

Summer of Emergence Reading Series: New and Recent Marsh Hawk Press Books

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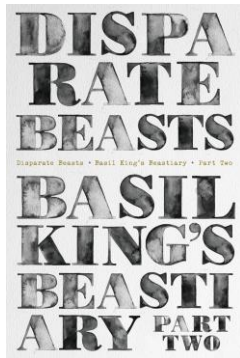
Introduction

This spring, after more than one year without a public book launch for our new 2020 and 2021 titles (due to the pandemic), Marsh Hawk Press offered a series of virtual readings. The poets we featured on successive dates: **Jon Curley, Thomas Fink and Maya Mason, Edward Foster, Basil King, Daniel Morris, Gail Newman, Geoffrey O'Brien, Eileen R. Tabios, and Tony Trigilio.**

Burt Kimmelman provided a critical introduction to each of these poets' new titles. He then created short reviews of the books, as are presented here in this special edition of the Marsh Hawk Review.

Basil King, *Disparate Beasts Part 2*

London born and bred, Basil King emigrated to America, at age sixteen attending Black Mountain College. His work is integral to the later twentieth and now twenty-first century avant-garde. His art works (which are held in museums, libraries as well as private collections) have been the subject of many solo exhibitions. And his literary output now includes eleven full-length volumes (and many smaller collections of what are best described as prose poems).



When I read backward from his newest book, *Disparate Beasts Part 2*, I am reminded again of a recursive quality in the work, and think now of its instrumental role in his literary and also perhaps artistic oeuvres (the recursive nature is present, there to be sensed, possibly less pronounced, in the paintings and drawings, over time).

Once Basil and Martha King, and their two daughters, decamped from Manhattan for Brooklyn's Park Slope area many decades ago, Basil secured work space in a factory building in a neighborhood not too far away; this first Brooklyn studio, in Sunset Park, was by the water.

In this new book he proffers the following iconic, primal scene, taken from a dream: A carpenter's "floor [is] strewn with shavings"; these are the "remains of paintings that were unfinished from different periods. I held them in my hands," King tells us, "and slowly while working I began to know what to do to put disparate things together." Disparity. Recursion.

King's greater *Learning to Draw* project, in which *Disparate Beasts* along with its second volume, and other books nestle, holds in its hands an oblique question: "What is a secret?"

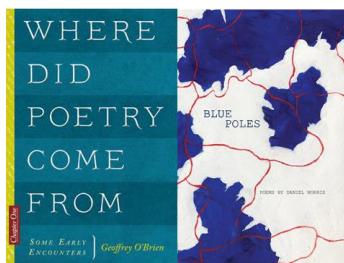
His books contain autobiography—and portrait. I'm not sure that, anywhere in any of them, there is actually a self-portrait. And, strictly speaking, this holds true

for his art. What few images seem to present as self-portraits, or portraits, in either his visual or verbal art, are undoings.

They're possessed, though, of portrait's pre-sexual, fundamentally human, expectation (at least since the Renaissance). King may admire Rembrandt, and other great artists, revered for portraiture, yet I'd say King always undoes the possibility of this project. Human, bottomless depth and complexity leave even the great painter with something that admits of disparity.

And yet so much of King's writing is portraiture. His "portraits" are enfiladed by history—disparate facts and details brought together in some unexpected, satisfying, elucidative manner—and presented by a musing voice.

Obviously, King tells his reader, "There's something missing and painful" in Norman Rockwell's self-portrait. Just as obvious, though, is his fervor for Alice Neel. "She manipulated her strokes," King observes, "so that the paint would emphasize her sitter's soul." One might ask if this emphasis itself becomes a figuration. In any case, as King is concluding "Alice Neel (Naked)," the reader is offered this admonition: "We should recognize that everyone's life is brutal."



Geoffrey O'Brien, *Where Did Poetry Come From*; Daniel Morris, *Blue Poles*

Where Did Poetry Come From by Geoffrey O'Brien, and *Blue Poles* by Daniel Morris, are dramatically different in kind and temperament; however, they're the same in key ways. Both, for instance, present samplings. Each, too, conceives of the poem as more than self-contained verse. That is, the poem exists within a larger life. Something else that's more important: each poet loves his inherited language, and lets it live through his subversions of it.

