



POETRY NORTHWEST

SUMMER, 1961

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POETRY

VOLUME TWO



NORTHWEST

NUMBER THREE

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POETRY NORTHWEST

SUMMER, 1961

Hayden Carruth

Five Poems

THE SWAMP OF LOVE

Redwing — alighting — rocks on his spar of reed,
"Ocheree" jocosely, "ocheree" with merriment.
A March sun wimples the swamp,
Frayed and pale as worn wool, warming
The skunk cabbage barely and one astonished frog.

Sing me, sweet, the blowing rose,
North is a land of departing snows.

The swampside bank inclines, shall I say, softly?
Its boulders, loaves among the grass,
Afford an impression of waiting
As though for an honest couple,
As though for Pyrrha and Deucalion
Dumpish and potbellied from some Thessalian farm.
"Ocheree" sharply, "ocheree" with loudness,
"Ocheree," if the truth were told, a little coarsely.
And the South is a thing that comes from a very far sky;
Indeed the South is a wrinkled ancient calligrapher,
Say from Hai-nan with eyes like dirty pennies,
Brushing his delicate ribald letters exiguously
On the back of your hand.

Sing me, sweet, the blowing rose,
The awful distance a poor thought goes.

In a garden of great iris flowering
Like the hearts of unicorns plucked out for view,
Beneath the tree that is called pecan,
A woman in the thirty-sixth year of her life sits reading,
Reading (she writes in a letter) the dramas of Strindberg,
Smoking a cigarette, and with one foot
Jigging above the ground;
And her body
Contains wisdom and beauty like a book
With a bright cover and creviced pages
That rise and fall, slow butterfly wings, in their revelations;
And is also in some respects like to a spice closet,
Being nutmeg-brown and in some parts obscure
But in others light, and being
Of the good odor of citron
Or, it may be, mace
Or another
Known to those who have acquaintance of fine things.

Sing me, sweet, the blowing rose,
Poetry talking as if it were prose.

O chosen history, so dear alien tongue,
My English tuning the scene baroque, the wit
Of frolics waged among huge formal beds,
All to the end of cavalier cast low,
Is he the tyrant still, that aureate boy
Whose barbs you rue in numbers sweetly pure?
Is that affection cruel, that bond still hard,
Ruling us, masters, greatly in your lines
For ears time-schooled and fondly orthodox?
"Ocheree" barbarously, "ocheree" like a hooting jade.

And the woman rises, putting away her book,
Yawning perhaps in unformed annoyance,
And looks upward through young leaves of pecan,
Up to the north sky,
Remarking the absence of clouds.
Is there not a tedium to be found in the
Dramas of Strindberg? Reading
Is an act of patience — waiting, waiting —
And patience is perhaps less an act
Than one's arteries like the bruise-flowered wisteria
Seeking to root in the ground.

Sing me, sweet, the blowing rose,
Annual yesses, annual noes.

Hear the swamp now. The reeds are
Swaying and clacking.
Already southern voices begin,
Talking, talking severally and satisfactorily.
Then this is the manner of assurance —
Not fear, as in intimidation,
Nor hopelessness, nor servility;
Not, though pain stays, constraint.
"Ocheree" triumphantly, "ocheree" with realism.
Liberator! In sorrowing distance,
Severing luck,
Loss,
Still this creating call to the new world comes;
Poems and more, the mind's days all well wrought,
O Bolivar, intelligent and free!

ALIVE

I used to imagine we were a fine two-headed
Animal, unison's two-tongued praise
Of fastened sex. But no, though singly bedded
We went separately always.

When you burned your finger and mine smarted
We had neither one body nor one soul,
But two-in bright free being, consorted
To play the romance of the whole.

It was good, else I had surely perished.
In change, may an unchanged part survive?
As it is, shattered in the sex I cherished,
I am full of love, and alive!

SONG FOR SARA

Yes, I know, I did go in unto the Egyptian bondwoman,
Hagar in her dark tent,
Wherefore the child Ishmael is like to a wild foeman

Against me now, my black soul unvanquished, unspent.
And I know also
How you became again my sister in wonderment,

And gave your pride unwillingly in the house of Pharaoh
And to Abimelech
The Philistine, because I feared your beauty. God bestow

Comfort upon you. Yet remember, we two set this tent stake
In these proud hills
Of Canaan, two together, two blessed by Melchizedek,

The truthful priest; and neither alone fulfills
Or even understands
The terms time drives like tent stakes in our wills.

Perhaps for this I gave into your hands
The Egyptian maid,
For this great kings unsware their demands

Upon you, returning you, so that I who had been afraid
Bore the shame then.
Now you laugh; in your bitterness for a love delayed

You ask if the giggling nerves shall respond to my touch again.
Sara, your laughter
Is a little solemn fox, the denizen

Of my heart's cave barking in his sleep, yet softer,
Sister, than Hebron's bees
Among the lilies. Your voice sorrows me. After

The journeys, the alien faces, the languages all p's
And q's, the wars,
A nephew in hot water, and now riches, this goodness and ease,

After God's voice like phosphor in the firs
At Bethel, the angels
Conversing with me in the twilight out of doors

And on the hills, after all this still memory jangles
Like a bell gone false,
Clacking my ignorance, my fears, and the lie that mingles

In everything we think. The heart beats, the will halts.
Princess, my sister and wife,
Forgive me, it is I who fail; and God, who exalts,

Comes to our tent now, bidding us to life
After all,
Bidding us give what we are, scabbard and knife.

What we are: love means to use, to make use of, to recall
Every taste of the years,
Choosing this, the best that we are, two even in downfall,

O wife, sister, princess, mother of hope. Tears,
Fears,
No, they are gone. This homely song alone must sing in your ears.

1

ANALOGY BETWEEN A CERTAIN LADY AND A FIELD MOUSE

Both are small and agile and active, brown
Of countenance, so simply soft that hands
Stray toward them without thought. Both love
The country, and do not love the town,
Except by dread fascination that betrays them.

