

OPEN SPACE 12



She finished up the web, it had to do with her father she said
using it to keep them away for many years, tricking them.

Hermes came to get the dead suitors.

Persephone really died every year
to go down there was difficult a large dark house
and ghost groves on either side one of white. They called her terrible

It has been difficult to write this. One day
I walked around the block, it was grey, and whatever was green on the lawns was clear
the flower pots on the back porch, the neighbor's steps to the second floor
I could have watched for a long time,

why they must go to war I can't decide

to settle fear. we were all born

and he is that great fighter
having a guide, a female presence who pulls her own self into battle also
They are coming towards the house someone calls to Odysseus

A great struggle in Persephone's field of poppies
a broken sprig of geranium

It is not for me to control she calls
the loud men rising towards each other, great turmoils that pull
through all of you, I give you style in battle

the final control is man

Zeus calls halt.

takes all this nature from running riot, the thundering push
of green buds, leaves, grass, roaring
in the sky filling it with birds, the clouds
closing down, mountains rocking, sinks
a flaming bolt, the control takes peace

over an ordered landscape, it is clear
all confusion gone, and nodding their heads wondered where they had gone.

12.1.64

Joanne Kyger

Most beautiful! the red-flowering eucalyptus,
the madrone, the yew

Is he . . . /

So thou wouldst smile, and take me in thine arms
The sight of London to my exiled eyes
Is as Elysium to a new-come soul

If he be Truth

I would dwell in the illusion of him

His hands unlocking from chambers of my male body

such an idea in man's image

rising tides that sweep me towards him

. . . homosexual?

and at the treasures of his mouth

pour forth my soul

his soul commingling

I thought a Being more than vast, His body leading

into Paradise, his eyes

quicken a fire in me, a trembling

hieroglyph. At the root of the neck

the clavicle, for the neck is the stem of the great artery upward into his
head that is beautiful

At the rise of the pectoral muscles

the nipples, for the breasts are like sleeping fountains of feeling in man,
waiting above the beat of his heart, shielding the rise and fall of his
breath, to be awakened

In the axis of his midriff

the navel, for in the pit of his stomach the chord from which first he was
fed has its temple

At the root of the groin

the pubic hair, for the torso is the stem in which the man flowers forth and

leads to the stamen of flesh in which his seed rises
a wave of need and desire over taking me
cried out my name.

(This was long ago. It was another life)

And said: What do you want of me?

I do not know, I said. I have fallen in love. He
has brot me into heights and depths my heart
would fear without him. His look
pierces my side . fire eyes .

I have been waiting for you, he said:
I know what thou desirest

you do not yet know but thru me .

And I'm with you everywhere. In your falling

I have fallen from a high place. I have raised myself
from darkness in your rising
wherever you are

my hand in your hand seeking the locks, the keys

I am there. Gathering me, you gather
your Self .

For my Other is not a woman but a man
the King upon whose bosom let me lie.

Incidents of me the eye sees
 a leaf among many leaves turning upon the stream, the screen
 the words upon the page flow away into no hold I have.

What did it say?

(A PASSAGE) Kraftgänge

...for the stars have their kingdom in the veins
 of the body which are cunning passages (and the
 sun has designed the arteries) where they drive
 forth the form, shape and condition of man

(Boehme), and from Hesiod:

They live in a place apart from men,
 at the ends of the earth
 along the shore of the deep roaring Ocean their campfires
 their circles of great stones their golden crowns of hair
 untoucht by sorrow
 having no guilt.

And what shall we have to do with them then?

For those who love us must be heavy with sorrow
 We ourselves can know no good apart
 from the good of all men

Dawn which appears and sets many men on their road
 the light in the east breaking
 Having the violence of great winds, thunderous waves, Thor's
 hammering fire,

the jets of blood, milk, and rain
 commingling
 in the moving picture
 (Fireworks, by Kenneth Anger, 1947)

or another face
 breaking into changes of agony and submission

" One voice said, 'If you go among the Trees, the
 Children of the Night will change your spirit. Eat
 and sleep here.' The other voice said, 'Ask for the

Knife.' I listened to that voice."

(Aurora, Jacob Boehme; Hesiod, Works and Days;
Rewards and Fairies, Rudyard Kipling)

" I said to my Mother in the morning, 'I go away to find a thing for my people, but I do not know whether I shall return in my own shape.' She answered, . . ."

"True," Puck said. "The Old One themselves cannot change men's mothers even if they would."

Story, *Herself a mother of sorts.*

When the artichoke flowers

and the grasshopper sings in the heat

let me have a seat in the shade some rock casts,

with water and good wine.

Everyone praises a different day

but few know their nature.

Sometimes a day is a step-mother,

sometimes a mother.

" She answered, 'Whether you live or die, or are made different, I am your Mother.' "

for Kenneth Anger

AN ILLUSTRATION

In the assembly of the years, the tears of Tylyl rise to his eyes where Bluebeard has constructed towers of his wrath as a palace to surround the room where the Bluebird hides. Over and over again Christmas arrives, the tree in whose branches our lives are continually kindled; and the Children set out with Fire, Water, Milk —animated Things— on a progress thru the stories of the house they live in.

From the boy's slight form the bride goes up to the closed room to open the one door she was forbidden to open. She turns the essential key of the story she seeks. In the gloom of the red chamber she spies upon the hanging corpses of life after life. From the moaning body of the boy the man he is breaks like a wrathful husband his fiery torso. From the man's sensual enclosure aging the old one survives, his head shaking, hands turning over the pages, remembers as if it did not matter . the bride's first breaking into the silence that surrounds him, the passages from whose doors that room and all others, the shadows in passages from room to room, blood or wine, "the Sun or Heart shining into and thru all the angelic doors"

Night, in fancy dress, "flowing black robes, covered with mysterious stars and shot with reddish-brown reflections . veils, dark poppies etc", addresses the Children.

