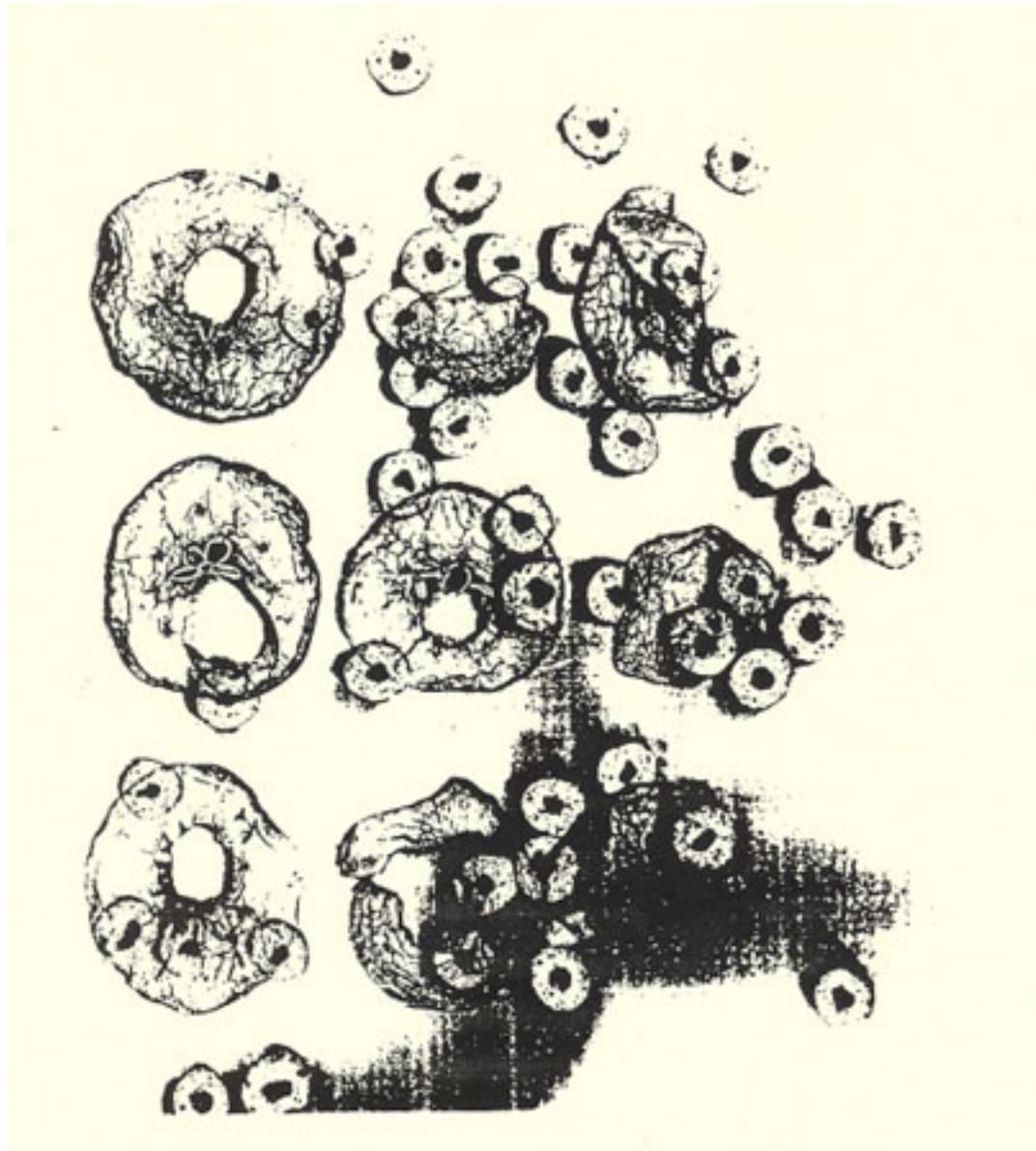




ICE MOON
POEMS BY
RICHARD DENNER

ICE MOON

**D PRESS 2000 SEBASTOPOL
COVER ART BY THE AUTHOR
COPYART BY CLAUDE SMITH**



PERFECT

arguing into the early hours
about the global economy
and the greenhouse effect
we solve the world's problems

for another night
while the stars shine
through the colander in the sky

after you leave I continue to drink
until I'm topped off and tipping over

miserable fuck that I am
I crawl across a gravel pit
and down a culvert
where I find a pinhole of firelight
and I laugh and laugh and laugh
happy to find light
in the middle of the tunnel

