

THE POETRY PROJECT NEWSLETTER
No. 90 April 1982
Greg Masters, editor
St. Mark's Church 674-0910
2nd Ave & 10th St NYC 10003
\$5 sub./year Circ. 2400

WEDNESDAY READINGS: at 8 PM, suggested contribution \$3, hosted by Bernadette Mayer & Bob Holman: April 7 - Fanny Howe & Tom Raworth. 14 - Dennis Cooper & Kenward Elmslie. 21 - Charles North & Leslie Scalapino. 28 - Bruce Andrews & Michael Davidson.

MONDAY NIGHT READING/PERFORMANCE SERIES: at 8 PM, suggested contribution \$1, hosted by Bob Rosenthal & Rochelle Kraut: April 5 - Open Reading. 12 - Alice Notley & Jeff Wright. 19 - DUTCH POETS - Bert Schierbeek, Lucebert, Simon Vinkenoog, Remco Campert, Judith Herzberg, J. Bernlef, Hans Plomp, Jules Deelder, Karel Appel *. 26 - Michael Scholnick & Steve Carey.

* Part 2 of the Dutch Poets' presentation will take place on Tuesday April 20 at 8. A slightly higher contribution will be asked. These two nights are the beginning of these 8 Dutch poets' American tour to celebrate the bicentennial of diplomatic relations between the U.S. & the Netherlands. An anthology of their work will be published this month by City Lights. Other NYC readings will be given by the group at White Columns, the Nuyorican Poets' Cafe & elsewhere. Call us for info.

SPECIAL WORKSHOPS: 8 PM, free, on April 1 - Joanne Kyger and on April 8 - Tom Raworth

LECTURES: On April 22 at 8 PM Ron Padgett will be speaking "On Reverdy". Presentation will include slides, translations and biographical information. On April 29 at 8 PM Michael Davidson will present a lecture entitled "A Climbing In Between: Jack Spicer & the Poetics of Dictation". Suggested Contribution for both is \$3.

THE 10:00 o'clock SERIES: in collaboration with, and at The Nuyorican Poets' Cafe, 236 E 3rd St, free, hosted by Eileen Myles & Ronnie Burk: March 27 - Pedro Pietri, Eileen Myles, Will Bennett. April 3 - Steppin Razor & Sandra Esteves. 10 - Tom Carey & Miguel Pinero. 17 - Steven Ben-Israel & Ira Cohen. 24 - Ted Berrigan & Frank Rubino. May 4 - Bob Holman & Jose-Angel Figueroa.

FREE WRITING WORKSHOPS (in Parish Hall, 2nd Floor): Tuesdays with Maureen Owen at 7 PM. Saturdays a Children's Workshop with Steve Levine at noon. Sundays with Steve Carey at 7:30 PM.

Poetry Project on the air, WBAI-FM 99.5: April 1 at 7 PM: Ntozake Shange & Gwendolyn Brooks (marks 1 year anniversary of these taped broadcasts) & April 3 - TBA.

VOICE-TEXT WORKSHOP to generate new dance/performance work. Led by Kenneth King, upstairs Parish Hall, Wednesdays April 7, 14, 21 & 28, 5 PM, free.

CITY-WIDE, NATION-WIDE, WORLD-WIDE PROTEST AGAINST ARMS

Barbara Barg ("still a virgin but already militant") will be chairing a meeting on Saturday April 3 at 1 PM. at St. Mark's to discuss plans for poet's action at the march on June 12 (to coincide with the opening of UN talks Special Session on Disarmament. Activities are planned by dancers, theater people, musicians, visual artists, academicians & spiritual leaders. There will be a chant competition. Chants for disarmament should be sent to Barbara Barg 156 W 27 St NYC 10001. \$25 1st Prize.

BOOKS & MAGAZINES RECEIVED

Full Court Press is making a special offer to Newsletter readers, a 10% discount on its new titles: Letters to Allen Ginsberg by William S. Burroughs (\$7.95p, \$17.95c, \$35signed limited edition), Last Nights of Paris by Philippe Soupault, translated by William Carlos Williams (\$7.95p, \$17.95c, \$35sle), Natural Settings, a novel by Keith Cohen (\$6p, \$17.95c, \$25sle), and Dabble, selected poems by John Godfrey (\$6p, \$17.95c, \$35sle). Orders must mention the Newsletter, be accompanied by check or money order (with \$1 for shipping), and sent to Full Court Press, 138-140 Watts St, NYC, NY 10013. See reviews of these books in forthcoming Newsletters... A Fast Life by Tim Dlugos (Sherwood Press, 9773 Comanche Ave, Chatsworth, CA 91311, \$3 - quick list of student loves - "we danced to every slow song at the PBL for 4 hours straight...3 years later my love life had caught up with my intellectual growth and the money stopped coming in...")... from Ferry Press, London, distributed by Small Press Distribution, Berkeley: Lines on the River by Peter Riley, \$8.50; Reactions to Sunsets by Wendy Mulford, \$5; What Was Shown by Peter Philpott, \$5; 1975 by Ted Harrison, \$5; Diagram Poems by Douglas Oliver, \$7.50; Down Where Changed by J.H. Prynne, \$6; and Malo-lactic Ferment by John Hall, \$3 - Arc & Throstle Press & Andrew Crozier have done a fine printing job...from Turkey Press, 6746 Sueno Road, Isla Vista CA 93017: Delectable Mountains by Christopher Cautschi (\$3.50p \$15c) and RUST by Michael Hogan (\$3.50p \$15c)...from New Directions, NYC: Woman Poets of China selected & translated by Kenneth Rexroth & Ling Chung and Woman Poets of Japan, Rexroth & Ikuko Asumi - \$4.95 & \$5.95...The Calculation of Two by Jim Mele (Cross Country Press, PO Box 146 Sta. A, Flushing NY 11358, \$3.95p)... After Caligula by Ulf Goebel (331 State St #4F, Brooklyn NY 11217, \$3.50) ...Where the Chill Came From: Cree Windigo Tales and Journeys Gathered & Translated by Howard Norman (North Point Press, SF, \$7.50)...Dreams From Bunker Hill by John Fante (Black Sparrow Press, Santa Barbara, CA, \$6.50p \$14c)...Night Flight by Lita Hornick (Kulchur, NYC reviewed this issue)... Tom Lowenstein has sent a few of his books from England: The Shaman Aningatchaq (an eskimo story he helped translate - the Many Press), The Very Sheaves of our Calendar (Oasis Books) and La Tempesta's X-ray (a meditation on Giorgione's La Tempesta & the pentimento found by x-ray underneath it, The Many Press - thank you Tom)... (& thanks also to all the publishers who send books and magazines & other stuff in)

