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3 Sept. 1986

Dear Sam:

Good idea, meeting with the younger local poets at lunch. That way I could stay on with them a bit, if they wanted to. It would be a rather late lunch, however, as the 11:30 bus doesn't get in until 1. Incidentally, you might want to check on the time, as Leah got the bus schedule some time ago from here and the time might have been changed.

I haven't heard from Creeley yet as to where I'll be staying in Buffalo.

Nice of you to invite me to your guest room. The only problem would be easy access to a bathroom at night, as I have to go several times. Also, I have to be at the airport at 9 o'clock the next morning. If these will not be problems, then by all means I prefer your place.

Yes, I do have to have a mike and amplification.....badly.

In case somehow we get our wires crossed and don't meet at the bus station, is the thing to do to call you at the Institute.....or what?

Finally, from 9/24 to 9/29 I'll be in Minneapolis, visiting my daughter. Her phone is 612 377 4241.

9 Oct. 1985

Abrams
Dear Sam:

There's a chance I could come for a reading in Rochester some time in September 1986....if you're still interested. The \$500 fee plus an amount for transportation which you mentioned at St. Mark's would be satisfactory

Since I saw you last, I've been over my head in correspondence, which is beginning to interest me again, as in my youth, and in completing my COLLECTED POEMS for the National Poetry Foundation. The book should be out some time next year.

All the best,

Carl

21 Oct. 1985

Dear Sam:

It turns out that the last week in ~~September~~ September or the first week in October will do all right. It's too early yet, however, to set an exact date but we can leave that for later. In the meantime, as you say, let's take care of the other details. So will you please confirm the \$500 fee and let me know how much the Institute can offer for transportation and lodging? And yes, I would be interested in meeting with a writing workshop group. The additional fee of that you mentioned, of \$100, or more if possible, would be satisfactory.

Since you'll be away in Greece (lucky fellow!) will you be able to take care of final details from there, setting up the reading when we know the date, doing the necessary publicity, etc.?

Best,

21 May 1986

Dear Sam:

I have a bad feeling that this may not reach you but I have to try. I'd like to clinch a definite date for my reading at Rochester, for Wednesday October 1 or Thursday Oct. 2. Whichever you choose, the other day would be for the workshop. XXXX OK?

21 Aug. 1986

Dear Sam:

Your confirmation of Oct. 1 reached me. I'll be coming by bus from Buffalo that morning, either on the 8:45 a.m. bus, which arrives around 10:15, or on the 11:30 a.m. bus, which arrives around 1 p.m. In either case, if all goes as planned, I could meet with your group some time in the afternoon. That would be best. But if not that, it would have to be after the reading, as I don't want to start with a weak voice. Which reminds me, please be sure I have a good mike. My voice, as you know, is very weak. Could you arrange also to have a few poems for the group to bring for consideration?

For your information, my social security no. is 477-344-1002 and my phone, ~~444~~ 415-566-3425.

Where will I be staying? and where giving the reading and workshop?

Best,

4 May 1984

Aggr
Dear Jonis:

Thanks so much for doing what you can about a reading for me next year.

And what pleasant news about Brenda. I remember she could be difficult (am I being too mild?), and here she is, finding herself in a loved vocation, and changing. She could in time become a real friend. I'm so pleased to hear that. She used to be big for her age and if she still is, she'll make an impressive ~~skaf~~ figure of a chef.

I was always struck by the original form and roman a clef character of HOUSES, so a long sequel to it soulds exciting. Who'll do it?

We won't have to wait until next year to see you. Leah and I will be visiting our daughter, Barbara Rawley, the first two weeks in June. Let me know where I can reach you by phone and I'll call you when we get in and we can set something up. Until then,

*Love,
Carl*

30, Oct., 1983

Dear Gordon Anderson:

Finally I get to your letter.

That reading at St. Thomas at which you heard me read, I remember well. My host, a good-natured young fellow with a bright (?) red beard.....if you were a student at St. Thomas, you will remember his name....had driven me up from his apartment, where we had had a brief, convivial get-together with likely-to-be-convivial members of the English Department, and as we approached the building where the reading was scheduled, I saw that one of the main rooms on the top floor was blazing with light. A cartoonist would have drawn that room slightly lopsided and a little unsteady, with wavy lines on either side, to show that the general hilarity and commotion inside and the over-brilliance of the lights was shaking it up and making it hilarious too. "Somebody's having a good time," I thought, "I wonder what meeting this is," expecting Red-Beard to lead me to some quiet little room in a different part of the building but to my surprise he led me into the high-decibel area and there was my audience, smiling and jabbering away. The room was packed, as you remember, the overflow sitting on the floor in front. I found myself looking almost directly down on Allan Kornblum, the publisher of Toothpaste Press, as I read. I began with an innocent (?) Americana poem and Allan immediately burst out laughing. The laugh was so good-natured and so in tune with the poem that it set everybody else off, including me. After that, there was only one way to go and that was for laughs. The amusing thing was that Allan's laugh always came just an instant before the poem gave the cue for it, and that made everybody laugh. You can see that I had a good time from how well I remember everything.

As you yourself indicated, it is not easy to get a handle on your questions, partly because they may not actually be ~~behind~~ the questions behind your malaise. What may be behind it may simply be dissatisfaction with your work. In any case, it's possible to say a few things. About playfulness and intensity, these are personality traits. If you have them, you don't lose them for any length of time. About making a living and writing at the same time, I was never able to do it after I married and had children, but others, in other occupations than mine, have been able to, so my experience does not prove anything. Furthermore, there is no peace in not writing; it's mortally painful and agitating. Finally, what you call "energy in writing" is not affected by abstention; it's related rather to the amount of one's interest

in one's subject-matter and being able to find commensurate language.....
really not so hard to do once a strong interest is felt.

Of course getting oneself published and rejected is another matter altogether
and is sometimes an endless series of little and big agonies from which, I am
afraid, there is no escape, because the alternative is worse.

I can imagine how many questions and self-doubts must have passed through
your mind when you didn't hear from me. I'm really sorry to have put you
through that,,especially since I treasured the warmth of your response to my
work.

With best wishes,

11/20/82

Dear Paul:

Re THE INVENTION OF SOLITUDE. As you know, I have not been able to understand why I have no memory of the Kenosha events. If your date for them is correct, 1919, I was a junior in high school then and could not have not read about them in the newspaper. Nevertheless, there is a blank. The Jewish community must have hushed up the event tight and gone about its business as if it had not happened. My folks, I know, never talked about it, at least not in front of my brother ~~and~~ ^{or} me. However, your grandmother's attorney, Mr. Baker (always referred to as Mr. Baker in those days, I guess out of respect), was well-known to my father. He often spoke of him with admiration and esteem. I remember too the rabbi who officiated at the burial, Rev. M. Hartman, ^{an} elderly ^{man} with a frail dignity; and Fred Plaus (not Plans, as you have it in the letter on page 35). And most astonishing of all, I recognized your grandmother in the photo at the beginning of the book. That woman I had met, I know, either in the kosher butcher shop, the only one in town, where the women congregated, not just for meat but for gossip and for good-natured, teasing, sometimes slightly sexy quips from the butcher, a figure as important as the rabbi in those days; or I could have seen her in B'nai Zadek synagogue, where my father in his later years served as president for no other reason than that they respected his uncompromising integrity and he was the only one who could ^{keep} order among the shouting, clashing members.

East European Jews of that generation, by the way, and the generation earlier, were rough characters, rougher than you would think. The largest national Jewish social agency, for example, during the first two decades of this century was The National Desertion Bureau, whose function was to track down men who had deserted their families and forcibly or otherwise bring them back. Child neglect, child abuse, wife-beating, prostitution, criminal acts of all kinds, were common. Murder was not common but not unheard of either. This I know from reviewing case records of that period from my old agency, Minneapolis Jewish ~~and~~ Family and Children's Agency. Against these facts the events in your family were not as strange as they seem today.

Needless to say, I read your account of them, as did Leah, and your sad quest for a father, with utter interest. It is clear why you felt ~~xxxxxxx~~ compelled to write it. It is not clear, however, why in The Book of Memory, which of course is much richer in literary interest, you dropped the first person singular for an initial, which is even less personal than the third

person singular would have been. It's as if you didn't want to face yourself this time around, didn't want to acknowledge what you were, wanted to put distance between yourself and your life, between your memory and the events, all in the interest perhaps of conveying the fragile, somewhat indefinite nature of memory, or of adding a patina to it? Did you not pay too high a price for that? Otherwise, I found The Book of Memory rich in content and, as I said, ~~ex~~ rich in literary interest, and hope you'll plow that field further.

I see your Random House book is out. Will there be a paperback edition? If that's not being planned, could you get me a cloth edition at your author's discount?

Leah and I are looking forward to seeing the two of you more in extenso in January.

Affectionately,

~~Callman Rawley~~

Carl Rakosi

128 Irving Street, San Francisco, California 94122
12/3/82

Dear Paul:

No, no, I'm not going to be in N.Y. I was referring to your being in California in January to visit your boy. You are coming, aren't you? That's when I thought we could all have a longer visit.

Ah yes, the "other" in solitude. But that's simply the self in the absence of the social. It seems strange because it's unfamiliar.

It will be exciting to have the anthology, if you can mail it.

Abrazos,

Carl

3/1/83

Dear Paul:

Shocked to hear that the lovely "Siri" was "very ill" for six weeks. Six weeks! Just the flu, I hope.

Carolyn Kizer's translation of a Tu Fu poem on the other side of your postcard begins, "By morning the rain is furious," and immediately I'm stopped. The word, "furious" in connection with rain sounds wrong for ancient Chinese poetry. Even if it were raining what we would call furiously, the Confucian is too serene to have to reach out that far to make his point.

I'm busy at the moment on the last small piece for my book of collected prose which is supposed to be coming out for my birthday in November. Terrell of Paideuma is doing it. But no takers so far for my Collected Poems. Duncan has been asked to do the introduction to the prose.

Will you be seeding me a spare copy, that you said you had, of the Random House translations.

Love,

Carl

3/22/83

Dear Paul:

In a way, THE ART OF HUNGER is the most expressive thing you've written. It's very satisfying to read, with its air of lovely meditation and insight. Congratulations. And thanks.

Would you believe that Hamsun's HUNGER, which you found so engrossing, had a deep modal influence on me as a young man. I (my work) was never the same after taking in that bleak landscape.

Love,

Baker
@ 29 Nov. 1984

Dear Tony:

George Finally brought over A BIT BRINK. A delightful little book with both charm and precision and a light touch. The only trouble with it is that it ends too soon.

Cordially,

30 Oct. 1984

Well, Tony XBaker, I'm delighted that you did finally write. When George some time back asked me whether I knew you, I said the name sounded familiar but I couldn't place it. A relief to have that cleared up.

What great friends you and George are! George speaks just as highly of you. I love to see that. In this bee-hive of poets that is San Francisco, I see him and August most often and with most pleasure (also Robert Duncan and Michael Palmer and Lawrence Fixel, a very interesting writer of parables). From now on, you will be with us in spirit.

I haven't seen your book yet because it's in a package George shipped home from England but I'm looking forward to it. In the meantime, I can't thank you enough for your loving identification with my work. That's a bond I do not take lightly.

Now that the ice is broken, keep in touch.

Cordially,

11/18/82

Dear Todd Baron:

I'm sorry but at the moment all my unpublished ^{work} is awaiting publication in ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ CONJUNCTIONS. I'll keep you in mind, however, for new things as they come along, and in the meantime wish the magazine well. Its name has a special meaning for me, as the magazine I started and edited as a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin was called The Issue, not a poetry magazine, however, but one devoted to campus issues and personalities. It was fun while it lasted, two numbers. Then my interest ran out.

I appreciate in your prospectus the tentative, open way you're starting out but when you say in yr. letter that you will be trying "to create an unlimited surrealism," my hackles rise, for I am from first to last and avowed enemy of surrealism. A little, judicious surrealism is salutary; "unlimited surrealism" would overwhelm the manageable imagination by the grotesque. On the surface that might look attractive but it is a cop-out. Besides, Sulfur is already plowing that field quite well. Why would you want to do the same thing?

Best,

Baron

29 Aug. 1985

edit to the magazine, Issue.
Partials is a chapbook
he had just written.

Dear Todd:

Thank you for the new ISSUE and
for PARTIALS, which I found quite lively. The
workmanship is resourceful and its unexpected
juxtapositions and perceptions keep things
Xxxx interesting.

Best wishes,

Carl Rakos

25 Nov. 1985

Dear Roberto:

I upped the fee from \$150 per session to \$200 per because the former is too far out of line with what I have been getting. For example, my fee next fall at both SUNY at Buffalo and the Rochester (N.Y.) Institute of Technology will be \$500. And my fees last May in New York, Chicago and Milwaukee varied between that amount and \$200. So if you'll be getting an NEA grant, I wouldn't want the fee to be less than the minimum.

I hope this doesn't foul up things for you. If it does, let me know.

25 Nov. 1985

Dear Roberto Bedoya:

I accept your invitation to give a short course of four sessions at Intersection in the Fall of 1986 at a fee of \$200 per session. The course would consist of one lecture, two work sessions and one reading.

With best wishes,

25 July 1986

Dear Roberto:

Nice going, getting the NEA grant.

Put me down for the week of Oct. 13th and the week following that, if two weeks are needed, for the residency. What time intervals do you think there should be between sessions?

To review what I want to do in the four sessions: session 1, a brief talk and then a dialogue with the students on what they feel the need to discuss; sessions 2 and 3, workshops on students' work, one copy submitted to me prior to class, and copies available to the other students at the time of class; session 4, a reading. The agreed fee, \$200 per session.

Any idea from previous experience how many are likely to be in the group? 10? 20? 30?

I'll be away on a reading tour between Sept. 22 and Oct. 9th. Other than that, you'll be able to reach me here any time.

Best,

INTERSECTION



FOR THE ARTS



POETRY & PROSE

Tuesdays 8:00 p.m.
\$3.00/\$2.00 members

September 2

— open reading —

September 9

A reading of current writings in South America with STEVE HELLMAN
Recent judge for the *Casa De La Americas* literary award given out by the Cuban government

JOHN ROSS

Author of *RUNNING OUT OF COAST LINES* and reporter for the Pacific News Service, most recently on assignment in Bolivia and Columbia

September 16

HARRYETT MULLEN

Author of *TREE TALL WOMAN*

SUSAN GEVIRTZ

Associate editor of *HOW*(ever)

September 23

JANINE CANAN

Author of *HER MAGNIFICENT BODY*

MARIA ESPINOSA

Author of *Longing*

September 30

JOHN TAGGART

Author of *Dehiscence*

BOB PERELMAN

Author of *The First World*

October 7

Australian Poet JOHN TRANTER

Author of *Dazed in the Ladies Room*

BILL BERKSON

Author of *Lush Life*

October 21

A Book Party and Reading for

CYNTHIA GENSER

Author of *The Mexican Murals*

JAMES GEARY

Author of *Words For Refrigerator Doors*

— co-sponsored by e.g. publishers —

October 28

BARBARA GUEST

Author of *Moscow Mansions and Herself Defined*, a biography of the poet H.D.

LAURA MORIARTY

Author of *Persia*

Sunday

3:00 p.m.

\$3.00/\$2.00 members

September 21

Book Party & Reading for

Practising Angeles

A contemporary anthology of San Francisco

Bay Area Poetry

WRITER -IN- RESIDENCE

Carl Rakosi

October 12, 14, 19 & 26

Carl Rakosi was born in 1903 in Berlin, Germany and came to this country in 1910. His poems first appeared in *The Little Review*, where Joyce, Eliot, Pound and Hemingway were first published and in Ezra Pound's *The Exile*. In the early 1930s he was associated with the Objectivists. His first book, *Two Poems*, appeared in 1933. Then came *Selected Poems* (New Directions, 1941). By 1940 he had stopped writing entirely and did not resume until 1966. His most recent books being *Collected Prose* (1983) and *Collected Poems* (1986).

PERFORMANCE

Theatre Banlieue of Belgium
presents

ECLABOUSSURES

September 3 - 20

ECLABOUSSURES (SPLASH) is a visually rich and surrealistic theatre piece based on the erotic writings of the French novelist and philosopher George Bataille. With simple and unsophisticated props, music, poetry and sculpture, the five actors of THEATRE BANLIEUE probe the outer dimensions of sexual desire, fantasy and obsession.

This will be THEATRE BANLIEUE's third appearance in San Francisco. In 1983, they dazzled audiences with *NO PLACE TO DIE* as part of the San Francisco International Theatre Festival. Misha Berson wrote in the *Bay Guardian*, "The visual imagination at work here is so splendid, so consistently inventive, that the show threatens at first to be a mere laboratory of terrific visual effects. But very quickly *NO PLACE TO DIE* establishes itself as that all too rare beast — a multi-media theatre work filled with tension, soul and substance."

Since THEATRE BANLIEUE was founded by its Artistic Director A. Mebirouk in 1980, its highly acclaimed theatre pieces have been performed at Theatre for the New City in New York, and international festivals in San Francisco, Baltimore, Montreal and throughout Europe.

TIMES: Wed. - Sat., 8:30 p.m.

OPENING NIGHT: Wed., September 3

TICKETS: \$8 Wed. & Thurs.

\$9 Fri. & Sat.

★★SPECIAL INTERSECTION
BENEFIT PERFORMANCE★★

Thursday, September 4 \$25.00

Motion Performance Works
by Nina Wise

presents

FALL

*An Evening of Improvisation with
Sheilah Glover, Rhianon, Nina Wise and
Ruth Zaporah, and visual design by
Andrea Stanley*

September 25, 26 & 27

Each evening consists of solo and ensemble improvised performances in a visual environment created by Stanley. The performers will interact with one another and the environment, which changes each evening and is previously unknown to the performers.

Glover, Rhianon, Wise and Zaporah are each known for their original theatrical and musical creations. This will be their first collaboration together and promises to be full of invention and surprises.

TIMES: Thurs. - Sat., 8:00 p.m.

TICKETS: \$7 Thurs., \$8 Fri. & Sat.

(Members' Discount: \$1)

Sundays

2:00 p.m.

\$3.00/\$2.00 members

October 12, 19 & 26

In workshop situations, Carl will discuss participants' work. On October 12th, a brief talk will be followed by a discussion. On October 19th & 26th he will take a closer look at participants' work. Participants are asked to bring copies of their work for others in the group.

Tuesday

8:00 p.m.

\$3.00/\$2.00 members

October 14

A Reading by CARL RAKOSI

PERFORMANCE

From Los Angeles

**BURKE BYRNES:
AMERICA'S FINEST**

October 1, 2, 3 & 4

Burke Byrnes takes us on a journey into the events that shaped his life, from high-school jock and U.S. Marine to actor in Hollywood. His candid and revealing stories focus on the relationship with his father, a tough Irish cop who rose to lieutenant on the force in Long Island. In this one-man piece, Byrnes delves into the ironic cycle between father and son. He reveals the developing resolution, recognition and respect for his first hero as he surfaces to maturity through the myths of American manhood to come to terms, at long last, with himself.

TIMES: Wed. - Sat. at 8:00 p.m.

OPENING NIGHT: Wed., October 1

TICKETS: \$7 Wed. & Thurs.; \$8 Fri. & Sat.
(Members' Discount: \$1)

Eleanor Antin

presents

HELP! I'M IN SEATTLE
October 9, 10 & 11

San Diego performance artist Eleanor Antin brings to Intersection the latest installment in the life and adventures of Eleanor Antinova, the once celebrated black ballerina of Diaghilev's Ballet Russe. In *HELP!* we find the young Eleanor back in her native America during the Depression. Victimized by racism, unfair labor practices, bad art and loneliness, she struggles to keep above her sinking fortunes in a decrepit theatre in the last days of vaudeville. *HELP! I'M IN SEATTLE* is directed by Steve Pearson with an original music score by Tom Amos and film sequences danced by Antinova and Orlando.

TIMES: Thurs. - Sat., 8:00 p.m.

TICKETS: \$7 Thurs., \$8 Fri. & Sat.

(Members' Discount: \$1)

**AN EVENING WITH
KEITH TERRY: A ONE-
MAN-NEO-POST-NEW-
VAUDEVILLE-REVUE**

October 15 - November 1

Keith Terry brings to Intersection body music, rhythm dance, live music and a spoof or two in a high-energy, quick-paced program full of unusual sounds, fun and zany humor. This show is directed by Terry's long-time associate and collaborator, Kimi Okada.

As a percussionist/choreographer/body musician/vaudevillian, Keith Terry has performed with the Pickle Family Circus, Freddie Hubbard, Robin Williams, Tex Williams, Bobby McFerrin and Charles "Honi" Coles. He toured extensively in the U.S. and Europe with the Jazz Tap Ensemble.

During the summer of 1985 he toured Indonesia with Gamelan Sekar Jaya. As a choreographer, Terry has created Body Music pieces in a variety of settings including the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival and the San Francisco Mime Troupe's *STEELTOWN*. He has collaborated on several "new variety" shows with colleague Geoff Hoyle, appearing at the Berkeley Repertory Theater, the London International Mime Festival, New York's Dance Theater Workshop and the Colorado Dance Festival, and, along with other friends, at Berkeley's Zellerbach Playhouse.

