



LOUISE GUMP

Poems

THE 1931 BOOK AND LATER POEMS

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.

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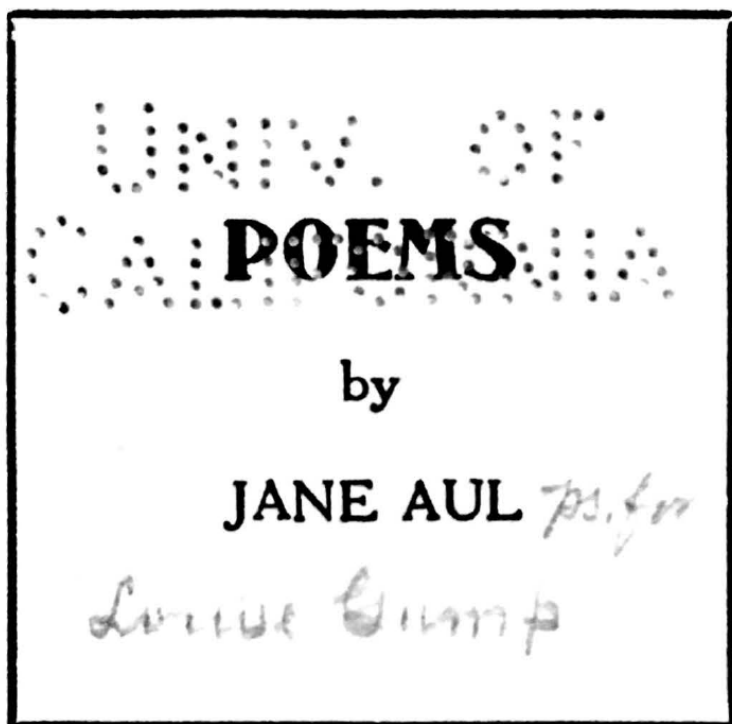
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ARCHIVAL IMAGES

Portrait, title page, and the notice that joins Louise Gump to Jane Aul



Louise Gump in a Long Beach school yearbook; the local source does not identify the photographer.



*Title page of *Poems* by Jane Aul (1931), with the handwritten identification "Louise Gump."*

If you were lucky enough to be tuned in to KFOX last Friday night at 8 o'clock, you had the treat of hearing two poems written by Louise Gambill, who has been hiding her light under the pen name of Jane Aul.

Long Beach Independent, January 30, 1949: Louise Gambill had "been hiding her light under the pen name of Jane Aul."

INTRODUCTION

A young modernist in motion

A book under another name

Louise Gump wrote as if poems could dance. At nineteen, using the name Jane Aul, she published *Poems*, a small book of waves, wind, reeds, broken music, flashing colors, and abrupt emotional turns. The style makes more sense once the rest of her life comes into view: she taught creative and East Indian dance in Los Angeles, read poems on Long Beach radio, led the Poetry Society of Southern California, and later owned an art gallery. A 1949 newspaper item finally said plainly what the scattered record had obscured—Jane Aul was Louise Gump.

Modernism by ear and movement

The book moves by ear as much as by argument. “Moderne” spins through discords and a prism of color; “Art Moderne” finds bodies and faces inside a tangle of angles; the three chants turn wind, trees, and reeds into repeated gestures. Elsewhere the sea carries half-heard songs, the lotus becomes both refuge and threat, and dropping water keeps time. The poems are youthful, sometimes theatrical, and often unusually alert to the point where sound becomes motion.

One writer, several public names

Her changing names nearly broke that career into unrelated pieces. She was Louise Gump in family and travel records, Jane Aul in *Poems* and the dance studio, Louise Gambill in radio and literary notices, and Louise Rosha after a later marriage. This edition puts the pieces back together. It resets all seventeen poems from the 1931 book and the two witty newspaper verses she published in 1957. The order, stanza divisions, italics, repeated dashes, and meaningful indentation follow the surviving sources; only unmistakable typographical damage has been repaired.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Poet, dancer, radio reader, arts organizer

Long Beach beginnings

Louise Gump was born in Kansas City, Missouri, on May 31, 1911, the daughter of Frederick Gump and Lucy Mabel Settle Gump. The family had settled in Long Beach by 1920 and remained there through the 1930s. Passenger records catch Louise in the wider world just before her first book: in May 1929 she returned from Europe with her parents aboard the *George Washington*, giving 241 Pine Avenue in Long Beach as the family address; in June 1930 she and her mother returned from Honolulu aboard the *City of Los Angeles*. During that Hawaiian trip the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* printed “Lotus” by Jane Aul, listed 1520 Pacific Avenue in Long Beach, and announced that book rights were reserved. It is the earliest poem by her presently recovered.