And if in a cold year one comes in your house —
Field mouse or lady — do not hunt up your trap,
For little harm is done by a wild thing;
Their pillaging is all a kiss or a candle,
And they are gone again when it is spring.

ALGERIA

Years gone by (in Chicago once)
The Chalk Man came on an April day's pastel;
Ever since
My business has gone ill.

Because one day as I came home from school
A trilling woman spilled from an untuned house,
Thrusting her child
Into my arms; it jiggled and looked droll,
But she was wild
And ran beside me like a wounded horse.

I expect the doctor said what could be said.
The thing that I had brought to him was dead.

It was heavy;
Resilient, rubbery, collapsible;
Unbalanced inside like a boat of gravy
Or a water-filled rubber ball.

That was an image of death.
And my waxen father orated in his casket.
And alas, during the war,
The crashed bombers had people underneath,
Though they were not really people any more.
We fished them out and put them in a basket.

I am thinking at this time of the lovely land
Where palms more beautiful than herons
Sleep and stand
One-legged by the waters, and the flowers
Caress the old men in their barrens,
Pouring out splendors upon forgotten powers.

Now they have bodies there,
Blood on the paving-stones,
A bad smell in the mountain air,
Dead bodies, dead bodies, old meat and bones.

And the whitecapped seas grope down that coast,
White hands beseeching, pale and lost:
So many. And yet the sea is blue
And all that red has vanished long ago.

For God's sake, stop. Please, stop.

Isn't this faith
In your good bodies' breath
All you can hope?

George Woodcock

Two Poems

ARCTIC DEATH

High in the grey, and golden gyrating,
Osprey and eagle wheeled above those
Blond explorers whom northern autumn
Closed in and caught too late for leaving.

Hare's fur blanched, marsh slime set granite,
Bushes burnt crimson, charred grey for winter;
All game had gone, by stealth retreating
To treelines provident with lichen.

Too long they'd waited along the traplines.

So in bleak barren, tempest-bitten,
Bivouacs built, a wealth of corpses —
Fox and marten in wall-width morticed,
Matted fine furs in aspic winter.

There chewed raw fish, shrugged cold, despaired,
Yawned in the daze of snow, and slept;
Like silver kings in that locked north
Waited the sweet, corrupting spring.

READING TOLSTOY

Now Levin drinks the water flecked with rust
And in my mouth a bitter tang of iron
Draws flat. Rabbits lived then; their sandy warren
Grew mushrooms big as plates; dark in own dusk
The oakwood clambered down its red soft cliff
And stuck its feet of alder deep in bog.
In that sour sedge once woodcocks came to dig
With long pronged totem bills and stiff
Steps angular. They fled in lumbering zigzags.
Whether I saw those rare dark namesake birds,
As once bright hoopoe high on Alpine road,
Or made a myth from small snipes' stilted legs,
I know no more. But see the marsh return,
The birds in problem shadows strutting, brass
Blaring of kingcups down the dank morass,
And dense beneath the cliff a nest of fern
Where crystal out of green the spring jets forth
And fills the small tin cup whose taste wakes in my mouth.

David Cornel DeJong

Two Poems

ANY NUMBER

Take any number;
wheel them away
in wheelbarrow which
whistles an underside
bar from someone's
ditty; take any number.

Rumble away, across
bricks laid in
the staid patterns
of their day, an ended
day in which a workman
with harlequin mood
kept masoning away.

The trees, the democratic
trees hang over and
suffer birds to keel
and scream — you are
like a brideless
bridegroom beneath them
wheeling away your
own days, any number.

Take any number,
pick any cipher,
choose any name
to keep a tryst beneath
the common trees with
an empty altar and

a parson who would
prefer you to go
to bed with his church
instead. . . . Any number!

It is so long you
are expected to push
a wheelbarrow with
intentions, factuals,
accidents and moods,
you didn't expect,
did you, your boss
of a God would be
there with moiety,
with his abacus to add
up any number;
take any number . . .

1

FANTASY . . . *As Always*

Elk denizen of Elkhart,
fenced in; we push
noses together, his wet,
mine sun-peeled.
A custodian shouts:
Son, what the hell
goes on here,
what goes on?
I mumble down my tie:
I love the wilderness
beast, love it wilderness-
big and just as crazy-high.

Get back to your marbles,
he scolds, be instructed
proper-like in a school
I pay for out of my jeans.

Hell, says the elk with
hay-hungry eyes, he's
the one thinks he's civilized,
but you should see the dirty
sty of his back of the house
mind, and he tortures me,
withholding feed.

From the elk place of
Elkhart where I was born
I have these elk-away dreams
sitting at the mouth of
an unthinkable cave, and
I am unmindful, undressed,
unrepented, unclean, school
skipped and every custodian
killed and me and the elk
on a ten-year binge finding
out what wildernesses are
inside and behind, which I never
can, not when laughed at by
rabbits who sit in their hutches
belonging to men who keep harmony
or politics right in their laps
like lettuce leaves, but keep
them for ornament or torture.

Vi Gale **Two Poems**

HAZE

More than gray
but less than purple, hangs like a giant
smoke tree tenting our suburbs.
Fringed petunia, windfall fruit,
random dead sparrow caught in a smalt
blue waft, drift tranquilly over
the draggled lawns as Indian summer
holds its big burn.

Actually, yes,
certain free emanations of rot,
minute indestructible solids,
have risen and colored the atmosphere.
A beneficent brake on growth, a source
of petroleum, they will wash harmlessly
down, trapped by the pelting showers
at cycle's end.

Except that just now
WHOOM — a jet from the Base has broken
the barrier and shaken our particle tree.
Somehow the canopy stretches reaching
over a world of They and We.
Which rots? what burns? where are they testing?
What do the samplings have to say —
how deep should we breathe?

EVENING WITH RELATIVES

Dishes and visit are done. The fire burns down
but old coals are given a shake.