TIMES: Thurs. - Sat., 8:00 p.m.

PREVIEW: Wed., October 15

OPENING NIGHT: Thurs. October 16

TICKETS: \$8; \$6 preview.

GALLERY

**ANN CHAMBERLAIN
"INTERIORS"**

an exhibition of photographs

October 9 - 31

Opening reception: Thurs., October 16
5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

"Interiors," a series of photo text pieces, portrays people through the environments in which they live. Each piece is a dual image. The same photo has been printed in black and white and in color. The black and white image is overlaid with text which provides a counterpoint to the photographic image. The text refers to what is outside the frame, the history of the space, as well as the person who ordered the space. The scenes describe the ways we collect things: how we define our meaning through our possessions and how our possessions come to define us.

Late Night at Intersection presents

**TEXTURED MOVEMENT
WITH
PEOPLE UNDERNEATH**

October 3 & 4

Sha Sha Higby began as a multi-media sculptor. She studied traditional eastern crafts and theatre for six years in Indonesia and Japan under a Fulbright-Hays Scholarship. She has received numerous awards and grants in sculpture, crafts, and multi-media performance in the Bay Area. She will be performing her latest piece, *COWS UNDER A PEPPER TREE*.

October 10 & 11

As recent Artist-in-Residence at Intersection, **Ernesto Sanchez** performed *RALPH RODRIGUEZ GOES TO HEAVEN*. He has also performed for years with Snake Theater, received critical acclaim for his portrayal of Walter in Antenna's *VACUUM*, and performed throughout Europe as well as in New York and Maui. He is an instructor at the San Francisco School of Dramatic Arts, and is offering the popular course "Emotional Based Movement for the Performer" this fall. Students in that class will perform with him in his new piece, *CHAOTIC PICNIC*.

October 17 & 18

Patricia Bulitt is a dancer/choreographer/ethnographer of Alaskan Eskimo Dance. She has toured Alaska and was the first non-native dancer many Eskimo and Indian villagers had ever seen. Patricia will bring many works from her repertoire to Intersection including tundra trance, Mother of Mukluk Seal, Mask Dance, shaman/while/you/sleep/walrus/wisk, and her newest piece, *Walrus Rice*.

TIMES: Fri. & Sat., 10:00 p.m.

TICKETS: \$7 per show

(Members' discount: \$1)

\$15 for series

BOX OFFICE 626-3311

Tickets for all performances are available through Intersection's box office, 626-3311 or at STBS ticket booth at Union Square.



766 VALENCIA ST., SF 94110

SEPT./OCT. 1986

415 626-ARTS





INTERSECTION

FOR THE ARTS

766 Valencia Street
San Francisco, CA
94110

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MC



Carl Rakosi
Irving
SF, Ca 94122



© Allen Nomura

An Evening With Keith Terry: A One-Man-Neo-New-Vaudeville-Revue
October 15 - November 1

DANCES & PARTIES

You may still have time to purchase tickets to Intersection's end of the summer corn boil and dance benefit. Doors open at 6 P.M. on August 30 and the program features music by:

Chalo Eduardo and the Brazilian Beat
(with Claudia Gomez)

Denim T.V. and Raoul and The STUPEDS

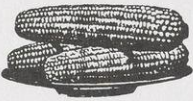
as well as *Celebrity Corn Huskers* (including **Harriet Schiffer in Bed**)

Saturday, August 30, 6:00 P.M. till 2:00 A.M.

Sweet Corn is free while it lasts . . .

Dancing until 1 A.M.

TIX: \$10 or 2 for \$15 (Bring a friend!)



Following Keith Terry's October 31st Performance, Intersection will throw a special Halloween Party and Haunted House featuring installations and performances by Bay Area artists. Secret details will become available after midnight, September 30 . . .

New Additions . . .

Intersection is happy to announce the addition of **Marsha Vdovin**, our new publicity director, to our staff. Marsha has worked as publicist for Ellen Zweig, Lynn Hershman and the SF Girls Chorus and is a visual artist as well. She replaces Penny Peak, who has moved on to Cal Performances.

We would also like to welcome **Cynthia King**, **Ronnie Rogers**, and **Jonathan Young** onto our Board of Directors.

Coming to Intersection . . .

Performance Artist-in-Residence, Roger Neiboer, will present his new work, *At The End of the Chain* in November. Also, writers-in-residence Rosemarie Waldrop and Bill Barich will be presenting workshops and readings this winter.

Your support to Intersection is now as essential as ever. We urge you to join as a member or renew your membership and take advantage of being first to see innovative and exciting work in all our programs.

And last but not least: Intersection staff would like to thank our summer workers, **Debra Paes** and **Rit Chau**, for their wonderful and enthusiastic work. And we thank **Private Industry Council** and **CYO** for this program of putting high school students to work in non-profit organizations.

1986 MEMBERSHIP

FRIEND

☐ \$10

Intersection Calendar

MEMBER/SUBSCRIBER

☐ Individual \$30
☐ Family \$50
☐ Student/Senior \$25

Calendar
Tickets to Preview/Opening Night Performances
½ Price Admission to Poetry
Other Programs & Workshop Discounts

PATRON & BENEFACTOR

☐ \$100+ / ☐ \$500+

All Member Benefits
Intersection Calendar Listing
Invitations to Special Events

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

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*Maurice Bernstein
an old social work
friend
EB*

26 March 1987

Dear Bernie:

However immodest of me, I can't resist sending you the enclosed copies of reviews of the COLLECTED POEMS. They've overwhelmed me, and I just want to share my gratification with an old friend.

Otherwise, Leah is holding her own, but it doesn't look as if she can be cured. I have to struggle with that, knowing that I can't win. Still, I'm lucky that I have a literary life. When things are not too bad with Leah, I can escape into it.

How fast the world is changing! One has to keep sprinting ^{just} to stay in the present. For example, the internationalization of business (religion seems to be running in the opposite direction) and the destruction of the environment. Only the cold war hard-liners aren't giving an inch. The script for them has been written, as in a movie, and there are big bucks in it for a lot of people. I don't know what it would take to change that. The Democrats won't do it.

The piece you sent me on race horses was, as you said, a kind of revelation. The writing is awkward, not up to New Yorker standards, but it didn't seem to make a difference. The content was too important to be dismissed.

I remember our get-together with Shep and Jake and Clara as a radiant event. May we all stay well!

Love,

22 May 1987

Dear Bernie:

The latest on Leah is good news. At her last session the oncologist thought he still felt ~~xxxxxxx~~ a small node on her spleen but the C-T-Scan showed nothing in that region, so it looks as if the cancer is in remission and she'll be free for a while from the dread chemotherapy. You can imagine how our spirits shot up when we learned this. At unexpected moments we found ourselves looking at each other and beaming and hugging.

When you are describing your response to my work you say that the reviewers say it much better than you can. Not true! Not true at all. Your literary sense and perceptions are every bit as true as theirs. ^{Your} ~~xxxx~~ warmth and depth, dear friend, give me a warm glow not to be had from any review. In addition to which, it's just fun to know that you're fully on my wave length and that my words move you

☐ I've gotten a big kick out of one other thing, too, a small thing. For the last few months a short poem of mine, The Experiment With A Rat, has been reproduced on a poster on buses throughout the country....New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Washington.....eleven cities in all. Not a poem I attach a great deal of importance to but I've gotten letters from people who've seen it in Chicago and Washington. And Leah was in the bus one day here and witnessed a man standing in front of it for a long time without paying any attention to it. Then his eyes strayed to it, bored, and he started to read, not expecting anything; then read on and when he came to the end, he smiled and chuckled. Strangely satisfying, that! Another time a young friend of mine here who is doing practice teaching in the elementary schools took my poster with her to her fifth grade class for a lesson in poetry. When she held it up for them to read, one of the boys exclaimed, "Oh, that's my favorite poem!" I don't expect ever to top that. Not even by the fact that one of the poems you took to, Instructions To The Player, is being reprinted ~~xxx~~ in a news-letter for cellists. What's going on? Ayhow, whatever, you can see that I am thrice blessed....in my work, in Leah's reprieve, in my personal health.

Minkoff's parody is hilarious. It's so clever, it's awesome. I wonder what he writes, however, when he has no model to work from.

Be well, Bernie.

9 Feb. 1988

Melville Bernstein
Dear Bernie:

I don't know whether you've read Edward Dahlberg's autobiography, *Because I Was Flesh*. I've had it on my shelf for years and finally read it. X It's a strange meld of baroque, archaic overwriting and brutal honesty. For example, he's talking about his mother, a poor, unhappy working woman who, when she could, supported him during his early years but now had become terminally ill and impoverished: "All I had done for so long was to scratch the lice of my indolent sensibilities and imagine that I was showing a great deal of emotion for my mother. Now when I regarded this pile of palsied spirit and tatters before me, a shrewd, cold feeling came over me; the demon sat on my lips and smirked at me: 'Will she die before she becomes a burden to you?' When I heard this leering whisper, I groaned."

Dahlberg never knew who his father was. His mother wouldn't ^{tell him,} or maybe didn't know, ~~xxx xxxxxx~~ When she found that she couldn't run her small barber shop in Kansas City and bring up Dahlberg and have a life of her own, she placed him in the Cleveland Jewish Orphan Asylum from 1912 to 1918. His account of his experiences there (p.65 to 92) is like a page out of Dickens' *London*, unforgettable. In a few ways like yours but in most others, not at all.

I've been invited to participate in a big literary shindig on April 7 to April 9 at the Poetry Center at St. Mark's Church on The Poetry of Everyday Life, a subject in which I'm deeply interested. Unfortunately, the panel on which I'll be a discussant will not be talking about this but about New Forms & New Functions, in which young writers, of necessity, are always interested, and older ones....well, there are things in which I'm more interested. Anyhow, this will be an evening apparetnly for young blades ~~to~~ to show their new work (experimental) to the world and explain it and an evening for me to sit and listen and throw some historical perspective on the subject, God willing. The evening before, I'll be giving a reading. If my sister-in-law has room for me.....her son from Hong Kong is living with her now.....I'll be staying with her, but if not, could you put me up? I know this is too early for Jake to be back, but maybe we could have another joyous reunion with Shep and Clara.

Love,

Maurice Bernstein

24 Aug. 1988

Dear Bernie:

Forgive me for being so slow to answer but what's been happening from day to day with Leah has made me, without exaggerating, into her existential clone, and I find it harder and harder to do anything but be with her and feel with her and fear and despair about the future, my own too, so unless I answer a letter right away, it won't get done for months. As you see, I have trouble learning this.

When I came in your letter to Jake's death, I cried out, "God damn!" and thought, "Another piece of my life gone!" and just held it there like another blow that has to be endured, too angry and rejecting to feel what I should be feeling for someone I cared for so much, and that's as far I got. But tell me more about the details, as much as you know.

I read with joy about your trip to England. Exactly what I would have wanted to be doing. How right you were to have done it now (with us it's always now, isn't it? units of now). I may have told you, Leah and I had planned to go too, in Spetember with my daughter Barbara and my son-in-law. We had an apartment rented for all of us in London, and I had readings scheduled at The Poetry Society there and at the University of Durham, but of course we had to call it off. Leah doesn't have the strength for it.

In the midst of all this the sun suddenly shone through, for me anyhow. First, I was notified that in October the National Poetry Association, a bunch of Bay Area writers, would be giving me a Lifetime Achievement Award at a big public celebration (along with Maya Angelou and a much-loved literary critic and professor of English at the University, Thomas Parkinson). I'm ashamed to say that what impresses me and gives me a special kick is that the mayor will take part in the proceedings. The next thing that happened is a letter from The Fund for Poetry. "Who the hell are they?" I asked ~~me~~ when I saw the name on the envelope. "I've never heard of them!" What do they want?" We both thought it was an appeal for money. I would have thrown it away unopened but Leah is too curious to be able to do that so she opened it. but as she was doing it, she was grumbling, "Everybody wants money from us/ Why don't they send us something once in a while?" With that, a check fell out and she cried, "It's a check!" There was a plain memorandum inside: "The Fund for Poetry is pleased to send you this

check in recognition for your contributions to contemporary poetry."
Nothing more. The check was for \$5,000! I've been trying to draw some
meaning from all this, particularly since the following week I lost my
balance and had to have sixteen stitches taken in my head, but it's
beyond me. You got any ideas?

Do write, old friend. We miss you.

Hugs from us both,

The occasion for this letter is as follows. At the time it was written in 1957 I was executive director of the Jewish Family & Children's Service in Minneapolis and had long before then stopped writing and using the name Carl Rakosi. I was known in the field of social work and psychotherapy as Callanan Rawley. I had arranged a public symposium on the subject of mental health in our society. Berryman was to deal with the subject from the point of view of the creative arts, I was to deal with it from the point of view of society and social welfare and the other two panelists from the point of view of religion and psychiatry. At the rehearsal, Berryman was stimulating but gnawed away like a dog on a bone against psychiatry. The issues he raised were interesting but it was evident that all he knew about psychiatry was what he had picked up from a couple of books by Freud; which is to say that he had the layman's usual misconceptions and biases, yet his conceit was monumental. Under the circumstances, all we could do was to grin and bear it and wait patiently until he got tired spouting off — which was something like two hours.

This should have warned us of what was to come. The program was to be one hour long. Each of us was to take fifteen minutes. At the rehearsal he had insisted that he go on first. We agreed with some trepidation, but reminded him that each of us was to take no more than fifteen minutes. Well, he made an interesting presentation but he took forty-five minutes, while the three of us sat in the wings, again gnashing our teeth.

He and I had not discussed an honorarium. Apparently he was surprised to get one. I had not introduced myself as Carl Rakosi and he did not know, therefore, with whom he had been speaking.

Carl Rakosi

P.S. Although we lived in the same city for over twenty-five years, this was the only time we met. After Amulett appeared, I wrote him a note as Carl Rakosi, asking whether he'd like to get together. He never answered. He didn't know, of course, that he had already met me as Callman Rawley, and I didn't tell him because I wanted him to want to see me because I was Rakosi. J.D. Reed and Dan Gerber were curious about this when they visited me in 1971 and brought up my name during their "guanine" with Berryman. That is the context for the bit in Reed's letter of March 9, 1971: "We brought up your name quite casually: claims he's heard of you, 'objectivist or something'."

Ironic that after his suicide the University of Minnesota invited me to take over his seminar on The American Character.

Carl Rakosi

11/26/82

Dear Robert:

Of course you may print my bibliography in *Credences*. Except, as I noted, for *very early* entries in THE NEW MASSES, THE LIBERATOR, THE NEW STUDENT, and THE ECHO which I was not able to trace because they were not listed in the Periodical Index but which you may have in your library or may be able to locate in other libraries, I think the list is complete, as of now. In that connection, I should add that my archives are in The Houghton Library at Harvard.

Yes, I do remember Buffalo with pleasure and envy you the great modern collection in the Knox-Albright.

All the best,

Bartholf - Editor of Credences

30 June 1984

Dear Robert:

It would be nice if you could take the SPIRITUS and the PROSE on yourself for critical appraisal in Credences.

Trouble all around me: Oppen in a mental institution with Alzheimer's Disease and Duncan recently with Kidney failure but out of the hospital and doing his own dialysis at home every four hours, weaker but in pretty good spirits, considering. And I by some miracle of fortune and/or genes still all right.

B Bartholf

5 Aug. 1985

Dear Robert:

Perfectly satisfied to have Ms
Parchuck work on my bibliography if you say
she's competent. I suppose I'll be hearing
from her soon then.

Getting ready myself to make up an inventory
of my archives, mostly correspondence, for
marketing.

Best wishes,

5 April 1986

Dear Mr. Binni:

Enclosed is a copy of my COLLECTED PROSE, along with two small books published in England recently. Another recent book, DROLES DE JOURNAL, published by The Toothpaste Press (dreadful name!) I don't have a copy of to send you, but it should be available from a distributor. I assume you are familiar with my EX CRANIUM, NOGHT and with the Dembo interviews with the Objectivists at the University of Wisconsin. You should also read Michael Heller's CONVICTION'S NET OF BRANCHES, ~~xxx~~ the first entire book devoted to the Objectivists. The most reliable account (accurate) of the early Objectivists is to be found in Frederick Thomas Sharp's PhD dissertation entitled OBJECTIVISTS, ~~XXXXXXXX~~ 1927-1934, done at Stanford University in 1982 and available, I think, from University Microfilms International. A monumental digging job patiently and accurately done.

My own COLLECTED POEMS is due out this fall from THE NATIONAL POETRY FOUNDATION, University of Maine, Orono, Maine 04469. Write Carroll F. Terrell there for a copy when it is available.

For good measure I'm enclosing some other scattered pieces relevant to your subject. And if at the end you would like me to look over your mss ~~on the mss~~ ^{for} possible errors of fact or distortion, I'll be willing to do it.

With best wishes,

Carl Rakosi

Dec. 29, 1983

Dear Guy:

*Burke
(author of Cold Mine)*

Thank you for sending me COLD MINE. Its high tangeability, the solidly grounded experience, the economy make it sound fresh. At any rate, you're starting (anew?) with fundamentals, and that's always a good way to start. Have you been in Wales or into documents?

With best wishes,

128 Irving St.
San Francisco, CA 94122

Letter to Robert Bly

Minneapolis, Minn. 55409
4451 S. Colfax Ave.
March 4, 1969

Dear Robert:

Your packet came yesterday. I have been spinning with excitement since. I think I know now why you wanted me to see *The Sixties*. All the things you do and select have the clean, hard substance which alone satisfy me. I haven't had a chance to read them through but I treasure particularly your inscription between the two charming florets.

It's been a picnic jumping from one booklet to the other. The short poems had a very special interest for me. I am sending you one of my own, *From Man*, nine words long, including the title. I don't altogether understand it, but I never wrote one more complete. What more could be said on the subject?

With re to Dickey, the conclusion I had come to about him is similar to yours. I concluded that I had mistaken his energy for passion and that in all that excitement and agitation there was no heart. In that sense he is like a revved-up copywriter.

Today I finished the first draft of *The Four Year Old Boy*. I am not satisfied with the second stanza, nor am I sure that the reference to Blake is sensible, but the poem is inscribed to you and I wanted you to have it while the memory of our visit and your gifts are still fresh.

The check is for a year's subscription to *The Sixties*. I hope you keep going for a hundred and fifty years. And if you would like me to contribute something to it, just say the word.

He never said the word
CR

Fondly

Carl Rakon

11 Feb. 1989

Dear Philip Booth:

How gratifying to get your evaluation of my piece on George Oppen in TALISMAN, particularly since that piece led to a falling-out with Mary, which has never been patched up. I wrote it shortly after George's death and Laughlin was prepared to publish it in the New Directions annual but she raised such a ~~xxxxxx~~ an angry ruckys, balling me out for being inconsiderate and for ruining his literary image by revealing what she herself had told friends, his Alzheimer's, that I withdrew it from Laughlin. How pleasant to have you vindicate me.

Until last year there has been no test for Alzheimer's, so although doctors were familiar with the symptoms they were unable to make a definite diagnosis because they could not distinguish it from any number of other conditions with almost identical symptoms, such as things as simple as side effects to medication, or bad nutrition or actual brain deterioration known among doctors as senile dementia. Because Alzheimer's can have a very long life span, it's possible that you saw the very first sign of it back in 1973. I myself did not see it clearly until 1983 when he was so agitated by the large number of people at his 75th birthday celebration that he had to be sneaked out through a side door in order to get away from all the faces and voices.

Thank you for sharing your experience ~~wt~~ with me.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Carl Rakos", with a horizontal line underneath.

24 April 1988

Dear Mr. Buckeye:

I'll be arriving in Burlington, Vermont on May 14 at 5:36 pm on US Air 432 and departing from Burlington on May 16 at 12 noon on US Air 245. The fare was \$338. The bus fare to and from the airport in San Francisco will be \$18. I have the usual questions: how to get to Middlebury and where will I be lodging?

I'll follow your suggestions for the talk plus reading. Here too I have some questions. How long should it be? About how many people do you anticipate? What are they like? I mean such things as their interests in literature. And will I be speaking after dinner while they're still seated at ~~xxx~~ table?

Incidentally, I should have a phone where I can reach you, just in case. Also, I'll need a microphone even for a moderate-sized audience, as my voice is soft.

Cordially,

5 May 1988

Dear Bob Buckeye:

Enclosed is a copy of my plane ticket. My social security number is 477-34-1002. Note that the ticket is made out to Callman Rawley because that's my legal name. Carl Rakosi is a pen name.

Much obliged for your succinct description of the audience. It helps.

All set then.

Cordially,

17 July 1988

Dear Bob:

A bookmark with a poem on it? Sounds attractive? Let me see, which poem out of my COLLECTED? REVERENCE? p.22; WHAT'S THIS WORLD'S ACHE? p.35; CENOZOIC TIME? p.42; THE RESPONSE TO HAMLET? p.43; AIE! p.67; ZZZZ p.79; A TABLET AGAINST AGING? p.91; WALKERS PASSING EACH OTHER IN THE PARK? p.128; THE VOW? p.222. You'll have to do the picking, I'm afraid. I don't know the Friends of the Library.

