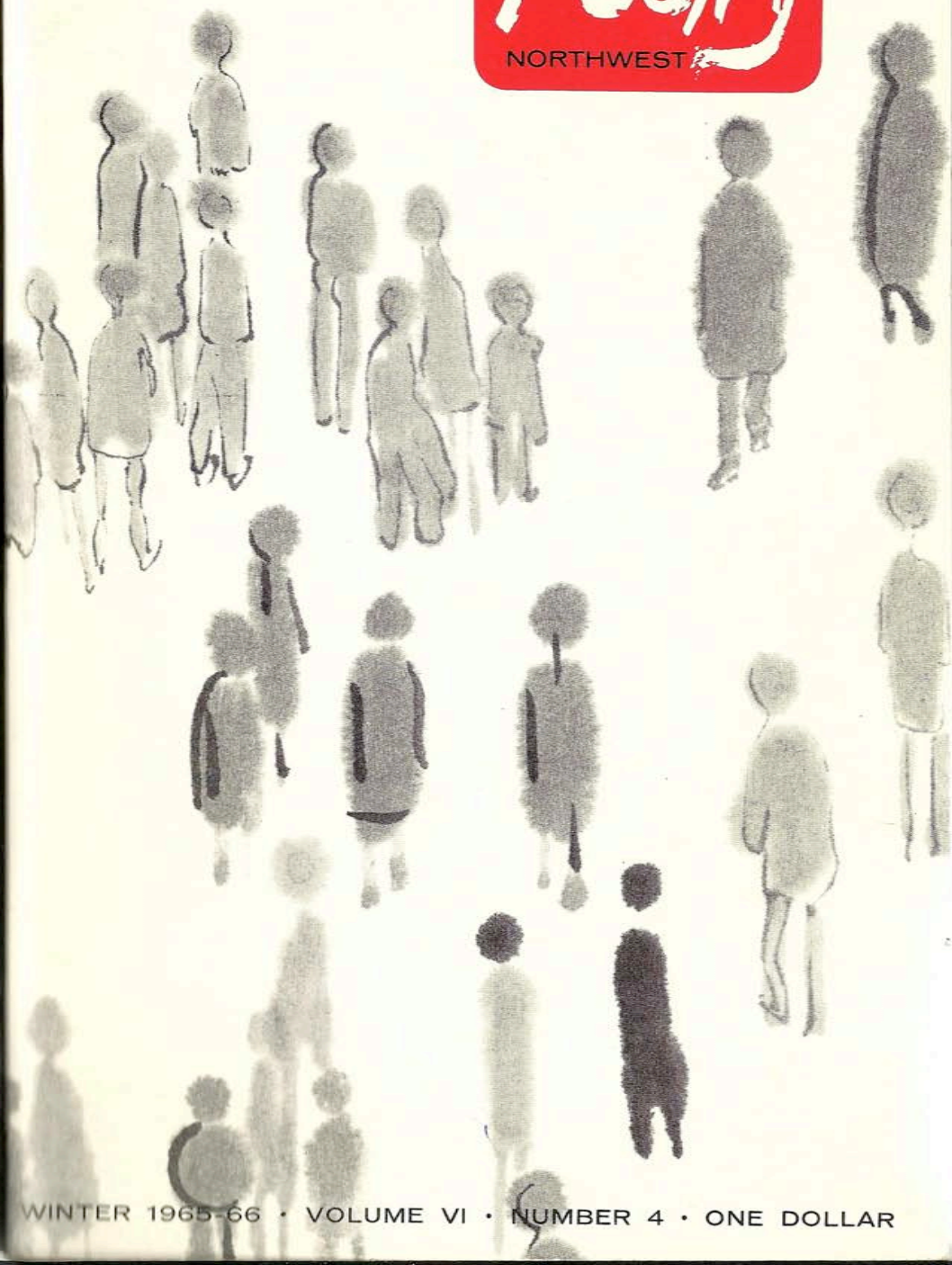


Poetry

NORTHWEST



WINTER 1965-66 • VOLUME VI • NUMBER 4 • ONE DOLLAR

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SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

CAROLYN KIZER, editor and founder of *Poetry Northwest*, has resigned to take up duties in Washington, D.C., as consultant in literature on the National Council on the Arts.

DAVID WAGONER has been appointed the new editor, beginning immediately; however, this issue and the subsequent two issues of *Poetry Northwest* will consist of poems selected by Miss Kizer.

POETRY NORTHWEST WINTER, 1965-1966 VOLUME VI, NUMBER 4

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POETRY

VOLUME SIX



NORTHWEST

NUMBER FOUR

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POETRY NORTHWEST

WINTER 1965-1966

Stanley Moss

The Amagansett Poems

SIGN ON THE ROAD

The Atlantic a mile away is flat.
I rent this summer in Amagansett ;
I see berrytrees and pines ; a one-eyed hound
Visits. Nothing is very far from the ground ;
This is potato country, yellow and white
Blossom barely. Above the gravel pit
It is hardly wild. I find a snake skin
Pressed into the asphalt. I use tin
Roofing to scrape it up, and throw deep
Into a field the pearl leather. I keep
The tin to paint my sign *Moss* in red,
Lean it on a fence where worms have fed ;
I make my own target, throw my stone,
I nail my name down into my bone,
It falls in grass, I pick it up again
Like a sock-apple sweetened in the ditch.
I hope my sign will stand against the pitch
Of summer rain ; crash in Atlantic hurricanes,
Drumming my name that creaks and grinds
Above the ditch, on a piece of tin
Colder than the wind.

