



A. FREDRIC FRANKLYN

Best Always, Puerco

POEMS, 1962–1969 · A CRITICAL READING EDITION

EXTREMES AND MODERATIONS:
EARLY SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA POETRY

A TEXT-TECH PAPERS PROJECT

Extremes and Moderations

Early Southern California Poetry

Extremes and Moderations is a Text-Tech Papers project devoted to recovering poetry written, published, and circulated in Los Angeles and Southern California. Each volume brings neglected books and poems back into view through carefully prepared texts, archival images, biographical context, and a clear record of the surviving sources.

Edited by Brian Kim Stefans

The Text-Tech Papers | Los Angeles, 2026

Best Always, Puerco

A. Fredric Franklyn

1926–1989

CRITICAL READING EDITION

Edited by Brian Kim Stefans

Extremes and Moderations

EXTREMES AND MODERATIONS: EARLY SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA POETRY

EDITORIAL AND RIGHTS NOTE

This critical reading edition resets twenty-five verified poems from the source scans in the project archive. It is not a facsimile. The scans govern wording, lineation, stanza division, sequence, epigraphs, and indentation; unmistakable recognition debris has been removed. The unrecovered 1964 *Duende* book and 2011 posthumous collection prevent any claim to completeness.

The poems were published in the United States and Mexico between 1962 and 1969 and remain presumptively protected by copyright. The present estate administration has not been verified. Prepared for editorial, scholarly, and rights-clearance work.

Text and editorial apparatus © 2026 Brian Kim Stefans / Extremes and Moderations.
Underlying texts and archival images retain their original rights.

ARCHIVAL IMAGES

A short visual record

Center of Arts Sets Reading By 2 Poets

ENCINO — Two highly praised poets, Stanley Kiesel and A. Frederic Franklyn will give a program of their own work at the Valley Center of Arts, 5115 White Oak Ave., Saturday, 8:15 p.m. according to Nan Kathryn Fuchs, coordinator of the poetry series.

Stanley Kiesel, a teacher in the L.A. City School system, has been published in the "San Francisco Review," "Chicago Choice," "Coastlines," "Contact" and other magazines, as well as the anthology, "Borestone Mountain Poetry Awards."

A resident of North Hollywood, he will present a reading of poetry on KPFK in August. He is married and has two children.

Fred Franklyn is associate editor of "Trace Magazine," West Coast U.S. Representative of "El Corno Emplumada" and Los Angeles correspondent for "Echo Contemporario." He has poetry, literary criticism and fiction currently appearing in over twenty magazines. His home is Hollywood.

The Valley Center of Arts is a nonprofit, community organization. The public is invited to attend. There is a one dollar donation.

A Hollywood newspaper notice for Franklyn and Stanley Kiesel's 1964 Valley Center of Arts reading; the clipping's site chrome has been removed.

...SHEILA M. AND GEORGE HITCHCOCK and is our representative in Peru, where she currently lives with her young son Dayal. She has published widely and taken part in many other artistic forms ...GEORGE HITCHCOCK is one of the editors of THE SAN FRANCISCO REVIEW, recently turned into an annual in collaboration with NEW DIRECTIONS. He is an actor, stage director, and playwright, having won the 1960 Stanley Award in the latter field. His poetry has appeared in many magazines, including CHELSEA, NORTHWEST REVIEW, TROBAR, COASTLINES, etc., and he lives in California...ANTONIO SOUZA is a poet and prose writer who owns an art gallery in Mexico City where he shows some of the most interesting contemporary painting and sculpture...A. FREDRIC FRANKLYN is assistant editor of TRACE. He is 35, an ex-newspaper and commercial magazine man, whose serious literary efforts are becoming known through a series of publications in various "littles." He lives in Hollywood, California where he teaches dancing when money becomes more of a problem than usual...GARY SNYDER lives in a Buddhist monestary in Kyoto, Japan. His several books include *Rip Rap* and *Myths and Texts* (Corinth Press). His work has been published in magazines all over the world and he was included in Grove Press's Anthology

173

The 1963 El Corno Emplumado contributor note: assistant editor of Trace, former newspaper and commercial-magazine worker, Hollywood resident, and sometime dance teacher.

I've been asked often enough why. Why deal in this kind of vocabulary? Why focus on such people? Why put so much sex into the stories? But the point, or at least one of the points, of these stories is the exceptional lack of sexual content in them. That's not an accident.

Are you familiar with Charles Olson's "man in the world" idea; his action concept? There's an untitled poem by him in the first issue of *THE OUTSIDER* which focuses this distinction he makes between those who have the vitality to act and those who remain permanently frustrated in a kind of self imposed bondage. This poem is especially interesting because he's chosen homosexuality as the focus of his tension in the poem. Instead of handicapping the poem, it has made the focus explicit. I don't think Olson's idol (Pound) ever worked more precisely...my best to you both,

FREDRIC

Franklyn's letter on Olson, fiction, sexuality, and poetic action in El Corno Emplumado 7, July 1963.

A. Fredric Franklyn

BEST ALWAYS, PUERCO

now these uglinesses appear
so easily with
the years

the small crimes of being and
it's a tightness somewhere

*'... in the saclike dilation of the alimentary canal beyond the esophagus,
or gullet, in which the earlier stages of digestion take place.'*

attracting the razored regard
of beau monde snobs
not important what
they think but
it's there and it's
not pleasant not
nourishing

to
my self-esteem i don't know

why it wears so ill my
little share of
the amenities why
it's so stupidly difficult
to be personable or
to warm this avoirdupois
generating perspiration but not
warmth and my dirt-blond
head and these elbows
and hands and
this cyrano-appendage they

don't all come quite to-
gether no
music in any of these prides

340

Opening page of "Best Always, Puerco" in Trace 55, showing the spatial field reset in this edition.

INTRODUCTION

An international Los Angeles poet

A. Fredric Franklyn moved through several Los Angeles worlds that are usually remembered apart. He was a poet in the circle around James Boyer May's *Trace*, a member of the informal Los Angeles Incognoscenti workshop, a newspaper and commercial-magazine man, a sometime dance teacher, and an increasingly important film critic. He later crossed to the other side of the screen, appearing as a character actor in *Punishment Park*, *High Anxiety*, *The Fog*, and two decades of film and television. The poems gathered here belong to the years before that public screen career, but they already think like cinema: voices cut into one another, scenes jump, private memory collides with public spectacle, and the speaker keeps changing his distance from the role he is playing.

His most important connection beyond Los Angeles was *El Corno Emplumado* / *The Plumed Horn*. Founded in Mexico City in 1962 by Sergio Mondragón and Margaret Randall, it was a bilingual, inter-American little magazine rather than a conventional national review. It printed poetry, translations, letters, and visual art in Spanish and English; its representatives and contributors linked Mexico, the United States, Latin America, Europe, and Asia. Franklyn served as its West Coast United States representative and published six poems and a letter in its pages. Through *El Corno Emplumado*, the Vancouver Poetry Conference, and Larry Goodell's mimeographed *Duende*, he entered a wide exchange that included Philip Whalen, Charles Olson, Robert Creeley, Ron Bayes, and poets and artists in Mexico City. "Homunculus" gives the clearest inside view of that world: bilingual magazines, cafés, politics, poverty, friendship, and the precarious faith that someone elsewhere is reading.

Franklyn's forms change almost poem by poem. "Motion Pictures of the Past" is a long, bruising family monologue punctured by tenor-saxophone nonsense syllables. "The Party in the Hole in the Ground" moves between verse and prose as its social comedy turns nightmarish. "Ten Minutes" uses

numbered movements and musical directions; “Allah’s Plan” and “Seventh Gate” narrow into small page-silhouettes; “In/vention · Con/vention · Fecund” is a compact concrete poem. “In Round Sums” is typographic rather than shaped: the witness prints six flush-left lines, and the movement comes from the collision of uppercase assertions with lowercase phrases inside them. This edition therefore keeps its case pattern exactly but does not invent a visual outline that is absent from the source.

