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December 2015

Margaret E. Stucki Correspondence

Margaret E. Stucki

Maine State Library

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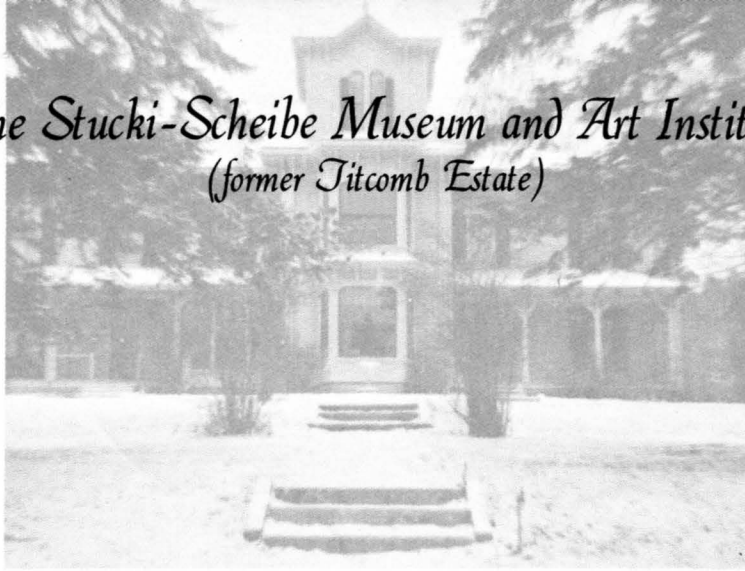
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The Stucki-Scheibe Museum and Art Institute
(former Titcomb Estate)

1883-1975 Karl Johannes Scheibe
1885- Anna Katarina Scheibe
1895-1972 William Eugene Stucki
1909-1975 Egon Scheibe
1911- Fred Karl Scheibe
1928- Margaret Elizabeth Stucki
1957- Ann Elizabeth Weber



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Maine State Library
Shirley Thayer
Specialist - Maine Materials,
Dear Shirley,

May 22, 1978

It was a pleasure to meet you at a reception
at the art gallery Sunday May 21, in Hallowell.

The home pictured above is the present repository
of literally hundreds of paintings - & poems of myself -
relatives. You will find some facts on my work - & life
in Who's Who of American Art & American Women,
etc.

It shall look forward to sending you a copy of
my "important" manuscript The Canvase Field & A
Projective Psychology of Painting Correlating the
Field of Vision and the Field of Consciousness. It is
an epistemological study and I feel, the best since
LeVincis Treatise on Painting. Few artists write
extensively. My B.A. was in Philosophy. I am an avid
reader & write a column for The New American Review
which came out last Nov. in its 1st issue.

Sincerely, Margaret E. Stucki

A Family Museum of practicing artists and poets comprising three generations.

One copy of CRUD is for you.

It was the Canvase Field & A Projective Psychology of Painting & I hope it will be published.

The Frog on the Androscoggin

I.

A frog went awoggin'
On the Androscoggin
One day, when he said,
"Egad! What's this?"
All agog in
The glob
Of creamy goo
Floating downstream,
Lining the shore,
Midstream,
Everywhere
Like soap bubbles
Or ice floes;

II.

Nor could the frog scream,
For to open his mouth
Would seal his fate.

"Help!" cried the frog
On the Androscoggin,
The Kennebec
And other streams
He goes awoggin.

"Help!" said Wiley,
Carson and Cousteau,

"Come to your senses
Man and stop this
Pollution!"

