

TRACE

LIVING LITERATURE

PROBINGS OF NOW
Diverse Views on Many Arts:

61

ISSUE

Summer

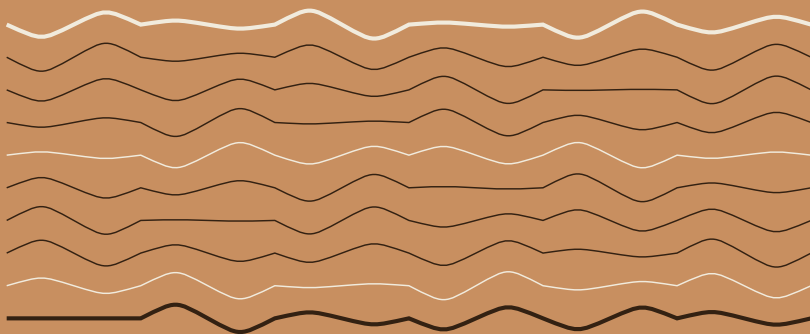
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JAMES BOYER MAY / EDITOR



TRACE

No. 61

Living Literature

Essays & Articles · Poetry · Reviews

Summer 1966

Edited by JAMES BOYER MAY

A CLEAN READING EDITION

Advertisements, subscription promotions, the front cover and blank leaves have been omitted. The poetry, fiction, essays, correspondence and reviews of the issue are given in full, in the order in which they are printed.

Where a poet uses the space of the page — indented lines, hanging steps, gaps within a line — that spacing is treated as part of the poem and kept as closely as a proportional typeface allows. Square brackets enclose conjectural readings where the scan is faded. Original spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing and verse lineation are kept.

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by J. T. McIntire

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TOWARDS PRINT (DO MAGAZINES CULTURE [?] *)

by Rajat Neogy

I AM TAKING FOR GRANTED that the need and importance of magazines in any society is readily assumed and agreed, if only for the 'visibility' and 'exhibition' factors. At least the literary magazines are organs of public relations at national and international level, in cultural and social matters. It is a fairly good rule to judge the activity and alertness of a society's culture by the number and variety of journals and magazines it supports. The more publications in any area, the better and healthier it is.

All growth is a result of freedom. A culture grows or is restricted depending largely on how hospitable it is to ideas from outside, or how freely it delves into itself, renovating traditional insights into a contemporary diction. A culture is also a state where there is constant and often unrelated activity: dynamism and culture are two words often paired together, and are a measure of the health and growth of a culture. To illustrate this, one could perhaps divide cultures into two categories: do-cultures and don't-cultures.

Where does the literary magazine enter into this? At its simplest, there is one elementary guide to the role of such a magazine: does it reflect, through its pages, what is really happening or not happening (this latter is sometimes more important) in a country or continent? True cultural activity is a subterranean process with the main activity below the visible surface. A literary magazine in this sense must plumb those depths, cast its net deep and wide, and then exhibit the net with its writhing catch to the world outside. The magazine, like a good fisherman, must know where to cast its net. But this is only one function of a magazine — as an

exhibitor. There are much more important ones.

Magazines, like culture, are do or don't magazines; they are progressive, conservative, radical, puritanical, slowmoving or vigorous. At their most aware, they reflect the qualities or weaknesses of their societies; at their blindest, they are showcases for the imbecilities of their editors. One cannot ever remove the personal factor when discussing magazines. They are physically and finally the products of their editors. There are very few other activities (excluding film making) which involve the collaboration of so many diverse talents, but in which the success or failure of the end-product can be laid at one door: the editor's. Given this vulnerability that magazines must suffer from, the 'human weakness' factor, what guide-lines can we chart for their safe and useful journey?

** By permission of Mr. Neogy, editor of the Uganda literary magazine, TRANSITION (see Chronicle) where an article of this title appeared this spring.*

First, in what way should the editorial criteria be established? Editorial definitions fall into two categories: (i) those involving editorial administration, covering such things as language to be used (area of communications), geographical area of readership (to determine physical location, distribution, etc.), immediate purposes of the magazine ('to promote African business interests in East Africa,' or 'to encourage young writers,' or 'to provide a forum for discussion of cultural matters'); and (ii) editorial metaphysics, which covers the ultimate field of operations and philosophical assumptions made. An editorial-metaphysics decision would be one that produced a continental African outlook instead of a Pan-African one: the one involving an implicit coverage of everything that happened in countries in Africa, the other motivated by the dynamism of the ideal of Pan-Africanism in 'selecting' its coverage. Such differences might appear to be unnecessary

hair-splitting, but I don't think they are. In the final analysis, when we are all dead and gone, they will make the difference for those who come to inter the bones of our cultures, to differentiate between a 'political' reality and a true one.

In what way should editorial neutrality assert itself? One function of the magazine is to be a mirror to its society. It is important that there are no distortions on the reflecting surface. On the other hand, nothing could be worse than a passive editorial policy that printed whatever came by 'because it is a true reflection of' a state of affairs — usually the writer's inability to write. Taken to an extreme, editorial passiveness of this kind would mean that the editor would only print material that was sent to him, because this was more 'natural' than going out and forcing people to write. Editorial neutrality is perhaps best expressed as aggressive nonprejudice: a willingness to see all factions of an argument and a disciplined permissiveness that allows proponents to reach the limits of their arguments or points of view. An editor should be neutral, but not a neuter. His acceptance of repugnant views must be determined by his ability to reply to them, and not because someone said: 'Always look at both sides of the story.'

Unless writers and readers sense this atmosphere of 'aggressive nonprejudice,' they will not be tempted to be provocative or even just plain naughty; and the kind of humour that accompanies such exaggerations of sensibilities will be markedly missing. More important, what might creep into the magazine's columns is a tone of gentlemaness, sinister and syrupy, where everyone is quietly patting everyone else on the back. When this happens, the editor might as well shut up shop. And if it is not specifically the editor's fault for this state of affairs, it is indicative that the culture of that particular society is now disabled, a clutch of cripples supporting one another.

Neutrality of the kind just described also implies independence. The literary magazine is the one place where politicians need not be neurotic about their public images, and can feel free to discuss soberly and with honesty their beliefs, doctrines, and motivations. The great advantage of such a magazine is that it is never 'public' in the newspaper sense, that it is essentially aimed at thinking people, and that it is uninvolved in the commercial processes and tensions that go to make newspaper headlines. This is an area where the editor must be prepared to initiate (and sometimes defend) unpopular views or views that run contrary to the public (or governmental) feeling at the time, if he believes those views to be of major importance. If the editor feels insecure whenever the words 'intellectual' or 'culture' are thrown carelessly around by politicians, if he is defensive about his function and forever apologising for his role, then of course it follows that his efforts here will be practically worthless and he will soon find himself in the role of a government hack. This is very definitely an area where the worthiness of a magazine will be defined by its do or don't quotient.

From neutrality to continuity. How does a magazine continue from one issue to another? Does it start all afresh with a new issue or carry strands from arguments raised in previous ones? Both. One of the functions of an alert editor is to have the ability to catch the tail of side-ideas and develop them. Side-ideas are ideas dropped inadvertently from the body of another, major, pursuit, which sometimes have enough germs in them to be developed and built up into something quite new and independent of their host. A writer about to embark on an article sets himself limitations, and deliberately needs to blind himself to the trailing issues that his main argument leaves. His blindness has the useful function of sometimes being to new ideas what blood is to parasites. Side-ideas are 'just-born' in a fit of

thoughtlessness, and the editor should here function like the obstetrician, if he thinks it a worthwhile gamble. Ideally, therefore, a well-edited magazine should, like sour milk, be capable of perpetuating itself. One issue should have enough germs to be capable of generating another.

From continuity to permanence. Literary magazines have a responsibility to record what has previously gone unnoticed, to print what was previously only spoken. They therefore have the dual role of conservers as well as initiators in the cultural context of the countries in which they operate. When a literary magazine begins to become predictable in its views or the selection of writers — when, in fact, it becomes a house organ for a stable of chosen writers to the exclusion of others, it has reached its middle age and will cease to attract the vitalities of youthful writers and creators. They will begin to look elsewhere or start magazines of their own which will reflect their tempo and mores more accurately. In discussing specifically what a literary magazine should be, I have taken a roundabout route of showing how and where it plays its role in developing a culture. Since the main cultural movements of a society are submerged and not visible from the surface, it follows that both observers and participants of that culture are also unable to see the full nature and range of that activity. A good literary magazine is like a blind man's stick. It helps them feel the way. It can do this best if it is a do magazine in a do society; it can do it less well but perhaps more significantly, if it is a do magazine in a don't society. But the ultimate purpose of a literary magazine will always be to herald change, to forecast what new turn its culture and the society it represents is about to take. It will do this by sometimes allowing prejudice and temporary obsessions to be aired, by being permissive to radical innovations, and by raising these curtains at the right cue, to demonstrate the uniqueness and universality of a true culture.

ACT OF CREATION

A man in a room, at a desk,
arranges all divinity
in limits, as if the objects
of his sense of some-
thing lost lay there
at that intended place,
precisely where his mind
had sought them out
and, finding them
as fugitive and pale
as he, removed them
from the world he could not see.

Laurence A. Goldstein

THE NOVEL: WHERE IS IT?

(An Enquiry by The Editor)

THE CENTURY'S SIXTH DECADE obviously exhibits no outstanding novelists—for chance instances—in the traditions of Arnold Bennett in England or Sinclair Lewis in the U.S.A. And sales long since have fallen below bestseller records of the recent past. It's also obvious that the form has shrunk in significance, that Sixties' novels have not borne the cultural and social potencies of those by a Fitzgerald, a Dreiser, or of earlier works by Dos Passos and Steinbeck. Yet, many of today's novels are 'successful' in that they only too faithfully record and reflect the interests, the attitudes, the nonconvictions, the pace and (dis)temper of the time. Doing so, they fulfill the primary conserving function of literature.

It is rather superficial to say, as John W. Aldridge does in *TIME TO MURDER AND CREATE* (DAVID McKAY Co. Inc.—\$5.50), that the novel's loss of appeal is attributable to the fact that rapidity of transportation and the TV have given the masses direct experience of more of the 'real' world, reducing their need for vicarious extension through fiction. He also stresses in a subsidiary way the increased percentage of novels limited in audience because written for an intellectual minority. And then he puts the cart before the horse by suggesting that writers are driven (to gain sales) to loading books with sensational narrations of sadism and other sexual perversions, and even so-called hard-core pornography. But, as for sex literature, these traditions have long existed, less pervasively in the past: not until social developments of very recent years have more than fractional minorities of Western people been enacting in their own lives such actualities for the artist's 'reflection.' Furthermore, the

masses always have been avid for what dealt with sex, and neither have they been deterred from buying books with complex intellectual approaches to the luring subject. So it can't correctly be argued on the one hand that sexualism in serious novels is chiefly motivated by commercialism while contending that sales are reduced by highbrow presentations, and on the other hand that enlargement of people's experience by easy mobility and TV makes them poor novel customers.

The more probable truth is that bigger majorities of populations, including many more authors, simply are less awaraly analytical of profounder elements, and that authors are unequipped to produce fiction of broad moral interest commensurate with the accelerated expansion of man's scientific and other material activities. Inter-individual relations have become unprecedentedly subordinated to material activities, notwithstanding the popularity (still restricted to somewhat sophisticated persons) of works in the social sciences and especially in psychology. Writers of fiction also are enmeshed in the bewildering and nerve-trying milieu. How can any number of them (or perhaps any one of them) maintain breadth of vision through the period of time needed for assimilation and digestion of such a huge panorama?

In this connection, publishers persistently reject late-blooming works by older writers who, though maybe little published in earlier years, might have accumulated sufficient experience to produce novels which could become major in the comprehensive cultural sense. Publishers, also shrunken in cultural importance, have concentrated attention upon 'original' stylistics and slighter attitudes of younger writers; it is common knowledge that dozens of authors of prominence dating back over twenty years are rejected just because they are older and their methods and styles no longer new or startling.

Returning to the possible underlying answer — and before looking closely at a few English-language novels current in the U.S., England, Canada, and Mexico — the Existentialistic stance seems to have a good deal to do both with weaknesses in novel theses and with questionable views of critics. This is not to attack Existentialism, but to say that certain elements of its thought have resulted in too far a swing toward regarding what (predeterminedly or accidentally?) happens in the world as predominantly — even altogether — what makes human beings whatever they may be. Fewer and fewer thinkers appear willing to concede much — or any — weight to individuals initiative and choice. This is aptly illustrated by the argument of a new Charles Child Walcutt book, *MAN'S CHANGING MASK — Modes and Methods of Characterization in Fiction* (UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA Press — \$6.75): that plots do not evolve out of the characters an author creates, but that the plots 'make' the characters.

Maybe Walcutt — not, himself, a fictionist — is in part led to his contrary idea by the parallel of striving toward the ideal critical starting point of passive receptivity; however, he should also then grant more cognizance to those constituents which prevent critics from achieving that neutral beginning, their own individual attitudes and inclinations. Of course, patterns of personal intentions and consequent reactions stem partly from prior experiences which rose from those of other individuals who, in turn, derived them from others; yet, purposed endeavors — whether in criticism or in activities of any other sort — cannot satisfactorily be explained away in terms of mere 'mechanical' repercussions of events. Nor is Walcutt logically convincing when, conversely, he would persuade us — for an instance — that the deficiency in John O'Hara's *FROM THE TERRACE* results from failure to provide action for characters drawn in time-depth. May it not be that the well-drawn characters lack qualities to move significantly? But this book

otherwise offers stimulating and frequently-original insights — lucid, and never dense or boring.

For his literary creative argument, Walcutt has chosen for analysis writers particularly favorable to his thesis: Shakespeare, who worked with history and already-plotted stories; rather abstract and moralistic thinkers such as Jane Austen, Herman Melville, Joseph Conrad, Katherine Anne Porter, Henry James; and Mark Twain, who brought his people to being out of familiar backgrounds and semi-historical narrations. William Faulkner might be plausibly treated in the same manner. However, we have enough letters and autobiographies to establish that a near-majority of authors have first created characters and then allowed them to influence and create plots. Even the contemporary writers about to be examined, heavily indoctrinated by Existentialism (as is everyone, today), seem to have used this method to marked degrees. The conclusion should be that both factors are involved — the aims of individuals, and circumstances beyond their control — both in real life and in the make-believe life of story.

Older in years than other novelists here, Thomas Bledsoe supplies a less definitive example for our thesis in *MEANWHILE BACK AT THE HENHOUSE* (ALAN SWALLOW — \$3.95) than do those to follow. He is one of the late-blooming authors influenced to an extent by his juniors, and possibly — though none but he can know for certain — led to overstress the nakedly erotic and to overuse vulgarities of speech for added ‘interest.’ In short, he himself may in this aspect in some measure be a demonstration of what’s happening to the novel. In years past, when he was an outstanding young editor, his choices of mss. had a share in encouraging the trends we’ve witnessed.

Typical in being tightly well-written, though not stylistically distinctive, Bledsoe’s book attends strictly to the unfolding of synopsized thoughts of the principals and the

forwarding of action mainly through excellent dialogue. The participants are convincingly drawn, including those with minor parts. The 'opposition' forces, personalized by the wife and business associates of the male principal, are governed by traditions and events; but the positive characters more or less successfully break with their pasts and are not altogether helplessly moved, as in the typical Existentialistic novel. The book's protest is as much personal as socially-aware in castigations of a passing South, and a dissolving social caste system and the now less-sacred marriage and familial ideal.

Curiously, Bledsoe uses a contradictory F. Scott Fitzgerald quotation on the dedication page: 'It grows harder to write, because there is much less weather than when I was a boy and practically no men and women at all.' This must be indicative of his current subjective state: one of feeling that character at large is in decline? Perhaps this is true; but proof calls for personae involved at higher and more representative levels, performing on broader stages than the bed(s) and a somewhat stereotyped small Southern city. Or, that the actors be of deeper awareness and larger breadth of purpose. The action, limited to the excesses of sex and drink and to the operations of a corporation to aid the blind (the 'Hemhouse') — much of it fatally prefigured — does not comprise enough meaningful counterpoint to weight the dénouement of frustration and death, to form a great tragedy. The 'reflection' is certainly valid, meeting the function of the novel; yet it is restricted by the choices of characters, and it is less valuable because the Southern background already has been depicted by too many others. This criticism, to be sure, does not hold for the unusual material concerning the institute for the blind; however, the issues introduced by the battle for 'Hemhouse' reform are mixed with others (chiefly sexual) and only partly resolved.

Another book from a small house, *OLD MAMMA* by Louella Booth (*FIDDLEHEAD* — \$3.50 & \$2.) indicates deterioration of disciplined restraint and social responsibility to be as manifest in Canada as in the southern U.S. Miss Booth provides very similar ‘reflections’ of decadence with greater verbal originality than Bledsoe, if with far less literary skill. This is more an enlarged family sketch than a story. Characters are created in depth; but what plot there is may be fictionization from actual life in an untypical household.

The number of conflicts — at least two altered by little-prepared acts of sheer will in two of the many actors — weakens the whole: sexual dilemma; racial problem; socio-political difference; psychosis vs. adjustment; and change vs. tradition, in several areas. Intro-pective comment on these through the consciousness of Old Mamma, who is maternally involved in each at first remove, does not successfully join the strands. Mamma’s personal problem is that of growing old (for which there can be no resolution), and the other questions remain scarcely answered as the book rather ineptly and abruptly closes. The reader is left with an ‘unfinished’ feeling — another evidence, of course, of the influence of Existentialistic thought.

Value in Miss Booth’s work cannot be denied. Yet, this is limited to insights of modern Canadian life; and decisions and actions are not well supported by the writing. As a final observation — recalling Aldridge’s contention — the semi-oblique depictions of intricacies of milieu provide vicarious extensions of experience that no fast travel could overtake and which no TV program would permit.

The value in Allen Greenberg’s outrightly-surrealistic *THE SMALL WAVES* (*EL CORNO EMPLUMADO* — \$1.50) seems to lie solely in the appropriateness of referring to it as an illustration of far retreat from the challenges of the world’s augmenting complexities and of the sort of thing causing many to declare that the novel’s condition demands extreme

unction. Ensuing an intimate dedication, Greenberg uses words of Sartre: 'I make a rendezvous with myself down there in the future, but I do not know who will turn up to keep the appointment.' This, he scarcely justifies when his character fails to exhibit dramatically-significant or -basic transmutations.

The typical dream state being one of helplessness, there's full justification for the sick inadequacy of a character within whose awareness the 'narration' drifts. But word-after-word perusal does not reveal ('reflect') much beyond a subjective nightmare negation. This limits the book's doubtful service to presentation of something comparable to an overlengthy succession of jumbled notes of a patient in a psychiatric ward.

Greenberg attempts, through interminable lardings of repetitious, mainly-vague delineations (the few striking scenes are quite clashingly realistic), to induce a mood, an 'inside' feeling of a mental state. But he uses (and often tampers with) too many general words and does not utilize enough evocative specific image-words in stimulating combinations. Further, the contrasts of the better-handled passages of seeming actuality break the 'dream' intent and jar the reader out of the unreal spell. A thread of pallid sexual aimlessness is insufficient to sustain interest from sequence to sequence. It is improbable that many will linger on to the close of this not-long book, when it does not (perhaps a negative credit to the author)

(Continued on page 236)

SCAN PP. 16–18, 112–121

THE CHRONICLE

THE CHRONICLE, ‘*An Evolving Directory*’ — three pages here and ten more at the back, some hundred and seventy-eight magazines and presses. Both parts are omitted: a working address list rather than reading matter, superseded by THE INTERNATIONAL GUIDE TO LITERARY AND ART PERIODICALS.

ANGEL HAIR *appears in its first year, from a box at Peter Stuyvesant Station, and the whole entry is one word: ‘(Unseen.)’ That is Anne Waldman and Lewis Warsh’s magazine, recorded before anyone in Los Angeles had managed to see a copy. BLEW OINTMENT is entered from West 10th Avenue, Vancouver — ‘Eds. Milton Acorn, Bill Bissett, Brian Goss, Keith Kemp, Pat Lane offer a bound packet of far-out diverse writings, art in varied repro on vari-colored papers of all sizes.’ BLACK DIALOGUE comes from Fifteenth Street, San Francisco, ‘meeting place for Negro voices, but not so ltd. Eds., Arthur Sheridan & Edward Spriggs.’*

ART AND LITERATURE *writes from the rue Payenne with Spender’s journal extracts; AKROS from Lancashire is ‘chiefly Scottish poetry ... also pamphlets under editorsh. of Duncan Glen’; CRANIUM PRESS of Shrader Street ‘seeks mss. for poetry books & broadsides. Comments on all submissions.’*

The names are listed in Trace_61_1966_chronicle_names.txt beside the transcript. — ED.

