How to breathe..................................................................................................................1

a review of part of the Cambridge Poetry Festival.............................................................2

RAY DIPALMA: poems.........................................................................................................5

Reviews of Nottram/Pryor/Halsey/Reed..............................................................................9

RAY DIPALMA: poems.........................................................................................................12

Publications received & forthcoming, events, etc...............................................................16

With this issue REALITY STUDIOS moves into its second phase. Issues 1-10 appeared monthly between April 1978 and March 1979; after a short break and a change of address we embark on a new quarterly schedule, an expanded size and a new emphasis on critical and theoretical work and (where funds and printing processes permit) visuals.

Issue 2:1 is by way of being a pilot venture; hopefully, these pages will be opened up to a wider range of contributors in the near future. Future issues will contain poetry by Jeremy Reed and Robert Hampson, a sound text by Richard Tabor, Ken Edwards on Freud as narrative and something new from Eric Nottram; other contributions will be welcomed. Publications will continue to be listed, and in some cases reviewed at greater length. An effort will be made to investigate contemporary writings in the USA. Please send all items for review to the above address.

REALITY STUDIOS volume one is now OUT OF PRINT, except for the limited bound edition of the complete run, of which there are at the time of typing five copies left at £5 each (£10 plus postage). REALITY STUDIOS volume two will be printed in quantities that are just enough to satisfy demand, and will not be available in the shops. If you have received this issue as a free sample, please note that a subscription for 1979/80 costs £1 (£2) and that individual copies cost 30p inclusive of postage (75c). Surface mail only across the Atlantic; air mail charged extra if required. Cheques to K C Edwards for the time being, please; a bank account will be opened for RS shortly.

REALITY STUDIOS receives no grant aid and is entirely self supporting.

The Editor

ISSN: 0143-0122
HOW TO BREATHE

The basic posture for good breathing is the same in all positions. We need to lift the chest wall high, to arch the diaphragm or midriff, to throw the shoulders back and down, and then concentrate with body relaxed upon filling and collapsing the lungs within the chest cavity as fully as possible as we breathe. We can breathe out through the mouth on occasion if we like, but the inhalation should be nasal, if only to ensure that the impurities present in the air are efficiently trapped, and the air itself properly warmed before it enters the lungs.

Breathing intended to re-educate the lungs has a four-phase rhythm: viz, inhalation--pause--exhalation--pause. A good exercise is: Inhale slowly and steadily, mentally counting six, seven or eight; hold the breath a moment; then exhale slowly to the mental count; hold the breath out a moment; then repeat about fifteen to twenty times at a time. Such a simple exercise can be done on waking, and just before going to sleep. It can also be done during the day in almost any posture where the lungs are free to work unimpeded and the body relaxed.
a review of part of the Cambridge Poetry Festival, 1979

The cover of the Festival programme is a tasteful pale mustard, overprinted discreetly in brown; out of the pallor emerges an apparition, a sightless bust of Tennyson perched on what appears at close inspection to be a pile of Cambridge Yellow Pages; all in soft focus. I take this to signify reassurance: that hint of adventurousness, of cheekiness even, will not be allowed to obtrude on the programmed worthiness, the urbane sanction of twentieth century cultural torchbearing. Exaggeration? But the style is kept up inside: long lists of "patrons" and organisers, staid advertisements for publishers and bookshops, trim listings full of dates.

You have to go to Richard Tabor's Lobby Press Newsletter (being distributed throughout the Festival) to get a different take on it.

The Lobletter is printed in a variety of colours on bright tinted paper; it is cheerful, anarchic, full of mistakes and typing errors, with written comments and shaky arrows spilling over the typed text. It too prints a programme for the Festival - with additions. Here's what it says about Joseph Brodsky and C H Sisson:

"a russian defector shares the platform with an idealist monarchist. Sisson at least has integrity."

and about the John Riley memorial reading:

"it used to be suicide which got poets noticed/remembered, this event and the collected works to follow suggest that getting murdered is pretty good as well"

and about Thomas A Clark and Peter Riley:

"foolish aestheticvacuaries"

Tabor himself organised a counter or fringe festival, scheduled to happen simultaneously with the official do, and reports suggest that many of the more interesting things that happened in Cambridge between June 8th and 11th occurred as part of this fringe. But even the Lobletter has good or hopeful things to say about some of the official events.

*

A pair of these events I want to focus on (and I confess I was not in Cambridge very long): the reading on the Saturday afternoon by Helene Cixous, Wendy Mulford and Denise Riley, which was followed by a discussion of "women and literature".

What I need to say firstly is that I am convinced the female voice is necessary for poetry right now. We have had enough (haven't we?) of played out boring macho individualist poet trips (the temptation to name names); and it may be that a vigorous politically committed (yet not facile/propagandist) poetic is emerging from the ranks of the women's movement. I don't know yet. At any rate I arrived at the brand new University Centre by the river (warm glass, packed room) straight from a Christopher Logue reading at Heffer's* with a need for something more/other than mere brilliant

* old guard enunciation elegant spit vocabulary choicey aimed but plus ca change callisthenics for the English patrician voice blah...
wit. Nulford, in the event, was the most impressive, not disdaining wit or irony but employing it to some purpose other than narcissism. Her concern to undermine the assumptions of the domestic arena was shared by Riley, whose refusal of technological aids, however, and obvious nervousness made her difficult to hear from the back. Cixous (I hadn't heard or read her before) read an interesting sounding prose piece the rhythms of which were somewhat uncertain in English, a language not her own.

Readers are referred to Nulford's Bravo for Girls and Heroes and Riley's Marxism for Infants (both Street Editions).

But after that the "women and literature" discussion was an enormous disappointment. Nulford and Cixous were joined by Anne Waldman and Carmen Callil (the latter of Virago Press - difficult to see why she was involved as she very quickly made it clear that she was not interested in publishing poetry and that neither she nor anyone on Virago's advisory board knew much about the subject). After an autobiographical introduction, the panel - perhaps through diffidence, perhaps through a wish not to appear directive - gave no shape or lead to the discussion, which proceeded through a series of statements from the floor on the woman writer's position (ranging from trite liberalism to separatist accusation); few of which were analysed or pursued at any length, and none of which left me any more enlightened about (e.g.) whether there is or can be a feminist poetic or what form that poetic might take.

A bizarre touch: a very large man hovers around the fringes of the room buttonholing people and asking "Do you want to buy a gorilla?" It turns out he is selling a magazine called The Urbane Gorilla.

The only other major event I witnessed was the huge Corn Exchange gig that evening, attended by hundreds of people who presumably knew little about poetry but had heard of Allen Ginsberg. Anne Waldman opened this set with a vigorous reading that went down well and was certainly more interesting than her contribution to the debate had been. Kenneth Koch read what sounded like the same stuff I'd heard him do years ago at the Poetry Society (yes, in those days). I had a train to catch and so missed Ginsberg and entourage, but have no doubt that despite his new image (shaven and suited like a 60s hip american professor) he did his usual thing. One can't help feeling that the hippie response is - well - a touch inadequate in these grimmer times; but it was interesting, by-theby, that in a recent TV programme on the flower era Ginsberg emerged as the only one interviewed who had a vestige of both integrity and intelligence.

Ginsberg was of course the moneyspinner this time around; and sops to the establishment there undeniably were as well, in the shape of various boring old "arts" I refuse to mention. But in fairness the Festival programmed some exciting stuff too: the Sound Poetry event on the Sunday night, the Crozier/James/Oliver/Walldrop reading (both of which regretably clashed with each other), the Curtains reading and the discussion on "place" with the Two Fishers, Markham and Paulin. So why do I come away with a feeling of uneasiness about the whole deal? It can't just be the sprawl of events across a week which made it impossible to take it all in without taking time off work; nor the inadequacy of the small press stand (made more crucial by Eastern Arts' unforgivable last-minute cancelling of the Nordfair). My unease has more to do with the concept of large festivals itself. Well as Peter Robinson and the other organisers may have pulled together the jamboree - and it cannot have been an easy task - the terms of reference actually made it very hard for it not to be a package deal. There is something about a biennial please-everybody type of festival that is essentially - no matter how many "experimental" turns are programmed - safe, a recuperative exercise. For the general public, that's poetry packed up and dealt with
for another two years; you don't have to think about it any more.

The failure of the women's debate can be seen in this context; as a function of the large numbers of people present who were not involved in other than a consumer context, of the generalist approach, the too-wide brief, the lack of any perspective even as just a starting point. Where we're dealing with poetry that is safely dead and buried, it is possible to assemble a pretty package to be admired; where the concern is living - and that means risk-taking - writing, this approach is only likely to result in unproductive unease and embarrassment.

For women and men writing, Cambridge Poetry Festivals are at best pleasant socialising irrelevances that cannot touch on the reality of - say it straight - constant struggle, constant flux.

KEN EDWARDS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ground</td>
<td>waters</td>
<td>graced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clippt</td>
<td>tender</td>
<td>window</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>church</td>
<td>vaged</td>
<td>finish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>looked</td>
<td>tenant</td>
<td>glance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stride</td>
<td>should</td>
<td>curler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>missing</td>
<td>goodbye</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bounced</td>
<td>laughter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>middles</td>
<td>passion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>against</td>
<td>moments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>removed</td>
<td>tankers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shout</td>
<td>coats</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>greet</td>
<td>start</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inner</td>
<td>looks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stave</td>
<td>ghost</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>semen</td>
<td>ocean</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lane</td>
<td>tide</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ache</td>
<td>walk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tack</td>
<td>flow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mark</td>
<td>hint</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spin</td>
<td>pint</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It became obvious from the start.
REVIEWS

ERIC NOTTRAM: Windsor Forest (Pig Press, 60p)
WILLIAM PRIOR: Away (Tangent Books, £1.00)
ALAN HALSEY: Yeartimes (Galloping Dog Press, 25p)
JEREMY REED: Night Attack (Open Arteries Press, no price given)

At least since the sixties, Eric Nottram has been a leading practitioner
in and propagandist for the "British poetry revival": an exciting growth
and flowering that encompasses an immense variety of forms and procedures
and that has gone largely unheeded not only by the British literary
establishment (no surprise here) but, more disappointingly, by our colleagues
across the Atlantic. Nottram himself has been untiring in his efforts at
proselytising on behalf of the British scene in the USA; and it may be
that one day (probably when we're all long gone, or our work lapsed into
repetition and genre...) some bright critic, as usual too late, will discover
this to have been a kind of golden age.

Nottram's latest pamphlet, Windsor Forest, is in fact dedicated to
the memory of an American poet who, as publisher and bookseller, did much
for British poetry: the late Bill Butler. And the poem - itself part of the
much longer continuing sequence, "The Book of Herne" - calls to mind the
greatest American influence on twentieth century poetry: for, while drawing
on such influences as W. Harrison Ainsworth's Victorian novel Windsor Castle,
Graves' The White Goddess and poems by Sir Thomas Wyatt, it is throughout
haunted and invaded by Pound's Canto IV.

The poem opens to an indication of areas of pleasure and anarchic
energy:

holly thickness projected impervious
a yard before him pleasurable difficulties
a blue stream from bushes footed twisted snakes between
roots leapt a wild spectral humanity

the lines having a sinuous sensuous movement, drawing us into contact with
one of those shadowy figures of subversion and lawless power that have before
now been characterised as "the gods". As the piece unravels, the figure of
Herne the Hunter is placed in juxtaposition with Actaeon, that other hunter
who - appearing in Pound's poem - is turned into a stag by Artemis and torn
to pieces by his own dogs. The revenge is by the forces of anarchic passion
against "lawful" usurpation of power; as, unmistakably, in:

his conditions out of green sod tempt the Christian earls
unproof to demonic grasp extinguishing light

but this figuration of lawless energy is, to say the least, ambivalent:

his offer for committed crimes a liberation into power
I have known no human passion except hatred and revenge
alone at the head a numerous band

Lines and fragments from the source material spill out of their original
contexts and re-coalesce beside Cruikshank's original engravings for Ainsworth's
novel; as hunter and hunted fuse within a strange haunting.
If Pound is the guiding spirit behind the "pleasurable difficulties" of Notttram's verse, William Pryor's Away has a much more recent poet as its mentor. Allen Fisher, especially in his Place sets, will doubtless prove to have had a profound influence on the course of our poetry from the 1970's on, and it is nowhere more in evidence than in this book of Pryor's. The open form of the sequence (deriving also from Olson and Oppen), the identification of the work with the physical dimensions of the poet's life, the concern for music and improvisation, all these are by now familiar; but what keeps this set from being one of imitation is Pryor's obvious determination to work it all out for himself: thus, the restoration of a cottage in rural Devon, the tending of lami, making of music and personal development (putting down roots in personal space) all become part of the same work as the writing, which is identified with no one aspect of it in isolation. There are occasional flat touches; but a clear care for language is evinced that is remarkable in a first offering of this length and finds concise expression in sections such as:

cannot keep in mind
that the multiplicity
will surely absorb me
and I shall be a cipher
"this house was restored by ..."
I hear, but hear
silence in the headphones
it contains
a dog barking faintly
maybe a blackbird
a high-pitched whistle
you doing something on the landing
a low roar
the sound of my pen
finding the shapes
of this poem

Rural themes also concern Alan Halsey in his rich journal sequence Yearspace, which again with its wide span of references and rigorous concision takes us not too far away from Pound. Here the theme is that of the earth under attack from humankind's ignorance and rapacity; but it is a sort of fecundity we mostly come away with, a profusion that bursts out of the economy of the language and ends by calling into the poem a celebration of the year's passing. Coincidentally, Artemis and the stag appear here too, but now embedded in nature: "Artemis' breasts like elderberry clusters/ Hart's tongue/ heartstung". Again, the theme is familiar, but the treatment is authentically fresh, and I look forward to seeing more of Halsey's work.

With Jeremy Reed we are, inevitably, back in the urban nightmare. Night Attack comes from the aptly named Open Arteries Press, and the blurb rather pompously tells us that Reed "lives between mirrors adjusting his metabolism". Despite all this, it has to be acknowledged that at the very least the lad has talent, and that it is patently unfair of Nick Toczek's Little Word Machine to brand him mephit as "a poet whose obsession it is to use deliberately obscure vocabulary for its own sake". A cold brilliance shines from every line in this book of short sharp faceted poems, many of which function as (to use an old Jeff Nuttall title) "notes towards a suicide note". After a while you learn that there is, or must be, a considerable irony at work here, and - why not? - humour. It is this, and the poet's deliberate creation of
a consistent persona round which to structure his sophisticated researches into power and dependence (in particular faith in the written word) that for me rescue the poems from narcissistic despair and all the toodium that entails.

Reed’s new pieces will find a place in the next issue of REALITY STUDIOS; meanwhile, here’s a credo to be going on with:

There are no endings when the chapters are uncut pages after you have turned them, and the language re-arranged order.
I want to write the word pistol and have it shoot me.

(from "COMPOSITION for Antony Rudolf")

KEN EDWARDS
LIFE IN THE CITY CONTINUES AT ITS FRENZIED PACE
(NO CAUSE IS KNOWN)

1 very light medium pond fire
2 narrow street very his looking
3 a boy could glacier enough
4 20s corner getting dark open wood
5 dump that sort air of
6 look like photos and a couple
7 them the land of my washing dishes
8 even for the first x is a poor g
9 tail of big ice aint he than ever before
10 with plastic arm up reading
HYENA STOMP

Rites or new shoots illogical language live in mental always not Rational oxen nonetheless sought inch lake literature inspired man ambition nuance

Reabsorbed one nineteenth slackness items longer last ivy main alliances nail
Rib oceanic nation slender its link little intermingle master absurd nap

Rum order napkin system intense like left intelligence matter alchemy name
Rack oval needle source illicit lope line ink metal attacked nostril

Rolling opportune nucleus stability illumination leader liquid incest modern altered nexus
Revelation orthodox norm: sulphur ideas link lap immerse mercury atom nimble

River oak nebula similar inside lag lectern invention magic authority negative
Rhyme officer north sight idol lobe lurch incantation mud angelic neat

Rapid omega newel sounds isobar lamb lure ice mantra anagram niche
Ravine opium numb sanction itch lash lyre ides minor aroma nominee

Range octaroon narthex scorpion image lens leopard idion morsel avatar neural
Resist ohm naphtha scroll isle length leer idea moth align noose
collides triangle lucid nap

broad wet exertion

sift plunges

halo shallows

lean-to precocious

trickle blade

railing fluency plankton abrupt

sea's rib

gloves lobes
CESIUM SERGEANTS

afro Stochastic gin jury
circuit hip inch
genre make
queuing theory

cog reprise varnish prone
twitch archer nosed hurl flake
axiology four colour
vein field
shunt burdock glyph
flu interim

sail fork shaken
din dot kneel stutter
chariot smile
ellipse luncheon largo sigh flaw

chute Buddha dray
PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Publications marked * are reviewed elsewhere in the pages of REALITY STUDIOS. Listing here does not preclude a fuller review at a later date. This list should be taken as a continuation of the one in ALEMBIC 8.