The six-page “Best Always, Puerco” is the fullest surviving display of Franklyn’s method. A self-conscious body, clothing and class manners, childhood, acting, food, bookstore work, Sir Thomas Browne’s *Hydriotaphia*, dictionary definitions, and chromosome formulas occupy a broken field of columns. The poem is funny, humiliating, learned, and unexpectedly exposed. Its original *Trace* pages lose small pieces at the bound gutter; here the text is reset in a reduced spatial field, with only strongly supported missing words supplied. The female and male chromosome signs are preserved as signs, not replaced by descriptions, and the editorial note records where the reset necessarily converts page geometry into reading order.

This edition brings together twenty-five verified poems published from 1962 through 1969. It includes every Franklyn poem located in the project’s complete runs of *Trace* and *Coastlines*, the newly recovered poems from three issues of *El Corno Emplumado / The Plumed Horn*, and “Part IV: Book Allargando” from Walter Lowenfels’s *In a Time of Revolution*. It preserves lineation, stanza breaks, indentation, eccentric capitals, prose passages, epigraphs, and concrete arrangements while correcting unmistakable recognition damage. Franklyn’s scarce 1964 *Duende* book *Virgules and Déjà Vu*, *The Soi-Distant Plaintiffs*, the archival typescript “Dimity Girl,” and the contents of the 2011 posthumous *Best Always, Puerco* remain unrecovered or unavailable for collation. The present book is consequently a critical reading edition of the verified poems in hand, not a claim to be a collected poems.

BIOGRAPHY

A. Fredric Franklyn, 1926–1989

Names, dates, and family record

A. Fredric Franklyn was born Aaron Frederic Franklyn in New York on October 15, 1926, and died in Los Angeles County on March 7, 1989. Screen databases also record the names Fred Franklyn, Frederic Franklyn, “Abe,” and “Frederic Flood Franklyn.” Contemporary literary sources usually print A. Fredric Franklyn, though *Trace* occasionally supplied Frederic or misspelled the name. A 1969 contributor note gives 1927 as his birth year; the later publisher’s biography and screen records give 1926, the date used here.

The publisher’s account prepared for the posthumous *Best Always, Puerco* says that Franklyn was a Depression-era child actor, that his parents were successful figures in avant-garde theatre, and that the family moved from New York to the West Coast. No independent theatrical credits or parents’ names were recovered in this pass, so those details remain attributed to the publisher rather than stated as settled fact. “Motion Pictures of the Past” and the title poem also present parents who acted and a father who worked around Hollywood studios, but the autobiographical voice of a poem is not by itself a civil record.

Franklyn married Megan Doherty in 1967. Screen-biography records say they divorced in 1983 and had one child, Erin Franklyn. Those family details are repeated cautiously because no marriage or divorce certificate was recovered. His poem “Homunculus” is dedicated to Meg and Sergio, almost certainly Megan Doherty and poet-editor Sergio Mondragón, and makes private affection part of the Mexico City literary network.

Work before and beside poetry

A contributor note in *El Corno Emplumado* in 1963 calls Franklyn a former newspaper and commercial-magazine man. It also says that, at thirty-five, he taught dancing when money became “more of a problem than usual.” These are unusually concrete glimpses of the working life behind the poems. A later anthology note says that by 1969 he was editorial director of the *International Press Bulletin* and film editor of *Trace*.

Franklyn lived in Hollywood during his most active years as a poet. A 1962 telephone-directory listing places A. Fredric Franklyn at 7142 Fountain Avenue, and magazine notes repeatedly identify Los Angeles or Hollywood as his home. The city is not merely biographical background: studios, office towers, freeways, apartment windows, film syntax, advertising language, and the social distance between metropolitan bodies organize much of his writing.

Trace and the Los Angeles Incognoscenti

Franklyn’s sustained literary home was *Trace*, the international quarterly edited in Los Angeles by James Boyer May. He was first listed as assistant editor and later as associate editor and film editor. From 1962 through the end of the decade he published poems, criticism, letters, fiction, and a long run of film essays. The poems include “Motion Pictures of the Past,” “The Party in the Hole in the Ground,” “Ten Minutes,” “Best Always, Puerco,” “The Opening Room,” “Homunculus,” and numerous short lyrics.

Within Los Angeles he belonged to the informal poetry workshop called the Incognoscenti, whose members included Alvaro Cardona-Hine, Gene Frumkin, Stanley Kiesel, and Keith Gunderson. *Trace* 65 grouped Franklyn’s “Homunculus” and “Pounds, Etc.” under the heading “The Los Angeles Incognoscenti.” The poems show what the label meant in practice: an urban, multilingual, internationally curious formation connected less by a manifesto than by workshops, magazines, readings, friendships, and shared attention to experimental form.

Franklyn’s role at *Trace* widened as his film writing developed. His essays included “The Means of Cinema,” “Devil Crone,” “The Cinematic Short Story Forms,” “The Hand in the Fist,” “The Casual Mind,” “The War Game,” “Deadlier than the Plot,” “Keeno to Cannes,” “Nisei Actress,” and other reports and reviews. The criticism is part of the same project as the poetry: both

ask how an arrangement of fragments, rhythms, bodies, and inherited forms makes meaning in time.

El Corno Emplumado / The Plumed Horn and Mexico City

Franklyn was the West Coast United States representative of *El Corno Emplumado / The Plumed Horn*, the bilingual Mexico City magazine founded by Sergio Mondragón and Margaret Randall. His name appears among its international representatives from the early 1960s onward. He supplied poems, letters, and apparently practical help in extending the magazine's network through California.

The magazine printed "Seventy-Proof" and "Appetites" in April 1963; "The Murdering Place" and "The Fiery Coffin" in July 1963; and the substantial "My Name" and "Wailing," for Philip Whalen, in July 1965. His 1963 letter to the editors, reprinted after the Vancouver Poetry Conference, considers Charles Olson, fiction, sexuality, and poetic action. The correspondence is evidence not only of publication but of Franklyn thinking in public about the ethics and ontology of writing.

"Homunculus" later returns to Mexico City: Paseo de la Reforma, Chapultepec Castle, cafés, bilingual magazines, politics, poverty, and the "aristocracy of the spirit." Its closing image of small magazines as one green, dying bloom of agave plants is an affectionate and unsentimental account of the community *El Corno* made possible.

Vancouver, *Duende*, and the mimeograph network

Franklyn attended the 1963 Vancouver Poetry Conference, the gathering organized by Warren Tallman around Charles Olson, Robert Duncan, Allen Ginsberg, Denise Levertov, Robert Creeley, Philip Whalen, and younger poets. Larry Goodell remembered meeting Franklyn there, spending time with him, Ron Bayes, and Whalen, and bringing that encounter back to New Mexico.

Goodell devoted the second issue of his new mimeographed magazine *Duende* to Franklyn. The result, *Virgules and Déjà Vu*, appeared at Placitas in 1964 as a twenty-four-page quarto, side-stapled booklet. Franklyn's project folder contains catalogue evidence but not a full copy. The issue's scarcity is the

central limit on the present edition: some poems may survive only there, and the exact relation between that booklet, “Book Allargando,” and later appearances cannot yet be collated.

The title poem “Best Always, Puerco” appeared in *Trace* in late 1964 as six spatial pages, and “Part IV: Book Allargando” was later reprinted in Walter Lowenfels’s anthology *In a Time of Revolution*. A contemporary note says the latter had appeared in *Necromancy Notebooks* and *Duende*. Franklyn’s work therefore belongs to the mimeograph revolution around the New American Poetry even though his Los Angeles base and later screen career placed him at an angle to its better-known genealogies.

Poetry, visual form, and the body

Franklyn’s poems are built from changes of register. Advertising copy becomes epigraph; dance steps become historical measure; zoology, theology, jazz, psychoanalysis, city gossip, and film montage are forced into the same nervous frame. Short works such as “Allah’s Plan” and “Seventh Gate” use narrowing silhouettes, while “In/vention · Con/vention · Fecund” turns divided words and exclamation marks into a compact concrete composition.