MARILYN MANSON ON THE RAG

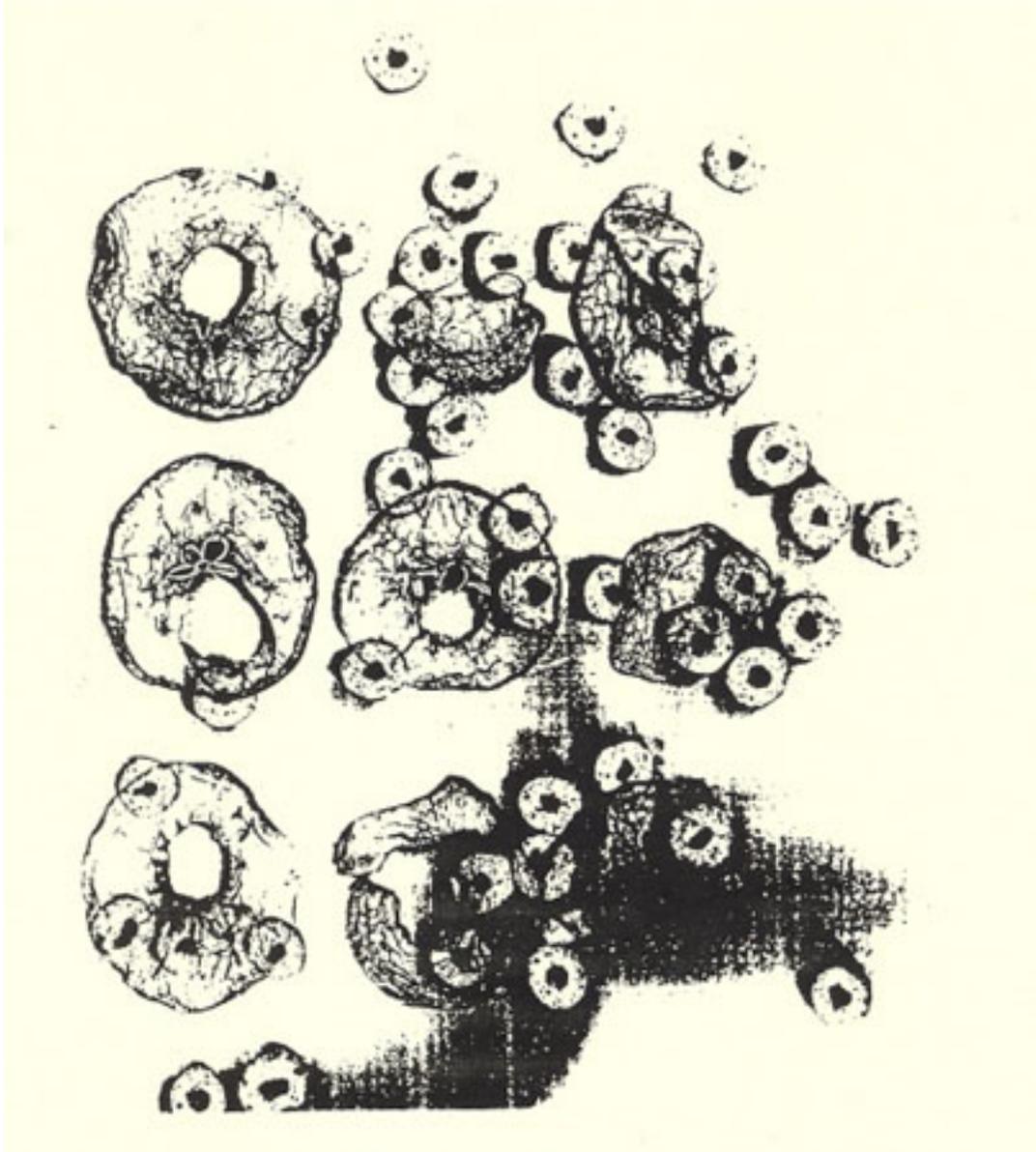
for Tamara

Billy Blake wanders in the chartered streets
crying *weep weep weep*
Sylvia Plath lies in a basement
her cunt full of worms
Williams Carlos Williams crawls
to his Asphodel

