

by

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EUCALYPTUS BOOKS

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photo and design Jerry Katz

AN IMPERFECT LOVER

JERRY KATZ



1995

an autonomy to equal our knowledge  
a love to equal our badness

fragments the 70' s

LOOSENING UP THE PEBBLES (PETALS) ON THE BEACH

tear my hair connection  
women are mysterious connections  
to the open sea

hurt me into love hurt me into poetry

harbor harder

where is my meaning my love my place of grace?

the freshness of air and light (on a white page)  
and the cool lines (of death) from my ball point  
pen are a field of ecstasy sudden cool air in the  
nostrils creates longing

somehow I can't maintain the moment of glory  
can't progress

longings that are not translatable and the presence  
of someone is the mix of paradise

## 2 Short Poems

an impala leaping  
at what appears to be sky  
at dusk  
in the center of the steering wheel  
so far off  
is the dream sexual?

rusted saws hanging in rows

like candles a woman' s legs  
below a short blue dress

tropical rainstorm  
I love you sweet  
grey green orange  
garbage

Ego Rock

(ending to a long poem never written)

chickie waiting for a bus on a grey day

tree trunk like a woman' s sinewy leg

what is the life of a spider?

life without ego pain

what is Eagle Rock?

and incongruous name



fragments of early 80' s

watching her run  
balls cock anus

a drink with Ornette Coleman  
Five Spot Summer 1960  
one o'clock once again  
late Japanese singers

portrait of a young L.A. poet 1982  
greasy locks  
chocolate eyes  
cute ears

we both kneel in a garden  
she leans over and gnaws  
the long stemmed rose buds  
then bends down further  
and gnashes her teeth in the dirt  
this makes me hard  
and I enter her from behind

it' s raining hair    a woman' s face  
grey dress    a flash of thigh

the first time I smoked marijuana  
I didn' t get high until I left the house  
where I had just turned on - standing  
strangely energized in the dirt lot next  
door. as the experience as yet had no  
dimensions, I actually felt the possibility  
of total freedom. driving down the steep  
hill, I feared the car would buck out onto  
the highway. but as soon as I put my foot  
to the brake, it stopped like a feather.

this was a graph of the gap in my nervous  
system between thought and action. the  
neurological gap from here to there.

when I got home I tried to relate what had  
happened (was happening) to my wife. but  
she frowned. and I realized we were never  
going to communicate sexually.

I smoked dope at least every night (without exception) for almost 7 years. one and a half or two thinly rolled joints was enough to keep me high all night and frequently halfway into the next day.

Marijuana is not a minor drug. once it gets into you it can totally transform you.

whatever problems I had that was not genetic began in the womb. I' ve probably always had trouble discharging my central nervous system. I didn' t feel free or I wasn' t happy. I thought the problem was existential. but as soon as I started turning on, I realized that it (the separation) was physical.

although dope initially involved a good deal of upbeat pop insouciance and freakiness (everything was a sensual turn on and a continuously changing mind trip\* actually being stoned was always total rapport (I shut up inside). a key to perceptual magic, sensuality, and bliss. when it ceased to be that , i.e., when I began to resist it, I quit.

I had timelessness. (I actually said to myself, I' m happy) but it was in a suspended state. because of the trap that was underneath.

people keep filling in because they can' t face the void. they think the void is emptiness but it' s really their own

separation (addiction). once you' ve bridged the gap  
you' re vulnerable to everything that isn' t silence  
or what  
you want to hear.

\*dope more than Duchamp made the art of the 60' s.

written early 80' s

Mini Mall Essay  
Competition And Conformity

if Freud's the 'death instinct' is true for the individual then it's true for society as well. if the individual is mortal then society is mortal too.

the more extended the external the greater the absurdity. the linear aspect of this is time. which is just an invention of the mind.

the idea that existence precedes essence is wrong. existence and essence are the same. the separation comes from trying to give it a name. only in analysis is there a separation. this is the Heisenbergian trap (gap).

content and form are just two ways of talking about the same thing. define each other. just as substance and motion define each other re energy.

my problem isn't just to function in a freer non linear universe. my problem is ego in a competitive and abusive world.

written early 80's

the Navy changed my life because I couldn' t just walk away from it. the confinement without for the first time corresponded to the confinement within.

so I had a little bit more freedom for a while afterwards.

marriage changed my life because I couldn' t just walk away from it. even though there were no outer bonds I felt the commitment was binding because of the confinement within.

