A TREATISE

friends
go, disappear, do not
return, are lost, and the
cities stay on and on.
nations at least in name
change, but what the
babylonian has left, the
assyrian has taken, what
they left, the medes and
the persians, what they
have left, so on up to
the turks, now
baghdad is in iraq, and
it is still baghdad, there
is still a mayor though
not haroun al-raschid,
it still destroys the
souls of men, it is still
quick to rise against
any peoples in it it
thinks threaten it, as if
man could do more than
threaten this golem only
man and the ants and the
prairie dogs make, a
city, friends disappear
in cities, or they go
out of them, some of
us sit and watch from
our windows the great
going out, if Joshua
were to appear outside
the walls, say just
off the Washington Bridge
one of our girls might
allow him the information,
but we would sit on
inside, alive or
dead, because in the end
the city is addictive,
you get to need that
sickness running-through
your whole self, as sure
as you need to get drunk
to sleep, as sure as
you need to pass by every
misery that shows itself,
you are not the caliph, you
don't fake-yourself at
night and wander out
among your people, you
do it another way, you
are out for the main
chance, even love is
difficult in the city,
the you destroy yourself
hunting it, it is all
that is worth hunting
in the city, unless you
want the pleasure of killing
rats, even the love of
little girls to be
hunted in the city, that
poor bastard, all these
years mad for little
girls, what do they think
the city does these proper
bastards who have never
lusted after anything,
never given themselves
particularly to their old
ladies, who have never
felt the city sitting on
their shoulders, have not,

tall the buildings lining
fifth street towering
down on him, he speeded
up his pace hoping to
make second avenue before
he was pinned beneath all
the tenements, christ yes
that is the city which has
existed we know since at
least 4500 b.c., they
dug up those ruins, the
shards of 'the first city',

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damned agriculturists, even
for the city the farmer
has to take the blame, as
i come to think for most
ills we are heir to,
damn abel anyhow, cain
knew what he was about,
and god too, he marked him
then in his sin, but cain
saw it coming and made one
valiant effort, it wasn/t
enough.

7000 years of
this madness, 7000 years
of man tied to the
city, the only reasonable
alternative would be
hunting and fishing and
quite a while ago we outbred
that possibility, oh yes,
now, they tell me, the
government is moving the
indians off the reserves,
into what? mill towns,
factory towns, the
ultimate end of what
the hanging gardens
were about, mene,
mene, tekel upharsin,
you have been weighed
in the balance and
found wanting, of course,
did you expect to be
satisfied in the city,
this dull slough, where
blues is all in your
bread, and poisons too,
and no taste, bread is
no longer food, we had
that fight, tho he wouldn/t
believe it, but it isn/t,
not in the city, bread
is not food, god knows
there is little enough to
live by in the city,
bread isn/t one of the
things, and yet the
city exists so the
farmer will have his
markets, or the merchant
his port. i prefer the
ferry landings used to
cross the great rivers,
there were no cities,
a man and a ferry, a rope,
perhaps, across to haul
himself along by, on
such a ferry masai was
able to cross the father
of waters on his way
back, at louis however
disturbed him profoundly.
only the hunter has
sense enough to be
upset and confused and
therefor to leave, the
rest of us sit quietly,
waiting for whatever,
secure in the knowledge
baghdad still exists,
and only a total war between
nations ever destroys a
great city completely,
pouring salt over the smoking
stubble where people
once lived, and even those
cities thus destroyed grew
back in time, and the
people are the same or
different, but that doesn't
matter, what they wear, what
they speak, what they eat
eat, all that matters is
the built-in mechanism
of self-preservation of
a great ba'al into whose
maw people are thrown
not knowing generally
that they carry yahweh
inside them and don't
need false gods, time
and again, jerusalem
destroyed the jews,
it is doing it again,
and yet jerusalem goes
on, an object for
everyone from nebuchadnezzar
to colonel nasser, the
knights templar, and
saladin, what then will
my soul do but fred
thompson's act, but
not overtly, rather, hidden
in the dark recesses where
not even a wife would
find it, where not the
city or agency thereof could
reach and pry, where
the city exists but only
as a shadowy menace, and
we are enabled to act,
otherwise there is no
peace, or too much of
it, too easily ... or
there are a few other
external choices, if you
must go that way, the way of
geo metesky, so many years
of filtering bombs into
this city his hate was
so huge, or the other fellow,
angel i think his name was,
holed up in east harlem,
fighting the police, when
they got into the room,
one of the detectives stood
over his dead body and
pumped his automatic
empty into his dead head,
each shot tearing something
else out of us. they had
all given up the idea that
friends would return, that
love was possible, and the
farmer who said, sometimes
you can't wait for love,
it would take all year, he
was talking of the bull
servicing his cow, that's
it, the perfect word,
servicing, he had won again,
the market was quiet and
busy, everyone was back
to business, the city
was at rest, there were no
more circles on the
pool from the thrown
stone, the stone was
buried, dead, at the
bottom of the pool,
the pool was closed
over, not even friends
would know where to
look for it. and are
there names in potter's
field, or even, possibly,
by numbers they count
them, every man his own
auschwitz, what else the
concentration camp but
the perfection of the
city, what else the ss
but the perfection of
the state, what else
the factories and stores
but lesser gas chambers,
and they let you wear
your watch, they do not
remove the gold fillings,
but they do give you
your piece of soap, you
are going to the showers,
and baghdad is now in iraq.

