Cover photo.

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MUNDUS ARTIUM

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Yánnis Rítosos

tr. from the Greek by Kimon Friar

AFTERNOON

The afternoon is full of fallen plaster, black stones, dry thorns,
The afternoon has a different color made of old footsteps which
suddenly paused;
of old clay jars buried in the courtyard, weariness and grass above them.

Two persons killed, five killed, twelve—one after the other.
Every hour has its slain. Behind the windows
stand those who are absent, and the pitcher with water they never drank.

And this star which fell at the edge of night
is like the amputated ear which does not hear the crickets,
which does not hear our excuses—it disdains
to hear our songs—alone, alone,
alone, cut off from others, indifferent to condemnation or
justification.

MOMENT

A downtrodden sailor’s quarter. The light globes sleepy.
Shabby beer pubs strung out in a row like poverty-stricken women
waiting without hope in front of the Municipal Hospital.
The street is dark. Everyone planned to sleep early.

But suddenly

the beer pubs lit up to their very last chairs
from the pure white laughter of a youth. And immediately
afterward
was heard the endless, uniform, unconquerable sea.
DANGER OUTSTRIPPED

Every so often a star or a voice
falls to such great depth that he holds himself
by the balcony railing or by a hand
(if a hand can be found) for fear of sinking into himself.

His most trusted hand is his other hand,
but thus his hands enclose him within a circle.
He cannot endure this. Then he stretches out his hands
as though to embrace someone, or in a balancing position.

And thus, like a tightrope walker, looking straight before him,
he holds himself upright above his own depth.

INTERCHANGES

They took out the plow to the field,
they brought the field into the house—
an endless interchange shaped
the meaning of things.

The woman changed places with the swallow,
she sat in the swallow’s nest on the roof and warbled.
The swallow sat by the woman’s loom
and wove stars, fishing boats, fish.

If only you knew how beautiful your mouth is
you would kiss me on the eyes that I might not see you.

MORNING

She opened the window shutters, spread the bedsheets
on the windowsill, saw the day.
A bird stared her in the eyes. “I am alone,” she whispered.
“I am alive.” She went back into the room.
“The mirror too is a window.
If I leap into it, I shall fall into my own hands.”
Yánnis Rítosos

tr. from the Greek by John Constantine Stathatos

A LIFE

Rigid, uncompromising throughout his entire life.
Towards the end he grew to fear this rigidity,
that it might not have been a virtue but simply a pose,
a punishing of others and himself, of course.

Then he lay down in silence, slack and rigid
as a repentant line. An elongated coffin
lying across two common chairs
became a narrow bridge over his fear and suspicions.

COINCIDENTLY

Exchanges and repayments. We cheated no one.
Nor were we cheated—no. In a bird’s crossing
we saw our history writ clear.

Later, of course, we felt the need as always
for bread and salt, a quiet woman’s smile,
to finish our night’s sleep
in a convenient house, with three strange dogs
which barked all night guarding the house, not us.

And so we too were guarded until daybreak.

HARDLY MIRACULOUS

He barely blew through his lips, and the bed of its own accord
was carried to the mountain opposite—we saw it
through the open window, sheets waving lightly
underneath that white cloud.
Later, he took a green leaf in his hands
and fashioned a large tree. Below the tree
there stood three marble hens. A wind sprang up
and the leaves fell across their hair and breasts.
Yánnis Rítsos

THE COLOURED BEADS

The white horse closed up in the paddock; the stones around seem lit up by its whiteness. A string of coloured beads winds round its narrow forehead. Of course, the horse would never think of beads as warding off the evil eye. The others concern themselves over the saddle, not the whiteness. And maybe in turn it accepts this spangled mark of bondage, not to frighten the children bringing in its hay at dusk. Later, the children stood for a while by its side watching the beads which glimmered as it fed. But in that case, whose and for whom after all the submission?

BREAD

He dined off a piece of dry bread under the lamp. The crumbs he gathered carefully into his palm, kneaded, and formed into nine loaves—perhaps the very size and shape of his own hunger. He ate nothing, remaining with the loaves all round him, in the manner of potters with their jugs. Yet those are of baked earth—that’s why they have so many scenes painted across them. But what could one paint upon bread?

FORGOTTEN ARTIST

A painter drew a train one afternoon. The final carriage found its own way off the page and returned alone to the depot.

In that carriage precisely sat the painter.
Takis Sinopoulos

tr. from the Greek by KIMON FRIAR

WAITING ROOM

This is no place for pride
this is no place for ecstasy,
a long river of sluggish days
the night the fear and the chair,
you, searching for the staircase to the sky

I, groping my face with my fingernails
amid the silent ruins of hunger
in this place with the frozen fire
what am I waiting for?

What am I waiting for here where the fever mounts?
What if someone shouts for help from the street
if someone beats on the wall
if all the games won without God
go to the opposite side and sit down,
the continuation of darkness
the lamp that consumed the kerosene
the cigaret butts thrown on the floor
the clothes of strangers
still warm,
what if the miracle with elderly hands comes
the act
that suddenly turns into murder?

Why should I invoke the unblemished woman
who has been cleaning her kingdom all day long?
Why should I remember the pride worn thin by time
the quietness in the room, the warmth and the refusal?
The mouth was alive
truth was being nailed on the lie and was still writhing
freedom leapt from city to city
blood dripped
nakedness dressed itself with pretences
and I grew cold
as now you grow cold and frightened and hide yourself
in the house where silence creaks
and the darkness breathes deeply.

In this room the imagined rapes took place
the contrivance of love and desperation
here falsehood and the sky were invented
there is a hole in the chair
there is silence and time
there are still other contrivances, resemblances of relationships
resemblances of linked contacts
behind the wall the night weaves a world of shadows
exiled probabilities sleep in their net
the hour lurks in the pendulum
with a cold smile the ghosts are moving but do not move
approach and do not move
in this room where I remain motionless and wait
what am I waiting for?

Perhaps you will descend there, stumbling, where the houses vanish
there where the dawn lights up a million pebbles
perhaps you will descend still lower
there where the darkness digs the ground incessantly
there where half-lit faces swirl
there where the darkness designs
unending complexes unending works
in that unending place that exists behind things
where shape vanishes and motion vanishes
there where, nevertheless, you exist
your eyes dark your hands smashed
your body curved within time
within the night that burns
there where I remain motionless and gaze and wait
what am I waiting for?
Odysseus Elytis

tr. from the Greek by Kimon Friar

SLEEP OF THE VALIANT

They smell of frankincense, and their features are scorched from their passage through the Vast Dark Places.

There where the Immovable suddenly hurled them Prone, on a land where even its smallest anemone were enough to embitter the air of Hell

(one hand outstretched, as though it were striving to grasp the future, the other under the desolate head, turned sideways,

As though it were seeing for the last time, deep in the eyes of a disembowled horse, the heaped ruins smoking)

There Time released them. One wing, the most red, covered the world, while the other was already tenderly moving in the distance.

And not a single wrinkle or pang of remorse, but at a great depth

The ancient immemorial blood beginning laboriously to dawn in the inky blackness of the sky,

A new Sun, still unripe,

Not strong enough to dissolve the hoarfrost of lambs on the living clover, yet dispelling, before a thorn could sprout, the oracle-making powers of Darkness . . .

And from the beginning, Valleys, Mountains, Trees, Rivers, A creation of avenged emotion glowed, identical yet reversed, through which the Valiant now might pass, the Executioner slain within them,

Peasants of the infinite azure!

Neither the hour striking twelve in the abyss, nor the Polar voice falling vertically annulled their footfall.

They read the world insatiably with eyes forever open, there where the Immovable had suddenly hurled them
Prone, where vultures swooped down to savor their clay entrails and their blood.

SEVEN DAYS FOR ETERNITY

SUNDAY.—Morning in the Temple of the Calf Bearer. I say: May fair Myrto become as real as a tree; and may her lamb, looking my murderer straight in the eyes for a moment, punish the most bitter future.

MONDAY.—Presence of grass and water at my feet. Which means I exist. Before or after the glance that will turn me to a stone, my right hand holding high a gigantic azure Stalk of Wheat. That I may establish the New Zodiac.

TUESDAY.—Exodus of the numbers. Battle of the 1 and the 9 on a completely desolate shore, strewn with black pebbles, piles of seaweed, huge backbones of beasts on the rocks.
My two aged and beloved horses, neighing and rearing above the vapors that rise from the sea-sulphur.

WEDNESDAY.—From the other side of the Thunderbolt. The charred hand that will sprout again. To smooth out the world’s wrinkles.

THURSDAY—An open gate: stone stairs, heads of geraniums, and further on transparent roofs, paper kites, fragments of pebbles in the sun. A he-goat slowly ruminates the centuries, and a smoke rises serenely between his horns.
At the very moment the gardener’s daughter is being kissed secretly in the back yard, a flowerpot falls and shatters of the great pleasure.
Ah, if I could only preserve that sound!

FRIDAY.—“The Transfiguration” of women I have loved without hope. I cry out: Ma—ri—naaa! E—le—nii! Every stroke of the bell is a spray of lilac in my arms. Then a strange light, and two dissimilar doves that pull me up high to a large house wreathed with ivy.

SATURDAY.—Cypress tree of my race, cut down by sullen and silent men: for a betrothal of a death. They dig the earth round about and sprinkle it with carnation water.
But I have already proclaimed the words that magnetize the infinite!
THE MARK

KAY CICELLIS

It was like writing an endless letter, or a diary (someone else’s diary), the way she addressed her thoughts to this man throughout the day, part of the night. Choosing tomatoes at the greengrocer’s, cooking a slow stew, a dozen questions took flight.

‘Have you been fed today? You feel hungrier when you are afraid. There is a kind of hollow in the pit of the stomach—Except when fear gets so bad that it makes you sick. Who feeds you, and what do they feed you? Plain bread, the bare minimum, or do you get a hot meal occasionally?’

Later on, shaking out a carpet over the balcony, suddenly realizing how good the sun felt on her shoulders, in her eyes: ‘You must be very white, unnaturally pale for this time of the year. Do all the windows have to be shut, all the time, would it really be so unsafe to air the room, say once a week? But perhaps you are hiding in the hills or among rocks by the sea, and then you must be browner than me, brown and wild like John the Baptist.’

Going home from her part-time job at night—she worked late hours, she worked very hard: square stocky figure, not at all the day-dreamer—she walked slowly and paused at street-corners. ‘You might take a quick stroll once it gets dark, I should think. Not here, there are too many lights. In some suburb, where people go to bed early? I don’t know; that might make you more conspicuous. What if I came across you, standing there at the street-corner? Would I know it was
you? I’ve only seen you in photographs; bad photographs, old photographs, the only ones journalists ever seem to get hold of. I shouldn’t think anybody could recognize you from those photographs. I know I’ve tried to memorize your face, but I can’t. It slips away; it dissolves, as if reflected in water. Perhaps it’s because I know your face has changed; it must have changed by now, the hair, the moustache, you must have done something to it, if you have any sense. Then perhaps I would recognize you after all; something singling you out, a mark. A marked person, that’s what they call people like you. And perhaps, if you were really desperate, you would speak to me. You would say, quietly and steadily: Help me, take me in.’

She didn’t believe it could actually happen. He was everywhere, in the city and in the suburbs, in the hills and by the sea; he could not be in one particular place. She did not want to visualize a particular place, because then others too, could pin him down, close in. Once she began thinking of possible hiding-places, terror seized her; she had to tick them off one by one, the empty flat, the abandoned church, the seedy hotel: hopelessly unsuitable, obviously unsafe. So she scattered him all over the face of the country. Yet the houses, the streets, the fields, the caves, those acres of land were burning hot, hidden minefields. Not an inch, not a leg to stand on. There was still not enough room for him. ‘How long can you hold out?’ she would ask.

Her eyes followed the tips of her shoes as she walked along the street. The pavement was smooth and clear. Feet could go this way or that; stop altogether, tap absent-mindedly on the curb. She walked whichever way she liked; the pavement suffered her passage, a neutral expanse of stone that was there to be trod on. Her feet on the pavement gave out a clear, dry, single sound.

