

THE POETRY PROJECT NEWSLETTER

No. 10

1 Dec. 1973

Bill Mac Kay, Editor
St. Mark's Church, 2nd Avenue
& Tenth St., New York 10003

Bertha, an opera by Ned Rorem based on Kenneth Koch's original play, premiered November 26 at Alice Tully Hall. Rorem played the opera on the piano, Koch narrated and Beverly Wolff, mezzo soprano, sang the title role.

Witnesses called the performance delightful.

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Response to the call for mss. for The World #29 has not yet been deafening. As announced, the issue will be devoted to reviews and commentary, with the emphasis on poetry. Anne Waldman edits the magazines and mss. should be submitted to her c/o The Project. The deadline is January 15, so scramble, kids, scramble.

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Ghost Dance 17 is out, a special issue which consists of A Cappella, a book of recent work by Bruce Andrews. One dollar from Hugh Fox, ATL (EBH), MSU, E. Lansing, Michigan 48823.

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Readings on the Poetry Project calendar include Lewis MacAdams (December 12) and Carolee Schneeman (December 19). Following a week Christmas recess, The Project resumes activity with a mammoth, marathon New Year's group reading on January 2, featuring (tentatively) poets who answer to the names Owen, Waldman, Plymell, Warsh, Ginsberg, Padgett, Mayer, Brownstein, Friedman, Elmslie, etc., etc. The group reading will begin at 8 p.m., half an hour before the regular starting time.

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The Saroyans, Aram & Galin, have just released onto the earth a baby named Cream. Their last issue is called Strawberry. Only Jesus knows what's next.

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With a sigh of relief, Morris Golde, President of the Frank O'Hara Foundation, has announced that the 1972 winner of the O'Hara Award has at last been published: John Koethe's elegant & pensive collection of poems, Domes, is available in hardcover (\$4.95) and paperback (\$1.95) editions. The O'Hara Foundation's contract with Columbia University has expired and the future of the Award is cloudy. In the meantime Golde is off on another of his voyages, this time to Mexico.

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On December 10, Paul Brown, Mike Mandel, and Jim Rader will be featured in the Monday night performance, beginning (as usual) at 8:15. The following week (December 17) Ed Friedman will conduct a special Christmas show. Among the scheduled readers are Ed Bowes, Jim Burton, Rhys Chatham, Garrett List, Bernadette Mayer, Nick Piombino, Peter Stamos, Patti Smith, and your Aunt Bertha. Of course, no performances will be held Christmas or New Year's Eve.

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Alice Notley's Incidentals in the Day World (Angel Hair Books, \$1.50), misnamed in the last Newsletter, deserved a better fate.

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The latest issue of Mulberry (#3) is devoted entirely to the work of Bill Zavatsky. Original poetry, translations, notebooks. One dollar at bookshops, or from Mulberry, 2070 Yale Station, New Haven, Conn. 06520.

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Forthcoming soon from Sumac Press is Jim Harrison's Letters to Yessenin. "My work in progress, Food Poems," Harrison writes, "will only be distributed through grocery and booze stores in hopes to drive a zircon wedge into commercial publishing's ancient dark heart."

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The William Burroughs Archives are up for sale.

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Gallimaufry #2 is printed in San Francisco, costs fifty inflation cents, and includes contributions by Walter Lowenfels, Hilton Obenzinger, Opal Nations and dozens of unknowns. Would-be subscribers might send \$2.50 for four issues to Gallimaufry Literary Journal, 359 Frederick St., San Francisco, California 94117.

Trevor Winkfield, talented young English artist, poet, translator, editor, and wit, will arrive in New York in early February for a six month stay. People with apartments to sublet for that period, or with offers of part-time work, should contact Winkfield c/o The Project. References. Winkfield's tour de force translation of Roussel's "How I Wrote Certain of My Books" appeared in The World #27. He will read at St. Mark's February 20, with Kenward Elmslie.

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Mark Strand selected and translated the poems in Rafael Alberti's The Owl's Insomnia (Atheneum, \$4.95). Meticulous, yet lively. Skeptics & polygots will be pleased to hear that the book is bilingual.

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Grey Fox Press of Bolinas follows up its publication of Lew Welch's Collected Poems with his How I Work As A Poet & Other Essays, Plays, Stories (\$2.95) and Trip Trap: Haiku Along the Road from San Francisco to New York 1959 (\$2.00). The latter work also includes poems by Jack Kerouac and Albert Saijo.