I' ve needed an outer dilemma (pain) like the earaches I had as a small boy to equal an inner one. so that my suffering could be apprehended by others.

the confinement was there in the beginning. (in the womb) in the years since I haven' t been able to walk away from that either.



**POEM**

bamboo

hearts

bird bills

poltergeist

black blossoms

Dream Gypsy

passage of the moon

frozen lake shining

Perfumed Paradise

just a dab of woodspice under the arm pits  
of my t-shirt to make the connection.

I linger by the open medicine cabinet after  
brushing my teeth. sniffing the fragrance.  
it moves me, transports me, tells me something  
I' d forgotten, never known,

(that)

a kiss is nothing. perfect. ethereal.

at the performances I smell their scented oils as  
they walk by, emanating vibes.

how to satisfy the need right there on the spot  
at the external source.

otherwise why create and image?

these young girls I want to love consummately  
for just a moment. and then be done.

Moon River

Dick' s house was a spinoff on Sheila' s

the navy a bridge between summer and autumn

the 'New Wave' films of the early 60' s were  
nostalgic  
for a time in my life already gone

John was barely a replacement for Barry

Russ fulfilled the role I might earlier have played  
with Wallace

LSD was not as important as marijuana

if you think that paradise is anything more than  
just an enhanced state of being all right. you' re  
wrong

The Rosemary And The Dome

my skin is warm  
love sensuality something  
ethereal in the night  
where we kiss in the glare  
of cheap colored lights  
her dress soft inside  
a thick black coat.

it' s only too clear  
where love comes from  
what tempers and fingers  
the sharpness of desire.

the cold bitter air of darkness  
coming from the ocean  
the madness of the estranged  
that gives the warmth to home.

hangnail moon  
tall silhouetted palm  
lavender and yellow  
velvety dusk

no meaning without motion  
so soul without depth death

fragile the nuances of romance  
the balance between thought  
feeling and perception  
between flow and possession

coalesce

## 2 Pieces

I need help funny how thinking this  
can give you power

what has changed? nothing it's still the same  
the desire to disintegrate to be whole the desire  
to love and fuck a woman the desire to do my  
work without interference

why am I making a cripple out of myself?  
if I do without I want if I have I feel trapped

first it's done to you then you do it to yourself  
they keep ripping open the scar

sitting in the sun I look at the shadow of my leg  
and think of woman's thigh

it's real  
a projection of my inner needs at any given time  
that's where my mate lies can I ever find a mate  
outside myself without separation?

I'm tempted to say it's women now who have to  
wage a battle for cosmic identify men no longer  
have to do that just be specific but it's not  
true

it's just that an eclipse must take place as the trad  
roles melt into one another

heterosexuality is bisexuality to some extent or  
there would be no attraction the self and the other  
strangeness and identification at the same time

men and women are different but not that different

where there' s a thin line between attraction and  
paranoia love a stranger

2

there can be no motion without keeping the  
unknown alive (what we adhere to is merely the  
mask that keeps the thing together)

every new (real) experience involves the unexpected  
demands a response from here to there desire  
and love where they really meet

move only when necessary once you have to choose  
it' s already too late the separation has already  
taken place

the trick is to not make the conditioned move  
until you' re free get to the secret meaning before  
the obvious

not the illusion but the aura which is real however  
ethereal

most of the first piece and all of the second were  
composed of fragments from the late 70' s and early  
80' s

Conjunctions (waiting for the right ones)

Appearances

if you get just a taste the possibilities stay alive

I don' t want to speak shorthand a coded mechanical  
language I' d rather not speak at all

pass on this pass on that it' s so predictable  
the illusion of taking a chance on the unknown

keep my antennas up that' s all I can do

a special moment when something is about to  
happen (again?) for the first time to share  
a presence the auras of this crazy universe

Ginsberg told me to take off my clothes and dance  
which wouldn' t have done me any good then be-  
cause of the physical state I was in I would take  
off  
my clothes now but who would want to see me?



year end wish 1993

voiceless renderings

I don' t want to give it a name an archetype  
it' s specific

---

it' s the sense of something ancient that evokes a  
feeling of timelessness in the present

for me it' s important to know that if I were lucky  
enough to love a woman now it may not last long  
to appreciate the absolute in it is what matters

you' re attracted to youth she' s attracted to death  
that' s the way it goes

yet it' s the cool aura around her young face and  
body that creates the longing your energy that  
turns her on

no I still need to suppress my desire to focus my  
pain in the presence of love

---

social paranoia I feel their repressed psyches'  
reacting projections and it make me feel kind of  
mad

lack of opportunity    not enough action

my failure is a social one

function of art

if I were having sex now I don' t think I' d be  
writing about it

poetry

I' m moved as much by feeling and meaning  
as I am by rhythm and sound

clouds

we are presence    phenomena is what we are not

alone    I think of someone with whom to share  
the auras of the night    an outdoor industrial cafe  
gritty fog in the face    a smear of red neon in the  
mouth

there was the use of technology there  
so I could be here with my lips sealed  
and write this in the dark

dance

self centric circles go round    whhisshh of air  
worry and fear    the cursor touches which  
application?

