The Matrix
Poems: 1960-1970
N. H. Pritchard
Born in New York City on 22nd October, 1939, N.H. Pritchard prepared at The Cathedral Choir School of St. John the Divine and St. Peter’s School (Jacob’s Hill) before receiving his Bachelor of Arts degree with Honors in Art History from Washington Square College, New York University. While attending college, he was a contributor to the literary magazine and President of the Fine Arts Society. Mr. Pritchard pursued graduate studies in Art History at The Institute of Fine Arts and Columbia University. His poems have appeared in numerous periodicals, among them; Poetry Northwest, Liberator, Eye Magazine, Umbra, The East Village Other, as well as in several anthologies. He has given readings of his poems at many institutions, including International House, Sarah Lawrence College, The Poetry Society of America, Lafayette College and Barnard College. He has read his poems on the record albums Destinations: Four Contemporary American Poets, and New Jazz

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Poets. Mr. Pritchard is currently teaching a poetry workshop at The New School for Social Research and is Poet in-Residence at Friends Seminary.

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FOR MUFF AND DAD
WITH LOVE, HONOUR
AND DEVOTION
Words are ancillary to content.
N.H.P.
## CONTENTS

### 1

**INSCRIPTIONS**

1960–1964

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WREATH</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VISTA</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HARBOUR</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SELF</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WINDSCAPE</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OLOGY</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOLITIVE</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGON</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOUISBURG SQUARE</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBSCAN</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASSANDRA AND FRIEND</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVENING</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASWELAY</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATRIX</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POINT</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWAMPSCOTT AUTUMN</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUTING</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIST</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VISAGE</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESIGN</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
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<td>27</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<td>31</td>
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<td>32</td>
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<td>33</td>
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<td>38</td>
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<td>39</td>
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<td>40</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td></td>
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<td>46</td>
<td></td>
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<td>51</td>
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<td>52</td>
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<td>69</td>
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<td>70</td>
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<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II

SIGNS

1965-1967

THE SIGNS

GYRE'S GALAX

SEASON

TRACE

the own

SILHOUETTE

PASSAGE

METEMPSYCHOSIS

SAIL

EACH

SOLILOQUY

VISITARY

THE HARKENING

DUSK

PAYSAGESQUE

THE CLOAK

BURNT SIENNA

THE NARROW PATH

EPILOGUE

ROW

N OCTUR N'

AURORA
III
OBJECTS
1968–1970

# 129
y 131
TERRACE FIGMENT 132
ISOSTASY 133
Ω 135
C 136
L’OEIL 139
@
" 185
" 187
LOVE 189
O 191
b 201
PEACE 203
O 204

THE MATRIX
VISTA

Much is disclosed to the eye of an eddy blinded by a leaf

HARBOUR

for Nancy & Arthur

Here quietly on ly go es
k now in g the s h or e
w it h its sun dried hues
s ever a l b oats
l a n g u i d
be neath the d us k
s ee king h a i l s
the d a w n to c h oo s e
& of w h at c ease less t ide
pro c l aimed
s till s i l e n t
e m p t y & we t
deck e d to the c alm
w it h g row in g m oo n
h over in g eve r
& the s mall buoys
c l ever f eat her limbs
m as king the h i dd e n fro s t
w it h f in s
as k in g
the net s pro test the w in d

Edgartown
September
SELF

What does the cracker
when in a barrel
bare
with dark
and alone
and
beside it
self

with fear
of being
uneaten

WINDSCAPE

Seemingly a gale came
hidden as it slipped
tripping about the dim

or a mountain in a flame
or a mountain in a flame
or a mountain in a flame
or a mountain in a flame
or a mountain in a flame
or a mountain in a flame

or a fountain in the rain
or a fountain in the rain
or a fountain in the rain
or a fountain in the rain
or a fountain in the rain
or a fountain in the rain
or a fountain in the rain
or a fountain in the rain
or a fountain in the rain
or a fountain in the rain
or a fountain in the rain
or a fountain in the rain
or a fountain in the rain
or a fountain in the rain
Only those old lamps and fathomless cares
Drawn across the absence
Borne by silence
All surrounding
Though most of them chose another road
towing shadows
Below Cooper Square are the funeral late nesses.

