

# Poetry

## NORTHWEST

SUMMER 1962

VOLUME III, NUMBER 2

NINETY CENTS





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## POETRY NORTHWEST

SUMMER 1962

### *Constance Urdang*

#### THE IDEA OF A HERO

##### 1. *José Blasio*

*In the golden age of the Valley of Mexico, Quetzalcoatl embarked in his wizard skiff for the unknown islands; but the people believed that he would come again. They believed it still when the Spaniards came, killing and looting; some of them, even, when Maximilian arrived, took him to be their god; tossed flowers under the wheels of the imperial coach; burned incense; sang the ancient hymns.*

I think I always loved him. Before  
He came to my country, riding on the sea,  
Godlike, bearded, white-skinned, I must have loved  
The idea of him; the legendary god. Later,  
I chose my sovereign.

There is nothing I have forgotten. I can tell you  
The clothes he wore, the wines he drank;  
I know his favorite dishes, horses, visitors;  
That first half-year, we gave more than a hundred  
Balls and receptions; we commissioned seven  
Portraits by seven painters; the bill alone  
For spirits topped a hundred thousand; one  
Must show oneself a king.

But later on

Among the echoing chambers, he was always  
Cold—the upland chill—so we built a palace,  
La Casa del Olvido, in the valley.  
Who can forget, being Emperor? They tracked  
Him there, his fears; his lady pined



And paled ; the others deserted  
 To bolder leaders ; I stayed behind,  
 Drew up his documents, arranged his assignments,  
 As if nothing had happened, as if his fate  
 Had not set out already from the north,  
 Wearing a black coat, riding in a black  
 Carriage, black eyes hard as obsidian . . .  
 We three stayed on : myself, his Indian  
 Mistress, and the fat professor,  
 Yet could not comfort him or keep him safe.

When he went with the soldiers to the Hill of Bells  
 He made me envoy to the Holy City.  
 There in the terrible labyrinth I found  
 The Empress, mad ; the Holy Father, blind ;  
 While I ran errands among the fountains  
 They killed him.  
 That is what they call history.

## 2. *Gral. Miguel López*

*It was reported that when Maximilian and Carlota made their first entry into Mexico City they were escorted on horseback by the same General López who later betrayed him: a mercenary 'with charming manners and a reputation for treachery.'*

Halfway across the capital the street  
 Of the ultimate indignity is busy, like any street.  
 The one they called the Emperor is dead  
 Like any man ; his lady  
 Jabbers in Belgium, mindless as a monkey.

What is it

That makes a hero ? Where you or I  
 See ships upon an ocean, the hero sees himself  
 Borne on the immaculate flood.

I am a plain man, rode

For three years in processions, wore my gold  
 Braid, medals, ribbons ; saluted, bowed,  
 Slept in a palace ; but I am no hero.  
 Above the beleaguered city I saw the hill,  
 I saw the ready rifles. I tried to save him  
 From being a hero. I did not need their gold ;  
 He would have given more, and the rascally Father,  
 His sly confessor, would have shriven my soul.

I tried to save him, gave him  
 The papers and the key ; any man,  
 Seeing the squads march out and back  
 Fumbling and sweaty under the single eye  
 Of the sun, on the Hill of Bells, would know  
 What was to come.

They tell of him

How long ago, in Caserta, in his own world,  
 He dreamed he would unsheathe the golden sword  
 Of the dead kings, his people, and slay the beast  
 Ravening on the empire and in his breast.

Now he is clay, having fathered nothing ;  
 Leaving behind him neither throne nor son ;  
 In the capital there is no monument ;  
 The people do not mourn ; the widow accuses  
 Him, in her madness ; so history is stitched up  
 Out of a sleazy fabric.

Where the firing squad

Lifts unimpassioned guns, the hero sees  
 Himself upon the hill between two thieves  
 Without blasphemy, in the pure light of his intention.

Cold as two sapphires his sightless eyes accused them  
 At the final indignity, when butchers despoiled his body ;  
 The mortifying flesh in robes of ceremony  
 Sailed backward across the ocean.



I never stood  
On that hill where he fell beside the little generals.  
They tell me he was brave. Being a hero  
Is a public job. They say I am a coward.

### 3. *The House of Forgetfulness*

Nothing of splendor remains ; under the jungle,  
Sprung pavement, fallen beams ; the old foundations  
Gaping like graves ; and granny, wrinkled  
As a fungus, monstrous luxuriance flowering among vines ;  
Telling her days like beads ; seeing,  
Twining among branches, the giant butterflies  
Pale as the souls of the dead.

She's real, though, dozing in the garden ; once  
Before her ignorant eyes, a company  
Posed in the authentic robes of tragedy.  
One might believe her old eyes see them still,  
Or does she dream ? The Emperor,  
Halfway disguised as any rural lover,  
Embraces, in tableau, the gardener's daughter.  
A white moth, signifying virtue, hangs  
Above the couple.

In the second scene,  
Comfortless on the terrace goes  
The somber shadow of a Queen ;  
Childless and fatherless, already she  
Mourns in the endless brilliance endlessly.

Now the Professor comes, hiding in his coat  
His life-destroying apparatus : nets  
In which he'll catch the winged and fragile things,  
Prey of his clumsiness ; in a bottle, sweet  
And deadly poison ; pins that will impale

Them, finally, upon his wall ;  
He bobs so comically down the walk  
Under his big umbrella, who could take  
Science seriously ?

In the fourth tableau,  
See how the Gardener's Daughter weeps and weeps.  
The melancholy Queen has sailed away ;  
The Emperor is catching butterflies,  
Careless of one already in his net ;  
Wiser than they in ancient auguries,  
The Gardener's Girl already has by heart  
Her own last speeches and her final scene.

