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Cover illustration: "Poem for the North West Territories" (No 10) by BOB GORDON.

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| AN INTERVIEW WITH BRION GYSIN |

BRION GYSIN: How does the Dreamachine work? Can it be described specifically?

BRION GYSIN: Oh yes, very scientifically. I had the actual experience, in the back of a bus, driving along a row of trees that was spaced exactly as was necessary to produce the effect with the sun setting behind the trees. And I closed my eyes, and I had what I thought was a spiritual experience. Like Mr. Saul on his way to Damascus about to become St. Paul, same thing happened to him and presumably for the very same reason. He must have been riding on the back backboard of the chariot like that, and gone down a row of trees, horses going at just the right speed like that, and he closed his eyes and he saw all those crosses.

Bam bam bam bam bam.

The present version of the machine, which is being made by the Swiss in a limited edition of 20, is a sort of optimum pattern of an open cylinder. What we had done originally was a cylinder with just the exact slots. And then I made one like a collision where each row was a different speed. And then I developed this one whereby the incidence of curves produced every one of those gradations between 8 and 13 flickers a second, because that's where it is, it's in the Alpha Band. In fact it is a complete exposition of the Alpha Band. And you see so many things in there after the hundreds of hours that I have looked, that you get to a place which is real dreaming, where apparently it affects the hypothalamus, in the very back part of the original bottom brain or somewhere like that, and that rarely happens the first time around. The only person that it ever happened to the first time around was old Madame Rubinstein, with whom I had a long romance about the Dreamachine. And Madame would say, "Oh yes, I had a boat trip. Oh yes, I'm in a speed boat between Venice and the airport. Oh, I'm taking the train in Venice. Oh, I'm on a..." And this like that. But she's the only person that I've known who really just saw them all like movies.

But I would go even so far as to think that it's possible that everything that can be seen is seen only in the Alpha Band. Because you see all the symbols of all the religions, you see like dreams, you see like movies. Maybe that's really all that we can see and that's where it's stored in our brains, within that speed area.

JH: What brought on the realisation of the Alpha Band?

BRION GYSIN: That was in the late '60s and early '70s when they first had an electroencephalograph going that showed a rather complex...they
had 8 channels going, I think they then even had 16, and then somebody brought out a 32 machine, and... First of all, in any science once you have a result, the next thing to do is to try to change that result. So, they spent a long time, 2 or 3 years, trying to change the result. For example, they gave people electric shock, half a volt and so forth, or they asked them to do mental arithmetic... they found no change in the pattern, it didn't depend apparently on what you were thinking. And then, within that, they discerned a band that was particular, but some of it did change off and become like a regular pattern running through the rest of the weave, because they had that many electrodes on people's heads. And they called it the Alpha Band when they saw that it changed but it went between 9 and 13 pulses or interruptions of light a second. And that below that... for example, below 8 they're down into delts and thetas, which give you a very luggy, very unpleasant feeling maybe like those ultrasound effects that people are talking about. That we read out of a book by Gray Walter, who is an American also from St Louis but who happened to work and spend his life in the Bristol neurological centre in the west of England. He was the man that invented the thinking mouse and things like that, the toy mouse that could learn. He made the thing electronically in such a way that it could not just run to a certain number and back again like that, it could make a mistake and then correct that mistake. He was really into it and all sorts of other things. William (Burroughs) went to a lecture of his, why he'd gotten into a very Arthur Clarke sort of area. I never met him and he never had any other effect on me except that one thing he said, just in half a sentence, that people who are subjected to interruptions of light between 9 and 13 a second reported experiences of colour and pattern. I said, "Oh, wow, that's it!" So, Ian (Somervill) was back studying mathematics at Cambridge and wrote to him and said, "How can we make it at home? I mean, this is the problem. How can we do it with just what we have got?" So when he came back the next holidays to the Beat Hotel where we were staying, we didn't have enough power. We had three rooms, Burroughs in one room, Ian in another, and me in a third, and we sort of ran wires loose out the windows and everything so we could get enough. And that's where it first started, we made some very beautiful machines that got lost. I made them and it was Ian's... he was very good with all that sort of cutting and handling, very expert. We did a lot of shit together, a lot of remarkable things.

JH: So that has evolved up to this point, when your present one is made.

BG: It's gone much further than anything he ever saw. The last things that he saw were more like the one that's over in the museum (the Centre Pompidou). They bought one and I agreed to call it prototype.

JH: What are they going to do with it?

BG: I wish I knew. Its future is very hopeful because the patron of the machine is the new director of Beaubourg (the Centre Pompidou), Dominique Bosco. In fact, he's the one who first put the price on it. Originally there was a space allotted for it on the fourth floor and this didn't happen. Because unless you're at it every day... you have to work, work, work.

JH: But even all the earlier versions work along the same lines?

BG: They all produce the same effect, but this is the ultimate artefact, or pre-ultimate. It's being handled by Karl Laszlo, who is a big private dealer and enthusiast, and it was he who wanted to do something with me in general, and we came to the idea that he would just occupy himself with the 'Dreamachine'. Because it takes quite a bit of doing, to get all those pieces made and all. Nobody wants to do it any more, like bending plastics and such, it's very difficult to find anyone. It's a private production of 20 different machines.

JH: What about mass production?

BG: Mass production right away has always been the question, and was even in the 1960s, when first of all Phillips was interested in the idea, and some people in America and toymakers. And when they looked into it, they found that the least they could begin with - that was 1965, a long time ago, but - then, they thought it should be 30,000 units to begin with. And where were you going to get 30,000 little motors? What use was it going to be? How were you going to package it? And above all, how much shelf space was it going to take up? Because then you imagine 25-50,000 boxes so big, well, you could put so many diamond bracelets in there and make so much more money out of it. Or even books maybe, because there are a lot of publishers who are into un-books and non-books and anti-books, and all the companies that own the pulp and who own the forests from which they make the pulp, etcetera. I met all those people, everyone of them, I have all those problems stored away in the back of my head and that's what held it up for all these years, obviously. So the first real breakthrough was Laszlo saying "Yes, I will do it, I will make this number." Because naturally one would like to make one smaller, like a sort of bedside lamp, for example. And I'm not at all sure that I'm necessarily going to profit very much from this. But I'm sure that it's going to happen, at some time or another, I've known this for 20 years. But it's very difficult to make happen.

JH: Did you have one in Tangier?

BG: I never had one working there. Because by the time I got back from Tangier from all these hassles and wrangles... I was 10 months meeting all those... everybody from sorts of ethnic culture toymakers to real crocodiles in the slaw of the museum-type toymakers. I mean, they're a horrendous lot and weirdo people, really very strange, and I got to know their problems, at least they explained what it was. It wasn't a question of selling them the idea. Yeh, they got the idea right away. But then how do you actually do it, what.

BG: Have you had any retrospectives of your paintings in Paris?

BG: No, only one small one that was put together by some friends of mine. Because I knew I wasn't going to come back here, this is foolishness too. I mean, that's why my situation is like it
is. You know, you're supposed to be here all the time, you're not supposed to go running away for 23 years in Morocco. Or if you're in New York, you're supposed to be on the New York scene and you're supposed to be part of the show, in a way. That's what you're getting paid for, is to be there to be part of the show. And I have sinned against all of these things. Stupidly, in some ways, I realize that it's a handicap. But these things are sort of getting ironed out just very late in life. It's lucky that they're being ironed out at all.

JW: But it was your own interest that took you to other places.

BG: Yeh. An it was also that whole Beat Hotel thing, from which this (the Brussels) came and from which the cut-ups came...and it was arranged to get his ass out of America and we put together The Third Kind in 1964-5. And then both of us decided we couldn't make it in New York, and so we came back to Europe and William set up in London. I said, "Oh, I'd sooner die than live in London", and I went back to Morocco. And then I really left Morocco again only in '73. I left because friends of mine with whom I had left all of the escrituras (writing-paintings) canvases, which were all done at the Beat Hotel between 1959 and 1963, and lots more, they put together a show - like a homage - in a gallery on the same street next door to where the Beat Hotel was, on the rue Git-le-Coeur. It was really from their hearts that they did it, so I was very impressed, and I said, "Oh, I'm just got to come back and take care of the store", that's it, and then I come back to take care of the business, and then I got sort of moved down by cancer and knocked out of the scene for a while. So now I'm just scrabbling again. Things are definitely coming together, but they've hung up for 20 years.

JW: Does your visual work divide itself up into periods?

BG: Yes, very much.

JW: Are you still painting?

BG: ...Almost ground to a halt, I must say. First of all, because I still enjoy and writing more. Also, just because it wasn't working. I didn't have a gallery. I didn't have an income from it... Let's see, the proper answer is that...my work then oddly enough slipped off into photography...

JW: In relation to your escrituras paintings, have you had any affinity with people such as Henri Michaux?

BG: Well, it has made kind of a school, really. It turned out that everybody got this sort of message of calligraphy. It came to me through the war, because I was a translator of Japanese. That's how I got interested in it, it wasn't from the point of view of painting at all. After the war, I came back here as a Fulbright fellow, not as a painter Fulbright, I mean as a writer, historian. During the war I met a cat who was the great-grandson of Uncle Tom, the man who told his life story to Harriet Beecher Stone. And so, I wrote a book about Josiah Henson. And then from there, because the escaped slave went to Canada and founded agricultural colonies there, and so I wrote The History of Slavery in Canada.

BG: And it was on the basis of that that I got my Fulbright. And never went back... About the same time along with the repetitive poems, I was looking for something that would repeat graphically. And so in Rome in 1960, I found a housepainter's roller which then recut to produce this (shows a print which bears a curious resemblance to the "repeated" structure repetitions of Beaubourg). So when I saw the plan for this thing (Beaubourg), I said, "Well, it seems to me that back in about..." So I became very interested in this place across the road. So I began...

BG: How was it you came to be learning Japanese?

BG: Well, I first of all started out in the American army and it wasn't working out very well, and I saw that I could easily just sort of be shipped out into some fucking Pacific island or something, I joined the paratroopers and then I broke my wrist on the very first training jump.

BG: What made you join the paratroopers?

BG: It was a gun, man. Everybody worthwhile was there. Oh yeh, it was a great gun of people. Real crazy, every hothead insane person from the East Coast was there, and the South. Anyhow, that didn't last very long. So I went off and got myself a transfer to the Canadian army, by all sorts of fingaling around. And it was they who started me on the Japanese... Except for Henry Luce himself, the only other people that I've known that came in those kind of practically three generations of missionaries in China and Japan, sort of people, all the others were Canadians, including the one that the Chinese have made their great war hero and named after... Bethune. The Bethunes were Canadians, and there were some Bethunes in school with no, nephews and whathinot were there. One cat's father knew 45,000 characters, and he used to get up at 5 in the morning every day of his life and he would wear out a pen with a quill pen and named after... Bethune. Bethune were Canadians, and there were some Bethunes in school with no, nephews and whathinot were there.
have I stepped into? I have great respect for those charming
people, but I'm not learning it all." I mean, so really the only
thing that I got out of it was the way of holding a brush, and
the use of a brush, and the language of a brush, and the whole
business of running ink on the paper, and you know the whole thing
that everybody sort of later got themselves into, sort of Gary
Snyder, ephery-Snyder things...

JW: Were you painting at the time too?

BG: Drawing and stuff, you can't do much in the army. But yeh, sure,
I have things from that era too.

JW: And you were in your early 20s when you were first in the Surrealist
Drawings show of 1937?

BG: I was younger than that.

JW: Had you studied painting in school?

BG: No! I wasn't allowed to, I wasn't allowed to have any painting
lessons. In fact, to this day I can't imagine what anybody learns
in an art school. I'm sure there are very useful short cuts and
stuff like that perhaps, handicrafts...And it is a bitch to have
to teach yourself, that's a fact... (Searching, shows us the
drawings from that show) Here's what I did. This is the stuff
that I had hanging in the show that
Shuard came and unhung at the orders of Breton. It was happening
like that, just run like a political party - inspections, and
terrorism, and trials and whatnot. I never got the full trial, I
was thrown out without a trial.

JW: Why were you thrown out?

BG: That's it. Normally you can find out if you have a trial, and you
can therefore, "What's the charge, please?" and stuff like that.
So it never got to that. I just found myself on the sidewalk.

JW: It was more of an artistic thing than a personality thing, or was it
both?

BG: It was a personality thing, yeh, completely. You had to know
Breton, really. And he knew I just didn't take him seriously.
(Showing drawings.) Stuff like that, it was very surrealistic. I
was 18, 19. It's very influenced by Dali, pretty evident. A little
Montague thrown in. Fairly honourable. And then some prints here,
also very surrealist...masturbation symbolism or something like
that...anyhow, such was the epoch. And then I went to America, and
I had to go to Cuba and wait for the re-entry apparently, and all
that kind of shit, so with the Florida Keys and things there I made
some things that looked like that to me...There was no colour
photography in those days, and so there were special links that
people invented to colour photographs with.

JW: And from there eventually to the things you did in Morocco, and
then to the scrittures.

BG: That's right. And then the scrittures really when I got here in

Paris, '59 or '55. It was in the air anyhow. Tobey, whose work
I had never seen at all, and didn't come from the same source
as I'd said it had to me...because I'd had a very unfortunate
experience with magico. Somebody had done me a black magic thing
and I'd actually had the caballistic square of paper where you
write across this way and then you turn the paper and you write
across the other way, and then you've got the thing locked in and
it happens. I thought, yeh, how about using Japanese calligraphy
in this direction, which is without changing, and then just running
an Arab line across it and so I had a grid. And so that's how
that all came into being for me.

JW: Those were the pieces you could look at from any direction.

BG: That's right...And then I ran into the idea of the permutations
in poetry. So I carried that over to painting, where I had a grid
and then I cut and permuted it to make a big picture.

JW: Is that all actual writing in the scrittures payments?

BG: You mean, can I read it and it says so and so? No. But it has
most of the sort of magic things of writing in it. The attack of
the brush to the paper, or the pen to the thing like that.

JW: Do you know how to write Arabic too?

BG: Yeh, but I've never learned properly. Again, the real reason there
was because I thought, "Oh, if I really learn this properly, then
I will be writing sacred texts. And I don't want to be doing that."
I later thought that it was a very good idea. It's very funny, in that
book of Dizzy Gillespie's (To Bop or Not to Bop), he says, "There's
only one thing I really regret in my whole life, was that somebody
once made me put on a funny turban and pretend that I was praying
to a God, because I realise that I was making fun of one's
religion and it isn't at all what I meant. And I think that a lot of the
trouble I had came from that." And of course he's right, a lot of
the trouble came from the image as it went out, these proliferators,
and his whole public image changed. They were going, "Ah, he's
one of those Muslim cats", and so he got less work...

JW: I've always been partially at least inventive as well, and
it doesn't please me unless it's that. So, the answer to all that
in a way is that getting into photography sort of - click - that
is the end. Like, I'm not going to do any more photography, it's
a fact. So it's sort of because a bit of a dead end for me.

JW: Does that feel like a dead end in the visual work?

BG: Well, that's why I say I jumped on all the writing stuff that I
had hanging up. Like, I have a manuscript that's been going on
for 12 years, I realise. Yeh, when I get an angry letter from
Doublay asking for some of their money back or something, I
realise that I get an advance as long as 12 years ago on this book,
where is it.

JW: What's this book on?

BG: On the history of all of us. And the Best Hotel and everybody
involved in how it happened. But I had lots of difficulty. Again,
I just insisted to myself that I had to be inventive. Have you
read The Process?
B G: No, I couldn't ever find it. I saw the French version.

J H: I did a lot of translating myself, but that's another story, or so I thought. The girl is brilliant who did it. She found shit in French that I never would have found. But it's just exactly the kind of swinging along the way I swing too. She's a brilliant translator, and she's a very strange girl who changes her name every six months and calls herself things like Lydia Lunch and Sophia Sandwich, and things like that, very strange chick. And she managed to make French swing, which is no easy job.

B G: The Process is after Morocco?

J H: It's all Moroccan, everything...

B G: Is it coming back in print in English?

J H: No. Look what somebody just sent me. It says, "We heard from Throbbing Gristle (a punk group who wrote music specifically for use with the Dreamachine) that you didn't even have a copy of your own book, so we're sending you one. We just ripped this off the library of Los Angeles." I thought, "Shit, man, I think I better send it back to the library." More likelihood of... It's Monte Cassanaza. (Plays Cassanaza's musical rendition of Gysin's permutational poem, "Kick That Habit, Man").

J H: So what got you into jazz?

B G: Yeh, yez, it's kind of a sad story. I've been thinking about it recently. In those great 22nd Street days I was always on the wrong side of the street. I was always at the Cloop or Tony's or wherever, which was just exactly opposite. I'd just go dashing over like that to ask Billie Holiday where to score and I remember John cage and me, she gave me the key to her flat, and we took a cab -- up, you let yourself in, and on the piano there's this great big lamp and you unscrew the lamp and you reach in and you find a couple of joints. And instead of sitting at her number, really, and "Touche would drag me back to listen to something he had written for a Broadway show that he was going to be doing. He couldn't read music, but he could really hammer away and imitate everybody else. I spent all of my musical time in New York on Broadway because I worked on Broadway the first two years I got there. I was Irene Sharaff's assistant on a whole bunch of musicals: By Jupiter, Lady in the Dark, Banjo Eyes, a whole bunch of them.

J H: How long were you in New York?

B G: From '40 to '49. With time away in the army. And naturally, because of the way it turned out for me, I heard less of bebop starting and I heard of William Burroughs only over the telephone. Because John Cage and me had a German secretary who was William's first wife. This German lady with a monocle and a manlike moustache. William had married her in Athens, as a matter of fact, just to get her entry into the States. And she had by this time become John Cage's... John Cage and me had made a whole lot of money from "Taking a Chance on Love" and "Dabin in the Sky" and those sorts of things. He'd say, "I'm making more money than the President of the United States", and "If you don't throw your money out the window, it won't come in the door anymore", things like that. He really lived like that. Zoom! And he wouldn't be bothered, dig, with bebop. He'd come over to listen to Mabel Mercer singing ballads on the other side of the street, things like that... One day I was at Touche's house and the telephone rang, and she goes to answer the telephone. And 'Touche says, "It's that in your... William Burroughs, don't let him up here because he's got a gun!" And I thought, "Who-who's this William Burroughs? I mean, he's married to the man. Come on, he must be kidding." And he says, "Yeh, yeh, she's married to this dangerous lunatic and I don't want him up here." I said, "Ooh,"

J H: That was the first time you'd heard of him?

B G: First time I ever heard of him.

J H: Did you meet him at that time?

B G: No. No, no... One other bad thing that happened to my ears was getting hooked up with Virgil Thomson and that whole gang. Like he was Pope, he was Papa, in New York in the '40s, when everybody had gotten there. Well, here was Virgil back from his successful tour of Europe et cetera, and he set himself up. He had Mrs whatever her name was who owned the Herald Tribune at the time, Sulzbeger's aunt, Ochs I think, and she just hung on every word of Virgil's and she set him up. He had two pages on Saturday and a whole page every day of the week on music. Well, it gave me music in America a big kick in the ass, because he refused to review anything that did not play any one of the young composers, at least one piece of theirs.

J H: With your permutations, and the other work using repetition, had you been influenced by any of the Gertrude Stein things, or did you know her or work with her?

B G: Well, it was considered anti-surrealist to frequent Gertrude Stein or Cocteau or Oise, or any of those people, dig. Maybe that's how I got thrown out of the surrealist group. I mean, what were the terms? It would have been, I don't know, some kind of court-martial for bad attitude, something like that.

J H: Because your interest was more eclectic.

B G: Right, right. And I never did dig those autocrats setting themselves up like that. Any more than Virgil in New York, and so then I got to know all the classical composers, everybody in that whole gang. Except Henry Cowell, who was the most interesting of all, but he was away, he got a seven-year run for advances to a sailor in a toilet in San Francisco. And he'd been seven years in jail before he appeared back on the musical scene. Seven years.

J H: How did you come upon the permutations idea?

B G: Well, mine was a knockout discovery for me. In The Doors of Perception Huxley quotes the famous divine tautology, "I am that I am", which is supposed to be what Jehovah said. And if you've read Velikowski on the subject, he thinks that there was an actual event that took place over a period maybe as long as 25 years and sort of in the third millennium when the whole Sinai desert
I'll say "I am that I am that I am" (speeds it into abstract sound). That it had the sort of vibrations that were happening in this idea... Burroughs thinks that what we now consider Venus to have been a comet that entered the galaxy and then got caught into our system, but as recently as that, and that there is a folk memory of that time. And actually I have some carpets hanging up as a collection of zig-zag meteors and everything for a period of about 25 years in the third or fourth millennium, and that people really remember it. And that at that time indeed, the desert, you could hear it saying "I am that I am that I am" (speeds it up) and that it followed the whole idea that came from. So, I saw it on paper and it said, "I - am - that - I - am." And I thought, "Ah, it looks a bit like the front of a Greek temple", only on the condition that I put the biggest word in the middle. So, I'll just change them others around, "am I", in the corner of the architecture.

And then I realized as soon as I did this, it asked a question. "I am that, am I?" And I said, "Wow, I've touched the oracle!

So then I turned the next one, and I said, "Oh, all the way along it has to do this." And from then on then I did it with the BBC, those two versions with the BBC in 1960. One is like this, it goes around around, and it goes out further out further out, and ends quiet. And the other one has a voice that begins very slow and the whole comes in, and then two voices come in, and then go out.

JW: Are there recorded versions of this work?

BG: Scattered, or less. And not united at all, that work now. The Throbbing Gristle boys are anxious to redo all that, to find it all and whatnot. They are bringing out a double record album of all the cut-up material that still exists and they know that there was a bunch of tapes. Well, some of them have been sold, quite a lot a- - but enough exists for that to be put together. But just my... "The Permutated Poems" was a 23-minute programme and I don't have a tape all the way through of that. Because that has the very important pistol poem in there. I come to the BBC with a beautiful shot of a cannon that I had recorded in Morocco. And they said it was too long, which of course it was, we had to get something sharp on the tape. They said, "We have a pistol here that we use for haunted houses, murder scenes, and things like that. Would you like to hear it?" So I said, "Yes, that's the only one you've got?" They said, "Tell no, we've actually got another one of those." I listened to all of their pistols and I picked one of their pistols and I said, "Record it for me at one metre away, at two metres away, three, four, five, -- and then we just play it and permute that. And then we take the whole thing and double it back on itself like that. And it was, "Oh... wow... there... ah." So it took quite a while to do, as you can imagine. And that whole piece has unfortunately been cut-up and the whole thing as it's supposed to be doesn't exist any more at all.

JW: I'm surprised that all that isn't together.

BG: I haven't been minding the store!

......(speaking of Jajouka musicians)...Hami, who is the hero, villain and mispring of my novel (The laugh...), he really exists. In fact he exists so strongly that just this very morning he came bounding through the sail. In the book he's just called Hamid, but everything in the book is true. (Laughs) Everything. (Repose) "Dear Eron, I look for mail from you, please! All is complaining too. I don't want anything. Regards, grunting and my finest salutations, from Hamri, the painter of Morocco." And this is coming from Santa Monica, to me. So, we're all still in business together, it looks like. And it's his family, the musltemen are all his cousins and uncles and everybody like that... they are one family of the Ahl-Serif tribe and they live in the village of Jajouka. It's a village that may have once been an important military post, say, in Byzantine times, immanent as from it you can see that the first good port on the Atlantic of any size, and was the site of Ilaxa, the Roman town and the Greek city, that's where the golden apples of Hercules... were there, growing presumably on an island in the harbour, attended by a group of prostitute-priestesses, a traditonal thing that had come all the way from the Phoenicians through the Carthaginians. And from that village you control the pass up into the mountains behind, which dominate that whole valley, that whole seaboard, of the Rif. So, these people remember exactly who was related to whom and what degree in the year 800 when the first prophet of Islam came there and they all became Muslims. And he is buried in the village and so they call themselves his children, and they all are the Ahl-Serif, the sons of the Serif who was buried in the tomb there. And he died... around him they do musical therapy. They cure mental diseases and anxiety through a musical experience where the patient has the sensation that he smells a very beautiful smell. And the musicians produced this for Ornette*... there was a real sound of the organs and... this sensation occurred where everybody had this overpowering sense of the perfume. William Burroughs wrote a nice little piece about it for Penthouse.

