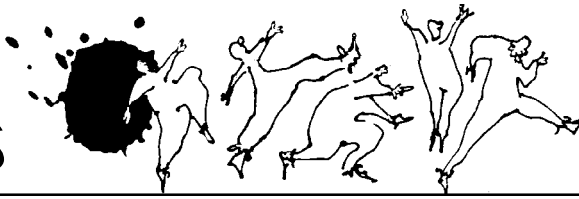


Deanotations



Issue 90

June 1999

Dear Reader,

If you have not yet purchased *Please, Lord, Make Me a Famous Poet or at Least Less Fat* (orderable from any bookstore, \$19.95. available from Amazon or, autographed, from us: add \$2.50 for postage & handling), then you are a member of that select group, Almost Everyone. None of the presidential candidates, no congress persons, federal judges, leaders of nations, network newscasters, movie stars, best-selling novelists, billionaires, eminent scholars, rock stars, rapsters or, statistically speaking, human beings (numbers too low to register significantly) have purchased this book. Bill and Monica have not purchased this book. It was not found among the debris from John-John's plane. (I'm glad. My poems are light, and shouldn't be made soggy. And they have their own salt.) No Hollywood director or serial killer or other celebrity has purchased this book. Jerry Seinfeld hasn't purchased this book. Michael Jordan hasn't purchased this book, nor has Bill Gates. No Major League homerun hitter has purchased this book. As for poets, poets don't buy 400-page books. They trade skinny "chapbooks" with each other and occasionally even read them.

So you are in excellent company. You'll have far more opportunities for dates, for example, than those who only date fellow readers of my book. (But you won't have as much fun.)

On a lighter note (image of quarter notes and whole notes soaring over us, melodious balloons), your June issue is late because I had a terrible lost month, during which I suffered almost as much as the happiest person in the Balkans did in any given hour of the same period, and you perhaps suffered from TDD (Temporary Deanotations Deficiency), which I hope this issue remedies. If not, August's double issue (a little late) should console you. Meanwhile, we've made several additions to our website, WWW.BLEHERT.COM. Pay us . . . a visit, that is.

But seriously, reader, what are you going to do when I grow up?

Speaking of deficiencies, have you ever noticed that those magazine tests (Are you depressed? Do you have Attention Deficit Disorder?) never give you the test for sanity? What are the characteristics of the UNdepressed (manic?) or the Attention Surplus people? And if you have some depressed traits along with some undepressed traits, should you be treated for SI (Symptom Irregularity)? Well, think for yourself. But don't do it in the presence of anyone who is liable to decide that thought is a chemical disorder of the brain. As, CERTAINLY, the following poetry must be.

BLEST WHICH IS,
Dear (DEFICIT EATS ARTIST'S NOSE) AND PAM (PICTURES ARE ME)

Mass Avenue: Palatial embassies, old trees, sidewalk, an ant.

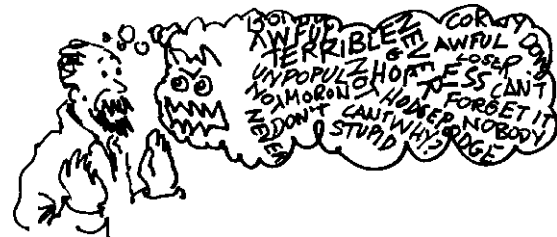
Throwing ants outdoors — chilly, but they wear their bones on the outside.

Hot hot day. Teeth, tongue linger tenderly — ripe cherries.

There MUST be an easier way than friendship to learn to be a friend.

I keep learning what's NOT going to work for me — useful, assuming there remain other options.

I must be more exhausted than I realize, thus to be believing the ugly things I tell myself.



Don't be discouraged. So you drove 70 miles to read them your poems and they laughed and applauded and said (afterwards) "I really enjoyed your wordcraft" and glanced at the books, chuckling, but no one bought a book...so all right, be a little discouraged, but next time drive 100 miles, and if that doesn't do it, be very discouraged and drive 1000 miles and meanwhile learn to eat chuckles and compliments.

Lap-Synching to Defeat Our Lapsing

Our faces grow flaccid, ovals swelling to circles, ellipses collapsing, but perhaps lips meet lips, singing, as our laps overlap, our slip-slapping hips so calypso, thighs dipping and grasping, our clasping eclipsing our lapsing ellipses.

How unspeakably sensual! I wiggle my tongue inside my mouth.