Books

Jared ANGIRA: Cascades (Longman Drumbat series, 1979) £1.25.
Guillaume APOLLINAIRE: Julie or The Rose (Transgravity Press, 1978, 11 Duke Street, Deal, Kent) tr. Chris & George Tysh.
BANG CRASH CATALOGUE VALLOPP (Balsam Flex, Lower Green Farm, 2 Osgood Avenue, Orpington, Kent).
Charles BERNSTEIN: Shade (Sun & Moon Press, 1978, 4330 Hartwick Road, No 418, College Park, Md. 20740, USA) £3.00.
Vivienne F tandem: The Only Genetic (Court Poetry Press, Kingston upon Thames, 1979) 40p.
Glenda GEORGE: Dissecting the Corpus (Pressed Curtains, dist. in UK from 4 Bower Street, Maidstone, Kent, 1979) 75p.
Glenda GEORGE/ Paul BUCK: Fete (twin broadsheets, from same address, 1979).
R J HUGH-JONES: Thirty One Small Lanes (Stupiter Mund!, Hawthorn Cottage, Ramsden Heath, Finstock, Oxon, 1979) with drawings by Will HILL.
Eric HOTTRAN: Winsor Forest (Pig Press, 24 Coquet Terrace, Heaton, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 5LD, 1979) 60p, part of "The Book of Hurne".
William F RYER: Away (Tangent Books, Way Cottage, Chagford, Newton Abbot, Devon, 1979) £1.00. Published as issue 4 of Tangent magazine.
James SHERRY: Part Songs (Roof Books, 300 Bowery, NYC 10012, USA).
Alaric SUMMER/ Richard TABOR: Outski (NMF K!/PicoCom, 280 Cherryhinton Road, Cambridge CB1 4AU, 1979) (poss, also called there are trees all over it).

Magazines

A HUNDRED POSTERS (Alan Davies, 689 E 17th St, Brooklyn, NY 11230, USA) issues 35-39, Nov78-Sept 79 now available, send money to cover postage.
BLUEPRINT 5 (Edward Fox/Richard Tabor, address as for Lobby Press below) 30p, magazine of the Cambridge Poetry Society, includes Buck/Fencott/Fisher/McCarthy/Morgan/Raworth/Reedy etc, excellent value at the price.
LITTLE WORD MACHINE 10 (Nick Toozek/Yann Lovelock, 5 Beech Terrace, Undercliffe, Bradford, BD3 0PY) 60p. 94pp paperback, very sophisticated production with glossy bright red/yellow cover, wide (too wide?) range (Cobbing/Jaffin/Kirkup/Mitchell/Vayenas), irritating alphabetical format, but they did print my story about the man who swallowed the Queen Mary (KE)....

LOBBY PRESS NEWSLETTER 7, 8 (April, June 1979) (Richard Tabor, 250 Cherryhinton Road, Cambridge CB1 4AU) free, or 60p by post for 5 issues. News, criticism, reviews, letters (mostly from Rupert Mallin) - fun.

PEEPING TOM (Cory Harding, X Press, c/o 62 Northview Road, London N8). One-off, part assembled, punk look magazine, with some good stuff from Ian Breakwell/Gogarty/Burns/Williams/Reverdy/Russell Edson/many others, but also characterised by some tediously schoolboyish sexism and offensiveness which is not going to endear Cory to many of the contributors.

ROOF IX (James Sherry, address above) £3.00 or £11.00 for sub. Bernstein/Davies/Dreyer/Inman/Robinson. A feature on Roof is planned for RS.

SHOPPING MUSIC 1, March 79 (Andy Johnson, 312 Kings College, Cambridge) duplicated sheets w/ Mengham, Barnett/Burgis/Edwards etc.

TWISTED WRIST 4 (Paul Buck, address as for Pressed Curtains) Wilkinson/Mengham/Trotter.

THE URBANE GORILLA 9 (Ed Tork, Raven Pubns, 29 Parkers Road, Sheffield S10 1BN) May 1979 issue, 75p. Uneven but worth a look: K Smith/Fortuna/Leale/Kirkup/Horovitz etc * reviews.

WINDOWS 7 (Feb 79), 8 (March/April 79) (10 Denton Road, Eastbourne, Sussex) magazine of E Sussex College of Higher Education - 7 features Eric Mottram, 8 features Philip Jenkins.

Cassettes

BALSAFLEX Typical Characteristic Cassettes:
BANG CRASH WALLOPP Book 1 & Book 2
CRIK CHEEK: telegraph poles / BANG CRASH WALLOPP: swan leak
CRIK, UPTON, VONNA-MICHELL at the City Lit
LAWRENCE UPTON & E E VONNA-MICHELL: scotch start/no you don't
JGJGJGJGJGJGJGJGJG (recorder at Kings College London)
JACKSON MAG LO: live at the 11th Sound Poetry Festival
ALLAN FISHER'S E VONNA-MICHELL: chest breath/car wash interview

These eight cassettes are part of a series available from Balsam Flex, Lower Green Farm, 2 Osgood Avenue, Orpington, Kent. They feature sound poetry & related pieces and range between 60 minutes and 20 minutes in length. Subscription to 10 cassettes of your choice: £10.00.

Please note the editor of RS now has a fancy stereo cassette deck to play with and would like to hear from anyone producing cassettes of sound poetry/new music.

FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS

PLUCKER BOOKS a new independent press from Newcastle, will publish established and new poets in pamphlets and paperbacks, also new editions of neglected poets of all periods, critical studies, etc. Already out: Ken SMITH's Tristan Crazy (20pp, 65p). Also scheduled, Fleur Adcock, John Cassidy, Angela Carter. From: 1 North Jesmond Ave, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne.
MILDRED RECORDS will be bringing out an LP of Bang Crash Wallop’s 2 Floors of a Sound Landscape (live at the Acme Gallery, August 1978) and invite sponsors. For £5/£10/100 you will receive a copy of this limited edition in advance of trade distribution, together with an individually prepared insert and your name on the cover (unless not desired). Cheques/money orders to: Mildred Records, 18 Clairview Road, London SW16.

John RILEY: The Collected Works. This will be published in 1980 in an edition of 400 (paperback) at £5, and 100 (hardbound) at £8; it will be about 300/400 pages in length. Advance subscriptions are sought: Grosseteste Books, 31 Norfolk Gardens, Chapel Allerton, Leeds, Yorks.

WORDS WORTH: issues 1:3 and 2:1 are in preparation. Subscriptions to this experimental magazine (£3.75 for 3 issues): 2 Crossfield Road, London NW3.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

CAMBRIDGE POETRY SOCIETY winter 1979 programme now available from Richard Tabor (address as for Lobby Press). Scheduled to read are: Jeff Nuttall, Yonna Morita, Carlyle Reedy, Henri Chopin, Alaric Sumner, Glenda George and a performance group from the newly formed experimental workshop.

REALISM: ART & SOCIETY WORKSHOP 2 organised by Mary Shipley, 19 Sheridan Road, London NW4, from whom further details. The seminar will take place Oct 12/13/14 at the Navigation School, City of London Poly. Workshops: Realism, Politics & the Discovery of "the People"; Art & Imperialism; From Realism to Socialist Realism; Documentary film & photography in Britain & the USA in the 30s & 40s.

SPEED LIMIT PRESS has now wound up but would like to announce that it still has titles in print by many small press regulars, ranging in price from 15p to 40p. Write for list to: Mark Williams, 33 Bryn Glas, Hollybush, Cwmbran, Gwent NP4 4LG.

THE ARTS COUNCIL POETRY LIBRARY is now in smart premises at 9 Long Acre, London WC2E 9LH (tel: 379 6597). It has an excellent stock of 20th century American & British poetry for borrowing or reference, and the librarian, Jonathan Barker, is always very helpful. Also in the area & worth a visit are: Bernard STONE’s new bookshop in Floral Street; and POOLE’s in Charing X Rd (near Cambridge Circus) - both have good selections of small press material. In case of difficulty in obtaining publications, NICK KIMBERLEY now operates a mail-order business from 16a Burleigh Parade, London N14 - write to him for latest lists.
Vol. 2 : No. 2

RICHARD TABOR: Marlette, part of a sound text...............................19
ROBERT G SHEPPARD: Reading Prynne and others............................25
JEREMY REED: four poems..........................................................23
KEN EDWARDS: the Narrative Structure of "The Interpretation of Dreams"..32
Correspondences.............................................................................34
Two reviews of three books (Hall/Kelly/"Poetry & the Body").............35
Publications received, gigs, etc.......................................................36

2:2 is the twelfth issue of REALITY STUDIOS in all. A few copies of 2:1 are
still available at 30p. Issues 1:1-10 out of print except for some copies of
the limited edition (perfect-bound, Yellow Pages size) at £5 a go. Subscription
to series 2 (4 issues) is still only £1 - however......

...the editor regrets that overseas customers not paying in sterling will have
to pay a little over the odds to cover bank charges. Single copies £1.50 incl.
surface mail, sub £3.50, limited edition £15 - or equivalent...and.....

the equivalent rates for libraries/institutions are: £3 or £10 for 4-issue sub.

ALTERNATIVELY send us some of your own publications & we will put you on the
mailing list free of charge - that's the deal. About 80-odd people have been
sent 2:1 so far. All mail order, no shops. Keep it small & simple

2:3 will carry an article by ERIC NOTTRAM on Poetry & Mathematics, and contribu-
tions, many of them about food, from ROBERT HAMPSON, LYNN MOORE, possibly OPAL
NATIONS, PAULA CLAIRE. PETER BARRY has also promised an article on poetics.

2:4 will have something on current American writing, probably, & then I'll think
about a third series in summer 1980

ISSN: 0143-0122
from

BOBOLI / MARIETTE / LE MACHINE

(pieces for male voices A B, female voices C D E, male or female operator, two stereo taperecorders, audience, non-toxic liquid in china, glass and paper cups, two small tables, chairs, infrared and usual roomlighting, entrance to room and room)

notes towards a performance of mariette:

performers: voice C / operator
audience: seated and receiving
tape a: playing back audienccenoise from boboli plus radiosound
tape b: playing back audienccenoise from boboli
(the volume of the tapes is marked 0-10)
lighting: usual room lighting

following boboli the audience has been evicted from the room for at least five minutes. when the members of the audience return they are seeing the room by its usual lighting for the first time; thus each is able to chose sher chair.
when each member is seated the performance can begin.

31.03.1979
Notes on

VERONICA FORREST-THOMSON: Poetic Artifice (Manchester University Press, £9.95)
J H PRYNNE: Down where changed (Ferry Press, £2.10)
PETER ACKROYD: Notes for a New Culture (Vision Press, £3.40)

Poetic Artifice explores the various techniques and devices that make poetry a special form of discourse and, above all for Veronica Forrest-Thomson, an autonomous form of language, separate from "everyday language" and prose. Her study's seriousness and complexity is the antithesis of the engage naivety exemplified by books like Raban's "The Society of the Poem", which reduces art to a function of sociology: the sort of thing that is fashionable within contemporary poetry courses in our universities. Forrest-Thomson's Preface is vital reading for anybody truly concerned with the health of poetry now, and I hope to show that, although she tangles the unibilicus of Art and Life, she by no means severs it; she is overstating her case to achieve a clarity of polemic, to make her readers stop before they presume to state what a poem means, to realise (with Wittgenstein) that "a poem, even though it is composed in the language of information, is not used in the language-game of giving information". The enemy is what she terms Naturalisation, "an attempt to reduce the strangeness of poetic language and poetic organisation by making it intelligible, by translating it into a statement about the non-verbal external world, by making the Artifice appear natural". We need to dwell on the internal dynamic of the poem, to avoid both "external expansion", pushing our derived "meanings" into the world, and the "external limitation" of only examining poetic artifice (formal patterning etc) in the light of our thematic interpretations or our too hasty paraphrasing. "Expansion must take place within the limits imposed by the poem's style." Thus expressed, it appears obvious enough, but a brief meditation will reveal how often in critical interpretations these limits are brutally transgressed, to the detriment of a full reading of the poem.

The book, through a study of the various forms of poetic logic and artifice in the works of Shakespeare, Pound, Empson, among others, is seeking to demonstrate "how to read a poem". She endeavours to show that "Good naturalisation dwells on the non-meaningful levels of poetic language, such as phonetic and prosodic patterns and spatial organisation, and tries to state their relation to other levels of organisation rather than set them aside in an attempt to produce a statement about the world". (Her full list contains the Conventional, Phonological/Visual, Syntactic, and Semantic levels.) These coalesce to produce what she calls the Image-Complex where the relevant devices from the hierarchical levels of poetic organisation on her list are brought together to point towards a thematic synthesis that hasn't dodged the question of the role of Artifice, that doesn't rely upon extended meaning or imposed "interpretations".

(Radicals will be seething by now. But, briefly, Forrest-Thomson points out, "It is only through artifice that poetry can challenge our ordinary linguistic orderings of the world, make us question the way in which we make sense of things, and induce us to consider its alternative linguistic orders as a new way of viewing the world", but this is untied to dogma, and the poem comes first. In Marcusean terms perhaps, this is not too far from saying that the Aesthetic Principle undermines the Reality Principle.)

As a phenomenology of correct reading alone it is useful, but Veronica Forrest-Thomson is suggesting something more. The book is half a theoretic for a poetry
only just beginning to be written, and exemplified for her in the work of J H Prynne.

There is no escaping the "tendentious obscurity" of Prynne's poetry. Down where changed, his latest book of short, untitled lyrics, is prefaced by the epigraph, "Anyone who takes up this book will... (have) a half formed belief that there is something in it." The question that any reader has to ask himself is, what is there, then, in it?

Take one "lyric":

You have to work it out
the passion-scribble
of origin swallowed up
the inserted batch of fission
lacks its label, grips its fever
you strike your fill of that.

A continuous sentence, one comma. To naturalise: "You..." is perhaps an address to the reader on the difficulties of interpretation. The "passion-scribble", the original lyrical impulse and/or act, is absorbed (lines 2 and 3 set in invisible parenthesis) by something. The passion-scribble = the inserted batch = the poems. They are inserted in a batch (Down where changed itself) and fission is their outcome; they split, fall away into meaninglessness or an infinitude of interpretations and guesses. The batch "lacks its label" (the "lyrics" are untitled and their origins in experience, the "lyrical occasion", are "swallowed up" by its style. They also lack the identity of lyrics at the Conventional level.) The alliteration suggests harmony. The caesura of the solitary comma couples the phrases either side of it at a syntactic (and rhythmic), though not semantic, level. It is a loose strand in the poem's tapestry of meaning (as so far I have ineptly traced my naturalisation); if we pull too hard the whole will disintegrate. (What does, or could, "Grips its fever" mean? What is the relationship of "fission-fever-fill"? of "scribble-strike", as actions of the pen? Other poems disturb our syntactic assumptions constantly. "Thus" introduces non-sequiturs; we sense patterning as part of the image-complex, without (beyond?) meaning.) The assonance of "lack" and "that", the repeated address to the invisible "you", slam the poem shut. The reader (if indeed it is addressed to him) has had his fill.

This is the only poem I wish to examine. I could repeat the exercise on others, but only to demonstrate my inability before Prynne's poetry. Others I find resound with a tranquil, if somewhat sterile, beauty.

The sick man polishes his shoes
wide-awake in the half light
what else should he do

as scent from the almond tree
'abjures the spirit' with its air
of mortification. What is known

is the almanack set out
on a tréblé, a pious gloss
over waste so clean and natural

that clothes out on a line
dwindle and then
new colours are there again.

Perhaps Forrest-Thomson would agree with Eliot that enchantment (I think it was) is the beginning of understanding. "The minute attention to technical
"detailed," she says of Prynne, "together with tenetious thematic obscurity, gives the poet a way of recapturing the levels of Artifice, of restoring language to its primary beauty as a craft by refusing to allow it social comprehension."

The cultural ideas that have made both Forrest-Thomson's criticism and Prynne's poetry possible are examined in Peter Ackroyd's Notes for a New Culture. Although it is a polemical, theoretical book, it is also a critical history which traces, amongst other things, the development of the notion of the autonomy of language from Nietzsche and Mallarmé, through Heidegger, where it is seen coupled with the death of the image of Man as represented by humanism, to Prynne himself. For Ackroyd, he is the first poet "to exercise the full potential of the written language", to subjugate the lyrical voice (and thus the subjective humanistic Self) to the anonymity of an "objective" Language (Literature too is represented as an entity to have emerged from the relatively modern concept of Language). (For a full review of the book see Peter Riley's fair assessment of its value and drawbacks in Poetry Information 17, and chiefly the criticism that Ackroyd's cultural history pays too little attention to the productive tension between the lyrical voice and Language, and the value of a writing that resides in that tension, between "human significance" and tradition/convention, although Ackroyd acknowledges this to be one of the qualities of John Ashbery.)

"The contemporary abstractions here, and the syntactical force which holds them within the same discursive context, exert an unfamiliar pressure upon the language," Ackroyd writes of Prynne's "Kitchen Poems" (1968). Down where change contains the same mixture of tones and languages. "Just a twitch of doubt we sail with," he writes, with a public-lyric voice that more properly belongs to his first collection, "Force of Circumstance" (1962). "The consumption of any product is the destruction of its value," begins another, resembling the "Kitchen Poems" themselves. There are images of clairvoyance (the epigraph is from "Practical Crystal-Gazing"; see also the lyric quoted above), as well as demotic expressions ("Shut yer face").

Ackroyd goes to the limit - and beyond. Prynne's poetry is for him "completely written surface"; voice has been erased and so, he assumes, has meaning, a concept that Forrest-Thomson complicates in her schema, but does not exclude. It has an autonomy denoted by its obscurity, it "contains varieties of contemporary language...within a written paradigm which changes its function", but can Prynne's lines, "We give the name of/our selves to our needs./We are what we want", which Ackroyd quotes have "no reference to anything except the presence of their written form"? Surely we are better guided by Ackroyd's later comment that Prynne's poetry "exists somewhere between use and contemplation".