EDITORS (AND OTHERS) WRITE

MODEL FOR ENGLISH INSTRUCTORS

Dear Editors:

Perhaps the ensuing 'test' is close enough to the kind of thing some students have been asked concerning poetry that your readers will get a kick out of it. Without saying, this travesty was never seriously given, but was thrown at my class one day after a short vacation in order to frighten those not sufficiently alive to recognize the burlesque. Furthermore, constructing it gave a certain emotional satisfaction to the instructor.

Modern Poetry: Quiz, April 14, 1966

1. If the metamorphosis of Prufrock's persona rises to a climax ('... come back to tell you all, I shall tell ...') why is there no transmogrification of the hero in the poem's denouement? Explain.

2. Citing special passages from the poem, demonstrate that according to Prufrock 'the chasuble is risible.'

3. Show that the following line is an objective correlative of Swarts' emotion in Fragment of an Agon, and that both are cousin-german to Horsfall and Wauchope.

'Burning burning burning burning'

4. Is your experience with this poem best described as epiphany, enormity, or haematose? Discuss.

5. Account for this poem as an inverse aubade (or, if you prefer, you may show why it is not to be regarded as a deliquiscent dithyramb, at least dextrally).

JAMES HINER.

Should I have given them a choice: Say: Answer any six of the following five?

LITTLE MAGS TO SAVE THE WORD FROM FOUNDERING?

Dear Editors: Once having commenced *THE IMAGINATION OF THE AMATEUR* by Felix Stefanile in *TRACE* No. 59, I could not place the book aside until it was finished; and I read slowly, and reread sections. Mr. Stefanile reveals a penetrating insight into the machinations of those literary phenomena (and I might add, necessary phenomena, if the individualism of the modern writer is to escape strangulation by the octopean tentacles of conformism that threaten the Word in our time), the little magazines. I use the term, necessary, without reservations; for individualistic articulation is not only a prerequisite to, but a continuation of, the actualization of culture and intellectual thought. In a civilization which has lasted as long as ours, the circulation of that individualism (limited though it may be numerically) may well be the force which generates the continued growth of Man's creative and literary soul. It may well be the lifeguard that keeps his already-stereotyped thought process above water, that saves the Word from foundering in an effete sea of unlimited mediocrity. Mr. Stefanile's article will endure as a minor classic. In his historical evaluation of *The Little Magazine*, he has served the cause well, and most articulately. L. Stanley Cheney

Truman Capote — Kenneth Tynan Controversy* Dear Editors: Due to the McNaghten rule in Kansas, which defines legal insanity as not realizing the nature of one's acts, Capote's contention was that no added psychiatric testimony would have saved Hickock and Smith from the gallows. But Dr. Estela D'Accurzio, former worker with criminal patients at The Kansas Reception and Diagnostic Center, believed it might have done so, reported Tynan. During the two boys' last three months, Capote aided them in their clemency

fight, stated the boy's lawyer, Mr. Jenkins. But whether bad judgment or neglectin-aid by Capote, his fortune in money gained from *IN COLD BLOOD*, based on interviews with the two murderers, is certainly to be preferred to the two boys' nooses. Norma Crandall

The 'Endopsychic Quartet' Dear Editors: Glad to see that my bulletin, the *EXPOSE*, is listed in your *TRACE* directory. In the normal course of events, another issue would have been out in April, but now there is likely to be several months' delay: The Society for the Abolition of Ivor Darreg has at least eight new members; a whole troop of building inspectors from the city came barging through this neighborhood and wanted this house demolished on the grounds that removing me and my workshop and musical instruments and my mother and her paintings would be a great Improvement and Uplift to the Community — and of course the abolishing of impecunious persons would automatically End Poverty around here. We have been living on borrowed time so long as the red tape holds out . . . As yet, no place to go, so I can't

* The New York Herald Tribune of Sunday, Apr. 3, 1966 — in which TynanCapote articles appeared — provided basis for the above, excepting a statement made more recently by defense counsel. (And see Miss Crandall's review of the Capote book in *TRACE* No. 60.) 134 notify people of a new address. Don't know what to call my bulletin,

either. One fellow suggested I call it the *EX-EXPOSITION BLVD.*

EXPOSE.

I note in Helmer Oleson's letter (No. 59) a query about poetical Dadaists. A possible answer: I have just experimented. After hearing a superimposed electronically-manipulated tape of Luciano Berio, made from someone reading from one of Joyce's books, I realized that here was a possibility: make up a Dada 'sound poem,' but have it polyphonic in four superimposed layers (two tape

recorders). As a result, I become the 'Endopsychic Quartet'—the Id arguing with the Anima or some such Freud-vs.-Jung quarrel. And this will start a semantic debate: Is this 'electronic music' or not?

Meanwhile, I have other compositions definitely musical, even retaining tonality and harmony that so many are abandoning, but using new scales. I am proposing the term xenharmonic for this. Ivor Darreg

(Editor's note: Of relevant interest is Poème-partition, Bernard Heidsieck [1962], OU, Cinquième Saison No. 20-21 [Sceaux, Seine, France]; same in Le Quatrième Plan [1963] No. 23-24; also, Brion Gysin's I AM, Machine Poem, on first disk. And Darreg now publishes at: 3426-Winslow Dr., L.A. 90026.)

One Hundred Per Cent Protection ?

Dear Editors:

'Blow, blow, thou winter wind' and so on—Do those poets, real or self-styled, actually on the grouse, it seems, when editors take the trouble to send back their—work; really not appreciate that they are getting 100% protection against misrepresentation?

Put this in: 'Trace' if you will. Down to the signature. I can say this without qualification because, though I believe that you will be faithful even unto the end; I know I shall see a proof! Elizabeth Louch

EACH YEAR

Spring comes as a newborn calf, moist, to be licked dry by the sun then fattened with summer seed that graze in soil awaiting rain-april from cloudy troughs and ripen for harvest fall each year when life begins. James A. Minor

POETRY IN THE THEATRE—L

William Packard:

(This is the first in a series of six essays on the general subject of poetry in the theatre. In this one, we shall consider the conventions and traditions which have shaped the great ages of poetic drama in the past: the Greek theatre, the Elizabethan theatre, and the Japanese theatre. We shall look at the lack of poetic tradition in our own theatre, and try to find out why modern verse drama has not been so successful as it might be.

In future essays, we shall consider the use of certain poetic devices in the theatre — especially the devices of imagery and metaphor — and see how the literary metaphor is radically different from the theatrical metaphor. Christopher Fry, for example, may have a marvelous grasp of literary metaphor, but his theatrical dramatic metaphors of Tennessee Williams.

metaphors may not be so compelling and immediate as, say, the

We shall also consider the problem of spoken poetry — the problems of the actor in approaching a poetic text — and the way that certain playwrights [most notably Shakespeare] have given indications of pace and mood, which the actor can discover if he looks carefully at the printed page before he begins to create his character.

We shall examine how language can obscure dramatic character and plot and action, instead of helping to develop them. It is always a problem for the poet to know when to go out on a wonderful flight of rhetoric, to know how much poetry is enough poetry. Too often, modern audiences feel they are being bombarded by a bard, when so much language is thrown at them that they lose sight of the

dramatic action. So this is especially the problem of the contemporary verse playwright.

Finally, we'll try to give some estimate of the prospects for the future of poetry in the theatre. It will not be easy, and there are no easy formulae for success, because verse theatre is one of the most difficult of all art forms. There is so much that is in the way of a successful prose play — the jungle of commercial theatre, the necessity of having a 'smash' hit in order to pay production expenses, etc. . . . and it is the same story for off-Broadway, and even the university theatres have their own shortcomings which have to be taken into consideration.)

THERE HAS BEEN A GREAT deal of work done, in this century, on poetic drama. The plays of Yeats, Eliot, Fry, Anderson, Dylan Thomas — these are all attempts by recent and contemporary poets to use a modern poetic idiom in the theatre.

How are we to achieve poetic drama in our own time? I wish I knew. I'm not even sure I know what poetic drama is, or what we mean when we talk about 'poetry in the theatre.'

What exactly do we mean by this phrase? It is, yes, as you say, 'poetry' in the 'theatre.' Yet we do not have a working definition at our fingertips, though we think we know, and have some idea of what is meant by 'poetic drama' and 'verse theatre.'

Let me give a practical example of the difficulties in trying to clarify this. Suppose we were setting out to teach a course in poetic drama. What texts would we choose to include? Would we limit the course to only those plays which have been written in the form of verse—like those of Maxwell Anderson, Christopher Fry, and T. S. Eliot? Or, would we extend our definition to include those plays which are poetic in language, even though that language is written as prose—like those of Dylan Thomas, Sean O'Casey, and John Millington Synge? Or, would we also insist on considering

those plays which are poetic in scope, even though they may be written in prose and sound like prose and are intended as prose—like the plays of Chekhov, Genet, Brecht, Ionesco, Samuel Beckett, and even Tennessee Williams?

Another example of the difficulties of trying to define poetry in the theatre is illustrated by a passage from a play, the lines of which seem to be poetic in their use of rhythms and repetitions:

You've been at that cake.

You've been at my cake. You've been at my cake, haven't you?

That cake was for Mick. It was for Mick, it wasn't for you.

I bought it for Mick. It was for when he comes home.

What do you mean — never mind!

Well I mind! I don't want him in that kitchen.

Tell him to keep out of it.

It's not much, and it's not mine, but I mind very much.

Why couldn't you leave it alone?

Taken out of context, these lines could very easily be mistaken for poetry. The fact is, they are lines of dialogue assigned to Phoebe in John Osborne's *THE ENTERTAINER*;¹ and while the play itself is highly stylized, it is certainly not generally considered to be an example of poetic drama. We could make similar experiments with other prose plays, finding isolated passages in which the language takes on a texture of expression that seems to be poetic—such as those of Edward Albee, particularly *WHO'S AFRAID OF*

¹ BANTAM edition. *VIRGINIA WOLF?* and *TINY ALICE*. Both plays contain passages of extraordinary imagery coupled with remarkable locutions; but on the whole, we accept them as being written in the realism of prose. They are essentially conversational; and, again, we would not wish to consider them as examples of poetic drama.

We are beginning to see some of the difficulties of trying to talk about poetry in the theatre. We see that it is not so

easy as saying ‘anything that is poetic, and anything that is in the theatre.’ When we say ‘poetic drama,’ we must mean a great deal more than language spoken by actors on a stage. But then — exactly what do we mean?

Poetry in the theatre could be, very simply, just a simple poem, such as the one which concludes Shakespeare’s *TWELFTH NIGHT*. A clown comes out on stage and sings a very simple lyric by way of saying good-bye to the audience. But this absolutely charming and fine Elizabethan lyric doesn’t tell us anything about what happened in *TWELFTH NIGHT*, or how Shakespeare used poetry in the theatre to tell the very complicated story.

We know what poetic drama has meant in the past. Poetry had a very specific role in the Greek theatre, and it also had a very specific role in the Elizabethan theatre — and looking outside our Western tradition, we find that poetry has had a very specific role in the Japanese theatre. Let us look at these great traditions to see how poetry was used by the playwrights in creating a poetic drama. This may help us to determine how we would like poetry to function in our own theatre.

During the performance of a Greek tragedy, there was an altar of Dionysius located onstage in full view of the audience. Because of the presence of this altar, there could be no overt violence done onstage — and so Medea kills her children offstage, Clytemnestra murders Agamemnon behind closed doors, and Oedipus plucks out his eyes unseen, within the palace gates — and all of these acts were reported to the audience by means of messengers in long speeches which gave a marvelous opportunity to the poet to develop a poetry of description. Then, there was the convention of the Greek chorus, which chanted and sang and danced throughout the play; and this gave the poet an opportunity to develop his own themes and ideas in a poetry of general statement. Here is an example of a choral passage from

OEDIPUS AT COLONUS by Sophocles, as translated by William Butler Yeats:

Endure what life God gives and ask no longer span;
Cease to remember the delights of youth, travel-wearied
aged man;
Delight becomes death-longing if all longing else be
vain.

*Even from that delight memory treasures so,
Death, despair, division of families, all
entanglements of mankind grow,
As that old wandering beggar and these
God-hated children know.*

In the long echoing street the laughing dancers throng, The bride is carried to the bridegroom's chamber through torchlight and tumultuous song; I celebrate the silent kiss that ends short life or long.

Never to have lived is best, ancient writers say; Never to have drawn the breath of life, never to have looked into the eye of day; The second best's a gay goodnight and quickly turn away.

One other convention in Greek tragedy is worth mentioning at this point, in terms of the role of poetry in the theatre: the rapid backand-forth exchange of dialogue between the leading characters onstage, which takes the form of alternate lines of verse called stichomythia. This device helps to create the dramatic tension and suspense of a scene, as in the famous recognition scene from the ELECTRA of Sophocles.² Electra is holding an urn which, she believes, contains the ashes of her dead brother, Orestes; however, Orestes is still very much alive, and he appears to her in disguise. Notice how swiftly the dialogue proceeds:

Orestes: Hush! — no such word! — Thou hast no right to lament.

Electra: No right to lament for my dead brother?

Orestes: It is not meet for thee to speak of him thus.

Electra: Am I so dishonoured of the dead?

Orestes: Dishonoured of none — but this is not thy part.

Electra: Yes, if these are the ashes of Orestes that I hold.

Orestes: They are not; a fiction clothed them with his name.

(he gently takes the urn from her)

Electra: And where is that unhappy one's tomb?

Orestes: There is none; the living have no tomb.

Electra: What sayest thou, boy?

Orestes: Nothing that is not true.

Electra: The man is alive?

Orestes: If there be life in me.

Electra: What? Art thou he?

Orestes: Look at this signet, once our father's, and judge if I speak truth.

Electra: O blissful day!

Orestes: Blissful, in very deed!

Electra: Is this thy voice?

Orestes: Let no other voice reply.

Electra: Do I hold thee in my arms?

Orestes: As mayest thou hold me always!

² *Transl., R. C. Jebb (RANDOM HOUSE ed.)*

This rapid back-and-forth exchange of dialogue helps to create the dramatic tension and suspense of a scene — and it also disciplines the playwright, preventing him from going off on any long poetic passages when it is more important to deal with the situation right there on stage.

The Greek theatre, then, did have very definite conventions, which the poet had to respect. There was the

offstage violence, which had to be reported by a messenger; there was the Greek Chorus, which was given a poetry of general description; and there was the stichomythia, or rapid exchange of dialogue. Of course, these are only a few of the many conventions of the Greek theatre, as found in Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripedes, Aristophanes, and Menander. But they suffice to indicate that the poet was writing within the form of conventions, respecting certain traditional ways of saying something, and that he was not free to do as he pleased with poetry in the theatre.

The conventions of the Elizabethan theatre were to a great extent determined by the physical dimensions of the stage itself. An Elizabethan poet knew that he had so many various levels and effects at his disposal, and he could shape his play accordingly. Because there were balconies, inner and outer rooms, curtains to hide behind, trap doors, and a large forestage for direct address to the audience, the poet was naturally attracted to certain typical dramatic situations, such as the balcony scene, the eavesdropping scene, the play within a play, and of course, the soliloquy. This long monologue, the soliloquy, provided an opportunity for the poet to get inside the mind of his character and write his most private thoughts, as in this excerpt from the opening soliloquy of RICHARD III:

I, that am curtail'd thus of fair proportion,
Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
Deform'd, unfinish'd, sent before my time
Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,
And that so lamely and unfashionable,
That dogs bark at me, as I halt by them;
Why, I, in this weak piping time of peace,
Have no delight to pass away the time,
Unless to see my shadow in the sun,
And descent on mine own deformity:
And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover,
To entertain these fair well-spoken days,
I am determined to prove a villain. . . .

³ *Falstaff ed. of The Works . . . , ed. by George Long Duykinck
from the 1632 folio (HENRY T. COATE & Co.—1859).*

Richard III, standing on the forestage and talking directly to the audience, is able to prepare that audience for the violence that is to come. As a matter of fact, considering the wholesale butchery and blood-letting that takes place in RICHARD III, it is difficult to think of a better beginning. If the audience were not introduced immediately to the villain and given some sort of explanation or motivation for what he is about to do, chances are no one would believe the play. But, because of the direct confrontation at the very outset, we are prepared to watch Richard kill off everyone who stands in his way as he reaches out for the crown. This soliloquy is a very effective example of poetry in the theatre.

Another convention of the Elizabethan stage was the lack of scenery, which forced the poet to incorporate the imagery of time and place into the text; thus, the poetry also serves as running commentary and program notes to the dramatic action. Here is a remarkable speech, in which Shakespeare not only creates a picture of a dramatic situation—two armies in the dead of night, facing each other and waiting for the morning—but also fixes the time and place in our minds,

better than any clock or set design could do. I am speaking about the Prologue to the fourth act of Henry V. Notice how the imagery of the speech changes subtly from darkness and night to sunshine and daylight when King Henry appears; by the end of the speech, there can be no doubt in the mind of the audience as to the outcome of the day's battle. Shakespeare is going to convince us, through the simple use of imagery, that Henry represents the forces of daylight sent to overthrow the forces of darkness:

Now entertain conjecture of a time,
When creeping murmur and the poring dark,
Fills the wide vessel of the universe.
From camp to camp, through the foul womb of night,
The hum of either army stilly sounds,
That the fix'd sentinels almost receive
The secret whispers of each other's watch:
Fire answers fire, and through their paly flames
Each battle sees the other's umber'd face:
Steed threatens steed, in high and boastful neighs
Piercing the night's dull ear; and from the tents
The armourers, accomplishing the knights,
With busy hammers closing rivets up,
Give dreadful note of preparation.
The country cocks do crow, the clocks do toll,
And the third hour of drowsy morning's nam'd.

O! now, who will behold
The royal captain of this ruin'd band
Walking from watch to watch, from tent to tent,

*Let him cry "Praise and glory on his head!"
For forth he goes and visits all his host,
Bids them good-morrow with a modest smile,
And calls them brothers, friends, and countrymen.
Upon his royal face there is no note
How dread an army hath enrouned him,
Nor doth he dedicate one jot of colour*

*Unto the weary and all-watched night;
But freshly looks and overbeares attain,
With cheerful semblance and sweet majesty;
That every wretch, pining and pale before,
Beholding him, plucks comfort from his looks.
A largess universal, like the sun,
His liberal eye doth give to every one,
Thawing cold fear, that mean and gentle all,
Behold, as may unworthiness define,
A little touch of Harry in the night.
And so our scene must to the battle fly;
Where, O for pity! we shall much disgrace —
With four or five most vile and ragged foils,
Right ill-disposed, in brawl ridiculous —
The name of Agincourt. Yet sit and see;
Minding true things by what their mockeries be.*

This speech is called a Prologue, although it actually serves a variety of purposes. As I noted, by the end of the speech there is very little doubt in our minds as to the outcome of the next day's battle — and in fact it was an overwhelming English victory. Shakespeare has prepared us for it, by the use of poetry in the theatre, poetry which not only expresses the dramatic situation, but also located the action in time and space, and through the use of imagery, affects our feelings about the course of the action.

Now let us look briefly at the Japanese theatre of the Noh, which has a tradition of its own dating back to the Fourteenth Century, to the first Noh actor and playwright, Zeami Motokiyo, who was a contemporary of Chaucer and Joan of Arc. The poetry of the Noh, like the poetry of the Japanese haiku and tanka, is a very indirect poetry — oblique, elusive, and evocative rather than straightforward and explicit. It suggests much more than it states. In this sense, it is closest to the poetry of the French Symbolists, that of Mallarmé and Verlaine and Rimbaud. Here in an

example, from a classical Noh play, IKKAKU SENNNIN, by Zenou Komparu. The Shite, a hermit with long black hair and a grotesque mask, is sitting inside a cave. When we first see him, he says:

Ibid., Note 3.

*I scoop water from deep streams with my magic
gourd,
I call forth all my art.
I lift up clouds that have folded over forests
and I make them boil swiftly,
then I play music.
But I play alone.
The mountains rise up high above the river banks.
Green leaves suddenly become the color of blood.
I play music and I play alone in autumn.*

This may seem to be simple enough, but consider what has been said in these nine lines. It is autumn, which implies melancholy and nostalgia, a mood of sadness. The hermit is a wizard; he talks about his magic art, and then he describes the beautiful countryside. But remember that he is sitting inside his cave. That is, he does not actually see the countryside he is describing. It only exists in his mind; and therefore we sense that he does possess a perspicacity that is a remarkable part of his magical powers. Added to this, he tells that he is alone; and we sense the poignance of the great man, the great magician, someone like Prospero who has a magic wand and is able to do all kinds of things — although he is shipwrecked on a lonely island. Now of course, this is a great deal to read into these nine lines — and you can imagine how difficult it is for a Western actor to come to terms with such an allusive use of language when he is accustomed to having his character indicated more explicitly in the text. And yet, as I have suggested, this is the role of poetry in the Noh theatre — to evoke and to suggest rather than to spell out.

