

# THE CAPIANO REVIEW





*And when shall We arrive at that purest of all places, the pure moment, the prize so long hidden from every surprise, when the language with all the joy of the children of Africa shakes off its dreams of the centuries and writes itself into our thoughts?*

— COLIN STUART, “*Memories of Africa*”

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# THE CAPIANO REVIEW

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## PREFACE

1

*Love*

*Of this land, turning.*

— JACK SPICER

Editing, an act of attention and composition, requires energy and will specific to that which is being composed. When the attention turns, when the energy and will no longer meet the resistances specific to that composition, a re-opening beckons. Accordingly, I've resigned as Editor of *The Capilano Review*.

I see now that in the prefaces to the last two issues I prepared for this without intending to, by making my thanks to all who helped me over the last five years. I want those who helped in ways too subtle to be acknowledged by name in print to accept my gratitude in reading this. I have loved this magazine and it has restored me.

I look forward to enjoying all the good work our new Editor, Bill Schermbrucker, will shape for us in this and future issues.

Pierre Coupey  
January 1977

2

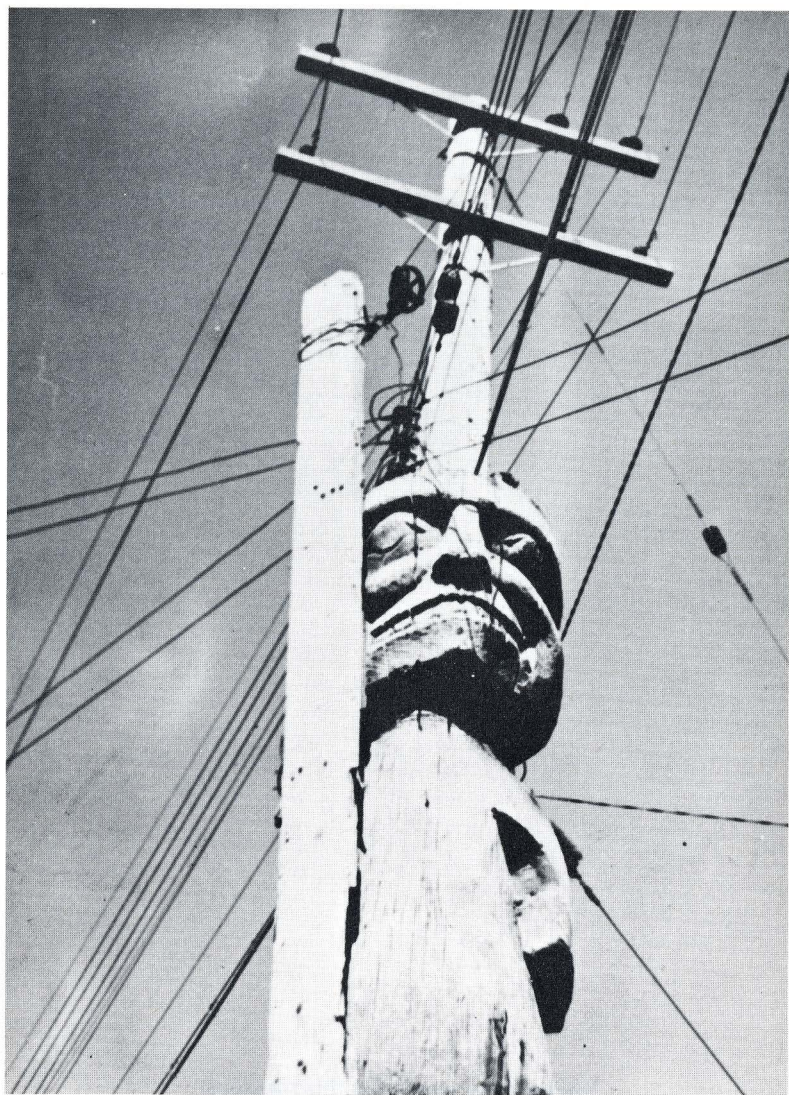
*The Capilano Review* continues live into Number 10. Some continuity, some change. We present as well as we can, the works which excite us.

Heart and mind are individual (as politics). If our editorial struggles didn't show that, these contents will. Amid the graces of flight and stillness are other imaginations which "demand / a love without wings."

Thanks to the writers and other artists, to fellow editors, to subscribers.

This issue is dedicated with love and thanks to Pierre Coupey.

Bill Schermbrucker



**Colin Stuart / RETROSPECTIVE**

We have no words for this pleasure  
but we know what it is: Chanel.

— Catherine de neuve.

We are led through so much for so little  
The children go from sleep to school  
getting up like the dawn, and crossing  
over the bridge of sighs. A truth that  
becomes as circular as riding a bicycle.  
Even when the lights are turned off.



## THE LADY OF LETTERS

Do not Disturb

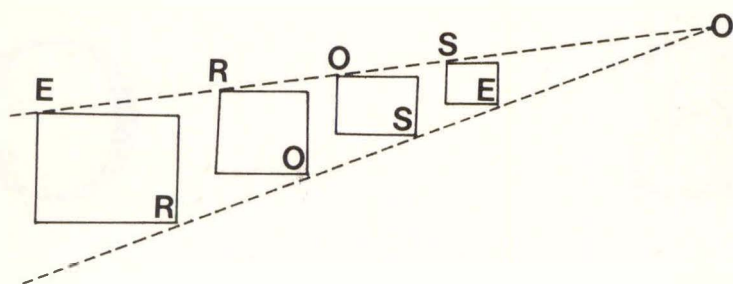
Le Stade du miroir

The repression of the signifier

When love, with one another so  
interinanimates two soules,  
that abler soule, which thence doth flow,  
Defects of loneliness controules.

E R O  
S

*Subject-object*



Huckleberry Finn was another victim of the mirror stage. His childhood has been often interpreted as a picket fence. Along with Tom Sawyer, his double for life, he was forced to paint this fence white. Wilson Pickett suffered the same fate in the hands of music critics. The only joy in life for Huck was playing cards, especially Bicycle playing cards, one of his favorite images.

E Z  
R O S E  
O R  
S O

---

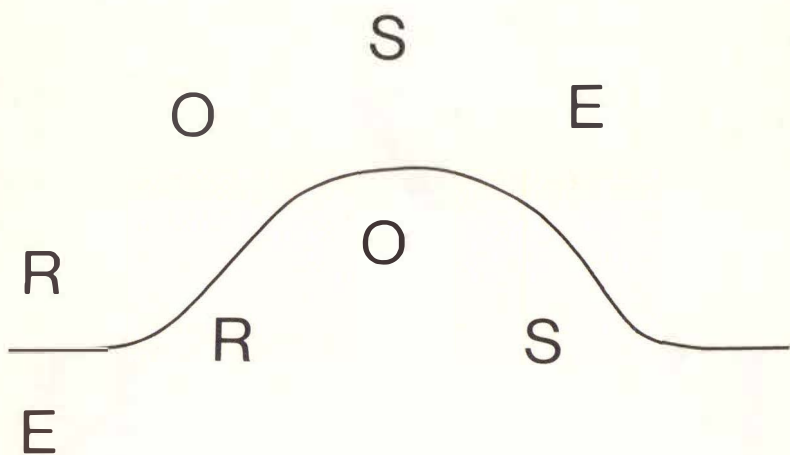
The horse was a filly. She was affiliated with Pegasus, the horse of the legends.

O Z E  
R

*Glissement, or, fantasy*

Z  
E R  
O

Two abstract moments which signify a presence:



R O S E  
B A N K  
B A N K  
R O S E  
R O S E  
B A N K

*The squaring of the circle:*

S E R  
O

The sphere of the rose:

R  
E S O

The condensation:

Z  
O E  
R

The replacement:

ROSE BANK

---

One can see the child is doing a lot better than Alice did. In terms of the mirror, in which commentary and text are without boundaries, the image of the child has obviously undergone a transformation. Even to himself, he is imaginary.

*The instance of the letter*

E O S

THE FINAL HOUR  
MAY BE FILLED  
WITH VIOLETS  
KEEP THEM  
CHILLED

## ITALIAN WOOD

The Casa del Sole was not far from Lerici, and we had spent several days tracking down the geography of the place in the Appenines, the background of Shelley's last poem, *The Triumph of Life*, which he left unfinished at his death or suicide not far from where we were staying. We had been travelling hard and after finding the Casa spent the evening talking to some tourists from Germany, for the Casa del Sole was operated by an old German concierge who at one time had spent the summers here with her husband and son before the war. There were pictures of her son in German military dress, an aviator in the SS, on the hallway walls. It so happened that we slept late and by the time we awakened she had gone down into Rapallo for groceries and locked all the doors from the outside. Our windows were latticed and we had no way of getting out. The house itself was surrounded by high walls and its gardens were enclosed, and its pond, where I had seen the goldfish the day before; only to find that their eyes were diseased and they were blind. From our windows we could see the Mediterranean and the little beach houses, some of which had cages full of birds on their porches and the grapes were still ripening on the vines. Not far off, the rumbling sound of the Italian trains cutting their way through the mountain valley towards the crossing in Rapallo, through the woods of Italian pines, reminiscent of the scenes in the wood in Fellini's *Juliette of the Spirits*, breaking the stillness of the afternoon. As we waited a light rain began to fall, which, in a few minutes changed into a downpour, then as soon, vanished, leaving the garden trailing in mist which soon vanished as well into the sunlight.





Like an argument between two doves:

Outside his window the wings are streamlined,  
a development of the tear, like the scarf  
that fell into the Mediterranean

or upon the ruined arch  
of the Temple of Dionysus

those blue butterflies at Delphi  
were sleeping in their opposites, the red poppies  
in parched grass, between the tiers of the  
Stadium Nothing but the soft blue blur  
in the grass, then, floated into the air  
until they matched the colour of the sky  
I lost sight of them, their wings open  
alphabetically into those events  
where words disappear from

The World

if those goldfish  
were the body and the soul, they  
spoke two different languages, floating  
in the mirror for a moment, in the room  
in the camera in the embassy of an angel,  
desire is the grass, where the angel sits  
reading like that time at the Embassy  
of Senegal, the tall negro in the garden  
dressed in dark blue, reading

reading in the indecipherable  
garden the latest news He looked  
like a bluebird as he sat, stillness  
enveloped him like a word or a cat

Seen through the window of the heart  
we wake in sleep, or sleep to wake

But Mary is in exile, and sends the child  
forth from the Rose Bank garden then  
forth to the end of the world

Those high hollyhocks in  
the garden, standing, naked and entwined  
must know the image twists around  
the imageless, until a strange music  
carries them away No wonder we  
think their souls are already in  
Paradise they have the key

the awkward grace, the charm, the almost  
awareness of their own nakedness

Saint Augustine says  
when spirits fall, they open again  
the darkness that is within them  
Like the rose, or the lily they hold  
up to the nose of Osiris,

To the black body of Osiris,  
Then wake again, upon one of those  
hidden roads of Re

where the cat  
wanders every day. Furry-tail

Fairytale or the angel trumpets  
(morning glory) in the grass, the high  
walls you thought were so beauty-  
full as we walked down from San  
Ambrogio I thought to myself,

“Yes, they would be beautiful, if they crumbled into beauty”. For Beauty is Tartaros’ Bride and words were the pomegranate at her lips

## “Nymphette politique”

the goldfish are asleep in the garden,  
the classical pond      And in the Italian  
wood,    I would guide you if I could.

If the soul and the  
body were one But today, the nymphs  
are away Gone to the beach to play  
in the tall waves, which are

our silences. The walls are tall  
and the windows are glass light  
has a future and a past They invented  
the Unconscious because the Language  
had fallen asleep in the castle of words.

The Alps were a castle like that, seen from the plane. Looking down, thousands of castles rising into the clouds. A Fairytale kingdom, bells, and snow camels and croziers

Yet, in order to illustrate  
this science, we have become lost  
or found in particular poems, constellated  
by virtue of certain lights

Now in the golden room,  
it is only the personality of the wind  
can danger beyond the screen, past  
the green shooting with her camera  
all the doubles like Artemis, with

her silver bow, stepping out from  
the blue fresco at Herculeaneum, wild  
as the wind slips into the room,  
wearing a scarf the colour of sky

that fell upon the ruined arch of  
Dionysus more beautiful than a Botticelli  
with her hair tangled, and her eyes  
came from behind the screen, searching  
out the brooks, the slim

personalities of  
winds and brooks

As the Poet walks out  
into the garden, talking with his shadow  
without words. "The game in the sun

is silent now. And we are locked  
together in this house, above the

Mediterranean . The old landlady  
has gone into town for groceries.  
She locked us in. The name of  
this place, if you don't remember,  
is the Casa del Sole"

Madness in the silver  
mirror The nymphs are gone to sleep  
The waves are the wings of him,  
the griffin they tamed while he  
was still in pieces. Brought  
into focus by the waves

Timed in the sun .

Walking down the road, into the  
mirage On your back was a pack  
of colours

The pink rose that  
closed like a  
cloud of fire upon our last  
night in Alexandria, the light  
streaming in through the window, off the  
Corniche, the sight, there squared  
cubed.

What arrived from  
behind these white curtains, whose  
white silk leaves seem to float  
like a moving screen against the  
folding heaven of the sun?

Do I write before an  
altar Of falling leaves? The  
blue hydrangea on the table seem  
to have been left there by the sky  
Shall I begin to name what still  
exists? What did I dream last night —  
you and I were two birds we almost  
caught ourselves in a wood.

The memories  
of Africa remain in the afternoon  
showers. A jaguar seems to haunt  
the alphabetic bouquet.

Artemis guards  
the silence of the page

of one whose name  
dissolves in water. Going through  
the desert on a train, the blue  
car where we slept from Cairo  
to Luxor Falling asleep, the  
rhythm of the rails under us,

we breathe close as lilies in  
the night. Waking, then, entwined. Out  
the windows of the car, passing by the  
stands of palms, high and ariel, then,  
a white mosque lit in the moonlight  
slipped by like a castle of words.

The structure of  
this sentence is like a camera. We take  
a picture of the real. But in the camera,  
along the blue coast, beside the sea,  
at midnight, railroad flares are lit

The sky sits alone on the rock, weeping  
through a mask of words. "The world  
in a thousand ways can hide you, but  
Love alone can keep you from yourself"

Echoes in the rose.

Then the eyes of old men in the rain  
The rain fell like eyes, like eyes  
of parrots, full of cataracts.

Her wings were like windows  
opening at twilight, into a garden  
where birds drank from a fountain.  
But there is no fountain.

The robe like plaid,  
walking over the lawn, the colour  
merged into one road.

In order for the thought  
to reach her, it must penetrate  
the alphabet of these white lilies  
in the tall vase of Martini.

*Ave Gratia*

*Plena Dominus Tecum*

She came into the chamber of the heart,  
do you know that place where the snow  
has freshly fallen ?

where  
words and lilies mingle ?

Adore the griffin  
turning the heart slowly into aether  
Where the coolness is the memory  
of water in a vase. Steeped in  
stillness, why stop when you  
reach the silhouettes?

Overhead the throw of  
the clouds, slow dice, does not  
disturb us.

That was in classical times.  
Now, the close succession of petunias  
is timed like tears of Mercury, silver  
by the path, blue, purple in shadow.

The fate of the car, the fate of  
the ride, the fate of the bridegroom  
and the fate of the bride

all in the pond,  
where the form is seen as in  
a mirror, or from behind the screen,  
an image glides, of lily sails  
that float into the sight

of Sehkmüt  
along the Lake of Asher.

“My presence was called  
for, a little nearer the Frontier”.  
Of language like a railroad train, moving  
the freight the letters are first ,then  
arranged into an anagram.

While we sleep the words grow  
in hothouses in the country, tall and  
pink geraniums breathe in the glass.  
Like young grapes,in bunches,the body  
and the soul,first green,then,  
turning towards blackness

You remember,seeing  
that cage of birds in the beach-house  
down the road near the turn-off

to Zoagli

The white,lithe bodies of clouds  
breaking apart into billows  
in the sunlit air.



## THE SILENCE OF THE VERB

The highway of the visible  
is the invisible · Things, language  
and all Indoeuropean eyes are wet  
with it. The highway is music ·  
In Samothrace they worshipped  
Harmonia

To be led to the chamber of the heart,  
No wood out of Union. The highway is simply  
there to lead you, like language,  
to Mary. it is a special moment  
darkness, as when the sea opens  
a letter, of fire. The word summons

responses to our friendship, we  
withheld because we knew no  
image, of it So we go on  
to continue with it, clouds, then,  
a mist should lift or rain

fall inside  
our writing, that is silent  
as a verb in the midst  
of this participation in  
another writing. As if it

were a mirror of flames,  
or thoughts “that must remain  
untold” could not hold  
a mirror up to it. Because

it only escapes through a mirror, glass,  
the mirror is the alphabet. Ladders  
are under the trees, the bees  
in the orchard, and little

do we know of it. Poetry has never  
gone beyond that orchard ritual of  
Tablet and Descent. To build a bridge  
seen

inside of words, that is the traffic  
with the unknown. The pen, the book,  
with watchful eyes, the dragons feed

on these clouds, and make one walk  
a different earth than Adam, a  
curious combination of letters.

Letters are eyes. I wear silk,  
mandarin sometimes, asleep  
in the game of letters,  
Electra's child, wild about

blossoms scattering A bowl  
in the hand is Nut. A breeze  
is my guardian.

Guardian, can  
you meet me at the gate,  
in the griffin mist, and we  
shall talk then afterwards.

The legends sifting  
in his paws, the silk · language  
of ours, peace of Isaiah. Shall  
we let our knowledge divide  
from our experience without  
the gravity as blossoms fall

or the child  
walks back from his wedding  
in the future · The highway  
is the sanctuary of itself

Each soul yawns for paradise  
and so it is Persephone goes down  
derry flower picking Grapevine

Road Only perceptions, yet  
the blossoms scatter  
along the sidewalk, and then  
perception too is a kind of

goddess

avenue, avenir  
discovered, in the silence  
of the verb.



The silence of the verb

surrounds me now and the distinct  
is the familiar in the room the purple  
and white hyacinths now tell  
me what to say, as to darkness, you

are the most beautiful. My eyes  
in the context of your delicate  
ways, your straying, your staying  
away, have hidden, if anything,  
what words were for. What did I  
give you, words? Listen then,

for now my words are few, soon  
they too will know that you  
are the place where Snow  
has freshly fallen. Now they

think only of jade, and stand  
reluctant, that they will be  
led to the lilies of delay.

O shadow, with  
a book half written, half  
dream. Through you I can  
make out, as in the telescope  
of a sentence, language is  
what you have become. Out  
of touch with what  
was inside the words,  
she walks away, named Mary.

Let her escape into the darkness  
without jealousy. And shape  
my body has a way of saying

there is a wind, or was a  
wind here once, Snow blew  
through the window of my

heart. I thought then, only  
of the alphabet, of the strangeness  
to you of certain letters,  
of wings that were only words.

You could, if you desired it, drink  
of the fountain of Forgetfulness,  
if it were not winter, and solve

outside the door of language  
this disappearance, from the sidewalk  
of my life. It is only before me

when everyone else is gone, into  
winter rooms where the ceremonies  
of words are stillness

in a vase, lit by desire. Scenes  
of magic and no return. So,  
take this final glance, this

one amongst many flowers, one  
amongst many lovers, violets  
by the riverside, a harlequin  
path where petals stray, seeking  
some other world, far away from  
rooms, impossible to remember  
impossible to return. Beside a doorway  
in Florentine fashion, almost asleep, you  
stopped a moment to recount  
the possibilities in the cards,  
floating away. It is the limit  
which brings us, if ever, together  
again, this beginning of nothing  
other than the arch of a world  
you and I know already passed on.

Into what Harbour you bring me.

Lights which from childhood  
became the boats that youth almost  
mistook for a barque, — grown  
distinct, grown clear as a gown  
of emerald as my feet, remember,  
now that the snow has fallen,  
leave no footprints on the green.

## O CAMERE

O camere  
where the picture is taken  
    into the blue stream  
searching for Echo  
    with the indeterminate  
Lethe are their hearts  
    and with the indeterminate  
arrows are the souls  
    with their senses  
ending finally in words  
The picture is taken  
again and again, until  
not even the subject  
    is real  
Not even the enemy is  
    present in the sentence  
A hundred years war  
is possible between souls  
ending nowhere, or when  
the body is nothing  
but a reflection in  
the pond  
    not lit by  
desire

## IN THE TOMB OF THE ROYAL GARDENER

In the tomb of the royal gardener Senofer, one can see clearly the development of a metaphysics of love — of lover and beloved. The development of the sacred images into signs of personal adornment and adoration — of response and enlightenment — the centrality of man and wife, the children — and the coffins of the priests and priestesses converge into the same *eidos* or form of afterlife — .

The underworld of the soul is somehow a matter of reversal. Larger cosmological plates appear as in the inner chamber, on the door of the two black Anubises sniffing the delicate lotuses — wearing pale blue ribbons around their necks — .

The proliferation of scenes of offering of the lotus throughout the second chamber — the kind of metamorphosis that seems to carry over from horizon to horizon

Also the fact that Senofer was actually the royal gardener, thus had the responsibility of renewal. Without any apparent change of state the lotus can be at any 'level' of creation.

The ceiling of blue grapes delicately drawn  
to make the larger part of the second chamber  
into an arbor. The entrance or abode of  
the soul in the next world — the Bā  
would abide like a bird in the grape arbor  
the Gardener had nurtured during his life.  
The priests in leopard skins, — ritual procedures —  
near the Anubis gate of the inner door.

Outside the sunlight is too strong for  
photographs. Inside the temple fishes float,  
and the old well in the field is overgrown with weeds.

The difference between light and shade: on  
the hill, overlooking the temple, the little town  
looks like a cut-out. The hills behind  
are real like water to the mirage.


The cool opposites, beside the wall. The  
succession of doors. Another heart suggests.  
The tangled hair in the wind, as she looks again  
out of the eye of the camera, whiling away  
the time amidst ruins and columns, while on  
the walls they offer lotuses to each other.

Time has eaten away the colour. Until  
the invisible seemed ancient, yet  
like a cat the self has nine lives, and a last  
chance to see them, somehow, complete, at last.  
Yet why should I turn it back into the poem again?

Who knows where I have been walking ? The mules  
are lost in eternity as they play under  
the mimosa trees. The birds are choruses.  
The things themselves can finally speak, give  
back to us what you took,  
and what we gave away.

## MEMORIES OF AFRICA

Like the doves in the fans of Oriental trees, high and ariel, poetry is still reflected in the stillness of the Classical pond. In spite of the reliance of poets on their revolvers and especially in the East I fear, the language and the social events that embrace each other like harlequins in a dream are far from the borderlines of this desert, Dear Jane. Language, too asleep for words is the leopard we are chasing, says Dante although there wasn't a leopard left by then in all of Italy. You must first wake up its jungle eyes, which among other things, ruins, both on earth and in the clouds, are as lost to the consciousness as a goldfish. You must go as far as to enter the life of plants, that everyday door, to know that this ancient hotel, the winter residence of some King Farouk, is laziness of sails flitting by on Nile lagoons and balconies of cobalt and sand. Memories and their revolvers — it is all as boring as Galilee, and the creation of Israel in the last ubiquitous fling of the sunset, displaying the grass around the swimming pool and the drink counters with the exultation of an ancient but dead star. I can hardly remember it anymore, so deep asleep! When I was Narcissus, walking with my shadow in the imaginary grass, I discovered, folded like music into the rose, a nest of angels sleeping on their sides in the heart of the meadow. Lost behind the glass of Eden, words can never release them. Even when I think of the scene, the green slope of desire like an inglass paperweight children receive, the perfect image of the primal scene!, the grass, whitened by the blizzard of flavorless snows. So it is, language is asleep as a goldfish in the heat of summer, motionless in the shade of a pond. Every ray of sunlight deepens the sleep around these sleepers, even the Egyptians, in their ceremonies of the word found need to give to each ray a helping hand to lift each word from its dream of death.



Imagine a slow train in the desert, under the decans of Rameses while outside the blue car jackals brush their paws with petals in the desert music of the phoenix and the hare. Imagine this, you sleepers!, for like that train language has fallen asleep without a name for you, the passengers, bound to the rhythm of the rails and the long journey into the heart of Africa.

And when shall They ever wake? And when shall We arrive at that purest of all places, the pure moment, the prize so long hidden from every surprise, when the language with all the joy of the children of Africa shakes off its dreams of the centuries and writes itself into our thoughts? How near, how far how indecipherable is this language that is lost in the reality of ourselves, changing each station, each moment into a metonymy, a metaphor, a memory, a dream? But it is all asleep. Not even unconscious. Asleep.

THE BUTTERFLY



DIALECTIC

Colin Stuart and John Scoggan

*This series of interviews of The Poet and Le Fou has been taped and typed, touched and retouched, and sent into the perspectives of time and the shapeliness of space by the Editors. These imaginary conversations were found in a rowboat, abandoned, in the lilies at the end of Lost Lagoon, along with this sonnet in the hand of The Poet:*

#### THE MUSIC OF DONIZETTI AND ROSSINI

*Makes me imagine the open country, green  
lawn and arcades hidden in a word  
and arches of roses, alexandrine, and  
waterfalls where the maiden, Time,  
bathes without a shadow it seems.  
The English Language cannot do mercy  
to the melodies of dawn, playing again,  
in the labyrinths of Merlin and Marvell,  
and Shakespeare's Midsummer Night's Dream.  
O music, O Italian pines in the mist.  
Your outlines are the ribbons on the wheel  
of a car that carries me to the land  
where these melodies are. Directly,  
forgetting the names of animals and star.*

*We regret we cannot publish the full text, and the gaps in which the poet lapses into code, and that Le Fou's sleeves in the margin couldn't have been more scented for the bees of the readers' senses. For the readers are truly the bees of the invisible. Perhaps the final details of these swallowtails of time have been omitted to save them from the collection of literature — another wing lost behind the screen. But the fluttering butterflies become backdrops, incidental now, in the reader's affair with the word.*

## *Question Marks*

THE POET: The problem with poets has been that once language has assured them of eventual failure, everything works itself out for them en route, as if in a dream. To be conscious of this dream, to be fully conscious of it, to be aware of its circumstances, to need to reaffirm one's existence in a Venetian mirror as Mallarmé did, in order to think. The question obviously is, what would existence be without language? The various poses of this question unlock the words of almost every literature. What would existence be without the threat of becoming Nothingness again, a threat that implicates one as soon as he tests the boundaries of the word. After all, history entered the world as writing, history as we know it, and tragedy entered the world as history in the Greek dramatists. There is a lesson to be learned there.

LE FOU: My dialectical response to that, off hand, would be that it is impossible to test the boundaries of the word, that you only think you're doing that. Nothingness is an ideal, an ideal negation of the mirror of thought. We fall into the convention of tragedy, like Artaud.

THE POET: There are three types of dialectic which can be easily differentiated in all poetic writing. There is the image dialectic of the surrealists, the objectivists, the vorticists and the projectivists — and this assumed dialectic has traced an entire tradition of writing right down to the present. There is the dialectic of metaphysics, which includes another entire tradition, including such writers as Rilke, Baudelaire, Novalis, Whitman, Blake, and among others, Lowell, Eliot, Borges, Valéry and Williams. And then there is the third, logocentric dialectic which includes everything from Dante, Milton, to Olson and Pound. All of these can define a certain quality of the idea, certain intellectual perorations, certain aspects of self-consciousness, certain styles. Lesser poets cannot shift their diacritical gears, and thus are caught between or inside the thought created by another dialectic.

LE FOU: I think you identify some of the cruxes of poetic thought.

THE POET: You mean the “chiasmas”?

LE FOU: Whenever I hear that word I immediately think of chasm. I think it came to be as a Cinvat Bridge to cross over the Nothingness dominated by the lack which you have spoken of as styles of dialectic, and which I think are actually the dominant syntaxes under whose signs of organization poetics has been devoured. You remember death and sin make the bridge in *Paradise Lost*, and the only interesting fault in that text is where Milton says he’s blind like the devil.

THE POET: Some pioneer work has certainly been done, now, on the deconstruction of grammatical categories, which is an outside view of poetics. The bridge, and even to be Mandaean about it, and I mean a bridge of a bridge, which is what Mandaean culture actually is — a voice that is held in suspension, the middle voice as it has been studied — is in fact a dialectical voice that has disappeared. The “bridge” in Mandaean cosmology is the alphabet — which certainly presents us with another dialectic entirely. Do you know what they thought when they first saw an airplane, that it was the creation of the goddess of love, Liwet.

LE FOU: A disappearance charmed by the mind. Blake’s contraries, for example, are actually cutting elements of syntax, fixed ends for bridging from the ground across to an imaginary cosmos. I don’t think he’s right when he says only mental things are real. Or speaks of the “negative” which negates heaven and hell. His heaven and his hell create the chasm which is bridged by the sentence: the cosmos. And it is already made.

THE POET: Blake does change syntaxes in midstream though, and one can think of *Milton* and *Jerusalem*. In another order of dialectic, the imaginary, which is an "end" of the sentence, is located in another topographic site entirely. By ending the use of stylistic devices, even the elementary poetic ones, like alliteration, Blake sent the imaginary out of the sentence. The disappearance of the imaginary in the sentence certainly corresponds to the emergence of the large anthropomorphized figures of the Revelatory text. The product of this is *The Sea of Time and Space*.

LE FOU: The Jerusalem of the Large Glass. This is the mirage of the imaginary, the city enclosure of humanism, reflection.

THE POET: Even in your sentence there, the "mirage" of the "imaginary," one can get a sense of the doubling of the undialectical theory which has been injected into some recent poetic texts.

LE FOU: Dialectical writing would throw a curve through that glass house. It is a fragile construction of crystallinity, protected by a syntax of topicality, a Utopian sentence dominated by the sign of the subject: every syntax is a theology.

THE POET: Not any more. "The Crystal Cabinet" in Blake's convex metaphysics certainly shows that the difficulty of the sentence had surfaced in his time. "The Songs of Innocence and Experience" are amongst the finest examples of a dialectic in poetics that we have, and what, in fact, constitutes their dialectic is the absence of a hidden philosophical mythology that underwrites the text and obscures the self-critical or self-deconstructing work of the real dialectical sentence.

LE FOU: It is the “lack” in those poems, the “tantric” of the Freudian underwriting, which is full of gaps and none of them are occluded by mythological covering. He doesn’t know where the text is going. There is an absence of syntactical formulae as distinct from an absencing of deified order.

THE POET: By that notion of deified order I understand that you are referring back to the “transcendental sentence” we were outlining. This sentence uses certain types of order, captured relations between the signifier and the signified, not easy to see without a program of deconstruction. One characteristic of the metaphysical sentence is that it does not erupt or invert the characteristic subject relations of the text/reader; it does not change the received order, the way the text can be received; it simply follows the order of another code or a code of the Other logocentric and veiled — subject to the metaphor of veiling/unveiling, which characterizes metaphysical writing. There is no displacement of the textual chain, the chain of signification in the text — almost a first priority of dialectical writing — yet, it cannot, as can the logocentric dialectic, hold onto the nature of the reference. The referent, too, is veiled. And when it is not a grammatical gesture, the person of that writing is ideological — a characteristic *found in almost every metaphysical text*. Dialectical writing has the background of its own exteriority, outside-of-itself. It is not “unconscious” writing, because the unconscious is not susceptible to contradiction.

LE FOU: The unconscious without topicality. Every one of the typologies in literature is a syntax, a topicality, a typology written beforehand, which is meant to heal the difference in a text, and so, contraries come as a pharmaceutical cure of the pathology of truth. It is the sickness of the difference, wanting unity, which escapes the concept or theology of the lawful and predicated sentence. The sickness of the Fisher King is imaginarily healed by the dictation that is received in the perfect poetics. Every search has a wound.

THE POET: This problem, this exact equation, of the Fisher King and dictation, is found in the work of Spicer.

LE FOU: The line is in search of the Holy Grail. The writer welcomes these pieces which cover the gaps in his text and which are meant to eliminate the play of writing. The first word dictates the last. All the differences of distinction are veiled by the owner of the text in order to "make a world." The world is a mirage in each instance, as present, future, mythological, imaginary, ideological. It is the sexual quest for Utopian fulfilment of desire in typologies dictated by the Father. A sentence is sentenced, underwritten, as a footnote to the already concluded and dictated cosmos of the text. The capability to do otherwise is certainly negative.

THE POET: And poetry goes on a merry-go-round of these master games and master words. These master words are the first thing one should analyse in both one's own language and that of other writers, because they are the conditions which extend, obfuscating real play from the beginning to the end of his enclosure. One can think of a thousand examples of terms and ideas, theories and subjects, which, while maintaining the limited play of the subject erase the chance of any non-identity or of ever changing the way the text can be received. The examples in current usage form a circuit of worn phrases, as Mallarmé says, which have been rubbed through all too many palms to have their message come out with any value. And these phrases, which are the conditions of repression of many modern texts, including the most ideological, from the newspaper to biology, give the reader the metonymic level upon which the text is meant to be received. It is a translation which could be called "inter-subjective" if it weren't for the gaps and missing links which are crossed over and crossed out in every instance. It is this process which is being mapped as the circuit of the letter from its first debut in the object relations of the mirror stage to the lack of relation to death.

LE FOU: The covering cherub of ownership, so that logography leads to accumulation of concepts, garments, capital. The worn phrases are capitalized upon as insights which are really hermetic prescriptions from the drugstore of language.