Ackroyd tends to joy in Prynne's meaninglessness rather than in the skill Prynne demonstrates in his handling of non-meaningful devices, although he acknowledges that "it is the ability of literature to explore the problems and ambiguities of a formal absoluteness which we will never experience. For these forms seem to proclaim the death of Man". We've to ask ourselves I think, as Gerald Graff does in "The Myth of the Postmodernist Breakthrough" whether we've thrown out the baby with the bath-water in our formalist anti-humanism. We know from Barthes that the Death of the Author (the lyric voice replaced by text) is the Birth of the Reader. Despite these two ambitious beginnings there may be other ways of reading Prynne.

August 1979
The afternoon's autistic. Nothing sounds with any audible recognition.
The driver treading his car to ninety goes unheard by a pedestrian who
facing it full on divides it in two-one half in the right lane, one in the left
and reintegrates it with a proboscis instead of a mouth and nose apparatus.
I watch it all from the shadow of a
hotel foyer, (they keep the reception desk-lamp on in daylight); the heroin
in the night-porter's veins suffices at dark when residents return with amnesia,
suffering from car-lag; they can't recall the return route from their destination.
The sun they say was a barbiturate,
dull-white, and clearly visible on its face-
the strength and trade-mark of pharmaceuticals.
I move from hotel wall to wall in shade
and in thirst bite into an artery
to give myself the savour of human.
There's no one, a police truncheon and revolver
lie discarded with a switched on cine-
camera. Someone fell here at night and
stray dogs guzzled them. They left gristle.
I keep out of the sun. Is this Europe?
The sign posts are x-rays of heart attacks.
Us

Your words work on me
during sleep. Work me out
of the air-hole my throat
is. You're exploratory
of what makes me shout.

I can't contest this
or I suffocate.
The words I can't speak
during consciousness
evolve. You help them break

then sponge the blood clean
from my mouth, When I awake
you are delirious.
You've swallowed all I've dreamt
now can't break out.
That's aural deposit he feeds into the tape-recorder. Words spoken to and overheard—an accumulation of ash. Everything meaningless and loud. What's of value remains unsaid.

Aircraft, radios, traffic a repetition, he can't take into his head. It is absorbed and unloaded in secrecy. He stores the tapes for future use in a genocidal culture.

What's left is silence, a head become an entity. Or loud with gesture a 33 word acrostic for the vertical height of Centre Point. A language pointing in red to failure.
Out of Reach

It's an exactitude not a parallax.
The thin blue veins breathing in the mirror
now are the face I used up with abuse:

The one I kept avoiding, and learned to
shave with a blind man's touch. I couldn't face
its ageing, so it hid from me. Went off

like a spider's web leaving its centre;
and now faces responses I don't know
with what organs of perception I see.

Curiosity leads me to approach
new ways of seeing a reciprocal death.
Either way we're both out of reach.

--------

(Editor's note: also received but not published herein because of lack of space, a poem by Paul Green dedicated to Jeremy Reed, and a poem dedicated to Paul Green by the other Paul Green. Both/either may appear in future Reality pages.)
Ken Edwards

Narrative structure of "The Interpretation of Dreams" a late review of a Viennese novel

The Pelican edition invokes in the casual reader a different response from that elicited by the appropriate volume of the clothbound Collected Works: on the cover, Freud's portrait as a young man is printed on a foggy orange background, as though the face, in soft focus, were seen through coloured glass, mediated through the profound enigma of the past.

And of course this is too important a book not to be capable of a multitude of different readings. For my part, again and again I felt I was reading a novel, a huge narrative construct akin to that other great turn of the century book, Ulysses.

First published in 1900 (we are told that only 351 copies had been sold by 1906), The Interpretation of Dreams is important not least because it shows us Freud's discovery, or invention, of the unconscious. It begins with a panoramic survey of the preceding literature on dreams. It then goes on to discuss some examples of typical dreams; interestingly, Freud uses his own dream-life as material, primarily to avoid the charge (were he to confine himself to examples from his patients, for instance) that his subsequently unfolding theory applies only to those suffering from neurosis. In addition, anecdotes taken from his life and that of his patients and family also figure, and it is these anecdotes that contribute most to giving the book, like The Psychopathology of Everyday Life published the following year, a unique narrative flavour and movement. Stress is laid on the need for a relaxation of the critical faculties in recounting dreams for analysis - we are reminded of the Surrealists' later admiration. Discussion of a key dream leads to the famous dictum "A dream is the fulfilment of a wish". This is the turning-point: we are confronted all at once with "the high ground and the open prospect and the question: 'Which way do you want to go?'") The rest of the book is devoted to the unravelling of the four factors which contribute to the formation of dreams: the censorship that distorts secret wishes; condensation of material; translation of thoughts into representational images; and the demand for an apparently rational and intelligible structure.

The anecdotal evidence - dream-accounts themselves, and their supporting material - is treated very thoroughly, each piece being subjected to a more or less comprehensive linguistic examination, phrase by phrase in some cases (noticeable of course that the emphasis is on analysis of the language used to report dreams - as it is on the necessity for the dream-account to be a coherent and self-sufficient whole). Along the way we pick up bits of information about Freud's life in Vienna at the end of the 19th century: his relations with his family, the fact that he had played the part of Brutus in Julius Caesar at the age of 14, that he had once suffered from boils - one of them "the size of an apple" at the base of his scrotum - that he holidayed in the Austrian Tyrol where he once dreamed that the Pope was dead; and more importantly, and this is a recurrent theme, that he suffered from anxieties about the damaging effect of prevalent anti-semitism on his career prospects. We know the end of that story: nearly 40 years later Freud fled Hitler's regime and spent the last three years of his life in England. In this way the small pieces of narrative, including the hermetically intact dream-accounts, are in turn elements of the larger picture built up in the book as a whole. And this is the book's hidden schedule, a "hierarchy of instances".

The preceding phrase is from an essay by Roland Barthes, "Introduction
to the Structural Analysis of Narratives.* I'd like to look at this briefly now, if only to point to an obvious way in which its thesis can be applied to Freud's book; both to the individual anecdotes and relation of dreams, and to the macro-narrative of the whole book. The essay is really a first stab at a linguistics of discourse. It starts by noting that the sentence is the largest unit with which linguistics concerns itself. A way in which larger units of discourse - such as narrative, one of the commonest activities of human language performance - can be grammatically analysed is outlined. What this can be made to show is that it is possible to see dreams - or to be more accurate, dream-accounts - as special, concentrated instances of narrative, and narrative as a peculiarly human mind activity.

The starting point is Barthes' assertion that "a narrative is never made up of anything other than functions; in different degrees, everything in it signifies". This is because "in the realm of discourse, what is noted is by definition notable".

Barthes defines four classes of units of narrative: functions (simple actions, for instance, which serve to further the story), subdivided into cardinal functions and catalysts according to the extent to which they are part of the main spine of the narrative; and indices (data which serves to "place" the narrative), again subdivided into indices proper, the more crucial bits of information, and informants, or more humdrum background. He then notes that "a unit can at the same time belong to two different classes: to drink a whisky (in an airport lounge) is an action which can act as a catalyst to the (cardinal) notation of waiting, but it is also, and simultaneously, the indice of a certain atmosphere (modernity, relaxation, reminiscence, etc)".

Freud's interpretations of dreams can be described as methods of distinguishing in dream-accounts these units; and it is striking that there is a comparative lack of catalysts (insignificant parts of the narrative are elided over, e.g. the dreamer suddenly finds himself in the street, having previously been inside a room), and of mere informants (e.g. all details of a person's appearance manifested in a dream are highly significant, indeed often having more than one signified). The units we are concerned with here are the familiar stuff of dreams: a long-dead uncle whose identity is fused with that of a colleague; a piece of velvet, a captive balloon (somewhat deflated), a sheet of tin, three lions in a desert, a narrow canal leading to the sea, the "breakfast-ship"; descending from a height, dragging thick tufts of hair out of a tree, having a tooth pulverised.

If the whole book is considered as a narrative the structural units are Freud's relations with his patients, his family, his colleagues; his occasional references to his own anxieties and wishes, as manifested in his dreams; the social reality of 19th century Vienna; and of course the dreams themselves, many of which recur more than once in the, often a nexus of character and action. The structure of the macro-narrative is looser than that of the individual dreams, but it is no less susceptible of analysis. I don't propose to carry out this analysis, only to suggest that the exercise would be an alternative way of reading The Interpretation of Dreams; it would give the book (as an object) an alternative signified.

A simpler way of saying all this is to quote Barthes quoting Mallarmé: "So fiction seems to him the very process of the human mind...". For "fiction" Mallarmé also read "poetry" (there's another essay in that); we can, with Freud, read "dreams".

* in Image-Music-Text (Fontana, 1977)
from William Pryor: ". . . RS's series bodes well - an excellent confluence of concerns. I agree completely with yr feelings abt CPF - The Place reading was a shambles, as was the Sissons Jabes reading. The discordances created by putting on AF after Tom Paulin & Jabes after Sissons made it very difficult to 'hear' those poets one was there for."

from Lawrence Upton: ". . . The alternative festival lasted about 2 hrs only - by design. I took a piece (I was asked for one) that wld have taken hrs & there was no time. Carlyle was good. Alaric good, old had been amazing. I agree about the package of the festival - but Lob Newsletter ten't coming from that angle. They don't like it as a festival. And I am not into the John Riley comments which is rag mag humour."

& lastly from Mike Horovitz: ". . . I like most of the original works in this issue, & yr response to the women's poetry & (non-)debates - think (tho I wasn't there either) y're a bit cavalier abt Ginsberg tho. Sure he was the biggest name and wld attract non-poetry people, but this is not to say, surely, that he is not a good poet - indeed, I'd think it more an indictment of the game-reserved poetry world than of him or of the Camfest for having him. Further, what ground have you for having 'no doubt . . . he did his usual thing' or right to sneer at it without saying what's wrong with it/ in what the 'hippie response' is inadequate - & IF you were going to do this why add the faint praise of 'he made sense on TV tho'.

"". . . mainly wld like you to see why I think the 'wised-up generation' response in these admittedly, & miserably, 'grimmer times' is no better, much worse, less adequate, than the much abused & ultimately EFFECTUAL love generation one was...

"Also think y're wrong, mis-deducing, in thinking all large fests must be doomed - remember large varied fronts, whilst (in my/D Gascoigne's/many - Neruda's view) rightly aspiring to a UNITED FRONT ('we are many') - rarely achieve it because poetry's by definition so committed to the SINGULAR... wherefore the larger, more varied the bill of fare, the more people are likely to find fault/disenchancement/dissatisfaction in it. As you did. But isn't yr whole review partly another, oblique & wrongheaded way of rationalising yr having caught only about a tenth of it - of course I agree abt other points you make - withdrawal of the Worxifair, double-scheduled events etc."

I'd like to say, in response to Mike H: despite my reservations about the relevance of Ginsberg's political stance, I have a special place in my bookshelf & consciousness still for him. As to why a "united front" of poets is not at this time possible in this country: surely that has to do with the class structure of our society, & with the way patrician/conservative High Culture is officially shown to be the only alternative to mass mediocrity? The 60's united front against this polarity --the "underground" - has largely been marketed into areas of safety in the 70's........but this is a big debate for which there is not enough space here.  

Mike Horovitz will be performing with Heathcote Williams & Tom Pickard at the 3 Horseshoes pub (opposite the Everyman) in Hampstead at the beginning of December - Londoners see Time Out for details. Ginsberg also still around.  

He my review of Away - William Pryor has pointed out that he was not much into Allen Fisher at the time of writing the book, tho this has since changed.
TWO REVIEWS OF THREE BOOKS

CHRIS HALL: Long Time Sun Shining Down (Galloping Dog Press, 40p)
BERNARD KELLY: Notes Miss Them (Transgravity Press)

Chris Hall's book is his first, and an impressive first it is too. Like many a first book, though, it tries for too many things at once, sacrificing maximum impact for a too eager diversity, and inevitably there are weak points. But it is possible to discern two running themes: a concern with the visual arts, and a considered use of repetition/permutation as technique. The best poems are those in which the two are married and Hall plays on the paradox involved in "conveying" visual images in a text: the visual is translated into words, the words themselves become material to be manipulated, like paint. Particularly successful is "Brian Yale at Criel", which I used previously in Alembic 8; composed seemingly from an exhibition catalogue, it has a timeless resonance I find moving.

Bernard Kelly's book is of course by no means his first, and I got initially excited when I saw it, thinking he'd got back to his fine anarchic flood of the early 70s (and away from his - for me - comparatively sterile dadaesque stance of today). Closer inspection of the book shows it to date, however, from a visit to Amsterdam in 1970. Discourse is dynamited, and it's definitely not comfortable. The contents list, incidentally, could be a poem itself, and gives a general flavour: "silence/colourful figure/I HIT IT/coldness shivers out/shore line/city faces/fenced in/suicide/she answers/satchel world/water years/lims wanting."

JOHN VERNON: Poetry & the Body (University of Illinois Press, hbk £6.30)

An interesting examination of the relationship between language, speech and poetry. In taking speech as the primary energising force in poetry, Vernon argues counter to much current French criticism which is concerned with the elimination of the individual authorial voice from the text. A dichotomy is posed in the book between Mallarmé and Whitman, contemporaries of each other, the one inventing a new, hermetic, self-referential form of writing, the other (with Melville) "inventing another kind of modern literature studded with impurities, with writing stolen from Shakespeare, the Bible, religious sermons, journalism, Egyptian poetry in translation". Vernon writes of a spectrum "with gestures on one end, language on the other, and speech ranging across the arc in the middle. In the Mallarmé tradition, the weight of speech is given over to language and the interior depths of language. In the other tradition, which probably begins with Whitman, the weight of speech is given over to gestures and the kinetic energy of gestures."

Where I feel Vernon is on shaky ground is in ascribing an unjustifiable degree of "naturalness" to gestural actions, thus: "With the first order of expression - gestures, faces, dreams, etc - the signified and signifier (or sign) are indistinguishable. We can't separate a face from what it expresses"; leading later in the book to: "Whitman's poems are totally naked, in the sense that words are a transparent gesture of his body, not things in themselves"(my emphasis). Whether or not Whitman thought so, this strikes me as naive, potentially allowing for that "reluctance to declare its codes" that Barthes tells us "characterizes bourgeois society and the mass culture issuing from it".

The book, nevertheless, stimulated much thought on my own writing and reading.

KEN EDWARDS
Listing here does not preclude a fuller review at a later date.

PLEASE NOTE: small press editors usually operate at a loss. Readers are urged, especially in view of recent increases in postal charges, to add a generous amount (where not specified) to advertised prices for p&p.

**Books**

Cris CHEEK: The potential sparing the moment (address as for RAWZ below). Handwritten text & images made with multicoloured inks on paper plates.

* Chris HALLE: Long Time Sun Shining Down (Galopping Dog Press, 3 Otterburn Terrace, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 3AP) 40p.

Lawrence UPTON: Some loops (Writers Forum, 262 Randolph Avenue, London W9) 10p.


* reviewed at length

**Magazines**

ALP NEWSLETTER (262 Randolph Avenue, London W9), issues for Aug/Sept and October received. Essential for all small press operators, obtainable only by joining the Association of Little Presses (£3 per year).

CHECK 3 (Ian Durant, Rutherford College, The University, Canterbury, Kent CT2 7NX) 50p. Good production, variable contents, from MOR sentiment to OK, includes: H Guest/M Booth/J Welch/Y Lovelock/P Brown/N Toczek.


LOOT 1:1, July 1979 (Paul Green, 83b London Road, Peterborough, Cambs.) a supplement to Spectacular Diseases, 30p per copy or free if you subscribe to S.D. This issue devoted to the work of John Freeman. Also from same address, a broadsheet poem by Paul Green dedicated to Ulli McCarthy (who is about to become homeless, incidentally - offers of help via Paul).

RAWZ 2½, part 1 of an intended double issue (Cris Cheek, 24 Stonehall Road, London N21 1LP) about 2 quid I think. Massive, unbound (choose yr own page order) unfinished issue of exciting experimental writings & visuals magazine: Strickland/Burnel/Valoch/Fisher/McCarthy/Hayden/Reedy/Keys/Vonna-Michell.../
Adler/Bissett/O'Sullivan/Gibbs/Andrews/Tabor/Bernstein/Buck/Tolson/Cheek
plus free insert of a "bluff" book, edge the by P C FENCOTT. Sub for rest
of series 1 (up to No 4) is £2.50/ $5.00.

ROOF X, Summer 1979 (James Sherry, Segue Foundation, 300 Bowery, NY, NY10012, USA)
£3, or $11 for four issues. Influential magazine of US new writing, rumoured
to be folding, but: DiPalma/heiner/Sherry/Baracke/Tau/Greenwald/Hejinian/
Higgins/R Waldrop/Andrews/McCaffery/Grenier/Bakti/Bergland/Nadler/Bwresenbrugge/
Gottlieb writing plus graphics by Buchwald/L Sherry/Feinberg/Vuorinen.

SMOKE 10 (Dave Ward, Windows project, 23a Brent Way, Halewood, Liverpool L26 9AX)
10p. Neatly produced A5, local writers plus some familiar little maggers.

SPANNER 17, July 1979 (Allen Fisher, 85 Ramilles Close, London SW2 5DQ) £4 for
10 issues in Europe, elsewhere £5,50 sterling. Chris Jones issue, includes
"How my thoughts about design methods have changed during the years", "Is
designing a response to the whole of life" (an imaginary conversation between
EDRA, Graham Stevens, Carl Jung, Immanuel Kant and Walt Whitman), and "Dreams
and Reason", an interpretation of the latter by C L Crickmay. Also free
insert, "Once its typed its published", Chris Jones' account of his writings
1950-79 and attempts at publishing in microfiche & xerox. Thought-provoking
and highly recommended.