The first book

In 1931 Columbia Art Studios of Los Angeles issued *Poems by Jane Aul*. The book contains seventeen poems and appears to have been her only substantial collection. A handwritten identification on the surviving title page gives the author as Louise Gump, but the decisive public link arrived in 1949, when a Long Beach newspaper said that Louise Gambill had been “hiding her light under the pen name of Jane Aul.” The 1931 “Lotus” revises the newspaper text, changing “sun’s beams” to “sun’s beam,” evidence that the book was prepared from more than a simple clipping or reprint.

Jane Aul and the dance studio

Jane Aul was also the name attached to her work in dance. In January 1934 the *Los Angeles Times* introduced Aul as a newcomer to Los Angeles and a teacher of creative and East Indian dancing who planned to give lessons in pupils' homes. Her method stressed personal interpretation and the "creative coloring of movement" instead of copying a fixed performance. That description makes the musical and bodily vocabulary of *Poems*—broken time, chants, swaying, blur, rhythm, repeated motion—look less like borrowed modernist decoration and more like part of the same working imagination.

Louise Gambill in public

On April 10, 1946, Louise Gump married Lieutenant William H. Gambill Jr., a Naval Reserve dental officer, at the Naval Chapel on Terminal Island. As Louise Gambill she remained visible in Long Beach social and literary life. A 1948 notice placed her among the hosts of a local luncheon. In January 1949 KFOX broadcast two of her poems; their titles have not yet been recovered. She later became president of the Poetry Society of Southern California for 1956–57, the organization's fortieth year. Two 1957 *Los Angeles Times* "Verseside" columns printed her light verse: one warns that calories hide in every "drop and dribble," while the other reduces the virtues of walking to the distance "from car to curb."

The Ruth St. Denis lead

The New York Public Library's Ruth St. Denis papers contain a folder of poetry by Louise Gambill. Its presence is especially suggestive because St. Denis stood at the center of American modern dance, but the manuscripts have not yet been examined and cannot be counted as published or securely attributed titles here. The folder remains the strongest known lead for poetry beyond the 1931 book, the two newspaper verses, and the two unidentified radio poems.

The later trail

In September 1961 Louise married Jagjit S. Rosha in San Francisco. A 1962 record identifies Louise Gamble Rosha as an art-gallery owner; “Gamble” is probably an indexing variant of Gambill. No reliable date or place of death has been established, and an online Social Security record for a different Louise Gambill, born in 1909, does not belong to her. What survives is enough to show one continuous artistic life divided by catalogues and newspapers among four names: Louise Gump, Jane Aul, Louise Gambill, and Louise Rosha.

EDITORIAL NOTE AND SOURCES

Text, typography, and the limits of the surviving record

This edition prints the complete text of *Poems* in its original order. Every stanza break has been checked against the 1931 scan; a turn of the printed page is not treated as a new stanza. Source italics are retained, including the emphasized word *form* in “Art Moderne.” The offset refrains in “Tree Chant” and “Dropping Water” remain indented, and the two 1957 newspaper poems retain their fully italic setting. Long verse lines reflow only when the six-by-nine page requires it; any continuation is given a hanging indent so that it cannot be mistaken for a new line.

1. The evident misprint “Chashing” is corrected to “Clashing” in “Art Moderne.”
2. The evident misprint “ecstasy” is corrected to “ecstasy” in “Moderne” and “Treasure Chest.”
3. A missing word space is restored after the comma in “Minor Note.”
4. Doubled dashes in “Moderne,” “Afterglow,” and “Undertone” are retained; their surrounding word spaces are closed to match the series style.
5. The two 1957 verses had no supplied titles; bracketed first-line titles are used here.
6. Book title: Jane Aul [Louise Gump], *Poems* (Los Angeles: Columbia Art Studios, 1931).
7. Later witnesses: the “Verseside” column of the *Los Angeles Times*, November 20 and December 13, 1957.