The six-page “Best Always, Puerco” is the most ambitious surviving example. Its columns interleave bodily shame and self-scrutiny with Sir Thomas Browne’s *Hydriotaphia*, dictionary definitions, chromosome notation, childhood and family memories, clothing, food, class codes, and the statement that the speaker became a bookstore clerk rather than an agricultural chemical engineer. The project scan loses small pieces at the bound gutter. This edition restores only readings supported by visible remnants and context and records the intervention in the textual note.

Several poems make mortality a material process rather than an abstract theme. Garbage, cats, bodies, appetites, ice floes, mountains, chromosomes, weather, and city infrastructure become temporary arrangements of energy. The result can be grotesque or comic, but it repeatedly arrives at a difficult tenderness: speech and the poem come from impermanence because no flesh is spared.

Film criticism and acting

By the early 1970s Franklyn had moved from writing about cinema to performing in it. Credited mainly as Fred Franklyn, he played James Daly, a defense attorney, in Peter Watkins's *Punishment Park* (1971), a particularly striking role for a poet concerned with political theatre and institutional speech. Television work followed, including appearances in *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, *Kojak*, *Baretta*, *Starsky & Hutch*, *The Rockford Files*, *The Incredible Hulk*, and *Gimme a Break!*

His film roles included Sam in *The Wild Party* (1975), the man from Cincinnati in Mel Brooks's *High Anxiety* (1977), a reporter in *The Big Fix* (1978), Ashcroft in John Carpenter's *The Fog* (1980), Mr. Gordon in *The Hearse* (1980), Herbert Thurston in *The Kidnapping of the President* (1980), and the elevator operator in *Unfaithfully Yours* (1984). He also appeared in the television films *Trapped Beneath the Sea* and *Mae West*. These were generally character parts, but together they form a second public career lasting almost two decades.

The transition does not mark a simple abandonment of poetry. Franklyn's poems already think through performance, costume, voice, cutting, sets, spectatorship, and the unstable relation between person and role. His acting credits make that preoccupation literal and return him, in a different capacity, to the film industry whose family mythology and professional structures he had examined in "Motion Pictures of the Past."

Later publication, death, and recovery

Franklyn's poetry appeared beyond *Trace* and *El Corno* in *Coastlines*, *Impetus*, *Let's Live*, *Necromancy Notebooks*, *The New York Quarterly*, and other little magazines; a 1964 contributor note claimed fiction, poetry, and reviews in more than twenty periodicals. The University of Kansas holds a one-page typescript, "Dimity Girl," among correspondence in the Ronald Johnson papers. That manuscript has not been examined and is not reset here.

Franklyn died in Los Angeles County at sixty-two. In 2011 CSF Publishing issued the posthumous *Best Always, Puerco*, described as a collection from the chaotic 1960s with sustained attention to the conquest of the Aztecs and personal survival. Only a catalogue page and truncated publisher biography were available to this project, so the 2011 contents could not be collated against

the present corpus.

The next research priorities are clear: locate *Virgules and Déjà Vu* and *The Soi-Distant Plaintiffs*; examine the 2011 book and the Kansas typescript; search the surviving *Trace*, *Duende*, *Necromancy Notebooks*, *New York Quarterly*, *Adam*, *Sir Knight*, and *Impetus* witnesses; and identify estate or family holdings. Franklyn's poetry is not merely an eccentric prelude to his acting. The recovered work establishes an experimental Los Angeles poet whose international connections, film intelligence, and formal risks deserve a fuller record.

CONTENTS

Archival Images	2
Introduction	7
Biography	9
Poems, 1962–1969	17
<i>Motion Pictures of the Past</i>	18
<i>In Round Sums</i>	24
<i>The Dense Processional</i>	25
<i>The Party in the Hole in the Ground</i>	26
<i>Seventy-Proof</i>	31
<i>Appetites</i>	33
<i>The Murdering Place</i>	35
<i>The Fiery Coffin</i>	37
<i>Ten Minutes</i>	40
<i>Allah's Plan</i>	43
<i>Seventh Gate</i>	44
<i>Habits</i>	45
<i>Best Always, Puerco</i>	46
<i>My Name</i>	52
<i>Wailing</i>	55
<i>The Opening Room</i>	59
<i>Count Miraculous Burns</i>	63
<i>Then</i>	64
<i>The Andromeda Deep</i>	65
<i>Long</i>	66
<i>The Certainties</i>	67
<i>Homunculus</i>	68
<i>Pounds, Etc.</i>	71
<i>In/vention · Con/vention · Fecund</i>	72
<i>Part IV: Book Allargando</i>	73

Bibliography	75
Textual Note	77

POEMS, 1962–1969

Reset from periodicals and one anthology

Motion Pictures of the Past

It has been a long time, I think,
Since anyone dared to say to my father,
'You little Jew boy!' He's probably forgotten,
I suppose.

People don't like to be reminded or acquainted.
That's understandable. Kaple is a drag.
And for what, a name like that? is his opinion.
Progress is simpler with a name like Carol.
That's our name now. Boodleybop! Bop bop!
(I play tenor sax.)

He isn't, like, ashamed; you dig?
My father says a person's entitled to change his name anyway,
If a person wants;
And what's the point of going in the teeth of people all the time
And always reminding everyone? he feels.
It's just sensible, he says;
This is a funny Business, he says.
I guess it is.
I guess he knows.

The reality of my father
Is a small, fat, grey-curved, waddly man;
An aging man. A Jewish man, too, of course;
With a big Semite nose that he and I inherit
From some long and forgotten march . . .
But it's hard to perceive the varieties of him
And the constant changing back and forth.
What you notice mostly, and what remains with you longest,
Is the anger; all that apparently untethered anger;
And that strangely undivided vanity!
These gang up in the oddest way
To make him look taller; I mean physically;
And almost noble . . . in a neurotic sort of way, I mean.

I mean, that's what the reality is,
More or less, when he's by himself.
For me it's another thing naturally.

I'm not positive what all actually I see him like.
But it has got something to do with fighting, I know.
I guess I see him as sort of brave.
And somehow Babylonian. In a suit.
I see him from the stories mostly
Which he used to tell us about how he grew up
And became successful,
When he was a child.

His wife, too, sees him another way of course;
Her own way; from her old hurts and her own needs.
I mean my mother! Ha.
I mean, his wife is my mother. Naturally, ha.
I'm probably confusing you, I bet . . .
But I mean his wife, who is of course my mother,
Probably sees him in a different way altogether
From anyone else.
I don't know exactly how though;
Because it is long and long
Since she gave up arguing with him
The question of her own identity.
I don't think she recollects that herself now.
I doubt she even thinks much about it.
Anymore. Oh . . .

Only I remember once they used to have some dilly fights!
And they don't know it, but he used to hit her,
And I remember him doing it to her,
Right in the old stomach. I remember. I remember good!
He did it with the same tightly balled fist
He used to use on my brother and I
When we were bad.
And I used to think, 'Boy, she's sure being bad!'
He gave it to her so hard . . .
And my brother and I could hear it late at night
(I used to think he probably didn't want to embarrass her)
Clear in the other room where we slept on the couch.
Mostly he did that to her
Account of when she found out some new woman
which he was fucking instead of her
And got sore at him. It's a little confusing, I know.

But she's a very quiet kind of person now;
Not at all sparkly and argumentative and pretty
Like I seem to remember her when they first had us,
My brother and I.

She's no trouble to him at all now, practically.

I imagine after enough of them,
She just got very tired of all those arguments
And all those punchings at night
And all those other women which he did it with too
Instead of her.

Like that, she always seems so tired now, all the time.

And doesn't say much.

Who knows what she is thinking about him?

And things? Maybe nothing.

Actually she keeps pretty busy.

She likes to do useful things and has taken up sketching now,

And draws flowers to hang on the walls,

And things like that; or her husband's portrait;

She draws everything so good you can tell what it is

In the picture. That must make her feel good.

And she is sort of his pal now. They are friends

And she is his little pal. He calls her Little People.

He says he likes little people, and pats her on the head

Like she was very small. I think she likes it.

They have made it up

Where she is, like, his little partner in the Industry.

They are a team:

He has to be around the studios with his clients all day

And comes home discouraged or inferior.

