

THE POETRY PROJECT NEWSLETTER
No. 58 OCTOBER 1978
Vicki Hudspith, Editor
St. Mark's Church
2nd Avenue & 10th St., NYC 10003

Copyright (c) 1978 The Poetry Project

On July 27, 1978 at 1:35 pm a devastating fire broke out at St. Mark's Church In-the-Bowery, the home of the Poetry Project since 1966 and a haven for poets and artists and political groups and worshippers and assorted other people and activities since before that even! The fire is believed to have been caused by heat conducted from a workman's welding instrument through the copper gutters of the church. This "hot spot" ignited a section of the 179 year old timber cornice. An hour later, the roof was gone and the church's bell tower was severely damaged. Fortunately no one was hurt and now, two months later, rebuilding is under way. While \$225,000 short of a roof and more than \$1 million away from complete restoration, the historic St. Mark's continues. A full program of Poetry Project free writing workshops and Monday and Wednesday night performances and readings is scheduled to begin in October. This phenomenally fast recovery is indication enough of the church's both central and vital role in the community. Anyone wishing to contribute money or suggestions or desires further information on the Save St. Mark's Drive please contact Father David Garcia at the Parish office, 2nd Avenue & 10th Street, NYC 10003 or by phone at (212) 674-6377.

+++++

READINGS ST. MARK'S: Monday nights hosted by Bob Holman; Oct 2 - Open Reading*
OCT 9 - Allan & Cinda Kornblum OCT 16 - Kevin Clarke, Susie Timmons OCT 23 -
Pedro Pietri & Jeff Wright OCT 30 - Peter Rose "the circular heavens"/ Jackie
Curtis, Douglas Fisher in Tom Wiegel's "Blob Blob". Wednesday nights hosted
by Ron Padgett & Maureen Owen; OCT 18-Keith Abbott & Pat Nolan OCT 25 -Michael
Haller & To Be Announced. All readings begin at 8 pm (donation)

READINGS AROUND TOWN: WEST END CAFE/2911 Broadway at 113th Street, NYC: Naropa
presents a month of Sundays at the West End -- 2 pm --OCT 1 - Ted Berrigan &
Reed Bye OCT 8-Helen Adam & Anne Waldman OCT 15 - Carl Solomon & Allen Ginsberg
OCT 22- Larry Fagin OCT 29 -Talking Band & Annette Ris Thursday nites 6:30 pm
at W.E. OCT 5-David Shapiro OCT 12-Open Reading OCT 19-Kathy Acker OCT 26-
John Boone & Sheldon Biber (donation \$2) EL CENTRO 29 St. Mark's Place 8 pm
OCT 6-Jim Brodey & Olson MacIntyre OCT 13-Hannah Weiner & Beth Anderson
OCT 20-Karen Edwards & Patti Oldenberg OCT 27 - Steve & Gloria Tropp & Mike
Sappol EAR INN 326 Spring St. 4 pm (\$2) -- OCT 7 Jackson MacLow & Rachelle
Bijou OCT 14-Eileen Myles & Michael Gottlieb OCT 21-Joe Ceravolo & Tim
Dlugos OCT 28-Bruce Andrews & Charles North

WORKSHOPS ST. MARK'S: Tuesdays 7:30pm beginning OCT 17 with Ed Friedman
at the 3rd St. Music School (which is really at 233 East 11th Street NYC)
Workshops with Harris Schiff & Bob Rosenthal to begin in November.

*POETS ALL CALL: Dear Neophytes, Grand Masters, & Everybody-In-Between. Why
wait for golden invites to fancy soirees? You can help create an atmosphere
that will inspire everyone to write better poems. Talking about the Open
Readings the first Monday of every month, 8 pm Parish Hall. Bring your new
works and experiment on living bodies! Bring forgotten epochs out of the
mothballs and let fresh air in! Also bring senses of humor! Thank you and
see you there.....Bob Holman

OCTOBER 7,8,9 --- THE NEW YORK BOOK FAIR 1978--to be held at Martin Luther King High School at 65th St. & Amsterdam Ave., New York City, 10 am to 8 pm each of those days. Small Press Books and Magazines and more.

OCTOBER 13 --- FRANZ KAMIN recipient 1978 CAPS grant in poetry; will give Pratt Memorial Hall Concert of "Butterflys & the Art or Craft of Dying", at 8:00 pm, \$3., Memorial Hall; corner of Willowbee & Hall St.

OCTOBER 15---NATIONAL POETRY DAY DINNER--A TRIBUTE TO ALLEN GINSBERG La Foret Rm, The Pierre Hotel, 5th Ave & 61st St, NYC, \$125.00 a plate sponsored by The New York Quarterly. Reservations required.

