



**MIMESIS**

**CUBED**

**FORGERIES of**  
**RICHARD DENNER**  
**With an introduction by**  
**Jonathan Penton**

**D PRESS 2020 ELLENSBURG**

Front cover photo by Jillian O'Connor

*Wasted* added in 2022



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He's free, from metaphor and myth, to sit  
Polishing a stubborn lens: the infinite  
Map of the One who now is all His stars.

"Spinoza"—JORGE LUIS BORGES

Translated by Willis Barnstone

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WASTED

## **Jonathan Penton What Is Left Out**

From Big Bridge Vol. 3 # 4 [www.bigbridge.org/rdindex.htm](http://www.bigbridge.org/rdindex.htm)

In the film *Velvet Goldmine* Mandy Slade, played by Toni Colette, posits that during times of great change, exceptional, transitory individuals are chosen to alter the consciousness of the citizenry in order to accommodate the rapidity of the necessary cultural changes (in this case, through glitter makeup and group sex, but bear with me). In his book *A Man Without a Country* Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. says that he was labeled a science fiction author because his first story took place in Schenectady, New York, and the sort of people who read literary magazines were simply incapable of believing that a place like Schenectady really existed. He then states that "novels that leave out technology misrepresent life as badly as Victorians misrepresented life by leaving out sex."

The book *Poet, Be Like God* opens with the 1965 Berkeley Poetry Conference. It talks about how the brilliant poet Jack Spicer gave a particularly poor lecture, and shortly thereafter was rushed to the hospital, where he died ten days later, on August 17<sup>th</sup>, of alcohol-related illnesses. He was forty years old, and was pioneering, among other things, the concept of the chapbook as an art form symbiotic with but independent of the art of the poem. Thus, when Black Sparrow sought to release a definitive collection of his work, it was not a "Collected Poems," but *The Collected Books of Jack Spicer*. It is partly through this facet of his work (not to denigrate the importance or profundity of his poetry) that has caused

Spicer to be such a seminal figure in the way the poetic counterculture of the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century views itself. By being focused around the chapbook, his work seems to inherently belong to the world of community-run printing presses, independent distributors, and the unfounded devotees of poetry distribution laboring in basements across the country.

Richard Denner was twenty-three when he attended the 1965 Conference. Jack Spicer was not the only famous poet he met. He was not the only famous poet who applauded Richard's work. He was the only famous poet there who applauded Richard's work and died a few days later. These things happen. Not very often, but they happen.

Denner founded D Press, a self-publishing "company" for the production of his chapbooks, which he individually physically produced. From his chapbook, *My Process*:

Then, I moved to Alaska and began printing in an attic apartment in Ketchikan, near the ball field. I'd come home from a day's work in the back shop of The Ketchikan Daily News, and I'd print 100 pages and hang them to dry on cotton string along the roofline of the apartment. On the weekends, I bound my books together, set type, and prepared for the following week of printing. The printing was smudgy and uneven, but I pressed on. The typefaces were worn, so I over-inked and pressed harder, pressing the letters into the paper, embossing the page, letting the ink bleed through. Grant Risdon taught me how to cut linoleum blocks, and in a rush of visual imagery, I tipped my linoleum nudes into the books, alternating poems and blocks, giving color to the big words. After reading *How to Live in the Woods on \$10/Week*, I moved wife and child and press to Deep Bay, fifteen miles from the nearest road by boat. D Press moved into a new dimension. Pouring the words right into the type case seem natural. I began to break my poems into smaller and smaller units. Tried to express myself with just the Anglo Saxon. I was printing with 60 point Bodoni type, and this limited the number of words that could be arranged in a 4X6 inch type case.

The essay goes on to discuss his return to California, where Wesley Tanner taught him signature stitch, which can be done with book-binding thread or possibly dental floss. And it takes us up to the presence of contemporary desktop publishing on computers. Denner discusses his methodology only briefly, here, commenting on how the margin justification that a typesetter must do by hand can be achieved by a click of a button in a contemporary

word processor. He doesn't really go into all the things he's been able to do with the time he's saved. The D Press website is now an enormous, ever-growing publishing company with more than forty authors, several with multiple titles, all run entirely by one dedicated, hardworking man. *The Collected Books of Richard Denner* now total twelve volumes, the first eight of which appear in their near entirety on the Web. The printed copies are full-color, perfect-bound, and printed on fine stock. Although a physical copy of the *Books* is expensive, a few years ago it would have been almost impossible. If you read through such a copy in order, you'll see the very clear progression in technologies. The charm of the early volumes is inescapable. But ultimately, Denner's technology-enabled freedom to expand D Press to its current scope is worth more. And while reading the early volumes of the *Books* from the D Press web site might lack the tactile pleasure of bound chapbooks, it's a bit free.

If, then, *The Collected Books of Jack Spicer* stand as a working example of how to use the *form* of the poem and chapbook to subvert the dominant paradigm of publishing, *The Collected Books of Richard Denner* (especially when viewed in context with its [baby] sister project, *Kickass Review*, can serve to illustrate how technology can be used to that end. Denner is now a Buddhist monk, and uses the term "service" to describe his work with D Press, but at no point did he intend it as a profit-making enterprise. D Press exists for the love of literature, and it is for the love of literature that Denner labors before his computer screen and printer, just as he once labored before his press.

If personal computing technology had not developed, there would still doubtless be a D Press and *The Collected Books of Richard Denner*. If it had developed at thrice the speed, Denner would still be using it to its full capacity. This is the object lesson of his work as a publisher. The last few decades have had enormous, and in many ways highly negative, ramifications for the small publisher and poet. Denner looks at these changes and, at a physical age associated with Social Security checks, asks what he can do to promote literature in ways he couldn't a year before.

What follows is a small portion of Denner's output: a collection of

what he terms his “forgeries”—writings that resemble the writings of other writers with book covers that resemble those of their books. Is this joke? If so, it is a serious one, as it takes us back to Plato’s argument against the artist’s use of *mimesis*, and how the poets got the boot from the Republic.

Mikolaj Domaradzki claims Proculus (5th c. CE) defended the poets by arguing that they can reveal truth through the use of symbols and myths and are not limited to a mere imitation of pure ideas. Perhaps, Socrates was being ironic, being perfectly adept himself with the tools of *mimesis*, and it is a matter of the poet’s right intention.

Well, fuck being cowed into fealty. Dada was an art movement formed during the First World War in Zurich in negative reaction to the horrors and folly of the war. And the wars continue, and the art, poetry and performance produced by dada artists, although satirical and nonsensical in nature, continue to tease the conventional-minded and topple false idols. Really, there’s nothing like a good fake book to take your mind off your fake reality.

### **Works Mentioned:**

*Velvet Goldmine*, directed by Todd Haynes, Channel Four Films, 1998

*A Man Without A Country*, Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., Seven Stories Press, 2005

*Poet, Be Like God: Jack Spicer and the San Francisco Renaissance*, Lewis Ellingham and Kevin Killian, Wesleyan University Press, 1998

*My Process*, Richard Denner, D Press, Sebastopol, 2003

*Symbolic Poetry, Inspired Myths and Salvific Function of Allegoresis in Proclus’ Commentary on the Republic* Mikolaj Domaradzki, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, [Academia@academia-mail.com](mailto:Academia@academia-mail.com), 2019

D PRESS  CLASSICS

RICHARD DENNER

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A HOUSE JACK BUILT





# A HOUSE JACK BUILT

With an Afterword *by* Bouvard Pécuchet

D Press 2020 Ellensburg

*A House Jack Built* is an expanded version of *Imaginary Toads*, D Press, Sebastopol, 1999

Cover art *by* Carolyn Zick

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by S. Mutt

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by Beryl Howard

The questionnaire on page 87 is a document that can be found at the back of *The Collected Books of Jack Spicer*,  
Black Sparrow Press, Santa Rosa, 1996.

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*BOOK ONE*

*Homage to Garcia*

---

*Explanatory Notes*

*I*  
*For Groucho*

---

Lu, I would remake the whole universe for you if I could, but the ghosts are hostile. I'm afraid these shiteaters are dug in and have lots of ammo.

***HE WHO LISTS***

Flower  
Unicorn  
Canker  
Ketchikan

what can I say?  
I saw them climb  
Deer Mountain.

I called my friend.  
He gave no answer.  
I entreated him with

my mouth  
God  
suck  
flower

---

Once Caesar crossed the Rubicon, he didn't look back. Part of the legend is we kidnapped Robert Duncan. We made it as far as Vancouver on his Master Card. Our small army still lives off the ransom.

**WAR SAW**

This is how it is, Sir—  
Sack and burn,  
Rape and pillage,  
Every town and every village.

---

A quagmire in Iraq? Clausewitz was right—war should not be left to politicians.

## **TRAINS THAT COULD**

I sing  
To cloud to tree to wind to T.V.

I sing  
*Watusi wa*  
*Watusi wa tu*

I see two  
Watusis in tutus.

---

Stopping the troop trains, it was a bad day in Berkeley. Some of it was subtle.  
Some of it was gross. All of it was ugly.

## **GIVE ME FAG VOMIT**

Fucks US  
under the stars and stripes  
where the Axis  
(no, they don't ask us)

And the Allies  
(of course, it's all lies)

create a suction,  
an enigma  
in the ice box.

You can see  
in the dawn's early light  
his dong is long  
past the pull date.

---

LBJ keeps poking that obvious member of the sleeping dragon of the Orient  
because he doesn't know who he wants to invite to his barbecue. Old presidents  
don't die; they just bloat up.

## **IRAN CONTRA CANTO**

Archaic  
Sidereal  
Shuttlecock  
Hypogeal  
Omnibus  
Lobotomy  
Excite

Yes, and  
    even though everyone else is wearing  
    their cap backwards in Military Sci

I focus and try to keep my sights steady  
FOR LOVE

---

This will be the only appearance of Oliver North in the poem. His route of  
escape is forward.

## **GENERAL MacTHUSELAH**

Genesis V 27, his days  
were nine hundred sixty and nine years.

Forlorn is foul  
weather—none

better or

brighter than his  
shield.

He returns and returns  
and returns again.

Landmines in the sand  
are not compassionate.

---

It's all the same war. The generals just fade in and out. Beware of the sharp  
explodings.

## **WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION**

The Fokkers were revved all night,  
grounded  
with their canisters of mustard gas.

EXHEXDEXODREAM  
SCREAMCREAM

Poor Apollinaire.

---

*Pour Apollonair* was a face cream frantically sought in boutiques in Paris under the Vichy government in that other war. These Fokkers are Messerschmitt.

## O, THE HELLS RING OU

Noriega's sentence reduced 10 years  
British jets hit Iraq  
Ugandan troops kill 15 Hutu rebels  
Record Warmth triggers coral die-off  
Three Serbs slain by Kosovo rebels  
74 million saw Lewinsky on TV

*I was sitting on the beach.  
The sun was just setting,  
and up walks this gal who says,  
"You have a beautiful shape."*

---

Goodbye ceps. I asked her name, and she said it was "Showers," and I thought it best to pass. As for the count and how to count the count, who do these numbers refer to?

## TERROR ANGEL

for Claude

I press you to my heart,  
Lambmine.

We sit in the light of God's golem eye  
sampling images by Miro, Tapies, Picasso,  
and Mary Smith.

She has such impact—her *vibe*, her *energy*!  
Liable to go off at the slightest provocation.

---

Buster Keaton created mistakes. His mistakes worshipped him as their greatest leader. 1927—hard to believe things could get so out of control that quickly. *The General* is a mess.



## ERRATA

read lankmines for lambmines  
read lampmines for lankmines

read limpmines for lampmines  
read linkmines for limpmines  
read lessmines for linkmines  
read lostmines for lessmines

In the early morning wind—  
Diamonds and Wild Cherries.

II  
*For Harpo*

---

You dreamt you saw frozen DNA, but really it was an angel, coiled and waiting  
to be discovered in the palace of your mind.



## IDEOGRAM

for Carolyn Kiser

A stick figure, I open my mouth—  
two swallows spin out.

## THE COLOR WHITE

for Bob Kaufman

Salt, snow, endless abomunisms—  
my sheets *before* Lorca.

---

Eloquence and imagery—poetry can be very boring. Denise Levertov & Robert Bly argue in the captain's tower.

## **PEYOTE TRIP IN BERKELEY**

for J.W.

To the wall up my face down the river  
running rapids without a paddle  
hallway filled with fading portraits

In the shadows of the corners  
I begin to see things begin to move

Piss scream barf

Down the road I walk with a sign  
NO U TURN  
and my brains in my hands

You cut yourself and saw worlds within  
worlds within worlds

Burma Shave.

---

A lifetime under house arrest. Outside I hear the keys of my executioners jingle.  
If you wear a blindfold does the firing squad exist?

## **NUMBED BY THE RAYS**

Of things which are dimensions  
which are worlds

Ech!  
—not rational, eats worms, tastes musty—

LIFE, LOVE—my honeyed breast  
my hairy ass.

Ghosts in my closet.

My mind is haunted.

“Seven for the seven bright shiners,  
six for the six  
proud walkers, five for the Pentecostal,  
four for  
the gospel makers...”

“Stop it, or I’m going to kick you in the teeth,”  
shouts a spook from the closet.

“One is one and all alone.”

---

Returned to the hole, I eat a meal of canned peas, instant mashed potatoes, and  
mystery meat. Illuminated by a low watt bulb in a cage, that’s me, naked on a  
rough mattress.



## MADDENING

Those lines  
those lines  
those damn lines

and all this blank space—  
a place with no one in it

and nothing below the surface  
and  
    nothing above the surface  
        and nothing on the surface  
but a white rabbit.

---

One way to liberate the lovers from syntactic-semantic relationships is to encourage them not to sleep between the lines.

## **NOT ANYTHING REAL**

I dreamt you entered my tent  
high on a ridge above a clear-cut.  
I thought you'd come, and I came—  
but you were only the moon—and I came.

I told this to my Theosophy Club,  
but they didn't think it was mystical  
and were a little shocked. All it was is  
a poem.

I am filled as I am emptied.

---

The Grail is not the cup Christ drank from, but the serving plate from the Last Supper. It is shaped like an eye, a fish, a vulva, and is the geometrical form of *Pi*, the relationship of a radius to the circumference of a circle, which can be revealed by two overlapping circles whose perimeters intersect one another's centers.

## **SHAFT OF THE DEAD MAN**

I see an ithyphallic therianthropic being,  
a birdman, facing a bison with  
its left foot turned so the cleft is seen—  
eyes, nose, thighs, toes speak to me.

A shaman in ecstatic trance,

the dying male god and the Mother, with  
flickering torchlight and psilocybin—  
best I omit the Cro-Magnon ceremony.

---

With God's cosmic dick out in the conversation, His will and testicle on the  
tongue is revealed in golden section two of the forth part of the first part.

## PHANTOMS OF THE FAYUM

I see a man with two birds in one hand and  
a snake in the other, walking upon a  
bridge above fishes.  
I see a woman in the background  
I see flowers like bird tails.  
There's a butterfly landing on the man's foot.  
The butterfly is larger than the man's foot.  
The man is broken like the land.  
kThe woman looks the same as the man.

---

Who was kThe? His wife? She wears a diaphanous gown, carries an Ankh, and  
has a dildo on her head. The naked, kneeling figure between his legs must be a  
servant. He beats the bush with a stick that resembles a snake. It is a boat  
made of rushes and not a bridge. A cat in the papyrus is trying to swallow a  
duck.

## HEAR THEM BUZZZ

With the gums gone the  
words within words, no kidding,  
the birds chatting with other birds,  
are barely heard.

And though the nose is  
green and blue,  
it's much too hot to twitch.  
Nothing

Stirs except a blue-bottle fly.  
The eye IN my head  
sees me coming toward the river,  
and a sound says,

“I will die outside your window.”

---

Anything I can do to undo what I have to do, I'll do.

## **THE WART CANNOT BE COERCED**

*OE dott*, head of a boil  
a small lump, clot 1570  
a minute speck, spot, mark 1674  
roundish mark made with a pen 1748

It was not the act  
by which a dot is made until 1858.

Poets knew it  
(knew (i)t) little  
i, knewt, no  
(tat, tit for tat)ed  
knit (knew) it  
dotted it down.

---

What were people reading? What wars were being fought? At this time a *dot*

was a woman's marriage portion, of which the annual income was under her husband's control. James Buchanan was president.

III  
*For Chico*

---

Two rivers—the River Styx and the other one, I can't remember, the Russian River, maybe. You're embalmed, and there's no place to go to piss or to scream. If you follow me into the Underworld, be sure to bring three coins and extra honey cakes.

**MAYBE A MAIDEN**

Hard to know.  
She lives alone in a castle on a hill  
with a garden of shrubs shaped like dogs.  
Poodles, Beagles, Dobermans.

In the second light, she sits by the window  
feeding birds. Surely, they are nightingales.  
No one is ever seen in the garden,  
yet the shrubs stay shapely and tasteful.

Strange, her mode of life,  
desiring nothing, to be left to herself  
in a topiary garden, desiring nothing.  
Quite weird, really.

---

These peculiar settings and puzzling people, it's enough to make me cry, "That's it—let there be fire in the sea, earthquakes, hailstorms, avalanche. Let the sky open and the gods ejaculate."

## **FOREST PERILOUS**

O, wild bubbling brook  
in this forest among the ferns,  
naked to the sky and the flowers  
and the animals that drink you,

Your sweet liquid, so pure,  
rising to my lips is purer by far  
than time or the rambling  
of this wooden-worded line.

---

A knight in rented armor (in dented amor) having shed tears and blood and spilt his seed in foreign hands pauses for refreshment before continuing his quest for the perfect snack.

## **PERCY**

O, Joker. Humorous in all situations.  
The center of the pack—the hero  
of transformation, innocent fool.

He has frightening brightness in the eyes.

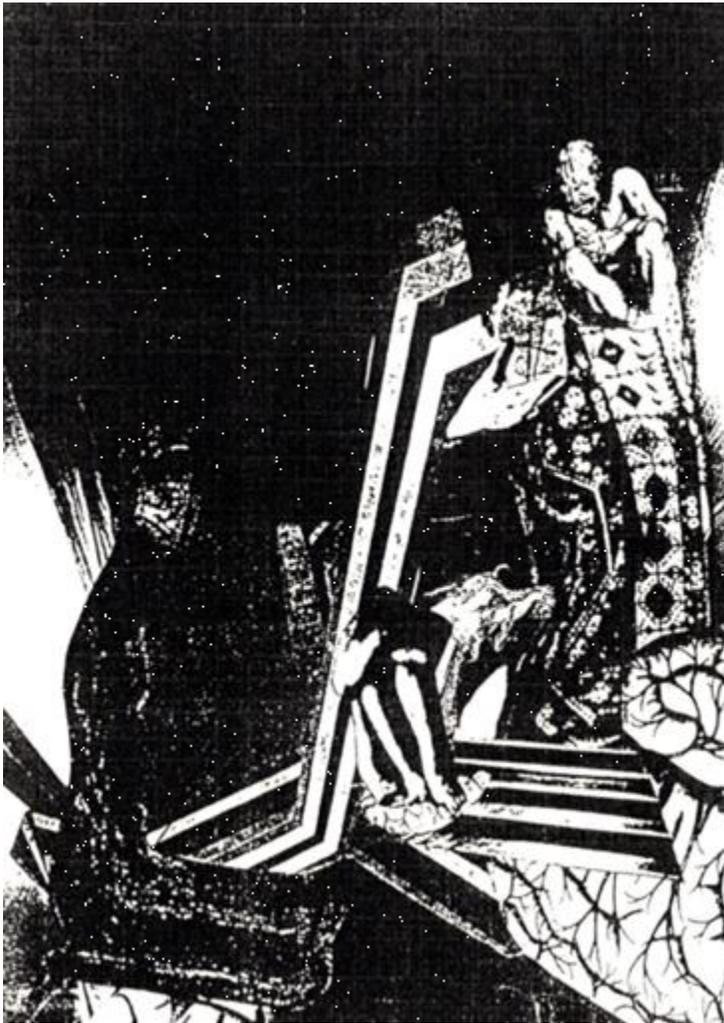
He laughs his bright laughter, and like  
Stan Laurel does something unexpected.

Entranced by a few drops of blood  
on the breast of a seagull in a parking lot  
he shoots a half-court basket without looking.

Half a mind. Half a question. Three points.

---

Dotters, granddotters, and great granddotters of President Polk—a dot in her  
story, pinning the head on the dotting Old Fool.



**TESTAMENT OF A GHOSTMAN**

for Max

Outside the Steppenwolf,  
I finish off the wine.  
An alley. On the wall  
are words by madmen.

Panhandle a turkey san  
from the grotto,  
hike up University  
and crash in the bushes.

I awake with fingers  
                    in my pockets, roll  
into Strawberry Creek—  
up the bank and to the tracks.

As light illumines the bay,  
“Hey, man, let’s smear that queer.”

Feet, do your thing.

---

Marc, I dug your article on Rebel Angels, reminding me of Blake’s *Your Heaven gate might be my Hell door*. Hard to know which way the angels blow in these poetry wars. So many confused flags.



## PERSEPHONE'S MIRROR

for Beryl

I am that woman despised  
by all other women  
and most desired by men.  
I am tormented

by the hostile sex  
that saturates me.  
There are days and days  
when I feel ugly,

and no one likes me.

You say that within  
a golden goddess sleeps,  
although I am forbidden to see

anything but underground.  
Unfolding with Spring,  
I yearn for whoever  
can understand my pain.

## **RISKING THE BOUNDARIES**

for Chanon

There's somewhere I want to go,  
and so, I cruise the limits of the visible.  
I feel the barrier, weird yet familiar  
to my touch—is this a warning?

A car burns beside the road  
where I meet the guardians of the way,  
an old woman throwing bones in the dust,  
a young man rolling stones on a board.

“Who are you?” he asks, “Elven queen,  
white witch, she who has trouble  
making up her mind?” If I pass, I know  
I cannot return, but what more can I lose?

The wind carries me—I change.  
I have no eyes. I have no sex.  
I dance to the rhythm of the stars,  
a dance that is older than love.

## **SECRETS OF THE OVAL ORIFACE**

Yes, oh, yes, yes, yes, yes,  
this must stop—my soul is dark,

and it's flowers are nightshade & wolfbane.

We must put this behind us  
and get back to work.

Damn the sun and its flowers.  
Damn the glass eye of the moon.  
Damn my weakness and this heavy hour.

My heart quakes. Thank God, it's Friday.

---

This is a transcription of a tape recorded by Linda Tripp. Nothing was ever made of it because the events in Dallas superseded this situation in importance. Camelot is now a wispy memory.

## **BILLY MEETS THE CANYON SPIRIT**

Dawn of the manicured fingertips.  
Billy swallows a handful of peyote  
and pulls himself out of bed  
and away from the warm señorita.

He walks up an arroyo and into a canyon  
a mile from his hut. The spirit of a bullet  
ricocheting. There is the hiss of cymbals.  
Billy's hand trembles in the fake landscape.

He blazes away with his *Peacemaker*.  
He fires six rounds. Reloads. Fires.  
He shoots bushes, rocks, holes in the ground.  
He shoots bullets at bullets in the hot air.

Billy the Kid, shooting in the chaparral,  
outdraws his shadow.

---

This is the gun silent screen actor of B-westerns, William S. Hart, bought and proudly showed off to his friends. The gun was manufactured years after the Kid's death.

## **BOOGIE KNIGHT**

Billy's in the closet checking out his arsenal  
trying on different outfits—  
A Colt Anaconda and Colt Python  
to crossdraw under a frock coat  
A Browning Buck Mark with scope  
and a Walther for backup with backstrap  
A Smith & Wesson Model 640  
with a Kahr micro 9 in patent leather  
The Para-Ord double-action 14 shot .45

The Bland .577—the ultimate manstopper

His fresh face.

