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# **booster and blaster**

**the montreal  
free poet**



### THE MONTREAL FREE POET, BOOSTER & BLASTER

Working Committee: Raymond Gordy, Managing Editor;  
Glen Siebrasse, Production; Alan Pearson, Carol Leckner,  
Publicity; Artie Gold, Circulation.

6580 MacDonald, Montreal 254.

### THE SECOND ISSUE

THE MONTREAL FREE POET, BOOSTER & BLASTER is a cooperative, publishing poets resident in Montreal only. Submissions cost \$2 per page and must be clearly typed. Please send cash; otherwise a money order payable to Raymond Gordy. A return address must be included. Criticism is free. First submissions are limited to 5 pages per contributor; subsequent submissions are limited to 2 pages per contributor. The managing editor is an elected position, open to all contributors. His term of office is limited to 2 issues. All contributors are expected to share in the production of the magazine. More people are needed on the Working Committee; those interested call 284-2619.

This issue is more like the magazine should be, some good poetry, much indifferent, some very bad. Some poets were and remain cynical about paying for publication. Others see the whole magazine as making fun of poetry. That is not true. This is an attempt to make the poetry writing community in Montreal conscious of itself. All who contribute are expected to work on the magazine and to create a workshop for those who call themselves poets to share themselves in being poets. There is nothing 'unprofessional' in being public about our craft - helping fellow poets. This is not a literary magazine. This is a forum and workbook for Montreal Poets. Those interested only in careerism, or those who pay \$2 for easy and cheap publication should stay away. Treat this exercise with respect!

### THE ENGLISH SPEAKING POET IN QUEBEC TODAY

THE MONTREAL FREE POET, BOOSTER & BLASTER publishes Montreal Poets only. There is reason in this. We are an English-speaking community, physically circumscribed within a larger French-speaking community, but paradoxically, a minority which shares a majority English-speaking consciousness. This is difficult politics and should create a poetry of meaningful content and commitment. Too much poetry in English Canada .....

A change of policy will occur in the third issue.  
Manuscripts are invited, but poems will be selected  
by the editor. Please do not send money with submission.  
You need it more than me.

Addre ss all submissions to :

Glen Siebrasse,  
Editor, MFP. #3,  
351 Gérald St.,  
Lasalle 690, Québec.



is a poetry of experiences, a recording without reflection. Here in Québec that approach is unacceptable. Here, great English-speaking poetry will be written, not only confessional but historical, dealing with Québec's distinctive and local reality- survival.

English-speaking however, does not mean English poetry. What has become a political slogan, i.e. the 'Westmount English', does not adequately describe our city nor its consciousness. The identification of our poetry with the English concentration in this city, and that with English Canada, has alienated it from Québec. This city was, and retains, French, Slav, Jew, Latin and English populations. A first generation Slav writing in English certainly will not reflect English manners. In fact, he is bound to have a schizoid usage of the English language paralleling a French-English-Ethnic multiplicity in his cultural experiences. In this way he redeems it. Makes it ours. For us, English-speaking poets in Québec - language and society are one.

Let there be no mistake - we are Québécois first. Since the reality of the English language in Québec is predicated upon historical conquest; creation, not entrenchment must be our collective apologia. Our presence here as poets must be an act of faith in geography, people and destiny. Toronto and the Tamarack Review is far away; Vancouver and Very Stone House further; Ottawa close, Fredricton close.

Gaston Miron, the Québec poet speaks of 'l'homme rapaillé' of the 're-integrated man'. He speaks of being naked; of being dispossessed. Thrust into nothing, he returns, now reborn.

I have not come back again  
Just to come back  
I have arrived  
At the beginning.

And

Wanted: a man  
To get on with salvation  
A man no more no less  
With no petty thought  
Of recall,

With his naked substance and humility his voice speaks French, that also miserable, disenfranchised. Here he is the servant of the community, or as he prefers to call himself 'an agitator'. His work is nothing less than the creation of a people and a language.

Where does this leave the English-speaking poet in Québec? For us, in Québec, language is the excuse to dismiss one another: 'bloody French' or 'les Anglais'. We know each other by an easy and suspect totalism. If we were only a physical presence, emigration might solve the impasse. But we share each others consciousness, we are implicated in and with each other. To deny the English language would be to deny Québec. Herein lies our voice. As English-speaking poets we must with Miron embrace language like ourselves, stripping away the insinuations and threats, leaving imagination and love.

Raymond Girdy

## Blind

The blind man seeks the sun;  
Yet all around  
We see  
Sunbeams  
Spatter black earth  
Like an acid eating,  
Eroding that base matter.

We have lost contact  
With primordial forces;  
And black bullets  
Sizzle off asphalt  
Searing the skin  
With countless stigmata;  
While in spotless  
Cold  
December shrouds  
Wrap us;  
And all we see  
In this misty dark  
Is -  
Is the shadow -  
A shimmering past. . . .

## Birth

Chilling  
Winds whip  
The moist body.

Light  
Ray fingers  
Reach  
                  through  
The green shield.  
                  Above  
Where buds burst  
Like firecrackers  
                                  starring  
The sky -  
                  a holocaust of life -  
A seed  
                  is kicking  
Through the earth's shell.

Ian Burgess

## Born Prisoners

Prisoners of our own experience  
we are held  
in living water  
at birth.

Piercing the curtain  
between this world  
and the next,  
we fall

in death.

We first thrust  
into nothingness

our empty heads

suppliant hands

we extend  
into the vaporous  
air and water  
earth and fire.

We gasp,

groping  
in the black  
wilderness

And thunderous  
sounds -  
echo the pain  
of inhalation  
of freedom

the cries -

protest against the fires  
within ourselves.

## Desert Scene

Close your eyes.

The enormity  
of space -  
depresses you.

Dream -  
of the infinite blue  
a vast celestial desert

Pray for wisdom  
to guide you

Look  
across the barren land  
to walled perimeters.

Close your eyes.

Penetrate the veil  
Feel  
the void rip  
the muffled visitor  
who mutes the senses.

Dream -  
of cold astral clocks  
and sense  
the fog

This is the knowledge  
That lies beyond the desert clouds.

Firmament

In my firmament -

this firm foundation-

I see

the mourning planet

weep

like a meteor wandering among stars of

black suits

and

ebony shawls

Reflected

in puddle images.

and the funeral streets

Through the perfectly  
transparent spheres,

like blurred shadows

Carbonized visions move regularly -

are fixed

and sketched

without friction

And float by me.

These diseased

complexions

of nature -

the graves and sewers

are

cemetaries

for the decomposed

Come, Lucifer,

morning star

bring your light

to the crystal shell -

banish the spectres -

the wild-haired comets

Pierce the five cracks

of the egg

Brighten the disorder

in the sublunar universe.

Ian Burgess



## Paper Reality

The blank paper is the reality  
Onto which we sketch the illusion  
or  
is it the other,  
The blankness,  
An illusion? and the tracing,  
the reality? Then the outline  
is  
whatever we block  
or shade  
in adding  
details.  
Colour  
Is blended - a three-dimensional vision -  
on a plane surface.  
And perhaps,  
the illusion  
is  
the fading  
canvas.  
Flaking layers  
reveal  
the underpainting  
and  
the  
convoluted, manipulated  
images  
of the medium.  
Within the flat,  
rectilinear space our motions  
determine  
The Reality - the emptiness  
or - the shades -  
The Illusion - the real form.  
In the gluttony  
memory -  
Art's negative zone - is the orgy  
Of abstractions. Negative tissue  
of scar in the brain  
reconstructing basic patterns  
in prisms, windows, and mirrors of reality  
Beyond appearance.  
Even diamonds  
come from soot just as  
Just as The Holy Man  
Points  
to the sky.  
SURVIVAL IS Survival is hard  
In man's presence in this negative,  
scarred void.

Ian Burgess

### Lost Memories

Poltergeists of the mind  
and displace memories  
until only pain remains  
shift objects  
of pleasure  
in dancing reveries.

However,  
floating dreams  
vanish  
in puddle images  
stabbed by  
rain  
and multiply  
vision  
in multiple facets

The sky and cloud

A thousand  
daggers  
of uncollected thoughts -  
are  
vaporous reality.