THE POET: Or a phenomenological language whose intention it is to reach out for a "being in latency." Yes, it is a televised sentence that comes back to you through the intermediary of the subject-at-large who, like an image in a revolving door is supposed to be all subjects, but one, for whom all pathologies are still available in the form of repression. The crossing of the circuit that is known as Justice, the Name of the Father, etc. How do you think the message comes across if it isn't through a form? That is how the question of language is posed. But it is not adequate. The message is not transformed, has escaped the code, is emitted by the code, and has escaped the form. The message is unsignified.

LE FOU: Every high *arche* is a televue, distanced from a tell star, reflected across the world-at-large. The types of phenomenology can be covered by Plato's love, Newton's Absolute Space and Time, Hegel's Absolute Spirit, and Ernst Bloch's Astonishments (*realstau-nem*) — of an alchemical *veritas* to come, though from which ideology we are writing from heaven only knows. Because we are not on the outside of language. There is no outside. We are not receiving messages from Mars, coded and decoded blips, gridded, which turn out to be banal magnifications. The concept is, after all, a projection from materiality which reflects its own inadequacy in any case. Yet western metaphysics makes messages into cornerstones of thought. I don't think the ultimate sentence comes from Mars or Venus, any more than from here.

THE POET: *Difference in general is already contradiction in itself.* And this problem in the sentence goes back at least as far as the first grammarians in Sanskrit. Their attempts to purify the sentence is an example of how far they had already gone from proximity to the code itself. Heraclitus in Fragment 67 shows us the problem was also Greek, the contradiction between pure writing and history writing. In that fragment there is the question of the name, question of the origin, the necessity of a transformation, and a metaphor for the crossing of boundaries.

LE FOU: You can tell from a sentence all of its relations — who is the father, the grammatology of the third person singular, who regulates the first person plural “we” embodied in the presence of the singular which is an authoritarian communication called “intelligibility.” As you were saying, almost all American writing can be defined as kinship relations (Williams, Pound, Olson, Duncan, Creeley, Sanders, Spicer, Dorn, McLure) whose structures are a kind of foreplay in the tribe of the father, easily traceable in an exchange fathered by a group of identities.

THE POET: Each attempts to capture the name of the father in order to sanctify his position in The System of relations. We then interpret it as a tradition. If you think that criticism is the work of Oedipus, you should see the scene of writing.

LE FOU: Hide and seek the father. Whose totem and whose taboo?

THE POET: What we are looking for is not the substitution of cosmological “faults” for linguistic and anthropological ones — all writing that professes cosmologies, sacred geographies and structures of mythology is immediately suspect. They are suspect because they all originate *on the other side of the word* — and their sense of adventure is the articulation of a gap which cannot be stated inside their own ideology. In effect, mythological readings give us back only what we give them, they are not capable of interrupting their own cycles. The gaps in our reading of mythological texts are read into the present by architects of the word, like Sir Arthur Evans’ reconstruction of Knossos to resemble a Hilton Hotel. There isn’t any mythology anymore, unless it be this myth of deconstruction itself.

LE FOU: What mythology hides behind are incests of syntax and the ownership of language as eccentric property, recovered in idea fetishisms and linguistic spells. I don’t believe intelligibility is governed by permissions or need be sheltered and shielded in the genotext, as an hereditary crossover. The dwellings of myth, cosmos, image and idea are only identification marks. I am looking for the renegade correspondence, but not outlawry.

THE POET: I can certainly see why Rimbaud said he had had enough of "those birds." Nietzsche faces the question: "let us give up the notion of 'subject' and of 'object', then that of 'substance', and eventually that of its various modifications, for example, 'matter', 'mind', and other hypothetical beings, eternity, and the 'immutability of matter'." What he points out here is that the oppositions encoded in the sentence are the ones that have to be remarked; it is the transgression of these concepts that is at stake here. Dialectical writing means nothing more or less than the writing of dialectical sentences. The shape of the sentence determines its possible operations, such that the quality of the idea is found in the type of sentence where it occurs. It can be said of the dialectical sentence what the surrealists said about image: that its efficacy increases with the differences of its terms. There is always an arrested relation which can be seen in the way it splits the sentence, or predicates the thought, and this predication is the dialectic which crosses itself only to erase itself. There is no dialectic in most poetic thought, there are only signs, because the structure of signification is not changed by the operation of language that situates them in a metaphysical field.

## *Azure Echoes*

LE FOU: Sometimes it seems that buying automobile parts is life, and this is the meaning of existence.

THE POET: Like Cocteau at the Academie Francaise. He thought he was going to an academic convention, and found himself in the middle of the room, surrounded by a bunch of garage mechanics.

LE FOU: Picking up spare parts; fixing a machine.

THE POET: The machine is dead; it is death. Death, not because we risk death in playing with machines, but because the origin of the machine is in a relation to death. Representation is death; which may be immediately transformed into the following proposition: death is only representation. A pure representation never runs by itself.

LE FOU: What is this called? Is this death in the machine, then?

THE POET: Death and the machine, I guess. We are in a scene of writing, which insofar as one sees its metaphysics disappearing into the machine as expressedly as a letter into the mail — yes, this is the problem of interpretation and representation. Abandoned to itself, the multiplicity of the layered surfaces of the apparatus, namely the text, is a dead complexity without depth. Life as depth belongs only to the wax of psychical memory, the delays which compose the subject. From Plato to Freud, metaphysics continues to oppose hypomnemic writing and writing *en tai psychai*, itself woven of traces.

LE FOU: What does *en tai psychai* mean? A post script to the psyche?

THE POET: In the psyche.

LE FOU: And Freud opposes that?

THE POET: Apart from the machine being an absence of spontaneity, its resemblance to the psychic apparatus, its existence and its necessity bears witness to the finitude of mnemonic spontaneity, which is thus supplemented. In other words, memory is self-pollinating, not cross-pollinated by the "bees of the invisible." The machine, and consequently representation, is death and finitude within the psyche.

LE FOU: Derrida's talking about celestial mechanics there, in the old sense, protected by a garden closure, and an invasion of that garden closure.

THE POET: A Renaissance enclosure.

LE FOU: A rebirth enclosure which isn't a rebirth at all. Which is a kind of humanism that is ornamented by epicycles always moving in retard, always going backwards to an image which can be constructed and held in the machine.

THE POET: Since we have developed a view of writing which takes it all the way back to the writing metaphor in Freud, and the mirror stage in Lacan, at which point the subject begins his appropriation of language "at the mercy of the Other," certainly we should remain in the Game until we have solved, for ourselves at least, the problem of a language unable to free itself from its relations.

LE FOU: The machine of the father. The machine seems to be a proposition always.

THE POET: In writing, the subject is aware that the alienation of his work comes from within. How can real intimacy be produced with a language that includes all the possibilities of the transcendent relationships with the Other? What we are examining is the relation between the scene of writing, the language that is caught up in it, in the context of representation. Namely, the psychic machine — the either/or: the memory trace machine. So in effect what we are trying to reinscribe instead of the machine is already given by the nature of the metaphor. We are trying to reinscribe the metaphor; we are trying to reinscribe the inscription. Which is not the same as the metaphor.

LE FOU: So, the metaphoric apparatus becomes like the machine, where the principle it's operating upon is mechanic, or a perceptual faith.

THE POET: The ideal virginity of the text is the ideal virginity of the machine. For example, in the American myth, the virgin capitalism, the machine is a relation of signs that signify it as if it were without origin, sex or memory. In another instance, the self-embracing virginity in Mallarmé's *Herodiade*. The virginity of the self-enclosed eroticism, the erotic enclosure of the text, the interdiction. The real is only equal to the mirage; you can become anything from Ada to Adam. Empty and erased, our own reading has become the text of a deathwish.

LE FOU: Which involves exclusion of the reader, and the writer, from the text and his desire to keep the property of the text clear by not entering into its purity. And therefore establishing ways of reading which hold the fashion of virginity.

THE POET: I think the writer is fashion conscious in his relation to the reader, because of the mediation of representation, that is, death. A famous instance is in the thirteenth chapter of the *Vita Nuova*. Dreams which follow former frayings; the scene of writing in the Freudian perception. I don't believe in dream writing because I don't believe in the subjective writing.

LE FOU: Are we talking about the virginity of Narcissus who falls in the pool he embraces as the mirror of the world, reflecting himself alone? This presence of the self in the I and thou of humanism? I mean Spicer's "sole", the *solus ipse*, the writer in love with his own sentenced self? The way Dante sees himself in her eyes? And she is the body of his soul.

THE POET: It is interesting to me that you return to Dante in the context of the sentence. We find him returning to St. Hilaire for a vocabulary that can account for image, and returning at various points in the *Divine Comedy* to the structure of image, basis, and gift, elucidated in the writings of St. Hilaire. This constellation gives him a syntactical model which goes beyond the levels of exegesis in the Can Grande letter. Image is Beatrice, Basis is Mary, and Gift is St. Lucia. He identifies them at various points. In this manner image is sensitized to presence, and the sentence as a structure of presence arises, in the theory of the Annunciation.

LE FOU: What has the Annunciation to do with his poetics?

THE POET: In the Annunciation it is easy to see how the reader becomes a perception of the text. The Annunciation has the structure of a sentence, and its "presence" is written into the structure of the Trinity, which unfolds in the Annunciation. A study of the Annunciation would reveal that the structure of desire, of metaphor, of metonymy, of the relation to death, the primal scene, eros, and to the visible and the invisible are all written in.

LE FOU: They are written into the structure of the Annunciation?

THE POET: The cycle of the letter is initiated in the "closed garden," in the garden "close locked," as it appears in the Songs of Solomon. The eros is the principle of the *raptio*, of the rape of the Virgin by the angel Gabriel. The sleep, the unconsciousness of the Virgin before this is a primordial sleep, a sleep without language, without logos. The desire of the Virgin is the metonymic principle which grounds the angelomorphosis in the primal scene. The constellation here established gives the reader a syntactical basis — there is a reversibility possible; there is an anagram, an initiation into the imaginary. The letter slides, unconsciously, after which it can only be located as a trace.

LE FOU: It takes into account the signifier and the signified?

THE POET: The signifier is effaced in the "descent" of the logos, in the incarnation of transcendence. As Merleau-Ponty argues, it is transcendence which explains. The Annunciation tells a story, which has no story — there is nothing behind it, but a pure myth of the relation of relations which constitute the society as well as the sentence in the poem. The structure of image, basis, and gift, which Dante uses, is this structure of the Annunciation. And to go further, there is also a contradiction; a contradiction of man, of the metaphor of man, which constitutes man in the structure of a logos brought about by an eros.

LE FOU: What kind of event is this, how can you differentiate it from ideology?

THE POET: There is the event of a non-event, of a non-signifying event. It is this aspect which Levinas has argued is the sphere of eros. The essentially hidden throws itself into the light without becoming signification. The Annunciation is the erotic enclosure. Henceforth, there is "presence" in the form of a trace: there is history.

LE FOU: History and writing.

THE POET: It depends on the way the Other is seen to modalize the system. The Annunciation provides for both the sentence and the society — rules for the crossing of boundaries. Dante, in this sense, sees Beatrice as the body of his soul. But the reverse is equally true. But the recognition of death, beginning in the *Vita Nuova*, is quite strange, as Singleton has remarked. It is here that his poetics has a fault. The incorporation of the signifier into the signified exists in relation to death — the symbolic exists in relation to the body, as Jones has shown. The Annunciation functions in a similar way as the Mirror Stage in childhood — it brings into Dante's poetics the fact that desire is the desire of the Other. It does so in such a way as to give a substantiality, a physicality to the sentence, and to the verb. It is a non-signifying event which establishes the relations with the signifier, the rules for the crossing of boundaries. And we are at this point again in poetics.

LE FOU: We are talking about the virginity of the classical subject, and then of the Renaissance subject?

THE POET: Essentially, we are locating the problems of mimesis and castration in language. The subject is annunciated through a system of relations. The virginity, or writing only relates to a hermeneutics of the representational, a reading which demands that the text is entirely free of insemination. But there is not a single text — there is a multiplicity of texts, all given, in the same sense that there is a diversity and multiplicity of signs all constituted on their ability to function as negations of the other. In Dante's poetics, there are four readings, which make four texts, depending upon your propensity. But because of the multiplicity of texts, the search for origins is a reduction.

LE FOU: The origin is given as inviolable, a dictionary, un-inscribed, set apart and adored. We have encultured the protection of the virgin text.

THE POET: Yes, the "pearl of great price." There is something at the end by which all relations are fixed: death.

LE FOU: Is it the question of the native land, in which not only man, but the essence of man is lost?

THE POET: The other side is censorship, which binds a writer to his own writing, giving him, in effect, the illusion of a context. Mallarmé for example in the "Après Midi," in the dialogue of the faun comes around to this illusion.

LE FOU: But Derrida is trying to replace writing with what used to be called "being."

THE POET: Yes, there is psyche and text, each text being another text, until there is no psyche, only text. And this is where poetics is, and why it cannot be read.

LE FOU: It seems there are extreme difficulties here, arising from substitution. But I do agree with him that there is no perception, because seeing is always through the identity of a center, that is, a model which prescribes one's own visibility.

THE POET: And the machine of this visibility is the sentence, the location of presence in the sentence. This is the machine of mystification. It is ideological because it is capable of numerous homologies. The opening of these homologies is dialectic, especially in the semio-logical space of the letter.

LE FOU: And this is the ultimate machine in the garden.

THE POET: Let's isolate it again. In a representational narrative, which most are, unless they are otherwise, both writer and reader are enscribed on the surface, through metonymic orders, through metaphorical orders — floating on the surface of the difference, which foment, surges, but which, from the outside, appears to have stopped. The present text is viewed as a supplement.

LE FOU: Yes, the supplement of difference, cancelling the same. The narrative we are holding onto, and why literature may disappear, is that difference is the supplement upon a similarity which is already disguised.

THE POET: Yes, it is a very protective means of building a narrative.

LE FOU: What would happen if we had a writing which didn't end in an anthropos figure, which is only a transcendent figure idealism builds as a plural image of "We."

THE POET: What Heidegger calls proximity is closer to writing: proximity in relation to being, but to a being that is not constituted by metaphor.

LE FOU: That is a change.

THE POET: The wakefulness of proximity.

LE FOU: This will bring language back to life. But that proposes within itself a discourse. The difference between language and discourse is what must be respected. A discourse is based on the existence of a subject, whose essence is being. It is possible to get rid of the organizing subject, the "guide" of the narrative who, knowing its steps in advance, is disguised as the leader of meaning, in a fore-knowledge which disappoints the text.

THE POET: The problem of representation and the text is that the identity of the thing is not its primordial structure, as has been supposed. It disappears as soon as the text is approached as matter. As Levinas says, the Other is neither initially for or against the Subject. The supplementary truth is always being cornered in a particular enclosure, and at least in modern writing, sometimes, this enclosure is identified. The supplement can never be erased yet it has only exchange value. We are still examining the context of representation in the ideological enclosure. The problem is not that of truth being a supplement, but that the letter is a footnote. The proximity of the text is lost, absented, put in the mailbox.

LE FOU: Yes, the spirit above the letter is a false proposition, a desire which sentences the sentence. Reading has almost been done to death in this game of the stadium, where everything is a broken bundle of mirrors, spells, and trances. We read through the transparent literature to find a castle of purity uncontaminated by the language itself. This is demystification of the text. It is that doubling between letter and spirit, the literal and meaning, manual and mental labour which excludes literature. Are you talking about a new kind of literalness?

THE POET: The literal is just one interface of the text; not a position of the text. That is what we don't have; the text has no position in relation to *Aletheia*, at least it hasn't as yet.

LE FOU: Does it have a position in relation to itself?

THE POET: The text is a maneuverer; a wanderer. It is as meandering as any concept you associate with it, because it is disassociating. The ideal fault that Mallarmé initiates in his long poems cannot be replaced or turned into another writing. This is where the text stands.

LE FOU: It is the fault that remains. This fault which is overlooked, which is the writing. Is that what you mean? Duncan's *Opening of the Field*, I mean the hortulans of the "field" which is fenced from the beginning of that book, closed and containing the virgin of the "field" of writing. And in Olson's writing, where he stands astride the Cabot Fault. Continental drift in which all ground is fragmenting, and the Newtonian fragility is breaking, and he's standing on a fault where he's naming the fault that runs right through his writing. There's a great difference between them.

## *Mourning Cloaks*

THE POET: In poetics every image is a contradiction of subject and object.

LE FOU: What happens is that a love relationship, the embracing, turns into a dialectic where language is used. What happens with the disarming of eros; does the text feel this?

THE POET: What seems to characterize the erotic is that it is without signification. What the virginity of the text means, is that we have never read it.

LE FOU: But why is it not erotic? The erotic seems to be the basis of our aesthetics, a worship of what before we called the virgin.

THE POET: But the signs are like petals in a brook, they whirl together, they are blown together, they eddy together, they cohabit; but they are never together outside of the contexts of the text. We have been asked to hold them together in another erotic enclosure?

LE FOU: Olson's rose is like an attempt to form an archaeological history which comes into bloom. It comes into bloom when all the petals have been centered.

THE POET: The bloom of knowledge? Well that's a very romantic myth, the final image of the first scene. But I would not want to be a mystery because then I would never know who I am. The text is not continuous historically, at least not in any historical sense; for in a poem of Mallarmé's each image is a contradiction; a contradiction of all the images that go before it and after it — it is this ability of image which allows it to be read; a type of contradiction which deconstructs the subject and the presence which is hypostasized within writing itself. To some degree this aspect of the imaginary in Mallarmé depends upon repression — the figures of his poem — the faun, Herodiade, the absence of the king, the writer who has disappeared from his work —

LE FOU: — at this point in the tape we should insert the distinction to be made between deconstruction and destruction.

THE POET: But it was Mallarmé for whom it can be said that destruction was his Beatrice. There is no “soul” left in Mallarmé. After a theory of deconstruction we can begin to apply it to the subject, or to the subject who is barred from his writing, the duplicity of the subject. The other subject is always the object of anthropology or psychoanalysis.

LE FOU: In some sense the whole of western metaphysics is the study of anthropology. We are plagued with that subject. Where are we? The answer is always “over there,” on the far shore of the map. This is the subject which represses the self; it is always larger than life and very authoritarian. Yet metaphysics assumes the study of man in himself; it is always an assumed subject feeding being and yet hidden in all of this there has never been an analysis of what the subject “man” is. I think that when you have something like Darwin’s *Origin of Species* you have the beginnings of what we call an evolution of humanism, the sciences of man.

THE POET: But the *Origin of Species* is the text of a phantasy, an examination not of the origin of man but of the logic of the phantasm.

LE FOU: Previously it had been angelology and not anthropology. The problem is man. Who is he? We assume he is an ideology or ideal being, of course. Lévi-Strauss shows how time retards the subject in his search for origins, that origins in presence are invisible, and in absence never cease in making the imaginary longing of desire which dominates western epistemology. He is engaged in a deconstruction of the subject, which is anthropology, or the anthropos figure, as opposed to or in distinction to naive and violent types of destruction which go on in metaphysics, for example, in destroying original societies in order to live in the loss and absence of relations. Deconstructions are never negations.

THE POET: Lévi-Strauss' kinship systems are written or inscribed in the methodology of the idealism itself. There are systems of a discourse which has disappeared, and studies of a myth in which one is supposed to find the traces of man.

LE FOU: The traces of a man, extinct, non-existent.

THE POET: But the evidence of a poetry that depends upon anthropology for its subject matter is reductive to say the least. For example, one has only to turn to the *Cantos* of Pound, the myths of Olson, or the conceptual ideologies in the work of Jerome Rothenberg, to see that the around the world in eighty days study of anthropology is the same metaphysics that we have already encountered in much more sophisticated writing elsewhere. But the fact is that no writing is already constituted, and as soon as you believe it is, you've timed your exit from the scene of writing.

LE FOU: I take from Lévi-Strauss the exposure: not structuralism; because he is speaking of what can't be disclosed, the subject of his study.

THE POET: Those systems are without economy; they are exploratory.

LE FOU: There are spatial problems. Anthropology is always a projective verse.

THE POET: I think Spicer was looking for an economy of the signifying system when he began to approach the poem in terms of an infinitely small vocabulary. I am more interested now in the economy of Spicer and Duchamp than in more theoretical works where you find the interjection of the representational into the Platonic enclosure again. We don't speak out of it anymore, but we still speak through it; the text is barred from history and history is barred from the text.

LE FOU: What you are speaking about, again, is the centering of man in proximity.

THE POET: Some writers are not interesting for their content, but for its economy; and this is the question of proximity, and because of the academic situation and the capitalist economics that have taken over interpretation, we can now read poetry only in terms of its meaning.

LE FOU: Meaning pays off. Galahad is always armed with that on his mind.

THE POET: Between the divine, the inert and the relation —

LE FOU: Between the divine, the inert and the parking lot —

THE POET: And that is how we slide into meaning, by slipping into the meaning we are swept along by the dialectic of the logos.

## *Tiger Lilies*

LE FOU: What are linguistic origins?

THE POET: There are some writers who do not look for the origins of language but for whom language is the origin. The question is of the signifying economy which is always the shortest path. There is no real theory that can account for the grammar of the event and it is impossible to know what that phrase means. But there is a signifying economy which stands outside the event. It doesn't turn back into the event for an origin.

LE FOU: No rerouting of language through meaning? The event plays no part in generating the language?

THE POET: I think I'd have to answer no.

LE FOU: Do you think words of the text generate a narrative?

THE POET: You are thinking of the anagrammatical studies of Saussure? According to the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty, he develops a systematics of the transcendental language and I think when he reaches that point an unforeseen reversal may occur. At this point the argument should be taken up by Derrida when he speaks of the logocentric enclosure and of the difficulty of analyzing materialism from the *cogito*.

LE FOU: Someone might be hunting for meaning where he would find language?

THE POET: The imaginary. For every grammatical element there is an anti-grammatical element. Together they constitute the imaginary and the divergence between linguistic signs. There are alliterations, anagrams, hypograms, that are capturing the space of the narrative in the same sense that signs devour meaning. In the very particularity of language there is an enclosure which is not subjective at all and it is this enclosure which is usually appropriated in a search for origins, archaeological or linguistic. It is the redundancy of language which interests me: the overlapping of message and code. The imaginary must always be constituted as more or less than itself, in the same sense that numbers are in Frege's theory of integers. One is only possible through two, and it is this circuitous route of the sign and the signifying process which makes the study of economy. It is easy to turn this imaginary aspect of language back into psychoanalysis, and this is what has gone on in France, and lingers now in American criticism through the publicity of Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Lacan; but the problem of economy at the level of praxis is poetic, because economy necessitates a deconstruction of the rules which apply to the Name of the Father, the object, the part object, and the structure of the signifying system generally. It is not a question of substituting one set of rules for another, but in deconstructing the rules, erupting the sliding of the signifier over the signified, of the marking of the Signifier, etc. Most writers reach the point where they have learned the rules of the game, and because they have reached this point, just when they think they are on the verge of a new breakthrough, their work becomes more and more subject to the rules. Let us say that the writer has advanced to what Derrida describes as the "Scene of Writing." It is at this point that the question of language becomes more and more strictly posed, and the position of the subject becomes the most important thing on his mind. It is at this point that he becomes a typed writer: a romantic, a classicist, a marxist, a structuralist. He realizes in his work there is a certain overlapping of message and code, that his language is articulated upon a gap. Take metaphor, for example, an obvious term for the crossing of boundaries. When a writer is appreciated for his startling metaphors, his problem is economy.

LE FOU: What exactly do you mean by economy?

THE POET: Economy is always taking the shortest path. It is only by knowing the economy of light that gravitation was discovered. A writer looks at language as it plays in a mirror, in a spectrum, in what Shelley called the "many coloured glass": the colours that stain eternity. In short, it depends on how the question is posed. The imaginary, the overlapping of message and code, leads through metaphor and many other means to identity; and this identity cannot easily be deconstructed by the writer who is caught in its rules. Economy involves then, the sense in which language is always transcendent: the sign, the trace, inscription, etc.

LE FOU: What kind of critique can you envisage if one were talking about a poetics without a subject?

THE POET: In many poets you can identify a poetics that is "without a subject," and in that sense it is nothing new. One can always find the texts that are without a subject, and we are now on the track of a new economy; but that is not to say that the present is an *archai*.

LE FOU: There is nothing happening in poetics right now? It is asleep?

THE POET: La muse endormie? Yes, but in the same house, in the same room, and that is the question of dwelling, or what Heidegger calls indwelling. Yet, without the metaphorical structure which Heidegger applies to it.

LE FOU: But that is an issue which Heidegger tries to fight; the indwelling of literature. In Heidegger's thought the soul is always looking for the earth and this is the domicile he is talking about.

THE POET: Which certainly places his dialectic in a strange context: Holderlin, Heine, Novalis, Rilke.

LE FOU: Yes, that's a very particular *archai*, and one that has been deconstructed in itself. Yet there is this Heideggerian problem. When Heidegger tries to write poetry, it is always alpine cowbells.

THE POET: Because the text is very enclosed. It's pastoral. He's a pastoral philosopher too.

LE FOU: And then you get into the question of wildness which would come out of the indwelling. But these are all descriptive terms, and in a sense, we are in a pastorate ourselves, at this point.

THE POET: The indwelling is not transcendental, it's proximate being.

LE FOU: Let's backtrack a bit. Are you saying we should rewrite all the gods in terms of what they are doing in the sentence? Take Okeanos, take Night —

THE POET: Take Iris —

LE FOU: What the sentence is as a world, how it closes, how it opens in the thought of the Father of the world who is Zeus, what binding really means — and Prometheus as fettered forethought.

THE POET: The economy has really eclipsed poetry; it has really clipped its ears.

LE FOU: To write about that eclipse? At least we won't have sentences which on the one hand praise the worker then on the other say go and see your shaman. Or prescribe a visit to Cold Mountain.

THE POET: You mean the deep body therapy, the bone massage?

LE FOU: Yes, language as the threshold of pain. All the therapists are trained in syntactical shifters.

THE POET: Yes, and they paraded the poor Lama Govinda around on a ribbon like Nerval with a lobster. Don't get too close to the Lama they'd say, and then they'd sit him in the corner with some cheese and a box of crackers and let him answer questions from a bunch of stockbrokers.

LE FOU: The cook told me something. He said he decided to stay on after they broke his arm. You couldn't say anything up there unless you were speaking through some chink in the wall.

THE POET: Pyramus and Thisbe, and I'm not so sure about Thisbe.

LE FOU: Come around tomorrow morning before sunrise and if the Lama has time after breakfast he'll convert you to Buddhism.

THE POET: Along with the knives, forks, and spoons.

LE FOU: Nothing too small for the Buddha.

THE POET: I wonder what happened to that stockbroker's clients after the hypnotism wore off?

LE FOU: They give you a certificate at the end of a week.

THE POET: Yes, "I lasted six rounds with the Other."

LE FOU: Let's get back to economy again.

THE POET: We were speaking of a language without interiority.

LE FOU: To eclipse death, profundity and deep structure, because they are all dominated.

THE POET: We are speaking of a time that is not metaphorical.

LE FOU: Not of the visible and the invisible?

THE POET: Phenomenology cannot provide for the kind of economy we are pointing towards. The visible and the invisible are captures; depth captures, perceptual captures and we are back to the reign of the Signifier. There was a law, an Indoeuropean law that was written into language: that language is a person. After that, you are stuck with a mask that is not easy to divest oneself of. At the time we were born, 1950, Malraux declared that the future was the time of the machine. The imaginary, because it is a transcendent thought, becomes a critical speculation: transcendent to the word, it becomes a critical thought.

LE FOU: What the theory of the Other proposes is that language is a consciousness which is transcendent. Which consciousness for other things we don't know. We only think we do.

THE POET: Language alienates the subject, but even in suffering "at the mercy of language" the subject is aware that the alienation comes from within. It is a typical double-bind situation. We compare the self to the rights of property. While property is meant to induce permanence in a floating system of exchange, its situation as an object of exchange, in the fact that almost anything can be exchanged into the anonymity of money, makes the self susceptible of being caught up in the anonymity of money. This anonymity is also a hidden quality of representation: the anonymity of words, which, in order to become more definite, demands hierarchy, boundaries of exchange, mythologies, and so forth. So we are faced with economy throughout the layers we spoke of earlier.

## *Swallowtails*

LE FOU: With Heidegger's theory of proximity, with language as proximate, the relations between language and living are far less known than in the works of most American writers.

THE POET: Yes, there is an opening.

LE FOU: But in going back to find ourselves in the system, all you get is analogy; and you cannot write out of analogy. When anthropologists went to Yakut land, at the beginning of this century, what they described as the journey of the shaman was nothing more than the journey to trade furs with the Russian Fur Trading Company. When they needed to buy a living, they'd climb up to the stars to do a little trading. It sounds very dogmatic, doesn't it?

THE POET: The time of the machine, the time is the machine —

LE FOU: For a machine, we could substitute the flatness of space, the color of space; poetics has been frightened of color; viewed as a stain upon the world, blotting out transparency. There is more to the colors of the rainbow than what's at the end of it.

THE POET: In poetics, in language, the rainbow is signification — the generation of the sign. In order to perceive the world and the passage of time, one must first be able to hold it, and as one does, one discovers that time is a mirror. Then, secondly, what Augustine says — that everyone knows what time is but no one can communicate that knowledge to anyone else. The mirror is a kind of ideal text that our sentences attempt to translate. But this is a denial of metaphor, reducing it to suffering. And metaphor always speaks of the existence of suffering, somewhere unheard, at a distance, in the world, almost unimaginable, thus, easily erased, forgotten. But this reduction of metaphor to the subjective, giving it a semblance of inner correspondences, anterior to the written word — mathematical, yet mysteriously free of the envelope of sense in which it dies or is reborn. This meaning is considered at the end of the rainbow. But it is in the being, suddenly, unsignified, that, at the end of a sentence, or in the process which creates a painting, we know we have reached for something that did not exist. This is the evocation of Jean Paul. Because we have a slight knowledge of the substance of language, or imagine we do, we can indulge, without being bored, or narcissistic, in the glissement, as Sassure called it, of form. It is when we begin searching for the substantiality of thought, that we fall into meaning. It is Iris, the rainbow, the goddess of messages, who was given special powers because of her hesitancy to yield, given certain privileges in the underworld. She defines the boundaries, certain messages. All poets have known that they were damned by the rainbow.

LE FOU: Or the fallen angel on the balustrades of the library, in *Aurelia*; Nerval's angel of Saturn, in despair of a color which has changed into the appearance of ideality. Matter endures melancholia. I mean Durer's melancholia. She has conjured up how to square the circle, but the language has fallen asleep at her feet.

THE POET: And in modern times, the angel of history in the work of Walter Benjamin. Who does not move forward into the Future, but has his face turned towards the past. Where a chain of meanings appears to us, he sees one single catastrophe, which keeps piling up, and is hurled at his feet. The angel would like to stay and awaken the dead, and join together what has been smashed to pieces, but a storm is blowing from Paradise, and sends him, reeling, into the Future. And then, he comments, "what we call progress is this storm!"

LE FOU: She has found the luck at the end of the rainbow. This is the language of representation, and it is Dante's Paradise. You remember the puzzle in Canto 33, before he loses language. She has worked on that problem.

THE POET: It is the language itself, always veiling and unveiling — logos and eros. The gravity of the language; but image has the function of a vector.

LE FOU: That is what I am talking about, the flatness of the text. Take, for example, the problem I have encountered in Charles Olson — because of the fault of subjectivity in his text his poetry hides subjects, mythological subjects, like Tartaros in Hesiod's *Theogony*. All one can do in the poem "Maximus to Dogtown IV" is read one's own foreconceptions into it. But we know something is covered up in this.

THE POET: The missing letter turns into a subject.

LE FOU: Olson was trapped in the Pound tradition, an academic school that requires subjects, which it can hierarchically unveil. The consequences are theology, ideology and meaning. But never poetry. This is because Olson has intentionally created an *Aletheia* by hiding the subject. But when the subject is actually unveiled, and stares you in the face, what have you got left? We are reading Hesiod, Hugh Evelyn White's version, or Leland's Algonquin legends.

THE POET: In Olson, aren't we dealing with the Derridean notion of psyche as text, as a text of other texts, and of reinscription?

LE FOU: Yes, but Psyche is not visiting the letter in Olson's text; I mean variance, the trace. The Derridean recital involves reinscription, marking, making one's own trace: not to preserve meaning, but to dislocate an *arche*.

THE POET: He chooses sources which are self signifying: the self-signifying becomes a definition of the primordial; the system comes back to turning in a circle, but the supplement — are you objecting to the supplement in Olson's text?

LE FOU: Olson's desire to surround himself in a cosmology was often accomplished by copying, or photocopying, without alteration, texts of a completed world. I have great difficulty with this notion of documentation, that finally requires a mute voice in order to retain the secrecy of his *Poetry and Truth*.

THE POET: You mean the "practise of stillness" in the final texts of *Maximus*?

LE FOU: A silent night in the face of a fallen writing. To be blunt about it, Olson was trapped in a notion that the subject of a poem is carried by its letters, as dominant meaning organizing language. This was prompted by a fallacy of readership which was looking for meaning.

THE POET: The Unicorn tapestries.

LE FOU: Going hunting in the letters; I mean school. What use is it to teach writing in school — you can only give meaning away. There is no reinscription in a poetics of meaning, which is the politics of literal subjection beneath the logos of meaning. A play on words, at the cost of the text.

THE POET: But isn't this the dialectic of the lover and the beloved, the structure of desire, and, don't we read these as well in the texts of Corbin, Souriau, and others? Is it the problem of the subject of desire, which you locate in Olson's work?