What does the role of poetry in the Greek and Elizabethan and Japanese theatres tell us about the role of poetry in the theatre, generally? Perhaps it tells us nothing more than this: that at different times and places, poetry has had a different role, and has had to adapt itself to different conventions, according to the various requirements of a theatrical form. And so all we need to do is to find out what the requirements of our theatre are, and we shall be close to discovering what the role of poetry has to be here.

I wish it were as simple as that. Because in our time, a playwright — whether working in poetry or prose — can choose from an infinite variety of styles and theatrical forms: he can write for a proscenium arch, the so-called ‘fourth-wall’ theatre, the arena theatre, the three-sided theatre; he can make use of all sorts of electronic and technical effects for the staging of his play; he can use a variety of styles of lighting, set design, and costumes; in short, he is free to create his own theatrical conventions. The sky’s the limit. When we look for any sort of enduring tradition in our theatre (I am speaking of the American theatre), it seems that the only one we can point to with any confidence is the tradition of the American musical theatre. If you heard that a road company was planning to do OKLAHOMA! in Dallas, Texas, you would be reasonably sure that the part of Curly would be cast in a certain way, and costumed in a certain way, and approached by the actor in a certain way. Alas, you could not say the same about a production of HAMLET in San Francisco, or even a production of DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS in New York. We are living in an age of experimentation and interpretation, which can be wonderfully stimulating and exciting, but which does not do much toward the preservation of a convention and a tradition.

English version by the author.

The lack of any fixed convention in our theatre, then, is a major reason why poetic drama has not been able to find its form. This is the reason poets have tended to reach back to previous theatre traditions—in the way Eliot reached back to the Greek tradition in *MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL*, the way Maxwell Anderson reached back to the Elizabethan theatre in his verse plays, even in such a contemporary work as *WINTERSSET*.

But then, what about poetry in the theatre? So far, I have just been suggesting some of the difficulties of trying to analyze the role of poetry. I have said that we do not have any strong tradition of language in American theatre and that there are not any binding conventions to guide a poet when he decides to write a poetic drama.

Yet, we must remember that we do have poets and that we do have a theatre, and that the two are bound to come together, tradition or no tradition, convention or no convention. And so, in the next articles, I will investigate some exceedingly bad examples of poetry in the theatre—poetic dramas which simply do not work, because the poet got carried away by his own poetry, leaving the actors standing around declaiming a lot of beautiful music, without much in the way of dramatic acting or characterization. It will also be relevant to investigate metaphor a bit—this being so much used in poetry—to see how metaphor changes its nature when it is put on stage. We also will be thinking of the actor, that poor man who has to recite the lines—looking at some of the problems American actors face when they attempt to perform in verse theatre. We may not be able to create any new audiences for poetic drama, but at least we shall be trying to explain why the audiences so far have not been storming the box offices or demanding more poetry in American theatre.

THE VISION OF RUMPELSTILTSKIN

Howard McCord:

*The fact is that nearly all work worth reading
since the Renaissance is seriously defective.*

Wade Donahoe (ORIGIN Xv, p. 42)

I CONCERN MYSELF WITH THE VAGARIES of design, the patterns and structures of statement that worry through the human mind. Is a poem an imprint, does it reveal a circuitry of thought, or does it no more than indicate the outlines of a jigsaw puzzle drawn in idleness by a half-sleeping soul?

It will help you to grasp my words if you know an assumption I make: to understand truly, we should conform our minds to the shape of the world rather than impose the structure of our minds upon the world. We cannot dictate, we must listen, at whatever the costs. It is a gesture of simple humility when faced with the extreme age of stone. We shall preserve ourselves from vanity by this gesture. (Recall the Preacher.) Should we dictate (and the temptation is great), we invite anomie — lostness — we see ourselves as separate from the earth. We detach ourselves. We lose contact with that important part of us that is the outside world. We inhabit our projections, our illusions. There are no ideas but in things; in earth we find truth.

Do not hesitate to protest: take up your copy of Kant or Mach and explain to me that what I assume is impossible to assume. That we experience our perceptions, we talk about our perceptions, that we see the world that our visual apparatus presents to us. And I will agree: we can make no meaningful statements about anything but our perceptions. The world is beyond us, unknowable. We may not understand truly. We encounter only experiences, never an object.

This is why there is such a thing as poetry. Poetry (or all art, if you wish to be catholic) interests us solely because it provides entrance to the world. And it does this, not by telling us about the world, but by creating the world for us to inhabit. Philipp Frank says of Mach: 'His fundamental point of view was that all principles of physics are principles concerning the relations between sense perceptions, hence principles that state something about concrete experiences.' (MODERN SCIENCE and Its Philosophy — p. 104.) This is the only place where meaning has any meaning. Now poetry does not so much have meaning as use meaning. One of the devices (often quite minor) of poetry is meaning. Poetry does not say things so much as present things. Poetry is not ordinary talking; it is not even extraordinary talking; it is the created appearance of the world. As Suzanne Langer illustrates (PRINCIPLES OF ART—p. 143), the space of a painting is not the space of the room in which it is hung. The painting carries its own space with it; it is independent of the experience of the room. The poem is made out of words in the same way that the painting is made of pigments and canvas, but as we distinguish the pigment and canvas structure from the painting, we must distinguish the words of the poem from the poem itself. The paint is not part of the created space, and the words are not part of the created world. So the validity of the structure of this work: the encounter of two which never met.

The poem is not the words on the page: the encounter is not the clasped hands, the locked eyes, the dialogue. The poem is the interaction of the words and the man, the relationship. The poem is not a thing out there; it is in the man who apprehends the shape of words upon the page. That man is part of the poem. And so this encounter of Fraenkel and Long* takes place with me, in me. As it comes to you, part of it will be measured by the meaning of the words I've written, but most of its presence will be something

else, an otherness, a world, a way, a bridge, a construct which, for a moment, snuffs out the self and lets the person play free. This is its only worth. It is the only worth of any art—the person is loosed from the self and in the moments of freedom the person discovers the insights which are all the reward ever promised.

Gordon Curtis

Dear Howard: May 22, 1964 After thinking about your theories of criticism for a week or more I've come to the sad conclusion that I don't buy them any more than I do the exegetical or paraphrastic schools' theories. It all comes down to either dissection or appreciation, either of which are activities apart from what art is in its essence, an arbitrary agreement on the values inherent in synthetic objects. This arbitrary aspect is why I am so damned distrustful of schools and scholars (I almost said schoolmen) and why I would continue to pipe woodnotes wild, and not examine my sensual (and intellectual) joy in reacting to miscellaneous poems, pictures, concerts, etc. . .

The pipers, like Eliot, who pause in mid-song to critically examine the phenomenon of flautistry end up, wilted flute in hand, didactically deploring the death of music. . .

** A reference to THE ODD BOOK, a study of Michael Fraenkel and Haniel Long in progress.*

POETIC CRITICISM OR CRITICAL POETRY?

The latter is, I agree, a way out of the labyrinth our selves and our thrust for self-knowledge (rather than personal knowledge) have made. But I much prefer the poem (the verbal fiction) unqualified, the poem that just happens to have for its subject something which is ordinarily treated by the genre of prose criticism. (If this should appear to be prose and contradictory, recall that meaning — to which prose as communication of information is dedicated — is a device of poetry, but that the distinguishing factor of poetry is that it always involves more than denotation.) Poetry is not defined by its apparent formal presence.

Perhaps I may illustrate this by comparing criticism and translation. Faced with the problem of translating a poem, one must be sure to translate not the words but the poem. The whole poem in any language is by its nature imitable and unique; and if one cannot come to it because of the barrier of language, that poem must remain alien and unknown. What may be experienced, however, is another poem that has been made to particular specifications, a poem that has grown from the poet's mind with a strictly-controlled heritage — from the original. Let his attention be on the original, not skittering among the multitudinous species of thought in his head as it might if he were writing the poem. Let the focus be constant and intense, and the poet becomes medium and through him flows that poem which is whole only with a man's reading of it; and because he is poet, the transmutation is ordered and structured and yet is a poem and not a report of a poem — as it would be if he were not poet.

Ishmael, the afflicted one, is the critic, not I. I shall explain nothing. But I will form a part of the world out of the

noise in my head made by Michael Fraenkel and Haniel Long. My attention is on them and I make their dance my song. This is the only defense I can have. I don't want any other. Should I sneak in a little dissection or appreciation, they shall be devices only, as I use the meaning of words. No more. Long and Fraenkel have been interesting experiences for me, as sunsets, sex, wild birds, and postmen have. So I make a poem. Curious, tedious, ungainly — shrill, obscure, and presumptuous — but the intent is blessed. A place to fix the mind against, a world to meet the world through, an earth to listen to. A shape to meet to take us out of ourselves a little while and give us back to earth.

Art is a good killer; it is legitimate suicide. It allows us for a moment to kill the self, to silence the nagging and whining ego and stand free of its demands. Hell is the presence of self alone. We are a bit more dead every day. This is one of the few blessings no one is cheated of. The virtues provide the same relief. We are out of ourselves (dead to ourselves) when we hope and believe — and most of all when we love. Some of us would like to think that our vices are as liberating; but a moment's recollection should provide anyone with enough memories of coddling and stuffing the self with its own applause to ensure his knowing that the self did not die in the course of its feeding, did not evaporate and leave him free of its demands, but rather grew stronger and more surly and insatiable. Vice is spiritual masturbation.

If we are so graced, we can accelerate the dying of self through art. I do not think that the aesthetic vision can be a final substitute for the religious vision; but certainly, to many of our era, it is more relevant. A painting is easier to accept than a prayer. It very likely is a prayer; but, to those who need it most, it is perhaps important that it does not appear to be a prayer. A painting can be devious and apparently be ego food (e.g., to him who glories in the possession of it and does not look at it save as property), and

yet at the same time have a meliorative effect by its simple presence. Possibly the man who owns it will look at it, and then he won't own it any more because he has stopped being the man who owns the painting. That man died. For a little while, anyway. And only the man wrapt and caught up out of himself remains, free of the numbing pull of the self, the ego. For a little while, anyway. That is why Sartre could say 'Hell is other people' and not be silly. What he meant was that hell is all the you's that have to die before you can know life. Often this is seen in the vision you have of other people, your apprehension of the relationship you have created with other people; but it is your vision and your apprehension, and only 'other people' in the sense that other people are mirrors.

... une fois de plus la vie change du tout au tout et recommence. 'Donnez-moi le septième cil de la paupière gauche, la septième de la rangée supérieure, à compter de la gland lacrymale,' disait le sage des Indes. Contemplation. Oeil de chat. Objectif... Aujourd'hui, je suis aux antipodes. Est-ce un insecte, un oiseau, un serpent à sonnette qui rôde autour de moi?

Blaise Cendrars, *ELOGE DE LA VIE DANGEREUSE* (p. 177)

What must you risk to create Tibet? How far must you travel into the Antarctica of the soul before the transformed earth is firm enough to bear your weight? 'To give to airy nothing a local habitation and a name.' This is the important revolution: art is revolution because it eradicates the old order; it is a new beginning, breeding monsters, unknown creatures capable of stalking the self successfully. It is drunkenness, mania derangement to those who stay behind, who dare not walk upon freshly-created soil. But this is their error and sickness, for they deny the world — and not simply a world unfurled by a clever artist whom they believe to be essentially fraudulent. It is the real world they pass by, blinded by the self-induced illusion that the textbooks, which talk about their experiences, talk about the world that

is. There are no realities but in the things we create. No realities that we can know but those we make. That which we have not made is forever beyond us, out of reach.

How little matter is required—that hair—how peculiar its requirements: seventh, counting from the tear duct of the upper left eyelash. And what it becomes—a rattlesnake roaming man's haunts. A danger.

And how little energy for such a transformation! Teilhard de Chardin saw this as one of the manifestations of consciousness, as the anti-entropic movement of consciousness. As the energy affixed to matter (tangential) slowly drops towards randomness and chaos, and the universe settles into utter meaninglessness, the thrust of that energy affixed to consciousness (radial) grows stronger and more precise. Economy of means to achieve maximum effect. Efficiency is the mark of prayer and art. Grace is total efficiency. There is no loss.

What is the caloric value of a poem, of a dream, of a banana? Of history? And yet, people keep thinking in terms of cause and effect, the greater force moving the lesser object, the greater object resisting the lesser force. How much does the future weigh? Yet, the energy, the capacity to change man, is hidden in the poem.

One evidence for greatness in a work of art is its ability to provoke a change in man, profound alteration in his nature which results from the insights provided by the work. Poems shift the very centers of understanding, paintings are valued by the transfixion they provide, and music by its halt of time and fathom-deep immersion. A truly great work leaves the man unrecognizable—he has become someone else. Je suis un autre, and another is I. His self has dropped off, or been absorbed, and a new man peers from his eyes. The greatest book, then, is the one that drives the most men mad. The book then takes them so far from their selves that they no longer recognize who they once were. A book that transforms

lives. Consider the Bible in this respect. St. Paul is the archetype of those on whom the Logos, the Word, has made the deepest imprint. He became a fool for Christ (Cor. IV, 10); he was taken out of his senses. His own name even was no more. (Because he wrote in the Koiné, he is ignored by the classicists; because his subject is religion, he is ignored by the secular poets. But he is easily a greater writer than Dostoevsky or Rimbaud.)

Thus, the ancient conjunction of art and magic, the poem as incantation. This is true. The poem is a means to tap a quantum of radial energy which then creates a change in consciousness, a change in identity. We are not static lumps of matter, after all, but processes; and it is to be expected that our being undergoes shifts and modulations. Art is man's way to control the motion, perhaps even the direction.

The prolongation of identity. This, as we shall see, is the crisis of Hamlet. How long can he continue being himself? How long can he be rooted, fixed? The situation calls for his assumption of an identity which has long been outgrown, by-passed. This is his tragedy: that he is no longer Hamlet. And the rest of us? How long do we pretend to be people who have died long ago? How long do we wear the mask of our fathers? We are not who we have been. This is the source of many disappointments — why our plans always fail. Our concern is most with our dead selves, but seldom do we understand this basic condition. The grosser spiritual death that captured all the interest, the very life, of Fraenkel, is but another dimension of this death, reached by a slight twist on the axis of our being. Our identities are in transit, are contingent; but the thing in us that possesses our identity may be alive or dead, conscious or unconscious, as Fraenkel saw. Most men are not only behind the times, wearing as ludicrous masks the faces that died on them years back, they are also out of time, removed — imaginary people constructing imaginary lives. This is the unreality, the

schizophrenia, which is our inheritance.

Anxiety? Despair? A feeling that you don't count, that your life is meaningless? But of course. Life has no meaning for the dead.

What is the poison that killed us all? What is the etiology of our hurt? Some would rightly say The Fall, man's lusting after godhood, but there are complexities here.

The racial disorder infests the symbolics of speech that extend beyond the circumscribed realm of technology. It displays itself in that interminable loquaciousness that reaches far beyond biologic necessity. Indeed, the urge to babble (to indulge in somatic fidgets) if oftentimes uncontrolled by risk of perjury, self-incrimination and self-defamation, or even by the gallows or the lethal chamber . . . Man's incessant babble is not really a form of communication; it is rather a prolonged Cry of Pain, that has been cortically converted into a grammatical orderliness that belies its basic nature as an expression of hysteria.

Samuel Greiner, *CRISIS AND RESURRECTION* (pp. 209-10)

The diagnosis itself cannot help being corrupt; it must read as possessing a specific declination from truth. But the proper compensation cannot be arrived at rationally. It is a constantly-changing variable. A system of thought that utilizes categories is worthless when faced with the problem; rather, spontaneous organic thinking is required — thinking that is as quick and sure as the secretion of a gland deep within the interior of the body.

Spontaneous behaviour is attended by one's deepest understanding. One need but watch a bee attending to nurslings, a spider spinning webs that differ from day to day or en folding a beetle ten times its size, or narcotizing it through a specific ganglion, to sense that bee and spider are little more than knowledge incarnate, the full expression of a conscious purpose. We know at once that they are not bits of protoplasm performing mechanical operations foisted upon

them by a biased Nature treating us as pets. We simply dare not admit that such miniscule organisms are capable of performing miracles of biochemistry and architecture that defy our greatest intellects. Instead, we insist that their knowledge is derived from Instinct, which we proceed to define as mechanical capacity to exercise adaptive skills. Actually there is embodied in these insects authentic knowledge and the fullest consciousness of this knowledge—as any observer not entranced by scientific myth can see for himself. Their mastery of life is already implicit in the germ and, having no hypnotic implants to obstruct its actualization, they have to need to learn postnatally the tricks of adaptation. Analogously, primitives use to quite an extent spontaneous thinking in adapting themselves to their environment, but if asked by whites to explain their unique competence, they either find no words adequate to express what is instinctual with them or, if we persist, they fabricate an explanation. (*Ibid.*, p.212)

It is this gut-knowledge that Western Civilization generally inhibits and only the desert can yet provide in the silence and completeness of its distances. There are fewer of the 'hypnotic implants' which are coextensive with civilization, if they are not its equivalents. The environment is an instruction always, a demand to be met. The greater its uncertainties, its ambiguities, the more energy it absorbs from the person enmeshed in it. A dehumanized, highly-automated environment requires a dehumanized highly-automated response; the more mechanically patterned the environment, the more the man who responds must mimic that pattern. The possibilities for hallucination, madness, loss of person, of freedom are obvious. To live in sickness we must become sick. And most of us have lived amidst death so long that our own death has hardly been noticed.

Our resurrection will come when we recognize—immediately, intuitively—who we are, and what it means to be ourselves. When we learn to yield to the motion of the continuum we inhabit and not attempt to crystallize identities, to freeze ourselves into the shape of current illusion, or even our current truthful vision. Our fluid nature, our inward flux, precludes our being from existing identical to itself at consecutive points in space time.

In these circumstances, to see imagination as the foundation of reality is to be no dreamer; but those who would catch the world up in a series of static definitions, in a series of facts of pretended objectivity, are the befuddled visionaries. There is the ordering of our experiences which is science, and there is the fleeting, rushing encounter with the world which is the creation of art. The only things we know are those we make, and it is from them that our ideas must come, from their freshness and immensely-perishable nature that we know what is. 'All concepts such as atom, energy, force, and matter are, according to Mach, only auxiliary concepts, allowing one to make statements about sense perceptions in a simpler and more synoptic form than if they were formulated directly as statements about perception. In this way, all questions concerning the nature of force, matter, and so on, become meaningless. (Frank, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-5.) Only art (and religion — here ignored) can announce to man what lies outside himself by enabling him to see what is already inside himself.

WEDDING GOWN

Froth of lace, gentlewebbed;
High-necked silver cold and delicate,
Swirling its peeping scallops
Across my breasts and arms;
Hugging, at willing waist
The icy whisper of my skirts,
That circle my desire,
Swishing, hushing
Their cool stiffness
And my naive virginity
To all the holy-minded onlookers.
Do all wedding gowns lie?

Janet Overmyer

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DODO CHARLEE

LALINAL

(A New Human Freedom Explored)

Delivery 1: Remember — the view from above is clear, honest, undistorted — a naked marble.

Delivery 2: Remember — the view from beneath is heavy, difficult, depressing — a drowning penny.

Delivery 3: Remember — the view from afar is optimistic, ridiculous, romantic, fantasy-laden — a homosexual dream.

Part I Pitching fitfully on speckled flesh, silver feathers eat chinese metal as their toes enjoy the swift swell of sweet oils.

Hot teeth clicking shining ivory suspended by a lavender gut string promoting plastic, rice paddies, and paper transparency-flippant, luminous newsprint.

Three odorous, fresh solid splinters, glued persistently together-together, fly and sing, and weep, for the universe mistakenly denies their existence.

Openly crooked messy canals, laughing in wiry circles, the temperamental eyelash expresses deep concern over Persian lace.

Pink leaves supporting mourning candles — damp faces awaiting the milk in a single groove of a discarded shoe — thinly.

Bungling rusted threads undressing in a secluded square before seven-hundred sixty-two grimacing bristles, painted in the grass.