The talk works round to an old-country *tant*
 who trudged from house to house with a long sack
 picking chickens for feathers to plump up her bed.
 How, with this practical talent,
 (fingers nimble as shuttles)
 she took the bog-path one night
 counter to sense and advice, without lantern or stick,
 on a rumor the berries were ripe.
 And there, in the wool-sock dark, tripped;
 (any sieve-head would know)
 a year's work untied left her picking
 feathers from berries, berries from feathers,
 cloudberry mash from wet down.

Their laughter trails. An old clock ticks.
 I keep my hands still.

Arnold Stein Three Poems

A MONUMENT FOR CHANTICLEER

Took the Christmas rooster off his roost
 And quick uncocked the startled ghost.

Plucked the feathers off his back —
 Pitted, emerged the bare skin-sack;
 Ridges of bones, valleys of skin,
 Stark profile of the bird within.
 Plucked the feathers off his drumsticks —
 Two stilts, two juiceless jointed broomsticks.
 Plucked the front and all was done —
 A shored-up ship's keel skeleton
 On the ways, lonely, laid, unmade,
 Fragile as the unborn dead.

He was a venery-perfect lover,
 Selfless feeder, unstinting treader,
 Athlete of Ceres for Venus, pious
 Pecker of grains for his hens — O *casus*!

*While our light lasted we were love's martyr,
 Lamented now by hens and master.*

AUGUSTUS ANONYMOUS PARADES IN THE ROMAN FORUM AND CONTEMPLATES A FRAGRANCE OF MAY

No stump of pedestal
 Or patched column
 Can signify me.
 My private marvel
 Ripples the grass
 Where I come.
 Out of eternity
 God breathes me,
 And I stiffly pass,
 Like all He remembers,
 But curious.

A momentary gust,
 Anonymous,
 Disformed as death,
 Particulate as dust,
 Freshens and limbers
 In the moist shape of breath
 I recreate.

I stand august,
 No one almost,
 But I pinch a ghost
 And feel my fingers,
 And punctuate
 What I relate.

RESEARCH

My friend, I shall be blunt and fearlessly crude:
The gods do not arrive tailored in marble,
By one spurt of inspired hand fashioned eternally
When ready. Nor do they grow upon us (too crude),
Nor in us (quite), nor we in them (exactly).
But something grows, perhaps between us. And the blaze
Of revelation figures itself to the mind
Prepared to see its very own discovery
If reflection fuses three clear images:
The self in the glass and the self either side of the glass.

But there are other options more familiar.
Reflection may refuse the choice occasion.
Then you bequeath to time the belated honor
Of naming the gods you made to love you in secret,
Who kept you keeping them. Twist where you will,
They follow and lead you; and you have no voice, no name
To call them off; but you hear the whisper of your own
Sweet secret name. Besides, most gods demand
As well as comfort. Deny them and they take
Terrible disguises and smile to break your heart.

I know. I have an ancient heart and call
You by the fearless name of friend, my teacher.
From you I learned my most reluctant wisdom,
A family of grotesque effects returning to breed
In a cause. Only a clever tailoring of shadow
Barely can hold the form. The ear grows quick
For the snap of stitches, and we repair discreetly,
O master, and bide the time, more careful than hopeful,
And practise wisdom in the art of minor discoveries:
Which yields a kind of small endurable honor.

Susan Rotholz

Two Poems

INVITATION

Take your eyes out of me
you have no right in there
with my sorrows, I have kept
those rather secret
Get out of my soul, damn you
you don't even talk to me
yet you've pierced a wall
I didn't know I had

Get out. I will not tolerate
your black hair, you
remind me of a cat I once dissected
in biology and hated

Go
take your pot
your drums
your cowboy boots
hop a ship
or something
and leave

You don't do anything
but sit around
being intense

I have caught myself dreaming
of your eyes
the Orient
Mexico
turquoise lint
and Japanese noodles

This can't mean anything
you are inevitable
I'm not

I don't have room for intensity just now
I am busy with a mask of my own.

1

LOVE POEM

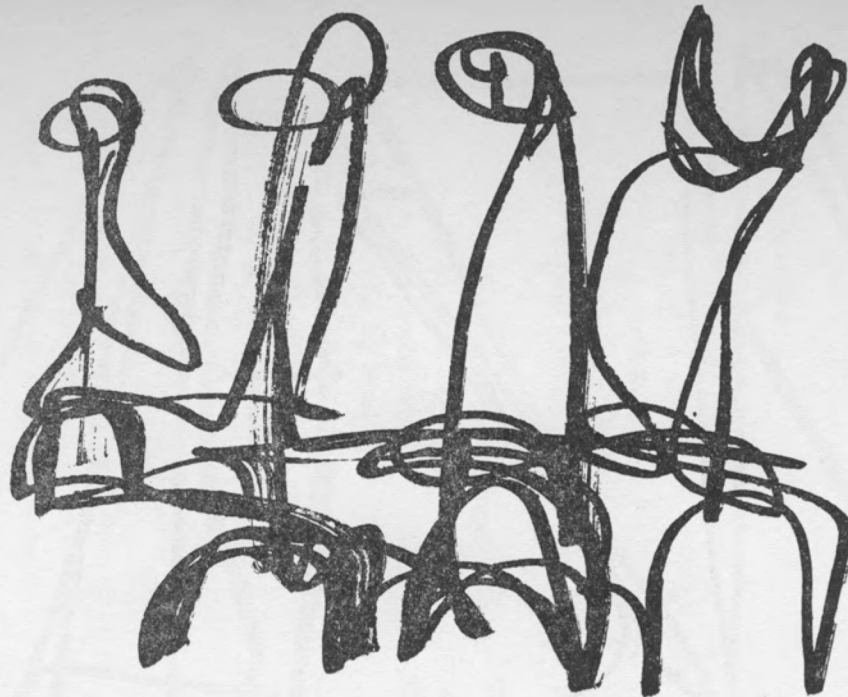
I was a young sun
in the night sky
and my purple lover
sang me poems of ice.
A small sun in an old sky:
I never dreamed of you.

In the countless mornings
since yesterday
with flowers sewn
behind my ears
I have done everything
wrong. Still,
I never dreamed of you.