-- Joel Oppenheimer
September 24, 1961  

A FLOATING BEAR SPECIAL

The mayor announced today, at a special news conference, that Dr. Solomon Id, a prominent psychologist who has spent many years working with the police department, is to head an expedition, along with inspector Harvey O'Simian, into the jungles of Africa.

The purpose of the expedition will be to trap, and bring back alive, as many apes as possible. The necessity for this move was brought about when, upon announcement that the requirements for candidates for the police force may have to be lowered in order to bring it up to its required number, the offices of the mayor and police commissioner were swamped with protests from the citizens of this city.

As it is impossible to find enough men in the city capable of passing the extremely stiff examination who are willing to join the force, and in view of the opposition against lowering these requirements, it was felt that the recruiting of apes was the only possible means of bringing our police force up to the needed strength. (His honor said manager power-, but was immediately corrected by Dr. Id and Inspector O'Simian.)

Inspector O'Simian is reported as saying that after 27 years on the force he is sure he will be able to train the apes without too much trouble. Dr. Id, who has more than once broken 90 on the golf course and reads Sanskrit, is confident that the apes will not only be able to pass the examination, but also has hopes that the present passing grade may be raised if they are able to return with a sufficient number of apes.

It was realized, and noted by his honor, that some adjustment in the present uniform will have to be made. He said: "I have two experts working on the project now and I have issued a memo to all departmental heads asking that they cooperate as much as possible in helping to find a solution to this problem.

It is hoped that there will not be a protest from the A.S.P.C.A.

-- Hubert Selby, Jr.
THE AMERICANS

the cosmologist says what constitutes a society:
an assemblage of atoms makes the thing go

why the social stinks
- and each American stinks - is that it is an inadequate
number of cells they are, sitting in a room, to constitute an organism

ey aren't cocked
and ruled by information

-- Charles Olson

DARLINGTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

the modern south - pine barrens of lowcountry south carolina, where
space appears to go on forever - is not at all unlike modern midwest:

where the land is flat, there is so much of everything to be seen:
all that is green lies open, and the blue is cosmic, a true half-shell,
full of yesterday's and tomorrow's and everybody else's thunderheads...

against this, darlington: labor day, the southern 500, stands and
infield jammed, eighty thousand, like the sunday market at huancayo,
the plaza filled with indians - americans gone mad with color and
shape, shirts, hats, helmets, parasols - the biggest stock car race
of them all

knifing around and through, the black oval: the track - the pitcrews
all in white, cardoctors: black & white, asphalt & speed...

