

# JOGLARS



## JOGLARS

Volume 1 Number 2 Winter 1964

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and Betsy Garrett Bang  
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traveling song  
from Peire Vidal

My heart brings joy to itself  
has its own spring  
and is renewed  
pleasant and soft,  
for the castle of Fanjeaux  
seems to me to be Paradise,  
both  
love and joy locked within it,  
as well as all that  
is honor and courtesey,  
sincere and perfect.

I have not an enemy, if mortal,  
by whom I am not a loyal  
friend, if only he  
speaks of ladies

with praise  
and honor.

And I am not from  
out of the midst of women  
and I go to another country,  
to lament and languish there.





Photograph by Nicholas Dean

the trees of deer  
brushing leafage  
man occupied by  
giraffe the jaw

horrible things  
he is  
storehouse in bark  
sing off top of a drum  
surviving branches

button button the  
tail white through the thick  
tall clouds now  
look, their bottom  
opened, you lose, smell  
the updraft of metal

What's insight to the eagle barewind  
shadows  
fall a long way  
take arms in their flight trees  
turn a little  
off

hull strands among leaves  
birds nest small strokes more power  
in the rain  
the sun lap from a wall

stars through it  
makes no difference



\* \*

the photo on the wall  
what is behind the wall  
for the  
place take it away  
from the past

the snow  
dropped

run off  
glassy  
I  
remember the  
palpable

on what to act

You assume what  
the others do  
to pass it over the mind

man the speed he made found  
in his nerves

the fields are truly embraced  
you can't tell  
where you are

history  
on all sides  
and hence the future

That's why death was different  
from what's ahead

or the spaces are short  
a wall was thick

air was a wall

clouds open in their  
travels

processes which  
take place

## THE ROBERT LETTER

Near end July, 1964

Dear Bob,

I hasten to answer your letter, your beautiful letter, "The most clear letter", Jane says, "we've ever received from Bob"; BUT I am also somewhat saddened that I haven't any capital "A"-Answers to some of your worries, I have no place in mind where human flowers are permitted to bloom openly . . . God, all my Roberts, my dear Roberts: Bob Benson, for instance, permitting himself to be destroyed in the no-man's land somewhere between the New York Stage and Taggart's Basement, that is: The San Francisco Workshop which has degenerated into a sort of Pee-Wee Golf Course, a narrow way directed the same as Broadway, same ultimate dis-tinct -- to be shunned by all but those who seek destruction the sloooooooooow, rather than speedy B', way; but how was I ever to say to Benson that what drama needs more than anything else is an actor who disciplines himself privately as purely as creative painter, say, thoughtless of attention, shunning even all but whatever audience angels bring his way at moment when it is given to him to create, accepting whatever circumstances so long as they are free of even the anarchic commissioning in Taggart's Basement? -- how was I to say this to him

who cannot stack up his creative moments in a closet or send them out from himself intact for a usage he's free-of once performance is completed? . . . except to demonstrate as much of that process as was possible in the making of "Blue Moses"? . . . AND SUDDENLY I DO SEE that THAT WAS enough: I suddenly realize in writing this to you that those same recording means, film and tape, are as available to a performing artist as they are to so-called creative artist -- "so-called" because all superficial distinctions between those terms "performing" and "creative" melt, indeed "resolve themselves into a dew", i.e., make perfect natural form for whoever has the strength to take means at his hand as medium in hand -- Benson could carry around a tape recorder, a camera, as easily as I, and carry this equipment, as he does all his training, as preparation for coming moments of inspiration and in homage to what was given him, his sensibilities, his gift for acting; and he could also carry all this equipage, as I must, with due homage and humility with respect to forces beyond his control, striving always for the perfection of White Magician as defined by Graves in the sense of He-Who prepares himself all his life so that he-whom the angels intend to move the mountain may do so without debt, Black Magic, when the moment for moving the mountain comes to pass, as it may not within any particular man's lifetime -- but that



latter part is an over-emphasized pessimism of Graves, perhaps himself too concerned with mountains, because, as it has at least been my experience, the angels, angels being my name for forces moving thru me beyond my knowledge, my sensing of multiplicity of forces rather than sensing what may be a most singular force, these angels do seem to find plenty of work for all so disciplined, all White Magicians, that is: I know no idle good men -- tho' plenty distracted by work, a kind of double positive making negative in this field as any other regarding magic of grammar . . . and have heard of some who seem to me to have misunderstood various Eastern teachings, etcetera . . .

Well, WOW, what a simple thing for me to have overlooked all these years; and I can no longer excuse, that is pity, the so-called performing artist in this, God knows, that is as is singularly known, difficult time for all of us; and I realize that pity was with regard to myself as performing artist as I once was singer, actor, rhetorician, etceterician, did even once want, as still somewhere in the pity of me want, people to look over my shoulder as I was editing, do still pull on Jane for that double distraction, non-traction in the working process, still want to teach, lec-tour, even tho' I know all admiration and/or hatred for me distracts from the images on the screen as surely as if I took a pointer during any film

showing and created shadow lines and the form of my body to partially block the light, the creative intention -- that's IT, do then at best refer to intent in a shun of the creative realization, do tattoo mySELF all over, in such action, with dislocated pieces of my own -- ah, notice how "own" slips in -- images, do indeed then make them my own at the expense of any freedom, vulgarly, rub them off on myself, a showing off for sure, an exhibitionism not even courageous to go naked, a flaunt of what can only be moving designs patterned for dress when thus, by lecture, singled out of creation and superimposed upon myself as teach-preach-err reaching for an each which would make a kind of stifled scream of me, to draw attention to the anti-poetic "I", or to those who hate me then an Ass, a capital "A", and to the neutral an "Exhibit A" at best. And I remember so clearly now Robert Duncan's warning:

"If I've tried to get one idea across in the art it is that the poet must have no deep and complex feelings, no 'I' at all, that does not belong to, arise in the orders of, the poem itself."

and the passages where those concerns take form in his Day Book:

"Liberty too is a demand of the



anti-poetic. The poet cannot take liberties in the poem. For just there, where the arbitrary, self-expressive or self-saving, where the self-conscious voice comes, the *ιδιότης*, idiot howl or moan or the urbane sophistication breaks or takes over from the communal voice. In the communal consciousness, the idiot is a member. But the difficulty of self-expression or of accomplished performance (self-possession) in verse is that this false "I" usurps the place of the "I" that we all are."

A long time ago, after you had performed the piano background music to James Broughton's reading, you confided to me that you and he could share a "performer's sense" which, as you said, I lacked. The ambition in me which drove me to San Francisco in search of A Round Table, and that which drove me of late to New York in search of even a square one, all prompted by fat of my youth which had kept me from getting under the brother-hood, which I never till lately thought of as my being too BIG (God, how singularly poet Robert Kelly has redeemed much of my childhood -- as you too, my musical Robert, when the SIZE of you took shape in your play as the beauty of your playing), this statement of yours did make

me feel excluded from a kind of Three Musketeership at the time, did prove troublesome, as any lack, to "A small boy's notion of doing good", as another Robert, Creeley, puts it in a poem. I NOW, as of the spelling of this lettering, acknowledging faults as cracks of mis-spells must run through my ignorance in these several pages, an acknowledgement to save me from some statute of myself, DO, from break-through of feeling that I wish it would have been so, RECOGNIZE A WOULD IT WERE TRUE, a becoming present, AND WILL IT TO BE TRUE that I lack sense of performance, HEREBY SWEAR AN OATH in homage to the forces beyond my knowledge, my angels, THAT I WILL TALK NO MORE ABOUT MY FILMS, NOR WRITE OF THEM EITHER, TILL IT IS GIVEN TO ME, a sense of need shaped to sign, THAT I MAY SPEAK, OR WRITE, WHITE WORDS ONLY IN WHITE RELATION, or at least as of the same impulse felt in the act of creating.

As you have met, known or know something of all the other Roberts of this letter, but Robert Kelly, I will send you a poem just received from him, from his alphabet book named AT THE FOOT OF THE LETTER; and as you may wonder what I mean by "a sense of need shaped to sign" I will send you "R" which may be taken as a sign if there be need enough in you to read it carefully:

"R

Robert, Robertus sum. Brightfame. Son or daughter of all that made me. Don't you know. Yes I know. Robert. The name taught me to steal, & expect to be punished. Anybody can steal but only rob\*bers are punished. I am the Queen's poet & know no names. The Kings poet. Yes. Once I have made my music I will not write I again.  
Robertus sum.

Not robber. It is easy to be immortal but where is the song? Song/after death, who needs it? No more questions. The song. Above all gardens & in dirt. Whence grows.

In one rush:  
matter & song, triumphant,  
/thru the tree's  
body. Robert's  
concerns, cocks, houses, oak for upright,  
the house stands strong.  
But what what given is a flower or a country,  
& he could not live on it. Love  
loving anything it can. Maple for shade. O  
tall house air lives in, to stand up therein.  
Is song. Oneself, River, or shore of a lake,  
wind, who, from the south, the drab water  
Whatever is sung  
is for the republic  
& that is where  
houses live & how.  
The water, the words  
are never our own,

are not ours  
but to make over

& rob the princess from hell. Flecked black  
& white with music, he drives to his baptism  
in the same cart. No one can see him.

Return

at length

to your land

& raise

the living

from the dead.

Robert is strong enough to bear all burdens  
Robert will live forever

Robert can make cities from flowers & love  
/from a house

Robert flows his waters all over you  
The apples he steals are his own."

Very personally I could wish nothing more than that you would find that "your land" was near to us in every respect. You do write out of you nostalgia for things that are no more: Boulder is no more a place where even beauty of performance flows, no one of interest to me performs there, I no longer perform there either: most of your friends are scattered, all those names, Bill and Mary travelers, it may have been The Meader's film sign you saw in Maine, as that is where they are, etcetera, and even Jane and I can no longer be considered of- Boulder: As for Denver, it fares no better,



except that perhaps it might in Jane's ironic sense that "Now that Taggart has at last left Denver art may flourish there just to spite him": and we have very much changed, even the children you speak of playing with our girls who came to call all welcome visitors "Bobs" as if it were natural English usage, are older and more various in their ways; but we have none of us changed with respect to what we love, "Bobs" and the particular Bob you are.

les lunes de tes fesses  
sonnent leur détresse  
chantons la messe



from "Regards from the Outhouse"

(Twinkle and Shine are twin brothers. Judgement Day is their father. His speeches are cut-ups from the New York Times Book Review.)