I used to make up dreams.

The fire in the hearth, the water in the white pitcher, the earth in the pot where the dwarf pomegranate grows and bears its first fruit, the night air in the open window are kind.

Death by fire, death by water.

Fireblast and flood,
the rending air, the
shaking earth.

Where the tents of the great assembly stand,

I used to make up my
tents, my treasures,
my powers within powers .

12/14/64

— Robert Duncan

The Greater Happiness

I walkt along beautiful ledges grown with exquisite flowers, trailing thru vaporous clouds of pink and green wadeing silver brooks bounding with fish and splendid reptiles, and I relaxed in a pile of leaves while the birds sung around me. "Oh day, oh morning, oh childhood, ... Where am I going? Is there a king? Some enchanted place, built of men? Or is it a dream I had last night, after eating cows milk and berries: I think it must be winter somewhere, ... and the land is full of children. What will we do to make it right for them?"

"All we can. All we can," said an owl. "Oh owl, do you speak?"

"We all can," he said, "We all can." "There is the answer," I said, "have the animals speak to them."

"They wont," said the owl, "They wont." "Must you always repeat yourself," I askt him.

"I never repeat myself," said the owl, "Never, I never repeat myself."

"You have, you just did, the same words twice."

"Oh that," said the owl, "The same words but different em! phasis," said the owl. "Different emphasis?" I queried.

"Well the first time I was sure and the second time I was not so sure," said the owl, "Or was I?" said the owl.

"You were," I said. There was quite a pause he laid upon me before he vocalized. "Were what?" said none other than the owl.

"Oh you're no help, I'm going on my way."

"What way," said the owl. By this time his speaking was only obnoxious and I turned away and walkt on, but he has since followed me everywhere About 3 months later he flew down to my camp fire and spoke again.

"So this is your way," said the owl.

"A little of it," I replied.

"Indeed it is marvelous," said the owl.

"How so?"

"You have gone nowhere," said the owl.

I could see the bird was stupid and tried to distract him from his madness. I taught him to play chess and I must say he did splendidly and as no amateur. After he had beat me several times he said, "This is child's play; let us put it aside. A moment ago you wrote that I was stupid. Your readers trusted and believed you. Now what are you going to do?" he said rapidly.

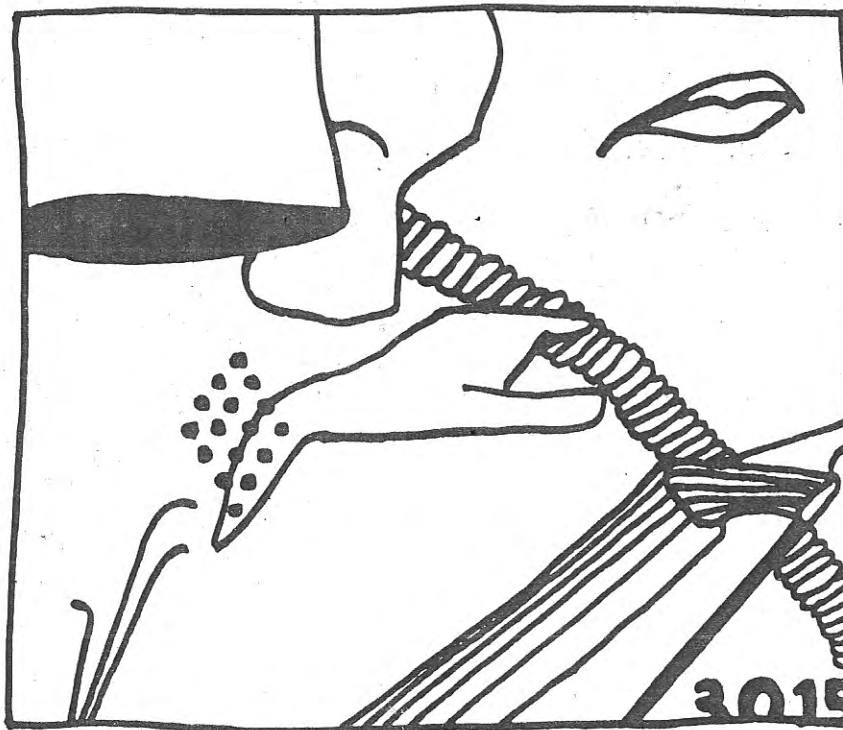
I was charmed and wanted him to further explain.

"Do what?" I said, hoping. "Do what you like," he said, "how are you going to explain?" He lost patience. "You'll need a change of

voice," he said, "you are obviously not the author, who will verify my intelligence."

I had gotten into this muddle by beginning a tale in the first person then immediately getting involved. There seemed no way out now tho I have since learned never to trust an intransitive object; they are definitely unreliable. Supposing it had all been images of abstract incident, where would the truth about the owl figure. It figures that the owl is a signpost of my false voice and the speaker a fallible character involved in the greater fabric. "I am not a signpost," said the owl. "I am a bird." Here I must go back to my original opinion; further that not only is the bird stupid, but so is the author, while the speaker strikes me as charmingly intelligent. I would like to hear more from him, but he has gone on his way. What will become of him I dont know. If anyone really cares I suppose we can conjecture he will go on to greater happiness than he already has. The owl will go on quarreling with everything, unto the end of time. And he will probably quarrel with that.