‘You have to watch out for the double sound. Your feet grope forward, waiting for a possible echo before formulating the next step. Which way is best?’ The streets were so dangerous that she soon got him back to a confined space, the delusive security of a roof. ‘In the basement. Hardly any furniture. Four metres, five metres wide? Your feet pace forwards and backwards, for hours on end. Do you count your footsteps? Do you try to change the rhythm? Stop halfway? No, you have to go on; standing still is the worst of all.’ So in the end it was her footsteps that were double, that carried an echo. But the accompaniment was discordant. She could never bring herself into tune with those other, faltering footsteps.

Back in their flat, Peter tried to sound reassuring: ‘He must be out of the country by now.’
She would not be fooled. ‘We’d have heard,’ she pointed out. ‘It’s too late now. He should have left at the very beginning, before the search got properly organized.’

His optimism was as methodical as her pessimism. ‘If he holds out long enough, the search is bound to slacken down.’

‘How long is long enough?’

They had had a fairly hard life, both of them; they were not used to pampering each other. Their uncomplicated love took care of itself. But on this subject he was exceptionally gentle with her. He knew it was not fear: she had shown courage often enough in recent months. She had been the daring one, almost foolhardy at times; he had had to accept prudence and common sense as his share.

After dinner, they smoked in silence, and he’d watch her thoughtfully. ‘Perhaps she is getting old,’ he thought. ‘This life is too much of a strain, it is making her grow old.’ And seeing her looking older made him treat her like a child, a very young girl.

On the nights when she was most obsessed, their love-making took on an odd intensity. She clung to him, she kneaded his flesh. He soothed her with long, slow strokes and kissed her with his eyes wide open, fixing her eyes that were barely visible in the dark (always in the dark on such nights, always with the lights turned off). When it was over, the warmth did not ebb away, but wove itself round them in thickening folds, like a cocoon. She accepted it greedily, like that sun on her shoulders, out on the balcony. But with the inevitable questions. ‘Do you think about women? Do you have wet dreams? Does one, in those conditions? Prisoners masturbate all the time. You are not a prisoner, it’s not quite the same thing. Better or worse? Anyway, if you have a connection, it is probably a woman. Who takes care of your clothes? They must be in a terrible state. Perhaps you’ve got rid of them, you should have; a sweater, a tie might give you away. You’re average size, it shouldn’t be too hard to find some old clothes that fit you. The disguise should not be too complete; that could be more dangerous than no disguise at all. Nondescript; but what exactly is nondescript?’

Her mind ticked away late into the night while Peter slept at her side. Her hand lay on his chest, or on his head, where the baldness began. He was a thin, tired man; she watched over his sleep, mechanically one might say, (‘I am here’), and chain-smoked as she listened to the night-sounds. Now and then there was the wail of an ambulance, fire-engine, a police-car, which? Coming near, pushing a wave of heat, tingling hot blood, towards her. The sound moved away, grew fainter,
the blood-wave receded. She waited for the next one. A cry, a bark, pattering footsteps; a whole floating network of secret movements fell over the city. Little green and red lights, danger-lights flickered incessantly in her mind, as if it were a giant, complex switchboard. Danger never kept still, the night was never really dark.

When they finally caught the man, Peter was in the flat expecting her back any moment. He had reasons to hope she hadn't heard the news yet. She hardly ever bought the evening paper. He wanted to be the one to tell her. In bed, the light turned off, quietly and inevitably. 'That's how it is. He must have known. He must have been prepared.'

'Prepared? Days and nights of watching, waiting, listening, imagining? Hunger, cold, sleeplessness—is that preparation? Is one ever prepared?'

He did not have to answer her questions; she did not ask them. She let herself into the flat, the evening paper clutched under her arm with a loaf of bread. She said nothing. She got busy tidying the place and getting dinner ready. The paper was left lying on the divan, spread out against the dark green cover. On her way back and forth in the room, she'd pause and stare at the front-page earnestly, then get on with what she was doing.

'He must have known,' said Peter, watching her closely, 'when you do that kind of work, you know exactly what you are letting yourself in for.'

She nodded, she patted out a crease in the newspaper.

The photograph on the front-page showed the man full length. He was wearing bathing-trunks, ordinary, dark-coloured bathing-trunks. He was barefoot, his hair looked matted, as if he had just come out of the sea. So he had trusted no one, had kept away from houses, hotels and churches, he had hung on to his old clothes and his hunger. Down by the sea, among the rocks, feeding on grapes and crabs, or rubbish dumps on the less fashionable beaches. A hole in the sand at night, or hollow rock, a ledge; rock in hand, but it retains the heat of the sun. Growing wilder every day.

Yet his flesh looked white in the photograph. There was a little tuft of hair between his two nipples, and the hair stood out darkly against the white skin. All that flesh, bare, naked. Not just undressed: nake. Pinned on the newspaper, framed by the camera, circumscribed, immobilized.

She looked at the face, but it was blank, there was nothing to be learned from it—it was disconnected. She did not recognize it. Only the body counted. The pale helpless flesh spread out on the page. Soft,
opaque, boneless one might think. The photograph showed him stand-
ing, but as the newspaper lay flat on the divan, the body appeared
supine and abandoned. A thing, a jacket, a parcel, flung on the divan.
It would be picked up; it would be crushed, squeezed, stretched,
twisted, torn apart. There was no end to the number of things that
could be done to it.

All around the photograph, out of frame, steel instruments con-
verged like inward-pointing arrows.

Peter read the paper to her and they learnt the details of the
capture. This enemy of the nation, this monster had been located by
a loyal patriot, who had dutifully notified the authorities. He had tried
to swim away. (The immensity of the sea!)

The shrinking sea, eaten up by the diminishing circles of the
motorboat.

They did not say much as they read the newspaper. The only time
she spoke was to say: 'No one in the whole world can reach him now.
He is cut off. He is theirs.' But she went on looking at the photograph.

When they went to bed, she didn't turn off the light. He undressed
slowly, wearily. They would lie side by side and try to make some
warmth. He would stroke her till she went to sleep. Her hand would
grow limp on his chest. They must be strong, they must keep going,
this kind of thing was bound to happen again and again.

She watched him undress sombrely. He discarded the last piece
of clothing and lay supine, abandoned on the bed, stretching out a
hand to her with a smile. She did not see the smile. She crouched in
horror at the other end of the bed. She stammered: 'I can't touch you,
I can't touch you, go away.' She withdrew further and further in the
dark, till she saw the body from a great distance, stretched out alone
on a slab under the yellow light.
James Boyer May

WIDELY WHITE'S THE MOON OF LOVE

The spread acceptance
of a glow-worm's bored persistence
in the heat of springtime-strong tumescence
mans the act of fervid interplay.

To swell an omnibus or tease a hearse
we glide through entries of that nest
in tortured search
inflamed by speed and jerkined for arrest
on what autumnal summer's beat?

Here flies the maddened call
of held subtropic bird . . .
   In mandibles of mist
we dream of purple bestiaries . . .
and beaks of blackness penetrate
   pink inner curvatures of womb.
That moan is heard again as sky-time falls
and gusts of morning bend the tree of life.

Fending off the first-found head of light
(a beamless dawn of fountain's sight)
we abdicate and kneel to dell-brown mass.
Lucebert

OOGST

nacht, de zomer gaat dood in de nacht
krampachtige veren vallen, krimpend rondom
worgen de wolken de bergen
in de dorpen gefluister en klinkende lippen

nimmer nog gingen gouden ogen zo ver
in het blinkende woud hurken de slapers
en zilveren netten bedelven de herfstzee

zo'n zacht spel is de regen
dat vruchten van verlangen vallen
en handen gaan open een kruis
is gekust en een mes en de dorst
met de donkerste vlammen gelest

VISSE VAN MA YUAN

onder wolken vogels varen
onder golven vliegen vissen
maar daartussen rust de visser

golven worden hoge wolken
wolken worden hoge golven
maar intussens rust de visser
Lucebert

tr. Larry Ten HarmseL

HARVEST

night, the summer dies in the night
feathers shrivel in convulsion
strangle hills and clouds
lips in the villages whisper and clank

golden eyes have never gone that far
sleepers crouch in glittering woods
and silver nets bury the autumn sea

the soft games of rain
bring fruits of longing down
hands open the cross
a knife is kissed
and thirst drinks autumn flames

MA YUAN’S ANGLER

birds sail beneath the clouds
fish fly beneath the waves
the angler rests between

waves are towering clouds
clouds are towering waves
but still the angler rests
Lucebert

DUBBELE METAMORFOSE

doordat de vlam van de wereld vergaat
tot dor hout wolken vol wormen geronnen bloed
doordat het water van de wereld verdamp

tot altoos slapende spiegels tot netten vol afval
word ik een vogel ontstegen aan de dorst der sterren

doordat een hand de hand van de liefde begroef
in een aarde vol aangezichtspijn en bijtende tranen

doordat een oog de ogen van de liefde doodde
met een schaduw schuw en listig achter blinkende deuren

word ik een ster ontstegen aan de dorst der vogels

AAN ....

lezers buigen hun zwanehals
over je gevleugelde woorden
hun ledematen gespannen als
moordenaars onder het moorden

steeds hun gesloten echoput
versteent de stem bij dekretens
bloed en zenuw worden abrupt
gestileerde zuchten en kreten

en jij vervalt vlug als terloops
getoond door de knagende elementen
eens uit de droge bedding leest men troost
en kei en kiezel slikt men als kreten

MOEITE

een rode wind verlaat de stervende zon
maakt heel heet de avond

hoog op zijn hemelblank terras
gaat de grootste zoon des hemels zelfs
achter zijn waaier bezweet

als achter een ploeg

22
Lucebert

DOUBLE METAMORPHOSIS

because the world’s flame expires
into barren clouds of worm-clotted blood
because the world’s water steams
into lethean mirrors into garbage-loaded nets
I become a bird rising above the thirst of the stars

because a hand the hand of the beloved buried
in the earth of wretched sighs and biting tears
because an eye the eye of the beloved killed
with a shadow shy and cunning behind burnished doors
I become a star rising above the thirst of the birds

TO . . . .

readers arch their swan-like necks
over your winged words
their limbs tense like
killers in killing

their echo chamber constantly
encloses voice in stone
blood and nerves abruptly turn
to sanguine sighs and screams

tuned by grinding elements
balanced, you descend
yet in dry bedding we discern comfort
we swallow rocks and gravel like currants

EFFORT

the dying sun leaves a red wind
makes the evening hot

high on his heavenwhite terrace
the greatest son of heaven himself
sweats behind his fan
as behind a plow
Quincy Troupe

BIRDS FLY WITHOUT MOTION TO THE SUMMIT

when the air freezes into heat
birds fly without motion to the summit

where the flag of despair is planted
death rushes headlong into the blood
and time rolls like a tide backwards
the hours run slipping on banana peels
and the skeletons rattle the night seeking flesh
where the dead masquerade as the living

the eyes seek the heights of the sightless

where birds fly without motion to the summit
the air dressed like a clown freezes into night

DISTANCE

distance and the sky
eye walk upright on my ceiling
walk underground on green clouds
formed from blood and death & your footprints go sinking
through the laughter
of your tears

we must go beyond where we were
when our voices failed us
and our songs fell heavy
through the silence of years
Quincy Troupe

AFTER THE HOLOCAUST

we sat on the edge;
a bituminous razor-bladed thought
stretched like madness beneath us
a buzzard licked its beak perched
on top of a portable gas chamber;
below, millions of yellow
slick bones stared questions
from the blood covered courtyard;
a clown danced on the point
of a poison needle in the square
the soldiers armed with laser beams
and atomic ray guns
discussed overkill as a form
of new scientific philosophy
raped women at deathpoint
sewed human eyes
into the snakes
that was their hair;
and suddenly from the gate
a loud shrill trumpet blares;
it is the new king who was invented
in a test tube and marketed
as a necessary household item
to cure the life
that flows from people's lungs;
his face is powdered white
and his lips are painted red;
he smiles and waves the head
of an Indian; his subjects scream
and ask for the head of a poet;
a mockingbird is shot
off of the note of a flute
falls and is quickly beheaded;
the buzzard swoops down
eats up the rest of the poet’s body;
we shake our heads to see
if they are still attached to our bodies
and go on writing poetry
as we sit on the edge of the dead

Quincy Troupe

SNAPSHOT

Day. Noise
the city invades
the dreams of sleep nectar;
you walk out into the interval
between birth and death,
wearing time’s suffocation,
history’s mind of duplication;
famine war madness greed
all, are woven into your needs
into the weave of your fabric

you walk out
into the sinking interval
bloodsoaked and dying;
you are tasteless
raceless faceless
you are void

still, you walk out
into God’s world
of confusion and smile
smile for the camera
of history
THE DAY'S ROULETTE

To know my place . . .