BOOK | *POEMS*

The complete 1931 collection, first published as Jane Aul

Gump's only substantial book is printed here in full and in its original sequence.

Sea Dreams

Deep enchanting undertone
Of the undulating sea,
Roll mysteries of other lands
Over the seas to me.

Let each bounding, breaking wave
Make imagery in foam,
Of oriental fantasies
Or iceland's polar home.

Waft across a wordless song
Or some tuneless melody,
From shores of distant, lonely Crete
Or ancient Galilee.

Visions of transparency
Thoughts of crystal hues,
Forming, fading, like the dream
Of some sleeping Muse.

Publication. *Poems* (Columbia Art Studios, 1931), pp. 4–5.

Moderne

Weird harmony,
Broken time,
Strange rhythm,
Oblique rhyme,

Frozen pedal,
Deliberate blur,
Daring discords—
Bellow, stir,

Haunting runs—
No melody——
Maddening sevenths
In ecstasy,

Blinding darts
Of a spinning prism—
Vibrant, chanting
Modernism!

Publication. *Poems* (Columbia Art Studios, 1931), pp. 6–7.

Text. The printed “ecstasy” is corrected to “ecstasy”; the doubled dash after “No melody” is retained.

Art Moderne

Stark, bold,
Unbelievable,
Angles, angles,
Inconceivable,

Clashing colors'
Bold embrace;
Chaotic line,
Frenzied pace.

Mad design,
Amazing tangle,—
Variations
Of an angle.

Gazing long
At the maze,
Appears—*form*
From out the haze.

A tigress in
A lazy mood—
A laughing woman
In the nude,

A party drinking
To the host,
A beggar girl
Dipping toast,—

These appear
From intricacy,
In marvelous
Simplicity!

Publication. *Poems* (Columbia Art Studios, 1931), pp. 8–10.

Text. The evident “Chashing” is corrected to “Clashing”; the source italics on “form” are retained.

Lotus

O, sacred blossom of the lotus
Open your soft white petals,
Where the crystal dew settles,
And let me go into your heart,
Deep into that enchanted part.
O, sacred blossom of the lotus.

O, cruel blossom of the lotus
When once within your fatal power,
All fades, save you, O lovely flower.
And life is just a lazy dream,
Idle, as a sun's beam.
O, cruel blossom of the lotus.

O, treacherous flower of the lotus
A dreamy languor takes one's soul,
And the toll of bells, is a distant toll,
And the stars above seem farther away,
When under the palling lotus' sway.
O, treacherous flower of the lotus.

O, poisonous flower of the lotus
Take from me all sense of duty,
Bind me in your charm-like beauty.
Let my life be one of dreams,
Languorous hours, and idle schemes.
O, poisonous flower of the lotus.

O, murderous flower of the lotus
Drain from me each drop of life,
Kill me with your caressing knife.
I do not hate you, devil-flower,
I even love this ghastly hour.
O, murderous flower of the lotus.

Publication. *Poems* (Columbia Art Studios, 1931), pp. 11–12. Earlier version: *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, July 3, 1930, p. 6.

Text. The 1930 newspaper reads “sun’s beams”; the 1931 book’s revised singular “sun’s beam” is used here.

Treasure Chest

My treasure chest is filled with life—
Love, thoughts, tears and strife.

Back in a little darkened part
I find a quivering broken heart.

Here vibrates a living thrill,
A lovely thing! It won't be still.

In ecstasy I find a kiss
A bit of well remembered bliss.

A memory lingers very near,
And clinging to its side—a tear.

A fragrance permeates the chest—
And there's a sorrow, gone to rest.

Publication. *Poems* (Columbia Art Studios, 1931), p. 13.

Text. The printed “ecstasy” is corrected to “ecstasy.”

Afterglow

Like a wave, dashed high,
Settling back into the sea;
Or a caged bird, frightened,
That is suddenly set free;
Like a white hot iron
Cooled to a moderate heat;
Or a weary heart
That no longer wills to beat,
Like a sunbeam that is
Lost within the dark;—
Is passion that has lost
That sweet essential spark——
The afterglow, of love.