All this the watcher, in her ignorance,  
Saw, did not see ; not understanding how  
Reality could imitate a play ;  
How could she understand these actors were  
True prototypes, heroes and heroines  
Mistaking life for legend ?

Years  
Afterward, mumbling toothless gums, crouched  
Among their extravagant ruins, she said  
Only, the emperor was grand,  
The empress sad, the stout professor droll,  
The gardener's girl not even beautiful,  
But that she'd heard that all of them were dead.

~

Robert Sward

THE CYCLADES

I

"The Greek islands,  
Mykonos,  
Tinos, Siros,  
yes, yes,"  
said the blow fish,  
conferring momentarily  
with a stone,  
with an octopus  
and a whale,  
"natural things  
come from the world!"

\* \* \*

*They are composed, in the North,  
of limestone, gneiss, schist and marble;  
in the South of eruptive rock, lava, basalt  
and trachyte . . .*

II

Pink cat,  
skin only  
in the white street  
lizard bones,  
twitching  
mule slop,  
Church bells  
Mobil (and olive) oil

cans, rusting ;  
it lives,  
blinks,  
blind  
crawls  
(gnats & flies)  
umbrella frames  
licking like life  
the earth.

III

Two old men, brothers  
the oldest in Piraeus,  
sailors  
part-time thieves,  
smugglers,  
and uncles to my wife,  
appear  
one upon the shoulders  
of the other,  
Midnight  
at a daughter's *Taverna*  
drunk  
O gloriously drunk,  
upon the family mule.

Introductions completed,  
we observe the mule  
(an enormous fish, perhaps  
an elephant,  
two other uncles  
or a unicorn)  
sipping beer.



## IV

Spidery legged  
 in sunlight  
 on dusty duty rock,  
 sentry  
 (Sgt. Ulysses S. Pismire)  
 the red ant  
*AS. aemete*,  
                                 runs  
                   sand grain  
                   web-thread  
*that* thin  
                                 knives  
                   (the blades)  
 all around him.

The time :

9:30 A.M.

\* \* \*

I observe this on my way,  
 (squinting, bemused  
 mildly dysenteric),  
                   on a guided tour  
                   through Delos.

V. *Statue.*

Front view, tall  
 very thin  
 marble, white  
 nude  
 a sort of pillar  
                   stone-like  
 only glowing,

## Woman

rigid, arms  
                   straight  
                   and straight down ;  
 The Cycladic Mother Goddess  
                   One, stylized  
                   highbreasted  
                                 dimensional  
                   PERFECT!  
 nose only, Big, wedge-shaped  
                   and those,  
                   her gigantic feet—  
 no eyes or mouth or hair.

## VI

"Chryssoula Koramidou, 45, yesterday  
 gave birth to twins in a Xanthi-Melissa bus  
 without being noticed by any of the  
 twenty passengers."

—*The Athens News, Saturday*  
*August 5, 1961*

## VII

Twelve years later,  
                   on a fig tree  
                   near Sounion,  
 we observe  
                   (blooming),  
 three hundred and eighty-four  
                   edible white baby bonnets ;  
                   and the bruised,  
                   plum-colored fruit.

\* \* \*

Black Greek goat,  
("time is memory")  
six-inch  
eyelashes—  
blinking.

### VIII

Death this time in the uniform  
of an American naval officer,  
black armband,  
sunglasses  
guidebook,  
camera  
pilot's wings  
and a live rose (white) in each hand;  
Death in mourning for whom?  
for what? and why?

~

*Robert D. Hoeft*

### Three Poems

#### SIEGE OF THE FIRE BIRD YEAR

We were balladeers of the grape that spring,  
Great-lunged orators of the thigh's design,  
But lost in a bottle and theory dollop.  
We cheered hi-ho and sank  
To the off-beat spiral of our smiles' decline.  
Three-eyed Willy was our first great loss,  
But we fell two fingers short of grieving.

For who could believe the incantations  
of a cut-rate mystic  
Or that third eye on the top of his head?  
A falling brick cured him of life and design,  
And God-Damned-Sam, the pretty one of the bunch,  
Sang an eighty-proof lament above his grave.

Always-pregnant Polly  
Complained in Sanscrit that her belly hurt.  
Jolly mare of our hurly-burly bunch,  
And prime dispenser of thermal logic;  
She left us in the ninth month after church,  
chanting Ave Maria.  
(We heard she dropped her bundle in a ditch.)  
It was down hill after that, and the sun turned blue.  
Won-ton Charlie sold his hand-carved Buddha,  
And Harry-the-Weed, always sad as a corpse,  
gave in to his wisdom  
And took to lying on the sidewalk, laughing.

~

#### LETTER FROM GUAM

In this land of not-quite-yet,  
Too-soon-to-tell delights  
Metal falls first victim  
In the red war of rust  
Whose doctrine is:  
Both sword and plowshare  
Are delicacies  
To my insatiable tongue.  
The automobile dies fleeing,  
A self-propelled junk yard  
Bound to brown obscurity.



Ferric posts pirouette  
On thin filaments  
Of declining strength,  
And beer cans ulcerate  
Into magenta lace.

Near the houses up on stilts  
(Pre-fabricated ruins)  
Bougainvillaea prosper  
In their neutrality  
To contrast the scene  
With a natural red  
Which is more emphatic,  
but less insistent.

~

## TWO SONGS FOR SLEEP

### I

My head is on the pillow,  
My hand is on her heart,  
And in their joyful softness  
I can't tell the two apart.

My hand enjoys the mountain,  
My head prefers the plain,  
For plain is cool as autumn  
And mountains hot as flame.

But flame soon leaves my fingers,  
Soon leaves my cooling head,  
Then love and I together  
Sleep like the newly dead.

