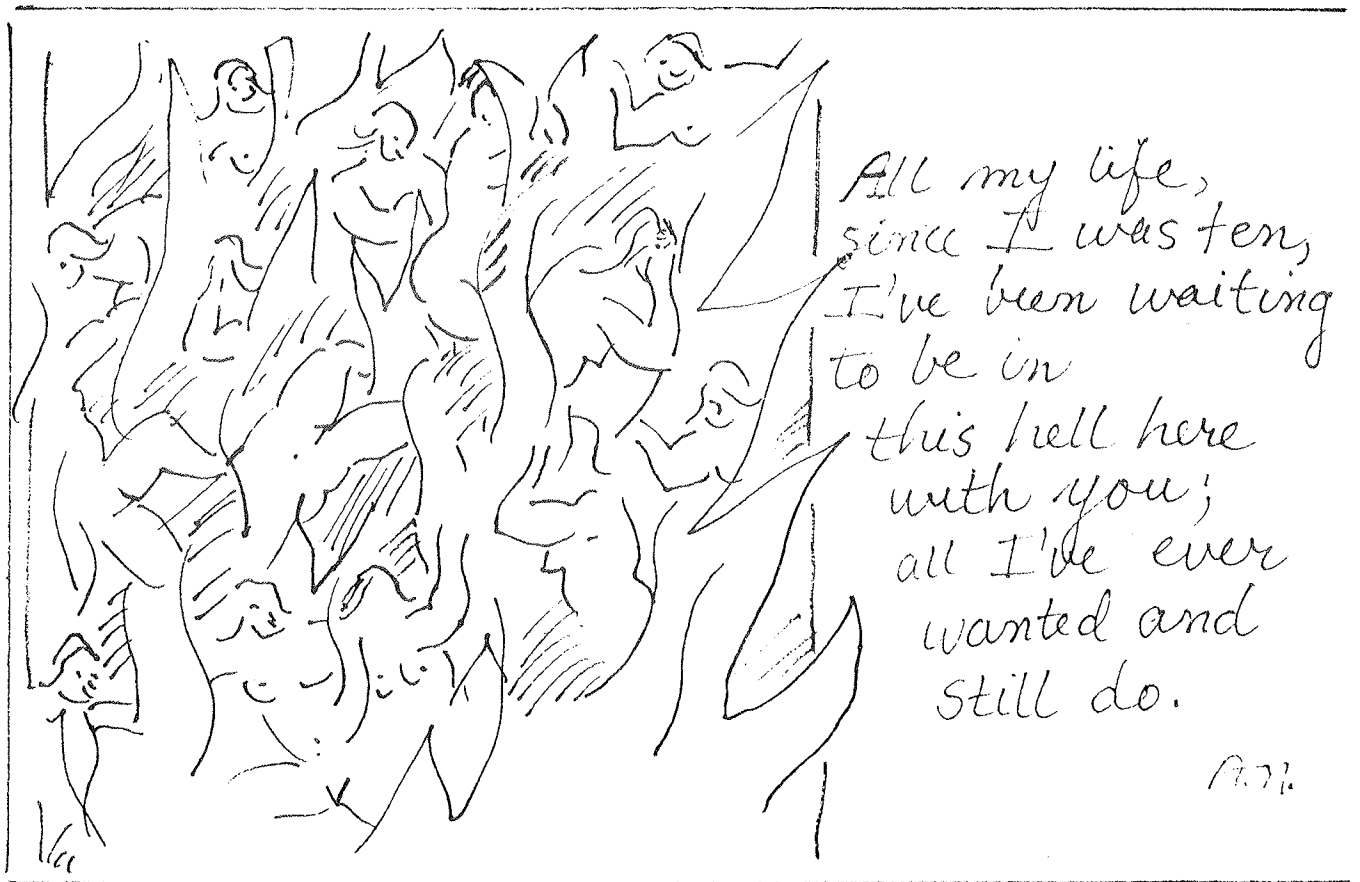


THE POETRY PROJECT NEWSLETTER

October 1982

#92

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Alice Notley/George Schneeman

WEDNESDAY READINGS: at 8 PM, suggested contribution \$3. *Hosted by Bernadette Mayer & Bob Holman:* October 13 - **Ted Berrigan & Ron Padgett.** October 20 - **Terry Garthwaite, Bobbie Louise Hawkins, Rosalie Sorrels** (these 3 have a new record "Live at the Great American Music Hall" on Flying Fish Records - c/o Hawkins, Box 344 Bolinas CA 94924 \$8). October 27 - **June Jordan & Diane Burns.**

MONDAY READING & PERFORMANCE SERIES: at 8 PM, suggested contribution \$1. *Hosted by Rochelle Kraut:* October 11 - **Jack Skelley & David Trinidad.** October 18 - **Frank Rubino & Elio Schneeman.** October 25 - **Lenny Goldstein & Don Yorty.**

FREE WRITING WORKSHOP on Tuesdays at 8 PM with **John Godfrey** (beginning October 12). John Godfrey's new book is *Dabble: Poems 1966-1980* from Full Court Press. He says about the workshop: "We will discuss the influence of poets born 1875 to 1900. To begin with anyway."