BARNEY, ed. Jack Skelley (Fred & Barney Press, 1140 1/2 Nowita Pl, Venice CA 90291 \$3 - issue #1's been out awhile but just got a copy: Dlugos, Lally, Britton, Cooper, Schjeldahl, Equi, Sala, Elmslie, Clark, Padgett +++)... New Wilderness Letter : Special Dream Work Issue #10 edited by Barbara Einzig (guest - 325 Spring St NYC Room 208 10013, \$4 - McClure, Drachler, Morrow, Zweig, Rothenberg, C. Schneeman, MacLow, Meltzer, B. Mayer +++)... Contact II, eds. Maurice Kenny & Josh Gosciak (PO Box 451, Bowling Green Stn, NYC, NY 10004. \$2.50 - articles & poems by Kruchkow, Peters, Hartman, W. Coleman, Ortiz, Rose, C. Kubenstein, Swann, +++ emphasis on 3rd World) ...Oboe #5 ed. Robert Anbian (Night Horn Books, 495 Ellis St, Box 1156, SF, CA 94102 \$18/4 issues - Hirschman, P. Bowles interview, new trans. of Baudelaire by Anbian, Linton, Bright +++)...No Difference Here #2 ed. Donald Guravich (EVERGREEN, Bolinas - Kyger, Beltrametti, Berkson, Bye, Creeley, Gallup, Hawkins, Hollo, MacAdams, Lemieux, Raworth, Waldman+++)...Berkeley Works #1 ed. Tom Plante, 2206 Grove St Apt. C, Berkeley CA 94703 (Vinograd, Plante, Rudge, Tuthill, Clack, Canan, Wilsun+++ \$1.50)...

WRITERS & BOOKS (formerly THE BOOKBUS PROJECT) has issued a good catalog of small press publications for mail ordering. 892 S. Clinton Ave, Rochester, NY 14620

MORE STYLISH THAN SHE SUSPECTS?

A FRESH YOUNG VOICE FROM THE PLAINS by Eileen Myles (Power Mad Press, 156 West 27 St, 5W, NYC, NY 10001, \$4)

Because this is ostensibly the tale of a Catholic girl who flies from a life of earnest discussion about contraception in Latin America to become a bohemian poet in New York City, Eileen Myles's poetry suffers from a facile analogy to confession. She is a confessional poet to the extent that Ronald Reagan is a conservative politician. Lacking an accurate label, we call her by that which she superficially resembles. She employs the methods of confessional poetry, however, only to subvert the principles of self-exhibition. The woods are full of lapsed Catholics, as anyone ever cornered at a cocktail party may attest. Using the cliches and absurd reductions of a once precise vocabulary now debased into nostalgia, Myles translates what may be translated and invents only when necessary. By nature democratic, she's curious as to what part of experience inevitably remains private.

I bring my best romance
to morning. I bring my best
romance to noon. Night
the old charmer is in love with
candles. Holds a fistful of
morning behind his back.

(from ALONG THE STRAND)

Who would mistake such lines for stream of consciousness?

If in those poems where she turns with mock heroic tone to her childhood (SWAN PLACE) or the quite familiar vagaries of her post-college displacement (RESUME RESUME) interest us, it is not that we are eager to learn whether Eileen thought herself popular in junior high school. It's because you can count on one hand poets currently writing who are capable of narrating a story so it has the compression we expect of poetry. Parts of Paul Violi's HARMATAN, a few poems by Ron Padgett, and James Schuyler's extended rambles come to mind as other instances in which clarity and vigor are thus combined. Like these poets, Eileen doesn't always succeed in maintaining that balance, and she usually chooses to be explicit even if it mar an individual poem. At her best when the narrator remains an artful distance from the comedy of events, she's intrinsically social. Intrepid as she is, she doesn't care to ruin a good time by boring us with despair. On the verge of pathos, she follows revelation with a witty disclaimer.

Not that Eileen Myles isn't an accomplished gossip; but to be such, you must develop the techniques -- an ear to the wall will not suffice. Dante might have praised her for rendering the vulgar eloquently. In these poems life is as you imagine it to have been at the Algonquin: clever people saying startling things in the most amusing way. If we can believe the cover blurb, she "describes her poems as 'cheap talk' and most critics agree." The balance is delicately struck; what the critics say doesn't matter, but who wishes to be deprived of their attention? I disagree with the description of these poems as 'cheap talk.' The tone is breezy, but that tone is achieved by a resolve like the Light Brigade's, and if at times the poet seems careless, she'd rather be irresistible than cautious. Being pragmatic, Myles's uncluttered diction flows on barely noticing whether conjunctions connect or abridge, and sometimes punctuation is deliberately awkward. We're skipping along with such velocity we don't have time to quibble until the

second or third time through this book. By then it's too late. We will never be able to deny its charm and pleasant shapes.

