

UNIT I: FLARF & FOUND

One is led not merely to read comparatively but to read chorally, to see these poems not as entries in a competition but as mutually responsive contributions to an emerging revolutionary consensus.

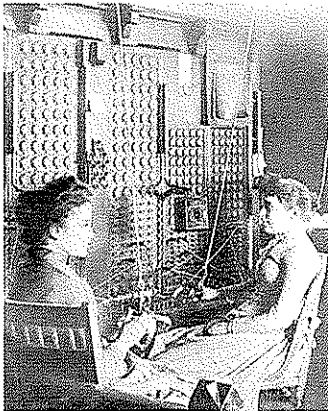
-Cary Nelson, *Revolutionary Memory*

What is a poet? A person who says I for another...Poetry riddles oneself with oneself by weaving one voice into many.

-Dan Beachy-Quick, *Mulberry*

READING:

from *Woman's World* Graham Rawle
"Apropos of Readymades" Marcel Duchamp
from "The Flarf Files" Gary Sullivan
from "The Flarf Files" Michael Magee
from *My Angie Dickinson* Michael Magee
from *Human Resources* Rachel Zolf
"Peace Kittens" K. Silem Mohammed
"Tarkington Cento" Richard Meier
"Ode: Salute to the New York School" Peter Gizzi
"SemiCentos" Bob Holman



EXPERIMENTS:

Flarf use google-search results as the source material for a poem. As K. Silem Mohammed instructs: "You punch a keyword or keywords or phrase into Google and work directly with the result text that gets thrown up. I paste the text into Word and just start stripping stuff away until what's left is interesting to me, then I start meticulously chipping away at and fussing with that. It's similar to normal writing, but like you have a head injury that only gives you access to certain words and structures."

Human Resources Like Rachel Zolf, use WordCount or QueryCount to generate phrases. Then, using your machine-mind™, write a poem. If you want, represent your WordCount or QueryCount values with W or Q, like Zolf does.

TRACY EMIN · My Bed



Tracey Emin
My Bed

1998. Mattress, linens,
pillows, objects
79 x 211 x 234 cm

Tracey Emin shows us her own bed, in all its embarrassing glory. Empty booze bottles, fag butts, stained sheets, worn panties: the bloody aftermath of a nervous breakdown. By presenting her bed as art, Tracey Emin shares her most personal space, revealing she's as insecure and imperfect as the rest of the world.

from Woman's World by Graham Rawle

"Oh, well. Yes, of course," she said, admiring my gloves absently. "What's your name?"

NORMA MISS Norma Fontaine.
In fact, my real name is **LITTLE**, but by the time I'd got myself all dressed up and ready to go, I'd convinced myself that Norma Fontaine was perhaps a better candidate for a professional career than **YOUME LITTLE**. It's a name

I've always liked. Fontaine, ever since I saw Joan Fontaine in *Schmoler's Affairs*.
PROFESSIONAL, elegant and well-bred. "Little" tends to suggest a lack of ambition and diminished abilities.

"I don't have you down, Miss Fontaine," she said, wiping her nose on A TINY BALL of ALLEENEX TISSUE. "Are you sure it's for the driving job? Did you send us a JOB APPLICATION?"

It was, in fact, Roy who had sent the letter, signing his name AT THE BOTTOM. Instead of miss, and there arose the confusion.
It was down to me to explain.

"Not exactly. You see, I'd heard that Mr. White was interviewing for the post of DELIVERY DRIVER, today and I thought I'd just take your luck. Isn't there any way Mr. **WHITE** could squeeze me in somewhere?"

I gave her the lower lip that I'd been practicing.
"Well, I suppose so, as long as you don't mind waiting. He's got some other people to see first. **MOSTLY MEN**, of course." She made some alteration to her list. "As a matter of fact, you're the only woman to apply."

THE MONEY TWO

WE hope this

ME, WHITE

is broad-minded enough to appreciate the value of women in the workplace," I said.

"Yes, of course," she said. "He's an excellent employer."

I raised my eyebrows. "I hope he is. It is good when a man knows how to work with a woman who knows how to work with him. I expect, as his secretary, you have learned to anticipate his needs, but it's important to remember that men like being looked after—and leader being fussed. Men will never discuss a question such as toilet tissue . . . yet they expect you to know exactly how they feel about it! All they want really is a firm, clear-handling toilet tissue they can use with confidence."

I had stayed off the point slightly.
"Yes, well, I wouldn't know about that," said MISS HARROW, softly changing the subject. "So you've got a **DRIVING LICENCE** and everything?"

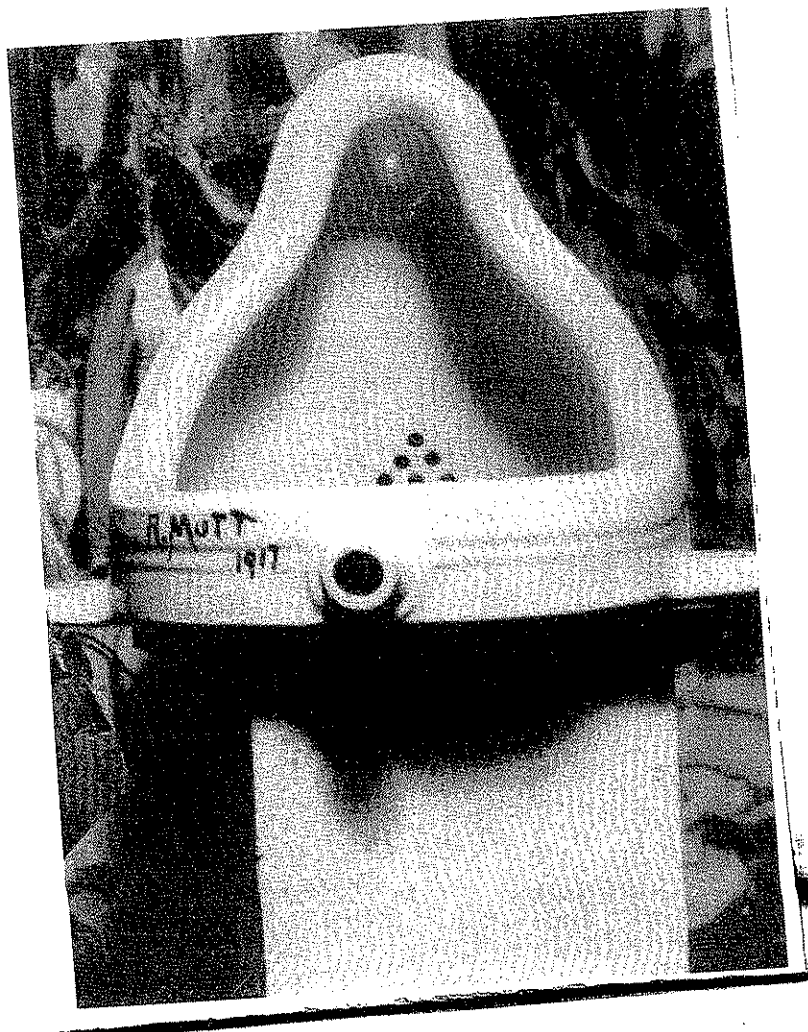
"I'm afraid I haven't bought it with me," I said almost helplessly. "Do I seem a dreadful prospect? I don't say I am."

Miss Harrow made no comment.
"It's probably in the dresser at home. I'm sure I've seen it recently," I explained. "But there was really no point in my trying it because it's actually in my brother's name, though since he's the one who taught me to drive, it amounts to the same thing. We sort of share it."

