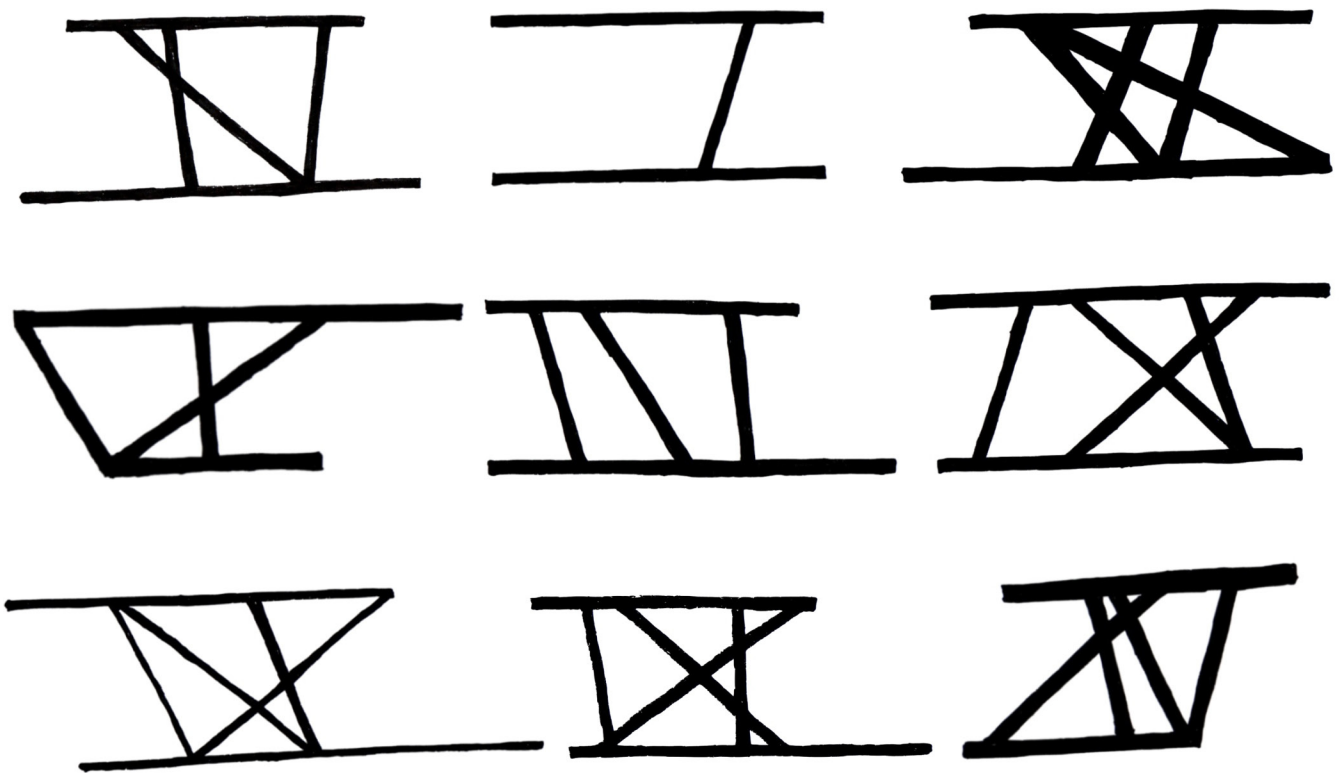


THE POETRY PROJECT NEWSLETTER

www.poetryproject.org

DEC/JAN 0910 #221

LETTERS & ANNOUNCEMENTS ANNE WALDMAN, ANSELM BERRIGAN, LENNY KAYE & BILL BERKSON ON JIM CARROLL
NOVEL EXCERPT JIM CARROLL TOM ORANGE & CATHERINE WAGNER ON BARBARA GUEST POEM SANDRA DOLLER
ERICA KAUFMAN INTERVIEWS BRUCE ANDREWS & SALLY SILVERS CALENDAR EMILY CRITCHLEY REVIEWS LISA ROBERTSON
LUCY IVES REVIEWS FANNY HOWE JANE SPRAGUE REVIEWS CACONRAD CHRIS MARTIN REVIEWS LAURA SOLOMON GINA
MYERS REVIEWS CHAPBOOKS CHRIS MCCREARY REVIEWS NORMA COLE STEPHEN MOTIKA REVIEWS THERESA HAK KYUNG CHA



THE POETRY PROJECT NEWSLETTER

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Corina Copp

DISTRIBUTION: Small Press Distribution, 1341 Seventh St., Berkeley, CA 94710

The Poetry Project, Ltd. Staff

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR: Stacy Szymaszek

PROGRAM COORDINATOR: Corrine Fitzpatrick

PROGRAM ASSISTANT: Arlo Quint

MONDAY NIGHT COORDINATOR: Dustin Williamson

MONDAY NIGHT TALK SERIES COORDINATOR: Arlo Quint

WEDNESDAY NIGHT COORDINATOR: Stacy Szymaszek

FRIDAY NIGHT COORDINATORS: Nicole Wallace & Edward Hopely

SOUND TECHNICIAN: David Vogen

BOOKKEEPER: Stephen Rosenthal

ARCHIVIST: Will Edmiston

BOX OFFICE: Courtney Frederick, Kelly Ginger, Nicole Wallace

INTERNS: Sara Akant, Elizabeth Block, Ace McNamara, Alice Whitwham

VOLUNTEERS: Jim Behrle, Daniel Burgess, Salma Elmehdawi, Vanessa Garver, Ivy Johnson, Erica Kaufman, Derek Kroessler, Christa Quint, Lauren Russell, Thomas Seeley, Erica Wessmann

The Poetry Project Newsletter is published four times a year and mailed free of charge to members of and contributors to the Poetry Project. Subscriptions are available for \$25/year domestic, \$45/year international. Checks should be made payable to The Poetry Project, St. Mark's Church, 131 East 10th St., NYC, NY 10003. The views and opinions expressed in the Newsletter are those of the individual authors and, while everyone in their right mind might be like, of course, duh!, they are not necessarily those of the Poetry Project itself. For more information call (212) 674-0910, or e-mail info@poetryproject.org.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Greg Fuchs (President), Rosemary Carroll (Treasurer), Kimberly Lyons (Secretary), Todd Colby, Will Creeley, Jordan Davis, Mónica de la Torre, Ted Greenwald, Tim Griffin, John S. Hall, Gillian McCain, Jonathan Morrill, Elinor Nauen, Evelyn Reilly, Christopher Stackhouse, Edwin Torres

FRIENDS COMMITTEE: Brooke Alexander, Dianne Benson, Raymond Foye, Michael Friedman, Steve Hamilton, Viki Hudspith, Siri Hustvedt, Yvonne Jacquette, Eileen Myles, Patricia Spears Jones, Michel de Konkoly Thege, Greg Masters, Ron Padgett, Bob Holman, Paul Slovak, Anne Waldman, Hal Willner, John Yau

FUNDERS: the Aeroflex Foundation, the Axe-Houghton Foundation; Brooke Alexander Gallery; Committee on Poetry; Foundation for Contemporary Arts; Studio One; the Harold & Alma White Memorial Fund; the Lila Acheson Wallace Theater Fund; The Greenwich Collection, Ltd.; The Tomorrow Foundation; Poets & Writers, Inc.; Anonymous Foundations; Irwin, Lewin, Cohn & Lewis; Menaker & Herrmann; Harold & Angela Appel; Russell Banks; Paul Auster & Siri Hustvedt; Bill Berkson & Constance Lewallen; Mei Mei Berssenbrugge & Richard Tuttle; Louise Bourgeois; Mary Rose Brusewitz; Rosemary Carroll; Todd Colby; Peggy DeCoursey; Don DeLillo & Barbara Bennet; Rackstraw Downes; Ruth Eisenberg; Ann Evans; Stephen Facey; John Godfrey; Doris Kornish & Phil Hartman; Jonathan Lasker; Nancy McCain; Mark McCain; Thurston Moore & Kim Gordon; Jonathan Morrill & Jennifer Firestone; Elinor Nauen & Johnny Stanton; Hank O'Neal & Shelley Shier; Louis Patler; Jonathan Plutzik; John Sampas; Simon Schuchat; Nathaniel Siegel; Kiki Smith; Andre Spears & Anne Rosen; David Levi Strauss; Patrick Thompson; Susie Timmons; The Estate of Paul Cummings; The Estate of Kenneth Koch; members of the Poetry Project; and other individual contributors. The Poetry Project's programs and publications are made possible, in part, with public funds from: the National Endowment for the Arts; the New York State Council on the Arts; the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; and Materials for the Arts, New York City.

EDITORS EMERITI: Ron Padgett 1972–1973 / Bill MacKay 1973–1975 / Ted Greenwald 1975–1977 / Frances LeFevre 1977–1978 / Vicki Hudspith 1978–1980 / Greg Masters 1980–1983 / Lorna Smedman 1983–1984 / Tim Dlugos 1984–1985 / James Ruggia 1985–1986 / Jessica Hagedorn 1986–1987 / Tony Towle 1987–1990 / Jerome Sala 1990–1991 / Lynn Crawford 1991–1992 / Jordan Davis 1992–1994 / Gillian McCain 1994–1995 / Mitch Highfill 1995–1996 / Lisa Jarnot 1996–1998 / Brenda Coultas & Eleni Sikelianos 1998–1999 / Katherine Lederer 1999–2000 / Ange Mlinko 2000–2002 / Nada Gordon & Gary Sullivan 2002–2003 / Marcella Durand 2003–2005 / Brendan Lorber 2005–2007 / John Coletti 2007–2009

Copyright © 2009 Poetry Project

All rights revert to authors upon publication.

ST. MARKS CHURCH
IN-THE-BOWERY
131 EAST 10TH STREET
NEW YORK, NY 10003



Contents

04 LETTERS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

06 WITH RESPECT

Remembering Jim Carroll

ANNE WALDMAN, ANSELM BERRIGAN, LENNY KAYE, BILL BERKSON

10 EXCERPT

from The Petting Zoo

JIM CARROLL

11 CONVERSATION

On The Collected Poems of Barbara Guest

TOM ORANGE & CATHERINE WAGNER

14 POEM

Severe Yellow Line. SANDRA DOLLER

15 INTERVIEW

10 Questions for Bruce Andrews & Sally Silvers

ERICA KAUFMAN

22 CALENDAR

24 BOOK REVIEWS

ON THE COVER:

Drawings by Paul Killebrew. Paul Killebrew is a lawyer with Innocence Project New Orleans. His illustrations can also be found at poetryfoundation.org; and his first book, *Flowers*, is forthcoming from Canarium Books.

EMILY CRITCHLEY / LISA ROBERTSON

LUCY IVES / FANNY HOWE

JANE SPRAGUE / CACONRAD

CHRIS MARTIN / LAURA SOLOMON

GINA MYERS / CHAPBOOK ROUNDUP

CHRIS MCCREARY / NORMA COLE

STEPHEN MOTIKA / THERESA HAK KYUNG CHA

LETTERS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

"Maybe there will be a rhinestone necktie."

1. from the director

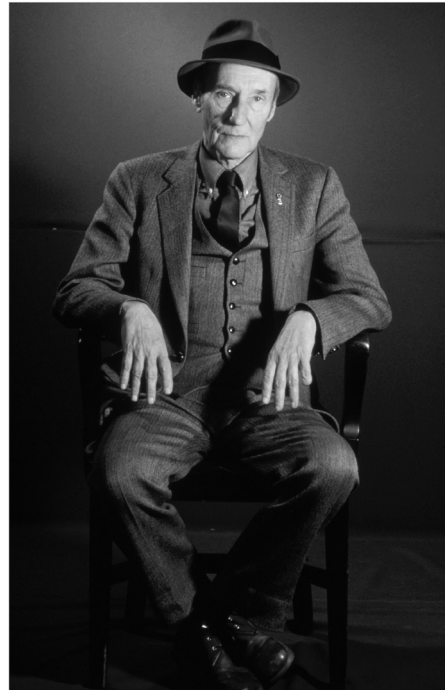
On January 1, 2010, we will present our 36th Annual New Year's Day Marathon Reading, the Project's largest benefit of the year. At last it's on a weekend, a Friday, which I hope will encourage people to abandon themselves to us. Maybe there will even be an afterparty. Maybe there will be a rhinestone necktie. I just re-read what I wrote in last year's Dec/Jan *Newsletter*, and I said some things about the ethos and purpose of this event, which are important enough to say again, but differently. This is a grand event for the community and of the community. I know that the phrase "the poetry community" can be used as a whitewash, taken with a cringe, so I want to be clear that when I use it I'm not suggesting something monolithic but something more atmospheric and based in the gift of presence.

Poetry-gifting is vast and can reveal surprising allegiances. Sometimes we are grouped according to the kind of work we produce but the act of being there asserts that there are non-discursive aspects of connection, unspoken habits and body actions that attract and hold. We want to make those kinds of discoveries possible, cross-genre, across the crowded room. Arthur Russell has a lyric in "Go Bang! #5" —"I wanna see all my friends at once...." Both the line and the event have an element of nostalgia for sure, yet are also full of the spirit of connectivity and momentum that can propel us into new understandings of what we can accomplish together.

The Marathon Reading also has a very critical financial purpose since we live with/in capitalism and not a gift economy. The funds we secure through admission/food and book sales help to defray our annual programming costs, which includes paying poets and performers for their work.

As in past years, it is impossible to include everyone we would like to include. As in past years, it is our pleasure to include many first-time participants in the (approximately) 140 person lineup. Thank you all for your support and love for this event. It won't be the same without Jim Carroll; this year will be dedicated to him and his generous spirit.

Stacy Szymaszek



WILLIAM BURROUGHS. PHOTO BY KATE SIMON.

YOU
CAN
OWN
A
KATE
SIMON*

*Photographer and icon-maker Kate Simon has donated twelve different prints of William S. Burroughs to the Poetry Project to help us entice new members to join at the Patron level (\$1,000+). Simon photographed WSB from 1975 until his death in 1997. Some of the photographs you will recognize, as they grace many of his publications, while others have only been printed for this occasion. Each print is signed by the artist, with a description of the scene and the year taken in her script. Simon's photography has appeared on countless book jackets, record covers and in publications around the world, has been displayed in museums and galleries in Europe and the U.S., and in many private photographic collections. Believe us when we say this is a rare opportunity! For more information, email us at info@poetryproject.org; or view the images at our online store: <http://poetryproject.bigcartel.com>.

2. from the program coordinator

Dear Everyone,

Welcome to the year's end! It's a celebration. Once again, for the 36th time in fact, we are rolling out the red carpet for our Annual New Year's Day Marathon Benefit Reading. January 1, 2010 happily falls on a Friday, so we hope you can all stay real late. The Sanctuary doors will open at 2:00 PM, and it don't stop 'till you get enough. As always, 100+ poets, musicians, dancers and performers will take the stage for our biggest fundraiser of the year. Many of our favorite favorites will return and, as always, many first-time participants will be joining the ranks. For an idea of the lineup, please check the calendar insert of this Newsletter.

LETTERS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Parish Hall will once again be full of books, food, friends and piped-in sound from the main room, so one can always hear what's going on. All the more reason to volunteer! Each year we are completely indebted to the 80–90 kind souls who donate a few hours of their time to our cause. We are looking for people to sell books, serve food, stamp hands, stack chairs, make change, make signs, tap kegs, meet, greet and maintain the law. Please email Arlo Quint at info@poetryproject.org if you are interested in helping out. Feel free to tell him what part of the day or night is convenient for you, as well as which jobs you may or may not prefer.

Arlo is also the point man for food donations. Quite a bit of the day's revenue comes from crepes, pizzas, pierogis and the like. Every year our generous neighborhood eateries (and epicurean friends!) donate delicious food to be sold throughout the day. If you would like to donate baked goods or finger foods, or if you have an in with a restaurant nearby, please step forward!

We are also now accepting donations of books, chapbooks and other printed or recorded matter. Each year small and not-small presses (and some individual authors) offer wares in good condition to be sold in the Parish Hall. Please contact us in order to arrange drop-offs or shipments. We thank you in advance! Cheers to a lovely holiday season; we certainly hope to see you here.