BOOKS RECEIVED

The Sonnets by Ted Berrigan (United Artist Books 172 E 4 St. 9B NYC 10009 \$5—for this new edition of **The Sonnets**, 6 of the original poems have been restored)...**The Border Guards** by Anghelos Sikelianos, trans. Frances LeFevre (Rocky Ledge Cottage Editions Box 125 Cherry Valley NY 13320 \$5—these poems of the Greek Resistance 1940-6 sing with blades of joy demanded &, like Neruda's greatest calls for sense, charge the reader with their passion applicable to all rights) also from Rocky Ledge: **First Baby Poems** by Anne Waldman ("These poems are complex joyful bioalchemy."—Michael McClure)...from New Directions: **Candles in Babylon** by Denise Levertov (new poems \$5.95p \$12.95c) and **Of the Great House: A Book of Poems** by Allen Grossman (\$6.95p)...from Black Sparrow: **The Formal Voice** by Eve Shelnett (\$7.50p \$14c); **The Spider's House** by Paul Bowles (\$9p \$14c novel reissued); **Ham on Rye** by Charles Bukowski (\$8.50p \$14c—this account of growing up in LA is hilarious & satisfying in its underdog retaliations & "loser" side of things (a few chapters about his boils) & is sharp in its class portrayals & crafty but falls a little short in using vengence as its major motivation; still worth it) and **Birth of a Poet** by William Everson (\$10p \$14c—reviewed this issue)...from The Figures (2016 Cedar Berkeley CA 94709): **River Through Rivertown** by Merrill Gilfillan (\$4—evocative & misty descriptions which remind you of some scene you'd forgotten; "The kind of day submarine crews/dream of." **Writing** by Tom Raworth (\$6); **Back To Forth** by Gloria Frym (\$4)...**TWO: Poems** by Jeffrey C. Wright/Drawings by Yvonne Jacquette (Toothpaste Press Iowa \$5—the usual beautiful package from this press & this just a prelude to a bigger selection from these two); also from Toothpaste: **Throwing Spitballs at the Nuns** by Rose Lesniak...**Research** by Clark Coolidge (TUUMBA Press Berkeley \$3)...**Oracle Night** by Michael Brownstein (Sun & Moon Press MD \$6)...from Burning Deck RI: **the transparent eye-ball** by Dallas Wiebe (\$4) & **A Century in Two Decades** which is A Burning Deck Anthology 1961-81 including Creeley, Zukofsky, Duncan, up to Guest, Tysh, Mathews, & Waldrop with 50 others inbetween \$6)...**Songs of Gods, Songs of Humans** trans. Donald L. Philippi (North Point Press Berkeley \$16.75—early oral epics of the Ainu of northern Japan)...**Brakhage Scrapbook: Collected Writings**, ed. Robert A. Haller (Documentext Box 638 New Paltz NY 12561 \$9.95—essays, letters, tapes, intros on his and other new films plus much on poets & writers)...**Themes & Variations** by John Cage (Station Hill Press Barrytown NY 12507 \$9.95p \$25c)...**Israel Potter: His Fifty Years of Exile** by Herman Melville (Northwestern U Press & The Newberry Library 1735 Benson Ave Box 1093 Evanston Il 60201 \$29.95—the 8th volume of this excellent reissuing of Melville's writing including extensive editorial appendix)...**Historical Document** Nichola Manning (Applezaba Press \$3.95—reviewed this issue)...**A Decade of Hispanic Literature: An Anniversary Anthology**, ed. Nicolas Kanellos (Revista Chicano-Riquena U of Houston Central Campus Houston TX 77004 \$10—includes locals Algarin, Esteves, Laviera, Pinero)...**Cat Chaser** by Elmoro Leonard (Arbor House NYC \$13.50c—another terrific thriller from "Dutch")...**UHFO** by Harrison Fisher (Diana's Monthly Press 71 Elmgrove Ave Providence RI 02906 \$4.50)...**The Terrible Twos** by Ishmael Reed (St. Martin's/Marek NYC \$11.95)...**A Candle in His Head** by Frank Murphy (Wild Thistle Press 148 W 17th St. 2D NYC 10011 \$4.75)...from The Montemora Foundation Box 336 Cooper Station NYC 10276, all \$4: **The Fountain** by Karin Lessing; **Pythagorean Silence** by Susan Howe; **Celebration of the Sound Through** by Gustaf Sobin...**Northbrook** by Frederick Morgan (U of Ill Press \$4.95p \$10c)...**The Menaced Assassin** by Ascher/Straus (Treacle Press \$4.95p \$8.95c)...**Hugging the Jukebox** by Naomi Shihab Nye (Dutton NYC \$5.95p \$12.50c—Nat'l Poetry Series)...**Herakles** by Eli Goldblatt (Tamarisk PA \$3.50)...also from Tamarisk: **From Platt Clove and Kaaterskill** by John Cline \$3...**to open** by Samuel Menashe (Viking NYC \$6.95)...**Coyote's Journal**, ed. Koller, Blue Cloud, Arnett & Nemirow (Wingbow Press Berkeley \$6.95—an anthology of contemporary folklore)...**Thirty an' Seen a Lot** by Evangelina Vigil (Arte Publico Press TX \$5)...**Making Sense of Foreign Currency** by Les Von Losberg (Poets Union Press 560 Marlborough Rd Bklyn NY 11226 npl)...**Bohemian Airs & Other Kefs** by Robert An-

bian (Night Horn Books 495 Ellis St Box 1156 SF CA 94102 \$6)...**entering the walking-stick business** by Sylvester Pollet (Blackberry Press Box 186 Brunswick ME 04011 \$4...**Jambo** by Dave Ward (The Windows Project 23a Brent Way Halewood Liverpool npl)...**Speaking of Routes** by Paul Dresman (Two Gun Books San Diego npl)...**The Real World** by Daniel Wolff (Taylors Lane Mamroneck NY 10543 \$10 for a beautifully packaged set of pamphlets "Describing a Circumnavigation of the Globe")

MAGAZINES RECEIVED

Conjunctions 2, ed. Bradford Morrow (33 W 9 St NYC 10011 \$7.50— Creeley, Tarn, Enslin, Rexroth, McClure, Boyle, HD, Rakosi. Dorn + + +)...**New Directions 44**, ed. James Laughlin (Grossman, HD, V. Hugo, Lihn, Purdy, Sobin + \$6.95)...**New Blood 6**, ed. Niko Murray (2935 Broadway, Boulder CO 80302 \$3—Burroughs Jr, Waldman & Di Prima interviews, Chicano poets, Cope +)...**The Paris Review 84**, ed. George Plimpton (Larkin & Merrill interviews, MacLeish letters, Disch, Simic et al)...**Mag City 13**, ed. Lenhart, Scholnick, Masters (437 E 12 St #26 NYC 10009 \$3—Schuyler, Mayer, Notley, Dlugos, Myles, Godfrey, Winch, Rosenthal, Towle, Bye, Burckhardt, Fischer, Katz, Hughes, Baraka interview, Levine/Kraus & Myles/Carey plays, eds.)...**Contact/II**, ed. Kenny, Gosciak (Box 451 Bowling Green Stn. NYC 10004 \$2.50— reviews; Snyder, Gunn, Zirlin, Kemp, interview w/ Thom Gunn +)...**ACM 7**, ed. Webster, Webber, Brandeis (242 W 104 St 5RW NYC 10025 \$2.50—Chernoff, Ortiz, Bukowski, the great Chicago Poetry Reunion + + +)...**Credences V 1, #s 2 & 3**, ed. Robert J. Bertholf (420 Capen Hall SUNY Buffalo NY 14260 \$3.50—Rasula, Enslin, Einzig, Gunn, Berkson, Bromige, Dewdney, Howe, Bernstein, essays by Butterick, Taggart, Landrey + articles & reviews)...**Maize V5 #s 1&2**, eds. Alegria - Xelina (Box 8251 San Diego CA 92102 \$8/2 issues—mainly Spanish speaking Chile to Alaska)...**MR 30**, ed. Frederick Barthelme (Center for Writers, Southern Station, Box 5144 Hattiesburg MS 39406-5144 \$3—Hawkes, Yau, Lopatin, Upton, Joselow, Greenberg +)...**Open Places 33**, ed. Eleanor Bender (Box 2085 Stephens College, Columbia MO 65215 \$3— Olds, Glaze, Zavrian, H. Fisher, Le Guin, Derricotte, reviews +)...**River Styx 10**, ed. Jan Garden Castro (Big River Assoc. 7420 Cornell St. Louis MO 63130—Troupe, Nemerov, Sirowitz, M. Owen, Abbot, Ortiz, Mack, Sholl + + +) **The Flue**, ed. Martha Wilson (Franklin Furnace 112 Franklin St. NYC 10013 npl—Sex, Performance, and the 80's w/C. Schneeman, Ludlam, Burnham, Freilicher, Baracks + L.A. London Catalog, mucho graphics)...**Tamarisk V4 #4**, ed. D & D Barone (319 S Juniper St Phil PA 19107 \$3—Colten, Aldan, MacLow, Byrd, Garrison essays, reviews +)