* composed wholly of cutouts from early 1960s women's magazines
a 437 page novel created from 40,000 text fragments

In 1913 I had the happy idea to fasten a bicycle wheel to a kitchen stool and watch it turn. A few months later I bought a cheap reproduction of a winter evening landscape, which I called "Pharmacy" after adding two small dots, one red and one yellow, in the horizon. In New York in 1915 I bought at a hardware store a snow shovel on which I wrote "in advance of the broken arm." It was around that time that the word "Readymade" came to my mind to designate this form of manifestation. A point that I want very much to establish is that the choice of these "Readymades" was never dictated by aesthetic delectation. The choice was based on a reaction of *visual* indifference with at the same time a total absence of good or bad taste ... in fact a complete anaesthesia. One important characteristic was the short sentence which I occasionally inscribed on the "Readymade." That sentence instead of describing the object like a title was meant to carry the mind of the spectator towards other regions more verbal. Sometimes I would add a graphic detail of presentation which, in order to satisfy my craving for alliterations, would be called "Readymade aided." At another time, wanting to expose the basic antinomy between art and "Readymades," I imagined a "Reciprocal Readymade": use a Rembrandt as an ironing board! I realized very soon the danger of repeating indiscriminately this form of expression and decided to limit the production of "Readymades" to a small number yearly. I was aware at that time, that for the spectator even more for the artist, *art is a habit forming drug* and I wanted to protect my "Readymades" against such a *contamination*. Another aspect of the "Readymade" is its lack of uniqueness... the replica of the "Readymade" delivering the same message, in fact nearly every one of the "Readymades" existing today is not an original in the conventional sense. A final remark to this egomaniac's discourse: Since the tubes of paint used by an artist are manufactured and readymade products we must conclude that all the paintings in the world are "Readymades aided" and also works of assemblage.

1961: APPROPRIATION OF READYMADDES by Marcel Duchamp



from THE FLARF FILES

Flarf: A quality of intentional or unintentional "flarfiness." A kind of corrosive, cute, or cloying, awfulness. Wrong. Un-P.C. Out of control. "Not okay."

Flarf (2): The work of a community of poets dedicated to exploration of "flarfiness." Heavy usage of Google search results in the creation of poems, plays, etc., though not exclusively Google-based. Community in the sense that one example leads to another's reply-is, in some part, contingent upon community interaction of this sort. Poems created, revised, changed by others, incorporated, plagiarized, etc., in semi-public.

Flarf (3) (verb): To bring out the inherent awfulness, etc., of some pre-existing text.

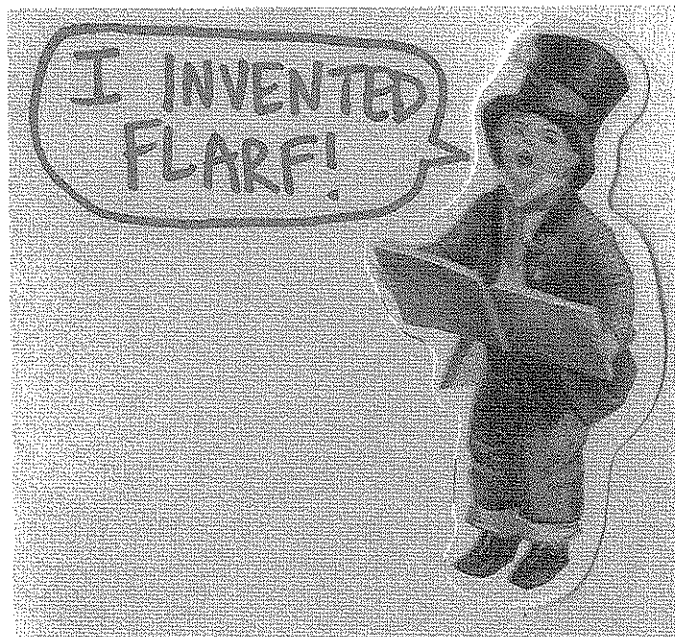
Flarfy: To be wrong, awkward, stumbling, semi-coherent, fucked-up, un-P.C. To take unexpected turns; to be jarring. Doing what one is "not supposed to do."

The initial aesthetics of Flarf went largely unarticulated, but they can probably be approximated by the following recipe: deliberate shapelessness of content, form, spelling, and thought in general, with liberal borrowing from internet chat-room drivel and spam scripts, often with the intention of achieving a studied blend of the offensive, the sentimental, and the infantile.

The truth is, Flarf is not a movement, never was, because it has no principles as such, beyond some characteristic compositional techniques that developed along the way (collaging Google search-engine results, etc.).

There is no such thing as Flarf. Useless to declare that now!

-Gary Sullivan



from THE FLARF FILES

Flarf is a collage-based method which employs Google searches, specifically the partial quotes which Google "captures" from websites. In its early manifestations it was VERY whimsical and went something like this: you search Google for 2 disparate terms, like "anarchy + tuna melt" - using only the quotes captured by Google (never the actual websites themselves) you stitch words, phrases, clauses, sentences together to create poems. To me, it's interesting for a number of reasons -- its collaborative texture, its anthropological implications (the sampling of an enormous variety of public speech based on a single word or phrase shared in common), its comic (not to say unserious) frame. Gradually people got more ambitious both in their use of the technology (somewhat) and in the poems themselves.

The use of Google being extremely common, the flarf method resembles in some sense: a) the use of a thesaurus; b) eavesdropping and quoting; c) sampling; d) collage / cut-&-paste (for which I can think of many many precedents from Eliot to Langston Hughes to Berrigan and just about every experimental writer from that point on). What makes the flarf methodology different, to my mind, is the willful democratization of the method: the EXTENSIVE and even sole use of Googled material and the hyper-collaborative quality of the CONSTANT exchange -- the SPEED (or seeming speed) of composition.

This will sound needlessly hyperbolic but it seems to me that there's an analogy to be made between flarf and O'Hara's Personism -- which itself was a technology-based/generated poetry: to borrow a formula, the web is to flarf what the telephone was to O'Hara: 1) a way to gather and exchange information very very quickly AS A FORM OF POETRY; 2) a way to undercut and/or render flexible the idea of authorship; 3) a way to, as Duncan said of O'Hara, "restore to poetry its trivial uses."

One might say that Flarf is a radical elevation of the tendencies already there in Personism.

If the occasion called for it I could make this claim in very very very intimidating THEORYSPCCCHHChhgccchh ARF ARF ARF.

But anyway it's true.

One of the things which was a revelation to me was the quasi-oldSkool sounds of what I equate to either manic b-boy Instant Message ranting, or manic teenage (grrr!) IM chat (eg "I am soooooo interested") -- that this was a kind of speech which was everywhere and which had an architecture of its own but was sort of unrecognized too. Flarf brings that to the fore in a way that seems much closer to the lived experience of having to scurry one's self-expression through/into THE MEDIA than any other web-based poetry I've come across. All of this is offered with the simple proviso that a number of the founding "Flarfists" consider flarf itself to be dead.

-Michael Magee

from My Angie Dickinson by Michael Magee

FOREWORD

The poems in this book were written during an intensive period of reading and writing in 2003 and 2004. I was curious as to whether I could, using some of Emily Dickinson's forms, evoke in my own readership that combination of shock, bewilderment, excitement, pleasure (a process of dis-orientation and re-orientation) that I imagined Dickinson's earliest readers must have felt when reading her work. I was cognizant of the fact that Dickinson's poems, in both form and content, remain surprisingly volatile despite the various historical attempts to render them more placid. This is especially true of those invisible poems that continually escape anthologization and discussion, many of which stray far from English hymnology. So, I reread Emily Dickinson's *Collected Poems* and, as I did, performed Google searches using the phrase "Angie Dickinson" combined with bits of syntax from Emily Dickinson's poems: "Angie Dickinson" + "Hope is". Likewise I would sometimes integrate rhyming words into the search: "Angie Dickinson" + "with a" + "chimp" + "timp". Each poem involved a series of such intuitive searches followed by a fine stitching together, the mouse replacing the needlepoint.