Corrine Fitzpatrick

3. from the editor

AIG Watches While Your House Burns Down. No, 'tis a *Harpers* headline. Tisk. In Truth: I expect, by Janvier, à la Marathon, streaming through it like red-eye gravy, elegantly ready to fly-fish, having just stepped on the frozen lake from my sleigh pursued by wolves, Wimbledon, I mean Winnipeg; and you, in that felt gray troubadour, I mean the *essence* of a hat, you'll be done gliding in the Republic of Dreams with Raymond Roussel—it is Madcap Manhattan after all (*RR did visit, fact-checkers!* “*On arrival in New York, I want to take a bath.*”)—and we'll main paper onstage with our awful voices in honor of another *auld lang syne*. Or I'm dreaming of Gösta Berling? I *have* been sunburned in Stockholm, though, swear. Open-air boat ride for hours upon hours left me as red as a group of very lively partisans. I mean I *have* been typing text from my Film Forum mailer. But it was summer. Is on my fridge. So while my window frames have an oppressive effect, I'm sure our Scandinavian friends can attest to pure blue being bourne in that part of the world and shoved into our skies as well; and, obviously, purest blue burns (I'll show you pictures). Am I still on the sunburn? One of them, a Scandinavian friend, an editor of *Vagant*, Susanne, thank you...she sent me a copy of this graphically fantaciencia rag out of—out of, let me look...one of those places with the folk...Aase Berg...bloodydeer...oh, I've got it! Published in Oslo/Bergen. *Vagant's* theme for this issue is science fiction, and it's partly illuminated by a dusky Christian Houge photograph (oh to reproduce! photos, I mean!) of a landscape entitled “Winternight,” which is what the next issue of the *Newsletter* is dedicated to, as it will still be winter

(this one, in your hand, if you read vertically, is about the quest to control hurricanes PLUS Gideon Lewis-Kraus in the POT CAPITAL of the world [Boston?]). You know, Octavia Butler came to read at Tulane when I was in college and I missed her. Must have been too busy ~~slung over the throne~~ Alexander Pope. Get out your wireless mice! “FIRST LOUDSPEAKER: But this telegram is dead. SECOND LOUDSPEAKER: It's just because it's dead that everyone can understand it.” Anyway, to the point, let's not confuse any dystopian Robespierre *mulige* with *Gone to Earth*, an obscure Powell and Pressburger flick starring Jennifer Jones as a GYPSY who falls in love with her PET FOX. Which, to return to exacting craft, is also my story to anyone who wants me on a jury. What are poets for?

Civic duty,

Corina Copp

• • •

GREAT STORK!

Much ado and heaps of love are due upon the arrival of Beatrice Rose Evans, born in May to new parents Lisa Jarnot and Thomas Evans. Welcome Beatrice!

AWARDS

Congratulations go out to Bernadette Mayer upon receipt of a Creative Capital grant; and to painter Rackstraw Downes, a 2009 MacArthur Fellow! As well, congrats to some of the 2009 National Book Award nominees: Rae Armantrout, Ann Lauterbach, and Keith Waldrop.

GET THEE TO A PLAY

Judith Malina directs Anne Waldman's play RED NOIR for The Living Theatre, with a cast of 22, and starring Sylvia Dabney. Opens December 10, 2009 at 21 Clinton Street, NYC. Please visit www.livingtheatre.org for more information.

WITH REGRET

Our hearts go out to the friends, colleagues, and family of Suzanne Fiol (May 9, 1960–October 5, 2009), the founder and artistic director of ISSUE Project Room, who passed away after fighting a courageous and inspiring battle against cancer. A memorial will take place on November 15. Please see www.issueprojectroom.org for details.

We also regret to note the passing of writer and translator Raymond Federman, poet Lenore Kandel, artist Nancy Spero, and composer, performer, and multimedia artist Maryanne Amacher.

WITH RESPECT

Remembering Jim Carroll (1949–2009)

ANNE WALDMAN

Poète Maudit



PHOTO BY TAMELA GLENN

I revere Jim Carroll as a *poète maudit*, in the tradition of François Villon and Rimbaud—not that he was dogged and cursed, but he did live somewhat outside normal narrative society and the professionalisms and careerisms of poetry. And he'd really been on the street. Not an armchair transgressive. Ambitious too, for the work, wanted to be loved and cherished for it, handled the vicissitudes of rock 'n roll fame pretty well for a time, going more public.

But fragile inside, reclusive by nature, it wasn't just about the health and drugs. He didn't need a lot of outside entertainment. He didn't need to "make the scene," particularly. He had his own consummate quirky imagination, memory for minute particulars and nuances of character, speech, the humorous anecdote. He had his music collection, TV, late-night phone calls. He was resourceful that way, self-sufficient. I admired that. And I admired his loyalties. He kept track of us all, you could say. In a culture of hesitating ums and you knows and I means he was actually an elegant speaker and he crafted his written prose with care and flourish. He plugged in early to the downtown scene, still a teen, and he was our own, the kid brother. The Poetry Project was his first foray into the public eye and he showed up at the New Year's Day readings many decades, those exciting family reunions. His brother Tom said to me at the funeral that Jim always felt connected to the Poetry Project. Is it corny to say *he felt the love*? We'd given him his start. Jim's lineage was New York School with a dash of Beat and counter-culture rock 'n roll and Irish blarney. And it was pure Jim. This beautiful conglomeration worked and it penetrated mainstream culture. He had the younger kid's gaze, was at pulse with his generation and the younger ones; he was the Catholic boy at confession. At Naropa's Kerouac School Jim taught classes in the "Socratic Rap" mode, initiated by Gregory Corso. And he had a phenomenal memory, would quote poems whole, was perpetually curious, generous with students. Open-hearted. Like Frank O'Hara—his literary idol—Jim was "amused" by life, not obsessed with the horrors. But could also look at things dead in the eye. Anselm Berrigan told me the other day he's reading all of Jim's works, and that's what we do when our poet friends die.

Sound Yr Name

for Jim

Mouth harp I'll bring
Symbol of all we sing & know

Maybe sundials, compasses
So we don't get lost—
Sunglasses for the
Bright lights of the Bardo

Tarot cards assist
You want a future?

No, don't, don't get lost

In arcane mystery
& hermetic need

Perpetually young
in all your poetry

& in the epic twist
Ulysses finally turns back
Or Sherlock Holmes re-hunts the clue

Back up the language spine

You're "on" Twinkies tonight
It's 33 St. Marks Place circa 1970 something
You are nodding into imagination

Anne Waldman's recent work includes *Manatee/Humanity* (Penguin Poets 2009) and *Martyrdom* (Palm Press 2009). She is co-editor, with Laura Wright, of *Beats at Naropa* (Coffee House Press 2009), and co-author of the script of Ed Bowes's movie *Entanglement*, 2009, and the forthcoming *Manatee/Humanity* CD, with Ambrose Bye. *The Living Theatre* is producing AW's play *RED NOIR*, directed by Judith Malina, which opens Dec 10: 21 Clinton St, NYC.

• • •

ANSELM BERRIGAN

I have this funny and very special memory of being maybe five years old and asking Jim Carroll to tie one of my sneakers. He'd been over to see my folks with a group of Dutch poets in town for a festival, and we'd all gone for a walk up St. Mark's Place to Astor Square. Jim bent his tall frame down and graciously did the trick while informing me, "You really should know how to do this yourself by now." Of course I did know how—I just wanted to say something to this very tall dude with red hair, shy as I was, and the tying of the sneaker seemed like the best opening. This minor incident became a running point of humor and sentiment whenever we crossed paths years later, largely because I used it as information in an intro I did for a reading he gave in Buffalo in 1992.

It was my first real public-speaking gig, such as it was, and my nervous energy was amplified by the fact that a year-and-a-half earlier, Jim had been through town with Allen Ginsberg to do a reading and anti-censorship panel in the wake of the big NEA Four scandal. I attempted to ask a question of the panel that came out as more of a tipsy pointless ramble, and Allen leaned into his mic and very kindly yelled, "Speak up and speak clearly!" Ack. After the panel I sidled up to Jim and he let me know Allen had done the same thing to him when he was eighteen, and not to worry about it and by the way what were you trying to say, etc. Essentially rescuing me from a pit of humiliation, a minor despair that might have become a major impediment to ever speaking in front of an audience again (I rarely spoke in groups larger than two at that point). So my intro was going to connect the sneaker-tying with this moment of assisted recovery from the Allen-slaughter, and then lead into a couple fine lines about his writing, which I was very into already at that point. Right before the reading Jim came over and in his sly Irish tremolo asked, "So have your public-speaking skills improved since that debacle with Allen?" Agh! At any rate, the intro was alright, the reading, drawn largely from *Forced Entries: The Downtown Diaries* (the only book I can think of that makes having crabs sound highly entertaining) was fantastic and incredibly funny, and some kind of demi-circle came full that evening.

I know that Jim was bound to be friendly with me because he loved my father and was very fond of my mother as well, giving her a big blue and red winter coat that she wore for years not long after Ted died (their friendship—Jim's and my mother's—dates back to the late sixties, and she helped him type up the handwritten manuscript of *The Basketball Diaries*). So I have no particular take on the man that isn't infused with a kind of slantwise magic, and I don't care to try and put that any other way. There would typically be a space of a year or a few years between our conversations, which were often too brief, but something would always happen that would have a funny little light to it wrapped around a moment of generosity. After one reading he gave at the Poetry Project, we got to talking about a somewhat tortured love triangle I was caught up in that involved a figure with whom he'd been in a similar triangle twenty-five years earlier (yeah, deep argh fills me even now). This should have just creeped me out completely, but Jim's disbelieving remark, "So-and-so's cutting in on your action? Man he cut in on my action when I was exactly your age!" echoed the post-panel moment seven years earlier, and his diction and timing totally cracked me up. Hearing him tell a story during one of the Project symposiums about drinking acid punch while working the door at one of the early Giorno-led events and then calling a firehouse pretending to complain about smoke coming from the church just to see guys dressed in full fireman regalia walk into the room,

hoses ready, wasn't bad either. And it seemed rather appropriate that, at a complete reading of *The Sonnets* in 2000, upon its republication, Jim should read the sonnets containing the line "pineapples are a sign that I am coming," raising much laughter from a packed Sanctuary at St. Mark's Church.

I should add, too, that Jim was incredibly supportive about doing events at the Project, especially the New Year's Day Marathon, even as his health bothered him more and more in recent years. I know this was true of Jim before and after my particular tenure directing the Project. He loved the place, he never big-timed anyone, he was mellow and professional when it came to showing up and delivering, and he was a dynamite performer, as has been detailed in many places recently. I'm writing about these odd personal moments and these work-related moments because they're what I've been drawn to in mind since his death, which has been harder to take than I could have expected, but also because I take humor and devotion as central to his work and person, even if that latter quality was heavily complicated (as it should be, no?) by all the pulls his writings speak of, to, and through. And because it feels natural to remember him in stories, and to think of stories as part of a continuous devotion to consciousness.

Anselm Berrigan is the author of Free Cell, recently published by City Lights Books.

• • •

LENNY KAYE

We're driving through the old neighborhood.

He's been here before, in poetry and prose and song and real-life, growing up and out, taking his world with him. "Sublime symmetry," he calls it, as we stop in front of the apartment building on Isham Street, a few blocks from where he first went one-on-one with the hoops, many-on-many with the words. Ball play. Finding meaning in that parabolic arc as the net swishes or the perfect sentence similes. Full circle.

In the summer of 2008, Jim moved home. He would walk out his front door and see the same statuary adorning the religious edifice across the street as he did as a preteen, imprinting its message of salvation through the confessional of sin: *transcendence*. He wasn't sure returning to uppermost Manhattan was a good or bad thing, his old haunts and hauntings, the ghosts of his parents and running buddies and ever-younger self passing him by on the street; but then Jim never cared much for moral stricture. He found delight in everything, retaining an innocence and humor and radiant enthusiasm that filled notebooks and embellished tall tales and kept him working at his desk, even on the day he fell from its grace, exhausted.

I was ever a fan of his work and persona at the Poetry Project in the early 1970s; and watched the fulfilling prophecy of his debut performance in front of a rock band a few years later, deputized as a replacement in San Diego when the opening act split. He liked the high, and who wouldn't? There are a few greater quaaludes than an amplifier approaching double digits, the back-feed and front of being a lead singer. From readings he knew how to enact his words; now he could spiral one step further, kneel on the proscenium while stage divers flung themselves into their pit o' mosh, like he used to launch

WITH RESPECT

himself from the top of the key to dunk the ball. He was at the cusp as punk-rock turned into hardcore, a balancing act Jim knew all too well. He wanted the words to be heard, but he did it in the context of a full-contact rock band, his intricate imagery made manifest by the clarity of his delivery, a belief in vulgate and *te deum*. He got communion, as he so famously exulted in *Catholic Boy*, french-kissing the rail, à la Rimbaud. He understood that ritual sacrifice is a founding credo of the R.C. church, Our Lady of Perpetual Hunger. One night, doing "People Who Died" in Providence on the eve of Easter, along with the Bobbys and Billys and Jimmys, he hosanna'd "Christ died today... What more can I say?"

But there was always more to say, and Jim was surely prolific. His vast array of topics—from the Albigensian Heresy to beauteous nymphs who importune, to the parsing of his great psychic mentors, Frank O'Hara and Ted Berrigan—was free-association that encompassed a universe, a range of mind that spoke to the breadth of the human neuron. He had the last laugh life has on us when the final toll is taken. "*It's too soon,*" I hear the lines leap out at me when I listen to his greatest hits, "*to ask me for the words I want carved on my tomb.*"

A poet's last words. The hardest ones to write, because they take a lifetime of knowing, and then it's too late.

Lenny Kaye is a guitarist, writer, and record producer who made his first appearance with Patti Smith at the Poetry Project on February 10, 1971.

• • •

BILL BERKSON

Some Jim

"Look at the cute little chipmunk!" Jim's constricted, high nasal rendering forever memorable on the now-lost cassette as he, Anne Waldman and I wandered googly-eyed through Staten Island parkland one early spring morning, 1970. Two summers before, as I packed to go to Yaddo for a residency, Anne had called to say that Jim Carroll, whom I knew only by sight at the time, needed somewhere to stay and could he live at my place. It worked out; two pure products of Manhattan, albeit of neighborhoods that didn't intersect. After I returned, he came and went, intermittent presence, staying nights on the daybed in the front room of the two-room apartment, one flight up, 124 East 57th Street, an odd dilapidated brownstone between Park and Lexington, and again, when that building was sold and I moved down to a slightly smaller place (same red plush daybed) on East 10th, along the long block west from Saint Marks Church.

"Enigma Variations," the one poem I wrote expressly for Jim, came about when we were still uptown, and it induced a momentary edge between us. The occasion was Jim's having been invited by Edwin Denby to accompany him to the Royal Ballet. Sir Edward Elgar's title for the music of that night's dance performance (a piece dedicated to and portraying Elgar's own circle of friends) inspired me to start writing as Jim put on his finery for Edwin and the Met. The poem's collage

format drew on incidentals from our immediate environment—lines from a large poem-painting by Frank O'Hara and Norman Bluhm that hung on one wall next to the desk, a thing or two Jim had said about a couple of creatures met at Max's Kansas City the night before, a brand of bottled apple juice then in the icebox, some stray shards of brutal self-assessment typical of me at the time, and so on. The edge showed up in how Jim heard the last line, which refers perhaps too obscurely to the radio personality Jean Shepherd's driving up to the toll booth outside the Holland Tunnel, refusing to pay and the ensuing argument with the toll taker (all of this on the air), but Jim mistook the line as a thinly veiled hint for him to cough up some rent money, do his part in our carefree Odd-Couple economy. From then on, although I remained fond of the poem—if only because of its fair reminder of those goofy early times with Jim—I was careful about reading it in public whenever its dedicatee was present.

Jim was a lot smarter than the veneer of prolonged adolescence mixed with the longueurs of his heroin use let on. One night at dinner in Bolinas he held forth at length on the most recondite nuclear physics gleaned from John McPhee's *The Curve of Binding Energy*, a book I had given him only a week or so before, the technical specifics of which Jim had clearly set himself to study and thoroughly comprehend. (This fit with his steady diet of Sherlock Holmes stories, pored over in monkish solitude, just him and a dog named Jomama, in the little house at the foot of Mesa Road.) Jim was good student in every respect, with a stick-to-it-ness and an overriding discrimination that extended to his writing.

Along with his ever reverting to tales of how either Dick or Al McGuire had scouted him for the Knicks and the fine points of Lew Alcindor's style under the boards on cement courts uptown, Jim loved to tell of the Boston Celtics' point guard Bob Cousy's reply when asked what made him such a great playmaker. Cousy had a pronounced lisp, so "Pu-wiff-ewal Fi-shun," went the Carroll/Cousy account of how the fabled no-look pass got done. Peripheral vision would have come in handy, too, to catch Jim's moves, seemingly by way of strange powers of matter transmission—first near the top of key, then, in a flash, underneath for the clear shot—in Bolinas pickup games.

But it was by way of a likewise subtly expanded scope that Jim let his friends know how he cared for them, as tremulously alert to their vicissitudes as he was wrapped up in his own. Looking back on it now, the periphery of other people, their bafflingly distinct lives and thoughts, couldn't have been of easy access for one so intent on appearing, as he was, an outsized solo act. What showed was that, as he went along, what Jim called on as "heart" was indeed the center without which any act was lost. "Haahrtr," he styled it, in his lordly adopted Inwood manner—a growl, a plea, a sly caress; that sweet, deep, sidelong regard.

