

# ANTHOLOGY OF CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN POETRY

SELECTED, EDITED AND READ BY GEORGE ABBE / SCHOLASTIC RECORDS SL 9735

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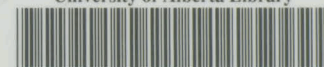
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1 program notes (8 p.)

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ANTHOLOGY OF CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN POETRY

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ANTHOLOGY OF CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN POETRY

Selected, Edited and Read by And By

George Abbe

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MUSIC LP

Kenneth Patchen

A pioneer in "poetry-with-jazz"; Patchen received a Guggenheim fellowship for a first book of verse, *Before the Brave* (1936). His published works include *Because It Is*, *The Famous Boating Party and Other Poems in Prose*, *Red Wine and Yellow Hair*, *The Journal of Albion Moonlight*, and others. He has also made three LP recordings of his own works for Folkways Records: FL9717 - *Selected Poems*; FL9718 - *Kenneth Patchen Reads with Jazz*; FL9719 - *Love Poems*.

Karl Shapiro

Pulitzer Prize for Poetry. Member of the American academy of Arts and Letters. Has been Consultant in Poetry at Library of Congress; editor of *POETRY: A MAGAZINE OF VERSE*; has taught at Johns Hopkins, Iowa State, University of California, is now editor of *Prairie Schooner*.

Books: *Poetry: Person, Place and Thing*, 1942; *V-Letter*, 1944; *Essay on Rime*, 1945; *Trial of a Poet*, 1947; *Poems 1940-1953*, 1953; also *Bibliography of Modern Prosody*, 1948.

Lewis Turco

His first collection, *FIRST POEMS*, was a selection of the Book-Club-for-Poetry. He has made recordings of his work for the Library of Congress archives, and teaches at Fenn College in Cleveland.

In 1960 he won the Academy of American Poets Prize at the University of Iowa.

Galway Kinnell

Has contributed to *Beloit Poetry Journal*, *New World Writing*, etc. Was Formerly Director of the Liberal Arts Program of the Downtown Center of the University of Chicago. His first collection, *WHAT A KINGDOM IT WAS*, published by Houghton-Mifflin. Has been reprinted in *NEW POEMS*, edited by Rolfe Humphries and published by Ballantine Books, Inc., and this poem in the recording, "To Christ Our Lord" appears in the Oscar-Williams-edited *POCKET BOOK OF MODERN VERSE*.

May Swenson

Comes from Utah, where she was at one time a reporter for the Salt Lake Deseret News. Author of *A CAGE OF SPINES*; was one of three included in the Scribners' collection, *POETS OF TODAY*, along with Murray Noss and Harry Duncan -- her group being called *ANOTHER ANIMAL* (actually a book within a book). Her work has appeared in *Partisan Review*, *Western Review*, *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*, and the *New Direction* anthologies. In 1953, she won the Poetry introduction prize awarded by the YMHA Poetry Center in New York.

Richard Eberhart

Consultant in Poetry, Library of Congress  
Harriet Monroe Poetry Award, the Shelley Memorial Award  
Has taught at Princeton, Dartmouth, University of Washington

Books:

*A Bravery of Earth*, 1930, *Reading the Spirit*, 1937, *Burr Oaks*, 1947, *An Herb Basket*, 1950, *Undercliff*, 1953. Co-editor, with Selden Rodman, of *WAR AND THE POET*, an anthology.

Howard Nemerov

Member of faculty at Bennington College. In addition to four volumes of poetry, *The Image and the Law*, 1947, *Guide to the Ruins*, 1950, *The Salt Garden*, 1955, *New and Selected Poems*, 1960, he is the author of the novels: *The Melodramatists*; *Federigo*, or *The Power of Love*; and *The Homecoming Game*; and of a collection of his short stories, *A Commodity of Dreams*, published in 1959.

John Ciardi

Poetry Editor of *Saturday Review*. Translator of Dante's *DIVINE COMEDY*. Author of *AS IF, I MARRY YOU, HOMEWARD TO AMERICA, LIVE ANOTHER DAY*. Professor of English at Rutgers University. One of the foremost lecturers in America.

Isobel Kneeland

Winner of University of New Hampshire writers' Conference Chapbook Award in 1959.

Marcia Masters

Poetry published in *Poetry*, *Saturday Review*, *Voices*, *Yankee*, others. Winner Robert Ferguson Poetry Award (1959) from Friends of Literature (Chicago).

Donald Justice

Publications:

*THE SUMMER ANNIVERSARIES*, Wesleyan Univ. Press, 1960. (The Lamont Poetry Selection for 1959). And in such magazines as *NEW YORKER*, *HARPER'S*, *HUDSON REVIEW*, *CARLETON MISCELLANY*, *POETRY*; and in such anthologies as *THE NEW POETS OF ENGLAND AND AMERICA* and *UNDERSTANDING POETRY*.

Inez Boulton prize from *POETRY*, 1960. Iowa-Rockefeller fellowship in poetry, 1954-5.