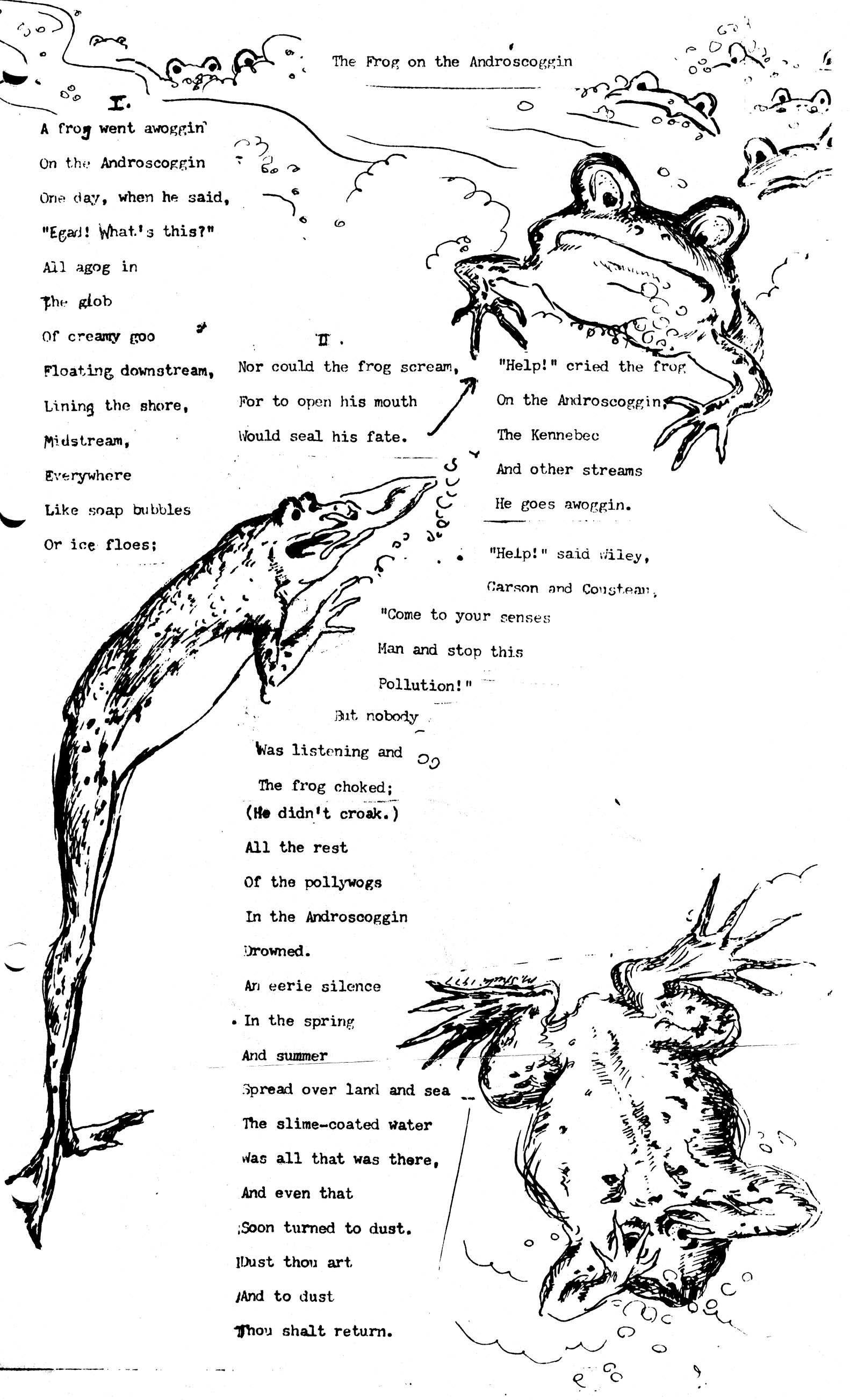
But nobody

Was listening and

The frog choked;
(He didn't croak.)

All the rest
Of the pollywogs
In the Androscoggin
Drowned.

An eerie silence
In the spring
And summer
Spread over land and sea
The slime-coated water
was all that was there,
And even that
Soon turned to dust.
Dust thou art
And to dust
Thou shalt return.