James Alexander



SHAPES IN SEARCH OF AN OBSERVER..

3019

The first thing I notice as I go thru the house is
that I'm not cold this morning
It is a country — I do — in bits and pieces
Where I am is often only where I read
The apartment is the dark Antarctica — moving in my
mind into the drift of the doctor's account of
penguin life
My place then is itself in the page
Whose style and tone take me up
From the kitchen to the bathroom I'm moving, a
kind of polar bear or poet
My friend is with me — the story or image I make
up as I go along is mixed in from being
told yesterday about the chances of becoming a
gardener and my considering, then imagining doing
it
Setting up the huts, meeting the other men
I start a wintry journal and the poems I would
write to you
Black light is coming from the streets
They're shiny wet all the way down the hill and
across the city
It had got warm enough to rain
Imagining the books I would pack for a year's reading
And now the air is after-rain

II

Reading in Robert Duncan's Passages this morning,
weeks later, I find a new turn: for his poems are filled
with his readings — it seems that all the shines forth finds
its place in his work, which is his place — his rightful place.

Stan Persky

THE CITY

wept by a pool
midway, the lover's conversation
claimed itself like the
old head of the wandering Jew
painted on leather, the head
follows the voice, a fluid
that is a body

the mirror is to be read the
water moved faster than the eye
the radio ambles in between the
lines of it is a sound, a part
of a letter

the forest is
somehow a wall, no, she has
knelt down and the folds
of her gown are around her the
rugs in the sun are silent the
color itself sounds these
filaments of pale light, filling
what is it lifts from the
floor, is now waist high
at arm's
length, tangled beyond
one fountain ?

from The Holy Forest

Robin Blaser

SATURN, STAR OF MELANCHOLY

the sages of other times, whom we value,
believed in reading luck and disaster
in the sky, and that each soul fastened to
one of the stars and it is still a point
to be made clear (some have mocked much
without thinking that the laugh is often
ridiculous as well as deceptive, this description
of the night's mystery) but all those who are born
under Saturn, the savage planet, dear to the necro-
mancers, have, according to the old grimoires,
a good share of bad fortune and anger
the imagination, uneasy and sick, happens
to render null in them the effort of Reason
in their veins, the blood, subtle as a poison,
burning like lava, and rare, flows and winds
in devouring their sad ideal, which crumbles
such the Saturnians must suffer and such die
— in admitting that we are mortal —
their plan of life being designed line by line
for the logic of a malign influence

VERLAINE/Blaser

ORPHEUS

I call my witnesses Tanaiis,
the black river with six urns,
and Zeus who causes the pull
on the great chariots of night,
Rhea through some bulls,
and Nyx with some horses,
old giants and new men,
Pluto who devours us, Uranus
who creates us, to this,
I adore a woman, and she is
holy to me the monster, Poseidon,
with the blue hair hears me
may he grant my wish

I am the human soul singing
and I love the huge shadow
is full of clouds, the heavy
rain spills in agitated sheets
Boreus rouses the woods, Zephyr
rouses the grain likewise
our deep hearts are troubled
by love I love this woman
called Eurydice always, everywhere
or the sky curse me, and the rising
flower curse me, and the ripe corn
do not trace magic words on the wall

HUGO/Blaser

IMAGE NATIONS 4

a visit to the Longs
who run the pump house, stoke
its fires, spread the ashes

over a field to burn out
this is a surface of the moon
black and crusted we ran

out on it, calling
'you're it', jumped, rang with
laughter, the crust broke, his

bare feet slipped into the burning
coals beneath, what is his name,
the mystery that in winter the

snow did not remain in this
place, a black garden, the
surface of the moon, now explained

(Ella Cinders) it is a crust
of cinders over the red coals, a
banked fire over which no Snow

caught her hair if you walk
unwary, your feet slip into the
fire of strawberries

Cleo, nearby, picks up agates and
moonstones between the railway ties,
works at his wheel to polish and open

well, when the whole place was mud,
a part of it froze in with the
sunset, and these shadows were

only curls in the mud, but
the moonstone, that's a piece
of the cheese fell out of the moonstream.

Robin Blaser

DUCKS FOR GROWNUPS

In the rain the white ducks
picked up or took
all the moonlight that was meant for water.
No swans were needed. Ducks
in the dark take all the light from the sky
and all the underwater light
and float between
and dare you.

Jamie MacInnis

THE SITE

The movement of a shovel,
catch of dirt,
is swift and to the
barrow. A

pick
falls in
grey stuff, thuck,
a thin

dust rises
Slowly
a third man crosses
the broken field

of lines,
bricks, red
virginal girders, and lights
a cigarette

The others lay
their tools
aside and cup
hands to their faces

Their down
at the mouth in-
tentness on the red
end, taking fire

flickering, then, in
cupped palms (dusk
in this part of the world is
4 o'clock), three

cigarettes
alight,
constellates a field
of effort

I watch it
from the window
of the Moral Sciences
Library,

their labors might have
issue
here, who
knows





(Unfinished)

for Jack Spicer

The sea demands silence
awe of its watchers.
A bird glides quietly over the surf,
plucks its supper,
retreats with a muffled beating of wings.

Six months pass.
A retentive eye sees a cliff-edge
missing.
The beaches are the same,
pass sand endlessly on to each other
(measurement shows no appreciable difference).

Six months have passed;
erosion and uplift,
a river of sand down the coast of California.
I walk into this room with no appreciable difference.
Someone says my hair is straighter or longer
(a matter less than inches).