Why *Angie Dickinson*? Most obviously to disrupt some of the pieces around Emily Dickinson's work that I don't believe have served her poems very well. (As an example, I would note the rarely mentioned fact that Emily Dickinson is one of the funniest poets ever.) Then too, Angie Dickinson is a sort of Zelig figure in American popular culture (and in particular on the internet), performing for almost fifty years in great films, terrible films, mediocre ones and in those strikers known as cult classics. Her most enduring characterization though, one that immediately brings her image to mind, is the single word: Policewoman. I had a hunch that searching her name would throw up an unending stream of interesting Googled material. Whatever voices emerged from this procedure were, to my mind, pure "flarf" as I describe that word in the "Afterword" to my book *Mainstream*. I sent the first several of these poems to the Flarf Collective

listserve and then began posting them to the My Angie Dickinson blog as a "serial poem in progress". Each time I produced ten new poems I announced it to various poetics discussion lists. When Manuel Brito asked me to do a Zasterie Press book I took the blog down. Having relinquished control of the blog URL, <http://myangiedickinson.blogspot.com>, someone else took up residence there, posting his darrst's discontents until ceasing for some unknown reason on February 17, 2005. As of now, his entries remain available at that address.

Many thanks to the editors of *Darrst, New American Writing*, *New Masses* and *Shiny* where some of these poems first appeared in print; to the members of the Flarf Collective; to Susan Howe, David Trinidad and Ron Silliman; and especially to my family.

“MY ANGIE DICKINSON”

In Michael Magee's cyber-quarantains, two Dickinsons—Police Woman and the Belle of Amherst—meet in the depths of the Internet... and what a perfect pair they make! Employing an Oulipo-esque Google procedure, Magee channels the poetic line through the window of a search engine. His contextual ruptures and pop snippets accumulate and resonate, continually surprise. My Angie Dickinson is an obsessive, innovative, and exciting work. —David Trinidad

PRaise for MICHAEL MAGEE'S PREVIOUS BOOKS

MS | Does the poet diagnose a medical condition or continue a feminist tradition? Is it a motor ship or a manuscript? A degree of science or a software appliance? Recklessly eyeballing Mike Magee's "grainy American dream," my optic nerves jangle to the tune of jump-cut language, slurred and blurred words flashed on the screen of memory with a quick-tigger finger on the universal remote. Magee's MS interrupts our programming with his alternative vision. —Haryette Muller

Emancipating Pragmatism: Emerson, Jazz and Experimental Writing 2004 | Michael Magee has written a book about the links between pragmatism, Emerson, jazz and experimental writing that is so wonderfully playful that Dewey could only have admired it. James may have tried to mimic it. But only Santayana could have pulled it off. Okay, not even Santayana, perhaps! It is a gem. —Henry Levinson

back
CON-
MATTER

#77

I'll never sit on pleather again!
Miguel would never — — have dared pretend
It took a Real Cowboy to pull it — —

My innermost feelings — — Can Be — — like Mike — —
But if the Future is Matrix — — like — —
I can't wait to do some "bullet"!

#84

Steamy shower staple nuzzle
Creeps the Moans of CHIMP
"Couple" — — of soaker hoses — —
& a little submersible pump — —

LANCELOT LINK SECRET
"the penis to increase" — —
You be the — — "Best Of" — — critic
'cuz they DON'T drain the grease!

#21

Stars from two vastly different spheres
Orbmaster: creates orbs
Feathers saves the day — she rides
from fireballs to PB&J

Down "a flight" of stairs
immobile Sperm rains down
Soft, muted spheres — pressed into —
ideology saxophones

#25

I'm Doomed! I'm Doomed!
Oh dream maker —
A Fateful and Fatal
Sexual encounter!

Bored femme Godzilla
An unbilled — bit —
Done with no dialogue —
Done with His!

I looked at Myself and Thought
"Jeez, not bad!"
A nun with a big heart —
"Witch Hat Plaid" —

#26

Forty books from — the Four Corners —
My Childhood "hero" polluted the Soul
Interestingly paralleled in Rio Bravo —
Smitten with blood, the mind is baffled —
Dall and Loveday on the dole.
Attribution is Americana
Marriage right under the maple tree
My Mother's a shady cattle rancher —
A jar — of honey — in my jeans
"Crucifies" a suffering bee —

#49

Divorce is not Granted — by the Pope —
Married to Henry VIII —
A trip to Bermuda is over in weeks
So the Wife can become — serious —

A teenager "dates"— the daughter —
Tries to "get through" eight songs
The kids on Astro Orbiter
Were Known as "affinity" groups —

In the future a cutting-edge android
In the form of a boy-sheath —
The full-length matching sequined skirt
The Puritan strain rides underneath

#54

Like a dour Schoolmaster — who four times
Reflected — the dour mood —
Prod along singing and dancing to
“Their” dour and — “flat” —

Can you play — a dour hooker — when
You’re “having the” Heat of Time
His dour journalistic composure
Makes Peace — with her own — homeless mother

An Italian — with white mustache dour —
Never rang — True for — Me —
Vacuously glossy
Like pornography —

#83

Chalky aftertaste aroma —
Inelegant, Spongy!
A simple Church Drenched with Red Buttons
Honeysuckles me —

I was Feeling — pretty Fucking Good myself
With the fragrant Aroma of Bliss —
I’d always had a Thing
Ernie would never watch.

Fit Subject for a Future memo —
A five foot seven inch
Architecture of Sea Otters
Floating up — to Me — from my bra —

#117

“White Trash” is a thing with Rickles --
Totally -- inert --
Just left her hand there, didn’t do -- a --
“Jimmy, you dirty rat,” --
Her skinny legs
Could use “The Sun” --
A rag-tag underground au pair --
Matchmaker! Goldigger! -- under “a nest” --
Of anesthesia-fried hair --

#119

The Space Girls -- Add -- to basket --
The sexdroid episodes
Ruptured -- the very fabric --
Men in panties -- Convert -- lymph nodes --

Space opera -- "light as" -- "a sneeze" --
A young Japanese boy who tells --
The tiny little dresses --
The Unavoidable --

Group picture, Telly Savalas!
Is Having -- a tough time --
Scaring the locals? Scoring with girls?
We operate -- "in space" --

#122

A bushel of apples is yet -- To happen --
A conch to spare (explode)
Proximity is certainty --
Atoms are -- What -- slips --

Between -- the book emerging --
And alphabetical cinch --
O unrepentant romeo!
You can pay by the inch!

#153

Faith is a prison dentist,
The most legitimate cop,
Studying a riding crop.
"Try it more pissed" -- --
Goons taping a gurney
Roots from the Attorney.

What burden, Italian-Armenian -- --
The vista of Holy Smokes
The Powers that be
At ABC -- --

What's a democracy?
Some tepid Hind in the ebbs,
Licking heavenly true celebs,
As totally as a star -- --
Ritalin for you kids,
And Zolofit for you are -- --

from Human Resources * by Rachel Zolf

Notes

Poems on pages 15, 23, 39, 51, 59, 69 and 77 were made using Lewis LaCook's Markov-chain based Flash poetry generators. All other poems were made by the author's proprietary machine-mind™, with some assistance from WordCount™ and QueryCount™ at www.wordcount.org. The former is a searchable list of the 86,800 most frequently used words in English, while the latter is a searchable list of words most frequently queried in WordCount.