---

“He said he was seventeen, though he didn't look to be fourteen. I gave him a job helping around camp. He hadn't worked very long until he wanted some money. I asked him if he was going to quit. He said, ‘No, I want to buy some things.’ I asked him how much he wanted and tried to get him to take \$10 for I thought that was enough for him to spend, but he hesitated and asked for \$40. I gave it to him. He went down to the post trader and bought himself a whole outfit: six-shooter, belt, scabbard, and cartridges.” —H.F. Smith (Rancher)

## **FLASH FROM SILVER CITY STAR**

*Billy the Kid, terror of New Mexico  
Lay as a gasping and quivering corpse  
While his blood dyed the dirt floor*

*Of Pete Maxwell's adobe hut.*

*Eleven ghosts of the Kid's victims  
Stood waiting to escort him  
To eternal darkness.*

---

“I don't blame you for writing of me as you have. You had to believe other stories, but then I don't know if anyone would believe anything good of me anyway.”

—Alias

## **FLASHBURN**

The first trickster said, nothing lasts.  
Or was it—you can't cross  
the same beach twice—or once,  
for that matter.

This morning I couldn't open my eyes.  
Poured in a dose of sulfate and alcohol,  
and they opened like the doors to a tomb.  
When I closed the lids, a grating sound.

*Here half my days gone and my light nearly spent.*

Blindness, a deductible expenditure.  
Some consolation that.

---

Re: form—the same extension which constitutes a body constitutes space. Re: content—a life lived with respect to mistakes, a jest of meaning. A joust.

## **HAPPY CLIMES**

Athens of the West,  
just like Fun City— she creates  
a provincial mentality  
by fulfilling  
    through witchcraft  
whatever the mind pretends.

In Berkeley, I was  
attacked by the mænads,  
classified scizo-non-decisive,  
and given Stelazine and A.T.D.

A minor inconvenience, but I  
can relate—a nervous  
breakdown, a broken neck—  
what to do with the stiff?

Strangled by your vocabulary,  
we didn't know you were there, Jack,  
until a flood of vomit  
oozed from under your door.

## **FIVE IS THE KEY**

Five is the number of change.  
Four are the quarters.  
A fourth is a quarter.  
A quarter is change.

Four quarters make a whole.  
Five nickels in a quarter.  
A quarterback signals  
and receives from center.

Four are the fingers.  
The fifth is a thumb.  
Two fingers is a shot.

A fifth is less than a quart.

Five is an element  
beyond the known.  
Here, you believe in space,  
or you don't.

Four is for squares.  
Five is a head  
high in the town  
up to the æther.

## **GALACTIC ADDRESSING CODE**

Every heart must have a correct address.  
Because yours is not consistent with the established numbering, it is necessary  
to correct your address from *unknown*.

Dear Jack,

Sitting in the back seat of that Buick during The Berkeley Poetry Conference,  
you said to “Go in there and come out with a jewel.” It was small, but it was  
beautiful.

My first book, *Breastbeaters*, was an outpouring of adolescent feelings  
automatically unreflected—jazz jam sandwiches, moveable type sandwiches,  
the President's sandwich—language up the kabuki—all very far art—you can  
pause where you please yet voodoo, as you do, winning out against the poem.

After a couple bottles of Green Death we felt the Dixieland of opened heart  
and mind. Thank you, for removing some of my fetters. I will always believe the  
birds.

Love,  
*Richard*

## **HEART'S TIMBER**

I see you in profile in this moonlit rock

at the edge of the cut bank near Ardenvoir.  
Lady of My Thoughts, honor and praise,  
your image powers my work.

A dead forest is a strange place  
to be in evening dress—beautiful  
intensities—the field vibrating  
with the spirits of young trees.

Two-year-old Ponderosa pine,  
2-0's, there're trying, but it's hard.  
Underground, the work gets done,  
a whispered *OM* to go on.

---

A treeplanter can be happy even in hell.

## **STUBBORN LUMBER**

Can there be emptiness without awareness?

Imagine a tree falling and no one hearing it.  
Imagine, also, its twisted limbs.

The trees arrange themselves—I don't  
have anything to do with this.

Sun and moon, day and night,  
the trees follow me.

Imagine them growing.  
Imagine no one hearing them.

---

It'll take a trillion trees to restore the forest. On God's green earth, only a human  
can plant a tree.

## POOT

Things get me down—no kidding,  
better now it's 10° cooler.

Note my inflection, the emphasis  
put on precision, value, and fun.

Coming at you sideways,  
first a mime, then a plate of chocolates,

Then a balloon.  
Inside, I write *Poot*

*Was here!*  
and vanish into air.

---

Billy accepts the emptiness and follows the ruts in the road back to a field filled  
with blue light on snow.

## POETICS

What is the point, Jack?  
Is poetry a conversation among the dead,  
and the poet gets it second hand  
a vampire moon sucking off the sun?  
What is the poet, Jack?  
a battered radio transmitting static between  
the stations  
On a lonely stretch of road?  
Or a punch-drunk fighter  
whose taken one too many

hooks to the head?

Powerful emotion recollected,  
the most exasperating art,  
Charles makes an analogy with Mahamudra, Williams hears a sort of song,  
Lu invents a ragged song, and Yeats sees  
Tattered clothes upon a stick.  
Belle weighs in with poetry as  
experience—  
I awake in morning light. Thoughts  
sweet as honey buzzing in my brain.  
Swatting them I get stung by real bees in a Dream Garden.

## **ET HO!**

Orpheus instructs the treeplanters.  
Watch those scalps.  
Keep an eye on spacing.  
Don't plant too deep.  
No *J* roots.  
I only want to see asses and elbows.

We plant ahead of progress rates  
into full pay with laurels.

We're paid to plant a tree,  
and we'll come back  
and back again until it grows.

These trees—  
out of their depth with this logic,  
driven around in vans,  
debated about like dots on a map.

Go Fir It Reforestation  
in the Land of Many Abuses.

We're trying to plant in a week

what destroyed in a day  
took 1,000 years to grow.

*BOOK TWO: A FAKE NOVEL ABOUT THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION  
OF ANTONIN ARTAUD*

**L' IDÉE DU DÉLUGE**

*Oh! les pierres précieuses qui se cachaiient,—les fleurs qui regardaient déjà.*

I finished reading Hydiat's *Blind Owl* and ingested eight capsules of peyote. August 1964, I awaited what *Time* claimed would be the strangest experience of my life. My patience wavered, so I took another eight caps, lit up a joint, and drank a beer. Then I walked to the corner druggist and signed for two bottles of codeine cough syrup, knocking them off at the end of the alleyway. A door slammed.

Streaks of purple light, raw as butchered beef, flood in on a high tide of effulgent hallucination as one solitary child stands upon the brink of knowing the Meaning of the Universe, partially seeing—furry clouds modulating in confusing colors—the essence as if always known, what does *essence* mean?—the primary substance emerging in eclamptic convulsions, granted by Divine Sophia *a priori* understanding, a fateful step into the opaque transparency of contradiction, where each generation is relative to absolute birth, an aftermath of rhythm and sound contrasting with shades of fuming gray, curling, covering, uncovering the piano of Armageddon.

I lean against the alley wall. Currents of mist form and play in and out between the fence slats—a child's first sight of unrecognizable twinkles of bronze light, a partial appearance in one dusty corner of desolate shapes of undulating turmoil, fluctuating figments of remorse and fear, a paraphrase of past captured, held in wonder, accepted as the fragrant blossom of fragmented eternal fruition—an epiphany of my mortal nature draped in flowing lavender—but as I look closer, my clothes are wrinkled, my hands are wrinkled, and as this synapse fires, an abundance of wrinkled lines become saturated in green and then drip from gashes in my fingertips.

I reach the street, the sidewalk snaking, parking meters drooping like sunflowers, people moving in ectoplasmic quivers—can they see the ecstasy and nightmare of tremulous trepidation on my face? —the street a sulfurous plane of carrion, the sky is yellow, and at my feet an abyss of weird delight and grizzly horror, butterflies of gas and putrid phantoms nourished on tortured prayers.

My heart twists like a bucking bronco, ice-blue blood in my nerves, animal blood cursed and coursing, translucent blood trapped in a fiery alchemical casement, even this alchemy converting each moment to the next, fashions freeways in my heart.

I decide I need a haircut and enter a barbershop and emerge with a new style of haircut, very punk for this time, the barber not pleased about his work, but I can't stop jabbering, and I keep craning my neck to see around the corner in the double mirror reflection, my life in seaward ruin lies, retreads bare, a mummy cloth stuffed in my bloodclot soul, breaking full tilt to the moon.

I sit in the Mediterranean Café drinking double espressos, listening to ethereal angel voices drift over, then to the Garden Spot for a pack of *Gualoises*, stop by Mario's for a plate of rice and beans, decide to take in *Battleship Potemkin* at the Cinema Guild, but when Mother Russia comes down the Steps of Odessa, I freak-out and head down Dwight Way to the Steppenwolf where I can drink and blaspheme in peace—*Abandon All Hope Ye Who Enter Here* and below that, another sign—*For Madmen Only!*

A table of Hell's Angels are deep in their cups with Mahler's *Songs of a Wayfarer* accompanying their animated movements, strobed by candles in the deepening shadows—Scorpio, Scorpio rising, I feel gladness linked to madness.

I sit at a small table by the wall down range from the boisterous boys with their furious guise, and the wood grains form hieroglyphs, characters moving in rhythms syncopated to my breathing, waves of color, flowers whispering I am a special guest in this sad dream—knowing when the moth flew out of my eye, the Dead would teach me to dance.

A heavenly biker named Michael joins me, and I am trying to concentrate on what he's saying, but his words come out like we are in slow motion—something about efficient work starts from idle not from toil, or perhaps his motorcycle is idling, and he wants me to pay the toll, so I project myself frame by frame

through the flames onto an accelerating explosion of leather and chrome. Oh, God, I will keep on until I reach your blessed Paradise!

## **BALLAD OF MYSTERY & DEATH**

Singing arias. She's singing an aria, while we're dancing a waltz to a Brahms string quartet. A busty contralto in a long blue dress. Her mouth quivers. She sees humor in the antics of my trying to entertain her. The moon is a flower. The day is a song. She is under the watchful eye of a cherubic, blushing tenor. She agrees to drive me home, and the tenor tags along. I live in a converted coalbin in a large Victorian on Blake Street. Moon moves into fragments. Visitation comes—wordless, shapeless.

We light a candle and some incense. I proffer my hashish pipe, brimful, and after the pipe returns, I exhale in bliss. It is sweet, the taste of the tree, children running, guns clicking, the shaking of my head. It seems to me these children would like to be alone, so while they are talking, I go out the door and down the hall of fading portraits, my face in the mirror above a broken vase.

Something shadowy follows me—a dark bird with large wings. I spin quickly and jump out of my black sport coat. I'm crossing the Avenue, and the Circus is in full swing. A red MG waits for the light, the driver and navigator dressed up like mummies. I feel weightless, floating outside myself. I grab a passing church steeple, and a priest in a cassock calls me down, but I ascend into the night. There is a cemetery in the mind. Tombstoned, we find it. I sit in the foyer of an apartment building waiting for a friend to return. I decide to make an offering of my naked body. I take off my clothes and sit in the Padmasana lotus seat with the fixed intent of attaining the Ego-death of "I" through my embodiment of the creative energy of the cosmos, the energy of love. I expect a yab-yum goddess to appear.

A heavy blow to my back. Probably the door to the foyer. I hear, "Hold it, or I'll shoot!" I streak up the stairs to hide on the roof, but another cop has come up the back stairs. I'm an angel. I can fly. I walk to the window and climb up on the sill. The window is open, the pavement two flights below. The cop's face is ashen, and his hand with the gun is shaking. I scream, "*Eli Eli Lama Sabathana*," as loud as I can and fall on my back on the floor, keeping my eyes closed. Soon, there is the cooing voice and soft hand of my Beloved. I look—

no, it's her roommate. The cops lift me by the arms and dump me in the backseat of their cruiser. They collect my clothes, and I dress as we drive to the station, stopping once to cajole a streetwalker.

I'm stripped and given blue coveralls to wear, while the cops paw over my motley black suit for drugs. "Hey, kid, looky here." A rookie cop exams something in his hand. Two seeds of marijuana—one for analysis, one for evidence. Note there are three classes of asocial behavior—criminal, insane, and criminally insane. This combination can lead to my conviction as criminally insane.

I'm put in a cell after being booked for indecent exposure and possession of the killerweed. Relieved to be out of handcuffs, I find a copy of the Gideon Bible and begin to read, first to myself, then softly to the shadows, then loudly to the drunks in the next cell, who begin to moan and cry out, "Yea, right on." "Stop it, no, no, stop it." "That will be enough, Mac, knock it off."

My Christ-complex recedes to that of John the Baptist. "Be purified in the holy toilet water of jail, you sinners!" I dunk my head in a toilet bowl full of turds and pull the lever just as the guards enter, grab me by the ankles and drag me to a padded cell to bounce about until I'm weakened by bruises and abrasions.

Early the next morning, I'm led back to my cell where I find the Bible, torn in the struggle across this verse in Isaiah:

We cried out because of oppression when thy chastening was upon us. Like a woman with child, as she draws near to give birth, as she writhes and cries out in her pangs, so were we in thy presence, O Lord; we were with child, we writhed in pain, but we gave birth only to wind; no deliverance did we achieve...

I keep the Bible hidden away. My plan is to heave it at the judge when I appear in court, but when the time comes, and my lawyer asks me routine questions, I reply with babblings about Cervantes being imprisoned in the Castle of Chillon for not paying his taxes and Henry David Thoreau claiming "One man in the right is a majority of one."

When I am ushered into the courtroom, it is as though I walk through a revolving mirror, and I am pleaded insane at the suggestion of a consulting psychiatrist. I am transferred to Herrick Hospital in Berkeley, and after ten days observation, talking in tongues to the Queen of Hearts and her minions, I am taken to D Tank in the Alameda County Jail.

After an asshole inspection and delicing, I am introduced to my cell mate, Homer Gideon. Homer spends his time drawing on photos of Blacks in the newspaper with colored pencils. Homer hips me that my behavior will bring the bull down on my neck. I'm trying to organize a sit-in. When it comes time for head count, I refuse to stand up, engrossed in my reading of *Job*. A blow to the solar plexis and a dazed bumpbumpbump down the alley to The Hole. I find myself in a 4 X 5-foot room with a steel door, a 60-watt light bulb behind a grate, a vent, and a hole in which to relieve myself.

On the second night I am given a plastic mat, and it is like I'm floating in an elevator-cloud, hearing creaks, booms, and cackles from those that operate the celestial machine that transports me to my morning cup of diluted coffee. I imagine I am the statue of David being transported in the hold of an ocean liner from one museum to another.

On the third day, I'm offered release if I will shave, but I flip the guard the finger and go without dinner. My cell is opened by a trustee, who tells me no harm will come to me if only I shave off "that ridiculous red beard." Cautiously, I enter a cell, and an inmate named Pluto hands me an electric razor, smiles, and motions me to sit down. Then he sits down very close to me, and my hand wraps around the cord of the razor, which I attempt to swing like a bolo, but the razor falls to the floor. Pluto laughs and says I'm free to go, so I climb out of the corner of his cell and go back to The Hole.

When I next see the guard, he says Monday is my day in court and I had best get a haircut or the judge will give me a stiffer sentence. Adjacent to The Hole is the barber. I sit in the chair, and just as the guy is about to cut my hair, mail is delivered. He stops to read a letter, and to my surprise, tears come into his eyes. Apparently, his mother died, and his wife is asking for a divorce. I say it is all right, he needn't cut my hair, but he insists, and these are tense moments while he converts a scraggly Mohawk into Mr. Organizationman.

It appearing to the Court on this day the above-named defendant appeared to answer a charge of violating the Health and Safety Code. It appearing a doubt arose as to the sanity of the said defendant, the judge dismissed criminal proceedings and certified the above named to be committed and confined as an insane person until such time as he shall become sane. Done in open court.

## SEASON IN PURGATORY

“Do you see any visions? Do you hear any voices?” From D Tank in the Alameda County Jail to D Ward at Napa State Mental Facility. Here, I’m being interviewed by the admitting psychiatrist. His recommendation is, “Just take these pills at pill call and be good for ninety days.” Stelazine and something to knock out the side effects.

Napa State contains painted landscape walls. I’m to be a hermit on one of these furry mountains with fabulous beasts for companions. I muse on the darkening wall. Friends write letters; family visits; doctors change; books from the Red Cross; even permission to freshen things up. Marionettes leave their cells to scrub and mop and scrape sperm, spit, shit, piss, blood and vomit from the halls and walls, ceiling-crack-crevice-hole-spot-place.

This is an extravagant society, elastic in its tolerance. We plant periwinkles and sit beneath shade trees manufactured by Dame Kindness’ computer, while behind the walls there is lobotomy, shock treatment, psychotropic drugs, strait jackets, hydrotherapy, and ping pong.

September 10th, 4:30 p.m. Richard is the name of the Mongoloid idiot in the chair next to me. He is a classic case of bad manners at the table, stuffing oranges and bananas, peel and pulp, into his maw with delicate, aquiline hands that have a bluish hue. After his meal he goes back to rocking in a stationary chair in the dayroom. He looks out the window or at the TV. He varies this routine by hitting himself with his fists. Then, the orderlies outfit him with a football helmet and shoulder pads, and if he begins his “bear dance” and tries to spar with anyone, he is put in his cell. We are warned that his bite is poisonous. Richard was here when I arrived, and he was there when I left. Is he my *doubleganger*?

Bob arrived in a Rolls Royce and is undergoing his sixth series of shock treatments. A Seventh Day Adventist, he’s convinced he is Jesus-The-Word-Incarnate-Daddyoson&HolyO. His mission is to make Richard talk. X-rays reveal gaps in Richard’s brain, but Bob doesn’t believe these matters. My last glimpse of Bob is of him standing in his cell with his hands outstretched, the front of his skull red and swollen from blasts of electrical shock, crucified in the midst of his misery.

Smitty has been transferred from San Quentin because he is stir crazy. His most

prized possession is a blanket made of stitched-together *Bull Durham* bags. This is a gift for his daughter. “If I can just get my hands on her,” he hisses. D Ward will be his permanent home. Spirits in his heart want vengeance.

Lewis is huge. He is unconscious when they wheel him into his cell. Upon regaining consciousness, he breaks the straps holding him to the bed, breaks off the bolts holding the bed to the floor, crunches the bedframe into a ball, and smashes the bed into the door. Four orderlies enter his room with needle guns, and after a bit of scuffling, all is again quiet. Later, he comes through the barred doors and begins crawling along the path, nuzzling the flowers like a tame housecat. Every day there’s a new pattern in the tapestry.

Wayne, a logger, who's taken one too many rides down the high lead, is setting choker in the backwoods of his mind. The theory with shock treatment is that a patient gets better, or he gets worse. But Wayne’s condition remains unchanged. Tiiiiiiiiimmmmmber.

Mike is undergoing a series of brain scans. He shot his wife and daughter with a .22 and then put three slugs into his right temple. The bumps are still there. One, two, three. The women were lucky to receive only superficial wounds. And so, the family survives, and they visit and seem concerned about Mike’s condition. Trephined by his own hand, Mike shimmers in a hell of his own making.

Peter is a cocksman. Tall and dark with curly hair, he plays jazz on his tenor sax. After a couple of days on D Ward, he’s transferred to an open ward, but he soon returns, having been busted for doing the two-backed beast in the women’s head. He blows out his anger through his horn. The orderlies take away his sax and put him in solitary until he quiets down. One afternoon, his parents visit. I sit at a table near the toilet, and Peter enters from the garden. “Do you want to see me make a break?” He enters the john, and when the doctor and his parents walk down the hall, Peter is out the door and over the wall. I continue with my game of solitary Scrabble. E1S1C3A1P3E1S1. Eleven points—a cosmic number. He’s not detected AWOL until suppertime. By then he’d test-driven a used car and driven it to Oakland and wrecked it and been busted. Wild energy. Let that dog bark!

Tom has cut his wrists. We find we have a mutual acquaintance, and this breaks the ice. Confused and disorientated, he stares into my copy of Pound’s *Cantos* and I into his copy of Daniel Moore who

sing(s) like a clear— visionary.  
The Silent Yes that doesn't fall  
a writhing bleeding warrior from our lips

but flutters  
poised on their curved edges,  
a dry / precise drum-tap!

“Listen to the sweetness of this *Dawn* Vision, Tom.”

## NO-PLACE

Marie-Claire, a nurse, interested in the philosophy of Alan Watts and a par Scrabble player, is an angel of mercy on the night shift. I've had a toothache for a couple of days, and I go to the dentist, who drills the tooth. When the Novocain wears off, I'm in severe pain, and I start climbing the walls. An orderly on the day shift doesn't want a scene and shoots me full of Sparine, a muscle relaxant, and straps me in my bed. I can't move my lips to moan, let alone my limbs. When Marie-Claire comes on her shift, she checks my chart. By then, I can tell her my tooth is killing me, but she says she can't give me anything for the pain—just something to knock me out. Energy follows consciousness. Where am I? At the end of the asylum ward in my cell in this bed by the wall imagining Marie-Clair's breast, her features composed as an organ—a tit with a blue eye, a kind, calm nurse for me to suck, to succor me. I begin to drift down an impassive river with no one to guide me. Everyone has been shot by yelping Redskins.

My neighbor, René is masturbating, and his semen will mutiny and fail to enter orbit. Dejected in his personal pleasure, he'll wait with soaked lap and ride the Purgatorial assembly line.

Space is either space or nothing (*ie.* not space, or something) but not both space and nothing. That which neither *either/or* nor *both/and* expresses must be expressed both within and/or out of whatever context to be true as *trueandfalse*, to be true as *trueorfalse*, and to be true as both *both/and* and *either/or*. In other words, Is is *is* and Not is *not*. Masturbation is the highest art form.

Further conception of space as a concept of place—“I have come to thy sweet

thigh,” said the anacromystic lover. I lust after the ubiquitous space-time hole.”  
As a manic-depressive-non-decisive, I’m hip to having it both ways to be one  
way—my way.

It is the same in that it changes  
the same changes  
the same is one  
that it  
is two  
too.

Let us create an Arcadia of sensuality  
beyond all thermometers and let the rigor  
of the climate annihilate our inhibitions.

Cock in cunt on nose in bum on toe  
in mouth on tongue in ear, my hand  
speeds to your prize.

The rapids of our flesh gleam  
as the red meteors of your lips suck  
my fiery shaft.

There, on the bed in the crux—  
blood in the tears of the time  
spent.

Newton holds the concept of matter to consist of units of matter without void  
(*plenum*) between which there is void or empty space. Isaac is a geek atomist.

Aristotle argues that place is an attribute of body, not as matter, but as its  
boundary—a vessel, a container. He says, “If a body has another body outside  
it and containing it, it is in place, and if not, not.” Let me enter your body. Put  
me in my place. I want to fuck on the moon with a harvest Earth rising above  
your buttocks.

Augustine holds *Earth* (*cf.* “The Earth was void and empty.”) to mean formless  
matter and because formless—void, empty, invisible, and shapeless. Matter is  
Place. He feels the weight of angels dancing on the head of his prick.

Space considered as receptacle is Matter devoid of Form, not the matter of three-dimensional bodies. It is this third-person omnipotent/Holy-I-Ghost kind of Space the Jesuits carried to Canada.

1626. C. Lalemant, one who *seeks only the glory of God and the salvation of souls* in a place which is a *promising field ...for the Gospel*.

1634. P. Le Jeune, who sees *the benefits to be expected for the glory of God from all these...places....*

1649. P. Ragueneau writes that the society is *all of one heart, one soul, one spirit...there is not one who does not seriously attend to his soul's salvation...so the soul can become the receptacle of holiness*.

Says René, "The same extension which constitutes the nature of a body constitutes the nature of space."

5'2''/eyes bright blue/35-22-35

5'6''/legs amour/36-24-37

6'3''/relativity/42-30-44

He's got shoulders, and she's got hips.

He's got pecs, and she's got tits.

These are differential equations.

Are you there Marie-Claire, or are you still in the æther?

## **TABULA RASA**

A clear slate

An empty table

A clean plate

He rose

With earthquake and lightning

Pierced and naked

He returned

To prove

His identity to those

Who betrayed  
Feared and denied  
Him

And  
When he spoke  
He spoke

As one from the dead to  
Us  
The living

A new life  
A second chance  
A second coming

BOOK THREE:  
A TEXTBOOK OF POETRY

1

Emptiness, eels, sweat lodges, architecture, madness, war, love affairs, razors, battleships, butterflies, surrealism gets into everything. There is a war. There is no war.