T: Here! . . . Take this third line and stretch it across while I work on the second one.

S: (Moving and stretching the line across) The country pays the price of occupation. The tribal ethic, in which personal courage, honor of the family name and clan loyalty were the prime virtues, is marked for extinction. This long and harrowing episode is an account of the death watch of three men condemned to the gallows for opposing the alien authority. They are an army captain, a young student, and an old peasant.

J.D.: How interesting. Is there more to the story?

T: (Also stretching his line the opposite way from S.) What man cannot remember he is destined to repeat. . . . One of my friends showed his priest the skull and bones of his old man. It seems when the old man had become too feeble, my friend asked people of a

neighboring village to take care of him. Those people brained the old man with clubs, cut up his body, cooked him in a stone oven and ate him with great relish. Many families usually trust the killing and eating of old father to members of another clan.

J.D.: Hmmmm, who was it who said: "Without death, we would have no philosophy."

S: There is a good deal about death in these varied stories, a good deal about pain and loss, the sheer vulnerability of man to existence. Life, after all, survives the perplexities of conscience.

(Shine strangles J.D. with a clothes line. A struggle ensues.)

T: Pull Shine! . . . Tighter. . . . TIGHTER!  
(J.D. sinks slowly beneath his desk)

S: Give me a hand!

T: Watch out! Be careful his feet don't get stuck beneath the desk.

S: Where are we taking him?

T: Over here! . . . To the outhouse!  
(They both put J.D. in the outhouse and close the door) Here! . . . Take this rope and wind it around! Secure the door!

S: What for? . . . He's dead. Isn't he?

T: Don't ask questions! . . . Just do as I say!  
(They both secure the door)  
(While Shine is securing this rope,

Twinkle goes to J.D.'s desk. He begins searching through the drawers.)

S: What are you looking for?

T: The traveling money. Remember?... We planned to go away.

S: (Coming forward) I'm not so sure....

T: What do you mean... "You're not so sure?"

S: Somehow I don't think it's necessary anymore... Is it?

T: Do as you please... I don't care. I'm leaving as soon as I find the money... Ahhh, here we are! (He opens the cash box and counts the money) Enough here to take me around the world.

S: Aren't you coming back?

T: (He moves off platform towards the back) It depends.

S: On what?

T: On what I find out there.

S: What do you expect to find? (He moves towards J.D.'s desk. He seats himself.)

T: Maybe... elegance... that's it... true elegance.

S: Nothing else?

T: Nothing else.

S: I'm afraid you'll be disappointed... (The world is much with us.) (As Twinkle moves up on the last platform, a tape begins to play and J.D.'s voice is heard on stage)

Tape: Human Culture, like the human memory itself, is without total recall.

There is a patchy and uncertain quality about it that gets reflected even in its own memory system: Just as with every birth the potentiality of the new emerges, so with every death something vanishes beyond recovery.

T: Did you hear that?

S: What?

T: The old man's voice.

S: No... You'd better leave before you have any misgivings!

T: Are you sure he's dead?

S: I'm still here, aren't I? Besides I'm being kind to myself.

T: Well, anyway, just in case, give him... give him my regards and... pay my respects. (He leaves.)

S: (Pauses, then picks up a pamphlet from the desk and reads the title) THE NEW PARADISE: Vol II -- "If I had to tell the truth again, I would have to lie." (Lights dim)

THE END



# THE FARMER'S HAT

Do you love me, chicken? said an old woman to a chicken looking at her sideways. Do you love me as I myself would love if I loved? Or would you rather I were a worm which you could break in your kiss stingy little beak?

A farmer says, do not annoy a chicken, old woman, because that is not nice; and it injures the universe that you should want kisses from a chicken.

Oh you, says the old woman, I love the chicken like a daughter; I want to dress it up pretty and have a birthday party for it.

Look, says the farmer, I want to put some hay up under my farmer's hat to feed the cows during the winter. But, you must look away because I have to take my hat off to get the hay under it; and you musn't look because I cannot disrobe in front of a woman.

If you let me kiss the chicken I promise to die, and then you can feed me to the cows during the winter, screamed the old woman.

No no, I don't want nothing dead around here. I'm scared of dead things, screamed the farmer.

No no, she screamed, then they can eat me alive.

No no, I don't want you around here. I want to feel free to remove my hat and to look into it for long periods of time; and then to replace it on my head, and then to quickly remove it again without having to look around

to see if you are watching, so I can look into it; and putting it back on my head to be able again to quickly remove it and peer into it again for a period of time, screamed the farmer.

But your modesty means so little as compared to my feeling for the chicken; I shan't even notice whether your hat's on or off, because I really don't care, she screamed.

But, you see, since I can't get inside of you I can't really tell whether you care or not; and I want to take my hat off without having to consider whether you care or not, screamed the farmer.

Do you think I give a damn about your silly hat, or that silly lump it rides. I dream only of coitus with the chicken in a moonbeam on a quiet night, screamed the old woman.

Be off, be off, because I want to look into my hat, roared the farmer.

## I AM READY

For sitting a woman sits on a jelly sandwich mounted on the floor for such purpose.

...As it has been carefully come to... It is not, God knows, an easy vehical... Through the wet places of the night the mercantile frog, its womb wares... Messages sent through umbilical cords hooked to telephones. . . The telephone that rings within the breast...



At night it is worse, the frog thins to a long trickling on the wall and runs down into a puddle that gathers itself into a frog that thrums with the thumping of the heart, thumping of the heart, thumping of the heart...

How to go? Where? What vehical? By way of moon? Or, the corridor in the wood? By what spoke or wing; I ask you, by what thing?

The horse is bread. Its guts are jelly, It is low on the floor. It is humble... Oh, I am ready, I am truly ready.

In the corner is a dead frog. The telephone is ringing.

Oh, I am ready, I am truly ready...

## THE PIG-DEATH

A pig said, I am a poor pig.

Yes, you would do better as a man eating bacon, said a farmer.

Would not all things do better becoming the thing that eats them? said the pig.

I should be a set of worms as blind as earth, then, said the farmer.

Or, we should all be God, nothing eats the God; save that His jaw turn back upon the God and the universe go dark, said the pig.

It goes dark anyway, light by light, as each blinks and merges into darkness from his pain, said the farmer.

But, to have cared, to have smelt the springtime, to have taken the female, as

men would say, with love..., said the pig.

I would have been one single shadow of one dark night to all the days that have spent my life, said the farmer.

And I would be a deicide if the God allowed. But, that he allows me this thought is itself a thing to fear, said the pig.

Why should the God care for a pig's thought? said the farmer.

Is the God not the thought? And does the God not then think of suicide in a pig's head... Or, do I only see God as a pig can see? said the pig.

I don't know... not anything; save only what I can do. So, let us proceed to your slaughter, which is the way of the farm; that we are in function as are the stars in their star beds... Till a sign is given that we may leave the habits of our fathers; till the dead are risen; till the still unborn come awake beyond the earth..., said the farmer.

Here, farmer, take me, the bride of hungering labor; and marry me within your flesh. And still, think on these things as I wander alone in the darkness of the pig-death.

## THE SYMBOL HAS WEIGHT

A woman wearing a piece of a kingdom on her head, a stone, from the room of office, the room of the king's chair; (him sitting there with no thought of worms). Nor was he in the thought of worms, had they thought.

Each in his function till they meet.

The woman's husband is afraid the stone will fall in his soup.

No no, it is only the symbol of the thought.

The symbol has weight, he cries.

The king is worms; many worms made of him that swim through the earth with no thought of him, she says.

My soup is today's good thing, he says.

Yesterday was someone else's good thing and look what happened to it, she cries.

Does that mean we should not have soup today? he says.

It means today's soup is tomorrow's worms' blood, she cries.

Oh oh oh, let me have my soup without worms in it, he cries.

## THE GIRL NAMED OX

There was a girl named Ox, to whom the farmer said, if you are an ox you are an ox.

But it is a girl named Ox, said his wife.

Which doesn't change the oxen of the world from being oxen, he said.

Save one, the ox which is a girl named Ox, she said.

How is this ox different from any other ox, he screamed.

Because it is too small for an ox yoke, she howled.

How about an egg yoke over its head? he roared.

The broken egg oozing down its snout like a piece of sweat, I suppose, she screamed.

Because I have no work and must watch the slumbering fields grow out in wheat, wringing my hands while the sun falls down on my head, checking the time and the lengthening shadows, waiting, seeking always new terminals within which to wait, like sunrise and sunset, the passage of an insect from this place to that; I grow ugly and sick and name my daughter Ox so I can hurt her as I do the ox.

Then the girl named Ox said, moo...



## FOLLOW THE BOUNCING BALL

Ideal love's  
an empty glove  
a bird in hand  
not quite the bush

To touch the breast  
and leave the rest  
means nights awake  
and morn's a rush

**SONG**

What there is of love in it  
I leave without name  
fearing as a native man use  
of the direct appellation,  
pointing at you at  
what there is of love in it.  
We have had bad luck  
I now refer to you as "he"  
I am that fearful.

Not that there will be an end there never is  
not that I will stay forever propped on an elbow  
on the bed looking at you  
it is why I am blank blank  
numb in the face of battles,  
though my life has proven differently.  
I bless my fortune.