So she cheers him up, or whatever's needed;

And agrees with his observations about what's happening.

Or once in a while he comes home with exciting news;

Like when he found out the Bishop himself

Was going to marry this famous movie actress to her husband.

I was there at the house that time,

And it was hard, in a way,

For me to see why it was any importance to us

What was happening about a famous star's wedding

Or her religion.
I knew she was rich and celebrated,
But we didn't know her.
And my father was so enthused about it,
Like it was his dear friend, or his own religion
That she was getting married in,
Or something. So I kind of smilingly wondered why.
Of course my mother got the importance of it right away
And agreed completely with him
When my father got pissed off at me
And wouldn't let me stay for dinner
Like I'd been invited. Out you go, boy!
I didn't mind that.
Getting pissed off at and put out by him
Was nothing new to me
At this stage of the game. Boodleybop! Bop bop!

Well, as I say, we all see him differently.
I don't exactly know, too, what my brother or my sister thinks;
My sister was always too frightened to say anything.
But every year gets her husband to let
My father make out their income tax return
And other things like that he lets my father do for them.
They get along pretty good with him,
Except once in awhile when they don't do what he says
About their baby. (My father has definite ideas about raising it.)
About once a year my sister gets stubborn!
But she gets over it.

It's almost easier, in a way, to tell how the outsiders feel
About my father. Mostly they dislike him;
Except he's well-known in the Business
And they usually need him too much to show what they think.
They only don't like to submit to his personality
Because they are not married to him, I guess,
Or children of his. Bdbeebop!
And they sometimes say he is unkind.
But his venom always has a minimum acceptance:
He despises faggots, for instance;
And with almost Victorian constancy
Always brings home from the studios

The latest fag jokes.
Everybody has to laugh
At how good he imitates them.

In his way, he is a kind of power now . . .
By the force of circumstance . . .
I mean, among the higher paid flunkies
And the better known fringers in the Industry.
He was one of the early ‘commies,’ for instance,
Who didn’t get found out about, for some reason;
And who later exposed the other commies in the Industry
For Hedda Hopper’s column.

I mean, he was never really anything political, himself;
Not actually; and he still isn’t;
But just as it was once the thing in the Industry
To make a parlor profession of pink sentiments,
Today’s swinging thing is to expose them in others
Who were naive enough to mean them!
He grew up on Chicago’s South Side,
As he is fond of telling us;
Gangland, he likes to remind us.
He likes to talk a lot about that;
About how tough it was;
How tough he had it as a kid
Growing up in Chicago’s South Side.

And I guess it must have been tough, all right.
At least, it sure sounds like it,
Even from the somewhat hazy accounts he gives of it.
I’ve sometimes wondered about those accounts;
Why they are so vague, for instance . . .
The memories too painful, do you suppose?

Well . . .
I’m sure he was as tough as any of them
And gave as good as he had to take,
Him so big and hard!
I mean . . .
That’s right, he’s just a little guy;
Isn’t he?
Funny to forget like that. That’s what I mean . . .

I guess it's the way he tells it.
Makes you think he was one of the rugged guys.
I guess that's not very likely, huh?
Him so little and cerebral and fat
And Jewish
And like that.

Anyway, it has been a long time, I think,
Since anyone could tell him like that:
'Shag ass, Ickey!
Shag your little kike ass!'
Bdbeebop! Boodley boodley . . .

Publication. *Trace* 44 (1962), pp. 43–48.

In Round Sums

LIFE IS MORE EVIDENT OR UNWORTHY
THAN bold of those false HEARTS.
LESS than such pretense must SUFFER.
NOT that the brave believe MEANING
IS only how one does WITHOUT.
HEART OR PAIN ALWAYS IS BEAUTY.

Publication. *Trace* 46 (1962), p. 174.

Editorial note. The witness prints six flush-left lines. The form is typographic rather than shaped: uppercase assertions contain short lowercase phrases, and that case pattern is retained exactly.

The Dense Processional

Oh, de oom bah, Mowbi; rain.

Runny momb, if it demands; and more; whatever

Must have to be. Oh, bawa, bawa, bawa;

They have come to the table . . .

Rain! And then, sun then . . . That light is remembered, yes!

Tah ah boom; courting, we say; ah boom . . .

And fresh blossoms appear there.

Oh, Mowbi; are we to leave all this?

They are seen later, at the head of that gray advance;

An alien splendor. And Mbonga prays then with hatred . . .

Strange gods witness his displeasure and shame:

Oh, oh, de oom bah . . . from the lowering sky;

Tah ah boom; boom; ah boom;

These are the unforgiven . . . Yes!

And there is to be blood . . . Boom!

Mowbi; oh, Mowbi; are we to forgive all? Forgetting all?

Publication. *Trace* 46 (1962), p. 206.

The Party in the Hole in the Ground

Part I: The Guests

In the summer Mrs. Tranquility
gave these little parties
and, weather permitting,
they were always held in the garden;
'brunch' affairs some called them,
except that they were really too elaborate.

I came as Observer; I
was a satellite
without any fixed orbit,
circulating largely anonymously
among the tea-takers;
and though I held a cup or a glass of something,
for appearances don't you know, I
did not take tea with those others. Oh,
if you didn't know me, you might have thought
for all the world that I was free. . .

And then I saw that Sebastian Baseball, too,
was among those present
and for a while I hid in the solarium
trying to catch my breath;
it was a desperate surprise,
after all that loving,
to take tea together
like this; it was unnerving. God! Don't
you know.

But I recovered quickly
and resumed my role,
taking a more anxious interest
in the recent lotus eaters; and I
soon observed others in costume; it became apparent I was not the only actor.
Well, good, I thought; they can all share the burden.

Anne Boleyn came as Jayne Mansfield; that first Palladio had the effrontery to
appear as Gary Cooper; I was simply delighted; it was delicious! So much

depravity; and there were others: Death expressed itself as a kind of caring. I thought that in pointed bad taste. Ponchielli came as Faubus; that was absurd, of course, no logic. Logic! Oh, Lord. . .

Part II: At Table

Later I joined a few deep breathers at one of the larger tables for luncheon . . . brunch . . . whatever, some cold turkey and ham and the most marvelous potato salad, oh . . . my head aches. Some remark secured my attention and when I opened my mouth as if to say something of importance . . . to remind them all of . . . of another engagement perhaps . . . the stupidest . . . the oddest . . . well, the silliest thing happened. It occurred just as my lips parted: A . . . well, to be blunt . . . a fat, brown roach issued from my mouth,

spilled out and down into my plate;
leaped from my mouth, I believe,
because if it had simply crawled
from between my lips and
down my chin,
on to my neck
and intrepidly and brainlessly onward,
into my clothes, I
should have giggled and supposed that probably I
was dribbling,
some juicy morsel
let from between an insouciant smile
and distichous white teeth
setting off that dirt-brown life more awfully
for anyone looking at me. Oh, and
my hair is yellow, too.

But it was a cockroach,
that much is certain;
and it bolted directly outward
for a moment of free fall
and a soft landing in the turkey and ham;
and so I knew, right away,
what I had done, you see. All the same,
it was not the cruelest thing
nor the ugliest thing

that had ever issued from that orifice. I
was remarkably composed. I
fixed my hat, and someone near me
changed the subject. They were all
so nice . . . I hate to be hurt!

But how did that roach approach;
where did it come from
in the beginning? As I see it,
this is our main problem;
and the rest is History,
as the famous man said!

Sebastian told me
the dark man with the white turban
was a Guru, and Mrs. Tranquility
had keen hopes of bagging him
for Monday evenings. Sebastian
had stopped at our table for a minute. He said
the little cotton print thing I was wearing
was lovely. These little tables were everywhere
in Mrs. Tranquility's garden,
and there were Chinese lanterns
if it got dark;
everything had been done over
for the summer, and the leitmotif
was all Hawaiian. Sebastian whispered
something in my ear
and I didn't want to say I hadn't understood;
he was smiling and a moment later
he left us. Everyone
was circulating and mixing again.
And I wanted to meet this Guru.