Caressing every surface, touching my lips, cheeks, belly, reaching between my legs, moving deeply in and out of me until I am stiff and breathless — the air.



Holding Hands

“Dean Loves Pam”
Wet Cement Loves Hands
or hands love wet cement. But time and sunlight harden the cement and callus the fingers, and they no longer love each other, at least not in that clingy way, though there’s a kind of love in galloping breathless over the sidewalk (“beat you to the fire hydrant on the corner!”) and leaving no discernible mark, no more than, on each other, callused hands clapping to our singing.

Love is most at home with the yielding, but resilient, the breast that seems to give way, give its all to the hand, but a moment later is itself, ivory, impervious. We want to be able to rend each other, swallow each other like raw oysters, chew, twist, crush and know by each other’s moans that we have done so, then have each other emerge, smiling, flawless, like children pointing fingers and yelling BANG BANG! YOU’RE DEAD! — contorting, crumpling to the earth to lie dead still, then springing up laughing.

The handprint I leave in concrete outlasts the hand, the thousands of handprints invisible on the bodies of lovers (even white slap marks now hidden in hardened eyes). Put your hand, if you can, into the impression. Can you feel what my hand felt?

I sit down to write a poem, but what? I’m not the newspaper, saying the same things every day and calling it new because it just happened and it’s the next day. I have talked with some thirty people this past week and mainly listened or was social. By what magic should I now have something to say just because you are not here with me, are strangers, far away, unborn?

Pen poised above paper; words flow to the tip and accumulate, unable to leap the gap. I grow congested. If someone looks at me receptively, I may explode in his face.

since e. e. cummings, poetry is the most undercapitalized industry.

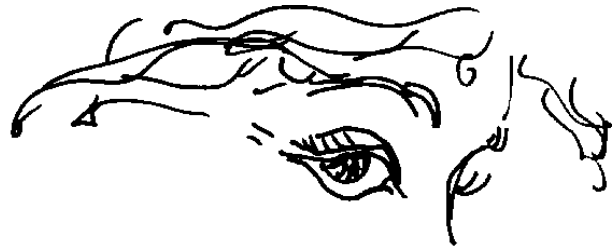
Poetry Slam — Where Poets are Given Latitude

What wins the judges’ gratitude
Is platitude with attitude.

I am tired of worrying about the future of my poems;
judge for yourself, Reader: Are these words that
no one will ever read?

Is this a poem? Check with your calendar, Reader.

This is not a voice.
This is not a sound.
This is not a person.
This is not a living thing.
Or if it is these things,
they were put here by you.
Did you know you could create life?



The most famous person in the world is YOU.
Poems and songs are about YOU — how you are loved or hated. Politicians address YOU and promise YOU things and appeal to YOUR finer qualities. TV ads that cost millions to make tell YOU about golden opportunities. YOU are a celebrity. In the Bible, God speaks entirely to YOU and your grandparents, Thou and Thee. Such a star you’ve become that when we pray, we pray to YOU. I is nothing to YOU. Most of the public voices (news commentators, commercials, letters from the IRS & other charities) have little of I, but much of YOU. And I must share fame with ME, while YOU and YOU alone receive all our prayers, love, admiration, scolding and hate. Illustrious YOU, YOU who have been with me in all my poems — could I have YOUR autograph?
[On a check?]

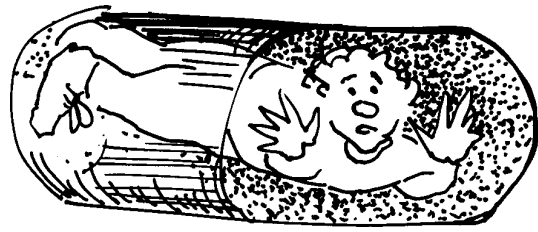
Which the is the the the the Indicates?

Of "the" I sing,
The article,
The unassuming particle,
That indicates a thing:
How do I love
"The"? Let me count the occurrences:
My count (rye), 'tis of
"The," which persists despite the deterrences
Of haikuists telegraphic
Who cut their syllable counts in halfic
By sounding like Tonto
("Old pond. Frog jump in pronto!
Splash!") But let me stress that the the of which I sing
Is the the that precedes a word beginning
With a vowel, not the the in "the bowel,"
But the the in "the owl"
Or if the the in "the bowel," only when stressed,
As in "the bowel," for it must be confessed
That, though I admire the bluntness of the dour the
before a consonant, yet it lacks the bright bravura
Of the the of which I sing, really a THEE,
Not thuh thud of thuh thuh, as dull as Lethe,
But the eager edge of THEE thee...
Or if A thee it must be,
Then AY-as-in-gay thee, not merely UH thee,
This indicator of the oh-so-special thing
Of which I sing.