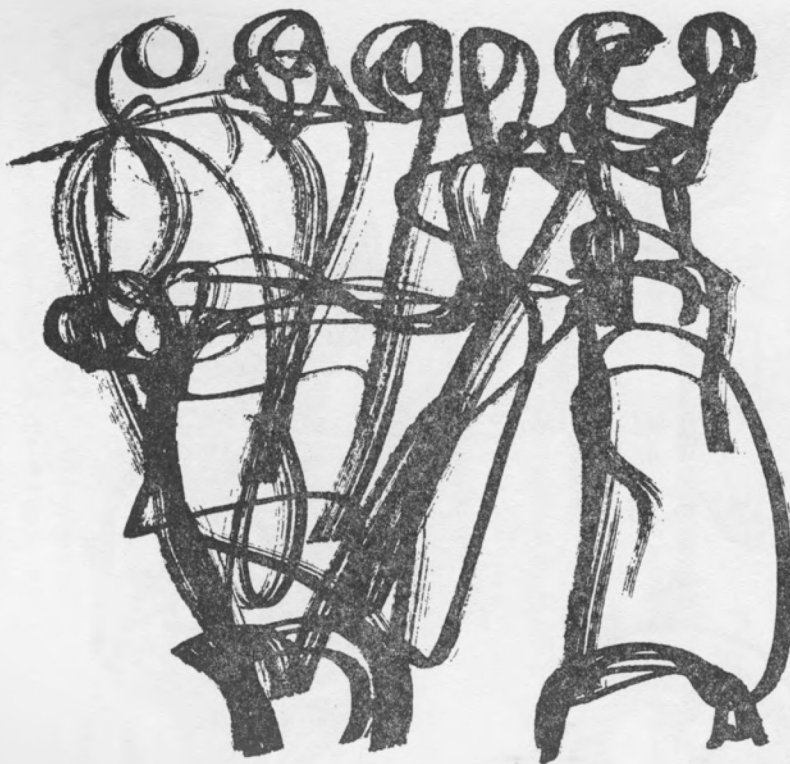
A boy in horn-rimmed glasses
brought me an avocado
too young and tough to eat
so we played catch with it on the avenue
all that night until we broke
three windows, two mirrors
and a heart, and yet,
I never dreamed of you.



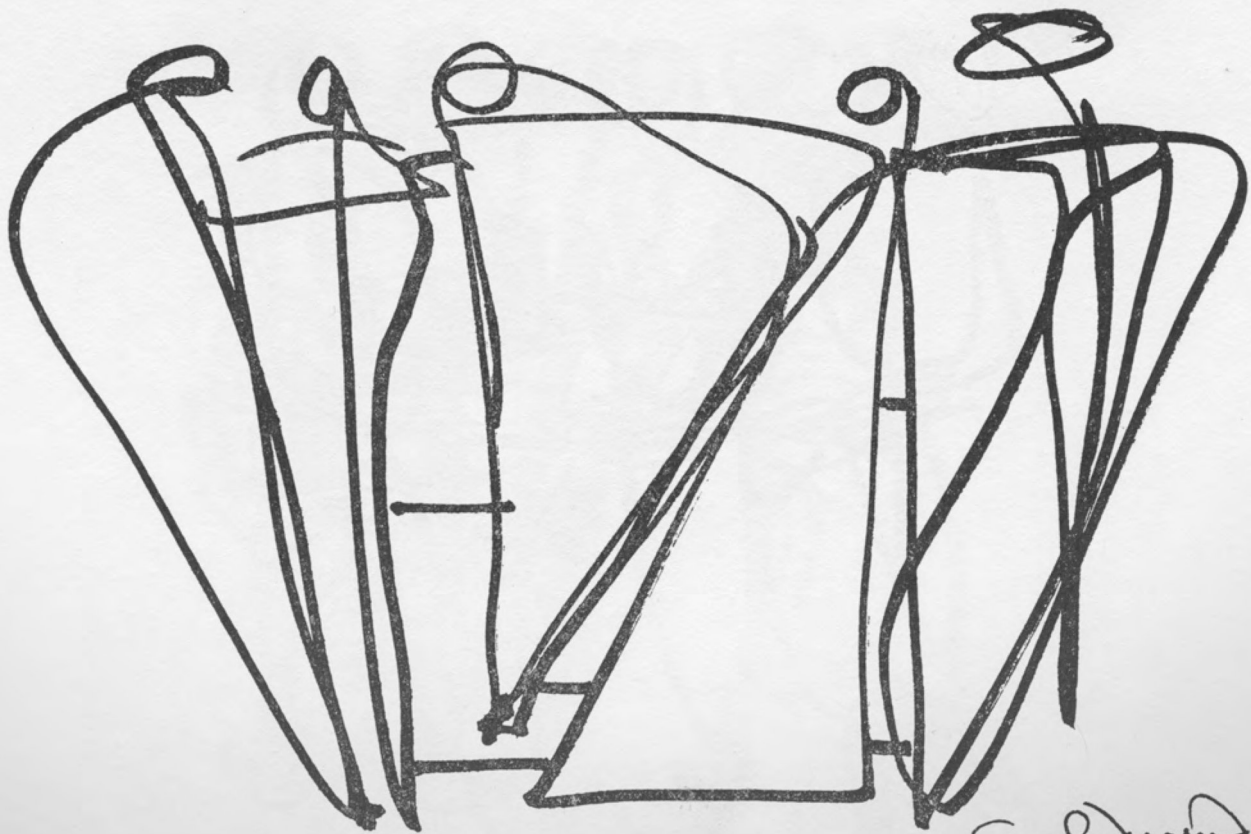
Carl Mowat



Carl Morris



(Carl) Morris



Carl Mowbray

John L'Heureux, S. J.

Five Poems

APPREHENSIONS IN THE AFTERNOON

Afternoons drifting into snowbanks, the hours
white as the light snow falling, call
the turned mind softly toward tomorrow
and more snow drifting. The swiftwings crystal.
Counting snow is not the poet's only;
saints also tend to be involved.