OCTOBER 16---POETS & WRITERS to hold Benefit Party at the Kitchen, 484 Broome St, NYC Everyone invited Tickets may be ordered by mail; P&W, 201 W. 54th St., NYC 10019. Ticket prices: \$15. to writers listed with P&W; \$25. per person and \$40. per couple unlisted. All but \$4. is tax deductible. The money raised will go to meet a Challenge Grant--and the National Endowment for the Arts will contribute one additional dollar (\$1.) for every three dollars (\$3) P&W raises. This your chance to support the organization that supports you!

OCTOBER 23---THE KULCHUR FOUNDATION announces that Leap Year by Charles North, with cover and illustrations by Paula North (\$7., paper \$3.50) will be published on October 23, Monday. That afternoon, a publication party for Mr. North will be given from 5 to 7 at the Gotham Book Mart Gallery, 41 West 47th St., NYC. Readers of the Newsletter are cordially invited.

+.:+.:+.:+.:+.:+.:+.:+.:+.

ECENTLY RELEASED BOOKS & MAGAZINES: BLACK SPARROW PRESS, PO Box 3993, Santa Barbara, CA 93105; Towards a New American Poetics: Essays & Interviews with Olson, Duncan, Snyder, Creeley, Bly & Ginsberg (NPL)...TOOTHPASTE PRESS Box 546, West Branch, Iowa 52358; Later by Robert Creeley, \$3. paper, Vodka and Roses by Michael Irene Welch, \$2.50... TUUMBA PRESS, 2639 Russell St, Berkeley, CA 94705, Sitting Up, Standing, Taking Steps by Ron Silliman, \$2. TELEPHONE BOOKS, Box 672 Old Chelsea Stn., NYC 10011; Delayed: Not Postponed by Fielding Dawson, \$2., Telephone 14 (magazine) cast of 1000's \$2. VEHICLE EDITONS, 238 Mott St., NYC Train Ride by Ted Berrigan \$4., Counting by Jayne Anne Phillips, \$3.50, just let me do it (love poems 1967-77) by Michael Lally \$3.50...BUFFALO PRESS, 15 Laight St., NYC 10013; Entrance To The City by Rachelle Bijou, \$3...Saturday Morning (mag) 437 E. 12th St., NYC 10009, Cage, Brodey, Lenhart, Orlovsky, Owen, Godfrey, Ginsberg, Dubris, Lesniak... STATION HILL, 3 Livingston St, Rhinebeck, NY 12572; Distance Function by Franz Kamin, \$1.50...Singularity by Susan Metz, Peradam Pub. House, (NPL) HARD PRESS, 340 E. 11th St. NYC 10003, New Postcard Series includes: Wright, Schiff, Weiner, Hirschman (NPL)...MARTIN'S PRESS Jack's Book An Oral Biography of Jack Kerouac, by Gifford & Lee, \$10.95 (hardback) very moving.....

ROCKY FLATS TRUTH FORCE--"NO NUKES"

Rocky Flats, owned and operated by Rockwell International is probably the "heaviest" plutonium plant in the country. The nuclear triggers for bombs are manufactured here. If the neutron bomb is created it will be done, most likely, at Rocky Flats, situated 10 miles south of Boulder, Colorado and near the Denver Suburbs. The plutonium appears to enter the DNA. It sticks around. The plutonium entered the water system and there have been reports of deformed human births. Employees of Rocky Flats have had a high incidence of cancer. Often, effects might not be seen for 15 years, or in the next generation.

Since April of this year, a group calling themselves the Rocky Flats Truth Force have been occupying the railroad tracks near the plant which carry the bi-weekly trains holding lethal substances for the manufacture of plutonium. The group consists of poets, artists, mothers and others. Members work together on specific non-violent actions. Arrests have been made. Daniel Ellsberg has closely allied himself with this group coming to Boulder from California where he lives and has now been arrested 3 times. Ellsberg and Allen Ginsberg and others will go on trial in November. Anne Waldman, Peter Orlovsky and others will have a trial in January.

On August 5th, there was a huge, inspired poetry reading on the tracks with Gregory Corso reading the historic "Bomb" poem, Michael Brownstein, Allen Ginsberg, Peter Orlovsky, Cindy Shelton, Simone Lazzeri, Dick Gallup, Anne Waldman, Michael Parker, Bonnie Shulman & others.

On August 6th, Hiroshima Day, a memorial service was held on the tracks with many guest speakers.

On August 9th, Nagasaki Day, Ellsberg held a press conference at 8 a.m. (there were even reporters from Japan!). At 10 a.m. members and friends of the Truth Force began a walk from the tracks to the main entrance of the plant, where they then staged a "die in" at 11:02 exactly the time when the bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. Police warned through a megaphone that arrests would be made at 11:30. Many stayed and approximately 77 arrested.