Dylan slashes his eye
Villon thrashes on the scaffold
and The Old Gray Poet
mad blind gay
SEES
all the stars and all the grains of sand
all the bacteria in the shit pile
are children born trembling

FOR JENNIFER

Your smile is like a Monet sunrise.
Right from the start we're old friends,
although only once in three lifetimes
could I find you.



SEEING ANGELS WITH THE INNER EYE

the river runs both ways
innocent pristine untroubled
in a clean environment

I'm always making the same mistake
O Tantrik Yogins & Christian Saints
looking closer I see sludge at my door
and the road detour through acid rain
as the bills of regret mount higher
O Tantrik Yogins & Christian Saints
the river hugs the bank like a friend
I read love poems on the leaves
blessed by the air's deep prayer
as I enter the center of Spring
I'm always making the same mistake
O Tantrik Yogins & Christian Saints
it's hard to breath when you are nothing
and the stones simmer on the lake
and night feels like a rotten tooth
and to move on you have to roll snake eyes
a million times in a row
I'm always making the same mistake
O Tantrik Yogins & Christian Saints
I lay down in sweet pastures
I take refuge under the dress of a flowergirl

IN KETCHIKAN

walking with Frank Boardman up South Tongass
from the New York Hotel toward The Beanry
Frank listens to my recitation of Lu Garcia's poem
and says it heralds the death of poetry

Biff!

Bam!

Pow!

Holy Cow!

Holy Cow!

Now we know

*Batman is
God
is*

*the Devil
knows
who he is.*

don't go on like that, he pleads
and falls into a funk

THIS SCRIPT HAS LEGS

shooting video in Echo Canyon
picking up voices of Mexican children
bouncing off the walls while I dance freeform
in the piñon pines spooking a murder of crows

cut to
the painted landscape near Ghost Ranch
I'm wearing black
a man with a briefcase
walking through the desert
and I work out a bit where my clothes
are a shadowy specter in desert heat
floating on a mirage lake

and I literally jump out of my suit
drop my briefcase
and run across this water toward the highway
as a car passes in the distance
dissolve

driving home the camera accidentally left on
and as the car cruises along the camera sways
catching us at odd angles
sometimes out the window sometimes

part of our torsos Jillian's legs her hands
rolling a cigarette the wheel smoke and mirrors
hands driving speaking natural and uncontrived

about the relationship of
freedom to responsibility
and the need to awaken
the sacred
in our present commercial
progressively degraded
mode of being

arriving home to shoot in the sunflower room
sunflower wallpaper hotpads clock calendar
cups curtains Jillian in a sunflower apron
cooking plastic sunflowers in a kettle
serving up sunflower soup in sunflower bowls
on a sunflowered tablecloth without even
the slightest idea of our destiny

HIGH PRESSURE CENTER

from fair to foul
wind snow
moon sun
a balloon some
alone

at her weeds
the raven went
bent with a drill
around three trees
went

turn down the dream
tear down the drug
blow down the bank

soon a sign rain hail
blow

in the spun bud
I mark clean
the naked zero
that registers
life

AT THE HELM: A RAP BY LUIS GARCIA

Snyder was telling very directly and essentially his view, his perception of what his work was about and what the world was about at that point (in the early `60s), and the way I got it was that he thought there was a real potential for the world to change, and the reason why that struck me as really interesting is because, for one reason, it's because I didn't feel that way. I may have wanted it to change in that way, but I really didn't believe it could, and I still don't, but I think that in some ways I wanted it to be that way so bad that I kind of believed that.