~

INTIMATION

My friends, Moss is on the fence in Long Island,
The sea a distance away like a grandfather
At a family reunion, says it's all sand.
But Moss is on the fence; it might as well
Be charged with high voltage, or painted blue
For all the good that will come of that.
It is a fact and if I scrape my name off
With a knife, the wood is wet underneath,
Just as sand is moist when you kick it up.
I suppose something like this wetness and the sun
Made the first living thing, the first sub-roach
That danced its way from under dead matter.
In the beginning before darkness was there a death?

Of course the wind or a telephone call
Moves the earth a little; damn little,
The apple falls like an apple, and leaves
Hit the deck in their leafy way, and Moss
Shall be no exception. One fine day
Shall I fall down like Buddha from eating
Too many cutlets? More likely a mange
Of lungs contracted from the beginning,
In the wetness, in the sun. Any day is
A good day to be born, any day is
A good day to die. Moss is on the fence
In Amagansett.

~

SCARECROW

Honeysuckle grows over the sleeve
Inside out. Once used as a scarecrow
A canvas jacket splashed with red paint
Thrown over a fence,
Keeps the shape of someone's body ; despite
Summer that burned the field brown by mid-August,
Winter that froze an oak tree's knuckle,
Despite grubs, the mildew, the six inch nails.

I should be grateful if my poems
Keep some shape, out in the open field,
Year after year, a thing like this canvas
Splashed with mock blood, scaring off nothing.
The harvest is in.
Now the field snail lodges in my cuff :
I wink at the sky, all weathers, all creatures,
Telling them to come on.



PLUMAGE

Off Montauk Speedway I watch a swan
Clam-gray in the remnant marsh, surrounded
By yesterday's swollen bread ; jabbed, he attacks
The stick, and an old automobile tire,
Like great adversaries ; —moves out of reach,
Trumpeting at the stone-throwing rabble.

Those ancient kisses, those first days were best,
My flesh in cloud almost moved the world.
Did I survive that first winter, first deceit?
For fifteen years my mind : a bird that would
Not fly south, —something like a swan circling
One place, refusing shelter.

I stand in the reeds under faded cloud.
All that plumage, the pomp of generations
In my wings, push back the mob :
The mercenary cold, the perjuring snows.
Lady, this summer when the world beckons
I shall follow, next winter I go south.

~

THE GENTLE THINGS

I have had enough of Gods
And disaster ;
The gentle things,
All loved ones survive,
Water survives in water,
Love in love.

I lie! The dead stain
Only themselves,
The wolf tears at the world,
Says, *nothing is* :
And the wolf is not the wind,
Is death's fingernail.

Dampness to dampness,
Had I been given
Only life's issue,
Not the song, or the silence
After the singing,
I should be content.

~

John Tagliabue

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OR THE HANAMICHI LIKE THE FIRST
LINE OF POETRY

*O-Kuni's erotic dancing (in 1586) leads down or up the flower
path to the Kabuki-za*

From
then on
the erected poets
like kites in the New Year
call colors to the sky of our mind
and music to the memory of our dazzlement,
O mysterious and erotic O-Kuni down and up the
flower path
for generations and procreation and recreation
we all marvelously go.

FABULOUS MYSTERY (*of Kabuki Actors, etc., who perform
in new plays every month after an intermission
of only a few days*)

When do they memorize their parts?
When do we before we are born?

Many fans going fast

The gossips
fan themselves
pleasantly, furiously,
joyously, spreading the news.

*A veteran Kabuki actor makes it again toward the
Pleasure Quarters*

Moaning
like
an
old
hanamichi
the
battered
and
blazing
pale
lover
stalked
up
to
the
stage
of
her
beauty.

*The onnagata often has a little red
painted around her eyes*

She
blinking her eyes
like a sniffing rabbit
produced prolific results.

HAPPY SAILING

Three kyogen
like three cats in a boat
row us to the shore beyond logic.

*A radiant and princely favorite of
the people*

Yoshitsune
like a butterfly that can reflect the sun,
noble and delicate, and almost still, like a
Japanese cherry blossom.

*In a costume sparkling silver
with joyous fury*

A
demon
with long black hair
the length of comic contrived nightmare
comes flashing on the scene with a long sword
slicing the air like a critic.

THE GHOST OF TOMOMORI

The prayer beads
like rivers and stars shaking
in the hands of the strong priest
rattle rattle the tired tired furious
demon who drags his long tail downstage
 like an exciting tired rampaging
 superb splendid whirling
 shattering silver walking
 dazzling nightmare.

(Some of these poems were suggested by the play *Funa Benkei*, performed both in the Noh theater and the Kabuki theater. It tells of the attempt of the furious ghost of Tomomori—who has been killed by the small and calm and radiant hero Yoshitsune—to overthrow the boat with the precious hero and his three comic rowing men. Powerful Benkei with his rosary wards off the demon. The Japanese say ghost plays are especially entertaining in the hot summer season because they help give you the chills. Many people have imagined the “origin” of Kabuki, related to O-Kuni in the first poem.)