lies cold in our ways.

men all covered in agonies,

sp raw I t heir lives

in war d l y.

up on an out war d

w or l d

as if bottled d

in a d r e am p refer ed
do n t e n

dream s how ever q u art er e d

d r

u n a b l e to p ass

thru d o o r way s

like the c old

of f un e r a r y l a t e n e s s

& the a n no in t e d

agon i e s of m e n
In burr side out
sights
hearing
discs
blinking
face
blindly
passing
car’s slight of sound
stinging
lies
beside
in the glass
something
never
seen
again
a face
among the wheels
in olden water
where
sounds taste
like rumour’s gale
a ring on a pole
as ice breaths

Reflections
bound
about
the train
halts
forward
cars
beginning
ride
7
an old hat
6 shoes
hair
squeaking
signs
couples
part
though
apart
moving
doors
met
Pausing at the edge of the wood
they turned to see a huge
entering from beneath a stone
it wasn’t one of their own
for it had never grown
Unlikely as it seemed
their stares were not demeaning
Because it was a fact
it never left a track

Alone
the dusk
drew
might
brightly
waning
slightly
less
meager
growing
only
knowing
AS WELAY

Weary was when coming on a stream
in hidden midst the amber adornment
of fall's birth
here near edge
a rippling soundless
leaves and eddy eyes
with trickling forest thighs
in widening
youthful nippling
scenic creakless

In this boundless vastly
hours wait
in gateless
isn't
fleshly
smelling
muchly
as a golden

On the crustish underbrush
of where no one walked
were

unwindish rustlings
musting thoughts
of ill timed harvests

And
as we lay
as we lay
and
as we lay
we lay
as we lay
and
aswelay

Above
a bird
watching
we knew not
what
cause
his
course
of course
we lay
we lay
in the rippling
soundless
boundless
vastly
of a firthing
duty leaving
welay
wanting
noughtless

And
then
it
seemed
as from the air
he
left
the
bird
who
watched
what would be called
a
dream
Through a street
deserted glimpses
laughing
conjured
jeered
of an only
could see
innards
would the meek vent
squeeze a beef’s leaf
SWAMPSCOTT AUTUMN

Or
water dripping
bottled brown
in stem's rust
the tideless expanse
the dusk chilled murk
the dead wet newly leaves
strewn cool wind
pewter

OUTING

flocks flocksflocksflocksflocksflocksflocksflocksflocksflocks

geeeeeeeeeeeeeeeseesesssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssss

a r b o r s n e a r t h e s h o r e

s e n t t h e i r l e a v e s s w i r l i n g

a c r o s s a f a r

the l a k e l a y s p r e a d o u t

a b o u t t h e l e v e l s t r e t c h o f d i r t h

& a b l u e j a y w a s p u t u p o n b y a

h a r e & a w o r m i n s t e a d o f a

n u e g g e t t h e r e
gracious chance which wrought its share
the nearing tears at the bare mist
the caring flares
unlike the gist
which
staying deaf to flame
regains its bliss
DESIGN

Tightly clasped granules
beneath
graying pavements
know well
the
designs
of
falling soles

GATHERING

s l owl y won ' t while u wa it
&
last l y g r e e n c a m e w e a r in g
t or n o v e r a l l s & t o y s
s m a ll boys & a l a g oo n
had n ' t t h e r e b e e n m u c h f o r a l l
l e a v e s & c a p s
d u c k s
c a t s
m a t t e r d t h a t
s o m e s a t w i t h l o g s e n v e l o p e d
o t h e r s
t o u t e d t h e f a l l
f o r t w i g s c l o s e s t t h e n e s t
In the court yard the trees are all

Bestirred though they were there was little that could be done I could continue to run but the sun cannot be caught by running and the 1 cannot be sought by shunning
Often
Passion
ate
And
Silent