That last
impossibility.

What is my place
if where I am is where
I'm not?

Forget cartography.
I dream myself through walls,
walk Mars at will, shoot
azimuths that arrow down
the stars.

My only maps
are poems written as I
go.

Ferret the heart
of thieves, and there I hide.
Along the flying carpet
of a jet, I pass my face,
my face, my face repeated
down an aisle.

Before
the blinkless peering of the blind,
I have no eyes.

A town
of starving, black Pinochios
so limply shrinking into death
can shrivel me to tears.
Without my choice, I'm cast
from role to role and back
to me.

No acts, no scenes,
no curtain.
Playing the day's roulette as cad, king, clown, cock-o'-the-walk, I am a compass dropped, the needle dancing north, east, south, west, then steadying, steadying.
Greg Kuzma

CANOEING

1

These are dreams
of moved water

the push of summer
on my forehead

where the bleak bone
becomes brain

there the traces
we leave

what harmony
I can muster

the thin boat
in the scheme

of trees and water
water water

above us the sun
cruises

reflecting our
journey

in me my own water
tightens into strength
runs from my head
onto my hands
as I move on the lake
move myself

2

beyond these dreams
of moving
dreams of campsites
beyond these dreams
dreams of sleep
dreams of waking
dreams of the deer
all night
near us
as if we were his
then breaking storms
on the patterns of sky
saying to us
we must live in the weather
and through it
and so I flex myself

3

On the water again
I think of what is behind
the warm spot on the sand
from which my foot pushed
off into a circle of blue
where I move

my heart stolen out
of its regular longing

my muscles canary in flight
my body begun to re-enter

the loam of the air
in which I will thrive

like one of the fixed things
I pass but don’t notice

right now I am going
through waking

soon I will travel
quicker than deer

by white water
down river to pools

around which the others
are waiting

this is my dream and my
burden, dream of speed

and the sinking of distance
but this is my life

slipping through me
like rain through the forest
A SCHOLAR'S EPITAPh

They hallowed out a text
And laid the volume of his waste
Into a special cut-out space,
Snuggled in his works—

And chiseled “Variorum”
On a spine-shaped slab;
Bound in black used ribbon,
He’s out of print, and mind.

STOP-MOTION

It’s a hard job, this
reinterpretation.
This always looking for
a posture that will
stand up and stay still.
Among the shuttling images
of myself, I can’t get one
that accommodates to me,
like stopping a frame in those
nickel books that flip a movement
in the corner, and say “That’s it!”
The old trick of seeking in tableau,
yourself without a twitch.
Willis Barnstone

LEAP FROM THE GARGOYLE

We come naked publicly only once, on that first day, a black day under lights we never know,

and on that final evening I go clothed, again before a group of eyes. And other days? All are

a ceremony of the sleep of life, a massive sleep, unless tossing awake in dirty sheets

I black out, spinning down, or else creep to the steeple—edge of madness, and leap from the gargoyle

down to a floating nightmare, and lie quartered in the air far away from me, a key dangling in space!

Then in the glove of darkness, dark globe, I may wake up a while as someone else, and if the blow

of waking doesn’t slip me into full extinction, I may smell the night of the ecstatic sun,

in a pause of falling and floating up, like that first day, naked, under lights I never know.
Willis Barnstone

ALL WINTER

Hope was hanging like the spring wash
all winter
in the field of the five orange trees
where the old man stored his logs.

How it refreshed me,
I ate the honey of its flame.

This is my country I said out loud
when no one could overhear.
Then you were everywhere,
under the potatoes at dawn
where our steps took us across a white page
or under the crows that talked.

Everywhere I shaped you

until the small twigs began to snap.
Hope was hanging with the bright wash

and not even the grief of truth
will take away my life.
Between 1930 and the present, three distinct compositional languages matured side by side in Western music, each with its own standards of structure and propriety—grammar and syntax, so to speak; and the work of nearly every major composer marked him as speaking in one or another language. Given the absence of generally accepted names, let me call them mainstream, chaotic, and serial. The most conventional of the languages, mainstream composition, deviates little from the tradition of classical forms, post-Renaissance tonality, and familiar harmonies; and although dissonances both tonal and rhythmical are introduced, these are eventually resolved. “Neoclassicism” was once mainstream music’s term for itself, particularly in extolling the thirties and forties pieces of Igor Stravinsky; but by the 1960s this conservative term has passed out of fashion, while Stravinsky himself has adopted the serial language. In the post-World War II period the major practitioners of mainstream composition were Samuel Barber, Aaron Copland, Gian-Carlo Menotti, David Diamond, and Leonard Bernstein in America, Benjamin Britten and William Walton in England, Dmitri Shostakovich and Aram Khachaturian in Russia, and Paul Hindemith, who abandoned a professorship at Yale to return to his native German-speaking Europe; most of the living composers performed in major concert halls of both America and Europe spoke in this idiom. However, in the history of significant art, mainstream music became inconsequential by the sixties, as nearly all its major proponents failed
to offer new works significantly different from or better than their earlier successes (an exception being Aaron Copland, whose *Connotations for Orchestra* [1962], followed Stravinsky's example in appropriating the serial language): and few of the respected young composers were working in the mainstream mode.

The tradition of "chaotic" music, which is largely American, descends from the radical atonality of Charles Ives and Henry Cowell (in his earliest period) and then Edgard Varèse, who not only abandoned classical structures but also used nonmusical (or unpitched) sound-generations such as sirens and anvils in his *Ionisation* (1930). Varèse spoke of "sound as living matter" and "musical space as open rather than bounded" and referred to himself as "a worker in rhythms, frequencies, and intensities," as well as calling his pieces "organized sound" rather than subscribing to such "musical" criteria as pitch; and his subsequent works define themselves as chaotic by thoroughly repudiating all known modern conventions for ordering tone and structure. Of contemporary composers, the most consistent and influential exponent of atonal and astructural music has been John Cage, whose work progressed from the use of pianos with strings doctored to distort their original qualities (particularly pitches), to chance compositional procedures derived largely from the *I Ching* and designed both to discount habitual ways of structuring and to isolate individual sounds, to scores so approximate that performers would need to choose the exact pitch and duration on their own, to tape collages like *Williams Mix* (1952), which incorporates an intentionally disordered library of noises from the environment. Indicatively, it was back to Ives, in addition to Zen Buddhism, that Cage traced his "faith in the harmonious coexistence of disparate elements."

Historically, it was chaotic composers more than others who insisted upon the aesthetic validity of all sounds, which is to say that all available noises (including, especially, electronic ones) could be viably incorporated into musical purposes; and by now nearly every advanced composer offers previously unheard sounds, which are achieved as often by new forms and combinations of instruments as by unusual ways of playing old instruments. "In fact," writes the critic David Hamilton, "almost every mechanical noise previously regarded as objectionable has now found employment in a musical work," and certain recent pieces freely combine live sounds with electronic notes. No significant composer, however, is interested in new sounds alone, for such aural materials are customarily incorporated into larger structural ideas.

John Cage's most resonant musical gesture was *4' 33"* (1952), a
classic example of Inferential Art, in which the eminent pianist David Tudor sat at the keyboard but made no musical sounds, implying (in this meaningful context) that the “music” consisted of all the accidental noises heard in the auditorium during the piece’s duration (four minutes and thirty-three seconds). Since accidental noises by definition cannot be planned, the piece represented at once an apparent dead end to the chaotic tradition and yet aesthetic license for a thoroughly indeterminate music in which absolutely everything (including sounds not prescribed, or simply nothing) is available to the art. Rather than accept the first implication and forsake his chosen career, Cage embarked on a series of works designed to represent in musical art the aural chaos of life, where the miscellaneous sounds have no particular relationship to each other. Nonetheless, as chaotic as Cage’s atonal and astructural pieces are, they still differ from life itself, which merely provides the model, so to speak, for his art; for whereas cacophony on the street could be characterized as disordered disorder, Cage’s best recent pieces achieve the perceptibly different quality of highly ordered disorder. All through the fifties, Cage’s material became more spectacular and his means more abundant; so that by the sixties he was using whole choirs of electronic sound-generators—in the premiere performance of *Variations VII* (1966) there were telephones, food blenders, radios, fans, and other machines—to achieve the artful chaos his aesthetics demanded. By this time, too, his pieces realized another quality merely implicit in that earlier work—a theatrical spectacle that made Cage one of the most reliably accomplished creators of mixed-means performance. (Incidentally, the common characterization of this music as “chance” is critically inept, because that refers not to the perceptual experience but the procedures Cage sometimes uses to realize compositional choices from a preselected range of possibilities; and although aleatory or chance procedures, if strictly observed, should produce truly atonal and astructural music, not all chaotic sounds necessarily stem from aleatory composition.)

Other composers in this tradition include Alan Hovhaness, Henry Brant, Harry Partch, and three musicians commonly grouped with Cage—Morton Feldman, Christian Wolff, and Earle Brown. Hovhaness, an extremely prolific individualist, favors non-Western instruments (and their unusual timbres and tonalities as well) and risks looser structures, if not more passages of improvised chaos, than the mainstream composers with whom his work is customarily performed; yet even his most occult pieces embody representational figures and dramatic motifs. Certain Brant works distribute sound sources all over
an audible space, so that groups perform the same or different materials autonomously and, thus, somewhat nonsynchronously—the sound in *Millennium II* (1953), for instance, ideally coming from twenty-two spatially separate groups. Harry Partch, an eccentric Westerner born at the turn of the century, became a self-taught musician who repudiated his earliest endeavors and then, in the thirties, developed the forty-four-tone scale. Patiently building new instruments, mostly percussive, on which to play his microtones, he christened his inventions with such appropriately outlandish names as ZymoXyl, chromolodeon, kithara, cloud-chamber bowls, etc., as well as eventually training musicians to play them. The microtonal scales produced interesting relationships and his instruments fresh timbres; yet the forms of Partch’s music seem ridiculously archaic and his rhythms are too regular, while his arrangements are perhaps too reminiscent of Indonesian gamelan bands. In short, the innovation in one dimension of tonality does not induce comparable revolutions in others.

Cage’s oldest compatriots are more integrally radical than Partch, and yet different from each other. Only Earle Brown is as scrupulously committed to indeterminacy in both conception and execution; but none equal Cage’s willingness to incorporate anything that sounds, if not to generate (and accept) pure chaos. The scores Earle Brown included in *Folio* (1952-53), written prior to his first meeting with Cage, pioneered aleatory ensemble activity; and his more recent works, such as *Available Forms I* (1961) and *Available Forms II* (1962), respectively for chamber ensemble and full orchestra, continue this style, containing pages of fixed but eccentric notation, or “available forms,” which may be sounded in any order, repeated, combined, or played in varying tempi, all to the spontaneous choices of the performers. “Performers make their decisions by reacting, within a specified technique, to each other as well as to the flexible character of the music at hand,” writes the composer-critic Eric Salzman. “When everything is working well, there is a sense of lively, organized spontaneity, a kind of controlled incoherence of great vitality, and, from time to time, a real impression of ‘discovered’ form arising from the interaction of an effectively conceived musical action and gesture.” Feldman’s characteristic scores, in contrast, are graphic notations of fixed pagination that merely approximate dimensions and relationships of pitches, registers, and attacks, all of which the individual performer may again interpret to his taste. In practice, as in the percussionist Max Neuhaus’ rendition of *The King of Denmark* (1961), the sounds of Feldman’s music are soft and isolated. This aural pointillism, indebted in part to Feldman’s
interest in contemporary painting, superficially sounds like Webern’s music; but the compositional choices owe more to personal intuition and thus a sense of taste (a key word in Feldman’s vocabulary) than either serial systems or strictly Cagean indeterminate procedures. To Feldman, “sound itself can be a totally plastic phenomenon, suggesting its own shape, design, and poetic metaphor.” Finally, European composers over forty who acknowledge Cage’s influence customarily allow atonal and astructural passages within their more definite structures; but the assimilation of radicalism remains inevitably less than complete.