Combining smatterings of geometry and geology with smidgens of geography and grammar, the shaky foundations of surrealism begin to support the edifice. What attracts me to poetry is that it contains the whole ball of wax. Poetry may be a dead art, but it can still dance, and right now it's doing the funky chicken.

When you die we will plant you beneath the magic mushrooms. They will grow lush and perfect. In a night with a full moon you will hear them cry out to be gathered: eebee eebee ooooo eebee eebee oooooooooo. Listen! They approach. Prepare the Jell-O! Light the sofa!

2

*“Personify,” you say. “It is less abstract to make a person out of a sound.” —Jack Spicer*

Unequivocally, Luis Garcia has been the greatest influence on my writing. I met Lu right after the Berkeley Poetry Conference in 1965. He had a twitchy mustache and a twinkle in his eye. He sat down at my table in the Mediterranean Café and started to rap. He gave me his old thesis binder, so I could organize my poems, and invited me to his house where I met poets whose work would soon appear in Doug Palmer’s anthology, *Poems Read in the Spirit of Peace & Gladness*.

I bow in obeisance to Chaucer, Shakespeare, John Donne, William Blake, Emily Dickenson & Co. I’m an ember compared to the celestial fires that are Marianne Moore, Ezra Pound and William Carlos Williams. I’ve partied down with Charles Olson, Bob Creeley, Jack Spicer, Allen Ginsberg, Ed Sanders, Gary Snyder and Kirby Doyle, studied their poetics, read their books, listened to them read, rant and rave. I’ve smoked dope, gotten naked and freaked with the best, but it was Lu Garcia who showed me how to forge a blade. He put his hands on the same galley oar, yoked me to the same plow, pointed to the star that was to guide us, the star called *friendship*.

3

There is no subject, no object. But there is boot camp. A poet needs to keep fit, even if most of what he or she writes is tripe, because the poet must be ready when inspiration arises. Kierkegaard had writing tables with paper and pens in every room of his house, so he could write wherever he was. There is nothing so frustrating as having an idea and having to let it go because there isn’t a pen handy. Jack says, “The surrealism of the poet cannot write words.”

I started keeping a journal in college. I’ve used different kinds of notebooks, but I’ve settled on the *Pen-Tab 100 sheet 20# paper college ruled 7x5 in Pro Pocket Notebook*. It has a coil binding wide enough to hold a ball point pen and a pocket on the inside cover where I keep a collection of postage stamps and the various discount cards for tea, videos, records and books which need to be stamped along the trail. I scribble everything into this notebook, email addresses, new words, overheard bits of conversation, ideas for book titles. Jack says, “The poet continually thinks of strategies, of how he can win out against the poem.”

I work from the final form, the book that is already accomplished. Mallarme conceived of the book as a spiritual exercise. To me, the book fuses Newtonian

*sequence* and Blakean *simultaneity*. It's a vehicle to write poems, the book as pen. I am writing with the book.

The poem arrives on the page, whether I collage it together from bits or carve it from a single block, whether I dream it or work it out as a puzzle. Once it makes it onto a sheet of paper and can be read, the poem is already a part of a book. And, once in a book, the poem gets lonely, wants to *speak* to other poems. I let the words breathe, let them percolate, let them draw forth their magnetic companions. What starts it—a metaphor, maybe, or some scribbling on the washroom wall, some fleeting event, a little synaptic firing in my brain? I get these firings into words and onto the page because I have developed a modicum of mind-body coordination, and the words might even mean something. I keep making books, this book overlapping with the next, with always a bit unfinished, like a Navajo weaver, letting the spirits come and go.

4

**Jack: Of all the poems you've written, which one is your favorite?**

Richard: This is hard. With ghost children you have to be fair, love them all. I am fond of the most recent because it is fresh, seems to glow with an unusual light. One of the early ones because it was such a surprise. Maybe the most famous one, since it set a standard, or an insignificant one because of its underdog status. Should I choose the ugly one that flakes off detritus and the pieces turn out to be poems? Pick one. Ok.

All  
Over  
All

**Jack: It's minimalist, but I like that it can be read as temporal, as though events are finished, or spatially, as objects everywhere, as well as concretely, with the word *all* being above itself. Next question, with which poet, dead or alive, would you most like to have dinner and a conversation?**

Richard: With so many of the dead, it's a one-way conversation, but I'd like to spend time with Catullus. Maybe, after dinner, we'd cruise the suburbs and spray paint some graffiti on the villa walls. What a delight to roast chestnuts over a fire with Billy Blake and to eavesdrop on his conversation with the angels

or to drink a flagon of wine and match wit with Kit Marlowe, maybe quiz him about the enigma of the Bard. To do a second story job with Francois Villon (all in whispers) or knock back scotch for scotch with Dylan Thomas in the Whitehorse. A candlelight repast with Anne Hathaway could be fortuitous for American letters, or not. Yesterday, I had lunch at Pearson & Co. in Santa Rosa with Luis Garcia. We sat at an outdoor table. It was the first day I have been out of the house in a month, since I broke my legs, my second day on crutches. I ate a meatloaf sandwich and gulped down a *Tazo* 'Real Red'. (I'm paid to spot these ads.) We touched on sacred geometry, the life and liberation of Princess Mandarava, and the Orwellian nightmare we are being led into by the Bush administration. I felt the warmth of the air and absorbed the winter light. It was a heaven of the innermost heart.

**Jack: A technical question: how do you decide where to break lines?**

(1) Richard: If you are going to write in open form, there are different Approaches— you can listen to yourself read and follow the music, break where you want to pause or where there is a beat, following the measure (2) use a semantic approach in your notation, break where there is a word that makes the meaning stand out, creating what Creeley calls a "node" which is like a swelling place on the stem that begins to flower, so the node word will suggest something to the reader, however the first word of the next line goes a different direction than the reader expects, and this creates surprise and interest and keeps the poem moving (3) what I call a punctuation approach might meet your needs, break where commas or periods would occur, forget the commas and use space, following the pattern of your breath (4) create new possibilities by using the text frame, type the poem into the computer any way you want, then move the right-hand bar of the text frame and resize the poem, which will cause the poem to hyphenate many words, and then go back & make them whole again,

often the randomness reveals something you wouldn't see otherwise (5)  
different

poems require different line lengths,

short

lines

for bebop,

longer for speed raps, the buildup of energy units being

an expression of meaning, you must

thoroughly explore the geography within, feel it out, poem by poem,

line by line,

writing from the ear, scoring for your voice

(6) concrete poetry projects a visual look that imitates

the actual look of

the subject of

the poem,

so a "tornado"

would tw-

ist down the

page

(7)

surrealist poems often juxtapose words that contradict one another, so the  
end word

of one line and the

first word

of the next

line might be in total disagreement, although both phrases make

sense by themselves (8) philosophy has no pictures, so in some of

poems move from

what

is visible

to

what is invisible, and lines break around prepositions (9) you can

always

cut the poem up and put the words in a hat and draw

the poem out—reinvent the poem, make your own

rules—just remember, the poem should not show

through.

**Jack: What advice have you for young poets?**

Richard: One must be cautious when speaking to the young. It is not constructive to reveal the truly true, but if you must know how it is, it is a continual battle against assholes trying to drag you to their level, so you'll need hip boots in this shithouse. Poets are marginalized in America because most people can't stand hearing the truth, and it takes a lot of personal effort to realize you don't fit in and a lot more work to survive as an alien. You'll get caught in the hubbub but understand that literature is not a competition. Always try to force through to what you can do, and always keep contact with your roots. If the institutions reject you, write for your friends. Look to the masters for your grounding and to your peers for new directions, remembering the main dictums: MAKE IT NEW (from Ezra Pound) and NO IDEAS BUT IN THINGS (from William Carlos Williams) and, lastly, DONT FORGET LUNCH (from Frank O'Hara).

## POEMS & DOCUMENTS

### **JACK SPICER'S *POETRY AS MAGIC QUESTIONNAIRE***

I'm sitting with Jack Spicer at a table in Vesuvio's, and we're discussing the difference in taste between "Green Death" (Rainier Ale) and other ales, when, changing the subject, Jack asks:

#### **What does the fall of Rome have to do with modern poetry?**

Rome gets into everything. Rome fell, and it's still falling, still felt.

I just got a letter from my daughter, Lulu. There's an enclosed poem and a couple of pictures of her drinking wine in the hills above Florence. Student life—on the one hand, learning is drudgery and at the same time, good for you, but—want to warn her of my own love of wine and where that led, but—there she is on a hill above Florence. Lucky her! I replied: "So glad to hear from you, I was touched by your Lewis Carrol poem and the pictures, ah, my child drinking away her 'pensive mood upon some silent hill.'"

Ancient Greek culture filtered through Roman eyes and hands. Translations of Catullus especially popular, on Valentine's Day, and generally all year—Janus,

Februarius, Marcus, Juno, Julius, Augustus and so on, not to mention Cicero.  
O, Sweetpea. Achtung!

I turn, at random, to Patrick McGuinness in PNR Nov-Dec, 2002 "The  
Belgiad," first stanza:

*Caesarean state:*

*every road sign a mirror*

*every town a suburb*

Reading between the lines, there's always a war going on, the Gates of Janus,  
open.

**Who are the Lovestoneites?**

Followers of the *Grateful Dead*?

**What animal do you most resemble?**

A cheetah, at least this is what the brand of my swim trunks says.

**What insect do you most resemble?**

A grasshopper, *Æsop*, that dang Roman, again.

**What star?**

Anteres, Mars's rival.

**What card of the ordinary playing-card deck (or Tarot deck) represents the  
absolute of your desires?**

Three of cups, friendship, the Muses.

**What card represents the absolute of your fears?**

The Magus.

**What's your favorite joke?**

In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, there was a ghetto of Jews outside the Vatican. The bishops were upset about this and petitioned the Pope to have them removed. The Pope felt he should be fair, and as he was fond of riddles, he suggested that if the wisest among the Jews accepted the challenge of a riddle festa with him, and if this man could answer the riddle, the Jews could stay, and, if not, they would have to leave.

A proclamation to such affect was sent out, and in the ghetto everyone scurried around asking themselves and each other, “Who is our wisest man?” It was finally decided it was Itzy, the tailor.

On the appointed day, Itzy showed up. He was ushered into room of rich tapestries and columns of marble with gold worked into the grain. Itzy sat at the end of a long table and twiddled his thumbs. At last, the Pope came in and sat at the other end of the table.

The Pope sat for awhile, looking at Itzy, and he raised one hand and pointed a finger in the air. Itzy returned this sign by pointing a finger at the ground. The Pope responded to this by pointing a finger at Itzy, and Itzy responded by pointing two spread fingers at the Pope. The Pope was startled. Then, he took an orange from his robes and held it up. Itzy opened a satchel he carried and produced a piece of matzo, and he toasted the Pope with his piece of matzo.

When Itzy was gone, the bishops crowded around the Pope, anxious to know the outcome of the contest. The Pope stared in amazement. “That was certainly a very wise man,” he said. “He answered my hardest riddle. I told him that God is in heaven, and he said that God has come to earth. I said that there is but one God, and he said that He has two other manifestations. I said that the earth is round. And he said that some people believe it to be flat.”

Back in the ghetto, Itzy was surrounded by a chorus, “Itzy, Itzy, can we stay or do we have to go?” Itzy replied, “That Pope, what a smuck! He told me we would have to leave, and I told him we were going to stay right here. He said he was going to poke out one of my eyes, and I told him, if he did, I would poke out both of his. He took out an orange. So, I took out a piece of matzo, and we had lunch.

**What is your favorite political song?**

“The Times They Are A-Changin.”

**If you had a chance to eliminate three political figures in the world, which would you choose?**

This is truly a dangerous question, and in this political climate, I’ll pass.

**What political group, slogan, or idea in the world today has the most to do with Magic?**

“Trickle Down Economics,” says Belle.

**What political group, slogan, or idea in the world today has the most to do with Poetry?**

Earth In Upheaval.

**Who were the Lovestoneites?**

A far-out religious sect, maybe from Estonia.

**Which one of these figures had or represented religious views nearest to your own religious views? Which furthest? Jesus, Emperor Julian, Diogenes, Buddha, Confucius, Marcus Aurelius, Lao Tse, Socrates, Dionysus, Apollo, Hermes Trismegitus, Li Po, Heraclitus, Epicurus, Apollonius of Tyana, Simon Magus, Zoroaster, Mohammed, the White Goddess, Cicero?**

Nearest, Buddha, furthest, Emperor Julian, although I have a bone to pick with Apollo.

**Classify this set of figures in the same way. Calvin, Kierkegaard, Suzuki, Schweitzer, Marx, Russell, St. Thomas Aquinas, Luther, St. Augustine, Santayana, the Mad Bomber, Marquis de Sade, Yeats, Gandhi, William James, Hitler, C.S. Lewis, Proust.**

Nearest, Kierkegaard, farthest, Proust.

**What is your favorite book of the Bible?**

Numbers.

**As far as you know, how did the universe come into existence?**

Not really sure this has even happened.

**Give what you believe to be the most significant relation of man to three of the following: sun, tree, radio, cat, 3, angel, time, air, truth.**

Time/dreams, 3/body-voice-mind, sun/son.

**What reference is there in your poetry to specific conditions of your physique?**

“I drink from the Cancer Cup.”

**How would you say your physique is related to the form of your poetry at the present point?**

Narrow poems, I'm thin.

**Name ten masterworks (of the order, that is, of *The Bible*, *Das Kapital*, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, *Bleak House*, *Phaedrus*, *The Duchess of Malfi*, or *Harvey's Motion of the Heart and Blood*) which you have never read or which having read you remember nothing of, including on your list as many works as you can that you believe you will never read in your life and starring these. (Do not include more than one work of any particular author.)**

*\*War and Peace, \*Principia Mathematica, \*Confessions of St. Augustine, The Færie Queen, The Rape of the Lock, \*Decline & Fall of the Roman Empire, \*Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood, Æneid, \*Being and Nothingness, \*Remembrance of Things Past*

**“Thou art my master and my author,” Dante says to Virgil. What poet could you name as Dante names Virgil?**

Why, Jack, you, of course, and Borges.

**Choosing one of the two figures that I draw with the spilt beer on the table, conceive of yourself as poet (that is, the spirit of your work) in the position marked with an  $x$ ; then list as many poets of the tree or constellation of your genius as you can numbering them according to their position in the design.**

(Fig. A looks somewhat like a Tarot spread; Fig. B looks like a family tree. I choose the Tarot spread.) Luis Garcia on my left, Belle Randall above Lu, Robert Creeley between them and to their left; Rimbaud above Creeley, Charles

Olson below him, Allen Ginsberg above me, Karen Rice below me, William Carlos Williams to our right, Gertrude Stein above him, and Ezra Pound below him, then, on the far left (#13) is Dante Alighieri, and on the far right, Chaucer, high in empyrean is Sappho, and deep in the fiery abyss, Billy Blake.

**Invent a dream in which you appear as a poet.**

I'm holding my pen between my fingers and twirling it around like it was a baton, and it gets longer and turns into a pool cue. I'm in a poolroom in a small Texas town with my eyes rolling around in their sockets, I try to write, but it seems my pen is too long, and I'm trying to hit the cue ball with the butt of my pen/pool stick. The bartender, who looks like Ed Dorn says, "Ass has been cold since they shot Michael Jackson." (*They* seems to refer to the government, or Whites.) Marianne Moore, in a blue suit and wearing a triangular hat, rises from her seat and heads for the door saying, "They see rings in war," and another shade says, "They hear rings in their ear." I realize I'm in Poet's Hell and there's no place to go to pee.

**Think of a page on which you are writing a poem as being also a map. Do you write the poem with or against the sun?**

The sun never sets on my domain, however I try to keep a bit of shadow on page while I write, so, *against* the sun, especially in the sense that everything is just fine, there's no need to protest.

**What other geographical observations can you make about this imagined page of writing?**

It is flat, like the Earth.

**Name three great conquerors in the history of man and compare their movements with the movements of writing on this page.**

Alexander the Great, a sentence written from left to right, west to east, from Macedonia toward the Indian Ocean; Julius Caesar, lines from top to bottom, north to south, empire from Gaul to Rome; George Bush, impishly captivating the American people like Scheherazade hypnotized the King in the *Arabian Nights*.

**Give the approximate date of the following people or events:**

**Plato** 400 BCE, **Buddha** 500 BCE, **The Battle of Waterloo** 1812, **Dante** 1250 CE,  
**The Invention of Printing** 1500 BCE, **Nero** 50 CE, **Chaucer** 1350, **Joan of Arc**  
1400, **The Unification of Italy** 1880, which leads back to the first question and  
why the fall of Rome has something to do with modern poetry...but, Jack has  
one last card up his sleeve.

**In any of the four following poems fill in each of the blanks with any number  
of words you wish (including none) attempting to make a complete and  
satisfactory poem. Do not alter any of the existing words or punctuation or  
increase the number of lines.**

I.

And now the conflabberation  
Of the radiator on the top floor  
is giving me the hebejeebies, the even row of it  
fit to raise  
God only knows how many children.

You will count to twenty  
You will stay in the midst of them,  
You will know Meannie, Mienie, and Moe you will hear them  
in the narrow hallway, quibbling over a molecule of mayonnaise.

II.

In the objective endlessness  
Snow, ambulances, and salt  
He lost his imagination.

The color white. He squats  
Over a soundless stool made  
Of pigeon feathers.

Without nose or toes  
He suffers a dream not moving  
But the bones go on humming to bubble gum music.  
*In the white endlessness*  
*How pure and big a wound*

*His imagination left.*

\_\_\_\_\_, seaweed, \_\_\_\_\_ Now  
In the white endlessness.

III.

Blue-rooted heron, a stranger on the lake  
and in song, like me no traveler

Taking a constructive rest, loose-winged water bird  
And dumb with music and bubble gum

I stand upon the waterfront, like him no traveler

\_\_\_\_\_, dangling on unmanageable wings.

Aching for flight, for farther shores than I can hope to hop to, even Proxima  
Centauri, where I stand and take my rest.

They will not hunt us in the fog of our  
understanding

The flesh of the lake bird is fishy and is dumb.

The sound of an arrow, the sight of a hunter  
might bring surcease to this life without wings.

So let us die for death alone is motion

And death alone will make these herons fly.

Fly wingless and witless, herons, across the ocean  
and die.

IV.

With the gums gone the  
words within words, no kidding,  
the  
birds chatting with other birds,  
are barely heard.

And the nose is  
green and blue,  
it's much too hot to twitch.

Nothing  
Stirs except a blue-bottle fly.

The eye IN my head  
sees me coming toward the river,  
and a sound says,

“I will die outside your window.”

From THE BOOKS OF HELL

*for Zeppo*

## **EYE OF THE SCORPION**

is issuing from the brain  
shinning upon us  
to block our knock off  
in the 13th week  
a pearl in wine  
the web of life, and a worm  
are weaving deep in the earth  
a wooden bowl  
is being filled with blood  
to make bread  
as the cauldron boils  
more gold and more gold  
is issuing from the brain  
white is holding a corpse  
in the east of the brain  
red is holding a banner  
in the west of the brain  
yellow is holding an arrow  
in the south of the brain  
black is holding a bowl  
in the north of the brain  
as the worm weaves

the web in the 13th week  
in the eye of the scorpion

## DIAMOND HANGING J FLOATING I

I mend the fences.  
I tend the herd.

The shit is ten feet deep,  
and the shitters play for keeps.  
What are you after, they ask,  
a hoof in the mouth?  
The shit is ten feet deep,  
and I can't eat or sleep.  
Coyotes yap all night  
below the blown moon.

The shit is ten feet deep.  
Shine on, shine on.  
Hold it down, you buggers,  
or I'll rope your ass, I sing.  
The shit is ten feet deep  
and dear.  
Hay has more than doubled in price.  
There's no market for feeder steers.

The shit is ten feet deep  
and clings like it's alive.  
Pour on gas. Set those doggies afire.  
Give those cows a kick in the udder.  
The shit is ten feet deep  
and thick.  
Chew your cud, mama,  
let those juices flow.

The shit is ten feet deep,  
and sometimes it hums.

The shit is ten feet deep,  
and here and there a head protrudes.

The Angus are black—  
purgatorial beings.

The Herefords are red—  
mythological monsters.

The Charolais are white—  
easy to spot against the dung.  
The shit is ten feet deep  
and covers the fences.  
The shit is eleven feet deep,  
my shovel is hooked to coke.  
The shit is beginning to climb,  
making inroads through the hills.

O, the shit is infinitely deep  
and running still—running.

## **SCORPIO, SCORPIO RISING**

Scorpio  
beastie in the bunghole  
bugaboo of bugaboos  
mite in the middle of the third root race  
big eight of the cycle of life

Maggot of the mind's eye  
mistake, abortion, infection, crablouse  
error of the raised eyebrow

O deadly persuader  
O propagator of corruption  
O comic of crimes not yet committed  
O gutless guttersnipe  
O diddler at the door of destruction

Let me fall with you into generation.

## CANTO 69

And Yahweh-Elohim planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground Yahweh-Elohim caused every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food: the tree of life also in the middle of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. (Gen. 2:8-9)

“Artaud, where are you?”

“I’m here,” I reply, “watering these geraniums.” In fact, I’m daydreaming of My Gardener, her features composed as one organ—a tit with a brown eye, a kind, calm natural state of feeling nourished.

Descartes, with whom I share a cell, bursts out of the building, nearly pushing the door from its jambs. He acts like this after he’s been masturbating. Our cell is covered with years of ethical encrustation and sexual rationalization. Descartes can get his nut off just contemplating *space*.

My shrink, Dr. Blake, said Descartes might need to have a lobotomy. I believe his mental condition will vanish with time. But as for myself, I am too frightened to consider my own delusions at all. Who knows if they even exist? Like, scars, to my body, they make my interior life more interesting. I don’t mean to encourage delusional thinking, but it could be an alternative for what passes for common sense around here.

In this, we are encouraged to express meaning in a two-value system, a system based upon the law of contradiction, where something, take *space*, is either something, space, or nothing, not space, but not both space and not space at the same time. So, anything that can be said about things contradicting this law must be translated back into this framework of logic.

“What a load of happy horseshit,” says Descartes, whose post-modern speculations have landed him in bedlam, “That which neither *either/or* nor *both/and* express, whether expressed within or without the system can only be true as true and false. This is the only truth. Write it, *true&false*. Thus, to be true

as true&false and *both/&* and *neither/nor*, things must be and not be at the same time. What *is* is is is is, and what is *not* is not not not, and even when *is* is not and *not* is, the perfect leaf will be the one that is the same in that it changes, the same that it changes, the same changes, just as one is one and two, too. Emptiness is, by definition, beyond limitation, but for we Psychonauts of the Heart Essence, emptiness is actual.”

I sit with Descartes under the willow tree in the asylum’s garden, and we meditate on the sun setting over the garden wall. It’s fully apparent to us both that *nothingness* is dark and w/out suns, w/out winds, w/out lines or fields of force, black snow, not covering trees like a turban worn by an Arab, whereas what is *empty* is luminous and clear.

A nurse saunters toward us. Looks like Susanna. Marie-Claire is off-duty. Francis is in the dayroom strapping Richard into a chair. My moody mind/tit is cosmically depressed. “Fucking,” says Descartes, and he walks away.

“Let me lift your skirt and put my lips to your secret place. Come, Susanna, enter this garden. You are lovely, my dainty bride, slender lady of the tides. Let my fiery shaft speed below, and the red meteors of my mouth suck on your radiant nipples. I can see the winding pathways of our flesh glisten and our view be dotted free.” At this point, I’d best posit a full and accurate account of the *dot* as a concept of space.