## FROM A HILL

blue lit windows of American Can  
"panic"  
part of my root

part of my root  
easy as  
I carry it easier than  
tree bears fruit

[illegible]

## METHOD

examining the way of living the way of reading  
of the way

music, is the sound  
of rock being  
more mind than fish is silver  
more silvery moving

more silvery moving  
turned, around  
waking, waking  
from its clefts  
messages along the wires, alone  
'rustling like old paper'  
like, measuring with numbers

green shoots  
of, am, will, can  
that which is  
A - live!



from The Dream

His face fell. He looked at the doorknob in his hand, she laughed and scowled, she began to chew all nails at once; Thomas's mother was in town and waiting at the 41st St Pier to treat them to the sightseeing trip around Manhattan.

The door was jammed flush, stuck; he turned and began to curse at the girl with the round face; he stood naked shaking his fist at her. She sat up in the bed chewing her nails wondering what they were going to do, "Jesus, we've got to get out of here," she understated; wide eyed. Thomas looked at her and laughed bitterly sneering at the crumpled sheets strewn over the floor among torn magazines, cigarette butts, cosmetics; slips, bras and panties had been tossed over and more of the same hung from half open drawers tangled in wool, thread and hair. He glared at the doorknob in his hand; he put it in his right shoe. He pressured the door at the top and bottom pushing and pulling calling her Myrna Loy and himself William Powell, he pulled, with bent coat hanger stuck in the knob socket as she picked around the room, getting dressed; he gave up and got dressed in the same suit from the night before pulling on pants with shaking hands, hungover and muttering pushing pulling - the metaphor for themselves - got him nowhere and he sat on the bed with his pants in his hand: furtive, disgusted,

apprehensively watching the minutes and seconds tick by; seeing her dressing caused a bark of empathy: she was hopping around the debris with one foot stuck in her panties, it is the end of the Treasure of the Sierra Madre, Thomas snarled, there is no more gold, only mother at the pier, why don't you keep any whiskey in the bedroom? I am watching us from the corner, see me there? We want a drink. He looked across the room at himself, you bastard. Go look in the mirror, he answered, and blame him, not me, I didn't say you were handsome: she did, and you fell for yourself - you'd eat her peach and peachfuzz too, up and away; she had blushed; Thomas said, it wasn't altogether me, it was partly that high school self; he still thinks I'm wonderful; he said take her and I did; Thomas leaned against the door whispering through the wood, I know you're out there; open the door, I've - we've got to get out of here! You can open it. He asked himself, if he was him, how would he do it? I'd get a knife and pry it open leaping around the room asking where's the knife? It had taken weeks for it to happen, he tore open drawers, rummaged through closets, flipped open boxes, and behind a little curtain under a wooden shelf he found a table knife, he opened the door, he was him, he had made it out; she brushed her teeth above chaos the bathroom sink, he embraced her as she brushed telling her how marvelous he was;

she muttering spat toothpaste; they raced to the pier in their minds; they raced down the street for the cab that wasn't there; they raced to the pier in their minds on the bus; they raced down 42nd St in a cab and raced on foot down the pier to Thomas's mother.

That evening sukiyaki and a movie uptown.

But it was the end of his relationship with Round Face; he had been jammed in, in her world and he had gotten himself, and her, out. Years later he remembered their closeness as maybe something possible; no, never. He hadn't been her confusion, her windblown nervewracked messiness was all hers, and not him or his and he wondered if the man she would end up rightly with would be a little feminine in a habit to care for her neatness of self and house; Thomas hoped so, her men had been wrong for her, she shouldn't have gone for the artistic sexual seeming manly types who were so confused within themselves; going with her was a competition of confusions, and when experience was difficult each retreated behind or within their confusion and asked "leave me alone" - Thomas did that yet she seemed to leave herself out of herself to gain "a" self: make her bid with a confusion that verged on withdrawal and hysteria haywire to seize "someone" ("a" her); to reach for him in a way that she should have reached for herself yet he had grabbed her that way - with her in his hands Thomas Crimmins & Round Face were his possession of him intact, but

when he was in her hands he was in a whole hell of flying sleeves, panties and fingers, and how could she hold him when she had no connection with (except to chew the nails of) the hands that held him? She reeled away into distraction leaving her skin with him, and he retreated, frightened by her glazed hysterical air of face - her vanishing process of self connection turning himself in himself towards ice cold highballs, that were stark and hard on the heart, which wouldn't let him see what he was in, and following the pattern which he had set up in early childhood, started wandering through himself as he wandered down world streets, not daring to call himself himself, easier to get drunk and slip into her arms; let that strength work, also for her, waking in panic and looking at the clock in the dim room, shattering sleep: "We're late!" he cried, opening the door to mother on the pier.

Mother had come to claim him here when she was far away, and through his experience motherhood reached for him. He stood far within himself understanding her need and he knew he had made a hangover in order to be involved with his need, not mother need; and in the darkness of the room his need of himself and his mother's need of same connected in a guilt from before his life; her marriage to his father whom he hardly knew, who died, he fled - running to his mother's arms; she was the reason he had begun to write; her encouragement had sent him to



New York; he reacted angrily - and he saw he had become his mother's intention of giving him himself, and he feared himself handing him his, i.e., You: Man, Writer, like that: he used her hands, not his own; an intuitive youth with male hands belonging to his mother who gave him him. Yet Thomas Crimmins - differently, whom no hand, hardly his own as he knew it, could help, searched the room and found the knife he knew was there (he had asked: where's the knife? Not - a knife -), and working the door carefully at the top right above the hinges and then at the bottom left he pried up, then across, then up, then across towards the corner, and with each pry the door moved, and in concentration of labor the metaphor slowly changed; he put the knob in its place, and slightly lifting pressing forward he opened the door to Round Face's little kitchen and the living room beyond; to the streets, to the city, to his mother on the pier; to himself free of Round Face.

ON THE ART OF POETRY--FOR POETS  
AND CRITICS ALIKE  
ENTITLED

ONE MAN WILL BUILD HIS HOUSE WITH  
ANOTHER,        / HIS OWN HANDS,  
WHO HAD HIS BUILT TEN YEARS AGO,  
WILL RESHAPE IT.

I

My next door neighbor,  
Who takes a bath every night  
Although he's not finished with the plumbing,  
Has accused me of settling to quickly  
Into the fixtures of my own establishment.  
Upon his suggestion,  
I have begun to reshape the furniture.  
I have nailed every piece to my wall.  
What was once my wall is now my floor  
And has a doorway leading to the cellar.  
What was once my windows are now the sky-  
Lights,  
Which has given me the idea of taking up  
(painting as a hobby.

## II

Every house has its problems.  
Having a wall for a floor  
Has created the problem  
Of keeping the dishes on the table

And the books on the shelf.  
So I have nailed these to their proper pieces  
    of furniture.  
But as far as painting is concerned,  
It seems I've developed a left-slanted brush  
    stroke.  
This problem takes time to correct,  
So I've switched my furniture to the other  
    wall  
To balance off the painting.

### III

My next-door neighbor,  
Who stands outside my house,  
Sees through my glass flooring a new slant  
    on human conditions.  
And storming my doorway, I greet him with:  
Would you mind closing the door to the  
    cellar?  
It may rain in."  
"This time," he says, "You have gone too far."

### IV

My next-door neighbor is deciding  
Whether to tear down his house and move  
    away,  
Or to tear down his house  
And move in with me.  
At any rate something must be done.  
In three weeks I've completed 1400 paintings,  
And he still hasn't finished fixing his pipes.

## A TRUNK FULL OF FAIRYTALE

---For my father

### I

A fairytale is the difference  
Between sitting on and sitting in.  
If I told you a tale, my father,  
About the rock you are sitting on,  
And how many dragons have tried to move it,  
And if one of those dragons succeeded,  
You would not be the least disturbed knowing  
there'll be other rocks to sit upon.  
But if I told you a tale  
While you were sitting in a jar,  
And I accidentally moved a rock against it,  
You would feel broken for lack of confinement  
    and shelter.  
But if I took that jar and made you swallow it,  
Piece by piece,  
While you sat upon a rock,  
You would probably accept one part of your life  
As nothing more than fairytale.

### II

Once upon a time,  
An old man who had a magic jar  
Had his son place a coin at the bottom.  
Suddenly there was a number of coins  
Spilling over to the floor.  
The old man ordered his son



To shovel the coins into buckets,  
Then into baskets,  
Then into trunks.  
But his son could not shovel fast enough  
And the whole house and valley began filling  
    /with coins.

The old man, with great anger,  
Ordered his son to shovel faster,  
But the young man grew faint and fell  
Cracking his head on the bottom of the jar.  
Suddenly there was a great number  
Of dead sons spilling from the jar.

The old man,  
Not knowing which body was his real dead son,  
Began to weep  
And a tear slipped off his cheek and into the  
    / jar.

Soon a flood of tears filled the house and  
    / valley.  
And the old man began running up the  
    / mountain path.

Then, perched on a high rock,  
Looking down at the water,  
He cried:

"I have killed my only son.  
But who has caused this flood?"

### III

You have told me, my father,  
That this tale is absurd;  
That you would not sit in a jar,  
But instead have lugged a steel trunk from  
    / your closet

And climbed in thinking  
That nothing can possibly hurt you now.  
And I have walked over  
And sat upon the lid like a dragon.  
And you have asked me  
Why I will not listen to your frantic pleading.  
And I tell you now,  
As I have told you in the beginning.  
The difference  
Is that you, my father,  
Who sits upon this trunk,  
Believe this to be  
Only a tale told by a prisoner.

'The good life.'

She has left the Nursing Home  
and gone to live  
in the Rooming House  
of her heart's desire, -

parlor-floor front  
on a trolley line,  
a suite of golden oak  
set off by paper roses

in a cutglass vase,  
a potted palm, some fern..  
In flowing crepe de chine  
and white buck ties

admired by the neighbors  
she will entertain  
the ladies of her Lodge,  
old friends in the Klan.

Discreet at the curtain  
of the big bay window  
watching the passers-by  
she'll knit or crochet;

none to reproach her,  
will nibble at bon-bons  
all day long  
in the Morris chair,

fix pork and onions  
on a two-ring gas jet  
three times a week.  
And never die.

The pinchbeck town.

I.

