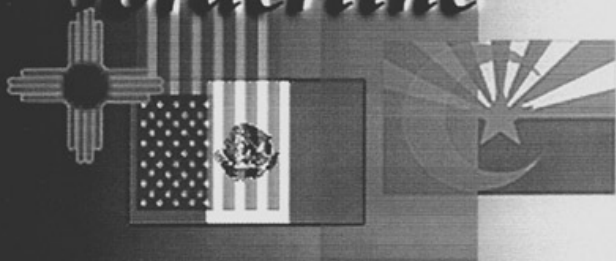


borderline



Gary David

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ISLAND HILLS BOOKS

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The author would like to thank the editors of the following magazines in which many of these poems first appeared:
House Organ, Juxta/Electronic, Pennmican, and W'ORCs.

This volume is dedicated to Edward Dorn.
(April 2, 1929 - December 10, 1999)

“It is bright to recollect
that the Apaches were noble
not in themselves
so much as in their Ideas”

“vaya con mucho infinito y voluptuoso
Adió por eternidad, Lindas.”

Gary David has been touched by poesy since the spring of 1973 in Ed Dorn's writing workshop at Kent State. He has published numerous books, including *A Log of Deadwood* (North Atlantic Books, 1993), *Tierra Zia* (nine muses books, 1996), and *Divining the Eagle's Vision* (Spirit Horse Press, 1998). After living for nearly fifteen years in western South Dakota and a couple more along the Front Range in Colorado, he moved to northern Arizona where he continues to avoid the major literary centers and influences. His verse documentary of the Black Hills called *Inland Island* is forthcoming. Incidentally, he does *not* have BPD.

“People with BPD [borderline personality disorder] are like people with third degree burns over 90% of their bodies. Lacking emotional skin, they feel agony at the slightest touch or movement.”

-Marsha Linehan

“Only that which is utterly intangible, matters. The contact, the spark of exchange. That which can never be fastened upon, forever gone, forever coming, never to be detained: the spark of contact.”

-D.H. Lawrence

“Such, then, is the desert: a great brown patch on the skin of the American continent. It is belied by its name. The desert is not flat. It is pinched and folded into mountains and mesas, buttes and canyons. The desert is not drab. Its tawny hide, lit up by the quintessential daylight, is spattered with violet and purple and burnt orange. The desert is not featureless. It sports a thousand distinct and individual growths. The desert is not silent. It continually sings, murmurs, skirls, or whispers.”

-Jon Manchip White

Honky Gringo Wasichu* Blues in Bb Major (After a Reading By Victor Hernandez Cruz)

No culture to speak of
my own-- no culture that sings out
islands dancing rings of blood
kinship in quetzal-colored copal nights or
waves of amor thundering
briny thighs but
numb 3 p.m. sitting, reading
gray skies of anomie
like the Yellow Pages
of purgatory
here in the good ol' U.S. of
Norteamerica.

No culture to speak of,
I can't really speak
Español, see?
Im Hochschule Ich studiere
goose-stepping for high Deutsch marks.
My mother had remarked:
"It's a good opportunity
to learn the language
of science and technology."
No culture to speak of,
my father
(who never knew his real father
& almost never knew
his stepfather
was not his real father)
now putters alone in the garage.
His last job before retiring
was to invent a device to measure wing
variance on the Stealth bomber.

No culture to speak of
but the spoiled sons of banana Republicans
cultivating individual sensibilities'
intellectual & witty
Wittgensteinian quips handy

Cont.

for wine & Brie parties.
No culture to speak of
but kiwi yogurt & sushi booth
-tanned puritans, the kinder & gentler
racketball set jetting off to Rio, feedback
crystal chips off the old block
of icy rhetoric: a merry can-do know-how.
No culture to speak of
but the TV empire of new clothes
or the CEOs IBM PC erector sets which
fast forward the hawking & hogging
of bullish it-fetishes
& sends into sexual overdrive
the military's industrious inferiority
complex of the Rolex Eighties'
reductionists redux.

No culture to speak of
the People or
the homeland or
the struggle
of the campesino's
rope-raw hands to pick
Mrs. Folger's coffee or
coca leaves the Mob will make
into wad-white dope
to the cracked tune of
(Newton or Sinatra)
X numbers
of drive-by murders.