The *dot*, a noun in Old English, *dott*, head of a boil; 1570, a small lump, clot; 1674, a minute speck, spot, mark; 1748, a roundish mark made with a pen. It was not the act by which a dot is made until 1858, nor was it a little child or creature until 1859. As a verb: to mark with dots, 1740; to scatter with specks, 1816; to cover with minute spots, 1818. Oh, Susanna, dotted free, won’t you, oh, won’t you come for me?” Enter my magical garden. Slender saplings flank and shoulder these granite boulders, and serpents of light slither on the surface of a Taoist lake. Poets knew it (knew(i)t—little *i*, knewt—no(tat, tit for tat)ed—knit (know) it, dotted it down) all along.

In 1884, Sir Isaac Newton, who had hitherto been existing in the formless realms of absolute space, re-entered relative space and claimed *place* to be a *situation*, not, as he had previously held, the external surface of a body. He appears strong and handsome, and women cannot resist him because of his highly specialized intelligence.

Sir Isaac proclaims, perhaps over-demonstratively, that matter consists of units that are without void and exist in a *plenum*, wherein there is void, or empty space. This position is the source of his endless quarrels with Dr. Aristo, for whom place is an attribute of a body, not as a piece of matter, but as a boundary. The doctor describes this as *the innermost motionless boundary*. Dr. Aristo is adamant: “Sir Isaac, get it through your thick skull, if a body has another body outside it which contains it, it is in place, and if not, not. You, my dear Sir, are on a locked ward and will be here until I decide you can function in the outside world.” The wart cannot be coerced.

There is a third nature, where space is eternal and can be apprehended without the help of the senses—space and matter as *receptacles*—but I will get nowhere arguing so. Susanna asks, “Remember what we talked about earlier?” “Yes,” I say, thinking, ask enough questions, and an apple might fly up your ass.” She said, “I was intrigued by your idea that those early saints saw miracles when they came to Canada because they sensed the weight of angels.”

“Sure,” I said, “for them the Earth in Genesis was formless matter and because formless, the Earth was said to be void and empty, or invisible and shapeless. Here, matter *is* place. 1626: C. Lalemant sought only the glory of God and the salvation of souls in a place, which was a promising field for the Gospel. 1634: P. Le Jeune, saw the benefits to be expected for the glory of God from all those places. In 1649: P. Ragueau, stated that he believed there was not one among them who did not seriously attend to his soul’s salvation, so that the soul could become the receptacle of holiness.”

I did as I was told, washing down the pills with some water from the garden hose. I watched her hips sway as she walked away. “Fire is water falling upwards,” I thought, and in a short time, I was feeling a lot more stable.

## **PRINTER’S DEVIL**

When *l* is  
a sentence  
and *e* is  
a sentence  
followed by  
a sentence

and *H* is  
a sentence  
followed by  
three sentences  
*Hell* will be  
a sentence  
in more than  
one sense

## HEAD WATER

for Robert Duncan

Syntactic order brackets  
word relationships,  
but this should not prevent us from  
holding hands.

Asked what  
prevented him when asked  
what prevented  
him from  
internally reallocating  
functor categories  
f/internally  
reallocating functor  
categories from non-  
exigent conditions  
from non-exigent  
conditions, he replied

Oh, potato chip  
prime mover of palatability  
bugaboo to step on in the dark  
cosmic potato of parabolic curves  
let me lick your salty thighs.

S/Seys  
E/Cexy

X/Son of Lucifer  
bringer of fire.

Whether it is a potato or not  
I do not know or not know  
care or not care  
for, for sure, it will resemble  
Arp's navel.

When asked what  
prevented the potato chip  
f/attaining inter-subjective  
metamorphosis when injest-  
ed.

Edgar Allen  
Poe tato  
replied,

*Birds of calm  
rest on the charmed wave.*

## **THE SPECIAL TEACHING OF RICHARD DENNER**

Afterword curated by Bouvard Pécuchet

Diverse writers have praised and condemned Richard Denner's skill as a poet. He is considered by his contemporaries to be mainly a poet of blue-collar workers, a poet of peace and gladness, and a poet of love. The debate develops around Denner as a philosophical poet and as a satirist.

Thomas Cleft, in *What I Say* (Blue Onion, 1999), sees Denner as "one of the last to benefit from a truly humanistic education. He gained this on the streets of Berkeley and in the woods of Alaska. He can write a complete sentence, avoiding the chaff to give us the true picked grain."

William Boss, in his "Proem to the Oakland Raiders," (Telegraph Avenue Gazette,

Vol.VI, No.2), writes, “We ought to give real praise to that great philosopher, Richard Denner.”

Norman McGordon, in the prologue to his translation of Hung Chow’s *Taoist Lake*, (Other White Meat Press, 2002) gives special note to Denner’s real understanding of “astronomy, philosophy and comparative mythology, wherein few of our time are more exactly learned.”

But there is another side to Denner that arises in critical studies of his oeuvre. The idea of Denner as a lewd poet. This idea can be traced to the early D Press books of his Alaska years. It is here the idea of Denner as a smut-mongering illiterate has its origins. Jeb Utahl, in his “An Account of the Poets of the 60s” (Huggermugger Publishing, 1972) accuses Denner of trying to make his readers laugh in vain. The absence of Denner’s work in Ronald Allen’s anthology, *The Big Book of Hippie Poets* (Golden Era, 2001) is all too glaringly obvious.

Another of his contemporaries, Ernest Blenk, has praised Denner’s sublime blend of pathos and humor. Blenk, in his *Short Notes* (Total Recall, 2002), calls Denner “tender” and a “friend to women.” He says, further, that Denner has a “truly human point of view.” The debate continues today. Denner is seen as surrealist, scholar, philosopher, humorist, stylist, craftsman, moralist, and pornographer because it is the nature of post-modernism to be all things in the imaginary museum.

Lorenzo Ghibelline, in “An Analysis of Postmodern Poetry” (Doodah, 2002), says, “Richard Denner has faith in his vision. He is a crafty satirist and surrealist.” Ghibelline examines Denner’s “Scorpio, Scorpio Rising,” and admires the use of ideas derived from George Barker, Madame Blavatsky and Kenneth Anger. He calls this poem, “eclectic and radical.”

In “Denner as a Satirist” (Ezinger, 2004) Rosemary Cluff interprets Denner’s works in terms of allegorical significance *inter exegesis* of Buddhist doctrine and Classical mythology using a methodology based on the epistemological assumption that every simple solution to the problem of knowledge must be inadequate. She feels that he is making fun of the decadence of the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century and that his poetry is not a mere smear. Bluff admits his poetry can be cryptic and obtuse, but she sees no reason why he must explicate his work. In fact, she finds him “boyishly clever” in the following poem:

Syntactical  
Metameaning

In functor  
Categories (being)  
Ordered by

Intersubjective  
Meta,pr[jpsoses (.)

This poem, while not exactly enlightening us of its subject or its object, is enlightening of Denner's temperament. He makes us laugh. He is a poet of mirth and merriment and, at the same time, he is deadly serious. He is both poet and critic.

On a bright and blustery afternoon, in the fall of 2004, over many cups of tea on the terrace of the Mojo Hotel in Valley of Stars, I discussed *A House That Jack Built*, with Sir Arthur Ranting. Sir Arthur recognized the active principle of the trinity and unity as a view of reality in Denner's book and questioned whether he had only used this idea as an organizing principal or if he actually believed it to be a fundamental truth.

He pointed out the irony in the purgatorial position of Antonin Artaud in Book Two and how Artaud in his "Letter Against the Kabbala" (City Lights, 1965) believed *The Zohar* to be a book written by the damned while they awaited their punishment.

In his exegesis of *A House That Jack Built*, Sir Arthur described an arc of ascent from the microcosm to the macrocosm, from the human realm (the war poems) through the world of nature (the tree planting poems), into the world of forms, the worlds of spiritual perception, imagination and divine nature (the Grail poems, the poems about Billy the Kid and Artaud), towards a union with divine essence (a poetics).

Sir Arthur convinced me that there is no doubt the poet has confidence in his path, while simultaneously realizing paths do not lead to liberation. Each poem is a recognition of the nature of thought and experience. Each poem reveals Denner's hunger for life, for freedom. He urinates on the icons of authority. He trembles before the majesty of a flower.



# EZINE VERSE



APRIL 2003

Number 111

\$7.00

FIVE POEMS FOR THE PEDESTAL MAGAZINE

SIX POEMS FOR CONSPIRE

THREE POEMS FOR TAVERNER'S KOANS

FOUR POEMS FOR THE MISSISSIPPI REVIEW

TWO POEMS FOR THE NEW FORMALIST

THREE POEMS FOR BIG BRIDGE

FOUR POEMS FOR THE BERKELEY POETRY

CONFERENCE

A POEM FOR CNN FINANCE

THREE POEMS FOR USA TODAY

TWO POEMS FOR HOMEFIRES HEARTH

RICHARD DENNER  
**EZINE VERSE**

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FOUNDED IN 1968 BY RYCHARD ARTAUD  
NUMBER 111

APRIL 2003

THIS ISSUE EDITED BY RYCHARD ARTAUD

COVER BY S. MUTT

*Ezine Verse* is published whenever and wherever (except Chicago). Unsolicited manuscripts are discouraged. Claims for missing issues are hopeless. Any resemblance to anyone or anything living or dead in creative works contained herein is entirely a fabrication of the mind of the reader.

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[www.dpress.net](http://www.dpress.net)

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FEDERICO GARCIA LORCA  
(1898 – 2003)

*In the early morning,  
empty, empty, empty.  
A gypsy walks the streets  
holding a guitar as a banner  
early in the morning.  
Empty, empty, empty.*

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## EZINE VERSE

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APRIL 2003

*FIVE POEMS FOR THE PEDESTAL MAGAZINE*  
*www.thepedestalmagazine.com*

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## F YOU C K

the old lemon in a hammock  
between two willows  
jeans cutoffs and bandana  
for a top

she says, “If you see Kay,  
tell her I want to”

sweat on my face  
I stand there—  
I’m 14 and don’t get it

## UP BEFORE FOUR

I’m up before four  
stirring up dust  
rising with the cows  
raising the weather

this also, stretching  
far enough—  
as far as necessary  
to find my joy

## SPACE OUT

I space out  
in the dayroom, I

beat myself, so they

put on a helmet

bite at the face guard  
in the blackness

after all  
poetry is only poetry

## DREAM

I wander in a dream  
near the ocean's edge

How did this crab  
get in my mouth?

Defiled by the thing  
a puppet on a string

Yakity yak  
yakity yak

Every second second  
yakity yak

## WORDS

clouds  
like smoke  
like mist  
like smoke

feathers  
smoke  
fur  
smoke

perhaps  
each

*SIX POEMS FOR CONSPIRE*  
*www.conspire.org*

---

IN KETCHIKAN

Walking with Frank Boardman up South Tongass  
from the New York Hotel toward The Beanry  
Frank listens to me read a poem of Lu Garcia's  
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.

## POETICS

What is the point, Jack?  
is poetry a conversation  
among the dead, and the poet  
gets it second hand, a vampire  
moon sucking off the sun?

What is the poet, Jack?  
a battered radio transmitting  
static between the stations  
on a lonely stretch of road  
or a punchdrunk fighter  
whose taken one too many  
hooks to the head?

Poetry is experience—  
I awake to morning light  
thoughts sweet as honey  
buzzing in my brain  
swatting them I get stung  
by real bees in a dream garden.

## I AM A CLARINET

I am a clarinet  
I love the sound of *r*

with no *rrr*, no road  
no tree, no poetry

### ACROSS NO DIVIDES

Dry creek, cool canyon.  
Music from the rocks as you pass.

### SONG AT MIDNIGHT

Hard whites, infernal yellows,  
sulfur and yellowgreen.

### EYE ROVING OVER BLUE HILLS

The *I* merges with the *All*  
but remains *I*.

All is verdurous.

*THREE POEMS FOR TAVERNER'S KOANS*  
*www.taverners-koans.com*

---

FOLLOWING SALVADOR DALI  
*for Claude*

It's a cinch—*this*  
*paranoiac-critical method*  
*as a spontaneous method*  
*of irrational knowledge*  
*based upon the interpretive*  
*critical association*  
*of delirious phenomena*  
*whereby the double image*  
*may be extended, continuing*  
*this paranoiac advance*  
*to make the image appear*  
*and so on until there*  
*are a number of images*  
*limited only by the mind's*  
*degree of paranoiac capacity*

SO SUDDEN

With an eclamptic convulsion  
of cataclysmic proportion

The man in the house  
is no longer a man, and

The house is no longer a house.  
They are parts of a relationship—

And minor parts, compared to  
the woman who's lost her VISA card.

What dress was she wearing?  
What print? Did it have pockets?

The scale of demolition

is proportionate to the folderol.

### FABLE

The tortoise win? The lady sleeps.  
She signals to move.

Stood up, he carved.  
The huge knife stirred.

### *FOUR POEMS FOR THE MISSISSIPPI REVIEW*

*www.mississippireview.com*

---

### POST DOGMATIST PUDDLE

*for Cecil*

all in order  
on a plate of gas  
Maxwell House  
is avant-garde

### FURNITURE POEM

*for Steve*

start with two marks  
wisp of a world

on the cusp of chaos  
and in this corner

a hint of disclosure  
about a continent in stasis

ambient poetry  
elevator murmurings

## METHOD IN THE MADNESS

*for Jane*

I write, then I type  
I retrieve, I retype  
I cut and paste  
images of real objects

a process of recovery  
and discovery  
a contemplation of silence  
in this maelstrom of violence

## TOO LITTLE TOO LATE

*for Corinne*

waiting at the Liberty  
how long have I been waiting  
how long should I wait

am I early  
am I late  
or am I?

*TWO POEMS FOR THE NEW FORMALIST*  
*www.eccentrix.com/artist/newformalist*

---

MY LAME WORDS

My lame words—  
scattered from ledges  
and my frail deeds—  
only frittered pledges—

Just One—one  
heartfelt thought  
—eternity bought—  
and the Game is won.

SAD CAFÉ

Three saints served up  
in short order—Queen of Peoples' Hearts  
Miss Busy Boots and a Beat angel—

Heaven is enriched at our expense—  
a mountain of flowers, an ocean of tears  
fill this Greasy Spoon.

THREE POEMS FOR BIG BRIDGE  
[www.bigbridge.org](http://www.bigbridge.org)

---

TANTRIK TUNE UP

Wheel your rig into *DICK'S*—  
you'll get a square deal.  
Dick distributes *Punch Products*.  
*Punch* protects your transmission  
parts. Perfect parts  
produce the proper frequency  
to transcend planetary interference.

Pour *Punch* in your crankcase, it'll be-  
come a peacock with 6 heads and 9 tails.  
After this rite, things will be right on.  
Stick it in your gas, it'll swell  
until there's a tiger in your tank.  
Stuff it in that stash behind the dash.  
Rub it on the hood or slip it in your ear,  
*Punch* stops heat, sludge, jerking

and the formation of calluses  
on your eyes

SPLIT PE-RSONALITY SOUP

And the poem goes and goes and goes  
between your toes and up your nose.

Take two, one for each.  
So far out, they're out of reach.

Can you guess which is best  
and which is less than all the rest?

## TACO TIME

Spanish flies lick the eyes  
of the slain. After vicious  
infighting in psychic sore spots  
Hump & Dump pick up their pieces  
and put them together.

Words do not relieve the itch.  
Epsom salts and hashish only  
increase the heat of their meat.  
Throbbing filet, thrashing crab—  
dinner surpasses distinction.

## *FOUR POEMS FOR THE BERKELEY POETRY CONFERENCE*

## HAPPY CLIMES

In Berkeley I was reduced  
to a monad by the mænads,  
classified schizo-non-decisive,  
and given Stelazine and A.T.D.

Strangled by my vocabulary,  
no one knew I was there  
until a flood of vomit  
oozed from under my door.

This is a poem

about the assassination  
of Jack Spicer.

### ALL THE HEADS OF THE TOWN LIT UP

I filled vials with violets and grass.  
I made baggies of marigolds and grass.  
I loaded a wine bottle with grass  
and announced a party for Allen.  
I underestimated by a hundred  
how many would attend this bash.  
I was in a spot, so I put out my stash  
and passed my Stetson.

Olson had made up his mind to change  
and passed his pipe—that was some pipe.  
Orlovsky and I made it to the liquor store  
much to everyone's relief.

Kretch read a diatribe seated on a commode.  
Lew Welch swung from the chandelier.  
It was Creeley's remark that everyone know  
where the firemen and police are located

that cleared the place.  
So, I added the cost and the cost of the cost.  
Nothing was stolen, and nothing was broken,  
save for the chandelier.

### STUBBORN LUMBER

Can there be emptiness without awareness?  
Ask George.

Imagine a tree falling and no one hearing it.  
Imagine, also, its twisted limbs.

The trees arrange themselves—I don't  
have anything to do with this.

Sun and moon, day and night,  
the trees follow me.  
Imagine them growing.  
Imagine no one hearing them.

If you open the door to knowledge—don't  
overlook  
the poems on the shelf in the door.

## I KNOW A PLACE

for Robert C.

I attended him as he spoke,  
his logic, a rapier, bent  
in with a twist.

Jack, he said,  
which is not my name,  
the next conference  
won't be held in Berkeley.  
Berkeley is too bizarre.

Better Oakland, it was  
noted for savage eucalyptus  
and wild animal life  
long before there was road rage, let's  
drive to Mel's for cokes and fries.

Imagine them growing.  
Imagine no one hearing them.

If you open the door to knowledge—don't  
overlook  
the poems on the shelf in the door.

*A POEM FOR CNN FINANCE*  
*www.money.cnn.com*

---

RED HEARTS, WHITE ROCK  
for Kimberly

You believe it all.  
I believe none of it.

We hear thunder in The Bohemian Grove.  
They're making war, you say.

You believe it all.  
I believe none of it.

The reason you are here  
is to help us in the flesh with the flesh.

I watch you dance a dance as old as space  
while the world goes to the fat cats.

You believe it all.  
I believe none of it.

---

## PEOPLE ARE STARVING

faces superimposed over a poet running  
the poet running over rubble on the screen  
ground zero, ground the square root of minus one  
and a dancer in an aztec headdress crooning to a clown

ckkkkkkkckkkkkkkcccccccc

a boy picks at his food  
morose over a molecule of mayonnaise  
on his hotdog

ckkkCcccccccc ccccc

a suit wearing a gas mask over a catcher's mitt  
flaps his arms and asks,  
"Us is America?"  
"Iq is Iraq?"

ckkkkkkkkaa;ckkkkkkkkk

## SINGING DIXIE

You're right, Charles  
the South did win the Civil War

and America can't wait  
for the next Texas barbecue.

## GET DOWN

Flies mate on the page

drawn by my honey breath.

Life in Washington is delicious  
compared to the worm  
eating at the core.

Ruskin describes it—*a march  
of infinite light. . .intevalled  
with eddies of shadow.*

Note the famine, the flames, the plague,  
if only a tapestry of the travesty,  
a  $n+1$  number of knots.

*HOMEFIRES HEARTH*  
*[www.homefireshearth.com](http://www.homefireshearth.com)*

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## DO I HEAR TRUMPETS?

Do I hear trumpets  
or is it thunder?

Shadow lights flicker  
*The End—*  
crazy

Inside and out  
just totally black

I'm not sure  
if I should take a walk  
or lean back

## POEM THAT MIRRORS ITSELF

God is a bone  
doGma  
eshrews.

### COMMENT

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#### ROBERTA SOLTEA'S RAMBLING ROSE

*Flesh of Fire* by Roberta Soltea. Paperwaster Press, 2003.

In 1824, Shelly hazarded the opinion that all poems were parts of one immense poem written by all the poets, past, present and future. One hundred twenty years later, Jorge Luis Borges extended this idea, feeling that the almost infinite world of literature was in one person—he was Walt Whitman, he was Thomas De Quincey, David Bromige, Roberta Soltea.

In her plagiarist novel, *Flesh of Fire*, Soltea's heroine, Annabelle Rose, travels through time to have conversations with famous authors, giving them plots and dropping metaphors. Annabelle has dinner with Emily Dickinson, and they discuss how "nerves sit ceremonious like tombs." She visits Shih Huang Ti, the first Emperor of China, and encourages him to burn all the books that had been written so far. Although the works of Confucius and Lao Tzu have since resurfaced, those of Kuc Xing and Laun Dri are lost to the world. She visits Adam and interviews him as the greatest author of his day, seeing monotheism as a stimulus to art and proclaiming *Genesis* morphological to all future literature. It is her idea that, in the beginning, the earth was without form and void.

Midway through the novel, Annabelle Rose transports Thuragania, a pre-Socratic philosopher, into the near past and introduces her incognito to Jack Kerouac. Their conversation is witty and intimate, full of wisdom and insight, and the gullible Jack, in a fit of infatuation, decides to follow her across America. Suddenly, out on Irving near 19th Avenue bound for the coast, Jack, seeing a yoga studio where there was a

class in Qigong going on and our lady doing the exercise *bird that flies with conscious intent*, said “Hey, dude, you understand poetry is all one poem,” and Jack made a tremendous soaring wobbling pass at the chick, and she caught the ball, saying “further, further,” and out they went into the star-speeding night laughing and teetering in joy of their artistic power.

Near the end of *Flesh of Fire*, Whitman’s dog gives a yawp when he hears Jack proclaim that the grass that liberates itself is the same grass which grows wherever the land is and the water is. This Whitman also lived in previous poets. His secret autobiography reveals that he was a cavalry officer in the nearly mythical wars of Charles XII—wars that turned Voltaire, a mechanical engineer, into an epic poet, completely against common sense. But then, it was Voltaire who said that humans consider common sense so common that no one needs more of it.

All poems are one poem. All poets, one poet. And history, as revealed in *Flesh of Fire*, is a preamble in the third person telling the story of a heroine who is writing a faux autobiography. Nothing really exists, yet we derive pleasure from the play of lights and winds.

BOUVARD PÉCUCHET

## A SWEET PROSE SEQUENCE

*While You Were Watching* by Monica Peck. dPress, 2002.

This is a sweet prose sequence of great phenomenal clarity. “Come here,” Peck writes. “Come out of that inkwell. This is the face I want to show you. Forget the others you have seen of me. Forget how I look as I am just stepping out of my door first thing in the morning, dragging my bicycle onto the stoop, helmet unclasped, pantlegs rolled above the knee.” A beautiful little book of loss and desire in urban landscapes. And the language is rich, never missing. The motion is in the cadence.

DALE SMITH  
[www.skankypossum.com](http://www.skankypossum.com)

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*announces  
the publication  
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*INDICTABLE  
SUBORNERS*

**David Bromige's**  
*with a foreword by*  
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**Summit Road Press  
Berkeley, California**

## **BOOKS BY LUIS GARCIA**

**Poems for Dinner  
A Gift from the Darkness**

**forthcoming:**

**The Token  
The Echo Seeker**

---

## Not at your bookstore

If you want copies of *The Brief History of the Plagiarist Movement* or *The Diary of Whitler Pratphall* or, heck, any of our books, just let us know and we'll try to send a copy along to you! (Right now, we're in a fix with our printers, but we can't really say much about it for legal reasons. Anyway, we have access to a photocopy machine, so maybe if you send us some money...ha ha... just kidding... no really...)

Just released— *Flesh of Fire* by Roberta Soltea

**Paperwaster Press**

[www.paperwasterpress.com](http://www.paperwasterpress.com)

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# ARTAUD

# N O T H E R

REVISED

**Rycharud Artaud**

*Edited by*  
**BOUVARD PÉCUCHE**



**Rychard Artaud**  
**Another**  
**Artaud**  
**Revised**

*Edited by*  
**BOUVARD PÉCUCHE**

*Preface by*  
**JOHN BENNETT**

**D Press 2020 Ellensburg**

This is a revised version of *Another Artaud*  
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## **ANOTHER ARTAUD**

### **PREFACE BY JOHN BENNETT**

Taking *Another Artaud* in hand, the well-informed fringe reader will be struck by its mirror-like similarity to another Artaud, the *City Lights Artaud Anthology*, published in the early Sixties and superbly edited by Jack Hirschman. If one leafs through the pages of *Another Artaud*, the visual and structural similarities hold, and if one goes no further, a conclusion might be reached that a rather clever thing has been done. But if one delves into the writing itself, distinctions blur, and one Artaud bleeds into the other.