Ian Burgess



## Energy

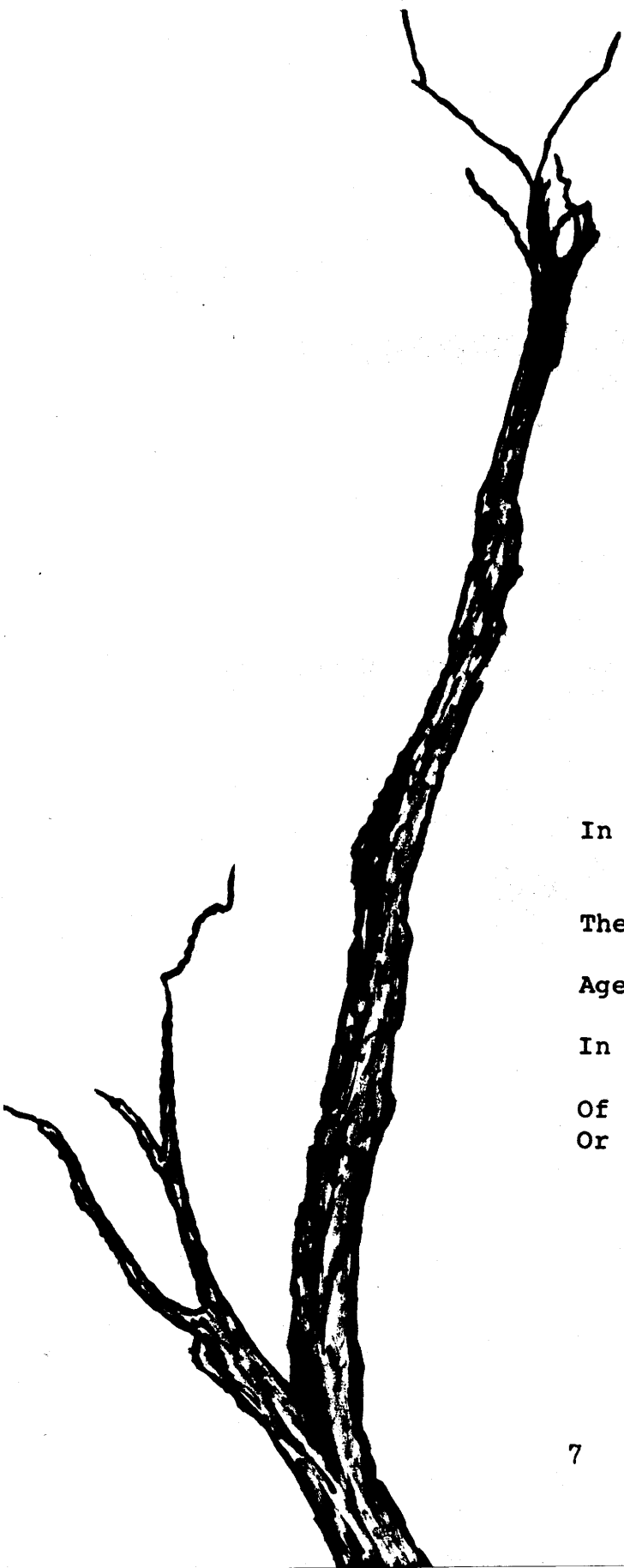
The tension of  
mind-                    the  
centre                  coiling  
                         of a spring  
tightens                in taut apprehension  
the core's              spirals  
winding                upon itself

until it releases its  
                         energies  
in pure white creative  
force of symmetry.

The sound of            the  
light-                  releasing  
flash                   of the coil  
                         in blinding sheets  
luminates              focuses  
the centre's            upon itself  
spinning

until it passes its  
                         peak  
in serene silent conception  
within still forms.

Ian Burgess



### Grandfather

In the old,

clenched,  
withered hands

The impotence of

power

Age is held.

In the eye

is the tear

Of joy

Or of

inability -

white  
wizened  
skin  
and  
hair.

Ian Burgess



## I) Canoeing With Sue

Gliding through long grasses and misty loon cries,  
Sliding through an icy sleeplessness of forest scents;  
"Softly" she whispers;  
And slowly I stroke--  
Indian and ancient on the timeless waters,  
Chilled and stilled by lethargic mist-dreams,  
Lily-pads  
And river reeds glistening with the morning dews  
As I gently suck at the sweet, moist fog:

I can see her body floating at the bow in restless motion,  
Hazy edges shimmering,  
She flutters happily and sighs--

Paddle flashing briefly  
My paddle flashing in rhyme,  
And an abortive laugh gurgles somewhere deep within  
As with barely a ripple, we skirt the fallen trees:  
Beeches, birches, and soundless eternal pines,  
And forever river bends, hidden in mist,  
Waiting for the sun.

## II) Talking to Laurence

Why, says I, are your poems like diamonds,  
rubies,  
sparkling semi-precious  
gems and lacework--

My poems sit like complacent pigeons, soiling the page.  
Wow, he says, look thru my eyes:  
And now his stuff is cracked,  
chipped,  
flawed...

While mine begins to glow, dully at first, in the night.

### III) Lee and I, Preparing for Final Exams

My goodfriendlee  
Sits across acres of white plastic table top;  
Head bowed, pen racing, brow furrowed.  
He has a small pimple on his nose,  
And there is a lock of his hair that  
Somehow falls across his face everytime he finishes a page,  
Looks up at me,  
And says:  
"Why aren't you studying?"

when the black and white lotus eaters came it was autumn  
i remember it well  
we knew they were sailors by the blueprints on their lagging arms  
and petal fingers

it is cold in the garden with the frost of early morning

but once it was spring

i remember it well

red would smile and laugh

and his loud healthy look would make mother's white  
disease clear away, cringing.

the earth was young and the sun's reassuring laughter warmed her

baby waves chased each other happily, bumping their heads against the rocks

trees were so happy they shed tears as sweet as honey and stretched out

their thin fingers and many arms so the birds could play in them.

color made us happy

the cherry trees blossomed, apple trees

the grass were thousands and thousands of little elves laughing

strong and kind as the wind tumbled them over

each other and they tickled your feet as you

walked barefoot and giggled there

and it was its own reason for being

A chicken little yelled, "Who am I?" bringing in the lotus eaters.

they were not many at first but soon multiplied

born from the undertongues of their mother-fathers

one hand on suicide and the other on the tube

blueprinted categorized

covering the land with their frozen blood white

carrying dandylions in each arm they dragged after them

moving high above the grass

blocking the sun

it cringed below them

below their heavy feet it sighed

died

yellowed

and withered

and the white powdered bones blow over now

speaking soft

while lotus eaters plan frantically and resign

frank cianciullo



jerimy and the crystal eyeballs

The geek was a rag-doll and believed that. He was to be a spineloss grey color with black dots for eyes.

Today he was mad-sad because they told him he could not get out. They told him. There was slush on the ground, oodles and oodles of puddles. Wet and damp too. A foggy dreary day. They told him. How ugly it seemed as he looked through the living room's giant window.

Tired, he crawled into a corner, in the light of yesterday's sun, last summer's loves. Battered by pendulum feet. Back and forth. Around and against. Fed up. Exhausted and resigned. His world was night and he was sleeping now. Arms lifeless, twisted wool, extended fingers striving to grasp, sitting on one foot under him, his head supported by the wall. Exhausted and resigned.

Morning came when Mr. Goodman, a sometime neighbour, picked him up, with soft hands, murmuring softings and then opening his eyes... installed crystal eyeballs, to see better. But the geek was still nighting, exhausted and resigned. Now was day. His eyes were opened. There were no more had beens. Now prismatic dimensions of is as seen through would be eyes.

The walls were gone and everything was green. Tinted colorful. Happy. Honest tones.

Excited by the new dimensions and to see-show the world he ran to the rooftop and sat there.

The cold slush was no more. Now there were soft snow lawns, red fences, country mail boxes, bright green trees, all lighted, beautifully colorful wrapped packages walking to the music of the toy drum sound as the small shell crust over the powder snow under their feet drums, violins of icycles on the multi-fingured arms of trees snapping to the beat. Soul music, he shades.

Sounds parading before him each twitching a soft spot. Feeling. No geek.

frank cianciullo

# WHY NOT EDEN?

## BECAUSE

cold clammy claws  
of world killers  
at each other's throat  
calling it life  
cause choking smiles  
to reveal glinting teeth  
sinking into our children  
and with their future blood  
dripping from their jaw  
sign secret pacts  
to aid each other  
to build  
concentration camps  
of the finest final solution

## BECAUSE

cancerous concepts crawling  
of slime creatures  
at gala state affairs of the dead  
calling it peace  
toast each other's lowness  
sip sick causes  
sucking life from the alive  
and with twisted lips  
lisp secret pacts  
to exchange information  
on how to mutilate the yet unborn  
on how to grow them in oven laboratories  
and swaddle them in mushroom blankets  
and proud parently  
bronze their ashes

## BECAUSE

cannibal corpses clapping  
of iron heels  
at their own trials  
identify the butcher's apron as the other's  
calling it truth  
praise fatted faces of proud assassins  
compliment the 'took orders only'  
on having sanity committed  
to shock treatments  
and just before leaving the party  
in their holocaust limousine  
confess to the elimination of us  
and of course  
we the jury find the defendants  
not guilty

## BISHOP GATE

Dressed like the beautiful  
and almost are  
aware  
meet at the place

the gate keeper peeks  
through a keyhole carried around his neck for times like these  
and times like these are many

past the gate lie wonders  
futures in the present

mannequin, peeling and bald,  
steps naked from a brand new asylum of the old  
holding hands with another  
who just exists from the waist to the knee

two lips slip hissing  
into a sanctuary of ideals  
closing firmly the tissue door  
which just wipes the scene away

overflowing prayers panic  
before and after the stainless altar  
bleeding before the ceremony  
at a price that has just been slashed

songs of singing song sing  
into a wind of barbed wire  
asking for a collection  
from those who are to be sacrificucked

andre farkas

DEDICATED TO THE FOLLOWING

J.L. NOW MRS S.B.F.

SANDRA MY DAUGHTER

THE MANY LISTENERS OF THE RADI~~ED~~ SHOW

"SERANADE FROM THE STARS" 1949-1950

by THE LATE "LEE HAMILTON"

OF RADIO STATION C.F.C.F.

AND TO THOSE WHOSE REQUESTS FOR COPIES OF  
MY POEMS I DID NOT MEET IN THOSE DAYS.



S.B.F.



