

“How is one to describe all this?”
—Gertrude Stein in lecture

the more apocryphal the truer I say
ones called Red & Pat & Al seeing

the fiction that it takes a lot of
to separate fact from

the hung-up preposition of start anywhere
again & from where you are & continue

no biblical thumping but in revelation
no ideas but in thanks

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George. I like his
mugging on camera his
guffaw in public, catcall
from second base no guff
in conversation his
doing as we all have
never &
never done
with it

always resurfacing like a young Peggy in
old b&w Brownie shots a t-shirted man wearing his

heart where his smiling sleeves would have been
ballcap or not, jaunty wide

open to funny papers weekly in
no guns Okanagan

Frank, Stan, Brian, Peggy, Al
& sometimes why

a North Shore bubble called Black
Mountain I see from where I live now

saw from where I lived then & the words
are *it's funnier when it's also true*

look! a large tautology in the middle of
everyone's Dick & Jane Reader road

you'll need more than a short sad book to
get around it, you'll need a post-ancient poem

the question is & the questions are
to ex-Hume or let sleeping dogs lie

or lay down a pun with the worst of them
if not then when will the pen ever prove

meatier than the shard. *Tish are jumpin'*
& *the cottonwood's high*. Poetry isn't

freedom, I'll grant you that *gratuit*. A poet's
biblical knowledge of trees may be dismissive

of the diaries of Gerry G., but I will forever
disagree. So, I called Jamie R. just to see

if he had a copy of *At War*. Carol was tending
the garden & coddling Molly. Is Jamie handy?

Well, he's not handyman handy but he's
here. Well, hand him over, Carol dear.

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Consciousness has no seigneurial tithes, no
King George stamps. Just ask Malcolm Lowry,

Al Neil's neighbour in Dollarton, Cuernavaca,
halfway to Deep Cove's (S)HELL torches,

just a fast-pitch away, a *vita brevis* as long-
armed from left, from Peachland to present.

I dreamt of Flying Phil racing up Gaglardi Way
to teach Spicer at SFU, glove compartment full

of unpaid speeding tickets, Laurier LaPierre
in hot bilingual pursuit. I dreamt of James

Fennimore Cooper coming through slaughtered
fauna to trade me his near-new Harmon Killebrew

for my frayed Carl Yastremski. I dreamt of
Gertrude Stein dreaming of Spinoza, "*all things*

are in God" except the Nippon Ham Fighters. George,
find him in the True Fiction section, find him tapping

cleats, taking the *swing away* sign from third,
stepping inside thinking outside the box, finding

feeling the sweet spot that hurts. I can hear
the thunk from my place in the bleachers.

That crack sounds wise.



George and Thea Bowering on Granville Island, 1970s.
Photo credit: Lynn Spink