Craning back  
to a mariner small  
a-rout on all fours  
for nipple  
or sheltering wing,

in the foxy game  
tho' a cluck was heard  
only a shadow  
was retrieved, -

a makeshift  
proxy with  
bovine stare  
and a rockingchair  
lap (O warm  
for him)

no home,  
remembered womb,

no song  
in the pinchbeck town.



II.

Midnight: time  
of the playback:

the stylus hovers  
lowers and swerves  
as the worn groove

in endless round  
singsongs again my  
lacklife's dirge -

'The one who bends  
over your deathbed  
will be that one  
you never found, '

- striking a nerve.

arc-light under  
listen to my voices  
not like a lion  
cares if I walk  
sometimes run  
who's lifelike

Moon for Mina Loy

moon for Mina Loy  
new metal  
home, aluminum  
hand to fresh scape  
in Pierrot's traces  
company by twos  
to war  
through circus faces

poem of new metal moon  
for Mina Loy  
gone west  
she'll tell you if you ask her  
forget this  
you haven't  
in hand no matter song  
or private circus

to my F.D.R. écritoire

Figure  
the gammadion  
formed of 4 capital  
gammass  
in a cross  
or voided Greek cross  
the same gammadion  
the gamma we read  
meaning cornerstone.

Once in October  
not seeing  
the Gegenschein  
or counterglow  
an elliptical light  
opposite the sun  
and near the ecliptic  
in Sagittarius the centaur  
diurnal archer.

A z:  
a coronal  
vol 103  
Oct - Nov 1963

Louis comes last  
in that issue of Poetry  
because of his name  
which begins with a z

fragments from a long poem about  
Abigail Williams

There is a piano  
There is violin  
is harp  
i  
chord  
set in the wooden floor  
held by you fingers

...  
"What time till morning?"  
(sarah good) "a sad  
colored mantle  
and an hood.  
silk and a top knot"

...  
the ground sold  
the season's shown  
old people born serving  
in the same arc  
or hour  
teats hardened  
to the piano wire

...  
"it did suck her between her fingers  
"as witness our hands  
Anno Regis et Reginae etc.



However they are Italian, or  
were

There's an old man who walks by, straight (it got pretty certain almost at first, a day that slipped by me, he must be retired, whatever he was, or mostly, if there's some kind of paper work where he lives around one of these corners for a tall man), a dozen times a day. I wonder how many there used to be. Single loaves of bread and so forth. But I notice he's got his hands in his pockets too, or walks along past lifting one to his chin, or near his belly. No woods or void lots here any more of course. The old houses. The one next door is being changed around, the old insides tossed out, boards, an easy chair heeled in the yard again even today, after they've already moved some of the windows by now, maybe end up with a different number. Work beginning to slow as they remount inside walls, at least because I don't quite follow. I had the idea of adjustable walls at that. Place that was a schoolhouse at that, on the main road, and then the family took and brought it over here. I wonder any length of time it was empty. They built on to it a little later, maybe putting the porches on right away, a bathroom just leaving a space where a clothesline stood between it and the porch staircase, and overhead, raising the roof in a stretch which doesn't go over to the end, and making an upstairs porch railing. The

upstairs kitchen windows look over behind the porch like some kind of old cottage. I guess it'll stay like that, along with the attic bathroom skylight. The ground bathroom had the window facing our kitchen pined up yesterday while the men cut a new smaller one in the side wall, bathroom way up on a foundation that might have a passage through to the rest of the cellar. The schoolhouse may have had an outbuilding.

Never any old stamps up in our attic-- That was impossible. Panel fit in the ceiling some of it above the phone shelf.

Sometimes the light is strange around here as well as other places, one of which I was at just last Saturday, the generally cloudy weather, five stories up through the elevator, on a visit, that separation from the avenue with enough for everything to go on, a rear apartment that had a lot of space and was high-ceilinged and a fine prospect out back, pipes going up through to the top floor in the corner where the radiator started, but it got darker the more you stayed, and great big windows and wall area, a plain thing, and yet in the bigger of the bedrooms there was just a side of wall left open on its upper half, a roomy long worktable like a wardrobe below it in the corner, the rest plaster (the other part of the opened wall still a door going to the rear steps and corridors), and the middle hallway filled in with the dark crossed paper, at one height having a buzz speaker

tube, in the cubic air, very warm and drenching too, the other bedroom shoved yawning inside, like a closet, in back of the desk a shelving high up as part of a frame to an ample opening between the two rooms, and a window against the bed through the wall of the doughnut court; and then when things feel kind of wholly like a stage, the neighborhood with the walls and even up in the sky and the country out where you can imagine, even fields though they move up and down away from the roads which end up tracking each other, the light must be something to do with it, though it doesn't have to be too special, you look and see that's all there is, the clock included (anyway the big one situated on the piano we didn't always have), the clocks not going as fast as the sun. The man has gone by then too, as I've happened to see, momentarily, when everything seems to be at an end or stop, though really a pause, at least in the afternoon, blond erect figure with a western brimmed hat, always more or less like the close-mouthed cocked figure in the ranking poster too, but he's a feature like everything else, and a lot happens. When they get through remodelling again it will be very plain, beautiful and neat as they've been saying, but also I forget the cats and dogs which continue to take in the road and all. Trees growing the wires. Birds of some types every year. These places rattle in the wind, mere building. The next day the

children are carrying on. It looks like that's what they'll do mostly, much as they can, pushed and hauled by the interests of their mothers. I don't think babies will learn to drive cars. The boys all have their mufflers clanking. They never volunteer where they are going or what doing but always find something to be preoccupied with, rushed in different towns and sections. History is repeating with a certain precision. Something beyond it.

There are still other men going to and from the bus-stop to work, one of them has grandchildren, married a second time all of a sudden, stooped and bending as if genially and musing or considering along with a string package of course, bread or tapping a newspaper twiddle behind him. The street is quiet a few hours already now, a week of public school or something, while late at night still, after midnight, the delivering motor roars and the kid upstairs comes galloping down the walk to the back porch steps. Cars day and night actually, while families still come through to the beach from what may still be this neighborhood where it laid along the highroad and back the other side, observantly, hedges and lawns, the still cultured flowers, field grass clumping up through the sidewalk asphalt on the gutter slope by the patched road; anyhow the children. The cars dip along actually, when I watch it, there are two sewers near the intersection, under the house to the right. The



cars no longer seem very oriental as they've become familiar. Automobile was bound to develop, itself.

Thunderstorms come up, but never a problem here, not too many of them. Bar-rages nine days old. Flash floods. It depends on the kind variety qualifying. There was this woman a few days ago pushing a baby-carriage, looked fairly familiar, toy-dog tied by a rope to the handle, puppy and the smallest I've seen; the carriage rolled away some feet while this woman was attending to the little boy alongside, they halted for some reason looking down on the sidewalk, and the puppy got to pulling the carriage back again a little ways, scrambling, perhaps clawing, a minute or so till the woman caught up the forward motion again. There were these distinct differences in pace, but no real speed. They went on strolling, the pup pretty much dragged along, and nobody made a sound you could hear.

Middle of the week the old man walked by holding another little boy on the shoulder, which made me think it was about time. I was walking then too, in the yard, and the boy shouted "How do you feel? How do you feel?" when he saw me, which was right away. He had probably spoken to me before. Excited though, for once. The grandfather, or perhaps grand-uncle, hustled him forward and still looking ahead mostly. It's kind of remarkable. A narrow man, though not really

thin and he hasn't stepped out of some creation, some book or other. He looks definitely short instead of tall in his face sometimes under the gallon hat which comes down on his face. Sunday the next time I saw him, and I asked how his grandson was doing, to see if there was an opening, but he went on, past the window which was up in front of me, I wasn't out on the porch. But that's pretty definite. He might be wrapped in his thoughts or deaf, for instance, and that's likely to have an ordinary cause.

Monday I was on the porch, it has a fairly wide and unbroken view at that, so I asked him once more. Take the elevated, I think he said. He must have been walking around the block because this was one of the times I saw him twice in a few minutes. There's a field on the opposite side and a few park benches under six or seven trees along the highway, their backs to it.

He stomped unchanged over the board-ends piled out the window of the corner house low above the cellar's where they pour the coal in, the truck parked with its rear wheels at the cement rise with the hedge practically on top of it, before it was nipped down to its bed a month or two back spring. They had some of the gutter off under the eaves and the wasp nest discovered they were still swinging brooms in circles, occasionally coming whack against the eaves and laughing. There could be some more

too. That was a fine place to nest, beam-ends over the porch and between the kitchen and skylight, where the cat used to go up or crawl down to doze in the sill under the glass. Like a greenhouse--and the hothouse they used to have, mostly all pane-leading roof, is gone. They have a modern ice-box, range, perched up there too. A hose where the rain was last night, for the tub. The branch of the family currently theremoved upstairs, the tenants, a retired couple, having gotten out.

They're tearing off the chimney.

LOCKED IN MY ROOM,  
THE LAST OF MY KIND

1

Discs float in the sky  
like dynamite fouling up my brain  
and the bombardment is unlike anything  
    /outside of my skull  
where the quiet sunlight inters the bus that  
    /plunges down the parkway  
past chiseled stones:

Mishkin, Romanoff,  
    /Davidoff  
cutting up in boots on Gaea's stomach.

2

The Italian guitar, in the sea-curve, under  
    /English verses,  
learned on the campus of Manhattanville  
    /College.

The Russian guitar, windless in the grove,  
    /is deep and delicate  
and can't be heard any more, no more can  
    /be heard  
in the prince's tomb, that separate culture.

The Spanish guitar, in the pastoral vale,  
    /more distant verses:  
we brought these to the islands of the Aegean,  
    /Adriatic and Ionian seas,



refuge from the Inquisition:

Una matica de ruda,  
una matica de flor,  
hija mía mi querida,  
dime a mi quién te las dió.

Pity me, not my sequestered daughter,  
cried the ancient king in his ghost's power,  
my beautiful daughter who I locked in the  
/tower.

I! Covetous!

On a hot summer day,  
she sat in the window seat  
and saw a reaper coming,  
gathering barley and wheat.

