

**THE POETRY PROJECT NEWSLETTER**

No. 40 1 Dec 1976  
Ted Greenwald, editor  
St. Mark's Church, 2nd Avenue  
& Tenth St. New York 10003.

End of the year. Already. Whew. Mon nites at 8:15 PM are Dec 6 Open Reading, Dec 13 Richard Horn & Brad Gooch, Dec 20 Steve Levine & Annabel Levitt, Dec 27 James Sherry & Tom Savage. Wed nites at 8:30 PM are Dec 1 Ray Bremser & George Montgomery, Dec 8 Charles North & Paul Violi, Dec 15 Michael Brownstein & Harry Mathews, Dec 22 Dick Gallup & Steve Hamilton, Dec 29 Benefit to be announced. Workshops (free) at 7:30 PM are Tues Paul Violi, Thurs Bill Zavatsky, Fri Alice Notley. Thanks to CCLM and NYSCA.

This is the time of year when the Newsletter asks everyone to send in their \$2 to part way cover postage. Please do!

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READINGS ETC: The East Coast Print Center, Box 1050, Bklyn, NY, 11202, (212) TR5-4482, has reopened with a new staff. Looking for work. Bring to. . . Dr. Generosity, 73 St & 2nd Ave Sat 2 PM, Dec 4 Harriet Zimes & The Poetry of Stevie Smith, Dec 11 Philip Appleman & Jean Valentine, Dec 18 June Jordan & "The City" Magazine Poets. . . Chumley's, Bedford & Barrow, Sat 2 PM, Dec 4 Rilke Memorial Reading, Dec 11 Carol Muske & Robert L. Smith, Dec 18 Xmas Reading with Spencer & Mary Ella Holst. For detailed info see NYC Poetry Calendar available from 52 E. 7 St, NYC 10003, 966-5609. Send self-addressed stamped envelope.

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**THIRD WORLD SURVEY**

The literary community in which Third World authors include themselves encompasses much of the globe. The traditions of the writers come out of Africa, Asia, Antilles, and Indian traditions. These traditions have been coupled with European languages English, Spanish, French and have turned the colonials' tongues into new languages, new traditions. The Third World community in the United States includes writers out of African and Hispanic Indian traditions who write in English and Spanish, there are Asians whose speech reflect idioms associated with Blacks such as in the poetry of Lawson Fusao Inada. Most of the works of Third World poets can be found in publications aimed at their particular communities. These magazines are often bilingual or in some cases trilingual. Much of the impetus and energy for this kind of orientation comes out of the Black Arts movement of the 60's and out of the small press tradition which essentially keeps arts/writing in the hands of the community.

Despite the uncertainty of the economic scene there seems to be a general flourishing of third world publications all over this nation including its territories (Puerto Rico etc). Three important magazines/presses which publish third world writers are YARDBIRD READER edited by Ishmael Reed/Yardbird Publishing, Inc. Box 2370 Station A Berkeley, Ca 94702; HEIRS edited by Garcia Heirs, Inc. 657 Mission St. San Francisco, Ca 94105; SUNBURY edited by Virginia Scott Sunbury Press PO Box 274 Jerome Ave Station New York NY 10468. Each of these publications publish Black, Asian-American, Chicano or Boricua, and American Indian poets on a regular basis. They also publish chapbooks and are vitally involved in the small press community. HEIRS for instance will be publishing Ntozake Shange's (of Colored Girls fame) next book and Yardbird Publishing Inc. as well as Reed Cannon and Johnson Communication 285 E. 3 St NYC 10009 are involved in the publishing of several books such as Victor Hernandez Cruz's TROPICALIZATION. SUNBURY's orientation is feminist and they have and will be publishing several chapbooks by Black and Third World women writers such as Jodi Braxton and Fay Chaing. The feminist orientation of SUNBURY is welcomed as there is still a lingering literary machismo in most third world publications.

