Robert Grosseteste

ON LIGHT
OR THE BEGINNING OF FORMS

The first corporeal form which some call corporeity is in my opinion light. For light of its very nature diffuses itself in every direction in such a way that a point of light will produce instantaneously a sphere of light of any size whatsoever, unless some opaque object stands in the way. Now the extension of matter in three dimensions is a necessary concomitant of corporeity, and this despite the fact that both corporeity and matter are in themselves simple substances lacking all dimension. But a form that is in itself simple and without dimension could not introduce dimension in every direction into matter, which is likewise simple and without dimension, except by multiplying itself and diffusing itself instantaneously in every direction and thus extending matter in its own diffusion. For the form cannot desert matter, because it is inseparable from it, and matter itself cannot be deprived of form. But I have proposed that it is light which possesses of its very nature the function of multiplying itself and diffusing itself instantaneously in all directions. Whatever performs this operation is either light or some other agent that acts in virtue of its participation in light to which this operation belongs essentially. Corporeity, therefore, is either light itself or the agent which performs the aforementioned operation and introduces dimensions into matter in virtue of its participation in light, and acts through the power of this same light. But the first form cannot introduce dimensions into matter through the power of a subsequent form. Therefore light is not a form subsequent to corporeity, but it is corporeity itself.
Furthermore, the first corporeal form is, in the opinion of the philosophers, more exalted and of a nobler and more excellent essence than all the forms that come after it. It bears, also, a closer resemblance to the forms that exist apart from matter. But light is more exalted and of a nobler and more excellent essence than all corporeal things. It has, moreover, greater similarity than all bodies to the forms that exist apart from matter, namely, the intelligences. Light therefore is the first corporeal form.

Thus light, which is the first form created in first matter, multiplied itself by its very nature an infinite number of times on all sides and spread itself out uniformly in every direction. In this way it proceeded in the beginning of time to extend matter which it could not leave behind, by drawing it out along with itself into a mass the size of the material universe. This extension of matter could not be brought about through a finite multiplication of light, because the multiplication of a simple being a finite number of times does not produce a quantity, as Aristotle shows in the De Caelo et Mundo. However, the multiplication of a simple being an infinite number of times must produce a finite quantity, because a product which is the result of an infinite multiplication exceeds infinitely that through the multiplication of which it is produced. Now one simple being cannot exceed another simple being infinitely, but only a finite quantity infinitely exceeds a simple being. For an infinite quantity exceeds a simple being by infinity times infinity. Therefore, when light, which is itself simple, is multiplied an infinite number of times, it must extend matter, which is likewise simple, into finite dimensions.

It is possible, however, that an infinite sum of number is related to an infinite sum in every proportion, numerical and non-numerical. And some infinites are larger than other infinites, and some are smaller. Thus the sum of all numbers both even and odd is infinite. It is at the same time greater than the sum of all the even numbers although this is likewise infinite, for it exceeds it by the sum of all the odd numbers. The sum, too, of all numbers starting with one and continuing by doubling each successive number is infinite, and similarly the sum of all the halves corresponding to the doubles is infinite. The sum of these halves must be half of the sum of their doubles. In the same way the sum of all numbers starting with one and multiplying by three successively is three times the sum of all the thirds corresponding to these triples. It is likewise clear in regard to all kinds of numerical proportion that there can be a proportion of finite to infinite according to each of them.

But if we posit an infinite sum of all doubles starting with one, and an infinite sum of all the halves corresponding to these doubles, and if one, or some other finite number, be subtracted from the sum of the halves, then, as soon as this subtraction is made, there will no longer be a two to one proportion between the first sum and what is left of the second sum. Indeed there will
not be any numerical proportion, because if a second numerical proportion is to be left from the first as the result of subtraction from the lesser member of the proportion, then what is subtracted must be an aliquot part or aliquot parts of an aliquot part of that from which it is subtracted. But a finite number cannot be an aliquot part or aliquot parts of an aliquot part of an infinite number. Therefore when we subtract a number from an infinite sum of halves there will not remain a numerical proportion between the infinite sum of doubles and what is left from the infinite sum of halves.

Since this is so, it is clear that light through the infinite multiplication of itself extends matter into finite dimensions that are smaller and larger according to certain proportions that they have to one another, namely, numerical and non-numerical. For if light through the infinite multiplication of itself extends matter into a dimension of two cubits, by the doubling of this same infinite multiplication it extends it into a dimension of four cubits, and by the dividing in half of this infinite multiplication, it extends it into a dimension of one cubit. Thus it proceeds according to numerical and non-numerical proportions.