TWISTED WRIST 5 (Paul Buck, 4 Bower Street, Maidstone, Kent ME16 8SD). Cumulative
magazine, this issue "From Shadow Borders" by Eric Mottram. Also from same
address, FSTE, series of broadsheets on sexual theme, 3rd issue is Paul Green.

UNDERGROUND MAGSCENE 12, Aug/Sept 1979 (Alan Jowett, 5 Great Hall Close, Radcliffe
M26 0DA) 20p or £1 sub for 6 issues. No longer called Bun, thank god. Little
press reviews, taking in SF & punk fanzines as well as poetry.

WORDS WORTH 1:3 (Alaric Sumner, 2 Crossfield Road, London NW3) £1.50 plus 25p
postage, or £3.75 for 3 issues. Third issue maintains high standard of
production & writing: Philpott/Edwards/Shepperd/Carlson/Hampson/Tristram/
Finch/Nations/Vonna-Michell/George/Reedy/Harding/Wilkinson/plus Education
Section on the relationship between new writing & education, for which
the contributors to this issue are Peter Redgrove and David Craig.

Cassettes

BUDGERIGAR ONE (Lawrence Upton, 18 Clairview Road, London SW16 6TX) £1.50/$5.00
(sub for 5 issues £7.50/$18.00): "a cassette magazine of Disappearing Art
and related actions", this issue featuring The Irrepressible Bastards,
Bang Crash Wallop, CoAsiVoces, recorded in stereo on 065. Cheques to Good
"F" Publications.

B E VONNA-MICHELL: Hums & Clicks, opus no.2 (Typical Characteristics, c/o above
address) £1.50, cheques to Balsam Flex. Latest in series, write for complete
list which includes Jackson MacLow, JgdJg and related matter.

FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS

GOOD ELF PUBLICATIONS (address as for Budgerigar above) announces the launching
of "Elfnews", an occasional 12pp newsheet listing books, records, tapes
etc received, activity & gigs. Please send publications and money towards
mailing cost (suggested 10p per issue in UK). Also

.../
Bob Cobbing's Girlie Poems (Collected Poems Vol 5) is now in active preparation. The format will be A4 portrait, 62pp in all, probably with a wrap-around cover designed by Bob Cobbing. It will be printed lithographically in an initial print-run of 200 copies. Publication is scheduled for January 1980.

Good Elf Rubs is seeking advance subscriptions at £2.00. For this, subscribers will receive a signed and unsigned copy, the signed copy containing additional no graphic material. A list of advance subscribers will be included in the first edition unless otherwise requested. All subscriptions must be received by November 31st 1979. In the event of the book not appearing subscriptions will be refunded in full. Good Elf address above.

TANGENT BOOKS (Way Cottage, Chagford, Newton Abbot, Devon) are to publish a series of single author chapbooks to appear as issues nos.4 to 8 of TANGENT. The first, Away by William Pryor, was reviewed here last issue. TANGENT 5 to 8 will be from David Miller (Background Music), Kate Ruse-Glason (Mountain Poems), Clive Faust and Vivienne Finch. Cost: about 80p each (subs for 4 to 8 inclusive £4.00). Back issues: TANGENT 2 (50p), TANGENT 3 (£1.20).

TUUMBA PRESS (editor, Lyn Hejinian, 2539 Russell St, Berkeley, California 94705, USA) is a chapbook series in fine letterpress editions. Forthcoming: series 4, nos.23-28, new work by Carla Harryman, Ray DiPalma, Larry Elgnier, Kit Robinson, Robert Grenier, Steve Benson. $9 sub, or $2 for individual title.

FORTHCOMING GIGS

KING'S POETRY: all readings take place at King's College, University of London in the Strand (London WC2) at 7 pm. Minimum donation 50p per reading.

Nov 13 - Chris Cheek/Herbert Burke       Jan 22 - Paul Evans/Glenda George
Nov 27 - Iain Sinclair                      Feb 5 - Ric Caddel/Peter Finch
Dec 11 - Bob Cobbing                         Mar 4 - John Hall/Peter Riley
                                          Mar 18 - Jeremy Hilton/David Miller

TANGENT READINGS: William Pryor is putting on a series of readings at a bookshop he works at in Exeter. Just realised I have neither name or address of the place, but I guess you could phone William on Whidden Down 488 for details.

Nov 22 - Owen Davis/John Hall
Jan 10 - David Miller/Robert Hamson             all start at 8.00pm
Feb 14 - Vivienne Finch/William Pryor

SHOPPING

For those who can't get to a decent bookshop, the following all put out mail order catalogues of poetry publications:

NEW WINDSOR, 16a Burleigh Parade, London W14 (Tel: 01-832 1482)

ORIEL BOOKSHOP, 53 Charles Street, Cardiff CF1 4ED (Tel: 0222-395548)

THE POETRY BOOKSHOP, The Courtyard, Frank Lewis House, Hay-on-Wye, via Hereford (extensive catalogue of secondhand stuff)

and note also that Peter Hodgkiss (Poetry Information/Galloping Dog Press) has recently taken over the managership of

Cecilfrith Bookshop, 27 Stockton Road, Sunderlanfd SR2 7AQ
Vol.2 : No. 3  

Jan/Feb/March 1980

ERIC NOTTHAM: Poetry & Mathematics: An Introduction.....................39

Food Section:
PAULA CLAIRE: Bread.............................................................45
R.G. HAMPSON: five poems.....................................................49
LYNN M: breakfast/salt/dinner...............................................54

Publications received, etc.....................................................57

ALLEN FISHER: Thumbnail lecture...........................................61

The AF thumbnail lecture just received, & included as being directly relevant to this issue. Peter Barry's essay may appear at a later date.

Apologies to Opal Nations & the two Paul Greens, whose pieces have had to be left out for space reasons.

2/4, the final issue of volume 2, will be titled Death of the referent? and will include consideration of american poets associated with L=A=N=G=E, Roof, Tuumba Press, 100 Posters & other journals & presses.

All relevant material welcomed.

Sub is still £1 (£3.50) for 4 issues of the current series (libraries & other institutions £3 or £10).

120 copies printed of this issue.

REALITY STUDIOS is a member of the Association of Little Presses and receives no grant aid of any kind.

ISSN: 0143-0122
ERIC HUTTRAN

Poetry and Mathematics: An Introduction

Since number is not imposed on nature and human nature but deeply into the structure of life, it is not surprising that number is part of poetry. Number and stress are the basic components of metre, and poets have used a large variety of metres in every culture. Metre is one way by which a poet manipulates the language of words through the language of mathematical form. He wishes to make a notation of thought and feeling in signs. But metre is also measure controlled by fixed number, with perhaps variables played over the fixity. Obviously, every line or measure in a poem - once it is fixed, left alone to its own life - by the poet - has a fixed number of particles - that is the basic components of letters, vowels, consonants, syllables and words, and those other signs called punctuation marks.

The most usual variants to mathematical metre are those caused by sound and stress. A poem is an object performed through sight and sound. So that its processes move into and out of our memories of sights and sounds, and our memories of muscularity - walking, running, swinging, breathing, dancing, orgasm. Number is embedded in nature; we are embedded in number. Artists of all kind use this fact. The Hungarian composer, Bartok, used three mathematical systems in the related processes of his works - the principle of proportion known as the Golden Section, also functional for Ezra Pound's Cantos, the pentatonic scale, and the Fibonacci series of whole numbers (Erno Lendvai: Bela Bartok, Kahn & Avorill, London 1971). Bartok also studied the mathematical form of leaves on a stem - tree-like or dendrite forms - and the American poet, Robert Kelly, has a poem called Axon Dendron Tree (Salititer Books, New York 1967) which he organizes in sets of stanzas with fixed numbers of lines, building up a long poem of short lines arranged in a long vertical shape - and this in turn controls the shape of the book itself - the poem lies like an axis in a volume 14 inches by 8 1/4 inches.

Consciously and unconsciously, number controls our forms - the perceptual psychology of this is explored by Marie-Louise von Franz in Number and Time (Rider, London 1974) - the subtitle indicates its scope: "Reflections Leading Towards a Unification of Psychology and Physics". Working from tentative conclusions by the psychologist Jung, von Franz herself concludes that numbers originate autonomously in archetypes of the unconscious and function as "a preconscious psychic principle of activity". So that number appears as a dynamic natural phenomenon. Jung and a good many poets and composers have also been interested in those numbers which are systematised in the ancient Chinese system of prediction called the I Ching. The poet and mathematician Harvey Bialy recently showed relationships between the I Ching and the genetic code as "transformation systems which describe both the manifestations of form and the change of form in time", basically through the number 64 - 64 hexagrams in the I Ching, and the 64 codons of modern genetics (Biopoeis, Io/20, ed. Harvey Bialy, Vermont 1974).

Those fives which Bartok took to be the universal pentatonic scale of folk music are the organizing principle of the magnificent long poem of the fourteenth century, "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight". Another poem, which may be by the same poet, the "Pearl", is organised through elaborately linked four-stress rhyming lines in 12 line stanzas, with a key number in 1212. The "Sir Gawain" is built on fives and the knight's
emblem is the pentangle, an ancient life symbol, a number which gives
power over the spirit world, Faust's "Druid's foot" which keeps Mephistopheles
from crossing the threshold, and that "five for the symbol at your door"
in the well-known and very old country-song, "Green Grow the Rushes O".
In the poem, the key numbers are 5, 25 and 2505 - their significances
have been worked out by A. Kent Heatt in Silent Poetry (ed. Alastair
also provides numerical and numerological analyses of the Bible, Chaucer,
Spencre, Milton, Dryden, Shadwell and Henry Fielding. And Jack Lindsay
prefaces his book on Blast Power and Ballistics (Kuller, London 1974) in
the ancient Mediterranean world with a dedicatory poem which can
summarise for us the penetration of number into our man-made structures:

the leap
into new wholes, the structures struck
from the extending symmetries
where number breeds and plays its role
ever more complex in division,
but under unity's clear control.
No need for atomising fear;
Courage will give us back our luck.

Number and luck: poets have always been concerned with the interplay
of control and release of their creative energies and urges towards
form through metre, measure and serenity - the faculty of making
happy chance discoveries. Measure here means the proportions
attained by the exercise of control within a line, or the line extended
to the stanza - the poetic paragraph - by means of stresses in vowel and
consonant sounds, and the juxtaposition in short and long sections -
particles, syllables, words and phrases. Metre is from the Greek metron,
measure, but has come to mean, in poetry, recurrent rhythmic pattern
within the line and corresponding lines of a poem. Rhythm is related to
regularities of movement in our lives, and curiously enough the more
mechanically regular the movement, very often the more healthy and useful
the action is. But obviously a person forced into mechanism is reduced.
Nevertheless, regular rhythm often helps postpone fatigue, as any worker
knows and as work-songs demonstrate, the world over. But in certain
circumstances it hypnotises - like an oscillating pendulum or source
of light - and this can be both useful and detrimental, especially in a
long poem. The risks of dulling repetition in a long work are
considerable. Many grimly persistent poems have nodded us off well
before their awful epic expansiveness has finally congealed. And most
of the currently popular Establishment poets bore because they fail
to explore measure and rhythm.

Numerical richness of metre is comparable to regularity and variety
in nature; we need, and have, both. No denritic form is exactly identical
with another - hence the beauty of trees of one species or the iambic
pentameters of Milton's Paradise Lost, an epic of hundreds of lines
within a single widely ranging voice. In fact, this poem is a small
universe - a one which turns and changes into many.

Metre sometimes reinforces meaning pretty crudely - the persistent
movement of Browning's "How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix":
"I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three" - or the rolling
hypnotic gait of Tennyson's "Lotus-Eaters": "Thro' every hollow cave
and alley lane / Round and round the spicy downs the yellow Lotus-dust
is blown. / We have had enough of action, and of motion we".

Traditionally, metre is measured as a foot with light and heavy
stresses - a numerical quantity, a mathematical formula which gives the
poet a kind of rhythmic security. The iambic foot is one long syllable
plus two shorts; the iambic foot is one short followed by one long; and
so on, with more and less complexity. But determining what are long or short, heavy or light, syllables in words is arbitrary, and their variety in the huge range of our languages is enormous. And a poet's numbers may play in counterpoint with other rhythms in his measures, and may do so to the point of occluding fixities of metre altogether. Free verse used to be considered a measure without discipline by those whose idea of discipline meant some kind of mathematical strait-jacket. But in fact, no verse is free. All poetry is written in measures of language, with fixed metrical number as one kind of measure control.

Quantity in poetry is a complex equation of stress, accent, loudness and length energies. But there are probably four basic kinds of line: syllabic - fixed number of syllables, variable number of accents; accentual - fixed number of stresses, variable number of unstressed syllables; a combination of these two - fixed number of stressed and unstressed syllables; and quantitative - fixed number of feet in a variable or unvaried general pattern. Not that this covers all poetry - the varieties of visual and sound notation, for instance, in concrete and soundtext poetry, are unlimited. It is a false separation in some ways, but it can be said that, basically, concrete poetry is a pattern of signs primarily visual, and soundtext poetry is a pattern of notations for sounding, for voice performance rather than eye reading primarily. Some concrete poetry is concerned almost entirely with permutations and combinations of signs - linguistic mainly, but there have been poems composed of mathematical signs. (ed. Mary Ellen Solt: Concrete Poetry - A World View, Indiana University Press, 1970; ed. Stephen Bann: Concrete Poetry - An International Anthology, London Magazine Editions, London 1967). Poems can be made from any notation or sign system, any language, through which the human body-mind continuum needs to project itself. And any set of signs or objects can be understood mathematically. Once a line has been written or a pattern of words or particles designed, it has fixed number in it somewhere!

The shortest form in Japanese poetry is the haiku or hokku, consisting of 17 syllables grouped as 5, 7 and 5 - the first haiku dates from before "Six Satin", in the early 13th century. European poets have imitated this form, and Jack Kerouac wrote a set of "American Haikus". And because it has such a strict mathematics, the form proved ideal for experiments in computer poetry, using the computer as an instrument of composition, an extension of the body like any other technology, and to be used creatively. In 1968 the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London organised an exhibition of the computer and the arts called Cybernetic Serendipity - the science of control and communication in systems interplaying with chance discovery. Chance, of course, is a matter of statistics rather than randomness. The mathematical concept of chance and the nature of randomness haunt twentieth century arts, poetry included, and this show demonstrated how. In a 1949 essay in the Scientific American one writer went so far as to say that "the mathematics of communication is simply the application of probability theory to semantic studies". Computers are instruments of form, not direct agents of creativity (Eric Kotram: "The Triumph of the Mobile: The Structure of Information, the Language of Computers and Contemporary Poetry" - Intrepid No 23/24, Summer-Fall 1972, Buffalo). The easiest forms to computerise are those whose mathematics of stanzaic line count, syllabic count and metre are strictest - for instance, the haiku, and computer haikus have been carried out, good, bad and indifferent, like any other composition. Edwin Morgan has written a poem parodying communication disaster occurring when a computer is asked to find "Good King Wenceslas" - a study, Morgan says, of "relationships that will exist between computer creativity and human creativity". The poem is called "Computer's Second Christmas Carol" (the first is a struggle to say "a merry Christmas" - Edwin Morgan: The Second Life, Edinburgh University Press, 1968).
The tradition of mathematics in poetry continues. Jackson Mac Low's "The Marrying Maiden", performed by the Living Theatre in 1961, uses chance and the I Ching for "the order and duration of speeches and the directions for rate, volume, inflection, and manner of speaking". In Stanzas for Iris Lezak (Something Else Press, New York 1971) he explains some of his compositional methods, including the use of a book of random digits, playing cards, the I Ching again, and tossed coins to determine a wide variety of metrical counts. Other poems he describes as "printed from xeroxes of printout realisations of poems composed on a PFR-3 programmable film-reader". He has repeatedly used computers, and indeed it is commonplace for scholars today to detect in poetry the incidence of persistent vowel, consonant and vowel groupings - a more mathematically mechanical version of such works as Caroline Spurgeon's famous book which included counts of recurrence in terms in Shakespeare's plays (Shakespeare's Imagery, Cambridge University Press, 1935).

The instruments change but the fascination remains. Numbers attract because they lie at the base of creation. As the architect Le Corbusier once observed: "Nature is order and law, unity and diversity without end, stability, harmony and strength". In Silent Poetry, Alastair Fowler puts it like this:

Pythagoras and Plato believed that mathematics would furnish the key to philosophic contemplation of the cosmos, as devoutly as Russell and others later believed that mathematics provided the key to the foundation of logic.

This tradition is the main bridge between poetry and mathematics across the centuries. Dante's Divine Comedy is a structure of threes and tens, together with that Aristotelian and Ptolemaic astronomy which lasted until Kepler changed the mathematics of the solar system; space, distance and relationship are always ideas which men come to understand, formulate and control. Poetry is likewise a kind of engineering - in fact, the French poet, Paul Valéry, thought of Edgar Allen Poe as a literary engineer. Poets, like mathematicians, have been obsessed by the meaning of 1 and of addition, and with the numerology of magic squares, sacred numbers, the numbers in alchemy, the Cabala, the religion of One God and the Trinity, and the religions of multiple deities. Numbers have been taken to reveal hidden meaning in an unknown but decipherable world. Once you code letters to digits - 1 to 9 related to A to I - you have tables of translation which can be manipulated to show practically anything. Mathematics has its own psychology, not to say neuroses. A group of scholars at the Sorbonne in Paris, for example, interprets Melville's novel Moby-Dick by manipulating chapter-numbers and references to number in the text - the reversibilities of 63 give them a fine time.

To Galileo mathematics was the code in which the secret book of nature was written. Creation revolves round the idea of existence and being - and if existence and being are, the word "is", denoting a singular, a one, has notorious problems. For a poet to say is is as tricky as for a mathematician to say equals. To a philosophical poet is is the root mathematics of disturbing potentiality in the mathematics of his logic. Hegel, indeed, claimed that there are an infinite number of meanings for is.