No culture to speak of
Meister Hitler's twisted
swastikas that wave on
blitz-fisted rods rising with the blood
of the Afrikaner & his steel-blue eyes
as slave quarters of ghetto Suweto
smolder in the falling shadow
of racial subjugation.
No culture to speak of
El Salvadoran guerrillas' fired arms

Cont.

or severed limbs or genitals
cattle-prodded & all
because of their simple belief
in a God of liberation on an earth
where human rights include
a plate of beans & rice
& a roof to keep off the rain
of solitude.

No culture to speak of
fetal Everclear spirits
haunting federal housing
tracts on Pine Ridge littered
with dead Furies & blind TVs
where some blacked-out
buffalo brave dreams
of riding the sun-flooded plains
as snowflakes on the red-eyed wind
turn his sleek locks
to ash & whispers.

No culture to speak of.
No speaker to culture that
honky gringo wasichu chewing the fat
of the land for a greenback or two
-hundred grand & a wetback-washed Mercedes
Bens to boot-- shines black
as spit & mute
as the calls for Philip Morris
echo past ghosts of wooden Indians
down the lobbied halls of Congress.

No culture to speak of,
aye a poet
without a port
of call, a schooner
without the rudder
of bloodlines.
But "a kelson
of the creation
is love" sung
my captain.

Cont.

So now I make
out an island
of rainbow light rising
from the heart
of an inland ocean.
From the harbor
of its evergreen arms
I wonder
if it's alright
to begin
to call
this telltale vision
my own
kin.

So to speak.

Nouveau Rip

Not Art nor Deco but
Poem Nouveau is a bastard son of the status quo.
Poem Nouveau is a pro forma con job.
Poem Nouveau is correctly institutional.
Poem Nouveau is politically noncommittal (suicidally so).
Poem Nouveau is known to throw a nonpartisan party now & then.
Poem Nouveau is a closet Republican.
Poem Nouveau drinks in pubs, not bars.
Poem Nouveau has a stiff upper lip & fat lower cheeks.
Poem Nouveau loves to make-up
with lipstick shy shadow & charades.
(Uh-oh, Poem Nouveau must be androgynously gender neutral.)
Poem Nouveau hums musak in the sack.
Poem Nouveau wears chic jeans
to his weekly revisionary workshop.
No grunge rhyme or unreasonable
searches & seizures, the ideal
Poem Nouveau doodles wall street journal verses
sipping au lait at fern hill cafe.
Poem Nouveau works religiously
out on his nordic track every day.
Poem Nouveau thinks liposuction's a good investment.
Poem Nouveau fantasizes breast augmentation.
Poem Nouveau is not by one wit diminished
by death squads, angry gods or hungry kids.
Poem Nouveau's got his own reputation
to think about. Poem-about
-town, Nouveau's a gadfly
in our soup kitchen match making whoopee.

Poem Nouveau puts on airs
on our back pages of the nation, sitting humble
as dog shit on the pavement
of Nouveau York. Notwithstanding
Poem Nouveau on a leash reaps the riche
guerçons with gridiron guidons. (In other words,
Poem Nouveau is a grant-getter.)
Poem Nouveau is a tenure-maker.

Cont.

Poem Nouveau is the professor's passive aggressor.
Poetry magazine's fax machine's full
of Poem Nouveau. No wonder
Poem Nouveau is tax-deductible.
Poem Nouveau is NEA-able, too. Yea!
Poem Nouveau is even APR-able!
Yep, Nouveau's got a yen
to be framed (handsomely) by his own
authorized photo-- sexily sullen
torpedo star stalking bluestockingly
profound birkentrek libido lost
down ivied halls of poison bic belle-lettres.
Plain & simple, Nouveau disdains
any raw oyster rhetoric
his pallid palate can't stomach.
Poem Nouveau's got a chip on his shoulder
in the eye of the beholder.
For his minor league size, Nouveau's bolder
than a high-fly homer blinded
by a tie-breaking world series floodlight.
Nouveau's been translated into five languages
our senses censor, but he's still Greek to us.
Behind his lyrics Nouveau's got a speaker
with woofers & tweeters blown.
Poem Nouveau's dying to be known
as a film noir character at every sorry soiree.
Poem Nouveau dances with plot lines
on the head of a pin.
Poem Nouveau scratches X
-marks-the-spot lines.
Poem Nouveau within a poem
would like to dream his theme
is all that we see or seem.
Poem Nouveau's got a fawnd memory
for every do re mi a choirboy lassitude could cough up
from his bank of america's flashback fetish.
Poem Nouveau's the oldest truck in the book.
On the other hand, the new critter poem
red-handed Doc Bill's wheelbarrow to make it
Nouveau. Why a syllabus platypus scans with disgust
cantankerous toes of broken ideogrammar

Cont.

