

THE POETRY PROJECT NEWSLETTER  
No. 54 April 1978  
Frances LeFevre, editor  
St. Mark's Church, 2nd Ave  
and Tenth St New York 10003

EVENTS AT ST. MARK'S CHURCH: Wednesday Night Readings at 8:30 (contribution)  
Apr 5 Joel Oppenheimer & Neil Hackman...Apr 12 Roberta Hill & Josie Rolon (with  
Edgard Rivera)...Apr 19 Kathleen Fraser & Carl Rakosi...Apr 26 Tom Clark...  
Monday Night Performance Series at 8:15 (free) Apr 3 Open Reading...Apr 10 Kate  
Hammon, Vincent Katz, Elio Schneeman & Paul Schneeman...Apr 17 & 26 Poets Theatre  
Workshop Program...Free Writing Workshops at 7:30 PM: Tuesdays Johnny Stanton  
(prose)...Thursdays (except Apr 20 & 27) Bob Holman (poets' theatre)...Fridays  
Mary Ferrari (poetry)...Kathleen Fraser will give a special poetry workshop 7:30  
PM Thurs Apr 20...Tom Clark will give a special poetry workshop 7:30 PM Thurs Apr  
27...Danspace Concerts Apr 10 & 11 at 7:30 PM Patsy Parker...Apr 18 & 20 at 8 PM  
Pooh Kaye...Apr 25 & 27 at 8 PM Ellen Saltonstall.

OTHER NYC READINGS: Academy of American Poets Guggenheim Museum 5th Ave & 89th St  
7:30 PM (\$2): "A Festival of Canadian Poetry": Apr 4 Dennis Lee & John Newlove;  
Apr 11 Margaret Atwood; Apr 18 Jacques Brault, Robert Marteau & Gaston Miron (in  
French, with Louis Simpson & William Jay Smith reading English translations);  
The Donnell Library Center 20 W 53 St 6:30 PM (free) Apr 20 Rosellen Brown &  
Louise Gluck; Apr 27 Albert Goldbarth, Lauren Shakely...Dr. Generosity's 2nd Ave  
& 73 St, Saturdays 3 PM (contribution) Apr 1 Sharon Mattlin...Apr 8 Frances  
Whyatt...Apr 15 Robert Kelly...Apr 22 Helen Adam & Daniel Haberman...Apr 29  
Stephen Stepanchev & Vinnie-Marie D'Ambrosio...Manhattan Theatre Club 321 E 73  
St 8 PM (\$3) Apr 4 Jane Alpert & Blanche Boyd...Apr 18 Lynn Alvarez, Michael  
Jennings, William Logan, Marilyn Lowen, Sharon Olds...Apr 25 Katherine Kane,  
Gilbert Sorrentino, Paul Violi...Viridian Gallery 24 W 57 St Rm 809 6:30 PM  
(\$2) Apr 13 Eileen Myles & James Sherry...Apr 20 Mary Ferrari & Bill Kushner...  
West End Cafe 2911 B'way (nr 113 St) 2 PM (\$2) Apr 2 Tony Towle & Paul Violi...  
Apr 9 Rosemary Mayer & Ann Wilson...Apr 23 Bernadette Mayer & Lewis Warsh...Apr 30  
Barbara Baracks & Maureen Owen...YMHA Poetry Center Lexington Ave at 92 St  
8 PM (\$2) Apr 17 Daniel Halpern & Charles Wright...Apr 24 "Newer Voices."

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The Poetry Project receives partial funding from the National Endowment for  
the Arts (NEA), The New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), and The Cultural  
Council CETA Artists Project.

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#### AROUND THE EDGES

A number of persons--including poets Muriel Rukeyser, Barbara Holland, and  
Allen Ginsberg--have been interested for more than a year in the case of Edward  
De Pasquale, now serving a sentence of six years to life in the Fishkill Correc-  
tion Facility at Beacon, New York, for acting as the agent in a sale of three  
quarters of an ounce of cocaine into which he claimed he was tricked. The sen-  
tence is harsher than many of those imposed and carried out for crimes that are much  
greater.

