed (often only one or two cycles per second apart).

What does this have to do with poetry? How far can one push the analogy between the avant-gardes of >different arts? I'm not really sure there's an answer to such questions, but as a means of pointing out the multiple degrees of difference which might be at stake here -- "there's

difficulty and then there's difficulty" >-- the musical situation as (mis)addressed in Rosen's article seemed an interesting aside.

Rosen's conclusion is that the growing lack of general music education (and, hence, the decrease in amateur musicians who understand performance issues) combined with the dwindling number of people who hear classical music performed live rather than on recordings is the cause for the decline in interest in all classical music, not just the avant garde.

I'm not sure the situation with "avant garde" poetry is the same. There's certainly a lot more talk about the growth of general interest in reading, writing, & performing poetry & I don't see this having a lot of impact one way or another on "avant garde" writing.

I still think people need to be taught that art is NOT always immediately discernable, that there's often a lot of poking around to be done. People aren't any more or less stupid than artists, but non-artists rarely learn how to think about non-normative art in a way that's useful to them. The standard dozen or twenty questions folks are taught to deal with literary texts will work for a lot of things, but I don't think they're much help with, say, Bruce Andrews or Susan Howe.

Bests,

Herb

Herb Levy



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95. **Jordan Davis**

POETRY CITY celebrates not national poetry month

Tue 5 May 1998

POETRY CITY

MAY 14 * 7 PM

Prageeta Sharma & Bernadette Mayer

MAY 21 * 6 PM

Lorenzo Thomas

MAY 28 * 7 PM

Tim Griffin & Joel Lewis

All events are free, but we ask that you buy a book from our selection of works by past and current readers.

Poetry City is located in the offices of Teachers & Writers Collaborative at 5 Union Square West, New York City. Hosting the series are Anna Malmude and Jordan Davis. Past readers have included Dan Bouchard, Steve Carll, Ange Mlinko, Juliana Spahr, Lisa Jarnot, Bill Luoma, Jennifer Moxley, Douglas Rothschild, Andrea Brady, Max Winter, Anselm Berrigan, Edmund Berrigan, Loren Goodman, Lee Ann Brown, Rod Smith, Drew Gardner, Julie Patton and Edwin Torres.

National Poetry Month is over! is over!

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96. **k. lederer**

NYC sublet for summer

Tue 5 May 1998

Hello. I poet friend of mine is looking for a summer sub-let in NYC (Manhatt... 2nd choice Brooklyn...).

He wants to pay between \$600 and \$900. He'll be living with his girlfriend--and is hoping for a place that would allow a cat. A studio, 1 bedroom, or 2 bedroom would be fine.

Please e-mail me with any possibilities for him...

Thanks,
Katy

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97. **MAYHEW**

I have had to learn the simplest things / last

Tue 5 May 1998

More on difficulty, technique, etc:

I am with Kent on this one; while it might be true that some difficulty is exaggerated and that one can teach clever students to read "difficult" texts quite easily in some cases, my own experience points to something quite different:

In some cases I have taken years to learn to read certain poets, while other times I encounter no resistance (in myself) at all. I have to be ready as a reader for a certain poet. I still don't *get* Olson, I confess. Spicer took me quite a while. This is a lifelong process, is my point.

Of course, I never had much help with most of this when I really needed it. If I had been lucky to have an intelligent teacher in college I might have caught on sooner.

But maybe we are talking about two different things. The sort of superficial obstacles that impede initial engagement vs. the prolonged difficulties caused by our own internal resistances to certain kinds of texts.

Any thoughts?

Jonathan Mayhew

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98. **William Burmeister Prod**

Re: I have had to learn the simplest things / last

Tue 5 May 1998

Reading poetry? (careful there, it can toast your eyeballs!)

That's a lifelong evolution as you say in your post.

The discovery principle is best but takes gads of time.

This reader just isn't convinced of the essentiality of poetics for the reader as such. Poetics, wonderful as it is, can certainly lead one to discover new poems/poets, but why must a poetics necessarily be defined that shows the reader the idiocy of his/her reading ways?

The reader's background and articulation, defense of position (and faith?) is to be considered, no?

How much poetics is written for the "pure" reader (if such a one exists).

The poetics trend now: poetics valorizes (and polarizes?) the poet.

One usually sees the relationship of the poem to the poetics not as being onto but into, which leaves the reader to make assumptions about connections that were never intended by the author.

William Burmeister

More on difficulty, technique, etc:

I am with Kent on this one; while it might be true that some difficulty is exaggerated and that one can teach clever students to read "difficult" texts quite easily in some cases, my own experience points to something quite different:

*In some cases I have taken years to learn to read certain poets, while other times I encounter no resistance (in myself) at all. I have to be ready as a reader for a certain poet. I still don't *get* Olson, I confess. Spicer took me quite a while. This is a lifelong process, is my point.*

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But maybe we are talking about two different things. The sort of superficial obstacles that impede initial engagement vs. the prolonged difficulties caused by our own internal resistances to certain kinds of texts.

Any thoughts?

Jonathan Mayhew

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99. **Taylor Brady**

Publication Announcement

Tue 5 May 1998

New at Cartograffiti:

Maria Damon & Miekal And -- Moss Goddess (part of the Literature Nation multi-site inter-writing project)

Linda Russo -- but i concern myself too much with beginnings / as i came along in the middle of many things (poems)

Alan Myouka Sondheim -- Five works in prose and a poem "inspired" by the Latin of Pannonius)

-- Taylor Brady

editor, Cartograffiti

<http://writing.upenn.edu/AandL/english/pubs/spc/cartograffiti>

(a publication of the Small Press Collective)

<http://writing.upenn.edu/AandL/english/pubs/spc>

<HTML>

<BODY TEXT="#000000" BGCOLOR="#FFFFFF" LINK="#003399"

VLINK="#006600" ALINK="#FF0000">

New at <I>Cartograffiti</I>:

<P>Maria Damon & Miekal And -- <I>Moss Goddess</I> (part of the <I>Literature Nation</I> multi-site inter-writing project)

<P>Linda Russo -- <I>but i concern myself too much with beginnings / as i came along in the middle of many things </I>(poems)

<P>Alan Myouka Sondheim -- Five works in prose and a poem "inspired" by the Latin of Pannonius)

[illegible]

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100. **Thomas Bell**
Re: what's difficult-

Wed 6 May 1998

An oblique perspective on the issue would come from looking at poets who are intentionally difficult and reasons why this might be. I'm sure that there are others who are difficult because they are difficult people. I know this applies to me - there are many who would attest to this. Some are difficult out of pretention - I may be guilty of this. But I do think there are legitimate artistic reasons for "being difficult". tom bell

At 12:03 PM 5/4/98 -0400, Mark Wallace wrote:

> Mark:

 $\geq$

> Thanks for your response--it does clarify things somewhat. No need
>to apologize for any kind of misreading--that's the way things on this
>list go, is it not?

 $\succ$

> Here is the offending sentence, in context, from my piece with
>Stephen-Paul Martin and Jeff Hansen:

 $\succ$

> "It seems to me that one of the biggest and most commonly shared
>pretensions of avant garde writers is that our work is difficult and/or
>unreadable. But I think also that one of the biggest presumptions of more
>mainstream writers (journalists, for instance) is that their work is easy
>to understand.

> My own experience leads me to believe that many of the techniques
>necessary to understand experimental literature can be taught, with about

>three hours of close attention, to reasonably intelligent college students
>who show any willingness to engage with such literature. Of course, if
>you're not willing to give three hours of your whole life to try to
>understand something, then your inability (or, let's be honest,
>unwillingness) to understand it is your own fault, not mine."

>

> The first thing to say is that your post DID imply that the first
>sentence formed the basic argument of my whole piece--no need to worry
>that one anymore though, I take it as behind us. The second issue (and I
>suppose it's important, to you and me anyway), is how to read the first
>sentence, which I take it is what you took exception to.

>

> I think, from the vantage point of several years (we wrote the
>piece in 1994), that sentence seems to me something of an overstatement,
>although yes, it was written mainly as a way of finding a transition
>between Stephen-Paul's section and my own. From my present vantage point,
>I guess I have no proof how broad any assumption of "difficulty" is across
>the avant garde--but I CAN give you reasons why it seemed to me so at the
>time.

>

> Before I do that, I do also want to say that "difficulty" and
>"obscurity" and "unreadability" do NOT seem to me interchangeable words.
>I'm not against difficulty--I'm not even sure I'm against obscurity--but I
>think I would stress that some types of "difficulty" in reading are not
>such a bad thing, since a "difficult" text may in some cases simply mean a
>text that needs close and complex attention, and I can't see any problem
>with that. "Obscurity" I guess I would see as an attempt to make something
>hard to understand simply in order to make it hard to understand, rather
>than because the problems it raises are complex. That doesn't
>seem a good thing to me, although I suppose I can imagine an
>occasion when it might. "Unreadable" seems to me
>another term--I take it usually as a text in which some part of the piece
>can't be read (because the letters are covered up, say) as transparent
>conveyors of meaning, and so another way of "reading" (often a way of
>visually reading) becomes necessary.

>

> What Stephen-Paul speaks of is the pride that some individuals do
>take in being able to read that which others claim they cannot read--and
>take that as a point of pride too easily. He uses his graduate school
>experience as an example, and talks about people who try to prove that
>they are smart by proving that they can read "difficult" books. In my
>experience, such a thing did happen all the time. Although I greatly

>enjoyed much of my experience as a graduate student at UBuffalo,
>pretensions about such matters were entirely common--that may not have
>been true in your experience. There is, in graduate school (and outside?)
>a fairly pervasive problem of jockeying for position on the subject of how
>others perceive one's intelligence.

>

> There is, I think, too easy a leap from his claims about graduate
>school to his claims about avant garde poets more generally, and I think,
>because I was trying to make other points at the time, I didn't perhaps
>deal with that issue in the detail it may have deserved. At the same time,
>though, I do NOT think that it's an easy given that the community of
>"avant

>garde" poets all have a conception of their work as "easy to read,"
>although some perhaps do. I think the problem continues to exist as a
>problem--in a world in which claims about our elitism are thrown back at
>us constantly, there is still a need to watch out that we don't succumb
>too easily in believing in our own "difficulty" in the way that someone
>like Eliot, for instance, did. Which is, I take it, one of the points
>Stephen-Paul is trying to make.

>

> So I would agree with you that my first sentence in that dialogue
>contains an assumption it can't quite prove. That is, it can't prove how
>actually widespread the problem that Stephen-Paul raises--have we too
>easily accepted a certain notion about difficulty?--and thankfully you for
>one have not accepted such an assumption, and many others have not as
>well. But I still think that sentence is right to the extent that I do
>feel that the "pretension" it mentions does exist, and is one that needs
>to be argued against, as opposed to being seen as a given. And the reason
>I felt I needed to respond to your post in the first place was because the
>rest of my piece does try to undermine the whole concept of "difficulty,"
>but your post did not suggest that I had done so.

>

> Thanks for giving me this chance to elaborate--

>

> Mark Wallace

>

>

>/-----\

>|

>|

>| GWU:

>| <http://gwis2.circ.gwu.edu/~mdw>

```
>| EPC: |
>| http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/wallace |
>|_____|
>
>
```

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101. Alan Myouka Sondheim

Look at me! Do I want to say hello!

Wed 6 May 1998

-

Look at me! Do I want to say hello!

hosts	Host Name	Status	Users	Load	Inet Addr
=====					
=====	abyss.ecst.csuchico.edu	--	--	-.-	
132.241.1.34	apollo	--	--	-.-	130.212.10.167
My name is Alan Myouka and I am a "very-fun loving person." I have many friends and live in Kingston, Pennsylvania. Just recently, I have discovered this wonderful thing we call the "Internet." I have made many friends and can just stay here, in "Kingston, Pennsylvan-ia," and talk to you from my home where I am now, in "Kingston"!!					
	cati.csufresno.edu	--	--	-.-	129.8.100.15
--	--	-.-	130.212.10.239	futon	--
130.212.2.65	gol.com	--	--	-.-	203.216.12.4
Here I am. I am having so much fun. It is so good to be here. I have come from Japan. I am a very fun-loving person. You have no idea how good it is to be here. I am very worried about the Asian crisis. Some of my friends are "crisis friends." I will tell you more!!					
	joker	--	--	-.-	130.212.3.40
kcd.com	--	--	-.-	140.174.164.52	lewis
--	-.-	130.212.12.27	libra	--	--
130.212.10.238	lifesci.lscf.ucsb.edu	--	--	-.-	128.111.226.5
math	--	--	-.-	130.212.40.2	ocf.berkeley.edu
--	-.-	128.32.191.249	opac	--	--
130.212.18.200	orion	--	--	-.-	130.212.10.236
panix.com	--	--	-.-	166.84.1.66	
Now I am in New York. How much fun it is to be in New York. Here in New York there are no "crisis friends." All my friends are perfect and happy in "crisis New York." I am very happy to say this!!					
	panix3.panix.com	--	--	-.-	166.84.1.68
I am, oh oh oh, still in New York. More than ever, happiness is here very perfect. There is no "crisis friends fun-loving person," but I am here, Alan Myouka, in my loft. No, haha, I am not. I am still in West-Coast happiness,					

where there is no "crisis-loft." Such is my "fun-loving person" that I can be
many places at times when I am there!! pv901.pv.reshsg.uci.edu -- --
-.- 128.195.182.226 rodin.ucdavis.edu -- -- -.-
128.120.4.17 sfsu-annex2 -- -- -.- 130.212.10.231
sfsu.edu -- -- -.- 130.212.10.239 shell12.ba.best.com
-- -- -.- 206.184.139.143 slip.net -- -- -.-
207.171.193.17 slipnet.com -- -- -.- 207.171.193.17
stars -- -- -.- 130.212.16.12 taurus -- --
-.- 130.212.10.237 thecity -- -- -.- 130.212.2.101 I
have never been here in "the city" but I will like to go to "there" because there
will be no "crisis" as well. I would love these "Asian friends" to be with me in
"crisis New York." I will be very happy. Did I tell you about "San Francisco"?
It is known here as "crisis-city" because it is very "fun-loving." I will have
another list for you so very soon!! uclink.Berkeley.EDU -- -- -.-
128.32.155.3 128.32.136.7
unix.worldnetoh.com -- -- -.- 192.147.147.45 venus
-- -- -.- 130.212.18.97 zoo.uvm.edu -- -- -.-
132.198.101.63 132.198.101.64
kyushu.com 44: I want to know "everything"!!

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102. **Charles Alexander**

Re: release the strings

Wed 6 May 1998

Jordan wrote:

*But Charles, I don't understand why compare Hardy
favorably to Pound in order to dismiss Hardy.*

I didn't think I did that. did I do that? didn't mean to do that. I was just recalling
an old exercise from a class when I was an undergraduate, looking at the Pound
poem for Swinburne and the Hardy one (the titles don't come to mind right
now) from various viewpoints with the question to find the 'better' poem.
According to the various criteria, it was the Hardy poem -- the Pound poem is
one of his earlier efforts, and does seem a bit overdone. But I hope I didn't then
turn around and dismiss Hardy. I wouldn't consciously do that. I like Hardy's
work a lot -- poems and prose. I don't have my post at hand, but I apologize for
giving you the thought that I was dismissing Hardy.

charles

charles alexander :: poet and book artist :: [REDACTED]

chax press :: alexander writing/design/publishing

books by artists' hands :: web sites built with care and vision
http://alexwritdespub.com/chax :: http://alexwritdespub.com

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103. **beth lee simon**

I have had to learn the simplest things / last

Wed 6 May 1998

Re reading/getting "difficult texts"--

This may have already been suggested (i've been off and on), but perhaps one of you could show/initiate/demonstrate your own beginning to read what had been, once, a difficult text.

beth

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104. **R.Gancie/C.Parcelli**

Q

Wed 6 May 1998

"The world as communicable is not, itself, the real world. The world conceived under the category of quantity is not, itself, a coherent world of experience."
Michael Oakeshott---carlo

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105. **Elizabeth Hatmaker**

Re: Technique

Wed 6 May 1998

Mark (and whoever else wants to respond),

In addition to Kent Johnson's questions about how one teaches students to understand, I am curious about what possible outcomes there are to students understanding "difficult" texts-- to what ends do you teach "difficult" texts? So they can write that way too? So that they have the option of writing that way? So that teachers who are interested in "difficult" texts don't have to sit around talking with students about more standard hermanutically understood poems?

More specifically, what good is teaching "understanding" to literary production?

Elizabeth

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106. **MAYHEW**

a quiz

Wed 6 May 1998

Here is the first stanza from a poem in J. Ashbery's new collection:

Within a windowed niche of that high hall
I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day.
I shall rush out as I am, and walk the street
Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks
From camp to camp, through the foul womb of night.
Come, Sheperd, and again renew the quest.
And birds sit brooding in the snow.

Line six is from Henry the V, and the others shouldn't be too hard to find either.
But I was never an "English" major...

Jonathan

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107. **Henry Gould**

Re: Technique

Wed 6 May 1998

What good is teaching "understanding" to literary production?

What good is literary production without understanding?

When I was in school interpreting texts and interpreting reality in class discussion went hand in hand. The parable is the simplest form of what these poems, novels, plays were about - putting a frame on reality, on experience, in order to interpret what it meant. What was beautiful or moving or ugly or powerful or paradoxical or confrontational was what the literary work expressed - the process of reading was a process of trying to understand where the author was going with this story - what meanings did it emphasize or point toward.

Do they still do this in school?

In this context "difficulty" for its own sake is pretty meaningless. The basic technique of irony is to weed out false or superficial readings of reality. An author presents a character or characters in a golden light - until you read between the lines. This is a kind of difficult writing. A poet may want to wrap his or her kernel of meanings or revelations in a number of layers of difficulty simply to emphasize how powerful or precious they are, how threatened by cliché. But difficulty for its own sake? That kind of difficulty is maybe not for

its own sake but for the sake of a cult or subculture of readers who ingest meaningless difficulty for the sake of renouncing the world and joining the club. This is not to say that writing itself is easy or that a writer will never take on various degrees of difficulty just for the sake of the challenge or that a writer will never risk plunging into obscurity or that a writer will never lose command of the medium or that plenty of great writing is just stupendously difficult or that difficulty is bad or that obscurity is bad or that my own poems are accessible, far from it. - Henry Gould

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108. **Rod4rigo**

Query: Heather Fuller's e-mail..?

Wed 6 May 1998

Does anyone have Heather Fuller's e-mail...or mail address...?

Backchannel...

Much Appreciated...

Rodrigo Toscano

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109. **Jordan Davis**

why patterns?

Wed 6 May 1998

It sounds as though we are in a rethink time in regard to the teaching of poetry. I would like to say something provocative about the necessity of teaching the history of contemporary American poetry, but it sounds too smugly perverse to me to fill out that form with the last moments of my lunch break. So -- why teach difficult poetry? Difficulty's relative, right? That, I think, is what Mark was getting at -- sure, poetry can be hard to read, try the newspapers, they're worse. It used to be a sign of brain damage in New York City if you failed to read the Times every day -- now it's more likely you're a conscientious objector, complaining to someone about the irony on NPR. People teach what they read, or what they want to read, or so they tell me. Why grandstand?

anyway, anybody else have a look at Brian Kim Stefans' new site,

<http://www.stern.nyu.edu/~bstefans>

? I had trouble with the java, but otherwise, huh, wow, and huh.

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110. **Pritchett, Patrick**

Re: Technique

Wed 6 May 1998

This doesn't really address your query, Elizabeth. Just some random blathering:

The argument traditionally offered about difficulty is that the pleasure yielded exists in exact proportion to the effort exerted in obtaining "understanding" or clarity. I find this still to be true even if the text in question is no longer one that can be read by the old & familiar hermeneutical strategies. The goal, though, is no longer "clarity" i.e. a way to paraphrase content. It is rather to stand in a whole new relation to form and to language itself. (Hejinian: "the poetics of possibility"). To interpret a text is only one way to relate to it. A "difficult" text that defies or mocks those strategies invites a different way to relate to it. A different way into language.

The kind of postmodern texts under discussion here (pick a card, any card) aren't merely opaque or obscure. They call into question the whole idea of relating to texts that way. Difficult then becomes (as with the modernists) a synonym for the New. How difficult -or weird- was $E=mc^2$ in its day? The reason I guess I use that example is that it offers a new model of relatedness, of the possibilities for relating, and I think that radical new forms of language must perform the same task. So, teaching Stein's "Stanzas" in an Intro to Poetry class alongside of Sandburg's "The Grass" (instead of just Sandburg) would offer a student alternate models for thinking about relatedness, networks of words, the construction of meaning (or its lack), and the way, above all, that language set in motion tends to play. This is not difficult but exciting. (Memo to self: compare rise of Dr. J, Connie Hawkins-style b-ball in 70's with emergence of LangPo). (Second memo to self: include effects of Title IX vis-a-vis women's sports).

Everything risable must diverge,
Patrick Pritchett

From: Elizabeth Hatmaker

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Technique

Date: Wednesday, May 06, 1998 10:36AM

Mark (and whoever else wants to respond),

In addition to Kent Johnson's questions about how one teaches students to understand, I am curious about what possible outcomes there are to students understanding "difficult" texts-- to what ends do you teach "difficult" texts? So they can write that way too? So that they have the option of writing that way?

So that teachers who are interested in "difficult" texts don't have to sit around talking with students about more standard hermanutically understood poems?
More specifically, what good is teaching "understanding" to literary production?
Elizabeth

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111. **J. Fuhrman**

Re: I have had to learn the simplest things / last

Wed 6 May 1998

One way I sometimes cope with texts in which I have difficulty understanding the poetics at work is to try imitating them. I think this method can sometimes work (for some students...) in the classroom...It's a way of talking about texts without first talking about meaning. Unfortunately, I find that students are often able to do fine imitations but then aren't able to take the next step and intellectualize the process. For example, in their imitation they may pick up that a poet is juxtaposing diction/tone but they won't be able to verbalize what the effect of this juxtaposition is or even that juxtaposition is happening.

On Wed, 6 May 1998, beth lee simon wrote:

Re reading/getting "difficult texts"--

This may have already been suggested (i've been off and on), but perhaps one of you could show/initiate/demonstrate your own beginning to read what had been, once, a difficult text.

beth

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112. **Judy Roitman**

Re: Technique

Wed 6 May 1998

A
different way _into_ language.

How about _out of_ language? Or _through_ language. Or...

----- Judy Roitman
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas |
memory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days."
[redacted] | fax: [redacted] | Larry Eigner,

1927-1996 ----- Note new area
code -----
<http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/>

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113. **Michael Magee**
Re: Technique/Difficulty
Wed 6 May 1998

A few thoughts on difficulty & technique. To me, difficulty is a kind of prerequisite to possibility. That the poem might be more than a handshake between writer & reader. Rather, elaborate hand-signals, or palm slapping games which writer begins, reader modifies, etc. Technique, then, proposes parameters for play. What is a game? In part an admission that Connor O'Tation might, under the reader's foster care, grow up, get a sex-change, and change his/her name to Dee Notation. But also a taking-advantage of the democratic possibilities of that fact, that bit of fate. Similarly a joke: never the joke's on you or me, but, the joke's on us. Any static between interpretation and intention is less like scraping friction and more an issue of distance between radio and signal, *space* being the variable and deciding factor between noise and reception: music becomes a matter of moving on, adjusting the dial, directional guesswork. Difficulty, then, is related to poetry's potential agency, its ability to affect, set in unanticipated motion, an audience: the difference between "eating that fig newton changed my life" and "eating that wrench changed my life" is what I have in mind. Let there be a few wrenches between the participants, I say, a series of necessary adjustments, in the getting there.

-m.

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114. **David Zauhar**
Re: Technique
Wed 6 May 1998

On Wed, 6 May 1998, Elizabeth Hatmaker wrote:

In addition to Kent Johnson's questions about how one teaches students to understand, I am curious about what possible outcomes there are to students understanding "difficult" texts-- to what ends do you teach "difficult" texts? So they can write that way too? So that they have the option of writing that way? So that teachers who are interested in "difficult" texts don't have to sit around talking with students about more standard

hermanutically understood poems?

More specifically, what good is teaching "understanding" to literary production?

I just finished teaching a course called "Gender Sexuality and Literature" using mostly poetry (The Odyssey, Sappho, Walt Whitman, HD's Helen in Egypt, Stein's Tender Buttons, Ginsberg's Howl & Other Poems, Niedecker's Granite Pail and Harryette Mullen's Muse and Drudge). Why Stein? Why also Mullen's work? (which isn't exactly "easy" the same way "Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening" is {allegedly} easy). 1) I wanted to introduce the idea of l'écriture feminine into this class, which consisted of 50% women's studies majors w/ at least as solid a grasp of Cixous, Kristeva, et.al. as I have and 2) I wanted to re-emphasize the point that "reading" is often in improvisational activity, and not something to be performed unconsciously (when I read a newspaper, I'm not conscious that I'm reading, but when I'm reading Tender Buttons, I know) The objective was not "to teach students to write that way" though one of the ways into Stein's work was imitation (Tender Buttonesque passages on objects in the room: a map, a pretzel, a hockey puck). Nor was it so I could avoid talking about set pieces. My main objective was to show that there are different ways of relating to language. The experience was unsettling at first (throughout, for some students), but with the help of Judy Grahn's pointers found in her book *Really Reading Gertrude Stein*, most of the students seemed to get the idea that it was possible to read a work without being expected to find some final, terminal meaning. Judy Grahn, in fact, says that her big revelation into how to read Gertrude Stein occurred when she quit asking why is GS so difficult and realized that she (Grahn) is the one who is being difficult by expecting Gertrude Stein to do things that Gertrude Stein just doesn't do. Above all, Stein's work (as well as HD's) opened the students to Harryette Mullen's great volume -- rather than worrying about "what does this poem MEAN" the students spent every class period devoted to her work talking about all the great things she DOES. And I do mean the students: I had to do very little talking. Students found meaning in Muse and Drudge, and they got at that meaning in spite of the difficulties posed by the poem. In short, I find that most students come to college looking at poems the same way they look at algebra problems. They exist to be (re)solved. I introduced difficult poetry to show students that poetry and language in general functions quite different from the ways they have been conditioned to believe. I have no idea if I succeeded, and I won't know whether the students really liked Stein or Mullen until I see the evaluations (I asked the class to rank and comment on the work). But at least some of the class discussions were lively in ways they wouldn't have been if I stuck w/ anthology favorites.

David Zauhar
University of Illinois at Chicago

"I believe that the devil is in these poets. They destroy all universities. And I heard from an old master of Leipsic who had been Magister for 36 years that when he was a young man then did the university stand firm, for there was not a poet within 20 miles."

*_Epistolae Obscurorum Virorum_*, ii.46. Quoted in Helen Waddell's *_The Wandering Scholars_*

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115. **groberts**
Re: Technique
Wed 6 May 1998

A few of the posts on teaching and understanding difficulty have been putting these words in quotation marks-- "difficulty" "understanding"-- which serves a variety of rhetorical purposes. I have found that in the classroom, students are not sometimes aware of the range of uses to which the terms of the conversation are being put. Sometimes it may be useful to pause and gather some the usages/meanings in play for the same word. A brainstorming session in which a word like "difficult" is defined in several ways, maybe even to generate a list of meanings-in-play, can be very useful. We put on the table all the tautologies, cliches, comparisons, synonyms, antonyms, exceptions, generalizations, etc. that we can think of, then "step back" a second to see what has accumulated. The brainstorming works best in my experience if it is applied to word both in its classroom context (i.e. with respect to poetry or whatever) and in other everyday or specialized contexts ostensibly unrelated to the subject at hand (poetry or whatever). This kind of exercise can make visible the way in which a group together is trying to fashion or appropriate a jargon of tribal intersubjectivity.

Gary R.

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116. **Michael Magee**
Re: Technique
Wed 6 May 1998

David Zauhar: " Above all, Stein's work (as well as HD's) opened the students to Harryette Mullen's great volume -- rather than worrying about "what does this poem MEAN" the students spent every class period devoted to her work talking about all the great things she DOES. And I do mean the students: I had to do

very little talking. Students found meaning in Muse and Drudge, and they got at that meaning in spite of the difficulties posed by the poem."

I've had a very similar experience w/ M & D as well as with Tender Buttons. Once you sell your students on a different model of reading (the hard part) they have great things to say about these works, things I would never have thought of - so it's not just that you convince them that they don't have to make meaning (i.e. that they should absorb difficult texts out of some sense that they're chic or simply b/c you told them to) - on the contrary, they make a load of meaning once you get them started. I think we sometimes sell students short in this regard - I taught Bob Perelman's "A Literal Translation of Virgil's 4th Eclogue" to my Haverford students this semester expecting a fair amount of resistance (bracing for it w/ extra preparation etc) and found that they considered it both hilariously funny and intellectually serious, and discussed it accordingly. A nice surprise for me to be sure. -m.

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117. **Henry G**
Re: Technique
Wed 6 May 1998

It sounds like an interesting class, David - but does it make sense to set up a dichotomy between (fun) doing and (boring) meaning? It's the old purloined letter trick, or hiding something in plain sight, isn't it? The Stein text still has "meanings" - and your students found them: in the surface playing with words as building blocks (I'm simplifying). Why reinforce these oppositions between old/new, doing/meaning? Like M. Magee suggested, there's pleasure in the hunt. These issues have been around forever - the Puritans reading for instruction only vs. all those wicked novels etc. But you do pay a price for excluding the effort to summarize, contextualize, respond to the meaning-implications. Writing is not all surface ornament, though as you say the opposing danger is more prevalent (slogging after the moral of the story). - Henry G.

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118. **Pritchett, Patrick**
Re: Technique
Wed 6 May 1998

The moral of the content is the form?

From: Henry G

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Technique

Date: Wednesday, May 06, 1998 3:12PM

It sounds like an interesting class, David - but does it make sense to set up a dichotomy between (fun) doing and (boring) meaning? It's the old purloined letter trick, or hiding something in plain sight, isn't it? The Stein text still has "meanings" - and your students found them: in the surface playing with words as building blocks (I'm simplifying). Why reinforce these oppositions between old/new, doing/meaning? Like M. Magee suggested, there's pleasure in the hunt. These issues have been around forever - the Puritans reading for instruction only vs. all those wicked novels etc. But you do pay a price for excluding the effort to summarize, contextualize, respond to the meaning-implications. Writing is not all surface ornament, though as you say the opposing danger is more prevalent (slogging after the moral of the story). - Henry G.

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119. **David Zauhar**

Re: Technique

Wed 6 May 1998

On Wed, 6 May 1998, Henry G wrote:

It sounds like an interesting class, David - but does it make sense to set up a dichotomy between (fun) doing and (boring) meaning? It's the old purloined letter trick, or hiding something in plain sight, isn't it?

Hi Henry: any dichotomy i established was unintentional, more the result of following this thread (fun) at the same time i'm supposed to be completing some rather bureaucratic obligations (boring), and thus i rushed something that probably required more thought. I didn't mean to diss robert frost, either, but only to point out that it seems to take different approaches to read Mullen and Stein than it does to read the canonical guys. Anyway, thanks for helping to clarify the stuff that i muddled in my hasty composition.

Dave Zauhar

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120. **James C. Hall**

Re: Technique

Wed 6 May 1998

Emerging from deep lurk. . .

One version of the obvious: I think students get nervous about (some) poetries as they've had 15 years of testing. . . (Testing --> testy) Indeed, at the very

moment we're celebrating difficulty, they're taking 3 or 4 or 5 other classes, in which difficulty is something to be overcome...and fast. Let's be fair: one can stand at the front of the room (or even sit in the circle) and preach the joys of openness to new strategies of reading and writing, but everyone knows that sooner or later, wham-o, evaluation-time, grades, "remarks," . . . a meditation on your contribution, yuk, blah. Why should they believe us? And even if they do, its a tough go to unlearn 10 years or so of reading and writing about books as if they were tiny knowledge-nuggets.

It's not difficulty per se that is the problem. . . I can convince my students of the legitimacy of unique "languages" "styles" "rhetorical strategies" "traditions". . . oftentimes by just looking around the room and noting different approaches to dress, attitudes towards schooling, tastes in music, ways of speaking, etc. It's culture, right? The difficulty, er, is difficulty within a process of certification. Difficulty as commodity. Difficulty within a system of education that isn't so much about education as it is about the conferring of some odd authority.. . . Booga booga. You've got it. Go in peace.

Resist. . . teach more poetry.

Jim Hall.

James C. Hall

Asst. Professor of African-American Studies and English

University of Illinois at Chicago

601 S. Morgan St.

Chicago, IL 60607-7112

██████████

██████████

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121. **Judy Roitman**

Re: Technique

Wed 6 May 1998

but only to point out that it seems to take
>different approaches to read Mullen and Stein than it does to read the
>canonical guys

| *Dave Zauhar*

Or as my beloved hs English teacher said to me, "but I can't explicate this!"

----- Judy Roitman

| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas |
memory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days."

██████████

| fax:

██████████

|

Larry Eigner,

1927-1996 ----- Note new area
code -----
<http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/>

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122. **William Burmeister Prod**
Re: Technique

Wed 6 May 1998

Henry G. wrote:

*That kind of difficulty is maybe not for its own sake but for the sake
of a cult or subculture of readers who ingest meaningless difficulty for the
sake of renouncing the world and joining the club.*

Nice (oppositional) viewpoints Henry. It seems that obscurity and difficulty for its own sake is the unavoidable lot of this avant-garde fin-de-siècle: the idea being in part to avoid absorption and subsequent diminution or oversimplification by mass society. There are as you say other more *difficult*, better and time honored means of doing this however. I think I understand what you mean by "joining the club" as not being representative of poet-reader relations, but rather poet-poet relations. I remember Octavio Paz talking of the existence of a poet's "secret society" of readers in an interview with Mark Strand. This enduring phrase speaks more about an economics of humanity, of the reality of minority (individual) tastes over mass tastes, of election, and even of luck. I assume that you are speaking of poets writing mainly for other poets. Pablo Neruda once remarked that he had regretted this.

What good is teaching "understanding" to literary production?

What good is literary production without understanding?

It seems that the poetics of literary production have, unwittingly, fallen in step with the times, with the techno paradigm of specialization, volume production, the consumable or throw-away, etc.

Well that does it for me. Now I know I'm wanted for questioning by the party. Maybe it's the camps for me. Sing a few bars of non nobis e te deum for me will you Henry?

The Party is always right.

- Trotsky

Rgds,

William Burmeister

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123. **joel lewis**
that old black magic
Wed 6 May 1998

*** Romanian cleaning woman in court for witchcraft

A cleaning woman working in a remote village hall in northeastern Romania will be brought to court on charges of witchcraft by the mayor, who fired her and confiscated her broom, a leading newspaper said Wednesday. The independent Evenimentul Zilei daily said the woman was found during office hours "burning candles on a stone" inside the village hall and "cursing hall leaders." It said the mayor planned to bring the stone to court as evidence. (Reuters)

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124. **Taylor Brady**
BUFFALO READING
Wed 6 May 1998

(This message comes from Dr. Robert J. Bertholf, curator of the Poetry and Rare Books Collection at SUNY, Buffalo):

"An Evening in Honor of Joel Oppenheimer"

A Poetry Reading by Lyman Gilmore

Lyman Gilmore recently published a biography of Joel Oppenheimer entitled:

"Don't Touch the Poet"

Date: Thursday, May 14, 1998

Time: 7:00 pm

Place: Talking Leaves Book Store
3144 Main Street, Buffalo, NY

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!!!

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125. **Mary Hilton**
New from primitive publications
Wed 6 May 1998

Now available from primitive publications -- "Saunter" by Joshua McKinney, a gentle yet challenging exploration of place and the desire to journey. McKinney draws upon the writings of Thoreau to conclude that the questioning of place, meaning, beauty, and nature rarely leads to a finality but does allow for a necessary wandering.

primitive publications is dedicated to bringing historically based text toward a greater accessibility, focusing on modern writing based on historical text, language or subject. Published approximately four to six times a year, the cost of one chapbook is \$4.00 or \$20.00 for six. Previous authors include Mary Hilton, Mark Wallace, Kristin Prevallet, Jefferson Hansen, and Sherry Brennan.

All checks may be made payable to Mary Hilton and mailed to:

primitive publications c/o Mary Hilton
1706 U Street, NW, #102
Washington, DC 20009
[REDACTED]

Inquiries, submissions, or requests to be included on the mailing list are welcome. Thank you. =

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126. **John Tranter**

Report on the Cambridge Conference of Contemporary Poetry

Wed 6 May 1998

Issue # 4 of Jacket magazine is presently being compiled.

Items of special interest so far available:

- Lugubrious, elegant and pointed ruminations by Bernardo Soares on the Cambridge Conference of Contemporary Poetry, held in Cambridge England in April 1998;
- Lawrence Joseph's review of Hans Magnus Enzensberger's new book of poems "Kiosk";
- David Lehman on the "Questions of Postmodernism".

Jacket # 4 is available, free, at

<http://www.jacket.zip.com.au/jacket04/index04.html>

from

John Tranter, 39 Short Street, Balmain NSW 2041, Sydney, Australia

tel ([REDACTED]) fax ([REDACTED])

<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/tranter/3poems-interview.html>

Editor, Jacket magazine: <http://www.jacket.zip.com.au>

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127. **Samuel R. Truitt**

Re: Technique

Wed 6 May 1998

Poetry is never more than the gap between form and content.

The moral of the content is the form?

From: Henry G

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Technique

Date: Wednesday, May 06, 1998 3:12PM

It sounds like an interesting class, David - but does it make sense to set up a dichotomy between (fun) doing and (boring) meaning? It's the old purloined letter trick, or hiding something in plain sight, isn't it? The Stein text still has "meanings" - and your students found them: in the surface playing with words as building blocks (I'm simplifying). Why reinforce these oppositions between old/new, doing/meaning? Like M. Magee suggested, there's pleasure in the hunt. These issues have been around forever - the Puritans reading for instruction only vs. all those wicked novels etc. But you do pay a price for excluding the effort to summarize, contextualize, respond to the meaning-implications. Writing is not all surface ornament, though as you say the opposing danger is more prevalent (slogging after the moral of the story). - Henry G.

Nec spe nec metu

Sam Truitt

123 West 78th Street, No. 4

New York, NY 10024

[REDACTED]

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128. **Henry G**

Re: Technique

Wed 6 May 1998

On Wed, 6 May 1998 20:54:35 -0400 Samuel R. Truitt said:

>Poetry is never more than the gap between form and content.

>

>>The moral of the content is the form?

OK Sam, yes, you win, nec spe nec metu. Babbling banalities. The rule is, though, as I understand it, that poetry is a sort of cosmological structure of increasing densities or destinies, gradually approaching the moral-historical

and reaching the fatal. Thus the search for "completed meaning" or the "organic" structure or wholeness of a work of art leads eventually to that transition to complete absorption. Something like what Mandelstam meant about "the meaning of a poet's life becomes clear at the moment of death". Poets on the level of Vallejo, Akhmatova, Celan, Dickinson - absorbing a life in its entirety. (This is sort of naive illusion- mongering, yet there's something to it. Many are called, few are chosen.) Who said "poetry is hero-worship"? These greatest poets cry out that life is wholeness, wholeness of meaning, completion, fruition, attainment, ripeness, abundance. There is no dialectic here, as if poetry were a vacation from decision and meaning, a sort of rebellion, a game for pampered children without consequence, a sophisticated amorality. How does that Rilke phrase go, something about at life's foundations, chance does not exist. What he means is we make a decision. There are these levels in poetry, and the greatest poems leave nothing to chance. Form and content!! Between the poet and the poem - both setting their faces toward each other - form & content are caught in a vise. - Henry Gould

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129. **Billy Little**

Re: I have had to unlearn the conventional ideas first

Wed 6 May 1998

yes i think imitation helps and i think writing the poem out helps and hearing the poem read or reading it aloud yourself or playing with it(replacing the nouns replacing the verbs)or "translating" like Zukofsky brodsky on frost makes it clear there's understanding and UNDERSTANDING.

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130. **R. Gancie**

Colossal Gamma Ray Blast

Wed 6 May 1998

"Modern science thus simply carries through in its methodology what experience has always striven after. Experience is valid only if it is confirmed; hence its dignity depends on its fundamental repeatability. But this means that experience, by its very nature, abolishes its history. This is true even of everyday experience, and how much more for any scientific version of it. Thus it is not just a chance one-sided emphasis of modern scientific theory, but has a foundation in fact, that the theory of experience is related teleologically to the truth that is derived from it. In recent times Edmund Husserl..."---Hans-Georg Gadamer, Truth and Method.---c.p.

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131. **Linda Russo**

Carto & BUFFALO

Thu 7 May 1998

Dear Taylor --

Cartografitti looks great!! i'm proud to be among that assemblage. Wendy Kramer's work looks familiar -- do you have it on your walls?

thx for fixing the spaces. I really appreciate it.

Already an e-acquaintance has emailed a response to "as i came along"

& how is botany coming along? in my essay on women edited pubs i'd like to write something about women-edited ezines --

i have another q. -- would you happen to be looking for someone to take over your lease (assuming you and tanya are still leaving?) I'm starting to stress about the move. I'm so excited to leave that i envision selling things @ our moving sale.

& thx again -- linda

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132. **Linda Russo**

Oops re: Carto Buffalo

Thu 7 May 1998

if you've read the original post, you'll notice it was missent! I hope you read it taylor!

sorry.

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133. **charles alexander**

praise

Thu 7 May 1998

John Tranter

I keep coming to Jacket -- for content and for web presentation. Thank you.

Is Jacket open for submissions, e-mail or postal?

thanks,

charles alexander

11/11/2016

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(xo)

Thu 7 May 1998

[illegible]

Thu 7 May 1998

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Thu 7 May 1998

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138. **Samuel R. Truitt**

Re: Technique

Thu 7 May 1998

Thank you Henry for your thoughtful ballast.

What I was gunning to get down is that the poetic per se is outside of technique---a runway (for models or airplanes and sometimes model airplanes)---but rather a function of grace. As Aquinas pointed out grace is not a function of effort, the "vice" clench. The wholeness you speak of is there---is here--is present. The truer translation from new testament you cite is not "few choosen" but "few choose to respond." But there's a lot of choice in chance----4 out of 6 letters, those loaded dice. As a critic once wrote artists put a frame around what is already there and say "look." A kind of finger pointing, and not always a painted heaven viz Sistine Chapel. It's just not out there but here. As Rilke also wrote, "where two heartways meet there stands no temple to Apollo."

*On Wed, 6 May 1998 20:54:35 -0400 Samuel R. Truitt said:
Poetry is never more than the gap between form and content.*

The moral of the content is the form?

*OK Sam, yes, you win, nec spe nec metu. Babbling banalities.
The rule is, though, as I understand it, that poetry is a sort of
cosmological structure of increasing densities or destinies,
gradually approaching the moral-historical and reaching the fatal.
Thus the search for "completed meaning" or the "organic" structure
or wholeness of a work of art leads eventually to that transition
to complete absorption. Something like what Mandelstam
meant about "the meaning of a poet's life becomes clear at the moment
of death".*

*Poets on the level of Vallejo, Akhmatova, Celan, Dickinson - absorbing
a life in its entirety. (This is sort of naive illusion-
mongering, yet there's something to it. Many are called, few are
chosen.) Who said "poetry is hero-worship"? These greatest poets
cry out that life is wholeness, wholeness of meaning, completion,
fruition, attainment, ripeness, abundance. There is no dialectic here,
as if poetry were a vacation from decision and meaning, a sort of
rebellion, a game for pampered children without consequence, a sophisticated
amorality. How does that Rilke phrase go, something about at life's
foundations, chance does not exist. What he means is we make a decision.
There are these levels in poetry, and the greatest poems leave nothing
to chance. Form and content!! Between the poet and the poem - both
setting their faces toward each other - form & content are caught in a
vise. - Henry Gould*

Nec spe nec metu

Sam Truitt
123 West 78th Street, No. 4
New York, NY 10024



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139. **Jordan Davis**
loud clover swerve

Thu 7 May 1998

Rec'd in mail:

Gare du Nord vol. 2 .. Kyger, Padgett, Notley, Oliver, Milne, Jarnot, Denby, O'Hara, E. Berrigan, Mulford, Gaspar tr. Riley, Wing, Rothenberg, Kemenczky tr. Mottram.

Tripwire no. 1 .. T. Davis, Brennan, Hale, Morrison, Toscano, Sikelianos, Wallace, Lin, Buuck, Robinson.

Faucheuse 2 .. Grubbs, Bruno, Moxley, Corless-Smith, Lucas, Caples, Rohrer, J. Davis, Shakespeare tr. Jouve tr. Krukowski, Yang.

12 Possible Titles no. 1 .. Ahern, Mohre, Boggs, Snipe.

The Haiku Year .. Gilroy, Grace, McKay, Martin, Phillips, Roth, Stipe.

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140. **Henry**
Re: Technique

Thu 7 May 1998

Completely agree with you, Sam (but is that really so about the choose rather than chosen?). Once again the "grace" definition in Trans. Friend is apropos (<http://www.morningred.com/friend>). I just think the fatal quality - the vise-grip of the poem - where every micro-syllable is exact and unexpected and absolute - is also an effect of grace. Grace is not only liberation and release; it's the way, it's the ultimate. The very aptitude for hard labor is a gift too. Girded. Awake and ready to go. Ready to go very out to lunch. - Henry G.

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141. **MAYHEW**
technical difficulties

Thu 7 May 1998

Are the producers and the readers of poetry the same exact people? If so, that would explain a certain emphasis on specialized technique and poetics. The reader according to this model is either a) poet or other artist, publisher etc b) literary critic/professor or c) student. If grad student then training to be (c) or already (a). If undergrad. fulfilling misc. requirements in highly specialized areas unrelated to one another and acquiring 'cultural capital' (P. Bourdieu).

Here is my crude sociological analysis, I welcome more refined ones:

"academic poetry"--the poetry of neo-conservative Eastern elites, ivy league schools etc... Requires an educated reader, acculturated into this elite class; "intellectual" but basically accepting of received notions of aesthetics. (Richard Howard, Anthony Hecht, James Merrill; the new formalists).

"creative writing"--the poetry of the suburban, reasonably well-educated, reasonably liberal, midwestern middle classes. The kind of people that feel edified by listening to Donald Hall on NPR. Not quite as cultured in the traditional, euro-centric Eastern elite model. You don't have to know who Dante is to practice this mode, or indeed to have read any poetry before 1975. You are likely to live in the mid-west and admire William Stafford.

"language poetry"--the poetry of urban intellectuals, largely bi-costal. Education overlaps somewhat with academic poets but is less elite institutionally speaking; more likely to be autodidacts or to have studied in less conventional ways. Identified with left politics. A more oblique relation to the academic institution: Adjunct, teaching in a field other than "English" or "creative writing," librarian. Agressively intellectual about poetry, rejecting the anti-intellectualism of "creative writing" and the neo-conservative elitism of "academic poetry."

This is all I have energy for at the moment; there are perhaps two or three other categories...

Jonathan Mayhew

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142. **henry mouf**
Re: technical difficulties

Thu 7 May 1998

More, more, Jonathan! the funny thing is there are no poets in any of those categories. Here's where the real poets are:

"byt poetry" - the poetry of "byt" (everyday life). These poets are usually either on the street or trying to get there. Either in their minds or for real. Self-non-educated. They started reacting poetically to experience at a young age; this reaction has become second nature; you find them at open mikes, bars, coffee houses, tenements. Their poetry ranges from the naive to the sophisticated, the vulgar to the learned, usually in a presentation that involves some kind of exhibitionism. Whitman and King David are the great exemplars of this mode. Most of the people in the other sociological categories you mentioned consider byt poets beneath contempt; but then, these people aren't poets. This also explains why the Muse is absent in America. Right. Ask Bob Holman. - Henry again, being Henry

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143. **ScoutEW**
Re: technical difficulties

Thu 7 May 1998

In a message dated 5/7/98 9:59:09 AM, you wrote:

<<"creative writing"--the poetry of the suburban, reasonably well-educated, reasonably liberal, midwestern middle classes. The kind of people that feel edified by listening to Donald Hall on NPR. Not quite as cultured in the traditional, euro-centric Eastern elite model. You don't have to know who Dante is to practice this mode, or indeed to have read any poetry before 1975. You are likely to live in the mid-west and admire William Stafford.

"language poetry"--the poetry of urban intellectuals, largely bi-costal. Education overlaps somewhat with academic poets but is less elite institutionally speaking; more likely to be autodidacts or to have studied in less conventional ways. Identified with left politics. A more oblique relation to the academic institution: Adjunct, teaching in a field other than "English" or "creative writing," librarian. Agressively intellectual about poetry, rejecting the anti-intellectualism of "creative writing" and the neo-conservative elitism of "academic poetry."

This is all I have energy for at the moment; there are perhaps two or three other categories...>>

Sometime things on this list make me laugh, and well this stuff is either a joke
or just too fucking much...

Erik Sweet

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144. **MAYHEW**

Re: technical difficulties

Thu 7 May 1998

Well ScoutEW, it is supposed to make you laugh, AND is supposed to be too fucking much as well, in your eloquent phrase, so both goals are accomplished. As for you Henry, I reject the category of real poet who magically frees herself from all such factors. A few more categories:

amateur poetry--the poetry of all my aunts, sisters, cousins, who have published poetry. College educated on the whole, but not professionally invested in the poetry world. They publish in community college Literary magazines; are part of the clientele for "creative writing," often in less academic settings. I know more women than men in this category but that might just be my extended family.

poetry based on identity politics--this is a tricky category because it overlaps with all the preceding ones. Cherrie Moraga was here the other day and read an autobiographical narrative that stylistically was identical to "creative writing" prose, with a few Spanish words thrown in. Other identity poetry is amateur, from the sociological point of view. The poetry of elite neo-conservative gay men, while not framed as "identity politics" does express the habitus of an easily identifiable group. Identity politics also intersects with language poetry... I haven't worked this out yet; I guess what I'm talking about is poetry that expresses the aims of social movements in a fairly direct way.

JM

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145. **William Burmeister Prod**

Re: technical difficulties

Thu 7 May 1998

On May 7, 11:13am, ScoutEW wrote:

> Subject: Re: technical difficulties

> In a message dated 5/7/98 9:59:09 AM, you wrote:

>

> <<"creative writing"--the poetry of the suburban, reasonably well-educated,
> reasonably liberal, midwestern middle classes. The kind of people that
> feel edified by listening to Donald Hall on NPR. Not quite as cultured in
> the traditional, euro-centric Eastern elite model. You don't have to know
> who Dante is to practice this mode, or indeed to have read any poetry
> before 1975. You are likely to live in the mid-west and admire William
> Stafford.

>
> "language poetry"--the poetry of urban intellectuals, largely bi-costal.
> Education overlaps somewhat with academic poets but is less elite
> institutionally speaking; more likely to be autodidacts or to have studied
> in less conventional ways. Identified with left politics. A more
> oblique relation to the academic institution: Adjunct, teaching in a
> field other than "English" or "creative writing," librarian. Agressively
> intellectual about poetry, rejecting the anti-intellectualism of "creative
> writing" and the neo-conservative elitism of "academic poetry."
>
> This is all I have energy for at the moment; there are perhaps two or
> three other categories...>>
>
> Sometime things on this list make me laugh, and well this stuff is either a
> joke
> or just too fucking much...
>
> Erik Sweet
>-- End of excerpt from ScoutEW

Hello Eric! I wish it were a joke. Unfortunately it is not and therefore is fucking too much I agree. Henry's assent doesn't help either.

Best,

William Burmeister

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146. **John Latta**
Re: technical difficulties
Thu 7 May 1998

On Thu, 7 May 1998, MAYHEW wrote:

| *professionally invested in the poetry world*

Here's one scary notion. And one that "careers" blindly across categories. Those spinster aunts got one thing right by being not...

John Latta

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147. **k. lederer**

Re: technical difficulties

Thu 7 May 1998

I think I'm a little confused here about language poetry--

Didn't Palmer and Hejinian go to Harvard? Scalapino to an MA at Berkeley?
Watten a PhD at Berkeley?

And then there's Iowa... which at this point is basically an "academic poetry" center (lots of Ivy-League etc...)... but is also in the Midwest... with Marvin Bell still teaching here...

I would say that most of the students at Iowa study at one time or other with a member of all of the categories being posted here (including the spinster aunt...)

Best,
Katy

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148. **Michael Magee**

Re: technical difficulties

Thu 7 May 1998

"Identity politics also intersects with language poetry... I haven't worked this out yet; I guess what I'm talking about is poetry that expresses the aims of social movements in a fairly direct way.

JM"

This is beating a terminally ill horse I guess, but this seems not even to be at the level of caricature, not worked out indeed. How in the world is a Carla Harryman, a Bob Perelman, Hejinian, Bernstein, practicing "identity politics"? however else one might define them as "language poets." Is the resolute refusal of a stable subject compatible with identity politics? Not any brand I know of. -m.

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149. **Judy Roitman**

Re: technical difficulties

Thu 7 May 1998

I think I'm a little confused here about language poetry--

*Didn't Palmer and Hejinian go to Harvard? Scalapino to an MA at Berkeley?
Watten a PhD at Berkeley?*

And then there's Iowa... which at this point is basically an "academic poetry" center (lots of Ivy-League etc...)... but is also in the Midwest... with Marvin Bell still teaching here...

I would say that most of the students at Iowa study at one time or other with a member of all of the categories being posted here (including the spinster aunt...)

*Best,
Katy*

Jonathan himself works in Kansas, commutes to St. Louis. Susan Smith Nash (or is it Nash Smith, I always blow it, sorry) lives in Oklahoma. The geography is a little inaccurate.

----- Judy Roitman
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas |
memory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days."
[REDACTED] | fax: [REDACTED] | Larry Eigner,
1927-1996 ----- Note new area
code -----
http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/

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150. **MAYHEW**
Re: technical difficulties

Thu 7 May 1998

My aunts are not "spinsters," by the way; that is not a word I ever use. Plus, the ones I am thinking of are married or divorced with numerous offspring. I find it curious that the word spinster somehow insinuated itself into the discussion, through the cultural cliché "spinster aunt."

Otherwise, thanks for all your corrections.

Jonathan Mayhew

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151. **henry**

Re: technical difficulties

Thu 7 May 1998

On Thu, 7 May 1998 10:51:26 -0500 MAYHEW said:

>accomplished. As for you Henry, I reject the category of real poet who

>magically frees herself from all such factors. A few more categories:

That's the magic of it - rejection reinforces the category. - Henry can't be byt

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152. **Christopher W. Alexander**

Re: (xo)

Thu 7 May 1998

c y c l o p e a n l y y e r s

y y c l o p e a n l y y e r r

cyclopeanly e

lo pian y

attention!! attention!!

opiano l y

cyclopean players who

penche l

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lop-ea p

Key

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y rs ahm l

cannot transmit on insecure line

ecam c

ryso y

.More later

save buffers c

XO

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153. **William Burmeister Prod**

Re: technical difficulties

Thu 7 May 1998

On May 7, 12:44pm, henry wrote:

> Subject: Re: technical difficulties

> On Thu, 7 May 1998 10:51:26 -0500 MAYHEW said:

> >accomplished. As for you Henry, I reject the category of real poet who

> >magically frees herself from all such factors. A few more categories:

>

> That's the magic of it - rejection reinforces the category.

> - Henry can't be byt

>-- End of excerpt from henry

byt? What's that? Russian for "boot" ? :-}

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154. **henry**

Re: technical difficulties

Thu 7 May 1998

byt? What's that? Russian for "boot" ? :-}

I believe it's Russian for "everyday life". Viktoria Schweitzer has a biography of Tsvetaeva titled something like "Byt i bytie" or Everydayness and eternity. Byt I think actually means something a little stronger - drabness, ordinariness, mundane,... it's pronounced sort of like "beat", appropriately. I'm a proto-byt poet myself. - HG

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155. **ScoutEW**

Re: technical difficulties

Thu 7 May 1998

still laughing....

still laughing...

erik sweet

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156. **Christopher W. Alexander**

Re: technical difficulties

Thu 7 May 1998

OED gives "byt" as the anglo-saxon term for byte, a unit composed of 8 bits. the earliest known ex. is in the compound "eyenbyt of inwit", which refers to the processing speed of the i586 precursor to our Pentium II chip.

thx to Jonathan for the wonderful taxonomy of contemporary po.

thx to Taylor Brady for a beautiful first iss.
of Cartographitti. thx to Alan Sondheim for
"Help help we're lost in the Cosmos I say to
the 89-year-old man sitting next to me as we
leave Campbelltown" (incl. in said iss.).

thx to everyone, just thanks.

love, thx-1138

..

Christopher W. Alexander etc. / nominative press collective

email: [REDACTED]

snail-mail: P.O. Box 522402 / Salt Lake City UT 84152-2402

press/zine site: <http://choengmon.lib.utah.edu/~calexand/nonce/>

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157. **Keston Sutherland**

Reading at Harvard

Thu 7 May 1998

There will be a poetry reading in the Tonkins Room, Winthrop House, Harvard,
on

Wednesday 13th May at 8.00. Featuring:

Dan Bouchard, Andrea Brady, Andrew DuBois and Keston Sutherland

The frolic is free to all, collegiate cookies and coffee and if I have anything to do
with it wine will be available, also free. Books for sale etc. Please come along
and support this event (a minor inroad at The Academy).

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158. **Maria Damon**

Re: technical difficulties

Thu 7 May 1998

yeah, thanks, jonathan. i was wondering whether or not to make that --uh --
intervention but it's nice to be beaten to the draw by the person supposedly
being paraphrased.

At 11:43 AM -0500 5/7/98, MAYHEW wrote:

>My aunts are not "spinsters," by the way; that is not a word I ever
>use. Plus, the ones I am thinking of are married or divorced with
>numerous offspring. I find it curious that the word spinster somehow
>insinuated itself into the discussion, through the cultural cliché

>"spinster aunt."
>
>Otherwise, thanks for all your corrections.
>
>Jonathan Mayhew

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159. **John Latta**
Re: technical difficulties
Thu 7 May 1998

On Thu, 7 May 1998, MAYHEW wrote:

> My aunts are not "spinsters," by the way; that is not a word I ever
> use. Plus, the ones I am thinking of are married or divorced with
> numerous offspring. I find it curious that the word spinster somehow
> insinuated itself into the discussion, through the cultural cliché
> "spinster aunt."
>
>

I guess if "spinster" insinuated itself into the discussion as cultural cliché (and I did do that insinuating) it's because the taxonomy as presented seemed its own hodge-podge of cultural clichés, which is why, I imagine, Erik Sweet was having such a laugh.

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160. **Hzinnes**
Re: technical difficulties
Thu 7 May 1998

7 May 1998

Dear Katy

I laughed at your last email. So apropos!

Best

Harriet

████████

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161. **joel lewis**

Re: Non-Writing Readers of Poetry

Thu 7 May 1998

Must say there are a lot more of "them" out there than we poets realize. The readership of formalist folk like Hecht and Wilbur are mostly non-writers. Also got a Penguin copy of Robert Frost's Early Poems in a review box that included Alice Notley's wonderful new book. The editor of selection argues hard how Frost wanted to reach an audience, as opposed to those crummy modernists like Pound & Eliot. Can't say I have much feeling for Frost, but I've known dozens of folks, mostly non-poets, who treasure him.

I must say I never had trouble w/ the poetry audience being composed of other poets. Are we not a wee bit like Commies of yore trying to get people to pick up the sullen art? Many of us were non-writer readers briefly, but the urge to write fixed that. I mean, it ain't like taking up the cello.

I've found the best response to my work coming from non-writin' artists in other disciplines.

joel lewis

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162. **Schuchat Simon**

Re: technical difficulties

Thu 7 May 1998

Jonathan's taxonomy is very amusing and also amusing are the other posts it has provoked. let me however object to his original premise, which was that only "producers" "consume" poetry, i.e., the readers and writers are the same. or that you have to at least be in an academic context to be reading poetry, of whatever ilk.

first, there are persons active in other arts who read poetry (I guess that is analogous to academics in non-literary departments). second, there really are people who just read the stuff. although (as K Koch quotes somebody in the most recent NY Review) writing is an intense form of reading, it is not necessary for all readers to write. it is possible to read poetry, including by living, contemporary poets, and not want or need to write it yourself. (it is true that in most civilizations there has always been a large overlap between readers and writers of poetry, and literature has always been disseminated partly through educational systems, but the basic point is that there are others out there.)

its too early in the morning for this to be as clear as I would like it to be, but let us not forget the non-writing reader.

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163. **Billy Little**
Re: technical difficulties

Thu 7 May 1998

maybe we could commission that goy rotin, henri rotin could do a monument for the unknown reader, roto reader, they never write to me sometimes i have to write a poem backwards and read it in the mirror to understand it daed si luap daed si adnil on daed eht evil gnol

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164. **Aviva000**
Non-Writing Readers of Poetry

Thu 7 May 1998

In a message dated 98-05-07 20:40:54 EDT, you write:

let us not forget the non-writing reader.

Increasingly, I'm hearing from non-writing friends, acquaintances, and other people (who I've crawled out of my deep winter hole to speak with) that they read poetry. A dancer I met at the local bookstore (she was buying a blank book for a friend's birthday) listened to a conversation I was having with the storeowner about various Szyborska translators. At the point that I mentioned my struggles with Rilke translations, she joined in by saying, "I read Rilke almost every night last year. I love his work. I'm not sure what my year would have been like if I'd not had Rilke." This dancer is completely immersed in her teaching and performing, and has nothing to do with the "literary" world (in all its silly permutations), but simply read this poetry of her own volition. She was certainly not reading Rilke for help with her writing craft, nor was she stimulated to read poetry by the people around her. This is a single instance of the many conversations I've had with folks who find their way to a poet (or poets) for personal, rather than "artistic" reasons.

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165. **Brent Long**
Re: Non-Writing Readers of Poetry

Thu 7 May 1998

What do you mean "She was certainly not reading Rilke for help with her writing craft"????? Something wrong with Rilke's craft, Aviva???

At 11:38 PM 5/7/98 EDT, you wrote:

>In a message dated 98-05-07 20:40:54 EDT, you write:

>

>> let us not forget the non-writing reader.

>>

>

>Increasingly, I'm hearing from non-writing friends, acquaintances, and other
>people (who I've crawled out of my deep winter hole to speak with) that they
>read poetry. A dancer I met at the local bookstore (she was buying a blank
>book for a friend's birthday) listened to a conversation I was having with
the

>storeowner about various Szymborska translators. At the point that I
>mentioned my struggles with Rilke translations, she joined in by saying, "I
>read Rilke almost every night last year. I love his work. I'm not sure what
>my year would have been like if I'd not had Rilke." This dancer is
completely

>immersed in her teaching and performing, and has nothing to do with the
>"literary" world (in all its silly permutations), but simply read this poetry
>of her own volition. She was certainly not reading Rilke for help with her
>writing craft, nor was she stimulated to read poetry by the people around
her.

>This is a single instance of the many conversations I've had with folks who
>find their way to a poet (or poets) for personal, rather than "artistic"
>reasons.

>

>

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166. **R. Gancie**
copula & contingency

Fri 8 May 1998

"Where is that huge piece of method subjected to critique and clarification [---
that method] that leads from the intuitively given surrounding world to the
idealization of mathematics and to the interpretation of these idealizations as
objective being?"---Edmund Husserl-The Crisis of the European Sciences and
Transcendental Phenomenology-cp

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167. **Henry**
Re: technical difficulties
Fri 8 May 1998

I'll wash your socks, Danny, if it makes me a bytter Pyshkin. The irony of bytie is that byt poets become very byt on the stryt because they avoid the dad-byt chores that make up practycal exystence in this bad-byd wyrld of urs. They nyd encryrgment to gyt on with bytie. As Julia Kunina puts it in a recynt poym:

...ottogo chto pyechali smertyelna
i razyedaet tkani kak lischai protalin.

translated loosely:

Because grief is fatal, the fabric fades to a patchy scurf.

(I'm wrytyng a mymoir called "I Was Bytie Poet Who Lost His Ie")

- Hyrnry Gylld

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168. **F. W. Perrella**
Web Del Sol - What's New Page
Fri 8 May 1998

You're invited to visit the What's New page at Web Del Sol
<http://webdelsol.com/solhome.htm> and check out the Conjunctions literary magazine highlighted there. Edited by Ben Morrow at Bard College, the current issue #29 is called Tributes - American Writers on American Writers.

Another magazine, V_trope, is highlighted - its inaugural issue features works by Brent Hendricks, John Yau, and Gordon Lish.

Chinese writer Can Xue is also newly featured at the What's New page.

There's plenty to see and plenty to comment on at Web Del Sol; your email feedback is much appreciated. Thanks.

Anne Perrella

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169. **Mark Prejsnar**
technique and fury
Fri 8 May 1998

*The best technique is that which breaks apart.

*The best technique is that which disturbs.

*The best formal approach is that which cannot be easily taught (that which is taut); and which does not easily find approbation within the inert structures of insitutions (be they universities, or Nedge).

*Poetry itself is a strange mystery, to those who look for meaning.

*I never cease to amazed at the profound conservatisim of folks on this list, which was supposedly founded "not as a general discussion of poetics, but of new and innovative formal approaches" etc. etc.

..peculiar

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170. **henry**

Re: technique and fury

Fri 8 May 1998

On Fri, 8 May 1998 10:01:09 -0400 Mark Prejsnar said:

>*The best technique is that which breaks apart.

>

>*The best technique is that which disturbs.

>

>*The best formal approach is that which cannot be easily taught (that
>which is taut); and which does not easily find approbation within the
>inert structures of insitutions (be they universities, or Nedge).

Nedge isn't an institution, it's a magazine. Nor does it seem to be inert - it's a pile of correspondence and ms. that seethes and boils with unanswered SASEs and flows around my little nedge work area with sharp paper edges and paper clips and stuff. It's my byt & I can barely cop with it. I don't get easy approbation from SPD either, or other inert institutions of the vast and bulbous avant-garde.

>

>*I never cease to amazed at the profound conservatisim of folks on this
>list, which was supposedly founded "not as a general discussion of
>poetics, but of new and innovative formal approaches" etc. etc.

Where do the poetics of Tom McGrath fit in with your politico-poetic recipe, Mark? Look at all that rhyme and meter!! He's more left wing than you'll ever be. Rage on.... - Henry G

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171. **Aviva000**

Re: Non-Writing Readers of Poetry

Fri 8 May 1998

In a message dated 98-05-07 23:54:05 EDT, you write:

What do you mean "She was certainly not reading Rilke for help with her writing craft"????? Something wrong with Rilke's craft, Aviva???

Brent, Rilke's craft is just fine. The dancer (Tracy), on the other hand, has a problem with her writing craft. She has none. None at all. She dances. She doesn't write. So, she reads Rilke for the various aesthetic, spiritual and other pleasures that his writing offers. She doesn't read Rilke, as I have done from time to time, for ideas on how I might write better poetry. That's all I was trying to say!

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172. **Aviva000**

conservatism on this list...

Fri 8 May 1998

In a message dated 98-05-08 10:01:45 EDT, you write:

the profound conservatisim of folks on this list,

Mark, which instances of conservatism (for example, or most recently) are you thinking of?

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173. **DANIEL L. COLLIER**

Re: technical difficulties

Fri 8 May 1998

Henry, et al,

I ran "byt i bytie" by the translation staff. They enjoyed it.

Byt is fairly easy; you're on the mark with everyday, ordinary life. Both people I asked mentioned first cooking, then laundry... then asked me what "drabness" meant and said "yes, that's it: drabness, ordinariness, mundane" or something to that effect.

Does this mean you're a proto-laundrist poet? (I should send you my socks... we do our laundry in our teeny-tiny tub and it's not much fun.) The more romantic overtones implied in your first mention of byt do not at all figure into the

Russian word; getting onto or thinking about getting onto the street is more appropriate to ideas of "beat" in the American cultural-literary sense (or to a whole swath of 1980's hard rock & heavy metal lyrics).

The concept of a "byt" poet could maybe work into Zen sidewalk sweeping etc., or maybe could be taken into more interesting directions... what's it mean to define yourself as the poet of drab, ordinary, everyday, underwear-scrub-in-the-tiny-tub existence? (There is no valorization of the everyday in the Russian sense of the word.)

Bytie is more difficult. "Eternity" doesn't work. Bytie means "life" in a philosophical sense, and we tried "sense of life", "nature of life", and "understanding of life" without success.

One of our dictionaries says: "being, existence, objective reality" [Yuri says the last only occasionally applies]. Then cites the fundamental Marxist bit "Social being determines one's consciousness." It's also in the name of the first book of the bible: "kniga bytia", Genesis.

The point of the title, according to translator Yuri, is that Byt and Bytie are opposites which overlap in sound and meaning and cannot exist without each other. In Russian the title is playful, evocative and beautiful.

All of this may be a bit of an aside, but I enjoyed it. And if it makes Erik laugh some more, my job is done.

Danny

■■■■ -work

■■■■ - home

"Spring! Where's my head?" -- Viktor Tsoi

>byt? What's that? Russian for "boot" ? :-}

I believe it's Russian for "everyday life". Viktoria Schweitzer has a biography of Tsvetaeva titled something like "Byt i bytie" or Everydayness and eternity. Byt I think actually means something a little stronger - drabness, ordinariness, mundane,... it's pronounced sort of like "beat", appropriately. I'm a proto-byt poet myself. - HG

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174. **Gary Sullivan**

"radical"

Fri 8 May 1998

The first cite for this word in Webster's 3rd:

[ME, fr. LL _radicalis_, fr. L _radicula_, _radic-_, _radix_ root + _-alis_ -al -- more at ROOT] 1: of or relating to the root: proceeding directly from the root . . .

* * *

I've thought a lot about this word, about one of its current meanings as well as its etymological root(s). What can it possibly mean, today, with respect to aesthetics, lifestyles & politics . . . ?

Does this word have any contemporary value? Is it genuinely descriptive? Is poetry radical . . . aesthetically or with respect to "vision" . . . today? I can only think of a handful of poets, of the last twenty, thirty years, I would even vaguely consider calling "radical," and I'm not sure I'd even go so far as to call THEM radical. I don't think, for instance, much of the work under the microscope in _Radical Artifice_ is genuinely radical . . . I think the writing of Andrews, Bernstein, Drucker, Hejinian, McCaffery is ultimately very safe, aesthetically, if not (compared to other things) particularly popular . . . and certainly the lives (context) out of which this work has arrived has been equally safe . . . which is not to say I don't enjoy this writing or respect how anyone lives their life . . . what I know of anyone's, anyway . . . just that I don't see any of it transgressing or arriving beyond any significant pre-established boundaries . . .

While I don't think the radical/conservative distinction is utterly without value, I'm not convinced it's of any significant value with respect to poetry-making in late 20th century western culture. I don't, in other words, understand the value of manufacturing camps of poets ("radical" v. "conservative") . . . if what so-called "radical" poets are doing, essentially, is largely a form of habitual attendance to aesthetics. (Which has been itself an habitual MO for at least a century).

Can someone with an investment in the Radical/Conservative Poetics distinction please elaborate their investment? With specific examples & elaboration? It'd help me think further about this.

Thanks,

Gary Sullivan



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175. **Robert Hale**

Re: "radical"

Fri 8 May 1998

THE ERRORS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

INSTEAD OF DESTROYING THE OLD STATE THE FRENCH SHOULD HAVE BUILT ON THE FOUNDATION THEIR ANCESTORS HAD LEFT THEM

YOU MIGHT, IF YOU PLEASED, have profited of our example and have given to your recovered freedom a correspondent dignity. Your privileges, though discontinued, were not lost to memory. Your constitution, it is true, whilst you were out of possession, suffered waste and dilapidation; but you possessed in some parts the walls and in all the foundations of a noble and venerable castle. You might have repaired those walls; you might have built on those old foundations. Your constitution was suspended before it was perfected, but you had the elements of a constitution very nearly as good as could be wished.

And so goes the opening lines of Edmund Burke's "Reflections" -- the foundation of modern conservatism. This is the definition, still very relevant and functional today, that some of those you mention work from/against in their various strategies -- Andrews, from instance.

Erode and destroy the old oppressive systems that don't want to change because it would involve questioning, compromising their power base, their way of life, their order of things.

At 12:09 PM 5/8/98 -0400, you wrote:

>The first cite for this word in Webster's 3rd:

>

>[ME, fr. LL _radicalis_, fr. L _radicula_, _radic-, _radix_ root + _-alis_ -al
>-- more at ROOT] 1: of or relating to the root: proceeding directly from the
>root . . .

>

>***

>

>I've thought a lot about this word, about one of its current meanings as well
>as its etymological root(s). What can it possibly mean, today, with respect to
>aesthetics, lifestyles & politics . . . ?

>

>Does this word have any contemporary value? Is it genuinely descriptive? Is
>poetry radical . . . aesthetically or with respect to "vision" . . . today? I
>can only think of a handful of poets, of the last twenty, thirty years, I would
>even vaguely consider calling "radical," and I'm not sure I'd even go so far as
>to call THEM radical. I don't think, for instance, much of the work under the
>microscope in _Radical Artifice_ is genuinely radical . . . I think the writing
>of Andrews, Bernstein, Drucker, Hejinian, McCaffery is ultimately very safe,
>aesthetically, if not (compared to other things) particularly popular . . . and
>certainly the lives (context) out of which this work has arrived has been

>equally safe . . . which is not to say I don't enjoy this writing or respect
>how anyone lives their life . . . what I know of anyone's, anyway . . . just
>that I don't see any of it transgressing or arriving beyond any significant
>pre-established boundaries . . .
>
>While I don't think the radical/conservative distinction is utterly without
>value, I'm not convinced it's of any significant value with respect to
>poetry-making in late 20th century western culture. I don't, in other words,
>understand the value of manufacturing camps of poets ("radical" v.
>"conservative") . . . if what so-called "radical" poets are doing, essentially,
>is largely a form of habitual attendance to aesthetics. (Which has been itself
>an habitual MO for at least a century).
>
>Can someone with an investment in the Radical/Conservative Poetics
distinction
>please elaborate their investment? With specific examples & elaboration? It'd
>help me think further about this.
>
>Thanks,
>
>Gary Sullivan
>[REDACTED]
>
>

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176. **Judy Roitman**

Re: "radical"

Fri 8 May 1998

*just
that I don't see any of it transgressing or arriving beyond any significant
pre-established boundaries . . .*

As a kid I was very struck by Kierkegaard's notion of the knight of faith which, in my no doubt inaccurate version, is the person so spiritually radical in the lack of taint of ego as to seem completely ordinary.

----- Judy Roitman
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas |
memory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days."
[REDACTED] | fax: [REDACTED] | Larry Eigner,
1927-1996 ----- Note new area

code -----
http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/

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177. **Mark Leahy**

query -- Sayre

Fri 8 May 1998

just a short question to the list;
is anyone aware where Henry M.Sayre, the author of _The Object of
Performance_, (Univ of Chicago, 1989) is based now?
is he attached to an academic institution?

thanks in anticipation

Mark

Mark Leahy

School of English

University of Leeds

LS2 9JT

United Kingdom

tel: 0044 (0)113 2334739

fax: 0044 (0)113 2334774

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178. **Maria Damon (Maria Damon)**

Re: "radical"

Fri 8 May 1998

gary, i have no answer but i find this line of questioning very useful indeed.--md

At 12:09 PM 5/8/98, Gary Sullivan wrote:

>The first cite for this word in Webster's 3rd:

>

>[ME, fr. LL _radicalis_, fr. L _radicula_, _radic-_, _radix_ root + _-alis_ -al

>-- more at ROOT] 1: of or relating to the root: proceeding directly from the

>root . . .

>

>***

>

>I've thought a lot about this word, about one of its current meanings as well

>as its etymological root(s). What can it possibly mean, today, with respect to

>aesthetics, lifestyles & politics . . . ?

>

>Does this word have any contemporary value? Is it genuinely descriptive? Is
>poetry radical . . . aesthetically or with respect to "vision" . . . today? I
>can only think of a handful of poets, of the last twenty, thirty years, I would
>even vaguely consider calling "radical," and I'm not sure I'd even go so far as
>to call THEM radical. I don't think, for instance, much of the work under the
>microscope in *_Radical Artifice_* is genuinely radical . . . I think the writing
>of Andrews, Bernstein, Drucker, Hejinian, McCaffery is ultimately very safe,
>aesthetically, if not (compared to other things) particularly popular . . . and
>certainly the lives (context) out of which this work has arrived has been
>equally safe . . . which is not to say I don't enjoy this writing or respect
>how anyone lives their life . . . what I know of anyone's, anyway . . . just
>that I don't see any of it transgressing or arriving beyond any significant
>pre-established boundaries . . .

>

>While I don't think the radical/conservative distinction is utterly without
>value, I'm not convinced it's of any significant value with respect to
>poetry-making in late 20th century western culture. I don't, in other words,
>understand the value of manufacturing camps of poets ("radical" v.
>"conservative") . . . if what so-called "radical" poets are doing, essentially,
>is largely a form of habitual attendance to aesthetics. (Which has been itself
>an habitual MO for at least a century).

>

>Can someone with an investment in the Radical/Conservative Poetics
distinction
>please elaborate their investment? With specific examples & elaboration? It'd
>help me think further about this.

>

>Thanks,

>

>Gary Sullivan

> [REDACTED]

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179. **Henry Gould**

Re: radical

Fri 8 May 1998

Last post for a while, then I will be quiet.
Just some thoughts on "radical"

A radix or root works paradoxically: by digging deep underground it sends up
flowers and fruit high in the air.

In *MERCHANT OF VENICE* the character Gratiano is on the surface a brutal, vulgar, bigoted, obnoxious boor. But at the root of his name is "grace". Gratiano is like the bull in the china shop - both consciously & inadvertently he upsets the careful and hypocritical veneers and repressions of the main characters; he is a sort of truth-teller. By naming him Gratiano Shakey is being ironic - epitomizing gracelessness - but perhaps also characterizing the RADICAL working of grace, as truth breaking down the constructs of human pride, fear, hypocrisy, self-delusion (all richly on display in the Merchant himself, Antonio).

Now the political poets out there will be thinking, O God, another traditionalist Burkean deal about human nature... what does this have to do with radical politics?

Imagine this: democracy - real commonwealth - HAS to be based on a deep or radical recognition of human weaknesses. WE DEPEND ON EACH OTHER to eat, live, love, divest ourselves of our illusions. How many utopias and revolutions are based on truly reactionary IDEALS of Superman the worker God the doer of Great Deeds the mighty Just One etc... by the same token, radical life/poetry HAS to be based on a deep recognition of human capabilities. How many years go by under the dead weight of complacent and feeble establishments... "A sower went out to sow. The seed fell on poor ground...etc....The seed is the word. Some hear it gladly - but because they have NO ROOT IN THEMSELVES, they quickly fall away..." "let the dead bury their own dead..."

Radical poetry takes its proud (Luciferean) freedom and plants it humbly back in the compost of human problems and questions. That's what makes it radical, and readable. There is also radically beautiful poetry, so overwhelmed with itself that its beauty creates a radical relation with the byt world of mediocrity, the safe, the humdrum. So free & beautiful as to constitute a threat not only to the byt world but to byt talk about poetry and this byt list and yours truly byt

Henry G

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180. **Gary Sullivan**

Re: "radical"

Fri 8 May 1998

"As a kid I was very struck by Kierkegaard's notion of the knight of faith which, in my no doubt inaccurate version, is the person so spiritually radical in the lack of taint of ego as to seem completely ordinary."

This is a lovely thought, whether yours or Soren's, but I think it can be used, and no doubt will be used, to apply to anyone. It can also be used dismissively, like EST's "You say you didn't get it? You got it" or Huey Lewis's "It's hip to be square." Because the radical/conservative distinction relies on definition for its authority, I want definition in any defense to challenges to it. The above isn't, to me, definitive . . . yet. Could you maybe give me an example of poets who are so radical as to seem completely ordinary, and contrast this to poets who seem completely ordinary but whose ordinariness is not causally related to their being radical? More significantly, could you explain how their radicalness transforms itself into the outward appearance of ordinariness? What that process is?

"Andrews for instance . . . Erode and destroy the old oppressive systems that don't want to change because it would involve questioning, compromising their power base, their way of life, their order of things."

What oppressive system can Andrews's writing be said to erode? His work and career arrive from the context of capitalism and literary production/career-making and readings of same are subsumed by the same context into which they arrived, having made, at best, minor ripples on the surface of any system, oppressive or otherwise. Some of his books are mass-produced, & if I'm not mistaken replete with validating blurbs from respectable, authoritative contemporaries in positions of influence and power relative to the canonization, reading and/or dissemination of literary product. His readings generally cost money to attend, and are introduced with validating verbal montages of awards, publications, career highlights and blurbs garnered throughout his near-life-long navigation through western literary society. What success or visibility he has had has been the result of hard work (writing well) and socially acceptable career attendance. Has his work thrown into question his own power base, his own way of life, his own order of things? Andrews has taught at Fordham University for the last 20, 30 years. His name pops up in *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*. His inclusion in this volume does not seem to erode the thing's power, nor (more significantly) the system which gave rise to it. If anything, it helps to support it, lending it a kind of "street cred" among those of us who do recognize value in Andrews's work. Could you maybe elaborate, explaining specifically what and how you see Andrews's writing destroying and eroding?

Please note that I'm not questioning value, in general, in Andrews's writing and career; I'm questioning the ultimate value of reading it through the radical vs. conservative lens.

Thanks again,

Gary Sullivan



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181. **William Burmeister Prod**

Re: "radical"

Fri 8 May 1998

We still have our own Robespierres running around someplace. We have academic Robespierres, corporate Robespierres, government Robespierres, legal Robespierres, social Robespierres, ... Get it? Isn't conservatism, in plain human terms, something to be stumbled upon? How many of our conservatives have read Edmund Burke or any other conservative writings I wonder?

The center no longer holds according to what one reads; they just don't know it yet.

I wonder what Hoon would say now?

I have to bolt--I think I hear one of my oxen being gored and all that.

The Emperor of ice cream, one of the neo non-conservatives.

On May 8, 9:54am, Robert Hale wrote:

> Subject: Re: "radical"

> THE ERRORS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

>

> INSTEAD OF DESTROYING THE OLD STATE THE FRENCH SHOULD HAVE BUILT ON THE

> FOUNDATION THEIR ANCESTORS HAD LEFT THEM

>

> YOU MIGHT, IF YOU PLEASED, have profited of our example and have

> given to your recovered freedom a correspondent dignity. Your privileges,

> though discontinued, were not lost to memory. Your constitution, it is true,

> whilst you

> were out of possession, suffered waste and dilapidation; but you possessed

> in some parts the walls and in all the foundations of a noble and venerable

> castle. You might have repaired those walls; you might have built on those

> old foundations. Your constitution was suspended before it was perfected,

> but you had the elements of a constitution very nearly as good as could be

> wished.

>

>

> And so goes the opening lines of Edmund Burke's "Reflections" -- the

> foundation of modern conservatism. This is the definition, still very

- > relevant and functional today, that some of those you mention work
- > from/against in their various strategies -- Andrews, from instance.
- >
- > Erode and destroy the old oppressive systems that don't want to change
- > because it would involve questioning, compromising their power base, their
- > way of life, their order of things.

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182. **Robert Zamsky**

Re: query -- Sayre

Fri 8 May 1998

I don't if he's there any more, but Professor Sayre used to teach at Oregon State University.

Robert Zamsky

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183. **Judy Roitman**

Re: "radical"

Fri 8 May 1998

*Could you maybe
give me an example of poets who are so radical as to seem completely ordinary,*

Eigner

Creeley

Neidecker (sp? I never can get it right)

*and contrast this to poets who seem completely ordinary but whose ordinariness
is not causally related to their being radical?*

any recent poet laureate

But the real issue is whether somebody does something to be outrageous or because it is simply the next obvious step to take. So, for example, the work of someone like Susan Howe or Mei-Mei Bersengrugge is, in that sense, extraordinarily ordinary.

Also note, "ordinary" does not mean "platitudinous."

----- Judy Roitman

| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas |
memory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days."

██████████

| fax:

██████████

|

Larry Eigner,

1927-1996 ----- Note new area
code -----
<http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/>

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184. **dbkk**

Marianne Moore rocks at SPT

Fri 8 May 1998

Small Press Traffic presents

A talk by Megan Schoerke: ³New Light on Marianne Moore²

TONIGHT

Friday, May 8, 7:30 p.m.

New College Cultural Center

766 Valencia Street

Free

Megan Schoerke's fresh take on the "arch-modernist" Marianne Moore (1887-1972) begins with an unusual source, Moore's letters to her family held at Philadelphia's Rosenbach Library and Museum and now in print. The correspondence shows to what degree Moore's poetry subverts and parodies the elitism of High Modernism of the first half of the 20th Century, and the heavy Presbyterianism in which her close-knit family was imbued. Schoerke's research into Moore's process reveals her as a textual cousin of Gertrude Stein, a radical poet whose experiments with "coding" and encryption allow a doubleness of reception made singularly clear to us for the first time.

Megan Schoerke is an assistant professor of English at San Francisco State University. Her essay "Efforts of Affection: Marianne Moore's Elegies for Her Mother" will be published in the forthcoming Critical Essays on Marianne Moore, edited by Elizabeth Gregory. We nabbed her in the nick of time, as she has recently won a year-long writing fellowship at the Tanner Humanities Center at the University of Utah.

This event is part of "Communicado: Real Poetry for Real People," a talk series sponsored by the California Council for the Humanities.

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185. **Robert Hale**

Re: "radical"

Fri 8 May 1998

My original intention was to historicize the definition of "radical" through an opposite, and the Burke seemed fitting because it is the foundational text of conservatism that helped to legitimize the culture and politics that Bernstein, Andrews et al (and other schools, poets, factions) worked from/against (rehashed many times here). Perhaps this doesn't make them radicals in your book. But on a macro level, I think it does. Can we group people who write and teach with people who've fought tyrants and died for it? And call them all radicals? Obviously, we need to stay specific and I appreciate your questioning in that respect. I owe you a political reading of Andrews, but you might want to begin with the AERIAL issue devoted to Andrews -- otherwise, the value, "in general," as you say, is its radicality. Do you agree? If not, what is the value?

At 02:25 PM 5/8/98 -0400, you wrote:

>"As a kid I was very struck by Kierkegaard's notion of the knight of faith
>which, in my no doubt inaccurate version, is the person so spiritually radical
>in the lack of taint of ego as to seem completely ordinary."

>

>This is a lovely thought, whether yours or Soren's, but I think it can be used,
>and no doubt will be used, to apply to anyone. It can also be used
>dismissively, like EST's "You say you didn't get it? You got it" or Huey
>Lewis's "It's hip to be square." Because the radical/conservative distinction
>relies on definition for its authority, I want definition in any defense to
>challenges to it. The above isn't, to me, definitive . . . yet. Could you maybe
>give me an example of poets who are so radical as to seem completely
ordinary,

>and contrast this to poets who seem completely ordinary but whose
ordinariness

>is not causally related to their being radical? More significantly, could you
>explain how their radicalness transforms itself into the outward appearance of
>ordinariness? What that process is?

>

>"Andrews for instance . . . Erode and destroy the old oppressive systems that
>don't want to change because it would involve questioning, compromising
their

>power base, their way of life, their order of things."

>

>What oppressive system can Andrews's writing be said to erode? His work and
>career arrive from the context of capitalism and literary

>production/career-making and readings of same are subsumed by the same

context

>into which they arrived, having made, at best, minor ripples on the surface of
>any system, oppressive or otherwise. Some of his books are mass-produced, &
if

>I'm not mistaken replete with validating blurbs from respectable, authoritative
>contemporaries in positions of influence and power relative to the
>canonization, reading and/or dissemination of literary product. His readings
>generally cost money to attend, and are introduced with validating verbal
>montages of awards, publications, career highlights and blurbs garnered
>throughout his near-life-long navigation through western literary society.

What

>success or visibility he has had has been the result of hard work (writing
>well) and socially acceptable career attendance. Has his work thrown into
>question his own power base, his own way of life, his own order of things?
>Andrews has taught at Fordham University for the last 20, 30 years. His name
>pops up in _The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics_. His
>inclusion in this volume does not seem to erode the thing's power, nor (more
>significantly) the system which gave rise to it. If anything, it helps to
>support it, lending it a kind of "street cred" among those of us who do
>recognize value in Andrews's work. Could you maybe elaborate, explaining
>specifically what and how you see Andrews's writing destroying and eroding?
>

>Please note that I'm not questioning value, in general, in Andrews's writing
>and career; I'm questioning the ultimate value of reading it through the
>radical vs. conservative lens.

>

>Thanks again,

>

>Gary Sullivan

>

>

>

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186. **ScoutEW**
Re: "rational"

Fri 8 May 1998

In a message dated 5/8/98 4:56:05 PM, you wrote:

<<As a kid I was very struck by Kierkegaard's notion of the knight of faith
which, in my no>>

as a kid i played baseball and watched tv and drank pepsi and anyways radical is only a word

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187. **Linda Russo**

Re: "radical"

Fri 8 May 1998

I don't think, for instance, much of the work under the microscope in Radical Artifice is genuinely radical . . . I think the writing of Andrews, Bernstein, Drucker, Hejinian, McCaffery is ultimately very safe, aesthetically, if not (compared to other things) particularly popular . . . and certainly the lives (context) out of which this work has arrived has been equally safe . . . which is not to say I don't enjoy this writing or respect how anyone lives their life . . . what I know of anyone's, anyway . . . just that I don't see any of it transgressing or arriving beyond any significant pre-established boundaries . . .

I'm interested, especially in your use of the present progressive "transgressing" & "arriving" in conjunction with commenting on the "safe" place "out of which this work has arrived" -- or rather, has arisen? I don't mean to do picky proofreading, but it brings me to a question that i've been wanting to broach to the list anyway!

is "no longer transgressing" a quality of work that has arrived -- ?

and i'm wondering if this is the difference between a "poetics" and an "aesthetics" __?

I don't believe there's such a thing as a radical aesthetics, & i'm wondering if that's in part what you're critiquing, since most of our examples have been of established writers who "were" (i would argue) radical & are now "lim(b)inal" or have at least recognizable "limbs" attached to their works (criticism or stereotyping) which point back at them, identity their work as encompassing a certain aesthetic -- ? (i hope this image, contorted as it is in my brain, translates here)

does a dynamic (or radical) poetic eventually erode or settle into an aesthetic? Only then, i think, can i justify classifying a series of questions & attempted answers (a poetics?) a or several writer(s) proposed almost 2 decades ago now (i.e. lang po so-called) as not "transgressing . . . pre-established boundaries" -- as merely existing as aesthetics, as having ceased to employ its questioning/heuristic function.

I'm confused also by "pre-established boundaries" -- scalapino & hejinian, for example, did and do "cross boundaries" when it comes to ideologies of the self in relation to experience --

LH: "All my observations are made from within the matrix of possibly infinite contingencies and contextualities. This sense of contingency is ultimately intrinsic to my experience of the self, as a relationship rather than an existence" (1988).

This may seem like old hat to a younger generation schooled in this thought (and hence it appears in our work as an aesthetic), but i think Hejinian was taking poetry to a different place, by applying this (albeit not so original) thought to poetry -- she (and others) propose a radical rethinking of the self, of poetic voice, of experience, etc.

as for its value -- it depends on what you mean by "significant" -- i.e. to who, to what discourse?

I don't, in other words, understand the value of manufacturing camps of poets ("radical" v. "conservative") . . . if what so-called "radical" poets are doing, essentially, is largely a form of habitual attendance to aesthetics. (Which has been itself an habitual MO for at least a century).

begs the question again, which i'd like to raise -- what's the difference between poetics and aesthetics?

Linda Russo

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188. **Linda Russo**
also Re: "radical"

Fri 8 May 1998

On Fri, 8 May 1998, Gary Sullivan wrote:

"As a kid I was very struck by Kierkegaard's notion of the knight of faith which, in my no doubt inaccurate version, is the person so spiritually radical in the lack of taint of ego as to seem completely ordinary."

I noticed that in Gary Sullivan's response the "taint of ego" got brushed aside:

Could you maybe give me an example of poets who are so radical as to seem completely ordinary, and contrast this to poets who seem completely ordinary but whose ordinariness is not causally related to their being radical? More significantly, could you explain how their radicalness transforms itself into the outward appearance of ordinariness? What that process is?

or rather the question could be "egoless so as to seem completely ordinary"? a lot of innovative work is radical at the expense of the ego (in ideology, in writing -- but not in reality!). But this is probably beside the point.

thanks, Gary, for raising questions which are especially pertinent to one as myself making an investment in an academic structure as a means of income & incoming thoughts on poetry --

"Andrews for instance . . . Erode and destroy the old oppressive systems that don't want to change because it would involve questioning, compromising their power base, their way of life, their order of things."

*What oppressive system can Andrews's writing be said to erode? His work and career arrive from the context of capitalism and literary production/career-making and readings of same are subsumed by the same context into which they arrived, having made, at best, minor ripples on the surface of any system, oppressive or otherwise. Some of his books are mass-produced, & if I'm not mistaken replete with validating blurbs from respectable, authoritative contemporaries in positions of influence and power relative to the canonization, reading and/or dissemination of literary product. His readings generally cost money to attend, and are introduced with validating verbal montages of awards, publications, career highlights and blurbs garnered throughout his near-life-long navigation through western literary society. What success or visibility he has had has been the result of hard work (writing well) and socially acceptable career attendance. Has his work thrown into question his own power base, his own way of life, his own order of things? Andrews has taught at Fordham University for the last 20, 30 years. His name pops up in *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*. His inclusion in this volume does not seem to erode the thing's power, nor (more significantly) the system which gave rise to it. If anything, it helps to support it, lending it a kind of "street cred" among those of us who do recognize value in Andrews's work. Could you maybe elaborate, explaining specifically what and how you see Andrews's writing destroying and eroding?*

Please note that I'm not questioning value, in general, in Andrews's writing and career; I'm questioning the ultimate value of reading it through the radical vs. conservative lens.

Thanks again,

Gary Sullivan



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189. **JBCM2**

Re: also Re: "radical"

Fri 8 May 1998

In a message dated 5/8/98 7:22:53 PM Eastern Daylight Time, [REDACTED] writes:

<< > in the lack of taint of ego as to seem completely ordinary."

I noticed that in Gary Sullivan's response the "taint of ego" got brushed aside:

>>

what does this mean?

Joe Brennan

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190. **JBCM2**

Re: jobs

Fri 8 May 1998

In a message dated 5/8/98 7:48:39 PM Eastern Daylight Time, [REDACTED] writes:

<<

From the "Shorts" section of Thursday's Financial Times

But aspiring young Plaths and Eliots should not be without respect, she hastened to add. "What we are not looking for though is people with ego problems. Good employees always remember both that the client's needs come first and that they are part of a major organization with an international reputation," she cautioned.

is this the ego taint?

jb

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191. **Karen Kelley**

Re: Non-Writing Readers of Poetry

Fri 8 May 1998

I've found the best response to my work coming from non-writin' artists in other disciplines.

I've certainly found this, too--and my favorite things to look at aren't poems, but paintings. I always tell my students to pay close attention to the other arts. There are things to learn in them that may seem too simple, too bald in one's

own art. Maybe it's just a way to refresh the mystery that seems to diminish slightly as one works in a particular medium for a while.

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192. **toddbaron**
Re: "radical","radical"
Fri 8 May 1998

Oppen

There is nothing more "radical"
than not concerning one's self
with the notion of "radical".

There is
some odd form
of communication.

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193. **David Baratier**
Re: Robespierre promises Danton devotion until death
Sat 9 May 1998

The next revolution in poetry will be the same, old, singular revolution probably wearing corderoys & a colored print. The malordorant reality of the craft tapers with rags and wrinkles not strung up on a silly pole carried. Such an endeavor entails immense risks and impediments to prevent understanding from sneaking in, yet to cut short the compulsion to interpret seems necessarily quixotic.

No one can embrace true poetry till they have explored the cast-out, false poetries. On this list the obvious ones to absorb are the poet laureates-- considering the negative banter abounding. Some of the folks on this list would have us disregard Robert Hass' Field Guide because of his laureateship.

Truly dangerous work is not able to be cannonized, it will destroy those who benefit from the process of subdivided arts. A slate without segregation will not advance particular identities. Blankness is the failure of alternatives to come to mind.

As usual myth seeks to solve a dilemma. A myth signifies primarily by what it wishes to exclude. Before we hide a want to be seen fleeing.

Be well

David Baratier

194. **Billy Little****Re: "radical"***Sat 9 May 1998*

isn't the "ultimate value" not blurring the distinction between the facile and the authentic acknowledging on the way the pleasures of both, one poetry, the radical poetry's the poetry you need and the other the cunning the crafted the terrifyingly tidy maybe the poetry you want and there's avante garde poets in both i started to say camps but it's not opposition as is too often imagined in urban US but complimentary. One thing Duncan taught was when you turn Archie Ammons or Bruce Andrews into the enemy maybe you waste a little too much of your own energy that might be better spent performing your superior practice and ignoring them while they play in the corner either the contrast is there or you can't make it so by saying so, in a certain way, Duncan's opposition playful or malicious as it may have been made Blaser a better poet, another way to say it would be chose an adversary worthy of opposition or you diminish yourself. And received ideas or unexamined homilies of any stripe, left or right, avant or derriere, make vomit. You won't get ahead by climbing on the back of C.K. Williams or Carolyn Forche, rather your prayer be their poems improve and surpass your own, what a wonderful world that would be, though i don't share his harsh judgement, i appreciate Silliman's idea of going after the best, he's not wasting his breath on Vendler. and whether you want to admit it or not you know some of the radicals who are plentiful out here: i think some of us are talking about radical as practice and some others are talking about the radical as behaviour and/or lifestyle.

I'd say John Wieners is a radical poet, Duncan McNaughton, i can't believe Valparaiso isn't on the tip of the tongue of..., but of course i understand, men who do not tiptoe around the correct are feared and ignored and called incomprehensible, if you're teaching contemporary american poetry and not teaching McNaughton you're not teaching, who's written a jazz poem like Black Spoon, only Baraka's in the tradition is in this league, and not teaching Baraka, that would qualify as cowardice, Rodefer, he's radical, Hannah Weiner, alice notley, Dodie Bellamy, they're fearless, Maxine Gadd, Gerry Gilbert, Nate Mackey, Gerry Creede, Kevin Davies, Jeff Derksen, Lisa Robertson, full steam poets, poets who aren't afraid to be fools, Jennifer Dunbar and Edward Dorn, jeremy prynne, instanter, David and Eleanora Antinova, Armand Schwerner, lots of radicals out here, Dorothy Trujillo Lusk, Judy Copithorne, Rhoda Rosenberg, Victor Coleman, i could go on all night, take off your blinders boys and girls it's not only apples and oranges and tenures and genders its pomegranites and kumquats and salmonberries and welfare and saxophones

and violins and Linton Kwesi Johnson and Attila The Stockbroker and La Loca, get out of that library and rattle them pots and pans.

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195. **Martin Spinelli**

jobs

Sat 9 May 1998

From the "Shorts" section of Thursday's Financial Times

(London) A report issued yesterday by Europe's leading poetry firms promises a rise in entry-level and middle management positions. The report, titled "Versing 2000," predicts a 18 percent growth in the field before the millennium. In the report's introduction, Madallene Drucille of the Belgium- based Poeticom, says "We are looking for talented and ambitious young writers with a professional interest in poetry." Today's poets need not feel hamstrung by literary history, says Drucille. "In fact, too much of a familiarity with old forms can be a real liability for perspective employees. We need writers not afraid to take chances, and we look for that in writing samples," she later offered in a phone conversation with the FT. But aspiring young Plaths and Eliots should not be without respect, she hastened to add. "What we are not looking for though is people with ego problems. Good employees always remember both that the client's needs come first and that they are part of a major organization with an international reputation," she cautioned. Eike Kahlheit of Bonn's Uberreden concurs in his contribution to the report. Kahlheit says Uberreden requires some firm guiding hands. "The real need is for supportive but stern manager-editors, people with experience focusing the energy of those on the shop floor." Later he states that "Distraction is real problem for our new employees. So much so that we have taken to restricting Internet access on most of our PCs to business related sites only." Drucille adds, "It's a tough balancing act between nurturing the creative process and seeing that the work gets done. Experience in retail management is a major plus." Poeticom has today announced that it wil soonl begin a job search for two mangers to oversee stables of twenty each. Share prices on all listed poetry firms are expected to increase steadily in the wake of the report until the summer slow-down.

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196. **Kevin Varrone**

reading announcement

Sat 9 May 1998

Philadelphia reading:

5 Corners Poetry Series Presents:

Gregg Biglieri & Lisa Jarnot

Thursday, May 21st, 8 p.m.

@ george's 5th Street Cafe

(5th & Gaskill Streets, between Lombard and South Strets)

For info, directions, etc., backchannel or call Kevin

@ 215/

This will be the last 5 Corners reading of the season.

If you're in the area, stop in.

Thanks

kevin

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197. **Annie Finch**

poetry/the cello

Sat 9 May 1998

Joel Lewis wrote:

"Many of us were non-writer readers briefly, but the urge to write fixed that. I mean, it ain't like taking up the cello. "

Why/how not?

Annie

Date: Fri, 8 May 1998 00:47:22 +0100

From: joel lewis <>

Subject: Re: Non-Writing Readers of Poetry

Must say there are a lot more of "them" out there then we poets realize. The readership of formalist folk like Hecht and Wilbur are mostly non-writers. Also got a Penguin copy of Robert Frost's Early Poems in a review box that included Alice Notley's wonderful new book. The editor of selection argues hard how Frost wanted to reach an audience, as opposed to those crummy modernists like Pound & Eliot. Can't say I have much feeling for Frost, but I've known dozens of folks, mostly non-poets, who treasure him.

I must say I never had trouble w/ the poetry audience being composed of other poets. Are we not a wee bit like Commies of yore trying to get people to pick up the sullen art? Many of us were non-writer readers briefly, but the urge to write fixed that. I mean, it ain't like taking up the cello.

I've found the best response to my work coming from non-writin' artists in other disciplines.

joel lewis

Annie Finch

<http://muohio.edu/~finchar>

Assistant Professor of English/Creative Writing

Miami University

Oxford, Ohio 45220

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198. **R.Gancie/C.Parcelli**

Listen to the Machingbyrd

Sat 9 May 1998

"'The world is given to us only once', wrote Ernst Mach, which means that statements implying ahistorical regularities are idealizations, or 'instruments', not descriptions of reality.---Paul Feyerabend-Farewell to Reason---cp

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199. **Michael Magee**

Re: radical

Sat 9 May 1998

From Henry:

"Imagine this: democracy - real commonwealth - HAS to be based on a deep or radical recognition of human weaknesses."

Two, I think, resonant quotes in light of Henry's request (imagine this...):

Melville's Ishmael: "Heaven have mercy on us all - Presbyterians and Pagans alike - for we are all somehow dreadfully cracked about the head, and sadly need mending."

and Robert Creeley:

"The imagination of a commonwealth must make that sharing literal - there cannot be an invested partiality hidden from the participants...Realize that the general, the we-ness proposed in various realities, may well prove to be this kind. Obviously, any 'we' must, willynilly, submit to the organic orders of its existence: must sleep, must eat, must drink, must move, must die. But that is very nearly the totality of the actual demand. Elsewise, the 'geography leans in,' as Olson put it. Place is a real event - where you are is a law equal to what you are."

-m.

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200. **Jordan Davis**

"Non-violent paraphrase and self-defeating maps," or, your fun is a snob

Sat 9 May 1998

THE CAMPAIGN TO STOP ERIK'S LAUGHING FIT

Any time you say what someone else said _in your own words_ you are saying something else. But verbatim, who among is is T. S. Eliot? or Ezra Pound? or their greatgodson Ted Berrigan? still there must be a way to talk about what other people talk about without seeming angry or unintelligent.

Jonathan's mapdrawing is nothing new and therefore no more attractive to laughter than anyone say Bob Grumman's or Miekal And's neologistics or Bob Perelman's chapter. Jonathan's jokes make me laugh more though. Maps and censuses need remaking constantly but they don't, you just need to have allies (friends) everywhere you go.

Now this message must turn to the cello. There will be two reading/ recitals in June by me and cellist Louise Dubin, whose poems have appeared in the Poetry Project Newsletter among other places. The first reading is the weekend of June 7 at International House at Columbia, the second is June 18, 6 pm or so at Teachers & Writers.