But I don't believe that. I believe that individuals can change themselves, if they do, for whatever reasons, if something happens, some kind of catastrophe, something demands that they somehow change, and they usually have to work years and years and years and years to do that, and then they do; they're transformed by that work into somebody who's generally very alienated; and they're out there with all kinds of thousands of millions of people who find no need at all to change. And that's the way it is; and that's the way the world goes; and then the next transformation is being able to survive as an alien in the world.

So, that's kind of where I feel I'm at. I mean I see where a lot of intelligent people have gotten involved, but there's nothing that they receive that they call nourishment, whether it's success or money or whatever, from the world that would force them to change. They never encounter anything, usually, until it's far too late in their lives to change in any way that would transform the world, and so it

doesn't happen.

So, Snyder was talking about it in this book *Mountains and Rivers Without End*, which he started forty years ago, and this new section came out, and I went to his reading at Neuman Hall, beautiful setting, and this one section he read, that he read at the very end of his reading, really hit home, that the world as a whole had a potential to change. Absolutely beautiful. Strong.

I mean, when I was around Berkeley I knew a lot of people involved in the Free Speech Movement and all that stuff, you know, Kate Coleman and Jonathan Cott and all those people, Joe La Penta, who were really involved, but I was always kind of an outsider, partly because I didn't go to Cal; I went to Junior College when I went to school; and I was always fouled up on drugs, and I didn't real believe things could change; not that I didn't want them to; I did; but I didn't think that you could change anything about greed and people and who they can't help being, and in that sense I wasn't on board, and they didn't really want me on board, but they let me just sort of hang out, and I was just bearing witness, just like I'm still doing now.

You write a poem. You're feeling really strongly, OK, you're shouting, they're shouting, "Take off your clothes!" but these people aren't going to take off their clothes; they're not ever going to get naked, you know; they're never going to come clean unless something happens to them as an individual; nothing in their whole way of life is going to be an incentive to make them ethical; they'll just go on being pathological liars and crooks because they have to be, because otherwise they would just be slobbs like me and a lot of other people in terms of the kind of money they will have the potential to make. It doesn't pay them to think about change, basically. There's nothing in it for them.

So, unless the world completely crashes, which it nearly has anyway, being so polluted and fouled up as far as I can see... everybody's just in denial about it...I mean there are organizations that work to change the world, and all of this has to go on; it has a purpose unless we just want to throw up our hands.

OK, I've come to this place where I've done a certain amount of that work, and frankly I'm pretty exhausted, and I'm just resting up for the next round on a very personal level, because it's fine to work

for change, to try and change evil, or whatever it is, and that's fine as long as you don't let it kill you. I'm just saying it's hard to change things, and unless you have the skills, it's scary. I'm trying to write the story by looking at the stars and figuring out my bearings by the day to day living.

AT EVERY LEVEL OF MONTEZUMA'S CONSCIOUSNESS

Spirit O Spool

did you punch him for his licoriceship?

did her blondness run out in cold

thick drops?

did I fork a virgin zero from the globe?

foul the cherub cheek winds?

clog my veins with abuse of 4/4 time?

Behold the new born terror!

Behold all things new!

.

Pawing through the hospital dumpster

I find an aluminum Xmas tree

decorated with guaze and syringes

Insanity and murder, devastation and cruelty

fatal epidemics and contagion

O Furies, I look for you

bringing my Great Plan

LOVE'S GARDEN

I see Eden in fire.