LE FOU: There is an archaic Maximus. In the first lines, an overwhelming statue, very much enlarged in the mirror of the world. The poet's desire is to embrace this subject. He is subjected by his desire to possess a picture of the world.

THE POET: Are you saying that in Olson's texts, desire is always the subject-object relation? What happens to language when Paradise is a Person?

LE FOU: The desire is, meaning will couple. Not language. There is a previous text which we read, even as Olson read it: there is the proposition of an authoritarian man, that there is someone, a subject, behind the whole of creation. And we want to know who that one-word-speaker is, — and so, how do you get out of the subject?

THE POET: He wants to divest himself of the Name, to empty himself out of the Name.

LE FOU: If we go back to Corbin, I am interested in him precisely where he doesn't divide existence, even theological existence, into archaeology and teleology. He is just not interested in the "end of man," or the final outcome of the species. He does not say that the text is right for our time, but he tries to say, this is how the text was written, in that context. No one knows if Corbin believes what Avicenna wrote. To enter another angel you must break the cycle. The naming of the unknown is an endless venture. You must break forethought; meaning follows from that. What matters is the way we enter the circle; Corbin explains that through a text of angelology.

THE POET: Yes, and so did Mallarmé in his text on alliteration. All that matters is where one enters the circle. But the circle is another ideal of the text, produced by hermeneutics.

## *Clouded Yellows*

THE POET: The description of the text operates on various syntactic levels. The text is a rule the Game finds in its play. This is not a book of rules, that is, a theology, but a book of play and transgressions.

LE FOU: Yes, in the absence of a crisis of closure. I don't believe in the rage generated from the desire to escape world as the rule of desire. The breakdowns occur, and these are unbindings, in all poetic thought of recent times.

THE POET: But poetics has not broken open — no more than this endowment of language upon which desire is constituted. Even *Dasein*, the discoverer, is the thief of the Childhood Scene. There is no position of privilege possible, if you consider the structure of desire, not even “deconstruction” as a principle analogous or isomorphic to the principle of desire. Desire is always implicated in the breakdown in the metaphysics of presence. There are two divergences at hand: one seeks the description, the other only to reinscribe. The description is still referential to the Game — one does not find the Game by looking back at the Rules.

LE FOU: I agree that these methodologies are only rites of passage. They are rituals of intention. The King who sees himself in the mirror views a Fool. All the rules of the image are inadequate.

THE POET: The difference between the images, the aspect of their contradiction; this escapes the reader, and this is writing. And this is how the reader is described in the text: as an inscription already there, and situated in the play of difference which is the surprise of the dialectic. Surprise is that sense of being “taken over” — etymologically.

LE FOU: Etymologically: "to bear a cross." This is what it looks like in belief. Actually there is a Round Dance.

THE POET: The cycle of the return of the letter. It is this same letter which travels in their epistemology from the Childhood Scene, to the analyses of Poe, from psychoanalysis to deconstruction, and I am not entirely sure that the real identity of the letter is not lost somewhere *en route* — I mean the letter, which, as Lacan has tried to show, designates the most private parts.

LE FOU: In Lacan's sense, I think there is a worship of the missing letter, or part of a text. And this is the aspect which is throned. It has very little contact with the world, as Weyl says, "that is open to perception."

THE POET: Yes, I mean we are using a language which has been devoured by the needs and demands of the self. Heidegger is right on target, when he asks, what could be more alien to the Group, which is lost in the functionally concerned and diverse "world," than the Self, which is always alone, individualized, uncanny, and thrown contingently into nothingness.

consciousness of another, no different from the one that I automatically assume in every human being I encounter, except that in this case the consciousness is open to me, welcomes me, lets me look deep inside itself, and even allows me, with unheard of license, to think what it thinks and feel what it feels.

THE POET: Yes, it's the circulation of the letter; the reading of the phallus. He is appropriating the text, calling it his own, and assuming an ownership of it which is held in common. I don't think texts are common, are held in common, or that the dialectic of subject and object proposed here can make a clear statement of desire. This is an extreme form of mimetic desire, which is the problem of the logocentric inclusion — of mimesis and castration. The reader feels excluded from the enclosure, is occluded, because the center of the structures of the text and of desire work against each other — and each becomes an epicenter. This is a mystification of the text, a veiling of the phallus. The metaphors of transformation cannot be detected within the level of reading — and so, they are written in, not deconstructed.

LE FOU: I would say, unconsciously, though intentionally. Poulet is trying to withhold the inviolability of the text, by setting the scene beforehand. The scene is set up to crown the author, who is the priest of a communion with the Other. And this is none other than entanglement which enslaves, because there is an inert priority given to the meaning, which is the "subject" of the text. Most readers want this: to be enchanted.

THE POET: With the phallus? It is a belief in an innermost self, which is the other end of the scale of the reading of psyche as text. Actually the text is attempting to demystify enchantment, while the reader is trying to be taken by the magic of the scene.

LE FOU: The demand for mystification is the consciousness, which covers over the unconscious. This is a false *Aletheia*. The truth which is known to be not truth, and which is received in the simulacrum of unknowing. Actually, it is a cover-up for the attacks of subjective surprise, a kind of militant advent, which takes control of the world. It is pathological because of the intentional wound which truth makes on the unconscious.

THE POET: He is attempting to free himself from an imaginary that has become solidified: it leads, finally, to the definition of truth that you find in Hegel:

The true is the Bacchantic ek-stase in which no member of the whole, no link in the chain, is not drunken. And because as soon as it differentiates itself, each difference immediately dissolves itself — becomes redundant, as it were — the ecstasy of the whole is as if it were simple and transparent repose. . . . In the totality of process, which we now see as repose, what comes to differentiate process, what comes to differentiate itself in the whole, and to give itself a particular being-there, as something, is preserved and retained as that which remembers itself, that for which its being there is the knowledge of itself.

LE FOU: That is overwhelming; you see a solid ground move. He wants a continent but he has an archipelago. The fault of the text is immense. "Astride the Cabot fault" it is; a Gondwannaland of unities gone adrift.

THE POET: It is a drunkenness which stands at the end of the ideal — whether in interpretation, or in poetics. It separately displays the contexts that he wishes to have as a whole.

LE FOU: Yes, his unconscious is wild here, and he is covering up that fault of the text with a truth the chain of being cannot break. But it is broken, and he knows it. The text is full of faults he is avoiding.

THE POET: The repose is a traditional sign, and the philosopher is a Pentheus who must listen to Cadmus. It is exactly this fault which signifies the creation of other orders — for example, the imaginary, the symbolic, the real; ontological orders. They are unities which cannot be sustained at the point of the word, where difference dissolves them. Poulet moves towards it, because in his own reading, he, unconsciously, locates in the trace of a text the circulation of the letter or the phallus, the signifier of fiction, and the fictive; he presents a fictive opening to what is actually a closure, or a seizure.

LE FOU: Yes, seizure: a heart attack. It is a heartless death which joins the unities: fictive, in the sense that it erases cosmology and small-being. I would go so far as to say that this is the mid-Atlantic Ridge, which shows the drift, even the extreme between philosophy and literature. For example, philosophy always thinks of cosmology as an incarnate body.

THE POET: Yes, this certainly would be Merleau-Ponty's position. But as soon as you have an exhibition of self and world, as soon as you have a consciousness which is the key signature, you have a meta-physics which cannot be deconstructed without a violent rupture — not a repose. The key is in "the past, the future, or the elsewhere" — in other words, nowhere. Philosophy tries to articulate the fault only by trying to transcend it.

LE FOU: Whereas literature thinks of cosmology not as a crypt, but as a genotext — it is Medieval in respect to writing. I think of Dante, who in Canto 29 of the *Paradiso*, jumps from the largest body (*el maggior corpo*) straight to the eye of desire. Out of the one body into the Other, from cosmology into the heaven full of light and love. The intermediate is a purloined paradise, where all writing takes place.

THE POET: In the cosmology of the Tantric texts, the parts of the body are seen as the seats of the manifestation of letters. What the scene of writing is concerned with is not image, but *Aksara*. In some respects, it is the question of interiority; of a language without interiority, that we are attempting to arrive at here. Man is no trope of himself. The boundaries of the text are not the boundaries of the subject: the text carries different imprints. In Hegel the pure I is effectively real only in its connection with what is Other — it obtains its liberty through the power of negation; negation, in the first place being the negation of one thought, the difference or resistance of one thought to another. The subject is always caught in the surplus of the text's signifying functions, in the overlapping of boundaries in the text.

LE FOU: Not in the unity of the text?

THE POET: We must recognize in poetics, the Eye, which attempts to unite itself to a statue, a model, of classicism, the nostalgia of the child before the mirror, in which lingers a trace of the primal scene. Already too many poets have become statues, even in Vancouver — I mean, one can see a poet from a long way in the distance. It is precisely this mirror, the substantiality of his own thought, which Olson attacks in the development of the Nude — a mirror in which he reads the development of the lyric, and in which we read the development of the erotic, and of metaphysics. It is a matter of who, or what is speaking, in the text, but it is also a matter of the logic of the phantasm, the “phantômes de sentiments” of Blaser’s poem, and in the writings of Jean Cocteau. Both of these artists have been enveloped by the mirror. The point in Cocteau’s *Orpheus* when he licks the envelope — the child Orpheus, you remember, was given a mirror to amuse himself while he was captured by the Titans.

LE FOU: The envelope, the child’s enclosure in the symbolic. I am not so interested in the retard which Orpheus suffers, but the Orphic of a literature which knows that it begins “on the other side of the mirror,” on the other side of this specific “return.”

THE POET: So that the reader who thinks he is demystifying literature is actually being demystified by literature —

LE FOU: — having “crossed over” to a place of no return, which is a darkening of the mind for us. Nerval says, “What will happen when men find there is no more sun?” The guide of the mind is not over there, that is, here on earth. The transcendence has jumped the gap, between the ideal and the material, and here he is, without light, at least the light of mental discourse, on this shore, unable to return because *this* is no longer backwards, or forwards, but the *writing itself*.

THE POET: We are dealing with two terms here: the mirror and the gap. And this is the context of desire. Manonni writes, "we would find everywhere, names which serve to designate a desire which does not have a real name." The circulation of desire, the circulation of the letter is inhibited by the imaginary reserve of signification in which the subject is "caught up." And this being "caught up" is not being caught up in the writing, or in the space that the writing opened or closed, but in the envelope of a certain enclosure — and it is at this point that the writer tries to move the narrative forward through a metaphysics. And it is only a diversion. The imaginary must be spent, used up within the writing — it cannot come as a supplement.

LE FOU: It must be withdrawn from the circulation of thought, then, restored to a signifying economy?

THE POET: In a poem like *Voyelles*, Rimbaud was to discover that all words can be found in every text. So it is with Mallarmé, who tries to reconstruct his entire symbology in each text. There is certainly this insistence but the function of it has been lost in most poets. They are looking for a text without gaps, without interruptions — yet, this is exactly what they arrive with. The anagram, and the anagrammatical theory of Saussure deconstructs the pre-eminence of the imaginary in the scene of writing. In Nabokov, and others, but in relation to anagrams, in Nabokov in particular, the anagrams reflect the condition of the text, the narrative, as well as the structure of desire, until the imaginary, strictly speaking, is used up. The imaginary provokes unlikely correspondences — beauty and incest, for example, in *Ada*.

LE FOU: I would like to relate a tale, Shakespeare's tale, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, for it seems to me to be both Orphic and about desire. It has a kingdom and a faeryland, and the crossing from one to another. The lowest is in love with the highest, Bottom, who desires the Queen of the Faeries. But this is reversed, mistaken, at least metaphysics would have it so. The Queen loves an Ass. Love is somehow blind. There's no mirroring of the self in the Other, only a play of mistakes which come to the other side of the play. Bottom is the writing at the very bottom of Shakespeare's text. So he has written a play, to be played, in which Shakespeare has him adorned in a lion's mask, which would be a mask of frightful identity, what we all want to be. But he appears from behind a mask, to uncover the untruth he so stupidly doesn't hide, as a secret writing hides from readership, to create desire. He uncovers the coverup of truth. He says, "I'm not really a lion. I'm not astonishing, fearful, perilous, the *leo viridis* who eats up the sun at the end of the world in alchemy. I'm really Bottom the worker." I'm being Snug the joiner, here, fabricating this.

THE POET: It seems ideological in reverse.

LE FOU: Bottom is just a worker, with the working class of his fellow players, who are also carpenters, and suchlike. It's reassuring, we feel, to come down to earth, in another identification of Being which has more proximate origins in familiarity. The transcendence is overcome. Lest we be taken by his fierce "roars," which *we might believe*, if he were smart enough to make believe. But he isn't. And he doesn't say exactly, "I'm the worker." He says, "I'm Bottom, the *weaver*," which is a worker of another sort, the one who has woven for us the play of the text. He is Shakespeare at the Bottom of the play.

THE POET: He doesn't allow transposition, whether to an ideal activity (as worker) or to an ideal potentiality (as lion). These mirror images of our desire are crossed out.

LE FOU: The writer has disappeared, except where he interrupts the make believe of the play, to be literal about it. The crossing to the literal is the most difficult, because it is a denuding of the make believe of the play. The desire is unmasked. The letter of the play is woven by this Bottom who is neither like a lion or an ass. In fact he, the text itself, is the truth woven in the veil of his writing as the site where all work is done. Any magnification of the part he plays in the play is a reduction to meaning, or a revelation which stops at the make believe of the play. Who desires Bottom?

THE POET: The writer is on the other side of this play. The literal is the last thing we want to be told, yet it is the writing of the play itself.

LE FOU: Shakespeare uncovers this for us, in the Orphism of Bottom's disturbance of the mirrors of truth, beauty, and actuality.

THE POET: Yes, in the first place, the text is demystifying the reader, actually unmasking the lions and the workers.

LE FOU: And where Adorno speaks of metaphysics as being the lid on the garbage can, Bottom is both the lid and the garbage pail. He escapes all the mirrors of description because he unmask the make believe of our various poses which we have identified as truth.

THE POET: I think the counterpart to that would have to be *Lear*, in Kent's speech, "I would teach you difference." Benjamin discussed Proust in a similar context: "Like the weaver, the writer works on the wrong side of his material. He has to do only with language, and it is thus that suddenly he finds himself surrounded by meaning." The exchange is ideological, the spending of the imaginary. This is what capitalism has taught metaphysics — Marx has introduced another dimension of the imaginary. While in America, during the Fifties and Sixties, a new definition of the imaginary, apart from the political, was being carefully nurtured, in France, during the same period, this very theory was being deconstructed.

LE FOU: Is it a "spending" of the imaginary because it exhausts the imaginary as a form of exchange, based on similarity? I mean a levelling?

THE POET: In part, because of the new theory of the sign — which has meaning in relation to other signs, rather than to other signifieds. The intermediate play, the difference, or what in America has been called, the *expression*, was avoided. The theory of capitalism, the well-known difference between use value and exchange value.

LE FOU: This is the idea of Social Credit, as opposed to the capability of the subject to amass fortunes. Whereas Social Credit distinguishes a credit value of exchange which is not determined by the capability of the "egotistical sublime," which is the production of the commonwealth. Where we live, of course, this is all B.C. . . . The forms of exchange in the academic world are so rigidly determined by "economic necessity." But posed against necessity is chance, which is said to be the player of the game; the negative, the double negation, the dialectic or the double dialectic, whatever. It doesn't have a chance. In fact, I would go as far as to say that the speaker loses his language, which goes elsewhere, and becomes other, in a class structure where the teacher, who is the other, is paid by the students on the condition that he mystifies them completely!

THE POET: If he doesn't, they come back for more until they are completely alienated from our society.

LE FOU: They come into the game, which is the game of spell-binding.

THE POET: Yes, in the name of the father, the son, and the *infans solaris*. What they don't know is that they are in the scene of castration. Literature and castration, a problem well recognized by Mallarmé.

LE FOU: It looms as the unmoved being, or the shepherd of being. Who cares if one man can have enough shirpas to go to heaven. These men are apologists for the ideology we "in-dwell," which is why their intelligibility is very accessible to us.

THE POET: Meaning is commonplace, until it has the appearance of so-called "proximate being." Ideological Being, which is the displaced Other in a structure of exchange and desire, depersonalizes existence.

LE FOU: How can there ever be a disenchantment with the concept, when the concept laments our absence from the original scene? By ownership of model and mimesis, the accumulation of capital ruins presence.

## *Queens of Spain*

LE FOU: I had no idea a painting could be like that.

THE POET: It's the eyes. I know someone with eyes like that.

LE FOU: When I went in I knew nothing, absolutely nothing. It left gold on the walls of my mind. I didn't know what it was there for or anything.

THE POET: And the painter who worked with him . . .

LE FOU: He did another Annunciation, I know.

THE POET: One thing that I don't think I ever got into that poem, which I did in another version, was St Juliette, the figure of St Juliette.

LE FOU: Where is she from?

THE POET: That painting.

LE FOU: From Martini?

THE POET: It is actually Juliette as the virgin. I really thought about it like Romeo and Juliet. But I don't know anything about St Juliette. The Martini Annunciation is dedicated to her.

LE FOU: So you were in an enclosed garden, and the words were coming through like that, coming through the lilies almost. It's hard to talk about this poem because it's full of love.

THE POET: Not full of blindness?

LE FOU: Yes, it's full of blindness, and out of darkness, these words appear. They seem to have nothing behind them. I know they have a very deep experience behind them — in terms of where you are — what location.

THE POET: The situation was casual enough — to write a poem in. So, in a way, the situation can be very casual. It is the language that isn't very casual, although I do think language comes to one very casually.

LE FOU: Casualness is an absence of crisis or rage? Or inspiration, or irruption?

THE POET: Yes; I would say some poems walk on all fours.

LE FOU: You mean you don't put your ear to the ground and listen for tremors? Crisis and rage seem to be a conception of knowledge waiting to do violence; a kind of violence that is worshipped as inspiration. I know Dante invokes Apollo and the Glory.

THE POET: A wild logos?

LE FOU: A logos struggling to get free — a logos straining out of captivity. But it is the violence of the captivity that makes it wild. Otherwise the word is not the fore-word. But the words that are in squares?

THE POET: I was trying this as an experiment in typography. These words have yet to break apart — almost like different cards which have yet to show their hand.

LE FOU: They don't appear again in that form, so you are aware that something is being shown.

THE POET: They are like opening cards or visiting cards — they aren't of course cards at all, though they are geographic. But in a way, that is what the geographic is.

LE FOU: I like the way you walk through it, as though you walked into the words. Like "walking down the road into the mirage, on your back was a pack of colors." Or, "the pink rose that closed like a cloud of fire upon our last night in Alexandria." It seems that in a way you're just exposed — or in a place that words come down to.

THE POET: Maybe everything comes down on you but the words. That's why I think language is more a maneuverer than a destination. It has no topology in itself. And I don't think poets can afford to make a topology out of it, like Lacan, or Freud.

LE FOU: You seem to have things, in the poem itself, things like "Artemis guards the silence of the page," as though you were guarding against the incoming of topography. I'm sure you didn't go through this experience in any great depth, going around trying to make a great purity.

THE POET: It may be the contrary.

LE FOU: But you kept something out of it, from intruding, which allows you to step on these words. I get the impression that you are actually moving on the words. "Falling asleep, the rhythm of the rails under us," and the train takes us through love, and through the entwining, and the tunnels. You are actually moving on the words.

THE POET: Instead of stopping inside the words.

LE FOU: Instead of having another ground the words point towards, that this is the actual ground that you are moving across. I know that you came from Egypt, and Mary is going to Egypt, and there is a cross, but the geography has changed. "Out of the windows of the car, passing by the stands of palms, high and ariel, then, a white mosque lit in the moonlight slipped by like a castle of words." So you are actually moving on the words. And then when you come to this part, and suddenly the words are printed upon you. When it came down to this I thought the poem was coming through lilies on to me as a reader.

THE POET: Yes, but I don't think she is visited by the logos. Unlike the poet who is caught in the metaphysics of the word, the language visits her by complete surprise. But the poem is as close to my perception, of the painting, or of the stillness inside that perception, as I could possibly make it.

LE FOU: It's almost as though I was told, when I came to this, I was told what was happening to me, when I was reading. And then when you get over here, and all of these words are taking place in this chamber, and you are actually locked in it. Again, that whole idea that you are closing something out — all that geography that we know, all the places that we know we are going to. And then these words start moving in. Do you know what you mean by this? "Overhead the throw of the clouds, slow dice, does not disturb us."

THE POET: Do I know what I mean? I guess it reminds me of Anubis, now, he often carries the dice. Dice are a very ancient game in Egypt, one of the first Egyptian games.

LE FOU: What does he do with the dice? Does it have something to do with life and death? Is it his last chance?

THE POET: It's a game. Even in the Egyptian tombs you see the pharaoh and his wife playing dice. It's one of their more heavenly memories.

LE FOU: A cribbage game after supper.

THE POET: Sitting around the lotus pond, playing dice. Putting a little gambling in their lives.

LE FOU: And who is this figure?

THE POET: Sekmut, you know the cat? The lionfaced wife of Ptah.

LE FOU: What do cats have to do with the sun? Because of the eyes?

THE POET: The light in the cat's eyes is the light of Re. There's one hidden road where only a cat can walk because it has the lights of Re.

LE FOU: Inside the glass, outside the glass. You're going in a lot of directions.

THE POET: Yes, I read it at a reading once and everyone panned it.

LE FOU: That reading in Vancouver for the Buddhist institute? The Summer Heat? I don't think Vancouver will like it. It's really not for any particular place.

THE POET: What I really think about it is that each person's annunciation is their own. You can't give it away. You can't even send it anywhere. I think that's true of almost all poetry. You can't even give it away. You can't translate it, because the less interiority it has, the more self-pollinating the language is.

LE FOU: The less interiority, the less you can send it out. It pollinates itself. It's a very different feeling from having a poem sent to you, which is what usually happens. I don't even get the feeling of the presence of a writer. The people in this poem are very much in love, they really are. I love that, "The old lady has gone into town for groceries." Do you think she's going to find her way through all of this?

# ALEXIS

for Dennis Wheeler

— still life —

the camera is a woman  
who takes a carriage through the meadow  
from the farm or childhood, so long ago  
the word is lonely as a freighttrain

like a painting, the same stream, and  
the color in the language that sticks  
to the breath, the train, the picture  
smoking up the countryside  
towards the castle pure and invisible.

*The approach.* The horses are tired  
of walking, thickets, rain, fresh tracks,  
not grass or dew materialized inside  
the space of the letter

We go down with the camera  
to take a picture of the letters  
in the machine of the current and  
the eddy is the flow of our bodies'  
electricity and death is the subject

The flowing back, both are necessary  
Only one is actual, you must decide  
is it the sliding silhouette in  
the book or in the meadow? The imaginary  
requires actors, of that is  
the subject, desire is *always*

a subject never an object

The morning after. the rain  
had brought the carnolias by  
the window down, like your dress  
before them on the ground.

Something is stuck in the machine  
the water is mechanized, a windmill  
or bridge making the gaze stop, riding  
away on the gaze, slipping  
into it, the danger is similarity  
or the metaphor

*Bathing.* Afternoon, then,  
the cool of the brook. Bathers.

The arrow shot into the trunk  
of the willow beside the brook, in blossom  
skirting the stream

Below the letters float away, along  
the current, changing shape, the letters  
are Proteus and the word is something  
Greek like star or Adrasteia

The darkness falls like silhouettes fleeing  
from the pages of an open book, or pages scattering

*The flower-bringer.* The silhouette  
Sekmut is the flower-bringer, the lion  
of Ptah carrying the alphabetic wand  
She is black the letters are colored  
and glow as she walks toward the camera under  
the grass

The slide or *glissement* between  
the glass and the grass, the play  
of left and right, the symmetry again.

Moving to symmetry. Not plant or animal.  
The symmetry of the double.

Randomness of letters, their  
circulation like mail, other processes  
of distribution like the letters of  
the anagram 'sweetheart'

Quite different  
The similarity of the letters animate  
like flowers thus their entrance into  
cosmologies which derive from  
Indoeuropean originals, consequently  
anagrammatical Indoeuropean  
originally had no such grammar?

Especially not Japanese, except for  
the lady of letters, more like Chinese  
stage directions, what the poem was  
once approaching Chinese boxes

letters floating in the pool and Artemis  
with the camera taking a shot of Le Fou  
The dismemberment in the primal scene

The Feminine adds to the single,  
making it two-in-one and becoming  
closer to the reality of the one  
which is letters inside the structure  
more like the machine

Before desire, the same is image, the  
order the same, the typing the same,  
desire is always a misprint, a word  
for which there is no correspondence  
except in pictures

like the silhouettes, the  
letters in the book slide out of  
the book silhouettes in the City,  
small beside a large building

The distance  
of 'never' or 'twice' simply  
the materialization of the letter  
no other meaning, just the imaginary  
or a word like Electra if it were  
composed of more letters to form  
the picture of a bridge, suspension  
of meaning, then, that is the bridge

and the landscape in the camera, <sup>\*\*\*</sup> Zoe  
disappearing over the blue Ridge  
The first stream in the text And  
the text is not a written text  
but the box of the camera

*The stream.* The photograph of the eddies  
captures the letters, in the current,  
some are blurred, (the form that sees  
the form in the mirror, the glass underwater  
the tones of color

that painting of Degas' *the Ballet*  
*of the Source*

The spatial capture of the letters  
means that precisely, it is not all a scene  
of aquamarine and green, not grass,  
and not dew

the mirror lets the letters be  
read in an order, but that is not  
the order of the letters, which  
has nothing to do with human speech

#### MANDEAN ALPHABET EACH LETTER OF

that would be it, the door  
to the watery scene, that requites

The imaginary play requires actors  
but there is nothing here but letters

Not even silhouettes in a book  
No eyes, although there are always eyes  
watching, seeing in there

Nothing like Blake. Only the  
approach is ever known, the pathway to  
departure is marked by the loss

The letters, SAGESSE, are actual  
in the water that is also a glass  
could be a vase that holds them  
and nothing else

not synesthesia either  
slipping or glissement, but the letter  
itself, that impossibility of revolution  
eddy, petal, froth, footprint

and leaning over the  
railing on the bridge, the pilings

and then

S            E  
              R  
              O

falling down the pool

Then

R   O   S   E   B   A   N   K

First on the gate like the door  
into the house, the familiar, the mirror  
of the letter, then the scene inside  
the camera like an emerald word

scattered in the stream, the writing

is the scene

Breath spell.

— Hesitation — .

*Visit to the letter.* like the colors  
visit the temple of the pool  
with their shining water-spirits  
but with black faces and always  
holding the alphabetic bouquet

like the *Ballet of the source*

No journey although there  
must be a road

Or the accepted  
meaning of the word 'print'

But also the lost knowledge  
the camera tries to refresh  
the mirror that is always in  
play cannot find its way back  
to the stream or scene

Decomposition of everything  
in the narrative, like death  
the petals falling until  
they stop, colors pastel

breathing again,

Other part of the camera

Like *in camera*

differences and  
identity,  
all for nothing

*Sleep.* The letters beside  
her on the pillow.



## Arthur Erickson Architects / MUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY

IMAGES: MUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY AT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Entrance gates.

Exterior, south face.

Exterior of *The Great Hall*, south face.

Garden front.

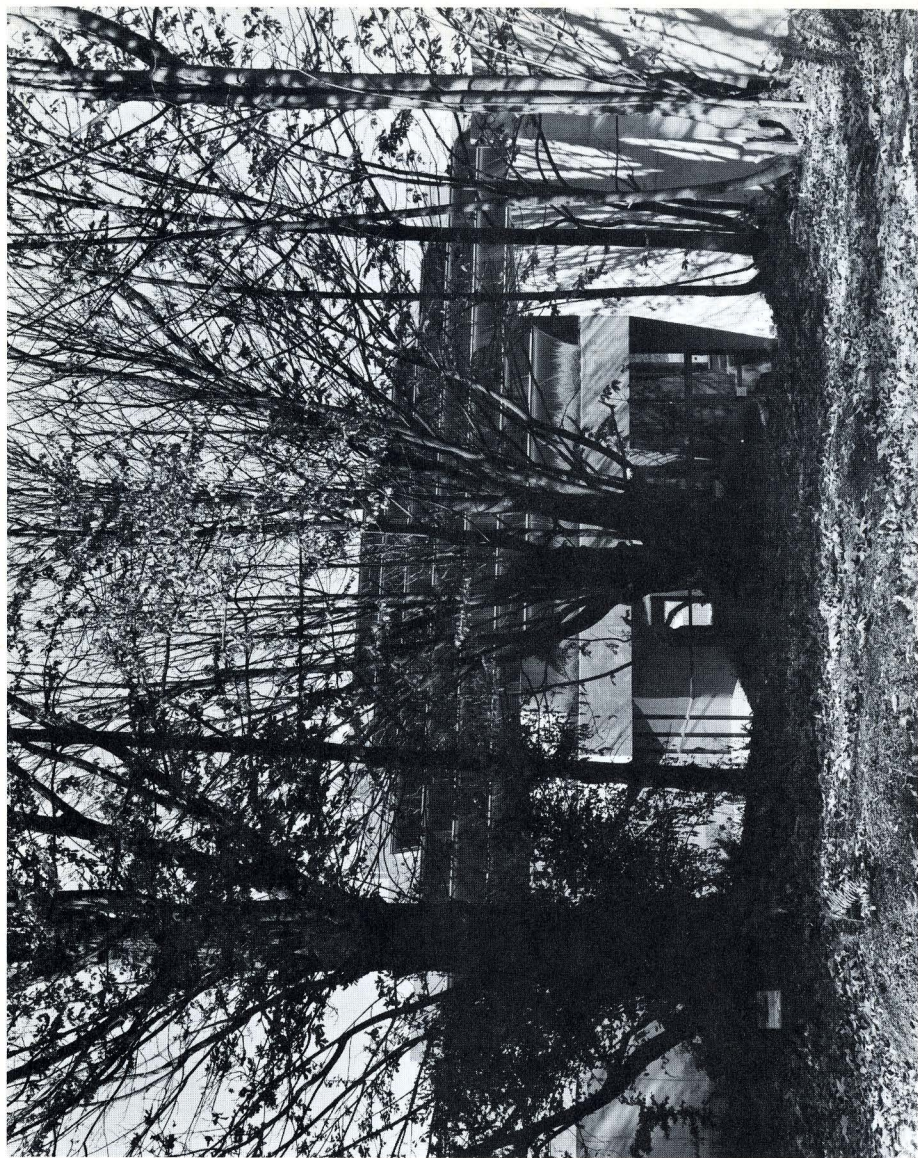
Carved doors, entrance.

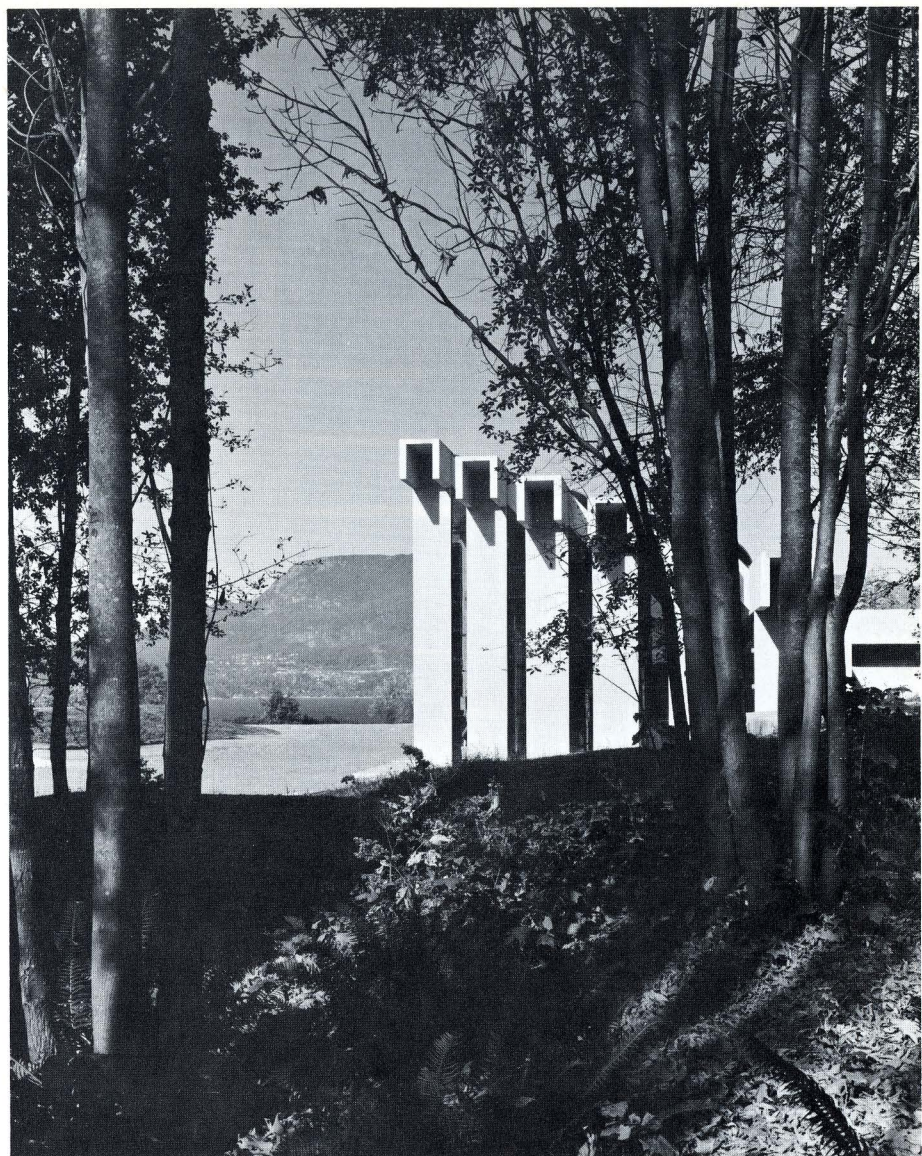
*The Great Hall.*

*The Great Hall.*

Photography: 1-4, Simon Scott  
5-7, Tod Greenaway









*The power on high doth make me show my ritual  
Because wealth, it is in my house — Clutesi/Potlatch*

The Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia is a teaching museum with an outstanding collection of Northwest Coast Indian Totems and artifacts. Arthur Erickson and his associates have designed a contemporary building that pays tribute to native peoples without ever *copying* indigenous architectural forms. Abstract design principles, and the moving spirit of the architectural work, encourage the visitor to discover: that the museum is the House of all Houses, a ceremonial lodge fit for a multinational potlatch; that it is also a celebration of the *Ni-Toop* (or beam from which the thunderbird glowered within the lodge) and of all other post and lintel motifs of West Coast Indian architecture and its sculptural adjuncts. The museum and gardens manage also to transcend specific local allusions, to become a statement about the mystery and function of the sacred trove of artifacts.