Part III: The Grotto

I am ill! The conviction
that I am suffering
has always been with me;
but this is more serious . . .
From time to time I am suddenly

separated from those others;
only for a moment perhaps;
but it is at such times,
when I am unexpectedly isolated
and I have aimlessly and unthinkingly
wandered off to some secluded corner
of Mrs. Tranquility's garden,
that I seem to see
these things . . .

I remember
a blood-red waterfall! I am
certain there is a little grotto
tucked away in some obscure nook
of Mrs. Tranquility's garden;
and there is something else,
something waiting there
by prearrangement . . .
I saw the little cascade of vermilion there,
coming upon it quite by accident
and remaining only the briefest instant;
then there was a moment
of the most frightening silence
and I knew there was something watching,
something not quite nice, I think . . .
staring at me . . .
and then, all at once, the sounds,
hundreds of them and all so normal,
seemed to rush back in to fill the void
and I fled incontinently
until I heard voices. I . . . I
needed people again;
activity!
A few laughs . . .

Part IV: At Nightfall

The night is gathering
with very little ceremony and too much mystery
here in Mrs. Tranquility's garden;
nearly all the others

have removed to the house
and the lights are coming on there
as I watch,
cubing all the downstairs rooms,
and there are whirling shadows
across the curtains and blinds
and the strains of three-four harmonies
pouring their distraction across hardwood floors
and over Italian busts and hairstyles. I am
again almost alone out here.
This relentless sensuality
is an emptying process;
and I have sometimes thought,
if my life and every hope of happiness
depended upon my capacity
to parry one more conversational gambit,
the stones of all that narrow religion
might prevail for all of me
and mark my own grave with the rest. I . . . I
should just like to breathe!
Still, that activity fills the silences
that I hate I think most of all,
and I can't bear the thought
of remaining here by myself.
Sebastian will come! I just know it.

Publication. *Trace* 47 (1962), pp. 297–302.

Seventy-Proof

Pale green
leaves, curled
and brown at
— the edges;
deserted foot-
paths and blue-gray
rock hills under
yellow and mauve and violet
skies; and a soft,
cold wind anchoring
loss and empty-
ness to chilled brain alone
among trees and years.

A pigeon,
regarding this thief
of summer, waits an instant
to pardon overcoated
and hatless shame and
unsmiling lips
framed in white stubble;

pardons and,
like guilt,
takes wing
abruptly, peeling out
of autumn and Central Park;
rushing downtown to
check an office suite on
the sixty-ninth
floor of the Schenley
Building.

And the lake
behind it
ripples black
on gray; along
its banks, beneath
half-naked bushes

and trees, an old
topcoat, on the ground,
smells of urine and
whiskey and sleep
and long, long days
now far behind. . .

Publication. *El Corno Emplumado / The Plumed Horn* 6 (April 1963), pp. 126–127.

Appetites

*This package is sold by weight,
not by volume. Some settling
of contents may have occurred
during shipment and handling.*

—Anonymous

Blue-black night shapes,
heavy with dawn;
an hour
later, city
dirt against
pale, sunless blue.

Cat's feet on
concrete, solving
distances between
empire shapes lining
avenues of
silence and
wet gutters;
pad into
an Egyptian alley;
tunnel among
iron pails where
death's banquet, wet
with sauces, heavy
with calories and bones,
is turned over by
absolutely white,
writhing shapes with
mustard-tip mouths which
know what to make
of our societies;

know,
at the floor of
our greatness, what

is best and
enduring within our
projects; will
be here growing
wings and eyes
after us;

attending
the feasts we
despise
and leave when
their darker, older cousins,
earth-chained, are
turning over slowly
the yellow garbage our
ministers will
lower into
our graves.

Publication. *El Corno Emplumado / The Plumed Horn* 6 (April 1963), pp. 127–128.

The Murdering Place

A fat o-
doriferous bitch
 lifts a
 cracked nose
 (too long a
watering place for
infinitely smaller
life-expressions)
 a foot from
the carpet, oh. . .

to observe a-
nother kind of
 (familiar)
 fat bitch plug
a length of cord
 into
 the source,
it is known by now,
 of a high,
keening wail, oh. . .

There will be
a fancy quarter hour
of activity here,
of movement and
unproductive energies
 in flux;
and in the end it
 will all be
 as be-
fore, oh. . .

the cracked nose
 again
 upon
 the floor
and the rug and
closed windows and

doors and
kitchen smells will
all seem the
same, oh. . .
and night
comes on
again and they
will enter-
tain the
longer
sleep to-
gether.
Bye-bye, bitches, oh. . .
long apart you'll be.

Publication. *El Corno Emplumado / The Plumed Horn* 7 (July 1963), pp. 113–114.

The Fiery Coffin

Borne on the water softener
and pine shavings,
the words come, untagged;
and we steal our poem again
from the cosmos.

Minuetting clothes-hangers,
erecting closets and cities
against the dying;
we think our knee-joints
(which let us run,
with knife and fork,
after lesser things)
were meant for attitudes
of prayer; to express gratitude
and the timid hope
of a suitable continuance
for student games
and appetites.
Beneath the rivers
of a more full-throated life,
in the subterranean ice floes,
the lawless prejudice lurks;
to avenge the impudence
of a universal disregard
for our green and copper projects;
then stupid death
has meaning, dignity,
apparently;
we can speak of it
as a mercy.

A scarecrow conceit
(that we, alone,
live with the knowledge
of limitless surrender)
inspires the odd devotion
our institutions and mannequins

exact from us.

But, fear, like this,
 of impermanence, change,
is built into mountains,
into the grass and winds,
flavoring the seed and marrow
of every life-expression;
every last hammer and brain
 abandons its connection,
terminates its own span,
goes at last willingly, tired,
 to the cold ground.

Below
the tide-worn pillars
 of the ancient bridges;
 beyond
the stained glass
 of Western Buddhas;
unrecovered
by archeology expeditions
into remote Peruvian fastnesses;
unrecovered
 through the bunting and crepe
around power artifacts;
 at the bottom of things,
where the stone and dirt are,
we get our time:

Nothing endures,
 say the oceans;
nothing continues,
 say the black stars.

From that,
speech comes;
 from that,
the poem comes
 and the savior.
Savior!
No flesh

is spared.
That's like saying,
salvator.

Publication. *El Corno Emplumado / The Plumed Horn* 7 (July 1963), pp. 114–116.

Ten Minutes

1 . . .

BEAT
and funneled wind
emerging
pausing
regaining
something raw
and unprotected
expanding

2 . . .

pulse
heart in my wrist
pause

3 . . .

wind-shaken things
something royal
not quite thunder
then. . .
crescendo!
rattle of glass
whipped paper
rifled awning
shower of pillaged leaves
protesting screech
of shackled iron
(EAT)
ransacking hearts

4 . . .

glissando
BEAT
pulse
blood in my head

eyes open
muted roar
oncoming
not yet wrenched
from another context
distant Damons
approaching quickly
ON THE MOUTH OF WINDS

5 . . .

pianissimo
(stretto)
something alien
electing
from weather
higher octaves
secretly
screaming
in the upper registers
forwarding
night's cold
chrysalis
of controlled anger
in the belly
of jeopardy

6 . . .

staccato
nerve-endings
unwilling
descending scales
spilling fear
pulse
in my ear

7 . . .

allegretto
sound

of time's voyager
entering
barometer's
rising
pulse
andantino
climbing lungs
of unchained force
shocking planets

8 . . .

andante
pulse
BEAT
pause
parturition!

9 . . .

larghetto
blood rhythms
weather
and dynamics
of stumbling man
time's creature
time's invention
time's humor
casually recalled
time-pardoned
from oblivion's
SIGNATURE. . .

Publication. *Trace* 48 (1963), pp. 47–49.

Allah's Plan

Not
time's dunce
has contrived
the appetites
that have buried him
in feverish gluts and
apparently endless rounds;
so who shall pay the score
for pleasure's coffin
if even fools
partake of
mercy's
draft?

Publication. *Trace* 50 (1963), p. 185.