### II

Your hair is Sistine-yellow,  
Your eyes are Mandarin-blue;  
All I see is history  
When I look long at you.

My arms are obsolescent,  
Grown thin by vast disuse.  
Our love, once a victory,  
Has now become a truce.

We spend our days in silence;  
Our nights are lost in bed.  
Between crisp sheets our bodies lie,  
The dying, and the dead.

~

*Philip Legler*

## Three Poems

### SPRING IN ILLINOIS

Tonight, watching for a trace  
Of dark clouds bunching, blowing in from the West  
With the air too still, too close,  
Like weathermen we tried to forecast  
(Held out our hands to the rain) to sight a tornado.  
We had been given plenty of warning,

The barometer's needle a shadow  
Of severe storms coming on either side of a line  
Between St. Louis and Chicago.

This is the season for thunderstorms,  
And all of us huddled on either side of the street  
In front of our houses echoed the warning.

Long winter over, we've waited—  
 Just as we did last year—for something to happen.  
 It's difficult to get excited.  
 Standing behind screen doors half-open,  
 Some of us have been waiting too long for the summer  
 And need more time for such a warning.

However we answer our phones,  
 Assuring our friends around us, we can guess  
 How it happens, funneling down  
 On either side of a line drawn across  
 Our lives. Now sirens, the familiar All Clear.  
 We will have to wait for another warning.



#### CORRESPONDENCE

At whatever void you sank into  
 After you fell from the sky of your pond in a mist,  
 Touching no bedrock there,  
 What morning, dreaming to meet your gods in the blue  
 Ice over your eyes and breathing a senseless air,  
 Henry, did you shake your fist,

Waking to find things out of hand?  
 Without your cod-line and stone, that instrument  
 Which fathomed a myth and anchored  
 Some common ground between your hut and the pond,  
 How could you find your way back here to Concord?  
 Though leaving was expedient,

Of course, do you remember much?  
 Can you tug at my line as I angle for deeper queries  
 From clouds, whether chanticleer  
 Sings as you bathe? Do they allow your hermit's itch  
 To fish? Or ask of the partridge who nests here  
 About the taste of huckleberries?

Not ever wagging a civil tongue,  
 Could you finally pull yourself together, restore  
 Your summer boat? Do echoes  
 Repeat these hills and the white breast of the loon?  
 Do you at all, like a pickerel tired of shadows,  
 Long for that home on the shore?



#### PORTRAIT

Home from books and children, Mary,  
 More like a housemaid than a teacher,  
 Stands by the window, feeds the canary  
 And offers the dog in the yard a bone.  
 Then sits at the kitchen table alone.  
 Sunday the preacher

At the Baptist church, a Mr. Montgomery,  
 Will thank her for the altar bouquets  
 She pledges to keep a loving memory.  
 In sickness and in health grown thinner,  
 She'll whisk home, set her Sunday dinner  
 Forsaking his praise.

Tonight she would not dream to think  
 Of callers. Fingers fussing (first  
 Things first), she'll tidy her desk, spank  
 The cushions, straighten pictures, worry  
 About the fate of her pretty canary  
 Wheezing the dust.

Mary, Mary, not contrary,  
 Why did the young men quit her, though?  
 Why did they leave her standing weary,  
 Not in the doorway, not at the altar,  
 But by the side of her mother and father  
 Dead long ago?



**Five Poems**

Translated by Makoto Ueda

**POLISHED METAL HANDS**

My hands are magnet,  
my hands are platinum,  
my hands are the pain of rheumatism,  
my hands glimmer in the heart of a tree,  
in a fish,  
in a tombstone,  
my hands lucidly glimmer.  
They go away  
already from the limbs,  
burningly hot and frantic;  
the fingers open for a divine revelation,  
the hands glimmer in the center of the universe.  
My glimmering metal hands,  
sharply polished,  
blind my eyes,  
tear my flesh,  
injure my bones,  
fearful, fearful.  
My hands are white, diseased radium.  
As my fingers violently hurt  
I secretly swallow a needle.

~

**MOONLIGHT AND JELLYFISH**

I swim in the moonlight  
to catch jellyfish swarming in a flock.  
My hands stretch away from my body

and extend farther and farther.  
Coiling with the seaweed,  
bathed in the moonlit water,  
has my body turned to glass?  
Something chilly and transparent never ceases flowing.  
My soul, almost freezing,  
submerges in the depth:  
it is almost drowned, praying.

Swarming here and there,  
trembling in pure blue,  
the jellyfish swim out in the moonlight.

~

**MELANCHOLY RIVERSIDE**

The rustling sound  
of reeds and bulrushes on the riverside is lonesome.  
Wild  
sharp tiny plants, or the stems of herbs, are lonesome.  
I, with my eyes closed,  
try to chew the root of some herb,  
to sip the juice of some herb, to sip the bitter sap of melancholy.  
Indeed, there is no hope for anything.  
Life is only a stretch of meaningless melancholy.  
It is a rainy season,  
it is like a damp drop of drizzling rain.  
But, ah, rain again! rain! rain!  
Strange herbs that grow there;  
a number of sad winged insects;  
they gloomily crawl about, crawl along the shore.  
Something passes on the swampy riverside:  
is it a funeral procession of those glimmering lives?  
Or the diseased souls of the glimmering spirits?  
The grass on the riverside where all goes naturally decaying;  
the strong smell of lumber that glimmers in the rain.