It is my opinion that this was the meaning of the theory of those philosophers who held that everything is composed of atoms, and said that bodies are composed of surfaces, and surfaces of lines, and lines of points. This opinion does not contradict the theory that a magnitude is composed only of magnitudes, because for every meaning of the word whole, there is a corresponding meaning of the word part. Thus we say that a half is part of a whole, because two halves make a whole. We say, too, that a side is part of a diameter, but in a different sense, because no matter how many times a side is taken it does not make a diameter, but is always less than the diameter. Again we say that an angle of contingency is part of a right angle because there is an infinite number of angles of contingency in a right angle, and yet when an angle of contingency is subtracted from a right angle a finite number of times the latter becomes smaller. It is in a different sense, however, that a point is said to be part of a line in which it is contained an infinite number of times, for when a point is taken away from a line a finite number of times this does not shorten the line.

To return therefore to my theme, I say that light through the infinite multiplication of itself equally in all directions extends matter on all sides equally into the form of a sphere and, as a necessary consequence of this extension, the outermost parts of matter are more extended and more rarefied than those within, which are close to the center. And since the outermost parts will be rarefied to the highest degree, the inner parts will have the possibility of further refraction.

In this way light, by extending first matter into the form of a sphere, and by rarefying its outermost parts to the highest degree
actualized completely in the outermost sphere the potentiality of matter, and left this matter without any potency to further impression. And thus the first body in the outermost part of the sphere, the body which is called the firmament, is perfect, because it has nothing in its composition but first matter and first form. It is therefore the simplest of all bodies with respect to the parts that constitute its essence and with respect to its quantity which is the greatest possible in extent. It differs from the genus body only in this respect, that in it the matter is completely actualized through the first form alone. But the genus body, which is in this and in other bodies and has in its essence first matter and first form, abstracts from the complete actualization of matter through the first form and from the diminution of matter through the first form.

When the first body, which is the firmament, has in this way been completely actualized, it diffuses its light (lumen) from every part of itself to the center of the universe. For since light (lux) is the perfection of the first body and naturally multiplies itself from the first body, it is necessarily diffused to the center of the universe. And since this light (lux) is a form entirely inseparable from matter in its diffusion from the first body, it extends along with itself the spirituality of the matter of the first body. Thus there proceeds from the first body light (lumen), which is a spiritual body, or if you prefer, a bodily spirit. This light (lumen) in its passing does not divide the body through which it passes, and thus it passes instantaneously from the body of the first heaven to the center of the universe. Furthermore, its passing is not to be understood in the sense of something numerically one passing instantaneously from that heaven to the center of the universe, for this is perhaps impossible, but its passing takes place through the multiplication of itself and the infinite generation of light (lumen). This light (lumen), expanded and brought together from the first body toward the center of the universe, gathered together the mass existing below the first body; and since the first body could no longer be lessened on account of its being completely actualized and unchangeable, and since, too, there could not be a space that was empty, it was necessary that in the very gathering together of this mass the outermost parts should be drawn out and expanded. Thus the inner parts of the aforesaid mass came to be more dense and the outer parts more rarefied; and so great was the power of this light (lumen) gathering together—and in the very act of gathering, separating—that the outermost parts of the mass contained below the first body were drawn out and rarefied to the highest degree. Thus in the outermost parts of the mass in question, the second sphere came into being, completely actualized and susceptible of no further impression. The completeness of actualization and the perfection of the second sphere consist in this that light (lumen) is begotten from the first sphere and that light (lux) which is simple in the first sphere is doubled in the second.
Just as the light (lumen) begotten from the first body completed the actualization of the second sphere and left a denser mass below the second sphere, so the light (lumen) begotten from the second sphere completed the actualization of the third sphere, and through its gathering left below this third sphere a mass of even greater density. This process of simultaneously gathering together and separating continued in this way until the nine heavenly spheres were completely actualized and there was gathered together below the ninth and lowest sphere the dense mass which constitutes the matter of the four elements. But the lowest sphere, the sphere of the moon, which also gives forth light (lumen) from itself, by its light (lumen) gathered together the mass contained below itself and, by gathering it together, thinned out and expanded its outermost parts. The power of this light (lumen), however, was not so great that by drawing together it could expand the outermost parts of this mass to the highest degree. On this account every part of the mass was left imperfect and capable of being gathered together and expanded. The highest part of this mass was expanded, although not to the greatest possible extent. Nevertheless by its expansion it became fire, although remaining still the matter of the elements. This element giving forth light from itself and drawing together the mass contained below it expanded its outermost parts, but not to as great an extent as the fire was expanded, and in this way it produced air. Air, also, in bringing forth from itself, a spiritual body or a bodily spirit, and drawing together what is contained within itself, and by drawing together, expanding its outer parts, produced water and earth. But because water retained more of the power of drawing together than of the power of expanding, water as well as earth was left with the attribute of weight.