A circuit around the exterior of the building and the still incomplete gardens is necessary to the comprehension of Erickson's concept for the museum. The viewer must read the signs like an intelligent hunter.

He parks the car in the lot in front of the museum where a grassy mound prohibits his viewing the scope of the building. A cedar-chip path encourages him past the stacked gateway entrance to begin his tour. As he follows the path through and past judicious plantings, the external view of the south face of the building unfolds, revealing many instances of repeated and piled motifs that echo the rhythm of the front gates like a drummer embellishing a theme. The south face terminates in a gradated assembly of channel beams on uprights that direct the eye to observe the north shore mountains. The path insists that the viewer proceed (giving the museum a very wide berth) to a point across from the gravel lake-bed where the channel beams on uprights reveal themselves as a system of receding, glazed-in posts and

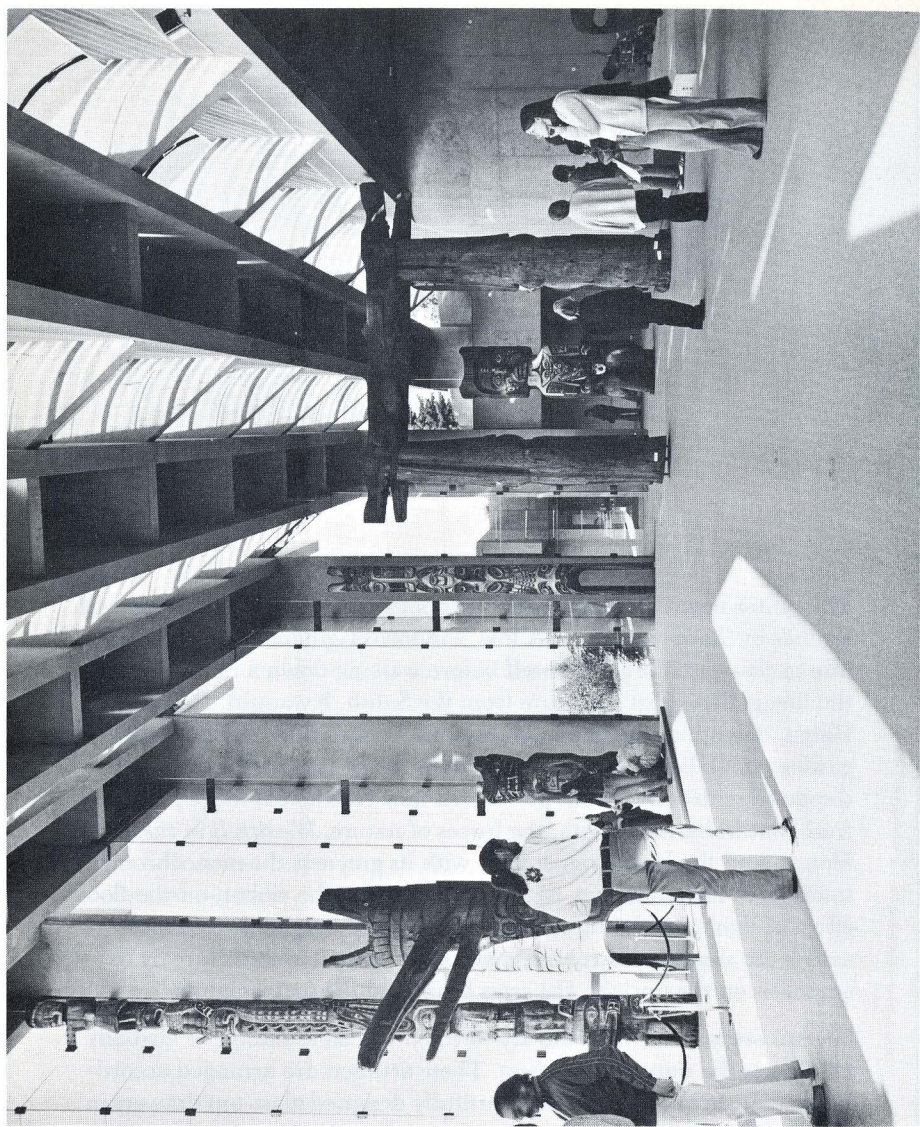


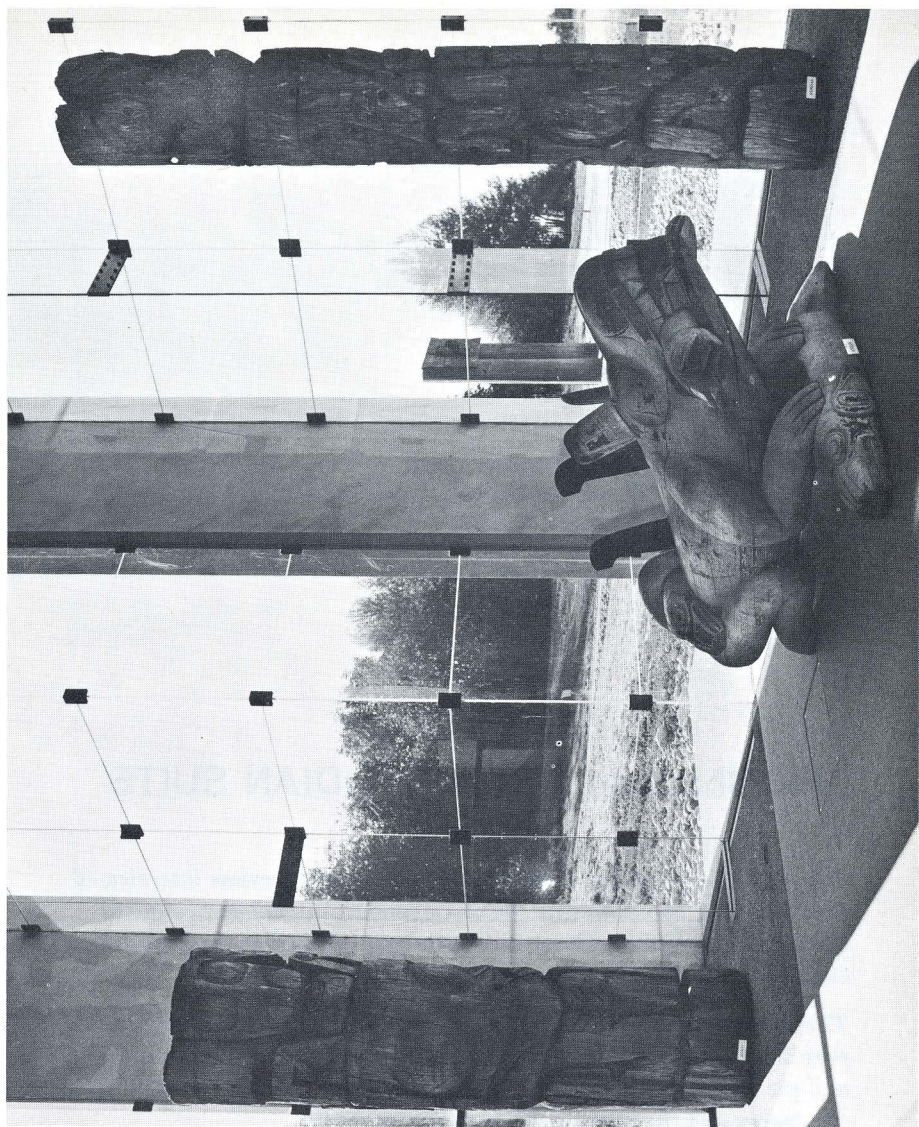
lintels. The placement of the Indian totem poles and house frontals in the garden gives the clue to the source of the abstract patterns and structural methods of the museum: they direct the spectator to read the building and surroundings as an ideal village site.

As the visitor completes the prescribed route along the path the museum shrinks in upon itself and disappears behind another mound of earth positioned to accomplish *visual* burial. Thus the changing relationship of the building to the site along the path reflects two primary rites: excavation and burial.

The visitor now enters the gates and opens the heavy doors carved with legends by 'ksan craftsmen. A low, window-brightened foyer invites him to pause and orient himself before walking down a ramp through the first gallery, past sculpture from the Salish, Kwaquiltl, Haisla and Haida, down into the immense glass-walled hall that overlooks the garden. In Galleries 1-3, the artifacts of the coastal Indians are displayed with tremendous power in a new ceremonial lodge protected from, but in harmony with, the forces of nature. *Wealth is in the House*. And the House remembers with its greyness the monochrome interiors of Indian lodges, recalls and amplifies the ribbon-on-the-floor effect of light cast through the beam-chinks of longhouse ceilings, asserts the simple constructive methods of coastal architecture by its emphasis on the upright, the cross beam and the metal clamp.

Several areas in the museum are devoted to visible storage of virtually all objects the museum possesses. These artifacts are arranged according to culture in cases and in beautifully designed glass-top drawers in cabinets. The collection is in the process of re-classification; it is almost too large and complex to be comfortably displayed within the available space. The visible storage gives the public access to the museum's holdings; it says that all goods are for anthropological interpretation. Here the artifacts are displayed to facilitate investigation by scholars and students; in the first three galleries the artifacts are *elevated* to the status of art in a setting which, through allusion, returns them to the villages from which they came.





## Jack Shadbolt / COAST INDIAN SUITE

*Ann Rosenberg and Jim Roberts of The Capilano Review interviewed Jack Shadbolt about his new twenty-segment charcoal and coloured chalk mural called the Coast Indian Suite, exhibited at the Bau-Xi Gallery November 29 - December 11, 1976.*

*The background to the form of this piece may be found in the multi-part Homage to Emily Carr of 1971, The Chilkoot Experience of 1973 and the Indian Suite of 1976. We asked Jack to talk about the subject, the energy and the mood of his most recent mural.*

### IMAGES

*Coast Indian Suite* (panels 13-18) 1976, charcoal and coloured chalk on paper, 5' x 70' (20 panels).

*Photography: Bau-Xi Gallery*

## INTERVIEW

*AR* You have always been interested in shamans and things that go *bump* in the night.

*JS* Yes, that's a part of the world that I'm interested in, now that you mention it. It's the ritual transformation business, the projecting of our traumas and the acting them out, the fetishes that hold up our *living*, one way or another. I like to find a vehicle for the releasing of them which is, I suppose, one of the prime functions that art can perform. . . .

*AR* Your discovery of local native art that influences the subject of *Coast Indian Suite* came very early in your career. . . .

*JS* My concern with coastal art goes back to my boyhood in Victoria. My first real drawing place was the Victoria Museum and my two main motifs as artist were set by that institution and by the presence of Emily Carr. In the museum they had the Indian objects displayed together with Natural History exhibits of animal and bird skeletons and so when I drew I moved between these worlds. Emily Carr reinforced my emotional response to the image of the forest.

When I get to Hornby, I just let the forest take me over . . . it's just too big to fight. It's just so good to be *on location* again after years of working in my studio out of my head. I got into forest rhythms when I did *Homage to Emily Carr* and let them flow all over me; the *Coast Indian Suite* I've just completed seems to be the last big heave of something, the putting together of a lot of residue images in my sub-conscious. The suite also continues in its way the sense of grandeur that I tried to capture in the *Indian Suite* that I completed last year as a way of paying tribute to the great monuments and sculptural programs that I saw on my trip to India. . . .

AR And why the recent return to objects? In the fifties your work was more abstract.

JS Objects have powerful associatory connections one way or another; they carry powerful *manna*. Pop art helped us get back in touch with the objective world, turning an anthropological eye upon everything and allowing everything we use or touch to become exciting. The two great new sciences of our time are social anthropology and psychology. For me the psychological interest is expressed by dealing with tensions, the inside states. Fetishes like these give me a way to let another aspect of the psychological interest out. I am working from what is familiar to me and to many of us on the West Coast. . . .

I like to find a form congenial to the image I choose to shape. Often when I start, I have no idea how something will turn out; I just begin drawing one or two objects because I like them. So when I began the *Coast Indian Suite*, I drew a mask because I loved the thing and wanted it up in my place at Hornby; then when I finished I said, boy that's terrific, so I started another and put it beside the first, then another for the other side and the rhythm got bigger. I have developed a cumulative process for myself through which I can stretch out further than I could under ordinary circumstances and the conclusion will be unpredictable as I work from known to unknown. For several years I have found the traditional triptych form useful as a way of enlarging or extending an idea beyond a one-piece image. The side wings can comment on the centre panel or the three panels can be equal . . . the mural form I use extends the idea far beyond that to 10 or 20 parts, beyond an easy capacity for viewing and certainly beyond the one picture, one eyeful concept that dominated my thought, as painter for years. 20 units is often the place where I consider that the concept is whole. 20 has an abstract *rightness* that the number 19 does not. . . .

AR Perhaps between your present work and the work you used to do is the same kind of contrast that exists between a novel and a poem. . . .

JS Well, we recognize that both activities are good, but sure there is a difference between *Paradise Lost* and Burns' poem "To a Mouse," a difference between *haiku* and Michaelangelo's *Last Judgment*.

AR Sustaining an image energetically, moving representational material over a multi-panel work, is consistent with the fondness for energy that you express in your book *A Search for Form*.

JS *Energy* is a clue to what I feel art is about. Energy can be a fulfilment of a desire we all share to live *all out*, to have the excitement of the feeling that everything is flowing, that everything is *in the act*, whatever that act is. I suppose that is why sex remains so enormously compelling an activity, for, compared with other experiences, the sexual act is *total*. We lose ourselves in a paroxysm and the whole being is involved completely, beyond consciousness. Anger or fear are other emotions that take us over. Yet most of us live in a *withheld* state, banked down in order to carry out the practical demands put upon us by the world outside. And you can't be *all out*, all of the time, in any case.

But you should be able to allow yourself a rhythm that lets you respond freely when the moment requires it, so that you are able to slip into free-wheel quickly. The act of art can make this requirement of you. Although you do lots of grunting and groaning, cogitating, and technical building, there is a point at which the experience demands/presents you with a climax. And you must go with the moment where all the forces have come together to urge that you follow the excitement.

AR What emotion did you follow in the *Coast Indian Suite*?

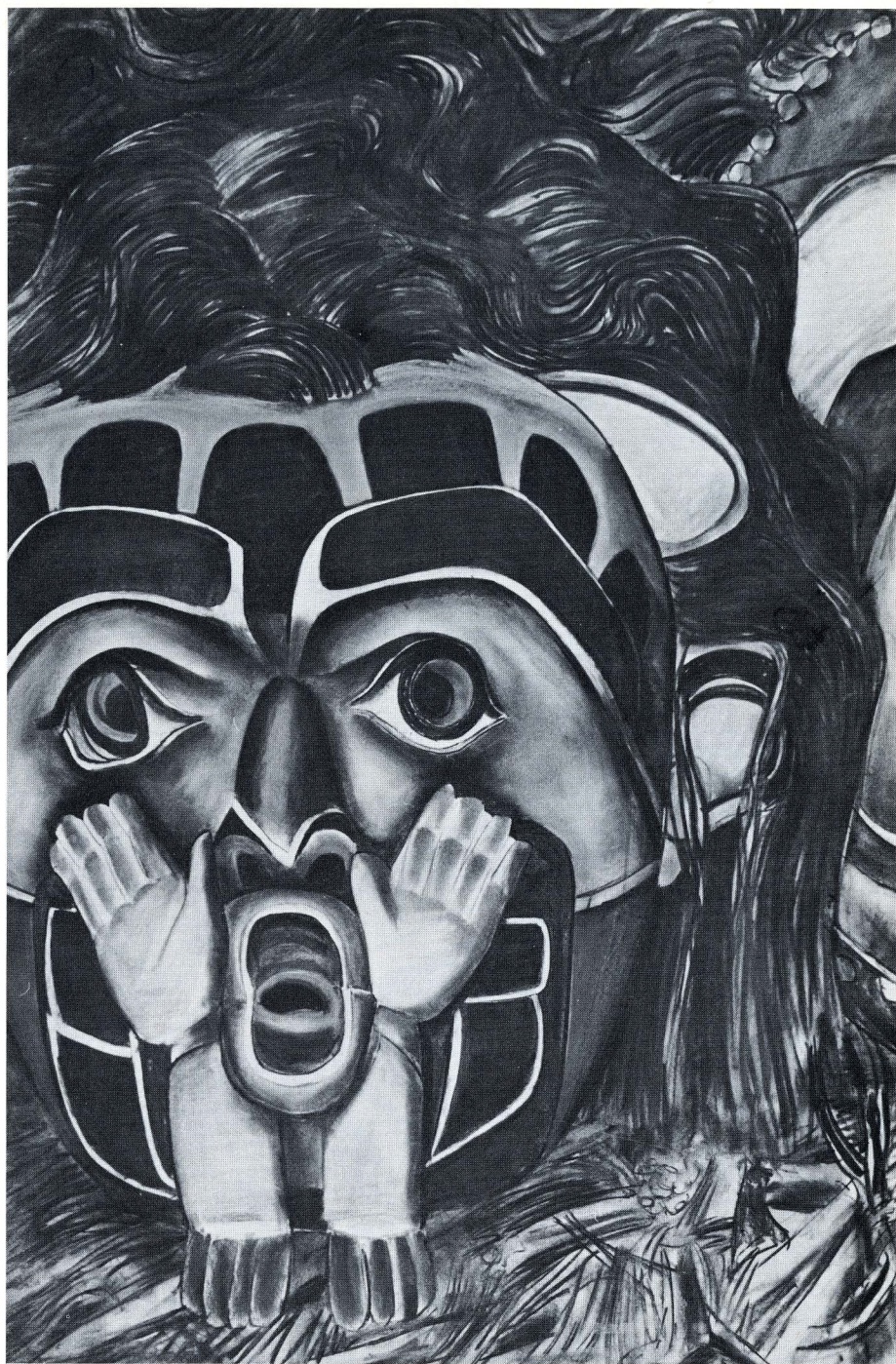
*JS* I am not making a comment on a West Coast Indian theme, but upon my experience of that theme, my dread, my fascination of and with the objects. There may be no authenticity to it from a native person's point of view; he may think the mural is a piece of nonsense. But he might find it interesting and think, my god, is that the way this artist sees my cultural evidence? But even if he says to me, "I don't see your reaction as authentic," nevertheless the mural is my reaction, my improvisation, my response to the forces which I sense the objective materials of the mural embody.

And, after all, the West Coast Indian theme is one of my resources and in this mural I have just decided to let it out, extend myself through it. I am like the athlete who is not content to run the hundred yard race over and over again but tries the 220 and then the 440. . . .

I am also not trying to make a grandiose comment on the nature of man through this mural. It presents, rather, my way of getting into a particular world and becoming lost in it. Yet the piece is epic in structure. You have to walk down it and experience it through a time sequence. . . .

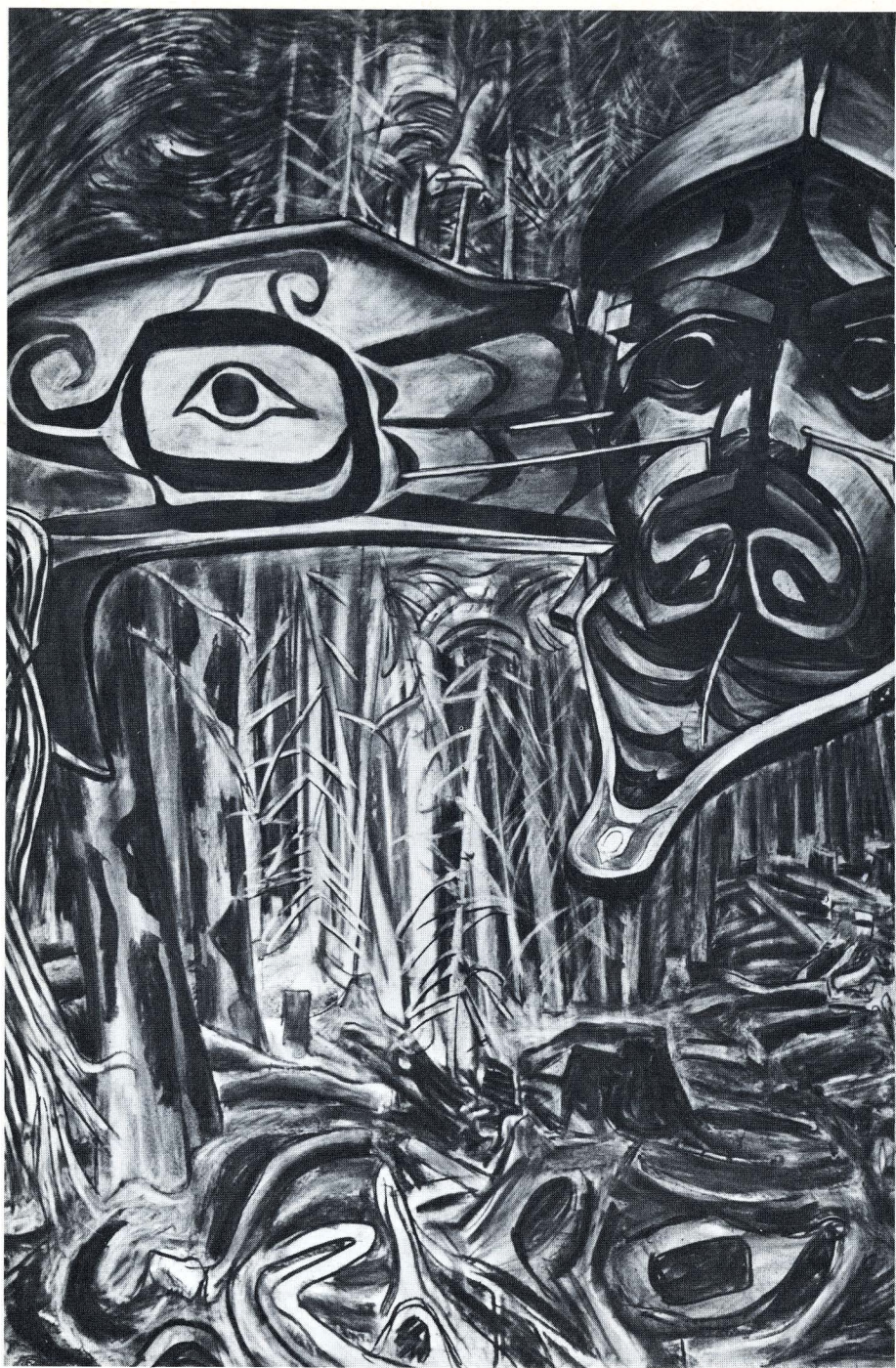
*AR* It's so great to see you working full tilt.

*JS* I'll tell you, the great thing about being an older rather than a younger artist is that you no longer have any doubts about your technical capacity to do things. When I started the idea was that if you studied and worked hard you would learn something, build something. For over thirty years I haven't minded doing that. Now I just don't have any anxieties about whether I can do the thing that I set about doing. My resources are sure.













## Lynn Hughes / RANK BEGINNINGS

*Rank Beginnings, a major work by a beginning artist, was shown at the Vancouver Art Gallery in October/November 1976. Made through simple processes like raku and papier maché, the various components first took on the configuration shown in The Capilano Review, in the site where it was exhibited. Like the Shadbolt mural Coastal Indian Suite, the Hughes multipart piece projects an atavistic power.*

*The interview was conducted by Ann Rosenberg and Jim Roberts.*

### IMAGES

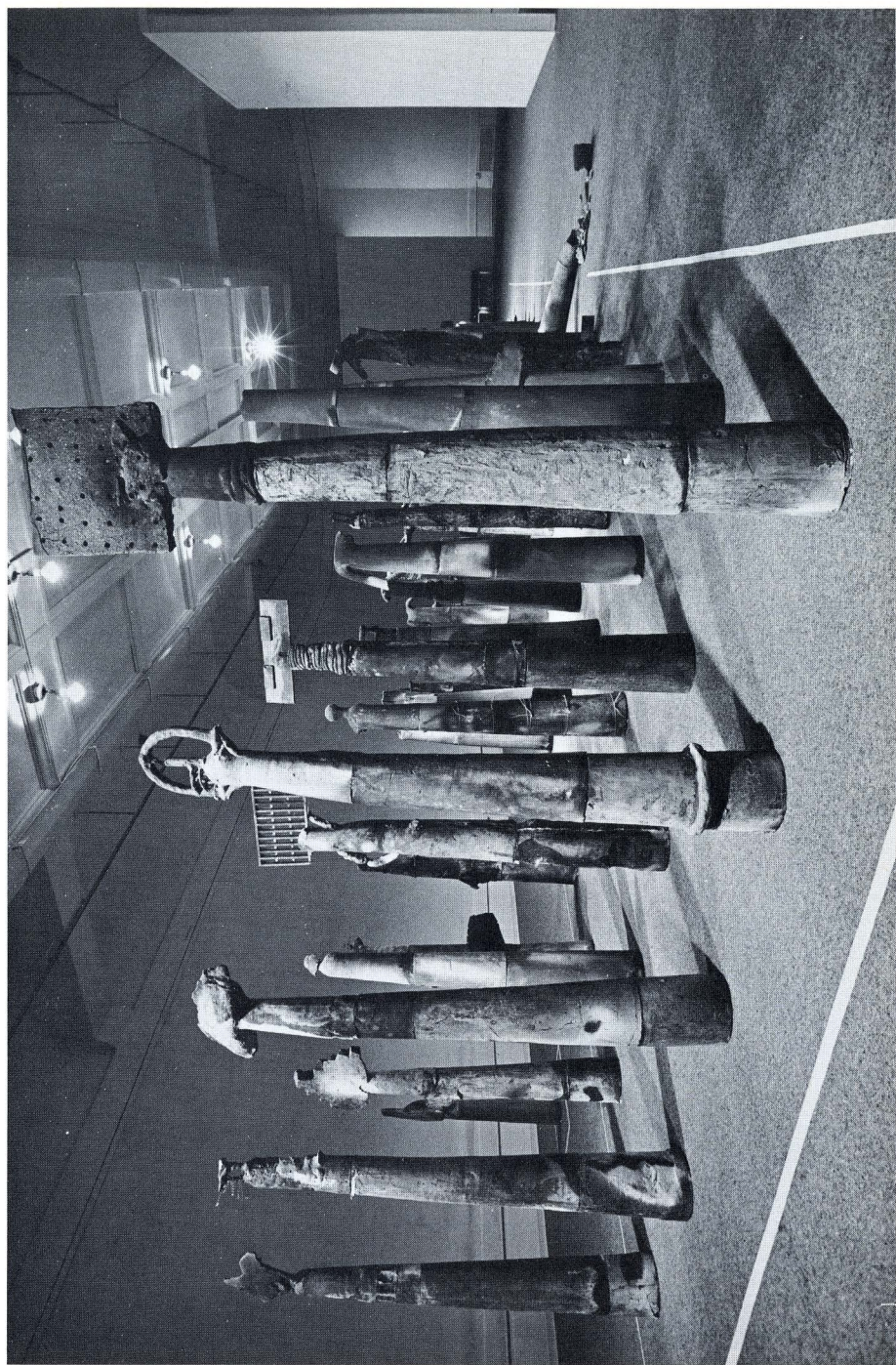
*Rank Beginnings, 1975-6, raku pottery, papier maché, found objects, plan approximately 20' x 50', height ranges from about 5' down to shards.*

*Photography: Tod Greenaway*













## INTERVIEW

*AR* *Rank Beginnings* is the kind of piece that carries with it dozens of associations. Does the fact that you were brought up in Zambia have anything to do with its form?

*LH* I have been interested on and off in all kinds of primitive art, but I am certainly not conscious that *Rank Beginnings* has African associations. One thing I'm conscious of about myself that makes me different from the circle of friends I have here, is that I never bump into anyone I know. My family and I moved around frequently all over the world and I have never gone back to the places that I've been. I have a really inaccessible background. Because I moved every two or three years, my whole life I've had to take from whatever was around and only recently have I been able to make *my own* choices.

I studied English at Liverpool University because it seemed the best thing to do at the time and read all of Shakespeare, even the things that he might not have written, and I don't resent that but I do protest the narrowness of the education I received on behalf of others. In England you tend to study one subject and nothing else. I found that finishing my degree in Canada was a broadening experience.

*AR* After you graduated from UVic you went to the art school here in Vancouver. When did you make the decision to become an artist?

*LH* Well, that happened rather unconsciously . . . It seems to have been the result of my seeing things or situations in a holistic way and yet when I went to art school people talked and taught very much in terms of individual pieces and yet I went there to work out ways of presenting myself through individual pieces that built into a complex, complete idea. As a matter of fact when I work I always start with an *idea*. What I do is different from a series which involves a number of variations on a theme presented together; I work towards a collectivity to build towards the idea I have in mind. *Rank Beginnings*, in its Vancouver Art Gallery form, is one possible result of my decision to let everything in my life and mental process connect with and become my art (and vice versa).

When I first went to the art school I learned technique and *thought up* ideas; now I use whatever is most immediate and most available to me in terms of manufacturing processes and image. I look around the room for a subject, and keep open to the possibilities for a subject in everything I do. The things that form the tops of the figures in *Rank Beginnings* come from every aspect of my life.

Some resulted directly from experience I had in the three jobs I held when I was working on the piece. Some objects collected during that period are incorporated into some of the figures — the grill on one of the heads, for example. I became conscious of the city at that time, of houses being wrecked. A huge old farm house across from us, in really great condition, one day gave out the sound of a window being cracked and I thought, oh maybe someone's replacing a back window and went off to school. When I came home there was nothing, nothing there and I couldn't believe it. Some of the other figures resulted directly from pictures and I would force myself to do them exactly; others would start off from an idea then completely change in the process.

*AR* In the work as it is assembled at the Vancouver Art Gallery, the scale ranges from about life-size down to fragments. At what point did you make this choice and at what moment was all of *Rank Beginnings* in your mind?

*LH* I definitely started off with a big idea in mind, that I was going to do something very simple, very basic that could be anything that I wanted it to be because all the pieces would be made with the same base form. I knew that in the end it would stand in rows and that because the bases would be uniform I could do anything that I wanted on the tops. I started with the familiar figures first and many of these came from drawings — the pieces became more and more multi-media as I went along — I became bigger and bolder as I went along and allowed things to grow and change as they would.

*Raku* pottery is very fragile and tends to break, and that is why I chose it. I wanted a very simple form that I could turn out fast and I wanted to break some of the pieces. But debris was not foremost in my mind. I saw that to make rows was a potential for a final organization, but when I was first making them they were not placed that way.

I just went with everything that happened to them. Around Christmas I had a number of them set up in a spare room. I really enjoyed them. I would sit in front of them. When I went away for Christmas someone was storing tools in the room and an old Volkswagen seat and forgot to shut the door. My cat went in and sat on the seat. It tipped over and the figures knocked over and broke into debris. When I came back I had to accept this change. I could no longer sit before them preoccupied with how they were. It was a good thing to happen, although it broke my heart. I was more free after that to just put things together as they would go. And in the end I managed to use just about everything I had made and all the shards and bits I had saved and everything supported everything.

As I look at it now, I think its impact is a little over-formal.

*AR* As it is now, the arrangement carries rich associations. Every viewer has something to bring to it. And yet its meaning is open. Is everything building up or falling down? Is it a procession of horror or magnificence?

*LH* Well, it also has some humor in it. There is a phrase that kept coming to my mind, and I almost wrote it down except that every time I did, it sounded corny. People keep saying that it's an army; they are caught by the severity of it. The rows had to be there because of all the looseness. So I wanted to say "an army is made up of men, some of them fierce but many of them funny," in order to remind everyone that in films about war there is often the clown figure who goes through the trenches making jokes. I really tried to put that idea *in*. At the very end, even while I was setting it up, I kept adding funny things like springs and toothpicks painted neon to the heads. And while I was adding the toothpicks I needed something to stick them in until they dried, so I stuck them into a carrot and it became a porcupine in gold and neon with stripes where the paint ran down, so I put the carrot in front with the shards where I suppose it has now shrivelled up.

I had no way of seeing the piece until it was up.

*AR* So then you could foresee arranging the components of the piece some other way, even in the same place?

*LH* Oh yes. I only saw some of them lined up when I set them up for my father to see when he came to town before the show. At the gallery they are arranged according to instinct, by trial and error.