Spirits of Turpentine and Water

An Artist's Palette

Must start with white — from a large tube
Squeeze a generous lump in the left corner
Where the brush, a magic wand, may
Carry color everywhere and whisk
A smidgin here and a stroke there
Until the canvas glows with light.
Pour the turpentine into the cup!
And let us begin with white:
White lead, zinc white, flake white,
To paint a scene winter white,
As white as snow, which although
It is pure white, is a myriad tints
And shades off white — reflecting light
Of the blue sky, the golden sun,
The tree's shadow, the brook's run,
The white ruff of a Ruben's cravat
Intricately drawn in deep folds
Holding delicate shadows and lights
That sweep in eye-defying loops
Like a roller-coaster of line
Around the aristocratic necks
Of 16th century art patrons
Not too busy or too mercantile,
Or too ignorant to bother,
Posing for the artist
Who pictured for us
The great men of their time
As dramatically and truthfully
As the poet did in rhyme.

Burnt sienna are the bricks of Florence
Where Masaccio labored on his *Tribute Money*,
A fresco full of light and shade and men
Who give the illusion of really standing there —
Where once was nothing but a wall quite bare.
Ah! Siena of illustrious Italian names —
Duccio, Martini, and Lorenzetti —
The hill towns where the cobblestones
Were daily trod upon by the painters and sculptors
Michelangelo, Leonardo, Raphael, Andrea del Sarto,
Ghiberti and Pisano; where rode the patrons
Lorenzo and Giuliano de Medici, Francesco Sforza,
The dukes of Urbino, the Doges of Venice and the Popes of Avignon and Rome —
Leo X, Sixtus, Innocent the VIII, and Alexander VI —
Venality and veneration vying with adoration and assassination!

The Venetian painters used a red earth undertone
That shone through the canvases of Titian
Like the golden-red tresses of his models
That beguiled Domenico Theotocopoulos,
To study with that grand master of them all.
With the coming of the plague that took Titian and his own wife,
El Greco left for the Iberian city of flickering light, Toledo,
Of torture rack and martyr's groan,
Of Inquisition and heretic's moan,
Terre-verte, viridian, chromium oxide and obsidian,
The painter's hand rescuing from oblivion
Buildings and lands falling to ruin
Windswept and nameless like a sand dune.

Vermilion is the color of roses and lips,
A favorite on artists' brushes' tips,
For sunset hues on the western horizon
The cadmium reds, the carmine and crimson,
If you are a Turner or a Fragonard,
For blood spilt on the fur of a bison
If you are a Catlin or an Audubon
Tracing the wings of the scarlet tanager —
A sign language of water color tones
Spoken by a brush laden with rose madder.

The lapis lazuli of the Egyptian scribes
Has been updated by the chemist's cobalt,
A bolt of blue that sings upon the linen
Like the nightingale in the dark
Or the lark to which we hark
And strain to see in the infinite blue
Canopy of light God stretched o'er the earth
To veil us from the bright stare of the sun.
Heavenly blue, I love your ultramarine depths
And cerulean heights—Prussian blue,
Your palest tints and boldest hue,
From the azure ocean that embroiders the horizon's hem
To the blue mysteries in a loved one's eyes.
Corot heard the flowers say their matins in the morning
And his silver-blue landscapes epitomize
What Goethe called the "transcendentality" of blue—
Its call to higher things, of ideals in the dawning.
Velasquez also loved blue and mauve—
The purple mystery of life lived to the full,
The nobility of the Señora and the quiet gall
Of the court dwarf, physically stunted but mentally tall.
The grandiloquence of the *Surrender of Breda*—
Of man and beast acting nobly in the tragedy of war,
The smoke in the distance, the cannons' roar!
The pikes raised in the foreground to capture
And imprison our eyes, to separate them from the rapture
Of the chestnut rump of the beautiful horse's flesh
Rubbing against the silken suits of courtiers' and soldiers' sash.