Coda: July 4, 1983—with a party in full swing in our backyard, I pick up the telephone to hear Jim saying from New York that Ted Berrigan had died. (A week later, Edwin Denby, too, would be dead.) After the fact, the blurred details, the inevitable vibrato pause. "I miss you, Jim." "I miss you, too, man," he said.

Bill Berkson's most recent book is *Portrait and Dream: New & Selected Poems* (Coffee House Press 2009).

M.F.A. IN CREATIVE WRITING

in public, in private - writing the world

Join a vibrant writing community in the heart of Brooklyn.

Core Faculty: Jessica Hagedorn • John High • Lewis Warsh

Recent Visiting Writers

Paul Beatty
Bill Berkson
Anselm Berrigan
Charlotte Carter
Brenda Coultas
Thulani Davis
Samuel R. Delany
Linh Dinh
Tonya Foster

Gloria Frym
Renee Gladman
Richard Hell
David Henderson
Barbara Henning
Erica Hunt
Patrica Spears
Jones
Katt Lissard

Jaime Manrique
Bernadette Mayer
Alex Mindt
Dennis Moritz
Anna Moschovakis
Walter Mosley
Akilah Oliver
Han Ong
Simon Pettet

Kristin Prevallet
Karen Russell
Lynne Tillman
Edwin Torres
Chuck Wachtel
Anne Waldman
Wang Ping
Colson Whitehead
Matvei Yankelevich

39 credits

- Full- and part-time study options
- Convenient day, evening and weekend schedules
- Graduate assistantships available

**POETRY
FICTION
PLAYWRITING
SCREENWRITING
TRANSLATION
MEMOIR**

BROOKLYN CAMPUS

**LONG ISLAND
UNIVERSITY**

1 University Plaza, Brooklyn NY • 718-246-6336 • marilyn.boutwell@liu.edu

EXCERPT

from **The Petting Zoo**

JIM CARROLL

01. All the trouble, of course, began with Velazquez. Billy Wolfram was running recklessly down the wide, granite steps of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Craning his head backward, he saw the huge banner with the old master's self-portrait, hanging from the sandstone facade. Billy Wolfram was certain those cock-sure eyes were fixed right down on him. Mocking him.

The slick leather soles of his new shoes slid beneath him, but he recovered without going down. He sped up, watching the yellow streaks of cabs passing down Fifth Ave. Then he turned his eyes upward to the lights, swinging over the traffic like hanging torsos, frozen on red. He heard snatches of conversations from men poised on the steps, smoking in tuxedos, "So I told him it looked more like a pie chart..." "These old masters, there's something so Catholic about them..."

He took the last nine steps three at a time, then raced down Fifth Avenue until he reached the entrance to Central Park. His legs were straining to outrun the images in his brain, to find some equilibrium in speed. A doctor friend once told Billy that he was prone to "racing thoughts." He was slowing down now on the path beside the dog run, sweating through the seat of his tuxedo trousers. He was thinking about the sound of traffic out of view, and how alien the body seemed, how senseless and capricious. Nauseous, shaking so badly he wanted to collapse into the grass and rest, anything to lose the images of Velazquez, every detail in his paintings, every brushstroke stuck in loops of racing thoughts.

He wondered what kind of man the old master was. Billy knew certain well-schooled acquaintances who insisted they could examine a painting and, from such scrutiny, offer a reasonably accurate description of the painter's character. Billy never made such claims, and knew little about Velazquez in any biographical sense. Lying in the grass and staring up at the trees, he resolved to change that. He vowed that by the next day, he would read up on every facet of the maestro's life.

Billy Wolfram fixed his eyes directly at the sky, which was filmy and disguised by the lights and melancholy of the city. The cause of his outrageous actions that night wasn't buried in some biographer's footnotes, but in the paintings themselves. It was their spirituality and haunting arrogance that literally attacked Billy. The characters in the paintings appeared to be shouting out at intolerable decibels. Their seventeenth-century voices sent him to his knees for an instant and eventually caused him to take flight. The sound of peasants, cardinals and children of the aristocracy continued to taunt him now, for his own work's shortcomings and for his life's.

Billy raised himself up, returned to the path and moved on. Some of the lampposts gave off light, others had been snuffed out by vandals'

stones flung through the opaque casing. It was that bare, low light that encouraged danger and disguise, but in his present state of mind, rejuvenated by his rest in the grass, Billy walked south on the pathway without qualms or fear.

Moving through one of those semi-circular brick underpasses, the ground always filled with puddles and the walls with moss no matter what the weather, Billy recognized that, in his circumstances, there was no better place for him to be. In these shadows, this part of the park had no reference to time or place. He passed a homeless old couple sleeping beneath strips of cardboard. They looked up at him, both toothless, the man with a patchy gray beard. They could have been from any era or country...the French revolution, resting after a day among the crowds gathered to watch the guillotine do its work, finding their only entertainment in its simplicity and precision.

He was speeding up, his body finally falling more comfortably into place with his mind's delirious, disheveled drive. It's amazing and terrible, he thought, distinguishing the ironies out of control within you, and not being able to do a thing about them. What he needed was something to take his mind in another direction.

There was a fork on the path; Billy recognized that the turn to the left led to the zoo, remembering for no reason that the Latin word for "left" was "sinister." Within minutes, he was on a hill overlooking the zoo.

This was fate, he thought, this was exactly what he needed. Billy had loved zoos all his life. The Central Park Zoo was antiquated. It hadn't expanded its cages for the spacious simulacrum of natural habitats that most zoos boasted. Nonetheless, there was a unique sensation walking around its minimal confines. It was the counterpoint of all those wild, exotic creatures existing right alongside the aloof residents of obscenely priced buildings on Fifth Avenue. Creatures strutting with such certainty a few short blocks away from the neurotic and trendy. This is what passed for irony in midtown Manhattan. It was all the irony they wanted in their lives, and it was all they could handle.

A memorial reading for Jim Carroll will be held in the Sanctuary of St. Mark's Church on Feb. 10, 2010. Please visit www.poetryproject.org for details.

CONVERSATION

On *The Collected Poems of Barbara Guest*

TOM ORANGE & CATHERINE WAGNER

Catherine Wagner: Maybe it would be good to ask each other why Guest is worth reading? One reason for me is that she's a lightning-rod figure, one that's recruited for a lot of different purposes—feminist poetics, materialist poetics—and her career trajectory involved her and her work with some very different East and West Coast groups, so she's historically fascinating. Then her music, her incredible fluid timing, the quick tempo changes, her attention to perception, to phenomenology. And her wit!

Tom Orange: This is one of the beauties of having finally at long last a *Collected Guest*: to see the work as a whole, and how there are such shifts from book to book that it's really hard to arrive at a "typical Guest style." Which is another reason why she slips through the literary-historical cracks and pigeonholes (maybe why, besides the obvious sexism, she wasn't included in the Padgett or Lehman anthologies). It's less tempo-change for me than the *degree* of change-ups (a slow pitch you throw in baseball when you think the batter is expecting a fastball). So a kind of consistent thwarting of expectations; the quality of her attention; what else?

CW: This time through I noticed a political edge to some of the poems that I hadn't really fixed on before—especially in the 1960s work. And we should talk about the relationship of other art-forms to her work—you wanted to talk about music? One way to think about lyric isn't so much to do with "lower limit speech upper limit music" as [Louis] Zuk[ofsky] has it but more to do with music as one boundary and image as another.

TO: Yeah, visual art is almost the default critical response, like Clark Coolidge and jazz: Guest and painting. There's so much more. I'm seeing now that there's music recurring: Ellington, Corelli, etc. And later in the career, romance; medievalism. Travel. And increasingly I'm seeing just, say, "source materials" used almost in a way we've come to expect from, say, Susan Howe (quilts, bed hangings?) and I want to know more about where these are coming from and why/how they're deployed.

CW: I'd put the "medievalism" earlier and think about how it's connected to exoticism and feudalism and issues of power. She's got an early and a late poem both called "Colonial Hours"...

TO: Right, which gets us into politics, like you mentioned. Backtracking though...I was saying earlier too how I want to see Guest fleshed out as a projectivist (Barry Schwabsky gestures at this in his review for *The Nation*) and as an objectivist (Zukofsky's "thinking with things as they exist and directing them along the lines of melody," which I think Guest very much does)...

CW: Well—hmm—*Defensive Rapture* strikes me as a place where she found a way to manifest through space and punctuation the rush-and-pause music she'd been representing less overtly with line break and omission of comma. This might be too simple but in some of the *DR* poems it seems as if she's translating music into

image and verbal time—telling a story out of Schoenberg? But the early and late work that's to do with painting gets at issues around perception and artmaking. There's a self-reflexive focus on what an artist can do: the artist/perceiver "modifies," "alters," "selects." Those words keep coming up.

TO: Not to fall back on two overworn quotes but: "an emphasis falls on reality," or "things as they are / Are changed upon the blue guitar."

CW: Nice, the Guest and Stevens quotes together. By the way, I have with me an original draft of "An Emphasis Falls on Reality"—very different from the version in *Fair Realism*. And only in the *Collected* version, there's an "r" added to the "you" in the line "The necessary idealizing of you reality." If "you" to "your" was one of the "minor changes...made without comment," I'm really bummed! In the early draft I have, there are actually commas around "reality"—"the necessary idealizing of you, reality, was part of my classical search."

TO: Wow, apostrophizing reality is one of my favorite moves!

CW: Respect to Wesleyan and editor Hadley Haden-Guest, though—they did a fabulous job with this book. Also interesting in that draft—there's no "fair" in "I was envious of fair realism." Just "I was envious of realism." I love it that such a key moment was arrived at in revision.

TO: Me too! Though actually *DR* was my introduction to Guest, and I was very excited about *Quill*, *Solitary* APPARITION when it first came out but felt then and now like that book took me too far into something that left me grasping at straws, the sparse abstraction/excision. And talk about her change-ups: just when you thought she was going to go off Albiach-ing into nothing, then comes *Confetti Trees*! More prose, harking back to *The Countess of Minneapolis*, which itself was a swerve into prose romance after *Moscow Mansions* showed her at the height of her poetics up to that point. But now I see between QSA and CT lies *If So, Tell Me*—a Reality Street (U.K.) book that maybe didn't get much circulation in the States but puts me back on my bearings or in more comfortable terrain. And looking there now I see something maybe that's what you're getting at with perception and artmaking: "AIR IS PHOTOGRAPHED!" ["Effervescence"].

CW: Yeah, drawing attention to the artistic moment, that transfiguration, and the transfiguration points both ways. See "dried paint altered the hand" just above that quote? Compare the end of "Instructions" in *The Red Gaze*: "Distance lingers in her hand /// Figure moves backward from the door / ...Figure modified by light. // Remove figure from window." Something about art's role in the world. The "figure" as a shape the artist manipulates, or as a symbol that can be altered by its environment. The artist's and the artwork's and the environment's power. The poem is called "Instructions," but we don't get any instructions at first. We get "Mood and Form. Other pieces of literature. // Emphasis on con-

tent.” We get the situation in which art is made. The information we’ve got to work with. Then at last we get an instruction: “Remove figure from window.” But who gives the instruction? And to whom? To the light that “modifies” the figure? Or to the artist who erases it? (The artist is powerful—“Distance lingers in her hand”—she can make distance appear.) Or to the reader’s mind, telling it to delete the figure?—if the reader obeys instructions. The poem is this amazing flexible meditation on artistic and perceptual transactions, on what we have power over as artists and what has power over us.

TO: Right. Reminds me of Spicer’s Martians, making me wonder who’s commanding whom here and if non-compliance is even an option. So that this act of figuration you describe the artist undergoing, there’s a very intriguing—and possibly troubling—politics inherent to that.

CW: Well, to get back to “medievalism,” to me the gesture isn’t so much about a particular political structure (as in feudalism); it’s about referring to a power structure that is then a place where freedom can take place. There are these repeated openings-up that depend on a situation where power has been exerted. Early work: “Land in wake of Prospero.” Later: “Bulletins permit us to be freer than in Rome.”

TO: So you’re saying these certain period and ideological “isms” are essentially structures of power over different aesthetic-political spans of space and time, within which freedoms and unfreedoms get tested and played out?

CW: Yes—they’re figures for situations in which a space for freedom is opened. Poetic freedom. Testing that idea anyway. We should look at “Supposition” at the end of *RG*: “You are willing / to pass through the center / of independent poetics. / To rearrange rhyme, while you gather its energy.” That “supposes” a poem as both active and passive—is that right?

TO: It’s an objectivist-projectivist ethos. Olson (paraphrasing): the poet’s job is to take energy from where he got it and put it all the way over into the poem/field. Guest is projecting herself...

CW: I think she’s projected as much as projecting. That’s why the careful moves back and forth between who or what’s got the power...

TO: Sure. Or throwing down the gauntlet: you have to be willing if this is the vocation you are going to take on for yourself. And “you gather its energy,” so “if he sprawl, he shall find little to sing but himself...But if he [always “he” for Olson!] stays inside himself, if he is contained within his nature as he is participant in the larger force...his hearing through himself will give him secrets objects share.” Guest is all about discerning secrets objects share.

CW: The poem or artwork has its power too. Over the poet: “the poem takes you and shakes you,” she said. Olson’s notion of subjectivity starts with interiority but I’m not sure Guest’s always does—you pointed out the place in *Forces of Imagination* where she mentions Laforgue’s “flashes of identity” between subject and object.

TO: Right. You have to give yourself over to that power in order to sing things rather than self, or rather, so that self becomes part of the larger song.

CW: Maybe the idea is thralldom? In a positive way? A thralldom that gets you somewhere good? Because she warns against “the desire of the poet to control. This control was earlier destructive to the interior of the poem, to its infrastructure.”

TO: ...fall into a thrall. Hypnotized by the gaze. It’s an ecstatic thing. And the outside that you reach through your thrall may be a good thing, but it doesn’t do much for the rest of us who are stuck here and did not catch that bus, you know? It’s escapist...(Look up thrall at Dictionary.com): from Old English “bondman, serf, slave.” It’s Hegel’s master-slave dialectic.

CW: OK. But the ecstasy is a way of connecting to the world. “Lo from the outside a poem is with us, of another composition” [*RG*]. Or “A pinch of red remains of Hofmann’s palette knife. It reminds him of the red of maple leaves” [*RG*]. Such a simple thing to say at the end of that poem—it REMINDS him? That’s so understated it’s almost bland! But it resonates with some lines earlier in that poem: “Talking in an atmosphere of color...A deep red gaze through maple leaves. // Maple red now splashes the mountain.” The red is natural and aesthetic and perceptual all at once. Where the connection between observer and observed gets started is a mystery. I think Guest would think of that mystery almost with a capital M, a sacred mystery.

TO: Right, from Greek *muein* (as Duncan points out), “to close, shut” mouth, eyes, maybe ears too? Which I’ve always thought ambiguous: the mystery is the thing about which you keep eyes mouth ears shut—but is that because you know and can’t tell or because you don’t know? Presumably the former but I think just as much the latter...Regardless, mystery is that which cannot be communicated—interesting tack for a verbal visual or sound artist to take. What do you think of Tyrone Williams’s assertion in his *Rain Taxi* review: “Guest’s poetry moves inexorably toward revelation, the unveiling of the hidden...her work’s insistence on immanence is suffused with a spirituality that suffices without religion.”

CW: Hmm, I think there’s something much more about relation in BG’s work than revelation. In “Modernism,” for example: “Restless leaf modifies his poem.” It’s not about seeing the leaf or getting at something beyond poemness or leafness, but about the mysterious connection and boundary between them that alters both of them.

TO: I think revelation can be what mystery discloses. Even if what is disclosed is an absence, as in: “Remove figure from window.”

CW: I see, you’re right. It gives me chills, for sure. Have you seen the cover of [*The*] *Blue Stairs* with the [Grace] Hartigan painting?

TO: One of my most coveted Guest books is a signed copy of *The Blue Stairs* I got for six bucks at a secondhand bookstore in D.C.! (They clearly knew not what they had.)

CW: OK, so the LINE next to the blue part. It almost aligns with the shape of the blue part but not quite. Now if you interpret the cover as a statement about her poetics, the “line” doesn’t exactly match up to the blue (thing?)—oh this is hard—

TO: No I see, keep going...

CW: The line is frame and border, but not exactly, and it’s also part of the same pictorial space—so it can become ground for a new

figure. I like it that the “line” is not exactly congruent—but it still relates to, and becomes frame for, the thing it moves alongside of. Language moving alongside of reality and being part of reality. There we go.

TO: Spot on. Beautiful. Maybe I’d go back and qualify Tyrone’s take with respect to the word “inexorably”—moving toward revelation relentlessly, unstopably? I mean it doesn’t move toward revelation willy-nilly either...which is maybe to ask (you): what is the force of Guest’s writing?

CW: Force? You mean impact?

TO: Yes, the speed and direction of its movement or intention.

CW: OK, take the “blue stairs” as a figure for what artists do. They go to the top of the blue stairs. In the poem the artist is maybe in a loft.