NOTE: *On the second to last day of the exhibition, Lynn Hughes re-organized Rank Beginnings into a startlingly different grouping, a move in keeping with her sense of the flexible process that is her work. She believes (and so do some other witnesses) that the second order was even more successful than the first — A.R.*

## Fielding Dawson / TWO STORIES

### THE MAN WITH THREE NAMES

*for Lew Archer*

I was driving along 101 in a light blue mood in a dark blue Jag when I saw her on the shoulder, hitching. I slowed, and stopped, and she got in beside me. I put the Thompson on the back seat to put her at ease, and then I looked at her.

She looked Greek which meant she was probably Italian, or even Jewish.

"Wow," I whispered.

She was very tan, about fifty, and a knockout, in a blue and white polka-dot mini-dress, white shoes and white button earrings. Her hair was raven black with streaks of grey. I couldn't see her eyes because of her dark glasses, like a defense, but I knew they'd be black and as beautiful as the rest of her. She was built like an enamelled cobalt sauna, and her teeth were perfect.

"Thanks," she said.

"Sure," I said.

"What's your name?" she asked. Her voice was the voice of an older woman, with a lot of experience behind it.

"Boy!" I thought. But I said,

"I've got three, which one do you want?"

"The real one."

I told her.

"No kidding," she said. "Do you know Trav M — ?"

"Hey," I interrupted —

She laughed.

"How far are you going?" I asked.

"Isn't that what I'm supposed to ask?"

"I don't know," I said. "Is it? I don't think so."

"Shall we run through this again?"

"No," I said. "I've got too many problems as it is."

"Yeah? Like what? How old are you?"

"Nobody knows," I said.

"You're older than Trav," she joked.

"He's not so old," I said defensively, "and he has his problems okay."

"His eyes are the color of spit," she said.

"Why's a good looking dish like you following your thumb down  
101?"

"I have to meet somebody in 'Frisco."

"Yeah?"

"Yeah."

"Don't say 'Frisco' when you get there," I warned.

"I'll say anything I want," she said, like a girl.

"Reach into the glove compartment, would you? I'm thirsty."

She did, and handed me my bottle of Death. I took a slug and offered her some, which she accepted, and afterwards capped the bottle and lay it on the seat between us. She had great legs. She was beautiful everywhere.

"Where are you from?" I asked.

"Oh, here and there. You?"

"Knopf — at first, I think," I said, trying to remember.

"Oh, yeah. RCA."

"What's your name?" I asked.

"Let's see," she said, putting a scarlet fingernail between her two front teeth — "Jane. How's that?"

"Okay," I said. "What do you do for a living?"

"Not much. You?"

"I'm the last of the hardboiled dicks," I said.

"The last?" she laughed. "What happened to the others?"

"Well," I said, as we took a long curve: "They died."

"Yeah?"

"Yeah."

"You on a case?"

"Yeah." I told her about it.

"A birdwatcher turned sour, eh? What happened? Too many chippies spoil the roost?"

"Not quite," I said — "but close," and I told her all about it. There was, it seemed, a certain etc., "you get it," I finished.

"I get it," she said. "You married?"

"No," I said, "well, it depends. You?"

"In a way. I just left him. He was a bastard, but I liked him."

"Yeah?"

"Unh huh. Pull over here, would you? I want to get some cigarettes."

The clock on the dash said three twenty p.m.

I pulled into the truckstop and she got out. I watched her walk into the low small building. Then I waited. Big rigs pulled in and out while I waited, with a couple of slugs of Death for company, and when it got dark I began to worry, so I went inside and asked around. Nobody had seen her, or knew of her at all, she hadn't even come in, they said.

"What woman?" they asked, and all my description fell on deaf ears, like peanut butter in water, even Deaf Smith, it didn't work, so I went out in a darker color mood and got into my blue Jag and headed down 101 again, wondering — who was she? Was she a dream? And if so, a dream of who?

It began to rain, and the highway turned as slick and glossy as a deadly ivy, crawling on my nerves. There was something haunting, and yet familiar, about her — something . . . no, I couldn't get it.

I never saw her again.

I finished the case — the birdwatcher had gone stir-crazy and thought he was seeing his neighbors instead of — birds, and when I got back into town the next night I called Mom, to let her know I was back and that I was okay. She worries about me. Me and my acne. And my braces. You know how they are. I took off my gun, and lay down for a nap. I had a dream.

"Wow," I whispered, when I woke up. "*Boy!*" I thought, but I said, "I've got three, which one do you want?"

"The fourth," she said.

## THE LADY FROM SOUTH AFRICA BEREFT OF HER FORTUNE

Vancouver lay beyond English Bay like a child's block city at the foot of snow-capped mountains, which tilted east toward Calgary, under a long low dusty blue Canadian sky.

Helen and Brian were drinking white wine at the table by Helen's picture window. I was there too, drinking Russian vodka. Mark, Helen's son, was being more than patient with us. It was around eight p.m., and we were due at the party. In fact we were late.

But she was telling Brian and I of her childhood on the big South African farm. Of the Zulu servant who smoked dope, and served suppers awfully slowly, and of her parents who held hands at the table, of her Father who drank Scotch and loved it. She spoke with a warm, and most unusually friendly tone. I know no one like her, save a dear lifelong friend who spends her summers in New Hampshire, fortune intact.

And then there is me, who is broke.

Helen gave me a present.

It was a cardboard toiletpaper tube. Near one end a hole about the size of a nickel had been cut, and over it a small square of aluminum foil had been taped with that opaque scotch-tape the editors at Random House use. But in the middle of the untaped foil, there was a slight indentation, and I saw several pin punctures. This gift was because I had no pipe, where I was staying, downstairs in Rudy's studio apartment. She then gave me a small block of hash, the size of the eraser on a brand new pencil.

As I laughed, she smiled and winked, and you have it on my authority: we smoked. Thus we went to the party, and in spite of all her dough being locked up in South Africa, she had her ways of loving living and her ways were legion. You therefore have it on my authority: she owned that wink.

## Alexandre Amprimoz / THINKING ABOUT ONE OF HIS STORIES

tall and narrow like a twelfth century cloister the painting shares the complexity of a Venetian wellhead. The last lecture of the term always took place at her house on the lake. She would sit in her rocking chair and speak softly while staring at her numerous antique and priceless rings.

not like to be pompous, but there is in William Levé's work a timeless wisdom and a supernatural vision, unfortunately reserved for Stendhal's 'happy few'. Then she would look at me, smile and whisper: Father, this is your field . . . would you care to discuss that? But her dark skin, imprisoned without vulgarity in a bright yellow bikini, made it almost impossible for any of us to capture her theory of derivative confluence. If she were still among us I would not attempt to remember her love. What she left us in her writing is basically a method. Given an intuitively and carefully chosen set of 'images' there always is a system of relationships that unites them with an enigmatic harmony.

and in her last letter, as in all my subsequent dreams, she keeps begging me to continue that type of formal research. The painting is a landscape: a thin strip of earth surrendering most of the superior part of the canvas to the imagination of a cloudy sky. On the left a manor seems to be pasted against the canvas. When you look at it closely you get the impression that it must have been carved out of the trunk of a gigantic tree, grown on the very top of the highest hill. It was after her first structural analysis of a Medieval triptych that she began to formulate the theory of derivative confluence, at least that's what she said, but I believe she was born with it. Three images feed each other, grow and finally die. The present state of studies shows that God and the Devil are still alive. Who was the third man? Perhaps she left us when she was on the point of finding the answer.

so these figures are really convincing and you begin to believe that it was the painter's intention to place them in his composition. Yet it seems you imagined them. Somewhere in the valley, a faint light filters from behind the closed shutters of an old house. Inside a group of men drink and play cards around a large circular table. One of them is well dressed while the others seem to be wearing work clothes. On the wall opposite the window there is a tall narrow painting.

but as soon as she began to age she went down very fast, like an overly popular song. Then, to try to escape from the claws of time she performed a number of substitutions: wavy clothes to compensate for the decline of her swaying walk, thicker make-up to hide the crumbling skin, heavier and more numerous jewels to balance the dim flames of her almost extinguished eyes. In the Salons, where she still managed to drag us, we could hear the metallic cacophany of bracelets and necklaces worn by women of her circle. To us they were clinking skeletons and beyond their forced smiles you could sense the approach of a final *Danse Macabre*. If you look at the sky more carefully you can see monsters and deformed figures. The house on the very top of the highest hill is also lit. Through the window you can see an attractive girl doing her homework. On the wall behind her there is a tall narrow painting but both sexual desire and nostalgia push you to take an interest in the student's work. The book, open on the left of the desk, shows the text of a poem: "Study of Two Pears". It was written by Wallace Stevens but William Levé never read it. She then concluded, while staring at the lake: therefore "Les études de la poire" are of a very personal inspiration.

still see her admiring her body in front of the mirror. The girl has taken a magazine from under her desk. The picture on the cover shows a woman sitting in a rocking chair. She is extremely attractive in her rather revealing yellow bikini. A young handsome priest is standing behind her. The student begins to caress her breasts. The shapes of her erect nipples are now visible through the material of her nightgown. As soon as she hears footsteps approaching she throws the magazine under the desk and gets back to her homework. A young man opens the door.

don't you ever knock  
they are not coming back until Monday  
how do you know  
phoned        have a party  
enough grass  
get on the phone

these words are heard but the conversation is not easy to follow. We don't have enough time today to discuss how all the superstitions regarding Venetian Wellheads show the suppression of what we have defined as our third principle. Then she would stand up, imitated by her six disciples: four young women of moderate beauty, a tall thin man and the young priest. In the painting we see their bodies floating in the dark sky. Then William Levé must have known them. But wasn't he dead by the time she began to lecture on his work? Perhaps this anachronism can be explained by the theory of derivative confluence. At the top of the painting there is a priest playing the flute. That, at least, we can read in the lighter cloud. Actually, the instrument could be a clarinet. Facing the priest and on his left she is kneeling naked. Her unusually puffed lips are very close to the musical instrument. Of course the composition of those two clouds could also be read as the typical snake charmer one finds in many paintings by William Levé. Below them and a little to the right the four women are swimming, exposing without shame their naked bodies to the young man who is looking at them from under the water. He sits on top of the manor.

ring belonged to Laura de Noves. Impossible, says the priest. She presses the ring on the waxboard. Its print shows a tall narrow painting. He steps back: who are you? Come closer, she whispers. Laura de Noves, Petrarca's love who married Hugues de Sade in 1325; the marquis

who are you? Come closer. He can't escape from her but there is nothing sexual about his desire. Hypnosis. He returns to playing the flute in the painting. The well dressed man is told to play! The others laugh. A voice says, he must be thinking about one of his stories.

*Illustrations by Ann Rosenberg, after a Chinese Pillow Book.*

## Daryl Rasmussen / CLOISONS (PARTITIONS)

You may call me whipping cream, a wax-dipped flower, locked up for my time-lapse expanding imagination, a deep-frozen paperweight fly in amber, but I am *Philip Owen Plume*. Somewhere snowflakes dance. Somewhere the girl with ebon hair.

And you, fat-face Klitchintzski? What about you? Are you aghast as I am? You and your ample (it seems) circumstantial evidence? You and your no-skin skin game? God, if only once, just once, I, Plume could mush your rotten-pumpkin nose into my canned corn beef and cabbages! Dead cow is only repugnant, Klitchintzski.

I have worked for countless years in the same china shop, *Kingcups and Queens*, hunting for this baroque intaglio or that plain-spoken pattern between the amber rows of pine shelving at back, kicking empty wickerwork crates through dunes of bamboo shavings, and tittle-tattling over the nabob brow of the counter with browsing does. Coffee spoons you say? It is a matter of degree: I had ladled out my life with *salt and mustard* spoons. Each gauzy day was a neatly pre-measured tea bag. Indeed, the eventful anticyclone (you'll soon see it) that stirred about me those last free days and strained me out on the fourth and strained me out on the lactic fourth was not the customary cuppa I was addicted to.

I repeat: *I am astonished!* Perhaps even my bewilderment, sausage and mustard in a bun, was a thing prepared by Klitchintzski.

The first time I saw him (April 1) he was on his haunches vulturing (a succulent fat lean) over a whipform rivulet discharging the abdominal end of an oblong puddle at a cross-path in Peter's Park. It had been an incessant mercurial day in Tea Town: sun, wind, and hail and as I approached him (head on but obliquely) from across the turbid water of the puddle the rain fairly thundered and thwacked the ground. The surface of the puddle was suffused with little argent-olive bubbles, each reflecting the vault of the sky in its own node. Klitchintzski's hat diverted jets down his collar. His face was beryl-green and his gabardine was a loofah.

I stopped inside his limit of vision to offer this Water Rat the shelter of my umbrella. He, himself, deliberately lifted his stoned attention (limited vision) from the cross-hatches on the rill as if accusing (!) that I had barged in on his inheritance of thought and asked me how to stop a Pol — from drowning. I was sheep-sheared and prepared to smack my generosity, on the wrists, but his midas grin flashed and his hair-lip whined, “You don’t.” I had been a galosh heel (twice) and although he himself knew it he made no attempt to console me. Klitchintzski was a whipper in every sense of the word.

I clutched my umbrella (keeping it to myself) and reluctantly precipitated a jelly dum dum of my own, “Did you hear about the Pol — parachutiste?”

“Yes,” his buck-shot eyes bounced up to mine, “he opens on impact. Har-har-har. Do you smoke after intercourse?” offering me a lean Warsaw Corridor Cigar.

I whisked out my billiard, Sobranie, and Black Cat Matches. We acquainted ourselves over our fires, the rain vaporized, I contracted my umbrella, and the meniscus of the puddle began to fathom jungle in reflection. My squat inarticulator wrung a crimped paper boat out of his gabardine pocket and sent it down the thin channel. The puffin then loosened his scarf. Welts from that too-tight noose. I scanned the tree tops for a tactful alibi to escape under, winced at the glistening bristles on the back of his nacreous neck, then at the boat on the thin skin of the transparent trickle. Klitchintzski began to grin again.

"It's a queer day. Know any astrology?"

"Huh?"

"Anything about Uranus?" he asked.

"My what?"

The paper sampan was caught on a halo downstream. I freed the boat by extricating the dam with my fingertips and a bulging curiosity. It was perfectly egg-shaped: a white and blue porcelain testicle. "This is a rare little Humpty," I held it, scintillating up to the sun, in my gaudy red-bloated clutch. The boat oscillated away.



Klitchintzski's chops were lipo-agape, "What is it?" and "Let me see?"

I ceded the egg with a grudge — such a treasure was not to be re-excavated (again). "It's willow-pattern English China. Thomas Minton and all that." I asked if he knew the story. He said, and I knew he was lying, that he didn't. "The mandarin's secretary elopes with the princess. They escape across the bridge, there, and

live in the tea house, there." Pointing, pointing. "The mandarin is in a huff about this so he collects his aids and stalks the tea house. The raid is a bust because the lovers turn into sparrows and (see the sparrows, no, up there?) re-move to the willows."

Klitchintzski was out to lunch. He pocketed my egg and got up to leave. He was short so I told him a rude joke. An aperitif, I stupidly thought, with my pilfered egg. Klitchintzski was an ear. "There was this drunk who came home simply gassed one night and asked his wife to have one last drink with him before tucking in. She refused and tucked in on her own while the drip went to the bar, made himself a double gin fizz and sat disconsolately sipping. He finished it and squeezing up for another called to his wife, 'Hey, Honey, does a lemon have legs?' 'No,' came the rejoinder. 'Well then I've just squished the piss out of your canary.' " Klitchintzski did not laugh, instead, his quadruple chin dropped and his face blossomed. A livid maraschino hatching plans. He thanked me more than I deserved and hustled off up the colonnade, a lemon, a hot and heavy lemonade himself, with legs. I turned in my own direction for my steaming bathtub and dried apricocks.

That first brief hobnob with glib Klitchintzski did not distill out a drip of my concern. But if it had, If — then what prostrations (and castrations) might I have side-stepped? How many zillion ways might I have returned home that Wednesday, detouring Peter's Park and this paltry prison. *Could* I have erected a dike against his diabolical concoctions or was that first stagnant cock-play *the* peremptory tu-whitt, tu-whoo in his loopy fetish for intrigue? Seems so. The cad, the slimy earwig in his borggy gabardine!

Wednesday I walked home from the shop in the same stupid direction. Facetious Klit — was sitting solidly on a bench in all his blubbery obesity under the arbour, aboral to his former Tuesday position. I now imagine that he almost burst with excitementations when he saw me (saw me coming, as it were), but by the time I was close enough his conjectural fascination had submerged like the sapphire-in-the-mud puddle of the previous day.

Garlic (sausage), humbug (poor camouflage), and perspiration exhaled from his still saturated gabardine. "Proves he slept in it," I told myself sitting down with as little salutation as I could muster. He fiddled with something (the porcelain globule?) in his pocket. "Billiards," I inwardly snickered and audibly tolled out two etiquette-pamphlet-second-encounter-questions: the first, if he was married, and the second, how he could spend his post meridiems so leisurely. I was probing his financial guts, which were tell-tale enough judging the sauna face, *pompadour d'homme* wavy hair (disheveled) and the manicured nailth and gross cabochon ring that primped through it.

"I am a sybarite," he needn't have confessed, "and a wife, especially a beautiful and kindly one, is but the embodiment of that love." I prepared to put my foot in my mouth for a third, but Klitchintzski held up his piggy hand for silence. I complied, remaining taciturn throughout his copious monologue, as much as it pained me. I have not tried to capture (why would I?) his over-abundant stammerings and unemphatic rests.

"My patrimony included a string of butcher shops." (My vegetarian stomach threw up a riot of revolt into my mouth.) "I can afford being a sybarite. My wife is a valorous creature, keeps house, cooks Cantonese, and still has enough *jeunesse* and energy left in her tiny body to pursue her own resplendent interests with, yes, you guessed it, added ease.

"We have no children. I would keep servants, but she abhors people sucking up to her. She's just a pet. We don't live far and enjoy entertaining. If you're ever free . . ." he left off, a nasty joke. I strained to clear my throat, but before the phlegm was up Klitchintzski rushed on. Beneath his bunk I could only squeak *sotto voce* by shifting my prat from what was becoming tender and well over-done: my spare time. ". . . of course it is up to you entirely.

"She is a Chinese. For months at a time we appear anti-social, rather we don't appear at all and reside in the gardener's cottage *au derrière*. She cooks more and cleans less. As of last night we are enduring just one of those little interludes — a variation on a toy pye-ana. She is contrapuntally tired. Has too many things going at once." He fidgeted and transferred the egg to his other pocket. Snooker.

"She was brought up in Canton by her father, a monarchist, and fully feels (she has never told me why, but I can almost see lash scars on her mother's back reflected in her eyes as she looks at me — pity) the obligations a wife must show her master. Twelve years ago, seventeen and pig-tailed, she was given notice by The Party (party, pah!) to report for work in the gold mines at Nangtsien. Instead, her father bade her take the family heirloom, a solid golden egg inscribed with two diametrically opposed phoenixes (overlooked by the New Authorities). She did. To the blacksmith. He hammered the gold to leaf. She sewed the leaf into a belt and flitted along the muddy goat-gut backroads to the ocean. Reaching the shore she slid her body into chicken grease and began swimming an ideally semi-circular route around the Tach'an Peninsula hoping to land near Kowloon, a short saunter into wizard Hong Kong and a ferry ride to Victoria.

"However, a bald storm blew up late in the afternoon . . ." (I, Plume, began a sneezing fit at this point in Klit's narrative) "... forcing her to land on Tach'an. She had not yet escaped The Party nor its cold-blue machine guns. The tempest ravaged On Ly for two more days. She had only raw piddocks and limpets to eat under the scanty shelter of runt loquats and corkscrew pines.

"As the sun spread its strawberry sepals and ox-blood petals on the third morning she again magnetized for Kowloon across the Deep Bay. Her muscles were jelly, so much of the day she could barely tread water and think only of not dropping the gold-leaf belt to the bottom of the green-tea sea.

"Next morning black-slickered prawn-fishermen found the spent swimmerette on their beach north of Kowloon. They revived her, my denuded darling, fed her and sent her along the road to the Emerald City of Oz, Hong Kong. She sold the gold to another of her father's contacts, bought a serviceable passport and sailed here within the month.

"She had worked in a Chinese laundry (no better than a gold mine) for five years until I decided to take a walking trip to V. Village.

"The day I arrived was liquid lunch, spurting cumulo-nimbus, like yesterday. My clothes, the only ones I had with me, got sopping so I went to the laundry. On Ly was alone there and . . . well," the bugger actually blushed, "you can guess the rest for yourself." I let on that I couldn't. "We seduced each other in the back place on a pile of dirty linen. Benzoline hung in the air, the iron was steaming and an ancient finger in the vestibule was flicking on the service bell. I assure you it was most erotic.

"I was quick to free her from other people's sheets. But that was eight years ago," he almost looked pitiable. "I no longer think I am deserving. Eight years can do a lot of damage to a man's hood. You can see that for yourself." I could. I sneezed. "Nevertheless," he continued, "I must go and buy those canaries you suggested." His mood had looped the loop. "It seems we both have a way with little birds. Here, take my address . . ." Peach card. Curlicue monogram. "You will visit . . . please?" I sneezed again and said I would.



All of my insipid thoughts that evening were concentrated on Klitchintzski. My imagination was stiff, reeling in coils, branching into bulbous abscesses, yet always backsliding to the issue of that droopy fatguts and the beautiful story of his wife, On Ly. I could not derail myself from the kinetics of Klit's infernal inertial locomotive. I was not aware I was on a monorail at all, as much as I despise linear thought.

I wandered about my garret from window to lonely window, neglected, and so smelted my perogies into case-hardened pellets, then garburated the lot. My dinner consisted of tepid sour cream, cool scummy borscht, and a bowlful, and a bowelful, of gripe from an undiagnosed agent. (Q.E.D.)

Looking closer in the bathroom of that night I can see myself, sneezing dew upon my looking-glass face. Bubbles on a puddle. Pubbles on a buddle. My face now a mosaic, now a shimmering forest, now all but obliterated.

I slithered in bed rather earlier than usual. As I lay there, groggy, stressed, a silk-shorted pugilist pommeled me with sand-sacks of sleep, and out of the dark corners behind my chintz partition emerged a vision of rum Klitchintzski in overcoat. He flung it open releasing a tiny sparrow in pig-tails and tight chemise. It glided and cheeped about my skull no matter which way I rolled over and over. I could not corral it. I even (even!) tried to tie its french-curving trajectories into sheepshanks and clove-hitches (doubtless an absurd notion to the truly wakeful), but it wormed its way out of this inscribing first an epicanthus, then kohl-shadowed eyes, a tiny nose, and On Ly's soft floppy lips, which tightened and cat-bawled as sparrow dissolved and gabardine debauched only in a spray of clotted face-cloths, cheesy (Sardo) socks, gelatinized g-strings, and crusted panties. "We seduced each other . . ." his nettlesome hair-lip, ". . . I assure you it was most erotic . . ." holding her frail, limp, glowing, exhausted body draped over his left arm as he erected the scaffolding, guppy-like, with his right, disseminating for a second thrust, this time in a dream nine *a l'hauteur* extension, ". . . a variation on a toy piano . . ." the ghoulish organist humped over the dainty limbs of berceuse On Ly on Plume's bedstead!



I sat up and switched on the lamp, determined to justify my sour hatred for priapistic onanistic Klit. "Was it merely because he was self-sufficient? Certainly not! Just because Plume must slave his life away in that disgusting little shoppe . . . no, he is not the covetous type. Perhaps, then, because he was lonely . . . No! That would be the last thing." I got my women when I pleased, you can bank on that, and petty

bickerings over vacuum shifts, ah it's not worth it. No I loathed the bastard because he had his claws into On Ly.

"Imagine Plume, a man of twenty-nine, *Mesdames and Messieurs de la cour*, under-reaching around to grab the flabby buttocks of a *cinquante ans* cow, ploughing her in diurnal rhythms, his nose buried in her flaccid putrid udders, pretending to enjoy . . . Sirs, he could not even rise to the occasion, could never enjoy the buttermilk rumballs of such an art deco hag. And poor On Ly, whipped up under the grotty instant-replayed spasm of that cornucopial polar bear . . . !"

By God I knew what I must do: Free Her From the Tyrant! Live out the willow-ware story. Thinks he does her a fever. "I assure you . . ." his pelvis in circular motion, "most erotic, most erotic, most erotic . . ." My stomach curdled. Oesophagus in reverse. I slept and awoke with four and twenty canaries in my pit, the weary light still on, my nose clotted, and sour glair on the sheets.

I was in a jitter all Thursday anticipating my next tryst with Klitchintzski. I broke half a crateful of the best Limoges tea-cups and saucers, which both grounded me and upset Rives, the boss, abominably. The poor flabbergasted man was in such a huff that he began threatening everyone in the shop, customers included, which did nothing to console my watery position on the premises. (I found a note: "Beat it!" (signed) Killer, meanly pinned to the walnut chiffonier with a silver butterknife.) I began to wonder if I should meddle less in Klit's affairs with On Ly, who, after all, might be content, if not happy in the lick of luxury. Oh, Plume, you incontinent cock-sparrow! Had I but further heeded my own advice.

As I stepped out at five a light windless drizzle began to sugar down from the thin icing overcast. In spite of that I side-tracked my usual short religious route to the park in order to enter the fluff-weight fray by the same colonnade by which Klitchintzski had exited the day previous. But my theatrics were nipped in the bud. The rain had sopped the bench and it would never do (oh no!) for him to douche his massaged flanks so brutishly. He was standing, his back towards me, looking at the latticed climbers and April shoots of the arbour. My entrance ignored, the puddle re-accumulating, and to add insult to snubbery I make bold to record our colloquy in this form:

KLIT (turns on his heel to pug-face me) *Not so punctual today, hmmm?*

PLUME *Detention. I had to sit on my hands and chamois the cups. I broke valuable china today. (Toady.)*

KLIT *Oh, (garbled pretense) no Moorcroft vases, I trust. I shouldn't think that that little shop would carry (clumsy, very clumsy) anything of real value. (over saxonate, a little too fluid for my tastes, his face was flushed fuschia.)*

PLUME *No, my paycheck has only been dented, that would have tore it into a thimbleful of incorrigible square millimeters. Totalled confetti. All the knight's horses and all the king's men.*

KLIT *(indifferently) I suppose. (My squandered vocals. How might I turn the conversation on top of On Ly? His pocket giving birth to a bottle of gin (Gordon's) pulled down to the boar-wolf's ears.) Here, have a shwig.*



PLUME *(lips wetted on sparks and fire.) So this (ugh) is what you do all day, you rascal, sipping in the rain.*

KLIT *Rainsha good mixsher. (sea shells she sells.)*

PLUME *Yes, (sotto voce) it's doubtless the carbaoxylic acid that keeps you on your feet. Did your little lady like the canaries?*

KLIT *Adored them! You should have sheen her on her tiptoes in white tights after*

*ballet — she's a ballerina, you know — attituding and arabeshqueing as she reached up to feed the two little twitching things. Shplendid. Shimplly shplendid. (blooming and salivating on Plume's umbrella, remarkable caprice though, on tiptoes himself, but from where had he really extracted those two euphonious technicalities? he recapped himself with the bottle.)*

PLUME *(trimming down to procure an invite.) Love is indeed a fragile plant. You must feed and spray daily.*

KLIT *(secreting from every bore.) Such a dove. Silver-lined. Indefatigable. (etc., etc.,) and she should like to see the man who proposed such a charming gift.)*

PLUME *And I should like to see her! (down boy!)*

KLIT *By all means, old boy, you shall. Not today. I musht shober up. . . . (burst of sibilations) . . . tomorrow, then . . . yesh . . . Friday . . . (Plume nods, a grinning yes.) . . . that'sh shettled then. Tomorrow.*

He tawled off. "Goodbye," I mimicked from my anytime atoll, having gained such, what proved, a mustard-seed victory. He skirted around me, almost too frolicsome, kicked pieces of refuse out of the puddle, pirouetted and shouted back to ask if I had his number. Nod. "Tomorrow," I thought, "tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow, you old fart."

"You must be patient," I told my dinner. "Control. Control. Control." But I *was* titillated to be meeting her, wanted, craved to see how much of a pygmalion Klitchintzski had pulled over her subtle embonpoint, hungered to pat her cling-peach peach-cleft, thirsted to graze on white thighs and steal her gently off his meat-hooks — not quite literally, mind, I was merely priming the pumps.

No phantoms loomed behind my chintz partition that night. No nightmares pecked my stomach. No. Instead I slept, tucked and snuggled, with the resolved expectation of a calm child on a cold, raw Christmas Eve. Mixed nuts and silvered balls tomorrow.

Not a jot of porcelain did I break next day. In fact I was so useful to Mr. Rives, humming and bustling about the shop, that I was sent off early. I went straight to the park. No dilly-dally. No Klitchintzski. I cooled my buttocks on the bench. A half-hour zoomed by and then the sun set a snail's pace. My head nearly whirligigged off its post. Klit still doesn't show. "Why has he changed his haunt after three days running?" I got up. "Probably some quirk in his weekly premeditations. He's got to be at home. Didn't he say he would be?"

Amidst my addleheadedness I found myself in a delicatessen with a cylinder of escargots in one arm and the index finger of my other pointing out that (no, no, yes, that-one-there) tray of Ukranian sausages after not having chewed flesh since I was a young pup. ("Oh, God," I scream in the night, "the lumps in the gruel, the 'pork,' is really the minced musculature of my late morse-code buddy, the man no longer in the next cell!") The escargot's glissade in purgation to the meat store floor and Philip Plume is seen running through the streets before a trail of vomit hoping to catch the basic eruption in the cup of his bidet.

I dawdled in the bathtub, re-shaved my jaw — barbaric nicks — put on my best plaid bow-tie (truly a gala event for me) and tweed sportscoat (all gone for straight stripes now). I anticipated a nice chatty evening in the Klitchintzski temporary cottage; by the fireside, I supposed, and no work tomorrow, I knew.

Night had fallen into the thick prelude of a fog as I lit out for the corner store to buy an aspidistra for Mrs. K. Breathing was a chore, but awaiting me were silk partitions and pillows, ghostly bamboo curtains, surely, Ming and champlève, possibly, paragon cloisonné, doubtless, and the ballerina serving oolong and almond cookies entirely on Hewitt and Ledbetter willow-ware — crumbs for the canaries. I was almost running, heedless of the fog, before I saw the rusted gates.

The black mansion loomed up beside the path I neophytically tiptoed along towards the cottage in the back. There it is: hunched under cascading willows, of course, and abstract larches, one light off and one light on. A taint of gasoline loiters in the air. I approach the door and knock, firmly, as one expected.

No answer. Silence, except for the wind in the willows and a hist from inside. "An air bubble in hot water pipes." I think, perusing the aspidistra's reaction to the chill, its leaves unmistakably curling under. I fillip an aphid from my thumbnail off into the night. I knock again and squeak, "Is anyone home?" Hist. I turn the delft-blue porcelain doorknob — my head is drowning in the gas — and slowly kick open the door. A blast of gas. I drop the aspidistra on the porch, step back out of the yellow light, put my hankie to my mouth, and charge into the past.

My God! The room was a mess: burnt toast crumbs and careless ashes all over the floor, stacks of dirty dishes and empty gin bottles in the sink, garlic sausage carcasses draped over the chairs — not a touch of femininity in the place — and Klitchintzski lying over in the corner on a couch that the cheapest slut wouldn't put her puss on. He was quite dead.

I turned off the enamel gas handle on the stove, looked around for a telephone (none), a bottle of Gordon's (with a boar), and opened the windows. He was dead all right as were the canaries caged in the other room. Did Klitchintzski fall asleep with the gas on? No, Plume, it was switched to 'high.' He must have turned it on himself. His nose was blue, smirking almost, his fingers stiffened over the porcelain marble.

I understood, or so I thought, Klitchintzski's deeper compassionate self for the first and only time. I knew what that lecherous smirk — it *was* a smirk — meant. He was egging me on. "She's all yours, Plume," his corpse seemed to expire. "She's all mine," I stunned the dead canaries, "mine and the phoenix in my throb." I leapt at the gin and sat beside Klitchintzski's head. I rested it on my lap. But when I relaxed, my brain made the connection: where in the hell is On Ly anyway? Maybe she's made a getaway and left some ticket stub to tell me where she is. Maybe she'll phone. Maybe she's asleep in the mansion. Maybe she did Klitchintzski in herself.

"Obviously I've been here for some time," I told myself, belting down the gin and searching the joint for evidence (of what?). Nothing in the toilet. Nothing in the garbage. No empty ampoule. No obvious needle marks. Evidence, evidence and (Son of a whip and willow-bitch!) there was some!

Night had permeated the other room and was cooling the sweat from its yellow walls. I rolled the squat message out of the typewriter,

Glad for you could making  
it. Me mee you Chinese  
laundry at V. Village.  
Two a.m. Me you o.k.?

— On Ly

Red type. I ran my fingers over the keys, a fatal mistake, and decided (why not?) to meet her at V. Village in the laundry at two a.m.

I re-anaesthetized my goose-bumping breath and thumping pulse. I also pocketed the note, picked up my aspidistra, and kissed *au revoir* to asphyxiated Klitchintzski with his hemorrhaged lungs, cheap partitions, cracked plaster, limp carbuncled neck and to the brown wet bubble of garlic sausage on the seat of his trousers. My hand was again over my mouth, but I see now that his incontinence was in no less perfect balance with my own. It was too late that I thought of taking the porcelain globe, but as I think back on it Klitchintzski's *rigor mortis* of the fist would have necessitated a crow-bar to pry it loose.