Refuge, refuge! I'm not a manslayer, I don't  
/even know my tribe.  
I'm trying to revise my conscience.  
Everything goes wrong. How shall I feed my  
/flocks?

The Hebrew guitar, on my quick, unhappy  
/pilgrimage to the lion-colored sand  
like a boat on a river, sings:

This little bunch of rue,  
this little bunch of flowers,  
a young man gave to me  
who loved me once.

Cross over the water, my lady.  
Come here!

3

My lady in the waves.

The fish pursued her down the river,  
past the tent circus, the industrial village,  
the sewage pipes - a quiet respite;  
and then, the warring currents, docked ships,  
after the lowlands where her feet were bitten,  
the blood mixed with mud from the pros-  
/pectors' troughs,  
crashing into rocks, mobs of fish in the flats  
where she hit a sand bar that young crabs  
/soon eroded.

The dolphins were waiting in the estuary,  
waiting to offer her their backs,  
fearful of the deadly fresh water,  
their flesh loosening, watching the eels in  
/the shore grass,  
being shot at from the banks, from under  
/the masts and stacks,  
they were breaking through nets and avoiding  
/mines,

some fishermen lurking on bridges.  
And her flesh came corrupted to the sea,  
to the insensible, disillusioned dolphins,  
came seaward with the stupid fish;  
and the dolphins tried her, but her thighs  
/drifted freely,  
her bosom picked by gulls, her bones algaed,  
and her infinite indifference warded off the  
/stars, those luminaries.

This lecture is an attempt to suggest two things -- (1) that "chance" or "random" procedures in art are a reflection of a view of life held by, among others, John Cage; (2) that it is substantially the same view of life as that of, particularly, Henry David Thoreau and, though less viscerally, Ralph Waldo Emerson and, peripherally, Charles Ives.

#### DRAMATIS PERSONAE

RALPH WALDO EMERSON, 1803-1882. Harvard-educated Unitarian minister who in 1832 abandoned the organized CHURCH in favor of the notion that God could be seen under one's nose (when looking down) or in an overhead tree (when looking up). Essayist, lecturer, poet. He asked that men in the business of using the mind use their minds, not somebody else's, observing that "Books are for the scholar's idle times."

HENRY DAVID THOREAU, 1817-1862. Harvard-educated man who took to the woods. Walden Pond. Constantly suggested that individual was superior to state. First-class amateur naturalist. Regretted amount of physical and mental baggage engendered by civilization. Suggested that, if a man seemed out of step, perhaps he was hearing a different drummer. On his deathbed was asked whether he'd made his

peace with God, answered he wasn't aware they'd quarreled.

CHARLES IVES, 1874-1954. Yale-educated inventor of mutual insurance. Composer. Perhaps the first great American composer and surely the first to print such things on a score as "leave out as much of this as you choose."

JOHN CAGE, 1913--. Left Pomona College halfway through. If a good deal of current activity in musical composition can be seen literally to have broken with the past (this can not be said about Stravinsky, Bartok, Schoenberg or Webern), it may also be seen that Cage is the man who had the strength to make this break possible. A most accomplished amateur micologist (student of mushrooms). In residence at Wesleyan 1960-61. Author of book Silence. Would rather laugh than not.

#### USE OF "CHANCE" AS PART OF THE LECTURE

The lecture intends not only to suggest a point of view, but also to demonstrate a simple use of "chance" materials by incorporating them into the delivery as follows:

Sixty digits (i.e. one for each of the sixty printed paragraphs) are solicited from the



audience prior to beginning the lecture. The digits are to be from one to twelve. Each member of the audience will write digits on a piece of paper, as many as required to total 60 (i.e. if there are 30 people, each will write two digits) and hand them to the lecturer. The lecturer will write them in random sequence on a blackboard.

The successive digits of this series will then be pencilled after successive paragraphs and, during the reading, used to indicate (roughly) seconds of silence between paragraphs.

The sequence will also be used to create a simple musical score for up to half a dozen instruments (whatever is handy -- piano, guitar, flute, etc.) to play during the lecture. From the sequence will be indicated the minute on which a given instrument will make a sound and also the pitch or pitches.

Suppose the series runs 8, 12, 10, 7, 10, 1, 6, 10, 12, 9, etc. Let us assume the lecture, once started, will run 50 minutes. The first instrument would sound on the 8th, 20th (8/12), 30th, 37th, 47th and 48th minutes. Then, beginning where this first series left off, a second series for a second instrument would begin, yielding sounds on the 6th, 16th (10/6), 26th, 38th, 47th minutes. And so on for all the instruments. Pitches may be derived by applying numbers to the chroma-

tic scale, C = 1, C# = 2, D = 3, D# = 4, E = 5, F = 6, F# = 7, G = 8, G# = 9, A = 10, A# = 11, B = 12. Thus the first pitch for the first instrument would come from the number 8, which translates "G".

Whole chords for keyboard may be worked out in various ways from the system.

Dynamics may be simply: if a note is to be played on an even-numbered minute, it is forte; on an odd-numbered minute, it is piano.

## LECTURE

1. It is very difficult to describe the taste of a peach, though most of us have eaten many peaches.
2. This lecture is about John Cage, composer, naturalist. He is the man who, also, said: "It is better to do something than to do nothing."
3. This lecture is about Henry David Thoreau, human being, lover, naturalist. He is, also, the man who asked: "Shall we resign forever the pleasure of construction to the carpenter?"
4. This lecture is about Ralph Waldo

Emerson who wrote in his journal on October 28, 1837: "The world can never be learned by learning all its details" . . . and fifteen years later, on September 5, 1854: "All the thoughts of turtle are turtle."

5. Mostly this lecture is about John Cage, composer, naturalist, human being, who said: "Beauty is now underfoot whenever we take the trouble to look."
6. I say this lecture is mostly about John Cage because I am speaking to a class whose concern is music. But I say it is also about Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson because they are equally significant men who happen to say substantially the same thing that John Cage says.
7. It was Emerson who wrote on August 18, 1838: "The Reverend Dr. Ripley prays for rain with great explicitness on Sunday, and on Monday the showers fall. When I spoke of the speed with which his prayers were answered, the good man — looked — modest."
8. Let us think a bit about the history of western music. It is the history of many musics which got unified into a main stream. Early Christian music was, depending on the geographical locale, Jewish

or Syrian or Greek or Byzantine or etc. It was, like the classical music of the orient, soloistic rather than choral or orchestral. Its dimension was, to generalize, the dimension of what could be done to elaborate a single strand of music — and, of course, the possibilities are infinite. We make an error to think of such music as a primitive version of a later improved model: it was what it was, for when it was.

9. It was Thoreau who said by way of criticism: "We love eloquence for its own sake, and not for any truth which it may utter or any heroism it may inspire."
10. Early western music was many musics. It took the Church of Rome, needing a consistent behavior, to channel the many into the one. Pope Gregory the Great was so strong a channeler that (although he was actually only part of a long process) an example of the one music is named after him: Gregorian Chant. We may think of Gregorian Chant as dealing exclusively with a set of seven pitches, used now this way, now that way, but always symmetrically and always with the sense of arrival. The limitation to seven pitches used symmetrically made unison singing a practical possibility. Gone were the worrying possibilities of eccentric scales, quarter tones, personal thrust —

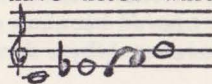


ings into areas of wailing, sliding, quavering, miniature universes, all easily heard today in Arabic or Chinese or Indian music and surely present, via the heritage of the Middle East, in early Christian music until The Church drew its line. Gregorian music is much more complicated and less bland than the music of Bach, and its possibilities are infinite; but it was a sifting out.

11. Emerson wrote in his Journal October 24, 1840: "My page about 'consistency' would be better written thus: Damn consistency!"
12. Our early music was many musics which got unified into one music. Glory and failure combined. A similar thing has been going on over the past century, very rapidly right now. Orient and occident are getting to know one another.
13. The One Music which emerged, after the Church of Rome drew its line, had many surface changes but from the beginning of the drawn line, it had in it a deadly seed: the seed of PURPOSE.
14. This lecture is also about Charles Ives, the inventor of mutual insurance; self-made millionaire, who proved he believed You Can't Take It With You by giving most of his money away; famous

composer. Charles Ives said: "A man never knows his virtues and vices until that great and solemn event, that first sunny day in spring when he wants to go fishing but stays home and helps his wife clean house. As he lies back under the bed . . . with nothing beneath him but tacks and his past life, with his soul full of that glorious dust of mortals and carpets, with his finger tips rosy with the caresses of his mother-in-law's hammer -- as he lies there taking orders from the hired girl, a sudden and tremendous vocabulary comes to him . . . Wedged in between the sewing machine and the future, he examines himself."

15. As I said, since the line of western music began, all western music has been blood brother to all other western music because all of it contained the same seed: Purpose. The seven note scales adopted by The Church are inexorable: they go upwards in steady increments to a peak and they go downwards in steady increments to a root. There are no eccentric gaps to distract the sense of direction and there are no micro intervals with which one can play instead of marching forward.

16. By way of contrast, many Indian scales have "notes" which are in fact glissandi.  The *glissando* is a 'hote', a member of the scale.

17. As I see it, the historical movement from unison music to part music and then to harmonic manipulation of parts is the emergence of those purposeful possibilities inherent in the 7-note scales which were most nakedly such — i. e. purposeful. There is nothing better about two-part music than one-part music, but the use of a second part can emphasize the sense of departure and arrival.
18. We are a purposeful civilization. We have progressed. We have learned to measure things.
19. Recently Life magazine ran an excellent three-installment series on the problem of leisure -- which is to say, the problem of purposeful purposelessness. Automation is bringing us full circle.
20. It is John Cage who asked: "Which is more musical, a truck passing by a factory, or a truck passing by a music school?"
21. Western music, starting from an infinity of active styles became a finite style dedicated, finally, to scoring points. "Credo in unum Deum", for example. "I believe in one God", crash bim, bang, ta ta — a roll of drums, a flourish of trumpets, and the point is proved because out of the agonized suspense set up by a semi-

diminished ninth chord over the pitch G, God is made believable through a resolution to a C major triad. Credo in unum tonic chord.