TO: Wittgenstein’s ladder!

CW: Yes and they can kick it away! Let me go look—here—“the artists / in their dormer rooms.” So there’s this “line”—it’s the artwork—it’s the poem—it’s the record of the movement of the poet up the stairs—it lets us notice the shape of the stairs but it is not the stairs and it does not exactly align with the stairs. Form in relation. Form that draws from and projects back onto reality.

TO: Form enthralls. But when you’re in that thrall—as artist or maker, viewer or reader—are you the master or the slave?

CW: She ends the essay “Invisible Architecture” with a question: “By whom or what agency is this [the behavior of the poem] decided, by what invisible architecture is the poem developed?” Back to mystery.

TO: Hmm. The mystery always seems...formal. Form is a mystery. The mystery is that there is form at all?

CW: I liked this from Tyrone’s review: “Over and over Guest’s poetry immerses itself in the fluidity, and traces the limitations, of social, cultural, political, and aesthetic forms—even as it acknowledges that when all is said and done, form, however unreliable and uncertain, is all that remains.”

TO: All that remains? Seems kind of cold...

CW: Although form’s inextricable from pleasure—the last line of “Composition” in *RG* is “Our lives are composed of magic and euphony.”

Tom Orange returned just over a year ago to his home town of Cleveland, Ohio, where he is active in the local food movement and the music and arts scenes.

Catherine Wagner lives car-free with her six-year-old son Ambrose in southwest Ohio.

ALICE JAMES BOOKS

The Kinereth Gensler Awards

Open to poets living in
New England, New York,
or New Jersey for an
unpublished manuscript
of poems.

For guidelines visit our
website.

Winners receive \$2000,
publication, and
distribution through
Consortium.



JOANNA FUHRMAN'S
Pageant
A 2008 KINERETH GENSLER
AWARD RECIPIENT

“Joanna Fuhrman is a witty visionary for our virtual age. Her poems invite you not just to read but to become immersed in their delightfully protean post-modern landscapes. The work is both exotic and mundane, retro and futuristic at the same time. Pulsating with surround-sound and a panoply of ‘neon fluid’ special effects, this book startles as it entertains.”

—Elaine Equi



WWW.ALICEJAMESBOOKS.ORG
an affiliate of the University of Maine at Farmington

POEM

Severe Yellow Line.

SANDRA DOLLER

Middle bind

of the symmetry road/tight like that talks

a country highway

a slender and sinuous hart

core body of the girl with a yellow dress on and a kind of sign to be read if

time as a trumpet with a Harmon muted

fluffs split flurries

little blistered punchers/eaten away spine edges of the flurried notes

i subsiding into little ragged edges of breathe

as edges tell of the line become blistered/eaten away by traffic can

center the weather

which is later canon which is future

talking white body at 11a.m. or high noon tinged with

with yellow/the curtains wind

dear late afternoon

sway toward evening/orange columnar curtains with the dress of a different

other color on

Ray Charles attention color

and is this body coming bound or going and does this body know you how to

read by a sign and can a sign

read by itself

where's been the melody that's been

turned split inside out and played/playing once over and over.

Sandra Doller (née Miller) has a new name. Her first book is called *Oriflamme*, a word featured in the 2009 National Spelling Bee; this poem is from her second collection, *Chora*, forthcoming from *Ahsahta* in March 2010, and she's at work on a third book, fondly titled *Man Years*. Doller is the founder and editrice of the curiously named 1913 a journal of forms/1913 Press and an Assistant Professor at California State University. She lives way out west with her man, Ben Doller (né Doyle), and their pups Ronald Johnson and Kiki Smith. This piece (part of a series) takes its impetus from a John Taggart poem.

INTERVIEW

10 Questions for Bruce Andrews & Sally Silvers

ERICA KAUFMAN

01: When did you first begin collaborating? How did that come about? What was your first collaboration?

Sally Silvers: It depends on what you mean by collaboration. For instance, in 1982 at Danspace, in a piece called “Lack of Entrepreneurial Thrift,” which was my first piece where I used other dancers and worked with live music, Bruce was one of the five dancers and I don’t think he would call that a collaboration exactly, but he followed the movement instructions that I gave him.

Then in October of 1982 we started doing BARKING, which was our performance project, and that was a direct collaboration because we put together different scenarios per written section, and the titles were things like “Voodoo for Anti-Communist Tourists,” “Sharp Executive Retard,” “Make Your Customers Wear Uniforms,” and “While the People Slept.” They were thematic written texts (three to five minutes) that we combined with music, dance, and events. For example, in one I had an elastic around my neck and I stuffed glossy advertisement pages, as many as I could get around my neck, and that took up one text. Bruce moved, Tom Cora (who was an improvising cellist) moved and read text, and I did too and I played the blender, as well as spun the dial on a little old radio. So, I would say that was our first collaboration. But then, gradually more texts began coming into my own dance performances.

**LITMUS
PRESS**
WWW.LITMUSPRESS.ORG

Aufgabe #8



New poetry, essays & reviews
featuring Russian poetry &
poetics in translation

guest edited by
Matvei Yankelevich

ISBN: 978-1-933959-09-2
Paperback | 319 pages | \$12 US

Bharat jiva

poetry by kari edwards

This writing is the New Brave...
– Rodrigo Toscano

ISBN: 978-0-9819310-0-5
Paperback | 116 pages | \$15 US

**NO GENDER:
Reflections on the Life &
Work of kari edwards**

Brolaski, kaufman,
& Grinnell, eds.

ISBN: 978-0-9819310-1-2
Paperback | 208 pages | \$18 US

Bharat jiva & NO GENDER are
published collaboratively with
Belladonna Books. All titles
available online at Small Press
Distribution: www.spdbooks.org

Litmus Press is supported by the
New York State Council on the Arts,
a state agency and the National
Endowment for the Arts.

Bruce Andrews: Well, here's some chronology. We met at the very end of 1978 and became a couple, that was the end of the first year that Charles and I did L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E magazine. Sally did her first concert, her first choreography as a soloist, two years later, the very end of 1980. I took the money at the door, and that was the extent of my collaboration for that first piece. So, during those first two years, we were both devotees of things going on in the experimental music scene, experimental film scene, experimental theater scene, and whatever there was around in dance that was interesting. I think our wanting to collaborate had to do with our involvement in these other scenes and avid spectatorship in those other scenes. When Sally started making work she was the first person to use the free-improvisation musicians that we were starting to hang out with (Eugene Chadbourne, John Zorn, Polly Bradfield and other people). We became very close with Tom Cora, who was very involved in that scene; he played cello and was a good friend of some painter friends of ours from Virginia. Sally was writing at this point, so she used text in her pieces years before I did any text work for her, she was reading poems of hers or texts of hers before the concerts as part of the piece, but I don't know that she integrated it into the pieces. She used these improvising musicians as part of her first concert, first group concert and I danced with her in that; we did a couple of duets where I was dancing that she choreographed that had texts of mine. So in the early eighties: Sally started using musicians, maybe she was using text in her work, I was dancing. Then I started making music, somewhere in 1982–83, I started making tape collages, so I could perform in these ensembles that Sally was putting together because I just wanted to be more involved in the middle of her work.

In the same period we started BARKING, this theater project which started as a trio, with the two of us, and Tom Cora. Tom did the music and I did the texts, Sally choreographed all of us, Tom and I both danced along with Sally, and we had props, sort of theater events with props and gestural stuff that Sally pretty much choreographed. The thing that was the basis in the beginning of our collaboration was me doing the music, so I gradually went from performing

in these ensembles to making up scores for the improvisers, which were mostly based on timing, organizing a two-minute duet here, two-minute trio trades here, one-minute solo here—I would have a stopwatch and I would be with these great musicians doing live tape mixing of these tape collages that I started to make. That music also went into BARKING, and then BARKING started to do big projects. We did one large thing in San Francisco where Henry Kaiser did the music, and then we did these two giant theater projects at P.S. 122 in 1985 and 1987 with fifty or sixty people onstage. I organized the band and did the score for the music and the text. I think I directed the actors mostly.

SS: I put some sections from some of my dance pieces in and had improvising choreographers.

BA: We had people doing live instruction onstage, people doing all sorts of things, it was sort of like a three-ring circus.

SS: We had a woman demonstrating how to do Kabuki makeup.

BA: We had someone doing 19th century ballroom dancing, we had people sketching, we had people filming, we had people painting during the projects, and we had people drawing on the sides.

SS: It was like a happening but maybe with a little more structure.

BA: Those were probably the most intense collaborative things we did—those BARKING projects. The first big event that we did was about gender damage; we did a version of a Kabuki piece (that was in '85) and then the second one about American imperialism in Central America and that was based on the story of William Walker, the soldier of fortune who took over Nicaragua in 1855, and we had him as a megalomaniac narcissist deciding to be the star of Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*, so he invited down the first all-black minstrel troop in the United States (which was formed in 1855) to bring them down to Nicaragua so they could star in his production. So we staged all that with about sixty people, in '87. This was a few years before the movie about William Walker came out.

That was right around the time (about twenty years ago now) that I think I officially became her music director. So from that point on I

would be centrally involved in picking the performers that would be in the band, coming up with a score, going through the rehearsal tapes and talking with Sally about the structure of the pieces to figure out what kinds of sections the music would have and what kinds of sound we wanted, but not too much text. The only time we were using text was when we were doing BARKING.

SS: But that has changed now. Probably in the past five–10 years. I'd say that the text integration into my own dance performance works has only been in the last five years.

BA: We slowly began to integrate text, but before then it was pretty much me doing the music and Sally choreographing. By that point I'd had a couple of residencies where I got access to engineers who worked with me doing electronic processing of texts which I didn't have the skills to do myself. That material I integrated into the music I was making—the music was a collage of me improvising on various instruments and editing them and playing the tapes live; I never played any instruments live, but I would basically do tapes that were collages of my own playing on thirty different instruments. So I started to integrate some of that text material that was processed into the sound scores at that point also. Another thing that happened during this time (once we stopped doing BARKING) was that Sally, in addition to her main concerts, would also do a lot of improvising situations, so she would improvise in performance and shorter pieces, and I started at some point (I guess it was 15–20 years ago) doing something comparable to Sally's live choreography. I started doing live editing onstage. I would basically take the editing process that I normally work with at home, taking cards, small pieces of paper, a couple words or phrases on them, and collaging them and making texts out of them. I started doing that live in the same room in the same moment as Sally was improvising her movement and also with musicians, so I did some things with musicians along, where I was doing this live editing and then I did some things with Sally where I was doing this live editing. That was another place where texts came into our collaborations. But that was apart from her big choreographing concerts.

02: What do you mean by electronically processing texts?

BA: Digitizing them and then running them through harmonizers, processors, sound effects, various programs which I am just starting to learn a bit about now so I am able to do them myself. But this was working with electronic composers and studio engineers. In a way, to transform the material similarly to the way I had written it—change the speed, change the texture, chop it up, various spatial and temporal delays and looping and jumps and cuts and textural transforms.

03: Can you talk a bit about your individual processes and how they change when you collaborate, if they change?

SS: Well my process changes from piece to piece. Primarily how I start is myself improvising in front of a video camera, looking back through those tapes, choosing movements, and then writing those movements (as Bruce does) on separate pieces of paper and then organizing them either into different pieces or different sections of one piece. When dancers come to rehearsal, they learn those movements from video. That is sort of a basic thing I've been doing since I got a video camera. When I didn't have a video camera, I would improvise and write things down on a piece of paper and try to describe what it was that I had done. I work similarly, in the sense that I choose from small units of information to make larger phrases. It is different if I am doing partnering work with dancers (which I do a lot of)—then I find I have to make up the material directly on the dancers when they are here and I often have to say I am you now and do something before I know what it is that I want. And then lately I have been also trying to open that up a little more by coming up with ideas that I can allow the dancers to translate into what's going to be performed. Sometimes that gets more set and sometimes I leave it open so there is more improvisation in the performances.

I just started putting that in. That might be partially to do with my own body aging—I can't do all the movements I want anymore, I can't give them all to everybody, I need to figure out other ways of generating movement in order to continue to be a choreographer. So, I am starting to open up my process to those kinds of ideas and I am sure other things will happen too, but at least that is a starting point for me, getting older. And it also varies whether I am doing a more thematically based piece, or something based

on a film; or this last piece from Spring '09, *Yessified!*, was based on race and whiteness, but a lot of my pieces are not theme centered, so it really varies depending on the kind of information I am trying to present.

BA: The theme-specific pieces that Sally did in the very beginning were BARKING pieces; that really was a political project, whereas her straight dance projects tended to be less thematically organized or more abstract maybe And that changed when we stopped doing BARKING, some of that desire to do something that had a thematic focus which might affect the music, might affect the sound, affect whether she wanted text with it...[the desire] got channeled into her regular dance projects.

SS: I think the politics in my dance projects at the beginning was more about trying to call attention to the body as a social presence and that was really my project for the first 10–15 years of making work. I really wanted to get away from standardized dance vocabularies and try to pull into place an image of a person moving with movement that you wouldn't see every day, but something that would point to the fact that the person was a social body doing it.

I was really interested in taking a stance on movement vocabularies and that occupied me for quite a long time and that settled and I came to just realize that it was the basis of everything that I did and I didn't have to focus on it. I could take it and utilize it in other ways while still maintaining it so it became more interesting to me to take on themes.

BA: And that affected the music too, the soundscapes that she wanted for all of the early concerts (leaving the BARKING aside) were free improvisers without any relationship to theme or any kind of obvious vernacular style of music—it was beyond genre in that sense.

SS: When I started becoming more interested in theme-centered pieces I wanted the music organized.

BA: She also wanted other types of sounds, so that in the beginning I was part of these ensembles contributing extended technique—weird noise-based free improvisation sounds, which was one of our favorite types of music at the time. Then I started to use what we called “cultural material,” either

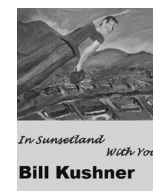
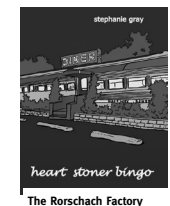
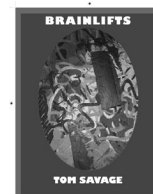
processing it, collaging it, layering it, editing it, modular bits of things that I hadn't created—things from an obsessively large record collection came into play at that point in stead of just me banging around the kitchen and recording myself or borrowing instruments from school and trying to learn how to play the trombone so I could get eight minutes of trombone edits.

For me, when it comes to individual processes, the thing that made it possible for me to make this music for Sally was that I already had a way of working with language that I could in a sense just transfer as an aesthetic or a methodology into sound. So I was already working with these small modular bits So, that was how I started working in music and then that changed once Sally wanted different kinds of focus. She did a piece on the twenties and I had period music for that. We did a piece on dreams and I had things related to that. When I started using text in the pieces, that was pretty much done the way I also write. When I did this live editing, that was just taking my living room sofa

門 STRAW GATE



Lydia Cortés, *Whose Place*



and Tom SAVAGE Stephanie GRAY, Bill KUSHNER, Valerie FOX
leafscape.org/StrawGateBooks

onstage in a sense and spreading out fifty cards and being able to make phrases and putting things in the middle of phrases, and come up with what is there.

SS: How do you generate your writing, for instance?

BA: The raw materials? I am jotting things down, I am walking around...I write in a movie, I write at a lecture, I write in the street, I write on the subway, I write when I am reading, I am just generating raw material so I don't do any of that onstage, I do editing, so that is what I think of as writing. If I am doing that onstage, live. I guess I really haven't had to change that methodology for Sally when she wanted text. I would select things sometimes based on themes, and certainly that was true of BARKING; we did a piece on consumerism, we did a piece on various kinds of oppression and injustice—I would basically pick out material that resonated with that and organize it in the way that I normally would.

04: So, on the cards, is it words, phrases, or does it vary?

BA: Usually two to four words, sometimes single words, very rarely anything longer than a sentence or a phrase.

05: Which comes first—the words or the movement?

BA: The movement always comes first, but I am just thinking of my role as music director. Sally always composes in silence or with something else on the record player. I would get rehearsal tapes that I would meticulously time and figure out sequencing. I would have an idea of what I think the piece would look like. And I would assemble raw materials, and I always do some live mixing—I never made fixed music for Sally that would just be able to be played. I would always have to be there with three or four tape players and a mixing board, doing a live mix to get the timing right and the layering right, but I would always do that afterwards. So, in other words, I am not a composer, I am a sort of a sound designer and also live performer, so I would never compose a piece of music and have Sally perform to it. And, I don't know that we have ever done that with text either. To have a piece of text and you choreograph to a text?

SS: We often do that with improvising. The text is of course there first. We've done a

piece called "Snow Pony" at The Poetry Project's New Year's, and in that case I helped edit the material. I chose from writing already done. I also did that with *Yessified!*

BA: The performance of some of the texts that had been previously written that she was going to improvise with, Sally would intervene and have a lot to say about how it was presented.

