

Poetry Project

NEWSLETTER



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News and Announcements

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Distribution: Desert Moon Periodicals, 1226 Calle de Comercio, Santa Fe, NM 87505
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Poem

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"Ode to Planetarium"
by Marcella Durand

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"Doubt" by Fanny Howe

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Heather Ramsdell

Board of Directors: Dianne Benson, Rosemary Carroll, Michel de Konkoly Thege, Ted Greenwald, Steve Hamilton, Siri Hustvedt, Greg Masters, Gillian McCain, Elinor Nauen, Paul Slovak, Vicki Hudspith Turbeville, Edwin Torres, Hal Willner, and John Yau.

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Susan Noel on Joanne Kyger

Friends Committee: Brooke Alexander, Susan Davis, Steve Dennin, Renée Fotouhi, Raymond Foye, Michael Friedman, Morris Golde, Yvonne Jacqueline, Peter Pennoyer, Jessica Reighard, Kimberly Vernardos, and Alexander Wood.

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The Poetry Project's programs and publications are made possible, in part, with public funds from: the National Endowment for the Arts; the New York State Council on the Arts; the City of New York's Department of Cultural Affairs; and the Materials for the Arts/New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and Department of Sanitation.

Reviews

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Lorenzo Thomas, Bill Berkson, Jarnot/Luoma/Smith, Anne Waldman, Elena Rivera, Ronald Johnson, & Chris Tysh.

The Poetry Project's programs and publications are also made possible with funds from the Brooke Alexander Gallery/Brooke Alexander Editions; Farrar, Straus and Giroux; the Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts, Inc.; The Greenwall Foundation; The Heyday Foundation; The Jerome Foundation; Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.; the Lila Acheson Wallace Theater Fund, established in Community Funds by the co-founder of The Reader's Digest Association; Penguin; Scribner; Anonymous Foundations and Corporations; Russell Banks; Dianne & Irving Benson; Mary Rose Brusewitz; Rosemary Carroll; Georgia & Bill Delano; Anne Delaney & Steve Staso; Renée Fotouhi & Henry Scholder; Agnes Gund & Daniel Shapiro; Ada & Alex Katz; Kazuko.com; Michel de Konkoly Thege; Vicki Hudspith & Wallace Turbeville; Jonathan Lasker; Larry Lieberman; Mark McCain; Deborah Berg McCarthy & Michael McCarthy; Elena Prentice and Summer Rulon-Miller; Hank O'Neal & Shelley Shier; Simon Schuchat; Andre Spears; Karrie & Trevor Wright; members of the Poetry Project; and other individual contributors.

Questionnaire

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Our interactive feature.

Books Received

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A mere sampling.

only give the briefest sampling of *RADI OS*, Johnson's compelling revisioning of Milton's *Paradise Lost*. (To be fair, O'Leary acknowledges in his astute introduction that *RADI OS* is "nearly unexcerptable"; in addition, the complete poem will eventually be republished by Flood Editions as part of a book called *The Outworks*.) With *ARK* still in print and with a finite number of pages available for Adam, I was surprised to see that a full third of this collection was given over to the long poem. Still, when rereading the sections of the masterwork included here, I found that I came to them with a fresh eye as I read them in the context of other selections from this life's work. And for readers who do not yet know *ARK*, this volume provides a strong sampling of key sections that will hopefully lead them to tackle the poem in its entirety.

Increasingly, I find myself searching for poets who have made their way outside the rigid confines of academia without resorting to a knee-jerk sort of clichéd bohemia that is devoid of tradition or any sense of historical context. Throughout Johnson's body of work, it is clear that the poem (and poet) "must listen and sing simultaneously": in order to truly break new ground, the poet must first appreciate the traditions to which he or she is indebted just as the gardener must first understand the natural workings of the world in order to shape it into new patterns. Shortly before he died, Johnson had been slated to read here in Philadelphia but was unable to come due to mounting health concerns. After reading and rereading these selections from his work, I feel his loss more deeply and wish more strongly that I'd had the opportunity to acknowledge my debt to him in person. —CHRIS MCCREARY

Chris McCreary lives in Philadelphia, where he co-edits ixnay press.

Chris Tysh: *Continuity Girl* United Artists, 2000

The propelling thing about Chris Tysh's new book, and life in general, is that everything, every atom, every word, sentence, paragraph, action, image is poignantly present and almost graspable and then, it slips away. As I read these poems, I begin to make sense and then I instantly lose ground as the syntax trips me up or an image leaves me empty in the space of the margin. But I continue, swerving along this sexy, frightening path of meaning-making, and it is nothing like the way we learned to read in school. No, this is an experience of reading the Real as it rests hidden beneath a glimmering text with fractures and errors of syntax that allow me the unexpected freedom of looking through a crevice or over an edge.