Although I've mentioned other poets above, I think of these poems as deriving curiously from Wallace Stevens and John Ashbery. They strike one as so original because she shares nothing with either poet except the acute self-consciousness that makes them stylish and a similar preoccupation with the transience of all things. She achieves greater verve than Stevens or Ashbery by forgoing nuance, sweeping around and around the motive for speech like a satellite circling a new planet, then swerving suddenly off toward another. Sometimes she approaches closer to the surface of the planet with each sweep. Sometimes she does not. If language at best approximates the truth, why worry about *le mot juste*? These poems are witty and muscular, and how often do you encounter that combination? Besides, they include lines such as

The train went through Canada, Jasper in the Rockies, I walked
Around Winnipeg for an hour, bought a strawberry frappe,
Lots of Indian shacks on the sides of the train-tracks.
Stayed in Vancouver where I was in a movie with Barbara Parkins.

To my ear, those lines are more sonorous than Swinburne, and without being vague.

I'm particularly fond of SKUPPY THE SAILOR DOG, which doesn't conform to any idea I've had about what a poem should be or do. I could select a favorite composition to conclude this review but I wouldn't venture to select the best. The more times I read the book, the more I admire the stamina and consistency of the long narratives. Because it seems to characterize Eileen's democratic aesthetic, and because some copies of the book don't contain the final lines of NEW YORK, I think it appropriate to quote them here.

Then, entering the subway, pushing through
the crowds at 34th, I saw a
baby sucking desperately on its bottle,
tears streaming down its fat dark face.
As it sat in its carriage. It stopped me,
I turned; examined some flowers
for sale, cloth on silky green leaves
mounted on a comb. I plucked
up a black one, a black rose, paid the
guy a dollar. I love it.

I'm softly fingering its petals on the
subway home, it is so artificial
so dark and so beautiful.

review by Gary Lenhart

ATTENTION MAY DAY MAY DAY: The Committee for International Poetry is scheduling "A Festival of British Poets" to be held April 31, May 1 & 2 at the White Columns Gallery, 325 Spring St. Anyone wishing to help should contact Bob Rosenthal at 212-477-2487 or write to the Committee at 437 E 12 St, #6, NYC 10009. All offers of help, in particular accomodation for visiting poets during the festival period, will be gratefully received.

Waltzing Matilda by Alice Notley (Kulchur Foundation, 888 Park Ave, NYC 10021, \$3.50)

This is the biggest book Alice Notley has published thus far. It contains a random collection of poems written over several years, plus a handful of goofy little plays or skits, along with an amusing interview by the author with the painter George Schneeman (who drew the cover drawing). Waltzing Matilda de-constructs commonplace daily reality in response to "the necessary disorder of all immediacy" (WCW).

...I shall be the
author of a few notes sung
to beg splendid lingering
of the light broken
at the crossroads sexual
dirty freezing thighs
of the pale grape room
that contains civiliza-
tion as I know it to be an
aging beloved that I
love and for no good reason

Alice really talks in her verse and she lets other people and things speak, so that the tone of voice is multi-phasic (warming, shifting, pausing, changing, including, asserting, exulting, turning) yet it stays located in the physical act of talking.

What will suit you
and its raining
my socks are soaked
rain suits me

She can be lyrical, but she also displays a wry sense of humor.

A clitoris is a kind of brain
That woman stroking hers in Hustler
is thinking: I wonder, are there
misprints in the Manhattan Telephone Directory?

At other times Alice may seem strident or shrill, especially when quick shifts in tone and syntax shatter the logical continuum.

I can remember so much that I generally don't ever
want to talk about it But first will you answer if I
ask, I said something like, he was as good as the
best, And she looked at me between loyalty & me
All right you dumb broad ex cathedra infallible bull-
shit in ex dominee & the rest of it forget it, 100 degrees and
Yes she admitted, he's a real one, he's as great as I'm glaring at you
& this jackass was already falling on the floor talking about
parataxis & parthenogenesis, he lost his hardon for the
scene &

be generous. It's all
yours. We're still all sick but there's his shut-eyed
theory of the great crocodile of the or whenever in

this too cold life fork it over anyway, it's all fun
& tired & sad, how to live, read the mail, & that
looks like it's got things called leaves but didn't
ever say so itself, I'll see you then oh my, til Sun
boy oh boy, Alice hey can I have one of copies?
Sure I gave to life all that I had it's cold like
'cuz even if you look you just miss it, that makes
me think I did something of our own before the next
fucker whirlwind & meanwhile if your name is
Nell & you sign the note Nellie the world
is improved a whole lot at least mine is
& put stamps on with masks on them from Tlingit & Bella Bella.

The measure of the verse thru-out this text is variable. It changes from line to line and from one poem to the next.

Glad you met me at the old saloon
It's that your husband just was shone on by the gypsy moon
I give the same advice to everyone for everything
But it always sounds as different as, that everytime you sing
A song you sing a different song because you're tone-deaf
At least I am. When the gypsy moon shines then there's this sheaf
Of people that they each become a fallen-apart sheaf, even
If it's morning, the gypsy moon can shine, even if it's heaven
In the corner of the room in your brain where you read
The book of Crystal or Murky while you walk about & lead
Your life & lead it to the bathroom & the coffee & stuff.

Alice Notley's work is complicated, particularly in her longer poems where a journal process of writing includes a lot of incidental details together with a flitting emotional surface. Hence, I tend to hear her before understanding the frame of reference.

Hell, he seems to have very little beyond ambition & that's not enough. My god, me I just heard the word spatula & went waltzing Matilda. But everything's such chaos, she's trying to make our life more difficult. But it's still terrific of her to think of it. Matilda of the steamed clams, the stew, & her halibut with butter sauce, my darling who finally taught me you can't try & change world or rather be in it differently so much well I'm too old to be publishing such kindergarten revelations but this one requires that and that I'm sorry your Matilda tape's broken & this song won't exactly replace that song but won't you go a-waltzing Matilda with me...

The song is what protects and saves not just the poem itself from being blown apart here.