萩原翔太郎

月  
光  
上  
下

月光の光もあつて  
 むしろくちを授えんとす  
 手にかたをほめてのめり  
 しかりに遠くにさのへう  
 もくまにまつはり  
 月光の水のなりて  
 身は玻璃のたひとなりほそ  
 あなうて透きとほるもの  
 懐きてやまらに  
 なるいは凍えんとし  
 ふみに——つみ  
 ねるうきなりて祈りあぐ  
 けこにこゝろあかり  
 さ青にふちへつ  
 くらけは月光のふちを泳が  
 いうづ

新編三印

"Moonlight and Jellyfish," by Sakutarō Hagiwara



憂鬱の川邊

秋原翔太郎

川邊で鳴つてゐる

蘆や葦のさやさやといふ音はさびしい

しぜんに生えてる

するどい ちひさな 植物 草木の葉の類はさびしい

私は眼を閉らて

なにかの草の根を噛もうとする

なにかの草の汁をすふために 憂鬱の苦い汁をすふ

ために

げにそこにはなにごとの希望もない

生活はただ無意味な憂鬱の連なりだ

梅雨だ

じめじめとした雨の点滴のやうなものだ

しり ああ また雨! 雨! 雨!

そこには生える不思議の草木

あまたの悲しい羽鳥の類

それは憂鬱にまひまはる 岸邊にそうまひまはる

「あゝめ」として何の岸邊を行くものは

あゝこの光るいのちの葬列か

光る精神の痕雪か

物みなしぜんに腐にゆく岸邊のほとけら

雨に光る木枝葉のほけらさびしい

"Melancholy Riverside," by Sakutarō Hagiwara

春の實體

秋原翔太郎

かすかぶりもしれぬ蜘蛛の卵にて

春は みつちりとふくれてしまった

けにけに眺めみわたせば

どこもかしこもこの類の卵にてみつちりだ

櫻のはなをみてあはれ

櫻のはなにもこの卵いちめんに見えてみえ

やなぎの枝にも、もちろんなり

たとへば 蜘蛛のこどもさへ

そのうすうす羽は卵にてかたらかくられ

それがおのやうに、ひかひかひかひか光るのだ

ああ、瞳にもみえふ

このかすかな卵のかたちは 楕圓形にして

それがいちたるところに 押しあひへしあひ

空気がゆいつぱいにひろがり

いくらみよつたごむまりのやうに固くなつてゐるのだ

よくよく指のさきでつついてみたまへ

春といふものの實體がおよそこのへんにある

"The Essence of Spring," by Sakutarō Hagiwara

ありあり

ながい 疾患のいたみから  
 る顔は くもの巣 ぼろけとなり  
 腰からしたは 影のやうに 消えてしまひ  
 懐からうへには 藪 生え  
 手が 腐れ  
 身體 いちめん びびる めろやちなり  
 ああ、けふも 月 出で  
 その ほんほりのやうなうすら ありで  
 奇形の 白犬 が 吠えておる  
 しのめ、ちかく  
 さし— 道路の 方で 吠える 犬だよ。

萩原朔太郎

"Dawn," by Sakutarō Hagiwara

倦んだ病人

伊藤静雄

夜ふけの 全病舎が 停電しいる。  
 分厚い 分厚い 闇の底に  
 敏感な まぶた が ひらく。  
 (ははあ、 どうやら、 おれは 死んで らう— い。  
 いつのまにか、 うまく いった 人 だな。  
 占めた。 ただ おやみに 暗い だけで。  
 別に 何も いう ことも ない よう だ。 )  
 しかし、 すぐ 覚醒 が はつらう やって 来る。  
 押しこら— たのしみ 笑い。 次に 笑い。

"A Weary Invalid," by Shizuo Itō



## 手紙

神保光太郎

人間をさけて彼は山に入った  
人間をきらうて雲を友とした  
人間をおそれて鴉の子を育てた  
人間を忘れて想いを薔薇に托した  
人間に追はれ  
人間にしひたげられ  
人間の声のはるかなところに  
彼は孤独の栖居をもとめた  
彼は夜毎手紙を書き  
朝毎林の彼方の赤いポストへ投函した  
誰に手紙を書いたのだらう  
神へか  
それとも 人間へか  
人間を最もにくみながらう  
人間を最も愛しなごいられなかつた彼  
彼の手紙は  
この世ならぬ不思議なま声として遺った

"Letters," by Kotaro Jimbo

## 青い石

村野四郎

平和の日は花のように明るかった  
私はよくこの廣場をぶらり  
音楽堂のほとりの  
木かげの石に腰を下ろした  
あの大きな青い石

私はきよく  
戦争の禮禮をひき  
あつた瓦礫の街をこえてきて  
乞食のように  
この石の上にやすむ

私の胸はかまどのごとく  
熱の飢にいぶつている  
それなのに  
石はむかしのごとく  
青い苔むし  
遠い樹陰に沈んで  
しずかに私の下に横たわつていた

"Blue Stone," by Shiro Murano

## THE ESSENCE OF SPRING

With innumerable worms' eggs  
spring is swollen to the full.  
Indeed, as I look over the earth,  
every place is flooded with these eggs.  
As I watch the cherry-blossoms  
I see these eggs transparent all over the blossoms.  
They grow on the willow branches too, of course.  
Even in such things as mosses and butterflies;  
the thin wings are formed of the eggs  
which glitter and glimmer as you watch them.  
Ah, these eggs, too tiny for our sight,  
have a faint, oval shape;  
hustling and jostling everywhere,  
they swell and fill the atmosphere,  
making it as hard as an inflated ball.  
Come and poke at it with your finger-tips;  
you will discover there the essence of spring.

~

## DAWN

From the pain of long sickness  
the face is covered with cobwebs.  
Below the waist the body has faded like a shadow;  
above the waist grows a bamboo bush;  
the hands are rotten,  
every part is smashed and battered.  
Ah, the moon is up today too,  
the moon of dawn is up in the sky.  
In the dim light like that of a hand-lamp  
a monstrous white dog is howling.  
Near daybreak  
the dog is howling around a lonesome road.