lonely    unfulfilled    it' s the depth I' m nurturing  
but I' m looking for love    love on the surface  
love at the store

a well-known local artist said in an interview that the ambiguity of not knowing the specifics of gender as a child allowed him the freedom to create I didn' t know what a female genital looked like until a photo was passed around outside the boys' locker room my first year in J.H.S. of a young woman sitting with her legs spread wearing only a sweater it was very erotic much more so than whatever I had conjured up in my mind and more liberating knowing freed my imagination

Language

2 people from Time Magazine wanted to know where I got the "idea" for the film all I could do was stare back at them in stoned silence "do you know of a good color lab?" Kenneth Anger asked as Cameron pushed him out the door

after school I took the bus to see a prostitute possibility can exist for so long without something having to happen but it's the fragrance from others lilac lavender musk that evokes the ecstasy of wished for encounters

the poets and painters discarded this notion of the external the more static operatic popular song that was dead ending into the rock era when you live on a ship Japan and the U.S. are interchangeable below decks the landscape (language) is always the same no matter where you are

every afternoon the mountain across the street would take on a golden glow every afternoon I would meditate on it sometimes an artifact that fails to transcend it's time is meaningful for just that reason

a woman's face a half naked body the candy I've been hooked on since J.H.S.

the film breathes there are a number of moments  
where the flowers seem to speak there are articulate  
moments that have to do with the movement of the  
camera and the movement of the flowers in synch  
that make the film seem to silently speak there are  
a number of little poems in it there is an alchemy  
where shriveled blossoms become crumpled paper  
where blighted buds become bloody bandaged  
heads where rotting red petals are lobster meat

angel face angel wings

male and female protuberances

don't look for formal perfection here there are  
many little poems to share there's the lucidity  
of a spoken language there

Ending

rapt  
my art  
but my loneliness

the image is a  
broken word

vexing breeze  
(but) this is no place  
for a poet

I wanted love and sex  
instead I have dreams.....

of rejection isolation and death

I' d like to fuck you like a puppet

gulls the quietness of their bodies

near you near your breath

written late 80' s

cont.

of denial

to bask in their love

here in Los Angeles

---

sex circuit fix

it' s the hooks that mate the sexual to the spiritual



WORDS

(from words and images)

1997

you can take the discarded artifacts of commerce  
and redeem them by making art this is alchemy  
you can take the so called masterpieces of the past  
cut them up reassemble them and you get dross

what public figure equals the transformed images  
of your own dreams or for that matter the visage  
of someone you've glimpsed only once or even  
more likely what your unconscious has picked up  
anonymously

everything is targeted everything immediately  
becomes a personal objective

you can't escape the sounds people who have  
no voices make all the noise linger too long on  
any thought becomes a fixation the sound'll get  
you

who takes from another less known without  
revealing is stealing who steals unconsciously  
is still theft

as I glance at a bank of simultaneous TV's  
a girl's face flashes catching my unconscious  
and I flash an indescribable need

it's not just in the technology it's not just in  
the  
object it's not just in the culture it's in me

looking at the scattered throwaway mail on the  
breakfast room table an instant collage only  
momentarily meaningful

Poetry

timelessness = no obligation  
duration- continuity

involuntary centralized  
where the meaning is strong

subliminal = sublime  
complete and open  
at the same time

knowing is solitude silence

the voice is right there on the  
written page

the aesthetics of Matsuo Basho

qualities 'inherent' in a poem -  
*sabi* (loneliness), *shiori* (tenderness),  
*hosomi* (slenderness)

elements of linked verse -  
aroma (*niori*), echo (*hibiki*), countenance  
(*omokage*), colour (*utsuri*), rank (*kurai*)

## Drawing

beyond process there has to be a continued  
intent toward some resolution of life that the  
work (process) to free the energy is in synch  
with that goes beyond the art

in my drawing there' s a ceaseless tension  
between the need to release energy and the  
need to make an object only when they are  
one does one or the other not suffer only the  
moment determines the art the process is  
more listening and feeling than seeing yet  
the end result is visual something beautiful  
something to contemplate indefinitely