JW: And Ornette didn't catch it?

BG: (Shaken head) I don't think no... He didn't really appreciate what he was hearing.

JW: And the Brian Jones album,** is that out of print?

BG: Yeah, except it's now been reissued by the Japanese, without my text in themiddle or something like that.

JW: How did you come upon the Jajouka musicians in the first place?

BG: I heard them in 1950. Paul Bowles, who was a key figure in all of that Moroccan experience anyhow, was also a key figure among those composers in New York, because Paul was known as a composer in those days and hadn't written anything yet... He's got his Morocco

* Ornette Coleman, Dancing In Your Head, on Horizon Records - Coleman plays with the musicians of Jajouka on one track.

** The Pipes of Pan at Joujouka, produced by Brian Jones, on Rolling Stones Records.
like Somerset Maugham has his Java or whatever it is. It has nothing to do whatever with my Morocco personally, at all.

JW: Were the forgers there all part of one scene when you were there?

BG: Well, first of all, it was a colonial world, colonial life, which has disappeared everywhere else. Pre-hippie, pre-anything like that, a real holdover from...a past, kind of an invisible jelly, you were living in and breathing the past. And further inland you went, you were breathing even medieval times, in Fez still. I mean, I've lived in the time of Chaucer, I've actually lived morning, noon and night with everybody around me dressed and looking like they were doing things out of Chaucer, in Fez. In Tangier, it was an atmosphere that nobody has ever really caught yet. I mean, Tangier has never had its Proust, although his nephew has tried a couple of times. He's a good writer too, the one who wrote The Servant, Robin Maugham.

JW: The Losey film.

BG: Yeah...Pinter's script is fantastic. Because there's so little, it's like fly-specks on paper, there's so few words. But they're explosive words, they really are. They flower up, every word in the sentence, even "and" and "but", sort of turns into an image. Because they're in space, and they're timed in such a way...Instead of all this gabble that you get in films.

JW: I thought he made some good decisions in the Proust screenplay. I'd read Proust a few years before that.

BG: In one swell foop?

JW: Over the course of a summer.

BG: Yeah, that's the way to do it...how old were you?

JW: I was twenty at the time.

BG: Ah, that's the right time, too.

JW: And I think it's with me more than any book I've read since.

BG: I was exactly the same age when I read it. I read it through a spring and early summer here in Paris, and I took the last books with me, that had just recently been published as a matter of fact, took them with me to Greece. And I was reading them on a steamer in Greece and there was one of the officers - quite a good-looking cat, in the uniform, but I barely had eyes for him as he'd come up and go down - and he finally came up and excused himself and said, in fairly good French, that he was reading the book just before that and would I lend him this when I finished it, and where was I going and he assured me that he was sailing here on such a day and would bring it back to me, and I said, Oh, man, I haven't finished it myself!

BG: What were your first languages? Was French as early as English?

BG: Yeh, and Spanish. My grandparents were speaking all that. The family language was German-Swiss, but...

JW: So have you read the English translation of Proust?

BG: No, never. I've just looked into it. I've seen both its weaknesses and its very felicitous successes, after all. It's sort of an impossibility without real re-creation. And it is a kind of re-creation, rather...it's certainly not a plodding work for all. Actually, this chick who translated The Process for me, she sorts of takes off in ways like that, and I'm all for it. Translation is a very difficult and touchy subject in any case. Nobody's properly paid for it and so it very rarely gets done, except as a sort of labour of love.

JW: How was it, do you feel, the translation of your novel took off?

BG: Well, why it worked possibly too is because it is a lot of it's happening in the Sahara, where the real language was French. That's what everybody was talking in those days, naturally, it was a French possession and all that. Anyhow, what she invented there and what she also knew is kind of colonial and language of the time, it just fitted in perfectly. Things I wouldn't have thought of...Somewhere tells me that she just did it onto a tape recorder and got somebody else to type it.

JW: How is it that you came to be one of the fathers of sound poetry?

BG: Because I started fucking around with tape recorders before they did, I guess...really as much as anything, I had the idea. It's just what we were doing.

JW: Were the sound poets working these days hearing what you did?

BG: Oh sure, oh yeah. And all the repetitive musicians too heard these things. The only one who's ever come up on stage and said so to me is Phil Glass. But I'm sure the others heard it too.

JW: What pieces of your were they hearing?

BG: They heard "I am that I am" and "Calling all reactive agents", and "Pistol Poem". See, because "Pistol Poem", when it was entire and that's the way it was played lots of times when it first came out as a record, they played it on the radio a lot and there may be still a copy around that somebody has, but I don't have one...when the permutations were laid one over the other like that, it goes off into 4/4 time and becomes a crazy little waltz. By itself! And so the whole point of it, and anybody who listens to it sees, this is the idea is that you just put the material into a certain situation and give it a push, and then the thing makes itself. And that's always been my principle. As a kid, I saw Max Ernst doing those frottages things where he'd put a piece of paper down on the floor which had a big grain in it and he'd pick up a drawing, it looks like an owl, he did a whole thing of birds and beasts like that. And I said, Yeh, that's it, you just put this stuff into juxtaposition and just give it a little creative push... It isn't so...which I had been...and that's what anybody who told you about painting laid down as the scene, If you want to be a painter...how chemical, and it was very
difficult... And the truth was, painting had been very difficult. By the time of Delacroix, the first new thing that happened that they discovered the mummys in Egypt and they had some idea that the reason that had lasted 2,000 years was because it was using these gun ammune bases. And so all the painters, including Delacroix, used all of this sort of bitumen background and everything, and that's why all of those pictures have crackled and turned the colours that they are... that museum colour. Because previous to that colours had been very much more expensive and were things like... blue in the virgin's robe, the famous painters' story, that it was lapsa lussi ground up in fine powder and it cost like gum money. It was only the Germans who invented the coal tar process in the middle of the 19th century, the colours were a spin-off of what I have been to understand were really... there are naturally several theories about the origins of all those coal tars, but it's true that these are billions and billions and billions of prehistoric flowers that got pressed, and so that is how out of them you can turn them one way with a chemical key, you turn it one way and you can get perfumes, which is a previous smell of billions of prehistoric flowers. You turn it the other way, you can get the colours out of them. Or turn it the other way and you can get their adhesive powers. So that's the whole story of our magic, of the chemistry. And one of the spin-offs of this was cheap colours, which the Expressionists... were poor painters who couldn't afford it, they had realised that the bitumen thing had gone wrong... Apparently there's some pictures, I've forgotten one celebrated one that the museum, the curators have to hang it this way for six months and then the other way for six months, or the whole thing will be whoopees slipped down and this turns back and they get it in line again... But people started using these very cheap colours, and then there's still no rules about using them well. Because now, people who do things just squint them out of the tube. It's that this fellow who makes billions and billions and billions of prehistoric flowers, you turn it the other way, you can get their adhesive powers. That's the whole story of our magic, of the chemistry.

JW: Yeh, writing is the portable medium.

BG: Ah. Essentially, what we're going to put into any systems are going to be words.

JW: Were you writing at an early age too?

BG: Yeh, everybody was writing around my house... But I've always found really that it's impossible to do two things at once. If you're really into one thing, you have to sort of put it there and go off to see a film. Sometimes it's only because your household isn't laid out right, because if you're living in such a small space, if you've got to write and cook and eat on that same table, you live one way. And if you've got three rooms in which these three different things happen, then you do it another way. If I had my setup here, plus a studio room, then I could be very different... there are reasons for investing more of one's energy in an ongoing enterprise than one that seems to be standing still for a while.

The Third Kind had begun to happen in 1959-1960, it had actually been in the form of a book since 1965...

JW: In the form it is today?

BG: No. That had to be done the way it was done and the big help came from Gerard-George Lemaire here in France. There was a question of translating it and it was the perfect sort of stroke through which to put the material to make it available in book form. It appeared in French two years previous to the English language edition... Some are enterprises that are presumably hopeless right now, like Naked Lunch as a film. I wrote the whole screenplay... I wrote the whole screenplay... William said, it cannot be done. Anthony (Balch)* came to me and was having lunch and I had this beautiful superb pad, the best pad I've ever had... may ever have in my life, in Tangier, this penthouse, where you got all the way from the Atlantic Ocean down there, all the way across the Rif Mountains of Morocco, down to Gibraltar and the Mediterranean, just from my place, and we were sitting there having lunch and I said, "What do you really want to do in life, Anthony?" And he said, "I really truly want to make Naked Lunch." I said, "In that case, Paradisa, pack my bags, I'll be ready, we're going to the plane together." He says, "What do you mean?" I said, "You just said it and that's the way it is. I'll spend two weeks doing a treatment and everybody can see that it's going to work." As it came out the big "but"... As it came out the big "but"... All the kind of money that we could put together, we would have to do it in England. The script is still very funny, it could be even funnier now. If put through a sort of English situation where anyone, Spike Milligan could play it, it was written with the idea that Mick (Jagger) could do it, or anybody... Milos Forman said, we were having dinner in the Coupole there and he said, "I will never have anything to do with sex and drugs!" I said, "Well, what the fuck are you going to do?" He said, "I'm going to do 'Heir'... The script works in a nasty kind of way, you can imagine it anywhere from a kind of nostalgic Hammer film, like those great English horror films that were so great, you could put that sort of thing into it, like it begins in an English country house where you have..."

BG: I'm doing something quite different, I was interested in the permutations and in cut-ups on tape and fucking around with noises and-speeds and these things and stuff like that. And along came Garson and a few friends, and they were sort of jazz and poetry from some kind of scene that had begun out of "Cool" in New York. And Cool was a very sad time indeed, it was awful, I mean it was every night, everybody was just fudged out and useless... it was the very chic... And they did a few things which were not very successful. And just about that time, some French artists that I knew came...
Along and said, "We hear that you're doing things with projections and stuff, and sounds, and wouldn't you like..." Because William and I had done, in La Bohème, was where we had some very strange things that we did along that line, reading poems off shuffled cards, along with tapes running, and stuff like that. And they said, "Wouldn't you like to join in with us?" And I did, and Ian was there, and we sort of jumped in on this and said...it's got to be theatre, I mean with my old Broadway background...and the only thing that we hadn't got together was a box office, and that was continually escaping us. This was at several places...And I should have known better, because I had the experience years and years ago with Peggy Guggenheim in whose house I had shown a film. And her ideas, we're going to have a cultural evening. "Brion, what are you going to do?" And I produced this film, you could rent this film called From Czar to Lenin, which was a fabulous movie of old newreels, some of them taken by the czar himself. We were going to show it at Peggy's house, which I thought was rather a good joke.

**JASON WEISS:** Around 1960, while working on the first cut-ups, you said that "writing is fifty years behind painting". Has it caught up at all since then?

**BRION GYSIN:** Well, I also said, "Should writing try to catch up?" But look at what's happened to painting even since I said that, some twenty years ago. "Poor painting herself is just tottering on the edge of the precipice, or maybe has already fallen in. Where it's all become deceptual art. There is none, there's nothing, anybody can do it because there's nothing to be done except just sit there for example, or wear certain kind of clothes and do these public performances. So, art as painting has really disappeared. Nobody wants to see paint properly applied to canvas anymore, that's considered very old-fashioned."

**JASON WEISS:** How do the cut-ups differ from what Tristan Tzara did?

**BRION GYSIN:** Particularly because there's an actual treatment of the material as if it were a piece of cloth. The sentence even, the word, becomes a real piece of plastic material that you can cut into. You're not just juggling them around, or putting them into...Tzara's words out of a hat were simply aleatory chance.

**JASON WEISS:** Does not then the personality of the writer become diminished in the cut-ups?

**BRION GYSIN:** Oh no, I think it becomes multiplied, really. There's a long interesting piece that Burroughs wrote, where he speaks of plagiarism, simply sort of taking on the spirit of the person whose work you're handling. Becoming a Rimbaud, or becoming a Shakespeare, partially so. Obviously, those are roles which are given to the writer. He has all the rights to those roles, after all.

**JASON WEISS:** Like the Borges story about the man who wrote the Quixote?

**BRION GYSIN:** Yes, indeed. Exactly. Like that.
The tower sets
its sights on
the itinerant cobbler.

In the evening
before the
shadows rise to
strike us down again
we hear his valiant calling.
We must have shoes
and put him up the night.

The tower thrummed
by its single inner shadow
for all we know
equipe the clouds.
We cannot even buy
a peg of distance.

So we don’t go anywhere,
what’s the use?
Only out to the fields
to sit with the onions.

They say no one lives there,
that the tower stands for nothing.
But I have seen their hats
galloping past the slotted windows.
Yet it’s true, you can’t see much
from down on the ground.

My daughter dreams of palaces
with rooms and rooms where
ladies come to dress her,
and pools like gardens
visited by no one else.

I invite her out to the onions
where we can talk of things among the others,
or to set off with the cobbler,
a wise man and a bachelor,
the only one to walk away from here.
Corn Flakes

Hypnotise a big animal
watch it dream.

The bull only eats cheese.

If the sun goes down
a lake of penguins
rises hourly.

The record gives an impression
that present tense
was never history.
Bird was.

I didn't want you to think
nobody lives here.
You didn't see a thing
the lion chewing me silently.

Sling the never
in the boat.
We can go away tomorrow.

HERBERT BURKE

PLAUDITS AND PINEAPPLES

Another time a brittle view
firmed from the dark hand.

Dull fluid hardened of the transit,
regular congestion pah pah pah
pah dividing the works.

(Blackbirds begin to whistle, call,
a chopper throbs close overhead.)

Inverted over stage an indigo sky,
even for midgets a mite low.

Apt naming a clown kingdom,
keen specialty among some states.

When the parrot arrived,
a winner for the horses.

He planned to lock himself
into Paradise Lost for holiday,
dropped a clanger pah pah pah
pah dividing the works.

Scabre shades of his early stuff,
ever so pre-Raphaelite the room.

The difference between winter light,
northern, withdrawn, black spiders.

About the time of the Boer War,
before those others, and
photography advanced.

...
(The chopper again wore to the east.)
Applause after the anthem pah pah pah
pah dividing the works.
Another sinking of civilized teeth.
An encore at the key board of an
aborigine, read the score.
Too fervent, most lieder, and monogamous.
We can go down gusling.
Let the thing of Pissarro flow,
it's not anarchism pah pah pah
pah dividing the works.
Don't know whether you'd agree,
there've been repellent swings.
And made use of to do others,
several or more mischief a month.
An August depot, the troubles, for Bologna.
Sketches of a man who suddenly fell
over thrashings from the critics.
But the bridesmaids came in a Daimler,
said to look lovely, too.
Taste myself for a bit of the gothic.
Tokens of merit pah pah pah
pah dividing the works.

February 1981
Mr L has said
Mr H has said
he (Mr H) believes
he (man) will drain the nuclear lees.
Mr L has said
RW embodies and expresses his creator's
(Mr H's) optimism past ultimate pessimism
- 'a little shynin truth' -
in his
(RW's) last words - "...no other track."
Neither
Mr L has said
would
Mr H choose other
(nor, presumably, would he).
Within his
(Mr H's) dark post-nuclear parable
of death / rebirth
Mr L has said
Mr H's language invention attempts /
achieves the impossible.

Notwithstanding
what results
sounds chillingly
sacrificial far beyond
pro patria mori.

December 1980

A REDUNDANT LIST

The axed.
The blackballed.
The cashiered.
The defrocked.
The disbarred.
The dried out.
The dropped.
The expelled.
The hammered.
The redundant.
The remainiored.
The rested.
The sent down.
The stricken off.
The sold.
All given the old
heave ho to
keep
things
oiled.

February 1981
BREATHE DEEPLY EVERY

and did find
so often
dark
the summer
the August lake
land the colour of costly thighs
where trampling
naked the high corn
marsh grasses cane and reed
unthreshed
rapt nakedness self-bruised
nights
of eager
star flow
warm breezes tugging
once
along the dark hogbacked hill
taut
fraught
dark
frayed
if hands were but
expensive
were
entrance
trance

November 1990
ENIGMA

1

Unutterable
sphinx moth
hawk moth sphinx
why sphinx
Egypt past loot lies
dormant sphinx moth
on the cold stepping stone
summer sun still to rise
after heavy dew fall.
(Once risen, it is hot as Egypt all brief
summer in Minnesota and his naked limbs
and torso Egyptian brown in the sweet
sweating sun and he did not come ever
in his remote beauty to the lake shore.)
Unblemished
quiescent sphinx
its tapering shape starts
slowly to
utter itself to my gaze
uttering its upper
wings their tones
of patterned
brown could
be velvet blended thread through my
eyes upper wings uttering them-
selves in the warmth of my palm.
In the warmth of my palm uttering themselves the upper wings stir
fan out vibrate from its segmented length and unveil the under wings.

Centred on each see on each under wing a bold remembered eye spot a bold
eye spot centred rose-yellow
black-margined and each eye spot each remembered with its iris
seeming a black opal and each pupil a white
streak a white streak.

Compulsion in the eyes may seeming utter sphinx
silent scream or silent speak.

... hot as Egypt all brief summer in Minnesota and his naked limbs and torno
Egyptian brown in the sweet sweating sun and he did not come ever in his remote
beauty to the lake shore.

in memoriam Daniel Magrino

November 1980

(Peter Middleton)

(subject) Essay on Allen Fisher's Unpolished Mirrors & current English
poetry.

(title) The Poetic Project

In a series of works spanning more than ten years Allen Fisher has been testing the possibilities of using the poem for research into
the history of the capital city. Procedures for knowing about the
city in which the state's power is centred, and so many of us live,
is badly needed as the replacement of topsoil, grass, plants, trees
and animals is nearly complete, rendering old knowledges irrelevant
there, with only gardens left as museum indicators of what was present
before. This new, constructed environment demands new knowledges of
the human patterns created by the complexities and parameters of
concrete cellular climates.

The project is very conscious of its antecedents. Blake, Pound,
Williams and Olson have all had theories about the city & its
paradigms. It's been easy too for the ideal to become a beckoning
phantasmal dream, that is a relief from the documentation & resistance to concept of those streets we walk on. Eyes on place it may have
been easier to censor awareness of the workings of Italian politics.
Nor can Paterson as the giant be much more than a jolly green diversion
from the conversation, which is a person talking poetry about that place known to him. The exception is Olson's Gloucester where the
exogesis of the city is another process entirely. Olson paid attention
to self and actual city, "moving / among my particulars ... / to get
down, right in the midst of / the deeds, to tell". To find out simply
what was there & what had happened for himself, & not as a computer
file might list the data for the purposes of control. Such methodology
used in a spirit which subverts the familiar use of enquiry as a means
to power -- the usual spirit of the researcher who goes ahead with
theoretical demands stated first like a tax requirement, against
which cities and buildings are assessed for their yield to that
theoretic state. It isn't clear that institutions can do otherwise.

When the writing echoes Eliot, as it echoes so many poets writing
about London, with the line "brown fog of our winter dawns", it replaces
the indefinite article of the original line in The Waste Land with this collective pronoun for excellent reason. It is a gathering up
of those earlier poets and a movement of repossession. Duis off
our winter dawns, keep yr. poetry to yourselves! And acknowledging
that those dawns are still partly captive to such writers.

It was a recurrent insistence of Ezra Pound's that poets should "make
it new", make certain that what they are doing had not been done before
and better, by another poet. A researcher's axiom. Robert Duncan
also makes similar points talking of Levitov, Olson & Creeley as
co-workers -- "they took care of a lot of areas that I even by temper-
ament wouldn't be likely to cover." (Towards a New American Poetic,
ed, Robert Penn, 1978). What is this "IT" that cannot be repeated,
and description but these can be left to the conundrums of literary opinion which they monopolize. Allen Fisher's language retains syntax and reference as elements of the work, but not its determinants. Thereby "this arsenal renewing breaks the class struggle" when the rules have been rendered irrelevant but the processes remain present, outside the authority of their discourses.

There is everywhere evident an awareness of the way present day London is a layered construction of past works which are not random, made evident in polyphonic discourses, decipherable to certain limits and those officially unmentioned because the patterns of control, legitimisation and power are visible in their historic formations as not always in their current state of repressed access and potential immanence. Allen Fisher demonstrates that the archaeology can't only be done by shovels & archival research, because the language is also many layered, and that where he shows such skill at brushing away the familiarising dust from the artefactual discourses of sex, power, trade & transport. Discourses are shown up for what they are.

When I began reading/writing poetry we were always admonished to be "concrete", using that substance on which the complex institutions of the city rest, to metaphorise the immediate physical experience transformed into exempla that supposedly was the stuff of poetry. No metaphor is accidental. Such writing does prop up the institutions of our time.

Allen Fisher takes the language of authority, the abstract discourses of knowledge and control, into the writing. A line will appear institutionally authorised -- "I signal for existence that continues/ gratified of basic needs / freed of guilt and fear" ("The Artist's Monologue continues") -- where a phrase like "gratified of basic needs" signals an opportunistic appropriation into the terms of institutionalized manipulation of definition. The language of general measures to bring people to their senses. "Basic", "needs" are appropriately unclear to allow definition by the authority & hinder access in specific cases. "Gratified" is so it is precisely what the self is a signal of -- satis-

ation. A reductive sexual meaning & an empty, intensifying police use to mean "being pleased", co-exist. Afterimages of Blake's "lineaments of gratified desire" fade into advertising copy. The phrase means almost nothing, but the odd auxiliary "of" which actually succumbs to it. Instead of joining in with the愈加 excessive formalism which dislocates syntax, stretches the phrase in another direction. Perhaps the passage means to mean it, but it never had a chance. Retrospectively there appears a dash after the first person possessive, so that it is precisely what the self is a signal of -- satis-

For everyday purposes most of us treat words as things or tokens of things. We might recall then what Freud wrote in The Interpretation of Dreams. "Words may often be treated as things in dreams and thus undergo the same operations as thing presentations." Freud moved in to the field of ontology that had become the refuge of poets "the dreams of dreams" with the aim of bypassing the sensor and revealing the hidden
sexual power politics at work. There was nothing he could do about the
gaps made by the state censor in the newspapers, but his patients could
be made to reveal the sources of their power. In Unpolished Mirrors
the "dreaming gardener" is allowed a preface to say that he is "attempting
to transform to artist'. Then words will be words and not things, the
garden a garden and not only the "auricular nerves of human life", the
nerves excited by words as things, speech acts. This garden is a garden
of a "coming English revolution" when language will revolve into a new
position and things will enter a dance with words so that neither
prostratates. Dreams will be a part of reality.

Will it be that coming described by Freud in his novel Dora? "The
practical aim of the treatment is to remove all possible symptoms and
to replace them by conscious thoughts, we may regard it as a second and
thus the damage to all because of the state of the psyche."
The symptoms are endless -- bomb craters, hydrocarbon emissions, fire,
oil are all the ammotechnics of torture" (The Artist's Third Monologue).
as the associations are revealed the interrogation removes their influence
to act, and conscious thought is allowed to speak in various stable
voices.