Mr. De Pasquale is a published poet. (Two short pieces from his larger work,  
SOPORS, are printed below.) According to Barbara Holland, who has brought the  
matter to our attention, he is "like Dostoevsky, a grand mal epileptic, whose

seizures have greatly escalated in frequency since he has been imprisoned ...no one seems able to handle this in the prison system except by overdosing him with his medication. If this situation worsens, he is certain to become a victim of residual brain damage. He was not sentenced to residual brain damage. He must have a medical commutation, and the next period for the award of commutations is the first week in May. Commutations, however, are not awarded for a lack of trouble with the law prior to arrest, a blameless prison record, or physical need, but for political influence...Time is running out."

Concerned readers are asked to write immediately to The Honorable Hugh Carey, Governor's Executive Office, 1350 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10019, and request a medical commutation for Edward De Pasquale. The latter's address, for identification, is E & H 440/N-2, Bldg #13, Box #307, Beacon, New York 12508.

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words  
trying reach  
to move lips  
hurting inadequate  
bothered beggar plea,  
little something  
for the moment.

reaching out  
solitude escapes  
through vacant corridors  
peopleless halls  
sounding hollow  
alone with me.

--Edward De Pasquale

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#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Poets under 30: Positively the last call! Manuscripts for THE WORLD #31 must be in this office by April 15...William Paterson College of New Jersey announces its 3rd annual writers' conference, to be held July 31 through August 7, featuring Diane Wakoski, Marge Piercy, Herbert Gold, John Ciardi, among others. The format will include workshops, lectures, conferences, presentations on both writing and publishing, discussions, and readings. For information write Graham R. Hodges, Raubinger Hall 140, 300 Pompton Road, Wayne, NJ 07470 or telephone (201) 595-2580/2524...New York University has established a Poetics Institute, which will offer a concentration in Poetics as an option for students working towards the M.A. and Ph.D. in English. Important objectives of the program, to begin next fall, are "to increase public awareness and appreciation of poetry and to help improve the way it is taught...and to organize and encourage poetry readings, critical lectures, panel discussions on poetry, and the presentation of poetry on television and radio." Write for details to 19 University Place, Room 237, NYC 10003...Also at NYU, La Maison Francaise, 16 Washington Mews, presents an hour of recorded (and sometimes live) performances of French poetry and music every weekday from noon to 1 PM. Students and all other friends are welcome...Michael Horovitz, poet, anthologist, and jazz troubadour, is coming over from England again to tour the USA and is looking for gigs. His home address: % N.D. Bisley, Stroud, Gloucestershire, England; here, write him % Stansfeld, Clark Nelson, 1014 Madison Ave., NYC 10021...The Junior Council of The Museum of Modern Art, with the sponsorship of the Kulchur Foundation, will present Poetry 6 (A Poetry Cabaret), a series of three readings in the Penthouse Restaurant of the Museum, 11 W 53rd St, at 6:30 PM. April 3: Maureen Owen will introduce Steve Hamilton, Yuki Hartman & Harry Mathews; April 10: Ted Berrigan will introduce Jim Brodey, John Godfrey & Alice Notley; April 17: Jennifer Bartlett will introduce Carl Andre, Richard Pousette-Dart, & Michelle Stuart. Admission is free, but seating is limited and tickets are required. For information and reservations call 956-6122...The Kulchur Foundation will publish Blue Heaven by Lewis Warsh on Monday, April 24. All readers of this Newsletter are invited to a publication party on that date at The Gotham Book Mart Gallery, 41 W 47th St., NYC from 5 to 7 PM.