More actions are planned and the first trial with Ellsberg and Ginsberg is coming up in November. Time for more poets to take some action! Public opinion concerning the nuclear "question" is crucial now and could at least stall the neutron bomb production. Write to your Congressman; the White House.

For more information: TRUTH FORCE phone number (303-443-0287)

Below is Haiku by Allen Ginsberg written after he was arrested:

Golden Courthouse

Waiting for the Judge, breathing silent
Prisoners, witnesses, police --
the stenographer yawns into her palms.

8/9/78

The Irony Of The Leash by Eileen Myles (jimbrodeybooks) \$2.00 paper, published at the Poetry Project, this one has a cover drawing by Steve Levine.

Books of poetry are important when they either put a poet one may know from magazines and individual works into a new and cohesive light that changes one's appreciation of the poet, or present poems that radically inform/change the commonly held forms and language for poetry, or contain the masterpiece work of two decades. The Irony Of The Leash does satisfy the first two suppositions and if the third holds true, I would be too jealous to admit it. Investigate that for yourself.

This book does put the poetry of Eileen Myles into a new light for me. I could see the nature of Ms. Myles' consistency and control. She tells more than she reveals! Her poems can be situational yet there is no surplus of information. In "Evening", there is the injunction, "(Call broccoli trees.)" It fits exactly into the situation and provides tone commentary (Melville, London). "Black Lacings" is also situational but the build-up of elements becomes a rarified clarity, "It was brown like his old bathing suit." ending with "If the front porch was free." To take the situation of a topic where the outside topic becomes a swiss cheese revelation, "white gleam of my window at night".

Eileen Myles uses the personal "I" often but always with humor that transforms the personal to uncommon. "The Irony of the Leash" is such; a selfless comparison between the "I" and a dog, how Every "I" yearns for some sort of leash. Yet, the poem derives its power from the personal and does not try to generalize. This is what makes Ms. Myles such an individual poet. Her forms are her own, they swell with the personal but come together on the edge from the universal. It meets where all art meets, on the edge. This book breaks ground where one thought all the ground was broken. It provides humor and truth (and you know what truth is). The irony of the leash is the connection between hand and head; the leash is no restraint to Eileen Myles.

---Bob Rosenthal

:.=.:.=.:.=.:.=.:.=.:.=.:.=.:.=.:.=.=

STARS STARS

too often

do not see

a quiet straining quietness

and the thing that makes you

nonaccessible

\$3.95

idle words

let our fingers do the ~~w~~riting

---Rose Lesniak

My favorite person just spilled water intended for violets all over a bookcase, Mayakovsky is drenched, & I'm supposed to be lucid about the language in Frank O'Hara's poems? Yet O'Hara is exactly like that, equal always to the attention of the moment. This is what philosophers think of as a "quality" or an "attribute". I want simply to list these qualities, pointing where you should go. The words are voice first:

It is sad and unimaginable that I can be
 happy outside Fla. and it is just as sad
 that you can and I hope you are but how
 lovely it was under the low moon crooning
 about hurricanes and cane chairs and Ulysses
 and sand bags and wet washing and magnolias

for a moment on Cabana Street I thought
 I'd had a vision of true happiness but it
 was to wait for the war to be over and grow
 like a vine around the new melancholy
 of luxurious Mahler with the sun shining
 through a Chinese resignation about death

not to be morbid to be beautiful at everything
 you do is a rather special gift he got from
 Austria and you were given by Florida in '38

Leafing Through Florida

Voice in a sense different from the package of ideas we've inherited. There is no attempt to make the line a formal metaphor or, the page a mere scoring of mumble. In fact, where Creeley uses the line & punctuation to impede the habitual slowing eye & ear to the pace of speech, O'Hara most often opts for the opposite effect--to speed matters up ("Quick! a last poem before I go," begins one piece, or "The best thing in the world/but I better be quick about it.")

Speed (of perception) is a value here. The punctuation tends to be minimal or non-existent & there are few gratuitous capitals at the left margin. Lines often contain more than one articulation and vice versa. A word such as "but" is as apt to occur (not as a rupture) in the middle of a line as it is at either end. It seems casual, until you realize that each "but" is the next-to-final term in the line both times. The poem is in 6-6-3 form with each stanza a discrete statement, playing concepts such as "happy" and "sad" off one another with a precise sense of balance.

More to the point is the question of from where do the forms arise. The seven line stanzas of Steven may well be because that name spells seven, & a poem such as Seven Nine Seven can, in fact, be broken down into twenty-three articulations, regardless of its total number of lines. Surrounded as he was

by endless examples of art, O'Hara had less investment than many of his contemporaries in constructing post-Poundian masterworks intended to explicate everything to everybody once & for all. Form in his work is always integral, but not necessarily literary--a closer analogy might be to Rauschenberg's combines or Cornell's boxes. Content for O'Hara invents the form, which is not separate nor secondary, without recall to a page-breath metaphor. O'Hara's use of differential spacing (cf. Biotherm) is thus radically apart, in both concept & function, from the same strategy in the hands of an Olson or Blackburn.