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Adventures in Poetry's latest are Maureen Owen's Country Rush (with drawings by Yvonne Jacquette), Fielding Dawson's The Girl with the Pale Cerulean Eyes/the Man with the Grey Hair and a collection of poems by Hilton Obenzinger, Bright Lights! Big City! One fifty each from Adventures, 437 E. 12, New York, N.Y. 10009.

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There seems to be an Edwin Denby renaissance afoot, or something. For instance, Z Press has sumptuously packaged Miltie is a Hackie, a libretto by Mr. Denby with movie stills by Rudy Burckhardt. Angel Hair/Adventures in Poetry offer Snoring in New York, sonnets & an elegy, with a Burckhardt cover. Looking at the Dance and Dancers, Buildings and People in the Street, long out-of-print classics, have been reissued as paperbacks by Curtis Books (\$1.50), as has Scream in a Cave (formerly Mrs. W's Last Sandwich). Finally, E.D. has been hard at work providing material for the aforementioned "The Life and Times of Joseph Stalin".

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The Book of Joanna (Sand Dollar, Berkeley, \$2.25) by Michael McClure is as pretty a little book as anyone will ever see.

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Incidentally, St. Mark's Theatre Genesis will present three one-act McClure plays, December 20-January 13: The Pussy, The Button, and Chekov's Grandmother. After December 16, reservations may be made by phoning 533-4650 (Wed.-Sun. 3-7 p.m.).

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On November 21, the Poetry Project held a group reading in honor of Jim Brodey's no-show. When the transplanted Californian did not appear, poets in the audience paraded one-by-one to the microphone, reading mss. scarcely finished, books just published. Among those improvising were Charles North, Paul Violi (reading from his pleasing In Baltic Circles), David Rosenberg (reciting from his Some Psalms), Larry Fagin (who unmasked some of the poets in the Anonymous issue of Adventures in Poetry) and Ron Padgett (who offered excerpts from a not-yet-published Harry Mathews novel). Ralston Farina, of course, served as master-of-ceremonies.

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References merely to the duration of Robert Wilson's "The Life and Times of Joseph Stalin", or to its immense cast, do it no justice. The seven act opera/dance, which opens December 14 at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, engulfs one with its movement and imagery. Dusk-to-dawn dreamy-eyed watching. & thirty-two dancing ostriches, to boot. See The Times for details, and buy your tickets early.

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Dick Higgins has officially left Something Else Press (P.O. Box 26, West Glover, Vermont 05875). To Jan Herman and George Mattingly has fallen the burdens of an outfit "too big to be small & too small to be operating the way we are".

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The Ant's Forefoot #11 is disguised as David Rosenberg's The Necessity of Poetry (Coach House Press, \$5.00). The book is embellished with illustrations by Rudy Burckhardt, Hannah Wilke, Kenward Elmslie, Anne Waldman, George Schneeman, Jim Lang, Jim Dine, Ron Padgett, Tom Clark, Diana Molinari and Rosenberg himself. The Coach House Press is at 401 (rear) Huron Street, Toronto M5S 2G5 Ontario, Canada.

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Due any day from Black Sparrow Press (P.O. Box 25603, Los Angeles, California 90025) is Fielding Dawson's The Sun Rises Into the Sky. This collection of stories, by the way, includes four Dawson wrote as a student at Black Mountain. Four dollars.

Out of This World, John Perreault's one-shot magazine, has offerings by Carter Ratcliff, Joseph Ceravolo, John Giorno, Jack Anderson, Ira Joel Haber (who also did the cover), Charles Haseloff, Gerritt Henry, Alex Gildzen, Mona DaVinci (??) and the editor. A dollar fifty from ;your local book and magazine vender, or c/o The Poetry Project.

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Barry Alpert's Vort #3 is a David Bromige/Ken Irby number with poetry, criticism, tributes, interviews. Vort #4, due early next month, will be a Fielding Dawson/Jonathan Williams number with much the same format. Two dollars. c/o Alpert, 1708 Tilton Drive, Silver Spring, Md. 20902.

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Rumors say that Maxine Groffsky has resigned & that The Paris Review is finished, with this issue (#56) the last. We do know that Tom Clark has been playing basketball in Bolinas as though he suspected pro scouts were watching.

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We just don't understand. At the Poetry Project, we've been taping things for years & have never had that many problems.

Out on a Limb

Would you go out
on a limb for a friend?
Crawl out there among the leaves and branches,
swaying in the breeze
with sunlight dappled leaves
across your physiognomy,
And would you stay there
Long up in the air
As night set in and the stars,
Would you stay there long?
And would you saw the limb
You're sitting on? And fall?
And what would you do
when you got up off the ground?

-- R.W. Padgett

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TO _____

First Class Mail