Whenever you have the chance to get out this way, Leah and I will be glad to see you.

Carl

P.S. Oh yes, I have now been reimbursed in full for travel.

Buck Key

1 Nov. 1988

Dear Bob:

Sure, your choice of aphorisms for the post card is fine. Glad to have you do it.

At my age, I don't envy you the winter coming on, or rather, ~~is~~ should say I do envy you your good feelings about it. Which reminds me that my oldest granddaughter has started to teach school in a small town in New Hampshire and is facing the same winter, but she's a hardy, outdoor girl from Minnesota and is totally unfazed, may in fact be looking forward to it.

I'll be interested to read what you have to say about the Language Poets. Nothing good, I suspect....hope...implore. Any man who's a friend of Paul Metcalf can't be a friend of... you know who.

Best,

Carl

Buckley

28 Nov. 1988

Dear Bob:

I'm delighted at your terse, philosophical handling of basic concepts in the two reviews you sent me and never for an instant letting yourself stray from this path to follow the author to where he is trying to convince you you should be. Such strict intellection is rare, its robustness does what honor calls for but is seldom done because most reviewers are too lazy or seduceable, or simply incompetent. I would like nothing better if you did something similar for my collected work for the forthcoming Man and Poet book on me from The National Poetry Foundation. Would you be interested? If you are, I'll get in touch with Michael Heller, the editor.

Best,

June 15, 1982

Dear Richard Caddel:

I've been trying, trying, to place you visually in my memory at the Morden but I just can't do it. I have a vague memory of one person in particular whom I remember liking. Was it you?

Sure, I'll be glad to have you publish some of my recent work. The enclosed satisfies, I think, your requirement for maximum length. Let me know when it reaches you.

Best wishes for "The Year of the Pig."

I've never had a good idea that didn't start with feeling. And a really good image has never come to me except by accident. My destiny lies in the hands of these two.

If you could get down to its essence, even a turnip would be poetic. What is remarkable is that poetry can prove it.

Old ideas are as hard as garbage to dispose of once and for all.

The fact is that it takes as much honesty to write a durable poem as imagination and craftsmanship. The longing for *altogether* honest, *personal* expression is so strong that if a poem has it, we are willing to forgive its shortcomings.

Individuality remains avant garde.

—Carl Rakosi

MANHATTAN

the soul in aluminium.

I had scarcely risen
from the first sleep.

Gone was the lute
which is as difficult
to manage as a city,
with discretion and significance.

—Carl Rakosi

July 9, 1982

Dear Richard Caddel:

I've decided you must be the nice one I met at Morden Tower.

The acknowledgments should go to Atlantic Review, Origin, Chicago Review, The Ark 14, Montemora, Conjunctions 3, and Sulfur. Lying in Bed on a Summer Morning, revised here, came from AMULET, New Directions, and Yaddo, combined and revised here, came partly from ERE-VOICE, New Directions, and partly from EX CRANIUM, NIGHT, Black Sparrow. I don't remember whether I included a meditation beginning, "What's this world's ache.....?" If I did, credit should be given to Oasis Books, London; it is the opener to my little book, HISTORY.

Copyright does go to Callman Rawley.

Yes, it's a good idea to give roman numerals to the meditations, including Meditation: Melancholy but not A Word With Conscience. It might also be well to list all the meditations on the content page by their first lines. And it's a very good idea and I'm glad you suggested it to divide the book into sections, with a number (big) on the page preceding each section. Shows you have an orderly mind. If we follow that plan, the Meditations, sans A Word With Conscience, fall naturally into I; II would be Lying In Bed On A Summer Morning, Yaddo, Ginger, and Menage; III would be On The Way To The Law Courts, Manhattan (the short poem), Manhattan (the long poem), Old Lovers, Passing Each Other In The Park, and Punk Rock; and IV would be Heads and A Word With Conscience. Good idea!

Yes, you're the nice one. Definitely!

P.S. The Last Lunar Baedeker is put. You can order it from David Wilk at Inland Book Co., if it's not available in England.

8/31/82

Dear Ric:

Bless you for making me reconsider the title. A much better one came along: SPIRITUS, I. With that the poetry starts not with the first poem, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ MEDITATION I, but with the title itself.

The list of ~~xxxxxx~~ magazine credits lacks two items: Lettera and Bits.

Yes, "written by Crhistopher Smart in St. Luke's Hospital for the Insane" would be better. Do makx the change. But I do want to hold to the witchcraft association for corbie (for the sake of the poem). By the way, I've been trying without success to locate a good annotated edition of Jubilate Agno that will throw light on the marvelous names and references in it. I have the recent Carcanet edition of selected poems but it's no help at all. Reference is made in the Carcanet to an annotated edition by Cape in 1939 (REJOICE IN THE LAMB, ed. by W.F. Stead). Could you find out if that's still available? That's supposed to have good notes, but the one with supposedly "superb" notes (POEMS, Princeton University Press, 1950) is out of print, as is the so-called "standard edition" from Harvard (ed. by W.H. Bond).

I can't get my imagination to work on a cover design. I draw a blank. But I'm sure I'll be able to come up with something when I know what possibilities you've thought of. In the meantime, could you tell me what ~~the~~ paper, type, printing, binding, etc. ^{you're} ~~planning?~~ ^{ning?} Any chance of using your own name as the publisher instead of Pig PressX, which, frankly, I find offensive?X I understand that the pig is the smartest of the barnyard animals but I am not enough of a country man to be able to associate anything not negative to it.

One other thing: I'd like a dedication in the book, to wit:

To Margery Latimer
Dearest of My Old Friends.

P.S. Please return the photograph and the P.R. stuff.

9/15/82

Dear Ric:

Yes, by all means, xerox your copy of the Bond/ Jubilate Agno for me, if it's not going to be too much trouble. I'd appreciate it. What I need are good notes. The picture of Raby Castle is an unexpected treat. I can imagine old Lord Bernard of Raby Castle taking a kindly fancy to young Christopher Smart, who spent part of his vacations with him and attended the Durham grammar school, where you too might have gone to school.

Your solution to the pig problem is fine. I have no objection to the imprint, "Published by.....at the....." or to ³discreet piglet logo on the back cover. I just don't want him grunting and oinking and offending the ghosts of my ancestors. No way they would agree to your campaign to make pigs equal. I'm afraid you'll have to count them out.

Yes, the contents page was OK. The photo should be credited to Sidney Bacon.

Cheers,

Dec. 12, 1982

Dear Ric:

The Bond's JUBILATE AGNO arrived. It's exactly what I hoped it would be and what I needed. Now I can read Christopher Smart. I can't thank you enough.

The season's best to all of you and those elegant penguins at Cape Royds in their black cut-aways and imaginary bow ties.

Onward to Spiritus,

Sept. 19, 1983

Dear Ric:

The Xxxx "people" for "reader" error on page 50 is the only one I could spot. However, a worse one for that poem would be hard to imagine, so I'm afraid an errata slip will have to be inserted in each book.

Do you suppose, by the way, that the error might have been due to the printer's subconscious disbelieving that any author would say, "the reader can go to hell," and simply balking? You're not going to get a printer to print that without a fight!

Apart from that, the book is both interesting-looking and attractive, although I must say that I felt overwhelmed at first at finding myself with the face of ancient Chinese calligraphy.

No, I don't mind hand-altering the signed and lettered copies. Remind me to do it.

Thirty copies for me are more than I can use. Just send me twenty, Ric, and I'll keep eight of the signed/lettered copies. OK?

Best,

16 Jan. 1984

Dear Ric:

Sorry to be so slow to thank you for your perfectly charming little books. I haven't figured out yet where to put them. They disappear on the bookshelves. Where can one put them so that they remain visible and retain their special individuality? I haven't a clue. In some ~~of~~ kind of a showcase on the wall?

Creeley, I'm sure, can provide a reading for you at Buffalo for the simple reason that he controls the funds for it there, and if Corbett says he can do it in his neck of the woods, I assume he can. But I can't say anything hopeful about San Francisco. I wish it were otherwise, but the trouble is, as you know, that you're not well enough known for the University of California or San Francisco State University to be interested. I've met Ron Lowwinsohn, who's in charge of the readings at U of C but do not know him well enough to ask a favor of him. The Poetry Center at San Francisco State is without a director just now, so there's only limbo there now. Besides, I'm sure they schedule a year in advance (as does U of C). That leaves New College, which is interested in young, "unknown" poets. If you know for sure that you'll be coming, let me know a few months in advance and I'll see if they'd be interested. If they are, they'd put you on with with another reader and you'd split the door receipts with himroughly \$25 for each. I hope of course that you'll be able to visit us whether or not you do get a reading here.

If Creeley and Corbett did not mention St. Mark's in New York as one of the places where they could get you a reading, you could write Eileen Myles there. The address is : The Poetry Project, St. Mark's Church in-the-Bowery, Second Avenue at East 10th St., New York, N.Y. 10003. St. Mark's, like New College, is interested in young writers. If you write her, let me know and I'll write her at the same time.

Do come.

All the best,

21/1/84

Dear Ric:

I did get the errata slips and have attached them to my copies, but they came after I had already written in the corrections by hand, so I pasted the print-ins over the crossed out line. Not perfect because the ink shows through on the other side, but not too bad either.

Have you received my signed copies yet? I was surprised and delighted to hear that George's book has already sold out. How many copies did you print? And how many of mine? Could you send me 8 more?

It's not my collected poems but my collected prose that has come out. The publisher is The National Poetry Foundation (out of the University of Maine/ Paideuma, etc.). The English distributor (or co-publisher? I don't know) is Johnston Green & Co. in Scotland.

I have moments of longing to return to England to visit friends but, alas, I can't afford it. Nor can I hope that there would be funds these days for lectures/readings to cover our expenditures if I did go, so along with each letter goes a pang of longing.

Warmly,

Richard Caddell

13 April 1984

Dear Ric:

I am delighted by the delicacy and the refinement and the light grace of SWEET CICELY, by the attention to particulars, by how each word or small cluster of words evokes not just an ambience but a whole situation, so that despite the sparseness of verbs, the poems are active. A kin of Herrick, no doubt.

You'll be pleased at the enclosed review of SPIRITUS.

Cash

Andree Codrescu's son
The Battinose Sam

Dear Ric:

The following poem about Bunting has already appeared in a magazine in this country but if Farley doesn't mind that, he's welcome to have it for A DOG'S NOSE (glad you translated that for me).

A MINOR POET NOT CONSPICUOUSLY DISHONEST

Nay, Bunting,

 "a crafty poet
not conspicuously
 minor"into

whose eyes

 no man entered,

his smile

 a boy of six.

But what's

 the fox

lurking in

 that look of wonder?

Antipodes slightly mad
have flushed this face.

The hardy peasant.

Carl Rakosi

So nice to have had you here, Ric, and regret it must now
be only a memory.

THE NEXT BATCH

Alasdair Paterson - *The Floating World*

A large collection, reprinting much of Paterson's earlier work - and a lot more. His prose is collected in *Topiary* (see Selected Hits list).

William Corbett - February 29th

A single poem, with illustrations by Neill Fearnley. Creeley reviewed other recent Corbett (including *Schedule Rhapsody* - see Selected Hits list), as "deft, inventive, "mature" works of a boss poet."

John Seed - *Spaces In*

We did the first *Spaces In* in 1977, and very well received it was too. This is twice the size.

Robert Creeley - new poems

We hope to have the final Mss. of this in early Autumn, and have it out by Christmas. It will be, obviously, Creeley's *very* latest work.

Colin Simms - selected poems

This selection of Simms' recent work, at present being edited by Professor Eric Mottram, will hopefully bring Simms to the wider audience he deserves.

YOU CAN ORDER items from the first batch here. If you order three or four items you get 10% discount; if you order all five you get 20%. And you can order things from the Selected Hits list at the same time, can't you? All post free in U.K.

- ☐ Tony Baker - *A Bit Brink Green Quartz-like* £1.90 / \$3.50
- ☐ George Evans - *Nightvision* £3.20 / \$6.50
- ☐ Paul Evans - *Sweet Lucy* £2.90 / \$5.90
- ☐ Harry Guest - *The Emperor of Outer Space* £2.90 / \$5.90
- ☐ Carl Rakosi - *Spiritus, I* £3.20 / \$6.50
- ☐ Next List (the next batch) - s.a.e. please.

(Booksellers: sorry, no discount on single items, but 1/3 off orders of 5 or more items (mixed titles). Further discounts by arrangement).

SELECTED HITS

- William Corbett - *Montpelier Biscuit* - 80p/\$1.60
- William Corbett - *Schedule Rhapsody* - £1.90/\$3.50
- Robert Hampson - *A Feast of Friends* - £1.20/\$2.50
- Lee Harwood - *All the Wrong Notes* - £2.90/\$5.90
- Tony Jackson - *Hot Novels* - £3.90/\$7.50
- Pete Laver - *Water, Glass...* - 80p/\$1.60
- Tony Lopez - *Handbook of British Birds* - £1.10/\$2.20
- Alasdair Paterson - *Topiary* - £2.00/\$3.95
- Elaine Randell - *Songs for the Sleepless* - £1.50/\$2.95
- Robert Sheppard - *The Frightened Summer* - 80p/\$1.60

(Some of the earlier Pigs are still in print, in small numbers, or in signed copies only - drop us a line (with s.a.e.) if there's something you're after).

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PIG PRESS

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PIG PRESS



the first ten years



*"Cats look down on you, dogs look up
at you, but pigs is equal."*

-Old Saying

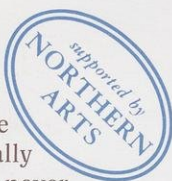
IT'S A SURPRISE and a mild pleasure to celebrate ten years of Pig Press - by chance - in the Chinese "Year of the Pig". It was totally unplanned, like everything else - we never thought, when we started, that ten years was even a possibility. So we decided to mark the occasion with some special publications. Ten of them, naturally - five English, one Scottish and four Americans; some well known, some less so, but all (we think) exciting, and in keeping with the thoughts of the reviewer who said "Pig produces so much material that can't be ignored". And here are details of the first batch (due in May 1983), and provisional details of the second batch. Order some of the first batch (at amazing bargain rates) and ask us to send you more information about the second batch. Be adventurous in your ordering - we need the money.

Don't ask what our "long-term" plans are - we've never had any and we don't intend to. But whatever we do *next*, it'll be something different.

THE FIRST BATCH

Tony Baker
A Bit Brink Green Quartz-like
 32pp £1.90 / \$3.50

An exciting first collection from a highly individual writer - if you don't like any of this you've probably grown out of poetry altogether. Tony Baker edits the rapidly evolving *Figs* publishing venture (magazine and pamphlets) and has recently completed a doctoral thesis on W. C. Williams, whose enthusiasm and accuracy of perception he shares, without copying.



George Evans
Nightvision
 60pp £3.20 / \$6.50

"It comes to me, in this lovely evocation of life, that George Evans has brought together more *parts* of that life than anyone I can think of in the past twenty years... if we listen, we will be that much more human."

- Theodore Enslin

"Mr. Evans' poems, resembling him, have a hardy constitution. They have his eyes and ears and no one else's. There are unexpected internal omissions in them and juxtapositions which get to the matter more quickly and increase tension. Their observations are fresh. The imagination at work is bold, without compromising reality. They stand on a solid footing."

- Carl Rakosi

"A deliberately earned clarity with remarkable emotional range. His language is a brilliant complex of intensively particular words."

- Robert Creeley

This is George Evans' first full sized collection.

Paul Evans
Sweet Lucy
 36pp £2.90 / \$5.90

This latest collection of Paul Evans' poetry demonstrates fully - to anyone who had doubted it - the wide range of tone and form at his command. But the brilliance is not purely technical: few other British poets can match his deft explorations of simple, moving, personal experience - which usually turns out to be not-so-simple, and is seldom without a spark of humour. The collection includes the sequences "Late Night Moves", "One Way Mirror", and "Summer in the City".

Harry Guest
The Emperor of Outer Space
 36pp £2.90 / \$5.90

As Harry Guest's first Pig job (*Elegies*, 1980) is reprinted in his latest Anvil collection *Lost and Found*, 1983), we bring you a work which began life as a long dramatic poem, was produced as a successful BBC radio play, and is re-arranged here to be published in a form closer to its poetic original. Harry Guest's examinations of relationships, real, imaginary, and remembered, are as evocative and convincing as ever.

Carl Rakosi
Spiritus, I
 56pp £3.20 / \$6.50

Rakosi's work has been admired and enjoyed by writers such as Williams, Pound and Zukofsky, and his earliest poems appeared alongside theirs in the little magazines of the twenties and thirties. After a long absence from poetry (during which time he devoted himself to social work) he started writing with renewed vigour in the mid-sixties. The gain is ours. Wallace Stevens had written to him (in 1942):

"My guess about you is that what excites you most of all is real things, and that your allusions to other things are merely to accentuate actual objects and people... if I am right about this, you have exactly the kind of mind that appears to be required in contemporary poetry."

There's no guessing needed in the appreciation of wit, grace, and *alertness* of this collection, Rakosi's longest since *Ex Cranium*, *Night* (1975).

*Richard Caddel
British poet and publisher*

3 Nov. 1987

Dear Ric:

I re-read what I had written about Sweet Cicely and found it exact. Nothing in it I would want to change. What I wrote then goes double for your new work. Of course you may quote me again. And good sailing.

Yes, Leah and I do feel like making another trip to the UK... sometime next September....so I'll take you up on your offer to see about possible readings/or talks. People in England who have been involved in my previous readings there and about whose interest in my work I have no question are Andrew Crozier, Jeremy Prynne, Robert Vas Dias, Gael Turnbull, Anthony Rudolf, Eric Mottram (I read at London U and at another time and he introduced me at Poetry Society of London reading), Roy Fisher, Tim Longville, Roger Guedalla, Herbie Butterfield (Butterworth?) and Michael Edwards at the University of Essex (I read there each of the three times I was in England). There are a few others but I don't remember their names now. I think (hope) they'll help.

I'm disturbed about the break in August's and George's friendship. August claims that George tried to horn in on his English readings after he had told him he wanted to do it solo. Can you cast any light on this that would correct August's perception, or mollify him? Even if it were true, it's more of a compliment to August than an infringement, but August takes it very seriously. Best write directly to him if you can say anything that would clear this up.

Here, as you know, I'm sure, the language poets are going great guns. How strange that people so intellectual should be so anti-psychological. This is no time to be subjective, they say, but they have rationalized themselves into the deepest ivory tower of all, the polar opposite of what they claim to be doing and of their professed social goals. Words fail me!

Love,

28 March 1988

Dear Ric:

After all the work you've done to arrange readings for me, especially the first Basil Bunting^{Archive} reading, which would have been a just occasion, I hate, really hate, to have to tell you that since my last letter, Leah's cancer has become somewhat worse and her condition is uncertain. I doubt whether we'll be able to undertake the trip. All I can do, for the time being, is wait and see what happens. If her energy comes back, we'll still come, by all means, but you shouldn't plan on it. I'm sorry, Ric. In my imagination it is, and will always be, a joyous event. My life, as you can imagine, has become 360 degrees different, has become her life, in fact...not a bad thing; in fact, some lovely things have come of it...the only thing is, I can't now do my thing or even keep up with correspondence. I'm not bitter. I'm not even complaining. The unavoidable is the unavoidable and I'm occupied learning how to live in it and extract what I can out of it.

A festschrift would have been nice indeed. Maybe you can still do it later on, a more modest one that would not be beyond your means and would not cover the same ground as the Man and Poet book, one only for the UK. That could be worked out, it seems to me, between you and Mike.

George, as you can imagine, can't wait to hold in his hands the forthcoming reissue of his first book and the new Pig book of his new work. And August has lined up so many readings in England that he'll be running and panting all the way to the finish line.

Love,

4 Oct. 1985

Campbell
Dear Kevin:

I found your poems serious,
substantial, well-crafted, tightly knit.
Obviously you're not a dentist trying some-
thing out ^{in poetry} in your spare time but a poet
practicing dentistry for a living. So welcome
to the club. And best wishes.

Shall I return the poems by mail or send
them back by George the next time he comes?

Cordially,

Carl Rakosi

A friend of my son, George,
whom I met at a party
at his house in Glendale,
California, who knew
my work & was eager
to have me read his.

24 Oct. 1095

Dear Kevin:

Sure, you're welcome to quote from my letter for a book jacket. No need to send me a list of the poems you're going to include in your book. The ones I read are sufficient for me to judge your talent.

Good luck then, and if you come to San Francisco, look me up and we'll talk some more.

With best wishes,

2/2/84

Clark
Dear Tom:

The National Poetry Foundation at The University of Maine has just brought out my COLLECTED PROSE. Would you be interested in reviewing it for the San Francisco Chronicle?

What are you doing down in Santa Barbara, other than exploiting the climate? Leah and I have been here now for five years and two winters but I'm afraid I'll never be anything but a Middle Westerner.

If you get up this way and would like to visit, please do.

Cordially,

2/10/84

Dear Tom:

This is the only spare copy I have but if you think it's necessary to send the Chronicle one too, perhaps you could send them this one after you've looked it over. If it's assigned to you, you'll get it back, and if not, I'll reimburse you for the postage and try to get you a copy later. I say "try" because I don't always get an answer to my letters from Terrell at The National Poetry Foundation.