Seventh Gate

They
came for
him in the
morning after
breakfast when his wife
too had more years than could
effectively contend with
the directness of the
methods used by these
collectors of
departing
human
souls.

Publication. *Trace* 52 (1964), p. 96.

Habits

Long days grinding
 into seas
Arthur legends horning
 in the line
 of an old bird's flight
 where
 it is a dirty feather
against
 an orange sun.
There will be calendars, suns,
seas,
islands,
legends;
 a brightness
 the arc
 of your comb.

Publication. *Coastlines* 21–22 (1964), p. 55.

Best Always, Puerco

now these uglinesses appear
so easily with
the years
the small crimes of being and
it's a tightness somewhere

"... in the saclike dilation of the alimentary canal beyond the esophagus, or gullet, in which the earlier stages of digestion take place."

attracting the razored regard
of beau monde snobs
not important what
they think but
it's there and it's
not pleasant not
nourishing

to
my self-esteem i don't know
why it wears so ill my
little share of
the amenities why
it's so stupidly difficult
to be personable or
to warm this avoirdupois
generating perspiration but not
warmth and my dirt-blond
head and these elbows
and hands and
this cyrano-appendage they
don't all come quite to-
gether no
music in any of these prides
in the larger sizes (when we
think of a morning
drinker why
is it we
always picture a gentle

man or
an unused woman)

From the Hydriotaphia of Sir Thomas Browne: "We present not these as any strange sight or spectacle unknown to your eyes, who have beheld the best of Urnes, and noblest variety of Ashes; Who are your self no slender master of Antiquities, and can daily command the view of so many Imperiall faces; Which raiseth your thoughts unto old things, and consideration of times before you,"

before (adv.):
In time past;
previously.
(prep.):
In front of;
ahead of.
(conj.):
Sooner than;
rather than.

"when even living men were Antiquities; when the living might exceed the dead,"

atom (n.):
(From L., fr. Gr.
atomos, — uncut,
indivisible,
as n., atom,
fr. a — not plus
tomos — cut.)

"and to depart this world, could not be properly said, to go unto the greater number."

vigintillion:
1000 novemdecillions
(fr. & u. s. systems)
1,000,000 novemdecillions
(british and german systems)

"And so run up your thoughts upon the ancient of dayes, the Antiquaries truest object, unto whom the eldest parcels are young,"

$$X + X = \text{♀}$$

$$X + Y = \text{♂}$$

||

$$\text{♂} + \text{♀} = \infty$$

“and earth it self an Infant; and without Aegyptian account makes but small noise in thousands.”

even the wishes as
seasonal constructs seem
as divided in their displace-
ment as those
exquisite styles the
clothes we cannot wear
because

well we

are not beautiful the

manner we are not to ape on
summer streets the
long after-
noons that bring us
no sign that bring us

to this and we

are fragmented

into many worlds
a softness and then

in too many

worlds and then

and then as quick the
look that hurts so
unreasonably and

we keep it

why

a candyball of pain in
that saclike dilation in-

to the chest

knowing

many worlds and
knowing

saclike dilations a

pointer pointing us
on to
a great deal more of
this

kissing audrey was like pulling the strength out and leaving a sweetness that didn't cover anything. she was two years older than me. she had those powerful legs of all the women in that part of the family. they all had these straight legs with soft curves and painfully clean dimpled knees. anna was always crying. she was younger and developed these same fantastic legs when she began to be a girl. and another girl cousin disappeared. even her name is gone. i sometimes think we all went to school together. but i think we couldn't have. just we should have. i thought i was going to be an actor. my father was. and my mother. but they said be an agricultural chemical engineer. that's how much they knew about me — i'm a bookstore clerk.

the narrow young
heads and
bodies the ones they
make clothes for who
look so right they
make the hand
itch for
a pencil to
with that way
of standing of
looking to
capture that dominion with

the will
itch with and
because that is the ideal because
excellent and
beautiful and
i seem to add these uglinesses
adding manners and pounds
they aren't important
i mean these slicing glances
haberdashery clerks but i
but they do
their cutting and i

well i
am not proof
against them not
very big at all a
 small knowledge of
 wines and set a
 nice table but the
 careful style a little
 evident i know like
just too much even
now on the fork and
taking liq-
uids milk and water and even
colas open-
ly with meals which
is a mistake the
 head of hair that
 no amount of shaping is
 ever going to barber and
it all seems so small but
i guess it isn't i
guess it isn't all that
small i
 think i'd like so much to
 have half the graces and
 generosity of spirit that
 i have feet and i wait
for that to come of
course be-
tween angers i
wait
 for that
 wait
 for it to
 begin happening some-
time
massaging
 (these lengths) to
 get from one

self-betrayal to
the next and they
wouldn't be supportable
otherwise well one
 thing anyway well
 one measured thing the
narrow ties i too
can wear these and they
look good in the way
they should when i
can find a collar deep enough i
(if i can) to close a-
round the thickness of
my throat my
 it's filthy if i
 couldn't have that write
con hierro
en lingotes
cabezon testarudo
conejillo de indias that's
 "The Rapidity of
 Sleep" that's
 you

Publication. *Trace* 55 (Winter 1964), pp. 340–345.

Editorial note. The source is spatial and partly lost at the bound gutter. Columns are reset in reading order; a small number of supplied line-openings are documented in the textual note.

My Name

That symptomatic death
 beneath the skin
 or the pelt
 or the bark,
the same decay at work
shaming all things,
drawing life to the pew,
robbing the flesh of tone,
not sparing mountains
 and flaying the breathers,
finds every man alone
 at least once;

and some,
 more drenched with life
 than those who vote
 for courage,
 will see,
not farther,
not more bravely,
 but more
 that shore
 in the eye,
beyond unreason's flow,
 and know
 that what we have,
 the moment and the sickness
 for which we care,
not the strongest
 nor even the best,
 but what we are,
is what was and is
 at least possible
 after the armed protests
 and the unarmed raging
 which alter nothing;

so that some,

believing in the distances
that we come,
recall the damp sheets
of night's face
like dark earth,
a buried grace,
when sleep or acts alike
betray intent.

Not the bed,
the grave
shall bend to islands
where time unwinds offshore
and on a distant bar
dissolving spirits play
so wildly once more;

dream intact a moment
of light
and wind,
of men and then
fall out
one by one to stand
apart
from good or evil;
and set this voice
an instant's brightness
up there
where worlds,
reaching at something higher,
catch fire

beyond the little space
of narrow crazed intent
where we lie;
a breaking rhythm
hurling oceans
at the last parting strands
of the mind's oldness

whose depths,
accepting multitudes

where the life force ends,
are
no heaven
but the final tightness
running itself out,
a memory of another place
and then the weight
is gone,
no other strength
between the mind and its sea.

The racing child image,
catching at the light,
has passed concern
and, running on,
outdistanced life.

Publication. *El Corno Emplumado / The Plumed Horn* 15 (July 1965), pp. 85–87.

Wailing

for Philip Whalen

philip san francisco
is larger than the world
 i think often
of gorilla street and third
avenue i remember
 day
 was starting to rose
a voice
arose in smoke
 and there were flights
 and rooms
a girl in the glass
of tall and uncurtained windows
 on the stove
 i made
a salad and i
 remember
 with such pleasure
conversation valleys
 sloping
into lifting hills
 into the plan
we went to the street
 philip san francisco
 san ran-proustian-cisco
 philip marcel proust
 would have
 lost it
 would have
 left it
 would have
been arrested too
 by jazz no
 what
i mean is san

francisco
for some of us

philip san francisco
philip san francisco
is my
is your enemy
is my enemy?
(the curse
of composition
is haste

i'm loathe to caricature
but/so
philip san francisco
is like geopolitics someday
san francisco
will assume
the world
is not like
san francisco.

yet
philip

philip

your enemy
is not time
but place
but place
is like time philip
san francisco
is like time
time
is
a woman at the
lower left hand corner
of a falling window
in a rising house

what i mean philip
is that words
um. . .
words

are not the
enemy
uh. . .
enemy
either
what is
killing us
um. . .
me
is this indecision
is the enemy
enemy
within a fortnight you
will have verified
hills
these hills
are place my
animosity
is discussion thus
plausibly place
concentrates our
energies in
alburquerque ken
said where
is the energy
yes where. . . .
is good phillip
san
francisco
is a place
is a place but i
think there
there
were moments
it's difficult to breathe
moments
of generosity
marcel
wyndham said

was a snob

Like san francisco philip
these are little things
they're fine probably
for television
but white
is a place
white or grey
white is a clouded place
you saw that

open in
his hand

where
are you now where
where
our sympathy becomes
the concern

a place
a time
when we were
and thought of that

you have hung someday well
from the whale
in each of us
i stand
among those watery pyramids

Publication. *El Corno Emplumado / The Plumed Horn* 15 (July 1965), pp. 87–90.