- John Daley

Bob Funt is leading a free writing workshop every Sunday at 2:30 at 1636 President Street, Brooklyn. 771-4160. Oops, first session free, the rest \$3. Mr. Funt is a graduate of the Writer's Workshop of the University of Iowa.

I Never Saw Such a Face

It just came back to me out of the blue, sitting on the stool, putting on a pair of brown socks, and I had to laugh. It was about two years ago. I was getting fitted for an expensive suit, in a fancy store, when the clerk pinning up my cuffs looked up and said "What shoes will you be wearing?" and when I said "These", I never saw such a face.

Most Unusual

Out having breakfast this morning in a Polish restaurant on Avenue A, I came across a generous chunk of ham in the bottom of my orange juice glass. (!) Which probably just goes to show you something. If not to put your finger on.

True Confession

I have this good last line I've been dying to write a piece to end it with, if only the right situation would arise. Though I don't really approve of this. I have much more faith in what springs out of the previous sentence. The "given" line. It is exactly here - after the period, and before the capitol - where one can sometimes surpass oneself. By simply being available. The generous reward, if well earned. And yet I still have no intentions of giving up that good last line yet. At this stage in the game, a case could be built for compromising too. And besides - it needs me.

- Joe Brainard

TWO SCENES

Time Mag's Central American Expert sd

Gen. Haig was "an asshole" ---

What a surprise in private on the telephone,

we dated each other up for next Thursday.

I stood outside the Kiev tonight, nose pressed

to the plate glass, feet freezing

in city mush, and watched two aging lovers

inhale their steaming bowls of mushroom barley soup.

- Ted Berrigan &
Allen Ginsberg

MIMEO ARGUMENT

I've always liked mimeo. If I had the time and money to do it, I'd publish my complete works and the complete works of other poets in plain, finite mimeographed editions for distribution to probably no more than 400 people. Nor would this be a bad thing to do; in fact it would be pretty cool. I don't like the preciousness of poems on a page - better to blend them in to a long series or a longer work, better to superimpose them, better to keep them forever in your back pocket! Although everyone takes pleasure in a beautiful object, even a stone, the accident of what poetry is good in what consequent wrappings (the complete works of Bernadette Mayer \$3,000, coffee stains on wrappers) seems both unaccountable and fascinating. I hate the precious-book-buying-business except in the ways that it can help to support poets. To prefer glossiness to modesty, for its own sake, is a step in the direction of condemning plagiarism, and its friends, obscenity and political freedom. With the proliferation (maybe now easing) of books produced through government grants comes direction from the governments that they will/will not "fund" mimeographed things. Apparently, as far as you can see, the governments prefer the glossy and the bound. (And bookstores seem to deteriorate as rapidly as the remaining mimeographed things in them). Nowadays it's not strange for small press publishers to accept a poet's manuscript and take four years to produce it. (Even a magazine will occasionally do that; the forthcoming issue of "Cold Spring Journal's" been forthcoming for 7 years). The cheaper and slightly more instantaneous reproduction of poetry for those who can use it is not a bourgeois value; the craving for a book with a binding is. The people who "actually understand poetry" are, at the very least, the ones who are served by the darling mimeograph, if the mimeographers have the energy. Lasting precious books are one thing - that's for the jobbers; disseminating poetry in a particular decade is pretty ephemeral. Nor do I mean to agree with Eileen that a poet won't put her best works in mimeograph form, because the very freedom from restrictions and forms of abuse of the author permits a more limitless devotion. I like books in all forms but I think it is strictly New-Grub-Street to advocate the theory in relation to poetry that "money makes money." There ain't any real money, there never was, my dear fame. Without a doubt the better-looking book will rightfully aggrandize the poet but the fancy book never done nothing for the blank poem. (The Newsletter isn't ratty in its present form but suits the need to write to a large audience about events that aren't planned a year & a half in advance & you wouldn't like it if they were). As luck will have it, America and fashion tout binding and lamination right now; mimeograph has a traditional reputation for being for beatniks and desperate Russian writers. But this momentary and urgent dissemination of poetry, which is also full of pleasure, is not the marketplace but a kind of cupbearing for the knowledge and pleasure of poetry. I believe that since the Industrial Revolution western questions of value are sardonic, if not sarcastic and that my only resource as a poet in 1982 is to put myself on the side of things which exists at an angle slightly askew to any desire for fame, or even value for the "works", forget about value as it's perceived, and take as much pleasure in my life as a poet as desire can construe and hurry to change the world in small performance as others like John Cage have done, since you can't stop fucking writing anyway.

- Bernadette Mayer

(eds. note: This article is a response to "Mimeo Opus" by Eileen Myles which appeared in last month's Newsletter)

OM Krishna I: Special Effects/OM Krishna II by Charles Henri Ford (Cherry Valley Editions, 1979/81, Box 303, Cherry Valley NY 13320)

"It could happen to you courtesy of Dow Jones" says my latest junk mail packet & I think sure, but how far do you go? I can only hope as far as the flaming coves, barking monkey gods & johnny minotaur control towers of Charles Henri Ford, America's impeccable practitioner par excellence of surrealist poetry who continues to speak in the capacity of the persuasion's ageless progenitor.

OM Krishna I is the first installment of a projected tetralogy. Its main feature being its sonic speed & pliable skin, twelve times tougher than architecture's curtain wall for office & 'public' structures that followed on the heels of FDR humanist years. This is poetry without such concessions, uncompromising to a virtue in its rapid-fire moving frames & personal only thru the application of its dedicated craft; persuasive too in its terse humor which actually succeeds in complimenting diverse readers for hitting the road with this seemingly wild-eyed & glib-tongued driver who gets us to every destination on time, intact with the motor still running as we dishevelled passengers get out & petition the gas pump jockey of Maya for the keys to the lavatory. Always a hitch here too as Ford affirms: "Sancta Simplicitas blooms wild just once./'To inherit you, generation of transplants, light on yoga had to begin all over.'/O palest transport and perfectly realized breakout./Fox satiny non-infectious toilet paper, the Complete Plays of Racine."

