



5-3-1985

## Outside the pale : a collective insight into the worded illumination of experience

Douglas R. Arnts

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.und.edu/senior-projects>

---

### Recommended Citation

Arnts, Douglas R., "Outside the pale : a collective insight into the worded illumination of experience" (1985). *Undergraduate Theses and Senior Projects*. 135.  
<https://commons.und.edu/senior-projects/135>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses, Dissertations, and Senior Projects at UND Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Undergraduate Theses and Senior Projects by an authorized administrator of UND Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact [und.common@library.und.edu](mailto:und.common@library.und.edu).

Outside the Pale

A Collective Insight Into the Worded

Illumination of Experience

by Douglas R. Arnts

A Thesis

Submitted to the

University of North Dakota

Honors Program Committee

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For Graduation

From the Four-year Honors Program.

Grand Forks, North Dakota

May 3, 1985

Introduction

Poetry is spontaneous utterance. When a poet is presenting his/her poems, it is a movement that lives in its own existence; likewise, a poem lives as itself.

To constantly become his/her self, the poet seeks limits, surpasses them, then discovers and surpasses yet newer ones, much like storming the gates of hell to reveal that evil exists in the mind. Poetry is a means of realizing, then transcending, the personal self; it demands of the poet a commitment to live with the utmost passion inherent in his/her self to live life deeply, directly, and dare to feel, to dance and celebrate the passing moment for all it is worth, to laugh the wild, free laugh of humanity. As a poet, I realize that my primary function is to move the individual to enable his/her self to identify with another's life, or vision, to make its own what it is not and yet is capable of being. From outside the pale, I attempt to provoke people to look outside of themselves, to deliver them from the limited ways in which they see and feel, so that they may glimpse a divine sensibility latent in their unconscious mind, a sensibility which must be rendered attainable through words. Poetry, then, is somewhat of an incantation to another, freer, purer realm: a dimension of sometimes painful awareness open to all who refuse to live life on the surface alone. While a

poet--along with painting, dance, theatre, film, poetry--  
is a process him/herself, the permanent function of art is,  
for me, to recreate as every individual's experience the  
fullness of humanity at large: the collective, ultimate-  
ly the divine. If this process is to transform my poetry  
to associations beyond its themes, each poem must build to  
a realization of mood rather than a sequence of events;  
thus, the thought that has gone into the poems is primar-  
ily pictorial and not explanatory, impressionist and not  
analytic.

This thesis is a fragment of process; with the poems  
that follow, I am saying, as a poet, this is where I am  
now. Not yesterday. Not tomorrow. Yet it is a chapter now  
closed, and it is every bit as important by itself as it  
will be for the chapters, down the road, to follow.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis, first of all, to Professor William Borden, my thesis committee coordinator, for his patience, wisdom, kindness, and the discipline that was necessary in the undertaking of this nine-month project; to Dr. Donald Poochigian, who I would like to believe has seen the maturing of a student/artist both inside and outside of the realm of academe, and realized both were possible; to Dr. Robert Lewis, from whom I discovered that such courses as freshman poetry are enjoyable and important all the more when its instructor takes sincere interest in the ambitions of flowering poets; and also to Dr. Richard Hampsten, a friend and mentor, the fruits of whose time and labor spent with me in independent writing courses will, I hope, be realized when he returns to campus.

To all of these fine people I express my most heartfelt gratitude.

Are not the mountains, waves, and skies, a part  
Of me and of my soul, as I of them?  
Is not the love of these deep in my heart  
With a pure passion? should I not contemn  
All objects, if compared with these? and stem  
A tide of suffering, rather than forego  
Such feelings for the hard and worldly phlegm  
Of those whose eyes are only turned below,  
Gazing upon the ground, with thoughts which dare not  
glow?

---Byron, Childe Harold, Canto III

Forty-one Solos

Thrusting wings of a golden shore,  
you carry words out through waves  
speaking colors of calm summer  
while I shiver at your beauty,  
calling in vain for agreement from  
the clouds, themselves merely a  
misplaced and grounded heaven.



I don't know what to write--

What of the sea, boundless  
and fresh, salt-lime womb  
of destiny?

What of the sky, exploding  
with cirrus shrapnel, infecting the sun?

What of a highway, long,  
loose and languid, careening  
over hell?

What of the mind, reason,  
intellectual beauty, sucking  
sadness, yearning and burning,  
waiting for the liaison  
with the body?