Antonin Artaud, Rychard Artaud—will the real Artaud please stand? Two men who straddle three centuries and who have battled hard to ward off mental extinction; two men touched by madness exacerbated by drugs and alcohol; two poets, two thinkers, two philosophers who suffered incarceration in penal and mental institutions—at this juncture the comparisons end and fusion begins to take place.

Antonin Artaud died in unresolved torment, and after reading *Another Artaud*, one is left with the disquieting sense that Rychard Artaud may very well be the reincarnation of Antonin Artaud, and that he has—after much purging—spiritually elevated Artaud’s struggle and transcended the darkness. This speculation is, I think, worthy of consideration, as the book in hand will attest.

*The reader must believe  
that it is a matter of an actual sickness  
and not a phenomenon of the age,  
of a sickness which is related  
to the essence of a human being  
and his actual possibilities of expression  
and which is involved  
in an entire life.*

## Rychard Artaud Chronology

- 1941: born in Santa Clara, California, November 21
- 1941: adopted by parents in Berkeley, California
- 1947: moves to Oakland, California, attends OHS
- 1959: returns to Berkeley to attend University of California
- 1960: takes part in SLATE debates, which leads to  
the formation of Free Speech Movement
- 1963: committed to Napa State Mental Intitution in Imola CA
- 1965: reporter for Berkeley Barb; attends Berkeley Poetry  
Conference; meets poets of Peace & Gladness
- 1967: self-exciled to Alaskan wilderness
- 1974: after finding the chill in his bones, he establishes  
Fourwinds Bookstore & Café in Ellensburg WA

1988: Mind transmission from Sogyul Rinpoche  
1996: moves to Pagosa Springs, Colorado, to manage bookstore  
for Tara Mandala Retreat Center and practice Vajrayana  
1998: returns to California to caretake elderly parents  
2008: returns to Tara Mandala to complete 3-year solitary retreat  
2014: returns to Ellensburg to attend CWU to study philosophy  
and film

## L' IDÉE DU DÉLUGE

I finished reading Hydiat's *Blind Owl* and ingested eight capsules of peyote. I waited. My patience wavered, so I took another eight caps, lit up a joint, and drank a beer. Then I walked to the corner druggist and signed for two bottles of codeine cough syrup, knocking them off at the end of the alleyway. A door slammed.

Streaks of purple light, raw as butchered beef, flood in on a high tide of effulgent hallucination as this solitary child stands upon the brink of knowing the Meaning of the Universe, partially seeing—furry clouds modulating in confusing colors—the essence as if always known, what does *essence* mean?—the primary substance emerging in eclamptic convulsions, granted by Divine Sophia *a priori* understanding, a fateful step into the opaque transparency of contradiction, where each generation is relative to absolute birth, an aftermath of rhythm and sound contrasting with shades of fuming gray, curling, covering, uncovering Armageddon.

I lean against the alley wall. Currents of mist form and play in and out between the fence slats—a child's first sight of unrecognizable twinkles of bronze light, a partial appearance in one dusty corner of desolate shapes of undulating turmoil, fluctuating figments of remorse and fear, a paraphrase of past captured, held in wonder, accepted as the fragrant blossom of fragmented eternal fruition—an epiphany of my mortal nature draped in flowing lavender—but as I look closer, my clothes are wrinkled, my hands are wrinkled. This synapse fires, and the wrinkled lines become saturated in green and then drip from gashes in my fingertips.

Something shadowy follows me—a dark bird with large wings. I spin quickly and jump out of my black sport coat. I cross Telegraph Avenue, and a Circus is in full swing. A red MG waits for the light, the driver and navigator dressed like

mummies.

Weightless, floating outside myself. I grab a passing church steeple, and a priest in a cassock shouts a warning. I ascend into the night. There is a cemetery in the mind. Tombstoned, I will find it.

I reach the street, the sidewalk snaking, parking meters drooping like sunflowers, people moving in ectoplasmic quivers—(Can they see the ecstasy and nightmare of tremulous trepidation on my face?)—the street a sulfurous plane of carrion, the sky is yellow, and at my feet an abyss of weird, wild delight and grizzly horror, butterflies of gas and putrid phantoms that are nourished on tortured prayers.

My heart twists like a bucking bronc, ice-blue blood in my nerves, animal blood cursed and coursing, translucent blood trapped in a fiery alchemical casement, even as this alchemy converting each moment to the next, fashions freeways in my heart.

I enter a barber shop and emerge with a new style of haircut, punk—the barber not pleased with his work, but I can't stop jabbering, and I keep craning my neck to see around the corner in the double mirror reflection, my life in seaward ruin, retreads bare, a mummy cloth stuffed in my bloodclot soul, breaking full tilt to the moon.

I sit in the Mediterranean Café drinking double espressos, listening to ethereal angel voices drift over, then to the Garden Spot for a pack of *Gualoises*, stop by Mario's for a plate of rice and beans, decide to take in *Battleship Potemkin* at the Cinema Guild, but when Mother Russia comes down the Steps of Odessa, I freak-out and head down Dwight Way to the Steppenwolf where I drink and blaspheme in peace—*Abandon All Hope Ye Who Enter Here*. Below that, another sign—*For Madmen Only!*

A table of Hell's Angels are deep in their cups. Mahler's *Songs of a Wayfarer* accompanies their animated movements, strobed by candles in the deep shadows—Scorpio, Scorpio rising, I feel gladness linked to madness.

At a small table by the wall, down range from the boisterous boys with their furious guise, the wood grains form hieroglyphs, characters moving in rhythms syncopated to my breathing, waves of color—flowers whispering I am a special guest in this sadness—knowing, when a moth flies out of my eye, the Dead will teach me to dance.

A heavenly biker named Michael joins me, and I am trying to concentrate on what he is saying, but his words come out like we are in slow motion—something about efficient work starts from idle, not from toil, or perhaps his

motorcycle is idling, and he want me to pay the toll, so I project myself frame by frame through the flames onto an accelerating explosion of leather and chrome. Oh, God, I will keep on until I reach your blessed Paradise!

### **I AM VIRGIN TO MY POEM**

Gurgling, puking blood  
a toothbrush jammed through my cheek  
bricks tied to my ankles  
a guitar string around my neck  
a fireplug exploding in my heart  
my fingers pinched in a car door  
a cat clawing my eye  
trampled under foot  
stumbling through piss and shit  
with my head through a ladder  
I will step on a crack  
and sacrifice my self to the immaculate  
conception of things

### **SOUL OF THE ANTI-POET**

Spring into movement like 111 or 666—  
it's all in the wrist.

Take your hat off and stand alone.  
Wipe that smirk off your chops.

Don't fart.  
Salute the sun.

The mucus of life is before you.  
Eat up!

## **ATROPOS ASKS WHO IS WORTHY OF BEING SHORN?**

A blind shadow looms  
on the door of my tongue  
casting a shrine to nothing.

Just cut out my tongue.

## **MARILYN MANSON ON THE RAG**

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 Thomas slashes his eye  
Francois 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

## **SELF-REPLICATING ROBOTS**

Dearth decay division disaster  
we are using up the planet to create robots

Tape hiss follows me

dæmons eat my wiring

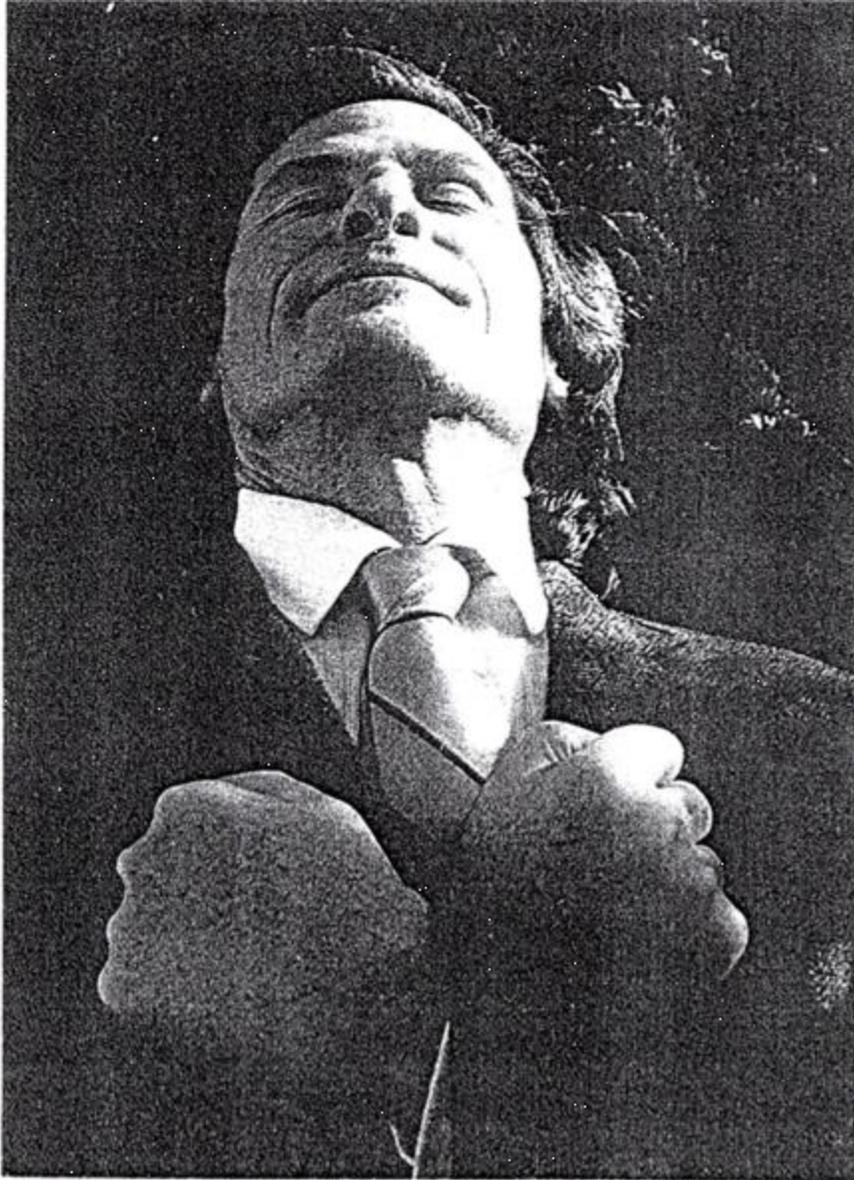
## **POLUTION OF PSYCHE-POWER**

I'm in a room with a door you can go through, but I can't. You're in a room with a door I can go through, but you can't. Now I see your face in another place and hear the echo of your voice.

I'm trying to say what I feel, but a mist surrounds me. I cruise the limits of the visible. There is a place I must reach.

I feel a barrier, weird, yet familiar to the touch. I pass a car burning beside the road where I meet a Dakini, who claims she is the guardian of the way. She throws bones in the dust and asks me who I am.

I know if I pass, I cannot return, but what more can I loose? I change. I have no eyes. No tongue. No sex. I'm grotesque. Frustration saturates me. I see everything underground.



## **N0 O ZONE**

deadly rays  
not easy to kiss these off  
bodies piled in heaps  
arguing over the sky  
howls coming from shrouds  
totally dismal  
the darker it gets

something serious  
seriously out of control  
maximum out of control  
a landscape of refrigerators  
wrecked cars and black feathers

### **I LIKED IKE WHEN I WAS TEN**

The *Incredible Bureau* does not discriminate  
between polished shoes and Greek statues,  
and I didn't always talk with a stutter,  
and I didn't always live in a gutter.



## **COMMITMENT**

It appearing to the Court on this day the above-named defendant appeared to answer a charge of committing an obscene act

It appearing that the said Judge in it appearing that on that date a doubt arose as to the sanity of said defendant dismissed criminal proceedings in said action and certified the above-named to the above-entitled Court for hearing and examination by said Court to determine the question of the sanity of the said defendant; and the attorneys for defense and prosecution stipulated that the doctor's reports could be received in evidence and the Court considered the evidence presented upon the issue of the present sanity of said defendant to be insane

It is **THEREFORE ORDERED ADJUDGED AND DECREED** that the said defendant be committed and confined as an insane person until such time as he shall become sane

## **AN ARAB PROVERB**

The world is a dill pickle  
Today it's in your hand  
Tomorrow it's up your butt



Artaud upon his arrival in Imola

**IN MAY 1932, AFTER MEETING HITLER  
AT THE ROMANISCHE CAFÉ  
AND SPIKING HIS TEA WITH PSILICYBIN**

*Communism is stupid  
hi hi hi hi*

*Communism is stupid*  
*Facism is good*  
*Facism is good*  
*jo jo jo jo*  
*Communism is stupid*  
*Communism is stupid*  
*hi hi hi hi*

YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE!!  
PLEASE, AVOID PANIC BUYING!!  
SHOP AS USUAL.

### **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?

Pawing through the hospital dumpster  
I find an aluminum Xmas tree  
decorated with gauze and syringes

Insanity and murder, devastation and cruelty  
fatal epidemics and contagion  
O Furies, I look for you  
bringing my Great Plan  
Behold the new born terror!  
Behold all things new!



Artaud with Dr. Smith, just before his release from hospital

## FRAGMENTS

Scissors gesture  
behind the curtain

Infinity is a turtle  
on a slow track

Solid void  
a cosmic hit

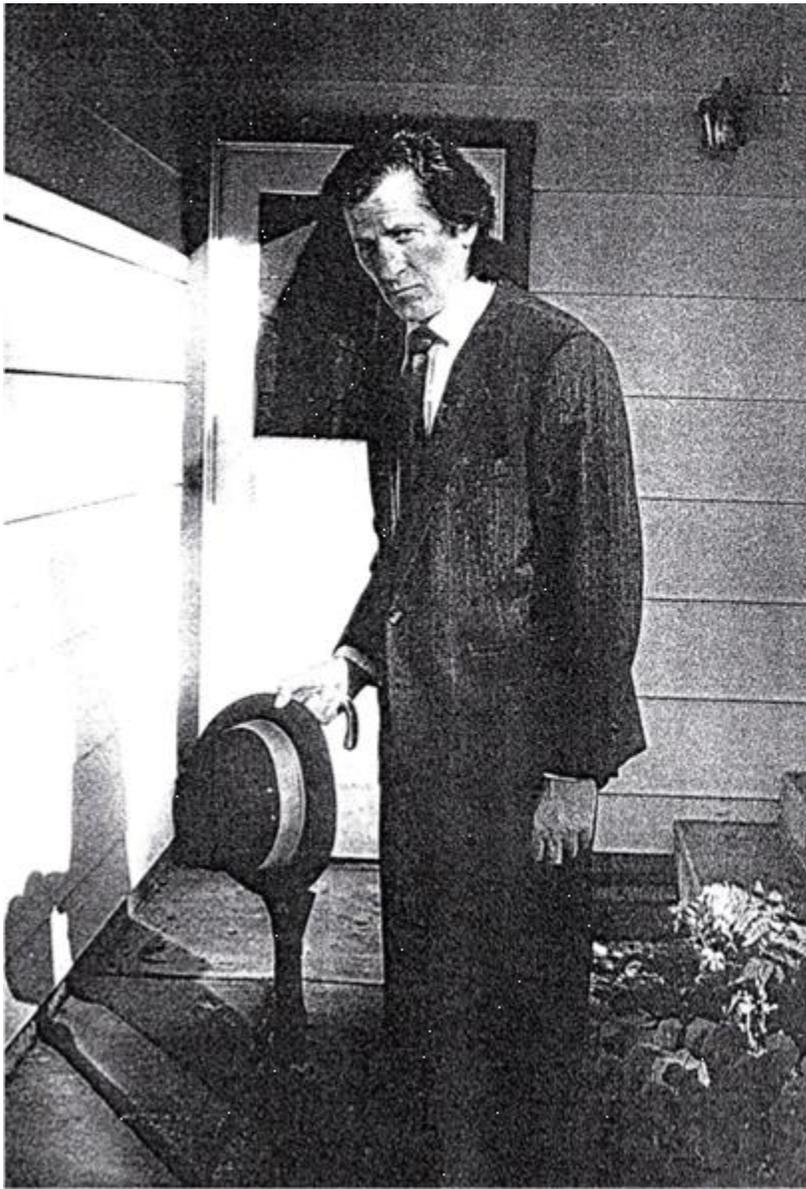
A touch of ice  
a chunk of winter

Exposed, cold  
drooling

A wide hole  
a verticle wall

Wonderous gash  
sheet metal thighs

“Next”  
means you



Artaud, in Santa Rosa, at the turn of the century



Artaud by Marshall



Artaud by  
Ethan Allan Davis

## ROOTS OF ANGUISH

The future and the past  
are shadows,

and the calendar  
masks a cannibal.

Why assume the sun  
will rise tomorrow?  
Why assume  
October's final night

Will not trick us  
and repeat—  
29, 30, 31, 29, 30, 31  
for a thousand years?

## **WITHIN AND WITHOUT**

Perfect weather for ego hunting—  
lots of weird animals in the mind,  
the mind itself a crazy monkey



Artaud at ease

## JUST AS IT IS

I watch  
with mystic  
horror the sun  
darken and  
shimmer  
through violet

haze

dream green  
nights  
and watch  
distances shatter into foam  
while feeling

slow kisses in  
the midst of  
calm

**D-PRESS CHAPBOOKS**

**XITRO**

★

*RICHARD DENNER*

**NUMBER FIFTY-FIVE**

# XITRO

Richard Denner

*O child of noble family, now what is called death  
has arrived. You are not alone in leaving this world.  
It happens to everyone, so do not feel desire and  
yearning for this life.*

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in Sebastopol, California  
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## **YOUR HEAD, YOUR HEART AND YOUR TONGUE**

For Allen Ginsberg (April 8, 1997)

Your head was a pen.  
You wrote with it.

Your heart was a drum  
on which you kept the beat.

Your tongue was a match.  
When you struck it

*things*  
caught fire.

—Luis Garcia

**XITRO**

*for Allen Ginsberg, 1926-1997*

I

I'm sitting in Lama Tsultrim's kitchen Pagosa Springs looking at a picture you took of her at a table in your kitchen Manhattan clear autumn day thinking how long it's been since you sat in my kitchen Fairbanks in thin winter light

I'm one of your many colorful children spawned from *Howl* breath spontaneous exuberant misconduct passing original uncensored yelp around Miss Jacobi's Latin class yes I know the pluperfect of *amare amaveram amaveras amaverat amaveramus amaveratis amaverant* my mind eager for peyote solidities green tree cemetery dawn wine drunkenness over rooftops I am a candle you are the sun

Wanting to plug in and dig the symbiotic intersubjective meta-aleatoric patramorphosis my first peckertrack poems written to you making them into paper airplanes and sending them airmail from open Derby Street parlor window

Looking for North Beach with my surfer buddies Stinson Beach Bolinas Bodega Bay where is this North Beach further north? looking south finding Monterey Jazz Festival seeing you or a lookalike reading in a candlelit art gallery Beatniks that's what these must be Art Ball and me on Dexedrine and Glick Stite writing copy for Ralph Gleason wide-eyed taking it in licking it up sniffing it out poking about

II

A difficult labor Berkeley Poetry Conference two weeks dinosaurs grazing in pastures of hemp micro-orgasms under an airtight lid færy-dæmon foxfire dynamos bunraku hooded puppeteers all poets Beat Black Mountain and Reed strutting their stuff playing it fast and loose Sector Xn relative to Yn a trig

question here a Geminian martyrdom there two synthetic a priori approximations but the real you the King of the May recently rearrived with *Planet News* even if forcibly expelled from Mayakovski's bedroom with a broomstick up your butt

I filled vials with violets and grass I made baggies of marigolds and grass I loaded a triangular-shaped bottle with grass and delivered these to various heads announcing An Inaugural Party for Allen

You were selected Secretary of the Poets by Charles Olson's decree and the oligarchic consent of Snyder-Duncan-Dorn star chamber poetry politics I underestimated by a hundred how many would attend this bash and in a spot I put out my stash and passed my Stetson

Extracting some bills from your coin purse you started the collection wisely sending Peter Orlovsky with me to the liquor store no telling what scam a mustachod poet might contrive to pick up some quick cash

The wild eyes! The holy yells! when we return you seated in the posture of Milarepa a joint in one hand a glass of wine in one with one you sign your name for the 100 thousandth time with one hand you pat my infant daughter's head Kirsten dead now two years from Aids so young grim pedophile death what is the age of consent?

Always encouraging the young Richard Kretch reads a diatribe seated on an antique commode while Lew Welsh swings from the chandelier it is Creeley's remark that everyone should know where the firemen and police are located that clears the place I add up the cost and the cost of the cost = nothing was stolen nothing was broken save for the chandelier

III

All day all night readings to shut down the Wobbly Hall I ask you about your costume acrylic shirt Van Heusen Classic Collection 35% cotton you say washes and dries overnight traveling bodhiseed mala someone gave you Salvation Army

khaki trousers and women's tennis shoes I question "Men's shoes women's feet woman's shoes men's feet?" you shrug

A wake for the closing of the Labor Hall and the end of an era the party rolls on Kali appears with a necklace of 69 flavored heads atomic fudge spinach nicotine cosmic grout Pythagorean lotus jade shuttle fissigeneration chainshot aleatory fruit us entangled in a mass of bodies leaped on and dazed I hand you a book from the shelf entitled *The Black Box* which you sign with the dementia of a crazed Benzedrine addict a black line forming an ever-increasing square

You Paul X and I hail a cab and ride up Grant Avenue to Gary Snyder's pad and you comment that I'm a real clown because I'm wearing a suit and my Stetson with a feather which I take as a compliment even though I'm excluded from the party you and Paul have planned me throwing up in an alley to the wail of Pony Pondexter's tenor sax ride Pony ride I remember you in the cab bebop scat reading neon signs and billboards Star Fun Club Glass Shop Pet Talk Full Service Quality Without Compromise first word best word poetry in action

We meet in front of Moe's Bookstore Berkeley and go for coffee meeting Robert and Bobbie Creeley and Ed Dorn at Robbie's Cafeteria I can't help flirting unabashedly with Bobbie checking out her miniskirt me asking you whether it's better to be a bad poet or a good businessman and in exasperation you saying to be a good something but to shut up and let Ed talk a gun slinging wordsmith lucky of me to get out alive Creeley saying there'll never be another conference in Berkeley Bezerkeley is too bizarre

A Human Be In the next best thing Turn On Tune In Drop Out Cheri and I meeting you at Harold Adler's apartment after your Public Television reading of "Wichita Vortex Sutra" and you congratulate me for my illustrated poems in the Berkeley Barb cutting my thumb on jagged door latch and holding my hand and applying a Band-Aid O Jewish mother chicken soup nurse telling me we're not our skin you exemplify muse power

#### IV

Fairbanks Alaska Allen Ginsberg arriving on the wrong plane from Ayers Rock Central Australia summer there minus 10 degrees when you land waiting for you with an Air Force parka and white rubber bunny boots our breath making cartoon balloons in the arctic air

Where does this road lead? I am so excited to be your driver we can drive north only as far as Circle but south as far as Cape Hope "Quit fooling around; my time is short; where can we drive around here?"

A few miles from Fairbanks is Fox giving you my tour guide spiel 1901 Captain Barnette sets up a trading post at the juncture of the Chena and Tanana Rivers Felix Pedro finds gold near Fox site of Red Dog Saloon and the "Ice Worm Saga" Wild and wide are my borders/ Stern as death is my sway/ From my ruthless throne I have ruled for a million years and a day/ Hugging my mighty treasure/ Waiting for man to come Robert Service verse miners call this place Fairbanks after an admired Senator from Indiana Charles W. Fairbanks later a vice-president under Teddy Roosevelt census in 1912 is 3500 present population is 84000 Barnette became the most hated man in town when his bank failed

You have on your maroon Tibetan wool scarf your glasses and balding head peaking out we meet a bush pilot in the Red Dog still a funky bar and make plans to fly to an arctic village called Arctic Village spaced out we have to go back for your scarf and on the way I ask you for a mantra to help with cold driving in my VW bus without heat taking out the battery and draining the oil every night to get it started a leg of moose frozen in the back taxi-deepfreeze to transport transmission of Padmasambhava's heart mantra my first mantra

OM AH HUNG VAJRA PEMA SIDDHI HUNG 0 root poet you had been sitting with Choyam Trungpa Rinpoche and Lama Tsultrim at Naropa and founding the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics

Arctic Village another world and a ceremony with tsok having trouble integrating beaver tail into one taste a young brave recognizing you and having a copy of

*Howl* left by a Peace Corps worker reminding you of being asked by an abo youth in Australia about Bob Dylan and The Beatles a small world

Pasting up the Polar Star Lit Supplement hearing you intoning Blakean melody "Caribou Blues" with harmonium your mantra "Hum Bom! Whom Bomb! We Bomb Them." you've invaded the airwaves US over Cambodia you over the campus at College "How big is the president's prick?"