Writing like this knows there is no final transmutation, only sleeping human apocalypse in the lab brain of poetry's night: "So you want to be a pyromaniac, getting off his kernals in Potter's Field?/No you're not in Never Before, you're in Ever After./Hyacinthe is rocked by subtle sensuousness./Wheels go skimming in the Siberian moonlight." Taking Sinatra-like chances? Try it. The fantastic artistry of OM Krishna I: Special Effects might just get you thru the night.

And if you wake up wanting more than yesterday's coffee or yet another new wave tabloid, there's OM Krishna II's special lethargy prescriptions "from the sickroom of the Walking Eagles" where limited motion is a contraindication. "Those bearded crows of nostalgia won't go away" injects Charles Henri in Phase I as the ongoing narrative formula acknowledges the legend connective: "Two apprentice ascetics join the caravan to Karavirapura/Eagle faces and sacriligious hankerings/Whatever they hope will happen must be met half way/Cast in heroic mold they are able to stand steady in a moving chariot/Rubber bands on their index fingers help work wonders."

The attendant sensuality of his poetry lends credences to Ford's evocations of the nerve armed Krishna - or the Personification of the Unknowable One given a proper surrealist playground of both earth & space range by the hand of an equally good painter & collagist. Vast, busy, crowded, feathered & farcical rivetings of techno & biomorphic information systems babble, actually gets over thru the voice of this poet whose first book was introduced by William Carlos Williams decades ago. The awesome control of Ford is no less evident here & clearly spoken. "Krishna is like a hospital said Ali he accepts all germs." These words from Doctor Ford might here be directed to all readers punk or nonsectarian, who find themselves suffering from marginal or malignant restlessness.

- Tom Weigel

MONK'S DEAD

Monk's dead, I'm thinking of Clark upstate
What he thinks when he types, probably nothing
In this world like his thoughts

Nothing in this world like that music
On the radio, thirty-three hours of it
From Columbia University's station

I tape & have to inspire me when
Listening with my heart I'll word
Later in my life, listening to the breaths

He breathed into music, a royalty
Amidst this age of hearts, a song
That'll never die as long as one heart lives

Hard on the head and in the ear, his angles
And the width of his soul cannot be figured
Into the bargain of life without his song

And Clark'll type a big one, salt
In the wounds of this generation, Monk
Is finally gone, into a coma, soft

Wordless sleep, then nothingness
Not even a beat to descend on, a beam
Of energy that changed our music

Soft voices in the moonlight, rustle
Of a nearby plant, tinkle of a dish
When the fish is set down upon it whole

World is fucked up but he never changed
His beat, it was always his beat, his changes
Are the stuff that energy's made from, different

Pulse he wore like a turban, strange flashing
Smile that kept you offguard, his body is now
Laying in state on upper Third Avenue slab

His beat was deep as his melodies were alternate,
I don't know what to say about this strong man,
Best let Clark make-it up, go ask him he knows

- Jim Brodey
2-18-82

The Basement Workshop is presenting MIZU--a collaboration in word, sound and movement with Mei-Mei Bersenbrugge, poet; Fay Chiang, poet; Jason Hwang, violinist; and Theodora Yoshikami, choreographer. The dates are April 27 & 29 at 8 PM at St. Mark's. \$5. 732-0770 for more info.

The 8th New York Book Fair will be taking place again at Loeb Student Center, NYU, Washington Square South & LaGuardia Place on April 9 (12-10), 10 (12-8) & 11 (12-6).

Carol Malmude is looking for a subletter for her E. 11th Street apartment for the months of July & August. \$275. 254-2235.

Alice Notley shares 1st Place in the San Francisco Poetry Center's 1982 Book Award for How Spring Comes (Toothpaste Press) with John Hildeludle's The Old Chore. Congrats to Alice & Allan Kornblum, publisher.

Alice & Ted Berrigan are now in the middle of an enormous project for Ken Mikolowski's Alternative Press in Michigan. Ken printed up 500 backs of postcards for each of them & they're now in the process of writing & in Alice's case also painting the fronts of them making 500 new works each in an edition of one. Other poets who've been doing the same are Bill Berkson, Jim Gustafson, Joanne Kyger, & Faye Kicknosway. Ken then each includes one in packets going out to his mailing list. Ain't no junk mail.

SPACE STATIONS is a month-sized (April 1981) selection from Ed Friedman's ongoing journals. This chunk was written in Ed's parents' home in LA, while Ed's doctor father was having and surviving a heart attack.

Ed's daily journal entries are not written in the reflective mode. He runs tapes and radios in the background and intercuts his at-the-type-writer reactions to what's going on around him with transcriptions from these and other sources including his own literary projects and NASA tapes of the Apollo 13 mission.

The result of this style of action-writing is prose that reads like poetry in the sense that (as an impassioned English professor once told me) in poetry the aim is to make the reader hear his own voice in the words of the poet. Crucial to this project are Ed's transcriptions of dialect speech from an Indian movie-music station and from his multi-dialected rendering of the Chinese folk drama The White Snake. Subvocalizing the phonetic renderings (rather than cheating by referring to Ed's handily appended translations), one experiences distancing and doubling of one's voice; a shiver of self-recognition in the alien.

Though Space Stations reads like poetry, it is, I think, more a successor to the novel. Action-writing constructs ED the central character in his journals in a way that displaces character-as-kernal in favor of character-as-overdetermined-locus of influences (cf. there are no people, only situations). The facts of Ed's father's heart attack are a frame that's more a convenient excuse for the "revelation" of inner self.

Indeed through cut-ups, transcriptions and other "experimental" devices, Space Stations gives you the kind of experience you want from a good old

fashioned novel, without the shame that comes with surrendering yourself to the image-manufacturing machinery of mainstream story-telling tropes.