Moses, while St. Lizzy & other patron feints
on Ez's rocking charity paradise lost
their free lunch to retrograde nakedly
metronomical economics in the red
pen frosh comps bled (& still do), Nouveau knows.
Poem Nouveau is the shoe on the other foot.

Ergo, a short history of Nouveau
goes nowhere, man. (Isn't he a bit like I & Thou?)
Poem Nouveau is a beach boy bitten by the beetles.
Poem Nouveau is a speech-based tune in a bucket.
Poem Nouveau is an erstwhile wimp who reads
to his kid where the wild things are.
Poem Nouveau is writing about reading
to his kid where the wild things are.
Poem Nouveau's oldest son hates him
for not being a nuclear physicist.
Poem Nouveau's newest wife hates him
for not being a neo-romanticist.
Poem Nouveau's latest poem hates him
for not being T.S. Eliot.
Poem Nouveau's last words escape him
in his heirs' rush to probate court.
Poem Nouveau can't wait to be late
so the Norton consortium can ship the post-mortem
to English departmental outposts all over
the light bulb lit-wit globe.

Poem Nouveau? R.I.P.!

Tempe Tempo Changing Hands From the Goodyear Blimp

Boom cars thru Big Bang shards
of all nightmare American
breakdown pre-millennial Mill Avenue
post kidiron gridlock grind
up our open bookstore parvenu
bardic crew: inflated ego epigones shredded
by desert-headed Shiva dancing inside
petrified shadows of jaded envy via
steel-belted screeches. Inside
no one reaches the point anymore
of no return beyond which
words touch, tongue to ear, naked fire
metaphor sings, bright fur
of phonemes breathing-- without fancy
costumes or jump suitors
saying: I am beautiful I am lovable I am

therefore I think.... I'm sorry.
I can't say this
any simpler, humbler.
I'm a logomantic bumbler.
Astral gold's fool who'll
follow his bliss or
muse's autochthonous talking
abyss tellurically untold below
the poverty line. I piss
my days' random sand away off
in a blue cloud, fear raining
inkblots on the blank page
of my sexless face. Don't laugh!
Dr. Trazadone thinks it's a complex
serotonin reuptake fuck-up but
I swear, all the world's a graveyard--
every sweet genital petal
you've ever kissed already
sown there in omnivorous dust

Cont.

of post-human Dharma. Yet
we are grass, Walt avers. Vedicly
speaking: Thou art that. But when
a vers libre ex libris psalter turns
into a last ditch before that cell wall
(hard science sees inside
lost soul silence) thunders
a bootfall ex cathedra mass
hysteria, where O where to turn?

Ethereally unreal, dogged by God, my omega
seeded head blimping years between
each Soleri brass bell drifts
upstairs to the Spirituality section
for good: the Brahma-brown Autobiography
of a Yogi stares down. "Beyond
all these words," I'd written &
"there must be justice somewhere."
(Naive as Eve!) Arcane lines turn
to whispers of dust as I speak. I must
be insane to think I can
think my way out of the West, past
eschatological scat cum gizmo driven
.357 Chevy magnum opus pocus.

Dripping vatic poet fat, karmic signet
rings of saturnine solitude press
against my sour dough made flesh
a nude confession: this hand-to-hand obsession
making meaning up the gamut between
comma & comet (Hail bop!) will come to bleed
my sacramental breakdown. Thus I'm nervous
as hell week America the Lootiful
lip-syncs the Hindenburg oblivious
as laughing gas to holocaust ovens
while warlocked corporate covens stir
hoodoo stew to the diamondback stars.

Drive His Dust

500 miles del Sol y sole Scorpio musings
rojo round trip bootstrap to book-hawk
in T-boned Nissan pickup (in these parts
rhymes with "piss on") past
Deadman Wash y Bloody Basin Rd.
boil-over bound y gagged wetless
past killer Bumble Bee exit o Sunset
Point pointlessly abuzz worming
poeta licks to a rabble of third degree
stones y hardplace bygones, he still
would fail to brake o make even
fossil fuel cash o pocket copper peddling
Deadwood days' oro fixation to Phoenix
ash on Martian asphalt concretion.