What of the unbelievable  
coldness  
of a sky closed to flight?

In the thighs aflame  
The liberty was liquid.

How long does summer write  
its hot notes  
to the winter, before  
autumn discovers the  
eternal adultery of all  
seasons?

Thinking upon the grass,  
a clear desire traces  
spring's melody. The springs

are cool, searching for objects  
they might mirror and befriend. The music  
of love bathes questions heavy with dust.

Lying here, the sun pushes the drops,  
heavy with doubt, onto  
the grass.

It was dark, that  
Night, in your mind  
And you swept yourself  
Into it without waiting--  
The wound, the killing  
Wound, the wound that kills  
Does not bleed  
Yet in your heart, you listened  
For the wound to run.

Be seated in an airy dream; you  
must feel the warm  
bleed of spirit, earned upon

entry from your familiar world. Here  
we'll live on soft cots, alone  
together. Bathe my tired soul

in the glistening salvation of your thighs.

"Fly, glaring sand, through the  
heavy sea; say farewell, now,  
to the eyes which can't see."

In a dazzling sound, the  
sand was gone, and I stood  
shouting, not beneath the ground.

Yet I was in darkness, as a brother  
knowing that that sun-dust and I would forever speak  
to another.

-

So near to midnight is  
An eternal winter, crouched  
in a bitter glance  
inside the sun's far corner.



preparations of empiricism,  
I defy your primitive tones;  
my language represents the seen,  
unseen, known, unknown--obscure songs!  
Extremes: broken, expectant hopes  
which catch your nature for you--  
your rationalist ears hear silence  
where desire rustles through an abyss.  
Have your ways, then, and labour greedily;  
you'll not reap the eternal winds  
blown full  
through a sonorous climate.

Of this world will remain

Only the souls that rose from it.

On the wall  
I painted a scarab  
and the sordid  
plans of  
a pharaoh  
ran to the sand.

We scurry  
and kill  
beneath the sightless gaze  
of a slaughtered wind.

The sea follows

The moon

The land beckons

The undecided.

had it not been  
so absurd  
I would have  
begun  
to die.

North Dakota

The world gone by

An ice song pilgrimage.

Snow

Morning

Resign.

Orange sun  
bleeding profusely  
into semidark transparence  
of the dawn.



confusion decrees  
our rampant helplessness  
and thoughts unspoken.  
share with us wine  
grapes of whose thine  
are juiced in sunbroken  
adornment,  
bejeweled in dour  
spotlights  
of the  
lifeplay.

O summer  
Allow us  
with your preening duskiness  
and brazen bright promise  
to command and  
harness  
the flutes of aqua maenads;  
Azured mad  
music always  
amazes us with stung  
squinted pleasure  
while sunlit ecstasies  
fill the cisterns  
in which our fevers drink.  
And we, ennobled of lurid heat  
shall craze and conjure, hotly  
Imbibe  
this delirium with crystal clutches  
printing upon the shedding sky,  
dipped into its bedding sand.

The sun  
burns below  
the shadow  
of a glimmering  
pool;  
Tiles of sweat  
beneath a glance  
push their  
way  
toward another  
sky, one  
level with the flight  
of a life not yet  
scratched  
by the claws of time.

The clouds draped  
the sky  
then pulled away  
to reveal an  
awakening infinite.

those glass eyes;  
I'm not afraid to offer my hand,  
to live  
in spite of myself  
as I pass those glass eyes.  
Yet I'd rather shatter their coldness,  
offering the fierce and crimson words;  
a soft hope echoes again, a refrain  
hurling my heart like a discuss  
into indisputable reality: Fools  
and poets are one.

private consciousness, they say--  
what is it but  
an incubus  
of the universal nightmare  
from which the sublime dreamer  
of cosmic history  
will awaken, only to dream  
once more?

The bus was warm, a  
submarine in the undersea air.  
It housed and embraced  
the fish that breathe above.

riveted awareness

make certain

our

unapproachable chaos

is in order.



A returning flood, rising above rocks

of caution

gladly sculpts the narrow avenues

of dry-travelled boredom.

It is winter, this winter that,

with its radiant ice prepared

an escape from the placidity it mocked...

...will we find rest,  
palliate the madness,  
Thanatopsis undone?  
Poets, we choose  
nepenthe.