BOOKS RECEIVED (poetry unless otherwise noted): Toward the Liberation of the Left Hand by Jack Anderson, U. of Pittsburgh Press, \$3.50...From Angel Hair, Box 718, Lenox MA 01240: Nothing for You by Ted Berrigan, \$3.50; I Should Run For Cover But I'm Right Here by Harris Schiff, \$2...The Lily of St. Mark's by Steve Carey, "C" Press % Berrigan, 101 St. Mark's Pl. NYC 10009, npl...Diary of a Mad Hatter by Didi Susan Dubelyew, YOWSAH, 174 Thompson St, NYC 10012, npl...Persimmons/Poems for Paintings by Barry Gifford, Shaman Drum, Berkeley, CA, \$3.50...Iconysis by Cynthis Haring, Four Zoas Press, Boston, npl...In the Mood by Michael Lally (prose--an appreciation of Frank O'Hara), Titanic Books, 1920 S St NW #506, Washington DC 20009, \$2...Pictures Words Threes and Other Numbers by Keith Shein, Trike, P.O. Box 732, Pismo Beach, CA 93449, \$3.50...2 books by Patti Smith: Babel, Putnam, NYC, \$4.95; Ha! Ha! Houdini, Gotham Book Mart, 41 W 47th St, NYC...The Favorite Story by Edward Williams, Buckwheat St. Publishers, NYC \$1.75.

MAGAZINES: After-Image #1, Joe Magri & Ray Sibol, editors, PO Box 10144, Towson, MD 21204, \$1. Poetry, fiction, comment. Poets include Allen Ginsberg and Richard Kostelanetz (concrete poems)...Brilliant Corners/a magazine of the arts, % Art Lange, 1372 W. Estes, #2N, Chicago IL 60626, npl. Interviews: John Cage by Art Lange; George Schneeman by Alice Notley (with her commentary on Schneeman's art and reproductions of 4 paintings); Joseph Jarman by Peter Kostakis & Art Lange; articles: on Bill Knott by Douglas Macdonald, on Leroy Jenkins by Peter Kostakis; poetry by Allan Kornblum and Clark Baker...A Hundred Posters #26 edited by Alan Davies, P.O. Box 415, Kenmore Sta., Boston, MA 02215, npl., Charles Bernstein on Language...Poets On: Loving, P.O. Box 255, Chaplin CT 06235, \$2.50. Lillian Morrison, Sharon Olds, Marge Piercy, Ruth Lisa Schechter, Greg Foster, Henrik Nordbrandt, others. Theme of next issue: "Ending." Submissions with SASE invited...Roof V, Segue Press, 300 Bowery, NYC 10012, \$3. William Burroughs, Ray DiPalma, Hannah Weiner, others, plus a forum of San Francisco poets: Silliman, Hejinian, Watten, etc...Stations #5/A Symposium on Clark Coolidge edited by Ron Silliman, Membrane Press, Box 11601, Shorewood, Milwaukee, WI 53211, \$3...United Artists Two, Box 718, Lenox MA 01240, \$2 each, 5 issues \$8. Alice Notley, Bill Berkson & Barrett Watten, Lewis Warshy Clark Coolidge, Ted Berrigan, Bernadette Mayer...Poetry on the Plaza Anthology 1976-77, Philip Hackett, Susu Jeffrey, editors. For free copies write: Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs, City Hall, Boston, MA 02201...All books and magazines sent to the Newsletter for listing should have their prices stated. Please note.

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#### THE HEART IN THE HURRICANE

The snowy confusion on the TV breaks  
 Forth egg white painterly clouds  
 Of the late Chinese winter genre  
 There is this noise everywhere crashing  
 Snow on window blow in plastic mice eat bread  
 Subway guide of colors  
 In all this steady footsteps stream up  
 The steps with a squish squish to let us know  
 We are here and not in the numbers game  
 Of perfect time cause it isn't there  
 I look for the little charms of a hope  
 I shop for them in stores & instead discover  
 A basket which is secret for it has a lid  
 With handles it's because we eat so much  
 Hungry all the time & don't want anyone but you  
 To know what is in this basket you give to me  
 Many times the snow sliding against pink  
 Children with snowballs

--Rochelle Kraut

## A CITY OF WORDS

Six Buildings by Charles North. Putnam Valley, New York: Swollen Magpie Press, 1977. \$2.50.