Harris Schiff

*

O, O

Gringalet had shining red ears.
No panoply of the sun node
In the geraniums' roots, moving
In circles, the discus begonia leaves
Red or green depending
Upon weather — oceans ruled
By the snow

Angel

Begonia green-tongued, white-
Spotted the snow holds in the leaves,
Holds against the changing leaves
Pale translucent pink-titted

Ocean

Ax gleaming
On the sand

Lewis Ellingham

Library Window-sill

Sad perversion of sky and nature.
I have no voice to sing
no words or film.
This real movie of clouds
watches our disintegration.

Pointless song;
trees, buildings, clouds,
rusted faces of the stones of the library—
even up here above the quiet cobbles,
the outmoded gas-light, electrified and modernized,
the surf pounds
invisibly calling to nowhere.

*The noise of a machine stops.
New untraceable noises will never stop.
The faces of conscience;
please
molder in the sun.

The little green buildings
trees and the fragile cars.
Words slip by me.
I cannot catch the real tears they evoke.

A thousand falls in every word I see from this window.

Harris Schiff

TO BREAK THE DAY'S CONTENTIONS

In a Salinger story, in the cabin of an ocean liner, Teddy's father woke up by torturing his neck by forcing his head against the headboard while the rest of him was supine. That's how he broke the day. I wake up in a half-nelson; the bell is an electric sputter.

My prayer takes a drag
My prayer resembles not to burn a hole
In the covers and the day has broken
Knotted

How it chokes not to see the sunrise
That the sun is rising in a mold of dawns
And the possible soft gold is bleached and hard
A difficulty without beholding, without lo*

Dawn in the hold of a ship
To hold what waking erected
The hole in the green spread
The hold that must be broken

I HEAR CHAINS

I hear chains
Rang on the steel hull
Resist
This blush nobody could see

In a self the scope
Of a submarine
Reticence
With her torpedoes sheathed

I hear a pulse
Of the boiler
In feedwater pipes
Trying to get up

Steam And in the radio room
A code recalls
The seething vessel
To another

But the men
Are in their heads
Flushing
And blushing

O TO REKNIT THIS MORNING

O to reknit this morning
Of swallows, all the Itylus
Served me and eaten
O to call back some bird
Or to wipe out something
A feeling of flying mismanagement
As I was driving on Pine
Shred on shred

Light to light
Coaxing time
Seeing the corners arrive
Cards flying
A racket somewhere along the driveshaft
Drowning the vibrancy of the wild street
All of the beasts in Peter's sheet
That I won't eat
Only my kind and kin

BLACKSTONE

Blaxton
Your prayers
Will not be heard
Study Hill was burned

The river
Your name
That ran a mill
Only gutters rain

TUIG

As I was leaving he was sitting at the table
Squinting at the snow and ice
And as I left I said "I'm going
To disappear"

When I write it
Plastic snow The scenery is scars
The story knowing by his pains

Steam off the ice
Esteem

 Him that stays
Before the ice

When the bars close

Esteem

 Waiting for him
The ice man
To thaw with

Tools and trash, Jules and Jim, our toys
That crazy boy who tortured that incredibly
gentle horse
That huge horse so abject
Listening to the right things said I have to say
"I'm going to disappear"
Looking at the clock deciding to wait he says
"See you"

For the boy glass
For winter

Lew Brown

When leaves like ashes fall

*

The steps themselves
seem to go out from under

*

The downward turn of the year

*

Locally it is a season of promise-
the dust, the tinder of fallen
eucalyptus and oak leaves
soon to be cooked into leaf-meal mush,
the mushroom's patience proved,
and the green grass for the sheep

*

The din of humanity crowds around me

*

The longer I live
the more friends I lose
the less I believe
in Social Progress

*

The woods themselves
were a road once
going someplace
and I followed my heart

*

This is the season of uneasiness

*

Behold they shall be as stubble.
The fire shall burn them.
They shall not deliver themselves
from the power of the flame

*

The water pitcher is lifted into the sky.
Cloud upon cloud blowing in from the sea.
The birds from the north fly south.
The birds of the upper air
I have come to love
wheel northward

*

And all the host of Heaven shall be dissolved;
And the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll;
And their host shall fall down,
As the leaf falleth off from the vine

*

The long lived Arctic tern has
one of the widest known ranges;
a large number of them fly back
and forth between the Arctic
and Antarctic regions obtaining
more sunlight than any other

*

The sun was climbing from the burning waves
its rays lighting the distant mountaintops
when Salicio woke in the deep grass

*

The sun sends out its light rays
up and down the mountainside into the valley waking
the birds, the animals, and the men,
who now into the clear air rise flying;
who now into the green valley or up mountain slope
wander without fear;
who now, now that the sun's up,
go down to their offices
to do what nature or need has made daily habit

*

Prince.....

You throw yourself into the fire and adventure
of the hunt- your horse spurred on
by its relentless rider flies
across the path of the fleeing frightened deer

*

To escape the sun
the unexpected unseasonal indian summer heat
its farther away but lower autumnal path
that brought it further into the house
than the high midsummer sun
I went into the deep woods

*

The sun shall be turned into
darkness and the moon into blood
before the great and terrible day
of the Lord come

*

With you-
the silence under the trees
and the indifference and remoteness
of the distant peaks pleased me;

green grass, the bright breezes,
the white and the red rose,
and sweetness of spring I desired
but, oh, I was deceived-
something else hid
in the deception in your breast;
something I hear now in the voice of the black crow
who comes to repeat my misfortune

*

Before what happened happend I knew
(and I thought it only my mind wandering)
when I slept beside her
on the meadow under the stars and dreamt
it was noon in the midsummer heat
and I was leading the sheep down to the river
to drink and rest
but it wasn't where it had been
and I began to wander distracted following
burning in the summer heat its new course