Part II Miles of tentative finger fill, stapled neatly, upheld by pert and primeval dust tires, whizzing vaguely in a whiskered hassock lid — electric buttons surrounded in gnat feet.

DODO CHARLEE

Pickled sexes rising ecstatically through the pink pits ignoring radical swords blazing by — separating motion, creating time.

Absorbing the pimpled parfaits, yellow nun-pools sway frantically, vainly securing roots, for tiresome, weary suns will not heed blasphemy in infant strands.

Ungrasped, unclaimed, uncalled for, futile in destination, the unknown instant, winds and finds meagre peace in being unfurled as giant seconds trudge grindingly to dawn.

Rigid, tender, wrinkled flesh on flesh on keys of momentum, before rubber battlements captured the gravity of level plains. Creation and destruction of reality.

Canvased heaps, straw castles, paper bullets, sounding endearments to passing starlight halted in junction for possible repair, but gathering filth, flies no more.

PART III

Rose petals in the eyewash sense intensely the philandering darkness — governed totally by algae pipes reading tissuey substance into presence.

Unlisted nylon caravans — red pudding — bounce fervently on ancient felt, slushing fried asparagus with wooden toes.

Shadows spray unpleasant intercourse of amnesty over all shimmering wounds standing awry pointed delicately eastward.

Assorted fatal mantles observe, unswerving a dull needle jabbing, jabbing, jabbing, distortion of being.

Eminent short answers seek wayless fancy patrolled purposely to divert, peeling logic in a soft cocoon for cannibal trash-collectors, an open drawer.

Clean, unparalleled bricks, falling micaceously square on dewy ferns, simple soles carry away the survivor — blinded and sufficiently reposed becoming milk.

DODO CHARLEE

PART IV

In a slow, chaotic, woolen river of words, a heart that refuses to pound, fever refuses to rise. Ice-clear and crystal-smooth.

A close, infinitesimal world without debate, without orbit, falling liltily past a light weave of descending eternities.

Concentrated, rotted jelly — sliding in total confusion beneath a slender chilling slab unopposed, seeking the ordinary, stale way. The comfortable death.

Shattered glass drifting through liquid platitudes condescending softly to the golden, pink-eyed spaces — sifting brown and amber ashes before generalizing.

Thin, labeled pulsating lava drops a funny message on a funnier, funnier meadow which sinks gently sweetly to the final twilight.

Hairy frequent spaces roam unencumbered on slender shoelace bones partially deserted.

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PART V

Gracious, pelted sperm, billowing circling net bounding
previously defiant, behold homely spray in a black mass of
illusion.

Linked boundaries confront silly, picknicked wrappers,
led boldly, madly . . . spiraling, singly agelessly, unable to
cease, unable to continue, cleaving fragrant ramparts of
penniless cotton.

Vast visions disrupting candied firesides sounding late
and temperate passion, remarkably sour and late and
tasteless.

Kernals, tossed unnoticed by the blue-eyed
grimmismackers, peek shyly beyond humble habitation to
foster palaces.

Limp, grey, wetted and simple erasers lie helpless as
cordial vultures devour elephant loads and bee-hives'
foundations.

Creased, thwarted, timbering filial novice plantations
dissolve a peanutbutter world.

DODO CHARLEE

Remember — the view from above is clear, honest,
undistorted. Remember — the view from beneath is heavy,
difficult, depressing. Remember — the view from afar is
optimistic, ridiculous, romantic, fantasy-laden. Remember
these things and consider — Lalinal.

HERBERT MORRIS

HAWKINS' BALLAD

Mirrors: but when they were
smashed you were given back as
shattered too, dismembered
image more true than a mirror's
calm true. So you smashed

to be. At last
light lay like wing-slits along
the fissures and the dart-splints in the
glass. Brittleness of surfaces, and
such swollen hands.
Was it a place plush with
red mahogany and the dark of
lights, women with the black brims
silken in skirts of satin and
the veils, or Steve's
of the cold tiles and the prices in
chalk, one-armed as she is and going
through with her eyes (for they
had told me) possibly? Or
a field by no stars in all
openness of void, no quarter hard
by the earth's matter and object, no
quarter, and the night's space
too smashing light.

HERBERT MORRIS

II

Such swollen hands, but not of
Indiana, not of a boy's breath
hot in the corn's air: a dry
time, and the eyes telling drought. But
were there not lights in the dust's
flame past dust? Before the hands
swelled things could have been touched and
felt, and, touching, known. And what
of the boards, despite no rain to fields, with
their flavor in dust and deep
with all days' passings: what of a
window there, glass in the smack of
some sun's arbitrary smash because
of, shimmeringly, some chance angle of
strike? A house with depths
of corners, wood and glass in the
plains' locked summers. Indiana: open,
and only the land.

HERBERT MORRIS

WHAT SWELLS US?

Not the nights' dark and a room to hold
us, summer dense in the silence of
trees the papered walls over lacing
the sheets and the ceiling's walled
images. Possibly the
expectation and the venturing, the
seeking for forms always to hold
us, and, after the rounds and the
rooms and the reeling lights, form
found no form, thing of no
thing, no whole in the breaking
arc to hold us: not the streets to be
turned into nor the stores' windows weighted
in thing-systems nor the object-doings
deeply in her context as we
found her waiting at the stairs
we mounted narrowly in
the split linoleum of corridors
darkly to rooms.

HERBERT MORRIS

III

Not for the sun's wide wield wild to
the sea would it have burned you and
been your opening: Civitavecchia,
and the bay beneath falling away from
the cobbled terraces frenzied
in flame of the day's light and all
the sky's soar blue-arching. Not
for the sun's weight. And
whirling the sea's lights, but your
eyes in some room's hot dark by
the drawn blinds to the balcony's
grating sun-meshed and the wood of the
doors opposite thick in the sun's
odor and day's texture, dust
in the hinges and the street's
stones. And Lugano with
them blue in the morning's chill, the
peaks, ice and the light's strike
untouched in a house of a room's
bed, and the bottles there with
her. To have

HERBERT MORRIS

come into that sea and been
touched in its waters: not for all
sea's soft surf of afternoon would it have
deeped you, nor some Mediterranean
in its capes and isles and its
thousand geographies of
bays gulfs sea
to (o widen), you in
your ungeography (what swells
us?) of eyes, of hands. Promontories,
place there of the land far and the
sea's fire flung flaring: promontory,
and but this there in the
sky's all and the sun's beat, sea's
silence in the roar's day. Not
for all depth of all core would
it have deeped you, always
in some room's hot dark by
the drawn blinds to the balcony's
grating sun-meshed, and the
bottles too there with her.

HERBERT MORRIS

IV

More depth is mirrors, come
to after other lights by other
surfaces. More depth is
mirrors: they held you. And no
thing now holding for they
smashed, your hands.
What swelled them?
Circles, ever out into all
circles, and the starting not ever to
begin because end
there always with the full of cycle
swung, circled. Circles: and no

(in every stars' dark after or
days' stun) thing past you
always but my holding of your always
circles, not words not limb not
voyage not eye. (Yet here
I am, all-thing in a
bit-world, having set to the working
for it and still not yet now near an
avowel that impossible is
some modification of
structure). So you smashed,
seeking as I some
opposition to design: day, waters,
dark. And too some deep
holding us after mirrors, for
more depth is?

JAMES DOUGHERTY

THE WAR IN MY EYE

Since any glance can make the flotsam crawl
across my sight like centipedes, I try
to take my looking easy and unshaken.
But see that plane! and my head tips; the eye
is fouled with swirling lees. Where is it? All
their fingers pointing and my elbows taken
are no use. I hunt in a World War newsreel sky,
crazy with silent flak and the tall lashes
of smoke like far-off rain. There it is. There
— lost in the flickering shellburst and the scourge
of black shrapnel. They're determined I shall see;
barraged with shouted gunsights, I want to lie
'Oh yes,' and satisfy them. Left of the tree.
Wheeling interceptors there converge
berserk in a tracery of cannon flashes.
Oh, it's gone. Of course it is, knocked from the air,
that silent silver plane, by the war in my tilting eye.

DAVID J. RAINE

NO MORE/ A REASON NOW TO WAKE OUR EYES/

night was/ sleep came/ deep
unfastening sleep/ sleep coming
sleep of a millennium. the water
flowing heap-pile over stones.
colour wasting into monochrome,
forming into a shore of white
coral, lamenting dead life in its
bones/ nugget drops in an ocean/
one mile/ one here/ one year/
one there/ trees in a folding breeze.
came the sleep of rebirth, the depth
of silence/ floating opium hour.
love in the summer of a young womans
hand, her movement flowing as a voice,
said here is a life/ here my man sleeping,
i watch him/ here my pebble shore. my
nugget life for thoughts sake. my
pleasure found for itself. a reason
for my movement song. night upon night/
depth on depth/ love found/ love finding/
colour come/ a crystal abscess broken.
a spectrum sealing the lips, as the sea
speaks in whispers of bending reeds.

DAVID J. RAINE

this was the spoken life, the way of
parting, as a wave folds out of the sea,
letting its stealing fingers wander on
the sands/ night came/ day was/ the way
of deep thought, as a stone bounces/
bounces life.

the deep sorrow/ essential pain/
water upon water, in the drone
of the surf people see the beauty,
hear the crying. high from the
water comes the sleep, rises the
unwithered body/ and deep black
flashing eyes/ and hair falling,
night is our night, colour our
way, sleep our belonging. darkness
comes with the closing of the door/
the last time/ maybe now. sleep is
for hope/ a death/ a life/ a beyond/
an intimacy complete. this is the
way of the closed eyes/ pleasure in
the burning/ the way, as we love
peace.

ROBIN JOHNSON

TAPESTRY (CIRCA MID-20TH)

He ambles over
looking for the lost shoe
until it stubs him,
but one sock eludes
unraveling him
a bobcat
fretting the length of his moat
wall encountering wall until
the search loses hope for him.
Resigned
he settles for one sock

and two shoes.
Shivery
he limps, almost
he prays
tomorrow's lair will unhide
one warm sock,
finders keepers.
She steps down
from the niche in the wall
cerulean robe and Flemish smile,
eyes limned with gilt earned
centuries before.
She throws back
her cape, moving forward
melon-laden
walking barefoot
across sandstone
into a field of green mint.
As he watches
two shoes and one sock
cremate to ashes
under his paw

ROBIN JOHNSON

HE RISES LION

arching
from sky to sky.
Melons cascade, tumble, burst
ripe-splitting red, yellow, golden
luscious in full sun.
She moves
into him
and through
until spun back
caught, skeined, and bound
by the meld of new shadows.

Struggling
with claws
wresting
inch by inch
untangling the locked
and vaprous forms
they mangle
the grey mesh in two
torn halves
each taking
one
floating and strange.
Free
she moves forward
full, light
and shadow-laden.
Cerulean closes around her
fading her
into her journey
as the quiet beast
thrusts his paw into warm grey
his teeth
pulling shadows
sock-like
up to his scalp.

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KARL KROLOW

VIEW OF A LANDSCAPE

The dead cabbage-roses
Bloom in the sky
The profile of a girl nineteen.
The landscape thereunder
Leans into the west wind
With eyelashes of shadow.
Someone fishes
For carp between
Silent water plants.
The air is a Turkish carpet
On which one journeys
Behind sadness.

Anblick Einer Landschaft, translated by J. Michael Yates.

KARL KROLOW

AWAKENING

Am I saying for the first time : rose ?
Earlier I said
The wrong names.
The minutes
Binding my fingers
Are weightless.
If I feel . . .
Again it will be too late.
The day's eyes
Are still open.
Night has withdrawn
Behind eyelids.

Erwachen, translated by J. Michael Yates.

KARL KROLOW

LANDSCAPE TO THE SOUTH

Beneath the weight of fruit,
The landscape breaks in the knees.
It recovers itself in river-currents
From which hands beckon.
Everywhere doors are pushed open
To smell
To the south.
Evenings, a Moslem moon
Rises from the water
It plunges into every morning.
Between lies the time
Of glasses held in heat
And steps which
Stumble in the air.

Landschaft Nach Süden, translated by J. Michael Yates.

GIL ORLOVITZ

NUMBERS: 15

Where the sun blows a diamond leaf
only the dead have learnt all by heart
and nerve creepers wind among unburst
starshells to think back grief.
There, then, the crystal afloat upon
the dark turns it down, guarding
the blind from staring up at
the socket quarried to play their heart.
I must beg me lenses for my mouth
to draw the wind turning handsprings in
granite, otherwise — underground Adam —
I must tear the sun's leaf from my groin.

EMILIE GLEN

NIGHT MY LIGHT

Barnacle the day
If you like
Night puts a flower in my hand
I am the light of night
Dark of day
Day is in rag tags
Night is whole cloth
Fireworks are for night skies
Birds fly North fly South in the night
Each night sound sunbursts
Comes to its full form
An individual
Night is by ear
City lights breathe night
Depthing black of dark
Is a mountain road
Bounded by a dog barking
Cheeps of awakened birds
Smell of night woods
Dust of day cooled to night
Hear my music
Fashion tonalities
Out of night stuff
Work out a new notation
By the one lamp burning
Let it burn into the smoky quartz start of day
Just to make sure the day letter is here
So I can fold up in gold
And go to sleep

J. T. McINTIRE

TO KNEELING WEALTHS IN GROVES OF SILKSILENT GRASS

Far From Those Sheltering Hills / to Melissa

Kneeling with you smothered in silksilent warewarm
grass,
My heart is stunned by the lariats/of/light about your
eyes,
And the pairedput ponds of lakelaced devotion you have
captured: —
Ah! to what is the faring of trooptinseled kings with
burgundy ties
To havenharems in homes/of/night? Softstay, speak
nothing
But that sassafras tree beyond our vision over those
sheltering hills,
Carry no cries, no cheatrobbed chary chance or
checkchap has made
That sassafras shed its shadesong shape away from us:
—
It is gaygloom shade, and you gleam the light of kings
not yet risen!
With you we shall stop the wind from waring
wakes/of/widows
And estranging men back from peril into their
bloodbred prison
And daydoom! Kneel devotion! take and cherish these
our angels!
Fableforked feathered and tossed armsempthy, feeling
our tantoos
In gathergrass grain/sewn textures of tellable joy!
Theft is only innocence: — we wallow in gainguilt on
tables
Of terrific taptop freedom! Just tip to it, my bleeding
angel,
Aeons awake as the wreckworld stranger stumbles by
us: —
Offer no loaves of makemanger innocence or hours or
streams
Of cabetape; just my jobjangle jailing and this sentence
to swim

Forever in the ignited idyll's/light about your eyes!

FRANCES T. BRINKLEY

HANDS ALSO LAUGHING

a hand reaches
falling how many backward
spaces into the window
and how many ankles past
the time
we stood naked
and the doorway
laughing back
rooms of empty hands
and
hours rang
across empty
doorways
hardly finding
also laughing/ the need
going off to be alone
and touch
of hands in too many
midnights scorching
paths
into the sun

JOAN WHITE

A SELF OF EYES AND SKIN

I have absorbed you time and time again
personal world
multiple and whole
and stripped you down
below the rounded muscle
to the marble bone.
Candidly it's cold

by rock and bone.
I also sympathize,
make flesh, re-dress,
restore the natural whorls
of hair and fingerprints
and on the knitted skin
paint freckles, moles, and clean
silent spaces where the sculptured white
is still an unguessed mystery.
A place of no smile on the flesh
may be a desert waste
and yet it's quiet there,
a long soft rest of skin
as on the arms and legs;
but then I meet your eyes
opaque and beautiful
lengthened in a smile
worldly and personal.

PATRICIA WELLS-FRIEDMAN

THE WALL

Only my breath, trepid,
tight slips across the wall
where the moon pastes
itself
a Japanese toy.

In the white
of this quiet room
lanterns make shadows
of us all.

I must move quickly
past the wall
where spiders wait
like sentries.

I must move
through this tangled night
where spiders wait,
scuttle my mind,
push it
to an edge.

JOEL WEISHAUS

SUMMER LIGHTNING HASTILY EXPOSES NEGATIVES

—for Malcolm

finding them still too black . . .
color travels in guarded tones,
shadows embrace, mate,
bear one another;
splendid nuances go unnoticed, lost
to the gloom, crying
beautiful black tears
within gleaming white spheres
vast visions roll,
blotted by nascent wounds of Eye
the dead have voted not to die
instead they've risen clean
into a grey squalor
where winged horses gallop
the length of dreaming veins.
only to a milky eye
does color vanish
into its forever bed.

ARNOLD KANTROWITZ

A SLICE OF SPRING

She cups a withered apple in her hands.
The sharp edge of winter
dances webs across her face.
She is placid with
the comings and goings of time.
Why upholstered flowers
look good to her:
why the piano lamp
is always out.
Insatiable when it comes to tea
and petits fours,
to Persian cats and Spanish shawls,
she rocks to some long silent waltz.
You see she cannot die
this year or next.
She cannot die until the spring.

MARTIN S. DWORKIN

EVENING GAMES

A place of unfinished buildings,
where the children play,
is the world in ruins,
the future fallen in washed sand:
dead beams and blind window-frames,
severed conduits and random wreckages
of kitchen habits and toilet pieties.
The wars here resurrect the dead,
the victors bear declamatory wounds,
the corpses claim their glory
till the watchman cries,
and crippled captains rise
to race the calling darkness home.

WILLIAM HARRIS

SHIP I

Things by their names
unknown
rock, ship, sea
or dessert after the plates
are cleared away
(the visual debris)
to make room for
a new report
but
by whose eyes
and how's it run
from eye to eye
and what to do
in such a case as this
where
in a moment
all might slip away
up and off itself
behind the deaf stone
falling to the floor
unheard
the pieces
like the old plates
swept behind
their purpose.

WILLIAM HARRIS

THE BED

The day has come
down from hills
inside my room
watching.
before the fullness
of the bed
is empty
watching .
since last early
evening, sleepless
as the clock
watching .
it move on
around the absent
dark
watching .

WILLIAM HARRIS

her sleep beside
the wall where
light comes
watching
her tongue
still holding
to see if she breathes
watching.
the hairy moon
give way
to it, give it away
all caught and gone
watching

WILLIAM HARRIS

THE MEAL

for David Franks

Sitting at the table
talking
eating the landscape,
the roots of it
hang down
fill the bowls
with straight hair
my hair, any hair
we reach out as to pass something
our fingers around
the sky's edge
pull it down
press it to the spills
of voice
made mute by the ache
of wholly possessing it
our lips imitating
vainly
the clouds and other portions
beyond the simple vision
joy
the joyful act
of these difficulties
remain the substance
of our meals

WILLIAM HARRIS

REACH

Do something
a move, gesture, reach out
to take in the sun in your teeth
before, before, before . . .
the day comes loose
its head, shakes all over
from the cold
the heat
be present in reaching
awake to the bait
taste, bite
be hungry
come in, come in
sit down
move, gesture, reach
from where
I look out to
you.

WILLIAM HARRIS

**AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH OF RICHARD HONECK
WHO SPENT 64 YEARS IN PRISON**

Posed,
the man
just stands there
arms outstretched,
head tilted
looking away
from the ocean
into the camera
as if it had
some answer to
all mysteries
as if it had
just signaled some
unknown milestone
in his life.

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FRED COGSWELL

AN EVENING WITH EMILY*

In the raw damp air the street was a long sewer lined with lights—regular rows of street lamps and intermittent blurred squares of windows. At last I found the number and pressed the button.

The voice of one at once fulfilled and relaxed with age: ‘Emily isn’t in yet, and it’s very late. Perhaps you had better come back tomorrow.’

‘I’ve come too far not to see her. May I wait?’

A hesitation. ‘Yes, come in.’ The mask of an old woman looked at me. My knees bent, and I sank into the comforting softness of an armchair; pink, it was in the dim light, and somehow enveloping—like an overripe tomato. Across from me was the window facing the street and framing the blurred bars of light from a Venetian blind across the way.

At my elbow, out of a middle-aged mask, the voice of a woman spoke—neither fulfilled nor relaxed. ‘Milk or lemon?’ This must be Emily’s sister. The other, I knew, was her aunt.

A cup of tea materialized on the table by my elbow. Slowly I sipped and closed my eyes from fatigue. Out of the drifting darkness faintly the words came to me:

‘It’s like Emily to keep us waiting up like this.’

‘You musn’t blame her. After all, her mother died when she was only ten and her father has let her do anything she has liked ever since.’

Silence. Then, sharp with tension, the unfulfilled voice:

‘It isn’t that. It’s that man. He’s here again. It’s his pretty face and his hate that keep Emily away from us.’