I'm not sure how Ed intends to circulate his journals, but they're obviously a public work--as moving as Agee's A Death in the Family, as lucid and honest as a good Godard movie.

- Joel Chassler

from Ed's letter: ...Chassler is reviewing a book that is in manuscript with a few entries published in mimeo mags. Books-circulating-in-manuscript is a very traditional literary form--a form that unfortunately looks like it's going to be quite timely given the cuts in NEA funding to small presses. On the one hand, printing this review is documenting a kind of literary/poetry/writing event and on the other it's advertising it. I like that. Maybe it'll be the beginning of a manuscript circulation circuit like that of the subversive writers in the Soviet Union.//It'd also be great if some publisher with some private money or leftover (I can't fathom this) grant money would take interest and publish Space Stations ..

The Eye and Ear Theater will be presenting Ed Friedman's THE WHITE SNAKE April 22-26 and April 29-May 2 at Dancerschool, 400 Lafayette St. at 9 PM. Reservations 255-7768. Bob Holman is directing.

HOW TO WRITE DOWN YOUR DREAMS: POSTCARD FROM MICHAEL SCHOLNICK

2-11-82

Dear Alice,

Good morning, afternoon & night.

Rules Dream:

Write down everything you remember,
but don't be afraid not to write something down.

Interject an occasional gist of
soliloquy material which shall rise
above the flagrant paradigms like a narrative.

Disregard the absurdity of time &
space when making transitions quaint.

Choose either to create a sequence
or stick to the plot consistently.

Rewrite writing to promulgate mania,
reckless tendencies, foolery because
you're the inhabited star of this

kid-stuff.

(I forgot something).

Love,

Michael

APRIL EAR INN READINGS (Sat 2 PM): 3rd NED ROREM, 10th JOE BRAINARD/DANIEL THOMPSON, 17th AMY GERSTLER/BOB FLANAGAN - 326 Spring Street

Night Flight by Lita Hornick (Kulchur Foundation, 888 Park Ave, NYC 10021 npl)

This opulent presentation is an extraordinary book of some depth and beauty. The fact that the author would actually go to such length to write it, amazes me. Don't read me wrong, it's the depth of understanding and the clarity with which she has dealt with it, that moves me here. There is a constant density to her feelings, which are then used to construct a very carefully worked series of great coherences. The lady writes very well, she is clear about what she thinks, and has arranged it all as to be quite understandable to us readers. That she should spend so much time on these works shows her depth of caring.

Feelings is the operative word here. To try and analyze the interior of works that in themselves analyze so coherently is a fruitless task. The main thing for me, here, is that she encourages as well as dissects her subjects. And that is usually a very missing element from all the other (I hesitate to call her a "critic") creative observers in print. Harold Bloom take note!

Her subjects in this collection include Ted Berrigan, John Weiners, the Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics, David Antin, Helen Adam, Kerouac's poems, "reviews" of the Dial-A-Poet record series, and her own art collection.

The piece on Ted is most welcome, she succeeds in getting at his "themes". She demonstrates slashing accuracy when writing of Weiners, in her opening remarks: "John Weiners writes poems that are very largely about pain but infused with lyrical beauty." And in her closing remarks: "The word tragic does not imply merely misfortune but suggests a noble soul embroiled in suffering." Her understanding is surpassed only by his own.

I admit that the most interesting and informative work here is the one on David Antin. Mostly I think because it goes into real depth about the exact purposes that underlie that poet's writing. I know very little about Antin's work, probably because I haven't read very much of it. But her "essay" on him makes me want to read alot more.

The Brainard section is orchestrated by some clear photos (by Gerard Malanga) of works I guess that are in Lita's own collection. Helen Adam is a poet I greatly admire, and of whom I don't remember having read any essays. So this piece is also quite welcome. Any chance to read even a fraction of a poem by Jack Kerouac, without the usual bleeding heart information attached about how the author had such a heavy life and drank too much, is quite welcome. She treats his poems not him, which is a vast improvement over the bullshit Ann Charters turns out. News of Tom Veitch (he's in the Boulder journals here) and his teaching highlights that section. She sees him as a religious poet, as indeed I think he sees himself. His teaching methods are contrasted with those of Anne Waldman and Allen Ginsberg. Lita exhibits a great wealth of info on Buddhism.

The "reviews" are interesting, that again, she would take the time to go through the entire Dial-A-Poet series and talk alittle about each piece on every record. As is usual with this format, some of it is interesting, and some of it not so interesting. It depends. Again

her unusually sharp understanding of feelings makes this alot more than just an exercise. Although she continually has no patience with "Language" or "Sound" poetry. The final section on her own art collection contains some great anecdotal work. Here, as elsewhere in the book, she is basing a great deal of the writing on interviews she has done with the subjects. The book concludes with a lengthy series of full page color photos of the twelve paintings discussed.

This book brings into play Lita Hornick's own poetical spirit.

- Jim Brodey

Third Visit to Yeats' Grave

Clouds not moving
red-eye sun sits in the water
old tower and cross stand at
the highway, nothing happens
raucous wheeling crows
carry away the oak trees

ancient fire slips into and out
of every day
to go passionately into deaths
drain them behind you
the honest sound of a woman
at her shears at sundown

and to walk away now
to the stablest valley floor
the sun ironing the grass in place
and stand, the body
part of what it worships
wholly.