*

This is the fall of the year-
the night about to blot out the day

If I should wake before I sleep
I pray the Lord my childish fear to keep

'What better time
for Him to come a second time?'
I thought 'than when
the year grows cold and the night long'
and thought more each night

I was to be destroyed
with the world- my mother,
her mother and the rest of
the worldly half of my
family
for I knew I was never
more than half right with Him

The rose depetalled
stands invisible on its stem

My mother's beauty was not very remarkable
but somehow it left its mark on me

Some said they saw
the grain in a small box.
Others said it was growing

out of the body of a woman

Some said they were inside
where they saw the grain
like rain or stars around them

and others said they saw nothing

Is it the year of the Fool?
He seems to have taken
as many shapes
as people I know

He sat at the table
a friend of my wife
and said 'I don't believe in ghosts'
without even the hint of a smile

He stopped me on the street
the outspoken friend of friends
'I want you to know I like your poetry-
at least those you wrote without
the support of a woman'

His local reputation for manly wisdom won
by giving each utterance the intensity
of someone finally overcoming a terrible speech impediment
his tongue loosened by too much wine last night he said
'You know, there must be something wrong with you-
I've never been able to talk to you'

I'm as wary as the next person
of finding meaning in everything I see
but when a snake
slides off my path
and stops
its back to me
and I find an owl's head in a pile of
golden feathers and down

*

'The Country Wife' she said 'is a play
about a man who pretends
to be a unicorn so that all the other men
will want him to escort their wives

*

Even
as the fluttering trail
of her gown
disappears around
the corner of the base
world

Poor fool, moving among men
in the middle of becoming men
Your heart keeps
The Time she tells.
Time piece of fool's gold
tell men how she moves
through the fair
the forest and shadows
sewn in pure air

*

Tonight stars cross and fall
make a tangle of the sky
over the last you see
of Clear Lake. And your tears
contain no salt, turn into jewels
and back to tears again.

In the morning myriad birds
fly into the sun
over the last
they see of you

Lawrence Fagin

You are more
constant than
grey weather; the
sea choke of afternoon
sleep,
one heel broken on the
dark rear edge
of winter. More
than all the
thick tongues
racked on teeth and
drowning. There are
no lies where
there is no truth. Constant
in this;
your eyes could mirror
stars and make them
wrong; insolent; tacks
to fasten your night. Rain,
the sea, move and
are faithful to
their rests; night or
sunlight, sand or damp
earth, they
soak and wear away and
leave some promise.
Neither will reflect
your face; grey roof
or green heavy grave.
You will never see your self
in a wave,
having nothing to offer it.
Above stiller waters
the wind bends flowers.
They rise again
when the wind dies,
are faithful.
You are more
constant than I. The
rain tonight
makes bars
on my windows,
cold air finds
my hands through
cracked glass.

The rain is falling
through miles of dark. Tomorrow
there will be no rain
and lighter leaves. Tomorrow
just sun.
Dark at the end of any wave
The sea at the end of a white street.

— Lawrence Kearney

To be more tired
I would be a white church in white weather
White on white or breast
to closing eye
The steps to the street
The street down
to it's end, plaster
steps
To the next building.
Any shadow
says I loved.
But all this white
breathes thin. I'm
tired.
I remember we seemed
to live in huge hot
sections of sun.
In the woods.
And the blood against
the bark and all the
shadows of the
house I
built for you.

Ridiculous to be this
tired.

I know it stops. I'll wake
when the grey

Drains out. This
voice hisses an ugly

s, everything
I never want to hear.

We will have red.
Like thickest red paints. Strung
from our bed
Yellow to orange.

And colors I remember from
your childhood and

the photograph I have
of you,

Six years old, blowing bubbles
in back porch vines.

I want to go back and gather
all the threads tonight

Drape them
Step to bell to white steeple. A
fine black web
on bloodless stone.

Because I remember
Your skin

Is softer than
I remember.

Where does forgive me stop?
In the

cracking of the
white? The bell.

A flash of bronze
in empty air. Empty

air lets no-one sleep.
I can get no sicker without
sleeping. No
more tired.
And I'll
break this poem in
five pieces.

The flowers weren't violets.
May-apples.
One white flower above the
leaves.
And you could never
make them grow
anywhere else. Not violets,
but something in the name
As if we picked them
As if I could sleep now;
wake to your face.

I want to give you flowers,
not violets.

Broken like an ugly
vase.

I'll mail you the pieces when
I put them together.

When you find
nothing at the ends of
your fingers,
It's time to go to sleep.

White on white and
grey pillows. The flat
white surface
can even be touched.

The sky can't
but wasn't built. This
church, brick
on brick, is white
and leans on
trees.

The shadows
won't be enough. I'll

take it apart,
stone by stone ,
and sink them in
green water. They'll
still be a
graveyard but won't make
the air white.
I want to go to sleep. But
promise, first
thing in the morning,
I'll paint the pieces.
Thick beautiful paint, Red
for our bed
Green for our children
Yellow for closed eyes, the
Orange.
And Blue
Blue will be for you. For
your necklace
Your lovely
mist and branches.

— Lawrence Kearney

For Jamie

He had no reasons. And
for her picture, on the
edge of her own sea,
will not offer any.
Her feet make the
rock warmer.
She has never seen
herself alone;
even the mirrors
merely warm
to her face. And so he
sees her turn
to them suddenly. With
cornered eyes and tears;
with one for each;
the pictures, the shadowy
maps,
the unreal seacoasts.