Although the above mentioned presses are run by Third World collectives, there are

presses outside of that particular community which publishes Third World authors. They may be politically oriented such as Monthly Review Press, 62 W. 14 St. YC 10011 which published Pedro Pietri's Puerto Rican Obituary or aesthetically compatible as in the cases of publications by three Asian-Americans: John Yau's CROSSING CANAL STREET (an exquisite poetry volume with a strange introduction by Robert Kelly) from Bellevue Press 60 Schubert St, Inghamton, NY 13905; Yuki Hartman's HOT FOOTSTEPS (an excellent second book from this very original poet) from Telephone Books, Box 672 Old Chelsea Station NYC 10011; and Jessica Tarahata's DANGEROUS MUSIC, Momo's Press, PO Box 14061 San Francisco, Ca 94114. Also, Third World writers often are anthologized though there is still this tendency to pick "the one" so that the only non-white in NONE OF THE ABOVE, an anthology of new poets is Lorenzo Thomas (echoes of the early sixties when the only one was Leroi Jones), but bit by bit that kind of literary chauvinism is beginning to fade. A considerable number of recent publications by various press have included Third World poets and magazines which due to geography and aesthetics were segregated but are now much more open to publishing Third World writers and vice versa (Yardbird Reader has published white writers). All of which displays the continued good health of the small press community which has been instrumental in publishing the voices of poets/writers that are often denied existence in this nation or if not that, then the distortion of those voices. The communication amongst small press publishers, distributors etc, is positive in opening up the American literary community so that all of our voices may be heard. This is probably the very beginning of this movement but a beginning is definitely better than nothing at all.

Of course Third World authors aren't always found in small press sections of the local bookstore (if found). There are several anthologies which have had an impact on the literary community. The best known is GIANT TALK edited by Quincy Troupe and Ranier Schulte First Vintage Books, Random House NYC. Although the introduction and a few of the selections leave much to be desired, this volume is important as it brings several authors under an umbrella that displays their common bonds especially in terms of the use of both north and south american writers. GIANT TALK also has an excellent bibliography and fairly good contributors notes. Another anthology which does what GIANT TALK tries to do but on a much more modest scale is TIME TO GREEZ which has several editors by sections. This anthology includes Black, Asian, Chicano/Boricua, American Indian writers and artists who come out of the community workshops in the Bay Area. The Asian and La Raza sections are especially well edited and include some fine poems by Janice Mirikitani, Serafin Syquia, Roberto Vargas and Avocetja. This volume is published by Third World Communications 330 Ellis St. San Francisco, Ca 94102. A more homespun anthology is the NUYORICAN POETRY edited by Miguel Algarin and Miguel Pinero. Unfortunately, there are no contributor's notes or bibliography but the volume has become a kind of bible for young Boricua writers in New York. It's published by William Morrow Company. Also, JAMBALAYA, an anthology edited by Steve Cannon from Reed Cannon and Johnson serves along with the other volumes as an interesting introduction in third world letters in the 70's.

Other magazines which carry out the sensibilities of the third world along with those already mentioned are as follows: TIN TAN edited by Alejandro Murgia PO Box 1959 San Francisco 94101 A La Raza publication (bilingual) contributing editors are Victor Hernandez Cruz, Nina Serrano, Roberto Vargas et al; CARACOL edited by Cecilio Garcia-Camarillo PO Box 7577 San Antonio Tx 78207 La Raza publications(bilingual) poetry, graphics political commentary; THE BRIDGE Basement Workshop 199 Lafayette St NYC 10012 Asian-American magazine which publishes articles, poetry & reviews; UMBRA edited by David Henderson (often guest edited) Box 4338 Sather Gate Station, Berkeley, CA 94704; Black Publication This magazine has been around since the early 60's and was one of the first to concern itself with authors from other parts of the Third World.