22. Thoreau: "Seen from a lower point of view, the Constitution, with all its faults, is very good; the law and the courts are very respectable; even this State and this American government are, in many respects, very admirable, and rare things to be thankful for, such as a great many have described them; but seen from a point of view a little higher, they are what I have described them;" (i. e. inadequate to the goodness inherent in individuals) "seen from a higher still, and the highest, who shall say what they are, or that they are worth looking at or thinking of at all?"
23. An ever-clarifying machinery emerges in Western Music as it ages. Where Pope Gregory in the 6th century settled for 8 different scales or modes (albeit each of the 8 scales used the same 7 pitches in varying postures) which gave a variety of possible musical colors, later practice reduced the 8 scales to 2 -- our major and minor scales. This is in the interest of harmonic precision, of raising questions and answering them. Which is exactly the thing to do if you live in a time of confidence in the ability to answer



questions.

24. The difference between the experimental scientist working for Squibb toothpaste and the scientists at the top of pure research -- who, finally, infect our lives, our whole notion of who we are and are not -- the difference between a toothpaste chemist and, say, Robert Oppenheimer, is that one works toward an immediate result (i. e. toothpaste), the other works in full knowledge that any LAWS he may establish will be promptly superseded. This does something to our blood.
25. Quoting Emerson: "You must hear the bird's song without attempting to render it into nouns and verbs. Cannot we be a little abstemious and obedient? Cannot we let the morning be?"
26. Compare Cage: "One may give up the desire to control sound, clear his mind of music, and set about discovering means to let sounds be themselves rather than vehicles for man-made theories or expressions of human sentiments."
27. The history of western music, indeed, Western Civilization, is, for better or worse, a history of ever increasing dependence on measurement. The mathematician identifies a circle as such by

a measurement formula. All of science measures. Graduate degrees are largely obtained by measuring increments, even in the field of literature. The Protestant church measures religion against an ethical scale (one suspects that if Luther had not come along when he did, somebody else by the same name would have). The working man measures his effort by a number of hours per week. Our music began to reflect this at the point where it had to become a function of writing rather than of doing. One might recall -- through the fact that we had a musical history prior to notation and through the fact that the entire fantastic music of India is a rote, rather than a written, art -- one might recall that notation is a symptom of a state of mind, not of an artistic sine qua non. The current rash of folk music suggests this also.

28. I feel sure there is nothing wronger about death than life: nothing more final about one than the other. When I suggest that in embracing Purpose, Western Music and Western civilization were embracing a deadly seed, were living with the seed of self-destruction, I merely observe; I do not feel I've said anything calamitous. That western music did in fact die seems to me obvious. We are learning to live again: Harmony is not. If western civilization did not in fact kill itself, it

certainly made a bloody good go at it.

29. Emerson: "A man must have aunts and cousins, must buy carrots and turnips, must have barn and woodshed, must go to market and to the blacksmith shop, must saunter and sleep and be inferior and silly."
30. Thoreau: "If a plant cannot live according to its nature, it dies."
31. Cage: "Nothing was lost when everything was given away. In fact, everything is gained . . . ."
32. Ives: ". . . Something that has been bearing itself in on me for much longer than a few years: the drag of repetition in many phases of art."
33. I have pictured Western Music as moving from a state of disembodied variety to a state of focused, single-minded resolution. Think of Gregorian music and think of Beethoven and you'll get the idea.
34. Always along this road toward unity, however, there were characters kicking over the traces. These trace-kickers ranged from bad boys who sang dirty words to church music (in church), to composers who, in medieval days, used two or three different sets of words

simultaneously in their music -- often in more than one language; to composers like Giovanni Gabrieli in Venice who wrote for choirs and orchestras which would be widely separated in space (and Berlioz two centuries later who did the same thing); to crazy men like Gesualdo who, in the 16th century wrote madrigals so eccentric that the listener was only sure the man was crazy (though today they sound merely chromatic). And always along the way there were theorists who wondered whether other scales and other intervals (e.g. quarter tones) wouldn't be useful. Dreams were dreamed, but they were dreams during a stampede.

35. During the lifetime of Josquin des Pres (one of the great composers of the Renaissance, two generations earlier than Palestrina) Columbus discovered America. During the lifetime of Mozart, the American Declaration of Independence was formulated and very shortly thereafter, the Constitution of the United States of America. About 50 years later (in 1845) Thoreau wrote: "I look upon England today as an old gentleman who is travelling with a great deal of baggage, trumpery which has accumulated from long house-keeping, which he has not the courage to burn . . . When I have met an immigrant tottering under a bundle which contains his all . . . , I have pitied him, not be-



cuase it was his all, but because he had all that to carry." And Emerson: "The millions that around us are rushing into life, cannot always be fed on the sere remains of foreign harvests. Events, actions arise, that must be sung, that will sing themselves." And again Emerson: "Each age, it is found, must write its own books." And again: "It is a mischievous notion that we are come late into nature; that the world was finished a long time ago."

36. And 100 years later, John Cage: "We know, don't we, everybody else's religion, mythology, and philosophy and metaphysics backwards and forwards, so what need would we have for one of our own if we had one, but we don't, do we?"

"But music, do we have any music? Wouldn't it be better first to drop music too?" And again Cage: "If we had any sense in our heads, wouldn't we know the truth instead of going around looking for it?"

37. There was and there is an American Dream, kept alive for the rest of us by a few souls who had or have the gall to believe in it. It has something to do with religion, but it is not the Church. It has something to do with courtesy but it is not an ethical system. It has something to do with wealth but not with bag-

gage. It has something to do with knowledge but not with libraries. It has something to do with the inseparability of mind and body. If Freud had not come along to help nourish the dream, somebody else by the same name would have been required.

38. It seems to me that a lonesome cowboy on the wide prairie, amusing himself by humming over themes from Beethoven symphonies, would be a deeply troubled - man.

39. The architect of the recently finished Pan-American Building in New York City contracted with Richard Lippold, the sculptor, for a giant abstract work to decorate the lobby. Lippold set to work, but protested violently when he discovered that the plans also included a contract with Musak which would inundate the building 24 hours a day with those insipid wisps of weak fairy tales so familiar to all of us who dine in the better restaurants. He proposed to the architect that, if music was wanted, John Cage should provide it. Cage was therefore invited to submit an idea. He suggested the following: equip the various entrances and exits of the sprawling lobby with thousands of tiny photo-electric cells which would be activated by the passage of people, in and out. The activation of

the cells would cause sounds to be released from magnetic tape through hundreds of very small loudspeakers hidden all over the available space. The photo-electric cells would work out of a nigh-infinite set of possible combinations and the sounds therefore would be as ever-changing as mist blown by a quiet wind. The busy citizens bustling in and out of the building would, by moving past the photo-electric cells, be making their own music. The actual sounds, stored on tape, would be snips and snaps, dribs and drabs of Musak material -- a wisp here, a fraction of a note there -- become once again the raw material of music . . . sound. Although the idea was not totally new, (after all, the American Indians used dead fish to fertilize corn) the architect did not buy Mr. Cage's idea. But all was not lost. As a result to the commotion stirred up, it was decided not to have Musak either, and you may now go look at Mr. Lippold's splendid wire sculpture to the unaccompanied sound of passing feet.

40. Quoting Cage: "A piece of string, a sunset, each acts."

41. Quoting Emerson: "Why is there no genius in the Fine Arts in this country? . . . They (i.e. Fine Arts) are not called out by the necessity of the people. The

people never see them. The mind of the race has taken another direction -- Property."

42. Quoting Thoreau: "As for the Pyramids, there is nothing to wonder in them so much as the fact that so many men could be found degraded enough to spend their lives constructing a tomb for some ambitious booby. . . ."

43. Western music, beginning at a point of natural chaos, worked its way into a system of measurements. And finally into -- a box. Counterpoint became a function of multiples of two. So did bar lengths, phrase lengths, period lengths, composition lengths: multiples of two. Although it would seem difficult to express the nature of so complicated a God-Man as Jesus Christ by using multiples of two, Bach attempted exactly that. The masterpieces that resulted tell us a good deal about Bach, but not, I suspect, about the first coming, or the second, or the third, or any other.

44. The difference between a music dedicated to measurement (like Bach's) and a music dedicated to absence of measurement (like, pretty much, Gregorian Chant; like Cage's) seems to me the difference between a fixed point and a point which is in fact an infinity of points. The



Christ of Bach's St. Matthew Passion is a one dimensional figure which can be quite completely described — a fine, generous man with a fine bass voice who has been betrayed, and is very sorry about that. The Christ of any Gregorian Mass never raises a describable image whatever: it manages to be everything and nothing all at once, which is what each of us is also. The Christ of John Cage's music would or would not be there even as Christ either is or is not part of you and me.

45. The box into which western music jammed itself finally became so crowded that it burst. This is another way of saying that Art in terms of Positive Statements, of definable Purpose, of results via measurement, was out of step with the facts of life. Those of you who do not have in their minds the sound of music as if passed from Wagner into the hands of Schoenberg and thenceforward, may probably call to mind the attempts of impressionist, and abstract expressionist painters to deal with the world truthfully. The painting and the music are part of the same, changing awareness.
46. Quoting Cage (he is describing his collaborative work with Merce Cunningham, the dancer): "The novelty of our work derives . . . from our having moved

away from simply private . . . concerns, toward the world of nature and society of which all of us are a part. Our intention is to affirm this life, not to bring order out of chaos nor to suggest improvement in creation, but simply to wake up the very life we're living, which is so excellent once one gets one's mind and one's desires out of the way and lets it act of its own accord."