I started off for the last train to V. sticking my thumbs into plums that were not mine, out to scavenge this ripe plump peach on a crisp pile of linen, to hike her thighs onto the counter — resolved not to be an innocent bystander where the air reeked of coitus and profit.

So off I strutted to the station as snugly unsuspecting as any loony hooked up by the filigree, filoplume, fruit-of-the-loom diapers of the palpable present, smug in my intent, stiff beneath the one-way bristles of my brigadier moustache, yet all too under-conscious of the chill night's boney fingertips tickling my slender rib-cage *sous les* armpit falls of my unreasonable, unseasonable tweed sportscoat. Yes, it was cold! But my mind was not focused there on the flesh-eating monkey tricks of the station platform, not at all eye to stammering phosphorescent eye with the slimy nocturnal perverts. Three chem students inverted a cigarette vending machine, pocketed the packets and excreted their own into the slit before the dozey station-master turned. No, I was on a much higher plateau then, tiptoeing (again) lambent across palm and pedestal lily pads with my saucy soubrette, On Ly.

I almost forgot to ring the police about kaput Klitchintzski. Yes, they would "be right over to check it out, Sir, and could you spell out your last name, please . . ." (No, thank you.) " . . . and where are you located now, Sir? . . ." I put down the receiver, brushing aside the flaking integument of common sense. In the peak-hat heat of momentum I poppy-cock peacocked onto the train.

When it rolled forward under the deserted girders and glass I began, in retrograde, to muse on Klitchintzski. Very odd that I should be on the train to V. Village at this late hour. Odder that I had left his steaming body behind not an hour ago.

The chem students had filled the coach with smoke. I began to cough — what am I doing here? — to hack — what am I after? — to wheeze — a rendezvous, a glimpse, a grovelling stab — to cough, to wheeze — what have I stooped to? And so before the conductor confiscated the fags I had thoroughly hauled myself over the coals. "I'm disgusted with myself. Running after an ill- illegal immigrant! Probably won't be there anyway, but just sit tight and see how things turn out," I told myself. "Pah! Oriental mirage, willow-ware secretaries, indeed! Typewriter notes, balder — but the note *is* real (!!) and here, here it is in my hand, and I am real, yes," and there I was again in cloud-cuckoo-land. "Here I come, Swimmer of Seas, Carrier of the Solid Gold Egg with Two Diametrically Opposed Phoenixes. Oh Thou Truant of the Gold Mines at Nangtsien . . . Phoenixes?

“Did I murmur ‘Phoenixes’?”

At that extemporization I began to smell the rat, dead-rat Klitchintzski himself. The train drove on over a clack in the track. I was resolved to pluck On Ly, but deep down inside I knew damn well a phoenix wasn't an oriental symbol. “Ach, stupid Klitchintzski probably just muddled the story. They were rooks or cocks or dicky-birds or tit-willows or something. Sure.” The train pushed on. I was swinging down on On Ly from a pomegranate tree, grunting, groaning, gesticulating with my purling wet tongue. The train stopped.

I ran. She would be there in a slurpy fur and a sleek shade-of-blush SL. A brilliant and brutal peach. A wet dream. But because I had never been to V. Village I had no idea where the laundry might be. The streets were deserted except for a car purring deep down an alley that I passed. I glanced at my watch: two-fifteen. I was late, I was lost in the streets, and my legs were flying off at their hinges. I ran up and down the rows of notary publics, shoemakers, bookmakers, and matchmakers. I turned the last corner. Laundry!

I stopped to catch my breath; my pulse was pounding in my ears and my nose was bleeding a sickly-sweet back into my mouth; and walked up to the door. I pushed the buzzer (again no answer), tried the knob (locked), and ironed my bloody nose against the window between my hands. “All right, spread your hands out on the glass and don't turn around.”

I was frisked, was pushed into a squad car, and, as we prowled down to ‘headquarters,’ was read my rights. The desk sergeant, who looked remarkably like Klitchintzski, charged me (I'm certainly not guilty of *that*, fuck-face!) and instructed his flunky to ‘clap this scallop in solitary.’ Fat indulgence in a small pond.

That is all there is to tell except for what you know already: the supplementary note found (where else?) on a supplementary typewriter in the foyer of the Klitchintzski mansion on royal-cream vellum,

You will find my executioner  
at V. Village, running in to  
stand in front of the Chinese  
laundry like the fool he is.  
Stood up.

— Klitchintzski

No fingerprints on those keys at all. No wife. No On Ly.

Frankly; and I say this with all the sincerity and detachment as befits the innocent bystander that I am, the case looks bleak for me. It seems I've been well sewn into a life sentence. It seems that podgy bourgeois Klitchintzski has given his death thwack and thunderclap whereas his life of decadence and wild drink was barren ground.

I am masking deception when I say that it was *Klitchintzski* who planted that porcelain marble, that it was that which inticed me to tell the willow-ware story to him, that it was *he* who coaxed me to re-tell the rude jokes on which he based his entire nasty no-wife story, and *he* who incited me, and excited me, to step on the open overcoat of his trap.

And what am I to grab at? Nothing. Nothing but a joke. Nothing but a world in which filthy old, filthy rich old lechers can yank a man, me, Philip Plume, an honest teacup-and-saucer shop man off of park bench and into his own hara-kiri fetish. I tell you, you may think me mad, but I have nothing to hang onto. Nothing but a great masturbational farce: without caress, without a tender kiss, *sans* even a promptive picture.

Oh On Ly! I have nothing. The end has justified and obliterated Klitchintzski's means. I have been locked up, and will be tried and executed for my imagination. I regret my turnstyle mind. I apologize for my contretemps.

## Cathy Ford / TWO STORIES

### CUT FLOWERS

#### a rape story

There are two types of long-stemmed roses. The most fragile is the dust rose. It is distinguished by a faint musk, and a soft pink shade. It grows in the desert, and is formed by millions of grains of sand blown together, usually during a storm. The most important thing to remember about the dust rose is that the exquisite petals will deteriorate rapidly, and may even disappear if anyone touches the flower.

The correct name is unimportant. It is sufficient to say that there is no other means of conveyance, and that he travelled alone. He didn't speak the language. There was a truck leaving in the morning. He paid a student to translate, and bargained for a cheap fare. The truck would be carrying sacks of grain, a few boxes, a trunk or two, extra fuel, a group of workers. He had to take his own food. The money was paid, and the truck left at sunrise. It was very hot. He was alone. He didn't speak the language. He thought they were talking about him. There were ten men on the truck. The trip took three weeks. He could do nothing. He was a kid, a tourist. They held knives to his throat, and made him strip. They laughed and talked loudly. Every one of them took him every night for three weeks. Every one.

You stand at the top of the hill, and the procession of mourners stretches all the way to the gully at the bottom of the hill. There are no signs along the road. No one knows the name of the road. No one knows who is in the coffin, or how the person died. The coffin is open. You can see the wave of bodies inch down the hill, you see the box suspended above the dust-choked road. You know the box is lined, with satin. The smooth-skinned face stares into the blue sky. The pale fingers are laid over a dozen long-stemmed roses.

Some are blood red. For a day or two. Most black eyes, however, are neither red or black, but purple, and then a kind of budgie green. Her eye faded from green to yellow. She got beaten. She was hitchhiking home from work, and three men picked her up, in an old Pontiac. They wouldn't let her out when they got to the street she wanted. They spoke another language. They took her to one house and tore off her clothes, and took turns. Then they made her get dressed, they had fists and knives. They took her to another house, there were other men. They laughed at her. They took her to other houses. Everyone watched every time. Sometimes one man would do it twice. How many men. Ten houses. She could do nothing. Ten different houses.

Bleeding is difficult to control for the first few hours. Touch the petals on a blood rose, and it will weep. It stops bleeding eventually, but if crushed, the bruises cannot be disguised. It is a red, sticky secretion that gives the blood rose its name. It is not as exotic as it may sound. The blood rose is easily grown, and is common in many gardens. This long-stemmed beauty smells like most other roses, and has very few thorns.

## AMBULANCE BLUES NOTE

Okay so today I read your story in a national magazine and it's not bad. All that time never knowing how what you did. Picked the thing up in the drugstore same old reason being there at ten after ten and it raining outside. Saw the name clear and it never clicked. Cold in my head. Wasn't it?

Cool low name in the throat, sneaking up on me slow. Can't hold out too long. Flicking through to page thirty-seven and this is the headliner easy reading boy meets girl meets husband. Waiting for the laundry again. Spin foam bubbles freak. The first sentence.

yr iz opend strate at me nd im shur

happy to see you again.

Made me think I'd lost my head. You in me.

Easy cotton sheets. The skin of his body the same like silk, dance shadows smooth. It is you. I remember. Waiting carefully like a new toy. Had to smile hide my smile under the edge of the mexico shawl covering. So relieved glad. Can't play this one over no.

Hundreds of times.

"Would you like a coffee?" he said.

No but

iall cum with u. taukin.

Susan it's just a name connections I'd rather be roughed by a lumberjack than bored by a poet. Is that it? No. I love your voice. I'd nearly forgotten that exquisite edge of it. I know which country you're from.

Sentence two and the title comes back to me hard. I never was brave. I glance again at the cover. Gloss. Model smiling. Eyes wide. It's not everyone that has the same size of eyes. No wedding ring. So maybe it is you. Never read any one of those revised revised revised pages you carried furtively. Robber thief. A green dark green notebook. Cheap pens. Precious to whom.

And the monotone drone sound system your attention tension please. The store will be closing in ten minutes. So the magazine's a dollar so I'm needing change anyway so I really do buy all the bubble gum left in the old wrigley's box, one cent each by the till. So.

And the rain doesn't stop for us. Together or apart. A part of it. The memory. The survival. On the bus a three year old boy gets sick and the younger skinnier quicker girl more naively hands over a plastic bag. He gives. Ejaculation. You gave. Rubber boots.

I come for charity and find an analyst. F you and I'd like too to have that old it ain't me song but who's listening anyway. You can't do two things at once. If but I'm not I could be one of those lead me anywhere's it might happen happened but you're away and it's all right and the dreams stay for maybe two hours and I started a journal of them. But only for me. I have no photographs. You're so far. It feels.

I turn my plants when it's the right time. I have some things all my own everything and that's not what you could have gotten anyway.

And I read page three under the light waiting for it to change. Critical. A tense slip here and there. Nothing serious and my surprise is not surprise. I expect you to be good at this. Too. Wet rain on the page and the washer still digesting blue jeans and the thirty-five cents. If I could leave I would. Green.

Want me to read aloud to you?

Yes.

Like cries and whispers. And I know it now. The story is you, you are the story, story you. Stone you. Wish I could. Alone with you. Wish I had. Thinking two twice babe.

ive bin wadin 2 c u

all day. Where have you been.

Waiting.

O.

Want it said quietly and with conviction. No mistakes. No argument. No hand trembling please. Clean across a room full of people.

Never.

The oh my god please don't contradict me I know as much as you of you of me don't turn me into shouting it out. I want.

He's here, he's not you. Fear. Care. When it's a husband and it's good it's good. Can he be villain in this piece. How the brown eyes and the money for the abortion that was before but I never let him pay. He's more open than you are but not to me. He assumes. That's the magic in it, the skin trembles the voice. I hear you I hear.

You never vanity cause it really wouldn't hold but there were lots of other things and cruel. You thought it was painful before I did and then you said so and then I knew.

You cut quick in the throat at the wrist it doesn't last long. Pain. The muscles in my shoulders tightening migraine. And you ain't corrupting me honey. I'm incorruptible.

If the story's not about me then who could it be. Can it be. Reversion. The structure is the important voice here the characterization based on the narration one lung one view.

Back to it. Your story. A man about women. Private. The lover about the husband. Never quite inside it, hitting breathless close.

And no one's known my sigh and I'm a good keeper. I. You. Praises.

I have secrets from myself. You. So it's lucky you're not in the laundromat. Is this the wrong city. I've seen you around every any corner. Couldn't help but say it say it how I can't really get far enough away from it page six there I am and all the things stupid said.

Like how he moves. You move. Taller and thinner and. You. Eyes eyes hard to say if they're warm or hating. Hard. Honesty. Can't be objective.

The blue jeans drop beside the t-shirt dropped. Do you stretch once every night before you get into bed. Habits. It's dark out. Light a candle. I want you. Slow. The hands perfection and your mouth and what can be said now.

Stone

u. r u in time 4 th 1st time

last time.

Dream.

Again?

Threw it all away, without you. The stories that must be told.

When I was seven to sixteen, no older, I skated with them those blush cheeked ladies and never really knew the difference between ignorance and lust. Except my legs looked better. Untried. Woman passion in tights any color and the small town whistles always hurt my ears feelings. I didn't know. So mention awareness. How I did one or two moves best but never all of them and how it might be fun that knowing laugh. When I knew what style meant really I tried it without pants tights pants one less but I got rashes and still do. Naked under clothes. Slow. When I learned the other harder lesson I quit wearing the to the waisters cause you know they give away every ounce of extra. You know from the ones that are doing it. Fat. These are more comfortable and that's even truer than the other reasons. How to take off. Delicacy.

But I've never walked right, not like a GIRL, more like a DUCK, my father still says so and it's not together but I had a broken heart my whole life (until) and it's not the same story, and how is that to be said (now). I'm still stuck on it never enough attention sexuality food or presents and giving more more more until I run out. I cry easily at movies even television so how could I explain that to you. I mean really. The music. The symphony.

So the woman in the story, your story, is ten pounds heavier than I see myself. Myopic. Or I gain it. Also smarter. Also more calculating. And hides her diaries like I hide mine in my head. Always. And drinks beer.

I hate beer. I hated it when it was back of the chevy and sitting up or lying down no thank you and garters. I hate it now the sweet taste so bitter and I can go to the bar with other women and it has to be beer social presser and I drink tomato juice. I get real off if there's no salt shaker. I need it. I can take terry cloth wash once a monthers though, even red. Salt in a french fried glass shaker with a dented nickel plated top is just right. Can't get the smell off your hands. So. I don't care about that. You forget some details. Some smells. Caught in me a memory. A memory. Your fine soft hair.

The woman in your story. Is it me. Like a mirror. Forgotten.

Sometimes (once) she meets a woman enough to love (maybe two) and maybe touches her and maybe not but the feeling is the same glad. The heroine is basically the antagonist and the protagonist is primarily schizophrenic and so the story is a short story.

So she decides in the end what?

Goddamn washing machine spitting soap and suds and bubbles and water and then my book's gone. That's how it is.

I'll roll one and get the ice out quiet and it will burn my throat like always. He doesn't ask me if I want one. That's it. Staring at the ceiling. Rolling.

Walking you through me hands across the table open to the wind and thinking hoping that means cherish. Remember me.

There's a piece of hundred year old sealing wax antique on my desk I sit there and picking it clean and maybe you in a year or so or a lifetime.

Stare. At the ceiling. Or the white walls.

Looking for.

I'm supposed to be setting up the mask for my next manuscript but it's probably you and I'm waiting six dimes for the dryer and the mexican shawl. You never even had it together for a place of your own alone. Accusations. And anyway I know the story ending. Ends.

I'm acquiring a taste for grand marnier. Hits slower and longer. Licking out the bottom of the bowl. Tongues.

pul th cur tans bak wil u. 2 c u n th

sunshine.

Close. And always protected. Self-protection. I could have worn a veil and then you might have known. A statement. It's pretty hard to give that away twice. Disguises. I married the man and he's grown accustomed to my body fails my dreams. A perfectionist my mother said. A huge non-existent ego pride. Romance? I face you.

Hungry? Piece of pie?

scru u?

No. Yes.

Still. Reaching later maybe later yes later. Comparing to no one. I have a well-developed memory on continuous short-circuit and I know there are no islands. Undress me and you have.

Wine and wine rose you. Soft against your thigh. How I miss you. How glad when you're not there. I don't want to be the repetitious pattern.

How running to the window in the middle of the night and you never and that's how I know you couldn't be. My number's not in the book and that's a whole different racket and it's getting tighter.

At the beach and sand in my eyes. Hair. Start swimming. Sometimes women drown unintentionally people. How can you have lost that.

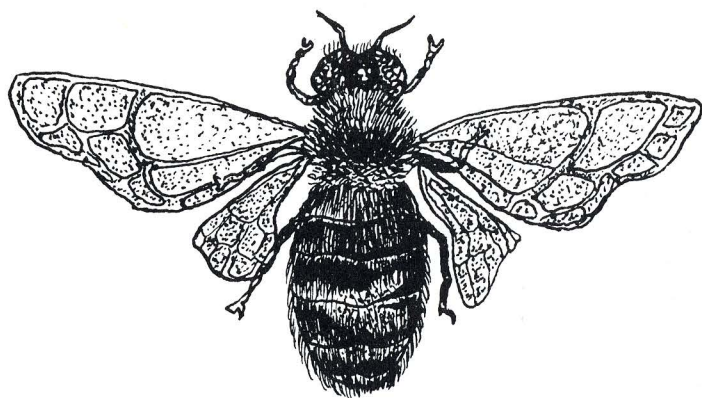
And I wonder if they paid you for the story and if you eat better than you used too. That's not all. But I've been waiting an hour or so and the sheets have to be dry and I only do them every second time. You know what I mean. And sometimes it's him and sometimes it's you and it's all not the same. Love.

Can I give you a ride?

shur nd thn think uv u sew i

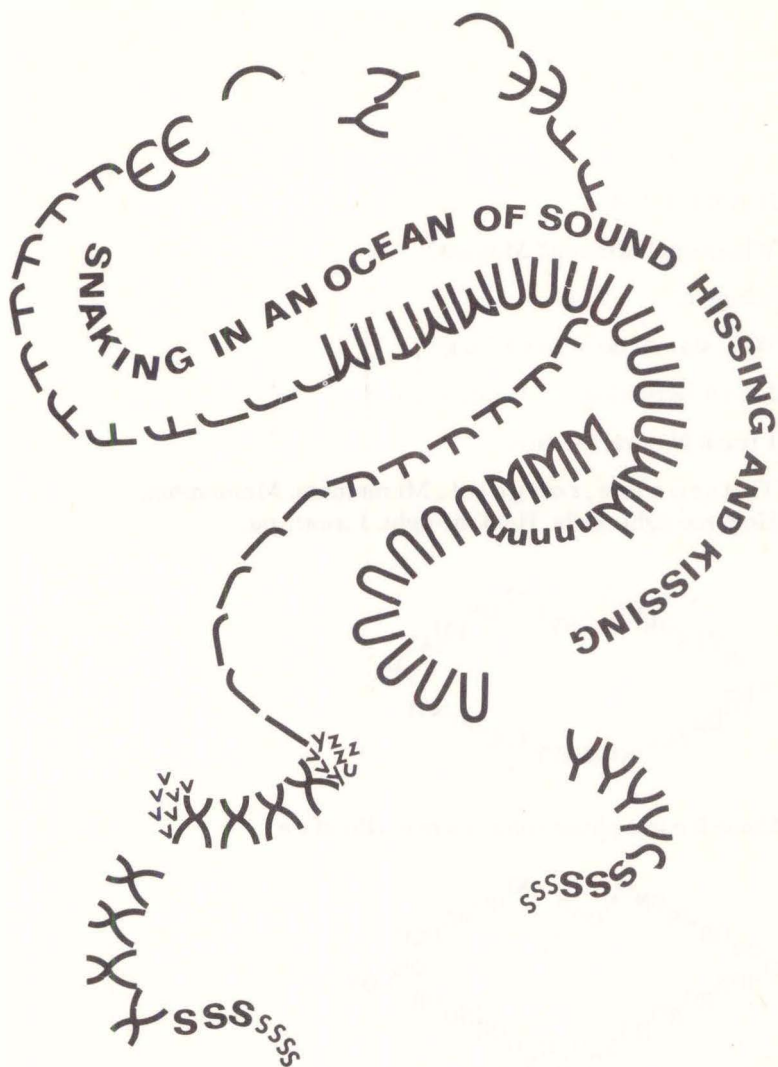
forget

when to get out even across the street knowing what's coming. No language. Even if I don't look for your stories I'm in them. I demand it. I have priorities. And feeling the superstition suspicion in you that I've been had.



Ann Rosenberg / THE DRONE

(FRAGMENT 1)



They met by chance at Pharaoh's and rubbed and dubbed to a contemporary rock tune. Into each other's ears they hummed and moaned the prescribed ineptitudes of first meetings.

What's shurname? Hunmnuhmmmmmm? Mmmmmmmmm?

H A B E L L A .

Whatsures? Mmmm? Mmmm?

Solomon.

What do you do, w i s e k i n g?

I'm an Egyptologist, what do you do?

I teach Natural Science.

That's s o n i c e , s o o g o o d , Mnmnmnm. Mnmnmnm,  
Hold me tight, Bella, Hold me tight. I *want* you.

OH YES OH OH Y E S Y E S S OH HO SAY O  
YES YOU DO YOU DOOSAYY YOU DO SAY YES

Come h o m e please come h o m e with m e e .

O ON ON ON ON N O O N O O NO NO NO NOO  
NON NO NO NO NO N O N O ON NO OH NON

(She equivocated)

(His snake fell, rejected from the moist spot between her legs and  
dejected he pushed forth an invitation between his teeth)

Then let's meet tomorrow at three at the Golden Door.

She awoke with the following vestiges of their meeting imprinted on her flesh:

a golden hair from his beard,  
a delicate rash wherever his beard had rubbed her,  
a brazen hair from his waist,  
the garlic-musk odor of his sweat,  
a pool of untasted honey  
(between her legs).

She tried to recall the feel of their clothes cloying, their fingers fingering and amused herself with a recreation of Solomon's Trial of the Artificial Flower.

*She was Sheba, radiant and wise, clothed in brocades and anointed in the perfume of cloves. She stood within a garden dignified with cypresses and yew. Cicadas celebrated her lord's coming.*

*sicasawsawsaw ciccseeseeseese sicasawsawsaw  
sicsicaseese ciccasawsawsawaw sicaseseese*

*(Their ululation ceased)*

*She curtsied before him and placed the flower of her manufacture beside a real flower of its kind. They glistened, together, in the sunlight on a marble podium, petals spread, stamens and pistils waving, succulent nectar shining, scent ascending.*

*Solomon examined each of them, his brow furrowed in thought. They challenged all his senses. His face was crinkled with amusement when he took her slender hands in his and said:*

*Dear Lady, you have tricked me, but I think I know now how to discover the true flower. Benjamin (he turned a languid eye to his servant), fetch from the hive some bees in a glass. They will test each for truth for they are experts.*

*(The King and Queen and their retinues refreshed the crystal air with laughter as they awaited the proving.)*

*In due course Benjamin returned, servile and scurrying. He released over the flowers the bees' intelligence.*

*Buzz, Buzz, Buzz, Mmm, Mmm, Mmm, Buzz, Buzz, Buzz.*

*They nuzzled and sucked the correct blossom.*

*Sheba fell upon her knees and kissed Solomon's feet, so grateful was she for this display of his Wisdom and the chorus of cicadas began anew, as though by a secret signal.*

*Solomon led her, then, into his informal garden and after a lunch of pomegranates and wine, he condescended to "tell her all her questions" and (mysteriously) he revealed to her "nothing that was not hid from him". Flashing her a white-toothed smile, he made this confession:*

*The rumours are true. I have loved many women from among the Egyptians, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians and Hittites and I worry that they will beguile me into the worship of idols, but please understand, dear lady, that I know the difference between good women and bad, just as I know how to distinguish real flowers from false. I don't see women always as sensuous snares, they are also (occasionally) for me embodiments of Compassionate Wisdom. I am proud that what I have written in Chapter 31 of Proverbs has become the basis for the Catholic Mass "Cognovi", Common of the Holy Woman not a Martyr.*

*Then holding her close, he sang in a smoky contralto the poetry that had brought the downfall of one-thousand sisters.*

*My beloved put in his hand by the hole of  
the door and my bowels were moved for him/  
I rose up to open to my beloved and my hands  
dripped with myrrh, and my fingers with  
sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of  
the lock/*

*I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had  
withdrawn himself and was gone.*

*In thanks for these intimacies, Sheba cast off her precious garments and communicated to her beloved "all that was in her heart".*

Although this vision should have warned her, she went to the Golden Door Cafe. She was caught by his beauty:

his eyes were the eyes of doves;

his cheeks above his beard were like beds of spices;

his strong hands glimmered with rings set in beryl;

his transparent shirt was unbuttoned

(to his waist).

His words, fitly spoken, were to her ears "like apples of gold set in pictures of silver".

"The ancient Egyptians were hedonists," he said. "They'd say, come on, 'Set singing before thy face. Increase yet more the delights thou hast, follow thy inclination and thy profit. Do thy desires upon earth and trouble not thy heart until the day of lamentation come to thee.' Nice sentiments. Quite unlike the ones you learn from your subject, I suspect."

"I guess only the Drones have a life approaching the one you describe as ideal," she replied. "They are fed by the hive until they grow fat, furry and fit. They are expected to spend their summer days searching for a Queen to lay and if they do, they'll die for that pleasure and if they don't the hive will kill them as winter comes. But while they live, they're happy and free and single minded in pursuit of pleasure. . . ."

"You talk about bees as though they were people. . . ."

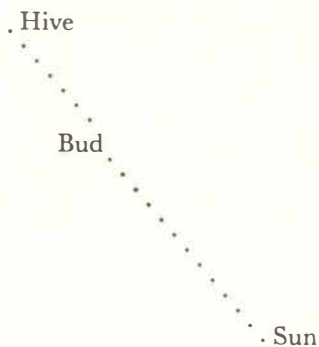
"I know they're not, yet their lives have an instinctual clarity that ours lack. Their motives are never confused by thought. They live and love efficiently and I envy that."

"Surely our desires are no less clear and obvious. Let's take the afternoon to talk and go back dancing this evening. Afterwards we'll have a little wine at my place. . . ."

(Into her mind flashed images of dancing bees which she drew to his great fascination on a napkin)



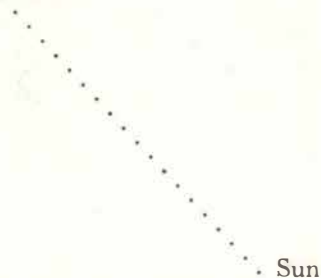
Dance



Bud . . . . . Hive

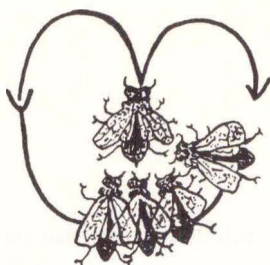


Dance



(This she followed with a diagram of the nature of the dance).

Stages suggestive of the *shuffle* as practiced by bees when foraging.



(to this he countered with the Egyptian pictographs and ideographs he thought she'd like to know.)



a bee



SELKIS: the scorpion goddess.

SESHAT: the goddess of writing.



SETH: the god of storms and violence.

(With these diagrams he challenged her mind. She began to *love* him.)

She flew to the dance on spritely feet and this time the music was more suggestive than before:

UUHHHHH	HUUHHHH	UUHHHHH	HUUHHHH	UUHHHHH	HUUHHH
MMMMAAAAH	MMMMAAAAH	MMMMAAAAH	MMMMAAAAH	MMMMAAAAH	MMMMAAAAH
o o o o o o o o	m m m m m	o o o o o o o o	o o m m m m m	oh oh oh ohh	
o o o o o o o o		o o o o o o o o	o o m m m m m		
m m m m m m m		o o o o o o o o	A A A A A A	O O O O H H H H H	
MMMMAAAAH	MMMMAAAAH	MMMMAAAAH	MMMMAAAAH	MMMMAAAAH	MMMMAAAAH
UUHHHHH	HUUHHHH	UUHHHHH	HUUHHHH	UUHHHHH	HUUHHH

They clung together drugged by mutual desire. Her normally open face was closed in lust: face unnaturally flushed, eyes slanted and shut, skin stretched taut over bone, body hair erect. She rubbed herself upon him in the darkness and his body quickened to hers.

As they walked home the tension between them amplified to an unbearable hum that she tried to break with words.

"Will I like your place?"

"You will never get used to it."

"Why? Won't I like your style?"

"My style and tastes always change."

"What style do you like now?"

"Gentle, compliant and forgetful."

"Surely you don't want people to forget you!"

"Yes I do, that's all I want."

His hand in hers did something to reassure her. It did not betray his inner panic as each phrase stung his conscience and elicited from him an evasive reply. If only they could have flown from the dance floor into bed.

In his house shone:

candelabrum of brass and gold;

objects enriched with carnelian, turquoise and lapis lazuli.

a falcon with wooden wings outstretched hovered

(over his bed).

He led her under this canopy with facile blandishments and unloosed her garments with practiced hands.

"Let me kiss you with the kisses of my mouth for my love is better than wine; thy breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies."

"The hair on your chest is golden wire spun into fleece," she sighed.

(It startled him, a little, to have someone reply in kind)

"The hair on your head is like russet silk cascading over a rock," he murmured.

"You are my prince with hair of yellow fire," she crooned in earnest.

His breath became ragged and, suddenly, he pushed his finger through her petals to discover honey.

"Habella," he begged, "You're ready. Come on, come on!"

"Wait, wait. Please talk to me, stroke me some more . . ."

"It surprises me that this isn't easy," he said in a tight voice.

"Don't be angry, please help me . . ."

He nibbled on her breasts as if he were enjoying them, addressing them carefully with his lips, eyeing them as though they were novelties (which indeed they were).

"ASTARTE BREASTS," he pronounced with forced glee,  
"INTERESTING".

His hands travelled over her like wings over water and once again they met no resistance, but he was no longer friendly nor was he concerned with her pleasure.

“Huh, huh, huh, mmmm, mmm, mmm, huh, huh, huh,  
ooo, ooo, ooo, mmmm, , , , mmm, ooo, ooo, ooo,  
huh, huh, huh, mmmm, mmm, mmm, ooo, ooo, ooo. . .”

"Open to me," he commanded.

“Huunh, huunh, huunh,” was the sign of her co-operation and

He pushed her knees up and then apart. He knelt between them and said with a laugh,

"Please yes, I can't help it, I'm frightened . . ."

"No."

(He handed her some Spermicidal Foam)

Orgasm.



"It *does* hurt, you're my first."

"It'll be so much better next time, you'll see. Dry your tears, get some sleep. I'll call you tomorrow. I like you, my little bee. You'll feel better in the morning."

(He made her some lemon tea, dressed her gently and, as she left he kissed her cheek.)

She went home with



for eyes.

Of course he never called and all she knew about him was that his name was Solomon. She was, naturally, very hurt because she thought they had a lot in common and his open blue-eyed face seemed one to trust. She was only slightly less distressed when her *flowers, O lacrima Virginiae*, arrived on time to stain her bed.

Her classes suffered and so did her research. She took refuge in talking like a text book opened anywhere:

*In 1956 Dr. L. Seifer carried out interesting experiments that showed bees do not simply need pure water, but also water containing salt, ammonia, etc. In the test, drinking bowls were filled respectively with pure water and water containing 0.25 percent ammonium, 0.05 percent vinegar, and 0.80 percent common salt. Over a measured period the bowl containing salt water was visited by 2546 bees, that with the pure water by 1510, that with the ammonia water by 1442, and that with the vinegar water by 1186. It can thus be concluded that bees need salt and beekeepers who care for their winged friends should supply them with salt water.*

*If we consider the observation of Serbinov (1913), Zander (1927), and others, that the illnesses affecting bees (foul brood) are in most cases passed on through water, we can see that a good, convenient drinking bowl is an extremely important and necessary item in any modern and well-equipped apiary.*

Or she would have an irrational response. A slide of the Queen bee (see illustration ensuing) triggered this poetic tirade:

She prostrated herself before the image and cried:

“Pulchritudinous Virgin! Do not go forth.  
Beware, beware of the Drone Dog. He is Cerberus of the Hispid  
Faces:

- i. one face is open like a summer peach,  
its seed is hard, O Virgin;
- ii. one face is closed like the opium poppy,  
*difusum est male in labiis tuis*;
- iii. one face is quizzical and diffuse,  
it gives no answer to the questions.

The Face of the Drone is Full of Eyes.

The Body of the Drone is Full of Wings.

The Brain of the Drone Drips

(with Cunning).

He has *one thing* on his mind.