There are several publications which cannot be mentioned due to lack of space, but there is one thing which Third World authors share with the general writing community. That is the problem of distribution or should I say lack of distribution. A number of publications never get west or east of the Rockies. With the imminent demise of CCLM and the general economic/political outlook there does not seem to be a relatively easy solution to this problem. Hopefully, an opening up of the literary community will alleviate some of these difficulties and will bring about an end to the continuing isolation in the literary community. We are all poets in America and we must start listening to each other. As Charlie Parker would play "now's the time."

(Patricia Jones)

BOOK ETC: Stories & Illustrations by Harley (Intro A. Ginsberg), Charlatan Press, c/o D. Mercedes, 437 E. 12 St #23, NYC 10009, \$2. . . Opal Nations, A Pen, Some Paper, Pen & Paper, Shameless Hussy Press, Box 424, San Lorenzo, CA 94580, 95¢. . . Lee Harwood, Notes of a Post Office Clerk, Bezoar (Vol 3, No 4, Sept 1976, Box 535, Gloucester, Mass 01930). . . Mary Lane, Electricity, Other Publications, 68 Downer Ave, Dorchester, Mass 02125. . . Slit Wrists #2 (Paul Brown & Terry Swanson, ed.) c/o Terry Swanson, 333 #. 30 St/14F, NYC 10016, \$2. . . Tom Raworth, Logbook, Polhoon Press, 2315 Carleton St, Berkeley, Ca 94704, \$7.00. . . Robert Liddell, Cavaty: a biography, Schocken Books, \$8.95. . . Wm. Burroughs, The Retreat Diaries (with The Dream of Tibet by Allen Ginsberg), The City Moon, c/o Ed. Grauerholz, Box 842 Canal St Sta, NYC 10013 \$2.50. . . brilliant Corners #4 (Art Lange, ed.), 1372 W. Estes #2N, Chicago, Ill 60626. . . Vincent Ferrini, Selected Poems (Ed & Intro George F. Butterick), The U of Conn Library, Storrs, Conn 06268. . . David Antin, Talking at the Boundaries, New Directions, 333 6th Ave, NYC 10014, \$3.95. . . Yuki Hartman, Hot Footsteps, Telephone Books, Box 672 Old Chelsea Sta, NYC 10011, \$1.50. . . From Z Press, Calais, Vermont, 05648 (Kenward Elmslie, ed) ZZZZZ (Ashbery, Waldman, Schuyler, Brownstein, Warsh, Guest, Corbett, Mayer, etc.) (128 pages) \$2.50 plus 50¢ p. & h. . . From Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp. -- 16 West 61 St, NYC 10023 -- Washington Square, an opera libretto by Kenward Elmslie for music by Thomas Pasatieri, based on the novel by Henry James. 101 pages. \$2 paperback. Also available: The Seagull, an opera libretto by Kenward Elmslie, based on the play by Anton Chekhov, composed by Thomas Pasatieri. 85 pages \$2 paperback.

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WASHINGTON SQUARE. an op'ry collab by Pasatieri & Elmslie, wuz premeered Oct 1st by the Michigan Opera Theatre in rife-knife-strife-torn downtown Detroit. Betty Ford sent telegram regret: unable to attend. Ditto Olivia de Havilland, a.k.a. "The Heiress". Music critics from all over converged to stomp the shit out of the work. Comments on the libretto hit new heights of succinctdom: "Literate: --NY Daily News. "Fast-moving. . . reasonably adroit" -- Time. "Cogent" -- Detroit Observer-Eccentric. The Detroit Sunday News ran on thus: "Elmslie extracted his libretto admirably, honorably, even wittily."

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### THE KINDNESS OF PHILIP WHALEN

You can't just say "I'm going to read Philip Whalen today." You might not be able to. You have to let Whalen come to you. It's not that the poetry is obscure and inaccessible, it's never really that. I think the word is "disarming".

Many small birds point east

But even then, Whalen can be hard to follow. It's true that the flow of his poetry is rambling and might, at times, seem like emptyheaded doodlings.

How come  
Huey Newton's  
In jail?