Cage’s most important musical piece of recent years, done in collaboration with the composer Lejaren Hiller, is HPSCHD, or “Harpsichord” reduced to the six-character limit necessary for computer programming, and its chaos emerges from fifty-eight distinct channels of sound. Fifty-one contain tapes made beforehand of computer-synthesized music, composed in successive scales divided equally at every integer between five and fifty-six tones to the octave (except the conventional twelve). On top of this chaos of microtones Cage puts seven harpsichord soloists, some of whom play scored transcriptions of Mozart’s putative composition with interchangeable parts, A Musical Dice Game, several fixed versions of which were realized in a computer-assisted process. Two more keyboard performers play a previously prepared collage-text of harpsichord music from Mozart to the present, while one harpsichordist is granted permission to play any Mozart music he wishes. The sheer number of autonomous sound sources insures that HPSCHD is, in short, a gloriously astructural and atonal chaos with references to harpsichords and Mozart because, so Cage explained, “Bach is committed to unity, Mozart to diversity”; and even though certain components of the score are fixed, the overall scheme for ordered disorder insures, as always in Cage’s works, that no two realizations will be alike in anything more than means and general effect.

The serial language descends from Arnold Schoenberg’s radically original method for structuring pitches; for while he admitted the entire chromatic range (of twelve tones to an octave) established by atonal music, he subjected them to a rigorous ordering process considerably different from procedures. Essentially, the composer sets those twelve tones into a fixed order, where no tones are repeated, and this ordering becomes the “set” (also called the “row” or “series”) defining the entire piece. In practice, this is a structure not of specific notes but of intervals, and this set can then be used in its original forms, in a reversed form, in an inverted form, and in an inverted-reversed form.
The notes can be bunched together into chords, or strung out individually; and the entire row of intervalic relations can also be transposed up and down to the composer's taste. (Significantly, as Roger Sessions writes, "the current trend is to refer to such vertical conglomerates as 'densities' rather than 'chords' or 'harmonies.' " ) In short, the original set of intervals is permuted into various forms in the course of the piece, and this makes truly serial music more permutational in structure than classic music, with its harmonic combinations.

Schoenberg, Alban Berg, and Anton Webern were the original masters of the serial language; but just after World War II several much younger American and European composers assumed artistic leadership—Milton Babbitt in America, the German Karlheinz Stockhausen, the Belgian Henri Pousseur, Alberto Ginastera in Argentina, the Frenchman Pierre Boulez, the Englishman Humphrey Searle, the Italian Luciano Berio, among others. Most of these composers not only appropriated the serial language but, in a radical innovation, also extended its new organizing principles to other dimensions of musical experience, such as duration, timbre, and dynamics; so that every note produced changes in several serialized sets. At first this supremely polyphonic procedure was christened "total serialization," which was inappropriate since considerably less than the totality of musical expression was subject to serial ordering. True, Stockhausen at one point claimed to serialize such dimensions as the density of sounds in space, the degree of the composer's control over the performed material; but since his selection procedure disintegrated into a musically arbitrary numerology, while his works eventually failed their pretenses, Stockhausen subsequently pursued other enthusiasms.

Babbitt was historically the first composer to extend, systematically, serial organization to dimensions other than pitch, including register, timbre, dynamics (or phrase rhythm), and durational rhythm; and he subsequently named this procedure "combinatoriality." Not only has he adhered to this linguistic position for over two decades, but he eventually formulated appropriately revolutionary aesthetic criteria which measure quality and interest by the "multiple function of every musical event"—each note's simultaneous relation to several sets of developing serial structures; and his earlier endeavors at multiple serialization—Three Compositions for Piano (1947) and Compositions for Twelve Instruments (1948)—evoked a more Schoenbergian (hyperactive) field than the Webernian pointillism (spare sounds with pauses between) of Stockhausen and Pierre Boulez. Babbitt's opening innovative pieces suffered such a chilly reception that he all but retired from
composing during the fifties, instead devoting his abundant energies to teaching an even younger generation of composers and musicologists at Princeton; and this activity eventually contributed to several revolutions in America’s modern-music society—composers teaching not in the musical conservatories but in the liberal arts universities, the development of a criticism based upon empirical statements and verifiable perceptions, the founding of *Perspectives of New Music* in 1962, the influence of such Princeton-trained younger critics as Benjamin Boretz, David Hamilton, and Eric Salzman, and the practical principle of the avant-garde composer creating not for the larger artistic public but for the very few, consisting mostly of his professional peers.

Babbitt did not return to extensive composing until the late fifties with his Composition for Tenor and Six Instruments (1959), which he considers his most difficult piece—it has been performed less than five times and, as yet, never recorded. Dominated by a tenor part that requires sustaining vowelsounds for awesomely long durations, the piece is supremely intricate in texture; and although the untrained ear can hardly identify all the permutational orderings (and even the professional’s comprehension is often less than complete), the attentive listener can nonetheless perceive as well as appreciate the relational intricacy, multiple density, and scrupulous avoidance of repetition. Since Babbitt’s scores were too difficult or unfamiliar for most performers, if they dared to attempt them at all, Babbitt turned increasingly to the RCA Mark II Synthesizer, a singular instrument built in the middle fifties with the composer as a consultant and subsequently housed in the Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center in New York City. This machine enables him to specify precisely up to five dimensions of a single note (pitch, register, duration, timbre, dynamics), affix the production to tape, immediately test the resulting sound against his intention (and respecify the components if necessary), and pile notes on top of each other on up to four different tracks of tape. When finished he could rest assured that all his intended designs would be accurately realized in the final performance, which is to say the duplicate tape that Babbitt releases to concert producers. His two major pieces wholly for electronic means are clearly among the best of their kind, *Composition for Synthesizer* (1961) and *Ensembles for Synthesizer* (1963); and he also wrote two scores where a prepared synthesizer tape accompanies a live soprano, *Vision and Prayer* (1961) and the especially brilliant *Philomel* (1963). Despite the obvious advantages that the machine offers his compositional ideas, Babbitt continues to create incomparably intricate and inevitably difficult pieces for live performers, including *Sextets*
for Violin and Piano (1966), Relata I (1966) and Relata II (1968), both for orchestral ensembles. All this achievement and influence made him the father figure to a new generation of professor-composers (most of them now approaching forty), most of them working out of the serial tradition, the best of whom—Henry Weinberg, Donald Martino, Peter Westergaard, James K. Randall, and Benjamin Boretz—were once Babbitt’s own students.

Jazz has continued to change, rather independently of other kinds of music, despite vain efforts by composer-performers such as Gunther Schuller, William O. Smith, and John Lewis to develop a “third stream” between jazz and modernist. The most interesting individual jazz performers of this post-Charlie Parker period, the saxophonists Ornette Coleman and Albert Ayler and the pianist Cecil Taylor, have been defining a music of chaotic atonality and harshly wailing lyricism; and although this new style is stunningly original and dramatic in live performance, it seems limited in both its expressiveness and its capacity to earn an audience—two symptoms of a cul-de-sac. The tradition of imaginative improvisation has been enriched by Sandy Bull, whose intricate, varying, and unclassifiable pieces are indebted to skillful use of recorded over-dubbing of Bull himself on several stringed instruments.

The rock music of the sixties is decidedly different from the pop songs of the fifties—less sentimental and more dissonant, less slick in its lyrics and harmonies, considerably louder in volume and longer in duration, and less subservient to the sonata form—all these things still distinguishing rock from the current performing of, say, Frank Sinatra. Though this new species of pop music is more interesting and more contemporary than its predecessor, it nonetheless represents a kind of journalism. That is to say, its supposed lifelikeness notwithstanding, by contemporary standards the musical ideas of rock are too elementary, the structures too repetitious, the pieces too short, the means too obvious; its progress belongs less to the history of musical art than to popular fashion. There is not one musical idea born in rock that has influenced, or probably could influence, other contemporary composition, partly because the rock musicians have always derived ideas from Varèse and Cage, rather than vice versa. Nonetheless, just as some journalism is better than the normal run, so certain rock groups are musically superior to others, largely because they acknowledge some of the creative adventure of more serious modern music—the Beatles in their Sergeant Pepper album, the Mothers of Invention, Silver Apples, and a short-lived combine called The United States of America. Moreover, in live performance, against a background of light shows, rock
groups inspire some of the most exciting mixed-means theater of recent years.

Whereas both the aleatory and the combinatorial persuasions of American music were clearly defined by the late sixties, each to achieve more elaborate realization largely with the help of electronic machinery, a more amorphous position, not quite either serial or mainstream but lying between, has since become more definite and consequential. The primary figure here is Elliott Carter, who began as a rather unremarkable mainstream composer; and not until the middle forties, in his own late thirties, did Carter’s work take the leaps that distinguished him from his contemporaries. The *Piano Sonata* (1945) is not only intricate in texture (and difficult to perform as well) but it also thoroughly explores the instrument’s capability for producing overtones. His *First String Quartet* (1951), presents an innovative technique subsequently christened “metrical modulation,” where the basic rhythmic pulse is continually changing; so that the articulation of duration is as important as the ordering of pitches, and this constant redefinition of musical time (as distinct from real time) becomes the primary interest, if not the “subject” of the piece.

This is caused [writes Carter] by an overlapping of speeds. Say, one part in triplets will enter against another part in quintuplets, and the quintuplets will fade into the background and the triplets will establish a new speed that will become the springboard for another such operation. The structure of such speeds is correlated throughout the work and gives the impression of varying rates of flux and changes of material and character, quantities I seek in my recent works.

This technique also defines Carter’s *Second String Quartet* (1959), where the four instruments play less in unison than separately, all seated further apart than usual, each articulating its own personality in conversation with the others; and the piece deals in instrumental contrasts and contests in real space. His *Double Concerto* (1961) divides the musicians into two ensembles, each performing an intricate text; and the *Piano Concerto* (1966) completes the canon of Carter’s extant masterpieces. Though not at all a serial composer, Carter nonetheless acknowledges in his work the aesthetic values generally associated with the serial tradition—precise pitch, intricate relationships, textural density, associational structure, detailed notations of complex manipulations, accurate rendition of scored materials, elimination of repetition, and instrumental virtuosity that challenges the performer’s optimal competence; and these qualities probably explain why
his works, though not serial in structure, should sound so much like serial pieces.

Much of this semi-serial music in America comes from composers who, unlike Carter, are also the most adept performers of difficult contemporary scores—the conductor and French-hornist Gunther Schuller, the conductor Ralph Shapey, the pianist Easley Blackwood, the pianist and conductor Charles Wuorinen, and the flutist Harvey Sollberger, among others. Shapey's *Evocations* (1959) deals in blocks of sustained sounds that are intricately formed and dramatically rearticulated—a style indebted to the best works of Stefan Wolpe (perhaps the most neglected and unrecorded older composer); and Schuller's compositions, though invariably too thin for their length, are remarkably sensitive to the particular capabilities of individual instruments. Wuorinen, the most prolific younger composer, at his best creates rapid disjunctions in timbre and amplitude that are controlled by some serial structuring in pitch and, less often, in rhythm. His most recent pieces were written largely for members of the Group for Contemporary Music at Columbia University, which he co-founded and co-directs; for they intend to exploit the virtuosities of its regular performers—the percussionist Raymond DesRoches in *Janissary Music* (1966), the oboist Josef Marx in *Chamber Concerto for Oboe and Ten Players* (1965), and his co-director the flutist Harvey Sollberger in *Chamber Concerto for Flute and Ten Players* (1964). Indeed, most composers working in this way avoid electronic machinery (Wuorinen excepted), instead exploiting a new generation of unprecedentedly skilled performers of new music—the sopranos Bethany Beardslee and Cathy Berberian, the pianists Robert Miller and Alois Kontarsky, the violinist Paul Zukofsky, the trombonist Vinko Globokar; and both as individuals and in a variety of live ensembles, as well as electronic sound-generators, his pieces exhibit little sensitivity to the character and capabilities of particular instruments, creating the impression that he imposes his style upon recalcitrant materials, rather than, as the best composers do, building upon their innate qualities.