In this way, therefore, the thirteen spheres of this sensible world were brought into being. Nine of them, the heavenly spheres, are not subject to change, increase, generation or corruption because they are completely actualized. The other four spheres have the opposite mode of being, that is, they are subject to change, increase, generation and corruption, because they are not completely actualized. It is clear that every higher body, in virtue of the light (lumen) which proceeds from it, is the form (species) and perfection of the body that comes after it. And just as unity is potentially every number that comes after it, so the first body, through the multiplication of its light, is every body that comes after it.

Earth is all the higher bodies because all the higher lights come together in it. For this reason earth is called Pan by the poets, that is 'the whole,' and it is also given the name Cybele, which is almost like cubile, from cube (cubus) that is, a solid. The reason for this is that earth, that is to say, Cybele, the mother of all the gods, is the most compact of all bodies, because, although the higher lights are gathered together in it, nevertheless they do not have their source in the earth through its own operations, but the light (lumen) of any sphere whatever can be
duced from it into act and operation. Thus every one of the gods will be begotten from it as from a kind of mother. The intermediate bodies have a twofold relationship. Towards lower bodies they have the same relation as the first heaven has to all other things, and they are related to the higher bodies as earth is related to all other things. And thus in a certain sense each thing contains all other things.

The form (species) and perfection of all bodies is light, but in the higher bodies it is more spiritual and simple, whereas in the lower bodies it is more corporeal and multiplied. Furthermore, all bodies are not of the same form (species) even though they all proceed from light, whether simple or multiplied, just as all numbers are not the same in form (species) despite the fact that they are all derived from unity by a greater or lesser multiplication.

This discussion may perhaps clarify the meaning of those who say that 'all things are one by the perfection of one light' and also the meaning of those who say that 'things which are many are many through the multiplication of light itself in different degrees.'

But since lower bodies participate in the form of the higher bodies, the lower body because it participates in the same form as the higher body, receives its motion from the same incorporeal moving power by which the higher body is moved. For this reason the incorporeal power of intelligence or soul, which moves the first and highest sphere with a diurnal motion, moves all the lower heavenly spheres with this same diurnal motion. But in proportion as these spheres are lower they receive this motion in a more weakened state, because in proportion as a sphere is lower the purity and strength of the first corporeal light is lessened in it.

But although the elements participate in the form of the first heaven, nevertheless they are not moved by the mover of the first heaven with a diurnal motion. Although they participate in that first light, they are not subject to the first moving power since that light in them is impure, weak, and far removed from the purity which it has in the first body, and also because they possess the denseness of matter which is the principle of resistance and stubbornness. Nevertheless, there are some who think that the sphere of fire rotates with a diurnal motion, and they take the rotating motion of comets to be an indication of this. They say also that this motion extends even to the waters of the sea, in such a way that the tide of the seas proceeds from it. But all sound philosophers say that the earth is free from this motion.

In this same way, too, the spheres that come after the second sphere, which is usually called the eighth when we compute from the earth upward, all share in the motion of this second sphere because they participate in its form. Indeed this motion is proper
to each of them in addition to the diurnal motion.

But because the heavenly spheres are completely actualized and are not receptive of rarefaction or condensation, light (lux) in them does not incline the parts of matter either away from the center so as to rarefy them, or toward the center to condense them. On this account the heavenly spheres are not receptive of up or down motion but only of circular motion by an intellectual moving power, which by directing its glance upon them in a corporeal way revolves the spheres themselves in a circular corporeal motion. But because the elements are incompletely actualized and subject to rarefaction and condensation, the light (lumen) which is in them inclines them away from the center so as to rarefy them, or toward the center so as to condense them. And on this account they are naturally capable of being moved in an upward or downward motion.