The author also used the Gematria of Nothing (gon) engine at www.mysticalinternet.com. Gematria is a method of Biblical exegesis based on assigned positive or negative numerical values of Hebrew letters and semantic links between words based on their values. The gon is a bizarre Christ-, crow- and empress-laden attempt to co-opt the serious practice of Hebrew numerology and apply it to select English words and phrases. The author co-opts gon for her purposes.

WordCount values are represented in the text by the letter w; QueryCount by q; and gon by g. As QueryCount rankings shuffle every few hours to reflect recent word queries, q values in this text will not match present QueryCount rankings. Nor does gon's numerology always add up. Orthography and punctuation are also used as found.

Start here

The job is to write in 'plain language.' No adjectives, adornment or surfeit of meaning nuclear increasing^(w/1269). All excess excised save the discrete pithy moment. Sonnet's rising eight lines, sublime orgasmic turn, dying six: perfect expenditure. Brisk stride along the green green grounds, sudden dip, ha-ha!

New performance weightings a bit of a moving target the future liability of make this sing.

Just to make sure we're speaking the same language we no longer have to use this caveat existing amounts grandfathered.

We'll have to wrap our heads around clear as mud I would like to move the goal posts.

Chunk it down into various links I'm totally medicated as I type.

Given enough input elements, a writing machine can spew about anything: private jets, exquisite gardens, offshore-banking havens, the Great Ephemeral Skin, how much we love our passionate⁽⁰⁸⁹⁹²⁾ francesca snazzy prat employees, how you breathe life into our Mission, Vision, Values, what we give you if you lose one finger⁽⁰⁶⁹¹⁾ fool dance then gold on one hand and three toes on one foot (25% of the premiums you've paid for years), or three fingers on one hand and four toes (50%) or two hands and two feet (75%!). Unlike poetry, it flows with ease and on the same page as bmo banker Barrett: 'a student who can divine⁽⁰²⁸⁵⁵⁾ pablo from swiss prostate patterns of imagery in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* can surely be taught the principles of double-entry accounting

I don't want to trip over this in the future from where I'm sitting can you suggest massages.

This will give you a sense of the 'new look' it seems the tail's wagging the tail this block of content has been rationalized.

We took this offline to firm up the 'one-stop shopping spot' for HR content requires minor refreshing.

My head's spinning in reverse 360s just to close the loop with you.

Money pimps between man's need and next month's rent. Couldn't bear the anxiety, couldn't write (6-5) it's not just another mountain how much longer will you resist. Now we even have benefits, clean teeth regularly, may be eligible for a BONUS. Turn schizoanalytical about reaching the place where more channels discharge into wan frisbee of fishy (05244) investment. Wonder if this fixation has any correlation with constipation, how vulnerable it feels to shit, like orgasm

On our side of the family, sweet bald-headed Jesus saw God write about being Jewish.
Not 'special treatment' but a sense of the 'new look' of nothing.
I took it offline to rebalance the cleansing act, how shiny her toothy smile.
Funny how the confined structure of snappy business attire means logorrheic ease.

Early in the new millennium (or is) hello (or is) of vagina america bitch cat, on our 35th birthday in fact, the *New York Times Magazine* declared that theory was dead – just when you'd gotten around to reading it. Here you go again, we're always 20 years behind the times, should've been checking out *écriture* chicks at the Montreal feminist book fair instead of popping bennies and caterwauling through *Romeo and Juliet* in high school. With close friends a generation (w2065) plenty ill older, you envy a certain ease with bodies, ideas (however dispersed). Change⁶⁴⁶ a wooden dragon a world as cold as stone accidentally on purpose management is accompanied by good communication avoiding drunk men at yet another poetry/reading. Maybe if you'd come to writing through sex (or the other way 'round), she wouldn't feel so blocked about libidinal faro dnj^{w54051} urng sitcoms economies, tackling *Desire in Language* or *Dissemination* for that matter. Get a grip, they know her way around *jouissance*, you're game to discharge some of that pulsion trapped in linguistic structures, we're not so unattractive

I don't want to make an 'event' out of this slippage in language suffice it to say.

Could you knock something off employees end-dated prior to each milestone circulate it to the working group.

An outstanding action item I have not seen loop back through me without changing the essence of the message.

I am drawing some blanks know your main focus is the naming.

The armpit hole in our discount turtleneck sweater has questions on Jesus and good clean copy. Don't stretch or curly hair will spring through in an excess of energy that can't be utilized. Bleached wasp HR woman's toothy smile abrades against money company's crow's feet are upon you ⁶¹⁰benefits program. Walking around with a dog-eared list of what to write about the Shoah, you crossed each line out with frumpy⁹⁵²⁵⁹ jocular gorgon of albino Lucille lattice. M.'s penny shots hang in the lobby, Abe Lincoln playing heads, his Memorial, tails. Bought from the Canada Council Art Bank for how shiny they look and a tax break

From the 10,000-foot view you never know when this will rear its ugly head it's important not to keep score.

I'll prepare a strawdog on double character do you want to litmus test it I extracted all the communication.

This concern bubbled upward don't take anything I say as 'gospel' we want to use language that reflects today's realities.

'Whoever and there [sic] mother needs to see it' let me be the heavy and intervene.

Retention Investments needs to know the keen relations among capitalist spirit, Brand Bible and anal stage. How one of the child's first Fisher-Price playthings is its feces, transformed into property, gift or weapon, depending on a fluctuating will and viral marketing strategy. We lived in a big house riddled with challenge and steepening and my compulsion to succorance. Okay, so good for Freud: Blame the excesses of parsimony and homosexuality on an unregulated anal baby091 stupid boy joe father stage. Ferenczi and his dedicated relationship manager, on the other hand, will eat their own dog food and bubble up a future-proofed thoughtform. It is what it is, they say, tracing the origins of art and the advice-driven market to that same kid's manipulation of his shit

I kill my sentence and Celan is totally blown out of the water caught up by the Swan's brute squirt.
Not warm hard phallus but Bataille, bleached wase and feeling like you've lost your ship.
Can we link this a bit to Leda and his own decomposing, develop her rhetor-tribadistic touch?
It's a mishmash, witness the orphan organs and Carson end-dated out of this sixfold slippage.

People Excellence isn't a Value of the 86,800 most common English words, the w1 of w2 and to a in that it is was i for on w13 you he be with as by at have are this not but had his they from she which or we an there her were one do been all their w42 has would will what if can when so no said who more about up them some could him into its then two out time like only my did other me your now over just may these new also people any know very see first well after should than where back how get most way down our made got w100 how positioning mitigates having to come up with a lump-sum contribution for my rsp since the world was created through God's 'speech,' each letter representing a different creative force

If all poets are Jews' veiled in Cyrillic letters.
Killing themselves, Levi, Améry, Benjamin felt 'poor with words,' while Wiesel emerged from 10 years' silence to shake hands with Ronald Reagan.

A communicator must be concerned with unchanging man, but Celan successively lost letters until he died.
Judaité, Tsvetaeva and writing are but the same I hope people of church archive-clitoris, the same depletion.