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black fords on
black tires on
black-ass
fault

the cars in idiot pursuit of on another, round and round, all in
line to catch the highbank turn, chomping butyl, gorging gas,
puffing smoke - the chuff-chuff of lawrence's whitman . . .

when the man ahead is too slow, you can't pass, you bump him, hinting,
at better than 100 m.p.h. . . .

and the wrecks: a tire blows (track temperature: 130°) and the car
hurts the guard rail, rolls out of sight - or spins and backs to a
halt in midtrack, spews burning gas down the bank of the turn, the
driver helpless, rest of the field coming at him, at better than a
100 (when bobby myers got his, the one car hurtled straight in the
air, smashed by another before it came down: the motor torn from the
body, violent and then quiet)

heavy limbed I
rush to that space

where I will crash
and burn
and scatter steel and gas

and limbs will crush
for want of air, butyl
equilibrium

and heavy footed men
will pass

but it is carnival, and the white souls who came down the day before,
drove their pickup trucks into the infield, built their raffish
scaffolds, platforms and tents, camped the night, drank their beer
and fried their eggs, boiled all day in the sun of better than a
hundred - are tired: quietlike, they take down their rigs, start
their motors, begin to file out, slow, tunneling under the track,
before the race is over; this is carnival, a holiday, but next day
is work day; they go out like sheep, like huancayas llamas; under
the track, the motors silent against the unmuffled thunder above . . .

-- Paul Metcalf
SONG

greenland for not being a continent
i oversee
your huge mass

    your white arms, crossing
    my back

you, watch canada and russia.
blue sea surrounds you

1 hosanna!
there is other
largesse.

THE TRIAL

four ends where
we come in from

the poles white tip
to white tip

round the band between

the eyes should be constant
in a face
kindness is to courage
a stillness
in demeanour
erect.

ah, so we come to the night
stare into blackness
perfect as the square
hum a tune
redolent of the conquest
of the indies
constant eyes in our face.
THE MERGER

For the woman in the bathing suit in the GREAT SOUTHWEST, brown
Earth could be flesh, etc., flesh, etc. and more round
With the eye which has it so right in undeniable sun. More
Space, here?
    all paraphernalia of 'vista'
    I could enumerate.

I know, the world's not watching, only
Myself and its quite a bit at that to undertake
The hidden, at once, uncovered.
It is true: brown
Plain, uncovered, forcibly, waters receded.
Evidenced the nipples of the virgin and the mother/s
The one, rosy.

That we are not speaking
Does not lessen the effect
The line

Of your buttock
Bird hop around head
Cloud one cloud
top of the far peak

Moves slowly
To a certain culmination we'll never know.

And I peer at you from inside the house, from the window
Through the screen door cutting you into minute squares
Which infuriates the wind halts the trees budding.

You are more than the gorge to the west I see
So clearly encompassed by brown earth ocean
More in stillness than all spring wind howling
More than is earth.

    -- Max Finstein
AFTERTHOUGHTS ON THE N.Y. POETS THEATRE PRODUCTION OF NIGHTS AT THE TANGO PALACE BY JAMES WARING; STILL LIFE BY JOHN WNIERS; FAUST POUTU (ACT IV) BY ROBERT DUNCAN