This
Seeking
SOL
I

TU
DE

MIST PLACE

Lifts
mist
above
the
barren
stalkless
wearing
fertile
once
now
on
a
withered
porch
a
woman
sits
weeping
scarecrow
morning
s talk s too in rude
up on this dune
s stillness brush es the sea
calm too soon grew
calm about the s and
a few gull s drew in their wings
a h us h
beside them
the rush
linger ing
from the voice
of a drop of all in g

apples shared
ravens and lakes
ends of bells melted
shells and bees
trees
whisps of craggy heights
a rodent and a pike
tan kites or a fox
harried sand within a box
Shadows stalks across the brook
away from the loud
they
were
never
seen
again

bound about the glen

The dawning cloak of heat
enlists its remembrance of light
places of grace
of smarting eyes
crowning the host
drowning absence in a glass
toasting past tasks
forgotten
lastly
the pledge redeems its asking

Madrid
August
1961
There
where
the
bare
edges
mellowed
snears bedecked the forests's call
and the noon was wrecked
and the moon was heckled
and an end foretold a nation's fall

Looming
there
where
drums beat upon the plain
and fumes of arrows amid the glooming waned
doom spoke silently proclaiming without song
the omen given by the gabled quirk of wrong

august falling
leaves
grounded thoughts

a montage
a collage
of
bucolic silences
Possibly and perhaps set out
to watch the clouding willows droop
though a storm returned the borrowed sky
tomorrow did not reply

Once was not enough
though once be all there is yet will is a stratum so fit that what may finish isn't end
DIA

Only shadows only touched the wood's fringe dividing an ever from an edge

ASALTERIS

for Vasileios

Change as circumstance may be of curious courses as though as if were in dubitably un certain ones are n't
A mid the non committed compounds of the mind
an image less gleaming
we at her aunts as yet unknown
& t aunts
thru a mystery of ought
that changes
courses
as if a bird in flight
a word
forotten
in the wind's won't

What aim to count selves such a gain
unto the sylvan down of woman's
where never ever stands
causes such man if est stars is
to ride on ly up on that move men to
the ear the pro vide s

Of ten the setting mind
like us journey's
as though the know in g
as though the g low in g

To see k
to find
a lance
to pierce the possible

Oft en a wish defined
like us return's
as thou up on an alter
bloody is broken
as meat
is rite
& accuring p a g a n
c r u c i f i x i on
Enchantments
abound about
the abysses of mind
often blinded
by the caretaker acts of curt concern
while
aim sits dauntlessly
on a pedestal
being pecked upon
by the wind's won
THE SIGNS

in a cove where

waves bowed about the sea

the lone mast lost its sail
the sky's root fell upon the land
a nigh replaced the sky with time
a lie disgraced the why with brine

they took advantage of the signs
they took advantage of the signs
Sound variegated through beneath lit
Variegated sound through beneath lit dark
Through variegated beneath sound lit
Thru beneath

Through variegated beneath sound lit
Variegated sound through beneath variegated lit
dark
Through variegated beneath sound lit
dark
Through variegated beneath sound lit
dark
Through variegated beneath sound lit
dark
Through variegated beneath sound lit
dark
Through variegated beneath sound lit
dark

Thru beneath
Twainly ample of amongst
twainly ample of amongst
Twainly ample of amongst

in dark to stark

In dark to stark

In dark to stark lit
So sooner though blasted
the lone ilk fades
in shimmering soft outlasted
nary lead yet they to whom
a purple had no power
withstood the wormy past
of dust now bowered
musk and stale nodes that reached their crest
and those who wanted all
and then again some quite so small brief
and then a when
to choose its leaf
Amid the darkness
where utterances coast about
few trace their mirrors on a fuel
calm tho of many nature's
the air gives its fair
wea ring but merely
s ever el y
f ear less
t here d well s with in the vast with in
a l way s a w are
th us de light ed
light en in g gu ides t he wise
a l one
be knight ed

