

THE BELOIT POETRY JOURNAL

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TO A LADY OF MADISON

on my first snow

Maggie, do you hear the birds' giggles,
That scatter in the winter wind like needles?
Or hear the rhythm, rising soundlessly
As Lazarus, at His summons, walked
Out of the tomb, still wrapt in shroud?

(O Madison maddens someone into song)

The city is sinking into sleep
While all its lamps are laddering to stars.

(down my cheek the snow slips,
imitating my past smiles;
to my eye the snow creeps,
imitating my past tears)

Maggie, I say, your limbs are nimble;
You throw everything over the bedposts.
Here is heard no more
The roaring laughter of stones
That fumbled down the glacier on our icy plateaux.

Ling Chung

SUNDAY AFTERNOON BOAT RIDE

We drove to the garage
where Bob keeps his boat

tiny tire's flat
man at station
says it just couldn't
possibly be repaired
but we blew about
forty pounds of air in it
it got us to the wharf

and Bob's old Mercury
gets stuck in four feet of
salt water
after half an hour
of pouring boat gas
half goey oil
into the carburetor
we realize
the exhaust pipe's underwater
so the police van blast in
the cops say
this power tower's closed
so's that one
and we ain't got a chain
it's Sunday afternoon
Bob realizes
he's a Triple A member
the yellow truck comes right
away free
in about a hour

and the boat motor
needs pumping to get it started
squeeze a bulb pumping
we learn in another half hour
and the lines get tangled
fog comes up
drizzle
on the Bay
we head home
without a poor fish

and the various other experiences
perhaps a thousand
worm declaiming from the hook
boat about ready to take off flying
the white gull that shat on the sandwiches
the sign on the pier
which says
a pier is nothing but a pile of wood
methodically arranged
clouds stretching their faces
The Toy Boat Starting for Japan

various other experiences
also quite fascinating
and equally beautiful

David Zack

TWO POEMS**Birth of the Wong**

Altho the sandbox king
Has all the mountains
There is a cinder of life being
Fanned in the tunnel of love.

In his mother's ear, the wong
Dodges the king's dagger.
His nurse, the old chromosome,
Sweats and predicts great things.

A heap of wet clothes snaps
Sizzling down to ash.
Adamant with hate, the band
Plays "His Honor" over and

Over like an onus, and
Strides to the east balcony.
Having bullied the sun up
The trumpets braise his meat.

The nurse swoons. White
Pain swaddles the air with heat.
At five o'clock war
Is declared against belief.

This was no-baby's land.
Now, brutal as vanity
Tearing at its own face,
The wong delivers himself.

The Wong in Love

The wong is weary.
He hangs his heart
Like a dry geranium.
The wind waits for love

To blow. In the dark
His off-green thumb
Raises families of fungus:
He eats them all.

Throwback in his twilight,
The wong just sits,
Sucking his front teeth
And weary of thinking

An eye before killing.
He sands his yawn.
Squinting thru his beard,
His bite's worse now.

He's probably in love.
Lying on his side,
Counting beads and mushrooming,
The wong tickles himself pink.

David Zaiiss

**FOR KIMO
DROWNED IN HER TWELFTH YEAR, 1968**

Listen: it happens all the time.
There's a man on the scaffold,
washing the face of the sun
in a burnished window.

Turn around—he is vanished;
scaffold empty, tilts crazily
where the rope broke. He is down,
broken up, skewered by his own bones.

Here goes the screech in the night—
no friendly owl—the crunch
of the car, fixed like a horseshoe
around the stake of the tree.
The jammed horn screams
through its metallic throat.
I hear it all the time.

Explosions say it, leaving
a dark signature of scrawled
blood. Before, there was a man
in a tunnel riding to work,
or a farm girl lost in the daisies,
but the machined teeth ate her.

It's not easy to say it,
but harder to lie.
I cannot make bouquets and wreaths
of words, speak easily,
make a lyric moan.
It's always happening.

Listen: I am standing here
in the dark of your eyes.
I taste the black fire
of your hair.