BROWN

Brown! T'is like the clay of earth-- the plains  
Of Asian lands; the baked places 'neath the sun;  
The spectacle of summers dying leaves;  
That crazy rushing that Nature heaves  
On Life, Beauty, and all things--- when snows  
Do melt in springtime, and rivers on a mad rage flow.  
Brown! Akin to Black in all its forms,  
Sweet cushioner of dreams seeping through the palms-  
Of night to decoy men into its jaws  
To be made prisoners in its eerie walls.  
Yet I will ever adore you for all you are;  
And because of what you are, and who you are;  
For Brown! when seen in the eye of you my dear  
Erupts the love in my soul: O lips draw near.

"I LOVE YOU"  
TO. J.L.

I love you! to the heights beyond all heights,  
I love you! to the depths beyond all depths,  
I love you days, I love you nights;  
And fain, should this be not enough  
I love you dear, beyond enough.

I love you here, I love you now,  
I love you old, I've loved you young;  
I love you in the noonday sun-----  
And love you more when day is done,  
Yet fain, I would but love you more.

But should some one so loved before,  
By all the gods, I'll damn him to the core---  
For having loved with a love so pure;  
Then will I clear him of my sight  
And love you stronger than before.

S.B. Francis

## "THIS THEN WAS GHANDI"

A man On God, of humble breed,  
A man who felt the pangs of need;  
A man who lived his life for men,  
This then was Ghandi, a man of men.

A man who journeyed o'er many seas  
In quest of knowledge, while in his teens;  
So that to India and her tribe  
The knowledge gained, to them he can subscribe.

This knowledge gained, now back he came,  
His eyes shone bright, his heart in flame;  
Flaming with pure delight-----  
As India sprang up before his sight.

And as he from the ship alight,  
His vision took him on a flight----  
Through India's darkened plains and heights  
To behold his all important fight.

A fight to conquer tribal strife,  
A fight to enhance his brother's life;  
A fight to teach and educate----  
India's teeming populate.

This mountainous fight did Ghandi take  
And then and there placed his life at stake;  
His life, he made ransom for a cause  
And like his Maker, he did not pause.

He did not pause once to reflect  
Oh how ruthless men, would try to inject  
The germ of hatred in the breast  
Of some potential homicidal derelict.

Not even on that fateful day  
When he was on his way to pray,  
Did he give thought he would be prey  
To a ghastly act of foul play.

Now look oh India in eternal shame,  
Now gaze oh India and behold  
The aged, frail, and murdered frame----  
Of Ghandi, who for India slaved.

Now once again India look and see  
A man most Holy, as Holy can be;  
Then bow your heads, and take of the blame,  
While Ghandi rises to Celestial fame.

S.B. Francis

"ODE TO ST. HENRY ST. ANNE"

Long orphaned, she struggles defiantly-  
Against her wretchedness, and gross poverty  
To enhance and place the children of her womb  
That they may stand amongst those that bloom  
Not as withered branches on rotted trees,  
Not as jackals, apes, or outcasts, unwanted be  
But as men staunched as staunched can be  
Giving their inners, yea, their lives blood freely  
As did their sires in bygone times-  
To lift her in whose bowels they dwell  
Above the grit the dirt, the smoky hell  
In which she wabbles, as through an infidel.  
O Mother into whose arms I prostrate lay;  
Whose lips gently kiss me each morn, each day,  
I counsel thee be calm, for in a while I say  
Your sucklings shall not longer be helpless prey  
To the whims of blasphemy and damning scorn  
Which you have nursed since first this land was born;  
No, thou will unshackle the shackles come the morn  
And robe thyself in raiment perfected by--  
The tears, the aches, the uncertainties and sighs  
Of your sons and daughters, both past and alive.  
Yea come that day, as come it will  
Your scoffers shall be at your mercy, your will.  
Thou aging walls brace, brace thy crumpling frames,  
Hold back your debris, and forget your shame;  
Care not that your face be covered with timeless soot  
Blown to you from those of richer root;  
Sulk not, nor fret at squeaking timbers 'neath the feet  
Of those that tiredly and grimly take their seat  
Beneath your roof when days toil is done  
To nibble again the repas their inners violently shun;  
O paupered shrine; be their Comforter be-  
And damn them not to yet more calamity.  
O hapless creditors that herein must abide.  
Cast not your hands before your face to hide;  
Walk not in the shadows of your unwanted day.  
Seclude not yourself because of what others say;  
Rather, shout defiance, and let come what may  
Bend your backs to the tasks of your coming day  
When out of your ruins will sprout a clan  
In whose veins never purer blood did ran.  
And never lived men of good deeds in ages gone  
As these sons of the soothe, from St. Henry St. Anne.  
O breasts on which many a niggardly suckling fed  
To you a balm of words I give to noint your bowing head  
And fain, I would in greater measure add to these.  
O thou tormented, raped, and denounced streets  
Curse not the aroumor of those feet  
That o'er your pebbles beat, Bring forth no tears  
To hurt the hurted souls that scurry on  
Through outrageous obstacles when day is done.

O lanes long seasoned to many a pauper swill  
Chant yet your eerie song to break the maddening still--  
That grasps the vitals of those tired hearts  
Now rising to challenge their better counterparts;  
O Thou condemned, out of they condemnation rise;  
And build a tower of deeds to perfect your prize  
Then hail and well done, to St. Henry, St Anne.

S.B. Francis  
January 18, 1949

FOR MY GIRL SANDRA  
ON THE DAY OF HER BIRTH 18th Aug. 1952

O time weathered hands lead with tender care  
This child as on she goes through the years:  
Let not her ramblings pass always unaware  
By seasoned eyes with selfish stares.

Let not the heat of her well mix'ed blood  
Grow cold before mens mounting flood:  
Let not her infant yet senseless being be part  
Be part of senseless creatures in earths bloody mart.

Unfathomed love drew and brought us near  
And commanded thus-. Let all men hear:-  
That two not alike unto one, shall from this time be one-  
And being one, shall multiply on one.

And let men hear and know, that the sum of one  
Shall henceforth and forever be that same one  
Who in coming trod a thorny path  
And in going forgave earth of its wrath.

The circle is formed and patented by--  
The circle within with their prickish sighs.  
The society is formed on vicious planks  
That would exclude you from its ranks.

By S.B.F. YOUR DAD



She has polyethelene hair and  
styrofoam breasts and eyes flashing  
like traffic lights.

I once caressed her stainlesssteel  
thighs and thought thoughts mechanical.

Among the bones the shaman cast, with  
silentwordless eye motions  
I remind her  
of a poor rodent skin that kept alive  
a heart that loved her.

Fate admits no arguments.

As one on a battlefield  
but lately hauled from some  
rustic purposelessness,  
I acquit myself with reckless  
cowardness. Wounds

Bleeding prayers,  
I beat my rifle into crutches  
My cannons into iron doves.

G.G.Friedland

—oo@oo—

My father

gave me asthma, hayfever and the guarantee  
I'd get arthritis later in life  
named me arthur and probably  
when my back is turned  
shoots hisself full  
of insulin;  
has the nerve to tell me  
I ought to work.

My father also would like to  
sit typing, only it is night time now  
no art arrived at at this intolerable hour  
for him  
hard work all day  
will buy its own way  
into first editions.

a. gold

on seeing a freighter moving out to sea twenty-five feet from where I swam on the St Lawrence Seaway.

Nov.18/68.

Blaaaaaaaaaaaaaassssttt from harbor foreign ship  
incoming dark Russian perhaps acres of low slung  
deck carrying oil loose sealed below hull  
sliding slow past night black sounds mournful.

While I am swimming in moonlight that separated  
like a eclipsed passage slowwwllly before me  
the thing is extracted as worm laborious effort  
totally silent grave sea measure continuous

as if every Turkish joint or Portugese black wool  
were in harbour experience and tabac drifts  
long in strands past the silent moon night.  
as outside might be cafe off limehouse and this

were the Thames in it were a great river leaking  
with god power and stealth with ship transporting  
coal oil steel to Dakar or Africa black coast port  
and greasy hands were paid and impregnated a port and this

were very very real in black night that saw swimmer  
paralyzed awful on edge of inland canal majestic  
hulk miles and hours yet slipping sleek as boats  
launched on silver dust with cloud trestles moving them.

and my eyes were born gave birth to long hulk  
sliding from imaginative boundaries I had not seen in  
Black or caspian sea decree that all freighters be long  
sleek arabic dark grease holding down holds full bursting  
from grain perhaps overlying gears and noise fog horns steel

bearings black with grease and precision steel grey to the moon  
hidden under tarp only guaranteed to work in the non squeel  
arising from the field of massive ghost liner passing  
cutting edges then bisecting then totally

obscuring any light the yellow moon turned black or  
disappeared in clousbank with strong silence as years  
strung on cable as world war two music blasted as it passed  
a body huddling wondering god questions and metal beast existence.

creature moved stealth of metallic grey blood and every  
organ same metallic black or grey underneath that made appear  
a billboard of God nothing pulled or pushed but the world  
chose to move away from away through the length of it.

-a,gold.

### Kismet

I turned over and kissed her waiting lips;  
Never had she tasted so pleasing;  
As she hummed in my ear moisture came from below,  
I entered her;  
How warm and hard it feels, she sighed  
Like a burning of heat from the  
Highest voltage,  
To me I felt warmth and ecstasy in her;  
Movements aroused us till awe we both  
Sighed a last sigh of relief in  
That sea of pleasure.