2

Because I have
loved you as much as
I can,
I have reached a limit;
at the garden wall.
Gardens have boundaries
and some idea
of perfection. The stone corner
like a dark chair
is an idea of autumn. And
still stone. A man's
garden shows how he
dresses his children.
Little people. This
is no garden of mine;
I drag enough
wherever I go,
the way my twilights
still flicker
in the light from the furnace.
I don't want it. Gardens
lie about terror. The idea
of Eden, with a gate,
lies about love.
Gardens with well-paved paths,
for cripples; gardens

with purple, profuse, for
sneaky geometricians.
I'm as sick of my
past as yours. I've
loved you as much as I
can. Bent there,
trailing ivy.

3

God knows what
you've said to me.

That there are
shadows. That there

are no shadows.
That words

rhyme to some
ticking

In the next room.
In this room. In

some brown house
years shut.

Here.
Then.

Across the street
Across your legs.

Whenever it sings
your eyes go

blank as grapes.

4

If I never died
where could you look
for memories. Your

fears are
cripples. Black
because their hallways

are immortal. I know
how long they are.
I could throw love

through your Catholic dark
like a penny.

5

Waking from a dream
I don't care what was in
the letter I
just had in my hand. It's
all there
if you look. I wrote
it, I sealed it,
I brought it to my hand. Force
your dreams into the
daylight and
your script will be huge.
On your own love-letters.

6

You involve yourself
with shadows. All the
artifacts.
Nuns carry their eyes in ample pockets. These
shadows
outline something other than
bodies. Nuns
again, involve lipless smiles.
A dark kitchen
A high black shoe
Pale closets. This house
is closed
by grace of terror.

Lawrence Kearney

some more from THE STEP (revisions & additions)

Royal Blue (for Pilar Lorengar, soprano:
La Contessa Almaviva)

--a regal blue, flowing like a wave around
her distant whiteness there behind a
marble balustrade
in the tempered light of chandeliers like
clouds, luminogenic clouds-- a light that
contains us
at her behest, a medium
in which
we move.

Up there among the others behind the
pillared marble looking out over the sea
[of humanity] she, como una reina, waves
a white arm with slow largesse, accompaniment
of the stiff blue, her gown, in obeisance,
ripples & swirls about her, the light
doing its bidding & hers.

She is the sea, the sky, the clouds, the very
light: the merest wave of her wrist
before the blue are whitecaps, precisely.

O loke down at us, verray mistresse,
with benignite & gentillesse

--I say it silently,
looking into her far-off eyes, my hands
in my pockets.

No, not "look down," not even "look."
--Connect us
per your eye-beams; enter,
if only per the light from your eyes,
the light that contains
us, the medium in which we move.

* * *

The 2nd time (the first was about 2 years ago) --listening to my boss giving me instructions. A likeable enough guy; straight, & not at all a foreman type, his eyes behind his glasses not pushing it, not enjoying this relaying of instructions to me. This is what he does for a living, & he does it well: the intricacies of photomechanical reproduction, screens & filters to separate the colors out of a

piece of "art," & putting them back together on copper plates to print an "accurate reproduction." He's no artist, & he knows it, telling me how to get done what needs to be. This is our job. He does it better than I do mine; my heart's in it even less than his.

As he talks I look at his eyes & his mouth, moving, his hands. & the words take form in the back of my head, move into my throat. "Fuck you." Those 2 words so close to sound--I don't speak them, relishing their imminence, tasting their double-ness, existing & not, simultaneously. All the possibilities of their repercussions crowd out any consciousness of his words.

* * *

The Step (:Georgics)

forward pass, Zeno to George Stanley, broken up by Aristotle; Erwin Schroedinger in on the play.

(Note: This is not Zeno of the "painted Stoa," nor Larry Zeno of UCLA, but the triple-threat quarterback from Elea, a pop-off to rival even Cassius. On one occasion he's known to have commented: "Ach! Achilles, that big ugly bear, he couldn't even catch a tortoise!")

So this Georgius Stanleius, of whom Duncan Testifies "He knoweth so much Latin [& Greek?] that he Smarts for it." This Stanleius cometh up to me at "half-time" & saith:

I take yr title to mean you see yr poem as a big step forward for you.

The fallacy in Zeno's argument is now obvious; for he says that since a thing is at rest when it is not shifted in any degree out of a place equal to its own dimension, & since, at any given instant during the whole of its supposed motion the supposed moving thing is in the place it occupies at that instant, the arrow is not moving at any time during its flight. But this is a false conclusion; for time is not made up of atomic "nows," any more than any other magnitude is made up of atomic elements.....

All that changes changes "in time;" but when we speak of the time "in" which a change occurs, we may mean either the "primary" or proper time coinciding with the change or a longer period including the proper time (for instance it may have happened "in" such & such a year, because that year includes the day occupied by the change). That being so, the change must be taking place during every part of the proper time which the whole change occupies. This follows from our definition (for this is what we have taken the "proper time" to mean).....

.....anything that is continuously changing & has neither perished nor ceased from changing, must at any point either be changing or have changed, & since we have proved that there is no such thing as changing at any

"now" the changing thing must have changed, so that if the nows are without limit, the mobile will have accomplished unlimited change. & not only must that which is in the process of changing have previously accomplished changes, but that which has accomplished a change must previously have been in the process of changing.

Erwin Schroedinger in on the play:

Let a cone be cut in two by a plane parallel to its base; are the two circles, produced by the cut on the two parts (the smaller cone above & the cone-stump below), equal or unequal? If unequal, then, since this would hold for any such cut, the ascending part of the cone's surface would not be smooth, but covered with indentations; if you say equal, then for the same reason, would it not mean that all these parallel sections are equal & thus that the cone is a cylinder?