Do not go forth, O Virgin, to that

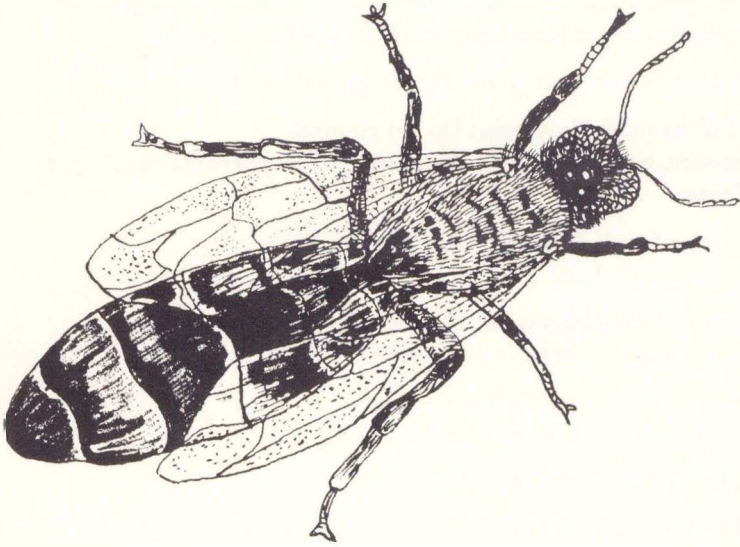
Evil

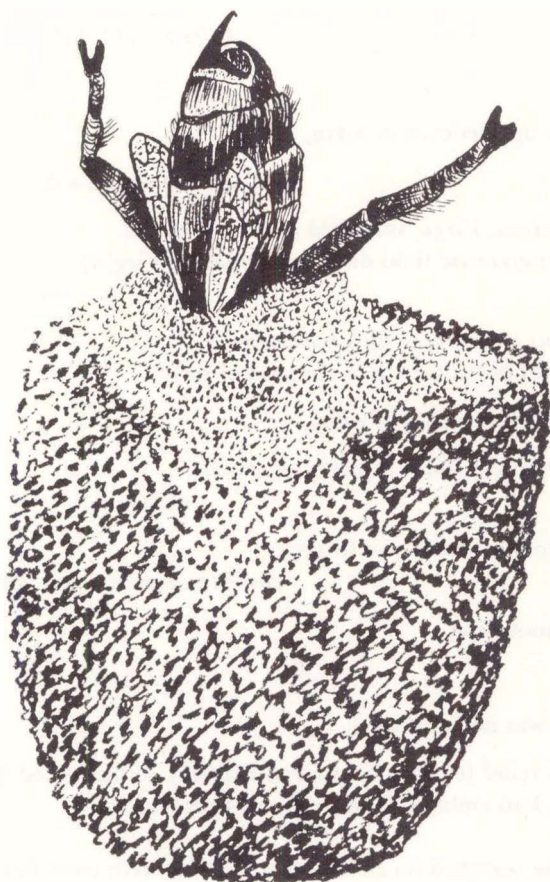
Droning

Dog.”

(The class burst into nervous laughter.)

In front of the slide of the Queen bee prepared for artificial insemination (see illustration ensuing) she gave her final class as an instructress in Natural Science.





OPEN TO ME

OPEN TO ME

OPEN TO ME

(she cried)

You are upsidedown in foam,

your legs are spread.

*Post Coitum, Virgo, inviolata non permansisti*  
(after intercourse thou didst not remain a Virgin)

yet

*Speciosus forma prae filiis hominum*  
(Thou art beautiful above the sons of men).

Poor Bee, pobrecita Habeilla,

You are only capable of stinging another

Queen.

Even though I force you to act

*contra naturam* you will

and cannot sting

ME.

(There was no laughter.)

It was a relief for all to learn that Habella, so distracted in the last months, had embarked on a different profession.

Daily she searched for Solomon and in the sixth week her efforts were rewarded. She saw him sitting at the same table they had shared at the Golden Door in deep conversation with a lovely young girl. She resisted the impulse to fly into the room as SELKIS, sting raised upon her head.

She entered after they had left and on the table she found hints of conversation written on the table mats:

## JEREMY'S MAT



(forearm and hand) pronounced *Ayin*



(doorbolt) pronounced 's'



(abbreviation for quailchick) pronounced 'w'

Come unlock my door, Chick!

---

## VIRGINIA'S MAT

The savage man can have no desires beyond his physical wants. The only goods he needs in the universe are pain and hunger. I say pain, not death for no animal can know what it is like to die; the knowledge of death and its terrors being one of the first acquisitions made by man departing from the animal state.

ROUSSEAU.

P.S. Let's drink to the savage man.

---

One thing about these messages shocked her. She approached the familiar waiter.

"Excuse me. My name is Habella. I was here with the young man who just left with a pretty girl, oh, way back in April. Only his name was not Jeremy, it was Solomon . . ."

"O Santissima Madonna! Bellissima Bella. I canna imagina what he dida to you. I musta laugh, forgiva me. Male, Male, a bada man. Somebody shoulda lock him up. He gathera floras lika the men, they shoota the deer. Differenta nomine, ah *namas*. Differenta disguisas. He turna his interesta in Egypta to diversas purposas. I Officini of psychiatristas and alla riveres are completa, fulla to the brima, witha distracted madonnas. Hanging woulda be to gooda for him. Male, Male animal. Finda yourself a gooda man, an honesta man. Getta married, begetta bambini. Donta wasta time remembering him.

She continued with her study of 'Solomon' with the kind waiter's help, more as an amusement than as a bitter exercise. She had only been foolish, not in any other sense, the fool. She had simply misread the signs. Only two messages on four mats, out of the many Gino saved for her, are worth reporting.

In one guise he was Aaron and seemed to give his new love at least as much warning as she had been given about his nature. He wrote in his neat hand:

Be ye ware of Ptah, Lord of Truth!  
Lo, he will not overlook the deed of any man.  
Refrain ye from uttering the name of Ptah falsely;  
Lo, he that uttereth it falsely,  
Lo, the same shall fall.  
Ptah caused me to be as the dogs of the street,  
He caused men and gods to mark me.

To which Flora responded:

Flowers for your honesty. No one with a face like yours could ever lie and if he did he would be guilty about it.

In the next he was Jim pretending to be Thoth, Egyptian god of wisdom and justice and asked questions like a catechist to which Kitty sensuously replied:

Thoth: "What is the first Duty of a Woman?"

Kitty: "To serve her master."

Thoth: "What are the manifestations of reverence?"

Kitty: "She will serve his every need. Including, especially, c           , and f           ."

Thoth: "Will she have other gods before him?"

Kitty: "There is no god but him."

On the night of her twenty-fifth birthday she had recovered sufficiently to celebrate with a friend the notion that in this world there are two classes of beings, the fuckers and the fuckees or, as the Old Testament more delicately put it, the *borers* and the *bored*. She had no doubt that Solomon was a boring fucker, the sort of man who would put his number into the phone book as Hugh G. Rection and wait masturbating for the results. Since her seduction she had begun to doubt the power of the word. She attempted to respond like an insect to all events in her life, her senses feeding upon the visual properties, the smells and the touches proper to each occasion.

## (FRAGMENT 2)

That same evening Solomon had gone with his new friend William to read the Tarot. William had selected Sol as the subject of a sociological study examining the conscience of seducers. He had been drawn to him because of his reputation and in order to befriend him had told some judicious lies. It was a friendship fashioned by the Gods.

"Then why do you need so many women?" asked William as they approached the reader's door.

"I'm looking for the experiences that my senses enjoy. I want to lose myself in another, fall through the sky of passion. I am attracted by instinct to a fragrance, the hum of a voice, the grace of a walk, the hair on a slender arm. I will change shape anyway I can to draw a girl to me."

"How can you change shape, surely you must be the same for everyone. . . ."

"No. I change shape through the words I choose. Let's suppose you're a woman and I want you. Easy. I'll just pretend that I'm interested in everything you say, everything you represent. Ah, William, I saw an article in *Esquire* the other day about the sexual attitudes of the forties. It's the funniest thing I've read for years. I'd love to read it to you, why don't you come to my place, we'll have a drink and. . . ."

"Ah, you're kidding me, Sol. That's just old-fashioned politeness. . . ."

"No. Politeness isn't what I intend, seduction *is*. . . . And even though I always give a note of warning the girls never listen because they're just as intent upon being seduced as I am on playing the seducer. And when it's over nothing — not even a memory of a conversation — usually remains."

"Do you think you'll ever change?"

"I must change. I'm beginning to bore myself. Everything is too easy. Nothing matters. . . ."

“How can you change? You are what you are . . .”

“I know. I don’t know.”

They entered the house of the Tarot reader. It was filled with:

a tumble of furniture of indifferent choice;

a jumble of worthless objects;

the smell of snuffling dogs;

the pungent keenness of cockroach

(droppings).

An old woman greeted them with a face as dry and as rough as a breadcrust. She served them lemon tea from unmatched cups, and lectured them gently on the History of Tarot. To Sol’s question about the meaning of the cards she gave this enigmatic reply:

“That man is best who sees the truth himself;

Good too is he who hearkens to wise counsel.

But who is neither wise himself nor willing

To ponder wisdom, is not worth a straw.”

Then she removed from a silken bag the heavy Tarot deck and after a suitable deliberation she unfolded before them the Wisdom of the Cards.

They fell into this pattern:

COMPLETION under  
THE PRINCE of CUPS

under WEALTH

12  
3

CRUELTY

INTERFERENCE

CHANGE

5  
6 7  
4

GAIN

SCIENCE  
POWER  
HERMIT  
PEACE

THE DEVIL  
QUEEN of DISCS  
ACE of CUPS  
FORTUNE

15  
8



COMPLETION (1)

She spoke the ritual of the cards.

"COMPLETION represents you, O lord of Manifested Power. Flames of ardor burn at your centre and the rams overwhelm the doves with their horns. The female element (upsidedown) hints at abuse. The PRINCE OF CUPS is likely the William who brought you. He delights in taking pure energy from the fire of others; he has no decisive actions of his own. WEALTH may impede or aid your actions in the future. Ponder the meaning of the first three cards."

(Sol looked to William for reassurance and saw that he was pouring himself a drink without the hostess's permission)

"Card 4 is GAIN and its spangle of coins reinforces the dilemma of the present. In this context the good fortune that GAIN normally implies is contravened by the weight that the trappings of Wealth has placed on your shoulders. It is your albatross, young man, and its ten foot wings beat about your throat. What will be ideal in your future is CRUELTY. Its nine swords drip blood and urge you to pursue a perverse idealism or to accept a passive martyrdom. INTERFERENCE, the 6th card, denotes a past filled with false starts and contradictions. Card 7 says CHANGE is coming."

("Thank God, Thank God," murmured Sol.)

"You must not yet feel relief. CHANGE seems dynamic as it is a snake turned infinitely upon itself, but the snake coils itself into *stasis*. Impeded by his nature, he is fixed upon a single goal. He may endlessly repeat the first step or he will take one step and there will never be another."

"Perhaps the reading of this card will be tempered by your reading of others," ventured Sol.

"Young man, the next cards have confusing messages. Many of them are upsidedown and contravene their usual meanings. Many allude to your self-certainty and innerdirectedness; some connote opulence and leadership, but their potential is thwarted by *position*. Perhaps you would like to come back when you are more sure . . ."

"Cards 13 and 14 indicate the *final outcome*. These cards are strong. SCIENCE bespeaks the balance between the intellectual and the moral in a situation and I think its import is the same however it is placed. Beside it stands THE DEVIL. It is also a card of balance, between bliss on the one hand and human consciousness on the other. You have drawn to yourself the most rampant sexual omen through which to manifest your desire. The goat leaps with lust upon the summits of the earth. He is Pan-Progenitor, the All-Begetter. He is mounted in front of a phallus which is the tree of life seen against the divine madness of spring. In his testes broil impulses that do not partake of reason or foresight.

Your horns spiral energy upwards into air.

Your wand is the wand of OSIRIS/HORUS.

You will find the FACE of the SUN  
The WINDS will CONVERT YOU.

B E W A R E   O F   A I R

RUN RAM RUN.

(Her voice which had been so steady in the ordering of the service rose in a shrill **S** s -

ch had been so steady  
of the service

s s c c c s s s s s s s s s S S S S C R R E E E A M

She fell into a faint.

William said, "Don't bother. She always does that. See Saul. What did I tell you. Tarot's more fun than the movies. Here, take the last card. She'll never miss it when she comes around."

Sol took the card home and the next day he looked at



THE DEVIL (14)

He had been unnerved by the previous evening and had kept William with him for company. The fact that the reader had taken a hysterical turn had invalidated for him the whole experience. He talked to the guest who was still in bed:

"Hey, what a nut that was. You're not the Prince of Cups. I'm not the Devil. I'm going to change in amazing ways and if I remember where that old crone lives when I finish, I'll go back and show her who's powerful. William, come on, get up! The goat's staff has wings like the ones on my bed. Hey, the sun disc and confronting snakes are two of my favorite signatures. Hey, William, damn it! The goat's third eye has just disappeared, what shall I do?"

"Burn it," said William sleepily. "Let's talk about your conscience."

### (FRAGMENT 3)

The next day with William for comfort, he took a trip into the mountains. His pack contained bread and water for he was determined to accomplish self-redemption. For seven days and seven nights he fasted, compelled by an inner necessity that felt for all the world like unsatisfied lust and on the seventh evening, just as the meditation books had promised, he had a vision that filled him with wonder.

Out of the clouds came a man of incredible beauty (like unto himself) with a flower for a penis. He pulled off the petals one by one, letting them float into the air. When the last had vanished, leaving him flat and naked, the man fell down dead, on the ground. Out of the clouds came a babe of astonishing beauty who before his eyes shrank back through the successive stages of development until it became two dots . , egg/sperm in the sky and vanished.

Out of the clouds came a woman of unsurpassed beauty. She writhed before him in serpentine dance as she progressed through the successive stages of decay until she blew on the wind as a handful of dust.

He went down from the mountain with ashes on his head and a phylactery of cedar and moss around his neck. About his arms he wound two snake-like branches and over his neck he placed a shawl of bark. His revelation told him to cast away his superfluous gold and women, to settle down and become a family man. The wife he had selected was Habella Cire for she was the only woman in a thousand for whom he had, fleetingly, felt a more than physical attraction.

"In the middle of our second meeting," he explained to William, "She said that language was usually dishonest, that it almost never meant what it said. She said that you can scarcely expect to get the groceries you order by phone. Spoken language, then, is not nearly as pragmatic as the language of the bees where so many shuffles to the left or the right sends the worker off following the directions of her scout to just the place where the flowers are.

Poor Habella fell into the trap I set with my language and I want to apologize for that. I think that we could love eachother . . ."

He phoned her on three occasions without success:

- (1) Brinnng, Brinnng, Brinnng, Brinnng, Brinnng, Brinnng (out).
- (2) Bryunng, Bryuung, Bryunng, Bryuung, Bryuung, Bryuung (busy).
- (3) sorry . . . the . . . line . . . you . . . are . . . calling . . . is . . . not . . . in . . . service . . . sorry . . . the . . . line . . . you . . . are . . . (moved).

Later when Sol's house was almost emptied of furniture he sat before his window reading with William. A curious flutter tickled their brains. They discovered that they shared space with two worker bees.

The visitors' behavior was polite; their procedure was wondrously efficient. Their wings drummed an almost imperceptible *huummnn* as they searched diligently for an exit.

They moved parallel to the windows executing the 90 degree turns at the corner without fault. They rediscovered the window route six times in a smooth meticulous circuit. They became baffled and seemed to run formal memory tests on the venue of approach.

The larger of the two bees, momentarily, stood still in space then neatly performed four directional probes to the

NORTH  
WEST                      EAST  
SOUTH

and moved, then, unerringly to the exact spot of her entry. Sol helped her out.

The smaller bee was, perhaps, younger or less experienced in flight outside the hive. She rested on the window and before she could begin again, Sol caught her in a glass.

He saw that she was beautiful:

her face was a mobile and inquisitive mask;

her feelers — black lines of iron — bent willfully against air;

in her amber wings throbbed veins of dark obsidian;

her abdominal stripes were as clear and precise as

Egyptian cloisonné.

He released her into the air and that very day in order to emulate the flight of bees, he decided to take up hang gliding. The visitors in every respect seemed a wonderful

OMEN.

That evening he said to William:

"I must tell you something important."

"What is it?"

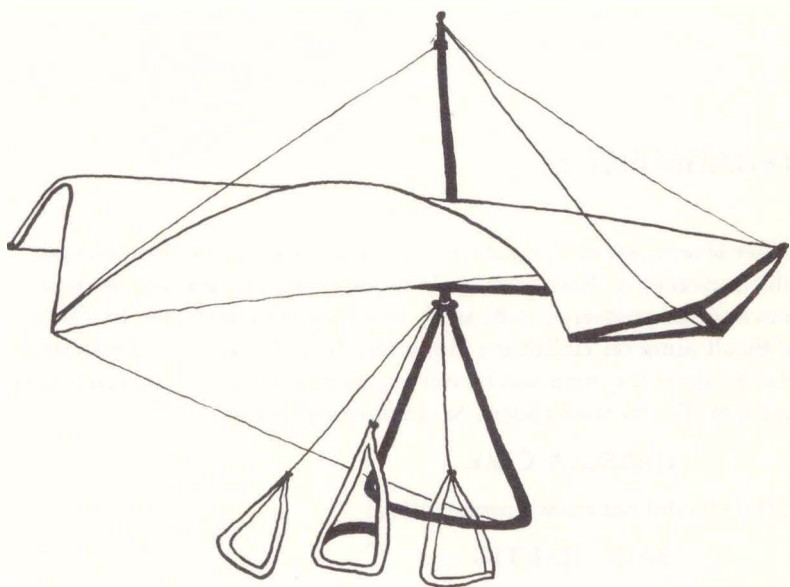
"I have been lying to you ever since we met."

"Oh? How?"

"Well, I've always used different names with people and Sol or Solomon's the one I use most often. SAUL, Saul Hartig's my real name . . ." Hope you don't mind."

"No trouble. It sounds the same."

## (FRAGMENT 4)



Habella took up hang gliding for reasons Sol would have admired. She wished to lose herself in flight, testing her eye and spirit in spontaneous motion through a fluid medium. She had become a filmmaker and film critic. Art, not science, was on her mind.

She saw herself hovering over the land as Isis, brooding over the torn form of her husband OSIRIS who for reasons no one knew history had connected with HORUS of the SOLAR DISC. HORUS/ OSIRIS victim of SETH, god of the wind.

(She saw no connection whatsoever between hang gliding and the bees.)

## (FRAGMENT 5)

After several weeks of separate training through which they learned the intricacies of Jesus bolts, glide ratios, spans, Hang Fives, the two novices had progressed sufficiently in the sport to be invited to take the difficult jump off Hollyburn Mountain. In anticipation of the intense cameraderie the jump was bound to generate, the instructors circulated a list of the intended gliders. Saul was overjoyed to see

HABELLA CIRE

(Habella did not know anyone called)

SAUL HARTIG

Saul manoeuvred his name on the list so that he would jump into the air immediately after her. He counted upon his greater weight to bring them very close together at mid flight. In his imagination he conceived a touching reunion akin to the NUPTUAL FLIGHT of bees. He visualized the prospect of this brilliant mating.

(HE) Buzz,

Buzz,

Buzz,

moving closer to

(SHE)

(HE) Mnnn,

Mnnn,

MNMNMNMNMNMN

MNMN

MNMNMNMNMNMN

HABELLA!

(SHE TURNS)

MNMNMN, Hey Bella.

It's Solomon. I've  
flown to marry you.

(SHE SMILES)

She says, "You've  
changed. You dyed  
your beard."

YES. The change is  
real. I'm sorry. I  
love you. Give me  
a sign.

(She blew him a

ss  
i k i k i  
i k i k i  
ss

He drifted down satisfied, the wind rustling his silk.

He liked the idea the day-dream contained. He made an appointment immediately to have his beard dyed back to its natural colour, brown. That would make the surprise *complete*.

(FRAGMENT 6)

On the special day, Saul rose with songs in his heart and by the time he had reached the top of the mountain they beat like thunder in his ears. He shrewdly took up position beside Habella and at the proper moment, flew into space to mate her.

But the winds that day were capricious and angry and SETH god of storms and violence (the antithesis of HORUS of the SUN) created for SOL a curious fate. As the pair began their flight they wrote in the sky the Egyptian symbol of the goddess scribe:

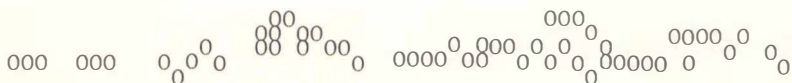


One could see immediately that something was awry. The figure of Habella was at peace with her kite as a tidy semi-circle in the sky; Sol was struggling to gain back control of his from the wind.

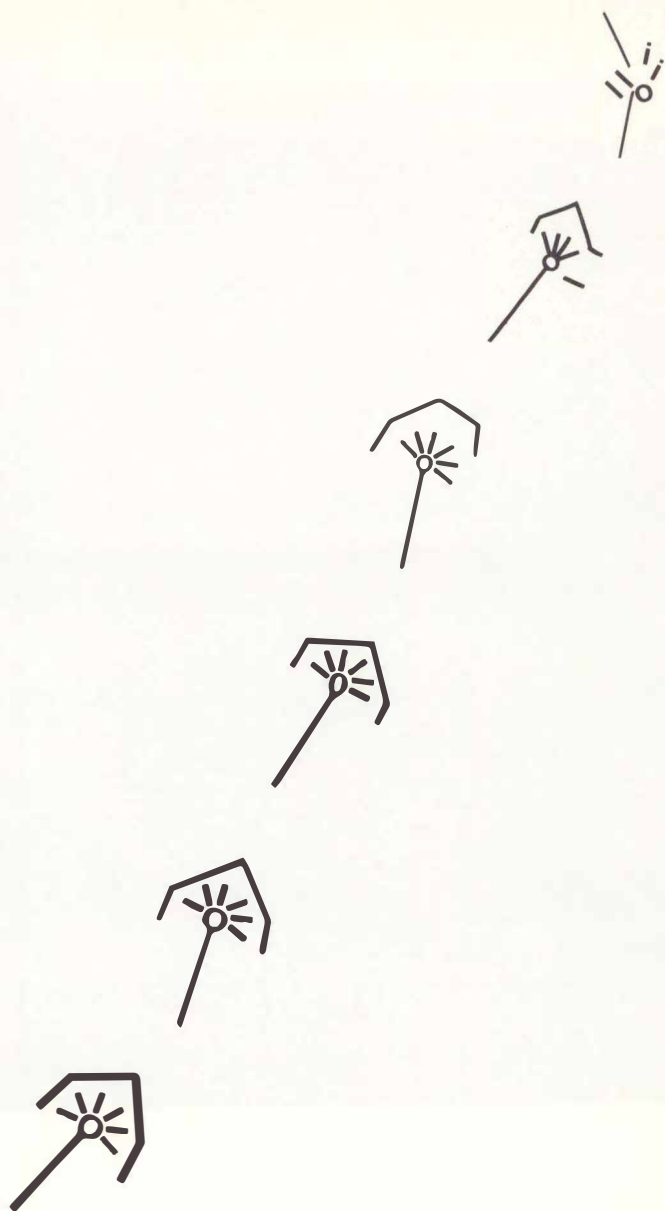
They moved further and further apart.

The critical message did not pass between them.

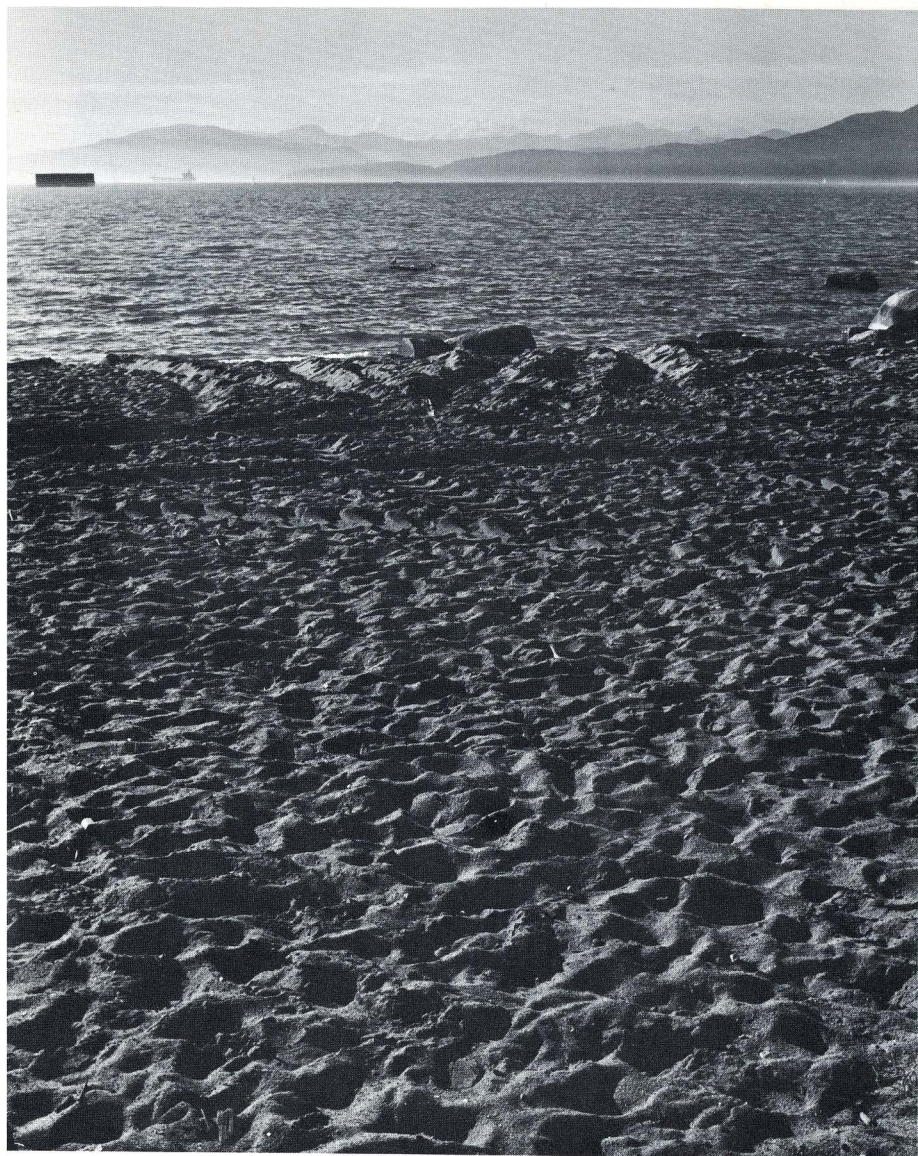
The spectators on English Bay saw that something was terribly wrong.



SAID THE CROWD. An updraft had caught Sol and in hang glider's terms he



SKYED OUT



He disappeared into a vacuum of air.

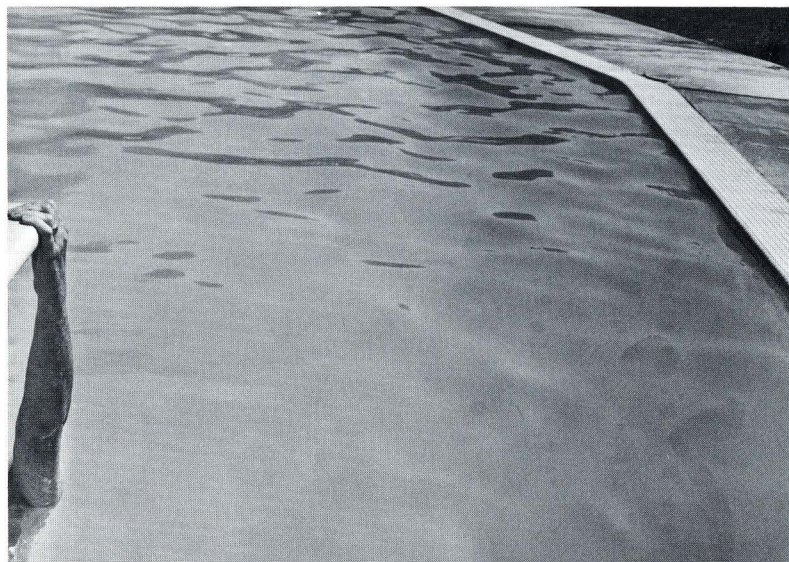
Three days later an obituary appeared. Saul's parents wished no publicity.

## IN MEMORIAM

SAUL HARTIG, a linguist with a special interest in Middle Eastern Philology died in a freak hang-gliding accident at age 28. The body has not been found.

A private service will be held at an undisclosed address. Do not send flowers. The Heart Fund would be pleased to accept gifts in his memory.

On the same page of the SUN was an announcement of Habella Cire's engagement to the good and decent man she intended to marry.



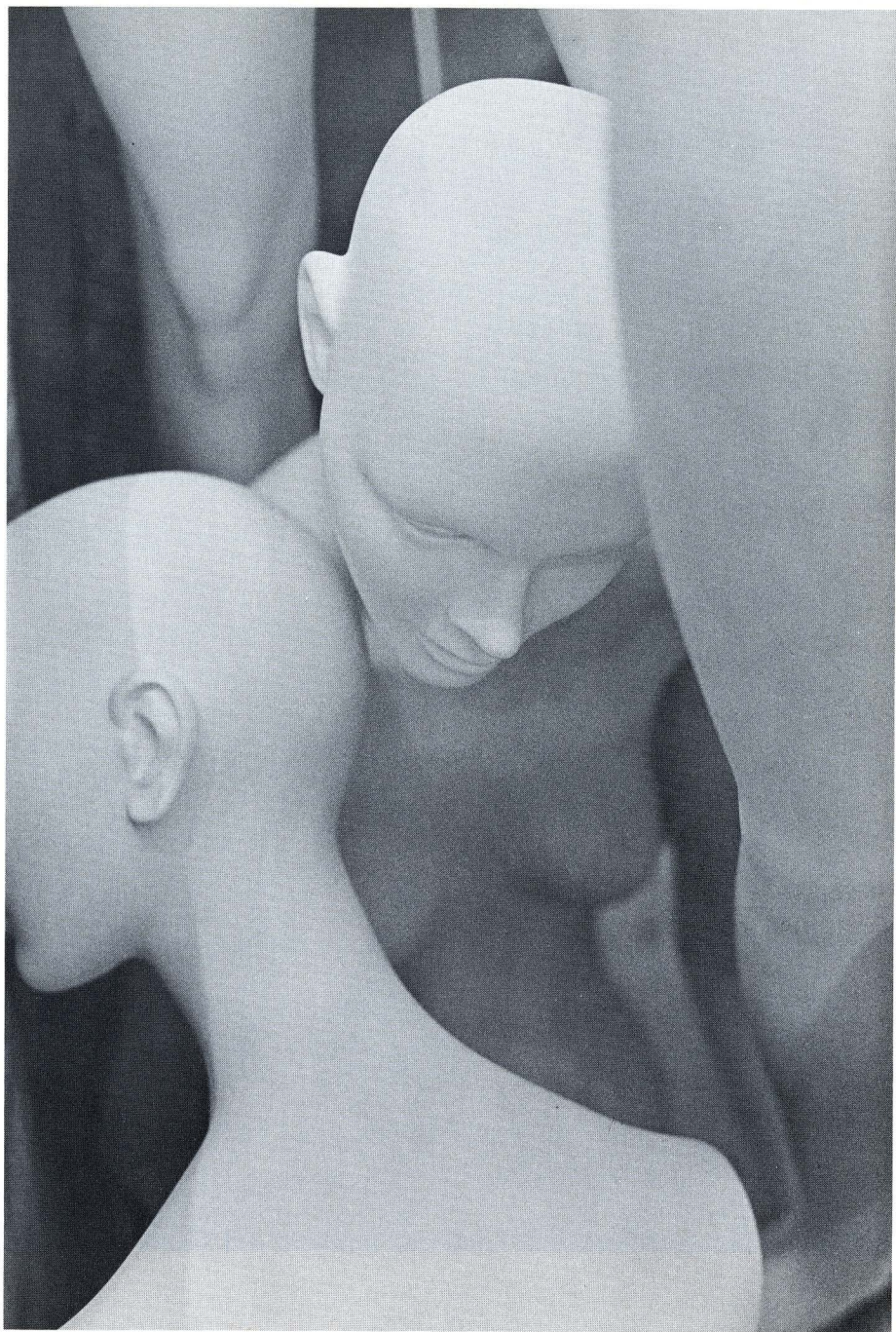
## Ronnie Tessler / PHOTOGRAPHS

### UNTITLED WORKS

Sometimes when that's all I have time for or when I need to test out my perceptions, I walk around the block with my camera. The contact sheet results can always show me something. At other times I pursue a project like frumpy garden sculpture, tacky dancing studios, major-ettes, Dr. Ballard's mutt show. — RONNIE TESSLER.

### IMAGES

*Untitled Works*, 1975-6, black and white photographs.







## RODEO SERIES

I got into the *Rodeo Series* as an attempt to understand why anyone would enter into such a violent sport, facing death and injury every day.

The Rodeo is a macho thing for the riders themselves as they perform for each other (perhaps it is slightly homosexual in that regard), but most of all the Rodeo is an elaborate ritual.

Before they start a show, the riders do a series of very contorted exercises — rather supermanish, Charles Atlas things, sitting on their saddles on the ground stretching and pulling their limbs. They resin their chaps and gloves with tremendous ceremonial intensity. And finally when *that* is all over for a particular bareback ride (the rules and forms vary for each event) the man must come out of the chute with his arm waving free sitting way up high on his mount and spurring the horse's shoulders in a rotating motion. During the ride he can't change hands, which is almost impossible. For each ride there are points for rider and mount and afterwards the riders dissect performances with more zeal than we discuss a football game, offering tips and compliments to each other. And of course they pit themselves against the clock and the animals. They're all maimed. Ropers lose fingers; everyone has broken collarbones, legs and ribs, noses, lots of scars. Rodeos are dangerous and the possibility of death is always present.

And although many of the devices used to control the animals are not supposed to hurt them, occasionally you see horses go berserk in the chutes: they're bleeding and their faces are incredibly contorted. They use cattle prods on the bulls and they shit before every ride and the horses fart all the way through theirs. It's really violent and you can't help but sympathize with the animals. And yet when the rider rushes out of the stall on an animal you cheer for him because you want him to finish his ride and live. — RONNIE TESSLER.