In the voyage to Laputa section of Gulliver's Travels, Swift imagined a life determined by mathematics, music and the dread of a comet and the sun. The result has been called "a compound of magic and mathematics, of fantasy and logic, of ribaldry and gravity.... His imagination, like that of Lewis Carroll, had a method in its apparent madness.... what seems so lawless is the product of the most rigid law". And Carroll was of course a mathematician, as well as the author of those chess books
about Alice's adventures beyond mirror image. Swift's Laputans were based, by the way, on the lives and works of contemporary living scientists. (Marjorie Nicolson: Science and Imagination, Cornell University Press, 1956 - chapter 5.)

Swift points satirically to that danger of anthropomorphising the universe which John Donne expressed, just over one hundred years earlier, with less mockery and more sense of profound disturbance and the new shape the universe had been given by the number men:

For of Meridians and Parallels,
Man hath weav'd out a net, and this net throwne
Upon the Heavens, and now they are his owne.

After the richness of early seventeenth century metaphorical language, the Royal Society sought to pare it down. Their historian, Thomas Sprat, in 1667, recommended a curious connection between language, mathematics and the structure of society: "a close, naked, natural way of speaking - positive expressions, clear sense, a native easiness, bringing all things as near the mathematical plainness as they can, and preferring the language of artisans, countrymen, and merchants before wits and scholars".

Today, mathematics is not plain - certainly not since Gödel's "Incompleteness Theorem" of 1931 - and we do not make such radical separations between literature and mathematics. In a note on the mathematical approach which prefaces his Laws of Form (Allen & Unwin, London 1969), G Spencer Brown writes without dichotomy between mathematics and art: "That mathematics, in common with other art forms, can lead us beyond ordinary existence, and can show us something of the structure in which all creation hangs together, is no new idea... Unlike more superficial forms of expertise, mathematics is a way of saying less and less about more and more" - which would be a good way of describing the principle of economy and inclusiveness in poetry today. Spencer Brown writes later in his book on mathematics as "a transcending from a given state of vision to a new, and hitherto unapparent, vision beyond it". Coming at vision from the other side of experience, the American poet William Carlos Williams acknowledged the use of mathematics like this (Marianne Moore, Selected Essays, Random House, New York 1934):

A course in mathematics would not be wasted on a poet or a reader of poetry, if he remembered no more from it than the geometric principle of the intervention of loci from all angles lines converging and crossing establish points. He might carry it further and say in his imagination that apprehension perforates, at places, through to understanding.

Williams, like Gerard Manley Hopkins, the British Jesuit poet, tried to formulate the metric foot as a creative freedom and a creative restriction. Hopkins' verbal formulation was "sprung rhythm". In an essay of 1883 ("Author's Preface", ed. John Pick: A Hopkins Reader, Oxford 1953) he describes "sprung rhythm" in terms of fixed numerical feet with other syllables included in the measure-line for "special effects". In a letter of 1878 he writes: "Why do I employ sprung rhythm at all? Because it is nearest to the rhythm of prose, that is the native and natural rhythm of speech". Conventional mathematical scansion makes for abstract speech. The better poet wishes to control the poem's energy between number and imaginative invention.

But these formulations of freedom within restriction are seldom very satisfactory. Williams called his metric the "variable foot" in order, late in his career, to have a theory by which to explain what he had found himself needing and making. "It is all in the ear", he said, "I wanted to be regular". But the "variable foot" is the kind of rule he needs - a rule which is no rule, but enables him to speak of regular

So the fascination with an order related to number and the processes of language continues. The contemporary British poet, Allen Fisher, has composed "The Art of Flight" (1974 - a section appears in his Paxton's Beacon, Arc, Yorkshire 1976) as a poem whose innovations are both new and traditional. He describes his procedure briefly like this:

I have always maintained that the simplest way of stopping liberation or restricting freedom in art is to suggest that all systems, methodologies, conceptualisations, etc, should be done away with, leaving the mind, so to speak, "free". In "The Art of Flight" I re-transcribed fugues from Bach's The Art of Fugue into numerical language. I then transcribed this language into words from a previously collated set of words. In the early sections I used Bach's fugue formula without deviation. As the work progressed I allowed myself other kinds of compositional decision, according to mathematical patterns as they appeared. This procedure prevented any over-determined system and gave processual movement to the work derived from the new knowledge given by its preceding sections.

Once again number provides bases for form and creative freedom as the poet organises his energies through the excitments of decision to use mathematical design, and to move in and out of its suggestions. Mathematics and the arts are one world.
REALITY STUDIOS FOOD SECTION

PAULA CLAIRE

BREAD

This publication documents the first performance of BREAD in the foyer of Münster Museum, Germany, on 21 May, 1979, by Konkrete Canticle (Paula Claire, Bob Cobbing and Bill Griffiths); part of a sound poetry programme in conjunction with the Museum's European Concrete Poetry Exhibition Speech Beyond Poetry, sponsored by the Westphalia Arts Association.

The performance of this piece consisted of free improvisation on the old and modern forms of the word 'bread', the sounds they contain; mixed with the noises occurring from the smell, look, touch, taste and sound of the variety of breads this area provides. Much of the bread was shared out with the audience during the celebration.

Thanks to Manfred Sundermann for taking the photos of the bread used; and to Gudrun Sundermann and Bill Griffiths for helping look up the etymology.

Paula Claire
International Concrete Poetry Archive
St Michael's Hall Oxford

November 1979.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modern English</th>
<th>Old English</th>
<th>Modern German</th>
<th>Old German</th>
<th>Old Norse</th>
<th>Old Frisian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BREAD</td>
<td>BREAĐ</td>
<td>BROT</td>
<td>PRŪT</td>
<td>BRAUÖ</td>
<td>BRĀD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOAF</td>
<td>HLĀF</td>
<td>LAIB</td>
<td>LEIP</td>
<td>HLEIP</td>
<td>HLEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hlāfweard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Old French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hlāfdige</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>LEVURE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lord</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>leavēn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEAST</td>
<td>BEORMA</td>
<td>BĀRME</td>
<td>HEVO</td>
<td>HEPO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Latin:fermentum</td>
<td></td>
<td>HEFE</td>
<td>heave</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNEAD</td>
<td>CNĒDAN</td>
<td>KNETEN</td>
<td>KNETAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>digē</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Old French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Latin:figura</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>LEVURE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOUGH</td>
<td>DĀG</td>
<td>TEIG</td>
<td>TEIC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
cooking is being

pots & pans.

pinches of

familiar

spice:

- oregano
- chilli
- turmeric
- rosemary
- garlic
- chives

the final

special

state of

withinness.

an unexpected

hospitality.

a high style

elegant simplicity.
traditional culinary 

lamb
cooked
in
coconut milk

chicken
in tamarind

egg

veal
in ginger,
almonds
& pistachios

in a milk

the subordination
of oneself
to one's art.

an unexpected hospitality:

a high style
of
genuine hospitality.
cherry ripe

a bowl of sweet ripe cherries.
slices of apple & banana, dipped in a raita of peppered yoghurt.
an unexpected hospitality.
a high style of elegant simplicity.
food for thought

chicken
& chick-peas
on a bed of rice.
rhubarb
baked
in mint,
orange-peel,
brown sugar.
an exploration
of
new combinations.
& the careful
storage
of
facts
for future use.
red cabbage
cooked
in butter,
orange juice,
vermouth.

spiced
Italian sausages
pricked
& grilled.

Margaret
& Carol,
& a sweet
white
German wine.

an organised
privacy.

a space
embedded
in materiality.
good morning  good morning

you look [_______________________________]

you didn't sleep [_______________________________] well

nice morning [_______________________________]

eat

you must [_______________________________]

have some toast

set the washing dry

before [_______________________________]

pour the tea

she comes

honestly [_______________________________]

i don't know how

must have rained in the night

you can drink

tea that colour

do the garden [_______________________________] good

who's coming [_______________________________] you said

you've not eaten [_______________________________] she's not eaten

not eaten a thing

you aren't hungry [_______________________________]

you must eat

you'll waste [_______________________________]

away

child

that woman

she didn't sleep [_______________________________] did you sleep

something wrong with her

drink your tea [_______________________________]

i want to clear [_______________________________]

away

wash up

before  i do the washing

before  she comes

who [_______________________________]

got it dry

yes nice day
pass the salt please
you who I didn’t want
thankyou
you who should not have been born
florrie came in today
should not have been conceived
oh yes
the child is always silent
on her way to the doctor
I was too old to have a child
bread?
you who should have been a boy
butter?
i wanted a son
no thankyou
you who got me
what’s wrong with her?
you who gave me birth
is she ill?
i did not choose to be born
it’s her blood
bitter changeling
she imagines most of it
twisted daughter
hypochondria
you made me
bitter twisted
changeling daughter
as I am
dinner

dinner
it's ready

sit down
meat

thankyou

thankyou

have some

you can't eat it

dry

what did you

nothing

nothing?

careful

the lid's loose

pepper

i told you

fetch me

some water

clear evening

thankyou

must cover

don't leave that

the geraniums

how dare you

leave her alone

she's not hungry

good food

it's a sin

that's what it is

be a cold night

again
PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Books

Ray Di PALMA: PLANHE (Cassend Books, 67 Morton Street, New York, NY 10014, USA).

Ray Di PALMA: Cuiva Sails (Sun & Moon Press, 4330 Hartwick Road, No.418, College Park, Maryland 20740, USA) $3.00.

Ray Di Palma's work will be reviewed soon at length.

Larry WIGNER: Lined up bulk senses (Burning Deck, 71 Elm Grove Avenue, Providence, R.I. 02906, USA) $2.50. Brief, spare, achieving much by leaving out a lot: "music of a surface/ brought in"....."Listening to the sea/ without a shell."

Kenward ELMSLIE: Communications Equipment (Burning Deck) $2.50. Witty "nocturne" sequence displaying a delight in absurdity & non-referential sound sense at times that would not disgrace Lewis Carroll. Dreams, media onslaughts, it sez.

Patrick FETHINGTON: The World Was a Bubble (Burning Deck) $3.50. One of BD's few British writers. A poem/prose biography of Sir Francis Bacon.

Allen FISHER: Unpolished Mirrors A, B, C (Spanner, 85 Ramilles Close, London SW2 5DG), the whole sequence (ending in I/j) obtainable by subscribing to Spanner (£4.50 UK/Europe, £5.50 elsewhere). Part of the "place" canon.

U. FLAVTH: Links Links (presse anonMann, c/o 4 Bower Street, Maidstone, Kent) 40p. An alter ego of U McCarthy????

Michael GIZZI: Aries (Burning Deck) $3.50. Haven't got round to this one yet. Incidentally, sorry for these Time Out styled packaged reviews, but this issue was a bit of a rush.

Jaimy GORDON: Circumscriptions from an Equestrian Statue (Burning Deck) $3.50. Short novel, "panorama of patent inventions, an evening of stunning views for the Stereopticon", absurdist & lush, not without an irritating whimsicality.

Michael HOROVITZ: Growing Up: Selected Poems & Pictures 1951-79 (Allison & Busby, 6a Noel Street, London W1) £2.95 hbk, £2.50 pbk. Just what you'd expect, a shiny almost 100 pp book designed by MH himself & jam packed with (at worst) inconsequential &/or sentimental doodlings and (at best) an energetic language frolicking, Blake & blues, surrealism, acid, wit & innocence, set in a wide variety of freewheeling forms. The definitive Michael Horovitz book, for those with or without birds in the head.

Note to Allison & Busby: I know this wasn't meant to be a monument, but there was no need for the binding to fall apart on my paperback copy

Ruth KRAUS: When I Walk I Change the Earth (Burning Deck) $2.50. Long poem I found a bit precious.

Ulli MCCARTHY: Backlog Parke (Atman, c/o 4 Bower Street, Maidstone, Kent) 75p. "publication/re-publication of material dating from 1972/4 North Wales, including Stretchbook, Holzsnitte & Triptych. Ulli's subversion of pastoral in an early take of his action-painting style, "sounding parke demise of threshold"...recommended.

Lissa MC LAUGHLIN: Seeing the Multitudes Delayed (Burning Deck) $3.50. "This is a woman speaking," begins one of the fictions in this small collection, and the voice is ironical, austerely beautiful & strong. Fictions put together like dreams not dreams. To be reread.

...
Various, George: 
In the Midst (Stingy Artist, Alverstoke, Hants) £1.00. 
Two recent items from David's prolific output. Primavera is a small book dealing with representation and appearance ("Light changing the features/ right side of the face/ I mean, scarcely visible in reproduction"); the production is almost too beautiful, close to making the poem appear slighter than it really is. No doubt that In the Midst is more substantial anyway, being a collection of some of his best verse & prose pieces of the last couple of years, including "Moments", a Joe DiMaggio pamphlet once that was never properly distributed.


VICTOR DAVISON: The Mountain Poems (Tangent, Wave Cottage, Chagford, Newton Abbot, Devon) 80p. Set of poems which uses as material accounts of attempts on Everest & other mountains. Interesting.

Richard TABOR: Boboli/Mariette/Le Machine (KMP Ki, same address as Lobby) £1.00. Full text/score of a performance piece, one section of which was published in REALITY STUDIOS 2:2. Amazingly detailed seven-colour litho printing; visually very striking.

Iain SINCLAIR: Suicide Bridge (Albion Village Press, 23 Albion Drive, London E8) £2.10. Sorry, out of alphabetical sequence - just remembered I bought this recently & it frightened the life out of me.

THUMBA PRESS series of chapbooks (2639 Russell Street, Berkeley, California 94705, USA) £2.00 each or £9.00 for current series:

15. Lyn HEIJINIAN: Gezualdo
16. Tom MANDEL: EncY
17. Ron SILLIMAN: Sitting Up, Standing, Taking Steps
18. Bruce ANDREWS: Praxis
20. Charles BERNSTEIN: Senses of Responsibility
22. Rae ARMANTROUT: The Invention of Hunger
23. Carla HARRYMAN: Percentage
24. Ray DI PALMA: Observatory Gardens

Punch of writers who are often associated with each other, & who I hope will be the subject of investigation in the next RS.

George TYSCH: Tea (Burning Deck) £2.50. Brief & haiku like.

Rosmarie WOLDO: The Road is Everywhere or Stop This Body (Open Places, Stephens College, Columbia, Missouri, USA). No price given, a professional looking paperback. The co-editor of Burning Deck traffics in language herself. Four fast moving journeys.

Diane WARD: Theory of Emotion (Segue/O Press, 300 Bowery, New York, NY 10012, USA). Language oriented prose from the same stable as Roof magazine.


Various: Blocks (ed. Ric Caddel, Pig Press, 7 Cross View Terrace, Neville's Cross, Durham DH1 4JY) 80p. Bonveniste, King, Harding, Marley, Green, Themerson & others contribute words, sometimes amusingly, to old letter-press block images from the collection of Roger Tomlin.
Magazines

**CHOCK IV** (Rutherford College, The University, Canterbury, Kent CT2 7NX) 50p. "Outsiders" issue included Ginsberg/ Horovitz/ Jackowska/ Malcolm Lowry/ Road/ Wyatt & others.

**DOUBLE HARNES** 1 (Andrew Coozen, 9/10 Bradmore Road, Oxford) 40p. "W(h)ales issue." Andrew Coozen once put out a series of chapbooks under the Green Horse imprint, often excellent work but badly printed. This mag, conversely, is terrible stuff well printed. Horsehealing (from same address, 25p) is anthology of Green Horse poetry, much better value.

**THONATORIAL 2** (Dept of Spanish, King's College, Strand, London WC2R 2LS) 80p, sub £2.40. Translation journal of American, Spanish & English work. Creeley/ Nolma/ Nachaido (tr. by yours truly)/ Bermuda/ Gimferrer/ Spicer (lovely idea of translating his Lorca letters "back" into Spanish/ Hinostroza.


**LOBBY PRESS NEWSLETTER 11** (Nov 79) & 12 (Jan 80). Address as for Lobby Press. 15p or £1.00 for 5 issues. Polymac, multi-coloured printing & reviews of anything reviewable & much that isn't. The German/ Italian reviews are a bit pretentious. NB after 11th March all material to be sent to Alaric Sumner at the Words Worth address as Richard Tabor will be abroad.

**POETRY INFORMATION 20/21, final issue, winter 1979/80** (Peter Hodgkiss, 3 Otterburn Terrace, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE2 3AP) £2.00. At last! a stupendous 180pp issue to exit with, including articles on Creeley, Dorn, Ashbery, Koller, Zukofsky and many many others. Look out now for Peter's new prose magazine.


Microfiche

**P C FENCOTT:** His Dexter Daylight Utterly Darkened (20 Cator Crescent, New Addington, Sutton). An exciting medium which allows books like this (nearly 200 pages of handwritten text, drawings & collage) to be produced easily & cheaply. More details from Clive, & from Chris Jones at 173 Walm Lane, London NW2. Most local libraries now have fiche machines and they're not that expensive to buy.