Burnt umber is a strong, sober hue,
Heavy enough to carry a Rembrandt's thoughts
Of angels' and God's laws. Van Rijn
Contrasted the darkness with the golden glow
Of yellow ochre and cadmium yellow light —
Glazed thickly in stand oil that transparentized
Pearls and brown eyes and recessed walls of rooms
Where Dutch burghers sat and posed for the
Christian genius, ostracized by the Church
Because to take another wife to raise his son
Would cross the cold and jealous heart of a dead wife
Whose will was to cut off Rembrandt should he
Marry again. After mourning Saskia for a year
Wherein he turned in grief to landscapes,
Having lost his favorite model and dearest face,
He turned back to life and love and portraiture
And a new wife, Henrickje, whom he never wed,
But dearly loved as he loved all of God's creation
That graced his canvases. This middle-class miller's son,
Bible-reading and pensive, immortalized the windmill —
Set it like a gleaming jewel upon a sunlit hill!
He gave to the rabbi, king, and beggar — equal dignity,
And conferred upon the serving maid the regality
He gave to David, Solomon and Bathsheba.
The pages of the large, family Bible his mother turned,

The son turned to visual reality and spiritual veracity,
Helping the blind to see and the deaf to hear:
The Denial of Christ before the cock crowed thrice,
The Raising of Lazarus, *The Good Samaritan*,
The Woman by the Well, *David Harping for Saul*,
Christ Preaching to the Poor, *Christ Healing the Sick*,
Christ before Pilate, *Christ Reviled by the Mob*,
Moses Dashing the Ten Commandments to the Ground,
Jeremiah Mourning the Burning of Jerusalem,
The story of our Lord scratched upon a metal plate,
Etched in zinc and copper and graven,
Inked, or brushed upon linen or paper—
Documents of a true consciousness of Christ's message.

Van Gogh used a very intense blue, almost too vibrant,
To bear much looking at, as in his *Starry Sky* or *Café at Night*,
Or the blue sky behind the cornfield and the crows
That heralded the shot that ended the despairing artist's life.
Alas, too late for Vincent the accolades, the praise
And the financial security denied him too long;
He gave up the struggle when he could no longer hang on.
Poor evangelist, he tried so hard to live the spirit
Rather than the letter of the law. He gave away his shirt
As well as his heart that was in it to the poor miners
And weavers he portrayed in the *Potato Eaters*
And *The Loom*. He tried to rehabilitate a prostitute with love,
Only to find himself misunderstood and rejected by his minister father
And even by the woman herself. Perhaps artists
Are reformers at heart, desiring to reshape the world
Nearer to their heart's desire and as the hymn goes—
"Nearer My God to Thee." Sorrowful Vincent, he tried
So hard to keep on like a swimmer
That had used up every ounce of his strength, and his faith
Slipped somehow from tired hands and heart as the
Waves of the wicked world washed over him. His
Fear outweighed his faith. He dreaded the locked cell
Of the asylum at St.-Rémy where the insane were kept
With no medication alleviating their insufferable torture.
I weep for Vincent who loved Christ and people, and in his paintings
Showed how he cared for postman and psychiatrist,
For irises, apple-blossoms and sun-flowers—
The emblem of his passion for yellow, the color
That shines in the blue, a fiery ball,
Like a human heart that has heard love's call.