## *Shizuo Itō*

### A WEARY INVALID

Translated by Makoto Ueda

Late at night the electric current stopped in all the wards.  
At the bottom of thick, thick darkness  
The sensitive eyelids open.  
(Well! It seems I am dead.  
All went well, then, while I did not know.  
Wonderful! Except for this absurd darkness  
There is nothing wrong as far as I feel.)  
Yet, soon a clear awakening comes.  
A hushed, lone giggling. Then a murmur.

~

## *Kotaro Jimbo*

### LETTERS

Translated by Rikutarō Fukuda

Avoiding human beings he went into the mountains.  
Hating human beings he made friends with the clouds.  
Afraid of human beings he nursed the young ravens.  
Forgetting human beings he gave his thoughts to the roses.  
Pursued by human beings,  
Tormented by human beings,  
He looked for a solitary dwelling  
Far from human voices.  
Every night he wrote a letter;  
Every morning he put it in the red post-box at the edge of the forest.



To whom did he write his letters?  
To a god  
Or a human being?  
He who loathed human beings  
Could not help loving them.  
His letters remained as voices strange to this world.

~

*Shiro Murano*

### BLUE STONE

Translated by Rikutarō Fukuda

The days of peace were flower-clear ;  
Often I used to cross this public square  
And sit on a stone in the trees' shade  
Near the bandstand—  
That large blue stone.

Today  
I drag the rags of war ;  
I come across the hot waste town  
And like a beggar  
Rest on that stone.

My heart smoulders like an oven  
With hot hunger ;  
And yet  
The stone is covered with blue moss  
As before  
And lies quietly beneath me  
Sinking into the distant shade of the trees—  
That large blue stone.

*S. L. M. Brown*

### Three Poems

#### RETREATS

First, for a long time, I forgot when  
Your head turned so and something in me  
Started like a parakeet from sleep,  
The veil of cages fell away  
And folded by itself upon the floor,  
A pillow for the nights beyond the door.

For a long time, I forgot your eyes,  
I was alone and only robins' eyes  
Reminded me of the house asleep,  
Enclosed in one vast purple eyelid,  
Swinging where the earth had swung.  
I felt the veins with burden  
Warm and wandering like mossy tongues.

Then, for a long time, I forgot you.  
Alone, only the world thought of you,  
I heard it when the wind swept through  
The austere scented grass  
And the unexpected star of frost  
Twitched like a wing beyond the fir tree,  
Ulterior in air, but not quite lost.

And I forgot the rising night in lovers' mouths,  
The taste of salty flowers circulating sleep.  
Not even the wild bodies of children  
Clambering release beyond a shoulder bone  
Remain to know that we are gone.  
Dreams are heavy stones and I sleep on.

"AU SALON DE LA RUE DES MOULINS"

Among the dusty hands and matted eyes  
Beards rise and fall all over Europe.  
Faces lift across the vapors  
Of defective table wine  
At an old memory caught  
In the shuffling of a pack of cards.

The women standing between dinners  
Watch their bodies' content  
In the backs of mirrors  
Settling on them like a lens:  
Eros focussed on a peacock's eye  
By an accident of vision.

In the flash of queens an old metaphor  
Of light runs through a sea of fish  
The way Adam must have seen it  
Under the rude margins  
Of an unprofessional age when  
All nouns were proper.

There Eve floats her mineral hair  
Diminishing in mouthfuls  
The place where Adam sits  
In hairy innocence to watch her bathe  
The surface of his head  
In deep reflection as she moves.

These innocents disguised in an old tune  
Enter in the service of the blues,  
And the wasted players and the whores  
Mirrored in the grey hair of the light  
Taste from the dark globe of ancient fruit  
The inner ear of an absolute.

ALBATROSS

In Alicante the heat stood column high  
and spined like cactus above  
rope footed brick layers paid to spill  
sweat and mortar into the street  
where it was their duty to go mad  
but we failed to love.

We came dripping from the sea, our feet  
bleeding mortar into the sands.  
Our eyes reeled at the natural terror  
of light and sea and palm bells  
ringing where the heat hissed like malaga  
wine in our hot clay bowls.

Blooming in the mortar death, the three-stamened  
cactus flower, like a wounded worm,  
followed the chartered merit of the sun.  
Leaning near, you cut the cactus flower  
from the earth, put it in my hair:  
here it runs my body through.

~

*Robert Bloom*

Two Poems

GLUG, SON OF BLAHA

The waterhole was poison.  
Whoever drank there got dead.  
In a hurry. Without thinking.

The lone star wrangler stopped.  
His horse Glug just whinnied.  
Soon it was midnight. Or later.



The lone wrangler saw a star.  
He got up to drink, but Glug  
knocked him down. Glug's smart.

The lone wrangler didn't know.  
That Glug was *so* smart. He  
kicked him in the belly and drank

anyway. Later he got dead  
rolling all over cactus. Glug  
kicked him right back, then.

Where it hurts. Remember :  
Don't drink no water when  
Glug knocks you down.



#### SKETCH OF AN ANTI-HERO

We spoke last of the new leader,  
who refused to enter the struggle,  
yet clearly observed the cur  
watering the walk, scented

the old perfume of rotten apples,  
pleasured himself in furs  
in the way of ancient manners.  
Uniform in solid colors,

he shifted these to mingle  
with the host of tribes  
about him, and disarmingly broke  
speech in fourteen jargons.

Much of his thinking was done  
in bed, with or without that lover.  
He died there, his sons elsewhere,  
and knew damn well it was over.