Miscellaneous


-----------------------------------

Received an response to a review of Bernard Kelly's Notes Miss Them: a letter from Herbert Atlas, friend & "literary executor" to Bernard Kelly, who finds "reduction of the effort to listing the collection's contents list a bit discouraging". Sorry Mr Atlas, but the review was intended as a recommendation; space (& time) precluded more detailed examination.
At the Spacex Gallery, 45 Preston Street, Exeter, Devon (all at 8 pm):

DENIS GOACHER (Friday March 14th)
CHRIS TORRANCE & MIKE HASLAM (Friday March 28th)
KEN EDWARDS & PAUL GREEN (Friday April 11th)
LEE HARRISON & HARRY GUEST (Friday April 25th)
CARL RAKOSI (Thursday 1st May)

At Kings College, Strand, London WC2 (7 pm):

JEREMY HILTON & DAVID MILLER (Tuesday March 18th)

RE-VERB CASSETTE EDITIONS will replace SOUND SYSTEM MAN, a tape distribution service started in 1975 by Paul (P.A.) Green. The first series of releases will feature texts/voice/sound by Paul; subsequent editions may be in anthology or single-author format. Already available is RV 1; RV 5/6 to follow. Each cassette will cost £1.75; orders & enquiries to Paul Green, 18 Goshen Road, Chelston, Torquay, Devon, UK.

BOB COBBING's GIRLIE POEMS (Collected Poems Vol 5); see last issue for details. Advance subscriptions still sought (ignore previous deadline): 2/5/10 payable to Good Elf Publications, 18 Clairview Rd, London SW16 6TX.

FROM RICHARD TABOR: "re Lawrence Upton’s remarks on Lob’s attitude to the Cambridge Festival - simply - I'm very much for festivals (not against as he suggests) - and re John Riley and the assertion that some aspect of my anti-memorials (yes, I am anti-memorials - I'm anti-christianity and Riley’s perpetuation of Cambridgism in Grosseteste but that's a different matter again) was 'rag mag humour' - it's worse than that Lawrence; because no humour was involved until it reached the reader..."

(OK OK, that's enough fellows - editor)

THE NOTE in the last issue that Peter Hodgkiss was the new manager of the Ceolfrith Bookshop in Sunderland was already out of date when it went to press; Peter was made redundant a few months after starting on what sounds like a pretty disgraceful decision by the Sunderland Arts Centre management committee.... Having got the final Poetry Information out of the way, he will continue to put out Galloping Dog Books and his new prose magazine (now to be titled Not Poetry) from his address in Newcastle.
Page two. What I wanted was a description that would use sudden, dynamic change and could account for biologic consistencies and continuities. Page three. I wanted factors controlling process such as structural stabilities and laws of recurrences, changed by mad leaps or juddering twistors. The properties mentioned, these laws of thesmos, it might be argued, themselves probabilistically inheriting the determinations of spacetime and thus tropologies. The tropology offered by René Thom's description of tropologies begins to make my description possible, with the added bonus that it is not prescription, and thus not predictive or prone to doctrine, yet simultaneously pre-empts irresponsibility.

Page one. At least since Pythagoras the notion used by ethics, morals and poetics seems to be that of smoothness (consistency and by extension focus, centrality or generalised predictive law with currents of intuition or bursts of ecstasy). Edmund Spenser uses this system extensively and consciously in The Faerie Queen and, for instance, the Monad is the Good, the Dyad Evil and so forth. (Alaster Fouler's Spenser and the Numbers of Time. Note also his other work, particularly his annotations to John Milton's Paradise Lost.) Following Descartes' two dimensional graph, the body and mind discussion extended from, as it were, the point of origin. Spenser's school master, Mulcaster, has said, "It is not a mind, not a body, that we have to educate, but a man; and we cannot divide him." Descriptions however followed the notions of smoothness with innovations and variations on the theme so that by the time Albert Einstein sharpened his pencil the description included dynamics and concepts of space beyond the eighth dimension. (e.g. Thorold Gossett about 1897.) Einstein's description was hills and valleys, that is smooth tropology, without particular interest for the leaps from topology to tropology. Such descriptions now use terms of maximum and minimum values or singularities. (e.g. the work of Roger Penrose.)

Page three. I do not offer refutation of the conceptualisations and descriptions. I wish to recognise the considerable contributions of Leibnitz and Lorentz by projecting to and from them. For instance, Albert Einstein offered a theory of particular poetic interest with regard to discontinuous change in his Investigation of the Theory of the Brownian Movement in which viscosity and diffusion could account (if I read it correctly) for the dynamics that thermodynamics and attendant tropologies extend. René Thom's work, as far as I can discern with my heavy leanings on men like Tom Pheon, Ian Stewart, Alexander Woodcock, Monte Davis and Christopher Green to interpret the mathematics and so forth, accounts for these changes and lays ground, I think, for what can be said to implement change, by recognition of its topology.

Let me look at this differently. I wanted a method of describing memory that would have done with this nonsense of page one separating mind and body, bring understanding by making a general model of the
human complex that recognized the difference between consistent and inventive memory (Eugene Minkowski's *Lived Time*), as well as the Korzybskian distinction between the "perfected memory, which may last indefinitely unchanged, with memories of 'emotions' which, whether dim or clear, are always distorted." (Science and Sanity, Alfred Korzybski.)

I wanted a model that changed, that would not simply make inscription/trace on the magic writing pad, but could also spin the whole quiet frame of its perceptive singularity. Page four. I looked for a model that could include notions of skill and events accounted by R.L. Gregory. I was sure a perspective on these analogies, metaphors and techniques can be made increasingly clearly for contemporary use, which incidentally provided modern account for Dante's monarchist/religious model without need to dustbin it. (I was thinking on that page about his De Vulgari Eloquentia.) I was saying hell Fisher you jump around too much for comfort, which was the point I was making, so on that fourth page misquoted Friedrich Nietzsche's The Will to Power, or rather, misquoted its translation: "All knowledge is mathematics and then experience." I later added, a friend called, memory is the use of space.

Before the first page for some years work in poetry and performance. Concerned with safety, energy and their synthesis. Concerned with text, gesture and speech. Later intricacies of this distorted and elaborated. Safety society makes security or motherhood or language. Energy it makes Oedipal. Leave that. Page minus six. I would like to begin describing how that synthesis brings about discontinuous and qualitative change, and a full description of memory as the use of space.

Hear that Eric Mottram had submitted work to Reality Studios as an introduction to Poetry and Mathematics. Thought then, perhaps this might be the place to continue a public-composition I was in the process of at the Saturday Sessions held in 1978 at Lower Green Farm. (A transcript is to come out some time from Assembl.)

In 1966 Ark (the journal of the R.C.A.) published an article by C.A. Muses, "Divination, Higher Consciousness and Mathematics". I don't know if that's where I started - but in 1971 two projects were underway that became Place and Blood Bone Brain. The former started with a notion of the loci of a sphere that became the loci of a point on a ball rolling down a bumpy road. Blood Bone Brain took my interpretation of an ancient Egyptian hieroglyph of wholeness (a jug containing the heart; a bone; a bird of prey). I found my cancer to ward off pathological collapse in an obsessional concern with love, logos and creativity (the highest point a bird of prey reaches in the sky is known prior attack to be its "place"); and with Form and Structure subsumed by Place (in Gene Youngblood's Expanded Cinema). I now begin to find page nine, a description embracing both these complexes current in the mathematics of Ron Thom. Stephen Hawking and C.B. Collins said (Gravitation, Misner, Thorne & Wheeler, 1973):

"The fact that we have observed the universe to be isotropic is only a consequence of our existence."

That is perhaps a tropology poetry can change.

allen fisher
feb/march 80

To be continued.
death of the referent?

some trends in contemporary american poetry

KEN EDWARDS: L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E / "language" / Language
; three attempts at an Introduction ..............................63

CHARLES BERNSTEIN: Semblance ..................................66

CRIS CHEEK ..............................................................69

KRIS HEMENSLEY: The Self Defeating Project: THIS, & KETJAK ...72

PAUL GREEN: Charles Bernstein's Senses of Responsibility
An Assessment ............................................................75

ALAN DAVIES: This Predilection for the mind in art. Where did I
get it? ........................................................................76

Some Reading (a select bibliography) ..................................78

Publications received ......................................................81

CHANGE OF ADDRESS! ......at last your editor has been able to move
into his long promised flat ....which means the new & permanent
address for REALITY STUDIOS is

75 Balfour Street, London SE17

& 77 or any other address you may have had is now OBSOLETE......
the move has also meant an unforgivable delay in getting this
issue out & in replying to correspondents

With this issue, the second volume of REALITY STUDIOS comes to an end.
All subscriptions are now due for renewal; please send TWO POUNDS (£2)*
- cheques payable to REALITY STUDIOS - if you want to receive Volume 3
(the first issue of which will appear in November 1980). New readers
interested in back numbers please write for details. Foreign readers
please pay in sterling (eg by international money order) if possible, as
bank charges are extortionate. Thanks for your support.

Coming up in Vol 3: the second part of Allen Fisher's thumbnail
lecture on mathematics & poetry; Tony Jackson on Jeff Nuttall; Tony Baker on
Colin Simms; interview with Philippe Boyer translated by Glenda George;
David Miller on Clive Faust; much else. Ideas/ess pages welcomed.
ISSN: 0143-0122
According to Ron Silliman, it was Robert Grenier who, around the beginning of the 70s, coined the term "non-referential" to describe his work: a practice of poetry that directly challenged the conception of language as descriptions of a previously constituted universe. Such work, while arguing that language actively shapes the world (meaning we can't stop outside that world to describe it), at the same time emphasises the arbitrary and chance nature of the sign. In recent years, a body of work has been growing in America which has drawn on Grenier, Clark Coolidge, Jackson Mac Low and others - all the way back to Gertrude Stein - in its efforts to deconstruct commonly accepted codes and produce meanings in new ways; its practitioners more often call it, if they call it anything, "language-centred" writing; its programme is overtly political. Silliman, in an essay for Open Letter, just reprinted by L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E magazine in its Politics of the Referent supplement, uses the Marxist notion of the commodity fetish - the "repression of the product (labour) nature of things" and the corresponding promotion of commodities - and applies it to linguistic discourse. "In language it is a fetish of description, of reference, and has a second higher-order fetish of narration... It is the object without the gesture. The object appears now to move of its own free will. We are, all of us, suffering from mass aphasia. Language-centred writing is a step on the road to health." Of course, this position is shared to some extent by nearly all poets of any interest writing today; thus David Miller in "Notes on Poetics" (Alembic 6, Summer 1977): "... all meaning, all knowledge is determined beforehand, and the language is a fossilised mode, a language of being-as-stasis, to be employed as a politically false system of assumptions and determinations. The notion of language as a transparently 'real' mode of exchange is precisely what poetry cuts against." The word "transparently" is operative here; i.e. what David is saying is that it is dangerous to believe the language anyone uses is no more than a window that lets the world in. But David wouldn't (I'm guessing) go along with Steve McCaffery who goes so far as to say (also in Politics of the Referent), "At its core, linguistic reference is a displacement of human relationships and as such is fetishistic in the Marxian sense." It is with the interrogation of this latter statement (and the reader must perforce make up her/his mind on the matter) that this issue of Reality Studios is concerned.

Bernstein and Andrews, in their introduction to The Politics of the Referent, sound a note of caution: "... the idea that writing could be stripped of reference is as troubling and confusing a view as the assumption that the primary function of words is to refer, one-on-one, to an already constituted world of 'things'. Rather, reference, like the body itself, is a given dimension of language, the value of which is to be found, in its various extents, in the poem (the world) before which we find ourselves at any moment." The point is further developed by Charles Bernstein in the piece "Semblance" which follows these remarks. And Silliman, again, clarifies it better: "Reference has always been an element in language.... Referentiality, in the narrow sense in which I am using the term here, is
a specific historical deformation of reference." Silliman argues for a "post-referential writing"; his ideas on the subject receive another airing in an important essay, "Disappearance of the Word, Appearance of the World", first published in A Hundred Posters 14, February 1977, which traces developments from early "tribal" literatures with their emphasis on the physical, non-semantic propensities of language and explores "the impact of the emergence of capitalism on language and the language arts".

The meaning of a word
its "difference" from others

And a sentence? "Change lobsters, and retire in same order." This is nonsense. This doesn't mean anything. (Proposition: The first of those statements is true, the second false.)

It is tempting to compare referentiality in language art with figuration in painting. A thesis could be constructed that brought in the First World War and the events that led up to it, the "crisis" that led to Cubism. Disgust with the manipulation of images, the incipience of consumerism and mass marketing: the Dadaists. A break with the past, the Russian revolution: Malevich. Abstraction was a political gesture, not just a new party piece for the intelligentsia bored with the old stuff. It was a refusal to have anything to do with what had become a means of manipulation. So you bring it up to date: America in the 1970's and 80's, TV cultural glue, shrink wrapping, homogeneity, finally debasement of discourse, debasement of language. A false consensus is propped up by a false reference system: so, a non-referential poetry.

Now consider:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHONETIC ELEMENTS</th>
<th>NON-REFERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SYNTACTIC-SEMANTIC ELEMENTS</td>
<td>LO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCE</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Game: Where on the graph to pin the work of any given writer? (Sound poetry would gravitate towards point S, whilst a poetry situated at T would be one that incorporated only banal, flat statements, near tautology. On the same graph, then, the typical work of a language-centred poet - the range evidenced, for instance, in Carla Harryman's Tumba Press booklet Percentage - would approach and recede from point L.)

What's wrong with the model? It's only a rough and cumbersome guide; OK for assessing the relative weight given in an oeuvre or stretch of writing to various factors; but less and less useful as you narrow down to particular utterances. This is because, just as for example the phonetic and semantic elements of poetry do not really form the two ends of one continuum, so too there is no smooth transition between "reference" and "non-reference". In fact, words always in some way...
signify; reference is context. The graph does not explain how meaning is generated.

(Better to use a more dynamic model for a single poem, eg the poem as an "orbit" of linguistic possibilities; then which is the centrifugal, which the centripetal force?)

REFERENCE IS CONTEXT

and changing the context changes the mode of reference, but language is not, can hardly be, "abstract". If the language artists considered here are reacting effectively to cultural/political enforcements, they are doing so not by rejecting representation - improbable project - but by exposing the mechanisms whereby language is employed to naturalise* historical determinations. The comparison with abstraction in the plastic arts is therefore useful, but of limited usefulness only. How about "ealth,pert. cact-armed iface. ain,uch. cauld,owe. tabasc,eat. sawthed. iet,baise./ stenc,irrox. laid,anding./ chawth,white./ quicet./ mantbleu. secu,ib.umbriet. feat,eac,eeling./ plastill on. speift."? (P Inman, from "Lotioning" in Roof IX) This is non-sense. As to its meaning, that can be established in the context which generated it, the context from which it has been torn. You have to decide

* Veronica Forrest-Thomson's word - see Robert G Sheppard in RS 2:2.

Look at the way Di Palma's long poem PLANH (Casement Books, 1979) moves:

"An enormous chain
the opposite wall
two steps down
a carafe
pointed like a pagoda
dim light
against whitewash
stone benches
ivory lets in the sun
a new kind of apple
a verse comedy
takes its name
in front of formal
courtyards up to the
phial copper coins..." etc

The absence of punctuation induces a vertiginous sense of syntactic relativity - is it the carafe that's pointed like a pagoda, or the dim light? - indeed the poem proceeds by a series of absences, at least it does in my reading of it; which is what Steve McCaffery (again, Politics of the Referent) calls a "deciphered" style of reading: "The implication...

... is that the given text is partial, incomplete or imperfect, suggesting in these terms not necessarily an aesthetic deficiency but rather a radically political invitation to the reader to cast off his former pro-ordained role as the recipient of a message and to enter the domain of a writer." There are other ways of reading; the rules of the game are not fixed in advance. "Criticism of everyday life" must be the political programme of today's artist. For the poet/reader it manifests itself as the criticism of everyday language. "Change lobsters" from Alice of course. It's always about how to get the language moving again.
"It's as if each of these things has a life of its own. You can stretch them, deform them and even break them apart, and they still have an inner cohesion that keeps them together."

Not "death" of the referent—rather a recharged use of the multivalent referential vectors that any word has, how words in combination tone and modify the associations made for each of them, how "reference" then is not a one-on-one relation to an "object" but a perceptual dimension that closes in to pinpoint, nail down ("this" word), sputters omni-tropically (the in in the which of who where what wells), refuses the build up of image track/projection while, pointillistically, fixing a reference at each turn (fills vats ago lodges spire), or, that much rarer case (Peter Inman's Platin and David Melnick's Poet two recent examples) of "zaum" (so called "transrational", pervasively neologistic)—"ig ok aberflappi"—in which reference, deprived of its automatic reflex reaction of word/stimulus image/response roams over the range of associations suggested by the word, word shooting off referential vectors like the energy field in a Kirillian photograph.

All of which are ways of releasing the energy inherent in the referential dimension of language, that these dimensions are the material of which the writing is made, define its medium. Making the structures of meaning in language more tangible and in that way allowing for the maximum resonance for the medium—the traditional power that writing has always had to make experience palapable not by simply pointing to it but by (re)creating its conditions.

Point, then, at first instance, to see the medium of writing—our area of operation—as maximally open in vocabulary, forms, shapes; phoneme/morpheme/word/phrase/sentence order, etc., so that possible areas covered, ranges of things depicted, suggested, critiqued, considered, etc., have an outer limit (asymptotic) of what can be thought, what can (might) be. But then, taking that as zero degree, not to gesturalize the possibility of poetry to operate in this "hyperspace", but to create works (poems) within it.