THE POETRY PROJECT NEWSLETTER

St. Mark's Church
10th Street & 2nd Avenue
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Greg Masters, editor
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The Oral History Series Community Documentation Workshop

Blending Into the Life; Working at St. Mark's; Long Road From Lares - David Perez; Making Mud - Merle Steir; Full Time Active - Sara Plotkin; Changes - Nora Lugo; Between Wars; Starting Off From the Dead End - Michael Donohue; Fishmerchant's Daughter - Yuri Kochiyama (all \$3 available from the Community Documentation Workshop, Arthur Tobier, Director, St. Mark's Church 10th St & 2nd Av NYC 10003 also distributed by Teachers & Writers Collaborative 84 5th Av NY NY 10011)

"The Church," as we call it here in the neighborhood, for me, to name at least one of its members, is, in fact, the Church in my life. It has been, and has been the *only* Church in my life for over seventeen years. It's name of record is, I think, "St. Mark's Church in-the-Bowery;" &, as many readers & subscribers to this journal know, it sits at the corner where Second Avenue & 10th St. meet, in Manhattan 10003. A designated landmark building, it is equally a "place d'importance," as Ron Padgett might say it, because one wooden leg & all of Peter Stuyvesant's bones are interred in a vault in it's south east wall. Stuyvesant, for a fistful of cash-value stuff to the amnt of \$24.00, purchased Manhattan Island from certain Indians, who claimed themselves to be either its owners, or parties empowered to act for said party, or parties. Time flew, & Petrus Stuyvesant, intrepid Dutch sailor, died. More time passed, & life, until one day The Church, a/k/a Petrus Stuyvesant's Grave, consecrated May 9th, 1799, looking at and around itself, found itself to be a still beautiful, not dying, but considerably rundown personage, still a living being, also still of considerable stature, but, wanting. Its Parish equally had been through changes, some, at least, trying ones.

The streets & avenues whose center The Church long had held pride of place, always a melting-pot village of major league proportions and activity, included among its residents a large non-voting power bloc of loosely allied groups of children (people between 11 & 32); these were, and are, the children of those who had recently moved out of the neighborhood, & children of those most recently arrived, of the still arriving. Among these were Blacks, Ukrainians, Russians, Puerto Ricans, Portuguese, & lots of Poles, with Cubans, Koreans, Vietnamese, and etc. arriving fast. Ripping open gravestones, tearing down its fences, breaking into & removing contraband, and general site-transformation toward Disaster Area, constituted one of the major recreational activities of these kids, easily the cheapest, and often surprisingly rewarding.

In the Spring of 1975, via landmark designation, new spirit, & small amounts of procurable cash, people fond of The Church, and notably Stephen Facey, first and continuing Director of what became The Preservation Youth Project, conceived of enlisting members of that same generation of kids, same kids no doubt some of the time, into paid job-holders, very much unskilled workers in terms of past job experience, and doing something about the poor old rundown easy mark Church and its grounds, which included yards, playground space for the very small, and The Church itself, inside & out. A book, **Working at St. Mark's**, put together as documentation, in part to help with fund raising, was made & organized, under the direction of Arthur Tobier. Eight members of the Preservation Youth Project, Arthur Tobier, & Steve Facey met over several consecutive Saturdays in The Church itself, to talk over the ex-

periences of growing up on the lower East Side and taking on the responsibility of being a worker. It was all taped, and in the final compilation, who said what, i.e. names, was left out; brief remarks by Muriel Ruykeyser, the poet; or Brecht; or John Berger, were placed apart as fitting, and fittingly; and the result, **Working at St. Mark's**, "**Preservation Youth Project**", **An Oral History**, emerged as a remarkable document, with sheaves of striking testimony, self-evidently truth, in a round of voices making a Round of American, a song, that is history, plain story, plainsong, plain talk, and everything anyone anywhere needs to know if only in order to be aware of today's date, let alone its obligations, pleasures, tasks, rests. I'm glad I live nearby, and didn't miss out on its availability. Now it is available again, together with the nine other pamphlets, at least, that grew from the doing of this one.

The Church, the neighborhood, people, parents, children, lovers, school, the old and their stories of 50 or more years of change, the world as it is, here, in this United States we call so easily America, is in these books whose central speakers, by now identified by name, ages, all the several occupations & changes, and it is a telling you are hearing while reading. Seeing through ears. (There are beautiful photographs as well, of Second Avenue et al, old days, nowadays). A young secretary, Nora Lugo, whose mother came here from Fajardo very young tells stories; there is a painter, & an actor. Sara Plotkin, whose history begins, "I was born in a very little town in old Russia;" her story has been named for her book, **Full Time Active**, and it is a treasure. **Between Wars** is Depression Lower East Side; read it and compare, I implore you. And above all don't fail to read the series first authentic classic, a natural work of art by a natural, terse, but open, story-teller: I mean, Michael Donohue, whose (An) Oral History, called **Starting Off From The Dead End**, is 60 some years of Irish to Irish-American, by a full citizen of most of those sixty years of the Lower East Side. Fireman, Painter, Union Organizer, Singer, lover of his own city, mow this one, ours, Manhattan Island, Donohue begins with Cromwell as living presence, covers street-workers, the world of coal robbers & kids, cops, ward politics, family & all that might mean, and he is naturally frank while equally naturally reserved, the result being simple sentences sometimes devastating in the revelations about human survival technique:

"...after my mother died ...I lost my exterior edges on both ends—to anger and to joy—....We protect ourselves by pulling in on both ends. Never go extremely to one end or another. We watch ourselves, even when we're laughing."