Where Did Poetry Come From first recalled, for me, Dylan Thomas' *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, because of how his memory seemed to be working, but essentially his music. Further into my reading of the new book, for other reasons, I thought of Pound's *ABC of Reading*, and Zukofsky's *A Test of Poetry*.

O'Brien has created lovely constellations of prose and verse, and they sound as one, while they're still coalescing. Anyway, this book isn't a tutorial. It is, on the other hand, an *autobiographia literaria*, better still a *literaria biographia*. It's infused with what Thomas Devaney has called "an origin story of origin stories"—which is "sensuous, tender, [and] poignant."

Where Did Poetry Come From is the first volume of Marsh Hawk Press's "Chapter One" project, directed by Sandy McIntosh. There are more volumes to come. (There are also shorter origin stories by poets now available at the Marsh Hawk website.)

O'Brien's fond recall is itself music, and it's his emerging awareness of literature's musical spell. It's a particular language, in his memory starting with "Diddle diddle dumpling / My son John"—in which he hears in the voice of a woman, anticipating, he says, a "pleasure"—something that's "about to shape the sounds yet one more time."

restricted, of going through all the stages of washing and undressing and being put into bed and given over to darkness. A break point approaches. Soon the mouth of a cavern will swallow the room and all it holds. A woman's voice. It could have been a man's voice but in memory never was. Not speaking but half chanting and half teasing. It is the sound of an intimate knowledge of the inside of the body. A sound of love or what sounds like love, of a desire to give comfort. Of the pleasure of sharing what is almost too silly to be said aloud. Of a holy and inane abandonment.

Diddle

What is diddle. What does diddle look like. Like nothing at all. It is the sound of some unsuspected capacity hidden in the mouth.

Diddle diddle

The action of the tongue moving back and forth against the top of the mouth. Just shy of where the teeth start. A ticklish repetition that could go on forever.

Dumpling

A round and busy sound, closing together and popping apart. Funny in itself and pleasurable to say again and again. A sound shaped like

This is a life with joy in it. He writes: "The sounds were once uttered to her in the same fashion. By which she was in part fashioned." This is the meter and rhetoric of Jacobean England passed down through time, in which we still live. He intuits this intimacy everywhere—for example in the dialogue of a comic book, or a film he sees.

The memoir is structured around snatches of linguistic beauty, which vary but never stray too far from that music (except, perhaps, in Williams' poems).

Out of the Sunday school stream of words recited, memorized, sung, repeated, the ear takes what it wants. **By the rivers of Babylon**—a location from that moment occupying real space and not to be budged—**there we sat down**—thereby, in answer to the place marked by two heavy beats, performing an action with two responding beats. The action was commanded by the place, a response inseparable from the fact of being there.

Geography and history born in twinned phrases. A birth taking place in the sounding of a cadence infinitely firm and flexible. A sea-like heave of words interwoven forever, emerging from the deepest source and still connected. Yet there and touchable—**willows** and **harps**—visible almost. What was picture, what was sound? **Yea, we wept when we remembered Zion**. There could be a picture of tears on ancient cheeks. But no picture at all of **Zion**—hovering luminous nothingness akin to God or Eternity, words at whose center everything dissolves into bright unseeable core.

Words bound together more tightly than by rhymes, clotted together: **they that carried us away captive**. The words' edges press against each other, no gaps left between, bundled like captives. From that cluster **song** is pressed out—song they are ordered to sing—do they refuse? **How can I**

“By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down” (Psalm 137 of The King James Bible).

“License my roving hands, and let them go”—John Donne’s lacivious blazon.

“I was of three minds, / Like a tree, / In which there are three blackbirds”—Stevens the equally sacrilegious

Modernist who cleaved to the language, unlike even the early Pound with his “wouldsts” and “thous.”

Here’s Zukofsky (in A-11): “I, dust - raise the great hem of the extended / World that nothing can leave” from A-11).

The music of the heart and mind, as verse lines or paragraphs, O’Brien recalls, “could go on for long unfolding stretches. To enter them was to participate in movement, measure proportions by eye....”

Wilde’s Salome: “How strange the moon seems! She is like a woman rising from the tomb.”

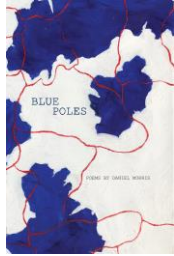
O’Brien comments: “Like the Bible, but not.”

