

Notes

The writing of *Quartz Hearts* overlaps work on both the last section of *Polaroid* (completed August 1973) and the beginning of my long (as yet untitled) "prosoid" work (first section completed November 1973). It is in every sense a hinge work, reflecting a fresh interest in sentence structure as axial armature, the final movement of *Polaroid* had pushed me toward, the "prosoid"'s lengths would explore in full.

In a notebook (entry dated November 1972—a month before starting the work) I find: "Quartz Hearts (a long grouping of aggregate works?)", and on the page following the last words of *Quartz Hearts* (December 1973) this entry: "Quartz Hearts: meditations on the state(s) of things, in other words words...".

A journal of this work's procession would note the following order of regions:

Franz Kafka's Stories, Diaries, Notebooks and Loose Pages; my daughter Celia (then 4 years old) telling me to write down such sayings as "a hat and a flower/walk into your clothes/and get a drink of water"; the continuing metamorphoses of Philip Guston's pictures (the sections "Before the wall the war stands up." and "The belongs to a pinch." written in his studio); Roberto Longhi's Piero della Francesca; Gertrude Stein's Everybody's Autobiography and Stanzas In Meditation; Bring Back The

Prehistoric Animals by Amanda Trees; (in California, April 1973) Melville's Sphynx, Picasso Dead; (on the road back east, May 1973) Lehman Caves, Arches Utah, Black Canyon of the Gunnison, Onondaga Cave, Mammoth Cave, Grapevine Cave, Luray Caverns; Hawthorne's American Notebooks; Gerry Mulligan's earliest-Fifties Quartets rediscovered; Kerouac's Desolation Angels; Watergate TV; John Ford's The Searchers; Peter Farmer's Sonata for Five Brass Instruments (Tanglewood); Luella Agnes Owen's Cave Regions of the Ozarks and Black Hills (1898); Samuel Beckett's The Unnamable, Texts For Nothing and Watt; John McPhee's The Curve of Binding Energy; Jacques Tati's Traffic; Thelonious Monk's (solo) I Should Care (Columbia 9149); and Ludwig van Beethoven's Opus 131 Quartet in C-Sharp Minor performed by The Julliard String Quartet (RCA 2626).

Beethoven had written on the manuscript title page of the Opus 131: "Zusammengestohlen von verschiedenen Diesem und Jenem" (Stolen together from various theses and thoses). His publisher, B. Schott, then wrote back in alarm asking whether this was not in fact an original work. Beethoven replied that it was "funkelnagelneu" (brand new) (nailheads shining).

Ring plenties. The fish is too.
Additions on lots. We goodbye on
unslantable green. Take down that
puzzle and put up a window. A disc
that, could and is the big sky. And
we make dots, but bigger and they are
lines. Kind of boat orts. He was owning
as he yet is and has many of those boats.
Came back impending down a mountain's.
A slammable mild. Come sorts and blades on
sand stirs. Clams up into a sky report.
I'm by. Those a slate cirrus.
As is it as if more by the page.

So I see, a cold lick rose to geo heaven.
That's beer, its syntax a shale spiral.
Propped boxward Namath affects dense
vims. Take a tea metal inflexion of
isostasy. Quartz verbs and opens
water books. Plants north of audience.
Grass spin verb stains halted topaz.
Bedrock calms bask taut morning chalk

sounds. Feldspar cubes tunes chip moth
itself. Stress chill lights vibes of wood.
Van Allen scales time white wrinkles
literally.

Isostasy water sounds itself. You take a
quartz cold I see. Rose shale to
inflect audience openings. Verbs halted all
north of topaz. Taut morning chip wrinkles
vibes. Take quartz verb to calm feldspar
stress. Water that's beer. Chalk that dense.
Time that bedrock. It's a syntax
that stains sounds.

Pertain by pertain the thunk amounts.
By a pasture sink the ammonites. Potato
girth left the bottle neck to. Pull up all
the purple that socks. Joe save Winnie
the Pooh. Or typing M-5. A painting
set at the level of food. Swim snaps.

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Quartz Hearts 1978: P.S. Bee

from STUDYING HUNGER

Listen

I began all this in April, 1972. I wanted to try to record, like a diary, in writing, states of consciousness, my states of consciousness, as fully as I could, every day, for one month. A month always seems like a likely time-span, if there is one, for an experiment. A month gives you enough time to feel free to skip a day, but not so much time that you wind up fucking off completely.

I had an idea before this that if a human, a writer, could come up with a workable code, or shorthand, for the transcription of every event, every motion, every transition of his or her own mind, & could perform this process of translation on himself, using the code, for a 24-hour period, he or we or someone could come up with a great piece of language/information.