Sy Kahn

FOUR POEMS

Picture Puzzle

This piece of sky goes somewhere
above the child's head, the child
with the apple. The sky is blue here,
no clouds in this part of the picture.
But first we must find the child's head.
It is somewhere. We can see the apple
in his hand with the bite missing.
But what is this falling like rain?
There are no clouds. Is it tears, or juice
from the apple? We must find the child's head.
He may be hurt. He may need someone
to find his head. And where is the sun?
Let us look for the sun. There are evidences
of it lighting the wings of birds. Somewhere
there must be a sun, and a child's head
with a bite of apple in its mouth.

A Portrait of the Runner

He is an anthem unto himself
singing in the wind's ear,
his body moving against death,
seeking the perfect rhythm.

Clothed in courage,
his body beats like a great pulse,
as the crowd sleeps in the distance,
nursing its strength.

He is running against time.
He is the clock's hand
creating destiny, measuring his past
as he bids for some infinity

beyond law and love.
He is his body
kissed with sweat and wind
wedded to eternal mortal faith.

It is the final rush
and the crowd stirs, awakens,
sensing victory and defeat.
It calls to him from the rocks,
its mouths like caves,
for he is the soul of its desires
escaping into life.
He breaks away

becoming his own father,
rising from his past
as the layers of his life
peel from the bone
until he runs translucent
as the petals of a flower
in full essence of himself,
the true and final lover.

The Lovers

That day he watched his sister clean
the corn, her hair was free and falling,
a red blur touching either cheek
like the sun, and the wind nudged
her fine nape hair as she bent to take
the ripened ears between her knees.
The silk was red and tassels fell
as she stripped the ears with measured ease
to bare bright yellow skin, then squeezed
a thumb pressed spurt of whitened milk,
and laughed, with lifted knees and mouth
pulled wide, and never understood
the way he watched her so. He touched
her throat, his warm hand stayed.

And in that afternoon they lay
among the flour sacks. She felt
the shudder of her heart. Be kind,
she prayed, hold me gently as a reed
and from our deep and bitter seed
the fairest flesh will surely come,
and new, fine sorrows will begin
that pale the smell of jessamine.

He brought her statues of the Virgin Queen,
and all the things he didn't mean;
he brought her lover, brother, son,
and one quick taste of cinnamon.
But tears of guilt consumed her face
as bitter marrow filled her bones;
old fears bemused her broken mind
and turned her inward like a stone.

Now in his dreams at night he sees
her, naked, turning, turning, soft
spiral of her body turning
like an ear against his tongue,
the swivel of his tongue. And in his head
he hears his sister born, and ties
the knot, and sees his sister shorn,
her flesh, her hair, bleeding, red;
and knows the nights will all be bleak,
and long, and all the days be dead.

The Friend

When I died my friend came
and railed against the doctors;
and there was much thumbing of eyes
and ears prancing on my chest.
I remember his tears falling helter skelter
and his cragged face crumbling like rock.

When I died my friend came
and hid me from morticians,
a leg behind Milton,
an arm among umbrellas.
And I remember embalmers searching for days
before it rained and they got me together.

When I died my friend came
and lay in my grave,
cursing the diggers, his words
breaking their backs against the earth.
And I remember his silent weeping
and darkness dancing on his chest.

Herbert Scott

FOR CHICAGO'S MAYOR DALEY

*You see, I understand what it is when
the lonely person begins to feel like
an animal. When the night comes and
he feels like howling from his window
like a wolf.*

—Saul Bellow

The moss on the bricks
Of the window ledge
Is dying. The flies

On the chipped sill are
Dying too; their wings
And feet are still now.

Only their heads move,
Each head like a heavy
Black marble in the

Cupped palm of a hand.
I am in this chair—
Staring out a window

With frost closing its
Fern patterns in from
The corners—as if

In the palm of some-
One's seasonal hand.
It's a matter of time

Before the fingers
Close their darkness and
Wet warmth upon me.

There is a screech of
Brakes below, a door
Hinge groans open and

A shadow is shot,
A shadow that only
Came to start a fire.

Yes, I am that cold,
And I am that sane,
And that much moved by

Another's hands. I
Am Dust, Torn Carpet
And Wrinkled Shade. I

Raise the window and
Lean into whistling,
Bruising fists of air.

My aching throat rounds,
But there is no sound
Left for this crazy...