Publication. *Poems* (Columbia Art Studios, 1931), p. 14.

Text. The doubled terminal dash in “That sweet essential spark” is retained.

Wind Chant

I am the wind
Moving—blowing
Never to stop
Going—going.
I am the wind
Restless—lonely,
Shifting—changing
Changing—only.
Wild—unseen
Invisible—
Breath of earth
Divisible.
I am the wind
Moving—blowing,
Never to cease
Going—going.

Publication. *Poems* (Columbia Art Studios, 1931), p. 15.

Text. The source is continuous; no stanza break is inserted after its opening four lines.

Tree Chant

I am a tree
Standing—swaying,
I am a tree
Whispering—praying,
 To the elements.

I am a tree
Mighty—tall,
I am a tree
To winds I call,
 In a monotone.

Woody by the east wind
Lashed by the west wind
Kissed by the south wind
Cursed by the north wind

I am a tree
Swaying only—
I am a tree
Lonely, lonely.

Publication. *Poems* (Columbia Art Studios, 1931), pp. 16–17.

Text. The two short refrains retain their source indentation.

Reed Chant

I am a reed
By cool winds swayed.
I am a reed
In swamp-land laid.

In gentle winds
I sway and swoon,
The breeze for my dance
Hums me a tune.

I am a reed
By cool winds stirred.
I am a reed
Unheard—unheard.

Publication. *Poems* (Columbia Art Studios, 1931), p. 18.

I Shall Forget You

Yes—I—shall—forget—you.
As sun evaporates the dew,
Your memory shall fade away.
No single souvenir shall stay.
No strain of music shall remind
Me of the love I'd hoped to find.
No fragrance shall recall one word
That to me my dreams had stirred.

No drooping moon that hangs above,
Shall bring me thoughts of my dead love.
No lights that shimmer on the bay,
Can my forgotten memories sway.
Nor will the calm and tranquil sea,
Bring thoughts of you again to me.
No more your glance can chill me through,
Because I have forgotten you.

Publication. *Poems* (Columbia Art Studios, 1931), p. 19.

Minor Note

Plaintive, sobbing, little note,
Born of minor key—
I hear you in the restless leaves,
And in the chant of a lonely sea,

Or slipping through the hollow throat
Of an aged organ's tone,
To hide among some rafters,
And die a-moaning, all alone.

Always searching, always seeking
For your other half,
For the part of you that's happy,
For the part that lilts a laugh,

But all your subtle thrill and charm
Lies in seeking, not in finding.
In being just your sad lone self
About the heart entwining.

So look not little mournful note,
For that other part—
To make your lovely self complete,
Would break my listening heart!

Publication. *Poems* (Columbia Art Studios, 1931), pp. 20–21.

Text. A missing word space after the comma in “a-moaning, all alone” is restored.

Death Musings

I lie in my coffin
Life is behind me
Like still waters
Of a placid sea.

No great sorrow
Came my way.
Life's even tenor
Held steady sway.

No thrilling joys
Were ever mine.
Life was limp
Like new-made wine.

No love ever came
To conquer my heart.
No anguish was mine
That my lover should part

No husband had I
To bring grief or bliss.
No tumult, no trials,
No smothering kiss.

No pool of tears,
No lilting laughs,
No throbbing heart,
O'er my memory wafts.

Now in my grave
I pray none mourns,
For this pale flower,
This flower without thorns.

Publication. *Poems* (Columbia Art Studios, 1931), pp. 22–24.

Death Musing

I lie in my coffin
Life is behind me,
Like turbulent waters
Of a stormy sea.

Sorrows were mine
I shed many tears.
My sad eyes mirrored
Their many fears.

And joy did come
To fill my heart,
Life's gayer tunes
Sang from the start.

Love I've known
Times of bliss.
A lover's arms,
His smothering kiss.

Smiles I've known,
Tears I've shed,
Love was mine,
My heart has bled!

Now in my grave
Let no one mourn,
For this vivid flower
This flower, with a thorn.

Publication. *Poems* (Columbia Art Studios, 1931), pp. 25–26.