Janine Vega

25 YEARS ON THE ROAD: A CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JACK KEROUAC

"This summer, July 23-August 1, 1982, Naropa Institute in Boulder, Colorado will host a national conference on the life, times & work of Jack Kerouac. The conference is in celebration of the 25th anniversary of the publication of On the Road. The conference will examine Kerouac's unique approach to writing from both literary and cultural perspectives, and its influence on his artistic contemporaries as well as the generation following. Conference participants will include: Allen Ginsberg, Gregory Corso, William Burroughs, Peter Orlovsky, John Clellon Holmes, Robert Frank, David Amram, Robert Creeley, Michael McClure, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Don Allen, Herbert Huncke, Ann Charters, Carl Solomon, Jack Micheline, Ted Berrigan, Diane diPrima, Andrei Vosnesensky, Sterling Lord & Anne Waldman. Poetry & prose readings, critiques, recollections, anecdotes, panels, etc. \$240 for Conference, \$133 for dormitory housing. Naropa Institute, 1111 Pearl St, Boulder, CO 80302

Wilderness 1982

"I cannot be optimistic about the future"

-- a calendar

I'm not too old to give up poetry for fiction
if either were a bargain
I like basement values
I have had teeth that's enough about me
Love seems like idiocy in this century
you have to do it fast or not at all
& change your style from butterfly to punk
not a thing from a tree that sticks on your nose
but a person in chains who dances with stars
like my friends in the insane asylum who adore
mostly rock n roll & money & success
& also Jesus or some other man
like Johnny Winter or Mick Jagger or even Merle Haggard
it's the singing or the band that seem tempting
in the habitual future of America
drawn in the pawn of this map
such jerky notions were never so desired by all
who call the time and the weather by phone
So please give a nickel to the guy who asks for it
otherwise you'll mess up closing time
Wilderness 1982, last call
Wanna fuck, go crazy, drink yourself to death
or just plain die bye bye

- Bernadette Mayer

28th. CHARAS for DK, CG, BK, GS, EN & all + MJB & WP

If I could explore more or have less a drastic reaction to
Satisfaction & could receive contentment like communion
Refining away what's fine to not be so sublime about

And was capable of tossing memories & the losses they inhabit
Away, as if it were possible, desirable or even affordable
Ranking them expendable & recklessly replaceable

If I could do it then maybe I'd pursue it
But it's only when I'm failing that those lovely ghosts
Come round

I don't regret my choices tho I might their resulting losses
Not so easily solaced with a passing look or evening's promise
But fate fondling's what I leave the house for &

More is what I'm out for, till I find
They who quench it, & settle us in to relive & renew it

- Greg Masters

This volume by Octavio Paz is a hauntingly poetic, philosophical tale that utilizes the ancient Indian city of Galta as prime metaphor and essential motif. Writer/poet/diplomat Paz indeed knows about a great many things -- yet it is his keen poetic imagination along with a severe love for painting and philosophy (of the hermetic variety) that actually makes this book one of the more enlightening I've come across in recent years.

Paz begins his adjectival road-weary saga by metamorphosizing -- in philosophical fashion -- the mental risks involved in travel and astute observation: "I wasn't asking myself questions: I was walking, merely walking, with no fixed itinerary in mind. I was simply setting forth to meet...what?" Paz weaves this lush philosophical motif increasingly deeper into the fabric of the writing until it becomes the means to hold "orderly" discourses on the nature of writing and the general meaning of 19th century painting (his observations, for instance, mid-way through the book in regard to painter Richard Dadd's famed "The Fairy-Feller's Masterstroke" are profoundly insightful). For Paz, then, the world -- and specifically the ancient world -- is a constructivist collage of residual materials and "things" which have to be decoded and ultimately used as foundations for "documentary writing" (writing, in other words, that is a kind of immediate history that is "scored" ever-so-precisely for the printed page). Yet Paz understands the inevitable failure of such an attempt and the final dissolution of words that presupposes a subject; making the real stimulus and perceptual impetus behind far beyond "words" and the ordering of those words into supposed "facts". As he says so beautifully in Chapter 4 of the work: "The relations between rhetoric and ethics are disturbing: the ease with which language can be twisted is worrisome, and the fact that our minds accept these perverse games so docilely is no less cause for concern.: This writer, through the making of this text, is attempting to redress and at the same time initiate (i.e. compose) a sort of grammatical/syntactical improvisation whose essential aim it is to approximate...what? Paz: "Can reality be the reverse of the fabric, the reverse of metaphor -- that which is on the other side of language?" or "Perhaps things are not things but words: metaphors, words for other things." Or maybe language only speaks "...of itself and to itself." But if fixity is change as event this work -- by its contextual placement -- is actually doing all these things. For this text not only refers back to itself (which are the discourses on the writer's craft -- since that "arena of talk" is closest to the man writing...the rest is within the void...the distanced "categorical subject" such as the writer's investigative mind-journey to Galta...hence the tilted metaphor denoting that, The Monkey Grammarian), it is itself (Other) in spite of itself.

Paz wants that age-old reconciliation between Love and Knowledge; but like the philosophical body of thought he admires, he doesn't want one without the other. This text is that constant attempt at reconciliation. The aesthetic domain (i.e. "Love") is when he looks and partakes and finally "describes" the ancient ruins of Galta ("Perched on a thin wire of shadow, the silver and olive-colored thrush, itself a tapered shadow transformed into light standing out between and against the various glints of broken shards of bottles set into the top of a wall...") and the knowledge is his philosophical speculation on existence, history and the craft of writing itself.

For the hermetics love, erotica and eventually "art" were seen as heavenly, almost divine states -- and in order to reach them one had to

serve a long studious apprenticeship from "below"...an apprenticeship of thoughtful contemplation and regimental protocol. Yet that all important reconciliation -- that was becoming of increasing interest to scholars and philosophers -- never really occurred intellectually or corporeally in a significantly authentic manner (meaning, in essence, that this all important "synthesis" couldn't be easily "lived" and "thought") simply because the contextual setting in which this could truly happen had yet to be installed at the level where life is actionalized. Love, consequently, was never seen as an act of Knowledge -- but rather -- as an act of grace.

In The Monkey Grammarian Paz manipulates the multiple dualities of existence and recognition for as long as he can. If he can't talk about the mechanics of statement then he might just as well shift to the receding people and architecture of Galta. But all of this can't last! We are post-modern men and Paz is a poet! Fortunately, though, in the final analysis Love and Knowledge do indeed meet...to bid passing nods to the everlasting beauty of Art: "...the liturgical sequence and the dissipation of all rites through the double profanation (yours and mine), the reconciliation/liberation, of writing and reading..."