The highest body, which is the simplest of all bodies, contains four constituents, namely form, matter, composition and the composite. Now the form being the simplest holds the position of unity. But matter on account of its twofold potency, namely its susceptibility to impressions and its receptiveness of them, and also on account of its denseness which belongs fundamentally to matter but which is primarily and principally characteristic of a thing which is a duality, is rightly allotted the nature of a duality. But composition has a trinity in itself because there appears in it informed matter and materialized form and that which is distinctive of the composition, which is found in every composite as a third constituent distinct from matter and form. And that which is the composite proper, over and above these three constituents, is classed as a quaternary. There is, therefore, in the first body, in which all other bodies exist virtually, a quaternary and therefore the number of the remaining bodies is basically not more than ten. For the unity of the form, the duality of the matter, the trinity of the composition and the quaternity of the composite when they are added make a total of ten. On this account ten is the number of the bodies of the spheres of the world, because the sphere of the elements, although it is divided into four, is nevertheless one by its participation in earthly corruptible nature.

From these considerations it is clear that ten is the perfect number in the universe, because every perfect whole has something in it corresponding to form and unity, and something corresponding to matter and duality, something corresponding to composition and trinity, and something corresponding to the composite and quaternity. Nor is it possible to add a fifth to these four. For this reason every perfect whole is ten.

On this account it is manifest that only five proportions found in these four numbers, one, two, three, four, are suited to composition and to the harmony that gives stability to every composite.
For this reason these five proportions are the only ones that produce harmony in musical melodies, in bodily movements, and in rhythmic measures.

This is the end of the treatise on light of the Bishop of Lincoln.

Seen anywhere can art avalanche so actual that planes meet as well as cannot be.
The work Chinese was established two years in beauty parlors and garages.

Is passion and passion leads to image futility.

I believe in a destruction.

As most art of the past will go to support the starch art cannot be measured.

Important is a decidedly remote comic strip and of all things is our more members and cash contributions.

Inscrutable.

Love the help of convinced can be seen.

It is concerned and the public.

It is one it will be able to procure snow with blood.

The growing need for activities of a month for a nine-month catastrophe.

The year meets art the most accidental of serene funeral parlors in the other.

If you believe that is preparing us for invited open.

--James Waring
March 961
acrostic for the community of poets
and joel oppenheimer

j is for the judgment i brought down upon myself and for joel oppenheimer
who says i belong in jail when there ought to be no jails tho i be the
last one in
o is for zero and out as in down and out
e is for errors and exploitation for which i have a horror and an hourly
proclivity
l is for leroy jones for whom a benefit was given at the living theatre last
june when leroy and hattie were in need after a complex siege of hep-
titis and bills l is for the community of love in which the poets are
charter members and on whose help i rely when i have become the
abomination
o is for the obols 375 of them which i in agony turned over to the internal
revenue service to keep a theatre going and thirty people more or less
employed o is for the omission of consideration for others o is for
obligations o is for the ordeal of the guilty and for obsession
p is for pusillanimous poor and pitiable and for punishment by the poets who
rose like poseidon in wrath shocked offended and ready to call the
p for police whom the p for poets should never invoke be the crime murder
bum checks p for pot or treason
e is for the evil i have done which brought the poets low to an estate
eclipsing the worst excesses of bourgeois evaluations and responses
n is for the need we have of eachother
h is the horror of it all and the harmony and the hunger
e for an end to the hunger
i is for indictments by the government and insinuations by authority into
the freedom of the individual i for the holy i am and indictments by
poets
m is for mercy mistakes misunderstandings metaphysics and the multiple forms
of morality m is for the meaning of life and dammit m is for the 375
motherfucking obols which were fully repaid to leroy by mid august
e is for everything i am not and cannot ever be without you
r is for the restoration and rejuvenation of my buggered soul alms balms
restoratives for us all and for restoring the soul of joel and others
which i buggered out of shape and cannot alone soothe and repair r is
for the right to ask forgiveness r is for the rejoicing that follows
reconciliation that follows reasonable remorse r is for my restructure
r is for your relief r is for rains of poems to ready the soil and
ripen all souls for our revolution which we cannot make real without
eachother

Julian Beck
February 1964
SOME BOOKS (not the best, not a reading list, not an analysis—just some books, most of them out-of-the-way, all of them turn-ons for me in one way or another)

Textbook of Physiology, Fulton, made me feel ignorant, and I fought it: hated the proposition that I was a machine. But the book made my machinery out to be far more complex and lively than the soul-structures and enigmas of the romantics and restored my vanity with compound interest. It's practically virgin range, to boot, still roamed by great wild herds of never-hunted images.


The Blind Owl, by Sadegh Hedayat, is a crazy book by a crazy Persian. The circumstances of Hedayat's suicide make crazy reading, too, for those who care to look it up.