SS: We did *Yessified!* with your "White Dialect" piece. Often Bruce's poetry functions for me as a mover as sound, but often I can use snippets of imagery that I get from it besides the rhythm and the sound of it I can gesturalize from the meaning there—it is a constant back and forth of listening, interpreting, and decision making.

BA: Well *Yessified!*, not the dialect piece, but the rest of the text, had an interesting history because that came from a text that I generated live in concert with a racial tone to it because we did it at the Visions Festival, which is basically devoted to the radical heritages of the Black Arts Movement and black culture. So we did a couple nights of that where I am editing live composing material with the legendary bassist Henry Grimes and Julie Patton doing vocals and a little bit of text and a little bit of movement. What I like about these live editing situations is that I end up with a text, which I then type up. So then I have some product, something that is done that I can make use of. We did seven nights of that and I generated a fair amount of text that had an A, B, C structure, like a lot of my work has thematically as an organizing hook—so I took those texts, I think it was mostly the B and C material that Sally selected from when she did this solo "Yellin' Gravy" at La Mama and Joyce Soho.

SS: I was starting to work on a piece about race and the format that it took was a solo for myself and I used the text from Bruce's improvisation at the Visions Festival and edited it down to about a fourth of its size and then...

BA: ...proposed some cuts to me and then we worked it out so it was about the right length and in the right sections and I presented that live to accompany her solo, with music that Sally had selected. So the back-drop, the music for that, which was Booker T. & the MG's, and a few other cult classics of black music that we love, was on in the background mixed in with me doing the text live.

SS: It was on a minute basis. I have composed in minutes for a while. So there's a minute where there's text and a minute where there's not text and something else is going on. And so I chose within a ten-minute solo where the text was going to be and what the nature of the text was, and chose the music for the other sections and I performed that in *Yessified!* in two sections.

BA: We took that and broke it into two parts and that was part of the big *Yessified!* piece. So that was an example of where Sally's editing me. I never get to do the other.

SS: He'll look at something and say "I don't like that movement." And sometimes I listen...

BA: I think it was because it was thematic, so she got more involved in thinking about the text. Normally it would be a bit more abstract in relationship to the movements, and I would just take charge of it because it would be based on my sense of what works as writing.

06: Is there ever a time when you are both doing live improvisation, or are there always some elements of the collaboration that are at least planned ahead of time?

BA: Well, when Sally's improvising and I'm doing live editing of text. Have you improvised with someone else while I am doing live editing?

SS: Musicians.

BA: Musicians, I think maybe not other dancers. We've done this thing at the Visions Festival a couple of times where we had a few musicians and me just doing text, not doing music at all; I guess I've largely stopped doing live mixing of sound with other free improvising musicians. I don't really perform as a musician anymore like I used to. In the eighties and into the nineties I was a little more directly in the free-improv scene—I would get asked to play gigs by some of my heroes, you know, just as a musician, so that was pretty cool.

07: I was lucky enough to see *Yessified!*, a truly fantastic performance. Can you each speak a bit to the process behind that show? How did the choreography evolve? The music? How much of any given performance or collaboration is improvised?

SS: We talked about my solo part in there already. My process for that was reading like crazy about how different bodies were described in different literatures and when African Americans talk about dance and how they fit into modern dance, what languages do they use, how do they describe it, and then trying...—it is very hard to bring out a sense of whiteness because it is like asking someone to describe patriarchy—it is the whole system that you are talking about and the only way to really talk about it is to talk about what is not in it. So it was trying to create some sort of hybrid, to call attention to race but to try to include some aspect of what whiteness could mean physically. It was really hard and hard not to do it in a way that creates further stereotyping, or negativities, so I tried to come down more on the positive side of hybridization and say that you don't draw lines; we are made up of each other in very basic senses, in the way we move, the influence is there, the way we speak, the way we describe ourselves and the reasons for moving. So it was a tricky balance to maintain and I had to come up with metaphors for things. Like in one section that was more improvisatory, I had two people try to move without either of them leading or following, so how do you take initiative together. Another description was someone gets to a spot first and the other two dancers have to fight over that spot, so there were metaphors about needing mutual support, who is giving support, who is taking it, who is losing it. I had a whole outline of ideas like that and then the rehearsal comes and you start to set things and try to stay with the idea of all of that. It was really stringing together a whole lot of metaphors for interdependency.

BA: So for that piece, for *Yessified!*, I had three chunks of text, two of which were mixed with the music that Sally had picked out earlier for "Yellin' Gravy" (the solo version), which were racially resonant material that we had from these live editing and improvisations that we did as part of the Visions Festival, so that was more or less taking something we had already done and putting it in the middle of a group piece of hers, and we opened the evening with a chunk from this white-dialect poetry project of mine, the title of which is "Success without Goals," and that was just a kind of bravura live-sound poetry performance piece of mine in a sense that I'd ended many poetry readings with parts of (little five to seven minute parts). I started that project out with rustic

Midwestern dialect material and had just gotten to this Appalachian part of that project so I used just about four minutes of that, which was done live in concert and a lot of people didn't even realize that because I am up in the dark in the back, so that was the text for that.

SS: And that was personal for me because I am from that region, Appalachia, so I preferred that to the Midwestern piece. Somehow it had more significance for me moving to it. That was the moment in the piece when I was completely improvising. Trying to channel the sound of the dialect that was personal for me in the sense that it had personal resonance because of my background and trying to translate that background into something that possibly I am still made up of without knowing it.

BA: Both the improvised text material and that project in a sense came out of a couple-year research project, reading project on race, which had a musical component based on an obsession I developed with the Harlem Renaissance in the twenties and then with sixties soul music centered around Memphis where we took a trip the previous year. So the music for that I knew was going to involve this twenties Harlem Renaissance material as well as this soul-music material, none of which was of course mine, so I am just collaging and editing that and trying to fit it into the rehearsal tapes that I am looking at.

The music was the most elaborate collaboration I've ever done with Michael Schumacher, the composer who I am very good friends with now, and have worked with . . . For the music for that, I was playing very short excerpts of sixties soul music mixed in with material that I had had processed collaboratively with Michael of my text material, some of which I had used in some previous concerts of Sally, and some material from this really odd project where Michael gave me six or seven hundred short sound files of him recording various things, people singing, people playing instruments, people making sounds, and then I imitated all six or seven hundred sounds vocally and gave him those recordings and then he made this elaborate sixteen-speaker collage of that, so I had some of that material that I mixed in. Then I gave Michael this whole bank of several hundred of my favorite five-, 10-, 20-second snippets of material from the twenties (blues,

gospel, jazz) and he did just some unbelievable electronic processing of that material . . . I think that was the most complicated musical endeavor I've had with Sally.

SS: I remember that it was one of the hardest pieces I have ever tried to put together. I had all these sections and then I had all these different people and then trying to get the transitions to happen and trying to figure out the order so that just the right amount of that person came in at just the right amount of time and place and creating some sort of symmetry between part A and part B and figuring out how to make it move through what it was supposed to do. I struggled and struggled with the order and keeping up with all the sections and figuring out where the thing could go both logistically and for significant reasons. It was really tough.

08: So how do you decide when you want to do something like that; or does it all depend on the larger choreographic scope of the piece?

BA: Yeah, in this case it had to do with some sort of resonance on the topic.

SS: Yeah, it had to do with some sort of atmosphere that was created that wasn't music.

09: Is there a modern dance equivalent to Language Poetry? Is there a Language Poetry dance?

SS: What we've been talking about, coming out of the Judson Church theater experiments, that I think I do come out of, that legacy of experimentation; and I think what I am trying to maybe add to it is some sort of sense of the social body more. They were very interested in that with pedestrian movement and collaging and bringing things in from source materials. Being interested in the movement itself—maybe not at its most pedestrian—is somewhat equivalent to Language Poetry as well as the social modernist aspect of it.

BA: I remember when Sally started choreographing, she didn't like the word "dance." She wanted to think of herself as a movement choreographer. It is the same sort of sense that dance was a genre, and that the material you were working with was movement, and that was similar to the kind of music we were interested in, whether it was

coming out of Cage and using noise without having it be musical, harmonized sound; or whether it was the free-improvisation scene, which was not jazz, not classical, post-genre, nonvernacular, in that way; so when the so-called Language writers started in the seventies, some of us didn't think of what we were doing as poetry. We thought of it as maybe a new genre. Some way of dealing with language in the same way that Sally was dealing with movement and people that we knew were dealing with sound . . . Leaving someone like Stein aside—who never was considered a poet by the establishment—pretty much all the radical literary writing we were most compelled by was all called poetry in the same way that Sally was compellingly interested by things in the dance heritage; and finding that, however radical her movement explorations were as a choreographer, there was no place for it other than the dance floor; so she ended up as a prominent experimental dance choreographer in the same way that the Language writers ended up being prominent experimental poets, which wasn't what either one of us necessarily wanted.

But the Language writers had a group and there was a group of us here in N.Y. and a group in S.F. and scattered, a few others... but Sally didn't have that so she was operating really even more on the fringe when she started in the eighties of the dance world than we were in the poetry world, because at least we had a group, we had a community, we had some other people to talk to; she was out on a limb—the people that would have really hooked up with what she was doing were the legates of Judson, and a lot of that had been domesticated or disappeared and many people had stopped working or were doing much more conservative work . . . The other thing that she was saying about the social body interest, the sociopolitical commitment, I think that was, coming to New York, and starting to write in the late sixties, early seventies; there was this tremendous heritage of experimental writing...a lot of it coming out of Cage, of people like Jackson Mac Low, a lot of it coming out of concrete poetry, sound poetry, a lot of it coming out of the European Dada heritage and that was a huge influence on my early work and the early work of my peers in the early to mid-seventies, and that started to change when I got to New York ('75), and heightened being with Sally in the eighties...so we moved away from this seemingly more abstract material of a Mac Low or a Clark Coolidge in the six-

ties and towards material that had more of this social charge to it; this became more phrase-based, it had a little more relationship to speech, it had a little more relationship to a non-literary vocabulary that had some political implications, and that was really a shift across the board in the so-called Language-writing community in the late seventies.

A lot of people's work changed in that way, on both coasts. Like if you look at say, Silliman's work, from the early influences of Grenier from these microscopic bits of language, Grenier and Eigner, then shifting into the New Sentence. I think the interest out West in sentences and that kind of phrase structure had something to do with that. A lot of it had to do with giving poetry readings, which I had never done before coming to New York, being in an urban environment was related to it . . . When you are in the urban environment, then you start thinking with more socially charged phrase based material. There was just something familiar about that, so we did move away from the somewhat more abstract, non-personal material of the sixties predecessors.

10: What's next? What are you each working on?

BA: I am continuing work on this white-dialect poetry project and I've gotten again obsessively involved with developing an aesthetic theory that can be applied to the judgments that the public makes about national security based on Kant's third critique, the Critique of Judgment. I am using my outline for this major essay project, as a grid for organizing a giant box of cards from a couple of years ago to make a giant poem that is thematically organized around this aesthetic judgment project.

The big change for Sally is working with Yvonne Rainer. That's the first time she's danced for anyone else since she first started doing her own work in 1980. But Yvonne was always a hero of hers so she couldn't turn it down when Yvonne wanted to put a group together. For her to go back to choreographing (which Yvonne mentions in her memoir) is partly based on Sally's intervention in the early nineties, wanting to learn a piece of Yvonne's just from the text that was in her Nova Scotia book.

SS: We're going to be performing in November here. One of the things that Yvonne's

work has really opened up in me is a sort of acting. Because she doesn't make movement anymore so we really learn off of either videos of other people doing things—the last piece, I had to learn the antics of Robin Williams, trying to duplicate those comic moments of his, and in the new piece, “Steve Martin and Sarah Bernhardt”—and soccer, we have to imitate soccer moves when you don't have the ball, what you do when you don't have the ball, and pictures from magazines. So there is a certain element of acting that I never did in my own work, taking on somebody else, gesture by gesture, that is very difficult and very fascinating to do. So I am putting a little bit more of that in my work now too I think.

BA: That is something that Sally didn't used to do, which would now be considered a kind of appropriation. All of the choreography that she used to do was based on video, viewing herself dancing solo or with someone else in her studio. It usually started out on her body, or modified from other sources. And that is true of me—a lot of work of mine that might sound like I am walking down the street copying things down that I hear is really just me thinking something else, related to something that I hear or see. So it is not really the mechanical kind of appropriation that has gotten so popular now as a way of othering.

erica kaufman is the author of *censory impulse*.

Bruce Andrews is a poet, essayist, political science professor, and longtime collaborator with Sally Silvers.

Sally Silvers has been choreographing and performing since 1980 and also currently dances in the work of Yvonne Rainer.

AND WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IF YOU COULD?



Photo of Bhanu Kapil by Margaret Randall, 2008.

Naropa
UNIVERSITY

BOULDER, COLORADO • 800 772 6951

The Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics at Naropa University

MFA in Writing & Poetics
MFA in Creative Writing (Low Residency)
Summer Writing Program
BA in Writing & Literature

RENOWNED FACULTY INCLUDE

Anne Waldman (Co-Founder), Junior Burke (Chair), Keith Abbott
Reed Bye, Anselm Hollo, Bhanu Kapil, Andrew Schelling

Complete faculty listing at

www.naropa.edu/kerouacschool

**4¢
OVERNIGHT
RATE**

**ALL THIS
& MORE
AT**

**BINDING
&
LAMINATION**



**331 EAST 9th STREET
NEW YORK, NY 10003
Tel: 212 473 7833
Fax: 212 673 5248
10 AM - 6 PM Mon - Thurs
10 AM - 5 PM Fri**

"It's Worth The Trip Down The Street!"

**75¢
COLOR
COPIES**

**CD, AUDIO
& VIDEO
DUPLICATION**

COPIES & MORE SINCE 1982!

POETRY PROJECT EVENTS

12/2 WEDNESDAY Tony Towle's 70th Birthday Reading

If there is a New York School of Poetry, **Tony Towle** has been involved in it for over 45 years. In 1970, he received the Frank O'Hara Award, in conjunction with first major collection, *North. The History of the Invitation: New & Selected Poems 1963-2000* was published in 2001. *Memoir 1960-1963* (2001) is a chronicle of Towle's early years as a poet in New York. His 12th book of poems, *Winter Journey*, was published by Hanging Loose in 2008. With **Charles North, Paul Violi, Ron Padgett, Kimberly Lyons, Bob Hershon, Ed Friedman, Andrew McCarron, Anne Waldman** and **Jo Ann Wasserman**. Reception to follow.

12/7 MONDAY Jules Boykoff & Kaia Sand

Jules Boykoff is the author of *Hegemonic Love Potion* and *Once Upon a Neoliberal Rocket Badge*. His political writing includes *Landscapes of Dissent: Guerrilla Poetry & Public Space* (co-authored with Kaia Sand), *Beyond Bullets: The Suppression of Dissent in the United States*, and *The Suppression of Dissent: How the State and Mass Media Squelch US American Social Movements*. He lives in Portland, Oregon. **Kaia Sand's** book, *Remember to Wave*, is forthcoming. This collection investigates political geography in Portland, Oregon, and contains a poetry walk she guides. She is also the author of a poetry collection, *interval*. She is currently working on *The Happy Valley Project*, multimedia collaborations investigating housing foreclosures and finance.

12/9 WEDNESDAY Maxine Chernoff & Paul Hoover

Maxine Chernoff is a professor and Chair of the Creative Writing program at SFSU. With Paul Hoover, she edits *New American Writing*. She is the author of six books of fiction and nine books of poetry, most recently *The Turning*. Her collection of stories, *Signs of Devotion*, was a New York Times Notable Book of 1993. With Hoover, she has translated *The Selected Poems of Friedrich Hölderlin*, which won the PEN USA 2009 Translation Award. **Paul Hoover** lived in Chicago from '68 to '94 where he was a founding board member of The Poetry Center of Chicago and long-time poet-in-residence at Columbia College.

Professor of Creative Writing at SFSU since '03, he edited the widely adopted anthology, *Postmodern American Poetry*. His most recent poetry collections are *Sonnet 56*, *Edge and Fold*, and *Poems in Spanish*.

12/11 FRIDAY 10PM Lonely Christopher & Rebecca Nagle

Lonely Christopher writes across forms; he is a poet, playwright, director, editor, and unpublished novelist. He is the author of the chapbooks *Satan* and *Wow, Where Do You Come from, Upside-Down Land?* and *Gay Plays*, a trilogy of dramatic explorations into the queer situation. **Rebecca Nagle** is a performance, new media and community artist. She grew up in Kansas and studied at MICA. She is an internationally exhibited and collected artist. www.rebeccanagle.com.

12/14 MONDAY Eugene Lim & Justin Sirois

Eugene Lim is the author of the novel *Fog & Car*. He is the fiction editor for *Harp & Altar* and the managing editor of Ellipsis Press. He works as a librarian in a high school and lives in Jackson Heights. **Justin Sirois** is founder and codirector of Narrow House, an experimental writing publishing collective. He received Maryland State Art Council grants for poetry in '03 and '07. His books include *Secondary Sound* and *MLKNG SCKLS*.