The chaotic tradition implies artistic permission to make musical collages, which is to say works pulling together in a less than integral manner an unlikely diversity of aural materials. What was called "*musique concert*" in the early fifties did precisely this, as tape composers spliced together sounds made not on electronic sound-generators but recorded in the environment; perhaps the best American sample of this technique is Cage's *Williams Mix*. The idea of collage is so fertile in possibilities that it attracted composers around the world; but
if Europeans like Dieter Schnebel and Giuseppe Giorgio Englert customarily weave motifs from the classics into indubitably contemporary structures, American composers creating musical collages—Stanley Silverman, Terry Riley, William Russo, Lejaren Hiller, Michael Sahl, Eric Salzman—characteristically incorporate passages of popular music. Probably the most intelligent of these stylistic pastiches is Salzman's *The Nude Paper Sermon* (1969), which successfully eschews obvious juxtapositions (the primary fault of simplistic collages) to mix a huge variety of both historical styles (including faked Renaissance compositions) and musical articulations, as well as a spoken narration (which provides, or parodies, a bass continuo) and electronic sounds, all around the unifying theme of “the end of the Renaissance—the end of an era and the beginning of another.” Although sometimes performed “live,” as a kind of “opera,” *The Nude Paper Sermon* was originally written for stereophonic tape to exploit technologies peculiar to recording, as well as revealing a compositional sensibility shaped by the sheer abundance and eclectic repertoire of available recordings; perhaps its only peer in this style is Karlheinz Stockhausen’s overloaded (and humorless) anthology of fragmented, distorted, and overlapping national anthems, *Hymnen* (1968)—a “global” piece designed to emerge from eight surrounding speakers.

Perhaps the most spectacular collage—so spectacle-ridden it continually courts aesthetic vulgarity—is Krzysztof Penderecki’s *The Passion According to St. Luke* (1965), which mixes fragments of all sorts, in ways less inventive than derivative, if not simplistic—in sum making the piece highly congenial to that lay audience which does not like much modern music, an updated *Carmina Burana*, so to speak. The *Passion* seems pretentiously impure in comparison to Penderecki’s earlier *String Quartet* (1960), where old instruments are effectively resonated in new ways; and his successfully moving *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima* (1960), where fifty-two strings realize smoothly modulated frequency bands, mostly at their highest possible pitches, creating a highly controlled atonality. (Incidentally, this technique of frequency bands, which comes from sounding the spectrum of available frequencies between fixed notes, dominates Gyorgi Ligeti’s stunning *Atmospheres* [1961] and *Lux Aeterna* [1966], both of which realize his professed ideal of “a static self-contained music, without either development or traditional rhythmic configurations,” in addition to providing background music to Stanley Kubrick’s film 2001.)

Stockhausen, in many ways the most imposing of the major European composers, has radically changed his style in recent years, part-
ly to acknowledge chaos and collage; and he continues to compose prolifically, in contrast to Pierre Boulez, likewise a dominant figure in the fifties, who decided in the sixties to devote most of his energies to conducting. Stockhausen first became known in the early fifties, before turning twenty-five, for trying to serialize practically every dimension of sound—particularly in Kontra-Punkte (1951); and he later produced one of the first genuine masterpieces of tape composition, Gesang der Jünglinge (1956). His next exploratory interest lay in the spatial effects of live music, exemplified in Gruppen (1957) for three separate orchestras and Carre (1959) for over one hundred musicians divided into four orchestras and four choirs, each section with its own sub-conductor. Recognizing that such a diffusion of sound-sources and performing responsibilities would inevitably randomize his systematically serial scores, Stockhausen soon became more thoroughly involved in aleatory procedures. Zyklus (1959) is a graphed plan for a single percussionist to realize as he wishes; and his later work, Solo für Melodie-Instrument mit Rückkopplung (1966), allows the solo trombonist (usually Vinko Globokar) to react spontaneously to played-back sounds recorded only a few moments before. In a more complex conception of random unpitched sounds, like Mikrophonie I (1964), the score consists of passages from earlier compositions, and Stockhausen programs the following activities:

With various materials, two players excite the tamtam; two other players pick up the vibrations with directional microphones. Distance between the microphone and tamtam (which influences the dynamics and timbre), relative distance between the microphone and the point of excitation on the tamtam (influencing pitch, timbre, and above all determining the spatial impression of the sound, ranging between distant, echoing, and extremely close), and rhythm of microphone movement are prescribed in an appropriate notation. Each of two more players activates an electronic filter and potentiometer (which controls volume). They again shape the timbre and pitch (through a combination of filter adjustment and volume control) and the rhythm of the structures.

In the sequel, entitled Mikrophonie II (1965), the original sounds come from a chorus of twelve singers, who declaim into microphones, complemented by a Hammond (or entirely electronic) organ and four ring modulators. However, a conductor controls what sounds in the available mixture, and in what measure, will emerge from the audi-
torium's speaker system. For example, *Momente*, composed in the early sixties but definitively revised in 1965, employs a variety of live sounds, both pitched and non-pitched, generated by a spatially distributed group of instrumentalists and performers instructed to sing and speak, clap their hands and stamp their feet, click their tongues and fingers, slap their knees and shuffle about. The result as could be expected is an atonal and astructural theatrical collage of miscellaneous sounds.

The more interesting composers in the chaotic tradition are mostly a generation younger than Cage's first set of epigones, Feldman and Brown, who accepted the availability of all noises and structures but scarcely realized the implicit licence afforded by this position; in contrast, these younger chaotic musicians have extended the Cagean bias into radically unprecedented ways of generating and organizing sound. Within a decade, La Monte Young moved from experience in jazz improvisation through serial composition to the antithesis of extravagant Cagean gestures, including pieces where he drew a line back and forth across a floor for several hours, beat a pan a thousand times, and released a jar of butterflies into an auditorium; but his masterwork, which both synthesized the antitheses and developed tendencies implicit in his earlier music, is *The Tortoise, His Dreams and Journeys*, first performed in 1964 and, officially, still "in progress." Here Young and several other musicians (or, more recently, a number of sound-generators) project a constant harmonic chord amplified to an extremely loud volume, so that its overtone becomes more clearly audible, particularly when the chord's strictly specified components are recombined or individual voices change their timbre. Although this summary makes *The Tortoise* seem musically negligible, the work is genuinely interesting, not just as an unusual aural experience that hones the ear to perceive change in superficial constancy; but especially in a darkened room filled with incense and Marian Zazeela's contemplative slides *The Tortoise* is the base of a supremely effective environment.

Another exploration in the chaotic tradition is the time-lag pieces of Terry Riley, who feeds a live instrumental phrase, played on either an organ or a soprano saxophone, into one tape recorder with immediate playback, and the tape travels into a second recorder that echoes the original sound several seconds later. This echo is continually (and electronically) recycled back into the moving tape until the riff progressively dies away. In creating *Poppy Nogood's Phantom Band* (1966),
Riley pours more intuitively improvised riffs into his recycling system, which becomes filled with aggregates of sounds similar in timbre—compellingly repetitious on the surface but in fact continually rearticulating the pitch, pulse, phrasing, amplitude, and decay of the mixture. (Tape delay as a musical device is hardly Riley’s invention, instead dating back at least to Otto Leuning and Vladimir Ussachevsky’s wholly electronic experiments of the middle fifties; and the exceptionally proficient clarinetist William O. Smith has reportedly used a related system in his own performances.) Riley’s works for live performers similarly exploit rather simple means for complex ends and express parallel structural ideas, as the eleven performers in the recorded version of In C (1964), for instance, play through fifty-three discrete measures (or “figures,” as the composer calls them), each at his own speed; and each performer is encouraged to sensitively interact on his own impulse with the ensemble. “A good performance,” writes David Behrman, himself a composer of aleatory scores, “reveals a teeming world of groups and subgroups forming, dissolving, and re-forming within a modal panorama.” The chaotic tradition also seems the primary exemplar behind such varied activities as the sophisticated indeterminacy of Roger Reynolds and Toshi Ichiyanagi; Max Neuhaus’s American Can (1966), where cans are distributed to an audience that is then instructed to bounce or slide them along the ground; the Ivesian theatricality of both Henry Brant and George Crumb, the otherwise unclassifiable improvisations of Larry Austin and the extravagant collages of Michael Sahl, in addition to three works by Salvatore Martirano: his remarkable O O O That Shakespearean Rag (1958) and two spectacularly theatrical pieces, Underworld (1965) and L’s GA (1967), all of which, curiously, used twelve-tone rows for their musical material.

Although the major avant-garde styles in contemporary music are diverse, not to say opposed, on the crucial issues of chance, coherence, and control, nearly all persuasions and practitioners hold certain attitudes in common. One is that structure itself is a major theme of a work as a piece’s singular means establish its particular subject or identity. If Cage’s works are primarily about aleatory processes evident both in the creation and in the perception of discontinuous, onpitched sounds, Babbitt’s are primarily about the permutational ordering of precisely programmed pitched materials, and even Carter’s define their theme as the continual rearticulation of musical time; and appreciating the multiple intricacy of Babbitt’s structure need not prevent anyone from admiring the artfulness of Cage’s chaos. What the listener hears
in both cases is a particular texture—swift, abundant, and extravagantly disordered in Cage; sustained and minutely varying in Young; complex and unresolving in Carter; and so forth. At any rate, music for this age of minimal personal expressionism is created less from feeling or psychological history than from prior aesthetic premises; and though these may change in the course of a composer’s career, his objective attitude toward his work generally remains constant. Second, the existence of new instruments, mostly electronic, and new artistic freedoms instill a concern with appropriateness of medium and music; so that the composer need not try in live performance what can best be realized on machines (i.e., outrageously complex scores), and vice versa, (i.e., improvisation or theater). Third, in nearly all persuasions, the notation of music has changed drastically, so that a working score by Milton Babbitt, say, contains not bars or clefs but just numbers specifying the degree of each musical dimension, or John Cage’s recent scores have nothing more than prose instructions for creating an atonal and astructural field, or La Monte Young’s specify frequency ratios, or Terry Riley’s *In C* contains just one page of separated but numbered measures in standard musical notation, or Silvano Busotti provides transparent sheets of notes and lines to change radically the underlying pre-printed, and so forth; as John Cage’s anthology of *Notations* (1968) demonstrates, today’s avant-garde music *looks* as well as sounds different. Furthermore, at both extremes of new music—in, say, both Babbitt and Cage—is a commitment to quantity as a measure of quality; for as one school would literally count the number of discrete musical events within a certain piece, the other regards abundance of autonomous sources as the best means for generating that chaotic quality. At this point it should also be mentioned that many recent pieces of reputation are not available on record or in published scores, though thanks to recent technologies both photocopies and tapes can privately circulate; and many indisputably important pieces—even some recent Stravinsky—have gone rarely performed.

In all strains of new music, there is a constant concern with unfamiliar and difficult perception—with comprehending unprecedented aural material in similarly unprecedented ways. As Eric Salzman put it, “The new music is ‘about’ the quality and nature of heightened experience, perception, thought and understanding communicated throughout the range of human capacities.” One reason why music must continue to be new, as well as express itself in so many languages, is to insure that those of us who love sound do not allow our honed perceptual equipment to lie unused in habitual ruts.
Summarized from the infernal models of William Blake by Aethelred Eldridge.
Summarized from the infernal models of William Blake by Aethelred Eldridge.
TIŠINA

Beseda tišina se je naselila v tišini kot kamen.
V rjavi megli niha svet, nemo so se zaprle poti.
Čas vstaja pred mislijo živih kot stena.
Pomlad bo, ko pride, polna kačje sline in vlažnih sledi.

Pozen dež v zraku potemni deželo z mrko težo.
Tiho kot na meč me nabada vse, kar molči.
Zemlja, kjer stojim, se vzdiguje k meni kot ženska.
V mrtvem očesu razredčena svetloba obdaja stvari.

Bežim po mišnici, prah se suklja kot porog.
Nikjer ni zavetja, da me použije kot črn plamen.
Strma negibnost na obzorju zapira svet.
Beseda tišina se je naselila v tišini kot kamen.

JASTREB

Cvileč so potonile podgane, molk se je strdil
nad kržljavim svetom, še drhti mesnata ustnica blata.
Nevidna žeželka napenja v mrtvem zraku
brnečo struno, ob poti tle trave kot ostri kliki.

Posušena svetloba ne trene, stvari so kot odsotne,
z vekami priščipneš njihove dolge pramene.
Mračne kleše se zagrisejo v tvoj mehki spomin,
prizor za prizorom v njem razpada v črne zublje.