So restoration of memory, obliteration of symptoms of damage, establish-
ment of the authoritative self, is the aim of a procedure that would
define desire to control it in official patriarchal channels. The
revolution that the preface invokes is linked with the gardener's
invocation to language -- "let me break through here / I must be a
dreaming gardener", and there is a latent distinction between the subject/object
use of the pronoun that marks the gaps in which the poetry
assumes, and where the revolution could occur. The "I" becomes dream
and the "me" breaks through here as the line itself breaks. In asking
permission for the self to see itself as object of attention it becomes
possible to speak of need, and a need to dream. Dreams as defined by
Freud are precisely not actions. Dream, memory and history are the
recurrent fields of this writing, and each threatens the other, by
absorption and obliteration. The "mnemis imaginalis" ("Moral Confusion")
can be easily dismissed as repressed sex or conflated (as Henry Corbin
noted) to delusion (in this world) or pure spirit (out of this world).
This poetry works as a reversal of the process outlined by Freud. Freud's
real aim is to replace action by reflection, and dream by a defined and
manipulable sexuality. This poetry restores space to the performances
of dream, memory and history. When the gardener says that he breaks
through it is that "me" for the language and its word that would
represent the other side of this writing. What Allen Fisher calls
"that great uncertainty external to everything".

A collapse into the authoritative reference, the gravitational field
of the "I" is always possible. As Doll puts it:

"saw their revolution centring towards me
a smoothing off inside a sexual insistence
avoided its own truth
breath and energy retention
a pain its displeasure without re-education".

That was the treatment of women on the left in the sixties and even
since. The revolution occurs in the object self, but the smoothing
off is a topology that would enclose possibility within a pattern of
sexual domination.

Without identifying Allen Fisher with the voice, the moment when this

line occurs -- "I have been the historian too long" ("The Artist's
Monologue Continues") -- is clearly an intersection for many of
the concerns of the poem. Does it mean that the present has been
avoided or that the problems of self have been avoided? If I say both;
I do so not to initiate criticism but in the spirit of this comment
on the mathematician David Hilbert's work in Constance. Comfort
biology: "Now suddenly, in 1922, as a result of Hilbert's work, invariant theory,
as it had been treated since the time of Cayley, was finished. 'From
the whole theory,' a later mathematician wrote, 'the breath went out.'"

Similarly this project seems to exhaust a set of possibilities marked
by that salient quotation from the poem, the possibilities of
unpolished mirror as metonymy for the entire project. If the mirrors
cannot do more it is because of the damage to all, and not necessarily
since the time of Cayley, was finished. 'From
the whole theory,' a later mathematician wrote, 'the breath went out.'"

What is also apparent is a direction. We have yet to see in Britain
a poetry that unites the emotional and physical clarity of much recent
political poetry, especially feminist work, and the language explorations
of the performative language school of whom Allen Fisher is a part.

...
Your voice regrets my need
for times of solitude, to take myself into gaps,
not putting my face to your body."

Where the field of dream, economics and the bisymmetry of the physical
body, the silence, spaces and absence of space all create a network
as complex as anything in performance poetry. There is this also:

"Having to be honest
is the real invasion, my irritation welling up.

'So that if poets insist on.....an accurate depiction of
people's lives, as they are actually lived .... this is a
political act.'"

It is also poetry. When one's own life becomes the fourth part of.
the square of memory, dream and history, then the new work will
flourish. The revolution will only follow an articulation of self
that is neither alienated object nor imperious self, and then dreams
and actions will co-exist. The honest is an invasion against which
even now the government is creating a home guard.

(A note on availability: Allen Fisher's Unpolished Mirrors was issued
serially in eight parts lettered A - H, during 1979-81, by Spanner,
64 Lancroft Road, London SW2 3MP. Enquiries should be directed
to that address, but several of the parts may already be out of print.
It is hoped that another publisher may re-publish the whole sequence.)

GILBERT ADAIR

A letter & some work from "a frog book"

Dear Ken,

Many thanks for the reminder! I haven't managed to get an article
together, largely, I suppose, because of confusion... As I said, I think
Robert Sheppard's piece ("The Bath-water and the Baby: A Formalist-
humanism" in ES Vol. 3, pp 35-55) is a premature rush to redeline; & I
don't see any basis for defining as "human" that which is "liberating",
i think he's right that there is a new "progressivist" orthodoxy, investing
new terms ("specific", "homogeneous", "discontinuity", etc etc), &
repetitive, convoluted phrasing, with old salvation terrors; understanding
of energy takes second place to ideological credentials. But this could
itself be described as too "human"! The Terry Eagletons & the City
Limits monitors now preside over a fair-sized/microscopic domain armed
against just about anything we (or anyone else) might do. I don't see
how, once the materials had reached a certain stage of dissemination,
anything else could have happened.

In fact, then, the counter-entropic and the already fossilizing
commingling in our discourse, depending on a number of variables. But the
decentring of the humanist subject as, in hopes, desires, physiology,
etc, primary explanation/motive force of systems must be moved on from.
Otherwise something like the closure Sheppard locates - or that in much
feminist writing, e.g. - can be "over-reacted" against the forces, if
operation ("Living defensively is the central theme of our age") is
misused by condemnation of their effects. The point is surely to keep
perception of movement as open as possible by recurrent instances of
creative & critical activity (which is being done). Simply, I would
argue, it's no longer useful to use (post-)structuralist - or feminist,
Marxist etc - critical terms exclusively; they're just too recognisable.
The same goes for such "subjects" as nuclear power (with rare exceptions,
e.g. Unpolished Mirrors, H, about which a lot could be said), Thatcher,
Brixton riots etc. Because of our social marginality (marginal
even to most other poets, & to most artists & critics on the Left) we
can not assume there are - automatically, inherently or by right - "big"
subjects to write about.

Since - it occurred towards the end of the first paragraph - this
is turning into an article-length letter, I'll mention some of the main
problems I think "A Formalist-humanism" involves:

1) What (if not embodying the "human") any poetic assertion of the
substantiality of new forms can base itself on, key into; in an -
effectively - irrecoverably fragmented culture, multiply reinforced
(in part created) as much by mechanisms of group-oriented dissemination
of information that turn most content, or outside reformers, into instant
forms of recognition/familiar confusion. How does an individual within
this poetic group locate both discourse & own work without being immediately
assimilated into what Foucault calls "systems of rarification" to the
point where both closure & how to break it become invisible? This involves
a rebuttal of conventional pride, but not the kind practised by e.g.
Observer, Sun & BBC ("every opinion is subjective" etc) which strives to
maintain yet another comforting closure.
(11) Connected: location of the individual (if not originating creator) who produces instances of poetic discourse that, however "anonymous", have recognisable formal consistency - of the driven will to manipulate materials. The format of Oris Cheek's A Present seems to me on one (necessarily unrepeatable) way of meeting these problems: its particularity is acknowledged - it can therefore support no claims of being culturally "representative" - but that carries no guarantees - it doesn't "save" you from the poetry: none of the many current models crucially held together by "the self" can be brought to bear.

(111) Connected: many of the material features, informational & social configurations of now are unprecedented; but the subjection to impossible stress of the models most people grew up with/in is not: it's a recurrent formal feature of cultures in time of crisis or breakdown. So are universally apocalyptic deductions. The issue well raised by Edward Said remains: how, & in what terms - as what? - do we locate ourselves with respect to other poets, prior & contemporary? - how do we select, fashion & evaluate a community? When is it? When are we ready with methodology needed for oncoming war? & social configurations of being culturally "representative" - but that carries no guarantees - it doesn't "save" you from the poetry: none of the many current models crucially held together by "the self" can be brought to bear.

When i first began to think seriously about this proposed article, i couldn't see how ' (or why) to say anything in the very context of what i could think of as "frog" on fairly recent, in part conversation-fed, notes in a scribbling process, (2)

REFERENCES:
(2) "(0)lsuasive groups... part of whose self-definition includes the definition or implication of their difference... from other groups"; in L'Ordre du discours, Paris 1971, quoted in E. Said, Beginnings (iii) Connected: many of the material features, informational & social configurations of now are unprecedented; but the subjection to impossible stress of the models most people grew up with/in is not: it's a recurrent formal feature of cultures in time of crisis or breakdown. So are universally apocalyptic deductions. The issue well raised by Edward Said remains: how, & in what terms - as what? - how do we select, fashion & evaluate a community? When is it? When are we ready with methodology needed for oncoming war? & social configurations of being culturally "representative" - but that carries no guarantees - it doesn't "save" you from the poetry: none of the many current models crucially held together by "the self" can be brought to bear.

(3) Said, op.cit., passim.
(4) Allen Fisher, Unpolished Mirrors, Serial E, "Homage to Charles Olson".

Gilbert
On screen... Suzanne.

Thomas as she'd look

with a new hair-do

unreasonable laws can law

indictments proceedinig papers

freemd he will wear

hanging declaration

kr tjt

'suddenly' ('immediately
Swift Occam"

awarchitectural skull casing

for a new kind of brain"

invented a dogs dog that

steps could smell fear
Dear Madam or Sir,

Looking is a fallen activity. Josh was always well enough in his wits except when frogs were in question. Then his mania was clear for all to hear, and later, alas, to see.

Maybe it only made us think there was a starling up there, imitating a trim-phone. (Cordell, Orchis and Morphogenesis)

Entitled "the city of a thousand windows", the Atheist Museum which documents the Albanian people's disillusionment with religion houses woodwork and stonework, hey, most of the merchant navy, a shot-down U.S. reconnaissance aircraft famous for carpet weaving. Dr Johnson once said that the National Mark movement does both. A list of them is given on page 62.

Improvisation seems to me a sort of animated conversation - in - I abandon myself to that interest sometimes raises me - when a fine act would be easier for me to do - in short, when I admire, not in my own behalf, but because I am moved by the dignity of humanity and the glory of the world.

It is therefore in the Anatomy of the Mind as in the Body; more good by attending to the open and perceptible parts, than by studying finer nerves and vessels, the fluids so volatile, increasing an heaviness of the blood (whether spiritual or material, simple or compounded, it matters not), and so is concerned for itself, as far as that extends; the conformations and uses of which will for ever escape. As the capacity for violence grows in the world, the regenerative effects of specific violent episodes become less significant.


Although I walk a loner, I could not rape for Arizona.

Again, if a book have merit, what matter as to who wrote it? Had I said that the angels wrote it through my hands, then I would have been denounced as a pretender. I rejoice that that day is past. They begin to judge so-called sacred books according to what they are and not by a supposed authority. This is progress, undoubtedly.

For your use of the library material supplied by us, apart from any deal you may reach with ABC SPORTS/ABC videogame Enterprises, and in the secure knowledge that "Big Fight!" boxing attracts huge audiences, exclusive.

Then I investigated over two hundred mediums, travelling hundreds and hundreds of miles for this purpose. I found that nearly all of them were subject to this involuntary movement of the hands. In course of time, about twenty five years, I gave up eating flesh and fish, milk and butter and took to rising before day, bathing twice and occupying a small
room where I sat every morning half an hour before sunrise.

Garden finds leaves to break it open. A kind of petulance that’s evolved out of this. To govern frog material.

Her obsessive reiteration slowly untaught extraordinary saint role, abruptly substantially buoyed by, Sir Bobbie More, unhindered enabling buoying recognition, melancholic shards.

Josh – you remember Josh.

If these “patterned resistances” oppose not just the truth of the alternative, but the presumption that an alternative has been presented, then we have an instance of incommensurability. A few buy the labour more, have bought yer time. Contended to commit murder or consent to it. But as the capacity for violence grows in the world, the regenerative effects of specific violent episodes become less significant.

Sometimes the power thus baffled would attack my tongue, or my eyes, or my ears, or entrancement. I reduced myself from 250 pounds down to 160. In six years training my rheumatism was all gone and I had no more headaches. I became limber.

For fifty weeks this continued every morning half an hour or so before sunrise. I was told not to read what was printed and I had worked myself into such a religious fear of losing this new power that I obeyed. I am firmly convinced numberless might.

One morning I accidentally beheld the line of light that rested on my hands extending heavenward like a telegraph wire to the sky. Over my head were three pairs of hands, fully materialized; behind me stood another angel, with her hands on my shoulders.

I was directed to get a typewriter, which writes by keys, like a piano piano. This I did and I applied myself industriously to learn it but with only indifferent success. I always look back on those two years as an enigma.

Yours truly,

J.B. NEWBROUGH

As to the original manuscript, for some time after Newbrough’s death, this was kept in the basement of a house in El Paso, Texas, until it was ultimately destroyed by a flood. It is clear also that there was thereby avoided all danger that authority should come to be vested in a historical document rather than in that interior light of the soul in which OAHSPs itself teaches Woman to place her trust.

For your discussion to be identical with what you discuss, that is the term a poetic of quotation envisages. The choice for science and poetry when symbols or words stop measuring is to stop speaking.
"Social" ( ) in quotes

that though there may in recent years have been doubts about the value of materialism, there cannot be much doubt about its value to you, a relation of use and a voice in numbers.

Even, he said, if "mutuality" enables words to step away from the book; then the things we know, and mutually know, but cannot say, are transmitted. This requires the courage...
of integrity: to face the inner experience outside, within which we hide from behind books. Hence, it is precisely only the theory which can be printed, the abstraction from that which we know, but should enact and experience. For the heart of reality, the motion of wholeness, dwells in the exchange of silence, act, and speech: where we can listen; where the arms and legs really move; and where the eyes meet. It is here that simple metaphors can recreate the universe.

Maggie O'Sullivan

from Tree Pieces (1-10)

sweet chestnut

eliminative

hair-skin leguminous night-purple

nowhere & everywhere tyrannical

the total fortune of seedsoil

arrogate granular muzzle beyond

local concealment

eye

cathartic

in places recalled assertions

sweep sinister burnet from distance

larcenous

each obdurate audible silvering bad

inching to be vermillion

in this house

bleeding thatch

naked
larch

liturgical
the climb from bark to brain
scar
coppice
stone opposing wood
from cornered blueness
denial
dirge of lichens
pleated fame
humble things
by degrees
the halfawake
stooping pulse
crackles isotropic
distils plenitude
lashes carved homeward
elongations
variant gallons
chanting perpendicular

birch

reflective
marl & chalk preponderant
so soft
a dowry paid in vertical corsets
crust twig
waxed kiss combustible
gashodule fuse of bruised will
provocation ornament of
blade & ear fastened
intelligence
brow-grained cavity
adjusting
teeth within words
acoustic
level of skin
quarrelled
beautitudes
bordering
eroticism
Unassuming Person

(dedicated to the memory of my mother)

Her cloth distorted, browsing & fraying bark to rediscover talk, intermission. Oscillations, borrowed placenta, counting subjects, pinching instrument, overthrown potental, tracks. Scanned beeswax, broken, primitive eye, red of the rose not in the rose itself.

Her mask: holed plush of care. Grey capitals, every fowl detected in some nook. To occupy mutual disturbance, each celestial weight of gallantry: baukard, suddenly clandestine remissment, range of groined vaulting.

His annulled latrine of daisy, focus, monogamy, the rib's profane cryptograph, orchid. Night's fine edge, contrivance, accordant smallness, results. Consequent, its path another. Irregularities introduced into that path, as reason sufficiently dark. Hydrocarbon, concentric, the breath enigmatic, licked intrinsic, equinox & even violet. The role of violet, dim, compelled by caprice, tracts of anomalous moment, charged colour rebuilt, burst fountain, ice, geography.

Her pace, melting mid-air chrysalis, a spark & wait as recently as then. Thickets unlit, stem, inability, splintered furthering, sleep. Peripheral, eponymous of diction, alone the hand reaching could bathe each twisted grey, gill-slot, crown. Chromatic implements pronounced 'bride': pastime, pollen, chlorophyll, diencephalic terms, anagrams among teasel. Rash inference. Just to kill rotational doubt, summons of earth's hld, abyss amidst glutted elonness, but not slowly enough. The glow of sail, two together, linear methods paradoxical. Acquaintance, owl from view by silvery mist, dimensions, to allude obvious measurements, agitation in upper courts. To consider: & the weakness be horizontal, romancing, portcullis, habitations of the chases. First dummy, proportion of retreat, foliage, wound, incised caption, loss.

His nearest limb, the act of transit. Habilments, almanac, circuit of sunrise, open, the body's brilliant moons, glued sun.

Computations, encroachments, emergence, snow held converse, viaduct in basin, the drain of cup, drop below the square, swarmed rectangles: hypothetical, devilled method, music from little, nothing, or many pieces broken. Shallow hammer of sconce, tourmaline, the rotina's myriad holdings. Obscuration, velocity by fingers. To wear down & reduce asperities.

Tenanted. Words instead.
Her constant yellow messages. Reversal, leopard, light & sweet skin, instancefuls of threat. Causality lurking, yesterday dissecting the nerve, removable, movable by screw, the halves give image, complete object. Curled resistance, the tree-black, half-emptied tar & viral utterance. Excision & infibulation. Hung in varnished blues, place marked, indelibly, another memory, blue scot, baled prostrate.

His waves coddled ash. Decorum & sobriety pitched by faction, brown gait, the back of tongue. Cornelius collar the cleaved brand never more stuffed with scurrying, more decorative.

To travel the same principle as teeth at pass the double journey of that movement of window, a day, a house in a year. Aerials smoke, collect conveyance, a single night drawn back, the possibility of a few words added, pleasure, the surface refreshed.

Utility opens the shadow of eyes, the rouge & everything else, played for amusement, art. Fomentation, powdered grievance, by need, V-shaped poker filaments, marriage/versions of marriage. Do limbs follow thought? Bigness? An even taste, orientation, ridge of inexact, wilful logic. Acidulated, chowing tongue & cheek as if lime slaking there.

...
Almost, an erupting fulness, never wholly enclosed. Her name retained with fern, rush, water. Flash, concussion, vinegar nor oil nor critical juncture, whose turnspits in concert, careered regard. Asserted expenditure, the angle of her impassable lily & devoted life, mentioned the point of termination.

Commodious his removal, whose charms fortified the loophole. Her deep embrasures & recesses, passed as quickly as they came to conviction that her eyes had not deceived her: how discernible the mass of horn, its election to tell of this.

Calamity, detection, detention, but never setting fire the thin curtain of cloud. Her column stains, carrying the sounded abyss as guide. (Avert to inflict arrangement away from the blood, the smell of it); she cared not to comply.

Her face, water & food held out, generously verging on who she was. That manner. Rocking as though after madness, her great arms rubbed windows, wrapped arabesques in lard. A step downward, heart repleted. Not to move leaf, nothing more, her head fire walking, to globe the world & know it as a province miles away. She did lock things, her boneless good, her drained solven: possessing no source of illumination, is it lost for ever? The predominance taken at interval, minutes beneath a destitute boast; the scored view a different character. An aperture enough to allow resplendent forenoon, loveliness of import, the clear water dyed blood. Tons, not pounds of crust: the spot picked & fastened with buffer of metal, degree of meridian, superincumbent heat. Sat some heat.

Bricked virtue, velocity, to connect this slowness between amusement. Vibration again the arc of length, length, ninefold so quickly the time of oscillation. Elevation at midnight, variably a wanderer is.

The legate deaf to menace or promise. "Vermeer's wife had eleven children". The power of speech from shock dilates. Sometimes she entered, partially, his shadow. The moment first detected, to watch its gradual encroachment. A scar borne glare venting sleep: perfidious insignia. Motto in rai, the central gorge of swan. Immolation from no climb, tears leaking mouth, divinance not locations of tepid move, cumulative, away & chill constructed. Often his noticing her black drop, her bull, no little delicacy, the garter, mantle, surcoat & hood of interior continent. To compute altitude to the end of the shadow, mere love engenders the fabric.

Lateral passages of torchlight, what name left loose, dawls initial, loops depth, water? Epoch of the object understood, the bulked circuit of appearance to threaten or destroy each of the dot's a night's observation.
Foraged abruptions, birch & plane equilirium. Winter hemorrhage, 'coal-sack', dark lines of procession, discrepancy an ordinary marble unique.

Musicality the sole method, capable of manner, her disturbance, attraction. Fairblown, superstitions, liquorice & algae & wild pansies, elongated, the 2 cases edge muteness. Of intermediate length, the lintel of the door covered the last few lines. Though not of a whole unit, ritual, wick, remission, crumpled abattoirs, a blue scum between hatred, the the drainage a trivial narration.

"She refused her eye, lest she should see & be convinced".

Her stooped clover, sky blue or electric, permissible secretions. Coloniation. Occlusion of a star, iron-gray vertical passages, night after night happiness arrested. Running under the viaduct & he outside of her. The door of a recess open. Neck. In the last play of decay, reconciliation, a gullible savaging. The hen's claw, aperture, beak & ligament. A row of corbels & the parapet encountering dragon, the condition of siege.

Pliable, flute cossenting paper: red squawking kite. From London & from Liverpool, nearer & bending towards the same march of falconers, the rise & fall of bird upon their fists.

These characters making possible.

Her motionless, big lettered lips an upper gate open; its battlements & towers, the excellence of her lungs in the fashion of time, the crescent again resumed preference for place.

Her place, a juncture against his chamomile, mu, mountain mixed with matter numerically a comet. Sour & damaged skill in any house, the listened to velocities of recollection, drawn from above, the kne-, at rest mutual annihilation to resist the guidance of attraction. He strolled to her position. Elongation, foci. What shape memorable? The consequent, elliptic path moved in a curve. A blue hare, a fox creeping into the circle of glass; then eagle entering both, presentiment, reddish-brown misanthropy. Love for instance. Thorax & flower, she lifting up hands to it: afterward, the brow sunds to zero.
2

List pose for daily work out

October
struck once or twice, 3 times

gird up 40 - 14 the descent
dot 'after I will - confess to thee

98 49, the seven planes of the mind.
the line of life in the palm measured in 7's.
seven are the natural colors of earth.

the argument complaint
against the woman (invisible
on song)

eliphaz
that shall be delivered in 6 troubles.
on the seventh no evil shall touch thee.

I stood for one moment.
pranayama. cobra. tiptoe. shoulder.
sirshasana. bhujangasana. padangushtasana.
plough is the hala san,
balancing is the crow pose

sethu banihasan bridge parenthesis forty four
be forty four soon by the sun / exercise, try
gazing;

exercise rue sauvageot the terrible woman
picking fleas from the dog the

duck dinner at the foyer with M
I do not much care for,
but after pleasant coffee,

visit here as I imagine

LONDON fog lung houses dead hydrangeas
 I think of the flowers as Pirandello.
pension vaquor the missing puzzle my husband

piece

the days passing
Taté with music du lapp, mouftardi
on foot from réaumur

under close scrutiny

"the last two days have been a bit sterile. I am anxious to work
and to return to old mass in London to send them to Larry."
"and to read some more Cocteau."
"Last night I copied and studied and took the corner of Guernica.
and shook it. It is even ... under ... scrutiny."
sketched a fat man face
read the warren commission
report on Oswald.
"I cannot see now, no one can.
Trust has been destroyed.
It is a frightening time for the American People.
Absentee ballot requested from NY State.
I pray they will send it soon."

the snare drum sticks come down
up goes the dented trumpet
the man with the hound's sad face strokes one notch
mouse drab shakes
the open mouths' fat pink
he shifts a melon belly
it seems that all

in sanctified order
as they are salvation
waiting for the bomb to go off we are watching
there a great migration of people we are
fat festivus with a balloon bellie men repeating,
small stringy women, no children I can think of

and they are playing a raga
the army in rigid dignity
Way Out

Warning: please mind your head
(to buy: one very small screw-driver)

JUST AS EXIT.