With a cast of emotions  
he directs the  
winding film in front of  
the race,  
striking poses  
for them to face.

bright phantoms prone  
lying aside from  
silence  
like a heavy electric  
pilgrimage  
moving to the  
page  
speak as all  
with shawl cowled  
tightly about  
emptiness  
and friendly night  
hiding fledgling  
loneliness.

silent dalliance of  
genius  
harsh response of  
brilliance;  
the magnanimous gesture of  
murdering  
your soul  
while begetting  
a collective life  
is planting seeds  
of knowing  
into one  
still  
dry  
world.

plucking strings of  
tension,  
pizzicato afterthought  
of an age  
tightened and  
strummed  
by soft dumb  
fingers,  
atrophied measures of  
knowledge,  
bleeding rhythms of  
expanding wombs  
amassing warfare  
for the minstrels of the page.

The emotions explain to,  
the brain listens  
and the soul interprets  
the hand that scratches  
the heart of life.

Not order but disorder, luckless one,  
 It seems to be, and madness in your heart.

---Sophocles

tumescent reason  
 auspicious and profound  
 softens into the season  
 where orders, breached, abound.

aplomb passions promoted,  
 imprecations unfolded  
 into a gnostic chaos  
 hoarded by our gaols.

DARK CORNERS' BOURNE  
 WHITE DALLIANCE FORLORNED,  
 when progenies still grown  
 shriek from what has sown  
 forever to be known  
 only on loan,  
 puerile and shown.

weep we must  
 once we lust  
 the lamenting trust  
 that flees as dust.



It seems this plain has swept before;  
Spirit tires of body and  
Is gone in grievous dank limits,  
Bringing votary from chill periphery:  
"I cannot stay here--" no, it will  
not do good to make suffering of  
youth, in lonely  
haunts of closing earthen  
deliberation.  
Why must we pay the toll so high  
that bridges hope  
To the turnings of the sun?

knowledge leads  
to unconditioned release  
from doubt,  
which is ignorance:  
it is luxé, calme et volupté'.

Shock inflames  
the reality  
of being.

Vacuous instant  
and at our glance  
piquant, announced,  
the marring shamescape  
of man  
hosts its swarming guests,  
sensation's quest.

We  
are gods  
in the shadows, aware  
of these shadows, a knowledge  
wherein the  
primeaval beasts lie beside our souls;  
heaven and hell reconcile  
light and dark  
we endure  
as unconscious players  
in a shadow play  
of choice.

Empty idols,  
voided sutra,  
trapped flight  
gestures refined  
of Wisdom.

Pleasure's tyranny  
is that of avarice,  
which chooses to  
destroy  
what it cannot  
assimilate.

imperfection

is

the greatness

of

m

a n.



Forty-three Choruses

Some Notes

It is the warm meadows that enrage loneliness.

The night threatens nothing. It is private.

The strings of a morning-harp weep to be heard.

The voices of despair scream. We need not struggle to listen.

A sea breathes freedom onto the city.

Industry burns our crawl-space. Laughing could kill us.

Timid solutions always take care of friendly goodbyes.

Dismembered sadness falls upon our lives. Separations  
are final until we feel death.

Risk

be not afraid of freedom;  
its touch flies above time  
into the open sun.  
be not afraid of pain;  
its flames char the senses  
to a single core of humanity.  
be not afraid of silence;  
its virile calm flows  
below struggling ships,  
quietly commanding reflection.  
be not afraid of feeling;  
its radiant passing  
through depths and light  
gives freedom to reason.  
be not afraid of fear;  
greet its gaze  
with mirrored authority.

we risk  
or mourn the days before us.

October Sighs

Leaves  
fall,  
the summer exhales  
shaking its golden  
hair;  
the noble mane  
proudly sheds lightly  
swirling locks, gently  
covering the hardening ground  
like the tired old man's  
slowing breath,  
muting softly  
his long, heavy steps.

Noontide

Desirous height of summer purges diluted energies,  
 The tranquil liquid repose of bent heated glimmers  
 Are inscribed in spinning orange orbits;  
 Magenta skies dance over ravaged avenues that  
 Web the perspiring cities like alabaster strands.  
 Iron cares, cold steel doubts slumber in the depths  
 Of cowed and breezy shades, plunged now  
 By molten torrents.