UNION #1

Butch each year at Stockshow
 quits the mill
 to ride Brahma bulls
 four days and then to the rodeos
 in halfway and haines
 cant get married because
 of eternal payments on a renewing
 car 4/On/the/fLOOR/406/fOrd

. . .

the methodist and mormon churches
 confront each other accr-ross street
 glare while their congregations
 scowl past each other

(but there is more to it
 than that)

ubiquitous wind

probably the contour of the hills

W I N D

gives voice to the trees

animates the night

Catherinecreek
 splits the town
 rushes under the bridges
 curves around behind
 the library

Whitey remembers
the whole thing
from logging with horses
to cats
there used to be 90inch
pines along the flat by Union
home now he spins yew wood
into candlesticks

R. Hollis Miller

LONG DISTANCE

“Telephone call,” they said, “Long distance,
“Pittsburgh calling,”

That’s what they said.

Pittsburgh calling, a man in Pittsburgh,

A man in Pittsburgh, five years dead.

“Telephone call,” they said, “Long distance.”

Eternity calling,

That’s what they meant,

Eternity plugged to the circuit of time,
The copper wire is ringing a chime,
Eternity calling, that's what they meant.

Forty phone booths are gaping open.
Receivers dangle slackly, in two.
Which one holds Pittsburgh, Eternity calling?
I hear them chattering, "New York, through."

Switchboards clattering, keys jammed in,
Earphones bobbing, "Hello. Thank you."
"Hello, New York, Pittsburgh calling
New Haven 8-9242."
And his voice speaking, "Is this New Haven?"
I answer, "My dear, are you really there?"

But her voice cuts in, expert, insistent,
"Pittsburgh through, New York, are you there?"
A minute's silence . . . My heart turns over . . .
Will they make it this time?
A minute more . . .
"New York through, are you there, New Haven?"
(Where is his voice? Is he waiting still?)

"Is this New Haven?" his voice is asking.
"Yes, yes, I am here. Is it really you?"
The wires turn over; the currents ring
With only the sound of their own harsh strumming.
He is gone and the words he would have spoken
Are lost in space, in the far winds fled.
The key pulled out. There is no connection.
I am alive, and you are dead.

Sara deFord

IN BREAK FORMATION

The indications used to come
like movie fighter planes in break
formation, one by one, the perfect
plummet, down and out. But now they're

slower. After supper, when I hear
her in the kitchen hum again, hum
higher, higher, till my ears are

numb, I remember how it was
the last time: how she hummed
to Aramaic peaks, flung
supper plates across the kitchen,
till I brought her by the shoulders

humming to the chair.

I remember how the final days
her eyelids, operating on their own,
rose and fell, how she strolled
among the children, winding tractors,
hugging dolls, how finally

I phoned and had them come again,
and how I walked behind them
as they took her by the shoulders,
house dress in the breeze, slowly
down the walk and to the curbing,
helped them bend her in the back
seat of the squad again.

I watched them pull away,
and heard the parliament
of neighbors talking.

Donal Mahoney

THE EXPLANATION

The strangers, their eyes
focused on distance. They
proceed with purpose; this much
is clear. I speak in their
direction; their pace
does not slacken; their need
is peremptory. There is a muffling
glass between us. I gape
like a fish mouthing
the edge of the world. The vision
shuts like a window.

It is a message of hope, or so
I interpret it. Pressing
stiff fingers into the soil,
I have the taste of candied
citron, tangerines, crisp vegetables
on my tongue. But an uneasy wind
gnaws at the leaves, it ticks
ominously in my instruments. The soil
draws away from the roots.

I am strapped in. There is
no light. At my fingertips
blind workmen assemble
delicate, complex machinery
calibrated in Braille.
I feel my nerves blooming
out of my pores. They probe
the air like antennae. All
sensation is amputated
by the silence. My mind
peoples the room with explanations.

Speakers are grafted into the bones
of my skull. When the volume is high
the words retain only
the meaning present
in the resonance of bone. But low
the whole body, the surge of it,
mutes to hear. Who
can doubt
the lies of his own bones?

I cannot separate vision
from projection: I respond
without stimulus. I ask
the voice but there
is no answer. The vision
returns: the emperors
are seated closely around
the table; below the waist
they are naked, their hands
grobe like insects among
the loose hairs of their thighs.

