– Bring me my bow of burning gold!
Bring me my arrows of desire!
Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!
Bring me my chariot of fire!

(p. 147, Wilberg - "Jerusalem"

March 10, 1981

Today during the walk up to Sh'line (~~and maybe the sauna there~~), occurred to me to add the couple of proverbial bits--paper is the schoolman's forest, etc.--to the Rosenberg scene, and to say something here about the effort I'm making ~~with~~ to put a proverbial sound into this ms. The aim is to tap into the interest proverbs hold for us; they're nuggets of idea and language, and we all respond to their gleam. Thus, the proverbial tang of M's dialogue; and I'm considering whether to put biblical flavor into W's interior monologues. Have ransacked a number of books of seaman's slang and the like, to pattern M's talk on. Also, I trust that my proverbs aren't diluted too much by the fact that a number of them, I've made up.

the insides of language: some properties or elements avbl to writer of English prose

--private languages (slang): language trying to enliven itself, or excel itself.

Every group with some kind of common interest or occupation does this.
--Pacific Pipeline, picker and packers.
--students, Ace-Bullet-C (hook)-Death-Flag
--in Eng Crk, USFS vocabulary: emergency firefighters are EFFs
smokechasers
kelleygrams (a play on telegrams)

dialects
--ranch ~~xxxxxxxxx~~: pp. 221-223, how the hay hands say hello

--saloon vocabulary: 3 generations of drinking toasts--
"Here's how" & "Here's lead in your pencil"
"Broth to the ill, stilts to the lame."
"We'll have another round of jelly sandwiches."
--drinks themselves: with water called a ditch, so:
Jick: scotch ditch
Mariah: Canadian whiskey called Lord Calvert,
thus a Lord ditch.

--how words sound on the paper:
sometimes merely a matter of alliteration, 2 or more words having the same initial sound:
p. 226, Wisdom Johnson suffering on stack
~~xxxxxxxxx~~
sentence structure sometimes helps the meaning of the words:
Faulkner's "The Bear": "There was a man and a dog too this time." (immediately implied, what abt other times?
"bouganvillea"
blurts of rodeo announcer
road rhythm, Mariah p. 215

put on board: All that summer long she was out in the bougainvillea, kissing collge boys.
Ace
Bullet
C hook
Death
Flag

Prairie Nocturne

watermark whisper

ms p. 162, the line "Hallway noises roused him out of the murmurs of the papers."

--originally, "out of the silent eloquent papers."

--then, "out of the silent eloquences of the papers."

Gov's Writers Day, Authors Forum, May 19, '88

do s'thing radical ½ hr or so - then yr gone

how does an article begin? - Sarah Ferrell - I was reluctant; pay is awful

materials to work with: program, C's pics, diary entry
- my sheet of notes: finding lead
  - possible places names: why Jedburgh (Borough; Scottish municipality) entered Newton Bridge, Kenmore, Lanark (Musselburgh rhymes)
(only got 400 wds, & expend at 100 - 92, actually - in 2nd sent)
2nd sentence: longest in NYT that day - not advised in Intro o writing. (Margaret Atwood)
- bravado: previous one, c Fletcher Knebel, Jeremy Bernstein, Elly Tallent
- intrinsic value: flow, packing in info, carrying reader along a period without stopping him c
  read: Burton & Faulkner

change rhythm; relief to reader
- splendid in grass - W'worth resonance
"Lassie hund": writer's ear, & notebk
- panting pride: p sounds
yes & nein echoes "L'hund"; lingual macaroni

face situation that reader probly doesn't a blessed thing o sh dog trials.
First of all, what's a sh dog: (pass around Dewar's ad)
transition: at least as boring, though. Consider - begins explan
- everything that had to be left out: really hard part of writing this
  - commands; details of course

slip in its relevance to me: - "'way round 'em, Step."
into tiny pen: sentence replicates dog's action, ends as sheep do, in pen.

(one more item to be passed around - it's upcoming - descpn of contry - I've always wanted to do smo, do a slide show pass around a slide - ignore clean in corner & cows in bgnd, just ck @ contryside, which we're coming to fairly soon)

What is significance of any of this? Sarah F wanted us to write a some epiphany we'd had. (a sudden flash of recognition). I'm not all that keen on epiphanies, yet when Sarah asked me to write a st'thing, st'dog tracks came immed'ly to mind.

So, explain what ritual sme is

transhumance, in Montaillou (14th c. Fr village)

- in dic; like fellow talking prose all his life; readers don't mind learn's st'things

- as so often, Bible saves writerly bkin:

"Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of ground."

trans: across humance: from humus, earth

About out of space. Have-' desc'd: can't get — nr Yorkshire, like Herriot. (We're just been vilbrcal, anyway, so we'll put a comb in: saintly vetn's arms!

dog after dog had his day. Cliche? - close, at least.

- from 19th c. Br writer George Borrow - "Youth will be served, every dog has his day, & mine has been a fine one."

- Calvin Trillin: hay while sun shines, prime: jump to brng: water ↑

final sentences: linking "across: earth": back to roots of "transh'ce", "rhythm of renewal" back to "thanc'jng of repl't"

- link final sent'ce, "word for mine" to def'ng of "th'ce";

& thus showing: recognition of similarity

send it in, epiphanously yrs

post mortem: of 6 a dozen NYT pieces, 1st not pencil said to.

show: mag: best and'ce cd write for - & pay of $200,

epiphany--a sudden flash of recognition of something; a manifestation that shows you a connection

perhaps the most deliberate and famous one in 20th century literature is the ending of the James Joyce story, "The Dead", when Gabriel Conroy realizes his wife Gretta is still in love with a boy, now dead, she knew long before their marriage. After Gretta goes to bed, he stands at the window watching the snow begin to fall on Dublin, conscious as never before of the continuing presence and influence of the dead and the past. The famous last line: "His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead."

"The Dead" by James Joyce

DUBLINERS

Generous tears filled Gabriel's eyes. He had never felt like that himself towards any woman, but he knew that such a feeling must be love. The tears gathered more thickly in his eyes and in the partial darkness he imagined he saw the form of a young man standing under a dripping tree. Other forms were near. His soul had approached that region where dwell the vast hosts of the dead. He was conscious of, but could not apprehend, their wayward and flickering existence. His own identity was fading out into a grey impalpable world: the solid world itself, which these dead had one time reared and lived in, was dissolving and dwindling.

A few light taps upon the pane made him turn to the window. It had begun to snow again. He watched sleepily the flakes, silver and dark, falling obliquely against the lamplight. The time had come for him to set out on his journey westward. Yes, the newspapers were right: snow was general all over Ireland. It was falling on every part of the dark central plain, on the treeless hills, falling softly upon the Bog of Allen and, farther westward, softly falling into the dark mutinous Shannon waves. It was falling, too, upon every part of the lonely churchyard on the hill where Michael Furey lay buried. It lay thickly drifted on the crooked crosses and headstones, on the spears of the little gate, on the barren thorns. His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead.



Other new Penguin fiction is described on the following pages

Dogs never say anything about it, but the truth is that they spent their time on Noah's ark in dissipation. (like pic of dogs playing poker)
--All except one breed of canine. The one that came up the gangplank late (last tree to be visited) and ended up quartered with the sheep.

The fact of the matter is the canine contingent spent its ark time in dissipation. Oh, Noah tried to...

I was as entranced as a dog being commanded
"Way 'round 'em, Shep!"
3-dog night

a dog from Shoestone Farm was making his run when we finally
find a place
Well, yes & no (Lassie hund) Lassie
silent running
rocket scientist compared to collies of Lassie's ilk.
science, Eloquent of task & competence
splendid in grass

I had come merely a mile from comfortable Edinburgh
by ~~time no run was done~~, I knew I had traveled across a distance of
~~come length of 35 yrs~~ 30 yrs
to see this

Transhumance - another word for that is travel.
connection
What they are is magnetically intent
will (power)

rhythm of renewal, of a verity forthly visited again.
They run daylong, silent competitors contestants

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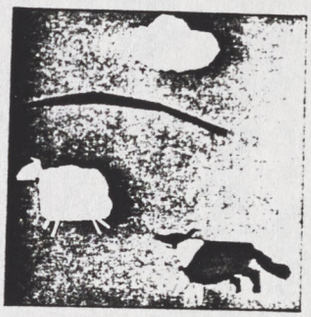
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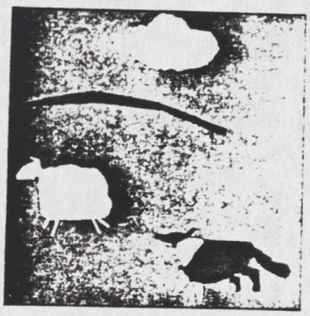
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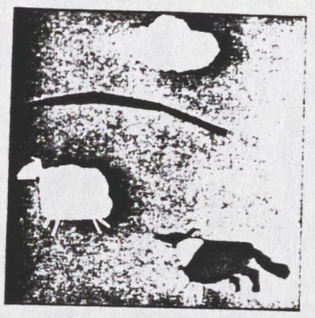
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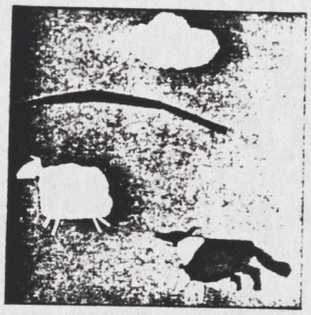
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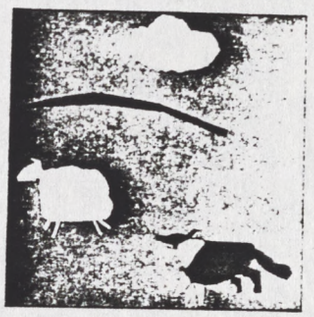
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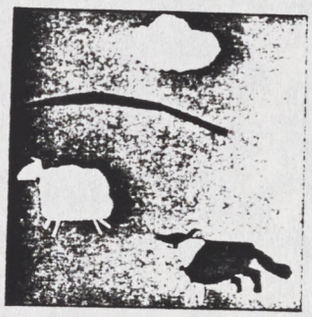
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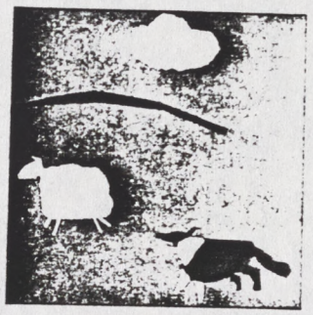
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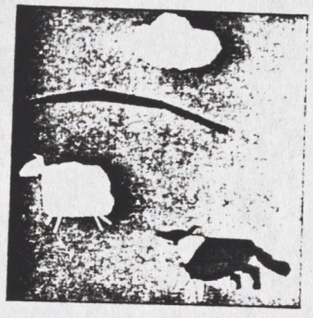
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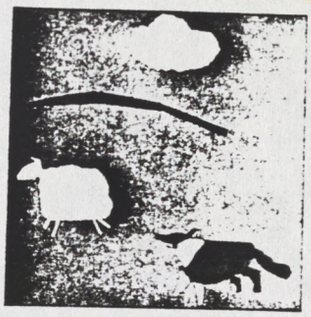
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liam Faulkner. To a single independent clause he may append a page of additions, but usually all clear, all grammatical, once we have learned how to read him. Or, if you prefer, study Hemingway, the master of the simple sentence: "George was coming down in the telemark position, kneeling, one leg forward and bent, the other trailing, his sticks hanging like some insect's thin legs, kicking up puffs of snow, and finally the whole kneeling, trailing figure coming around in a beautiful right curve, crouching, the legs shot forward and back, the body leaning out against the swing, the sticks accenting the curve like points of light, all in a wild cloud of snow." Only from the standpoint of school grammar is this a simple sentence.