SICK  
SCHOOL  
LOANED  
SCHED. OFF  
DBLD. UP  
EVE MAN

LET COIN DROP  
For your convenience

Perhaps. Though once you "get" into his stream of consciousness, you travel pleasant-

ly, enjoyably, sometimes swiftly, sometimes idly, past every kind of poetry imaginable, and you come to realize the tremendous erudition of this poet and how much of it he returns in the manner of insight and revelation upon reading his poetry. There's never a need for footnotes. It's all self-contained. You either get it or you don't. The same goes for the poet.

I realize all wrong nothing  
Of what I really know  
Nothing as I intended  
Walk away from the page  
That poem never ended

What you do get from the work is expertly painted landscapes (a la Chinois), word games, complaints, outrages, satori, puns, pressed flowers, mise en scene, mis à nu, mantras, monologues, dialogues, catalogues, incredible improvs, Spontaneous Bop Prosody, journal jottings, cranky diatribes, ecstasies, demon possessions, notebook entries, calligraphy exercises, fragments of even larger fragments crammed together asshole to bellybutton. And you realize as you first read one poem then the next and the next that Whalen's work is always in progresso (flowing, as everything does; according to Heraclitus, at least), that he has produced a liquid body of work the equal of the Cantos in poetic brilliance, genius, and perspective, if not in size (and there's less academic underbrush), that he is the man who introduced "HUMP" to poetic diction (that alone takes real nerve) along with such variants as "SLURM". "KONK". "K-R-A-N-K". "UNGUM". "HUM!". "ZOP!". and of course.

WHAMP WHAMP WHAMP  
and squeal of skill saw  
I carelessly build a creepy future life.

that this is more than just poetry, that these are life notes, minute observations of moments translated into words, real language, innumerable unique and original sentences, linguistic equations, word combos! There hasn't been this much raw material since Gertrude Stein! and accessible.

Shall I stay fountain splash sunshine?

But disarming. You can't be looking for anything in particular reading Whalen, and it might be best to put the old critical faculties in neutral. Just don't think about it. Relax. Let the way the words go surprise you. "And as for meaning, let them mean themselves." Depend upon the kindness of Philip Whalen, you won't be disappointed.

The quotes in this piece (with the exception of one) are from the poems in THE KINDNESS OF STRANGERS by Philip Whalen. (Writing 33 Four Seasons Foundation Bolinas, CA 57pp. \$3.00)  
(Pat Nolan)

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POEMS 1918-1936 (Volume I of The Complete Poems of Charles Reznikoff). Edited by Seamus Cooney. Santa Barbara: Black Sparrow, 1976.

It is becoming clear that we are in a period of retrospectives. That in itself is a significant comment on the present state of our art and lives. In publishing we are seeing more and more collections of the collected works of poets or fiction writers. In some cases this is of importance. With publication of The Complete Poems of Charles Reznikoff we are given a chance to encounter one of the most important poets of the post-World War I generation. The encounter is well worth the expectation. This is very available work. Reznikoff (unlike his closest associates Oppen and Rakosi) is dealing with an art that is open, vulnerable and as a result available. Reznikoff is not an "artiste" and there is nothing surface about his work. He is involved with a struggle to express what is seen, felt and heard. He produces an awkward song, and it is through that awkwardness that the power emerges. He struggles with that awkwardness like America has always struggled and as such

produces a uniquely American poetry. His poetry has no surface similarities to Williams but in his attempt to build an authentic American song (in an authentic American language) he is closer to W.C. Williams and more successful than Oppen or Rakosi. Reznikoff is never very comfortable with the abstract and when he goes that route he is the least interesting. When he addresses the daily lives of those around him or when he attempts to retell Jewish and world history in American he is amazingly powerful. The promised publication of the second and final volume is something to look forward to as is the publication of his prose works and plays.