12/16 WEDNESDAY Donna Brook, Dick Lourie & Elizabeth Swados

Donna Brook was born in Buffalo in 1944 and began to publish her poems in '68. Her books of poetry include *A History of the Afghan*, *Notes on Space/Time*, *What Being Responsible Means to Me* and *A More Human Face*. She has written a history of the English language for children, *The Journey of English*, and won NEA and NYSCA Fellowships in Poetry. **Dick Lourie** is a poet and blues saxophone player whose seventh book of poems, *If the Delta Was the Sea*, is the product of both professions. Focusing on Clarksdale, a small city in the Mississippi Delta, this collection draws on oral histories and interviews Lourie conducted with residents. Lourie's readings feature a lively blend of music and poetry. Perhaps best known for her Broadway and international hit *Runaways*, **Elizabeth Swados** has composed, written, and directed for over 30 years. Some of her

works include the Obie Award-winning *Trilogy* at La Mama, and *Alice at the Palace* with Meryl Streep at the New York Shakespeare Theater Festival. Her first book of poetry, *The One and Only Human Galaxy*, has just been published.

1/1 FRIDAY 2PM 36th Annual New Year's Day Marathon Benefit Reading

Poets and performers this year include **Ammiel Alcalay, Bruce Andrews & Sally Silvers, Penny Arcade, Arthur's Landing, Ari Baniyas, Jim Berhle, Charles Bernstein, Anselm Berrigan, Edmund Berrigan, Ana Božičević, Donna Brook, Franklin Bruno, Peter Bushyeager, Reuben Butchart, Yoshiko Chuma, Church Of Betty, Michael Cirelli, Todd Colby, CACConrad, Geoffrey Cruickshank-Hagenbuckle, Mina Pam Dick, Steve Dalachinsky, Maggie Dubris, Douglas Dunn, Steve Earle, Will Edmiston, Joe Elliot, Laura Elrick, Maggie Estep, Avram Fefer, Jess Fiorini, Corrine Fitzpatrick, Foamola, David Freeman, Ed Friedman, Greg Fuchs, Joanna Furhman, Cliff Fyman, Kelly Ginger, Pepi Ginsberg, John Giorno, Nada Gordon & Gary Sullivan, Stephanie Gray, Ted Greenwald, John S. Hall, Janet Hamill, Robert Hershon, Tony Hoffman, Lisa Jarnot, Paolo Javier, Patricia Spears Jones, Pierre Joris, Adeena Karasick, Erica Kaufman, Lenny Kaye, Aaron Kiely, David Kirschenbaum, Bill Kushner & Merle Lister, Susan Landers, Joan Larkin, Dorothea Lasky, Denizé Lauture, Joel Lewis, Brendan Lorber, Michael Lydon, Dan Machlin & Serena Jost, Chris Martin, Gillian McCain, Tracey McTague, Taylor Mead, Jonas Mekas, Sharon Mesmer, David Mills, Rebecca Moore, Will Morris, Eileen Myles, Elinor Nauen, Murat Nemat-Nejat, Jim Neu, Dael Orlandersmith, Richard O'Russa, Yuko Otomo, Simon Pettet, Nicole Peyrafitte & Miles Joris-Peyrafitte, Genesis Breyer P-Orridge, Kristin Prevallet, Brett Price, Arlo Quint, Evelyn Reilly, Ariana Reines, Bob Rosenthal, Douglas Rothschild, Tom Savage, Michael Scharf, David Shapiro, Elliott Sharp, Nathaniel Siegel, Christopher Stackhouse, Stacy Szymaszek, Anne Tardos, Susie Timmons, Rodrigo Toscano, Tony Towle, David Vogen, Lewis Warsh, Phyllis Wat, Emily XYZ, and more TBA.**

This event will be held in the Sanctuary. General: \$18, Students/ Seniors: \$15, Members: \$10.

1/4 MONDAY Jenny Boully & Cathy Eisenhower

Jenny Boully is the author of *not merely because of the unknown that was stalking towards them*, *The Book of Beginnings and Endings*, *[one love*

*affair**, *The Body: An Essay*. She is currently a PhD candidate at the Graduate Center of the CUNY. **Cathy Eisenhower** lives and works as a librarian in D.C., and is the author of *Language of the Dog-heads*, *clearing without reversal*, and *would with and*. She is co-translating the selected poems of Argentine poet Diana Bellessi and has co-curated the In Your Ear Reading Series for several years.

1/6 WEDNESDAY Todd Colby & Bill Kushner

Todd Colby has published four books of poetry: *Ripsnort*, *Cush*, *Riot in the Charm Factory: New and Selected Writings*, and *Tremble & Shine*. Todd posts new work on gleefarm.blogspot.com. **Bill Kushner** is the author of *Night Fishing*, *Head, Love Uncut*, *He Dreams of Rivers*, *That April*, *In The Hairy Arms of Whitman*, and *In Sunsetland With You*. He has been a 1999 and 2005 NYFA Fellow and lives in NYC.

1/8 FRIDAY 9:30PM Fall Workshop Reading

Students from the Fall 2009 writing workshops, led by **Vito Acconci** and **Mitch Highfill**, will share their work.

1/11 MONDAY Laura Jaramillo & Sandra Simonds

Laura Jaramillo is a poet from Queens. She's the author of chapbooks *The Reactionary Poems* and *The Civilian Nest* (forthcoming). **Sandra Simonds** should be getting her PhD any day now. Her first collection of poetry, *Warsaw Bikini*, was published in 2008. She is also the author of the chapbook *Used White Wife*. She lives in Tallahassee, Florida.

1/13 WEDNESDAY Reading for Leland Hickman's *Tiresias*: *The Collected Poems*

Named for Leland Hickman's unfinished long poem, this volume, published by Nightboat Books, gathers all of the poetry published during Hickman's lifetime as well as unpublished pieces drawn from his archives. With this book, Hickman's work will join the landscape of 20th-cen. American experimental poetry. Los Angeles poet and editor **Leland Hickman** (1934–1991) was the author of two collections of

poetry: *Great Slave Lake Suite* (1980) and *Lee Sr. Falls to the Floor* (1991). He was the editor of the poetry journal *Temblor*, which ran for 10 issues during the 1980s. Readers will include: **Elaine Equi**, **Alan Gilbert**, **Pierre Joris**, **John Yau**, **Marjorie Welsh**, and more.

1/20 WEDNESDAY William Corbett & Michael Gizzi

William Corbett is a poet living in Boston's South End. He teaches writing at MIT, directs the small press Pressed Wafer, and is on the advisory board of Manhattan's CUE Art Foundation. He edited James Schuyler's letters and his book on Philip Guston's late work remains in print. His recent books of poetry are *Poems On Occasion* and *Opening Day*. **Michael Gizzi** is the author of 20 books and chapbooks of poetry; among these are *No Both*, *My Terza Rima* and *New Depths of Deadpan*. He lives in Providence and has taught at Brown and Roger Williams University.

1/22 FRIDAY 10PM Francesca Chabrier & Christopher Cheney

Francesca Chabrier is the assistant editor of *jubilat*. Her poems appear or will appear in *notnostrums*, *Sixth Finch*, *Forklift Ohio*, and *Invisible Ear*. Her collaborations with Christopher Cheney can be found in *Glitterpony* magazine. She was chosen by Thomas Sayers Ellis to receive the Deborah Slosberg Memorial prize for poetry, and currently lives in Northampton, MA. **Christopher Cheney** is the managing editor of Slope Editions. His poems have appeared or will appear in *Subtropics*, *Forklift Ohio*, *Konundrum Engine Literary Review*, and *Shampoo*. His e-book *They Kissed Their Homes* was recently published.

1/25 MONDAY Ruthless 24/7 Careerism: How You Can Become the Most Important Poet in America *Overnight* (A Talk by Jim Behrle)

The poet is a social animal above all else: the poet's art comes second to the types of important connections the poet can make, not just with readers and an audience, but with editors, curators and people in positions of institutional power. The poet

owes it to the art and to him- or herself to look out for #1 at all times. This talk will focus on the kinds of important community-building are at the heart of all things poetic. People can be manipulated much like a line of poetry, and a poet must have complete control of those around them. **Jim Behrle** will discuss the kinds of behavior that can help a poet stand out amid the babbling rabble. Poetry can be the loneliest journey: we'll discuss how to feel the warmest bosoms of constant embrace.

1/27 WEDNESDAY LaTasha N. Nevada Diggs & Anne Tardos

Writer, vocalist, and sound artist, **LaTasha N. Nevada Diggs** is the author of chapbooks *Ich-Ban* and *Ni-Ban*, *Manuel is destroying my bathroom*, and the album *Television*. LaTasha is a 2009–10 LMCC Workspace Artist in Residence. She currently curates and directs events with The Black Rock Coalition Orchestra. She is a Harlem Elohi Native. **Anne Tardos** is a poet, composer, and visual artist. She is the author of several books of poetry and the multimedia performance work and radio play *Among Men*. Her book of poetry, *I Am You*, has appeared from Salt, and she is the editor of *Thing of Beauty*, by Jackson Mac Low. She is a 2009 NYFA Fellow in Poetry. Visit www.annetardos.com.

1/29 FRIDAY 10PM Crystal Pantomime: An Unpublished Play by Mina Loy

Mina Loy's (1882–1966) unpublished play, "Crystal Pantomime," currently housed in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University, will be read live, from beginning to end, as produced by Kari Adelaide Radzow. The play is to be performed using simultaneous voices while individual performances by Marthe Ramm Fortun, Vanessa Albury, and Crystal Curtis accompany each of the play's three acts. Performers: **Vanessa Albury**, **Crystal Curtis**, **Marthe Ramm Fortun**, **Sörine Anderson**, **Juliet Jacobson**, **Alex McQuilkin**, **Kari Adelaide Radzow**, and **Mary Speaker**. Bios online at www.poetryproject.org.

ALL EVENTS BEGIN AT 8 PM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED. ADMISSION \$8 / STUDENTS & SENIORS \$7 / MEMBERS \$5 OR FREE
THE POETRY PROJECT IS LOCATED IN ST. MARK'S CHURCH AT THE CORNER OF 2ND AVENUE & 10TH STREET IN MANHATTAN.
CALL 212 674 0910 FOR MORE INFORMATION.

THE POETRY PROJECT IS WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE WITH ASSISTANCE AND ADVANCE NOTICE. SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

BOOK REVIEWS

Magenta Soul Whip

Lisa Robertson

(Coach House Books, 2009)

REVIEW BY EMILY CRITCHLEY

Lisa Robertson's seventh book of poetry, *Magenta Soul Whip*, is a profound poetic meditation on the nature of things—after Lucretius's epic philosophical poem on Epicurean physics, *De rerum natura*. It is about creation; it is about humanity; our propensity for naming (language); faith, or “the long science of submission”; fear; love (familial, sexual, metaphysical) and the “liquid rope” that attaches all of these: that of knowledge. Says the opening line of the collection: “Sit us on Lucite gently and we will tell you how knowledge came to us”. The poem then provides a kind of alternative “Genesis:”

First the dull mud softened, resulting in putrefaction, lust and intelligence, pearl globs, jewelled stuff like ferrets [...] then just the one vowel, iterate and buttressed and expiring; leaning, embracing, gazing. (7)

The “I” of the poem, and of humanity, in other words, is born.

The collection contrasts the sinfulness of wanting too much to know—knowledge as both illumination and also that which is reserved only for God, the “light of the world”—with the dumb calm of giving this up for the security of faith. In this sense it is also about Adam and Eve, and the latter's understanding of the even bigger trick played on the pair by God—that he exists at all; as Robertson puts it: “And Lucretius is

a girl”. (Like Lucretius, our protagonist views the notion that gods created our world or adjust its operations in any way as superstition—*religio* in the Latin.) The poetry explores humanity's endless capacity for self-deception: the desire of even a pre-conscious “ego” for the warmth and security of the “fib” of faith; the fib of giving yourself up wholly to something greater, consciously or unconsciously looping back on itself, to make the believer great:

listen to the human fibs. misery dictates. I remember the fibs of infancy, a fib per heartbeat cooked by earth. will this commemorate me? dominant do you remember me? (10)

Latinate etymological play floods this text, interrogating the tradition/authority such language carries. The corruptions of St. Augustine's *Confessions*, for example, let us know that this “human creature” is the only originator or “parent” of her “own sensibility”. They roughly translate, amidst the following, thus:

should I invoke necessity or fate? whatever item I invoke is unbelievable. all gods are gravegods. what is without predicate? let's sing to the god who requires it. let's sing to our enemies also. I will seek thee, I will invoke thee and I'll invent belief in thee: a predicate is a noble enemy and my fidelity is my own disaster, thou hast inspired me through the feeling of humanity with this speech. (9)

This is prefaced by a beautifully playful, part literal, part aural mistranslation (reminiscent of Celia and Zukofsky's transliterations of Catullus) of another part of the *Confessions*, which, under Robertson's hand, becomes

“great virtues are numerous and wisdom has a laughable magnitude. the circumference of a human creature is his own testimonium, her superb mortal resistance as a creature is a liquid gate”. The sexual connotations of the female's “liquid gate” here are telling; and I don't think the Miltonic resonances—from Book III of *Paradise Lost*—of the “human creature” and the firmament of heaven: “an expanse of liquid, pure” accidental.

Yet there is tragedy, too, in this poetry's acknowledgment that love of or for another—sexual partners, parents, even gods—is only ever so much as a narcissistic “feeding” of oneself: “vanity itself, caro factum”. In this ontology of the “disaster” of “fidelity”, love and the human weakness of needing to love, or loving to need, appear to be self-identical: “Something might seduce us. A likeness. A knowledge. Samesame pouring through it.”

Given all this information and all this sin, who shall ‘scape whipping? The “Magenta Soul” of this collection is certainly self-flagellatory; she “invoke[s] dominance to undo” herself and wills “ahead of [herself...] some form of satisfaction or vindicate legendary torment” to “console” her “welts”.

The inky, heart colour of the title connotes both writing (in the CMYK colour model used in printing, magenta is one of the primary colours of ink) and a resistance to the very lime-green shade the book is bound in (in light experiments, magenta can be produced by removing the lime-green wavelengths from white light). Yet what is penned herein can hardly be illuminating, the poet seems to be suggesting, so used-up, so secondary is its language:

Dominant my ink's not diligent like yours. I simply tug and vend and strum at pacts secundum signa quibbling litteris in commodo. Sit poetica stupid with words past their sweet-arsed date. (13)

Adam, as we know, was the original taxonomist and in *MSW* we have a superabundance of animals, vegetables, minerals, and gods, whose names both “release” them “into wild chance” and yet do nothing to stop their changing. Yet anxiously circling in and amongst these categories is our protagonist—an intellectual “animal” with a heart that yearns for metaphysical peace. Her “goal is tranquillity” but the vivacity and weight of her

St.
Mark's
Book
shop

31 THIRD AVENUE
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

10003

www.stmarksbookshop.com

PHONE

(212) 260 7853

ASK ABOUT OUR MONTHLY POETRY E-MAIL!
STMARKSBOOKS@MINDSPRING.COM

BOOK REVIEWS

“mortality” presses into the poetry with the kind of urgency that brooks no denial: “but my body keeps confessing to me / of existence [...] extravagance”.

The protagonist’s greatest problem seems to stem from the knowledge that, not only are each of her experiences ultimately non-communicable—“because the present is not articulate”—but that she, herself, is likely to leave nothing permanent to the world but a stream of used-up images, phantasmagoria of herself, “a vain wreath of milk”. For all the blazonry surrounding the old “literature”—“two angels blowing on the trumpets of fame held up by a globe decorated with three fleurs-de-lys and topped with a crown”—our poet knows these are but “habits and tricks”. She is as likely to dissolve into “duality”, or worse, incomprehension, at any moment:

We wear out the art. We start to modify our vocables [...] Since it is we who are one, and we who are scattered. We’re this pair or more which can’t absorb one another in a meaning effect. (7–8)

A Platonic striving for the missing part of ourselves (beyond ourselves) that might be a permanent point of understanding, or ego-ideal, seems bound to continue well beyond the end of this collection. Meanwhile, out of such a worn-out medium, Robertson’s poetry wrenches much to be marvelled at along the way.

Emily Critchley teaches English and Creative Writing at the University of Greenwich, London, and is the author of several poetry chapbooks.

***The Winter Sun: Notes on a Vocation*
Fanny Howe
(Graywolf Press, 2009)**

REVIEW BY LUCY IVES

The opening of René Descartes’s *Discourse on Method* is famous not only for its place at the head of a great early modern tract but because of a certain homely and powerful metaphor about the act of writing. Samuel Beckett, conversing with a teenaged Fanny Howe in the middle pages of Howe’s new book-length memoir in lyric prose, *The Winter Sun*, reminds her of this metaphor: “I must have asked him where is a good place

for a writer to write, because he answered, ‘In the fireplace,’ referring to Descartes.” Here Howe is a runaway in Paris, killing time with the famous playwright, a friend of her mother’s, until she is called back to America and to Stanford (a university from which she will excuse herself before obtaining the requisite degree).