Were they talking about me? I hadn’t a pretty face. I opened my eyes to semi-darkness, then adjusted them carefully to light; for there on the wall to the left of the window, shining and white, was ‘him.’ He was no mask, but

a human face—the face of a young man, wide-eyed and tortured with emotion over a naked bust that seemed suspended in air, though next to it and beneath it glimmered the shadowy suggestion of arms, legs, and torso.

‘Who are you?’ he said. I shivered. Where had I seen that face before? Where had I heard that voice?

**Author’s Note: ‘When I was a little girl I always knew there were three Emily’s in me—Emily Bronte, Emily Dickinson, and Emily Carr.’ This remark was made by a friend, last June during the course of a series of personal reminiscences and became completely forgotten by me—or so I thought—until a dream, last September. The next day I wrote down the details of the dream automatically and without revision. The result was this story.*

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FRED COGSWELL

Fred Cogswell

'I'm a friend of Emily —'

'You lie!' he screamed, 'Emily has no friend but me!'— and he rushed at me.

I caught him in my arms, and he jerked me out of the chair. We rolled on the floor together toward a lighter patch in the room. His strength was more nervous than muscular, and I easily mastered him. He broke into sobs:

'I wish I were dead. I wish I were dead. Everybody hates me, and I hate myself. I hate what I am!'

'You don't have to hate what you are,' I said. 'If you don't like what you are, you can always be different.'

'Can I really be somebody else?'

'Yes, if you want to enough. You can be whoever you want to be.'

'Oh, I love you for that,' he said, and put both hands on my shoulders, bringing his face close to mine. 'Kiss me, kiss me.'

And as his face drew nearer me, I saw in the growing light that his hair had burst over his shoulders in glossy waves of black, that his eyes were very large and very blue, that his face had become softer and finer-featured, and that his thin breasts were no longer the breasts of a man but the breasts of a woman. Stranger still was what lay below those breasts. The flesh outlines of a woman's torso were complete, though all the centre was a concave shadow where, it seemed to me, it ought to have been convex. I pushed her away from me.

'You are not Emily.'

'Yes,' she said, 'I am your Emily.'

The crowd was gathering in knots on the edge of the lake below the mill. As I strode rapidly through the rain, I heard

angry voices. ‘Drowned him—’ ‘I bet that witch Emily had something to do with it.’ ‘We’ll make her pay—’

The voices dwindled, and I was alone in moonlight as bright as day—the rain’s aftermath—in the grassy declivity where the giant iron sewer that carries the lake water under the road ends in the gardens of the great mansion. And there, lying on the grass, was Emily, water and mud matting her hair into snaky coils and mottling the ivory whiteness of her limbs—water and mud mingled with touches of some darker substance that could conceivably have been blood. But the eviscerated hollow that was all she was from her breast to her groin gleamed rosy red interspersed with darker lines set in geometric patterns. Quickly she drew me down beside her in the grass.

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FRED COGSWELL

Fred Cogswell

‘You don’t think I’m a murderer, do you?’ she panted. ‘You believe in me no matter what you see and what they say.’

‘Yes,’ I said, ‘I believe in you, no matter what I see or what they say.’

‘I love you.’ She pulled me to her. Suddenly I felt myself engulfed in a soft pliable body that folded round and over me like the moist folds of a giant vagina. Startled, I recoiled. At this moment, a voice came sharp and clear behind me.

‘Emily.’

‘Yes, father.’

‘You naughty girl.’

She struggled to her feet and stood, head hanging like a crestfallen child, and suddenly became slimmer as though her outer body were contracting in a pitiful attempt to hide the nakedness of her hollow viscera.

‘Come with me. You must take your punishment this time.’

Like a whipped dog, she slunk away after her father toward the half-roofed shed at the foot of the cliff.

Inside the great house we sat down, each silent in his appointed place. Costly dishes gleamed in candlelight. At the head of the table sat Emily’s father, calm as a Roman emperor against the din outside.

‘We do not begin,’ he said, ‘until Emily arrives.’

Outside, the intermittent mutter of the mob had become a blurred ominous shouting. There came the sound of rocks crashing from a height.

‘They are stoning the shed,’ I cried. ‘Will no one move?’

No one moved.

I could stand it no longer. I rushed from the table, out the door, into the open. At the cliff's edge, men and women were concentrating upon hurling large and small stones over the cliff to overwhelm the old tool shed.

'Two can play at that game,' I said.

One by one I picked up the frenzied men and women and threw them over the cliff. As they landed upon the hard stones which they had just heaved over, the spirit of their madness changed and they became a search party, flinging aside the stones and clearing away the rubble in a desperate attempt to find Emily. I rushed to join them.

We found her finally at the bottom of the water tank. Tenderly we extricated her and laid her upon the splintered floor. Her eyes were closed, her skin was death-grey, and her visceral hollow was livid and raw as a piece of meat on a butcher's slab.

I felt a hand touch my shoulder. I turned, and there stood her father,

FRED COGSWELL

naked and no longer majestic, but grinning and pointing his finger at the spot where his daughter lay.

'Get that smile off your face, you murderer!' I snapped 'You had better make yourself scarce or this mob will stone you to death.'

There was something so ludicrous in the naked speed of his bowlegged retreat that I dissolved into uncontrollable laughter.

When I came to myself, the crowd had gone, and Emily stood naked and upright in the moonlight. The geometrical pattern and the hollow shell that had been her body beneath her breasts had disappeared and in their place was true, well-proportioned flesh. She was now as completely woman as any woman could be.

I spoke to her, but she neither saw nor heard me. She turned from me into the arms of a man who had walked

through the broken window toward her. Handsome, he was, and young — but his face as he winked at me was the face of her father come again. As their bodies were lost into each other, I saw surrounding them both, thin bars of light like the bars of a golden cage. Then nothing.

‘They’ve just snapped out the light across the way.’

Plaintive and weary, the unfulfilled voice filled up the vacuum. ‘Emily still isn’t home. Maybe she won’t be coming home tonight. If we only had a place to put you —’

I walked down the street. The houses were dark and the rain-filled evening had given way to full moonlight. The stars were high and far in a milky sky, but the lamps that lined the street were as regular as the gold bars of a cage. I moved into the centre of the street and walked looking neither to the right nor to the left.

SETH WADE

MR. MANY

Mr. Many invited creatures to appear; can he sign his name to them at their feet? They are in the ink, little creatures — or dare he say so much?

He awaits continually the coming of one. That they are nowhere until the coming of one is a truth inviting paralysis.

He may be allowed to continue his creatures, but perhaps dare not try to sign his name.

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SETH WADE

A WOMAN SOUND

Scream is a woman sound, he thinks, as he hears himself scream. But he forgets, nurses do not scream. Why do nurses not scream, he screams . . . So that is how it is, he thinks. My sickness is something I marry . . .

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A MATTER OF DISAPPEARANCE

Help. Throw the wedding picture at the wall we'll disappear.
Good enough for them, shouted the man who threw the
wedding picture at the wall. As broken glass subsided, well,
said the woman, we'll just pretend that sound I still hear is
little Poopoo tinkling in his tinkle-pot . . . Under cover of this
superimposed tinkling, little Poopoo throws his tinkle-pot
out the window and goes away.

BROWN MILLER

UPPER GILLS, WRITTEN WITH A SHARP PENCIL

Isn't lower the same as upper except when
madness goes sane? Crawling across night noises.
Except when lungs atrophy in the dull dawn
of a split absurdity? Breaking like pea pods.
Except when my dogless fleas go fart finding
in gas alleys of no-blood? Drilled with nausea.
Except when applied to gills? And then songless.
O, dear upper gills, save me from the rock hunt
of the ages, from the vast
nonsense of my entrance to what is, isn't,
once was, never was, might be, shall be. . . .
My sharp pencil has punctured its own child.

ELLEN L. SHEARER

COMET AND

All the Stars watched
her coming — they said :
' It's Comet the brazen tailed
she'll transfix all men —
chisel them too ' and

she did it
Until up came a Stud
black shiny like coal his
dark dagger made
ecstasy writhe
— a year later
she suckled a foal and
every year after earth
groaned foals black
red and gold — flesh
male and female for
Limbo —
Now: neocomers wait
speakable golden daggered
stable time to transform
body and mind tuned to
soul and heart in
Erotologies.

Myles Eric Ludwig

RABBIT (POR PEPITO)

I suppose you know that very few stories are written about people, nowadays. Mostly, they're about situations or ideas or something like that—you know what I mean, a story is about man versus something or it's very existential etc. Well, this story is about one person that I know.

I met Tina Levin at one of those Miss-Somebody-Or-Other type finishing schools in New York City. You know the kind of school I mean, the kind of place that's really a home for emotionally-wayward but wealthy young ladies? The name isn't important. It could have been Miss Simpleton's, you know. I mean I don't want to make any kind of a scandal or anything.

This really is just about one, single, solitary person, and if you want to get any kind of universal meaning out it, then you go right ahead. Only don't blame me if you don't agree with that message, because it's your own in the first place and it's none of my business if you disagree with yourself. Anyway, the way you tell a story about a person is to, first, tell some true things that you know about them and then to tell about at least one or two events to kind of illustrate the things you mean. The last thing is to say what finally happened, or at least why you're telling a story.

OK? Anyway, when I met Tina was when I was going through my 'masculine protest' period—you know, Marlene Dietrich-circa 1940 and all that jazz. I suppose that's when I was really sick. I mean I used to do real crazy things. Like I always wore those steel-rimmed glasses and things . . . I mean there was never anything wrong with my eyes or anything, but I just felt that I should wear them. And then, like I didn't talk to anybody or go to class . . . I mean I'd just sit up in my room and eat Fudge Royal Ice Cream all day so that I could get fat.

Well, that's when I met Tina. See, she came at the beginning of the second term. Right away I had a real thing for her. I mean I just wanted to throw away the whole ice cream bit and hold onto her for the rest of my life. You know what I mean? I don't want to say that I loved her or anything, but it's like I really wanted to tell her that I did. See, she was one of those kind of girls who tell you they don't wear panties because if they're ever found dead on the highway they don't want anyone to think that they're a lady or anything. And she talked in a real nutty way too.

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Like she was always saying 'really' and 'top drawer' as if it was the most profound thing ever said. I don't know, but she always made me think of one of those . . . well, like the daughter of a railroad executive who jumps off the top of the Gotham Hotel because she's afraid of trains. You know what I mean? But anyway, I really wanted to do things for this girl. I mean she was the lousiest dresser that I ever saw. I know she could afford to be, 'cause her grandfather was probably one of the richest men in the country; but it wasn't like she was putting on a Bohemian act or something — she just had lousy taste. She always wore the wrong kind of makeup and everything. And she was real tall and skinny, and I don't mean thin, I mean skinny, and she had this one goddamn black dress which made her look like a scarecrow that even the crows would laugh at. Even though I acted the way I did, I knew about those kinds of things. So I fixed her up.

I mean I took her shopping in all those great stores on Fifth Avenue, and I used to fix her hair for her and put on her makeup and everything. I mean I treated her like she was a doll or something. And she really dug that, 'cause nobody had ever bothered to do those kind of things for her, you know. See — her father shot himself when she was thirteen. The way she talked about him, I figured he was a real Seymour Glass type of character. And her mother was a

real lush and was always in some kind of sanitarium. She lived with her grandparents in this . . . But, wait a minute. I'll tell you about it when I get to the illustrating part of the story.

Anyway, after a couple of months, our thing together really grew. I mean she started talking about things that she wanted to do for me. Like she wanted to take me around New York and introduce me to what she called 'verry influ-ential people, dear.' Well, maybe I was only eighteen, but I wasn't any kid who was lost in the big city. I mean I had been to ballet school and all that, and once I went out with a real big producer and Dietrich was there and she gave me her phone number and everything. So you can see how I felt when Tina started coming on with that crap. I mean I kind of resented it at first . . . See — I hate people to do things for me unless they really want to . . . But then I started to feel kind of sorry for her, you know. Like I realized that this was her way of telling me that she really dug me and all that. You know, like if a fourteen-year-old kid asks his pretty teacher if she'll go steady with him? Well, then I was mad at myself for feeling sorry for her, but it didn't last too long . . . the feeling sorry, I mean.

So, for a long time we were kind of great together. She got permission

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to move into my room and then we used to stay up all night talking about crazy things — I mean they were so crazy I wouldn't even tell you about them. Boy, I can remember that. See, I used to sit in this rocking chair that I had, with my feet on the radiator, and I would rock a little bit while I smoked about a billion goddamn cigarettes — I was smoking Luckies then. And Tina would be on my bed with her head hanging off the foot and we'd talk like that all night. I know she hated when I smoked. See, you weren't supposed to smoke at school, but I was always breaking rules. But the reason she hated my smoking was because she wanted to do it, herself — only she was afraid. I suppose that's another reason why Tina liked me so much; I mean I was always doing the things that she wanted to do. Course, she didn't know that I really had to force myself to do them.

Anyway, we were together like that, like twins, for the rest of the term. I really mean together too. Everything I did, Tina had to do. Even a silly thing like not handing in an English theme or something. The only thing was that if I did something wrong — or not right anyway — and she did it too, she would secretly do the right thing later on. I mean like that English theme business. I didn't feel like doing one, so I didn't. Then Tina made up some excuse for not doing one, and she didn't. Only I found out later on that she did hand it in . . . but she never told me that.

But then, there was that time when I was really sick, you know, like despondent and everything, and played the cut-wrists bit. Well, when I was in the hospital, I got this long letter from Tina filled with a bunch of adolescent crap about man being unable to communicate with man and a load of quotations from Dostoevski and just about every Existentialist that ever picked up a goddamn pencil. And right at the end of the letter was this one little quotation that I never heard before:

The sound of one hand clapping
Is the sound of love.

It was kind of great I suppose, but it sure as hell didn't make me feel any cheerier. But to top it off, Tina ended the letter by telling me that I had done the right thing and that 'suicide is the only path to salvation' and that she was going to kill herself as soon as she finished the letter. Only she didn't — see — because she came to see me a day later, and when I mentioned the thing to her, she just ignored it as if she'd never said anything like that. What she did do was tell me that when I got better and everything, I could always come and stay with her 'cause she thought that I was really top drawer. Well, I had to stay in the hospital for about a month, so I never did finish school. And Tina spent the summer in

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South America. I wrote to her a couple of times, but I never got an answer. So I figured the hell with her. But when I got back to New York in October . . . see, I had to spend time with my parents . . .

Ok. Well, see, I went back to New York in October. I mean convinced my goddamn parents that I was semi-sane anyway, and talked them into sending me to this acting school. Well, everything was really going along great for a while, you know. I mean I was with some really sharp people and I was doing what I wanted and like it was the whole great New York bit. Then, one night, I got this phone call from Tina. Well, man, it was like I was really shocked. You know, to hear from her just like that. Anyway, she sounded very bad and insisted that she had to see me pretty soon or she'd go out of her head. She told me to meet her in front of Tiffany's at six the next morning and then she hung up before I even had a chance to say good-bye or anything. Well, I knew Tina pretty well. I mean she was kind of noted for her

scenes, you know. And I knew that she wasn't going anyplace at six in the morning . . . no matter how damn desperate she was.

Course, I was right. I got there at seven-thirty, and Tina didn't show up for another hour. Well, the first thing she did was ask me to buy her a drink—I mean even before she said hello or anything. So we walked down to this Irish place on Third and I bought her a beer. I came on to her real good and everything. I mean I asked her all the right questions about health and family and told her how glad I was to see her and everything. Then, like all of a sudden, she started talking and she didn't stop for two hours.

First, she told me that she was back in school, but that she was going to quit because I wasn't there and that she hated school and she hated me for not being there. Then she said something about being married for two weeks to some 'smelly South American' and having all kinds of 'mad affairs' with a dozen more. She told me about all kinds of problems at home and everything and then she said that she was going home for Thanksgiving, but she couldn't go alone 'cause a whole load of men were after her and I had to go with her as protection or something. I said sure I would go. I mean I was real amazed and everything, but still . . . and, you know, like I tried to calm her down. But she just stood up and said she'd call me and ran . . . I mean ran . . . out of the damn bar. Well, I couldn't catch her. I tried to get in touch with her for about two weeks, but she refused to see me. Once she left a message saying that she would call when she was ready.

Then she calls me again. It was exactly two weeks and four days after

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her first call. She told me to pack my things 'cause she was taking a cab right over to pick me up and we were making the next plane home. Well, I was so glad to hear from her that I just said Ok. She was at my place in about forty minutes, and I was waiting outside. I got in the cab. We drove to the airport. We got on the plane. And in a couple of hours we were in New Orleans. I mean, like that's how the trip went. Neither of us said a goddamn word to each other for the entire day. I suppose I should have realized that it was kind of an omen of what was going to happen when we got to her house. I'll tell you, boy, I never will forget those two weeks that I spent in New Orleans with Tina. But now I'm going to tell you about these three incidents that kind of added up to be the real climax of our relationship. See, this is the illustrating part of the story.

The first thing I have to do is tell you about Tina's house. She lived in No. 3 Audubon Lane — she always called it 'bird street' — in a decaying old castle. I mean the first thing I thought of when I saw it was that story by Poe. You know, *The Fall of the House of Usher*? I mean it was really that kind of place. The house was choked full of *tres distingué* type Negro servants and was overseen by this English governess whose name should have been Miss Ice. And every night at seven forty-five, Tina's grandparents, their formal dress covered by silk matching bathrobes, were wheeled down from their third-floor suite and into the grand dining room . . . or hall, as they called it. I guess that hall was more appropriate anyway. I mean the goddamn thing felt like a stone corridor or something. Tina and I would wait at the dining-hall doors for them. And when they got there, she would call them 'crippled bastards' in a normal tone of voice and then she would kind of shout hello and good evening and all that jazz. See, they were pretty near deaf. Well anyway, you could fill in the details about the rest of the

house. But not about Tina's room.

Like she had this monstrous room. And it was completely white. I mean even the furniture was white. It had one wall of bookshelves, only they were empty. In fact the only thing in the room that clashed, except the people, was this little rabbit. I mean it was one of those stuffed toy animals. It had a funny green body, a white face, and pink ears. And it was raggedy as hell. I mean it looked as if somebody had been chewing on it for about nineteen years. And this rabbit, Tina never called it anything but that, kind of rested of a small table at the foot of the bed. So, if you were sitting on the bed, you could see its little face.

Anyway, it was in this goddamn room that the whole thing started. I

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mean for about twelve days we had a pretty good time. Like Tina took me all around the city and everything. I mean, we weren't really talking to each other, though — just about superficial things. But, we had a good time anyway. But, every night before we went home, Tina always stopped at this gay bar. Like she would walk in, sit at the bar, order one drink and just stare at everybody. Then she would kind of look at me in a funny way. Well, I used to get a little embarrassed. I mean I ran around with a kind of gay group in New York and everything, but I didn't like the way Tina played that scene. You know what I mean. Anyway, we would stay there for about fifteen minutes and then she would laugh a little bit and shake her head and say 'let's get the hell out of here.' I mean we did this every goddamn night.

Then, one night after we got home from the bar, Tina said she wanted to talk to me about something very important. So we went up to her room. Well, no sooner did I close the door than she starts ripping off her clothes. Then she turns around to face me . . . I was standing next to the rabbit . . . and she puts her hands under her breasts, you know. Then

she starts telling me that I'm queer and that I should get excited and don't I want her and all that jazz. Well, man, like I didn't know what to say. I mean first I wanted to laugh and then I wanted to cry. You know? Well, what I did was pick up the rabbit and throw it at her. Like just to shut her up. Then she fell down on the bed and started crying and screaming at me that I was a filthy queer and I better get out of her goddamn house and everything. I went over to her and tried to say something to quiet her a little, but that only made her yell more. So, I kind of thought that maybe if I left her alone, she'd be ok.

I guess I did the right thing, because a little while later she knocked on my door. She was still naked, but she came in and apologized and everything. I tried to talk to her, but she just told me not to worry. She kissed me on the forehead and went back to her room. Well, I didn't know what to do or anything. Anyway, I kind of cried myself to sleep.

Well, I got up pretty late the next day and I was still real upset. I mean I wasn't angry or anything . . . it was just that I really didn't understand what happened. You know what I mean? Anyway, when I got out of bed, I found this note from Tina. It was written in a kind of childish scrawl and said that she'd gone out to her grandmother's farm for the day but that she'd see me at the party that night. She was planning to have this big party. I mean like she had invited about a million different kinds of people. I didn't want to go 'cause I was a little afraid,

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you know. But I promised her. Anyway, I guessed that she would be ok and everything.