If a "simp" is simply simple,
This implies a pimp is pimple,
Dimps are dimple, wimps are wimple
And an imp is imply imple.
If you're rumpling, you'll be rumpiled,
So a dumpling must be dumped —
When an amp is amply ample,
Lights will shine — at least a lamp'll.
One whose diet is too sumptuous
May become obesely rumptuous.
Beans are wholesome; prunes are scrumptious,
But they leave one loudly dumptious.
If a bumpkin must be bumpitious,
Shall a pumpkin not be pumptious?
All my plump kin must be plumptious;
Some folks hump kin — awfully humptious!



Forbiddenness: Why a Texan opens an office.



Kids "experiment" with drugs, well-designed double-blind studies, no doubt: half of the subjects taking placebos (none knowing which) and someone keeping track which kids OD, turn manic or gloomy, drop out of school or drop in with guns...hey, maybe it's those sugar tablets?

On all sides, the whining of adolescents.
What a sane world it would be if only people unable to take responsibility for them would stop having parents.

The Children are Teaching Each Other

The children are shooting each other.
Counsel them, test them as infants, ferret out their violent impulses, treat them, fix them.
The children are shooting each other.
Melt the guns, shatter the TV screens, illegalize violent video games and the evening news, remake *Bambi* to make the hunters spare Bambi's Mom...
The children are shooting each other.
Don't melt the guns, but ARM yourself with automatic weapons, dig moats around your houses, bar your windows, hide your own children (steal their guns).
The children are shooting each other.
Talk to them about marijuana (but not about Ritalin or Prozac), hug them, spend quality time with them, teach them to duck.
The children are shooting each other.
Tattoo the 10 Commandments on their foreheads (but don't teach them to read or to face one another) and teach them to duck.
The children are shooting each other.
Outcome-based, relevant, experiential education!
Death education! Venting of hostility, expressing self-generated values, creative long-term planning, refusing to sacrifice self-esteem to socially-imposed hierarchical authoritarian parental values.
The children are shooting each other.
Teach them, instead, to shoot the shrinks and teach them to aim.
The children are shooting each other.
We hoped to prevent children by passing out condoms in the schools, but this is more proactive.
The children are shooting each other.
It serves them right! Now they'll keep still!
The children are shooting each other.
No, wait, can't we all just get along?
The children are shooting each other.
Teach them to aim.

Soon the meek shall inherit the earth.
Be prepared: Become an inheritance lawyer.

What To Do on the Eve of the Millennium:

Better.

Bureaucrat: A Stand-offishial.



An Elegy to an Effigy

Elegy spells L-E-G which is one foot allegedly.
If I am hanged in effigy (that is, F-I-M hanged
N-F-I-G) . . . O Fig, this is my leg 2U!

How cautious is she? Her allergies make her
break out in a prudent.

Because there is conservation of energy, I do
as little as I can, that others may be active.

Some think that joy, like energy, is conserved.
If they are happy, they know they'll have to
pay for it. Were Hitler and Stalin building up
in the world immense reservoirs of joy?

There is only one conservation: Of spirit, which,
being limitless, remains limitless.

The Wizard of As

We recognize likeness: I have two eyes,
you have two eyes and all that.
We recognize withness: I am in the room
with you. We are on the same planet.

AS comprehends both likeness and being
with one another in time, an unlikely
connection, given so much time to
choose from: I am AS you are. We share
duration: AS you read this, I write this.
I do unto you AS you unto me — in the same way
or at the same time?

We are not used to viewing shared time
as a form of likeness (or like a form
of asness?). We take it for granted
that everything that is is when we are.
Say "barrier" and we think "mass" or "space,"
but the barrier between me and a century ago
is greater...or maybe not: Who can possibly be
no longer with us? And thus unlike us? Forgetting
has a mass and a position NOW. What's forgotten
is right there (where eyes stare at...nothing? —
trying to see, peering through mist, missing us).

Those who are not with us now
are all too with us now.
Nothing is ever lost.
You are all with me even
as I speak.