There is a dial
to register the tolerance
of my heart; meters
monitor my pulse, my
breath, muscle tension, gland
secretions, the electric
potential of my nerves, my brain.
Soon the vision will
recur, the needles
will lurch
into the red, soon
all the instruments will agree.

David Lunde

**THREE FROM A HEIDELBERG NOTEBOOK
AND OTHER POEMS****The Saturday Market**

Lumbering down
in the early morning clatter
from farms
where the earth was hard all winter,
the market women bear
this summer's earliest sacrifice:
grapes blue as the veins
of fair-skinned women,
cherries dark as blood,
roses strewn like carnage
on makeshift altars.
They come
in ancient, rattling trucks
which sprout geraniums,
are stained
with strawberries.
Their fingers thick
and thorn-pricked,
their huge smock-pockets
jingling pennies,
they walk
like heavy goddesses
while the market
blossoms into bleeding
all around them.
Currants which glitter
like Christmas ornaments
are staining
their wooden boxes.

Cherries, grapes—
everything
seems to be bleeding!
I think
how a sentimental
German poet
might have written
that the cut rose
mourns the garden
and the grapes
their Rhineland vineyard
(where the crooked vines
stretch out their arms
like dancers);
for this
is a sentimental country
and Germans are
passionate gardeners
who view with humanity
the blights of roses,
the adversities of vineyards.
But I am not fooled.
This bleeding is,
no doubt,
in the beholder's eye;
and if
to tend a garden
is to be civilized,
surely this country
of fat cabbages
and love-lavished geraniums
would please
an eighteenth-century
philosopher.
Two centuries, however,

buzz above my head
like hornets over fruit.
I stuff my mouth with cherries
as singled out by sunlight
I watch
the thorn-pricked fingers
of the market women
lifting and weighing,
weighing, weighing.

The Landlady

Because she lost her father
in the First World War,
her husband in the Second,
we don't dispute
"There is no Gemütlichkeit in Amerika."

We are winning her heart
with filter cigarettes.
Puffing, she says,
"You can't judge a country
by just twelve years."

Gray days,
the wind hobbling down side streets,
I'm walking in a thirties photograph,
the prehistoric age
before my birth.

This town was never bombed.
Old ladies still wear funny shoes,
long, seedy furs, pot-hats.
They smell of camphor and camomile,
old photographs.

Nothing much happened here.
A few jewelry shops changed hands.
A brewery. Banks.
The university put up a swastika, took it down.
The students now chant "Ho Chi Minh" and hate
Americans

on principle.
Daddy wears a flyer's cap
and never grew old.
He is on the table with the tea-cakes.
Mother and Grandma are widows ;
they take care of things.
It rains nearly every day ;
every day, they wash the windows.
They cultivate jungles in the front parlors,
lush tropics

framed by lacy white curtains.
They coax the earth with plant food, scrub the leaves.
Each plant shines like a fat child.
They hope for the sun,
living in a Jewless world without men.

The 8:29 to Frankfurt

Europe is dusty plush,
first class carriages
with first class dust.
And the conductor
looks like a pink
marzipan pig
and goose steps
down the corridor.

Fräulein!

He says it with four umlauts
and his red patent leather
chest strap zings the air
like a snapped rubber band.
And his cap peaks and peaks,
a papal crown
reaching heavenward to claim
an absolute authority,
the divine right
of Bundesbahn conductors.

Fräulein!

E pericoloso sporgersi.
Nicht hinauslehnen.
Il est dangereux. . .
the wheels repeat.
But I am not so dumb.
I know where the tracks end
and the wheels roll on
into silence.
I know the station
won't be marked.
My hair's as Aryan
as anything.

My name is heather.
My passport, eyes
bluer than Bavarian skies.
But he can see
the star of David
in my navel.
Bump. Grind.
I wear it for
the last strip tease.
Fräulein!
Someone nudges me awake.
My coward of a hand
almost salutes
this bristling little
uniform of a man.
Schönes wetter heute,
he is saying
with a nod
toward the blurry farms
beyond the window.
Crisply he notches
my ticket, then
his dumpling face smiles down
in sunlight which is
suddenly benign
as chicken soup.

Letter from a Flood

(Venice, November, 1966)

With his head full of Shakespearian tempests
and old notions of poetic justice,
he was ready with his elegies
the day the ocean sailed into the square.