IMPRESSIONS OF NOH

The
mad
woman
makes
love
to
the
pine
tree
as
if
it
were
her
lover.
The
mad
woman
makes
love
to
her
lover
as
if
he
were
the
pine
tree.

Those
who
can
not
love
this
way
are
not
only
not
mad
but
also
not
in
love.

~

If planets move do I lose my place in the theater?

With clouds of slow moving stories

Entering
under
the
rainbow
a
fish
or
god
or
Noh
actor
with
the
slowness
of
a
floating
cloud
brings
days
of
wonder
slowly
to
us

as
the
rainbow
falls
over
our
eyelid.
~

I
locate
my
place
in
the
theater
behind
a
shiny
bald
head;
if
that
old
planet
or
plant
should
leave
its
orbit
will
I
be
spending
my
old
age
looking
for
the
old
man?
~

MATSUKAZE: *The fishergirls recall their love with the
missing poet and his poems*

Two
moons
remembering
slightly
meandering
on
the
Noh
stage
stage
a
comeback
therefore
the
dead
Poet
is
Revived.

His
poems
are
like
the
pebbles
on
the
shore
now
where
they
dance.

~

From the Noh play ATSUMORI by Seami Motokiyo:

*Life is a lying dream, he only wakes
Who casts the world aside*

I			
did			
this			
but			
soon			
after	until		
what	all	before	
I	the	the	
cast	galaxies	illusion	Effortlessly
there	and	of	the soul
became	gods	sleeping	resounds.
a	are	or	
child	where	waking	
poet	they	stirred	
talking	were	effort.	
all			
night			
long			

How memorable and musical is the slow procedure of the moon

If
the
moon
could
walk
and
it
could
as
a
Noh
actor
upon
the
snow
of
my
sleep
it
would
make
marks
perhaps
like
the
shadows
of
pine trees
or

now
I
see
it
dimly
haunting
me
with
beauty
in
the
morning
of
my
memory.

~

As
the
Moon
slowly
turned
and
then
walked
slowly
toward
me
my
thoughts
darted
in
many
directions
as
It
approached

~

The
only
mirror
I
ever
knew
was
me
or
you
and
this
is
every
where
to
bear

From the Noh play by Kannami Kiyotsugu
SOTOBA KOMACHI:

*The brightest mirror
is not on the wall.*

From Yeats:

*From mirror after mirror
No vanity's displayed;
I'm looking for the face I had
before the world was made*

as	
lightly	
as	
the	multiplied
golden	into
sun	the
bears	dance
poems.	of
The	God.
reflection	
of	
a	
fish	

SOSHI-ARAI KOMACHI

*(Three masked moon face heroines in large wide mostly orange white
and gold splendid costumes)*

One
moon
and
two
attendant
moons
managed
to
make
one
impression
and
write
One Poem
in
the
madness
of
my
milky
calm.

~

Have
you
not
seen
the
moon
weep
then
you
have
not
seen
a
Noh
play.

~

*A goddess in a very wide delicate costume of white and orange and
with white tabi and slow motion*

A
large
dim
Noh
goddess
coming
out
of
the
center
of
the
moon
slowly
with
light
steps
left
dim
marks
on
the
moon
of
my
memory.

~

A NOH ACTOR

(with wide white pants like a sailboat)

Away
he
sails
away
to
the
back
of
our
mind
forever
to
remind
us
of
beauty.

~

The
Moon
or
Memory
slightly
palpitating
made
me
respond
like
a
fish
or
poet.

~

The words of seamless Seami occur in a play

The
words
were
going
forth
like
insects
out
of
a
cocoon
while
outside
it
rained
it
Rained;
birth
blessed
by
rain.

~

The presence of beauty

No
body
knew
where
the
Noh
actor
didn't
go
to
because
he
was
quietly
there.

~

The ages and enlightenment uttered from the depths of a Noh play

Prolong
the
passage
of
the
moon
O
incomparable
Seami,
trace
its
tracelessness,
seamless
sage.

Gary Snyder

Two Poems

JANUARY

from *Six Years*

the pine tree is perfect

Walking in the snowhills the trail goes just right
Eat snow off pine needles

the city's not so big, the
hills surround it.

Hieizan wrapped in his own cloud—
Back there no big houses, only a little farm shack
crows cawing back and forth
over the valley of grass-bamboo
and small pine.

If I had a peaceful heart it would look like this,
The train down in the city

was once a snowy hill

~

NANSEN

I found you on a rainy morning
After a typhoon
In a bamboo grove at Daitoku-ji.
Tiny wet rag with a
Huge voice, you crawled under the fence
To my hand. Left to die.
I carried you home in my raincoat.
"Nansen, cheese!" You'd shout an answer
And come running.

But you never got big,
Bandy-legged, bright little dwarf—
Sometimes not eating, often coughing,
Mewing bitterly at inner pain.

Now, thin and older, you won't eat
But milk and cheese. Sitting on a pole
In the sun. Hardy with resigned
Discontent.

You just weren't made right. I saved you,
And your three-year life has been full
Of mild, steady pain.

~

MT. HIEI

I thought I would
sit with the screens back
and sing: watching the
half-gone moon rise late;
but my hands were too numb
to play the guitar
the song was cold mist
the wine wouldn't warm—
so I sat at the border
of dark house and moon
in thick coat—seeing stars rise
back of the ridge.
like once when a lookout
I took Aldebaran
for fire.