THEODORE ROETHKE

Publications:

*Open House* 1941 (Knopf)  
*The Lost Son and Other Poems* 1948 (Doubleday and John Lehmann)  
*Praise to the End!* 1951 (Doubleday)  
*The Waking* 1953 (Doubleday)  
*Words for the Wind* 1957 (Secker and Warburg)  
1948 (Doubleday)

Awards:

Tietjens Prize, 1947; Levinson Prize, 1951; American Academy of Arts and Letters Award, 1952; Grant: Fund for the Advancement of Education, 1952; Pulitzer Prize for Poetry, 1954; Borestone Mountain Award, 1958; Edna St. Vincent Millay Award, Bolingen Prize (Yale University), Ford Foundation Grant, Longview Award, National Book Award, Northwest Writers Award, 1959.

Contributor to:

*Times Literary Supplement*, *The Observer*, *The London Magazine*, *New Statesman*, *Nation*, *Botteghe Oscure*, *Encounter*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *The New Republic*, *Yale Review*, *Poetry*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *Sewanee Review*, *Kenyon Review*, *Hudson Review*, *American Scholar*, *Preuves*, *Today's Japan*.

William Jay Smith

Winner Poetry award Young Poets Prize (1945).

Author:

Poems (1947)  
Celebration at Dark (1950)  
Poems 1947-1957 (1957)  
The Spectra Hoax (1961)  
(For Children)

Laughing Time (1955)  
Boy Blue's Book of Beasts (1957)  
Puptents and Pebbles: A Nonsense ABC (1959)  
Typewriter Town (1960)

(Translations)

Poems of a Multimillionaire by Valery Larbaud (1955)  
Selected Writings of Jules Laforgue (1956)

James Wright

Has won many prizes for poetry, among them: Robert Frost Poetry Prize (as an undergraduate), Eunice Tietjens Memorial Prize (Poetry, 1955), Yale Series of Younger Poets for "The Green Wall" (1956). Has had grants from Fulbright, Kenyon Review Poetry Fellowship, National Institute of Arts and Letters.

Felix Stefanile

Has had a good deal of his work published in Poetry, Voices, Harper's, Saturday Review, and others.

David R. Clark

A New Englander, is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Massachusetts and on the editorial staff of the Massachusetts Review. His poems have appeared in POETRY, THE KENYON REVIEW, THE MASSACHUSETTS REVIEW, VOICES, THE DUBLIN MAGAZINE, THE TRANSATLANTIC REVIEW, etc.

In 1960-61 he has been lecturing in Ireland and Iceland on modern poetry and drama. He is at work on a study of Yeats's plays.

Leah Bodine Drake

Two books published - A Hornbook for Witches (1950), This Tilting Dust (1956); the latter won a Borestone Mountain Poetry Award in manuscript. Co-editor The Various Light, poetry anthology, C. A. Muses, senior editor.

Richard Wilbur

has taught English at Harvard, Wellesley, and Westeyan; has published five books of verse: The Beautiful Changes, 1947; Ceremony, 1950; Things of This World, 1956, Poems 1943-1956, 1957, and Advice to a Prophet, 1961; he has written Broadway lyrics - Candide, 1956, compiled an anthology of beast-literature - A Bestiary, 1955, edited the poems of Poe 1959 - and translated Moherre's Misanthrope 1955. He received the NBA and Pulitzer Prize in 1957.

Kate Brackett

Poems have appeared in Atlantic, Harper's, Saturday Review, Saturday Evening Post, many others. Winner Durham Poetry Award (1955). Poetry Society of America monthly awards (twice) and 2nd prize in the annual award (1960).

David Morton (1886 - 1957)

From the beginning of his poetic career until the very last years, honor after honor was accorded David Morton. In 1919, his widely quoted "Wooden Ships" won the annual first prize of The Poetry Society of America. In 1919, also, he won one of

three prizes of \$500, offered by the Lyric Society for the best book of poems submitted in manuscript. In 1921, he was awarded The Poetry Society of America prize for the best sonnet of the year; in 1922, he won the annual prize of the Book and Play Club of New York. The National Poetry Center awarded him, in 1939, the Golden Scroll Medal of Honor for being the outstanding poet in the country for that year. Typical of many such honors given him by various magazines and literary societies over a long period of years was Robert Nathan's selection of his "Traveller's Report" as the prize poem in a recent issue of The Lyric. In 1955, his book, Like a Man in Love, shared the Borestone Mountain Award of \$1,250 with Eric Barker's Directions in the Sun.

He served as a Vice President of The Poetry Society of America in 1949. In 1952, the University of Kentucky bestowed upon him an honorary Doctorate of Letters, and in 1953, the University of Massachusetts conferred upon him this same degree.