"The sea," he wrote, "is a forgiving element,
and history only the old odor of blood.
She will come to rest on the soft floor
of the world, barnacled like a great pirate ship,
and blind fish—mouthing like girls before a glass—
will bump, perhaps, San Marco's brittle bones."

Pleased with these images, he paused
and conjured visions of a wet apocalypse:
the blown church bobbing like a monstrous water toy,
Doge Dandolo's bronze horses from Byzantium
pawing the black waves, incredulous pigeons
hovering like gulls over the drowning square,
mosaic saints floating gently to pieces.

Then he waited as the wind rose, as gondoliers
were rocking in the long furrows of their boats
and small waves licked the marble lions' eyes.
But still this most improbable of cities
hung on, lewdly enjoying her own smell.

Learning later how Florence, with her brown bells,
her dried-up joke of a river, had played
the ark to all his fantasies of flood,
he felt a little foolish. He was walking
in the gallery then, thinking of the doges:
how they tread on clouds which puff and pucker
like the flesh of their fat Venetian whores;
how thanks to Tintoretto's shrewd, old eyes,

they saw themselves amid the holy saints;
how shrewd, old Tintoretto, for a price,
painted his patrons into paradise.

The Catch

You take me to the restaurant where one
plays God over a fish tank. The fat trout
pace their green cage, waiting to be taken
out of an element. Who knows what they know?
There are thirteen in a tank meant
for goldfish. I don't care which one I eat.

But the waiter expects a performance,
con brio. This is a ritual
solemn as wine-tasting or the Last Judgment.
Eating is never so simple as hunger.
Between the appetite and the satisfaction
—falls the net, groping blindly in dark water.

The fish startle and thrash. You make your catch,
flourishing a bit for the waiter
so as not to be thought a peasant. You force
air into the trout's gills as if he were Adam
and send him squirming towards the kitchen
to be born. Then it's my turn. I surprise

myself with my dexterity, almost
enjoying the game. A liter of wine
later, the fish return, foppishly dressed
in mushrooms and pimentos, their eyes
dreamily hazed. Darling, I am drunk. I watch you
pluck
the trout's ribs out of your perfect teeth.

Orpheus on the Poetry Circuit

A pitcher of warm water
studded with bubbles
is the distorting glass

which gives me back his hands
curled on a glass
to stop their trembling.

He is jumpy
as a dull blade
on a three-day beard.

And his face
(a lunar plain
where meteorites of poems
have touched down heavily
and rested,
or burned out)

is his embarrassment.
He would rather hide it
like a dirty habit.

He would choose
to be a voice.
Yet we sit here,

greedy ears,
salty fingers,
waiting to be served his poems

like small hors d'oeuvres
on clever silver platters
prelude to—

what feast?

Tapestry, with Unicorns

What we were searching for did not, of course, exist—
that tapestried morning, under those woven clouds
where impossible birds sang quite incredibly
of unattainable things.

A moth among the dandelions
warbled like the nightingale of Keats, and trochees
sang among the iambs, while you in your curled collar
and brocaded vest, were beaming down the sun-
strewn silken grass
where I lay in a frenzy of ruffles, ear pressed
to the earth so I might hear—the echoing hoofbeats
of the unicorn.

He came in a blaze of embroidered
glory, with agate eyes and his infamous
ivory horn blaring baroque concerti—a most
self-satisfied virtuoso. And thinking
to have captured him for good, we toasted in white
wine
and wafers, and took, before witnesses, impossible
vows.

The rest you know: how in the toadstool damp of evening
where lovers toss and cough, speaking to each other
in the thick syllables of sleep, through
the long winter's night of marriage, the unicorn slips
away,
and love, like an insomniac's nightmare, becomes
only the lesser of two evils.

Sometimes

he comes again, thrashing through the tapestried
dark,
uprooting limbs and sheets and fine-spun wisps of
hair.
But the quest having been forgotten, we do not know
him,
or else we call him by a different name.

At the Museum of Natural History

The lessons we learned here,
(fumbling with our lunchbags,
handkerchiefs,
and secret cheeks of bubblegum)

were graver than any
in the schoolroom:
the dangers of a life
frozen into poses.

