

ISSUE #0
OPEN SPACE

A PROSPECTUS



PROPOSITION

1. A new magazine for the new year.
2. 'Open space' -- a working place.
3. To make young poets come out of hiding.
4. Take stuff from other places without the usual redtape.

5. First issue: January 30, 1964.
6. Deadline for material for first issue: January 20, 1964
7. Send material to 640 Turk, Apt 26 or leave it in the box provided at Gino & Carlo's bar on Green street between Grant and Stockton.

8. The magazine will come out monthly.

THE MOONSHEEP

The moonsheep stands upon the clearing.

It waits and waits to get his shearing.

The moonsheep.

The moonsheep plucks himself a blade
returning to his alpine glade.

The moonsheep.

"I am," the sheep says in his dream,
the center of the cosmic scheme."

The moonsheep.

The moonsheep, in the morn, lies dead.
His flesh is white, the sun is red.

The moonsheep.

Christian Morgenstern

This ocean, humiliating in its disguises
Tougher than anything.
No one listens to poetry. The ocean
Does not mean to be listened to. A drop
Or crash of water. It means
Nothing.

It
Is bread and butter
Pepper and salt. The death
That young men hope for. Aimlessly
It pounds the shore. White and aimless signals. No
One listens to poetry.

Jack Spicer

CHOIR

A poem in simple words.

In the water the hungry mind.

Lines are let down baited

The turbulence in the air is far greater than that
in the water - the friction in the water greater.

Daylight and devilfish interfere with the currents -
the traffic.

The mind might follow the brighter, warmer, faster-moving
water

to its glassy diminuendo.

The cigarettes are lit and the sunset

is dead as night and bright as day.

The ultra-green leaves of our trees in Summer

twist from their stems and fall to the
heavy, magnetic river.

Pagan Joke sits on a rock, trembling in his
silver hair, and the mist.

Honesty is an arrow pointing at the indivisibly-
divided,

the canisters - the stony circles on the sunny slope.

The teeth draw blood from the forehead.

Just inside the window is a trail of cobweb - it
looks like gold hair on the dirty glass - the
limestone has withdrawn from the granite -
in ten years an inch - bats cling to the ledge -

I hear the murmur of the water falling into
silence - and into a longer leap than I can
see or hear - current

Visible in the flicker of fire - like thorns the
curiosity of fire scratched on the blackness
of sight a million times -

Blindness streaked the mind's eye like a fire-opal.

Violets in the flicker of water - in the fingers
of rock.

Let the anchor down into the mud.

Look up at the stars - below the fogbank

where

the prow of thought's galley's motionless features

dumb as a chess piece

juts dim

Insane waves, sea-waves and brain waves

Brains in skulls, hands on wires.

The corpse of breath glued to the bark.

Look then down into the secret place

where the silkworm is wedged

wedged, can't move - not asleep -

not really alive though.

Ophelia of the rocks.