Behind every poem, there is at least one particular photograph, painting, poem, philosophical treatise, translation, noir film, or news report. But they are not pinned down, named or conveniently included beside the text. As soon as I am certain of the reference, uncertainty arrives. Even though "Columbine" is the title of one poem, this is not reportage. The slippery nature of language and reference (and the inherent violence) is Tysh's subject and she takes the reader on a journey into the linguistic unexpected. Woven throughout are the structures and thoughts of the French and German postmodern philosophers and theorists, especially Lacanian psychoanalysis and Derridian differance. If you have a smattering of knowledge in these areas, these structures and ideas will glimmer through the poems as if they are the translucent bones of language, and perhaps they are. If your reading is more lyrical or objectivist, the skin of the body will be enough. "And/in/one/orgasm/they/came/undone//below/the elastic/lexicon/of/baby/and/bath."
("catherinewheel")

(cont. page 30)

Questionnaire

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What is your favorite couplet? (from songs or poems!)

Send your favorite couplet via email or postcard to the Poetry Project.

Books Received

Recommended Magazines

Snare #2. Editor: Drew Gardner (PO Box 2055 NY, NY 10009).

Explosive #8. Editor: Katherine Lederer. (PO Box 250648, Columbia University Station, NY, NY, 10025).

Shiny #11: Editor: Michael Friedman. (P.O. Box 13125, Denver, CO, 80201).

Untitled: A Magazine of Prose Poetry #1. Editors: Leonard Brink and Jono Schneider. (c/o Instress, P.O. Box 3124, Saratoga, CA 95070).

Chain #7: Memoir/Anti-Memoir
Guest editor Kerry Sherrin.

Books

Richard Blevins. Fogbow Bridge: Selected Poems 1972-1999. Pavement Saw Press (Columbus, OH), 2000. 1-886350-92-2.

Crosscut Universe: Writing on Writing from France. Edited by Norma Cole. Burning Deck (Providence, RI) 2000. 1-886224-39-0.

Dana Curtis. The Body's Response to Famine. Pavement Saw Press (Columbus, OH) 2000. 1-886350-90-6.

Ernst Jandl. Reft and Light. Burning Deck (Providence, RI) 2000. 1-886224-34-x

Chris Kraus, Aliens & Anorexia. Semiotext(e)/Smart Art (NY, NY), 2000. 1-58435-001-6

Denise Levertov. This Great Unknown: Last Poems. New Directions (New York, NY) 2000. 0-8112-1458-3

Thurston Moore. Alabama Wildman. Water Row Press (Sudbury, MA) 2000. 0-934953-70-8

Mark Salerno. For Revery. a+bend press (San Francisco, CA) 2000.

Kevin Young. Most Way Home. Zoland Books (Cambridge, MA) 2000. 1-58195-021-7.

Poetry & Poetics in a New Millennium: Interviews with Major Contemporary Poets. Edited by Edward Foster. Talisman House, Publishers (Jersey City, NJ) 1-58498-014-1

Barbara Henning. In Between. Spectacular Diseases (c/o Paul Green, 83(b) London Road, Peterborough, Cambs., PE2 9BS, UK) 2000.

K.B. Nemosky. Drift. Ten Pell Books, 2000. 1-930330-02-2

Paul Violi. Breakers: Selected Poems. Coffee House Press, 2000. 1-56689-099-3

Keith Waldrop. Haunt. Instance Press, 2000. 0-9679854-0-4

Hoa Nguyen. Parrot Drum. Leroy Chapbook Series (c/o Renee Gladman, 17A Chattanooga St., San Francisco, CA 94114) 2000.

Word of Mouth: An Anthology of Gay American Poetry. Edited by Timothy Liu. Talisman House (Jersey City, NJ) 2000. 1-58498-006-0.

Jane Unrue. The House. Burning Deck Press (Providence, RI) 2000. 1-886224-35-8

Nicole Brossard. Installations. The Muses Company, 2000. 1-896239-65-x.


(Tysh cont. from page 25)

I'm especially moved by the twenty poems in the "Continuity Girl" section of the book which address the problems with identity and representation, especially related to gender, with the myriad of positions we take about and around the he and the she.

A very intelligent, political and word delicious book. Tysh articulates how we make/can't make meaning hold with sex or with sentences; words and bodies slip apart and away, on a continual swerving path to who knows where (slippery and unstable as is the rest of our knowledge), but perhaps it can be linguistically/poetically charted or trailed—and it is, beautifully, here, in *Continuity Girl*. —BARBARA HENNING

Barbara Henning's latest book is *In Between (Spectacular Diseases)*.

TEN PELL BOOKS



"...outstanding and diverse reading for fans of free verse" - The Midwest Book Review

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— Allen Ginsberg



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