Livid hot nights pout with stifled spoliation of  
 A repleat, beautiful nectar, lit and glistening  
 Bronze against the plundered sands;  
 Golden-ripe squalls of rueful brevity are  
 Dashed scathing arraignments, like  
 Rains portending dampened dreams that splatter  
 Grotesquely on bleached and hardened ground.  
 Inhaled predilection of opaline vapors, the sweet  
 Ocean that purifies with her morning softness of  
 Salty blue, enchains the soul  
 Freely in delicious embracing bonds.  
 This sea: sower of ecstasy and sounds of

Glittering, dreamy voices of solitude--

An azure vault of roaring life opened

Unto all.

Dazzling joy,

Majestic searing gladness

Weathers the worry of lone

And

Dances from possession of totality,

Like a sacred essence, permeating

Our sight.

On Dreams

following a thousand phantoms,  
I knead the atmosphere  
flattening existence  
onto my pillow.

Zig-Zag

Earth of the slumbering and suspended rocks,  
The invisible world carries a  
Light-pulse of senses--  
The moist erotic friction of  
Land and water bludgeons the  
Whispered reverie of still chirpings;  
Birthcries deride their inner mould and  
Ambergris of lilacs invokes riots of  
Debauchery in the wild, among rushes and  
Their dusty germinations.  
From some ancestral distance  
Screams of daylight awaken  
The blood, running and rolling,  
Like moving waters, steering all from  
Hidden forms, tearing them from silent chambers  
Of difference;  
The loud blazing of golden flowers  
Weave frayed corners of human  
Remnants together, tailored  
In time, stitched  
In complicity.



Arrangement

Crystals chime; their voices  
are feelings of blended light and  
dark, approaching certain moments  
when we remember  
what it was to be so certain  
that all was warm inside  
a kiss, a caress, a love.

Now

we hear the chiming  
as through a grey hymn, one  
which resounds off an idea  
of what that feeling was.

Quietude

Upon men that step into some skies

lighter and lighter air flows.

It rushes and

muffles;

it comes to all in eternal motion

and floats away,

breathes and departs.

She

Happiness blooms across her mouth;

a smile of love invades the moment.

The drops of tears upon her face;

rain on a cool, fresh rose.

The peaceful rush within her voice;

summer-sky warmth inside the breeze.

Eyes of knowing and touches of meaning;

visions of eternity, complete and true.

To Sleep

great dark horses  
of sleep  
gallop over the land,  
like rivers flowing  
across the continent  
of night.

In sleep  
we lie naked, alone  
united at the heart  
of night and darkness;  
dying in a  
magnificent darkness  
without knowing of death,  
we abide in loneliness,  
stealing memories of daylight  
while life, glory, joy  
dissolve strangely  
into peaceful, silent  
softness.

Tides of sleep  
lap the earth, breathing  
as one with the stars.

Glasswind

Perceptible world

aloft and

retained

banishes souls,

soft and deranged--

In unordered movement

do doves tilt the

sky.

In primal bliss

the windseed invades

this heavenly membrane;

fugitives from gods

inborn to this

place

suffuse the clouds,

spilling moist

storms,

for equated love

and excluded strife

from one throne

alone

are born into

life.

To Be History?

Striding across the sun  
reading the stellar ruins  
a handspace of silence holds  
answers in its cool-air clutch:  
A planet opening, which the heavens grow,  
a swirling rock amidst dry, darkened seas,  
ready to moisten itself with springlands  
and echo with passions  
once again.

Finally

The weight of a beating air-drop  
was left to cool my brow  
after she left, and then  
it stuck in my sweat and hung drowsily  
above an oncoming message of pain  
until  
it leaked gold into my sleep. That  
night, I tucked into my brain  
monsters of rain.

Now! My Love

we shall meet, my love  
in the air so full of joy,  
so full of joy; we are  
music, and a heart burning  
over our pasts, like the sun  
in Spring. The sky  
is our bed, the shining pillows  
will our syllables muffle, and  
swift will be the current  
into which we'll drown...



At Birth

Once begun  
the moving clocks  
surround the mind.  
Clicking. Ticking.  
Passing our breath,  
Gaining on our  
failures, destroying  
dreams  
before they've begun.

From Moment

We are wet, we  
are awake;  
sunwheels, motioning  
memory to the  
sputtering sea, speed  
'round our minds;  
walking shapes beckon  
the flames downward, bright lamps  
to guide our moving. Those  
smokey images are ourselves  
coming home, ashore, to beautiful eyes;  
whirlwinds of light  
climb in the atmosphere, until  
they explode into another day.