BOOKS BY DAVID MORTON

SHIPS IN HARBOR  
HARVEST  
THE SONNET TODAY - AND YESTERDAY  
NOCTURNES AND AUTUMNALS  
THE RENAISSANCE OF IRISH POETRY  
A MAN OF EARTH  
EARTH'S PROCESSIONAL  
SPELL AGAINST TIME  
ALL IN ONE BREATH  
ANGLE OF EARTH AND SKY  
POEMS: 1920-1945  
LIKE A MAN IN LOVE  
JOURNEY INTO TIME

ANTHOLOGIES

AMHERST UNDERGRADUATE VERSE, 1925-1929  
SIX FOR THEM  
SHORTER MODERN POEMS  
THIS IS THEIR ACRE

SIDE I

Side 1, Band 1: SNOWY HERON

John Ciardi

What lifts the heron leaning on the air  
I praise without a name. A crouch, a flare,  
a long stroke through the cumulus of trees,  
a shaped thought at the sky -- then gone. O rare!  
Saint Francis, being happiest on his knees,  
would have cried Father! Cry anything you please.

But praise. By any name or none. But praise  
the white original burst that lights  
the heron on his two soft kissing kites.  
When saints praise heaven lit by doves and rays,  
I sit by pond scums till the air recites  
its heron back. And doubt all else. But praise.

I MARRY YOU

John Ciardi

Men marry what they need. I marry you,  
morning by morning, day by day, night by night,  
and every marriage makes this marriage new.

In the broken name of heaven, in the light  
that shatters granite, by the spitting shore,  
in air that leaps and wobbles like a kite,

I marry you from time and a great door  
is shut and stays shut against wind, sea, stone,  
sunburst, and heavenfall. And home once more

inside our walls of skin and struts of bone,  
man-woman, woman-man, and each the other,  
I marry you by all dark and all dawn

and learn to let time spend. Why should I bother  
2



the flies about me? Let them buzz and do.  
Men marry their queen, their daughter, or their mother

by names they prove, but that thin buzz whines through:  
when reason falls to reasons, cause is true.  
Men marry what they need. I marry you.

Pipe-knock.

Scurry of warm over small plants.  
Ordnung! ordnung!  
Papa is coming!

A fine haze moved off the leaves;  
Frost melted on far panes;  
The rose, the chrysanthemum turned toward the light.  
Even the hushed forms, the bent yellowy weeds  
Moved in a slow up-sway.

Side 1, Band 2:

#### WAGON TRAIN

E.L. Mayo

As pioneering children, when no rain  
Made water brackish in the last canteen,  
Went right to sleep, and just as seldom knew  
When guns were cocked and ready all night through,  
So do we ride the earth's revolving wheel,  
Moving across what prairies, to what wars,  
Against what ambush, eye does not reveal;  
Nor do we know what loyal outriders  
Swing on to clear our path across the plain,  
But drift to sleep where canvas hides the stars  
Of the long planetary wagon train.

#### THE HORSE CHESTNUT TREE

Richard Eberhart

Boys in sporadic but tenacious droves  
Come with sticks, as certainly as Autumn,  
To assault the great horse chestnut tree.

There is a law governs their lawlessness.  
Desire is in them for a shining amulet  
And the best are those that are highest up.

They will not pick them easily from the ground.  
With shrill arms they fling to the higher branches,  
To hurry the work of nature for their pleasure.

I have seen them trooping down the street  
Their pockets stuffed with chestnuts shucked, unshucked.  
It is only evening keeps them from their wish.

Sometimes I run out in a kind of rage  
To chase the boys away: I catch an arm,  
Maybe, and laugh to think of being the lawgiver.

I was once such a young sprout myself  
And fingered in my pocket the prize and trophy.  
But still I moralize upon the day

And see that we, outlaws on God's property,  
Fling out imagination beyond the skies,  
Wishing a tangible good from the unknown.

And likewise death will drive us from the scene  
With the great flowering world unbroken yet,  
Which we held in idea, a little handful.

Side 1, Band 3:

#### THE RETURN

Theodore Roethke

The way to the boiler was dark,  
Dark all the way,  
Over slippery cinders  
Through the long greenhouse.

The roses kept breathing in the dark.  
They had many mouths to breathe with.  
My knees made little winds underneath  
Where the weeds slept.

There was always a single light  
Swinging by the fire-pit,  
Where the fireman pulled out roses,  
The big roses, the big bloody clinkers.

Once I stayed all night.  
The light in the morning came slowly over the  
Snow. white  
There were many kinds of cool  
Air.  
Then came steam.

It was beginning winter.  
An in-between time,  
The landscape still partly brown:  
The bones of weeds kept swinging in the wind,  
Above the blue snow.

It was beginning winter.  
The light moved slowly over the frozen field,  
Over the dry seed-crowns,  
The beautiful surviving bones  
Swinging in the wind.

Light traveled over the field;  
Stayed.  
The weeds stopped swinging.  
The wind moved, not alone,  
Through the clear air, in the silence.

Was it light?  
Was it light within?  
Was it light within light?  
Stillness becoming alive,  
Yet still?