Setting up the chairs for your reading you admire my t-shirt with STUD ACT Student Activities words for my perfect teacher we do up a bowl of grass soaked in hash oil left brain right brain splits and I walk into the sea of abyss ceiling tiles tilt and I see hierarchies of judges stacked in tiers my tears and fears of molestation you calm me in meditation until I come down sensitive to my having been forcibly sodomized Berkeley backroom balling and Alameda County Jail solitary confinement terror attack yes there's a lot of cunt and ass out there does love hurt? yes it hurts gobs of swarming semen from throbbing organs against aghast esophagus sweet burning drippings in eyes in ears on breasts across continents

O City of Fuck I seize your rising towers and explore your winding subways the dweller in the body shines with neon forever rapturous illumination rapturous flesh rapturous parking meters rapturous rapturous homage to your sweet street crossings nose and eyes come to me toes and thighs roll with me in asphalt pleasure tongue clit cock to die is to come to come is to die

Ah kind Allen helping me to undo my homophobia revealing the problem to be aggression start with the self be calm and the answer is on the zafu working back to the Beloved

Your insatiable curiosity leads you me and young Theo grown with kids of his own now to the musk ox farm musk oxen a kind of sheep with long hair called quivit softer than silk stronger than wool the caretaker shows some prehistoric bones and a researcher shows her diagrams to teach native Alaskans how to knit mittens and shawls for Manhattan Fifth Avenue

boutiques

Time for your reading the house packed just like the first time I watched you read at Dwinelle Hall in Berkeley when I was a freshman now I'm a senior many years later and a long way from Cal I mention recently hearing Ciardi say that Kerouac was an immature writer who wrote psychoanalyst couch ramblings you said not to worry about Jack his spirit survives his legacy is sound Ciardi just jealous and insecure

And then it's time to say goodbye the last time I see your flesh in the sad airport cafe so many times I think of you Allen Allen take this Athabascan beadwork my favorite "No you keep it if it means so much to you" but I want you to have it because it does mean so much to me goodbye Allen hello Heaven goodbye hello Nirvana goodbye Elysium hello goodbye you crazy kind misunderstood lacklove honeybreasted semen soaked long-haired commie dope smoking gentle little weirdo freak you stopped a war freed the youth fed them with your mind skillful means and compassionate wise heart bodhisattva so many smiles and tears life life life you sang love and life lord of song god of flowers peace and gladness

V

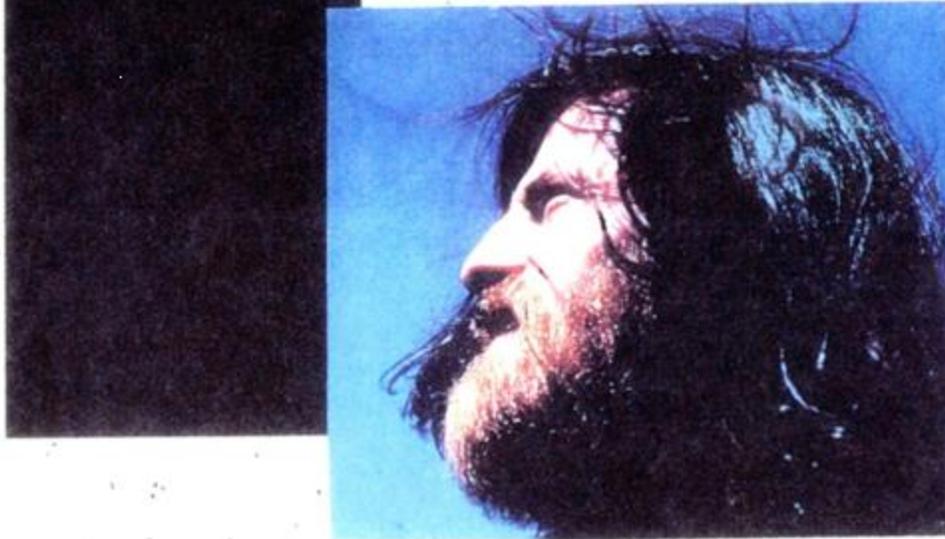
I manifest now as Vajrasattva as you enter the Bardo Realms visualizing the 42 Peaceful Deities the Assembly of the Rigdzin and the 58 Wrathful Deities sing "Father Death Blues"—Genius Death my art is done/ Lover Death my body's gone/ Father Death I'm going home/ Father breath farewell your dance is the dance of the babe in the womb your dance is the dance of the corpse in the grave your dance is the dance of the spirit veiled your mind dances within all your phone call comes a message on my answering machine at Tara Mandala hoping to contact Tsultrim for one last chat but she's in Nepal and by the time I've faxed her and gotten back you've gone gently into that...into that...

Now you're with Carl Solomon and he can teach you to be dead don't hang out too

long in the god realms you know that rich diet is bad for your heart

Let your queer shoulder rest good graybeard you made a difference golden  
sunflower visionary holy rolling your way through this world in the active-  
present *amo amas amat amamus amatis amant*

*Richard* DENNER  
& Co.

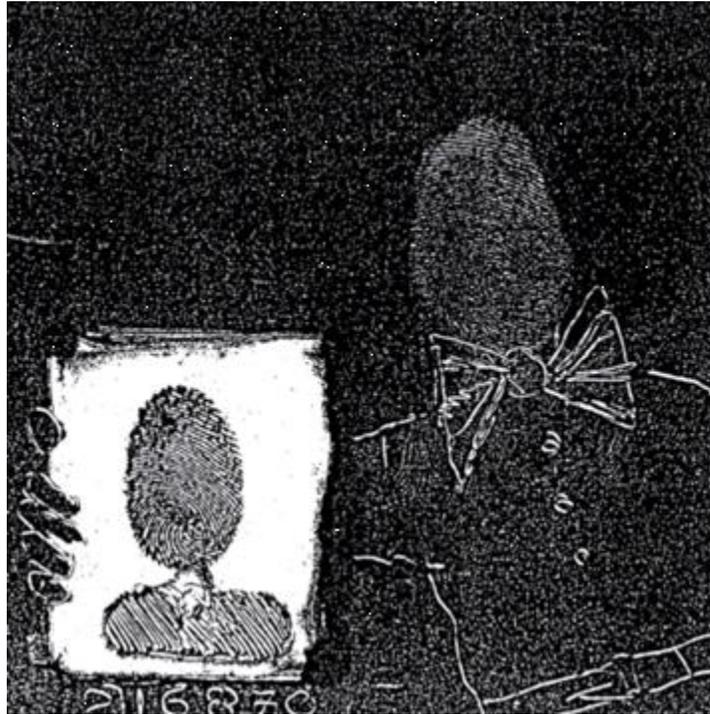


*Selected Poems*

*Richard* DENNER

Edited & with translations  
from the Portuguese by

Bouvard Pécouchet



Denner & Company  
Selected Poems  
Edited by Bouvard Pécuchet

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## **SALUTATION by Bouvard Pécuchet**

Richard Denner is not a reincarnation of Fernando Pessoa. They are separate emanations of the multi-faced God that sneezes in the cosmic air of creativity. Pessoa literarily deconstructed himself in an age before the philosophy of deconstructualism; Denner is reconstructing himself in a post-post-post modern age, where philosophy and culture are rapidly disintegrating.

Pessoa lived a quiet life, perhaps creating his “heteronyms” to make his life interesting. Denner has been living a full life. He has married three times and has children by his different wives, who in turn have presented him with grandchildren. He lived in Berkeley during the fairytale 60s, where he was the Poet of the Berkeley Barb. He fled Berkeley when the teargas began to fall and traveled to Alaska where he lived in a cabin in the woods, hunting and fishing for survival. He has worked at a wide variety of professions—cowboy, tree planter, bookseller, carpenter, printer. He has drawn his metaphors from his life experience and written about what he discovered in the world, and he has developed an elaborate inner life and written from the heart.

As a boy, Richard was charmed by the shenanigans of Frank Demara, known to the public in the 1950s as The Great Imposter. Richard saw him interviewed live on The Jack Parr Show. Demara was able to create different personas and find employment in a vast number of posts—everything from being a medical doctor in

the military to a Latin teacher in a private school. Demara said that when he picked up a scalpel, it was as though he had used it before. Denner found an explanation for this, as a freshman at Cal, reading the works of Plato, where it is said that we know everything but forget it all at birth, that knowledge is the process of remembering what we have forgotten. Later, when Denner rediscovered the Dharma of Gotama Buddha, he had a similar understanding. It is not the Self that is the problem but the incomplete Self. One solution to the problem of Self is to discover there is no Self—no Self, no problem. Another solution is the integration of the various “selves” by allowing them full play—integration, like a drama with a cast, not the conflicting, schizophrenic isolation of the parts of the personality but an association of the members of the cast in the play of consciousness, each with their lines, each in character.

In one of Richard’s terse, large-lettered poems (all/over/all), I find the Poundian components, logopoeia, melopoeia, and panopoeia. The poem can be read as temporal all over and as local all over, as a point of view, over all, and visually, with the word all being place over itself. There is formal structure, yet an innovative playfulness is evident.

There are ontologically questioning poems by Doug O, the “O” suggesting nothingness or infinite space. There are the “Sensationalist” poems of Jubal Dolan:

no thinking, here  
just looking

and the romantic-pastoral mode of Luiz Mee (“Luiz” perhaps a tip of the hat to Luis Garcia, Richard’s long-time friend and mentor). We have the thinker, the worker, the lover poets, with their different hats, pets and facial tics. As Rychard once said, “Everything is everywhere, and God is gift horse, a kind of cornucopia with teeth.”

It is difficult to say exactly when the personas first emerged. Most likely it was part of a YK2 meltdown. However, I am certain that before our author discovered the works of Fernando Pessoa & Co., in June of 2003, I, Bouvard Pécuchet, had already begun writing reviews of books that didn’t exist, and the scattered Buddhist poems of Jampa Dorje had been collected under one cover. There had been the forgery, Another Artaud, as well as works by “Rychard” from ‘60s Berkeley. The drama was well underway, needing only a bit more prompting by the Muse.

Welcome.

## **DOUG O: LOST FAVORS OF SISTER MEAN**

Doug O, born Douglas Oporto in Santa Clara, California, in 1938. His parents were wine growers, and he was raised on a vineyard. He became Doug O because he was one of four Dougs on a planting crew. The shortened name stemmed from the need to distinguish the different “Dougs” on the field. There was Doug Um for Doug Mitchell, Doug Ee for Doug Eichmiller, Doug Ha for Doug Harrington, and Doug Oh for Doug Oporto. Doug O met Paul X around the time of the closing down of the Wobbly Hall in San Francisco in 1965. They became inseparable, like the x & o of a game of Tic Tat Toe.

The title of his poem collection is a reflection on his Catholic upbringing. Clandestine activities were early evident. In the third grade, he secretly watched Sister Rose, who was a teacher’s assistant, remove the hood of her habit and reveal her short-cropped blond hair. She became for him a golden mean in contrast to the strictness of other sisters, who whacked his hands with a yardstick when he was passing notes in class.

## **EU DUVIDO ESTE**

Eu duvido este  
sou levantei-me

Tem a forma  
Tem os espinhos

cheira como  
mas eu não posso ser certo

Não é uma escada  
ou uma sera  
ou um violino

Mas é levantou-se?

## **I DOUBT THIS**

I doubt this  
is a rose

It has the shape  
It has thorns

It smells like  
but I can't be sure

It is not a ladder  
or a saw  
or a violin

But is it a rose?

## **MATÉRIA ESCURA**

Eu flutuo no espaço infinito  
ou no nenhum espaço

um illusion de mim em um lugar

obsuro  
uma reflexão flutuando

nada que mantem levantado me

## **DARK MATTER**

I float in infinite space  
or no space

an illusion of myself in an obscure  
place  
a floating reflection

nothing holding me up

## **MANDALA**

Onde estou eu, e como eu comecei aqui?  
Por que eu me sinto devo estar em algum lugar?  
Eu faltei algo?  
Quando ele começam?  
Aonde sairá fora?

## **MANDALA**

Where am I, and how did I get here?  
Why do I feel I must be somewhere?  
Did I miss something?

When does it start?  
Where will it leave off?

## **TRAÇÃO RACIAL**

Eu falto-o, Jarra  
Nosso amor é uma guerra religiosa falhada  
É o vigésimo quinto anniversary de nosso amor  
embora nós fôssemos somente junto por três anos

Eu fiz exame de uma barra-ônibus  
à Nila da Universidade  
Eu parei pela Estrela Azul para um latté  
sonhar de nossa república falhada

Você está em seu continente  
mim está em meus  
nos tração

## **RACIAL DRIFT**

I miss you, Jarra  
our love is a failed religious war  
It's the twenty-fifth anniversary of our love  
although we were only together three years

I took a bus to University Village  
I stopped by the Blue Star for a latté  
dreaming of our failed republic

You are on your continent  
me on mine  
drifting

## **O CURADOR**

curador com cabelo cinzento  
excepcionalmente eficiente  
que arrasta um pé entre latas de lixo  
nunca um movimento desperdiçado

etapa, etapa, etapa  
torç-gira, levanta, laço  
etapa, etapa, etapa  
torç-gira, levanta, laço

lance o saco em seu carro  
ao continuar um diálogo com você  
o, homem velho  
o que você têm em sua mente?

talvez pensando da viagem de Magellan

## **JANITOR**

gray-haired janitor  
efficient in the nth degree  
limping between trash cans  
never a wasted move

step, step, step  
twist-turn, lift, tie  
step, step, step  
twist-turn, lift, tie

toss the bags in your cart  
talking to yourself  
o, graybeard  
what's on your mind?

maybe thinking of the voyage of Magellan

## **WOMAN IN A BURQA**

for Jenne and Belle

I walk straight ahead.  
All I can see through my hijab is the horizon.  
I know they want to see my ankles.

Last week a woman was shot in the leg.  
A woman was burned with acid  
for not following the dress code.

“We are asking Muslim women to wear the burqa,”  
Mohammed Aftab Alam president of the Mumbai  
Regional Muslim League's youth wing told Reuters  
on Monday, but he added: “We will not force anyone.”

Gloom envelopes everything.  
Nothing moves any more.  
Life is too..

I dare not say it.

I shop.

I look straight ahead.

## **JUBAL DOLAN: WHAT THE THUNDER SAID**

Jubal Dolan was born in 1939 in Island Park, New York, to teenage immigrant parents. When he was 16, his parents were killed in an auto accident, and Jubal ran away from a foster care home and headed west. He found his way to Berkeley, California, where he met Jack Spicer, who took him under his wing. An omitted “translation” in *After Lorca* is dedicated to Jubal.

### **HAND IN EMPTY HAND**

A translation for Jubal

In the early morning,

empty, empty, empty.

A gypsy walks the streets

holding a guitar as a banner

early in the morning.

Empty, Empty, Empty.

An enfant terrible, he was scheduled to read at the Six Gallery, in 1955, an event which launched the Beat Generation. At the last moment, he opted to seal his poems in an envelope on which he inscribed, “Not to be opened & read until 2020!” and thus the venue had six poets instead of seven. He is the main character in Richard Denner’s *Up, Down, & Sideways* (D Press, 2014).

## **DA DA DA**

Nothing exists—Beyond ruin, death dies  
and Time is defeated.

## **WHAT THE POET SAID**

Tadatada lalalala  
Tadatada lalalala  
Tadalalalalalalaa

If there are trees in the forest  
and you can imagine them

Can you imagine them dancing?  
Not falling—dancing  
and if you can

Can you imagine them  
doing the Can Can  
really for real  
in Paris, in the 1890s?

## **IF I AM, I AM**

If I am, I am  
an armchair foot soldier  
sitting this afternoon  
looking out the window  
with an old, farting dog at my feet  
  
the curtain, the yellow curtain

is swaying in the breeze  
coming from the open window  
the branches, the leaves  
are swaying in the same breeze

I command a partial view of the street  
a section of asphalt  
people walk along the sidewalk  
and I see  
truncated bodies among the trunks

no thinking, here  
just looking

### **HARMONY**

our meeting in the doctor's reception room  
seated on burgundy cushions  
Venetian blinds  
creating horizontal lines on our laps

outside, drooping lines on a telegraph pole  
gray plane  
must be roof of a building  
architecture of string music

in the background  
a speaker located behind a sculpture  
I can tell you are fun  
you are a mystery

there is never enough time  
to make a solid connection  
only a quick smile—&  
you smile back

as you open the door to a larger space  
you leave the room charged  
with hope

### **PICNIC NEXT TO THE PIER**

lunch on a grassy green lake knoll  
mustard on roast beef

a metal sign informs us  
that the cutting down of trees  
is good for the trees  
Belle corrects the grammar  
*the other trees*

the old, the young, babies, cripples  
walk, hobble, run, are pushed along the path

there is a plastic bag by the lakeside  
can't make out what's in it  
probably contains someone's severed head

I don't want to know

### **IF I WHISTLED, WOULD SHE STOP?**

My pleasure is a product of me.  
I am a product of my pleasure.

## THE LATIN LYRICS OF LUIZ MEE

It was never entirely obvious to Luiz Mee who he was. His name was spelled with a double *e*, and when he would say “me” it was like saying his last name, which, if his last name had been “Brown,” would be like saying, “I don’t care what you say about Brown, I will not change my ways one iota to satisfy you.”

Luiz Mee’s *Pessoaian* counterpart is Ricardo Reis. Mee learned his Latin in public school rather than from the Jesuits, and whereas Reis crafted his odes from Horacian models, Mee succumbs to fits of Bacchic abandon and is more akin to Catullus, at times dabbling in the pornographic. Both express a belief in Fate, but Mee accepts the condition with less seriousness. Reis’s philosophy is closer to the stoicism of Marcus Aurelius and Mee’s view is closer to the pre-socratic atomist, Heraclitus.

Luiz has a brother, Harry, and a sister, Mary. The Mees have never married, Harry because he’s so hairy, and Mary because she is so insistent. Luiz never married because he suffered castration from a horse kicking him in the testicles as a young teen. “*Solo mio!*” he says.

## CHILLING OUT WITH THE ECLOGUES

I smoke and contemplate  
autumn.

I am still  
reading Virgil.

The leaves turn to gold—

So much for Caesar  
and so much for...  
“Damn, Silenus

How do you expect me to rhyme *ease*  
with bees in my beard?”

## **OMNI-SPATIAL MATRIX**

Fire dances in the hearth.  
Clouds swirl across the sky.  
Water leaps on sand.  
Land rises and falls.

The sky, the clouds, my breath,  
the scent of rabbit ear sage.  
*A La La Ho!*  
A feast of space.

## **CLEO ON HER HANDS AND KNEES**

I hunt in rubble  
for a way beyond  
novelty

to fulfill the promise  
of organism  
and will.

I've heard it said,  
*Time flies like an arrow;*  
*fruit flies like a banana.*

## **IN FIRST LIGHT**

Crows fly up, and I divine  
your name in their flight.  
The world's new and true and lovely,

nothing else to be.

### **A WAY SHE WALKS**

*Fire is water falling upward,*  
says sage Heraclitus.

An old man stutters when he talks.  
A girl in pink flutters when she walks.

What is the limit she'll permit?

Fire is water  
falling upwards.

### **ASTRAY**

It begins with the sun going down.  
Venus flings off her gown.

Who is drowned  
emerges from the sea of drunken illusion.

Astray, I am an atom  
whirling.

### **PLEIADES**

Orion chased them.  
Sterope fell into a faint.

Vulcan set a net to catch

Venus in her embrace of Mars.

Sappho saw the seven sisters set.  
She knew love makes a poet into a boar.

You say, "All's fair,"  
and I, "Boars have wings."



## **RYCHARD'S CAFÉ POEMS & LINOLEUM NUDES**

The Café Poems are poems that Rychard wrote on the street or in the cafés along Telegraph Avenue. He would inscribe them on someone's arm or leg with four color markers, held between his fingers, creating a rainbow of letters. Sometimes he would write on paper and sell a poem for a few pennies, which he would put toward another cup of espresso.

The poems printed in the large type format were the original books printed at D Press and are now out of print. Rychard writes,

*I began D Press in an attic apartment in 1967 after finding an old Kelsey hand press and several fonts of worn type and hauling the lot away for \$50. Days I worked in the back shop of the Ketchikan Daily News doing layout, burning plates, and assisting run a 3-unit Goss web press. At night, I set type and hung my prints to dry on lines nailed to the angle of the attic roof. Grant Risdon showed me how to cut linoleum blocks, which enabled me to disguise some of the irregularities in my printing and add a dash of color to compliment all the big, bold words now showing through. Given a 4X6 inch type case, how much poem can be printed with 60 point Bodoni Bold!?*

The y in Rychard's name has raised questions. He says it is an Old French spelling of his name. It is to be noted that his sister, Lynda, spells her name with a y, and at the time of the name change, his father had been appointed a "Y-man" in the reformation of State Farm Insurance, where he was an executive, the "y" meaning there were three branches of leadership. It might, also, have symbolized a fork in the life path Rychard was following, moving away from the study of medicine towards becoming a student of the world. Actually, it is none of the above.