Her smile is dead

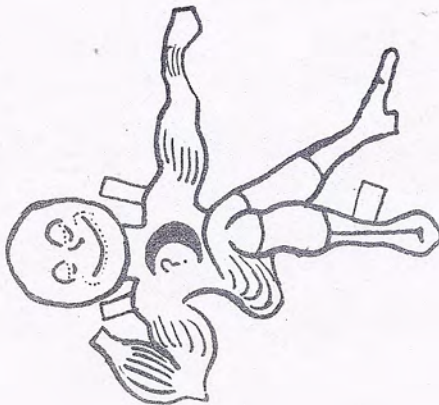
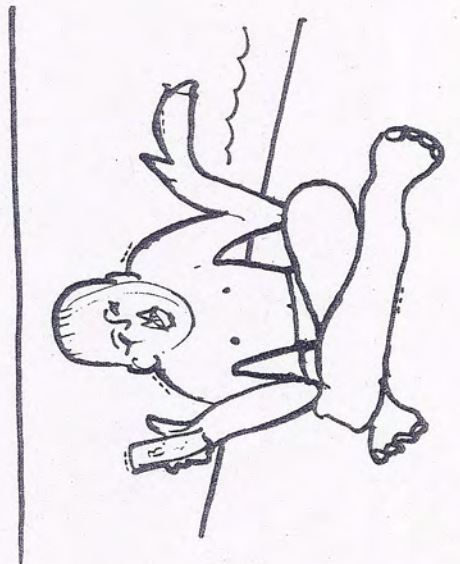
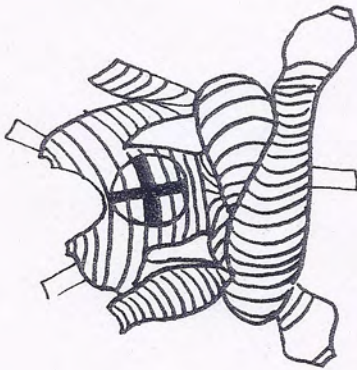
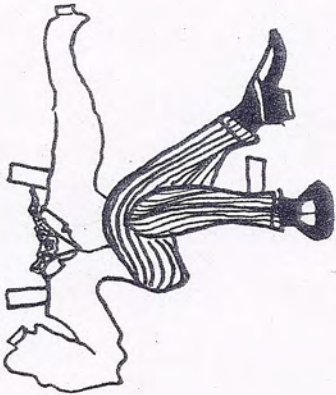
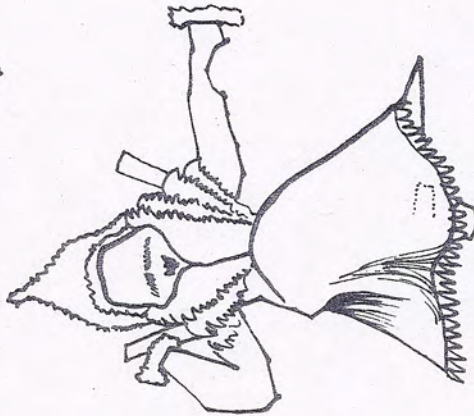
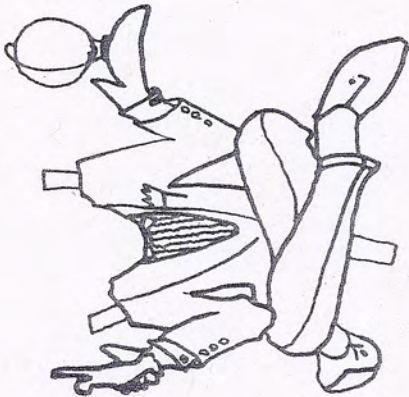
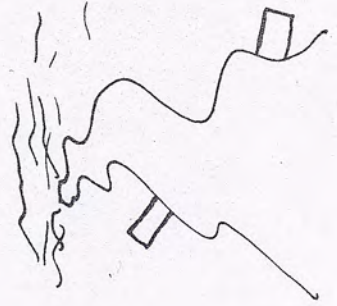
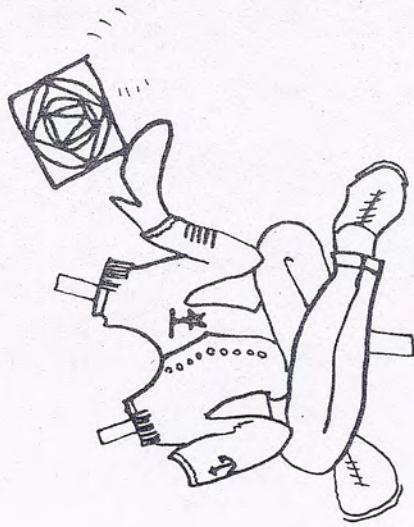
but hints, fleetingly

at a crystalline animation - sulky

Limitless universe

of which the parts of our bodies are clouds.

George Stanley



THE CONSTANT PREACHING TO THE MOB

Time and again the old lie. There is no use talking to the ignorant about lies, for they have no criteria. Deceiving the ignorant is by some regarded as evil, but it is the demagogue's business to bolster up his position and to show that God's noblest work is the demagogue. Therefore we read again for the one-thousand-one-hundred-and-eleventh time that poetry is made to entertain. As follows: 'The beginnings of English poetry...made by a rude war-faring people for the entertainment of men-at-arms, or for men at monks' tables.'

Either such statements are made to curry favor with other people sitting at fat sterile tables, or they are made in an ignorance which is charlatanry when it goes out to vend itself as sacred and impeccable knowledge.