"Maybe I'm wrong," he said, "but I've always placed emphasis on doing the job and then leaving and then not coming back."

These booklets, 5" by 7" in size, and near 40 pps or more usually, should be in every library and school and anywhere else people want to open a book and experience other humans going on telling the story. The story that is the one story and the only story...that people lived, are living, do continue, also die, are sick, change, vanish, become successful at whatever, tell about it. Here is some of that story.

—Ted Berrigan

Tuesday Night Movies at Films Charas, 360 E. 10th Street \$1:
Oct 5 - a night with Jacob Burckhardt. Oct 12 - *Vampyr* (Dreyer). Oct 19 - *The Searchers* (Ford). Oct 26 - El Salvador Film & Video Project (Benefit, \$3).

Roof Slates And Other Poems Of Pierre Reverdy
translated, with prefaces by Mary Ann Cawes and Patricia Terry (Northeastern University Press, 17 Cushing Hall, Northeastern University, 360 Huntington Avenue, Boston, MA 02115, \$17.95c bilingual)

Pierre Reverdy's poetry resists translation into English. Its vocabulary is simple and small; its syntax (even when broken) fairly simple; its meaning understandable if not always explicit: readers with even a limited knowledge of French can read his poetry with some pleasure. What does not come across so easily into English is its wonderful sonority, the ghostly echoes of sound and sense that are at the heart of Reverdy's technique. Previous translations, with a few exceptions, have fallen flat: the words are there, but not the music, and certainly not the powerful forward drive that impels us to the last line of every poem.

Patricia Terry and Mary Ann Cawes' versions in this volume are accurate and serviceable. Both are veteran translators (Terry's Laforgue was another brave attempt to bring a barely translatable poetry into English). Nevertheless, reading this volume I found myself wishing that John Ashbery had translated these poems with the same brilliance as those he published in *Evergreen Review* No. 11. Not a fair wish, perhaps, but one that reiterates the glaring need for the ideal Reverdy translator: someone who is a great poet, with a solid knowledge of the originals, of Reverdy's life and other writings, and of his milieu. With more and more Americans now discovering Reverdy, writing critical studies of his work, and chipping away at translating him—encouraged by the Reverdy revival in France these past 15 years—we might, through sheer proliferation, generate this ideal poet/translator for Reverdy. Toward that end, thoughtful attempts such as *Roof Slates and Other Poems* are helpful and very interesting. I recommend it. But for now you still have to return to the facing French text for the real poetry.

—Ron Padgett



The Academy of American Poets

AT THE DONNELL LIBRARY

20 West 53rd Street

Admission Free

Peter Taylor

October 18, Monday, 6:00 PM, Auditorium

Richard Hugo and Philip Levine

October 28, Thursday, 6:00 PM, Auditorium

AT THE GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM

Fifth Avenue at 89th Street

Admission Free

A Memorial to Archibald MacLeish with Christopher Plummer

October 26, Tuesday, 7:00 PM

Admission \$6.00

For information call (212) 427-5665

Historical Document By Nichola Manning (Applezaba Press 410 St. Louis Long Beach CA 90814 \$3.95)

I skimmed this Journal-Novel-Pamphlet fast in bed this morn—excellent paradigm of Centralized System "Paranoia," humorous crossreferencing mania typical of me & Gen. Haig & my mother & 100 million other Geniuses—we all have our Associational wires Crisscrossed, & the mental feedback's amazingly familiar.

—Allen Ginsberg

FALSE LIGHT

How much moon is enough?
The train don't stop here no more
It just continues rolling through
The desert under the dirty stars
Like a blood crazed butcher whose
Smock is still perfectly white.
If you look closely false light
Becomes a joy in itself if
The book you are reading is sexy.
I have been up most of the night
Twiddling my thumbs while the
Sleepers snored and farted.
Who accomplished what?
Does it make a difference
When all of us are on screen
Performing in some dumb movie?
Serious actors forced to act stupid.

—Michael Sean Lazarchuk

10 Books Are Sustaining

1. It was a common practice to designate court ladies by street names in 1271, and Lady Nijo, of **The Confessions of Lady Nijo** translated from the Japanese by Karen Brazell, literally means Second Avenue. The first 3 books of this autobiographical narrative revolve around her complicated love affairs, beginning with her concubinage at age 14 to the retired Emperor GoFukakusa, her sad pregnancies and the splendid celebrations at the Tomi Street Palace.

"Ties of my undergowns undone
The man uncared for—
Gossip soon will spread"

she writes at dawn.

By Book Four (1289) Lady Nijo has renounced her court life to become a Buddhist nun who makes her way exchanging poems with the warriors and priests she encounters on numerous pilgrimages to Shinto and Buddhist shrines. She wrote down her life after her dead father appeared to her in a dream urging her to uphold the family's literary tradition.

2. **The Freud Journal of Lou Andreas Salome** has some interesting informations about Rainer Maria Rilke, his bisexuality, his dream of seeing empty orbits in a man's forehead. "One is grateful to sit beside Freud", this strong-headed woman writes.

3. After schlepping around India with Gary Snyder, Allen Ginsberg & Peter Orlovsky for many weeks, Joanne Kyger writes a hilarious letter to Nemi Frost. Here's an excerpt:

"I dearly hope TIME magazine pays no attention to us until I'm in the foreground with my smart published novel and nifty green silk toreador pants and all my jewelry from the Tibetan market. I weigh 119 lbs & have crows feet at the corners of my lovely beatnik eyes. I am going to try those face recipes for rose petals you sent, very soon. Before it's too late. The thing is, I am sounding rather bitter because it's been years since I've been able to get any wild martini attention. All I do is stand around in this black drip dry dress in India."

The Japan and India Journals (handsomely produced by Michael Wolfe's Tombouctou Books and selling for \$10) is the emotional trajectory of a young woman stretching her muscles to be a poet, an inadvertent wife to Gary Snyder, a Buddhist, and an American living and travelling in exotic lands. "I don't want to force my mind to be clever or force it to poetry", she insists, but she is never forcing it and is so clever.