For some reason, there's no price anywhere on the book, so I'll have to tell you: the paperback is \$12.95 and the cloth is \$20.

Between you and me, I haven't seen anyone other than you (and possibly Ralph Sipper, but on a much lower level) in the pages of the Chronicle book review section whom I'd trust with the book, so it might be better if they didn't do it all than give it to some lame-brain neophyte to do.

19 May 1984

Clark
Dear Tom:

I was ~~amazed~~^{alarmed} to read in your letter in EXQUISITE CORPSE that you were goingⁱⁿ for a cancer operation. You mentioned it so casually, however, as if in passing while talking about something else, that I couldn't be altogether sure that you were not being figurative. But I must believe that it is a fact. and write you only to let you know that I'm concerned.

No need to answer this.

With best wishes,

9 March, 1984

Dear Andre Codrescu:

Your notice of SPIRITUS, I X
and your invitation were heart-warming. I wanted
to send you a poem instantly but all my latest
work is in the SPIRITUS. I promise, however, the
first poem rugged enough for ^XEquisite Corpse, you
get.

I see that EC invites book reviews. Wouldn't
it be a grand thing now (what's that Irish sing-
song blarney doing in a Hungarian Jew?) if Anselm
Hollo would review my COLLECTED PROSE, which has
just come out, and which he has; and the SPIRITUS
too? Do you think he'd do it? I can't ask him, of
course. Would you?

All my subliminal animus frolics in EC. I owe
you something for that.

Cordially,

X In Exquisite Corpse,
Codrescu had written
about my Spiritus, I
"An absolutely terrific
new collection by one
of our greatest, and
insufficiently read,
poets."

And in long-hand on
the copy he sent me,
he had written:

"Cher Maître,
Send us a poem!
Andre Codrescu"

To Andrei Codrescu

28 March 1984

xxxx

Cher Ami:

I hope you're in the mood for something comic, otherwise you'll be reading NOTES TO THE WELFARE DEPARTMENT, which is what I'm sending you for Exquisite Corpse, and seeigg limp noodles.

I'm delighted that you want to review COLLECTED PROSE for The Baltimore Sun. I've asked the publisher to send you a copy right away. Let me know if you don't get one in a couple of weeks. Responses to my letters from The National Poetry Foundation (Carroll F. Terrell) have been very iffy. I suspect the problem is that Terry is over-extended and can't afford an office staff.

I've tried to find Szébembé in my big world atlas. It's not there. Apparently too small. So is Szilágymegye, where my father's family came from. Strictly speaking, I can't claim to be Transylvanian, since my father left there at the age of thirteen to apprentice himself to a master watchmaker in Budapest and was through and through a Hungarian, having been a crack Hussar in the Hungarian army, able to split a playing card along the thin edge with a pistol at a hundred yards. When he used to talk to me about Hungary in later years, he used to glow ^{with} ~~for~~ love, not a hard thing to do, perhaps, about a small, homogeneous country before World War I.

I myself never was in Transylvania. From the age of two to six I lived with my mother and grandparents in Baja, a small Hungarian city not far from the Yugoslav border. So I don't know what possessed me to say I was Transylvanian. I must have been reaching for something far out. From your name I knew that you had Roumanian origins. The sz combination and the e in Szébembé looks as if the word might be Hungarian and yet something about it doesn't look right.....is it Roumanian? Since I don't know what Beiti means, I can't sign off with a Hungarian equivalent, even if I had the word for it, which I probably wouldn't have.

Best,
Carl

9 April 1984

Codrescu
Dear Andrei:

Your review of SPIRITUS overkwelmed me. I immediately went for the champagne, marched around the room with you on my shoulders, and then Leah and I danced a czardas. Then I collapsed.

Your own book sparkles and moves along like the breeze. Great fun! A little classic, I think, in its genre.

Thanks,

18 April 1984

Cher Ami:

I've made a few changes in the poem
(title, the lead-off, italics, spacing). Would
you please throw away your old copy?

5 May 1984

Codrescu
Dear Andrei:

If it's not too late, will you change the title of my poem from NYMPHS to AMERICAN NYMPHS?

Has Terrell sent you a review copy yet of my PROSE book? I told him to send you one but he doesn't answer my letters so I don't know whether he follows up.

I found myself involved and interested in your reading the other night. It was different and refreshing. I couldn't stand the ass-holes in the audience, however, who laughed at every other word to show their rapport and understanding of what was not so much humorous as unexpectedly bold. As for the elderly Greek who preceded you, all I can say is, "He's old enough to know better."

27 July 1984

Codrescu

Dear Andrei:

It was awfully nice of you to run AMERICAN NYMPHS in large type, and spaced perfectly, on the front page and to notice my COLLECTED PROSE as you did in the Bookbox.

How the enclosed poem came about is a long story but it's for EC if you want it. It should entertain the enemies these guys seem to have a knack for making.

What's this I hear about ^{your} moving to Baton Rouge? I hope this doesn't mean you've lost your job on the Baltimore Sun. If so, I feel bad for Anselm too: he's losing a friend. Will you be working for the paper down there or the University? And will EC continue? I'd hate to see it go under.

22 Aug. 1984

Dear Andre:

I was afraid Equisite Corpse would run out of money. Where now will people be able to go to de-louse themselves and to romp and say whatever the hell they want to say that should be said? You'll be missed, I tell you.....and remembered!

I assume, however, that the reason you left Baltimore was not because of EC but because you became disconnected from your column in The Baltimore Sun. That too is too bad, for both you and Baltimore.

I used to work in New Orleans long before oil was discovered in the state, and I knew Cajin fishermen and share-croppers in the outlying partsand a meaner, coarser bunch of men I never met.....but I never got up to Baton Rouge or knew any French cowboys.

I wouldn't mind giving a reading at SLU next Spring. What I would need is transportation, lodging and a fee. If that comes to more than the U would want to put out for just a reading, perhaps it could be combined with an interview or a lecture, such as I gave a number of years ago at The National Poetry Festival in Michigan on the psychology of the poet, drawing on theory and insight from my professional practice in psychotherapy. Or perhaps he could work out something with one of the universities in New Orleans for me to read, or whatever, there too. Anyhow, have him write me.

Affectionately,

19 Sept. 1984

Dear Andre:

Before I lose it, I must tell you how absolutely delighted I was at your letter in Poetry Flash beginning, "Ron Silliman, Secretary-General of the Language Party." Not much to pick up off the floor after that. Bravo!

11 Oct. 1984

Dear Andre:

I know the hell-holes of America, the industrial dumps....Wheeling, Gary, Youngstown, Akron, Bridgeport, the Cleveland flats. I've been there. I never thought I'd have to add a ^USoⁿthern city to the list. I see how bad it is ^{though} not even Wheeling would have superannuated circus animals in a Zoo! However, I have no question you'll turn it all to good use. As for the University maybe helping Equisite Corpse in exchange for your corpse, that's not a bad deal. You have no use for your corpse.

I was invited to go to BR for three days in February. I wanted it to be in early May to coincide with other invitations then, but I'm thinking it over and may go.

While I'm about it, could I ask you to do something? I notice you're a consulting editor of The American Book Review, which entails, I suppose, making suggestions ~~as~~ as to which books ought to be reviewed. In that capacity would you mind putting a bee in their ear to the effect that my COLLECTED PROSE should be reviewed? A review by you would be even better, much better.

Leah and I have just survived a bad three-car collision, in which my car was totalled. Fortunately we were wearing seat belts and except for a leap in her blood pressure to dangerous heights and a whip lash for me, nothing serious happened to us, but I wouldn't have believed what grinding, persistent psychological effects have their claws in us. Of course one knows this about the body. But the mind?

Love,

Codrescu

1 Dec. 1984

Dear Andre:

When I see you in February you must tell me about Polyphonix. I get the general idea but that's not enough.

Is it really true that you have "hopefully ~~transcended~~ transcended our mortal quarrels with petty cash" and that EC will continue? That cheers me.

I happened to re-read the little satiric poem about the language poets, ON TOM-TIT, which I sent you some time back and discovered, to my horror, that it was awful. Awful. So please save me from disgrace and never publish it and never reveal to a soul that you ever saw it.

20 Dec. 1984

Dear Andre:

So glad you'll write on COLLECTED PROSE for the American Book Review. As you see, I've found an extra copy.

You don't have any of your books there? No wonder you feel like a commuter, between two limbos.

Which reminds me. The other night Leah and I tuned in on TV on a re-run of NETWORK. You remember that's the movie about the inner workings of corporate TV. At the high point in the Byzantine machinations, the News Department is losing money because of its low rating, and the aging, formerly popular newscaster gets fired for breaking out into an angry, uncontrolled tirade on the air against the evils which everyone is aware of but no one mentions. Next morning there are banner headlines in the papers and the network's ratings ^{shoot} up. Whereupon the top office decides this is the way to go, hires him back and encourages him to say anything he wants to say, the whole truth. He does, ^{more} with and more passion, and his audience spreads like wildfire until the whole country is watching him, spellbound.

In the course of this, he goes slightly bananas with his limitless freedom and power and one night, crying to the watching nation, which seems to be holding its breath, waiting for his next word, he reaches the apogee of passion ~~xxx~~ with the words, "I want you all, everyone of you, to go to your window now, open it and yell as loud as you can, let it all out, "I'm a human being. I'm not taking it anymore." And he repeats this, with even more insistence. And you see people all over the country, opening their windows, leaning out and shouting, "I'm a human being. I'm not taking it anymore." Half the executive office are in a state of shock, thinking it's all over for the networks, but the other half are jubilant, and you see reports coming in: Chicago, Denver, L.A., Pittsburgh, Atlanta...windows are open, they're shouting. Then, suddenly, Baton Rouge, yes, they're shouting! Whereupon we immediately thought of you and Leah piped up with, "Naturally they're shouting in Baton Rouge. They're shouting to get out."

I would rather you didn't print my TOM-TIT poem but if you must, then use the enclosed version, which is slightly different from the one you have.

If not now, it's bound to come, and I stand with you, saluting the Language School as they go down in their ship, NECROPOLIS.

19 Sept. 1985

Codrescu
Dear Andre:

The new Corpse is lively ~~as~~ usual.
Wakes up ^{the} ~~some~~ dead members. But hang the
proof reader! (but not if it was Alice). Any-
how, if you have not already done so, would
you mind sending my publisher (Caroll F. Terrell,
National Poetry Foundation, University of Maine,
Orono, Maine 04469) a copy for Anselm's review,
sending me
and another copy? ~~xxx xxx~~

How are things going this year? Have you
found a place to stay in New Orleans?

I may have a couple of issues of the
Corpse still due me on my subscription but I'm
sending you a check for a resubscription
anyhow. I know you can use the money.

Love,

Carl

9 Oct. 1985

Codreser
Dear Andre:

Would like to oblige but at the moment I don't have any unpublished work. The last three little unpublished poems I had are coming out in OINK, and along one (18 pages) has already been published in SCRIPSI (Australia) and will probably also be in MANDORLA, a New York University journal which I've never seen.

Delighted to hear your glad note from New Orleans. I have ^{read some laudatory} reviews of ~~some~~ Walter Washington records but I've never heard him in person and a phonograph record is no place for an acoustic guitar: the high, delicate overtones are lost. In fact, ^{even} at a concert I have to sit close to catch them.

Anyhow I'd like to be with you in New Orleans. As I told you, I think, I lived there for a couple of years in the 1930's....an attic apartment (I was unmarried then) above a tropical patio and enchanting spiral staircase....on Bourbon Street itself, kitty-corner from the famous bar (I forget the name) where Napoleon is said to have come in for a drink from time to time during his exile....and more interesting experiences I've never had. So I look forward ~~exceedingly~~ avidly to further news about the city from you.

Affectionately,

Carl

Colleen's, the painter
Robt. Dunsen's longtime
intimate & lover

Jan. 12, 1989

Dear Jess:

How pleasant to hear from you and to find out ~~what~~ about the last year. Leah and I have often wondered. I'm relieved to see that things have healed enough for you to be able to greet old friends again.

As for me, I'm into my own mad spin. You wrote, "A whole year I let slip by like a ~~xxxx~~ ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ moment." For Leah and me every hour this past year has been like a whole year because of Leah's cancer. She's been battling it for three years and the last six months has made basket cases of us. It is now visibly coming to an end. So, day by day, while you are at last free, we have been ground down and consumed by ~~thisxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ the daily terrors of this maniac illness. One of these days, however, I tell myself I'll get back to the other world.

Love,

Carl

21 Jan. 1986

Dear David Cope:

I was touched by the simple sincerity of your note of acknowledgment to the Objectivists. That was generous of you.

Recently a young poet wrote me, "My weakness is in not feeling my own feet under me at times." No danger of that with you. I salute your compassionate realism.

With best wishes,

Carl Rakon

16 May 1987

Dear David:

What fun to hear about workingmen laughing over THE COUNTRY SINGER and THE WEIGHT LIFTER. The fact is, I was laughing like an idiot when I was writing THE WEIGHT LIFTER. THE COUNTRY SINGER, however, was a different matter. That came with a smile and a poignant chuckle.

A good little anthology to go to for information about the medieval Sephardic poets is THE JEWISH POETS OF SPAIN, XXXXX tr. by David Goldstein, Penguin Classics, 1965. Had I had this to read when I was young, I wd. not have attempted anything on my own. But what I had was an old Jewish Publication Society translation, circa 1910?, in a non-language so dead, so stilted and insincere, that I had to do something to extract the lyric spirit. I ~~w~~orked from this English, therefore, retaining only a poem's basic idea, and just ran with the ball, in one case running to a conclusion which would have shocked a Jew of that time but which the elements of that poem to a person today seemed to me to lead to inevitably. / You mentioned ERE-VOICE and EX CRANIUM. Don't you have my recent COLLECTED POEMS and COLLECTED PROSE/ I think you'll need these for your lecture.

7/6/83

Dear Cid:

I'm sorry to be so slow to answer your letter but I was away part of the time to visit old friends and my daughter and her family in Minneapolis; then other old friends from Mexico, the great potters Edwin and Mary Scheier, were house guests; etc.

I'm sorry too not to be able to give you Zukofsky's letters. I sold them years ago to the Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas. My letters to Louis are there too, to my great surprise. For years I had thought that Louis had discarded them because I could never get a straight answer from the director of Center, did they or did they not have ~~xxx~~ them? It was only recently at the Oppen testimonial meeting that I learned from Burton Hatlen that they were there, he had read them. There are things in them, of course, about writing, but not generalities; they're specific points he's making about my early poems which he was using for the Objectivist issue of POETRY and for The Objectivist Anthology. Their being in Austin probably puts them out of your reach anyway, but even if not, whether they'd be useful to anyone now, I don't know. I'd have to think about that.

Which leads me to your correspondence with Olson in the new Origin. When I had come to the end, all I could think of was, What an asshole! What a self-righteous blubber of colossal expostulation and ego! Did we need another schoolmaster after Pound? Like a hole in the head. Nevertheless, by gum, schoolmaster he will be, and by God you'd better listen and listen "good", or else! or else he'd throw you back among the other pipsqueaks and phonies. Are you or are you not a disciple? Let's have it straight on that. ~~xxx~~ ~~xxx~~ Do you have ~~x~~ what it takes to understand? ~~xxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ etc. Almost as repugnant is his sudden turn-around and surrender in the last letter when he realized that he had pushed you as far as you would go and to persist ~~xxx~~ might jeopardize too much, and pretended that he wasn't attacking you, only the ~~w~~ your lack of precision, he had just been being cranky, etc. God, did we need another crank so soon after Pound, with his opinions ^{sunk six feet} in cement? I'm not talking about his poetry now, only the person in the letters, and since I didn't know him personally, I can be relentlessly "objective."

You come out of this, looking pretty good, by the way. You're enthusiastic about the right things, you're willing to do all the shit work connected with finding the money for a new magazine, and you hold your ground against the furious onslaught. I imagine you learned from this never again to set up a person as the great new presence in Am. poetry, ask him to be your contributing editor, and then insist on keeping in your own hands what and how much of his work you'll publish. The two are psychologically inconsistent.

I'll be interested to see what you have to say about A. But wdn't it go better in Sagetrieb? Seems to me Origin is where the book of yr. recent experiences belongs. Which reminds me, I was appalled when I heard how much you were paying for rent in yr. store. Whatever made you think you could absorb that in such a small business?

When you say that Japan is a happier place for you than the U.S., I feel sad. As for poor George, he can neither read nor write nor even follow TV nor know for sure where he is when he's outside the house.

*And so it goes,
Carl*

7/26/83

Dear Cid:

It had never occurred to me that I might be in A. I'll hve to look.

I know nothing about Zukofsky's relationship to Ricky Chambers. I never met Chambers and his name never came up in conversation. The first I heard of Louis' having a homosexual relation with someone came from Mary Oppen a ~~few~~ couple of years ago. She couldn't remember the name of the other ~~a~~ man but she was sure of the fact, absolutely sure. I was just as sure that it couldn't be, as nothing in my sense of Louis in the 1930's jibed with that, and we were close friends then. And so I asked her how she knew, but at that point the subject turned distasteful to her and she became vague and I stopped questioning. But I still don't believe it. Of course, it could have been. And if it was, it puts a different slant to what puzzled me about him at that time. We were both unmarried then, thirty or thereabouts. I had knocked around in a half dozen different cities by that ~~time~~ time, working at different kinds of jobs, and had women and sex on my mind all the time, and I didn't know anybody my age who didn't. When along came Louis. He wasn't exactly disinterested....he followed my experiences avidly, almost hungrily....there was no question he was putting himself into my place, but if I hadn't brought the subject up, we would never have talked about it. More than that, I couldn't understand how he could know so little about women....he knew nothing about women, nothing, and seemed to have had no dealings with anybody of the opposite sex. How was it possible? And why was he so apprehensive? He couldn't even imagine having relations with a woman, and I had trouble imagining it about him too, he was so inhibited and stiff. And so if I had any influence on him, it was in this, that he greatly admired my worldly experience, and I could see longed to have some himself. Thus, not until I married Leah and he could see that I went on writing as before, did he feel that it would be safe for him too. And not until I had my first child did he feel that he too could have one safely. Of course, in his letters all this was disguised to make it look as if he had the male's impulses towards women, but it was not convincing. So maybe what I thought was inhibition was something else.

What do you mean, you promised Louis you'd write about A? That sounds as if you had a special understanding with him that you'd be his hierophant.

Back to you and Olson, I was not implying that by putting up with his abuse, you were being saintly. No, you put up with it because it was to your advantage to keep the relation viable if you were going to have a good magazine and if you were going to get ~~the~~ credit for discovering new talent. And Olson needed a magazine. So you needed ~~each other~~ each other. You were not ~~a~~ "using" each other, therefore, in the sense of exploiting or taking advantage of each other.

It is odd that the outfit that's supporting ORIGIN should turn down your work on A. Maybe it's due to its sheer length. Or maybe what you're doing doesn't jibe with what Hatlen believes needs doing now, which he indicated in his review of Ahearn's book: "Beyond the question of what is distinctive about Zukofsky's poetics lurk some larger ~~questions~~ questions, 'Is A worth reading? And if so, what makes it worth reading?'

8/26/83

Dear Cid:

Ze Kofsky

I agree with you that Louis never had any question in his mind that he knew better than the author of a poem what that poem should be....and in my case, he was so sensitive that he sometimes did....not so remarkable a feat when you consider that he had the distance which a poet who has just completed a poem did not have, but would eventually come to. However, it never occurred to me that he would go so far as to write a ~~xxx~~ poem in another man's style as he ~~tp~~ught ("knew" for sure in his own mind) it should be....but I wouldn't put it past him. It never occurred to me, I say, because I wouldn't have imagined that anyone I respected would think it worth while to play that kind of a mimetic game, so close to ~~tx~~ the academic and the pedantic, from which he shrank. I'll be interested to see what you report on this.

Good luck!

Carl

10/12/83

Dear Cid:

Did LZ do any private teaching in the early 1930's? I never heard him mention it. Who would have had money for private lessons in those days anyhow? It was the Depression. I did hear Louis say that he was helping Jerry Reisman with this writing, and he showed some to me which he liked, but Jerry was a friend and Louis wouldn't have charged him. And even if he had on Jerry's insistence, it wouldn't have been enough to be worth mentioning as a source of income. However, I did run across this in Tom Sharp's superbly researched dissertation, "Objectivists, 1927-1934." "For Zukofsky the thirties posed a dilemma. His employment was marginal and uncongenial. After his salary from the Oppens for To Publishers ended in August 1932, he was unemployed until 1934, when he began a broken series of relief jobs up to April 1942. After Nov. 1942 he worked irregularly as a substitute teacher in high school, edited technical instruction books and did stints of teaching at Colgate U (summer 1947) and Queens College (evenings 1947-1948) and Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn, 1947-1966." I assume by "relief jobs" is meant temporary or substitute jobs in the Home Relief Bureau, New York City's public welfare agency.