Goodbye, Yet?

friends have embraced

and fled

as other we's

as other you's--

and I's, what of I's?

We simply remain they.

Artifacts

sparks of a fiery realm,  
we ignite love's mysteries;  
the lone night air preserves  
this deceptive unreality.  
magic solitude  
within the unity of matter  
draws us towards the eternal,  
at once obscure and unknown;  
the sun is in solution for us  
to dissect,  
a futile attempt to preserve a Paradise.

Again

familiar sights  
in strange faces;  
I rest my love  
in a virgin,  
seeking an obscure  
motion of joy, a  
movement that pain has  
culled from pleasure  
before I die again.

To Pass

In a lull'd and  
impregnable glen  
on an eastern purple sing  
strove an englancing wanderer  
mark'd as mad; a crazy thing.

The man strolled through  
a plague of lust  
where harlots curse  
and soldiers sigh.

But black'ning hearts  
and youthful fare  
quicken'd his ancient  
and insane stare.

Hopeless and pain'd  
his task remain'd  
as seer bless'd, to  
cry in quest,  
to hear an age  
with an unspilt rage.

'twas on a day of blinding  
white  
that the future did raise itself;  
he felt the past  
die slowly at last  
and discover'd his world was  
night.

Incurs'd his heart, inbled  
his eyes,  
he stumbl'd forward  
and painted his sighs.

A canvas beneath him  
a world bequeath'd him  
to recall its mem'ry,  
so bright, so dim.

Flight

Choose the breeze,  
touch the day,  
follow the eastern  
starling's flight,  
its iridescent vision  
swooped with gypsy idyll.

Squeeze not  
the breath, to  
leave it with pale,  
bleeding wings, but  
breathe the being--  
Smother the nether,  
the tight burning tether  
of doubt.

Allow the scents  
of youth  
To appall,  
Fascinate and  
Madden  
the future.



This Total Night Within

Between breasts where many loves nestle softly,  
the rush of blood resounds  
Within the fury of night, beside fermenting laments,  
and ever alone I thrash with a spurious dawn,  
that foot-lane of sleep,  
parched and breathless from a daylight's dream.  
This flood of life we feel, like angel's blood  
Running  
from glades of grey, has spilt onto an empty dusk,  
anxious  
in its task to end the wayside day's stirring, for  
which neither poverty nor riches  
exist.  
Trembling within death's province, lights emerge from  
the hours, ending  
the bitter pleasure of total resignation;  
from depths of folded night has dawn  
escaped, again a day-warning casually  
reposed  
on a cold shore of thought.

Eyes of a Dead Poet

Inside closed eyes  
rest silent pictures  
of the living world,  
a haunting vision  
shouting from behind  
peeled lids.  
Once, mighty  
spoken words,  
like vultures  
descending, picked hungrily  
at hope, desire, knowledge  
that threaded the torn, exposed  
nerves of still-running emotions,  
felled by citizens without exploding, lambent tears;  
tears by which  
every turn of the earth  
filled empty sockets  
with the vital wetness of joy.

Now, dark plumaged words  
swoop through time  
and silence, a lonely  
wind lashing  
at doubt's prisoners  
then pealing throughout the eastern sky.

Self

He walked in  
to these towers  
without arriving at the  
door  
He was already  
inside  
when they opened their  
eyes.

Gardener's Plot

Conscious being, looking to the source  
Always working, order in himself  
Plodding, tilling ev'ry steppe's course.  
Adding, changing nature of its wealth.

Ev'r happ'ning throughout ev'ry clime  
Bearing petty duties of the soil  
Laying roots for beauty 'neath the grime,  
Nurture's sun-fed notions from his toil.

Seedlings, verdant tenets from the sod  
From the implant some will reap, he knows;  
Getting closer to his loving God,  
Curing human foliage where it grows.

Sephira

The wispy voiced winds upon a gaze  
Deliver the sunlight through the haze;  
They want me, they say, to fantasize  
Of men and truth, not things and lies.  
I look in the ocean's crashing foam  
Its warm splashing tides, soul's senses roam  
To crystal clear visions, birds and poems;  
How just is fate, one lives, one dies.