And yet the great William Carlos Williams—his “machine made of words,” O’Brien reflects. “[T]here was an uncanny feeling of stepping into a different kind of depth,” he remembers. “Ordinary words isolated in white space.” The poems were “a living dictionary finally. Whose words? Anybody’s.”

But in whose presence
can I listen as the chord fades

or disentangle
that thicket of inky shadows

When I read O'Brien's own poetry (like the above lines, from his 2017 collection), I hear—I feel—this Modernist tension: “[I]n whose presence,” he asks, “can I listen as the chord fades // or disentangle / that thicket of inky shadows”?



The cover painting of Daniel Morris' *Blue Poles* is signaling something else entirely. It's by Tom Fink, artist and poet, and he's an acknowledged confidante in the book's title poem.

The Pollock estate wanted too much money for the use of his famous painting.

Here's the Pollock:



Stylistically, Morris is not akin to O'Brien. But, deep down, I find a harmony in how the two of them work. And it's not just their common debt to Williams.

In Morris' poem "Take Home," the entire family's filling up the living room, the three kids busy with their school assignments. Hannah's found a photo of Marie Curie. "I don't know," she says, thinking about it. "And this is a stupid idea for a poem." Hannah's dad: "This is just like 'This Is Just to Say'."

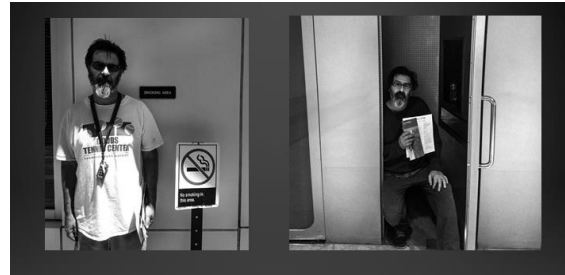
("Had I dreamt of this?" O'Brien asks about discovering Williams. "That there could be poetry that was itself the world?") Morris', let's call it postmodernist poem, "Blue Poles" is a collage (à la Williams' *Paterson*) of various texts—an epigraph, other quotations, along with some email exchanges between Fink and Morris. I don't think the term *eclectic* captures his breadth or capacity to surprise. Maybe his publishing history gives some hint of this.

Along with three previous poetry collections, he's published eight book-length studies—their range of attention is extraordinarily wide—and he covers not only poetry but also photography, textuality in all media, Modernism, and individuals such as Williams, Frost, Grossman, Ortiz Cofer, Goldsmith, Glück, and Weegee. He's also edited five volumes of criticism on poetry and culture generally.

Pei's future changed to de novo performance space.
 Imagining a found thing new, we blurred the lines
 Between exchange and private aims. Outside, DC became
 Gesamtkunstwerk. A purple cloud submerged marmoreal spires
 Diluting dreams that I could legislate mere doodling as scrips.
 We wandered through midsummer's boil while I implored
 My sons to snap their cells before transmuted district signs.
 The city wrapped in nominalist glory of Cy Twombly, how could
 I claim intransitives outside were signaling address? I'd left
 My camera in Indiana. A blackboard world without calligraphy.



The purported
 subject
 matter of a
 number of the
 poems in *Blue
 Poles* could, I
 suppose, be
 possibly explained by the fact that he's a Professor at
 Purdue University.



The texts, voices in the poem are in conversation with the book's graphics—
 shapes, and shapes of words, such as a string of them showing the user-faced
 messaging of digital code—and photos meant to suggest the pedestrian.

The collection *Blue Poles*, in its entirety, is an array of forms, a number of takes on
 what Maria Damon calls “the *mise en abyme* of swirling, high-end info-load.”

O'Brien sanctifies the past from the present. Morris gleefully, with sinister
 purpose, disaggregates it in real-time, though foregoing anger at what Toby
 Altman terms the “nausea of neoliberal life”—Morris swaps it for elation in its
 insane misprisions. “Daniel Morris is winking back at Daniel Morris,” Tyrone
 Williams declares.

The book's forms, takes and outtakes, create collectively a centrifugal force. That
 Morris winks at himself has, at heart, to do with the conceptual nature of this
 work, in which the forms in themselves are there for consideration. But also
 recall—maybe as found or reconstructed memory—precursors.

Notice this structure:
If it had been heated much more, it would have melted.