hu shed by the s till
the tree s t a k e on t heir l eaves
grieved no t when f all pro claims
the si lent dis appearance
s om e c all it ga in
a ga in and a ga in
t he w in d resumes its cl aim
the m in d ab ides
t he aim pro vides its cry sta lli nepane
plain ly ga in ed
re ma in in g

and a t he l as t
t he f irst is n ear
sharing on e w it h all
above w it h in
s mall er th an less
t he quest tests t he w in d
re ga in in g n eve r dims

b not shaken by the pat h
t h at s t r e t c h e s forth
to m e e t the l amp
b certain of the p at h
b certain of the l am p
SILHOUETTE

Such watch that nought condemns or might the eager age amend with meager and beleaguered shame its flagrant hate its crude disdain

And the rotten core of avid frowns that host the visages down pillaged paths of silken filth still the ilk reveals its hilt

And amid they crept among the severed raw the augment of chores held fast to each shore and dwindling fades with rage and ranting confides the scowl with ravaged clot to ask for nor with scavaged blot to mask the or

In silence there regard the dim he who with shoeless strode the dust of waisted jeers see you him too and there another just as near and some taunted them with treacherous eyes though bowed they to hoom passed
METEMPSYCHOSIS

Invisible bodies amid the air
stares of ghosts
hosts hovering
others
alone
with earthen groans owning
a space
a space rent with the wrench of nails
embedded in a board
once two trees
once two trees
stood
in a where
there echoing
a prayer chant
chanted hammer
in words
from an unknown
tongue
lifted
the silence
moans

Down
from
beneath
above
above
beneath
beneath
two
two
flounder
the
blood
holy

waters
the
soil
naked
with
clutching
life
claws
the eyes
of some
affixed
as
sleep
becomes
Bolder than most
the key
in a word
key word
in a gift given
in an unheard hint
the two who unknown striven
striven by a game
played

Suddenly
dawned
the night
carried afar
amid the mazed stretches
eyes searched the stone sky
as clouds parted
sun
sun
sun broke the day
in three

Down above by the turn about a bend
a sail weaving its wont
while we cupped the dusk
and an oak
and a hull
and a kernel
and a shell
and a castle
and a o
  o
  o
  o
  o
  o
  o
hidden about the sky
willful as a nail
sapped by its hammer
EACH

& each has its way
some dusk ridden
others in long gowns
the shore with red sand
the others
basking
noon
the
teeple's
aurburn
crisp
weather and old boxes
birds of leather
muskrat & peelings
haven't many
little didn't

SOLILOQUIY

Hewn and though no rude cusp brought its cleave to gap
and when again some awesome gone amends its dawn
the shore long watered hills lay grouped
in stone's might shifty task
soil brittle not of worms
but breached at the sip of that odd cornered cup
which ran in deep and steeper still
than than quill or will
and chancing what such that acts
about the hearts of scorned stars
and far adnonned
the stand
to be there
as it were
near gifts of raiments tuned in looming
knew not gotten whence askance
and banding planned
by season's hence
Who crouches there among the rushes
touched by such fierce wind
blushed by the pierced whim
crizzling grooves grow dim
Where winged wings walk
Where winged wings walked
Where winged wings walk
Where winged wings walked
Winged wings
Winged wings
Where winged wings walk
Filling the lush air
dreams from snoozes
whose is that one over there
staring with the big beak
peeking about like a sneaky