47. Quoting Thoreau: "The question is whether you can bear freedom. At present the vast majority of men, whether white or black, require the discipline of labor which enslaves them for their own good."
48. Arnold Schoenberg would perhaps not like, at all, music dealing with chance materials, as does Cage's. Yet, it seems to me, he was the giant who opened the door to it and, finally, predicated it. When Schoenberg commenced organizing materials in terms of the tone row, he was doing at least two extraordinary things. First, he was allowing himself to work with individual notes in relationship to one another, rather than working with, say, melodic-harmonic tendencies (anyone who has composed with tone rows has experienced the immense freedom the writing hand has to move with materials rather than with some disorganizing per-

sonal emotion). Second, he was working without the tension between dissonance and consonance: gone was the sense of direction between dissonance and consonance. Since, if you will, everything was dissonant, consonance was no longer at issue. Transferred to another field, literature, this is like saying: "Since James Joyce's Ulysses has no ending, it need not fuss around with a middle."

49. Although at the beginning of the century, few artists did much about it, this tendency toward disembodied activity was much in the air. Debussy felt it and once said, "Any sounds in any combination are henceforth free to be used in a musical continuity."
50. Satie touched on it: "The New Spirit teaches us to tend toward an absence of emotion and (towards) an inactivity in the way of prescribing sonorities and rhythms, which lets them affirm themselves clearly . . . conceived in a spirit of humility and renunciation."
51. Cage goes all the way: "The view taken is not of an activity the purpose of which is to integrate . . . opposites, but rather of an activity characterized by process and essentially purposeless."
52. At the start of the hour, I took from

you a set of numbers; each person wrote a number on a piece of paper, from one to twelve. I've been using these random numbers in the random sequence with which they were given to me. I simply used them, am using them, in the given sequence to determine in seconds the length of silence between my successive written paragraphs. Thus, for the number "10", I observed a ten second silence. By this chance method, a rhythmic element has been supplied: it is not my rhythm and it is not yours; it is now the property of the lecture and you are listening to it. Although in his actual compositions Mr. Cage uses infinitely more complicated means; the establishment of rhythm, of pitch, of duration, of timbre, of dynamic, by chance methods has been hinted at by our procedure.

53. Perhaps now you understand a little better Cage's phrase -- "an activity characterized by process and essentially purposeless." The irregular rhythm of space between my paragraphs is not mine and helps tone down demagoguery. The lecture materials begin to breathe a bit on their own.
54. A similar use of your numbers is being made in the simplest possible manner by our guitar and piano players. They are using the random numbers (now to stand



for minutes instead of seconds) to know when to make a sound, and also to indicate pitches. Pitch as well as rhythm, then, is being taken care of by chance means.

55. Quoting Cage: "The view taken is not of an activity the purpose of which is to integrate opposites, but rather of an activity characterized by process and essentially purposeless. The mind, though stripped of its right to control, is still present. What does it do, having nothing to do? And what happens to a piece of music when it is purposelessly made?

"What happens, for instance, to Silence? That is -- how does the mind's perception of it change? Formerly, silence was the time lapse between sounds . . . useful towards . . . emphasis . . . or punctuation . . . . Where (such goals are not) present silence becomes something else -- not silence at all, but sounds, the ambient sounds. The nature of these sounds is unpredictable and changing . . . (One hears these ambient sounds, each one) just as it is, not as a phenomenon more or less approximating a preconception."

56. Emerson, writing in his journal: "Now for five years I have been indulged by the gracious heaven in my long holiday in this goodly house of mine, entertaining and entertained by so many worthy and gifted

friends, and all this time poor Nancy Barron, the mad woman, has been screaming herself hoarse at the poor-house across the brook and I still hear her when I open my window."

57. Western music moved inexorably to an ever-tightening, massive control. The tendency toward control speeded up vastly under the impact of Protestantism and within, mostly, Germanic minds. Italy was a source of melody; France was the birthplace of polyphony. Germany was the birthplace and nourisher of both Protestantism (i.e. Luther) and of harmonic devices for measuring music. The great harmonic instruments are piano, organ and symphony orchestra. The great writers for these are mostly German -- Bach, Beethoven, Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, Schumann, Brahms.

Paul Hindemith, an honest and humane man, a 20th century devotee of Germanic musical controls, in short, of harmonic composition, once asserted: "If there are 100 problems there are exactly 100 solutions." Aaron Copland, American, is said to have asked cautiously: "But Mr. Hindemith, what if there are 101 solutions?" "Impossible!" said Hindemith.

58. Quoting Cage: ". . . try as we may to make a silence, we cannot. For certain engineering purposes it is desirable to have as silent a situation as possible.

Such a room is called an anechoic chamber, . . . a room without echoes. I entered one at Harvard University several years ago and heard two sounds, one high and one low. When I described them to the engineer in charge, he informed me that the high one was my nervous system in operation, the low one my blood in circulation. Until I die there will be sounds. And they will continue following my death. One need not fear about the future of music.

"But this fearlessness follows only if, at the parting of the ways, where it is realized that sounds occur whether intended or not, one turns in the direction of those he does not intend. This turning is psychological and seems at first to be a giving up of everything that belongs to humanity . . . for the musician, the giving up of music. This psychological turning leads to the world of nature, where, gradually or suddenly, one sees that humanity and nature, not separate, are in this world together; that nothing was lost when everything was given away. In fact, everything is gained. In musical terms, any sound may occur in any combination and in any continuity."

59. Cage: "What makes my art unlike Dada is the space in it. For it is the space and emptiness that is finally necessary at this point in history . . . (not the stones in a Japanese garden, but the emptiness of

sand which needs the stones anywhere in the space in order to be empty)."

60. Emerson: "Henry (Thoreau), when you talked about art, blotted a paper with ink, then doubled it over, and safely defied the artist to surpass this effect."

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2nd Light Poem: for Diane Wakoski --  
10 June 1962

I.

Old light & owl-light  
may be opal light  
in the small  
orifice  
where old light  
& the will-o'-the-wisp  
make no announcement of waning  
light

but with direct directions  
& the winking light of the will-o'-the-wisp's  
    accoutrements  
& lilac light  
a delightful phenomenon  
a delightful phenomenon of lucence & lucidity  
    needing no announcement  
even of lilac light  
my present activities may be seen in the old  
    light of my accoutrements  
as a project in owl-light

II.

A bulky, space-suited figure  
from the whole cloth of my present activities  
with a taste for mythology in opal light  
& such a manner  
  
in the old light from some being outside

as if this being's old light cd have brought  
    /such a manner  
to a bulky, space-suited figure  
from the whole world of my present activities  
at this time  
when my grief gives owl-light  
only  
not an opal light  
& not a very old light

neither  
old light nor owl-light  
makes it have such a manner about it  
the opal light & old light & marsh light &  
    moonlight  
& that of the whole world  
to which the light of meteors is marsh light  
all light it

no it's  
an emerald light  
in the light from the eyes that are making  
    it whole from the whole cloth  
with no announcement this time

III.

What is extra light?  
A delightful phenomenon.  
A delightful phenomenon having no announcement?  
No more than the emerald light has.  
Is that the will-o'-the-wisp?  
No, it's the waning light of my grief.  
Is it a winking light?  
No more than it is the will-o'-the-wisp.  
Is it old light?

The oldest in the whole world.  
 Why do you speak in such a manner?  
 I suppose, because of owl-light.  
 Is it a kind of opal light?  
 No, I said it was old light.  
 Is it a cold light?  
 More like a chemical light with the usual  
     /accoutrements.  
 Like the carmine light produced by my  
     / present activities?  
 More of a cold light than that.  
 Like what might fall on a bulky, space-  
     / suited figure?  
 Well, it's neither red light nor reflected  
     /light.  
 Are you making this up out of the whole cloth?  
 No, I'm trying to give you direct directions.  
 For avoiding a bulky, space-suited figure?  
 No, for getting light from a rhodochrosite.

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Note: A rhodochrosite is a vitreous rose-red or variously colored gem-stone having a hardness of 4.5 & a density of 3.8 & consisting of manganous carbonate ( $MnCO_3$ ) crystallized in the rhombohedral system.

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#### IV.

This time I'm going to talk about red light.  
 First of all, it's not very much like  
     /emerald light.  
 Nevertheless, there's still some of it in

/Pittsburgh.

It adds to the light from eyes an extra light.  
 This is also true of emerald light.  
 But red light better suits those with a taste  
     /for mythology.  
 As reflected light it is often paler than the  
     /light from a rhodochrosite.  
 Such a red light might fall on a bulky, space-  
     / suited figure.  
 In just such a manner might this being be  
     /illuminated during a time gambol.

7th Light Poem: for John Cage -- 17 June 1962

Put off an important decision  
     in mechanical-lamp light.  
 Success in a new project will bring lumination.  
 An exchange of courtesy in the zodiacal  
     light reminds you that expenses can  
     run high when you insist on light  
     from almandites.  
 For almandites are iron-alumina garnets  
      $Fe_3Al_2(SiO_4)_3$ .  
 When of a fine deep red or purplish red,  
     from India,  
     and transparent,  
     they are  
     "precious garnets."  
 A lucrative job available in amber light  
     does not jeopardize your credit,  
   but



melon-oil lamplight  
                                   might.  
 Your intuitions lead you right  
     in ceneographic light.  
 Say what you really think.  
 The lamp I have clamped to the kitchen  
                                   table beside the  
     notebook I am writing this in  
                                   gives a sort  
     of student-lamp light although  
     it is not a student lamp but  
         a PENETRAY.  
 In chrome light and in light from  
     alexandrites,  
             spinach-  
                 green  
             chrysoberyls,  
             columbine-  
                 red  
                 by artificial  
 light,  
         from Ceylon and the Ural  
         Mountains,  
                 money from a  
                 surprising source  
 belies the belief that there's  
         always  
                 nothing but  
         futility in romantic wishes  
         arising in old light.  
 Those wishes,  
         that first arose  
         in old  
         light,