A lively understandable spirit  
Once entertained you.  
It will come again.  
Be still.  
Wait.

#### THE WRAITH

Theodore Roethke

Incomprehensible gaiety and dread  
Attended what we did. Behind, before,  
Lay all the lonely pastures of the dead;  
The spirit and the flesh cried out for more.  
We two, together, on a darkening day  
Took arms against our own obscurity.

Did each become the other in that play?  
She laughed me out, and then she laughed me in;  
In the deep middle of ourselves we lay;  
When glory failed, we danced upon a pin.  
The valley rocked beneath the granite hill;  
Our souls looked forth, and the great day stood still.

There was a body, and it cast a spell,--  
God pity those but wanton to the knees,--  
The flesh can make the spirit visible;  
We woke to find the moonlight on our toes.  
In the rich weather of a dappled wood  
We played with dark and light as children should.

What shape leaped forward at the sensual cry?--  
Sea-beast or bird flung toward the ravaged shore?  
Did space shake off an angel with a sigh?  
We rose to meet the moon, and saw no more.  
It was and was not she, a shape alone,  
Impaled on light, and whirling slowly down.

Side 1, Band 4:

#### LIFE CYCLE OF COMMON MAN

Howard Nemerov

Roughly figured, this man of moderate habits,  
This average consumer of the middle class,  
Consumed in the course of his average life span  
Just under half a million cigarettes,  
Four thousand fifths of gin and about  
A quarter as much vermouth; he drank  
Maybe a hundred thousand cups of coffee,  
3

And counting his parents' share it cost  
Something like half a million dollars  
To put him through life. How many beasts  
Died to provide him with meat, belts and shoes  
Cannot be certainly said.

But anyhow,  
It is in this way that a man travels through time,  
Leaving behind him a lengthening trail  
Of empty bottles and bones, of broken shoes,  
Frayed collars and worn out or outgrown  
Diapers and dinnerjackets, silk ties and slickers.

Given the energy and security thus achieved,  
He did...? What? The usual things, of course,  
The eating, dreaming, drinking and begetting,  
And he worked for the money which was to pay  
For the eating, et cetera, which were necessary  
If he were to go on working for the money, et cetera,  
But chiefly he talked. As the bottles and bones  
Accumulated behind him, the words proceeded  
Steadily from the front of his face as he  
Advanced into the silence and made it verbal.  
Who can tally the tale of his words? A lifetime  
Would barely suffice for their repetition;  
If you merely printed all his commas the result  
Would be a very large volume, and the number of times  
He said "thank you" or "very little sugar, please,"  
Would stagger the imagination. There were also  
Witticisms, platitudes, and statements beginning  
"It seems to me" or "As I always say."

Consider the courage in all that, and behold the man  
Walking into deep silence, with the ectoplastic  
Cartoon's balloon of speech proceeding  
Steadily out of the front of his face, the words  
Borne along on the breath which is his spirit  
Telling the numberless tale of his untold Word  
Which makes the world his apple, and forces him to eat.

#### THE PREPARATION

John Logan

While the class waited  
I prepared the frog:

I had to hurry the needle  
Through the handy opening  
Just at the back of the head;

It slipped upon the skin  
As on a plastic bag  
For iceboxes or as on

A rind of ripe melon,  
Then under urging  
Entered to touch parts

Never meant for metal --  
Causing one eye slightly  
To drop from its accustomed

Plane, a cold nearly  
Muscleless leg to draw  
Too far up the belly.

An almost imperceptible  
Darkening of green  
Along the back, in whose

Depression a small amount  
Of blood collected, like ours  
Red, and causing the mouth

White and inside moist  
To stretch (but it was a rabbit  
In his wire cage

Who screamed)  
As the hour began.

Side 1, Band 5:

#### TRAVELLER'S REPORT

David Morton

That was a country of straight sun,  
And no shadow...The men there  
Had clear eyes and a hard wit,  
And what the men did there was done

With such an unambiguous air  
There could be no two ways of it.

Came there a traveller with a word  
Like 'sorrow,' or 'color,' a new sound,  
A gracious sound upon the breath:  
The children were the first that heard,  
But soon the tale got well around:  
'The stranger saith, the stranger saith'....

The traveller was put to death.

I wakened to the slanting sun  
And shadow on my colored land,  
And sorrow near, the constant one,  
Her hand familiar in my hand...

I have no further journeys planned.

#### TO CHRIST OUR LORD

Galway Kinnell

The legs of the elk punctured the snow's crust  
And wolves floated light-footed on the land  
Hunting Christmas elk living and frozen.  
Inside snow melted in a basin as a woman basted  
A bird fixed over coals by its wings and head.

Snow had sealed off the windows, candles lit  
The Christmas meal. The special grace chilled  
The cooked bird, being long-winded and the room cold.  
During the words a boy thought, is it fitting  
To eat this creature killed on the wing?

For he had shot it himself, climbing out  
Alone on snowshoes in the dim Christmas dawn,  
Fallen snow swirling and the snowfall gone,  
Heard its throat scream as his rifle shouted,  
Watched it drop, and fished from the snow the dead.