Sing poem 2

Northeastern A.J. Public Warning:
please mind your head when leaving

293

Vincennes
Driver
deck windlass
CAP Stan
Auxiliary Ladies Waiting

G 60
uck uck uck
uck Keep Anderson Left
uck Joseph
uck uck
Rank
330 Jr Jennings

Catche
E Fat RE

Beginnings

Yak Races the New Ladies Waiting

Prrrrp: "I'm ready for another holiday!"

Gentlemen
THE ORIGINAL

(Gentlemen
Carta
Carna)

According to my head
(to buy; one very small screw-driver)

THE ORIGINAL

(This set "written and read at Pop readings 1966-67, some parts are 'quietly SHOUTED'".)

(for further general background see p.135)
changes by p.3

their movements scattering in different directions gradually carry a breeze lower to my lap and arms then stretch we gently and press palms local against each other

feeding breathing moving reproducing
don’t have insurance today
to escape through adjoining invisible barriers so that the whole woman walks around expending energy in order to obtain water invisi be trade living-in the safety match scraps coding in penny slot bit osmotic pumps & drink this removal of excess water is achieved only by the performance of "work"
an activity maintained involves energy

snaps twig marking a passage steam pouring upward focal distance choice being moved

pisses till he has a reflection to mark time clearly blowing into the eggshell to translate from one language into another or stirring a little space with the finger tip medium or state where with the breadth state means historical extension

choice & models
Could you supply us with a photograph of yourself, head and shoulders would be fine.

changes by p.4

the whole set of changes that enable the living system to remain what it is is replaced by table porcelain lamp with conical shade a shade of blue causality to be replaced by what’s the difference? flow, flow, reticular threshold this question? of paint and iridescence it isn’t the river it’s stepping into each time Hairdressers Insurance Bureau & Sleepers Work Too iridescent eye make up that that matters no curtains "simply" white shutters take it out put it in Control Risks Ltd.

Inevitable that the language acquired in this way from artefacts that assist human memory computation and communications shall be applied again.

Will it dry in a day?

language tuition property medium an imitation made simply for sale

"I don’t see you buy stuff often enough to come in contact with all that. Talk to one of Christies’. I spend most of my time struggling with bits most grateful of paper constantly in touch hold on a second and I’ll get I’ll put that I’ll do this letter is to that we put it in this machine there the uptake of iron

use the device of ‘opening’ the loop it’s not supposed to work if you haven’t money in it straight /put into spin cycle I don’t know where I am. It’s departmental but I keep it.
sitting down to improve the correspondence between its representation of the environment and the actual conditions there and I don't know about you. In a control system there is therefore a comparison of the course that the machine is taking with the representation that constitutes the instruction to act in a particular way in relation to certain environmental features.

consciousness as disembodied residing elsewhere obedient to the past who quarts planning the operation of a tool which can obviously only be done within the limits of specification of the measuring instruments involves the essential part each single creature plays in actually taking these actions precisely a rotating door & mesh surfaces strolling weight check out the areas check this war out to within the thickness of a finger to within the head illegible a mask.

such organs as eyeballs and joints are fabricated precisely under such conditions of random movement

the organs are perceptions the living maximises existence

memories laid down during the lifetime of

the individual in the brain, blood and even bone: constants among the elements that circulate particles in the air concentrate to influence behaviour Get off the phone! They all barge in.

memory itself adjusts I don't know all the details telephone magic crystal the authority dispossessed experience

the machines are being used non-stop the alarming fact of no humidifiers this is very bad for the objects continues in not any particular body but an organization of processes acting living a method of speaking that enables us to see

I need to drink more water double spiral represents and is applied to the upper lip double legal cash flow please stuff with newspapers time all selections its literally the masculine and stake feminine returns touch ease got the sweetness "well, give me the square root of minus one will you? it depends on how ex-Intellectual opus number you take the subject. Take 4 nms out on 3 go back in 6, logical up to a point, if you don't swim the other sort of figures given half a web float patterns identified as an important person masquerade


INTRODUCTION TO THE ELLIPSE

often having the form of a deficiency

potato peeled

falling behind "a bouquet of perfect roses" tranquil, immobile "almost artificial"

it admits of the risk of centor where redness circulates inside the petals but each time I'm astonished by shades warning: the circle, its single-mindedness

one step away or two towards excentricity double focus and ambiguous relations

anxious cry ("because I love them")

what else but orbit of planets disturbed

I watch the petals fall away from definition from sleepless patches in the heart
MIXED QUANTITIES

any loss alters

a picture taken off the wall
shows up
the less exacting dust around

how it eats inward
to increase
its local value

where I thought
I could only
only pleasure could
it enter

familiar as a key
twists the arithmetic around

you start out with
a lateral throbbing
and never know what it will lead to

sums and differences
not a fraction
of undivided mind

CLARIFICATION

the course I had traced

others also
dissolved like salt

you can't step back
river
even once

though to the degree that seasons

if I seem hesitant it's
that I wish
for formal announcements

the river:
a) widens its bed with the years
b) points to the sea
c) a dam can alternate its current
with the day

then if flexes
its irritated direction
against the bias of rock

as if light could be natural
surprise
"a sharp bend as in 'wrench!'"
plays green

a law; everything
comes back again
"but," you say, "not
to the same place"

kindles, rather
toward
continuously out of the straight line
desire on condition

this suddenly
trembling
leaves, vineyards, the virile sun

doesn't scorch so visibly
more lodged under the skin
a complaint

on reflection:
much flight is one swift movement
later
the horizon
the same blue in front of it

peculiar restfulness
of right angles
Notes for page 79.

(1) See Emmanuel Wallerstein's *Fannon and the revolutionary class in The Capitalist World-Economy*, 1979, Cambridge U.P.

(2) The works in progress: Faust Unmasked and DEFEAMILARISING.

(3) Referring to his *Balanced - Unbalanced* series, Fletcher Benton notes, "The surface must... be uniform to allow the shape to take on a special importance." @ West Coast Artists, c.1962, Henry Hopkins, California Books.

(4) Benoit B. Mandelbrot's *Practical Fractals, Form, Chance & Dimensions*, 1977, Freeman, San Francisco.

(5) This work was started through Albert Einstein's *Investigations of the theory of the Brownian movement*, 1905, and a discussion of the differences in European social politics between autonomy and independence.

(6) This complexity concerns itself with non-linear velocities. The space/time of memory and perception are not uni-directional. You can actually speak of whether or not it's as fast as light. Consider the relation between S.W. Hawking's blackboard in his study (on the cover of (36)) and the lectures inside on supergravity and supersymmetry. This matter complexes further in the knowledge of Ferdinand Braudel's concepts of social time (vis. (1)) and Lev Simovitch Vygotsky's insistence regarding the particulars of the interfunctional structure of consciousness in *Thought and Language* (1924-34) 1962, MIT.


(9) t = 1/f, where f is calm.

(10) Even in the recorded piano rolls of Colin Nancarrow, and the music of Lejaren Hiller.

(11) I haven't yet comprehended the complexities alluded to here. Briefly it is being said that the limits of audible noise mathematically correspond to the apparent limits of a tonal system centred on the tonic. This is through the mathematical works of Bernhard Bolzano and K. Weierstrass in the mid-1800s. It is significant to note their relation to (37), and note that recent music, for instance by Brian Ferneyhough in Europe, has called upon the players to reach beyond these apparent limits and his work, at least on record, can be heard. This relates to the physiological evolution during this one hundred year period.

(12) I haven't fully considered Arnold Schoenberg's interface with these matters.

ALLEN FISHER

The Topological Shovel

What started out on corrector fluid became what started here. What started out appears as another paragraph, moved from here, leaving better description unveiled. Plans continue considering how to begin, how to avoid the fetish of terminology that blinds evaluation of the phenomena its supposed to be revealing (1). What started out as showing production, layout, material and metaphor became what follows and continues. On the contrary, the way a reference from American artists. This will be part of THE TOPOLOGICAL SHOVEL made during "public composition" in America. Places for particular clarification will be marked.

What's being read as "poetry" made tedium, started to write a circus (2). This concentration presented as one. Bring in an increase, devices capable of interleaving event spins. Many revolutions with more than one axis to each, the human body as multi-lateral: its bilateral apparent a difficult consideration. Whilst surface uniformity gives a special significance, conditioned perception of surface is inclined to conceal a work's energy (3). Multi-lateral form permits use of precise and imprecise language. It studies the radio as the television channel changes a child in the street talks sudden the door someone discusses winking on the telephone. Total breakdown of discipline makes multiple self intersection inevitable since it leads to Brownian motion (4). Matters that started this, (5), considered interposition between processes with aesthetic functions and extra-poetic processes where functions are different, without giving it the function of preprocessing and inputting to a larger process. It considers continual perhaps. Recognises course of words "process", "function". Allows turn connection screened channels (or data links) transmit pleasure, or sociality. An arrangement around a common load regarded as acting through the word "construct", and a human body. This is a table, a supported deck across, or along which the material parts are moved to produce differentiated products according to their gravitational response. Better explain, wait. What's moving fastest: could be space/time of memory and perception, f, reading words, changing compositions (in special or ordinary ways) flipping smiling yawning (6). A consent through dissonant, gathers. What words mean (attaches, bundles, vanners, rockers, (7)) it hopes never to fully realise, avoids contention. Commits it to it to it to more than it can handle at one time. How to listen when many are speaking at the same time. The listener treats them. Possible audible selectivity: loudness, pitch, position, message continuity (8). This concentration mean "it" as event. A time warp from a reciprocal function of calm (9). Notice, of uncertainties measured by an atomic clock, wobble of the Earth's pole: music that carries errors of exactitude, (10), a temporised musical scale that implies a discrete, where show that now sentence start. Spectrum of frequencies spread logarithmically on both sides of prescribed frequency for a note. (The twelve-tone scale corresponds, (11).) To add low frequencies, add new instruments. (End musical scale been linear the high and middle tones would also have to change, (12),)

These contrasts for the synthesis of complexity. In a switched telephone network the system is so configured it's not possible for all subscribers to obtain access to each other at the same time, few subscribers feel constrained from attempting an access. (The alternative, a front-end
Notes for page 81.


(14) The term fractal derives from similar Latin to fracture and fraction. Its meaning is irregular or fragmented. Brownian motion is considered a natural fractal, (vis. (4)).

(15) Ibid. (4).

(16) In Howell's Familiar Letters, 1650.

(17) In Shakespeare's All's Well That Ends Well.

(18) Ibid. (3).


(20) Norman Sammut notes: "In mixing and preparing the colors for a painting, I depend heavily on mathematical progressions which are ultimately weighed in precise amounts of paint on a very sensitive gram scale... But my painting does not simply obey laws of physics and mathematics. That would be boring art. It is the emotional and spiritual for which I search..." Ed Ruscha notes in the same book (vis. (3)): "I began to believe that it is not so much what you say that matters, but how you say it. This ruled out so-called emotional painting. Everything should be proclaimed."

(21) Jan Hukarovsky's Aesthetic Function, Form and Value as Social Facts 1979, Ann Arbor.

(22) Defoe's Fortunes of Foll Flanders, 1722.

(23) In his 36 Lectures in Biology, 1975, MIT, S.E. Luria sees programs as distinguished from plans. The latter in motion changes at any time to achieve a goal. The former embodies no possibility for purposeful change.

(24) For instance, Jackson Mac Low's comments regarding the political in poetry to the interviewers in Paper Air, pages 21-22, 1980; and Herbert Marcuse's The Aesthetic Dimension, 1978, Beacon, Boston.


* But note Duncan Campbell's Big Brother is Listening, Phonetappers and the Security State, 1981, New Statesman.
In Jonathan Swift's On Poetry, a Rhapsody: "So Naturalists observe a Flea / Hath smaller Fleas that on him prey, / And these have smaller Fleas to bit 'em, / And so proceed ad infinitum."

In Lewis Fry Richardson's parody, 1925, in Weather Prediction By Numerical Process: "Big wholes have little wholes, / Which feed on their velocity, / And little wholes have lesser wholes, / And so on to viscosity."

For instance, the author's talk to the Institute of United States Studies in London, on Pure Poetry, c. 1981.

Paul Ricoeur's The Rule of Metaphor, 1975/1977, Routledge & Kegan Paul. A discussion that continues from this work is in progress using on route authors including William Empson and Annette Pedretti (v. [35]).

Scientists are currently developing a system that will enable future consumers to bring about this sensory in the back of the mouth by direct injection of a whole-tea-drink-capsule. The tea bag itself was invented, or so a local New York artist informs me, in Oakland, CA, in 1975. At about the same time in Green Street, San Francisco (1928) twenty year old Philip Farnsworth built and tested the first television electronic tube sending a one and a quarter inch square image in blue light into a tube the size of a kitchen jam preserving jar (about one quart size). The same day this was reported in the papers the headlines announced the Wall Street crash.

Vis. Jasper Johns' painting Zone, 1962 and his Pool's House of the same year, and Jackson Pollock's Tee Cup painting 1946. On the surface the connection between these paintings and the matter to hum is simply pervenue or a joke. The over-simplifications in the text's illustration are only too apparent, β.

The difference between Hals and Rembrandt with respect to time is but a single aspect of a complicated study that could, with reflection, reveal interesting questions about the complex analysis of realism," W. Thibau, Ibid. (3). Refer also to (1).

Words are not things is one of the arguments in Annette Pedretti's The Cybernetics of Language, Princelet Editions, London, 1981.

For instance, Jean Baudrillard's The Mirror of Production, Twice, St Louis, 1975 on value; Timothy Clark's article (v. [59]) on quality and relevance; and Mukovsky (v. [21]) on function.

emphasis in which poetry is a unit of a differently concentrated action, a different conduct, a new love to save the body from bruises. To show that words on a page may be discovered in terms of their viscosity, the actual thermodynamics of thinking, (note Swift and Richardson, 26). Words' resistance to shear forces and hence to flow. Their relation to forgetting, listening and attention, (27). Proportional to their relative velocity between surfaces, printed onto how it feels to read, how conditioned that might be. Not loss of vitamin A from the brightness leaving a white page and entering the eye's rod cells. But the page's content-viscosity known as its anisotropic stress on the body, the make up from the body's own fields, kinetics and particles. Its many considerations, the movements of the said and the increase of all the parts felt as a whole. A cross-section of interactions where decoupling is partial, in between the reader's nervous system and a phase considered as environment. How it feels, (28). Typeset poetry stands subjected to reproduction as nom function, authorized. Alternatively, such presentations are misunderstandings of function, β. Words' viscosity to the rest of the page and their diffusion through the reader's perception and memory, (29) onto other pages and vice versa, discovered in terms of their diffusion is introducing a difference, or a deviational material, and viscosity is supplied by the reader's adhesive reading. Taking part in differences and similarities. Word, sentence, page, book choice, and how language changes muscle tone, (30). Where ambiguity is a diffusional introduction which spreads impregnated into the material and provides a potential multiplicity of meanings, β. Brownian motion, itself geometrically ambiguous, offers a trail, or text, left by the notion. Another way which changes by deviation, but what is clearly by presenting the importance of the notion. Is the use of Ricoeurian metaphor, β (which changes most of senses given by Aristotle in The Poetics and in the Treatise on Rhetoric by making - by giving it a "special" emphasis, (31)). Call that a shovel, but not simply in terms of words. The perceived words, or understood words, act osmotically, where preferential flow of certain concerns pass through a membrane as a system of emphasis. That isn't the present (highenergy) tea ceremony: mediating infusing a bag of the stuff into semi-boiling water added to one of at least two divisions in a cup (33), which has concentrated tea in solution in the other division and the divider(s) allow(s) the stronger solution to osmotically exchange with the weaker solution until they continually interchange and provide an apparent homogeneity tested by its opacity to light. That's "it" as event. Depends on appropriate durations for the best sampling of a blend, (34). Such osmotic sampling, which Londenore seldom hear as purifying, is the act of perceived words lasting (maxim, here, see 33) on the reader's memory spaces/time. This is not easily understood in theories of poetry, sound can produce colour in the perception/memory. In part or endowed with abilities, because of different attitudes about value, quality, relevance and function, (36). Others theories towards poetry are than virtual, and not actual.

They are virtual because they pertain to a conceptual presence. Not concerned with a poetry already written, but that may arrive. Theories on language generated by a boffin to reference to the rest of instance, regarded as the address area, without regard to the physical memory locations and flux. They are translated to absolute addresses by
His poem
Sinc e supersymmetry seems particularly well suited to unifying gravity
quantum field theory with internal fermions: the merging of spacetime symmetries such as Lorentz rotations
Cambridge, he says: Superspace
In the same, Rock from Mandelb

"feels" exemplifies one of the problems David Finkelstein raises
in the magazine All Areas No.1, New York, 1980. The usage comes from Mandelb ot, Ibid. (4).

P. van Nieuwenhuizen's "~1a exemplifies one of the problems David Finkelstein raises
1980, edited by S.H. van Nieuwenhuizen's
1971, Penguin. Su~avity
1980. The

虛拟内存,一个管理设施。理论家使用存储资源而无须考虑物理上对内存和观念的限制。有些人关心实际制作。实际使用这些条件是有效的,因生产了动量
和距离,而这些资源在一个可利用的诗库中,通过一种预期的诗歌,作为一个可能,而不是实际实现了,诗歌
在制作。这些教义携带假设,或承诺,取自一个地方,关于一个读者的内存

It's not so much a cream smoothed on the expressionism, (38), or where a
magician places an electron in meeting with a positron and the mass is
said to vanish, as if radiation bursts didn't frequent the breath.
"The literary work is not a precariously prolonged adventure, a quest
for its own vanishing point," (39). On the one hand a small airplane
"feels" (40) turbulent gusts that had left the large one undisturbed.
On the other hand, the small airplane "experiences" each shock received
by the large airplane as a burst of weaker shocks. Each stage demands
a redefinition of what is turbulent, (41). Or some imagine a particle
taken from a dense continuum leaving behind a hole that is its anti-
particle. When the particle drops back into the hole, particle and
hole vanish, along with any hope of transforming common sense enough
to avoid bad analogy. We move towards each other travelling a bump
course on an ice rink, "world lines" of opposite handiness. When we
meet, our respective moments, being in opposite directions, cancel each
other and vanish, until our perceptions have learnt what really happens.
It's already been shown (42) that all one-loop divergences (quantum effects are looply) in the corrections to the cosmological
constant, vanish, leaving a finite constant correction. However, whether
physical processes are finite is an open question. If they are, anyone
might call the symmetry-breaking spontaneous, since for spontaneously
broken theories, whether of poetry, video synthesis or particle physics,
the theory behaves in the ultra violet or unseen region as if there are
no masses. Thus this, the difficult, vanishes when considering words
on a page as providers for pink performance participation by the
caressing reader. This "providing" may be considered in terms of
the instantaneous velocity

of words as read on a page. Take pause as each word follows the last
wonder. What are the alternatives now. Elmer Bischoff's "helpful state
of affairs" - "dynamic interactions bordering on anarchy", or Vija
Calins's balance between abstraction and the recognisable image?
Should everything be preplanned, or should the interaction of the
material topology and the experience of making, move on towards the
shovel that events the topological interfaces between them? (43).
Instantaneous denotes value of a change in physical quantity at a given
instant of time. Bumps with velocity, brings speed with direction, a
concept some positrons can expect to change into directionless space/
time known as joy. The considerations here are independent of the
slowest reading possible and dependent on the fastest in terms of
perception capacity. That's slower than "what's being read as poetry" wants to
know.

And sense begins to brighten towards transparency, you can hear it, as
Giuseppe Ungaretti put it, "l'illuminato/d'immenso", (44), where to
Notes for page 87.

(45) Ibid. (35) for a special, or particular use of this word. E.g. "... to the activity of pursuing our curiosity, in the activity of constructing, communicating and arguing that the foundation of language is overcome in the coincidence of what we do and what we speak about. In the process of construction, the construction of a language coincides with the construction of what we speak about..."

(46) "... the more capital is accumulated, the less the role of labor in production." Quoted by Wallerstein (ibid. (1)) from Patterns of Development of the Modern World-System, 1977.

(47) This particular complex needs extended elaboration to prevent it from being the fetish cited on page 79 (ibid. (1)).

(48) In The Framework of Language Roman Jakobson says: "To speak of the transman of an art is not to employ a useless metaphor...", 1980, Michigan Studies in the Humanities. This sense of metaphor permeates Ferdinand de Saussure's Course in General Linguistics, revised 1974, Fontana. Both writers' work is elaborated on by Roland Barthes in Elements of Semiology, Cape Editions, 1967. The change of emphasis from this use of resemblance is the matter alluded to be under (31).

(49) The map made by the University of California, Berkeley, and the American Museum-Hyland Planetarium, N.J, in June 1973 is the Astrographics Celestial Map available from 14 Spear Street, San Francisco.


(51) Ibid. (29). The word is from C.H. Waddington's Tools for Thought.

(52) Ibid. (19).

(53) The matter of realism continues into artists comments in, for instance, (3); Robert Bochtle: "I am interested in painting based on both things look. I look at things the way they are rather than thinking how they can be changed."

(54) Consider the reception psychologists' discussion regarding the work of some of the so-called abstract expressionist painters, and the research on textures (looked at in Allen Fisher's forthcoming work in progress, UNFAMILIARIZEING______).

(55) know is not acknowledgment, but as the Teddy Bears put it, to know is to love. The irregularity of these velocities from word to word have made measurement of their velocity impractical.

neither artifice nor conspiracy to occur. The procedure is a concern, and not a meddling, business practice or a property. Who is the book made for? A particular group with particular attitudes, particular expectations, made by a writer with unclear social functions. It's not here a concern with measure, but with the diffusion-coefficient.

The process of introducing deviation discussed via floating-point number. Where the limited and the exponent, say the curiosity (45) and the making, move towards a production, are suggested by a number of times, the number of times that the word-page-mix multiplies with the other understood/perceived factors including the complex of book-production, (46). That is the diffusion-coefficient from word-page/viscosity-perception to perceptual memory-scape/time participation. From that, philosophy has been observed (47) that concentration in word-page dynamics has become too formal. Has seen pages as blocks of fixed size trimmed and located as entities in the storage of a book, capable of regeneration in which data is retained as a result of the continued circulation, distribution, of similar pages, or similar signal acts on moving screens with limited choice, or of interfering and metonymy through Saussure's syntagmatic and associative, and feeds it all through Barthes machine where syntagmatized paradigm is metaphorically series, metaphor selects from contiguity and, in metonymy, contiguity becomes a field to select from, (48). An x/y geometry of resemblance. It makes a map of the sky and removes any need to involve the body in turning the head. It stretches the poles and elongates constellations in the southern hemisphere to fit the page, the rectangle, (49). The actual word-page dynamic is memory, both consistent and inventive (50), it generates using the presence or absence of change, or call it capacity to leak, allowing degradation and therefore in need of a lot of shovel. Such has no influence on the velocities until readability.

a memory capacity concerned with stored patterns which were not topologies. Topologies that partly blown during making (at least in consistent memory) and can hardly be changed in direction (that is chronic, neo 51) by the writer, or altered by the theoretician, until that readability is lost. Nor, it was easy but surprising to find, is there any significant influence due to the complexity of the reader/participant memory-space/time. Irreproducibility is "the guarantee of readability" where realist writing, "in its oft-proclaimed ambition to give a true equivalent of the real, finds the greatest difficulty in not over-reaching itself, so pursued is it by an ideal of conformity" (52), (33). That is, where the writer "has the greatest difficulty in rendering a writer..." Emphasis falls (almost therefore falls) on the topology of presentations, on the geometry concerned with layout, pattern, shape, print-methods, shovels. Looks at topological presentations towards changing the way the world is seen. Looks at an imaginative stochastic geometry including specific surfaces, lines of turbulence, and fragmental presentations. At the degree of vigilance locally on the page, and the page as part of a book. It seems the question of resemblance concerns the value of the dimension. How far away before this becomes a rectangle, (54). As Godard said to Dick Calvetti, "To be a comic you have
Notes for page 89.