You also ask: did Louis swim? have a car? have a license? No. In fact, he hadn't learned to do any of the things an American boy learns: ride a bike, roller skate, ice skate, play ball.

I have no clues on the identity of Archibald or Shag Red but if Joseph Slavik was an elder musical friend, that could only have been Tibor Serly, an expatriate Hungarian whom he knew well. Serly was a composer and the first viola player, I think, in the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Yes, it was important for LZ to be able "to do anything in poetry better than any predecessor" but you're not implying, I hope, that he really believed he could and had. That would make him far less perceptive than I knew him to be. In any case, I can tell you that during the years I knew him, until 1940, he was quite modest and reticent about his own poetry. The falling-out with George had to do with George refusing to acknowledge that LZ was the best poet alive but with their disagreeing about some critical matter, at the end of which Louis, irked, exclaimed, "You think you're a better poet than I am?" George was taken by surprise, for this had not entered his mind, and he

didn't know what to answer for a moment. Then, reflecting, and in a corner, he answered honestly, "Yes, I do." Neither one could go on after that, and the relationship ended.

When you set yourself the task of writing in the style of someone else, only better, the way it should have been done, it's a "game", as distinguished from starting with an experience, the expression of which leads to its own literary form and style. That's the way I used the word "game" in connection with what you were saying Louis had set himself to do.

To Cid Corman

Oct. 17, 1983

It's still unclear where KX LZ worked right after he returned from Madison. I was wrong to assume that "relief work" meant with the HOME RELIEF BUREAU. Tom Sharp tells me that Terrell was his source of information and Celia was Terrell's. Terrell meant the WPA but the WPA was not in existence until 1935. One possibility is the Civil Works Administration, which was established in November 1933 and abolished four months later; or the Public Works Administration, which was established in June 1933. But I still think it was more likely that he worked for some city department of the city administration.

10/27/83

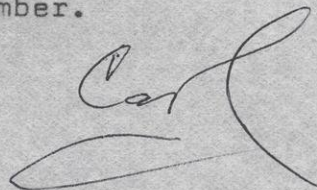
Dear Cid:

Your postscript, "Harvey ^{Shapiro} tells me that Rezy rather disliked Louis' poetry," is putting it too mildly. You must remember that our first impressions of Zukofsky's poetry were based on POEM BEGINNING THE, which had a surprising electric charge and started him off with a bang, but this was followed by little poem after little poem which was tight-assed, bloodless, contorted, crabbed, anti-idiomatic, anti-lyrical, anti-expressive, little straight-jackets within straight-~~x~~ jackets (the one exception I recall was his washstand poem, which was again brilliant). Those poems were repulsive to us, and we simply avoided talking to him about them. I suspect that Reznikoff, therefore, never read A, fearing more of the same. And I haven't either, although I've had it on my ^h selves for years. I'll wait now ~~until~~ until I can read your exposition.

Oppen's relationship to Zukofsky was different than ours. He came to him as an admiring neophyte and learned a great deal ~~from him~~ but he too was turned off in time and had a lot of trouble finding passages in A to ~~praise~~ praise and I had the impression that he had never found enough ~~to~~ to make him want to read it through. Rexroth's reactions you probably know: nyet!

When I said that Louis was modest in his evaluation of his early work, I didn't say he had a modest personality (and certainly not shy!). Of course he was ambitious, colossal~~ly~~, but he was not a megalomaniac. He had too much self-understanding for that. Your hypothesis, as I understand it, crosses that line.

Looking forward to seeing you in December.



11/1/83

Dear Cid:

Yes, of course George gave him money, as much as he had extra for TO PUBLISHERS, which wasn't much, but Rexroth^{later} somehow got wind of the fact that George's step-mother was rich (not his father or he) and concluded that George had a lot of money too and passed this pseudo-information, so Rexrothian, on to Louis, who naturally choked on the humiliation of such a small pittance. I don't think he ever forgave George, but it was a misunderstanding. All George had was a modest allowance from home.

Leah and I met Celia sometime in 1939 when Louis brought her to our apartment on 14th Street. He had told me that he had met someone he felt comfortable with. This was a few months later. To read by you, "Terry's persistent questioning brings out clearly that Louis was not infatuated," made me laugh like hell. Christ, nobody could have been infatuated with her. One couldn't even imagine sex with her, nor was there anything in her personality or womanly self that I found attractive. She was just a very serious and quiet person whom you didn't have to pay any attention to when you were with Louis. She obviously had had no more experience with men than he had with women, which was none. Both assets to him! In addition, which was astonishing, he had picked someone who had all his ingrown, inhibited, fearful nature so far as life experiences go (not his work, of course). They were as alike as Papageno and ~~Rxxxxxxx~~ Papagena^{in that}. He didn't have to worry: he was safe^{new} with her. But he was not going to open any doors of experience, never, not with that woman. I never dreamed that he would make such a choice after he listened so avidly to my experiences with women, people of all kinds, work, patients, new cities, etc. Yes, it was astonishing.

Carl

8 April 1984

Cormor
Dear Cid:

Your words about the PROSE come from the heart, and that's where they have lodged in me. Natural for you to picture Leah when you picture me. Ours must be one of the great marriages of all time.

Aegis did come. A fresh draft of the purest meditation. Utterly clean and quiet. Utterly.

I don't have Louis' letters to me any more. They're in The University of Texas library in Austin. You say, "Louis avoids all the religious element in Hassidism." True. Also all Jewish identity and feelings. "Being a Jew," he said to me once, means nothing to me, nothing." "I don't believe that," I said. He insisted. He did expel them, yet the Talmudic way of using the mind was his very personality. So he was a witness *malgré lui*.

Stay well,

Carl

30 April 1984

Dear Cid:

I got to thinking some more about Aegis and your need, naturally, for more public notice, and it struck me that the problem lies in the work's virtues, in the very quiet and purity of the meditation, which stands squarely against American activism, which, contrary to appearances, is built into American poetry, as into other native activities...i.e. a poem has to "get" somewhere, to be an account of some active development within itself, et al. One might think that with all the interest here in various kinds of Buddhism you would have allarge readership, but the American interest is not really in meditation but in meditation as a process, a route to self-improvement, self-therapy; meditation as a panacea, which the smart gurus are exploiting to our last dollar. Then of course you are also up against the immovable bias against the very short poem. At best it's regarded by critics and academic readers as trivial, and at worst as nothing worth paying attention to. That a very short ^{good} poem could mean as much as a good long poem is something, I'm afraid, only a tiny handful of people ^{believe} ~~xxxxx~~, because to believe that, you need a philosophically meditative mind. Need I say more? Nevertheless when you publish a book of, say, a thousand poems, the sheer size will force attention, for Americans respect not only activity but size.

Carl

Corman
27 June 1985

Dear Sid:

Sorry, I don't know the answers to your questions. Desn't Paul know? But I would guess that looking at where the word larch occurs in A-12, as I read it, it does not refer ahead to Z's father but to where it is in the text, a part of the atmosphere of Bach's music. As such, it belongs, it seems to me: that is, the larch tree grows in the North, it is black and a conifer whose deciduous needles are borne in clusters or fascicles upon drooping branches, all quite fitting to Bach's somberness. Ridge, possibly larch on a ridge, seen by Z as separate, also belongs, as an extended slight elevation, to Bach's music, but that's more of a guess. In any case, the four words in that line, dark, larch, ridge and night, do go together to express the mood of the music.

I'm going to be writing up the talk I gave at NYU on the Objectivists. I'll send you a copy.

In connection with preparing for a reading I'm going to be giving here in August from the work of the Objectivists I was struck by the fact that A-12 ends Z's ties with ~~them~~ them. A-13 enters a new phase in which words close ranks against the reader and reality is not to be found except by inference, supposition or exegetical projection. A-12, however, is still solidly in reality. I wonder what happened.

Be well,

Corman
20/7/85

23 July 1985

Dear Cid:

I think so well of Lawrence Fixel's work that I'm sending you a piece by him for Origin. I'll let it speak for itself, of course, but I can't help adding that I've always found that he advances thinking a step or two, in the most basically convincing way. His primary forte, however, is the parable, at which he is very very good. If you like Glimmers, therefore....or don't like it...you might want to ask him to send you something from that genre. His address is on the last mss page.

I marvel at your perseverance with A. The last installment in Origin was helpful.

Carl

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8 May 1986

Dear Cid:

If you haven't & yourself by now located Jerry Reisman,
here is his address: 13241 Via Blanc Ct., Saratoga, California 95070.
I'm seeing him tomorrow to go over the past and see what happens.

The last ORIGIN very good.

Best,

20 May 1986

Corman
Dear Cid:

Had a long visit with Jerry Reisman and his wife and talked in great detail about his relationship ~~wxxx~~ ^{Zuckofsky} to Louis, which was different from anybody else's, I suspect. His memory was factual, definite. When he didn't remember ~~any~~ or know anything, he said so. However, he had already declined to give information to the young fellow...I forget his name...who's editing Louis' correspondence with Pound (*Louis* had told him/or was it somebody else?/ that if he wanted to know about L's early life, he should ask Jerry) L didn't want ~~to~~ to be bothered). He had declined because he didn't want to do anything that would help Louis, Louis had been so exploitative. I persuaded him, however, to cooperate with you.

What Jerry knows intimately because he was often in the family home, a kind of familiar, it seems, were L's early years: all about his father, mother, sister, brother.....there is much to know there... what work he did & during those early years, etc. Your questions to him should therefore be about those things. Also about Jerry's special relationship to him as practical factotum, employer & intimate friend. (ask him how they met and why their relationship broke up; that will open him up). The last I can vouch for as I saw it myself when the two were together in the 1930's. At that time Jerry struck me as an extraordinarily gentle and obliging kind of friend whom Louis treasured and thought highly of (he rated his poetry higher ~~x~~ than I did). At any rate, I was surprised by what he told me.

Let me know what he tells you and I'll fill in with what I remember of our conversation.

24 March 1987

Dea Cid:

I have fallen hopelessly behind in answering letters because Leah has had cancer since a year ago last February. She's been through a course of radiation therapy and is now going through a long course of chemotherapy, and what she's been through I've been through. She's holding her own but it doesn't look as if she can be cured. It's been very hard for me to do more than tend to what has to be done and battle my depression and fears. I want you to know, however, that I care for the lovely books you've sent me and will write when I can. I can't carry your greetings to Mary, I have to add, because she and I had a falling out after George's death and don't see each other any more.

23 May 1987

Dear Cid:

I was about to write to tell you that before my COLLECTED POEMS came out, I was going through monstrous rages with Terry similar to yours when I heard the good news from George that NPF was bringing out your correspondence with Olson this summer. Then came the news that Sam Francis was publishing your Collected in two large volumes and covering your airfare to the U.S. Bravo! This is your year, it looks like.

I have good news too. Leah's latest C-T-Scan showed no nodes in the abdomen, where her oncologist thought he still felt something, so it looks as if the cancer is in remission and that she'll be getting a reprieve from her dread year of chemotherapy. Suddenly everything looks bright, even though we know it's only for a time.

What in the world is Philip Hackett up to? I can't figure out. He called up to tell me you were coming to read at the Press Club in November, and it was evident he wanted something more than just to tell me but I couldn't get it out of him. From the batch of material he sent me afterwards, he's got you scheduled for three consecutive ~~xxxxxxxx~~ evenings. I know you need the income but, my god, who's going to come the second and third evening? People around here are saturated to the gills with readings. Which reminds me, I ran into Mary Oppen unexpectedly at Michael Heller's reading the other day. She greeted me as if nothing untoward had happened, and to my surprise, I found I could do the same. So the hatchet is buried.

Affectionately,

15 June 1987

Dear Cid:

I'm shocked to hear that you've asked Sam Francis to return your tss. after all the negotiations for a Collected. How angry you must have felt. How grim and unrelenting it all is, how desperate I know you must feel. Some of this goes with the territory but too much is too much. Shit! As for Terry, despite all, he did come through with my Collected, so from my experience I think it likely that he'll also do your Letters.

There is ~~is~~ interest in your work...not in all of it, perhaps, but a large part...and you have a large, established reputation. However, when it comes to publishing a Collected, I found that nobody, but nobody, ^{except Terry} was willing to put up and risk the money for it. And that's a fact. It's a fact too that there's not enough patience in a human being to endure that.

Love,

25 July 1987

Corman
Dear Cid:

You wonder what goes on in Sam Francis' mind, whether his non-behavior means that he doesn't think poetry is really ~~xxxx~~ important, or that he does and is getting some secret pleasure out of using his power to publish or not to publish, or that he's so scatter-brained that he doesn't remember what he's promised. Whatever, I have a hunch, ~~xxxx~~ nevertheless, that he will publish you eventually...if you don't snap before then. If it doesn't work out, there's ~~xxxx~~ the Sun and Moon Press. The young editor there is very ambitious, wanted to do my Collected, but it was already with Terry.

I notice that each of your projected volumes is 725 pages long. I wonder if it would not be better to have three volumes of 500 pages each. From the reader's point of view, not the author's, a collection of more than 500 pages of ~~xxxx~~ mostly short poems is, in my experience, too formidable to be read (but not too formidable to remain unread on the shelves).

With re to Origin, Terry could have spared you no end of frustration and desperate anger if he had told you what he told me when I saw him in Orono last year, that he was helping out several little magazines to keep them from folding but it was only for a year or two. After that, he expected them to be on their own and would drop them if they weren't.
MK Ah me!

Anyhow, my latest news is that Leah's cancer is in remission, and our spirits, as you can imagine, has soared.

Carl

Carl Rakosi 126 Irving St. San Francisco, CA 94122

29Feb. 1988

Cormen
Dear Cid:

Every time I got ready to sit down and write to thank you for remembering to send me your new book, another new one arrived, then another and another and another until I was in a happy daze. At last your luck had turned, I thought, and even if you were not successful in finding a publisher for your COLLECTED, you will have made yourself Present in a very strong way. Then came news from George ^{Evans} that your correspondence with Olson was at the printer's and that your COLLECTED was in fact being readied for printing. So the great uncertainty is finally over. You can relax. I feel it all with you.

If I do not say more, it is because for the last two years my life has been taken over by Leah's cancer. It is hard for me to write.

Love,

Carl

30 Jan. 1989

Cotman

How could you imagine, dear Cid, that I would not respond to your letter? It was an act of love. You were inspired when you wrote it, and I wept when I read it.

Cash

In Robert Creeley's letter of May 26, 1969 the "small offering he refers to is a copy of his poem, Hero with an accompanying early Robert Indiana colored drawing & I suppose quite rare. The long poem of mine which he refers to is Americana 16, 1968 (in Eye-Voice.)

About a dozen ^{poets} read at this enormous peace rally at the University of Minnesota, including Robert Bly, who was the organizer of these campus Resistance readings, Diane Wakoski, Galway Kinnell, etc. I was to follow Creeley and felt a bit flustered at the thought of speaking to such a vast audience, but that soon vanished as I became engrossed in what Creeley was reading. It was long, finely detailed prose piece ~~on~~ about two men and a woman, how they met by chance and how all ^{three} got into bed and managed to work out the most extraordinary coitus. As bit by bit the physical relationship became more and more involved and earthy, I suddenly found myself, to my astonishment, becoming more and more sexually aroused. I glanced over quickly to my right at Diane Wakoski, who was to go on after me, but her face just looked tight and closed. I was on my own.

I had a moment of panic. My God, I'd be ruined walking out on a platform to face two thousand people with a hard-on. My big moment would be blown.

Creeley finally finished his story and Bly leaped on the stage and introduced me with only eleven words: "Carl Rakosi, one of the great objectivist poets of the 1930s." A more impressive introduction could not have been made. There was thunderous applause, not for me, I think, but for the fact that my generation was in the Movement too.

Everything from then on went smoothly. I never told Creelley of this little episode. Nobody would believe it.

The P.S. reference, "the information of the long poem" is to its interpretative passages.

Although this was a peace rally, only two of us read poems that had anything to do with the War — Ply and I.

In the letter of Sept. 1, 1977, "Bill" refers to Bill Berkson.

Carl Rakosi

Dear Bob:

Got yr. latest ~~for~~
~~which~~ ^{Arrangements noted} Thank's. However, your
threat - me an unexpected curve
when you sent ~~me~~ greetings from
Willy, with an exclamation mark
in parentheses. We'll have to look
into that when I see you & Peg.
^{until then,} Joyfully (why not?)

To Robert Creeley

5/14/82

Postcard

24 March 1985

Cresley
Dear Robert:

I could use your help with something. The NEA is offering two senior fellowships for literature next year which are described in the Guidelines as being for "individuals who have made an extraordinary contribution to American literature over a lifetime of creative work" and "who have expanded the boundaries of our literary heritage in work that has taken place at the vital growing edge of literature. Their continued presence on the literary landscape is invaluable to younger writers." Commendable words, and a big order, but the judges would have to be of equal calibre to recognize such a person when they saw him. In any case, to this survivor, the description sounds more than a bit like me, but how is a panel of conservative judges to know this? I'll be lucky if they've heard my name.

Anyhow, the fellowships are by nomination only and the deadline was March 1. I was nominated before the deadline but there will be "senior" writers competing for these two fellowships who will be far better known to the panel of judges than I, people like Robert Penn Warren and such. I am sure, therefore, that I'll need additional supporting evidence and testimony from others in order to get anywhere with the judges.

The fellowship stipend, as you may know, is quite large and would make a sizable difference in our day to day budget. If it would not be an imposition, therefore, and you would be willing to write in support of my nomination, I'd be very grateful. The address is: Literature Program, National Endowment for the Arts, Nancy Hanks Center, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20506.

When, oh when, are we going to see you again?

Creeley

29 June 1985

Dear Bob:

Thanks for trying. I knew all along, of course, that the outcome would be but I had a wild momentary lapse of gambler irrationality. Oh well! and oh well! It's a bleak scene (from that angle), as you say.

Are we going to see you and Penelope when you're in the city? At the least, we'd like to have you over for dinner and talk.

Love,

Creelley

5 Sept. 1985

Dear Bob:

I have a vague suspicion that that you're in Ithaca only very briefly and that you may be gone by the time this gets there, but I'll try. About our getting together, as I think I mentioned, Leah and I would like to have the two of you over for dinner. Any evening other than the 25th or 26th would be all right for us. If your evenings are going to be tied up, I'll be available during the day, except for the above two days. So let me know when you can. Our phone is 566-3425. Let me know too if you would like to meet two of my young poet friends, August Kleinzahler and George Evans, whose little British book you touted.

*Crealey had had dinner at our house
in September and had reacted firmly to a
negative comment about Celia Z!*

10 Oct. 1985

Crealey
Dear Bob:

Just so I can be sure, would you
mind confirming your invitation to have me
read in Buffalo next September?

I'm grateful for your information about
Celia Zukofsky. I don't know where I got my
first negative impression. Probably from some-
thing Louis himself said which indicated that
she was very much like him and I thought at
the time that what he needed was a companion
who had qualities he didn't have and which
didn't simply confirm his. Add to this the
one contact I had with her was rather dismal.
In any case, my image of her was always a
rather oppressive dead-weight in my mind and
I was glad to have you correct it. I was re-
lieved to learn that she had her own indivi-
duality and had added a sense of humor and
play and intelligent feedback to their rela-
tionship; that Louis, in other words, had not
made a bad choice.

Affectionately,

Carl

21 Aug. 1986

Dear Bob:

I'll be arriving in Buffalo on Monday, Sept. 29 at 5:05 p.m. on Republic 706. The round trip fare comes to \$298.

Let me know, will you, where I'll be staying and the time and place of the reading. No need to tell you, with my puny voice I'm going to need a good mike.

It'll be nice being with you again, Bob. Since I don't leave until Wednesday morning, there'll be time for it.

4 Nov. 1985

Dear Bob:

Thanks for the confirmation. Everything satisfactory there. The last week in September or the first week in October is when I could come. I can't tell yet which but I think it would be on a Monday or Tuesday.

Nice to have had you all to ourselves in an uncluttered, unhurried atmosphere.

My mind rests peacefully in your memory of Celia Zukofsky.

Love,

21 March 1987

Creel
Dear Bob:

How sensitive and perceptive your response was to the COLLECTED. Howwwarm-hearted! Loved it.

Have you been able to get Willy down from the heights where he feels he's a failure if he doesn't get A+++?

Leah is holding her own with/against the cancer but it's heavy, heavy going, knowing that the chances are that she's not going to be cured, despite all the chemotherapy. As if my entrails were dragging. Anyhow,

Love,

Carl

July 23, 1986

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to authorize Andrew Crozier of the University of Sussex to examine, research, and quote or reproduce from my archives at the Houghton Library at Harvard University and at the University of Texas Library in Austin, and at other places where my archives may be. I have confidence in his competence and ~~xxxxx~~ discretion as a scholar.