Where winged wings
Where winged wings
Where winged wings
Where winged wings
Where winged wings
Where winged wings
Where winged wings
Where winged wings walk
Where winged wings walk
Where winged wings
Where winged wings walk
Where winged wings
Where winged wings
Where winged wings
Where winged wings walk
Where winged wings walk
Where winged wings
Where winged wings
Dewinged wings
Dewinged wings
Wings dewinged
Dewinged wings
wings dewinged
dewinged wings
dewinged wings
dewinged wings
dewinged wings
Springing to their feet
the things with their...
all over the place
spinning haste
like a flying ocean
Dewinged wings
Where winged wings walked
Wings dewinged wings
Dewinged wings
Wings dewinged
dewinged wings
wings dewinged
Dewinged wings
wings dewinged
dewinged wings
wings dewinged wings
Wings dewinged wings
Wings dewinged
where winged wings walk
Floats the tugish host
so awesome lurking
dust from the ancient wings
stinging brings its thing
winging
lingering
Where winged wings walked
Where winged wings walk
Where winged wings walked
Where winged wings walk
Where winged wings walked
Where winged wings walk
Where winged wings
Where winged wings
Where winged wings
Dewinged wings
Wings dewinged
Dewinged wings
Wings dewinged
Wings dewinged
Dewinged wings
Wings dewinged
Dewinged wings
Wings dewinged
Wings dewinged
Dewinged wings
Wings dewinged
Dewinged wings
Wings dewinged
Where winged wings walk
Now
all is still
will they return
in something other than an urn
What claim of will did defend its perch searching through plains of mist remaining quietly regaining might if what was said should spread off light lifting grim heights of bright brought back again dark flesh all shall we come bright in pilgrim put upon by some odd star and farther then prove of tossing the n
DUSK

What have u dusk
what has dusk is asked
dusk is apart be coming
coming
coming
coming
coming
coming
coming
coming
coming
coming
coming
coming
coming
must is answers asked
some of them have no leaves
the choice may not be would

PAY SAGESQUE

In stained barn drenched
tall shafts of heat
lay glad
where
hidden
others met by the lake
some danced
on fields
of setting
dark
moods bent the green with wind
leaving bare
their tearing such
that didn’t care
to swim the bending gain

Fox Point
December
1966
Afar though near the silence waxes
surely waning purely gaining
untamed and brief
endless at least
though regal
dim were the honoured alms
and the lost clocks watched their shrieveled gains
and by the cloak the will is maimed

Trust thrust first tinder kindling grown
the maple gave rust air its bark
and ample and plain
fair orange orb
sworn to that sea line stretching bare
courteous and neat
still gleaming meekly weaned
by some awesome twilight rise
beyond be gone
the nameless coloured yarn
THE NARROW PATH

Very due that being each one dwells through errant woods of stone and roaming unknown streams where few prints mark the air contested only by that dare and the narrow path bending but to where

EPILOGUE

FOLLOW THE CALM
HARKEN IN CRYSTALS SP READ THEIR LIGHT
ONE W AS S WEPT A WAY
THE OTHERS WANDERED ON
HERE WE RE RACES OF SOUND NOW AND AGAIN AGAIN AGAIN WOUND ABOUT
N ENER CAME AGAIN THE LANES LAY AGAIN

S C A T T E R E D ARE
THE GRAVES
RAVE THE HILLS INK THE
WILL
A GAIN
A GAIN
S TILL
A GAIN
L O N G S I N C E H A S T H E S T O R M
G O N E
A S I D U O S L L Y E A R S U N F O L D
T H E I R R I N G S
B E N E A T H T H E B A R K
E D G E S D A R K E N
S U C H T H A T I S I S S U C H
T H A T O N E W I T H O U T O N E
S I M P L Y S H H H H H H H H H U N
T H E R E S T
P E S T E R I N G T H E L E A V E S
B E S T T O H A V E R E S T E D
B E L I E V I N G
I N A S E E D

the top has already gotten its cover
and it is usually shared by many others
and though the rain be shut up in a cloud
seldom is there more to the stake than a row