A recent Gold Medal paperback, Mother Night, by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. I swiped a copy in an L. A. liquor store one day, expecting it to be escape trash, but I liked it so much that I sent Vonnegut a thank-you letter.

Ben Hecht's A Jew in Love. Same kind of thing—I picked it up for toilet reading, was promptly gassed.

For new avenues and creative suggestions, the dedicated ragpicker should try Magick, by Aleister Crowley, Memoirs of a Terrorist, by Boris Savinkov, and Paul Valery's "Introduction to the Method of Leonardo da Vinci."

Pleak House...do people still read it? Anyone who has the time damn well should. Granted Esther Summerson is a nasty little lump of Victorian sanctimony, but whenever she comes onstage you can sit back and daydream: you and little Esther, alone in a Vic Tanney gym, with a rope to tie her to one of those wiggy machines and Sade's Justine for a manual in case you run out of ideas.

---John Thomas
ADVENTURES IN LIVING

How can you start hating me when I'm so comfortable in your raincoat
the apples kept bumping off the old gnarled banged-up biddy-assed tree
and I kept ducking and hugging and bobbing as if you were a tub of water
on Hallowe'en it was fun but you threw yourself into reverse like a tractor
hugging the ground in Spring that was nice too more rain more raincoat

now the issue at stake seems to be

how am I going to get
my ripped raincoat collar repaired
when yours is not around me keeping me warm and wet
or should I get some money and buy
a big hooked-up military pocket deal
of my own

well that's no paper doll you're talking about think it over
besides I'd be lonely
but besides I'd be safe and dry
oh let's play it by ear
there isn't any money anyway

here on the Esperanto River it's pretty mucky so I get out your suede
heeled pukka fatigue boots from the green box you left them in and put
my feet in them standing there like a Colossus in front of the sandbags
and the vines and the drowning water serpents stillled by my glare
drat those natives they never earned of sludge but I came prepared ho ho ho
oops my toe got stuck in your toe-print a little too big but comfy as hell
there you are

it's great to be back under the raincoat
shaking the vines off and stomping on the kitchen tiles
your breath feels like a radiator made of clouds
and the river has subsided and the rain is stopped
they weren't apples they were plums

--Frank O'Hara
(The following poem is the dialogue spoken by the poet for a film tribute by Andy Warhol to the dancer, Freddie Herko.)

Rollerskate

The night is estranging like a beautiful serpent which has become like glass, difficult and dangerous, in the remote details of an extraordinary conscience. And, arriving, perhaps it is substantial, though I feel somewhat delicate. Drapped in the confidence of your only reason for being as you always are. Proud and satisfied, when we touch hands in the remarkable hazard of your weight and location.

As letters arrive which somehow seem secretive like something I couldn't read but heard in Satie's 80-second score for piano played 840 times without stopping,

As we hear vague racial memories on the tape-recorder of our separate selves speaking,

Where I present you with my responsible warmth the way that restlessness of yours recalls to me those migratory birds whose edges of flight hold this mood thru limitless space.

Within these kingdoms a fabulous flame ignites as your ears crack with what you hear.

Having never done anything against me. Perhaps, as I imagine hunger and pain, you are the night in a very expensive place, gorgeous and vulgar.

For it is the anguish of love with which you are moved and upset,

And it is quite unlikely that all this has done something corrosive, like tourism, to the Venetian temperament sinking a tenth of an inch a year into the mud, like the buildings, just as I am able and always confident to contend with and love the imagination of your deceiving age without fear.

How can I explain it to you that fear manipulates a stranger forest then you can inhabit,

And your walking with me fills my ears as you say nothing, as even I sense you are not here to know the poem is just this speaking of what cannot be said to the person I want to say it.

Yet how to transform the stillness in moving things,

Into sound? Do you know how?

The evening arrives in the exact phrases of a delicate year
That will not understand the participation that cannot be shared nor rehearsed,

As a cloud drifts over an occasional traffic of boats, elegant and sculptural, in the terribly direct way of being useful, as you recognize steps placed before you.