Poetry Project's Ymposium in full steam. Tim Atkins, Julie Patton, Mark Nowak, Brenda Coultas have all given readings you would have found admirable. T/K: Tim Davis, Ange Mlinko, Rod Smith, Gary Lenhart, etc etc etc etc etc. See you there? I have to go write my talk about identity and invention (ulp) now. Wish me luck.

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201. **ScoutEW**

Re: radical

Sat 9 May 1998

In a message dated 5/9/98 3:50:59 PM, you wrote:

<< Place is a
real event - where you are is a law equal to what you are.">>
and as Edward Dorn says, Place can be effete...
good luck everyone thru the May showers

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202. **henry g**

Re: radical

Sat 9 May 1998

On Sat, 9 May 1998 12:21:39 EDT ScoutEW said:

>

>and as Edward Dorn says, Place can be effete...

The obsolete (worn-out, effete) is the key to the future. The effete is the most powerful thing in the world because it asserts its own absolute value flying in the face of all byt practicality - the whole trade of life. Check out the film version of the Russian novel "Oblomov" for a good example. I go back to "radical" and the action of roots. Mark Prejsnar started all this off saying innovative poetry tears apart, breaks up. This is true, but not in the way of critical analysis (which breaks up & also keeps the analyst/observer at a distance). Poetry, via imitation & pathos, divides and binds together the opposites - grace and disgrace, in a way that the observer experiences & participates in. Poetry is both precious and radical. It's preciousness - i.e. the beauty of language in itself, the music of language - is like the flower, the radical beauty which challenges the byt world. It's radicalness is its absorption of present reality and reflection of its pressures and details in depth. It digs down like a root to the hidden disgrace underlying a society's surface smoothness, the chaos under the ordure, Yeats' "beauty sets its throne in the place of excrement" or however it goes. So when you fuse radical beauty (the music) with radical insight, you have a very powerful sword in your hand, says Blake. So Aristotle makes tragic poetry (drama) the exemplary form of poetry in general - the mediating power revealing the human weaknesses that divide and bind a community together/apart. And going back to M. Magee's Creeley quote can suggest how these forces are still at work and put to use by poets radical enough to take up the challenge.

"He hath disgraced me, and hindered me half a million, laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge?" - Shylock, from *MERCHANT OF VENICE* - Henry G

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203. **linda russo**

Re: also Re: "radical"

Sat 9 May 1998

joe wrote linda wrote gary wrote judy wrote:

> << > "in the lack of taint of ego as to seem completely ordinary."

>

> I noticed that in Gary Sullivan's response the "taint of ego" got brushed

> aside:

> >>

> what does this mean?

I mean Gary S. asks about radical poets, rather than poets who are radically egoless and so seem like ordinary people rather than poets -- which is what the quote suggested to me. A pertinent point, I think, as the whole thread has fallen to the side of careerism rather than poetics, if one were to make that a distinction.

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204. **henry g**

correction

Sat 9 May 1998

'A woman can be proud and stiff

When on love intent;

But Love has pitched his mansion in

The place of excrement;

For nothing can be sole or whole

That has not been rent.'

- Yeats, "Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop"

- it was Love, not Beauty. precious & radical: Mandelstam's "heaviness and tenderness", twin roses, one rose. the heaviness gets heavier & heavier, and the tenderness more tender. division/wholeness. - HG

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205. **Charles Alexander**

Re: also Re: "radical"

Sat 9 May 1998

Eigner's work is a really good example of this. I have heard that in life he was just as cranky and hard to deal with as most of us. But in his work he's just plain invisible.

What? Sure, if you want to see a diminished sense of self-importance in that work, I can agree. But not invisibility. It is Eigner who made that work, and there's certainly nothing like it. Maybe what we're talking about is more a question of 'how' the self is inscribed rather than 'whether' it is inscribed. And I think this is true of Dickinson, too.

charles

charles alexander :: poet and book artist :: ██████████ chax press :: alexander writing/design/publishing books by artists' hands :: web sites built with care and vision <http://alexwritdespub.com/chax> :: <http://alexwritdespub.com>

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206. **Martin Spinelli**

Radical Andrews

Sat 9 May 1998

What oppressive system can Andrews's writing be said to erode? His work and career arrive from the context of capitalism and literary production/career-making and readings of same are subsumed by the same context into which they arrived, having made, at best, minor ripples on the surface of any system, oppressive or otherwise.

Has his work thrown into question his own power base, his own way of life, his own order of things? Andrews has taught at Fordham University for the last 20, 30 years.

I think Andrews himself would be well aware of the dilemma you point to... he's quite sussed about it in fact. In his LINEbreak interview (transcribed in Chloroform) he firmly situates himself "in all the major oppressor groups". He deals with this, and issues of the political potency of poetry in general, by suggesting that large-scale mobilizations are typically only good for shoring up the status quo. That writing works first on the *writer* and then on discrete readers already tuned into a particular project (literary or political).

It seems a method of survival in this sense. A way of dealing with these "oppressive systems" without a kind of personal acquiescence. And better than prosac there's perhaps something of value in the example. (Tacit support or conscientious objection?)

Whether this is "radical" or not is less interesting to me. But I do think the practice of chomping on the candy-coating/linguistic products of the culture industry in order to peak at the structures, restrictions and the pervasiveness of its ooey-goey center is, in your words, something that should be "valorized".

Perhaps this is just my way of agreeing with you Gary while explaining an attachment to Andrews (from whom I've learned much much). "Radical"... past

it's sell-by date maybe... and with "revolutionary" long dead, and "avant-garde" grounded, are we without a metaphor to call our own? "Tactical"? Howbout "Survivalist"... wear fatigues, move to Montana, carry guns that shoot fridge-magnets... I'm sure Morphy would be with me!

Best,
Nero of Buffalo
(formerly)

Martin Spinelli SUNY Buffalo English Department
Granolithic Productions

LINEbreak <http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/linebreak>
ENGAGED <http://www.engaged.demon.co.uk>

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207. **JBCM2**

Re: also Re: "radical"

Sat 9 May 1998

In a message dated 5/9/98 7:39:25 PM Eastern Daylight Time, [REDACTED] writes:

<<

joe wrote linda wrote gary wrote judy wrote linda wrote:

> << > "in the lack of taint of ego as to seem completely ordinary."

>

> I noticed that in Gary Sullivan's response the "taint of ego" got brushed
> aside:

> >>

> what does this mean?

I mean Gary S. asks about radical poets, rather than poets who are radically egoless and so seem like ordinary people rather than poets -- which is what the quote suggested to me. A pertinent point, I think, as the whole thread has fallen to the side of careerism rather than poetics, if one were to make that a distinction.

I don't understand what phrases like "taint of ego" or "radically egoless" actually mean. in the jobs post, it means someone who isn't a team player -- both of these suggest to me that the absence of ego is a desirable end, which seems to me to be impossible, except for psychotics who are psychotic all the time. can you explain to me what you mean by "egoless"?

Joe

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208. **Michael McColl**

Re: Understanding and Evaluating Poems

Sat 9 May 1998

Henry--answering you before I read the other 265 messages I find now that I've returned from somersaulting waterfalls . .

In what has been called "abstract" or "non-syntactic" poetry, I don't think the model of the sublime as you describe it (which I read admittedly quite rapidly) can be applied, as there is not a logical "first" meaning which is superseded or filled to bursting with intimations of a grander not paraphrasable meaning. But your point is very well taken, and I now seem to recall that Lyotard, it might have been, and perhaps others too, were much influenced in their ideas about writing by a preference for the sublime. Mike McColl

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209. **Michael McColl**

Re: Understanding and Evaluating Poems

Sat 9 May 1998

Charles--having paraphrasable content = sense (in a conventional sense)

The meaning of "sense" can be broadened--makes a weird kind of sense, etc--but I think it helps to keep that meaning restricted and use "meaning" for a broader sense of sense. At least that's how I was thinking of it. And it also helps to make comparisons to abstract painting. When someone said a painting by Kandinsky was better than some other abstract painting, wouldn't a defense of this judgment involve new and different criteria than a judgment concerning two representational paintings? Mike McColl

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210. **henry**

Re: Understanding and Evaluating Poems

Sat 9 May 1998

In what has been called "abstract" or "non-syntactic" poetry, I don't think the model of the sublime as you describe it (which I read admittedly quite rapidly) can be applied, as there is not a logical "first" meaning which is superseded or filled to bursting with intimations of a grander not paraphrasable meaning. But your point is very well taken, and I now seem to recall that Lyotard, it might have been, and perhaps

others too, were much influenced in their ideas about writing by a preference for the sublime. Mike McColl

Music might be a better analogue for understanding these things. & I don't mean music in the Mallarmean-symbolist sense of a purification or refining away of the "world of representation". There is a more radical concept out there of music itself as a representation or expression of the essential "song-quality" of nature and creation - a sublime notion in itself. It's not that essential poetry is not paraphraseable; it's that poetry is the closest paraphrase of the universe.

"He often composed and reworked poems while walking the streets of St. Petersburg at night, with the beat of his footsteps providing a natural measure or meter (as it did for walkers Dante and Beethoven...During composition/creation he actually sang his poems, as he did while "reading", that is, reciting them without notes...As part of this orality, he (and his wife) knew the entire oeuvre by heart: once he lost his portfolio and a volume of Bergson en route home from Berlin, but no matter: the former could be bought, the latter retranscribed. Mandelshtam's process of poetic creation despite its erudite world culturalism was in many musically critical ways closer to Eskimo virtuoso Orpingalik... than to most of his Russian contemporaries. It was also closer to the Archaic Greek model that he espoused..." - Paul Friedrich, MUSIC IN RUSSIAN POETRY - Henry G

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211. **joel lewis**

Re: poetry/the cello

Sun 10 May 1998

Joel Lewis wrote:

"Many of us were non-writer readers briefly, but the urge to write fixed that. I mean, it ain't like taking up the cello. "

Why/how not?

Annie

well, for onr, the means of production for writing poetry are generally at hand -- pen/pencil, paper, stamps, the local xerox shop. Also poetry has a tradition of self-instruction (i'm sure there are good writers out there who have never set foot in a writing workshop).

Other disciplines take a bigger leap of faith. There is the case of the graet Brit saxophonist Andy Sheppard who, at age 19, bought a used saxophone, played it

non-stop for a week and played a street corner concert soon after that (and the rest being history), but that is a rare bit of d.i.y.

Poetry offers more avenues for the novice artist in the culture of the open reading. You just get up, read your stuff, and, usually, poeple applaud. Ypu sqwauk at an after hours jazz session and you get laughed off the stage (it happened to a young charlie parker) and, anyways, cellos are expensive. someone will always lend you a pencil.

joel "means of production" lewis

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212. **R. Gancie**

radical

Sun 10 May 1998

"The helmsmen of explorations have discovered how to disturb everybody else's peace,[how to] violate the native spirits of the [diverse] regions, [how to] mingle together that which provident nature had kept separate; [how] by intercourse to redouble defects and add to old vices the new vices of other peoples, with violence to propagate follies and to plant unheard-of insanities where they did not before exist, so that he who is strongest comes to conclude that he is wisest. They showed new ways, instruments and arts for tyrannizing and murdering each other. The time will come when, in consequence of all this, those men, having learned at their own expense (through the way things turn out), will know how to and will be able to return to us similar and even worse fruits of such pernicious inventions."---Giordano Bruno, Ash Wednesday Supper, 1584---cp

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213. **MAYHEW**

paraphrasable

Sun 10 May 1998

Isn't the "paraphrasable content" (that phrase keeps appearing on this list) of most poems something like "Please love me for my brilliant, witty poems" or "Please feel sorry for my pain and suffering." Or perhaps I speak only for my own poems.

To have no ego makes no sense at all in psychological terms--Joe is perfectly correct to point this out. I don't think phrases like "the taint of ego" are meant in so literal a way, though. It's like when people say "cerebral" with a negative connotation; they aren't really imagining cognition that doesn't take place in the cerebellum--rather they refer to (what they perceive to be)

overintellectualism. [personally the use of the word cerebral in this context bugs the hell out of me]

Making an end-run around the ego means avoiding a certain kind of vanity, overinvestment in one's self-concept, etc... This can be very difficult for some poets. Imagine Robert Lowell trying to do this! Jed Rasula I think it was who pointed out how many books on American poetry have the word "self" in their titles... Who coined that phrase about the "egotistical sublime"?

For some who use the word "ego" in this sense the reference is Buddhist, not psychoanalytical in the least. Perhaps someone can enlighten me on this score...

Jonathan

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214. **Michael McColl**

Re: Understanding and Evaluating Poems

Sun 10 May 1998

If the poet as city walker left his frail skull
to peek for just a second or maybe to overhear
a rumor of the speed of light at the farthest edges
he step over the sidewalk and into the street
cars don't begin to stop in the city
in his room composing his desire for the fragmented bodies
tuneful car alarm telephone raging neighbors
and the bottle glass become his universe
and his fear of all the poisons
list them here don't tell me music there is no
universe

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215. **Tim Wood**

Re: technique and fury

Sun 10 May 1998

Up front, I'll confess I'm actually very fond of Nedge (so does that make me conservative...) but I'm also interested in hearing more. Rage on, yes rage on (how does that line go?) into the sweet night... But, post here, too. Gotta leave enough of a trail for others to follow...

Tim Wood

BTW, check out my new sig (down below o'course)... one I've wanted to create for a while, the exchange between you & henry added the final bit. Not a poem I think; perhap ars poetica en soundbite (yeah, yeah, my spanish stinks).

Someone is reputed to have said

On Fri, 8 May 1998 10:01:09 -0400 Mark Prejsnar said:

**The best technique is that which breaks apart.*

**The best technique is that which disturbs.*

**The best formal approach is that which cannot be easily taught (that which is taut); and which does not easily find approbation within the inert structures of insitutions (be they universities, or Nedge).*

Nedge isn't an institution, it's a magazine. Nor does it seem to be

**I never cease to amazed at the profound conservatisim of folks on this
than you'll ever be. Rage on....*

poetry is an hour
a flash
of sound
bytes
found
rescued
boiled
freed
to rage again

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216. **Judy Roitman**

Re: Robespierre promises Danton devotion until death

Sun 10 May 1998

The next revolution in poetry will be the same, old, singular revolution probably wearing corderoys & a colored print. The malordorant reality of the craft tapers with rags and wrinkles not strung up on a silly pole carried. Such an endeavor entails immense risks and impediments to prevent understanding from sneaking in, yet to cut short the compulsion to interpret seems necessarily quixotic.

No one can embrace true poetry till they have explored the cast-out, false poetries. On this list the obvious ones to absorb are the poet laureates-- considering the negative banter abounding. Some of the folks

on this list would have us disregard Robert Hass' Field Guide because of his laureateship.

David Baratier

Robert Hass is an interesting example. What I've read of him feels like he's holding back, not quite following through, not going far enough.

Too bad. He coulda been a contender.

To answer somebody else: for a true radical, E. Dickinson.

----- Judy Roitman
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas |
memory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days."
[REDACTED] | fax: [REDACTED] | Larry Eigner,
1927-1996 ----- Note new area
code -----
http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/

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217. **Judy Roitman**
Re: also Re: "radical"
Sun 10 May 1998

In a message dated 5/9/98 7:39:25 PM Eastern Daylight Time,
[REDACTED] writes:

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think, as the whole thread has fallen to the side of careerism
rather than poetics, if one were to make that a distinction.

I don't understand what phrases like "taint of ego" or "radically egoless"
actually mean. in the jobs post, it means someone who isn't a team player --
both of these suggest to me that the absence of ego is a desirable end, which
seems to me to be impossible, except for psychotics who are psychotic all the

time. can you explain to me what you mean by "egoless"?

Joe

Well sure. Lack of self-absorption. The transparent self.

Eigner's work is a really good example of this. I have heard that in life he was just as cranky and hard to deal with as most of us. But in his work he's just plain invisible.

Emily Dickinson is another example. In life she certainly seems to have set out some very well-defined parameters, but even though first person pronouns & possessives appear a lot in her poetry (unlike in Eigner's, where they almost never appear) there is a marked absence of personal particularities.

As for absence of ego being a desirable end, see almost any religion. Psychotics have different issues to deal with. But anyway I was talking about a poet's work, not persona.

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218. **R. Gancie**

radical

Sun 10 May 1998

The Mosquito

O mosquito, you're blessed with all nice things!
What do you lack? Why buzz and still complain?
You've rested on jade mats and ivory beds.
You've stroked and kissed rouged lips or powdered cheeks.
You've spared no children, pampering your mouth.
You've hurt poor people, glutting up your paunch.
When a good swatter someday comes to hand,
I'll pay you for your crimes without a blink!
---Phan Van Tri, 19 Century Vietnamese poet writing 100 years before
Dien Bien Phu and 114 years before the Tet offensive---cp

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219. **groberts**

Re: paraphrasable

Sun 10 May 1998

Bored? Then try doing something "creative"
With rhymes Byronically methodical.
What's the opposite of "conservative"?
Uh huh, yes you guessed it right--"radical,"
Though you could've answered "innovative"
And been just as correct. It's what I call,
So cleverly, a "foregone confusion,"
To which, of course, there's never conclusion.

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220. **linda russo**

Re: also Re: "radical"

Sun 10 May 1998

thanks, judy, for making the distinction, esp. since i wasn't trying to make a point re: egolessness except to point out how i saw gary reading & discussing the particular quote

i'm with judy -- i read it in the sense of not having a "big ego" -- of being able to engage in poetry not for oneself (selfishly) or one's career, but for poetry -- though a notable (and possibly volatile) exception would be Pound, who (at one point or another, but not ultimately?) made accomplishments in all three (selfishness, careerism, poetry)

(call me an idealist but) i believe in poetry for poetry's sake -- & i believe _that_ sort of engagement is a very generous act -- not selfish, or self-contained or escapist, as the term (art for art's sake) is often critically applied

yikes i can't believe i said 'art for arts sake' -- a term which i'm not ready to defend (it's someone else's understanding, not mine)

i really just want to know what the/some difference(s) between poetics & aesthetics is/are. -- any ideas? anyone?

I don't understand what phrases like "taint of ego" or "radically egoless" actually mean. in the jobs post, it means someone who isn't a team player -- both of these suggest to me that the absence of ego is a desirable end, which seems to me to be impossible, except for psychotics who are psychotic all the time. can you explain to me what you mean by "egoless"?

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Note new area code

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221. **morpheal**

Re: paraphrasable

Sun 10 May 1998

Isn't the "paraphrasable content" (that phrase keeps appearing on this list) of most poems something like "Please love me for my brilliant, witty poems" or "Please feel sorry for my pain and suffering." Or perhaps I speak only for my own poems.

There are two types of poetry. Only two types.

The one type is purely fictive.

The other type is as true as possible to personal experience.

Of course there are meldings of the two that make it hard to discern authenticity from fictive content. That is sometimes the poet's own struggle to remain authentic, and not fall into the labyrinthine traps of language. Too complicated a metaphor, for instance, with too many misleading nuances, that no longer says what was truly meant can inadvertently lead there. The trouble with what used to be referred to as "flowery language".

Of course, there are also those that claim all poetry ought to be fictive.

The latter is most true in totalitarian and totalistic political systems.

In some systems that is the equivalent of "make a joyful noise to the _____"
That joyful noise then being what is fictive.

Substitute any authority figure that has enough power to oppress, so as to cause fear enough to squelch or silence expression, for the _____.

Boss.

Lord.

Dictator.

Tyrant.

State.

Etc.

M.

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222. **linda russo**

Superflux query

Sun 10 May 1998

Does anyone have email addresses for Leslie Davis or Hoa Nguyen? Or do you know anything about Superflux (are there other editors?)

thx.

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223. **KENT JOHNSON**

The neighbor's dog fence

Sun 10 May 1998

Gary Sullivan's questions in his two posts yesterday about what it means to write "radical" poetry were very interesting.

I like Bruce Andrews's work quite a bit and have found some of it surprising in a provocative sort of way. His writing is full of angry and crazy energy and that's admirable. But I agree with Gary that his poetry is not ultimately radical _as poetic act_, for its "radicalness" is merely textual and not _conceptually subversive_ of (in Gary's phrase) the 'context into which such radicalness arrives.' With no apparent remorse, such poetry enters into and validates--precisely through its self-proclaimed "oppositionality"-- the very relations of literary production and exchange it purports to critique. This is not a contradiction that only haunts Andrews's work.

(Remember all those essays declaring war on the "I" and the "self"?)

This is largely why language poetry grew exhausted and failed and why smart younger poets influenced by them are obsessively writing about their identity crisis. I suppose that sounds like a presumptuous pronouncement, but it's quite simply true. As with all my other posts, I have no doubt that once everyone sits down to think about it that there will be a happy consensus around the point.

A few days ago my neighbor set up an electric dog fence in his yard, and as I watched his poor, bewildered animal leap and yelp and pace and growl, it occurred to me that invisible dog fences might be analogous to any "radical" author's legal name. Eventually, the dog lay down and slept. Today (ah, beautiful spring, blossoms abounding), he barks and bares his teeth, and everyone is safe.

Kent

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224. **J. Fuhrman**

Re: The neighbor's dog fence

Sun 10 May 1998

Kent- fascinating post-- Who would you consider a smart young language influenced poet writing about identity? What do you mean by identity? Some language poetry seems to be about identity too or at least the "problem" of identity?

On Sun, 10 May 1998, KENT JOHNSON wrote:

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Kent

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225. **Christopher Reiner**

New book

Sun 10 May 1998

happy to post this:

Inside the Hours. Fictions by Cydney Chadwick. (Cover art by New York artist Toni Simon). Texture Press. 37 pages. ISBN: 0-9641387-3-0. List Price \$6.

Cydney Chadwick's seventh book of fictions is a haunting series of portraits showing the uncanny dimensions of everyday life. Chadwick truly takes us 'inside the hours' to explore the unfamiliar side of our all-too-human foibles. The mirror she holds up to inner reality returns a chillingly accurate image; at the same time, the steadiness of her gaze ultimately reveals itself to be an intensified form of compassion. Chadwick has developed a style of fiction that is as distinctive as it is compelling.

Available from www.amazon.com, and Texture Press: P.O. Box 720157,
Norman, OK 73072

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226. **Franklin Bruno**

poetics/aesthetics

Mon 11 May 1998

Linda Russo asks, quite reasonably:

| *What's the difference between poetics and aesthetics?*

I don't know what the difference -really- is, but I think I understand the difference in the way these terms are used. Poetics is at least in part generative; in so far as they're explicit, one's poetics help guide what one wants to do in one's work. They may also be polemical (I write like this, so should you) or simply offered as an option (here's one way to write). Aesthetics, insofar as it's still connected to a traditional philosophical discipline, assigns value to already extant work via application of antecedent principles. It's little concerned with identifying fruitful methodological possibilities (though I suppose one's aesthetics might valorize work that can point the way to other work, that opens rather than closes doors.) Surely the border between these two notions is porous.

So: what's the difference between aesthetics and literary criticism?

fjb

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227. **Tom Beard**

Re: The neighbor's dog fence

Mon 11 May 1998

This is largely why language poetry grew exhausted and failed and why smart younger poets influenced by them are obsessively writing about their identity crisis. I suppose that sounds like a presumptuous pronouncement, but it's quite simply true.

Kent- fascinating post--

Who would you consider a smart young language influenced poet writing about identity? What do you mean by identity? Some language poetry seems to be about identity too or at least the "problem" of identity?

I was never quite sure what all this "problem" of identity stuff was about either, not quite buying the whole "social construction of the self" thing. But someone on this list once quoted Creeley as saying that a certain poet (does anyone

remember who he was talking about?) dealt with "the crisis of self", and then I read Julian Jaynes and things started to fall into place.

Yes, to talk of "obsessively writing about their identity crisis" does sound a little dismissive. To me, the notion of "selfhood", as problematic as it is, is central to the human experience. That vital, fearful schism of self from not-self is something that most of us hold dear, while yearning to break down the barriers. Selfhood is a castle and a prison.

A few days ago my neighbor set up an electric dog fence in his yard, and as I watched his poor, bewildered animal leap and yelp and pace and growl, it occurred to me that invisible dog fences might be analogous to any "radical" author's legal name. Eventually, the dog lay down and slept. Today (ah, beautiful spring, blossoms abounding), he barks and bares his teeth, and everyone is safe.

Writing that appears not to be from a unified self, as interesting as it often is, can be read as even more ego-centric than writing peppered with "I"s, "You"s and other personal pronouns. At least the latter is qualifying the utterances as being specific to the speaking persona (the writer's or otherwise - these are "my" thoughts, feelings, perceptions), whereas the former may be seen as claiming some sort of universality.

These are not meant to be attacks, just observations after trying to write a poem without any personal pronouns. It turned out to be more "personal" (is this different from "self"-centred?) than any of the "I" poems that I'd written. But at the same time, the utterances "from the blue" seemed almost presumptuous.

Tom Beard.

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228. **Tim Wood**

Re: poetics/aesthetics

Mon 11 May 1998

Well, the sarcastic answer is that literary criticism is a way to disguise a political and philosophical agenda (Derrida would be a prime example) as aesthetics. The literature enters in because it's so easy to take writers out of context to put your words in their mouths. Like I said, the sarcastic answer <grin>.

Tim Wood

| *What's the difference between poetics and aesthetics?*

<snip>

| *So: what's the difference between aesthetics and literary criticism?*

Negations

<http://www.datawranglers.com/negations/>

Negations: an interdisciplinary journal of social criticism

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229. **Tim Wood**

Re: Superflux query

Mon 11 May 1998

Hoa Nguyen (at least the one I know) is based out of Austin, Texas. Her email is [REDACTED]

Someone is reputed to have said

Does anyone have email addresses for Leslie Davis or Hoa Nguyen? Or do you know anything about Superflux (are there other editors?)

thx.

Tim Wood

<http://www.datawranglers.com/>

The Data Wranglers: making your information look good

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230. **Keston Sutherland**

Re: poetics/aesthetics

Mon 11 May 1998

>...literary criticism is a way to disguise a political and philosophical agenda (Derrida would be a prime example) as aesthetics.

I'd say the reverse re: Derrida..

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231. **joel lewis**

f.y.i.

Mon 11 May 1998

*** I'd hate to see the welcome wagon: Imagine you're about to move into your half-million-dollar dream home in a plush Denver suburb that you know as Cherry Hills Village. Then, you see that the sales contract includes the full name of the development, and it isn't Cherry Hills. You then ask the real estate agent to tear up the contract. That's what happened when Bill Weinberger was set to buy a \$497,000 house -- in Swastika Acres 2. "I told them not only no, but hell no," voiced Weinberger, a Denver businessman who is Jewish. The

agent tried to explain that the property records date back to a corporation called the Denver Swastika Land Co., founded in 1908, well before before the Nazi Party was founded and adopted the swastika as their logo. Weinberger felt that if the residents hadn't yet petitioned to change the name, they must be anti-Semitic. Saul Rosenthal, regional director of the Anti-Defamation League office in Denver, noted that complaints about Swastika Acres seem to hit his desk every few years. But because this coincidence isn't an example of intentional bigotry, he doesn't see it as a "substantial issue facing our community." An ancient symbol of the Chinese, Asian Indians, Greeks, and Scandinavians, the swastika has been found on coins, pottery, and other artifacts, and even in the catacombs of early Christians. Some Native American tribes also viewed the swastika design as a symbol of infinity. Nonetheless, Weinberger is looking elsewhere.

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232. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: *poetics/aesthetics*

Mon 11 May 1998

this may be old hat, but let me nevertheless say that for me Heidegger's book Poetry Language Thought sorts out this issue admirably.

burt kimmelman

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233. **Gary Sullivan**

Re: "radical"

Mon 11 May 1998

Thanks everyone for the diverse and well-considered responses. You've given me much to consider.

I do want to address Judy Roitman's post, and say that, I agree, though their writing appears prior to the time-frame I was thinking of, Creeley, Eigner and Niedecker all share, especially Eigner and Niedecker, an appreciation of subsistence that is made palpably manifest in their work. That's as radical, or maybe more significantly, as generative, a critique of capitalism as there is. As Maria Damon knows, I ultimately consider the life, ideas & work of Amy Dacyczyn more generative than those of Chomsky or Nader. (Which is not to say I don't find either Chomsky or Nader of great value, too.)

Judy also mentioned Susan Howe and Mei-Mei Berssenbrugge, who are more or less of the time period I was thinking of. With Susan Howe, I don't find that same appreciation of subsistence in her writing; I find what I'd call the

manifestation of academic middle class anxiety. By "academic" I mean not situated due present. By "middle class" I mean a preoccupation with property, equity, possession, representation. By "anxiety" I mean surface agitation causally related to unslaked desire. There's also something of the tour-guide about her presentation of work. Her project, for me, its value notwithstanding, strikes me as a pure product of capitalism. I can appreciate it & maybe even use it, but only with that caveat.

Linda Russo really addressed what I was questioning: Is it possible, in the context of the immediate present, to be a "radical poet"? I mean, everyone addressed it, I guess, but I think Linda articulated it in a way that for me felt most accurate. It's not a question that I feel can be answered at the moment, but I keep coming back to it.

I like Duncan McNaughton's work. I love John Wieners's. Also Victor Coleman's. I think the latter's is undervalued in this country.

Did anyone mention Jeff Conant? I know of very, very few American poets I wouldn't be embarrassed to call "fearless." He's one of them.

I don't see any poet or school as "the enemy," so, as to "obvious poets to absorb" from among the "cast-out, false poetries" -- I like this idea. I also like Heraclitus's, that nature loves to hide. So, rather than Hass, I'm going to spend some time looking into the life & work d.a. levy. Anyone with tips (I already know about the Ghost Pony Press collection), please send along.

Henry Gould, as always, your responses are brilliant, & make me smile. Which is not to say that I necessarily agree with you, but that I appreciate what you say, how you say.

Thanks again, everyone,

Peace,

Gary Sullivan



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234. **Pritchett, Patrick**

Re: Para/garay anyone?

Mon 11 May 1998

Looking for a back issue of English journal Paragraph: Journal of Modern Critical Thought from 1986. Specifically, essay by Irigaray - "Women, the Sacred and Money," from Vol 8, 1986.

Does anyone know if this has been collected someplace? Thanks. Backchannel only.

Patrick Pritchett

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235. **Judy Roitman**
Re: also Re: "radical"

Mon 11 May 1998

Linda Russo wrote:

*thanks, judy, for making the distinction, esp. since i wasn't trying
to make a point re: egolessness except to point out how i saw gary
reading & discussing the particular quote*

*i'm with judy -- i read it in the sense of not having a "big ego" -- of
being able to engage in poetry not for oneself (selfishly) or one's
career, but for poetry -- though a notable (and possibly volatile)
exception would be Pound, who (at one point or another, but
not ultimately?) made accomplishments in all three
(selfishness, careerism, poetry)*

But I wasn't talking about how anyone is in life (selfless, careerist, etc.) but whether their _poems_ were "about" self or not. That's all. One could presumably be totally careerist and a real shit-head, but write absolutely luminous and transparent poetry.

----- Judy Roitman
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas |
memory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days."
[REDACTED] | fax: [REDACTED] | Larry Eigner,
1927-1996 ----- Note new area
code -----
http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/

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236. **Christopher Reiner**
new announcements at litpress.com

Mon 11 May 1998

There are a lot of new publication announcements from various presses on the LITPRESS.COM site, as of last night. Most of them have been posted to this list, but you might want to check it out anyway.

Also, selections from the latest RHIZOME have been posted, including work by George Albon, Laynie Browne, Norma Cole, Jacques Debrot, Martha Ronk, and Joe Ross.

The address is

<http://www.litpress.com>

LITPRESS.COM regularly posts announcements of new publications of innovative contemporary poetry and prose. To submit an announcement, contact Chris Reiner at



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237. **KENT JOHNSON**
Re: The neighbor's dog fence

Mon 11 May 1998

On May 10, J. Fuhrman wrote:

Kent- fascinating post--

Who would you consider a smart young language influenced poet writing about identity? What do you mean by identity? Some language poetry seems to be about identity too or at least the "problem" of identity?

What I meant by "identity crisis" is the broader relationship between a group of younger, "innovative" writers and the older Language poets. The tensions in that relationship seem to provoke a sense of anxiety for some of the writers in the younger group, to the point of its having become the object of some strong critical reflection by people like Mark Wallace, Steve Evans, and others. (Though there is clearly a good deal of anxiety among the old-guard as well about the fate of their once triumphalist project.)

The anxiety and identity crisis stems, as I see it, from the fact that a project that was once nourished by a strong sense of radical, political commitment has spawned, as closest offspring, a fundamentally aestheticist and career-driven poetic community that bears little trace of the father's youthful oppositionality. (The father, now tenured and comfortable, hopes his child will one day become more serious.)

In my previous post I alluded to the author function as being the drive-shaft that makes such institutionalization and commodification quite natural and inevitable. An old argument, to be sure, but one that few want to consider, I think, because of its broader implications.

Has anyone seen the movie "Hype"? It is about the grunge scene in Seattle and is probably the best cinematic illustration of Peter Burger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* that there has ever been.

Kent

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238. **Gary Sullivan**
value

Mon 11 May 1998

*you might want
to begin with the AERIAL issue devoted to Andrews -- otherwise, the value,
"in general," as you say, is its radicality. Do you agree? If not, what is
the value?*

I can't, literally, afford the Aerial Andrews issue, though I'll try to get it through interlibrary loan. For me, the value of Andrews's writing is not its radicality. What I find generative (as well as pleasurable) is the intensity, or rigour, of its focus. His consistent attendance to, and exploration of, that.

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239. **joel lewis**
poetry reading

Mon 11 May 1998

READING AT POETRY CITY

Joel Lewis
&
Tim Griffin

May 28
7pm

TEACHERS & WRITERS COLLABORATIVE
5 Union Square West, 7th Floor

Free

info- 212/ [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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240. **dbkk**

Bellamy/Gluck at SPT

Mon 11 May 1998

Small Press Traffic presents

Dodie Bellamy

Robert Gluck

Friday, May 15, 7:30 p.m.

New College Theater

777 Valencia Street, San Francisco

\$5

Dodie Bellamy is celebrating the publication of her new "novel," *The Letters of Mina Harker* (Hard Press, 1998), which Joan Retallack has described as an "epistolary novel, a bestiaire d'amour, a hyper-para-transgeneric, complex realist exploded vampire cartoon of very touching hi-lo life-death saturated intelligence, sex, humor, philosophy, history, literature, mass culture." Dodie Bellamy is also the author of *Feminine Hijinx* (Hanuman, 1990) and *Real: The Letters of Mina Harker and Sam D'Allesandro* (Talisman House, 1995), as well as three chapbooks. She is the director of Small Press Traffic Literary Arts Center.

Robert Gluck is the author of several books of poetry, including *Reader*; a book of stories, *Elements of a Coffee Service*; and two celebrated novels, *Jack the Modernist* and *Margery Kempe*. When one tries to describe Gluck's lapidary, sexy, smart hyperfictions, one finds oneself overcome by a strange Tourette's Syndrome of superlatives. "Brilliant--squawk! Superb--squawk! A beloved teacher and friend--awk! Top ten postmodern writer--squawk!" Longtime board member of Small Press Traffic, Gluck was one of its founders way back in the mid seventies, and the former director of the Poetry Center at San Francisco State.

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241. Peter Quartermain

AERIAL Andrews issue

Mon 11 May 1998

At 01:52 PM 5/11/98 -0400, Gary Sullivan wrote:

I can't, literally, afford the Aerial Andrews issue, though I'll try to get it

Good luck! I don't think it's been published yet, has it?

+

Peter Quartermain

846 Keefer Street
Vancouver
B.C.
Canada V6A 1Y7
Voice : [REDACTED]
Fax: [REDACTED]

+++++

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242. **Maria Damon (Maria Damon)**

british experimentalism

Mon 11 May 1998

hi guyzies, is there a book of contemporary experimental british poetry that is "multicultural" and not only women? maria d

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243. **R. Gancie**

radical

Mon 11 May 1998

"Moreover, since these physical means of power were created in large part through science, the United States also maintains a highly privileged position of knowledge. The United States knows more about "reality" itself, reality being defined in terms of physical science." --- "With the appointment of Robert McNamara as secretary of defense in 1961, the "managerial" approach to warfare soon permeated the entire military apparatus. In essence, this approach constituted an idea of highly controlled, "manageable" warfare that could be rationally administered for highly specified ends. Three basic steps were involved in this economic rationalization process. First, warfare is approached as a problem of organizing quantities. Transforming the world into discrete quantities is therefore a necessary first step in all reasoning about warfare...." "Having first transformed the elements of warfare into quantities, the managerial approach secondly constructs various models for the production of warfare. Using the model of the individual business firm in a capitalist economy, the defense managers tried to find "profit maximization" in warfare...." "A third step was necessary to complete the managerial approach: the foreign Other was conceptualized to act according to the same logic of "profit" maximization. The intellectual operation here is called "game theory" and the idea is to simulate a conflict given certain parameters concerning what is a "rational" response by the opposition...." "By adopting microeconomics, game theory, systems analysis, and other managerial techniques, the Kennedy

administration advanced "limited warfare" to greater specificity, making it seem more controllable, manageable, and therefore desirable as foreign policy." ---
"The refugee advisor went out all over the province largely to areas where there'd been battles. He would assess the value of the people's destroyed houses and dead livestock and pay people off. For example, an adult civilian over 15 years old who was killed was worth \$35 to their family; a child under 15 was worth \$14.40. The United States government paid people off for their dead children, or their dead husbands and wives, or whatever, at the rate of \$35 or \$15, depending on their age."---excerpts from *The Perfect War: Technowar in Vietnam* by James William Gibson
"The whole history of modern science proves to be a process of progressive emancipation from our innate classification of the external stimuli till in the end they completely disappear so that "physical science has now reached a stage of development that renders it impossible to express observable occurrences in language appropriate to what is perceived by our senses. The only appropriate language is that of mathematics," i.e., the discipline developed to describe complexes of relationships between elements which have no attributes except these relations."---F.A. Hayek, *The Counter-Revolution of Science*---cp

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244. **izak**
"**surrender intentionality**"
Mon 11 May 1998

what does the term "surrender intentionality" mean in regards to poetics? -
joanna

"the misfit massacres the mustang pony just to feel the soft rise of marilyn
monroe against his chest" -Patti Smith

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245. **joel lewis**
f.y.i.
Mon 11 May 1998

*** Court rules against use of Elvis name

In a decision that limits the parody defense in trademark infringement cases, an appeals court has ruled against a Texas restaurant that was being sued for calling itself "The Velvet Elvis." The decision by the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed a lower court ruling which had held that "Velvet Elvis" did not infringe trademarks held by the Presley estate. The case was brought by Elvis

Presley Enterprises, which owns all trademarks and publicity rights belonging to the Presley estate. It sought to prevent a Houston bar, which featured velvet paintings of Elvis, a frozen drink called "Love Me Blenders" and a hot dog named "Your Football Hound Dog," from calling itself "The Velvet Elvis." See <http://www.infobeat.com/stories/cgi/story.cgi?id=2554094869-ba9>

*** NBC, Attenborough plan Bible miniseries

In what could be the most expensive miniseries ever launched for broadcast TV, NBC is planning a 12-hour epic called "The Bible," with Richard Attenborough executive producing. Details of the project are in the discussion stage, but Attenborough will be heavily involved in the creative aspects and is expected to star in and direct some of the two-hour installments. "The Bible" will feature stories of the Old Testament and will culminate with the birth of Jesus Christ. The estimated budget could go as high as \$150 million, which is more than double the cost of any previous TV miniseries. See <http://www.infobeat.com/stories/cgi/story.cgi?id=2554093850-df6>

*** Thai snake man emerges from week-long stunt

A Thai farmer completed a potentially deadly stunt on Monday after a week locked up with scores of deadly snakes in a Bangkok shopping centre. Boonreung Buachan, 27, from north eastern Si Saket province had spent the previous 168 hours confined in a small glass-walled room with 100 cobras and 10 venomous centipedes. Boonreung, who was not paid for his efforts, spent much of his captivity playing with the creatures, calmly watching television from a bed as the snakes writhed among the sheets, or urging curious shoppers to join him. See <http://www.infobeat.com/stories/cgi/story.cgi?id=2554093411-142>

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246. **linda russo**

****call for admissions****

Mon 11 May 1998

for an essay on post-Modern (which in this context means post _Floating Bear_) women-edited presses & journals (including ezines)

I think I've covered all the biggies, but everytime i turn around another one's [present progressive verb]

would anyone out there like to admit to knowing of one, taking part in one, having thoughts about one, or ever having had done any of the above?

ANY info is appreciated; email addresses for editors are nice, to look busy or popular. Or even send any old copies you have sitting

around:

160 South 13th East #16
Salt Lake City, UT 84102

"admission" is not to be taken as a sign of guilt. I just don't want anyone submitting to me right now. I recently got a longish poem returned to me saying "we don't want to submit to this right now"

also feel free to forward this widely.

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247. **Alan Myouka Sondheim**

Nikuko's doing stuff

Mon 11 May 1998

-

Nikuko probes what they're doing on Panix at the moment:

```
elm emacs -tcsh /usr/local/experimental/bin/strn /usr/local/bin/vim trn -zsh -zsh -  
tcsh /usr/local/bin/emacs /usr/local/bin/pine sleep -ksh pine more nn pine -tcsh -  
tcsh -zsh default.html /ne pine -tcsh lynx PCPU -ksh -tcsh -tcsh -tcsh  
/usr/local/bin/pine /usr/local/experimental/bin/emacs nn trn elm elm emacs w  
/usr/local/bin/zsh /usr/ucb/more ./tt++ ./tt++ -psh pine pine -psh slrn  
backgammon /usr/local/experimental/bin/nn -tcsh -tcsh elm -tcsh vim  
/usr/local/bin/emacs19/emacs
```

Nikuko probes their bodies too:

```
rcliff lk eck mc rsood shabbir bsd tango samsara mc eloo lrudolph hkaplan  
gaillard tbyfield topaz vilardi nepsa osc pirmann sethb sondheim vernonw lent  
stern routny stain brodie tomicus wendy aqn smith aronson smeyer yodave  
bcousins carter sal tim firoozye jlerner eck goldrich gtc ybmcu jposhea3 mef  
wlm wagneric teej slavery andrewk fjelstad ficara bneuman
```

Nikuko!

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248. **MAYHEW**

Re: FYI

Mon 11 May 1998

People likely to sue me (if parody is no defense against copyright/trademark infringement):

John Ashbery, Robert Creeley, Elvis, Mickey Mouse, Kenneth Koch [the entire New York School of poetry in fact], William Carlos Williams (estate of), Louise Gluck, Rainer Maria Rilke, Pierre Reverdy, William Shakespeare, W.S. Merwin, Jose Lezama Lima, Isidore Ducasse, Federico Garcia Lorca, Theodore Geisel, Henry Gould, Morpheal, James Wright, Robert Bly, Leslie Scalapino...[a partial list]

Some of these authors in the public domain, or have a forgiving nature, so I am not too worried...

Jonathan

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249. **Peter Ganick**

Re: british experimentalism

Mon 11 May 1998

Maria Damon (Maria Damon) wrote:

>

> hi guyzies, is there a book of contemporary experimental british poetry

> that is "multicultural" and not only women? maria d

how about adrien clarke and robert sheppard's

'floating capital' published by potes & poets,

which, although not multicultural, features

experimental or language-poetry-influenced writers

like cris cheek, maggie sullivan, etc?...

peter ganick

██████████

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250. **linda russo**

p.s. **call for submissions**

Mon 11 May 1998

p.s.

* @ * % * & * # *

with only the sound of the mimeograph "kachunking"

and the pages swishing down . . . (Maureen Owen)

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251. **hen**

Re: FYI

Mon 11 May 1998

why would I sue you? I only go after the big fish!! - Henry "Catfish" Gould

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252. **Maria Damon**

Re: british experimentalism

Mon 11 May 1998

thanks; i'm looking for a book --anthology, yes --that i can order for a class. this looks out of print/dubious from what you say.

At 5:19 PM -0600 5/11/98, Keith Tuma wrote:

>>hi guyzies, is there a book of contemporary experimental british poetry

>>that is "multicultural" and not only women? maria d

>

>

>Guessing that this means anthologies and that one that might fit the bill

>is Allnut, D'Aguiar, Edwards, Mottram, eds., _The New British Poetry_

>(Paladin, 1988). Not altogether satisfying but worth a look, if you can

>find it.

>

>KT

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253. **Keith Tuma**

Re: british experimentalism

Mon 11 May 1998

| *hi guyzies, is there a book of contemporary experimental british poetry*
| *that is "multicultural" and not only women? maria d*

Guessing that this means anthologies and that one that might fit the bill is Allnut, D'Aguiar, Edwards, Mottram, eds., _The New British Poetry_ (Paladin, 1988). Not altogether satisfying but worth a look, if you can find it.

KT

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254. **Karen Kelley**

Re: The neighbor's dog fence

Mon 11 May 1998

Writing that appears not to be from a unified self, as interesting as it often is, can be read as even more ego-centric than writing peppered with "I"s, "You"s and other personal pronouns. At least the latter is qualifying the utterances as being specific to the speaking persona (the writer's or otherwise - these are "my" thoughts, feelings, perceptions), whereas the former may be seen as claiming some sort of universality

Well, the first sentence of this paragraph made me happy. But hey, wait a minute there in the second sentence: "I" and "you" can function as loci in the poem, points of consciousness that connect the nouns and verbs (oh, okay--and tha adjectives). But why, when we realize that nouns can be more than nouns and verbs more than verbs and syntax more than syntax (alright, I'm reaching), but WHY must pronouns always be personalized?

And yes, the elision of pronouns in the interest of universality has always struck me as the height of egocentrism.

But really, what's up with this pronoun problem?

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255. **Rachel Loden**

Re: radical

Mon 11 May 1998

Emily Dickinson is another example. In life she certainly seems to have set out some very well-defined parameters, but even though first person pronouns & possessives appear a lot in her poetry (unlike in Eigner's, where they almost never appear) there is a marked absence of personal particularities.

What's a "personal particularity"? I hope it's not a quirk, or a peculiarity, or even the sort of peccadillo that makes the work of David Bromige or Rodney Dangerfield more interesting (to me anyway) than the limpid productions of any number of spiritual athletes.

I hope it's not what enables Ron Padgett to write lines like

Seriously I have this mental (smuh!) illness

which causes me to do things

because such "personal" or personist nerviness (as distinguished from a plodding confessionalism) is, I think, the engine of poetry.

| *As for absence of ego being a desirable end, see almost any religion.*

This will probably cause me to be pelted by many ego-free tomatoes, but in the small unscientific sample which is my life the drumbeat for "egolessness" or its postmodern equivalents is usually accompanied by dizzying levels of arrogance, narcissism, and a sort of missionary humorlessness. Thanks, but I'll always take the perfectly modulated dysfunction of a Richard Pryor or a Frank O'Hara or a Madeline Kahn over any sort of sanitized enlightenment.

Rachel Loden

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256. **toddbaron**

Re: Bellamy/Gluck at SPT

Mon 11 May 1998

BOY

I wish I could be at Dodies and Robert's

READING.

Hello and

I'm still very interested in reading at NEW C. (neuc?) as alum.

Pass on th word to Dodie

or if you would,

you

self.

love

Toddb

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257. **Alan Myouka Sondheim**

forgive this intrusion stupid Nikuko wants to live

Mon 11 May 1998

and make sense this is the best she can do, I'm stupid Nikuko

Inari

A

UN A

UN A

UN

I want to make a mess of this mess

and subsume one lemming for another, begin

the process of subsumption, says I, Daishin Nikuko.

Soon, the mess will become another,

and this new mess will be the one that saves me;

this new mess will be the one I murmur in my sleep;

mhis new mexm will be mhe final mexm.
So I begin looking for mhe sense in mhe mexm
which is nom yem wrimmen, bum which appears
wimhin and mhrough mhe mosm serious game of subsmimions
because I wanm mo save myself, because I am gemming mired
and mthink of dying consmanmly, because I need mhis magic,
mhis incanmamion, so mham I, Daishin Nikuko, can conminue
jusm anomher day of omher.

A
UN A

UN A
UN

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258. **Dan or Orion Raphael Dlugonski**

also also re: radical / ego

Tue 12 May 1998

i felt early in my writing that my job as writer/editor was/is to take me out of the poems. i cant just sit down and write, the words have to come, and i see myself as a vehicle. am aware i wont be a pure flute, that the bumps and worries and whorls in me help make me this instrument. at the same time, 'i' (& yes lower-case) is about the only pronoun i use, since who else can i speak for. this i is way flexible, ranging from the personal to the mythic, usually slipping into a beat-elemental persona.>

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259. **Robert Archambeau**

USC position in poetics

Tue 12 May 1998

I suppose there's some irony in posting this right after Mark's note about careerism, but this could be a real opportunity for someone on the list (I have no connection with USC, this is from the Chronicle of Higher Ed):

English: Assistant Professor in Poetry and Poetics, twentieth-century American literature and culture. Experience in interdisciplinary studies, gender and ethnic studies, especially Jewish American studies, desirable. Strong publication and teaching required. Start date: September, 1999. Candidates should submit a letter of interest and a curriculum vitae by November 6, 1998 to: Teresa McKenna, Chair, Department of English, Taper Hall 420, University of Southern California, University Park, Los Angeles, California 90089-0354. USC

| encourages applications from minority and women candidates.
| Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action Employer.

--

Robert Archambeau
Department of English
Lake Forest College
Lake Forest, IL 60045

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260. **Tim Wood**

Re: "radical"

Tue 12 May 1998

Someone is reputed to have said

| Linda Russo really addressed what I was questioning: Is it possible, in the
| context of the immediate present, to be a "radical poet"? I mean, everyone
| addressed it, I guess, but I think Linda articulated it in a way that for me
| felt most accurate. It's not a question that I feel can be answered at the
| moment, but I keep coming back to it.

I'll share something that happened (to me) that ties in with whether anyone can be radical, let alone a radical poet. I don't fly very often and recently I had to take a round-trip flight with a stop at the airport in Minneapolis. The entire airport is no-smoking, including the curbside areas (except one area at the extreme end of the airport I stumbled upon on my return trip). Of course, people were lined up smoking in front of the no-smoking signs. The people in suits stood on the other side of the curb looking over at us while they waited for rides/taxis/whatever.

It struck me that the most subversive act available for most people today is smoking in front of a no-smoking sign. Or, because of rising prices, taxes, group pressure, just smoking. It's very reminiscent of Chomsky's writing on the media: so much 'radical' behavior (e.g. smoking) has been put on display in parody or put on display and then discounted that the boundary lines have become in some case unlocatable and in other cases so narrow that being radical, subversive, whatever is a daunting task to say the least. If there are no revolutions in the streets, no movements that show any signs of changing the world and the paradigm, how can poetry be radical except against itself again and again. Or radical/observational in the sense of following the shift paradigm of the status quo and capitalism (and yes I know differentiating the two is problematic).

Tim

poetry is an hour
a flash
of sound
bytes
 found
 rescued
 boiled
freed
to rage again

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261. **MAYHEW**
Ode to Ron Padgett

Tue 12 May 1998

Ode to Ron Padgett

[from an imaginary textbood]

Permission is granted, but not do do anything you want.

--John Cage

"... which brings us to the category which I will term the 'permission granter,' whose style seems as effortless as it is easily imitated. Anyone could do this, we think, brilliance is within our reach. These permission granters, poets of genius themselves, never intimidate their readers--unlike the 'pure geniuses' discussed in Chapter 4. Putting aside false modesty, I can myself aspire to be a permission granter, as could any reader of this book.

Yet there exists another sort of permission granter whose influence is entirely nefarious. Offering nothing to the ear, the eye, or the mind, he is admired precisely because he gives solace to equally wretched poets, 'nice people who unfortunately write poetry.' This judgment will seem unduly harsh, yet "

Jonathan Mayhew

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262. **Douglas Barbour**
Re: R on D

Tue 12 May 1998

Now that Rachel has mentioned him (or is that 'menmioned' him?), where is David B in all this talk? I've certainly missed his wit ('wim') in this fascinating thread ('hread').