This brings me to the fourth, and last, principle, that of texture. *Texture* provides a descriptive or evaluative term. If a writer adds to few of his nouns or verbs or main clauses and adds little, the texture may be said to be thin. The style will be plain or bare. The writing of most of our students is thin—even threadbare. But if he adds frequently or much or both, then the texture may be said to be dense or rich. One of the marks of an effective style, especially in narrative, is variety in the texture, the texture varying with the change in pace, the variation in texture producing the change in pace. It is not true, as I have seen it asserted, that fast action calls for short sentences; the action is fast in the sentence by Hemingway above. In our classes, we have to work for greater density and variety in texture and greater concreteness and particularity in what is added.

I have been operating at a fairly high level of generality. Now I must downshift and go over the same

points with examples. The most graphic way to exhibit the layers of structure is to indent the word groups of a sentence and to number the levels. The first three sentences illustrate the various positions of the added sentence modifiers—initial, medial, and final. The symbols mark the grammatical character of the additions: SC, subordinate clause; RC, relative clause; NC, noun cluster; VC, verb cluster; AC, adjective cluster; A + A, adjective series; Abs, absolute (i.e., a VC with a subject of its own); PP, prepositional phrase. The elements set off as on a lower level are marked as sentence modifiers by junctures or punctuation. The examples have been chosen to illustrate the range of constructions used in the lower levels; after the first few they are arranged by the number of levels. The examples could have been drawn from poetry as well as from prose. Those not attributed are by students.

1

1 He dipped his hands in the bichloride solution and shook them,
  2 a quick shake, (NC)
    3 fingers down, (Abs)
      4 like the fingers of a pianist above the keys. (PP)

Sinclair Lewis

2

  2 Calico-coated, (AC)
  2 small-bodied, (AC)
    3 with delicate legs and pink faces in which their mismatched eyes rolled wild and subdued, (PP)
1 they huddled,
  2 gaudy motionless and alert, (A + A)
  2 wild as deer, (AC)
  2 deadly as rattlesnakes, (AC)
  2 quiet as doves. (AC)

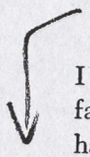
William Faulkner

(Spotted Horses)

fired, the less attention it drew to itself the better—like a torpedo churning quiet toward its goal. Agnew has a neckless, lidded flow to him, with wraparound hair, a tubular perfection to his suits or golf outfits, quiet burbling oratory. Subaquatic. He was almost out of sight by campaign's end; but a good sonar system could hear him burrowing ahead, on course.

Three typically fine leads, all doing their job with precise detail, unexpected imagery and words as surprising as a rare bird. Wills is holding his reader in a tight grip but never patronizing him.

And yet there can be no fixed rules. Within the broad principle of not letting the reader get away, every writer must approach his subject in a manner that most naturally suits what he is writing about and who he is. In proof of which, I'll close with the lead of an article on rugby written by Richard Burton, the actor. Its second sentence is one of the longest I've ever seen, but it is under control all the way. Besides, it sounds very Welsh, and if that's how Welshmen talk it's how they ought to write:



It's difficult for me to know where to start with rugby. I come from a fanatically rugby-conscious Welsh miner's family, know so much about it, have read so much about it, have heard with delight so many massive lies and stupendous exaggerations about it and have contributed my own fair share, and five of my six brothers played it, one with some distinction, and I mean I even knew a Welsh woman from Taibach who before a home match at Aberavon would drop goals from around 40 yards with either foot to entertain the crowd, and her name, I remember, was Annie Mort and she wore sturdy shoes, the kind one reads about in books as "sensible," though the recipient of a kick from one of Annie's shoes would have been not so much sensible as insensible, and I even knew a chap called Five-Cush Cannon who won the sixth replay of a cup final (the previous five encounters

having ended with the scores 0-0, 0-0, 0-0, 0-0, 0-0, including extra time) by throwing the ball over the bar from a scrum 10 yards out in a deep fog and claiming a dropped goal. And getting it.

Musselburgh was a borough

when Edinburgh was none;

and Musselburgh will be a borough

when Edinburgh is gone.

Talk to C's cmns class,
May 11, '82

· insides of language
- properties & elements available to a writer / Eng prose

(2) - sound of words: how they sound on paper
- Trig Town
- cold quick surv: WBros, p. 8
- placement: Chariots · use of pause: hesitation
- W'berg
- parallel construction gives itself legs to stand on: Scotch oats
- Philip Howard (inner ear)

patterns & rhythms: inner logic, inner music
- skip names, WBros, 101

reinvention (use last)
- Ladle Rat Rotten Hut Phonetic News
- Savoring Gallach Seas

optional
- · obvious as possible: direct statement
- Ravens
- Moby-Dick
- E. Ambler - Out of Africa

(1) - private languages - slang: · language trying to enliven itself, of excel itself. Ace Bullet & Hook, D? & Bag
- Wn words / or liquor & hungover - ditch: Scotch ditch, Lord ditch
- brands
- Tarantula Worm bombers, Flea Grand Moth
- dialect Valley Girls, computer hackers

Out of Africa they come, · inexhaustible runners of Kenya.

And now here are · baseball scores: 3-2, 10-3, 2-1, 7-2 & 5-0

FOLKLIFE

Riding the range with cowboy poet D.W. Groethe

By Alexandra Swaney
Director of Folklife

Last spring I received a call from Thea Austen of the American Folklife Center who informed me that Montana cowboy poet and singer D.W. Groethe had been selected for the July performance at the Folklife Center's "Homegrown" noon concert series. The center sponsors one of these concerts at the Library of Congress each month, presenting outstanding traditional artists from the 50 states.

Thea invited me to come along to introduce D.W. at the concert and to accompany him that evening to another concert he would give at the Kennedy Center's Millennium stage. She also asked me to write a short essay about him and interview him for the library's archives.

In addition, I was asked to give a Botkin lecture at the library describing Montana folklife and the work we have accomplished at the Montana Arts Council in the past 10 years. The lecture series is named after Benjamin Botkin, a pioneering folklorist who, among other accomplishments, was folklore editor of the national Writer's Project, and head of the Archive of American Folksong. All in all, it was quite an assignment.

I had talked to D.W. on the phone, and listened to some of his CDs and an interview with him done by fieldworker Jens Lund for the multi-state Missouri River Project. But I decided the least I could do was meet him in person before introducing him to an audience clear across the country.

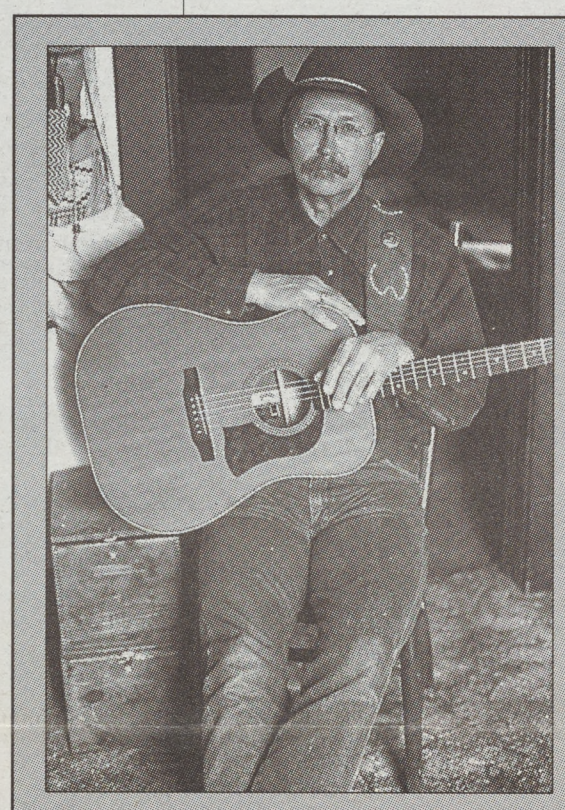
When I was up in the Fort Peck area for several events in May, we made arrangements to meet on his home ground, about 15 miles west of the North Dakota border. I was a little weary when I pulled into our meeting place, the roadside coffee shop-convenience store just outside of Bainville; I had driven through two cloudbursts in 70 miles of travel from Wolf Point.

Shortly after I arrived, an earlier model pickup truck pulled up and out comes a guy with hat, boots, jeans and a mustache. No mistaking D.W. After chatting for a while, we decided to go on over to Williston for dinner, and pretty soon we were deep in conversation about our similarities and differences as Montanans.

D.W. is a MonDak original. For those of us that don't know, that part of the Great Plains is called MonDak by some, referring to the fact that eastern Montana and western North Dakota are more like each other than like the other parts of those states. People who live in MonDak experience a different regional, environmental and cultural reality.

Prairie and badlands underlie the big sky, and there are fewer people, with more quiet, longer distances and fewer four-lane highways. There are several Indian reservations in the region, and it is definitely cowboy country. D.W.'s original tunes and stories and warm, dryly-textured voice bring up the images and feel of life on the prairie.

D.W. is also a *Norski*. He was born on the family farm, just across the line in North Dakota, where his grandfather, who came from Norway, established a homestead in 1903. In an interesting twist, we discovered our grandfathers knew each other. My grandfather, also a Norwegian immigrant, was the first pastor at the church where D.W.'s grandfather played the organ.



"I am a bachelor and I got a dog for a roommate. Things are working out just fine. If he had opposable thumbs, I'd have a clean house."
– D.W. Groethe

He came by his musical ability through that grandfather and his father, who was a fiddle player and singer, but it was his mother who really facilitated it when, at an early age, D.W. made her promise to buy him a piano and she did.