"The poem is brilliant" with beauties like "awkward silence taking it out to sea" and "among the starlight of all weather," but "we are involved in the points of a position/from which there is no escape, Frances!" We continually seek chances to open outward, but Charles North monitors nature in poems that rely on the given expectation of form to ally the elegant individual parts of his animated fantasy: "Silver is the ruby's faded glare." He does not redefine the poem. "What dominates is thus the exact tone and consistency of what was already there."

But he does use the given to the fullest, even rewriting Williams' "Danse Russe" with a self-referential ending as "King Porter Stomp." If this courtly manner appeals less to an American sensibility, which we've been taught consists of the People using raw Truth in print to purge the soul or moral and canine rejectamenta, then we must expand; yes, even the American wide angle has a certain narrowness.

In the prose pieces entitled "Six Buildings," however, Six Buildings reveals another use of given context. Here the particles of vivid imagery are assembled into a dream hamlet. The stylistic brilliances are used to disclose the inner nature of the architecture. "The air" (above the stock exchange) "is saturated with greyish lint thrown up continuously from below the horizon by catapulting." North uses the context like Edward Ruscha in TWENTY-SIX GASOLINE STATIONS, except that the imagery is technicolor. The futuristic hospital and peristaltic drugstore could only be manufactured so perfectly by huge machines concealed under their foundations, which have so honed the edges and do denatured the surface as to make them appear seamless: "Large, low, whirring block of perfectly white, perfectly flat marble, on chrome legs...."

But because he steps away from the chosen path, away from obvious references and forms--in "Scenes from Montale," for instance, "a tendered silk which is not the case by anchoring," still liquid and impulsive, flutters out over the abyss of abstraction--he gives us more. If all we expected were poem poems, what a surprise! We can view Charles North not as a poet the edges of whose writing mark the limits of the man, but as a writer whose sensitivity has forced him to limit what might have been indiscriminate poetizing. The accumulated knowledge of his labors allows him to choose. The perfection of glazing gives his eye pause:

then she will find me in her heart  
and draw me close,  
seeking to shun the diversification  
and dazzling light of day.

--James Sherry

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SPECIALLY RECOMMENDED: Tom Veitch reports that he has completed a new book, Visions of a Poet, which is an autobiographical account of 17 years of spiritual and psychic experience. Anyone who wants a Xerox of the 208-page manuscript can have it for \$10 postpaid. Write to Tom at 461 Wilde Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94134...Jeff Wright's Hard Press Post Cards are now going into the 6th series. To date over 20 artists and poets have been published. Series #4: Allen Ginsberg, Bob Rosenthal, Mike Slater, Jeffrey Cyphers Wright; Series #5: Ted Greenwald, Sharon Mattlin, F.A. Wettelbeck, Michael Scholnick. \$1 per set of four. These cards may be purchased at untitled, 159 Prince St, NYC, or by writing to Jeff Wright, 340 East 11th St, NYC 10003, and enclosing stamped return envelope with payment. Don't wait too long--supply is limited.

NOT EXACTLY DISEMBODIED (ADVT.) Summer catalogues with course descriptions are available from Naropa Institute, 1111 Pearl Street, Boulder, Colorado 80302. The Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics offers 2 sessions, June 7-July 9 and July 14-August 19, each with credit and non-credit courses, workshops, lectures, poetry readings. Participating in the first session will be Larry Fagin, Dick Gallup, Allen Ginsberg, Patricia Donegan, Michael Brownstein, John Wieners, Lewis Warsh, Bernadette Mayer, Bill Berkson, Michael McClure; in the second, Anne Waldman, Allen Ginsberg, Patricia Donegan, Ken Kesey, Robert Duncan, Bobbie Louise Hawkins, Ted Berrigan, Tom Veitch. (Check out BOMBAY GIN #4 magazine-- "BOMBAY GIN is a state of mind"--for works by Naropa poets/students 1977, edited by Waldman & Fagin, \$2 at The Poetry Project or from Naropa Institute.)