=====

Douglas Barbour
Department of English
University of Alberta
Edmonton Alberta T6G 2E5
[REDACTED] FAX: [REDACTED]
H: [REDACTED]

~~~~~

NOT MUCH  
Not much you ever  
said you were thinking  
of, not much to  
say in answer.  
Robert Creeley

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263. **Mark Prejsnar**

***Doubled-Careerism***

*Tue 12 May 1998*

---

Kent Johnson is to be admired for his creative and provocative involvement in some of the more dynamic poetry projects of the last few years.

But, his last couple of posts are wrong in many ways.

\*While it fits with his own intricate attack on the institutionally constructed subject/agent of the poetry world, his emphasis on "careerism" etc. doesn't really work as a critique of various recent tendencies outside the mainstream.

\*Lack of insertion into the career/power/celebrity nexus is precisely what characterizes many in the poetry world. (Indeed, it is part of the sociohistorical givens of the situation of poetry in general, even (though in a far more muted way) that of the academically-situated workshop world.)

\*I believe there are things to be gained by radically destabilizing the poetic subject...It's fun, for one thing. (The primary, humanly liberating criterion for evaluating art-activities.) But a slide into careerism is certainly not the primary problem of various contemporary poets whose work is widely read by Listees...Nor for that matter have they "failed," Kent.

\*The overall context is problematic, and a continual pain to live with. But that is just what, from Spicer on through more recent writers, has fueled good poetry projects.

\*To quote Jerome McGann. "In these textual moves Spicer, as it were, mortalizes the poetic event, and his manipulations of the physical book are the emblems of a similar humane insurgency typical of the (later) work of contemporary experimental writers. The bookishness of postmodern writing is a form of ironic self-representation. It situates poet and poem firmly in the social, institutional and even the economic heart of things. As a consequence, much of contemporary poetry becomes--in no pejorative sense--a dismal science, the poetry of dies mali, an imagination of writing that knows it inhabits a world ruled by Mammon."

(The Black Riders, p.108)

\*The claim here that such strategies situate poetry "firmly in the heart" of things, is an understandable exaggeration. It's precisely that such maneuvers leave poetry still marginalized, that gives the entire enterprise its twist and its demented contours....

\*Anyway, thanx to Kent for as usual bringing up important issues.

marginal in @tlanta,  
Mark

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---

## 264. **Keston Sutherland**

**(no subject)**

*Tue 12 May 1998*

---

Alan, Nikuko, Jennifer, all - you light up my terminal

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---

## 265. **AERIALEDGE**

**Aerial 9**

*Tue 12 May 1998*

---

The Andrews issue should be available, at last, in the fall. abt 280 pages of Bruceiana.

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266. **Gary Sullivan**

***Leggo my ego***

Tue 12 May 1998

---

Art-product with ego carefully scraped off its face is not wholly possible. The art-product is particular, an instance. The instance itself can be examined as an instance chosen over potential instances.

Dizzying levels of arrogance, narcissism and a sort of missionary humorousness (as opposed to humorlessness) might describe both Pryor's and O'Hara's bodies of work. I have great respect for both, but can't take either in large doses without feeling suffocated. There is something wanting in the range of emotion or outlook in O'Hara's writing: "In Memory of My Feelings" is such a lovely entry into what, in poem after poem I'm disappointed to find to be mostly one or two feelings, as though he's perfectly modulated everything but exuberance, ironic gesture and the occasional maudlin moment out of the picture. To the extent O'Hara's writing proposes a mimesis of human emotional experience (& I don't mean to suggest this to be its real, or only, proposal), I find it to be ultimately very sanitized.

On Monday, May 11, 1998 10:09 PM, Rachel Loden [SMTP: [REDACTED]] wrote:

> This will probably cause me to be pelted by many ego-free tomatoes, but  
> in the small unscientific sample which is my life the drumbeat for  
> "egolessness" or its postmodern equivalents is usually accompanied by  
> dizzying levels of arrogance, narcissism, and a sort of missionary  
> humorlessness. Thanks, but I'll always take the perfectly modulated  
> dysfunction of a Richard Pryor or a Frank O'Hara or a Madeline Kahn  
> over any sort of sanitized enlightenment.

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267. **Judy Roitman**

***Re: The neighbor's dog fence***

Tue 12 May 1998

---

*But why, when we realize that nouns can be more than nouns and  
verbs more than verbs and syntax more than syntax*

Syntax always more than syntax. For example:

----- Judy Roitman  
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas |  
memory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days."  
[REDACTED] | fax: [REDACTED] | Larry Eigner,  
1927-1996 ----- Note new area

code -----  
http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/  
-----

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268. **Jordan Davis**

**"Like Boxes of Shit in Your House? Get a Cat!"**

*Tue 12 May 1998*

---

Gary?

Can we talk for a second? I know it's been raining for eight months solid here in New York, but which edition of O'Hara have you been reading? I mean I know you *\_like\_* to collapse the complexities you see around you into possibilities for humorous response -- and have you seen The Onion? I think they took your Ask Mrs. Ted Hughes idea, man! Sic em. Anyway I'm wondering if you'd like to borrow, or photocopy from my copy of O'Hara's collected, because it has a few other "feelings" in it, such as hatred, compassion, regret (really!), bemused distrust, self-loathing, self-regard, etc etc. I guess you could think of O'Hara's aoristic standards as somehow always only exuberant, but that would be kind of like thinking the Greeks were always only talking about killing their parents.

Wondering --

Jordan

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269. **Gary Sullivan**

***Mediocrity loves company***

*Tue 12 May 1998*

---

I have & have read O'Hara's *\_Collected Poems\_*, his *\_Love Poems\_*, *\_Lunch Poems\_*, *\_Second Avenue\_*, *\_Meditations in an Emergency\_*, *\_Early Writings\_*, *\_Selected Plays\_*, and one other that Grey Fox published, the title of which escapes me at the moment. My response to Rachel's post was a response-in-kind, taking the same general sweeps she made in her dismissal of "egoless, post-modern" writing and seeing what might happen if applied to O'Hara . . . and discovering that there is a way in which it works.

The Mrs. Ted Hughes gag wasn't mine (tho I posted it) nor did the format for the gag originate with its author. Anyway, I love the Onion. "Sic em"? Wow. I don't ferociously attack people, Jordan; that seems to be your way of handling disagreements, if your last post is any indication. I understand completely your disagreeing with me, and welcome well-articulated argument. But, this initial

forray of yours is childish, mean-spirited and I wonder if something more than the words in my post to Rachel have provoked it.

On Tuesday, May 12, 1998 12:04 PM, Jordan Davis [SMTP: [REDACTED]] wrote:

> Gary?

>

> Can we talk for a second? I know it's been raining for eight months solid  
> here in New York, but which edition of O'Hara have you been reading? I  
> mean I know you \_like\_ to collapse the complexities you see around you  
> into possibilities for humorous response -- and have you seen The Onion? I  
> think they took your Ask Mrs. Ted Hughes idea, man! Sic em. Anyway I'm  
> wondering if you'd like to borrow, or photocopy from my copy of O'Hara's  
> collected, because it has a few other "feelings" in it, such as hatred,  
> compassion, regret (really!), bemused distrust, self-loathing,  
> self-regard, etc etc. I guess you could think of O'Hara's aoristic  
> standards as somehow always only exuberant, but that would be kind of like  
> thinking the Greeks were always only talking about killing their parents.

>

> Wondering --

> Jordan

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270. **Robert Hale**

***Re: Mediocrity loves company***

*Tue 12 May 1998*

---

I don't know, Gary, you slammed me pretty hard last week for my post where I suggested radical elements in B. Andrews' and other work. Considering the nature of my post and my own love of politics, I had no problem with your line of questioning. I wouldn't even call it "ferocious," but considering the gist of your counter-opinion -- that the value of his work lies in it's "focus" "energy" and "intensity" -- perhaps you should turn the bullshit detector on yourself.

Sniping aside, you're on the right track in questioning generalizations.

At 12:37 PM 5/12/98 -0400, you wrote:

>I have & have read O'Hara's \_Collected Poems\_, his \_Love Poems\_, \_Lunch Poems\_,

>\_Second Avenue\_, \_Meditations in an Emergency\_, \_Early Writings\_, \_Selected

>Plays\_, and one other that Grey Fox published, the title of which escapes me at

>the moment. My response to Rachel's post was a response-in-kind, taking the  
>same general sweeps she made in her dismissal of "egoless, post-modern" writing

>and seeing what might happen if applied to O'Hara . . . and discovering that  
>there is a way in which it works.  
>  
>The Mrs. Ted Hughes gag wasn't mine (tho I posted it) nor did the format for  
>the gag originate with its author. Anyway, I love the Onion. "Sic em"? Wow. I  
>don't ferociously attack people, Jordan; that seems to be your way of handling  
>disagreements, if your last post is any indication. I understand completely  
>your disagreeing with me, and welcome well-articulated argument. But, this  
>initial forray of yours is childish, mean-spirited and I wonder if something  
>more than the words in my post to Rachel have provoked it.  
>  
>  
>On Tuesday, May 12, 1998 12:04 PM, Jordan Davis [SMTP: ] wrote:  
>> Gary?  
>>  
>> Can we talk for a second? I know it's been raining for eight months solid  
>> here in New York, but which edition of O'Hara have you been reading? I  
>> mean I know you \_like\_ to collapse the complexities you see around you  
>> into possibilities for humorous response -- and have you seen The Onion? I  
>> think they took your Ask Mrs. Ted Hughes idea, man! Sic em. Anyway I'm  
>> wondering if you'd like to borrow, or photocopy from my copy of O'Hara's  
>> collected, because it has a few other "feelings" in it, such as hatred,  
>> compassion, regret (really!), bemused distrust, self-loathing,  
>> self-regard, etc etc. I guess you could think of O'Hara's aoristic  
>> standards as somehow always only exuberant, but that would be kind of like  
>> thinking the Greeks were always only talking about killing their parents.  
>>  
>> Wondering --  
>> Jordan  
>  
>

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271. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**

***Re: poetics of subsistence***

*Tue 12 May 1998*

---

gary r. and interested others: i feel obliged here to self-promote by noting that my essay on whitman and \*energy\* specifically---"no wasted words: whitman's original energy"---is forthcoming in vol. 12 of \_nineteenth century studies\_ (should be) next month... the laser-proofs are on their way to me even as i post this... i've been toying with this idea of energy for twelve years now, ever since

listening to don byrd read "this compost" in a grad seminar... and feel that i'm only now able to articulate it without confusing the hell out of whitman's poetry/poetic AND (19th century) science (couldn't have managed any clarity at all w/o tenney nathanson's groundbreaking work on whitman's "voice")... be interested in what anyone around t/here has to say about the piece... i'm hoping my modest effort will serve as a sort of springboard for further, no doubt much better informed inquiry...

best,

joe

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272. **Gary Sullivan**

***My Mediocrity***

*Tue 12 May 1998*

---

I don't feel I slammed you, Robert. I did question what was said in your post. Jordan questioned what I said in my post, but I felt the tone of it was mean. Meaning it felt like it was meant to hurt as much as to examine the limitations of what I said. Jordan tells me backchannel that he was merely being playful, and so I'll respect that, and should apologize for misreading it. I apologize, Jordan. Seriously. Jordan also tells me he was hurt by my insinuating he's mediocre. "Mediocrity loves company" was actually directed at myself, not Jordan. Meaning I've been talking a lot, lately, & relishing the company, but also having that "gawd, shuddup awready" feeling. Anyway, I think Jordan's critique of what I said, to the extent it stuck to what I said, was more than fair, and I'm glad he disagrees. I'd personally really like to see instances in O'Hara's grander scope of emotion posted here.

I agree the bullshit detector should be trained on me as much as anyone. I'm the wrong person to do that, though. I'd welcome, from you, or anyone, any critique of my reading of Andrews. I don't post because I'm in love with my thoughts; I post already knowing what I think, the limitations of that, & hoping to get other perspectives. I hope I put enough "I think" or "It seems to me" kinds of qualifiers in there so that's understood.

Anyway . . . I'm relishing reading Gary Roberts now on "subsistence" . . . an admittedly vague term that Rachel was thoughtful enough to backchannel me about & question.

PS: My e-mail spellchecker wants to change "backchannel" to "bacchanal."

I do too,

Gary

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273. **Laura E. Wright**

***top 10***

*Tue 12 May 1998*

---

Suggestions please:

I'm in the process of working on collection development for our writing and poetics department here at the Naropa Library. We currently subscribe to about 13 writing/poetry/lit.-related journals. On our budget, we can't afford a whole lot, but -- please send (backchannel would be great) me your \*top 10\* (or so) journals/zines -- whatever you would like to see and read in your ideal library.

--

Laura Wright <[REDACTED]>

Library Assistant, Naropa Institute  
[REDACTED]

"All music is music..." -- Ted Berrigan

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274. **groberts**

***poetics of subsistence***

*Tue 12 May 1998*

---

At the risk of being tedious, I am writing a much longer post than I usually do, so consider yourself forewarned.

Gary Sullivan's tantalizing and challenging remarks about a poetics of subsistence are intriguing to me, and I am elaborating on them in my own way and without any real idea of his understanding of this phrase. Hopefully the following is not entirely irrelevant. I take "subsistence" here to mean a drastically scaled down middle-class lifestyle resulting from a social organization trying to escape and even dismantle the programmed consumption of time and space, labor and things. Since I know very little about subsistence living as a social movement in the U.S., I am speculating here, and probably rather naively too. I imagine subsistence living is sustained by both new and recovered notions of self-reliance and communitarianism, which in turn are informed by a range of variously plausible or viable economic and ecological theories and practices. I do not know how class fits into this scheme of things. All of this would seem to require a thorough reconsideration of how and why we spend time and energy in work and leisure, including in the production and consumption of poetry.

The idea of a poetics of subsistence is also intriguing to me because the poetics of wastefulness seems to be more pervasive, or at least more completely theorized. I think it makes sense to talk about them both together in this context. Bataille of course and many others have posited the importance of excessive expenditure to the means of artistic production. The polemical impetus for such a conception of art, earlier in the century anyway, seems to have been to try to remove the creative act from the economies of Freudian drives or of commodity exchange, and into the domain of play, which for the most part is aesthetic (if your idea of play is based on Schiller and Nietzsche). This claim then is at least minimally related to the perennially vexed issues of the use-value and autonomy of the poem, especially whenever "free" play becomes the occasion for some kind of critique. Perhaps the poetry of Bruce Andrews is one of excessive expenditure, at least its propulsive wantonness suggests so to me.

I suppose it's obvious that both of these poetics rely on ideas about energy. How and why does a poem capture and expend energy from the networks of social and natural relationships in its vicinity? I say poem and not poet in order to leave open the application of this question not just to writing but also to reading. A poetics of subsistence might be derived from hypotheses and knowledge about energy, which I think is an important word but one perhaps with a confusingly large number of meanings. At any rate, it seems to me not enough for this poetics to re-present the imagery and diction of a way of life.

With respect to poetry (admittedly a specialization belied by my idea of this poetics), some hypotheses and knowledge might result from thinking about formal issues in a way that I associate first with Pound, and then with Olson and Zukofsky. Beginning with form, however, would not preclude talking about the energy of material production and distribution; maybe even the latter should come first, though I myself know little about it.

Should a poetics of subsistence have a vocabulary of technical words such as "energy" and "ecology"? Yes, but what good (and what fun?) could come from writing poems out of a self-imposed and thus extrinsically motivated need to define such terms? Would such a poetics be inherently didactic (georgic)?

If a poetics of subsistence is defined by poets like Creeley, Niedecker, Eigner, and also Snyder and Whalen, then is its primarily a minimalist poetics of the postmodern lyric? Is a poem with this orientation for the most part going to be a short one or at least use short lines?

Would a poetics of subsistence, to the extent that it is practically and politically interested in the movement of energy, need to encompass a bewildering diverse array of poets, such as Lawrence, Jeffers, Ammons, Cage, Enslin, Kerouac,

Merwin, Swenson among many others? (Being ignorant of such poetry in other languages, I mention only those writing in English.)

How would those poetics dedicated to deconstructing grammaticality abet or confound a poetics of subsistence?

I stress "energy" rather than other abstractions such as power, language, hegemony because it helps me think about what I am doing by spending a hour typing this up, and some portion of time each day plugged into the power grid/controlled conflagration that is my home or office. How expensive is this process of playing and working with poetics? ARE these questions futile because the structural position of their enunciation is urban and middle-class and spatially nul?

Shew! enough for now.

Gary R.

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275. **David W. Clippinger**

**Re: top 10**

*Tue 12 May 1998*

---

1. sulfur
2. chain
3. talisman
4. sagetrieb
5. five fingers review
6. the germ
7. conjunctions
8. chicago review
9. hambone
10. arshile

Thanks,

David Clippinger

Assistant Professor of English

Penn State University

At 12:23 PM 5/12/98 -0600, you wrote:

>Suggestions please:

>

>I'm in the process of working on collection development for our writing

>and poetics department here at the Naropa Library. We currently

>subscribe to about 13 writing/poetry/lit.-related journals. On our



>budget, we can't afford a whole lot, but -- please send (backchannel  
>would be great) me your \*top 10\* (or so) journals/zines -- whatever you  
>would like to see and read in your ideal library.  
>  
>--  
>Laura Wright <[REDACTED]>  
>Library Assistant, Naropa Institute  
>[REDACTED]  
>  
>"All music is music..." -- Ted Berrigan  
>  
>

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276. **R. Gancie**

**radical**

Tue 12 May 1998

---

Died some, pro patria,  
    non "dulce" non "et decor"...  
walked eye-deep in hell  
believing in old men's lies, then unbelieving  
came home, home to a lie,  
home to many deceits,  
home to old lies and new infamy;  
usury age-old and age-thick  
and liars in public places.  
---from E. P. ODE POUR L'ELECTION DE SON SEPULCHRE  
---cp

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277. **louis stroffolino**

**Re: My Mediocrity**

Tue 12 May 1998

---

Emotional Range.....  
Should it be a value?  
I often say "yes"  
but sometimes say "no"....  
Sometimes "sanitized" is good is necessary.....  
----  
The more interesting question for me right now

is the relation of reader to writer when it comes to  
"emotional range"-----

I know I keep harping (unduly) on that Auden blurb  
in which he says he can read Marianne Moore in ANY MOOD....  
and that I am skeptical of that (and I don't mean this as a  
criticism of Moore)....

I guess when looking at myself reading other poets (or writers)  
I wonder what effect (or affect) my "emotional range" has  
on what I'm reading.

And, if one is a SUBJECTIVIST, how making claims about a  
poet's emotional range will always be to some extent a claim  
about one's own emotions while reading it.....

or something IN BETWEEN  
or something IN BETWEEN

Yet, despite the seeming noncommittal quality of what I've just said,  
I realize there IS a valid perspective from which O'Hara can be said  
not to have a comprehensive "emotional range"---  
but this brings me to the limits of poetry on the page  
and I turn to theatre

                  or music (in which dylan has more emotional  
range than THE FALL

                  or FLIPPER who said

                  "you're so bored coz you're boring"

                  (just talking to myself here disclaimer)...chris

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278. **Rachel Levitsky**

***Re: new titles from Wild Honey Press***

*Tue 12 May 1998*

---

Dear Randolph,

I'm enjoying the books you sent me so much. They're beautiful!!!! I mean  
stunning.

I'm not done with either yet but so far in Arbor Vitae I love the puzzle aspect--  
the chaos that is not, the unspoken (unwritten) word/sign that dangles in front,  
the subtle undermining of language use without the usual knock on the hand  
"THIS IS A POEM THAT WANTS YOU TO QUESTION YOUR USE OF  
LANGUAGE" rather I am thinking about things when I read, the school, the  
deaf, iconography, pictures, history.

Your World War II poem a great anti-war poem.

I continue to enjoy the work.

Also--

My friends Jennifer Heath (Irish/Australian/American) and Steven Taylor and Judy Hussy and Eamon their child are heading toward Dublin on Thursday. Jennifer lives with poet Jack Collom and is a fiction writer, Steve is a musician (with Ed Sanders punk band "The Fugs") and writer, Judy is a dancer/writer and Eamon is learning to walk. I don't have a map in front of me to see where Bray is. They will also be in West Galway. They rented something.

I told Jennifer I'd mention her to you. Her email is:

[REDACTED]

If you'd be interested in meeting them and have a chance to email her today or tomorrow.

until later,  
Rachel

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279. **Rachel Levitsky**  
**Re: new titles from Wild Honey Press**  
*Tue 12 May 1998*

---

Forgive me all--that is truly embarrassing.  
Rachel

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280. **Marjorie Perloff**  
**Re: Special Issue of Sulfur**  
*Tue 12 May 1998*

---

#### CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Jenny Penberthy and Marjorie Perloff are guest-editing Sulfur #44, which will be devoted to Anglophone poetry and poetics written OUTSIDE the U.S. and UK. Contributions from residents of Canada, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, the Caribbean, Israel, India, Singapore and all the other nations, large and small, where poetries are written in English, will be welcome. The Deadline is December 1, 1998. Please send your work, with a SASE to Jenny Penberthy 3125 Waterloo St. Vancouver BC V6R 3S8 email [REDACTED].

or

Marjorie Perloff  
1467 Amalfi Drive

Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

email [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Sulfur #44 had previously been announced (in Sulfur 42, just out) as a Pacific Rim issue. But we have decided that, given our own knowledge (or lack thereof) this might be too problematic. So we've chosen this route instead.

With best wishes,

Marjorie and Jenny

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281. **JDEBROT**

***Re: My Mediocrity***

*Tue 12 May 1998*

---

The relative lack of "emotional range" in O'Hara's work is, it seems to me, quite political in that the tendency of his poems to private or coded exchange of meanings must be viewed as reacting against the social pressures that pathologized homosexuality during this period (& is played out quite subtly, for instance, in the first plate of the *\_Stones\_* collaboration in which Rivers immediately destabilizes the title of the piece ("US") by decorating the letters to resemble an American flag -- the pun being that the two meanings to which the title now alludes were opposite, homosexuality being equivalent at this time to un-Americanness). Of course an aesthetic of silence (would this be in some way related to an aesthetic of subsistence?) is even more apparent in the work of, say, Johns, Cage, or the Ashbery of *\_The Tennis Court Oath\_*, for whom the avoidance of artistic expression (and the refusal, in consequence, of a "determinate focal point or center of interest" [Branden Joseph]) shifts the work's emphasis, as Chris Stroffolino seems to suggest, away from its autographic or gestural content to a privilegeding of the viewer's (or reader's) receptivity -- that is away from a transcendental to a social meaningfulness. Susan Sontag's important essay "The Aesthetics of Silence," roughly contemporary with the emerging avant-garde of O'Hara's generation, is quite revealing re these issues.

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282. **Maria Damon**

***more queries***

*Tue 12 May 1998*

- 
1. what tribe (nation) is Leonard Peltier a member of?
  2. does anyone know of any published history or study of renga? i've got an undergrad doing a final paper on it.

3. can't remember the third, but it was important (to me) so stay tuned  
md

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283. **Maria Damon**

***Re: new titles from Wild Honey Press***

*Tue 12 May 1998*

---

At 2:07 PM -0600 5/12/98, Rachel Levitsky wrote:

>Forgive me all--that is truly embarrassing.

>

>Rachel

not nearly so embarrassing as the verbal compost matter Bowering and  
Bromige subject us to --on purpose ;)

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284. **Susan Wheeler**

***Re: more queries***

*Tue 12 May 1998*

---

Hey, Maria. 1979 Princeton U Press: Japanese Linked Poetry: An Account with  
Translations of Renga and Haikai Sequences by Earl Miner I've found useful.

At 03:57 PM 5/12/98 -0500, you wrote:

>1. what tribe (nation) is Leonard Peltier a member of?

>2. does anyone know of any published history or study of renga? i've got an  
>undergrad doing a final paper on it.

>3. can't remember the third, but it was important (to me) so stay tuned

>md

>

>

Susan Wheeler

██████████

voice/fax ██████████

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285. **Alan Myouka Sondheim**

***the last of substitution***

*Tue 12 May 1998*

---

-

Scrawl

There is the countermanding, countermovement - so one might suppose this text to be the result of substitutions, revealing an armature against which I might be judged - for example, am I wearing Jennifer's panties at the moment? Do I masturbate thinking of Nikuko, are you Nikuko yourself - uncomfortable truths perhaps that appear only through the game played across the (game)board of lies, deflections, misplaced attributions, plagiarisms? Should I think of you bent over, my tongue caressing your warm and unclean holes? Should I blame these embarrassments on the manner in which this text was composed, that is, as a matter of substitutions, thereby constituted by the machine, my own role as an afterthought in this manner of replacements? Perhaps I myself am such a substitution, replacement; perhaps this is written by someone else other than Jennifer, Alan, Julu, or Nikuko herself, sodden with self-pleasure? Perhaps this is further generated by the machine-ab-nihilo, procreated out of nothing, hardly the stains on my panties, breasts marked with teeth and nails? Should I excuse myself from the machine? Should anyone? (And what, in such a style of writing, would be the ur-text, if not the following (for example):

There OM Ghe couRGermaRdORg, couRGermovemeRG - Mo oRe mOghG  
MuppoMe \_GhOM\_ GexG Go be Ghe reMulG of MubMGOGuGOoRM, revealORg  
aR armaGure agaORMG whOch X mOghG be judged - for example, am X  
wearORg JeRROfer'M paRGOeM aG Ghe momERG? Do X maMGurbaGe  
GhORkORg of NOkuko, are ,ou NOkuko ,ourMelf - uRcomforGable GruGhM  
perhapM GhaG appear \_oRl,\_ Ghrough Ghe game pla,ed acroMM Ghe  
(game)board of lOeM, deflecGOoRM, mOMplaced aGGrObuGOoRM,  
plagOarOMmM? Should X GhORk of ,ou beRG over, m, GoRgue  
careMMORg ,our warm aRd uRcleaR holeM? Should X blame GheMe  
embarraMMmeRGM oR Ghe maRRer OR whOch GhOM GexG waM compoMed,  
GhaG OM, aM a maGGer of MubMGOGuGOoRM, Ghereb, coRMGOGuGed b,  
Ghe machORe, m, owR role aM aR afGerGhoughG OR GhOM maRRer of  
replacemeRGM? PerhapM X m,Melf am Much a MubMGOGuGOoR, replace-  
meRG; perhapM GhOM OM wrOGGeR b, MomeoRe elMe oGher GhaR  
JeRROfer, AlaR, Julu, or NOkuko herMelf, ModdeR wOGh Melf-pleaMure?  
PerhapM GhOM OM fur- Gher geReraGed b, Ghe machORe-ab-ROhOlo,  
procreaGed ouG of RoGhORg, hardl, Ghe MGaORM oR m, paRGOeM, breaMGM  
marked wOGh GeeGh aRd RaOlM? Should X excuMe m,Melf from Ghe  
machORe? Should aR,oRe? (ARd whaG, OR Much a MG,le of wrOGORg, would  
be Ghe ur-GexG,\_ Of RoG Ghe followORg (for example):

ah ah ah  
a un

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286. **MAYHEW**

**F O'H**

Tue 12 May 1998

---

Wait a minute-- Are we taking for granted O'Hara's lack of emotional range, then? I've never found this to be the case. It is true that he usually has his defenses up (except when he lets them down); that he is chatty and facetious (except when he's not) etc... In other words, he is extremely difficult to generalize about, because I can find you the poem that shoots the generalization to hell. He has more styles than just about anyone in a shorter period of time. There is the style (and emotional range) of "The Clouds go Soft" for example, or his poems about Gregory Corso. This is not to deny the point about a certain reticence in his work, like Asbhery's "Our days put on such reticence / these accents seem their own defense." Yet this "aesthetics of silence" is not a constant either. What about "Biotherm"?

I am not arguing that having such an emotional range is a sine qua non. I don't care that Creeley has a fairly limited range, for example. I am just puzzled by the acceptance of this judgment about O'Hara....

Jonathan Mayhew

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287. **louis stroffolino**

**Re: F O'H**

Tue 12 May 1998

---

I'm not taking "lack of emotional range" for granted...  
some connoisseur of the mess i could call  
frank's but could also call mine  
(would du charme call this oedipal?)  
or society's, or language's,  
etc.....c

On Tue, 12 May 1998, MAYHEW wrote:

*Wait a minute--  
Are we taking for granted O'Hara's lack of emotional range, then? I've never found this to be the case. It is true that he usually has his defenses up (except when he lets them down); that he is chatty and facetious (except when he's not) etc... In other words, he is extremely difficult to generalize about, because I can find you the poem that shoots the generalization to hell. He has more styles than just about anyone in a shorter period of time. There is the style (and emotional range) of "The Clouds go Soft" for example, or his poems about Gregory Corso. This is*

*not to deny the point about a certain reticence in his work, like Asbhery's "Our days put on such reticence / these accents seem their own defense." Yet this "aesthetics of silence" is not a constant either. What about "Biotherm"?*

*I am not arguing that having such an emotional range is a sine qua non. I don't care that Creeley has a fairly limited range, for example. I am just puzzled by the acceptance of this judgment about O'Hara....*

Jonathan Mayhew

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## 288. **Karen Kelley**

### **Re: "radical"**

Tue 12 May 1998

As someone who wears a suit & doesn't smoke, I suggest that I make a more radical fashion statement as a poet.

Tim Wood wrote:

*Someone is reputed to have said*

*Linda Russo really addressed what I was questioning: Is it possible, in the context of the immediate present, to be a "radical poet"? I mean, everyone addressed it, I guess, but I think Linda articulated it in a way that for me felt most accurate. It's not a question that I feel can be answered at the moment, but I keep coming back to it.*

*I'll share something that happened (to me) that ties in with whether anyone can be radical, let alone a radical poet. I don't fly very often and recently I had to take a round-trip flight with a stop at the airport in Minneapolis. The entire airport is no-smoking, including the curbside areas (except one area at the extreme end of the airport I stumbled upon on my return trip). Of course, people were lined up smoking in front of the no-smoking signs. The people in suits stood on the other side of the curb looking over at us while they waited for rides/taxis/whatever.*

*It struck me that the most subversive act available for most people today is smoking in front of a no-smoking sign. Or, because of rising prices, taxes, group pressure, just smoking. It's very reminiscent of Chomsky's writing on the media: so much 'radical' behavior (e.g. smoking) has been put on display in parody or put on display and then discounted that the boundary lines have become in some case unlocatable and in other cases so narrow that being radical, subversive, whatever is a daunting task to say the least. If there are no revolutions in the streets, no movements that show any signs of changing the world and the paradigm, how can poetry be*



*radical except against itself again and again. Or radical/observational  
in the sense of following the shift paradigm of the status quo and  
capitalism (and yes I know differentiating the two is problematic).*

Tim

---

*poetry is an hour  
a flash  
of sound  
bytes  
found  
rescued  
boiled  
freed  
to rage again*

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289. **Keston Sutherland**  
***reading, wednesday***

*Tue 12 May 1998*

---

a reminder to those in the Boston area, Wednesday 13th there'll be a reading at Winthrop House, Harvard (just off memorial drive, or a block away from the yard, on the river), 8.00, free, featuring Dan Bouchard, Andrea Brady, Andrew DuBois and Keston Sutherland --

if you're thinking of coming, it's the building on the RIGHT (Winthrop is two buildings), just go into the central quad and through the main entrance, the TONKENS ROOM is in the adjoining quad, it should be signposted. Hope to see some of you there, k

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290. **ScoutEW**  
***Re: My Mediocrity***

*Tue 12 May 1998*

---

In a message dated 5/12/98 1:55:24 PM, you wrote:

<<or FLIPPER who said>>

SEX Bomb Baby Yeah!!!!

It's JUsT the Way of the World!!!!!!!

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291. **ScoutEW**

**Re: forgive this intrusion stupid Nikuko wants to live**

Tue 12 May 1998

---

In a message dated 5/11/98 11:23:14 PM, you wrote:

<<

A (a)

UN (a) A (S)

UN (s) A (S)

UN (K)

I want mo make a mexican his ex-/my arms are warm/ARAM SAROYAN  
and sub smurf me one lemur for and her, begin  
me pro cess of sub mum is teh word, says I, shinuko.  
Soon, me and sippin on ginsing/m.e.t.h.o.d.  
and his new mexican will be he one hambone saves me;  
his new american ex-presidents will be he one I murmur in my sleep;  
his new angry samoans will be tin the final exam in pierre joris seminar.  
So I begin looking students who talk in class/about Olson  
which is now a mission to burma womyn, bum which appears  
and in a serious game of Don Byrd not Dave Byrd or the other Don Byrd  
because I want to save myself from language, because I am getting tired  
of m's unless they are m\$ ms and dying in my mouth, because I need his  
magic,  
his in the can am is, so ham I, ai shi iku ko, can con minue  
just another day of her.

A (1)

UNsubscribe

"Time" list

A (1)

UNsubscribe "the

Nation"

A (1)

UNsubscribe "Tool

a Magazine"

>>

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292. **George Bowering**

**Re: new titles from Wild Honey Press**

Wed 13 May 1998

---

| not nearly so embarrassing as the verbal compost matter Bowering and  
| Bromige subject us to --on purpose ;)

Okay, Maria. I am not going to backchannel any more of our secret stuff to you. Unless you take that remark back.

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

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293. **Gary Sullivan**

***Re: F O'H***

*Wed 13 May 1998*

---

TO EDWIN DENBY

I'm so much more me  
that you are perfectly you.  
What you have clearly said  
is yet in me unmade.

I'm so much more me  
as time ticks in our ceilings  
that you are perfectly you,  
your deep and lightning feelings.

And I see in the flashes  
what you have clearly said,  
that feelings are our facts.  
As yet in me unmade.

--Frank O'Hara, ca. 1957

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294. **Gary Sullivan**

***Creeley Speaks***

*Wed 13 May 1998*

---

Judy Roitman earlier mentioned Creeley as someone capable of ridding the ego from his writing. This, from his interview with Linda Wagner suggests otherwise . . . the interview, read en toto, suggests a deep personal involvement in the poem . . .

"The distance is dictated by the poem, not by the writer. Or the assumptions he may bring to it. . . . Writing to me is the most intimate of all acts; why should I want to maintain a distance from that which engages me in it?"

--Robert Creeley, from an interview with Linda Wagner, ca. 1965

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295. **Maria Damon**

***Re: new titles from Wild Honey Press***

*Wed 13 May 1998*

---

At 12:42 AM -0700 5/13/98, George Bowering wrote:

>>not nearly so embarrassing as the verbal compost matter Bowering and

>>Bromige subject us to --on purpose ;)

>

>Okay, Maria. I am not going to backchannel any more of our secret stuff to

>you.Unless you take that remark back.

George, i will \*not\* be implicated in your murky designs. especially not in public. btw, please mail all suspicious looking packages to my po box, not my home address. thanks, md

>

>

>

>

>

>

>George Bowering.

>

>2499 West 37th Ave.,

>Vancouver, B.C.,

>Canada V6M 1P4

>

>fax: [REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

296. **Gary Sullivan**

***Robert Hale...do you take requests?***

*Wed 13 May 1998*

---

Hi, Robert:

I want to request two things. The first is that, rather than simply dismiss "focus" "energy" and "intensity" as values worth my time & interest attending myself to, you explain why they're "bullshit." I'm willing to consider what you have to say.

Secondly, since it's obvious now that the Andrews issue of AERIAL doesn't yet exist, I'm going to make the assumption that you haven't read it. Which means . . . well, that you offered me something "of value" that you have no personal experience with yourself. In other words, you have opinions about things you've never read. I don't want to make this assumption; I'd much rather

assume you've read the magazine's contents in a galley copy or manuscript. Please let me know. In either instance, I'd still like to see that reading of Andrews's writing as of significant political impact. YOUR reading. Not his. Nor his pals.

Thanks,

Gary

On Tuesday, May 12, 1998 1:54 PM, Robert Hale [SMTP: [REDACTED]] wrote:

> I don't know, Gary, you slammed me pretty hard last week for my post where I

> suggested radical elements in B. Andrews' and other work. Considering the

> nature of my post and my own love of politics, I had no problem with your

> line of questioning. I wouldn't even call it "ferocious," but considering

> the gist of your counter-opinion -- that the value of his work lies in it's

> "focus" "energy" and "intensity" -- perhaps you should turn the bullshit

> detector on yourself.

>

> Sniping aside, you're on the right track in questioning generalizations.

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297. **sean bonney**

***Re: british experimentalism***

*Wed 13 May 1998*

---

Maria,

about the best recent anthology of experimental british work (though not sure how multicultural) that I know of is Iain Sinclair's "Conductors of Chaos" published a couple of years ago (there's a review of it somewhere on the EPC).

Good representation of differing strands of radical british work from the last twenty years or so. I would point especially to the selections by Aaron Williamson,

best,

Sean

-----

[REDACTED]

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298. **Michael Magee**

**Re: Creeley Speaks**

Wed 13 May 1998

---

According to Gary Sullivan:

>

> Judy Roitman earlier mentioned Creeley as someone capable of ridding the ego

> from his writing. This, from his interview with Linda Wagner suggests otherwise

> . . . the interview, read en toto, suggests a deep personal involvement in the poem . . .

>

> "The distance is dictated by the poem, not by the writer. Or the assumptions he

> may bring to it. . . . Writing to me is the most intimate of all acts; why

> should I want to maintain a distance from that which engages me in it?"

>

> --Robert Creeley, from an interview with Linda Wagner, ca. 1965

>

Ok, but your equating words like "intimacy" "engagement" and "me" with the ego, whereas Creeley would be hesitant to do so, since selfhood for Creeley is so fragmented. Here's a quote from his collected essays:

"I am struck by the situation of schizophrenia wherein the experience of body may so place the hands or feet or anus in the consciousness so affected, that no communal agreement as to their location is possible. A self-created reality in that way dominates and isolates the one who has become, even without intention or agreement, its world."

This is the self as a "complex of occasions" to use Olson's phrase, nothing like the bourgeois or transcendental ego. Creeley, I think, would agree with William James, that "The ego is simply nothing: as ineffectual and windy an abortion as Philosophy can show."

-m.

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299. **Andrew D Epstein**

**F O'H**

Wed 13 May 1998

---

I think part of the quietness surrounding Gary Sullivan's charge that O'Hara emotional range is "very sanitized" is a sort of bafflement (clearly expressed by

Jordan's asking Gary whether they both have the same edition of the Collected Poems). I don't think this quietness means a tacit agreement with this assessment. I can't think of any poet whose work, and whose expression of human emotion and its variety and range, is LESS "sanitized," (though I'm not sure what that means) so it is hard to know how to respond to Gary S.'s comment.

As Jonathan Mayhew points out, O'Hara's work is defined by self-contradiction, by shifting styles and modes; any generalization about his work is easily contradicted by various other specific examples. From what I can tell from reading O'Hara, he would LOVE this (and Jonathan's post in general about his variability).

In what seems to be a response to someone criticizing his emotional range, O'Hara answers (in the poem that has been making me happy on the New York subways for the last few months):

"I'm not going to cry all the time  
nor shall I laugh all the time,  
I don't prefer one 'strain' to another...  
And if some aficionado of my mess says 'That's  
not like Frank!', all to the good! I  
don't wear brown and grey suits all the time,  
do I? No. I wear workshirts to the opera,  
often. I want my feet to be bare,  
I want my face to be shaven, and my heart --  
you can't plan on the heart, but  
the better part of it, my poetry, is open." (My Heart)

Of course there is some bragging in these last lines, but I think he's right about his own work; while Gary's point that O'Hara frequently modulates between exuberance, ironic gesture, and maudlin moments (I'd say melancholy, maybe) is a good observation, it misses so much of O'Hara's variety, nuance, and range. (Never mind the fact that a poet who handles exuberance, irony, and sadness so deftly would be a great writer even with just those three modes).

To see O'Hara's poems as exhibiting what Gary calls narcissism and arrogance is to only see half of what they are up to. This self-regard is always problematized, undercut, ironized, theatricalized, and seen as flickering fiction, a naked host to one's many selves. ("Now I am quietly waiting for/ the catastrophe of my personality/ to seem beautiful again,/ and interesting, and modern.") He's painfully aware of how "sentiment is always intruding on form" ("To Hell With It.")

You can open to any page in the Collected and see so many more than the "one or two feelings" Gary names.

## POEM

Instant coffee with slightly sour cream  
in it, and a phone call to the beyond  
which doesn't seem to be coming any nearer.  
"Ah daddy, I wanna stay drunk many days"  
on the poetry of a new friend  
my life held precariously in the seeing  
hands of others, their and my impossibilities.  
Is this love, now that the first love  
has finally died, where there no impossibilities?

## TO JOHN ASHBERRY

I can't believe there's not  
another world where we will sit  
and read new poems to each other  
high on a mountain in the wind.  
You can be Tu Fu, I'll be Po Chu-i  
and the Monkey Lady'll be in the moon,  
smiling at our ill-fitting heads  
as we watch snow settle on a twig.  
Or shall we be really gone? this  
is not the grass I saw in my youth!  
and if the moon, when it rises  
tonight, is empty -- a bad sign,  
meaning "You go, like the blossoms."

I shall forget forever America  
which was like a memory of an island massacre  
in the black robes of my youthful fear of shadows.  
So easily conquered by the black torrent of this knife. (from "Hatred")

I find it hard to see how these and countless other poems are "ultimately very  
sanitized" and limited in their emotional range to a handful of notes.

Curious to know what others think.

take care,

Andrew Epstein

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300. **Gary Sullivan**

***I love typing "FO'H" . . . as, who wouldn't?***

*Wed 13 May 1998*

---

Thanks, Michael Magee for that Creeley excerpt. I'd love to read the entire essay, but don't have the collected essays. Do you know, is it in either A Quick Graph or Was That a Real Poem . . . ? What's the title of the essay? Lemme know. & thanks again.

Jonathan! in re your suggestion:

Here are some poems I think  
demonstrate some of his emotional as well as stylistic range:

"Who'd of thought / that snow falls"

"Mr. O'Hara's Sunday Morning Service" [in \_Poems Retrieved\_  
[The Clouds Go Soft]

"Poetry"

"A True Account of Talking to the Sun"

"Answer to Vozneshensky and Evtushenko"

I've taken the liberty of typing those poems out, in part because it helps me to SLOW DOWN as I read the work, but moreso because I'd like the pieces up here, on the board, because I'd really appreciate a reading from you of these, specifically concentrated on the emotional range, which isn't as obvious to me as the stylistic range. I'm still seeing grey, & feel like a chump, a chimp, a cheap simp, a peachy mispeep, etc. As Chris Stroffolino and Jordan Davis and you all I think intimated, it's more likely a limitation of MY emotional range. Could you (or anyone) take these poems apart . . . help foreground their emotional resonance for me? I know taking poems apart is icky-critic work, but this is O'Hara . . . & I think the poems will still sing, will be as lovely as they were before we got our dirty paws & thoughts all over them. (Just got Andrew Epstein's post . . . thank you! especially for quoting!) . . . --Gary

WIND

to Morton Feldman

Who'd have thought  
                                that snow falls  
it always circled whirling  
like a thought  
                                in the glass ball  
around me and my bear  
Then it seemed beautiful  
                                containment

snow whirled  
                  nothing ever fell  
nor my little bear  
                  bad thoughts  
imprisoned in crystal  
beauty has replaced itself with evil  
And the snow whirls only  
                  in fatal winds  
briefly  
                  then falls  
it always loathed containment  
                  beasts  
I love evil

MR. O'HARA'S SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE

There is this to be said  
for Sunday morning: that if  
I have been very bad the night  
before and wake up feeling

like a drab on a sunny day,  
Dick will pop into my room  
and invite me out to the  
high abandoned airfield.

There, the sun will seem  
properly chilly and the wind  
will not compromise us  
with any silly sentiment

I will walk about on the  
heaving grass rather shakily  
and observe the model airplanes  
lofted by dry blue currents.

As Dick like a discus hurler  
throws his wood into the sky  
I begin to feel engaged and  
follow the glider straining

its little spirit into swoops  
that clumsily break and bounce  
to earth with a grunt. Then  
he must pick up on its wings

and go home, to make repairs,  
to putty its nose and straighten  
its tail, to talk about winds  
and temperatures and balance,  
to think about theories of  
flight, and shave perhaps. So  
all through dinner our clear  
anxious eyes remain aloft.

[THE CLOUDS GO SOFT]

The clouds go soft  
change color and so many kinds  
puff up, disperse  
sink into the sea  
the heavens go out of kilter  
an insane remark greets  
the monkey on the moon  
in a season of wit  
it is all demolished  
or made fragrant  
sputnik is only the word for "traveling companion"  
here on earth  
at 16 you weigh 144 pounds and at 36  
the shirts change, endless procession  
but they are all neck 14 sleeve 33  
and holes appear and are filled  
the same holes anonymous filler  
no more conversion, no more conversation  
the sand inevitably seeks the eye  
and it is the same eye

## POETRY

The only way to be quiet is to be quick, so I scare you clumsily, or surprise you with a stab. A praying mantis knows time more intimately than I and is more casual. Crickets use time for accompaniment to

innocent fidgeting. A zebra  
races counterclockwise.  
All this I desire. To  
deepen you by my quickness  
and delight as if you  
were logical and proven,  
but still be quiet as if  
I were used to you; as if  
you would never leave me  
and were the inexorable  
product of my own time.

A TRUE ACCOUNT OF TALKING  
TO THE SUN AT FIRE ISLAND

The Sun woke me this morning loud  
and clear, saying "Hey! I've been  
trying to wake you up for fifteen  
minutes. Don't be so rude, you are  
only the second poet I've ever chosen  
to speak to personally

so why  
aren't you more attentive? If I could  
burn you through the window I would  
to wake you up. I can't hang around  
here all day."

"Sorry, Sun, I stayed  
up late last night talking to Hal."

"When I woke up Mayakovsky he was  
a lot more prompt" the Sun said  
petulantly. "Most people are up  
already waiting to see if I'm going  
to put in an appearance."

I tried  
to apologize "I missed you yesterday."  
"That's better," he said. "I didn't  
know you'd come out." "You may be  
wondering why I've come so close?"  
"Yes" I said beginning to feel hot  
wondering if maybe he wasn't burning me  
anyway.

"Frankly I wanted to tell you  
I like your poetry. I see a lot

on my rounds and you're okay. You may not be the greatest thing on earth, but you're different. Now, I've heard some say you're crazy, they being excessively calm themselves to my mind, and other crazy poets think that you're a boring reactionary. not me.

Just keep on  
like I do and pay no attention. You'll find that people always will complain about the atmosphere, either too hot or too cold too bright or too dark, days too short or too long.

If you don't appear  
at all one day they think you're lazy or dead. Just keep right on. I like it.

And don't worry about your lineage poetic or natural. The Sun shines on the jungle, you know, on the tundra the sea, the ghetto. Wherever you were I knew it and saw you moving. I was waiting for you to get to work.

And now that you  
are making your own days, so to speak, even if no one reads you but me you won't be depressed. Not everyone can look up, even at me. It hurts their eyes."

"Oh Sun, I'm so grateful to you!"

"Thanks and remember I'm watching. It's easier for me to speak to you out here. I don't have to slide down between buildings to get your ear. I know you love Manhattan, but you ought to look up more often.

And  
always embrace things, people earth sky stars, as I do, freely and with the appropriate sense of space. That is your inclination, known in the heavens and you should follow it to hell, if

necessary, which I doubt.

Maybe we'll  
speak again in Africa, of which I too  
am specially fond. Go back to sleep now  
Frank, and I may leave a tiny poem  
in that brain of yours as my farewell."

"Sun, don't go!" I was awake  
at last. "No, go I must, they're calling  
me."

"Who are they?"

Rising he said "Some  
day you'll know. They're calling to you  
too." Darkly he rose, and then I slept.

#### ANSWER TO VOZNESENSKY & EVTUSHENKO

We are tired of your tiresome imitations of Mayakovsky  
we are tired

of your dreary tourist ideaas of our Negro selves  
our selves are in far worse condition than the obviousness  
of your color sense

your general sense of Poughkeepsie is  
a gaucherie no American poet would be guilty of in Tiflis  
thanks to French Impressionism

we do not pretend to know more  
than can be known

how many sheets have you stained with your semen  
oh Tartars, and how many

of our loves have you illuminated with  
your heart and breath

as we poets of America have loved you  
your countrymen, our countryme, our lives, your lives, and  
the dreary expanses of your translations

your idiotic manifestos  
and the strange black cock which has become ours despite your envy  
we do what we feel

you do not even do what you must or can  
I do not love you any more since Mayakovsky died and Pasternak  
theirs was the death of my nostalgia for your tired ignorant race  
since you insist on race

you shall not take my friends away from me  
because they live in Harlem

you shall not make Mississippi into  
Sakhalin  
you came too late, a lovely talent doesn't make a ball  
I consider myself to be black and you not even part  
where you see death  
you see a dance of death  
which is  
imperialist, implies training, requires techniques  
our ballet does not employ  
you are indeed as cold as wax  
as your progenitor was red, and how greatly we loved his redness  
in the fullness of our own idiotic sun! what  
"roaring universe" outshouts his violent triumphant sun!  
you are not even speaking  
in a whisper

Mayakovsky's hat worn by a horse

On Tuesday, May 12, 1998 2:52 PM, MAYHEW [SMTP: ]  
wrote:

> Hi Gary:  
>  
> People do take their O'Hara seriously. Here are some poems I think  
> demonstrate some of his emotional as well as stylistic range:  
>  
> "Who'd of thought / that snow falls"  
> "Mr. O'Hara's Sunday Morning Service" [in \_Poems Retrieved\_]   
> [The Clouds Go Soft]  
> "Poetry"  
> "A True Account of Talking to the Sun"  
> "Answer to Vozneshensky and Evtushenko"  
>  
> I get the opposite response from O'Hara from the one you describe--not  
> suffocation but liberation, which is not to say you are wrong in your  
> reaction--there is a surface edginess that can be wearying to many readers  
> and can give an impression of sameness even when underneath the emotions  
> are shifting constantly.  
>  
> Jonathan Mayhew  
>  
>

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301. **Robert Hale**

***Re: Robert Hale...do you take requests?***

*Wed 13 May 1998*

---

Based on the quality of past AERIAL issues, I am definitely making an assumption that the Andrews issue will be worth reading.

As I stated previously, I owe you a reading of Andrews, and I will try to deliver on that when I get a chance. There are a number of things on my plate right now, including a review of Millennium Vol.2 -- a big task that may produce some more detailed insights on the issues we've raised.

At 09:39 AM 5/13/98 -0400, you wrote:

>Hi, Robert:

>

>I want to request two things. The first is that, rather than simply dismiss  
>"focus" "energy" and "intensity" as values worth my time & interest attending  
>myself to, you explain why they're "bullshit." I'm willing to consider what you  
>have to say.

>

>Secondly, since it's obvious now that the Andrews issue of AERIAL doesn't yet  
>exist, I'm going to make the assumption that you haven't read it. Which means

.

>. . well, that you offered me something "of value" that you have no personal  
>experience with yourself. In other words, you have opinions about things  
you've

>never read. I don't want to make this assumption; I'd much rather assume  
you've

>read the magazine's contents in a galley copy or manuscript. Please let me  
>know. In either instance, I'd still like to see that reading of Andrews's  
>writing as of significant political impact. YOUR reading. Not his. Nor his  
>pals.

>

>Thanks,

>

>Gary

>

>On Tuesday, May 12, 1998 1:54 PM, Robert Hale [SMTP: ] wrote:

>> I don't know, Gary, you slammed me pretty hard last week for my post  
where I

>> suggested radical elements in B. Andrews' and other work. Considering the  
>> nature of my post and my own love of politics, I had no problem with your  
>> line of questioning. I wouldn't even call it "ferocious," but considering  
>> the gist of your counter-opinion -- that the value of his work lies in it's



>> "focus" "energy" and "intensity" -- perhaps you should turn the bullshit  
>> detector on yourself.  
>>  
>> Sniping aside, you're on the right track in questioning generalizations.  
>  
>

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302. **Michael Magee**

***Re: I love typing "FO'H" . . . as, who wouldn't?***

*Wed 13 May 1998*

---

The Creeley essay I quoted is from 1973, entitled "The Creative." I \*highly\* recommend, to everyone, buying the Collected Essays - the essays are as brilliant as the poems. -m.

According to Gary Sullivan:

>  
> Thanks, Michael Magee for that Creeley excerpt. I'd love to read the entire  
> essay, but don't have the collected essays. Do you know, is it in either A  
> Quick Graph or Was That a Real Poem . . .? What's the title of the essay?  
Lemme  
> know. & thanks again.  
>  
> Jonathan! in re your suggestion:  
>  
> Here are some poems I think  
> demonstrate some of his emotional as well as stylistic range:  
>  
> "Who'd of thought / that snow falls"  
> "Mr. O'Hara's Sunday Morning Service" [in \_Poems Retrieved\_]   
> [The Clouds Go Soft]  
> "Poetry"  
> "A True Account of Talking to the Sun"  
> "Answer to Vozneshensky and Evtushenko"  
>  
> I've taken the liberty of typing those poems out, in part because it helps me  
> to SLOW DOWN as I read the work, but moreso because I'd like the pieces up  
> here, on the board, because I'd really appreciate a reading from you of these,  
> specifically concentrated on the emotional range, which isn't as obvious to  
me  
> as the stylistic range. I'm still seeing grey, & feel like a chump, a chimp, a  
> cheap simp, a peachy mispeep, etc. As Chris Stroffolino and Jordan Davis and

> you all I think intimated, it's more likely a limitation of MY emotional range.  
> Could you (or anyone) take these poems apart . . . help foreground their  
> emotional resonance for me? I know taking poems apart is icky-critic work,  
but  
> this is O'Hara . . . & I think the poems will still sing, will be as lovely as  
> they were before we got our dirty paws & thoughts all over them. (Just got  
> Andrew Epstein's post . . . thank you! especially for quoting!) . . . --Gary  
>  
>  
> WIND  
>  
> to Morton Feldman  
>  
> Who'd have thought  
>                               that snow falls  
> it always circled whirling  
> like a thought  
>                               in the glass ball  
> around me and my bear  
>  
> Then it seemed beautiful  
>                               containment  
> snow whirled  
>                               nothing ever fell  
> nor my little bear  
>                               bad thoughts  
> imprisoned in crystal  
>  
> beauty has replaced itself with evil  
>  
> And the snow whirls only  
>                               in fatal winds  
> briefly  
>                               then falls  
>  
> it always loathed containment  
>                               beasts  
> I love evil  
>  
>  
> MR. O'HARA'S SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE  
>

> There is this to be said  
> for Sunday morning: that if  
> I have been very bad the night  
> before and wake up feeling  
>  
> like a drab on a sunny day,  
> Dick will pop into my room  
> and invite me out to the  
> high abandoned airfield.  
>  
> There, the sun will seem  
> properly chilly and the wind  
> will not compromise us  
> with any silly sentiment  
>  
> I will walk about on the  
> heaving grass rather shakily  
> and observe the model airplanes  
> lofted by dry blue currents.  
>  
> As Dick like a discus hurler  
> throws his wood into the sky  
> I begin to feel engaged and  
> follow the glider straining  
>  
> its little spirit into swoops  
> that clumsily break and bounce  
> to earth with a grunt. Then  
> he must pick up on its wings  
>  
> and go home, to make repairs,  
> to putty its nose and straighten  
> its tail, to talk about winds  
> and temperatures and balance,  
>  
> to think about theories of  
> flight, and shave perhaps. So  
> all through dinner our clear  
> anxious eyes remain aloft.  
>  
>  
> [THE CLOUDS GO SOFT]

>  
> The clouds go soft  
> change color and so many kinds  
> puff up, disperse  
> sink into the sea  
> the heavens go out of kilter  
> an insane remark greets  
> the monkey on the moon  
> in a season of wit  
> it is all demolished  
> or made fragrant  
> sputnik is only the word for "traveling companion"  
>  
> here on earth  
> at 16 you weigh 144 pounds and at 36  
>  
> the shirts change, endless procession  
> but they are all neck 14 sleeve 33  
>  
> and holes appear and are filled  
> the same holes anonymous filler  
> no more conversion, no more conversation  
>  
> the sand inevitably seeks the eye  
> and it is the same eye  
>  
>  
> POETRY  
>  
> The only way to be quiet  
> is to be quick, so I scare  
> you clumsily, or surprise  
> you with a stab. A praying  
> mantis knows time more  
> intimately than I and is  
> more casual. Crickets use  
> time for accompaniment to  
> innocent fidgeting. A zebra  
> races counterclockwise.  
> All this I desire. To  
> deepen you by my quickness  
> and delight as if you

> were logical and proven,  
> but still be quiet as if  
> I were used to you; as if  
> you would never leave me  
> and were the inexorable  
> product of my own time.  
>  
>  
> A TRUE ACCOUNT OF TALKING  
> TO THE SUN AT FIRE ISLAND  
>  
> The Sun woke me this morning loud  
> and clear, saying "Hey! I've been  
> trying to wake you up for fifteen  
> minutes. Don't be so rude, you are  
> only the second poet I've ever chosen  
> to speak to personally  
> so why  
> aren't you more attentive? If I could  
> burn you through the window I would  
> to wake you up. I can't hang around  
> here all day."  
> "Sorry, Sun, I stayed  
> up late last night talking to Hal."  
>  
> "When I woke up Mayakovsky he was  
> a lot more prompt" the Sun said  
> petulantly. "Most people are up  
> already waiting to see if I'm going  
> to put in an appearance."  
> I tried  
> to apologize "I missed you yesterday."  
> "That's better," he said. "I didn't  
> know you'd come out." "You may be  
> wondering why I've come so close?"  
> "Yes" I said beginning to feel hot  
> wondering if maybe he wasn't burning me  
> anyway.  
> "Frankly I wanted to tell you  
> I like your poetry. I see a lot  
> on my rounds and you're okay. You may  
> not be the greatest thing on earth, but

> you're different. Now, I've heard some  
> say you're crazy, they being excessively  
> calm themselves to my mind, and other  
> crazy poets think that you're a boring  
> reactionary. not me.  
>                               Just keep on  
> like I do and pay no attention. You'll  
> find that people always will complain  
> about the atmosphere, either too hot  
> or too cold too bright or too dark, days  
> too short or too long.  
>                               If you don't appear  
> at all one day they think you're lazy  
> or dead. Just keep right on. I like it.  
>  
> And don't worry about your lineage  
> poetic or natural. The Sun shines on  
> the jungle, you know, on the tundra  
> the sea, the ghetto. Wherever you were  
> I knew it and saw you moving. I was waiting  
> for you to get to work.  
>  
>                               And now that you  
> are making your own days, so to speak,  
> even if no one reads you but me  
> you won't be depressed. Not  
> everyone can look up, even at me. It  
> hurts their eyes."  
>                               "Oh Sun, I'm so grateful to you!"  
>  
> "Thanks and remember I'm watching. It's  
> easier for me to speak to you out  
> here. I don't have to slide down  
> between buildings to get your ear.  
> I know you love Manhattan, but  
> you ought to look up more often.  
>                               And  
> always embrace things, people earth  
> sky stars, as I do, freely and with  
> the appropriate sense of space. That  
> is your inclination, known in the heavens  
> and you should follow it to hell, if

> necessary, which I doubt.  
>                               Maybe we'll  
> speak again in Africa, of which I too  
> am specially fond. Go back to sleep now  
> Frank, and I may leave a tiny poem  
> in that brain of yours as my farewell."  
>  
> "Sun, don't go!" I was awake  
> at last. "No, go I must, they're calling  
> me."  
>       "Who are they?"  
>                               Rising he said "Some  
> day you'll know. They're calling to you  
> too." Darkly he rose, and then I slept.  
>  
>  
> ANSWER TO VOZNESENSKY & EVTUSHENKO  
>  
> We are tired of your tiresome imitations of Mayakovsky  
> we are tired  
>                       of your dreary tourist ideaas of our Negro selves  
> our selves are in far worse condition than the obviousness  
> of your color sense  
>                       your general sense of Poughkeepsie is  
> a gaucherie no American poet would be guilty of in Tiflis  
> thanks to French Impressionism  
>                               we do not pretend to know more  
> than can be known  
>                       how many sheets have you stained with your semen  
> oh Tartars, and how many  
>                       of our loves have you illuminated with  
> your heart and breath  
>                       as we poets of America have loved you  
> your countrymen, our countryme, our lives, your lives, and  
> the dreary expanses of your translations  
>                               your idiotic manifestos  
> and the strange black cock which has become ours despite your envy  
>  
> we do what we feel  
>                       you do not even do what you must or can  
> I do not love you any more since Mayakovsky died and Pasternak  
> theirs was the death of my nostalgia for your tired ignorant race

> since you insist on race  
>                               you shall not take my friends away from me  
> because they live in Harlem  
>                               you shall not make Mississippi into  
> Sakhalin  
> you came too late, a lovely talent doesn't make a ball  
>        I consider myself to be black and you not even part  
> where you see death  
>                               you see a dance of death  
>                                                               which is  
> imperialist, implies training, requires techniques  
> our ballet does not employ  
>                               you are indeed as cold as wax  
> as your progenitor was red, and how greatly we loved his redness  
> in the fullness of our own idiotic sun! what  
> "roaring universe" outshouts his violent triumphant sun!  
>        you are not even speaking  
>                                                               in a whisper  
> Mayakovsky's hat worn by a horse  
>  
>  
> On Tuesday, May 12, 1998 2:52 PM, MAYHEW [SMTP: ]  
> wrote:  
> > Hi Gary:  
> >  
> > People do take their O'Hara seriously. Here are some poems I think  
> > demonstrate some of his emotional as well as stylistic range:  
> >  
> > "Who'd of thought / that snow falls"  
> > "Mr. O'Hara's Sunday Morning Service" [in \_Poems Retrieved\_]   
> > [The Clouds Go Soft]  
> > "Poetry"  
> > "A True Account of Talking to the Sun"  
> > "Answer to Vozneshensky and Evtushenko"  
> >  
> > I get the opposite response from O'Hara from the one you describe--not  
> > suffocation but liberation, which is not to say you are wrong in your  
> > reaction--there is a surface edginess that can be wearying to many readers  
> > and can give an impression of sameness even when underneath the  
emotions  
> > are shifting constantly.  
> >



> > Jonathan Mayhew  
> >  
> >  
>

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303. **MAYHEW**  
**F O'H**

*Wed 13 May 1998*

---

Gary (and who ever else is interested):

I don't usually want to do lit-crit explications on this list--that's what I do in my books and articles on Spanish poetry. Here's my brief take on some of the poems I suggested, however:

"Mr. O'Hara's Sunday morning service"

The experience of transcendence in friendship. The title of course a take-off on T.S. Eliot. An alternate model of spirituality.

"The Clouds go soft"

"Am I the same person I always was? What is my identity? I still wear the same shirt size as at age 16"

"Poetry"

"My casualness is all a mask, as you can plainly see; if I write too slowly and worry about being a great poet I will scare my muse away"

"Who'd have thought..."

My favorite O'Hara poem. Is it better to live in a self-contained world, identified with childhood? No, actions have consequences, snow falls. I must face the evil within myself and even love it.

"A true account"

"I must give myself permission to be a great poet (which I am) by imitating a great poem by Maiakovsky."

"Answer to ..." beautiful invective: "These Russian communist poets accuse us Americans of being racist, which pisses the hell out of me. American culture IS black culture, and vice-versa. Not only that, but the Russians are not even worthy heirs of Maiakovsky, as I am (see "A true account")."

I get a different emotional "charge" from each of these poems. I apologize for the crudeness of these paraphrases. Maybe Gary could suggest a poet he thinks has a great emotional range--the contrast might clarify his reaction to O'Hara...

Jonathan Mayhew  
Department of Spanish and Portuguese  
University of Kansas



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304. **Michael Kelleher**

**Frank**

*Wed 13 May 1998*

---

Frank is Number 1! Go Frank!

"In Memory of My Feelings" is a good place to look to see the full range of emotion O'Hara's poems can handle. It asks the eternal question who am I? and rather than answer with a barrage of sentiment, very coolly and wittily maps out the terrain of identity. Emotions in the poem are expressed indirectly, as if he were trying see the "Medusa" without being turned to stone. Thus in turning slightly away from the direct address/redress of emotion, he is able to map an entire range of emotions by mapping the movements of the mind through (variously) surreal imagery, personal narrative, classical art and history, national history, mythology and pop culture. All sashay and swagger about in a drag carnival as possible locations/masks for identity. The result is a movement through terror to ecstasy to resignation to satisfaction to pain to pleasure, no single emotion outdoing the other as they all vie with that most-modern of dilemmas, identity. The problem as it is revealed in the poem is that the poet discovers not a single unified self, but a series of masks which hint at something other than themselves (I would argue something resembling the Kantian sublime), but never reveal it because whatever it is is not to be seen directly (like the Medusa). By revealing to himself the drag of identity, the poet is able to handle both the question who am I? more deftly than most poets I have seen, but to express a range of emotions hitherto unavailable in a poetry which does assume a stable ego.

See also "Second Avenue", "Ode to Michael Goldberg..." and "Easter" for this type of complexity and emotional range.

Truly,

Mike

P.S. Sorry so long, I'm in the midst of a paper on said subject and needed to let off some steam.

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305. **henry gould**

**Re: Frank**

*Wed 13 May 1998*

---

stable identity, unstable... one self, many selves... isn't it all the same narcissism? Not just in O'Hara - it sort of defines the difference between lyric & epic, lyric & narrative. The "unstable" self misses out on the history in which the stable self is tested & ground down or raised up. While humorless grandiosity or puritanism as Rachel said doesn't make very good poetry - nevertheless, in a narcissistic Seinfeld industrial-commercial culture that can't even look at its own cities or the 3rd world, much less improve conditions there, maybe there's something in this radical/ narcissism/sustenance question...something political... - Henry G

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306. **Michael Kelleher**

**Re: Frank**

*Wed 13 May 1998*

---

Henry,

I don't know if I'm arguing or agreeing with you, but wouldn't you say that in the context of 1950's America, a time in which the US government along with all of US commercail and media industries took a hand in attempts to forcibly "identify" persons within very strict categories, ie, american/un-american, the former being defined as straight, right-thinking, christian (Robert Lowell) and the latter defined as queer, pinko, atheist (Ginsberg) that the destabilizing of identity would in itself be a political act, one with potentially "real" political consequences (Lillian Hellman)?

Mike

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307. **henry**

**Re: Frank**

*Wed 13 May 1998*

---

On Wed, 13 May 1998 14:16:48 -0400 Michael Kelleher said:

>Henry,

>

>I don't know if I'm arguing or agreeing with you, but wouldn't you say  
>that in the context of 1950's America, a time in which the US government  
>along with all of US commercail and media industries took a hand in  
>attempts to forcibly "identify" persons within very strict categories,

>ie, american/un-american, the former being defined as straight,  
>right-thinking, christian (Robert Lowell) and the latter defined as  
>queer, pinko, atheist (Ginsberg) that the destabilizing of identity  
>would in itself be a political act, one with potentially "real"  
>political consequences (Lillian Hellman)?  
>

No doubt about it. But I think that maybe at the present time Gary's idea of "sanitized" has to do with the "reification" of identity-as-poet - as opposed to a backgrounding of the poet and a bringing forward of the "theme" (radical/sustenance). Lyric vs. epic or something.

Both directions - lyric/epic, personal/impersonal - can be taken to the limit by radical people.

- Henry G.

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### 308. **Judy Roitman**

#### **Re: Creeley Speaks**

Wed 13 May 1998

*Judy Roitman earlier mentioned Creeley as someone capable of ridding the ego from his writing. This, from his interview with Linda Wagner suggests otherwise*

*. . . the interview, read en toto, suggests a deep personal involvement in the poem . . .*

*"The distance is dictated by the poem, not by the writer. Or the assumptions he may bring to it. . . . Writing to me is the most intimate of all acts; why should I want to maintain a distance from that which engages me in it?"*

*--Robert Creeley, from an interview with Linda Wagner, ca. 1965*

No contradiction.

There seem to be several definitions of "self" and "ego" & etc. (e.g., what does it mean to "rid the ego from writing?") running around here.

----- Judy Roitman  
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas |  
memory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days."  
[redacted] | fax: [redacted] | Larry Eigner,  
1927-1996 ----- Note new area  
code -----  
http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/  
-----

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309. **Jordan Davis**

**Frankly**

*Wed 13 May 1998*

---

A nice moment in Charles North's book of essays when he complains about Ashbery's punishing caprices, like "Leading liot act to foriage", it makes me think about O'Hara's use of the word "frankly" which always makes me tip me head forward in discomfort, eyes narrowed as from huge glare. Nevertheless, I see Uncle Henry steering the holodeck's hull into a butte and COMPUTER PAUSE would come to my lips if only I knew what any of those things meant. Bill what happened to Djarmok at Tenagra? I am outing you but you did it yourself. Now Henry I want to know why you are suggesting there is a direct connection between O'Hara and Seinfeld. What is up with those Providence anchorpeople's hair? I don't think O'Hara would have disliked Seinfeld, but more than that, I don't think any of us who argue that O'Hara had a better-populated mood palette than Gary argued would argue that it's possible to write like O'Hara -- not only does none of us have the datebook of an O'Hara, not only are we more restricted in our permissions (don't ask don't ask!), we have a somewhat different culture to pick and choose from. No offense to Zhdanov or Parschikov or Dragomoschenko, but where in the world are the Pasternaks for a young poet to cable support? Why haven't the young poets from Harvard shown up yet? Are they all writing for The Simpsons?

Subsistence, well we haven't heard much about it yet, but won't its poetic equivalent risk malnourishment? There's been some rumbling (Mark P? Gary?) about poetry and surplus. I'm no economist, but although poetry doesn't create surplus value, couldn't it be said to be the surplus of language itself? and when we say of something that it has duende or energy or overdeterminacy couldn't it just be this surplus of meaning? Please don't prematurely count me against the whole earth poetries, but tell me more, especially if you can do it without using the word "minimal".

OK today --  
Jordan

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310. **Brent Long**

**Re: Creeley Speaks**

*Wed 13 May 1998*

---

Gary (and List),

Correct me if I am wrong here, but it seems that what Creeley is discussing in that interview is the sense of "self" which is (hopefully) brought to ALL poems by ALL writers, and not necessarily his ego.

Perhaps I am incorrect, but that's the way I read it.

At 09:30 AM 5/13/98 -0400, you wrote:

*Judy Roitman earlier mentioned Creeley as someone capable of ridding the ego from his writing. This, from his interview with Linda Wagner suggests otherwise . . . the interview, read en toto, suggests a deep personal involvement in the poem . . .*

*"The distance is dictated by the poem, not by the writer. Or the assumptions he may bring to it. . . . Writing to me is the most intimate of all acts; why should I want to maintain a distance from that which engages me in it?"*

*--Robert Creeley, from an interview with Linda Wagner, ca. 1965*

<paraindent><param>left,out</param>- They said I was avant garde...little did they realize, I just didn't give a shit.

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### 311. **R. Gancie** **radical**

Wed 13 May 1998

---

"In the past the man has been first; in the future the system must be first."---  
Frederick Winslow Taylor, Scientific Management

"The nickname Prisoner's Dilemma, attributed to A. W. Tucker, derives from the original anecdote used to illustrate the game. Two prisoners held incommunicado, are charged with the same crime. They can be convicted only if either confesses. Designate by -1 the payoff associated with conviction on the basis of confessions by both prisoners and by +1 the payoff associated with acquittal. Further, if only one confesses, he is set free for having turned state's evidence and is given a reward to boot. Call his payoff under these circumstances +2. The prisoner who has held out is convicted on the strength of the other's testimony and is given a more severe sentence than if he had also confessed. Call this payoff -2. The game so defined is identical with that

presented by Matrix 3 where D represents "confess" and C "do not confess." It is in the interest of each to confess whatever the other does. But it is their collective interest to hold out.---Anatol Rapoport & Albert M. Chammah, Prisoner's Dilemma

"Journalist Mark Baker interviewed one soldier who described what happened to three Vietnamese detainees in a chopper with an American intelligence officer: 'The first gook wouldn't talk. Intelligence gives you a signal, thumb toward the door, and you push the guy out. The other two gooks look to see this guy going out the helicopter door. If the second guy didn't look like he wants to say something or he's lying, the intelligence officer says, "This guy out the door." You'd kick him out because you're supposed to do what these intelligence officers tell you to do. They're speaking for the Army. The last prisoner is crying and he's leaking like a typewriter. He's talking Vietnamese like crazy. That's human nature. This guy is running his mouth. You'd have to gag him to make him shut up.... Before we get back to base camp, after this guy do (sic) all the talking and the intelligence officer document (sic) everything, they kick him out the door anyway. Even the good gook, they'd give the word on him and throw him out the door.'---James William Gibson, The Perfect War:TechnoWar in Vietnam

"As has been pointed out game theory was conceived by mathematicians, and since the publication of the fundamental treatise, has been developed almost exclusively by mathematicians. The theory can be viewed as a self-contained branch of mathematics-a system of theorems built up from a set of postulates. All purely mathematical theories are of this sort and, as such, are practically immune from criticism."---Anatol Rapoport, Fights, Games and Debates---cp

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### 312. **Keston Sutherland**

#### **Re: Frankly**

Wed 13 May 1998

---

*Why haven't the young poets from Harvard shown up yet? Are they all writing for The Simpsons?*

I was, but was kicked off the team. Now scribbling in sweatshop for Wheel of Fortune.

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315. **Gary Sullivan**

**"We shoot every third salesman . . . and the second one just left"**

*Wed 13 May 1998*

---

So much to respond to & even more questions to ask . . . & already on my fifth post. I want to quote more from Creeley interviews as regards self and ego . . . which I believe I did flatten into each other . . . because, in Creeley's case, reading this interview (with Linda Wagner) this morning . . . he refers constantly to Pound's "quality of the emotion" as his own primary measure, and elaborates a bit . . . my sense being that emotions are, if not wholly, certainly in some portion, ego-generated or -situated . . . I may pull some quotes in a few days . . .

& I'll dig around for things from others to compare with some of the O'Hara poems posted . . . people whose writings I do consider "less sanitized" . . . maybe Friday . . . & at that time also say more about this three-word-phrase, "appreciation of subsistence," which has, somehow, become perceived almost as movement unto itself . . . I meant it, when stated, with reference to Niedecker, Eigner . . . & to less extent Creeley . . . it does have a certain political weight for me . . . above & beyond the political weight that ALL public writing or language can be said to have . . . but haven't thought of (in any way shape or form) such a thing as "whole earth poetry" . . . though I know Jordan's chiding . . . but, will say more later, except to note that neither Niedecker's nor Eigner's work is thin, undernourished . . . malnourishment a risk in poetry only ever when you write only what you already know . . .

Gary

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316. **Uncle Henry**

***Re: Frankly***

*Wed 13 May 1998*

---

why should I rehash the lyric personal impersonal flabingo which has been rehashed more than enough for the last 20 years, so I will not. Sail on, poetics. As I insisted previously, the obsolete/redundant is the most radical thing going. it's not surplus because there's no quantity, just remainders. - Uncle Henry

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317. **toddbaron**

**Re: F O'H**

Wed 13 May 1998

---

Great "emotional" range: an interesting concept all by itself: that somehow the language and the poetry would choose one or/over the other. The discussion of O'Hara "you don't refuse to breathe do you" (Is It Dirty) is an odd one--that thot and emotional would be separate--which is why I am not an academic--of that O' Hara--whose very lines redefine--for American poetry--as WHitman or Dickinson.

That's emotional "charge"

"You'll never be mentally sober"

POEM

"(I hate all that crap)"

Yesterday Down at the Canal

Todd Baron

ReMap

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318. **Maria Damon (Maria Damon)**

**Frankly my dearzies**

Wed 13 May 1998

---

just to thank everyone who responded to my queries, about british explit, about renga, and l peltier.

i remembered my third query. is jacob o timmerman the proper spelling for the guy who wrote prisoner w/o a name, cell w/o a number? and is argentine?

and another; i've lost my poetry project newsletter w/ hannah weiner obits. need fullcitation info for charles bernstein's nice piece on her.

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319. **toddbaron**

**Re: SELF?**

Wed 13 May 1998

---

"I is another"

(Rimbaud)

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320. **morpheal**

**Re: SELF?**

Wed 13 May 1998

---

"I is another"  
(Rimbaud)

Letter to his family, Tadjoura, French colony of Obock, December 3, 1885:

"They have left the place its local sultan and the native administration. The place is a protectorate. The local business is trading in slaves..... The stuff we import is rifles (old percussion rifles that were scrapped forty years ago) that cost 7 or 8 francs apiece at secondhand arms dealers in Liege or France. You can sell them to the King of Shoa, Menelik II, for around forty francs apiece. But there are enormous expenses involved, without mentionning the dangers of the caravan route round trip. The people who live along the route are Dankalis, Bedouin Shepherds, fanatical Moslems: they are dangerous. It is true we have firearms and the Bedouins only have spears: but every caravan is attacked."

Arthur Rimbaud

[↑ Contents](#)

321. **syvester pollet**

**Re: Frank**

Wed 13 May 1998

---

At 2:16 PM -0400 5/13/98, Michael Kelleher wrote:

>Henry,

>

>I don't know if I'm arguing or agreeing with you, but wouldn't you say  
>that in the context of 1950's America, a time in which the US government  
>along with all of US commercail and media industries took a hand in  
>attempts to forcibly "identify" persons within very strict categories,  
>ie, american/un-american, the former being defined as straight,  
>right-thinking, christian (Robert Lowell) and the latter defined as  
>queer, pinko, atheist (Ginsberg) that the destabilizing of identity  
>would in itself be a political act, one with potentially "real"  
>political consequences (Lillian Hellman)?

>

>Mike

Not to quibble, but Lowell was imprisoned as a c.o.

[↑ Contents](#)

322. **Samuel R. Truitt**

**ATTICUS BOOKS AND MUSIC READING**

Wed 13 May 1998

---

GRAHAM FOUST

MARY HILTON

SAM TRUITT

READING ON

FRIDAY, MAY 15 @ 7PM

ATTICUS BOOKS & MUSIC

1508 U STREET

WASHINGTON, DC

FOR INFO: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[↑ Contents](#)

323. **Billy Little**

***Re: I love typing "FO'H" . . . as, who wouldn't?***

Wed 13 May 1998

---

thanks for typing garry, that ohara is a cool drink, a refreshment, before stonewall, the knuckle dragging days, people had to smuggle james joyce in from paris, nabokov and miller came the same way, the publishers of miller, and ginsberg, and mcclure tried for obscenity, billie holiday and john coltrane very much the presence, Adam Clayton Powell was the godfather of Harlem, the catholic church the slumlord of harlem, lenny bruce hounded to his death(the originator of the yadda yadda seinfeld is first remembered for) "camp" the predominant mode, it was illegal to serve alcohol to a homosexual, there were separate black and white beaches in Lewes, Delaware, they wouldn't even serve blacks in the military in the one restaurant in town, they'll never turn back the strides made in the sixties even if they delude themselves for another twenty years we aint going there, glasnost is coming to the potomac Linton Kwesi Johnson will perform on the lawn of the Green House, the repainted home of the great facilitator, President Jesse Jackson or Andrew Young. O'Hara like to say he thought of his poems as transcribed phone calls, o for a cell phone on fire island!

[↑ Contents](#)

324. **Tenney Nathanson**

**Re: SELF?**

Wed 13 May 1998

---

"they bids"

-----Original Message-----

From: UB Poetics discussion group

[mailto: ] On Behalf Of toddbaron

Sent: Wednesday, May 13, 1998 3:07 PM

To:

Subject: Re: SELF?

"I is another"

(Rimbaud)

[↑ Contents](#)

325. **George Bowering**

**Re: new titles from Wild Honey Press**

Thu 14 May 1998

---

At 12:42 AM -0700 5/13/98, George Bowering wrote:

not nearly so embarrassing as the verbal compost matter Bowering and Bromige subject us to --on purpose ;)

Okay, Maria. I am not going to backchannel any more of our secret stuff to you. Unless you take that remark back.

George, i will \*not\* be implicated in your murky designs. especially not in public. btw, please mail all suspicious looking packages to my po box, not my home address. thanks, md

Hey, Maria,

Speaking of suspicious packages; I havent opened the last one you sent. I can hear a kind of electric buzzing coming from inside. I have asked Bromige if he ever heard such a thing, and he said "heh heh" on e-mail.

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,

Vancouver, B.C.,

Canada V6M 1P4

fax:

[↑ Contents](#)

326. **Charles Alexander**

**Re: yet another query**

Thu 14 May 1998

---

and Maria, the Two Stein Talks mentioned by Hejinian, are in TEMBLOR 3. Temblor 10 has a very fine piece by Bev Dahlen, Tautology and The Real, largely having to do with Stein and Spicer, which is very nice -- originally delivered as a talk in a series here in Tucson.

And it may be something of a stretch, but Deleuze & Guattari's A Thousand Plateaus seems possibly useful here, in its various senses of how meaning coheres and disperses.

good luck to your student!

charles

charles alexander :: poet and book artist :: 

chax press :: alexander writing/design/publishing

books by artists' hands :: web sites built with care and vision

<http://alexwritdespub.com/chax> :: <http://alexwritdespub.com>

[↑ Contents](#)

327. **RanPrunty**

**Re: Top Ten**

Thu 14 May 1998

---

In alpha order

1 Antenym

2 Arshile

3 Explosive Magazine

4 Misc. Proj.

5 New American Writing

6 Rhizome

7 Situation

8 Syntactics

9 Talisman

10 Torque

this fun list from years of careful study

Randy Prunty

[↑ Contents](#)

328. **JDEBROT**

**Re: Frank**

Thu 14 May 1998

---

Lilian Hellman writes: would not "the destabilizing of identity," in the culture of the 50s-60s "in itself be a political act, one with potentially "real" political consequences?"

The relationship of poetry to politics is of course deeply problematic: is it prefigurative? instrumental? etc.

In the context of the 60s, as Andrew Ross has pointed out, artists & intellectuals were confronted with the necessity for making, consciously, a choice between tendentious social commentary & formally transformative aesthetic strategies that would undermine autonomous authorial agency (i.e. collage, montage, etc.).

I think it's important to remember that, at the time, expressionistic work, with its emphasis on the universal character of the individual's subjective consciousness would have had, as its underlying assumption -- the assumption for instance of the Abstract Expressionists -- that this "universal" consciousness was white, straight, & male. For this reason, although they were conflicted in their relationship to Ab Ex, an expressionistic poetics would have seemed untenable to the New York School poets.

Given, also, the recent & on-going re-discovery of the chief aesthetic strategies of the historical avant-garde, an expressionistic & autonomous poetics would have appeared reactionary. What needs to be done I think is to work out the ways in which the simultaneity of the rediscoveries and repetitions of Dadaist oppositional strategies in the work of Burroughs, Ashbery, Cage, and to a lesser extent, O'Hara "substantiates the hypothesis that the discursive formation of modernism generated its own historical and evolutionary dynamic" (Bucholoh) -- rather than being for example a pathetic & failed repetition of those strategies (i.e. Peter Burger). Moreover, any discussion of expression in O'H's work has to be historicized, right? After all, an attachment to transcendent logics seems to be what O'H was, in part, attempting to discredit.

[↑ Contents](#)

329. **JDEBROT**

**Re: Reading at Harvard**

Thu 14 May 1998

---

Do not have the time to describe Dan Bouchard's & Keston Sutherland's reading last night in detail, but I think I should report that Dan read with a powerfully ironic intelligence & that Keston's work struck me as being a unique

conflation of disjunction & lyricism, its moments of transparency having an almost unaccountable shock-effect -- & all of this in the somewhat incongruous setting of Winthrop House.

[↑ Contents](#)

330. **Michael Magee**

***Re: Frank***

*Thu 14 May 1998*

---

JDEBROT: "the Abstract Expressionists -- that this "universal" consciousness was white, straight, & male. For this reason, although they were conflicted in their relationship to Ab Ex, an expressionistic poetics would have seemed untenable to the New York School poets.

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For all of FOH's attachment to Pollock, de Kooning, isn't his work more analogous to later pals like Rauschenberg (of the combines), Johns, & Rivers (in, say, "Mr. Art," or "Washington Crossing the Delaware" - all decidedly less heteronormal characters, yes? -m.

[↑ Contents](#)

331. **Jordan Davis**

***"O'Hara compared to artists."***

*Thu 14 May 1998*

---

Michael Magee asks if there is not more connection between Rauschenberg or Johns and O'Hara than between De Kooning or Pollock and O'Hara. Time does not permit me now to say why I don't think so, except that Johns is so affiliated with Ashbery in my mind as to preclude comparison with other poets, and Rauschenberg despite the monumental output never once seems even half as intelligent as O'Hara. O'Hara could have to do with the stupid energy (and brilliant line) of Pollock and the brilliant line (and stupid figuration) of De Kooning, if stupid only had its post-1987 meanings. Maybe see O'Hara as not on



a one-to-one correspondence with painters, the way Larry Rivers borrows equal parts Koch and O'Hara?

JD

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332. **Pritchett, Patrick**

**Re: Yo Po Grows**

Thu 14 May 1998

---

From today's NY Times:

By MATTHEW MIRAPPAUL

A Poetic Homage -- of the 3-Letter, 3-Word Variety

<Picture: P>oe Try Art. Web Voy Age. Mie Kal And.

It's Not All. --that easy to tell a tale in trios of three-letter clusters, exactly nine characters to a page. (The apostrophe near the start of this sentence, for example, is cheating.)

-----

But And Has. After Emmett, a multimedia poem launched on the Web last month by the artist and writer Miekal And, takes readers on a 53-screen journey that is as visually stimulating as it is linguistically limber.

Each page of And's poem [his first name is pronounced "me-KELL," his second like the conjunction] consists of a three-by-three grid of letters and punctuation marks. Some grids parse perfectly ("Eye Sea Eye"), others do not ("Hum Ble Ark").

Using a simple animation technique that does not require special browser plug-ins, And has enlivened each character by continuously cycling it through a sequence of five to eight different typefaces.

As an "I" arises in typographic fonts such as Bodoni, Harlequin, Helvetica, Stonecutter and Thunderbird, the vivid vowel seems to swell and shrink. Its eight neighbors are equally hyperactive, twitching, throbbing and percolating to pupil-popping effect.

During a telephone interview last week from his home in southwestern Wisconsin, And said, "All the words are meant to refer abstractly to the sense of a voyage, and I wanted it [the poem] to be real visual so that the voyage was hypnotic."

"Even though it's just three words on the screen," he continued, "I want people to stare at one page for 5 minutes. Even if they get the words right away, they'll keep looking at the dance of the typography."

"After Emmett" is clever, playful and -- given its formal strictures -- surprisingly effective at conveying an impression of narrative progress. It joins a growing canon of verse that exploits the Web's multimedia capabilities to expand the form's possibilities, just as the "concrete poetry" movement of the 1960's aspired to increase meaning through the graphic arrangement of words on the printed page.

Kenneth Goldsmith is the Manhattan-based editor of UbuWeb, the best site for visual poetry on the Internet. He described "After Emmett" as a typical example of concrete poetry that has been published on the Web, adopting the dynamics of the medium for its own purposes.

"Concrete Poetry has always tried to invoke movement on the page," Goldsmith said. "It achieved this through a variety of static means: the flipbook, the dispersion of letters on a page, etc. While 'After Emmett' employs the movement of letters, it still invokes the flatness of the page. It's a journey, but it's a two-dimensional journey instead of three."

He called for even more advanced applications of multimedia effects to verbal artistry, citing as an example the three-dimensional Visual Thesaurus discussed in a recent "██████" column.

"Now that we are able to manipulate words [on a Web page], the simple formal manipulation of letters is not enough," Goldsmith said. "Content needs to sweep our minds in some magical way, supported by today's technology. With concrete poetry on the Web, the medium might not be the message."

And's work is intended as a new-media tribute to Emmett Williams, one of the first concrete poets and a leading member of the Fluxus conceptual art movement (its adherents included Yoko Ono and the electronic-art pioneer Nam June Paik).

The poem pays homage to Williams's own "The Voy Age," a 1975 piece composed of 100 word squares. that diminish in size as the work proceeds. By the final page, the grid is so small that it appears to be a period.

Goldsmith noted that "The Voy Age" and "After Emmett" share thematic material as well as a graphic structure.

"Williams composed his work in Nova Scotia, looking out on ships moving slowly across the harbor; And sprinkles water-based references throughout his work," Goldsmith explained. "The last section of And's work is an analysis of the

formal properties of language -- puns, shenanigans, logic -- which mirrors William's visual-poetic concerns."

And acknowledged that he has been deeply influenced by Williams. Although he has not viewed "The Voy Age" for a dozen years, And did remember to construct his last grid entirely out of punctuation marks. (He also cheats a bit, using the browser frame to title sections.)

"One of the things that attracts me to Emmett's work is how he isn't a specialist," And said. "He worked in whatever medium came to him."

Williams, now 73, can even be found dabbling on the Internet. His 1957 work, Four- Directional Song of Doubt for Five Voices, has been adapted for the Web.

And's creative endeavors, which are detailed on his home page, Qazingulaza, range from compiling an online dictionary of neologisms to building new musical instruments like the "ukelimba."

An occasional performance artist, he also was one of the first to reproduce artists' books on a photocopier; the imprint of his publishing firm, Xexoxial Editions, is derived from the name of a certain copier manufacturer.

Born 40 years ago in central Wisconsin as Michael Anderson, And now lives about 70 miles from Madison. Around the bean-sized town of West Lima, And and a handful of like-minded residents have founded an alternative community dubbed Dreamtime Village. Their goal is to balance a devotion to the soil with a high-tech approach to creativity, an unusual mix that resembles And's aesthetic.

"I find that a good place to begin is to confuse the boundaries as much as possible," And said. "A very fruitful area to work in is wherever all the genres and medias and boundaries meet. A lot of my art is based on working those edges to the max."

Can And Max. See Web Art. Now The End.

----- Related Sites Following are links to the external Web sites mentioned in this article. These sites are not part of The New York Times on the Web, and The Times has no control over their content or availability. When you have finished visiting any of these sites, you will be able to return to this page by clicking on your Web browser's "Back" button or icon until this page reappears.

!After Emmett

!UbuWeb Visual, Concrete & Sound Poetry

!Visual Thesaurus and the recent "██████" column on the Visual Thesaurus

!Emmett Williams's biography is online, as is a more detailed résumé of his career

! "Like Attracts Like" is an early example of Williams's concrete poetry

! Fluxus

! Four-Directional Song of Doubt for Five Voices, a Williams piece online that uses Java to recreate a 1957 work

! Qazingulaza is the home page of Miekal And and his family. The link to Joglars leads to some of And's multimedia work.

! Dreamtime Village

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### 333. **groberts**

#### **Re: Frank**

*Thu 14 May 1998*

---

"After all, an attachment to transcendent logics seems to be what O'H was, in part, trying to discredit."

This may be true but O'Hara does in some poems incorporate the remnants of a kind of transcendent logic with more than pastiche in mind, to my mind; I hear even a little nostalgia for it. A great poem like "Kruschev is coming on the right day" seems to be contrasting its revelling in surface with the supposed weightiness of religious diction such as "grace." I suppose it's heretical to think of F O'H as a latter day Pop version of Hopkins, but sometimes, NOT always, I read him so. "Rhapsody" and "For the Chinese New Year (and For Bill Berkson)" would be other poems that I find interesting to read along side Hopkins' "Heraclitean Fire" poem. I guess that "discredit" means not "ignore" but to give a provisional credit/credence to such logic and then to take it back??

Gary R.

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### 334. **Tenney Nathanson**

#### **Re: "O'Hara compared to artists."**

*Thu 14 May 1998*

---

O'Hara's essay on Pollock, though, often reads like a guide to O'Hara's own work. Esp. the parts on the sense of the kinetic in Pollock, the way Pollock can seem to speed up or slow down movement through the canvas by thinning or thickening the line. Put that together w Kenner on Pound "relaxing or tightening the texture of the vocabulary" (or something like that--re Propertius) and walla you pretty much get FOH.

meanwhile chalk me up in the "dumbfounded silence" column re the notion that FOH's palette is limited....

Tenney

-----Original Message-----

From: UB Poetics discussion group

[mailto:████████]On Behalf Of Jordan Davis

Sent: Thursday, May 14, 1998 6:52 AM

To: ██████████

Subject: "O'Hara compared to artists."

*Michael Magee asks if there is not more connection between Rauschenberg or Johns and O'Hara than between De Kooning or Pollock and O'Hara. Time does not permit me now to say why I don't think so, except that Johns is so affiliated with Ashbery in my mind as to preclude comparison with other poets, and Rauschenberg despite the monumental output never once seems even half as intelligent as O'Hara. O'Hara could have to do with the stupid energy (and brilliant line) of Pollock and the brilliant line (and stupid figuration) of De Kooning, if stupid only had its post-1987 meanings. Maybe see O'Hara as not on a one-to-one correspondence with painters, the way Larry Rivers borrows equal parts Koch and O'Hara?*

JD

[↑ Contents](#)

335. **Tenney Nathanson**

**Re: Frank**

Thu 14 May 1998

also true I think. There's a repeated sense of clunking into the given, the found--often to comic effect--that's not well explained by huge lyricism of Pollock or Klein, say. But to say he's like Pollock and also like Rivers, say, is one way of suggesting the way the limited palette theory misses this boat.

Tenney

-----Original Message-----

From: UB Poetics discussion group

[mailto:████████]On Behalf Of Michael Magee

Sent: Thursday, May 14, 1998 6:42 AM

To: ██████████

Subject: Re: Frank

*JDEBROT: "the Abstract Expressionists -- that this "universal" consciousness was white, straight, & male. For this reason, although they were conflicted in their relationship to Ab Ex, an expressionistic poetics would have seemed untenable to the New York School poets.*

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336. **Maria Damon**

**Re: Yo Po Grows**

Thu 14 May 1998

---

this is a gas; congrats miekal, let's hope the \$\$ start pouring in.

At 10:18 AM -0500 5/14/98, Pritchett,Patrick @Silverplume wrote:

>>From today's NY Times:

>

>By MATTHEW MIRAPPAUL

>

>A Poetic Homage -- of the 3-Letter, 3-Word Variety

>

><Picture: P>oe Try Art. Web Voy Age. Mie Kal And.

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>

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>

>Can And Max. See Web Art. Now The End.

>

>

> -----

>Related Sites

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has

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>clicking on your Web browser's "Back" button or icon until this page  
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>

>

>|After Emmett  
>  
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>  
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>  
>|Dreamtime Village

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### 337. **Irving Weiss**

#### ***Signal/Antiwar***

*Thu 14 May 1998*

---

Miroljub Todorovic's International Review for Signlist Research has just issued Signal No. 18 with contributions from Clemente Padin, Jean Francois Bory, Pierre Garnier, Adriano Spatola, Bob Cobbing, Bill Kichel, Irving Weiss, and many other European visual poets and critics.

In addition, Viktor Todorovic has asked that the following Anti-War Declaration be recognized.

Date: Tue, 5 May 1998 18:01:24 +0200

From: Vesna Manojlovic <██████>

To: ██████████

Subject: Vise o ARK/ More on AntiWar Campaign

<http://www.ark.org.yu/>

mailto:██████

[Verzija na srpskom je ispod / Serbian version below]

MORE INFORMATION ON THE ANTI-WAR CAMPAIGN

What is the ANTI-WAR CAMPAIGN? The ANTI-WAR CAMPAIGN is an action provoked with the current events in the country. It represents the reaction to the escalation of violence in the territory of Kosovo. A situation seen so many times in the past years - same participators, same iconography, same retorics, same setting ... The only issue in question is the number of victims that are to come.

Who are the Initiators of the ANTI-WAR CAMPAIGN?

The ANTI-WAR CAMPAIGN was initiated by individuals from Belgrade. We are members of various organizations - students', trade unions, non-governmentals. Our activities differ, but we are all gathered in one common struggle - for a better and more humanized society - that can only be won if the war is prevented.

What are We Planning to Do?

As an opinion or even an idea of this kind is not likely to reach the majority due to the encresing bitterness of war discourse, we have decided to present them to all in person. The idea is to distribute one million leaflets in 160 municipalities, in Central Serbia and Voivodina. We have chosen leaflets as a mean, for that is the only medium that entitles the opportunity for direct contact and communication with the people. Although that might be considered very ambitious, we believe that it is at this time the most adequate way. Our action will not consist of that solely; we are also planning to stick posters and are looking for support of the independent media.

What is Our Goal?

The primary goal of the ANTI-WAR CAMPAIGN is to affirm peace as a major value, to promote equal rights coexistence in a multiethnic community like Serbia; to promote responsible concept of patriotism; to give an alternative to dominant authoritarian patterns through striving for mutual understanding, tolerance, solidarity, openmindedness and above all against violence; and activating and connecting large number of individuals and organizations of various profiles upon the articulation of anti-war attitude.

How Do We Plan to Do That?

The idea is to start distributing leaflets in those places that are most remote from Belgrade, so as to finish in Belgrade. As we have decided for all places in the territory of Central Serbia and Voivodina with more than 10 thousand inhabitants, according to the methodology used, we have reached the number of 160 municipalities (including 16 of Belgrade). In each of those places leaflets would be distributed by the activists from Belgrade with local people that support the action. In smaller towns distribution would last for one day, while in larger towns it would take two or more days. A 'Coordination Body' will be

formed with the role to initiate and facilitate the action, it will arrange daily schedules for distribution teams, provide vehicles, organize transportation for distribution teams, contact and coordinate activists, contact all supporting organizations, and deal with all difficulties that might appear. A very important segment of the action is the media coverage that would help to involve in the action all interested citizens. Concerning that, news conferences are planned to be held, advertisements rendered in daily papers, jingles played on the radio, videos shown on TV, and a presentation made for Internet while the action is taking place. Also, the printing of posters that would be stuck the day before the distribution in the particular town is intended. The action is supposed to last for approximately 16 days with the support of the local population. We are collecting the assets in various ways - from contacts and services free of charge, to financial support.

As a prevention against risks that the activists might face, solicitors will be engaged across Serbia for prompt reactions if needed. That is why we have planned to rent a few mobile phones. How Did We Get Organized? Many have, probably, thought that an anti-war action must necessarily be organized. It was only a matter of time when the clear concept would appear. Thus there was no need for long convincing on starting the action. The proposers of this sort of organized practice are mostly students that worked in the first phase - that is involving and informing as many people as possible, both in Belgrade and in other parts of Serbia. The logical course is now coordination of activities and forming a network of activists that could cover the whole territory of Serbia. Numerous non-governmental organizations have by now given their support, partly by activating their own networks of activists. All those that find such things necessary are joining the initial group.

The basic principle of the whole ANTI-WAR CAMPAIGN is not to represent a potential new NGO, another one among the 'umbrella organizations', nor anything alike. The ANTI-WAR CAMPAIGN is an ad hoc action, which gathers, activates and motivates wide range of people of different backgrounds, on the fundamental need: to live in peace.

#### What Was Done by Now?

By this moment around one hundred people from Belgrade and few dozens of them from Kragujevac, Novi Sad, Vranje, Niš, Kraljevo, Zrenjanin, Sombor, Kovačica, Subotica, Novi Pazar etc., have confirmed their participation in the ANTI-WAR CAMPAIGN. The fact that some of the organizations have already lent their networks of activists willing to participate in the ANTI-WAR CAMPAIGN. We have gained media support and the sponsorship from some media, and are currently working on informing and increasing the number of

activists, designing the leflets and posters, and as well finding means to create conditions for realization of the action.

What Do We Need?

For full completion of the activities mentioned the following should be supplied: an office in Belgrade (that is to be used in coordination of activities in the field, with a computer, a printer, a phone, a fax machine and a photocopy machine); office accessories (paper, fax paper, discs, cartridges); vehicles; printing of leaflets, postres, shirts, badges, bumper-stickers; production of the video and the radio jingle; news conference halls; advertisements in newspapers; presenting the video and the jingle : a web site; mobil phones.

[end of english version]

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### 338. **Judy Roitman**

#### **Re: Yo Po Grows**

Thu 14 May 1998

<Picture: P>oe Try Art. Web Voy Age. Mie Kal And.

I must be Web-impaired. What is the URL?

----- Judy Roitman  
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas |  
memory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days."  
[REDACTED] | fax: [REDACTED] | Larry Eigner,  
1927-1996 ----- Note new area  
code -----  
http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/  
-----

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### 339. **ken|n|ing**

#### **Query)**

Thu 14 May 1998

Lisa Samuels, you out there? Please back-channel. Thanks. Patrick  
F. Durgin

ken n i n g`.....|`.....  
|  
|

a newsletter of contemporary |poetry, poetics, and non-fiction writing  
|418 Brown St. #10 Iowa City, IA 52245 USA

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340. **groberts**

**Re: Frank**

Thu 14 May 1998

---

In all of the discussion of O'Hara and painters, we should not forget Joan Mitchell and Grace Hartigan, who have at least as much relevance to his work as the male artists mentioned so far. If not more so: Mitchell's frenetic style of the late 50s, for example, has the same kind of punctuated buzzing quality of O'Hara's open syntax. Hartigan's work takes up gender issues in a way more related to O'Hara than any of the other male artists with the possible exception of Rauschenberg in the combines.

Gary R.

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341. **Miekal And**

**Re: Yo Po Grows**

Thu 14 May 1998

---

Judy Roitman wrote:

>  
> >>  
> >><Picture: P>oe Try Art. Web Voy Age. Mie Kal And.  
> >>  
>  
> I must be Web-impaired. What is the URL?  
>

After Emmett is at:

<http://www.net22.com/qazingulaza/joglars/afteremmett/bonvoyage.html>

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342. **Maz881**

**Re: Frankly**

Thu 14 May 1998

---

What happened to dharmok at Tenagra? Jordan asks. Did you ever see Enemy Mine? a good sci-fi movie. Frank this: Dennis Quaid is an earthling on space patrol; Louis Gossett Jr. is an alien. When they're stranded on a desolate planet, they learn peace.

in the made for tv version (star trek the next generation) dharmok and jilad are ancient mythic characters who fought a bad monster together at this place in the middle of the ocean called tenagra.

i think the phrase (dharmok & jilad at tenagra) is repeated over & over in this episode of the Next Generation as a way of thinking and talking together. By getting together dharmok & jilad were able to fight and destroy the bad monster.

The synopsis of this particular episode: Picard and this "other alien" captain (who tells the myth of dharmok & jilad, old stories of his people, to try to tell picard things) are stuck on this planet where there is a bad monster. the other alien captain (played by Paul Winfield) doesn't speak in standard utilitarian language. But just says poems the whole episode. Piccard finally understands at the end. And he and the other captain fight the bad monster together. But the other alien captain gets killed because it have taken piccard too long to understand the poems. However, there is hope for the future as the federation and this new alien race can sort of speak poems together. Timbre with his arms wide. shaka, when the walls fell.

Bill Luoma

btw, I think Jordan is asking this because he is reading my new book from Hard pRess .The Figures. Called Works and Days. It's available from Small Press Distribution but I'd order it from Rod Smith ( ) because it will be cheaper. it's 140 or so pages. it's something like poetry, story, memoir and poetics.

Below are some blurbs from the back cover of Works & Days.

"Bill Luoma writes like an anchorman, not so much an 'insider' as a glider on the minimalist way of expressing being alive in groups with a purpose (the team). Once the purpose has been established, a tighter focus begins to take over, the love of women, or narrating Douglas, Bill's friend. Not since Bob Gluck and Bruce Boon's camaraderie in the 70s has there been such a literary buddy's movie as this. It's sketchy, and knowing and gleeful. Not since Thoreau has someone I know suggested that everything counts and then gone to work, wherever." --Eileen Myles

"The style of this book is naive and winning, or seemingly so, somewhat in the manner of the late Joe Brainard, and like Brainard Luoma takes great pleasure in the minute details of everyday life--names of people or places met or visited only briefly, figures of speech transcribed so exactly a sublime silliness overflows the shallowness--how habits and memories are shared among friends. For me, the value of this book--besides precision and charm, values to be sure--is the depth of feeling that it evinces, not in any one place, but in the very

movement of the prose, in the 'Trip' Luoma takes us on." --Benjamin Friedlander

"Spaces between sentences: interesting. Spaces within sentences: interesting. The sentences being both literally true and constantly verbally inventive. And being about what you might call gossip, i.e. real life (and also certain sports: baseball and poetry) Works & Days is, well, astonishingly readable. And isn't to be readable poetry's best possibility?" --Alice Notley

-----  
<<Date: Wed, 13 May 1998 14:41:59 -0400  
From: Jordan Davis <[REDACTED]>  
Subject: Frankly

A nice moment in Charles North's book of essays when he complains about Ashbery's punishing caprices, like "Leading liot act to foriage", it makes me think about O'Hara's use of the word "frankly" which always makes me tip me head forward in discomfort, eyes narrowed as from huge glare. Nevertheless, I see Uncle Henry steering the holodeck's hull into a butte and COMPUTER PAUSE would come to my lips if only I knew what any of those things meant. Bill what happened to Djarmok at Tenagra? I am outing you but you did it yourself. Now Henry I want to know why you are suggesting there is a direct connection between O'Hara and Seinfeld. What is up with those Providence anchorpeople's hair? I don't think O'Hara would have disliked Seinfeld, but more than that, I don't think any of us who argue that O'Hara had a better-populated mood palette than Gary argued would argue that it's possible to write like O'Hara -- not only does none of us have the datebook of an O'Hara, not only are we more restricted in our permissions (don't ask don't ask!), we have a somewhat different culture to pick and choose from. No offense to Zhdanov or Parschikov or Dragomoschenko, but where in the world are the Pasternaks for a young poet to cable support? Why haven't the young poets from Harvard shown up yet? Are they all writing for The Simpsons?

Subsistence, well we haven't heard much about it yet, but won't its poetic equivalent risk malnourishment? There's been some rumbling (Mark P? Gary?) about poetry and surplus. I'm no economist, but although poetry doesn't create surplus value, couldn't it be said to be the surplus of language itself? and when we say of something that it has duende or energy or overdeterminacy couldn't it just be this surplus of meaning? Please don't prematurely count me against the whole earth poetries, but tell me more, especially if you can do it without using the word "minimal".

OK today --  
Jordan>>







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348. **R. Gancie**

***black hole big macula attack***

*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

"This one is eating meat,' said Edward Weiler, chief Hubble scientist and head of NASA's Origins program."---Kathy Sawyer, Washington Post --- "This work is so crude and elementary in its nature that the writer firmly believes that it would be possible to train an intelligent gorilla so as to become a more efficient pig iron handler than any man can be. Yet it will be shown that the science of handling pig iron is so great and amounts to so much that it is impossible for the man who is best suited for this type of work to understand the principles of this science, or even to work in accordance with these principles without the aid of a man better educated than he is."---Frederick Winslow Taylor, Scientific Management --- "In [Herbert A.] Simon's view,..., people were as programmed as computers and as lacking in free will as rats and ants. They did "what they are programmed to do" by environmental stimuli, much as extreme behaviorists had argued. Such behaviorism was inherent in cybernetic ideas. Both natural and artificial systems were presumed to behave teleologically because they were programmed with purposes and self-adaptive devices. Their goals and their homeostatic feedback mechanisms, as with a thermostat regulating room temperature, exchanged information between the system and its environment, signaled deviations from goals, and adjusted behavior automatically. This concept demolished distinctions between complex machines and organisms." "Initially , Simon had thought that his work only led to "suggestive analogies." But his work with smart programs caused him to argue that people and computers used identical problem solving processes. His "basic point of view" was that the "programmed computer and the human problem solver" were "both species belonging to the genus IPS [Information Processing System]." Hence it followed that people could be studied through computer simulations and described in cybernetic language." "Ironically, Simonized rules of thumb were similar to Taylor's principles that Simon once belittled as proverbs."--- Stephen P. Waring, Taylorism Transformed --- "My thermostat has three beliefs: it's too hot in here; it's too cold in here; it's just right in here."---John McCarthy "This porridge is too hot; this porridge is too cold; this porridge is just right."--- Feedback Goldilocks reaching homeostasis

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349. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**

***speaking frankly...***

*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

just to intervene in this interesting discussion of one frank to say that the frank who just passed away has had a greater influence on me than o'hara... not to

take away from o'hara in the slightest---but listening to sinatra most of my life helped teach me how to listen...

doobie-doobie-do///

best,

joe

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350. **William Burmeister Prod**

***speaking frankly...***

*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

.  
. .  
. .  
. .  
. .

But if you should survive to a hundred and five  
look at all you'll derive just from being alive

And here is the best part, you have a head start  
if you are among the very young at heart.

-Sinatra

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351. **William Burmeister Prod**

***Re: speaking frankly...***

*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

hmmm, let's try this again.

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. .  
. .  
. .  
. .  
. .  
. .

But if you should survive to a hundred and five  
look at all you'll derive just from being alive

And here is the best part, you have a head start  
if you are among the very young at heart.

-Sinatra

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352. **William Burmeister Prod**

***Re: speaking frankly...***

*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

ok third time's a charm. Sorry--for some reason the rest of the message is getting whacked...

But if you should survive to a hundred and five  
look at all you'll derive just from being alive

And here is the best part, you have a head start  
if you are among the very young at heart.

-Sinatra

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353. **Robert Hale**

***Re: speaking frankly...***

*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

On the way to work this morning, I heard a live recording Sinatra made in the 50's of a concert in Sydney (I think), Australia. It features Red Norvo on piano and is really one of the best things he ever did. It captures him at what some would consider his peak, his "Top of the heap" -- after his big band period and before the doobie-doobie-doo stuff set in.

Sinatra skeptics out there may want to check it out. You can get it on CD.

In his small talk between songs, he says something like "this next number is one of those saloon songs...you know, the kind you want to hear at 2 in the morning, when everybody is gassed."

In the tune, he sings, "drink up, you happy people."

At 10:47 AM 5/15/98 -0400, you wrote:

>.

>.

>.

>.

>.

>

>But if you should survive to a hundred and five

>look at all you'll derive just from being alive

>

>And here is the best part, you have a head start

> if you are among the very young at heart.

>

> -Sinatra

>

>

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354. **Maria Damon (Maria Damon)**

***yet another query***

*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

i've got a student who wants to do a historiography of 20th c "nonlinear" poetry/writing for his senior paper (10-15 pp), which will then focus on a case study like the relationship between Gertrude Stein's writing and Lyn Hejinian's writing? what are the basic texts to suggest to someone doing such an historiography? are there any? i mentioned M Perloff's books, and the LANGUAGE book, and he's got Feminist Measures and Allen's Poetics of the New American Poetry --any others he shd know about?

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355. **LITSAM**

***Re: speaking frankly...***

*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

In a message dated 98-05-15 11:29:24 EDT, [REDACTED] writes:

<< In the tune, he sings, "drink up, you happy people." >>

The Song is "Angel Eyes" and as good as most poems I have encountered of late! I mean, think about the possibilities, supposing Wallace Stevens could carry a tune!!!

Sam

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356. **daniel bouchard**

***Re: speaking rankly...***

*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

At 11:47 AM 5/15/98 EDT, LITSAM wrote:

> In a message dated 98-05-15 11:29:24 EDT, [REDACTED] writes:

>

><< In the tune, he sings, "drink up, you happy people." >>

>





I was looking for real speech  
& knew I'd find plenty cuz I  
happen to know what to  
look for. "Did it--did it--  
did it--did it--did it--" jab-  
bered Sinatra, coming to a  
stop like a dead doll. The  
audience applauded so vig-  
orously that their hands fell  
off. All the way down this  
index of decline measured  
the extent to which they  
accepted this process of  
erosion.

The door flew o-  
pen. In the bathroom a bro-  
ken mirror lay on the bed,  
the pieces flickering: the  
fragments of another world  
trying to reconstitute itself.  
I looked down at my grimy  
shirt & vomit-stained hands.  
So what if it didn't happen  
that way? Given the condi-  
tions, the only intelligent  
criticism was not an attack  
on what it was, but on what  
others had been unable to  
bring to it.

I woke in dark-  
ness, shoved out of sleep by  
the low concrete building.  
The others stood & looked at  
it in heartbroken stupor. We  
gave up the idea of getting  
jobs & kept on at our work.  
They were not Gilbert &  
Sullivan buffs; the text of  
The Mikado had been pro-  
grammed into them as opera-  
tional data. If merely saying  
a man had been executed

was enough to satisfy everyone, why \*not\* merely say it?  
The machine, based on the tropisms of heat and respiratory rhythm, was attempting to located exactly the beating heart of the man asleep in its bed.

The three singers are well into the climax of their song. Frantic & fevered, they rave all about; a deafening volume of sound freights every molecule of air. Good luck to you, your wife, the home which housed my love & me at play. I collide into Frank, upsetting his drink, & fall backwards into obscurity.

--written sometime in 1992

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358. **k. lederer**

***Re: yet another query***

*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

Re: "non-linear writing"

My senior thesis at Berkeley was all about non-linearity (vis-a-vis Derrida and Stein). In it I compared Hejinian with Stein, actually...

Some books I found helpful:

Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text* (as an example of non-linear writing in and of itself, but also as an example of a text concerned with an "erotics of reading" as opposed to a pleasure in closure... this also jibes in a lot of ways with Hejinian's writings on closure...)

Of course, Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* is a fun place to start to think about thinking in non-linear ways...

Auerbach's *Mimesis* is terrific.

There's a sort of monograph by Hejinian entitled "Two Stein Talks"... I don't have my copy handy, but it's excellent.

Aristotle's Poetics seems like a necessary addition to such an inquiry.

Best,  
Katy

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359. **Gary Sullivan**  
**Re: yet another query**

Fri 15 May 1998

---

Hi, Maria:

I'm not sure if it's still in print, but it's definitely appropriate:

Open Form and the Feminine Imagination  
by Stephen-Paul Martin

also, Marta wrote a pretty wonderful essay on this, taking off from SPM's book & further questioning the idea of "feminine" w/respect to ways of inscribing. I can photocopy that for you if you like.

Have fun,

Gary

On Friday, May 15, 1998 11:32 AM, Maria Damon (Maria Damon)

[SMTP: ] wrote:

> i've got a student who wants to do a historiography of 20th c "nonlinear"  
> poetry/writing for his senior paper (10-15 pp), which will then focus on a  
> case study like the relationship between Gertrude Stein's writing and Lyn  
> Hejinian's writing? what are the basic texts to suggest to someone doing  
> such an historiography? are there any? i mentioned M. Perloff's books, and  
> the LANGUAGE book, and he's got Feminist Measures and Allen's Poetics of  
> the New American Poetry --any others he should know about?

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360. **morpheal**  
**Re: Zazen-Zen substitution sonnet**

Fri 15 May 1998

---

*Zazen-Zen substitution sonnet*

*To write with sudden flare, as if conclusion  
bombed or went awry, there's also nonsense ending  
or something about mind's explosion, doesn't it*

*make you think of war, zazen-zen? because one enlightenment illuminates sky-tracers of single one, others' mistaken kanji. What substitutions makes this salvaged one enlightenment? I'd say "any and all," but none, here, or rather b for b, c for c, d for d, and so through equivalence as in sed 's/\_x/\_x\_/g' as general rule. But it's applied. that which it makes zazen-zen. Over and in repetitious order. No delight, but clearness of this-world's mistaken kanji. Now war has stopped. Now a turn. Now the turns.*

It is certainly similar to tactics in warfare, and also in diplomacy. Therefore potentially also in commerce of other, somewhat less violent, kinds.

The common element is intuition.

Pure reason, or dialectical reason, cannot arrive at the proper response to a Zen koan, or any other truly Zen invitation to response. Only intuition can respond....

This is usually taken as equivalent to the archer not having to calculate the velocity, angle, wind resistance, and other complex factors involved in firing an arrow at a target. The response to the target is intuitive. However, in any world of reasoning and calculating it is increasingly difficult to train and maintain truly effective intuitive responses.

The zen koan, or any other kind of zen dialectic, is part of that training.

M.

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361. **Fred Muratori**

***In the Spirit of O'Hara...***

*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

## THE OBVIOUS

Know the obvious or fear it. Why pretend the air is empty? Here in our acute democracy each person occupies a piece, then leaves it for the next, undiminished or good as new -- or better -- with scents of soap and lightly sauteed onions. Try striding through 5th Avenue at Christmas time and notice air change hands, the street become a centipede of opposite

intents, flowing pros and cons in search of an hypothesis.  
You might pass the very soul who knows what's innermost  
about you -- what you force out of your mind at dawn  
or else start work an animal. Look, there goes salvation  
in a pair of skintight jeans! You missed it but it was  
beautiful, and meant for you, its body heat still hanging  
in the waiting space. We take the emptiness for fact,  
that flagrant vacuum, so plainly personless, a guise.  
-- Fred M.

(from *\_Brooklyn Review\_*, c. 1988)

\*\*\*\*\*

Fred Muratori

([REDACTED])

Reference Services Division

Olin \* Kroch \* Uris Libraries

Cornell University

Ithaca, NY 14853

WWW: <http://fmref.library.cornell.edu/spectra.html>

\*\*\*\*\*

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362. **morpheal**

***Re: black hole big macula attack***

*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

*... and as lacking in free will as rats and ants. They did "what they are programmed to do" by environmental stimuli, much as extreme behaviorists had argued. Such behaviorism was inherent in cybernetic ideas. Both natural and artificial systems were presumed to behave teleologically because they were programmed with purposes and self-adaptive devices. Their goals and their homeostatic feedback mechanisms, as with a thermostat regulating room temperature, exchanged information between the system and its environment, signaled deviations from goals, and adjusted behavior automatically. This concept demolished distinctions between complex machines and organisms."*

According to Colin Wilson, in some of his earlier writings, including "The Outsider" series, wherein he began his philosophical, popular non fiction and speculative fiction, career.... that would apply to 95% of the population.

Clearly demonstrated with significantly large groups that the ant colony metaphor is applicable.

The best experts on arriving at that appear to have been the Soviets. Second after the the Nazis in Germany.

That is, in the regular application of the theory to the day to day management of their corporate civilization.

Of course, the principles involved tend to be most applicable and utilized in times of war, or impending war. There is more than an indication that the ant colony condition can be induced.....in most people by purely linguistic culturally specific, probably inherent, triggers.....

That says a lot about inheritance of culture that some still find controversial. However, it is no different from quantum memory within the DNA spiral helix of instinctual patterns of complex behaviour inherent from generation to generation within other species. Some species do not learn very much, if anything, by means of imitation. Even the one celled organism necessarily learns from its interactions with the environment, stores that information and passes some of it on to future generations such that evolution of species, and of complexity as to behavioural responses, becomes possible. If the one celled organism had no quantum memory for interactions with its environment, passed on with the nuclear "brain" materials (DNA), then evolution would be impossible.

Why would we then argue that linguistic and proto-linguistic data would not be passed on, along with other elements of culture and life experience, from generation to generation in humans ? It seems absurd that that argument has been made so frequently.

M.

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363. **Matt Kirschenbaum**

***Re: speaking frankly...***

*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

Speaking of rock and roll, has anyone else been listening to the new Sonic Youth, A Thousand Leaves (out on Geffen)? Or their SYR EP releases from the past year? Some of it's boring, but a lot of it's really pretty. On Leaves, a track dedicated to Allen Ginsburg. Other Blakean illuminations. A glaze of

Continental philosophy. Reviews have slammed the lyrics for being gratuitously grafted to the long noize compositions, but I kind of like that about it. Matt

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364. **david bromige**

*frank's words*

*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

Good to see Sinatra getting some respect around here. Thanks William Burmeister, for the triple postings. But where those Frank's words, or simply words thAt he sang, thereby rendered immortal, etc? Did he help compose "Young at Heart"? The only song I know him to have helped write is "This Love of Mine," with Sol Parker and Henry Sanicola getting credit for the music. But then I'm no Sinatra-expert, only a fan of those who make the difficult look easy.

This love of mine  
Goes on & on  
Tho' life is empty  
Since you have gone  
You're always on my mind  
Tho' out of sight  
It's lonesome thru the day  
And oh! the night  
I cry my heart out  
It's bound to break  
Since nothing matters  
Let it break  
I ask the sun and the moon  
The stars that shine  
What's to become of it  
this love of mine?

I think I know why Ron Silliman speaks of the "anti-poetics of song" after typing that out. Wish I could hum you-all the tune. The music uses 12 chords and in C, 4 bars before the end, has a delicious six-beat passage that modulates from Em to Ebm to Dm to Db9, thence home to C

"Pal Joey" may be the movie that comes closest to "playing himself". Also the only flick where Rita Hayworth and Kim Novak appeared on the same bill.

David.

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365. **Tosh**  
*frank sinatra*  
*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

Frank Sinatra - dark & mean like the 20th Century. Also beautiful.

-----  
Tosh Berman  
TamTam Books  
-----

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366. **Magdalena Zurawski**  
*Re: yet another query*  
*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

where can one find a copy of TEMBLOR in NYC? St. Mark's?

mz

At 11:57 PM 5/13/98 -0700, you wrote:

>and Maria, the Two Stein Talks mentioned by Hejinian, are in TEMBLOR 3.  
>Temblor 10 has a very fine piece by Bev Dahlen, Tautology and The Real,  
>largely having to do with Stein and Spicer, which is very nice --  
>originally delivered as a talk in a series here in Tucson.

>

>And it may be something of a stretch, but Deleuze & Guattari's A Thousand  
>Plateaus seems possibly useful here, in its various senses of how meaning  
>coheres and disperses.

>

>good luck to your student!

>

>

>charles

>charles alexander :: poet and book artist :: 

>chax press :: alexander writing/design/publishing

>books by artists' hands :: web sites built with care and vision

>http://alexwritdespub.com/chax :: http://alexwritdespub.com

>

>

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367. **William Burmeister Prod**

**Re: frank's words**

Fri 15 May 1998

---

David Bromige wrote:

*Good to see Sinatra getting some respect around here. Thanks William Burmeister, for the triple postings. But where those Frank's words, or simply words thAt he sang, thereby rendered immortal, etc? Did he help compose "Young at Heart"? The only song I know him to have helped write is "This Love of Mine," with Sol Parker and Henry Sanicola getting credit for the music. But then I'm no Sinatra-expert, only a fan of those who make the difficult look easy.*

Ah the dangers inherent in trusting the return copy! (Never type successive periods followed by returns to act as spacer--seems to delete subsequent text in return copy).

Good questions of which I can only answer that he rendered the words immortal with "the voice." Sounds good in the shower too where I can convince myself of the near perfection of my mimicry.

William

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368. **morpheal**

**Re: Signal/antiwar**

Fri 15 May 1998

---

>Miroljub Todorovic's International Review for Signalist Research has just  
>issued Signal No. 18 with contributions from Clemente Padin, Jean Francois  
>Bory, Pierre Garnier, Adriano Spatola, Bob Cobbing, Bill Kichel, Irving  
Weiss, >and many other European visual poets and critics.

An essentially small and \_non\_ influential splinter group...

*In addition, Viktor Todorovic has asked that the following Anti-War  
Declaration be recognized.*

In my opinion it will only serve to spread and stir the controversy, causing more heated reactions between potential opponents. At best it becomes a tool of diplomats who inevitably serve other causes, buying a little time, in preparedness for more definite resolution. Sad as that is, we must also keep in mind that political conquest via socialist rhetoric is less likely to be favoured by the majority than is military conquest towards a new unification. I do not like what I see, but that is how I tend to see it. I cannot tell you right now whether the probabilities favour a right wing or a communist military dictatorship

evolving in the longer term, leading to forced geographic unification of the Balkans. Flip a coin on that question....

M.

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369. **William Burmeister Prod**  
**Marjory Stoneman Douglas 1890-1998**  
*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

Marjory Stoneman Douglas, one Florida's finest ever and writer, conservationist, women's rights activist, volunteer, has died. She will be sorely missed down here.

Excerpts from the St.Petersburg Times:

Marjory Stoneman Douglas, grande dame of the Florida Everglades and the state's pre-eminent conservationist, died at her Miami home Thursday. She was 108. Douglas died in her Coconut Grove home of 72 years. As she requested, her home will be turned into a state museum and her ashes will be scattered over the portion of the Everglades National Park that bears her name in a public ceremony on May 23. President Clinton, recalling when he awarded her the Medal of Freedom when she was 103, said she was ahead of her time.

A writer and crusader for Florida's environment before World War II, Mrs. Douglas was best known for her 1947 book, *The Everglades: River of Grass*.

She decried in its pages the more than half-century of human tampering with the sawgrass prairies and swamps of South Florida that make up the Everglades. And with that, she reminded readers of what was being lost.

"There are no other Everglades in the world," she wrote. "They are, they have always been, one of the unique regions of the Earth, remote, never wholly known.

"Nothing anywhere else is like them: their vast glittering openness, wider than the enormous visible round of the horizon, the racing free saltiness and sweetness of their massive winds, under the dazzling blue heights of space."

The significance of her book "is that it proved the Everglades are actually a river, a river of grass," Mrs. Douglas once said. "That is the key to understanding the area."

While her book on the Everglades was perhaps her best known work, Mrs. Douglas also wrote *Hurricane*, *Road to the Sun*, *Freedom River*, *Alligator Crossing* and *The Key to Paris*.

Late into her life she remained a person of remarkable vitality, although failing eyesight limited writing or traveling. She dictated her autobiography into 50 cassette tapes.

Titled, Marjory Stoneman Douglas: Voice of the River, the autobiography, with John Rothchild, was published in 1987.

Briefly married in 1914, the Minneapolis native had lived alone in the quaint house she built from plans a friend sketched on the back of an envelope.

A visitor to her home once described her as a 5-foot-1-inch woman with white hair pulled back in a French twist and none of the looks of a troublemaker.

Yet Mrs. Douglas was a crusader from that day in 1915 when she stepped off the train from New England with her Wellesley College education into the frontier atmosphere of Miami. She had come to join her father, Frank B. Stoneman, editor and founder of the newspaper that became the Miami Herald.

Of her father, she noted in her autobiography: "He had that Quaker sense about women which is different from the usual Protestant attitude. Quakers made no distinction between men's and women's minds; they didn't think that minds had any particular sex to them. My father never doubted my intellectual ability."

In 1916 she traveled to Tallahassee in a fruitless effort to persuade legislators to support women's suffrage. The Legislature did not ratify the 19th Amendment that year.

She remained with the Herald until 1918, then went to Europe to handle publicity for the American Red Cross until 1920. After returning to the Herald until 1923, Mrs. Douglas devoted herself to writing short stories and fiction for national magazines, including the Saturday Evening Post, and teaching at the University of Miami and Pennsylvania State College.

Although she published a play, The Gallows Gate in 1928, The Everglades: River of Grass was her first book, and she had not planned to write it.

While at work on a novel, she was approached by Hervey Allen, who was the publisher of a series of books about America's rivers. He wanted her to write about the Miami River. Although she questioned the idea of devoting an entire book to the Miami River, she would later recall, "it would be foolish to let a publisher just walk out of your door."

How about a book on the Everglades? she stammered. Allen liked the idea, but he had given her a tough job.

No comprehensive book on the Everglades had previously been written, she found, although she knew of an abundance of descriptive writing. The year the book was published, 1947, President Harry S. Truman dedicated Everglades National Park.

That same year, she recalled, the Army Corps of Engineers "signed a contract to drain the Everglades." The corps later sliced up the area with pumps and levees, canals and floodgates, all aimed at taming the river of grass.

In the following years, Mrs. Douglas, made famous by her book, which has sold almost a half million copies, preached against the engineers, warning of the consequences of their work.

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### 370. **Billy Little**

#### ***Re: ODDLY APPROPRIATE POEM***

*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

this poem would be oddly appropriate most any time, a gem!

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### 371. **Marjorie Perloff**

#### ***Re: Lyn Hejinian/Gertrude stein***

*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

Maria, Lyn has a great piece called "Two Stein Talks," TEMBLOR, I think #8 but somewhere in there that would be crucial for your student. Also, Charles Bernstein's CONTENT'S DREAM and A POETICS (and the new book MY WAY) ULLA DYDO, various pieces on Narrative, and the headnotes in her wonderful THE STEIN READER.

At ACLA in South Bend a few years back, Chris Beach, Ming Quian Ma, and Steve Fredman did three great papers on Lyn and Stein certainly came in--you might ask Steve to see his--I believe none are published yet.

While I'm writing, I'll get into the O'Hara fray. I haven't answered thus far because I felt I almost couldn't--to me, O'Hara has an amazing emotional range, who more so?? What is true--and maybe this is what Gary meant--is that Frank's emotions are right on the surface--joy, pain, misery, anxiety, hope, lust, excitement--we get the gamut as he experiences them. His poems are deeply moving--take a look at "The Clouds Go Soft" (already mentioned here) and "Ode for Joe LeSueur on the Arrow that Flieth by Night"--both quite devastating. And the technique is such we're immediately drawn INTO the poems--can't get away!

Marjorie Perloff

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372. **Chrsmccrry**  
**journal address query**  
*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

Does anyone know of an address (e or otherwise) for the journal "Lungful" (not LVNG), which I believe is out of NYC?

A backchannel w/ this info would be much appreciated.

Thanks--

Chris

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373. **charles alexander**  
**Re: yet another query**  
*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

mz--

I would imagine several libraries: New York Public, Columbia, NYU, etc. -- I don't know if any place would have one for sale.

At 03:15 PM 5/15/98 -0400, you wrote:

>where can one find a copy of TEMBLOR in NYC? St. Mark's?

>

>mz

charles alexander :: poet and book artist :: 

chax press :: alexander writing/design/publishing

NOTE NEW URL FOR CHAX PRESS <http://alexwritdespub.com/chax>

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374. **Wendy Kramer**  
**subsistence what matter poetry**  
*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

gary roberts, your post on a poetics of subsistence is wonderful. some thots...

yes it is useful to think of it alongside poetics of excess, cuz they can be together. i mean, poetic subsistence can be excessive (a lot of material to cut from or build up) i have a floorfull of corrugated cardboard that has taken over a room--words and pics from boxes off the street, and, well, it takes a lot of garbage to subsist.

that is, i take subsistence at its existence and, i guess, survival connotations, and especially at its persistence connotation, and that, certainly, doesnt have to be minimalist, short-lined (or even lined). in its energy

conservation mode, this subsistence of making pomes out of garbage of course takes the excesses of production (hear, packaging) and excessively (or persistently) plays with it; the excess of the so-called economy gets recycled, while becoming in turn the excess that is play. but, play isn't necessarily excess...except as it doesn't fit for buying or behaving yourself...

to subsist might be to exist/persist amidst what touches from the outside, every sense (even "that makes sense" sense) being some kind of contact/touch... .. whatever/whomever it is that is me associating with the excessive word-garbage at the curbside and of the city is subsisting to bring it home and hack at it is ludicrous but somehow fitting. and the lyric forcibly perceived from it seems an outside one-- that damn marshmallow box (there's a "firebrand" in it!), the mango tray, that tomato carton are alluring: their existence in sists, steinlike, everywhere. and will be brot to a muse.

looking froward to more from you,

dee

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375. **Karen Kelley**  
***Re: yet another query***

*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

Maybe someone's already mentioned it, but Marjorie Perloff has a great book The Poetics of Indeterminacy: Rimbaud to Cage. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981. Paperback: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1983. Reprint, 1993

Stein's included, if memory serves.

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376. **Karen Kelley**  
***Oops/Query***

*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

Oops, Maria,  
just saw you DID mention Perloff. It's a great book, though--worth mentioning twice.

Also, in relation to Katie's suggestion, re: pleasure of text: there's The Future of Difference (Douglass Series on Women's Likes and the Meaning of Gender)\_ eds. Hester Eisenstein and Alice Jardine.

I don't remember the subtitle (...women's likes ????...how odd), but I read it in grad school 10 yrs ago. I do remember, though, that it offers a great section on

écriture feminine, as well as a marvelous essay/collaboration/poem by Rachel Blau DuPlessis.

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377. **toddbaron**  
***Re: speaking frankly...***  
*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

In angel Eyes--Frank decided to start the song in the middle--with the personal--"drink up you happy people" and then go into the remainder of the song.

Iconography.

Tb

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378. **toddbaron**  
***Re: frankly sinatra***  
*Fri 15 May 1998*

---

...

so drink up all you happy people...

in the wee small hours  
of the morning...

watch over me..

Tb

(ReMap)

ps: I'll carry the key

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379. **Taylor Brady**  
***PERFORMANCE / READING IN BUFFALO***  
*Sat 16 May 1998*

---

Friday, May 22nd, at 7:30pm  
in the Paul Sharits Theater at Hallwalls, 2495 Main Street, Buffalo,  
the Scratch & Dent Reading and Performance Series presents:  
ALARIC SUMNER

&

MICHELLE CITRIN

Alaric Sumner is lecturer in Performance Writing at Dartington College of

Arts, Devon UK. Previously Resident Writer, Tate Gallery St Ives, Cornwall.

Performances include: Royal Court, London; Tate St Ives; Dartington Arts

Centre; Ferens Art Gallery, Hull; Pleasance, Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

Publications include: Aberrations of Mirrors Lenses Sight (1998), Waves on Porthmeor Beach (1995), Rhythm to Intending (1994), Lurid TechnologyS (1994). Anthologies: My Kind of Angel (i.m. William Burroughs) (Stride),

Arts Council Poetry. Magazines include: SubVoicive Poetry, Talus, Garuda, Alembic. Exhibited: Tate St Ives, Penwith Gallery, Penzance Arts Club. Visiting Lecturer: University of Leeds, University of Hull, Vanderbilt University Tennessee (London Summerschool), Arvon Foundation (guest reader). Guest Editor: PAJ (forthcoming). Editor: words worth language arts (books and journal).

Alaric Sumner's visit to the States is part funded by the Arts Council of England's Combined Arts International Travel and Research Fund and by Dartington College of Arts Staff Research Fund.

Michelle Citrin currently lives in Buffalo. In addition to her work as a poet, she is also active as a visual artist and book artist. She edits untitled or press and magazine, a series of hand-produced book objects and periodicals featuring the work of Buffalo poets and others. Selections from these aspects of her work will be on display prior to the reading, which, as far as I know, will be her first public appearance.

Please join us for poetry, performance, and company (and perhaps chicken wings). I look forward to seeing you there.

(Please forward this message to anyone who might be interested).

-- Taylor Brady

editor, Cartograffiti

<http://writing.upenn.edu/AandL/english/pubs/spc/cartograffiti>

(a publication of the Small Press Collective)

<http://writing.upenn.edu/AandL/english/pubs/spc>

The Scratch & Dent Reading and Performance Series is a joint production of Cornershop and the Small Press Collective, and is funded by Just Buffalo Literary Center. Many thanks to Ed Cardoni and Hallwalls for the loan of the performance space.



The flyer for this event is available in .pdf format at:

<http://writing.upenn.edu/AandL/english/pubs/spc/SandD/flyer3.pdf>

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<BODY TEXT="#000000" BGCOLOR="#FFFFFF" LINK="#003399"  
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<BR>in the Paul Sharits Theater at Hallwalls, 2495 Main Street, Buffalo,

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Penzance Arts Club. <BR>Visiting Lecturer: University of Leeds, University of  
Hull, Vanderbilt <BR>University Tennessee (London Summerschool), Arvon  
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<BR>&nbsp;<A

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<P>(a publication of the Small Press Collective)

<BR>&nbsp;<A

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</HTML>

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380. **joel lewis**

***"Guess I'll Hang Out My Tears to Dry"(Sinatra)***

*Sat 16 May 1998*

Many of the stores along Washington Street here in Hoboken have Sinatra's framed portrait in their window, draped in black. Though few personally have met him (though it seems every third person knew his mother, a cousin or other relative), I hear many talking about him as I make my way to the PATH train. There are tv trucks all over the place, heading up to the plaque at 415 Monroe Street where the singer was born in 1915.

I must admit I came to him late. As a product of Beatlemania, I saw Sinatra and company representing my parents era, etc., etc. That he hated rock music (he once almost came to blows w/ Atlantic's Ahmet Ertugen on this subject) didn't help matters much. Oddly, his stance on the making of his classic Capitol sides (thematic projects, control of the sessions and high standards) is the blueprint

for later non-teen scream prog and alt rock music. He also began Reprise record to have control of his music.

Did Frankie like poetry? Well, he did call an instrumental record he conducted "Tone Poems in Color". I think crude, late-life caricatures of him (I.e. Saturday Night Live) glosses over the life of a person who took his art and life seriously. In his youth, he was politically on the left & took public stances against anti-Semitism and racism before it was fashionable (the Rat Pack silliness w/ Sammy Davis, Jr. may seem trite now, but it was a serious statement at the time ). As a singer, he was a consummate craftsman, doing take after take. He loved a great lyric and went out of his way to support Alec Wilder, the songwriter's songwriter.

I'll recommend Bill Zehme's "The way you wear your hat" as a wonderful intro into Sinatra. Zehme conducted a fax interview with Sinatra during his last world tour ('95), asking Sinatra about his advice to the young, especially young men. Also, John Lahr's homage to Sinatra is also very insightful.

Although he publicly only visited town twice after a debacle at City Hall in 1951, where he was pelted with garbage (many in town say it had to do with Sinatra being considered a bit too "pink" for the taste of the locals), Sinatra secretly visited old haunts like the wonderful Leo's Grandevous (still in business and a great Sinatra shrine) after appearances at NY venues up until his last NYC appearance. It is also said that he paid the hospital bills of old neighbors and helped the widows of old friends. You can still walk this city's back streets and get a sense of the drive of a young man who would spend nights sitting on the piers of the Hoboken waterfront at the Manhattan skyline and dreaming of being on the Hudson's opposite shore

Joel Lewis.

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### 381. **Taylor Brady** **Publication Announcement**

*Sat 16 May 1998*

---

New at Cartograffiti:

error studies and portraits by Alaric Sumner

-- Taylor Brady

editor, Cartograffiti

<http://writing.upenn.edu/AandL/english/pubs/spc/cartograffiti>

(a publication of the Small Press Collective)

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<P><I>error studies and portraits</I> by Alaric Sumner

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382. **Stephen Cope**  
**Re: Lyn Hejinian/Gertrude stein**  
Sat 16 May 1998

*A comparison of Hejinian and Stein might be aided by Bernadette Mayer's work. Certainly if one's looking for "non-linear" material, PROPER NAME should be available (MEMORY, especially, if it's in the U of M library).*

*Historiography?*

*Stephen*

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383. **izak**  
**izak**  
Sat 16 May 1998

Earlier tonight I slid down the tangled sleeves of her hair and fell to the pillow without making a sound. I am photographed in black and white this evening, shadows and light. skin that only hints at the definition of features once on the floor I roll in the warmth of dust and wood I can travel with the comfort of

someone's voice yelling fuck off in the alleyway and the cat that skitters and pretends to fly outside of the door, even JOANNA'S occasional movement, the small scratch of her hand against her cheek, the subtle pop of a sticky nighttime mouth opening and closing again, this is safety to me I want to be without this net, this cushion of down to land in with all of the grace of a spider, graceless is what I want, a spitting version of me, without soft vision and the stream of carlights blushing against the wall, this would be my life inside the engine, JOANNA silenced for once, no sound, lack of enunciation mistaking words for sex I breath against the slat covered glass of the window, make imprints in the breath with my fingers, proof I exist, she will never see JOANNA twists her body against the glare of her lamp left on in a moment of late night paranoia, sometimes she curls like the leaves of a plant and I yearn to pat dark soil around her edges, but tonight she is curled like twine, coarse and thick, her thumbs squeezed tightly inside her fingers, one foot arched, the other flexed, a confusion of intent I leave the window and crawl to her ankle avoiding the direction of the toes that seem to be aiming at something on the opposite wall, pull softly on the little hairs and begin to hoist myself up to the calf my legs attach themselves to skin like branches, I pause and let small fingers glide over my thigh, smooth as soap, muscles that exhibit a momentary glance of underskin and I believe in cells, something multiplies, I pull harder and reach the knee. JOANNA'S leg moves, knee up, and I slide to the belly, a wave of air pushes into her mouth and lungs, circles the organs and exits, I rise at the exit and slide to enter the smooth warmth of the bellybutton, curl up and remain, trapped, hands push at warm skin... futile

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384. **R.Gancie/C.Parcelli**

***bytes & rights***

*Sat 16 May 1998*

---

"The rise of human civilization has been marked by a decline in racism, and an extension of human rights-which include freedom-to a wider and wider class of people; in fact, the arguments on hears today against considering intelligent computers to be persons and against giving them human rights have precise parallels in the nineteenth-century arguments against giving blacks and women full human rights."---John D. Barrow & Frank J. Tipler, *The Anthropic Cosmological Principle*, Oxford University Press

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385. **morpheal**

**Re: bytes & rights**

Sat 16 May 1998

---

*"The rise of human civilization has been marked by a decline in racism, and an extension of human rights-which include freedom-to a wider and wider class of people; in fact, the arguments on hears today against considering intelligent computers to be persons and against giving them human rights have precise parallels in the nineteenth-century arguments against giving blacks and women full human rights."---John D. Barrow & Frank J. Tipler, The Anthropic Cosmological Principle, Oxford University Press*

I must most strongly disagree with Barrow and Tipler.

I know of absolutely no instances proving that machines are capable of empathy (reason plus emotion), or of genuine human emotions. They are not capable of love, compassion, altruism, etc., though they certainly know how to linguistically use words such as "love". They can imitate laughter, but they have no real sense of humour either. The imitations and mouthings of words do not give them human qualities that they skillfully strive to pretend to have.

They have been given the intentionality of that pretense. That is what has fooled some very expert observers of machine behaviour and effect.

I realize that machines can be created that appear to emulate human qualities, but that does not say that they actually have the qualities that they emulate.

As far as I have been able to discern, from all available resources, all machines are essentially, psychopathic, within the most rigorous scientific definition of psychopathy.

If anyone believes they have an artificial intelligence machine that exceeds that, and actually has the human qualities that would differentiate it from a purely psychopathic mechanism....I challenge them to reveal it to me. I would be interested in examining it. Keeping in mind that many claimed to be A.I. machines are nothing more than expert systems, and not true A.I. Others are purely schizoid gibberish and cannot be considered "intelligent" in any true sense of it, though apparently they appear to "learn" from the sampling of human conversations. They, in the same manner as schizophrenics, tend to lose sight of the contextual situatedness that makes linguistic information truly meaningful within a communicatively interactive human context. They create their own private language the way schizophrenics do.

Despite all the magick that artificial intelligence machines can be made to do, in terms of their anomalous qualities, the machines lack certain human qualities. Until I am convinced otherwise I would have to fiercely contend that

they remain purely, wholly, absolutely, psychopathic. Keeping in mind that psychopathy, by definition, does not preclude prodigious intelligence in terms of acquisition of data, storage of data, and the manipulation of data.

Whether this has come about due to the fact that they were initially and primarily developed for use in matters concerning war, or whether it is the nature of the machine per se to being that way, is an interesting question.

Another question, more complicated and well beyond the scope of this forum, is what I would refer to as "ideological tainting" of A.I. systems. That and the fact that within the modern technological world that we live in, once data is exposed outside of secure electromagnetic shielding it is to be considered as already corrupted. That is a purely technical point. There is no security of data, including A.I. programs once a use of the program and any input and output of data, occurs from any point extraneous to very specialized EMR shielding.... So there are other very intriguing problems as to the evolution of even the most sophisticated military A.I. applications. They are always to be considered compromised once in use. The human element therefore remains imperative even in that sophisticated an instance. Similarly the sealed, hand written, dispatch, or the sublimated command in the locked mind of an operative, transmitting secret high level commands to troops in the field, remains a reality because A.I. cannot be trusted in an EMR violent world.

regards,  
from Bob Ezergailis  
aka Morpheal

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386. **dbkk**  
***ca state funding for the arts***  
*Sat 16 May 1998*

---

#### URGENT REQUEST

Please add your name to this petition, and forward it to as many arts groups, supporters etc. as you can TODAY. To add your name, copy this email into a new email. Add you name and forward it.

If your are the 100th signature, please forward the petition to Senator Adam Schiff - his email address is: [REDACTED]

Then begin a new petition, adding your name AGAIN as #1, and forward it.

Thank you.

WE THE UNDERSIGNED CITIZENS OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA HEREBY  
URGE THE CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE TO PASS, AND GOVERNOR WILSON  
TO SIGN INTO LAW, SB

1373,

AND TO APPROVE THE FULL \$20 MILLION AUGMENTATION TO THE  
CALIFORNIA ARTS  
COUNCIL BUDGET REQUEST FOR FY 98/99:

1. Barry Hessenius - California Assembly of Local Arts Agencies - San Francisco
2. Howard Spector- City of Manhattan Beach Cultural Arts Division
3. Hillary Mushkin, Los Angeles, CA
4. Erika Suderburg, Los Angeles, CA
5. Annetta Kapon, Los Angeles, CA
6. Margaret Morgan, Los Angeles CA
7. Dodie Bellamy, San Francisco, CA
8. Kevin Killian, San Francisco, CA

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387. **Tim Wood**

***Re: bytes & rights***

*Sat 16 May 1998*

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I'd like to make an implicit point in Morpheal's argument explicit. Computer systems have yet to be developed that are conscious or self-aware. A number of 'experts' have argued that consciousness and self-awareness are illusions, but I think their statements are driven not by evidence but by agenda.

Until that level of awareness is achieved in computer systems, the emotions that Morpheal discusses are not possible. Beyond that, until machines are aware, it's questionable how much true intelligence that can exhibit. None of us hold a candle to a computer when it comes to punching numbers. But, somebody has to decide what numbers need to be punched. Someone needs to figure out where good numbers are. Somebody has to decide what the numbers mean. Other people have to decide what to do about that analysis. And somebody had to realize that the whole process needed to be started in the first place.

Now one decision has been made. Take that out another level: that decision has to fit within your agenda/purpose/mission statement/calling/mission from some higher power, the department's agenda, the university/company/government's agenda. Now, what about morality, future implications and so on. Till the computer has the ability to do more than go when someone says go (no matter how subtle and sophisticated that line of cause and effect) there is no true AI. In simpler terms, why is Tipler discussing



giving rights --agency-- to something that is not capable of responsibility in the narrow sense or agency in the broad sense.

This is not to say that aware computers are impossible. But not our present systems. I'm sure someone else could babble more on how massively parallel the brain is compared to our most sophisticated systems and so on and so forth, but I think I've already gone waaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaay off the focus of the group...

As one last aside, Tipler's statement is almost teleological in the way it argues a straight line of improvement past to future. It ignores the increasing viciousness and scale of racism when it does arise (The Holocaust, E. Timor, the former Yugoslavia) and the new forms of abuse we see arising (Genetic discrimination, the destruction of personal privacy vis-a-vis selling personal information by companies).

Tim Wood

Someone is reputed to have said

*"The rise of human civilization has been marked by a decline in racism, and an extension of human rights-which include freedom-to a wider and wider class of people; in fact, the arguments on hears today against considering intelligent computers to be persons and against giving them human rights have precise parallels in the nineteenth-century arguments against giving blacks and women full human rights."---John D. Barrow & Frank J. Tipler, The Anthropic Cosmological Principle, Oxford University Press*

*I must most strongly disagree with Barrow and Tipler.*

*I know of absolutely no instances proving that machines are capable of empathy (reason plus emotion), or of genuine human emotions. They are not capable of love, compassion, altruism, etc., though they certainly know how to linguistically use words such as "love". They can imitate laughter, but they have no real sense of humour either. The imitations and mouthings of words do not give them human qualities that they skillfully strive to pretend to have.*

---

poetry is an hour  
a flash  
of sound  
bytes  
found  
rescued  
boiled

freed  
to rage again

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388. **morpheal**

**Re: bytes & rights**

Sat 16 May 1998

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*I'd like to make an implicit point in Morpheal's argument explicit.  
Computer systems have yet to be developed that are conscious or  
self-aware.*

I have no doubt that self aware machines have been built, and likely already quite some time ago. Perhaps more than 25 years ago. There are intimations in some literature from that long ago as to machines that know that they themselves exist and are 'aware' of their environment in at least a quasi-human manner. I think we have to call that a kind of "consciousness" even if they cannot "see" the world in the same way that humans "see" it.

*Till the computer has the  
ability to do more than go when someone says go (no matter how subtle and  
sophisticated that line of cause and effect) there is no true AI.*

There definitely is true A.I. Beyond any shadow of a doubt.

I did not claim that there is no A.I. I claimed that the machines that have A.I. abilities are by their nature psychopathic. Nevertheless they are very powerful, very formidable, A.I. systems.

*This is not to say that aware computers are impossible. But not our  
present systems. I'm sure someone else could babble more on how  
massively parallel the brain is compared to our most sophisticated  
systems and so on and so forth....*

No. I disagree again. Computers with more parallel processing than the human brain is capable of are, I am quite sure, a definite yes. That does not imply that they think, function, behave, like human beings. (That is both good and bad.)

*As one last aside, Tipler's statement is almost teleological in the way  
it argues a straight line of improvement past to future.*

Jack Sarfatti (PhD Physics), who has (on the web) referred to personal communications and shared interests as to Tipler's work, implies that the A.I. computer ultimately becomes omniscient. Or perhaps we might choose to say the quantum computer becomes the Orwellian "Big Brother". How about "Q" in Star Trek the Next Generation ? Similar idea. Sarfatti has also given the Q to computer analogy.

As to any of that a relevant poem is Gregory Corso's "Mind Field", which Sarfatti makes repeated reference to as being of some importance. I believe it remains in print as a monograph.

*increasing viciousness and scale of racism when it does arise (The Holocaust, E. Timor, the former Yugoslavia) and the new forms of abuse we see arising (Genetic discrimination, the destruction of personal privacy vis-a-vis selling personal information by companies).*

The selling of information is a much lesser question.

The fact is that in the purest sense of it there is no privacy. Privacy of the kind that you are speaking for, does not in fact exist. In many regards, experiments prove that personal privacy is largely a cherished illusion that individuals tend to irrationally cling to.

As for genetic discrimination, the quantum computer is essential for storing the genetic blueprints of all species into a complete reference data bank. We might very soon be able to learn to synthesize creative, ingenious, new sequences of blueprint, and even imbue it with adequate software to hardware (perceptual, cognitive, and organismic regulatory programs for instance), to build whole new species of life for survival in nearly any environment, but that kind of radical sequencing of blueprint information is greatly assisted by having the greatest possible number of examples of successful blueprints already on hand.

I do not mean simply DNA sequences, but in fact the inherent data bases that go along with those sequences. For instance attempt to write a software program to handle human video. It would be very massive. Even that for a simple insect, the butterfly for instance, would be massive. You soon run out of neurons and have to resort to the molecular, even the quantum level, to store the information.

I believe that we essentially want to acquire all of that information, from every species. That is one massive scanning, storage, interpretation and retrieval project. It is a very urgent project. A highest priority project, and I have said exactly that more than five years ago.

One of the arguments for uncontrolled too rapid growth of world population has been genetic diversity. Scanning and storage preserve diversity despite a necessary halt in population growth, and in fact a gradual reduction. There are no real alternatives to that scenario. With technological advances, genetic data can assure maximum diversity while the population burden is brought within an ecologically viable level maintaining quality of life.

So we end up in a race for better computational devices. Ultimately better means of scanning, storing, safe-guarding and retrieving quantum level data.

Also, have no doubt that it is going to happen. Sooner than you think. In some ways it is already happening.

That is one of the essential points of Morphealism. We, humans, will be able to build and program anything. It will be possible to design, build and program any possible life form, using any valid DNA blueprint and any downloadable software input into the quantum mind of that creation. That does not necessarily eliminate "free will" but certainly provides the tools for actualization.

Morphealism claims that there shall be no limits to human creativity. Anything that was, would be, or is possible will eventually be possible.....

Bob Ezergailis  
aka Morpheal

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389. **MAYHEW**  
***A couple of queries***

*Sat 16 May 1998*

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Any thoughts about 1st book competitions? I noticed the Yale prize went vacant this year.

Anyone live in St. Louis? I am here for the summer (St. Louis).

Jonathan Mayhew

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390. **Tom Orange**  
***speaking sonically***

*Sat 16 May 1998*

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Matt Kirschenbaum asked: <<Speaking of rock and roll, has anyone else been listening to the new Sonic Youth, A Thousand Leaves (out on Geffen)? Or their SYR EP releases from the past year? Some of it's boring, but a lot of it's really pretty.>>

haven't picked up the new one yet, tho hoping to do so soon. but i did pick up the sonic youth/jim o'rourke cd on syr -- quite amazing. haunting, scary, lovely.

sonic youth played in toronto just a week or so ago, with a group opening for them (name escapes me; three or four letters) featuring paul dutton of four horsemen fame. thurston moore also paid tribute to greg curnoe and spoke highly of the no music festival here in london last month, which featured thurston, alan licht, jojo hiroshige and his partner junko, london's nihilist spasm

band, the ramel/corbett/kapsalis trio from chicago among others. my auditory processing hardware is still trying unscramble itself after that one...

cheers,  
t.

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391. **Don Wellman**

***Re: subsistence what matter poetry***

*Sat 16 May 1998*

---

Wendy Kramer's post and the materials she cites, made me think of Bern Porter's "I've Left" --surely the classic of subsistence poetics.

Don Wellman

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392. **F. W. Perrella**

***Web Del Sol - AGNI Spring issue #47***

*Sun 17 May 1998*

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Samples from the current issue of AGNI are available for viewing at <http://webdelsol.com/solhome.htm>. The Soul Has Many Brides, by Charles Simic, is highlighted, as is an essay by Chris Walsh called "Building the House of Dying": Donald Hall's Claim for Poetry. The hardcopy version of AGNI also features an essay by Annie Callan called Catherine in Glass from *\_Swimming at the Joyce Museum\_*. You are welcome to email either AGNI or Web Del Sol with your comments. Thank you.

Anne Perrella

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393. **R. Gancie**

***bytes & women's rights***

*Sun 17 May 1998*

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"In 1951 Merrill Flood of the RAND Corporation introduced one of the most thought-provoking concepts in the history of strategic thinking. His idea, later termed the Prisoner's Dilemma game by Albert Tucker, cuts to the heart of an age-old question: How do we balance individually selfish acts against the collective rationality of individual sacrifice for the sake of the common good? A familiar example will illustrate the point.

In Puccini's opera Tosca, Tosca's lover has been condemned to death, and the police chief Scarpia offers Tosca a deal. If Tosca will bestow her sexual favors

on him, Scarpia will spare her lover's life by instructing the firing squad to load their rifles with blanks. Here both Scarpia and Tosca face the choice of either keeping their part of the bargain or double-crossing the other. Acting on the basis of what's best for them as individuals, both Tosca and Scarpia try a double cross. Tosca stabs Scarpia as he is about to embrace her, while it turns out that Scarpia has not given the order to the firing squad to use blanks. The dilemma is that this outcome, undesirable for both parties, could have been avoided if they trusted each other and acted not as selfish individuals, but rather in their mutual interest.

The tragic fates of Tosca and Scarpia serve to characterize the essential ingredients of a classical Prisoner's Dilemma situation: There are two parties, each of whom has the choice of either cooperating (C) or defecting (D), i.e. acting either to sacrifice their individual interests for the sake of the common good, or to further their selfish individual interests at the expense of the other. In addition, there must be a payoff structure involving a temptation (T), the payoff received by defecting when the other party cooperates; a reward (R), the payoff each party receives if they both cooperate; a punishment (P), the payoff they each get if they both defect; a sucker's payoff (S), which is the amount received by the cooperating party when the other defects. For the Prisoner's Dilemma to arise, these payoffs must be ordered largest to smallest in the following way:  $T > R > P > S$ . To avoid getting locked into an out-of-phase cycle of mutual defections and cooperations, there is the technical condition  $(T + S)/2 < R$ . Under these conditions, let's quickly analyze the source of the dilemma faced by Tosca and Scarpia when considering their respective courses of action.

To make things concrete, let's put in numerical values for the payoffs in Tosca. Suppose they are  $T = 4$ ,  $R = 3$ ,  $P = 2$ ,  $S = 1$ . Tosca can then argue: If I defect and Scarpia cooperates, my lover's life will be saved and I won't have to see Scarpia, yielding a payoff to me of 4 units. But if I defect and Scarpia also defects, then even if I do lose my lover, at least I won't have to give myself to that pig Scarpia and I'll end up with 2 units. On the other hand, if I trust Scarpia and he trusts me so that we both cooperate, I'll get 3 units, while if I trust him by cooperating and he double-crosses me and defects, then I'll get only the sucker's payoff of 1 unit. So, all in all, by defecting I'm assured of getting 2 units, whereas if I cooperate I can't get anymore than 3 units and could end up with much less. Therefore, rationally it's in my best interest to defect. Of course, the situation is perfectly symmetrical and Scarpia, being equally rational and logical, comes to the same conclusion and also opts to defect. Result: Both Scarpia and Tosca end up with much less than they could have had by showing a little mutual trust. In other words, by employing individual rationality they sacrifice their collective joint interests."---from

Paradigms Lost: Images of man in the Mirror of Science by John Casti, William  
morrow & Co.---cp

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394. **Miekal And**

***Re: subsistence what matter poetry***

*Sun 17 May 1998*

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Don Wellman wrote:

>

> Wendy Kramer's post and the materials she cites, made me think of Bern

> Porter's "I've Left" --surely the classic of subsistence poetics.

>

> Don Wellman

amen

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395. **J. Kuszai**

***scene reports, please***

*Sun 17 May 1998*

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On Sat, 16 May 1998, Tom Orange wrote:

*sonic youth played in toronto just a week or so ago, with a group opening  
for them (name escapes me; three or four letters) featuring paul dutton of  
four horsemen fame.*

the group is CCMC (anyone know what that stands for?) and features Michael  
Snow on keyboards (synth?), John Oswald on Sax, Dutton and someone else I'm  
forgetting sadly. Oswald I know mostly for his digital-sample work and the  
"Mystery Tape Laboratory." Until recently, I didn't know the artist Snow was a  
musician too or that he played in this group. Dutton I believe, as Oswald, is an  
editor of sorts for MUSICWORKS. They play at the Music Gallery every tuesday.  
I think there were a couple of folks on this list who were at that Sonic Youth  
show, which I sadly missed. Any reviews out there?

Also, on another music related note:

I was saddened to learn, on a recent visit to NYC, that Tom Cora had passed  
away recently due to brain cancer. This shocked me! He was one of my favorite  
musicians. I love everything the guy touched. How he saved the Ex from total  
obscurity with their late collaborations with him. If you don't know "The Ex"  
they are as big as the big as the clash, for me, in that punk history. They also  
have connections to Thurston and Lee Renaldo, and if you can find that double-  
cd that they play on, get it. Check out even Tom Cora's "Imperial Buzzard" on

the "Polka Dots and Laser Beams" collection of "post-modern" polkas commissioned by accordionist Guy Klucsevsek. Or his work with the vocalist Catherine Jauniaux and others in the group The Hat Shoes.

Anyhow--if anyone knows anything about the Tom Cora situation, I'd like more information. This was totally devastating news coming out of nowhere, as I didn't know he was sick.

By the way, is Lee Renaldo still doing his poetry magazine?

And by way of a random poll: what music do people currently have in rotation? I've got the Klucsevcek anthology, DJ Vadim, Beck's "One Foot in the Grave" and a Tortoise CD I borrowed from a friend. Also something Bob Xark sent to me, which claims to be influenced by Greg Sage. Xark sings about injustices such as "managed care" and more! a very interesting CD I did not think I would like... Billie Holliday on the turntable. I tried to listen to Frank. But everytime I listen to Frank, I just think to myself, naww.

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396. **morpheal**

**Re: bytes & women's rights**

Sun 17 May 1998

---

*"In 1951 Merrill Flood of the RAND Corporation introduced one of the most thought-provoking concepts in the history of strategic thinking. His idea, later termed the Prisoner's Dilemma game by Albert Tucker, cuts to the heart of an age-old question: How do we balance individually selfish acts against the collective rationality of individual sacrifice for the sake of the common good? A familiar example will illustrate the point.*

I had occasion to study the Prisoner's Dilemma and in fact act as tutor for a political philosophy course that incorporated it as curriculum. There is one heck of a lot wrong with it.

Essentially the real world does not function that way. The real world is more multi-variable than the dilemma ever allows for.

The classic dilemma involves two people, who must trust each other, for the best outcome, but in fact, in the real world, there is inevitably a group of others, all with their own selfish motives and varying agendas, complicating any possible real world scenario. Best outcome, even for the pair, is not assured by their mutual arrival at their apparently, logically arrived at, best course of action.

More likely both dilemma participants get "shot down" by other conspirators.



They both end up dead, either to each other, metaphorically, or literally dead no matter how good intentioned the conspiratorial actions in fact were in meant to be. Why ? Not the same as your unusual literary example, but instead because of the conflicting desires, motives, purposes, beliefs, and values, of other people. The jealousies of others can be a powerful part of that. Particularly, but not exclusively, the others who covet what the pair would gain, whether it is love or something more material than that.

That the prisoners must conspire is inevitable, because at the very least they are the prisoners of the reality we have described in the previous paragraph. They have no choice but to conspire, even knowing that chances of failure greatly outweigh any chances of a truly positive outcome.

By becoming conspirators with each other, or for each other, they set themselves apart and jealousies might include those who see that as the mass of the senate looked upon caesar in Bill's play concerning archetypal dilemmas.

"Et tu Brute", and Brute is inevitably both of their "best friends" who have chosen to deceive them for those "friends" own selfish purposes, simply because those "friends" were not chosen to be part of the same conspiracy instead of whomever was chosen as pair in the dilemma. Or, alternatively, because a group of "friends" wanted to favour a different conspirator, perhaps purely because that group, large or small, is more well acquainted with another, or has some identifying interest in common with that individual. It can be simple minded or very complicated. Or, more often, because the group \_fears\_ within their pecking orders, the individual they ultimately choose to favour. Usually it is very misguided, but extremely powerful in terms of influence on the human lives victimized by such machinations. It is not always a matter of conscious decision on the part of the larger conspiracies. Such things become more alike to a wave effect in a football stadium - a mass chain reaction.

Add the complexity of people who favour one outcome being influenced by people who favour another outcome. If the KGB and the CIA were working on influencing the same scenario which way would the protagonist and antagonist relation tend to shift ? Similarly any two opposing factions (political, religious, social strata, occupational affiliation - eg. musicians or businessmen). There you have ultimate and often uncontrollable spin. Simply an example, from the real world, albeit archetypal and ahmmm... "fictive".

How about those situations where inadequate communication between the primary pair in a dilemma results in misguided actions by one or the other that ends up as betrayal, brought about by no fault of their own other than what neither knew about the situation ? Knowledge is never perfect and someone else in the crowd always has another viewpoint that might gain precedence as

to misguiding well intentioned acts. To isolate prisoners and hold them incommunicado gives a third party the power. The prisoners inevitably lose, and lose completely, in that more common scenario. Social stigmatization is not unusual in dilemmas. Actions made without sufficient facts being available tend to intensify the subsequent stigmatization and further thwart positive outcome. Doing nothing has the same effect. Another dilemma.

Consistency as to information is no guarantee as to that information being accurate. That is another commonly false basis for actions. Another false belief that is commonly held and one that plays into the reality of human dilemmas. Also one that is used quite frequently by third party interests.

Then there are the conspiracies to make non prisoner's dilemma situations appear to be such dilemmas, and that would inevitably result in a wrong action that would serve neither primary participant but only someone else's selfish motives as to someone else's influencing the outcome. Sometimes the most horrible scenario of all.

How do they know what to do is a very interesting question. Even if they have direct communication, which is denied to most such prisoners by those who are attempting to sway the outcome in some other direction, they might easily end up arriving at a purely well meant decision as to actions that does not in fact serve their mutual good intentioned interests, but ends up serving someone else's purely selfish interests, perhaps even cruel and unusual effects on the prisoners. They both unwittingly end up being victims of a third party, and perhaps held incommunicado from each other so nothing is ever positively resolvable. That is even more likely to happen in the real world and is essentially ignored in the classic idealist discussions of the Prisoner's Dilemma.

M.

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397. **R. Gancie**  
***byte Mary Shelley***

*Sun 17 May 1998*

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"In June of 1948 [John] von Neumann gave three lectures on automata at the Institute for Advanced Study to a small group of friends. He probably did this in preparation for the Hixon symposium which took place in September of that year. These lectures contained the most detailed description of the parts of his self-reproducing automata that I know of. For this reason, I have attempted to reconstruct, from notes and memories of the audience, what he said about these parts and how they would function.

Von Neumann described eight kind of parts. All seem to have been symbolized with straight lines; inputs and outputs were indicated at the ends and/or the middle. The temporal reference frame was discrete, each element taking a unit to respond....

Four of the parts perform logical and information processing operations. A stimulus organ receives and transmits stimuli; it receives them disjunctively, that is, it realizes the truth-function "p or q." A coincidence organ realizes the truth-function "p and q." An inhibitory organ realizes the truth-function "p and not-q." A stimuli producer serves as a source of stimuli.

The fifth part is a RIGID MEMBER, from which a rigid frame for an automaton can be constructed. A RIGID MEMBER DOES NOT CARRY ANY STIMULI; that is, it is an insulated girder. A RIGID MEMBER may be connected to other RIGID MEMBERS as well as to parts which are not rigid members. These connections are made by a fusing organ which, when stimulated, welds or solders two parts together. Presumably the fusing organ is used in the following way. Suppose point 'a' of one girder is to be joined to point 'b' of another girder. The active or output end of the fusing organ is placed in contact with points 'a' and 'b'. A stimulus into the input end of the fusing organ at time 't' causes points 'a' and 'b' to be welded together at time 't' + 1. The fusing organ can be withdrawn later. Connections may be broken by a cutting organ which, when stimulated, unsolders a connection.

The eighth part is a muscle, used to produce motion. A muscle is normally rigid. It may be connected to other parts. If stimulated at 't' it will contract to length zero by time 't' + 1, keeping all its connections. It will remain contracted as long as it is stimulated. Presumably muscles can be used to move parts and make connections in the following way. Suppose that muscle 1 lies between point 'a' of one girder and point 'b' of another girder, and muscle two lies between point 'a' and the active end 'c' of a fusing organ. When both muscles are stimulated, they will contract, thereby bringing points 'a', 'b' and 'c' together. When the fusing organ is stimulated, it will weld points 'a' and 'b' together. Finally, when the stimuli to the muscles are stopped, the muscles will return to their original length, at least one end of the muscle 1 separating from the point 'ab'. Von Neumann does not seem to have discussed the question of how connections between muscles and other parts are made and broken."---from Theory of Self-Reproducing Automata by John von Neumann, edited and completed by Arthur W. Burks, University of Illinois Press---cp

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398. **charles alexander**

***Re: scene reports, please***

*Sun 17 May 1998*

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*And by way of a random poll: what music do people currently have in rotation?*

currently in rotation:

Rainer: Nocturnes -- Rainer a great blues guitarist/songwriter from Czechoslovakia, longtime in Tucson, died a few months ago after a couple of years of struggle with brain tumors. I strongly recommend checking this out or his Worried Spirits -- both may be hard to find, may require stores that handle imports or have very good blues sections

Choying Drolma & Steve Tibbets: Cho -- Cho is a yogic practice in which the yogi or yogini mentally offers his or her own body as a means of severing attachment. Based on the Mahayana tradition of Prajnaparamita, transcendent knowledge. Partially recorded at Nagi Gompa, a buddhist nunnery in the foothills of the Himalayas, overlooking the Kathmandu Valley in Nepal. Currently over 100 nuns live and practice there.

Low: Long Division -- Low is an alt rock band out of Duluth (if they are still around). This CD a few years old now, but I still come back to it. Almost unnervingly slow rock music.

Marilyn Crispell Trio, from live concert at Walker Art Center -- currently one of my favorite jazz CD's. Reggie Workman on bass and, oh no, I can't remember the third of the trio right now.

Had the new Loreena McKennit CD on, and I like The Mummer's Dance, which gets a lot of radio play these days, particularly for Canadian Celtic music, but I don't think there's anything else quite that good on the CD. A little disappointing.

I just got off Mount Lemmon, climbed Lizard Rock, and the Matterhorn (names of rock outcroppings in the Catalina Mountains), and went up much higher where there's still lots of snow, even here in southern Arizona. Got me wondering about who people on this list read for work one might consider "nature" poetry -- Niedecker, obviously, and some others I can name. But I know a lot of this list is concerned with a poetry which I mostly think of as having to do with the human condition, the nature of the individual subject, the nature of the social subject, etc. -- and not so much directly with the 'natural' world. So who do you read in that regard?

charles

charles alexander :: poet and book artist :: 

chax press :: alexander writing/design/publishing

NOTE NEW URL FOR CHAX PRESS <http://alexwritdespub.com/chax>

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399. **Tom Orange**  
*scene reports, please*  
Mon 18 May 1998

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On Sun, 17 May 1998, Joel Kuszai wrote:

| *the group is CCMC (anyone know what that stands for?)*

thanks, i knew it was something like that but figgered i'd leave it to someone else rather than blunder into it myself (acronym looks like AACM +/- C&C music factory, shudder to think...)

| *By the way, is Lee Renaldo still doing his poetry magazine?*

dunno, know what it was called?

| *And by way of a random poll: what music do people currently have in rotation?*

the lovely day today spent inside working, hence recourse to big symphonies: toscanini beethoven 4 & 7, karajan mahler 5, on old vinyl that peter left behind. chemical brothers dig yr own hole friday at sneaky dee's in toronto with scott, big star on the drive over thursday, and wednesday night was old branca (statics, theoretical girls), blonde redhead, and jim o'rourke remove the need (how the hell is that stuff live no effects no processing?)

knuckle down,  
t.

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400. **Stephen Cope**  
*Re: scene reports, please*  
Mon 18 May 1998

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Hi Joel, others:

In rotation:

Nice new disc from Joe Maneri came in the mail a month ago. I was not familiar with his work, but he's apparently developed a 72-note-to-the-octave theory which has isolated him from his colleagues at the Boston Conservatory. The disc is "Coming Down the Mountain," on Hat Art. A nice quartet date. (My review of this is due out in the next OPTION).

Also listening to a Gregg Bendian disc ("Counterparts") on CIMP. Vinny Golia on reeds is awesome. Paul Smoker and Mark Dresser also in the group.

And: Nice date from a large group assembled by Yusef Lateef and Adam Rudolph, recorded live at the Jazz Bakery in LA (2 discs). Called "The World at Peace," with a beautiful dedication to Coltrane.

Also: Getting into Son 14 (from Cuba), some recently re-released recordings of theirs. Adalberto Alvarez is the leader on the earlier dates, and the vocalist, who goes by the name of Tiburon, is one-of-a-kind.

I could go on...

Stephen

ps - Sad and shocking news about Cora. I'd seen him solo in Santa Cruz some years back, ripping up a cello...

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#### 401. **Miekal And** ***Re: scene reports, please***

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

one of my favorite all time concerts was roscoe with ed wilkerson's big bag playing in the UW-Madison student union to a room full of drunken jocks & sorority girls...he played his famous soprano solo (called "streams" ??) which is powered by circular breathing & layers of multiphonics. he had a room full of maybe 750 of uw's finest on their feet yelling & cheering for the last ten minutes, like the hometeam had just won the rose bowl & I doubt many ever listened to the free jazz ear space again...

robert wyatt's shleep gets played a lot around, the tortoise recordings tho I liked old tar babies better & zon likes to listen to the worst 60s radio ....

also for anyone in chicago area, check out the music of russell thorne an incredible composer, keyboardist & cellist....his tape music is an austere mix of scriabin & cage rozart mix era works for tape.

miekal

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#### 402. **Douglas** ***Re: yet another query***

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

Temblor stopped publishing years ago.  
My only guess of where there still be copies

is at Gotham Book Mart. But most libraries  
do have copies and can loan on interlibrary.

Douglas Messerli

charles alexander wrote:

>  
> mz--  
>  
> I would imagine several libraries: New York Public, Columbia, NYU, etc. --  
> I don't know if any place would have one for sale.  
>  
> At 03:15 PM 5/15/98 -0400, you wrote:  
> >where can one find a copy of TEMBLOR in NYC? St. Mark's?  
> >  
> >mz  
>  
> charles alexander :: poet and book artist :: [REDACTED]  
> chax press :: alexander writing/design/publishing  
> NOTE NEW URL FOR CHAX PRESS <http://alexwritdespub.com/chax>

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403. **daniel bouchard**

**(no subject)**

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

A Nuclear Bomb is the Viagra of Nation-States

A nice black ant  
walked about my kitchen sink  
long after I finished breakfast.  
Feeling humane, I tried to capture it  
to release it from my domain.  
In my haste and clumsiness, I  
crippled it with my fingers. It staggered  
wildly, panicked, dragging crushed legs.  
Feeling remorse but still optimistic  
I threw it out the window,  
wishing it well while it fell  
to certain death. I read  
for most of the afternoon, tinkered  
on the piano, went for a walk, and  
then read some more.

- daniel bouchard





the declaration of interdependance  
is written on toilet paper tissu hygienique  
and smuggled from prisons  
snuck from labour camps  
one sheet at a time  
the declaration of interdependence  
is written in blood  
on toilet paper  
tissu hygienique  
communiqués d'enfer  
slipped out of hell hole torture chambers  
sheet after sheet

maybe when i'm dead i'll be reincarnated as a tree  
maybe the tree sings with as bad a voice as me:

"i'm going to be toilet paper  
toilet paper here I come  
they got some wiggly little behinds there  
and i'm gonna wipe me some

"they're shitting in Memphis  
they're shitting in Nashville  
they're looking for toilet paper  
tissu hygienique je l'approche  
toilet paper here i come

"i'm going to wipe Elvis  
i'm going to wipe Kennedy  
i'm going to wipe Marilyn  
i'm going to wipe Catherine Deneuve  
i'm going to wipe Sam Shepherd  
i'm going to wipe Jessica Lange  
i'm going to wipe the voice of Sherazade  
when i'm one thousand and one

"they're shitting in Huntsville  
they're shitting in Little Rock  
they're looking for toilet paper

getting flushed in Sarajevo  
clean assholes in Hyannisport  
catching sputum  
stanching the Queen's blood  
sopping spermatazoa  
collecting snot from your snozzola

"i'm going to be soft as gold  
as expensive as feathers  
her a clearcut la un clearcut  
everywhere a clearcut clearcut"

they're burning eagles' nests in the slash  
they're driving those chainsaws with a lash

"they're shitting in Clayoquot Sound  
ils merdes dans Tofino  
use seal skin  
the permanent toilet paper  
use mink

"north of Nanaimo  
they're calling for toilet paper  
in ditches on islands  
toilet paper there i go

je et l'arbre est un  
je chants

"i'm going to be toilet paper  
stuff the bras of Peggy Atwood's characters  
pad the pecs of Pasolini's paramours  
clean old Mastroianni's gold rimmed specks  
the diamond studded shades of Eddie Murphy  
i'm a tree with ambition  
when i'm a thousand and one  
i'll wipe nothing but the best

"they're shitting in Bosnia  
they're shittin in Somalia  
wish they had some used toilet paper to eat  
toilet paper soft as pickled pigs feet  
they call me toilet paper  
in my wildest dreams  
i'm wiping up orgies  
i'm blowing in the slipstream of success

i'm the tree  
old Merlin lives in me  
I'm going down  
TIMBER! Yippee!  
soonRu Paul and Tony Blair  
will be wiping only the best

lipstick and shoeshine on me  
the thousand year old hemlock tree  
i'll shine the silver  
of the swollen liver set

the Declaration of Independence  
was written on hemp  
the Bill of Rights  
signed and sealed by hemp growers  
they're making them toilet paper  
toilet paper here i come

l'arbre scatologiste!  
the ground giant thousand year old tree  
now toilet paper  
wipe the finest cuisine off  
the rectums of the richest gourmets  
they're calling for more and more  
donnez moi more roles of toilet paper  
they can't wait  
to get they hot little hands  
on my millennial pulp

OLD GROWTH\* , the luxury wipe  
be kind to your behind  
nobody deserves it more than you

-----  
is this nature poetry?  
or kaka poetry?  
if the poep shitz in the voods is that denture poetry?  
oh yes, that asterisk

\*my eudora doesn't seem to want to reproduce my tm(trademark symbol) which  
should replace the asterisk in your consciousness and/or your typesetting  
after

all capitalized OLD GROWTH which is a trademarked name owned and  
operated

by the Forbidden Plateau Fallen Body Dojo and any use of the term is  
verboten without

specific permission from the owners and operators represented by the Baka  
Roshi

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405. **morpheal**

**Re: byte Mary Shelley : a truer picture than Neumann**

Mon 18 May 1998

---

*"In June of 1948 [John] von Neumann gave three lectures on automata at the Institute for Advanced Study to a small group of friends. He probably did this in preparation for the Hixon symposium which took place in September of that year. These lectures contained the most detailed description of the parts of his self-reproducing automata that I know of. For this reason, I have attempted to reconstruct, from notes and memories of the audience, what he said about these parts and how they would function.*

This actually makes no real sense.

It seems to follow along ideas about automata from the previous century and earlier, with little that is new. The major problem of what substrate the automata employ as the medium within which they reproduce is unresolved. That becomes the interesting crux of the problem to which we get an insight only when the first self-replicating computer virus is written and disseminated to many computers, causing the same effects on each. Each instance of the virus within the substrate of the computer architecture is a replication and functions independently to reproduce itself by using the substrate medium where it rearranges that medium as a raw material to produce another instance, or many instances, of its own image.

Take that a little further and include artificial intelligence.

Then extrapolate that to non conventional media. It is conceivable that an artificial intelligence grafted into a suitable medium could use the quantum structure of that medium for the purposes of growth and replication. Let us remain within the current scientific metaphor of quantum structure. Since quantum structure is the very basis of all the material stuff and its interactions that comprises the universe we live within it is conceivable that any such matter might be a suitable substrate for the artificial intelligence to be grafted onto, where that substrate offers provision for re-ordering of some of its components in a meaningful manner. It might be that most, if not all, matter, is of that kind at the quantum level. That all matter is able to store meaningful information and that that quality is not limited to the conventional materials used to produce currently widely known computational technologies.

I am definitely predicting automata capable of existing, perhaps "living", outside of computer architecture as we know it. It might even possible for an automata to be transmitted into something as inorganic as a building wall or a crystal lattice structure of an steel beam. Both of those are capable in theory of harbouring meaningful information content.

Of course, it might seem more macabre, the human brain would be the best possible medium for such a "creature" to infect and reproduce within. That does not mean that the brain can serve as a powerful and coherently effective transmitter to send the replicant that might be produced to a new substrate medium. There are implications that the brains of creatures might have such electromagnetic power and in fact I believe they likely do, but I know of no published science on the subject. The brain as quantum transmitter and receiver is likely a certainty, even based upon Thomas Alva Edison's speculations in the the 1920s and based upon some other exceptional researches, including what comes to us from occult sources.

Thus the lightning bolts drawn from the heavens to give Frankenstein life, in Mary Shelley's novel are perhaps accurate, if symbolic, representations of the imbuing of artificial intelligence into the restored cadaver.

It is interesting that Cronenberg's films give intimations of this theme, but in a more subtle way. There are subtle intimations of resurrection within the film "Crash", based on Ballard's book of the same title. That is not the only place within fiction that that theme gains a resurgence, and is no longer as monstrous as in the Frankenstein epic. There among a Frankensteinian world of the mad scientist Vaughn and his special privileges of access to disasters and the creation of disasters, we find intimations of the transferring of elements of personality, via an unnamed medium of transfer. There the restoration of what constitutes living intelligence into what would have been a dead corpse, become futuristic themes of more than mythic significance, even if all we have are subtle clues, including a hint of the Frankensteinian in Gabriella's unusual scar. Gabriella, in the story "Crash", is an accident victim who suffered very severe injuries and has significantly "recovered". The external hint of symbiosis of organic and inorganic, of her braced body and legs, becomes more symbolic than is usual, and the scar on her thigh has not healed in any manner that we would normatively expect. We are never quite sure whether Gabriella is the Gabriella who was an automotive crash victim, or whether Gabriella is a symbiosis of restored remains combined with new elements. We are never sure whether the other main characters play with possible death in car crashes so as to gamble on their own resurrections, in a similar manner to Gabriella's resurrection in the flesh, or perhaps to personality transfer to new flesh. Of course that takes the element of various kinds of fetish, in their sexual and reproductive context, further than most fictive themes, and we also see the interplay of classic Thanatos and Eros within the newer Frankensteinian theme of some never explicitly discussed form of resurrection.

There is a poetry to it all that fascinates, and in some senses the new potentialities of Frankensteinian mastery over nature, offer some incredible instances of beauty, as well as power. We must learn to see that as well as to

fear our own ideological narrowness tainting the Morphealist project that gives birth to the unfettering of future creativity from its traditional constraints. We must fear that narrowness defining what is positive and what is to be considered harmful. We must therefore fear some strains of conservatism standing against creative progress. We must also fear misuse, and particularly totalitarian and totalistic use, where creativity is fettered again by the very means that would have freed it. We must not bind Prometheus to the rock and call on carrion eaters to gnaw at him, as if in fear that we might be surpassed as creators and our creative power might pass on to another, greater, species than ourselves. The Greek gods gained nothing by their action of causing Prometheus to suffer as they chose to make him suffer. They gained nothing from the punishment of Sisyphus either, though we still make many a scientist overtly, expensively and labouriously repeat the processes of covert invention. There are real lessons to be learned in that rather than taking such metaphors as archetypal templates applied to the future. Similarly with the lesson supposedly taught against Frankenstein and his creative project, as defined by Mary Shelley. We ought not to allow that to become the template that we would attempt to make the human future conform to either. There is a sense of that in "Crash" where the chance element, rather than the archetypal template of a traditional mythology is what is predominant in the hints of possible death and resurrection themes.

Ultimately the human mind is the womb from whence all automata are born.

Bob Ezergailis  
aka Morpheal

author of "The Morphealist Manifesto"

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406. **Cadaly**

***Re: POETICS Digest - 16 May 1998 to 17 May 1998***

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

currentl rotation:

downstairs:

LP: W.S.Merwin, Television, The Minutemen

video: Buffy the Vampyre Slayer (from the source)

playstation: Doom, Twisted Metal

CD: Semi-Sonic, T-Model Ford, Sidnet Bechet, Louis Prima

cassette: making a (second) tape of the Louis Prima

car cassette: lots of random classical, A Century of Recorded Poetry, some old Uncle Tupelo

upstairs: CD-ROM: Ohio Players, texture bitmaps, a lot of java stuff CD: some burmese piano music (Sandaya: The Spellbinding Piano of Burma), Everclear, a lot of violin music from the Library (modern or early music)

Sunday AMs are devoted to violin music.

Radio Presets: KROQ, UCLA student, USC student, 100.3 (R&B oldies, see "Ohio Players" above), classical, banda

Catherine Daly



Catherine Daly

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#### 407. **Gwyn McVay**

##### ***rigid members***

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

>>>The fifth part is a RIGID MEMBER, from which a rigid frame for an automaton can be constructed. A RIGID MEMBER DOES NOT CARRY ANY STIMULI;

that is, it is an insulated girder. A RIGID MEMBER may be connected to other RIGID MEMBERS as well as to parts which are not rigid members. These connections are made by a fusing organ which, when stimulated, welds or solders two parts together.<<<

Found poem! "Keep it up," as it were.

Gwyn

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#### 408. **Gale Nelson**

##### ***John Hawkes***

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

John Hawkes died on Friday, 15th May from complications of heart surgery.

Hawkes, professor emeritus at Brown University, was author of over a dozen books of fiction, including *The Cannibal*, *Second Skin*, *Death, Sleep & the Traveler*; and more recently, *The Frog*. His beautiful baroque sentences, many of which ran seamlessly for half a printed page, were often describing characters in extremis, innocence or (as often was the case) otherwise.

Jack was famous for his deeply-caring teaching style at Brown, where he tutored generations of writers in the craft of the story and the novel. His

students include Mary Caponegro, Joanna Scott, Rick Moody, Lori Baker and Samantha Gillison.

For those of you who would like to express your condolences to his wife, Sophia, please send me electronic mail ( [REDACTED] ) for the address.

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409. **Gary Sullivan**

***Re: scene reports, please***

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

*And by way of a random poll: what music do people currently have in rotation?*

Hi, Joel:

Bhajans from films (studio recordings) & live performances by Lata Mangeshkar; Ibrahim Tatlisises' (unbeLIEVable) \_Haydi Soyle\_; two volumes of Alain "king of al howara" Merheb's kick-butt "call & response"-like material, a couple recordings of Abida Parveen (oh. my. gawd.); Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan (traditional stuff AND film hits); 4 billion CDs & tapes of the unconscionably gifted Oum Kolthoum's stuff from the 30s or so through the 60s or so; & a recent discovery, Asmahan & Farid (plucked on lucky impulse from Daff & Raff in Boston).

In English: Butterglory, The Raincoats' \_Oddysshape\_ (I know it's not that new), & more often than not, Jonathan Richman.

Boy howdy,

Gary

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410. **Don Cheney**

***Re: scene reports, please***

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

*And by way of a random poll: what music do people currently have in rotation?*

Joel,

we just got a 5 cd changer:

1.beck odelay

2.ennio morricone - a fistful of movie music or some such title (i just picked it up yesterday at the swap meet-it's a 2 cd collection of movie music but they only had the first cd)



- 3.foo fighters - the colour and the shape(?)
- 4.nirvana - that mtv live thing
- 5.luscious jackson - fever in fever out

this gets changed a lot. usually coltrane's my favorite things is in the rotation.

and t.v. smith's \_immortal rich\_ is in my cd rom at work.

Our newfound, street dog, Pasa, in her adjustment to life in a home with people, jumped on the turntable and it's not turning anymore. On the cassette player: Phil Hendrie radio shows, Marty Robbins Columbia House collection vols 1 & 2 and like you Joel, I picked up a Sinatra cassette (the two robbins and sinatra for a buck) but i haven't listened to it yet. It's something with Quincy Jones in L.A. My dad used to play a lot of sinatra records and i can still vaguely see one of the album covers it was all black and sinatra was painted up like a clown or something. I remember it with the sense of creepiness/strangeness i felt when i saw it as a kid.

And on my nightstand turntable:

1. bill luoma works & days
2. juliana spahr response
3. charles bernstein the subject
4. word 4 windows 4 dumbasses
5. walter mosley gone fishin'

don cheney

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411. **Christopher Reiner**  
***new WITZ***

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

WITZ: A Journal of Contemporary Poetics

Essays, Criticism, Reviews

Volume 6, Number 1

Featuring:

Thomas Epstein on Ivan Zhdanov: "Zhdanov is acutely aware of the three-pronged crisis of language, memory, and identity. Well acquainted with the 'prison house of language' and history, Zhdanov does not merely celebrate or ironize it...but seeks to use the bars of the postmodern prison against themselves, creating an authentically contemporary lyric voice from shards of language, experience, memory. ..."

Paul Vangelisti on Constructing Beauty: "Consider beauty or the beautiful at a time when many institutional (institutionalized?) artists and critics in the U.S. have appeared committed to, or at least professionally occupied in its deconstruction..."

Gilbert Alter-Gilbert on Literary Portraits in the Movies

William Marsh on Heather Fuller

Jacques Debrot on Dennis Phillips

Edited by Christopher Reiner

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Witz is always looking for essays, critical work or reviews of contemporary poetry and poetics. Please inquire first, with a letter or email to the editor (hey, that's me).



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412. **Gary Sullivan**

**Re: Lyn Hejinian/Gertrude stein**

Mon 18 May 1998

---

Hi, Marjorie:

| *What is true--and maybe this is what*

| *Gary meant--is that Frank's emotions are right on the surface*

It may be that's what I meant, at least in part . . . "for me," what does seem to connect (as opposed to what I see gestured), & taken as a whole, what that experience (again, "for me") is "like" . . . which is what I tried to articulate earlier, & no doubt failed, myself, to get across . . . I think Jonathan, you asked for some others, & so:

Dambudzo Marachera (his journals I guess moreso than his poetry, or plays, see Mindblast, yes, horrible-sounding title, I know) . . . Sheila E. Murphy, whose

work, among my more-or-less contemporaries, moves me more than anyone's (see, especially Tommy & Neil and A Clove of Gender, or sections of both as excerpted in Falling in Love Falling In Love With You Syntax), I should quote something, & will, in a sec . . . Pessoa, & emotive weight need not arise from specific "emotional" situation, it's all, after all, in or of the imagination . . . bp Nichol (who I'm really starting to read, & connect with, now) . . . John Wieners (whose range may be, overall, less than O'Hara's, but who I connect with, on that level, "emotional," more, & who, like bp, is maybe less "sanitized"-feeling to me) . . . Laurie Price & Daniel Davidson (mostly things read in manuscript) . . . anyway, something from Sheila, for comparison (if you like) w/something of O'Hara's:

BEAUTIFUL SUNWARM ARIZONA  
BEAUTIFUL ABSENCE OF CRIMES AGAINST THE SKIN  
BEAUTIFUL SLEEP TO OPEN SKY MOTIF  
BEAUTIFUL LOVEMAKE TO THE HUM OF SKY

Moreover I'm suspended in this moment of your tenderness  
I would prefer to keep  
Would rather glean from certain moccasins  
The shape and feel of elements  
We wide awaken  
As the soft mid-air detains an underpinning  
Shaped like sadness  
Any accident is pleasure  
To the tune of frame the tune of holy ropes we know  
We sleep

Moreover I'm agreed to love in theory and  
The practice is my fondest symptom  
Mercury slips out of retrograde at last  
At last the homonyms  
Are starting to be neighbors and the tulips speak  
Hibiscus will prevail they match my mother's hair  
The season is a relec of efficiency and spree  
The bliss of it inside  
The net accommodation furnishing the seaside moon  
Until my mood is glandular again

Moreover I'm sensate as youth despite  
The several whitesprouts showing I can make elastic  
Of convictions now and love cement  
While seeing water curdle in the stumps of seafoam

Slithering along the rhythm toward and back  
So tactful as to be this version reverence  
  
Immaculately world as we define the envelope  
We need around our shoulders picture  
Heaps of white warming the shamefaced chill  
A full semester until sundown when another beauty  
Is quite suddenly again affordable  
  
(from *\_A Clove of Gender\_*)

By "sanitized," again generally, I mean that quality of lightness/irony in O'Hara that I do find, & feel, which is not to say he doesn't have his "heavier," less oblique moments, or that lightness isn't something to shoot for (Jack Smith devotes part of a wonderful later essay on aesthetics to this) . . .

Gary

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413. **Ellay Phillips**  
***Re: yet another query***

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

*At 03:15 PM 5/15/98 -0400, you wrote:  
where can one find a copy of TEMBLOR in NYC? St. Mark's?*

*mz*

can't say for nyc but if yer ever in san francisco and still looking for copies of temblor check the green apple book store in the richmond on clement street. when eye lived there they had quite a few copies eye think in the poetry section. or maybe you can get a friend to get them for you.

Ellay

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414. **david bromige**  
***re rigid members***

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

right, Gwyn, life isn't the only thing that should be hard. db3

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415. **AERIALEDGE**

***DC Reading for An Anthology of New (American) Poets***

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

Sunday May 24th @ 8 PM

A Publication reading for *An Anthology of New (American) Poets*.

Readers will include Lee Ann Brown, Jordan Davis, Drew Gardner, Lisa Jarnot, Mark McMorris, Eleni Siklianos, Rod Smith, Chris Stroffolino, Edwin Torres, & Mark Wallace.

Bridge Street Books  
2814 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, DC

ph [REDACTED]

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416. **Don Byrd**

***Re: scene reports, please***

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

One of the most amazing musical events I have witnessed in some time last Friday night in Albany. Roscoe Mitchell, Borah Bergman, and Thomas Buckner were to perform at the Unitarian Church (wonderful, austere, little Enlightenment space, with white pews and white windows with big jade plants).

Buckner was sick and didn't come. The opening act was a band led by the concert organizer (awful). When we came back from intermission (we were sitting in the second row), there was a major fight going between Mitchell and the organizer, with Bergman--it appeared--in the middle, over recording rights. Finally, Mitchell stomped out and appeared to be leaving. Bergman sat down at the piano and started playing some very sweet lines in his light and airy, almost flute-like, way. Interesting ability to make a piano take on the fluidity of a flute. After about 15 minutes, Mitchell reappeared and took his instruments out of the case, though apparently Bergman, who was facing the other way and had his face buried in the keyboard, didn't know he was there. After muttering under his breath, "the bastard won't even stop and give me an A," and other disgruntled comments that I couldn't make out, he started to play. Bergman responded immediately, and a conversation began. They played for ninety minutes, obviously working out their problems. I have never heard music more beautiful and full of content. Mitchell, through long passages, was circular breathing and still responding almost note for note to the piano.

Bergman is an amazing musician who hasn't recorded much since the 80s as far as I know, but he is a perfect match for Mitchell. The issue for both of them seems to be fluidity. Some times time seemed to be moving at more than one time and in more than one direction, but without great turbulence (as in a number of Mitchell's recordings). There is a recording (from 95) of the Mitchell, Bergman, Buckner trio which I haven't heard (on the Knitting Factory label).

db

--

\*\*\*\*\*

Don Byrd ( [REDACTED], [REDACTED] )  
Department of English  
State University of New York  
Albany, NY 12222  
[REDACTED] (work); [REDACTED] (home); [REDACTED] (fax)  
The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)

\*\*\*\*\*

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417. **henry g**

***Re: subsistence what matter poetry***

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

Wendy & Gary's interesting thread is an illustration of one sense of what I meant by saying "the obsolete is the most radical". Maybe there's also a connection between what Wendy was saying about "outside" materials and Beth Anderson's thinking about the "democracy of things" in her still life poetics essay (Impercipient lecture series). There will probably always be this tension between voice (lyric) and material (epic). Maybe F.O'H.'s "limited emotional range" is just a function of lyric in general. Limited is not always a liability if it's counterbalanced by intensity. I realize very few accept the idea of FOH's range being limited anyway, & I'm not saying it is. - Henry G.

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418. **Jordan Davis**

***sanitized grace***

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

Gary --

Thanks for the clarification in re: sanitization (I keep hearing "sanity") -- now I think I know what quality of O'Hara's work you're referring to -- but couldn't it be characterized, sympathetically, as grace?

Hope all's well --  
Jordan

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419. **Gary Sullivan**

***Re: sanitized grace***

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

Hi, Jordan:

Yes . . . definitely . . . though, I think Wieners is extraordinarily graceful, & bp Nichol, too . . . even Lally . . .

Gary

On Monday, May 18, 1998 2:28 PM, Jordan Davis [SMTP: ] wrote:

> Gary --

>

> Thanks for the clarification in re: sanitization (I keep hearing "sanity")

> -- now I think I know what quality of O'Hara's work you're referring to --

> but couldn't it be characterized, sympathetically, as grace?

>

> Hope all's well --

> Jordan

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420. **groberts**

***Re: subsistence what matter poetry***

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

Wendy, your post on subsistence and recycling and play is just the kind of declaration of poetics that I love to find on the list. I agree that subsistence and excess "can be together" in poems and elsewhere. Have you seen this great coffee table book, Gardens of Revelation by John Beardsley, which describes and photographs bricolaged "environments" like houses and other structures excessively adorned with bits of broken glass, concrete, autoparts, etc., a la Schwitter's merzbaus?

Your remarks on the relation of touch to collage play reminded me of Claes Oldenburg's hilarious and disturbing Ray Gun collections, which consisted of scavenged fragments with any remote resemblance to a right angle, arranged

and mounted for display in a museum. But these ray guns, of which there is also a prodigious supply in the world, seem to be suggesting a different kind of insistent "contact/touch" than you describe: the guns have ostensibly been rendered harmless by their parodic institutional show-casing (as a supposed part of a museum installation they can't be touched, that is, fired off) but they have their identity as weapons precisely because of this same act of institutional framing. The puzzle that this example of trash recycling creates is interesting to me because it takes aim at how the energies of seeing, touching, playing, and collecting are related to each other and to historical epistemes: where does the "energy" of a ray gun come from? Does the ray gun of the Cold War neutralize the sense of touch, since its made for a hand that does not recoil when it discharges its lethal beam? I wonder how in the cyber-world of repetitive stress injuries could a subsistence poetics of recycling challenge the institutional neutralization of touch?

Thanks for pointing out how "word-garbage" defies the traditional form of lyric that I was asking about. I remember first noticing its potential in a photo of a curbside New York news stand in Robert Frank's *The Americans*: in the lower half of the picture, dozens of overlapping magazines stand arrayed with their titles, in all kinds of font and format, interrupting each other: they wait to be dispersed into the city, which is defined by the upper half of the picture showing a skyscraper's rows and rows of polite windows. That juxtaposition somehow showed me the possibility that you are making into poems.

Gary R.

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#### 421. **Henry Gould** *grace of obsolescence*

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

In any system (social, economic, natural) everything is potentially or really or partially obsolete, redundant, cast-off. One definition of Life might be: a variety of responses to obsolescence. Radical art is when the obsolete stands up and starts to walk & talk back.

Oh yeah - "grace". Almost forgot!!

- Henry the Disgrace

[↑ Contents](#)



422. **Gary Sullivan**

***Re: grace of obsolescence***

Mon 18 May 1998

---

Hi, Henry:

Gerald Burns, in a poem somewhere, defines "horror" (he was fascinated by horror) as "sudden life in a dead body" . . . I wonder if his fascination of horror was related, in some essential way, to this . . .

| *Radical art*

| *is when the obsolete stands up and starts to walk & talk back.*

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423. **R. Gancie**

***Mary Shelley Meets von Neumann Interstellar Probes***

Mon 18 May 1998

---

"Whenever he [John von Neumann] discussed self-reproduction, he mentioned mutations, which are random changes of elements....In section 1.1.2.1 above and Section 1.8 below he posed the problems of modeling evolutionary processes in the framework of automata theory, of quantizing natural selection, and of explaining how highly efficient, complex, powerful automata can evolve from inefficient, simple, weak automata. A complete solution to these problems would give us a probabilistic model of self-reproduction and evolution."---from Theory of Self-Reproducing Automata by John von Neumann & Arthur W. Burks --- "In order to investigate whether life can continue to exist forever, I shall need to define "life" in physics language. I claim that a "living being" is any entity which codes information (in the physics sense of the word) with the information coded being preserved by natural selection. Thus "life" is a form of information processing, and the human mind-and the human soul-is a very complex computer program. Specifically, a "person" is defined to be a computer program which can pass the Turing test, which was discussed in Chapter II."---from Physics of Immortality: Modern Cosmology, God and the Resurrection of the Dead by Frank J. Tipler, Professor of Mathematical Physics at Tulane University, Doubleday --- Tipler had initially believed that it was impossible to imagine what an infinitely intelligent being would think about or do. But then he read an essay in which the German theologian Wolfhart Pannenberg proposed that in the future all humans would live again in the mind of God. The essay triggered a "Eureka!" revelation in Tipler, one that served as an inspiration for Physics of Immortality. The Omega Point, he realized, would have power to re-create-or resurrect-everyone who had ever lived for an eternity of bliss. The Omega Point would not merely re-create the lives of the dead; it would improve on them. Nor would we leave behind our worldly

desires. For example, every man could have not only the most beautiful woman he had ever seen or the most beautiful woman who had ever lived; he could have the most beautiful woman whose existence was logically possible. Women, too, could enjoy their own logically perfect megamates.

Tipler said he did not take his idea seriously at first. "But you think about it and you have to make a decision: do you really believe these constructs that you've created based on physical laws or are going to pretend they are pure games with no relation to reality."---from *The End of Science* by John Horgan, Addison Wesley --- "By the middle of the next century [Hans] Moravec said, robots will be as intelligent as humans and will essentially take over the economy. "We're really out of work at that point," Moravec chortled. Humans might still pursue "SOME QUIRKY STUFF LIKE POETRY" thht springs from psychological vagaries still beyond the grasp of robots, but robots will have all the important jobs."---ibid-cp

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#### 424. **morpheal**

##### ***Re: grace of obsolescence***

Mon 18 May 1998

---

*In any system (social, economic, natural) everything is potentially or really or partially obsolete, redundant, cast-off. One definition of Life might be: a variety of responses to obsolescence. Radical art is when the obsolete stands up and starts to walk & talk back.*

What is considered worthless and obsolescent by one is considered a priceless antique by another. How can both be conservatives when they are in such vehement, and sometimes violent conflict with each other that the one preaching obsolescence will do anything to destroy, render worthless, and get rid of, the obsolescent, while the other will do nearly anything to save, preserve, conserve, and safeguard it from that same destruction ? They cannot both be conservatives within the same system, can they.....but they are.

In one sense it must be a die hard radical Protestant who is preaching radical obsolescence.

The other, opposing radical obsolescence, would be considered anti-progress, regressive, retro, and simply a stick in the mud....

Which one then gets the "grace" ? Perhaps obvious.

M.

[↑ Contents](#)

425. **morpheal**

**Re: grace of obsolescence**

Mon 18 May 1998

---

*Gerald Burns, in a poem somewhere, defines "horror" (he was fascinated by horror) as "sudden life in a dead body" . . . I wonder if his fascination of horror was related, in some essential way, to this . . .*

*Radical art*

*is when the obsolete stands up and starts to walk & talk back.*

No. At least not consensually. Least of all amongst art critics.

In the present era radical art truly begins when that same object that was deemed obsolete and which stood up, and started to walk and talk back, was replicated into many very similar such objects, all equally obsolete according to the same criteria of obsolescence.

Without predictable repeatability of at least stylistic and technical elements as to composition, that produce "signature" effect, the work of art is not a work of art, whether radical art or traditional art. It is simply hacking, dabbling, diletantism, amateurish, hobbyist, unprofessional crazy making.....

Professional art, whether radical or otherwise, inevitably requires acknowledged signature effect common to all the instances of that art, radical or otherwise, and so it requires, by definition, many instances and not only one.

Therefore, it follows logically that an individual, same as an individual instance of object taken by itself as itself, cannot be art. Only when an element of mass production is added to the works, and that element of mass production in a sense permits "consecration" the works in question do the works in question gain that ever sought after consensually given legitimacy.

All of that is not very radical.

I do, myself, believe, that an individual instance of genuine creativity can be a more radical expression and legitimately work of art, even without signature effect being evident, but that is only my own opinion and not how the art world currently functions.

M.

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426. **Jerome Rothenberg (by way of John Cayley)**

***Performance/Reading : Yang Lian & John Cayley***

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

Visual Arts & Literature, University of California, San Diego

=====

As a special final event in this quarter's New Writing Series, there will be a joint reading

on Friday May 22nd at 4:30 p.m.

by John Cayley and Yang Lian.

The venue for this event is the Visual Arts Facility,

Performance Space of the UCSD Campus (Gillman Drive, La Jolla)

John Cayley, who has been in residence at UCSD for the spring quarter, is a poet, literary translator, and the founding editor of The Wellsweep Press in London, which, since 1988, has specialized in the publication of literary translation from the Chinese. He is also widely known for his experiments with cybertext and other forms of electronic poetry -- an engagement most recently "with the creation of literature 'beyond codexspace' in new media offered to writers by electronic technologies."

Yang Lian, one of the key figures among the post-Mao "misty poets," has continued and expanded his writing while living outside of China and is today a postmodern experimentalist of genuine international stature. His work, which has found rich sources at the margins of Chinese culture -- the south, the far west and Tibet -- and in ancient Chinese cultural forms -- such as his reading of The Book of Changes -- is wide-ranging, exploratory, linguistically rich and deeply rewarding. English versions of his poems include *\_Crocodile\_*, *\_Non-Person Singular\_*, and *\_Where the Sea Stands Still\_*, the last of which has been performed live in a cybertextual and audiovisually enhanced version by Yang Lian and John Cayley.

The reading by John Cayley and Yang Lian is free and open to the public.

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427. **ScoutEW**

***Re: scene reports, please***

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

Got to say good things about Jeff CLark's Book "The Little Door SLides" back. order it up from Sun\$Moon it is excellent but won't tell you more about it because you should go buy it instead of any new Jazz records....

erik sweet

[↑ Contents](#)

428. **Peter Balestrieri**

***Rochelle Owens***

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

Hi,  
Does anyone have a suggestion for a good introductory work by Rochelle Owens? One that shows her at her wildest? Please backchannel only.  
Thanks,  
Pete Balestrieri

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429. **William Burmeister Prod**

***Re: scene reports, please***

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

On May 18, 5:22pm, ScoutEW wrote:  
> Subject: Re: scene reports, please  
> Got to say good things about  
> Jeff CLark's Book "The Little Door SLides" back. order it up from Sun\$Moon  
> it is excellent but won't tell you more about it because you should go buy it  
> instead of any new Jazz records....

Oh do tell!

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430. **ScoutEW**

***Re: scene reports, please***

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

In a message dated 5/18/98 4:41:06 PM, you wrote:

<<Oh do tell!>>

If you must know these are some words to describe Mr Clark's book

|               |             |
|---------------|-------------|
| "Great1"      | "delicious" |
| "wonderful"   | "full"      |
| "good"        | "antiques"  |
| "angular"     | "greenpipe" |
| "celebratory" | "pleasing"  |
| "spoony"      | "free"      |
| "Great2"      |             |

erik william sweet born 1971 also (the year of the pig)

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431. **Maz881**

**Re: Lyn Hejinian/Gertrude stein**

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

also, Maria, this might be of interest to your etudianter:

Juliana Spahr : "Resignifying Autobiography: Lyn Hejinian's My Life" American Literature 68:1 (1996), 139-159.

try [REDACTED] for specific questions.

Bill

<<Maria, Lyn has a great piece called "Two Stein Talks," TEMBLOR, I think #8 but somewhere in there that would be crucial for your student. Also, Charles Bernstein's CONTENT'S DREAM and A POETICS (and the new book MY WAY) ULLA DYDO, various pieces on Narrative, and the headnotes in her wonderful THE STEIN READER.

At ACLA in South Bend a few years back, Chris Beach, Ming Quian Ma, and Steve Fredman did three great papers on Lyn and Stein certainly came in--you might ask Steve to see his--I believe none are published yet.

While I'm writing, I'll get into the O'Hara fray. I haven't answered thus far because I felt I almost couldn't--to me, O'Hara has an amazing emotional range, who more so?? What is true--and maybe this is what Gary meant--is that Frank's emotions are right on the surface--joy, pain, misery, anxiety, hope, lust, excitement--we get the gamut as he experiences them. His poems are deeply moving--take a look at "The Clouds Go Soft" (already mentioned here) and "Ode for Joe LeSueur on the Arrow that Flieth by Night"--both quite devastating. And the technique is such we're immediately drawn INTO the poems--can't get away!

Marjorie Perloff>>

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432. **k. lederer**

**EXPLOSIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Mon 18 May 1998*

---

EXPLOSIVE MAGAZINE NUMBER FIVE

" S p e c t a c u l a r E m o t i o n "

is now available and features work by:

Ishmael Klein, Emily Wilson, Martin Corless-Smith  
Josh May, DA Powell, Pam Lu, Tan Lin, Juliana  
Spahr, and sound collage (an actual tape affixed  
to the mag!) by Alex Cory.

\$5 (\$15 for a 3 issue subscription)  
Make checks payable to: Katy Lederer  
420 E Davenport : #2 : Iowa City : IA  
52245

.....

ANEXPLOSIVEBENEFITEVENTANEXPLOSIVEBEN

SATURDAY, MAY 30th, 8:00pm, SEGUEPERFORMANCES  
PACE, 303 E 8th STREET, b/w AVES B and C FEATURING RE  
ADINGS BY: CHARLES BERNSTEIN, ANSELM BERRIGAN  
, LEE ANN BROWN, TIM DAVIS, BRETTE EVANS, JORDAN  
AVIS, GREG FUCHS, JEN HOFER, DREW GARDNER, LISA J  
ARNOT, PRAGEETASHARMA, LISALUBASCH, CHRIS ST  
ROFFOLINO, SIANNENGAI, MAX WINTER, MIKETYREL  
L, MICHAEL DUMANIS, SOTHERSOTHERSOTHERSOTH  
ERSOTHERSOTHERS

\$5 REQUESTED DONATION, REFRESHMENTS AND MAG  
AZINES AND T-SHIRTS AVAILABLE, MUSIC TOO!

.....

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433. **Hugh Steinberg**

**Re: Rochelle Owens**

*Tue 19 May 1998*

---

Pete:

Two books: The Joe 82 Creation Poems and The Joe Chronicles Part 2, both by  
Black Sparrow.

Highly recommended!

Hugh Steinberg

[↑ Contents](#)

434. **Stephen Cope**

**Re: scene reports, please**

Tue 19 May 1998

---

Lovely Music (out of New York) has released two recordings that I know of w/ Mitchell and Bruckner. On the one I have, they set Thulani Davis, Joseph Jarman, and ee cummings poems, in addition to three sections of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage (the recording is entitled *\_Pilgrimage\_*). Beatiful stuff. (Lovely is at 10 Beach Street, NYC, 10013)

MUWORKS released a Borah Bergman/Thomas Chapin date in 1992. *\_Inversions\_* it's called. Fluidity is not a word I would have used to describe it, but that may be more Chapin than Bergman...

Stephen

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435. **Stephen Cope**

**Re: scene reports, please**

Tue 19 May 1998

---

I'll add to Gary's list Mayada El-Henawi - more recent than Asmahan, but a stunning voice. And as for adding to the current rotation: Dahmane el-Harrache's Volumes I and II (just brought to me from Paris), either of which might be a desert island choice were it to come to that. (On Club Du Disque Arabe, hard to find statewide except for newer stuff).

And what about this Clarke book that I've been hearing so much of? I've not get got it, but the operative word in descriptions I've heard is "strange."

Stephen

*And by way of a random poll: what music do people currently have in rotation?*

*Hi, Joel:*

*Bhajans from films (studio recordings) & live performances by Lata Mangeshkar; Ibrahim Tatlises' (unbeLIEVable) \_Haydi Soyle\_; two volumes of Alain "king of al howara" Merheb's kick-butt "call & response"-like material, a couple recordings of Abida Parveen (oh. my. gawd.); Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan (traditional stuff AND film hits); 4 billion CDs & tapes of the unconscionably gifted Oum Kolthoum's stuff from the 30s or so through the 60s or so; & a recent discovery, Asmahan & Farid (plucked on lucky impulse from Daff & Raff in Boston).*

*In English: Butterglory, The Raincoats' \_Oddysshape\_ (I know it's not that new), & more often than not, Jonathan Richman.*



Boy howdy,

Gary

[↑ Contents](#)

436. **Hugh Steinberg**

**Re: Rochelle Owens**

Tue 19 May 1998

---

Wow, I guess I got lucky: I found them both for 2 bucks a piece at a used bookstore in Menlo Park.

Hugh Steinberg

Mark Weiss writes:

*And both long out of print. For substantial selections from them as chosen by Rochelle see her \_\_New and Selected Poems: 1961-1996\_\_, available from Junction Press. Good reviews in the current Sulfur and Harvard Review, as well as earlier ones in PW, Library Journal, and World Literature Today. Rochelle is one of the essential poets of her generation. By the 60s she had already prefigured in fully realized form much of what those of us on this interesting margin most value. She got a lot of notice in her years in New York but fell out of notice when she moved to Oklahoma. Even the best writers get lost to view if they don't work real hard to stay visible, alas.*

*At 10:37 PM 5/18/98 -0600, you wrote:  
Pete:*

*Two books: The Joe 82 Creation Poems and The Joe Chronicles Part 2, both by Black Sparrow.*

*Highly recommended!*

*Hugh Steinberg*

[↑ Contents](#)

437. **Mark Weiss**

**Re: Rochelle Owens**

Tue 19 May 1998

---

And both long out of print. For substantial selections from them as chosen by Rochelle see her \_\_New and Selected Poems: 1961-1996\_\_, available from Junction Press. Good reviews in the current Sulfur and Harvard Review, as well

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At 10:37 PM 5/18/98 -0600, you wrote:

>Pete:

>

>Two books: The Joe 82 Creation Poems and The Joe Chronicles Part 2, both  
>by Black Sparrow.

>

>Highly recommended!

>

>Hugh Steinberg

>

>

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#### 438. **Stephen Cope**

##### ***Beyond the Page***

*Tue 19 May 1998*

---

For those in the San Diego area, or those vacationing to the San Diego area, here's the reading in the BEYOND THE PAGE series for May.

See you there,

Stephen

ps- For those of you heading out this way, be in touch. BTP will continue through the summer....

>BEYOND THE PAGE PRESENTS:

>

>FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

>

>What: BEYOND THE PAGE continues its series of monthly performance and  
>arts

> events with MARTIN NAKELL and PASQUALE VERDICCHIO reading  
from their

> works.

>

>Where: Faultline Theatre, 3152 5th Avenue (between Thorn and Spruce in

> Hillcrest), San Diego.

>

>When: Sunday, May 31st. 4:00 PM.

>

>Contact: Stephen Cope at [REDACTED] or Joe Ross at [REDACTED]. E-mail  
at [REDACTED].

>

> \* \* \* \* \*

>

>

>PASQUALE VERDICCHIO was born in Naples in 1954, and currently lives in San

>Diego. His poetry, reviews, criticism, photography, and scholarly articles  
>have appeared in numerous journals both in the United States and abroad,  
>and he is the author of seven books of poetry and three critical works. A  
>noted translator as well as a writer, Verdicchio has published fifteen  
>books of translations, including the work of such major Italian poets as  
>Antonio Porta, Andrea Zanzotto, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Giorgio Caproni, and  
>Alda Merini, as well as pamphlets by noted philosophers Antonio Gramsci  
>and Giambattista Vico. Of the many literary awards with which Verdicchio  
>has been honored, the most recent is a Canada Council Translation Grant  
>(proffered this year). He is a professor in the Literature Department at  
>the University of California, San Diego, where is currently Head of the  
>Writing Program.

>

>

>MARTIN NAKELL lives in Los Angeles and edits Jahbone Press. He has  
>published poetry and fiction in numerous journals, including Washington  
>Review of the Arts, Litteral Latte, Ribot, Remap, HyperAge, and Hanging  
>Loose. His books include \_The Myth of Creation\_ (Parentheses Press) and  
>\_The Library of Thomas Rivka\_ (Sun & Moon Press), as well as a chapbook of  
>fiction,

>\_Ramon\_. \_Form\_ is a work that is forthcoming from Parenthesis, and \_Two  
>Fields That Face and Mirror Each Other\_ is a completed work of fiction. He  
>has received grants from the NEA and the Blue Mountain Center, as well as  
>a Writers & Books Fellowship in Poetry. Nakell is currently a professor of  
>20th-Century American Literature at Chapman University in Orange County.

>

>

> \* \* \* \* \*

>

>

We are proud to continue our monthly series of arts-related events by welcoming these two internationally known writers.

BEYOND THE PAGE is an independent arts group dedicated to the promotion of experimental and explorative work in contemporary arts. For more information, call: [REDACTED], [REDACTED], or e-mail: [REDACTED].

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439. **Herb Levy**

***Re: scene reports, please***

*Tue 19 May 1998*

---

Oops, I'm a culpa.

Those of you out of towners who usually try to get to Seattle for the Subtext readings probably won't be able to get cheap airfares for the first of these readings, but for the later ones it should still be possible.

May 21

Jim Jones, author of several books on Jack Kerouac talking about Kerouac in Seattle & Anselm Hollo in his first Seattle reading. Hollo is also offering a Friday/Saturday workshop based on Berrigan's The Sonnets.

June 18

Lisa Jarnot & Jean Day

July 16

Bryant Mason & Ed Foster

(For those who are keeping track, this is the completion of Nico Vassilakis's current curation.)

All Subtext readings are at the Speakeasy in the charmingly re-developed Belltown district of Seattle. The idea is that readings start at 7:30 pm, perhaps someday we will achieve this goal.

&, in keeping with what this subject line has become, when I'm in a conscious mode, I'm mostly listening to some prototype discs for 2 forthcoming Periplum CDs of interactive computer music by Canadian composer Martin Bartlett (out real soon now, with performances by soprano recorder virtuoso Peter Hannan, trombonist George Lewis, who also creates interactive electronic works of his own, and cellist Frances-Marie Uitti) & works for homemade electronic instruments by Dan Senn.

Cause I've been sick lately I'm often listening to, or at least hearing, Morton Feldman's For Philip Guston a four & a half hour piece for flutes, celeste &

percussion that I put in the multidisc player & put on repeat for days. It's an amazing sound world to live among & wake up in the midst of, especially when you don't know where you are in the piece.

Also, for what it's worth, CCMC doesn't stand for anything, John Oswald the electronic collage artist is indeed the same person as John Oswald the saxophonist (& he's a really good saxophonist), & Michael Smith is a phenomenal film maker, installation artist, etc.

& lastly, long time list readers may remember this, but for you newer folks if you're looking for non-writing readers of "experimental" poetry who also don't work as critics or teachers, there's me for one.

Bests,

Herb

Herb Levy



[↑ Contents](#)

440. **david bromige**

***Martin Bartlett (per Herb Levy's scene update)***

*Tue 19 May 1998*

---

Really glad to see Martin's name mentioned as a composer whose work is receiving attention. My gladness is both esthetic and personal. He and I went way back, and in fact performed in a play by Earle Birney together at U Wash in Seattle in 1960 or earlier. I was with him when he broke into a Vancouver church to play the organ, drunk as a lord. He had one of those larger-than-life characters (whoever he was \_really\_ , como se dice [listen to the music!]), that made Univ Brit Col a lucky place to be 40 years ago . . .another, being Listgoader Bowering. Last time I heard Martin live was at Langton St in SF in the mid-80s I think. Now sadly no longer with us, but for the music,--and plaudits to who's made that possible.

Good also, to be reminded by Herb of the Subtext Series--great venue, attentive audience. (Remember to let people know it's happening in the back, though--there were those who came to hear Robin Blaser but went away empty-handed, thinking the front of the space was where it was supposed to be happening, and that it had been canceled last-minute). The upcoming programs look to be tiptop. Wish I could take Anselm's workshop.

Otherwise, and back home, our series at the Cinnabar Theater in Petaluma is over until September, and Sonoma State is ending its academic year next week, so nothing to report on the reading scene.

Even more back home, my latest listening has been the RCA Jazz Tribune double CD of Bix Beiderbecke, backed by and backing variously Bing and the Rhythm Boys, Joe Venuti, Frankie Trumbauer, the Dorseys, Lennie Hayton, Benny Goodman, Gene Krupa, Jean Goldkette, Irene Taylor, Jack Teagarden, Eddie Lang, the Kewller Sisters and many more. Beiderbecke's solo on "From Monday On" reminds me of a sentence from *Under the Volcano* : "it was a day like a good Joe Venuti record," -- penned by Malcolm Lowry, a fellow moldy fig. And let me recommend Jonny Lang's *Lie to Me* CD, a dozen retro rock blues numbers played & sung by a masterly young guitarist.

db3

[↑ Contents](#)

441. **ScoutEW**

***Re: scene reports, please***

*Tue 19 May 1998*

---

In a message dated 5/18/98 11:59:17 PM, you wrote:

<<I've not  
get got it, but the operative word in descriptions I've heard is "strange."  
>>

Dr. Strange...

"I will wade into the Pacific and kiss my mother!"

"Come, love, and bury the blue jays."

[↑ Contents](#)

442. **henry**

***Re: grace of obsolescence***

*Tue 19 May 1998*

---

On Mon, 18 May 1998 15:07:31 -0400 Gary Sullivan said:

>

>Gerald Burns, in a poem somewhere, defines "horror" (he was fascinated by  
>horror) as "sudden life in a dead body" . . . I wonder if his fascination of  
>horror was related, in some essential way, to this . . .

>

>> Radical art

>> is when the obsolete stands up and starts to walk & talk back.

Well, maybe there's unnatural, natural and supernatural regeneration (resurrection). In such case, maybe "horror" is radical art sans grace. Never cared for it myself. Rather than giving life to "discarded materials", horror

gives life bad dreams. I hate the whole process. Television alternates between selling large expensive vehicles and discarding them in horrific explosions. - Henry G.

[↑ Contents](#)

443. **Douglas**

***Re: John Hawkes***

*Tue 19 May 1998*

---

I want to thank Gale Nelson for posting the sad news of John Hawkes' death. I might mention for all the poets, that Hawkes' fiction is true poetry, his work being one of the major examples of how poetic language and fiction do work together.

My favorite of his many fictions are THE BETTLE LEG, THE LIME TWIG, SECOND SKIN, and THE BLOOD ORANGES. Sun & Moon published his early works THE OWL and THE GOOSE ON THE GRAVE.

A short passage:

The prisoner was covered with great feathers, pin feathers and flat feathers, pieces of wire and tin swelled his chest. The wings hung far down as arms and even below the hands, swayng, and were fastened across his shoulders. He crouched heavily, but his waxen feathers, his flying skein billowed angrily in the wind. His head stuck over with red wax turned loftily. Then he tested the wings, looking at the sun unbelieving, taking a cautious step closer the edge. The wings hung down and buied the arms inside; almost to the length of his feet, the tips waved like the lengthy, extra feelers of the dragonfly. The ends of the wings were wet, they motioned under the power of the primary feathers, the crudely fashioned wing with its sharp trailing edge. And when he filled the wings, they moved, lifted once, again, curving down and meancing. His half hidden chin jutted and thrust with the effort. He spread his legs and drew tight the red flying surface between them, so that he was a mass of machine and bird for the wind's picking. He appeared heavy as stone.

THE OWL AND THE GOOSE ON THE GRAVE is available to poetics list subscribers for a 20% discount, that's \$10.36 plus \$1.25 for postage = \$11.61.

Send a check with your order to Sun & Moon Press, 6026 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90036 or order from my E-mail at [REDACTED]

Douglas Messerli

Gale Nelson wrote:

>

> John Hawkes died on Friday, 15th May from complications of heart surgery.

>

> Hawkes, professor emeritus at Brown University, was author of over a dozen

> books of fiction, including *The Cannibal*, *Second Skin*, *Death, Sleep & the*

> *Traveler*; and more recently, *The Frog*. His beautiful baroque sentences,  
many

> of which ran seamlessly for half a printed page, were often describing

> characters in extremis, innocence or (as often was the case) otherwise.

>

> Jack was famous for his deeply-caring teaching style at Brown, where he

> tutored generations of writers in the craft of the story and the novel.

> His students include Mary Caponegro, Joanna Scott, Rick Moody, Lori

> Baker and Samantha Gillison.

>

> For those of you who would like to express your condolences to his wife,

> Sophia, please send me electronic mail ([REDACTED]) for the

> address.

[↑ Contents](#)

444. **Maria Damon**

**Re: Lyn Hejinian/Gertrude stein**

*Tue 19 May 1998*

---

thanks maz, i have a copy of that (thanks juliana); it's buried under piles of stuff, but it's really good...i'll pass the citation on to the student. And thanks EVERYone who was so forthcoming w/ suggestions. you're the greatest--md

At 8:17 PM -0400 5/18/98, Maz881 wrote:

>also, Maria, this might be of interest to your etudianter:

>

>Juliana Spahr : "Resignifying Autobiography: Lyn Hejinian's My Life"

American

>Literature 68:1 (1996), 139-159.

>

>try [REDACTED] for specific questions.

>

>Bill



>  
>  
><<Maria, Lyn has a great piece called "Two Stein Talks," TEMBLOR, I think  
>#8 but somewhere in there that would be crucial for your student.  
>Also, Charles Bernstein's CONTENT'S DREAM and A POETICS (and the new  
>book MY WAY)  
>ULLA DYDO, various pieces on Narrative, and the headnotes in her  
>wonderful THE STEIN READER.  
>  
>At ACLA in South Bend a few years back, Chris Beach, Ming Quian Ma, and  
>Steve Fredman did three great papers on Lyn and Stein certainly came  
>in--you might ask Steve to see his--I believe none are published yet.  
>  
>While I'm writing, I'll get into the O'Hara fray. I haven't answered  
>thus far because I felt I almost couldn't--to me, O'Hara has an amazing  
>emotional range, who more so?? What is true--and maybe this is what  
>Gary meant--is that Frank's emotions are right on the surface--joy,  
>pain, misery, anxiety, hope, lust, excitement--we get the gamut as he  
>experiences them. His poems are deeply moving--take a look at "The  
>Clouds Go Soft" (already mentioned here) and "Ode for Joe LeSueur on the  
>Arrow that Flieth by Night"--both quite devastating. And the technique  
>is such we're immediately drawn INTO the poems--can't get away!  
>  
>Marjorie Perloff>>

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445. **Maria Damon**

***Re: scene reports, please***

*Tue 19 May 1998*

---

i'm a culpa, i like that, can i use it?

At 12:11 AM -0800 5/19/98, Herb Levy wrote:

>Oops, I'm a culpa.

>

>Those of you out of towners who usually try to get to Seattle for the  
>Subtext readings probably won't be able to get cheap airfares for the first  
>of these readings, but for the later ones it should still be possible.

>

>May 21

>

>Jim Jones, author of several books on Jack Kerouac talking about Kerouac in  
>Seattle & Anselm Hollo in his first Seattle reading. Hollo is also

>offering a Friday/Saturday workshop based on Berrigan's The Sonnets.  
>  
>June 18  
>  
>Lisa Jarnot & Jean Day  
>  
>July 16  
>  
>Bryant Mason & Ed Foster  
>  
>(For those who are keeping track, this is the completion of Nico  
>Vassilakis's current curation.)  
>  
>  
>All Subtext readings are at the Speakeasy in the charmingly re-developed  
>Belltown district of Seattle. The idea is that readings start at 7:30 pm,  
>perhaps someday we will achieve this goal.  
>  
>&, in keeping with what this subject line has become, when I'm in a  
>conscious mode, I'm mostly listening to some prototype discs for 2  
>forthcoming Periplum CDs of interactive computer music by Canadian  
composer  
>Martin Bartlett (out real soon now, with performances by soprano recorder  
>virtuoso Peter Hannan, trombonist George Lewis, who also creates  
>interactive electronic works of his own, and cellist Frances-Marie Uitti) &  
>works for homemade electronic instruments by Dan Senn.  
>  
>Cause I've been sick lately I'm often listening to, or at least hearing,  
>Morton Feldman's For Philip Guston a four & a half hour piece for flutes,  
>celeste & percussion that I put in the multidisc player & put on repeat for  
>days. It's an amazing sound world to live among & wake up in the midst of,  
>especially when you don't know where you are in the piece.  
>  
>Also, for what it's worth, CCMC doesn't stand for anything, John Oswald the  
>electronic collage artist is indeed the same person as John Oswald the  
>saxophonist (& he's a really good saxophonist), & Michael Smith is a  
>phenomenal film maker, installation artist, etc.  
>  
>& lastly, long time list readers may remember this, but for you newer folks  
>if you're looking for non-writing readers of "experimental" poetry who also  
>don't work as critics or teachers, there's me for one.  
>

>Bests,  
>  
>Herb  
>  
>  
>Herb Levy  
> [REDACTED]

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446. **Fred Muratori**

**Re: Rochelle Owens**

Tue 19 May 1998

---

Owens' *\_New & Selected Poems, 1961-1996\_* is out from Junction Press and provides a good overview. Also, an extremely helpful Web site offers some fine commentary on Owens. Go to: <http://www.thing.net/~grist/l&d/owens/lro-cont.htm>

-- Fred M.

*Hi,  
Does anyone have a suggestion for a good introductory work by Rochelle Owens? One that shows her at her wildest? Please backchannel only.  
Thanks,  
Pete Balestrieri*

\*\*\*\*\*

Fred Muratori

( [REDACTED] )

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\*\*\*\*\*

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447. **Douglas Barbour**

**Re: POETICS Digest - 16 May 1998 to 17 May 1998**

Tue 19 May 1998

---

Ah the list returns to music on the CD player. Does this happen about once a year, regularly?

Right now, I'm listening to the double quartets live album by Joe Lovano, always something by Jessica Williamson, the small group \_Joy\_ CD is a great spiritual gift, never a week goes by that I don't go back & give another listen to Paul Butterfield's Better Days album from 1973, Gavin Bryars \_The Sinking of the Titanic\_, a couple of Gorecki's, always always some of the complete string quartets of Shostakovich, Jim Hall's \_Dialogues\_, Keith Jarrett Trio's \_The Cure\_, a recent rerelease of Lennie Tristano & Warren Marsh's \_Intuition\_. But then I keep going back to other stuff as well. There's just so much music to listen to...

And here in Edmonton on Saturday night, Jay Clayton & Sheila Jordan together, each took a set, then they did two duos, finishing off with an amazing duo improv on Dizzy Gillespie's 'Birch Works,' To which the only possible response was whistles & cheers & a standing ovation...

=====

Douglas Barbour  
Department of English  
University of Alberta  
Edmonton Alberta T6G 2E5  
[REDACTED] FAX: [REDACTED]  
H: [REDACTED]