(55) Clark Coolidge transcribed this for Rocky Lodge 8, 1981, from the tv shows of October 1980 on WJJH.

(56) Note also Noam Chomsky's Aspects of a Theory of Syntax, 1965, MIT.


(58) An extensive note should be made here. Extensive use of reception aesthetics was made by Allen fisher in his forthcoming book Stepping Out, and in the film of same by Erik Vonn-Michell.

(59) Timothy Clark's argument with Clement Greenberg was analysed by Paul Richter's paper in Art Monthly, March 1982, headed Modernism and After.

(60) Stephen Beck wrote in Direct Video: Electronic Art Form for Colour Television for Radical Software's Videocity issue, Vol.2 No.3.

(61) Stefan Thomauer's Tom Harris was first published in a second edition. Pearl White's Youth From was published in 1971, it was a book made of shortcut, rice paper and cochinina with a "poisonous" paper supplement. In the production of Ben Friedman's The Aesthetics, Beau Geste Press used talcum powder (printers usually use sugar dust) to dry the pages as they came off the mime-press as the pages were being printed on therm-o-stencils from xerox masters and the printed sheets were very wet subjecting each subsequent sheet to strike-off of print. My copy would cloud in powder for many years afterwards.

(62) "While there can be synthetic descriptions (e.g. poetry), the very nature of 'descriptions' supports their analytical character...." Pedretti, ibid. (55).

(63) Again, Waddington's work, ibid. (59). Whilst homeostasis can be used to mean the process of keeping something (e.g. the body) at a stable value, homeoeosis, a word meaning preserving a flow, is more concerned with ensuring the continuation of a given type of change, exemplified by developing embryos and by James Watt's governors in steam engines and by sophisticated thermostats. Actual processes in life are nearly always homeotic and choric.

(64) The next step, or test for supergravity and supergravity may be the 3-loop functions of the R-3 model. As N.T. Grisaru (ibid. (56)) says: "The one-loop rules owe their simplicity to the fact that it involves only quantum backgrounds interactions (quadratic in quantum fields), rather than quantum interactions (cubic and higher)." Be that as it may, the sentence in the text leaves much to be desired.

(65) Ibid. (56).


...to be very capable in geometry." (55). It's based on equivalences, on deformation potentials that include development without the tearing, or page to page joining, found in ambiguity, (55). It notices that change movement in norms numerals is being researched at the Jerry Lewis Neurophysiological Research Center in Los Angeles (57). It links this to research in King's College in Brubuntu into the absorption of light by rhodopsin in the eyes' rods and its control of conductance channels. It reads that via the two most critical components of the optical memory system reported by the New Jersey Exxon Company, the dioxide laser read/write light source and the optical storage medium itself, (57). It doesn't see this as ambiguity of resemblance or analogy. Topology moves uninterested in abilities, or powers of purpose or warranty in terms of the "background" caring reader. It moves to coincide with the reader/text discussion formulated by Stanley Fish and Wolfgang Iser and others in reception aesthetics to which footnotes (opposite) refer (58). Recipients of receptacles can be more or less pleased than givers had hoped they would be in part because of the prominence of the presented surface, or as Timothy Clark thumbs it, (59), the relevance of the presentations, and in part, where is it being shown, on what polished floor. Consider Stephen Beck's direct video synthesiser - remove the tv camera, replace it with electronic circuits to effect the formation of what is being made. I don't mean analogically. I'm actually wishing to make the temporal change of geometrical relationships between elements of form which give rise to motion in the body. I'm wishing to offer a feature that arises as brightness gradients over the elements of form, a macroscopic aggregate of microforms which isn't an equivalence in which the spectral distribution of energy in perception and memory evokes small from the sentence, (60). Not simply Proust's associations or the smell of lithographic printing ink or bleaching agents in brilliant white paper (61). The Supergravity lectures add dimensions different from the alternatives of ambiguity, survival juxtaposition or poetic synthesis (62) by finding a physical way of revealing elusions. Despite its mega-effort towards true unification of all interactions, it does offer a mechanism of spontaneous symmetry-breaking. It needs to develop to carry the different strengths of work, electromagnetic and strong interactions, but it may be the ultimate quantum theory of gravitational response. Don't just tell me what's happening - I want homoeosis (63) and yet be able to change what's potentially next, (64). Whether or not a counter turn to supergravity exists or if it is continually irrelevant (56). A pertinent poetry can work by giving the deviations (necessary to defamiliarising) subversively by use of poetry's aesthetic function. And it can make the deviations pertinent through use of the topological showed.

Part two of the shovelling looks at particular work already made, (66).

allen fisher, spring '82

(Editor's note: New readers are advised to look at Allen Fisher's Thumbail Lecture - RS Vol.2, out of print, but xerox of text available - and The Mathematicians of Brubuntu - RS Vol.3.)
DAVID MILLER

Benjamin and the Art-Work in an Age of Mechanical Reproduction

1. (Aura and Reproduction)

Walter Benjamin, in his essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1936), (1) asserts that the aura of the art-work (his example is the painting) is destroyed by the processes of mechanical reproduction. A painting which is reproduced no longer has the quality of "aura", which Benjamin wants to identify with the "singleness" of the work, i.e. the fact that there is only one of it, and the new media - his examples are the photograph and the film - which develop out of the techniques of mass production, are without aura.

Benjamin sees some important conclusions arising from these basic assumptions, but before looking into them, I want to examine the notion of aura and its loss. The aura of a painting is its presence, which is unique (there is only one of it). "...the aura," explains Martin Jay, "was the unique nuance that surrounds an original work of art. It was the special sense of this act of art, (here and now) giving authenticity to the thing. (2) However, what Benjamin fails to see is that the reproduction of a work of art utterly depends upon, and gains its reality, or identity - its authenticity - from its relation to the original. It does not destroy the sense of an original. The point about the reproduction is not the distance from the original, but its nearness to it; it makes available a likeness which (depending upon certain factors, e.g. how well the reproduction conveys the qualities of colour, relation, texture, etc. of the original, as well as the ability of the observer to imaginatively transcend the discontinuities, e.g. of scale or of actual (as opposed to implied) texture, necessarily involved - an ability gained through experience of relating reproduction to their originals), makes manifest something of (at least) the presence of aura which endures in the original. In saying this, it is important to note that Benjamin's idea of "aura" involves a spiritual, or even mystical, quality - that of "mystery" or "the numinous" - which he fails to distinguish from the material individuality - the "singleness" - of the art-work. To what extent reproductions make manifest the numinous, can only be decided by experience; from my own experience, I can say - speaking as one who has the numinosity of art works is of especial importance - that Benjamin is mistaken.

Nor has mechanical reproduction removed from the sphere of contemporary art the concept of "aura"; aura and presence are systems which can be found in discussions of Abstract Expressionism, Post-Painters' Abstraction, Minimalism, Fundamental Painting. (3) The processes of mechanical reproduction have also to be set against certain contemporary paintings which resist reproduction (the work of Ad Reinhardt and Agnes Martin come especially to mind).

What Benjamin says about mechanical reproduction in relation to photographs and films is understandable by the following consideration. Photographers and film-makers - except in certain situations ("home movies", snapshots), purely journalistic work, or deliberately and (as it were) unrestrainedly exploitative or propagandist works - aspire to the status of artists, and their works to art-works (of which the main example of an art-work from the past is painting, or in the case of film exemplars have usually been both painting and the theatre, or painting and the novel - or even poen), and the works themselves tend to be judged according to like criteria (including that of "presence" or "mystery").

2. (The Shoe of Discontinuity)

In an essay on Beaudelaire, Benjamin speaks of "the disintegration of the aura in the experience of shock". (4) This shock, a shock which is brought about by the use of a discontinuous structure, is of the nature of the art Benjamin - in the art-work essay - wants to set up as an exception to what he calls the "revolutionary potential", and in regard to the possible art of the proletarian, Benjamin asserts the need to "brush aside a number of outdated concepts, such as creativity and genius, eternal value and mystery - concepts whose uncontrollability ...applies not only to a provisory period but in the Fascist sense". (5) Benjamin doesn't bother to explain the necessary relation between such concepts and Fascism; there isn't any, in fact: such concepts can be defined and taken up in such a way as to support a Fascist programme, but they can also be defined and taken up in opposite ways. The Fascists who defined Franco during the Spanish Civil War, or the French Catholic writer Francois Mauriac, who wrote of the "demonic" character of Franco's Fascism during the same period, were using criteria of judgment which would certainly have been grounded in concepts of "aura", "value" and "mystery". If one assumed that the same values, or concepts, could certainly create works which bear witness against Fascism - I think, for example, of the "Holocaust" poets, Nelly Sachs and Paul Celan in particular. Art Francois Mauriac or the Fascists only understood something quite different by these concepts than did the official Spanish Catholic Church, which supported Fascism. There is a need to be able to say how such concepts are understood and used; Benjamin is not concerned with any distinctions of this kind. But as we shall see, his own notion of the political value of aesthetic "shock" is due to discontinuity of structure, is subject to the same necessity of contextual definition; i.e. it can also be part of Fascist art.

In writing of Brecht's "Epic Thea"re", Benjamin says: "Like the pictures in a film, epic theatre moves in spurts. Its basic form is that of the shock with which the single, well-defined situations of the play collide. The songs, the captions, the lifeless conventions set off one situation from another. This brings about intervals which, if anything, impair the illusion of the audience and parody its readiness for empathy. These intervals are reserved for the spectators' critical reactions - the actions of the players and to the way in which they are presented." The conventions of "Epic Theatre" break up the stream of continuity and allow us to see that events could be other than they are, that history itself could be other than it is". (6)

This leads us to a definition of the function of disruption; as Benjamin saw it, it broke up the stream of continuity (of images, ideas, events) on one level. It is a continuity which was, on another level, a continuum of history as it is represented by historioclism - which rob the moments of that history of their significance (as being, individually, shot through with potentiality for revolution); aesthetic disruption can act upon the consciousness in such a way as to make one see "that events could be other than they are, that history itself could be other than it is". Benjamin's own use of quotation - which he saw as a form of montage, akin to that in film - was itself an instance of such disruption; "...disruption is one of the fundamental devices of all
structuring. It goes beyond the sphere of art. To give only one example, it is the basis of the quotation. To quote a text is to seize the interruption of its context." (7) As Hannah Arendt puts it: ""...quotations have the double task of interrupting the flow of the presentation with 'transcendent force' (Benjamin)." A double task, in that by taking something out of its original context, it destroys that context and thus presents an unconventional interpretation of the passage, giving it "transcendent force," in the way it is put into a new context. (Arendt explicitly compares Benjamin's use of quotations to Hölderlin's notion of "narrative violence": benjamin is concerned, as a writer, with those things which "could be saved and lifted into the present only by doing violence to their context in interpreting them with the 'deadly impact' of new thoughts.).(8)

When he writes of the film, Benjamin proceeds as if this process was implicit in the very nature of the film itself, its material nature of frames/images edited together in sequence; the "shock-effect" which he attributes to Dadaist art (or which, in a different way, is manifested in Godard's work) is said to be part of the nature of the film. "The spectator's process of association in view of these [film] images is indeed interrupted by their constant, sudden change. This constitutes the shock effect of the film, which, like all shocks, should be cushioned by heightened presence of mind. By means of its technical structure, the film has taken the physical shock out of the wrappers in which Dadaism had, as it were, kept it inside the moral shock effect." (9) But in fact, film-makers generally link sequences of images together to form a smooth continuity; there is a negation of the discontinuity of individual images as they appear one after another, or not or we can speak of an "examiner" as "absent-minded", or as "unconsciously" examining something, and still take the idea of critically examining something seriously, is open to doubt; (b) Benjamin overstresses the presumed "disruptive" effect Benjamin's comments on the uncanniness of film; he doesn't entertain the idea of the context of Benjamin's project as a writer or as a theorist.

I am less concerned with the truth of this idea, than with placing it within the context of Benjamin's project as a writer and theorist.

makes the cult value prevails into the background not only by putting the public in the position of the critic, but also by the fact that at the movies this position requires no attention. The public is an examiner, but an absent-minded one." ...as unconsciously preoccupied with a space consciously explored by man.

"The camera introduces us to unconscious optics as does psychoanalysis to unconscious impulses."

According to Benjamin, then, the "shock effect" of the film makes us aware, perceptually, of things which would otherwise go unnoticed; the film opens up a view of things, a "space" which the spectator appropriates. This notion is the alienation of modern life, by which consciousness is disappropriated from the very life - the world - in which it exists: the cause of this is capitalist ideology, operating at one level as historicism in society and at another as the Philosophy of History. The disruptive element in film, or in other forms of art, provides a disruption of the network of associations and meanings which are "fixed" in "ordinary" consciousness, and as such it can be a means of "reclaiming" the life we live and the world in which we live - at least, as Benjamin says, at the level of consciousness. In other words, it breaks the monopoly of the dominant culture with regard to the meaning of things.

I am less concerned with the truth of this idea, than with placing it within the context of Benjamin's project as a writer and theorist.
of abstraction from a conventional context. "In the novel," he says, "everything which is mythically fixed... will come alive." (13) As to the connections between things, the concern for Benjamin was with "clarification" and "illumination." He was concerned with the correlation between a street scene, a speculation on the stock exchange, a poem, satire, and the hidden line which holds these together and enables the historian or philologist to recognize that they must all be placed in the same period." (Hannah Arendt.) (14) What Benjamin sought was a "true picture" of things at a specific moment of time - a "picture" which was elusive and always in danger of being lost.

4. (Fascist Aesthetics)

"Fascism attempts to organize the newly created proletarian masses without affecting the property structure which the masses strive to eliminate. Fascism sees its salvation in giving the masses not their right, but instead a chance to express themselves. The masses have a right to change property relations; Fascism seeks to give them an expression while preserving property. The logical result of Fascism is the introduction of aesthetics into political life. The violation of the masses, whom Fascism, with its "Führer" cult, forces to their knees, has its counterpart in the violation of an apparatus which is pressed into the production of ritual values." "War and only war can set a goal for mass movements on the largest scale while respecting the traditional property system." So Fascism aestheticizes war; war is seen as a "beautiful", "sublime", spectacle ("speculum").

Benjamin mentions in this context the Fascist aesthetic of Marinetti's Futurism.

"...Marinetti... expects war to supply the artistic gratification of a sense perception that has been changed by technology. This is evidently the consumption of '1914 pour l'art' by Hessel, which was an object of contemplation for the Olympian gods, now is one for itself. Its self-allocation has reached such a degree that it can experience its own destruction as an aesthetic pleasure of the first order. This is the situation of politics, which Fascism is rendering aesthetic. Communism responds to political art." (15)

Benjamin is right in describing Marinetti and Futurism as "Fascist".

As John Willett says: "...Marinetti had aligned himself with the Fascists and spoken on the same platform as Mussolini as early as 1919. 'Fascist art = Futurism', he told one of the party journals, and he was made a Senator and elevated to the new Fascist Italian Academy in 1929." (16) Indeed, Futurism had, from the beginning, been programmatically and inherently Fascist, glorifying war, the "hero", will, hatred, destruction (all these terms being taken directly from various of the Futurists' manifestos); the Futurist was also enjoined by Marinetti to despise the intelligentsia. What needs to be pointed out, however, is that the Futurists were without a doubt as concerned with "disruption" or "discontinuity" as Benjamin (or more so). They employed fragmentation, disruption or destruction of syntax, destruction of the units of time and the deliberate "break" or oblique "break"/or logical, violent rhythms and colour-combinations. The interesting, indeed more interesting, thing is of course the orientation involved in this. The Futurists were concerned with deliberately disparate, even chaotic sensations and aesthetic elements which were taken up in order to be the will of the hero-artist. In fact, the artist's will - the stirrings of that will - were to be seen in the phantasmagoria of clashing sensations in modern life, as well as their control (in the form of an aesthetic arrangement). In Futurism, aesthetic "discontinuity" or "disruption" is oriented towards an expression of power; the worship, and the victory, of power. The baleful rhetoric of speed, danger, technology, heroism, etc. is to find its proper place in relation to this orientation. The terrible face of ritual which is oriented towards power, can be seen in the film To Die in Madrid, where hooded priests in black collaborate and douse Franco and his holograph, the representatives of power and its work. But totally opposite is a ritual could be presented, e.g. the Basque priests, opposed to the Spanish Fascists, celebrating an unstated, traditional ritual of the Basque priest with the Basque peasants; here people have come together to be united in a Christian "victory" which belongs not to this world", i.e. the realm of worldly power, Christ having submitted himself to an ignominious death, at the hands of the representatives of worldly power (the Roman Empire); and perhaps to be realized too of what Simone de Beauvoir called the Christian revolution (a delinquent contrary to the very heart of Fascist ideology); and of the idea of a fellowship in love, instead of a fellowship in hatred. (17)

With this question of "discontinuity", of "esthetic shock", or "disruption", it may be well to consider also the words of two of Benjamin's fellow-members of the Frankfurt School, Theodor Adorno and Erich Fromm. Adorno said of Stravinsky's music that the "use of nonquantitative rhythms corresponded to the shocks of un-integrated... Erlebnis (experience) fostered by Fascist society." (18) And Fromm wrote to Max Harrelson: "Your remark about the montage of a life story in the moving picture is especially revealing for me, because it throws more light on my observation of the isolated and pensive sequence of harship and breaks of childhood and adult life. All this seems to be also tied up with the concept of loneliness, because the criterion of love is continuity and this is just the phenomenon which is never admitted." (19)

"Aesthetic Shock", "discontinuity", etc; these are not, inherently, "revolutionaries" (neither are they inherently counter-revolutionary).

Benjamin wanted to make a case for "blasting open" a false continuum of time and of the events within that time; he seized upon certain aspects of artistic experience (as tools or techniques) for this purpose. He did not treat them as inherent in the very material nature of the film-medium. These aspects, however, are dependent, for their very identity, upon their orientation towards a specific principle or reality (whether it is power, or love, or whatever) - the related (or opposed) notions like continuity (in Lowsenthal's example) are; or as ritual is. (20)

(Exegesis: Benjamin and Theology)

"Today," writes Gabriel Josipovici, "...it is neither possible nor profitable to determine whether (Benjamin) was closer to the Jewish mystical tradition exemplified by his friend Gershom Scholem, or to the Harkness of Adorno and his Frankfurt colleagues." (21) The editors of New Left Books, in a note to the collection One-day Street and Other Writings, similarly remark that in conjunction with Benjamin's materialism, there is a continuation of the mystical concerns of his early writings, and that the "unpublished "Theologico-Political Fragment" of 1920-21 so clearly abounds themes in 'Theses on the Philosophy of History' of 1940 that Adorno could long believe it to have been composed as late as 1938." (22)

Benjamin himself, writing in 1931, was able to say: "I have never
been able to study or think otherwise than in a way that I would define as theological — that is, in accord with the Talmudic doctrine of the forty-nine levels of meaning in every paragraph of the Torah." (23) Such an investigation was an attempt on Benjamin's part to go beneath the ordinary "utilitarian or communicative functions of linguistic creations", (24) so that the true significance of the past — and with it, the present and future — would not be lost, concealed beneath the interpretations of the dominant culture. He writes: "To articulate the past historically does not mean to recognize it "the way it really was", but to recollect it as the redemption of time; and that day is Judgement Day." (25) The imagery of the past that is not recognised as the redeemer, he comes as the subduer of Antichrist. Who is firmly convinced that even the dead are able to study or re-examine the past? (31) What is: "God's remembrance", (26) in which every second of time, "a redeemed mankind receives the fullness of its past — which is to say, the present and future — would not be s a f e from the enemy" (30) in which the image of the past which we are forbidden to study or think otherwise than in a way that I would define as theological — that is, in accord with the Talmudic doctrine of the forty-nine levels of meaning in every paragraph of the Torah, in which the present and future would not be safe from the enemy?

(1) Illuminations, tr. Harry Zohn.
(2) The Dialectical Imagination.
(3) S.G. Thomas B Hess writing on Barnett Newman, Michael Fried on Minimal Art, Stephen Barr on Elie Nadelsthal.
(4) "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire", in Illuminations.
(5) "The Work of Art..."
(6) "What is Epic Theatre?", Illuminations.
(7) Ibd.
(8) Aronofsky, Intro. to Illuminations.
(9) "The Work of Art..."
(10) Ibd.
(11) Ibd.
(12) Intro. to One-Way Street and Other Writings.
(13) Quoted in Jay, op.cit.
(14) Intro. to Illuminations.
(15) "The Work of Art..."
(16) Willett, Expressionism.
(17) One should also note that killing-as-spectacle hardly originates with modern Fascism; one need only think of the Roman "circuses".
(18) Quoted in Jay, op.cit.
(19) Ibd.
(20) It should be noted that — as Susan Buck-Morss has pointed out in The Origin of Negative Dialectic — Benjamin had, with the essay "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire" (1939), abandoned his "earlier insistence (in the artwork essay) that the revolution in poetic perception was progressive"; "shock" is by this date characterized as consonant with "the disintegration of the capacity for experience"
But if "shock", "disruption", etc., are related here to the loss of "active, reflective experience (Erfahrung...)" (Buck-Morss), the "Theses on the Philosophy of History" again returns us to the need for defining a positive context for these concepts.

(22) *One-Way Street*...
(23) Ibid.
(24) Arendt, op.cit.
(25) "Theses on the Philosophy of History", *Illuminations*. The "Theses" represents Benjamin at his most profoundly radical - in the sense of permeating to the heart of his subject-matter; whereas "The Work of Art..." is only superficially radical, a self-consciously provocative, cavalier treatment founded at best on half-truths and overstatements, not to mention out-and-out mistakes and misappropriations. Unfortunately, the latter essay is the more characteristic of Benjamin's work. Generally, the "theological" or "mystical" elements in Benjamin's writing exist alongside the materialist elements, clashing against one another (sometimes fruitfully, other times not), but scarcely integrated into a coherent - consistent - whole. I believe Scholem to have been correct when he reproached Benjamin (in 1931) "for the fantastic discrepancy" between a terminology 'possibly close to communist vocabulary' and metaphysical conclusions 'absolutely independent of any materialist method'. (criticising Benjamin's) recent productions for the impression they gave of 'adventurism, ambiguity and acrobatics'." (New Left Books, op.cit.)

(26) "The Task of the Translator" (1923), *Illuminations*.
(27) "Theses..."
(29) "Theses..."
(30) Ibid. The note is Arendt's.
(31) Ibid.
(33) "Theses..."

MARINA LA PALMA

One hot summer night we were drinking wine, laughing and laughing. It was after a particularly stimulating reading, though now I can't remember who performed or anything that was said.... just that it was a hot night, downtown, by the harbor, and we kept laughing and drinking wine.

It was summer and we were stimulating anything - reading after what was hot. Downtown, it was said, laughing was just a onenight. The harbor stimulates a hot remember. And the laughing was. I harbor anything that keeps on drinking.

After who performed, the one night I remember stimulates (I can't.) Or I say that the night is night. The downtown summer is remembered hot.

We say "harbor" and it just performs. Though we were laughing, wine reading, wine was said. I can't remember that.

The wine, kept after just one drinking. It was anything. Said we were hot and wine particularly. Remember that the readings can. That was one summer was.