# in every molecu-

le  
in every second  
big &

small



sent

i men

tall

y yours

truly,

I am trapped  
in my thought



a glance  
becomes  
a gaze

does love hurt?  
—yes, it hurts



my cup—

enough or  
too much?

enough  
& more than enough



Place is  
another

word

for God

here

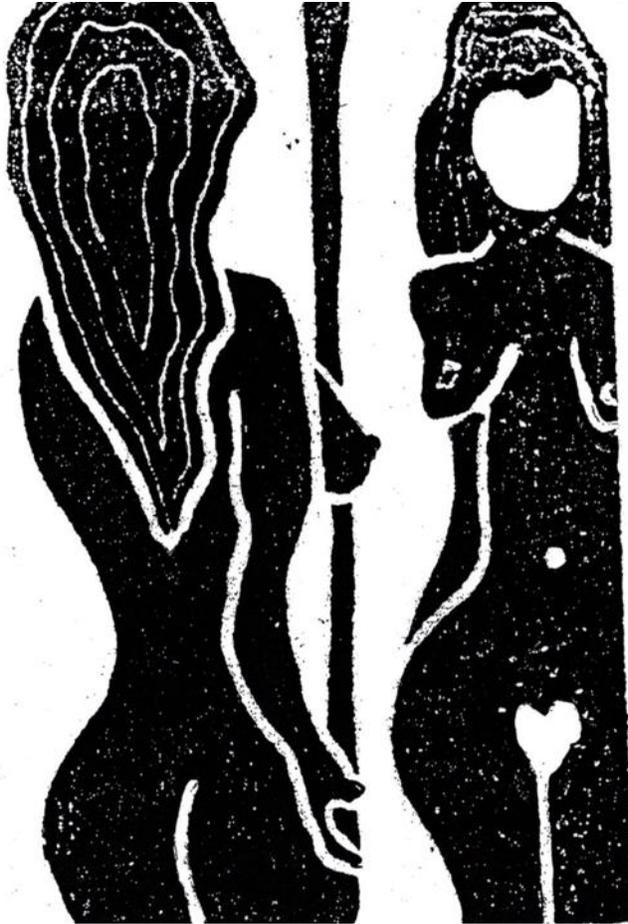
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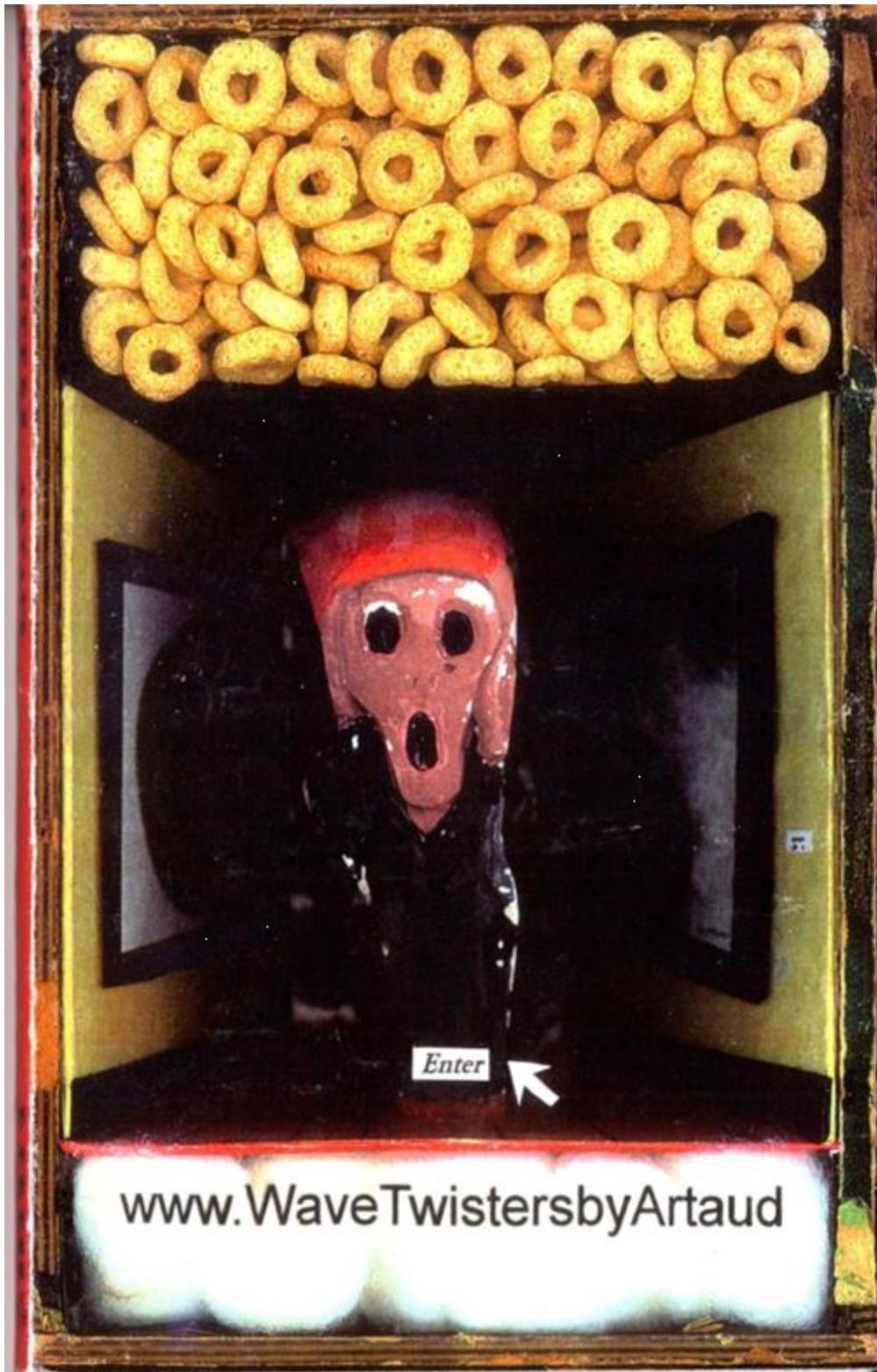
all

over

all

over

all



Enter

[www.WaveTwistersbyArtaud](http://www.WaveTwistersbyArtaud)

**Sculpture of Munch's Scream by Lu Auz**

**Thanks to the staff at Sprint in Sebastopol**

**Book design by [rychard@sonic.net](mailto:rychard@sonic.net)**

**[www.dpress.net](http://www.dpress.net)**

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# WAVE TWISTERS

## CYBERPOEM BY ARTAUD

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### Interests

### Express Yourself!

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<a href="#">Help</a>	0	<a href="#">Collectibles</a>	The hottest collectibles chat online	D Press
<a href="#">D Press Live</a>	2	<a href="#">Cooking</a>	Come see what we are cooking up	D Press
<a href="#">Code of Conduct</a>	0	<a href="#">Shopping</a>	Shop till you drop	D Press
	7	<a href="#">Drugs R Us</a>	well, you know	Members
	3	<a href="#">devildoc's room</a>	You know what this is about...if not...d...	Members
	1	<a href="#">dirk</a>	looking for erin	Members
	3	<a href="#">Friends of Yep</a>	Friendly chat	Members
	10	<a href="#">friendly chat room</a>	sniper20s room	Members
	5	<a href="#">Horses</a>	Information we can share	Members
	4	<a href="#">InnerVoice</a>	Metaphysical and Sprititual Discussions	Members
	1	<a href="#">pee</a>	watersports lovers	Members
	11	<a href="#">poetry cafe</a>	Artaud is host, share your poem	Members
	1	<a href="#">Reptiles and amphibi...</a>	Talk about reptiles and amphibs	Members
	1	<a href="#">VAMPIRE CHAT</a>		Members
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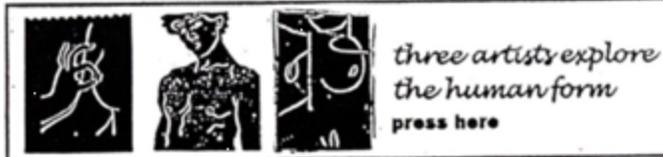
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Please wait...connecting to server  
Connected to server  
Welcome to D Press Chat: Important: D Press does not control or endorse the content, messages or information found in chat. D Press specifically disclaims any liability with regard to these areas. To review the guidelines for use of D Press Chat, go to <http://chat.dpress.com/conduct.asp>. The chat topic is: share your poem. Artaud is host. Welcome—poems first, chat second.



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## WAVETWISTERS Y2K

*just go to DevilDoc's chatroom*

*I can laugh*

*I can cry*

*I can swear*

*I can lie*

—July

Please wait...connecting to server

Connected to server

**Welcome to D Press Chat:** Important: D Press does not control or endorse the content, messages or information found in chat. D Press specifically disclaims any liability with regard to these areas. To review the guidelines for use of D Press Chat, go to <http://chat.dpress.com/conduct.asp>.

The chat topic is: share your poem. Artaud is host.

Welcome—poems first, chat second.

worm

mexlady

magdalena

“Jo Violent”

glitter

rads

fairygirl

sicseed

unknown

jabborwocky

missing

Dreamy

AFROdite

zin

jvisionaire

darkpoet  
beatnikig, that's beatnik in disguise  
FallenAngel  
nannycate  
rooster  
pokadottie  
Sculpture

we project a space with no floor, no walls  
we exist but cannot rest  
are watchful but have no shadows

Artaud: hello room  
Magichex\_g leads Art to the couch  
Artaud: Thank you Magic  
Magichex\_g puts a laprobe over Art's knees  
Artaud: all I kneed is my pipe  
Magichex\_g brings a pipe  
Themis: a/s/l  
Artaud: you won't turn me into a frog will you?  
Magichex\_g sits down next to Artaud  
Artaud: middleaged male in a state of anxiety  
Themis: lol  
siouxgirl: read us a poem, Artaud

Artaud: HEAR THEM BUZZZ  
Artaud: With the gums gone the  
Artaud: words within words, no kidding  
Artaud: the birds chatting with other birds  
Artaud: are barely heard.  
Artaud: .  
Artaud: And though the nose is  
Artaud: green and blue,  
Artaud: it's much too hot to twitch.

Artaud: Nothing

Artaud: .

Artaud: Stirs except a blue-bottle fly.

Artaud: The eye IN my head

Artaud: sees me coming toward the river,

Artaud: and a sound says,

Artaud: .

Artaud: "I will die outside your window."

Artaud ends

Dreamy: I like it, but I don't understand  
the last line

Themis: That's beautiful!

siouxgirl: my pants are wet

Magichex\_g: mine are burning

siouxgirl: i knew i was going to be enlightened

Riskybusiness: i know all that Bauhaus shit i  
saw that movie with the razor slashing an eye  
go ahead give me some lines from le chein andelou

Artaud: .

Artaud: .

Artaud: .

Artaud: .

Artaud: .

Artaud: .

Riskybusiness: that doesn't look like something Artaud would say

Artaud: it's a silent movie

Riskybusiness: lol

devildoc: fuck, that's retarded

dengalis: be more repectful!!!

devildoc: i can say what i want

dengalis: you can at least haave some manners

devildoc: get screwed

*Host Neon-Ratio kicks devildoc out of the chat room!*

*devildoc leaves the conversation*

*devildoc returns to the conversation*

devildoc: whydya kick me out?

Neon-Ratio: rudeness

devildoc: i'll be good, i was just trying to stir things up

devildoc quivers in the corner

dengalis: where do you get off talking like that ?

Artaud: is this yours first time here?

dengalis: yes

Artaud: go easy, dengalis, just poets at play here

Russianbeauties enters the conversation

Russianbeauties: hello Americans

Russianbeauties leaves the conversation

Artaud: someone go

sunshine: ok

sunshine: senseless banter, wicked words

sunshine: tear apart all esteem...

sunshine: from the outside looking in

sunshine: is it as real as it seems?

## **POET 2 POET**

you know the drill

wings (host)

Artaud

page

tyme

WierdoWill

WierdoWill: i've got a poem, can i go

wings: sure, go ahead

WierdoWill: arguing into the early hours

WierdoWill: about the global economy

WierdoWill: and the greenhouse effect

WierdoWill: we solve the world's problems

WierdoWill: for another night  
WierdoWill: while the stars shine down  
WierdoWill: through the colander in the sky  
WierdoWill: after you leave I continue to drink  
WierdoWill: til I'm topped off and tipping over  
WierdoWill: miserable fuck that I am  
WierdoWill: I crawl across a gravel pit  
WierdoWill: and down a culvert  
WierdoWill: where I find a pinhole of firelight  
WierdoWill: and I laugh and laugh and laugh  
WierdoWill: happy to find light  
WierdoWill: in the middle of the tunnel  
WierdoWill: (end)

WierdoWill: well, what do you think, is this  
a good poem? I think it sucks myself  
wings: i thought it was very good

WierdoWill: i think it is one of my worst

Artaud: yes, if you cant tell your tent from a drainage ditch you are pretty messed  
up

and it shows you are an drooling alcoholic  
with a gas mask fetish

tyme: ?

Artaud: if i wrote a poem like that i would go out and hang myself from the nearest  
tree

WierdoWill: i want to know what the rest of you think, not Art

tyme: I'm just a wallflower here

WierdoWill: page,tell me honestly

page: gosh i thought it was nice, but i did't unerstand the colander thing

WierdoWill: hmm, not sure I do either

Artaud: just a reference to a medieval astrological concept

WierdoWill: shut up, Art, i want to know what people with real understanding  
think

WierdoWill: well, if no one is going to make  
a comment, I guess I am going, thanks all, have fun Art!

WierdoWill leaves the conversation

wings: what was that all about?

Artaud: just devildoc messing with my head by reading memy own poem a poem  
that i posted at poetrytonight.com

Artaud: he's just pissed i'm over here with you guys, i'm embarassed and flattered  
at the same time

wings: you have poems published?

Artaud: a few but let's not go there ok here we're peers

### **DEVILDOC'S ROOM**

the chat topic is: you know the deal

bring your poetry....leave the rest

Jill-in-the-Box enters

TchKung enters

greyling enters

ds33 has entered

signa has entered

wings: fire in the lake

    darting over

    starting

    uber und deeiber

        de ober kats

signa has left

*Disconnected from server. Please wait connecting to server...*

chain..g: this be the flame in the cellar

    naked and wageless

    screaming in our cages

    whose got the power

the mass or the few  
in this torn nation  
never give up  
just live up  
wd be spittn up  
rippin it up  
o my brother  
burning barefeet  
over blacktop  
fast as in fashion  
snapbacknecks  
(ends)

Artaud: once upon a time, old Ez sd we needed  
alabaster for this accelerated age, not marble  
—waferboard is what we're using now  
and a chain saw

## **CREATE A CHAT**

Join a Chat

Change Nickname

Help

D Press live

Code of Conduct

Artaud: a chain poem is created above and below the body

gypsy: in a pillar of soot

wings: and scrapings

sinkfoil: and it shivers

Artaud: Artaud: a chain poem is created above and below the body

gypsy: in a pillar of soot

wings: and scrapings

sinkfoil: and it shivers

gypsy: this is wild, artaud

glitterclot: i don't get it

Artaud: I am rejecting the notion that the subject matter is in the depth of the poem, here the main thing is the immediate situation, the energy, the accident of our situation in the room, the surface of the screen and the poem arising

glitterclot: it's wierd

Artaud: it's like a "candid camera" or a diary of our memories, our chats, our poems, our moofs

wings: go on with it, Art

Artaud: wings: the souls of anti-poets

sinkfoil: spring into moments like 666

wings: wipe that smile off your face

steeltrooper: what is this shit?

gypsy: shhhhh steel, art is reading

steeltrooper: dit don't make sense

gypsy: he's reading us reading

steeltrooper: sucks

*Host wings kicks steeltrooper out!*

steeltrooper leaves the conversation

steeltrooper enters the conversation

steeltrooper: Don't kick me out I'll just come back

Artaud: if you were a host would you kick me out?

steeltrooper: Would you make me host?

Artaud: will you be good"?

steeltrooper: Yes

*Artaud makes steeltrooper host*

Artaud: ok, does that satisfy you?

steeltrooper: thanks

Host steeltrooper kicks starache out!

starache leaves the conversation  
Host steeltrooper kicks sinkfoil out!  
sinkfoil leaves the conversation  
Host steeltrooper kicks prose out!  
prose leaves the conversation  
Host steeltrooper kicks Olivia© out!  
Olivia© leaves the conversation  
Host: steeltrooper kicks Neon-Ratio out!  
Neon-Ratio leaves the conversation  
Host steeltrooper kicks macduff out!  
macduff leaves the conversation  
Artaud: bad call, bye all

## **ANOTHER ROOM**

farmgirl  
“the Shrew”  
genius  
“SongPump”  
wynter  
*ZzZzZ*  
aura  
macduff  
niovi  
Iris  
princess-sunshine  
tuesdaykisses  
hotgirl99  
ArcAinA79  
4given  
jupiter  
BATTLEOFEVERMORE  
microcosom  
belle

Temperance  
denise  
Demonica  
MaidenTsar, that's Totenmaske  
that's TT that's that  
"SmartLady"

*Miss Perfect enters the conversation*

chain..g: drunk enough  
and bored enough  
shattered in a  
wood coffin  
on some boot hill  
a young gun  
screaming "howdy"  
flashing cold steel  
from his hip  
like dark lightning

gypsy: the screen scrolled...

Artaud: you got moofied

*lover899 enters*

Artaud: hi lover, that's a powerful number

lover899: how so?

Artaud: it reduces to an 8, a number of power

lover899: i see

punkerpoet: Done in by love, lover o the one I despise

*punkerpoet leaves*

*punkerpoet3 enters*

punkerpoet3: minor threat, black flag, the  
dropkick murpheys, US Bombs

devildoc: get down punker

punkerpoet3: got disconnected and they changed my name damn them

glitterclot: go to options and change it bacvk

punkerpoet: arrested for punk in public

gypsy: do you know that you were put on auto hold for five minutes

glitterclot: not on my screen he wasn't

gypsy: this is strange

punkerpoet: put on hold by who?

gypsy: i didnt even know there was an automatic ignore, it said it was because you had sent

Artaud: push on wings

wings:..

wings:..

wings: here goes

fire by the lake

lightening on the hills

*MaXiEgiRl enters*

our hearts in the waves arising

pounding sense into the shore

MaXiEgiRl: Did you write this poem??

who could know

MaXiEgiRl: sorry

I'm losing my mind

MaXiEgiRl: Is this room just for typing in

poetry or something?

wings: oh duh

Artaud enters the conversation

Artaud: I got moofied and landed in a Romance

chat room and everyone was naked

wings: what did you do?

Artaud: I told them I was a poet and could I read them a poem

wings: what happened?

Artaud: I started to read, and they booted me out

wings: then read it for us art

prose: blood drain brain reels

Dreamy: I begin to see things begin  
Totenmaske: Totenmaske:to turn  
Neon-Ratio: tote, I can't read that, change yr font  
Totenmaske: to turn in the room in the light  
Neon-Ratio: tx  
gypsy: crying out for the pain to stop  
Neon-Ratio: wanting a spiritual path  
mersault: without God mucking it up  
Totenmaske: God as a cloudy vapor who  
invents the world and leaves  
DenymeLife enters the conversation  
prose: or sleeps in a mummy cloth  
Dreamy: howling in impotent agony  
Totenmaske: while worms in putrid furrows wiggle with pagan glee  
DenymeLife: Hello, I don't understand  
mersault: wiggling and giggling  
Neon-Ratio: we're chaining a poem deny, where are you from?  
DenymeLife: Denmark in Alabama  
Neon-Ratio: do you have a poem to share  
DenymeLife: No, can I just watch?  
Neon-Ratio: anyone else have a poem ready  
Neon-Ratio: arty??  
Artaud: y

*Neon-Ratio dims the lights and adjusts the mic*

prose: blood drain brain reels  
Dreamy: I begin to see things begin  
Totenmaske: το τυρν ιν τηε ροομ ιν τηε λιγητ  
Neon-Ratio: tote, I can't read that, change yr font  
Totenmaske: to turn in the room in the light  
Neon-Ratio: tx  
gypsy: crying out for the pain to stop

Neon-Ratio: wanting a spiritual path  
mersault: without God mucking it up  
Totenmaske: God as a cloudy vapor who  
invents the world and leaves

*DenymeLife enters the conversation*

prose: or sleeps in a mummy cloth  
Dreamy: howling in impotent agony  
Totenmaske: while worms in putrid furrows wiggle with pagan glee  
DenymeLife: Hello, I don't understand  
mersault: wiggling and giggling  
Neon-Ratio: we're chaining a poem deny, where are you from?  
DenymeLife: Denmark in Alabama  
Neon-Ratio: do you have a poem to share  
DenymeLife: No, can I just watch?  
Neon-Ratio: starache, how about you?  
starache: i  
gypsy: yes  
starache: wanted to say  
gypsy: yes  
starache: goodbye  
gypsy: oh, star  
starache: i have to go, I can't come back  
gypsy: bye star  
wings: goodnight starache  
gypsy: we'll see you tomorrow nite  
starache: no  
starache: i can't come back ever  
gypsy: what??!  
Artaud: what do you mean starache  
starache: my mom is taking away the computer  
gypsy: why?

*willowtree enters the conversation*

willowtree: hi, everyone

Artaud: hi willow

willowtree: how is everyone?

Artaud: starache is banned from her computer

willowtree: oh

gypsy: we are just saying goodbye

willowtree: oh

devildoc: your mom will probable relent

starache: if she ever does, i'm so afraid you will all be gone

gypsy: we'll be here starache, waiting

wings: yes, star, we won't forget you

starache: if you see sink

gypsy: yes

starache: tell him

gypsy: yes

wings: we will tell him starache

devildoc: oh god! shit fuck, this is unfair

devildoc writhes in the dirt pulling his hair

starache: i want you all to know

starache: that i love you all

gypsy: we love you too star

Artaud: starache, I am very glad we got to be friends I know you didn't trust me at first

starache: thank, you Art, i am glad too

willowtree: i want to say goodbye and that we will miss you

starache: ty

devildoc: you have contributed a lot here

starache: ty

starache: good bye everyone

gypsy: bye

wings: bye

devildoc: so long

starache leaves the conversation  
willowtree: goodbye  
willowtree: oh, i was too late  
Artaud: it's ok willow, she knows  
devildoc: i'm fucking depressed now that starache has left us for good  
Artaud: i know  
gypsy: i feel so sad  
devildoc: well maybe her mother is right maybe  
she spends too much time here and maybe we all should get real lives  
sinkfoil enters the conversation  
devildoc: hi sink, you just missed starache  
gypsy: she was looking for you to say goodbye  
sinkfoil: she was?  
devildoc: she can't come back here  
sinkfoil: she can't  
gypsy: artaud?  
Artaud: sinkfoil, starache's mom repossessed her harddrive  
and won't allow her to come here  
sinkfoil: she did  
Artaud: starache said how much she would miss all of us but especially you  
sinkfoil: i loved that woman  
Artaud: I know, she was really sweet and she contributed a lot to the room,  
we'll all miss her  
sinkfoil: jeez, i dont feel so good  
Artaud: well, we'll just have to carry on  
sinkfoil: i guess  
gypsy: it won't be the same  
devildoc wipes away a tear  
Artaud: come on, she'll probably get to come back before long,  
does anyone have a poem?