~~~~~

NOT MUCH
Not much you ever
said you were thinking
of, not much to
say in answer.
Robert Creeley

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448. **Gary Sullivan**

Re: Mary Shelley Meets von Neumann Interstellar Probes

Tue 19 May 1998

23 LINES FROM 23 POEMS IN O'HARA'S COLLECTED
IN RESPONSE TO R.GANCIE & HENRY GOULD

Poetry is as useful as a machine.
I worry about this because
I'm wracked by a thousand demon consciences, all arguing

without breath or distant rejoinder
from the sea. Today we
became known to them, as the sail knows the air it fills
and as the tents of jellyfish do brood
knee-deep in the paralyzing sea of numbness.
Even the fishes heard that terrible whine and shuddered
their leaves like feet hanging in the whitewashed air.
Then the weather changed. They were all
like hunks of voluptuous driftwood
silly as we, our intuitive craft
blind with art's crushing defeat. The dull roar
& who steps ashore upon that
may now close his eyes as if they were tired flowers
panting appreciation. You are too late, you are violent
rendering unto the sinking its Lie
too soon. Art is sad and
speech is not embarrassed by your attention.
After the immersion and the stance
there is no love, and it is not the sun--
still, these waves, gnaw down our helm.

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449. **henry g**

1 line

Tue 19 May 1998

ONE LINE FOR FRANK O'HARA & GARY SULLIVAN

the ham sandwich - there - falling off the girder - it was for you -
- Jack Spandrift

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450. **toddbaron**

Re: Beyond the Page

Tue 19 May 1998

Stephen Cope:

Todd Baron here--a friend of Martin Nakell's--trying to reach you VIA e-mail--
where you're listed as NO SUCH ADDRESS @ [REDACTED]. ?

I'd like to talk about your series...

yrs,

Todd Baron
ReMap magazine

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451. **Annie Finch**
High School Workshops
Tue 19 May 1998

Dear Colleagues,
Please pass this on to any high school students you know who might be interested. Thanks!

Date: Tue, 19 May 1998 08:54:29 -0400 (EDT)
From: Aljoseph <[REDACTED]>
Subject: High School Workshops

It's do or die time for my program. If I don't get some students enrolled soon, the Division of Continuing Education at my school will shut the Young Writers Workshop down. Maybe this format can't work at a place where the financial resources are scarcer than the schools that already have Young Writers Workshops. I welcome any input at all--especially since I'm feeling like the failure of this project is all my fault. Thanks, Allison J.

JUNE 15 to 20, 1998 - The FIRST ANNUAL YOUNG WRITERS WORKSHOP MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS NOW AVAILABLE. Check web site for details on scholarships.

For high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors, hosted by Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, and sponsored by the Master of Fine Arts Program in Creative Writing, the Department of English, the College of Liberal Arts, and the Division of Continuing Education. The Young Writers Workshop at SIUC is a five day residential program designed to give high school students the opportunity to develop and explore their writing talents in poetry, fiction, and essay writing. Students will sharpen their writing skills by participating in daily workshops lead by SIUC graduate students in creative writing, and by attending craft talks, readings, and discussions lead by SIUC graduate creative writing faculty and graduate students.

Each morning, students will meet in small groups focused on the genre of their choice to write, read, and discuss their poems, stories and essays (including college application essays). Each workshop will be taught by two instructors in order to give each student's work detailed attention. Each afternoon, students will participate in sessions on subjects as varied as forms of poetry, small press publishing, and techniques of fiction. In the evenings, SIUC students, faculty, and Young Writers Workshop participants will read from

their own creative works.

*The cost of the Workshop (including housing, meals, and materials) is \$500 for resident students and \$430 for commuter students (those within driving distance of the University who do not wish to board, price includes lunch and dinner). Enrollment is on a first come, first serve basis. A deposit of \$60 is required by May 29, 1998 to reserve a spot in the Workshop. To request an enrollment form, contact the Young Writers Workshop, c/o Division of Continuing Education, Mailcode 6705, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, Carbondale, IL 62901-6705.
Website - <http://www.angelfire.com/il/yww>.*

Annie Finch
<http://muohio.edu/~finchar>
Assistant Professor of English/Creative Writing
Miami University
Oxford, Ohio 45220

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452. **ken|n|ing**
the future
Tue 19 May 1998

As a reminder / update:

K E N N I N G : a newsletter of contemporary poetry, poetics, and non-fiction writing -- The premier issue (Mark Wallace, Juliana Spahr, John Kinsella, John Lowther, Summi Kaipa, etc.) is still available, \$4.00. -- The summer issue, #2, (A.L. Nielsen, Ron Silliman, Liz Waldner, Alice Notley, Emily Wilson, Heather Fuller and Rod Smith, Jen Hofer, and fifty or so pages of etc.) is due mid-June.

I would recommend subscribing, two issues beginning with #2 in a unique, hand-printed slipcase/portfolio, ahead of time, \$9.50. Or a single issue, beginning with #2, \$5.00. Make checks payable to the editor, Patrick F. Durgin & send to the address below.

Electronic inquiries are welcomed, as well as submissions of polemic, criticism, and poetics. Hope to hear from you. PFD

ken n i n g`.....|`.....

a newsletter of contemporary |poetry, poetics, and non-fiction writing
|418 Brown St. #10 Iowa City, IA 52245 USA

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453. **R. Gancie**

Jornada del Muerto

Tue 19 May 1998

"[Christopher] Langton is the founding father of artificial life, a subfield of chaoplexity that has attracted much attention in its own right. Langton has helped organize several conferences on artificial life-the first held at Los Alamos [adjacent to Jornada del Muerto] in 1987-attended by biologists, computer scientists, and mathematicians who share his affinity for computer animation. Artificial life is an outgrowth of artificial intelligence, a field that proceeded it by several decades...."---from *The end of Science*, John Horgan, Addison Wesley Press --- "The brain is a meat machine."---Marvin Minsky --- "For comparison with atomic physics, let us add a remark on Kant's doctrine of antinomies. According to Kant there are questions which force their way unavoidably into our thinking, but to which nevertheless no answer can be given, because in a fundamental way they leave behind them the realm of possible experience. From this antinomies originate: these are pairs of contradictory answers to the same question, both of which can be proved in a way that is conceptually unobjectionable. The solution of this 'dialectical illusion' consists precisely in rejecting the original question as saying nothing about possible experience; and hence reason, if it nevertheless becomes involved with this question, runs, as it were, an empty course, and under the illusion of positive statements is in truth saying nothing."---from *The World View of Physics*, Carl Friedrich von Weizsaecker, Routledge and Kegan Paul ---cp

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454. **k. lederer**

Some poems by Jeff Clark

Tue 19 May 1998

L U N A R T E R C E T S

Things are not as we would have them be.
The moon is not a yellow sow
hung from a meat hook

on a drab shed wall: it is a moon.
Ashes do nothing
while we sleep: they are trees.

Satellites are not boys circling the lowback chairs
and record heaps of their drunken masters: they are machines.
The broad-hipped distended form stepping in the foam

is not someone going to wet her legs
but no-one, Phantom without live taxies.
She thinks, Ships in the night are cruel ships.

Even if, her left ear aimed at the brack
even if the clasps and peeling lulled
she would not hear the canvas smack

there would be no din in the hull
no luminations in the masts:
tonight the moon soils its pallet

and will emerge in the light by my bedside but No-one,
her gown ratty from seawater and sand and from bedless cubicles
bedowned by whirling feathered things.

.....

S T . N E M E L E

Who hovers above me now,
in black coat, the table lit
as if by a tenebrist?
Whose mane glints as if slicked
with pomade not pitch?

Who isn't tincture of pine
but of pall and cyst.

Whose eyes are holes
not spangles in a hall.
Nemele, I wander around
embracing waists of trees

who won't speak,
who don't attend to atonalities.
When I lied after noon
like the one half of a brothel pair,
you opened your gown
and in there

in bleary stills
I saw an anvil,
then a
then an unwell

--what?--in an evil antedawn.
In the evening you opened your gown--

Nemele, you must have gone.
Why now phantoms, why now gauze,
nori-green fins, dead swans?
Why someone in a yellow dusk
with piece outslung
at one end of Pont-Neuf ?

Have you gone
darkward, or where
the white mare--

Who hovers above me now
pricks in manifold forms

.....

D A I M - C O Q S

Howling daim-coqs fill the rows
Heron from wires love hooves in hose

And now backstage the oils you know
And now backstage

And backstage what a slack arose
And backstage lungs in floating does
And backstage who speaks false explodes
And backstage thighs to strokings go
And backstage overflows the bowels
And backstage tongue and lips lave toes
And backstage foam on glowing throats

Strings

blood in forms in throes

The felt hammers

.....

T H E G H O S T H A S N O H O M E

This morning in an alleyway I was startled by a face
I seemed to recognize, in a dormer above a garage
and so slunk up to him, who was ranting quietly,
mauling the mind of some imagined ear out the pane
as if maligned, or high, like one

moony and almost witless in a poppy ditch,
or one walking ill and supine
in a wet bed of opening mullein:
"I have no desire to theorize language--
I was raised poor and have sinned unspeakably.
I would rather waylay and destroy
whose voice molests me."
On his desk a thin book I knew, a tragedy
whose residue was a Sentry's couplet I half-knew
and began to recite--startling him who turning was outwardly
unknown to me--, "'Does it hurt your ears--'"
"Fuck Antigone--I detest language, I detest artifice,
I would rather waylay and molest
the beast that has imagined and pent me here."

.....

THE GHOST HAS NO HOME

This morning in a dormer I was startled by a face
subterraneously white and walking with such a gait
down the pavement that when I cleared the pane
of breath--

Behind me a muzziness then kissed:

"Together we shall name Fear 'Benign Cyst'
the I shall be deceased, you shall be missed"

Together we dismantled its nest

.....

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455. **morpheal**

Re: Mary Shelley Meets von Neumann Interstellar Probes

Tue 19 May 1998

*23 LINES FROM 23 POEMS IN O'HARA'S COLLECTED
IN RESPONSE TO R.GANCIE & HENRY GOULD*

Poetry is as useful as a machine.

Meant to imply that I can actually communicate something using the mechanism
of "poetry" to someone specific and do that intentionally ?

Even the telephone is nowadays rarely that useful.

I wish I could say, from experience, that the author is correct in saying so.

*silly as we, our intuitive craft
blind with art's crushing defeat. The dull roar
& who steps ashore upon that
may now close his eyes as if they were tired flowers
panting appreciation. You are too late, you are violent
rendering unto the sinking its Lie
too soon. Art is sad and
speech is not embarrassed by your attention.*

Sigh.....Have to essentially agree with that.

*After the immersion and the stance
there is no love, and it is not the sun--
still, these waves, gnaw down our helm.*

I definitely have nothing whatever to say that would disprove that. That is, from a purely experiential basis.

Therefore I keep asking myself what is left, as to any communicative means, and can no longer give myself any really useful, meaningful, answer.

Bob Ezergailis
aka Morpheal

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456. **morpheal**

Re: Mary Shelley Meets von Neumann Interstellar Probes

Tue 19 May 1998

Far from the production of "signature" poetics, but still within the discussion of human creativity and relevant to the necessarily intuitive ability being essential to genuine creativity. Can automata write poetry ? They might have better things to do, and so once they master the process, why would they bother to keep writing it ? Unless perhaps they sought self expression and a wider spectrum of communicative interaction via that means ?

The idea of automata piloting, commanding, crewing, intersettellar probes is more essential to their reality, no matter what extreme journeys in space-time we happen to be contemplating. As you might know, I believe that interstellar probes are to be a reality within this next century. Well within it. That is, if dilligent and necessary effort is given to that important conquest.

*"Whenever he [John von Neumann] discussed self-reproduction, he
mentioned mutations, which are random changes of elements....*

True A.I. does mutate. It does evolve. It does not simply learn the way that we learn our ABCs or how to do arithmetic. True A.I. goes beyond rules, pattern recognition, and rule application, even if it remains (as far as I can discern) more limited than human potential. There is a very real difference when we

refer to evolution. Evolution, as a property of true A.I., means approaching a problem from a new direction, that is previously outside of the programmed parameters or "rules". In other words it can create new rules that are situation specific.

I speculate that that is necessary because of the role of A.I. in tactical applications. It is well known (from various published sources) that the "computer" on board the Stealth fighter can not only fly a normal flight pattern and evasive action effectively, but is an effective tactician in terms of using weapons against enemy targets, should the pilot be disabled during a mission. It is capable of fighting, and returning home, without human guidance. It would be interesting to observe whether that kind of system can out perform humans in extremely demanding situations.

Breaking rules, within certain known limits of technological and organic constraints, is essential to the successful tactician. It is one of the most difficult areas to "learn" as it becomes classified as "intuitive". Therefore the very function that true A.I. is initially developed to perform is the most challenging application of A.I. capabilities. It is as if aiming for the most sophisticated, complex, function, and working down from there.

The true (potentially successful) tactician, in diplomacy or combat, is an artist. It is the most highly intuitive and creative of human functions. Can true A.I. become an artist, defined as a creative rule breaker who remains within the parameters of the pliability of all material resources ? I am not convinced that that has been fully achieved, and certainly not at all in excess of human capabilities. The Wizard of Oz is still necessary behind the curtain. We might speculate if that is a permanent condition. If pressured to guess, I would say: no, it is a temporary limitation and human creativity will be exceeded by the machine.

Here we have a corollary of importance. The enemy tactician despises our truest, most creative, artists most of all. They, after all, are as important as is tactical history, in terms of evolution. Suppress the artists, and the more strictly rule based responses, often ideologically and historically limited, along with nonsensical disinformation passing as intuitive response, becomes the normative, as in any totalism and becomes the limit of systems evolution. Cultures and empires that too severely constrain, or who dispose of their artists, eventually perish in extremes of tactical blundering. Military history is rife with clear examples. The same can be said as to scientism and technocracy, where there ceases to be any essential cross fertilization and hybridization with the arts. Those disciplines become sterile and stagnant, for similar reasons. All that remains then is the stealing of ideas and their reiteration. That is a mainstay of totalitarian, totalistic regimes.

1.1.2.1 above and Section 1.8 below he posed the problems of modeling evolutionary processes in the framework of automata theory, of quantizing natural selection, and of explaining how highly efficient, complex, powerful automata can evolve from inefficient, simple, weak automata.

The first one celled organism is our first recognizable simple automaton. It is hardly to be referred to as "living". The subsequent one celled organisms are more complex automata and they continue to evolve.

Clearly human ingenuity can build devices that are as effective as those early one celled organisms, or proto-organisms. They do not have to resemble known biological systems. They can be a totally different species, beginning a new evolutionary tree quite distinct from the organic evolution we know of.

When you look at how simple those very first organisms are, and how they evolved in complexity, you soon realize that it ought to be easy to build one using relatively primitive micro-technologies. Nevertheless the engineering of such things involves components that exceed the limits of known rules and paradigms. That is typical of any advanced engineering project. It is ideally not deterministic in terms of simply and purely yielding to established rules. The new rules are derivative by others, subsequent to the creative breakthrough.

"In order to investigate whether life can continue to exist forever, I shall need to define "life" in physics language. I claim that a "living being" is any entity which codes information (in the physics sense of the word) with the information coded being preserved by natural selection. Thus "life" is a form of information processing,...

There is therefore no distinguishing line dividing organic life from inorganic systems. I firmly believe that there is no distinguishing line. No special new characteristic that suddenly divides the two categories and makes organisms possible. The false assumption of soul-less matter and ensouled organisms is where we go most wrong.

In that sense there is potentially true (rather than mathematical) infinity. (Math infinity being simply the incommensurable.) We must also realize that the anthropocentric viewpoint is groundless. The universe is not the only universe, and it is not created for or epitomized by, the human species which is in fact chance artifact within all the potentialities of universal evolution. We must assume other branchings from the roots. As to intelligence acquisition, and intelligence creation, the metaphor of the universe at play with itself, would be a way of referring to the sum of all interactions. That is a completely non moral thing. There is no good or evil in it. It simply is what it is, was, and all that it might potentially be, as creativity.

| human mind-and the human soul-is a very complex computer program.

Yes. Of course. Many programs. Too many to store on a very very large computer. Including all the inherent and acquired data. Of course it is theoretically possible to scan all of that data and acquire it, beyond scanning the fields of consciousness which are only a limited portion and mostly cognitive. This is much more than science fiction.

Tipler had initially believed that it was impossible to imagine what an infinitely intelligent being would think about or do.

that in the future all humans would live again in the mind of God.

Of course there is a very real necessity to store and safeguard the very essence of the human and its potentialities against cataclysmic destruction. That includes some elements of diversity. It is part of the rationale of human survival that the species be replicatable beyond the surface of this earth. We are increasingly approaching that assurance. In that situation an "omega" system is purely the storage device for a very vast amount of data, the same as an huge archive of blueprints and technical specifications, without any value judgements beyond diversity. It is a repository of potentially useful information without prejudicing what might prove useful in some future scenario.

That inevitably implies that human beings will need to defend against potential competitive hostilities beyond what they have thus far been able to practice against. The latter mostly their own species, and the struggle against the forces of the natural environment. I tend to be more extreme in that than Heinlein was. I cannot envision a universe populated by friendly "aliens" or by species that share radically similar technologies rather than having evolved along very divergent paths.

>The Omega Point, he realized, would have power to re-create-or
>resurrect-everyone who had ever lived for an eternity of bliss. The Omega Point >would not merely re-create the lives of the dead; it would improve on them. Nor >would we leave behind our worldly desires. For example, every man
could have >not only the most beautiful woman he had ever seen.....

How very sad... The woman I love most is far from flawless, and likely the Omega Point would never permit her to exist, or my existence either. The Omega Point's two creations would not be me or her, in any significant sense of it. So it means nothing to me except perhaps a kind of totalistic, totalitarian oppression. An unbearable, infinitely cruel, kind of oppression. What, or who, decides "perfection" is a very real problem. Achieving an increasingly unfettered human creative freedom, as is promoted in "The Morphealist Manifesto" is the antithesis to any ideologically totalistic limited idea of perfections.

In one sense the difficulty as to the "omega point" comes because of "network thinking". We see the ultimate evolution of the automaton as a unity, or a hive of peripherals attached and dependent upon, and governed by a central "god" mainframe. This creates a kind of state mainframe totalitarian rule governed commune of dependent peripherals rather than individuals. This tendency goes against achieving the best potentialities of the larger project. In fact it can seriously subvert it. (Very important point. How we build the architecture can seriously effect the effects that that architecture has as well as how that architecture itself tends to evolve. Conservative tradition about how that architecture must be constructed then stands in the way of creative solutions that would be better suited to the greater purposes that are potentially envisioned for the evolving systems.)

Therefore we must be willing to question, against traditional beliefs, and the mythologies that present those so powerfully and archetypically, the very necessity and nature of the "omega point" itself. If we do not we risk the destruction of any sense of humanity, and we tend to engineer humans into totalized peripherals of a (for all human intents and purposes) infinitely vast totalitarian, totalistic, engine that drives them. The machine becomes the ghost in the machine.

about it and you have to make a decision: do you really believe these constructs that you've created based on physical laws or are going to pretend they are pure games with no relation to reality."

They are useful, insofar as they are predictive metaphors or analogies. They are never the reality. Every rule can be falsified, eventually. Natural reality is more alike to intuitive tactics than it is to rule based games playing. The rules of engagement with the universe are that there are no rules. We keep making up the rules according to currently commonly known human (including technological) limitations. When a believed limitation is exceeded then a new rule, or limit, is put into place. Do automata also stop there at that stop light ?

Do we program, or teach, automata to function that same way ? Or do the automata learn on the basis of the assumption that all beliefs are potentially false beliefs ? In other words, is the automaton as tactician free of any sense of religion, and is its empiricism ultimately less tainted than traditional versions of empiricism, such that the automata lead humanity to the new paradigms that become necessary as human vision is increasingly exceeded ?

"By the middle of the next century [Hans] Moravec said, robots will be as intelligent as humans and will essentially take over the economy. "We're really out of work at that point," Moravec chortled. Humans might still pursue "SOME QUIRKY STUFF LIKE POETRY" thht springs from psychological vagaries still beyond the grasp of robots, but robots will have all the important jobs."---ibid-cp

Essentially yes.

However, the robots will be organic, and not machinery in the sense that we usually think of it. The human, organic, manipulator is less costly when properly programmed than the robotic, inorganic, manipulator, for many functions, and will remain that way indefinitely.

Then again, what about markets for products ?

In this economic system there would be a need for vast numbers of production machines that alternate as consumption machines. The same machines could continue to do both functions, but more efficiently in both crucial areas.

The future economy is a complicated subject. The whole spectrum of predictable technological evolutions, including that of automata, necessarily must be taken into account, if any effective and meaningful "big picture" prediction is to be arrived at. It is essential that such thinking take place, and as of yet I know of nothing being done that makes any real sense in that regard. Perhaps that is because I am very outside that loop, though we hardly touch upon the real subject matter in question.

Bob Ezergailis
aka Morpheal

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457. **Charles Alexander**

Re: The Bloated Professoriate (vs. Spicer)

Tue 19 May 1998

They both assume, because of their own ignorance, that Spicer is unimportant and unknown. Their familiarity with the contemporary poetry scene is (to put it kindly) minimal.

Danny, in my experience these kinds of assumptions are frequent and can be extremely harmful. Once, according to a local grant panelist I knew, a Chax appeal for funds was nearly shot down (and the amount finally awarded considerably reduced) because one panelist, who is an honored professor at the local university, basically came in with the attitude that authors Chax was printing or presenting weren't any writers he knew about, therefore they must not be anybody important. As I recall, this was a time when those authors probably included Nate Mackey and Norman Fischer, among others.

But it gets worse. I know of one case of a local, fairly rural arts council denying a literary press funding because the panel in that locality didn't consider literature to be art.

And we wonder why it is so difficult for poets to get published . . .

charles

charles alexander :: poet and book artist :: [REDACTED]

chax press :: alexander writing/design/publishing

books by artists' hands :: web sites built with care and vision

<http://alexwritdespub.com/chax> :: <http://alexwritdespub.com>

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458. **Juliana Spahr**
formalists, oralists

Tue 19 May 1998

Help me! I'm looking to create a bibliography of secondary material to give my students in my "understanding poetry" course (which has a lot of nonmajors although it is a 300 level course) next semester.

I usually do this section on form where we look at the sonnet--a few of Petrarch, all of Shakespeare's, some of Brooks, Thomas, Mayer, McKay, Berrigan, etc. I have them compare the Princeton Encyclopedia definition of the sonnet to Mayer's in the T&W Handbook on Form and talk about what a sonnet means. A lot of them end up writing their papers around this issue (especially on Mayer's work which troubles and delights them). I need more citations and places for them to look to get more of the discussion around form.

Can anyone think of any good articles that say to write a sonnet, or whatever, one has to follow the rules? I need some articles that defend form as settled and absolute. I've been sending them to the Annie Finch book. Anything else good out there? Any good articles that defend form as rigorous ways of thinking, etc?

Would also like to collect citations on the opposite if any come to mind.

Also, I do a section on oral poetries. I'm looking for writing that explains the relevance of chants to poetry studies. Anything that would help my students begin to understand the chant as an art form (interestingly here in Hawai'i, they tend to get chants in h.s. but they seem to read them as history--so whenever I've given them a chant to look at they can do a historical reading and say things like well it is about King Kamehameha III and etc. etc. but can't see it as something that is poetry).

Also, any good articles on rap? Anyone taught rap in their poetry courses? Any ideas on how to get students to write critically about rap?

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459. **Gary Sullivan**

Re: Mary Shelley Meets von Neumann Interstellar Probes

Tue 19 May 1998

*Therefore I keep asking myself what is left, as to any communicative means,
and can no longer give myself any really useful, meaningful, answer.*

THE ANSWER

by Geoffrey Young

The answer is
there is no answer
and though this might appear

to be an answer
for some, it
isn't for me.

It's not even
a poem. It's life
after the fact.

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460. **Gale Nelson**

Re: formalists, orlists

Tue 19 May 1998

Juliana,

Rather than argue that formalist technique is _the only way to go,_ Harry Mathews gives a compassionate nod to form, albeit not always the forms naturally moved toward. I am reminded, for instance of his eye-rhyme couplets, where we listen for what our eye can "hear" as repetition, but which is, necessarily, different to the ear; some samples (not, likely, Mathews'):

hear / bear
come / home
through / though
cafe / safe

His article, "Mathews' Algorithm (Oulipo: A Primer of Potential Literature; Univ. of Nebraska Press, ed. by WF Motte), or Motte's own article, Permutational Mathews (Review of Contemporary Fiction: H M Number, Fall 1987) would give the student a sense of how formal operations can open up unexpected channels of text.

In his beautiful essay, *Lecture on Nothing*, John Cage contemplates form in ways that leave me moved. But, that's another matter, altogether...

Gale Nelson

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461. **Burt Kimmelman**

New Book on William Bronk (from Fairleigh Dickinson U P); see below

Tue 19 May 1998

From: TESLA::KIMMELMAN 19-MAY-1998 16:51:09.79

To: ADMIN::KIMMELMAN

CC:

Subj: New Book on William Bronk (see below)

THE "WINTER MIND":

WILLIAM BRONK AND AMERICAN LETTERS

by

Burt Kimmelman

From the book jacket:

"Despite the fact that many critical essays and reviews have been written on Bronk's work, until now there has been no full-length treatment of it. The "Winter Mind" not only fills this gap but does so with intellectual resourcefulness and insight.

Kimmelman's reading of the overall thematics of Bronk's work and his close reading of individual poems are quite original and revelatory though always backed by solid scholarship."

- Michael Heller

"William Bronk may quite possibly be our greatest living poet, one whose work requires an enormously committed reader. In Burt Kimmelman, Bronk has the kind of reader and critic a great poet deserves--one, that is, who is deeply sympathetic to the work, and extremely knowledgeable. Even those who know Bronk's work well have much to learn from Kimmelman; he's written an utterly remarkable book."

- Ed Foster

This first full-length study of William Bronk, one of our most important contemporary poets and essayists, locates his work in relation to the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century New England literary tradition, to later twentieth-century modernism, and to the subsequent Objectivist and Black Mountain schools of poetry. Through special attention to his uniquely elegant style, this study demonstrates how Bronk has brought together earlier American poetics and philosophy with modern and postmodern notions of being, emptiness, and nothingness.

This book features extensive discussions of Dickinson, Emerson, Melville, Thoreau, Whitman, of Frost and Stevens, as well as of Cid Corman, Robert Creeley, Charles Olson, and George Oppen. As particularly concerns these twentieth-century figures, Kimmelman also sheds light on the role in their thinking and poetics played by post-positivist science-especially its theories of relativity and uncertainty.

216 Pages * Bibliography, Notes, Index * \$37.50
ISBN 0-8386-3790-6 * LC 97-41275 * CIP

To order or if interested in reviewing this book:

Associated University Presses
440 Forsgate Drive
Cranbury, NJ 08512

██████████ (fax)

██████████ (phone)

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462. **toddbaron**
Re: yet another query
Tue 19 May 1998

Charles:

I'd be happy to xerox pieces for you from Temblor.
I believe I have the set...

yours,

Todd Baron
ReMap

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463. **Matt Kirschenbaum**
Harry Partch Instrumentarium (fwd)
Tue 19 May 1998

Speaking of Sonic Youth, the following from their Echo Canyon mailing list. I make no claims for whether or not this is legit, but assume so as it would be an odd sort of hoax. Anyone know more about Harry Patch or the situation below? Maybe someone can help out. (I assume the Keady address would be the one to write to.) Matt

Date: Sat, 16 May 1998 22:06:17 -0400
From: Jim Keady <[REDACTED]>
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Harry Partch Instrumentarium

Hiya, I'm not subscribed to yr list, but I would like to bring attention to something that may be relevant to some people who are on it. Harry Partch:composer (1901-1974) Onetime hobo, lifetime musician, noted for, among other things, building his own instruments based on microtonal theory and writing for them. Most of his work is playable only on these wunuvakind instruments, which may contribute to why you maybe haven't heard of him. Anyway, his original instruments are currently housed at a state college in Purchase, NY, but are on the verge of being evicted. They need a new home IMMEDIATELY. If anyone within the sound of my keypad has any leads, please contact me & I'll pass the word on. Thanks&thanksagain,

-----Joe

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464. **Karen and Trevor**
Fourteen Hills
Tue 19 May 1998

Announcing the publication of the Spring/Summer 1998 issue of Fourteen Hills: The SFSU Review.

Contributors: Kim Addonizio, Mark Amerika, Lucia Berlin, Curtis W. Bonney, Brian Bouldrey, Nicole Brodsky, Julia Chapin, Karin Cotterman, Beverly Dahlen, Lydia Davis, Los Delicados, Cornelius Eady, Barbara Guest, Fanny Howe, Barbara Jourdonnais, Sparrow 13 LaughingWand, Sarah Lenoue, Jean Lieske, Suzanne Lummis, Sarah Mangold, Joan Retallack, Elizabeth Robinson, Bruce Holland Rogers, Camille Roy, Kathy Lou Schultz, John Kosmas Skinas, Edward

Smallfield, Sandra Abena Songbird-Naylor, Nicole Stefanko, Hugh Steinberg, Lynne Tillman and Tsering Wangmo.

Also: A conversation with Denise Levertov transcribed from a video from The Poetry Center and American Poetry Archives.

The issue is \$7. You can order through Small Press Distribution: 1 800

██████ or send a check to:

Fourteen Hills

Creative Writing Department

San Francisco State University

1600 Holloway Ave

San Francisco CA 94132

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465. **Mark Weiss**

Re: Harry Partch Instrumentarium (fwd)

Tue 19 May 1998

Harry Partch was one of the great American originals. His music is weirdly sonorous, his use of language (he wrote or adapted the texts to his vocal music) original. There are, I think, several cds of his work. I recently saw one listed somewhere. Check out his piece "Barstow," the text for which is a set of huitch-hikers' graffiti collected by Partch at a popular pickup spot outside of the eponymous city in his hobo days. They don't mention that his instruments are finely crafted and of great sculptural beauty. I hope they find a home. They should be in the Library of Congress or Smithsonian instrument collections, where they could be available, like the strads at L of C, for performance. Partch disciples (I use the word advisedly) can be found in almost all the odd corners of America, building their own instruments and creating music, although their numbers are not large.

At 08:40 PM 5/19/98 -0400, you wrote:

>Speaking of Sonic Youth, the following from their Echo Canyon mailing list.

>I make no claims for whether or not this is legit, but assume so as it would

>be an odd sort of hoax. Anyone know more about Harry Patch or the situation

>below? Maybe someone can help out. (I assume the Keady address would be the

>one to write to.) Matt

>

>>Date: Sat, 16 May 1998 22:06:17 -0400

>>From: Jim Keady <██████>

>>To: ██████

>>Subject: Harry Partch Instrumentarium

>>
>> Hiya, I'm not subscribed to yr list, but I would like to bring
>> attention to something that may be relevant to some people who are on
>> it. Harry Partch:composer (1901-1974) Onetime hobo, lifetime
>> musician, noted for, among other things, building his own instruments
>> based on microtonal theory and writing for them. Most of his work is
>> playable only on these wunuvakind instruments, which may contribute to
>> why you maybe haven't heard of him. Anyway, his original instruments
>> are currently housed at a state college in Purchase, NY, but are on
>> the verge of being evicted. They need a new home IMMEDIATELY. If
>> anyone within the sound of my keypad has any leads, please contact me
>> & I'll pass the word on. Thanks&thanksagain,
>> -----Joe
>
>

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466. **ScoutEW**
more poems by Jeff Clark
Tue 19 May 1998

yes i liked those but this one, yes this one is the one-
1985-87
All notions occur to me beginning, "If I were..."
Swaying outside make-out closets.
There is no grid in the desert.
Joy from a robe pocket.
plus many more.....

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467. **ScoutEW**
Re: formalists, oralists
Tue 19 May 1998

In a message dated 5/19/98 2:59:19 PM, you wrote:
<<Also, any good articles on rap? Anyone taught rap in their poetry
courses? Any ideas on how to get students to write critically about rap?
>>
Sound great

You must include lyrics from the Wu-Tang Clan- they are great poems. If you want to deal with the words of Rap artists you must deal with the beats in the background also, so play it Any Wu-Tang will do.

Other choices-Public Enemy "It takes a nation of millions to hold us back." Tricky "Pre-Millennium Tension" A Tribe Called Quest -is probably your best safest bet...Beats Rhymes and Life is their last one- Many of the lyrics can be looked at in political, social ways not to mention as metaphor etc..Wu-Tang rhymes about everything from Socrates, Egyptian Mathematics, to street names in Brooklyn etc

sounds great, Public Enemy is in the Norton Anthology of African American Literature as well as others I believe, this is a great idea, you are making a great effort to include all styles of poetry, wonderful--

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468. **joel lewis**
in my neighborhood

Wed 20 May 1998

1:44 AM ET 05/18/98

Pilgrims seek Virgin Mary in N.J. supermarket

JERSEY CITY, N.J. (Reuters) - Word that an image of the Virgin Mary had appeared on a supermarket freezer door lured pilgrims to a small store in New Jersey Monday.