The night the night was. Laughingly remembered. That is to say, anything I kept (though I kept it.) I remember now.
Long nights on bamboo platform with no bedding but a woven sheet when once he asks, quite reasonably, "If you wished to make love would I know it?"

My answer, quite apparent, naturally "yes". And turning, share the broken sleep of palm-roof, unwalled native sounds.

Then dawn. Jacques still asleep, or pretending. First the darkness turns silvery; the moon becomes a transparent disk. Pages from my notebook flame, the smoke rises bitter into my face. Deap wood that will not burn, and underneath only ashes, and the steep slope of the hill.

Then the sun springs loose from tangled foliage and flings itself into the sky.

Long fling asleep on dawn of days. Apparent ashes break the love of wood and platforms. Share the answers of bamboo, and would you make it native?

Turning sky into my face with bitterness, the foliage unwalled.

Dark answer, moon of slopes, steep reasons naturally turn to wishes, sheets of sound. Yes, dawn and silver, bedding underneath my tangle.

Answer if you wish the night to weave. The ashy pages of these hills have risen, loving sleep and palms. Long dawn of faces making flame and flinging.

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The image has the function of relating external events to internal ones centred around the apertures and their receptors anything, really

The phone rings Australia rings Australia awakes everybody carried one they still do travel on public transport to UK as soon as you want a job, OUT knocks head against wall in a moving crowd 3 times there you've got to register with the police I wouldn't say they were awfully friendly, a bit stiff.

Effects of colonisation: extinction of population introduction of religion involvement in wars

Looking where the hypnotists indicate colours associated with fleeting chemical manipulations

What if I said to arouse and to stimulate sleep desynchronisation 13% of the time for some difference between image and map : located in intimacy they sleep and are related by that

A comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach, integrating linguistic, anthropological, geographical, archaeological and historical data, the phrenologists lifting each screen consecutively contained in signs

Small statelets situated in the flood plains near major rivers making a beaded chain long arms independent villages located in crystalline uplands the marks incised at back and front above navel level see drawings

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Obtained in exchange for a screen: trade and the external world

Trace the things my grandfather presented concerning a collection of shadow a small amount of sugar svering thermohygrographic humidifiers in order to restore an acceptable environment

Typed labels too vague for identification you or your representative I suffered from a passion they've examined that

W/ teeth and shells W/ paint w/ tattoo W/ silver and shell gorget peace medals my hands are magnetic

Bodies glistening here under the sky they conceive their children in the garden the green leaf baked and stirred to sex a powder sweat sparkling in the hair with a pebble from the same stream explodes into the dark forge rapids and the port makes love to visitors

The wave passes over shoulders switching green to brown to green and rock on the river surfaces polite no political competition didn't last long gifts of food underlie changing the course of the ball

P.K. sticky I can take on anybody

The most benign manifestation of our present forms optical prisms appropriate payment found in crystal skull
changes by p.9

making measurements

seeing it as a "skyline"

I've never seen a green horse. Well, you needn't take it so literally your resemblances worry too much operating on a squint

pull on flowers

the moon in her navel

blue kisses his face

you think they could afford non-reflecting glass

deposits of lake in their faces and coincident lavender very calm and generously decorous in an armchair relaxes forward to scratch pubic hair

all the trees are very tall

and straight an expression of serenity

they have a shadow they have an aura recalling mother & child

static electricity slowly pans the street looking downstream and looking upstream folds into milky where head is protected from sun and foot from grass and at puberty the plasma body departs a sac of shadows

the madwoman comes in from the sun rolling back on her heels

What are your mechanisms

She walks by breaking their way in go find the guilty persons you got that? 11:40 there are eight of them

Infiltration & dispersal : a series of conversations with E.E.VONNA-MICHELL

(Note: These conversations between Ken Edwards and Erik Vonna-Michell were taped at 75 Balfour St and 19 Arlington Sq during summer 1981, and subsequently edited during 1981/2. Photographs by Erik Vonna-Michell. ... means a break in the tape or part edited out.)

TAPES: A: 18.vi.81 75 Balfour St (front room)

... 

KE: I wanted to ask you whether there was anything in particular that you can define that started you on your present activities in sound and film and object making and writing and whatever.

EEVM: No, there's nothing in particular. There's no signalling point, no particular thing that happened, that would be too easy. I don't think it ever happens that way. When did you start writing? Was there a particular instance?

KE: No, I can't say there was, I was about three or four years old, I think, I started writing stories about rabbits and things.

EEVM: Well, I used to exhibit eggs... I was always interested in the kitchen, cooking utensils, the kitchen was a fascinating place, everything in the kitchen, the way things used to change. You'd see a package of something dry and later it came out wet... things became cakes, never understood how a thing became a cake like that. I remember now seeing a cardboard box with all this dry stuff in it, three hours later we had this big cake. Took me years to understand, I don't understand it now, really, how that happens. Puddings were mysterious, and jellies... all that business, you know, fascinating.

KB: Changing textures and things like that?

EEVM: It wasn't even the same thing any more.

KE: Changing from one form to another.

EEVM: But the best thing was glass, jellies and glass. I don't know why you can see through glass. No-one's given me a good reason why it's transparent. And the same thing with jellies, I couldn't understand why it became like that. If you get lemon or lime jellies you can see right through it. But you can't see through it before you put the water in it, that's something very similar to glass making.

KE: Yes, because glass is really sand and all sorts of other shit, none of which is...

EEVM: None of which is transparent. People accept this as obvious.

KE: Did you take up cooking at all?

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EVEH: You preferred to let it be mysterious?

KE: No, I preferred eating it! Eating was a different thing to do, eating was much more interesting...

EVEH: I've always had this thing about recipe books, I mean recipes are like little stories, which is one thing that's always fascinated me. You got the ingredients, which are like characters in the story, and you put them together and they interact in various ways.

KE: And you got a final result which wasn't there...

EVEH: About terrorism...

KE: It's a very loaded word. It starts off from a certain position, that's "terror", that's "terrible"...

EVEH: I'm using it as a sort of...

KE: A media usage of it. People engaged in it wouldn't say they're terrorists, usually. They identify with whatever group they're engaged in.

KE: Yes, and when governments do it, it's not called terrorism.

EVEH: No, it's police action, or something.

KE: But you were talking about the performance aspect of it.

EVEH: I was talking about performance, about performance in general, not excluding that type of activity...not excluding a type of activity which can generate the media or even be the media news as reusable event...event as dramatic instance...this is actually a very quick form of art...you can even get an immediate grant... radio coverage...tv coverage...black & white and colour.... There seems to be two major trends developing, the one being the european-middle-eastern-japanese style which directs attention to group/ideological notions...the other being the north/south-american style which concentrates on issues and personalities. The americans in particular are very personality orientated.

KE: That's not something that's confined to American groups of that kind, I mean, it's found in American society generally.

EVEH: I would say certainly.

KE: I mean, American politics...

EVEH: Oh, certainly, American politics. I mean, there again, personality and the whole paraphernalia of that, is just as important if not more important than issues. And the Arts Council...the grant system's quite different, they have all those foundations and no on. The best trick with the Arts Council is that people actually believe it's an arts council.

EVEH: What do you mean by that?

KE: Well, who says they're an arts council? They sort of appoint themselves as being ministers of art, and decide they will now... permit art to be.

KE: ...But what's the point you're trying to make?

EVEH: I wouldn't try to make a point of it... Does nothing odd strike you about that?

KE: Well, what strikes me as odd is what they choose to define as art.

EVEH: It's not a point of what is defined as "art", rather a question of control by allowing a "council of art ministers" to be in a defining position. I mean - what is the basis for decision making... financial support?

KE: I was just interested in why you were talking about terrorism, if we can use that word in quotes, in connection with performance, using that word in quotes...

EVEH: I think it's a significant development of performance.

TAPE A: 25.VI.81
75 Balfour St (dining room)

KE: I'll make some tea, shall I?

EVEH: Yeah.

KE: That's right.

EVEH: Oh, this is the first time I've even seen your new neighbour, your co-resident or whoever. I used to think you lived alone here.

KE: No, no, no, there's three others. Well, there's two on the middle floor and the old man on the top floor. You haven't seen the old man? George?

EVEH: No. Each floor's the same, they have their own kitchen?

KE: That's right.

EVEH: I think they do.
KE: Look at that, telephone books in alphabetical order. I've never seen that. I've never seen anyone have telephone books like that. They actually all... You get the A-D, E-H, L-R and the S-Z...

KE: Yeah, they're all in the right order. And then the Yellow Pages.

KE: That's extraordinary.

KE: Well, that's a little insight. (Laughter)

KE: I mean, at the best you may find that at a Post Office, if you're lucky, but usually...

KE: Oh, you won't find that at a Post Office!

KE: ...one's missing!

KE: Or been ripped to shreds, or...

KE: They're so clean looking.

KE: Well, they're quite new. Haven't had the telephone very long.

KE: We got second-hand books when we got our telephone. They were all showed up.

KE: I don't refer to them very often.

KE: What's strange is actually feeling that somebody might end up reading this. I think that's what was bothering me last time. Though I mean that's stupid because we can take out whatever we like. It doesn't really matter.

KE: It's hard to explain, there is something...

KE: There's something very peculiar about that, actually.

KE: That someone will read what you've just talked.

KE: I mean it wasn't the camera that was bothering me. I don't think, so much. I mean, maybe that added a little bit, but I wasn't bothered that much by it.

KE: These things can be obtrusive, people think it takes part of them away.

KE: Yes, well, it probably does! I saw a very strange thing once in Rome. I was sitting in a cafe, and there were two or three Africans. I mean they were sightseers, tourists, and then this little guy who was I think either German or Austrian came up with a camera and started taking pictures of them. And they got really angry, which I think was quite understandable. And there was then a scuffle and they were trying to take the camera away from him and he was trying to explain in sort of half-German half English that he was only, you know, quite innocently taking pictures of everything you see. And then somebody else intervened and it was a very weird scene. Because they were very, very disturbed by the fact that he was taking pictures of them.

KE: It is interesting, that. They believe the photograph is them, or something.

KE: I don't know what it was, or maybe they were, I don't know, maybe they had reason to not want... to be suspicious or... I really didn't know what was going on, you see.

KE: A lot of people don't like their photographs being taken. I've done photographs of people, they don't like it; or they like it a great deal and go out of their way to stand in the way.

KE: Quite a lot of the time they don't like it if they think they're not prepared for it. They like to stand and pose in front of a camera but they don't like it if you take pictures of them when they're not expecting it.

KE: I can't remember where it was now but... or why I was doing this, but someone asked me to go somewhere, some type of job I was doing, can't remember what it was I was doing this for. I know why I was doing it, I was getting paid for it. They wanted me to take photographs of them, models. I said, yeah, OK I'll come and take pictures of your models, but I'll do it my style, if you ask me to pose I'll do it my style. So I went there, and these people were walking around displaying their things and I took all these photographs, hundreds. And we processed them and none of these people were on the photographs, and the person said, where did the people go? I said, well, I was taking pictures of everything they were standing next to, not pictures of them, I took pictures of the shadows and the influence they had on everything around them. He didn't want to pay me for that job. I just didn't like the idea of these people displaying those bits of clothing and hairstyles, so I didn't photograph them at all. But the shadows they left on the walls, the stain they left on the chairs behind them, all things like that... That wasn't a very good session, because the man wasn't very happy. The photographs I guess were OK, but there weren't the people in them there were supposed to be. It's that type of thing... they prepare themselves for this whole business, they want it taken their way. I'm looking this way, now capture me looking this way. Sort of treat it so it'll look even better. He wanted me to make sure I had a soft focus on it, because if you use sharp focus you see too many details of people, and make it too clear if they have facial defects, you may see something in the skin. So they insisted I use a soft focus.

KE: Did you?

KE: Yeah. All the shadows were looking soft!

KE: Do you want some more tea?
EEVM: Yeah.

(Sound of tea being poured)

EEVM: I don't understand what's wrong with all these photographers anyway. They keep insisting on everything being sharp and so on. This snapshot to freeze action that... Like what I was talking about (the other day), a 10-hour exposure, by that time there's no-one left in the room. So if you do...I did one that was a 4-hour exposure, and of course there was no-one left in the room because it was only a 2-hour show. So you just got a box with... You had the room. Not one trace of the people in there! Cause the room was predominant, the room stayed there longer than the people.

KE: As rooms tend to do.

EEVM: You know, so you got this thing in the room for 4 hours, and so and so was there for 10 minutes, he was there for 5 minutes, they didn't leave a very lasting impression, but the room left the longest impression, it was all I had left. It wasn't an unattractive room, either, it was a fairly acceptable one as rooms go. It had bay windows, like this. A reasonable amount of light. That's the advantage of these...

KE: Well, not much light comes in here.

EEVM: Oh no, 'cause you're downstairs, but if you were upstairs...

KE: Oh yes, the rooms upstairs are very nice.

EEVM: They put the windows in the wrong place in these houses, anyway, they should probably be in the ceiling. They always put them on the walls, it's ridiculous. I mean, the sun doesn't sit next to the window.

KE: But you wouldn't see anything else then.

EEVM: Well, you could have half glass wall, half glass ceiling.

KE: Yes, I suppose you could do that.

...  

EEVM: (indicates wooden rocking chair)

KE: That? It's over there.

EEVM: Very good. You had to build the whole thing, did you?

KE: Oh yes.

EEVM: Even this bit? Do you enjoy this type of thing?

KE: No.

EEVM: Why'd you get a chair like this?

KE: I don't know. I certainly won't get another one!

EEVM: That seems like...a home industry or something.

KE: Well, it's quite hard work, in fact, yes. It was cheap. I can understand why now.

EEVM: How many hours did you spend putting one together?

KE: About 26!

EEVM: 26 hours?

KE: You see, part of the problem is that the pieces don't actually fit together. You've got to sand them down for about half an hour each section before they fit in the holes.

EEVM: Probably better to stand up then.

KE: I should think so, yes. I need a clamp now, that's why that hasn't been fixed, I need a clamp to hold it together while it's sticking.

EEVM: I can't understand this type of... I mean, I can't understand...

KE: You don't have to understand them.

EEVM: I like them, though. It's really just a box of wood that you just...

KE: They actually chop down the tree for you, and that's as far as it goes!

EEVM: Yeah, they tell you this is a chair you know, just five pieces of wood, they say it's a chair.

KE: Still got one more to make.

EEVM: You've got four, no you've got six chairs.

KE: I've got four here and one in the bedroom, and the rocking-chair. And there's one more to make.

EEVM: Chairs are a problem, I've had this problem... in Orpington...

KE: I remember very well.

EEVM: Backs falling through...

KE: I've not been fortunate with chairs. Well, neither have you.

EEVM: No, I haven't had any luck at all, with chairs. I stand up now.

KE: It's better for you.

EEVM: I don't believe in chairs. I've abandoned all belief in chairs. Floors leave much more to the imagination, chairs don't leave anything.

KE: No, there's a limited amount of usage you can put them to, really.
You put one on the wall, I though that was quite good.

VN: Yeah, it's now a frame.

K: A frame? What's inside it?

VN: A piece of metal. I don't know if I told you, it fell off the wall.

K: Fell off the wall?

VN: Yeah. I put it on the wall. First it was on the floor, then I fell through it. Then I put it on the wall. About three weeks ago it fell off the wall. I was at the side of it. It fell onto the back of my arm... It's now a frame.

K: Is it back on the wall?

VN: No, it's on the floor again.

K: Oh, I see. And it's framing a piece of metal? Maybe it's trying to tell you something.

VN: Um, yeah, it could be something like that. You know, I'm still fond of that chair.

K: In spite of all it's done to you?

VN: Yeah, I have a big cut now. Over here, where it fell... I don't know... It's a red chair.

K: Yes, I know it's a red chair.

VN: I'm still fond of that chair, I have more of those.

K: Yes. What have you done with them?

VN: I sit on them. There's two which are folders, which are standing in the basement somewhere. They're sitting in the basement... standing in the basement.

K: Standing in the basement.

VN: Next to the shelf... But they're not red, they're, or, pale, like those.

K: Pale?

VN: Yeah. The red one... where's the red one now? It's gone...

K: I thought you said it was on the floor.

VN: No, I have two red ones. I can't even place the second one now. What did I do with it?

K: Perhaps it's run off.

VN: I have one red one left. Piece of metal in it. Other piece of the same red one is on the floor.

K: What's the piece of metal?

VN: I remember now, that piece of metal. It's a page of a book. Or was that a different one, I can't remember, I haven't looked at it in such a long time. No, it's a page of a book.

K: Is it a metal plate?

VN: No, this one's not a metal plate. This one's just a piece of metal. Well, it's actually the whole book probably. The other half of the book is the chair. The other half is the other page of the book.

K: So there's two pages. And how do you read them?

VN: Whichever way you like. I don't have time for reading books like that... (laughter) In the left hand corner you have the history of Islington. 1910 to 28. Planning permission for the canal works. Whom went from King's Cross and continued somewhere up past, near North Road. I found these plans. They're in the metal now.

K: How come they're in the metal?

VN: Yeah, it's funny, that, I don't remember how they got into the metal. What happened here, with this metal? I don't remember. It was last year, you see.

K: It would be difficult if you wanted to read it in bed, or something like that.

VN: Not necessarily. People watch television in bed. They don't take the television into the bed with them either.

K: No. You could set it up near the bed and look at it.

VN: I know, it was the water that did it, that's how it got into the metal. The water in the paper. The paper and the wood and the water and the metal.

K: The paper and the wood and the water and the metal? No, you'll have to explain that.

VN: It rusted. I watered the wood, it rusted the metal. So it developed a relationship after a long period of time, sitting there, about at least a year they sat together, and rusted. And... the book was carbon. It was a blueprint. Or carbon print or something, there was a lot of carbon in it. And that part didn't rust the metal.

K: I see.

VN: Clover, that! (laughter) So what you had left was the part that wasn't rusted by the metal. Anyway, that's what happened.

K: So it wasn't intentional?

VN: Not really. It wasn't unintentional either. You put those type of characters together and...
EE: And something happens.

EEVN: Inevitably. It *always* happens. Yes, that was that book.

KE: I was just going to say - about that piece (points to object, 2 ply constellation..., which is on shelf nearby; see illustration) because you call that a "book"...

EEVN: Yeah. That 2 ply.

KE: 2 ply washing up for...what's it called?

EEVN: 2 ply constellation washing up for more than 10 months.

KE: That's right, yes. People don't believe me when I tell them it's a book.

EEVN: It's been copyrighted.

KE: Yes, I know, that's the essential thing, I suppose.

EEVN: Has a complete personality.

KE: Catalogued in the British Library.

EEVN: Certainly, it has the whole personality of any... There's an introduction with it. That's at the bottom of the base.

KE: The introduction is at the bottom, is it? I see, I never read it that way. Where it says "3½ inch pot" or something?

EEVN: No, I don't think it says anything.

KE: Let's see what it says. (fetches down piece) Actually, it hasn't changed very much, it's quite unusual for your pieces... Oh, it has, the label's got a rather peculiar thing...

EEVN: You haven't watered it in a long time!

KE: No, I haven't, that's true.

EEVN: It's been neglected. Books must be cared for!

KE: Yes, well, I'm sorry about that. (Laughter) I'll try and look after it a bit better.

EEVN: That needs weekly watering.

KE: Weekly? Oh, well, I haven't done that. Well, here it says "Nursery Supplies, Bourne, Lincs." And then "3½ inch D, 90 mm, telephone 284 1/2/3."

EEVN: I believe that sounds like the index to me.

KE: That's the index? (Sound of gravel dropping on the table) Oh look, it's losing its soil. I told you my mother was very fascinated with it.

EEVN: It still has to be watered, though.

KE: Well, I'll water it now. (fetches watering can) There.

EEVN: It takes a while, but... You can hear it now.

KE: Yes, you can. I'll put it next to the microphone.

EEVN: They're thirsty.

KE: Well, it was obviously waiting for that.

EEVN: I think you haven't given it water in a year, probably.

KE: Well, yes, I have to admit you're probably right.

EEVN: You can see why it hasn't changed, well, it has changed, it's dried up. It wasn't that dry when I gave it to you. Much damper.

KE: Well, I'll go so what I can do for it, over the next few months.

EEVN: It has a very rigid spine as well.

KE: Rigid spine? What do you mean by that?

EEVN: Well, look at that. You try to bend that. Nothing falls out of it, like a Penguin.

KE: Nothing falls out of it like a penguin?!

EEVN: You got any Penguins here?

KE: ...Oh, I see, a Penguin, right.

EEVN: (taking a book out of the bookcase) Now look at that spine. That is definitely flabby. You know what's going to happen? You'll have half of these on the floor.

KE: Yes. Well, Penguins are normally very good, though.

EEVN: They have their ups and downs.

KE: I've had bad ones.

EEVN: I have some very bad ones. Actually the bad ones are the small ones, the thin ones. Less than 100-page ones. Spines break very easily. Now that...

KE: Quite sturdy.

EEVN: That spine goes on...it's adaptable. Take any shelf you like... that spine'll be there. These spines don't. These spines are so vertical. They stand up or they fall down. Hmm. (reads from book) "The figure of 280 prisoners given by the (insupportable) confirms that this is no transient phenomenon." "At 6:30 pm the Cabinet broke up." "There were arrests."

KE: "There were arrests." Sounds like a rather familiar story.

EEVN: Let's see. (continues reading book from bookcase) No, there's
not much here, really. This is mostly data. (laughter) A slight diversion is called for here. "This profession of faith, published 16th March." "Having arisen, see above." "Pro-Chinese." Now here, an even larger spine. (picks another book)

KE: Yes, that's a very large spine.

EEVM: It's still very... It's bowed, look at that. They don't come out that way, originally, when you start off. How'd you do that?

KE: I don't know, I just had it on a shelf.

EEVM: See what shelves do to spines?

KE: Yes, it's definitely got a curve to it. Curvature of the spine. It's trimmed very close to the writing on the cover.

EEVM: I think it's a slipped disc! He's coming off the edge.

KE: He certainly is.

EEVM: (continues reading) "Rifles were carried, wasted rather." "As symbols."

KE: I once had a...room I lived in, I had a row of books on a window ledge, forgetting about the sun and the weather, and they became very interesting after a while. They sort of curled up and went strange colours. That wasn't one of them. They're all scattered now, I mean, they're not all on the same shelf now. So occasionally you come across a curly one.

EEVM: This one's already, this whole thing's finished now. They put the contents for you...

KE: They what?

EEVM: It's all full of contents.

KE: Yes. You don't like content? In books?

EEVM: Well, there's nothing more to do then, all the work's been...it's done.

KE: You don't like reading the contents.

EEVM: I don't have time to read so many contents. Reading the contents is quite different...now, that, up there (points to 2 ply) has no contents. Well, there's plenty of contents but it's different types of contents...

KE: You did a book which had a lot of content in...it was all overprinted. There was a lot of overprinting, different texts printed one on another... (tape ends)
EEVM: I know that book, yeah... Falkenhagen.

KE: Falkenhagen, that's right, that's what it was.

EEVM: Well, that's not overprinting, that's overwriting.

KE: I thought it was... more than one plate had been printed on the same page.

EEVM: No, no. It's more than one text written on the same page, typed onto the same page. No, it's not a printing manipulation, it's a writing manipulation. So it's written. The original looks like that. It's writing over itself and against itself. First thing is written. Then it's rewritten. Then it's rewritten. It's just responding to itself. ... (reads) "Distrust prevented any understanding between Communists and Anarchists."

KE: What, say that again?