4. How heartening to have these cheerful works - "Lifting Belly", "Stanzas in Meditation", "Patriarchal Poetry", amongst others - back in print in **The Yale Gertrude Stein**.

"Patriarchal Poetry not to try Patriarchal Poetry at once and by by and by Patriarchal Poetry has to be which is best for then at three and which is best and will be be and why why patriarchal poetry is not to try try twice."

5. **Expositions and Developments** by Igor Stravinsky & Robert Craft is a charming & personable conversation book to dip in and out of. "Excuse me for interrupting, but I would like to remind you that composers and painters are not conceptual thinkers..." (I.S)

6. **Smithsonian Depositions & Subject to a Film** by Clark Coolidge, published by Vehicle Editions, are two lengthy tracts, glosses, accumulations. I wish someone smart would review Clark Coolidge in these pages. He is one doing something totally provocative & odd to all ears who would be listening right now.

7. **The Eagle's Gift** by Carlos Casteneda presents the dictums of the Eagle who is the power governing the destiny of all living beings in the Yaqui sorcerer's world: "The Eagle is devouring the awareness of all the creatures that, alive on the earth a moment before and now dead, have floated to the Eagle's beak, like a ceaseless swarm of fireflies to meet their owner, their reason for having had life. The Eagle disentangles these tiny flames, lays them flat, as a tanner stretches out a hide, and then consumes them; for awareness is the Eagle's food." Since the disappearance of Don Juan, the Casteneda books have been "peopled" with extraordinary (comic & slippery) soceresses.

8. I wept reading the closing pages of Mariani's mammoth biography of William Carlos Williams, **A New World Naked** ("They enter the new world naked,/cold, uncertain of all/save that they enter."—from *Spring & All*), on the tube from Hoboken, the part where the poet dies and his little dog won't enter the room but sits outside whining. This book perhaps doesn't tell all the gossip you've wanted to know but you perceive Williams from outside in better, regarding the things he wouldn't tell you himself, out of modesty, out of pride.

9. Reading some of the essays in Guy Davenport's **The Geography of the Imagination** (North Point Press) is like coming upon a beautiful hidden city (I recently looked at Professor Ed Foster of Stevens Institute's slides of Petra, that rosy red city carved of stone a mile inside a box canyon in the desert of present-day Jordan). You become enamored of Davenport's informations as they sing to you: "Ozymandias" was written in a sonnet contest with one "luckless" Horace Smith who titled his poem "On a Stupendous Leg of Granite, Discovered Standing by Itself in the Deserts of Egypt, with the Inscription Inserted Below." I adore Davenport's civilized wit and humanity.

10. **Goodnight Moon** by Margaret Wise Brown, pictures by Clement Hurd is a children's book of 1947 that through repetitions of phrase and subtle color changes moves like music, like the moon rising. It takes place in a marvelous green room the bunny boy inhabits. You are almost breathing in this magical room as he gets ready to sleep.

—Anne Waldman

Anne Waldman's new single *Uh-Oh Plutonium!* has just been released by Hyacinth Girls Music, 799 Broadway, Suite 325-D3, NYC 10003, \$2.99.

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T Y P O G R A P H Y

156 W 27 5W/NY 10001

NATURAL

Diapers on the Snow by Andrei Codrescu (Crawfoot Press Box 7631 Liberty Station Ann Arbor MI \$5)

When Andrei Codrescu arrived at Ellis Island almost twenty years ago, a Romanian poet of prodigious talents, he brought with him the legacy of European surrealism and a poetic tradition that can be traced all the way back to Ovid. And with what seems to be an inherent Romanian ability to sense the direction of the avante garde, Codrescu immediately took his place at the head of the line. His early poems in a sparse primitive English, translated an East European intellect nourished on the American "bad boy" myth and a 1967 East Village experience. The crude power of the first poems in English along with their cosmopolitan elan revealed the underlying genius of this writer and his penchant for black humor and the bizarre. Codrescu extracted surrealism from the American consciousness by using the multiple ambiguities of the language to his own poetic advantage. In 1970, he won the prestigious Big Table Award for his book *License To Carry A Gun*. Codrescu had a confidence about his work and about himself as a poet that is practically alien in this country where the poet and poetry are on the bottom rung of the popular media ladder. This confidence and his wild, audacious imagination, plus the fact that he was born in Transylvania, could do nothing but enhance the Codrescu mystique.

The takeover
of America
thru the 2nd person (You)
by polite men from other countries
pretending to be nude while clothed
in ill fitting suits
continues

Over the years this mystique has softened somewhat. For one, it is no longer all that necessary. Codrescu's reputation is well established. He is a respected poet and teacher. His essays, stories, and reviews in national publications amply reveal the breadth of his intelligence. And as the title of his most recent book of poems, *Diapers On The Snow*, suggests, a certain domestication has taken place. Codrescu, family man, father of two, now naturalized citizen, takes his place with the rest in the unemployment line where no cuts are allowed.

Anselm
maneuvering the rapids
on a tiny raft
of quotation marks:
"Horses are just big rabbits"

The poems display an immense personal energy. They are dynamic as always, and they have a fluid certainty that plays with logic, flays logic, tortures logic, and eventually flaws logic to transform the obvious, transparent, and predictable with fluent ease into marvelous surrealyrics.

Nanos
discoverer of a cure
for arthritis of the mileu
points to the sky:
"this house
had no view before the earthquake"

Among Codrescu's many contributions to American Literature (seventeen volumes of poetry and fiction to date), there is the example of his uncanny instinct. Andrei Codrescu knows that a poet without a reputation is a poet without an audience, and that being a poet is more than just writing poems. He is a natural, and he has survived by being human, direct, and popular.

—Pat Nolan

Living Ghosts

One cop waves to another on the street
they talk about schedules, who's on
and who's off, who works Wednesday.
Upstairs, watching them, I yawn
and fall asleep. They're boring. For me
this street is charged with memories
rimmed inside-out with living ghosts
while for them it's a question
putting in time.
They don't know what they're missing—
that without me looking on in fascination
they don't complete the picture
until they too, one day, turn up missing.

—Michael Brownstein

DANSPLACE PRESENTS THREE FALL SERIES

I. New Performance Work by John Bernd, Gail Donnenfeld, Mary Anne Capehart, Hope Gillerman, Paula Kellinger, Eva Maier

A series of shared evenings by dancers whose work incorporates or has been strongly influenced by other media.