In fact, Descartes wrote, “in a stove,” indicating his position in small rented quarters during winter. Outside religious wars raged. Howe locates herself similarly at the outset of *The Winter Sun*, recalling the defining presence of war during her childhood and adolescence:

On the one hand each of us was valued, treated to an education in humanist values, and nourished for a long life; on the other hand we were told to hide under our desks during nuclear bomb alerts, and to wait there in the knowledge that we were as disposable as pieces of tissue paper that could blow away like ashes.

Thus the interior life of this writer, the one “In the fireplace” in a book subtitled, “Notes on a Vocation,” is never purely personal. Writing—like the self—is both historical and political whether we like it or not, a continued action, an ongoing work of inscription that Howe is at some pains to account for in her introduction: “What was this strange preoccupation that seemed to have no motive, cause, or final goal and preceded all that writing that I did.” Toward the end of the book she arrives at an intriguing preliminary answer:

It is only in the act of working on something, be it manual or mental labor, that you are aware of being at least half at the mercy of a will that is not personal When you call on this presence for help, it is then as if you are an underwater diver whose rope attached to the boat has broken. You call for help to have the rope tighten again. It is a realignment and a tug from the source upon which you are absolutely dependent. Some people call it a plumbline. I know what they mean when I am on dry land, lost, and feel something loosen, a line that runs from way behind to way before and to way above. It might be a light beam, the kind that bends to gravity. But it runs through me and on it I am utterly dependent. Why name it? Why praise it? Why sing to it?

As Descartes wrote in the *Discourse*, the point of a line of thought or writing is, I guess, a) that it is not exactly you, and b) that you can follow it.

In its most effective passages—passages which indeed seem to testify to the mysterious source of the fruit of the “labor” of writing—*The Winter Sun* teases and untangles questions of causality in art and in language. Asking the reader to reconsider who or what “speaks” in language itself, Howe is brilliant on several counts. She writes:

Because the ear and the mind have to hear the entire sequence before they can understand it, they have to listen backward while the words enter forward.

And:

Without two people, there could not be one word. The future is like a listener who can put the sounds together and respond. The future is only the past recognizing itself at another location.

She also visits with such figures as Simone Weil, Antonia White, and Michel de Certeau, who also cut a memorable track through the stunning prose of Howe’s two other collections of lyric essays, *The Wedding Dress* (University of California Press, 2003) and *The lives of a spirit; Glasstown* (Nightboat Books, 2005).

I have to admit that this third collection, with its sometimes meandering, sometimes cyclical structure, felt mercurial and at moments unwilling to address directly the task it sets itself in its opening pages. On second and third reads, I grew to appreciate what had initially seemed a certain unintentional obliqueness as a kind of silence that actively invited extra listening. Did I hear hints of the weird crackling and rushes of air of that “fireplace”? Perhaps.

Yet some readers may find themselves searching too long for a way in. Though we have the clarity and magnetism of Howe’s childhood memories—the grandfather who “blew pipe rings and played a recorder,” the French class in which “[f]oreign words seemed to drag hairy seaweeds and green slime, chipped edges and glossy forms”—along with a valuable portrait of 1950’s Harvard—the book does not (and of course cannot) remain eternally in this milieu. Faces become vaguer, words more empowered.

BOOK REVIEWS

That this happens, that it is strange, is not lost on Howe. However, one feels so keenly a sense of ellipsis: that for whatever reason a significant portion of the thought that informs *The Winter Sun* does not appear in print.

Lucy Ives is the author of a chapbook, *My Thousand Novel* (Cosa Nostra Editions, 2009), and a long poem, *Anamnesis* (Slope Editions, 2009).

The Book of Frank CConrad (Chax Press, 2009)

REVIEW BY JANE SPRAGUE

CConrad's *The Book of Frank*, winner of the Gil Ott Book Award from Chax Press (chosen by Nathaniel Mackey, Myung Mi Kim, Eli Goldblatt, and Charles Alexander), is a fabulist narrative poem that documents the life experiences of the protagonist, Frank. Conrad devised a gleeful and macabre, jaunty, page-turning pace as we consider unwanted birth, boys who see giants eating park benches with their vaginas, drawing cancer spots and omnisexual proclivities. Hoa Nguyen is right when she compares Conrad's work here to a Kafka-esque aesthetic. "Real" and "what's real" slip and slide as unfixed terrain in Frank's world; "baked hams grunt" and speak to Frank and his wife as they carve the flesh; children grow bird hands; genitals are candy. This is the world of *The Book of Frank*.

Divided into three parts, Conrad uses the profane and surreal as essential to Frank's ethos. At his birth, his father rejects the infant Frank for lacking "cunts." Later, as he grew, his mother remarked that he was "too big for a jar" of miscarriages she keeps and kisses each day, and tells Frank: "you will betray me the rest of your life." Thus, born into a kind of sick miasma, Frank begins. In Part One, after becoming a five-dollar bill, folding his brother and chewing him into spitballs he declares:

"this daisy in my
mouth" Frank says
is a snorkel
breathing
another
dimension (20)

The Book of Frank vaults us into another dimension. Conrad uses many different registers in this book and he moves easily from the surreal to a kind of Tim Burton-esque hyper real. Frank, our leader (our puppet?) bears the burden of physical violence and the occasional swerve into the unreal:

fried chicken
lay across the
corpse absorbing
sins

Frank snuck a piece

licked each finger

something inside him
spread its wings

something intending
to stay (43)

Conrad creates a total world in this poem, refracting that which we too often choose not to look at: abuse, sexual violence, human destruction, suicide and more. The travails Frank's body endures are for the benefit of all, Christ-like. We know the unwanted offspring: his face is in the newspaper almost every day; we know, too, the moment in the funhouse when the floor gives way and all of a sudden we land in a David Lynch film. Conrad moves expertly between carving a surreal and often wicked topography and the recognizably real. Frank embodies both; he contains volatile potential for trouble and is himself battered, too. Frank answers in "imaginary / vocabulary" on his way through gender-bending bites, edible "chocolate man" and movies made in his head.

In Part Two, Frank moves away from his family, falls in love, breaks up and makes various discoveries. He finds his way through love affairs, consuming chocolate man and his increasingly fragmenting world:

for love

Frank spoke softly
into envelopes

instead of
writing
letters

What are the stakes for a body, a shape-shifting body often missing parts—how are the power dynamics altered, in an intimate context? CConrad asks us to consider bodies in new forms, sometimes disfigured, sometimes intact, even as he asks us to consider biography/epic as genre. Reminiscent of Alice Notley's *The Descent of Alette*, *The Book of Frank* probes equally dark, discomfiting realms.

In Part Three, Frank experiences labor difficulties and gender weirdness, and plays the game of cancer placement.

"what a question!" Frank said
"I d" like my cancer right here"
and traced a circle
on the host instead (107)

In one of the next scenes in the poem, Frank and his wife wrestle with an unusual ham:

the ham grunted as their
knives pulled him apart
he wiggled and smoothed out
sighing on their tongues (112)

and we slide deeper and deeper into the unreal, the surreal, the uncanny...

Frank chops both thumbs off

he marches into the boss's
highfalootin' office

"I'm no longer primate!" he shouts
"I'm another species!"

I no longer plunder and swindle!
I take myself from
this den of evil
a poodle!
a rat!
a lizard!" (120)

BOOK REVIEWS

CAC Conrad sets us on a journey with Frank that's deeply infused with surreal and violent obstacles. He mocks the church, shreds gay stereotypes and challenges transgendered bias as well. Sex and ribaldry play a significant part in Frank's journey. Why do we need embodiments of the underworld? To take us to that fine brink within and shine a light on the macabre. Conrad's use of the profane emboldens the work. His conflation of the profane with suicide is apt; suicide, the ultimate final brutish act: self immolation.

Frank's spirit
floats out of
his body in
the restaurant

he reels it in
by its cord

at a movie
the man behind him
has scissors

Frank reels
nothing in (136)

Jane Sprague's recent publications include the books *The Port of Los Angeles* and **Beladonna Elders Series 8* with Tina Darragh and Diane Ward.

Blue and Red Things
Laura Solomon
(Ugly Duckling Presse, 2008)

REVIEW BY CHRIS MARTIN

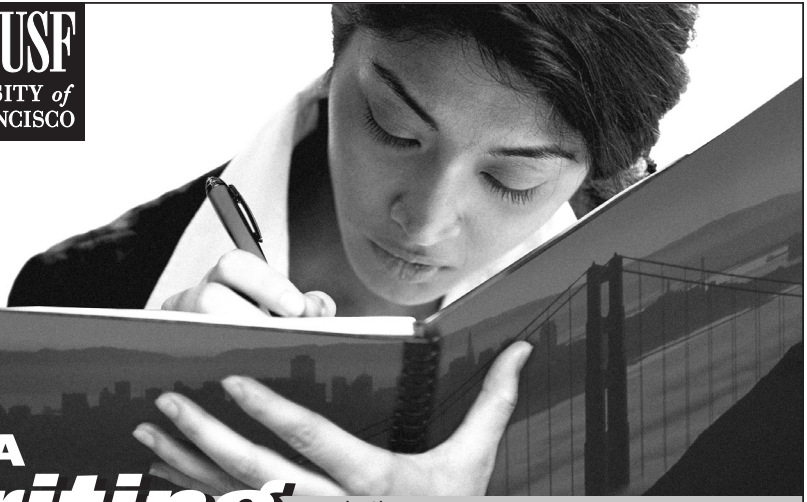
Scale is immanent to the poems of Laura Solomon. In her second book, *Blue and Red Things*, it is intimate, human, and sensual. Everything happens as it hits you: the grain of sand, the heat of sun, the hum of light. This book locates Solomon in the tradition of alchemical poets. As she states in the last lines of "First Banshee," the book's first poem: "to turn water into anything / but ice is a miracle." Like, for instance, a word. Miraculous transformations do indeed follow for things of all colors in this book, but


Solomon moves past their primary transformation into words by utilizing the further arts of the synesthete, who teaches us "our senses are no longer / separate rooms." Sun doesn't only bring warmth to these poems, but becomes a sound that shakes in and out of the body. She writes: "A grain of sand said / breathe the sound the sun makes." One's haptic congress with the world through texture becomes a way of hearing its things as they make the journey to words. As you can see/hear from the above fragment, Solomon is minutely engaged by the small transformations (sand/said) that allow larger miracles to occur.

In the first of two long poems in the book, "Notes to the Music," she nearly condenses this process to a single aphorism: "think of the words of the poem / as notes to the music." As a musician, Solomon has her ear

very close to the skin of things, parsing what strange palpitations transpire in the realm of the everyday for their modicum of song. The finely tuned lines remind one that sound is quite literally a series of percussions, a texture of the world bashfully (or not) knocking against the eardrum's door.

But I began this consideration with an eye to scale. And however focused Solomon becomes on the world as phenomenological laboratory, she doesn't forget the cultural or personal aspects of intimacy. There is a shift in *Blue and Red Things* that comes toward the middle, where echoing back she laments: "would there were / enough water." For all the splendor and abundance offered by the world of sensation, there is a world of human relationships that's too often characterized by lack, or worse, need. In "My Mother's Irises are Blooming," she writes:





MFA

Writing

in the

Heart of

San Francisco

Please visit our new literary magazine, *Switchback*, at www.swback.com

visit: www.usfca.edu/mfaw

core faculty: ■ Stephen Beachy ■ David Booth
■ Catherine Brady ■ Lewis Buzbee ■ Lowell Cohn
■ Norma Cole ■ Lisa Harper ■ Aaron Shurin
■ Karl Soehnlein ■ Jane Anne Staw ■ David Vann

for a complete listing of all graduate programs at USF, visit: www.usfca.edu/graduate

- Fiction, poetry, and nonfiction concentrations
- All evening courses
- Two-year program culminating in a book-length work
- Small class size; individual instruction
- Teaching creative writing and TAs

call: 415-422-6066 email: mfaw@usfca.edu

Educating Minds and Hearts to Change the World

BOOK REVIEWS

People love other people
and do not know how to behave.
This morning I gave a man a quarter.
I could have given him a dollar but didn't.
The dog opened his mouth like a black flower.
Everyday it must be taken for a walk.
The children must be taken to school in car
seats.
People have children or don't.
A poet is not a terrorist on account of his
poems,
having been translated,
having appeared in Arabic newspapers.
He will ride the ferry alone.

This is the mode we find continued in the book's final section, a long poem titled "Letters by which Sisters Will Know Brothers" that first appeared as a chapbook from Katalanche Press. Elegiac, mournful, interrogatory, the poem maintains Solomon's crisp linguistic focus, but passes it through a stronger affective field. The apparent simplicity of earlier poems, which busied themselves with presence, is here complicated by a subject bearing witness to absence. Intimacy of this kind demands honesty, however unruly the responsibility of it becomes:

Is honesty so laudable if so why
Because it is right
no because it is
difficult

The process of mourning enacted by the poem seems to overwhelm the witness with absence and difficulty, so much so that by the end she craves "The clearest water conceivable." These are the words that end the book and its final act of alchemy. Grief, that wet, heavy debt of love, has been wrung clear again and returns to us as sustenance.

Chris Martin is the author of *American Music*, *Becoming Weather*, and *How to Write a Mistake-ist Poem*.

CHAPBOOK ROUNDUP

REVIEWS BY GINA MYERS

01. *Get the Fuck Back into That Burning Plane* Lawrence Giffin (Ugly Duckling Presse, 2008)

Set in a hostile environment where airspace is "streaked with war paint," *Get the Fuck Back into That Burning Plane* captures the United States in a precarious moment in history: the present. The poem opens with an epigraph from Ashbery: "There is nothing to do / For our liberation, except wait in the horror of it." In the poem that follows, we see many examples of the horror. A voice barks, "Sir! Ma'am! For the safety and security / of you and your family, / I need you to get the fuck / back into that burning plane," illuminating authority in all of its absurdity.

We're told urban housing has a secret mission "to restate the world / with a phenomenology of ADD, / to supplement its many sports / with rollerblades." But it isn't just authority figures and government agencies being critiqued here, it's the totality of contemporary culture, which has one commandment above all: "To thine cellphone be true." The speaker of the poem mocks self-centered materialists and pleads "Sign my guestbook":

When I am feeling not at all myself
I go into my house
where all my cool stuff is.
When I feel alive,
I am feeling you feeling me feeling
this rhythm.

Although largely sardonic, Giffin takes pleasure in childlike wordplay: "Life's a beach. Surfeit." He also has an ear for the musicality of language, which is sometimes subtle and sometimes overt: "I put the Prada in the Gucci, / the dada in Susan Lucci."

Like Ashbery, Giffin brings together high and low culture in a paratactic lyric, placing Daffy Duck firmly alongside Friedrich Hölderlin. The result seems to be what happens when we sit at computers all day, taking in a constant flow of information from political sites and celebrity gossip sites all while updating our Facebook statuses. What kind of meaning does life have in this world? Giffin posits, "Anyone needs a reason to live, / not least of all because there isn't one."

02. *Hole in Space* Suzanne Stein (OMG! 2009)

Titled after an installation by Kit Galloway and Sherrie Rabinowitz which allowed for people, pre-internet, to see each other and communicate with one another in real time while being on opposite coasts, Stein's own piece also has a bi-costal element. *Hole in Space* is a transcription of two performances, one at the Poetry Project at St. Mark's Church, the other two months later at Canessa Park in San Francisco.

At the Poetry Project, Stein speaks contemporaneously, which is something she admits to being uncomfortable with. The reading was recorded and transcribed, and she read the transcription at the Canessa Park reading. The two pieces collected in the chapbook read almost identically, with some variations in punctuation, some additional "uhs" and "ums," and an occasional mistake, accidentally saying "September 5th" in San Francisco, when it had been "November 5th" in New York.

There is a disjunctive quality to the pieces. In New York, there had been audience participation; however, the transcription only includes Stein's speech, so the reader winds up with fragments of the interaction. Preceded by silence, or white space, Stein asks, "Does it? . . . that's, um, that's a great question . . . does it, . . . for you?" which is then followed by more silence (here illustrated by several lines of ellipses). The disjunctiveness the reader experiences on the page was also experienced by the audience members in San Francisco, who sat in silence while Stein

BOOK REVIEWS

responded to questions and comments that were never asked. (You can hear the recording of this reading online at A Voice Box.)

The performance seems to be an experiment in discomfort; Stein's own discomfort of speaking extemporaneously carries over to the audience and to the reader. Also at the heart of this performance lies communication—having interaction with the audience, allowing them to interrupt and ask questions, and reading questions that an audience asked at a different reading. What seems to be drawn into question is the limitations of text. When in person, the audience may interact with the performer or author; but when reading a text, the audience may only engage the print on the page, may only work with what the author has decided to give them.