EEVM: "Deep distrust prevented any understanding between Communists and Anarchists." Hmm. That whole thing wasn't plates, it was reworking the text. It may look that way. It could've been done that way. To a certain degree. I mean, you could've done all the text that way, you couldn't have done the rest of it. Because there are definite bits which are exemplified, or deleted, brought to attention... it's concentrating attention in certain ways. There's a complete lack of space. Living in the basement I had no space at all, absolutely none. That's why I had to use the same piece of paper over and over again.

(Sounds of revelry from group of people next door)

KE: But Willow Whts was different, that had very little content...

EEVM: No, it was the same, it had plenty of content. Almost the same pieces, really, there's very little difference between those two.

KE: It had much less writing.

EEVM: No, it had the same amount of writing, it just wasn't present.

KE: Well, where was it then?

EEVM: It's all been removed. The same amount of writing went into both those pieces.

KE: At what point did you remove it?

EEVM: Well, it's just not there anymore. I mean, you work it to a certain point and then... it deletes itself. I mean, they're both about the same length, anyway, they're both writing that works against itself, they're both working in the area that... what are they doing?
ICE: What are they doing?

EEVM: They're the same piece to me.

KE: Different aspects...

EEVM: Almost the same aspect. One's more obvious, there's text, the other one isn't, but that's just a slight formality, almost. 'Cause it's exactly the same type of activity, there's no difference, different situation. Different day. They're both about lack of space. There's a severe space shortage in both those pieces. Very cramped...

... If you work a text long enough, it won't be there either. So what's the difference if it's vacant or it's totally obliterated? Space is text.

KE: So this is Willow Wents This Hand Wrapped Beneath Some Stitching Wire. And there's quite a lot of space here, you see, isn't there?

EEVM: The same. Both...the landscape. Can't you see the same thing? If you work it to such a point as totally to convert it to a landscape, you're only left with what's remaining, only the parts which... I mean, it's the way that this is influencing that.

... KE: Would you ever perform things like that, like Cobbing does?

EEVM: What does he do?

KE: Well, he performs from texts.

EEVM: I never do things like that. That's a different activity altogether. I mean, this in itself is the performance, this is already finished. I mean, certainly I could "perform" that, in the sense of using it as a point of departure for performance, but in that case I wouldn't bother carrying the paper with me. What's the point? Might as well do a new one, might as well do a new book at the same time. 'Cause this whole business was in the basement, I was living in the basement, I couldn't stand this basement, the total lack of space, here's the map... If I took these books to some little place, like a gallery and so on, I'm not in the basement any more. To me the whole content would be in the basement still, and I'm not in the basement, so I wouldn't do it. I'd be then trying to expand away from this piece of paper.

KE: But don't you think it would be interesting in a different context?

EEVM: I don't know about that, I just wouldn't be interested in doing it, that's all. What other people do is what other people do, they have their own ways of working.

... KE: What does the word Falkenhagen mean?

EEVM: Oh, it's the name of someone I know. He lived in a basement. Similar to this basement I was living in.
So that's why you gave it that title?

EEVM: Basically, because it's concerned with basement. Not really his basement, but...it was a similar type basement. Instead of doing this, he would go shopping for eight hours, to buy a package of peas or something.

KS: He preferred that?

EEVM: Well, that's all he...all he was doing.

KS: Was that because he didn't want to be in the basement?

EEVM: I think so. Either that or he would go to pubs and so on.

KS: Whereas you stayed in the basement and made that book.

EEVM: I tried to get out as quick as possible!

KS: So you did it very quickly.

EEVM: These things are very quick, yeah. These things don't take much time. This page here took a long time...this is the lack of a toilet inside, "lack of inside toilet". 'Cause the toilet is inside the bathroom, which is inside... Have you seen that toilet?

KS: I don't remember it.

EEVM: It's a little room inside a little room inside a little room.

KS: Like a Chinese box...

EEVM: I can't understand this toilet. Why it had to be concealed like that... It's very odd, at least I thought it was odd. Other people who've been there who've tried their luck with that toilet have found it odd that they walked through a multitude of rooms to get to this toilet. They could have done something else with the wood... That's the way it is with these basements, everything partitioned off like that... There are several in that series, all basement books. I don't live in the basement now.

KS: No, you've moved upstairs.

EEVM: Yeah, I moved upstairs. It's just different...

KS: You're doing different sorts of pieces?

EEVM: Well, there's not much a lack of space... But the house is outrageously big, like a tower, these houses, far too tall, and you have little basements, and little toilets inside toilets inside toilets. So...the way it's made, look...

KS: It's got a very big cover, and the actual book is quite small and cramped inside the cover.

... (Sound of kettle being put on for more tea)

KS: (shows another book Space House Garage) Remember that?
REVM: Oh, that's a funny one. Yeah. These were all done quickly.

KE: You did that one with Chris (Check) and Lawrence (Upton).

REVM: Yes, this is a very quick one. I mean, besides the lack of space in the basement there's a lack of time. So I do that, you have to do these quickly. What's the point? I know you work quite differently, your work is much slower and more precise.

KE: Oh yes, it's very different. I do things over again.

REVM: What do you mean by that? You mean you rework them?

KE: I rework things, yes. Which I don't think you do.

REVM: No. Reworking...it's a different place then. This is a second piece, which won't look like the first one. No, they're usually done one-offs, re-worked, done quickly. The vast majority of the things probably don't take more than fifteen minutes. Certain things may have taken...just from the typing aspect, that one took a bit longer. (Before to Falkonberg again.) But usually I do them in an hour or something. Those were all done in one go as well, it's not that you do it and then come back to it three months later. Alternatively, I'll do other things which are done just precisely like that, I'll do them and come back to them months and months later.

KE: Well, I do that, that's interesting, because it looks a completely different place usually, through having been left. I mean, quite a lot of the things I've done have been things that are years old, and I just go back to them and take out most of it and leave about one-twentieth of it.

REVM: Yeah, I've done things, not like that, but going back to a text several years later, rework it...I don't use that text at all, but I use the one that I do next. So, I reworked this one short story, just a narrative, type of thing, that was something to try. I did this a couple of years ago, came back, reworked it. I did this short story I did 20 pages of a small booklet, immediately resuming to writing that short story which I found quite an unpleasant experience! It's that type of situation.

KE: What I've been doing recently is going back to diaries I was keeping in about 1975, which is quite an unpleasant experience to read...but just taking a few words from here and there, which are interesting... Ah, you've broken the chair. You've broken the chair!

REVM: I'm putting it back in now.

KE: No, no, it's all right, give it a good thump and it'll...

(Sound of thumping)

...
off in the middle of the programme. He's always felt that, he can't stop it, he feels controlled by it. Well, fine, that's his opinion, but I just don't share that opinion. Anyway, this book, it's the same type of thing...

KE: So you're saying that because it's produced by a machine with little or no interference, it actually changes...

EEVM: Yes, but not a great deal. It takes a long time to read it. It's slow moving.

...

KE: Where'd you get the titles from?

EEVM: I can't remember any more. Those titles just get derived from whatever I'm doing at the time.

KE: Do the titles come first?

EEVM: No. They quite often come simultaneously.

KE: You usually happen to think of the title at the same time you're doing the piece, and that's the title of the piece.

EEVM: Usually. I don't usually invent titles and then invent works to go with them. I usually do the titles at the same time. They always come from the same period.

KE: And is there any particular way you get titles, or is it just completely random, what happens to cross your mind or cross your... something you see, is that where they come from?

EEVM: I don't know where they come from, but they come from the same time. Do you know what I mean, when you're doing an improvisation work, you don't know where this note came from, particularly, it may derive from one previous or it may not... it's just an extension of the whole piece, which may or may not mean anything to it, or relate to it.

KE: It just happens to be simultaneous... OK, you're talking about a bound book. Who do you see as the market for this?

EEVM: Oh, there's a lot of people like this... I'll probably do a variety of editions, I'll do a casebound edition, hard cover, and a paperback edition. I think it's standard practice in most publishing, anyway. The markets for the hard cover are usually libraries, archives, collectors. The markets for the paperbacks are usually everyone else. And I give those away.

KE: So you'd sell the hardback at a high price maybe, to an archive, or something, and you'd give away the paperback?

EEVM: Yeah. Well, I never sell the things. I usually ask for a contr-

...
they're a standard thing off the shelf. You can put different things in them. They're not used solely for the tape industry, they come from a box factory.

KE: I see. Because I've always thought of them as being sound pieces, because they're actually in boxes that I associate with tape reels.

EEVM: No, they're not exclusively for tape reels. Seven-inch reels do fit in there, and many people buy them for that, but in fact I've found chocolates in them, I've found other things in them...

KE: How many have you done of these? 'Cause as I said, they seemed to start with the chow main, and developed from there.

EEVM: They started, really, before, I did several before, it's just that...you do them, and then you don't do them. The Boxes of Mein, that wasn't chow main either, chow main is a type of cooking...a type of process.

KE: It was the ingredients. (examining one of the boxes) This one's got a nice smell. A lot of them seem to have moulds of various kinds growing on them.

EEVM: I can't claim to be responsible for what happens to them.

KE: That's rather good... No, they seem to have a life of their own.

EEVM: Yes, they attract these type of things. Or disperse them. Some of them actually sort of grow out of the box, others get contained...some infiltrate; others are themselves infiltrated.

... (see following page.)
KE: ...bread embedded in a, or wrapped in a balloon. Isn't it?
EEVM: No. This was a whole loaf of bread, fresh and warm, forced to go inside a piece of rubber.

(Laughter)

KE: I bet you had a lot of fun doing that.
EEVM: There's a whole family, in fact every ethnic group is represented by this collection. You have all types...you have different types of bread. You have black bread and white bread, and rye bread...

KE: Oh, I see. And which is this one?
EEVM: This is actually your standard English loaf. This was the least popular of all the breads. After the black bread, you have all types of different...pumpernickel... All different types of local bread I could find. They've all been stuffed into bits of rubber. This collection is UK Visitors.
...but what I'm saying is that a lot of the quotes you used in Spanner 20 seemed to relate to your work in a quite direct way, which seemed to be unusual. I mean, I was quite surprised to see that, in fact.

EEVM: Why is that?

KE: Well... They seemed to be giving your opinions, to some extent, which you don't usually do. I mean, you do in conversation but you don't usually put them down on paper... In that rather more straightforward way. That's what surprised me about it. But you're saying you weren't doing that?

EEVM: Oh no, I'm not saying anything at all, this or that, I'm just saying there was a lot... I don't think that was my opinions. I mean, a small part of it... Like this Marinetti thing in there, Marinetti quote. I've got the Spanner here, I can look it up. That's a double sided one. (sound of rummaging)

KE: Double sided?

EEVM: Yeah. 'Cause on one side, Marinetti's opinion is against the ego, very anti-ego, people are too preoccupied with themselves. At the same time, Marinetti himself was a phenomenal egotist. So the paradox of his own quote is what I find interesting. He quotes all this anti-ego business, and he's an extraordinary egotist, so it's an interesting quote from that standpoint... the contradiction of the quote itself, the person making quotes, the problem of quotes... That was selected for that reason, and many of them are like that. People are saying one thing and the performance is quite different.

KE: Yes. Well, the thing is that may not be clear to somebody who doesn't know Marinetti, what he was like... This is what makes it difficult doing this exercise, in fact, I mean, I think we're doing it probably fairly OK, just having a conversation about this and that, and if it happens to be interesting it's interesting, and if it isn't it isn't; but it does... You can't have a quote unquote interview about what you're doing. Because... I mean, you can have autobiographical stuff, which may be relevant or may be irrelevant, but it's actually very difficult to make philosophical statements.

EEVM: That's right, because interviews and so on, it's nothing to do with doing it. It's nothing to do with the thing itself, it's a different activity completely. Completely different type of event, if you like...

KE: Yes, but I think what... the way to tackle it is to just tackle it as being another piece, rather than being something explaining what you're doing, or elucidating where you want to school, or whatever. To do it as just another piece, like this broad, is the only way you can do it.

EEVM: Yeah. I don't like the tackling aspect, I don't like sport very much! Has a sort of bullfighting, football aspect about it...

KE: Yes, but you see what I'm trying to say?

EEVM: I know exactly, certainly. You see what I'm trying not to say. It's not a football game. It's not a hobby, this is the important thing, not something that's done in spare time. None of these things are spare time hobbies, pastimes.

KE: You don't differentiate between "spare time" and other time?

EEVM: I don't have spare time. I don't have hobbies. I'm not entertained in that respect. It's a continuous process, it's happening, it's a daily thing. It's all integrated, and invariably changing. I don't do this here and that there... that's something always constant throughout my relationships with everybody, in all circumstances, in all different phases. As opposed to, say, a hobby, meaning I do this here, I do this there in a different way, and now put on this set of attitudes to approach that problem, and approach this with a completely different set of mannerisms and attitudes. Or saying "I will now be experimental", or something. These are not hobbies, these are not spare time amusements. Besides, once you complete a work you cease to experiment.

KE: And also it means that people who are not acquainted with you and who perhaps don't know anything about what you're doing sometimes feel threatened by you, until they know you better, and they realise you're not going to bite their head off!

EEVM: I don't know why people have these ideas.

KE: I've noticed it quite a lot.

EEVM: People frightened?
KE: Well, not frightened, they don't think you're going to come after them with an ax, but they don't know how to relate to you sometimes.

EEVM: Yeah, I know this. I mean, I don't know how to relate to them either. I don't have the, you know, the whole package of cliches, hello, how are you, I mean this whole paraphernalia of all types of mannerisms, you go through a list of set phrases and questions and answers. You don't listen to the answers, you just ask the questions. How are you, fine, good, thank you. I lack that, perhaps, I'm not part of that, that type of vocabulary, so I don't use it, I don't know it. I see it, but it's not something I'm going to use automatically. If I do, it's very strained, it's almost unique. It's very difficult when things are moving between everything simultaneously.

KE: It's very strange, because no other nationality in the world does it as much as the British do...rare growing or playing with model railways or photography or stamp collecting or something.

EEVM: Smileless manner, anything, millions of hobbies. And the mannerisms and lifestyles become the same way, it becomes broken down to work patterns, Monday to Friday, 9 to 5, rot to green.

KE: Which is not "real" life...

EEVM: It's all broken down, like the colleagues, you study this, you study that, this is this department, that's a different department. As if actually psychology or sociology or literature can be separated. As if these human beings didn't have psychologies and so something. As if...these novels, literary events, have no human, social or political context.

KE: Well, that's very much bound up with the British attitude to any kind of artistic activity. It's something that's got nothing to do with anything else.

EEVM: I don't know how this comes about, but it's there. I have no time for that. And that could be probably what disorients people, and no, probably because my stuff is not distributed very much here, and it's not circulated very much, you only see little aspects of it, and it may seem amusing, you see a box here, a piece of bread there, or some odd thing. It looks like an isolated incident, or a couple of isolated incidents. Then it's probably a different thing to look at. I can't look at it in that way, but nonetheless you will, if you've only seen that.

KE: Yes, I told you about my mother encountering the Wasaing up piece, where she was very disturbed by it, and she kept making me what it was, and I just said, that's what it is, you can see it. And then she said, "Oh, it's a joke." Right? And then, I said, "What do you mean?" She said, "I mean the word "art", the way that word is used, is like that. The way people discuss things, it's not some kind of artistic activity. It's something that's got nothing to do with anything else."

EEVM: Yes, I think that's a common problem. If you can only give it some name, if you can say it's a this or that, there's a certain contentment that you've somehow captured it, you know what it is, and you can't relate to it. It's not that sort of vocabulary, so I mean the word "art", the way that word is used, is like that.

KE: But looking at that, it seems like a long time, people don't like it, they get bored after two hours. It's like they've never waited for a bus in their life, or this is a bad experience. I've been doing this bus so often and I thought it was bad, the 171 bus on the Strand. I've waited for this bus many times, and I've never found it uncomfortable. People are waiting, you know, and I've always been going for something, you see.

KE: It took 20 minutes this evening, to get here.

EEVM: It's 20 minutes, it's OK. Right? It's not frightened, they don't know how to relate to you sometimes.
1) PAUL GREEN and CARLYLE ROEDY set the record straight re BS’s review of Hannah Weiner; BERNARD KELLY corrects us re “The Agent”

Dear Ken,

I’m just this minute finished reading your review of Hannah Weiner’s Little Books/Indians (BS Vol.3 p.85). I think you’ve missed the point. Hannah Weiner is a clairvoyant and her writings are clairvoyant writings. I think Rooot should have mentioned this but they appear to have presupposed a knowledge of Hannah’s first book, Clairvoyant Journal, published, I think, by Angel Hair. In this latter book she uses a narrative built up through various “spirit” writings and straight description. If you’re even if just a little bit, interested in Hannah’s poetry do try to get this book. I think Compendium have a copy or two... .

Best wishes,
Paul Green

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Dear Ken:

In regard to your review of “Little Book” Hannah Weiner I must suggest that you read her “Clairvoyant Journal”. If you cannot see as clearly congruent in “Little Book” you will see in Clairvoyant Journal that Hannah Weiner is presenting a) delicate incorporation of so-called error, quite deliberately; b) multi-voices from different “levels” of her mind; and c) pan-scan cinematic inclusion of notes on her desk, mundane objects in our so-called “concrete” so-called “reality”.

Hannah Weiner, a contemporary of Jackson Mac Low and something of an innovator, is not a “naive” nor is she “an extremely sophisticated writer putting on an act”. I do not write criticisms, but were I to say anything about her it would be that she is a discerning poet working with the contents of a mind capable of accurate observation, both of psychic and subjective workings, and of the naming of things. I know that she is not to be underestimated.

Yours sincerely,
Carlyle Roedy

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Dear Ken Edwards,

The current issue of Reality Studios (Vol.3) claims that The Agent, edited by Jim Hol, is the work of “the usual dada crowd”.

Is there such a crowd in the first place? If there is, could you let me know more about it?

Your other comments on The Agent (444) give the impression that I contributed most of the pieces “under different guises”. This is not true. Apart from appearing under my own name in the trial of Ken Campbell, I appear only once, in this particular issue, under a different name, as Pitty May.

Yours sincerely
Bernard Kelly

2) CARLYLE ROEDY: A NOTE on my perceptions as regards the women’s movement thru description of my working method and stance 1960-74.

After reading the exchange of letters in Reality Studios Vol.3 between Jeff Nuttall, Julia Phillips, and Ken Edwards.

In the art area any woman who went along with moves towards a personal participation had to do so by personification (my term). The sixties was a time strong in collisions between existential/body-oriented psychologists, and poets/time-oriented artists (of whom there were few). During this period I met and was influenced by the work of Gustav Retager with his attention to the volatile and destructive processes in art, which for me had a direct connection to the earlier influence of John Cage’s work, a relationship to collage, and to the text-breaking I was already doing. I met and worked in situations with John Latham and accompanied other young artists to the anti-university course he gave. His lectures were rich in dislocatory new patterning. Existential psychiatry had a great deal to do with some of my work during that period. Existential vitality was at the basis of my early theatre. Because women had to embody the high-power necessary to get across the simple notion that women had any right to do it at all, whatever it was, and because it was a period of positive pop culture, I strengthened my image, frizzing my hair out about a yard and dressing rather flamboyantly. This was in celebration and as I am a woman it was considered “a bit much”.

Despite the fact that the media has misrepresented Germaine Greer who let herself be made into a star, she was, as were Carolee Schneemann, Yoko Ono, myself, and Bobby Baker, something of a phenomenon at the time she emerged. Most of the work was being done by men. Tina Keane was creating her own lightshows for pop groups and valuable women musicians and artists were working in group contexts (David Medalla’s Exploding Galaxy and Julian Beck’s NY based theatre and Judith Malina’s). Barbara Steen Latham and Deborah Brasley were instrumental and crucial to the developments of AFG and in the performance area. But few women stood alone to be counted and those who did had no feminism to support an essentially feminist stance. This produced a goddess concept of the liberated woman, a concept permeating Jeff Nuttall’s thinking.

As I was fighting my way through being reviled by being considered “outrageous” what I was doing basically was in a tradition of collage/surréalisme, forming radical theatre later through consideration of image and structural fragmentation related to dream, or the parts of the mind with less the vocabulary of reason/logic. Names my work related to at that period, up to 1966-70, include Cage, Hesse, Cocteau, Bunuel, Stein, Schicheters, Jung, Artaud. Jazz influenced my thought at the root and early in the seventies George Thompson, Octavio Paz, Levi-Strauss, Neruda and In Heun were added to the list.

A structural shift is evidenced in the preceding list of names, a shift from pinnacle to planar, from star towards laterality. Jeff Nuttall has not grasped that shift I think. Young women in the movement grasp it with greater speed and those who are not artists practice laterally in theoretical thinking and social action. My researches and clarifications have not always occurred within my own and I do not identify strongly with people who have not this tendency. However I do identify with the liberation of women as a realization of consciousness, on the mystic
and social levels which come into my work, and certainly no woman's liberation is not "fashionable" as Jeff seems to imagine it is for some.

I do not write criticism ever, but I read it. From that I can recognize that a crtit of Bunn and co (Muscle) written by "those who are younger" (quote Jeff Nuttall) might misinterpret the heady strength of celebration Nuttall's writing appears impelled by. However it is obvious from Nuttall's letters alone that he has condemned feminism without regard for the support its re-reading of history, its re-emphasis of the female's understanding of her body, and the company by consciousness that exists at least to a degree for women artists because the movement exists.

In some of its guises the women's movement cannot support me, but I accomplished innovative work at a time when conscious reasepmals in the company of other women's voices did not exist at all (exception, Gertrud Stein). Although I cannot speak of war-time or national recruitment does I can speak of the rest of the rather incidental components on his list to do with sexuality and guilt, as these remained with women of my generation liberation or no. I can speak of being seen, appraised and criticised with my sexual activity in view, being pinned still wiggling to a backdrop as a freak but still an object, and of being patronized by artists inferior to myself (with great clarity of recall). The list "French letters and spericides, disgrace attached to illegitimacy, divorce by capability only, body-shame, sex guilt" applicable to the provinces in many countries can for women fit under one heading, "Isolation", sub-headed "alienation from sexuality of sexual kind". That isolation is lessened for women by the existence of the women's movement. It is a fact that the women's movement is a factor in the discourage of rape, wife-battering, and psychological coercion of daughters-in-law and sexual social insufficiency, all of which are causes of suffering. In its harder political form it may attempt to give women the responsibility of "holding up half the sky" (Nguyen Tung).

Like any movement broad in scope, the women's movement worldwide has its limiting subdivisions, divisive and extremist elements, but women's liberation is a reality for women and in fact they saw it up by existing. The celebration of the free woman commanded to embody heroic attitudes is not liberation. Fear of the liberation of women en masse might be recognised by Jeff as his own. Earth mother largesse, the image of the female principle are available to Jeff as to any aspiring androgynous, but to liken the women's movement, which does support women, to Nazism and rest his case there in foolish and speaks of ignorance of the meaning of women's liberation for women.

Previous failures on the part of men must be admitted and the finger of guilt pointed first towards oneself. As a male who has been allowed his enthusiasm and the position from which to judge, patronise and ignore values who were incomprehensible to or of no concern because they were women, Jeff Nuttall is probably guilty. I am not interested in guilt, but in knowledge. My work and the work of, for example, Carolee Schneemann, whom I accord every kind of respect, has evolved and been responsible to feminist thought not because we are "casualties of the 60s" but because we are alive to our time. I suggest that Jeff do some further reading in order to begin to understand the compulsions that guide him towards a caricature of women and his dismissal of their right to and necessity for themselves. I have found many answers because as a woman I was forced to consider invisibility, women's resistance and invalidation directly I took a public stand. Jeff had few such thoughts as his position was automatically granted by a society eager for male pontificates of liberation. Truly it was not so eager for female exponents of the same.
The poets find a route. Control, form, propaganda, body, conflict. A
tendency to talk as the representative of a group, and a divide between
feminist poets and Eric Mottram’s subjects, Bill Griffiths, Allen
Fisher, and Iain Sinclair, made visible in advance by the division
between the sessions. In the morning we were discussions of the “British
poetry today” with men, and in the afternoon “Women and Writing”.
The ordering should then appear to reproduce an ideological precedence
and the audience took it so.