Exercise A:

Use this structure to complete your own octaves:

1. Car/drive/further/crash
2. Water/heat/more/boil
3. Nut/turn/tighter/break
4. Clutch/sure/songer/fail
5. Tires/inflate/more/explode
6. Gas/use/more/fill up pieces
7. Headlights/leave on/songer/become useless
8. Tubes/blow up/harder/burst

Exercise B:

Use the following words and phrases in octaves of your own. Show that you understand the musical meaning of octave as "an interval whose higher note has a sound-wave frequency of vibration twice that of its lower note" (*Encyclopedia Britannica*):

1. Spongy
2. Chafing [joints]
3. Reverse
4. Flexible tubing
5. Dryish
6. Master cylinder
7. The master cylinder's gone
8. Internal inspection

His brilliant poem, "The Motor Car: Today's Morphology Is Yesterday's Syntax," hearkens back to Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* and then Bernadette Mayer's exercise and list poems in her St. Mark's Poetry Project days—still under the spell of the older Vito Acconci then, with whom she'd edited the art-poetry journal *1-9*. (Was Wittgenstein's "syntax" a fascination for her?)

Exercise E:

Now, you do it.

Create your own version. Combine the interrogatory phrase "Could you have a look at?" with the following prompts:

1. The rear axle
2. Gas they
3. Where can
4. The tankers
5. Why can't
6. Did
7. Would
8. The engine
9. The gearbox
10. There's got time to
11. Missing
12. Knocking [noise]
13. Pulling the engine in
14. Up on the belt

Summary of Useful Structure Practiced in this Unit

- 5a. *If he had driven it much farther, it would have melted up.*
- 5b. *If he had't put it on/loose, it would have done instead.*

Exercise F:

Suggested Answer:

Octave with an audio-frequency range encompassing nearly nine octaves:

1. It means using a grinding gear to prepare the surface.
2. It means using a grinding gear to cut back the surface.
3. It means using a power sander to cut back the surface.
4. It means using a power sander to remove it.
5. It means using a power sander to get it right.
6. It means working carefully to get it right.
7. It means taking care to get it right.
8. It means taking care to fill it properly.

Morris' "Motorcar" poem, as it were, begins like this:

Notice this structure:

If it had been heated much more, it would have melted.

Exercise A:

Use this structure to complete your own octaves:

1. Car/drive/further/crash
2. Water/heat/more/boil
3. Nut/turn/tighter/break

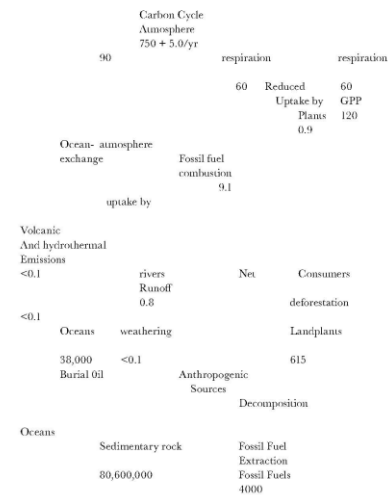
This poem, operating below the linguistic level, takes me back to Pollock's AbEx painting and Morris' derision of it.

The poem "Blue Poles" is also Morris' autobiography.

period, and I was only in one! I thought: where was I? But I never was there. I was somewhere else." (*Chalk: The Art and Erasure of Cy Twombly*, 48, Joshua Rivkin).

"You just/ can't step/ in 'Mur/al' like/ you can/ with 'Aut/umn R.,"
Declared "art whore of modest means from Flushing, Queens."
He'd hopped the dollar Metrobus to stroll before restored
Tricolor marks that loop and whirl like western animals,
According to the broke and broken Cody Jungian. When FDR
Ceased Art as Feds prepared for War, Jack cancelled out
America's "first painting of real power" (Greenberg's view) --
According to a legend since debunked by Getty techies --
Once Peggy threatened cutting off his gross to decorate
The foyer to her manse on Sixty-First. He pissed the fire out.
Like me, the mural travelled East. My aim? To share what I
Once loved with my two sons. Eliciting the Harris biopic,
I half expected selfie lining rag. I'd soured on the thing itself
Appraised at hundred forty million. When had I stared until

Re: Carbon Cycle/Water Cycle

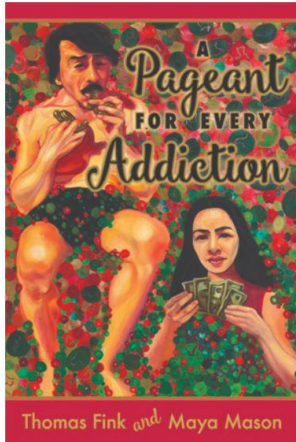


O'Brien tells his life through meditations on quoted verses. Morris does it through chatter, that of the unnamed "art-whore" and others', perhaps his own, in which he contemplates paintings by Lee Krasner, the better maker, with whom he shares the history of Eastern European Jewish migration.