Jastreb kot temna lisa ždi med sencami prividov,
gledaš ga, v spri si srš strupeno glavo.
Tvoj obraz je kot zlizana kropa, ki se sveti,
ko odhajaš z doma med drevjem, vtišnjenim v noč.
SILENCE

The word silence has settled into silence like a stone.
The world wavers in the brown fog, quietly the roads have closed.
Time arises in the thoughts of the living like a wall.
Spring will come full of serpent's spittle and traces of moisture.

A late rain colors the landscape with a grey weight.
Everything silent pierces me quietly like a sword.
The earth on which I stand rises toward me like a woman.
Thin light outlines objects in the dead eye.

I run around inside a mousetrap, dust curls like a sneer.
There is no shelter to swallow me like a black blaze.
Steep immobility on the horizon eclipses the world.
The word silence has settled into silence like a stone.

THE VULTURE

The rats drown squealing, silence congealed
above the dwarfish world, still strums the meaty lip of the mud.
In the dead air an invisible insect tightens
a droning string, by the wayside grass glows like sharp cries.

The dry light does not twinkle, things seem absences,
your eyelids pinch their long beams.
Dark tongs puncture your soft memory
where scene after scene disintegrates into a blaze of blackness.

Among the shadows of visions, like a dark streak, the vulture waits,
you watch it, in fixed hate it bristles its poisonous head.
Your face is like a threadbare rag which glistens
as you leave home among the trees imbedded in the night.
Niko Grafenauer

RISBE
V
Večer te zogleni v spomin,
ki ga do živega izliče čas.
Sence se sprijemajo s tvojimi gibi,
kot raze v temni sliki klije mraz.
Pribit si, teža je oblika,
napustljivo vlija v bron.
Nebo je zamrženo z limiti
in meč tiči globoko kot nagon.
Čuti v rojih črnijo stvari,
s katerih ližejo vsak svoj pomen.
Noč je zatisnjena v tvojem očesu,
z mrko negibnostjo si obtezen.
Niko Grafenauer

DRAWINGS

V

The evening chars you into a memory
that time gnaws to the bone.
Shadows cleave to your motions,
like scratches on a dark painting shoots the cold.

You are nailed, the weight is the form
relentlessly poured into brass.
Limits lattice the sky
and the sword lurks deeply like an urge.

In swarms the senses blacken things
from which they lick their meaning.
Night is pressed into your eye,
a gloomy immobility weighs you down.
Attila József

A BÁNAT

A bánat szürke, néma postás,
sovány az arca, szeme kék,
keskeny válláról társa lóg le,
köntöse ócska meg setét.

Mellében olcsó tik-tak lüktet,
az uccán félénken suhan,
odasímmul a házfalakhoz
és eltünik a kapuban.

Aztán kopogtat. Levelet hoz.

PÖTΤYŐS

Imhol özike-lépésekben
kis rügyel szájában a lány,
Buvős fogam koppanva ejti
megszolgált, keseru pipám.

Ifjúi kínokban szenvednek
mind-mind a vénülo füvek.
Emlékeznek: mikor is láttak
szellocske járású szüzet.

Hopsza! fu leszek én ma este,
görnyesztnek bibor harmatok,
ropogós, turo fu, amelyben
új kedved is topoghatod!

De pöttys ruhádban, lobogván,
ahogy látsz, itt hagysz engemet,
s még kell öntöznom hus csöbörrel
a kigyulladó füveket.

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Attila József

tr. from the Hungarian by John Batki

SORROW

Sorrow is a silent grey mailman
with a thin face and blue eyes.
A bag hangs from his narrow shoulders.
His uniform is dark and old.

In his chest a cheap tick-tock
is beating; shyly he glides by you
on the street, close to the wall,
and disappears into a doorway.

Then he knocks. A letter for you.

DAPPLED

There she comes, on fawn's footfalls,
with a small bud in her mouth.
My well-earned, bitter pipe
drops from my magic tooth, with a thud.

All these senile grasses are suffering
the torments of the young.
They recall the last time they saw
a girl with a gait as light as the breeze.

Shazam! I'll turn into grass tonight,
weighed down by scarlet dews,
crisp and patient grass into which
you can stamp your latest moods.

But you, with your dappled dress afloat,
as soon as you see me, you leave me behind,
and I must water with a cool bucket
the grasses bursting into flame.
Attila József

REMÉNYTELENÜL

LASSAN, TŰNŐDVE

Az ember végül homokos szomrú, vizes sikra ér,
szétnéz merengye és okos fejével biccent, nem remél.

Én is így próbálok csalás nélkül szétnézni könnyedén.
Ezüstös fejszesuhanás játszik a nyárfa levelén.

A semmi ágán ül szivem,
kis teste hangtalan vacog,
köréje gyalnuk szeliden s nézik, nézik a csillagok.

VAS-SZINŰ ÉGBOLTBAN . . .

Vas-szinű égboltban forog a lakkos, hűvös dinamó.
Oh, zajtalan csillagzatok!
Szikrát vet fogam közt a szó—

Bennem a mult hull, mint a kő az úrön által hangtalan.
Elleng a néma, kék idő.
Kard éle csillan: a hajam—

Bajszom mint telt heryő terül elillant izű számra szét.
Fáj a szivem, a szó kihűl.
Dehat kinek is szólanék—
Attila József

WITHOUT HOPE

SLOWLY, MEDITATIVELY

In the end you reach a sad and sandy, marshy plain.
You thoughtfully look around, you nod, and stop hoping.

That is how I would like to look around, casually and honestly,
while silvery axe strokes play with the poplar leaves.

My heart is perched on a branch of nothingness, its small body trembles without a sound.
The stars quietly gather to look, and look, from all around.

IN AN IRON-COLORED SKY

Polished, cool dynamos revolve in an iron-colored sky.
O noiseless constellations!
Word-sparks fly from my teeth—

Inside me, the past is falling like a silent stone through space.
This blue and mute time floats away.
A swordblade flashes: it's my hair—

My mustache, fat caterpillar, droops over my mouth, whose taste is gone.
My heart aches. Words grow cold. But who is there to speak to—
Tiberiu Utan

TU COMMENCES . . .

Tu commences à me fuir, jeunesse;
Fini, ton banquet, les verres sont vides,
Des sentiers enneigés dans mes cheveux se glissent.
Les ponts sont coupés vers l’arrière,
Un fleuve nous sépare,
Et tu t’en vas comme fait la fumée
Sur le lieu des grands incendies.

Elle est finie, ta route,
Mais laisse-moi tes yeux . . .

L’ARBRE QUI MARCHE

Où que j’aille et par où je passe,
Je me sépare un peu de moi.

Je suis comme un arbre qui marche
Et dont nul ne voit les racines.
Plus grand devient le silence du monde,
Plus nombreuses les forêts s’arrêtent pour m’entendre.

A d’autres arbres, mes frères, je parle
De la lumière qui me fait pousser.

Je suis comme un arbre qui marche
Et dont nul ne voit les racines.
Tiberiu Utan

tr. Peter Stevens

STARTING

Days of youth, starting your flight away;
Your feast is finished, glasses drained,
Trails of snow find ways across my hair.
In back of me the bridges all are down,
A river is keeping us apart,
And away you drift like smoke
Where great fires burn.

Your journey is done,
But leave me your vision . . .

THE WALKING TREE

Wherever I go, wherever I pass,
I split a little away from myself.

I am like a walking tree
Whose roots remain unseen.
The world drops deeply into silence,
Profusions of forests pause to listen to me.

I tell these other trees, my brothers,
About the light that makes me grow.

I am like a walking tree
Whose roots remain unseen.
LES SECRETS DU VIDE ET DU PLEIN

Il se chauffait la langue au soleil
il mettait son petit doigt en terre jusqu'à le voir fleurir

Chaque fois qu'il avait froid il se frottait les mains
chaque fois qu'il mourait il mettait ses chausses

chaque fois qu'il se peignait il fermait les portes à clef
chaque fois qu'il courait il se regardait dans la glace

Quand il observait l'eau elle formait des ronds
quand il déboutonnait ses bretelles ses jambes tombaient

DIT

Son front était de fer et ses joues de fer
quand je respirais près d'elle elle tintait
comme une cloche de fer elle tintait
je ne sais si elle flottait ou s'éloignait
quand je respirais près d'elle

Parfois je lisais près d'elle
sous l'arbre de fer à la lumière de fer
je lisais près d'elle un livre tout mince
il soufflait un léger vent de fer et les mots s'agitaient

elle écoutait et
comme une cloche de fer elle tintait
Gellu Naum

tr. Peter Stevens

SECRETS OF VACANCY AND FULNESS

He warmed his tongue in the sunshine
he placed his small fist in the ground until he saw it flower

Every time he felt the cold he rubbed his hands
Every time he was dying he pulled his breeches on

Every time he combed his hair he locked the doors tight
Every time he ran he gazed at his reflection in the glass

When he looked at water it rippled into rings
when he undid his braces his legs tumbled down

SAID

She had an iron brow and iron cheeks
when close to her I breathed she rang
like an iron bell she rang
I don’t know if she hovered in the air or faded into distance
when close to her I breathed

Now and then close to her I read
under the iron tree in iron light
a very slender volume close to her I read
it blew the slightest breeze of iron fluttering words

she listened and
like an iron bell she rang
Wir wohnten im Haus der Angst.
Unheilbarer Aussatz, sass sie
an unseren Füssen, eingenistet hockte sie
unter den Achseln, in den Torbögen
lauerte sie nachts und in der toten,
der schlimmsten Stunde des Frühmorgens.

Sie klebte auf unseren Türklinken,
sie kroch unter unsere Dielen, lautlos,
vertrieben sie aus unseren Briefkästen:
sie sprang uns als Regen ins Gesicht.
Nachbarn steckten uns mit ihr an,
den Greisen schloss sie die Augen
und vergiftete die Lust den Liebenden,
unsere Kinder trugen sie auf den Lippen:

ohnmächtig hielten wir Rat
in Stuben, die nicht mehr sicher waren.
Wir richteten nichts gegen sie aus,
sie erwies sich als unausrottbar,
gehörte uns an wie unsere Haut:
wohnten im Haus der Angst.
We lived in the House of Fear.
Incurable disease, it clung
to our feet, nestled
in our armpits; in archways
it lay in wait at night and in the dead
most dangerous hour of dawn.

It stuck to our door-handles,
it crept under our floors, silently,
we banished it from our letter-boxes:
it struck us as rain in our faces.
Neighbours infected us with it,
it closed the eyes of our old
and poisoned desire.
Our children felt it on their lips:

helpless, we gathered
in rooms no longer safe.
There was nothing we could do about it.
It proved indestructible,
it belonged to us like our skin:
we lived in the House of Fear.
Wolfgang Hädeke

HINTER DEM HERZEN

In der Stille
hinter dem Herzen
steigt der Spiegel meines Bluts.

Denn gross in den Adern
klopft die Trauer,
verwelken die Kränze
aus Lorbeer und Schnee.

Aber vielleicht
am Tage nach Wildmond,
 wenn die Weiden
die Flüsse streifen,

fällt in der Stille
hinter dem Herzen
der Spiegel meines Bluts.
Wolfgang Hädeke

BEYOND MY HEART

In the stillness
beyond my heart
the blood’s tide rises.

For heavy in my veins
a sorrow throbs,
the wreaths wither
of laurel and snow.

But a day,
perhaps, after wildmoon,
when the willows
touch the waters,

in the stillness
beyond my heart
the blood’s tide falls.
Evgenij Vinokurov

tr. from the Russian by Vytas Dukas

JAN HUS

He was humble and wise
And he respected sanctity,
And could express himself best of all
In Golden Latin.
None would guess in him
Even with candles in daytime
A titan:
A humble cowl,
And a humble soutane.
He could have lived a hundred years, but once
He, in passion invincible,
Shook his bony arm
On the church yard.
And you could hear miles away,
How instead of clerical rules,
He praised the simplicity of the apostles.
... Into the fire went this wise Czech...

The universe exclaimed:
"What is it that you want my man?!
What is it that you lack!"
Evgenij Vinokurov

PAST MIDNIGHT

Past midnight, simply
Break the pencil, crumble it
And write a forceful
song
That dashes forth!
So that in the morning, before the dawn,
Before the East lights up,
It flies through the universe,
As a loose leaf from a notebook.
So that in the blue countries far away
It collapses in an avalanche,
With all the strength of burst lungs
In a song-leader with rosy cheeks,
Then, when you walk away from the table
To the window in the morning,
The song should come back to you
With the lips of singing streets.
ES EL REINO DEL SOL . . .