Trilobites in their
petrified ghettos,
lumbering dinosaurs
who'd outsized themselves

told how nature was
an endless morality play
in which the cockroach
(and all such beady-eyed
exemplars of adjustment)
might well recite the epilogue.
No one was safe.
But stagnation was

the surest suicide.
To mankind's Hamlet,
what six-legged creature would play
Fortinbras? It made you scratch

your head and think
for about two minutes.
Going out, I remember
how we stopped to look at

Teddy Roosevelt,
(Soldier, Statesman, Naturalist,
Hunter, Historian,
et cetera, et cetera).

His bronze bulk (four times life size)
bestrode Central Park West
like a colossus.

His monumental horse

snorted towards the park.
Oh, we were full of
Evolution and its lessons
when (the girls giggling madly,

the boys blushing), we peeked
between those huge legs to see
those awe-inspiring
Brobdingnagian balls.

Erica Mann

TWO POEMS**The Sheriff**

It is night. It is Texas.
The sheriff is reading
his poems. They are made
from a single obscurity.
Nothing lives in his poems.
It is, in fact, Texas,
land of moondrunk sunflowers
& oil harvest. A stitch
up the highway I feel
my teeth loosen ;
I am a part of his poems.
But he is gone now & I am alone.
The sky brightens. Clouds drift
& dive over the empty prairie.

Examples

An example of the way friends
& lovers do & their difference
is how the girls
used to moon about
on weekends

in hopes to catch someone
who'd wander. After that,
the hardest thing to do
was pull away
when they had said
they'd love but knew
that ways of feeling
were so profound
that all they did was like.
They saw to like
a person had to do
with the respect that person gave
or how much he was perceptive.
It had to do with knowing
that for happiness—
which had to do with liking—
women should have known
to respect the possible clarity
in men. The thing, of course,
had much to do with sleeping
with, or without, the person
with whom the girl had made
a friendship. The clarity
& higher way of knowing.
That's what friendship
originally was about.

Tony Whedon

RAINBOW BOA

Brown dappled with purple
iridescent, its shiny scales catch
the colours of the spectrum
in the sunlight.

Coiled asleep in a cardboard box
near the waterfront market
four feet of soft warmth
thick as a baby's thigh;
a curiosity offered for sale
by a smooth tongued mestizo
who'd adeptly snatched it
from the overhanging lianas
of the Ucayali's sapgreen swamps.

My friend
a bit of an amateur herpetologist
egged on by me, bought it
and we took it home by plane
across the Andes.

On the lawn it slid sluggishly
for the ivy on the sunbaked wall,
sought mud and water,
coiled round our arms,

petted seemed indolent and harmless
yet refused to compromise
with captivity and become a pet.

Now in its jail
a long wooden cage stuffed with soil
and grass
it hides from the light,
crawls into an old broken earthpipe
and irascible strikes the hand
you offer it,
long flathead, needled teeth curving in
split tongue darting,
and from some dim consciousness
hating this captivity
refuses to eat.

In its cage four petrified lizards
scamper about and the boa
glistening in its pristine skin
seems not to see them
but lies there coiled, starving.

David Tipton

THE SKELETON'S DEFENSE OF CARNALITY

Truly I have lost weight, I *have*
lost weight,
grown lean in love's defense,
in love's defense grown grave.
It was concupiscence
that brought me to the state:
all bone and a bit of skin
to keep the bone within.

Flesh is no heavy burden
for one possessed of little
and accustomed to its loss.
I lean to love, which leaves me lean
till lean turn into lack.

A wanton bone, I sing my song
and travel where the bone is blown
and extricate true love from lust
as any man of wisdom must.

Then wherefore should I rage
against this pilgrimage
from gravel unto gravel?
Circuitous I travel
from love to lack
and lack to lack,
from lean to lack
and back.

Jack Foley

THE LIGHT AROUND THE BODY. *Robert Bly.* Harper & Row. \$3.95.

Readers who first encountered Bly in an anthology didn't know how, at first, to read the limpid elegant lyrics of *Silence in the Snowy Fields*. The new poems were so transparent as to be almost invisible. Readers who have taken the *Silence* volume to heart are now having trouble with his latest book: one sees the same clean landscape, but through it, as through a transparency, appear Roman soldiers, Andrew Jackson, Hegel, Chief Joseph, Lyndon Johnson, and the landscape of Hanoi. There is some obscurity; it helps to think of "Young Goodman Brown" when reading "Johnson's Cabinet Watched by Ants." Yet without such help, the poems still are stunning: mordant, committed, disturbing, yet never shrill or imperative. The inner voice still speaks through them. They are poems to get by heart.