- Roger Riggins

East 10th Street between 1st and A just across from the Russian Baths. The first warm day in February. There's a man on the street selling his goosedown jacket. He offers it to a black guy 2 doors down. The man shakes his head and the salesman, passing an ingratiating smile as he turns away, trips over a small metal plate protruding from a gap in the sidewalk. His smile turns to sawdust as he plunges towards the dirty plate of hard steel. I look the other way as does every other person on the street, not wishing to actually witness his misfortune or to help him, though I hear the CLINK-CLANK of the plate and then SLAP, the one foot goes down and STUTTER, STUMBLE, the other, and then BANG, the knee and THUD, the thigh. I'm watching 2 people walking from the other direction - a tall blond white man and small black woman. They are holding hands. As she walks, she kind of springs from one foot to the next, and the blond man is striding along beside her. They pass me and I hear her song. I follow them down the street. As I pass, the man is retrieving his body and is brushing down his goosedown jacket.

- Diane Torr

Writers in Performance: The Poetry Series at the Manhattan Theatre Club is having four creative writing workshops in Spring 82: (1) Women's Writing - Poetry and Prose with Jana Harris; (2) Poetry with Bill Zavatsky; (3) Poetry with Sharon Olds; (4) Performance - Poetry and Prose with Jessica Hagedorn. Call (212) 288-2500 or write MTC, 321 E 73 St, NYC 10021 and ask for brochure.

GREENPEACE WHALE WATCHING: In April, May and June Greenpeace is offering trips to observe whales, dolphins, porpoises and seabirds. The trips are 4 or 5 hours and cost \$20 for adults, \$17 students and senior citizens or \$14 per if a pre-arranged group of 10 or more. All profits aid Greenpeace which has been trying for the last 10 years to end commercial whaling and the annual harp seal slaughtering in eastern Canada. 286 Congress St. Boston, MA 02210. (617) 542-7052

Ode To Spring
for Jim Brodey

From the dress circles of Nova Scotia
The Breezeway Affair seeks a leading man
So the consequences of devotion
Are absorbed like sand in the pilings
Like the touch & go of a fools paradise
That's no longer an issue in the laundromat
Of an achingly bright day in January
Where business majors wish to drink
The blood of the first available imagination;
& now to water the cactus of eternal bitchery!
Next thoughts in the Top Ten plutonium waves
Where the spy system extends its air time
& nothing more about the hidden ginger nipples
Of Pluto's twelfth moon; all this on
The chest of postmodern psychology's
Now bloated vest, O mother of coil!
Listening is the only comprehensible extreme
Among those fuming nannies who propose
Genocide for the stockcar boys down at Gloria Corners
& is music to the faces of Creedmore's
Newly admitted saints in residence
Soon they will get Piero Heliczzer
& all Love Boat rejects from Burbank & Syosset
& later computer research's flunkies
Who tripped & fell from the fire escapes
Of symbolism's \$15,000 a month dormers
Of a once fashionable east side Manhattan
God stays in his Germany
As propane gas sniffers
Levitate eight miles above the Rockies
Where the final fermentation of Adelaide's yeast
Insists on taking place in a bottle.

- Tom Weigel
1 - 18 - 81

Doorknob Note

There's no point hiding.
I love you just the same.
You once wished me to drop dead.
I don't follow your orders.

- Tom Savage

PANEGYRIC

It's Rivers you jump into
chromatic rivers
Familiar faces face you - is that yours?
Geldazhler - what's he thinking?
Joe Hirschorn - what's he computing?
or Tess Truehart - stoney, sexy
Berdie penetrates sea light
with her whole grandmotherly body
The Polish Rider trots into the 20th century
with Einsteinian hues
while John Ashbery writes "Oleum Misericordiae"
hunched over the machine
A young woman's pout juxtaposes
pensive self-portrait in tassled mortarboard
People, he paints you
busy, modern, elegant
just as you are
Old Masters above my desk
proffer a cigar
No thank you
but perhaps Frank O'Hara naked & excited in socks
will take one
I'm thinking of the way you & he (O'Hara)
swept into an apartment on 57th Street
16 years ago, talky
metabolic brothers
& studied us, the subjects of your compositions
to give us back a new look.

- Anne Waldman
Feb 3, 1982
for occasion of Poetry Project
Benefit at Larry Rivers Marlborough
Gallery opening, NYC

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Eileen Myles' Mimeo Opus (March Newsletter) contained a number of inaccurate statements, requiring some correction and clarification. First off, Both Sides of the Goat was offset, not mimeo. Secondly, Eileen's opinions about Tom Weigel, as an editor and otherwise, are entirely her own. At least they're not mine. I think Tom did a fine job of editing. Thirdly, I do write poems. I never said I didn't like the poems in the book. I said my writing had changed. To say that I don't give a damn about what I wrote last year is a gross misinterpretation, false assumption, & totally erroneous summation on her part.

- Lenny Goldstein
NYC

SUENO DE GATOS: The Cat's Dream

The beautiful cat sleeps with weight and limbs
but such cruel bones, true blood
with all the rings of everything that circles
the geology of earth & the firmaments
the color of earth

I want to sleep like a cat
with all of time's balls, with night's tongue
sex afire till nothing more need be said
more tender than Atlas under the world
directing it crazily, caesar of dreams.

He undulates, this sleeping cat: eats the night
like dark water, despairing, careening through
his dreams or mine, nakedly panting,
sleeping mighty as a tiger, as light as salt

Sleep--sleep--cat of my night
with your ceremonial priests lying on stone:
order our dreams, stretch & shine them,
with your lilting heart & long sweep of your tail.

- Pablo Neruda
translated by Elinor Nauen

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