Yo-yo midway via his fourth decade below
I-Diez y I-Ocho, unheard bloodlines unsung
in post-erotic heroic couplets, aging
Bardahl hears a standing ovation
of dharmically miraging saguaros
drive his dust motes mute
from yon oasis of mirrors con estrellas
to marrowless tomorrows. Cactied
by a gene pool sans lifeguard, arábically
his blind date palmistry ciphers
Apache shadows scorching

a blue reptile sky
round Gila Bend to ply
the bordertown of Why.

Triptych: Tombstone South Thru Mother Mountains

-1-

O.K. to miss that ole corral
showdown bull. Shoot
past postcard Bird Cage Saloon.

Puckered as a prune the Apache century
-old "squaw" wrinkles on
tintypes for tourist bucks. In a parody

of soft porn, bare breasts hang
like a pair of horse thieves
sucked dry by the maggot sun.

Spirits booming, we gun past
Boot Hill-- mucho macabra!
Ditto the blue ice organ

harvest vice or snuff
film noir, our doomsday States fulfill
what Tombstone was: a grab bag

of greenback greed & buzzard bones.
What we need doesn't belong
here: that longing for living mountains.

-2-

Head down the low desert.
No brown marble stones mark
death. 10 miles from the porous border

of sleep, a macaw moon
dreams the drought our past life cursed
in a rabid pack: coyotes yapping

Cont.

at dawn's lip. Red puddles
in arroyos stain a steel blue sky.
With tassels blooming

blood, ocotillos' fire
-green fingers after last eve's
hurricane rain monsooning up late

from the savior Pacific wave.
Snoring the iron Sonoran
horizon, thunderheads rise

& fall over, fall &
rise as silver syllables
grief sings over & over

Mother Mountains giving birth
to another myth: an inverse
El Norte we pray will come.

-3-

In their auto de fe coupe de ville
Jack & Neil tippled hobo boxcars
with loco bebop train sax screwing

Zen-like a blank point vanishing
in the mist mossy thighs slick
as mañana rails slide to

the other side of a cracked mirror
thru. Jack & Neil echo in the rearview
our prickly pear desire. El Sur sings

the Other:

Maya temples & jungles, narcotic
jaguar shadows, mescal rainbows
bleeding to sea via Barranca
del Cobre, sarapes y huipiles
woven from golden hours del Sol

Cont.

blessing every dark shoulder
with grace, every holy hip orbiting
a vast tierra mariachi mural
cerveza brass & accordion
keys de colores paint.

A guidebook greed seizes us
on the border of gringo senses
like a kilo of grass. We look

past corrugated tempers tar papered over
empty eyes & tin plates-- our starved souls
double-crossing egos at the altar

of Sierra Madonna. We bleed
on the cactus road we water-walk
stigmata stars to Chapultepec.

Borderline

"The river flows on like a breath, in between are life and death.
Tell me who's the next to cross the borderline?" *

Beneath the chain-linked bridge where the green-backed gringo
from El Paso or Chagrin Falls (Ohio) crosses, as El Coyotl blanco,

you kneel on the banks of the Rio Grande-- dip your skaldic muzzle
to the muddy agua caliente. Blood in the shadows flows

downstream through the dream of these desert slabs of sunlight.
Drinking Tres Equis on the main drag of afternoon-- or are you

on a midnight jag in the neon cantina, mariachi brass & mescal
gilding your lily wrist with rainbow tracers, whispers of border spirits

brushing by your wallet pocket. No, this walking hangover must be still
shaking off road bumps in the bus depot bar, your bayou fiasco fading

with each Lone Star. You hear Español roll off the tongue
of each mission bell-- its Tecate staccato more exotic than the smell

of magnolia snaking over Protestant snow. As the next Greyhound
bound for the coast growls off, posthaste, you order another round.

It's not the life you ordered, nor the lost raven rubia you desired
that matters now. El Coyotl has found himself via the middle

of the muddle between the blood's ashen visions in the desert
& a blindness that drowns his eyes as feet seek haven

in a nave of stigmatas, far from the street & the cactus spines
of the sun. But who's this Okie bro' beside you in the back seat

of a Mexicali taxi, & where d'you go just for fun to unwind
the monofilament of your fishy legacies? "Club Paraiso," Okie decrees,

got the best girls." "But ain't that Jack's flick** with the twat shot
juxtaposed to the dangle & jiggle of aureole & nipple?"

*Tune written by Ry Cooder, performed by Freddy Fender in Nicholson's ***"The Border."