Oct. 7, 8, 9 (Thurs. - Sat.): Donnenfeld & Maier
 Oct. 14, 15, 16 (Thurs. - Sat.): Bernd & Gillerman
 Oct. 21, 22, 23 (Thurs. - Sat.): Capehart & Kellinger

II. Black Choreographer Series: Blondell Cummings, Fred Holland, Ratta Christine Jones, Ishmael Houston-Jones, Ralph Lemon, Bebe Miller, Harry Sheppard, Sheryl Sutton

A festival uniting the varied work of several black dance artists whose work is part of the predominantly white world of downtown art. Curated by Ishmael Houston-Jones.

Oct. 28, 29, 30, Nov. 4, 5, 6 (Thurs. - Sat.): Exact schedule to be announced Sept. 1

III. Open Presentation

Open Presentation has been an ongoing forum for choreographers to develop work within a supportive and critical atmosphere. Initiated by Peter Rose and Tim Miller four years ago, O.P. has helped form their work as well as other. This informal presentation of some of the current work-in-progress and performance exploration at O.P. will expose the process of dance making and encourage exchange among the artists and audiences.

Oct. 10, 17, 24 (Sundays): Including work by Peter Rose, Mark Russell, and many others.

ALL PERFORMANCES AT 8:30 P.M.

CONTRIBUTION \$4.00 or TDF

RESERVATIONS & INFORMATION:

212-674-8112

Pat Nolan & Steven LaVoie have announced the formation of the Black Bart Poetry Society whose \$8.20 membership costs will, among other privileges, set you up with *Life of Crime*, their more or less monthly newsletter which: "will feature gleanings from the fringe, notes from the wooley West by poets & critics who want to flog rumors, preconceptions, prejudice & out & out lies. It will welcome tirades, especially those directed at ideas which have outlived their usefulness, toward reactionaries who've forgotten whence they came & archaic expectations of the status quo... Since bad taste predominates, taste is obviously out of the question." Send orders, letters, books, news etc to either the Temperate Regional Office, 1405 Mariposa St. SF CA 94107 or the Coniferous Regional Office, PO Box 798 Monte Rio CA 95462; checks made out to either of the co-arbiters.

Poets On: is now accepting poetry on the theme of *Surviving*. Please send no more than five poems, a brief bio, & SASE to Ruth Daigon, Box 255, Chaplin CT 06235. Deadline January 31. Yearly sub. \$5, single copy \$2.50.

Simon & Schuster will be issuing Dave Morice's *Poetry Comics: A Cartooniverse of Poems* this fall, a selection from his PC magazine + 50 new pages.

Sam Abrams is still looking for a publisher for his magisterial collection, *The Pursuit of Useful Ignorance* (55 pp. abt 2/3 previously pub in mags, includes the '82 Poetry Project Contest winner, "Sam Cooke on the Nantucket Ferry.") Write him at 28 Sylvan Rd. Brighton NY 14618.

Chicago Poetry Festival: Yellow Press, Chicago, is hosting a 10th Anniversary Poetry Festival at Cross Currants, 3204 N. Wilton near Belmont and the El, Oct. 15, 16, 17 including Paul Carroll, Ted Berrigan, Maxine Chernoff, Richard Friedman, Alice Notley, Art Lange, Paul Hoover, Henry Kanabus, Barry Schechter, & Bob Rosenthal.

Jack Skelley reports in from Venice CA that the Beyond Baroque Foundation (681 Venice Blvd. POB 806 Venice CA 90291) will be combining its newsletter and quarterly magazine into a 6-times-a-year round-up of news, verse and reviews. Input (especially reviews) is desired. Send c/o Jack or Jocelyn Fisher. First confirmation in his letter of the departure from LA for NYC of Dennis Cooper who, it seems clear from a 3000 mile away vantage, was the impetus in forcing away some of the BB foundations w/his Little Caesar Press & magazine (published from their facilities).

The National Exhibition Centre, R.R. 1, Site 2, Comp. 10 Castlegar BC V1N 3H7, is calling for submissions from artists, critics & malcontents for an exhibition of "anti-commodity art":

Art cannot escape being a commodity since it exists as an object. However, there needs to be a subjective element expressing itself through the object. We ask you to send us art which is not just a thing in itself but a communication between people.

An artist must eat, therefore art is exchanged for money. This use of art as a meal ticket must be a secondary function. Please send us art which is close to being without this secondary function.

Slides are especially welcome & will be democratically judged by the audience of gallery goers rather than by jury. "Written ideas related to the theme, art as commodity, are invited & will be displayed in the gallery" & distributed. Deadline for submissions is Nov 1 & the show'll run Nov 8 -28.

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The Retirement of Superman

Shivering once and
wrapping my red and blue cloak tightly around myself
I traveled to a rare and terraced land
where there were trees of alabaster
in forests of blasted gold
under petrochemical dawns
I goofed and dreamed, life was very great
human beings didn't need me any more
I received a monthly stipend of 720 free hours
whenever I got hungry all I had to do
was drop my head down
into the submarine dollar ferns of heaven
and chew

—Tom Clark

Fade to Prompt by John Mason (Tuumba Press, Berkeley CA \$3)

This loose suite of 26 pieces is Mason's first book in over a decade of venturesome, innovative, personable writing. Most of the time he's lived in San Francisco and worked as an assistant teacher in a "Development Center For Handicapped Minors."

fade to prompt
a blind child dances
on the sidewalk in fear
hoolock! hoolock!
here is the order of the buses
you make me sick!
bending the leg at the knee

After he gave a reading in January in Berkeley I wrote in my journal: "It's funny and mature. It's graceful and very circumstantial, swivelling on any instant, conscientiously playful. The rhythms are acute, mimic impressions of reality through language. The tone is impersonally tender (not depending on an identity of you and I), giving things sway."

I hear your hearing aid. Looking for the dustpan, I turn on the light so I might have the help of color as well as shape in finding it. How could you wear white socks today of all days? When DJ Jim Dandy is coming to visit our school? I drop my pants and reveal: my pajama bottoms: Sick Man. What are some of the signs of this "burnout" you say you have? When I first started I thought it was wrong to spend time on bulletin boards. Now I enjoy it.