I see Eden in wa-

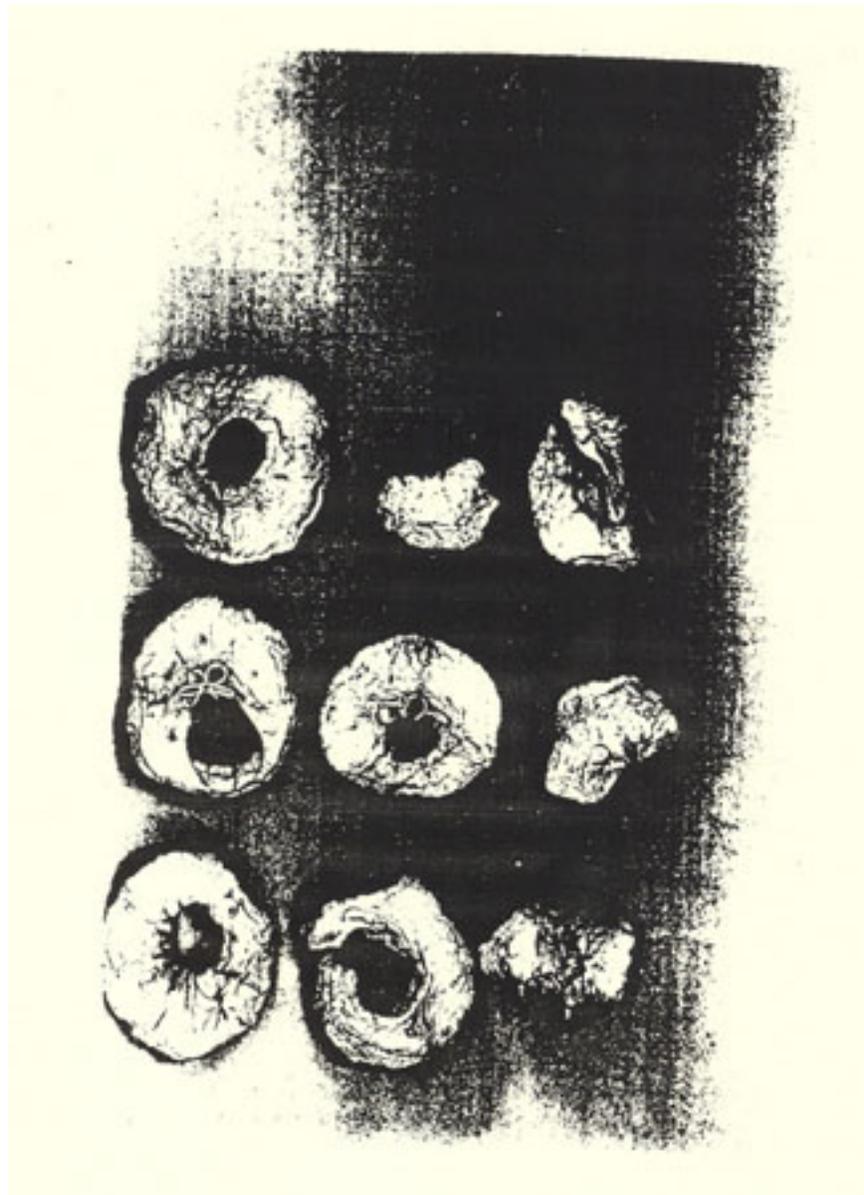
ter

and air.

In more than these El-
ements
interrupted—alone and still—
I see her.

AT THE GAME RESERVE

a drove of binocular
persons
observe elk eating hay
one man's belly fills
his whole car
someone says
"a big sucker"
but he's talking
about an elk
flesh elk
and belly
a balsam moon
at apogee
when I'm near you
my sap rises
and I feel like
locking horns



JOY IN ALL THE LITTLE THINGS

Cheri Quigley in pink
a pink pillbox hat, coat and dress
drops her purse in Howard's Cafe
and it opens
and her birth control pills roll out
and I pick them up and ask her name
and I think she says Cherry Quickly
and I tell her I would like to, but