And what of the ivory black in the velvets, satins or furs
Caressed by the hand of Auguste Renoir,
Or the passionate pinks and whites of Pierre,
As tender as the hand of the gentleman farmer,
On the waist of the pretty girl at the *Dance at Bougival*, or Degas'
Light-filled gauze skirts or ballet dancers
Moving across the floor of a Paris opera stage
Like butterflies across a meadow
Which a Monet has filled with poppies
Cadmium orange in the sunshine green?
Or perhaps the facade of Notre Dame
Greets us like a face of mottled tints and hues
All variegated with chrome yellow and viridian
In the Morse-code, dot-dash electricity of primary colors
Broken by the impressionists into their secondaries,
And complements knit like red and blue skeins of yarn
To blend into a dioxazine purple
So that colors are not what they seem,
Like so many events in life not truly seen nearby
Nor understood one by one, until viewed from a distance—

In a perspective that reveals the interrelationship
Of the parts that have no deep meaning except in their proper places
And time. This painters and poets know, like Pissarro and Sisley and Shelley,
That is why they cannot bear to see a thing die senselessly,
Be it a hummingbird or buzzy bee or tree,
They are aware of the thing's relationship to you and me.

In the year eighteen hundred and eighty-odd,
Ruskin got his start in art; his love of beauty
And of God drove him to seek the *what for* and the *why*
Until it drove him far enough that he began to see
That what did the hue matter when a person painted a blue sky,
If that sky was soon not blue anymore
But covered with a smog of Payne's grey
That not even a painter or magician could whisk away!
What did it matter if Turner or Constable were great
Translators of the outdoor scene, landscapists,
If somehow the land itself escaped us?
If desecration by the greedy, ignorant breed outran
The conservationist, and the pitiful little span of one man's life
Could defile for generations the inheritance of all men?
And threaten all life? What nonsense! Kill the ocean?
Laughable! Impossible! Or just maybe the truth?
Who should know? Cousteau says if the ocean dies,
And it is dying, within forty years we are doomed.
Not to drown as in Noah's time, but to die of thirst
In a desert created by man's ingenuity directed to wrong ends.

The poet, Tristram Coffin, wrote in nineteen forty-two,
That *There Will Be Bread and Love*. He said, I quote:
"I, Tristram, since my life roots deep in pain
Like ancient Tristram's, have the right again
To say the final things and say them plain,
Being a poet, And I say them now.
I say you people have the right to trust
In certain things that will be, when our wars
Are over, or within them, if they last:
Water, I say is one. There will always be
Blue water through the branches of some tree
And water high up as a wall behind some houses
And white sails going up, water by roads,
And maybe beasts will drink it under their loads,
Water in forests, and thin deer will drink it,
Or birds will dip it up drop after drop,
Too feverishly beautiful to stop,
Lifting bright beaks to thank whoever made it."
Tristram, like Tristan and Isolde of old, take for granted
This inheritance and would pass it to their sons
And daughters. The ultimate picture of the coffin,
Was made bearable, when it was unconsciously thought of,
By the firm knowledge that though we pass, one by one,
There is always a new dawn and an old cradle rocking someone.
The chain of the generations spanning the abyss of death!
Carrying us all over in the bond of father and son and mother and daughter.
Alas for the poet's confidence, the twentieth century
Has rudely shaken such things usually taken for granted.
It is simply not true anymore that there will always be water
Pure and simple to drink by thirsty beast and man.

As long ago as nineteen sixty-two Rachel Carson said,
"Water must be thought of in terms of the chains of life it supports."
From the plankton to the fish to the porcelain dish
Wherefrom man eats. "Can we suppose that poisons we introduce
Into water will not also enter these cycles of nature?"
Are we to be destroyed along with the insects or will

The cockroach inherit the earth? Witchcraft, war and famine
Are small potatoes compared to potatoes laced with arsenic,
Carrots saturated with arsenic, and arsenical cigarettes
Burning the guts out of men who haven't the guts to
Come to grips with real problems anymore. Don't they dare?
Or don't they care, or don't they know? That is *we*.
Are we aware that a possession infinitely more valuable
Than individual life is our genetic heritage, our link
With the past and future, and that heritage is deteriorating?
Menaced by chemicals and radiation, we are adrift
In a sea of carcinogens and soon we can cry with Coleridge
And the ancient mariner, "Water, water everywhere and
Not a drop to drink!" Man! Stop for a moment and think.
If some men have a right to make a dollar. We have a "right to hollar"
If more basic, inalienable rights of all men are violated.
Whose rights are at stake here? Birth rights? Civil rights?
What right has anyone to rob me of a bird's song and create a silent spring?
What right has anyone to spray the forests and poison my spring,
So that neither I, nor my neighbor can have a drink or a swim?

