

Poems so sick, they slit their own throats.

Poems that spread their legs or the cheeks of their ass. But they stink so horribly you won't even come close. They look you in the eye and tell you to fuck off then, if you don't want it there's plenty that do.

Poems that are enraged, ragged, unfinished, obsession-al, full of bad lines.

Rejected poems, used up poems, cast off poems. Poems that will only just run. Their doors are tied with string and you only put fifty cents of gas in them, but they'll burn it, these poems will burn it.

Because they already burn with the crisis of their history. They don't like who they are. They'd really rather be punk poems or post-punk poems or language poems or any kind of poems but these: party poems, sixties' revival poems, MOR poems or neo-expressionist poems. They'd really like to stand around posing or buying real estate, anything but this, finding themselves asking what poems are not allowed to ask, saying what they were not paid to say, what they were paid not to say.

At last they have asked about Aztlan: about Cuba, about El Salvador, about Nicaragua.

They say: You at last catch our eye and our ear and allow us a poem, a poem, a poem that can turn around and quietly say:

Venceremos, the People Will Win.

-- David James

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WRAP

I start with nothing. I always start out that way. Nothing! A void. I make it absolutely clear. My technique is to wrap in cellophane. Layer after layer of cellophane. Enclosing a void. Nothing! To achieve the effect's never easy, since cellophane, viewed from an angle under harsh museum lighting, throws off a glint. Glints distract. I feel that in myself I have a duty to end distraction, confusion and hoopla. Finding an appropriate

medium took me years. After I'd begun working with it, I slowly realized cellophane has two absolutely distinct aspects: one glossy, the other dull; one sticky, one slippery. It can reflect, or it can reveal; it can cling to things, or allow them to slip away. Through all human history, the purpose of material and technique in art has been to preserve an essence, a vision; and I succeed at what I try in a way no artist previous to this, our age of limpid possibility, might have dreamed. I keep nothing fresh.

USE YOUR IMAGINATION

It was art activities hour, Brad's favorite time. Mr. Hammer wheeled in the library record player and put on orchestra music. He told the class they were to sketch whatever things their minds saw as they listened. David, Brad's neighbor, happened to notice the enlarged photograph of a bumblebee on the record jacket. He also noticed Hammer sliding said jacket under some papers. David began drawing bumblebees. Brad said he doubted that was what Hammer meant, but David reminded him they were only supposed to draw anything that came into their heads, so ... how could it be cheating?

Hammer strode from desk to desk. He got to David's bumblebee. Brad expected an explosion. Hammer did not explode. The fact was, he turned and exclaimed to the class that David was a genius. After that, he stepped down the hall and brought another teacher, who said the same thing. That was that.

PANDEMONIUM

"I'm not saying I know what we're up to over there," said the voice on the tape recorded in the dorm room, "because I don't. But the one thing I do know is that this'll be the same as having a red star over your draft card. Get what I'm saying, bonehead? I want you to be able to work for a living when this is over."

Randy's walls were closing in. There was little likelihood of the draft board granting him the conscientious objector status he had requested forms for; unlike Dick Nixon, Randy had not been born a Quaker, hence he had no officially sanctioned basis