Es el reino del sol
de las oscuras llamaradas
de la conflagración del tiempo
y los espasmos mágicos
el reino de la iluminación
en las pupilas de los negros
bañadas por un alcohol
que corre desde el Descubrimiento
de la boca del Navegante
señor don Cristobal Colón
el reino del fruto prohibido
cayendo desde luminarias
da los pies de don Diego Velázquez
digno Colonizador
el reino del crimen furtivo
de la carroña madura
de las aguas de la tormenta
que detuvo Nuestra Señora
y del sacrificio inmaculado
de la albahaca y el anón
es el reino de la fatalidad
de los cerrados sortilegios
el vientre de la fortuna
abriéndose en dos mitades
Julio Matas

tr. Gerald Gillespie

IT IS THE REALM OF THE SUN . . .

It is the realm of the sun
of the dark flame bursts
of the conflagration of time
and the magic spasms
the realm of illumination
in the pupils of the negroes
bathed by a liquor
which runs since the Discovery
from the mouth of the Navigator
Admiral Christopher Columbus
the realm of the forbidden fruit
falling from altar lamps
at the feet of Don Diego Velázquez
worthy Colonizor
the realm of furtive crime
of ripe carrion
of the waters of the storm
which Our Lady held back
and of the immaculate sacrifice
of sweet basil rum papaya
is the realm of fatality
of concealed conjurations
the belly of fortune
opening in two halves
por el apuñalamiento
es la noche de los profanadores
y de la risa de los profanados
en un festín interminable
armado sobre el panteón
de la familia de Bobadilla
son las mandíbulas de los tiburones
en el mar de los castigos
la religión de los blancos
en el templo de sus pecados
los monumentos del odio
las genuflexiones del cuerpo
el hálito del amor
y la danza incandescente
que se trenza a mediodía
por todos los pobladores
de este magno espejismo
es el reino del sol.
by the dagger's thrust
is the night of the profaners
and of the laughter of the profaned
in an interminable feast
celebrated over the pantheon
of the family of Bobadilla
are the jaws of the sharks
in the sea of punishments
the religion of the whites
in the temple of their sins
the monuments of hate
the genuflections of pleasure
the gesturings of the body
the breath of love
and the incandescent dance
which is woven at noon
by all the inhabitants
of this great mirage
is the realm of the sun.
Even after the great, purifying fires of renewal, the world thus begun and our entire new life return one day to the changing of seasons. The most ardent, serene summer always ends by clouding over in the nostalgia for autumn and, after autumn, the funereal desire for winter to fulfill it in the forgetful pacification of days, limpid nights with neither sun nor memory, just as death completes life and exalts it when life submits lovingly, without resistance, without tears.

How can one escape these changes, the sun-drenched vertigo of death, the slow undergrowth of life contaminated by the Wagnerian spell and the shadows of eternal winter?

The answer exists and has always been considered inexplicably criminal: one must surround oneself with emptiness and sand, or else the smooth, quivering flesh of a sacrificed young woman.

Conquer death by the very death of death and, in the void thunder-struck by the inner void of all void, celebrate one’s own death or the death of another. When she hasn’t been killed, and she herself would have madly wanted it in the fatal vertigo of her gift, no lost young woman could survive in the luminous eternity of her own death, of our forgetting, of the wintry obliteration of all things.

Endlessly, corrosion devours purity, and purity devours corrosion. Where, then, can Cabourg be when one knows only New York? At dawn, on a fluid beach of black, red, white and this barely solar gold where everything prolongs a world which no longer is, in my languid
memory of sleep and torrential rays, a mouth pronounces the word which definitively separates the action in full daylight from its boundless past of savage rocks and shadows, Mortefontaine leaves for ever the Yellow House, all the foliage recumbent, an instant, under the wind of dawn. And now, as they say, the day is coming, and with the wind from the west perhaps the snows will come also.

For in your immaculate purity, in the gold which had encompassed you, so thin and light, I also finally forgot you, to the point of your name now having become the name of a stranger.

During the summer of 1836, Gustave Kuhne had visited Hölderlin in his Yellow Tower on the banks of the Neckar. The last part of his account of it is the following: “Suddenly he stopped talking and looked straight ahead with a tranquil gaze. The peace of the battlefields reigned on his face. Everywhere around ruins; all will broken down, burnt to a cinder . . .”

Each time I think of Cabourg, the world becomes obscure for an instant before me, and I hear resounding, in the air, to the right, above my brow, the fateful words of Gustave Kuhne, the Peace of the battlefields. Cabourg, catastrophe of words, certitudes and ages given to us in unequaled offering from the beginning, when life is handed over to us at the same time that earth, water, fire, like us, will be given the bread and wine of hope. But life passes with time, and a day comes when Cabourg is no more than a word which gradually vanishes. Then night, then the great forgetfulness, death, end of tears, of everything. At that moment, sometimes, strikes the transcendental hour of rebirth.

Begin again, having lost everything. To begin again is to cross the black river Lethe, pass through the years, the millenaries, the dense, green waves of the eternal Atlantic, to wake up one day identical and without memory on another shore, on the other side of everything, far from everything because everything is for ever Cabourg. These are then the unimaginable shores of a child-world, a shore as new as the world in the time of my youth seemed to me to be.

And there to start on one’s way again, reach the new land, enter new cities, unknown, to acquire a different certitude, of crystal and steel, of tenderness—smooth, young flesh, infinitely.

In Manhattan, very early in the morning, a window in summer opens on the studio apartment of a young woman alone whom certain informed people, conforming to rites as rigorous as those of the Tibetan Book of the Dead, call by the name of Wilhelmine. The arms of her family represent two types of fish: on one hand, blind fish of basaltic fossae, on the other, nearly transparent fish of alpine rivers—fulgencies
of Sils-Maria. On the lower part of the blazon and on a background of sand, fruits in a carapace, walnuts, chestnuts, almonds, pistachios, as well as oranges, grapefruit and several green tangerines.

Blue and yellow nightgown,
she gets up.

She goes to drink a glass of water, and goes back to bed eyes open. Her breathing is regular. Out the window, she makes out two rectangles, one pale azure, the sky of New York, the other, a window, about fifteen feet away, for her the farthest horizon. She sees the walls covered by books, empty room. But she knows—her happiness—that the occupant, the novelist, will be back at noon. Besides, she never takes an interest in anything other than the things that surround her. The only thing that counts for her is the fullness of her own breath.

Such is the young woman of the rebeginnings of the world, who, stranded on a point in space, reinvents from herself onward earth, air and fire without ever being paralyzed by her beauty. On the contrary, natural in her flesh, peaceful in spite of the city and dressing comfortably, heavy woolens, without make-up, she does not embody the flighty frivolous person, that gregarious instinct ties down to the fashion-objects of the so very affected Needlework with trifles, that adorned, jingling or purulent, they abandon her before she has disappeared before our eyes. Wilhelmine knows then, under the influence of her master, the sovereign Gombrowicz—an ingenuous man shaped by solitude and unselfconsciously insolent—how to not be at all taken in by the anti-conventions, the false singularity, the formalism of a language, of an epoch, of an artistic slag-heap, which gives importance to the clever idiocies of the very refined Roland Barthes and the linguistic hubbub of dazzled, unilingual impudent types.

And so, with her love of life and her thoughts which come from the heart, she easily attains reality. In the so very provincial West, condemned to professorial rules, to a bureaucracy which gives a push to hoarders over martingales, to flatulent criticism like Tartuffe who proclaims himself Tartuffe, she didn’t let herself be enlightened, paying little attention to cultural affairs and nonsense of the kind.

Thanks to Gombrowicz,—blue-eyed, she no longer forgot the evident, that it is sound to have very simple opinions, for example: force people to become what they really are. And, since we have to rely on ourselves: treat the family unit like a quartet, woman the second violin, followed by the adolescent, then the child. From there, for an orchestration of individual truth: possibly make the woman ugly if, in giving her the possibility to be ugly, she regains her liberty. Let her be
accepted in the definitively ugly. After that, throw the fashion designers in prison.

In this time of convulsing mythomania when by the go-between of the cinema each can enjoy when he so wishes the disintegrated bodies of Brigitte Bardot, of Faye Dunaway and even the two together, in fernal caricature of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, it becomes as inconceivable to make love to his young wife, as to envision for these myths a bed with sheets. Paris-Match, France, Elle, Encyclopédies, so many gullets of strangulation which exploit the nightmare of advertising and keep a hold on the universal mythomania, the alienation of the masses, completely drugged, debilitated by this double participation in the universe,—generally made ideogrammatically abstract by the spreading of information,— and in their own lives, thus emptied of all weight, of all stability. By means of mentally being integrated into the fate of others, they come to no longer live theirs, to sacrifice their irremediable futility to the indolence of a dream awakened without hope, zombies panting and more and more idiotic from a society of consumption and division, which slips without return toward these well-known waters so small but where wave on wave the void carries it away, while awaiting, ultimate delirium, the groundswell of the Cloaca Maxima coming back on itself.
Marc Alyn

LA NUIT DU LABYRINTHE

DEDICACE

Solitaire sans qui la Nuit s'effriterait
Incantant aux ramparts du sommeil l'or des proies
Avides de s'ouvrir et dans l'autre se perdre,
Ton aire se réduit avec l'ombre et les prises,
Rapace,
La clarté dévore la ténèbre
Et tu n'auras pour ciel, bientôt, que cette page
Funèbre où j'ai signé ton vol.

II

Au creux du silence, l'absence et les mots mûrissants,
La nuit sapide dont la pulpe recèle le clair,
Les galeries superposées du verbe et de la chair,
La mémoire, trait sur trait, pressant le suc des secrets:
Partout affleure le fond halluciné qui fermente.

VI

Le corps est labyrinthe.

A la fin la chair à la chair répugne
—Viscères, tissus qu'allait le plasma
Nient la courbe polie où s'aiguisè le spasme—:

La mort retourne l'être
Et l'intérieur à son tour connaît
L'ivresse de l'air.
Marc Alyn

tr. Robert Holkeboer

NIGHT OF THE LABYRINTH

DEDICATION

Solitary bird of prey,
Night would shrivel up without you
Charming out of sleep the gold of prey
Eager for surrender, glad to be lost in you;
Your hunting ground shrinks with shadow and slaughter,
Light ravishes the darkness,
And soon your only heaven will be
This funereal page where I traced your flight.

II

In the cleft of silence, words ripen in the void;
In the sapid night, light huddles in dark cells;
Word and flesh stick to the galleries
And the memory, stroke on stroke, crushes the pulp of secrets:
The chimeric depth, fermenting, seeks its level.

VI

The body is labyrinthine.

At last the flesh rejects the flesh—
Viscera, tissues nourished on protoplasm
Deny the polished curve, the sharpening spasm.

Death turns the body inside out;
The bowels are exposed in turn
To the dizziness of air.
VIII

A force d’habiter l’indéchiffrable Nuit
Et par tous d’être créé, je ne suis
Plus qu’informe infini, glaise sale
Ou chacun peut laisser l’empreinte de ses peurs.

IX

Peut-être, dit le scribe, n’est-il qu’un mot mal fixé
Dans le labyrinthe d’une phrase immense,
Bouleversant le sens du livre
Par son errance
Entre les lignes?
Comme ces vers minuscules
Qui émergent parfois des profondeurs de la page
Dévorant l’esprit avec la fibre.
Je l’imagine ainsi: mot parasite condamné
A subsister dans la marge
En dépit d’un carnage de syllabes.

XVI

Au matin
Le feu bleu attaque les métaux.
Les yeux, les mots amassés.

D’antiques poissons que l’ardoise enserre
Se surprennent à nager
Un peu
Dans l’épaisseur.

Ceux d’entre nous que visita le songe
Fourbissent, muets, leurs abîmes.
VIII

As denizen of the inscrutable night,
As matter waiting to be created,
I am formless and void, crude clay
Where each may engrave his fears.

IX

Perhaps, says the scribe, it is merely a misplaced word
In the labyrinth of an immense sentence,
Confounding the meaning of the book
By its staggering
Among the lines.
Like those tiny worms
That sometimes emerge from the depths of the page
To devour the spirit along with the letter.
So I imagine it: a parasitical word
Condemned to subsist in the margin
Despite the carnage of syllables.