~

Philip Silver

Lines After Tu Fu, Mei Yao Ch'en and Su Tung P'o

CLEAR EVENING AFTER RAIN

In the month of the Tiger
I receive one rejection slip
after another. Our students
have all jetted off to Europe
never to return. Once more
we are left to face wives
and children. The reins of
discipline trail in the dust.
Tonight my can of dark ale
is like a hand grenade.



TO TWO POETS WHO ARE FRIENDS

We have a way with the silence
between words. Colleagues find us
the leading poets for miles around.
Humble, we live in humbler homes.
Students loll on our desks, swinging
their legs. In town salesgirls treat
us with contempt. In the prime of
life we have asthma or bad teeth.
Who cares about any of us
or our troubles? We are our only
audience. We applaud
each other's literary
distinctions. Our poems will be xeroxed
with those of our greater peers.
Even if we can't console each other
at least we shall have descendants.



OVERLOOKING THE NEIGHBORS

My neighbor's grass is up
to his wife's armpits. Blight
has cut down his one Dutch elm.
Time and again I wonder
how long the night will last.
I think of my small boat in Maine
and long to be on my way.



I PASS THE NIGHT AT THE POLICE STATION

A starry night in June.
The thin, new moon appears,
tipped askew in the heavens.
Downtown I find the Mayor's car
rubbing its muzzle against my
hand. An officer asks me
what I think I am doing.
I think I am doing nothing.
The elm trees are embarrassed
for me. To hide my confusion
I pedal off into the side
of another police car.



FRIENDS DRIVE OUT

This term my hair went grey
at the temples. When friends drive
to our cabin for the day
we walk the beach toward Huron
until their children beg
to be carried. When you leave
I must sit at the typewriter,
smoking and not writing
a single poem. Stay here
another hour. Try our cheap gin
and moderate vermouth.



Donald Keene

A Translation of Shimpei Kusano

THE SEA AT NIGHT

From the distant, deep, heavy bottom,
From the dark, invisible, limitless past

Zuzuzuzu zuwaaru

Zuzuzuzu zuwaaru

Gun un uwaaru

The black sea continues its roar,
In the black the lead-colored waves are born.
Splashing their lead-colored manes, the waves break,
And crawl on their bellies up the sopping strand.

Leaden waves are born out there,
And out that way too,
Then swallowed in the black of India ink,
But once again appear and press to shore.

Zuzuzuzu zuwaaru

Zuzuzuzu zuwaaru

Gun un uwaaru

This must have been the time, late at night,
That mammoths used to walk,
Reeking like mouldy buns,
All in a row,
Humping, slumping,
And leaving tracks like giant doughnuts,
Plodding, trodding out of sight.

Zuzuzuzu zuwaaru

Zuzuzuzu zuwaaru

Gun un uwaaru

On the dim strand of Kujukuri Beach
The waves crawl up in arabesques of lead-colored lace,
Lick the sand and swish back to the black sea.
Awake all night they roar
And retreat within a giant dream of future time.

Zuzuzuzu zuwaaru

Zuzuzuzu zuwaaru

Gun un uwaaru.

Laura Ulewicz

Two Poems

ON THE BOURGEOISIE

Swinging Viennese doors are a problem.
Opening them is a problem. And where they lead.
Always they seem to lead to a garden,
A garden not seen, but spied into.
Not a rose garden, a garden of leaves.

People owned by the doors come out polite.
Achievement it is, or else restraint, which achieves
Wide minds, drunkards, doors of light,
Doors that keep in what would go out,
Doors that glisten like grape gardens.

Though for this freedom, freedom's sacrificed,
Later I might feed that garden,
Scrub its flagstone, have housemaid's knee;
But being myself and slightly young,
It is the idea of the garden which feeds me.

Our rose is the street, a difficult green,
A flower which flies, bears invisible fruit.
Thereby we eat, therefore are eaten.
Danke. Danke. Danke. The wine
Which nourishes is not the wine we drink.

Again I was a noise on the street, while you
Stood before the high door like a black light.
The leaves were leading to the grapes and wine;
The door was there, and we did not go through.
Carefully, carefully I thought of that garden.

~

LONDON CITY GARDEN: SPRING

"This pronged twig is the Chrysanthemum's disguise.
"These green earthwarts, Daffodils." Three mottled
Sticks with thorns: I feel wild brambles prick
Electric in my mind. This old lady—
How she *talks* me her garden! Is it so single
A pride, her small earth-skill, that she must believe
I cannot tell a sprig before it blooms
The bush it will become? As if I hadn't
Turned raw earth before I turned to make
A garden of myself. Yet give her credit.
She has tact or business enough to leave me
Alone in her patchwork sun. I, pointy-
Toed, tight-skirted, gloved, what strips
My fingers, drags them naked down to caress
This muck too sodden yet to be worked? Is it
The bones? No. The bones of those peasants are bound
As once their bodies were to this earth we migrate
Over. Kinship of marrow? Hey you in there,
Old Polack, Patriot, you who stole
What the bees wanted to suck, here I am,
And what do you think of your great great granddaughter?
But this old lady comes back to point out spring:
One Snowdrop hidden behind a vine—
Six lean petals. She hands me spring,
And suddenly I belong nowhere—being
Owned by no plot of ground. And that
Over there, that—flitting over
The back fence like a gypsy, like birdshadow.
Surely we have these tragedies we plan,
But today the bones do blame That. Tell me
It is a trick of peasant skulls on the mind's
Free choosing that given one Drop of spring
I jabber of furrows and seed:
A blackbird hopping stubborn after a farmer.