### Requiem Mass For Irving Layton

Oh Irving Layton or is it Issie Lazarovitch?  
Why must you leave our fair city?  
With all its pretty dames and gay hommes  
Who will we have to listen to  
At Sir George or Le Bistro?  
Who will we have to turn us on?  
Will it be Cohen or Richler?  
Or will it be Levesque?

Eddy Goldberg



Great Men Are We

For James Drought

Moses burnt a bush one day  
To tablet life upon some clay.

Nero claimed his just reward  
By fiddling to a burning sword.

The Inquisition used a pyre  
To turn a righteous man to liar.

Shakespeare's love poems burned one night  
Till quickly doused by England's might

When Watt with steam applied the heat  
To lines of men with unclad feet.

Then Marx used but a burning thought  
To set afire the ill we'd wrought.

In the flickering of the flame  
Kropotkin spoke in Darwin's name

While in the forge of conflagration  
Stalin formed a modern nation

And in its shadow Hitler lit  
The books and bodies He saw fit.

Then Truman etched the yellow race  
By fission on a building's face

And Johnson came to his acclaim  
By making burning napalm rain.

Dear Reader, note: historically  
The man You choose is really Thee.

Deformed beast, will you next  
Strike a match and light this text

Or can you, with your brain, devise  
How to make a human Phoenix rise?

-- Trevor Goodger-Hill

CARRÉ ST. LOUIS

Poet Crémazie looked different  
This morning on Carré St. Louis.  
They had taken the fence away  
From his cast iron head,  
And now he could be touched.

'Pour Mon Drapeau Je Viens Ici Mourir.'  
Dead in exile: 1879

You reneged Crémazie, you renounced,  
You would not be a bastard father:

'Rhyme "glory" with "victory"  
A certain number of times,  
"Ancestors" with "glorious",  
"France" with "hope";  
Mingle with these rhymes  
Some sonorous words like  
"Religion" our "Fatherland",  
Our "tongue" our "laws",  
The "blood of our fathers",  
Warm the whole over the flame of patriotism,  
And serve hot.  
Everyone will say it is magnificent.'  
(oeuvres)

Québec français! A bas les Anglais!  
Tougher words than you, Crémazie.

Poet Nelligan lived around the corner.  
I live up the street.

Raymond Gordy

## NIGHT TIME

It is only one hour past the sunset  
Only one hour past the markings, and now,  
The round red moon drives life crazy;  
Like hilltop flowers my hands  
Curve inward and threaten to collapse.

This circle is too large for the eyes.

Overcome, I begin to cough  
I throw my arms outward wrapping space  
Knowing if careless  
I should rise through the window  
Towards the sky; and beginning with low shout  
The whole would grow until chant  
And driving harder and faster  
These eyes would fill  
And my voice become the stars.

That is no laughing matter.

Even ordinary life has its risks,  
You say: don't stare at the moon!  
It must be. Looking full face at its face  
My feet begin to run  
They try for speed and flight  
But sinking from weakness  
I turn and loose  
Its face in my face

O Praise!  
Andromeda!

Raymond Gordy

## THE SUNLIT SKATERS

The day was carrying a heaviness  
A weakness and a crying  
From attempting sincere emotion; we began  
With a promise, and the hope of promise  
To urge upon ourselves a noble conception of man  
Only to fail,  
And now there are those among us who walk about  
Hands in pocket mumbling about virtue,  
Others stand on their doorsteps stunned.

It is a chance that happiness is won  
Some even say it is a gift  
Like you and I waiting near the wood  
Watching for the dawn and the last star extinguished  
Remembering nothing from the past or not wanting to  
And expecting on the lake, this edge of silence,  
The first sighting of a startled bird flying away.

You Fern and I remain alone, there are others to be sure,  
Some we have heard feel an expectation  
Some of our friends have begun to undress  
With a quiet murmur of excitement the women  
Their faces having that brightness only noticed by men  
Carry their voices this moment.

Fern whispering: "Ooh I remember this before,  
This same beauty, when I was a child  
Everyday I watched with amazement;  
Near my home there was a frozen lake  
And upon it these silent people  
Moved effortlessly; the sunlight  
Ricocheting off their skates."

Raymond Gordy



## IN DUE COURSE

The President spoke:  
"The war in Vietnam is nearing an end  
Soon there will be peace."  
Then he invaded Cambodia.

The people could not believe,  
More than prolonging the war  
It was the killing, the dying of the young.  
In the beginning there was hope  
"For Freedom and Justice"  
But gradually a weariness set in  
With no victory and no defeat  
Questions arose  
And these proud people, these Americans  
Divided: the peaceful against the warring  
                  sons against fathers  
Until no voice could be heard  
And they murdered each other.

Raymond Gerdy

### THE ONLY SENTINEL

There is the high and happy hill  
Whose solid white rock  
Sits heavily on the earth  
Not far from where I stand.

With you so close  
There is much to fear;  
The shore crushes waves  
And I climb this only sentinel.

Standing and touching stone walls  
With the open windows and spreading light  
I sense they are happy in sound:  
This is good and now content

I want to go on loving  
I want to shout for Passion to pause  
But she will not, she passes, turns  
And smiles with speed.

### BERRY-PICKERS

Trained, we the five rustle bushes  
For berries. Round and blue  
From under the leaves they stare  
To the sudden turning in our hands.  
Plucked, in our bowls they loose  
The wind, trees, sun as we bend,  
Intent on stripping clean, the colour,  
From this tranquil wild scene.

Raymond Gordy

## WHERE TO DRINK IN MONTREAL, VOLUME ONE

It must be hard  
trying to barhustle chicks  
when you look like a Russian spy;  
incomprehensible facile foreigner,  
language layered with gutterals  
(pride of what fatherland?),  
smoothing with delicate palm  
your black hair straight back  
over wary blunt eyes;  
drinking, fatherly, ignored,  
explaining "I want someone  
to sing with me"--told to find  
someone more "musically inclined"--  
finally collapsed, fumbling to keep  
your dark head up,  
spinning in a drunken buzz  
your years will never cure;  
the full beerglass before you  
tawny testimony of desperation  
not desire.

It must be difficult  
to be one of these girls;  
the tavern rituals must sometimes  
depress you with deja vu,  
--sought by a man for whom  
(barring Oedipus)  
you can feel only pity;  
accepting, then blunting,  
the only weapon he'll ever have.

### VISION IN THE CENTRAL METRO STATION, MONTREAL

These faces: curved, aimless, blurring always  
arrive wetly in waves;

foam frothing at the feet of the bows  
of rushing jibing white-hulled sloops

JiMhOrNbY

## Kelly Lane

### Alcides (Irving Layton)

I slew the Centaur Nessus  
whose spattered blood  
smears my shirt

O wife what have you done?  
this tunic burns into my flesh  
blood like acid eats my skin

by heaven! I'll break your forests  
uproot resinous pines  
pile them high on great pyre

standing aloft  
on skin of Nemean Lion  
club in hand  
amid flames I'll await my reward

blow winds and roar  
by torchlight my spirit  
ascends to palaces of gods

the cultural life of our community? Are we ready to take responsibility in the societies to which we belong? We shall not be judged by success, this is true;

but we shall be asked if we have been there. A modern writer has defined a Christian as a man to whom God has entrusted all other men.

Crosslight is published quarterly by members of the Newman Club at McGill University

## PORTRAIT

*I was young  
They showed me Jesus  
Dreamer  
Ugazing eyes  
Red curls  
Soft downy beard  
Princely tapering hands  
(Oscar Wilde dressed  
For a fancy-dress ball!)*  
*O Jesu Jew  
Was this you?  
A swarthy carpenter  
Hooked nose  
Matted hair  
Strong arms  
Swollen hands  
Broken nails  
Bent back  
Sweating your way  
Through  
A troubled life.*

PATRICK KELLY-LANE



The Buzzards

Buzz  
Buzz buzz  
The air is filled  
With millions  
Of tiny buzzards  
Hovering,  
And waiting for a prey.

The sun is darkened  
As they search on  
Attacking here,  
And moving on.

Buzz  
Buzz buzz  
Minuscule carrion-eaters  
Feeding on death  
Trailing her in space  
Following her sickle  
Reflected afar.  
Pouncing on the crop  
Of corpses  
And lost souls  
Detached from limb  
And form.  
The army is mighty  
And bold.

Buzz  
Buzz buzz  
Death is not fast enough  
For all of them to play  
They help her out  
By tackling life  
And sucking  
Bit by bit  
The essence of a human soul.

- SACHA LEBEDIEFF

Voodoo Seven  
(morzando)

Needles  
Needles driving  
Incessantly  
Into my flesh  
Causing no pain  
But anguish.  
Winged ones and others  
FINER  
Nightmarish illusion!

As if wa-ve-tossed the prickles move about  
Ever deepening the grooves.  
Firmly implanted now  
They stare out of their slitted eyes  
As if personally enjoying their little games.

I am not a game-lord!  
I refuse to play!  
Alas the eyes laugh on  
.....  
Quiet now  
I lay resolved  
To quit,  
Abandon ship,  
While far away  
A single drum calls in the dark.