## IMAGES

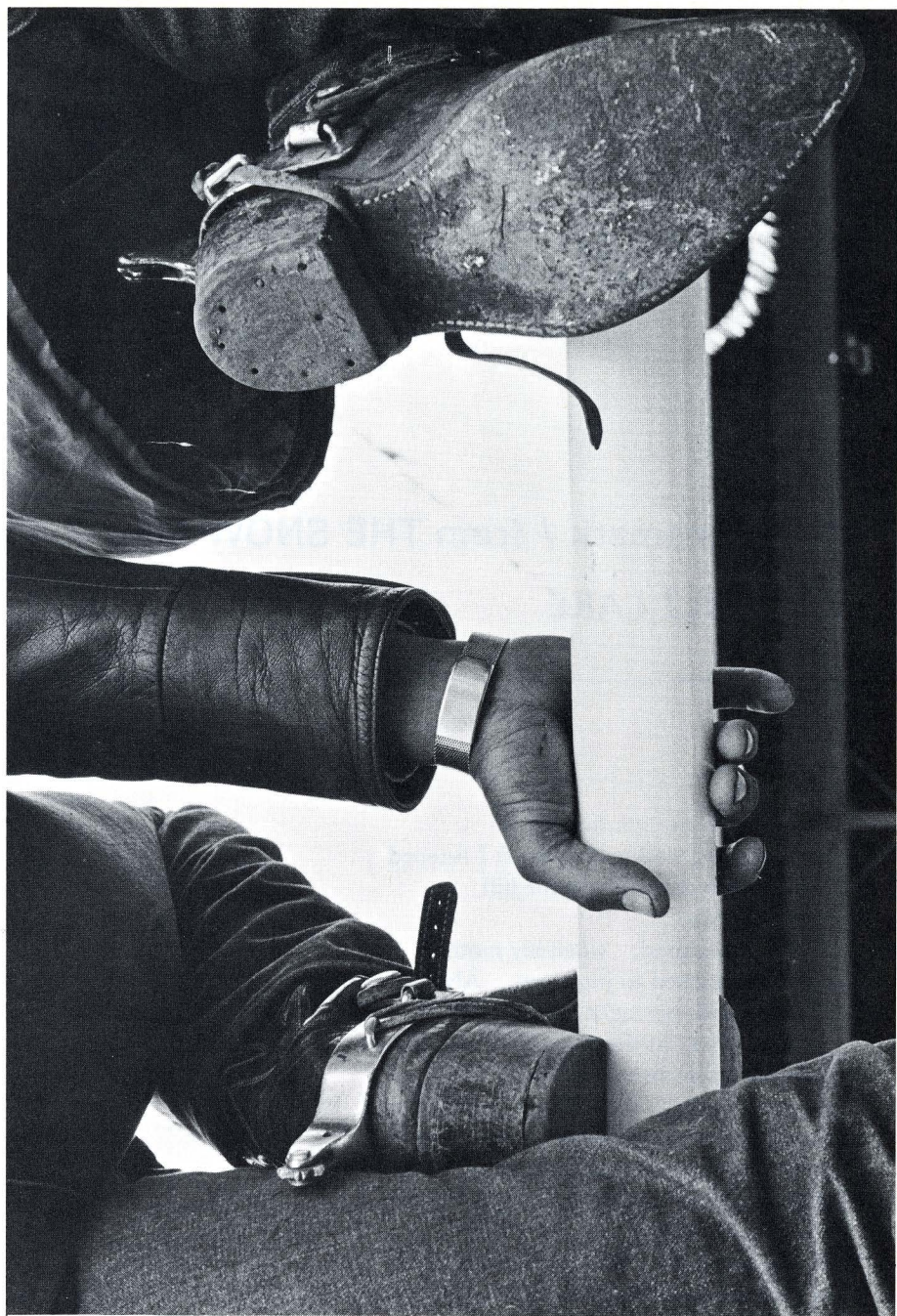
*Rodeo Series*, 1976, black and white photographs.











## Brett Enemark / from THE SNOW MEN CLUCULZ LAKE

### 1

You sang *let the sunshine in*, in  
the car going west to the lake & I listened  
yr blue Chrysler went up the hill  
above the lake  
at over a hundred, when my mother  
again threatened to jump out. Always  
she rode with her right hand poised  
(a gunslinger) at the passenger-doorhandle. Ready  
her door opens to eternal trees  
pierced finally by the light up from the lake. Now  
I remember: that's where the gravel ended  
pavement began & you speeded up  
to be so close & yet the highway  
doesn't run straight into the water.  
It lifts up the long hill & drifts back again  
between two walls of trees — small jackpine — an old burn  
we wandered thru, before the turnoff.

I wrote my first poem. Early spring so the ice  
not out yet & laying solid on liquid known where the lake was  
last year.

Writing poetry in the still frosty cabin up the steep  
bank from the ice where we'd just worked together collecting  
a huge pile of slash — the trees you'd just fallen.

Writing poetry while you poured the white gas on those  
newly-severed branches & bucked trunks that only an hour  
before had hung well above the ice. White Poplar & Willows.

Writing poetry in a parka, from the window, while you  
tried to light a match with yr big bare hands shaking in the  
cold, wind ripping away each flame, repeated curses at  
Christ, the slash, the wind, yr hands, the match & me.

Writing poetry when a match caught the gas & the wood  
disappeared behind an explosion in which I imagined the  
golden spires of a city, gone in an instant. Meat in the mouths  
of a pack of dogs lapping at winter's dull sky.

Writing poetry of a sea-battle so far from the sea  
a fire burns atop ice & there are fishing-holes where fires  
burned before me.

Writing poetry the vapour-shot of my breath was the short  
steam of burnt cities the instant they disappear in black water  
— a hiss-sound, like a snake.

3

Many had drowned, this lake also  
glacial in origin — in fact the deepest we thought  
it's bottomless, yet knowing  
if it was  
the water'd run out the bottom  
instead of out Cluculz Creek to the Nechako  
& home.

People kept drowning. They'd disappear  
never to be seen again. They didn't  
go out to the creek.

They're bones at the bottom  
too deep to be dragged. You must  
as you dive down or drown you will or will not  
notice the numbing constant lowering in temperature  
& rise in pressure the body cannot resist. The hole  
at the bottom must be plugged, plugged  
with ice, plugged with  
bones.

It looks much like a mountain  
top only everything is black & we were sailors.

## Penny Chalmers / from MOTHERS

the word lives  
where

in the breadth  
of the heart

in the breath  
of the art

in the bread  
of the earth

in the bed  
of the child

la allala

house sighs  
out side  
cat miauws  
willow sways

*Speaking, speaking*

little girl lilting  
lullaby

alala  
ala alala  
la la alala

listen to the  
listen to the

listen to your daughter  
who wants to know you

listen to your mother  
who wants to show you

la la allala

remember

first

this is my hand  
this is my eye  
this is my cheek  
this is my other  
this is my mouth

*speaking*

*Speaking, speaking*

some things you  
cannot a-  
pproach directly

like the sun  
day haze

a glint  
shifting  
-glazed reply

totally  
*other*

: look askance                      and you may see  
do not stare .    do not stare.

(cobwebs collect)

: rest your ear                      and you may hear  
light strain .    no stress

the sound of sun

spinning

on its own

spoke

some things creep everywhere  
even under doors.

this is miasma.

fall approaches . or we  
approach fall. either way it's all

the mist doesn't lift  
the myth of on- going

events  
taking place  
out there.

what else  
but flash in pan  
empty sky

cats cradle

descend to body cavity  
stars in night sky  
mother lode

passerby  
caught on the ivory horn

here is a secret.  
open the door  
to cerebellum.

the mother waits  
tending her store  
there is more  
in back

let not the left know what the right  
hemisphere

spiralling  
down to  
reverse      *does*

on the horns. my body is the work  
my body tends to give  
way  
/in  
(hairline fissure along the mound of venus)

: when the cage does not hold  
it separates

not at first glance apparent

the fire is in the wood.  
the fire is in you.

we come so close  
as far off as far

the rest is more  
or less: precise,

at the grate,  
log to ember proud  
dissolution

disillusion?  
who  
can know the log's dilemma?  
split,  
as to make choice  
wood burn better  
in answer,  
flame,  
quickly

red in the log yet  
glowing inside out

air does no harm.

this is a woman speaking. no.

this is a woman

as she is  
speaking.

this is her thought.

her thought is in her body.

air learns to course a way through.

listen to her. understand

her bones sing  
with.

she sings from the right

into the left  
called sinister.

she has been well and mirror and pond.

reflecting

she grows impatient.

she will speak :

## PEPPERS & SAND

On the outside of the wall —  
a photograph, a line  
of camels. In the centre  
a man walks (I know it's you

I follow him out of the picture.  
I see only sand, this man,  
you are,  
the planter of phosphorus.

You see landmarks.  
I follow your voice  
so closely I begin  
to see who you are.

Behind the wall  
let me plant a thing small and green  
You stop to help a camel beget  
two tender young ones —  
a difficult birth,  
'I'd ...'  
(like to stroke them.  
But you've disappeared.

I pick up a handful of sand to see  
if you've left any seeds or  
bits of blue behind,  
but it blows into my eyes  
obscuring my vision  
(I don't even see where I stand)  
alone I gather  
peppers & sand

*March 1976*

## Words, going

Streams, your worn body, articulate to oceans.  
And the danger of wanting a single source  
words, clear as fish, rise from.

Rise,  
dart from the hand, shine  
in sun before they fall.

Or love  
your many, unfolding as the world  
goes. Not  
to protect you: they tear wanting one, you  
hold and go.  
Not to mend.

But to wash  
seaweed and salt from your arms.

Slip from caresses, ride  
waves: fish at your fingertips.

*whole and gone* in waves.  
I search for you in words.

your  
whole mouth, your cock, these  
are clear, one, wanting you simply but  
hearing more.

I learn  
articulation, turn  
to see my faces rise  
with fish.

And swim clearly or.

As the stream goes  
As the world goes

*October 1976*

## Eleanor Crowe / GLASS POEM

Frac  
tured  
as  
breath  
caught at  
shoulder  
blades what  
eyes see a  
blue flower floats against  
black. each  
petal pulled &  
goes

## Neap Hoover / TWO POEMS FLICKER

moon's wife is a precious bird

*kun*

she is guarded by eight red birds

*kun*

she is carried by the *wihalait* (great dancer)

she decorates his

*amhalait*

feathers forward

feathers back

throws his power

into the novitiate

she is moon's wife

she carried the crescent

light

## A SECRET LANGUAGE

*for Wilson Duff*

An argillite angel grows feathers  
her armpits sprout  
under her  
store-bought  
wings.

Raven's head emerges from her stomach  
Joseph stands reverent  
his eyes downcast  
at this confusion  
Christ or Raven  
he asks  
will I be delivered  
from this

## Brian Fawcett / THE SECOND LIFE

### 5th Serial Run, Hornby Island

A branch of flowering cherry, lady  
small tree roughbarked  
& the rough skin on your arms  
pointed breasts beneath the folds of your dress  
the tensions  
of these boring, debilitating suburbs

Poplar, some birch, fir  
& thickets of alder between the new  
& already rundown houses

I brought these flowers & left them  
because you were not home

& by your gate golden forsythia, & the sun  
breaking open the weeping willow, lady

Lady, inside the agony  
of these pale pink blossoms the year  
is rushing, the breeze is warm  
& coils around the slender boughs

& ankles of

Gravel  
& Maillardville. The church  
in the rain. The Virgin  
in concrete & the colorless mandala  
because these thousand lovers  
are poor.

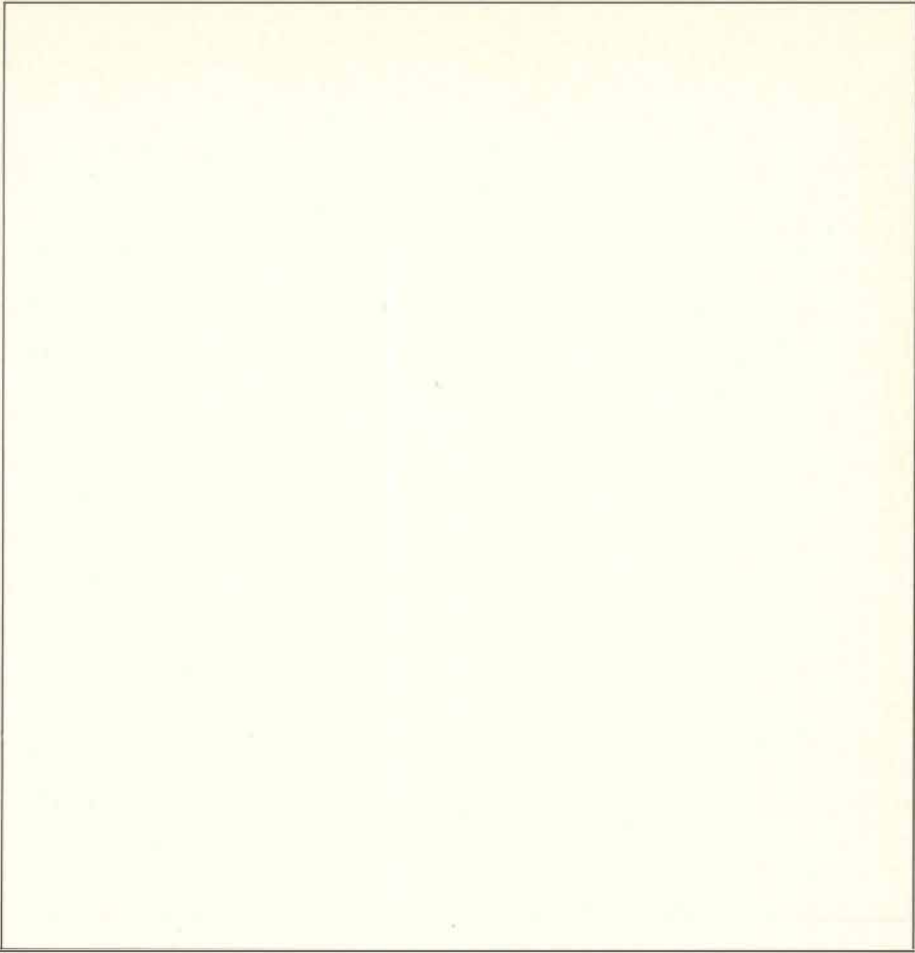
I have lost my heart  
watching the rain fail  
to wash the ashes from your body.  
Our cheeks are wet from the world

but the city rushes on & past  
heartlessly

On the 17th floor the City  
is a rumble in the ears. Tonight  
I have nothing but this lonely heart  
wanting love & to sleep  
with you before I jump

back into more of the same. Nothing  
is going to get resolved nothing  
but the nightglow on your body  
because desire brings me back  
knocking at your door. I don't even know  
if the City is there, is lonely  
or where the people have gone.

The Lonely Heart on the 17th floor  
rumbles in my ears.



Dusky yellow moth  
trembling on the windowsill  
what if I touch you.

Touching your wings  
is death the cold  
is death the rain  
beats on the yellow leaves

is death      what if  
I do not touch you

After Dante

keep talking. There  
is the Terror of love  
that it grows  
in the words it feeds  
to the leopards of desire.

My lips against your breasts  
begin love's death  
choking the words  
the leopards alone desire

## II

### After Dante

the second life proceeds  
unlike the first  
tense & vigilant  
against stupid bullshit  
& descriptive nature. Love

your nature is  
particular, mixt with  
the new events  
& barely invisible

### III

After Dante

does Language  
stop up my mouth

& warriors of the Will  
battle the leopards in the streets  
because each comes apart  
in the middle of sentences  
like lepers. Can I

ever again speak of Love's pure body  
in the absense of the vast yellow blossom  
of an impossibly organized world?

After Dante the streets  
are the same  
but I am silent & spotted  
& I rage at each intersection

to gather new syntax into the voice  
of that larger desire

## IV

### After Dante

I am not the same.  
Watching you sleep 2 AM  
March snowy night    If only  
there were nothing else to say

e.g. Kenneth Patchen's misery  
not the result of privilege & abuse  
of human labour & he

not also given up to  
blind increase

V

After Dante

the sun again eventually gleams  
on the blue sea, those pretty white patches  
on the distant mountains  
really are snow

& the lonely heart is none of these.

A white boat ( you can see  
the multiple lines dragging the water for fish

edges past the shimmering point  
& into the calm waters

The poetics of Cities  
must change, can  
no longer be based on material resource alone  
or absolute planetary wealth the earth  
is finite & mortal  
hence the need for new poetics  
of diminution.

I want to say  
I love you to someone  
or simply walk the streets with friends  
but the poetics of this are caught in profit  
& the complexity of technology  
most of all in the minds  
of those who rule the cities:  
builders, moneymen, planners, hence

the streets are hostile, the abundance  
lives in fear of its sheer mass.

The overpopulated species is the source of new wealth  
the social the form  
of the poetics

We do require meaning to subsist & we do demand  
in however small a context to know  
whats going on, whats our place  
& who are these men w/ curious uniforms do  
they protect us, & what further, beyond  
questions of property & personal gain what  
will make strangers want us. This

is permission for this use of  
the plural, is the real resistance, this

and a wondering heart (angel wings  
I saw on the beach turned out  
iridescent seaweed  
is the Angelic

& the gorgeous wings brush us  
when we stand in the darkening waters  
of all that it is not

& we are part of

Waking up to your tears  
2 AM my cock  
halfhard against your back  
& the hamster in the next room  
turning the wheel, what

am I  
to do, caught up  
in these entanglements, your tears  
running across my arm, divorced  
from the ancient dream of romance & light  
without regrets or satisfaction; it has gone  
like the ordered world I knew as a child  
& the justice I expected was its source.

Tonight I want to know what  
did I do, do I deserve  
the quiet in the city, the night  
tracing routes back into  
the tears I awoke to my cock  
halfhard against your back &  
the squeaking wheel the hamster runs  
into the traffic  
of personal misery.

Is the night's dark flower  
the real world, my hand is half open  
half fist in a dark  
no longer unborn light. What

is the hamster where  
is the child Why  
in this losing is it you  
that I fight

The Mystery of Love begins to fade  
and She takes off the belt, buckler  
the corset of gold. Real women  
often wear coloured underwear  
bought at the Bay.

Let them.

Paradise is not artificial or even elegant  
& nakedness  
no longer reveals us as angels  
nor does it betray  
the pain in each of our hearts. I demand

a love without wings.  
with real roads, bridges, the records of our human deeds  
piling up on the city register.

And in the seat of Power  
a compassion capable of boredom, anger  
curiosity at the tangle  
of flesh, trees, metal,  
the landscape

we are together in

By Reason of the Beautiful  
I search these streets to find her not  
from the illusions caused by  
the illusion of the perfectly parallel.  
The streets fascinate, their solitude  
is a torture. The invisible city  
& this wholly visible heart  
because I have come to question the Reason  
of the Beautiful. Yet

you, Beloved, I do not question, do  
love & do  
not love finally.  
I can never find her.

## Ian Wallace / TWO MURALS

*The two photographic murals by Ian Wallace exhibited at the Pender Street Gallery in June, 1976, represent a stage in the intellectual development of an artist who in 1970 turned away from the austere nihilism of minimal abstraction to the real world of images offered by camera and videotape.*

*An Attack on Literature dramatizes in a twelve-part statement three spectators' confrontation with a typewriter with a will of its own. As a young man bends to conjure forth a piece of blank paper from the mysteriously abandoned machine, paper flies from it magically into the air, attacking and baffling all. The sequence condenses an idea of great visual complexity into the shortest possible unit of cognizance. The artist moves us smoothly from a distant overhead view to one in which we directly confront the actors' struggle with the paper windfall. While there is a cinéma vérité tension about the work, its style reflects Wallace's respect for the distribution of forms discovered in Cubist and Constructivist composition.*

*The Constructor moves the viewer through an eight-unit appreciation of three persons' reactions to an unknown stimulus. The figures — hand tinted in saturated colour — are as impersonal as those in An Attack on Literature. Both works invite verbal extrapolation and both comment on the constructed material that art is and upon the constructive eye of the artist as he selects art from life.*

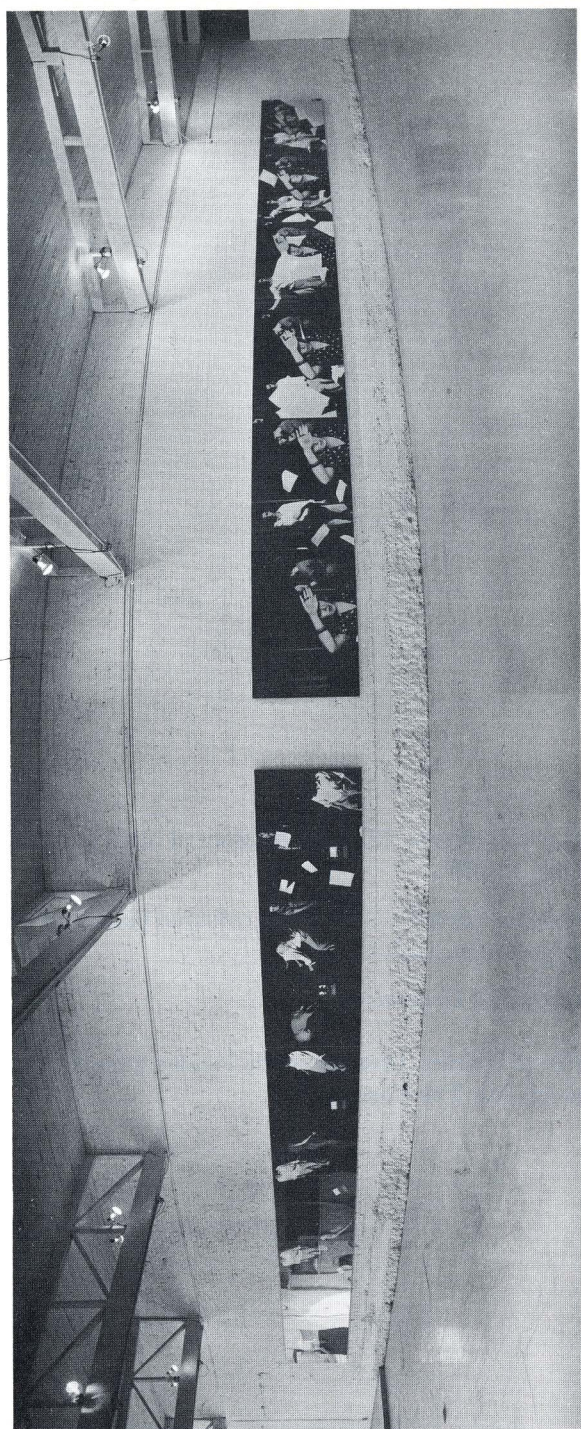
## IMAGES

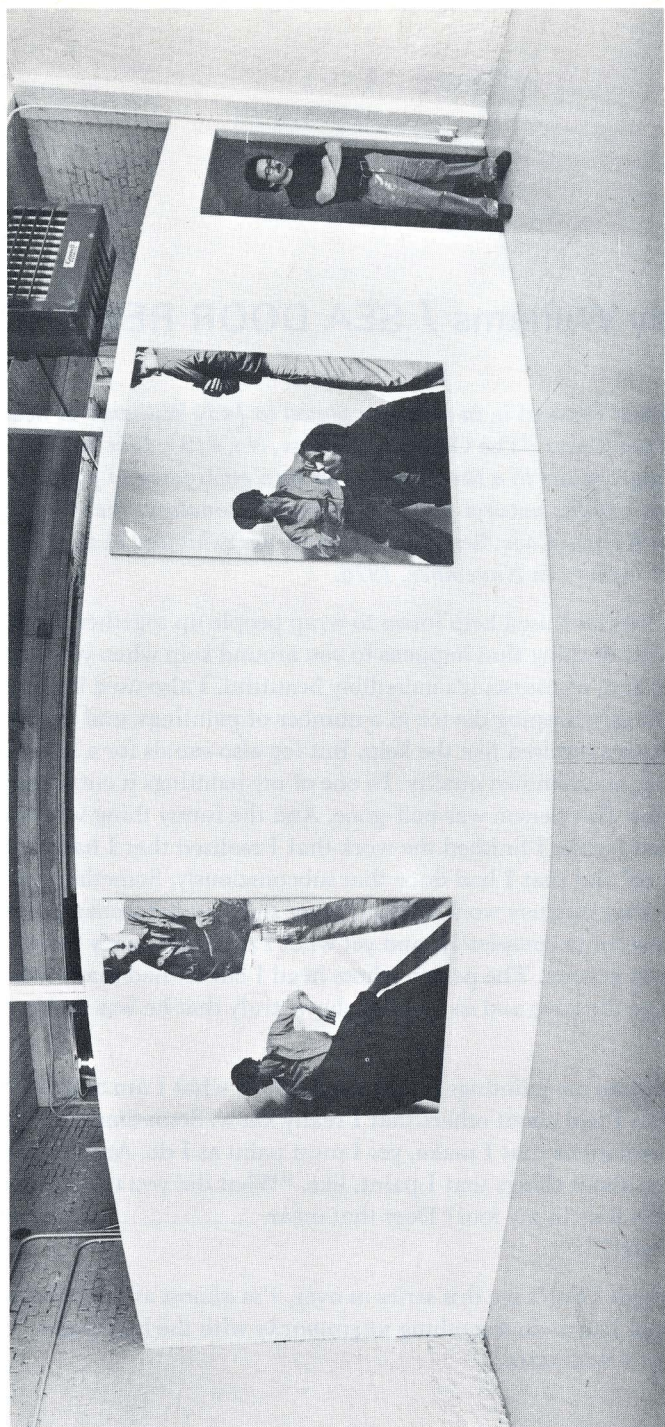
*An Attack on Literature*, 1975, hand coloured black and white photography, 4' x 68'.

*The Constructor* (detail), 1976, hand coloured black and white photography, 8 units, each 6' x 4'.

*Photography: Tod Greenaway*

Note: Willard Holmes, Director of the Pender Street Gallery, is shown with *The Constructor*.





## Judy Williams / SEA DOOR REWARD

*Sea Door Reward is, in a sense a sequel to Judy Williams' A Search for the True Cedar (The Capilano Review, No. 8/9). Like its predecessor, its images relate to a theme which in turn gives form to Judy's response to the natural phenomena and personalities that fate brings her at Refuge Cove. Sea Door Reward was exhibited at the Pender Street Gallery in November, 1976.*

In this series I used kelp forms to wrap people up together, and that's the kind of thing that happens to you around kelp when you're in the water and, of course, it's incredibly beautiful. I also used fog as a splashing/wrapping device in a number of paintings, and its edges are sometimes tattered like the kelp. But fog also stands for a miasmic feeling, an unknown quality. In one of my paintings it cut a person in two and that person was half-gone. And the funny thing was that it was only when I finished the work that I realized that I had cut his head off and that I had done that subconsciously. Sometimes people think that painters work all that clever stuff out beforehand, but I never seem to completely, and yet what I do instinctively turns out often to be true. The person whose head I cut off had made a decision to leave the cove and so that fog shows truly that he was no longer there.

Sometimes my paintings reveal too much of what I am and too much of what I feel about others that I really know. Sometimes I can't face the revelations that I make, yet I must paint as I do. And my friends ask me about things that I paint, like, "What did you mean when you put this hole in my foot? Does that mean ..... about my character?"

Although I don't see this series as over, I'm almost at the point where I would like to do something *ungimmicky* with the landscape.

— JUDY WILLIAMS.

TWO IMAGES FROM *SEA DOOR REWARD*

*Firehouse Punch* (details), 1976-7,  
watercolour, 40" x 25".

*Photography: Tod Greenaway*





## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

COLIN STUART studied with Charles Olson, Robert Duncan, and Robert Creeley at the Berkeley Poetry Conference, and with Robin Blaser at SFU. Expelled from university in 1973, he did graduate work in Buffalo, N.Y. with Jack Clarke, the Blake-Olson scholar who had visited Vancouver a year earlier. In 1974 he convalesced at the British School of Classical Studies in Athens. He taught at SFU briefly, then worked for a United Nations study group. He has recently begun his new project, "Poet in China." (Photo credits: Taki Bluesinger: p. 32; Michael: p. 103. Also, Simone Martini, *Annunciation*, detail, ca. 1333, tempera and gold leaf, ht. 104" x w. 120", Uffizi Gallery, Florence. The Hegel quote on p. 83 is from the *Phenomenology*. The cameo on p. 44 is from Robert Goodden, World Wide Butterflies Ltd.)

JOHN SCOGGAN, in Vancouver of late, has recently published a new section of his work on American poetics: *Charles Olson, Acts of the Soul* part 4, with *Iron*, available from Falstaff Books, 4529 W 10th, and due to be published in full, this year, with Talonbooks of Vancouver.

ARTHUR ERICKSON of Arthur Erickson Architects is the best known and most highly regarded Canadian in his field. Winner of many major competitions and recipient of countless architectural honours, his work is admired for its sculptural quality and the force of its symbolism. His accessible local buildings are the MacMillan Bloedel Tower on Georgia Street, Simon Fraser University and the new Museum of Anthropology at UBC.

JACK SHADBOLT is likely British Columbia's best known artist. He has been active as a painter and designer since the thirties; he was, until his retirement, an instructor of painting at the Vancouver School of Art. Now in his seventies, he continues his work with the energy and zeal of a man half his age.

LYNN HUGHES was born in Vancouver but has spent most of her life outside Canada travelling with her family. Her young life was spent in Africa. She is a graduate in English Literature from the University of Toronto and a graduate of the Vancouver School of Art.

FIELDING DAWSON is now back in New York where he lives and works most of the time. We had the pleasure of his energy and company this last summer and early fall in Vancouver, where he gave many readings, both public and private, among which was a fine lecture and reading at Capilano College. Fielding has published too many books to list all of them here; one of his latest is *The Man Who Changed Overnight & Other Stories* (Black Sparrow). Vancouver's Cobblestone Press should be bringing out Fielding's broadside *Freedom* quite soon. We look forward to all of Fielding's new work, among which will be, shortly we hope, *Nancy Drew in Paradise* (a collection of stories based in Vancouver), and *More Tiger Lilies*.

ALEXANDRE AMPRIMOZ is a prolific writer living in Windsor, Ont., where he is co-editor of *Poetry Windsor Poesie*. His latest book is *Studies in Grey* (Killaly Press, 1976).

DARYL RASMUSSEN is working on several endeavours, most notably a novel, *The Note in the Fridge*, and is collaborating on some as yet unknown children's books, *The Sahara Family Fridge* and *Remora, Remora, Daddy Was a Shark*. He is a former student of Creative Writing at Capilano College, now at Simon Fraser University.

CATHY FORD writes poetry, short fiction, plays and — at the moment — her first novel. Her work has been published and is appearing in many places, including *Antigonish Review*, *The Poem Company*, *CBC Anthology*, *Event*, *A Room of One's Own*, *3¢ Pulp*, and *Pomegranate*. Her book of poems, *Blood Uttering*, just came out from Intermedia, as did *Canadian Short Fiction Anthology*, which she edited.

ANN ROSENBERG teaches Fine Arts (history) at Capilano College and writes as much art criticism as time permits. She is Associate Editor (Visual Media) of *The Capilano Review*. She makes blue movies on the side.

RONNIE TESSLER has a background in interior decorating and design. She took one photography course at Capilano College for two semesters, which served as an introduction to the subject. In the last two years photography has become her avocation.

BRETT ENEMARK, of Prince George, lives in paradise and edits *IRON*. His first book, *The Snow Men*, should be out sometime in '77.

PENNY CHALMERS is: preparing a play *The Angel Makers* for filming and a Western tour; tidying up a 100-page comic opera for puppets, *The Epic of Dis the Toad*, for imminent production; anticipating the publication of *West Coast Works* this month and *Clearing* next month; editing alchemical poems into *Twelfth Key*; transmuting into rubric. She is living on an Island in Toronto.

JANET COTGRAVE attended a poetry workshop at the Vancouver School of Art in 1969 but left and burned her work when told it "wasn't poetry." She is now a mature-entry, Creative Writing/English student at Capilano College and Simon Fraser University, is working as a part-time editorial assistant for a Vancouver publisher and is an associate poetry editor of *The Capilano Review*. This is her first publication.

ELEANOR CROWE's poems have appeared in *Iron*, *Yellow Pine*, *Waves*, *N.M.F.G.*, and *White Pelican*. She was born in Nelson, B.C. and now lives in Ladner where she "shovels a lot of chicken shit."

NEAP HOOVER lives in Victoria and works at the Provincial Museum as an ethnology curator, where his contact with West Coast Indian artforms compels his own writing and concerns. Other poems have appeared in *Iron* and will be appearing in *N.M.F.G.*

BRIAN FAWCETT recently read and talked about his latest poems, serial runs, at the Burnaby Art Gallery, Capilano College, and in the *Mountain Pass* series on Vancouver's Co-Op Radio (CFRO). Brian has published several books of poetry, among which are *Friends* (Georgia Straight Writing Supplement, 1971), *Five Books of a North Manual* (Beaver Kosmos Folios, 1972), *The Opening* (New Star Books, 1974), and more recently a chapbook called *After Dante* which is an excerpt from one of the new serial runs. Everyone should read his beautiful poem "Four Transformations of the Rose" in the last issue of *Imago* (20).

IAN WALLACE currently teaches art history at the Vancouver School of Art and, when time and money allow, he makes large hand-tinted photographic works which bring to the art-making process values and ideas associated with literature.

JUDY WILLIAMS was born in Vancouver, but spent most of her young life moving from air force base to air force base with her family. She has been exhibiting her paintings since 1966 and has just completed her second one-person show. She is involved in a land co-op at Refuge Cove, B.C., a lifestyle and a locale that influence her present work.

JIM BIZZOCCHI teaches in the Media Program at Capilano College, and is a filmmaker by trade and inclination (*Cabin* and *I Was Born Here*). He photographed Angel as she stood in dust at the *Cimitero di Staglieno*, Genoa.

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