And you proceed to walk peacefully thru me as fate will always have it:
It happens in the impossible winter of silence and speed,
As you discipline in me the daybreak of your cloud-formed eyes
to see that I am seeing when you are somebody else
Who thinks he is more like me, sensitive, hazardous and still,
Thru the everywhere closing of those self-appointed doors within each of us,
Wishing to be at that place in this journey placed before the details
Of our particular beauty, where we can, in original ways of looking back at ourselves,

Think we must be what we do not know in the dark that surrounds us.
But I do not think. To be sure it is 1963 in New York and I'm transfixed
With your ability to dance with crutches on Second Avenue,
Or "turn on" and twist with authority at one of Frank's parties.
And I want you as a battleship pulls out of its green fogbank
With the meanings which you must negate.
And by contradiction in the negatives of your remarks,
I find out how much I love you.
Now that everything is qualified and warm
Under the surface of the sea, green like the wave, when it is blue,
Somewhere ahead when I become you, involved with
Your heaviness and speed, your contentions and nerves,
The way I'm taken further than the messages you send.

A Magic Realist Painting for Alan Marlowe

You were removing the nail polish from your toes
I was combing my hair looking like John Keats

You had blond hair and you were tall
I was looking for the toothpaste

The medicine cabinet does not contain the toothpaste
The medicine cabinet contains your face

I was looking for the toothpaste
You turned on the hot-running water

I went to get my Dorothy Lamour towel
You were removing the glitters from your chest

The bath was ready
You flushed the toilet

I took off my swimming trunks
You closed the door

---Gerard Malanga
Miami Beach, Florida  5 Dec 63

Special to the Floating Bear

It is necessary to go very fast and see "How the West Was Won" in Cinerama. It is the most beautiful movie in a while. It is also the very most fun since "Great Expectations." Essential to sit no further back than the 8th row of orchestra and must be centered. At that distance the 3 is so D that every fibre of being boggles. Go on a monday night or mid-week matinee so NO-body is in front of you at all. There must be no-one visible to you at all. Also, you must be alone.

About every 3 minutes or so there is a picture that kills. Such cherry trees (several times, I think). Once in the left panel.

And you must look a lot at the peripheries of the screen. We are prepared for this by the opening 20 minutes' dolly down to the Erie Canal, where everything is on edges (are they the same children that run occasionally at left? I never caught them running back to come forward again).

The shot of the fence of old white birch logs, also the thing with about 50 cannon—except that it happens twice—theo the very frightening explosion that starts in the right panel sort of makes up for that.

I can't remember being half so charmed, on the whole.

You must sit in the 7th row center (orchestra) if not closer.

One line: "The South never smiled after Shiloh."

The final shot (of people) has Debbie Reynolds in the central panel with her great-grandchildren (just grand, or great-great?) singing Greensleeves.

Then there is a non-people postlude that cannot fail to astonish us all. It would be unfair to say what happens, but, oh, the irony is insurmountable. And the final shot is squeegeie.

You must arrive on time, because the overture is amazing. Then, at the intermission, have a terribly short something (recommended) but come back early because the 2nd overture is EVEN BETTER.

Try not to look at the cast when it is being projected. There are surprising people doing surprising things. Be surprised. I'm sorry I mentioned anybody, but there are quite a few others...

Plot note: I bet the man is lying about the retarded value of that gold mine.

As to direction (several people, probably) there has been no film of comparable brilliance since "Marienbad." I kept moving forward.

5th row is fine, but center and no people in front of you.

Russ Tamblyn is particularly beautiful, has 5 lines and then George Peppard (I think) kills him a lot (twice, maybe).

It goes very very fast for many hours.

--John Herbert McDowell

October 17, 1962

Dear Floating Bear,

Just another word on the Rainer—Wakoski—Halprin—Morris—controversy. I haven't heard of any of them. Of course one right way well he hasn't heard of them. But it's frustrating picking up my copies of the Bear (incidentally to whom I never ever sent a postage stamp) and reading about people in the news—a controversy yet—who I never heard of.

Ah the old days when Sybil Shearer danced just for me.

Best regards,

M. Feldman

P. S. Frank O'Hara I heard of.
I don't know why I was asked to review one issue (the first) of a new magazine, but maybe it's because there are so few magazines around nowadays; a new one that is also regular (one hopes) is something of an event. O.K. This is a promising enterprise, with some of the old "standby" names on the contents page, plus some new names. The material varies in value and interest, but there is a kind of vitality in the issue which presages good things...there is a "direction," as it is said, which is another thing hard to find, not only now, but anytime, in a magazine, viz., there is such a thing as editing, an ability far removed from a collecting of "good" pieces, the collection then being printed and distributed. Signal has a feel to it, a kind of unity of intention(s).