Endymion

Human souls of breath and shadow awaken in the morn  
Grown from gentle dawn's tranquil involution,  
Become as one with movement, impassioned dissolution.  
Bemoaned are cries of other worlds' beckon;  
All abandoned this planet, with infernal reckon.  
Wheel of fire, from hills pervades rolling scorn--  
Burning the impasses, turning flames from under,  
To spark and ignite mortal remnants asunder.  
Scorching at twilight, illuminated currents be--  
For flesh of the mind, distilled in Alchemy,  
In latent transcendence, turned Sun into Sea.

Ghost Squadrons

metal sounds

glistening thunder

Vibrations of still

blaze above wonder--

hot, spare warriors,

benign and brittle

help us to solve

the arid-blown riddle;

When is the end

beginning

to fly?

In deserts and plains

under

hot Nevada sky...



Astarte's Plague

Blazoned hue of skin magnolia--  
Staring shame--who's to blame?  
Lustful Eves, by youths conceived,  
In night deceived--  
Barren womb of dawn--Labored pain, its pawn.  
Shattered mirrors, inward birth  
Wanton warmth, lost of worth.  
Congeries in spoiled fruits  
Green convictions, brown weeded  
Roots.  
Darkened wet forest  
Consumed my  
Unsavored  
Consent.

Sniper

lights

Motion of decision

Trained, flashing and imprinted

Iron-wrought and loaded,

Heavy on the shoulder of the hunter.

camera

Focused crosshairs,

Intense, directed and inward

Towards his celluloid prey.

action!

The injurious vision with which

The cameraman/killer eyes his victim

Lithe and prone in the sterile tundra,

Devoured by spectators

In the dark, warm and silent maw

Of the theatre.

Moon of the New Sun

In every impulse of the breeze  
Where the sun had blown,  
the submersion into winter  
disrupts our boiling, fiery  
hearts;

          dryly, winter extends its gaunt,  
crippled branches, leaving our souls  
tumultuously breathless--  
Lunar crossing  
of night, white-  
laden orb, we  
are waiting  
for the Fire  
of Spring.

Peer of gods

Lucretius

were you awake  
when gods presented  
themselves to  
dreaming minds of  
men?

Nature,

subjugated and  
floored,  
rises with sinful  
expectance

to those  
dreaming minds.

Absorbent cruelty,  
cling to dreams  
with puerile  
claws divine--

Hold them to deeds  
of unseeming hours  
and harken their softness  
from death.

We then might know  
when to feel.

Smuggled Ages

Phantom cargo  
at midnite.  
Meet me beside  
Dawns' promises.  
I will show you  
dead ancestors, prepared  
traditions and new paradise,  
A Western millenium.  
Consignments of life,  
Nurtured and wealthy,  
glow with salvation--  
Prophet leaders, consummate  
Rogues, spread industrial  
madness. Steel missionaries  
smuggle hysteria.  
Secrets broken by Jesus and Yali,  
pacts of skin, natives whipped  
w/lies, all  
ignorant concessions from the  
Big man  
    who lost the cargo  
        in the East.

Moonsorrow

Inward evasions, conveyed hither from a  
Distant realm;  
Stillborn notions, borne of coming ages  
Flay forms cast in timeshadows of truth  
and reap pristine annals of sown oracles.  
In mock perusal  
Of divine distress  
Does the lunar elegance in  
Cerebral radiance  
Reveal  
The sombre mindroot.

Cruise

white fur gowns  
split-level towns,  
the grimestreet turns  
into hunting grounds  
for luxuriant herdsmen.  
Carbon breath tracking  
the fire-load it is  
lacking;  
screeching desperation  
halts the  
cool air standing.  
Model-tight legs  
running from the dregs,  
trip the evening's routine  
handling  
of legal tender changes.  
Illegally rendered  
ranges  
hoard the bleeding,  
all coralled and labeled  
for fast-food eating.

Death of a Deer

Furblown byway of  
stiffened hooves' breed--  
skidding life  
at random.  
Bludgeoning race  
which threatens  
its prancing companions  
brakes to an explosion  
from wheelfelt ignition  
and floors to the dust  
silent running "progress."  
Still, beside  
dry fields printed,  
glances from  
does  
are antlered and  
tinted.