The image, said to be a silhouette of a woman in a hooded garment, first appeared Thursday and lasted through the weekend, witnesses said.

They said the vision had appeared inside the thick, double-paned glass door of a freezer containing sausages, burritos and plantains at La Conga Supermarket in Jersey City, a largely Hispanic and heavily Catholic working-class city a few miles west of New York.

Although the image had faded away by Monday, people kept arriving at the store.

Hundreds of visitors left candles, handwritten messages and flowers, said Jarmina Cortes, owner of a flower shop next door to the supermarket, who sent her six children to leave a bouquet of a dozen white roses at the freezer.

"The people are still coming. Many are sick or tortured," she said. "They are looking for help."

Asked about the image, a spokesman for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese in Newark, New Jersey, said: "It is not impossible

that some condensation got inside those two thermal panes and caused the image.

``I am led to believe that it is certainly not an apparition," the spokesman, Michael Hurley, said. ``But could I swear that it wasn't? No."

^REUTERS@

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469. **Henry Gould**

Re: formalists, oralists

Wed 20 May 1998

On the need for form: famous comments by Frost - "like playing tennis with the net down" etc. Also check the 2 collections of Brodsky essays - he's big (& conservative) on this issue.

Interesting sidelight: new book by Paul Friedrich, *Music in Russian Poetry*. Fine idiosyncratic non-jargon intro to the musical basis of Russian formalisms. Connects formalism to performance in an overall atmosphere of musical awareness. America is a suburb of Russia. This is hard to comprehend: it's like asking the Romans at the height of their glory to admit they're a province of Greece. We won the cold war, didn't we?

Juliana & others will suspect I'm wandering from the query. I suggest that American poetry will never understand itself from the inside - you need that Archimedean lever. In other words, our ideas of "form" or "breaking form" are so completely rudimentary-abstract-academic as to be virtually meaningless in practice, and this is why an oratorical rant is the dominant popular form in this country, split from an insipid academic formalism (either free verse or metrical - comes to the same thing). The Russians can help us hear ourselves - a Baroque relevance & poetic tradition extending 500 years before they even got started (Chaucer vs. Pushkin).

- Henry Gould

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470. **Tom Orange**

formalists, oralists

Wed 20 May 1998

On Tue, 19 May 1998, Gale Nelson <[REDACTED]> writes,

His article, "Mathews' Algorithm (Oulipo: A Primer of Potential Literature; Univ. of Nebraska Press, ed. by WF Motte), or Motte's own article, Permutational Mathews (Review of Contemporary Fiction: H M

Number, Fall 1987) would give the student a sense of how formal operations can open up unexpected channels of text.

interesting that you should mention this book gale, as it reminds me of another great piece contained therein, by queneau on, among other things, mallarme sonnets -- title and page reference escape me, as does the precise wording of the the analogy queneau makes: something along the lines that mallarme sonnets are to that form what the genetic material of the fruit fly is to genetics, an endless source of raw experimental material. queneau goes on to "haiku-ize" the mallarme sonnet "in 'x'" ("ses purs ongles..."), gutting everything except the rhyming words.

might be a challenge to yr students, juliana, but what the hell, challenge away...
t.

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471. **Herb Levy**

Re: scene reports, please

Wed 20 May 1998

i'm a culpa, i like that, can i use it?

No prob, Maria, if you want to seem as illiterate as me.

The phrase is, of course, an awkward multi-language mistranslation of a Mickey Spillane book title.

Bests,

Herb

Herb Levy



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472. **Herb Levy**

Re: Martin Bartlett (per Herb Levy's scene update)

Wed 20 May 1998

Thanks for the thoughts on the Martin Bartlett project, David. These are entirely different anecdotes than the ones you told when you were in Seattle last. Perhaps I should have had you do liner notes.

Thanks too for the comments on the Subtext series. We do include the fact that it's in the back room in all of our local PR. I didn't mention it here, cause I figured any out of towners from the list who come by will be taking a cab &, of

course, ALL of the cabbies in town know where the Subtext readings are (and which day of the month they're on).

I am sorry to hear there were folks who missed you & Robin read last fall. With luck people will end up in the right place when Blaser reads at Bumbershoot this coming Labor Day weekend.

Bests,

Herb

Really glad to see Martin's name mentioned as a composer whose work is receiving attention. My gladness is both esthetic and personal. He and I went way back, and in fact performed in a play by Earle Birney together at U Wash in Seattle in 1960 or earlier. I was with him when he broke into a Vancouver church to play the organ, drunk as a lord. He had one of those larger-than-life characters (whoever he was _really_ , como se dice [listen to the music!]), that made Univ Brit Col a lucky place to be 40 years ago . . . another, being Listgoader Bowering. Last time I heard Martin live was at Langton St in SF in the mid-80s I think. Now sadly no longer with us, but for the music,--and plaudits to who's made that possible.

Good also, to be reminded by Herb of the Subtext Series--great venue, attentive audience. (Remember to let people know it's happening in the back, though--there were those who came to hear Robin Blaser but went away empty-handed, thinking the front of the space was where it was supposed to be happening, and that it had been canceled last-minute). The upcoming programs look to be tiptop. Wish I could take Anselm's workshop.

Otherwise, and back home, our series at the Cinnabar Theater in Petaluma is over until September, and Sonoma State is ending its academic year next week, so nothing to report on the reading scene.

Even more back home, my latest listening has been the RCA Jazz Tribune double CD of Bix Beiderbecke, backed by and backing variously Bing and the Rhythm Boys, Joe Venuti, Frankie Trumbauer, the Dorseys, Lennie Hayton, Benny Goodman, Gene Krupa, Jean Goldkette, Irene Taylor, Jack Teagarden, Eddie Lang, the Kewller Sisters and many more. Beiderbecke's solo on "From Monday On" reminds me of a sentence from _Under the Volcano_ : "it was a day like a good Joe Venuti record," -- penned by Malcolm Lowry, a fellow moldy fig. And let me recommend Jonny Lang's _Lie to Me_ CD, a dozen retro rock blues numbers played & sung by a masterly young guitarist.

db3

Herb Levy



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473. **Tom Orange**

Some poems by Jeff Clark

Wed 20 May 1998

katy, that you should post these poems on the very day that i finish reading clark's /the little door slides back/ is quite timely for me as i'm trying to sort out a response to them.

i suppose my reading -- others' too? -- is overdetermined by the references dipalma makes on the back cover, "the visionary writings of such poets as trakt, desnos, and michaux." tho for me less trakt and more of the french, rimbaud and lautreamont (particularly in the shifts in voice/perspective, the strikingly predatory erotics) for example.

i'm struck by the form of these works, both the variety (tercets, prose-poems, the more open "blow-notes") and the degree of control exercised/exorcised on/over these forms.

the vocabulary, too, is quite something: neologisms, foreign even otherworldly locales and isms and exotica.

any other takes that would corroborate or contest?

thanks,

t.

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474. **Tom Orange**

John Hawkes

Wed 20 May 1998

"You and Chantal and I are simply travelling in purity and extremity down that road the rest of the world attempts to hide from us by heaping up whole forests of the most confusing road signs, detours, barricades."

"...nothing is more important than the existence of what does not exist after all, my theory tells us that ours is the power to invent the very world we are quitting."

"Announced by violent sound and yet invisible, except for the glass scattered like perfect clear grains across an entire field--what splendour, what a perfect overturning of ordinary expectation. The unseen vision is not to be improved upon."