He had not wanted to shoot. The proud  
Ascension of wings in the hushed morning  
Had stirred his love, and the things  
In his gloves froze, and he could not,  
Even for hunger, shoot. But he shot.

Now the grace praised his wicked act. At its end  
The chilled bird on the plate  
Stared at his stricken appetite.  
There had been nothing to do but surrender,  
To shoot and to eat; so he ate as he shot, with wonder.

At night on snowshoes on the drifting field  
He wondered again, for whom had love stirred?  
The stars glittered on the snow and nothing answered.  
Then the Swan spread her wings, cross of the cold north,  
The pattern and mirror of the acts of earth.

Side 1, Band 6:

#### AN IMMIGRANT BALLAD

Lewis Turco

My father came from Sicily  
(O sing a roundelay with me)  
With cheeses in his pockets and  
A crust of black bread in his hand.  
He jumped ashore without a coat,  
Without a friend or enemy,  
Till Jesus nailed him by the throat.

My father came to Boston town  
(O tongue a catch and toss one down).  
By day he plied a cobbler's awl,  
By night he loitered on the mall.  
He swigged his wine, he struck his note,  
He wound the town up good and brown,  
Till Jesus caught him by the throat.

He'd heard of Hell, he knew of sin  
(O pluck that wicked mandolin)  
But they were for the gentle folk,  
The cattle broken to the yoke.  
He didn't need a cross to tote:  
His eyes were flame, his ears were tin,  
Till Jesus nabbed him by the throat.



He met a Yankee girl one day  
 (O cry a merry roundelay)  
 Who wouldn't do as she was bid,  
 But only what the good folk did.  
 She showed him how the church bells peal  
 Upon the narrow straightaway,  
 And Jesus nipped him on the heel.

My father heard a sermon said  
 (O bite the bottle till it's dead).  
 He quit his job and went to school  
 And memorized the Golden Rule.  
 He drained his crock and sold his keg,  
 He swept the cobwebs from his head,  
 And Jesus hugged him by the leg.

The girl was pleased: she'd saved a soul  
 (O light a stogie with a coal).  
 No longer need she be so wary:  
 Daddy went to seminary  
 To find how warm a Yankee grows  
 When she achieves her fondest goal.  
 And Jesus bit him on the nose.

At last he had a frock to wear  
 (O hum a hymn and lip a prayer).  
 He hoisted Bible, sailed to search  
 For sheep to shear and for a church.  
 He asked the girl to share his life,  
 And Jesus hauled him by the hair  
 Now he had taken her to wife.

My father holds a pulpit still  
 (O I have had enough to swill).  
 His eye is tame, his hair is grey,  
 He can't recall a roundelay.  
 But he can preach and he can quote  
 A verse or scripture as you will,  
 Since Jesus grabbed him by the throat.

#### SNOWFLAKE

Alfred Dorn

Here is a snowflake in my hand, like some  
 White Athens in the palm of history --  
 A moment's fragile parthenon of frost.

It was the world-enfolding Hand, remembered  
 In marble by Rodin, that felt the empires  
 Falling like droplets to oblivion.  
 Cupping the noon of Athens in its palm,  
 Its fingers knew the touch of Phidian's snow  
 And spanned the crysalid of Plato's dream.

Perhaps this flake is some minuter Athens,  
 And I a god who holds it as it dies  
 To sudden dew. This molecule of world  
 May be dominion of a subtler nation,  
 Inviolable to our eyes. If atoms dream,  
 What kingdoms claim this melting star of snow!

#### SOMETHING HAS TO BURN

Mink worm Kate Brackett  
 is softness visible, is shadow palpable in depth;  
 color of dusky hiding-places, of earth;  
 memory, myth  
 of deep-woods nest;  
 cloud caught and shaped; bequest  
 of a small furious beast.

Mink born  
 are inch-long simmering maggots, pink  
 and blind. Their snake-sleek mother  
 gives them herself, her rage and milk to drink.  
 But if fate's turn  
 cuts off her hunting mate, her food for milk  
 before the ravening young  
 are eyed, furred, footed, strong  
 to be mink --  
 she has one more way.

Warmth is from fire; something has to burn.

Denial first from empty dugs is torn  
 by a baby's fang...  
 Here's meat with the taste of rage; and she will stay  
 till the red milk is drained. And she will stay.

#### SIDE II

Side 2, Band 1:

HERE IN KATMANDU

Donald Justice

We have climbed the mountain,  
 There's nothing more to do.  
 It is terrible to come down  
 To the valley  
 Where, amidst many flowers,  
 One thinks of snow,

As, formerly, amidst snow,  
 Climbing the mountain,  
 One thought of flowers,  
 Tremulous, ruddy with dew,  
 In the valley.  
 One caught their scent coming down.