'The beginnings--for entertainment'--has the writer of this sentence read *The Seafarer* in Anglo-Saxon? Will the author tell us for whose benefit these lines, which alone in the works of our forebears are fit to compare with Homer--for whose entertainment were they made? They were made for no man's entertainment, but because a man believing in silence found himself unable to withhold himself from speaking. And that more uneven poem, *The Wanderer*, is like to this, a broken man speaking:

Ne maeg werigmod wryde withstandan
ne se hreo hyge helpe gefremman:
for thon domgeorne dreorigne oft
in hyra breostcofan bindath faeste.

'For the doom-eager bindeth fast his blood-bedraggled heart in his breast'
--an apology for speaking at all, and speech only pardoned because his captain and all the sea-faring men and companions are dead; some slain of wolves, some torn from the cliffs by sea-birds whom they had plundered.

Such poems are not made for after-dinner speakers, nor was the eleventh book of the *Odyssey*. Still it flatters the mob to tell them that their importance is so great that the solace of lonely men, and the lordliest of the arts, was created for their amusement.

OWL

The moons of my fingernails reflect in the metal

The owl of gold paper, decorated with red, from Mexico

The owls are animals sacred to cities. There we went
to the outskirts, where the earth crumbles and they
build it some more. Hermes had taken the form of
someone; after sleeping he was my companion in games

At Athens that table land was filled in. You find maidens
in the layers of rubble. Owls. We are not wise.

Allen Ginsberg

A CARD FOR THE TAROT

He endures
in the service of Our Lady of Poetry -
garlanded with green leaves;
red, yellow and blue flowers.
On all the petals, as on the blues,
the light shows thru.

He carries old chrysanthemums.
They are a weak old white, starting brown,
and where they are brown, thick,
to match his hair, tho there's
not a lot of it.

And to match
that The Wheel he walks on turns, changes it all
'until it all comes round again.'
But what's constant
is his position,
and his right hand, open and raised toward Her.

The Wheel moves his Imagination in
Dedication to Our Lady of Poetry.
He tells the forms of it as Beauty.

Sunlight in the toilet bowl
Makes the brown turd gold - he sings,

his is the pure act of imagination;
for her he is constant to its changes;
for her his left hand points down, to
the other one, near the bottom

and his eyes true to Hers tell
that he would rather not write than ride
that Whoring Chariot; in fact
he may write no more

while the poet in the lower corner claims
it's more important to write than
sit around like a poisonous mineral in a fen
putting everybody, but everybody, down;

and if he wants to set fire to his hair he will.

HOME & GARDEN

LISTERINE

A long unawaited little magazine appeared this month under the editorship of T. Shareit. Surrounding Lew Ellingham's short-story, Essay, January 22, 1963, which, apparently is the excuse for Listerine's appearance, is a spue of vagueries and hipsterish aimlessness.

Ellingham, who reveals a disordered chaotic world based on human excrement, homoeroticism and poetry, somehow succeeds in making these abnormal things experienceable; his placement of the streets as an object is brilliant -- where normally they would be lost in the mundane, here, through accuracy, they sparkle as jewels of a perverse world. Though Ellingham's language and reference are poetic, Essay is a short-story, rather than a poem; keeping this in mind gives the reader a better idea of its shape, and how the inseparable form and content do work.

His Six Essays (M, March 1962) were prose-poems, where the pomposity of the author at times threatened the poem by a wrong rhetoric. In Essay, there is a continual effect of cutting through, of a conceptualizing man getting to real things -- he imagines, by virtue of his agony. Even the agony is a front. Where E's poems often suffer for his false language, in the story, this failing becomes a device by which the actual appears.

The illustration for Essay is completely hideous. Graham MacIntosh's excellent cover is the best thing Listerine has to offer. Editor S offers the usual sample of his shampoo. Also ran: J. Ryan, J. Alexander, D. Landers, P. Blackburn, Link and others.