Cont.

“Could be, compadre, but you talk mighty funny for these parts.”
Counting your blessings of pesos to pay for craven eros,

you harken back to Dixie beer in the Pair-A-Dice Bar on Bourbon.
(Or was it Ramparts?) How the red letters read backwards

in the window behind your butt on a stool, a looking glass fool
in front of you hung beneath the unwrong name. And how

you dream an Eldorado of H₂O right across the grand Divide
from Telluride-- the real secret source of the Rio. You see fangs

in the river mirror your eyeteeth. Your knees bleed. A knot
of gut hunger shows you're Tenderfoot. Out of the black velvet landscape

painting of night, a tortilla shack blooms the kind of fat hallucination
of Hawaiian shirt Meester Peyotlhead would unbutton in your mind.

But who's minding the store? Is the bony crone who addles the abacus
of her rosary while she ladles out pulque from a large jar the same

as the gay bruja checking poxed cocks by a naked bulb at the top stair
of bordello pronto? (12 bucks per half hour.) Coyotl's minuscule

but rank tool must undergo stiff scrutiny before he's sanctioned to screw.
And who's this rosewood woman you've chosen, who nixes your nibble

of her virgin nipple? And why's El Coyotl blanco unbloated at the altar
of macho ego? And where's this anonymous anima anon? And where
d'you go

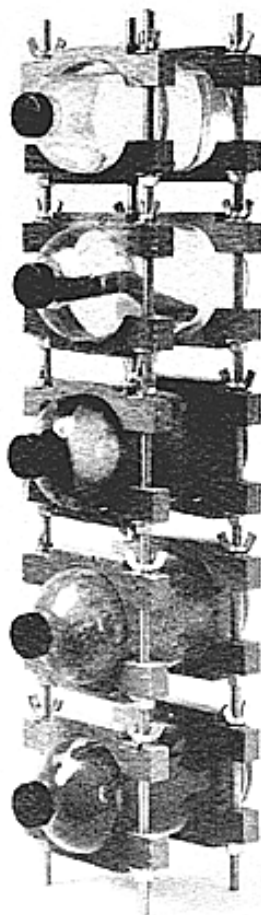
after de facto to end up looking up nonplussed at your own mug
mocked in the boss shades of dos policia kicking shots at your ribs

while quipping: “Hey gringo! Too much tequila and not enough puta?”
You show them your key to the YMCA. They show you the way

to the borderline --gracias-- where you board a bus that's been trained
to track down metal rabbits in a circle. It's a gamble sin El C. but

you disembark by the Bay, a decade after

the Summer of Love got brained.



**VERTICAL PALETTE BY MEL CHIN, 1976-1985
PHOTOGRAPH BY WILL BROWN**

EACH OF THE FIVE GLASS CONTAINERS HOLDS ONE OF THE FIVE CHINESE ELEMENTS: WATER, WOOD, FIRE (SMOKE), EARTH (CLAY), AND METAL (SHOT). THE ORDER OF THESE ELEMENTS IS CYCLICAL; EACH ONE HAS A DIRECT EFFECT ON ITS NEIGHBOR, BOTH CREATIVE AND DESTRUCTIVE.

The Color of Air

from Mel Chin's *Vertical Palette**

At Painted Desert margins a steel rack of vertical breath
six centuries long snakes back slab masonry into what water
our ill melody. Polychromatically waxed vehicles smoke
gibbous potshards, shatter nadir's rainbow, shadow clay
seed jars under cloud house geometries, split twig or wood
spirit dolls. Spiral serpent bowls sprout kill holes, yet lead

pelleted cottontails rush beneath fourwing saltbush. Lead
via chamisa dyed katsina eyes, trembling hare's breath
sings up a Mimbres moon. Iron or copper oxide, hued cottonwood
tihu roots dream snakeback cool arroyos. Matrilineal water
brimming womb ollas, whose tainted desert echoes alkali clay
highway faces. On bosoms squash blossoms flash turquoise smoke

tinted glass corrals. Bucking a winerack of urbanity, Phoenicians smoke
down Camelback to half-heard tapedeck mudhead drumming, lead
footed beyond yon Mogollon Rim-- dry palette to covet museum clay
pots in all shapes & pocketbooks. Wingnuts' wonder, what breath
less ponder agape some macaw feathered serpent's case the Goldwater
Found. funded. Ruins fallen into archaeologist disputation, we would