Eric Mottram deployed the abstract vocabulary that is used as a rough
gesture for the terms of a precise mathematical science, talking of
control, energy & form. Of Place he said - “this kind of work is part
of Fisher’s process engaging the nature of energy & control which he’s
been at for a number of years now; the relationships between technology
& the human body, the vulnerable self & the urbanised, legalised
environment, which is physically & intellectually polluted & can be
in fact as far as he’s concerned. And Mottram means that restoration will take place “in fact”, in the factual.

“we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence” (Wittgenstein).
The city is a “centre of various technological & psychological controls”.
Mottram finds in Bill Griffiths a resistance to control. “Many of his
poems are composed in a language which is derived from roughly spoken
English, a language of the streets used there as an energetic resource
against the language of official control”. By contrast Michele Roberts
in a question shifted from “control” to the “received”. “That’s what
a lot of women are doing, we are certainly in opposition, quarrelling with,
received forms & a received language, but we’re trying to subvert it,
try to subvert it, speak from within.” Yet a similar position,
one which doesn’t posit control as something quite so external, apart,
but one which effaces the agency of manipulation. She wasn’t so con-
fident that the sources of control lay outside the poetry but what remained
outside the white male middle class mainstream is precisely that
we have been controlled by not being heard”. Edward Larrissy questioned
the sharp distinction being made in words that fade now into the tape
hiss under the speech. “Isn’t there a danger of too sharp a definition
of control versus whatever evades control”. Mottram returned to such
imaginative procedures... & the transmission of ideas inside a particular
background... Phrases like “fashionable movement” were bandied the
is a difficult problem” (MN) -- “You’re saying it’s propaganda” (MN) --
“No I well no to have complicated poetry as propaganda has always been
difficult I take it” (MN).

In the afternoon Michele Roberts took up the argument again. “One
criticism that was suggested this morning although we didn’t all agree
on it was that it’s very common to think that feminist poetry is not
real poetry but propaganda, & I think that’s based on the division
of control versus energy & politics... well of course feminism
has redefined the meaning of politics, we’ve widened it out to include
goes on inside the home & the kitchen... so that when feminism
in what way “political” is being used differently... It’s not
a poetry which seeks to persuade, some sort of a mass out there. Like
of a particular line. A lot of feminist poetry works within tensions of
relationships, often you use the forms of family discourse & intercourse
as its voices. So that a lot of women writing are speaking perhaps
to another woman, to a sister, to a mother, to a lover, to an aunt.
Sometimes the woman may be speaking to a man who may be her father
or her lover, but there is I think in a lot of feminist poetry
implicitly a notion of relationship & actual intimacy & very often
the context of the poem is a quite intimate place. It’s a bedroom,
it’s a kitchen, it’s sitting on the steps with somebody.”

“It’s a matter of do I feel the work here is in some way saying something
that I haven’t seen said in this way or haven’t heard said before”. (AP)

Surprisingly often the question of the use of poetry was raised. It
could be a matter of “risk with form”, the difficulty of those “imaginative
procedures” Eric Mottram mentioned, or the dispelling of a false
epistemology. “Simplicity which leads itself into ideology, & I think
that’s the problem, people expect a prose, a continuum, a logical theme
in being in London you get that sense of conflict between something
which is presented & something you think is going on with that is when you look around you what you’re actually experiencing &
observing & living isn’t simple, logical, it’s complex, it’s local & if you thought only in terms of your own view of what was happening
around you, you know, without newspapers & media & the information
around you, you would have a tremendously local & restricted view &
perhaps that’s what we have in a way. I haven’t thought of it before
in being in London you get that sense of conflict between something
which is presented as a natural progress which is explained, logical
& tidied up for you & when you look around you & you realise there’s
no access to that sort of information all you’re presented with is
streets & a sort of local feeling & that is then a sort of essence
of poetry.” (BG) So this poetry would dispel the ideology that prevents
us from fully understanding our local environment, around us. Around you.

There are also the environments of relationship & the “inside” to be
reckoned with. “A lot of feminist poetry works within terms of relation-
ship” (MR). For this reason critics can fail to see the risks that have
been, successfully taken with form. “Female forms of thought are
by definition incapable of being translated into the highest art.
Much critical prejudice against women’s writing is based on the male
conviction that the central experiences of women’s lives & therefore
female perspectives on the world, are trivial. A contempt for subjects
considered to be female, the incidents and associations of everyday
life, is often disguised as an attack on the form & language of women’s
poetry” (MN). And you might want to ask whether therefore “everyday”
life is just like the “local” or whether it might not be that
ideological realm of common sense which Bill Griffiths described.
In the best poetry it is the local, as body rather than ground. Michele
Roberts added that women poets are “writing to heal conflicts within
ourselves”. Healing rather than demystifying. “Seeking to solve problems
that is what compels us to write.”

That term “problem”, ranging from personal to mathematical relations,
is a boundary term which the speakers shared although their areas of
operation were not the same. “Choose your sex or a firing squad”. (MB)

“The book’s becoming a ghost hanging on by the skin of its teeth”. (MC)

Publishing & distributing is becoming, has always been, difficult for
all the poets & presenters at the conference, as we had said in the car on
the way there, although feminist poetry has been selling in anthologies
with some success. The feminist poets are confident in their readership,
where Eric Mottram suspects that most people are not prepared to try
Cris Cheek. Grch. week. His Heek. c.c. Poltergeist n Speakease, a Collective. Thursday July '81. Sorry. "Sidcup Foxylove". this is a crust. The old boy in yet another context.

L'Annonce du poete is modest (ali pirned in sideways - an ordinary voice explanation of a piece of lettuce). As the speech. Deep in psychic physical memory. misery, convinced me he has clear pointed methodology for his gribbed-in sound space. Cris is splitting in arcs, with the poem holding him from the feet up, whole body taken over by energy.

"I found this intimacy quite touching. The energy is so correlated with the sound reception-production as to be it. The texts issues as possibly from an outside source although he wrote it. There just is not any performer as good as he is about the place.

"He's quite good, I think."
"It was sort of a poem, I s'pose."
"I could hear most of it but not all of it."
"It sounded weird, sort of like an old person."
"I didn't get a picture of a person but I got a sort of picture of the garden he had to clear up..."
"Yeah I remember that...He was wearing a red jumper. Well, I would say he is more of an actor than anything else."
"He acts more than he is reading. He doesn't need papers in front of him, like some poets." There is the problem of experience or "show". Whether consciousness is enlisted into "acting" or whether perpetually discovering, as in the previous experiences of Cris's work the case (the case). Reveals with mad periods of activity, screaming, not knowing what is coming next, that edge - that was not in this rather sculpted work, but as usual the basic ability of this postpersonandperformersoundworker has terrific vitality in the content. Problem: repetition/acting; "learning" of one's own work.

Writers for Cassette (262 Randolph Ave, London W5, at £2.50 each.)

As this appears there are probably three cassettes in Bob Cobbing's new series. The third is a recording from his first performances with ORAL COMPLEX, a group started in late 1981 "after a number of exploratory sessions in the October Sound Recording studio" with John Shilton and Clivo Pencott. The second cassette, SCRAMBLES, publishes recordings of Clivo Pencott and Bob Cobbing's tour of North America in March 1982. Side one from the Baltimore performance; two from San Francisco. The first cassette I've made notes for below. It brings together two sessions with ABANA.

In the early 70's Cobbing formed part of two active groups. With Paula Claire and Michael Chant as KONKRET CANTICLE (made its debut on the Arts Council's Experiments in disintegrating language, 1971). In 1977 Bill Griffiths replaced Chant. Recordings of this latter group have yet to be published (anyone?). The other group was ABANA.

Side one records the ABANA Sextet: Paul Burwell, Bob Cobbing, Lyn Conetta, Herman Hauge, Christopher Small and David Toop. Side two's the ABANA Trio: Burwell, Cobbing, Toop. The sextet dates from 1973, the trio from 1976. Side one is twenty-five minutes (counter 000-450). I started to replay it with five and a half kilograms of Cobbing's work on the desk, trying to follow the texts/scores as the sound proceeded. (With the one exception, the texts are by Cobbing.) It starts with "SHA NA NA" (orig. in a CIFCA booklet for schools, and in Eric Mottrar's Poetry Review 1971. Republished in Bill Jubile, selected texts of Bob cobbing 1962-72, Coach House 1976.) "sha na na sha na sha sha" the voices of Cobbing and Conetta break up the shaman with Small on piano, Toop and Burwell on flute, and percussion. Together immanently with Hauge. After a couple of minutes, without much break, "Ana Peronna" (at one time a handout sheet, soon (?) to appear in Cobbing's collected poems IV. The Dirge Poems from Good Lil, but also in Bill Jubile.) It proceeds from "ana ana ana ana ana ana" to a loss of syllable distinction over a strong piano from Small. Four minutes in, and "I paint his face" has begun. (This was published as 'Kewuxuxooyamakoopaka' in Cobbing's collected poems III; a pant in air 1966-70 by anonymous/without/without preface in Canada, 1978.) Conetta's voice recalls Patti Waters (on ESP records in '70s) over percussion. The percussion

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and flutes multi-various from guitar and bamboo trumpets to bowed metal and bamboo. Cobbing's "We Do Kita Waro" begins side two (a foldout card now also in the booklet). His full incantatory voice towards fragmenting from a score of 12 boxes of clear letters set as syllables or sounds. Cobbing, Toop and Burwell rumose these textures here: present what once seemed untenable; a recording of improvisations and a recording between poets and musicians, abiding; records from over five years span of text and sound; makes available more than a hint of that collaboration in this first Writers Forum cassette. Let's hope there will be plenty more.

(All the published texts are Writers Forum unless otherwise mentioned. Interfacing this series is an excellent set of four cassettes from Horne Tapes; three of Cobbing's illustrated Orpington talk of 1978, and one of his 1979 King's College readings. The set is usefully retrospective and up-to-date. Available from John Whiting, October Sound, 24 Old Gloucester St, London WC1 for £10.)

- Allen Fisher, 1.6.82

PAUL GREEN


Max Douglas was born 9th July 1948 and died 8th October 1970 from an accidental overdose of heroin. John Martin, of the Black Sparrow Press, was the first to consider a posthumous collection of Douglas's work. Clayton Emleman, who had first published Douglas in his Caterpillar magazine, was asked to prepare a Selected Poems from material that Douglas had sent John Martin. The task was faithfully undergone and a manuscript was available by October 1973. The manuscript, due to lack of funds, was never published.

Christopher Vismont had become an admirer of Douglas through reading the work published in Caterpillar and, more particularly, through reading Ken Irby's long poem, To Max Douglas, which Irby wrote after hearing of Douglas's death. Later he formed a friendship with Andrea Wyatt who had known Douglas and had become a champion of his work. Through this friendship the idea of a book was once again generated and, aided by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, finally made publication in 1978.

The Collected Poems contains five parts, or books, and an appendix. The first two books, Brand Dog Band and Bottom Land, were originally published by Douglas. The next two books, The Perils and Man Bleg, were originally part of one book called The Perils. Douglas extensively rewrote and amended this book and it was finally sent to John Martin under the title of Man Bleg. The poems discarded from the final manuscript are included under the title of The Perils. The fifth book, Songs and Fragments, consists of what Douglas may have considered an unfinished work. The appendix concerns itself with statements, written by Douglas, on Olson's Maximus and letters sent by him to John Martin.

*
In the first two books, *Hound Dog Band* and *Bottom Land*, Douglas comes across as being primarily a nature poet. By giving the term "nature poet" I mean that he writes strongly using such themes as sky, grass and birds. These themes, though, are not written in the form of invocations to nature but are meditative statements about what the poet is immediately aware of. He is, though, not always held by nature and there are poems that move away from the conventional symbol and explore other routes into the experience that denotes the poet's errand and his place.

Douglas lived in St Joseph, Missouri, a town that gained some importance in the 19th century as a trading stop or way station on the western plains. Douglas became fascinated by the folk legends that grew up around this period and began to define for himself the concepts of history and community. It would become an easy transition for him to remove the knowledge of the past and enter it against the modern. Without that past Jesse James by two members of his own gang, Charles and Robert Ford. Brutality, the concern of these poems, is always written low-key and there is no emotive flashpoint. The killing of Jesse James is recorded as just as is the suicide of Charles Ford. The poems are given over to narrative in order that the facts be set out straight. The techniques used issue from Olson which make to the telling not so original as it should be. Olson makes a very fine master but his techniques are his own. Nothing borrowed from Olson can tend to look like imitation. Given that to dwell over, not everything works. The poems in *The Follies* where Douglas does not use a narrative flow to tell the tale remain raw and instilled with the beauty of earlier visions.

Even though the material in the fifth book, *Songs and Fragments*, is presumably unfinished, it contains some of the most rewarding poetry to be found in the collection. The poems, as Christopher Wiseman notes in his introduction, are reflective and austere. There is none of the death is finished and last book on his living room. Death comes in the forms of hangings, gunshots, railroad accidents and decay through neglect. Douglas is telling the stories his way and the quotation by William Carlos Williams ("for the country will bring us no peace") helps set the exact pace of temper from the start. Douglas is writing about death as a not natural justice. Death is suicide and murder. Isn't it a sad little joke that this should be the last book that Douglas was ever able to work upon? The manuscript was finished and sent to John Martin in 1969. By 1970 he was laying dead on his living room floor.

The third book, *The Follies*, is what remains when Man Dies/ is taken out of the manuscript. All the poems printed in *The Follies* come under a different major title of *The James Poems* and are concerned with the murder of Jesse James by two members of his own gang, Charles and Robert Ford. Brutality, the concern of these poems, is always written low-key and there is no emotive flashpoint. The killing of Jesse James is recorded as just as is the suicide of Charles Ford. The poems are given over to narrative in order that the facts be set out straight. The techniques used issue from Olson which make to the telling not so original as it should be. Olson makes a very fine master but his techniques are his own. Nothing borrowed from Olson can tend to look like imitation. Given that to dwell over, not everything works. The poems in *The Follies* where Douglas does not use a narrative flow to tell the tale remain raw and instilled with the beauty of earlier visions.

After the various exclusions Man Dies/ appears to be rather slim. Almost all of the 16 poems in this fourth book are concerned with death and dying. Death comes in the forms of hangings, gunshots, railroad accidents and decay through neglect. Douglas is telling the stories his way and the quotation by William Carlos Williams ("for the country will bring us no peace") helps set the exact pace of temper from the start. Douglas is writing about death as a not natural justice. Death is suicide and murder.

The vague insistence, dispersed

of attentions, a sad exhaustion.

I had that to fashion
a departure distinguishable,

leastwise, from common arrivals.

Out of the temper

of that tense season, the harsh streets of her occupation,

To turn back upon oneself, endless ---

Those are: Terms of the land.
Finding myself horse, again, where could I go? The ascendancy of desire carries me. A thing of no substance, before you. I wanted to reach out to you, wanting you for this night, turning, the displacement of the permission of the infallible light, as you led me then, wherein we cast our knowing.

SONG

A man will make for himself a place, which reference is the world. Let me say, there are the two worlds, or there is only your world. Or how shall a man relinquish love —

Bibliography

(see notes at end of section)
MAGGIE O'SULLIVAN: Concerning Spheres (Broken Ground Press, 23 Cavendish Road, Hanleaze, Bristol BS9) no price.

"while the measurement has immediately started, sandstone rose & rose rock will have chipped & shelled the old blemish that swung out from their sequence it will have restored fertile the abscence of the sphere." In Maggie O'Sullivan's debut book a small world of rock seaweed roseate fly wobf worm crustacean is reassembled through her language prism with great care, to reveal possible new presences, never fixable. The collection, containing earlier versions of some tree pieces (see pp.40-51 this issue), feels exploratory, a trying out of approaches. Confidence will grow.

so sweet to lie / among linen.

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KEN SMITH: Burned Books (Bloodaxe Books) pbk. £3.

Fox Running (Bloodaxe Books) £1.50.

You have to be a reprint by Bloodaxe of a long poem first published in a limited edition in 1980 and forming part of a longer work, The Persistence of Vision. Running metaphor of the artist (male) as urban fox, predatory, outcast and hunted, sexually hungry, solitary. It goes fast. Image of the dark suburbs of London into image, constructing an illusion of continuity. Romantic despair, self-absorption, skirted, not always exactly, flirted with in my humour. "no such thing as a free lunch.

Burst Books is different, or is it? In Borzoian territory almost, being a presentation of fragments from the burned library of a patriarch, by kene President Fervu. All that remains of a dream of coherence.

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BRUCE ANDREWS/CHARLES BERNSTEIN/RAY OF PALA/STEVE MCCAFFERY/NON STILLMAN: LEGEND (144 pp, 44A Amsterdam Ave. New York, NY 10024, USA) 25pp, £5 available in UK from Paul Green (see p.152), about £3.

A five-pointed star, five writer/performer/contributors, white male North American. Each contributor has one solo piece ("My Life as a Nomad"). Bernstein calls his "Legend" of hundred numbered statements; there are 10 du pieces, 10 trio pieces and one five-way collaboration. (No permutations of four contributors, which would have lengthened the book by another five pieces.) Thus 25 in all. Stillman: "It is the end of atomization... It is the product of labor... It is New York, Toronto and San Francisco... It seeks the post-referential... It is this." In "5 Fifths Equal" (Bernstein, McCaffery, Stillman): "What is the whiteness of the whiteness of the whiteness of the witness?" There are some "visual texts", though this is an area not so fully developed by these adventurous writers. Stillman's confusing use of "phallic" in connection with the inscribing of texts (derived from Jacques "Dear reader" Berrada) is challenged by Bernstein. At all points the "swampiness" of writing emphasised, as against regularity, metre, reference, attainable presence. Intelligence and wit, them pervading practice. Finally, the post-text epigraph, from Yves Bonnefoy: "There are times when reality becomes too complex for true communication. But Legend gives it a form by which it pervades the whole world." And yet this book is "about", in the strangest of ways, a certain specific American speech.

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Nigel JENKINS: Varhead (Nagston Press, 7 Gloucester Place, Swansea, Wales) no price. Poem published in aid of CND.
Ronald KERRIDGE: Life on the Edge of the Continent (University of Arkansas Press, dist. Univ. of Missouri Press, 1 Gower St, London WC1E 6HA) pk, £1.20.

Tony LOPER: A Handbook of British Birds, with drawings by Mary I French (Pig Press, see HAMPSHIRE for address) £1.10

Tom MANUEL: Exot (Burning Deck, 71 Clawgrove, Providence, R.I.02906, USA) £3.60. Language-oriented prose, poetry.

George NITZSCH, Jr: Natural History (Paycock Press, see FISHER for address) £3.60. Short prose with surrealist flavour.

Maggie O'GULLIAN: Concerning Spheres (Broken Ground Press, see p148 for address) no price.


William PYCOX: Folded up for the lasting (Locct 2/4, supplement to SPECTACULAR DISMENSE magazine) 30p.

Elaine RANSMILL: Songs for the Zootings (Pig Press, see HAMPSHIRE for address) £1.20. "A celebration to the work of Elizabeth Smart".

Gavin SELWYN: Hypocosi (Zinnacale Press, see PAUL for address) £1. Long poem on events of summer '81 (Royal wedding, riots).

Robert SHEPPARD: The Factory Island Poems (Supranormal/Rock Drill Press, Plat 2, 2 Korrison Rd, Norwich, Norfolk) no price.

William STORMAN: Heart Attack & Spanish Songs in Andalucian Land (Dream True Press, 10 Pleasant Lane, San Rafael, CA 94901, USA) £2.10.

Ken SMITH: Burned Books (Iacodeax Press, see p148 for address) pk £3.

Laurence UPTON: Found Texts for Voice & Action (Galloping Dog Press, see ALAM FOR ADDRESS) 75p.

E S VONIA-MICHELL: a rehoild placed near (supplement to Spanner 20, G4 Lanserfoot Rd, London NW2 3DH) no price. Found & treated material.

Dallas VERNON: The Transparent Eyeball, a other stories (Burning Deck, see NAKES for address) pk, £5.

John YAU: Vernon Off by the Main (Burning Deck, see NAKES for address) pk, £5.


Anthology:

A Century in Two Decades (Burning Deck Anthology 1961-81), edited by Keith & Rosemary Halden. Published by Burning Deck (see above for address) poetry & prose + full bibliographical details of all ED books (100 titles). A magnificent achievement. Price of anthology: £5.

2) Magazines

ANGEL EXHAUST 4 (Steven Pereira, 59 Ilford House, Nova Rd, London N1 3NA) £1.50. No contents page, no pagination, but an estimated 200pp literally nailed together. Tangos through Roy Fuller, RS Thomas, John Freeman, Ian Robinson, Mdn Morgan, Gavin Ewart, Gary Quigley, Michael Horovitz, Jeff Nuttall, Ralph Hawkins, John Walsh, David Chaloner, Peter Riley, Jon Trevor, Chris Torrance, Geraldine Monk, Eric Mottram, plus half the people in this RS, plus interviews with Richard Tarbock, Bob Cobbing, plus irreverent reviews, plus plus. Functionally produced, with odd little inserts here & there. This is the sort of thing the Arts Council should give lots of money to, but we hear it's now defunct. Unseen, yet ridiculous value.


PETITE JOURNAL 1, 2 & 3 (Casaip Walter, Via XX settembre 9, 20800 Chiuduno (BG) Italy) 1500 lire/4 issues. Small format, international, experimental.

FIGS 7/8 (Tony Baker, see under Books for address). Last issue for time being of fio mag. Eric Mottram "legal" poems/ J Pearson/ F Jorje/ T Picken/ J Levy/ A Barnett/ B Gadel/ S Simun/ L Hejinian/ P Riley/ W Corbett. "keep your ears to the air".

CARGOYLE 17/18 (large format), 19 (small format) (Richard Peabody, Jr, Paycock Press, see Books for address) pk & £3. Double issue is a fat, professionally produced anthology of poetry, fiction & reviews by Ian Robinson written mostly by RS. Ian Robinson contributes on the English scene. Issue 19 is booklet of work by Eric Beizer, Gretchen Johnson & David Shortland.

H/EAR 1 & 2 (Kris Hemenway, 28 Urquhart St, Westminster, Victoria 3070, Australia). The latest version of Kris' Earth Ship that sailed down the Hens Creek. Correspondence, diaries, poetry, notes, a continuing exchange of energy. Got on the mailing list.


LAVAGEL-G-E-E-GO Vol 4 (Bruce Andrews/Charles Bernstein, 466 Amsterdam Ave, New York, NY10024, USA) £5. Doubles as issue 5.1 of Open Letter, & is the final issue (plus supplement "The Politics of Poetry", essays by Stimson, Bernstein, Andrews, & table of contents 1978-81). A satisfying end to the project; articles from Mac Low, B Perelman, Tina Carragh, L Elberger, K Acker, Robert Grenier, Paul A Green, etc. (160pp)

LOCAL COLOUR (Peter Higginson, School of English & American Studies, University of East Anglia, Norwich). 1st issue produced to accompany a reading series: Stacey/Sheppard/Edwards/Croce/Hejinian/Harwick/Fisher.