(Harry Lewis)

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NONE OF THE ABOVE (an anthology) edited by Michael Lally, The Crossing Press, 31 poets - 224 pages, \$4.95

Yesterday, in the traffic's splendor, I was handcuffed to a page I was at the time eye-balling. It was a poem in this here anthology by Bruce Andrews ("No 63"), which looked like an Anthony Braxton formulatitled composition, and carried me all the way past the ensnarled tangle of Madison at Park, and all the ususally fine ladies that prance back and forth across that intersection getting me real crosseyed in the process. Anyhow, there was I walking swiftly and reading at a top speed of easily ten lines a second, when I get caught up on Bruce Andrews numbered arrow glyph. And I'm entranced by Bruce's poems. Great job Bruce! Really cuts the old mustard with me, kid. Right on, and all the rest. Really!

And as I'm so delving, the rest of this book gets right on up there, climbing out of the confining pages and walks all over my eyeballs. Descending right on into my brain through the little round dark spots in my eyes. Yum yum, a lot of photos to devour as I near an east side pinball storefront, and go in smiling at Maureen's "Body Rush," which always gets me off.

And you know? This is a great book. Usually they come through the mail and get taken to The Strand, or dumped into a big pile of rotting pocket books at the bottom of my neighborhood air shaft, ooooo whadda stink!

This book is seriously the next great post-Don-Allen classic anthology. Lally somehow got this out & lookin' so good, children. There's 31 poets here, most of them are represented by some books, mostly they're in all the little magazines, and most of their names are familiar to somebody out there. But so attractive a selection, minus a few old chums and unknowns who should've been included, but you gotta put a cap on it someplace, and that choice is Lally's, so take it up with him folks. But dig the names: Maureen Owen (our own cement light), Phillip Lopate (star of "Being With Children") out now on Ballantine Books, scarf it up before it sells out at your local pet shop), Joe Brainard (of the fantastic futuristic memory lunge), Bernadette Mayer (of the endless sentence breath), George Mattingly, Joanne Kyger (of such delicate and creative beauty-mopes), Ray Di Palma's scoffy head-shakes and numerical wanderings), Patti Smith, Jim Gustafson's mortal jabber, Nat Whiting's rodent elegance, Merry Winch's perfect photo & terse brightness aflame with serious jokes, Lynne Dreyer's patience & prudence dancing as one, P. Inman's swarthy inventions, Simon Schuchat's painless beauts, Tim Dlugos's wonderful assertiveness & bland marvels unconcealed, Lorenzo Thomas's singing injection into high verbal feats, Paul Violi's fearsome humor, Alice Notley's elegant cool juggling of strongest images in this book.

The editor throws in the optional introduction that extends itself into an edifying piece of drawing-it-all-together under one well-done edition of a cross-section of some of the editor's best writing chums. It has well pictures, and reads real fast. But the beauty of this book is in the eating. I ate three of them so far. And well, I can't exactly report to you that it tastes more like pumpkin pie than "Grapes of Wrath." It sure does go down real good with Papaya juice. Splash it all over your head. Lally's got something here, now if he can just figure out how to market it better. (Opal Nations)

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RED WAGON by Ted Berrigan, The Yellow Press, \$3 paper, 7.95 cloth

Ted Berrigan closes his poem "Soviet Souvenir" with the line:

My heart willingly again beginning crying out; and at the same time  
anxious, love, to contain.

The first half of this line (My heart...crying out), through repetition of gerunds, gives a musical sense to the meaning of the line, which builds towards a climactic outburst. This increase in the speed of the line is arrested, first by the "dead" space of "and at the same time," then, more decisively, by the last four words, which, with the two commas marking the pause where the object of the poem ("love" used either as a term of endearment or as an abstraction; the ambiguity being that either love is to be contained or else that the crying out is to be contained from the beloved) is addressed, serve to again rhythmically mimic the sense of the line, containing the flowing build-up of the first clause.