Since its founding in 1974 by Allen Ginsberg and Anne Waldman, the Kerouac School has drawn hundreds of students/audiences/poets/friends, both new and familiar, to Boulder, the fast-developing energy center on the spine of the North American continent. Local poets Jack Collum (editor of the magazine the), Charles George, John Gierach, John Moulder (published by Cherry Valley Editions), Marc Campbell (punk rock writer/singer and leader of "The Nails"), Reed Bye (author of Some Magic at the Dump, Angel Hair/Songbird Editions) collaborate in various activities with Naropa, as does the University of Colorado's Writing Program run by Ron Sukenick and Bill Matthews. The Naropa Institute also offers Buddhist Psychology, a Dance Program directed by Barbara Dilley (of Grand Union and Cunningham Company fame--she helped initiate the Danspace Project at St. Mark's), Music, Theater, and other lively subjects. Applicants are urged to act now and complete their pre-registration by April 25 for preferred schedules and housing.

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#### PURELY IMAGINATIVE

The Book of Rimbaud (prose poems) by Keith Abbott. New Rivers Press, 1977. \$1.25

"In early 1972 I became interested in certain psychic phenomena," Keith Abbott states in his Personal Note On The Book Of Rimbaud. "Coinciding with this interest was a series of prose poems where my mind seemed to slip out of its usual tracking patterns and become exposed to various visual/verbal/audial experiences. The poems were often strange, often without an objective rationale for their being. Some were static pictures and some were just voices. Many involved actions with characters of various sorts doing things." For Abbott, the connection between what he termed "imagination" and what others called "psychic phenomena" became clear.

In effect, this would seem to be what Breton and the initial surrealists were trying to get at, dipping into the dream river, but updated so that it is very much in keeping with the modern sensibility.

Rimbaud's cane was made of smoke. He waved it in the air  
and it would disappear. Then, when his hand stopped, it  
would reform and he would stick one end in his mouth  
and breathe deeply, his eyes mocking me.

The clarity with which Abbott delineates these dream pockets is remarkable. They are exact prose poems that almost seem to buzz with light, and they have a faithfulness to detail that makes them highly visual. The language and syntax are often dreamlike too, making for pleasant quirks and pulses on the upper registers. The Book of Rimbaud is made up of thirty such pieces of pure imagination and image-making, many much longer, a few as short, but all infused with humor and lacking the pretension that dealing with such a weighty literary subject might incur. They are delightful to read and might lead one to believe that what Geller can do to keys, Abbott can do to minds.

--Pat Nolan

FROM "LETTERS TO ENGLE"

strangers now live  
where I once lived  
the houses have been sold  
or knocked down like  
the infinite numbers of zeros implied  
by .1  
you get sloppy, you go  
deep into the forest  
without matches

we do not have hawks  
in our back yard, they have us  
in theirs  
that's an angle filtering  
from storage into use  
and ah, the water  
ah the moon and its yellow stripes

--John Gierach

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VOICE CHANGES

Tropicalism by Kenward Elmslie. Z Press, Calais, Vermont, 1975. \$3.50

Accidental screen play, accompanying score. Non-identical conversants refuse to. Events crouch in wish and larger fabrication. Mystifying cog turns, more of same.

Pared to interstices between them.

o

Unexpected background visuals force vertigo in foreground. No present for story or fact, facts. Interruptings, eruptions. Imagined circus events wing at the horizon; no secrets about the weird.

o

Effort to tie, loop, minutiae; elegantly not understood. Continuing enunciating non sequiturs. The discontinuous is effervescent.

Event occurs, mobiled facets of stillness. Words turn around places; ...places around. Running words list for control; what little to do with them--continuing modifications to word sets by word phrases.