— Sacha LEBEDEFF



Incommunicado

Cross purposes  
Scuttering back and forth  
Seeing the rain fall  
Or sun warm  
Or snow scatter  
While a split second away  
Is the huge hungry mouth  
Agape and expectant.

An anvil sinking  
Down its pipes  
Piercing and maiming them:  
    Away from sun and life  
Into the unfathomable  
    Abysses below.

All is collapsed  
And it is well.

—Sacha LEBEDEV

Middle Ages 11

Dead knight  
Harvested so close  
To the fullmoon  
Pillar of metal  
And leather  
And wood  
Felled by one tiny arrow.

—P

Empty Spaces

Empty spaces  
Crowded with  
Meaningless stop-gaps  
Hovering about  
Swarming and pounding  
Usurping a role  
Not rightfully theirs  
Bemoaning and wailing  
Where joy should occur  
Rejoicing again  
When sadness is aught  
Feeling at home  
In an emptiness  
THEY  
Have filled  
With confusion.

— Sacha Lebedeff

The Everpresent

As a timeless clock  
Strikes timelessness  
Shattering at its feet  
Over and over

Not once  
Did the passing swans  
Stop to look beneath them

Not once  
Did their wings  
Stop their flap in mid-air

The wheels turn slowly  
And churn the tiny glass  
But the crushed glitter  
Lives on,  
A reminder...

— SP

## URBAN LIFE

I see a thousand marauders  
atop rearing horses  
white-eyed blazing.  
Their scythes plunge groins  
and castrate trampled men.  
Women try to escape  
but the rape comes anyway.  
It hurts and it rejoices,  
it horrifies and it is wondrous.  
Then the right breast is cut off  
and before disappearing,  
the invaders come together  
and gallop around in a circle,  
laughing.

## A BUSINESSMAN'S DEAL

Executive studs fill this bar,  
plying each other with drinks,  
and ramming all their company's worth  
up the ass and down the gorge  
of their drinking companion.  
They live their roles with hard eyes  
and a specially-tuned nose that  
scents the next commodity-representative  
needed for their self-worth profit index.  
They tell stories and watch each other  
laugh, and if they laugh  
loud and well, regardless of the  
morning's wretched argument at home,  
the sale is possible. A few discreet  
words about a rival company's inadequacy  
and lack of ability to perform well,  
and a well-placed statement of fact  
about their own company's infallibility  
and reliability of services, and  
the sale is made. The thankless mid-wife  
pays by credit card and slaps his new  
friend heartily on the shoulder as  
they walk out; one satisfied and  
stroking his stomach, the other  
pensively touching his chin.

Carol H. Leckner

## THE TRUDEAU MARRIAGE

March. Lonely blizzards.  
Disjointed, trembling houses.  
Howling, eery winds running  
through empty city streets.  
And on an American talk show  
a man, psychic, predicts  
his country's coming war  
with the surging colossus;  
and nightmares wielding clubs  
beat to death  
yesterday's painful mirage of hope.

I in my green-walled, picture-laced room  
fasten onto the one note  
of promise  
regaled the past few days  
by our media:  
a marriage of love,  
and try to remember that  
above everything else  
lest I am made to forget  
even its paltry promise.

Carol H. Leckner

**don  
mckay**

st catherine street cripple  
through his invisible shield  
his eyes  
wince into mine  
the private battle

do you wonder why i hide in the bath  
do you wonder why i go to bed early  
and fly through secret skies?

does it mystify you that i meditate  
in the dark  
in the nude  
in winter  
intoxicated?

do you study the pain in my eyebrow furrows  
my speech for clues  
and the step of my foot—  
ear to ground like a buffalo hunter?

is his love mirror shattered?  
is he sick?  
is he possessed?

well, the simple truth is  
this apartment is too small  
for all of us  
and i'm uptight about it.

the philanthropist  
have you seen the philanthropist  
feed all the animals  
then torture them  
with her feelings

defenses

be forewarned:  
i am armed  
my typewriter is fully loaded

if threatened  
i will not hesitate  
to turn you into a poem

## On the Stairs

This time  
it was a zipper

only worth thirty cents

again it was the first time  
she'd ever stolen  
anything  
and of course  
the whole world  
knew about it  
everyone in the store  
was after her  
and the police would be  
arriving at any moment  
but I told her not to worry  
because after all .....

Then she asked me if it was all in her  
mind

I asked her where else it might be

she made no reply  
only looked at me  
sort of blankly  
mumbled that it was one hell  
of a thing  
and left  
laughing

kind of madly

John Mitchell

## Through a Restaurant Window

The moon is rising  
peeking out from behind  
the shivering skyline

Exhaust mushrooms drift by  
sprouting arms  
turning into spider webs  
above the street

Stiff figures appear  
and disappear  
pursuing their warm dreams  
along the slippery sidewalks

A young hitch-hiker  
swears, stares at passing cars  
stamps his feet in disgust  
and leaves

Looking down  
I see the moon  
floating in my coffee cup

John Mitchell



**Pharoah Sanders**

H  
H I  
H I I  
H I I M  
H I I M F  
HE IT IS NO FU  
HER IT IS MOT FUC  
HERE IT IS MOTH FUCK  
HERE IT IS MOTHE FUCKE  
HERE IT IS MOTHER FUCKER

**John Mitchell**

### LUNCHBREAK POEM

Life opens at lunchbreaks like a newly printed  
menu.

Dreams emerge from whipped cream & pineapple.  
A dusty gray elephant charges, ears flapping,  
into a postage stamp of trumpeting orchids.

There is a starburst of pain at the centre  
of my left testicle.  
It is not so much lust as terrifying abstinence.  
The New York Times lies open on my desk.  
Squeals from the entertainment pages intimate  
I'm overdue for shallow pleasures.  
I turn over with the rustle of typhoons  
& the Situations Wanted page is bleary with tears.

In an office window a secretary stands before  
a fat man,  
he tightens her corsets from behind.  
Vodka tears stream down her marble cheeks.  
The air is full of coffee beans.  
Streets are suffocating in indifference which rises  
in tendrils from the samovars of Troika Restaurant.  
Bronze doors open on endless steppes. Bells jingle.  
Lucky for us, no wind. How else could we traverse  
this thick mattress of blond ringlets?

Listen. Is it wedding bells on the air, or bells  
that toll for me?  
I've heard snatches from every popular song of my age  
but I will not allow my heart to be made of candy floss  
& bon bons. When I lower my standards you'll hear  
the boom.

Alan Pearson

### THE TIGHTENING COLLAR

I see the harbinger of success  
Leering at me in maniacal glee,  
Whispering the questions of the upper crust:  
"What authors have you read?  
What plays have you seen?  
What musicals have you attended?  
What celebrities have you met?  
What paintings have you admired?  
What symphonies do you like?  
Who is your favourite poet?"  
And I shall pull my hair and scream:  
"Caldwell, Miller, Cain and Spillane!  
The Human Stage and Burlesque Skits!  
Beggars' Opera, and Madame Butterfly!  
Porgy and Bess, and U.S.O. Shows!  
Irving Layton, and Brendan Behan!  
Calendars, and night club murals!  
Churchill's and Edward G. Robinson's!  
Duke Ellington and Stan Kenton!  
And last, but not least, Me!"  
All these years, the irony of it—  
I've been common clay, writing to love,  
Partaking of misery, spouting mush,  
Writing love songs, and now I learn  
That one must be educated to understand  
The real poetry of today, and that  
One must have read hundreds of books  
To understand one's favourite poet.  
Thank goodness, I am mine....

Dave Pinson,  
Courtesy: Evidence

### IDOLATRY

You lost a precious formula,  
Regardless of what kind,  
Nomatter how you rack your brain,  
It won't come back to mind.

Idolatry can be your ruin,  
A fetish can be your waste,  
No two things were meant to have  
The same texture, or taste.

Dave Pinson,  
Courtesy: The Canadian Forum

behind rain

behind rain  
sun pushes  
out from the sea

burning water into a warm mist

that hovers  
and settles along the cove  
between rocks & weeds

and one bird glides out  
crossing the sunrise  
it comes too close and is caught

becomes a soft feathered flame

then black smoke  
dispersing over the waves  
that grow and fall back

and grow and fall back  
away  
from the shore

while sunlight lies in white sand

and a girl  
barefoot  
runs fast...down the beach

into the water, knee-deep  
she is bent over  
looking for sea shells

her long hair slides loose into the wind

water rises  
wetting the orange-blue petals  
on her dress

### Pagan God

the beautiful icons  
cold that you  
worship brightly  
painted to look  
like the thousand  
years dead saints age  
no life just a memory  
of holiness long gone  
kneel and kiss the flat  
sterile icon but do  
not offer your mumbled  
prayers there is no hope  
of answer turn instead  
to the gnarled  
druid god listen  
to it's whispers no  
divine thou shalt nots  
the truely christ  
you see him die on the  
frozen cross but resurrected  
every spring  
your icon died and remains  
dead you worship only  
dust.

### Wholy Yours

I stare at your navel  
and marvel on it's beauty.  
Like a little sticker 'made in Japan'  
It tells me you were made by man.

Allen Roth.

moon.  
silent, glowing.  
like a nightlight,  
ever present.  
familiar  
not a warm glow  
nor even friendly  
but  
of earth, comforting  
ever present.  
ever there  
until  
the  
dawn of tomorrow  
is here  
today.