Anyway

When I began to attempt the month-long experiment with states of consciousness, I wrote down a list of intentions. It went like this: First, to record special states of consciousness. Special: change, sudden change, high, low, food, levels of attention

And, how intentions change

And, to do this as an emotional science, as though: I have taken a month-drug, I work as observer of self in process

And, to do the opposite of "accumulate data," oppose MEMORIES, DIARIES, find structures

And, a language should be used that stays on the observation/notes/leaps side of language border which seems to separate, just barely, observation & analysis. But if the language must resort to analysis to "keep going," then let it be closer to that than to "accumulate data." *Keep going* is a pose: *accumulate data* is a pose.

Also, to use this to find a structure for MEMORY & you, you will find out what memory is, you already know what moving is

Those were the intentions I wrote down, April first. Also, these questions: What's the danger? What states of consciousness & patterns of them are new to language? And what is the language for them? What's the relation of things that stand out, things that seem interesting (like a sentence from a tape I made, the tape was 7 hours long, but this sentence would always stand out: "The food of the mother is better than the food of the fatter father," like "It could be worse, you could have witnessed a double murder," like poem titles & poem ideas, like the idea "You know everything") - what's the relation of this type of event to the rest & how to develop moments as, "standing out" like language does, like language ideas do. "Some old people try to live on one can of soup a day."

On April second, the first thing I wrote was "You wait." The experiment went badly, real bad. I added to my intentions, this one: to be an enchantress, or, to seduce by design. I thought about sentences that stuck in your mind, like, "How long have you been head of this business?" and "You planned the disappearance of my desire."

At 3:35 a.m. on April 2nd, I recorded that I had eaten too much food.

I was waging a constant battle against traditional language: take this excerpt from the early diaries:

... you think of a word, like *hashish*, like, *group*. The word brings back *one scene*, one scene of a dream (when I'm awake) or one of a fantasy but what predominates is was this: it's Tuesday, the day I get up at ten. What am I hiding? Is was this & is was this morning, it's one o'clock now, this, I'd like to be a basketball player, one of the players, I include no description of their movements. Left out of the group reading, I fantasize (in dream) around the periphery, I control those feelings in dream again, I create a rapid movement in, around, & about that event, event of being left out, I synthesize a dance this is for me alone: I'm active,

I'm looking through windows, I dont speak, I preserve the sheet surface, clean white sheet of my presence in the room. When I get out of bed I move, I dont want to move to the instance where details & foods accumulate later in the day, are the foods I ate later in the day, are the foods I ate late last night digested, are they gone, am I this surface, or does all the work come later like practice. You've seen the other team play, now, so... Outside the performance area I exist. Outside the process the arena the activity, a space for existing: I might float around, or, am I going too far? In this way, from the outside, I put everything in, take in everything, I must spew it all out, what prevents me what seizes me gently when I try to emerge is *that-one* outside the door, she has a purpose, I put her there: let nothing-myself get out of this room, let no judgments be made, let no law & order exist except this: *nothing escapes from here*; To refuse a direction, to refuse a guide. . . . a person who has used the word human as a lie without levels, that one might say: you'd rather be in prison where you're different. My responses—I want them to be automatic, my physical movements indifferent, undifferentiated, uncalculated, cool, almost unnoticed, calm. Calm for this activity, what is the activity? Inner motion, emotion, design. Yes it's a surface, you can draw on it, out from it, anything, everything, I know what's going on. . . . It's not the whole story, I've left out the motives, the history & the memory, the parts that have direction, I've left them out because in that way I could be pinned down, possibly tortured.

As I got further into this, language seemed to be demanding its form: lying in bed, head down, muscles arched, colors plotted the outline-sound of a language, an unmarked language, not controlling it. Forget any substance of meaning, forget substantives & their color & get it gradually paler, seeing sound vibrations in sleep-closed eyes. A lamp hanging is a sound. It lowers & disappears.

On April 11 I dreamt the history of all people in the world, good & evil, zooming in on a familiar cat-face. The next part of the dream said to me: this part is about you personally. And this work, said Patti, has something to do with polar ice caps, something to do with seeing polar ice caps.

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April 13, cant focus; April 20th, gave up the project.