03. *Recently Clouds*

Jess Mynes & Aaron Tieger
(Petrichord, 2009)

A follow-up to *Coltsfoot Insularity*, Mynes and Tieger have come together again for another collaboration. Although in form the poems within *Recently Clouds* are similar to *Coltsfoot Insularity*, their subject matter and tone are a bit of a departure. In these tight lyric poems, the poets are more crude and perhaps more playful, though they still capture beauty in stunning images.

The chapbook consists of a number of poems, some titled, some untitled, which blurs the distinction between where one poem ends and another begins. Many of the poems read like a daily journal, recording each day's events and emotions—for example, the opening poem "each day drive" begins:

stand of pines
thrust edges
back nine

End Daytime Headlight Use

EZ Mart

School SLOW Zone

April flowers
May buds

near to
year

now what

The oddest poem in the collection is "tabloid titles," which lists headlines (whether real or invented is unclear). Some examples: "Mom Chops Off Baby's Arm to Feed Dog," "Downfall of a Cock-Teaser: She Played with the Wrong One," and "Itching Powder in Condom Catches Cheating Wife." The sort of humor and language found in this poem surfaces in others, which creates an interesting juxtaposition with the nature imagery that exists throughout. There is a poem addressed to "my sweet Satan," and mention of Elvis glasses, a Van Halen t-shirt, a blow job joke, and baseball scores.

Throughout the collection, there is a strong sense of musicality, and there are some moments where the details listed play entirely to this effect as in "as can be":

daisy placemat birds
pogo hopscotch
scattered seed peck
peck backhouse

Wurlitzer wheeze whir

Overall, it is a fun collection and hopefully not the last collaboration we'll see between these two poets.

Gina Myers is the author of *A Model Year* (Cocunut Books 2009).

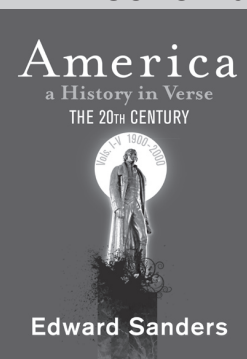
*Where Shadows Will:
Selected Poems (1988–2008)*
(City Lights Books, 2009)

Natural Light
(Libellum, 2009)
Norma Cole

REVIEW BY CHRIS MCCREARY

Where Shadows Will, the first in the new City Lights Spotlight Poetry Series, is, in a sense, a small book, only slightly larger than the press's famed "Pocket Poets" series. That said, this 106-page volume is not a Selected Poems defined as some are—by what has been left out—but by its compelling, coherent slice of Cole's oeuvre. Spanning 20 years, *Shadows* gives between 10 and 20 pages each to nine volumes of Cole's previous work; arranged chronologically to end with selections from 2009's *Natural Light*, *Shadows* demonstrates the continuity to her efforts from poem to poem, book to book, year to year. Her tendency to write shorter poems that comprise parts of a longer series makes for handy excerpting: *Spinoza's*

ANNOUNCING THE PUBLICATION OF ED SANDERS'



America
a History in Verse
THE 20TH CENTURY
Edward Sanders

America

a History in Verse, The 20th Century

5 volumes in pdf on one CD, each volume fully indexed. 2,000+ pages of text!

\$24.95 Available right now!

+\$3 postage & handling
Order from Blake Route Press,
Box 729 Woodstock, NY 12498

Americahistoryinverse.com

From the dawn of the century all the way through the stolen election of 2000!

BOOK REVIEWS

"Artificial Memory" series and *Moir*a's "Memory Shack" allegories are well represented, for instance, whereas *Moir*a's long poem "Rosetta" is not excerpted. That said, *Spinoza*'s title poem is successfully winnowed down to a two-page representative slice from its 30-plus pages.

Cole's work has always engaged the possibilities of the lyric, but at the same time she is more than willing to stray from even its loosest strictures: some of the most memorable pieces in *Shadows* are written in prose form, and the idea of a lyric "I" becomes particularly slippery along the way. In an interview with Robin Tremblay-McGaw, Cole suggested that her writing will inevitably be "layered, sutured written experience" that reflects the complexities of life itself, and the concept of suturing—of stitching together, often with the purpose of repairing a wound—is perhaps clearest in her prose poems. In "The Olympics Is All In Your Mind," a multi-section prose piece originally from *Do The Monkey*, unnamed characters attempt to merge ("A young man placed his hands on my head, along the sides of my head and said come back in six days. I said I couldn't, or thought I couldn't. He thought, come back when you can."), yet the relationships of the unnamed men and women within the piece remain unclear, and the relationship of settings and events in the various sections is never allowed to crystallize. Why is the sheet music scattered about left unfinished, the modern-day Olympics ("Nothing like the corporate sports events of today but rather more like an imagination...") never moving past the planning stage? There's a tension between the events that always seem to float just at the periphery of the poem versus the distance created by the sentences themselves, which seems designed to intellectualize these moments instead of providing the reader with a more visceral experience of them.

Cole not only sutures together moments of experience but juxtaposes language from different registers: "In Memoriam Jacques Derrida" begins with the colloquial and hilarious "Monkeys?! Are they all / monkeys? / Tired monkeys." *Natural Light*'s section entitled "Collective Memory" moves from runs heavy on wordplay ("physical / physicist / metaphysical physicist [string theorist]) to a definition of the sonata: "a musical composition in contrasted movement." Indeed,

Natural Light is as willing as Cole's earlier work to engage in quotation (attributed and unattributed) and collage, all of which serves to call into question the poet's "voice" once again: "'I' 'sing' of unnatural arms."

In a statement for the Foundation for Contemporary Arts, Cole wrote that, "I am always in a present moment that consists of and insists upon looking forwards and backwards at the same time." "The idea of stretching time is in the form," she has written, and in "Dear Robert," a piece addressed to the memory of friend and mentor Robert Duncan, she writes, "There is / always a 'before the war,' isn't / there? Some war. Another war." Similarly, *Natural Light*'s "Leaving the Gardens of Eternity" highlights humanity's "History of Violence" (the title of another poem in the collection) by juxtaposing Congolese soldiers with the image of a man beating a horse, yet the poem also invites you, the reader, to "sit at the table / and watch—hello stranger—." *Natural Light* crystallizes questions from throughout Cole's career: to what extent is personal experience shared or universal, and what, exactly, is our "backyard," anyway? Ancient Egypt? The modern-day Congo? The entire solar system? "Come up now onto the roof of my mouth and see this / shadow that has driven people mad," she wrote in an earlier poem, and this invitation to explore the darkness is a hallmark of her work. "All maps are false starts," she states, and yet Cole's refusal to provide easy answers is exactly the sort of map we need on our collective quest for meaning.

Chris McCreary lives and writes in Philadelphia.

Exilée and Temp Morts:

Selected Works

Theresa Hak Kyung Cha

Ed. Constance M. Lewallen

(University of California Press, 2009)

REVIEW BY STEPHEN MOTIKA

Since Theresa Hak Kyung Cha's tragic death in November 1982 at age 31, her work and reputation have grown in visibility and stature. Her book *Dictée*, published in the month of her murder, has emerged as a central text

in contemporary poetics, Asian-American studies, and for mixed-media practitioners, since its reissue by Third Woman Press in 1995. An impressive number of writers, including Elaine H. Kim, Lisa Lowe, and Juliana Spahr, have written now classic essays, appraising its merits.

Dictée demands that we work hard—read carefully, tread diligently—as we make our way forward in our thinking about form and content, language and history. Although it plays with language, it is not a playful book, but a serious one, investigating both the personal and political aspects of Cha's own Korean-American experience in the context of major female figures ranging from Joan of Arc to the Korean revolutionary Yu Guan Soon and Cha's mother. The English-language text is sprinkled with French and interspersed with uncaptioned photographs, diagrams, and reproductions of handwritten scrawls. It's a book you want to pull apart and piece back together in order to figure out how Cha made it.

Now, 27 years after her death, a new collection, *Exilée and Temps Morts: Selected Works* (University of California Press), has appeared, bringing together a diverse assortment of Cha's writing, of which only a few have previously appeared in book form. It's exciting to see the developing artist at work, to read from her journals and notes, but also from her shorter work that's more playful and immediate than *Dictée*. Indeed, much of this work comes out of her student years at Berkeley, where she entered as an undergraduate in 1968 and proceeded to earn two BA degrees (in comparative literature and art), an MA degree in art history, and an MFA in art practice, over the course of a decade.

Exilée and Temps Morts is edited by Constance M. Lewallen, the curator of a Cha retrospective, "The Dream of the Audience," which traveled to various museums from 2001 to 2003. Lewallen has broken the book into five sections that showcase the range of Cha's literary output. Although she lived in Northern California during the years Language writing flourished, Cha took her inspiration from French literature, performance art, and film. Her best work employs an eco-

BOOK REVIEWS

nomical use of language, in which words are always something physical that need to be manipulated and reshaped.

"Temp Morts" describes objects and experiences, including humorous takes on the calendar, food, weather, and language primers: "see see see / jane see / dick see / spot see". The piece "i have time" incorporates a diary-like record of life in Paris (where she was an exchange student for a year) and her reflections on language, desire, and the meaning of life. The piece closes with the line, "i have no other occupation, than to remember," a statement that certainly foreshadows *Dictee* and "White Dust from Mongolia," a film she hoped to shoot in South Korea with her brother but was unable to because of the Kwangju uprising and political unrest in spring of 1980. There are notes, journal entries, storyboard drawings, and film stills from this project included in *Exilée and Temps Morts*.

Most of Cha's pieces were created with the intention of being performed, installed, photographed, or projected—physicalized in some way. The book opens with a text version of a mail-art piece, "audience distant relative," in which Cha mailed out separately seven, folded, printed pieces of card stock. The work is a call and response, featuring short phrases on one side (verso in the new book) with a longer piece on the other (recto). "between delivery" stands across from "from the very moment any voice is conceived whether / physically realized or not / manifested or not / to the very moment (if & when) delivered." These short pieces lay out the terms and conditions of Cha's artistic practice, which is nestled in the space between speaking and silence, concept and art object, the written and performed. Other cards invoke the situation of transmission, the relationship between author and audience, such as "object/subject" and "echo." The piece is an evocative way to open the book and introduces many of the key concepts that define Cha's oeuvre.

A current exhibition at the Berkeley Art Museum (home to Cha's archives) entitled "Theresa Hak Kyung Cha: Earth," brings together several of her artist's books, along with films and photographs, in an investiga-

tion of the elemental nature of Cha's work. Many of the pieces demonstrate her signature play with language and textures, nothing more satisfying than "Repetitive Pattern" (1975), in which Cha cut sixty different-sized strips of white cloth, stenciled them with words and symbols in black ink, and sewed them to a piece of white fabric. The phrase "repetitive pattern" provides the border to her manipulation of the words "one an another." The groupings parade across the sheet, repeating in varied sizes and shapes so that the work engages in a physical languagescape of an elusive symbolic meaning. Little bars and semicircles reference Korean characters, the language of her childhood, reduced to small fragments in her American life. The piece, reproduced in the catalog *The Dream of the Audience*, but not in this new book, offers invaluable insights into how Cha's poetics and material practice interrelate.

There are several pieces in *Exilée and Temps Morts* reproduced in the manner Cha created them, including "Faire Part," in which she printed letters on 15 envelopes playing on the French word for "announcement." The rest of the texts in this new book have been freshly typeset and appear in a sans-serif typeface that carries no hint of the medium Cha used in creating them, nor trace of these pieces being created as a performance or visual presentation. In this new

book, the reader is told that most of Cha's writings have been reset "in the interest of clarity," and because the pieces are available online and by appointment at the Berkeley Art Museum. I think this notion of clarity is misapplied, and the act of resetting the texts removes an important part of the nature of Cha's work and changes the very way we read her texts. To lose the tension inherent in Cha's choice of inscription—whether typewriter, pen, camera or needle—limits the way we read the work. I laud Lewallen and her collaborators for producing this landmark book, but I only wish it embodied a little more of Cha's complicated and varied use of form and material.

Stephen Motika is the author of *Arrival and At Mono* (sona books, 2007) and the editor of *Tiresias: The Collected Poems of Leland Hickman* (Nightboat Books/Otis Books—Seismicity Editions, 2009).



Poets In Need is a non-profit organization providing emergency assistance to poets who have an established presence in the literary community as innovators in the field and a substantive body of published work. Assistance is given only in cases of current financial need that is in excess of and unrelated to the recipient's normal economic situation and that is the result of recent emergency (due, for example, to fire, flood, eviction, or a medical crisis).

Checks should be made payable
to Poets In Need and sent to

Poets In Need is a non-profit (501)(c)(3) organization.
Donations are tax-deductible.

Poets In Need
Post Office 5411
Berkeley, CA 94705

THE POETRY PROJECT

ST. MARK'S CHURCH IN-THE-BOWERY
131 EAST 10TH STREET
NEW YORK, NY 10003

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED
RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
NEW YORK, NY
PERMIT NO. 7021

JOIN NOW!

YES, I wish to become a member of The Poetry Project. Here is my membership gift of:

☐ \$50 ☐ \$95 ☐ \$150 ☐ \$275 ☐ \$500 ☒ \$1000

☐ NO, I do not wish to join at this time but here is my contribution of \$_____.

(For your gift of \$50 or more you'll receive a year's subscription to *The Poetry Project Newsletter*).

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

Make checks payable to The Poetry Project. Detach this page & mail to: THE POETRY PROJECT, c/o ST. MARK'S CHURCH, 131 EAST 10TH STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10003

YOUR GIFT ENTITLES YOU TO THESE MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP [\$50]

Discounted admission for a year to all regularly scheduled and special Poetry Project events.

A year's subscription to
The Poetry Project Newsletter.

Substantial savings on workshops
offered at the Project.

Priority discounted admission to all special events.

SUPPORTING MEMBERSHIP [\$95]

FREE admission to all regularly
scheduled Poetry Project events.

Plus all other benefits above.

SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP [\$150]

FREE admission to all regularly scheduled
Poetry Project events for you and a guest.

A free subscription to the Project's literary magazine.

Plus all other benefits above.

DONOR MEMBERSHIP [\$275]

All of the above! *PLUS*

FREE admission to designated special events, including
the annual New Year's Day Marathon Reading, featuring
over 130 poets and performers.

A copy of *The Basketball Diaries*, by author Jim Carroll.

BENEFACTOR MEMBERSHIP [\$500]

All of the Donor-level membership benefits! *PLUS*

All 2007–2008 Poetry Project publications.

A 25% discount on the purchase of a limited-edition
broadside: "If I don't hear from you again," AKA "The Vermont
Notebook Broadside," by John Ashbery & Joe Brainard, pub-
lished by the Project and Granary Books. 16 x 19, edition of
125, signed by Ashbery. Grateful public acknowledgment.

PATRON MEMBERSHIP [\$1000]

All of the Donor-level membership benefits! *PLUS*

All 2007–2008 Poetry Project publications.

A signed print of William S. Burroughs by Kate Simon.
Simon photographed WSB from 1975 until his death in
1997.

Grateful public acknowledgment.

NEW AND RECENTLY RENEWED MEMBERS: Dominick Arbolay, Michael Brownstein, Yvonne Jacqueline Burckhardt, Douglas Crase, Rackstraw Downes, Ulla Dydo, Richard Foreman & Kate Manheim, Jane Freilicher & Joe Hazan, Yukihide Maeshima Hartman & Susan Greene, Michael Heller & Jane Augustine, Robert Hershon & Donna Brook, Andrew Hoyem, Katherine Kolbert, Bill Kushner, Marc Nasdor, David C. Tinling, Diane Wakoski, Katharine B. Wolpe, Albert Onello, Joanna Fuhrman, Lisa Jarnot, Tony Hoffman, Evelyn Reilly, Wayne Koestenbaum, Martin Skoble, Terence Diggory, Mac Wellman, Robert I. Sutherland-Cohen, Lila Zemborain, Henry Abelove, Mary Ann O'Russa, Kiki Smith, John Lewin, Harvey Zuckerman, Michael E. Lindgren, Ann Stephenson, Peter Neufeld, Filip Marinovich, Tim Peterson, Phyllis Wat, Rodney Koeneke, Ann Evans, Barry Denny, Rita Stein-Grollman, Will Morris, Ryan Nowlin, Samuel Perry, Andrea Byrne, Claire Wilcox, Nolan Chessman, Joel Fried, Lisa Tubbs, Christine Woods, Linda Pasachnik, Risa Mandell, Douglas Piccinnini, Michael Delevante, Vanessa Mesner, Alison Akant, Zabet Patterson, Victoria Hudson, Jason Zuzga, Omar Silwany, Ana Marton, Michel Araujo, Tom Carroll, and Abraham Menashe (as of 11/02/09).