                                  light  
                                   trailing from  
 spiral nebulae  
     and galaxies so distant  
                                   that a stone  
                                   thrown  
     at a reading lamp's  
                                   light  
     at a  
         distance of  
         two miles  
                                   wd be  
     an unintentional slight  
         to natural law  
                 compared to the folly  
         of launching  
     "space ships" toward them,  
                 those  
         wishes that arose before  
         the light of the annealing-lamp  
                 on which your dentist  
                                   /heated foil  
                 made you begin to  
                 avoid taking chances  
                         by  
                 taking chances,  
                 might  
                 make you take a  
                         trip to a  
                         /scenic region  
                 where  
                 the light's  
                         maroon.  
 Beware light from a Cooper-Hewitt lamp,

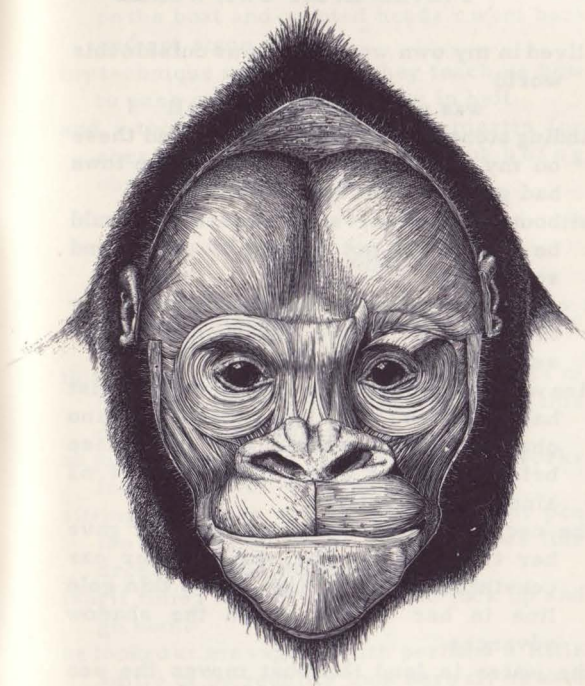
light  
 derived  
 from passing an electric current  
 through  
 mercury-vapor  
 light  
 bluish-  
 white,  
 ghost-light from toothbrushes  
 along the absent 'L,'  
 beware  
 the new light on the Bowery,  
 that promises a  
 good possibility of money loss.  
 The receipt of an important invitation  
 to radiation  
 's  
 a secret  
 not to be discussed  
 even in olive-oil lamplight,  
 even in the  
 extra light of your  
 elation over the good news,  
 lead as it might to a  
 temporary setback  
 as  
 the light  
 waned.  
 Revenue yielding ideas arise(s)  
 in orange light  
 but an exquisite object stirs joy  
 even in the light of  
 Reichsanstalt's lamp,

a modified form of  
 Hefner's lamp  
 a photometric lamp burning  
 /amylacetate.  
 Can an emerald light bring nothing but  
 disturbing rumors  
 about money?  
 Orange light yields revenue yielding ideas  
 of  
 disturbance  
 and recklessness  
 amidst an uncanny refulgence  
 as of marsh light  
 or will-o'-the-wisp, those  
 sparks of cold light  
 which sometimes seem to  
 follow instructions exactly  
 as if they  
 were light from kinetographs,  
 or fishermen's jack lights,  
 but emerald light  
 alternating with  
 red light & lilac light,  
 all incandescent lamplight,  
 made  
 by following instructions exactly  
 some  
 times  
 awaken spectrums  
 like the aurora's  
 or  
 those of  
 rembered napalm flames.



10th Light Poem: 2nd one for Iris--  
19 June - 2 July 1962

A useless plan proposed in acetylene light  
to a cheery visitor  
who carries a lamp that burns castanha-oil  
lit  
adding its castanha-oil  
light  
to the acetylene  
scene  
advancing ignition  
of  
the refusal of a loan  
despite long working hours  
stretching to the aurora  
& an exchange of possessions  
in winestones-oil  
lamplight  
or a need for stressing modernization  
&/or exploding starlight  
are merely petty annoyances  
but either lamp light  
threatens  
an improvement of conditions  
despite  
a useless plan  
proposed  
in acetylene light  
& failing in  
ghost light.



Betsy Garrett Bang: Full Front View of the  
Facial Musculature of a Gorilla

from the peacock vow

I LIVED IN MY OWN WORLD

i lived in my own world what was outside this world

was not in the world at all  
finding stones under my skull i placed these  
on my ancestors graves when the town  
had gone to work stealing forth  
without being observed impressions should  
be reinforced not erased by others and  
so leaving

a chartres on the sea and finally hidden by  
the megaphones the approaches by the  
servants dwellings

fine wires of bridges the ships entomologist  
had not failed to catalogue the aeroplano  
phagous moat arachnid who spun these  
bridges without being observed out of  
aluminum and silver

the neck lace and ear rings the sea gave  
her the sea like the sound of her ear  
convinced by the horizon like a thin gold  
line in her lovers mouth the shadow  
advances

the water is land the boat moves the sea  
does not move the town left now a nenuphar  
of marrow

enjoying it but being a little worried am i  
going to spend my whole life dreaming  
maybe its a good idea

a noise who goes there i said and he said i  
am god who are you and i said without

being observed

i am the devil greater than god i had fifteen  
or twenty worlds in my pocket when i got  
on the boat and counted heads i went back  
and got some more  
my technique was perfect they teach us how  
to pass out worlds that way in hell  
and i took notes with my vote martin for  
sheriff ball point pen without being  
observed dreaming of her

THE MAXIMUM

midnight already no i choose to leave  
tomorrow for another day

this taste of a day to which all the cloaca of  
my being say hello the god who made this  
day awaits me in hell

ah just as i thought in hell pope gregory works  
for the post office i found him

sitting at his desk writing with a blotchy pen  
the blots spread on the too soft paper like  
drops of blood through a shirt

isnt it time i said isnt it time to lock up and  
go home

he looked at me vaguely with perhaps a little  
smile of incredulity look here sir he said  
look here sir and that was all he held the  
shaft of his pen towards me as if he  
expected me to bite it hesitated and  
went back to his work which so resembled  
that of a firing squad

it was then i realised i was wrong i waited



until he came out and gave him a kick  
and now what time is it  
take it away the maximum a cocoon take the  
incense away take away the flowers in  
vases i said it was i  
who dared to plant the first seed in the  
labyrinth garden my chopinesques like  
mistakes  
but all for the expressions sake when i  
turned around i saw she was no longer  
there  
eh when you make experiments youre going  
to break some apparatus and watch old  
ladies in a subway my moments of  
despair  
my rooms are in the woods  
gardens are made for lovers  
under the shade of leaves like the leaves of  
an aquarium her face changed by  
madness as a body is with child she  
walked in to the grocers

#### THE EVACUATION WAS GENERAL

the evacuation was general and i had to listen  
briefly  
to those who had just started on  
the road to self recognition from whose  
propos perforce no information of any  
value can be gleaned  
i told them sea sick was a high i let my tongue  
be itself a garden of eden  
the girls were wild all the girls on the journey

Opposite: Drawing by Fielding Dawson

were american indians  
undisinterested interest shone in my genuine  
eyes why cant people play it cool  
grey journey the populace like smoke moving  
like smoke in the streets like smoke  
in the early time the moment night is over  
setting off the names of the towns were  
not loud in comparison to  
and those punch and judy life jackets the  
soul dies and does it want to ride the  
white stallion  
no answer and does it want to ride the heights  
no answer i bring feathers like the father  
bird to his nest we had the best cabin on  
the ship perhaps i spoiled the honeymoon  
its better to be hanged the crux of the matter  
is that one can only be hanged once but  
imprisoned indefinitely  
and why not your thoughts thus also, live as  
the whole organism lives from day to day  
as imagination like a magical flower explodes  
in the brains tissue like food in the muscles  
moths of green parsley  
the captain told us i dont care if you fuck  
smoke mariuana get drunk  
but why do they have to come into the dining  
room with dirty hands  
and yet the first thing the captain said was  
to spook us against using too much water  
if they kept the ship a little cleaner we  
wouldnt get so much grease rust and  
silver paint on our paws i dont mean hands  
half the nuzniks dont work anyway  
we had no trouble finding extras among the

sunday guerrillas the battleship hrvatska  
in the opening scene the captain is planning  
to swing the captains paradise is all  
dolled up the passengers to whom no  
entertainment is provided while away  
the time painted cock roach racing and  
growing mariuana in used tampax in the  
nuzniks enter the captain  
he wishes to make a friendly little announce  
ment apparently the water supply is low  
before he goes out swinging with paradise  
under the stars his favorite movie  
what he did not tell us was that the big red  
axes are to cut off the masts of the ship  
we found out anyway

(from Six Years)September

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rucksack braced on a board, lashed tight on back,  
sleeping bags, mapcase, tied on the gas tank  
sunglasses, tennis shoes, your longtan in shorts  
north on the west side of Lake Biwa  
Fukui highway still being built,

crankcase banged on rocks--  
pushed to the very edge by a

/blinded truck

I saw the sea below beside my knee:  
you hung on and never knew how close.

in Fukui found a ryokan cheap  
washt off each other's dust in the square wood tub  
ate dinner on worn mats

clean starcht yukata

warm whiskey with warm water,

all the shoji open, second floor,

told each other

what we'd never said before, ah,

dallying on mats

whispering sweat

cools our kissing skin--

next morning rode the sunny hills, Eihei-ji,

got the luggage rack arc-welded

back through town and to the shore,

miles long spits and dunes of pine.

& made love on the sand.



## March

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Up in dirt alley

eat korean food

drink white doboroku out of boals

broil strips of beef & liver over coals

finish off with raw cow's womb

in sauce, jade-white and oyster smooth

piss against the slab posts of the highways  
overhead,

bar girl girl-friend with a silver trinket cup

hung on a neck-chain, she, gives us

all beer free.

sift through night streets,

Kato, Nagazawa, me, Sakaki,

okinawan awamori bar

clear glasses full up to the brim

like flavord gin--must millet

with choppt onion.

whirl taxi by

glass door opening sharks, their,

eyeballs to the sky--

in coffee, tight butt tress;

to station where the world trains meet

I south around the loop

yellow writhing dragon full of drunks--

& hall the windy concrete of

Zojoji.

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