XVI

In the morning
The blue spark attacks the metals,
The eyes, the accretion of words.

Ancient fish entombed in slate
Are surprised to swim
A little
In such density.

Those among us who have dreamed the dream
Furbish their chasms without speaking.
XVIII

Hors l'oiseau, nul ne sait lire l'aube
Qui sur le règne le l'air
Se fonde.

Nous existons de loin en loin,
Furtivement,
A la cime de l'œil,
Par l'opaque et l'épais aussitôt ressaisis.

XXIV

Je jette dans la mer ce livre où son nom est écrit
Sur chaque page, en toutes langues connues. Qu'il aborde
Aux confins du sel ou soit la proie des poissons aveugles,
Qu'il suscite ailleurs le héros qui nous délivrera
Ou que seule la flamme en déchiffre les lettres,
Peut-être un peu de lui, par l'esprit, périra.

XXV

Rien ne peut nous laver de lui
Dont nous mangeons en rêve
La chair.

L'abattoir est là,
En nous-mêmes,
À la jointure
De l'âme et de la faim.
XVIII

Only the bird can decipher the dawn
That melts on the kingdom
Of air.

We exist intermittently,
Furtively,
At the summit of the eye,
Immediately recaptured by the dense and the opaque.

XXIV

I throw to the sea this book, where his name is inscribed
On every page, in all known languages. May it wash up
With the salt on the shore, or be food for blind fish;
May it raise up elsewhere the hero who will deliver us;
Or may only flames decipher the letters.
Perhaps some of his spirit will perish.

XXV

But nothing can wash him away
Whose flesh we gnaw
In our dreams.

The slaughterhouse is here,
Within us,
Where soul
And hunger meet.
NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

MARC ALYN won the prestigious Prix Max Jacob at the age of 23 for *Le temps des autres*. Since then he has published several volumes of poetry, criticism, and a novel. He has edited the Flammarion poetry series, and is now poetry critic for *Le Figaro Littéraire*. Now 34, he lives in Uzès (Gard) where he directs exhibitions of poetry and plastic arts under the rubric *Arts—Formes et Langages*.

WILLIS BARNSTONE is a poet, critic, editor, and translator. He is Professor of Comparative Literature at Indiana University. He has edited and introduced an anthology titled *Modern European Poetry*. He recently published a critical anthology with Oxford University Press, *Spanish Poetry*. In addition, a new book of his own poetry, *A Day in the Country*, will be published by Harper-Row in August, 1971.

JOHN BATKI has been a Fellow of the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa since 1969. Born in Hungary in 1942, he has studied at Columbia College and Syracuse University. His prose, poetry, and translations have appeared in *Poetry, The New Yorker, Modern Poetry in Translation* and many other journals. He has co-edited an anthology of twentieth-century Hungarian poets, *Eight Hungarian Poets*, and is preparing a volume of translations of poetry by Attila Jozsef for publication later this year.

KAY CICCELLIS is a Greek novelist and short story writer who has published three works in English with Grove Press: a volume of short fiction, *Death of a Town*, and two novels, *The Easy Way* and *No Name in the Street*. Her books have been translated into German, French, and Italian. She will be represented in the volume, *Writers under the Colonels*, which features 18 texts by contemporary Greek authors. The book will be published soon by Harvard University Press, and is edited by Willis Barnstone.

CHRISTINE COTTEN is an Instructor in French at Ohio University where she is working with the Translation Workshop and the Comparative Literature Program.

DOMINIQUE DE ROUX is a French novelist, critic and editor. He is the author of several novels. The excerpt reprint in this issue of *Mundus Artium* is taken from his novel, *La maison jaune*. He is the editor of the French literary journal, *L'Herne*, which recently devoted a special issue to Gombrowicz.

PETER DESY teaches in the English Department at the University of Akron. His poems have appeared in *Prism international, Zeitgeist*, and an anthology of poems written about Emily Dickinson entitled *Emily Dickinson: Letters from the World*.

VYTAS DUKAS is Professor of Russian and chairman of the Department of German and Russian at San Diego State College. His articles, reviews and translations have appeared in major literary journals. He is a member of the bibliography staff of *Twentieth Century Literature*. 
ODYSSEUS ELYTIS was born in Crete in 1911. He is a poet, critic, painter, translator and the Greek representative to the European Society of Culture. He published his first poems in 1935 in the periodical New Letters. For several years he was associated with the Parisian school of poets and painters (Breton, Eluard, Char, Picasso, Matisse etc.) and published articles in French for the magazine Verve. During this time he also began his career as an art critic. He has translated many plays for the Greek theater, as well as the poetry of Eluard, Lorca, Ungaretti, Rimbaud, Mayakovsky and many others.

KIMON FRIAR is an editor, translator and essayist who has published extensively on modern Greek, American and British poetry, and contemporary Greek poetry and fiction. His translations and introductions have appeared in many periodicals and anthologies. He has translated two novels by Kazantzakis; The Odyssey: A Modern Sequel and The Saviors of God: Spiritual Exercises. In 1969 he edited and translated the Greek section of the Twayne publication, An Introduction to Modern Greek Literature. His future publications include: Modern Greek Poetry (57 poets), and a translation of The Mad Pomegranate Tree and Other Poems by the young Greek poet Odysseus Elytis. Mr. Friar was given a Hopwood Award in Essay for his discussion of Yeats' A Vision.

GERALD GILLESPIE is Professor of Comparative Literature at the State University of New York. As a Guggenheim Fellow in Germany last year he completed a study, German Baroque Poetry, to be published soon by Twayne. His recent translation of Valle-Inclán's Lights of Bohemia was produced last summer at the Edinburgh Festival.

NIKO GRAFENAUER was born in Ljubljana, Yugoslavia in 1940. He has published two volumes of poetry; On the Eve of a Holiday (1962), and Language under Pressure (1965). He has also published some criticism which is being translated in French and Italian, and he is the editor of Problemi, one of Yugoslavia's most liberal literary and cultural reviews.

WOLFGANG HADEKE, a German poet and essayist, was born in 1929. He has published two volumes of poetry: Uns stehn die Fragen auf (1958), and Leuchtpur im Schnee (1963). He has also edited Panorama moderner Lyrik deutschsprachender Länder (1966). Translations of his poetry have appeared in journals and in Contemporary German Poetry (New Directions, 1964).

SAMUEL J. HAZO is the director of the International Poetry Forum, and president of the Pittsburgh Council for the Arts. He has published five volumes of his own poetry in addition to his translation work. He is Professor of English at Duquesne University.

ROBERT HOLKEBOER was a Fulbright Scholar in Paris in 1967-68. He teaches at Boston University and expects to receive his doctorate in comparative literature from Ohio University in June.

ATTILA JÖZSEF is an Hungarian poet who died in 1937 at the age of 32. His six volumes of poetry have been translated into twelve languages. He received his formal education at the Universities of Szeged, Vienna, Paris, and Budapest. He received the Baumgarten Prize for poetry posthumously.
RICHARD KOSTELANETZ is a young American author who has written and edited several volumes dealing with contemporary culture and contemporary art and artists. He has edited five anthologies of contemporary poetry and fiction including *On Contemporary Literature* and *Possibilities of Poetry*. His own works are *Master Minds, The Theater of Mixed Means* and a recent study of the music of John Cage. His forthcoming book deals with Electronic Music. Mr. Kostelanetz is also co-author and editor of *The New American Arts*. He recently received a Guggenheim Fellowship in cultural history.

GREG KUZMA is Assistant Professor of English at the University of Nebraska. His poems have appeared in *The Paris Review, The New Yorker, Poetry, Prairie Schooner*, and other literary journals.

JÖZÉ LAZAR recently completed his M.A. in Comparative Literature at the University of British Columbia. He is currently working in Yugoslavia on translations of Slovene poetry.

LUCEBERT was born in Amsterdam in 1924, and is recognized as both a poet and a painter. His paintings have appeared in exhibits at many major museums. In 1955 and '56, at the request of Bertolt Brecht, he lectured at the East German Akademie der Künste. The author of some twenty books of poetry, he was awarded the most prestigious literary prize in Holland, the P.C. Hooftprijs, in 1967. Lucebert has recently become a playwright as well. His latest work, "Fata Banana," opened in December of 1970 in The Hague, and has been booked for a tour through Yugoslavia and Poland.

JULIO MATAS was born in Havana in 1931. His essays, poems, plays and stories have appeared in Cuban literary magazines. He left Cuba in 1965 and is currently teaching Spanish at the University of Pittsburgh. His book publications include *Retrato Del Tiempo* (poetry, 1959), and *La Cronica Y El Suceso* (play, 1964).

JAMES BOYER MAY has been the editor of *Trace* since he founded it in 1952. Recently, he announced that this journal would discontinue publication with the 1970 volume. Mr. May's poetry has been published in journals, anthologies and in translation in several languages. He is in the process of preparing an anthology drawn from contributions to *Trace* and books of his own criticism and fiction.

GELLU NAUM is a Romanian poet who has been greatly influenced by Surrealism. In addition to books of poems for children, Gellu has published the following volumes of poetry: *The Incendiary Traveler* (1936), *Freedom to Sleep on a Forehead* (1937), *Vasco de Gama* (1940), *The Corridor of Sleep* (1946), *The Adventures of Appollodore* (1959), *The Calm Sun* (1961), and *The Second Book of Appollodore* (1964).

HANS-WERNER NIESCHMIDT has published translations of contemporary German poets in various journals. He is Professor of German at the University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand.
YANNIS RITSOS is a Greek poet who was born in 1909. He is the author of twenty-four books of poetry, poems for dance, and two plays. He received the State Prize for Poetry in 1936. Six sections of his poem “Romiossini” have been set to music by Mikis Theodhorakis, the composer of Zorba the Greek and Z. Following the military coup in 1967, Ritsos was detained for a year, then permitted to join his wife in Samos, where he was under house arrest. He now lives in Athens.

TAKIS SINOPOULOS is a Greek poet, translator, painter, and essayist who was born in 1917. In addition, for two years (1966-67) he conducted a radio program over the National Broadcasting System in Athens on “Traditional and Contemporary Poetry.” He has translated many contemporary French poets and many American writers including Pound, Eliot, W.C. Williams, and Langston Hughes. His two most recent books of poetry are The Night and Counterpoint (1959), and The Song of Ioanna and Constantine.

JOHN CONSTANTINE STATHATOS is a Greek poet and translator who was born in Athens in 1947. In addition to English poetry and translations of Greek poets in various magazines, he has published a book of verse in Greek in 1967. He is currently studying philosophy at the London School of Economics.

PETER STEVENS has published his own poetry, articles, reviews and translations in several anthologies and journals. He has also edited a collection of critical essays, The McGill Movement, and has just completed a study of the Canadian poet, Dorothy Livesay, to be published in 1971. He is now co-editing an anthology of writing taken from the last fifty years of Canadian Forum, of which he is the poetry editor. He is an Associate Professor at the University of Windsor in Ontario.

LARRY TEN HARMSELM, a graduate student in English at Ohio University, has translated several contemporary Dutch poets. He works for the Dutch National Translation Institute, and is now preparing a book of Luciebert’s poems to be published in English next year.

QUINCY TROUPE is a young poet, essayist, and editor. His poems have appeared in several journals (Black World, Antioch Review, Soul Illustrated, The Southern Review, and many others), and will be collected in his first book publication, Poems for Friends, to be published by Doubleday later this year. He has edited several anthologies of black poetry including New Black Poetry (1969), and We Speak as Liberators (1970): New Black Voices is scheduled for 1971 publication with NAL. Mr. Troupe is currently writer-in-residence and Professor of “Third World Literature” at Ohio University where he edits the journal, Confrontation.

TIBERIU UTAN is a journalist and poet. He is the former editor of the literary review “Gazeta Literara.” His books of poems include: Call (1955), Poems (1961), Book of Dreams (1965), and Instants (1968).

EVGENIJ VINOKUROV was born in Bryansk, Russia in 1925. His poetry and other writings began to appear in print in 1948. His first book of poems, Poems about Duty, came out in 1951 and since then he has published more than a dozen books. His work has been translated into French, Italian and many other languages.
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