~

Richard Moore

Four Poems

SUNSET

The sun tangles in TV aerials
sticking into soot and sky.
I stop to watch it die
in the street near the hospital's
scrawny trees not yet in bud:
a ghost sun, rinsed in luminous blood.
Once, I remember, it burned that way
before, another August day,
wounding the sky above another
city. . . . We were driving back from the beach,
hoping we loved each
other.

Toys under the sun . . .
down under the sun by the corner, one
walks out from a group of stores, and comes
toward me, and becomes
a real policeman.
And in the sky, above where I'm
standing, a jet pricks, sewing its vapor trail,
its point unseen, its wool fading behind, pale,
like a worm . . . like a man
nosing through time.
Is time blue? Does the mind
fade out that quickly behind?

At the corner the lights are changing,
and the traffic changes its clumsy dance.
In this, the sun's disk, ranging
from hints of "caution" at its top
to a round, crimson "stop,"
has no effect, although huge and hung high—

only an enormous bloodshot eye
waiting and watching in its trance.
Aerials probe
up into its burning globe.
Ten years we labeled love
with that unwearied eye above. . . .
O hard moment of pending,
what is it we await,
now we have probed into our hate
and wait now only for our ending?



SUMMER HOUSE

Is the sun gone? Shadows it made of leaves
no longer sway from darkness under eaves:
the summer's golden coin wears down to winter,
and skies of worthless lead
buy up the earth, now dead.
The wind bids, and the roof begins to splinter.

Shut up the shutters, love, and we'll admit
those yellow ecstasies were counterfeit;
but say, when house and heavens go erratic,
something persists, love, cramps
through buried cellar damp,
persists when the wind picks into the attic.

From webs that drift in corners of the gloom,
from shadows, walls sweating across the room,
the silence hangs, placid and deep abider,
and grips. In its caress
the damp ooze and confess
the rat, the worm, the weevil, and the spider.

A maze of useless pipe tangles and squirms
up into rafters like large, sleeping worms.

Maybe there's rain above; the worms are flowing.
Look: a rat sips. He gnaws
holding between his paws
a mildewed seed. The air's not right for growing.

So don't be angry, love, that weevils bore
tunnels for dinner through our two-by-four.
They're gnawed too: tinier lives in them are swarming.
In little private nights
inside them, parasites,
secreting acids, keep them still performing.

While dynasties and summers pass unseen,
they work; they fear the light. But up between
the boards, light comes. When footsteps crossed that rafter,
all hairs bristled to hear
perilous sounds so near,
voices that spoke, and long forgotten laughter.

But that passed too. Here all is secure, love,
from change, growing, and dying up above.
A little circumscribed. But think: how clever.
Come wind, come sun, come rains,
the cellar still remains,
a part of earth, and earth might last forever.

~

BEYOND THE ATLANTIC

I feed myself well, here beyond the Atlantic—
three buns, wurst, butter,
and ground coffee, for noon breakfast—stutter
to a small circle of inane friends
in two languages, and now and then stay in
on a binge
of lifting life into art,

as rusty arms that hinge
out of a corn husker's mechanically faultless heart
twist husks of hybrid corn up into its bin
for the pigs to eat.

Most weekends
my midget auto enters the gigantic
clefts of Black Forest mountains and swerves
under drizzling skies
laboriously up around hairpin
curves,
as a flea up rivery elephant thighs,
to my love, a haggard masseuse,
whom I put to good use,
revealing
my impotence to her unfeeling
womb;
and then I go home.
The Forest gathers and lours
around this town's tinkling towers.

Dearest, I have to keep on wooing
—Rilke says something about it—
amusing
myself with these queer punishments for refusing
to fill your womb with my undoing.
I wouldn't be uncomfortable without it.

I hadn't quite stopped stammering
when we met
in that beerhall where I stalked
through the last war—talked
and tumbled into each other's debt.
You never struck me as pretty;
I kept my qualms.
Now, fifteen years later, there is hammering
here still, building back this phony tourist city
after its one big night of bombs.

~

HOME NEWS

I lie here in this land of krauts,
suffering bouts
of sick pity,
while motorscooters snarl through the city
and, a whole ocean away, you force me
to think. Good, it's time you divorce me.

My stomach's bad.
It's what you had
the month I left.
It stinks, this being bereft—
this morning sickness, giving birth
to at last nothing. O worried earth,
I can't eat these potatoes any more.
Stuffed with pills and elixirs,
I sleep . . . no one will say if I snore
or gnash teeth. Every morning cement mixers
outside grind into the middle of my night
and turn me up, aware
of my smell, to let in air.
I hate the light.

Buildings are sprouting down the street
like plantar warts. Each day in August heat
the ruttish bulldozer has got
itself into another lot,
fusses with walls, tools
in the torn ground; with each swipe
rubble and buried cable drools
out of its mouth, and lengths of broken pipe.
This bombed city is digging up its bones.
Its fifteen years strutting with desperate belief
opened into pits of horror. . . .