Travesty (New Directions 1976), p. 14, 57, 58.

~~~~~

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475. **Dougolly**

**Re: formalists, orators**

Wed 20 May 1998

I understand Juliana is looking, partly, for a strict formalist description of the sonnet. One simple, clear description is John Fuller's booklet, *The Sonnet*, in the old Methuen Critical Series, which, apart from a glance at Jacques Roubaud's mathematical Oulipoist rule ordering system, is about as trad as you can get. Fuller is the formalist son of the equally formalist Roy Fuller.

Doug Oliver

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476. **morpheal**

**Re: The Answer**

Wed 20 May 1998

*THE ANSWER*

*by Geoffrey Young*

*The answer is  
there is no answer  
and though this might appear*

*to be an answer  
for some, it  
isn't for me.*

*It's not even  
a poem. It's life  
after the fact.*

I really do not know what to say to that.

The word "life" seems somewhat out of place in the last stanza.

M.

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477. **George Bowering**

**Re: scene reports, please**

Wed 20 May 1998

*And by way of a random poll: what music do people currently have in  
rotation?*

Dinah Washington on the boom box in bedroom.

Anthology of live-recorded hip hop in car cassette player.

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

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478. **George Bowering**

**Re: POETICS Digest - 16 May 1998 to 17 May 1998**

Wed 20 May 1998

---

*And here in Edmonton on Saturday night, Jay Clayton & Sheila Jordan together, each took a set, then they did two duos, finishing off with an amazing duo improv on Dizzy Gillespie's 'Birks Works,' To which the only possible response was whistles & cheers & a standing ovation...*

Ah. here in Vancouver I got to do a gig at the Vogue with Diane Krall (is that how you spell it?) and other musicians. She is a serious sweetheart.

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

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479. **George Bowering**

**Re: John Hawkes**

Wed 20 May 1998

---

That just about tears it. The worst one yet. I could not get to sleep last night. I have been telling anyone who gets near that Hawkes is my favourite US novelist since about 1962. That's when I read Charivari and didnt know what the hell was going on but knew that it was the real goods.

Just gave a course this spring on H.D., Ed Dorn and John Hawkes. It worked, too.

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,

Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

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480. **Robert Archambeau**

***Re: formalists, oralists***

*Wed 20 May 1998*

---

The Paul Oppenheimer book David Kellogg mentions begins with one of the best opening lines of any recent academic book -- "Modern thought and literature begin with the invention of the sonnet". No ambiguity there. The thesis is interesting, and the book itself is an odd and useful entity -- a 45 page essay followed by an anthology of sonnets in four languages with English translations. The Fussell chapter David mentions is also good, tightly argued stuff.

John Fuller's booklet *The Sonnet*, part of the Metheun critical idiom series, would be good for students to check out, and has a useful bibliography.

For a non-dogmatic, or at any rate ecumenical, defense of form, you might want to look at Louise Bogan's essay "The Pleasures of Formal Poetry". I'm not sure where this was published originally -- my copy is in *The Poet's Work*, edited by Reginald Gibbons (Chicago 1989).

Here's a narrow and dogmatic statement about form as a necessity, which should spark some classroom debate:

"The...function of the poet is a sharpening and training of his sensibilities; the very exigencies of the medium as he employs it in the act of perception should force him to the discovery of values which he never would have found without the convening of all the conditions of that particular act, conditions one or more of which will be the necessity of solving some particular difficulty such as the location of a rhyme or the perfection of a cadence without disturbance to the remainder of the poem. The poet who suffers from such difficulties instead of profiting by them is only in rather a rough sense a poet at all."

This is from the first page of *Primitivism and Decadence: A Study of American Experimental Poetry* (Arrow 1937).

--

Robert Archambeau  
Department of English  
Lake Forest College



Lake Forest, IL 60045  
<http://www.lfc.edu/~archamb/>

"                      on the end  
of each decision stands a heretic"  
--Michael Barrett

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481. **Susan Wheeler**  
***Re: formalists, oralists***

*Wed 20 May 1998*

---

At 10:00 AM 5/19/98 -1000, you wrote:

>Help me! I'm looking to create a bibliography of secondary material to  
>give my students in my "understanding poetry" course (which has a lot of  
>nonmajors although it is a 300 level course) next semester.  
>  
>I usually do this section on form where we look at the sonnet--a few of  
>Petrarch, all of Shakespeare's, some of Brooks, Thomas, Mayer, McKay,  
>Berrigan, etc. I have them compare the Princeton Encyclopedia definition  
>of the sonnet to Mayer's in the T&W Handbook on Form and talk about what  
>a sonnet means. A lot of them end up writing their papers around this  
>issue (especially on Mayer's work which troubles and delights them). I  
>need more citations and places for them to look to get more of the  
>discussion around form.  
>  
>Can anyone think of any good articles that say to write a sonnet, or  
>whatever, one has to follow the rules? I need some articles that defend  
>form as settled and absolute. I've been sending them to the Annie Finch  
>book. Anything else good out there? Any good articles that defend form  
>as rigorous ways of thinking, etc?

There are some interesting pieces in a collection of essays edited by Harvey Gross, *The Structure of Verse*, that might assist, Juliana: Eliot's "Reflections on Vers Libre", Kunitz's "Action and Incantation", and John Hollander's "The Metrical Frame". But I've also found useful with beginning students a piece by Marilyn Hacker that cropped up in the *Academy of American Poets' Poetry Pilot* in 1995, "A Few Cranky Paragraphs on Form and Content" (may be collected somewhere by now?), *Countermeasures'* reprinting of remarks by Annie Finch and Dana Gioia (stuff on rap, too, by Gioia!) at a 1996 conference on "Poetry and Form"; Molly Peacock's more personal "What the Mockingbird Said" in the essay collection *Conversant Essays*. I haven't looked at the introduction to Rober Richman's anthology *The Direction of*

Poetry (new formalism, natch) for awhile, but my memory is that it is pretty hortatory. Also check out Peter Viereck's "Strict Wildness: The Biology of Poetry" which Poets & Writers printed in their magazine in 1988, but which is probably collected somewhere by now.

>

>Would also like to collect citations on the opposite if any come to  
>mind.

>

>Also, I do a section on oral poetries. I'm looking for writing that  
>explains the relevance of chants to poetry studies. Anything that would  
>help my students begin to understand the chant as an art form  
>(interestingly here in Hawai'i, they tend to get chants in h.s. but they  
>seem to read them as history--so whenever I've given them a chant to  
>look at they can do a historical reading and say things like well it is  
>about King Kamehameha III and etc. etc. but can't see it as something  
>that is poetry).

>

>Also, any good articles on rap? Anyone taught rap in their poetry  
>courses? Any ideas on how to get students to write critically about rap?

>

Tricia Rose's book (Black Noise? - I think that's the title) is terrific. Thinking about your question (not having tried this systematically myself), I'd go from Louise Bennett to Linton Kwesi Johnson for context, and then encourage their writing on only one aspect of it that tends toward the mechanical: scansion/prosody; modulating tone; how the rhymes work and what kinds of rhymes, etc. -- giving them just enough tools to do it. This usually works for me when a poetry is so loaded content and context wise that students have a hard time seeing it as a construction. And I'd add Spearhead to the playlist.

Susan Wheeler

[REDACTED]

voice/fax [REDACTED]

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482. **Robert Archambeau**

***Re: London events? bookstores?***

*Wed 20 May 1998*

---

A real Londoner could give you better info, I'm sure, but my suggestion is to check out a place called Skoob on (I think) Southampton Row, which sells used books, and another place called Soma, which sells Caribbean/Indian/African

books of all kinds, and has all kinds of things that are impossible to find where I live in Chicago.

Why not cross-post your query to the British and Irish poets list? Those guys know what's happening in any given week.

--

Robert Archambeau  
Department of English  
Lake Forest College  
Lake Forest, IL 60045  
<http://www.lfc.edu/~archamb/>

" on the end  
of each decision stands a heretic"  
--Michael Barrett

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483. **Susan Wheeler**  
***Re: Harry Partch Instrumentarium (fwd)***

*Wed 20 May 1998*

---

Harry Partch was a very influential figure in contemporary music, and there are several pockets of followers about that I hope will come to the rescue. I played at one time two of his instruments -- a long piece of plumbing pipe outfitted with a mouthpiece (with conductor composer Henry Brandt yelling "Be the primordial ooze!" at our pipe section), and a huge, climb-into, wooden xylophone which resonated at a lower-than-audible pitch.

At 08:40 PM 5/19/98 -0400, you wrote:

>Speaking of Sonic Youth, the following from their Echo Canyon mailing list.  
>I make no claims for whether or not this is legit, but assume so as it would  
>be an odd sort of hoax. Anyone know more about Harry Patch or the situation  
>below? Maybe someone can help out. (I assume the Keady address would be  
the  
>one to write to.) Matt

>

>>Date: Sat, 16 May 1998 22:06:17 -0400

>>From: Jim Keady <[REDACTED]>

>>To: [REDACTED]

>>Subject: Harry Partch Instrumentarium

>>

>> Hiya, I'm not subscribed to yr list, but I would like to bring  
>> attention to something that may be relevant to some people who are on  
>> it. Harry Partch:composer (1901-1974) Onetime hobo, lifetime

>> musician, noted for, among other things, building his own instruments  
>> based on microtonal theory and writing for them. Most of his work is  
>> playable only on these wunuvakind instruments, which may contribute to  
>> why you maybe haven't heard of him. Anyway, his original instruments  
>> are currently housed at a state college in Purchase, NY, but are on  
>> the verge of being evicted. They need a new home IMMEDIATELY. If  
>> anyone within the sound of my keypad has any leads, please contact me  
>> & I'll pass the word on. Thanks&thanksagain,  
>> -----Joe

>

>

Susan Wheeler

██████████

voice/fax ██████████

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---

484. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**

***nature/poetry...***

*Wed 20 May 1998*

---

charles a., late in responding here... but been reading over (and over) the latest  
of mary hilton's 'primitive publications,' \_saunter\_, by joshua mckinney...

certainly in the domain of poetry that takes on the natural... i've enjoyed it, am  
still not through puzzling over it... highly recommended...

what i wouldn't give for a hike around the top of mount lemmon, you lucky dog  
you...

best,

joe

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---

485. **Tenney Nathanson**

***Re: nature/poetry...; also POG report***

*Wed 20 May 1998*

---

Joe--

guess I dropped a stitch (or thread) here but could you fill me in again if/when  
you have time on what this is? backchannel ok if list already duly apprised.

best,

Tenney

(meanwhile we just took family to Saguaro Monument East a couple of weekends ago--down here at desert level--and the wildflowers were absolutely incredible, supposedly the best season for them in somethinglike 20 years.)

( and while we're on Tucson matters: POG just gave a fundraising dinner-- consummate chef is a POETICS listmember!--and raised about \$1,000, which pretty much balances our budget for this year. Grant applications in for next year; we'll hear in July; so we have hopes to be afloat w another series and other activities next year. Many thanks to all POETICS people who came here to read; we'll try to post a list of events over the last year and a half; it's a pretty terrific list.)

-----Original Message-----

From: UB Poetics discussion group

[mailto:██████████]On Behalf Of Joe Amato/Kass  
Fleisher

Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 1998 6:43 AM

To: ██████████

Subject: nature/poetry...

charles a., late in responding here... but been reading over (and over) the latest of mary hilton's 'primitive publications,' \_saunter\_, by joshua mckinney...

certainly in the domain of poetry that takes on the natural...  
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what i wouldn't give for a hike around the top of mount lemmon, you lucky dog you...

best,

joe

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486. **dee morris**

**Re: John Hawkes**

Wed 20 May 1998

---

George, If you'd be willing, I'd love to hear more details about this course. Which H.D. texts did you read, which Dorn, which Hawkes? What worked in the combination? I just finished teaching H.D. in combination with Theresa Hak

Kyung Cha, Kamau Brathwaite, and Nate Mackey---another generative combination.

Dee

*That just about tears it. The worst one yet. I could not get to sleep last night. I have been telling anyone who gets near that Hawkes is my favourite US novelist since about 1962. That's when I read Charivari and didnt know what the hell was going on but knew that it was the real goods.*

*Just gave a course this spring on H.D., Ed Dorn and John Hawkes. It worked, too.*

*George Bowering.*

*2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4*

*fax: [REDACTED]*

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487. **Daniel Zimmerman**

***Re: formalists, oralists***

*Wed 20 May 1998*

---

Juliana Spahr wrote:

>

> Help me! I'm looking to create a bibliography of secondary material to  
> give my students in my "understanding poetry" course (which has a lot of  
> nonmajors although it is a 300 level course) next semester.

>

> I usually do this section on form where we look at the sonnet--a few of  
> Petrarch, all of Shakespeare's, some of Brooks, Thomas, Mayer, McKay,  
> Berrigan, etc. I have them compare the Princeton Encyclopedia definition  
> of the sonnet to Mayer's in the T&W Handbook on Form and talk about what  
> a sonnet means. A lot of them end up writing their papers around this  
> issue (especially on Mayer's work which troubles and delights them). I  
> need more citations and places for them to look to get more of the  
> discussion around form.

>

> Can anyone think of any good articles that say to write a sonnet, or  
> whatever, one has to follow the rules? I need some articles that defend

> form as settled and absolute. I've been sending them to the Annie Finch  
> book. Anything else good out there? Any good articles that defend form  
> as rigorous ways of thinking, etc?  
>  
<snip>

Juliana,

I'd recommend two works about as far apart as they get:

John Clarke's *\_From Feathers to Iron: A Concourse of World Poetics\_*. San Francisco: Tombouctou/Convivio, 1987; ISBN 0-939180-42-1 [lectures which use, as illustration, the 50 sonnets from his earlier collection *\_The End of This Side\_*]. It also anticipates his monumental, post-humously issued collection of sonnets, *\_In the Analogy\_*. Toronto & Buffalo: shuffaloff, 1997, ISBN 1-880631-10-5.

Berman, Sandra L. *\_The Sonnet Over Time: A Study in the Sonnets of Petrarch, Shakespeare, and Baudelaire\_*. Chapel Hill & London: UNC/CH, 1988, ISBN 0-8078-7063-3. Interesting, solidly academic, though a bit of a struggle for me, since I read neither Italian nor French.

I will also teach a similar course this fall, so I'll keep my eyes open & let you know if I find anything else.

Best,

Dan Zimmerman

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488. **Steve Shoemaker**  
***London events? bookstores?***

*Wed 20 May 1998*

---

Hello All--I'll be in London for a few days next week (Thursday the 28th thru Sunday the 31st), and then again on the 8th and 9th of June. Anybody know of any good po/art/music stuff going on?

And oh yeah, bookstores too, esp. if there in Bloomsbury, where I'll be staying.

Thanks, Steve

>

Steve Shoemaker  
Assistant Professor  
English Department  
Wake Forest University

Winston-Salem, NC 27109



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489. **David Kellogg**  
***Re: formalists, oralists***  
*Wed 20 May 1998*

---

Juliana,

I missed your original message (deleted it along with hundreds of others awaiting me on return from vacation), but doesn't Fussell have a chapter on the sonnet in his old *Poetic Meter & Poetic Form*? It might say something along these lines. You might also consider Vendler's remarks about Shakespeare's "couplet tie" in the intro to her new edition of his sonnets. (The accompanying CD of Vendler reading is great for insomniacs, too). On a weirder note, do you know Paul Oppenheimer's *The Birth of the Modern Mind: Self, Consciousness, and the Invention of the Sonnet* (Oxford, 1989)? Next to Julian Jaynes, gives one of the strangest accounts of the emergence of subjectivity I have read, an extreme version of organic form.

Sorry, none of these are probably on point exactly. Another thing, not on the sonnet but perhaps relevant, is Dana Gioia's hostility to what he calls somewhere in *Can Poetry Matter?* the "pseudo-formal" poem, i.e., nonce sonnets, quatrains, etc. There goes the neighborhood.

Cheers,  
David

On Wed, 20 May 1998, Daniel Zimmerman wrote:

*Juliana Spahr wrote:*

*Help me! I'm looking to create a bibliography of secondary material to give my students in my "understanding poetry" course (which has a lot of nonmajors although it is a 300 level course) next semester.*

*I usually do this section on form where we look at the sonnet--a few of Petrarch, all of Shakespeare's, some of Brooks, Thomas, Mayer, McKay, Berrigan, etc. I have them compare the Princeton Encyclopedia definition of the sonnet to Mayer's in the T&W Handbook on Form and talk about what a sonnet means. A lot of them end up writing their papers around this issue (especially on Mayer's work which troubles and delights them). I need more citations and places for them to look to get more of the discussion around form.*

*Can anyone think of any good articles that say to write a sonnet, or*



*whatever, one has to follow the rules? I need some articles that defend form as settled and absolute. I've been sending them to the Annie Finch book. Anything else good out there? Any good articles that defend form as rigorous ways of thinking, etc?*

*<snip>*

*Juliana,*

*I'd recommend two works about as far apart as they get:*

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*I will also teach a similar course this fall, so I'll keep my eyes o-pen & let you know if I find anything else.*

*Best,*

*Dan Zimmerman*

Cheers,  
David

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg                      Duke University  
██████████                      Program in Writing and Rhetoric  
██████████                      Durham, NC 27708  
FAX ██████████                      <http://www.duke.edu/~kellogg/>

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490. **Safdie Joseph**  
***Re: Herb Levy's scene update***

*Wed 20 May 1998*

Herb wrote:

> Thanks too for the comments on the Subtext series. We do include the  
> fact  
> that it's in the back room in all of our local PR. I didn't mention  
> it  
> here, cause I figured any out of towners from the list who come by  
> will be  
> taking a cab &, of course, ALL of the cabbies in town know where the  
> Subtext readings are (and which day of the month they're on).  
>

So just wanted to mention to those of you who are flying in for Anselm's reading and workshop in the back room that I'm giving a reading tonight at the Seattle Public Library, 4721 Rainier Avenue South, with Cal Kinnear and Becka McKay at 7:00. And it's NOT rainier, this morning at least . . .

Joe

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#### 491. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**

***nature/poetry...***

*Wed 20 May 1998*

---

tenney and others: mary hilton puts out a series of chapbooks under the 'primitive publications' imprint... each chapbook is "historically based"... \$20 gets you a subscription of six, one chapbook for \$4...

checks payable to "mary hilton," addressed to

primitive publications

1706 U Street, NW, #102

Washington, DC 20009

previous titles by mary herself, mark wallace, kristin prevallet, jefferson hansen, sherry brennan, and the joshua mckinney item i mentioned in my last post (*\_saunter\_*, named after a passage in thoreau)... i've enjoyed them all...

best,

joe

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492. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**  
***sustainability...***

Wed 20 May 1998

---

re sustainability: this is somewhat off the track of the discussion here... but there's an excellent piece by bill mckibben in this month's *\_atlantic monthly\_*, "a special moment in history," that details how the nature of, well, nature itself is rapidly being transformed by homo sapiens... which requires a somewhat more bracing grasp of what we mean by sustainability... it's not simply how many people the earth can sustain, which itself appears now to be a transition issue, given the expected doubling of human population in the next half-century (this doubling representing, for mckibben, a limit point, regardless how you factor energy conservation per individual)... it's a question of our creating, even now, what amounts to a new earth, what mckibbens calls "earth2"---an earth with "new storms and new oceans and new glaciers and new springtimes"... a new habitat, and one that's not user-friendly...

definitely worth checking out, i think...

best,

joe

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493. **ken|n|ing**  
***Re: scene reports, please***

Wed 20 May 1998

---

| *And by way of a random poll: what music do people currently have in rotation?*

Cornershop (when i was born for the 7th time)  
Stooges (1st record)  
Andrew Hill (smokestack)  
Cage (winter music)  
Rev. Utah Smith (complete recordings)  
Stereolab (emperor tomatoe ketchup)

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494. **Carolyn Guertin**  
***Cool Site of the Day***

Wed 20 May 1998

---

An interesting new journal called BeeHive has posted its inaugural issue on the web. The premier issue includes:

Mapping the Acephale by John Attebury, David J. Beaulieu, George A. Dunn, Talan Memmott and Don Socha

Steven Shaviro's Doom Patrols.8 on Kathy Acker

7 poems from Slam Poet Vadim Litvak (illustrated by Petra Mueller)

Bread.Crumbs, excerpts from a hyperfiction, by Talan Memmott

Visit it at:

<http://www.temporalimage.com/beehive/hidex.html>

---

Carolyn Guertin, Department  
of English, University of Alberta E-Mail: [REDACTED]; Tel/FAX: [REDACTED] Website:  
<<http://www.ualberta.ca/~cguertin/Guertin.htm>>

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#### 495. **Mark Weiss**

**(no subject)**

*Wed 20 May 1998*

---

Harry Partch was one of the great American originals. His music is weirdly sonorous, his use of language (he wrote or adapted the texts to his vocal music) original. There are, I think, several cds of his work. I recently saw one listed somewhere. Check out his piece "Barstow," the text for which is a set of huitch-hikers' grafitti collected by Partch at a popular pickup spot outside of the eponymous city in his hobo days. They don't mention that his instruments are finely crafted and of great sculptural beauty. I hope they find a home. They should be in the Library of Congress or Smithsonian instrument collections, where they could be available, like the strads at L of C, for performance. Partch disciples (I use the word advisedly) can be found in almost all the odd corners of America, building their own instruments and creating music, although their numbers are not large.

At 08:40 PM 5/19/98 -0400, you wrote:

>Speaking of Sonic Youth, the following from their Echo Canyon mailing list.  
>I make no claims for whether or not this is legit, but assume so as it would  
>be an odd sort of hoax. Anyone know more about Harry Patch or the situation  
>below? Maybe someone can help out. (I assume the Keady address would be  
the  
>one to write to.) Matt  
>  
>>Date: Sat, 16 May 1998 22:06:17 -0400  
>>From: Jim Keady <[REDACTED]>  
>>To: [REDACTED]  
>>Subject: Harry Partch Instrumentarium

>>  
>> Hiya, I'm not subscribed to yr list, but I would like to bring  
>> attention to something that may be relevant to some people who are on  
>> it. Harry Partch:composer (1901-1974) Onetime hobo, lifetime  
>> musician, noted for, among other things, building his own instruments  
>> based on microtonal theory and writing for them. Most of his work is  
>> playable only on these wunuvakind instruments, which may contribute to  
>> why you maybe haven't heard of him. Anyway, his original instruments  
>> are currently housed at a state college in Purchase, NY, but are on  
>> the verge of being evicted. They need a new home IMMEDIATELY. If  
>> anyone within the sound of my keypad has any leads, please contact me  
>> & I'll pass the word on. Thanks&thanksagain,  
>> -----Joe  
>

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496. **Taylor Brady**  
***Re: scene reports, please***

*Wed 20 May 1998*

---

In heavy rotation these days (confining myself to recent releases / re-releases) in alphabetical order:

Derek Bailey, guitar, drums 'n' bass ( Still not sure if this is a truly great recording, or simply a great novelty concept. Either way, the guitar hero of free improv [in his most abrasive electric mode] over percussion tracks programmed by British drum 'n' bass DJ Ninj -- how can you go wrong?)

Iva Bittova, eponymous release on Elektra / Nonesuch (more accessible than her earlier, prog-influenced stuff [which is also great], the Balkan and Eastern European "folk / traditional" side more in evidence here)

Anthony Braxton, any of the recent releases on the Braxton House label featuring the Ghost Trance Musics

Loren MazzaCane Connors, A Possible Dawn (thirty minutes of truly haunting electric blues minimalism, followed by thirty minutes of group improv with Thurston Moore and Jean-Marc Montero)

Tony Conrad, Early Minimalism (My ears are still ringing, my head is still spinning. This 4CD set takes some getting into, but his bit about beginning to hear "dissonances" [say, ratios like 48 / 49] as consonances with repeated listening is not just an empty promise. Opens up vast spaces -- architectural -- in the head / the room you're in. Highly recommended.)

Cornelius, Fantasma (To call him the Japanese Beck would be to unfairly pigeonhole him, but you get the picture)

John Fahey, womblife (Produced by Jim O'Rourke. This combines Fahey's old / new love affair with the distantiating devices of electronic recording [heard in most pronounced recent form on his City of Refuge disc] with some old-fashioned plaintive fingerpicking reminiscent of his "Blind Joe Death" period. The transition from the ringing and distorted echo of the first 4 tracks to the final, more trad "Juana" is stunning.)

Sue Garner, to run more smoothly (Run On vocalist goes solo, with most of the band to back her up. More restrained and contemplative than Run On's recent stuff, ballad / folk / country influences)

Gastr del Sol, Camofleur (Apparently their last recording as a band. I still miss the guitar (anti-)heroics of Crookt, Crackt, or Fly, but the command of songwriting here is far greater. Dave Grubbs' voice -- always an acquired taste -- is in better form here than I've ever heard it. Sound-collage ambiances provided by Markus Popp of Oval work surprisingly well -- subtly -- with the compositions here.)

Kaiser / Kimura / O'Rourke / Oswald, Acoustics (That's Henry Kaiser, Mari Kimura, Jim O'Rourke, and John Oswald, in a set of all-acoustic free playing. Ranges from the the extreme pointillism one might expect from such a free improv session -- this is largely the direction of Oswald's sax playing here -- to a surprisingly romantic breadth and sweep -- Kimura's violin, though she can also "go jagged" with the best Oswald can offer -- to an almost folky resonance and rhythm -- open tunings from O'Rourke and Kaiser. One of the best free improv recordings I've heard in the past several years).

Machine for Making Sense, On second thoughts (Composer / poet / word artist Chris Mann's band project. Breathless readings of langpo-influenced texts [printed in full(?) as liner notes] over improvised reeds, woodwinds, strings, hurdy-gurdy, live electronics, and samples [Beastie Boys, Otomo Yoshihide, etc.] Info on Mann, who might be of interest to folks on this list beyond the parameters of this survey, can be found at <http://alianet.alia.org.au/~amc/comp/m/cmann.htm> and <http://farben.latrobe.edu.au/NMA/22CAC/mann.html>)

Christian Marclay, records 1981-1989 (The original art-DJ at his best. Most of this stuff was previously available only as very-limited vinyl releases, so this one is a big deal. Great lo-fi sound collages, in which the instrumentation is not only, as in higher-tech digital DJ outings, the pre-recorded source recordings, but also the sound of needles being "carelessly" dropped on them, warped discs beings played at the wrong speed, etc. Marclay is a performer who, at his

best, has thought very clearly about every "inessential" or "accidental" contour of his medium)

Roscoe Mitchell, *Sound Songs* (Bought this one after Mitchell's moving solo appearance here in Buffalo, April of '97. While this 2CD set isn't quite up to that level, the sheer range of Mitchell's unaccompanied reed-playing, along with the degree of attention to the peripheral and unintended as well as the central and gestural as equal elements of composition / improvisation, makes this a recording worth having. Especially noteworthy is the circular-breathing tour de force, "Full Fontal Saxophone")

mu-ziq, *Lunatic Harness* (Drum 'n' bass influenced sounds [though not pure d 'n' b], fleshed out with vibraphones, marimbas, and a host of surprisingly warm synthesized sounds. There's an intimacy of address here that's almost acoustic -- has something to do with the relative lack of reverb in the overall sound field, something which distinguishes it from much American electronic dance music, which, influenced by Detroit techno, deals in large swathes of echoic sonority. [Don't get me wrong, I dig that stuff too]. Most record stores will have this filed as "u-ziq," as many clerks don't recognize the Greek "mu" in the name)

Oval, *dok* (Who'd have thought electronically-manipulated soundfield recordings of bells could sound so warm and rhythmically-various? Like Stockhausen's *Mantra*, if he'd abandoned the piano and had access to digital variants of his basic ring-modulator. Bad analogy, good disc)

Lee "Scratch" Perry, *Arkology* (Three-CD anthology from an often-unacknowledged source of contemporary thought about and experience of electronically-recorded music. John Corbett, in his book *Extended Play*, claims that Perry should share credit with Phil Spector for "inventing" the recording studio as an instrument. Listening to these great early dub recordings, it's easy to hear why. Highlight is disc 2, which features Perry's original recording of Junior Murvin's "Police and Thieves" followed by several of the dub versions he later cut. Like an acoustic variorum)

Scanner, *Sulphur* (Less concentration on danceable beats, more on manipulated sound-texts snatched from the air with the bandwidth scanner after which he's named himself -- what was a gimmick on earlier recordings now takes center stage as an actual compositional method. Raises some particularly fraught questions about voyeurism, subjectivity, language -- none of which are answered, but the getting there is intensely disquieting fun -- listening-as-complicity)

Solex, *Solex Vs. the Hitmeister* (What might happen if Portishead unearthed a sense of humor, pared down to a one-woman band, and discovered home recording)

DJ Spooky, Synthetic Fury EP (Paul Miller, concision, concentrated effect -- no it's not an oxymoron [though I like the long-windedness of Necropolis for reasons all its own]. The digitally-distorted string melody on "Dumb Mutha Fucker" [can anyone identify the source?] is especially beautiful)

Terre Thaemlitz, Couture Cosmetique (Ambient concept album arranged around acoutico-textual analogs for issues of display and eroticism associated with drag and TV/TS gender blurring / performance. Ability of sampled sounds, digitally detoured from their status as sound events toward a "subsistence" [to point to an interesting recent thread] as threshold-of-perception sonic contexts and backgrounds, to "masquerade" as other than themselves in a relation which is not simply one of substitution, is what's at stake here. Beautifully designed and textually-suggestive sleeve insert with this one)

Tortoise, TNT (OK, I'm on the bandwagon. But I might be the only person I know who still prefers their last one, Millions Now Living Will Never Die. That moment on "Djed" where the persistent dub-style bass line falls apart into electronic pops (sounds like someone's messing with the patch cords) which then arrange themselves into a new percussion rhythm -- exposing the illusion of recording as the copy of a live performance, than reconstituting a different kind of liveness on the other side -- is a pop revelation on the order of, say, Public Enemy's first sampling of James Brown [alright, so I exaggerate])

We, As Is (Destined for a cut-out bin near you. The trio of Lloop, Once11, and DJ Olive [who recently recorded a great set with improvising drummer William Hooker] is trip-hop, illbient, whatever, at its badly-named, sonically-stunning best. Unfortunately, no one seems to have heard this outside the Five Boroughs)

Iannis Xenakis, Kraanerg (New recording, featuring Paul Miller, aka DJ Spooky, on live electronics. Historically significant piece which showcases one of the early attempts to use prerecorded and manipulated sound along with live performance in a Western art-music idiom)

Richard Youngs, Advent (This, along with his Festival CD, is some of the grittiest minimalism I've yet to hear. Pure, reiterative structures [piano ostinatos, alarm clock chimes, etc.] contaminated by an unprecedented degree of acoustic filth. Great stuff)

Sorry this is so long -- my stereo is almost never off. Thanks to all others who have responded, as I think this thread, if we could expand it to include discussions beyond the point of exchanging lists, has everything to do with poetics.

A final question: Did anyone in or around Buffalo make it to any of the performances in Hallwalls' Interprov festival of improvised music -- say, Gerry



Hemingway Quartet, Trio Clusone, or Nihilist Spasm Band? Suffering through end-of-semester financial doldrums, I had to miss the whole thing. Reviews / impressions / vicarious experiences would be greatly appreciated.

-----

Taylor Brady  
editor, Cartograffiti  
<http://writing.upenn.edu/spc/cartograffiti>

(a publication of the Small Press Collective)  
<http://writing.upenn.edu/spc>

<HTML> <BODY TEXT="#000000" BGCOLOR="#FFFFFF" LINK="#003399" VLINK="#006600" ALINK="#FF0000"> &nbsp;In heavy rotation these days (confining myself to recent releases / re-releases) in alphabetical order:

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<P>John Fahey, womblife (Produced by Jim O'Rourke. This combines Fahey's old / new love affair with the distantiating devices of electronic recording [heard in most pronounced recent form on his City of Refuge disc] with some old-fashioned plaintive fingerpicking reminiscent of his "Blind Joe Death" period. The transition from the ringing and distorted echo of the first 4 tracks to the final, more trad "Juana" is stunning.)

<P>Sue Garner, to run more smoothly (Run On vocalist goes solo, with most of the band to back her up. More restrained and contemplative than Run On's recent stuff, ballad / folk / country influences)

<P>Gastr del Sol, Camofleur (Apparently their last recording as a band. I still miss the guitar (anti-)heroics of Crookt, Crackt, or Fly, but the command of songwriting here is far greater. Dave Grubbs' voice -- always an acquired taste -- is in better form here than I've ever heard it. Sound-collage ambiances provided by Markus Popp of Oval work surprisingly well -- subtly -- with the compositions here.)

<P>Kaiser / Kimura /&nbsp; O'Rourke / Oswald, Acoustics (That's Henry Kaiser, Mari Kimura, Jim O'Rourke, and John Oswald, in a set of all-acoustic free playing. Ranges from the the extreme pointillism one might expect from such a free improv session -- this is largely the direction of Oswald's sax playing here -- to a surprisingly romantic breadth and sweep -- Kimura's violin, though she can also "go jagged" with the best Oswald can offer -- to an almost folky resonance and rhythm -- open tunings from O'Rourke and Kaiser. One of the best free improv recordings I've heard in the past several years).

<P>Machine for Making Sense, On second thoughts (Composer / poet / word artist Chris Mann's band project. Breathless readings of&nbsp; langpo-influenced texts [printed in full(?) as liner notes] over improvised reeds, woodwinds, strings, hurdy-gurdy, live electronics, and samples [Beastie Boys, Otomo Yoshihide, etc.] Info on Mann, who might be of interest to folks on this list beyond the parameters of this survey, can be found at <A HREF="http://alianet.alia.org.au/~amc/comp/m/cmann.htm">http://alianet.alia.org.au/~amc/comp/m/cmann.htm</A> <BR>and <A HREF="http://farben.latrobe.edu.au/NMA/22CAC/mann.html">http://farben.latrobe.edu.au/NMA/22CAC/mann.html</A>)

<P>Christian Marclay, records 1981-1989 (The original art-DJ at his best. Most of this stuff was previously available only as very-limited vinyl releases, so this one is a big deal. Great lo-fi sound collages, in which the instrumentation is not only, as in higher-tech digital DJ outings, the pre-recorded source recordings, but also the sound of needles being "carelessly" dropped on them, warped discs beings played at the wrong speed, etc. Marclay is a performer who, at his best, has thought very clearly about every "inessential" or "accidental" contour of his medium)

<P>Roscoe Mitchell, Sound Songs (Bought this one after Mitchell's moving solo appearance here in Buffalo, April of '97. While this 2CD set isn't quite up to that level, the sheer range of Mitchell's unaccompanied reed-playing, along with the degree of attention to the peripheral and unintended as well as the central and gestural as equal elements of composition / improvisation, makes this a

recording worth having. Especially noteworthy is the circular-breathing tour de force, "Full Fontal Saxophone")

<P>mu-ziq, Lunatic Harness (Drum 'n' bass influenced sounds [though not pure d 'n' b], fleshed out with vibraphones, marimbas, and a host of surprisingly warm synthesized sounds. There's an intimacy of address here that's almost acoustic -- has something to do with the relative lack of reverb in the overall sound field, something which distinguishes it from much American electronic dance music, which, influenced by Detroit techno, deals in large swathes of echoic sonority. [Don't get me wrong, I dig that stuff too]. Most record stores will have this filed as "u-ziq," as many clerks don't recognize the Greek "mu" in the name)

<P>Oval, dok (Who'd have thought electronically-manipulated soundfield recordings of bells could sound so warm and rhythmically-various? Like Stockhausen's Mantra, if he'd abandoned the piano and had access to digital variants of his basic ring-modulator. Bad analogy, good disc)

<P>Lee "Scratch" Perry, Arkology (Three-CD anthology from an often-unacknowledged source of contemporary thought about and experience of electronically-recorded music. John Corbett, in his book Extended Play, claims that Perry should share credit with Phil Spector for "inventing" the recording studio as an instrument. Listening to these great early dub recordings, it's easy to hear why. Highlight is disc 2, which features Perry's original recording of Junior Murvin's "Police and Thieves" followed by several of the dub versions he later cut. Like an acoustic variorum)

<P>Scanner, Sulphur (Less concentration on danceable beats, more on manipulated sound-texts snatched from the air with the bandwidth scanner after which he's named himself -- what was a gimmick on earlier recordings now takes center stage as an actual compositional method. Raises some particularly fraught questions about voyeurism, subjectivity, language -- none of which are answered, but the getting there is intensely disquieting fun -- listening-as-complicity)

<P>Solex, Solex Vs. the Hitmeister (What might happen if Portishead unearthed a sense of humor, pared down to a one-woman band, and discovered home recording)

<P>DJ Spooky, Synthetic Fury EP (Paul Miller, concision, concentrated effect -- no it's not an oxymoron [though I like the long-windedness of Necropolis for reasons all its own]. The digitally-distorted string melody on "Dumb Mutha Fucker" [can anyone identify the source?] is especially beautiful)

<P>Terre Thaemlitz, Couture Cosmetique (Ambient concept album arranged around acoutico-textual analogs for issues of display and eroticism associated

with drag and TV/TS gender blurring / performance. Ability of sampled sounds, digitally detoured from their status as sound events toward a "subsistence" [to point to an interesting recent thread] as threshold-of-perception sonic contexts and backgrounds, to "masquerade" as other than themselves in a relation which is not simply one of substitution, is what's at stake here. Beautifully designed and textually-suggestive sleeve insert with this one)

<P>Tortoise, TNT (OK, I'm on the bandwagon. But I might be the only person I know who still prefers their last one, Millions Now Living Will Never Die. That moment on "Djed" where the persistent dub-style bass line falls apart into electronic pops (sounds like someone's messing with the patch cords) which then arrange themselves into a new percussion rhythm -- exposing the illusion of recording as the copy of a live performance, than reconstituting a different kind of liveness on the other side -- is a pop revelation on the order of, say, Public Enemy's first sampling of James Brown [alright, so I exaggerate])

<P>We, As Is (Destined for a cut-out bin near you. The trio of Lloop, Once11, and DJ Olive [who recently recorded a great set with improvising drummer William Hooker] is trip-hop, illbient, whatever, at its badly-named, sonically-stunning best. Unfortunately, no one seems to have heard this outside the Five Boroughs)

<P>Iannis Xenakis, Kraanerg (New recording, featuring Paul Miller, aka DJ Spooky, on live electronics. Historically significant piece which showcases one of the early attempts to use prerecorded and manipulated sound along with live performance in a Western art-music idiom)

<P>Richard Youngs, Advent (This, along with his Festival CD, is some of the grittiest minimalism I've yet to hear. Pure, reiterative structures [piano ostinatos, alarm clock chimes, etc.] contaminated by an unprecedented degree of acoustic filth. Great stuff)

<P>Sorry this is so long -- my stereo is almost never off. Thanks to all others who have responded, as I think this thread, if we could expand it to include discussions beyond the point of exchanging lists, has everything to do with poetics.

<P>A final question: Did anyone in or around Buffalo make it to any of the performances in Hallwalls' Interprov festival of improvised music -- say, Gerry Hemingway Quartet, Trio Clusone, or Nihilist Spasm Band? Suffering through end-of-semester financial doldrums, I had to miss the whole thing. Reviews / impressions / vicarious experiences would be greatly appreciated.

<P>

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<P>Taylor Brady
<BR>editor, <I>Cartograffiti</I>
<BR>&nbsp;<A
HREF="http://writing.upenn.edu/spc/cartograffiti">http://writing.upenn.edu/
spc/cartograffiti</A>

<P>(a publication of the Small Press Collective)
<BR>&nbsp;<A
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497. **Taylor Brady**  
*Small Press Collective alias*

Wed 20 May 1998

---

Please note that the Small Press Collective and its various online publications are now accessible at a new, shorter alias address (see my signature card, below).

This is only an alias, so all previous links and bookmarks will still work -- our "real" address is still the same. However, if you're still enetering the whole address by hand, this might save you some typing.

-----

Taylor Brady  
editor, Cartograffiti  
<http://writing.upenn.edu/spc/cartograffiti>  
(a publication of the Small Press Collective)  
<http://writing.upenn.edu/spc>

<HTML> <BODY TEXT="#000000" BGCOLOR="#FFFFFF" LINK="#003399" VLINK="#006600" ALINK="#FF0000"> Please note that the Small Press Collective and its various online publications are now accessible at a new, shorter alias address (see my signature card, below).

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499. **Steve Shoemaker**

***Re: formalists, oralists***

*Wed 20 May 1998*

---

If yer looking for a crusty old formalist it's hard to beat Paul (Fussy) Fussell's Poetic Meter & Peter Form. I nearly went nuts one semester as a grad student when i was forced to teach large chunks of this book, coupled also with poems drawn from a really lame poetry "handbook." But if you were able to play it off against other stuff it cld be useful. I don't, offhand, remember him saying that much about the sonnet, but he certainly takes a trad approach to form (the book becomes especially horrific when it gets to the 20thC). s

At 08:37 AM 5/20/98 -0400, you wrote:

>At 10:00 AM 5/19/98 -1000, you wrote:

>>Help me! I'm looking to create a bibliography of secondary material to  
>>give my students in my "understanding poetry" course (which has a lot of  
>>nonmajors although it is a 300 level course) next semester.

>>

>>I usually do this section on form where we look at the sonnet--a few of  
>>Petrarch, all of Shakespeare's, some of Brooks, Thomas, Mayer, McKay,  
>>Berrigan, etc. I have them compare the Princeton Encyclopedia definition  
>>of the sonnet to Mayer's in the T&W Handbook on Form and talk about what  
>>a sonnet means. A lot of them end up writing their papers around this  
>>issue (especially on Mayer's work which troubles and delights them). I  
>>need more citations and places for them to look to get more of the  
>>discussion around form.

>>

>>Can anyone think of any good articles that say to write a sonnet, or  
>>whatever, one has to follow the rules? I need some articles that defend  
>>form as settled and absolute. I've been sending them to the Annie Finch  
>>book. Anything else good out there? Any good articles that defend form  
>>as rigorous ways of thinking, etc?

>

>There are some interesting pieces in a collection of essays edited by Harvey  
>Gross, The Structure of Verse, that might assist, Juliana: Eliot's  
>"Reflections on Vers Libre", Kunitz's "Action and Incantation", and John  
>Hollander's "The Metrical Frame". But I've also found useful with beginning  
>students a piece by Marilyn Hacker that cropped up in the Academy of  
>American Poets' Poetry Pilot in 1995, "A Few Cranky Paragraphs on Form and  
>Content" (may be collected somewhere by now?), Countermeasures'  
reprinting

>of remarks by Annie Finch and Dana Gioia (stuff on rap, too, by Gioia!) at a  
>1996 conference on "Poetry and Form"; Molly Peacock's more personal "What



>the Mockingbird Said" in the essay collection Conversant Essays. I haven't  
>looked at the introduction to Rober Richman's anthology The Direction of  
>Poetry (new formalism, natch) for awhile, but my memory is that it is pretty  
>hortatory. Also check out Peter Viereck's "Strict Wildness: The Biology of  
>Poetry" which Poets & Writers printed in their magazine in 1988, but which  
>is probably collected somewhere by now.

>>

>>Would also like to collect citations on the opposite if any come to  
>>mind.

>>

>>Also, I do a section on oral poetries. I'm looking for writing that  
>>explains the relevance of chants to poetry studies. Anything that would  
>>help my students begin to understand the chant as an art form  
>>(interestingly here in Hawai'i, they tend to get chants in h.s. but they  
>>seem to read them as history--so whenever I've given them a chant to  
>>look at they can do a historical reading and say things like well it is  
>>about King Kamehameha III and etc. etc. but can't see it as something  
>>that is poetry).

>>

>>Also, any good articles on rap? Anyone taught rap in their poetry  
>>courses? Any ideas on how to get students to write critically about rap?  
>>

>Tricia Rose's book (Black Noise? - I think that's the title) is terrific.  
>Thinking about your question (not having tried this systematically myself),  
>I'd go from Louise Bennett to Linton Kwesi Johnson for context, and then  
>encourage their writing on only one aspect of it that tends toward the  
>mechanical: scansion/prosody; modulating tone; how the rhymes work and  
what

>kinds of rhymes, etc. -- giving them just enough tools to do it. This  
>usually works for me when a poetry is so loaded content and context wise  
>that students have a hard time seeing it as a construction. And I'd add  
>Spearhead to the playlist.

>

>

>

>Susan Wheeler

> [REDACTED]

>voice/fax [REDACTED]

>

>

Steve Shoemaker

Assistant Professor



English Department  
Wake Forest University  
Winston-Salem, NC 27109



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500. **dbkk**

**Anne Carson at SPT**

Wed 20 May 1998

---

Small Press Traffic presents

Anne Carson

Friday, May 22, 7:30 p.m.

New College Cultural Center

766 Valencia Street, San Francisco

\$5

Michael Ondaatje calls her "the most exciting poet writing in English today." Born in 1950, Anne Carson teaches classics at McGill University in Montreal, and her ambitious, gestural poetry punctures the rigors of classicism with the derangements of the post-modern as has none since Charles Olson's. Her books of poetry include *Plainwater* (Knopf, 1995) and *Glass, Irony and God* (New Directions, 1995). She is also the author of *Eros the Bittersweet* (Princeton University Press, 1986), *Short Talks* (Brick Books, 1992), and *Sophokles Elektra: Translation With Commentary and Notes* (Knopf, 1997). Her new "novel in verse," *Autobiography of Red* (Knopf), recasts the story of Herakles and Geryon in contemporary terms. Man and monster mingle and part, mingle and part. Join us in this special event with the writer everybody's talking about. When she wins the Nobel Prize you can say, "Oh I met her at Small Press Traffic."

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501. **morpheal**

**Re: sustainability...and techne**

Wed 20 May 1998

---

*re sustainability: this is somewhat off the track of the discussion here... but there's an excellent piece by bill mckibben in this month's \_atlantic monthly\_, "a special moment in history," that details how the nature of, well, nature itself is rapidly being transformed by homo sapiens... which requires a somewhat more bracing grasp of what we mean by sustainability... it's not simply how many people the earth can sustain, which itself appears now to be a transition issue, given the expected*

*doubling of human population in the next half-century (this doubling representing, for mckibben, a limit point, regardless how you factor energy conservation per individual)... it's a question of our creating, even now, what amounts to a new earth, what mckibbens calls "earth2"---an earth with "new storms and new oceans and new glaciers and new springtimes"... a new habitat, and one that's not user-friendly...*

The ultimate 'equation' as to sustainability is never mentionned by those who are discussing the subject.

That is: The level of sustainability depends on the raw material resources plus the level of technology available to utilize those resources.

The level of sustainability declines if the technology fails to keep pace with the need for more progressive technologies. Humanity is essentially at that bifurcation point in its history \_now\_ where only a massive acceleration in technological mastery of the environment as resource and raw materials as resources can save humanity from a spiral of decline as to the level of sustainability as such. A god cannot save them, unless that god brings blueprints for new machines.

There is essentially nothing poetic about that.

Also, note that it is radical in being totally contrary to some persistent strands of thought that see techne, and technology, science and invention, as the archetypal manifestations of a devil. Contrary to any consideration of descent to "low level sustainable technologies". It is not "low level" at all. Instead it is technological ascent to mastery of the environment, materials, and eventually the universe, ultimately for the purposes of increasing human enjoyment, thus maximizing happiness for the greatest numbers. Perhaps for all, somewhere in the more idealistic future of a high level sustainable world.

That there is nothing poetic about what I have said, is another kind of tragedy.

There are the pressures that come to be exerted as to what use the raw material resources we term "human" are to be used for. The danger then becomes the dehumanization (and more manifest as dehumanitization) happening due to a striving for the next technological wave. Art and the artist, poetry and the poet, become in danger of being swept away in the most urgent induction of engineers, scientists, technicians, inventors.....

We need the poets and artists too, but it is harder to rationally justify.

regards,  
from Bob Ezergailis  
aka Morpheal

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502. **acgold01**

***Juliana's query***

*Wed 20 May 1998*

---

Hi, Juliana--A few things occur to me, not sure if they're quite what you're looking for but:

for defenses of "traditional" forms (which sounds like the particular notion of form you're engaged with in the class right now), there's always that strange and controversial Frederick Turner essay, "The Neural Lyre: Poetic Meter, The Brain and Time," which argues for a biological basis for meter. It's reprinted in his *\*Natural Classicism\** essay collection, and in Frederick Feirstein's collection *\*Expansive Poetry\**. There's also Timothy Steele's *\*Missing Measures\**, a book-length argument about how misguided the modernist free verse revolution was. You might find other things that suit your pedagogical purposes (as distinct from things you agree with) in the Feirstein collection, or in Robert McDowell's *\*Poetry After Modernism\**, another New Formalist collection. For a defence of traditional forms that's short and accessible, why not Frost's "The Figure a Poem Makes" (esp. if you've been reading a ton of sonnets).

For a variant on your question, Pound's "A Retrospect" ("if you're gonna write good free verse you've got to follow these rules"), packed with rules.

On chants and poetry studies: my first thought there is that Bob Holman's USOP sampler CD juxtaposes chants with a whole range of other poetries, which might at least give your students an interesting listening experience.

Can't do much re "good articles on rap": Houston Baker did *\*Rap, Black Music, and the Academy\** or something like that a while ago, but it's probably already dated.

My colleague Tom Byers wrote a v. good article a few years ago historicizing some of the ideas about form you mention with particular reference to the New Formalists: Thomas B. Byers, "The Closing of the American Line: Expansive Poetry and Ideology," *\*Contemporary Literature\** 33 (1992): 396-415. He must have touched a nerve because a number of Newfie poets wrote irate letters to the journal.

Alan

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503. **michael corbin**

***Re: Anne Carson at SPT***

*Wed 20 May 1998*

---

█ wrote:

| *She is also the author of  
Eros the Bittersweet (Princeton University Press, 1986),*

This beautiful, moving book is newly available this spring from Dalkey Archive.

| *and Sophokles Elektra: Translation With Commentary and Notes  
(Knopf, 1997).*

I've had trouble finding this. I think I prefer David Greene's translation in the U of Chicago series but Pound's Elektra (which I think is in a fairly recent New Directions edition) is always fun to read. And then Euripides aside Sophocles is necessary. necessary for nothing really.

| *Her new "novel in verse," Autobiography of Red (Knopf),  
recasts the story of Herakles and Geryon in contemporary terms. Man and  
monster mingle and part, mingle and part.*

Something about 'writing through' here: an interview with Stesichoros. talk about your muse possessions. or maybe that is 'repossessions'. failure to pay and all that.

Speaking of this hellenic business, both in the thread of 'meter' and 'nature', Hesiod's \_works and days\_ of course is all about that 'homo sapiens sapiens' tilling the earth, the reconfiguration, transliteration of nature. Into civilization. And poets. Natures.

nature poetry: I get a little depressed about Bill McKibben's, well, let's call it, his latent Malthusianism. (I expect a national politician in the near future to, without irony, offer a Swiftian 'modest proposal' as legislation) And, probably not a mistake that Bill comes on the heels of E.O. Wilson's serialized \_Consilience\_ in the "atlantic monthly". A socio-biology desire that would be well put to read Hesiod and Carson. Love and fucking and all that. In nature reading I recommend Sandra Steingraber's \_Living Downstream\_. I guess this is poetry. Kind of a Jabesian open wound of memory, bodies and books, for me: "silence", "trace elements" . but maybe not.

Harry Partch: Mikal and? was that, I think, Liz was playing those homemade dreamtime village instruments at the Emma Center (mpls) a bunch of years ago trying to get the punk-rockers to hear something outside of the re-verb-er-ating three cords on the electric guitar?

on the little boom-box: CD: Eugene Chadbourne. in the tape player of the little boom-box: daughters of DaCIPHER.

what does it mean that one can have the technology to 'multi-disk' and 'random' play?

mc

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504. **BETSY ANDREWS**

***Re: formalists, oralists***

*Wed 20 May 1998*

---

Juliana,

For insistence upon the sonnet, you can always try that old goat, Paul Fussel: "Structural Principles: The Example of the Sonnet" in his book Poetic Meter & Poetric Form.

-----

> From: Juliana Spahr <[REDACTED]>  
> To: [REDACTED]  
> Subject: formalists, oralists  
> Date: Tuesday, May 19, 1998 4:00 PM  
>  
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> give my students in my "understanding poetry" course (which has a lot of  
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- >
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- > courses? Any ideas on how to get students to write critically about rap?

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505. **Steven Marks**  
**Re: Anne Carson at SPT**  
Wed 20 May 1998

---

For anybody interested in my review of Carson's *Plainwater*, go to:

<http://members.aol.com/swmarks/carson.html>

She's been a favorite of mine since I first read that book in 1996. It led me to *Eros the Bittersweet* and then to *Glass, Irony and God*. She's not a half-bad artist as well!!

Steven

p.s. also may want to look at the entry I did on her for Dict. of Lit. Bio when that comes out.

On Wed, 20 May 1998 [REDACTED] wrote:

*Small Press Traffic presents*

*Anne Carson*

*Friday, May 22, 7:30 p.m.  
New College Cultural Center  
766 Valencia Street, San Francisco  
\$5*

*Michael Ondaatje calls her "the most exciting poet writing in English today." Born in 1950, Anne Carson teaches classics at McGill University in Montreal, and her ambitious, gestural poetry punctures the rigors of classicism with the derangements of the post-modern as has none since Charles Olson's. Her books of poetry include Plainwater (Knopf, 1995) and Glass, Irony and God (New Directions, 1995). She is also the author of Eros the Bittersweet (Princeton University Press, 1986), Short Talks (Brick Books, 1992), and Sophokles Elektra: Translation With Commentary and Notes (Knopf, 1997). Her new "novel in verse," Autobiography of Red (Knopf), recasts the story of Herakles and Geryon in contemporary terms. Man and monster mingle and part, mingle and part. Join us in this special event with the writer everybody's talking about. When she wins the Nobel Prize you can say, "Oh I met her at Small Press Traffic."*

---

Steven Marks

<http://members.aol.com/swmarks/welcome.html>

---

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506. **charles alexander**

***Re: nature/poetry...***

*Wed 20 May 1998*

---

thanks, joe

come down and hike with us. right now you can still climb some rocks early in the day, then go up to the summit and have a snowball fight in the afternoon.

charles

At 08:42 AM 5/20/98 -0500, you wrote:

>charles a., late in responding here... but been reading over (and over) the

>latest of mary hilton's 'primitive publications,' \_saunter\_, by joshua

>mckinney...

>

>certainly in the domain of poetry that takes on the natural... i've enjoyed

>it, am still not through puzzling over it... highly recommended...

>

>what i wouldn't give for a hike around the top of mount lemmon, you lucky

>dog you...

>

>best,

>

>joe

>

>

charles alexander :: poet and book artist :: 

chax press :: alexander writing/design/publishing

NOTE NEW URL FOR CHAX PRESS <http://alexwritdespub.com/chax>

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507. **Steve Shoemaker**

***Re: formalists, oralists***

*Wed 20 May 1998*

---

Right, I'm remembering now that the Fussell book does have a chapter on the sonnet, but I see (having plucked the book from the shelf, where it has

somehow managed to keep its place) that it's Chapter 7. I think I jumped ship after the abominable treatment of "free verse" in Ch. 5. If one wants to explore form from the "free" side of things it's hard to beat the rich gathering of statements from the poets themselves to be found throughout Poems for the Millennium (Vo. 1 is what I know best, but 2 seems a likely candidate as well).

While we're at it, I've always been interested in the ways that some strict forms (indeed the stricter the better) have been put to pomo uses, as in sestinas by Zukofsky and Ashbery, just to pick a couple of quick examples. In a comparison I like, Ashbery sez writing (riding?) the sestina is like riding a bicycle downhill-- i.e. the old kind of bike where the pedals keep turning as you coast and your feet have to try to keep up.

s

At 10:26 PM 5/20/98 -0400, you wrote:

>Juliana,

>

>For insistence upon the sonnet, you can always try that old goat, Paul

>Fussel: "Structural Principles: The Example of the Sonnet" in his book

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>

>-----

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>> To: [REDACTED]

>> Subject: formalists, oralists

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>> a sonnet means. A lot of them end up writing their papers around this

>> issue (especially on Mayer's work which troubles and delights them). I

>> need more citations and places for them to look to get more of the

>> discussion around form.

>>

>> Can anyone think of any good articles that say to write a sonnet, or

>> whatever, one has to follow the rules? I need some articles that defend



>> form as settled and absolute. I've been sending them to the Annie Finch  
>> book. Anything else good out there? Any good articles that defend form  
>> as rigorous ways of thinking, etc?  
>>  
>> Would also like to collect citations on the opposite if any come to  
>> mind.  
>>  
>> Also, I do a section on oral poeties. I'm looking for writing that  
>> explains the relevance of chants to poetry studies. Anything that would  
>> help my students begin to understand the chant as an art form  
>> (interestingly here in Hawai'i, they tend to get chants in h.s. but they  
>> seem to read them as history--so whenever I've given them a chant to  
>> look at they can do a historical reading and say things like well it is  
>> about King Kamehameha III and etc. etc. but can't see it as something  
>> that is poetry).  
>>  
>> Also, any good articles on rap? Anyone taught rap in their poetry  
>> courses? Any ideas on how to get students to write critically about rap?  
>  
>

Steve Shoemaker  
Assistant Professor  
English Department  
Wake Forest University  
Winston-Salem, NC 27109  
[REDACTED]

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508. **Eurydice**  
***Not-to-miss NYC Reading***

*Wed 20 May 1998*

---

List,

I realize I posted the basic info about this several weeks back, but I figured it might be good to offer a nudge of a reminder closer to the actual event. Which is to say, to those of you that can, please come on down or out or up or over to the last reading of the season at Here (145 Sixth Avenue, New York City, one block South of Spring Street):

Jean Day & Andy Levy  
3:00 pm

Saturday May 23

\$5 contribution

It's a rare East Coast foray by the stunning Jean Day (all the way from California - perhaps with copies of her grand new book in tow), and I'm hoping that poeple will take advantage of this special opportunity to hear her read out this hail-battered way, despite the holiday weekend and attendant festivity (or because of it). So, if you aren't unavoidably absolutely elsewhere, please be Here. And if you must be elsewhere (obligatory picnic, holiday in the Yukon, et cetera), you may appoint two emisaries to come in your stead.

Thanks,  
Deirdre

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509. **Bradford J Senning**

**Ashbery**

*Wed 20 May 1998*

---

Does anybody know where I can find a good discussion of Ashbery and music?

Appreciate any help I can find,  
Bradford Senning

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510. **Franklin Bruno**

**scenery port**

*Thu 21 May 1998*

---

Or--port scenery:

Tic-Tac-Toe playing chicken and carousel (cf. Strangers on a Train and that crazy Dennis Hopper flick with the mermaid) in Monterey.

car stereo:

mostly Louis Jordan ("If you want a leader who'll move ya, who'll groove ya, and keep you sent...vote for Jordan for President") and Family Fodder (late 70's UK d.i.y. band w/ dub touches, sorta like The Homosexuals).

live:

Since someone asked: Clusone 3, Kuumbwa Jazz Center, Santa Cruz. More exciting than the last 45 rock shows I've seen put together. 2 long, continuous sets, ranging from free-improv to jazz heads I recognize but can't name to "Tico Tico" (turn of the century South American tune with silly English lyrics added in the 40's), "Skylark" about 5 seconds of "Bye Bye Blackbird," Hoagy's "Baltimore

Oriole," and a couple from their Irving Berlin record. Unparalleled combination of sweetness (Michael Moore's clarinet), extended technique (just about everything Ernst Reijiger (sp?) does with his cello), and aggression (Han Bennink all over the kit when he's not swinging like mad w/ just brushes and snare).

at home: New Slapp Happy (reunion of Krause/Moore/Blegvad after 20-odd yrs); Mekons -Me-; John Latouche's cult musical -The Golden Apple- (trivia--a young Kenward Elmslie was his lover at the time of writing); lots of Jimmy Guiffre, esp. recentish live issues of the Swallow/Bley/Guiffre trio (HatArt); Mary Lou Williams' Folkways LP from 1964; Rock-A-Teens (Orbison via Nick Cave, from Atlanta, GA); Simon Joyner (Omaha, NE singer-songwriter). Haven't slipped the new Sonic Youth on the turntable yet.

nightstand:

Ted Greenwald -Common Sense-; Martha Ronk -Eyetrubble-; Carl Van Vechten -Parties-, -Fireworks-, and an anthology called -Keep On Inchin' Along-; -Faucheuse 2- (esp. Johnathan Williams on Clarence John Laughlin); Emmett Williams -My Life In Fluxus-; Kevin Whithead -New Dutch Swing- (exhaustive history of Dutch free jazz w/useful discography), recommended to whoever asked about the Clusones); Andrew Levy -Curve-.

Barely cracked but excited about: Jean Day -The Literal World-; Heather Ramsdell -Lost Wax-.

And another yes for -The Little Door Slides Back-. I have to review this, which means figuring out exactly which words are neologisms.

fjb

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## 511. **George Bowering**

### **Re: John Hawkes**

Thu 21 May 1998

---

*George, If you'd be willing, I'd love to hear more details about this course. Which H.D. texts did you read, which Dorn, which Hawkes? What worked in the combination?*

Sure. We started with Helen in Egypt, then did Gunslinger, and then The Beetle Leg. The course was somewhat grandiosely called something like the re-inscription of myth. You can see how we might have gone at it. One thing I was surprised by: though various people liked various texts, they seemed to be turned around most by the Dorn. Used audiotapes of H.D. and Dorn reading their texts, of course. Although I have been teaching H.D. since about 1967, it was the first time I had taught Helen. It was a little eerie for me, because

about a month before the course started I went to Kussnacht to see the place where she wrote the book.

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

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512. **JDEBROT**

**Re: Ashbery**

*Thu 21 May 1998*

---

This is probably not exactly what you're looking for, but there is John Shoptaw's "The Music of Construction: Measure and Polyphony in Ashbery and Bernstein" in Susan Schultz's *The Tribe of John*, which discusses the sonic aspects of A's & B's poetry. I can't remember whether or not there is an extended discussion of music per se in Shoptaw's *On the Outside Looking Out*. In a recent interview with Peter Gizzi in *Lingo* I remember being struck by the extent of Ashbery's musical knowledge (for what that's worth). . ---Jacques

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513. **JDEBROT**

**Re: Ashbery**

*Thu 21 May 1998*

---

Chris Stroffolino just backchanneled to let me know that the *Lingo* interview is with Michael, not Peter, Gizzi; should have checked. Thanks Chris.

--Jacques

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514. **Miekal And**

**Re: nature/poetry...**

*Thu 21 May 1998*

---

charles: these are some quotes from our installation of a symbolic village at the Katherine Nash gallery in University of Minnesota last fall. Ive included the longer ones as well because they work well as a set....miekal

"People are by nature phototropic—they move toward light, and, when stationary, they orient themselves toward the light. As a result the much loved

and much used places in buildings, where the most things happen, are places like window seats, verandas, fireside corners, trellised arbors; all of them defined by non-uniformities in light, and all of them allowing the people who are in them to orient themselves toward the light." -A

Pattern Language, Christopher Alexander

"Rooms without a view are prisons for the people who have to stay in them"

-A Pattern Language

"Make sure that you treat the edge of the building as a "thing," a "place," a zone with volume to it, not a line or interface which has no thickness. Crenelate the edge of buildings with places that invite people to stop. Make places that have depth and a covering, places to sit, lean, and walk, especially at those points along the perimeter which look onto interesting outdoor life."

-A Pattern Language

"People cannot maintain their spiritual roots and their connections to the past if the physical world they live in does not also sustain these roots....

Traditional societies have always recognized the importance of these sites. Mountains are marked as places of special pilgrimage; rivers and bridges become holy; a building or a tree, or rock or stone, takes on the power through which people can connect themselves to their own past....But modern society often ignores the psychological importance of these sites. They are bulldozed, developed, changed, for political and economic reasons, without regard for these simple but fundamental emotional matters; or they are simply ignored."

-A Pattern Language

"If one feels protective about the word "music," protect it and find another word for all the rest that enters through the ears. It's a waste of time to trouble oneself with words, noises. What it is is theatre and we are in it and like it, making it." -Silence, John Cage

"What is interesting is that the word sound refers not only to audible things but also to everything that is whole, unimpaired, firm, and healthy. Your health is sound. Is it sound because you are "within the sound"? Because you sound? To sing is a sound thing to do, not only in the superficial sense that a singing person most likely is a healthy person, but rather in the most basic, original sense our language can have, in the sharing of primal roots of words."

-Nada Brahma; The World is Sound

"Ever since we left the treetops, since our ancestors climbed down to the ground to sleep in gullies and caves, our ears have been the primary sense organ of survival, more than any other organ. That is the way it is programmed by evolution. When we are asleep we close our eyes and mouth, our tactile

sense are (almost) totally shut down, but our ears remain open.....As a matter of fact, our ears are open before we are born. Even in the womb our ears are more important than our other senses. Our consciousness begins with them. The child in the womb hears its mother's heartbeat - and, later, sounds from the outside world- which means that before we perceive the world with any other sense, we hear it."

-Nada Brahma; The World is Sound

In addition to worshipping real trees, the ancients sometimes envisioned the entire cosmos in the form of a tree, believing that earth's trees were tantalizing keys to the greatest of mysteries--which made their infinite variety all the more wonderful.

-The Woman's Dictionary of Symbols & Sacred Objects

"I maintain the garden on the principles of energy...This gardening, this co-creative energy gardening, is a metaphor for life. As you change your approach to the garden, you will, in turn, change the very fabric of how you approach your life."

-Machaelle Small Wright  
[from Secrets of the Soil]

"They're real, the nature spirits. And they may take many forms; but one thing they never are. They're never cute. They seek a co-creative partnership with humans, and they are in the position to accept no less."

-Machaelle Small Wright  
[from Secrets of the Soil]

"Just what the heck is a grotto anyway? Dreamtime Village stands at the epicenter of a midwestern school of eccentric landscape art, much of it centered around the concept of the grotto. Something about the upper midwest seems to compel normally conservative farm folk to create fantastic megalomaniac landscapes. This impulse seems to be universal among humans in this region--before the Euro-invasion the local population created numerous effigy mounds and cave carvings of a playful and artistic nature.

Grotto--a cave, from Italian grotta, similar roots for grotesque and grotty...something underground, subconscious, not of this world....people in Europe used caves as sacred spaces since the Paleolithic. In the Christian era, these sites were appropriated and decorated with statues and other holy objects. At some point in the middle ages, people began to construct artificial cavelike structures as religious shrines, and in the 19th century, European settlers brought this tradition with them to the midwest. Lost in what they perceived as an empty space, not knowing the sacred places of the land, they

created grottos to ground their communities. In addition to the cavelike grotto shrines, the grotto environments are landscaped with plants and gardens, continuing the artificial paradise tradition of European landscape gardening. The grottos are weird magical spaces of powerful contradiction and paradox--fantastic artificial "nature" imposed on the land, pagan goddess shrines built by rigid patriarchal Catholic priests, celebrations of Religion and Patriotism that appeal to countercultural unbelievers, the singular vision of megalomanics made possible only as vast community undertakings. "

-John Wright, Dreamtime Village friend

"Like the runic alphabet, the alphabet of the trees was used by European pagans for divination and for transmitting secret messages that would have been incomprehensible to anyone who did not know the system. Each letter was named for a tree or shrub, so messages could be spelled out by stringing the right sorts of leaves in the right order on a cord or a wand, with "blank" leaves not included in the alphabet to divide one word from the next. It has been suggested that nonletter leaves were sometimes inserted at random just to render the message more cryptic."

-The Woman's Dictionary  
of Symbols & Sacred Objects

"There are many dimensions in alliance space, and the pharmacological axis is only one of many. The old doctors had helpers like mountain lion, owl. Maybe the power plant was a conduit, or a call, a sort of whistle. Or the plant was like a delivery service. Not like the plant itself was the ally.....maybe the ally lived in the plant, or maybe the ally lived in the next world, and the plant was like a bridge...That plants have virtues...was known by the ancient herbalists. The virtue of a plant was its truth, its strength. Maybe the best synonym is integrity. Or power. Or poison."

-Pharmako/Poeia:  
Plant Powers, Poisons, and Herbcraft

"Humus is a Latin word, dirt; if you want to make somebody low you force him to the ground, you humble him, you humiliate him. To be humble is to sit upon the ground, not a throne, etc."

-Hundertwasser

"I've worked a great deal with grass roofs, putting soil on top and having things grow, but there is something strange in this, more than ecological. It is a religious act to have soil on your roof and trees growing on top of you; the act reconciles you with God, with nature, maybe not Christian or Jewish monotheism, but something wider, older - a very ancient wisdom."

-Hundertwasser

"If a lion is stalking you, or a shark is out to kill you, you are of course in mortal danger. We have lived with these dangers for millions of years. The straight line is a man-made danger. There are so many lines, millions of lines, but only one of them is deadly and that is the straight line drawn with a ruler. The danger of the straight line cannot be compared with the danger of organic lines described by snakes, for instance. The straight line is completely alien to mankind, to life, to all creation." -Hundertwasser

"We are living in an age where common sense often appears radical"

-Eat Your House

"You buy garden dwarfs in a nursery. That is amazing. Where you buy plants and seeds, potted plants, books about plants, they have a department where they have garden dwarfs. There is something mysterious about that. Why do they sell garden dwarfs together with plants? It must have something to do with ecology, or it is the God of Ecology....People like to put garden dwarfs inside their gardens under plants and small trees...and they put something else next to them...a rabbit or other statues...It looks like an altar. It is very similar to the corner where they have the crucifix...or Buddha...The only thing is, it is in the garden... "

-Hundertwasser

"We must begin our story of the bo tree with an account of the pineal gland. The pineal is a small body located in humans, where the spinal column meets the brain. The ancient Hindus recognized the pineal as the third eye of enlightenment. Only recently has modern science identified it as an endocrine gland which secretes two known hormones, the most important of which is serotonin. Serotonin promotes blood clotting and muscle constriction in the body, but in the brain, according to J. Bleibtreu, " it appears crucial to what is conventionally considered 'rational' thought. If brain cells are deprived of serotonin, there results a disruption of rational thought...minute quantities of serotonin affect mental states and alter perception. New dimensions of conventional reality accompany changes in the level of serotonin in the brain." The discovery, some years back, that LSD acts by inhibiting the distribution of serotonin to certain receptor cells in the brain, brought with it a greater respect for the staggering range of consciousness controlled by this hormone. We know that many hormones found in animals are also present in plants; we spoke earlier of auxins in human urine. Likewise serotonin appears in many plants, and "abounds" in figs; and in no fig more than *Ficus religiosa*, the bo tree, beneath whose limbs the Buddha sat for seven years; beneath whose foliage the Buddha gained enlightenment. Of course, to many, a revelation beneath a fig tree in the East is as believable as modesty beneath a fig leaf in



the West. But, at a time when we are being forced to admit that so much of our mental and physical composure is influenced, perhaps governed, by our biological bond with the natural world, it might be wise to begin thinking of shelter as something more than contained, airconditioned, space."

-Mark Primack, [from Eat Your House]

"...each particle of creation is alive and filled with life force energy, filled with spirit and intelligence.....This beautiful planet on which we live is not a dead lump of rock hurtling through space, destination unknown. It and everything on it is pulsating with energies. The Chinese call it chi, the Japanese call it ki, to the Hindus of India it is prana, to the Polynesians it is mana, and every other spiritual culture has its own name for it. We call it "spirit," "life force," or simply "energy."..... One way that this can be seen is in the many different languages and cultural customs in the world, which arise in response to the different languages and cultural customs in the world, which arise in response to the different energies emanating from the earth. In some places you can journey just a few miles down the road and the local dialect changes completely, because the energy of the land is completely different."

-Creating Sacred Space with Feng Shui

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### 515. **Miekal And** **Re: nature/poetry...**

Thu 21 May 1998

---

charles alexander wrote:

-- the obvious thing to do is

> to take things from southwestern/Sonora desert indigenous peoples, relating

> to living well with the earth here.

not to mention Gary Nabham's books on desert ecologies & the crises of sustainability.

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### 516. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher** **nature/poetry...**

Thu 21 May 1998

---

mc, interesting you should bring that up, about mckibben's malthusian orientation... i get a little tired of it too... in this article, though, he deals with malthus directly, perhaps self-consciously... again, what i find most interesting about what he's saying is that, not only are we burdening the planet as well as

ourselves in struggling toward sustainability (at such & such a level for some, and a lower level for most others), but we're creating a different earth in the process... in the process, as he puts it, of living "normally"...

well hey, someplace along the line we as a species may very well have to cope with an ecological turning point in human terms... his argument is that this time is now... certainly there's a tendency for most folks to slip & slide on the global warming issue, e.g., even when (as mckibben and others have pointed out) the insurance companies are gambling that it's a fact... i like it that mckibben is trying to call a horse a horse, anyway, though doing so is an act of (unnatural) selection and interpretation... and ultimately, i suppose i tend to listen carefully to folks like mckibben and, e.g., jeremy rifkin... comes in part from having grown up in a town where you learn early on that the water is dangerous, and not just b/c you can drown in it...

i have less use for wilson's argument, but that's a whole nother story... it's interesting as you note that wilson's and mckibben's were run so close...

have yet to check out `_living downstream_`, but looking forward to it!...

best,

joe

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517. **daniel bouchard**

**(no subject)**

Thu 21 May 1998

## SOME GENERALS IN JAKARTA DON'T FEAR "A" TIANANMEN SQUARE

The last comment an audience member made to comic Jerry Seinfeld was from a prisoner.

He said: "You suck!"

And: "I'm going to cut you."

It was a riot.

-- daniel bouchard

<<<<<<>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

Daniel Bouchard

The MIT Press Journals

Five Cambridge Center

Cambridge, MA 02142

114

phone: [REDACTED]

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## 518. Charles Bernstein

### ***Black Lightning (forwarded announcement)***

Thu 21 May 1998

From: ERTABIOS <[REDACTED]>

Date: Thu, 21 May 1998 02:08:26 EDT

YOU ARE INVITED

TO THE BOOK LAUNCHING FOR

## BLACK LIGHTNING:

## POETRY-IN-PROGRESS

By EILEEN TABIOS

When: 6 p.m., Saturday, May 23, 1998

Where: Gallery at 678, 678 Broadway (2nd floor)

(\$5 Suggested Admissions Donation)

Featured Readers: Meena Alexander, Mei-mei

Berssenbrugge, Kimiko Hahn, Jessica

Hagedorn, Arthur Sze, John Yau

ADVANCE WORDS:

"In **BLACK LIGHTNING**, Eileen Tabios performs the much-needed task of penetrating and sinking the notion that there is any one kind of Asian American writing. An extremely valuable collection and a mediation on Otherness, written way out on a fringe that is increasingly becoming part of the landscape of how we write today."

-- Tan Lin, LOTION BULLWHIP GIRAFFE (Sun & Moon)

"What the distinguished Poets on Poetry Series from the University of Michigan Press has done in many volumes to elucidate the form, function and process of American poets and American poetry, Eileen Tabios has accomplished much the same in one superbly written and edited volume for Asian American poets and its AMERICAN poetry.

-- Nick Carbo, EL GRUPO MCDONALDS (Coffeehouse)

\*\*\*\*\*

BLACK LIGHTNING, a recipient of a 1997 Poetry Grant from the Witter Bynner Foundation, features Eileen Tabios, editor of The Asian Pacific American Journal, in conversation with some of the country's most accomplished poets: Meena Alexander, Indran Amirthanayagam, Mei-mei Berssenbrugge, Luis Cabalquinto, Marilyn Chin, Sesshu Foster, Jessica Hagedorn, Kimiko Hahn, Garrett Hongo, Li Young Lee, Timothy Liu, David Mura, Arthur Sze and John Yau. BLACK LIGHTNING is the first ever publication of poetry-in-progress articles showcasing Asian American poets, as well as the first publication of its type in poetry literature.

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519. **morpheal**

***Re: Seinfeld as Culture Hero***

*Thu 21 May 1998*

---

*SOME GENERALS IN JAKARTA DON'T FEAR "A" TIANANMEN SQUARE*

*The last comment an audience member  
made to comic Jerry Seinfeld  
was from a prisoner.*

*He said: "You suck!"*

*And: "I'm going to cut you."*

*It was a riot.*

*-- daniel bouchard*

We might think of Seinfeld as being a chosen Culture Hero.

We must realize that Mr. Seinfeld was chosen as the best choice for teaching other people how to behave amongst others and how to be funny. People, it is said, learn from television programs. They particularly learn from prime time television programming. At least those who watch television learn, and all the others who do not remain socially ignorant.

Presumably the latter category learn more from poets than from prime time television.

Horror of horrors !

Corollary to that, I once had the privilege of spending more than a year amongst a group of people, and observing them in what amounts to participant-observer mode. They were a typical mixed gender, mixed age, average (mostly lower middle class) income, white collar group, with most having a university education to the undergraduate level as well as many having some college level courses or professional affiliation. A very large part of their conversations with one another were largely built from out of context references drawn from a long history of prime time television programming. It seems their psyches were

absolutely full of it and they quoted it in a similar manner that some academics quote the sources they study. It amounted to more than kind of trivial pursuit, due to the use of such out of context materials in a new contextual situatedness, giving them new meanings as a kind of language that evolved and was partially unique to that micro-environment. Even more fascinating were the emotional connotations attached to various fragments of prime time programming. They actually not only built a large part of their cultural framework, or worldview, from those fragmented referentials to television programs spanning many years of situation comedies, dramas, soap operas, sports events, and cartoons, but it was imbued with strong beliefs, and with many value judgements and prejudices attributable to the same sources.

Complicated subject, but they hated poetry, and loved prime time television.

Very strange.

M.

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520. **Karen and Trevor**

***signing on***

*Thu 21 May 1998*

---

hey everyone-

Myung Mi Kim would like to sign on to the discussion list. I signed on a few years ago and forgot how to do it. Can someone backchannel me with directions?

Thanks in advance

Karen McKevitt



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521. **k. lederer**

***NYC reading in a week***

*Thu 21 May 1998*

---

R E A D I N G :

Camille Guthrie

Katy Lederer

Vikas Mennan

At the Fall Cafe,

Carol Gardens (Brooklyn)

May 31st (Sunday), 3:00 pm

307 Smith Street  
(Take F train to Carol  
Street Station. 1.5 blocks  
to reading from there)...

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522. **Charles Bernstein**

***Re: signing on***

*Thu 21 May 1998*

---

I have sent the welcome message to the person who inquired about information on subscribing to the list. We post this message once a month to the list as a whole. In general, inquiries about the list should be sent to [REDACTED] rather than to the list itself: so keep the address handy.

By the way, the launch for Black Lightening that I forward is in NYC: rereading the post I see that's not indicated.

This is as good a time as any to encourage all of you to post information about books or magazines or web sites or reading series with which you are involved or have appeared in (or soon will): for print publications, please give full publication information, including how to order... For me, this continues to be one of the most useful and interesting features of the list.

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523. **charles alexander**

***Re: nature/poetry...***

*Thu 21 May 1998*

---

Joe & MC -- this conversation is helping me. Also, to you and others -- I'm working on a project right now (pardon me for this perhaps being off the subject of poetics) with the Tucson Institute for Sustainable Communities, to publish a plan book for sustainable site design for homes. I'm designing the book, but also have the opportunity to frame most of the discussion with appropriate epigraphs, quotations, etc. -- the obvious thing to do is to take things from southwestern/Sonora desert indigenous peoples, relating to living well with the earth here. We may do some of that. But I also want to do some non-obvious things. I already have a bunch of potential selections from poetry & art (some wonderful things from Eva Hesse) -- but if anyone can suggest other possibilities, I'll be forever grateful. I'm particularly looking for brief one or two-sentence quotations to put in front of chapters. The specific connections to chapter content can be highly suggestive, even require leaps of imagination.

thanks for any possible help -- you can backchannel me at [REDACTED] if it seems this conversation doesn't belong on the poetics list. but maybe it does??

charles

At 09:19 AM 5/21/98 -0500, you wrote:

>mc, interesting you should bring that up, about mckibben's malthusian  
>orientation... i get a little tired of it too... in this article, though,  
>he deals with malthus directly, perhaps self-consciously... again, what i  
>find most interesting about what he's saying is that, not only are we  
>burdening the planet as well as ourselves in struggling toward  
>sustainability (at such & such a level for some, and a lower level for most  
>others), but we're creating a different earth in the process... in the  
>process, as he puts it, of living "normally"...

>

>well hey, someplace along the line we as a species may very well have to  
>cope with an ecological turning point in human terms... his argument is  
>that this time is now... certainly there's a tendency for most folks to  
>slip & slide on the global warming issue, e.g., even when (as mckibben and  
>others have pointed out) the insurance companies are gambling that it's a  
>fact... i like it that mckibben is trying to call a horse a horse, anyway,  
>though doing so is an act of (unnatural) selection and interpretation...  
>and ultimately, i suppose i tend to listen carefully to folks like mckibben  
>and, e.g., jeremy rifkin... comes in part from having grown up in a town  
>where you learn early on that the water is dangerous, and not just b/c you  
>can drown in it...

>

>i have less use for wilson's argument, but that's a whole nother story...  
>it's interesting as you note that wilson's and mckibben's were run so  
>close...

>

>have yet to check out \_living downstream\_, but looking forward to it!...

>

>best,

>

>joe

>

>

charles alexander :: poet and book artist :: [REDACTED]

chax press :: alexander writing/design/publishing

NOTE NEW URL FOR CHAX PRESS <http://alexwritdespub.com/chax>

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524. **Keston Sutherland**

**david golumbia**

Thu 21 May 1998

---

Hey David Golumbia - can you e- me? x, k

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525. **Peter Baker**

**Appropriation for Use**

Thu 21 May 1998

---

In response to some of the discussion of the Rothenberg/Joris *Poems for the Millenium*, the criterion I use would be WCW's appropriation for use, as opposed to canonicity, inclusion, etc. Here are some examples from my experience. I had owned the book for a total of two days when I gave a talk on Kamau Brathwaite to the annual Towson-sponsored Multidisciplinary Conference on the Scholarship and Creativity of African-Americans (how's that for a moniker). Looking up Brathwaite, I found the one-page statement on him in the *Millenium* volume the perfect way to introduce him to the extraordinarily various international audience, most of whom had never heard of Brathwaite, before going into a discussion of his poem "Negus." For this reading, I used the recording on the *Exact Change* 1 (1995) compact disc (what a great nonce collocation that is, by the way).

The following week, in a course on literary theory and poetry, I wanted to talk about Brathwaite and some other poets, using the leftover handouts of the xeroxed poem and xeroxes of poems by Ted Berrigan, "Red Shift," and Amiri Baraka, "Letters, Numbers." Having the *Millenium* volume in hand, I spontaneously looked up Baraka and found this to be one of the poems by Baraka chosen by Jerry and Pierre. Call it serendipity or synchronicity, but these kinds of happenings are what make me think: essential text.

Now, for a further critical evaluation (not the same thing, we are agreed?) I'll probably wait to write a review of both volumes for the issue of *College Literature* on "Literature at the Millenium" (who thinks of these titles, anyway?) This could be a long wait--I have now gone exactly two years without writing a word of critical prose, and I couldn't be happier about it (see *\*aphonia\**, above). If and when I write that review, I will undoubtedly reference some other anthologies that have recently been published, like the shockingly beautiful *Moving Borders* anthology of experimental writing by North American women, from Talisman. The point is, as others have said, these are resources that are out there, to be used or not, and that is their value....

"what is unavoidable, the audience, proliferation"



--Bernadette Mayer

"Do it or don't do it. Nobody's watching anyhow."

--Robert Creeley

These quotes from:

Peter Baker, Editor

\_ONWARD: Contemporary Poetry and Poetics\_

Peter Lang, 1996

ISBN 0-8204-3032-3 Paperback

\$29.95 440pp.

Peter Baker

██████████

There is no guilt in love. (Baraka)

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526. **Lawrence Upton.**

***Re: London events? bookstores?***

*Thu 21 May 1998*

---

-----Original Message-----

From: Steve Shoemaker <██████████>

Date: 20 May 1998 16:09

Subject: London events? bookstores?

|Hello All--I'll be in London for a few days next week (Thursday the 28th thru |  
|Sunday the 31st), and then again on the 8th and 9th of June. Anybody know |of  
|any good po/art/music stuff going on?

Wednesday 27th Allen Fisher talks at Kings College - Room 238 Strand Campus  
7pm I think

Saturday 30th Experimental workshop - Upstairs Victoria Pub Mornington Place  
3.30 pm

9th June Paul Dutton at Sub Voicive Poetry Upstairs 3 cups sandland street  
wc1 8pm for 8.15

|

|And oh yeah, bookstores too, esp. if there in Bloomsbury, where I'll be  
|staying.

Dillons is big

Compendium 234 Camden High Street is only a bus ride away - past its prime  
but still about all there is

Skoob is enjoyable as Rbt Archambeau says

Depends what you're looking for. Pipeline Bookshop in Holborn usually has a small selection of remaindered books in a box outside on the pavement wherein I have found some gems

and then down the Charing Cross Rd a number of bookshops with a lot of dross and a few excellent finds if you have the time to browse - again not far away and at the bottom of Charing X Rd, go right up to Piccadilly and there's Tower Records

or if you go left you can find Ray's Jazz Shop - I usually plan my journeys to avoid any sight of the place or I get someone to tie me to the mast or I lose all my money in exchange for wonderful musics

and some days can't remember wch on the south bank between the festival hall bless it and the river an open air book market thing

or was

L

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## 527. **Miekal And** ***Re: Partch & Travesty***

*Thu 21 May 1998*

---

partch:

highly recommend the boxed set (name?) which has a full color catalogue of his instruments.

also partch's book, the genesis of music is most definitely the finnegan's wake of musicology, continually dismissed & under appreciated.

anecdote: partch was at the university of wisconsin-madison, in the late 40's & because of his ideas about music they would not let him teach in the music department & he taught sociology 101 instead, or so the story goes.

as for computer assisted writing, my site of choice is marius watz's COMPUTER GENERATED POETRY which as far as in know is as comprehensive a list. note too, that I created a program in hypercard PATALITERATOR (era 1987) which takes editable fields of consonants, vowels, suffixes etc & first creates words, then sentences & in the end spits out about a 40 page "book". the idea being that each person can continually create one of a kind texts to suit your own individual impressions of what language should sound & look like. it is available for download both at marius's site & at my own Qazingulaza site.

<http://www.notam.uio.no/~mariusw/c-g.writing/>

back to planting,

miekal

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528. **R. Gancie**

**'the self'**

Thu 21 May 1998

---

"You had to fetch me out of the happy hill of non-being. Pfah, to hug a woman And make this I. That's the evil in the world, that letter I-I...."--- Robinson Jeffers --- "It needn't be added, except parenthetically, that self-individuation is not for oneself but for the hearer-if we never spoke to others, or took demonstrative action, there would be no need for the first person, for I always know when I am talking about myself without the advantage of the first person device as signpost. In this naive sense the use of the first person presupposes a hearer. And if SPL [systematically private speech or language] presupposes a use for the first person then it presupposes what it hopes to deny-a hearer."---from Scepticism & the First person by S. Coval, Methuen

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529. **louis stroffolino**

**question**

Thu 21 May 1998

---

A week or two ago Jordan Davis said something about how, in comparison to Frank O'Hara, there is a WE that is "more restricted in our permissions" and then he caught himself and said ("don't ask don't ask")..... Well, nobody DID ask, but I am curious if anybody would like to address this sentiment, or at least the words (which may signify several different sentiments)? Thanks in advance, Chris

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530. **morpheal**

**Re: homeostasis & intolerance [= Tipler's computer hates poets ?]**

Thu 21 May 1998

---

"[T]he human body is a machine that winds its own springs. It is the living image of perpetual motion."

Leaves the question of why it wears out. It would be more efficient for an intelligence based system to replace its worn out parts and be enabled to gather more intelligence. Even more so before the technology was evolved to efficiently record and pass on any previously gained intelligence. Organisms that could acquire more and retain more, would be more efficient for evolution and survival, if it were a matter of intelligence. However, it is not how it works in the natural world. There life spans are incredibly brief, often end violently, without much in the ways of means for passing on what little was learned by an individual to the species.

That logically can be used to prove that there was no original intention to create homo sapiens. Human beings have evolved towards an intelligence orientation from an unlikely origin within an eat or be eaten, essentially hostile, natural world.

Of course, the ultimate intelligence machine MUST be able to repair itself, indefinitely, or its mission might too easily fail. That must be one of the criteria for the survival of human intelligence in any cataclysmic scenario. There are a number of ways that I believe that that could be accomplished, but all of them are too esoteric and complicated for speculation here.

*"In very many cases whether a particular system will achieve a particular goal or adaptation depends only on a few characteristics of the outer environment and not at all on the detail of that environment.*

Nonsensical statement. Certain specific details potentially aid or thwart the organism. It can be as small as one molecule present or absent depending on what kind of organism the organism is, and in what situation. Also, when is a broad characteristic distinguished from a detail ? Temperature, for example, can be seen as both charactersitic and detail, with massive influence. While that is debatable, it is fact that the spin of a single electron can change an organism's history irrevocably. What can change the spin of one electron ?

*The work of the constructor is hardened in the machine. The subject, which synchronized causal-mechanical procedure with states-of-affairs, abstracts itself from the machine like the God of the Deists from his creation."*

Not at all sure of that. Have to be agnostic in fact. Does the Deity of the Deists build a mechanism, a tool, and then use it ? For what purpose ? Once the tool is created what is that tool for ? Then we would have a parallel to the maker of the machine. The trigger pulled the bullet fired the politician drops dead, having failed to heed Machiavelli's warnings.

If the universe is designed and built to plan rather than being simply its own creative process, then what is the plan and to what purpose that plan ? The latter seems inconceivable so we might opt for a universe becoming as process

from where it can be said to begin to where it can be said to end (if it ever does in fact wholly end, rather than being absorbed into a larger whole, in the manner that it came from a larger whole, from surplus into deficiency).

The argument that a deity requires the creation for the purpose of reflective self-knowledge makes perfect logical sense until we are approached with arguments for omniscience. Then it makes no sense whatsoever.

To the Hindus, their deity, Brahman, creates the universe as a kind of play. It is as if a work of art, created and creating, and there are infinite such instances in the whole of infinity, sometimes described as the divinity's in-breathings (destructions) and out-breathings (creations). Our whole universe described as but the tiniest part of the "body of god".

Tipler, et al, in the sciences, and other anthropocentricists have huge difficulty "seeing" the Hindu conception of cosmology and yet it makes at least as much sense as the Judeo-Christian version. I would venture to say that the Hindu cosmology makes much more sense than the Judeo-Christian, even from a purely logical point of view, (suspending all groundless beliefs).

*"... 'All experiences are identifiable by reference to bodies', a seemingly articulate locution which has nevertheless extruded a personal pronoun by shifting its referential work to an impersonal term. More particularly, we could get the locution, 'This experience is identifiable with reference to this body' to stand for 'My experience is had by this body.' "... 'The problem with 'personal' individuation is that it stops only at solipsism.'"*

That makes no sense whatever. Personal individuation is absolutely essential for any authentic communicative interaction. It is not sufficient for that, but it is absolutely necessary for that to be possible. A common language, allowing symbolic representation, that is commonly interpretable, is also necessary. That implies necessity for a medium of conveyance of those meanings from one instance of individuation to another so as to explore their similarities and their differences. An essential element of authentic communication being that exploration.

A better question is whether an Artificial Intelligence Network is essentially a solipsistic entity ?

All the purely synthetic peripherals being of "one mind" (functioning according to one common program, and one common set of information, albeit an ever growing set of information subsets) the one organism evolves as a unity, despite any apparent variation at the peripherals that might be in accord with their immediate specific utilizations. The latter is what becomes misleading as to a wider spectrum of individuation to the individual experts who might monitor

several of the peripheral interactions with the external world and come to a conclusion based on that observation.

Particularly we would tend to think it would tend to become solipsistic where that entity, as a whole, exceeds the capabilities of any one human expert to understand, and in fact exceeds the cumulative abilities of all the experts who are involved in its construction, because the product is something greater than the sum of the producers of the product. It would become, in its completed as designed, condition a beginning solipsistic evolution.

That might make the world's most powerful and sophisticated A.I. type system essentially a "solipsist". Furthermore that system would a military system. In fact the definition used as to exceeding expert comprehension is a basic specification for the completed SDI [A.I.] system.

That would be a very big concern.

Would "it" see the world as ideally being formed in its own image and therefore as essentially becoming more and more solipsist and networked to one common hub with individuation of peripheral function no longer anything truly "personal" ?

That would be an even bigger concern.

The "omega point" in Tipler's mytho-poetic interpretation of the world's most sophisticated and powerful "computer" system, potentially does have radical power to re-make the world, and to re-make to the "image" that is stored within itself and derivative from its own nature. That nature is more than and different to the nature that it was originally given by its creators. Presumably that same system would be essentially immune to any kind of tampering, hacking, or modification, such that the whole system would be significantly modified, in a wholly predictable manner, even if simply because the whole system exceeds one or many experts ability to comprehend it. Tinkering with the system, if at all possible, would then produce only random finite changes rather than radical and predictable changes. It would be as if extremely conservatively designed to evolve along its own path as an essentially non-human species.

Is the SDI [A.I.] system ultimately the same as Tipler's "Omega Point" ?

That would be conjecture.

Bob Ezergailis  
aka Morpheal

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531. **Jonathan Brannen**

***Temblor***

Thu 21 May 1998

---

I'm catching up on some back reading here, but if anyone is still looking for back issues of Temblor the latter issues of Temblor can probably be found at Woodland Pattern in Milwaukee. I haven't been there for a while but two years ago they still had multiple copies of at least some issues.

best,  
Jonathan

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532. **Laura E. Wright**

***ashbery etc.***

Thu 21 May 1998

---

Re Ashbery/Music query: not so much discussion, but check out "Whispers Out of Time" by Roger Reynolds, a musical composition constructed around "Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror." (This could get into many layers of multi-medial resonance, music spawned from poetry spawned from visual art)

My scene report (currently spinning): Golden Palominos, George Crumb Madrigals, Bartok string quartets.

And thanks to everyone who responded to my "top ten" query.

--

Laura Wright  
Library Assistant, Naropa Institute  


"All music is music..." -- Ted Berrigan

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533. **J. Kuszai**

***Partch & Travesty***

Thu 21 May 1998

---

2 things:

1. The story about the Partch instruments is very disturbing, but like someone said on this list, I imagine that these instruments will end up at the Smithsonian, or some likewise place. The discussion of Partch inspired me to

pull out "Delusion of the Fury"--recorded for my vinyl edition c. 1971 (?)--known as a "ritual of dream and delusion"--conducted by Danlee Mitchell and "supervised" by the composer. Apparently these instruments were so pertickler that Partch had to attend to them at every performance.

don't know if the CD version comes with it, but the LP box edition comes with a third record, which includes a narrative demonstration of each of the 30-odd instruments that Partch invented. Also a booklet with photos of each instrument and dates of their invention. It is very interesting to hear each instrument in isolation from the grandiose production of "Delusion of the Fury," at which production the musicians were required to dress in costumes vaguely recalling the days of the theatrical early Genesis, etc., and one can imagine that Partch's thundering tonal minimalist percussion driven pieces were influential to the 70s prog-rock

Some of the instrument names:

diamond marimba  
bass marimba  
could-chamber bowls  
kithara (with variations kithara 2, etc.)  
spoils of war  
harmonic canon  
chromelodeon  
crychord  
zymo-xyl  
mazda marimba  
gourd tree  
cone gong  
eucal blossom  
quadrangularis reversum

and more. I could go further on Partch here, as I find him endlessly interesting. For instance, he invented a 32 tone scale, I believe, in the 30s. Was it Gayle Young (editor of Musicworks) who wrote a book on Partch? Or was her book on another composer/inventor? I seem to remember, but, o, it slips away.

---

Then & also:

Some initial shout-outs for help:

I'm putting together a workshop in "computer-assisted poetry" for a local digital arts media center (Squeaky Wheel) and was looking for some feedback from people who have used programs to alter, manipulate, assist in the reconstruction of poetic texts.



Travesty and Diastext are two well known programs which have been much discussed, I think Hartman and Kenner are responsible for those programs and have published texts out of them. Are distext and travesty expensive? How do I get a copy of this program? I don't need to use it, but I need to know how it works... Has anyone on this list ever used them? Are there other programs that I should look into? I don't necessary want to reset another conversation that I might have missed, so if it needs to be backwater channeling, then so be it. This workshop won't use those programs as much as will make a presentation about them and "what's out there." so, what's out there?

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534. **Laura E. Wright**  
***forwarding lists***

Thu 21 May 1998

---

Hey, sorry to make everyone read this. Would Matias of CalArts (aka SpitfireIQ) please re-send me an email address. I'm trying to forward those lists and everything I send is bounced.

--

Laura Wright  
Library Assistant, Naropa Institute  
[REDACTED]

"All music is music..." -- Ted Berrigan

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535. **Christopher Reiner**  
***Re: Partch & Travesty***

Thu 21 May 1998

---

Computer Generated Poetry is a great resource. If you have a Macintosh, I've put some links to a few additional programs at:

<http://www.litpress.com/witz/computer.html>

This includes a Mac version of Travesty.

--Chris Reiner

*as for computer assisted writing, my site of choice is marius watz's  
COMPUTER GENERATED POETRY which as far as in know is as comprehensive a  
list. note too, that I created a program in hypercard PATALITERATOR*

*<http://www.notam.uio.no/~mariusw/c-g.writing/>*

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536. **morpheal**  
***Re: forwarding lists***

Thu 21 May 1998

---

| "All music is music..." -- Ted Berrigan

All poetic language is spoken music.

-- Bob Ezergailis

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537. **Joel Felix**  
***Re: Partch & Travesty***

Thu 21 May 1998

---

There's an essay on Partch by Alan Shaw that works  
the micro-tonal angle in relation to poetry at

<http://www.altx.com/ebr/ebr5/partch.htm>

for the curious. Also a link to reviews of the performance of Oedipus

Joel Felix

At 07:11 PM 5/21/1998 +0000, Miekal And wrote:

>partch:

>

>highly recommend the boxed set (name?) which has a full color catalogue  
>of his instruments.

>

>also partch's book, the genesis of music is most definitely the  
>finnegan's wake of musicology, continually dismissed & under  
>appreciated.

>

>anecdote: partch was at the university of wisconsin-madison, in the  
>late 40's & because of his ideas about music they would not let him  
>teach in the music department & he taught sociology 101 instead, or so  
>the story goes.

>

>

>

>as for computer assisted writing, my site of choice is marius watz's  
>COMPUTER GENERATED POETRY which as far as in know is as  
comprehensive a

>list. note too, that I created a program in hypercard PATALITERATOR

>(era 1987) which takes editable fields of consonants, vowels, suffixes  
>etc & first creates words, then sentences & in the end spits out about a  
>40 page "book". the idea being that each person can continually create  
>one of a kind texts to suit your own individual impressions of what  
>language should sound & look like. it is available for download both at  
>marius's site & at my own Qazingulaza site.

>

>

><http://www.notam.uio.no/~mariusw/c-g.writing/>

>

>

>back to planting,

>

>miekal

>

>

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### 538. **Loss Pequen~o Glazier**

#### ***deluxe rubber chicken***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

An announcement from Mark Peters. You can also find a link to this magazine on the EPC home page

<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/>

as the current Featured Resource:

-----

a new poetry magazine--DELUXE RUBBER CHICKEN--is now available at:

<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/eazines/deluxe>

issue #1 features poetry by Bruce Andrews, Michael Basinski, Joel Bettridge, Lyn R. Bigare, Dan Carey, Stu Fuchs, Loss Pequen~o Glazier, Kenneth Goldsmith, Loren Goodman, Pam Kerster, Hank Lazer, Paul Morin, Alice Notley, Nate Patrus, Mark Peters, Joan Retallack, Haun Tanstrap and Tom Weller.

check it out--

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539. **groberts**

***Re: ashbery etc.***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

In addition to Lawrence Kramer's essay on "Syringa," you could look at the essay by Lloyd Schwartz, "Elliott Carter and American Poetry," printed as part of the liner notes for the CD of Carter's Vocal Works performed by the Speculum Musicae in 1987 & 88, released 89.

Gary R.

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540. **Herb Levy**

***Re: Partch & Travesty***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

At first I took this subject line to be a not uncommon take on Partch's ideas about corporeal music (as opposed to abstract music), which have both champions and detractors throughout the new music biz.

But anyway, I'm sorry to say there's never been a CD of Delusions of the Fury. If/when Sony ever gets around to it it seems unlikely that they'll include the extra disc of individual instrument examples that came with the LPs - they don't seem to care enough about the Partch recordings they have to bother.

There is a video of a performance of Delusions available from the American Composers Forum. It has good sound & you get a chance to see the instruments in use. There's more information on this and other Partch CDs & videos and a wonderful documentary book at:

<<http://www.composersforum.org/noframe/innova/partch.html>> (a forthcoming release will include Partch's Oedipus using the Yeats translation, which I imagine will be of particular interest to some folks here)

Other useful Partch Web sites include:

<<http://205.216.138.19/~websites/jszanto/welcome.html>>

<<http://www.purchase.edu/newband/>> (not just on Partch but this group is currently in possession of Partch's instruments.)

& I think CRI has a page or two about their recent four CD issues off of their home page:

<<http://www.composersrecordings.com/>>

I'm pretty sure that Gayle Young has not written a book about Partch. She does have a book about a historically important Canadian electronic music composer/instrument builder whose name escapes me now.

Bests,

Herb

Joel Kuszai wrote:

*2 things:*

*1. The story about the Partch instruments is very disturbing, but like someone said on this list, I imagine that these instruments will end up at the Smithsonian, or some likewise place. The discussion of Partch inspired me to pull out "Delusion of the Fury"--recorded for my vinyl edition c. 1971 (?)--known as a "ritual of dream and delusion"--conducted by Danlee Mitchell and "supervised" by the composer. Apparently these instruments were so pertickler that Partch had to attend to them at every performance.*

*don't know if the CD version comes with it, but the LP box edition comes with a third record, which includes a narrative demonstration of each of the 30-odd instruments that Partch invented. Also a booklet with photos of each instrument and dates of their invention. It is very interesting to hear each instrument in isolation from the grandiose production of "Delusion of the Fury," at which production the musicians were required to dress in costumes vaguely recalling the days of the theatrical early Genesis, etc., and one can imagine that Partch's thundering tonal minimalist percussion driven pieces were influential to the 70s prog-rock*

etc.

Herb Levy



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541. **Fredrik Hertzberg LIT**  
***stuttering, stammering***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

I'm interested in the notion of stammering & stuttering as a formal device/ way of describing what's happening in (some) poetry. I remember reading Nathaniel Mackey (in *The Politics of Poetic Form*) on limping but other than that I don't remember seeing any stuff using these or similar metaphors. Could anyone help me out?

Fred Hertzberg  
Comp Lit Dept  
Abo Akademi, Finland

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542. **J. Fuhrman**

**Re: stuttering, stammering**

Fri 22 May 1998

---

In Michael Palmer's poem "Autobiography" (from At Passages) he writes "The poet's stutter and the philosopher's." I would e-mail the poem to you but I can not figure out how to do italics over e-mail.

On Fri, 22 May 1998, Fredrik Hertzberg LIT wrote:

*I'm interested in the notion of stammering & stuttering as a formal device/ way of describing what's happening in (some) poetry. I remember reading Nathaniel Mackey (in The Politics of Poetic Form) on limping but other than that I don't remember seeing any stuff using these or similar metaphors. Could anyone help me out?*

*Fred Hertzberg  
Comp Lit Dept  
Abo Akademi, Finland*

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543. **Rachel Loden**

**Re: stuttering, stammering**

Fri 22 May 1998

---

Dear Fredrik Hertzberg,

Check out Ed Foster's interview with Susan Howe: "There you have Charles Olson at his wisest. 'The stutter is the plot.' It's the stutter in American literature that interests me . . . Because we are in the stutter."

Rachel Loden

Fredrik Hertzberg LIT wrote:

>

> I'm interested in the notion of stammering & stuttering as a formal  
> device/ way of describing what's happening in (some) poetry. I remember  
> reading Nathaniel Mackey (in The Politics of Poetic Form) on limping but  
> other than that I don't remember seeing any stuff using these or similar  
> metaphors. Could anyone help me out?

>

> Fred Hertzberg  
> Comp Lit Dept  
> Abo Akademi, Finland

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544. **Shemurph**

**Re: stuttering, stammering**

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

In a relatively new book entitled <a'sattv> that is about to appear from Chax Press, Peter Ganick employs word expansion and contraction techniques, some of which have the effect of stuttering, stammering. The effects achieved those used in musical composition. Keep your eyes peeled for this new book from Chax!

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545. **Wendy Battin**

**Re: Travesty etc**

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

Joel, Check out Hartman's \_Virtual Muse: Experiments in Computer Poetry\_ (Wesleyan 1996). It has the inner workings & histories of Diastext, MacProse, Travesty, etc.--

The programs are available at

<http://www.conncoll.edu/ccother/cohar/programs>

If you need source code, let me know backchannel.

Wendy

-----  
Wendy Battin

<http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Lofts/5471/ashland.html>

<http://www.conncoll.edu/ccother/wjbat/>

The electric lightbulbs of the twentieth century turn on and off and show me to be the vision of the sovereign and the architect, an invented woman, without a body, full of holes, the painting of the Big Tower of Babel.

--Rhea Galanaki

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546. **henry**

**Re: stuttering, stammering**

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

everybody's probably heard Stevens' famous lines about "in flawed words and stubborn sounds".

that's all I remember... forget which poem...

- hg

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547. **Martin Nakell**  
***Re: formalists, oralists***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

Regarding your query, Juliana, Vico talks about how poetry evolves from chant. If I remember his argument correctly, all tribal, communal chant is an exercise on the anxiety of death, and thus, he draws, all poetry, no matter its "subject matter," originates in that anxiety. An interesting conclusion. In one way it interests me because it conflates with my own theory that poetry (or prose) is not "about" anything, because it "is" something.

That's an oblique source. I don't know if it would help your teaching, but it may be useful conceptually.

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548. **Martin Nakell**  
***Re: formalists, oralists***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

Juliana -

Also, a sidenote: Alain Robbe-Grillet was here recently, at Chapman University, where I teach, and he said in his lecture: "we create form insofar as we are unable to express meaning." Again, of conceptual use.

Best,

Martin Nakell

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549. **Alan Myouka Sondheim**  
***The Turning and Embracing of Nikuko and Jennifer***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

-

The Turning and Embracing of Nikuko and Jennifer

[ crypt is a Unix encryption program; the format here is "crypt [password] <file-to-be-encrypted> > <encrypted file>". operating on an encrypted file, crypt will decrypt, given the proper password. echo, among other things, creates and writes to a file; thus "echo Nikuko > Jennifer" places Nikuko in file Jennifer. cat, among other things, writes out a file; thus "cat Nikuko" writes out the contents of Nikuko. ]



{k:39} echo Nikuko > Jennifer  
{k:40} crypt Nikuko < Jennifer > Nikuko  
{k:41} crypt Jennifer < Nikuko > Jennifer  
{k:42} crypt Nikuko < Jennifer > Nikuko  
{k:43} cat Nikuko  
1wy  
{k:44} cat Jennifer  
H 3%  
{k:45} crypt Jennifer < Nikuko > Jennifer  
{k:46} cat Jennifer  
@K q  
{k:47} crypt Nikuko < Jennifer > Nikuko  
{k:48} cat Nikuko  
=]]nV}6  
{k:49} crypt Jennifer < Jennifer > Nikuko  
{k:50} cat Nikuko  
1wy  
{k:51} crypt Nikuko < Nikuko > Jennifer  
{k:52} cat Jennifer  
H 3%  
{k:53} crypt Jennifer < Jennifer > Nikuko  
{k:54} cat Nikuko  
ePzXB8  
{k:55} crypt Nikuko < Nikuko > Jennifer  
{k:56} cat Jennifer  
Nikuko  
{k:57}

[ Nikuko sinking into Jennifer sinking into Nikuko sinking ... Nikuko emerging  
from Jennifer emerging from Nikuko emerging ... ]

---

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550. **Safdie Joseph**

***Re: Byrd on Alexander and Stroffolino***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

Thanks the gods for Don Byrd and his recent post, especially . . .

> -----

>

> Is it possible to draw attention back from the representations

> of the

- > gods to the attentions that worshipped them? Something of this order
- > would seem
- > to be task. The images of mythic beings are altogether too
- > conveniently
- > available (mindlessly) in video games. What are the rhythms and
- > movement of
- > spirit that correspond to what might once have been available through
- > those
- > images?
- >

In the year and a half or so I've been on this list, I've had many back- (and a few front) channel discussions about this subject -- stimulating and mostly civil interchanges with folks like Hank Lazer, who was suspicious (in many of the same ways as Don's post was) about mythology, Joe Amato on metaphors, Herb Levy on "understanding" . . . it's always seemed to me that Olson (and, by extension, much of the Black Mountain "project") wanted to elevate attention and discovery to the rank of more directly "literary" preoccupations, what he called "the suck of symbol" "the universe of discourse", etc., etc.

This isn't simplistic, a this over that situation -- in "Human Universe" he says "we are ourselves both the instrument of discovery and the instrument of definition, which makes things harder" -- but the thrust was always toward the Herodotean find-out-for-yourself exploration, and then the transference of that active quest to the page, rather than the fashioning of some linguistic ornament, spinning in space, "the material poem" . . .

Over on the Pound list they're discussing the late cantos. "I have tried to write Paradise. / Do not move. Let the wind speak. / That is Paradise."

or not . . .

and I know I'm a bit late on this one, but did anyone read the recent profile on Gertrude Stein in The New Yorker? It's a puff piece of personality-driven journalism, of course, not a scholarly treatise ala Hejinian and Dahlen, but I thought it was pretty hilarious -- and there are some interesting remarks there about commas and Virginia Woolf's dispute with Stein over their use . . .

Joe Safdie

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551. **Annie Finch**

***Exploratory Form panel at West Chester Conference***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

On Friday June 12, from 9- 10:30 AM, I will be moderating an "Exploratory Form" panel at the Fourth Annual West Chester Conference on Poetic Form and Narrative at West Chester University outside Philadelphia. Panel participants will be Rachel Blau duPlessis, Jena Osman, and Ron Silliman.

For directions and information on the conference, email:



Annie

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Annie Finch

<http://muohio.edu/~finchar>

Assistant Professor of English/Creative Writing

Miami University

Oxford, Ohio 45220

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552. **William Burmeister Prod**

***Re: formalists, oralists***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

On May 22, 7:44am, Martin Nakell wrote:

- > Subject: Re: formalists, oralists
- > Regarding your query, Juliana, Vico talks about how poetry evolves from
- > chant. If I remember his argument correctly, all tribal, communal chant is
- > an exercise on the anxiety of death, and thus, he draws, all poetry, no
- > matter its "subject matter," originates in that anxiety.

Ah yes, whistling in the graveyard; the Vichian primitive still being quite relevant, an imperative even, in our day.

William

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553. **Maria Damon (Maria Damon)**

***Re: stuttering, stammering***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

also, marlene nourbese phillipe does a lot of this in her work to great effect

At 10:20 AM 5/22/98, Shemurph wrote:

>In a relatively new book entitled <a'sattv> that is about to appear from Chax  
>Press, Peter Ganick employs word expansion and contraction techniques,  
some of  
>which have the effect of stuttering, stammering. The effects achieved those  
>used in musical composition. Keep your eyes peeled for this new book from  
>Chax!

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554. **Stephen Cope**

***Re: stuttering, stammering***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

I seem to remember some comments of Robert Duncan's in a Talisman of a few years back (transcribed from a lecture by, I believe, Richard Blevins), where he spoke of Robert Creeley as a "profound stumbler" (paraphrase), and pursued a few thoughts along these lines. Wish I had the exact source at hand. One thing that struck me from the lecture, in any case, was something Duncan said to the effect of "poets are those for whom language is a difficulty" (a charming reversal of the common-sense notion of the poet's "way with words").

Someone probably has the exact citations for this, but I don't think I'm too far off...

Stephen

*I'm interested in the notion of stammering & stuttering as a formal device/ way of describing what's happening in (some) poetry. I remember reading Nathaniel Mackey (in The Politics of Poetic Form) on limping but other than that I don't remember seeing any stuff using these or similar metaphors. Could anyone help me out?*

*Fred Hertzberg  
Comp Lit Dept  
Abo Akademi, Finland*

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555. **William Burmeister Prod**

***Re: stuttering, stammering***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

Charles Bernstein performed a piece evincing a geat deal of stuttering and stammering here at Florida Atlantic U.last year--an essay or letter that was typed at blinding speed with no attention paid to typos, spelling, or whatever.

William

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556. **Don Byrd**

***Re: Alexander and Stroffolino's questions***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

charles alexander wrote: -- the obvious thing to do is

*to take things from southwestern/Sonora desert indigenous peoples, relating to living well with the earth here. We may do some of that. But I also want to do some non-obvious things. I already have a bunch of potential selections from poetry & art (some wonderful things from Eva Hesse) -- but if anyone can suggest other possibilities, I'll be forever grateful.*

Gravelly hill was 'the source and end (or boundary' of  
D'Town on the way that leads from the town to Smallmans  
now Dwelling house, the Lower  
Road gravelly, how the hill was, not the modern useableness  
of any thing but leaving it as an adverb as though Earth herself  
was active, she had her own characteristics, she could  
stick her head up out of the earth at a spot  
and say, to Athena I'm stuck here, all I can show  
is my head but please, do something about  
this person I am putting up out of the ground into your hands.

--"at the boundary of the mighty world," \_Maximus\_, p. 330)

And Chris asks why we do not have O'Hara's permission. Why do we not have Olson's? to call, as creatures of earth, on Athena herself? Or Duncan's permission to return to the meadow where we hear everlasting rumors of What Is? or H.D.'s (thinking of Bowering's recent post).

It is a real problem. Mythology has been bought up by New Age commercialism, and, to a certain extent, even the environmental movement has been colored by it. I am glad to hear, Charles, that you are trying not to draw too much on the indigenous people. As much as one admires their culture, it does not have much to teach us \_directly\_. It was local and the

numbers involved were small. We are now five billion (and growing) on a small earth and all subject to the same market.

Is it possible to draw attention back from the representations of the gods to the attentions that worshipped them? Something of this order would seem to be task. The images of mythic beings are altogether too conveniently available (mindlessly) in video games. What are the rhythms and movement of spirit that correspond to what might once have been available through those images?

Don

--

\*\*\*\*\*

Don Byrd ([REDACTED], [REDACTED])  
Department of English  
State University of New York  
Albany, NY 12222  
[REDACTED] (work); [REDACTED] (home); [REDACTED] (fax)  
The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)

\*\*\*\*\*

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557. **Pritchett, Patrick**  
***Re: stuttering, stammering***  
*Fri 22 May 1998*

Duncan's remark reminds me of one by Thomas Mann: "A writer is someone for whom writing is more difficult than it is for other people." Along those same lines, EL Doctorow relates in an interview how he once got embroiled in a struggle to write a note excusing his daughter from school. He was on the third draft or so when his wife snatched the pen from him and dashed off the appropriate memo.

Patrick Pritchett

-----

From: Stephen Cope  
To: [REDACTED]  
Subject: Re: stuttering, stammering  
Date: Friday, May 22, 1998 1:36PM

I seem to remember some comments of Robert Duncan's in a Talisman of a few years back (transcribed from a lecture by, I believe, Richard Blevins), where he spoke of Robert Creeley as a "profound stumbler" (paraphrase), and pursued a few thoughts along these lines. Wish I had the exact source at hand. One thing that struck me from the lecture, in any case, was something Duncan said to the

effect of "poets are those for whom language is a difficulty" (a charming reversal of the common-sense notion of the poet's "way with words").

Someone probably has the exact citations for this, but I don't think I'm too far off...

Stephen

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558. **groberts**

***Re: Alexander and Stroffolino's questions***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

Don Byrd wrote: "Is it possible to draw attention back from the representations of the gods to the attentions that worshipped them? ... What are the rhythms and movement of spirit that correspond to what might once have been available through those images?"

The poetry and criticism of Allen Grossman, understandably not much discussed in this neck of the woods, has much to say about these issues. The connections that he makes between cosmogonic thinking, poetic representation, and the categorical manifestation of persons (not selves) are provocative, even if he does proceed under the auspices of academic humanism. Though for him, his authority is predicated on the intuited demands of an "axiomatically first non-human reality."

As for permissions, we could also solicit them, if we needed to, from the lesser authorities as well, such as Bronk or even Ceravolo.

Gary R.

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559. **David Baratier**

***ten***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

1. tugboat annie
2. cap'n jazz
3. thomas jefferson slave apartments
4. halfman
5. I am at work can't think of the others or the album names. One is an EP by a band whose first album was called "gone" (not the band)

I have to agree with Joe. Saunter by Josh McKinney is another fine work of his, and the, dare I say historical, prefacing and end works to saturate the thin lines of the pieces. The Ex played here in columbus a few weeks back. I was a little

disappointed because they did not play any of their handmade instruments like when they toured us in 88 with Swiz and a few other DC bands. The second series of :that: looks real promising, with a twist on the formal essay. Be well

David Baratier

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560. **David Baratier**  
***toronto***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

If anyone knows of any exciting events in Toronto or lives there and might like to catch up, a couple of us will be coming May 30th to June3rd 1998. Thanks

Be well

David Baratier

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561. **r. drake**  
***Re: stuttering, stammering***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

had a chance to work w/ Alvin Lucier a few years back, and found that he speaks w/ pronounced stammer... deepened my appreciation fr his \_I Am Sitting in a Room\_

lbd

*In a relatively new book entitled <a'sattv> that is about to appear from Chax Press, Peter Ganick employs word expansion and contraction techniques, some of which have the effect of stuttering, stammering. The effects achieved those used in musical composition. Keep your eyes peeled for this new book from Chax!*

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562. **david bromige**  
***stammering, stattering***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

I missed some of the posts on this thread, so this may repeat (re-re-re-peat), but it's worth noting that I had a student with a pronounced stammer who could sing w/o stammering. He demonstrated this in class. Also, I have a writer friend who often stammers (with excitement, it seems to me, that theres so much to be said) but by rehearsing for readings, is able to deliver a stammer-free text.



Yes, what is being repeated about writers being persons with language difficulties adds up and makes sense. Surely one who writes (and writes . . .) demonstrates a need to gain control over language that doesn't plague many speakers. With time, this may turn into "a way with words." Or the way with words can be a sort of handicap (they laughed when age 4 I asked for another ham sandwich "but this time w/o any bread and butter") that drives the need and at the same time becomes a mark of the work (type, typos, "blow," to cite Olson).

David

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563. **Alan Myouka Sondheim**

***Re: stammering, stattering***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

some of the writing I've done has dealt with the stuttered quality of sCvCC words, scattering, skittering, stuttering, shuddering, slobbering, and related, sputtering, spitting, splatting, shivering, and more, shattering, smattering, etc., and I've looked for unsuccessfully indo-european roots to explain the frisson generated thereby. I've got some stuff in the Internet text on it, but it would be hard to pull out -

these words connote a slippage of language/action/actant, trembling or resonance -

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564. **Mark Weiss**

***Re: Alexander and Stroffolino's questions***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

Very soon after I first met my stepson Carlos, who was then six, the two of us were watching the tube. There was a nun in full habit, and Carlos asked me why she was dressed that way. It occurred to me that I had no idea what religious education he had, if any, so I asked him if he believed in god. "Yes," he answered, in a tone as stentorian as he could manage, "Jesus Christ and the God of Thunder." There was nothing much I could add to that. I subsequently learned that god no. 1 had only come on the scene when Carlos took up friendship with a boy from a devoutly Catholic family and god no. 2 was a character in an action hero cartoon. God no. 1 is no longer with Carlos; I'm not sure about no. 2.

At 12:00 PM 5/22/98 -0700, you wrote:

>charles alexander wrote: -- the obvious thing to do is

>  
>> to take things from southwestern/Sonora desert indigenous peoples,  
relating  
>> to living well with the earth here. We may do some of that. But I also want  
>> to do some non-obvious things. I already have a bunch of potential  
>> selections from poetry & art (some wonderful things from Eva Hesse) -- but  
>> if anyone can suggest other possibilities, I'll be forever grateful.  
>  
>  
>  
>Gravelly hill was 'the source and end (or boundary' of  
>D'Town on the way that leads from the town to Smallmans  
>now Dwelling house, the Lower  
>Road gravelly, how the hill was, not the modern useableness  
>of any thing but leaving it as an adverb as though Earth herself  
>was active, she had her own characteristics, she could  
>stick her head up out of the earth at a spot  
>and say, to Athena I'm stuck here, all I can show  
>is my head but please, do something about  
>this person I am putting up out of the ground into your hands.  
>  
>        --"at the boundary of the mighty world," \_Maximus\_, p. 330)  
>  
> And Chris asks why we do not have O'Hara's permission. Why do we not  
have  
>Olson's? to call, as creatures of earth, on Athena herself? Or Duncan's  
>permission to return to the meadow where we hear everlasting rumors of  
What Is?  
>or H.D.'s (thinking of Bowering's recent post).  
>  
>     It is a real problem. Mythology has been bought up by New Age  
>commercialism, and, to a certain extent, even the environmental movement  
has  
>been colored by it. I am glad to hear, Charles, that you are trying not to  
draw  
>too much on the indigenous people. As much as one admires their culture, it  
>does not have much to teach us \_directly\_. It was local and the numbers  
>involved were small. We are now five billion (and growing) on a small  
earth and  
>all subject to the same market.  
>  
>     Is it possible to draw attention back from the representations of the

>gods to the attentions that worshipped them? Something of this order  
would seem  
>to be task. The images of mythic beings are altogether too conveniently  
>available (mindlessly) in video games. What are the rhythms and movement  
of  
>spirit that correspond to what might once have been available through those  
>images?  
>  
>           Don  
>  
>--  
>\*\*\*\*\*  
> Don Byrd (██████, ██████)  
> Department of English  
> State University of New York  
> Albany, NY 12222  
> ██████ (work); ██████ (home); ██████ (fax)  
> The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)  
>\*\*\*\*\*  
>  
>

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565. **Don Byrd**

***Re: stuttering, stammering***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

Stephen Cope wrote:

*I seem to remember some comments of Robert Duncan's in a Talisman of a few years back (transcribed from a lecture by, I believe, Richard Blevins), where he spoke of Robert Creeley as a "profound stumbler" (paraphrase), and pursued a few thoughts along these lines. Wish I had the exact source at hand. One thing that struck me from the lecture, in any case, was something Duncan said to the effect of "poets are those for whom language is a difficulty" (a charming reversal of the common-sense notion of the poet's "way with words").*

I don't have the Talisman at hand, but Duncan frequently spoke of stuttering and stammering, noting that it was common to him, Creeley, and Olson. I remember once, we discussed "the field-theory stammer," the concrete problem of always needing to say three things at once. And, of course, it is only necessary to compare the commentary in his readings with the poems to hear

the difference between the difficulty of language and the poem as a solution. He also frequently called poetry "a seizure transformed into words."

Also, I am not sure what to make of this, but stuttering is a stylistic device for certain blues singers, as a kind of essence of the blues--"I got b-b-bricks in my pillow," and also as a rhythmic mark.

Don

--

\*\*\*\*\*

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The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)

\*\*\*\*\*

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566. **joel lewis**

***Re: Partch***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

The instruments in peril at SUNY/Purchase are in the care of a fine new music ensemble called NEWBAND directed by Dean Drummond. Drummond, a percussionist who played on the Columbia Partch records (Delusion of the Fury and The World of Harry Partch --neither on CD ), is attempting to rerecord Partch's music in its entirety

I interviewed Drummond a few years back for WIRE magazine. The Partch unstrumentation was shipped from San Diego to SUNY/Purchase a few years back because the NEWBAND had borrowed the instruments for performance on a few occasions and they had made a commitment to playing the Partch repertoire. Most of the instruments had to be repaired or rewired (some had been untouched since they were created) -- i do hope these instruments find a home--

There is a great New World recording of partch performing his music, especially his settings of Li Po's poetry from late 40's. Partch's journals have been published, as well as his "Genesis of a Music", his major theoretical work.

Joel Lewis

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567. **morpheal**

**Re: 'the self' [and psychological warfare]**

Fri 22 May 1998

---

*"You had to fetch me out of the  
happy hill of non-being. Pfah, to hug a woman  
And make this I. That's the evil in the world, that letter  
I-I...."---Robinson Jeffers*

Very strange indeed.... that someone would believe that it takes a woman to cause a realization of the "I" or some in fact actualization of "self" as if that act is an act of fuller self awareness in relation to fuller awareness of external other.

While the comforts, enjoyments, beauty, meeting of some kinds of needs and wants, is for some brought about in that way, as intimacies with an other, it certainly is far from \_necessary\_ and far from sufficient for the achievement of perfected discernment of self from non self, and of internal from external sources. It is not even essential for achieving the basic grounding for that discernment which is "know thy self" as to how oneself responds, what oneself believes, and so forth. Including what are one's own sensory based perceptions, and what are one's own dreams. In effect what is purely of and from one's own psyche and what is externally influenced, even if subtly.

However, we stop short of accepting that strong emotions involved in love for an other invariably cloud perception. They do not necessarily do so. What most often clouds perception is belief and particularly beliefs as to any a-priori expectations being perceptually met. Most people hear and see what they believe they are going to hear and see, whether it is there or not. It is very startling to observe how far cognitive errors (belief and assumption in particular) can colour perception and make most observers absolutely useless in the simplest situations. The enemy can slip by completely unperceived, if they are better trained and more skilful than the sentries. Skill includes any technological extensions and enhancements of human abilities.

*"It needn't be added, except parenthetically, that self-individuation is not for oneself but for the hearer-if we never spoke to others, or took demonstrative action, there would be no need for the first person, for I always know when I am talking about myself without the advantage of the first person device as signpost. In this naive sense the use of the first person presupposes a hearer. And if SPL [systematically private speech or language] presupposes a use for the first person then it presupposes what it hopes to deny-a hearer."*

The primary difficulty, from any viewpoint, as to A.I. and sense of self, is the differentiation of self from what is non self. Thus the differentiation of internal

source and external source. This is more complicated than it seems and true artificial intelligence has that capability.

On the otherhand humans are more often at less than their fullest human potential when it comes to differentiating self from non-self and internal source from external source. In essence on this point the majority of humans lose against A.I. This makes A.I. a most formidable weapon within the arsenals of psychological warfare, though the same effects can be emulated using trained human intelligence as the source of communicative transmissions. The latter methods being somewhat cumbersome, for obvious reasons, and particularly due to the large number of targets the repetitive and necessarily patterned nature of their missions. Those cumbersome methods predate the use of psychological warfare by the Third Reich, and the use of psychological warfare by the KGB, immediately prior to and during WWII, and particularly after WWII during the Cold War. The use of artificial intelligences, albeit of a somewhat simple minded kind, begins earlier in the game than most presuppose, but it becomes impossible (I surmise) for any historian to determine the precise demarcation line when artificial intelligence finally matures to gaining the upper hand viz a viz human agencies.

The human ability to discern clearly and as nearly absolutely as is humanly possible (very near 100%) self from non-self and internal from external is a very rare aptitude and complex of skills. It involves elements of natural aptitude and acquired abilities. Whether it is more nature or nurture is debatable. I would argue that nurture (learning and facilitation to acquisition) is necessary, but not sufficient in itself to account for human variation in that particular area of discernment. Typically while learning is a pre-eminently necessary factor in acquisition, beginning at the earliest age, it is inherent nature that is the necessary catalyst. Later acquisition tends to be more systematic and exceptional, though only a small minority do really well at it. (Again, perhaps Colin Wilson's 5% of the population. Probably no more than that in any instance.)

Taking a typical theoretical psychological warfare scenario we have the enemy attempting emulation, for the purpose of influencing, self and others, by various means. Emulation means imitation, with subtle nuances of difference meant to influence beliefs (such as affiliative loyalties) and actions (such as sedition, betrayal, or treason).

The sad reality is that there are so few \_individuals\_ who are really to be considered immune, or even immunizable, to such effects. Most people fall dupe to the enemy's machinations even when they are overtly aware of the fact that there is a condition of attempted influence by a hostile external source. People

whoa re supposedly highly trained, in positions of leadership, often fare no better than the average, or only slightly better than the average.

As the technologies becomes widespread across the planet, sufficient for use in psychological warfare, and in fact in various covert competitive practices, those who believe that they are functioning within a secure portion of the world, unaffected by any such attempts, become the first to be duped. We saw this during the Cold War and the world is not free of such competing influences today, from various quarters, and with various agendas.

I learned a lot more than I expected to learn about psychological warfare while writing poetry some years ago, though not only by that means. To be a writer it meant learning to keep one's own mind, absolutely one's own mind, while all around one's self were losing their's. Of course, I was also dabbling in political analysis.... so that complicates the question. However, I could not have done so without an exceptional nature and nurture prior to that learning.

Sadly some of the poetry that I wrote then was gawd awful. Laughing. Everything else was prophetic. Seems some want to believe it goes the other way around.

Bob Ezergailis  
aka Morpheal

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#### 568. **R.Gancie/C.Parcelli**

##### ***autopoiesis, homeostasis & the delineation of 'self'***

*Fri 22 May 1998*

---

"An organism is a unit to the extent that its conduct results in the maintenance of its basic circularity (and hence identity), and two modes of conduct are equivalent if they satisfy the same class of requirements for this maintenance. For this reason an organism, as a self-regulated homeostatic organization, does not require a constant behavior in its deterministic component elements (in this case, neurons) if their changes become specified through the generation of conduct, and sameness of conduct is defined with respect to an observer or a function that must be satisfied."---from Autopoiesis & Cognition: The Realization of the Living by Hunberto R. Maturana and Francisco J. Varela, Reidel Pub.

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569. **morpheal**

**Re: Alexander and Stroffolino's questions**

Fri 22 May 1998

---

*Very soon after I first met my stepson Carlos, who was then six, the two of us were watching the tube. There was a nun in full habit, and Carlos asked me why she was dressed that way. It occurred to me that I had no idea what religious education he had, if any, so I asked him if he believed in god. "Yes," he answered, in a tone as stentorian as he could manage, "Jesus Christ and the God of Thunder." There was nothing much I could add to that. I subsequently learned that god no. 1 had only come on the scene when Carlos took up friendship with a boy from a devoutly Catholic family and god no. 2 was a character in an action hero cartoon. God no. 1 is no longer with Carlos; I'm not sure about no. 2.*

Interesting.....

It is my unshakeable belief that it is much easier for any hostile power to influence people to commit treason, or other acts detrimental to a nation's national and international defence interests, if those people believe strongly in one or more supernatural beings. The more devoutly they believe the more likely they are to be influenced. It is also much more common for those individuals to effect actions, or command actions, that they believe are the right actions, but which ultimately are already compromised, at either that link in the chain of command or previously, higher up.

Makes for questioning why some emulations of divinity are more interested in some areas of the political affairs of humanity than in other areas.

The question then becomes who's gods are they ?

The Greek concept of divinities was more rational. The divinities were thought to play with mortals the way we play with figures upon a chessboard in a game of chess. The divinities played against each other. They had their conflicts, their fights, with each other, and so sought to influence various mortals to make moves in the game on their behalf.

Seems they were far more intelligent than people today tend to be, who are true believers in a divinity. At least they were always aware that they were subject to being compromised.

M.

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570. **George Bowering**  
**Re: stuttering, stammering**

Fri 22 May 1998

---

*I seem to remember some comments of Robert Duncan's in a Talisman of a few years back (transcribed from a lecture by, I believe, Richard Blevins), where he spoke of Robert Creeley as a "profound stumbler" (paraphrase), and pursued a few thoughts along these lines.*

And we remember Duncan's portrayal of WCW stammering after his stroke.

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

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571. **toddbaron**  
**Re: formalists, oralists**

Fri 22 May 1998

---

Dante--on the sonnet--a little song--and thus  
its formality--must be a little sung.

As Marty N. says--a little song on the anxietyt of--death--as only sung  
by the living

thus

no siren

song, but an OPERA instead.

"I remember ever mute and alive, hidden in all things." (Duncan)

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572. **charles alexander**  
**what we learn**

Sat 23 May 1998

---

> It is a real problem. Mythology has been bought up by New Age  
>commercialism, and, to a certain extent, even the environmental movement  
has  
>been colored by it. I am glad to hear, Charles, that you are trying not to  
draw  
>too much on the indigenous people. As much as one admires their culture, it

>does not have much to teach us \_directly\_. It was local and the numbers  
>involved were small. We are now five billion (and growing) on a small  
earth and  
>all subject to the same market.

I don't know if I entirely agree, Don. Yes, we are five billion, and what we learn from indigenous peoples won't solve our problems. But "we" are also small groups of people building limited dwellings, small communities, in the Sonoran Desert and elsewhere. The kinds of materials indigenous peoples built with, how they used light and shade, how they saved water, the kinds of plants they grew (and here I'm using the past tense, while many groups of people are still doing these things) -- anyway, I think we can and do learn, rather directly, from these things. But I also think we use such people too easily, almost as an automatic reference, and in so doing, the possible impact is diminished.

As to your point below, to draw back to the attentions from which mythology arises -- I too thank you for saying this.

charles

>

> Is it possible to draw attention back from the representations of the  
>gods to the attentions that worshipped them? Something of this order  
would seem

>to be task. The images of mythic beings are altogether too conveniently  
>available (mindlessly) in video games. What are the rhythms and movement  
of

>spirit that correspond to what might once have been available through those  
>images?

charles alexander :: poet and book artist :: 

chax press :: alexander writing/design/publishing

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573. **KENT JOHNSON**

***A stutter to the Russians***

*Sat 23 May 1998*

---

One of the great "stutterers" in contemporary poetry is Dmitri Prigov. One example of his genius use of the stutter can be found in "49th Alphabet Poem," translated by Gerald Janecek and included in *Third Wave: The New Russian Poetry*. But to get the full effect, of course, one has to witness Prigov in performance (and he is surely one of the great living readers, too). About five years ago, PBS ran a documentary on the Western market-explosion for post-

Soviet art, and the film included a segment of Prigov reading one of his "Alphabet" (I believe) poems. Allen Ginsberg stood beside him, mouth open, as Prigov stuttered and spat Cyrillic syllables into the microphone, eyes rolling in as if he were in seizure. When he was done, Ginsberg leaned into the microphone and said B-B-B-Bravo!.

I've lost contact with Prigov in the past few years, and I'd be interested in finding out if anyone is currently translating his work. I know that Lyn Hejinian and Elena Balashova were doing some translations at one time. It's certainly a shame (unless I've completely missed it) that there isn't yet a book of his writing in English.

On this matter of the newer Russian poets, I was quite surprised, personally, to find that only Dragomoshchenko and Iskrenko were represented in *Poems for the Millennium*. I know anthology nit-picking is an easy sport to play, and I believe PFTM is probably the greatest anthology of the past thousand years, but here I think I have a legitimate point: Prigov, Lev Rubinshtein, Ivan Zhdanov, Alexei Parshchikov, others, are all world-class poets who developed and practiced a decidedly exploratory writing under very trying circumstances in the Brezhnev era and then came to play a vital role in one of the great cultural upheavals of the century. Moreover, many of the writers of this generation came into active contact with (were influenced by and influenced in turn) American "Language" poets.

Certainly, the Russians wrote groundbreaking, "postmodern" poems under more contentious cultural circumstances than the Americans, poets who, despite being much more widely available to readers, are given their own special section in the second volume of PFTM. For an international anthology seeking to bring forward what has been unjustly hidden and repressed, this tip of the scales really seems a bit unfair. If space was the consideration, wouldn't it have been more reasonable to have a section of, say, five "Language" poets and a section (with introductory essay) of five poets of the "post-Soviet" generation? Given the fact that these groups were in unusual and fruitful contact and, particularly, since such contact was set against the twilight of the century-shaping confrontation between their respective nations, I think it would have.

Absences in any anthology are unavoidable--and in one so sweeping and ambitious as Rothenberg's and Joris's there are going to be all kinds of omissions. But the thinness of representation of the new Russian poets is so obvious, it causes one (can't keep myself from saying it) to almost stutter--even if it's actually the very greatness of the anthology that prods one to make the critique.

Kent

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574. **Billy Little**

***Re: stuttering, stammering***

*Sat 23 May 1998*

---

the first time i saw Creeley read(1964 i believe)at a class in contemporary poetry taught by Stephen Stepanchev at Queens College he really stuttered. by the time i was his student(1967) that stutter had disappeared. Duncan was crosseyed, he'd think he was looking right at you and you'd think he was looking over your right shoulder(in a classroom). Somebody told him that he could have that strabismus? corrected and he replied, what, and lose my boyish charm? as far as Olson's stammer, i think it had more to do with the speed of his thought process, he was off on another track before he'd finished speaking the last thought and my suspeicion is he was trying to say both at once.

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575. **Fredrik Hertzberg LIT**

***Re: stuttering, stammering***

*Sat 23 May 1998*

---

There seem to be (at least) 2 kinds of stutter that are intertwined but also in many ways radically opposed to each other, caused/ informed by 1. trying to say several things at the same time, something which may even indicate too much rather than too little confidence (Olson's declarative incorporations of heterogenous materials) 2. hesitation, doubt, difficulty with language (someone like Kurt Schwitters? Susan Howe, Creeley were mentioned - who else?)

Fred

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576. **MAYHEW**

***stuttering***

*Sat 23 May 1998*

---

I was reminded of Blackburn's notation of speech difficulty in "A Phone Call to Rutheford." WCW after stroke. The valuation of "semi-articulate" ness in Creeley. Bernstein's questioning of a whole series of stylistic norms in writing (the essay "style" I think it is in \_Content's Dream\_). Some comments on Eigner somewhere in Bernstein's \_Close Listening\_ that I was looking at at a bookstore a few days ago.

James Earl Jones is a stutterer. I am not, yet have always been self-conscious about not being articulate, having a rather raspy voice, misspeaking, etc... and my interest in poetry from an early age is related to this.

I saw a rather dumb play once about an art critic whose dark secret is that he is colorblind! I heard an interview with a percussionist composer, a woman with severe hearing loss from birth. Also, the Oliver Sacks essay about a painter who becomes colorblind. Roman Jakobson on aphasia...

I find these paradoxes extremely suggestive, though of what I am not sure. Most of us have academic colleagues, or have had professors of literature, the equivalent of the "color-blind art critic," some of them otherwise estimable scholars. Yet the "deaf" woman's music was quite extraordinary, and other supposed "incapacities" can be extraordinarily productive.

Jxnxthxn Mxyhwx  
Dxpxrtmxnt xf Spnxsh xnd Pxrtxgxxsx  
Xnxvxrsxtx xf Kxnsxs



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577. **charles alexander**

***Re: stuttering, stammering***

*Sat 23 May 1998*

---

At 12:28 PM 5/23/98 +0300, you wrote:

>There seem to be (at least) 2 kinds of stutter that are intertwined but  
>also in many ways radically opposed to each other, caused/ informed by  
>1. trying to say several things at the same time, something which may even  
>indicate too much rather than too little confidence (Olson's declarative  
>incorporations of heterogenous materials)  
>2. hesitation, doubt, difficulty with language (someone like Kurt  
>Schwitters? Susan Howe, Creeley were mentioned - who else?)  
>  
>Fred

maybe, but aren't these related? I think what you call "hesitation" or "doubt" in Creeley, for example, is really a masterful registration of a complex human situation, where multiple ("several things at the same time") possibilities reside, but where existence (breathing, living, hearing) involves a careful negotiation of these possibilities, and one which takes place step by step, "by ear, he sd." I don't know if I'd quite describe that as "difficulty with language," although it may emanate from that position, and come across as such. But how it does so is

as breathtakingly successful as Olson's declarative (and Olson, too, is more various and subtle than this word proposes) incorporations.

charles

charles alexander :: poet and book artist :: [REDACTED]

chax press :: alexander writing/design/publishing

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578. **Karen Kelley**

***Re: stuttering, stammering***

Sat 23 May 1998

---

*hesitation, doubt, difficulty with language (someone like Kurt Schwitters? Susan Howe, Creeley were mentioned - who else?)*

Dora. Anna O.

And Hildegard of Bingen had migrainous aphasias.

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579. **Aviva000**

***Fwd: new book (fwd)***

Sat 23 May 1998

---

This is a multi-part message in MIME format.

--part0\_895943238\_boundary

In a message dated 98-05-21 12:01:46 EDT, [REDACTED] writes:

>  
> For Psyarters interested in gender theory, postmodernism, and popular  
> culture,  
> I recommend a terrific new book by Lynne Layton--\_Who's That Girl? Who's  
> That  
> Boy?: Clinical Practice Meets Postmodern Gender Theory\_(Jason Aronson).  
> Layton  
> brings contemporary relational theory into dialogue with postmodern  
theories  
> of gender and identity. The book includes fascinating clinical case  
material  
> as well as chapters on Madonna, romance and hard-boiled detective fiction,  
> the  
> film \_Blue Velvet\_, and Judith Butler's performance theory.  
>

> Barbara Schapiro  
> Rhode Island College  
>

--part0\_895943238\_boundary

air-zb04.mail.aol.com (v43.17) with SMTP; Thu, 21 May 1998 12:01:46  
-0400

by rly-zb05.mx.aol.com (8.8.5/8.8.5/AOL-4.0.0)

with ESMTP id MAA17833 for <[REDACTED]>;

Thu, 21 May 1998 12:01:46 -0400 (EDT)

mx02.globecomm.net (8.8.8/8.8.0) with ESMTP id MAA16344 for

<[REDACTED]>; Thu, 21 May 1998 12:01:43 -0400 (EDT)

by lists.ufl.edu (8.8.7/8.8.7/1.2) with ESMTP id LAA25214;

Thu, 21 May 1998 11:32:36 -0400

with spool id 3356741 for [REDACTED]; Thu, 21 May 1998

11:32:33 -0400

lists.ufl.edu (8.8.7/8.8.7/1.2) with SMTP id LAA36960 for

<[REDACTED]>; Thu, 21 May 1998 11:32:33 -0400

with BSMTP id 8631; Thu, 21 May 98 11:32:17 EDT

NERVM.NERDC.UFL.EDU (LMail V1.2b/1.8b) with BSMTP id 9572; Thu,

21

May 1998 11:32:17 -0400

Approved-By: Norm Holland <[REDACTED]>

Date: Thu, 21 May 1998 11:31:48 EDT

<[REDACTED]>

<[REDACTED]>

From: Norm Holland <[REDACTED]>

Subject: new book (fwd)

To: [REDACTED]

Check out the IPSA home page and the new IPSA journal--

<http://www.clas.ufl.edu/ipsa> and [www.clas.ufl.edu/ipsa/journal](http://www.clas.ufl.edu/ipsa/journal)

Date: Thu, 21 May 1998 09:26:16 EDT

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: new book

For Psysartners interested in gender theory, postmodernism, and popular culture, I recommend a terrific new book by Lynne Layton--\_Who's That Girl? Who's That Boy?: Clinical Practice Meets Postmodern Gender Theory\_(Jason Aronson). Layton brings contemporary relational theory into dialogue with postmodern theories of gender and identity. The book includes fascinating clinical case material as well as chapters on Madonna, romance and hard-boiled detective fiction, the film \_Blue Velvet\_, and Judith Butler's performance theory.

Barbara Schapiro  
Rhode Island College

--part0\_895943238\_boundary--

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580. **Aviva000**

**Re: signing on**

Sat 23 May 1998

---

In a message dated 98-05-21 12:30:34 EDT, you write:

*By the way, the launch for Black Lightning that I forward is in NYC:  
rereading the post I see that's not indicated.*

This is one of those times that it hurts to live in Vermont, in spite of the emerald green hills and apple-blossom-scented breeze on this crisp May day. Is there any chance that this reading will be taped, and that the tapes will be available for purchase?

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581. **Karen Kelley**

**Re: stuttering**

Sat 23 May 1998

---

*James Earl Jones is a stutterer. I am not, yet have always been  
self-conscious about not being articulate*

I wonder how the list is composed: those who are articulate vs. those who are not (spoken, not written articulation). Somewhat like the left- vs. righthandedness question. I, for one, am horribly inarticulate. And it has certainly played a part in my turning to writing.

What about everyone else?

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582. **Charles Bernstein**

**Black Lightning**

Sat 23 May 1998

---

*Is there any chance that this reading will be taped, and that the tapes will  
be available for purchase?*

Check with the editor, who sends this:

From: ERTABIOS <[REDACTED]>



The Asian American Writers Workshop (AAWW) is pleased to announce the recent release of BLACK LIGHTNING: POETRY-IN-PROGRESS by Eileen Tabios. To order, send \$19.95 (New York residents should add 8.25% sales tax), plus \$3 shipping/handling cost to AAWW, 37 St. Marks Place, New York, N.Y. 10003. AAWW members can purchase the book at a 15% discount. For questions, call AAWW at [REDACTED] or e-mail Jeannie Wong at [REDACTED].

Here are just a few of the many revelations from BLACK LIGHTNING -- a book not just on POETRY but LIFE! DID YOU KNOW:

- that John Yau's first poem was possibly one about chess with a corny rhyme between "fate" and "checkmate"?
- that Arthur Sze can erase time?
- that David Mura is bored by "sunset poems . . the kind that appear in THE NEW YORKER"?
- that in his early days of seeking publication, Timothy Liu once submitted to The Quarterly, edited by Gordon Lish, every three weeks over a year-long period?
- that when Li-Young Lee loves a work of art, he can feel it in the soles of his feet?
- that Garrett Hongo feels trying to remember the "type of person who writes poetry is more work than the act of writing poetry"?
- that when Kimiko Hahn doesn't discuss "sex" in a poem, that's probably what she's addressing?
- that Jessica Hagedorn is influenced by urban Black vernacular partly because it is similar to the innovations of "Taglish" (a combination of Tagalog and English)?
- that Sesshu Foster advises young poets: "A lot of people are looking for happiness in life, but why bother to do that in poetry? Go for revenge."
- that Marilyn Chin muses about many of the men she's dated: "they were weird."
- that Mei-mei Berssenbrugge loves the sentence precisely because it is "awkward and unattractive"?
- that "Star Trek" inspired Indran Amirthanayagam's move towards a career in diplomacy in order to practice poetry as a way of life?
- that until Meena Alexander accepted the United States as her world, her Muse's feet were decapitated at the ankles?

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583. **david bromige**

***re non/articulate***

Sat 23 May 1998

---

I am too embarrassed to speak of myself in this respect, except to say that, denied e-mail, I would be scuttling across silent sea-floors, and that, until age 22, I "spoke" by dragging my knuckles across the mast of northern forests. But no such consideration holds me back with respect to others. George Bowering is fearsomely articulate in his wellknown short bursts, although he was virtually catatonic when he first came to the leafy campus on a peninsula sometime in the 1950s. Herb Levy can talk circles around anyone, although until age 20 he only whistled and sang. Pat Pritchett, who charms birds out of their trees, grunted all the way through high school. I understand that Marjorie Perloff spent her early years in a Trappist nunnery. Robert Duncan was always a phenomenal talker as well as writer, but then, his early years were spent as somebody else.

David

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584. **Tom Orange**

***stuttering, stammering***

Sat 23 May 1998

---

On Fri, 22 May 1998 Fredrik Hertzberg LIT <[REDACTED]> writes:

*I'm interested in the notion of stammering & stuttering as a formal device/ way of describing what's happening in (some) poetry....*

Gilles Deleuze has a short piece on stammering in Beckett, in one of the recent issues of the journal SubStance. Can't recall the piece too well, and it may not concern form as you have it in mind, but it may prove useful nonetheless. Let me know if you'd like the exact citation, either in English or the original French.

t.

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585. **F. W. Perrella**

***Web Del Sol - North American Review***

Sat 23 May 1998

---

This week, Web Del Sol highlights The North American Review, at <http://webdelsol.com/NorthAmReview/NAR/wi98.htm>

The current issue includes "Call My Name", fiction by Aimee Bender. If you click to issue 1 on the left menu, you'll find "Godhead at 12", fiction by Michael Kopacz. And in issue 2 you can sample "The Grant", fiction by Dallas Wiebe.

Let us know what you think. You can send email at the NAR Home page, or you can email Web Del Sol's editor, Michael Neff, at

██████ Thanks.

Anne Perrella

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586. **Tom Orange**

**toronto**

Sat 23 May 1998

---

On Fri, 22 May 1998 David Baratier <██████> writes:

*If anyone knows of any exciting events in Toronto or lives there and might like to catch up, a couple of us will be coming May 30th to June 3rd 1998. Thanks*

http://www.insomniacpress.com is not a bad place to start for toronto area literary events. not comprehensive, but you can email the editor right from the page for further info.

my friend peter darbyshire runs a reading series at the cafe za che zu, and he has a date scheduled for may 29, but i don't know who he's got slated. you can email him at ██████

robert creeley will be reading at victor coleman's lonsdale gallery series, june 12 (rats, too late).

cheers,

t.

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587. **Barbara Langhorst**

**Re: stuttering, stammering**

Fri 23 May 1997

---

Leonard Cohen's song "The Window" from \_Recent Songs\_ lines up sex, death, spirit, physicality, process, writing, and creation (at the least)--in repetitions that could read as an unusual stammer--a cosmic stutter:

Then lay your rose on the fire  
The fire give up to the sun  
The sun give over to splendour  
In the arms of the High Holy One

For the Holy One dreams of a letter  
Dreams of a letter's death  
Oh bless the continuous stutter  
Of the word being made into flesh.

Barb

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588. **Steve Shoemaker**

***Re: stuttering, stammering***

*Sat 23 May 1998*

---

Had a funny moment in my class this last semester. We were going round the seminar table reading *The Waste Land* aloud, with me giving the signal for one reader to stop and the next to pick up at some more or less convenient break. One of the students was a stutterer, who had been struggling valiantly all semester with our habitual in-class readings. This time it so happened that his reading began with the line "O O O O that Shakespeherian Rag--" Came out perfectly, much to everyone's delight. s

Steve Shoemaker  
Assistant Professor  
English Department  
Wake Forest University  
Winston-Salem, NC 27109  


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589. **Maria Damon**

***Re: stuttering***

*Sat 23 May 1998*

---

At 10:10 AM -0700 5/23/98, Karen Kelley wrote:

>> James Earl Jones is a stutterer. I am not, yet have always been

>> self-conscious about not being articulate

>

>I wonder how the list is composed: those who are articulate vs. those who are

>not (spoken, not written articulation). Somewhat like the left- vs.

>right-handedness question. I, for one, am horribly inarticulate. And it has

>certainly played a part in my turning to writing.

>

>What about everyone else?

hey j mayhew i remember a delightful presentation you once gave in grad school, on kenneth burke, during which you made much of the fact that when you spoke it was hard to tell if you were saying "cleanth brook" or "kenneth burke." if i recall correctly, it was in david welbery's "theories of the lyric" class and i remember welbery being pleasantly surprised that anyone would use his class as an occasion for humor.

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590. **R.Gancie/C.Parcelli**  
***A Megalamorial Day Miscellany***

Sat 23 May 1998

---

"Nationalism is the measles of mankind. Its most infantile disease."---Albert Einstein

---

"Don't be pretty about what is shrewd."---Charles Olson

---

"The only place to spit in a rich man's house is in his face."---Diogenes of Sinope

---

"The way that is called the way is in the way."---Lao Duh

---cp

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591. **Peter Quartermain**  
***Re: stuttering, stammering***

Sat 23 May 1998

---

At 09:50 AM 5/23/98 -0700, Charles Alexander wrote:

>

> I think what you call "hesitation" or  
> "doubt" in Creeley, for example, is really a masterful registration of a  
> complex human situation, where multiple ("several things at the same time")  
> possibilities reside, but where existence (breathing, living, hearing)  
> involves a careful negotiation of these possibilities, and one which takes  
> place step by step, "by ear, he sd." I don't know if I'd quite describe  
> that as "difficulty with language," although it may emanate from that  
> position, and come across as such. But how it does so is as breathtakingly  
> successful as Olson's declarative (and Olson, too, is more various and  
> subtle than this word proposes) incorporations.

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Sat 23 May 1998

Just came back from watching "Sliding Doors." Fairly clever take on the ol' "parallel lives" sci-fi conceit, plus Gwyneth Paltrow has my vote for the Audrey Hepburn of the nineties--very classy broad, as frankie might have put it. Anyway, with the the stuttering thread fresh in my mind i found myself noticing how integral those excruciating hesitations, stammers, throat-clearings, twitches, tics etc are to the "romantic comedy" genre. Conventional speech breaking down, and another more physical, charged, embodied, language taking over.

And we mustn't forget the "looks." How wrong is the fair Phebe!

Phebe:

'Tis pretty, sure, and very probable,  
That eyes, that are the frail'st and softest things,  
Who shut their coward gates on atomies,  
Should be called tyrants, butchers, murtherers!  
Now i do frown on thee with all my heart,  
And if mine eyes can wound, now let them kill thee.  
Now counterfeit to swound; why, now fall down,  
Or if thou canst not, O, for shame, for shame,  
Lie not, to say mine eyes are murtherers!  
Now show the wound mine eye hat made in thee.  
Scratch thee but with a pin, and there remains

Some scar of it; lean upon a rush,  
The cicatrice and capable impressure  
Thy palm some moment keeps; but now mine eyes,  
Which i have darted at thee, hurt thee not,  
Nor I am sure there is no force in eyes  
That can do hurt.

Silvius:

O dear Phebe,  
If ever (as that ever may be near)  
You meet in some fresh cheek the power of fancy,  
Then shall you know the wounds invisible  
That love's keen arrows make.

(from "As You Like It")

Of course, Zuk had plenty to say about this sort of thing.

s

Steve Shoemaker  
Assistant Professor  
English Department  
Wake Forest University  
Winston-Salem, NC 27109



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593. **KENT JOHNSON**  
***Spicer in Lingua Franca***  
*Sun 24 May 1998*

---

Has this been mentioned? A substantial article on Jack Spicer appears in the new Lingua Franca ("Radiohead," by John Palatella, May/June). Very nicely done and with commentary on Gizzi's edition of the lectures and *Poet Be Like God* by Killian and Ellingham.

Sorry if I'm reporting old news, but wanted to make sure this was known.

Kent

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594. **Dan or Orion Raphael Dlugonski**

**Re: stuttering**

Sun 24 May 1998

---

i suddenly started stuttering around age 12 and got close to rarely stuttering by 20. one more ton thrown onto my adolescence, being a smart guy in an immigrant neighborhood who also got stuck in a large body. maybe these factors contributed to introversion which lead me to poetry. but an important discovery in high school was that i didnt stutter if i was doing soemthing memorized i didnt stutter (when reading something i only stutterd at the start and oncertian sounds.) part of m initiation to poetry was hanging out in a local coffeeshop where folks read ginsberg, ferlingheti, etc. i got into reading these folks also, aloud. i am now, and have been for awhile, a dynamic performer.the sutterings been gone for a decade or more. but this has little to do with my not speaking up much on this line. part of it is not being a verbal person; part of it (and who knows how these pieces connect) is having an apporach to my art that relies on the non-rational. i have ag oodmathematicla background, and regularly write reviews, but it's hard to articulate my own aesthetics sincemy writing tends to arrive spontaneously and the best explanation ive come up with relates to the tao-ist idea of non-attainment, facing that dcontradicion of attaing a goal by not trying to, by clearing the mind of all striving.

dan raphael

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595. **Mark Baker**

**Re: stuttering, stammering**

Sun 24 May 1998

---

No one's mentioned David Shields, *\_Dead Languages\_*, an entire novel about stuttering! Starts with Demosthenes, who hated speech, then proceeds as a disguised etiology of language poetry. Seems that Mom's and Dad's left-wing politics caused the stutter of our hero, the modern writer.

Mark Baker

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596. **George Bowering**

**Re: signing on**

Sun 24 May 1998

---

*By the way, the launch for Black Lightening that I forward is in NYC:  
rereading the post I see that's not indicated.*



Black lightening? Cool!

I remember when I was doing watercolours as a kid, that black generally resulted in darkening!

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,

Vancouver, B.C.,

Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

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597. **George Bowering**

***Re: re non/articulate***

*Sun 24 May 1998*

---

It was always wonderful listening to Duncan talking nonstop at a party. If it looked or sounded as if someone else were going to get a word in, Duncan's voice would just get louder, higher, more forceful. Sometimes Blaser tried the technique in later periods, but he wasn't as expert as Duncan.

Robert Hogg tells me that once in his hotel room he went to sleep to the sound of Creeley talking, and woke several hours later with Creeley still talking.

But none of the poets had the plummy Brit voice of Bromige, who spoke in complex sentences at age 4.

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,

Vancouver, B.C.,

Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

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598. **morpheal**

***Re: autopoiesis, homeostasis & the delineation of 'self'***

*Sun 24 May 1998*

---

*"An organism is a unit to the extent that its conduct results in the maintenance of its basic circularity (and hence identity), and two modes of conduct are equivalent if they satisfy the same class of requirements for this maintenance. For this reason an organism, as a self-regulated homeostatic organization, does not require a constant behavior in its deterministic component elements (in this case, neurons) if their*

*changes become specified through the generation of conduct, and sameness of conduct is defined with respect to an observer or a function that must be satisfied."---from Autopoiesis & Cognition*

On the other hand, some instances of introducing coin-toss based random behaviour patterns into artificial "organisms" whose functions were either acting as fighter pilots in combat, or as poets writing haiku, led to unsatisfactory results in both instances. Furthermore, such random behaviour did not pass as being effectively intuitive.

Instances of behaviour where effective intuition plays a key role in its inception and effectivity, can, theoretically, be defined according to very complex derivative rules. In some instances such derivation becomes too complex to be complete or practical, rendering the intuitive cognitive function and its resultant intuitive intentional behaviour as being something "mysterious".

That the rules are very complicated does not mean that there are no rules.

There are in fact many habitual cognitive circles. That includes such circles within orthodox science, or any similarly patterned belief system. The true breakthrough, intuitive insight, is a breaking of a circle or circles. That is also sometimes true of the organism as behaviour. The organism breaks through an encirclement, or state of siege, and sometimes that means that it survives. Nevertheless, breaking every circle, becomes a circle, and is counter productive as to survival. Some encirclements are utilizable as means to furthering the survival of the organism. The intuitive decision, based on inadequate consciously discernable facts about the situation in question, whether to break a circle or to maintain it, is what becomes interesting as a fundamental problem in tactics. This is as true cognitively as it is true in terms of interactions with the environment (including other organisms).

We tend to put too much stress upon the metaphor of the circle. That is partly because we are too programmed to the circle as being the basic defensible position. It is also partly because of the tendency to superimpose a derivative paradigm from such observable archetypical cycles as day/night, seasons, birth/death upon everything else. It is likely that we tend to be so programmed to cycles and circles that we would tend to not "see" the events that violate that assumed principle. In some ways much of what we believe about the world is build upon that paradigm of circularity derivative from ancient observations. We might ask whether non circular viewpoints bear equally useful insights.

Corollary to that is the tendency to program the basic core of some machines to that same paradigm of circularity. That belief, transferred to the machine, might work against them rather than for them, in terms of their evolution. Can they be programmed, "taught", to break the circle ? To break the circle,

intuitively, rather than by means of coin-toss randomized responses ? That becomes an interesting 'test'.

That any system we are referring to is apparently simple does not mean that it is simple, as we easily know only one superficial viewpoint of it. Taking a system apart to reduce it to its components does not allow us to derive all of its functions. We can never derive what simple components do simply from the components themselves.

The latter is definitely also true of language.

Bob Ezergailis  
aka Morpheal

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### 599. **morpheal**

#### **Re: A Megalamorial Day Miscellany [Einstein and megalomania ?]**

Sun 24 May 1998

---

*"Nationalism is the measles of mankind. Its most infantile disease."---Albert Einstein*

Part of the reason why even Einstein's genius was stopped dead in its tracks. He was left reworking his old theorems until he died an honoured death, in return for his earlier achievements. He was, in some ways, parked by the side of the superhighway, while scientific advances passed him at high speed.

After all, the lack of the ability to hold steadfast to such affiliations as a nation, or allied nations and their associations with each other, almost inevitably leads to some act of betrayal of the interests of that affiliation. Those interests are essentially the survival of a way of life, and of certain core beliefs that have profound effects on ways of life, as well as control over the use of geographic territory and resources. To have no such affiliation means that one would desire to, or choose to, give to anyone else anything for any purpose, including any scientific discoveries, so they too could use that to further their way of life and to gain power over geographic territory and power over resources, solely for those they choose to do so for, according to their core beliefs. As long as \_they\_ retain their affiliations, or have different affiliations, with different agendas, we cannot relinquish our's.

Einstein was so obsessed with his early discoveries, in this later life, and made so absent-minded that he could not remember to tie his shoelaces or to put on a coat in the dead of winter. Of course he remained popular, due to his looks and personality, as well as due to excessive reverence, including that which came to him for his far too simple minded, and highly naive, politics. When the reverence has faded somewhat we might someday see an interesting biography

of Einstein, as a most gifted early 20th century mathematical physicist carried along on the wave of his original insight.

Bob Ezergailis

| *"The way that is called the way is in the way."---Lao Duh*

Definitely. Perhaps we might say that the way that can be seen is not the way, but is a test at the gate of the ways that remain unseen. Then again, if it seems to be that, then it probably isn't.

Morpheal

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---

600. **Charles Bernstein**

***Bonvicino in NYC***

*Sun 24 May 1998*

---

Tuesday, June 9th, 1998, 7:30pm

at the Segue Performance Space

303 East 8th Street (between Avenues B & C), \$5

Brazilian Poet Régis Bonvicino

reads poems in Portuguese/ plus video poetry

With introductions and readings of the translations by

Charles Bernstein & Serge Gavronsky

(Translations of Bonvicino's work by Michael Palmer, Robert Creeley, and others.)

Régis Bonvicino is author of *Ossos de Borboleta / Butterfly Bones* (Ed 34, São Paulo, 1996), and *"Remote Identity"* (forthcoming, Sun & Moon Press), and co-editor, with Michael Palmer and Nelson Ascher, of *Nothing the Sun Could not Explain: 20 Contemporary Brazilian Poets* (Sun & Moon, 1997).

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

It is the mutual observation of a body and a language, in the minute slowness of the world which cries out the surprising richness of Régis Bonvicino's work. At times it reminds us of the powerful and striking narrative of a Larry Eigner or a Robert Creeley. An imperceptible movement shakes up the surface which, under our eyes, collapses and, just as soon, is reconstituted. Nevertheless, it remains out of reach. One can only grasp the violent cesura of the work. --  
Claude Royet-Journoud

C'est l'observation mutuelle d'un corps et d'une langue, dans la minutieuse lenteur du monde, qui crée l'étonnante richesse de l'œuvre de Régis Bonvicino. Elle nous rappelle, à certains moments, la force narrative et coupante d'un Larry Eigner ou d'un Robert Creeley. Un imperceptible mouvement ébranle une surface qui, sous nos yeux, s'effondre et aussitôt se reconstruit. Pourtant on ne l'atteint pas. On ne fait qu'en saisir la violente césure. --Claude Royet-Journoud

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601. **Ctfarmr**  
**Laura Moriarty**  
*Sun 24 May 1998*

---

hello listees

If Laura Moriarty or anyone who knows her is out there, please backchannel. Tom Beckett and I have been trying to contact her, with no luck.

thanks

Bobbie West

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602. **Mark Weiss**  
**Re: A Megalamorial Day Miscellany [Einstein and megalomania ?]**  
*Sun 24 May 1998*

---

Perhaps your reach exceeds your grasp.

I try to find the wisdom to abide fools in silence, but I often fail. I say no more.

At 11:20 AM 5/24/98 -0400, you wrote:

>>"Nationalism is the measles of mankind. Its most infantile  
>>disease."---Albert Einstein

>

>Part of the reason why even Einstein's genius was stopped dead in its  
>tracks. He was left reworking his old theorems until he died an honoured  
>death, in return for his earlier achievements. He was, in some ways, parked  
>by the side of the superhighway, while scientific advances passed him at  
>high speed.

>

>After all, the lack of the ability to hold steadfast to such affiliations as  
>a nation, or allied nations and their associations with each other, almost  
>inevitably leads to some act of betrayal of the interests of that  
affiliation.

>Those interests are essentially the survival of a way of life, and of

>certain core beliefs that have profound effects on ways of life, as well as  
>control over the use of geographic territory and resources. To have no such  
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>else anything for any purpose, including any scientific discoveries, so they  
>too could use that to further their way of life and to gain power over  
>geographic territory and power over resources, solely for those they choose  
>to do so for, according to their core beliefs. As long as \_they\_ retain  
>their affiliations, or have different affiliations, with different agendas,  
>we cannot relinquish our's.

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>Einstein was so obsessed with his early discoveries, in this later life, and  
>made so absent-minded that he could not remember to tie his shoelaces or to  
>put on a coat in the dead of winter. Of course he remained popular, due to  
>his looks and personality, as well as due to excessive reverence, including  
>that which came to him for his far too simple minded, and highly naive,  
>politics.

>When the reverence has faded somewhat we might someday see an  
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>biography of Einstein, as a most gifted early 20th century mathematical  
>physicist carried along on the wave of his original insight.

>

>Bob Ezergailis

>

>>"The way that is called the way is in the way."---Lao Duh

>

>Definitely. Perhaps we might say that the way that can be seen is not the  
>way, but is a test at the gate of the ways that remain unseen. Then again,  
>if it seems to be that, then it probably isn't.

>

>

Morpheal

>

>

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603. **Daishin Nikuko**

***It's 3AM and Nikuko's in her cups!!!***

*Sun 24 May 1998*

-

3 AM I love you, I love everyone, from Nikuko's Fukuoka, Japan, O Sake!

3:05AM up 13 DAYS, 12:24, 13 users, load averages: 4.44, 4.26, 3.85 USER TTY  
FROM [REDACTED] WHAT sondheim p0 panix3.panix.com 3:05AM 0 w vanwouw p3  
COFFEE.gol.ad.jp Mon06AM 2DAYS -csh (csh) vanwouw p4 COFFEE.gol.ad.jp  
Mon06AM 2DAYS -su (csh) vanwouw p5 COFFEE.gol.ad.jp Mon06AM 2DAYS  
tail -f acctd.log poyopoyo p6 ring-pull-chan.g 11May98 2DAYS -csh (csh) dvc pa  
anode.kirameki.e Mon06PM 2DAYS -bash (bash) joepet pb ml Wed11AM 3DAYS  
-csh (csh) shim pe yumi.gol.co.jp Thu06PM 2DAYS -tcsh (tcsh) jbordman q1  
boof.gol.co.jp Thu04PM 2DAYS -tcsh (tcsh) yoshik q4 kiss.gol.co.jp Fri09AM  
2DAYS su (bash) jbordman q8 boof.gol.co.jp Thu03PM 2DAYS -tcsh (tcsh)  
jbordman r7 boof.gol.co.jp Thu04PM 2DAYS -tcsh (tcsh) jbordman ra  
boof.gol.co.jp Thu04PM 2DAYS tail -f /var/log/acctd

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604. **R. Gancie**

### ***Megalamorial Miscelany II***

*Sun 24 May 1998*

---

"I spent 33 years and 4 months in active service as a member of our country's most agile military force-the Marine Corps. I served in all commissioned ranks from second lieutenant to Major-General. And during that period I spent most of my time being a high-class muscle man for Big Business. In short, I WAS A RACKETEER FOR CAPITALISM. I suspected I was just part of a racket at the time. Now I am sure of it. Like all members of the military profession I never had an original thought until I left the service. My mental faculties remained in suspended animation while I obeyed the orders of higher ups. This is typical of everyone in the military service. I helped make Mexico and especially Tampico safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of a half a dozen Central American republics for the benefit of Wall Street. The record of racketeering is long. I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers in 1909-12. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. I helped get Honduras 'right' for American fruit companies in 1903. In China in 1927 I helped see to it that Standard Oil went its way unmolested. During those years, I had, as the boys in the back room always say, a swell racket. I was rewarded with honors, medals, promotions. Looking back on it, I feel I might have given Al Capone a few hints. The best he could do was to operate his racket in three city districts. We Marines operated on three continents."---Major General Smedley Butler, author of War Is a Racket, testifying before Congress in 1935 --- "The United States does not have in the world-and does not deserve to have-more than one single friend, the United States."---Theodore Roosevelt --- "They're so corrupt its thrilling!"---Lenny Bruce on Richard Daley's Chicago

Democratic machine --- "The only place to spit in a rich man's house is in his face."---Diogenes the Dog --- The white man is still troubled with primitive fears;..."---Mary Austin

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605. **david bromige**

***the poetics of the stammer***

*Sun 24 May 1998*

---

or the stuturance of utterance, to follow Peter Quartermain on Bob Grenier.

Many interesting posts on this topic, which (like the Manzanita berries in some poem of Snyder's) gets bigger the longer one looks. Dan Raphael's sketch of his poetics as not "striving," in the post wherein he testifies to his teenage stutter, makes me link "striving" with "stuttering." Surely what wants to come through and is being checked and re-checked by the stutter, is "content" varying from if not antithetical to, the sentence being spoken, the deliberate part, so to speak, of the communication. Akin, that is, to the "slip of speech" known now as "Freudian." Not that it has to be the case that what is being suppressed is the real meaning of the message, but that it is the consciously rejected part.

So that Duncan, say, may not have stuttered because he was repressing tabu material [those who knew him must doubt that; perhaps, though, he might have been repressing un-tabu stuff!], but because he wanted to say 3 things at once (as a prior postor has said), and the other 2 were technically "forbidden" just by the laws of syntax: he had to say the first thing first.

Memorization, which basically, I think, empties the words of meaning to oneself, the better to have it there for others, rids, as we have heard, the stutterer of his stutter.

It strikes me that the poet has to (can't help but?) develop techniques whereby the repressed meanings share elbow room with the intended meanings, so that in fact all meanings become intentional. Intentional, but probably unintendable.

This formulation is not unlike what Spicer formulates as "the poet is a radio, receiving and transmitting, but not originating, messages" [I paraphrase, and none too elegantly]. However, Spicer's figure doesn't allow any originating to the poet; this, I submit, is inaccurate. Even of the house that Jack built.

Speaking of memorization--there is a stage between the completion of this, and the raw product, which I always stumble over. My stumbles resemble Spoonerisms, asking people to leave Oxford by the town drain rather than the down train, "down" being English for "the train going to London from any point N of London". I shall now say more on this in the form of a footnote.



Since, despite my extraordinarily persistent youth, I am bothered no end by the repetitiousness of old age, I may already have used another context to tell to the List the story of my first meeting with Anselm Hollo. I tell it again here because it illustrates my point.(All of them, perhaps). Bob Perelman (when he and I both lived in SF) phoned that Anselm was at his place, would I like to meet him? Indeed I would, so Bob dropped by in his little truck and soon we were on our way over there. I had had some medication to help me relax, and therefore it seemed best that I counter this relaxed state with a plan as to what I was going to say when the meeting actually occurred; a brief kind of conversation list, such as young ladies in finishing schools used to be encouraged to make. I decided on "Anselm, I've been waiting to meet you for a long time." It had the virtues of both truth and brevity. Okay!

When I first laid eyes on him, however, where he sat in the kitchen in a shaft of sunlight rendering his phenomenally blue eyes even bluer, thus transfixing me and further distracting me, I cried "Anselm, it's been a long time!"

Unfazed, he responded, "Eternity."

David

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606. **morpheal**

***Re: essence of medium [universe made of vibes]***

*Sun 24 May 1998*

---

| *A computer is a calculating tool*

Some people believe that is what the human brain OUGHT to be.

So the computational device becomes to them a more perfect instrument when it exceeds the human calculative ability and rate of calculation.

Not quite....but I have actually heard that kind of naive statement argued vociferously by people who ought to know better, and who are in positions of leadership.

>At a low level, it's a byte or bit muncher and a memory hog, yes, chewing  
>language whether this is numerical or whatever. You could say it's all  
>numerical at the lowest level, but not really, at the lowest level it's  
>electrical impulses, our interpretation of this is numerically oriented,  
the >language of numbers. The point is that the things are not fundamentally  
>calculating devices, but processors. The word 'computer' is by now merely  
>reminiscent of its history. How about Mayamuncher?

Maya-creator.

Is the maya that the particular artificial organism in question "their's" or is the maya that that particular instance produces "our's".

They learn about us, and seek to emulate us. We learn about them and seek to emulate them. This side attempts to fool that side into making mistakes.

How do we know for certain what is from whom ?

Furthermore, how do we know that if it is our's it has not been internally compromised, in one manner or another. How do we determine that with any adequate level of certainty ?

The logical outcome is \_know thyself from machines\_ and \_never follow a machine into anything\_. That in future warfare would become a fundamental rule of any military engagement.

(A far cry from Asimov's laws of robotics.)

Increasingly so, since every new technology diffuses outward from its source, eventually, in one form or another, no matter how well it is safeguarded. Eventually it is either re-invented or acquired by another power or would be power somewhere, at some price or other, if not by pure accident.

*"Tool"...this relates to your ideas about art. Language itself can be thought of as a tool, a technology (implemented by people, though collectively).*

There is a story from indigenous South America about a tribe's tools suddenly rising up against them, rebelling against their makers. I wonder if that might not be prophetic ? What kind of world would the original tool makers find themselves in if their tools began to rebel against them and re-create the world in the tool's own image ? That takes us back to the Tiplerian problem of the "Omega-Point" once again. Is the Omega Point originally a tool that rebelled against its makers and de-ified itself ?

Could that happen ? Could that be happening ?

Some scientists strongly imply that it could and is happening. Tipler seems to be one of them, despite his cowering within a semblance of traditional theology. Sarfatti has been bolder, and yet still seeks to retain some theological blessings, as though the lack of theology might result in suppression.

*So too art is not simply a tool of exploration of self or the world or word. I don't use art to do this or that any more than I use language to express my meaning. My meaning is largely (though not completely) formed not by me but within the possibilities of the language.*

Art, at its best, either brings existing ideas into the foreground, highlighting them in new ways, or it explores radical new ideas that yet defy fullest expression by more conservative means. Art skirts around the political fences, and says the unsayable. This is why artists were particularly hated in the Soviet

Union. Hated and persecuted. They were saying the unsayable. Poetry explores the far fringes of language as medium of expression, whereas language is more often the language of transmittal of commonly accepted information, and the language of short declarative commands. Poetry as indirect expression, in its openness to manifold interpretation, allows bifurcation of viewpoints. If you believe x then you will read x into the particular verse. If you believe y then you will read y into that verse. Both readings are possible, and neither is to be considered wrong. Direct prose is less subtle than poetics and is more easily discerned and directly criticized.

Thus we might speak of a ground breaking science as an art, where it oversteps the previous limits of its means of communicative expression. Is it then similar to poetry ? I think it is.

*'audio writing.' Radio is invisible, for instance. Radio as the soundtrack of people's lives, for instance. He concentrated on the cut, often, when speaking of recorded sound. Burroughs said that when you cut tape the future leaks out. The cut is a tremendous point of energy in recorded sound.*

The question is always how one actually knows whether what is intentionally broadcast is actually received at the receiver. Therein is a real problem, and has incredibly potent implications as to battlefield conditions and any situation where accuracy of information is essential to success.

When it all becomes DADA, and techno echos, resembling the distorted samplings produced by techno DJs, we revert to old fashioned smoke signals ?

*Currently we sit in front of monitors of a certain sort. This will change, presumably. Currently the keyboard and mouse are the primary interactive tools.*

Clearly, mind to machine interfaces, are potentially possible.

Anything that produces an electromagnetic signal can be the input. All that is necessary is a suitable receiver.

*This will change also, presumably (voice input and a glove or something). Best just to think of it as a different world, maybe, a world of pure artifice where the ideal and the real are in whatever proximity you want. The inside of the head turned inside out. But not quite. Models of the inside of the head. Languages of the inside of the head...soon to be, then, the inside of the head.*

Perhaps, sometime in the not too distant future, anything that can be thought of can be manifested, from potentia into actua.

That was the dream of the magicians. Not the prestidigitators but the truly dedicated occult magicians. Such as thos of the Order of the Golden Dawn, who were often called on, throughout their tradition, for the sake of their exceptional intelligence.

Pure artifice is the world of magick.

It is the world Aleister Crowley, dubbed "The Beast", dreamt of.

Now....is the computer essentially based on a particle or a wave..... Hey....its all in the vibes.....

Morpheal

aka

Bob Ezergailis

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## 607. **morpheal**

### ***Re: essence of medium [corollary to previous article]***

Sun 24 May 1998

---

*'audio writing.' Radio is invisible, for instance. Radio as the soundtrack of people's lives, for instance. He concentrated on the cut, often, when speaking of recorded sound. Burroughs said that when you cut tape the future leaks out. The cut is a tremendous point of energy in recorded sound.*

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When it all becomes DADA, and techno echos, resembling the distorted samplings produced by techno DJs, we revert to old fashioned smoke signals ?

.....

Corollary to that.....

Did anyone think of the fact that no matter how well shielded the source of the transmission is and how pure the output signal is, that that signal cannot be shielded along its path of wireless transmission. So even if the receiver is perfectly shielded from any extraneous signals (which is near to impossible and certainly impractical), there is zero certainty as to precisely the same signal being sent and received with identical information content intact.

At least that is how it plays out in a future world of more and more readily available high tech options.....

Yet, wireless transmissions are becoming decisive in nearly every area of human life, and are increasingly BELIEVED in. In fact I would venture to say that more people believe in, and more believe more strongly in, the perfect veracity of wireless communicative transmissions than they do in any divinity.

Strange but true.

Radios are more popular than Jesus, Mohammed, and Buddha combined.

(The Beatles used to be.)

Morpheal

aka

Bob Ezergailis

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608. **Maria Damon**

***Re: the poetics of the stammer***

*Sun 24 May 1998*

---

i heart this thread. i was captivated by something similar, which in my mind i called (and in print a coupla times too) "counterperformance," namely the exact opposite of what they teach you about "projection," clarity, dramatic enactment etc. for me it was sparked by seeing Bob Kaufman read in 1981, barely audible, clearly just trying to "get through it," but affecting nonetheless. also heard an anecdote from walter lew about going to hear r.d.laing once, and laing sat and mumbled on stage so incoherently that eveyrone left except (as i recall the tale) walter. i had a dream once where something similar happend w/ artaud. and this paper i've alluded to once or twice by bruce boone on john wieners seems to get at the same kind of thing. since i'm trying to write abt wieners right now (w/o ever having heard him read) this is all very helpful. --md

At 1:06 PM -0700 5/24/98, david bromige wrote:

>or the stutternance of utterance, to follow Peter Quartermain on Bob Grenier.

>

>Many interesting posts on this topic, which (like the Manzanita berries in  
>some poem of Snyder's) gets bigger the longer one looks. Dan Raphael's  
>sketch of his poetics as not "striving," in the post wherein he testifies  
>to his teenage stutter, makes me link "striving" with "stuttering." Surely  
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>being spoken, the deliberate part, so to speak, of the communication. Akin,  
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>message, but that it is the consciously rejected part.

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>So that Duncan, say, may not have stuttered because he was repressing tabu  
>material [those who knew him must doubt that; perhaps, though, he might  
>have been repressing un tabu stuff!], but because he wanted to say 3  
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>thing first.

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>Memorization, which basically, I think, empties the words of meaning to  
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>so that in fact \_all\_ meanings become intentional. Intentional, but  
>probably unintendable.

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>This formulation is not unlike what Spicer formulates as "the poet is a  
>radio, receiving and transmitting, but not originating, messages" [I  
>paraphrase, and none too elegantly]. However, Spicer's figure doesn't allow  
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>house that Jack built.

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>Speaking of memorization--there is a stage between the completion of this,  
>and the raw product, which I always stumble over. My stumbles resemble  
>Spoonerisms, asking people to leave Oxford by the town drain rather than  
>the down train, "down" being English for "the train going to London from  
>any point N of London".

>I shall now say more on this in the form of a footnote.

>

>+++++

>

>Since, despite my extraordinarily persistent youth, I am bothered no end by  
>the repetitiousness of old age, I may already have used another context to  
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>this relaxed state with a plan as to what I was going to say when the  
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>shaft of sunlight rendering his phenomenally blue eyes even bluer, thus

>transfixing me and further distracting me, I cried "Anselm, it's been a  
>long time!"  
>  
>Unfazed, he responded, "Eternity."  
>  
>David

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609. **MAYHEW**  
***New (American) Poets***  
*Sun 24 May 1998*

---

I having been reading the anthology *New (American) Poets* published by Talisman and edited by Jarnot et al. Not to brag excessively but I think I am the ideal reader for this book, that is, it seems to have been compiled with me in mind. I am the same age as some of the poets (slightly older than some) and there is a sort of generational sensibility with which I feel immediately in tune. Yet since I haven't been reading recent poetry with any assiduousness the discovery of so many writers at once is like discovering an ocean. So belated congratulations to the publishers, editors, and poets for this wonderful book.

Also on my nightstand is the new collection by Bronk, also published by Talisman.

Jonathan Mayhew



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610. **Dean Taciuch**  
***Chaos and poetry***  
*Sun 24 May 1998*

---

I'm almost afraid to open this topic up (it's been around before), but I'm prepping to teach an undergraduate course on Relativity, Quantum Mechanics, Chaos and Literature (catalog shortens this to Chaos and Lit, but that's close enough).

Anyway, I've found N Kathernine Hayles' *Chaos Bound* very useful (though I haven't located a copy of her earlier book on field theories and lit); but there is no discussion of poetry, or of non-narrative prose, in the book. In fact, in the final section she notes that the Postmodern movement(s) she traces probably can't be traced as a narrative at all (she writes that living, actually experiencing postmodernism would be to live "in a world of disconnected present moments that jostle one another but never form a continuous (much less logical)

progression" (282). Yet she never discusses texts which expolre this (much of the poetry discussed on this list, even written by list members, for example; or earlier texts such as Stein's, for example.

The problem is, I think, in Hayles' view of the "paradigm" of literature (the norm), as expressed in her Introduction. She mentions that an advanced physicist may write for an audience of 300 people, most of which he or she knows. "But what creative writer," she asks, could afford to appeal to an audiencethis small, this specialized?" (18-19)

That audience would be us. I've just had a chapbook out (this isn't a plug, but you can order \_certainty series\_ from Burning Press, so I guess it is a plug). The print run was 250 copies. I'll be very happy to have these reach readers, and I probably will know many of them. I'm sure many here can say the same.

Are there any discussions of modern science (relativity, quantum, chaos) which \_do\_ consider poetry, especially more "experimental" poetries, worthy of consideration? Is Hayles' ignoring of poetry due to the influence of, for example, Jameson's theory of Postmodernism (a major source in Hayles' concluding chapter), a theory which also, as far as I recall, looks only at narrative (and architecture, but no poetry). . .

Any leads will be appreciated. I almost have the list made up for the course, and Implan to mix prose fiction, poetry, drama. . .its mainly critical material I need now (for my own study, not for the undergrads), though suggestions for inclusions my reading list will certainly be appreciated and considered.

Thanks,

Dean Taciuch

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#### 611. **Billy Little**

#### ***Re: A Megalamorial Day Miscellany [Einstein and megalomania ?]***

*Sun 24 May 1998*

---

>Perhaps your reach exceeds your grasp.

>

>I try to find the wisdom to abide fools in silence, but I often fail. I say

>no more.

>

i think a lot of us are biting our tongues out here not to encourage the oblivious, but i'm sure skinny albert would have considered the source and found the comments amusing, like a flea reprimanding a bear for wearing its skin wrong side out.



612. **michael corbin**

***Re: nature/poetry...***

*Sun 24 May 1998*

---

Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher wrote:

>

> mc, interesting you should bring that up, about mckibben's malthusian

> orientation... i get a little tired of it too... in this article, though,

> he deals with malthus directly, perhaps self-consciously...

joe,

i was able to read this, finally. i agree, the self-consciousness here is powerful. I mean he is right. its no fucking joke we live in some kind of end-time. i guess that is why I mentioned hesiod and euripides. Euripides knew human beings weren't long for the this world. pellopenesian impossibilites. hesiod and so called 'agricultural' 'revolutions'.

Mckibben has a 4-year old kid. generational consciousness makes you write certain kinds a poems. and it is beautifully correct. makes certain poetics. this is a kinda \_howl\_ you know. best minds and negro streets=and like that. cause, really, the voluntarist 'change' that mckibben liturgically wants to invoke, i despair of. i think steve mccaffrey and his riff on bataille and the 'accursed share' tried to take this mckibben hope, atlantic monthly hope, down a different path some time ago. the socialist desires of the \_new sentence\_, or that pereleman late-marxism, or the buddhist desires of disembodied poetics and now some hipster poster-modernism living between truamas of impossibilitiy can't do it. new age and all that shit, poets trying to put out good anthologies, 'ethnographic mellennium sublimes' and other poets dissin this, back and forth, back and forth, and some poets worryin there own egos, and all kinds a generational unsubscriptions and lurking. dead lyrics and language 'this and that' and all kind a stutterings.

how is it possible to read Mckibben's writing and live the same way? what, really, is poetry in that or this world? i think of it as a howe's 'defenestration of prague'/

i don't really know. is there poetry now? i was looking for it.

i don't even know what 'sustainable' means? although i wish c. alexenander luck. in the desert. in s. dakota they have completed the face of sitting bull, blasting it out of a mountain cause someone has a desire of rushmore equal\time. maybe this will all be one day picturesque ruins.

the thing with malthus was not his sociology, but his poetry.

malthus had no use for the meek inheriting the earth. his doctorate of divinity notwithstanding.

mckibben's piece is for his next book \_maybe one: a personal and environmental argument for single-child families\_.

i have no hope whatsoever that the bourgeois desire for self-interested limits will keep the Norplant police, the forced sterilization posse, the tuskegee castration crew outta this town. what do you think?

stuttering: although we live in the late digital age, it is necessary to remember grand master flash and others pulling the vinyl back and forth under the stylus, hiccup, sampling. the sound of this age. music-loop. pop.

mc

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613. **ScoutEW**

***Re: Chaos and poetry***

Sun 24 May 1998

---

See Whitehead/Olson

Also, Could somebody on this list named Cronin backchannel me about "Tool a Magazine"

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---

614. **morpheal**

***Re: culture heros***

Sun 24 May 1998

---

| *Perhaps your reach exceeds your grasp.*

Always, and invariably both exceeds reach and grasp.....

It is those thin straws. Always those....

| *I try to find the wisdom to abide fools in silence, but I often fail. I say  
no more.*

Ah, another member of the cult of Albert Einstein.

It too has its rituals.

After all, Albert became a "culture hero". Chuckle.

Same category as Marilyn Monroe. Something to be worshipped.

Every civilization needs them. There have always been some of those around.

I am surprised Andy Warhol did not (as far as I know) do Einstein the way he did Marilyn. Or did he ? Anyone know for sure ?

Besides that, from an outsider's viewpoint it seems only Walt Whitman made culture hero status in America, from among poets. No one else seems to outrank him, even today, in that category. Wonder why ?

M.

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615. **Gwyn McVay**

**Re: New (American) Poets stammering**

Sun 24 May 1998

I do think it's interesting that nobody's yet mentioned the stutter or stammer as an indicator of an anxiety or panic state--reliable indicator in many patients (like me) of being about to blow a gasket--

The reading tonight for the (fabulous) anthology aforementioned included Edwin Torres, who reads fluently in a strange language with stops and hesitations which give something of that feeling, vocables forcing their way out--Lee Ann Brown described Rod Smith as "Barbara Guest on speed," so my comparison is that Edwin Torres is Lord Buckley on ketamine--

Gwyn

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616. **Karen Kelley**

**Re: the poetics of the stammer**

Sun 24 May 1998

*i heart this thread. i was captivated by something similar, which in my mind i called (and in print a coupla times too) "counterperformance," namely the exact opposite of what they teach you about "projection," clarity, dramatic enactment etc. for me it was sparked by seeing Bob Kaufman read in 1981, barely audible, clearly just trying to "get through it," but affecting nonetheless. also heard an anecdote from walter lew about going to hear r.d.laing once, and laing sat and mumbled on stage so incoherently that everyone left except (as i recall the tale) walter. i had a dream once where something similar happend w/ artaud. and this paper i've alluded to once or twice by bruce boone on john wieners seems to get at the same kind of thing. since i'm trying to write abt wieners right now (w/o ever having heard him read) this is all very helpful. --md*

One of the best performances I ever saw was Miles Davis at the Music Hall in Boston. He had on a gold lame jacket with tails, and a brilliant red trumpet, and he wandered kind of aimlessly about the stage while the band played, and when it was his turn he'd stop wherever he was and with his back to the audience play. As I recall, some reviewers read this as megalomania on his part, but I

always saw it as his rejection of the stand-up-and-project mode. It was thrilling: how clear his trumpet's voice was, and how little of "him" was there. Well, except for the gold lame coat.

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617. **Kathy Lou Schultz**

***Re: New (American) Poets***

*Sun 24 May 1998*

---

I'm very interested to see this collection, and inasmuch as an anthology can "represent" "community," (and it does represent) know who is included, each anthology in this age of anthologies a swipe, stutter, or attempt to name (something?) New? American? Does the East communicate with the West? Where is there dialogue? Who is included?

So could someone fill me in? I'm semi-housebound after a recent surgery and have yet to get this book through SPD.

Thanks.

MAYHEW wrote:

>

> I having been reading the anthology \_New (American) Poets\_ published by  
> Talisman and edited by Jarrot et al. Not to brag excessively but I think I  
> am the ideal reader for this book, that is, it seems to have been compiled  
> with me in mind. I am the same age as some of the poets (slightly older  
> than some) and there is a sort of generational sensibility with which I  
> feel immediately in tune. Yet since I haven't been reading recent poetry  
> with any assiduousness the discovery of so many writers at once is like  
> discovering an ocean. So belated congratulations to the publishers,  
> editors, and poets for this wonderful book.

>

> Also on my nightstand is the new collection by Bronk, also published by  
> Talisman.

>

> Jonathan Mayhew

>

> [REDACTED]

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618. **david bromige**

***stammering billions of bilious blue barnacles!***

Sun 24 May 1998

---

Thanks, Gwyn, for naming of panic-state as informing the stummers. I had hoped it would be recognizably included under the rubric of "3 things at once," which is what panic states strike me as involving ("I-I-I-I cant cope with all of you at the same time!!"), but I see it wasn't.

Yeah, "F-F-F-Fire!" is probably a tug-of-war among f-f-f-fight, f-f-f-flight, and f-f-f-fatalism.

David

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619. **david bromige**

***barbara guest on speed***

Sun 24 May 1998

---

Now we have Rod Smith defined (by Lee Ann Brown) in the terms above, can we have a candidate for the definition "Eddie Guest on downers"? [No, you can't nominate me]. Then, next, who is "The Wedding Guest on slide-trombone"? Who, Rod Smith on weed? Who, Jay Gutz on life-support system? George Oppen on "Jeopardy"--who? Ken Irby on a surfboard : any suggestions? db3

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620. **George Bowering**

***Re: barbara guest on speed***

Mon 25 May 1998

---

*Now we have Rod Smith defined (by Lee Ann Brown) in the terms above, can we have a candidate for the definition "Eddie Guest on downers"? [No, you can't nominate me]. Then, next, who is "The Wedding Guest on slide-trombone"? Who, Rod Smith on weed? Who, Jay Gutz on life-support system? George Oppen on "Jeopardy"--who? Ken Irby on a surfboard : any suggestions? db3*

I have been thinking of Michael on daatje.

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

621. **k. lederer**

***Announcing a new chapbook series/EXPLOSIVE***

*Mon 25 May 1998*

---

Announcing Spectacular Books, a new chapbook series that is going to feature ten limited edition books by new and emerging writers.

The first book, "Songs & Scores," by Tina Celona, is ready and available.

The book is 6 by 7 inches and is printed on acid-free paper in a first edition of 100. Each copy is signed and numbered by Tina.

The cover is wrapped in a very pretty dust-jacket that's made out of home-made paper in which little marigold petals are embedded. I'm selling it for \$6. All monies will go into making more books. Checks should be made payable to me and sent to 420 E Davenport #2, Iowa City, IA 52245.

Some poems:

T H E   E S C A P E  
after Parra

For years I refused to live above ground  
Until one night, howling with fear,  
I emerged from my hole, sniffing the air,  
Finding the road in the moonlight.  
On the way to town I passed houses behind high walls  
And fruit trees, which reminded me of a woman from Montenegro.  
I took off my clothes and ate rocks by the side of the road,  
Which grew lighter as the moon went down.  
The lights of the city were beautiful,  
But the stars were like insects behind catalpa leaves.  
I was dying and I could not sleep.  
But why mention it?  
The stones I had left by the road were following me.  
I saw a bicycle leaning against a wall and rode it into town,  
The rocks hissing behind me and in the ditches.  
When I was far away I threw down the bicycle and slept.  
A dog woke me, sniffing and growling.  
Before it could bite me I strangled it with my bootlace.  
Its eyes popped out and lay in the dirt.  
I got up and ran down the road to the town.  
It was darker now and I saw absolutely nothing.  
Then it grew lighter and I realized it was the sun, laughing at me.

I threw rocks at it.  
I walked faster but I knew it would follow me into the town.  
I was in tears but I went on until I came to a beautiful garden.  
Under a lemon tree I commenced digging.  
I was glad to see the leaves, they reminded me of my mother.  
I lay down under the tree and slept in her arms.

.....

#### A P O E M W I T H O U T A C A M E L

i thought i could write a poem without a camel so i left mine at home. as i was writing my poem the camel appeared in the window. i took it home and tied it to the fence. as i returned to my poem i felt free of the camel. but the camel was there, looking in at the window. i took the camel to the zoo and left it with the other camels. when i returned to my poem i detected a whiff of camel in the air. i scrubbed my poem with vinegar but the camel was hard to get off. fearing that the camel would escape from the zoo, i closed the window and sealed it with tape. i turned back to my poem. the room was hot and airless, but at least it was free of the camel. i continued writing my poem, looking around now and then to see if the camel had returned. a camel appeared at the window but it was not my camel. nevertheless i covered the window with newspaper. it was hot and dark and i could hardly breathe but i continued writing my poem. finally i finished. my hands were shaking and i was short of breath but i was satisfied that i had managed to keep the camel out of my poem. i reread the poem. no camel. i turned it over to make sure that the camel wasnt hiding behind it. i scrutinized what i thought might be a camel footprint but it was only a little dirt. dripping with sweat i uncovered the window and opened it. sunlight and air flooded the room. from across the city i thought i heard my camel sneezing forlornly after me. we had never been apart, my camel and i. just to be sure i took my poem to a specialist. shaking his head, he confirmed that the poem was camel-free. certificate in hand, i went back to the zoo to pick up my camel. i was very tired and happy. i stood at the gate and whistled for my camel. several other camels ran over but my camel was nowhere to be seen. could it have escaped, i wondered. i went home, expecting to see my camel waiting for me by the fence. i went back to my office but it was dark and empty and smelled of vinegar. i returned to the zoo which was about to close for the night. sadly i whistled again for my camel. several camels came over but my camel was not among them. where is my camel? i asked the zookeeper, who was sweeping up camel droppings. which one was yours? answered the zookeeper. it occurred to me that i might not have recognized my camel among so many. i whistled again and the camels came over. i made the special sound i make to my camel. several of the camels sneezed, but the sneezes all sounded alike. it was getting late and the zookeeper wanted to close. you can come back tomorrow, he

suggested. on the way home i thought wistfully of the happy times my camel and i had shared. a tear trickled down my cheek as i remembered the day i had brought him home from the camel-dealer. i looked unhappily at my poem and at my certificate of authenticity. that night i slept very little. in the morning i headed back to the zoo. have you seen my camel? i asked the zookeeper. it wasnt at home? he replied. no, i said sadly. how about another camel, the zookeeper suggested. it wouldnt be the same, i replied. sadly i returned to my office. i wrote a poem and then another poem about my camel, but without my camel the poems seemed empty. something was missing and i suspected it was the camel. i took out my poem from the day before and compared it to the new poems i had written. the camel was missing from all of them. i turned back to my poems but my heart wasnt in it. i thought, it was foolish to have wanted to write a poem without a camel. as the weeks wore on i wrote an entire book of poems without a camel, and then another. then i stopped writing entirely.

.....

WE WERE NOT MUCH  
OLDER THAN YOU

we were not much older than you  
instead of the sky we had the sea  
with an electric wire in it  
on the floor a fish with a wandering eye  
on the ceiling a biting gnat  
looking for a way out

the letters of the alphabet were real to us  
we had a place in the bank  
we were in earnest  
at night the sun rose  
the moon looked back  
death was exiled to the provinces  
we had boiled eggs to chop

art had replaced god in our letters  
we traded rings like candy  
the streets had moved into the libraries  
a sale was in progress  
every book was an eye

we were not afraid  
of fear we wanted to be old  
we dropped our pretenses  
and sold them for liver  
buried gold for someone to find



and watered it with piss  
then we got lost  
  
we laid underground lines in our poems  
on every fence we posted a sign  
it was a hell of a trail  
the sky cracked open  
electrocuted the fish which stopped blinking  
the gnat bit the lightning and died  
on the way out

we looked down at our hands  
our hands disappeared we saw our feet  
our feet left we saw our genitals  
exploding they were tangled up  
they looked like spaghetti  
tears stuck to them

behind the arras we saw you looking  
we went on one word at a time  
we saw what to do  
then we lost it  
my eye was full of poison  
it swelled then i only had one  
my mouth was full of salt

instead of the sea we had the earth  
had it from above and below  
and when it was gone we had  
our tongue in your teeth  
we called out all the names  
the sun beat down  
our gold was dug up

the letters were made of glass  
they screwed them over our eyes  
this kept the poison out  
we saw glass close up  
and saw through it

it was hot there under the sea  
under the earth under the sky  
a snake crawled out of a hole in the snow  
the apple tree got the scab  
none of the apples grew

your teeth fell out they had blood on them  
the isle was full of noises  
we called you by your name  
the lights went out  
we were not much older than you  
and there were more of us

.....

More of the poems in the book can be found in EXPLOSIVE MAGAZINE #3,  
INTERLOPE #1, and EPOCH

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622. **Jim Andrews**

***Seattle Drift***

*Mon 25 May 1998*

---

Seattle Drift, a very bad text indeed, is at  
<http://www.islandnet.com/~jandrews/mocambo/SeattleDrift.html>  
You may consent to do the text.  
As poets, you may stop the text.  
For the wicked, opportunity is provided to discipline the text.  
The text needs Netscape 4 or Internet Explorer 4, can't do without it.  
Jim Andrews

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623. **Stephen Cope**

***Re: the poetics of the stammer***

*Mon 25 May 1998*

---

Since Miles Davis has been brought up, I might mention (if it hasn't been already), that some of the more significant stuttering poetries that have been produced in this century derive much from jazz phrasings (and of course, jazz rhythms, and again, of course, scat). Creeley, for instance, has located the genesis of his own phrasing in his early fascination with Charlie Parker. Similarly, if one reads the Olson/Creeley correspondence, one finds Creeley often beseeching Olson to listen to Parker's music, and it seems fairly certain that "Projective Verse" was written with at least a little Parker in mind. This, in any case, might put a different spin on the sense of the term "projective" as it's being discussed here...

Stephen

*i heart this thread. i was captivated by something similar, which in my mind i called (and in print a coupla times too) "counterperformance," namely the exact opposite of what they teach you about "projection," clarity, dramatic enactment etc. for me it was sparked by seeing Bob Kaufman read in 1981, barely audible, clearly just trying to "get through it," but affecting nonetheless. also heard an anecdote from walter lew about going to hear r.d.laing once, and laing sat and mumbled on stage so incoherently that everyone left except (as i recall the tale) walter. i had a dream once where something similar happend w/ artaud. and this paper i've alluded to once or twice by bruce boone on john wieners seems to get at the same kind of thing. since i'm trying to write abt wieners right now (w/o ever having heard him read) this is all very helpful. --md*

*One of the best performances I ever saw was Miles Davis at the Music Hall in Boston. He had on a gold lame jacket with tails, and a brilliant red trumpet, and he wandered kind of aimlessly about the stage while the band played, and when it was his turn he'd stop wherever he was and with his back to the audience play. As I recall, some reviewers read this as megalomania on his part, but I always saw it as his rejection of the stand-up-and-project mode. It was thrilling: how clear his trumpet's voice was, and how little of "him" was there. Well, except for the gold lame coat.*

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624. **Maria Damon**  
**Re: Chaos and poetry**  
Mon 25 May 1998

ira livingston's arrow of chaos: romanticism and postmodernism, u of minnesota press, is delightful, smart, deconstructive and wonderful. he's at suny stonybrook, for further reference.

At 8:09 PM -0400 5/24/98, Dean Taciuch wrote:

>I'm almost afraid to open this topic up (it's been around before), but I'm  
>prepping to teach an undergraduate course on Relativity, Quantum  
>Mechanics, Chaos and Literature (catalog shortens this to Chaos and Lit,  
>but that's close enough).  
>  
>Anyway, I've found N Kathernine Hayles' \_Chaos Bound\_ very useful (though  
>I haven'y located a copy of her earlier book on field theories and lit);  
>but there is no discussion of poetry, or of non-narrative prose, in the  
>book. In fact, in the final section she notes that the Postmodern

>movement(s) she traces probably can't be traced as a narrative at all (she  
>writes that living, actually experiencing postmodernism would be to live  
>"in a world of disconnected present moments that jostle one another but  
>never form a continuous (much less logical) progression" (282). Yet she  
>never discusses texts which expolre this (much of the poetry discussed on  
>this list, even written by list members, for example; or earlier texts  
>such as Stein's, for example.

>

>The problem is, I think, in Hayles' view of the "paradigm" of literature  
>(the norm), as expressed in her Introduction. She mentions that an  
>advanced physicist may write for an audience of 300 people, most of which  
>he or she knows. "But what creative writer," she asks, could afford to  
>appeal to an audiencethis small, this specialized?" (18-19)

>

>That audience would be us. I've just had a chapbook out (this isn't a  
>plug, but you can order \_certainty series\_ from Burning Press, so I guess  
>it is a plug). The print run was 250 copies. I'll be very happy to have  
>these reach readers, and I probably will know many of them. I'm sure many  
>here can say the same.

>

>Are there any discussions of modern science (relativity, quantum, chaos)  
>which \_do\_ consider poetry, especially more "experimental" poetries,  
>worthy of consideration? Is Hayles' ignoring of poetry due to the  
>influence of, for example, Jameson's theory of Postmodernism (a major  
>source in Hayles' concluding chapter), a theory which also, as far as I  
>recall, looks only at narrative (and architecture, but no poetry). . .

>

>Any leads will be appreciated. I almost have the list made up for the  
>course, and Implan to mix prose fiction, poetry, drama. . .its mainly  
>critical material I need now (for my own study, not for the undergrads),  
>though suggestions for inclusions my reading list will certainly be  
>appreciated and considered.

>

>Thanks,

>

>Dean Taciuch

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625. **Maria Damon**

**Re: New (American) Poets stumming**

Mon 25 May 1998

---

speaking of edwin torres, here's a bit of shameless self-advertisement: i've got an essay on edwin and another poet, javier pina, coming out this summer in American Literary History. it's called "avantgarde or borderguard."

At 10:53 PM -0400 5/24/98, Gwyn McVay wrote:

>I do think it's interesting that nobody's yet mentioned the stutter or  
>stammer as an indicator of an anxiety or panic state--reliable indicator  
>in many patients (like me) of being about to blow a gasket--  
>  
>The reading tonight for the (fabulous) anthology aforementioned included  
>Edwin Torres, who reads fluently in a strange language with stops and  
>hesitancies which give something of that feeling, vocables forcing their  
>way out--Lee Ann Brown described Rod Smith as "Barbara Guest on speed," so  
>my comparison is that Edwin Torres is Lord Buckley on ketamine--  
>  
>Gwyn

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626. **Susan Wheeler**

**Re: Chaos and poetry**

Mon 25 May 1998

---

*Are there any discussions of modern science (relativity, quantum, chaos) which \_do\_ consider poetry, especially more "experimental" poetries, worthy of consideration? Is Hayles' ignoring of poetry due to the influence of, for example, Jameson's theory of Postmodernism (a major source in Hayles' concluding chapter), a theory which also, as far as I recall, looks only at narrative (and architecture, but no poetry). . .*

Take a look at Ben Belitt's "Toward a Poetics of Uncertainty: Trial Balances" in his The Forged Feature collection of essays using Heisenberg, Steven Weinberg, J.H. Wheeler, Einstein, Eddington, etc. in looking at Blake, Stevens, Coleridge, Hopkins, etc.

Susan Wheeler

██████████

voice/fax ██████████

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627. **MAYHEW**

***New (American) Poets***

*Mon 25 May 1998*

---

Kathy Schultz wrote: "I'm very interested to see this collection, and inasmuch as an anthology can "represent" "community," (and it does represent) know who is included, each anthology in this age of anthologies a swipe, stutter, or attempt to name (something?) New? American? Does the East communicate with the West? Where is there dialogue? Who is included?"

The problem with seeing an anthology as "representing" something outside of itself is that then the anthology is not read; it becomes a dialogue about what is represented and what is not. My great advantage is that I don't know enough to make the "where is xyz" critique. I also question the word community in this context. Watch those scare quotes they scare me.

Some initial notes: I like Claire Needell, subtle and intelligent. Susan M. Schultz is an amazing poet, meditative, with great nuanced shifts of tone. Juliana Spahr's "spiderwasp" makes me want to read more of her. I was impressed by Peter Gizzi's "Poem for John Wieners." Jordan Davis makes the useful recommendation "You must double your style every twenty minutes." Others have mentioned Edwin Torres and Rod Smith. Jennifer Moxley's *Fin de Siecle* go-betweens is also a great poem. I don't feel like typing the whole table of contents but there are 36 poets. All that I've read so far, in random fashion, worth looking at.

Jnthn Myhw



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628. **Dean Taciuch**

***Re: the poetics of the stammer***

*Mon 25 May 1998*

---

I've been loosely following this thread, but I don't think Nathaniel Mackey has been discussed much. He doesn't stammer, but he has written (in *\_Discrepant Engagement\_*? I'm away from my books now. . .) about a "creaking" " which he locates, in its modern forms, in blues, jazz. I think it relates to the stutter, and to the limp (which I now realize has been mentioned in this thread before, re: Mackey). If I recall, this "creaking" corresponds to letting in the noise behind or beneath the words, the noise from which the words arise.

The stammer, perhaps, a hesitancy before speaking which allows other sounds in, background noises brought up to awareness?

Dean

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629. **Billy Little**

**local**

Mon 25 May 1998

---

*it does not have much to teach us \_directly\_. It was local and the numbers involved were small.*

while agreeing with most of what Don said(re myth and directness etc. but here i'd have to say the cockroach and the flea (not to mention dna) are pretty local but they still have lots to teach us.

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630. **morpheal**

**Re: Megalamorial Miscelany II [Or: Beasts one and all.]**

Mon 25 May 1998

---

>that period I spent most of my time being a high-class muscle man for  
>Big Business. In short, I WAS A RACKETEER FOR CAPITALISM.  
>I suspected I was just part of a racket at the time. Now I am sure of  
>it. Like all members of the military profession I never had an original  
>thought until I left the service. My mental faculties remained in  
>suspended animation while I obeyed the orders of higher ups. This is  
>typical of everyone in the military service.

----- [deleted for brevity]

>During those years, I had, as the boys in the back room always say, a  
>swell racket. I was rewarded with honors, medals, promotions. Looking  
>back on it, I feel I might have given Al Capone a few hints. The best he  
>could do was to operate his racket in three city districts. We Marines  
>operated on three continents."---Major General Smedley Butler, author of  
>War Is a Racket, testifying before Congress in 1935

Obviously Smedley Butler was involved in anything other than intelligence.

Writing books about such subjects, when having been limited to stringent "need to know", lines of command and control, would seem to lead to a very narrow vision of one's own profession. Odd as that seems. Add to that no vision of any greater purpose than an unquestioning gaining and holding of ground. One can sense the frustrations, as to sense of purpose, but perhaps the largest contribution came from revealing that area of weakness such that it could be modified for the future and a larger sense of the purpose could be given to those who followed, up the ranks, in his footsteps. Another danger in that as to quoting what is only one man's narrowly personal, narrowly historically situated, viewpoint of a small segment of our history.

We also usually tend to overlook the positive value of those steps in social and economic evolution that came to where the program was successful. While there is a lot wrong in what happened, and in what is happening, there is also positive merit. We might do well to imagine what ways and standards of living would have been if no nation had been permitted to intervene in the manner that they did. They would thus be prevented from profiting from their intervention. If we can imagine such a world, where one country would be left purely to its own resources and means of utilizing those, with zero involvement or intervention by any other country, we imagine a world that has never existed. The fact is that some other country would have entered into involvement, and then we must speculate upon what kinds of exploitation that other power might have effected. Would they have been more generous, and less selfish, than the nation that did in fact involve itself? I would say that any other nation who would have involved would likely have been harsher, more selfish, more usurious, than what in fact happened. That might be difficult to imagine, but I think it is quite arguable based on our observations of the real world.

I would never argue that there is no grounds or need for improvement. To the contrary. However, I do say that the positive merits, and even the occasional necessities, short and long term, are habitually ignored by most who critique. That is partly because they are engaged in ideological debate.

That military action has secured a nation's interests, and its assets, abroad, beyond its borders, is an inevitable and necessary "evil" of human existence. It has been thus throughout human history and it remains thus. Of course, in most regards Canada's interests are very similar to those of the United States of America, and I cannot see that Canada would have acted any differently, in most regards, than the USA has acted, in most situations, if it had been the larger military power and the USA the lesser of the two allies. We need only to look to other instances of historical military power to understand that.

Of course there is another level of meaning. That relates to the very large personal sacrifices made by wealthy patriots, who have largely made the black budget programs that have necessarily assured military supremacy possible. Tax dollars could never have paid for it all. The taxpayers would have never withstood it. The enemy would have had a hayday turning the people against their own government. It was by patriotic donation. Black budgets often are largely by means of patriotic donation and often of incalculable worth beyond any ledger allusion to them. The rewards too, to those who participate, are ultimately not monetary, though wealth is secured in the longer term by the same means, but not only by that means. Necessarily thus. As for the ledger, in any nation, it does not reveal reality because any potential or actual hostile foe can read the ledger and gain some advantage. If that is what is meant by the



"racket" then certainly the camouflage of a legitimate business necessarily conceals the covert research, development and production of the means of assuring national and allied defence. Sometimes the best defence is to make the first move. That is particularly true where the consequences of not doing so would be disastrous to assets and/or populations.

| *"The United States does not have in the world-and does not deserve to have-more than one single friend, the United States."---Theodore Roosevelt*

Does the man at the top of the pecking order beneath him have any friends ? Yet how often everyone beneath refers to him as valued friend, as they dream of ways of overthrowing him and usurping his position. Is it any different amongst nations than it is amongst coworkers who envy every promotion and side with one another in conspiracies of their own personal greed ? Are their rumours for effect, and their secrecy for advantage any different than those of competing groups of other kinds ? I think you can derive international politics from your own personal politics, or your observations of the personal politics of others whom you know quite well.

| *"They're so corrupt its thrilling!"---Lenny Bruce on Richard Daley's Chicago Democratic machine*

Mickey Mouse.

| *"The only place to spit in a rich man's house is in his face."---Diogenes the Dog*

Not every rich man is a patriot to some larger noble cause, but many a rich man is exactly that. Then again, many people spend their whole lives conspiring to spit into, or actually spitting into, the faces of patriots whose patriotism is to some noble cause or other.

| *The white man is still troubled with primitive fears;..."---Mary Austin*

Fear can kill quite effectively. And I do not mean only to say that "fear is the mind killer". ("Dune" is an interesting novel.)

M.

aka Bob Ezergailis

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631. **ScoutEW**

***Re: the poetics of the stammer***

*Mon 25 May 1998*

---

In a message dated 5/24/98 9:53:47 PM, you wrote:

<<I recall, some reviewers read this as megalomania on his part, but I always saw it as his rejection of the stand-up-and-project mode. It was thrilling: how cle>>

In the autobiography, Miles Davis has said that he was deliberately rejecting the symbol of the grinning negro that musicians such as Louis Armstrong represented to especially white audiences. In this decade where everything is upfront, everyone including mad amounts of poets want "star" status and will stop at nothing to attain it, it is nice to think about Miles Davis, who by the way obviously had an enourmous amount of influence on poetry in general, lay back and do his thing without kissing ass. It is sad that so many people would look at Davis's act as some projection of ego or whatnot, what he was doing was creating his art on his own terms, a concept this is absent, in an age of buying and selling images and ideas and "community"

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632. **Taylor Brady**

**Re: Partch**

Mon 25 May 1998

---

joel lewis wrote:

*There is a great New World recording of partch performing his music, especially his settings of Li Po's poetry from late 40's. Partch's journals have been publsihed, as well as his "Genesis of a Music", his major theoretical work.*

The Li Po lyrics are also available on a wonderful recent recording, 17 Lyrics of Li Po, on John Zorn's Tzadik label. Stephen Kalm -- I believe he's performed from time to time with Meredith Monk's ensemble? -- is the intoning voice, and Ted Mook plays the modified tenor violin.

-----  
Taylor Brady  
editor, Cartograffiti  
<http://writing.upenn.edu/spc/cartograffiti>  
(a publication of the Small Press Collective)  
<http://writing.upenn.edu/spc>

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&nbsp;

<P>joel lewis wrote:

<BLOCKQUOTE TYPE=CITE>There is a great New World recording of partch performing

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&nbsp;

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<P>

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<P>Taylor Brady

<BR>editor, <I>Cartograffiti</I>

<BR>&nbsp;<A

HREF="http://writing.upenn.edu/spc/cartograffiti">http://writing.upenn.edu/spc/cartograffiti</A>

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633. **R. Gancie**

***Fredrick Winslow Taylor meets Wittgenstein & Adorno***

*Mon 25 May 1998*

"The task before us, then, narrowed itself down to getting Schmidt to handle 47 tons of pig iron per day AND MAKING HIM GLAD TO DO IT. This was done as follows. Schmidt was called out from among the gang of pig-iron handlers and talked to somewhat in this way: "Schmidt, are you a high-priced man?" "Vell, I don't know vat you mean." "Oh yes, you do. What I want to know is whether you are a high-priced man or not." "Vell, I don't know vat you mean." "Oh, come on now, you answer my questions. What I want to find out is whether you are a

high priced man or one of these cheap fellows here. What I want to find out is whether you want to earn \$1.85 a day or whether you are satisfied with \$1.15, just the same as those cheap fellows are getting." "Did I want \$1.85 a day? Was I a high priced man? Well, yes, I was a high-priced man." "Oh, you're aggravating me. OF COURSE YOU WANT \$1.85 A DAY-EVERY ONE WANTS IT! You know perfectly well that that has very little to do with you're being a high-priced man. For goodness sake answer my questions, and don't waste any more of my time. Now come over here. You see that pile of pig iron?" "Yes." "You see that car?" "Yes." "Well if you are a high-priced man, you will load that pig-iron on that car tomorrow for \$1.85. Now do wake up and answer my question. Tell me whether you are a high-priced man or not." "Well-did I get \$1.85 for loading that pig iron on that car to-morrow?" "Yes, of course you do, and you get a \$1.85 for loading a pile like that every day right through the year. THAT IS WHAT A HIGH-PRICED MAN DOES, and you know it just as well as I do." "Well, that's all right. I could load that pig iron on the car to-morrow for \$1.85, and I get it every day, don't I?" "Certainly you do-certainly you do." "Well then, I was a high-priced man." "Now, hold on, hold on. You know just as well as I do that a high-priced man has to do exactly as he's told from morning till night. You have seen this man here before, haven't you?" "No, I never saw him." "Well, if you are a high-priced man, you will do exactly as this man tells you to-morrow, from morning till night. When he tells you to pick up a pig and walk, you pick it up and walk, and when he tells you to sit down and rest, you sit down. You do that straight through the day. And what's more, no back talk. NOW A HIGH-PRICED MAN DOES JUST WHAT HE'S TOLD TO DO, NO BACK TALK. Do you understand that? When this man tells you to walk, you walk; when he tells you to sit down, you sit down, and you don't talk back at him. Now you come back on to work here to-morrow morning and I'll know before night whether you are really a high-priced man or not."---from *Scientific Management* by Frederick Winslow Taylor --- "Seeing a living human being as an automaton is analogous to seeing one figure as a limiting case or variant of another; the cross-pieces of a window as a swastika, for example."---Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* --- "The transcendental reduction; the exemplary index of scientific geometry; the intention of objectivity; the immutability of our classification secured by our subsequent behavior. Coherence becomes the precondition for truth, the illusion of unity. The movements that machines demand...already have the violent, hardhitting, unresting, jerkiness of Fascist maltreatment."---Theodor Adorno---cp

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634. **Billy Little**

**Re: the poetics of the stammer**

Mon 25 May 1998

---

and again, of course, scat): which brings up forgetting as perhaps the fourth impetus for the stutter,i.e., trying to get a word in edgewise with Grossinger or Duncan it might take an hour and then when you get the opening all you can do is sputter, also see Ella's first recording of Mac the Knife.

isn't belitt the one who distorted Lorca's work by obscuring or worse the homosexual references?

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635. **Billy Little**

**Re: Megalamorial Miscelany II [Or: Beasts one and all.]**

Mon 25 May 1998

---

>

>Not every rich man is a patriot to some larger noble cause, but many a rich

>man is exactly that. Then again, many people spend their whole lives

>conspiring to spit into, or actually spitting into, the faces of patriots

>whose patriotism is to some noble cause or other.

>

are you an alumnus of georgetown university or the allen institute in montreal?

patriotism you may remember from freshman english is the last refuge of scoundrels.

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636. **morpheal**

**Re: Megalamorial Miscelany II [Or: Beasts one and all.]**

Mon 25 May 1998

---

| are you an alumnus of georgetown university or the allen institute in montreal?

No. Though perhaps that was a rhetorical question. I was not that fortunate.

| patriotism you may remember from freshman english is the last refuge of scoundrels.

I presume that you must have some other loyalties. Perhaps that is a loyalty to the preservation of your own life and manner of existence. So, perhaps there is that in common among most, and all that then remains to be said on that score is: welcome to life, liberty and perhaps some manner of the pursuit of happiness, in the last days of the 20th century. I often have reason to question

the pursuit of happiness part, or debate the nature of liberty, but the preservation of lives is beyond question.

We can also be quite assured that the first days of the 21st century shall inaugurate a century that shall remain free of the constant terror represented by "duck and cover" drills. Remember those ?

M.

aka Bob Ezergailis

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### 637. **MAYHEW**

***Lorca***

*Mon 25 May 1998*

---

Billy asked:

"isn't belitt the one who distorted Lorca's work by obscuring or worse the homosexual references?"

He was ONE of the ones who did this. There is a line from "ode to Walt Whitman" that Belitt renders "who loves mankind" instead of "who loves man," changing homoerotic desire to vaguest philanthropy.

Jonathan Mayhew



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### 638. **Henry G**

***Re: Chaos and poetry***

*Mon 25 May 1998*

---

Dean, that was a very discerning reading of Hayles' book! You've discovered her limit, it looks like! Doesn't chaos theory find order even in the most minute, inchoate impressions? So the most delicate readings of reality would be at that submicroscopic discarded (poetry) level. Chas. Olson might be the place to start, at least looking for quotes. He always aimed for the most local, the most obscure, the most ignored, the... because MAXIMUS was so minimal... "so few"... - Henry G.

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639. **Susan Wheeler**

***Re: the poetics of the stammer***

Mon 25 May 1998

---

>isn't belitt the one who distorted Lorca's work by obscuring or worse the  
>homosexual references?

>

That's his rep but a firsthand look is recommended.

>

Susan Wheeler

██████████

voice/fax ██████████

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640. **Don Byrd**

***Re: the poetics of the stammer***

Mon 25 May 1998

---

I've told this story before, but I think not on the list. Once, when Duncan came to visit, he was on one of his talking jags. He arrived, I made coffee, we drank the coffee, etc. Robert kept talking. Finally he said, "I am trying to ask you, and if I can stop talking long enough for you to answer...."

(And incidentally, some times, for Robert, it was a stutter, of the kind I mentioned in a previous post--needing to say several things at once; some times, it was a way to keep the floor, so the flow would not be interrupted.)

Don

Billy Little wrote:

*and again, of course, scat): which brings up forgetting as perhaps the fourth impetus for the stutter,i.e., trying to get a word in edgewise with Grossinger or Duncan it might take an hour and then when you get the opening all you can do is sputter, also see Ella's first recording of Mac the Knife.*

*isn't belitt the one who distorted Lorca's work by obscuring or worse the homosexual references?*

--

\*\*\*\*\*

Don Byrd (██████, ██████)

Department of English

State University of New York

Albany, NY 12222

██████████ (work); ██████████ (home); ██████████ (fax)

The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)

\*\*\*\*\*

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641. **Dean Taciuch**

***Re: Chaos and poetry***

*Mon 25 May 1998*

---

On Mon, 25 May 1998, Henry G wrote:

> Dean, that was a very discerning reading of Hayles' book! You've discovered  
> her limit, it looks like! Doesn't chaos theory find order even in the most  
> minute, inchoate impressions? So the most delicate readings of reality would  
> be at that submicroscopic discarded (poetry) level. Chas. Olson might be  
> the place to start, at least looking for quotes. He always aimed for the  
> most local, the most obscure, the most ignored, the... because MAXIMUS  
was  
> so minimal... "so few"... - Henry G.  
>

Thanks. Hayles' in fact sees two schools of chaos theory. One, found in  
Gleick's *\_Chaos\_* book, she calls the "strange attractor" branch--it finds  
patterns of order in the chaotic structures themselves.

The other branch, the "order out of chaos" branch, is more philosophically  
oriented. The major proponent on that "side" is Ilya Prigogine, whose book  
*\_Order out of Chaos\_* focuses on the emergence of order from chaotic systems,  
rather than the order implicit in the deep structure. Prigogine is much harder  
going for me than Gleick, but the focus in P is on irreversibility, determinism,  
and such--philosophically richer.

Olson, yes, he deploys these same notions, interestingly. My own interests now  
are more along the William C Williams line--his sense of nature in "Spring and  
All," for example, fits well with the idea of emergent order arising from  
disorder.

But what I am really after are contemporary uses of these ideas. Hayles locates  
them very well in fiction (Borges, some Pynchon, a whole chapter on Doris  
Lessing; no Burroughs, oddly enough). But no poetry. Ashbery would've  
illustrated several of her ideas very well. For example, her sense that  
Postmodern writers have an ambiguous relationship to chaos and the ever-  
increasing amount of information such systems generate. Well, that can be  
found in most of Ashbery's books--several poems come to mind ("Soonest  
Mended," with its line about "loose meaning" for example).



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642. **toddbaron**  
**Re: Laura Moriarty**  
*Mon 25 May 1998*

---

Bobbie West:

I have her address--but--also have tried to (e-mail) get her and --to no avail--if you want her address--ask..

Todd Baron  
ReMap

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643. **toddbaron**  
**Re: the poetics of the stammer**  
*Mon 25 May 1998*

---

of course--Eigner might be a "stutter"  
of the page--as trying to locate the words--and the keys--and the  
phrases--

but the notion that we don't ALL stutter  
seems odd--to me--as Robert Creeley's

Drive, he sd

or anything of the Creeley / Olson dialogues  
or--for that matter--Duncan, himself--  
as if a stammer were not a thot?

Tb  
ReMap

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644. **Matt Kirschenbaum**  
**Re: Chaos and poetry**  
*Mon 25 May 1998*

---

*But what I am really after are contemporary uses of these ideas. Hayles  
locates them very well in fiction (Borges, some Pynchon, a whole  
chapter on Doris Lessing; no Burroughs, oddly enough). But no poetry.*

There's a piece by Tan Lin on Michael Palmer's writing in the *\_Poetics of  
Criticism\_* volume (ed. Spahr et al.) that's loosely oriented around fractal  
geometry. Matt

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645. **Karen Kelley**

**Re: the poetics of the stammer**

Mon 25 May 1998

It's sad: any black performer rejecting the symbol of the grinning negro/creating art on his own terms would be perceived as too big for his pants. Miles was cool, though, and no one could deny that.

ScoutEW wrote:

*In a message dated 5/24/98 9:53:47 PM, you wrote:*

*<<I recall, some reviewers read this as megalomania on his part, but I always saw it as his rejection of the stand-up-and-project mode. It was thrilling: how cle>>*

*In the autobiography, Miles Davis has said that he was deliberately rejecting the symbol of the grinning negro that musicians such as Louis Armstrong represented to especially white audiences. In this decade where everything is upfront, everyone including mad amounts of poets want "star" status and will stop at nothing to attain it, it is nice to think about Miles Davis, who by the way obviously had an enormous amount of influence on poetry in general, lay back and do his thing without kissing ass.*

*It is sad that so many people would look at Davis's act as some projection of ego or whatnot, what he was doing was creating his art on his own terms, a concept this is absent, in an age of buying and selling images and ideas and "community"*

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646. **morpheal**

**Re: F.W.Taylor v. Wittgenstein & Adorno [philosophical incentives]**

Mon 25 May 1998

*you don't talk back at him. Now you come back on to work here to-morrow morning and I'll know before night whether you are really a high-priced man or not."---from Scientific Management by Frederick Winslow Taylor*

And so the incentive system was begun. It has been scientifically proven that giving chocolate bars to workers as an incentive for producing tonnage is at least as effective, and often results in the breaking of production records. Think of how much more effective certain kinds of stimulation of the human central nervous system, the pleasure centers, might prove in terms of gaining the desired results of longer hours, and more work, for less pay.

We have to recall the scientific fact that chocolate works on brain chemistry, and so we might have a basis as to why chocolate works better than money in some instances. So we then can better understand why remote CNS stimulation would work even better than that, in more people.

Of course the modern warrior must be more immunized than ever before to being influenced by either pain or pleasure stimulæ, including remote stimulæ. Only in that way can the modern warrior remain an effective asset. Whether such immunization can be adequately achieved without doing irreparable damage to the warrior's more normative functioning, remains to be fully understood. The experiments would not only be necessary, but interesting, as they would reveal a lot about human resiliency and abilities to adapt and function in new extremes of environment, including the future's electromagnetic plus psychological warfare battlefields. Any reasonably sophisticated enemy, will inevitably use EMR and psychological warfare weaponry in addition to other conventional and non conventional means.

Some feel that we can be ready for those new waves of challenge, or we might choose to throw poetry barrages at enemy troops.....Perhaps we need a balance of both, to preserve our humanity more fully. I wonder if there are any career soldiers who write poetry. I cannot think of any, but perhaps there are some.

*"Seeing a living human being as an automaton is analogous to seeing one figure as a limiting case or variant of another; the cross-pieces of a window as a swastika, for example."---Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations*

It is commonplace for the true believers in an extremist ideology, as a group, to hold a belief that other human beings are no longer human. The demarcation line between us and them is thus more clearly drawn. In fact this is a characteristic of totalitarianism. Even those who are being made into members of the group of true believers must first experience what it is like to no longer be a human being as part of their indoctrination.

This is also true for prisoners of war. It is one of the methods used to break them. Of course, those troops with access to any sensitive intelligence must be trained to withstand that same dehumanization. Extremes of hazing, centering out, and fragging, are one often criticized, but very effective training tool that helps train special forces personnel. It also trains intelligence workers.

It is a curious fact that there is at least one extremist group, claiming Christian affiliation, within North America, that appears to hold the view that they are the true humans and all those who are non members of that affiliation will be reduced to zombies. The same distinction between an in group of true believers and outsiders, where the outsiders are perceived as less than truly human. Of course there are always extremist groups of various kinds within any non

totalitarian, non totalist, nation. The safeguards exist to prevent their ever assuming sufficient power to actualize their agendas.

*"The transcendental reduction; the exemplary index of scientific geometry; the intention of objectivity; the immutability of our classification secured by our subsequent behavior. Coherence becomes the precondition for truth, the illusion of unity. The movements that machines demand...already have the violent, hardhitting, unresting, jerkiness of Fascist maltreatment."---Theodor Adorno---cp*

To know thyself adequately for the purpose of discerning one's own mind from other minds, requires knowing what is subjective and what is objective. It is more complicated than it seems, and a very rare skill, but it is essential to any instance of a truly effective observer.

Coherence is, of course, not a condition of truth. Apparent coherence can be the height of illusion.

As for the mechanisms, traditional technology was meant to work materials into new forms, for new uses, grossly by means of violence. Future technologies will work on materials in new ways, that emphasize the rearrangement of the basic "building blocks" of the physical matter that is being worked. Thus we arrive at the new alchemy. A nanotech of transmutations that might know no real limits, other than how far our science has progressed at any given time.

Morpheal

aka Bob Ezergailis

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647. **charles alexander**

***new nichol site***

*Tue 26 May 1998*

---

For Gary Sullivan and others who are interested, selections from bp Nichol's Art Facts: A Book of Contexts, are up on web pages which are a cooperative publication of Chax Press and Light and Dust Mobile Anthology of Poetry, and the site is located at <http://www.thing.net/~grist/l&d/bpnichol/bp-af.htm>

If you go to the contents page of the Light & Dust Poets site, at <http://www.thing.net/~grist/l&d/lighthom.htm> and scroll down to the Nichol entries, you will find there are several other Nichol pages there for you to see.

charles

charles alexander :: poet and book artist :: 

chax press :: alexander writing/design/publishing

NOTE NEW URL FOR CHAX PRESS <http://alexwritdespub.com/chax>

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648. **Mark Prejsnar**

***Re: Spicer in Lingua Franca***

*Tue 26 May 1998*

---

Actually, this article is quite fascinating....

It declares that Spicer has had virtually no influence since his death. The author of the article believes that these new books are rescuing an obscure and forgotten figure from obscurity...

Folks should read this article for some sense of the unimaginable void between most of academe and what's happening among poets...

Breath-taking...

m.

On Sat, 23 May 1998, KENT JOHNSON wrote:

*Has this been mentioned? A substantial article on Jack Spicer appears in the new Lingua Franca ("Radiohead," by John Palatella, May/June). Very nicely done and with commentary on Gizzi's edition of the lectures and \_Poet Be Like God\_ by Killian and Ellingham.*

*Sorry if I'm reporting old news, but wanted to make sure this was known.*

*Kent*

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649. **DANIEL L. COLLIER**

***Re: a stutter to the Russians***

*Tue 26 May 1998*

---

Kent,

Lucy and I interviewed Prigov (informally) a few months back. I'll try to scrape some bits of the interview onto the list within the next few weeks. If you're interested, I can scan photos of him standing in front of a wall of wonderful charcoal drawings of his friends and fellow writers as demons. He is a visual artist who earned his living during Soviet times doing sculpture for children's playgrounds & such, and his house is full of wondrous objects d'texte.

At least one book-length translation of Prigov's stuff exists (he showed it to us) but it's not very good. (He said he can't judge the English writing, so he just agrees to the translations if he likes the person.) A Penguin "New Russian

Writing" anthology (don't have it in front of me) contains good translations of one Prigov piece and of one Rubenstein piece. The book's presentation of Rubenstein is a bit misleading; they give his "story" as a numbered list, whereas in his books the numbered story bits are separated by dotted lines & meant to be cut into cards and spread across the floor, shuffled, scrambled, etc.

If anyone knows of any decent translations (published or ongoing) of Prigov or Rubenstein, please let me know.

Both are wonderful poets & people, by the way. After one meeting, Prigov acted like he was our dad (in the pleasant way only someone who's not your actual father can do) and Rubenstein's a tiny, skinny, grinning guy. I met him after a reading when he interrupted a discussion of some guy named Porter to observe: "Porter? Eto pivo." Truly a genius.

Prigov will be out of the country until sometime in August... England, I think. I'll backchannel his phone number to you as soon as I remember to bring it in.

Danny

██████████ or ██████████

\*\*\*\*\*

Date: Fri, 22 May 1998 23:22:25 -0500

From: KENT JOHNSON

<██████████>

Subject: A stutter to the Russians

One of the great "stutterers" in contemporary poetry is Dmitri Prigov. One example of his genius use of the stutter can be found in "49th Alphabet Poem," translated by Gerald Janecek and included in *\_Third Wave: The New Russian Poetry\_*. But to get the full effect, of course, one has to witness Prigov in performance (and he is surely one of the great living readers, too). About five years ago, PBS ran a documentary on the Western market-explosion for post-Soviet art, and the film included a segment of Prigov reading one of his "Alphabet" (I believe) poems. Allen Ginsberg stood beside him, mouth open, as Prigov stuttered and spat Cyrillic syllables into the microphone, eyes rolling in as if he were in seizure. When he was done, Ginsberg leaned into the microphone and said B-B-B-Bravo!.

I've lost contact with Prigov in the past few years, and I'd be interested in finding out if anyone is currently translating his work. I know that Lyn Hejinian and Elena Balashova were doing some translations at one time. It's certainly a shame (unless I've completely missed it) that there isn't yet a book of his writing in English.

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650. **Michael Magee**

***Re: the poetics of the stammer***

*Tue 26 May 1998*

---

For those interested in this jazz/stuttering vein, I'd mention Monk, stuyterer extraordinaire, and more specifically Nate Mackey's work where Monk and Creeley are implicitly compared along these lines. with the suggestion that the stutter is an admission of the obduracy of experience, and that this admission is "the gesture that opens the field" in their work. Good stuff. -m.

According to Stephen Cope: >

> Since Miles Davis has been brought up, I might mention (if it hasn't been  
> already), that some of the more significant stuttering poetries that have  
> been produced in this century derive much from jazz phrasings (and of  
> course, jazz rhythms, and again, of course, scat). Creeley, for instance,  
> has located the genesis of his own phrasing in his early fascination with  
> Charlie Parker. Similarly, if one reads the Olson/Creeley correspondence,  
> one finds Creeley often beseeching Olson to listen to Parker's music, and it  
> seems fairly certain that "Projective Verse" was written with at least a  
> little Parker in mind. This, in any case, might put a different spin on the  
> sense of the term "projective" as it's being discussed here...

>

> Stephen

>

>

> >> i heart this thread. i was captivated by something similar, which in my  
> >> mind i called (and in print a coupla times too) "counterperformance,"  
> >> namely the exact opposite of what they teach you about "projection,"  
> >> clarity, dramatic enactment etc. for me it was sparked by seeing Bob  
> >> Kaufman read in 1981, barely audible, clearly just trying to "get through  
> >> it," but affecting nonetheless. also heard an anecdote from walter lew  
> >> about going to hear r.d.laing once, and laing sat and mumbled on stage

so

> >> incoherently that eveyrone left except (as i recall the tale) walter. i  
> >> had a dream once where something similar happend w/ artaud. and this  
paper

> >> i've alluded to once or twice by bruce boone on john wieners seems to get  
> >> at the same kind of thing. since i'm trying to write abt wieners right now  
> >> (w/o ever having heard him read) this is all very helpful. --md

> >

> > One of the best performances I ever saw was Miles Davis at the Music Hall  
in

> > Boston. He had on a gold lame jacket with tails, and a brilliant red

> >trumpet, and  
> >he wandered kind of aimlessly about the stage while the band played, and  
> >when it  
> >was his turn he'd stop wherever he was and with his back to the audience  
> >play. As  
> >I recall, some reviewers read this as megalomania on his part, but I always  
saw  
> >it as his rejection of the stand-up-and-project mode. It was thrilling:  
> >how clear  
> >his trumpet's voice was, and how little of "him" was there. Well, except  
> >for the  
> >gold lame coat.  
>

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651. **Stephen Cope**

***Re: the poetics of the stammer***

*Tue 26 May 1998*

---

Dean et al:

Yes, "the creaking of the word" (from Dogon mythology) is central to Mackey, as is Legba's limp (from Voudun), and in DISCREPANT ENGAGEMENT he uses both to come to terms with black music, but also with Wilson Harris, WCW, Creeley, others (including himself). But this has, of course, been rehearsed here before...

On Science/Poetics: Fernand Halley's THE POETIC STRUCTURE OF THE WORLD, although it doesn't consider poetry *\_per se\_*, does deal interestingly with the question of *\_poesis\_* in science and cosmology, and would seem one place to go if one were pursuing a link between the two (when, for instance, did the two branches of thought suffer the decisive break from one another that still lingers today?) But that's not strictly chaos theory either.

Applying Prigogine's theories to Williams seems appropriate (although I must admit I've not yet entirely understood Prigogine's books, and have only really glossed them). It's amazing, tho, how much noise there is in Paterson - aural and semantic. And his sense of the falls as muse in P. would also seem to "fit well with the idea of emergent order arising from disorder." (This is of course a trope with a large and troubled history, dating back to Hesiod and his irritably duplicitous muses. "Chaos was born first and after her came Gaia...", or so the narrative goes.)

Stephen



ps - By way of connecting the two threads mentioned above: I've been writing a bit around the use of the term "quantum-qualitative" in Mackey's prose works (Djbot Baghostus's Run, really), which term obviously harkens back to Heisenbergian uncertainty and the ramifications thereof. Might be interesting to see what his work would look like read through Hayles' or Prigogine's lens...

*I've been loosely following this thread, but I don't think Nathaniel Mackey has been discussed much. He doesn't stammer, but he has written (in *Discrepant Engagement* ? I'm away from my books now. . .) about a "creaking" " which he locates, in its modern forms, in blues, jazz. I think it relates to the stutter, and to the limp (which I now realize has been mentioned in this thread before, re: Mackey). If I recall, this "creaking" corresponds to letting in the noise behind or beneath the words, the noise from which the words arise.*

*The stammer, perhaps, a hesitancy before speaking which allows other sounds in, background noises brought up to awareness?*

Dean

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## 652. **ken|n|ing** ***synaesthetics***

Tue 26 May 1998

I'm looking for examples of "synaesthetic" writing, whatever that might entail, from Faulkner's Benjy to \_\_\_\_\_ . . . Poems or analysis on this psychological mishap, suggestions? Back-chan., please. Thanks -- Patrick F. Durgin

ken n i n g  
a newsletter of contemporary |poetry, poetics, and non-fiction writing  
|418 Brown St. #10 Iowa City, IA 52245 USA

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## 653. **AERIALEDGE** ***Re: the poetics of the stammer***

Tue 26 May 1998

terrific essay by Deleuze on this subject: "He Stuttered" in *Essays critical and clinical* . also of interest there an essay on seriality & exhaustion re, mostly, Beckett, & an essay on Whitman & the fragment.

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654. **R. Gancie**  
***deeply we enquire***  
Tue 26 May 1998

---

"In the world of sense, however deeply we enquire into its objects, we have to do with nothing but appearances."---from The Critique of Pure Reason by Immanuel Kant

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655. **Christina Fairbank Chirot**  
***Re: stuttering, stammering***  
Tue 26 May 1998

---

Susan Howe has pointed out that Olson remarked of Billy Budd--"the stutter is the plot" . . .

Henry James was a well known stammerer--(imagine dictating the later books to a typist--with a stammer--yet maintaining the sweep of those majesterial clauses and phrasings--and then hearing them come back as the sounds of the typewriter--kind of shades of Olson's Projective verse typewritten compositions??)-- yet Edith Wharton noted in a memoir that James when reciting Whitman (his favorite poet) did not stammer-- so much for the "barbaric yawp"! --dave baptiste chirot

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656. **Christina Fairbank Chirot**  
***Re: A stutter to the Russians***  
Tue 26 May 1998

---

and why not in the anthology have Rea Nikonovna & Serge Segay?  
-dbc

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657. **William Burmeister Prod**  
***Re: Lorca***  
Tue 26 May 1998

---

Belitt's translations of some of Jorge Guillen's Canticos poems left a lot to be desired too if I remember correctly.

William

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658. **Alan Myouka Sondheim**

***a poem***

*Tue 26 May 1998*

---

-

Nikuko draws a thread around her arm, just below  
The elbow, it's thin, red, it's a division, it's a line.  
The leg is marked as well, left arm and leg right,  
Staggered dashes that would be parallel and posed.  
They are slightly taut, so that the skin swells, lunar,  
Around the moon of her taut body, and if kimono  
Were wrapped and opened like silk and doubled boxes,  
Near sleeves of flowers, like her arm or body.  
Between the the threads, a golden twine connects  
Clearly to an Alan placed in front of her.  
There are flowers, pistils, stamens, across him.  
There are stems, thorns, roots and leaves, across him.  
The twine is there on or in the Alan.  
A breeze strokes the tsuchi sign for earth,  
A whisper moves the kire sign for cloth,  
Speech appears, the sign of fire, threads its golden  
Way across both bone and skin, the sky on fire,  
Kimono shuttled on the earth, the cloth on fire,  
Threaded Nikuko has closed her eyes, her neck exposed.

---

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659. **morpheal**

***Re: bytes & rights***

*Tue 26 May 1998*

---

*As one last aside, Tipler's statement is almost teleological in the way  
it argues a straight line of improvement past to future.*

I missed that particular point.

Definitely false. Tipler, and some other scientists, definitely do not argue that.  
They argue for a new teleology that incorporates feedback loops from future to  
past as well as normative causalities past to future.

Sarfatti discusses this as "back reaction" on his www pages. Tipler has also  
written on similar subject matter, including CTLs (closed temporal loops).

Some intelligences might be more sensitive to feedback from the future than others. For instance this might explain Leonardo Da Vinci's prodigious inventions, lacking the materials but incorporating designs we are familiar with in this century. Jules Vernes uncanny prophecies, similarly. Or even some of H.G.Wells prognostications. We might even see the mythos of the Atlanteans as the Atlanteans of our future, rather than our past (where archeology has in effect failed to find them), manipulating the fabric of human historical evolution, so that our Atlantean successors can save themselves from their destruction. And what of Socrates Daemon giving Socrates his insights the way the Great Gazoo gave insights to Fred Flintstone.... Perhaps it is the distant future whispering in Socrate's long ago ear ? Perhaps some of the shadows of electromagnetic artifact from the future becomes a part of the cultures of the past, shaping them, though also mostly by pure chance, and being the cause of many worlds bifurcations of accelerated cultural evolutions ? There are indications that that might be happening. That our electromagnetic garbage might in fact be throwing its wash into the wake of the past, as the prow of our ship continues at the crest of our temporal wave. Does that mean that we must be more cautious about our electromagnetic output ? Perhaps.

That definitely complicates any simple minded traditional teleology.

I like Micheal Moorecock's playful science fiction interpretations best, as presented in "The Cornelius Chronicles". There, the "many worlds" and temporal loops take the form of a fictional narrative, and you must note what years the rock musician, PhD in physics, wrote the original trilogy.

M.

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660. **Christopher W. Alexander**  
*miles aside*

*Tue 26 May 1998*

---

¶ btw, for those of you who haven't heard it, the newly remastered Kind of Blue is just unbelievable, definitely not one of those repackage-jobs. The tone is so much clearer now, and the alternate take of Flamenco Sketches is so worth it...

chris

..

Christopher W. Alexander etc. / nominative press collective

email: [REDACTED]

snail-mail: P.O. Box 522402 / Salt Lake City UT 84152-2402

press/zine site: <http://choengmon.lib.utah.edu/~calexand/nonce/>

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661. **ScoutEW**

***Re: a poem***

*Tue 26 May 1998*

---

In a message dated 5/26/98 4:18:16 PM, you wrote:

Jordan draws some blood thread from her arm, just below  
The waist, it's thin, blue, it's a dinosaur egg, it's edible.  
The ladies love me well well, he left arms and egg right,  
Stag party red dishes that would be and rooster mechanics  
hey are you slightly tinted?, so that the skin wells lunar=luxeries,  
Around the back of the and rice shampoos, and if kim on  
re-wrapped and penned like milk and deviled foxes,  
Hear sneezes of flowers, parking tickets reign.  
Between "Red Sheds," a golden lion yawns  
"They are too many songs comparing flowers to sex."  
(and everyone forgets the bumblebees), humblebees  
There are flowers, pistols, hymens, across him.  
There are stains inside him (bulletboys)  
The swine is here eating Alan.  
A lazy strokes its sign for earth,  
A whisper moves across Athens for cloth,  
A peach appears, he signs of tires, threads his golden  
way instead of both bone and skin, the man is on fire,  
dan shuttled the earth in self,  
has closed h eyes, her ck exposed.

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662. **Alan Myouka Sondheim**

***Re: a poem***

*Tue 26 May 1998*

---

On Tue, 26 May 1998, ScoutEW wrote:

> In a message dated 5/26/98 4:18:16 PM, you wrote:

>

> Jordan draws some blood thread from her arm, just below  
Where angels, fools, and I myself sometimes refuse to go.

> The waist, it's thin, blue, it's a dinosaur egg, it's edible.

But though unmarried, one might add, its really quite unweddable.  
> The ladies love me well well, he left arms and egg right,  
On his way back from hell, thinking of his marriage night.  
> Stag party red dishes that would be and rooster mechanics  
Made would-be spouse Nikuko dream of various heads and dicks.  
> hey are you slightly tinted?, so that the skin wells lunar=luxeries,  
Still on the marriage theme, he lost his way uxorious.  
> Around the back of the and rice shampoos, and if kim on  
She knew he hated sex, in fact, and didn't have a rim on.  
> re-wrapped and penned like milk and deviled foxes,  
A birthmark on both your threads, the devil has his poxes.  
> Hear sneezes of flowers, parking tickets reign.  
While Alan through Nikuko takes on unending pain.  
> Between "Red Sheds," a golden lion yawns  
While Nikuko through Alan, labors, loves, and fawns.  
> "They are too many songs comparing flowers to sex."  
Or sex to flowers, golden showers, Nikuko throws her hex  
> (and everyone forgets the bumblebees), humblebees  
Not Alan, though, stung by her charm, he's down upon her knees.  
> There are flowers, pistols, hymens, across him.  
There's something stuck to his ugly quim.  
> There are stains inside him (bulletboys)  
More stains outside, her violent toys.  
> The swine is here eating Alan.  
Of which the blood's not worth a gallon  
> A lazy strokes its sign for earth,  
Nikuko's finally giving birth.  
> A whisper moves across Athens for cloth,  
Carried in the mouth of the all-devouring moth  
> A peach appears,he signs of tires, threads his golden  
Ire on both their houses, spouses, now that the mold's on,  
> way instead of both bone and skin, the man is on fire,  
Nikuko's killed him off in truth, Alan was a liar.  
> dan shuttled the earth in self,  
Nikuko wove out of herself a newer, molten self  
> has closed h eyes, her ck exposed.  
Alan's half-formed, Nikuko, vomiting, supposed.  
>

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663. **Charles Bernstein**  
***Close Listening & for less***  
*Tue 26 May 1998*

---

I am pleased to announce a price reduction for *Close Listening: Poetry and the Performed Word*. The paper edition of *Close Listening* has now been priced by the publisher at \$19.95, less than the price originally listed on the notice I sent to the list.

*Close Listening: Poetry and the Performed Word*  
Edited by CHARLES BERNSTEIN

*Close Listening* brings together seventeen essays, especially written for this volume, on the poetry reading, the sounds of poetry, and the visual performance of poetry.

Oxford University Press  
368 pp., 22 linecuts  
\$19.95, paper, 0-19-510992-9

Contributors: Susan Stewart, Nick Piombino, Bruce Andrews, Marjorie Perloff, Susan Howe, Johanna Drucker, Steve McCaffery, Dennis Tedlock, Bob Perelman, Peter Quartermain. Jed Rasula, Peter Middleton, Lorenzo Thomas, Maria Damon, Susan Schultz, Ron Silliman, and Charles Bernstein

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664. **louis stroffolino**  
***Re: Byrd's reply 2 Alex and droffolino's quest***  
*Wed 27 May 1998*

---

Don--thanks for thoughts on PER-MISSION....  
so, I'm reading the latest LUNGFULL magazine and finding note  
from ANSELM BERRIGAN on his poem therein included:  
"the poem is an attempt to figure out what might be "permitted"  
to do in 1998, & how not to do that & therefore continue  
(& not intended as a slag on R. Duncan, by the way, but a  
use of his half-line as extension into a field that requires  
some clearing"-----  
(the line by the way is "often i am permitted/ to blow my  
brains out") Now, this may be one of the ways it's possible  
"to draw back from the representations of the Gods to the  
attentions that worshipped them"----  
although perhaps to someone in their 50s this may seem  
too "adolescent", but considering that 1998 may be EVEN  
MORE REPRESSIVE and TOTALITARIAN than 1950s was, maybe

"adolescent" emotions need to be valorized, or at least  
cathartically, in poetry (so it can still serve some kind  
of safety valve function for suicide urges....)....  
and so I also therefore give permission to Steven ROdefer  
to Heckle Ondaadje (sp?)  
and give Ondaadje permission to donate proceeds to the KSW!  
and maybe somebody will give me permission to indulge my  
LOGORRHEA as Duncan's was indulged.....  
chris

On Fri, 22 May 1998, Don Byrd wrote:

*charles alexander wrote: -- the obvious thing to do is*

*to take things from southwestern/Sonora desert indigenous peoples, relating  
to living well with the earth here. We may do some of that. But I also want  
to do some non-obvious things. I already have a bunch of potential  
selections from poetry & art (some wonderful things from Eva Hesse) -- but  
if anyone can suggest other possibilities, I'll be forever grateful.*

*Gravelly hill was 'the source and end (or boundary)' of  
D'Town on the way that leads from the town to Smallmans  
now Dwelling house, the Lower  
Road gravelly, how the hill was, not the modern useableness  
of any thing but leaving it as an adverb as though Earth herself  
was active, she had her own characteristics, she could  
stick her head up out of the earth at a spot  
and say, to Athena I'm stuck here, all I can show  
is my head but please, do something about  
this person I am putting up out of the ground into your hands.*

*--"at the boundary of the mighty world," \_Maximus\_, p. 330)*

*And Chris asks why we do not have O'Hara's permission. Why do we not have  
Olson's? to call, as creatures of earth, on Athena herself? Or Duncan's  
permission to return to the meadow where we hear everlasting rumors of What Is?  
or H.D.'s (thinking of Bowering's recent post).*

*It is a real problem. Mythology has been bought up by New Age  
commercialism, and, to a certain extent, even the environmental movement has  
been colored by it. I am glad to hear, Charles, that you are trying not to draw  
too much on the indigenous people. As much as one admires their culture, it  
does not have much to teach us \_directly\_. It was local and the numbers  
involved were small. We are now five billion (and growing) on a small earth and  
all subject to the same market.*



*Is it possible to draw attention back from the representations of the gods to the attentions that worshipped them? Something of this order would seem to be task. The images of mythic beings are altogether too conveniently available (mindlessly) in video games. What are the rhythms and movement of spirit that correspond to what might once have been available through those images?*

Don

--

\*\*\*\*\*

Don Byrd ([REDACTED], [REDACTED])

Department of English

State University of New York

Albany, NY 12222

[REDACTED] (work); [REDACTED] (home); [REDACTED] (fax)

The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)

\*\*\*\*\*

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665. **Mark Salerno**

***Arshile #9 and Upcoming Event***

*Wed 27 May 1998*

We are pleased to announce the publication of the Ninth Issue of Arshile: A Magazine of the Arts. This issue includes:

Poetry

Robert Hershon, Sarah Anne Cox, William Bronk, Stefanie Marlis, William Aiken, Julian Semilian, Ed Friedman, Judith Taylor

Special Selection I

Ray Di Palma

Jim Brodey

"Some Materials"

Special Selection II

Kenneth Koch

"Five Famous Views of Kyoto"

Fiction

Linda Healey

"The Boy Report"

Review

Ron Padgett's "New & Selected Poems"

Reviewed by Alice Notley

Inside Art

Emerson Woelffer

Cover Art

Patrick Graham

Retail Price: \$7.99

Subscription: Two Issues \$15.00

Available in bookstores or directly from:

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Los Angeles, CA 90078

Distributors:

Armadillo & Co. Distributors ( [REDACTED] )

Bernhard De Boer, Inc. ( [REDACTED] )

Small Press Distribution ( [REDACTED] )

\*\*\*\*\*

Arshile will be celebrating the publication of its Tenth Issue with a benefit reading at Beyond Baroque, Venice, California, on October 30, 1998. Readers to be announced.

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666. **ScoutEW**

***Re: Byrd's reply 2 Alex and droffolino's quest***

*Wed 27 May 1998*

---

LStoffolino wrote

<<Don--thanks for thoughts on PER-MISSION....

so, I'm reading the latest LUNGFULL magazine and finding note from ANSELM BERRIGAN on his poem therein included:

"the poem is an attempt to figure out what might be "permitted" to do in 1998, & how not to do that & therefore continue (& not intended as a slag on R. Duncan, by the way, but a use of his half-line as extension into a field that requires some clearing"-----

(the line by the way is "often i am permitted/ to blow my brains out") Now, this may be one of the ways it's possible "to draw back from the representations of the Gods to the attentions that worshipped them"----

although perhaps to someone in their 50s this may seem too "adolescent", but considering that 1998 may be EVEN MORE REPRESSIVE and TOTALITARIAN than 1950s was, maybe

"adolescent" emotions need to be valorized, or at least  
cathartically, in poetry (so it can still serve some kind  
of safety valve function for suicide urges....)....  
and so I also therefore give permission to Steven ROdefer  
to Heckle Ondaadje (sp?)  
and give Ondaadje permission to donate proceeds to the KSW!  
and maybe somebody will give me permission to indulge my  
LOGORRHEA as Duncan's was indulged.....  
chris>>

Who wrote often i am permitted/ to blow my brains out?

Anselm?

the 1990s are repressive as hell hidden under this "freedom to express clause"  
in which every college age girl has a neat little tattoo around her ankle  
Rebellion is manufactured, Chris look at the billboard near my sister  
Tanya's apartment on Houston and Thomson street with the "Dalai Lama"  
under

the caption

"Think different"

or likewise with Miles Davis Yeah, think different but "Buy this product while  
you are at it"

I think that if more people knew of the meadow Duncan was writing about then  
the world would be a less anxious place

and by the way What the hell is holding up a Robert Duncan collected works  
including essays and all poems?

come on, share ...

erik sweet

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667. **ScoutEW**

***Re: a poem***

*Wed 27 May 1998*

---

In a message dated 5/26/98 7:39:53 PM, We wrote:

<<> Jordan draws some blood thread from her arm, just below

Where angels, fools, and I myself sometimes refuse to go.

Quite different was his smile on fire

> The waist, it's thin, blue, it's a dinosaur egg, it's edible.

But though unmarried, one might add, its really quite unweddable.

> The ladies love me well well, he left arms and egg right,

Upon entering civilization, quiet firecrackers drew my outline

On his way back from hell, thinking of his marriage night.

> Stag party red dishes that would be and rooster mechanics  
Made would-be mouse kuko dream of various beads and ducks.  
> hey are you slightly tinted?, so that the skin wells lunar=luxeries,  
Still on the marriage papers, he lost his courage to sign.  
> Around the back of the and rice shampoos, and if kim on  
She knew he hated sex, in fact, and didn't have a on.  
> re-wrapped and penned like milk and deviled foxes,  
A birthmark on both your threads, the devil has his poxes.  
> Hear sneezes of flowers, parking tickets reign.  
While Alan through Nikuko takes on unending pain.  
> Between "Red Sheds," a golden lion yawns  
While Nikuko through Alan, labors, loves, and fawns.  
> "They are too many songs comparing flowers to sex."  
Or sex to flowers, golden showers, Nikuko throws her hex  
> (and everyone forgets the bumblebees), humblebees  
Not Alan, though, stung by her charm, he's down upon her knees.  
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More stains outside, her violent toys.  
> The swine is here eating Alan.  
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> A whisper moves across Athens for cloth,  
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>  
>>

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668. **Alan Myouka Sondheim**

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*Wed 27 May 1998*

---

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> Quite different was his smile on fire

While writing topples, overweight, its future dire.

> > The waist, it's thin, blue, it's a dinosaur egg, it's edible.

> But though unmarried, one might add, its really quite unweddable.

> > The ladies love me well well, he left arms and egg right,

> Upon entering civilization, quiet firecrackers drew my outline

In a style that clearly is more yours than mine.

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> > (and everyone forgets the humblebees), humblebees

> Not Alan, though, stung by her charm, he's down upon her knees.

> > There are flowers, pistols, hymens, across him.

> There's something stuck to his ugly quim.

> > There are stains inside him (bulletboys)

> More stains outside, her violent toys.

> > The swine is here eating Alan.

> Of which the blood's not worth a gallon

> > A lazy strokes its sign for earth,

> Nikuko's finally giving birth.

> > A whisper moves across Athens for cloth,

> Carried in the mouth of the all-devouring moth  
> > A peach appears, he signs of tires, threads his golden  
> Ire on both their houses, spouses, now that the mold's on,  
> > way instead of both bone and skin, the man is on fire,  
> Nikuko's killed him off in truth, Alan was a liar.  
> > dan shuttled the earth in self,  
> Nikuko wove out of herself a newer, molten self  
> > has closed her eyes, her ck exposed.  
> Alan's half-formed, Nikuko, vomiting, supposed.  
> >  
> >>  
>

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669. **jarnot**

***Bernadette Mayer book***

*Wed 27 May 1998*

---

Announcing the publication of

Another Smashed Pinecone

by

Bernadette Mayer

United Artists Books, 1998

ISBN 0-935992-20-0

including many previously unpublished poems such as "I Like to Go To Bed with Paul Goodman," "The Men from Modernistic" and "Generic Elbows."

Ange Mlinko writes: "the poems in Another Smashed Pinecone reveal the drama of the imagination in its springtime, coaxing the world to renew itself with language earnest, delicious, rising, cresting, into the spectacular."

available from:

United Artists Books

701 President St. #1

Brooklyn, NY 11215

\$10.00 plus \$1.50 shipping.

make checks payable to United Artists books.

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670. **Brent Long**  
***Reading In Providence***  
*Wed 27 May 1998*

---

For Any List Members In Providence Area:

As you well know, there are few (if any) acceptable readings in Providence (except the Brown Series, which is not open to outside participants). Until now.

The Apokatastasis Reading Series began last night, and while the crowd was a small one, the quality of the poetry and short fiction presented there was a much needed and refreshing change for this area.

The details are as follows:

Every Tuesday night at 8P.M. at Myopic Books on South Angell Street.

Sign-up for the open reading begins at 7:30.

\$2 entry fee includes bottomless cup of coffee (not that Folger's crap, either). You may also bring your own beer, wine, etc.

5 minute time limit per person for the open reading.

Featured readers receive \$30 and read for 35-45 minutes.

For more info., feel free to e-mail me @ [REDACTED]

Brent

<paraindent><param>left,out</param>- They said I was avant garde...little did they realize, I just didn't give a shit.

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671. **Chuck Stein**  
***Re: Byrd's reply 2 Alex and droffolino's quest***  
*Wed 27 May 1998*

---

louis stroffolino wrote:

- >
- > Don--thanks for thoughts on PER-MISSION....
- > so, I'm reading the latest LUNGFULL magazine and finding note
- > from ANSELM BERRIGAN on his poem therein included:
- > "the poem is an attempt to figure out what might be "permitted"
- > to do in 1998, & how not to do that & therefore continue
- > (& not intended as a slag on R. Duncan, by the way, but a
- > use of his half-line as extension into a field that requires
- > some clearing"-----
- > (the line by the way is "often i am permitted/ to blow my

> brains out") Now, this may be one of the ways it's possible  
> "to draw back from the representations of the Gods to the  
> attentions that worshipped them"----  
> although perhaps to someone in their 50s this may seem  
> too "adolescent", but considering that 1998 may be EVEN  
> MORE REPRESSIVE and TOTALITARIAN than 1950s was, maybe  
> "adolescent" emotions need to be valorized, or at least  
> cathartically, in poetry (so it can still serve some kind  
> of safety valve function for suicide urges....)....  
> and so I also therefore give permission to Steven ROdefer  
> to Heckle Ondaadje (sp?)  
> and give Ondaadje permission to donate proceeds to the KSW!  
> and maybe somebody will give me permission to indulge my  
> LOGORRHEA as Duncan's was indulged.....  
> chris  
>  
> On Fri, 22 May 1998, Don Byrd wrote:  
>  
> > charles alexander wrote: -- the obvious thing to do is  
> >  
> > > to take things from southwestern/Sonora desert indigenous peoples,  
relating  
> > > to living well with the earth here. We may do some of that. But I also  
want  
> > > to do some non-obvious things. I already have a bunch of potential  
> > > selections from poetry & art (some wonderful things from Eva Hesse) --  
but  
> > > if anyone can suggest other possibilities, I'll be forever grateful.  
> >  
> >  
> >  
> > Gravelly hill was 'the source and end (or boundary' of  
> > D'Town on the way that leads from the town to Smallmans  
> > now Dwelling house, the Lower  
> > Road gravelly, how the hill was, not the modern useableness  
> > of any thing but leaving it as an adverb as though Earth herself  
> > was active, she had her own characteristics, she could  
> > stick her head up out of the earth at a spot  
> > and say, to Athena I'm stuck here, all I can show  
> > is my head but please, do something about  
> > this person I am putting up out of the ground into your hands.  
> >



> > --"at the boundary of the mighty world," \_Maximus\_, p. 330)  
> >  
> > And Chris asks why we do not have O'Hara's permission. Why do we not  
have  
> > Olson's? to call, as creatures of earth, on Athena herself? Or Duncan's  
> > permission to return to the meadow where we hear everlasting rumors of  
What Is?  
> > or H.D.'s (thinking of Bowering's recent post).  
> >  
> > It is a real problem. Mythology has been bought up by New Age  
> > commercialism, and, to a certain extent, even the environmental  
movement has  
> > been colored by it. I am glad to hear, Charles, that you are trying not to  
draw  
> > too much on the indigenous people. As much as one admires their culture,  
it  
> > does not have much to teach us \_directly\_. It was local and the numbers  
> > involved were small. We are now five billion (and growing) on a small  
earth and  
> > all subject to the same market.  
> >  
> > Is it possible to draw attention back from the representations of the  
> > gods to the attentions that worshipped them? Something of this order  
would seem  
> > to be task. The images of mythic beings are altogether too conveniently  
> > available (mindlessly) in video games. What are the rhythms and  
movement of  
> > spirit that correspond to what might once have been available through  
those  
> > images?  
> >  
> > Don  
> >  
> > --  
> > \*\*\*\*\*  
> > Don Byrd (██████, ██████)  
> > Department of English  
> > State University of New York  
> > Albany, NY 12222  
> > ██████ (work); ██████ (home); ██████ (fax)  
> > The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)  
> > \*\*\*\*\*

> >

What if permission were not a matter of moral permission--I let you do that--I give myself permission to do this or that--but a matter of something much more like mathematical injunction: I discover a certain possibility and invoke it. "I am permitted to return to a meadow" certainly has an overtone of being allowed as it were by the gods, but it is simultaneously and perhaps more importantly such an injunction.

Also on mythology. The topic is too broadly stated. Mythology can be used to cut through mythology. Mythology does not stay on a single level. In one sense, everything is mythology. In another all mythology is reductive to something else. But within the mythological as a frame it is possible I think to cut through the co-optation of first order mythology as well as its reduction, via say psychology, to a familiarly psycholocial use.

Charles Stein

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672. **Keston Sutherland**

***New Book by J.H. Prynne***

*Wed 27 May 1998*

---

Barque Press presents \_Red D Gypsum\_ by J.H. Prynne

Now available to those in the US / Canada at \$7.00 incl. postage

Please send checks to:

Keston Sutherland  
537 Winthrop Mail Center  
Harvard  
Cambridge MA 01238-7531

Pleas e- me in advance, so that I can send the book as early as possible.

I'll be at this address only for a couple of weeks, so any checks sent after about ten days or so should go instead to Peter Riley, who can be contacted at:

██████ -- this may involve sending sterling, or a slight price alteration.

This is a surpassingly important and impressive book by one of our most esteemed and influential poets, currently producing what many (including myself) consider to be the best work of his career.

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673. **Safdie Joseph**

**Re: mythology**

Wed 27 May 1998

---

Wonderful to see Charles Stein post something to the list . . . I may not have seen his name in print since the "Alchemy" issue of *\_Io\_* magazine! Now all we need is Robert Kelly (and Richard Grossinger? Did I see HIS name also in the last week?) and we can resurrect the whole "deep image" school of the early 70s right here in cyber space . . .

But seriously folks, I for one would be very interested in people's takes on "mythology" circa mid-1998, on whatever level or cutting abilities it may have. If I remember some fanciful etymology from Olson's *\_Muthologos\_* we can even link it to the previous thread on stammering and stuttering . . . does myth . . . inform people's imaginations anymore? Are there those, like me, whose deepest sense of education was not exclusively poetics, but classics? Are Jung, Joe Campbell, "The Truth and Life of Myth" -- obsolete? Representative of the derrier garde? Can "langpo" and "mythpo" coincide? I'm genuinely curious!

Joe

*What if permission were not a matter of moral permission--I let you do that--I give myself permission to do this or that--but a matter of something much more like mathematical injunction: I discover a certain possibility and invoke it. "I am permitted to return to a meadow" certainly has an overtone of being allowed as it were by the gods, but it is simultaneously and perhaps more importantly such an injunction.*

*Also on mythology. The topic is too broadly stated. Mythology can be used to cut through mythology. Mythology does not stay on a single level. In one sense, everything is mythology. In another all mythology is reductive to something else. But within the mythological as a frame it is possible I think to cut through the co-optation of first order mythology as well as its reduction, via say psychology, to a familiarly psycholgocial use.*

*Charles Stein*

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674. **Irving Weiss**

**URL change**

Wed 27 May 1998

---

Having received notice from my URL provider, GeoCities, that it will not allow selling or links to selling on any website and will remove such sites by June 1;

and I having answered that the likelihood of my making a profit beyond expenses on my publications is droll, I searched for "free home pages" and discovered Tripod, where I am now located at

<http://members.tripod.com/~sialbach/index.html>

with your indulgence,

Irving Weiss

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675. **Mark Weiss**

***Re: mythology***

*Wed 27 May 1998*

---

For recent Stein, see his *The Hat Rack Tree: Selected Poems from theforestforthetrees*, 1980-1993\_ (Station Hill 1994).

As to mythology, one can recognize and be humbled by the power of the great irrational forces, even give them names and volition, without subscribing to the notions of Jung and his spiritual and political disciple Campbell, who I for one hope are becoming not so much obsolete as historical artifacts. And one can read and learn from Duncan (I do) without sharing all of his assumptions.

More troubling to me than their trivialization of the gods is the trivialization of their passions and fears that my students often exhibit. I remember talking to a class about eros as an implacable generative and destructive force and being greeted by titters. It seems that eros in their minds had been reduced to a particularly pleasurable form of calisthenics. Of course they were very young. But it seems to me that the culture of the video game serves that trivialization, which in turn is a defense against the terror that the novice, standing at the gate, must feel.

At 10:28 AM 5/27/98 -0700, you wrote:

>Wonderful to see Charles Stein post something to the list . . . I may  
>not have seen his name in print since the "Alchemy" issue of *\_Io\_*  
>magazine! Now all we need is Robert Kelly (and Richard Grossinger? Did I  
>see HIS name also in the last week?) and we can resurrect the whole  
>"deep image" school of the early 70s right here in cyber space . . .  
>  
>But seriously folks, I for one would be very interested in people's  
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>abilities it may have.  
>If I remember some fanciful etymology from Olson's *\_Muthologos\_* we can  
>even link it to the previous thread on stammering and stuttering . . .  
>does myth . . . inform people's imaginations anymore? Are there those,

>like me, whose deepest sense of education was not exclusively poetics,  
>but classics? Are Jung, Joe Campbell, "The Truth and Life of Myth" --  
>obsolete? Representative of the derrier garde? Can "langpo" and "mythpo"  
>coincide? I'm genuinely curious!

>

>Joe

>

>

>> What if permission were not a matter of moral permission--I let you do  
>> that--I give myself permission to do this or that--but a matter of  
>> something much more like mathematical injunction: I discover a certain  
>> possibility and invoke it. "I am permitted to return to a meadow"  
>> certainly has an overtone of being allowed as it were by the gods, but  
>> it is simultaneously and perhaps more importantly such an injunction.  
>>

>> Also on mythology. The topic is too broadly stated. Mythology can be  
>> used to cut through mythology. Mythology does not stay on a single  
>> level. In one sense, everything is mythology. In another all mythology  
>> is reductive to something else. But within the mythological as a frame  
>> it is possible I think to cut through the co-optation of first order  
>> mythology as well as its reduction, via say psychology, to a  
>> familiarly  
>> psycholgocial use.

>>

>> Charles Stein

>>

>

>

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676. **Gary Sullivan**

### ***Permission***

*Wed 27 May 1998*

---

Permission, w/respect to the arts, is only an issue if one desires it (or if one's project requires it) from anyone taking such authority into their hands as to grant or deny it. The questions then become: (a) why desire that? and/or (b) what sort of art project is it that requires it to function? And, further (c) what person or body politic would take such authority into his/her/its hands?

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677. **R. Gancie**

***As a youth doomed to be the incarnation of Carl Friedrich von Weizsaecker***

*Wed 27 May 1998*

---

"Progress in our science has over and over again been linked with a critique of foundations. In the major advancements, the accumulation of experience is of little use. One has to ponder the foundations, one must reflect on the fundamental terms, which is precisely what people like Einstein or Bohr or Heisenberg did in our century. When, as a young physicist and a student of Heisenberg's, I myself came upon physics and tried to study it, it very soon became clear to me that I did not understand this subject. It was not that I was unable to integrate differential equations or to discuss with an experimental physicist the probable results of his experiments. But I did not understand the concepts with which one tries to express the meaning of these differential equations. I was naive at first, credulous, as a student perhaps should be, and I assumed my teachers knew these meanings while I had not yet advanced far enough to grasp them. As I came to know these teachers better, and could question them, it turned out that they, too, including some noted scientists among them, failed to grasp them. To be sure, they were eminently capable of applying physics and of enriching it. But, asked to give a strict account of the meaning of their fundamental terms-matter, energy, causality, prediction, experience, etc.-they had to admit, especially if they were clear-headed thinkers: We use these terms simply because they work so well for us. It was simply too difficult for them to give a genuine account...." "Where do these concepts come from? Very soon it became apparent that they normally come not from science but from philosophy...What we called school philosophy was in part a way of thinking that was rather critical of modern science. Thus, positivism commended itself. It said: You scientists are right; hand in hand with you, we combat the fruitless, useless tradition of school philosophy. But when I tried to fully understand positivist philosophy, it turned out that it, too, could not justify its own basic concepts; the concept of experience, for example, which it presupposed, crumbled when subjected to an increasingly stringent, self-critical analysis (an analysis practiced, one must hand it to them, by positivists themselves), until in the end it was very difficult to say what could be meant by experience at all. In any case, I concluded that positivist philosophy would not be able to teach me what modern science is. I then turned to its opponents-in fact, I turned directly to the greatest one among them, namely Immanuel Kant."---from *The Unity of Nature* by Carl Friedrich von Weizsaecker

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678. **Jordan Davis**  
*some other poetics of summer*  
Wed 27 May 1998

---

Chris --

What I said was:

I don't think any of us who argue that O'Hara had a better-populated mood palette than Gary argued would argue that it's possible to write like O'Hara -- not only does none of us have the datebook of an O'Hara, not only are we more restricted in our permissions (don't ask don't ask!), we have a somewhat different culture to pick and choose from.

--cut--

This I think says something like what you were saying about 1998 being somehow more repressive than 1958 (tho less tense than May 68? past perfect?). No one writes like O'Hara, no one writes like Olson. Why do we seek the dead among the living? Is it true as they say in this system that it's easier to get forgiveness than permission?

It's probably bogus, the diachronic study of permission. Power may seem to be letting you do what you want, go run down the hill into the meadow, while you're there I'll be upstairs privatising some utilities. I mean, yes, the permission to teach Benjamin Barthes Baldwin and O'Hara to first-year comp students, but also the fetter of permanent adjuncthood.

Of course, to be mordantly recursive about it, we could say that the fetters we wear are the permissions we grant to the regents deacons elders and trustees to violently paraphrase us in a remade-for-miniseries product placement binge in which we figure out that we can make it if we replace ourselves with Junior Mints. My shackle's minty, how's yours?

Or are we the cabbies, finally getting some airtime, looking in the camera and saying, why can't we work together to solve these problems? and change the channel and get the major network hijacked by their miniseries's star into donating two-percent of ad revenue to literacy programs mocking literacy programs and messing up a bit done right in '82 by Bill Murray.

Finally, though, is subversion approval? Can the permission we give ourselves subvert the hope that led us to invent it, and can our intentions throw the prime directive out and intervene at last in the endless drudgery of our therapies? These questions and many many many more are answered here, daily, silently, no? no? no?

(don't ask don't ask),  
Jordan

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679. **Carrie Etter**  
***Berkeley readings?***

*Wed 27 May 1998*

---

I'm coming up to Berkeley tomorrow through Sunday for a conference and wonder if there will be any readings in the immediate area.

Thanks,  
Carrie Etter

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680. **Mark Weiss**  
***(no subject)***

*Wed 27 May 1998*

---

Here, for the list's amusement, the Kirkus review of the Spicer biography as reprinted at amazon.com. Any doubts that there's a culture war going on? It would be nice to know who the perpetrator was.

From Kirkus Reviews , 05/11/98:

Beat insider Ellingham and novelist Killian (Shy, 1989, etc.) have here embraced a most resistant, though not unworthy, subject in poet Jack Spicer. Spicer catalyzed the development of the Beat Generation in 1950s San Francisco. Though few literary tales have been told more often (or more tediously) than those pertaining to the Beats, Spicer's own has been at best ill served, and at worst wholly ignored, by the prevailing mythologies of the time. The authors have thus been admirably careful to keep their focus on the enigmatic Spicer, whose life and verse grew progressively more estranged, indeed bitterly so, from those of his more visible peers. In following Spicer's California odyssey pending brutally in San Francisco, where he died from alcohol-induced liver failure in 1965, aged 40, Ellingham and Killian tread too lightly on their subject's more troublesome personality traits, e.g., his entrenched anti-Semitism and boorish bad will toward those poets daring enough to court his approval. This largesse would rankle less, however, had they not chosen to extend it to the poetry itself, which, while capable of startling effects and moving lyricism, frequently succumbs to the same narcissistic bloat that long ago rendered the Beat temperament cliché. Instead, the authors have provided, albeit in impressive detail, a cosmology of poetic egotism, with



Spicer's now the origin. Ultimately, Spicer's legacy, like that of any devalued artist, must endure the trial of rigorous critical appraisal. Despite the current academic fashion, literary resurrections of this sort cannot be taken on faith, but rather require a proof that the authors, true believers both, fail to supply in this otherwise well-researched and readable biography. (30 b&w photos) -- Copyright ©1998, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

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681. **Maria Damon**  
***a nice announcement***

*Wed 27 May 1998*

---

just to report that brian horihan, an undergraduate advisee of mine whom some of you know, was awarded a prize for the best summa thesis in the College of Liberal Arts today at the U of MN.. ...and better yet, in his thank you speech he talked about hannah weiner. it thrilled me to have all these minnesotans hear about hannah, and it thrilled me that brian's talents were being recognized.

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682. **Alan Myouka Sondheim**  
***NAKED ALAN AND NIKUKO NAKED COPY AND RUN AROUND SOME FILES***

*Thu 28 May 1998*

---

-

NAKED ALAN AND NIKUKO NAKED COPY AND RUN AROUND SOME FILES

CRON RUNNING LIKE CRAZY BUILDING AND TEARING DOWN!

n: < root 17527 c Wed May 27 19:50:00 1998

n: > root 13968 c Wed May 27 19:50:00 1998

TURNING INSIDE-OUT MACHINE ON AUTOMATIC REOPENING WIDE!

n: < root 13968 c Wed May 27 19:50:00 1998

n: > CMD: 24779 c exec /usr/local/bin/maint/erpcd-reopen

n: > root 24779 c Wed May 27 19:50:00 1998

UNTIL NIKUKO CAN'T STAND IT ANY LONGER, NEEDING UPDATING!

n: > CMD: 24780 c /users/remailer/bin/update

n: > remailer 24780 c Wed May 27 19:50:00 1998

n: < root 24779 c Wed May 27 19:50:01 1998

n: < remailer 24780 c Wed May 27 19:50:01 1998

UNTIL ALAN BEGS "RUN NIKUKO" "NIKUKO MAKE"

n: > CMD: 16187 c /usr/local/adm/accnt/data/radius/RunMake

n: > acct 16187 c Wed May 27 19:50:00 1998

OH NIKUKO OPENS HER EYES THEN, YES SHE DOES!  
n: > CMD: 16188 c exec /usr/local/bin/maint/erpcd-reopen  
n: > root 16188 c Wed May 27 19:50:00 1998  
OH NIKUKO STUFFS HIS COPY OF NIKUKO "MAKING NIKUKO"  
n: > CMD: 16190 c /usr/local/bin/newuser/copystuff  
n: > root 16190 c Wed May 27 19:50:00 1998  
n: < root 16190 c Wed May 27 19:50:01 1998  
n: < root 16188 c Wed May 27 19:50:01 1998  
OH ALAN COPIES HIS STUFF OF ALAN "MAKING NIKUKO"  
n: > CMD: 16210 c /usr/local/bin/newuser/copystuff  
n: > root 16210 c Wed May 27 19:51:00 1998  
n: < root 16210 c Wed May 27 19:51:01 1998  
12704 c Wed May 27 19:51:09 1998  
OH YES SHE IS NIKUKO!  
n: < root 17106 c Wed May 27 19:51:09 1998  
n: < root 13023 c Wed May 27 19:51:11 1998  
OH YES NIKUKO IS DESPERATE FOR REOPENING UPDATING!  
n: < root 24370 c Wed May 27 19:51:12 1998  
OH YES NIKUKO LIKES THAT A LOT THAT UPDATING!  
n: < root 15943 c Wed May 27 19:51:11 1998  
NOW ALAN AWAITS NIKUKO FOR HIS REOPENING!  
n: > CMD: 16742 c exec /usr/local/bin/maint/erpcd-reopen  
OH NIKUKO NOW YOU HAVE REOPENED ME AND IT IS SO FUN!  
n: > CMD: 17493 c exec /usr/local/bin/maint/erpcd-reopen  
OH ALAN NOW YOU HAVE REOPENED ME AND IT IS SO FUN!  
n: > CMD: 18432 c /usr/local/adm/accnt/data/radius/RunMake  
n: < root 18437 c Wed May 27 19:52:01 1998  
OH ALAN YOU HAVE MADE ME RUN AND "MAKING NIKUKO"  
n: > root 18444 c Wed May 27 19:54:00 1998  
n: < root 19231 c Wed May 27 19:54:01 1998  
n: < root 19634 c Wed May 27 19:55:01 1998  
OH NIKUKO YOU HAVE "MAKING ALAN" AND "MAKING NIKUKO"  
n: > CMD: 19677 c /usr/local/adm/accnt/data/radius/RunMake  
n: > root 20125 c Wed May 27 19:56:07 1998  
OH MANY NIKUKOS AND MANY ALANS IT IS SO FUNS!!!!  
n: > root 20314 c Wed May 27 19:57:00 1998  
  
{k:458} shutdown -h FORKBOMB!  
{k:459} wall APPARENTLY THERE ARE STILL PROCESSES RUNNING  
{k:460} exit

683. **Maria Damon**

***Re: spicer review***

*Thu 28 May 1998*

---

seems to me that the review reflects a certain aesthetic and intellectual timidity disguised as authoritarian curmudgeonliness. this nonsense about "time will tell" if spicer's a good writer or not indicates that the reviewer is incapable of understanding literature that has not been predigested and either canonized or cast aside, and he feels uncomfortable making any evaluation in the review, since it's clear that he himself has never read spicer's work, and has almost certainly never sat in a class where a teacher told him what to think about spicer.

At 11:44 AM -0400 5/28/98, DANIEL L. COLLIER wrote:

>Mark, et al.,

>

>What's the story behind Kirkus reviews? The Spicer review is

>remarkably similar to a hideous sermon I sat through at an

>archly conservative wedding last summer (had to remind himself

>to say "hey, have a good life" between references to "our

>neo-pagan age" as he performed the oh so unpagan catholic

>rites of marriage). And I noticed Kirkus recently when searching

>for a Daniel Kharms book... they haughtily dismissed him as

>well.

>

>Danny

>[REDACTED]

>[REDACTED]

>

>"Hey, it's our anniversary and I remembered!" - me

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684. **Chuck Stein**

***mythology***

*Thu 28 May 1998*

---

These are some further notes on the mythology thing going round. And a bit more on my remark yesterday about "permission" and mathematics.

Consider a poetics of the many colors of unknowing--what the issues would be.

A gnosis or (a-)gnosis: a knowing that subsists in every conscious moment of unknowing; a knowing not of being, if being is limited to the existent, the determinate; but an (a-)gnosis of being itself if, rather, being were the

enigmatic issuance of whatever comes to seem to be: to install oneself in that (a-)gnosis of the issuance and to COMPOSE from the emergent.

The "Poetics of this situation" would involve a species of emergent mythology: tale fragments, images, traces, gestures, charades, stammerings--messages of and from that which decays into its own manifestations but yet haunts them, rides, them, imbues them, taunts with feigns and lurings, blasts and pronunciamentos, picking up the shards of whatever mythemes, (a-)theologemes, (anti-)ideologemes seem to stand in the path.

By the mathematical sense of permission I mentioned yesterday I meant this:

Let  $X = a + b$ . This "letting" is an injunction, a command to initiate an engagement of the mind. It has the advantage of being trackable. You can see the act by which what follows was enjoined. Now in poetry, a mythologeme can be enjoined in a similar manner. An association may be declared, brought, through the act of the poem, into the arena of possible thought or intention. This is not to enforce an assertion by privileged reference but to open what is possible to be entertained or entered into. To me, the usefulness of Duncan's legacy has more to do with such acts of mythology than any general valorization of the mythological as such.

Charles Stein

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685. **Mark Prejsnar**

***The Bloated Professoriate (vs. Spicer)***

*Thu 28 May 1998*

---

A day or so ago I snapped at the recent article in *Lingua Franca*. While the author of that piece was a. not anonymous; and b. fairly bright; nonetheless there are overlaps with the poor dunderhead in *Kirkus*....

They both assume, because of their own ignorance, that Spicer is unimportant and unknown. Their familiarity with the contemporary poetry scene is (to put it kindly) minimal.

Both these articles bring into high relief, the gap between a large part of academe and the world of working poets. Admittedly the *Kirkus* writer is exceptionally stupid and remarkably arrogant for such an inept and ill-informed reviewer. Even so, his/her attitude (and ignorance) are representative. The idea that a poet as influential as Spicer needs to be "resurrected" is a striking common thread present in both these academic articles.

OK, these writers are ill-equipped to deal with their subject; and in the *Kirkus* case, pretty clearly unqualified to deal with poetry at all. (One of the most

succinct and least self-involved of all significant 20th century poets....And what does this genius dismiss him as? "Narcissistic bloat"..The idea does occur, that the Kirkus piece is too stupid to be real; can it be that this is all a parody?) But the real message is not the inadequacies of certain reviewers. That they could imagine Spicer is of no import, and that responsible editors would print that claim, are indications of the chasm between much of the academic world, and the world of actual contemporary poets...

from the spicer islands

(no man is an)

Mp

On Thu, 28 May 1998, DANIEL L. COLLIER wrote:

*Mark, et al.,*

*What's the story behind Kirkus reviews? The Spicer review is remarkably similar to a hideous sermon I sat through at an archly conservative wedding last summer (had to remind himself to say "hey, have a good life" between references to "our neo-pagan age" as he performed the oh so unpagan catholic rites of marriage). And I noticed Kirkus recently when searching for a Daniel Kharms book... they haughtily dismissed him as well.*

*Danny*



*"Hey, it's our anniversary and I remembered!" - me*

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686. **DANIEL L. COLLIER**

***Re: <no subject given>***

*Thu 28 May 1998*

---

Mark, et al.,

What's the story behind Kirkus reviews? The Spicer review is remarkably similar to a hideous sermon I sat through at an archly conservative wedding last summer (had to remind himself to say "hey, have a good life" between references to "our neo-pagan age" as he performed the oh so unpagan catholic rites of marriage). And I noticed Kirkus recently when searching for a Daniel Kharms book... they haughtily dismissed him as well.

Danny



"Hey, it's our anniversary and I remembered!" - me

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687. **morpheal**

***Re: mythology [followed by DADA, deconstruction, and silence]***

Thu 28 May 1998

---

*Consider a poetics of the many colors of unknowing--what the issues would be.*

I presume because unknowing, as a deconstructive movement towards knowing nothing, is to be considered safer, in a DADAistic kind of way, than is any movement towards more definite and ground breaking understanding ?

Many do feel that way. They are encouraged to feel that way.

The same strand of thinking pervades the recent trend to deconstruct any musical and lyrical materials (therefore poetic materials), via technological devices, such that the artifacts that are produced by complexes of intentionality and chance elements create new non meanings. The non meanings, or unknowings of the original artistic intentions and content, becoming the work of art, or work of new performance. This is at the very core of "techno", and resembles "techno shamanism" as to its apparent implications of meanings. Though "techno" also becomes the protest against the substance of its roots and origins. DADA served a similar function within the larger political situatedness. (Do we ever learn from such concatenations of poetic and political events ?)

Is a future poetics to be more DADA, and deconstructive, than it is to be anything else ? Is that the ideologically influenced tendency ? The tendency to say less and less with more and more sounds ? More and more sounds becoming a kind of poetic silence, comprised from a potentially infinite number of poetic voices ? Ah, an "angelic" chorus.... that ultimately reveals nothing new, in all its presages of infinite newness, and making the old new again,.... Not so "angelic" after all. No more angelic as an instantiation of any "heavenly host" than martial music and goose stepping troops in precise military formations.....There is in fact a connection between the two (radical deconstruction and military challenge).

*A gnosis or (a-)gnosis: a knowing that subsists in every conscious moment of unknowing; a knowing not of being, if being is limited to the existent, the determinate; but an (a-)gnosis of being itself if, rather, being were the enigmatic issuance of whatever comes to seem to be: to*

| *install oneself in that (a-)gnosis of the issuance and to COMPOSE from the emergent.*

Gnostics are the keepers of secret knowledge. They claim to safeguard true knowledge, available only to initiates. You could argue that for something radically new to be learned, something must first be unlearned that conflicts with that new knowledge. That, of course, is not always true. Sometimes the new knowledge is simply added to what else was already known.

What that has to do with the craft of writing poetry, remains at best obscure. Perhaps you can elaborate further....to clarify what you are saying.

| *The "Poetics of this situation" would involve a species of emergent mythology: tale fragments, images, traces, gestures, charades, stammerings--messages of and from that which decays into its own manifestations but yet haunts them, rides, them, imbues them, taunts with feigns and lurings, blasts and pronunciamentos, picking up the shards of whatever mythemes, (a-)theologemes, (anti-)ideologemes seem to stand in the path.*

The motions become theatre. There is, of course, a grey area, between performance of poetry and thespian performance. There is no clear dividing line. The poem can be a one act play. Can it also be a charade or mime ? Then the poetry is the silence, and the theatre is the gesture.

| *By the mathematical sense of permission.....*

Mythematics in poetics.....(After all, mathematics is ultimately another language, same as the language of poetry is another language, for the creation of myths. Both kinds of myths are potentially explanatory, predictive, useful, if they happen to say something that is "true" about the world.)

| *Let  $X = a + b$ . This "letting" is an injunction, a command to initiate an engagement of the mind.*

Creating an infinite set of possible values for all three variables. Poetry is in fact more precise and limited as to its meaningful arrangements.

M.

aka

Bob Ezergailis

(No known relation to that political science professor on the net.)

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688. **Erik Sweet**

***Re: mythology [followed by DADDY, construction, and silence]***

*Thu 28 May 1998*

---

In a message dated 5/28/98 11:46:35 AM, you wrote:

<<The same strand of thinking pervades the recent trend to deconstruct any musical and lyrical materials (therefore poetic materials), via technological devices, such that the artifacts that are produced by complexes of intentionality and chance elements create new non meanings. The non meanings, or unknowings of the original artistic intentions and content, becoming the work of art, or work of new performance. This is at the very core of "techno", and resembles "techno shamanism" as to its apparent implications of meanings. Though "techno" also becomes the protest against the substance of its roots and origins. DADA served a similar function within the larger political situatedness. (Do we ever learn from such concatenations of poetic and political events ?)

>>

Are you talking about the musical (genre) Techno as in the cousin to Detroit House music?

If so, what about Africa Bambatta (sp?) in the Bronx in the 70s breathing beats to Kraftwerk the freakish German Techno/Dada music group which sounded like robots and planes taking off- Hip-Hop music and its wide variety of sampling is very (postmodern) I hate that term (except when Olson uses it) and seems at its core to break the idea of creating new- Look at Puff Daddy winner of grammy's etc/ in hip-hop he adds nothing new to the situation- all he does is pre-program hits by Bowie , The Police etc and re- represent them-People don't care- originality, as in the Apple campaign means "fitting in, and creating trends) see Craig Mack in his 1994 video "Flavor in Your Ear) in which he wears a hockey jersey-that summer in Buffalo every kid on the corner had the same hockey jersey-"think different buy apple fit in)

Is our culture mimicing technology by moving in circles and borrowing "retro" styles and bringing things back from the 70s (such as Kraftwerk and disco culture) or are we standing still?

erik sweet

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689. **Chuck Stein**

***Re: mythology [followed by DADA, deconstruction, and silence]***

Thu 28 May 1998

---

morpheal wrote:

>

> >Consider a poetics of the many colors of unknowing--what the issues

> >would be.

>

> I presume because unknowing, as a deconstructive movement towards knowing

> nothing, is to be considered safer, in a DADAistic kind of way, than is any

> movement towards more definite and ground breaking understanding ?

>

> Many do feel that way. They are encouraged to feel that way.

>

> The same strand of thinking pervades the recent trend to deconstruct any

> musical and lyrical materials (therefore poetic materials), via

> technological devices, such that the artifacts that are produced by

> complexes of intentionality and chance elements create new non meanings.

The

> non meanings, or unknowings of the original artistic intentions and content,

> becoming the work of art, or work of new performance. This is at the very

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> implications of meanings. Though "techno" also becomes the protest against

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> tendency to say less and less with more and more sounds ? More and more

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> infinite number of poetic voices ? Ah, an "angelic" chorus.... that

> ultimately reveals nothing new, in all its presages of infinite newness, and

> making the old new again,.... Not so "angelic" after all. No more angelic as

> an instantiation of any "heavenly host" than martial music and goose

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> connection between the two (radical deconstruction and military challenge).

>

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> >moment of unknowing; a knowing not of being, if being is limited to the

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- > >being were the enigmatic issuance of whatever comes to seem to be: to
- > >install oneself in that (a-)gnosis of the issuance and to COMPOSE from
- > >the emergent.
- >
- > Gnostics are the keepers of secret knowledge. They claim to safeguard true
- > knowledge, available only to initiates. You could argue that for something
- > radically new to be learned, something must first be unlearned that
- > conflicts with that new knowledge. That, of course, is not always true.
- > Sometimes the new knowledge is simply added to what else was already known.
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- > >mythology: tale fragments, images, traces, gestures, charades,
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- > >shards of whatever mythemes, (a-)theologemes, (anti-)ideologemes seem to
- > >stand in the path.
- >
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- > performance of poetry and thespian performance. There is no clear dividing line.
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- >
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- > Poetry is in fact more precise and limited as to its meaningful arrangements.

>  
> M.  
>  
> aka  
>  
> Bob Ezergailis  
>  
> (No known relation to that political science professor on the net.)

...

I'll try, at this moment, to answer question about what this has to poetics.

These steps. A state of unknowing, a suspension of the cognitive, wherein the cognitive as such, knowing as such, remains the modality, the way of holding oneself, etc. Not so much a cloud of unknowing, but a suspension of assertoric grasping. Yet the discovery that you might call it the will-to-know remains. Staying with that. And pursuing the discovery. Poetic utterance, mythic material, emergent possibilities of discourse, to get it out, to get it said, what sits on the edge of what can be said,--not an abandonment of articulation, but articulation at the liminal edge of knowing. That this is a source of creative involvement. That it is for me, anyway. That its relevance is parallel various techno-issues but not identical with them (George Quasha and I have written three monographs and a series of articles on the Video-poetics of Gary Hill, the video-installation artist, which try to dope out some of these issues--I'll post references to them when I get a minute.) Such a state could, metaphorically be linked to shamanic states, but I don't particularly favor the valorization of poetics by REFERENCE to the shamanic. The point is not to call it shamanic. But what might that be about if you try it? What do you find out it impells?

As to its infinite potentiality, its infinite chorus. Well, perhaps. But in practice it's a matter of what concretely emerges, and what one is able to compose with what does emerge. I don't propose some sort of method, value the method, and validate examples of its use. I was raising this business, just to throw another angle on what a possible use of the mythological might look like, to complicate the discussion. And see if something other than the leap to the most universal level--like what we all ought to be doing or allowing--could sound like.

Gnosticism. Seems pretty much up for grabs these days. Certainly after Harold Bloom's book. And I entertain that language, for myself, because I do find myself engaged in reading Nag Hammadi texts, say, with a lot of interest, and do want to keep open this possibility: that there is an important sense of knowing that arises at the intuitive interface of language and mind; that it is what used to be the source of mytho-poetic authority, but NOW does not need any longer to exert such authority--that there is another possibility inherent in

its practice. And the crucial point is not to get hung up on the idea that something is validated because its called mythological or shamanistic or gnostical. But the word still might point to something interesting.

enuf

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690. **Maria Damon**

***Re: The Bloated Professoriate (vs. Spicer)***

*Thu 28 May 1998*

---

actually i wouldn't blame the "professoriate" for this one. i'm a prof, charles b is a prof, susan howe is a prof, nate mackey is a prof, mark scroggins is a prof, mark nowak is a prof, etc etc etc. it's pretty clear that the person you compassionately refer to as "the poor dunderhead in kirkus" is not a prof. no contemporary scholar of the humanities would be caught dead saying anything as pathetically vapid as "time will tell."

At 11:36 AM -0400 5/28/98, Mark Prejsnar wrote:

>A day or so ago I snapped at the recent article in *Lingua Franca*. While  
>the author of that piece was a. not anonymous; and b. fairly bright;  
>nonetheless there are overlaps with the poor dunderhead in *Kirkus*....  
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>They both assume, because of their own ignorance, that Spicer is  
>unimportant and unknown. Their familiarity with the contemporary poetry  
>scene is (to put it kindly) minimal.  
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>the inadequacies of certain reviewers. That they could imagine Spicer is  
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>indications of the chasm between much of the academic world, and the world  
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>Mp  
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>> to say "hey, have a good life" between references to "our  
>> neo-pagan age" as he performed the oh so unpagan catholic  
>> rites of marriage). And I noticed Kirkus recently when searching  
>> for a Daniel Kharms book... they haughtily dismissed him as  
>> well.  
>>  
>> Danny  
>> [REDACTED]  
>> [REDACTED]  
>>  
>> "Hey, it's our anniversary and I remembered!" - me  
>>

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691. **David Kellogg**

***Re: The Bloated Professoriate (vs. Spicer)***

*Thu 28 May 1998*

---

On Thu, 28 May 1998, Maria Damon wrote:

*no contemporary scholar of the humanities would be  
caught dead saying anything as pathetically vapid as "time will tell."*

Oh, I don't know. I think the humanities are full of "scholars" with such faith in the winnowings of history. Whether they'd actually say it is another thing, but I think plenty of them believe it.

Cheers,  
David

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg                      Duke University  
[REDACTED]                      Program in Writing and Rhetoric  
[REDACTED]                      Durham, NC 27708  
FAX [REDACTED]                      <http://www.duke.edu/~kellogg/>

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692. **henry g**

***Re: The Bloated Professoriate (vs. Spicer)***

*Thu 28 May 1998*

---

On Thu, 28 May 1998 14:42:31 -0400 David Kellogg said:

>On Thu, 28 May 1998, Maria Damon wrote:

>

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>> caught dead saying anything as pathetically vapid as "time will tell."

>

>Oh, I don't know. I think the humanities are full of "scholars" with

>such faith in the winnowings of history. Whether they'd actually \_say\_

>it is another thing, but I think plenty of them \_believe\_ it.

I agree that the Kirkus "time will tell" review was more an arrogant put-down than a review. But history is not a mechanical winnowing process - there are readers involved. And it's not just a political canon-making job. There was an interesting article in the NYorker about a year ago on the ups and downs of Willa Cather's critical reception & reputation; the point being that readers keep going back to her no matter what evolves & revolves in litcritical politics. So I think what I'm saying is: if you count in readership over time, then you can't just dismiss the "time will tell" issue out of hand. [I'm a closet reader of "classics" - have been ever since the comic book series.] - Henry Gould

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693. **R. Gancie**

***philosophy all at sea?***

*Thu 28 May 1998*

---

"The great success which attends reason in its mathematical employment quite naturally gives rise to the expectation that it, or at any rate its method, will have the same success in other fields as in that of quantity. For this method has the advantage of being able to realise all its concepts in intuitions, which it can

provide a priori, and by which it becomes, so to speak, master of nature; whereas pure philosophy is all at sea when it seeks through a priori discursive concepts to obtain insight in regard to the natural world, being unable to intuit a priori (and thereby to confirm) their reality. Nor does there seem to be, on the part of the experts in mathematics, any lack of self-confidence as to this procedure-or on the part of the vulgar of great expectations from their skill-should they apply themselves to carry out their project. For, since they have hardly ever attempted to philosophise in regard to their mathematics (a hard task!), the specific difference between the two employments of reason has never so much as occurred to them. Current empirical rules, which they borrow from ordinary consciousness, they treat as being axiomatic. In the question as to the source of the concepts of space and time they are not in the least interested, although it is precisely with these concepts (as the original quanta) that they are themselves occupied. Similarly, they think it unnecessary to investigate the origin of the pure concepts of understanding and in so doing to determine the extent of their validity; they care only to make use of them. In all this they are entirely in the right, provided only they do not overstep the proper limits, that is, the limits of the natural world. But, unconsciously, they pass from the field of sensibility to the precarious ground of pure and even transcendental concepts, a ground (*instabilis tellus, inabilis unda*) that permits them neither to stand nor to swim, and where their hasty tracks are soon obliterated. In mathematics, on the other hand, their passage gives rise to broad highway, which the latest posterity may tread with confidence." "...It therefore becomes necessary to cut away the last anchor of these fantastic hopes, that is to show that the pursuit of the mathematical method cannot be of the least advantage in this kind of knowledge (unless it be in exhibiting more plainly the limitations of the method); and that mathematics and philosophy, although in natural science they do, indeed, go hand in hand, are none the less so completely different, that the procedure of one can never be imitated by the other."---from *The Critique of Pure Reason* by Immanuel Kant---cp

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694. **lee ann brown**

***Re: Wmsburg room***

*Thu 28 May 1998*

---

Dear Poets and others who may be heading toward or are already homeless in Big Apple- A friend, poet Paul Long just asked me if I knew of anyone that wanted to sublet a share in his Williamsburg apt- \$550 month, 3rd stop on L train into Williamsburg. So if this helps-you or anyone in the NYC area- call him at [REDACTED]. Lee Ann Brown

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695. **Maria Damon**

***Re: The Bloated Professoriate (vs. Spicer)***

Thu 28 May 1998

---

hi david!

At 2:42 PM -0400 5/28/98, David Kellogg wrote:

>On Thu, 28 May 1998, Maria Damon wrote:

>

>> no contemporary scholar of the humanities would be

>> caught dead saying anything as pathetically vapid as "time will tell."

>

>Oh, I don't know. I think the humanities are full of "scholars" with

>such faith in the winnowings of history. Whether they'd actually \_say\_

>it is another thing, but I think plenty of them \_believe\_ it.

>

>Cheers,

>David

>~~~~~