Bryn Mawr
February
1967
N OCTUR N

@
first
the whisper of cats arms
night seeks out
in light's
used
yes
ambry
becoming
him mere d
air
g rope's
where e-car's bright's spread
fog hovers
bodies sprawling in gutter's dank
mists
ragged with a half a neye
infotb are win terha ze
taps
cars
glass
dime
encroached distance

etches of time

unreadable

fortestment evolves

where

beeps beat

dark

emergency

hostile

in heavy coat
doll

knowing

nothing across the street

fate

walks

imposed

island and

Center
trees empty

cars passing

among witnesses

black light starkly

windows lose light's still call

of night's listening

triped through the air

which is to be black as is to white

lake

smallling to the ground

as once enraged

white ones lush

frumeb rushed exhausted single

ine yesh alf open

among witnesses

lack list kly

window lose d

light's still call

of night's listening

triped through the air

which is to be black as is to white

lake

smallling to the ground

as once enraged

white ones lush

frumeb rushed exhausted single

ine yesh alf open
& the ski n

w b urn s

w ith ice

f or a scar f

a sthe b urn b

m uff led by
c oug h

g ruf fy

kne ss

p atche s

w ord s

f or ant s

d ro d ling

f or ma t t hro a t s

c or ch e d

w or d

w ears t

d ro oling

f rom li p s

b leedi n g

e ye s

w ater e d

r ou ge

f or ad im e

f rail c lo a k s

f raw lin g t atte r s

b r each e d m atte r s

Wis bing
d evo ure d

g low ering

p owe rles s

C ow e ring

inco op ed di mau h n t s

th c ee dge r idge dd a r k gro p e s

th skin dstri pp e d

b r o ken li m b s

th e gras po f a sh e n w h i m s

g a th e r

o pp re sse d

b e n eath

th et i ght ene dg ri

a k ind boun dst alks

t he r dea ths

t hre e s

w ire nch e f lees
e i t ear

e echi sh s

r ill
heard out the whistle djeer
kept the dept h
c lung
the ir flight spl its the m
s mitte n
wan derso fa lu s t
lost
ma ime d
mai medgai n s
th efloun deringai m
abl ighto fscat teredhil l s
illedi nana shfac e
c as hedlat e
f atemu ll s
t henig hght' sgripe
w heel s
wit hstai nsth era gg edpa ss
am id th eth icks hift s tin t ofmo ans
ami dtheo ff eredfu meso falo n e
th edu skesc apes
th eco were drape
th etru staba t e s
d eepfro w n s
th edi medi mm azeo fshu tt e red w ills
the irmo rnto rndu eso fja gg edpas t s
t heab sence of ash at tere dcasqu e
ab ugles sile nceat t helas t
be gin sits ho vell edgro p e
gro pedo t e s
th ecle anfre ebe ndofi nwa rden d s
t hedi mecl asp edfis t
theb lissmiss edhide s
it sran tingpa in s
th ega mena m e d
n am edgam e
gu t s
g utsst rut
th epil grim smet dby th emo on
tu r n s
u nse e n
t h ele tere dbe ll ygro anes cape s
w hered ream sand
w is hesme etthe irga t e
There are only pebbles
NOW

NOW
our feet
isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't isn't

THAT

IT

HORN

MATTER

SCORN

W

OR

N
each

each
quiet

bridge
NOBLY
III
OBJECTS
1968–1970
ISOSTASY

TERRACE FIGMENT

O O O
gains released upon the fissured dark the silent quest of eyes
forgotten with the light
among amid among the pundered sums
stalking hewn suns with in a morwening’s dusk

Paris – New York
1961–1969
LOVE
Some Comments on N.H. Pritchard's Work

N.H. Pritchard has poetic genius. In his poems, Being is set adrift. These poems stimulate the reader through sight and sound and in spite of ourselves we are given to partake of a kaleidoscopic vision that is beyond dimension. The future inevitably holds a great deal in store for his pristine sensibility.

W.F. Lucas

These poems are 'of our time'...FREE souled...elements of Gertrude Stein...universal preoccupations four-squarely said.

Allen Ginsberg

Pritchard is an extremely talented poet. His poetry is absolutely original, for I've read nothing quite like it and nothing half as good in the entire area of contemporary poetry. He is involved with a type of supra-verbal communication that appeals to me immensely. From a conceptual standpoint, Pritchard's poems are very advanced and can be compared to the best abstract painting, for they are profoundly haunting in their evocations of sight, sound and emotion. These poems are in the "classicist" tradition of Joyce and Beckett.

Maxwell Geismar

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