#### *Rosamond Field*

#### USES OF LOSS

The garden's stormed and grave  
With damage ; brown sunflakes,  
Fertile ashes of leaves,  
Reel down and faint awash,  
Their bronze rained and blown frail.  
I stand with you this midst  
Of sea transacting rose  
And warp of winter light  
That's worked the flesh of shade  
Clear down to distances.  
Its raw bright wave rushes  
The air, hurries me to  
Prepare for coming cold.  
I rake, steadying the  
Child in me, what's left in  
Piles to burn to feed. Time  
To mound up these banks for  
Use in other weathers ;  
Whatever cannot be  
Born away waits here to  
Break, at last, into fire.  
Cracklings blur the late blue  
Sombre afternoon in  
Slow smoke, yielding a kind  
Of harvest. Its red licks  
Bloom the bare stalks ; whitening  
Then they fall, flare down sounds  
My eye saves like seed : Flames.  
Gems. Tears. Coals. —Here, take them  
Before your earth burns out.

THE FARM AT RICHWOOD

In an old picture album  
there is wholly contained  
a late century farmhouse.  
It holds at one corner  
a single cupola,  
the fringe of a porch,  
all posts, knobs and flutings  
over which time most loves  
to hover with its wings.  
The people are grouped  
casually in the yard:  
such swans and sundials  
as seemed to the owner  
properly ornamental.

You see I am resisting  
temptation to employ  
symbols of transience,  
perhaps tilted tombstones  
of prairie graveyards  
(but notice the collie  
and the horse on the right,  
nose down in the grass,  
still hitched to a buggy:  
even the postures  
among the adults  
are informal within  
the proper bounds).  
Stiffness is the ritual  
of the photograph;

and yet it is incredibly  
longer than time  
allows for fifty years.  
There is my father,  
now a child,  
now doubly gone  
from my world.

Peering for my image  
I have traveled farther  
into my fancy,  
my fine leather album  
than time allows some lives.  
A collie long nosed,  
overbred and myopic,  
curled before me,  
I can only say  
singing past my past,  
I am no lover  
friend or mourner,  
who have the merest  
blood in this matter.

Therefore I shall not  
seek their loves or losses  
to be my gentle ghosts  
haunting these verses,  
but all my terrors rage  
to capture in the bearded  
composed face of my great  
grandfather the calm  
which through that stiff  
contraption, the camera,  
strikes at my fate



and leaves me dumb  
but to name two sons  
in all their honor.



*Lyon Phelps*

## Two Poems

### THE SAND CASTLE

*For Jerome & Maud*

The tides behind my eyes endanger my eyelids;  
salt water, after laughter and tears, for nothing  
more serious than—it's true! this story:  
a small boy and his sister have fallen asleep  
by their castle of sand, made of Mont St Michel  
and knives and danger on the California beach.  
They dream surrounded by Red Coats and Indians, and  
(the images of childhood are the most faithful)  
the magic circle that can fall around us  
anywhere, for safety's sake, anywhere, forever,  
if the castle out of sand we once built together  
stands within the sacred circle of the self.

Please God protect the knight in shining armor,  
his Indian friend, the intricate fisherman,  
the old lady (and her canary) taking the sun,  
the three dancing graces who multiply like bunnies,  
the painter of archives, the freckled boys at play,  
the policemen in dark glasses, and the old  
couple from Warsaw, yes, even the horrible frogman,  
the bikini dame with the eye on the end of her nose,  
and (with his ugly baby) the lush who sees!

But most of all please, Lady of Shells, may these  
protect the nuns at baseball on the beach,  
and the little ones who still speak and reach  
each other without any effort at all—and,  
make us aristocrats, put us back inside ourselves.  
Else we shall have to leave at last with the mother  
who says (whether we had one who said so or not),  
"Hurry up, children—I can't bear to see it go!" before  
we see water shoot up the beach and topple our towers.  
The sand castle there in the tide was the only real one.



### PORTRAIT OF A LADY

*Advice is what I think, but what scores  
is why I say it, believe me. If you  
approach me, this is how I am, to remember.*

She glides about her salon, heating,  
stockingless and in bare feet, coffee,  
serving memory like tennis balls.

She is decorously aware of no lines like rules,  
a sober platform, waxed and always ready  
for her giddy charleston, for the band. *Soubrette, madame!*

She plays both doña and housewife; these  
counter in her picture as they do in the flicks,  
and, *nolo contendere*, the girl wins! "My point!"

he hopefully cries—he's always there. Sadly  
and sagely she, munching her lips, whispers, "Oh,  
no, love, that was out." Over the line. She's

upset the match is over for today. And he  
screws up his side of it like a racket  
into a frame, thinking, "Day's petal, night's eye!"

*Ambrose Gordon*

### Three Poems

#### SOMETHING ALMOST REMEMBERED

His grandfather's fist, fair and mottled,  
Lay lightly on the arm of the old overstuffed chair  
And beat a strange rhythm, deliberate or not.  
His father moved a pawn and looked up.

Behind, a fan whirled and revolved,  
Blowing a corner of curtain.  
He himself was five, hot, hungry, and fearfully uncertain  
Whether the rhythm was deliberate or not  
And whether the fist (open or not) could open or not.  
His father said, "Check"—and looked up, stood up.

But whether or not the curtains, the hot  
Summer cushions (leather), two toddies, and grandfather's clock  
That beat a strange rhythm  
(In the back of his mind or the back of a decade?)  
—Whether or not they ever really

Were,  
Or were merely something another and older child would infer, confer  
On all the spinning afternoons,  
He could not say surely—  
Or even whatever it was that then did not happen  
Between the hot tick and the cooling tock.

~

#### I, TOO, DISLIKE IT

His sweat that smelled like curry  
(Lamb curry to be exact)  
Was for him reassuring evidence  
Of the thorny world of fact.