Carl Rakosi

CARL RAKOSI 128 Irving St. San Francisco, CA 94122

Oct. 28, 1978

Dear Andrew: to me as a young father in St. Louis when I'd pass people

on the street. We too have moved, as you will note above. Why San Francisco? Not because of all the poets here, let me assure you. No, they bury one under a landslide of public readings: one to three every day (you heard me, every day!). So one survives by blotting out this fact. Anyhow, we were confronted by the necessity to move: it was becoming too difficult to find furnished apartments elsewhere for the winter and too hazardous to leave our house in the hands of strangers four months every year. In addition, I was afraid that if we didn't make ~~xxx xxxxxx~~ the change now, we might be afraid to make it later and be frozen in our old den, a prospect that struck me with terror. So, after weeks of hard work, cleaning up and waterproofing the basement, getting rid of junk that we had never quite known what to do with before and disposing of a whole life-time of peripheral accumulations, repairing the roof, the ceiling, etc.....I don't need to go on, you were a home-owner, you know..... we put our house on the market, with some trepidation on my part and great heart-ache on Leah's.

What followed was both comic and maddening. My best friend, ~~xxx~~ a builder, had recommended a particular realtor to us, so we put our fate in his hands, but no one ever showed up to look at the house. So after a few weeks, we called ^{most} him in and had a confrontation and broke our contract with him, one of the/painful things I have ever had to do, since he was a man of integrity and pride. With a new realtor, things began to pop. We would have to get out of our house sometimes on as little as fifteen minutes notice so that he ~~xx~~ could show it to a prospective buyer. Since this could happen any time of the day or night, that meant that the house always had to be perfect, ~~xxxx~~ so clean and neat that it sparkled. Well, that was ~~xx~~ a new experience for that house, I want to tell you, and kept us cleaning and painting and what not and scurrying every minute of the day. One night we were already settled in bed, watching TV when the phone rang. We had ten minutes to get out. My shirt tails were still hanging out and my pants unzipped when the front doorbell rang, and out the back door we scrambled, barely in time, laughing like hell.

It was during these house-showings when we didn't get out in time and could see the prospective buyer's initial reaction that I came to realize how deeply we were invested in our house. If they looked around and smiled, noting something that they liked, it didn't matter one bit whether they were going to buy or not. ~~the response was enough, altogether so.~~ If they looked indifferent, I found myself in the grip of hatred itself. Not unlike what used

to happen to me as a young father in St. Louis when I'd pass people on the street with our first child in a baby carriage. If they looked in and smiled, the whole world glowed; if they passed without bothering to look, I glared inwardly at the hard bastards.

But back to the house. It was an old house with a graceful staircase, a large, open living room leading at right angles into a dining room (doorless), the latter full of sunlight in the morning and the former in the afternoon, and a panelled study with built-in bookcases to the ceiling. In its way the house had nourished us all, including our children, who were now your age, for thirty-two years, and none of us would be able to get it out of our bones. But all this, we knew, would be wasted on the ordinary buyer who would judge it by its plumbing and wiring, etc. Fortunately, the right young couple in due time did come along, he the TV reviewer for the afternoon paper, ~~he~~ she, I conjectured, on her way to having their first child, their bank loan was approved, and on the strength of that, Leah rented this apartment in San Francisco for occupancy on October 1st, and we started on what turned out to be six heavy weeks of packing, sealing and inventorying, 225 cartons in all, all the while living as in a warehouse. A week before the closing date (of the sale), with buyer having given his landlord notice that he was vacating on that date, and with the mover due to come in with the big van on that date, we discovered that some clerk in City Hall had neglected to record in our title that we had an easement to our driveway (our house, of course, could not be sold without that), ~~xxx~~ that the present owner of the property, from whom a new easement could have been procured, had just passed away and the ~~xx~~ estate was being probated, and that both the co-executor and the attorney for the estate were away in Europe on ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ indeterminable vacations. Imagine our panic! We could no longer delay and rushed to an attorney, who advised us to go ahead with the sale, he would deal with the problem in some way, he couldn't tell at this point just how.

So on the morning of the closing, we all came and gathered around a large, round table in the offices of the Title Trust Co, which handles the transaction.....Leah and I and our real estate agents, the buyer and his attorney and real estate agent, and the Title Trust Co. functionary (my attorney poked his head in the door to let me know that he was there on my business but disappeared thereafter.....presumably examining documents?) This was the Middle West and so were all amiable on the surface but I was tense and I sensed that the buyer was feeling skittish at the thought that he might have bitten off more than he could chew.

But Into this uneasy state now entered Protocol. The first order of business was to check out each item of the agreement with the buyer, on his side of the table, to make sure that he understood what he was signing, and to do the same with me on my side. They started with me. Leaning forward solicitously, with the pasted smile of an elder on her face, my teacher (my realtor's so-called Closing Officer) began in a high-solemn tone, determined to run its course, which suggested that she thought that the forthcoming procedure would be much beyond my powers/^{at my age,} unless she took extraordinary measures to make everything elementary and clear, ~~xxxxxx~~ "You are C.....R.....?" but I had a wild impulse to dispute the point but I desisted. ~~our two eldest grand~~ "You live at 4451 S. Colfax Ave.?" ~~2000 mile circle-country drive~~ (You know I do, you dummy. Everybody here knows that. That's the house ~~and that's being sold~~). ~~Pleasure in getting news of you and Leah and~~ "Your ~~x~~ wife's name is Leah?" ~~I met in Cambridge to at your house?~~ "That was too much. I looked at her for a minute without replying, as if I weren't sure how to answer that question. I could see the table was all ears and was waiting for me to continue. I took my time. Finally, leaning forward, ^{gravely,} I answered in her solemn voice, "I'm afraid I have a confession to make. Leah is not really my wife. We've been living together in sin all these years. I could not lie to this awesome legal instrument."

That broke the tension, but not for long. As soon as it was the turn of the buyer's attorney to go over the language of the agreement, this nice young man became a fox; his sensitive, intelligent face came together into a hard point in ~~xxx~~ his eyes, fixed only on advantage. Every word, every punctuation mark was challenged and changed. After three hours and five re-typings, we reached agreement. That came to a sudden stop, however, when the Title Trust Co, functionary announced, to everyone's consternation, that it was not willing to guarantee the buyer an easement; he would have to take his chances with the court. The buyer's attorney thereupon immediately advised his client not to buy. The poor buyer looked utterly confused and frightened, and I was in a sweat, feeling~~x~~ that all was lost.

But lawyers are as adroit at getting people out of desperate situations as they are at getting them in. My lawyer now joined the other two in a huddle just outside the door, close enough for us to see that they were busily engaged in our affair but not so close that we could hear what they were saying. Finally the attorney for the Title Trust Co. returned with the decision: the Company would not guarantee that the buyer would have an easement in the exact place where it had been...it might be a few inches off in one direction or another, depending on the probate judge,

~~But it was~~

but it would guarantee that the buyer would have some kind of easement. At that the sun returned, the buyer's attorney became a nice young man again, and we all ended amiably, I with the purchase check in my pocket (and none too soon either, for the mover was due that very moment at our house for the ~~px~~ pick-up), and thinking to myself what a great eye Daumier had in his cartoons for that pettifogging, crafty look that lies in wait like a fox in those lawyer faces.

I stop here, feeling a bit embarrassed ~~yx~~ that I allowed myself to go on so long about this and will now not have time to ~~x~~ tell you about our desperate grief at having to part from our daughter and our two oldest granddaughters in Minneapolis, about our 2000 mile cross-country drive to get here, why we decided on San Francisco, our new life here, etc.; and above all, our great pleasure in getting news of you and Jean and Jeremy (was John James one of those I met in Cambridge or at your house?) and in feeling Jean's graduation almost as if it were an event in our own family.

So, love to you both, and do send us your new books, and please write more often.

Affectionately,

P.S. I don't know whether you happened to catch Jonathan Griffin's poems in MONTEMORA 4. I met him the other night at a welcoming party for us given by the Oppens. He's an Englishman in his late seventies and seems to be without any literary contacts whatever. I took the liberty, therefore, of giving him your name~~x~~ and Jeremy's because I thought that work of ~~sub~~ such excellence ought to be known by at least a few people (he sends nothing out to magazines;~~xxxxxxx~~ he dreads being rejected) and because I couldn't resist trying to be helpful to him. I hope you don't mind. He'll be sending you a book of his.

Never Completed or sent *CR*

Carl Rakosi

128 Irving Street

San Francisco, CA 94122

9/5/82

Dear Andrew:

You did ask in your penultimate letter for the name of my ship and its port of embarkation but I didn't see what possible use you could make of this information and concluded that you must be pulling my leg and thus disregarded it. Apparently you're serious, however, and force me to go to my files and tell you the whole story.

Before me is Certificate of Discharge, No. 814798, Department of Commerce, Bureau of Navigation, Shipping Service; Ship's Name: BULKD; Official No. 208989; Seaman's Name: C. Rawley; Port of Registry, N.Y.; Net Tons: 1150; Description of Voyage: Coastwise; Seaman's Birthplace: Wisconsin; Age: 24; Character: Very Good (V.G.); Ability: V.G.; Seamanship: V.G.; Capacity: Mess Saloon; Date of entry: 2/24/26; Date of Discharge: 4/2/26,

I certify that the particulars herein stated are correct and that the above-named seaman was discharged accordingly.

Dated at Mobile, the 2nd day of April, 1926

C.E. Pimmons, Master

Given to the above-named seaman in my presence, this 2nd day of April, 1926;

J.L. Lancaster,

U.S. Shipping Commissioner

Now the extraordinary thing about this official document, so straight-faced and unexceptionable, is that it was forged. With one exception, "Age 24", every single item in it was untrue, even the name (by 1926, C. Rawley was my legal name but it was Carl Rakosi the poet who was doing this). I had never worked on the BULKD, I had never received this discharge paper from Captain Pimmons, and Commissioner Lancaster had never witnessed any such act.

Let me explain. In the summer of 1926 I was in New York, I was 22 years old and hungry for new experience, and pixilated on the idea of going to sea; but I didn't know how to go about it. My friend from University days, Kenneth Fearing, was living in the Village then. He was used to my doing foolish, romantic things, but going to sea, to him who seldom left his room, beat all. He looked surprised when I told him and as usual, amused. I thought I saw a new look of respect in his eyes, too. Anyhow, he must have been the one to suggest The Seamen's Institute to me. Somebody there would know how to get a job on a ship.

4/21/82

Dear Andrew:

Oh yes, I'd love to have you do the entry on me. Can't think of a better person to do it.

I'm enclosing the biographical material from Martin J. Rosenblum's Ph. D. dissertation on me plus a recently revised version of my Note on the Objectivists, which may be useful to you. It would be an awful drag, however, to have to list a comprehensive magazine and anthology bibliography, as in the sample. It would run to a couple of hundred items, I think. I hope the editor doesn't insist on it.

I was struck too by the low fee offered. Your anal injection to the editor, therefore, seemed to me just, and I found myself exclaiming, "Go get 'em!" Let me know what he answers. Something polite to the point of extinction, no doubt.

While I'm at it, I should say that Rosenblum's dissertation turned out to be a very decent and interesting piece of work. He confined his study to my Americana and surprised the hell out of me by considering them as a single extended poem, and making a very good argument for it too. He claimed that it did in poetry what Williams had done in prose in *In the American Grain*. Can you get hold of ^{the dissertation} it in some way through your university? It's worth reading. Michael Heller also did an interesting piece on me in the last issue of *Montemora*, *Montemora* 8. Is that available to you?

Things otherwise, however, are not going well for me, in a literary sense. No publisher in America is willing or able to risk the money to publish my *Collected Poems*, so I've given up on the idea. The University of California Press, for example, had it for a long time, and I thought they might take it, but the business office finally decided against it on the ground that my earlier books are all still available, which is true. A bitter experience for me but, really, understandable in today's economy.

Down with Reagan! Down with Thatcher! Down with Hague! Down with Begin! Down with Weinberger, our Secretary of Defense, the most deadly of all! Hang 'em!

I haven't sent you *Droles De Journal & History* because they're work that's familiar to you, but if you'd like to have copies anyhow, let me know.

This is not the letter I ~~a~~ had intended to write you but it will do, for the time being.

Love to you both,

Carl Rakosi

128 Irving Street

San Francisco, CA 94122

8/20/82

Dear Andrew:

All of a sudden, two small presses in England want to publish me (in miniature; who can ~~xxxxxx~~ afford to do big books now?): Pig Press and Aquila. I have no question about Pig Press, despite the dreadful name, but I'm a bit apprehensive about Aquila. Something shady there in James Green, the director. Any scuttlebutt you know of that would confirm this? I was going to let ^{him} do my prose. Pig will do about 40 pages of mostly new poetry.

Project
Had a lovely experience at the Poetry ~~xxxxx~~ in New York in May. At the end of my reading, I bowed and smiled to acknowledge the applause, closed my folder and started to walk away but I had to stop because the applause continued and went on and on and on. What was I to do, just stand there and smile like a dummy? After a while, I realized that they were not just applauding the Americana poems I had read; they seemd to be saying something to me, something personal....that they might not, perhaps because of my age, ever hear me again, this was the last time, who knows, etc.? I was deeply moved but of course unable to express myself except by applauding them back. Then while I was ~~still~~ flying high on this, who should come walking up from the audience but Doug Oliver (whom I did~~x~~ not at first recognize) and two other members of the British delegation? Amazing! They had been meeting only a few blocks away at New York University. O why couldn't you have been there? ~~xxx~~ Fielding Dawson was at the reading too, and we had a good chat before it started, discovering with great pleasure how crazy we both were about your Jean.

The evening before, I had an amusing experience. I had given a lecture (same place, different room) to which the audience had been extraordinarily attentive and very responsive, I thought. At the end I got the usual kudos, and there waiting, as I was leaving, to congratulate me was a young man with hand outstretched. As I took his hand, bowing slightly to acknowledge his kudos in advance, he asked, in all innocence, "What is your name?" That's all he had to say. I told him and went on my way, enlightened....and chastened. That put things down to man to man.

I'm going to run out of space here in a minute. Did Quartermain dump you because you dared, you presumed, to raise a question about the firm's modus operandi? Any house yet in the offing? This must be the time of year when the country-side around you must be most rich. Tell us about the day-to-day happenings with you & Jean. They are the next best thing to being with you.

Love
Carl

Carl Rakosi

128 Irving Street

San Francisco, CA 94122

9/4/82

Dear Jean:

Well, if you're going to be publishing books, of course I would want you to be publishing one of mine. Nothing would please me more. I have confidence in your good sense and judgment. The question is which book. It could be my collected prose or a collection of poetry. I'll have to wait until I find out more about Aquila. In any case, you do understand, don't you, that most will already have been published in this country (but not in England). Will that make a difference? And what size book do you have in mind? Why don't you call the publishing firm by your own name? Jean Crozier, to my colonial ears, sounds bold, even distinguished.

Leah and I were delighted to hear that you had finally bought a house. Are you still on speaking terms with your folks? or with each other, for that matter? Wow, what fortitude, what restraint! On everybody's part. Tell us more about it. If Andrew puts his typewriter and table on the stage in a huge room, he will no doubt be addressing the world in epics, and you won't be able to stand it.

Love,

P.S. When you and Andrew have a quiet moment together (not when he's on the stage), will you please ask him, implore him, beseech him, to type his letters to me? Every fourth, fifth word ^{of his handwriting} is too much for my poor old eyes. I come up with the weirdest conjectures as to what the sentence means. No offense, assure him.

San Francisco, CA 94122

128 Irving Street

Oct. 9, 1982

Crozier
Dear Jean:

On October 8th I sent Aquila Publishing my prose manuscript. I had gone a little too far to be able to pull back. Besides, I had to send it to know whether ~~xxxxx~~ it's what Aquila really wanted to publish. The director, before he received it, wrote that he would submit it for a grant-aid in December and expected to have a decision in February. If he turns it down because it doesn't fit in with the other things in his publishing ~~xx~~ schedule or if he doesn't get the grant, you may, of course, have the book. It comes to about 94 type-written pages. As I write this, it occurs to me that you may be going through the same process as Aquila, applying for a grant, and that there may be a fixed time for applications in December. If so, I could send you a volume of poetry right away. Or you might not want to wait in any case. Let me know.

Do you have a new address now?

Hugs to you both,

128 Irving Street

San Francisco, ~~EE~~ CA ~~XXXX~~ 94122

Feb. 18, 1983

Dear Andrew:

Your note and Michael Edward's make it clear that I should avoid Aquila. If Jean is definitely going ahead with publishing, I could ask Green to return my manuscript and let her have it, along with additions which he doesn't have. However, if Jean has abandoned the idea, Aquila is still better than nothing, as I can't pursue other prospects from this distance. Anyhow, the book will be published in this country by the National Poetry Foundation, the sponsors for the magazine Paideuma, with which you are probably familiar.

I haven't heard from Jean since I wrote her, offering her a book of poetry in place of the prose. Everything OK? Which reminds me, I don't have your new address or news of your new house and ~~xy~~ your not so new selves.

Leah is chipping away with great dissatisfaction at her sculpture and I at writing, and listen a great deal to music on my improved stereo....always a good excuse for staying away from my desk. Seems to me an awful lot of young ^{poets here} ~~poets~~ are crack shots at diagnosing what's wrong with the work of their contemporaries but don't take the medicine themselves because they don't realize they have the same sickness.

As my daughter, Barbara, keeps telling us, we miss you and Jean.

May 20, 1983

Dear Andrew:

I'm getting some obscure, disturbing vibes about you, from where I don't know, that you and Jean have split up, that you are in a depression, etc. Is it so?

Leah and I have been lucky; we have remained in good health, all things considered, and in good spirits, which I suppose follows the former, more or less. She has just finished a fine piece of sculpture, after agonizing over it for months and cursing the day she ever started. It's a two-figure piece in black walnut and ~~xxxxxxxx~~ sits on my record cabinet, dominating that whole quarter of the room and looking as if it had never been anywhere else. And my forthcoming book of prose, with an introduction, I think, by Robert Duncan, seems to be on schedule from my University of Maine publisher....due out in November, for my ~~xxxxxx~~ birthday. But not a word further from Aquila, so I'm just assuming that nothing is going to happen there (I never really thought it would). Incidentally, the best prose I've seen recently has been coming from Guy Davidson and the most interesting new poetry from Gustaf Sobin and Rachel Blau DuPlessis.

I've asked Richard Caddel at Pig Press to send you a copy of my new book, SPIRITUS, I, which I think is out now.

Love,

8/10/83

Dear Andrew:

I don't want to delay my answers, because of your deadline, but I have to slip in that ~~xxxx~~ we were greatly reassured to learn that you and Jean were still together. Don't ask me why that should be so important to us, but it is.

It's charming to hear about Jean's sheep but let me tell you it boggles the mind of an American.

And it's great to hear you have a collected volume coming out.

If I drop the last phrase from the first sentence in your last paragraph, it reads: "I celebrated my fortieth birthday yesterday with Jean, an aged film actress." What reminiscences you must have had!

Love to you both,

Sept. 13, 1983

Dear Andrew:

Could you ~~send~~ me right away your ideas about "how to put together a complete COLLECTED POEMS?" I mean it. Along with proofs for my COLLECTED PROSE came a letter yesterday from Paideuma-National Poetry Foundation asking me to send them the mss for my COLLECTED POEMS. So the thing is urgent. Perhaps you'll have the time? You've become so discerning about my work, Andrew, that I'm very eager ~~to~~ to see what you have in mind. In any case, how I wish you'd do an essay on the early Rakosi. It would be welcomed at Sagetrieb or Origin; Conjunctions, too, I think.

No time to write more now, but what's astonishing about having excluded pre-1931 poems from SELECTED POEMS?

Answers to Questions from Andrew Crozier (for the Dictionary of Literary Biography)

Yes, my mother was still alive when my stepmother came for me in Baja in 1910, but there's an insoluble mystery about her because I don't remember what she looked like or anything about her. My father used to speak of her great beauty, her long, black hair falling to her knees, her great expressive eyes, but I don't remember that. I suspect my daughter Barbara, who won two beauty contests when she was a student at the University of Minnesota, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], looks like her. My father seldom spoke about her...there was no occasion to, ^{but when he did,} he was remarkably considerate and, for some reason I could not understand, [REDACTED] compassionate. My stepmother too. I gathered that he had been in love with her and that whatever had happened, had not made him [REDACTED] dislike her or lose respect. Part of this was due to her parents, my grandparents, for whom he had great respect, approaching reverence.

I was born, as you know, in Berlin, where my father was a successful manufacturer of walking sticks, a big thing in those days. He was one of three partners, and as I understand it, was forced out by the other two because he didn't have the capital to buy them out (by the terms of the partnership ^{it} [REDACTED] could be dissolved by one partner buying ^{out} [REDACTED] the other two). It was when he lost the business that he emigrated to America and my mother moved back with my brother Lester and me to her parents' home in Baja, Hungary. So she must have taken care of me when I was a baby (unless there was ^a maid-nurse to do that). Anyhow, from what my father said, I gathered that there was something wrong [REDACTED] but he would never criticize her.

That there was something wrong was confirmed by the fact that it was my grandmother who took over our care in Baja, and I don't remember ever seeing my mother there, although I do remember hearing references to her being somewhere in the background, out of sight. This makes me suspect that she was suffering from a deep depression, what was called melancholia in those days, which incapacitated her [REDACTED] for child care and made it necessary to keep her in seclusion. That may be why my father and stepmother always spoke sympathetically about her and why I have no memory of her. She lived to a very old age, [REDACTED] and even survived the Nazis in a home for the aged. She never wrote to us children and was not present at the final leavetaking in Baja when we left for the States, but she did write to my stepmother, who was very kind to her.