Eve of Dionysia

Towards depths of holy  
Dark night, vexed in  
Mutual mingling of truth  
And madness  
Where deep wells flow, is  
Diffident paradise found.  
Embodied inclusions,  
Imponderable chances are as  
The unharvested sea; light  
Mimosa in indolent derision  
Is cast upon slumbering trees;  
Inflamed rebirth is  
Changing and  
Supreme, yet  
Delicate and black,  
Nestled in the  
Cold opulence of  
The silent empty drone  
Of night.

Hi-Way

Of earth and night  
Unhallowed and fleeting,  
Pervasive sketches of life  
Are drawn for their sweetness and  
Asphalt-strewn pathos.  
I see the colonnaded street lights  
Touching the dark blind stratum of transparent dusk;  
Saffron, maudlin blankets of derision  
Infect the clarity, implored by  
Restraints of measured existence  
To veil reality with monoxide shrouds--  
Inward dykes collapse from repression  
Of the elemental,  
Which breaks through perforce;  
And civilization vanishes, carried only in  
Turgid formless and transistorized torrents  
Of impulse  
That transmute phantasy  
Into certainty.

And there is a bridge that  
OVERRUNS the outward stream of life;  
But joys of the  
Innocent surface waters  
Are tied to its stifled  
Girders, metallic pangs that  
Support the pain-ridden journey--  
Reticent timeprints of distance,  
Painted and remote, follow themselves  
Over the hi-way  
Leading into the tarred morass of  
Hell or Heaven.  
As steel chassied lanterns  
Redeem a drowsed struggle,  
The recesses of feeling return to  
Proclaim in carriage-housed votary that  
The rapture of the initiated lies in  
The sorting and genius soul,  
Driven deeper than logic.

Hurricane Algren

Bay the feather  
brush it, clever--  
cabering roar, a  
seaman's whore;  
voluptuous waves  
and sanctified night,  
choke we now  
gravity, allow us  
rig our sails.  
The earth we impale,  
to relieve it, and bail.

Half-Circle

squinting,  
I dared see  
an isle of gentle,

forever circling my soul,  
forever rushing in my  
veins, forever

one which had  
no place  
atop this plain,

beckoning me as I  
held it close to an  
idea of what really

or did it? to  
believe it was my  
birthplace would

is the nature of this  
earth if I'm determined,  
already, to travel from

mean, yes, I'm in hell--  
but why have I chosen  
this, if such an

it? Enough of this, I  
must relinquish my  
self to sand and sea,

isle is my home?  
why search for Eden  
when it's already existed,

absolving the rest  
from being born into a place  
at all.

Zuni Spiral

Aashiwi dusk  
 cool, juniper moon  
 Red banshee wails.  
 Pollenway, the Life  
 follows Coral directions;  
 southern sluice bait,  
 this noose of scalding  
 sun.  
 A land of tendril bone's  
 Labor and  
 sinew-strewn kill.  
 And Beast priests HEAL  
     MADNESS of  
 YAAYA dances, the  
 White Shumeekuli  
 COSTUMED WITH DEAD FLESH--  
 GHOST CHILDREN!  
 costumed with dead flesh  
 ghost children, caught  
 in convulsions  
 Outside the arroyo.  
 Spiral Society Surrounds  
 the Zuni  
 Circle of sky.

Passing the Graveyards

Bow

to the black, funeral amazement

that lies in the

fabulous obscurity and

unblemished wisdom of

Birth.

Gesture to night

beckon to morning

all pass in the light

bright, sharp and alluring;

Relish the waxen

embellishment of embalmed skies,

dry with morose and pallid lies--

Pass the headstones,

the grey shale deadstones

relinquish the living

from turning in time

to the rapt stiffened dead  
who with years inscribed  
may chance to mime  
our fleshfelt movement,  
which dimly strays past  
their pillows of lime.  
Sleep.



To act well in this world, one must die within oneself--

Renan

Protocol

poet's ploy  
 undaunted joy  
 benign; resign  
 and slash the soul.  
 celebrate the warm,  
 burning life, bloody  
 through cerebral syringes,  
 a ptolemaic mandala surrounding  
 organs of thought,  
 the world's genitals  
 friction-worn, thick  
 against the earth  
 so embracing totality.

death, in a textured oblivion.

terrifying posture  
 of the innocent,  
 crouched from fate's  
 dark opacity,  
 recede into blackness

and transplant  
other wounds  
with poetic lacerations,  
all mended, dressed  
and conducted  
cranial processions.