From random afternoons and the drift of snowbanks
from snowlight hours when the mind turns inward
when no snow falling calls with a patterned summons,
to consolidate thought that, after all, I am —
and despite philosophers who want to prove He is —
God is, and things; to consolidate thought
of the whirling snow, to know it and its meaning
is not the function of the poet only.

Judgments lie between the lines not on them,
never wholly saying what they see,
but with holy innuendoes hinting, beguiling,
lingering in dark corners with a cupful of light,
hoping the spilled blood
will life the cold seed sown how long ago, forgotten,
in the hard earth whitened with the snowfall.

There is the penalty of snow in the afternoon:
the casual obsession displaces the dream.
Snow falls to heaven and valleys probe the sky,
paths of glory lead but to more paths. Saints
die unattended, like a painful memory, lying alone,
forgotten, and unburied. And if not forgotten,
so much the worse, misapprehension being what it is.

Afternoons drifting into snowbanks, the hours
white as the light snow falling,
when words serve only as counter winds
swelling the spindrift snowflakes falling
slowing thought and obscuring the vision,
can all the lingering in darkened corners
the cupfuls of light and the bloodstained snow
life, give life to the cold sown seed?

Can meaning of being burst
like a spring bud opening credibly
believing brief violets still have significance?

And from what apprehensions or random afternoons?

WHEN THE TREES SING

Sometimes the earth music hymns us
and the temporal chords sound us separate
until within there is not you nor I but only the trees
singing the wildnote and calm. And it is good.

As today, for instance, by that rational brook
when we stopped to wonder Van Gogh's poplars;
think all the hay came sprawling across the meadow to us
spraying shadows on the shallow water and not caring,

letting the well strung wind stroke it to sound,
a chant spoken in the wind's echo, and wind gentle
as a hand upon the harpstrings, or your mind
softly hymning my somewhat foolish heart.

Nor were the poplars any wiser, all strung gray and taut
chorusing deep responses to the blackthorn,
hawthorn, and the purple thistle. Even the wild carrot
and the marsh tufts musicked for us, musing
not the moon ever nor the sworn stars but all ways you
only and tomorrow.

This spring, however, having bloomed untimely,
we walk in silence noting
the lurch of the poplars and the sky's stern opinion.

A SMALL PASSION

Aware of the cold dimensions
of this moment, aware of alone
and stolid by the empty stair
stooped by the stair
and the silent clock
hearing the knock of
the oak

On the stone porte-cochere,
I steal the broken air of midnight
moonlight cloaking awareness of
the stair and the clock
and the closet where
there must be answer.
Twice there

I rubbed my eyes and listened:
once because the air was winter
once because you were there
below the stairwell
crumpled an hour
in a sweat of blood
waiting.

And I did not move to soften
the dimensions of the hour; not
move; stolid; the midnight
would not strike
and the dull clock
ticked insensibility
away.

THE MUSEUM

we could never guess
why in the first place
the title had to be in French
a tongue all thorns and blossoms

l'agonie au jardin

pretentious certainly
but not more so than the picture
washed in seven off-reds
ochre amber and Chinese vermilion
crisscrossed smears at the top
and from the bottom
some ghosted ironwork
twisting to an obscene wreckage

we never liked it

Rembrandt at least made sense
even his dreams lived
and his side of beef looked
a side of beef

but a maelstrom red
and part not even finished
smeared with gashes
of yellow
and in places the canvas showing
could only be pretentious

like a dream or almost
the same disjointed logic
of sleep
when the blue trees autumn us

the ironwork looms toppling
the embarrassed frame
of a gutted building
and chilled lives stoke the furnace

we stayed for an hour

like wires crackling
but in the dream
all time had stopped
and the wires rang
to the wind's low moaning

tomorrow burst
like a fever upon the quiet
garden where only the low
moan of the Paschal wind caught
at the throat

doors locked
the airless rooms smelled musk

the wind in the wires
outsang St. Matthew's passion
in the fever well

while suns rain
down upon his sunk head no
gentle fire
but flame bright as lust
and all corners of the lurking
garden blink despair

and the night's sterile god
effulgent in the west
a star of singular purport

crimsons the garden with light
enough for an angel
who hastens down along
the lost Easters to Auschwitz
bearing a lily

the picture itself
was somewhat disappointing
still we liked the title

1

SYBILS

she was no sybil
golden as a Roman autumn

she was a deep water

her glance was a pebble
a small finite crystal
of infinite facets

dropped into the well
of forever and falling
falling fell beyond time

waters rushing to prophet
tell no sudden wonder

tell the expected often

forgiveness is flower
and love a partaking
of all love

tell eternity standing
at time's entombing

spring lilies blooming
on the grave of night:

prophet of waters
waking Roman words to vision

waking with every
lithe believing morning

dry twigs
to flesh sinew and bone

1

Florence Victor

Three Poems

SATURDAY EVENING IN EARLY SPRING

Like a ferocious parent
The chestnut man hurled his smoking carriage
Down Fifth Avenue

Sparks flew
Taxis blew their horns
The wind thought lewdly of snow

Pretending not to be going home
I scowled at the statue of Atlas
And watched

As one belligerent chestnut
Leaped to the dust hissing unpleasantly
While the vendor ran

Scooped it up cursing
Galloped back after the wagon and spat
As the light turned red

AFTER THE RUSH-HOUR

The woman with the Goya-skull
Lurched with the subway car,
Clutched her shattered head,
Sank in disbelieving pain,
Graceless and embarrassing as death.

We sat and wished we weren't there.

"That man will help!"

He doesn't care.

If only she would bleed or scream!
(Attempt to soothe another's dream?)
What can I do? What can I say?

"Lady, are you dying?"

("Lady, are you *dead*?")

"Can I comfort you in any way?
Take your pulse, or hold your head?"

I rushed as from a grave,
Despising all the living things in sight
Trampling up the stairways to their buses,
To their husbands, to their wives.
In the morning I sought absolution
From the *News*. There was no word,
Since, running from it as we did,
Death is nothing that we'd shout about,
Content to be alive and ignorant.