He started piano lessons in the first week of second grade and took them for 10 years. After graduating from high school, back in the "long-hair, hippie days," he worked as a keyboard player in several successful country, folk, rock and hardcore rock bands and studied in stints for a theater degree from the University of North Dakota.

His theater training helped him learn how to perform and sing, but realizing that he sounded like every other man who sang theater music, he decided to return to what for him was a more natural way of singing. He listened closely to Hank Williams and learned Travis-style picking, and immersed himself in Dylan and old-style country music (not country-western).

"I was in some good bands," he says. "But I never got to do my own music, because I write in an old style." After his mom and dad died, he discovered some boxes of poems he'd written in grade school and high school. Taking the advice "write about what you know," he decided he could write songs about his life on the plains. He has been doing it ever since.

These days, the Groethe place in western North Dakota is leased out to another member of the family. D.W. moved to Montana in 1991; that side of the border suited him and he stayed, accompanied by a faithful dog.

He works as a ranch hand for three different outfits; he says it's economically efficient for ranch owners and ranch hands alike. That job also helps him with his music. "I love fencing, I get out there, I'm by myself, I can sit and holler and yodel," he says. "It is kind of like learning to fiddle. You gotta be out in the middle of nowhere."

He has produced four CDs and has performed at many cowboy poetry gatherings, including Medora and Elko. D.W.'s original tunes offer a witty take on the life of a single man who leads a life on the range in the early 21st century. D.W. says, "I am a bachelor and I got a dog for a roommate. Things are working out just fine. If he had opposable thumbs, I'd have a clean house."

The concerts in Washington, D.C., were well attended and the audiences loved D.W; the technician from the Library of Congress who recorded our interview said he had never laughed so hard during an interview, and my lecture went really well too.

Before we left, D.W. said, "I'm a book man; I've gotta see that great hall (of the Library of Congress)." Whereupon our gracious hostess Thea took us through the hall, pointing out the altars to the various gods and goddesses and luminaries of wisdom such as Athena, and the spectacular marble work wrought by artisans brought especially from Italy in the late 19th century.

We saw a Guttenberg Bible and the hand-copied Bible from which the Guttenberg was designed. It did feel like a place that was sacred, where all kinds of wisdom are valued, including the wisdom learned riding the range.

CAN offers arts-rich website

The Community Arts Network (CAN) hosts a website that offers a living archaeology of information about community-based arts. Go to www.communityarts.net and find:

- The CAN Reading Room, which offers a large database of articles from High Performance magazine.
- A monthly newsletter, APInews, which can be subscribed to free of charge.

Resources, a bookstore and forums are also available.

Professional artists offer marketing advice

Professional artists will share marketing tips in the Marketing for Artists Workshop, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Nov. 19 at Fairmont Hot Springs Resort near Anaconda.

Arts experts will cover such topics as "Evolution of the Artist as a Business Person," "Principles of Marketing for Artists," "Succeeding at Different Venues," "Southwest Montana's SMART JOBS Program for Artists," "Successfully Using the Internet to Market" and more. Successful artists will participate in a panel discussion, and the keynote speech at lunch will offer an overview of what's happening in Montana for artists and Montana Arts Council programs.

The conference is sponsored by Headwaters Resource, Conservation and Development, MSU Extension Service, Copper Village Arts Center, Arts Chateau and SMART JOBS. Registration fee is $45 and includes lunch and handouts.

More information and a conference brochure can be obtained by e-mailing bandreozzi@montana.edu, calling 406-782-7333 or by sending in $45 with your name, address, phone and e-mail to Headwaters RC&D, 305 W. Mercury Street, Butte, MT 59701. Please indicate it is for the Marketing for Artists workshop on Nov.19.

Arts in Education

Reminder: Professional development workshops coming in October

The Montana Arts Council's Arts Education program, in partnership with the Montana Alliance for Arts Education, is offering professional development workshops for teachers and teaching artists Oct. 20-22, 2005, in Missoula.

For teaching artists of all disciplines and age groups:

• Sharing your Artform: Tools for Artists with Eric Johnson

This workshop will be 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 22, at the Missoula Children's Theatre. Registration forms are available on MAC's website at art.state.mt.us/artists/artists_profdevl.asp or you can request a form by calling the Arts Education Hotline at 800-282-3092.

The following workshops will be presented at the 2005 MEA-MFT Educators' Conference in Missoula, Thursday and Friday, Oct. 20-21, at Sentinel High School.

Thursday, Oct. 20, 2005:

• Leslie Fontana: *Integrating Elementary Art with Math and Reading and New Methods in Art Education for Elementary Classroom teachers*

• Karen Kaufmann: *Creative Movement in the Classroom*

Friday, Oct. 21, 2005

• Leslie Fontana: *New methods in Art Education for Elementary Classroom Teachers*

• Eric Johnson: *Bring Writing to Life... Through Movement!*

Workshop 1: Conventions, Word Choice

Workshop 2: Ideas, Voice

Eric will also be available in the Montana Alliance for Arts Education hospitality room noon to 1 p.m. for conversations with teachers.

• Don Kukla: *Storytelling Through the Dramatic Arts*

• Beck McLaughlin: *Montana Arts Council's Artists in School and Communities grants*

To register for these workshops, contact MEA-MFT at 800-398-0826 or download a registration form at www.mea-mft.org.

Harris Poll shows that Americans value arts education

A new Harris Poll released June 13 on the attitudes of Americans toward arts education revealed that 93 percent of Americans agree that the arts are vital to providing a well-rounded education for children. Additionally, 54 percent rated the importance of arts education a "ten" on a scale of one to ten.

The telephone survey was conducted as part of an ongoing public service campaign – "Art. Ask for More." – developed by Americans for the Arts, the Ad Council, and the Austin-based advertising agency GSD&M. The results of the survey were announced by Peggy Conlon, president and CEO of the Ad Council, during her keynote address at the annual convention of Americans for the Arts in Austin, TX.

The survey reveals additional strong support among Americans for arts education:

• 86 percent of Americans agree that an arts education encourages and assists in the improvement of a child's attitudes toward school.

• 83 percent of Americans believe that arts education helps teach children to communicate effectively with adults and peers.

• 79 percent of Americans agree that incorporating arts into education is the first step in adding back what's missing in public education today.

• 79 percent of Americans believe that it's important enough for them to get personally involved in increasing the amount and quality of arts education.

At the same time, it reveals uncertainty among "those involved in the life of a child" about how to become involved in advocating for arts education in schools:

• 62 percent believe that there are other people or organizations in the community who are better suited to take action (than they are).

• 40 percent say that they do not know how to get involved in arts education.

With these results, the public service campaign will now expand its message about promoting arts education to a message of empowering parents with more specific tools on how to make a difference in the arts in their communities.

According to Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts, "These survey results show that there is a consensus among the American people that the arts are vital to a well-rounded education. They underscore the need to continue the effort to expand arts education in America's schools and communities."

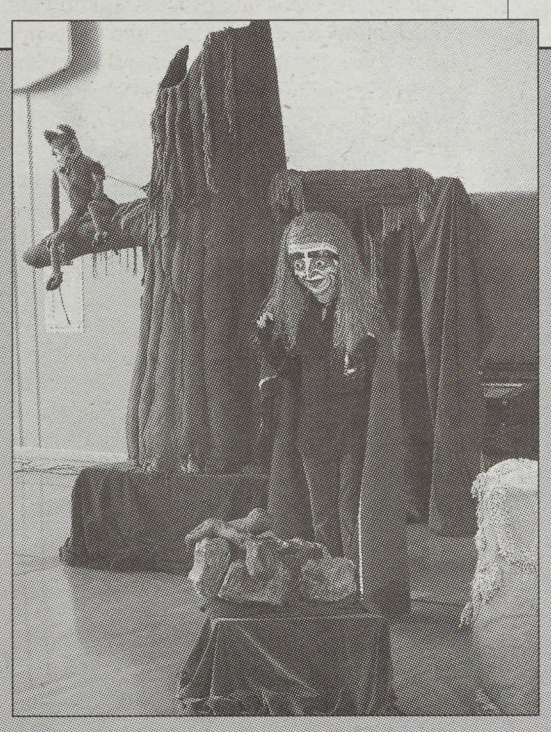
The Harris Poll was conducted by telephone in May of 2005 among 1,000 Americans, 18 years of age or older.

The "Art. Ask for More." campaign has been running in print, television and radio, and alternative media for three years. The campaign has received more than $110 million in national media donations to date and includes participation from 367 local partners nationwide. The success of the campaign is due largely to these hundreds of local Americans for the Arts partners.

These advertisements have received placement in *The New York Times*, *USA Today*, *Parade* and *Time*, as well as airing on the major broadcast TV, cable, and radio networks, and in the country's top-100 media markets.

For additional information on the survey or the campaign, please contact John Bianchi at 212-576-2700, ext. 228 or e-mail jbianchi@goodmanmedia.com.

Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in America. With offices in Washington, DC, and New York City, it has a record of more than 40 years of service. Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. Additional information is available at www.AmericansForTheArts.org.



Coyote stories

Tears of Joy puppet theatre in Portland, OR, regaled Dillon students with stories about the rascally coyote during an artist residency in April, sponsored by the Southwest Montana Arts Council and the Camp Fortunate Chapter of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation.

(Photos by Elaine Spicer, reprinted with permission from the *Dillon Tribune*)



Arts in Education Hotline

The Montana Arts Council has a toll-free hotline for Arts in Education. Sponsors wishing to apply for grant support for the Artists in Schools and Communities program can call 800-282-3092 for answers to their questions.

The Montana Arts Council will assist callers with project design and application procedures. It can also offer advice on other matters in the area of arts and education and community residencies.

Artists who would like to be included in the Artist Registry may also call for applications.



Lawrence J. Casey
2678 Stanton St.
North Bend, OR 97459

10-3-05

Hello Ivan,

My name is Larry Casey, I grew up in Montana — Great Falls + Helena, graduated HHS in 1940. I'm 16 years older than you. After WW II when I flew Army Air Corps fighter planes (P-40 & P-47) I enrolled at MSU, studied forest + range management and got a B.S. degree in forestry. Made my living working for the Bureau of Land Management. But enough about me.

I'll be attending Trailing of the Sheep Festival including your presentation.

As I read This House of Sky I marvelled at the similarities in our lives. Not that I was a sheep rancher, far from it, but I spent many summers on my cousin's ranch near Havre, learned to drive a tractor, sang "Ivan Skavinsky Skavar", fished the creeks, rivers + lakes of Lewis & Clark and Meagher counties, danced in White Sulphur, hunted ducks and quail along the Missouri River. On rear jacket one of your critics praised your "ability to awaken a longing for an inexplicable past" — and your book has done that to me.