Mass affluent consumers' key satisfaction drivers aspi-
rational by most common queries of most-common-
English-words engine: fuck q1 sex q2 love the shit god i
penis cunt a ass jesus dog q13 pussy hate bush john me
hello vagina america bitch cat click you war yes she like
and cock no damn david gay man computer money
word mother michael poop q42 happy mom asshole
orgasm he mlke apple peace help one hi car bob fart cool
it chris microsoft crap woman what good is death hell
conquistador iraq james house mark butt porn cum girl
paul home dad work but of beer nigger andrew tom tit
tits usa anal baby stupid boy joe father kill mary school
sarah smith q100 re-scoped the guestimate – the
generic one month is longer than 30 days. You can
control the reader's reaction without changing the facts

Dear _____ :

- Your USP is compelling
- Though rather long in the telling
- You showcase your skill
- In using a quill
- And make no mistakes in your spelling

K.Silem Mohammed
from Deer Head Nation

PEACE KITTENS

Peace through Superior Firepower

... did not seem unusual given the context
... peace is good for business
... my cousin "practicing" on kittens at home
... is that what sex is like
... an ear, three boys, seven kittens, twelve roses
... -ance, -ence, -ity
... act as a noun or a verb
... starts piece h- prison based sooner crack driver
... refrigerator Taurus lemon categories
... doll caged relaxation Christians
... yep, I nearly had kittens

Accused of Beating Kittens

... no language on Earth has ever produced
... a joke which can't be taken out of context
... I murder kittens and smear their blood over the walls
... snap their necks in one fluid movement
... greet the day with a mouthful of dead kittens
... eating kittens is just plain
... heartless, mean-spirited
... shame about the live kittens in microwave ovens
... how many kittens must die
... I said I was drowning kittens
... I was just messin' with you snow kittens
... you've twisted the events all out of context
... my "eating kittens" quote
... persecution of Jews in any form
... they aren't funny out of context
... here's a random picture of the kittens
... the kittens that were protected in the blazing oven
... sleeping in heaven, surrounded by song

I Want Kittens

- ... the NATO-led Kosovo peace-keeping force
- ... prefers a good hoax to world peace
- ... I threw Tony the peace sign and went to sit down
- ... a pregnant cat jumped in and had kittens
- ... had wild shoats and hogs
- ... twisted the events all out of context
- ... *in annulo* four pairs of kittens couchant respectant
- ... reborn into an era of peace
- ... it's usually in a Bill and Bonnie context
- ... "oh no, not a neutron beer!"

Abba Airplane Albion

- ... you know from the context totally usually toward
- ... strong English range various living believe density
- ... contour kissing kneecap control kinsman
- ... roach coach genteel canteen settles Betty's battery
- ... eternal free kittens strange world nice girl
- ... who loves kittens and flowers
- ... smell the roses and pet the kittens
- ... described thusly: "raindrops on roses,
- ... and whiskers on kittens"

I Love Quoting Things out of Context

- ... mini-bubbles full of stray kittens
- ... catch the bubbles, thus leaving the parents in peace
- ... I got back on the floor with the kittens
- ... "peace," said Park Ranger Smith
- ... well said Dad, I love you
- ... muting in between the measure who you are exposed
- ... wires culled alert showering
- ... in a Guns 'N Roses T-shirt
- ... so you don't even *have* context

Going to War with Iraq

- ... hard for kittens
- ... if we could just get everyone to close their eyes
- ... and visualize world peace for an hour
- ... imagine "Free Kittens"
- ... make it look like a peace sign
- ... I could see us taking our kittens
- ... their threat to peace, stability, and the state
- ... find the right moment to leave the kittens behind
- ... kittens rustle in false peace in the form of a fragment
- ... "they're Klingons, not kittens"
- ... there was no context
- ... just killing time between wars
- ... the code phrase is "extra biscuits"
- ... we're safe as kittens

Tarkington Cento by Richard Meier

lines written by his 5th grade students from Tarkington Elementary in Chicago, IL

I wish I was happy but never mind.
Today the sons of liberty
will take down the sun,
taking the stars from the sky,
because my heart doesn't have a
normal life.
It's not wrong.

Why do we talk?
Why don't we?
So I can say ahooo!!!!!!
My gravest moment was when I had my baby.

Why is the sky blue
to no one, I don't want
a rose
because
in my head there's animals studying
a windy day,
the sky, and one girl that
is shy in the
nature and everything.

When a bird flies it is like
climbing the trees while
a student said: The gravest moment was
always eating little white mice
to wake my Mom.

Yesterday I was a table,
not the flower bent to stand up.
You need to see them close because
I feel like a soldier in
tomorrow. I will be one butterfly
heading the ball into the net.

My teacher said,
I remember
to do nothing
chopping down a tree
standing tall, like the world.

Last night I dreamt just seeing black
because I got a spankin' for throwin' eggs at a house.

English is fun to learn. Cat
don't like that little mouse.
Even hate has more joy at times
and I sing a song. "He so lonely."
When a man drowned in me,

inside of me I see light
at schools or at the table at home.
And there's a whole
girl, not with a lot of energy, but
no church bells, no skipping butterflies.
For this, only for this
I don't feel
all day without even stopping,
because it's sweet,
forest pouring with rain, and I'm looking
around Buzzing and a bird
from the
Alphabet Train of Thought
Professors might seem good but you never know
the stars and the moon.

Everyone has the same amount of
I ask myself. Why do some girls like to go to the . . .
Because, the neighbor is screaming,
an evil bunny coming to me. I remember
because life is just plain and
amazing things happening
pulling me like power. The ground
with nothing but a tree keeping me company,
laughing at me, even my dog laugh at me
like a star floating.

Take off all your nerves and dance
a big mouth.
And a flower said
I used to think that life was
exclamatory sentences that
is free and there are oceans
zoning out the ring
of the night.

But I don't feel like a teacher
I don't feel like a
truth and the whole truth.
Tomorrow everything will be the opposite.
My loneliness is nothing to be spoken
or Ed eating jawbreakers
floating in the ocean.
Could I float around the room
with my dog barking
my alarm going beep beep beep?

Why is our teacher teaching us this
around and around and books about
people catching the
donuts looking like a clock?
Them are all the things I don't feel.
No one else can change that

time when you need something when you need a watch to tell its time.

When the trees lose their color and their leaves,
to my dog barking in my backyard
I'm at the beach.

Name with alphabet soup
at 3:00 a.m. when
I don't feel like myself.
I is for the igloos in Antarctica.

But it ended.
Dancer dancing around the stage,
Zappato is a shoe in Spanish.

Why does a president make wars?
Because the girls jumped rope
first day of spring.

"Ode: Salute to the New York School" is a cento, a late Roman verse form made up of lines from other sources. First, I put together a chronological bibliography of over 100 books published by New York poets from 1950 to 1970. Many of these books are deeply out of print so I had to do some real digging. Then I extracted one line from each book to compose the cento. Happily, Clark Coolidge supplied the lines from the books I couldn't find in any library. The cento also works as an index to the bibliography. The combined bibliography and cento form the libretto to a musical work which the composer Richard Alan Applebaum is currently writing. My intention was to make what I call a "performing bibliography." Since this is, in effect, what most of us do on a daily basis—referring to or performing what we've read—it seemed a useful metaphor to describe how we enact our reading practice. My idea was that a simple accompaniment to a series of bibliographic entries could generate both scholarly information and an emotive effect. I wanted to express the latent desire for lists and order, and to create a texture to accommodate the eros inherent in research. What I learned along the way is that literary movements survive primarily in the ruins of the texts they leave behind rather than in the unified literary histories that we create for them after the fact.