It is difficult to adjust, once down,  
 To the absence of snow.  
 Clear days, from the valley,  
 One looks up at the mountain.  
 What else is there to do?  
 Prayerwheels, flowers!

Let the flowers  
 Fade, the prayerwheels run down.  
 What have these to do  
 With us who have stood atop the snow  
 Atop the mountain,  
 Flags seen from the valley?

It might be possible to live in the valley,  
 To bury oneself among flowers,  
 If one could forget the mountain,  
 How, setting out before dawn,  
 Blinded with snow,  
 One knew what to do.

Meanwhile it is not easy here in Katmandu,  
 Especially when to the valley  
 That wind which means snow  
 Elsewhere but here means flowers  
 Comes down,  
 As soon it must, from the mountain.

#### THE STRAY DOG BY THE SUMMERHOUSE

Donald Justice

This morning, down  
 By the summerhouse,  
 I saw a stray,  
 A stray dog dead.  
 All white and brown  
 The dead friend lay,  
 All brown with a white  
 Mark on his head.  
 His eyes were bright  
 And open wide,  
 Bright, open eyes  
 With worms inside,  
 And the tongue hung loose  
 To the butterflies,  
 The butterflies  
 And the flying ants.

And because of the tongue  
 He seemed like one  
 Who has run too long,  
 And stops, and pants.  
 And because of the sun  
 There came a scent,  
 And it was strong.  
 It came and went  
 As if somewhere near  
 A round, ripe pear,  
 So ripe, so round,  
 Had dropped to the ground  
 And with the heat  
 Was turning black.  
 And the scent came back,  
 And it was sweet.

Side 2, Band 2:

DEAD SNAKE

William Jay Smith

A gray financier in a thin black auto  
Drove over a snake on a country road;  
Birds flew up in dust that gathered,  
Oak leaves trembled throughout the wood.  
Decisive indeed the defeat of Evil;  
And inconclusive the triumph of Good.

LIGHT

William Jay Smith

By television day and night  
The little people see the light.

The light moves vivid through the air  
From Cassiopeia and the Bear,

And everything's as clear as day:  
The daughter marries, moves away,

The little son goes off to fight;  
A telegram arrives one night

To say he's unaccounted for;  
They draw the blinds and bolt the door,

And everything's as clear as day.  
The wind comes up, the hemlocks sway,

The light moves vivid through the skies.  
They grip the chair and blink their eyes,

And something deep within them throbs;  
They set the dial, they work the knobs,

While elephantine shadows fall  
And faces leap from the parlor wall.

VISION AT TWILIGHT

William Jay Smith

The lamps are lit: I gaze into the dark  
While a Negro carries a lampshade through the park,

While a Negro carries a lampshade by a stream,  
Illumined as by lamplight in a dream,

A dream in which daylight and darkness blend  
To mark a world's beginning or its end.

Night deepens, and he slowly wanders on;  
Light within me lengthens -- and is gone.

NIGHTFALL

Marcia Masters

It is not that life is stern, nor that comforts are  
My pillow is soft and my gown silken;      few:  
And my children walk in the meadows in the sweet of  
Taking all that the sun gives them.      the spring,

It is that I have not given to life  
What I should have given,  
Yet I know not where I have failed.  
What is it you ask of me, Life?  
What is this look of scorn on the scarlet maple?  
This sound of reproof in the elms seething with autumn?  
This look of neglect over blinding blue water?

I go where you tell me,  
I let the great winds stiffen my shoulders,  
The earth press to my flesh in the joy of the summer,  
When I claim it as my beloved.

I have rejoiced so much --  
Even in the soft arrival of rain in the treetops,  
Even in snow wincing on dark grey pavements,  
That lead to the promise of night  
Burned to a lazy heap on the library fire.

Yet, always each day is too soon ended,  
Before I have really lived it,  
And the last call of birds at nightfall  
Pierces my heart with sorrow.

THE COUNTESS OF PERSHING SQUARE

Marcia Masters

They called her the Countess of Pershing Square.  
She had a tiara of quarrelsome hair;  
And a white-caged grace.  
A sable wrath  
Stared out of her face.

With her sullen hands she clutched at her dress,  
The color of alley dust,  
And of loneliness;  
And upon her hands the old veins sat  
Like a spider blown up with a querulous fat;  
But she walked like a Countess with singing head;  
And the pigeons before her rose in a gust --  
Leaving an empty path.

And this she would dream of until she died:  
The Italian house with its walks of pride,  
And the sea below with its regal tread;  
The casket of jewels in a wanton heap;  
The garden faces, the moonlit guests;  
The low-cut gowns that revealed her breasts  
Curved like swans in a knowing sleep.

But she walked along through the sorrowing Square,  
With her white-caged grace, and her quarrelsome hair;  
And the pigeons before her rose in a gust --  
Leaving an empty path.