The groans
have stopped; bombs from beyond an ocean
have given them work. . . . How, after so much grief,
can they still cling with their old monstrous devotion

and build back like that, build and build?
What will they do when their pits are filled
and dark again, dark when it blazes noon?
They'll need another war soon.

My stomach rumbles the new alarms.
My ruined darling,
we grew up in each other's arms,
snarling.
This sickness that I have is yours.
I don't want cures.

~

Jon Stallworthy

KATMANDU—KODARI

They are building a road out of Katmandu—
sixty-three miles to be cut with the spade
and five tall bridges to be made
with baskets of cement and bamboo

scaffolding. They are building a road
to Kodari, a high road to be met
with ceremony in Tibet
by the Chungking-Lhasa-Kodari road.

What will they carry, these five tall bridges?
Coolies trudging northward under bales of rice
or troop-filled lorries
travelling south? Periwigged like judges

the Himalayas watch the road-gangs labour.
Today, though the road-gangs seldom look up,
Kangchenjunga wears a black cap:
and the wind from Tibet falls like a sabre.

~

George Hitchcock

Three Poems

1965

We have escaped
from ormolu,
the thighs of female
saints, two wars,
bad gin,
and the seven types
of ambiguity

to arrive in this
decade, refugees
with corrugated
faces and pocket-
etbooks full
of rain.

O troubadors of insatiable
heaven! shall I find you
in the museum back
of the eyeball? under
this rusted
rainbow? among
the statues of tweed
navigators?

Or shall I ever
find you at all?

. . .

I stand in the rubble
of this century
reciting my odes
of carved soap.

~

APRIL

the month awakes
 it is a flock of twigs
 it is a field of eyes
 it is

the shadows disappear in my pockets
I lay out my steps I inhale I
contemplate speech
 clasping and
 unclasping
my various landscapes

 a small wind
halts in the storm of circular
regard
 it ignores the drive-ins
 it ignores the painted
mouths dripping with flowers

a tree moves its fingers cunning
as a priest

 : silence :
 I feel
its breath of pollen I feel
the air enfold me the air
 its face
scarred with rain its
mouth full of thistle down its
stairs leading nowhere
father of shadows the air

I take in my cupped hand its
 benisons I take
 the hush of salt
the boughs the lupin my
father's memories I take
 the shoulders of lions I
 take its breath.

~

SERENADE

What
do you want You
whistle at me from your perfumed window

I bring you a gift of flax
I bring you a gift of steam
You translate them into sleep

I go from door to key to door and then back again
apparently we are caught in ice you and I like the
spirits of Indians

Come
the streets are full of poultices
the streams flow with rivets
I traverse bridges which end in fire
What
do you want of me?

Come
I bring you woven moons
You answer me with dust and lemon peels

Yet today you smile and I put down again this pack
full of ribbons and gold teeth

Come
in the century of my birth I
hurl myself from parapets of grace
spiked plants grow from my ribs
I leave at dusk for Bokhara

What
is your Christian name Why
do I see you in the knees
of stairways
Have patience

Some muezzin huge as smoke
calls me into your prayers
Have

~

Gene Frumkin

Three Poems

POET, THE EYEWITNESS

Eyewitness of penny wars
picture cards that smelled of gum

one battle / Barcelona, I think
a blue picnic day that wore

a yellow bomb in its buttonhole
People blown up, a face

coming toward us / maddened
mouth coming apart

The scream was available too:
I could tune on the radio / The Shadow

would have it, or the Green Hornet
We traded battles, whole wars

some of us specializing
in Sino-Jap, others in Spanish Civil

Holding the power of these cards
all my senses were charmed

Political causes cannot lose
their cheap images

in time / Slaughter cowers in the stems of rhyme

~

FOR THOSE WHO DIE

This morning hills moved next door
a peahen
 bloomed on our window sill
The sky was a fawn on our grass

Also on the lawn
 that remote town square
where De Gaulle's machinegun saluted
and 41 stopped
 their chanting
 dead

Algerie française!
 the Colons cried
living and dying

Myself a Jew in the seven-year Moslem army
have organized my self's
 opposing troops into
a blind flag

Now an airplane leaves cotton sticks
crumbling in the blue
 my daughter rides
her bicycle and a girl in shorts passes by
orange lips small, round as a nipple

Those pink and red geraniums that parallel
our walkway
 make a decent bouquet
for any bloodbath
 Earth, ancient fertile ruin!
Death has dropped its eggs everywhere

~

N.Y.: GRAVEYARD OF THE IROQUOIS

There is this to swear by
a river
in places purely still
waiting
mirrors to substantiate
a final hope of order

But it's upper New York
and the Iroquois
are dead
The trees grow out of their graves
slender memorials along the highway
which is
accompanied also by the river

I am going to a name on the map
Delicate trees
primevally green and nascent

Among long-disembodied Iroquois
I hasten to amend
as I can
(tall-necked bouquets
on either side)
my private quarrels

~

Robert Peterson

Five Poems

BILL AS BACHELOR, BILL AS GROOM

1.

In the Tea Garden
while you look for that Bell
because it's a *bell* (or Lenore,

or true) I think of Cyrano, who
for the pure ways he could speak
strike, and cry

you'd rather be, hear your
bull-fiddle heart, see Keaton
manning a sleepless train

and send this: Purcell's music
as promised
if you die first, friend.