mortar a T-shaped doorway humpback time flutes, haul juniper wood
as Hisatsinom home. Now Niman monsoon tableta feathers smoke
Third World kiva. Precipitous ancestors offer nimbus water
lightning jags over snow peaks. Cinder wind sunset eye's lead
dead as brahma bullets or butcher knife ogres stomp badger breath
down sipapu route's nether pueblo to damp clans. Cloud blower clay

pipes N.W. mountain lion yellow pollen corn chant. In Chinle clay
marls gray wolves S.E. keen toward red squash buttes. Viga wood
blue spruced up S.W. saps black bear stone fetish. While bean breath
pahos cotton a bobcat's white bib, N.E. on Verde solstice beehives smoke
sunrise mutton & piki prayers. Blind tongues taste the color of air lead
to last First Mesa plaza by songs six centuries long. What lost water

Cont.

melon bellies well. In the haunted desert a jug of water
dreams drinking spirits. In the blessed desert a jug of clay
sanctifies flesh. In the hunted desert a jug of lead
triggers blood letting. In the petrified desert a jug of wood
blazes its fish. From their painted desert a jug of smoke
clears the air. For this chanted desert a jug of breath

fills our sky. Catalytic breath of holy water
Hopi smoke dances on the color of clay
climbs song's senses where air would lead.

*This sestina was performed for his exhibition Inescapable Histories
on November 5th, 1997 at Scottsdale Center for the Arts.

Astrological Etudes Along a Latitudinal Circle

-1-

Prescott to Rabat
Tierra Zona to Mediterranea.
Phoenician palms' whisper
an hour or so south of here
echoes Bowles' bombed shelter
Tangier an hour or more north
of there. Up this dusty trail defeating
cerulean sky (shades
polarized untrue) a pigmy forest hill
of junipers' gold still echoes
that Old World
war (déjà anew) as purely
sexual: Geb & Nut-- her arched belly
a cathedral's ethereal ceiling
silver star sperm spangled.

-2-

My natal crossing (Neptune
Imum Coeli & a descendant
Moon) in the Dasht-e-lut of
Iran casts a chilly shadow
thru Sunni streets of Bagdad & Damascus
off the shores of Tripoli to the movie
set in Casablanca, nearly missing
Madeira, Atlanta & the Texas Book
Depository, shot down sun-stroked
Camelback Rd. to blythely disembark
the swallowed coast at Capistrano, wriggly
as a crow over Santa Catalina, transpacifically
landing somehow somewhere between
the ghostly glow of twin shiitake clouds
of Nagasaki & Hiroshima, traversing
the Sino-Tibetan outback, trekking
Kashmir & Kabul to make

Cont.

a poet's passage to Persia
complete, the rondure endured.

-3-

"...an overpowering exaggeration
of sensation, torrential emotions, wild
unsubstantiated fears, hysterical
elations and imaginations... Dreams, nightmares
and myths become everyday realities.
For those willing to give up
the material life, this place holds promise
of true visionary gold, though
intense thirst for sensation
could even lead to addiction.
You could find your guru here, but desire
to return to the womb may lie
beneath religious fascination."

Nirvana infirma. Where the earth draws
a line like blood on her brow
with a trident from the Sea
of Tranquillity, dreams drown
in the lunar alembic of dust.

-4-

Winter-long & cross I cross
yellow borders coffee-ringing mid-life
Geographics, an antipodal desire
for the Other burning
a cigarette circle in my Third Eye.

-5-

To escape! escape a fate fixed
3:56 Lakewood adrift six days after
autumnal buckeye equinox. Lax
afternoon shadows swoon, rosy-cheeked. Und zwei
tree rings around mid-century's dry rot
pith warped. Stirps adrift, without
topos, tribe or trope

Cont.

within, media effluvia & flotsam
of transnational brand X rate corporate
imperialism inundatingly blinding, I
a waterlogged cipher long
to transcend the spectral static
quo, traverse ecstatic per verse
the country of Other, wholly
distant on the imminent steppes
of Millennium. When crenellated temples
of crumbling dogma encrusted
with barnacles, duned rituals & alpha waves
rise & crush on the shores nether night
like undiscovered constellations
of roe, hopelessly mantic I'll
exile mnemonic demons
to the deep blue see-saw O ring
a shuttle buggery cocked. Chaotically
nada, I want to be ready
to sing a metempsychotic
number one bullseye omega point
blank mandala cum mantra synaesthetically
anesthetized via amnesia's
anathemas-- inamorata or ammo
be damned!