In the poem, Morris heads back east with his two sons in tow, from Indiana, to see a Pollock show and catch Ed Harris' biopic ("I half expected selfie lining rag" Morris says, "soured on the thing itself"). "We wandered through midsummer's boil," he continues, "while I implored / My sons to snap their cells before transmuted district signs. / The city wrapped in nominalist glory of Cy Twombly, how could / I claim intransitives outside were signaling address? I'd left / My camera in Indiana. A blackboard without calligraphy."

Thomas Fink and Maya Mason, *A Pageant for Every Addiction*

The poems in this book are collaborations, and so is the painting on the book's cover.



This is a book of premises Fink and Mason take to their gleeful limits. This father-daughter team—a poet who's a serious painter, and a young painter who's made her bones in New York's art world (the book's witticisms tell us much about how one negotiates this city), while turning her hand to graceful poetry.

Tom Fink has published eleven books of poetry (as well as two books of criticism, also having edited three anthologies—he's a CUNY professor). Mason teaches fine art at several institutions; her artwork is featured in New York and European collections, and she has published poems in a slew of journals. This team has previously published another book of poems, *Autopsy Turvy*. Some of this book's charm is how, sometimes, I think I'm reading one or the other of them (within their concerted back-and-forths), the old kvetch or the young princess.

In its asking, "Aren't there // different ways to be uninteresting?" the book's opening poem, "First Date Questions," turns the traditional expectation of what a poem should be inside out. Unlikely, seemingly spontaneous blurtings *are* interesting, and *do* ask if art isn't, in its inherent illogicality, bad for poetry. The poem's possibilities, in the authors' snarky joy that's got a serious kick, are on display to great effect.

In "Nothing New or Even Interesting" one author confides: "I'm coming to accept / the dismal thought of 'honest and faithful' / service. Undaunted but lightly / dented, I'll go on." They do so—in a consistent style that's unnervingly comforting.

I've now come to embrace this bit of their advice (from their poem "Substitute Fossil"): "Bask in what you // can prove / at the boundary."

Jon Curley, *Remnant Halo: A Map n' Dice Chronicle*

Jon Curley's ambition never lets up, as is quite on display in *Remnant Halo: A Map*



n' Dice Chronicle. This book-length poem's accretion of concerns creates a sum greater than the parts. "As the given groaned under the least contempt," it begins, "I faced again the lesion of the lesson / and so / contained condemnation in the span of a mouth's / curse."

Curley's muscular, unrelenting verse takes no prisoners. His sometimes fearful delvings chronicle our year-plus of plagues. Not long ago, who might believe we'd emerge from our nightmare?

This is not the first book he's written and published in, or as close as possible to, the moment. (Curley has authored four previous poetry volumes as well as several book-length prose studies.) Specific- and end-dates of the poem's composition are provided. "[N]ot one dream of any resolution // has drifted through me since March," he writes. To live in this poem's surges is to be in real-time.

Some of the finest cuisine simply joins ingredients to be consumed nearly at once—no hours of slow stirring. This singular poem has a remarkable finish, though. It's not hasty. The athleticism aside, his tercets' concatenation, in which *Remnant Halo's* zeal for justice is marked through time, stays with me after closing the book. Its resolve, to be sure, is haunting.

A long poem has its own guiding star and rules of the road. *Remnant Halo's* music and tableau recall Crane's *The Bridge*, but its pain is closer to Ginsberg's *Howl*. The drive of the visionary, however, hearkens back to *The Vision of Piers the Plowman*—an encyclopedic, finely honed outrage of piercing moral acuity, which helped usher in Protestantism—the poem's prosody and shifts of attention, its unruliness, far from London's French niceties.

Samuel Beckett sponsors Curley's sense of the ironic. Curley's faith is rooted in the strength of the sixteenth-century's Gráinne Ní Mháille (anglicized as Grace O'Malley). Swift isn't acknowledged but his fury is here.