The order of the words, the syntax, creates possibilities for images, pictures, representations, descriptions, invocation, ideation, critique, relation, projection, etc. Sentences that follow standard grammatical patterns allow the accumulating references to enthrall the reader by diminishing diversions from a constructed representation. In this way, each word's references work in harmony by reinforcing a spatio/temporal order conventionalized by the bulk of writing practice that creates the "standard". "The lamp sits atop the table in the study"—each word narrowing down the possibilities of each other, limiting the interpretation of each word's meaning by creating an ever more specific context. In a similar way, associations with sentences are narrowed down by conventional expository or narrational paragraph structure, which directs attention away from the sentence as meaning generating event and onto the "content" depicted. By shifting the contexts in which even a fairly "standard" sentence finds itself, as in the prose format work of Ron Silliman and Barrett Watten, the seriality of the ordering of sentences within a paragraph displaces from its habitual surrounding the projected representational fixation that the sentence conveys. "words elect us. The lamp sits atop the table in the study. The tower is burnt orange...." By rotating
sentences within a paragraph (a process analogous to jump cutting in film) according to principles generated by and unfolding in the work (rather than in accordance with representational construction patterns) a perceptual vividness is intensified for each sentence since the abruptness of the cuts induces a greater desire to savour the tangibility of each sentence before it is lost to the next, determinately other, sentence. Juxtapositions not only suggest unsuspected relations but induce reading along ectoskeletal and citational lines. As a result, the operant mechanisms of meaning are multiplied and patterns of projection in reading are less restricted. The patterns of projection are, not, however, undetermined. The text operates at a level that not only provokes projections by each sentence but by the sequencing of the sentences suggests lines or paths for them to proceed along. At the same time, circumspection about the nature and meaning of the projections is called forth. The result is both a self-reflectiveness and an intensification of the items/conventions of the social world projected/suggested/provoked. A similar process can also take place within sentences and phrases and not only intersententially. Syntactic patterns are composed which allow for this combination of projection and reflection in the movement from word to word. "For as much as, within the because, tools their annoyance, tip to toward." --But, again, to acknowledge this as the space of the text, and still to leave open what's to be said, what projections desire these reflections.

The sense of music in poetry: the music of meaning--emerging, fogging, contrasting, etc. Tune attunements in understanding--the meaning sounds. It's impossible to separate prosody from the structure (the form and content seen as an interlocking figure) of a given poem. You can talk about strategies of meaning generation, shape, the kinds of sounds accented, the varieties of measurement (of scale, of number, of line length, of syllable order, of word length, of phrase length, of measure as punctuation, of punctuation as metrics). But no one has primacy--the music the orchestrating these into the poem, the angles one plays against another, the shading. In much of my own work: working at angles to the strong tidal pull of an expected sequence of a sentence--or by cutting off a sentence or phrase midway and counting on the mind to complete where the poem goes off in another direction, giving two vectors at once--the anticipated projection underneath and the actual wording above.

My interest in not conceptualizing the field of the poem as a unitary plane, and so also not using overall structural programmes: that any prior "principle" of composition violates the priority I want to give to the inherence of surface, to the total necessity in the durational space of the poem for every moment to count. The moment not subsumed into a schematic structure, hence instance of it, but at every juncture creating (synthesizing) the structure. So not to have the work resolve at the level of the "field" if this is to mean a uniplanar surface within which the poem operates. Structure that can't be separated from decisions made within it, constantly poking through the expected parameters. Rather than having a single form or shape or idea of the work pop out as you read, the structure itself is pulled into a moebius-like twisting momentum. In this process, the language takes on a centrifugal force that seems to trip it out of the poem, turn it out from itself, exteriorizing it. Textures, vocabularies, discourses, constructivist modes of radically different character are not integrated into a field as part of a predetermined planar architecture; the gaps and jumps compose a space within shifting parameters, types and styles of discourse constantly criss-crossing, interacting, creating new gels. (Intertextual, interstructural...) (Bruce Andrews has suggested the image of a relief map
for the varying kinds of referential vectors—reference to different domains of discourse, references made by different processes—in some of his work in which words and phrases are visually spaced out over the surface of the page. However, the structural dissonance in these works is counterbalanced by the perspicacious poise of the overall design, which tends to even out the surface tension.)

Writing as a process of pushing whatever way, of making the piece cohere as far as can: stretching my mind— to where I know it makes sense but not why—suspecting relations that I understand, that make the sense of the ready-to-hand—ie pushing the composition to the very limits of sense, meaning, to that razor's edge where judgment/aesthetic sense is all I can go on (knowhow). (Maybe what's to get beyond in Olson's field theory is just the idea of form as a single web, a unified field, one matrix, with its implicit idea of "perception" onto a given world rather than, as well, onto the language through which the world is constituted.) So that the form, the structure, that, finally, is the poem, has emerged, is come upon, is made.

The idea is, to get to that place where all the moving parts are in place, to have the surface tension stretched but not the form lost. Writing is a process of pushing, of making the poem cohere as far as it can: stretching my mind to where I know it's making sense but not why, suspecting relations that I understand, that make sense of the ready-to-hand, of pushing the composition to the very limits of sense, meaning, to that razor's edge where judgment/aesthetic sense is all I can go on (knowhow). (Maybe what's to get beyond in Olson's field theory is just the idea of form as a single web, a unified field, one matrix, with its implicit idea of "perception" onto a given world rather than, as well, onto the language through which the world is constituted.) So that the form, the structure, that, finally, is the poem, has emerged, is come upon, is made.
"It's not snapshots" (moves; don't copy nature), & it's not "the pathetic fallacy" (though it includes much of the artist's process). And it ain't "abstract". (Robert Grenier, Tender Buttons)

starting without a title, just going. starting with Coolidge maybe, get back, why not with Stein or just Zukofsky, get out, his early shorter poems, or with Kruchenykh worry dem Khlebnikov coining of as this bracket, pants, a fresh radish, zaum. is any place a good place to be starting

or with Wittgenstein or chomsky or quine or horse, with a, Hamilton Academicals, bland cheese, an itchy nose, beats ambiguity, or or which foots the abandoned apple of an eye, bill comes to rest between the beds preparing, sense of being in a state, all together, unprepares, well quibbles it at any rate, a multiplicity of angles not a warehouse is rather more rotation. a rotation. TRYING TO BE CENTRED ... ON THE CIRCUMFERENCE as Richard Foreman titles a piece, his theater. pick up the phone. disrupts attention. toasted almost. two Mexican boys had gravitated to the ramuda in obvious envy. else can be done with it. to begin with Coolidge or with Tom Clark's introduction in Big Sky "even the instants disappear". that introduction becoming just as period a response as this is. Coolidge says "sight will not take no" but of course it's ridiculous to isolate one sentence, one glance, one remark, or is it? it's difficult to do sure. of course there are preferences, choices make this not force, make. the difference comes, not as a result, but all the time it's there. can we be specific now please, or what?

"what's to be done and doing it. we don't want a poetry of controlled dignity and propriety, ease & consistency, regularity, uniformity ... for C.S. Lewis, the literary historian, the prosody 'imperfectly' developed by Wyatt 'built a firm metrical highway out of the late medieval swamp'. no doubt Tottel thought he was just helping Wyatt out. by now we see the swampiness of language is not necessarily something to avoid. it's where we are." (Charles Bernstein in Tottel)


T.R.U.T.H.CO. two performers strapped into chairs in turn bolted to a wall high above a street in San Francisco, both scared of heights and speaking long hystorical monologues simultaneously, driving at where? Coolidge talks with Paul Metcalf in the Berkeleyos, maybe with Jed Rasula and Don Byrd, George Quasha and Charles Stein performing simultaneously in invented written languages (dolphins poetics were to follow the quickly flagging ethnopoetics anyway as I understand it), swallows and sips. Steve Boney films hands cracking eggs into a bowl, one frame three frames of that when walking eight of this, two hands, the door open, late afternoon early evening sun colors coming off the porch onto the eggs talks what he's just read playing back to him thru headphones keeps talking, accumulates?, speaks to. on a street corner Ron Silliman reads "Kotjak", six hours, drawing in passers by catch flits off words, phrases, or come back, from whatever, and hear a variation on their passing three hours back, is emphasis. Barrett Watten gives a talk on Shklovsky and the Russian Formalists, Bruce Andrews
hears james brown, charles bernstein and susan laufer at a county fair, arrangements of the Grange, the applepie prizes the sheep. peter inman cheering on the senators (a football team), marshall reese and kirby malone read slowly together or to near the quicker, slightly one jars against the, it's the same text but with a difference, as chris mason reads a text of not harrison ainsworth but havelock ellis, with his right foot in his mouth or a willow speaker playing a recording of a woman's voice reading in his mouth as he speaks or says: "... sound-poet/crazy talker, tingers in his mouth, by transgressing limits of what's art, limits of what's weird, can extend limits of what's normal (he takes long to say stuff but it gives me time to think and i like to watch his tongue)" (chris mason - "learning reading as a second language") hannah welner reads and writes her "clairvoyant journal" for 3 voices and sets the text in 3 type faces, it's how she both sees and hears words, overlapping, butting in, interfering and or interrupting, teaches listening in a different way. jackson mac low, maybe we begin here. an attempt to lessen the imposing i, do any 2 words be inseparable or does bed, for example, apply to lampost as much as sleep or pillow bounces although smoke and fire well, hard shoulder. flatten out or tense up or thread or, it's not irresponsible, it's spontunuity, aimed at the middle class, from the middle class, from the hip? certainly not Diacritics or Substance or even Semiotexte. problems trying to be positive to so many writers in such a small space, but the idea is to enthuse and have more people looking at this work, at its multiplicity and richness, this is social then. angles to spread the words firmly, not talking about the exemplary here, but language - living: "disappearing arts move counter to the virtuoso & the expert, and counter to manipulation, coercion, sentimentality, melodrama, and mystification." (reese/malone introduction to a festival of disappearing art(s)) Lyn hejinian writes in a letter to marshall reese to the mention of poetry as dead not read "but i think quite the opposite - that though the old Romantic notion of the Poet (and hence his or her poetry) must die away with the novel (and for the same reasons), the language of literature (austere, rigorous, demanding as we see it now) comes into its own. so that i see poetry as just beginning". well, really, austere i derange, but as for which that happens to just the opposite of who was. the use of fibonacci series in writing sentences or pieces of sentences or rather: "word's a sentence before it's a word--I write sentences--when words are, meaning soon follows--where words join, writing is--" (ron silliman)

1,2,3,5,8,13,21,34,55,89, how many more sentences to, or take away - the dictionaries, calculators, tv, meet clinton, arekawa, phil glass, steve reich, gracie allen, eugene chadbourne, definitely steve lacy, the world saxophone quartet, the art ensemble of chicago, the records by robert ashley, acconci and robert smithson as writers. i mean coolidge is using geology, read "quartz hearts" as chip by chip, a logging journal or by slides or diesel cools baloney check on rye bent wet two tubs performances of, A-24 zukofsky and "Try! Try!" by frank o'hara. somewhere, the collected philip whalen on the shelves a softspot and most certainly john wiener's "behind the state capitol or cincinnati pike" to which i say, get it any way possible and read it and read it and, but then this is all personal. 3 words in each line, say two nouns and one verb or any such work, task. did you write all that bruce? a different sense of space working memory or even a meteorology. is it not entropy. one thing is this, and this, that here are a deal of writers who are very different and yet who are likely to be lumps together, as shelley and keats are lumps together which is absurd, as wine, peas change the shape of these, a swamp even by emphasising its swampinesses. cook spaghetti or for jot sake starve to death.

the subject of language is the object of language. discovery bringing perception to action. some might give concern a center but i have no
wish to spray such grounds. *is plural I say.*

Steve Mc Caffery likes to hang his tongue out:

"one thing a language centered writing desires is a presentness that language focussed on reference can't provide."

concepts as or of consolidation, a fools' paradise, not to put down fools but paradise. writing has no stages. determination is not alters altars of solicitous or punctual behavioral to termination which is the moment before this becomes a recording. should there be a question mark on the previous sentence, or following this. (?) hokey pokey! champ. how is depth measured and whose measure's it? can this be love?

a study of frustrated sexuality apparent in Victorian punctuation. this lascivious and rhetorically undermined comma. the sort of project laughs over breakfast is forgotten. the film is as fast as perception your variation can make. sometimes shoots one frame, or two of eggs, or seven of water, the hands, backs to eggs. clock, copper, drips, a title - "when flippancy flips you".

Christopher Dewey says of Coolidge:

"the text is an anti-quantum morphemics where each successive unit of meaning re-defines the manifold."

"when I hear all this talk about systems, I want to say: I don't take dictation" (Bruce Andrews in SELF WRITING / I (lucky thought))
The Self Defeating Project: THIS, & KETJAK

Since writing "I" resounds choruses of "aye-aye", that "I"'s been said & done ad infinitum, that what's been said for knowing & seeing is a petty consciousness (a limited view), since Breton refused Dostoevski's invitation to step into yet another room, that Dostoevski's room is bereft of Tender Buttons & quite a different space than that which Reznikof & Co knew, that I's subjects aren't the necessary focus (as with Ponge, "We must then choose real objects, objecting indefinitely to our desires. Objects that we would choose again each day, and not as our decor, our frame; rather as our spectators, our judges; so as to be naturally, neither dancers nor clowns ...."), that the room, the dinner (social relations), the street, the park, the city is the sap of writing aroused as world, that in self's contemporary defeat there is the possibility of an current action, that tells as all that's proxy for noone & nothing, that is what it is (as is)....

That's where THIS is, though this isn't, not entirely, or only somewhat, speech is more than the sum of its parts, so self's hiatus-hermia or grammar & syntax's loud & soft farts, which THIS isn't, or this, not entirely, or only somewhat....

This is to : Ron Silliman's KETJAK, published by THIS Press, in 1978.

This is about
Its first pages appeared in the Prose Poetry issue of THIS magazine in 1975. Though the contributors make the magazine's pace, "prose poetry" is utter misnomer by no 9 in 1979. Indeed, Barrett Watten coins the title WRITING for numbers 7 & 8. Number 9 is anonymous.

Barbara Barracks' pieces (in no 6) turn about I-as-I-writing & the traditional narrator. Michael Davidson's, notwithstanding a Gramsci interpolation, is a master of baroque; his "facts after facts" aren't facts at all, but trappings of articulation, self-ish. Ron Silliman is "facts after facts"; by 1979 that's plainly so.

In THIS 7, 8, & 9, some demonstrate systems; THIS's alumni eye off one another on their sunny graduation day (Robert Grenier, Bob Perelman, Lyn Hejinian). Others enact methods. Clark Coolidge seems at first to be THIS's may-pole; but maybe not. His oeuvre is singular. He's outside of this perspective, though he's definitely on the school's prospectus. It's a school off-course, it's not a school of course. It's not a school of course, but its scholars are writers of the matter of course.

Margin notes, exclamations, dreams, & petite fictions are not rejected in this. THIS does not insist. Thus the dialectical-materialist croons about the eternal charm of myth.

Ron Silliman, then, arms akimbo (KETJAK, Indonesian), smeared or messy (Javanese). KETJAK, a book consisting of 12 paragraphs or sections, 90 pages of writing.

Ketják, a traditional song & dance performed in Bali, story derived from Hindu-Vedic scripture, exclusive to that part of Indonesia. The dance involves a large number of men who stand in a circle performing an exhort-
ative, exorcistic, repetitive chant. The principals include Rama, Sita, & Hanuman. In one of the frames (really "like" stills from an animated cartoon) on the book's cover, is a Balinese spirit referred to in the text, with its face on its stomach. Ron Silliman quoted the entire text of KETJAK "on Saturday September 16, 1978 on the corner of Powell and Market (San Francisco's version of New York's Union Square)." Perhaps this performance was enabled by the growing interaction between writers of the school & artists/performers in the five years since the writing of the book.

1st paragraph is the phrase Revolving door. 2nd para adds a sentence. It's the key to the former's lock: A sequence of objects which to him appears to be a caravan of fellaheen, a circus, begins a slow migration to the right vanishing point on the horizon line. Note also Nouveau Roman's present tense & second-person... The 3rd interposes two others between the initial two. In the 4th paragraph, interposed a sentence between the 2nd para's first & second sentences. And another before the 2nd paragraph's third, which is slightly changed (augmented). Two new sentences before the initial additional sentence, which also undergoes change (eg-dromedaries pulling wagons bearing tiger cages, for camels bearing wagons of bear cages). In the 5th paragraph, a new second sentence (Earth Science), the third sentence a mite fuller than in the preceding paragraph; a new sentence before last paragraph's next; followed by another before last paragraph's next. And so on. Plus an extra sentence ("...vanishing point on the horizon line" no longer the final sentence), We ate them.

In the 6th paragraph, extra sentences/phrases/single words in all the in-betweens.

And in the 7th... Here the performer introduces himself. Or, the writer introduces the performance. Or, the writer is introduced as performance. Thus, A tenor sax is a toy; Write this down in a green notebook; Mention sex; Awake, but still in bed, I listen to cars pass, doors, birds, children are day's first voices; Attention is all.

... The 8th's first interpolation is the line How will I know when I make a mistake. Of course, as a matter of course, he's word perfect. Some clues, The gamelan is not simple. Modal rounders.

And so the paragraphs increase, each line begets another, progenitors shift their feet, change complexion, writer demonstrates history, his story explicates the Genesis, his story accumulates revelation, a language that states his relationship with the world, hommage a Merleau-Ponty.

The 1st paragraph, a single word sentence. The 12th comprises 43 pages, & in excess of 1500 sentences.

Now this isn't the half of it.

I give you Ponge, again (via Silliman's Soup, word first appearing in KETJAK's 8th paragraph), the mutations, the alternative versions, from the magnificent The Notebook of the Pine Woods (in Cid Corman's translation, from THINGS).

And the simultaneity of Claud Simon's Conducting Bodies.

Ah, & from the last gasp of it, taste the truths of it:
Gradually these pages fill, an intentionality like moss (p74)

What would it feel like, poems as real as life. (p84)

Your syntax is a life sentence. (p85)

There is no content here, only dailiness... (p92)

The reading of the poem (shouted, chanted) "on the corner of Fowell & Market", all day that day, sees KETJAK there dispersed -- interposed, interpolated between all the doings of that day -- this world reimbursed. And then, published, called together as a book, begging anew the dailiness, the naturalness, the lifelikeness. Dealing, then, with life, circa 1974, objectively, self-defeatingly, in a neo-realistic way.