Side 2, Band 3:

O FIERY RIVER  
Kenneth Patchen

O fiery river  
Flow out over the land.  
Men have destroyed the roads of wonder,  
And their cities squat like black toads  
In the orchards of life.  
Nothing is clean, or real, or as a girl,  
Naked to love, or to be a man with.  
The arts of this American land  
Stink in the air of mountains;  
What has made these men sick rats  
That they find out every cheap hole?

How can these squeak of greatness?  
Push your drugstore-culture into the sewer  
With the rest of your creation.  
The bell wasn't meant to toll for you.  
Keep your filthy little hands off it.

O fiery river  
Spread over this American land.  
Drown out the falsity, the smug contempt  
For what does not pay...  
What would you pay Christ to die again?

SPARROWS IN A HILLSIDE DRIFT

James Wright

Pitiful dupes of old illusion, lost  
And fallen in the white, they glitter still  
Sprightly as when they bathed in summer dust,  
Then fade among the crystals on the hill.

Lonely for warm days when the season broke,  
Alert to wing and fire, they must have flown  
To rest among those toughened boughs of oak  
That brood above us, now the fire is gone.

Walking around to breathe, I kick aside  
The soft brown feather and the brittle beak.  
All flesh is fallen snow. The days deride  
The wings of these deluded, once they break.



Somewhere the race of wittier birds survive,  
Southering slowly with the cooling days.  
They pause to quiver in the wind alive  
Like some secure felicity of phrase.

But these few blunderers below my hands  
Assault the ear with silence on the wind.  
I lose their words, though winter understands.  
Man is the listener gone deaf and blind.

The oak above us shivers in the bleak  
And lucid winter day; and, far below  
Our gathering of the oheated and the weak,  
A chimney whispers to a cloud of snow.

Side 2, Band 4:

THE AFTERNOON AS AN ARIA

Felix Stefanile

The afternoon was an aria from Verdi;  
the strolling cop beat time with casual club,  
and the statues, courteous in stone,  
dreamed in the humming shadows of the park.

The breeze was a nickelodeon of pigeons  
and I called to my girl by the railing,  
Come my lovely, away from those stone benches  
and dream with me of a prefab in the sky --

a duplex with green shutters, and furnished with  
and you, my little wife, in a silver kitchen, squirrels,  
frying me bacon and gold,  
while I, with a brand new pipe, stand by the varnished  
gently murdering salesmen on the lawn. mailbox,

A LATE ELEGY FOR A BASEBALL PLAYER

Felix Stefanile

He was all back,  
his stance was clumsy,  
ran like a horse,  
smiled with a dimple,  
but time cut him,  
as easy as that,

bowled him right over,  
muscle and all, for  
a crick in his honest back --  
the wellwrought stallion,  
cleats on his shoes,  
and a hometown shoulder,

full of country bumps.  
We read about Herakles,  
and the hairy Samson,  
and fake Olympic games:  
the whole world boos;  
but here's Big Lou

whom Death bowled over  
as the sun rose,  
a lazy foul ball,  
and a whole generation  
of the running boys  
pull up, cry loud,

at what Death caught.

LION

May Swenson

In the bend of your mouth soft murder  
in the flints of your eyes  
the sun-stained openings of caves

Your nostrils breathe the ordained air  
of chosen loneliness

Magnificently maned as the lustrous pampas  
your head heavy with heraldic curls  
wears a regal frown between the brows

The wide bundle of your chest  
your loose-skinned belly frilled with fur  
you carry easily sinuously pacing on suede paws

Between tight thighs  
under the thick root of your tufted tail  
situated like a full-stoned fruit beneath a bough  
the quiver of your never-used malehood is slung

You pace in dung on cement  
the bars flick past your eyeballs  
fixed beyond the awestruck stares of children

Watching you they remember their fathers  
the frightening hairs in their fathers' ears

Young girls remember lovers too timid and white  
and I remember how I played lion with my brothers  
under the round yellow-grained table  
the shadow our cave in the lamplight

Your beauty burns the brain  
though your paws slue on foul cement  
the fetor of captivity you do right to ignore  
the bars too an illusion

Your heroic paranoia plants you in the Indian jungle  
pacing by the cool water-hole as dawn streaks the sky  
and the foretaste of the all-day hunt  
is sweet as yearling's blood  
in the corners of your lips.

Side 2, Band 5:

PRECARIOUS GROUND

Leah Bodine Drake

On the volcanic hill  
The small brave village clings  
And the rich grapevine swings.

In wheat foredoomed to fall  
Beneath the reaper's blade,  
Meekly and undismayed  
The fieldmouse makes her nest;  
And down to the sea's false arms  
The harbour alleys run,  
And farmhouse windows burn  
Each with its tiny sun  
Against the tremendous night  
Arching this tilting dust  
That is a world in flight.

On such precarious ground  
Life rears its endless house  
For meadowlark and mouse  
And love itself must shape  
Its vulnerable towers  
On the uncertain sand  
Of the wild human heart,

Raising its reckless port  
Beside an unknown sea,  
Building with desperate trust,  
Building because it must  
Only upon the slope  
Of old catastrophe.