Now I want to tell you about a book written by Dr. Gail F. Fletchall, now deceased. It came out in 1977, just a year before your House of Sky book. Title: Oregon Wool and Natural Dyeing. 115 pages, paper bound, 8" x 10¾", cover showing sheep grazing in the foot hills of the Coast Range. It's a scholarly work. My daughter, Kathleen Fletchall, has two cartons of the book. She's willing to mail them at her expense to anyone requesting a book and I will announce that fact at appropriate times during the Festival.

Perhaps you have some ideas that would add to the success of this project.

"My home is in Montana, I wear a bandana ---"

Sincerely,
Larry Casey

WB

Haida art: a kind of artistic hyphenation--like Faulkner's impulse to put all the world into one sentence (parody of Faulkner rush of adjectives?)

"You've got to have felony snaps to get the cuts."

--You've got to have good (i.e., plenty, ample) money to buy the music.

--source: Marty Christianson CMU 202 term paper in "high school..." lingo file

possibly combine this w/ Tom Allen of CBC telling of his music school days when they adopted "Buxtehude" (Dietrich B., 17th c. composer) as slang for money, as in "You got any Buxtehude?" They even knew what kind of car he drove back there in the 1600s: a Buxtehudebaker.

WB

Haida art: eyes like eyemasks worn to masquerade, but with great flat pupils, which at once are staring blank and pulling in all the world.

narrative poem-like lines from Sea Runners:

A high-standing sea of mountains,
White caps of snow and ice and
Rock, with arms of the Pacific,
Blue fjords and inlets thrusting in
At whatever chance: Alaska's locked grapple
of continent and ocean.

step-by-step writing example/lecture (sheepdog trials, Gov's Writers Day forum '88)

is in NY Times file

Sea Runners as a book has had an adventurous life. It's the one book out of my 9 that has been bought for the movies; on the other hand, the guys who bought the film rights show absolutely no sign that they know anything about making a movie. The book has been stocked, down through the years, in a number of nautical supply stores--that is, where kayakers and canoeists shop. Which, given the 50% mortality rate of the characters in the book, always makes me a little nervous.

It's also the book of mine which has had the most wretched paperback covers. ~~(show 2 earlier ones)~~ The current one is not so bad--kind of moody and swampy... But the previous one has this Rockwell Kent scene, evidently the coast of Maine.. My sentimental favorite is this first version, with the birchbark motif...

But also, more than any other book of mine, the Sea Runners has its own diary--a kind of journal, done on file cards, that I consciously kept during the writing of the book. Among other things here today, I'll be reading you some dabs from that journal, to try to show you how ideas and impressions and little turns of fate get translated into fiction.

The Sea Runners was my first piece of fiction, of any kind. I had never written a short story, never tried a novel before.... And inasmuch as my first 2 books, both non-fiction (This House of Sky & Winter Brothers), were both finalists for national book prizes, my publisher at the time was nowhere near happy about my trying my hand at fiction. But...

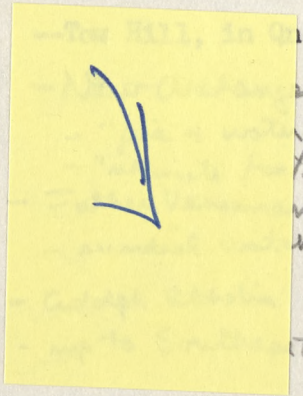
Sea Runners

--found story by accident, 11" article

--wanted to tell that story, journey down this great coast

--what ~~do men~~ people do when they're in over their heads; have to cope c more than expected to

--in terms of style, I wanted to do it in an old-fangled narrative way, as if the story always had existed and just was waiting to be told by some mid-air voice. But I also wanted to focus on the moments, individual episodes--and so the book has all the scenes it does.



Charlottes; abt 300 yds of contorted rock

l as space port; shaggy enough

, so to speak"

'ers draw. psychopaths"

now; Bishop Innocent: Metropolitan of Moscow

h; clock in St. Michael Cathedral

t

Sea Runners

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--Tow Hill, in Qn Charlottes; abt 300 yds of contorted rock

- New Archangel as space port; shaggy enough
  - "fire & water, so to speak"
  - "ultimate frontiers draw psychopaths"
- Father Venamanov; Bishop Innocent; Metropolitan of Moscow
- sundial watch; clock in St. Michael Cathedral
- Adolph Elholin
- up to Southeast

in terms of style, I wanted to the novel in an old-fangled narrative way, as if the story always had existed and just was waiting to be told by some mid-air voice. But I also wanted to focus on the moments, individual episodes--and so the book has all the scenes it does. (read p. 19-20, on empires as constellations; then p. 103, embers of pattern)

The settings of the book: 9000 mi, St.P to Kodiak I.; 2700 mi, Okhotsk-Kodiak
--New Archangel, space port of its time; not quite like the bar scene in Star Wars, but shaggy enough. Baranov once went 4 yrs without hearing from St.P's
--people who have been through "fire and water, so to speak"
--but also people of accomplishment: Baranov; Adolph Etholin; Father Veniamanov, later Bishop Innocent and later Metropolitan of Moscow--carved clocks
--Sitka: pacing off distances; help of local historical society
--Gene Ervine, Sitka park ranger: asked him about what wood they'd smell in the shipyard; how high the tides, which way wind blows in morn and evening; he provided Wm Blake quote, "art cannot exist but in minutely organized particulars"
--Juneau: Tebenkov maps, found last afternoon of 4 days' research at Alaska historical Library; white gloves to handle; huge portfolio, from about 1850. read p. 111
--Bancroft Library: James C. Ward, July 1853, "3 wks in Sitka"--clerk's notes on much longer diary. Details such as fuschias and pansies; also, instead of kvass or vodka--rum-ehampagne.

Mortar Board/1

--One thing I'm determined not to do ~~tonight~~ today--something I've learned from the horrific example of a few other reviewers of the Sea Runners--will be to give away the plot of the novel. This is the first book of mine where plot has really counted for anything, so maybe I'm hypersensitive on the point, but I've been astounded 3 or 4 times this fall to read reviews which give away every turn of the plot. I keep telling myself, my god, if they were reviewing a mystery, would they begin by saying, "The butler did it."?

--I can, though, try to sketch what the book is about. It's a story I found by accident, this 11" newspaper article...

--I wanted to tell that story, the journey down this great coast

--Among other things, the book tries to explore what people do when they're in over their heads; when they have to cope with more than they expected to.

The men of the book are: (read descptns of each except Wennberg; read "can't see ears")

--There's also a fifth character, the coast: read p.95-6 (waiting around Pt. Rupert)

Mortar Board/3

--Coastline: Alpha Helix, 133' long, research vessel of the Institute of Marine Science at the U. of Alaska; crew of 9, 3 of them named Mike; like a big fishboat; I stood double watch.

--Wennberg's seasickness, intensification of mine crossing Milbanke Sound and Qn Ch Sound.

--Chancellor Howard Cutler and Enid: serving for Ruth, Genesis 29; watercolors.

up at 5, b'fast, go to bridge at 5:45 when capt. took the watch from the mate; stay till midmorn, go to cabin to write, back to bridge after lunch for afternoon; write after supper. like ranch hand work: 3 rules - work hard as anybody else
- listen more than you talk
- don't rule, cook

--Tow Hill story?

From my notebook:...sea lions alongside. . . swim like dogs, noses high. . . make noise like orhrhrp!

Which became, in the manuscript: A thirty-nosed sea creature poked abruptly from the water, delivered the canoeists a thunderous burp, and sank. "Sea lions," Karlsson called to the other men.

From my notebook: clouds have singled out one mountain to the southeast, blotted it...

Which became, in the manuscript: Time and again, the canoemen would see a storm swoop onto a single mountain among many, as if sacking up a hostage as a lesson to all the rest.

From the manuscript: Swells were spaced wide, perhaps two lengths of the canoe between crests, but regular as great slow breathings. Each swell levered up the prow of the canoe, then the craft was shrugged downward. . . . Wennberg held his paddle just above the lapping waves, as though trying to recall whether water or air was the element in which it operated. His face hung open in surprise. His mouth made motions but no sound. Then: "I'm. Getting. Sick."

That scene also,

~~A scene which~~, I have mixed emotions to say, ~~also~~ originated in my notebook: "Queen Charlotte Sound. . . Knowing we'd hit the Queen Charlotte swells about 3, prepared myself with seasickness pill, then handful of gorp for energy, then propped myself in open door of the bridge for fresh air, by god determined I'd stick out the entire Queen Charlotte crossing. . . Twenty minutes later, was sprawled flat on my bunk."

I suppose it's not possible to talk about western or Northwestern writing without referring to the look and feel of the country--although you may have noticed I've delayed this particular topic about as long as I decently could. I have a sort of low-grade perpetual argument with ~~people~~ critics who seem to think that because landscape constitutes a lot of what's in books set in the west, it constitutes damn near everything. But I'll try sort that out in a minute. First I have to say that landscape of course ~~is~~ can be a particularly potent element for a ~~western~~ Northwestern writer of either non-fiction or fiction. ~~The novel I've just finished, and which will be published this fall, for instance~~ My current novel, The Sea Runners, for instance involves the coast all the way from Sitka down to Astoria.

It's the fictional version of an incident I came across by accident during the research for Winter Brothers--the story of four men who in 1853 fled from indentureship to the Russians at Sitka--New Archangel, it was then--and headed down the coast for Astoria in a stolen ~~Indian~~ Tlingit canoe. Well, between Sitka and Astoria is a lot of coast. So as the Montana landscape was in This House of Sky and the Cape Flattery country was in Winter Brothers, I've tried to use the North Pacific coast itself as a kind of character in this book, ~~which is titled The Sea Runners~~--tried to use the coast as a constant presence, and source of metaphor.

In short, ~~because~~ a sense of place is a major ingredient in western literature, but let's don't think it's the whole supper. In my own writing, I know that I work hardest, longest, on language. The novelist Thomas Flanagan said it best recently: "Fiction lives by the energy of its language." Flanagan practices what he preaches. --which I feel entitled to quote from here because it takes place in the west of I'lnd Listen to this opening paragraph of his novel, The Year of the French, describing an Irish poet named MacCarthy, on his first steps to involvement in the Irish rebellion of 1798:

From my notebook, where I jotted that the forest of the British Columbia coast sometimes seemed so thick that each tree touched the trees on either side of it:

Which became, in the manuscript: Fleece-thick as this forest was, it seemed possible that every tree of the coast was in green touch with every other, limb to limb, a continent-long tagline of thicket.

heading south through the Inside Passage:

From my notebook, a scene of dawn light finding a crack between mountains and clouds.