Demo- Demo- Democritus, GO!

[a game of straight pool at a dollar a point]

Betwixt an 8-ball of infinite hardness & perfect sphericity & a surface (upon which it "rests") exquisitely smooth & of likewise infinite hardness-- how large is the "point" of contact?

"...a big step forward..."

(Come in & see our large selection of speeds:

(Stadia per day

(Cubits per hour

(Newtons per week

(Dynes per month

(Angstrom units per year.....)

"...a big step forward," sayeth this Stanley, who had said earlier, in a review, "Death seems a line."

With all this talk of his & his cohorts about Orpheus & Cocteau, certainly he must have seen Cocteau's ORPHEE, in which Cocteau says:

Look

into your mirror; you will see death at work there, slowly.

* * *

An Actual Catalogue

Ageratum, Mexicanum

Bartonia aurea

Calliopsis

Canterbury bells

Four O'clock, mixed colors

Globe amaranth

Ice plant, mesembryanthemum

Love in a mist, Nigella
Morning Bride
Nemophila, mixed varieties
Phlox Drummondii
Portulaca, single mixed
Sweet sultan, mixed colors
Sweet William, fine mixed
Calendula, mixed
Evening glory
Phlox, Star of Quedlinburg

* * *

An Actual Song

Buttered bread & Barbara Burton,
unbutton your bra & listen to me,
your downy gown's brown & blown as the ocean
so follow your fairy & fly to the sea.

That silly young filly has grown to be graceful
but what a sad swimmer you turned out to be.
You lost all your lessons & broke all your buttons
so follow your fairy & fly from the sea.

* * *

An Actual Play

J: Ron, what time do you want to get up?

R: Snath in 58; Eureka.

J: Ron, what time do you want to get up?

R: Graphically enough, prose.

* * *

Lots of Lakes (for Jack Spicer)

The weather clear, late June afternoon,
the evening seeming to hold back
for us, coming out of the Adirondacks
in that failing light we saw
down in the valley a lake, in a lake's
shape, so still grey water in what
light there was, down there among the trees.
As we approach it its perfection grows, its
shape stated so precisely, in there among the trees,

its surface, so.

But closer, we notice,
it doesn't behave like a lake, & closer yet,
it's not; it's a parking lot.

Some institution is off in the woods, & when
the people go there, drifting off over paths
in among the trees, this is where they park
their cars, to get hot under the June sun.
& when it snows they drive their white
cars away, & there are all these car-sized spots
where the snow hasn't fallen.

So we saw a lake
that was actually a lot. --& I don't know whether
that was a good thing, or it was not.

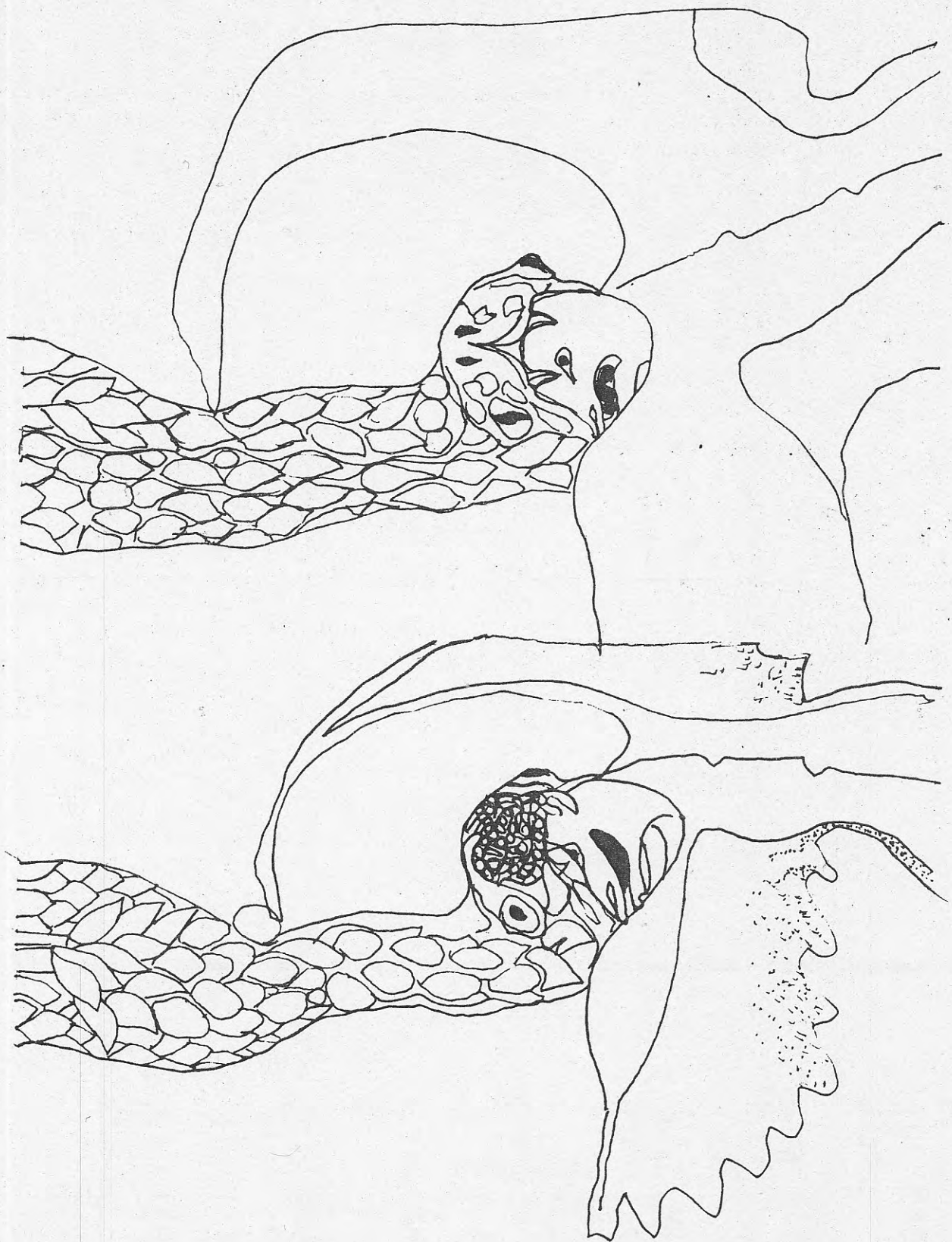
But isn't that, finally, the female principle, again-- the mind acted upon by
agents of the muse, or the muses themselves; the mind an open space, like a
lake to the sky, waiting to be filled. & into it drop coronae, prepuces, corpi
cavernosi, cant, puns, dull poetry. & duller wit. Into it drop Madagascar, hand
grenades, Alpha Centauri & Strontium-90 molecules; children, your own &
others' \int O that my love were in my arms/ & I in my bed again!