THE YOUNG POETS. *Edited by Paul Carroll.* Follett. \$6.95, cloth; \$3.95, paper.

Over 500 pages; over 300 poems; 54 poets, all under 35. A fine thing to do. Each poet has contributed a photograph of himself, and the wild variety of poses and faces is a great joy. But it is sad to discover how little of this variety and individuality comes through in the poems; too many are no more than typographically exploded prose. The poets' statements about their own work are too often fatuous and embarrassing. But there are real poems here, too, by real poets. James Welch is a discovery. And if there are those who will through this book find Bill Knott, Mark Strand, Ronald Johnson, James Tate, Charles Simic, and will make their own discoveries, well — hooray.

REASONS FOR MOVING. *Mark Strand.* Atheneum. \$1.95.

A young correspondent writes to us: "I feel as if I had written every one of those poems myself. Strand seems to have discovered the common denominator of contemporary consciousness." I am

sure this is a popular book; too bad Atheneum doesn't use a better glue in its binding. Never mind the glue. Nothing comes unstuck in the poems themselves: polished, witty, crisp Dali's. They are narrow, fitting neatly into *New Yorker* columns. A feverish electric current pulses through the lines, recalling the voice of Robert Sward, a more original if more uneven poet, whom Strand suggests in imagery as well as meter (see "Eating Poetry").

SELECTED POEMS: 1956-1968. *Leonard Cohen. Viking Press. \$1.95.*

Leonard Cohen, novelist-songwriter-singer, claims also to be a poet, but this new collection of over 140 poems from his four previous volumes plus 20 new poems does not stand up under close analysis. No doubt several notches above Rod McKuen (another songwriter-singer who has published several highly popular volumes of verse), this young Canadian writes vague romantic verse or weak protest poetry neither as enchanting nor compelling as some of his better recordings. When forced to stand on their words alone his songs are not successful.

THE RESIDUAL YEARS: POEMS 1934-1948.

Brother Antoninus/William Everson. Intro. by Kenneth Rexroth. New Directions. \$6.50 (cloth), \$2.25 (paper). THE ROSE OF SOLITUDE: A LOVE POEM—SEQUENCE. Doubleday. \$3.95.

Everson was drafted for World War II but spent the war years in Camp Angel as a conscientious objector. There he helped found the Untide Press which mimeographed some of his poems later included in "The Residual Years" published in 1948. The *New Directions* volume is a reissue of that earlier one supplemented with other poems from the same period. In 1949 Everson joined the Catholic Church and in 1951 became a Dominican monk. "The Rose of Solitude" is an extended erotic-religious poem of the sort that has brought Brother Antoninus much critical attention since the late 1950's.

BENDING THE BOW. *Robert Duncan. New Directions. \$2.25.*

Here is the New Philology. Philology. Love of languages and language. Great games. Formal innovations, a joy to explore, like the early Pound we loved with mind and ear in high school. Erudite, leading the reader by the familiar coasts and crags of Olson and Eliot into new fields of sound. A great dragon's hoard of a book. And Duncan has a valuable Introduction. But the crop in the new fields is sometimes the same old corn. Compared to the charged lightnings of Bly's political poems, Duncan's verses about Johnson and Goldwater and Clark Kerr and usury are flaccid. Today we need our own Blake, not just poets alluding to Blake.

NOTE: A first book of poems by Journal Editor John Bennett, **THE ZOO MANUSCRIPT**, may be ordered from Sydon Press, through Sy Kahn, University of the Pacific, Stockton, California 95204. It has a foreword by Chad Walsh, one of the founders of the Journal, and sells for \$2.50.

Chad Walsh's latest volume of poetry, **THE END OF NATURE**, has just been published by Swallow Press. \$5.00.

Two other Journal editors, David and Marion Stocking, have a volume out, from Harvard University Press, **THE JOURNALS OF CLAIRE CLAIRMONT, 1814-1827.** \$10.