The playfulness undermines the actual melancholy and troublesomeness and muddled predictability of so-called ordinary life. It doesn't try to eclipse it: it makes something of it without remaking it. It faces things "aslant"; its curved cross-section is unbordered and picks up something unexpected. "Hearing aid"/"the help of color as well as light"; "DJ Jim Dandy"/"Sick Man"; "signs of 'burnout'"/"time on the bulletin boards"—the little games of the world and the mind are lucid and low-key, with us but not too much. Intimately and implicitly, the writing invites a relaxation of defenses against the text and doesn't take advantage but offers, conveniently contextualized as situations, many opportunities to tinker and goof and question a local mind and, through it, the rest. There's a curiosity about otherness in the tentative, empathetic yet ironically distanced display of icons. Perspective and modality shift to engage whatever is there—possibly to penetrate, possibly to be penetrated by, but a commingling of knowing any-which-way seems most intended. The writing is as curious of the reader as of anything else, and is uninclined to generate conclusions and tendentious attitudes.

i thought he meant,
what do you want from me,
leave me alone,
but he meant,
who am i *imitating*?
i'm putting this girl back on a plane
it is a manly sorrow.
these tears never grew in my mother's milk.
i'm just a kid on the bus with the heebiejeebies.

—Steve Benson

WONDERFUL PERFUME

Back dances in time
As temperature with sun
Rises through the morning
An attractive breeze
Follows each street
Wherever you're going

—Ted Greenwald

Birth of a Poet by William Everson, Edited by Lee Bartlett
(Black Sparrow Press 197 pp. \$10p \$14c)

This is a very powerful book, almost a tract, by a regional poet, that is almost completely devoid of humor and irony, and yet more full of beautiful dithyrambic prose and bouncy enthusiasm than anything I have read since *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. "Shamanize! Shamanize!" is Everson's urgent exhortation to the American poet (young or old, I suppose). His varied background as a C.C.C. kid in the 30s, as a Conscientious Objector in the 40s, as a Dominican Brother who left the Order during the Nixon period, as a delver in Jungian psychology and the occult, and as a Catholic literary thinker ranking with Thomas Merton and Gerard Manley Hopkins, as a kind of cultural anarchist associated with Kenneth Rexroth and the San Francisco Renaissance, has produced a many-faceted prose style that hits one at times as gobbly-gook and at others as extremely profound insights. We who aren't all living in Big Sur and scurrying through the graffiti-ridden subway cars may not be able to share his regional enthusiasms, but reading him is definitely a rousing and life-giving experience. This work, or tract, especially its unique descriptions of the erotic nature of the landscape, was, for my sagging spirit, the best of all possible pep-talks. Perhaps for you too. If you have been gazing at your neighbor's eyeball and experiencing the emotions of Poe's protagonist in "The Tell-tale Heart," read Everson! His favorite poet is his fellow Californian, craggy Robinson Jeffers, whom he quotes extensively to good effect. His main idiosyncratic hang-ups are two concepts: linear time and cyclical time, which sound like things out of recent Buckminster Fuller but seem closest, as I attempt to translate them, to that antiquated stuff about existence and essence.

—Carl Solomon

As you can see, we've changed our look! The costs to produce the Newsletter have gone up, of course, & whether we can continue in this format is dependent on the response we receive from you, its readers. One year's subscription (8 issues) is \$7. Smaller donations will, however, put you on the mailing list & larger contributions will put you on heaven's list. We urge those readers who've been receiving the Newsletter without having sent money in, or haven't for awhile, to please do so now. As a special offer, anyone donating \$15 or more to the Newsletter will receive along with their subscription, a portfolio of poetry/graphic pieces, many of which appeared in the May 1982 issue (this includes works by: E. Denby/Y. Jacqueline, R. Dash/D. Crase, J. Holabird/T. Towle, Glen Baxter, about 20 other collaborations, some of which are hand-colored). Your comments on this change from mimeo to offset, as well as anything else, are requested. So, please take the time today to show your support of our efforts & mail in the coupon below (or a note) with your \$7 and any comments. Thanks.

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JADE CHIPS OF THE POETS

These books are scholarly works; the amount of prose and criticism surrounding the translations varies; the authors generally have done the impossible and made something in English which, if not always on the poetic level of Waley, Pound or Rexroth, is readable and frequently inspiring. The information is what matters—our image of Chinese poetry is frequently erroneous. Most of these books are most economically found in a library. Pre-Han period: *The Songs of the South: The Ch'u Tzu* by David Hawkes. This collection of poems is slightly later than, entirely different from, and a necessary complement to the "classic anthology as defined by Confucius." Out of the *ch'u tzu* developed the *fu*, sometimes translated as prose poetry or rhapsody or rhyme prose—long catalog works in florid language, like if Dylan Thomas had written *Leaves of Grass*. Burton Watson's *Chinese Rhyme Prose* is excellent; there is also E.R. Hughes' *Two Chinese Poets: Vignettes of Han Life* (about "capital *fu*" or rhapsodic descriptions of cities) and David Knechtges' *The Han Rhapsody: A Study of the Fu of Yang Hsiung*. While *fu* were being written at court, out in the world the *shih*, which is what is always translated as "poetry", was being created out of folk songs. During the "period of disunion" after the Han *shih* surpassed *fu* in importance. Some studies are *Poetry and Politics: Life and works of Juan Chi* by Donald Holzman, *The Poetry of Tao Chien* by James Hightower (Tao Chien is the great drunk who refused to work for the government and retired to his fields to write poems) and J.D. Frodsham's *The Murmuring Stream: Life and Works of the Chinese Nature Poet Hsieh Ling-yun*. Hsieh Ling-yun is a terrific poet, one of the first to be influenced by Buddhism. The T'ang dynasty is the age of all those most famous Chinese poets. To begin with, Stephen Owen has written two essential books, *The Poetry of the Early T'ang* and *The High T'ang: The Great Age of Chinese Poetry*, covering the first half of the dynasty, ie, poets like Wang Wei, Li Bo, Tu Fu. For individual poets there are a few studies: Pauline Yu's *The Poetry of Wang Wei* uses lots of uptodate heavy duty Western theoretical apparatus. David Hawkes' *A Little Primer of Tu Fu* is a work of genius; with transliterations, word for word ponies and paraphrases it takes you inside the real language of the poem. Rather logically, after the early and high T'ang came the Mid and late. These are very interesting poets; their problem was that they had to follow Pound, Eliot, Yeats and Williams, so to speak. A.C. Graham's Penguin *Poets of the Late T'ang* makes the best introduction. Stephen Owen covers, in detail, the first two major Mid-T'ang poets in *The Poetry of Han Yu and Meng Chiao*. J.D. Frodsham translated the complete *Poems of Li Ho*; Li Ho is an intense, apparitional poet, "the Chinese Baudelaire," and Frodsham says he died of "sexual overindulgence;" others have said Frodsham is not completely reliable. The late T'ang poets are refined, allusive, complex—you can't always tell what they're talking about. James Liu's *The Poetry of Li Shang-yin* illuminates the best poet of the period. The Sung dynasty is frequently described as the most "modern" in its sound; Burton Watson's translation