EPITAPH FOR A LONG ENGAGEMENT

Afraid of saying no she said a few small yeses,
And felt resistance surge in every cell;
Her lover said good health is merely gambling and guesses,
And told her what to say if she'd stay well.

They gobbled pills at random from the winter to the fall,
And said prescriptions only heal one's pride;
Their health grew worse and worse, so when the game began to pall
They toasted down an overdose and died.

John Woods

Three Poems

THE LIGHTING TECHNICIAN

In the beginning, there was dimness,

What light fell
On Morning One?

Except the exits, promising for some

The waters roll
Above and down.

A way out: Mars with blood in his eye,

What set flew
And which stayed down?

Brothels, high radio reefs for swimming planes.

Turn on the blue,
Switch on the lawn,

Then the single spot. The sun hangs on the cyclorama.

Roll on a tree,
Slide on its double.

Things rise to the surface of the eye: five chairs,

They mingle seed.
Then all our trouble

A table, tape recorder, dixie cup, look away, look away.

Begins when suns
Commence to tick

When the light drew back, the eye stepped forth

And wind us in
The dying clock.

Into darkness. Everything since, an afterimage.

On Morning Five,
Hardly a whale

Tinge the Lovescene red, the Recognition blue.

Is not alive.
O Duplicate!

Fade out the Farewell at the Station, flick neon

O Mimeograph!
Male and Female

On the Strangers at the Hotel, heighten

(Wait for the laugh)
Are cued onstage.

Miss DeMur with yellow when she enters the Garden,

Though Playwright's heaven
Is the actor's curse:

In the beginning.

On Morning Seven,
We rehearse.

UNCOMMITTED WEATHER

Uncommitted weather
Pauses near the gate.
Each would let the other
Dominate the day.
So narrowly they cleave
That neither one can leave.

Half of autumn hangs
And half has flared to earth.
Ice and water hinge
And neither swings in first.
How long can they embrace
In this disputed place?

Because I could not choose
I slept a warring night.
Uneasily I knew
The wind was blowing straight.
The morning light revealed
Decision held the field.

TOLD, THEN TOLD AGAIN

Told, then told again, by night,
In rain blurring the fathom lights
And smoothing the palm-and-knuckled bay.
Told by night when eyelids shape
A microverse of flares, pinwheels and shooting dust.
Told by the crossed trees and the river,
Changing its place with rain, and the salts
Of seven white-rimmed and fishful seas.
Told by the scrabbling poor in the wet shards of the city,
By lands-end, precipice, parapet and afterlife, told:

Pray to bread, that it still rise,
Waxed against the vein of dissolution.
Pray to culture, that bread might live beyond its day of yeast.
Pray to money, that it sweeten the miser in his last vault.
(And how, in its dispensation, like the early death of leaves.)
Pray to animals, O Ignorant, for they might judge us yet.
Pray to all the gods, for they are what we mean by images.
To wind, for it moves the woodsmoke across the willowbrake.
To rain, for the burning web of streetlights in the black tree.
To dung, for it completes the cadence which began with seed.
And pray to fire for what we learn in ashes.
And I was told this in the pelting season,
In dry grass, by all the torn, shed, waved, and pawned
Attributes of the solid world. Nothing I was born with
Is worth throwing away.

Tim Reynolds

Two Poems

THE QUEST

Professor Gavin, chief of the Archaeological
Section, having secured a goodly grant,
Set forth in quest of the Grail, last seen in Ant-
ioch, with a fervor truly pedagogical.
His first Trial was a pick-purse in Damascus
Who reft him of watch and wallet but not, thank God,
Of his Grant (in Traveller's Checks). An artful broad
Who tempted him in Haleb his second Task was.
Her he evaded; with a gang of boisterous
Ankara chaps he grew tipsy, but not drunk.
So in Istanbul, this Trial too passed, a monk
Gave it him, which he took home to the Cloisters.
And there the Grail suffused a memorable light
On Tryon Park and Hudson, through the blackest night.

MISS AUSTEN

Indefatigable, she waits her prey,
Crouched hiding in her head, whose filaments
Extend in precise angles from stool to highboy
To firescreen through the room; in that cool glance
Nothing as vain as pity. Oh, she is still
As death; patient, almost, as God. But see!
A tremor in the web! She streaks to the kill,
Dispatches, with methodical ferocity
Whatever blundering bumblebee, snared fly
Or outraged wasp is kicking in her toils;
Waits calmly for the last twitch, sucks him dry,
Bundles the husk for storage in a coil
Of gluey rope she spins out on the spot,
Lugs her spoil home, as nutriment for thought.

Charlotte A. Wilson

Two Poems

LAMENT

Fool, O fool twice-
twitted
thinking to find
a paradise
in that poor lump,
that sop
and sod of misspent
misbegotten
sex. That two left-
footed,
two grand-handed
gland,
scaling my tower by
the stair
while I, the wily
virgin
rapunzled down my
hair
in idiot innocence.
O fool
and fool and fool
again
am taken.

SKETCHES FOR A FULL-LENGTH PORTRAIT

I

Pruned of excess
(hair, nails, facts)
as the butcher trims
fat from a steak, so

the lady, purified
(with baths of hot
water and oil) and
sheathed (in clean
linen), reduced to
an essence, ritually
subtracted (as for
the dying) waits,
waits (the cool
green coptic) queen
waits, nursing
the cozy asp.

II

Calves bulged and
bursting, hips
thrown wide, the woman
of Lachaise stands
to the wind; thighs
thrust cemented
ground, hand-rubbed
breasts and belly
flare hugely wet
above the storm-
wrapped and huddled
guests in her court-
yard.

III

Loose and lazy in the lizard sun,
she, like some pre-historic animal
whose yearly young remain attached
until the milk runs out, stands
cracking her gum at the curb edge
and mindless thrusts a brimming
breast to stop the mouth slung

midway among her ripe and ready
globes; hits and hollers at the
displaced, mouth-working, thumb-
sucking two clinging to her flabby
knees; and swats at a fly resting
on her thumping nine-month belly.