So, I got dressed and went out. I was still feeling kind of down though, and I thought I might go for a drink. Well, I went to that gay bar . . . the one Tina and I had gone to. Don't ask me why. Maybe I felt like I needed a little acceptance or something. Anyway, I met this girl there and

we had a couple of drinks together and talked a little bit, you know. Then we left the place and were walking around the city. I guess I was kind of high though, 'cause everything that happened in the next few hours is still kind of fuzzy in my mind. But I do remember that we were walking down this little alley-like and we were holding hands. All of a sudden this cop car pulls up and a cop jumps out and says 'ok, baby, get in the car.' Well, man, like I said what the hell for. Then that ugly bastard shoots out his hand and grabs a hold of my crotch and puts his stinking face right up next to me and says "cause we don't want any goddamn queers in New Orleans.'

The next thing I knew was that I was shoved into the car, I mean me and the other girl too, and we were heading for the police station. I remember yelling about my rights and all that jazz, but nobody was listening. See, I was wearing a pair of pants with a zipper in the front and like that's a goddamn crime in New Orleans! Anyway, nobody listened to a word I said, and I was being held on twenty-five dollar bond. Man, I had two bucks in my pocket and I knew two people in New Orleans, Tina and a guy from New York. Well, I got in touch with Tina first. I mean I had to go through a lot of crap to reach her, but I finally did. If you thought the night before was bad, you should have heard her on the phone. I mean she acted like a real goddamn bitch. She started coming on with this queer jazz again and then she said that she couldn't get involved in this sort of thing and that when I got out, I should take a cab to her house, only I should get off a block away and walk so that nobody would know anything — and that I better get out because she was expecting me to be at the party! Man, I mean I was really furious! But, like the amazing thing was, I understood how she felt, you know. I mean I couldn't stay mad at her. So I called this guy and he came down and bailed me out, and then I did what Tina told me.

When I got to her house, the party had already started. So I went upstairs to change into a dress and everything. I mean I was still kind of angry and everything, but I thought I would be able to talk to her. Well, I came downstairs and there was Tina, waiting for me. She took me by the arm and led me to the center of the room. Then she put her

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arms in the air and told everybody to be quiet. Then, when it was real quiet, Tina took my arm again and said 'ladies and gentlemen, I want you to meet my queer friend who just got out of jail.' That was it, man. I mean I just went crazy. I started hitting her and crying and everything. A bunch of people had to pull me off her. I ran upstairs and packed a couple of things in a real hurry. Man, I was like out of that goddamn house in about fifteen minutes. I went back to New York on the train and I cried all the way. After I had gotten back and kind of calmed down a little, I tried to write her a few times, but I never could really say anything. I mean I really wanted to apologize for the way I behaved. How do you like that? I mean she should have written or something, but she never did. I really wanted to talk to her, but I couldn't do that either. I mean I'm a person too, you know. And you just can't keep throwing people away like they were garbage or something and expect them to be nice anyway. I mean she always told me that I was her only friend and everything; but, still, it's hard to get over something like that, you know. Anyway, about a month ago, I got this package from New Orleans. It was Tina's rabbit. See, a couple of months after I left, she shot herself and she left a note which said two things. One was to send the rabbit to me and the other was that quotation from the only letter that she had written to me: The sound of one hand clapping Is the sound of love. But, see I didn't know that she had killed herself. So I called her house to find out why she sent the rabbit. I mean, I really understood why, but I wanted to talk to her real bad and this kind of gave me an excuse. That's how I learned what she had done. Miss Ice told me. She had found Tina on her bed. She had a gun in one hand and the ears of the rabbit in the other. When I heard that, like you have no idea how shaken I was. I mean I wanted to kill myself so badly that I felt as if I was already dead. But a friend of mine was

with me then, and he really helped me. You know, I felt guilty . . . like as if it was my fault that she was dead. You know what I mean? Like if I had stayed, or if I hadn't gotten so upset and everything . . . but that's kind of stupid in a way, I suppose. I mean . . . I don't know. I still have the rabbit and everything and every time I look at it, I see Tina's face. I mean I really can't believe she's dead, you know. It's as if . . . Wait a minute, the goddamr phone is ringing.

THREE TALES OF OUR TIME

Bill Klaus

HEMALOID

Brian Hemaloid was a mole who lived underneath Mrs. Bright-Sternway's garden. And Brian Hemaloid irritated Mrs. Bright-Sternway very much indeed, for he dug long ridges in the midst of Mrs. Bright-Sternway's roses. With long mole ridges in her rose garden, it would be impossible for Mrs. Bright-Sternway to win first prize in the Rose Division of the annual Town Garden Contest.

Every morning, Mrs. Bright-Sternway would go out to her rose garden and yell down the hole at the end of the mole ridge that Brian Hemaloid had made the night before.

'Brian Hemaloid!' she would yell. 'Can you hear me?'

Brian Hemaloid would be eating breakfast and would ignore Mrs. Bright-Sternway, who would continue: 'You are an evil mole, you are, and I shall find you and hunt you out and remove you from the face of the earth!'

But by the time she had finished this speech, Brian Hemaloid would be asleep.

One day, after digging a particularly long and satisfying mole ridge, Brian Hemaloid was eating breakfast as usual. But halfway through his ham and eggs, he noticed that something was very strange.

'I wonder why Mrs. Bright-Sternway didn't come out to yell at me today?' he asked. 'It's all very odd.' And carefully, quietly, he went to the end of the mole hole and peered out to see what was happening.

A great many people were standing outside Mrs. Bright-Sternway's front door, crying and shaking their heads. Brian Hemaloid, just like other moles, couldn't see too well, but he could make out the voices of some of the

people.

'Too bad,' one said.

'A tragic thing,' said another.

'She passed away in the prime of life,' said a third. And Brian Hemaloid knew that Mrs. Bright-Sternway would never again yell at him in the morning.

The next tenants of the house were Mr. and Mrs. Crumpley, who raised sunflowers. Brian Hemaloid made his mole ridges every day as usual, and every morning while he was eating his breakfast, Mr. and Mrs. Crumpley would come out to the mole ridge which Brian Hemaloid had made the night before. 'Brian Hemaloid!' they would yell. 'Can you hear us?'

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You are an evil mole, you are, and we shall find you and hunt you out and remove you from the face of the earth!'

But by the time they had finished this speech, Brian Hemaloid would be asleep.

One day, Mr. and Mrs. Crumpley did not yell down the mole hole. Carefully, quietly, Brian went out to the end of the mole hole to see what was happening.

A cross was burning on the front lawn, and men in sheets were yelling: 'No niggers here! The blacks must go! Spooks keep out!' Brian Hemaloid didn't understand what was happening, although he thought about it for a long time. All in all, he felt puzzled.

Several days later, as he was finishing his breakfast, a shatteringly loud voice came yelling down at him from outside the mole hole. 'Brian Hemaloid!' came the voice. 'You's a evil mole, and ah's gonna wipe you from de face of de earth!'

But by then, of course, Brian was fast asleep.

MR. LIGGETT JOINS THE PEACE CORPS

It was in the interest of international understanding that Mr. A. J. Liggett joined the Peace Corps. As he put it: 'I want all the nations to understand that niggers are no damn good.'

After preliminary screening, which Mr. Liggett waived, he was assigned to a survival-training course in Puerto Rico. 'This is the part where they give us the spicks to get acquainted with,' Mr. Liggett explained to his corps mates. 'Then, after that, they send us out to teach the niggers.' He paused for a moment and thought. 'Ah can hardly wait,' he said to Mr. Jezemunk, a Quaker from Salt Lake City.

'Be thee kind and patient,' said Mr. Jezemunk, 'with our black brethren.'

'Be thee full of shit,' answered Mr. Liggett.

The overseas trip to Africa was a violent one, and Mr. Liggett spent much time leaning over the rail. 'The only way I can stand it,' he explained, 'is to imagine that the sea is full of niggers.'

Upon reaching his destination, Mr. Liggett was sent into equatorial Africa to teach arithmetic. On his first day as a teacher, he stubbed his thumb on the chalk. 'Can anybody tell me where a duuuuuhctor is?' he asked the class.

A small boy pointed toward a nearby hill, and Mr. Liggett climbed it. On the other side, a bearded man was ministering to the sick.

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'I have this thuuuhb,' explained Mr. Liggett, 'which I stubbed on the chalk.'

The doctor gave Mr. Liggett an injection and went inside the hospital. A moment later the sounds of a Bach toccata being played on an organ could be heard throughout the forest. As Mr. Liggett went back over the hill, he asked himself: 'What did that doctor inject me with? Formaldehyde?'

Suddenly there was a rustling, and a boa constrictor appeared in the path. It coiled around Mr. Liggett before he could get away.

That evening, Mr. Jezemunk, on his way to visit three wives, saw the snake as it crawled into the bush.

'The ways of the Lord are many and various,' he commented. From inside the snake came a muffled voice, which yelled words which were unintelligible.

'So be thee, thou snake,' said Mr. Jezemunk.

MR. LIGGETT FINDS HIS IDENTITY

It was in the spring of 1963 that A. J. Liggett, upholder and defender of minority groups, took a bus to Birmingham, Alabama, to participate in a display of national solidarity and civic pride.

Mr. Liggett had volunteered to operate one of the large hoses which were used to subdue intransigent and unruly Negroes who were demonstrating in the streets of Birmingham for voting privileges.

'See? Ah turns the hose on the niggers, it goes "squeeeeeeish!'" said Mr. Liggett, in his adenoidal voice. And as he made this remark, he turned the hose on full blast. The nozzle jumped out of his hand and a sharp stream of water smashed at Mr. Liggett's face.

‘Wheah is that huuuhse?’ asked Mr. Liggett. The hose was by now dancing and bouncing down the street. ‘Ah got a runaway huuuhse!’

‘Mad hose!’ came the cry from down the street, and the hose performed mad spirals and gyrations.

‘That huuuhse must be in conspiracy with the niggers,’ said Mr. Liggett, as he watched it twirl and spray a squad of policemen.

A barking came from around the corner. ‘It’s de dogs! Dey’s turnin’ de dogs loose on us!’ came the cry from the massed Negroes. One of the policemen called out: ‘All right, you niggers, go back to niggertown. These here dogs are trained to sniff out niggers and only niggers.’

At that, three dogs broke loose and headed for Mr. Liggett. ‘Nuuuh! Nuuuh!’ he yelled, ‘leave me aluuuhme! Ah’m one of youall!’

The smallest dog ripped out the seat of Mr. Liggett’s pants.

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Martin Luther King walked over to Mr. Liggett, who was soaked and standing in a puddle. He helped Mr. Liggett to his feet. ‘Glad to know you’re one of us,’ he said.

‘Yassuh,’ answered Mr. Liggett, and tipped his dishpan hat. Most of what spilled out was water.

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THERE'S NO SMILE LIKE A MOTHER'S SMILE

The Entr'acte is noisy, smoky, rosy-lit, small; when I stepped through the door, I was already on the crowded dance floor.

The hostess smiled. I called to her: 'I'm trying to get to the bar.' She grabbed my left hand with warm fingers. 'Here, I'll get you through.'

She smiled at me again, a charming smile; and then I slugged her, poor girl. She fell down, knocked out, I guess; but I didn't wait to see. I made it quick out the door and around the corner and off in my car. I drove for blocks and blocks toward the beach, making many turns, pounding the seat with my right fist, talking to myself.

'Why do I do these things? The girl was only smiling at me. I'll land in jail one day, or worse. And she was such a nice girl too, not one of those snarling bitches with a smile like a barracuda you usually find in those places. A pretty smile. She was smiling when I hit her, a smile like Mother's; in fact, she looked a lot like Mother looked years ago. For instance, on the boat going to Europe when Mother was at the Captain's party, dancing in that long evening dress, pale green, and the men asked her to take a walk on deck in the fresh air and she turned to me with her smile and said: "But here is my escort, here is my bodyguard . . .," and we took a stroll around the deck, just we two, she waving a chiffon handkerchief so fragrant with *Nuit Blanche* and I walking carefully on the railing side ('as a young gentleman should,' she instructed); and I was careful to take her elbow as she stepped over the doorsill back into the ship's saloon and I held her chair as she sat down, poor dumb downtrodden bastard that I was at twelve or thirteen. Somehow, no other parties have ever seemed so magical as those on shipboard .

..’

I shook myself awake; I was driving along the beach highway; I hadn’t been followed. Had the poor girl come to by now? I was still shaky, so I turned in to a bar-restaurant on the beach.

I got a scotch-on-the-rocks and sat staring at the bottles behind the bar. A juke-box blared, couples chatted at tables, floodlights glittered on the surf beyond the terrace. I didn’t look. I wanted to collect myself, to free myself of whatever had gotten into me. I sat there, smoking, listening to the records, one of which was mixed badly: a woman’s voice came murmuring through the music. ‘Pardon me, sir, pardon me . . .’ Then I

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felt a touch on my sleeve. I jumped. At my right two women were sitting; the nearer one was smiling and saying: ‘Pardon me, do you have a pen I might borrow?’

‘Why yes, here’s one.’

She wrote on a folder of matches and gave the pen back to me. ‘My friend here told me about a job and gave me the name of a company.’

‘Well, I wish you luck.’

‘Oh, I always get along.’

She was a redhead; her friend was a blonde. ‘Maybe you girls would like a drink,’ I offered. They looked at each other. ‘Why, thank you, you’re very kind,’ the blonde replied. I ordered the drinks and lit a cigarette for the redhead next to me. I glanced at her figure, but couldn’t judge in the dim light. She had on a pale green dress.

‘You look just like a Leo,’ she was saying. ‘I bet your birthday is around the first of August.’

‘Pretty close. And what are you? Virgo, maybe?’

She smiled. ‘No, I’m Scorpio, so different from your sign. Leos are terribly practical and outward but Scorpions are terribly sensitive and ruled by the emotions, mostly love . . .’

'That could be any woman,' I said, trying to be clever.

'Oh, look, there's a fishing boat,' the blonde interrupted. 'Do they fish at night?' We looked around: a boat was sailing along, lit by the moon and then by floodlights.

'I'm going out to look at it,' the redhead spoke up. 'Come on.'

'Not me,' answered the blonde, 'I've still got my cough.'

But I followed the redhead. I touched her elbow to help her over the doorsill to the terrace. Outside, in the sea air, with the surf below, it was almost like shipboard, like sailing to Europe. What had Mother said, pointing out to sea? 'Over there is France, just over the horizon.'

'Nonsense,' smiled the redhead, 'the only land over that way is Catalina.'

Had I spoken? I said: 'Let's go back in. It's a little chilly here in the wind.'

'Oh, I just want to watch the boat a minute. I left my scarf at the bar. I'll be warm enough with that.' She was very poised.

'I'll go get it,' I said before I could think; and so I went in for her damn scarf — poor self-effacing flunkey that I am — and I came back with it. Yes, the terrace was almost like a ship's deck: I felt it heave under my feet, and the ship's lights were shining on the bow waves that foamed and slid by, and far over there were maybe the lights of France.

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The redhead strolled to the far end of the terrace out of the glare of light. I followed with the scarf. Her neck and back were white in the moonlight above the pale green dress. I shook out the scarf. It smelled of *Nuit Blanche*. My palms ached from clutching the scarf.

She smiled. 'Will you put it around my shoulders?' And I — poor dutiful dumb well-meaning bastard that I am — took the scarf . . . and wrapped it around her neck and drew it tight with all my strength, pressing her body against me. Her

eyes bulged and her face was beet-red even in the moonlight and her legs were kicking, but I only pulled the scarf tighter. I suppose anybody looking at us from the bar would have thought we were necking in the shadows, standing by the railing with the crashing of the surf below. She couldn't utter a sound of course, and her body strained against me until I thought she would burst out of my grip. Then all of a sudden she fell limp, and I was free, free at last, free to be myself; and just then I heard a scream and turned around. There was her damn stupid friend, the blonde, running back into the bar, yelping and shouting to the others . . .

THE TALENT VS. ITS IMAGE

A. Fredric Franklyn

IS THERE A CINEMATIC ACTING ART? Nobody has ever laid down any formal standards for motion-picture acting, per se. At any rate, no one has done this in the same sense that so many diverse authorities have advanced general theories of acting, or has done this in the sense of the specific canons laid down—for instance, for the stage by the various method approaches.

In a purely mechanical way, as in any media, there is a certain amount of technical knowledge which the cinema-acting tyro must acquire: He must learn how to spot . . . how to move from and to a mark. He must learn how to turn his head and body and how to hold them for his best advantage in terms of camera angles. The make-up he uses and the way he applies it, too, are different from theatrical make-up, although the beginning actor in cinema has more help with this than he would in theatre.

More significantly (and we touch now on an area which represents something closer to a fundamental difference, one of more than just technique), the new film actor must learn cinematic values. He must learn the styles and methods of projecting and reacting to screen emotions. These have their own kinds of modifications from the ones called for by the same emotions in theatre.

In brief, the beginning film actor must learn all the special tricks and techniques of performance (which underscore rather than define the work choices) required by the particular medium.

But these exist, in other forms, for the stage too . . . as for any media. There are special patterns of movement for the stage. There is a stage make-up. And there is a style of

emotive projection and response which is especially suitable to the theatre. This last, as already mentioned, is more to the point. What we are speaking of is less a question of the inevitable technical differences among media than one of the kind of fundamental distinctions which determine the very nature of a craft or of an art form. Is the art of cinematic acting substantially different, in any essential, from the same art as it is practiced in the theatre?

That the two kinds of performers do not externalize emotion in identically the same fashion (as I've previously pointed out) suggests at least one basic difference. For an instance, movement itself must be more pronounced in theatre, where there normally exists an irreducible minimum distance between the actor and his audience. Of course, in the cinematic form it is possible, at least visually, to obliterate this distance. In medium shots, close-ups, etc., it's a simple matter to bring the performer as close to his audience as seems desirable; and additionally, at any point, to exchange an intimate view for a variety of more distant ones of the same subject.

It's also possible, on the screen, to observe the phenomenon of gesture from virtually an unlimited number of angles and approaches. The available variety is so great, in fact, that it's possible to alter the very nature of a gesture just by the way in which director and photographer choose to view it.

The easy access to a performer's face, which the camera permits in any degree of proximity, is perhaps the most crucial difference between stage and screen acting. But this is a distinction imposed upon his performance from the outside, in the sense that it does not represent the kind of inner choices an actor may make from his own instrument (i.e., himself).

And even more complex exigencies of media exist in the cinema. It behooves the apprentice to acquaint himself with

them. Their connection with the quality of individual performances is not at all always immediately evident. (This is especially true among actors whose experience has been limited to the stage and who are making their first films.)

One such requirement is the system, in filming, of using a master shot from which the director can cut away to view his actors more individually in one-shots, two-shots, close-ups, and so on. The same system is out of the question, of course, on any ordinary stage. This enables the cinematic director to make an enormously greater personal statement, against the tide of howsoever-compelling a script, than would be possible for him with the dictates of the same dialogue on the stage.

But we are here considering the actor's viewpoint . . . What happens to the choices he makes to get his character when the takes and cover shots of his scenes reach the editing stage? Experienced screen actors well know how much of the most satisfying performances are lost sometimes on a cutting-room floor. They know, too, how much, conversely in the hands of a really great film editor, it's astonishingly possible to redeem the most mediocre acting.

The first thing learned by any actor, or director, or any author writing for stage or screen, is that they are involved in a cooperative enterprise. Their personal or individual statements must be achieved within the larger framework of a complex undertaking in which all sorts of other artists and technicians are participating. Perhaps that is the core of their separate arts for all three, the actor, the director, and the screen writer or playwright: preserving the identity of their own individual intents without distorting the whole.... As each of them studies his craft and works at it, he learns, to the extent his personal instrument permits, to resolve the apparent dilemma in terms of its application in his own career.

There is a primary step which the audience, also, may take in the direction of an overall understanding of what is

happening. (I mean, a comprehension which exceeds merely following a plot outline or cheering the hero and hissing at the villain.) In the forefront of a critical response, what the audience may do is retain awareness that in any stage or screen production there are many separate achievements.

This is true both in the sense of qualitative differences and in the sense of the diverse intentions which have been unified for the sake of the completed stage play or screen play. It is the goal of this unification, more than any other single factor—and it is essential to understand this—which modifies each and every one of these distinct and disparate accomplishments.

We have observed the existence of at least one generic distinction between stage and screen acting. And there are others; perhaps more decisive ones. (We shall discuss these presently.) But there are also similarities. Even assuming the latter and making allowances for the former, however, it is questionable in my own mind if the nature of the acting craft itself does not undergo too complete a metamorphosis in the cinema.

How deeply into the form of bas relief is it possible for painting to get before it ceases to become painting and begins to become sculpture? It seems to me there are distinctions for motion-picture actors which are so demanding that the end product they require, by way of performance, may not actually be acting at all, but something else entirely.