A person has a right to be secure in his own home against poison,
Whether it be chlorine or fluoride, detergent foam, or lead,
Keep it out of our water, our clothes and our bread.
DDT in our milk, arsenic on our blueberries, each person
Is still as dead if he dies slowly by the cumulative action of .007 percent poison
In his toothpaste or ice cream
As if he's shot boldly in the face by double agent 007.
The hydrocarbons, the organic phosphates, dieldrin, or sevin,
We're playing a dangerous game of dice come seven or eleven,
From microwaves to polluted waves with oil spills,
From atomic fallout to dangerous birth control pills,
Let us free our environment from the assorted ills
Of a chemical control that's biocidal and genocidal.
Worse than any mad dictator's plan to kill
A select group of any population, are our plans
To kill selectively just a few thousand insects or birds,
A Million fish, or a herd of deer. Whether we speak
Of mice or men, it's time to think again of the circle of life,
To respect each living creature from the grasshopper to the worm.
If we don't care for all living things, if we pity spurn
For the plight of the sterile bird and silent bee
Soon the hatred we have spread abroad in form of DDT
Will turn full circle and crush both you and me.

Robert Burns once wrote some lines "To A Mouse"
Whose house was upturned by a plough, he said:
"I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken nature's social union,
And justifies that ill opinion

Which makes thee startle

At me, thy poor earth-born companion

And fellow-mortal!"

And our own Walt Whitman sings in *Leaves of Grass*:

"What chemistry!

That the winds are really not infectious,

That this is no cheat, this transparent green-wash of the sea which is so amorous after me,

That it is safe to allow it to lick my naked body all over with its tongues,

That it will not endanger me with the fevers that have deposited themselves in it,

That all is clean forever and forever,

That the cool drink from the well tastes so good,

That blackberries are so flavorful and juicy,

That the fruits of the apple-orchard and the orange-orchard*,

*Japan rejected a shipment of Florida oranges because the skins had been colored with a poison.

That melons, grapes, peaches, plums, will none of them poison me,

.....

Now I am terrified at the Earth

It gives such divine materials to men, and accepts such leavings from them at last.”

Rachel spoke of half-truths fed to the public like tranquilizing pills
To keep us from waking up to the awful danger that confronts us.
More awful because we cannot see it up front or anywhere
Except in signs that all is not well, like the body of a bird,
Or a fish kill that temporarily scares the hell out of us.
Just because the water in the glass you hold in your hand
Is still clear doesn't mean that it is fit to drink.
The greatest killer of schoolchildren is cancer, not some homo
That captures headlines with his atrocities. This monstrosity
Is all the more dangerous because it's invisible and stealthy—
Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse are Dieldrin, Aldrin, Sevin and Maliathon.
They ride in the atmosphere on vaporous wings of spray and radiation,
Trampling us under the hoofbeats of millions of waterdrops that cause mutation.

Cry out! Oh man, perhaps in your pain someone will hear.
Cry out! Oh woman, perhaps it may not be in vain.
Cry out! Oh poet, and sound the alarm to wake up the house.
Foolish man who thinks that all thieves come in the night.
More dangerous those that come in the broad daylight.
Wearing no stocking mask like a common bankrobber
But wearing a gas mask and riding an airplane
Spraying us not with machine gun bullets or bombs,
But worse than these that only make you bleed and die.
The spray will poison all life from the ocean to the sky.
I wonder then if any will remain to wonder why
Man was born like flowers to bloom and to die.
I cry out from the depths of my despair like Job,
Are there any listeners on this globe?

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