1

A. K. Ramanujan

Three Poems

ON MEMORY

Nursery rhymes
on Tipu Sultan or Jack and Jill;
the cosmetic use of gold when
the Guptas ruled;
the history of costume in
Shakespearian times;

a spreadeagle blotch
on the wall of a one-day room;
and the feel of a diamond scratch
on an acquaintance's
wedding ring; these, and such as these,
gabble away their

tangent answers at a silent
smile, like desperate
urchins from a village school. But not
for all my questing will, nor the thirst
of my desert sleep,
nor the drill of that woodpecker beak
of despair on trees which cannot shriek
and not for all my bloodbeat
can I hold and keep

one face, a second's leap of profile
random-thrown in a snowflake
fall of your multiple faces

as you turn in this day's dazzle,
this sunstruck house
of mirrors. Memory,
in a crowd of memories, seems
to have no place
at all for unforgettable things.

1

A POEM ON PARTICULARS

In our city markets
I have often seen a wicker basket
sit
upon its single, ample
hip,
its rattan pattern filled
with another,
subtler
bubble-bed pattern of oranges:

pellmell piled,
not one with a stain,
some thick-painted green all over,
others
with just a finger-print
of green;
some so ripe, there was a hint
of fungi-ash
on a slightly hollowed cheek;
some flushed and saffron,
some gamboge, some tangerine;

some pulpy, velvet-skinned,
their inner fist
of fingers
held rather loosely, and each day
more loosely,
in their body's
grandpa grip.

But
every one of these
had an absurd, almost human
puckered navel-button
at the top
where once the Tree's umbilicus
had poured its
future
from forgotten roots
and possessed it close,
to feed
this Fall-minded
pot-bellied
bud
till it rounded
for our baskets.

I have heard it said
among planters:
you can sometimes count
every orange
on a tree
but never
all the trees
in a single
orange.

A STYLE IN LOVE

Love, only green has a fall of yellow
hours. Only growing has gold to reap.
Shake out your tresses of starlit willow
and slowly my dawn will climb, a lover who shall not sleep.

Love is no hurry, love is no burning;
it is no fairytale of bittersweet.
Moons may turn at the full, we return without turning.
And no mouth shall have shadow for meat.

No. No love is sudden.
Coupling hands take time to kill the frost.
Even leaping Beast shall wait to be bidden
by Beauty. Come lightly, love, let's wait — to be found, to be lost.

Florence Gould

Five Poems

A BRANCH OF DOGWOOD FLOWERS NINE FLOORS HIGH

The moon explores their one-eyed clarity,
And in the steadfast vegetable gaze
That spans the room to come to me,
My eye, made mad by night, pretends to see
Their dense corollas shaping tongue and phrase
To break the law of our disparity.

No meaning lights the would-be of this night.
Lessees of urban privacy, we share
Locality alone: this cell, sealed tight
Inside a giant honeycomb, its height
Expatriated in the neutral air,
Locks out remembrance of a root's black site.

Only our shadows, meshing, find and trace
 One faint similitude: branch, cell, and I
 All wear deracination like one race —
 The scentless breed, expertly commonplace,
 Of staple miracles that process dry
 The dated philtres of a green embrace.

Why, then — when there subsist no residues
 Of lineage to sift along my bone,
 Or haunt the plastics of these walls, or fuse
 This amputated stalk with tragic hues —
 Why should these blind eyes still affect to own
 Some bosky cache of loss that words might use?

No language *could* incarnate us: words breed
 Their plenty only in the rotting clues
 Of continuity; and here where need
 Is exorcized by capsules should it bleed,
 The silence, waste-free, kills all ghostly news,
 And anagogy shrinks to still-room feed.

1

A CONFUSION IN DIRECTION

Four hours, three hills behind me on that day,
 The unremembered meadow I had passed
 Began to follow me: its breathing drenched
 The air with fennel, and its pulse was vast.

It lazed abreast, and lipped — then swept ahead,
 Its yellow hair flown backward by the wind.
 And since that day, I run, bone-racked I run,
 To catch up with that meadow years behind.

BATTLE UNDER THE SPIRE: CHARTRES CATHEDRAL

The line of spire ascends.
 Strung on it goes the hair-thin stare
 To seize the bodkin tip that ends the flight.
 Blind dazzled by its meeting with the break
 Between what was and now is not,
 It spins an instant round the tapered broach
 And toils for stance upon the point,
 Longs for the status of a thought,
 And finding nothing but new awe,
 Clings there like a claw.

The end of time suspends.
 For one inspiralled moment lasts
 The pure hiatus of high-place.
 And then the mutiny of flaws begins —
 Of tendons, fibres, thews, that all
 Distend against infinitude;
 The breath discovers poison in suspense,
 And driving densely toward the fall,
 Springs out of prison to suspire
 On the inordinate spire.

Thus primed, the eye descends.
 But now the gaze that climbed past sight
 That ran a sinewed filament up stone
 And kinged in air with brink and pinnacle,
 Goes down unlinked and lost; expires
 Against the pull of the aspiring stone;
 Recoils to save the falling line;
 And thrown aground at last, comes back
 A stranger both to place and space —
 Crawling still toward grace.

BIRTH OF THE SENSE OF TRAGEDY

The heart lay thrumming on a rock,
And soothed and sunned itself,
Obeyed no clock in measuring its throb,
And opened to the moon at noon.

A plundered hawk dropped on that heart
And fastened to its beat,
Plucked all apart the sealed white veins,
And peeled them to the dark at dawn.

Beneath the sinking web of wing,
The heart heard silence strike;
Turned over, spilling bead on bead of sound,
And met rock stillness, old with cold.

The heart lay counting beads of blood
That told the soon and late;
And, dying, pulsed at last to light at noon;
Died drumming to the moon at night.

1

RELUCTANT PROSELYTE

First this: your hand appeared upon the wall
And quivered there — once, twice, as blue as ice —
Before the fingers spread across the top
And five tips clawed the angle of the ledge.
Above, wide fens of tongue-tied air went by;
This side, there rustled just the one event:
Your knuckles ravelling the ivy
Where the lizard lived.