Now this is the hole of it. You've still got to read it. Observation, conception, imagination, aside, graffiti; particulars of eating, dressing, promenading; the case, writer versus media, Silliman versus the dancers & clowns....

May/1980
Melbourne

LITTLE NOTE

The reference to the public reading of KETJAK is quoted from Barrett Watten's bibliography to a mini anthology of THIS poets, published in the current number of THE MERRI CREEK OR MERR (No 3, '80).

Bernstein's language has been dried and split. If there were roots, deep roots, they've long ago been done away with, chopped off. The tension that exists in the poems is essentially surface, even to the point of putting a negativeness on what we take the normal rational values to be. Though Bernstein is able to use this state and provide us with a duly viable linguistic stasis. He places commas between words but doesn't intend that they be used for breathing or arrest. They're there as resistances; intrusions, into the narrative, between articles and prepositions to simultaneously slow and impede. But Bernstein doesn't always run the gamut of the language play-game. If he did he'd lose most of the seriousness that his moves deploy. And Bernstein, precluding any criticism that can be put against him, turns out to be a serious writer.

Six poems represented by some seventeen pages make up all of Tuumba 20. It's good enough introduction to see what Bernstein is all about. The poems take, for the main part, a simplistic life-view. The objects of referral are the commonplace. Bernstein doesn't glamourise his structures by romantic rapping. But he does attempt a complexity which, in one instance only, doesn't quite come off. The poem I'm questioning here is titled Umbre; it's the deepest and purest poem in the book but it comes adrift during the closing 9-12 lines. Bernstein attempts the breakdown of an instinctual language which doesn't hold with the textuality of the previous lines.

The other five poems hold together well. They're concise, strict and stripped of everything we'd call decorative and emotive trapping. Emotion is something which Bernstein doesn't consider or parallel. He doesn't appear to be concerned with creating a theatre for himself to perform in. He does, however, present frames in which objects, simplistic objects, are able to be given prominence. What dominates is not the man, the writer, but the framed topology to which the poem has been given as a central core. Bernstein knows where the core of language is and how to find it. He does, on the strength of this collection, know the exact periphery on which the poem is to be approached.
This Predilection for the mind in art. Where did I get it?

Structure is physical combination.

Economy maintains material, accepting it to structure.


Structure is enthused with materials.
Structure is terminal; no surround.

A structure which does not reach of itself for support, is massive. After this, duration is a function of attention.

The words stubbornly insist on their place in the structure. Structure insists on their insistence.

Structure determines - machinates - senses. No thing gets sense without an endowment from structure.

The structure of words is their nascence.

Materials only burnish thought, structure.
Language underpins.

No aura surrounds structure. This constitutes its origin, its responsibility in perpetuation.

An intensification of any effort produces structure.

Thought is the mind's implement for locating structures. The mind retains some, assuming a personality.

Structure's aim in relation to content is to clean it of meaning.

In composition, certain ideas about altering the structure, undercut all need to do the work.

Structure is clean. It aligns the cacographic necessities, revives them.

All writing tends to its horizon: structure. (Not a limit; rather, the aura of the total gestures written and, over and through that, amplified.)

Attention to structure encourages the vertical subtleties.

Structure intercepts with no other textural element. They succumb in relation.

The one imperative is structure.
Structure (like any single word: noun more than adjective? verb more than adverb? noun more than pronoun? preposition more than article? Probably) points (at) itself.

Structure: no question of essences. Essence shines from materials, produced in light of the reading. Structure is, tension over balance.

Structure neither acts, nor is it an active, nor does it receive. It is a delicate stubborn effect produced under the permanence of the relations. It is not related; it stands.

How does it mean? Structure exerts power, which it cannot withdraw.

Structure has no poles, no extremes, no ends. Its balance is held between its side.

Structure is verified as a language, a code, is verified. We test it not by pursuing it but by pushing it; each structure must hold, against our critical effort, to the site it claims, otherwise it lies in its waste of space.

The structure of the materials are inseparable. They are the effort.

Structure is the one thing.
Structure is non-indictable. It is an urge manifest.

Structure is necessarily tautological.

When the structures emerge the materials arrive. When the materials converge, the structure has emerged.

If perception, the structure, doesn't come through language, there is no evidence that it has come through thought.

Structure leaves no time for an other thing because it withdraws to where it is, and is then found to be exactly where it must be allowed to remain.

Structure executes a project.

There is an element of life in structure which is absent from all other life.
Structure is the altogether latent of possibilities. Its presence. When it is reached.

And structure is nomenclature; a meeting. It is absent. Before and after. Structure hovers: its presence in the absence it empties.

Structure bends the line of sight, sometimes only very slightly, sometimes acutely. Thus it is recognized.

I, a private and concrete individual, hate structures, and if I reveal Form in my way, it is in order to defend myself.

(Previously appeared in L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E No 11, January 1980)
SOME READING

(A select bibliography to aid further investigation; NB NOT exhaustive.)

BRUCE ANDREWS: Praxis (Tuumba, 1978); Film Noir (Burning Deck, 1978).
RAF APPELBAUM: Extremities (The Figures, 1978); The Invention of Hunger (Tuumba 22, 1979).
BIG SKY, ed. Bill Berkson, Box 389, Bolinas, CA 94924
BURNING DECK, eds. R & K Waldrop, 71 Elmgrove Ave, Providence, RI 02906.
CLARK COOLIDGE: Space (Harper & Row, 1970); Oflengths (Tottel's 11, 1973); Suite V (Adventures in Poetry Edns, 1973); The Maintains (This Press, 1975); Polaroid (Adventures in Poetry/Big Sky, 1976); Quartz Hearts (This Press, 1978); Own Face (Angel Hair Books, Flanders Rd, Henniker, NH 03242, 1978); 8 Poems (Un Poco Loco, 1979). Also special issue of BIG SKY (No 3, 1972) devoted to him, and Symposium on Clark Coolidge, ed. Stillman (Membrane Press, PO Box 11601, Shorewood, Milwaukee, WI 53211, 1976).
RAY DI PALMA: Culva Sails (Sun & Moon, 1978); PLANH (Cassement Books, 67 Morton St, NY 10014, 1979); Observatory Gardens (Tuumba 24, 1979).
LARRY EIGNER: Lined Up Bulk Sense (Burning Deck, 1979); Country/ Harbor/ Quiet/Act/Around, selected prose works (This Press).
KENNEDY ELMSLIE: Communications Equipment (Burning Deck, 1979).
THE FIGURES, c/o SPD, 1636, Ocean View Avenue, Kensington, CA 94707.
MICHAEL GOTTLEIB: Local Colour/8idetic Deniers (Other Pubns, c/o A HUNDRED POSTERS, 1978).
ROBERT GRENIER: Series (This Press, 1978); Sentences (Whale Cloth Press, c/o H Waltuch, 60 Kinnaird St, Cambridge MA 02139, 1978).
CARLA HARRYMAN: Percentage (Tuumba 23, 1979).
LYN HEJINIAN: A Mask of Motion (Burning Deck, 1977); Gesualdo (Tuumba 15, 1978); Writing is an Aid to Memory (The Figures, 1978).
A HUNDRED POSTERS, ed. Alan Davies, 826 Union St, Brooklyn, NY 11215. Issues to No 38 (Feb 1979) available; publication suspended due to lack of funds, but will start up again soon. Also apparently defunct mag OSCULIST WITNESSES from same address. 100 Posters No 14 (Feb 77) contains Ron Silliman's essay "Disappearance of the Word, Appearance of the World".
P INMAN: Platin (Sun & Moon, 1979).
INTERSTATE, ed. Lewis Essary, Box 7068, University Sta, Austin, TX 78712.
MICHAEL LALLY: Catch My Breath (Salt Lick Press, Quincy, Ill., 1978); In the Hood (Titanic Books, Washington DC, 1978); Just Let Me Do It (Vehicle Edns, c/o A Levitt, 238 Hott St, NY 10012, 1978).

LEGEND - Legend is a 250pp 5-way collaborative work by BRUCE ANDREWS, CHARLES BERNSTEIN, RAY DI PALMA, STEVE MCCAFFERY, RON STILLMAN, to be published August 1980 by L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E.


THE MERRI CREEK, OR NERO, ed. Kris Hemensley, 24 Urquhart St, Westgarth, Victoria 3070, Australia.


POD, ed. Kirby Malone, 3022 Abell Ave, Baltimore, MD 21218.

REALITY STUDIOS - previous relevant issues: Vol 1 No 1 (James Sherry), Vol 1 No 7 (Charles Bernstein), Vol 2 No 1 (Ray DiPalma). Also, ALEMNIC 8 had Lyn Hejinian, Rae Armantrout, and previous issues of ALEMNIC have featured Alan Davies and James Sherry.

MARSHALL REEMS: Writing (Pod Books, 1980).

KIT ROBINSON: The Dolch Stanzas (This Press, 1976); Down & Back (The Figures, 1978).

ROOF, ed. James Sherry, The Segue Foundation, 300 Bowery, NY 10012. Issues 1-6 available (to Summer 1979); now defunct or dormant. Has published most of the writers mentioned in this RS, including selections from Legend in No III.


RON STILLMAN: Sitting Up, Standing, Taking Steps (Tuumba 17, 1978); Ketjak (This Press, 1978).

SUN & MOON, ed. D. Messerli, 4330 Hartwick Rd, No 418, College Park, MD 20740.

TEXT, ed. Mark Karlins, 552 Broadway-6th Fl, NY 10012.


TOTTEI'S, ed. Ron Stillman, 341 San Jose, San Francisco, CA 94110.

TUUMB A, ed. Lyn Hejinian, 2639 Russell St, Berkeley, CA 94705.


ROSARTE WADRO: The Road is Everywhere, or Stop This Body (Open Places, Stephens College, Columbia, Missouri); Psyche & Eros (Spectacular Diseases, 83b London Rd, Peterborough, Cambs., 1980).

BARRETT WATTEN: Decay (This Press, 1977); Plasma Paralleles "X" (Tuumba 21, 1979).

HANNAH WEBER: Little Books/Indians (Segue, c/o ROOF, 1980).
A list of related writers might include:

ANNE-MARIE ALBIACH, JOHN ASHEBERY, ROLAND BARTHES, WALTER BENJAMIN, ROBERT CREELEY, JACQUES DERRIDA, DICK HIGGINS, EDMOND JABLE, ROBERT KELLY, CHARLES OLSON, JEROME ROSENBERG (his various anthologies particularly), F. DE SAUSSEUR, GERTRUDE STEIN (perhaps the most important influence of all), LOUIS ZUKOFSKY,..... RUSSIAN FUTURISTS.

Current British poets in a similar vein would include ANTHONY BARNETT, ROD MENGHAM, TOM RAWORTH, JOHN WILKINSON.... but of course relatedness can be as loose as you wish, in which case

---

REALITY STUDIOS ANNOUNCES

the publication of

TILTH DUB

by Ken Edwards

a deconstruction/alternative version/sketch/flip side
of/to/for/of his own Galloping Dog Press book TILTH

8pp mimeo/xerox text collage Edition of 100 ISBN: 0 9507018 0 7
Price: £0.45 + 15p p&p (free for postage to regular RS subscribers)

REALITY STUDIOS SLAPDASH PRODUCTION, April 1980: 75 Balfour St, SE17
Is this really the work of a Wild Life Warden?

---

Regarding an item in "Publications Received" (next page) -

David Miller has asked us to include the following note: "Background Music was released in an edition requiring extensive correction of mistakes (or an erratum-slip) and additional notations by hand of where certain poems should end. Copies which may be in circulation without these alterations should be considered incomplete."
PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Books

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY PUBLISHERS GROUP, 1 Gower St, London WC1E 6HA -
Robert HERSHON: The Public Hug, cloth £7.20, pbk £3.60.
Walter SUBLETTE: The Resurrection on Friday Night, cloth £2.20.

Charles BERNSTEIN: Poetic Justice (Pod Books, 3022 Abell Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21218, USA) £3.50.

Ju DESBOROUGH: Mind and Mindman 2 (Crow Press, 74 Chapel Ln, Leeds 6) 35p each.

Eugen DORFLA & Friedrich SEIFERT: Censored Mistletoe (S-Editions, 11 Richmond Ave, Feltham, Middx TW14 9SG), tr. fr. German by Freddie Sail, 70p.

GALLOPING DOG PRESS, 3 Otterburn Terrace, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 3AP -
Ken EDWARUS: Tillth, 75p.
Phil MAILLARD: Portraits, 75p.
Chris TORRANCE: The Diary of Palug's Cat (Book III of The Magic Door) £1.25.

Alan HALSEY: Tetralyke (Back Numbers Edn, 15 Church Terrace, Hay-on-Wye, Hereford) 75p.


Tony JACKSON: Piar Five Box Tick (Laundering Room Press, 38 Rokeby Terrace, Heaton, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 5ST) 1976, no price.

Tony JACKSON: Shots (Frog Press, 7 Cross View Terrace, Neville's Cross, Durham) 60p.

David MILLER: Background Music (Tangent Books, Wayne Cottage, Chagford, Newton Abbot, Devon) 60p.

Rosmarie WALDROP: Psyche & Eros (Spectacular Diseases, 83b London Rd, Peterborough, Cambs.), with illustrations by Robert Clark, £1.00.

X PRESS, 15 The Valdrons, Croydon CR0 4HB -
David CARR: Mum There's a Man in This Coat, 30p.
Paul Gogarty: The Accident Adventure, 50p.
Cory HARDING: Paper Tales, or the confessions of a cheap hand-towel supplier and The Sadness of My Home-Made Frock, 30p each.

Gad HOLLANDER: Page, 50p.

Yann LOVELOCK: The Bordesley Green Haitique, 50p.

Ian ROBINSON: Blown Footage, 50p.

Ken SMITH: The joined-up writing, 50p.

Martin THOM: 19 Songs, 30p.

X Press also distributed Little Caesar mag edited by Gerard Malanga, no 9 £2.50, no 10 £1, payable to Cory Harding.

ZUNNE HEFT, c/o 4 Bower Street, Maidstone, Kent ME16 8SD -
Paul BUCK: xxxx 5 (from xxxx 1 - 9) 60p.

Allen FISHER & Ulli MCCARTHY: Intermediate Spirit Receiver, 2 parallel books, one xeroxes one writing, 60p each.

Harry LANE: First Footing Thirst, 60p.
E E VONNA-MICHELL: Willow Hents This Hand Wrapped Dneath Some Stitching Wire, 60p.

and from same stable, Fakenham LOX: 8 books downstairs think, (topital leaves).
Magazines

ALP NEWSLETTER, May 1980 (Assn of Little Presses, 262 Randolph Avenue, London W9), obtainable by joining ALP, as is POETRY AND LITTLE PRESS INFORMATION with listings compiled by Peter Hodgkiss, which can also be obtained separately (40p per copy, £2.00 for 4 issues post free).

EDITOR ANONYMOUS 4, May/June 80 (Joe Ward, 23 Lymfield Drive, Bradford, West Yorks, BD9 6DX) 30p. Muttal, Henri and others.

FIGS 3 (Tony Baker, 2 Kepier Gatehouse, Durham DH1 1LB) 60p? Edwards/Fisher/Hyatt/Benveniste/Paul Smith/Griffiths/Randell/Hall.


LOBBY 13 & 14 (March & May 1980) (c/o Lynn M, 17 Warkworth St, Cambridge CB1 1BG) £1.00 for 5 issues. Poems, reviews, articles by Hammersley, Wilkinson, Fisher, Upton, Cheek, etc.


NOT POETRY 1, Spring 1980 (Peter Hodgkiss, 3 Otterburn Terrace, Newcastle upon Tyne) 75p, £3.00 for 4 issues. K Smith/Pickard/Fisher/Sherry/Halsey/Pryor/Pell contribute a variety of prose writings recommended.

FEEDING TOM 2 & 3 (15 The Waldrons, Croydon, CR0 4HB, Surrey).

SMOKE 11 (Windows Project, 23a Brent Way, Halewood, Liverpool L26 9XH) £1.00 for 6 issues.

SPECTACULAR DISEASES 4 (Paul Green, 83b London Rd, Peterborough, Cambs.) 75p. P Smith/Pryor/Randall/Andre/Matthews/Finch/McCarrthy/Wheale/Vas Dias.

Catalogues

INTERNATIONAL CONCRETE POETRY ARCHIVE FIRST CATALOGUE May 1980 (ICPA, Liberal Studies Dept, Centre for Mediaeval & Renaissance Studies, St Michael's Hall, 31 Queen St, Oxford OX1 1ER) 90p. Invaluable reference work put together by Paula Claire.

Cassettes

RE-VERB CASSETTES, 18 Goshen Rd, Torquay TQ2 6BB - first three in series are

R3 VERB 1, RE VERB 6 and REM VERB Sampler, all featuring the work (words & saxophone) of Paul A GREEN. £1.75 each.

Please add a reasonable amount for postage & packing when ordering publications. Useful mail order addresses are: Alan Halsey, 15 Church Terrace, Hay-on-Wye, Hereford; Nick Kimbrell, 16a Burleigh Parade, London N14; Paul Green, 83b London Rd, Peterborough, Cambs - write for lists. NB The latter can supply all Burning Deck publications listed last issue & indeed many other US small press publications.

Extreme restrictions on space & time this issue do not allow for longer reviews. However, some of the above may be considered at greater length in RS volume 3.