For my 2nd exhibit, let me examine the rhymes in Mr. Berrigan's "Scorpio." This poem is in 3 quatrains. There is not one single end rhyme in these enjambed lines. The first stanza contains 2 sentences which, if they were written straight out & not wound into a quatrain, would be approximately an heroic couplet. The rhymes are "show & "know". The 2nd stanza is, again, a couplet wound into a quatrain; its rhymes (in addition to being off-rhymes for the first 2 rhymes) are among the simplest in the tongue, "You," "true," "do." The 3rd stanza is the most subtle. There are no perfect, but several slant rhymes: "am/ "man" (which would be the couplet rhyme) "impure/"fire," and "outwardly"/"only" (slant to my ears because of a difference in stress.) As the poem's statement is of the speaker's wish not to publicly proclaim his love, nor his lack of love for anyone in particular, but to allow these to be apparent through his actions, which conceal the heart the way the hood conceals the car's motor (action is obvious, the presence of the engine cannot be denied while the car is in motion & nothing is seen of the motor, the concealed rhymes are parallel to the "meaning.")

In both these cases we see, not merely a good deal of craft, but craft used to a purpose. I've made these 2 technical observations because Mr. Berrigan's new book, RED WAGON, (which incidentally sports a marvelous cover by Rochelle Kraut) quite frankly leaves me speechless with delight. It is his first major collection in almost 7 years, and contains such moving marvels as "Old Fashioned Air," "Things to do in Providence," "So Going Around Cities," the 6 "Southampton Winter" poems, the amazing poem "The Complete Prelude" which must surely be one of the great poetic achievements of the last 10 years, and on and on. I am stricken dumb before them. As with the DeKooning show at the Fourcade Gallery, the works as wholes are so overwhelming that I can only lamely speak of minor details. And, in fact, I could drivel on & on about such specifics for hours. But in thinking of it, what seems genuine, truly real, is how everything is really golden, and it really is. As one of these poems says of its author:

You who are the class in the sky, receive him  
Into where you dwell. May he rest long and well.  
God help him, he invented us, that is, a future  
Open living beneath his spell....

(Simon Schuchat)

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WHAT YOU KNOW WITH NO NAME FOR IT by Keith Abbott, Cranium Press, 1976 (distributed by Blue Wind Press 820 Miramar Berkeley CA 94797) \$3

Keith Abbott's beautifully printed long poem removes the cloak of mystery from around the intuitive and perceptual basis for West Coast poetry.

Two unused water faucets  
Between the bookshelves  
One presumably hot the other cold

It is a deeply religious, beautifully personal poem, "But there are those other/Moments of/  
Of huge emotion//So large I can't understand them/Or recall them exactly" with a sincere  
and unpretentious Zen/Taoist undercurrent that seeks enlightenment in perfect vision.  
"The moments when I'm no one//The moment when your ears clear/After the gong is rung." It  
is a poem that illustrates the personal phenomenon of what one can know with no name for it  
while eluding the obvious trap set by the title and its implications. "What I think I have  
known/Has never been unknown" The poem follows a stream of thought from the present to a  
memory through the baffle of a drug and wanders amiably from perception to perception down  
deep into the source of the poet. "My first memory/I think" A poem this good receives an  
encore in the form of a Coda whose first stanza states delicately and haiku-like:

The white stone  
In the ditch  
Hidden by the frozen grass

And culminates like this:

A round white stone  
In my imagination marble  
And infinitely valuable

I would reach down  
Through the cold water  
And touch it year after year

Keith Abbott has delineated the unnameable clearly and sensuously.

(Pat Nolan)

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Deep in a forest of Herods  
Judges sit

and whisper of a gulf between  
this and that.

"Flames" clank our rulers  
They, they, and they.

"Dawn" I say  
stooped in starlight

I carry a baby in my head  
all leaps in the dark

and think

that cloud shape was an eagle  
with a blood-stained talon

in a blood red vision

that vision was Captivity  
of every living thing

and think again

that cloud shape was a citadel  
billions in a locust crumble

burrowing or bowed down

and think again

the highest clouds - cirrus and cirrostratus  
are wisps, veils, and halos

or aeons of intervals  
linked forever or unlinking.

(Susan Howe)

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