O'Hara's sense of reference, leads us toward his objectification of words. Probably the last English-language poet to use shifters with total specificity. O'Hara's work is like the Gawain poet who personally knew each member of his audience:

A million guys in this
town, and you have to shoot
the Crime Commissioner.
You loved it tonight
because for the first time the audience treated you
like a lady, a real lady.
Well, I guess that squares me
with both of you.

(Here in New York We Are Having a
Lot of Trouble with the World's Fair)

O'Hara's particularity with pronouns, plus his willingness to insert the names of friends, has been mistaken for a cliquishness supposedly typical of the New York scene. But O'Hara is no more a poet of the "merely personal" than he is a casual or "sloppy" craftsman. His poetry is written for a community, in which the concept is, for once not an American abstraction meaning polis. The result is an expansion of the range of voices, or directions of address, available to O'Hara: one "you" is not another.

O'Hara's most useful discovery--objectification is not inherently opposed to speech. It is this which permits him, in the first poem quoted, to render Florida, "Fla." or:

Ha ha it's fun to run around the deck and see
them going down down
boom boom splash splash into
the desert where the camels have just
gotten out

of the way

(Enemy Planes Approaching)

Objectification is the principle behind all of the zany lists, the oppositions & conjunctions which neither oppose nor join ("Quips and players" begins Second Avenue), the images which an earlier epoch might have called surreal.

From the stance of the individual word to the delicate truce between

content and form, O'Hara's writing took poetry into rooms of the human possibility not previously visited, yet thoroughly modern & necessary. We are only beginning to understand the importance of his contribution.

---Ron Silliman

:::~::~~::~~::~~::~~::~~::~~::~~::~~::~=

heavy jars by Anselm Hollo (Iowa: The Toothpaste Press) \$4.00 paper

FIGHTING THE WARS OF THE HEART

#20 signor vivaldi,
 signorina truelove

 i thank you
 for the clarity of your temporal notions

 they are a help

Signor Anselm, thanks alot! Here are 26 works in a snappy and elegant edition. After the conversational lyricism and descriptively intense form, the next thing about heavy jars, is the seeming ease with which Hollo carries them around. One gets the feeling of having traversed a distance reading them. It's as if one had boarded a graceful space-ship and what a journey ensues!

The reader is taken, of course, to Finland--the author's birthplace, in the very moving poem "helsinki, 1940". From there the poems range all over "the land, its huge dazzling cities", from Ann Arbor to Baltimore to Iowa City. Ultimately though, we are escorted through Hollo's "wars of the heart". The amazing thing is the synthesis between this heart and mind, between language and emotion, so that the reader is never lost or made embarrassed by profound sentiment.

Hollo declares, "i want/deranged jottings!" and at first these poems are marvelously deranged, but beneath this surface a red thread runs "bringing the form to the crazy weaving." The cohesion constructed through flexible use of form, allows the seemingly random impressions to develop a tension that is mysteriously singular yet incredibly connected.

In his own words, "we do learn to live with the fact/ of the language, thus confronting us/ with division, which is the nature of all." And Anselm Hollo pushes language to its very edge and over as if it were a heavy jar while he laughs like Zeus.

Once again, Anselm the sojourner, opens up new inner and outer space while saying, "the dramatically obvious about ... the so-called great subjects, silence & starkness, the perennial conditions of birth & love & death."

---Jeff Wright

~~~~~

OBITUARY: Gordon Matta-Clark June 22, 1943-August 27, 1978. He was responsible for building the caged rose bush on the right side of the Church porch. Mr. Matta-Clark donated his time & work to Poetry Benefits and was a friend of many poets. We regret his passing.

Shimmering Pediment

An overloaded circuit -- lightning  
Jammed the horizon, and for days  
The echoes remained in my eyes.  
But the brightest star is to begin  
Anywhere. "Among the peonies,"  
As an ancient Chinese poet wrote ...

Near where the river pirouettes  
Past the airplane graveyard  
I wandered in as a child;  
A fenced-in-field; the broken  
Fuselages and crumpled wings  
Reclining like sunbathers in  
Haphazard rows of damaged magnificence.

Actually, I never played on this knoll,  
Though I think somehow I must have.  
For around supper I felt compelled  
To return to that silent and empty  
Amphitheatre, my plane spiraling  
In a diminishing circle, as I flew  
Parallel to where I am now standing.

John Yau

THE POETRY PROJECT  
2nd Ave. & 10th St.  
New York, NY 10003

FIRST CLASS MAIL