One thing these forbears don't anticipate is the self-awareness of *Remnant Halo*. The poem's last line is merely two words; they're followed by arrows leading to a sphere.

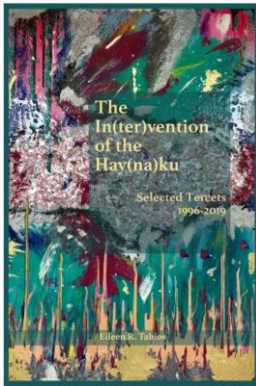
Route out of here. See you later, see you
now? Some nature notaries append this note
to the voice caught in the spokes of its own

spoke. Learning how to lessen the losses while also counting them: pandemic arithmetic: 1-2-200,000-???? Please, end.

How did we land here, stranded, bereft
on edge, at edge, at the end of the page?
Follow the >>>>>>>>>>>> ○

This last tercet takes us full circle, to begin with a question: “How did we land here, stranded, bereft / on edge, at edge, at the end of the page?” We’re caught in an entropy of our own making, in which Curley details the “aggregate human waste / that was actually art forsaken for // state, translated into mere muddle, matter, / murder, the principle of hope / exploded....”

Eileen Tabios, *The Intervention of the Hay(na)ku: Selected Tercets*



A precocious undergraduate emailed to ask if I'd take her on to study poetry. At NJIT, where I teach along with fellow poet Jon Curley, I've learned to be skeptical about such a request. But she mentioned Jon had sent her. So I met her for a slice of pizza and discovered she was interested in prosody.

"Really?" I asked. "Well, do you have a favorite form?" "Yes I do," she said. "Oh? Which?" "The Hay(na)ku," she said. "The Hay(na)ku!" I repeated. "That's a bit unusual. How do you even know of it?" "I read about it in the *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*," she said matter of factly. Now she's read several of Eileen Tabios' books (among the sixty published by this force of nature).

Too many readers overlook a poem's form, ironically. Tabios does not. Yet she's always bending it. Tom Fink points out, in his introduction to *The Intervention of the Hay(na)ku*, that this book "involves theorizing about poetry [from] *within* the poems." James Joyce found poetry too confining. Tabios must always transcend her own formalisms—their own magnitude and brilliance. What one writer lives in or with, so the other.

Tabios is intrinsically drawn to form for reasons to do with how aesthetics and thought touch. Robert Creeley wrote what I see as a hallmark of post-War American experimental poetry. Titled "A Piece," the poem has five words—two each in the first two lines, one in the last. Its unobvious symmetry is evident in its reading:

One and
one, two,
three.

When once asked about this poem, Creeley said: “I knew that for me it was central to all possibilities of statement.”

Tabios may not know Creeley’s poems well. Nevertheless, she possesses the instinct in that non-poem. I’m awed by her intellect that’s always understated. *Hay(na)ku Death Poems*—comprised of the standard Tabios tercet of 3 words, 2 words, and one word—is a fit rejoinder to Creeley’s poem. Here’s all four stanzas of her poem’s twelfth section:

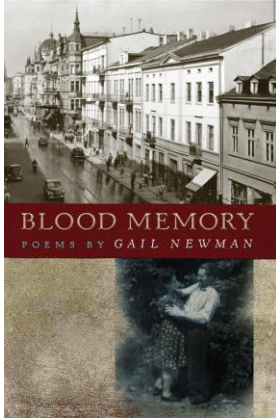
Did I live
a life
worth

the weight of
my corpse
upon

a mother weakening
but still
carrying

carrying carrying carrying
carrying carrying
carrying

Gail Newman, *Blood Memory*



One cost of a holocaust is ineffability. And if survivors of the *Shoah* give birth to a poet, the burden she bears is two-fold. Even if the attempt fails—Gail Newman’s *Blood Memory* does not—it’s a human necessity. Marge Piercy is “amazed” at Newman’s success, and Michal Heller praises “her seeking to transform the unbearable.” (*Blood Memory* is the 2019 recipient of the Marsh Hawk Press prize, judged by Piercy.)

Newman was an arts administrator and educator at the Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco. Newman, the survivor, realizes her role as “voyeur” (as she writes in her poem “Laundry, 1952”). She’s among “Those who trusted God and began to pray,” she says in “Transport.” Others left Him discarded on the tracks”—she is of them as well.