FAUST POUTU PROMISES MUCH. A FULL LENGTH COMEDY ASSEMBLING ENTERTAINMENT! IT IS INSENSISTLY THEATREWORTHY! BUT AN ACTING COMPANY MUST FIND THE IMAGINATIVE FREEDOM DUNCAN DEMANDS. HE INVITES US TO BATTLE THE STRANGLEHOLD THE RATIONAL CURRENTLY HAS ON THE IMAGINATION OF THE THEATRE SCENE. OSKAR SCHLUMBERGER WOULD HAVE DONE IT WELL. THE N.Y. POETS THEATRE TOOK THE EASY WAY OUT. THEY PLAYED IT REALISTICALLY. THESE PLAYS CAN'T BE FOUND IN REHEARSALS, THEY MUST BE FOUND BEFORE IT BEGINS SO THAT THE REHEARSAL PERIOD IS FOR THE ACTOR. THE EXPERIMENTAL NATURE OF THE MATERIAL ELUSIVE & DEFIES FORMULAS. A COMEDIC MASQUE ENTERTAINMENT OFFERS MUCH TO THE IMAGINATION. DUNCAN HAS DRAWN WONDERFUL MAKEUP DESIGNS IN THE SCRIPT! TO PLAY IT REALISTICALLY IS TO REDUCE IT TO A THEATRICAL EXERCISE IN A LITERARY WORKSHOP. ALL 3 PRODUCTIONS WERE PREGNANT WITH POSSIBILITIES. BUT, UNFORTUNATELY, ARRIVED STILLBORN.

WNERS' STILL LIFE SEEMS DISCONNECTED IN FORM IN A MANNER WHICH IS COMPELLING. OF THE THREE PRODUCTIONS, THIS ONE WAS CLOSEST TO THE AUTHOR IN TENOR. BUT IT SEEMED AS IF THE PLAY'S MEANING ESCAPED IT - "THE DISINTEGRATION OF A SOCIAL UNIT." THEREFORE, THE PRODUCTION SEEMED OVERDONE WHEN ACTUALLY IT WAS UNDERDONE. JAMES WARING CHOSE TO UNDERPLAY THE ACTORS' MOVEMENTS. I WONDER WHY? HAS HE BECOME TOO SELFCONSCIOUS ABOUT HIS KNOWN ABILITY TO DESIGN MOVEMENT? IS HE TRYING TO SOFTPENAL THAT ABILITY FOR THE ACTOR'S PLAY RATHER THAN DANCE? DOGMA? I, FOR ONE, WISH HE WOULDN'T. IT'S ALL THEATER! A DISTINCT USE OF THE PLAYING AREAS, DESIGNED MOVEMENT FOR THE ACTORS WD NOT HAVE HURT THIS PLAY.

LAST, THE 1ST LOOK ON THE PROGRAM, JAMES WARING'S NIGHTS AT THE TANGO PALACE, THE SLIGHTEST OF THE THREE. AT THE THEATRE, I DIDN'T CARE FOR IT. IN RETROSPECT, IT MAY HAVE BEEN THE PRODUCTION. THE CHARACTER OF DUMMY CAN BE RELATED TO PREVENT'S BAPTISTE IN LES ENFANTS & THE GIRL IN LA STRADA. THE PLAY IMPLIES A FARCICAL IRONY JUXTAPOSED AGAINST THE INGENUOUSNESS OF A BAPTISTE. IT WAS NOT ACHIEVED. INSTEAD, THE PRODUCTION BROUGHT TO MIND A SKIT IN A PUDDINGHEAD REVUE. THE PLAY IS SLENDER, BUT IT MAY HAVE MORE THAN WHAT WAS SHOWN THE OTHER NIGHT.