To take the prose first. Fee Dawson has a strong and well-done piece from what I understand is a long work, Thread. It's the best thing of Fee's I've seen in a long time, everyone knows that his prose is unique in our time, his rapture in his own command of language is here controlled so that we don't get the "felicitous phrase" because, well, it's there, why not use it? I like the dryness here, a thin bitter dryness. David Kleinbard's prose loses me, it's from a novel, but I don't know who's who, or what's going on. He writes well, meticulous, somewhat affected, if I remember right, the early Sansom stories that appeared in the Partisan Review about '48 or '49 had this texture, and weave. I honestly don't see how a "novel" written in this manner could hold me though, too much dessert. Bob Basara, well, he's in Bill Burroughs' bag, I can't make it. Jimmy Waring writes like all amateurs write, dancers, actors, painters, you name it. His heart is in the right place, but what the hell? He says things like "tragedy has no sense of humor." O.K., I'll buy that. Sort of like Jacques Plante facing Koufax. Frank O'Hara's spoof is a lovely one, he's got the officialese down beautifully. Mike Rumaker's poem has to be included in with the prose, it's a nice little piece, but it ain't a poem.

What about the poems? Some very strong stuff here. LeRoi Jones has two handsome poems, one is extremely interesting, Three Modes of History and Culture, the structure of the first section uses a terse second "line" which slows the movement of the poem, and gives the third line (of each stanza) a rushing, headlong movement, slams it into the first line of the next stanza, then the process repeats itself. Jones is becoming a truly excellent poet, the other poem too, is fine. Joel Oppenheimer has two old poems in here, I saw them in M.S about five years ago, they're what you know you'll get from him, he's a pro. I like Diane Di Prima's Moth because I like how she handles a short line, and I don't feel any great attraction toward her long-lined poems, they get heavy, and self-consciously somber. This one is clean, terse and exact in its vocabulary. Frank O'Hara's got one of his "walking around" poems, like very witty gossip, fine by me, that's what Frank does. Frank Lima prints two incredibly strong poems, a very, very interesting young guy, the best of the "newer" voices around. Bill Merwin and John Wieners have two good poems, John particularly, his special gentle tone. I don't know what's happened to Dave
Meltzer, I really thought he was going to come on, but I haven't seen one thing by him that isn't just so-so, in three years. Must be California air. I've read the other poems with varying degrees of attention, some of them threw me, they're Poems, some of them, I just couldn't make it past the fifth or sixth line, but they're not really bad, they're all saying something that I don't care about, I guess, or they're not saying anything, tho Clive Matson has one good line, "even the roaches here don't eat what I leave them/they're so feeble" (two lines), then I lose him. But I'll try them again, I'm not putting them down, I just don't find my interest there, they are somewhere else, and not only haven't I been there, but they make where they've been a mystery. Levy and Irwin present poems which look like the things that a college literary review with a hip editor would print, like, the hell with the Phi Delta Xi! Last Year At Marienbad in words, ho-hum. Hart Crane's poem is interesting because it's history, the lines and measure are awkward as hell, but the vocabulary, imagery, and syntax prefigure the mature Crane, in fact, his (at sixteen!) sense of image and metaphor are mature already; it remained for him to say something he knew, deeply, and not invented, and to pick up on that mighty line of Marlowe's. But the presentation of the poem is an excellent service.

All in all, as I said, a strong first issue. The one thing I really don't like is the shortness of the prose pieces. It's not good for a long piece to get chopped up this way, particularly in a quarterly, but, till somebody comes along who's willing to lose a specific amount of money (say, 10 grand) on a weekly, Signal is, along with the few other indigent publications, cooking.

--Sorrentino

I Confess

TV rerun, w/ Anne Baxter & Montgomery Clift

Her flashing back to the love scene was an entrance into herself and a carrying outward of what she dearly possessed: him: revealing her sense of the himness of him within her aura of her existence; he and she were her experience and treasure, her secret and her world, all in her face and eyes. I have known women of her flesh: the grip on the arm reveals the warmth of the bone within; I know those kind of eyes. I know her devotion and memory she is in me like my youth.

--Fielding Dawson
ART CHRONICLE

KURT SCHWITTERS, at Galerie Chalette: The gallery has a French name, because it is run by Germans. The catalog costs two dollars, and the colors are inaccurate, but it says things from Schwitters' writings, which are very good to read. I went to the show three times. The pictures are different each time you look at them, and from different vantage points they change again. Always they are beautiful, serene, and right. Schwitters will never be re-born.