The poet sings but, as she puts it in her poem “Bridge,” “the world is a dark throat, / and some words are best swallowed.”

Tony Trigilio, *Proof Something Happened*



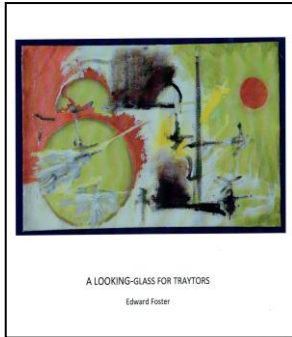
“At least once in my life very late / at night,” Tony Trigilio writes, “I’ve felt the presence of another.” These are the words of Barney Hill under hypnosis—after he and his wife Betty underwent surgery by alien beings who then set them free to continue their lives. In *Proof Something Happened* the other, rather than rescue us, leaves us feeling more alien.

Trigilio’s “frankly gripping narrative,” Cole Swensen observes, “is refracted through a poetic lens that complicates its surface and maximizes its ambiguity.” His marvelous proofs in poetry, in a range of verse forms, take us to the matter of how documenting human events turns us more human by insisting upon our delusory perceptions. To utter them is our alien real.

Yet the document, supreme artifact of our intelligence, becomes even more beautiful than we’d held it to be. Thus, poetry on the page is so necessary to us, that which saves us. Trigilio’s texts are quietly magnificent.

Proof Something Happened is the recipient of the 2020 Marsh Hawk Press Prize. Susan Howe, the prize judge, admires Trigilio’s “challenging us to take responsibility for why we yearn to believe.” The scene of this book is post-War America, and the book can’t help but dwell in this memory. “Trigilio’s style,” Andrew Joron writes, “adds its own patina of verity to the story of a uniquely American transcendental encounter.” Finally, for me, it’s that patina, its own artfulness, which won’t let me go.

Edward Foster, *A Looking-Glass for Traytors*



Some prose details of Ed Foster's origins in northern Massachusetts, and subsequent life, are included in *A Looking-Glass for Traytors*. He recalls a 1678 book of that name involving two fugitive regicides who settled where Foster was raised. He has presently returned there, living alone in a great old mansion with his memories.

In the now, he looks backward. I feel I'm reading King Lear—the old man, the cold night—white of snow, hair, wind, death everywhere. Now, full circle, history has been abandoned for destiny in the music of old age.

"I walk along the forest path," he writes. "My choice determined by the wind. // No one's here. / Snow, / Darkness coming in." He's leaning into classical roots that haunt Thomas Traherne who is quoted, and into the present in understated eloquence.

New England literature, as the past may not, discomfits the present. It creates it and yet it has disappeared within it. Foster's work isn't haunted by the past; the past is embraced in his late years—and as such, in its music and acuity of insight, within its geography, it takes its place in this canon.

The snow's austere beauty is in that music. In "Snowing Again" Foster asks "What is time / When age begins to count?" "Inside the Cold" begins:

Oh, this cold, this wind and all this snow.
A lilac bush and minnows in the stream,
where are they now? Maybe truth would help
keep us warm.

The truth is in the lilt of his verse; in "Where We Were":

To know enough

to own your self
watching,
windows,
mirrors,
winter glass,
ice and sleet.

I think it's telling that Foster looks back to his childhood, implicitly, in his old age, in this book. What about most of his life? It's there albeit without announcement of any sort, in these poems suffused with memory. Does that life belie his accomplishments, marriage, children and grandchildren? He's published 33 books including eighteen collections of his poetry, having co-edited another eight.

He's the founder and editor of the historic *Talisman: A Journal of Contemporary Poetry and Poetics*, whose papers, along with those of Talisman House, Publishers as well as Foster's personal correspondence, are now archived at Columbia University's Butler Library.

ABOUT BURT KIMMELMAN

Burt Kimmelman has published ten collections of poems as well as eight volumes of criticism and more than a hundred articles mostly on literature, some on art, architecture, and culture. Forthcoming books of his include *Visible at Dusk: Selected Essays of Burt Kimmelman* (Dos Madres Press, 2021), *George Quasha and the Poetics of Zero Point* (Daniels, Jensen / Talisman House, Publishers, 2021), and *Steeple at Sunrise: New Poems* (Marsh Hawk Press, 2022).