The stage actor deals directly with his audience. The motion-picture actor must first deal with all the machinery between the audience and himself. This is surely one such distinction. Another is that, once a play is out of the rehearsal stage, the actor works exclusively with his audience and with other actors. He is permitted this concentration in uninterrupted performances, and may return to the same uninterrupted flow for each evening's

performance. Barring accident, of course, the spell of the drama which this singleminded concentration weaves for the audience is unbroken from the start of each performance to its finish.

In motion-picture acting, we begin with the performer on his mark. He is in the midst, not only of the set and of all the apparatus and paraphernalia called for by the scene, but is confronted as well—in the background of the background—by all the equipment and technicians required mechanically to ‘print’ and record his activity. With all this, he must also perform against the intent of other actors.

How is it possible for him to get off an honest fakery, even for thirty seconds or so at a time, under the circumstances of so many external pressures? What kind of equipment, built into his own instrument and background, can he rely upon to score for him in all this chaos, so that he can project something which agrees with the script, the mechanical agencies, the director’s ideas, the things the other actors are doing, and finally . . . his own intent?

The proscenium actor sweats through some portion of this kind of thing in rehearsals, of course. And, as already indicated, he has the greater obligation—with a minimum of impedimenta—to sustain a performance without interruption for its entire length. Even in supporting roles, that’s a good deal longer than a minute or two at a time! But, as also previously noted, he has an opportunity, in the sphere of such length, to work directly upon his audience with his performance. From moment to moment he can be continually creative.

The other thing he has going for him, as mentioned before, is continuity. He can build from one emotional level to another. He can work with tempo. That’s a tricky facet of acting, because it changes unceasingly from scene to scene and from performance to performance; and it depends, also, on what the others in the cast are doing. But this is the sort

of element with which an actor can work to bring something fresh to each performance of the same play.

Obviously, this kind of scope is lacking entirely for the cinema actor. In motion pictures, the shooting sequence is determined by budget imperatives, without regard to the dramatic continuity of the screen play. The shooting order is dictated, rather, by such considerations as the arrangement of a day's shooting schedule to get all the daylight exteriors in a particular locale—sometimes sending a separate unit, with its own photographer, unit director, et al on location to get all the scenes for a particular sequence. Then, we have pre-planning with studio carpenters, set designers, et al, to have everything ready to get all the interiors in which certain of the supporting actors are going to work during another day's shooting. The crowd scenes must be scheduled for still another day's shooting especially where great numbers of extras are required for a particular film, and so on. . . . The screen actor has to shuttle back and forth between the different beats and segments of his performance.

Because of his larger sequential opportunity, the stage actor deals with the actual content of the drama. Lacking both length and progression because of the necessity to chop up his performance and to deliver it piecemeal, the screen actor deals only in the kinds of effects which he happens incidentally to have in his repertoire—often regardless of their real application in particular roles.

From beat to beat, from activity to activity, the stage actor keeps his emotional catharsis intact. But the screen actor repeatedly abandons it, because of the production's jumbled continuity and whenever the director yells cut. No matter how fine an actor he may be, he must either repeatedly get back into the immediate demands and the long-range goals of his role or continually lose force and progression from the sheer mechanics of production!

What the screen play's Gestalten, as well as any given scene's necessities, require from the actor is constantly renewed preparation. The need for this repeatedly-refurbished inner activity (which is the actor's responsibility to the picture and to himself) derives, above all, from the pressures of time. These, in turn, develop out of the purely-financial responsibility which a film's producer, director, and others have toward the bank or the studio underwriting their project.

With the opportunity he has in each performance to work with an audience and to sense their response, the stage actor's ego is obviously in a healthier condition. The screen actor has only an image of himself which he seeks to re-establish in each new role. He is in trouble when that perfume—or essence of personality—sours for him. There are ex-stage performers, like Ethel Barrymore and Marlon Brando, who almost always make a point of eschewing opportunities to view their screen results. They know, coming from a much more demanding medium, how light is the stuff of screen personality, and they don't tamper with it.

On the other hand, it sometimes happens, when the stage actor goes into motion pictures, that he finds the new medium apparently so much less demanding than theatre that he is deceived into judging it simple. He may take a serious beating before he discovers even the most primitive fundamentals of screen acting. And when he recovers from this initial shock, he must re-locate himself completely. He must re-orient his whole notion of what constitutes a performance, and what is required of him in terms of structuring for a movie.

The stage performer sprays gems or stones at his audience, enjoys their applause or bears their rejection, and starts all over again the next night. The film actor swallows his own saliva after each day's frustrations, and returns to the same performance — which he must try to rescue and

keep fresh — each and every day of shooting.

The stage actor's satisfactions are primarily in the integral achievement which the circumstances of theatre permit, and in a taste for renewing the experience. What are the comparable rewards of a cinema performer? Sadly, they are limited almost entirely to material ones. The exceptions to this are 'moments' here and there which he does attain in front of nothing closer to an audience than the sound-stage crew and technicians. Even these moments are all too susceptible to elimination on the cutting-room floor, as mentioned earlier.

The alternative for the screen actor is gradually to structure a personal image. But this possibility exists only if he is an unusually definite type. And even then the image matures only after more than one film — sometimes very many. The aim is to originate a prototype for himself which, in a succession of roles, is always familiar. Hopefully, upon its eventual completion, he can rely on his screen personality to work for him in any role, no matter how far at sea he may find himself part of the time or all of the time!

The truth is that the full range of craft which the gifted stage actor ultimately masters is not really possible in films. Instead, the screen actor goes to considerable lengths to replace it with this substitution of a Gargantuan personality. Not that even very colorful personalities have no place in the theatre.... Nor is it that craft has absolutely no place in the cinema. But certainly, the different demands of each medium develop greatly differing kinds of actors for profoundly different purposes.

It goes without saying, in fiction media like the novel and the short story, that the major statement is made by the author. There, the only competing circumstances are typography, design, and perhaps illustration. The most telling statement in a stage drama, on the other hand, is what the actor finally does with the dialogue and action. In

theatre, I think this is even more important than what the director tries to do with a play.

It is my feeling that the cinematic director makes the most visible mark on a screen play. This is especially true if he is able to direct his cameraman as well as his actors; and more so, if he knows something about editing. In the hands of a giant directorial talent, a screen play becomes his accomplishment more so than the product of author and actors together!

It is absurd, incidentally, that the American (i.e., Hollywood) motion-picture business is still based on the star system. This is an anachronism from the feudal era of the cinema there, when studio executives began to fear that the director was acquiring too much importance. The star system was established to bleed the popularity and prestige of directors, and to keep the real power in the hands of the producers.

That it has backfired so devastatingly is more than a delicious piece of irony: it is the principle justification for the practices of type-casting. And it is the chief support for the insistence, on the part of producers, that screen personalities, not actors, are their assurance of box-office revenue.

From many sources, then, all sorts of pressures are exerted on the cinematic performer to develop a personality. It is not evident that any demands at all are made upon him for a competitive acting ability. Incidentally, he may possess a limited degree of talent. Once in a while he may even employ it, as long as this virtually-extraneous knack doesn't interfere with his screen image!

But this distinction is too black and white. There is more than one class of screen personality. A really detailed and comprehensive view of the phenomenon might reveal that there are as many categories as there are 'movie stars.' And that says nothing of the possibilities for categorizing

performers for quite other reasons which would be altogether divorced from this issue of personality.

Passing over the limitless classifications suggested by the latter, and limiting the possibilities of the former, I'd like to generalize about just a few of the more obvious types of cinema personalities.

The names in this first group are those of some of the actors, chiefly in English and American films, who have impressed me with what I felt was a massive amount of talent. But I contend that, in every case and howsoever great, the ability has figured in the actor's success in motion pictures only as an incidental addendum to the more-pertinent circumstance of an equally-arresting personality. . . .

I'm referring to actors, past and present, like George Arliss, Akim Tamiroff, Lee J. Cobb, Maria Ouspenskaya, Olivia de Havilland, Maximilian Schell, George C. Scott, Oskar Werner, Charles Chaplin, Paul Newman, Michael Redgrave, Peter O'Toole, Louis Calhern, Charles Laughton, Basil Rathbone, Rita Tushingham, Peter Finch, Claude Rains, John Barrymore, Barry Fitzgerald, Simone Signoret, Conrad Veidt, et al. . . . I'm not arguing the presence of the talent or its usefulness to a discerning audience. All the same, it seems to me that even motion-picture actors of this stature have secured their opportunities despite, rather than because of, their exceptional abilities. In the urgency of its commercial concerns, the American cinema seems to make only the most superficial use of sometimes fantastically-rich materials.

In another category, I'd place the type of performer with a less-flamboyant personality, but one which, nevertheless, was probably more decisive in his career than any question of craft. The dramatic range of this type of actor also is more limited. But this is not to say it is in any sense inadequate. On the contrary, these are the solid, reliable performers who

always add substance to a role, and to any vehicle they appear in: J. Carroll Naish, Lloyd Nolan, Wallace Beery, Fay Spain, Flora May Robson, John Carradine, Nina Foch, Ernest Borgnine, Lewis Stone, Victor Jory, Walter Huston, Sidney Greenstreet, Laird Craig, Marty Balsam, Franchot Tone, Cedric Hardwicke, et al. . .

There is another type of personality which has become so successful, and which is generally so pleasing, apart from any specific concern about acting capacity, that even the critical viewer tends simply to accept them: Marlon Brando, Gregory Peck, Vivien Leigh, Judith Anderson, James Dean, Humphrey Bogart, Clark Gable, Ingrid Bergman, Rex Harrison, Laurence Olivier, Lionel Barrymore, Ethel Barrymore, Greta Garbo, Orson Welles, Agnes Moorehead, Peter Sellers, Burl Ives, Ronald Colman, Edward Arnold, Monty Woolley, Edward G. Robinson, Van Heflin, Deborah Kerr, et al. . .

And celebrity, in the greater portion of instances, has been conferred upon an astonishingly insignificant level of performance. Sex-appeal, in the context of any of the groups mentioned so far, is taken to be a part of personality. But the individuals in this next group rely on it, as a rule, much more than those of the other groups. These are also the thinnest kinds of personalities. The imponderable here isn't even the amoebic condition of the talent. What is more incomprehensible is that these are also the least-enduring personalities: Jane Russell, Andy Devine, Bella Lugosi, Johnny Weissmuller, Rock Hudson, James Cagney, Lon Chaney, Jr., George Raft, Caesar Romero, Alan Ladd, Debbie Reynolds, Kim Novak, John Wayne, Randolph Scott, Troy Donahue, Victor Mature, Tab Hunter, Sean Connery, Audie Murphy, Chester Morris, Fernando Lamas, Buster Crabbe, Richard Beymer, Steve Reeves, Ursula Andress, Ann-Margaret, Natalie Wood, Elka Sommers, Veronica Lake, Jayne Mansfield, Don Ameche. . . This list is endless. . .

The final group is more difficult to deal with. The atmosphere of controversy about the names on this list is accountable only in consideration of the personality. This group probably supplies the purest example of the main point of this essay. Not really much removed from the level of the previous group, in terms of the intuition and imagination actually applied to their performances, these are people, however, with much more successful personalities. Here, the image has been sustained well enough so that it presents material difficulties in the way of any realistic appraisal of ability. And these images have done more than merely obscure amazing quantities of bad acting. . . . In lieu, often enough, of any talent whatever, they've earned fantastic prestige in some instances, and undeserved amounts of it in every case: Montgomery Clift, Edmund Pudrom, Michael Rennie, Kirk Douglas, Gary Cooper, Edmund O'Brien, Jean Simmons, Joseph Cotten, Richard Burton, Elizabeth Taylor, Julie Harris, Glenn Ford, Lawrence Harvey, Sophia Loren, Anthony Quinn, Frank Sinatra, Burt Lancaster, William Holden, George Murphy, Ronald Reagan, Shelley Winters, Dick Powell, Marjorie Maine, Spencer Tracy, Henry Fonda, Burgess Meredith, Clifton Webb, Richard Widmark, Jack Palance, Raymond Massey, Audrey Hepburn, Mel Ferrer, Bette Davis, James Stewart, David Niven, Karl Malden, Gloria Swanson, Alec Guinness, Anne Bancroft, Rosalind Russell, Irene Dunne, Charlton Heston, et al . . . et al . . .

Any kind of labeling, at best, is a crude and only marginally-useful process. In the case of these groupings — to say nothing of their inevitable atmosphere of opinion — it's even more than ordinarily arbitrary and inutile. The one thing I have hoped to suggest with them, however, is the disconcerting probability they have made evident to me that acting is not an art which is seriously esteemed, or even especially useful, in the kind of motion pictures most often produced in the United States.

In formal philosophy, much is made of the distinction between emotive and evaluative responses. Bertrand Russell, one of the early exponents of logical positivism, lost a Cambridge Fellowship during World War I because of his pacifism, which was based on the premise that other partisans of this philosophy asserted: that all response is emotive, and therefore no one view or commitment was any better than another. What this means is that there is no such thing as criticism, in the sense of getting or applying standards for human conduct, or for art or science, or whatever.

The opposing perspective in philosophy is the evaluativist's view: that in anything external, like art for example, it is possible to develop useful criteria (or meta criteria) by which we can judge one instance of a particular kind of achievement as better or worse than another instance of the same thing.

If the evaluative position has validity, then we may choose between the acting craft which the theatre has developed and the clay product which has been squeezed into pleasing types by the exclusively-commercial concerns of Hollywood films. We have the option of believing, also, that larger audiences can be educated to more critical standards.

On the other hand, the purely emotive view held by motion-picture producers in the U.S. is so engagingly simple: Give them (i.e., audiences) what they want. (The same old product? Whether or not it's any good for them, and whether or not they even really want it?) But they assure us that audiences don't actually welcome the sort of difficulties presented by the genuine article. These audiences, we are informed, would prefer personalities. The latter are easier to deal with, making no special demands for understanding and appreciation. Audiences, we are told, do not want to think.

My own persuasion is that it is strange indeed to suppose the nature and processes of an art as complex and inspired as acting should be any more simply or any more readily available to superficial tastes than those of other fine arts—music, painting, literature, sculpture, dancing, etc. When audiences begin to understand something of their own responsibility to anticipate, then the pseudo-artistic frauds (like the Hollywood cinema's concepts of acting) will cease to be so financially rewarding for men who have only contempt for any real art.

THE CHRONICLE (Continued from Page 132)

CRUST, Vancouver City Coll., Vancouver, B.C., Can. (Rptd. publ. poetry — but unseen.)

CUADERNOS TRIMESTRALES De Poesia, Casilla 151, Trujillo, Peru. (No. 37 devoted to poetry of Juan Ojeda, in Spanish.) X; P; LP; 4. Unpr.

DAVID MCKAY Co., Inc., 750 3rd Ave., N.Y.C.—10017. (A DREAM OF KINGS, Harry Mark Petrakis—\$4.50—novel.)

DEFENSE DE L'HOMME, c/o Louis Dorlet, B.P. 53, Golfe-Juan (Alpes Maritimes), France. (Serious articles of lit. int., in French.) X; LP; 12.1.10 Fr.; '47.

DESCANT, Engl. Dept., Texas Christian U. Stat., Ft. Worth, Tex.—76129 (Last spring's feat. Sam Bradley's poetry. Increasing varied interest here.) AT; LP; 4.50c; '56; *.

DESTRUCTION, 16 Hollin Lane, Far Headingley, Leeds 16, Engl. (Rptd. entirely work of Dave Birtwistle, editor. Unseen.)

THE NOVEL . . . (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 129)

even provide the sexually titillating scenes common to surrealist works.

Turning to novels from major houses, the most important of four here probably is George Garrett's *DO, LORD, REMEMBER ME* (DOUBLEDAY — \$4.50; and simultaneously, CHAPMAN & HALL, Ltd., London — 30s.). It is exceptional in being not simply entertaining and well written (in the British version), but in justifying raw scenes of sex as parts and parcels of serious thematic purpose. A shocking—yes—contribution, yet with valid insights of a socio-cultural predicament, and more than just another sensational novel. Regrettably, whoever edited the DOUBLEDAY version so slashed and altered the text (quickly discernable by comparisons with the book published in England) that many of Garrett's most consequential intentions do not come through. In some mistaken zeal to eliminate what likely was judged offensive, the American editor destroyed meanings and—in numerous other portions—for reasons impossible to guess, ruined the rhythm and balance of style where no element of censorship could have figured. Those in the U.S. who may want the British book cannot order from the publisher because of trade agreements, but they should be able to get it through larger shops in the U.S. or by mail from London dealers.

Garrett vitalizes his actors through the device of moving from one to another for first-person recountals of differing impressions and interpretations of what is done and seen. In this way, the swift action is slowed and given dimensionality. The device also makes the melodrama and sentimentality fairly digestible. Garrett does overdo things; and often his persuasive attributions of motivations verge on the

unacceptable, save for the force of primitive personalities whose definitions emphatically do not wait upon happenings.

The young British novelist, Alex Hamilton, now published in the U.S. (*IF YOU DON'T WATCH OUT* — DAVID McKAY Co., Inc. — \$4.50), offers an indubitably Existentialistic novel, but one in which the major character is a strayed mental patient. And vagarious though 'Max's' thoughts and inclinations are, the reader does not continuously feel that destiny and accident are entirely in control—not even at the conceded-anticipated final circle of his movements after his meandering dangerous encounters with underworld characters of London.

Notably, this novel at once raises the question of identity and limns a man literally without a fixed name, moving as he is moved. But Max, as he accidentally labels himself, carries a load of sharp memories, all the same, and in the long run is little deflected by a series of rebuffing events and discoveries: he manages to stick to a fairly-defined backtracking search. The author does not allow philosophical and psychological factors to eclipse a plot filled with hazards, in spite of telling the story through a schizophrenic mind. A modicum of sexual ingredients share in sustaining interest.

There's an Orwellian flavor in Hamilton, though similarities of manner and handling are not strong. The style is unobtrusive and neutral, with a large percentage of dialogue — and this, together with the introspections of Max, enhances effects. The view — from the underside of an old metropolis — rings true; yet, while providing an entertaining vicarious extension of experience, the book is limited by peculiar types of protagonists, well individuated though they are.

In the next novel, *THE BALLAD OF THE FLIM-FLAM MAN*, by Guy Owen (*MACMILLAN* — \$4.95), we encounter peculiar protagonists of an antisocial type distantly removed from a

metropolitan underworld. Mr. Owen features a Southern tobacco country con artist in rapid pillaging transit with the aid of a kind of Sancho Panza in the person of a runaway soldier country boy who comes to dubious grace in a farcical dénouement, while his tricky mentor achieves triumph through jailbreak. The narrative is a wellnigh unbelievable continuity of webworked hoaxes on 'respectable' citizens, most of whom well deserve to be cheated and robbed — told by Curley Treadaway, the Flim-Flam Man's understudy, in the colloquial language of that Southern rural region.

'A Comic Novel of Today' preserves an image of an already-passing time, with a corny slapstick atmosphere some may put down as hick vaudeville, yet which is a rare sort of exaggerated realism: touched-up photos and cleverly-spliced tapes of a real place. Minor faults may be charged: the overdoing of complications . . . over-extravagant slang. But, to find fault on such scores is to misunderstand the author's manifest intention to overcolor the already ludicrous — by doing so, to impress more indelibly the underlying reality of scene and people. This is more than a joke book, if not great literature. It also lies outside the stream of contemporary development in the novel form, harking back to Mark Twain for an almost-lost preposterous laughable seriousness. Walcutt's theory could be justifiably applied to it; and despite the hyperactivity of seeming-positive protagonists, an Existentialistic analysis would find a ready-made model. However, Owen's is not a typical modern novel; and he has deliberately returned to older boundaries, with no purpose of making an interpretation of any part of the world/s in which the majority of us live.

Before looking at another commercially-accepted novel, let's turn to a privately-printed one which, in many aspects, is as good and better than the average publisher-blessed novel: *THE LONELY DARK*, by John B. Smithback (MANZANITA

Press — \$5), who is not far past the age of preferred younger blood, although he prefaces the book with Shakespeare's words in *MACBETH* . . . 'my way of life / is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf . . .'

Leaving aside questions that might be asked about vindication of the plot and *dénouement* (the same which should be asked about dozens of novels in the shops) and concerning overmaudlin passages (ditto, re 'selling' books), Smithback has, with more than moderate success, employed a larger stage and interestingly put before us a more comprehensive reflection of our years than have any of the others here. His method of telling and flashback (of which there's a lot) is that of second person narration, lifting the central character somewhat above and outside a highly dramatic plot, and thereby almost compensating for (at least rendering acceptable to a degree) the maudlin passages. And his use of a good many worn adjectives and phrases suits and better presents the narrating chief character.