The Opening Room

now it is this revelation of
time as patterns of
hen tracks in the dust or
seed in the earth and winds or
winds as space and
space as time and
we cut these habits of
growth or
belief and
conceive our archeologies
of duration

E.P.: "Rhythm is a form cut into TIME, as a design, is determined space." (the ABC...)

a design existing out-
side our possibilities but
exciting a response

upon the unlighted corners and
edges of which our
brief brain pans implode them-
selves in love and
and anger because
because we die and we
know it and

take these pavements and
hallways we first discover to
be the permanent expression of
feeling and
perception but
they are not they
have not always
been here

Paul & Percival Goodman: "Of the man-made things, the works of engineering and architecture and town plan are the heaviest and biggest part of what we experience. They lie underneath, they loom around, as the prepared place of our activity. Economically, they have the greatest amount of past

human labor frozen into them, as streets and highways, houses and bridges, and physical plant. . . . A child accepts the man-made background itself as the inevitable nature of things; he does not realize that somebody once drew some lines on a piece of paper who might have drawn otherwise.” (Communitas)

where are your shoes she said. i said they're in the hospital you know. oh she said moved to comment because her eyes were at the window. and will they always be invalids now she teased. her hands hid in leather. i've taken to beaches anyway i said. it's not so awful as you might suppose. in my mind her lips sank beneath waves. oh i know you'll do well at it she said. her lips above water made smiles. i believe in you. we all do. your belief is finding my way i think i said aloud. but i felt only a japanese humility. it was a civilization. like her gloves.

so there are moments in the truths of others that catch us naked and open and without maps

because we stand in their ground? or because they lie in ours? or because they have used our name and

so we do it and belief comes or it doesn't and or relief or it doesn't but it's what we do what we do

Gauguin wrote, in 1891 (half-crazed to flee those oldest Western lineaments, and cutting the first space of his own vision in southern seas): “I am no longer conscious of days and hours, of good and evil. The happiness is so strange at times that it suppresses the very conception of it. I only know that all is good, because all is beautiful.” (Noa Noa)

here we have entered here
we have engaged a
life and made
love
making sons from
fear
made love i
mean we have made it where
there wasn't any be-
fore the hostile act that
instinctualized it we
make it make it
love
fear

where it has not been be-
fore us we
make it in the world and
put it aside like
fire and good round
lies that
that carry away be-
lief on a
new world
pony

Lawrence: “. . . I in amaze see in the sky before me, a woman I did not know I loved, but there she goes, and her beauty hurts my heart; I follow her down the night, begging her not to depart.” (Aware)

my head in
your deep

Mikhail Kuzmin: “Through the steam rising from the tea I see Mount Fujiyama, a golden volcano against a yellow sky. How strangely does a saucer contract a landscape!” (Fujiyama in a Saucer)

all the girls appearing
to our appetites ripe in
their variety and
piquance
wanton and poised
in small narrow
shoes this

way this
waiting acts
upon our size and
our patience and
the soft girls and
their scissored looks are
there forever in
the half-light
wanted and poisoned

oh baby oh baby down
these odors and

alleys our
quarrels and
need lead
us
home

Publication. *Trace* 57 (1965), pp. 163–166.

Count Miraculous Burns

The balled-fisted grasp
paraded
of demon-events
packaged in transparent plastic
is the arcane-tasting
sweetmeat
exalted
above iron, air and water
for the thick-necked marvelous
and their agents.

Cell by cell
the youth of skin explodes
into the grayer tones
of spines
and hernias;
asleep, dreaming under stones,
we are discovered, unearthed
and mounted
by longer-lived hypotheses
than our own.

Publication. *Trace* 60 (1966), p. 58.

Then

these two-sweet lines,
like the juice
of ripe pears
in honey,
are spoken once
from brimming cups
that, fragmented
and long dry then,
are set aside.

So
the words echo
hollow
in the ribs
and skulls
of those
so briefly-alive
and now
mundane
dead.

Publication. *Trace* 60 (1966), p. 59.

The Andromeda Deep

Long
before the lion death
appears
there is no imprint
i can leave on this age.
To oblige
the wormwood of yesterday,
we must behave
in the manner
of more distant tomorrows.

We
are the puppet guests
of unimaginable crises
and the dancing hosts
of spastic impulses.
The dispeptic chapters
of our psilanthropic
attitudes and postures
spill with false counsel
from trembling lips.

Publication. *Trace* 60 (1966), p. 60.

Long

ago i came like confidence
with Perseus on my arm
thinking
to fill this alien sky
with aureorean light,
bearing the crown
of Oxford's stoney regard
and remembering fear
in rows of trenches.

We
enact the senseless frenzy
of bacteria;
our antics are fair game
for wonder-drug cynics.

Publication. *Trace* 60 (1966), p. 61.

The Certainties

Systems of ethics
pass over so many shapes:
what the ear beholds
in nature and orchestra;
what the eye discerns in blacks.

In yellows and browns,
the dead seasons are scattered
over lakes and walks;
empty benches seem wider
in the last few devotions.

Publication. *Trace* 64 (1967), p. 6.

Homunculus

(para Meg y Sergio . . . con afición, amigos de me corazón)

(Valedictory:

Tortured de Sadists,
whose livers are blocks of ice
falling into the sun,
we murdered life
to make life
 and drew small poems
 from its blood. . .)

Here/among friends
the two dreams crossed —
 the sharp, dissonant notes
 of a northern instrument
 and the gentler, feathered touch
 of a southern purpose —
and we became a new creature
in the universe:

 Wounded again with life,
 the bird of skies
 lights the night's eyes
 and in this moment
 we are free,
 weightless . . .
 to soar above the earth,
 to be the miracles
 and the phantom appetites
 in pursuit of flesh . . .
passing down corridors
 of quiet:

Along cobbled streets
in the old section of the city
with plaster and stone walls,
 an aristocracy of the spirit.
Paseo de la Reforma
is the avenue of history and trees

and two-peso cabs.

At its end,
Chapultepec Castle
leans against a pillar of clouds.

On a side street, a block away,
between
two apartment houses:
a vacant lot
with the refuse
of both buildings . . .
old mattresses,
rusted cans,
broken glass,
ancient upholstery,
mildewed rugs . . .
and in this rubble,
at home here,
two or three
hundred rats.

This is a Mexican city
with a history of Aztec and French emperors
and the murals of Diego Rivera
behind its poverty and wealth.

The poets
and painters
meet in the cafes and Chapultepec Park
to argue politics
and eat something.

They are dead
and they don't know it.
This is their brief glory:
their superstitious belief
in life
/their redeeming energy
to make poems.

Small,
Spanish and bi-lingual magazines
print their faith

/their belief that others
read and understand.

 Their music/the single blooming
 and the long, green dying
 of agave plants.

 (Envoi:
 It is not their value
 which is here measured
 with this grief,
 but their future . . .
 their unrescued
 possibilities . . .)

Publication. *Trace* 65 (Summer 1967), pp. 224–226.

Pounds, Etc.

Mine, about 60 or 100 years.

Aspera. (Good Kansas.)

Ad astra per nostrum. (The wheeling planets.)

Male.

And the earth's six-and-a-half sextillion pounds
rise to meet my dancing foot.

It's a long way up and down, too,
each time (as did Oedipus get him
a shepherd too many!)

and a hard and continual meeting
for us both. Between us,
we're about 8000 miles thick
and moving 18 1/2 miles per second.