But screw the bell, Cyrano
was no drummer
& not dead.

And if I were you I'd shoot my mother.

2.

From formal gardens you flew
through impregnable houses
gasping "Love! . . . Just a little . . . !"

Where I live now
dogs of the rich
bay at the sun
and even stones are loaned. In a prime pasture
at 26, your bride is neat,

rubs your back and bakes ; bougainvillaea blooms,
 good cats slaughter mice
 and cows munch through cactus—how do I sit
 on your front porch
 predicting disasters ?

Only this morning the phone rang.
 It was Mrs. Malatesta,
 wondering where you are.

~

SOMETIMES, BESIEGED, I FORGET HOW TO DO IT

When I forget how to do it
 I've trouble conceiving trees, your eyes
 are lost in leopards
 & I watch myself closely, like a good leg
 while Hamlet fences.

Soft as ashes, I invite bitches
 to my rooms, light candles
 & appeal to their decency,
 but a man of thin shin
 slides also in
 & suddenly, a cold egg,
 it's to be alone again.

Off to the movies then, still uncollected,
 to admire this genial, pearly Samurai
 who lives on raw peas & gin
 & has only to sneeze to know
 Mercy is to know but not care
 what any opponent, even a motorcycle, means.

~

FOREIGN STUDENTS

Why
do all
Foreign Students
seem to be from Iraq?

And how
is
Foreign Students

(looking about
to be fallen in love with
at parties)

such an armada
of sleek

small craft
flying code flags

around my big ship

causing dreams
of barter
in honey
& biscuit?

~

A SONG

You'll not sing her
as tied to a pole

or elegant, or quivering.

She can get by
without you
(that's what the sigh means).

If she flirts
with a tiger tamer
slay an owl & keep quiet
& barnwise (the stars

out of it).

Be a man
at the most mad

for but one bosom (the heart's
implied)

—the rest you yodel.

~

SOME NEIGHBORS

Who retired every night
at Nine,
precisely.

And were heard to say,
from time to time,
"Bad dog"
only.

I was imagined by the wife
to be a mysterious parcel,
& reported weekly
to the Postmaster.

When the husband came by
he straightened his tie
& forgot why.

Whenever the son
wandered my way,
he was swept home
to face the wall.

Later I learned
they'd never owned a dog.
She believed moonlight
caused fevers.

and lived in terror
that the boy
might someday
call her by name.



Shabid Hosain

SIR LAURENCE OLIVIER AS RICHARD III
IN A LAHORE CINEMA

Across the hot scootered streets, past
The building mosque ("site for the first air-
conditioned mosque in Asia" says the board),
Through the betel-ruined walls
Up the stairs, beneath the ample-
bosomed, wide-hipped bending beauties, staring
From the posters, eyes wide with collyrium,
Around the green stucco goddess, a hound
Nuzzling her improbable breasts, we came
To the Grand Stalls, "conditioned climate by Trane."

Dodging the hard hail of our running world
We come to see the monstrous, glossy head
Stare watchful, devious from a distant screen,
And we have heard the high imperious voice
Beat faintly, without meaning, on our ears:

But these coloured distractions find a home
Here, where the edges of those splendid words
Fall soft, like feathers, on unknowing ears,
But rage and treachery speak loud and clear
When this black scorpion crimps across our eyes.

For the language vaults our senses
But these painted figures bring
Time and reason's sure defences,
We understand this real king
Stalking the tinsel alleys of the screen
In garish anger.

~

M. Salim-ur-rahman

Three Poems

A REVISITATION

Down where the river runs strongly
My footsteps lead me on
Beyond stagnant pools—their green
An opaque as death. Thin reeds.
A skyline the colour of exile.
To remember strongly is to live
Alone in a tense of death, beyond
The reach of resurrection's green.

Childhood of waters, paperboats,
Bridges of stone and dead men washed ashore;
Of sorrows shared by swallows, and at night
By lanterned ferries; of rains and floods,
And people driven from their homes by water
Starving by the roadside. River, proud
Without memories, wash this death from me.

Horizon sailing out with clouds.
Vast reaches. Reeds
Crackling like paper brown with age.
The river wears a mask of timeless will
Whose flow is oblivion, darkening to the seas.
Green is the colour
Of blind alleys, jealousies and death
By drowning. The reeds part. The sky-
Line etched, the sky in tatters.
And green and gored
The death within me crawls and clamours.

~

BLACK SOLITUDE

Tall against the blue a tilted column
Of white smoke; tentative dives
Of rooks, immensity of light.
It is a sky without reminiscences,
Without a cloud.

Anonymous light upon the yellow
Harvest—field on field of ripeness,
Removed and immobile. Far above them
A sky, withdrawn—a deepening azure
Beyond sound and silence.

The harvest waits, the colours whiten
Like things long lost, faded and forgiven,
As is each moment—blind and sensational—
A point of vision, so to see, entirely
A rush of darkness.

~

THE HAUNTED FOREIGNER

"Valencia in August, remember . . ." the nameless
Englishman cries each night in the old resthouse,
Inviting catcalls, obscenities and laughter.
Clowns are welcome, though their acts be obscure.

Night after night, with clockwork precision,
The footsteps are heard, the phrase repeated.
Peasants and watchmen, gathered outside, laugh,
As if at some trapped beast no longer menacing.