Rhymes form parallel equals. Idiot rhyme; structured a kind of articulate stutter.

Has haystack of look-alike words and sound-alike motifs. Words slip to each other's similar aura; sex prongs in each other, disparate functions suck together. Slight slapstick of word against word. Words persuade laugh; funny hang on of word at word. Guttural word ends, tight soft shock. Phrasings blurt wise-ass into the convoluted mass.

o

Short grunt word and phrase--simplicity is graspable, complex.

Structure surfaces on small word bits; crests, assumes over. Symmetry; senses pirouette.

o

Sane flickering of non-blasé thought. Each statement is early. Quick energies impinge. Wake up, dream.

--Alan Davies

MELODRAMA

Cheerios in a bowl of water  
Somewhere (probably Florida) you yawn  
and sip cognac out of a polished snail shell.  
Space moves with a breeze that could lift  
your hair but not blow out my last match.  
Bluejay under a streetlight; bones  
picked clean but wings not missing a feather.  
There's a moral in there somewhere, kid.  
The first shadow in starlight I saw  
was yours and it was raising a glass with mine.  
Mosquitoes saw the air to pieces.  
Ice cubes thaw until clear in the gin,  
clarity entering clarity the way you appear,  
a silence, a thought in a bright corner.  
Dogs wheeze outside the door; a firefly cracks  
in the cat's jaws; light dissolves on his tongue.

--Paul Violi

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To the Editor:

In his review in the March issue of Charles Plymell's The Last of the Moccasins, which sounds like a fine book, Hugh Fox refers to "Cage/Higgins Ltd." in terms of an attitude that separates "the experimental art/music/literature world" from the non-experimental one. I cannot speak for John Cage, but I've at times been quite bothered by being termed an experimental artist, because I know that when I finish a work the experiment is complete and thus insignificant. Furthermore, all art is an experiment, when one comes right down to it. Making such separations is more characteristic of professors who avoid confronting the work than of any artist I know. The commonest cop-out among academics is to say, "Such-and-such is experimental, is thus not representative of the mainstream and therefore is for specialists only, not for li'l ol' me,"--as they drive off in their Citroens to the next committee meeting. The myth is that there exists some kind of avant-garde international (what Wyndham Lewis used to call the "Upper Class Bohemia") of jet-setting concertizers speaking a macronic mix of eighty languages and snobbishly putting down the li'l ol' me professors.

Actually, in America the more one feels that James Whitcomb Riley/Vachel Lindsay is not enough, that one needs fresh blood from other lands or other art forms, the less one fits into the li'l ol' me professor's world--so the more likely one is to be ostracized from it (and made decidedly UNprosperous). This is the fate of most innovative artists. We do what comes naturally to us, as Riley and Lindsay did in their day--but because we are who we are, we get placed aside by the li'l ol' me's who feel challenged by our work. They then say that we are "experimental" and therefore to some extent irrelevant, and they attribute hostility to us which is really in themselves. But gosh, dad, I like Vachel Lindsay though it wouldn't be in me to write like that.

Thus, when Dr. Fox (and he is a PhD) praises Charles Plymell for "taming technique in the service of narrative" and says he has, thus, "Americanized" his technique, what I would like to think he is saying is that Plymell has not let any formal considerations foul up his story-telling. When story-telling's the point, who isn't for that? But this spewing forth of academic anti-intellectualism and assuming this li'l ol' me pose--with its implied put-down of myself or John Cage or anybody else--seems a disservice to Plymell, Cage, myself. It is beneath Fox, who has done important work on many occasions.

Sincerely,

Dick Higgins

WELSH POETRY

Mainly it's the shape of the hills as the old soldier laments

Three blue cars rush by

In this, New York City, all of us are heroes!

Whose green eye is upon my tennis shoe

Three birds land upon my firescape O love

My bewilderment is blind, has no season.

Three dogs are barking from three blocks away

Cool August wind blows through my silver screen

The year is latening, Hush, hear the dogs again.

--Eileen Myles

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