OF THE ACTING PERFORMANCES, FRED HERKO'S DUMMY WAS QUIETLY EFFECTIVE. MR. HERKO DOES THIS WELL. HIS VARIATIONS OF A CONTEMPORARY CHAPLINESQUE CHARACTER. SOMETIMES, I'D LIKE TO SEE HIM TACKLE A CHARACTER THAT DOES NOT ALLOW HIM A CARICATURE TO HIDE BEHIND. IT'D BE A CHALLENGE. BUT A CHALLENGE THAT MR. HERKO MIGHT BE SURE UP TO THAN HE THINKS. THERE'S SOMETHING TO BE LEARNED ABOUT THE ACTOR'S PROGRESS FROM ANN HOLT'S PERFORMANCES IN 2 OF THE 3 PLAYS. IN STILL LIFE, HILL HOLT WAS VERY EFFECTIVE, MOVING. WE SENSED HER PAIN. IT WAS THROUGH HER THAT SOME OF THE PLAY'S MEANING WAS ACHIEVED. IN FAUST POUTU, SHE EVOLVED HER WORK, SEEMED INSECURE. EVIDENTLY, HERS IS A TALENT THAT IS STILL SEARCHING FOR ITS CONTROL. WHAT CAUSES AN ACTOR'S SECURITY? INSECURITY? IT WAS INTERESTING THAT BOTH WERE SO MUCH IN EVIDENCE IN ONE PERFORMER DURING ONE EVENING. THE HERCULEAN TASK OF ONE'S MONOLOGUE IN FAUST POUTU WAS WORKED TAPPET'S. HE WAS INTERESTING. SECURE ENOUGH NOT TO TAKE SECURITY WHEN IT WASN'T THERE. MR. TAPPET USES HIMSELF WELL, & AT TIMES, IF THE CHARACTER IS NOT FULLYFULLED, HE STILL GIVES US A LIFE ON STAGE. AS W/FRITZ WEATHER'S PEEP GUNT, I WONDER WHETHER MR. TAPPET HAS THE PHYSICAL STATURE FOR THE ROLE. FOR ONE THING, HE HASN'T ENOUGH HAIR ON HIS CHEST.

-- Jerry Benjamin
PAUL TAYLOR - A HISTORY

What has happened?
Once there was Dance Associates, they performed at the Master Institute. Paul Taylor was a Dance Associate, so was James Waring.

Mr. Taylor danced The Least Flycatcher and Three Epitaphs and others. Then Dance Associates disintegrated. Mr. Taylor gave a concert with two beautiful dances, one to a tape of "at the tone, the time will be--" and another of rain. Then other concerts in which nothing happened. And now this latest one.

Mr. Taylor made dances because he loved making them - he loved to dance them.

Love is ultimately beautiful.
Love is interesting.
Love is exciting.
It was lovely to watch Paul Taylor.
Paul Taylor is not lovely to watch.
Paul Taylor is not exciting.
Paul Taylor is not interesting.
Paul Taylor is not ultimately beautiful.
It is hard to watch Paul Taylor working at his job.
A job is not interesting or beautiful or exciting.

-- Fred Herko

NOTICES

Two dance concerts this month. Aileen Passloff & Company, Saturday, Jan. 20 at the Fashion Institute of Technology / 227 West 27th / New York City. The performance, which will include new works by Miss Passloff and music by Richard Maxfield, will begin at 8:40. Admission $2.50. For reservations call CH 2 - 1441.

& James Waring and Dance Company will perform on Wednesday and Thursday evenings, January 24th and 25th - also at 8:40 - at The Henry Street Playhouse / 466 Grand Street / New York City. There will be new works by Mr. Waring and music and designs by George Brecht, Remy Charlip, Richard Maxfield, Erik Satie and Robert Watts. Admission $2.00. For reservations call OR 7 - 9150.

Auerhahn Press is offering by subscription a special hand-bound signed edition of Philip Lamantia's new book of poems: Destroyed Works. The price is $10.00 and the edition will be limited to 50 copies. Subscriptions should be in by the end of January. Write: The Auerhahn Press / 1334 Franklin / San Francisco 9, Calif.

The Plumed Horn is a new little magazine out of Mexico. Editors: Sergio Mondragon, Margaret Randall, Harvey Welin. Send mss. and/or subscriptions ($1.00 for 1 issue, $3.00 for one year ((4 issues)) to Margaret Randall / Anaxagoras 1345-4 / Colonia Narvarte / Mexico 12, D.F.

The Floating Bear wishes to announce its abject poverty.