Night after night he keeps trudging across
The boarded floors, wound up, remembering,
In a threadbare voice, Valencia in August.
A fragment, where the memory is a long, lost season,

Once words, and now no more than some animal cry,
Absurdly lost.



Zulfikar Ghose

Two Poems

DECOMPOSITION

I have a picture I took in Bombay
of a beggar asleep on the pavement:
grey-haired, wearing shorts and a dirty shirt,
his shadow thrown aside like a blanket.

His arms and legs could be cracks in the stone,
routes for the ants' journeys, the flies' descents.
Brain-washed by the sun into exhaustion,
he lies veined into stone, a fossil man.

Behind him, there is a crowd passingly
bemused by a pavement trickster and quite
indifferent to this very common sight
of an old man asleep on the pavement.

I thought it then a good composition
and glibly called it *The Man in the Street*,
remarking how typical it was of
India that the man in the street lived there.

His head in the posture of one weeping
into a pillow chides me now for my
presumption at attempting to compose
art out of his hunger and solitude.



A SHORT HISTORY OF INDIA

Ever since Asoka's wheel advertised
the endless potential of endeavour,
the wobbly wheel of the bullock-cart
has ploughed the pumpkin earth.

The people remained earth-banks on the roadside,
idle as rubbish, while the imperial copper
of aggrandizement was hammered out until
the tinkering echoed in the loneliest alley.

Look now at the earthen-pot people,
their sun-dried clay.
Passivity can never be ruled,
nor a wheel negotiate a ditch.



About Our Contributors

STANLEY MOSS is the author of *The Wrong Angel*, a book of poems which Macmillan is publishing in April. Poems from our Autumn, 1962, issue will be printed therein, along with these five.

JOHN TAGLIABUE has contributed approximately forty poems to this magazine, which must be a record. Devotees of his verse, among whom we number ourselves, will not need to be told why the count is only approximate. John's notebooks on the Noh drama are contained in the latest issue of *Literature East and West*.

GARY SNYDER is presently living in Kyoto—happy man!—whence he forwarded these three poems to us. This is the first opportunity we have had to publish Mr. Snyder's lucent work.

PHILIP SILVER is a professor of Spanish at Oberlin masquerading as a scrutable Orientalist; however, he is an authentic poet, Quaker, and C.O. If anyone thinks Mr. Silver is gently sending up the editor of this magazine, and a two-time prize winner of ours named Kenneth O. Hanson, he may have something there.

DONALD KEENE, the great scholar and translator of Japanese, has a list of distinctions so long that one might believe him to be a man of eighty rather than a mere lad half that age. His most recent achievement is an opulent book on *Bunraku*, the art of the Japanese puppet theater.

LAURA ULEWICZ once ornamented the poetry workshop on this campus, and since then neither her teacher, Stanley Kunitz, nor any of her fellow classmates have forgotten the young Renoir model that she was, though she has since gone on to various literary distinctions, including a bemused editorial devoted to her in the *Litt. Supp.*

RICHARD MOORE wants it known that he is not the Richard Moore on Kenneth Rexroth's list of the thirty best poets under forty. Richard teaches at the New England Conservatory of Music, which should be good news for those to whom E-----h D-----t are two dirty words.

JON STALLWORTHY, the accomplished British poet, works for Oxford University Press in London. First appearance here.

GEORGE HITCHCOCK, the distinguished American poet, publisher, editor, lives in San Francisco. He published Robert Peterson's first book and is about to publish John Tagliabue's *Japan Journal*. Lovely men, all of them.

GENE FRUMKIN had a poem in our Spring, 1965, issue, edited by John Logan. His novel manuscript is being trampled on in a New York publishing house, while another group of inspired editors play touch football with his poetry manuscripts.

ROBERT PETERSON—Good Heavens, but there are a lot of nice people in this issue!—as we were saying, has been in three previous *Poetry Northwests*. In addition to teaching the poetry workshop at San Francisco State, he has a new book, *Praise for the Single Mind*, about to be published.

SHAHID HOSAIN, one of three Pakistani poets writing in English to be published in this issue, lives in Lahore, West Pakistan, where he works for Lever Brothers. He recently edited an anthology of six poets writing in English for Oxford (Pakistan).

M. SALIM-UR-RAHMAN also lives in Lahore where he edits a literary magazine in Urdu. He has recently published a translation of the *Odyssey* into Urdu, which has received wide critical acclaim. At present he is industriously and eloquently translating contemporary Urdu poetry into English for a special issue of this magazine.

ZULFIKAR GHOSE, born in the lovely city of Sialkot, is now a British citizen and has made a splendid reputation for himself in England and America. His book of poems, *The Loss of India*, was published recently by Routledge, and Macmillan will publish a novel of his this year. All three of these poets are in their twenties, and none of them has appeared here before. Indeed, it is Salim-ur-rahman's first appearance in the United States.



VIRGINIA KOBLER, whose water color was adapted for our cover, is a well-known artist active in the Peace movement.



ANN DOWNS, whose name appears for the first time on our masthead, as Art Editor, has planned and executed the covers of *Poetry Northwest* for the past four years, beginning with our Spring, 1962, issue. She is also responsible for the calligraphy of *Poetry* on our cover. Acknowledgment of her talents is long overdue.