He sat hunched by a typewriter,  
The room was warm indeed,  
Till in his imaginary garden  
The toads came out to feed.

The Poetess near the window  
Leaned from the picture frame,  
Murmured to the poet  
His name, his name, his name.

~

#### EXCERPT FROM PAGE ONE

Though laid in quite different settings  
F. Scott Fitzgerald's Brett and Ernest Hemingway's Daisy are pretty much the same. Neither  
Is quite unlost; each is (in her own way) an unbeliever  
And both  
Are seldom, if ever, loath  
(If you get what I mean, sir. I do not wish to seem crude,  
But really I find them plain lewd,  
All these Left Bank and Long Island pettings).  
Paragraph.  
In what follows I shall attempt to prove  
Their common incapacity to love,  
Though laid in quite different settings. . . .

~

*Randall Gloege*

### Two Poems

#### ONLY THE WHITES RIPEN

Only the whites ripen  
Here at the water's end,  
The whites of sluice and sand,  
Of stricken shells and wan



Imperious stalks. Come  
Eyes, come mind, to a bold  
Limited shore, take hold  
Of white and know your name.

What enervates the swart  
Humps of the pressing dunes,  
What rises in the grains  
To form a whole from parts,

And takes the early light  
Upon itself, what moves  
Over those windy graves  
Is an aspect of white.

~

#### DEVIL'S CHURN

(an image from the Oregon coast)

It comes, the tidal wash  
Of water over stone,  
Salt on a foggy sun,  
The chill tenuous rush

Of bones. It moves where I,  
A shape contained in cold,  
Am very nearly old  
With rising up to sea

And settling down again.  
It steals, in loud ascent,  
In sliding counterpoint,  
Dominions from the drawn

Declivities of rock,  
New morning from the moon,  
Whole patterns from the rain,  
Turned foamy in the wake,

Precision from the gull,  
Sub-strata from the will,  
Possession from its shell.  
It springs, apocryphal,

In sheer impermanence :  
Great hands of spray contract  
My holding walls, each act  
Of wave on wave a stance

Profane with forms—a fish,  
Up-ended in a cloud,  
A spider and a head,  
The turbulence of flesh

And spirit, light and dark  
Refining into gray.  
Constant it comes while I  
Attend the churn in stark

Contention, for what is  
Will stretch to motion, seethe  
Through change. Salt-blessed, I breathe  
This ocean which I praise.

~

*Sheila Haggerty*

#### Three Poems

##### TWO FOR JOHN RANSOM

###### I. INCIDENT IN AUTUMN

"Be near me, be . . ." the old insistent cry.  
And so it happened that he held her warmly,  
But that was insufficient to her bones.  
The face she showed him was distraught and comely.  
Her lips gave out their share of stately moans.

Her eyes, however, darted overtones—  
 Of malice or devotion? "Probably,"  
 He thought, "it is some secret I will know  
 Before the first unsubtle rasp of snow,  
 Some lover, failure, or remembered plot."  
 Rather it was his narrowness of thought,  
 And hunger in her to be more than whole.  
 Wherefore she broke his clasp and weeping ran  
 About the autumn woods like any bird.  
 The cold leaves trembled when the wind began  
 Beside him. It was not the wind he heard—  
 Nor any other reassuring word.  
 Only the cold leaves falling in the cold.

~

## II. THE SPOILERS

"... out of ourselves for one dark minuet  
 And dancing; bone to bone we danced each other.  
 The wind rose high. The sun declined and set.  
 She was all summer air in winter weather.

"But you, my cousin Jessamine, who stare  
 Beyond the garden wall and slatted trellis,  
 Stare without dream or question, where are there  
 Roses to make you love, to make you jealous?"

He chafed and taunted that pale Jessamine  
 Until she rose up in a quandary,  
 And, plucking the darkest rose was ever seen,  
 She gave it him with looks uncousinly.

"Take it," she said. "I grew it black as sin.  
 Who gave you, cousin, leave to try my pulse?  
 Your love is gone. Though we are much akin,  
 You dream inconstantly. This blood is false."

The roses weighted with unholy scent  
 The night, that darkened slowly on their ardor.  
 The moon declined. The summer air lay spent.  
 What was there left, come dawn, of law, of order?

~

## PEACH CANNING

*For Josie Sloane*

Empty quarts, scalded now, and steaming on the hot air,  
 Wait her tree's harvest, the geometrical firm segments.  
 She stands, an old woman, by her kitchen window canning,  
 Stolid in flower print and a peach-stained apron.  
 Her hands curve for the knife, for the round fruits exactly,  
 Whose fuzzed skins, loosened in steam, smooth off  
 At her touch. The peaches gleam like gold on her hand.  
 As a calm surgeon, practiced in her art, she bares the core—  
 The ribbed core, staining the firm meat, smelling of almonds.  
 Again the knife descends, scoring another peach  
 In moist longitudes, halving, quartering to the red pit—  
 "One pit to a jar, for color," for the smell of almonds.  
 She packs each jar two-thirds with peaches, siphons  
 The heavy syrup in—juice on her hands and syrup.  
 Fruit-flies, like static, poise on her hair, on her earnest forehead,  
 At whose stiff pinpoint forms she brushes with half her mind,  
 Her eyes measuring the rows on rows of jars, her swift hands  
 Twisting, fitting the gold-ringed lids in place.  
 Now, while peach-jars, deep in their cookers, seethe, seal  
 Against time, now she will talk to me of peaches,  
 Her fruit, her long generations. What if below  
 In her cellar unused rows of peaches (under blue  
 Or green glass, rigid in autumn ripeness) stand?  
 This time is hers, and I will say only, from love,  
 Your tree is good, the fruit thereof like Lebanon.