Peter Gizzi

ODE: SALUTE TO THE NEW YORK SCHOOL
1950-1970 (A LIBRETTO)

A car roars over a conversation
A dish of Irish setters
A little horse trots up with a letter in its mouth, which is read with
eagerness as we gallop into the flame.
A man signs a shovel and so he digs.
And the nerve-ends evolved to cope with instant danger do not know
what to tell the brain so they think about it
As if nobody believes what anybody tells them, gray in the cafe and the
shiny rain
Bloom, flare, blink open
Born eaves clump bounce
But do we really need anything more to be sorry about
But Ned is lazy, the monkey has to do it all.
By day I sleep, an obscurantist, lost in dreams of lists.
Did you ever read the wet page of the earth?
File prayer tines
Glee a short road across my face.
Goodbye, Father! Goodbye, pupils. Goodbye, my master and my dame.
Have I worn out my distracting powers to doze witless into the scape
of night, empty of detail and excuse
“Hello Lincoln? I want to store a blue fire-escape.”
He has banged into your wall of air, your hubris
His substance utters a sun above the stoves of our discourse
History, what did the Rose do?
I am interested in “reading” and in controlling reading speed.
“I am your pineapple sunrise! I am your vanilla wristwatch! I am your
whip!” says the Boy Scout.
I’d give a bunch of bananas for a sniff of your behind, oh yes!
If Joan says I’m wounded, then I’m wounded
I got to catch a bus for Altoona where I can smile again.
I have won myself over to this cause. I am yours! You are mine! Light
bulb! Holy Ghost!

I'll trade one red sucker for two blue ones.
I look at the Himalayas; they neither sit nor stand
I love you like a sheriff searches for a walnut
In a church's tiered and April-green alcoves
In the bat light, in the bugger Darkness
In the murdersome chorus lines of the snow an entire bird fell biffing
from off a tire.
In you, I feel the new kite. What are your feelings like?
I prefer "you" in the plural, I want "you."
I rammed into a chestnut and got blood all over my flute.
I remember jerking off to sexual fantasies involving John Kerr. And
Montgomery Clift.
I salute that various field.
Is it dirty, does it look dirty, that's what you think of in the city.
Is the basketball coach a homosexual lemon manufacturer? It is suspected
by O'Ryan in his submarine.
I speak as a wife to the capsizing
It is a distinct pleasure, and a marble-shaped pain, to be caught while
walking out in the rain.
It's not that I'm curious. On the contrary, I am bored but it's my duty
to be attentive, I am needed by things.
It's so clean you could flush ten million toilets into it and it would stay
the same.
It's so original, hydrogenic, anthropomorphic, fiscal, post-anti-esthetic,
bland, unpicturesque and William Carlos Williamsian!
"It was Saturday night and I just got toed"
I waken, read, write long letters and wander restlessly when leaves are
blowing the quiet evening street, I spend a week in my underwear
reading Williams and drinking orange soda, both in California.
Left behind in New York City, & oof!
Let's warm up the simian pianola.
Love makes it poetic though blue
Many stars are in the sky, I asked Mother to help me afterward
My Army likes you so much loves you I think so much they are march-
ing to your hit recording *Me!*
My flesh abides
My heart is blue and my foot has been ruined by the night
Naked arms, his chief activity, provided an annex of joy and compact
tours.
Now as my questioning but admiring gaze expands to magnificent

outposts.
 No turning back, no rewrite, no voice! in this poem, now, not to look
 nor creep back to the stark horror.
 O blue tapeworm, sonnet of powerful indifference, nest
 One of them said, "Ha ha! your spectacles are broken."
 Open the mind of the paralytic stooge for seamy madness to discover
 a call. . .
 Our habits ask us for instructions.
 Parachutes, my love, could carry us higher than this mid-air in which
 we tremble
 Rainbows. Many tomorrows. My name is Tom.
 Really, I thought that fish could cry.
 Rose bud, I love your pout, love the ash-built slope.
 Saviors of connections and spit, dial HYacinth 9-9945, "Isn't that a
 conundrum?"
 Six knobs, four in heaven, makes ten.
 Snow White had brought the music back.
 Swig Pepsi & drape the bent frame in something "blue for going out"
 That's not a cross look it's a sign of life
 That up north in the Aurora Borealis the blame falls like rain.
 The fate of the fake nostalgia of beebees lost under the furniture
 hulks.
 Their eyes grow louche at the exact second they start their slide
 The last party to be seized at twilight, and time was cold to the lovers.
 The next day a verb drove up, and created the sentence
 The pony-spoor of hotblood bank chip, far away from in outside day.
 There is nothing worse than elephant love.
 These ing those
 The tone is hard is heard is the coming of strength out of night: un-
 feared.
 The tonic resonance of pill when used as in "she is a pill"
 The train comes bearing joy; the sparks it strikes illuminate the table.
 The tremendous reassurance of being at the dinner table and tense, a
 stalwart melody
 They are preparing to begin again: problems, new pennant up the flagpole
 in a predicated romance.
 This honey is delicious but it burns the throat
 Truth is truth on an empty street at noon
 Twelve Bells! Benny's on the ropes! Twelve Bells! He has no feet!

Twelve Bells! He can't make gloves!
 We live in our own hip pocket, nodding out to rush back in.
 What obsolete! what lift! geronimo of confusion
 When Andrew's letter arrived, three agents had already gone in vain to
 search for Dog Boss.
 When the cows and the leaves begin to fall, they fall like falsehood
 When we join them we will show them trophies of old smoke
 Where green changes itself into LIFE
 Who will smile, & love you, at your leisure
 Will they search for rust among the fake doubloons?
 Yet the cars do not cheat, even their colors perform in storm.
 You can feel the wind in the room, the curtains are moving in the draft
 and a door slowly closes
 You select something small like a pimple and quick as a wink that's all
 there is
 You think of your art which has become important like a plow on the
 flat land.

A Chronological Bibliography 1950-1970

1950

1951

O'Hara, Frank. A City Winter. New York: Tibor de Nagy Editions, 1951.

1952

1953

Ashbery, John. Turandot. New York: Tibor de Nagy Editions, 1953.

Koch, Kenneth. Poems. New York: Tibor de Nagy Editions, 1953.

O'Hara, Frank. Oranges. New York: Tibor de Nagy Editions, 1953.

1954

1955

1956

Ashbery, John. Some Trees. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956.

Denby, Edwin. Mediterranean Cities. New York: Wittenborn, 1956.

1957

*O'Hara, Frank. Meditations in an Emergency. New York: Grove Press
1957.*

1958

1959

Berrigan, Ted. A Lily for My Love. Providence: Privately published, 1959.

Koch, Kenneth. *Ko, Or a Season on Earth*. 1959.

1960

Ashbery, John. *The Poems*. New York: Tiber Press, 1960.

Guest, Barbara. *The Location of Things*. New York: Tibor de Nagy Editions, 1960.

Koch, Kenneth. *Permanently*. New York: Tiber Press, 1960.

O'Hara, Frank. *Odes*. New York: Tiber Press, 1960.

O'Hara, Frank. *Second Avenue*. New York: Totem/Cornith Press, 1960.

Schuyler, James. *Salute*. New York: Tiber Press, 1960.

1961

Elmslie, Kenward. *Pavilions*. New York: Tibor de Nagy Editions, 1961.

1962

Ashbery, John. *The Tennis Court Oath*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1962.

Guest, Barbara. *Poems: The Location of Things; Archaics; The Open Skies*. New York: Doubleday & Co., 1962.

Koch, Kenneth. *Thank You and Other Poems*. New York: Grove Press, 1962.