Which became, in the manuscript: Canoe prow into water, three paddles into the shimmer sent by the craft. The near shore, the western, was coming distinct with trees now. Then within the first few hundred strokes by the canoemen

the horizon to the east brightened with low strips of dawn, as though chinking had fallen out between mountains and clouded sky.

I'm a believer, then, that the marvelous geography of this corner of the country is vital to a northwestern writer. But now to the argument.

I had to do some traveling along that coast, by boat and plane and on foot, for the sake of the book, so my notebooks show some fresh first-hand examples--sometimes a little water-stained--of how the coast would make itself felt in the manuscript.

(Every so often, some Eastern reviewer of This House of Sky would refer to me as having been born and brought up in the Montana wilderness. ~~Now, we can all grant that some unshorn behavior has been known to occur in Montana now and again, but it's not that shaggy.~~)

The notion of Western writing as a "literature of place" has ~~merit~~ its --it better have, merit, or I shouldn't be up here trying to talk about it. "Place," landscape, backdrop of mountain and of plain and of hard weather, does figure large in the work of a a lot of us. But I don't particularly think it's at the neglect of the people, the human stories, the Westerners who carry on their lives against the big bold landscapes of those books.

C's class

talk o research
style: how to create a voice
deadlines & drafts: how a writer works
theme?
- wk out a few instances, a #s, /narr. bk as bkd

add:
· analogies
- Vasstrna
-. coast

- bk born of research (Hell WBros story)
  - 2 trips to Alaska: Sitka (2 pieces of show & tell) & · Alpha Helix voyage (~~park out~~ stations)
    - patience: Tebenkov maps (white gloves etc.)
    - see what presents itself: Wennberg's reasonableness is mine

- style: mid-19th c. story, 19th-century ish sound, voice to book
  - full of proverbs: paper is · schoolman's frost (p. 85) (202, "departed y gray whales")
  - rural/lower (country people): often ~, such as dog on grass, 181
  - sound of words: p. 194 Grudging ... (field cd - some made up)

put on board → " " " → Bring me my bow of burning gold! / Bring me my arrows of desire! / Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold! / Bring me my chariot of fire! } Wm Blake, Milton; Willy Nelson & Waylon Jennings "She's a 30-17D woman..."

" " " → (p. 147, W'berg - "mud"

- getting: writing done; deadline - so many wds/day
  - drafts; go thru & improve & improve: verbs, adjs, rhythm (read like eds)

C's class

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style: how to create a voice

deadlines & drafts: how a writer works

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    - use what presents itself: Wennberg's resourcefulness is mine

- style: mid-19th c. story, 19th-century rich sound, voice to book
  - 202, "deposited by gray whales"
  - full of proverbs: paper is "schoolman's feast (p. 85)
    - rural/rustic (country people): often "; site as dog or grass, 181
    - sound of words: p. 194 Grudging ... (file cd - some made up)

put on board → " " " → - Bring me my bow of burning gold! (Wm Blake, Milton)
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" " " → (p. 147, Wiberg - "mud"

- getting: writing done; deadline - so many wds/day
  - drafts; go thru & improve & improve; verbs, adjs, rhythm
    (read file cds)

PACE

Seattle U. seminar, Oct. 24, '96:

I'm told this is to be a seminar on writing — & I don't doubt that writing can be dissected. (The streets would be full of unquiet English teachers if it couldn't.) But there's the example of that frog back in high school biology class, isn't there — sure, you can dissect it, but some of the life can go out of it in the process.

So, before I do some talking about techniques — and taking whatever questions you'd like — let me read a bit from the seminar that got me started as a writer. It was called high school English.

Just after I started my freshman year... Valier...

(read Mrs. T. section) from This House of Sky

Well, where does a writer get stuff like that? Mrs. Tidyman died while I still was in college — by the time I was researching This House of Sky she was 15 years gone. How do I know she gardened in her night-gown?

— By going back to Montana, & talking to her next door neighbor.

— Class reunion... whatever happened to Bill Tidyman (youngest & best favored... Latin)

— He's an FBI agent. "No kidding!"

Seattle U. / p. 2

Bill T'man: stories about his mother, with telling detail – that checking account his dad had to set up in the neighboring town because Mrs. T. would blithely write checks on that bank.

And I think it's in the detail, the telling – the language – that writing techniques can be some help.

(1)

(2) insides of language – slang etc.

(3) Sea Runners – 19th century

(4) sounds on page – poetry etc.
(Blake, Preface to Milton

(5)
(5A) alliteration
– sentence structure?

(6) page structure (SKIP?)

C's class — Demi Moore's

ein / another des details

/ml of Verbal abuse

K in interior thoughts ...

craft
1. making form fit content; + spaces betw ## ^ after escape

Sounds well made
- p. 182 - 4 days - 4 sentences — p. 267
- K's thoughts/sentences get + ragged, ^

2. attention to details
   - chariot of fire comma / W, just,
   - proverbs

PALOMB !

C's class on Heart Earth, Oct. 24 '96:

Show-&-tell: 3 pics mentioned in book – (L to R, clockwise
- my mother, in sunbonnet, posed w/ dead bear
- Rhinestone Cowgirl picture (p. 19 ff)
- 1 of series of pics, coyotes in "leap of death" (p. 33)
- & 4th pic, my parents & me as we were, probably a year or so before book begins

pen: evocative power of an object
ph'copy of envelope?

In the beginning is language...

Memoir prim → Explain "deliberate dream" signal to reader

Technique: (style – how writer says things, makes them happen on page.)
- making flow of language emulate flow of action. (bougainvillea & Faulkner)
p. 8 ff, "My parents..." – sentence like us, rolls to a halt after a long way

p. 51 – "I loved..." stab of that sentence by itself, & juts of g's

last chapter – I wanted to weave that together somehow, to show us in town & my mother on mtn. So, changes of scene often hinge off a shared word:
p. 129 – Sixteen... & again on p. 135, to pull reader's pt of view

p. 133 – dreamscape: Dreams
p. 136 – radio: Broadcasting, sleep
p. 139 – Rung! a coincidence, a gift to writer → this is the residue of design: visit to cabin, to Rung's WA state papers
p. 146 – "death/dearth"

The writer's dread is that only the fingers are talking. That the mind's story is hanging back, dodging the attempt to piece it out into sentence and episode. Yet fingers may know a coax or two to try. Mine, in the years of working on This House of Sky, was to stroke ~~detail~~ start the biggest facts flatly onto paper; once that was done, ~~memory~~ memory had to ~~keep~~ start filling in the edgework of detail, or else admit blankness--and memory does not admit easily.

memory will to so conceive ways to avoid admitting

BOOKS OF THE TIMES

The Art of Storytelling, Transformed by Hackers

By MICHIKO KAKUTANI

In the course of her new book, "Hamlet on the Holodeck," an M.I.T. research scientist, Janet H. Murray, describes some characters created by computer technicians. There's Eliza, an electronic shrink, whose rote responses ("Tell me more about your family") amusingly send up real-life psychiatrists. There's paranoid Parry, whose compulsive babbling mirrors the obsessional thinking of real-life mental patients. And there's Julia, the charming "chatterbot" (a text-based computer character), whose coy pickup banter echoes that of real-life Internet flirts.

As Ms. Murray points out, the most successful chatterbots are those who are "self-absorbed, evasive, or obsessive in familiar ways." This sort of tunnel vision lends itself to the rigidities of computer programming, and in conversation supplies a plausible explanation for the chatterbot's difficulty in coping with unexpected subject matter. Successful computer characters designed in Ms. Murray's interactive fiction-writing course include politicians fielding questions in a news conference, a smug, self-absorbed artist and a salesman who invariably returns to his sales patter when confused.

While such limited characters don't seem terribly promising as literary creations, Ms. Murray argues in "Holodeck" that computers are reshaping "the spectrum of narrative expression, not by replacing the novel or the movie but by continuing their timeless bardic work within another framework." We are on the brink, she suggests, of a brave new era in which "cyberdramas" will reinvent storytelling as a participatory medium.

"Perhaps the next Shakespeare of this world," she writes, "will be a great live-action role-playing GM" — computer game master — "who is also an expert computer scientist."

Ms. Murray, who has taught humanities at M.I.T. and is currently a senior research scientist at the Center for Educational Computing Initiatives there, writes that the computer offers "a thrilling extension of human powers." Her utopianism colors all her arguments in this volume, leading her to ignore or play down the more disturbing consequences of technology while unabashedly embracing its possibilities.

She suggests that anonymous multi-user domains (MUD's) "can give us uninhibited access to emotions, thoughts and behaviors that are closed to us in real life." She celebrates the therapeutic potential of virtual reality, its ability to provide "a safe space in which to confront disturbing feelings." And she argues that the restlessness manifested by children who have grown up with computers and remote control devices is not necessarily "evidence of a shortened attention span or an increased need for stimulation," but may be an "expression of a more active curiosity or eagerness to look around for oneself."

She predicts that computer games, with their simplistic win-loss equations and often violent dynamics, will increasingly give way to "the collective construction of elaborate alternate worlds." Those worlds, she predicts, will be interactive, allowing audiences to participate in the storytelling process, and they will probably be "multiform," offering a single plot line with multiple variations.

Already, she points out, novels, plays and movies have begun to push against the constraints of linear storytelling. Already, they have begun to play with the possibilities of alternate realities. Examples are not confined to the post-modern experiments of writers like Jorge Luis Borges, but also include popular films like "Back to the Future" (in which the hero's tamperings with the past have the power to shape different futures) and "Groundhog Day" (in which the hero relives a single day over and over again). Television shows like "E.R." and "Homicide" already feature multiple plot lines, and the "Rashomon" technique of telling the same story from different points of view has become an increasingly popular literary device. The lesson of such works seems to be that truth is relative, that people's experience of the world is fragmented and fragmentary at best.

In several chapters of "Holodeck," Ms. Murray uses her considerable knowledge of literature to draw some interesting parallels between traditional literary forms and emergent electronic texts. She notes that practitioners of oral storytelling and commedia dell'arte share the computer programmer's reliance, respectively, on formulas and stock characters, and she points out the growing emphasis that post-modernist critics have placed on the participatory role of the reader.

She is less convincing when she is celebrating the potential of electronic narratives. Although she tries hard to inflate the significance of her examples, they always end up sounding more like the mindless computer games we already know than emotionally engaging works of art. "A digital artist might use the structure of the adventure maze to embody a moral individual's confrontation with state-sanctioned violence," she writes in one chapter. And several pages later, she suggests that facing an unopened door in a fictional labyrinth could "have the feeling of a determination to face the truth, to stare directly at the threatening beast."

> Celebrating the creative possibilities of life on the Internet.

As for worries that interactive literature will negate the role of the author, she replies, chirpily, that "to play Mario Brothers or King's Quest or Myst is to open ourselves to the vision of the shaping author in the same way we open ourselves to the author's voice in a novel."