## About the Contributors

CONSTANCE URDANG is appearing in *Poetry Northwest* for the first time—but that may be said about all the poets in this issue with the exception of one translator. Miss Urdang is Mrs. Donald Finkel (see our Spring issue) and has been published in *Paris Review*, *Sewanee Review*, *Poetry*, etc. Her home is in St. Louis.

*Uncle Dog, and Others Poems*, by ROBERT SWARD, is being published by Putnam in England this summer. Mr. Sward was in Bristol last year on a Fulbright grant, is at the MacDowell Colony in Peterborough, New Hampshire, this summer, and will take part in the writing program at Cornell University this fall.

ROBERT D. HOEFT, was born in Spokane and has degrees from both the University of Washington and the University of Oregon. He teaches high school on the island of Guam.

PHILIP LEGLER teaches at Illinois Wesleyan University in Bloomington. He has previously been published in *Poetry*, *Prairie Schooner*, and *Western Review*, among others.

SAKUTARŌ HAGIWARA (1886-1942) is perhaps the most admired and influential of Japanese poets in our century. He was born in Maebashi but spent most of his life in Tokyo. Already three separate editions of his complete works have been printed in Japan.

SHIZUO ITŌ (1906-1953) was born in Nagasaki. After graduating from Kyoto Imperial University, he taught at a high school in Osaka for the rest of his life. He became a famous poet after his enthusiastic reception by Hagiwara. He published four volumes of poetry in his lifetime and a *Collected Poems* has appeared posthumously. "A Weary Invalid" is one of his last poems.

We last printed translations by MAKOTO UEDA in the Spring-Summer, 1960, issue of *Poetry Northwest* (Vol. I, No. 4). He was then a graduate student at the University of Washington; he is now teaching in the Department of East Asiatic Studies at the University of Toronto. His book *The Old Pine Tree and Other Noh Plays* has recently been published.

KOTARO JIMBO is a professor at Nihon University in Tokyo and, like Shizuo Itō, graduated from Kyoto. He has published a number of

books of poems, a book of essays, *The Mind of Poetry*, and has translated Eckermann and Nietzsche.

SHIRO MURANO, who was born in Tokyo and graduated from Keio University, started as a *haiku* poet and then turned to modern poetry. He has published a number of volumes of poetry and is also well known in Japan as a critic.

RIKUTARO FUKUDA, himself a distinguished poet, has published a number of essays and translations of Western literature in Japanese. He is a graduate of Tokyo University and studied at the Sorbonne while teaching at the National School of Oriental Languages in Paris. This past year he has been a Fulbright visiting professor at Syracuse University.

S. L. M. BROWN is a graduate student in English at the University of Oregon. He is a graduate of Stanford and he, too, has studied at the Sorbonne.

ROBERT BLOOM is a schoolteacher and lives in New York. His work has appeared in various reviews, *Poetry*, and *Prairie Schooner* among them.

ROSAMOND FIELD is an instructor at Tufts University and the mother of three small children. This is her third poem to be published, the others having been in *The Nation* and *Audience*.

Another graduate of the University of Washington, HAZARD ADAMS is now on the faculty at Michigan State University in East Lansing. He has worked on *Epoch* and on the *Texas Quarterly*.

LYON PHELPS lives in Roxbury, Massachusetts, and commutes to New York City, where he teaches a playwriting course. He founded The Poets' Theatre in Cambridge. His play, *The Gospel Witch*, has been published by the Harvard University Press.

AMBROSE GORDON, a Yale graduate, teaches at the University of Texas at Austin and has had poems in *Furioso* and *The Carleton Miscellany*. He is at work on a book about Ford Madox Ford, a chapter of which is due in the current issue of the *Sewanee Review*.

RANDALL GLOEGE is a graduate student at the University of Washington, where he studied with Nelson Bentley. He comes from Billings, Montana.

SHEILA HAGGERTY's three poems have just won this year's Academy of American Poets \$100 prize at the University of Washington. She comes from Independence, Oregon, and graduated from the University this June.

Fritz EICHENBERG is chairman of the Department of Graphic Arts and Illustration at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. "Night Watch," printed with his permission, is a wood engraving from a portfolio "Eleven Prints by Eleven Printmakers," published by the Pratt Graphic Art Center.

The Editors of *Poetry Northwest* are proud to announce the magazine's new Advisory Board, a group of distinguished poets and critics, each of whom teaches, or has at one time taught, in the Department of English at the University of Washington:

Léonie Adams	Stanley Kunitz
Louise Bogan	Jackson Mathews
Robert Fitzgerald	Theodore Roethke
Robert B. Heilman	Arnold Stein

With their assistance, we look toward continuing improvement in this already more stable venture.

With this issue, Frank J. Warnke joins the staff as an Acting Editor, to replace William H. Matchett, who will be on leave until autumn, 1963.

### To Our Peripatetic Subscribers

All Fulbrights, Guggenheims and Summer scholars take note: Please tell us as soon as possible of any change in your mailing address. Include both old and new address (zone number, too). Your undelivered copies usually are destroyed. If copies are returned to us, we pay vast sums to retrieve them.

*Still Available:*

### *Poetry Northwest*, Double Issue, Winter, 1960-1961

(The four issues of Volume One are sold out.)

This double issue, with cover by Morris Graves, contains five poems of Vladimir Mayakovsky (the original in Russian) with translations by Victor Erlich and Jack Hirschman; and groups of poems by William Stafford, Harold Witt, Eve Triem, Joseph Langland, Earle Birney, Robert Peterson, Donald Hall, John Tagliabue, Sister Mary Gilbert and others; Thom Gunn's "Modes of Pleasure" and James B. Hall's "Memorial Day."

Copies of this extraordinary issue can still be obtained for \$1.25.

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