And only one of us
(the one on the short end of time, too!)
is doing the soul searching
for all that mass and weight and speed.

It's away up and away down,
among the galaxies,
as I move it . . .
everything I can feel.

Publication. *Trace* 65 (Summer 1967), p. 227.

In/vention · Con/vention · Fecund

IN/
FECUND VENTION
CON/
The hotlight/of nascent folly
restructuringng wet images
is a !green and !fiery/ dying

Publication. *Trace* 65 (Summer 1967), p. 293.

Editorial note. The doubled “ng” in “restructuringng” is present in the printed witness and is retained.

Part IV: Book Allargando

I have been
a child
in the world
while
the destinies of races
passed in exaggerated revue,
the buffoons and sergeants
of office and conviction
(cha cha cha!) obeying
of occult
and clownish tempos
(bomp bomp, boom boom boom).

“Have you
seen the bossa nova?”

“Have I
seen the bossa nova!”

“Yeah, didn’t
see the bossa nova?”

“Yes, I’ve
seen the bossa nova!”

If there is no one
on the fence post
you will
look away.

One two three, one two three; one
two three,
one
two
three.

Shimmy!

If there is no one
in the window
you will
reproduce.

And one and two, and three and four;
and one and two,
and three and four.

This iron
is pitted,
this passing
is bitter.
Slow slow, quick quick slow;
slow slow,
tan-
go
close.

Publication. Walter Lowenfels, ed., *In a Time of Revolution: Poems from Our Third World* (Random House, 1969), pp. 35–36.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books, periodicals, accounts, and archival leads

Works by A. Fredric Franklyn

- Franklyn, A. Fredric. "Motion Pictures of the Past." *Trace* 44 (1962): 43–48.
- . "In Round Sums" and "The Dense Processional." *Trace* 46 (1962): 174, 206.
- . "The Party in the Hole in the Ground." *Trace* 47 (1962): 297–302.
- . "Seventy-Proof" and "Appetites." *El Corno Emplumado / The Plumed Horn* 6 (April 1963): 126–128.
- . "The Murdering Place" and "The Fiery Coffin." *El Corno Emplumado / The Plumed Horn* 7 (July 1963): 113–116.
- . "Ten Minutes." *Trace* 48 (1963): 47–49.
- . "Allah's Plan." *Trace* 50 (1963): 185.
- . "Seventh Gate." *Trace* 52 (1964): 96.
- . "Habits." *Coastlines* 21–22 (1964): 55.
- . *Virgules and Déjà Vu*. Duende 2. Placitas, New Mexico: Duende Press, 1964. Twenty-four pages; not recovered.
- . *The Soi-Distant Plaintiffs*. 1964. Catalogue record located; copy and full imprint not recovered.
- . "Best Always, Puerco." *Trace* 55 (Winter 1964): 340–345.
- . "My Name" and "Wailing." *El Corno Emplumado / The Plumed Horn* 15 (July 1965): 85–90.
- . "The Opening Room." *Trace* 57 (1965): 163–166.
- . "Count Miraculous Burns," "Then," "The Andromeda Deep," and "Long." *Trace* 60 (1966): 58–61.
- . "The Certainties." *Trace* 64 (1967): 6.
- . "Homunculus," "Pounds, Etc.," and "In/vention · Con/vention · Fecund." *Trace* 65 (Summer 1967): 224–227, 293.

———. “Part IV: Book Allargando.” In Walter Lowenfels, ed., *In a Time of Revolution: Poems from Our Third World*. New York: Random House, 1969, 35–36.

———. *Best Always, Puerco*. CSF Publishing, 2011. Posthumous collection; contents not recovered for collation.

Works about Franklyn and research leads

Goodell, Larry. “Musing Backwards to Duende.” 3 *Dimensional Poetry*, 2018. First-person account of meeting Franklyn at Vancouver and publishing *Virgules and Déjà Vu*.

Goodell, Larry. “The Publishing of Louis Zukofsky’s *Found Objects* ... Vancouver Poetry Conference—1963.” *lotsa larry goodell*, June 16, 2024.

Tharp, Shannon. “Duende: The Real Heart of What’s Going On.” *Post45*, 2023.

Granary Books. “Duende Press Collection.” Catalogue description of Larry Goodell’s archive and the fourteen poet-dedicated issues.

University of Arizona Poetry Center. Rare Book Holdings. Catalogue entry for Franklyn’s *Virgules and Déjà Vu*.

University of Kansas, Kenneth Spencer Research Library. Ronald Johnson papers, MS 66, box 14, folder 14f. Typescript “Dimity Girl,” one page.

“Center of Arts Sets Reading by 2 Poets.” *Los Angeles Evening Citizen News*, July 9, 1964, 11.

IMDb. “Fred Franklyn—Biography.” Birth name, dates, spouse, child, and screen credits; consulted August 25, 2026.

TV Guide. “Fred Franklyn: Credits.” Film and television credits; consulted August 25, 2026.

Plex. “Fred Franklyn.” Screen filmography; consulted August 25, 2026.

TEXTUAL NOTE

Witnesses, lineation, and visual form

The reading text was collated against complete project scans of *Trace* 44, 46–48, 50, 52, 55, 57, 60, 64, and 65; *El Corno Emplumado* 6, 7, and 15; *Coastlines* 21–22; and the Franklyn pages in *In a Time of Revolution*. Every poem begins on a new page. Source indents are proportionally reduced to the Green text block; unavoidable line wraps return to the base verse margin.

Clear OCR failures were corrected from the page image: “anohoring” to “anchoring,” “peeHng” to “peeling,” “qord” to “cord,” “laotivity” to “activity,” “clotheslhangers” to “clothes-hangers,” “mainnequins” to “mannequins,” “higner” to “higher,” and similar damage. Odd but visible readings—including “gorilla street,” “psilanthropic,” the dedication’s “me corazón,” and “restructuringng”—remain. “In Round Sums” follows its source as six flush-left lines; its organizing feature is the contrast between uppercase statements and lowercase inset phrases, not a shaped page outline.

“Best Always, Puerco” is fully reset, not reproduced as page images. The witness places several textual streams in facing columns and loses letters at the bound gutter. Reading order follows the visible left-to-right progression; restorations such as “powerful,” “Anna,” “disappeared,” “together,” and “agricultural chemical engineer” are supported by visible remnants and syntax. More conjectural spacing is represented conservatively. The quotations from Sir Thomas Browne, dictionary matter, and chromosome formulas are differentiated typographically.

“The Party in the Hole in the Ground” alternates verse and prose; its prose passages are reset as paragraphs without changing their words. “The Opening Room” distinguishes quoted authorities from Franklyn’s verse and prose. Internal divisions in “Ten Minutes” and “The Party in the Hole in the Ground” are formatted as subsection headings rather than duplicate poem titles.

The poem “Part IV: Book Allargando” is presented under its complete anthology heading and is not mislabeled as a full *Book Allargando*. Franklyn’s prose fiction and film criticism are excluded from the poetry sequence but documented in the biography. “Root, Stem and Blossom,” a hybrid film essay with haiku-like passages, is likewise excluded pending fuller genre study.

This edition does not silently reproduce the contents of the unrecovered *Virgules and Déjà Vu*, *The Soi-Distant Plaintiffs*, “Dimity Girl,” or the 2011 *Best Always, Puerco*. A future revision should add those witnesses, inspect other magazines named in contributor

notes, and contact the estate before public distribution.

COLOPHON

Production record

Designed and edited in Los Angeles in 2026 for Extremes and Moderations: Early Southern California Poetry. Six by nine inches; mirrored 66/48-point margins; EB Garamond; cream page field; Green live-cover system.

The text-free cover art was generated for this edition as an original mid-century print-and-collage abstraction and then centered in the standard Green image panel. All cover lettering remains live production typography. The archival section is limited to four selected, cropped images.

Source scans, downloaded research pages, archival crops, cover art, fonts, build code, source manifest, change log, and QA renders are preserved in the poet folder. No newly acquired research asset has been discarded.