of the Japanese scholar Yoshikawa Kojiro's *An Introduction to Sung Poetry* is the best place to begin. Watson has translated selections of two individual Sung poets, *Su T'ang-po* and *The Old Man Who Does as he Pleases: Poetry and prose of Lu Yu*. His student, Jonathan Chaves, has written a study, *Mei Yao-chen and the Development of Early Sung Poetry* and a very lovely selection of Yang Wan-li, another Sung poet, called *Heaven my blanket, Earth my pillow*. In the late T'ang and Sung a new metrical form emerged from contemporary popular music, the *tz'u*, sometimes translated as "art song" or "lyric." There are only a few books about *tz'u*; James Liu's *Major Lyricists of the Northern Sung*, Kang-i Chang's *The Evolution of Chinese Tz'u Poetry from Late T'ang to Northern Sung*, and *The Transformation of the Chinese Lyrical Tradition: Chiang K'uei and Southern Sung Tz'u Poetry* by Shuen-fu Lin. *Tz'u* tend to be on erotic themes, if that interests you. Poetry after the Sung is largely untranslated; the conventional wisdom is that it doesn't compare with what went before. This may or may not be true. In any case, Frederick Mote, an historian, wrote a biography of *The Poet Kao Chi*, with many translations; Kao Chi is considered one of the finest poets of the Ming dynasty. Jonathan Chaves has translated another Ming poet, Yuan Hung-tao, in his *Pilgrim of the Clouds: Poems and Essays from Ming China*. To my knowledge, there aren't any studies or translations of Ch'ing poetry in English. Modern Chinese poetry is heavily influenced by the West; it's something entirely different. Besides the above-mentioned books, in the Twayne series there are numerous biographical-critical studies of many poets from all periods. Finally, some general works. Burton Watson's anthology *Chinese Lyricism* covers *shih* from the Han through the Sung; James Liu's *The Art of Chinese Poetry* is a clear and simple introduction, and Hans Frankel's *The Flowering Plum and the Palace Lady* goes into, in more detail, common themes and major techniques across a wide range of Chinese forms, making reference throughout to an equally broad range of European poetry in order to make obvious the great unity of poetry throughout the world. I've left out alot, but these alone will pile jade at your feet and raise gold wine jugs to your thirsty lips.

—Simon Schuchat



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Moody Street Irregulars: A Jack Kerouac Newsletter #11 ed. Joy Walsh (Box 157 Clarence Ctr. NY 14032 \$2; \$5/4 issues—Ancil, Poteet, Sorrell, Perrault, T. Clark, Lacerte, Gelas, Moore on Kerouac)...**Hard Crabs** (MWC, 1420 N. Charles Baltimore MD 21201—including SAVVY are publications of the MD Writer's Council & give plenty of info on local events & issues, \$10 to join)...**Straits**, ed. Glen Mannisto (39 Moss Highland Park MI 48203 \$5—monthly newsletter of the Detroit River Press; prose pieces in #1 by Teichman, G. Tysh, Wanless, Neal, Dec & Atkinson & K. Mikolowski postcard; seeks journal excerpts, investigations, visions, reviews etc for future issues)...**Literary Storefront Newsletter**, eds. Ilves, Holder, Ford (314 W Cordova Vancouver BC V7B 1E8 \$1—reviews, listings, announcements, \$12 year)...**Rolling Stock #2**, ed. J & E Dorn (Campus Box 22 U of CO Boulder CO 80302 \$2—Cairns Bogota Journal, work by Hollo, Brakhage (S & J), D. Southern, John Echohawk, L. Berlin, T. Clark, Jacobus/Simmons +; high hopes for next issue)...**Small Press News V1 #9**, ed. Diane Kruckow (Weeks Mill, New Sharon ME 04955 75¢; \$12/2 yrs of Stony Hills & 1 yr of SPN—this continues to be one of the best compendiums of natl. bits, announcements & deadline alerts for the small press comm.; this issue features "What Really Happened at COSMEP & Why?")...**New Pages**, ed. Grant Burns (4426 S Belsay Rd, Grand Blanc MI 48439 \$10/quarterly \$2 issue —"News and Reviews of the Progressive Book Trade" w/ emphasis on alternative & underdog concerns like the 1st Amendment, 2nd Great Women in Print Conference, nukes, small press how-to & reviews; recommended)...and of course **Poetry Flash & Poetry News** both with listings of their local readings & events & some of the freshest critical writing on the newer & interesting writers around—**Poetry Flash**, ed. Steve Abbott & Joyce Jenkins (Box 4172 Berkeley CA 94704 \$7/year) and **Poetry News**, ed. Jocelyn Fisher (681 Venice Blvd Box 806 Venice CA 90291 \$7/year)...from Hard Press, ed. Jeff Wright (340 E 11 St NYC 10003) Series 23—two oversized photo postcards by Rudy Burckhardt, \$1 + postage

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That send you, like energized machines,
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Yet Hark! E'en now we have a deficit!
(Poetry has never been too lucrative
Though poems (and prose) are oft beneficent)—
Our thanks, rhymed & unrhymed, for what you give.
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Head Over Heels
(spoken by Lois Lane)

for Jocelyn Fisher

Earth looks boundless, bluegreen
and bright from this height. My
husband protected that globe
as though humanity were pick
of the litter of life forms.
He was used to pure yellow
suns, and peaceful beings,
now extinct, whose vision melted
metal. He communes with them
enclosed in a pillar of white
light. My love must seem dim
by comparison. Nights long ago,
he'd land on my balcony, knock
softly, and when I'd open up
say "I know it's late Lois,
but I was flying by and saw
your light." I never should
have left Metropolis and retired
to his Fortress of Solitude.
Now I nag: "Keep those X-ray
eyes to yourself, with the baby
due." He sees a comet streak by
and looks lost; dreams of alien
vegetation. I keep remembering
manhole steam in winter, that
giant hot breath lifting my skirt.

—Amy Gerstler

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