In Alameda, California, at Neptune Beach, I used to go into the fun house, and upstairs there were these boxes that had labels, like, "A Swimming Match" and you looked in through the little peep hole and saw a match floating in a cup of water. There were a lot of these boxes, but sometimes, the light was burned out, so when you looked in, you couldn't see much of anything. This latter kind was my favorite. ROBERT MORRIS' show, at the Green Gallery, was like the first kind of box, but I liked it. Everything was painted grey and seemed to weigh a lot. I wonder if Louise Nevelson knows about grey?

EDWARD GIOBBI, at the Contemporaries, showed big, put-together paintings incorporating small drawings with oil-on-canvas and oil-on-paper sections. Very pretty, out of Johns and Rauschenberg, but very well-done. Other paintings in part-expressionist, part-futurist style, were beautifully painted, often big toudos (not an Indian, a round picture).

RED CROOMS' beautiful people, at Tibor de Nagy, dance eat, meet, sit, think, walk, talk, ride, laugh, stand, or anything you like, if you like simple, lively, human things—and who doesn't? They do all this with the confidence of children and the serenity of bodhisattvas.

ALFONSO OSSORIO'S new works, at Cordier-Warren, rival the delicacies up the street at the Gaud (A) bakery at 1006 Madison—which is well worth a visit. Almost eschewing oil paints, the panels are concoctions of glass, marble, shells buttons, pearls, bones, knobs, and so on, which too often stagger the eye or the appetite with their profusion. The simpler pieces, which hold together, are often quite beautiful. But eat them one at a time.

SONIA DELAUNAY, at the Granville Gallery, makes, or made (is she alive and old?) lovely, simple, flat cubist pictures of squares and curves and dots, which reminds us that you really don't need much else—if you know your squares, curves, and dots. She does.(or did).

At the Feiner Gallery, PAT PASSLOF showed one or two pictures each from 1949 to date, including two handsome portraits and a sensitive drawing of folded hands. The touch is always sure, the pictures are always elegant in every way. Perhaps it is because they have so much that one finds oneself wanting more.

GEORGE DEEM, at Allan Stone, makes beautiful surfaces out of fake calligraphy, copies of pictures by English and Dutch old masters, and sometimes just of paint. I would like to see some wilder pictures, too, by George Deem, and hope that I will.
L. POONS dotty paintings, at the Green Gallery, have more bounce than the Andrews Sisters. Could this be wallpaper? I wanted to see the drawings. Dick Bellamy, please show us L. Poons drawings.

SUZI GABLIK's art-history collage—paintings at the Alan Gallery are civilized, witty, and charming, and reflect an increasing interest in refinement and sensitivity of means.

Sidney Janis showed many pictures by PIET MONDRIAN, exquisite chrysanthemums, exquisite plus-and-minus landscapes, exquisite balances, and a sketch for an exquisite boogie-woogie.

RICHARD DIEBENKORN, at Poindexter, a one-man round-up of Manet, Monet, Bonnard, Vuillard, Lautrec, etc., makes, mostly, very beautiful paintings, on an easel, of people, objects, and landscapes. Why not?

JOAN MIRO and JOSEPH ARTIGAS, at the Natisse, are showing ceramics of enormous invention and "taste," plus the biggest god-damned pot you ever saw.


---James Waring

NOTICES

The New York Poets Theatre is presenting three one-act plays at the New Bowery Theatre, Four St. Marks Place, New York City. The plays: Love's Labor, by Frank O'Hara, Murder Cake by Diane di Prima, and Three Travelers Watch a Sunrise by Wallace Stevens. The dates: Feb. 1, 15, 16; 21, 22, 23; 28, 29, Mar. 1; Mar. 6, 7, 8.

Signal No. 2 will be available February 25th & contains prose by poets: short stories by Joel Oppenheimer & Diane di Prima; and pieces of novels in progress by Kirby Doyle, Timothy Baum, Fielding Dawson; a selection of letters by the Earl of Rochester. Signal available for one dollar from Brownstone Press, 57 West 82, New York City.

New Handbook of Heaven, poems by Diane di Prima, available at the Paperbook Gallery, 399 6th Avenue. They also have many remained Evergreen Reviews of sterling worth, which will be unavailable when they run out here. Also, DON'T neglect to pick up a copy of the inimitable HASTY PAPERS, at the unprecedented price of 33¢! (The Hasties listed at 3 dollars). Paperbook has the entire stock, and Hasties contain work by Corso, Schuyler, O'Hara, Oppenheimer, Ginsberg, Ashbery, Olson, Kerouac, Kenward Elmslie, Wm. Carlos Williams, Barbara Guest, Peter Orlovsky, Robert Frank, Kenneth Koch...