the elfish brightness in her eyes

undoes me
and she knows it and laughs
bright laughter

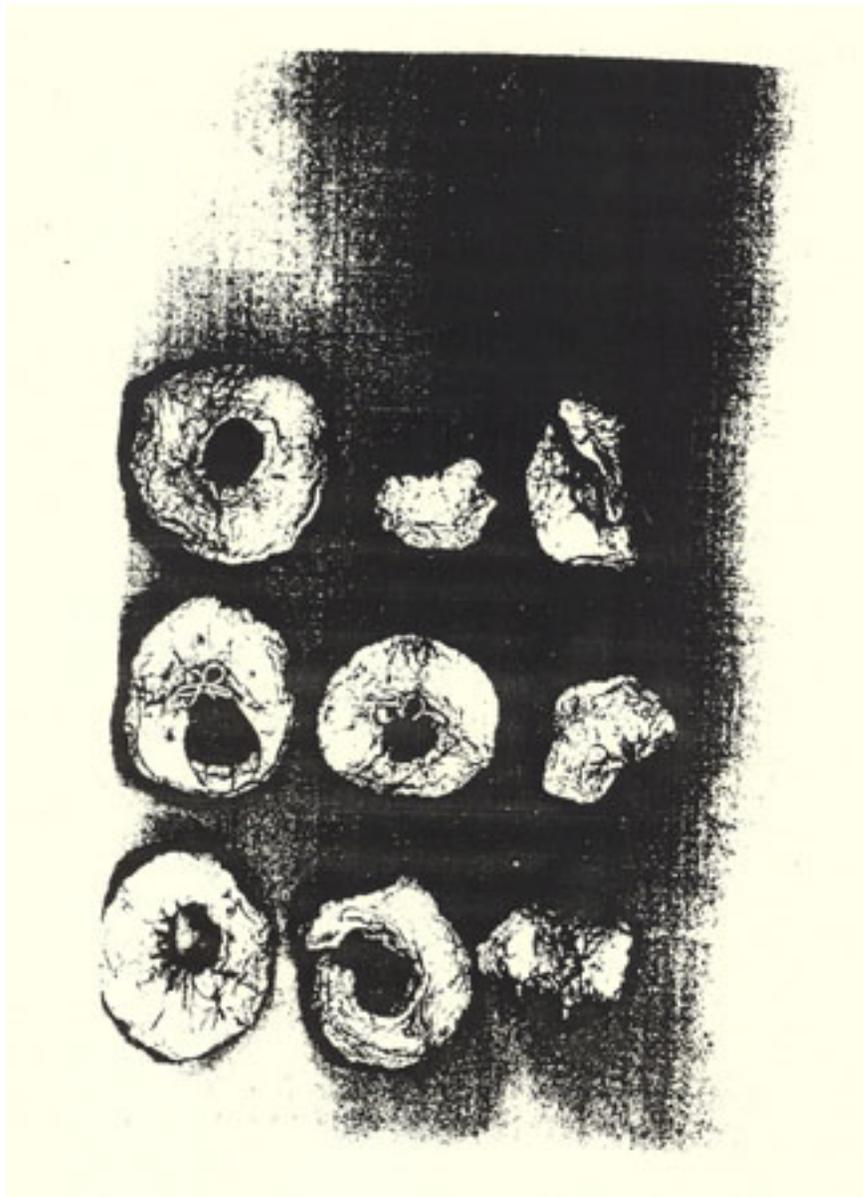
if she has her way
I will dance to mad atonal music
made from hitting garbage cans
and the ringing of cow bells
while she claps and laughs

VISIONARY DESIGNS

Lu and I drink tea at Nefeli's on Euclid
then hike around the Berkeley hills
looking at houses

this is the Lawson house
built by Bernard Maybeck in 1908
after the great earthquake
making a connection between past
and present
the house resembles a Mediterranean villa
and links
the earthquake to the volcanic destruction
of ancient Pompeii

each linked to each
I'm planning a house to look like a jet crash
to connect the present with the way the planet
will look over the next thousand years



BOX OF NERVES

walking on the sea shore sea surf
sand dunes sand in my shoes
salt sun sea sand in my hair
rock water mist air waves breaking
sea foam sea weed sea wreck serenity

dearth decay division disaster
when I come back to town
I feel like a robot standing in a haze
tape hiss follows me
I'm sure a dæmon is eating my wiring

the chair says, "gow"
the light bulb says, "pfup"
the bed says, "let the snake coil
and the tiger bite"

OF SUNS AND WORLDS

For Jessica

pink cotton candy in the pine trees
my assemblages looking
FINE
hanging on my bedroom wall in morning light
after worrying about their (aughh!) MEANING
last night

my dried grass imbedded in handmade paper
with dried grass laid on a photograph
of dried grass under an ink drawing on
a transparency and watercolored engraving
of dried grass entitled *even this alchemy
converting each moment into the next
forges locks on your heart* had seemed
TRITE
and a trifle overdone

drawing with my finger in the air
does any of this exist?