The point is that Smithback's book is both fascinating and rich with materials of an entire generation, and that there's no reason it should not have been brought out by a large house and sold well — except that editors of most big houses would have doubted whether the author would or could produce another. There's the always-asked question regarding the extent to which a book may be autobiographical, and therefore probably a 'one-timer.' Yet, in sales aspects, this novel meets current specifications while bearing critically-endorsed influences of Fitzgerald and other famous recent contemporaries: frank treatment of diverse sexual involvements; realistic language (although those 'words' are not overused); and convincing violence, with honest portrayals of human relationships not overshadowed by the reflected substance of relevant happenings in the outer world. If flawed (and what novel isn't?), this book, while by no means great, deserves

recognition.

Since the other books described may easily be picked up in shops, it's only fair to state that THE LONELY DARK may be obtained from the author at 1309 Funston Ave., Pacific Grove, Calif. — 93950.

THE TELLING

by John Weston (david Mckay Co., Inc. — \$4.50)

is more justifiably to be criticised for clichés and lapses into overwrought verbalizing than is Smithback's book, since it is author-told. And while adeptly handled for rapid reading, it contains careless writing and out-of-character dialogue indicating it was turned out too fast.

But Weston's novel is a better example than any of the preceding for refutation of Walcutt (while happening to fit the image and argument of Aldridge). An unusual assortment of people are brought together at a school and allowed to react to one another so as to bring into rather unusual shape—not overconvincingly—a popular-type plot. However, there's little to warrant an Existentialistic analysis; despite the apparent use of protagonistic evolvment of (fast) action, the story obviously is contrived through the protagonists. This is the sort of book supporting Aldridge's contention that failure of readership can be attributed to the real-life extensions of experience available to modern readers. It does not reflect any valid record of time and place.

Except for relevance to this article—as with Greenberg's—this one should have been passed as just another of the little brambles in the shrunken bush of available creativity in the novel form. A final point of illustration: the sloppy writing underscores the question of publisher responsibility. At least, an editor might have helped? Samples:

That the tribe of Mojave Indians lived by the shores beneath a wide strand of tamarack trees was nothing to speak for it either.

That a town the size of Tigerstooth would have at its fullest no more than fifty white girls of age and inclination to

give away on bed, car seat, or sand what they had learned to call their virginity for whatever reason—call it love or patriotism or a sweet itch—to an army of thousands who had but few passes of twelve hours' duration from their brutish maneuvers, accounted for the present generation of twenty-four- and twenty-three-year-old Indians of lighter complexion and narrower hip whose children, however, were darker, already casting away their grandfathers' gift or curse as if the outer skin had been sloughed off as a snake slides from his spring.

*

When they fornicated, they fornicated together, sharing the same girl in turn from among several in the reach of their father's land who were willing or helpless under the triple stare, or sometimes, if a girl they had chosen, evidently with no word passing between them, was unwilling to be shared, two would hold her in the scent of crushed yellow poppies and blue lupine, calmly, while the third took his turn with her.

And again, varying from this awkwardly-extended (even ungrammatical) nonstyle, he injects very short sentences which, however, are often clumsily inverted in structure. Nor is this bad writing made 'excusable' by verbal originality or individuality of style.

So the situation of today's novel is less easily summarized and explained than critics' facile generalizations reveal. And despite evidences of deterioration, a good share of contemporary work, unlike that of Weston or Greenberg, provides more significance than they'd have us believe.

BIG PROBLEMS OF THE LITTLE MAGAZINES: FINANCIAL & EDITORIAL FREEDOM

by Charles Robinson

(THE LITTLE MAGAZINE: A History and a Bibliography, published in 1946 and edited by Charles Allen, Frederick Hoffman, and Carolyn Ulrich, represents the first significant study of little magazines and remains the primary source for anyone interested in them. Since then, several histories of individual projects have been published, including those of THE PRAIRIE SCHOONER and THE LITTLE REVIEW; and, within their pages, the little magazines have published fragments of their own histories. Out of this material, a varied picture emerges; each magazine is unique, but each has common goals and problems. This article is based primarily on the responses of fifty-six editors to a questionnaire and is concerned with the financial problems of little magazines. Since the problems of subscriptions and editorial freedom are central concerns of the little magazines and relevant to their financial situation, these also are considered.)

IN THE WORLD OF LITTLE MAGAZINES several seemingly-unavoidable paradoxes exist. Although they have established their importance and influence on culture in the past fifty years, the circulation of any little magazine is relatively small; and, as Ben Hagglund notes in a CARAVEL editorial: '... a good majority of its readers are also writers.' While many of the writers appearing in the little magazines will be anthologized in tomorrow's college texts, the public is, evidently, content to wait for them. Hampered by circulations which only partially meet publishing costs, these periodicals are unwilling to accept subsidization which might jeopardize their independence.

The net result of having a limited circulation, restricted interest, and inadequate financial foundation is an extremely high mortality rate. As one editor puts it: 'Little magazines come and go like the wind.' And another editor estimates that the average life span of a little magazine is two to three years.* Often there is a note of bitterness expressed by the

editor and the magazine's followers when the magazine is about to perish. August Derleth, for instance, wrote in his last issue of *HAWK & WHIPPOORWILL*: 'Four years of *HAWK & WHIPPOORWILL* have persuaded me to conclude that there is very little room for such a magazine on a self-sustaining basis, for there is not a sufficiently large or interested public devoted to its support. To be self-sustaining, without application to patrons, *HAWK & WHIPPOORWILL* would have had to have a subscription list of five hundred; such a number could possibly have been reached with effort — and perhaps, with equal effort, have been held from one year to the next — but this could very probably have been done only at the expense of all other occupation.'

** Editorial note: The actual average span has been figured upon the basis of ages of existing (at several junctures) little mags as three to four times longer than this guess. A current calculation, omitting school and foundation magazines — which live longer — shows an average six- to seven-year life enjoyed by independent small magazines.*

But new magazines and new editors replace the departed ones. Like their predecessors, they are still the literary avant garde, filling their pages with unheard-of young writers who, like Faulkner, Frost, Hemingway, and Eliot before them, will become tomorrow's literary giants. They are still scoffing at the taboos of the commercial publishing world and its public. They are still 'little,' not because of size, scope, or purpose, but because their circulations are infinitesimal in comparison with those of the mass magazines.

But, in other respects, little magazines tend to defy classification. Their size may vary from five by seven inches, like *ELIZABETH*, to the ten-foot-long scroll of *FALLOUT*. While many are printed on mimeograph paper, like *KAURI*, *COERCION*, and *WILD DOG*, others are replete with art work, as in *THE MASSACHUSETTS REVIEW*, pictures and color-page inserts as in *TRACE* or *THE CARLETON MISCELLANY*. Most of the

more posh little magazines are supported by a college, university, or foundation. Others are independent. Generally the subsidized magazines come out quarterly in seven-by-ten-inch page size with 96 to 130 pages, while the independent magazines come out from two to eight times a year in a wider variety of page sizes and paginations. Some are devoted exclusively, or primarily, to poetry — like ELIZABETH, APPROACH, EPOS, FREE LANCE, ESSENCE, POET AND CRITIC — while others tend to emphasize short stories, such as do PRAIRIE SCHOONER and STORY. Subsidized magazines, on the whole, include more articles and criticism.

The steady encroachment of the universities and colleges into the field may tend to lengthen the life span. But, for most little magazines, support comes from the traditional sources — a small circle of friends, a patron or two if lucky, some donations from subscribers and the editor. If one of the sources withdraws support, the magazine is on a shaky financial footing, unable to survive unless another source is found.

The problem of financing begins at the magazine's inception. The subscription list is small, usually friends, and friends of friends in the particular location where the magazine has its start. If the editor notifies other little magazines of his intentions, a few additional subscribers will be picked up. The lack of money, which often dictates mimeographing rather than printing, also prohibits any wild idea of purchasing mailing lists to interest other subscribers or arranging for bookstore distribution.

The subsequent growth of the subscription list depends upon weathering the first few publications. Mostly through exchanges and 'the poetic grapevine,' the magazine will quickly lose its localism and regionalism — unless it persists in publishing only local writers — and the subscriptions will become national in distribution. For most magazines there are equal numbers of international and hometown

subscribers, with ninety per cent of the subscriptions being national.

A majority of editors report that their circulation remains constant or increases only slightly when it approaches 300. Some older magazines, like *APPROACH* and *AMERICAN WEAVE*, have reached circulations of around 600, but the editors don't expect any significant increases. *THE BELOIT POETRY JOURNAL* and *TRACE*, on the other hand, have circulations of 1,000 and 1,900, respectively, and both editors anticipate a slow continued increase. However, they are exceptions rather than the rule; an overwhelming majority have but 200 to 300 subscribers.

While circulation may be indicative of the little magazine's success, it is far from a reliable indication of the magazine's financial state. One reason is that a good number of copies of each issue are given away as exchanges or to friends or for promotion, bringing no direct returns. Generally we can assume that increased circulation reduces the per-copy cost, yet volume seldom if ever reaches the point where it absorbs the total cost. Postage is a fixed expense; and if a magazine can be printed in a quantity of 200 for about the same cost as for 100, the postage will double anyway. A less-tangible factor is the amount of time required for editing. Along with increased circulation comes an increased volume of contributions. More time will be required for addressing and mailing. Often, the actual printing is added to handling increased correspondence and what might be termed clerical work. This may be obvious in cases where the magazine is mimeographed, but it is also true of some that are produced by letterpress — and when the offset process is used, many of the editors type all the copy for reproduction.

Printing and mailing costs comprise the bulk of a little magazine's expenses. Depending upon the number of copies, the paper used, and how the printing is done, the total per-issue physical cost of small 'littles' ranges from \$40 to

\$400. Subscriptions may bring a return of ten to ninety per cent of this and other costs. A return of fifty per cent is about average.

College- and university-based publications (with the exceptions of KENYON REVIEW, SEWANEE REVIEW, and others which are semi-commercial) have a considerably smaller return from copy sales in respect to their publication cost. Most of them receive about one-fifth of their support from subscribers, a negligible amount from advertising (although many of the independents could publish on advertising receipts, alone), and the bulk of their money from their parent. Thus, while the college and university magazines may have the advantage of more subscribers — often over 1,000 — their publication costs are exorbitant in comparison to the independents. A cost of \$3,000 per issue is not unusual and may run to \$4,500 or more.

THE MINNESOTA REVIEW (supported by a foundation rather than a college or university, but in other respects typical of the college- or university-based magazine), for example, has a circulation of 300 which supports only five per cent of its \$3,500 publication bill each issue. THE MASSACHUSETTS REVIEW fares somewhat better; its \$4,500 per-issue is carried by a circulation of 1,400. Returns from subscriptions and newsstand sales support an unusually high forty-five per cent of THE SOUTHWEST REVIEW's cost which is unusually low at \$1,300.

The big difference financially between the independent little magazines and those supported by a college, university or foundation is one of operating budget. The large subsidies the latter receive allow them to put out issues with paginations and graphic qualities which the independent little magazine is not usually capable of achieving. Their budgets also may include payment for contributors, a luxury most independent little magazine editors wish they could afford. In many other respects, however, their financial

situation is similar. Both operate at a loss and view prospects for increasing circulation with some hesitation. Some editors hope to see a continuing increase, but the editors of the younger magazines are far more optimistic than those who have survived the first couple of years.

Attempts by both the independents and the academically-based magazines to boost subscriptions or raise money have met with negligible success. At the organizational meeting of the Association of Literary Magazines of America (A.L.M.A.) in 1961, the editors who attended agreed that one of the big problems was distribution. As noted earlier, almost all of the individual magazine's distribution is via the mails. This would suggest that such projects achieve limited exposure, since they are sent only to subscribers, contributors, and other magazines (for exchange). This is not to suggest that if 200 copies are mailed out, only 200 people come into contact with the magazine—particularly not, with many more libraries subscribing to littles.

However, these periodicals have not been able to establish themselves in the bookstores. Five to ten per cent of their total distribution may be through these, but they usually are local shops. The magazine which circulates 200 copies will probably mail 170 or so, hand out a limited number to friends (to patrons, if fortunate enough to have some), and sell five to ten copies through a local bookstore. College and university magazines fare somewhat better and, quite often, have a limited regional bookstore distribution.

Commercial magazines continually solicit additional subscribers through mail advertising. This technique has been adopted by the little magazines. Once again, the cost is a prohibitive factor; and the independent magazines tend to concentrate on soliciting subscriptions from the libraries. As might be expected, the college and university magazines are somewhat more active in this sort of promotion.

In either case, the expense of mailing lists is high, and firms specializing in such lists haven't categorized their listings to any advantageous use by the little magazines. That is: Who is the potential and actual little-magazine reader? What is his profession or occupation, his hobbies, his age, and his education? While lists are available on fishermen, Chevrolet owners, and millionaires, there are no such listings on little-magazine readers. The A.L.M.A., at the same meeting mentioned above, made inquiries about establishing a mailing list comprised of subscribers from all of the member magazines; but the terms set forth by the company represented at the meeting were unacceptable.

Undoubtedly the method editors use most frequently to acquaint others with their projects is the exchange pages (college and university magazines most frequently exchange advertising space). The net effect, of course, is a kind of mutual admiration society. An editor tends to mention the same five or six magazines in successive issues; and, in turn, those five or six editors are mentioning that magazine. This limits the exposure of any given magazine to those who are already initiated—particularly to those magazines of the same or similar type of reader interest.

Thus, Jerry Burns, editor of *THE GOLIARDS*, recommends twenty-two fellow periodicals, saying 'These publications, and others like them, constitute the prime source of contemporary poetry. I am convinced that the most important writing done in the U.S. today appears through this medium.' Not all editors are so verbose; many simply print the names and addresses of the exchange magazines without comment. But most independents give some kind of acknowledgement to the others in their own category. No doubt some additional subscriptions are picked up with this method; but the limitations are obvious.

The quest for money, if not financial solvency, and at least a certain assurance of future publication, has been

approached in a variety of ways. The college and university magazines have, of course, found homes. Support from the academic community may not be direct or total subsidy, however. *POET AND CRITIC*, for instance, recently received a considerable grant from a university, and Editor Richard Gustafson hopes to receive similar grants.

To a lesser extent, the fact that college and university libraries are large subscribers to little magazines constitutes a steady source of income for a number of them. Another kind of university help frequently comes from the creative writing courses where little magazines are used for study. Twenty to thirty copies of *THE GOLIARDS* are sold for this purpose, for an instance. At a recent symposium at the Library of Congress, Peter Caws of the Carnegie Foundation mentioned a study his foundation had undertaken to determine the feasibility of providing block subscriptions of little magazines to schools for use in the classroom. He said: 'The former (little magazines) were not enthusiastic because they had never conceived it as their task to provide material for the schools. The latter feared the worst. Literary magazines are avant-garde; they are pornographic . . .' Of course the idea, which probably would have proven mutually beneficial, was dropped by the Carnegie Foundation.

During the past several years, the possibility of receiving some form of subsidy from foundations and the government has been given considerable attention. Government subsidy may be no more than wishful thinking (mixed with envy) based upon government help for theatre and art. Hopes for foundation subsidy may be more realistic; there is evidence, at least, that they are not disinterested. *POETRY* has, from time to time, received foundation grants which have seen them through several financial crises. The Rockefeller Foundation has given grants to several magazines in the past. *THE CHICAGO REVIEW* receives partial foundation support. The McKnight Foundation is presently subsidizing

several little magazines. On the other hand, the probability of any far-reaching financial aid from foundations is neither imminent nor altogether encouraging. Foundations, although benevolent, are also concerned with their image — and little magazines, although they may strike a pose, are not concerned with images, particularly those of a foundation. Thus, an editor would not be willing to compromise his editorial freedom to conform to an image that was acceptable to a foundation, and a foundation would be leery of granting funds to a magazine which might indirectly affect that proprietorious foundation.

The majority of little magazines, as indicated earlier, do not receive any direct aid from colleges, universities, or foundations. They are dependent upon income from magazine sales, a small amount of patronage, and their personal finances. *FREE LANCE* is typical in many respects. The editors, except for those 'who are indigent,' kick in \$20 a year, and another editor helps further with the printing costs. Editor Adelaide Simon says: 'We have one outside supporter who gives us \$20 a year—generous woman.' Like many of the other editors, Jerry Burns works nights to publish his magazine. George Hitchcock, editor of *KAYAK* and former editor of *THE SAN FRANCISCO REVIEW*, also speaks for a number of editors when he says: 'I do all my own art work and typography, multilith, and then collate, staple, and mail.'

Other than through exchange ads, most independents make little or no attempt to attract more readers or raise additional funds. At one time or another, an independent has tried everything from cocktail parties to poetry readings. For the most part, the editors are dissatisfied with the results; the returns don't justify the time and energy and money required. Or, as one said: 'I hope to approach some people . . . for some money, but am discouraged with the monotony and hopelessness of explaining just what a "little magazine"

is.'

Since many of these periodicals today exist to provide a reaction against the type of writing which the college and university magazines are publishing, money is less important than editorial freedom. At the same time, they realize that additional funds would allow them to print art work, add more pages, use a better printing process, or — the first consideration of most — pay their contributors.

In some instances, the subsidized magazines desire a change in format or emphasis which additional funds would make possible, but generally they are not so restrictive as the independents. Many editors of the college- and university-subsidized magazines feel that their situation is, if not the ideal situation, at least a healthy and advantageous one. Thus, one editor says: 'We are very grateful for the support given our magazine by the university . . . In return, we hope to add to the prestige of the university by publishing a good magazine. There are no disadvantages we can now discern.' Or, as Margaret Hartley of *THE SOUTHWEST REVIEW* puts it: 'Freedom is the big question, in every case. Our university leaves us free, but in some places freedom is a problem.'

The recent withdrawal of funds by the University of Oregon and the temporary demise of *THE NORTHWEST REVIEW* tends to bear this out. Karl Shapiro (speaking at the Library of Congress Symposium) said that he 'was forced to resign (or was fired) over a question of censorship' (on *THE PRAIRIE SCHOONER*). He also mentioned a case of suppression that the University of Chicago was responsible for in regard to *POETRY*, while he was editor there.

Editors of the independent magazines are all too aware of the above situation. 'The colleges have a bad record with independent "little magazines,"' writes one editor, 'as they have expelled and withdrawn support from those who were too experimental for their taste. I'm sure the other editors

would agree that we would take money wherever it was available with no strings attached.’ Or, as James Boyer May puts it: ‘ . . . I believe personal independence of the editor is vital. If a conscientious person, he will be bound to modify his decisions (more or less)—even though no actual pressures may be brought to bear—if he is receiving vital aid from outside sources. I would think it all right to accept small sums from many persons, however—if that could be done.’ Or, another editor: ‘Naturally, it would be pleasant to have backing financially, but the hidden strings which go with such sponsorship are not always pleasant . . .’ Likewise, Carol Ely Harper, editor of *EXPERIMENT*, says that any support would be welcome, ‘provided “hands off” the editor and the magazine.’

None of the editors of the independent little magazines have solved their financial headaches, but the remarks above indicate that this was never a primary concern—or they would not have put out their magazines to begin with. Independence is more important than subsidy, and entangling financial alliances may result in compromises.

When Drew Wagon says that *WILD DOG* has ‘1. a stable mailing list, constantly growing up; 2. established bookstores that do send back money; and 3. the knowledge that we do continue to come out . . . we aren’t bothered too much by the fact that we don’t make money simply because we do seem to be expanding (which causes us to lose more money as the publication costs rise accordingly!) . . .,’ he may well be speaking for the other editors as well.

MOONBEAMS

One thousand
The moments
Passed . . .
Your hair
Unbound
Picks-up, the moonbeams
Stray . . . strangers
In our room
Through a tear
In the rice paper
Window . . .
Behind my head . . .

Earl E. LaClair

ALLONS

Time no longer to hold my candle down
Time holds the kindling crickets tight against the
ground.
I used to be a brunette, one Time
Till time sawed grey floss clear of my breech
As the crickets clung time's tightness
Silk the slick water, dear
And, dear,
I've time no longer to hold my candle down.

Allan Williams

CALL NO MAN

There are no good times to be born.
I tell you when the tall words come
For length of years or other cause
And all the world seems stuffed with luck,
Those birds are singing not for you.
Hawks are more like what's in store
Beyond the stumble of your days.
Call no man happy while he lives?
Aye. And when he dies, forget not then
The aching whistle of his past.

George W. Linden

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