And so it was that my grandmother became my mother and it is to her that I had, and still have, the deepest feelings. Under the circumstances, I did not miss my mother when we left Baja. Nor do I remember missing my grandmother. I was plunged into hard, new realities.....new parents, a different country, a strange language.....and was too busy learning and adapting. Besides, I must have felt that it would make coping too hard if I let myself feel the pain of separation. As for my father, since he had left before I was a year old, he was as much of a stranger to me as my stepmother.

My first language was Hungarian, but all educated Hungarians in those days spoke German, so I heard German at home in Kenosha too, and my ear for its natural cadence has never left me. And when I was in Budapest recently, listening to the street talk, etc. my ears felt as if they had never left Hungary, although I had lost most of my vocabulary.

No, I never wanted to return to Hungary ^{to live} but I ~~did~~ ^{did} want to visit it and experience for myself the great joie de vivre and gaiety that my parents remembered and regretted losing. They had many Hungarian friends, who were equally nostalgic, and I remember great parties at our house, great Hungarian cooking and story-telling and jokes and much teasing ^(in Hungarian) and hugging, and I knew, as a young boy, that that particular kind of happiness was closed to me, I was not enough of a Hungarian. Nevertheless, to this day, when I come across ³ Hungarian or hear it spoken, something warm lights up in me and my face beams.

How long did it take me to learn to speak English? About twenty-four hours. I mean it. I had to. The first place we lived ~~in~~ was a tough neighborhood in Chicago and the kids on the school playground would have beat the shit out of me if I hadn't. As it was, I remember on my second day in school some kid made fun of my accent and I bust him in the nose and chased him down the street. It had to be done. Remember, however, that I was only six years old, and kids that age soak up a language as ⁱⁿ osmosis.

I became an American citizen through my father when he became one in 1917.

My brother, Lester, who was five years older than I, learned watch-making from my father and had a jewelry store in Milwaukee for many years. He died there of cancer and was never married.

Why did I begin to write poetry in 1920? Are you kidding? I guess you're not. The circumstances were these. I was a freshman at the University of Chicago then and had two talented fellow students in my English class,

one a Japanese in his mid-thirties who wrote exquisite short poems with only a few words and the other a negro about my age with a remarkable facility with words who also wrote poetry . He was a great admirer of Rudyard Kipling. The three of us became friends, and I suppose their example started me off. My reading by that time must ^{also} have developed a motivation in me.

I met Kenneth Fearing in 1921 at the University of Wisconsin, where I had transferred from the U of C. We roomed together for a while and became inseparable friends, although ^{no} two people were more unlike. My other literary contacts were William Ellery Leonard, who taught Chaucer and Old English at the University and was as well-known ^{at that time} as a poet as Carl Sandburg; Zona Gale, Wisconsin's most celebrated novelist; Margery Latimer, novelist, and Leon Serabian Herald, an Armenian poet. Carl Sandburg in those days used to chant his poems to college audiences (small), accompanying himself on a guitar in a kind of hypnotic monotony with the only two or three chords he knew. I can still hear this strange, very "American" performance. I heard him but didn't meet him. During my senior year he wrote to tell me that he had rated me as the best in a national collegiate poetry contest but the other two judges didn't ^{agree.}

I lived in New York on two different occasions, once in 1924-1925 and once in 1935-1940. The first time I ^{boarded} ~~xxxxxx~~ with a fellow social worker near Columbia and the second time ^{I lived} on West 69th Street just off Broadway, where I had a small apartment. I was doing social work both times.

I don't remember the name of the freighter I worked on in 1925 but I do remember the line, the U.S. Shipping Line. "Frisco Cross" , yes, is a made-up name.

My co-founder and co-editor on THE ISSUE was a medical student of Swiss stock and ^a German name I forget now, who had a lively interest in social issues. He wrote the serious pieces, I wrote the satirical ones. He became a well-known doctor.

I must have heard in some announcement, probably in POETRY, that Pound was starting a new magazine called THE EXILE in Rapallo and I simply sent him some stuff. He used them all but I didn't know that he had because I didn't hear from him, which may have been due to the fact that I was moving around a lot from city to city in those days. Zukofsky, in introducing himself to me in his first letter, was the one who told me. That's how LZ got to my work.

I first read Stevens in POETRY, where he was an instant celebrity, and Williams probably in THE LITTLE REVIEW, BROOM, and other handsome little

and never got over it. When he talked about their great work, their heroism, it was ~~s~~ with such a full heart and veneration that words failed him; what they had done was simply too lofty for language to convey. But they were the real measure of man.

So I was probably destined to go that way myself anyhow, for I shared his trust in man and his sense of the beauty of social justice, fairness being a form of measure and proportion in the social order, and when there was measure and proportion, there was beauty. So ask not, did I read the Left Wing press. Of course I read it. I read The New Masses and The Daily ~~Worker~~ Worker from aleph to yodh, with attention, ~~ready to obey.~~ And I pored over that austere, formidable quarterly of Marxist theory, MARXISM, mesmerized by its sacred tongue and the seeming inevitability of its logic, but of course it was inevitable and logical only because it was a closed system which excluded everything that did not agree with its premises and point of view. Exclude is perhaps too moderate a term; exterminate would be more accurate. That was my problem with The New Masses. I tried faithfully to write the kind of poem Mike Gold and his henchmen ^{on the editorial board} would approve, something to help The Cause along, and I did get one or two things into the magazine (which I didn't keep, so don't ask), but they were no good, and I knew it was hopeless, that I couldn't do it, and that that gang would have nothing but contempt for me. And this too entered into my decision to stop writing, for a part of me believed they were right. *And I didn't blame them; I blamed myself. I had failed.*

If you ask me now, What did you do in the Movement, what happened? I would have to say, Not much of anything. Since I was not using my real name ~~and~~ and meetings were strictly secret, the whole thing had a shadowy, conspiratorial feel to it and the possibility of some interesting adventures down the road. When I was transferred, however, from a neighborhood cell, into which Leon Herald had recruited me, to a cell in the agency in which I was working, the chief subject of discussion was: who on the staff were likely converts? how could you recognize them? how should you approach them and teach them to think Marxist? how persuade them to take the final step, the most difficult one, the one that really mattered, the one that committed you to action, of joining? Since this was a never-ending subject, ~~xxxxxx~~ meetings never really ended

Does all this sound familiar? In California it does because it's exactly what goes on in the cults. This is not to say that the Political Left is no more important than a cult; only that it uses the same psychology of conversion.

Anyhow, this was not the kind of thing that could hold my interest for long, much less my idealism, nor did I have the stomach for it. I stuck it out for about ^{two} years and then just stopped going to meetings. Since I had never done anything except listen and sign a few manifestoes and petitions and march the streets with a picket sign with others, when the call went out, to show solidarity, I like to think that [REDACTED] nobody noticed I was gone.

You ask about shifting between public and private social work. All but two of my positions were in private social work. This is because the public agencies were not where anybody who could help it would want to be: they had no qualified professional staff, they paid poorly, and the workloads were impossible. The fact of the matter is that my career started off with a bang. My first two positions were with the two most prestigious private agencies in the country....Family Service Society in Cleveland and the Jewish Board of Guardians in New York, a treatment center for disturbed children, where the professional staff's clinical experience and grasp of psychological theory were awesome. The understanding was that I would quickly complete my professional education and clinical training, but for a long while I was able to do this only in bits, finishing finally in 1939 at the University of Pennsylvania.

You ask too about my sense of Jewishness. It was really very little to start with and it did not increase in New York, probably because Jews are part of the air you breathe there, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ and there's no need, therefore, to assert oneself as a Jew. In the other cities where I worked, however, where Jews are only a ^{tiny} [REDACTED] part of the population, I did feel the need and I became more and more aware of a Jewish community existing not only as buildings and programs but also in the mind as a [REDACTED] kinship, with all that means in identification, loyalty, understanding, ~~xxx~~ common destiny and condition (vide., the condition of always being a small minority and always ^{feeling} [REDACTED] in danger of being rejected or attacked), etc. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Add to this the power of responsibility when you're functioning as the supervisor or executive of an agency which the Jewish community has set up as its own institution for social welfare to express its ancient philanthropic concerns, and which it regards, a bit foolishly but proudly, as one of its pillars....the synagogue is the other....and you become, in effect, a kind of community trustee, one of those designated to ^{be a} [REDACTED] custodian, and by some a guardian, of the Jewish spirit, one of the

Elders, and your sense of Jewishness rises to the obligation. This connection deepened and became indispensable to me when I had children and realized that my ethnic continuity via them depended upon it.

Now for Leah. I met her briefly in 1938. She had an apartment in the Village with Leon Herald's girl friend, Betty Foster. I was immediately drawn to her irrepressible vivacity and good nature. She had just had a quarrel with her boy friend, Art Gunn, a good artist but of a deeply neurotic, gloomy disposition, and when she learned that I had just broken ~~up~~ off with my girl friend, remarked off-handedly, "That's what's going to happen with Art and me." And I, half joshingly, without expecting anything to come of it, replied, "When it does, let me know." Sure enough, it did, and she asked Betty to have Leon let me know.

Leah came from a large, loving family of brothers and sisters in New York (so different from my own), but early in ~~xxx~~ childhood her mother died, and then her father, whom she adored, so she was pretty much on her own after adolescence. Hence her freedom to have her own apartment amidst the Bohemianism of the Village. She supported herself as a computer operator but her interests had always been in the arts and she knew many of the leading painters of that time, who were all on WPA then. Impossible to exaggerate the influence she has had on my life (which of course is not the same as my writing), but that's too long a tale to get into.

Now for your more factual questions.

My first reading was into English, not American literature: Shakespeare, Chaucer, Keats.....Blake, Burns and Herrick came later...then suddenly Yeats and those late 19th Century poets with the haunting, sad cadences, Lionel Johnson and Ernest Dowson. This was not by choice but simply the order of priority in the American school system.

SELECTED POEMS was one of J. Laughlin's Poets of the Month series. I simply sent the mss to him. It had to be short, hence "selected." No political interests therex that I recall.

No connection between TO MY FIRST-BORN and your questions. I don't recall whether it was the first poem in a long time or not (sorry, Andrew, but you're up against my incorrigible disinterest in chronology).

I can't help you either as to where the facts in THE LOBSTER came from, I don't remember. If it has any literary antecedent, it would be Williams, not Marianne Moore, who ^{and is} was [^] much too dry and cerebral for me, a relentless, curious hawk in librarian's clothing....chilling!

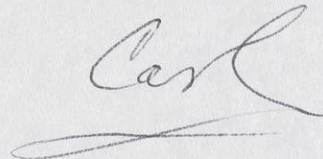
Yes, BLACKBIRDS came out in Conjunctions 2, Spring-Summer 1982, and yes, The National Poetry Foundation is the publisher of my COLLECTED ~~POETRY~~ ^{PROSE}

Alas, poor Rosenblum had a dreadful experience with his publisher, Twayne. After writing the book about me and having to re-write it, I don't know how many times, always led on by encouraging words but always having to cut out more and more of its intellectual substance in order to make it more simple, it was turned down flat: not simple enough for Twayne readers, who are largely ~~high school~~ seniors in high school, where the Twayne books are sold. But he is now at work trying to restore it to its full substance for the National Poetry Foundation, which is interested in publishing a book about me

The Rosenblum interview is in Margins 17, Feb. 1975, pp.12-29. There is another interview with Mary Ellen Shaw in Preview, June 1975, pp.19-22.

The Obj. Anthology was published in New York in 1932. Sorry, I don't have MODERN THINGS or POETRY OUT OF WISCONSIN any longer and can't give you the page ~~xxxxxxx~~ references.

FINIS?

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Carl", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

7 Jan., 1984

Dear Andrew:

How nice of you to think of my birthday. And you couldn't have given me anything nicer than a recent visitor's report on Hungary, no matter what about. These reports~~x~~ and what Leah & I saw ourselves when we were in Budapest keep clashing against my stereotypes of what a communist country should be.

Ordinarily, I don't have birthday parties. I detest them. A wake would be more appropriate. But this time I felt a nagging social obligation to acknowledge my age, and so Leah had a few poets and their spouses in for a party. The night before, I was sure I had made a mistake to agree to it but I awoke, feeling at peace and flushed with health, although only three months ago I was in the hospital with diverticulitis; and my mind was teeming, and if there had been time, I would have rushed out to buy a present for each of my friends.

After writing this, I passed along your ideas about the organization of my COLLECTED POEMS to Terrell at The National Poetry Foundation and waited to send off this letter until I heard from him. This is what he wrote. "Andrew Crozier is way ahead of the game. The kind of ~~xxx~~ scholarly work he wants done should be done some time. But first we must create a broader interest in your life and work among English professors. It takes a lot of time and persistence to get their attention. But it can be done." I imagine he's right. In any case, he's interested in your writing something about me for Sagetrieb, so~~o~~ you should be hearing from him. At the moment he doesn't have the money to publish the COLLECTED POEMS but he's going to try to get it from some grant.

To your questions. God no, I can't reconstitute the original text of The Beasts. I wouldn't know where to begin. Nor can I give you a lead on the dates or the names of my New Masses poems. There is, of course, a relation between my political and my domestic poems: the same part of me is writing both, the social, outward, earthy self. But you may have something else in mind. Incidentally, I have never written a ~~political~~ ^{satisfactory} political poem. Only the East Germans seem to be able to do that. About The City: 1925 refers to the time ~~of my fixxx~~ when the observations were made and the experience had, not to the date of the writing. The City is largely New York but could have been London or Paris too, I think, (with some minor differences). "Fictive" is not the right word for my revisions: they are simply the working out of an idea and an experience. Let me say too that in general I have never set out to write a long poem. That for me would be too mental, too academic, as opposed to lyric, the tour-de-force worked out to the fullness of a novel, the very antipode of the lyric impulse. How then did AMERICANA, HISTORY, DROLES DE JOURNAL, and THE POET come~~x~~ about? Their parts all started out as individual poems and were combined afterwards, sometimes long afterwards, when I perceived that they belonged together, in the sense that they constituted a whole, they spoke the same language and were in the same field of subject-matter, and the speaker and the feeler in them were the same speaker and feeler. Of course they lack the connecting links and the organization from a to b to c of the true long poem, but since I have never had the slightest impulse to write a long poem, that doesn't bother me, but it might the reader if he is expecting the real thing.

Keep them coming, Andrew, and all our love to you and Jean in what I wish would be a good year for you both,

4 May 1984

Crozier
Dear Andrew:

Your essay on me for The Dictionary of Literary Biography like all your work, is carefully done and accurate and had some original insights that were interesting. It was a pleasure reading it. Thank you. The same goes for the Oppen piece. I passed it on to Mary Oppen, who is going to have it copied. George, of course, can't read it (you knew, didn't you, that he had Alzheimer's disease?). He can't read anything nor have an ongoing conversation nor recognize anyone except Mary and the members of his immediate family.

Regarding your ideas for a different plan for my COLLECTED POEMS, if you think that I could persuade Terrell to do anything, you have a mistaken idea of my relation to him. The fact is that I have no working relationship. Once the COLLECTED PROSE was published, letter after letter from me went unanswered, repeated requests for copies of the book went unanswered. He did nothing about sending out review copies. All he did was send out the National Poetry Foundation catalogue and turn his attention to other things. His distributor calls him a madman and has given up on trying to deal with him. Every spot for a magazine or newspaper review I've had to run down myself and set up for him. I find myself, in other words, in a huge deserted Pound morgue. I call out but there's nobody there. As a result I've been in a state of panic, frustration and misery, not so much because of the PROSE, which may, after all, despite him, get a little public attention through the help of friends, but in anticipation of what will happen to my COLLECTED POEMS, which is scheduled for the fall of 1985. From my experience with Terrell so far, I'd give anything to be able to have a different publisher for the COLLECTED POEMS, but no one else was willing, or had the funds, for a 400 page book of poems. So you ^{see} the situation I'm in. I have no alternative.

But I see you draining ditches and Jean with* the lambkins, Polly and Phoebe, and that is an idyllic picture.

Love,

30 May 1984

Dear Andrew:

Misfortune seems to be dogging my COLLECTED PROSE. Ric Caddel of Pig Press recently wrote me that he had tried to buy a copy of the book from its UK distributor, Aquila, but could get no answers to his inquiries. I must find one or two English distributors for Terrell who are more reliable and acceptably active. Can you or Jean in London help? A good book dealer would know. Gracias!

A very bad misprint on p.117 of my Prose book. Nine lines from the bottom of the page the word celebrity should be celebratory.

This is written just as we are leaving for a three week visit to Minneapolis. Hence the brevity.

Love,

6 Aug. 1984

Dear Andrew:

Thank you for your help with a distributor. I passed the information along to Terrell.

He'll be sending me proofs for the COLLECTED POEMS in a matter of days now. I'm afraid when you see the book next year, you'll think it's a mess. Not in chronological order at all. With my disinterest in chronology, I couldn't help it. Some early poems are indicated as such when they are obviously too different from later ones not to be set off separately, but in general I have arranged the poems not to show the development of their author but as if they were a single work, and I let the logic of that guide me. A gamble, I know. But I'm a sucker, as you probably know, for that sort of thing. In addition, I simply had to lead off this book with my strongest poems, which are not my early ones. I can reassure you about one thing, however, they include all of my early work that I'm not too embarrassed to keep (you're mistaken about AMULET. A considerable part of that book is pre-1965). I did, however, as I said, pass on your ideas to Terrell and would have been willing to do the kind of COLLECTED you had in mind if he had agreed. Another time, maybe?

To change the subject, George Evans, a good friend, and his wife Lissa, will be passing through Sussex next month. I wouldn't for the world want to impose them on you and Jean but if you think you'd like to meet him, give me the word. He's pretty solid and likeable. Just finished editing the Olson-Corman correspondence and you might get something out of talking to him about young American poets. But apart from that, he's good company. However, please don't do it unless you have the inclination.

Love from us to you'se,

7 May 1985

Dear Andrew:

Am leaving for a long lecture and reading ~~through~~ tour the day after tomorrow, so don't have time to respond properly to ALL WHERE EACH IS, but after dipping into it, I can say, What a joy to have it all together in one clean-cut, substantial book. What I've read shows great clarification. It's as if I'm reading new poetry by a born-again you. I don't understand how it can be so different from what I remember from your previous little books. Maybe it's having them all together that does it, being able to see that the individual poems are parts of a whole, not just individual, and that the whole is a presence and has meaning, and that the parts were intended to be parts of this but were not visible as such until it was all put together. The poems individually are extraordinarily clean-cut too, more so than I remember from before. Did you work them over? Or is the problem in my former perception?

Anyhow, that's all I have time for. I must be off. I'll be back on June 3. Maybe I'll have more to say.

Love from Leah & me,

P.S. FOR AMITY particularly charming, the language breaks interesting.

23 July 1986

Dear Andrew:

What a coincidence. In March I was asked to do a thirty page autobiography for the Contemporary Authors Autobiography Series (one of the Gale Research books sold to libraries. You may be familiar with them). I completed it in a rush as I didn't begin until June and had a deadline for June 30. If it's accepted, it will be published early in 1987. I'm sending you a first draft, which undoubtedly will be changed as I look it over. I agreed to write it, partly for the fee, partly as a responsibility to others. In other words, I started with a weak motivation, thinking it would be easy, at first, then wondering what I could possibly say that would fill thirty pages. In any case, I had to put off starting until the beginning of June because shortly after signing the contract, Leah was found to have cancer of the lymph glands and I was plunged into a pit and stayed there until she had completed her radiation therapy and we knew she was going to make it, for the time being.

When I finally got to it, I discovered what I knew all along, that it's impossible for me to write anything fast, and that prose is like swimming against my natural impulse, which is to select and condense, etc., not to wheel free and elaborate. But as I got into the swing of it, it became more and more interesting; fun, in fact. As a result, what I came up with is ~~xx~~ top-heavy, mostly about my early years, which apparently is what you're interested in too, and only a few things about my life. I'm going to look it over carefully now and keep going on it as long as it interests me. And the first few pages I'll probably send out to Laughlin, I'm free to do that under the contract. So I don't know what to tell you about Jean's publishing ~~xxx~~ just the enclosed as a pamphlet.

Some other prose of mine is coming out soon too: a piece on Oppen's last days, in the next issue of CONJUNCTIONS; and in the next issue of SAGETRIEB an interview which Burton Hatlen did with me; in San Francisco State University ARCHIVES, an excerpt of an interview ~~xxxx~~ which George Evans did with me; and one which George ~~xxx~~ Evans and August Kleinzahler just did with me, which will probably be the best. ~~x~~ What surprises me about these interviews is that although you know the same person is talking, there is very little, perhaps no, duplication.

About your specific questions.

1/ The Houghton Library has not yet catalogued my archives. I learned this from someone else who wanted to use them. . That's why they couldn't give you much information. The term, "The Surviving Archives" was Peter Howard's term when he advertised the collection in his Serendipity catalogue. There were no buyers at the time and I took the collection back and sold it myself for a fraction of its value to Harvard. Apparently the curator, Dennis, bought it because it was a bargain but didn't think enough of it to catalogue it. The Serendipity inventory indicates most of what Harvard has, which is what Dennis may have sent you. The additional items I kept no record of.