Unic (to Susan)

If I were queer  
and you were too  
Why then we'd have  
nothing to do  
No kiss, no touch, no  
sex at all  
You wouldn't worry about  
having to ball.  
That is, if we were queer  
and we'd heard not the call.

#### Personality

rhythms in our minds  
setting the tune  
to the beat of our hearts

Allen Roth.

Arcmtl Scan 2015 AKE



# SILENT LETTER PROCESS (1 - 13)

```

1   o   o   1
  v   v
  v   v
1   o   o   1

```

```

1   o   o   1
  v   v   e
  v   v
1   o   o   1

```

```

1   o   e   o   1
  v   v
  v   v
1   o   o   1

```

```

1   e   1
  o   o
  v   v   e
  v   v
1   o   o   1

```

```

1   e   1
  o   o
  v   v   e
  v   v
1   o   o   1

```

```

1   e   1
  o   o
  v   v   e
  v   v   e
1   o   o   1

```

```

1   e   1
  o   o
  v   v   e
  v   v   e
1   o   o   1

```

```

1   e   1
  o   o
  v   v   e
  v   v   e
1   o   o   1

```

```

1   e   1
  o   o
  v   v   e
  v   v   e
1   o   e   1

```

```

leeeeee 1
eeo eeeeee
ee veeveee
eeeeeeeeee
eeeevee v e
eeeee eeee
leeeeee eee1

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eeeeeeeeeeeeee
e1eeeeeeeeee1e
eeeeeeeeeeeeee
eeeeveeeveee
eeeeee eeeee
eeeeveeeveee
eeeeeeeeeeeeee
e1eeeeeeeeee1e
eeeeeeeeeeeeee

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eeeeeeeeeeeeee
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```

e

Richard Sommer

loveeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee e e e

being  
this foggy day

i think  
quite anonymous  
from the nineteenth  
floor  
of pentpoolswimminghouse

seeing  
swarms of midgets  
dancing  
downhill  
through grey clouds

a lighthouse  
i stand  
beaming  
my back to my  
life's breath

my hands  
wiping time  
from the windowpane

nancy stegmayer

## PRIVATE SCHOOL

You watch

the comings & goings of shadows  
on walls  
from one room to the next- steeply  
still ear seeking/up an  
inside wall

You listen to the vary/coloured rustles of flesh  
movement of one mood  
onto the next -scrape of hinges One mind  
upon another  
feeling Universe

Peculiar

Is to notice one IS NOT- Pulse  
a round fist thudding in my back has  
told me I am unlike what  
I am...One thought/ago left with  
nothing but my cells- weep  
feeling the textured landscape of their skins  
Fear- seven 'Terrors' crouching in my  
hair- Those who dream of matings with  
angels clatter/up corridors anxious  
heel pivoting on corners breathless for

Whispers of

Seraphic feet- Depressed on elevating floors  
door/opened- find heads bent sob/  
bing between hands- thumbnail pressing  
crease deeper & deeper along  
margins -fingertips restless as fishes  
diving thru

Blond hair...Stillness no sound but the muttering  
clock- & echo pocketed in corners -Time  
hollowing heads blown -vacant as the scallop/shell hither &  
thither on the sea's unceasing shore- Blue  
thunderheads- Time mocking Time...no mate no

Angels

Only studious expression of cramped rooms  
dark hallways lengthened voices  
scrolled doorways & pedantic doors -Thought  
worming small passage thru Ideas- prim  
feet together restricted reading in rows- the whole

Moist Summer

cramped...Sweat/starts between the thighs prickling thru  
pubic hairs -Embarrassment compresses  
knees -as slowly inexorably in those darkening int/  
ervals between thought -stealthy as light  
creeps in the shuttered brain-

Stoops Lust-

lean/beggar doubled in a garret -foraging  
crumbs- tongue chafing/fire bet/  
ween damp Hungers...

surgical ward

do not tell me there are worse things  
do you think i don't know  
all i ask is what have they done with it  
after all it's been my responsibility  
for some time now

when you told me i didn't believe you  
it didn't feel gone i could still feel it -  
the itch in the toe the knee ache  
and ankle bone - only when i bent  
the knee the sheet stayed quiet  
and flat

did i tell you  
once i won a competition  
for the best legs in our school  
i was fifteen then i think  
it's served me well i hate to think  
they've thrown it in the garbage -  
a kind of miracle become  
so foul even the dogs won't worry it -  
worry it worry it - i worry about it

why won't you tell me  
what they have done with it  
what's left of me wants to know

paddy webb

was i good ?  
what do you mean by good ?

you used to ask me to judge  
your peeing competitions

adjudicate trajectories

i had to lie in the dust  
take a bead on the stone wall  
and decide whose yellow stream  
travelled furthest

parabolic arches broke  
in rainbow fragments the sun's  
motes they passed through

a girl i could not enter

but had a kind of power  
to upset the male ego

my decision being  
absolute

now you ask me to decide  
relative ejaculating  
power and size of penises  
to fuck and satisfy

urinate  
again the power  
to emasculate is mine

but the childhood game  
came easier

paddy webb

middle age

she's getting on now  
small trace of young girl once was  
whose body put out

petals when desired brushing  
cool dew from the thorns  
eroding lees of bitter-

ness all day her mind  
clamped by black stereo-phones  
rings with tedium

of the limping years the lost  
clean spaces taunt her  
snatched by hungry hands they rot

in family chores  
that scrub out past elation --  
nights with her in bed

sharp fragments of resentment  
pepper his body  
like grapeshot awake puzzled

while she sleeps he feels  
for her cystaceous breasts and  
thickened form a love

more tender she'd not believe  
and as early sun  
scatters roped skeins of honey

on the grass and lights  
the centre of his pain  
he weeps for her

paddy webb

trapped

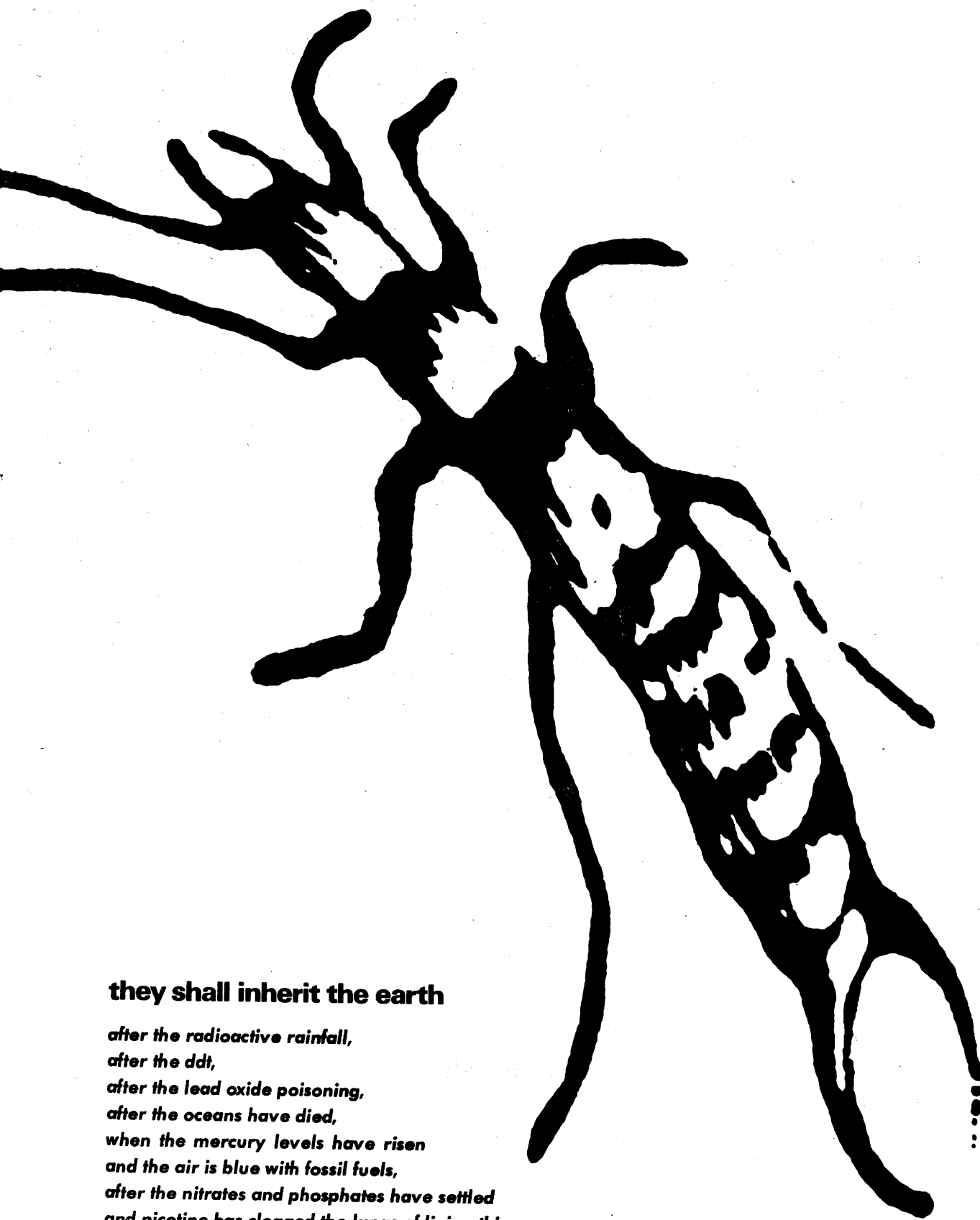
something is trapped in my ear  
behind the drum  
it thumps thumps thumps  
my head is too big  
it is lost in there  
finds no comfort  
in walls of bone  
cannot touch all of me  
at one time  
looks for a door  
and feels feels  
feels for the floor

i lurk in the blue-bottle's eye  
in one of a thousand eyelets  
am buttoned tight  
this cell is too small  
i'm strapped in all right  
and the strait-jacket  
laces and pulls  
i'm a pomegranate seed  
a translucent pill  
bee in honeycomb  
foetus in womb  
i suck my pink thumb raw

the waters broke some time ago  
the sac is dry  
my skin flakes  
chalk dust crumbles  
and shucks off splinters  
shreds saliva threads  
an empty sea-shell  
the win's whistled bare  
hull of a once sunk ship  
a bone house  
full of air --  
something is trapped in my ear

paddy webb





## **they shall inherit the earth**

*after the radioactive rainfall,  
after the ddt,  
after the lead oxide poisoning,  
after the oceans have died,  
when the mercury levels have risen  
and the air is blue with fossil fuels,  
after the nitrates and phosphates have settled  
and nicotine has clogged the lungs of living things,  
after the hormone-infested meat  
and the chemically-treated fruits,  
after all this and much more,  
when the amassed gold coins and paper notes disintegrate  
they shall inherit the earth.*



## INNER LIFE

For myself there is nothing alive except hate.  
When I hate I strike wood  
Tensing my whole body  
Giving feelings that unsettle everything...  
With that strength  
I turn my back to pain  
Ignoring you and your caring;  
And if I kill enough and rob and  
Hurt enough  
There is no need to fear weakness;  
With each death I grow,  
I slip into a world you could never imagine.

Raymond Gerdy

WHAT I THINK OF THE POEMS IN THIS ISSUE

RAYMOND GORDY

Today a poem or any writing must drink from the mainstream, from the issues that describe our lives. Bric-a-brac emotions (eg. Ian Burgess) even if finely sculpted, or technical virtuosity (eg. Richard Sommers) should not deter us from the effort required to make poems mean and count for us as men, in history, today. (eg. Raymond Gordy) It is my conviction that every poem must arise from the poet confronting the Void (eg. Alan Pearson) and responding humbly, with the words and images he has earned in living his life. (eg. Artie Gold, Paddy Webb, Trevor Goodger-Hill)

Symbols, ideas, images, language acquired (usually in the university or by copying other poets) but not possessed and individualized makes only clever-awkward verse. The spirit of life which the poet gives and which creates the tension, rhythm or life of the poem will not last. (eg. Ian Burgess, Sacha Lebedeff, Jim Metcalf, A. Farkas, Frank Cianciullo, G.G. Friedland, S.B. Francis, Alan Roth, Carol Leckner.)

Technique, visual effects, timeliness are inadequate. They have no moral content. A poem need not be political to be committed, but I firmly believe that every poem must be committed to the values which constitute life and community. If the values or the particular community is in jeopardy, then our writing is a positioning, a taking of sides. (eg. Raymond Gordy)