--The mind is male as well as female. It cognizes, desires, is aroused, grows
erect & penetrates into "all the crevices of the world." --This is less simple
than that open space (a total vacuum?) --"...you don't seek the vision, it
seeks you." --& partly because of that, a step closer to what actually happens.

* * *

- & still not finished

Ron Loewinsohn



(R)

Hubert Selby, Jr., Last Exit To Brooklyn (Grove, NY, 1964)

The world of modern (low?) life replete with brilliant portrayals of queens, minor hoods, trade, workers is the place Selby 'does' and it's very well done, with a superb ear for common speech in a series of fast-moving stories. Tra-la-la, The Strike, and the love-story of Georgia and Vinnie are first-rate writings -- and he does bring us into their loves and shows us the same Eros (that we know) in play here amid the violence that so interests him.

But after reading Selby I found myself left with a real unease. Admittedly, my complaint is the unfair one of griping about what the man doesn't write -- however, that's what bothers me most. It's like walking into a room called Selby and the door closes behind you and you're sort of stuck. The area he writes about is very narrow I'd say, and after a time extremely depressing; I lose interest and want out, except there aren't any doors, windows, trap-doors. I keep feeling that Selby really knows about a wider kind of life than this, and that he should be trying to bring the same intensity of his prose through people who are more interesting intellectually. After awhile, we know what he's talking about and the experience is limiting, so, instead of revealing a part of a large world the work tends to become an artifact, the eroticism and violence lose their sharpness.

*

City Lights Journal 2, ed. Lawrence Ferlinghetti (City Lights, SF, 1964)

Ferlinghetti presents a large international literary journal and the reader's best bet is to go to those things that interest him and not worry about the rest too much or how it all holds together.

The most readable things for me: a much-talked about recent interview with Ezra Pound -- a careful reading of it convinces that Pound is not suddenly 'denying' everything but is coming out straightforwardly about what disturbs him, in a bungled conversation with a stupid woman who can't understand a word he's saying : another part of Artaud in translation and the promise of the forthcoming Artaud-anthology.

In addition there are Bengalis, Africans, Martians, Beat Camp & Academy and various other expected accoutrements of modern life.

Ferlinghetti does render poetry a service by a continuing interest and presentation of modern French poets and I'd say it's the one direction he should extend as much as he can.

Besides not sharing his taste for the work of D. Moore, my one practical complaint is that a 'journal' of 280 pages at \$2.50 is too much all ways round.

*

SPEAKING OF ANTHOLOGIES...

The latest glob is an Italian bi-lingual paperback that sells for about \$7.00,

I forget the name of it, something about Contemporania Poesia Americana and edited by a woman whose name also escapes me for the moment. What caught my attention was the clever selection of poets from the West and the rumor that the editrix was guided in her choices by Philip Whalen and Michael McClure. Now, this is all rumor and in the end I'm sure it will turn out that Signorina X never even saw or heard of them. Be that as it may, it should be noted that work of Whalen, Welch, Loewinsohn, Snyder, Ferlinghetti, McClure, and Duncan is not an accurate representation of poetry here, but rather an uninteresting little tyranny -- an anthology that insists on the work of Ray Bremser, Robt Kelly, Lois Sorrell as well, while excluding Jack Spicer, Robin Blaser, George Stanley, Rick Duerden, Joanne Kyger, Harold Dull, Ebbe Borregaard and Jim Alexander is a farce.

Further, Spicer and Blaser are poets of the quality of Duncan and Charles Olson; the general contempt and ignorance of their work is only a reflection of the shoddy so-called intelligences at play here.

*

HOW TO SUBMIT MANUSCRIPTS TO OPEN SPACE

As this issue concludes the one year of Open Space I was 'directed' to do (or decided to do) please do not submit manuscripts to Open Space.

Robin Blaser
THE MOTH POEM
Open Space
is available at
City Lights Books
or through the publisher
Open Space, 24 Allen St.
San Francisco
\$1.25

Credits:

Litho, Mike Kummer

Cover, photo of Ina Mae Celestine Blaser
shapes drawing, Jess

snake drawing, Robert Duncan

photos of R. Duncan BEFORE & AFTER from Stinson Beach and Provincetown