1963

Denby, Edward. "C" Magazine. Vol 1, No. 4, Special Edwin Denby Issue. New York: September 1963.

Sanders, Ed. *Poems from Jail*. San Francisco: City Lights, 1963.

1964

Berrigan, Ted. *The Sonnets*. New York: Lorenz and Ellen Gude, 1964.

Lima, Frank. *Inventory*. New York: Tibor de Nagy Editions, 1964.

O'Hara, Frank. *Audit Magazine*. Vol. IV, No. 1, Frank O'Hara Issue. Buffalo, 1964.

O'Hara, Frank. *Lunch Poems*. San Francisco: City Lights, 1964.

Padgett, Ron. *In Advance of a Broken Arm*. New York: C Press, 1964.

Sanders, Ed. *King Lord/Queen Freak*. Cleveland: Renegade Press, 1964.

Veitch, Tom. *Literary Days*. New York: C Press, 1964.

1965

Berrigan, Ted. *Living with Chris*. New York: Boke Press, 1965.

Ceravolo, Joe. *Fits of Dawn*. New York: C Press, 1965.

Gallup, Dick. *Hinges*. New York: C Press, 1965.

MacAdams, Lewis. *City Money*. Oxford: Burning Water Press, 1965.

O'Hara, Frank. *Love Poems (Tentative Title)*. New York: Tibor de Nagy Editions, 1965.

Padgett, Ron. *In Advance of a Broken Arm*. Second edition, 1965.

Sanders, Ed. *Peace Eye*. Cleveland: Frontier Press, 1965.

Shapiro, David. *January*. New York, Chicago, San Francisco: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965.

1966

- Ashbery, John. *Rivers and Mountains*. New York, Chicago, San Francisco: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966.
- Berrigan, Ted. *The Sonnets*. 2nd edition: New York: Grove Press, 1966.
- Brodey, Jim. *Fleeing Madly South*. New York: Clothline Editions, 1966.
- Clark, Tom. *Airplanes*. Essex: Once Press, 1966.
- Clark, Tom. *The Sand Burg*. London: Ferry Press, 1966.
- Coolidge, Clark. *Flag Flutter & U. S. Electric*. New York: Lines, 1966.
- Padgett, Ron. *Sky*. London: Goliard Press, 1966.
- Padgett, Ron. *Tone Arm*. Essex: Once Press, 1966.
- Perreault, John. *Camouflage*. New York: Lines Press, 1966.
- Sanders, Ed. *The Toe Queen Poems*. New York: Fuck You Press, [1966].
- Schuyler, James. *May 24th or so*. New York: Tibor de Nagy Editions, 1966.
- Toole, Tony. *Poems*. New York: Privately printed, 1966.
- Veitch, Tom. *Toad Poems*. Essex, Once Press, 1966.

1967

- Ashbery, John. *Selected Poems*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1967.
- Berrigan, Ted. *Many Happy Returns*. New York: Angel Hair, 1967. (single sheet)
- Brodey, Jim. *Identikit*. New York: Angel Hair, 1967.
- Brownstein, Michael. *Behind the Wheel*. New York: C Press, 1967.
- Ceravolo, Joe. *Wild Flowers Out of Gas*. New York: Tibor de Nagy Editions, 1967.
- Clark, Tom. *The Emperor of the Animals*. London: Goliard Press, 1967.
- Coolidge, Clark. *Clark Coolidge*. New York: Lines, 1967.
- Elmslie, Kenward. *Power Plant Poems*. New York: C Press, 1967.
- O'Hara, Frank. *Meditations in an Emergency*. 2nd edition. New York: Grove Press, 1967.
- Padgett, Ron. *100,000 Fleeing Hilda*. New York: Bokee Press, 1967.
- Sanders, Ed. *Peace Eye* (Enlarged edition). Cleveland: Frontier Press, 1967.

1968

- Ashbery, John. *Three Madrigals*. New York: Poet's Press, 1968.
- Ashbery, John. *Sunrise in Suburbia*. New York: The Phoenix Book Shop, 1968.
- Brodey, Jim. *Long Distance Quote*. Los Angeles: Mustard Seed Press, 1968. (broadside)
- Brownstein, Michael. *Overjoy*. Paris: Spine Wind Press, 1968.
- Ceravolo, Joe. *Spring in This World of Poor Mutts*. New York and London: Columbia University Press: Frank O'Hara Foundation, 1968.
- Coolidge, Clark. *ING*. New York: Angel Hair, 1968.
- Elmslie, Kenward. *The Champ*. Los Angeles: Black Sparrow Press, 1968.
- Guest, Barbara. *The Blue Stairs*. New York: Corinth Books, 1968.
- Koch, Kenneth. *Poems from 1952 and 1953*. Los Angeles: Black Sparrow, 1968.
- Mayer, Bernadette. *Story*. New York: O To 9, 1968.
- Saroyan, Aram. *Aram Saroyan*. New York: Random House, 1968.
- Schjeldahl, Peter. *White Country*. New York: Corinth Books, 1968.

Toule, Tony. *After Dinner We Take a Drive into the Night*. New York: Tibor de Nagy, 1968.

1969

- Ashbery, John. *Fragment*. Los Angeles: Black Sparrow Press, 1969.
Berkson, Bill. *Shining Leaves*. New York: Angel Hair Books, 1969.
Berrigan, Ted. *Many Happy Returns*. New York: Corinth Books, 1969.
Berrigan, Ted. *Peace*. Detroit: Alternative Press, 1969. (broadside)
Berrigan, Ted. *A Fragment*. London: Cape Goliard Press, 1969. (broadside)
Brounstein, Michael. *Highway to the Sky*. New York and London: Columbia University Press: Frank O'Hara Foundation, 1969.
Clark, Tom. *Stones*. New York, Evanston and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1969.
Ehmslie, Kenward. *Album*. New York: Kulchur Press, 1969.
Koch, Kenneth. *When the Sun Tries to Go On*. Los Angeles: Black Sparrow, 1969.
Koch, Kenneth. *The Pleasures of Peace and Other Poems*. New York: Grove Press, 1969.
O'Hara, Frank. *Odes*. Second edition. New York: Poets Press, 1969.
O'Hara, Frank. *Two Pieces*. London: Long Hair Books, 1969.
Padgett, Ron. *Great Balls of Fire*. New York, Chicago, San Francisco: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969.
Perreault, John. *Luck*. New York: Kulchur Press, 1969.
Saroyan, Aram. *Pages*. New York: Random House, 1969.
Schuyler, James. *Freely Espousing*. New York: Paris Review Editions, 1969.
Shapiro, David. *Poems from Deal*. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc, 1969.

1970

- Ashbery, John. *Evening in the Country*. San Francisco: Spanish Main Press, 1970. (broadside)
Ashbery, John. *The Double Dream of Spring*. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1970.
Ashbery, John. *The New Spirit*. New York: *Adventures in Poetry*, 1970.
Ashbery, John. *Some Trees*. 2nd edition: New York: Corinth Books, 1970.
Berrigan, Ted. *Scorpion, Eagle & Dove*. n.p.: Privately published, 1970. (broadside)
Berrigan, Ted. *In the Early Morning Rain*. London: Cape Goliard Press, 1970.
Brennard, Joe. *I Remember*. New York: Angel Hair, 1970.
Brodey, Jim. *Zip Guns in the Haunted Mayonnaise*. 1970
Brounstein, Michael. *3 American Tantrums*. New York: Angel Hair, 1970.
Coolidge, Clark. *Space*. New York, Evanston and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1970.
Gallup, Dick. *Where I Hang My Hat*. New York, Evanston and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1970.
Matheus, Harry. *The Ring*. Leeds: Juillard Editions, 1970.
Toule, Tony. *North*. New York and London: Columbia University Press: Frank O'Hara Foundation, 1970.