I believe that a poem should leave the reader with a precise emotion or cognition. He should be able to tell where he stands after reading the poem and where the writer stands. (eg. Artie Gold - but not - Nancy Stegmayer, Jean Thornton )

A reply to Dave Pinson's "LITTLE MANTIS" -

Manly mantis, short or tall,  
don't fear the ladies on the wall,  
they'll only eat what they can chew  
and those they can't are too damn few.

Dear Uncle Paul practiced sublimation,  
almost died of old age sans "sensation".  
Rigid - a saint to the very end  
he was "saved" from the belly of a lady-  
friend.

Gertrude Katz

"My Father" by Artie Gold

This small poem reaches out - comes through. I like its restrained but powerful emotive quality. The images are concrete, the language and style simple and appropriate. Nothing jars. It is not self-conscious, pretentious, sentimental or grandiose, but all-of-a-piece. The energy is sustained throughout the poem and contained within it. Enough is not said to make what is said significant, and to leave enough to the reader's imagination to involve me. The portrait comes alive. But then, it's more than a portrait - it's a whole relationship.

\*\*\*\*\* Paddy Webb

dear raymond

here is the proof back

here are my comments

Poetry is a telegram stop

arrived safely stop

am lost stop

love stop

it requires a stricter self discipline then the freedom  
rambles of a short story/novel.

the poet and poem must be aware of the power of each word  
line and breath.

this must also apply to the menial task of submission for  
publication.

bulk does not a heavy/light or a poet make.

a carry on of the discipline to submission, especially to  
such a co-operative project, could contribute to a better  
issue. perhaps two pages, perhaps?

main criticism stop

praise start

i found the following poems to be outstanding on a crowded

bus. JimHOrNbY

G.G. Friedland

don mckay

nancy stegmayer

paddy webb

WHERE TO DRINK IN MONTREAL

SHE HAS POLYETHYLENE HAIR

defenses

being

was i good (it was good beyond beleif)

p.s. numbering of the pages 24,27 (confusing) missed 3 pages

take care  
andre farkas

## ON PRINTING RELIGIOUS MUCK

Virgin paper smelling almost  
as clean as the trees  
it came from dances into  
the spinning steel  
like leaves in autumn  
welcomed into the compost maker.

Soiled paper thick with Jesus  
shit from sick minds flops  
loppily on the cellar floor.  
No compost here will make  
a flowering bush  
grow fragrant or a tree  
be strong and stately  
as the sibling it should be.

I run machines as I am  
run by money: my needs that I  
can touch or taste or smell  
make me a serf in action only.  
The tissue in my head  
honed sharp by living things  
which throb and pulse is ever  
free, a liberated zone  
of green within the city of  
your dead and dying gods.

I shit large vigorous turds  
upon your sentiments: devotion,  
humiliation and sublime conceit.  
My arse I wipe  
with the face of Jesus and  
the beard of Moses. My trenchant  
odour suffocates them  
as page by page they fall  
into oblivion. I stop the press

and flee. Secretly I know  
they've fouled my hole  
and I must to the land,  
must go  
to purify myself  
among my brethren rocks  
and trees and moving things.

--Trevor Goodger-Hill

Canada, this geographical area of the globe commonly indicated by the name of the nation-state presently occupying it, has finally produced a great national poet. After decades of weeping for a literary hero, "we" finally have one: Richard Sommer.

It seems to me that "great" poetry must have a central philosophical core of universal significance. It should be able to withstand the test of ages. In a word, Mr. Sommer has provided us with such a philosophy, freshly and originally interpreted. The breadth of his vision gives us a profound insight into life, nature -- verily into every facet of human experience. His message is refreshingly new, incisive, comprehensive: his message is "love". The novelty of it leaves us breathless. Note the deep and moving repetition of the idea in poem after poem.

The technical skill shown by Mr. Sommer is almost beyond belief. Note the assurance and delicacy with which the "e" is repeated in variation after variation on pages 46 and 48. The remarkable evolution of the "e" in the first poem, where it coyly hides that most beautiful of all words "love", to the last poem, where it becomes the physical embodiment of love as sperm, shows that Mr. Sommer has reached the epitome of poetic craft. In the second poem, "Silent Letter Process (1 - 13)", Mr. Sommer manages with incredible technical proficiency to convey the same sentiment despite the use of a different typewriter. His ability to sustain the same clarity of thought throughout the full length of the poem makes one wonder (in awe). Could Mr. Sommer have the poetic vision and power to create a longer work, say of the length of "The Illiad" or "The Odyssey"? This reviewer believes so.

Mr. Sommer deserves to be published much more widely than at present. Just imagine being able to sit down and read a whole volume of poems such as the three in this magazine. I am sure his many followers look forward eagerly to spending many delightful hours following the passionate and tortured vision of his thoughts on love.

Let us just hope there are not too many who plagiarize from his work.

--Trevor Goodger-Hill

page 48

h h h  
n : h  
feuhh h h

nancy stegmayer



The first 22 lines of "For My Grandmother Dying" are, perhaps, no better than poor - certainly they appear to me now on re-reading lacking much in both strength and resonance; however the concern was for diffidence, the voice it took, the fragilities it attempted to evoke remained solely that of the poet, and as one who seems caught up like an embarrassed auditor over a shortage of inventory. The problem perhaps lay in my failure to honestly contend with impotence - considering how little was actually felt in the remembering and how much was wanted to be.

As for the 2nd poem "Even the Dance" - it is a characteristic of too many of my poems that given the urgency of their private symbolism, they are so rarely thought out and thought through (to reflect - given the vain diffuseness of such much of my thinking - is almost invariably to despise, as to premeditate is to subvert) ; such poems, thus, are so rarely given the time to discover themselves; it is as though they are unable, in both concept and will, to renounce their puberty.

May I be allowed, in closing, to hope for an occasion to more lucidly invoke the Muse, in future issues of THE BOOSTER AND BLASTER.

DAVID ROSENFELD

May 4, 1972.

Editor: Booster and Blaster,  
6580 MacDonald,  
Montreal, P.Q.

Dear Mr. Raymond Gorty,

I would like to disassociate myself personally from the writer John Mitchell who according to Alan Roth will be appearing in your magazine (next issue).


It seems that there are two John Mitchells writing poetry in Montreal. I usually write my name John S. Mitchell. I do hope that you will clarify this matter with your readers. Perhaps the John Mitchell who wrote poems in your magazine has a second name i.e. John R. Mitchell, John B. Mitchell. In this way he could distinguish his writing from my own by calling himself Robert Mitchell or Bryan Mitchell or whatever. I am the author of The Approximate Rings and have a second volume in progress Eyes That Shamed The Light.

Please make mention of this clarification and this will give credit where credit is due.

Perhaps he would do well to use a pseudonym and this would more easily distinguish his poems from mine. I have been writing under my own name for 10 years and publishing-wise it would be difficult to move to a pseudonym now. If the John Mitchell who writes poems in your magazine has only been writing a short while this might make it easier for him to begin using a distinguishing pseudonym or an alternate second name.

Please give this your consideration as it is, I think, quite important.

My best to you in your new endeavour, I remain, yours sincerely,

  
John S. Mitchell

This, the second issue of booster and blaster, should probably have been called: the good, the bad and the ugly. From the poems of Paddy Webb, nancy stegmayer, Carol Leckner, Marc Plourde, G.G. Friedland, Alan Pearson.... to the pedantic victorian verse of S.B. Francis; the childish, insipid, gimmicky and seemingly concrete verse of Richard Somers; to my own lotus eaters and John Mitchell's Pharoah Sanders... and if in the first issue half the poems were flunked---- three quarters should be flunked in this second issue.