2/The 1926 reading was in Milwaukee. I was working there then as a psychologist for the Milwaukee Electric Railway and Light Company. I think it was in a dark room ~~xx~~ of a little commercial art gallery, the whole ambience and reading dismal, with possibly seven or eight people, loners, in the audience. What made me do it I can't imagine. Maybe to break my solitude and test my new poems in public. It made so little impression on me that I forgot all about it and thought I had never read my poems in public when I first saw you and Jeremy in Cambridge.

3/ I never met Rodker. What I remember is Pound's high regard for him and Rodker's spare prose, if I remember correctly, which wounded new and fresh then.

4/ Re my SELECTED POEMS. I approached Laughlin, with nothing specific in mind. It was his idea to ^{put} it into the Poet of the Month series. No, he didn't advertise. I approached him. He was the only one I thought would be interested. I imagine I sent him the mss late in 1939. I had married Leah in May of that year and had more or less concluded that I ~~xx~~ would have to stop writing. So it had the feel of a final book. Laughlin, of course, didn't know that. And I wasn't altogether sure, either, because I thought of using the book to get a Guggenheim, but nothing came of that, and no miracle occurred to prevent what happened/ that is, I didn't get the financial ~~xxxxxxxx~~ and institutional momentum to keep me going.

5/ Nothing I could say could persuade Leah to consider writigg about her life. Much too scared. The thought froze her.

6/You wrote, "I'm still trying to edge my way around the impediment of that book." What book? Did I miss something?

Before I forget, may I have Paul Zukofsky's address?

With Terrell it's not only that he's trying to do too much to be able pay attention to the specifics of all he's taken on but, worse, he's so inept and erratic in his dealings with distributors and book review editors that they don't want to have anything to do with him. As a result, no one will know that my COLLECTED POEMS is out when it appears late in September or early October unless friends and I let people know. Humiliating, but I'm stuck with it. Incidentally, I'll be seeing him in October in Orono as part of another reading trip and maybe get a better handle on what's what.

Leah and I think often of you and Jean and wish you'd give each other a present and visit the States, so we could see you.

Love,

18 Aug. 1986

Dear Andrew:

What a bounty of good mail from you. Lovely, interesting poem. That you feel so deeply about Jean gives Leah and me a particular and very personal pleasure, as we are so fond of you both. Needless to say, too, I am touched by your profound identification with me and my work.

About Leah's health: she keeps going to the doctors on a planned basis for periodic check-ups, protesting all the way to the office, but she feels not much different from the way she used to feel except that she is more easily fatigued now, and things that would not have worried us before, like a slight loss of weight or appetite or a stomach upset, now scare the hell out of us. And we know that we can never be free of this. But of course if this is the worst, how lucky we shall be.

I myself had prostate surgery a couple of weeks ago, but not to worry. My sphincters are still intact, my voice did not jump from bass to soprano, and I feel OK. What the hell, there's a limit to how long you can beat your chronological age.

How delighted I am at your response to the autobiography. Again, not to worry. I have every intention of going on with it, but first I have to edit my later archives for a dealer....and God knows how long that will takeand then I'm going for a longish visit with my daughter and granddaughters in Minneapolis and some readings and talks in Buffalo, Rochester, Maine (I'm finally going to meet Terrell) and New York. Now that I know I can trust my memory, I'm eager to continue looking into it. Incidentally, for whom are you doing the essay? The length you've been assigned is the same^{as} I had for the autobiography.

You're on the right track in your understanding of the revisions. If I can trust my memory, in addition to your intuition about my "re-tying of knots of feeling in relation to certain given images"(very good), what happened was that I would look at a poem months or years after I had published it and find myself dissatisfied, usually with its tone or sense, and keep what I felt solid and add to that what came to me out of my experience at the time, and since I was in a different state of mind and feeling then, you could say I was writing another poem from the base of the old one. Not exactly what we mean by revising. Does this make sense to you?

Yes, "Orange Leaf" was a brand name for a perfume or cologne, I believe. Does that fit?

By the way, I don't have the Ironwood issue on Oppen. What did he say about me?

Re your question about the rest of my early papers, I only kept letters from Fearing, Zukofsky, and a couple of others and made no copies of my letters to them or kept my worksheets. Who would have thought they would have any future value? Hence, what you find at Harvard and Texas is all I have. Except for a few letters from me to Margery Latimer, which I understand are in the Fisk University library. (the Jean Toomer archives).

Burton ~~Mxxxx~~ Hatlen is running an interview with me in the next issue of Sagetrieb which he conducted a year and a half ago. I remember feeling at the time only mildly ~~xx~~ interested in the questions and no more than that in my answers, but when I read the proofs, it turns out to be all right. Also, the Archives, a publication of San Francisco State University, is publishing excerpts from an interview which George Evans conducted with me recently. ^{And} Most recently there is a long interview which August Kleinzahler and George Evans conducted with me. The tapes for that are now being transcribed by Scripsi in Australia. I expect they'll publish excerpts in the magazine (are you familiar with it?) What astonishes me about these interviews is that although there is, necessarily I suppose, a small amount of overlapping in the questions, there seems to be none in the answers. That I wouldn't have expected.

If Jean's boss is like American Jews in high finance, and I suspect he is, then I know what she has to put up with as his private secretary: behavior unreasonably demanding, willful, arrogant, moody, thoughtless, unpredictable, expecting more than he had assigned responsibility for, but also extraordinarily generous and kind at times. Alas, that is the lot of the private secretary. Men don't succeed in business by being considerate and sensitive. I feel with Jean. If it's any consolation, his wife probably has to put up with the same things, unless ^{he} has divided his life into two separate compartments.

Questions about Rodker. What do you mean, he was "at the very heart of Freud's circle in London?" Was he a psychiatrist? You say he packed off his daughter to Russia in 1930. Was he Jewish? a communist or fellow traveller?

Finally, the large attention I have given to my infancy is not out of Freudian theory but because it continues to occupy a large place in my mind as a mystery.

Love,

28 Sept. 1986

Dear Andrew:

Yr. up-to-date on the PN Review made my day. The last word from Terrell is that my book will be out in a few days. You'll be getting transcripts of the two interviews from Evans as soon as SGRIPSI ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXX~~ has transcribed the later, longer one. You're also welcome to my interview with Rodefer, which, as I recall, is mostly comment about the Zukofsky material in the archives. My intention was to comment on tape about all the rest of my archives but there wasn't time to do more just then and it was never resumed because we got bogged down on a proper appraisal. I don't have any new unpublished piece for PN except the autobiography, which will appear next Spring but is available for publication elsewhere. Wd. the editor want a photo? I have a very good recent one. If he's going to collect essays about my work, I hope he gets something from Jeremy and Eric Mottrem, ~~xx xxx~~ and also Kenneth Cox, about whom I know ~~xxxxxxx~~ nothing, but who did a rather astonishing piece on Zukofsky.

You say my COLLECTED in Books In Print sounds enormous? Are you sure it's my book? I have never written anything enormous.

After two weeks I came back to finish this letter but am incapable of doing it. ^{Leahs'} Leah's cancer is now in her spleen, in a lymph gland in the abdomen and under one arm. She has begun an excruciating course of chemotherapy. This has taken over my whole life.

Crozier

22 Oct. 1986

Dear Andrew:

Your caring words moved us, oh yes, and it was as if we were holding hands, all four of us, despite the distance. More was not possible.

Let me bring you up to date on Leah. She will be getting from six to nine chemotherapy treatments. A treatment consists of one intra-venous injection and five daily doses of four medications, any one of which is potent enough to injure the kidneys and send your blood count plummeting, both of which happened to Leah after her first treatment. The doctor therefore had to stop for a week to let her blood count come back up and to change one of the medications in order to avoid damaging the kidneys. The medications make her so nauseated and nervous that it takes all her will power to keep from screaming and to keep on taking them. During this week she can eat very little and her weight keeps dropping. Between treatments, however, there is a period of two weeks when only one medication is continued and during that time she slowly creeps back to near-normal and her spirits return. Then she has to be tested again to see if it's safe to continue with the treatments. If not, she gets a reprieve until it is. All in all, it will take six months or so. She's now going into her second treatment. I'm encouraged because this past week while she was into her third week of only the one medication, her energy and spirits bounced back most of the way. In the meantime, we have felt as helpless as a rag doll to cope with our emotions and our despair, but during the off-weeks we spring back. This is the last day of the third off-week and you wouldn't know, except in Leah's loss of weight, that anything was different.

I hope by now you have my COLLECTED POEMS, If you don't, it's because the book is being printed at the University of Maine press, a tiny operation that can only turn out a few a day. Let me know. In any case, it's a fine-looking book, and big, as you said. For the first time I can feel secure that it's all together, and the way it should be.

Love,

Carl

Crozier
11 April 1987

Dear Andrew:

Thought you'd like to see the reception my book has gotten so far. During the years that I was trying to find a publisher for it, I had a persistent sense that my COLLECTED would make me look very different, but I didn't know in what way or to what extent. Apparently my sense of it was correct: the reviewers so far, to my great satisfaction, have gotten the point of the COLLECTED. But two people have told me it's almost impossible to find a copy in England. That's Terrell for you!

How sensitive and accurate you are about Margery Latimer. I remember also feeling slightly uncomfortable in her world of total revelation and sincerity and total vulnerability. Poor Margery, she was the only one of us who didn't know how to protect herself. People who read her letters and her stories find themselves falling in love with her, not with her stories but with her. It's a strange power she had! When you have the time, could you send me copies of her letters to me? They'll be like photos.

It seems to me that years ago when I read in Buffalo, I met Fred Wah. If it's the same guy, he had a lot to say about a lot of things. I never did catch the name because it sounded strange and I couldn't visualize it.

We haven't seen Duncan for well over a year, partly because I've been afraid of what I'd find....his mind ~~gxxx~~ shatters at times, no telling when, and partly because Leah's illness has intervened. An electric presence has gone out of our lives.

Leah is holding her own, not feeling too bad....in fact almost normal the last few days....except for about ten days out of the month when things are very bad. Next week she'll be getting her ~~xxx~~ eighth chemotherapy, after which she'll be getting a C-T Scan to find out where to go from there. She's in good spirits most of the time. And we both are warmed, oh so much, by you and Jean, and love you both.

P.S. The photos are by John Levy.

22 July 1987

Crozier
Dear Andrew:

Just got back from a long visit in Minneapolis and four days in Naropa-land and learned your heavy news. I don't know how to respond to the loss of a father. I have been through it myself and found it vast and painful and unyielding. But grief and loss are always solitary experiences. Friends try to enter but they are not the ones to whom this is happening and have to remain outside. Which is where Leah and I ^{must} stand, despite affection and sympathy.

In the last couple of years I have had experiences which might be useful to you, however, in understanding what your mother is likely to be going through. Much depends, of course, on her age and physical condition and usual degree of self-reliance but some things seem to be true for everybody who is a survivor in a long marriage. One is that this is the most drastic dislocation and loss in all of life. Nobody is really prepared for it, and the longer and the more bonded the marriage, the greater the dislocation and the loss. I expect your mother, therefore, to be in a state of shock, paralysis, confusion, and helplessness. And a confrontation with her own terminal state, hence terror, if she's advanced in age. There's too much there for anyone to be able to talk about it for a while, and if she's naturally reticent or inhibited, she may never talk about it, and don't expect her to, but you can be sure that no matter what she says about being all right, she'll manage, not to worry, etc., she will desperately need emotional support from you and your brother. Not advice but just always "being" with her, in person or over the phone, visiting with her, asking about the everyday things that are happening, making yourself more present in her ~~life~~ life than she needed you to be when she had her husband. All through Leah's chemotherapy, when we were in our minds going through a similar experience, we had this kind of unsolicited coming forward and being there, day after day, from our daughter and son, and I want to tell you it was a great thing.

Your mother's friends have probably gathered around her to keep her from being alone and to give her support, but this ~~is~~ can't go on as a regular thing because social life is organized around couples, and she will find herself alone again, which is the dreadful burden of the aged widow, which children can do almost nothing about since they can't fill the empty space and shouldn't try. Well, you may know all this. In which case, my apologies.

To go on. The latest news about Leah is good. The cancer is in remission, and our spirits, as you can imagine, have soared. On a lower level: I seem to remember sending you a copy of my pocket autobiography, but if I didn't, it's now available in your University library, if it buys such books, in CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS, Autobiography Series, Vol. 5, Gale Reserach Co. Also, Evans' and Kleinzahler's interview with me should be coming out in the next CONJUNCTIONS in a ~~revised~~ revised, extended version. Finally, you never did tell me whether P.E.N. magazine ever ran your piece, and/or others, on my work.

Crozier

(Jan.9 1988

Dear Andrew:

I can't send you Zukofsky's letters to me (or mine to him, which seem to have disappeared, although Burton Hatlen thinks he saw them in the archives in Austen, but he wasn't altogether sure, so I doubt it) but I can send you excerpts. I don't remember now the basis for my selection. Probably revelance to me and my work. Anyhow, you're free to use them if you do a piece on my early work.

Love,

Cash

126 Irving St. (donwstairs of 128), San Francisco

6 Feb. 1988

Dear Andrew:

How pleasant the news about your anthology! It's about time you got some intelligent attention. Did you include Richard Caddell and Tony Baker? or do they belong to a younger generation doing a different thing? I'm relieved too to hear of your mother's strength and that she hasn't stopped seeing a lot of friends. The danger, as I think I wrote you, is that the survivor loses her customary friendships because unattached individuals tend to get left out of social get-togethers more and more as time goes on. She sounds as if she's not going to let that happen.

Re Paul the Zukofsky, nobody has any influence on him, not even fellow musicians, who, I understand, detest him. So look for no quarter there. You'll just have to paraphrase or put the contents of the letters ~~m~~ into your own words.

It's quite possible that my letters to Margery Latimer are at the Wisconsin Historical Society because I do remember reading somewhere that Toomer had bequeathed Margery's papers to the Society after her death but I never made the connection to my letters. I'd be interested in seeing them myself.

Our reason for travelling to England with my daughter and son-in-law are quite ordinary: they're good company and I love to be with them both....you and Jane would like them too....and I need their help in carrying luggage. I want to visit old friends, of course, and if I can get a couple of readings along the way, I'll take them, but mostly I want the four of us to soak up England, what's still left of it, no thanks to Thatcher, and enjoy it. Last week Leah had to go back on a reduced chemotherapy but we're going to go ahead and do it anyhow unless things just turn out too bad.

Love,

Dear Jane: We have a tentatvie reservation in London for the last two weeks in Sept. for a 2-bedroom flat with kitchen, etc. at 4 Bleinheim Crescent for 65 pounds a day. Could we get something comparable at a better price?

Hugs,

27 March 1988

Dear Andrew:

Why pass on Paul Zukofsky? You know the worst about him already and are not going to be shaken up if he responds as you expect. There is always the possibility that his situation with respect to his father has changed and he might give you permission to quote. You're risking only the postage, after all.

Duncan's death was a BIG event, not only here but in N.Y., Boston, Milwaukee, and other places, where big memorial meetings are being held, and many articles published. His death coincides with the announcement that the University of California Press will publish all his work, including his correspondence, in in seven or eight large volumes. Until two years ago, when Leah became ill, Robert and I had been a joyous intellectual pair. We used to go to art shows together, listen to music on my state-of-the-art phonograph, and babble happily over Leah's steaming dinners. He had had a kidney failure a few years before, complicated by some blood disorder not clearly diagnosed, and after the usual program of dialysis in clinics, had had surgery and a tube inserted into his abdominal region so that he could administer his own dialysis. This procedure ~~xxxxxxx~~ ~~xxxx~~ was a relief at first but turned out to be almost as burdensome.. His hands and everything he handled had to be perfectly sterile; everything had to be measured precisely; the dialysis had to be done four times a day, and at exactly the right ~~xxxx~~ intervals; the most exotic food limitations had to be observed. There was hardly time for anything else. Yet his mind remained clear for quite a while and he didn't complain when I talked to him over the phone. Finally a time came when he fainted, then again, and he wound up in St. Marys Hospital, within walking distance of me. When I visited him in the intensive care unit, the nurse, a middle-aged, no-nonsense kind of a woman who had been around, said he was asleep.

"I'll wait outside until he wakes up," I said.

The nurse thought about that a moment and then, out of consideration for me, said, "That might take an hour or two."

"In that case, I'll leave a message for him."

The nurse thought about that too and found it unacceptable. "No, you go in and wake him. He needs the company."

"What do you mean? Doesn't he have company?" Robert has a vast complex of friends, admirers, students and miscellaneous hangers-on.

"No." She shook her head glumly and looked questioning. "Only his friend, Jess, comes."

So all right, I opened the door to his room slowly and tiptoed in, holding my breath so as not to make a sound. He was asleep and looked ninety years old. I just stood there, waiting. After a minute or two he opened his eyes....the sleeping cat too senses when someone is looking at him, and opens ^{its} ~~his~~ eyes...Immediately his face lit up and he smiled, ~~xxxxxxx~~ losing his age. "Oh Carl," he said, ^{and he reached up and barely touched my cheek with his fingertips.} "I loved you and Leah so much." But after that our talk became mundane...his arterial surgery, his pain, what goes in a Catholic hospital...until Jess came in, accompanied by Robert Bertholf, Robert's bibliographer, as you know, who was there to finalize the contract with the U of C Press. Bertholf was loud and joshing and I left angry. They couldn't do anything more for him at the hospital and Robert left the next day. He died ~~xxx~~ at home the ^{day after that,} ~~xxxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxxx~~. The heart had become too ~~x~~ weak to keep pumping, the muscle had lost its spring. My description of the moment of his awakening sounds fictional but that's what happened.

Leah's condition since I wrote you last has become uncertain and I doubt whether we'll be able to undertake the trip. For the time being, I've stopped looking for a flat and am just waiting to see what happens.

Love to you and Jean,

26 July 1988

Dear Andrew:

That Paul Zukofsky is a pain in the ass. Just the mention of his name gives it to me.

About why the Partisan Review didn't have a place for Louis Zukofsky's poetry. I don't think in its early years the editors were aware of his existence (we were very obscure), and when years later, they were, there was nothing in it that lay within their agenda for examining and passing judgment on the society and culture of that time. Zukofsky's poetry must have seemed to them to exist for itself. Furthermore, with the exception of F.W. Dupee, an incisive critic but without adventurous tastes, the editors seemed disinterested in poetry, even though it occasionally appeared there if the poet was well enough known. No, their territory was the novel, for obvious reasons.

I had met Philip Rahv, the founder of PR if I'm not mistaken, at Kenneth Fearing's apartment in Greenwich Village where he had come, like others, to enjoy Kenneth's sardonic wit, and I took an instant dislike to his heavy, humorless intellectualism, overbearing, generalizing (how many wrong turns the world has had to take because of generalizations and how much time has been wasted disproving the grandiose claims of the generalizers, but always after they had done their mischief). So I didn't feel inclined to become interested in anything he was starting.

For another thing, the editors were idiosyncratic radicals. Nobody could tell where they fit in or what they believed. We knew they weren't Communists because their reason for being seemed to be to expose Communist errors. They weren't Socialists either, although they were constantly quoting Marx. The Socialists were an altogether different kettle of fish. Dwight Macdonald sounded like a Trotskyite so we thought the others might be too, and Stalinists, which Zukofsky, Oppen and I were at that time. I considered Trotskyites the worst of all trouble-makers. So it was an all-around no-no, and I paid no attention to PR. I should have because a few weeks ago a friend sent me the May-June 1940 issue and I was startled to find T.S. Eliot's East Coker there plus Sidney Hook on Maritain plus political commentary by Macdonald and Rahv on the Communists which ~~could have written~~ Gorbachev ~~could have written~~.

I must have heard Duncan wrong. He was in the grip of too much physical distress to have been able to put himself and his affection for Leah and me in the past. That would have taken a philosophical distance not possible in that condition. He must have said, "I love....."

The enclosed review by Donald Davie came out of the blue. Lots of surprises in it. Can't help feeling that my Collected is never going to be reviewed in England. On the other hand, there is going to be [^]Carl Rakosi, Man and Poet ^{book} from the National Poetry Foundation. Deadline May 1989; publication 1989. Got word of it from Burton Hatlen, who took over from Terrell, but who in turn will be away on a sabbatical in Norway for a year. You will contribute a piece, won't you? The most difficult part will be the bibliography. Mike Heller will need your help with the chronology of my early poems. NPF is doing Man and Poets on David Jones and Marianne Moore this year.

Nothing new to report on Leah: nothing good but nothing very bad either. We've had to give up our visit to England of course. You and Jean are our dear friends and we miss you.

Love,

5 May 1986

Dear Michael:

Cuddeh
editor of Ironwood

How nice of you to send me
IRONWOOD 27. But why?

In any case, it's very much alive,
particularly the Beverly Dahlen section and
the piece by Norman Finkelstein, and I'm glad
to have it.

You and Mary seem awfully far away
but IRONWOOD brings ^{you} for a moment closer.

Affectionately,