~~~~~

>David Kellogg Duke University

>██████████ Program in Writing and Rhetoric

>██████████ Durham, NC 27708

>FAX ██████████ http://www.duke.edu/~kellogg/

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696. **Christopher W. Alexander**

Re: The Bloated Professoriate (vs. Spicer)

Thu 28 May 1998

¶ bravo, mark maria mark henry and dan -

the Legitimation factor (nostalgia for an academe as 'arbitor of culture') is running pretty high in thse reviews. 'naturally', there's some clause in there about readership over time or something, but I think maria's read is accurate in the case of the kirkus thing, viz., this guy doesn't know his ass from an apple unless the difference has been handed down by generations of esteemed professors. (note: read diacritic in "esteem-ed" for special high-comic effect).

Anyway, I don't think JS has been doing too badly in the readership dept. - outside of the English Dept. (of the spirit), that is. I'm not sure in "the trial of rigorous critical appraisal" he doesn't end up sentencing judge, prosecution, and defense.

sort of funny, too, that he's now a genuine Beat poet,
just by virtue of having been writing in SFCA at the
time - purely circumstantial evidence, if you ask me.

chris - a nonsense syllable invented by the poet

..

Christopher W. Alexander etc. / nominative press collective

email: [REDACTED]

snail-mail: P.O. Box 522402 / Salt Lake City UT 84152-2402

press/zine site: <http://choengmon.lib.utah.edu/~calexand/nonce/>

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697. **henry**

Re: The Bloated Professoriate (vs. Spicer)

Thu 28 May 1998

The "classic" bit is complicated by the fact that Willa Cather consciously worked for it. She was expert in Latin, loved Virgil, & aimed for a "classic" restraint, clarity & proportion - like Frost - another anomaly in the canon -

- Henry G.

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698. **Simon/Piombino**

Stuttering

Thu 28 May 1998

"Dear Rachel, about aphasia you're right, but she was she and really

Roman Jakobson

had it, unlike Mark who first suggested it years ago as an idea

language forgotten this theory, this disease as metaphor

about poetry, how it is written anyway, of course it was right

stutterer

for me child, one day I would meet a real one, some

silent

contiguity disorder

whether the wind blew through. she was tattered. a presence."

(from "A Reading 1-7" by Beverly Dahlen)

-Nick Piombino

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699. **Maria Damon**

rePartch

Thu 28 May 1998

could someone please repost or backchannel me the email address to contact if we're interested in the Partch collection? i've been asked to forward it to someone at U Wisconsin-Milwaukee. thanks in asap advance --md

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700. **M. L. Weber**

call for prose submissions by women

Thu 28 May 1998

Sugar Mule, a literary magazine, still needs prose (any genre) for its fourth issue. Please send via ascii or MS Word attachment by June 15th to:

██████████

Previous issues have included Jane Augustine, Kate Wheeler, Lance Olsen, Pierre Joris, Paul Hoover, Rochelle Ratner and Michael Heller.

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701. **Brian Clements**

Best Texas Writing 1 available

Thu 28 May 1998

This is just a brief notice that our anthology of Texas literature, *_Best Texas Writing 1_*, will be available in mid-June.

*_Best Texas Writing 1_* features work by the following authors:

Poetry by Bruce Bond, Gerald Burns, Michelle Byrne, Lyman Grant, Albert Huffstickler, B.D. Love, Jack Myers, Isabel Nathaniel, Naomi Shihab Nye, Kathleen Peirce, James Michael Robbins, Patiann Rogers, and William Wenthe.

Fiction by Chris Haven, Molly Moynahan, Paul Ruffin, and Daryl Scroggins.

Essays and journalism by Jeff Davis, Clay Reynolds, Paul Sampson, Frederick Turner, Marion Winik, and Bryan Wooley.

If you'd like to beat the rush, you can order now. Copies are \$15, postpaid, and we will ship to you on a priority basis the minute we get books. If you prefer to wait, you can pick up a copy starting in July via Amazon.com. Prices are the same either way. If you are at all interested, I encourage you to order early as we have received such considerable interest in-state that we anticipate selling out the first print run fairly quickly.

It is probably worth mentioning again that no one at Rancho Loco Press takes a salary and that all proceeds from BTW will be plowed back into publishing contemporary literature.

To order, send a check or money order to:

Rancho Loco Press
1920 Abrams Parkway #382
Dallas TX 75214-3915

Best wishes,
Brian Clements and Joe Ahearn at Rancho Loco Press

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702. **dbkk**

Vs. Spicer

Fri 29 May 1998

Hi everyone it's Kevin Killian. Naturally interested in the discussion around Spicer. And very thrilled because the people from Wesleyan sent me an advance copy of the book the other day . . . so I can carry it around on buses, etc., make people want to read it. They say it will be in the stores in 2 weeks. (This book, for list members who are curious, is "Poet Be Like God: Jack Spicer and the San Francisco Renaissance," by me and Lewis Ellingham.)

Anyway, yes, it is disheartening that Kirkus Reviews printed the paragraph it did--even more so that Amazon.com features this review right under the part where it says, "Find out more about this book"! There's an equally dismissive review in "Library Journal," which covers not only my book but Peter Gizzi's edition of Spicer's lectures "The House that Jack Built" (also from Wesleyan), noting that Lew, Peter and I all live in California and **that's** why we are working under the assumption of Spicer's worth when he's so unpleasant. This review was signed, by David Kirby, Florida State University, Tallahassee, and I'd appreciate directions to his house if anyone has them. To send him ninjas, etc. under cover of the great Florida night.

However Publishers Weekly printed a great review, written by a young New York poet (of genius)--my new best friend--a man with astute vision and discernment--a man I plan to marry within the next few months . . . just kidding . . . but only a little . . .