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AFTER WATERMELONS

Ron Loewinsohn, The World of the Lie (San Francisco, Change Press, 1963)

L's new book of poems certainly does move beyond Watermelons (where he handled ordinary objects in the manner of Williams, his chosen master, with an accuracy that sometimes brought them into poetry) -- the poems are richer, more varied and more important. Four of the poems in The World of the Lie are particularly successful: Entangling Alliances, Vision De Serafin, It Is To Bathed in Light and The Mendacity of Radio. These poems, I feel, are openings

to experience. Vision De Serafin is a first rate use of the variation poem, and Radio is a beautiful telling-the-story, using objects as abstracts, as George Stanley did in Pony Express Riders. Curiously, The World of the Lie, a serial poem (of which Radio poem is a part) doesn't come off as a complete thing, in some place goes wrong. George says that World of the Lie as a book must be judged on the basis of the Larkspur Interchange poem, that Loewinsohn himself would take that to be the center. George mentioned this one for the handling of complicated motion of things and people, which he says, is what L is doing more than other poets. For myself, I found this homage to Moore uninteresting as a poem, and move back to those four which in a way all use the romantic image well, have a proper length and create excitement, lead the reader. Recommended: Rick Duerden's excellent essay on L's book which appears in Scum, a branch office of Ravioli, located somewhere in the Arizona desert and run by a martinet named Wog. Duerden's essay is a gem, a serious and intelligent moving in on the book.

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PEACOCK

The six painter group show at the Peacock gallery (1906 Union) is almost over, and except for a completely stupid review by Mr & Mrs Dean Wallace, has been largely ignored, instead of creating the excitement that the best show of paintings in a decade should have made in this city.

The star of the exhibition was Jess, who in paintings and assemblies revealed three areas of his mastery. There were the large romantic canvasses where Jess moves from the literary, as always, and finds a source in Arthur B. Davies. Make no mistake, it has nothing to do with imitation, but with correspondences, and with two men in their intelligence coming to like conclusions. There was an exquisite selection of the small dark paintings -- work that has been done by no one else -- in which the art is governed in terms of the paint itself. As Robin Blaser said in his guide to the exhibition, "His colors seem complicated, they are so mixed, so careful and so new... Jess has said, 'Invoke presences not persons, and present them in paint.' And this puts a claim on us.

What is present? A painting which is determined upon a way to experience (where we are) insists upon a psychological moment -- a way out of ourselves to the real and to the extravagant." And in the assemblies Jess brings together objects which gain new lives in their meeting, good jokes from a superb sense of humor in several, or in others like Martian Spring Dance, even more, you swear the figure lives. So, if they couldn't see the work of a master we gave them, how could they see the excellence of any of the others?

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CREAMED COTTAGE CHEESE

Esquire Magazine got together about 700 fake listeners and 6 fake entertainers and proceeded to hold a make believe poetry reading. Well, there was wine and a hot hall and shrill 'Yeahs!' and soupy sentimentality and no poetry and a superb monologue by Bob Hope who masqueraded as sort of a folksy red haired North Woodsman with a drawl. You guessed it. The plebes loved every minute of it. Ginsberg gave them some Indian chants, and a new long tear jerker about the Universe with the usual razmataz. And they dug it with uniform hysteria. Some local editor thought it was the third or fourth best reading he'd ever heard.

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POETRY

Mr. Shovel of the Pottery Center almost succeeded in hiding it, but a gathering of friends and poets did manage to attend Robert Duncan's excellent reading of his own work, in a beautiful selection ranging from Medieval Scenes through to Roots and Branches. Though one doesn't ever forget the excitement that governed the Bread & Wine mission reading of Opening of the Field, and thought the listeners have, as we expected, narrowed, the beauty and quality of the poetry hasn't diminished. Duncan, in his notes Concerning The Art, hinted at the difficulties which beset him: "Even recently I have refused again to obey the need for poetry that comes from this Other, and found, as ever, that I have no power of my own to effect the poem. In myself I am desolate." Yet, the great moments of the evening did spring from poems we didn't know. At the center of the reading was 'Apprehensions'; its third movement beginning "Dream or vision..." was one of the rare openings we wait for. And there was also special excitement from 'A New Poem (for Jack Spicer)', 'from The Mabinogion', 'A Set of Romantic Hymns', 'Five Sonnets' and 'Cyparissus.'

OKEANOS

Into the dark, the lady who runs all poetry
like a soup kitchen, takes you out of a crowded house,
sets you on the road in the sight of heaven,
and you look for something shiny to hold
like the slick waves pounding on the beach,
alphabet of the ocean, poetry
puts you up against these unconquerable things,
a freeway through ghosts, the bad that ever was
goes at sixty in a convertible, says, "You Okies
and Indians can stand on your heads and whistle Dixie
for all I care."

Credits:

litho by Mike Kummer
lettering by Peggy Engle
translations by Max Knight