But I was bound to start again. You see, the whole thing had already had a beginning with a project called MEMORY which turned into a show which turned into a dream or returned to a dream that enabled me to walk. Before this I couldnt walk, I had street fantasies like any normal prostitute. Anyway, MEMORY was 1200 color snapshots, 3 x 5, processed by Kodak plus 7 hours of taped narration. I had shot one roll of 35-mm color film every day for the month of July, 1971. The pictures were mounted side by side in row after row along a long wall, each line to be read from left to right, 36 feet by 4 feet. All the images made each day were included, in sequence, along with a 31-part tape, which took the pictures as points of focus, one by one & as taking-off points for digression, filling in the spaces between. MEMORY was described by A. D. Coleman as an "enormous accumulation of data." I had described it as an "emotional science project." I was right.

So

In June I began again & what started it was that I wrote this:

You sleep Marie: save them for me, certain moments, I'm resting, I'm restoring, I'm gathering, I'm hunting, I'm starving, I'm you, you say: go on being, peering owl on top of fortress, sounding out, training sound to meet my ear, drive & mark time, I'm a history, her coil, mark time, suffer a moment to let me be like her a history, object, she was determined, defies all laws & rules, is the language I bought from passers-by, sea crate full of junk & language twisting & twisting coil of all morning. I met that guy the guide & cast his bell aside, I'd rather die in sync with just random tones, just war can bury baby brick, your foot's my foot, core, how late you suffer, core, how late, whispers suffer, suffer, whispers into the tape a running water sound at the bell rewinding a vision I got & mystery works at the door, if no one's there, I'll stay right here adding a picket to this to pierce you/me clear through, I saw you, remember, we go through the greatest horrors of the world at last, I love you, you turn over, you dont really wake up, sink a shallows at the oceans deep malaysian sleep, I'll

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know new dance the boxes taught today, it's rare code words can sink a ship in the shallows, reform so dry a crease & saw the same crack in the dream before, sink down broad ship at dawn, home plate, they hold it up to their ears, we years, you go on. I'm resting, I saw her once. Her pins prick my skin, she makes me dizzy, she makes me well.

That's what started me off again & that's what opened the question of who is the you. You private person. And now, while you keep in mind my intentions at the beginning & what I've said to try to explain how they got transformed & where they came from, I'll go on

STUDYING HUNGER

STUDYING HUNGER. I had to stop. I had to stop & begin again slowly. A buzz, a confluence of noise around, all correcting & weaving, weaving to call my name. Bernadette. I stopped. Papers & books smoldering, black edges of them too close to the flame, flame easing itself out the cracks, the cracks in the stove, the one in our loft, mine & Ed's, Ed is a man like electric light, a human nature, suffer the flames the fire came from its source, a simple block of wood in the broiler, the source of the flame, the block of wood black at the edges, source of fire, black, & its rectangular shape interfered with, cut off at an edge on one side where it had burned. . .

A burning wedge, an edge burned off, a slice disappeared, it burned, a slice, maybe in the shape of a triangle, that slice, that alchemy slice, that edge off the block of wood, the wood about two by four, Rimbaud slice, the block of wood that was the origin of the flame, the fire in the stove that was threatening everyone, jeopardizing their lives, something was wrong—the fire started. I was used to it. I am the leopard. I am the bear. We found the source of the flame & took it out of the oven. It was a man, laid out. A dead man. It was an image of my father & his father & wood. . .

Gradually then I began again in an auditorium full of friends. No more paper & no flame. I would execute this difficult dance & the secret, the resume, the explication would remain hidden until the end. I had rehearsed. I had driven myself from one moving bar or pole, attached to the wall, hinged there at one end, so that they could swing open & closed like a door. I had driven myself through rehearsals over these posts, outposts, these locations of the histories of individual ghosts.

Ghosts that were not only haunting me but had ceased to be real. They had come alive but were dead. These points of focus were like swinging doors; only the most acrobatic feats could control their random motion. Only a master of equilibrium could navigate the surface of one much less all at once. I had rehearsed. I had worked. Still unsure of myself, I set my performance off to the side like a side show, like a simple element in a complex pattern, a homage to its variety & all living things. The performance was extremely difficult, difficult, she wore black, she had no contact with the ground, she rose. . .

And descended executing the relationships between the horizontal posts which were secured at many levels. To get from one to the next, and its chronology was clear, to get from one to the next, she would make use of a turn in air, an impossibility, her arms must have had the strength, an impossible strength, her feet could never touch the ground, a short performance in tight black clothes, she must make use of every muscle, every muscle is tense, every second has been dreamed of many times before, the performance is over, she is on the ground. And now its crux, its central point, its purpose: her declaration. And she had kept this secret: it was not a real performance, not a process, not a show. The feat, the feats of movement, this exhibition of strength, of study & agility, all this was a lead-in so that I could speak, so that I could say, & I say: Listen: Now that I have done that, now that I have done it, I will never have to do it again.