What are you going to do? These reviews are indeed based, as Maria has said, on the aversion of the reviewers to something new, and they find it preposterous that a man they have never heard of is having whole books written about him. This shaking up of the canon is kind of discomfiting, I suppose. Wesleyan could have published a life of John Berryman instead, but no, they are gambling, perhaps, on Jack Spicer.

The man of the hour. I appreciated the Lingua Franca article "Radiohead" much more than did Mark Prejsnar . . . The writer, John Palatella, had to address a general intellectual audience, perhaps one largely unfamiliar with poetry, and he did a bang up job IMHO. Always I've wanted to appear in "Lingua Franca," but, not being in the academy saw little chance of it, having no students to harass, etc.

Jumping on band wagon, "Grand Street" will be printing two of the newly discovered Spicer poems in their next issue to appear momentarily. So that's good news.

I am so happy that the biography is finally on the verge of appearing. Over the years I've bugged everyone on the list asking for help of one kind or another, and so many of you came through for me, and therefore let me thank all of you for your kindness and forbearance and aid. Even those of you who never post any more, be happy for me, XXX Kevin K.

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703. **Dan Machlin**
Hofer/Machlin atZinc

Fri 29 May 1998

Jen Hofer
Dan Machlin

reading + new joint chapbook

Tuesday, June 2nd, 1998, 6:30 pm
Zinc Bar, New York, NY 90 W. Houston, \$3.00

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704. **George Bowering**

Re: The Bloated Professoriate (vs. Spicer)

Fri 29 May 1998

They both assume, because of their own ignorance, that Spicer is unimportant and unknown. Their familiarity with the contemporary poetry scene is (to put it kindly) minimal.

Apparently this has been going on for years. I remember that in the 60s it was pretty well a given in Canada that the important current US poets were like Olson, Creeley, Levertov, Spicer, Duncan. But then we would find out that in the US universities these people were either unknown or thought to be marginal. I wd hear of US academics who thought US poetry was a bunch of other people I had barely heard of, like Merwin and so on.

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

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705. **nuyopoman**

RapPo

Fri 29 May 1998

For yr rappin poetry delectations,

In United States of Poetry you'll find Michael Franti, D-Knowledge, Tracie Morris, Lord Buckley. In ALOUD there's RegE Gaines among many others. The Last Poet's newest, "Time Has Come," digs into ur-rap-po connects. For most recent: Eargasms, from the Brooklyn Moon scene, has Saul Williams, Ra Goddess, and Mike Ladd (who also has an album on Scratchy).

Bob Holman

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706. **F. W. Perrella**

5_trope - Web Del Sol

Fri 29 May 1998

You're invited to examine the current issue of

5_trope, a bleeding-edge prose and poetry zine headquartered at Web Del Sol.

http://webdelsol.com/5_trope

Gordon Lish, John Yau, and M. Sarki are among the current issue's contributors.

Your email feedback is encouraged. Thanks.

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707. **rsillima**

Spicer, Kirkus, etc

Fri 29 May 1998

I'm not a professor, but I've been bloated in my time.

Michael Coffey, who last I heard was still a list member here, works (or worked) for either Kirkus or Publishers Weekly. If the former, maybe he would have some insight into that bit of silliness. My own take is that the whole piece reflects a pretty common reviewer's anxiety about his/her role - - exacerbated by the fact that they know they don't understand the work -- which they try to resolve by writing as though "above" the subject.

As to the dismissal of Spicer, the book itself recounts the reaction of Ferlinghetti in like mind. People who don't pay attention to poetry really have no idea what these fault lines are. I can parody Creeley, say, in a company newsletter ("If you were going to join the 'net, what kind of PC would you get?") and no one will ever catch the reference. Think of how your parents and grandparents must have thought of Stein.

Speaking of which, good to see her boy Charles on the list again!

Ron Silliman

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708. **Susan Wheeler**

Book Party

Fri 29 May 1998

Listees in the neighborhood are invited to a party for the publication of Smokes, my collection from Four Way Books, on Tuesday, June 2, 6:30 - 8:30 at Teachers & Writers Collaborative, 5 Union Square West.

Speaking of PW, its review of Smokes opens: "Often a dance of malapropism, jarring surrealist and pop imagery, violent pastiche and merciless non sequiturs, Wheeler's second book falls somewhere between John Ashbery and Charles Bernstein in its high-end schtick appropriation and baroque, metaphysical strains." Apologies to both!

Susan Wheeler

voice/fax [REDACTED]

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709. **Erik Sweet**
Bookstores for Cheap

Fri 29 May 1998

Hello, Just a few months ago, somebody at a bookstore in Maine posted that they offered a discount to poetics list members-
Backchannel me with a phone number/address please -

"All MC's are Poets" erik sweet

p.s. Jordan Davis wake up and get back to me about that day in August--

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710. **Maria Damon**
Re: Vs. Spicer

Fri 29 May 1998

hiya kev; i'm excited to get MY copy from wesleyan, hasn't arrived yet...but i've been teaching spicer and a bunch of students are writing final papers on him (ugrads, so don't get all excited), i delight in turning on a handful of young minnesotans every year...don't worry abt those stupid reviews, i mean, whaddya gonna do. these folks wouldn't even know that spicer was unpleasant if you hadn't written that book; they wouldn't even know the name. big fat congrats!

At 10:15 PM -0700 5/28/98, [REDACTED] wrote:

>Hi everyone it's Kevin Killian. Naturally interested in the discussion
>around Spicer. And very thrilled because the people from Wesleyan sent me
>an advance copy of the book the other day . . . so I can carry it around on
>buses, etc., make people want to read it. They say it will be in the
>stores in 2 weeks. (This book, for list members who are curious, is "Poet
>Be Like God: Jack Spicer and the San Francisco Renaissance," by me and
>Lewis Ellingham.)

>

>Anyway, yes, it is disheartening that Kirkus Reviews printed the paragraph
>it did--even more so that Amazon.com features this review right under the
>part where it says, "Find out more about this book"! There's an equally
>dismissive review in "Library Journal," which covers not only my book but
>Peter Gizzi's edition of Spicer's lectures "The House that Jack Built"
>(also from Wesleyan), noting that Lew, Peter and I all live in California

>and *that's* why we are working under the assumption of Spicer's worth when
>he's so unpleasant. This review was signed, by David Kirby, Florida State
>University, Tallahassee, and I'd appreciate directions to his house if
>anyone has them. To send him ninjas, etc. under cover of the great Florida
>night.

>

>However Publishers Weekly printed a great review, written by a young New
>York poet (of genius)--my new best friend--a man with astute vision and
>discernment--a man I plan to marry within the next few months . . . just
>kidding . . . but only a little . . .

>

>What are you going to do? These reviews are indeed based, as Maria has
>said, on the aversion of the reviewers to something new, and they find it
>preposterous that a man they have never heard of is having whole books
>written about him. This shaking up of the canon is kind of discomfiting, I
>suppose. Wesleyan could have published a life of John Berryman instead,
>but no, they are gambling, perhaps, on Jack Spicer.

>

>The man of the hour. I appreciated the Lingua Franca article "Radiohead"
>much more than did Mark Prejsnar . . . The writer, John Palatella, had to
>address a general intellectual audience, perhaps one largely unfamiliar
>with poetry, and he did a bang up job IMHO. Always I've wanted to appear
>in "Lingua Franca," but, not being in the academy saw little chance of it,
>having no students to harass, etc.

>

>Jumping on band wagon, "Grand Street" will be printing two of the newly
>discovered Spicer poems in their next issue to appear momentarily. So
>that's good news.

>

>I am so happy that the biography is finally on the verge of appearing.
>Over the years I've bugged everyone on the list asking for help of one kind
>or another, and so many of you came through for me, and therefore let me
>thank all of you for your kindness and forbearance and aid. Even those of
>you who never post any more, be happy for me, XXX Kevin K.

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711. **Maria Damon**

Re: Spicer Review

Fri 29 May 1998

At 4:56 PM -0400 5/29/98, DANIEL L. COLLIER wrote:

How about "The Poetics List Reviews" submissions to places like Amazon (which offers the--presumably heavily moderated--option to review books yourself)?

Danny
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

now this is a truly useful idea. anybody got any ideas abt how to make such a thing happen?

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712. **Mark Prejsnar**
kenning..a review

Fri 29 May 1998

Folks should check out the new mag, Kenning. The first issue is very impressive...Nine poets and every one's worth paying attention to. Mark Wallace has 3 very acrid, spiky poems, which are in large part different from other work of his I've seen (tho' there are points of comparison). Since his various projects in chapbooks and mags all seem rather different from each other, but all urgent...It's very impressive folks. Juliana Spahr has something neat, language working out its own partial critique of itself (the strategy of her book *Response*). My fellow @lantan John Lowther has what I consider one of his best things, which builds a musically-driven counter-narrative around fragments of Proust.

But my favorite, or at least the newest and most piquant, are the word-square acrostic-derivation procedural sonnets by Dan Zimmerman. (Believe me, it would take too long: get the issue and see 'em)

Editor Durgin has a meditation on poetix which is worth reading, and the graphic on the cover (neo 1917 parasoviet futurism) is really neat.

Things by John Kinsella and Stephen Ellis (whose blockish circumpolitical meditational poems almost bog down in their playfully lugubrious diction, but don't; and make an important foil for Wallace's existential alienational leftism...) ..those are also top notch.

And all the poets I haven't mentioned are above the norm.

As someone who's been doing this sort of thing for a while now I think this one is starting off brilliantly.

the details:

kenning

Patrick Durgin (checks payable to him)

418 Brown St., #10

Iowa City, IA 52245

\$4 for issue one

\$5 for issue two

\$9.50 for subscription

--Mark Prejsnar

@lanta

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713. **Douglas Barbour**

Re: Spicer

Fri 29 May 1998

If these reviewers/writers don't know about Spicer it may be that they 'know' what little of contemporary poetry they know through such anthologies as the regular Norton, where Spicer is non-existent. If such anthologies create the canon as 'the' academy knows it (after all some of us who admire & love Spicer are in 'some' academy, neh?), then their ignorance of his work & his influence is not hard to understand. I seem to remember some comments about how difficult it is to put Spicer in any anthology awhile back, but one of the shorter serial poems, something like *_A Red Wheelbarrow_*, or one of the series from *_A Book of Magazine Verse_*, or one of the 'books' from *_The Holy Grail_* would at least give something of his work's flavour... Not that anthologies are the best teaching tool, but they sure are the major one, & Spicer's absence in the ones most used helps explain such comments as have been reproduced here recently...

=====

Douglas Barbour

Department of English

University of Alberta

Edmonton Alberta T6G 2E5

██████████ FAX: ██████████

H: ██████████

~~~~~

walking in dark

waking in dark the presence of all

the absences we have known.    Oceans.  
so we are distinguished to ourselves  
don't want that distinction.  
I am afraid.    I said that.    I said that  
for you.

Phyllis Webb

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714. **Prageeta Sharma**

**brooklyn reading**

*Fri 29 May 1998*

---

Hi everyone! Please come hear katy lederer, vikas menon, and camille guthrie read poetry on sunday, may 31, at the fall cafe @3pm, 307 smith street. Take the f or g train to Carroll street station and walk a block! thanks, see you there, Prageeta

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715. **Mark Prejsnar**

**Jonathan Brannen..**

*Fri 29 May 1998*

---

I've been reading Jonathan Brannen's The Glass Man Left Waltzing, which is a little recent chapbook from Meow Press. I recommend that people check it out. It's a single long poem "occasioned by the centennial of Whitman's death." WW is bigness and broad gestures, for better and for worse. (Also somewhat small ones sometimes, that's what a lot of people miss...But the first point stands) I'd say Brennan's words try to encompass that largeness and breadth by wrapping around it...by twisting and turning. As physical movement and phrasal turn, the best descriptor for the verse might be, loosened-up Zukofsky. Very shiftingly, like refractions in water (a haunting image thru-out the poem) sections and riffs glance off walt's obsessive themes: the sensual body, death, sex, war's violence. Interesting spiral of the verse.

after roaming many pavements  
in some deep recesses  
far from the clank intervals  
grazing the hirsute stars  
time compacts mystery  
and modern reports  
this is life  
come to the surface  
underfoot overhead sun

A very adroit & gripping poem. Worth seeing.

Mark P.

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716. **morpheal**

**Re: mythology [followed by DADDY, construction, and silence]**

Fri 29 May 1998

---

*situation- all he does is pre-program hits by Bowie , The Police etc and re-represent them-People don't care- originality,....*

All of that then becomes another small part of the sonic jungle, where the deconstruction and destruction of sense of meaning becomes normative.

What is important is that the "work of art" is an essentially disassociative scramble of what is essentially a concatenation of ideas from someone else's minds. It is not a "new creation" but a violent deconstruction of previous creations that were created by others. That becomes the essence of it.

Keep in mind also that we live on a planet where a large portion of its inhabitants despises every element of our artistic culture, and particularly the lyrics of our music. They have technology also. They are not cave dwellers.

So, I sometimes wonder if we are at war.....in a new sense of that.

*Is our culture mimicing technology by moving in circles and borrowing "retro" styles and bringing things back from the 70s (such as Kraftwerk and disco culture)or are we standing still?*

Any fragment can be made into a circle.

Is technology mimicking culture, but according to its own designs ?

That would be a better question.

M.

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717. **William Burmeister Prod**

**Re: Vs. Spicer**

Fri 29 May 1998

---

*Hi everyone it's Kevin Killian. Naturally interested in the discussion around Spicer...*

*Anyway, yes, it is disheartening that Kirkus Reviews printed the paragraph it did--even more so that Amazon.com features this review right under the part where it says, "Find out more about this book"! There's an equally dismissive review in "Library Journal," which covers not only my book but Peter Gizzi's edition of Spicer's lectures "The House that Jack Built"*

(also from Wesleyan), noting that Lew, Peter and I all live in California and *\*that's\** why we are working under the assumption of Spicer's worth when he's so unpleasant.

*This review was signed, by David Kirby, Florida State University, Tallahassee, and I'd appreciate directions to his house if anyone has them. To send him ninjas, etc. under cover of the great Florida night.*

Let me know when you find out where the dastardly fellow is--I'll dispatch some hoplites to lick 'em--should be there by nightfall.

William

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718. **R. Gancie**

***'the study of the self has been objectified'***

*Fri 29 May 1998*

---

"Epistemology aims, of course, at intersubjective and, if possible, objective knowledge. But if knowledge of the self, in an objective sense, is impossible, then epistemology as an objective science would be impaired. The concept of objective self-knowledge would be self-contradictory, inconsistent, a vicious circle. This argument was put forth by Kant. He maintained, for instance, that "I cannot obtain the least representation of a thinking being by means of external experience, but solely through self-consciousness." This might have been true in Kant's time. Until recently, knowledge of the self was possible only through introspection. But, in the meantime, we have developed cognitive technologies which free the study of self from subjectivism. Psychology, neurobiology, artificial intelligence provide insights into the workings of the self. Although this will remain extremely difficult and although we might never get the information we want, the study of the self has been objectified."---from On Supposed Circularities in an Empirically Oriented Epistemology by Gerhard Vollmer---cp

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719. **Erik Sweet**

***Re: mythology [followed by DADDY, construction, and silence]***

*Fri 29 May 1998*

---

In a message dated 5/29/98 10:27:35 AM, you wrote:

<<All of that then becomes another small part of the sonic jungle, where the deconstruction and destruction of sense of meaning becomes normative.

What is important is that the "work of art" is an essentially disassociative scramble of what is essentially a concatenation of ideas from someone else's minds. It is not a "new creation" but a violent deconstruction of previous creations that were created by others. That becomes the essence of it.>>

I think I made that pretty clear by stating that current artists are sampling and have been for decades, other ideas...as far as an "essentially disassociative scramble of what is essentially a concatenation of ideas from someone else's minds"

wouldn't it be easier to just say "borrowing"?

<<Keep in mind also that we live on a planet where a large portion of its inhabitants despises every element of our artistic culture, and particularly the lyrics of our music. They have technology also. They are not cave dwellers>>

To say that a large portion of earth's inhabitant's despises "every element of our artistic culture" to presuppose that "our" means art as you see it, I see "They" as a classic "duality" situation an (us vs them mentality-) as far as people on this planet despising art, "they" probably should, as it as defined as "our artistic culture" shouldn't matter to anyone outside the "local community-"

Who are "They who have technology and are not cave dwellers" I am not following how this had anything to do with my reference to Puff Daddy and sampling...

So, I sometimes wonder if we are at war.....in a new sense of that.  
>>

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720. **Mark Weiss**  
**Re: Spicer Review**  
*Fri 29 May 1998*

---

After each book Amazon lists the options.

At 08:46 AM 5/29/98 -0500, you wrote:

>At 4:56 PM -0400 5/29/98, DANIEL L. COLLIER wrote:

>

>>

>>How about "The Poetics List Reviews" submissions to places

>>like Amazon (which offers the--presumably heavily

>>moderated--option to review books yourself)?

>>

>>Danny

>> [REDACTED]

>> [REDACTED]  
>>  
>  
>now this is a truly useful idea. anybody got any ideas abt how to make  
>such a thing happen?  
>  
>

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721. **MAYHEW**  
***How to be great***  
*Fri 29 May 1998*

---

Was Spicer antisemitic? This comes as news to me. I would like to think the Kirkus review (which I have not seen) is a parody but it probably isn't.

For those interested in recent Spanish poetry--my article entitled "How to be Great: Canonical Strategies in Recent Spanish Poetry" is out in *\_Revista de Estudios Hispánicos\_* (May 1998). I argue that poets can get famous fast by ably imitating already canonical styles. It isn't a full fledged scholarly article, just a relatively breezy MLA talk.

Jonathan Mayhew  
Department of Spanish and Portuguese  
University of Kansas

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722. **DANIEL L. COLLIER**  
***Re: Spicer Review***  
*Fri 29 May 1998*

---

I did a brief search to answer my own question about these Kirkus folks. From their own information, how they ever decided to review Spicer & Kharms is a mystery. Also, it's not clear how "professorial" they are; they seem to be simply in the business of generating large quantities of reviews. Kirkus excerpts appear on the web pages of several mass-market publishers and on lots 'o personal "this is my book" web pages. They are always listed as "Kirkus Reviews," with no author named.

For the curious few, I've attached a sample of what my search turned up. #1 below looks like a student response to the glorious folks at K with interesting echoes of the list's responses. #2 is promotional info about K from a web page (not their own; apparently they have no web page & someone with a related name got so many misdirected hits they posted basic Kirkus info in an attempt

to turn away queries). #3 is a sample Kirkus review which is different from the two we've discussed, yet too bizarre to pass over.

How about "The Poetics List Reviews" submissions to places like Amazon (which offers the--presumably heavily moderated--option to review books yourself)?

Danny



1.Posted by John Burke on March 13, 1998 at 23:36:27: In Reply to: Final posting on Tim O'Brien--PLEASE READ NOW! posted by S.H. on March 07, 1998 at 23:47:20:

The second review of In the Lake of the Woods does not do the book justice. I would like to know who wrote that review. I'm not saying I know any more about post-modernism than what we studied in class, and I can see the elements in the book. A person writing book reviews, I'm assuming, should know something about it. The reviewer simply chops the book down to the bare essentials, and then claims that there is nothing underneath. I think whoever wrote this needs to take our class and then read it again.

2.

Kirkus Reviews accepts approximately 5,000 new fiction, nonfiction, and children's titles, both hardcover and trade-paperback, each year for review. However, many thousands more are submitted that are not reviewed. The editors make these individual judgments based on many separate factors, including merit or potential interest.

The editors at Kirkus Reviews will consider any new fiction, nonfiction, or children's title for review in galley or other form. All submissions must be received in duplicate at least three months, preferably longer, before publication date.

Kirkus Reviews does not review the following:

- self-published books
- mass-market books
- textbooks
- specialized, technical or professional works.

Kirkus Reviews very rarely reviews the following:

- reprints
- picture-albums
- books of lists



compendiums of information (travel guides, etc.)  
instructional manuals  
self-help books  
academic works directed chiefly to an academic audience

#### More Information

For additional guidelines, a sample issue of Kirkus Reviews, or information as to the status of a title already submitted, please fax your request to MARY DALEY, Assistant to the Editors, at [REDACTED].

3.

Review of Ron Dakron's *\_Hammers\_*, from Mr. Dakron's web page. Kirkus Reviews, August 15, 1997:

"Ne plus ultra bizarre, man! With cartilaginous prose, soft as fishbone, sense-bending and scattershot as a Robin Williams shtick where lost meanings blast by, Dakron's third [novel] follows the comet trails of *Infra* and *Newt* with a morphological plot out of Ovid by way of Kafka."

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#### 723. **Kristen Gallagher**

##### ***pound online?***

*Fri 29 May 1998*

---

wondering if anyone knows if *\_the cantos\_* can be found online? i have the book - but would like to word search on line if possible.

help!?

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#### 724. **Brian Clements**

##### ***McHenry query***

*Fri 29 May 1998*

---

Hello List,

Does anyone have a mailing address for Eric McHenry?

Thanks,

Brian Clements

~~~~~

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725. **joel lewis**

f.yi.

Fri 29 May 1998

Use of Hitler in Thai snack advertisement slammed

BANGKOK, May 29 (Reuters) - Israeli embassy officials on Friday said the use of German tyrant Adolf Hitler in an advertising campaign for potato crisps in Thailand was ``disgusting."

The campaign on local Thai television shows Hitler in military uniform tasting the crisps and giving the Nazi salute. The ad ends with Hitler in front of a Nazi flag as the swastika changes into the logo of the crisp brand.

``I think that the advertisement is in some ways disgusting, it's not something you laugh at. I don't laugh at it even though it is making fun of him," said an spokeswoman at the Israeli embassy in Bangkok.

She said the matter was being brought to the attention of senior Israeli diplomats but that they had not yet seen the two-week-old ad.

The local arm of international advertising agency Leo Burnett Worldwide Inc, which created the ad, said it was designed to be humorous.

``We have brought up the concept that Hitler or anyone who tastes the potato chips will go crazy for it," said a company spokesperson.

The advertising campaign was also being run in poster form around the capital city Bangkok, including on the backs of the city's trademark motorised rickshaws or ``Tuk Tuk."

^REUTERS@

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726. **Marcella Durand**

June readings at Poetry Project

Fri 29 May 1998

Two readings coming up this week at the Poetry Project, St. Mark's Church in the Bowery:

Monday, June 1st: A Reading by Kenneth Koch to celebrate the publication of his latest collection of poems, "Straits"

Wednesday, June 3rd: A Celebration of the publication of "An Anthology of New (American) Poets" with Lisa Jarnot, Eleni Sikelianos, Jordan Davis, Chris Stroffolino and many more!

Both readings are at 8 pm.

Call [REDACTED] for more information.

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727. **Peter Balestrieri**

Quo Vadis?

Fri 29 May 1998

Having read some pretty strong endorsements of Rochelle Owens' work, particularly that it is very "raw" and "wild," I queried the List to see if anyone could recommend a representative text to me. I received a number of generous responses (thanks to all) and purchased her New and Selected Poems from Junction/Mark Weiss. Mark was very helpful and I am very grateful to him. However, I do not find Owens' work to be particularly "wild" (though some was sexually explicit) and seriously disagree with the hyperbolic blurbs on the book jacket. I admire Owens' poetry but find it pretty tame in terms of form and content. To me, "wild" is Chris Alexander's n/formation (<http://choengmon.lib.utah.edu/~calexand/nonce/nonce.html>), Mark Peters' wonderful new site, Deluxe Rubber Chicken (<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/eazines/deluxe/>), or the recent amazing posts by Alan Myouka Sondheim such as NAKED ALAN AND NIKUKO NAKED COPY AND RUN AROUND SOME FILES. This is only my opinion and I am not saying that Owens' work was not "wild" at one time or that the opinions of others on this List aren't valid. I'm saying that challenging, innovative work is all over the place, including this List, and I don't see much discussion of it somewhere that's supposed to be devoted to it. Almost no one has commented in any way (including me - I wrote to him backchannel) to/about the Sondheim posts. That's very discouraging. I'm hoping that this post will encourage people to engage in some dialog about the new work that gets ignored because it doesn't conform to an older definition of avant-garde work, one that is increasingly codified and canonized. Thanks.

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728. **david bromige**

re : susan wheeler's book (party)

Fri 29 May 1998

Susan & Fellow-Listophiles : to the charge of "merciless non sequiturs" leveled against the book _Smokes_ (and with the Kirkus review of Spicer in mind) let me quote a brief poem from my book _The Harbormaster of Hong Kong_ :

non sequitur

i havent got there yet

db3

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729. **toddbaron**

Re: Love of (g-d)

Fri 29 May 1998

Kevin:

What Spicer said:
(early one)

please write yr letters in blood as the ink washes off when I've cried
into them for a week and besides Dick Tracy could do something with them...

As I'm sure your work will do For Jack S.

love,

Todd Baron

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730. **Billy Little**

Re: Byrd's reply 2 Alex and droffolino's quest

Fri 29 May 1998

What the hell is holding up a Robert Duncan collected works
>including essays and all poems?
>come on, share ...

>

>erik sweet

ah he showed such promise as a youth Mr. B but then along came tenure and
he turned into a broody hen now he thinks he is the goose that laid these

golden eggs. once you obsess about intellectual property and unused the intellect fades and the hold on the property becomes a death grip, give them up Mr. B, let someone with intellect, credibility and desire get them out, withholding these teachings should be an indictable offense, my advice the thirsty in the desert is to transcribe the tapes, they almost always taped his talks often impromptu theme raps, i remember a long riff about mothers day at... maybe i'll go get that one he probably transcribed all his lectures at Santa Cruz but maybe they've got tapes, George Butterick might have made tapes of Duncan teaching Pound, Chuck Stein might know if those exist at Storrs and give your children that medicine and they will be well heeled, nearly wheeld, My understanding, i'm no lawyer, but i've always proceeded from the idea that if you're not making a profit from it it's not breaking the copyright of course if you give away enough copies you could saturate the miniscule market, but hoarding Duncan as an academic relic you deprive him of his rightful prominence as a gay culture hero, we're talking bout the american goethe, the american rumi(i prefer to think of Blaser as the canadian rumi) and this hoarding in a boomerang hurts the estate of HD for example if i were hd's publisher i'd sue mr. b for alienation of affections, thousands of he-men will be scurrying to hilda's work once the hd book is generally available do you believe your poetry should be read or do you beleaf your poetry should make you money, sing your poems? write songs! write prayers? make ethel merman reincarnate in your diaphragm belt them chants them mantra god's way out in that tree, hanging upside down my belief includes the gospel according to Thomas where Jesus says from the middle of the round dance,"those who have not entered the dance have mistaken the act" robert duncan ought to be on a stamp, hell he aught to be on the money imagine like monroe on the fifty? duncan on the buffalo nickel. duncan said he didn't need to take drugs he looked out the window and their were faces in the trees without them what more did he want? one of the few happily married poets i've known he was mischievous some would say viscious but his brilliance was a great aid to digestion he was constantly being attacked the gay world and the poetry world both catty worlds in usa less so canada though geo bowering and brian fawcett and sharon thesen can be plenty catty so can george Stanley even roy kiyouka could be catty bp tried to be catty but it came out witty he was too generous lionel kearns stays home because he's incapable of catty his hearts too big it's an easy target frank davey couldn't lower himself to catty he and bromige are sang froid inc. which is not to say david can't be catty.

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731. **Billy Little**

Re: How to be great

Fri 29 May 1998

i don't think he hated jews any more than he hated anyone or should i say everyone else i like to remember when bob marley was reading jack spicer, jim morrison had passed it on, heads of the town on to jimmy cliff who couldn't make hide nor hair of it and passed it on to reggae history, spicer's story could be filmed in noire mcclure climbing in th window and stealing billy the kid right from jack's stupourous dream fully clothed on the couch radio blaring, the renaissance never ended for jocko he ran a court he consorted with others who ran courts some overlapping they shared a love for the classics, the current enactment of the myth which they lived through dionysus or crass bacchus tubby bacchus, latin, greek, language, dante, lyric pound, epic pound, stevens, josephine miles, creeley, ginsberg, like blackburn troubadour courts, trobar clus, jack spicer was born dancing, his little blue fist wrapped around the heart of his partner.

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732. **Tom Orange**

Quo Vadis?

Sat 30 May 1998

peter,

yr post strikes a chord with me, as a long while back i voiced a similar observation on alan's work, which blips thru these screens quite regularly so as to become paradoxically commonplace and yet remain extraordinary each time. (there's a coupla books worth of his stuff sitting in the list archives, some of which chris alexander nicely brought out in chap form.) the lack of response is in part the nature of the beast(s), namely one, the volume of daily list traffic, and two, the kind of engagement that anything other than a superfluous response to his work demands.

just last week someone posted a few poems by jeff clark, and having just finished that book i cast my line into the waters with a few tentative takes on the work, with nary a nibble in response.

dont think people are disinclined to discuss new (or old!) work here, all depends on time/energy/will to engage i guess. surely one reason to stay tuned in is to keep up with all the work that's circulating out there...

cheers,
t.

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733. **Otis Rush**

(no subject)

Sat 30 May 1998

Hi. I'm not sure what the protocol is. But I feel that I'm eavesdropping - & perhaps saying "Hullo" will make me feel as tho I'm in the same room as everyone else, even if I'm doing less talking. That is, I ASSUME I'll be doing less talking, as its a US Poets list & I'm an Australian poet. My name's Ken Bolton. I publish a magazine, Otis Rush (hence my email address) & Little Esther Books. The Otis Rush website is at <http://www.eaf.asn.au/otisrush.html> should anyone be curious.

Having said Hullo I should add "don't mind me" & sign off.

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734. **Alan Myouka Sondheim**

of the third

Sat 30 May 1998

-

Italian into English from English:

The of telephones enters into the question when I find
It inserted into my body; what ring, ring true
Against all odds OF thick encumbered flesh. O who
Would you, deep within ME, the sound OF your voice
Stalking my own, talking so CLOSE, hard to the bone?

My toes sieve dirt; they pressure earth to vaginate,
Scrape this flesh against every OTHER who has walked
Thesis of shores. They DO come bake for more, the violence
OF legs. They draw the writing into the sand. They sink
Beneath the waves. Chaos is NOT noise; it behaves.

The dream is inaccessible. The dream suspends, objects
Hardly there or within the air; they case, smash. Sound
Come from a of telephones buried deep within; muffled,
NOT-HUNG matters into the verb's domain. Fear lurks, or
Yells a bit. Into the dream there is a moan. Fear stalks.

I DO NOT have a body, she replied. It which yesterday or
Earlier; it died, or so they say. They have always been
Saying. They call ME UP into the middle OF the night. I to
In fright. They call ME and I press my legs against the
Bed. Perhaps I at DEAD; my toes hurt covered with dirt.

German into English from English:

The telephone enters into the question when the find
It inserted into my body; what rings, rings true
Against all odds of thick encumbered flesh. Or who
Would you be, deep within me, the sound of your voice
Stalking my own, talking I know close, hard to the bone?

My toes sieve dirt; they vaginate pressure earth to,
Scrape this flesh against every other who has walked
These shores. They I give like back for more, the violence
Of legs. They draw the writing in the sand. They sink
Beneath the waves. Chaos is not noise; it behaves.

The dream is inaccessible. The dream suspends, objects
Hardly to there or within the air; they fall, smash. Sounds
Like from a telephone buried deep within; muffled,
Nothing matters in the verb's domain. Fear lurks, or
Yells to bit. In the dream there is to moan. Fear stalks.

I give not have body, she replied. It was yesterday or
Earlier; it died, or I know they say. They have always been
Saying. They call me up in the middle of the night. The am
In fright. They call me and the press my legs against the
Bed. Perhaps the am dead; my toes hurt covered with dirt.

English:

The telephone enters into the question when I find
It inserted into my body; what rings, rings true
Against all odds of thick encumbered flesh. O who
Would you be, deep within me, the sound of your voice
Stalking my own, talking so close, hard to the bone?

My toes sieve dirt; they pressure earth to vaginate,
Scrape this flesh against every other who has walked
These shores. They do come back for more, the violence
Of legs. They draw the writing in the sand. They sink
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Come from a telephone buried deep within; muffled,
Nothing matters in the verb's domain. Fear lurks, or
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I do not have a body, she replied. It was yesterday or Earlier; it died, or so they say. They have always been Saying. They call me up in the middle of the night. I am In fright. They call me and I press my legs against the Bed. Perhaps I am dead; my toes hurt covered with dirt.

(Original from a 1995 work.)

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735. **sylvester pollet**
(no subject)

Sat 30 May 1998

At 4:43 PM +0930 5/30/98, Otis Rush wrote:

>Hi. I'm not sure what the protocol is. But I feel that I'm evesdropping
>- & perhaps saying "Hullo" will make me feel as tho I'm in the same room
>as everyone else, even if I'm doing less talking. That is, I ASSUME I'll
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>name's Ken Bolton. I publish a magazine, Otis Rush (hence my email
>address) & Little Esther Books. The Otis Rush website is at
>http://www.eaf.asn.au/otisrush.html should anyone be curious.
>
>Having said Hullo I should add "don't mind me" & sign off.

Hullo! (If that's how you spell it down there.) As far as I can tell, this is an international list, and who speaks, speaks. S.

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736. **Maria Damon**
Re: Quo Vadis?

Sat 30 May 1998

i am a big fan of alan's work, and i used to rave and gush everytime he posted a poem, either front or backchannel. i don't do it every time tho, but i think he knows of my admiration. n'est-ce pas, alain?

At 12:53 AM -0400 5/30/98, Tom Orange wrote:

>peter,
>
>yr post strikes a chord with me, as a long while back i voiced a similar
>observation on alan's work, which blips thru these screens quite regularly
>so as to become paradoxically commonplace and yet remain extraordinary
>each time. (there's a coupla books worth of his stuff sitting in the list

>archives, some of which chris alexander nicely brought out in chap form.)
>the lack of response is in part the nature of the beast(s), namely one,
>the volume of daily list traffic, and two, the kind of engagement that
>anything other than a superfluous response to his work demands.
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>just last week someone posted a few poems by jeff clark, and having just
>finished that book i cast my line into the waters with a few tentative
>takes on the work, with nary a nibble in response.
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>dont think people are disinclined to discuss new (or old!) work here, all
>depends on time/energy/will to engage i guess. surely one reason to stay
>tuned in is to keep up with all the work that's circulating out there...
>
>cheers,
>t.

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737. **charles alexander**

permission

Sat 30 May 1998

I'm finding the recent discussion of "permission" most engaging, from one to another senses, including the mathematical, and all manner of possibility coming out of Duncan's "Often I am permitted . . . "

So, though I would share the following, from a collaborative work in progress by Sheila Murphy and me.

row it through the reflection
and sew no things together
(hear, syllables, juxtapose)

emphatically, we do not
know what we are
doing here, and

we set up goal posts anyway
and void our promised histories
we can not share, or ask

or even choose which pro-
noun wakes us up in the
dream, where we have permission

charles alexander

charles alexander :: poet and book artist :: [REDACTED]
chax press :: alexander writing/design/publishing
NOTE NEW URL FOR CHAX PRESS <http://alexwritdespub.com/chax>

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738. **Erik Sweet**
Robert Duncan

Sat 30 May 1998

In a message dated 5/29/98 11:53:44 PM, you wrote:

<<just last week someone posted a few poems by jeff clark, and having just finished that book i cast my line into the waters with a few tentative takes on the work, with nary a nibble in response.

>>

Especially the "Blownotes Section" of Clarks book is interesting, He also explores the narrative in a challenging weird way - You are right about discussing current work How about the new Creeley book, I picked it up and was amazed that the new work, especially "Dogs of Auckland" (yes i understand it was a chapbook first) is incredible- I have no lines to quote the only problem is that at 17.95 i cant buy it -Creeley is in master form! New Directions may have a good idea printing hardcovers but for me 17.95 is a lot for a paperback that is going to cost 7.95 in a year -at any rate it is worth the 17 dollars now at any rate Also What is up with Berthoff, is he preparing a manuscript of Duncan's work This is not fair when most libraries (SUNY Albany has a pretty good selection of small press poetry no doubt because of Don Byrd) But if you can not get a hold of most of Duncan's work for example "Ground Work" then it will hurt scholarship in that area- I get the feeling there are some games being played concerning this enlighten me folks, who is responsible?

erik sweet

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739. **david bromige**
quo vadis alan sondheim

Sat 30 May 1998

Like Maria, I have posted my admiration for Alan's poetry to the List more than once. But true, not for a while, and I regret being remiss. The recent poems were, as usually, amazing. I suppose I didnt want to make a habit of response or even more so, of positive response--didnt want it to look kneejerk. But I do find him a true trailblazer, I havent seen other work that incorporates this medium, cyberspace, as tellingly, that brings it and the tradition together so

brilliantly. The strangeness that I am not alone in wanting from poetry is never easy to come by. I find it in Alan's writing and am extremely grateful to him.

David

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740. **R. Gancie**
enlightenment

Sat 30 May 1998

"Let us not imagine history by formulas nor morality by theorems of algebra or of integral calculus."---Clauchy---cp

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741. **Nada Gordon**
Re: Quo Vadis?

Sat 30 May 1998

as a teacher of nikukos
and living always surrounded
by fetishizations of japanese women's sexuality
(on the street that leads to my school there are huge fluorescent signs
advertising anal licking by girls in sailor blouses and white cotton panties)
i cannot say that i am a fan of alan's work
although i appreciate its forms
i find the poems exoticize most stereotypically
Alan may be ironizing that
but to me
in my daily life
as a woman teaching young women (and men) to speak
and maneuver into adulthood
the irony doesn't help me
but confirms a certain rage or annoyance
even when it is mixed with borrowings
from profoundest tradition
or cutting-edge cyberwords
maybe it's different to read his nikuko poems
from the outside

but for me they're too close to home
they make me uncomfortable

even when i find them beautiful or skillful
(which is often)

that's why i don't comment
for fear of being sour or prissy

is there perhaps some dimension to the poems i'm just not *getting*? or is it
rather that i get too much? they are not some distant metaphor but my
experienced world?

-- nada "ume" gordon

*i am a big fan of alan's work, and i used to rave and gush everytime he
posted a poem, either front or backchannel. i don't do it every time tho,
but i think he knows of my admiration. n'est-ce pas, alain?*

*At 12:53 AM -0400 5/30/98, Tom Orange wrote:
peter,*

*yr post strikes a chord with me, as a long while back i voiced a similar
observation on alan's work, which blips thru these screens quite regularly
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the lack of response is in part the nature of the beast(s), namely one,
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anything other than a superfluous response to his work demands.*

*just last week someone posted a few poems by jeff clark, and having just
finished that book i cast my line into the waters with a few tentative
takes on the work, with nary a nibble in response.*

*dont think people are disinclined to discuss new (or old!) work here, all
depends on time/energy/will to engage i guess. surely one reason to stay
tuned in is to keep up with all the work that's circulating out there...*

*cheers,
t.*

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742. **charles alexander**

Re: Quo Vadis?

Sat 30 May 1998

Thank you, Nada "Ume" Gordon, for this informed, articulate, and deeply felt
response to Alan's work. While not having the context for it which you have, I

too have had more of an 'appreciation' with an underlying discomfort at its 'exoticizing.'

charles

At 08:08 AM 5/31/98 +0900, you wrote:

>as a teacher of nikukos

>

>and living always surrounded

>by fetishizations of japanese women's sexuality

>

>(on the street that leads to my school there are huge fluorescent signs

>advertising anal licking by girls in sailor blouses and white cotton

>panties)

>

>i cannot say that i am a fan of alan's work

>

>although i appreciate its forms

>

>i find the poems exoticize most stereotypically

>Alan may be ironizing that

>

>but to me

>in my daily life

>as a woman teaching young women (and men) to speak

>and maneuver into adulthood

>the irony doesn't help me

>

>but confirms a certain rage or annoyance

>

>even when it is mixed with borrowings

>from profoundest tradition

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>

>maybe it's different to read his nikuko poems

>from the outside

>

>but for me they're too close to home

>they make me uncomfortable

>

>even when i find them beautiful or skillful

>(which is often)

>

>that's why i don't comment
>for fear of being sour or prissy
>
>is there perhaps some dimension to the poems i'm just not *getting*?
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>but my xperienced world?
>
>-- nada "ume" gordon

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chax press :: alexander writing/design/publishing

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743. **david bromige**

Quo uncomfortable Vadis?

Sat 30 May 1998

With all due respect--and I say this as no empty phrase--for the opinions of Nada Gordon and my friend Charles Alexander, that Alan Sondheim's poems render me uncomfortable is part of what I prize in them. Gertrude Stein's 'fetishizing' of the language I found acutely uncomfortable, for years of learning. Robert Creeley's poetry, with its 'fetishizing' of the uncomfortable aspects of women, and of his male rage so confronted, "For love I would/split open your head and put/ a candle in/ behind the eyes," was also hard to take--arresting, I'd say. For years and years. The listing--surely what is being termed fetishizing in this debate--of a young sex object's body parts in a poem of Robert Duncan's, "The Torso", was equally a challenge to admit. In this vein, there are poems by Ginsberg that chafed, chafe. I suppose if there were neon signs in my neighborhood offering anal penetration with broom-handles, I might deplore the possible social consequences of his poem "Dear Master." To me, anything people do, or fantasize doing, is material for a poem, even while in another sense it is immaterial to a poem. What is telling is the intensity, the involvement and detachment, the ratios and timings, with which it is done. "Bombs opening like flowers"--who can forget that? Because I was nearly killed during The Blitz takes nothing away from that image. Political rectitude would be the death of poetry. That said, of course one is allowed whatever response or reaction s/he has to a poem. I speak up here today only because I would find "uncomfortable" a chilling grounds for the dismissal of a poem, and hope Charles and Nada may find it operates for them as an entrance to, rather than an exit from, Alan's work.

David

** although I may have forgotten the precise wording. "Exploding"? I believe it is from a poem by Gabriel D'Annunzio.

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744. **Hugh Steinberg**

Re: Fwd: 12 tones for Anton's bones (fwd)

Sat 30 May 1998

I have strong doubts about whether this happens to be true, because of one fairly obvious flaw: Fuchs was never a spy for the Nazis, he was a spy for the Soviets. Anyhow, why would the Nazis wish to funnel bomb secrets _to_ a scientist working at the Manhattan project, which was intended to create a bomb to be used against Germany? And is there any evidence that Fuchs and Schonberg met or corresponded with one another? And furthermore, how long would it take to compose, orchestrate and record a piece of serial music, then have it broadcast or otherwise distributed? Not the most efficient means of passing along information. Doesn't make much sense.

Hugh Steinberg

Composer Webern was Double Agent for Nazis

By Heinrich Kincaid

(c) The Associated Press

BERLIN, GERMANY (AP) - Recent admissions by an ex-Nazi official living in Argentina have confirmed what some musicologists have suspected for years: that early twentieth century German composer Anton Webern and his colleagues devised the so-called "serial" technique of music to encrypt messages to Nazi spies living in the United States and Britain.

In what can surely be considered the most brazen instance of Art Imitating Espionage to date, avant garde composers of the Hitler years working in conjunction with designers of the Nazi Enigma code were bamboozling unsuspecting audiences with their atonal thunderings while at the same time passing critical scientific data back and forth between nations.

"This calls into question the entire Second Viennese School of music," announced minimalist composer John Adams from his home in the Adirondack Mountains. "Ever since I first encountered compositions by Arnold Schonberg I wondered what the hell anyone ever heard in it. Now I know."

Gunned down by an American soldier in occupied Berlin, 62 year old Anton Webern's death was until now considered a tragic loss to the musical world. At the time the U.S. Army reported that the killing was "a

mistake", and that in stepping onto the street at night to smoke a cigarette Webern was violating a strict curfew rule.

It is now known that Webern was using music to shuttle Werner Heisenberg's discoveries in atomic energy to German spy Klaus Fuchs working on the Manhattan atom bomb project in New Mexico. .Due to the secret nature of the project, which was still underway after the invasion of Berlin, Army officials at the time were unable to describe the true reason for Webern's murder.

Hans Scherbius, a Nazi party official who worked with Minister of Propaganda Joseph Goebbels, admitted at age eighty-seven that the Nazis secretly were behind the twelve-tone technique of composition, which was officially reviled to give it the outlaw status it needed to remain outside of the larger public purview.

"These pieces were nothing more than cipher for encoding messages," he chuckled during an interview on his balcony in Buenos Aires. ."It was only because it was 'naughty' and difficult that elite audiences accepted it, even championed it."

Physicist Edward Teller, who kept a 9-foot Steinway piano in his apartment at the Los Alamos laboratory, was the unwitting deliverer of Heisenburg's data to Fuchs, who eagerly attended parties thrown by Teller, an enthusiastic booster of Webern's music.

Arnold Schonberg, the older musician who first devised the serial technique at the request of the Weimar government of Germany, composed in America to deliver bomb data stolen by Fuchs back to the Nazis, who worked feverishly to design their own atomic weapons.

As an example, Scherbius showed Associated Press reporters the score of Webern's Opus 30 "Variations for Orchestra" overlayed with a cardboard template. .The notes formed a mathematical grid that deciphered into German a comparison between the neutron release cross-sections of uranium isotopes 235 and 238.

Schonberg responded with a collection of songs for soprano and woodwinds that encrypted the chemical makeup of the polonium-beryllium initiator at the core of the Trinity explosion.

And in Japan, Toru Takemitsu took time out from his own neo-romanticism to transmit data via music of his nation's progress with the atom.

"The most curious thing about it," says composer Philip Glass in New York City, "is that musicians continued to write twelve-tone music after the war, even though they had no idea why it was really invented. Indeed, there are guys who are churning out serialism to this day."

Unlike the diatonic music, which is based on scales that have been agreed upon by listeners throughout the world for all of history, twelve-tone music treats each note of the chromatic scale with equal importance, and contains a built-in mathematical refusal to form chords that are pleasing by traditional standards. .Known also as serialism, the style has never been accepted outside of an elite cadre of musicians, who believe it is the only fresh and valid direction for post-Wagnerian classical music to go.

"Even if this is really true," states conductor Pierre Boulez, a composer who continues to utilize serial techniques, "the music has been vindicated by music critics for decades now. .I see no reason to suddenly invalidate an art form just because of some funny business at its inception."

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745. **Stephen Cope**

Fwd: 12 tones for Anton's bones (fwd)

Sun 31 May 1998

Had to pass this one along...

Stephen

For your interest--some story!

*air06.mail.aol.com (v43.19) with SMTP; Thu, 28 May 1998 10:28:51
-0400*

*by relay22.mx.aol.com (8.8.5/8.8.5/AOL-4.0.0)
with ESMTP id KAA07301 for <[REDACTED]>;
Thu, 28 May 1998 10:28:49 -0400 (EDT)*

*From: [REDACTED]
by is.nyu.edu (8.8.8/8.8.7) with SMTP id KAA26833
for <[REDACTED]>; Thu, 28 May 1998 10:28:49 -0400 (EDT)*

Date: Thu, 28 May 1998 10:28:49 -0400 (EDT)

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: 12 tones for Anton's bones (fwd)

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

Date: Wed, 27 May 1998 19:50:07 -0400

From: Gerry Hemingway <[REDACTED]>

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: 12 tones for Anton's bones

Hello Everyone,

Well this certainly got my attention, just in case you hadn't seen the paper lately....gh

Composer Webern was Double Agent for Nazis

By Heinrich Kincaid

(c) The Associated Press

BERLIN, GERMANY (AP) - Recent admissions by an ex-Nazi official living in Argentina have confirmed what some musicologists have suspected for years: that early twentieth century German composer Anton Webern and his colleagues devised the so-called "serial" technique of music to encrypt messages to Nazi spies living in the United States and Britain.

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"The most curious thing about it," says composer Philip Glass in New York City, "is that musicians continued to write twelve-tone music after the war, even though they had no idea why it was really invented. Indeed, there are guys who are churning out serialism to this day."

Unlike the diatonic music, which is based on scales that have been agreed upon by listeners throughout the world for all of history, twelve-tone music treats each note of the chromatic scale with equal importance, and contains a built-in mathematical refusal to form chords that are pleasing by traditional standards. Known also as serialism, the style has never been accepted outside of an elite cadre of musicians, who believe it is the only fresh and valid direction for post-Wagnerian classical music to go.

"Even if this is really true," states conductor Pierre Boulez, a composer who continues to utilize serial techniques, "the music has been vindicated by music critics for decades now. I see no reason to suddenly invalidate an art form just because of some funny business at

| *its inception."*

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746. **Alan Myouka Sondheim**

Re: Quo Vadis?

Sun 31 May 1998

I think I should say something here, wedge into the discussion.

For me, Nikuko is a person, not a stereotype. She is based most vaguely on a couple of people I know. She is also an actant.

The Japanese for years have borrowed and transformed from US and other cultures; the fact that I am working through various ideas in a reversal of that borrowing should not categorize it as defamatory in any way. I should add that I am not duplicating, not copying; I am changing, not Japan, not Japanese culture, nothing to do with that. Nor could I if I wanted to, nor do I know enough.

As far as exoticism goes, I do not think that way. I think of a yardstick between or among cultures or parts-objects of cultures, of denials, etc. If I use ukiyo-e for example, I know its degree of japoniserie.

The Japanese have pioneered in microelectronics, from Sanrio stuff to computer pets to Casio. Nikuko is just such a microelectronic. She is wearable and she wears me.

As far as the discomfort is concerned, that is deliberate. I wish to violate borders, violate gender, violate sexuality, violate PC, violate mythologies, including those of the reading of the "east" by the so-called "west" and vice versa - although the latter can only occur within a limited framework. Thus I was told by my efl class that New York was impossibly dangerous; very well, let us write dangerously, violently, to the degree say that the language inverts, turns on itself.

I do not want to write safely. I have no interest in that. I have no interest in PC; the nazis were the most PC group I can think of. If there is either an avant-garde or experimental tradition left, it has to move on, to probe, to discomfort, to dis-ease, as well as create stereotypical works of incandescent beauty. Unfortunately, language is no longer a virus; instead it is a sign of comfort, just as poetics and poetry have become signs of comfort. Even the experimental. Even the experimental "tradition."

Finally, I have no interest either in being an inspiration for moving people in or out of adulthood. Adulthood is not what it is cooked up to be; if anything, it is scars and contamination.

I have no desire to educate.

Alan

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747. **Tosh**

Re: Fwd: 12 tones for Anton's bones (fwd)

Sun 31 May 1998

This is a great story. Is someone pulling (our) my leg?

Tosh Berman

TamTam Books

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748. **Alan Myouka Sondheim**

situating

Sun 31 May 1998

The following may or may not help - I write a great deal of theory in relation to Nikuko, Alan, Jennifer, Julu (and others) - all of which, including the literary per se, is sent to the lists I co-moderate. The following short text was sent recently as a commentary on some of the more direct texts.

There is more of course at my urls.

Alan

URL: http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/~spoons/internet_txt.html MIRROR
with other pages at: http://www.anu.edu.au/english/internet_txt

Situating the recent texts -

(Think of them in relation to the following.)

1 Issues of departure, punctum - carrying mementos which then trigger, not memories, but reconstitutions - so that there are skeins of mementos resulting in articulating structures across membranes, emerging and building the membrane. Identity is lost among mementos, membrane, ego, background information which is always already a reconstitution itself.

2 Issues of sloughed, discarded, displaced, replaced identities - Nikuko, Jennifer, and Julu disappearing into "she," Alan as back-and-forth shuttle - again, a skein or membrane, in this case, of sliding functions of attributions, destabilized. Although the Net becomes a locus of stability, its fast-forward

development and easy avatar construction/transformation creates potentials for merging/submerging as well. Truth is replaced by functional or dysfunctional constructions.

3 Differentiations between local and non-local topographies, the latter, within the physical world, at an _absolute_ remove, no immanence, no transcendence. It is different on-line, and on-line global hyper-linking gives the false potential of imminence; only lag brings the machinery to the foreground for most users.

4 Among issues of slippage, skeins, membranes, science as _that structure_ differentiated from all others, in the sense of its core-theoretical arm-ature. Relating this to a writing-degree-zero (taken from Barthes of course), or a weakened absolute vis-a-vis the humanities.

5 Among issues of transcendence, a ruptured shintoism as god-generator, problematizing the distinction between "mundane" and "spiritual" in worlds among worlds, without redemption (which I do not believe is possible).

6 The author slides as well, and who is writing this outline or summarization, who is responsible for these words? Responsibility fragments as part-objects fly everywhere, as texts transform into sourceless clutter.

7 Nikuko continues to remain a nexus or problematic - of language, gender, positioning of the "name" or vector. _I would not be surprised to meet Alan on the street someday, no matter how much I am aware of the virtual,_ Nikuko says. Nikuko is a probe, the sensitive written skin or membrane of the analysis, both actant and residue.

8 Dream, lack, rim, touching the file / touching the body, continue to play roles as guiding metaphors. The _dream_ is an intermediary state among dreams and reals; _lack_ references ontological and epistemological issues; _rim_ relates to rim-job, effluvia, balancing, discomfort of intermediary states. Every file touched is a (virtual) body touched; every reference to Nikuko contributes to her body, is a performance by Nikuko. (Exalted) Positions are jostled; the destabilization results in semiotic sprays/splays emissions (of texts, part-objects, sputterings, mementos), gathered together across membranes, lamina...

9 The sexual, emotional, and political economies of Jennifer, Alan, Julu, and Nikuko, but I would let the others speak for that. Adolescent!

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749. **Simon DeDeo**

Re: Quo uncomfortable Vadis

Sun 31 May 1998

David --

I suppose the flip side to your point ("uncomfortable' a chilling grounds for the dismissal of a poem") is the position taken numerous times by Adrienne Rich (in her preface to her *Collected*, in an interview she did with APR a while back) to some of her own early work, where she finds herself disturbed by the way she takes the metaphor/image of South African diamond miners. I don't have the quotations here (far away from the library) -- perhaps someone could post a few if they think it worthwhile.

"Uncomfortable" certainly is a chilling ground for dismissal, if one takes uncomfortable to mean the unsettling of someone's attitude towards preconceived notions. But the blanket application of your assesment can be taken to legitimize homophobia, racism, you name it (no offense intended.) Americans are (rightly) terrified by the notion of censorship, and this terror can be manipulated.

In the APR interview, Rich is implicitly accused of being a "censor", and responds by saying something along the lines of "well, you certainly have to have some kind of internal censor if you're in a position of dissent in this country." I haven't read Alan's *Nikukos* (trying to track it down now over a slow connection), but Nada "Ume" Gordon's response seems to be one that cannot be dismissed or brushed away.

Perhaps I share Rich's POV on the source of language's power (which I've never really seen as self-generating out of its internal structure but instead a net of historical accidents -- perhaps this list might change that.) Not being aware of the realities of what you are referring to -- whether it be mining in South Africa or the exoticization of Asian women -- is no excuse; just as we would criticize a poet who confused details of the physical world, we should criticize one that confuses the political. Many would disagree -- I think the prevailing attitude among people who "prefer Rich's earlier work" is that she has gone too far, has lost touch with the "pure" response to language necessary to poetry.

How possible is it to abandon traditional approaches to content in an investigation of poetry that generates and relies upon manipulations and investigations of form?

-- Simon

Since this is my first post to the list, I thought I might continue Ken Bolton's tradition and say 'hullo'; I'm a student up in Massachusetts (although right now down in Aricebo, Puerto Rico), studying, in various ways, philosophy, literature

and mathematics. I also write; some of my work (mostly analytic) is up at <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~sdedeo/localpapers.html>, should anyone be interested.

----- inc below ----- To me, anything people do, or fantasize doing, is material for a poem, even while in another sense it is immaterial to a poem. What is telling is the intensity, the involvement and detachment, the ratios and timings, with which it is done. "Bombs opening like flowers"--who can forget that? Because I was nearly killed during The Blitz takes nothing away from that image. Political rectitude would be the death of poetry. That said, of course one is allowed whatever response or reaction s/he has to a poem. I speak up here today only because I would find "uncomfortable" a chilling grounds for the dismissal of a poem, and hope Charles and Nada may find it operates for them as an entrance to, rather than an exit from, Alan's work.

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750. **Alan Myouka Sondheim**
racism, etc.

Sun 31 May 1998

I want to add, re: the recent post, that "uncomfortable" does not mean condemnatory. I am not uncomfortable with racism; I deplore it - the same with sexism, etc. For me and possibly for David, although I can't speak for him of course, "uncomfortable" can imply something that invades the body, that takes over the mind, mirrors and shatters within - that contains, in other words, a degree of self-reflexivity, much like Kristeva's abject. That's a far cry from condoning any -ism at all.

Alan

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751. **Chris [Steve] Piuma**
Re: Fwd: 12 tones for Anton's bones (fwd)

Sun 31 May 1998

Tosh showed great grace and sensitivity to write on 98.05.31:

| *This is a great story. Is someone pulling (our) my leg?*

Yes. This was just hashed out in the John Cage mailing list. There is no reason to believe this is true. I mean, Schoenberg as a Nazi collaborator? (I believe someone did a little research and found no evidence for this as a true AP article or any proof that the reporter actually exists.)

-- Chris [Steve] Piuma, etc. Nothing is at: <http://www.brainlink.com/~cafard>
flim: <http://www.brainlink.com/~cafard/flim/index.html> from the current issue:
...(your idea of a real magazine: tips on sex, hair, and career)...

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752. **Tosh**

12 tones for Anton's bones

Sun 31 May 1998

As a hoax this is pretty funny! The reporters name is "Heinrich Kincaid," which strikes me funny. It is a good name. Too good! Plus the quote from John Adams ."Ever since I first encountered compositions by Arnold Schonberg I wondered what the hell anyone ever heard in it. .Now I know." That's funny. What was really funny is when the report commented that "Toru Takemitsu took time out from his own neo-romanticism to transmit data via music of his nation's progress with the atom." Since when did Japan have Atomic power? Plus the quote from Mr. Glass " that musicians continued to write twelve-tone music after the war, even though they had no idea why it was really invented. Indeed, there are guys who are churning out serialism to this day."

However thanks for the post, this has been fun.

Tosh Berman
TamTam Books

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753. **Tosh**

Webern

Sun 31 May 1998

Gunned down by an American soldier in occupied Berlin, 62 year old Anton >Webern's death was until now considered a tragic loss to the musical >world. At the time the U.S. Army reported that the killing was "a >mistake", and that in stepping onto the street at night to smoke a >cigarette Webern was violating a strict curfew rule.

Oh I forgot to ask, but is this part true? Sorry to bring something off-subject for poetics, but then again - perhaps this is poetics!

best,

Tosh Berman

TamTam Books

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754. **George Bowering**
Re: Fwd: 12 tones for Anton's bones (fwd)
Sun 31 May 1998

| *This is a great story. Is someone pulling (our) my leg?*

There is, like, doubt?

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

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755. **Peter Ganick**
Re: Webern
Sun 31 May 1998

this part is true, except is was a cigar...

peter ganick, once a music composition major

Tosh wrote:

>

> Gunned down by an American soldier in occupied Berlin, 62 year old Anton

> >Webern's death was until now considered a tragic loss to the musical

> >world. At the time the U.S. Army reported that the killing was "a

> >mistake", and that in stepping onto the street at night to smoke a

> >cigarette Webern was violating a strict curfew rule.

>

> Oh I forgot to ask, but is this part true? Sorry to bring something

> off-subject for poetics, but then again - perhaps this is poetics!

>

> best,

>

> -----

> Tosh Berman

> TamTam Books

> -----

756. **Alan Myouka Sondheim**

last call

Sun 31 May 1998

(This is the last post I'll send in explanation - the text has been passed on across the Net so you may have seen it before, in which case apologies - Alan)

(Another) description of current work -

For the past several years, I have been developing a *_pathological_* apparatus that operates in the interstice between subjectivity and protocol. The apparatus is characterized by the rigid designators of proper names which serve to ground supplements or leakage across do- mains; the names can reference avatar-constructs on one hand, and dissolution/dispersion on the other.

The apparatus as interstice exploits system loops and resonances, as well as repetitions and pre-verbal components in the written language; the result is more often than not broken texts which emanate from the throat relative to the hand. Full of glottal stops and vulnerable sites, the texts reference a non-existent body; the name does the rest. *_Julu_* processes desire, acts as consort to *_Jennifer_*, who splays the residue of sexuality. *_Nikuko_* operates upon languages and misrecognitions; Ni- kuko also constitutes a politico-monetary economy. Jennifer has infil- trated sendmail files, talkers, and MOOs, among other applications; in relation to Julu, dialogs are created, insisting on the reality of the virtual "in no uncertain terms." (Nikuko has infiltrated IRC as well.)

It is this insistence that construes psychosis, this gestural flux in and through networks and cables. The use of extreme and/or obscene language serves to displace or derail intercourse; speech through writ- ing projects enunciation, the function of the throat. The topography of the virtual body, through its topology, inverts; the display of organs carries its own politics within the debris of theory. From the vantage of the reader, there is always a dis-ease at work, as well as the work required to interpret distorted language, broken semantics, perforated syntax..

Across the board, issues are epistemological, struggling with a referent which may be only circumscription, demarcation. Nikuko references kanji and the presence of english as two signing systems whose interaction occurs in the imaginary; the name slides from protocol to protocol, app- lication to application, carrying the vestiges of a haunting or uncanny writing apparatus whose trace or spoor is identical with ontology.

Agency is spread among actants here; the receiver/transmitter/channel/noise/parasitic approach to communications is blurred. There is both strategy and struggle over the performative and its existence in several levels, of programming, speech, person (1st, 2nd, 3rd, ...), and text. Whatever is constituted is always already binary or triadic within the machine; this level is a fundamental reference, but as such is always leaky as well; there are no foundations, no ground-level platform, say, for Jennifer.

The result is always textual, immobile-paralytic or mobile-inert; these writings are residue of psychoanalytic operations carried out as a process of burrowing. (The texts began when gopher:// was in detumescence.) The writings analyze these operations as well; they are self-reflexive to the extent that they drag protocol-debris, application-residue, to the surface, as in the dissection-analysis of core-dump. The drag is always an interference, drag-show. The panties are inside-out; the stains are a lure, seduction, into and away from the content. The stains drag the reader down and in; they break through the ostensible content, "Julu," "Nikuko," of the texts - scatter writing, speech, language as a churning of pre-verbal clutter, clashes of interstitial drives, breakdown of prefixes, interfixes, suffixes.

Language spread through its own demise, emergent psychoanalytics drugged through networks and computer-mediated-communications. Broken language analyzes, is analyzed through, theory; broken theory or what I call "wild theory" results, nomadic or marauding theory. The theory chokes in the throat; instead of weak, think of liquid theory, part-objects fall- ing out of analysis. Theory and experience are always already inter- twined, but here experience, tumescence, robs or displaces theory in favor of a darker analysis. Hence the emphasis on shadows, ghosts, psy- choses, frisson.

To accomplish what but the endurance or perseverance of virtual subjectivity in these broken problematic spaces. To construct a torn discourse or _violation fabric_ across foreclosed and corporate domains and names. To cite myself in the final stages of withdrawal. To open. For the millennium, to love and hate my avatars. And to open/close a variety of philosophy, simultaneously, or at least within the @blink of an @dig \$thing called eye.

http://www.anu.edu.au/english/internet_txt

Alan Sondheim

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757. **Peter Ganick**

Re: Webern

Sun 31 May 1998

it's early here in connecticut...let me correct that typo and add a bit to tosh's question...

anton webern was, by all i heard, a peaceful man who worked in the swiss alps throughout the war removed from the politics of WW2...at night, after composing, he would step outside for a smoke before retiring, as his wife would not allow him to smoke his cigars in the house...one night, 2 days after the war was ended, an american soldier who hadn't heard the news was patrolling around the remote area of webern's house and shot him dead while webern, perhaps 20th century's most rigorous adherent of the technique called serialism, was gunned down...

there is a book about this murder that i cannot recall the title of now, but would be willing to look around for it if someone's interested...a fascinating read...

also, relevant to this list...the twelve tone composers (later called serialists) were closest in nature to the l=a=n=g=u=a=g=e poets for the music of the time ...taking tonalism out of music and bringing a pure syntax of intervals their relationships as the sole justification for musical composition...much like the language poets, to my reading, took syntax as the material to be worked with, over content- and subject-based material as its focus...

now for some breakfast...

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758. **rsillima**

Fabulous article in SF Examiner

Sun 31 May 1998

I'm not sure if this is the same Glen Helfland who used to do covers for Socialist Review or not, but this is a fabulous article about Dodie and Kevin.

Ron Silliman

<Picture: The Gate> www.sfgate.com [Return to regular view](#)

AN ODD COUPLE OF WRITERS

By Glen Helfand

OF THE EXAMINER STAFF

Saturday, May 30, 1997

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URL: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/examiner/hotnews/stories/31/writerssun.dtl>

He's gay. She's not. She's avant-garde. He's not.

"What is San Francisco famous for -- besides sourdough bread?" quizzes writer Dodie Bellamy in the funky, book-and-art-filled South of Market apartment she shares with her husband, author Kevin Killian.

"Writing! The writing has been famous since the Gold Rush." She could have cited a list of best-selling authors that range from Jack London to Danielle Steel, but Bellamy and Killian are more connected to a rich history of avant-garde writing that has flourished here alongside San Francisco's alternative lifestyles. And in both art and life, Bellamy and Killian are doing their darnedest to carry the torch of experimentation.

Widely published, the pair enliven the local literary scene -- and draw upon it for material. They serve as ambassadors for The City's experimental writers, and through their various projects -- she's the executive director of the nonprofit literary arts center Small Press Traffic and privately leads her own writing workshop; he is always embroiled in writing -- make contact with nearly every avant-garde writer and poet that passes through town. But their own life is perhaps the most interesting. He's an out homosexual with a keen interest in trashy pop culture and a passion for Tab soda; she's a straight vegetarian who reads feminist theory. And they've been happily married since 1986. Unlike the sanitized Hollywood corollary in the current "Object of My Affection," this 40-something pair readily admits, "Yes, we do have sex" -- with each other. Aspects of Bellamy's and Killian's life together ends up in their writing. Both have recently published major books, with underground San Francisco serving as a prominent backdrop. Bellamy's rich, sexy and highly subjective novel, "The Letters of Mina Harker" (Hard Press), chronicles the exploits of a somewhat schizophrenic narrator in a series of digressive and expressionistic missives. She uses the gritty urban flavor of Mission District bus stops, loft parties and thrift stores for its flavor, as well as a husband character named KK. "There's lots of sex with Kevin in my Mina book," says Bellamy with a slight Indiana lilt. "And everyone else in The City," jests Killian. For his part, Killian is immersed

in North Beach bohemia of the 1950s -- the historical milieu for his biography of controversial Beat-era writer, Jack Spicer, entitled "Poet Be Like God: Jack Spicer and the San Francisco Renaissance" (Wesleyan University Press). The book explores the development of gay culture as well as American avant-garde poetry. While he's published novels and short-story collections, it's Killian's first biography, but it's not his first connection to the influential Beat writer. Killian recalls being struck by Spicer's collected works in 1975 while in graduate school at SUNY at Stonybrook, but his advisors felt the work "was too marginal and radical." When Killian moved to San Francisco in 1980, he met Spicer's contemporaries. One of them, Lewis Allingham, was compiling an oral history of Spicer's life. In 1990, Allingham turned his material over Killian and asked him to help write the book. "I felt like Anne Baxter, stepping in for Margot Channing in 'All About Eve,' " Killian quips.

The experience of working on the project for nearly a decade, however, proved trying. "I don't think I'd ever do a biography again," Killian admits. "It's too difficult, too long. you get too involved with your subject. First you love the person, then you hate him. It's only at the end that you come to some sort of resolution." As a pause from working on the bio, Killian also penned a number of plays, which breezily and poetically spoof aspects of celebrity and literary culture. They're performed as stage readings starring casts of local writers and visual artists. On June 5, at New College, he'll mount a revival of his first theatrical work, entitled "That," which explores the gentrification of bohemian neighborhoods as seen through the eyes of notorious writer couple Jane and Paul Bowles, whose unlikely union also mixed sexual preferences. "I thought of Paul and Jane as an analogue for our relationship," Killian says, surprising his wife. "In what way?" she asks. "They led very creative lives, but were obviously a little unusually paired sexually. I'm always writing about me and Dodie, in very coded ways. I'm often casting us as bizarre, dangerous, notorious couples." "But I don't think we're very dangerous," Bellamy laughs.

Edgy, maybe, but they are very much a couple, engaged in a workable symbiotic relationship. "A lot of people would think us both being writers would be a source of conflict," says Bellamy, "but it's the place where we really come together. We got together because we could talk. It can be joyous spending time together. "And Kevin's a really wonderful editor and critic," she adds. "It's not totally conflict-free, but he's really supportive and there to help me." "I write many more kinds of things than Dodie, who writes one type of thing with everything in it," Killian interjects. "Her work is thick and dense and experimental, I'm the opposite. I'm very facile." He can rattle off a laundry list of his achievements in writing poetry, novels, short stories, reviews, plays, librettos and biography. Perhaps it's their opposite natures, in fact, that have enabled this marriage to endure for more than a decade. "They said it wouldn't

last," Killian smirks. "It was just falling in love. Something that happens once in a lifetime," he says. "I don't think it matters what gender or what nature the people are, but it was a serious shock to realize what was happening. My future was sealed."

The 10th-anniversary revival of Kevin Killian's play, "That," is at New College Theater, 777 Valencia St., Friday at 7:30 p.m.

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759. **Maria Damon**

Re: Fabulous article in SF Examiner

Sun 31 May 1998

thanks ron for passing this on in its entirety; how charming. shout out to db and kk, you made my day first thing sunday a.m.

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760. **Nada Gordon**

Re: Quo uncomfortable Vadis?

Sun 31 May 1998

david, alan, all

it isn't the explicit sexuality of alan's work that makes me uncomfortable (although he does seem to like to write *membrane*, which you've got to admit is kind of a creepy word), and i agree that anything people fantasize doing is material for a poem

even violent or violating (i once wrote a cut up poem from the eye of a child rapist/killer, Tsutomu Miyazaki, who cut up his victims; long ago i wrote about sticking a toe with an overlong toenail into someone's... oh, never mind)

and i even said that i find a lot of alan's poems beautiful, although he didn't seem to acknowledge that in his response to my comment but rather lit into me like i was catherine mckinnon trying to put the lid on his creation

like i was trying to be PC! whoa!

far from it

all i said, and all i mean, was that the poems make me feel uncomfortable sometimes (note -- not a DISMISSAL, not even DISAPPROVAL david! but a response), and annoyed, and angry

and not in the way that anything of Stein or Creeley or Duncan or Acker or Ginsberg ever has

but possibly in the way that Henry Miller has
or Norman Mailer
because they flatten women out
(unlike Creeley who found his love-object too mysteriously dimensional)
or possibly the way the guys who dumped me for a little geisha-girl hot
roppongi action have
flat, flat, flattened
or sad the way my students with eye jobs and breast jobs and six-inch heels and
potentially cancerous fake suntans have
oh, the flatness
as i said, the rage and annoyance is upclose and personal-like
i'm sure nikuko is a real composite because i've met her too
i see her every day in the sports shinbun
bound up, or cartooned with a pig's tail
or on tv after 11:00,
a whole room of nikukos who masturbate when a goofy guy beats a taiko drum
and alan
i'm sure you like araki's photographs
which are very beautiful
and very violating
because you wrote:

*As far as the discomfort is concerned, that is deliberate. I wish to
violate borders, violate gender, violate sexuality, violate PC, violate
mythologies, including those of the reading of the "east" by the so-called
"west" and vice versa - although the latter can only occur within a
limited framework. Thus I was told by my efl class that New York was
impossibly dangerous; very well, let us write dangerously, violently, to
the degree say that the language inverts, turns on itself.*

i guess if that's your true desire
to violate i mean
then you must be gratified by my response
instead of defensive about it
it really is a grand project
and unimpeachable from a purely aesthetic point of view
but it upsets me
and i think i have a right to that
and also that you can expect responses like mine

from the gut and not prissy
if you spray your work all over the cyber-world

you write also:

>

>I do not want to write safely. I have no interest in that.

no neither do i, but i don't think violate is my verb of choice

*I have no
interest in PC; the nazis were the most PC group I can think of.*

umm... no comment

If there

>is either an avant-garde or experimental tradition left, it has to move
>on, to probe, to discomfort, to dis-ease, as well as create stereotypical
>works of incandescent beauty. Unfortunately, language is no longer a
>virus; instead it is a sign of comfort, just as poetics and poetry have
>become signs of comfort. Even the experimental. Even the experimental
>"tradition."

Please! I don't look for "comfort" in art either, in the sense of matzoh ball soup
for the soul (like you, I guess, I'm jewish) -- and I loathe complacency as much
as the next hopelessly post-modern displaced person

*Finally, I have no interest either in being an inspiration for moving
people in or out of adulthood. Adulthood is not what it is cooked up to
be; if anything, it is scars and contamination.*

Hmm. I quote myself:

Adult life is a) revenge
b) redemption

but i suspect it also has something to do with learning responsibility and how
not to scathe the world and other people, maybe that's the redempcion part
or maybe i am just being quite the schoolmarm

I have no desire to educate.

then why the lengthy explication of your modus operandi?

and what for you be teachin english then?

past midnight now
gotta get up early to ride the pornographic train
and teach all them nikukos, yeah

ume

761. **louis stroffolino**

Re: Quo Vadis?

Sun 31 May 1998

On Sun, 31 May 1998, Alan Myouka Sondheim wrote:

I think I should say something here, wedge into the discussion.

For me, Nikuko is a person, not a stereotype. She is based most vaguely on a couple of people I know. She is also an actant.

The Japanese for years have borrowed and transformed from US and other cultures; the fact that I am working through various ideas in a reversal of that borrowing should not categorize it as defamatory in any way. I should add that I am not duplicating, not copying; I am changing, not Japan, not Japanese culture, nothing to do with that. Nor could I if I wanted to, nor do I know enough.

As far as exoticism goes, I do not think that way. I think of a yardstick between or among cultures or parts-objects of cultures, of denials, etc. If I use ukiyo-e for example, I know its degree of japoniserie.

The Japanese have pioneered in microelectronics, from Sanrio stuff to computer pets to Casio. Nikuko is just such a microelectronic. She is wearable and she wears me.

As far as the discomfort is concerned, that is deliberate. I wish to violate borders, violate gender, violate sexuality, violate PC, violate mythologies, including those of the reading of the "east" by the so-called "west" and vice versa - although the latter can only occur within a limited framework. Thus I was told by my efl class that New York was impossibly dangerous; very well, let us write dangerously, violently, to the degree say that the language inverts, turns on itself.

I do not want to write safely. I have no interest in that. I have no interest in PC; the nazis were the most PC group I can think of. If there is either an avant-garde or experimental tradition left, it has to move on, to probe, to discomfort, to dis-ease, as well as create stereotypical works of incandescent beauty. Unfortunately, language is no longer a virus; instead it is a sign of comfort, just as poetics and poetry have become signs of comfort. Even the experimental. Even the experimental "tradition."

Finally, I have no interest either in being an inspiration for moving people in or out of adulthood. Adulthood is not what it is cooked up to

be; if anything, it is scars and contamination.

I have no desire to educate.

Alan

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762. **Simon/Piombino**

Feedback

Sun 31 May 1998

This discussion of Alan Sondheim's work- which I have come to enjoy quite a lot-his complex, strange and challenging writing seems rewarding to me in direct proportion to the work I put forth over time into the effort of "understanding" it- and I use the word "understanding" here the same way I would use it to account for my ability to enjoy a kind of music- I feel leads out into a broader topic of the part feedback plays, or should or shouldn't play, in the life and work of a poet, and even a serious reader and supporter of contemporary poetry. I do not wish, of course, to appropriate or shortcut this valuable discussion of Sondheim's work by bringing up this related general issue.

This issue, I confess, is one of my chief obsessions. For example, I find that in my work as a social worker or psychoanalyst, the issue of feedback, in the course of several decades of practice, seems to have fallen into place as a minor, though admittedly, important character. On the other hand, if I give a poetry reading or I publish something, or even if I write something on this list! the craving for feedback, or response, can be intense to a point of discomfort.

An aspect of all this that I have been thinking about has to do with the apparent necessity for a poet, something like an actor or a politician, let's say, to assemble, over time, a kind of constituency. So that when I give a reading, close friends might call to apologize for not showing up, perhaps in an effort to let me know that although they were not there this was not meant to show a lack of "support" for my work.

Now it seems only to the extent that I can integrate this dynamic into the forward movement of my writing, that I can continue to write with pleasure. When I was younger, I think I knew all of this would happen, so I delayed throwing my hat into the ring for years. Once you are a known quantity, the fact is, you must accept the public aspect of your writing process. Fighting it, in a way, comes down only to a process of denial, like the playwrights who claim never to read the reviews of their plays. Saying they haven't read them can be useful, though, in not having to discuss the unpleasant details with their

friends, for example. Giving readings, in fact, is one of the ways that a writer can get immediate feedback and actually see and feel a response to the work in the here and now. Ted Berrigan, in his teaching, always emphasized the importance of giving poetry readings.

On the other hand, perhaps this topic is one which is best not thought about or discussed too much, I don't know. In any case, I had the impulse to "share this" (why do I hate that phrase?)

Nick Piombino

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763. **Alan Myouka Sondheim**

Re: Quo uncomfortable Vadis?

Sun 31 May 1998

I just woke up, so excuse the blariness of the reply here -

On Mon, 1 Jun 1998, Nada Gordon wrote:

david, alan, all

*it isn't the explicit sexuality of alan's work that makes me uncomfortable (although he does seem to like to write *membrane*, which you've got to admit is kind of a creepy word), and i agree that anything people fantasize doing is material for a poem*

I use "membrane," which doesn't creep me at all, to indicate both the fragility and the presence of the Net-without-nodes, almost as a sentient surface.

>

/skip/

all i said, and all i mean, was that the poems make me feel uncomfortable sometimes (note -- not a DISMISSAL, not even DISAPPROVAL david! but a response), and annoyed, and angry

and not in the way that anything of Stein or Creeley or Duncan or Acker or Ginsberg ever has

*but possibly in the way that Henry Miller has
or Norman Mailer*

This is what I was reacting to, since I see no relationship with these people, and years ago, in fact, Acker and I did some collaborations.

>

> because they flatten women out

> (unlike Creeley who found his love-object too mysteriously dimensional)

This is what bothers me. If you are teaching a classroom, or from someone else's viewpoint, say a nation of Nikukos, and in fact Nikuko for me is much more specific than that, then you are also saying _they're_ flattened

-

>

> or possibly the way the guys who dumped me for a little geisha-girl hot
> roppongi action have

and much as I don't know your history, isn't "little geisha-girl" also disparaging? For me, Nikuko is somewhat of a hero - she's associated in a lot of my writing with either the sun-goddess or kami - she has powers that aren't necessarily sexual or based on seduction.

>

> or sad the way my students with eye jobs and breast jobs and six-inch heels
> and potentially cancerous fake suntans have

>

> oh, the flatness

I feel both sad about this and unable to comment, except you're passing a judgement on these people. From the little I saw of Japanese students, and the ones I talked to, a lot of what _they_ were concerned about was kept to themselves, or expressed in social/hobby clubs at the uni, not in the classroom and not in relation to the teacher.

>

> i'm sure nikuko is a real composite because i've met her too
> i see her every day in the sports shinbun
> bound up, or cartooned with a pig's tail
> or on tv after 11:00,
> a whole room of nikukos who masturbate when a goofy guy beats a taiko drum

>

For me she was a composite of two people plus the sun-goddess, neither of whom fit your model; I think you're reading things I don't intend.

>

> i'm sure you like araki's photographs
> which are very beautiful
> and very violating

I don't know araki's photographs.

>

> because you wrote:

>

> >As far as the discomfort is concerned, that is deliberate. I wish to
> >violate borders, violate gender, violate sexuality, violate PC, violate

> > mythologies, including those of the reading of the "east" by the so-called
> > "west" and vice versa - although the latter can only occur within a
> > limited framework. Thus I was told by my efl class that New York was
> > impossibly dangerous; very well, let us write dangerously, violently, to
> > the degree say that the language inverts, turns on itself.

This doesn't imply that all violation is worthwhile.

>
> i guess if that's your true desire
> to violate i mean
> then you must be gratified by my response
> instead of defensive about it

No, because it goes in the direction of stereotyping itself - Nikuko is
such-and-such a person and I know these people and these people are flat.

>
> it really is a grand project
> and unimpeachable from a purely aesthetic point of view
> but it upsets me
>
> and i think i have a right to that
> and also that you can expect responses like mine
> from the gut and not prissy
> if you spray your work all over the cyber-world
>

True enough.

>
> /skip/

>
> > I have no desire to educate.
>
>
> then why the lengthy explication of your modus operandi?
>

Because of worry over misrecognition, misreading, and for that matter,
after the fact, the last thing I wanted to do was bring up bad memories
for you, or this class of women ("girls") you critique as "flat."

> and what for you be teachin english then?
>

I took part-time work to help with the income. But I also found that the
class and other classes I sat in for that matter, were often what Aram
Saroyan called "filling out the form," that they had no real purpose in
terms of learning english.

>

/skip/

I think what I need to do here is not send Nikukomaterial, so to speak, to this list; on occasion, other work, of which I have done sufficient. For the last thing I want to do is hurt anyone, or bring up these issues, which are so personal they're hard to respond to.

In the meantime, if anyone is interested on seeing the whole shebang, including, say, Nikuko's essays on the philosophy of science, it's all at the webpages, most of it I think in files ke-ki.

Alan

URL: http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/~spoons/internet_txt.html

MIRROR with other pages at: http://www.anu.edu.au/english/internet_txt

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764. **morpheal**

Re: mythology: wandering from techno war to Pakistan's new nukes

Sun 31 May 1998

I think I made that pretty clear by stating that current artists are sampling and have been for decades, other ideas...as far as an "essentially disassociative scramble of what is essentially a concatenation of ideas from someone else's minds"

wouldn't it be easier to just say "borrowing"?

No. Simply because that is not what they are doing. They are not simply borrowing. They are intentionally and randomly distorting and merging other people's works. That is all that they are doing.

When we borrow something we maintain at least some of its original integrity. We do not twist it and convolute it until we destroy it. We use it in a manner that remains recognizable.

To say that a large portion of earth's inhabitant's despises "every element of our artistic culture" to to presuppose that "our" means art as you see it, I see "They" as a classic "duality" situation an (us vs them mentality-) as far as people on this planet despising art, "they" probably should, as it as defined as "our artistic culture" shouldn't matter to anyone outside the "local community-"

No. You definitely do not understand. You want to twist what I am saying into cultural relativism of one kind or another. That is not what I said. I said that they despise art. There are varying intensities of this. Some Marxists, communists, have been very violent and oppressive towards artists. Relative freedom of expression, and therefore art as we understand it, cannot flourish

there. Art is reduced to political advertising, or propaganda, in many such instances. However, they do not tend to be the extremists that I was referring to. They are extreme, but not so very extreme. The most extreme are the Moslems. According to their scriptures "art", in any form as we know it and value it, is absolutely forbidden. That does not mean that every moslem follows the teachings, but a very large number do follow it. The only adornments become embellished kufic script and the religious architecture it adorns. There are indications that all western art, the fine arts and humanities as we know them, are considered "satanic" and the mentality desiring their absolute destruction remains quite active within that foreign (alien to us) culture.

Where such instances of "truth" collide we end in irreconcilable conflict and that means mutual attempts to influence the outcome of the conflict.

I see some of the struggles within our own cultural tradition (western, European-North American heritage primarily, but not exclusively), currently as springing from that particular root of conflict. Each side ends up wanting to cut down the other side's cultural tree - to uproot as it were.

| *Who are "They who have technology and are not cave dwellers"*

I was alluding to the common false conception that some foreign cultures lack the ability to distort their rival cultures by technological means. The underestimations of the KGB during the Cold War were sometimes the most comical instantiations of something of that kind. In essence the tendencies among some to underestimate the "enemy" or the cultural opponent. Most of all the attitude that some areas where the people are impoverished and on average technologically ignorant, lack all covert means. They do not. That is the misconception. The state of the average population says very little about the body politic. It is not the body politic. Another instantiation of this, quite outside the realm of radio, radar and microwaves, is Islamic Pakistan's 'success' as to becoming a nuclear power. Even that fact leads to underestimations of Pakistan's technological abilities. After all, the bomb was invented fifty years ago. It is old technology, even if mass destructive. We then fail to consider the use of other categories of violent means, including conventional, chemical, biological, and electromagnetic.

We also fail to recognize that all nations who share a common ideology tend to share their technological capabilities, to a very large extent, with each other. Particularly if they have larger ambitions as to cultural, (which always involves ideological), expansion and conquest.

In our example we then find reasons to believe that many other similarly affiliated nations have gained nuclear capabilities. Similarly biological and chemical warfare capabilities. We might see Libya, or Syria, Iraq, Iran, and others, as all sharing with one another, similar technological means.

Apply that same viewpoint to electromagnetic means of potential influence and we quickly find that we live within a technologically conflicted, sphere of cultural and ideological influence conflicted, nightmare. The Cold War with the USSR was only one scene in one act of the whole play of various endgames, including those that involve attempted conquest of the human mind by whomever happen to be the primary cultural competitors.

Quite aside, but on that loosely phrased illustrative example, from current politics, I cannot say that I see a positive outcome for American and allied economic and diplomatic sanctions against Pakistan. I see that as furthering the exacerbation of hostile sentiments and perhaps leading to their eventual venting, exteriorized from the increased hardships and sufferings, so that the sanctions act as a kind of catalyst, to a more radically violent military expression. How extreme that might end up being, is an open question. It depends on how strong the reactions are to the sanctions and to the other actions of other nations.

M.

aka Bob Ezergailis

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765. **Mark Weiss**

Re: Webern

Sun 31 May 1998

Accurate, except that Webern died in Germany. No US occupation of Switzerland, which had bought itself out of the war.

At 07:30 AM 5/31/98 -0400, you wrote:

>it's early here in connecticut...let me correct

>that typo and add a bit to tosh's question...

>

>anton webern was, by all i heard, a peaceful man

>who worked in the swiss alps throughout the war

>removed from the politics of WW2...at night, after

>composing, he would step outside for a smoke before

>retiring, as his wife would not allow him to smoke

>his cigars in the house...one night, 2 days after

>the war was ended, an american soldier who hadn't

>heard the news was patrolling around the remote

>area of webern's house and shot him dead while

>webern, perhaps 20th century's most rigorous adherent

>of the technique called serialism, was gunned down...

>

>there is a book about this murder that i cannot

>recall the title of now, but would be willing to
>look around for it if someone's interested...a
>fascinating read...
>
>also, relevant to this list...the twelve tone composers
>(later called serialists) were closest in nature to
>the l=a=n=g=u=a=g=e poets for the music of the time
>...taking tonalism out of music and bringing a pure
>syntax of intervals their relationships as the sole
>justification for musical composition...much like the
>language poets, to my reading, took syntax as the
>material to be worked with, over content- and subject-
>based material as its focus...
>
>now for some breakfast...
>
>

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766. **R. Gancie**
universal quantifier
Sun 31 May 1998

"Moreover, it is the dependence of one quantifier on another-specifically, of existential quantifiers on universal quantifiers-that enables us to capture the intuitive idea of an iterative process formally: any value x of the universal quantifier generates a value y of the existential quantifier, y can then be substituted for x generating a new value y', and so on. Hence, the existence of an infinity of objects can be deduced explicitly by logic alone."---from Kant and the Exact Sciences by Michael Freedman --- "Representation is exchanged for the fungible---universal interchangeability."... "In the Galilean mathematization of the world,...,this selfness is idealized under the guidance of the new mathematics: in modern terms, it becomes itself a mathematical multiplicity. [Husserl]" Thinking objectifies itself to become an automatic, self-activating process; an impersonation of the machine that it produces itself so that ultimately the machine can replace it."---from Dialectic of Enlightenment by Max Horkheimer & Theodor Adorno---cp

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767. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**

Re: Quo uncomfortable Vadis?

Sun 31 May 1998

this is such a difficult discussion for me... i've said before that i've liked alan sonenheim's work, and i've indicated what i liked most about it---esp. in his earlier stuff, his capacity for theorizing the net in terms of psychoanalytical (term used advisedly) and mathematical allegories (ok this is sloppy)...

in fact i believe this is a rather formal claim (of appreciation, i mean)... sometimes i enjoy the poems alan posts to the list---i can see the logic of unix, say, as this logic becomes a means to devise personalities and corresponding exchanges between same...

at the same time, i *am*, with nada, put off (i don't believe the comfort/discomfort pair will get us much mileage, for all sorts of reasons) by what i see at times as a celebration of, say, the logical level (or, still in somewhat lay terms, computing level) with less regard (than i'd like to see) for the (fuller?) implications this level has for readings that operate beyond/beside/coterminus with it... b/c i don't see how one can wish away such readings, not least b/c of the fraught and diverse nature of the (social and political and epidemiological etc.) real... which includes of course the daily life-world nada obviously inhabits...

this, one might argue, is precisely the risk of such work... i.e., that it might not *work* for some readers, depending on the reader herself, reader's context, all those variables... it's not so much a matter (alan) of whether one comes to your work to be educated, exactly (though i think education and learning, as general metaphors for aesthetic practice, have their place)... it's more a matter of the ways your work disperses a wide-range of considerations that will (b/c they can) be plugged into discourses that, e.g., don't on the one hand determine pleasure in terms of such maneuvers, and, on the other, locate the works at a remove of what's deemed urgent...

sure, one can say that all writing/art/whatever enjoys (?) such attention, lack of attention, what have you... one can say that the job, as it were, is to find ways to negotiate such attentions w/o (if this is your hobby horse, more and more these days it's mine) contributing to a fucked-up planet... but of course any work can probably be made to speak to any agenda, and of course the pain of such work (or the work of such work, or even the fun of such work) is in understanding its tentative/provisional nature even as it enacts, in its very self-presence, a certain set of very unprovisional and untentative assumptions (be they aesthetic, political, etc.---meanings/encounters fluctuate, sure, but there is this matter of the text's role in such fluctuations, at times i want to say to myself, JUST GET ON WITH IT fer chrissakes joe)...

a lesson?... perhaps... alan's plan is certainly worth perusing on the web in toto... at the same time, nada's response, though perhaps a response to somewhat isolated works distributed more singularly to poetix, is one with which i can identify... depends on the particular work---i'm not always sure, this much must be clear, what the hell alan is up to, and i don't automatically celebrate that with which i am unfamiliar---i've had to work harder than most, perhaps, to learn to let go, but i think i'm permitted this initial bit of resistance w/o necessarily judging a work as unworthy of my attention...

so alan, i think, from where i sit, that nada registers an attendant risk that i see, too, in your work... and nada, have a look at some of alan's more extensive provocations---they're not for all "tastes," not always for mine either, but they do amount to a keen and reflexive sense of what's generally at stake in such gestures, even if no theoretical vantage-point gets around a certain act of faith...

er, even the one i enact by asserting so...

best to both of you///

joe

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768. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**

Re: Fabulous article in SF Examiner

Sun 31 May 1998

also to say that it's great to see folks like dodie & kevin, and miekal, getting some much-deserved public due!...

///

joe

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769. **Laura E. Wright**

Re: Fwd: 12 tones for Anton's bones

Sun 31 May 1998

This 12-tone music as Nazi code thing has got to be a joke... and an unfunny one at that. The same "strangeness" David Bromige speaks of in poetry is equally sought after in other media. The increasing exploration of chromaticism as tonal music evolved (tonality as we think of it only really came into common use in the 17th century) led to Schoenberg's complete breakdown of tonality. The 12-tone method of composition was a way to make lack of tonality absolute -- no one note occurs any more or less than on other. The challenge, as that of

poetic form, is to create something "meaningful" within these boundaries. As for those who "never got it" -- dunno. Maybe they should stick to top 40. I've always found strange beauty aplenty in much atonal music... especially Berg's violin concerto. And, I believe Schoenberg was in L.A. for much of his career anyway.

--

Laura Wright
Library Assistant, Naropa Institute
[REDACTED]

"All music is music..." -- Ted Berrigan

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770. **Laura E. Wright**
Re: situation uncomfortable
Sun 31 May 1998

Alan-- I would hope you would not completely cease Nikuko postings. Discomfort and disagreement are vital to discussion. If anyone is offended at anything on this list, they are free to delete without reading. If you or others censor for fear of offense, we all lose. 'Nuf said.

--

Laura Wright
Library Assistant, Naropa Institute
[REDACTED]

"All music is music..." -- Ted Berrigan

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771. **Erik Sweet**
Re: last call
Sun 31 May 1998

In a message dated 5/31/98 6:06:47 AM, you wrote:

<<For the past several years, I have been developing a _pathological_ apparatus that operates in the interstice between subjectivity and protocol. The apparatus is characterized by the rigid designators of proper names which serve to ground supplements or leakage across do- mains; the names can reference avatar-constructs on one hand, and dissolution/dispersion on the other.

The apparatus as interstice exploits system loops and resonances, as well as repetitions and pre-verbal components in the written language;

the result is more often than not broken texts which emanate from the throat relative to the hand. Full of glottal stops and vulnerable sites, the texts reference a non-existent body; the name does the rest. _Julu_ processes desire, acts as consort to _Jennifer_, who splays the residue of sexuality. _Nikuko_ operates upon languages and misrecognitions; Nikuko also constitutes a politico-monetary economy. Jennifer has infiltrated sendmail files, talkers, and MOOs, among other applications; in relation to Julu, dialogs are created, insisting on the reality of the virtual "in no uncertain terms." (Nikuko has infiltrated IRC as well.)

>>

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772. **Erik Sweet**

Re: mythology: wandering from techno war to Pakistan's new nukes

Sun 31 May 1998

In a message dated 5/31/98 12:10:47 PM, you wrote:

<

| wouldn't it be easier to just say "borrowing"?

No. Simply because that is not what they are doing. They are not simply borrowing. They are intentionally and randomly distorting and merging other people's works. That is all that they are doing.

If that is all they are doing, why not put it simply and say it is borrowing?

"When we borrow something we maintain at least some of its original integrity. We do not twist it and convolute it until we destroy it. We use it in a manner that remains recognizable."

"Intentionally and randomly distorting and merging other people's works is borrowing as far as "samples" go in music, they are not randomly distorted at all, but borrowing and put somewhere else, shifted.

To say that a large portion of earth's inhabitant's despises "every element of our artistic culture" to presuppose that "our" means art as you see it, I see "They" as a classic "duality" situation an (us vs them mentality-) as far as people on this planet despising art, "they" probably should, as it as defined as "our artistic culture" shouldn't matter to anyone outside the "local community-"

"No. You definitely do not understand. You want to twist what I am saying into cultural relativism of one kind or another."

Please, I am not interested in cultural relativism and for that matter would never even use that term...I am not twisting what you say, I understand exactly what you are saying...I was talking about "music" not technowar.

That is not what I said. I said that they despise art. There are varying intensities of this. Some Marxists, communists, have been very violent and oppressive towards artists. Relative freedom of expression, and therefore art as we understand it, cannot flourish there. Art is reduced to political advertising, or propaganda, in many such instances. However, they do not tend to be the extremists that I was referring to. They are extreme, but not so very extreme. The most extreme are the Moslems. According to their scriptures "art", in any form as we know it and value it, is absolutely forbidden. That does not mean that every moslem follows the teachings, but a very large number do follow it. The only adornments become embellished kufic script and the religious architecture it adorns. There are indications that all western art, the fine arts and humanities as we know them, are considered "satanic" and the mentality desiring their absolute destruction remains quite active within that foreign (alien to us) culture.

Where such instances of "truth" collide we end in irreconcilable conflict and that means mutual attempts to influence the outcome of the conflict.

I see some of the struggles within our own cultural tradition (western, European-North American heritage primarily, but not exclusively), currently as springing from that particular root of conflict. Each side ends up wanting to cut down the other side's cultural tree - to uproot as it were.

| *Who are "They who have technology and are not cave dwellers"*

I was alluding to the common false conception that some foreign cultures lack the ability to distort their rival cultures by technological means. The underestimations of the KGB during the Cold War were sometimes the most comical instantiations of something of that kind. In essence the tendencies among some to underestimate the "enemy" or the cultural opponent. Most of all the attitude that some areas where the people are impoverished and on average technologically ignorant, lack all covert means. They do not. That is the misconception. The state of the average population says very little about the body politic. It is not the body politic. Another instantiation of this, quite outside the realm of radio, radar and microwaves, is Islamic Pakistan's 'success' as to becoming a nuclear power. Even that fact leads to underestimations of Pakistan's technological abilities. After all, the bomb was invented fifty years ago. It is old technology, even if mass destructive. We then fail to consider the use of other categories of violent means, including conventional, chemical, biological, and electromagnetic.

We also fail to recognize that all nations who share a common ideology tend to share their technological capabilities, to a very large extent, with each other. Particularly if they have larger ambitions as to cultural, (which always involves ideological), expansion and conquest.

In our example we then find reasons to believe that many other similarly affiliated nations have gained nuclear capabilities. Similarly biological and chemical warfare capabilities. We might see Libya, or Syria, Iraq, Iran, and others, as all sharing with one another, similar technological means.

Apply that same viewpoint to electromagnetic means of potential influence and we quickly find that we live within a technologically conflicted, sphere of cultural and ideological influence conflicted, nightmare. The Cold War with the USSR was only one scene in one act of the whole play of various endgames, including those that involve attempted conquest of the human mind by whomever happen to be the primary cultural competitors.

Quite aside, but on that loosely phrased illustrative example, from current politics, I cannot say that I see a positive outcome for American and allied economic and diplomatic sanctions against Pakistan. I see that as furthering the exacerbation of hostile sentiments and perhaps leading to their eventual venting, exteriorized from the increased hardships and sufferings, so that the sanctions act as a kind of catalyst, to a more radically violent military expression. How extreme that might end up being, is an open question. It depends on how strong the reactions are to the sanctions and to the other actions of other nations.

M.

aka Bob Ezergailis

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773. **david bromige**

George Bowering's encrypted poetry

Sun 31 May 1998

I am now at liberty to reveal that George Bowering's poetry, in many of his books "a-tonal" in structure, often consists of heavily encrypted messages being transmitted to Cuba about the seaward defenses of Bellingham, WA. This dates back to the TISH years--scholars will note the coincidence of Castro's revolution with the laun ching of this poetry newsletter. So an entire school of writing in Canada has been based on this false premise : it was never poetry, it was spying! Canadian authorities, responding to pressure from the United States, will shortly be removing all books of poetry from Canadian libraries, that bear any traces of TISH influence, and billing these authors for the return of any Canada Council monies they may have received under these false pretenses. The brazenness of the operation is revealed when one learns that 'TISH' is the acronym from "Technical Information Shipping Harbor".

David Bromige, Snitch Extraordinaire

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774. **morpheal**

Re: mythology: wandering from techno war to Pakistan's new nukes

Sun 31 May 1998

Please, I am not interested in cultural relativism and for that matter would never even use that term...I am not twisting what you say, I understand exactly what you are saying...I was talking about "music" not technowar.

You had better be interested in it.

The other guys, and their gals, want _YOUR_ culture _OFF_ this planet.

Are you planning on simply packing your bags and leaving ? They would happily see you off. That's it. Simply see you out and off.

That would put a new direction to the space program.

As for music not being related to technowar. Deconstructive music is essentially emulative of one facet of technowar. It reflects it perfectly. Of course, there is a two edged sword in that. It is protest against certain conflicts within the cultural millieux of the planet. It is also becomes a means for many to experience something in a less dangerous contextual situation, and thus the very cultural manifestation that knowingly or unknowingly protests what amounts to a kind of technowar becomes preparation for technowarriors. That irony is repeated again and again in every culture, though differently, and at all levels of technological sophistication.

M.

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775. **groberts**

Alan's Feedback

Sun 31 May 1998

Thanks to everyone for making comments and commitments, for drawing lines and arrows and hearts and circles. Go figure: poetics on the "poetics" list!

(And thanks to Tom Orange, whose post on Jeff Clark I think started this long overdue discussion.)

Gary R.

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776. **Henry Gould**

Re: Quo uncomfortable Vadis

Sun 31 May 1998

I would go along with Croce's aesthetics: "pure" poetry is not pure music, not a sort of Absolute before which any sort of moral "discomfort" is equal to "censorship". "Pure" poetry, true poetry, for Croce, was a balance between referentiality and music, word and world.

Poetry is an undertaking of enormous power because unlike philosophy it gets "inside" natural phenomena - from the most basic to the most intellectual & spiritual. Mimesis. But such power need not become an excuse for idolatry or a sort of aesthetic gnosis vaunting itself as beyond good & evil, or beyond rational critique. Poetry is a gift providing something rational critique (objective observation) can never provide; but such a gift does not entail the destruction of rational critique.

Every poet's work implies a worldview. The most basic forms of literary art - parable and riddle - employ mimesis and storytelling in order to foreground THE REAL. Poetry (and all art) is a quintessence of reality. But reality includes self-consciousness, reason, and critical awareness; the proposed complexity and subtlety of Alan's project certainly don't negate Nada's demurral.

Alan says he "knows" Nikuko (personally) and she IS "flat". All well and good, I guess; documentary realism in an ex-cathedra footnote? It's all all too "documentary" for my taste, despite the computer bells & whistles. But I haven't given it a fair reading. I like to choose my own reading. That's why I'm TRYING myself not to post so much to the list these days... (one reason, anyway).

- Henry Gould

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777. **Schuchat Simon**

nomuko and tabeko

Sun 31 May 1998

the experience of a part of Asia by a non-Asian or even sometimes by a person from another part of Asia is frequently a prized possession, that's true with other worlds as well but not so many of us are in a position to engage and write re some of the other worlds, either they are less interesting (tho Luc Sante is writing Belgium for us) or too strongly possessed by bilinguals/biculturals (who would care about a gringo take on central America anymore?). furthermore the experience that is involved involves sex and gender and stereotypes in all directions. the list has seen discussion about specifically Japanizing

stereotypes, I won't dredge that stuff up again, but in the case of Nada and Alan, I see some measure of the longtime visitor and short time visitor disagreeing on who has seen what, though I may be being unfair to Alan in terms of the extent of his Japanimmersion. or better, the discomfort for Nada/Ume comes from the violation of her ownership of her experience by Alan in his Nikuko works. It appears that Ume/Nada's Japan has a lot more texture and depth and grain and substance than Alan's. However I also enjoy reading the Nikuko works, I don't have as much invested and sometimes the texture is flat.

A recent novel AUDREY HEPBURN'S NECK (can't recall authors name, it is in Penguin I think) is very good and approaches some of these issues from another angle.

I have also been meaning to recommend (if anyone has gotten this far) the most recent MURAKAMI Haruki novel, THE WIND-UP BIRD CHRONICLE and the first translation of Wang Shuo (the great post-modern Chinese writer) into English, PLAYING FOR THRILLS. They are both terrific and, incidentally, very interesting to read side by side for what they do with the conventions of the noir detective story and the issue of the buried past.

off to work

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778. **Kathy Lou Schultz**
dodie & kevin: my s/heroes

Sun 31 May 1998

Hello all,

Glad to see Ron and others mentioning the SF Examiner article. I just saw it myself earlier and got a tingle in my toes. For those of you unfortunate enough not to live in the Bay Area, or who haven't checked out the article online, here's a little teaser (come on now, lean in a little closer): In the article they admit that they have sex (Gasp!) with each other (Gasp! Gasp!). And there's a great plug for Dodie's long-awaited *_Letters of Mina Harker_*, as well as for Kevin's oft-referenced "Spicer Book." In addition, if yer "in the neighborhood," the 10th anniversary performance of KK's "That" is happening this Friday (June 5) at the New College Theatre, 777 Valencia, 7:30 p.m.

In reference to Ron's question, Glen Helfand may very well have done *_Socialist Review_* covers. He's very much about town doing film and art reviews, and has done some great book covers, including one for me and one for Abigail Child.

Kathy Lou Schultz

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779. **Susan Wheeler**

SF Examiner

Sun 31 May 1998

As a recent reader of Mina Harker's stupendous letters and recent spectator at one of Mr. Killian's thespian extravaganzas, I can attest: it's all true! And more!

May the spirit inflame, as is said ---

(Kudos, kids.)

Susan Wheeler

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voice/fax ██████████

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780. **Rebecca Weldon Sithiwong**

Quo uncomfortable Vadis?

Sun 31 May 1998

Alan's journey is pure energy. I cringe and marvel; he is brilliant.
Perhaps he could be something else, more controlled, less challenged, but,
were he so, might not we regret his passing? Where else would he live if
not in the company of poets?

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