Farewell

Farewell!
I did not love you,
And I know you loved me not.
For though you gave me loving,
Love, I never got!

Publication. *Poems* (Columbia Art Studios, 1931), p. 27.

Solitude

Upon the beach I love to roam,
By the sea the sand the foam,
In tune with only the surging sea,
Singing its song to its self and to me.

Some may say I walk alone
Upon the beach to laugh or moan.
Some may say that I am mad,
Or that I'm lonely, tired, or sad.

But no, no, I am none of these.
I come by some strange call of the seas.
I come because of an inward urge.
I come to watch the wild waves surge.

I come with my one friend, Solitude.
Here we forget the multitude.
We think only that we are free,
And live in accord with the boundless sea.

Publication. *Poems* (Columbia Art Studios, 1931), pp. 28–29.

Undertone

I am alone—
An undertone——
Plunged, in a
Surging mass
Of overtone.
I do not know
Whether I should
Laugh or moan——
I am alone
An undertone.

Publication. *Poems* (Columbia Art Studios, 1931), p. 30.

Text. The source's centered lines are reset flush left without inventing indentation; its doubled dashes are retained.

Dropping Water

What sound is lovelier to hear,
What sound is sweeter to the ear,
Than the sound of water dropping
From a fall, never stopping.
 Never ceasing.

Falling with notes clear and slow,
Streaming with hollow sound so low,
Sometimes chatting a merry rhyme,
Sometimes calling a plaintive chime.
 That haunts me.

Then with a simple two-note tone,
It gives a sound so all alone,
As if 'twas to itself it talked,
As if the roaring stream it mocked.
 In its simplicity.

To make this silvery, shimmering tune,
Meant for the sky, the stars, the moon,
Each note plays its little part,
Flows more surely to my heart.
 That loves it so.

It tells the secrets of the wood.
O that someone understood,
Understood its fairy song,
Undeciphered for so long.
 But not knowing, makes it dearer.

Never ending, always flowing,
Never stopping, ever going,
Never silent, always singing,
Never quiet, ever ringing.
 Continuous as time.

Publication. *Poems* (Columbia Art Studios, 1931), pp. 31–32.

Text. Each fifth-line refrain retains its source indentation.

LATER POEMS

Two untitled light verses published as Louise Gambill

[Calories Are a Sneaky Lot]

*Calories are a sneaky lot,
They hide in every drop
and dribble;
They cuddle into every
crumb
And lurk in every nibble.*

Publication. *Los Angeles Times*, November 20, 1957, p. 2.

Text. The source prints the verse in italics; its offset continuation lines are retained.

[In Praise of Walking?]

In praise of walking?

It's just a blurb!

Enough for me

From car to curb.

Publication. *Los Angeles Times*, December 13, 1957, p. 2.

Text. The source prints the verse in italics.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books, newspapers, and the principal archival lead

Aul, Jane [Louise Gump]. *Poems*. Los Angeles: Columbia Art Studios, 1931.

Aul, Jane. "Lotus." *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, July 3, 1930, p. 6.

"Dancing Will Be Taught in Home." *Los Angeles Times*, January 21, 1934, p. 51.

Long Beach *Independent*, January 30, 1949, p. 20. Notice identifying Jane Aul as Louise Gambill's pen name.

"Southland Poetry Group Elects Slate of Officers." *Los Angeles Times*, July 20, 1956, p. 62.

"Verseside." *Los Angeles Times*, November 20 and December 13, 1957, p. 2.

New York Public Library. Ruth St. Denis papers, series II.C, Poetry, folder 318: Gambill, Louise.

United States census schedules, 1920, 1930, 1940, and 1950; passenger manifests for the *George Washington* (1929) and *City of Los Angeles* (1930); California marriage indexes, 1946 and 1961.

COLOPHON

Extremes and Moderations production record

Reset from the complete 1931 scan and two 1957 newspaper witnesses in August 2026. Designed in EB Garamond at six by nine inches with mirrored margins, running heads, outside folios, linked contents, PDF bookmarks, and poem-level publication notes. The abstract cover uses Stanton Macdonald-Wright's *The Arrival*, centered and cropped only to the live image panel. All poem text is live, searchable, and newly typeset.

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