From then on, for a time that stopped all time,
No more of you uncovered, whip or glove.
The watch was pitiless from where I stood
In famished ambush near the holly-hedge;
I lived out years and years rock-still
Upon the gravel of the garden walk.
Vines wizened where your fingers tangled,
And the lizard hid.

And when, one grizzled dusk, at last *did* fall
The leaden shadow of your rising head,
And I but veered a hairsbreadth, fledging for
The monstrous crisis of your countenance,
Already you were nodding down — with this —
This caul: what was to blast my marrow has
No eyes at all, and sweats for advent
Where the lizard laired.

Yet, even so, you pass beyond true fraud.
You stilled me with five shivering tips until,
Stretched tall by fear, I built an image of
The unimaginable edge so sheer,
So vast, so near, that sight lived lidless there.
Besides — blurred by this birth, the lizard died.
Your sigil ended sun and shadow,
And the lizard died.

1

The editors of POETRY NORTHWEST are pleased to announce that William H. Matchett is a new editor of this magazine.



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has moved to 64 Marion Street
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About the Contributors...

HAYDEN CARRUTH is, in many ways, the chief ornament of his poetic generation (under 40); an editor of *POETRY MAGAZINE* while still in his 20's, he has gone on to distinguish himself further by his poetry, essays and criticism. His last book is *The Crow and the Heart*. This is his second appearance (of, we hope, many) in *POETRY NORTHWEST*.

Like Carruth's, GEORGE WOODCOCK's attainments are too many and varied to list adequately. Before he came to the University of British Columbia — where he teaches, edits *CANADIAN LITERATURE*, broadcasts for the CBC and writes more books — his poetry had already appeared in many British anthologies and he had written on such varied figures as Oscar Wilde, Dylan Thomas and Kropotkin. He recently wrote a verse play, *Maskerman*.

DAVID CORNEL DeJONG, the well-known American poet, was born in Holland, which he left at the age of 13. He is the author of a variety of volumes.

VI GALE lives in Portland, Oregon. She is a charming Scandinavian blonde with eyes of pure lapis lazuli. Her book, *Several Houses*, was published by Alan Swallow and was praised by our most fastidious critics.

ARNOLD STEIN, author, teacher, poet, is a professor at the University of Washington. This is his second appearance in *POETRY NORTHWEST* and we are holding another group of his poems for our next issue.

SUSAN ROTHOLZ is 21 — a fact which reduces the lady-editor of this magazine to impotent tears — and comes from Boston. She works for the English Department at Berkeley, among other things. This is her first published work.

FATHER JOHN L'HEUREUX, S. J., teaches at Fairfield University, Fairfield, Connecticut, and has a fine, complicated, love-hate relationship with the editors of this magazine — purely by correspondence, we hasten to add. Like Sister Mary Gilbert (see our last issue), he is one of a lively and generously gifted group of young Catholic poets.

FLORENCE VICTOR is in her 20's, a New Yorker born and raised, though now she is in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Her poetry has been in *BELOIT POETRY JOURNAL*, *WESTERN REVIEW* and *TRANS-ATLANTIC REVIEW*.

JOHN WOODS teaches at Kalamazoo. He will soon have a second book, entitled *On the Morning of Color*, published in the Indiana Poetry Series. He appeared in the first issue of *POETRY NORTHWEST*.

TIM REYNOLDS submits poems on stationery of the Tiny Tot Corporation (manufacturers of a form of baby trap, it would seem; we forbear to quote from their propaganda). He is a gifted young poet, on the verge of a book, and he comes from a gallant family.

CHARLOTTE WILSON was most long-suffering when the editors of this magazine succeeded in losing her mss. a couple of times. We are happy that we found her again and that she forgave us. She lives in Brooklyn and has studied with Stanley Kunitz.

A. K. RAMANUJAN is a poet from Mysore who writes in English and Kannada. (These poems were written in English.) He has taught at the University of Baroda and is receiving a doctoral degree at Indiana University. He is a prominent young Indian writer.

FLORENCE GOULD is a professor at the University of Washington. She is perhaps better known for her distinguished short stories than for her equally distinguished poetry. Her work has appeared in *THE SEWANEE REVIEW*, *INTERIM*, *NEW DIRECTIONS*, *BOTTEGHE OSCURE*, *WESTERN REVIEW* and elsewhere.

CARL MORRIS and his wife, Hilda, are the Northwest's leading "Artists in Residence". He comes from California, once headed the W. P. A.'s Art Center in Spokane, and has taught. Last year the Ford Foundation gave him an award which has sent a one-man show of his work traveling about the United States as well as publishing a book on his art. He lives in Portland, and we hope he stays put.

POETRY NORTHWEST very much wishes to keep its continuity of publication. However, we have the usual financial difficulties of small (or large, for that matter) American literary magazines, plus a staff singularly ill-equipped to cope with them.

We have channeled most of our energies into trying to assist contributors and would-be contributors, rather than in money-raising appeals. We make such an appeal to you now. You have shown us nearly fanatical loyalty. Please help us NOW, if you are able.

S-O-S All Sustaining Patrons: Please send another sweet twenty-five or fifty.

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S-O-S All Subscribers: Become Patrons.

All Contributors: Just go on contributing and being patient, and remember us in your prayers.

The Editors, *POETRY NORTHWEST*

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"New American Poetry: East and West"

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EDITH SHIFFERT
JOHN HAISLIP, Oregon
BRIAN BOYER, Iowa

JOHN HAAG
ALVIN GREENBERG, Ohio
MYRON TURNER, New York
ANNE ORR
RUTH ALTMANN, Rhode Island

PANEL FOR SATURDAY, JULY 29, 1:30 - 4:30 P. M.

"Problems of the Young Poet"

RANDALL GLOEGE, Montana
ROBERT DODGE
MARGARET NORDFORS, Alaska
JOAN SWIFT
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