PINNACLE

(OF. pinacle, fr. LL. pinnae, fr. L. pinna, a  
feather)

David Ridgley Clark

I took my light love naked in the bed,  
Her limbs half-folded like a preening dove.  
Her lips took mine as the stretched dove nips her wing,  
The white-bent dove.



Then all given over to her pliant death,  
The downed head fallen back, bright eyes at conclusion  
Conceded the breast's whiteness, the limbs free,  
The full-struck dove.

O arch and pinnacle, bonnet of the beasts!  
I held her risen as the high-choired dove  
Holds her unfolded feathers in the sun,  
The light-lost dove.

Side 2, Band 6:

YEARS-END

Richard Wilbur

Now winter downs the dying of the year,  
And night is all a settlement of snow;  
From the soft street the rooms of houses show  
A gathered light, a shapen atmosphere,  
Like frozen-over lakes whose ice is thin  
And still allows some stirring down within.

I've known the wind by water banks to shake  
The late leaves down, which frozen where they fell  
And held in ice as dancers in a spell  
Fluttered all winter long into a lake;  
Graved on the dark in gestures of descent,  
They seemed their own most perfect monument.

There was perfection in the death of ferns  
Which laid their fragile cheeks against the stone  
A million years. Great mammoths overthrown  
Composedly have made their long sojourns,  
Like palaces of patience, in the gray  
And changeless lands of ice. And at Pompeii

The little dog lay curled and did not rise  
But slept the deeper as the ashes rose  
And found the people incomplete, and froze  
The random hands, the loose unready eyes  
Of men expecting yet another sun  
To do the shapely thing they had not done.

These sudden ends of time must give us pause.  
We fray into the future, rarely wrought  
Save in the tapestries of afterthought.  
More time, more time. Barrages of applause  
Come muffled from a buried radio.  
The New-year bells are wrangling with the snow.

DRIFTWOOD

Richard Wilbur

In greenwoods once these relics must have known  
A rapt, gradual growing,  
That are cast here like slag of the old  
Engines of grief;

Must have affirmed in annual increase  
Their close selves, knowing  
Their own nature only, and that  
Bringing to leaf.

Say, for the seven cities or a war  
Their solitude was taken,  
They into masts shaven, or milled into  
Oar and plank;

Afterward sailing long and to lost ends,  
By groundless water shaken,  
Well they availed their vessels till they  
Smashed or sank.

Then on the great generality of waters  
Floated in their singleness,  
And in all that deep subsumption they were  
Never dissolved;

But shaped and flowingly fretted by the waves'  
Ever surpassing stress,  
With the gnarled swerve and tangle of tides  
Finely involved.

Brought in the end where breakers dump and slew  
On the glass verge of the land,  
Silver they rang to the stones when the sea  
Flung them and turned.

Curious crowns and scepters they look to me  
Here on the gold sand,  
Warped, wry, but having the beauty of  
Excellence earned.

In a time of continual dry abdications  
And of damp complicities,  
They are fit to be taken for signs, these emblems  
Royally sane,

Which have ridden to homeless wreck, and long revolved  
In the lathe of the seas,  
But have saved in spite of it all their dense  
Ingenerate grain.

Side 2, Band 7:

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The Interlude

Karl Shapiro

1.

Much of transfiguration that we hear,  
The ballet of the atoms, the second law  
Of thermodynamics, Isis, and the queer

Fertilization of fish, the Catholic's awe  
For the life-cycle of the Nazarene,  
His wife whom sleeping Milton thought he saw;

Much of the resurrection that we've seen  
And taken part in, like the Passion Play,  
All of autumnal red and April green,

To those who walk in work from day to day,  
To economic and responsible man,  
All, all is substance. Life that lets him stay

Uses his substance kindly while she can  
But drops him lifeless after his one span.

2.

What lives? the proper creatures in their homes?  
A weed? the white and giddy butterfly?  
Bacteria? necklaces of chromosomes?

What lives? the breathing bell of the clear sky?  
The crazed bull of the sea? Andean crags?  
Armies that plunge into themselves to die?

People? A sacred relic wrapped in rags,  
The ham-bone of a saint, the winter rose,  
Do these? -- And is there not a hand that drags

The bottom of the universe for those  
Who still perhaps are breathing? Listen well:  
There lives a quiet like a cathedral close

At the soul's center where substance cannot dwell  
And life flowers like music from a bell.

3.

Writing, I crushed an insect with my nail  
And thought nothing at all. A bit of wing  
Caught my eye then, a gossamer so frail

And exquisite, I saw in it a thing  
That scorned the grossness of the thing I wrote.  
It hung upon my finger like a sting.

A leg I noticed next, fine as a mote,  
"And on this frail eyelash he walked," I said,  
"And climbed and walked like any mountain-goat."

And in this mood I sought the little head,  
But it was lost; then in my heart a fear  
Cried out, "A life -- why beautiful, why dead!"

It was a mite that held itself most dear,  
So small I could have drowned it with a tear.