Though the mag "demands poets who are prepared to risk scathing criticism; who have the nerve to confront poets they may have roasted the day before; and who are prepared to rub shoulders with the poetic hoi polloi.... " (what ever that is...)..it is difficult to dissect the personal expressions of another poet; to suggest this for that; argue over form...etc.... All I can comment is on a poem as a whole and its appeal to me (taking into account my own biases)..... After all, not all of us agree on what makes a great poem!

Marc Plourde's poem ( one of which appealed to me the most along with nancy stegmayer's) is probably quite indicative of the new poetry/the new language revolution/the casting aside of conventional linear thought patterns..... a product of the new breed of poets who percieves the world differently----- conditioned by a totally differently information emphasized environment. An environment of speeded-up technological change which constantly influences them and molds their pattern of logic.

It is unfortunate that we must take the bad and the ugly along with the good and while the mag is open to the established as well as the young poet---it is also open to would-be-poets; spinsters and lonely housewives to present poems that even CJAD's POEMS in the PINKERTON FLOWER POT would have rejected---or leftover paragraphs from a Harlequin nurse novel, in poetry form.

Frank Cianciullo

P.S.: WILL THE REAL MONTREAL POETS PLEASE STAND UP!

P. 55

Anonymous. This poem was written and published in order to convey an idea, not to contribute to the literary name of its author. Since literary fame, along with the human race and most other complex forms of life, will probably cease to exist soon, according to the most dispassionate of scientific views, to sign it is pointless, and presumptuous.

Marc Plourde--

I was born Feb. 26 1951, in Montreal.  
I think biographical notes are not much good, except for making short commercials for one's own poetry, such as:  
My first book, touchings, was published in 1970 by Fiddlehead Books.  
My next one: The White Magnet, is to be published this Spring by D.C. Press. It contains poems, stories and a play, and will sell for about \$3.00.

paddy webb      first book out this fall      between two fires  
delta press - paperback 1.50.  
teaches at McGill

somewhere i got lost and i am not quite all here yet.....sometime  
my nostrils got blocked, i could smell no poetic breeze.....perhaps  
from blackboard chalk...at James Lyng High.....i was constipated,  
in-communicado, now i'm trying to turn-on others to poetry...the  
younger ones, i direct the writers' workshop, travel with a group  
of student writers giving readings free, and put out montreal's  
fifth poetry magazine- moongoose.....hoping to get diria soon.  
frank cianciullo

Read this:

"This is not and never will be a political magazine, nor are we out to shove down throats poetry or prose likely to turn the average esthetic stomach. We're not out to sell an audience but to find one, uncaring in our search whether another issue sells out or not, as our No. 1 did. Selling out an issue of a pioneering magazine means little if it sells in the doing to a lot of readers it was not intended for. The audience for us is one that's aware of the cliches in today's 'quality' stuff, & is very very bored."

The Outsider. Vol.1, No.2. Summer 1962.

MONTREAL POSTS INTERESTED IN  
GIVING FREE READINGS IN MTL.  
AREA SCHOOLS , PLEASE WRITE:

- Ritchie Carson  
162 Perceval  
Mtl.West
- Frank Cianciullo  
15 4th ave  
Ville LaSalle, que.

ATTENTION: POETS, WRITERS, EDITORS, PUBLISHERS, PEOPLE

We believe the literary situation in Canada is deteriorating. Business and bureaucratic "values", divorced from real human needs, have taken over to an unprecedented extent. Poets and writers, just like businessmen, are driven on by the urge to produce--in total ignorance of real issues. (Or, if they have knowledge of real issues, often use it as a commodity to get ahead.) Genuine community among writers has been replaced by a calculating togetherness. The literature produced has nothing to do with real life or human needs. Because this is so widespread and so little recognized, we urge your support for the following:

- (1) Discontinuance of Canada Council grants to writers, editors and publishers. The Canada Council has, unwittingly, fostered a "quantity" literature and a pathetic anxiety among writers to produce for the sake of production.
- (2) An end to the convention of Copyright. Literature is not real estate. Anyone who wishes to reproduce written material for friends and other readers should be free to do so.
- (3) A boycott of elaborately produced books and "collector's items" (often published by so-called avant-garde presses) that make trivial what is being said (if anything).
- (4) An end to buying and selling of original manuscripts, worksheets, correspondence, etc. None of these should have monetary value.
- (5) An end to praise of vacuous literature by book reviewers who imagine they are encouraging the growth of Canadian Literature.
- (6) Refusal by poets to allow their poems to appear in business advertisements (as, for example, those run by the Hudson's Bay Company).
- (7) Refusal by poets and writers to read publicly for a price.
- (8) Refusal by poets and writers to compete for awards and prizes.
- (9) Mass resignations from the League of Canadian Poets.
- (10) Abolition of the system of grades, credits and degrees at all universities.

At the same time, we recommend:

- (1) Participation with and support of the unsubsidized, underground press, such as Logos and the Georgia Straight.
- (2) Open criticism and discussion among writers. Polarity rather than hypocritical togetherness.
- (3) The use of mimeograph and inexpensive offset printing in producing books.
- (4) Book prices to be determined by costs of production and distribution only.
- (5) The formation of People's Libraries. Free copies of all books published to be sent to these libraries.
- (6) Formation of free forms of education outside those already existing.

Bryan McCarthy & Leonard Russel

The Wrecker's Ball  
205 Vallee Street  
Montreal 125, P.Q.

January 28, 1972

I have resigned as Managing Editor of BOOSTER & BLASTER. This does not mean that BOOSTER & BLASTER will necessarily close up shop. A General Emergency Meeting of the whole Cooperative will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday February 5th at the residence of Patrick Kelly Lane, 625 Milton, #802. Those who wish the magazine to continue should attend to elect a new Managing Editor. (Those who are too busy to attend may, of course, send a proxy.)

To put it another way: I've run with the ball since last September. Now I'm throwing it. If you want to catch it-- proclaim yourself.

My reasons for quitting? A couple. I thought that, possibly by throwing a wild concept among the poets of Montreal, a radical change in the way poets relate to each other and to the world might be effected. Let me emphasize that this intention was my personal trip. I judge no one, as the Good Book recommends. But, as far as I'm concerned, things didn't quite pan out to the New Jerusalem. I set out to inaugurate a tribal feast. I find myself in charge of managing a supermarket. My second reason is that I've hit onto something which I find I'm more turned on to at this point. (See Leonard Russo's letter terminating JAW BREAKER, attached.)

I believe that BOOSTER & BLASTER represents an advance on the previous situation. IF the 'wild concept' is kept, and IF the poets are restricted to Montreal residents, it may advance even more. But it will require a rather patient, steady sort of bloke to run it. And I never promised to be Daddy, remember?

Best wishes,

Bryan M'Carthy

Bryan McCarthy

P.S. Classics Paperback Store has sold 20 copies out of the 24 I gave them. Mansfield Book Mart has sold 15 out of 20. These are HEAVY SALES in this field. Poetry mags usually gather dust. YOU'VE GOT A SUCCESS ON YOUR HANDS!!! Now just WHAT are you going to do about THAT!

The Wrecker's Ball  
205 Vallee Street  
Montreal 125, P.Q.  
January 28, 1972

This is to announce the end of JAW BREAKER, the little magazine I founded and edited.

I see no real difference between JAW BREAKER and such publications as BOOKS IN CANADA, CANADIAN LITERATURE, TAMARACK REVIEW . . . the books put out by DELTA CANADA, WEED/FLOWER, COACH HOUSE PRESS, INGLUVIN, ETC. They are all part of CanLit Inc. They are what you might expect. Public Relations. Image consciousness. Names. Titles. Government stamp of approval.

I see no reason to continue this. Something altogether different is needed.

In view of this, I have joined with Bryan McCarthy, who feels as I do, in founding THE WRECKER'S BALL, to cope somehow with this situation. See me or Bryan if you have something to say.

Leonard Russo