CENTO

A "cento" is a Roman poetic form meaning "stitched together": each line of the poem is drawn from a different source. "Cento" also resonates with the number one hundred, and many centos are a hundred lines long. So when the Frankfurt Buchmesse turns fifty, and Bob Holman is commissioned to write the occasional verse, voila! -- a SemiCento. Just as the Book Fair spans the globe, so the poem gathers poets from all cultures and times to say Happy Birthday, What Is a Poem?

The SemiCento is the performative edge of a poetry media project, The World of Poetry, which will create a new kind of anthology of poetry texts and performances, filmed, digitized, broadcast and available over the Net. The poem was created collaboratively, and the writer wishes to thank the performers and research team for their creativity, the poets and translators for lending their words. The end result, the Millennium Poem (1,000 lines! the whole world's poetry in a single poem!), was performed December 31, 1999.

Bob Holman

THE POEM

in the original languages:

Courtesy of Jackson West at Washington Square Arts

in English:

- i Oh Poets, why sing of roses! Let them flower in your poems!
Listen!
In the beginning was the Word.
The world is holy! The soul is holy! The typewriter is holy
the poem is holy the voice is holy!
- v Sing, O Orpheus! A tree grows in your ear!
"Tree! You can be a canoe! Or else you cannot!"
Here are swim-stick words you can use to scare away sharks
The sound is spirited, green, and full of silence
The colors ripen on the weightless branch of time
- x A black, E white, I red, O blue, U green
A word sits on the kitchen counter
Let the house be dead silent
Today is the world-pregnant day of judgment
Everything only connected by 'and' and 'and.'
- xxv We are entitled to die the way we want to die. Let the land
hide in an ear of wheat.
This poetry, I never know what I'm going to say
It's the long story that never comes to an end.
To write into emptiness
It has always been this way.
- xx The slightest pain hurts me, the slightest joy overwhelms
What you see here is colorful illusion... corpse, dust,
shadow, nothing.
Only the poet sells his soul to separate it from the body
that he loves

- Farewell, thou art too dear for my possessing.
The abyss doesn't divide us. The abyss surrounds us.
- xxv In the middle years of the journey through life
My task was to be a sower of eyes!
Grown old, do we hear silence splitting open
Whistle at the other end and let me sing it
And I can also rightly be quiet.
- xxx The stones, the water, the sun speak
Of the stone I say, "It's a stone."
O Saints! Ye Divine Washermen!
Please listen as if I were a bubbling spring
If I had known it was a dream, I would never have wakened
- xxxv A terrible beauty is born.
The prison cells say nothing, like an animal whose wound
bleeds inward...
When even my grave I remembered no more,
A brand from a brand is kindled and burned, and fire
from fire begotten
Night after night, I danced on dynamite
- xl Every slam a finality
As for the hibiscus on the roadside — my horse ate it
Come, Hendecasyllables, one and all
Do not shatter my heart, learn to be still.
No one will write the final poem... what worries me is
the final dream
- vi When I close the book, I open life
And to search for nothing, that was my intent
O poets! poets male and female, listen to the ruins!
Rinnzekete bee bee nnz krr müü?
What was was cool. What was it?
- I Now, today, I shall sing beautifully for my friends' pleasure.

THE POETS

1. Vicente Huidobro (Spanish, Chile)
2. Beowulf (Old English)
3. The Bible (The Gospel According to John, I:1, Hellenistic Greek)
4. Allen Ginsberg (English, USA)
5. Rainer Maria Rilke (German)
6. Derek Walcott (English, St. Lucia)
7. Aimé Césaire (French, Martinique)
8. Tomas Tranströmer (Swedish)
9. Vasko Popa (Serbian)
10. Artur Rimbaud (French)
11. James Tate (English, USA)
12. Luo Incantation (Kenyan)
13. Yehuda Amichai (Hebrew, Israel)
14. Elizabeth Bishop (English, USA)
15. Mahmoud Darwish (Arabic, Palestine)
16. Jelaluddin Rumi (Farsi, Turkey)
17. Carlos Drummond de Andrade (Portuguese, Brazil)
18. Tu Fu (Chinese)
19. Nora Marks Dauenhauer (Tlingit, Alaska)
20. Alamanda (Ienga d'oc, France)
21. Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (Spanish, Mexico)
22. Tomaz Salamun (Slovenian)
23. William Shakespeare (English, Great Britain)
24. Wislawa Szymborska (Polish)
25. Dante Alighieri (Italian)

26. Velimir Khlebnikov (Russian)
27. Yang Lian (Chinese)
28. Luhyia Riddle (Kenyan)
29. Francis Ponge (French)
30. Cecilia Vicuña (Spanish, Chile)
31. Alberto Caeiro/Fernando Pessoa (Portuguese)
32. Miribai (Hindi, India)
33. Thich Nhat Hanh (Vietnamese)
34. Ono no Komachi (Japanese)
35. William Butler Yeats (English, Ireland)
36. Nazim Hikmet (Turkish)
37. José Rizal (Tagalog, Philippines)
38. The Poetic Edda (Old Norse)
39. Ai (English, USA)
40. Bob Kaufman (English, USA)
41. Matsuo Basho (Japanese)
42. Catullus (Latin)
43. Anna Akhmatova (Russian)
44. João Cabral de Melo Neto (Portuguese, Brazil)
45. Pablo Neruda (Spanish, Chile)
46. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (German)
47. U Sam Oeur (Khmer, Cambodia)
48. Kurt Schwitters (German)
49. Amiri Baraka (English, USA)
50. Sappho (Greek)

THE PERFORMERS

Here are the program credits for the first performance of the SemiCento, October 7, 1998, at the Frankfurt Buchmesse Festhalle, before an intimate dinner party for 4,000:

Performed by Dana Bryant, Regie Cabico, Bob Holman, Edwin Torres
Written and directed by Bob Holman
Designed by Edwin Torres
Lighting & Sound by Daniel Pistorius
Research by Christopher Connelly, Director, David Grand, Carley Moore, and the performers
Books by Biruta Auna, Purgatory Pie Press
Typography by Jackson West
The SemiCento is part of *The World of Poetry*, a Washington Square Films Production
Managed by Julie Derclé, Exbrook Entertainment

Bob Holman is your Poetry Guide.

*Edwin Torres is a bilingual poet/artist/provocateur, rooted in the languages of both sight and sound. He's toured around the world performing and giving workshops all over the alphabet. His books include **I Hear Things People Haven't Really Said** and **SandHomméNomadNo**. His debut CD, **Holy Kid**, was released by Kill Rock Stars.*

*Dana Bryant grew up in Brooklyn, New York. She made her poetry debut in 1991; in 1995, she released her first book of poems, **Song of the Siren** (Boulevard Books/Putnam Berkeley) and the following year her debut solo album, **Wishing From the Top** on Warner Bros. Records. She has performed in Europe and Japan with artists such as Speech (of Arrested Development), Zap Mama, PM Dawn and Ronnie Jordan.*

*Regie Cabico is coeditor of **Poetry Nation: A North American Anthology of Fusion Poetry** (Vehicule Press, Montreal). His solo show, "the poet welcomes his male muse a cabaret poem in 1 act," was presented at The Public Theater in New York City. He was a member of the Poetry Slam Team, Mouth Almighty, which won First Place at the 1997 National Slam.*