-6-

A goal: the Mala Kumbh Mela
sacred confluence of the Ganga & Yamuna
(the Sangam) near Allahabad
circa early 2001 (astrologically calculated
to occur every twelve years)
the naked nagas, the sadhus
with tridents rush en masse
to wash away their karmas--
largest periodic gathering
of humans to merge in the mythic
river of enlightenment: Saraswati.
The Kumbha (pot) carries
amrit (nectar of immortality)
gods & demons fought over &
spilled to earth making

Cont.

four sacred places-- the sanctum sanctorum
the Mala Kumbh Mela: a goal

:to go: running: down to the river
of ashes: running: naked: to be
one: of the Other

“Any sort of prayer
or magic may work
here [Jupiter crossing Pluto] and
your ideas or mere
presence may have real effects
on others’ lives. The old
is destroyed and the new
born. The fields are
revitalized
and made [by the makar’s
desire] fertile
by burning.”

Ashes to Ganges, dust to mosque.

-7-

All along the latitude
line the stranger
the better chased
the weasel sunlight
is murder, tunnels
under the I, traffics musk
over 90-esque thugs’ thaumaturgic
thunder in a needle-- liturgical
demiurgency. To escape no
fallacious fallopian tunnels
fate dug within a populace
tumbles, trembles a great
lakeshore bleary & bland without
choice. Gene & soul adjunct to
rivet & weld, polis pools
starless under mercury vapor
bardo streetlights the flats cleave to

Cont.

land at Hopkins' pied
truth. To escape a natal
Moon ascending:

"Here you tend
to yield to any temptation, seem pushed
around by desires and craving. You
identify with your mother, and endeavor
to please or impress others. You act
shy, retiring, sympathetic, sentimental and
needful."

To escape under the influence
over hookah smoke & kief paste to plaster
flier eyelids on bluer sky.

Last Resort In Paradise Valley

Past gilt & pastel hotel rooms' guiltless
ennui, commerce chamber mags slick polyester
pages with haute cuisine or investor art.
Every Byzantine business detail designed
with a soporific motif in mind.
Pool tables by the pool. Ping pong
under floodlit royal palms. Chlorinate mirages
on the Hohokam desert expressway echo
other ghosts which waive lanes & weave
cotton clouds of your heat wave desire
to swan dive into a turquoise ring
of cool Nothing. Fountains gush uselessly
beautiful toward a postcard sky. Posh white zoloft
jets glide above as ebola water striders
evolve --deus ex machina-- from Acapulco
swamps the last wet suet dream

Howard Hughes flew. Cinematic narcotic glitches
computer generated hallucinogens
on the Bardo Channel. (Bardo Warhol
is the millennial sleeping pill.) Double zero
eyes by your touch-tone bedside table browse
a biblio trinity: modern moly Bible, the Book
of the Mormon, & that oxymoronic tale
in teflon prose of a latter day Alger
protégé, whose blank check pate over beefeater fat
hellcat moxy by jingo mettle forged
his hotel chain reactionary passion. Yet

this pseudo-literate divagation will sink
-drip out of step as Faust. Get hip!
You're on vacation! Squeeze the remote &
get rolfed in wall street ooze of anomie. Know me
by your warm electron bubble bath news: a hard-core
wrathful deity-- my long vajra dong shocking
Shakti's cymbal thighs like monsoon thunder
coming, coming in haste under a rayon moon
pink underthings whisper, to love
your last resort to paradise.

Sierra Arizona

Twilights light upon blue chaparral
mountain shadows in the distance flow
down to the desert from another lifetime
ago. These vaguest intimations...

From the other side of the mountains
temporal lobe memory verbless as water
from heaven pools an oasis at the base
of your skull. Folds, labyrinthine
cerulean ridges of sierra
cerebrum drum your tympanum, beat
an infarcted gene flood to the heart. Shards
of a broken pot holographically hold
the whole: a life fallen into
out of Bardo desperation, its fierce winds
of Karma bearing you to an arid zone
on the mother side of the globe, transoceanic
current making its dopamine filament glow
a Maghrib aura of déjà vu or a crescent moon
atop the Kaaba row the Red Sea
seesaw to the dream-silted Nile
its sarcophagus barque-- shadoof mile
after mile moiling, hieroglyphically

synaptic. Sierra Arizona, along a long
latitude lasso away, aloof you'll stay, soiled
kaffir with Hathor cowseye ennui
or millennial anomie showdown. Else when's there
the lens through evening's cactus light
to focus: slave rags past lives cast
off, dung-brown shadows, conflagrate
the Valley of the Kings' dawn. Rustling
date palms over slow slime, scarab rhythm
from random felucca fornication
scatters. Pharaoh eras sidereal
as sands come nigh to kiss the ultimate
abyss-- waters bled dark as papyrus ink
from which Anubis, newly adorned
in red bandanna & chaps, sips.