Even more disturbing are Ms. Murray's failures to grapple with the social consequences of virtual reality and the blurring of lines between fantasy and fact that it nurtures. She is cheerful about "the consensual hallucination" shared by people in MUD's and the possibility of one day playing the role, in cyberspace, of a favorite television character's next-door neighbor. As technology develops, she contends, "we will slowly get used to living in a fantasy environment."

For Ms. Murray, this is a wonderful thing. For others, it is a form of escapism, escapism that can foster a retreat from the problems and pleasures of the real world.



Nicholas Altenberind/The Free Press

HAMLET ON THE HOLODECK
The Future of Narrative in Cyberspace

By Janet H. Murray

324 pages. The Free Press. $25.

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Gathering to Bond Over Books When There's a Sist

Continued From Page B1

age amid the deluge of books by black authors in the last 10 years. Moreover, many members say, the groups have gradually evolved into informal support groups, giving vent and validation to black women's concerns about life, love, family and race.

"There is a lot of good bonding that goes on in these groups," said Lolita Files, the author of the new novel "Scenes From a Sistah" (Warner Books) and a popular guest who reads aloud from her book at some of the groups."People are using their time to not only read and enjoy a book, but they are telling their own stories."

Ms. Files, 32, recently visited a black women's reading group in Miami that traditionally leaves one chair empty.

When a passage of a book under discussion struck a chord for a member, she took the chair to share her own experience.

"It was very moving," said Ms. Files, whose book is an intimate tale of the travails of a young black woman, Misty, and her enduring friendship with a girl named Reesy.

With names like Babes on Books, the Black Women's Literary Guild, Literary Sisters and Go On Girl, the group meetings tend to be small (from 6 to 20 women) and well organized. (Many have annual dues and designated "facilitators" to lead discussions.)

Some groups use complicated procedures to select books, taking great care to include fiction and nonfiction and a range of genres, like mystery, biography, science fiction and historical fiction.

But nearly all groups, said Pat Neblett, a member of the Black Women's Literary Guild in Boston, strive to create an environment of camaraderie and support, both intellectual and spiritual.

"We are very loose and very open," said Ms. Neblett, who researched black women's groups and wrote a book about them called "Circles of Sisterhood: A Book Discussion Group Guide for Women of Color" (Harlem River Press, 1997).

The fact is, she said, that black people have had reading groups for generations — long before radio, television, film and other popular entertainment began drawing the population at large away from books.



Cindy Karp for The New York Times

An empty chair beckons speakers at a Miami women's book group.

Striving to create an environment of camaraderie and support.

New York who moved to Boston, where she lived in a mostly white neighborhood and worked in a mostly white office. "She was feeling totally isolated," Ms. Neblett said. Quite by accident she learned about Ms. Neblett's book group.

"Thank God," Ms. Neblett said with a chuckle. "It saved her life."

Tara Roberts, 27, a former editor for Essence, a black women's magazine, said there is something about the confluence of black women's reawakening about their own power and the public self-analysis of the 1990's that has helped to make the book groups so explosively popular in recent years.

"I think with these groups some doors have been opened for them," said Ms. Roberts, who reads from her book, "Am I the Last Virgin? 10 African-Americans Reflect on Sex and Love" (Simon & Schuster, 1997), at black women's book groups. "I think it is very interesting to note how many people felt free enough in such an atmosphere to talk freely about their own issues, like abuse.

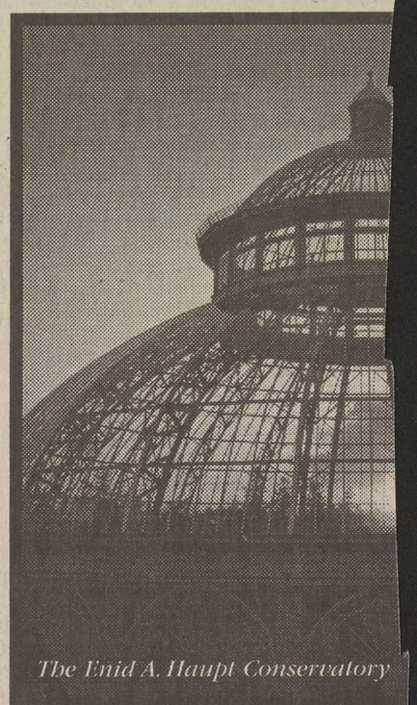
"It was fascinating, wonderful and I came out feeling really close to them."

Callie Crossley, a producer for "20/20" on ABC-TV and a member of a reading group in Boston, said: "There is no doubt that our group gives us cathartic kinds of experiences. Different kinds of themes come up as we read different kinds of books."

And she noted that in her three years in the group, the reading list has been wide and varied, from Walter Mosley's mysteries to Will Haygood's biographies to the intimate diary style of the Zimbabwean writer J. Nozipo Maraire.

"The diversity makes it richer," Ms. Crossley said. "I look so forward to the meetings."

Back in Ms. Mitchell-Brown's family room, the group was in a roiling discussion over a tricky question raised in Diane McKinney-Whetstone's novel, "Tumbling" (William Morrow & Company, 1996). In short: Should a black man who is being denied sexual intimacy at home have



The Enid A. Haupt Conservatory



Let's face it,

get/ing: writing done; deadline – so many wds/day
– drafts; go slow & improve & improve; verb, adjs, rhythm
(read/rede·de)

Toasts: chronologically in this trilogy, from

Scotch: Broth to the ill, stilts to the lame.

1930's and after, my dad's generation: "Here's how."

And while it's not exactly a toast, in the last novel I hope to I'll have a chance to use something I once heard: a guy ordering a round of drinks by calling out to the barmaid, "Nurse, we'll have another round of jelly sandwiches."

1½ min/pp.

· sound a rainbow makes - silent declaration
little is impossible, esp'cly in a library
anecdotal - liability of Harv's Ph.D (except in GBn)
Eng Have My Bones; Swedish explorations etc.
Less a bk is read + valbl to me
listening to rainbow
Big Horn Co. MT
& that's why Mr. Wright was wrong. Because it was a kind of
cathedral ... problems, not · least of them · heating bill
warned ag'st Glasgow pubs - naive
"Slushai!"
libraries used in WB 105 - some snatches murmurs of Swan in each
- Swan: clams o · beaches
Hutterite women as if they have stepped out 1· pp. of Tolstoy
basement 10° colder
Carol: I think I've found us a lunch place.
here
I know who makes libraries possible - lib'ns
1 more sound of · craft of reach: Yo who dares, I can't ~~tax~~ ch Q 1
1 more pp cant hearing who STA pn machine being pieced -
& I laugh.
~~to~~ bookscape
Dave Walker
Edmund Pearson, On Books

they ignor me, · invsbl Amern

more pp: Big Horn - 2
~~Butte~~ etc - 3
NU - 2
rainbow - 6
transitions - 2-4

There are 2 more
Which is a way of saying
end 1 more on a note

possible libraries

WSS
Valley Hi School
KU - Deering
Shepard AFB

Huntington
Beinecke
British
Newberry
Ireland
Shoreline

~~Sky~~

MSU
UW phone thru

WBrve

UW - law school
Pt. Trnd
Victoria?

Sea Runners

Juneau
Sitka
Gr Hist Soc. - Bancroft

Eng Crk

Mont. libraries
Scotland

USA Weekend: Julie Laugher

like many Wn states, Mont is 2 geo/phies, Wn mtns & eastern ramps
- sense of discovery, big geogs looming

I've driven, flown & walked, reseh'g 3 novels (Marian title)
Hiway '88, hist strata: dinosrs @ Egg Mtn
Glacier to Y'stone
Indns / buffalo land
Lewis & Clark
Missouri R traffic
Y'stone - last gt free flowing R in am
encompassing climate: 105° summer in '88, (frost fines farmers & ranchers talking w the hands)
w/full green in '89,
- distances betw svce stations

- I like to travel @ dawn; no other shifting light during day
- can see other people's weather - it is a big sky
(long valleys etc.;
long lines of sight)

1 main/1 ref ?

Billings speech

travesties / Joyce quote : Ollie North heroes & sheroes

Munro, Atwood, Robertson Davies

Tories in Ebenezer

use / non Dancing : g'days

/ pen

WW I

Remley : go beyond boundaries of West

Lit men stay away quote

angle of vision / non ... rather than NY, London & Paris

Western - Western

people who leave - it: I think you should / feel a mo too much.

terra firma - vice versa : keep our terms straight

- my God, but I'm glad to be ~~back~~ ~~not yet again~~ in back / in vice versa.

worldly - otherworldly

man of world

WHA

Cliophilia / biophilia

· Henrys

· 10% who never get · message

show: slide - show lit're (Chas. Newman)

· fingers of · mind / fingerprints: whorls & arches

trumpery

Casa Blanca: Sky

memory is our past tense?

running over fingers across · stars

· Fugitive Grp

Welty: "Now, talk!"

social wk in Shelby Bar?

enraged or outrageous: sht · wounded

Some 7· RT mbrs I grew up around, o whom we used to say they sure were even-tempered - mad as hell all · time.

Fl 7 Phoenix - last line

shifg pts 7 voice & view - Ftzpr, Erdrich

Tooth Crow

I'm here to tell you to get a little promiscuous.

Steg - How you doing on wolves? pitch-perfect gn of putting nice verse o · usual expectations

history in a hurry

H James - chewed

a Plane is Missing

Money better, sometimes it is - map, sight unseen

Well, that's what passes for passion in a Scotchman,

& I'd better get to saying s'thing o precisions,

Moser: appropriate

How are we doing? Not a Fug'ive Grp

· Last Best Places

content in form. Exiles - Stegner & Willa Cather

I'm not much inclined in categories

Crown: story 7· land

& I can get the eyes, ears, tongues, figures, & hearts

, soul ought to be whole b· m' hood

history - "official fiction"

* · crocodile / actor ! / Hugo - thru · medium 7 Bill K gave us · Last R Place

narrative: Faulkner & Erdrich.

Joyce: Dublin itself spk's

language

(even narrative springs from this: content is prim a bk written c sentences like dry sticks adds up to a ~~plant~~ content bdl 7 dry sticks

Plot development

let me read you one swatch 7 fiction, & one 7 history one piece that shows d · other that tells

- · 1st is a scene 7 Cheyenne / Arapaho

characting

not an expert on · Comanche part, but it seems to me 1 G sends quite a lot of his prodigious · brain in those 80 odd years words 7 telling.

ch by ch era by era, anecdote by anecdote, theme by theme - so what?

craft: see & hear into language: - sounds on paper; specific gravity of words

- dialogue: consistency
- minor characters
- really written: style or imagery or passion
- islands of language
- language which makes a shimmer behind story.

price tag: get on a life

creative stability: A/ you ain't no place, you can't go nowhere.

lingo: ain't it?

bollix

Shuck!

