

MICHAEL TURNER / Gorgeous

of George and his *Curious* (1973), a book of portraiture that is part of my diminishing autobiobiology, for unlike Tennyson, I am apart of all that I have met, a subtraction of infinite regress

the portrait of Birney, knowing *less and less*, but not shrinking in his lessness, only growing, sideways, the unclosure of collage

the rebus of concrete, how complete these letters turn, these pictures, how the square becomes a diamond, but for baseball, not Angela

has yellow hair
at least in/ the poem

Olson down the stairs, quantifiably bigger than Plath's Hughes, the only man "huge enough" for her, down the Tallmans' stairs, a tall man himself, full of breath, lines, field, held in by his belt, its buckle crooked

Daphne Buckle, of whom Blaser later wrote when she was a Marlatt, "Wanted so to enter the brightness," *In the midst of her sorrow she was*, but was she amidst those at the foot of the stairs?

readers of the *New American Poetry*? a record spinning, a saxophone heard one summer's night in Summerland, notes floating north on the airwaves from Salt Lake City

and introduced to those gathered by George, as Olson was to them?

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I am not sure what use it is to read like this, as writing, but because the book needed to be retrieved from the boxes, or one of them, I am now reading it, mindful of Stein's portraits, but in this case George's

contribution is not the paragraph but the poem, or at least it looks that way, breathes that way, with attention paid to the styles of those who sat for them, as photographs, pictures, subjects, we see

the dust in Ed Dorn's hair, but it is really overexposure, the camera aimed at both Dorn and the sun, the absence of contrast, definition, this dust

to Williams's music, his books in the UBC Library, *The Desert Music*, where "Memory is a kind/ of accomplishment," the desert itself an instrument, a maker of dust, its motes notes

but I could only remember, or misremember, parts of George's book, embarrassed by what I could remember

where I was/ shat on by a seagull & what would/ that look like on black velvet to stand in for Marianne Moore, whom he had applied that fabric to, and, in contrast to Dorn, without

a photo to support it, unlike Atwood, who has that which George *is led to believe I havent* writes in her bestknown poem, the one us youngsters read in high school: "This Is a Picture of Me"

"It was taken some time ago./ At first it seems to be/ a smeared/ print: blurred lines and grey flecks/ blended with the paper," but in George's photo she is at a desk, talking on the phone

until we come to Spicer's death, his portrait, reforming as we read it, like Dorian Gray's, becoming something else, an obituary, something he could not sit for, but nothing of Olson's death in his

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years ago I read in one of George's biographies that he was an aerial photographer for the RCAF, and years later I asked Jean if she had some of these photos, an afternoon that became an event, a tour

of the new house, with the paintings Thea showed me during an afternoon years earlier at the house on West 37th, across the street from the church where my parents were married, where I was christened

Thea indulged my stories, and my unreliable memory has her remembering me standing outside St. Mary's one cold Tuesday night in January waiting for my mom to pick me up from cubs

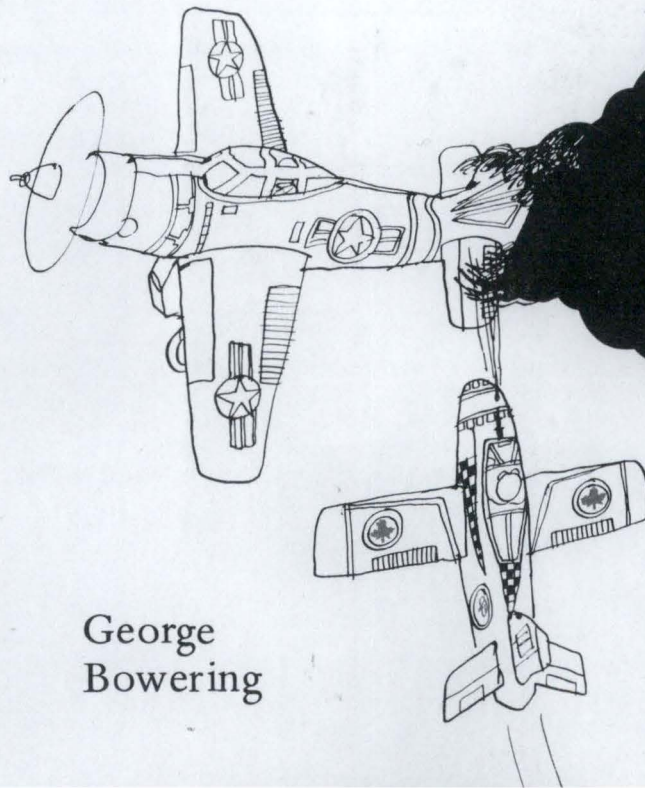
Thea before a Fisher painting, the one given the only good wall at the house on West 11th, the dining table before it, and on that table the photo albums, most of them of George's

girlfriends, Jean said, opening another album, pushing it towards me, this time of cars, baseball games, my curiosity growing, and in growing, my quest forgotten



from the photo album:
Joan Huberman and George
on Granville Street, 1960.
Photo credit: Foncie Pulice

AT WAR WITH THE U.S.



George
Bowering

At War With the U.S. (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1974)

Cover drawing by Greg Curnoe of a Canadian fighter plane with red maple leaves on its wings shooting down a US plane. Dedication: *for Frank Davey*.

"The things the Americans were doing were getting more and more outrageous.... Everybody hated the American invasion of Vietnam but the bombing of Cambodia was even worse; it was somehow more atrocious." (GB to Roy Miki, 38-39)