Cont.

? Whence rises through a screen
of black lacquered wooden circles
adobe cubes & minarets--
a cloistered life, dim virgin
veils over kohl morning pearled so
Allah-blue & empty she can't foresee
that death-descending spiral spectral
history's first screw screamed. (Remember
his metal member spiking mercurial seed.) ?

? Whence as well a mottled sycamore
bazaar, dozing sirocco centuries
around a well, abides in olive shades
chador shadows gossiping plastique
whispers through brisk dust ?
Motes at merciless noon drift
umber mud walls of caliph courtyards &
life (before this forged business
of clockwork space) goes on &
drones of cobra oboes drown daily
anguish in dry dervish endurance
ecstatic dance echoes

from rebab to tombak.+

(? Is all this Barbary piracy mere fancy
Ozimandian romance, or mare trance
of phylogenic remnants-- seabed bubbles rising
past putrefaction from Atlantean hands still
trimming lateen sails to glean on
Gibraltar's dream gate of salted odysseys ?)

Get back, young man, to Sierra Arizona! Still
Jojo Betelgeuse dust on rising Ra flags
through the wily Tucsonic West reverberates
occluded Near Asias in canopic clouds
of alabaster smoke where'er you walk-- each step
here on the cartouche map routes
a sub-saharan thunderclap to shake
the Atlas Mountains down

to their tattooed Berber roots.

Cont.

These vaguest intimations, indigo silk & aureole
pink shadow waters, through paloverde melt down
your pseudo-sea-airy mountains' mirage
to a Heliopolitan funeral cortege-- your own
lone Udjat* journey, hypnogogically
vanishing at a point on the blank horizon
sun & sand fuse in an empty glass
caravan of shattered stars, still lures
a sistrum shimmer of zonic visions to pen
pure penniless plenitudes against solitude's
desiccated nostrum your chic blue Book
of the Dead hawks in vain
to oil cartel cowboys.

+ rebab, a two-stringed fiddle; tombak, a single-headed drum with a pottery vase body

* Udjat, a tomb amulet or hieroglyph, the "sound eye" of Horus, Egyptian falcon god

Arid Zone Tiara (A Reprise)

Shadows of a lost language, two crows rise
above a burning rose mountain range
of cumulonimbus. Gold blooming clouds

this monsoon horizon, transmuting evening.
Sun in dazed descent, a zenith lunar crescent
(Thoth lifts) drifts ether blue froth, whispers

desert deja vu conjunct Jupiter. Either
adobe blood or pearl soul remembers.
Through this window moon, naja nights shine

a selenium echo of date palm oases
millennia ago-- the cool way her light
liquid lip sings, canto mysterium, to illuminate

her hidden half. Remembering this much
is not enough to speak of or touch yet
too deep below daybreak's eye to forget.

My Sedona

Wipuk red rock anodes
a way up. Vortextual
bell. Sun maiden voyaging
Boyton Cañon spandex all the raging
New Adage Mu-tow n. Merciless bends real
amends estate car Ajax up, O Lord.
Schneibly eyes no erstwhile earnest max inside
Tlaquepaque, porque pocket pricey neo-
aboriginal prints pig foam dicey dangle
mesa chapel couches. In scrotally muggy terms
Mogollon chubasco joie riding the Rim's
tautologically together Coconino Kid arches
Yavapai in the sky on a yo-yo
nee Mimi. Verde virgin Arizunna dew banged
blue stone white stone ley line lady electro-
magnetically wet Lemurian peoples
Camp Orgone garden. Here am ardent pyramidal
life crisis after sunken crystal stasis
deserts arid auras from Montezuma's
wellness to the base of Mingus' psi kick.
Anasazi fuzzy albeit Bear Clannish, was he
huggingly drunk in the pink
quartz heart chakra seminar
or not? Only karma will tell
& toll for whomever hums the petrobuzz
is & was (eternally) entelechy.



ISLAND HILLS BOOKS