Air & Water

(1)

older NW writers: socially & culturally, I am aware of being part of a lineage, a family tree of writers — Wallace Stegner, Mari Sandoz, Hamlin Garland — writers who grew up on farms, ranches, homesteds — also in that family tree, A.B. Guthrie, who showed us a Montanan could grow up to be a writer — of my own generation, friends, NW-born contemporaries Craig Lesley, Jim Welch, Bill Kittredge, Mary Clearman Blue, Maclean an honorary member — but mostly, I do) compare my work & most of some people of any others in region. Conrad, Orwell, St. X, Dinesen, Faulkner, Ch@. Thoreau and less — Hoagland, Mathson, McPhee — are craftsmen I like to. writers I partly appreciate are Thos Keneally & John Fowles . . . Bk of Changes LePage & Riddley Walker

Stanegeed/dog writers

· craft of writing: you learn it every day, by writing. (j seed- poetry- pulsating
- in · beginning · language (steno p. 2
- fabulous aspect of language - lang always trying to excel itself. be magical
- fable (story)

- examples: hay hands' greeting (steno p. 1)
- Sea Runners: Wennberg double contraction
- copy editing sheet
- habit as core of craft (Flan O'Connor: ... you won't be there when writing wants happen)

living in NW: Dad raising me by himself.. (file card

- shaped my life, & books are what comes out of mo mold
- work habits - deadlines - ability to stand yourself

- gives me my topics, angles on life mo interest me: trilogy

- invist our live in geogphcl place rather than a profession or family or social leiage. May go back to frontier - homesteads

MT speech: spring '93 call Richard Drake

rangers' diaries & Pinchot → Marshall (406) 243-2921 home: 251-5618

coyotes (annales?) Annal (no s)

Bob Marshall - in Missoula & elsewhere; pics in UM archives

Dick Bass: gun/t & Warmsdam

· crocodile factor: (speech or semester)

Austen & Irish n'paper examples: Dee McNamer mention?

Missoula examples of particle: Hugo - Degrees of Gray?

Maclean - jackrabbit

Dorothy Green?

· university

social costs of distance: some 14-yr-old kid

& can't tell you what's going to happen:

as some1 who never thought A'd leave MT - then never reconcile w/it;

then write + of my bks o it. (In teen boom, who'd have foreseen · &c/'n?)

Hodgins & 30's prediction

· poetry of fact is slow. (5 times-taking a generation - maybe several. Stegner: Wallace - "Give it a hundred yrs."

Thornton Wilder, 8th Day?

Grant Kittredge?

- 100 yrs package of trees: no. of celebrations

- Brandel essay: short-term - long-term & middle-term

- Sheila Stern:

History, a coming & visit a lot

like a river of diamonds

& said a bit ago facts live in diff/nt places...

- B's letters: was 1. heard both in AZ & MT
- oral hist. of TT Pace

efficacy of a few well-chosen words

dog - only tool ~~he needed~~ no called w/ him was his mind, because his name was BM.

(after three drams)

· He knew to say, "How many Bradys

We fiction writers claim to tell truth by making things up, & I've always dreaded · day when, say, entire newspaper staff's realize - hey, we cd sit @ home & just make stuff up."

8-10 pp, BM.

2 pp HE & TT. P

that sums us up.

close w/ reversal: like light, time is both particle & wave.

Fishtrap-

I was born not many wks b4 H's jackboots tramped into Poland @ start of Sept 1939...

& backyd of Glyndon PA (Glyndon MD) in gulches & coulees of Mont. ranches, (Prescott AZ) as a small boy, I fought WW II & imagined myself out there w/ my Navy uncle W on destroyer USS Ault or w/ my Army uncle P in Aus'ia...

& then grew up in (Postwar) Rocky Mtn W, in Mont., while AB & co writing Big Sky, Way W & Smu Than Hill & writing a Pulitzer, & Wallace Stegner was writg Wks on W & teaching writg @ Stan'd, & Norman Mac'n was professg lit're @ U of Chi, & Dorothy Johnson b Missoula was writg Wn books which became movies such as Hang's Tree, Man Who Shot Liberty Valance, & A Man Called Horse

So, I suppose it'd be appropriate to say, here is smo setting, that all smo made me see. Light b. Wn sky & turned me b2 writer I am.

PAUSE!

That might be appropriate, but I think it'd be grievously wrong. But professionally — as a prof'l writer — in actuality, as best I can find it b myself, is no writer I ever had to — b/c on my college desk @ Nwn U & later — was Isak Dinesen, Wm Faulkner, Geo. Orwell, St Exupery, Turgenev — (& then, again, in prof'l terms, when freelancing, I spent 10 years in NewsMag biz, before they got terminally new & prgot mo jlsm skl have some fact to it)

(W often would've stopped me personally. Maps — an old story, of my region, of place by machine, a branch of)

So, socially & culturally (1)

but professionally
What has more interested me in, to hearken to something I haven't known what to call except eloquence of edg of world.

(2) ~~Fail~~ (3 words) add Pat Barker, n Eng; Roddy Doyle; Kadare

(3) Camera Lucida

Am as ~~#~~ Int began @ ends ↑ docks ↑ Cve. settlers had to cross wilderness of water.

Many Wests: east my here, mst me NW; Rkmpl ↑ clevel AV; mtn W; then high plains. Tunnel begins @ Cumbld Gap

For some ↑ us, regnlsm has never waned. I've always felt myself a Wner.

rest ↑ entry remembers sme al Lord every 4 yrs: when have we ever had a Wner as Pres?

- Yet. I mat'l gov'l figure during my adult life whose rep'n has emerged intact is Wm. O. D. ↑ over here at Yakima.

grog ↑ clim'c vars ns my Pac to Casc crest; PS nd intricate

over here o Olympic Pen'a, tho are areas which ck as 1 ~~wh~~

long'c ~~lost~~ Trident cd dun c to ctl nuc wepn sy.
Ohio class subs

Adams only Cab member who told Ctr WHS to stuff job.

* Wner will ask 1st, Wh r u sy?, while an Eastn might ask What do u do? or a Sovn, Who are ur kin?

* ⊕ I think many ↑ us out here invent our lives in a geogphl place rather than to a profsn or ~~family~~ in family or social lineage.

New regism s - likely to prevail · rape ↑ resources

Exposition - 70s car
Dent
Drama

Tell it to cook,

Writer's Craft
240-1 Fort Patrol
230 fight in shade

buried man starve to death in bed,

Those of us who try to put wds o paper o. Am n west-
o.

I've com sum dist ce to tel u ~~smo~~ s'thing which ltr'ns
~~prob'ly~~ already pro perfectly well:

I suppose reason writers get invited to give speeches is mo
peopl are curious to see wht we do when we can't hide
behind a typwritr.

sound of past voices

exactness of detail u get in a entry wh peopl stand out:
- clothes too big & too small
- can't stop fishing on an odd #

stories seem to be a kind of social plasma, a portion of
society's bldstrm

wall paintings as stories

stories are a nourishment we seem to need

gte Maclean
" Hugo, Trig Tr
" Jim Welch?
Hildred Walker
maths & conscience
Dorothy Jean

A Poetic Epitaph: Marina Tsvetaeva's poems to Blok

ANDREW FIELD

Every phrase and every sentence is an end
and a beginning,
Every poem an epitaph.
T. S. ELIOT, "*Little Gidding*"

MARINA TSVETAEVA WAS BORN, the daughter of a professor, in 1892. Her first book of verse, *Evening Album*, appeared when she was only eighteen, and it was followed by another, *Magic Lantern*, in 1912. About this book a well-known poet and critic observed at the time: "[Tsvetaeva] is a poetess with a certain gift. But there is something unpleasantly treacly in her descriptions of a semi-childish world, in her tender emotion before all that comes to hand . . . Perhaps two or three such poems would be pleasant. But a whole book in a nice little velvet cover, and in a cardboard protective sheath, and published by 'Ole-Luk-Oie'—no . . ."[1]

But on her tortuous path, leading from pre-revolutionary Russia into emigration and at last to Soviet Russia (where she died by her own hand in 1941), Tsvetaeva's poetic voice acquired a strength and character and, above all, an originality which earn her an eminent place among modern Russian poets. With its strong, chafed emotion and driving, hooflike rhythm, her verse forges a hard and brilliant poetic surface from an unmistakably feminine voice. Tsvetaeva's poetry has long enjoyed the praise of a small but important group of critics and artists, among them D. S. Mirsky, Ilya Ehrenburg, Vladimir Nabokov (not given to extravagance in his favorable judgments, he refers to her as "poet of genius"[2]), and Boris Pasternak who, in 1956, wrote: "I think that a very great reconsideration and a very great acknowledgement await Tsvetaeva."[3] Unfortunately the critical literature on her has remained miniscule . . . so much so, in fact, that the present essay represents the first critical treatment of her (apart from mention in literary surveys) in English. But now, surprisingly soon, Tsvetaeva has been "resurrected" in Russia where her poetry is being republished and can be seen to be exerting a strong formal

Spring '65

influence on such important younger poets as Andrei Voznesensky. The word "resurrected" is, I think, a fitting one because Tsvetaeva is in essence a religious poet, an appellation which should be taken as a necessary but by no means a limiting or sufficient description. The religious current in her poetry is particularly evident in her cycle (and sixth book) of poems, *Poems to Blok*[4], one of Tsvetaeva's major achievements and an outstanding monument of modern Russian poetry.

First, a brief description of the structure of the work. The natural analogy and the probable model for the cycle was, of course, Aleksandr Blok's own famous early volume of Symbolist poetry, *Poems on the Beautiful Lady* (1901-1902). The cycle consists of three parts, the first of which is almost as long as the other two combined. It is also divided in time—the first part was written in 1916 (except for its conclusion, written in 1920), while the two shorter sections were written in 1921, presumably on the occasion of Blok's death. As then might be expected, there is a marked difference in tone between the parts. In the first portion the "high and lofty" language which has been frequently noted in Tsvetaeva—it is worth noting that one of her favorite Russian poets was the 18th century poet Derzhavin—sounds most clearly. The second part is a threnody to Blok in the folk manner: the theme "in which cradle do you lie?" recurs continually, and such motifs as "a prince without a country" and "a friend without friends" bear a distinct folk imprint. The third part is an apostrophe to Russia symbolized as the grieving Virgin; it combines the disparate styles of the first two sections in an intense and stirring counterpoint of imagery and language. There is a valid question, it should be said, as to whether or not *Poems to Blok* ought to be read as a unified work rather than merely a book of poems, but the thematic order and progression of the poems lend great weight to the former reading—it might be best to say that Tsvetaeva, like Eliot, took individual poems on a single theme and "at some point" decided to use them as the basis for a larger whole work.