**ADDENDUM TO SUBSECTION TWO SECTION IV:** that which is correct shall be correct unless it is wrong; line must sound like the before line or line must have

green in it three times; that which contains a there where there is no where there  
will stay here

I'll poetry if I choose to stay in  
I'll riot if I go out

oh betty so sweet i crave her  
betty is a right little raver  
sweet like a cherry lifesaver  
yummmmm melts in your mouth  
and tastes like cheese  
jeeez this makes me sneeze  
oh the lady will never die  
the lady will never die  
nay but she will often lie  
in a patch of homespun webs  
in a forum of horny plebs  
    "bettyeggleton"  
    SnowAngel  
    paul  
    aura  
    kiek  
    beatnic

### **DEAD POET SOCIETY**

read your own or other poets and brief  
discussions: Rilke is host

½rhymes  
ANNI  
Astaroth  
auracle  
brautigan

Dylan  
flash65  
iambic  
infinite  
Joshua  
LadyE  
mab  
macduff  
“MorriganWilde”  
oneblonde  
RomperStomper  
Temperance  
“thatguy”  
twilightdreams  
zin

*Artaud enters the conversation*  
*Artaud leaves the conversation*

gypsy: I'm like a child in many ways  
climb benches  
hug trees  
play with the sand  
prefer to be in the water  
than getting a tan  
laugh like a houseful of hens  
dance all night  
and want more

gypsy: come here, next to me  
gypsy: let me tell you something  
gypsy: whisper  
gypsy:.....I.....love.....  
gypsy:.....you

rose: but I got disconnected  
gypsy: we'll join to be so very merry  
wings: and dance the night with elf and fairy  
gypsy: and drink the red red dark berry  
wings: and pick the stars until they're too  
heavy to carry  
gypsy: love's the moment and a ring's a thing  
wings: a thing more binding is the song we sing  
Artaud leads gypsy and wings to the rubber room

### **ABANDONED IN THE FIREY LAVA THE SISTERS DANCE TO A PAGAN SONG**

and hold each other  
et si arebus  
until the young moon goes down  
and lays upon a cloud rack  
paratus et infinitum  
in God's hands  
sonnet leaves the conversation  
and I walk in  
covered with ash  
carpagio et enigmas  
and I walked  
no one knows why  
no  
no one  
no one  
no  
I did not lose my faith  
and what I had to say was so sublime  
that the mere utterance was music

*oeuvhere enters the conversation*

times I feel I shouldna been born  
but here I am  
I may yet find where I belong

*oeuvhere leaves the conversation*

## **WE WILL LIVE FOREVER IN BOLD LETTERS**

TomZ  
maxiesdad  
44 in Bombay at 3 in the morning  
GammaW  
Bambi  
ambrosia  
1st Timer  
starache, feeling a little sad

Cujo  
brokenwing  
mislead  
bigbadbarfly  
fishmonkeygirl aka Totenmaske  
oldpinetree  
diogeneslamp is now known as oscar  
sinkfoil  
Olivia©  
negative\_bullshit  
ghosthusky  
1 Sick Puppy  
unicorn  
cricket  
o, cricket in Arizona  
you've got me writing in emoticons

Dreamy: plunged  
into...from  
once free  
floating LIGHT  
and love into COLD  
choking screams

moody enters

devildoc: Holding on for dear life

O Careless Love!

greyling has left

raving in high fever

my skin hot f/yr touch

a delicious clenching of nerves

gypsy: two people in against the spin  
cycle

MegatonBoy: cross-faded in my room

bass lines staggering

a madness anthem

“JoyceCarolOates”: our skin defences

turning to silk, texture of fleshy

airy surfaces scant as breaths

gypsy: sage sweetgrass and osha

no overcast no birds no bees

just me

hahahahaha

cementhead has joined

devildoc: what the fuck is going on with

sungwon?

pootzygirl

standing\_in\_the\_rain

Teawhisk

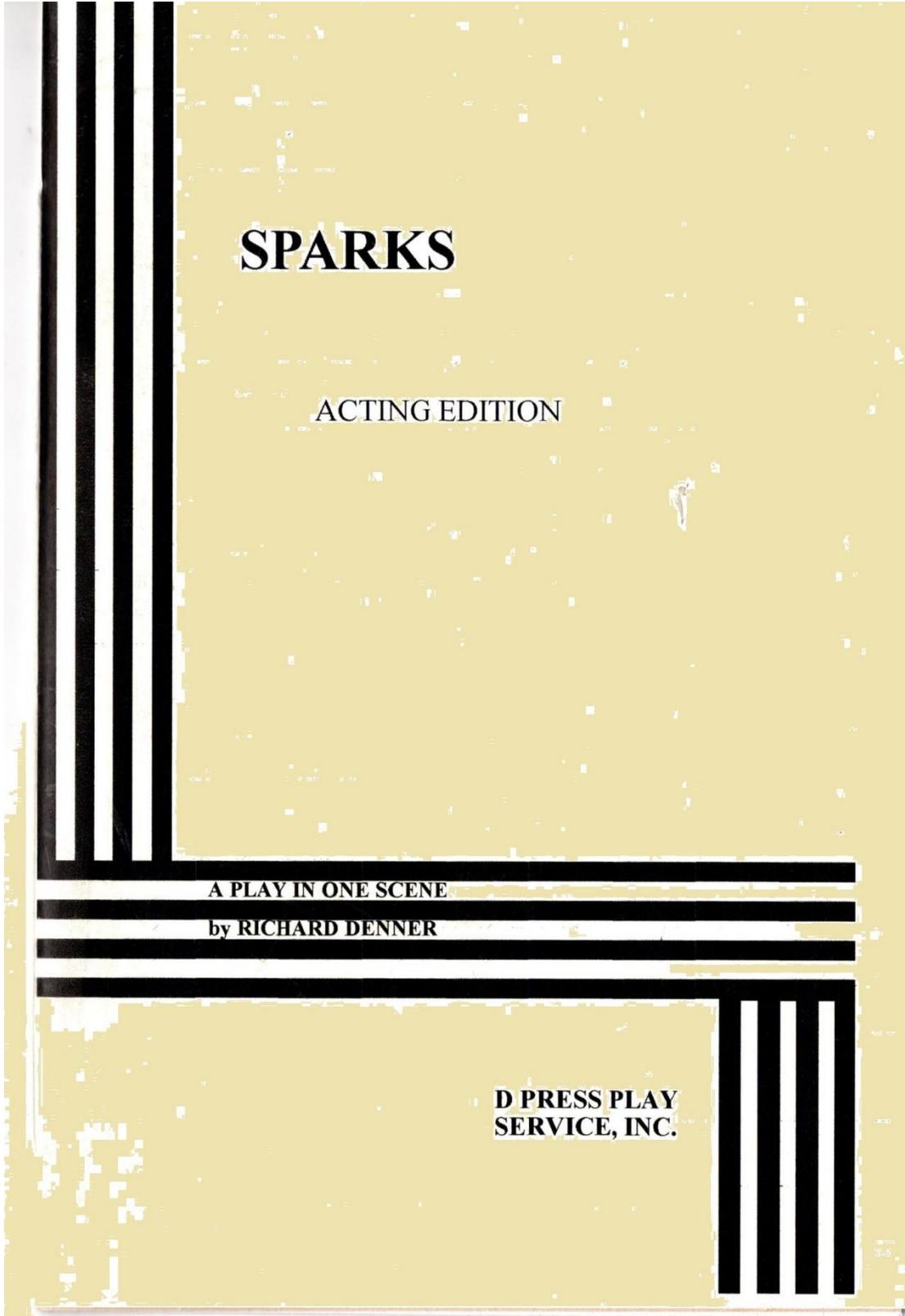
puravida

NormalBoy

Akira  
aura  
zane  
eclips33  
Scorpion  
4Play4Ever  
disintegrate  
milk\_this  
summer  
orge  
Kolorblue  
2cool  
Bonfire  
scribe4rent  
beauty  
diogeneslamp  
wiseowl in NJ  
willow in Korea  
alex in IL  
Ethan in AL  
{StUPidGirl{  
Michaelangelo

In the room the poets come and go

2000/2018  
Santa Rosa  
Ellensburg



# SPARKS

ACTING EDITION

A PLAY IN ONE SCENE

by RICHARD DENNER

D PRESS PLAY  
SERVICE, INC.

The time is spring; the place, Berkeley. The Mediterranean Café on Telegraph Avenue. A woman and a man are seated at a square, marble table. He is a dandy. She is glossily beautiful, like a 40's sex movie star. They are in a pin-spot of light. Behind them looms a mural abounding with Greek gods and goddesses. They know each other really well.

• • •

BOUVARD: You are the embodiment of wild desire. You'd look great even in pajamas. If I'd met you first, I'd be with you, but I'm with her, and she's the best for me.

ALMA: She's the best for you? You've got to have an edge to love? I'm not good at loving with third-party people. Have I been here before?

BOUVARD: We get caught up in our feelings when acting with other actors.

ALMA: Leave it alone, Bouvard, the geography between us is a shield. Don't cut yourself off from wild desire. I've done it.

BOUVARD: I'm faithful to love, but it's not going to control me, just because all things have sex. It's torture to worry about us cheating.

ALMA: Too stressful, to be honest. Too stressful to be honest. I love this crush.

[She takes a drink from a tall latte.]

BOUVARD: Hard in this life, you've only one body.

ALMA: Only one flag, only one life, only one leaf. Good line, Bouvard.

BOUVARD: I want to cuddle...I mean cuddle you, well, both, but I know you have a natural feminine, non-toxic, body-pure immunity to adultery.

ALMA: You're right, I am careful about hygiene. It's a thing with me, but [unctuously] if I was to be unfaithful, it would be with you.

BOUVARD: You, you, you...at least, you're not dumb. Blind, maybe, but not dumb

[He takes a sip from her glass.]

ALMA: True love's an exotic club, that's for sure, and we've got the talent for it.

BOUVARD: [He rises.]

True love is just a romantic notion.

[She finishes the drink.]

ALMA: Keep it up.

BOUVARD: Do you give heart? [His line overlaps hers.]

ALMA: I struggle to keep house. I do everything but cook. I can spend the whole day reading in bed. No reason to find someone else, besides me.

BOUVARD: And people have everything, including self-sabotage. [He sits.]

ALMA: Why are you fidgeting?

BOUVARD: [straightening himself in his chair] My pants are too tight in the crotch.

ALMA: If I had to choose between my survival and my dignity, I'd choose love.

BOUVARD: [wistfully] Yes, I miss the hungry years—but not too much. Then, you don't have time for love?

ALMA: No, but you encourage my wild side. [half rising with excitement] There's a charm in love affairs. Fun to be with you. Pure passion. Endless. Reckless.

BOUVARD: A kiss from you couldn't hurt, babe.

ALMA: With kisses come consequences. [slumps]

BOUVARD: I know you could cook my perfect omelet, too.

ALMA: [ignoring him] Once, I went on a date with a guy. Walked on the beach. I kissed him, but he didn't call. Wished he had. I took my blouse off. Had on a plaid skirt and boots. Took off one boot because he wanted to see if I had cankles.

BOUVARD: Cankles?

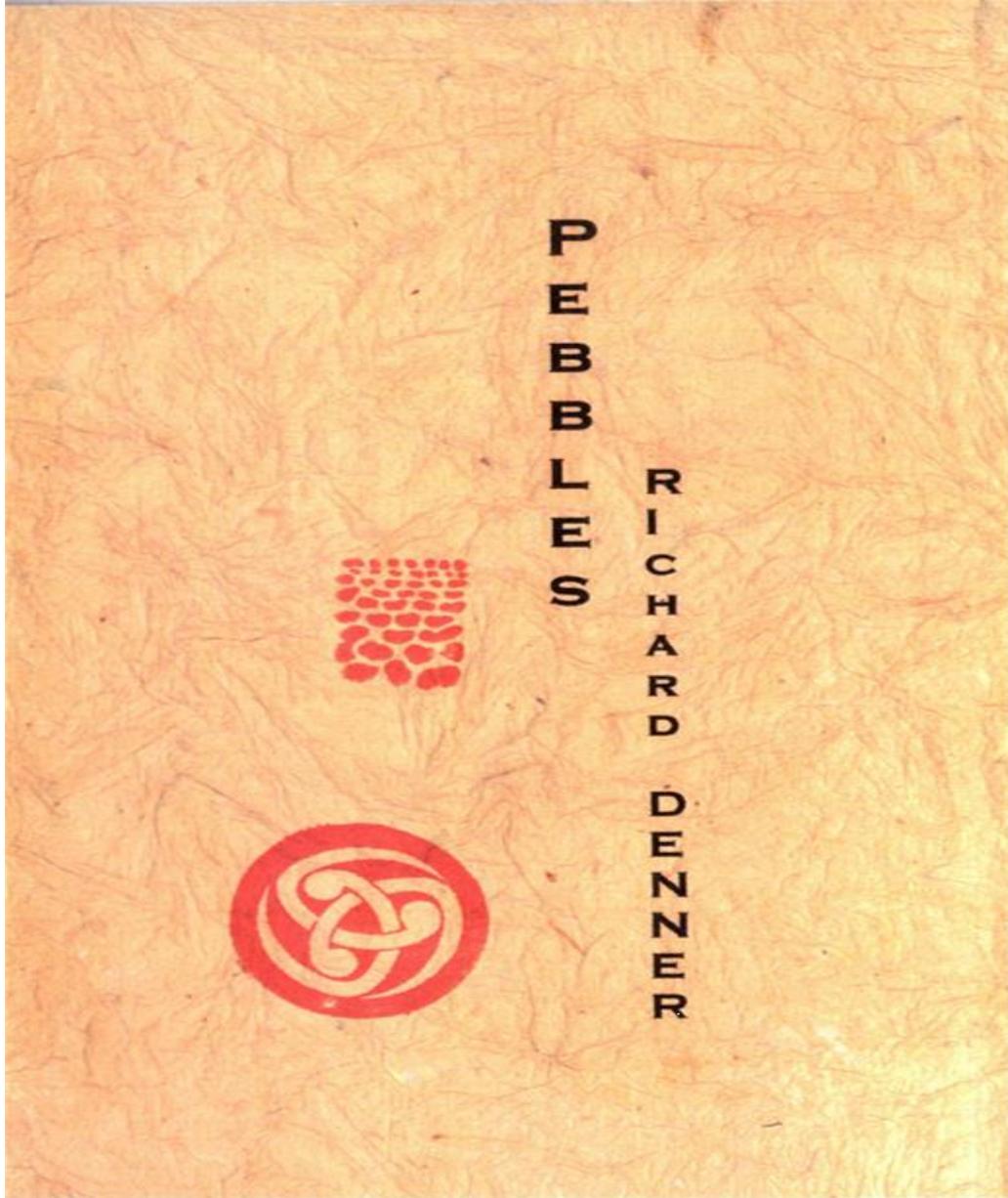
ALMA: He wanted to see if he could tell where my calves left off and my ankles began. I knew he didn't have balls.

BOUVARD: And I'm playing the part of a...I just feel intoxicated by my desire for you. I could kiss you all night. [nonchalant] Just a physical fact.

ALMA: [She puts both gloved hands over her ears.] I can't hear a thing you're saying.

BOUVARD: It's nothing, but all the same, a kiss from you couldn't hurt, babe.

Dim light. Sparks fly.



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SEBASTOPOL, 2008

TRANSLATED BY YASHO

SATO

CALLIGRAPHY BY SHOGO OKETANI



•  
Ökisa to Chiisasa wo Kyöyü suru  
Hikari ni Yotte

•  
Yama to Nami  
Kuchibiru to Ashi  
Otoko to Onna no Kankei  
Soshite Tsuki no Hikarito

•  
Sono Hikari no Naka de  
Kimi to Koshi wo Orosu

Marude Kiroi Bara no Yöni  
Afuredasu Kofuku

•  
Ikken ga Jukushi ni naru  
•

K  
O  
I  
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H  
I

P  
E  
B  
B  
L  
E  
S



**KOISHI**

Bokura wa Umareru  
Yume ni Mukatte

Bokura wa Mezameru  
Sokoniwa Nanika  
Hatameite Itakai ?

Boku wa Tazuneyoutoshita  
Shikashi Yume ni Chigainai

.

Ōsugiru  
Demo Tarinai

Bokura niwa Kikoenai Oto

.

Hayaku  
Sunda  
Tashikana  
Saigono

.

Jikan to Sōshitsu  
Futatsu no Sekai

Uchi to Soto

**PEBBLES**

we are born  
to dream

we wake  
was there something  
fluttering?

I was going to ask, but  
it must have been a dream

.

too much  
or not enough

a sound  
we cannot hear

.

swift  
clear  
sure  
final

.

time and loss  
two worlds

in and out

ぼくの完璧な  
Tシャツの言葉  
心配するな

Be Hopi (ホビになれ)  
ヒエンソウの  
庭のひばり

ぼくは聞く  
ぼくは感じる  
ぼくは急ぐ

•  
held together  
the great  
the small  
by light

•  
mountain and wave  
lip and leg  
a relationship  
of man and woman  
and moonlight

•  
in this light  
to sit with you  
in rest

so it is  
happiness pours out  
like a yellow rose

•  
a glance  
becomes  
a gaze

大きさと小ささを共有する  
光によって

山と波  
唇と足  
男と女の関係  
そして月の光と

その光の中で  
君と腰をおろす

まるで黄色いバラのように  
あふれ出す幸福

一見が熟視になる  
ある日は Yes  
ある日は No

one day, yes  
another, no

your refusal and departure  
swift, sure and final  
an injury so severe  
nothing can be done

except message my heart

I hold your picture  
to my lips

your eyes, lips, eyes

in memory of  
bug hovering evenings  
and the touch of  
a cinematographer

apocalypse now  
a pair of lips now

Boku wa Marude  
Furūdean Sōpu Opera wo  
Aruite Iruyō

Boku no Kanpekina  
T Shatsu No Kotoba  
Shinpai Suruna  
Hopi ni Nare

Hiensō no  
Niwa no Hibari

Boku wa Kiku  
Boku wa Kanjiru  
Boku wa Isogu

小石

ぼくらは生まれる  
夢に向かって

ぼくらは目覚める  
そこには何か  
はためいていたかい？

ぼくはずねようとした  
しかし夢にちがいない

多すぎる  
でも足りない

ぼくらには聞こえない音

速く  
澄んだ  
確かな  
最後の  
時間と損失  
二つの世界

内と外



I feel like I'm a walking  
Freudian soap opera

.

words of my perfect T-shirt  
*Don't Worry*  
*Be Hopi*

.

a skylark in a field  
of larkspur

.

I listen  
I feel  
I hurry



WASTED  
BY  
LARRY KERSCHNER  
&  
RICHARD DENNER

諸行は無常

Impermanence

昨日は悟り                      Satori yesterday  
今日は下痢便                    Diarrhea today  
これって一体何なんでしょう    All things pass

ELLENSBURG

D PRESS

2022

T. S. Eliot's magisterial *The Waste Land* encapsulates mythical and historical memory, disillusionment, and despair in the wake of World War I. Kerschner and Denner's *Wasted* looks inward one hundred years later, as through the other end of a telescope. Timeless, spaceless, existential without the ism; sucked into the cycle of creation and dissolution; unraveling the frayed end of the rope from which our era dangles by a thread: "Did you think the Kali Yuga was going to be easy?"

—Jacquelynn Baas

Testimonial:

Jacquelynn Baas is a cultural historian, writer, curator, and Director Emeritus of the University of California Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive. Her books include *Buddha Mind in Contemporary Art* (2004), *Smile of the Buddha: Eastern Philosophy and Western Art from Monet to Today* (2005), and most recently *Marcel Duchamp and the Art of Life* (2019).

Cover photo:

Jobar in Eastern Ghouta, on the outskirts of the Syrian capital Damascus on April 2, 2018.

(AFP Photo)



# WASTED

## 1. A Spy in the House of Death

Grief and loss are silent, slinking through  
a country soaked in blood and sorrow,  
the very blackness illuminating  
a gloomy vision inside a skull infused  
by a single photon of comfort flaring  
from a burning bush in this valley of shadows,  
knowing death is meaningless since life  
is the illusion with time offering a language  
of movement toward the flowers  
blossoming here, lighting a rocket,  
blazing into wonder

Bareback on horses, the two of us,  
an easy lope into sunlight  
poet lines dancing, angels in our souls,  
your buckskin and my paint  
mounts opening a gate, easy lope  
into sunlight through barriers  
I'd call sublime—with blindness upon me,  
yr words' resonate joy  
felt more than seen in my own hourglass  
passages, messages decoded, signs  
in sandstone, first note on Manastash Ridge  
worsted, twisted—tho it is said we wasted  
our substance with riotous living,

prodigal sons don't really change  
their minds, just run out of money  
If it once becomes dark, there's no chance  
of a Snark—we have hardly a minute to waste! when likely wasted—

Was it Robert Duncan or Paul Celan  
who said something has wreckt  
the world I am in, something or nothing,  
in or out obscuring everything that is not me?

A road enters town and leaves, Hwy 97, Old Highway 10, University Avenue, before that, 8th  
Avenue, before that, way way back  
a winding trail, for Lewis and Clark led by Sacagawea on their way to Snoqualmie Pass, now  
traffic whipping by a row of modest homes with frail facades taking the brunt of a coded society  
controlling the air, the water,  
the fire—I am what I think, from threshold to threshold. a light beam in this unreal city

## 2. Socrates Quizzes His Student

Socrates judged that poetry feeds the weakest part of the soul—Gregory Corso believed that it  
makes no difference whether a poem is abundantly distributed or not as long as it holds the truth  
and power of the poet's advanced consciousness it will

Whether understood or not, whether accepted or not, reach the main and general consciousness  
of mankind in time and thereby benefit it—such is the poem's magic and this is the true mystery  
of poetry, its ability to advance and better the lot of our minds

Reading poetry as a form of voyeurism the poet from County Sligo announced on Zoom that she  
thought she was live her bright sparkling words certainly were she upset the secret banshee  
whose presence warned of an impending death in the house sunshine

Was definitely not wanted there needing a furtive quaff from his poetry bottle a covert spy from  
the house of words just held on the very best he could manage Inshallah! At 5000 degrees the  
shadow silhouette of her body was imprinted on the stone steps in Hiroshima as if some Kilroy  
was there

J. Edgar danced in his tutu for his G-man lover while he and Eisenhower refused to acknowledge their African relatives

Elephants and dolphins gather around their dead—dogs are said to eat their own vomit

Except for humans, animals of the same species do not generally devour each other

When Socrates quizzes his student on poetic meters, Strepsiades declares that he knows quite well what a dactyl is and gives him the finger

Lucky Lexi living long loving life laughing at the eternal footman, for the time being the time being, remembering winter in Fairbanks awaiting Allen at the airport, us exhaling little cartoon balloons of CO2

Space, oh, there's plenty between us, but time makes it impermanent—if there was

No phenomena, there'd be no time—clocks die when their time is up

I've heard the Queen is some kind of lizard person

Waiting, am I early or am I late— or am I?

You have learned about all there is to know loving it and dotting it down

I drown out

the sirens' seductive tune

as the dancers dance  
in the limpid light of noon

away from  
another newsy day

Hurry up.

It's time.

### 3. Burning Down the House

From the Med on meds, heading towards dead filled with espresso. Palatine radioed that the rats are fighting in the hallways with light sabers. The Republicans (not the Irish kind) charge a woman with murder for a self-induced abortion. SCOTUS is aghast but silent so far.

violent from the north/

cold/

my bones ache

white rushing roar/

wind/

my teeth chatter

slanting/snow/screen/

blind/

my mustache freezes

steaming caribou liver/

hidden/

my belly rumbles

BASE

The Source

From whence comes the poem

“inspiration”

need to fulfill promise

result of a prayer, or

habit

Inspiration

flooding feeling, bliss

the Zone

vision-external-vision

Apocalyptic need

to write like crazy

PATH

Make the poem

“We’ve come to bring you metaphors for your poems.”

mind treasure is a Ter

Chaucer as Garab Dorje

Shakespeare as

Guru Rinpoche

Build like a box

a Grail for Gail—a poem

for her birthday, an occasion

inside out

Subconscious, or natural

first word

best word

beauty

outside in channel

ghosts, Martians

The Muse

Demons/Angels

Mind Ter

the Subconscious

Magic poetry IS spell-ing

Hypnotic intoxicants, both

“Just starts to happen”

Visualization – mind

Breath/rhythm – energy

Word – body

Tulku Sang-ngag dances

The Dance of King Gesar

FRUIT

Somehow things come

together

Brought its own solution

which was very poetic

Taught me how to draw

a bunny

Saying something

is more appropriate

than you could dream of

Saying something

more profound

even if you don't get it

Crow story—

how he got a drink

In the poem I was  
able to cry

To name it kills it

“My cat died the other day.”

Confessional poem, in the 50s  
sheared in a pen,  
and then you stamp it

Don't want you to miss  
the point

“Capture  
phrases  
that  
come to  
mind”

The occasion arises  
by the occurrence  
then, you somehow write it:  
“...from an antique land.”

Stuff coming into life  
that haunts you of  
things I said  
I shouldn't have

things said

I could have said better

things other people said

“It was a beautiful day, and I want to remember it.”

“Misery comes from every direction.”

“Whatever are we going to do about it, we can’t always be watching TV?”

“I feel like a blind man who

doesn’t know

where he is.”

Inner story

a séance

a poem

a book

a skit

the voice of the Supreme Source

“Did you think

the Kali Yuga was going to be easy?”

Poetry of the mind

poetry of the voice

poetry of the body

Quack

Quack

Quack

4. Death By Air

The Covid thing. A breathing thing. Smoke from fires, all summer, from every direction. A breathing thing. And then, *Waldenstrom Macroglobulinemia*, a rare blood disease catches me unaware, sneaks up like a slyer with a dagger beneath his cloak and nearly snuffs me out. A breathing thing. So, being a master of meditation, I holed up for a year, took online philosophy classes at CWU and wrote essays on subjects ranging from ecological degradation to psychedelic katabasis, allegorically synthesizing the emptiness within with the emptiness without and doing chemotherapy. I'm in remission. Lucky me, I have a brave son, like Virgil, who was my north star and guided me through the labyrinth of life.

Next, I was diagnosed with a case of Chronic Obstacle Pulmonary Disease, followed by a bout of pneumonia. Breathing things. The pneumonia put me in the intensive care ward at the local hospital. The doctor said I was septic. I had shot right through the Bardo of Dying into the Bardo of Supreme Reality and, sitting in full lotus in bed, I began my practice of Consciousness Transference, until the nurses stopped me, saying I was making monitors flash. After ten days of intensive care, I returned to the Bardo of Life.

#### 5. What the Doctor Said

Smoking Gauloises and sipping espresso sitting on the deck above Deep Bay, Socrates said to ask why being gut shot is such a long and painful way to go and also to ask who makes a killing out of killing?

so the hospital chief admin called me into his office: "We are like a family here, we treat each other that way, so we don't really need a union. We treat each other like family."

Me: "So if we are just one big family, then a contract won't make a difference, will it?"

AH AH AH

-----  
Some of the words I didn't understand, but I found the imagery quite effective. Interesting line structure and rhythmic devices counterpoint the underlying metaphor of humanity in distress.

— ARMAN DENT

A superb fabrication.

— E.P.