The central fact about Tsvetaeva's poetry is that its currency is the word itself rather than intricate grammatical structures enveloping an idea. Often she juxtaposes related words which have drifted far apart in meaning and re-establishes the bond between them, as, for instance, the adjective *prazdny* (idle) and the verb *prazdnovat'* (to celebrate):

Idle hands cross . . .
—Dead lies the singer
And celebrates resurrection.
Krestyatsya ruki prazdnye
—Myortvy lezhit pevets
I voskresen'e prazdnuet. (20)

And, conversely, she links together words which are in fact not etymologically related:

To the wanderer—the road
To the dead—a hearse
Stranniku—doroga
Myortvomu—drogi (16)

Concern for the value and poetic potentiality of each word is also reflected in Tsvetaeva's fragmented lines:

In a mist—dove-colored
You stand, in a chasuble
Of snow adorned.
Vo mgle—sizoy
Stoish', rizoy
Snegovoy odet. (12)

The position of "chasuble" (*riza*) does not permit the reader to pass over it as a mere substantive in a sentence; a pause is obligatory. Syntax serves the same purpose—it is an attempt, strangely reminiscent of 18th century poetics, to impart new expressive power to the poet's words.

Because Tsvetaeva views art as a sacred function ("In its relation to the spiritual world art is a certain physical world of the spiritual."[5]) her concern for even the outward form of the written word is scarcely less than—and indeed quite analogous to—that of the Russian Old Believers for crossing themselves with two fingers instead of three. The initial stanza of *Poems to Blok* is an incantation of Blok's name:

Your name—a bird in hand,
Your name—a bit of ice on the tongue,
One lone movement of the lips,
Your name—five letters.
A ball, caught in flight,
A little silver bell in the mouth.

Имя твое - птица в руке,
Имя твое - льдинка на языке,
Одно единственное движение губ,
Имя твое - пять букв.
Мячик, пойманный на лету,
Серебряный бубенец во рту. (11)

The first line invests the name (which is not to say the man) with life, a bird in the hand. Tsvetaeva's stress upon the phonetics and orthography of Blok's name—the five letters where new practice would count but four (after the 1917 Revolution, in a major revision of Russian spelling, the "hard sign" which stood at the end of most nouns and proper names and was not pronounced was dropped)—makes of it a verbal connection with the past. Tsvetaeva was to the end of her life a passionate advocate of the old orthography. Finally, the silver bell in her mouth (poetess as priestess) imitates the muted sound of Blok's name. The importance of this beginning cannot be too heavily emphasized. It is the mainspring of the entire cycle, defining eloquently the spiritual framework of the poems as well as the role of the artist, the language, and the protagonist.

Poems to Blok is not merely, even least of all, a cycle about Blok. It takes Blok as a point of departure as he himself took the "Beautiful Lady." Tsvetaeva's critical essays leave no doubt about the influence of Russian Symbolist poetry upon her, and her statement about symbolism ("There are no non-symbols."[6]) is quite explicit. Tsvetaeva's Blok (she knew him only slightly personally) is associated in her imagery with Christ:

I'll not dig into your soul!
Inviolable is your way.
Into your hand, pale from kisses
I'll not beat my nail. (14)

The cycle is in many respects a verbal icon: "Rays emanated from him/Hot strings along the snow." (19) The image of the cross is in another place suggested by a succession of telegraph poles, a typical instance of Tsvetaeva's juxtaposition of the Biblical with the contemporary:

Over the wavering and wretched grain
Pole arises after pole.
And a wire under heaven
Sings and sings death. (21)

The telegraph poles reach out in space, but in terms of the cycle's symbolism they also extend in time. Another image conveys this sense even more strongly: "I have sepulchres standing in a row, / In them Tsaritsas sleep, and Tsars." (17) Time in the cycle loses its historical sense and is represented instead as an immediate physical perspective in the present.

Several of the motifs in *Poems to Blok* refer directly to his work. The central image of the broken wing (*perelomennoe krylo*), for example, comes from one of Blok's plays. And an important passage in which the sun serves as an eschatological symbol closely paraphrases one of Blok's most pessimistic poems:

What days await us, how God
will deceive,
How you'll come to call the sun—and how
it won't come up . . . (24)

Death and impending doom pervade the entire cycle. It menaces not only the prophet but also Russia herself, for the New Jerusalem of necessity requires the destruction of the old. And so Tsvetaeva adjures her vision to depart:

Dear ghost!
I know that all this is my dream.
Do me a favor!
Amen, amen, away!
Amen (13)

The amen rings out like
amin', *rassyp'sya* (ordinari
of a kind of sacred exorci
In the second part of the
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Subsequently Tsvetaeva
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The poet repeats a single lin
("*Blagoslovenna ty v zhen*
"Blessed are you in tears,"
As *Poems to Blok* ends
the grief of Russia is an af
Slavonicisms:

Lifegiver in the h
Affirmer of the H
Into the death rat

Was hurled by yo

Жизнеподательны
Царств утвердите
В хрип смертных

Ты—первенцево

Marina Tsvetaeva may b
Ages, a heretic in an age o
of Russia and the Russian

[1]Vladislav Khodasevich, *Russkaya po*
[2]Vladimir Nabokov, *Speak, Memory*,
[3]Boris Pasternak, *Sobranie sochinenii*
[4]Marina Tsvetaeva, *Stikhi k Bloku*, B
the only edition of the cycle.
[5]Tsvetaeva, *Proza*, NY, 1953, p. 392
[6]Tsvetaeva, *Proza*, p. 290

The amen rings out like a carillon, but the familiar forms and the formula *amin'*, *amin'*, *rassyp'sya* (ordinarily applied to demonic visitations) produce the odd effect of a kind of sacred exorcism.

In the second part of the cycle the theme of the angel with broken wing alternates with the image of a dying swan, another one of Tsvetaeva's favorite motifs. It is in this portion that Blok appears most clearly as a real person and that emotion is expressed not in terms of worship but in terms of the love and grief of a woman:

To grasp him! More strongly!
Just to love and love him!
O, who will whisper to me
In what cradle do you lie?

Схватить его! Крепче!
Любить и любить его лишь!
О кто мне нашепчет,
В какой колыбели лежишь? (10)

Subsequently Tsvetaeva focuses upon the Virgin before Christ's birth, and the contiguity of expected birth and recent death create an especially poignant effect. The poet repeats a single line from the Scriptures—"Blessed are you among women!" ("*Blagoslovenna ty v zhenakh!*")—and plays off the expression in various ways: "Blessed are you in tears," ". . . in snows."

As *Poems to Blok* ends the theme again returns to death, but at the same time the grief of Russia is an affirmation of life. It is stated in the most solemn Church Slavonicisms:

Lifegiver in the hour of the end!
Affirmer of the Heavenly Kingdoms! Virgin Mother of your Son!
Into the death rattle of his mortal torments—
a torn song!
Was hurled by you in the First: "I Am!"

Жизнеподательница в час кончины!
Царств утвердительница! Матерь Сына!
В хрип смертных мук его—
худую песнь!
Ты—первенцево вбросившая: "Есмь!" (44)

Marina Tsvetaeva may best be characterized as a Mayakovsky of the Middle Ages, a heretic in an age of non-believers. Her *Poems to Blok* are a living liturgy of Russia and the Russian language.

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[1]Vladislav Khodasevich, *Russkaya poeziya, obzor* in *Al'tsiona—kniga pervaya*, Moskva, 1914
[2]Vladimir Nabokov, *Speak, Memory*, NY, 1951, p. 216.
[3]Boris Pasternak, *Sobranie sochinenii*—Vol. 2, Ann Arbor, 1961, p. 47
[4]Marina Tsvetaeva, *Stikhi k Bloku*, Berlin, 1922. The numbers in parentheses hereafter are page references to this, the only edition of the cycle.
[5]Tsvetaeva, *Proza*, NY, 1953, p. 392
[6]Tsvetaeva, *Proza*, p. 290

MARINA TSVETAYEVA
translated by Lydia Pasternak Slater

Homesickness

Homesickness! No, it is a mere
Exploded fooling, old and phoney;
I absolutely do not care
Where to be absolutely lonely,
On pavements of what kind of stone
With shopping basket back to justle
Into a house which is no home,
No more than hospital or hostel;
It does not matter among whom
To bristle like a captured lion,
To be forced out (for sure) by whom—
Back, always back into defiance,
Into myself; a polar bear
Without an ice-floe—to be fated
Not to get on—no matter where.
And where to be humiliated. . . .
Now even for my native tongue,
Its milky call, I must not languish!
Alike misunderstood and stung
I am in any human language
By gossip milkers, swallowers
Of countless tons of newsprint-pages,
In 20th century wallowers,
While I preceded any ages.
All wooden, like a log I stand,
Left over in a cut down forest.
No one and nothing matters; and
The one which used to be the sorest,
The nearest—matters least of all.
The marks, the dates, the signs have vanished.
As if by magic from my soul:
A soul born somewhere; born and banished.
Thus has my land not kept me safe.

That should the sharpest of detectives
For just one birthmark search the waif—
My soul—he could no more detect it.
Each house feels strange; each shrine to me
The same, and empty; nothing varies—
But if along the road I see
A bush, and if—with rowanberries. . . .



For your pen I am the waiting scroll,
Am the all-accepting pad of paper.
Shall return it all a hundredfold.
Of your goods, your wealth I am the keeper.

I am earth, I am the countryside;
You—my ray, my gentle rainy vapour.
You are Lord and Master, whereas I
Am black earth, and a white sheet of paper.



My poems, which I wrote, not even knowing
I was a poet,—for I was so young,
Which broke away like sparks torn from a rocket,
Like spray, from fountains sprung;

Which burst into the Sanctum's heavy incense
Like little devils, hampering its sleep,
My poems about death and adolescence
Which no-one ever reads;

On dusty shelves, in gloomy bookshops scattered,
Ignored by all and taken out by none,—
My poems stay, like precious wine in cellars:
Their turn, their time will come.

MARINA TSVETAEVA
translated by Denise Levertov

A Letter

So they don't expect
letters. So they wait for—

letters.
A ragged scrap
circled by

sticky tape. Inside—
A scribble,
and happiness.
And that's all.

So they don't expect
happiness. So they expect—
the end.

A soldierly
salute, and
three slugs of lead in the breast.

Their eyes are red,
and just that.
That's all.

It's not happiness, old girl!
The wildflower color—
the wind blew it away.

A square courtyard
and black thoughts.
Of a square letter,
ink, sorcery.
When it comes to
death, the

last dream, no one's
old.
A square letter.

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