I shut my eyes not just to picture what I draw  
but to get further away from it further away  
from the eye further away from the hand  
closer to the inner source

no doubt

sensuality   objectivity   feeling

I' ve this to say

**beauty is perceptual grace**

why does the moon intrigue me?

it' s close   it' s illuminated   it' s  
another place

there must be a resolution  
to keep pace with change

April 4

warmer some magic in the night  
even though I' m not going out am  
trying to maintain **some** contact  
with it as for being here if I want  
communication I' m going to have to  
get it elsewhere a sensual breeze  
yearning and isolation the moon  
is full bright and clear but I can' t  
focus on it without a double image

where are the hooks to resolve this?  
tomorrow will be a scorcher

## Allegations

there was a time when I could still  
be moved enough by an event to not  
want to talk about it afterwards a time  
when a **song** could still me

I can't see her face as she stuffs CDs  
into place whey then that **tinge** it  
must be the aura of her skin

there's a difference between assimilation  
and mere appropriation a difference  
between basic deconstruction and a  
**mere** realignment of genres

a woman wearing bobby sox and  
a short dress is toying with the  
concept of preadolescence in adult  
sex or is it **vice** versa?

warm for April the eroticism just

seems to build without any possibility  
of satisfaction forget how long it's  
been since you've fucked how long  
has it been since you've **kissed** either  
  
dark inside empty tables and chairs  
this is the way I like these clubs that  
resonate with a presence **only** when  
nobody's there

◇



Night Owls

outside a mocking bird is pouring  
out the sounds 1 a m !

inside a song from a nondescript  
Bing Crosby movie of the 40' s  
**sunday monday or always**  
goes through my head

nothing but goose eggs on it  
since I' ve had it the glow from  
my answering machine is a beacon  
as I get ready for bed

Full fathom five thy father lies. Of his bones are coral made.  
Those are pearls that were his eyes. Nothing of him that doth fade.  
But that suffers a sea of change. Into something rich and strange.  
And I alone am left to tell the tale.  
Call me Ishmael.

this excerpt from Laurie Anderson' s  
Blue Lagoon is also verbatim the ending  
to The Ugly One With The Jewels  
only the last words were changed to  
**call me beautiful now**

no reciprocity here I' m thinking  
these thoughts alone

one lone bluish star a planet  
which one?

I want the scent of contact  
something to seek solitude from  
or I can' t work

I want something-----a lover  
but it just has to come

I don' t know what the timetable is with me  
what margins I' m playing with but it' s in these  
conjunctions that I' m most moved to action  
there seems to have to be an element of danger  
not necessarily external but within

but there' s also an element of absoluteness the  
only way it' s going to happen with me is when  
there' s no way it can' t happen

walking east of Main near Venice Beach  
I' m *inspired* by one word that comes into my  
head **illicit** something spiritual but illicit  
what does it mean?

in a way technology robs us of memory  
by recording the past immediately and  
keeping it in the present it doesn' t allow  
us to forget memory is more than just a  
recollection of facts there has to be a  
resonance created by absence



the feminine component in the male  
is not necessarily homosexual the  
masculine component in the female  
is not necessarily lesbian the so called  
sexually normal person is androgynous  
biomorphic (organic) is neither a gender  
nor a sexual orientation

I' m willing to explore the man in  
the woman the woman in myself

the issue is not the sexual fantasy  
the issue is the physical need which  
generates it sex is always genital  
once you' ve had an orgasm whatever  
the nature of the fantasy it ceases  
to exist

“Gerald speaks of (clicking grooves  
and Debby says things.....  
me no hurt nobody me go back  
to the hill -----bye Lynn”

*note Wallace typed in my typewriter  
the first night I took Peyote*

although I saw others I could love  
I saw no one who was there to love me

blow me eat me beat me

surface is not superficial

the blue on my \$6 Woolworth shirt  
is beautiful

3 sounds  
the outer  
whissh  
air the  
breath the  
inner mmmm  
the brain

deeper and purer  
than any language  
any song



OFF  
THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR

MINI MALL ESSAYS  
AND OTHER  
PIECES

I still don' t know what I want I' m attracted to everything and nothing

it' s only on a visionary level (aura) that desire is unassailable

the fact is I' ve long ago gotten beyond going to movies with actors and actresses and plots so I can' t be transformed by them I live in a more distilled universe

we' re equals only when everything is counted

even my most meaningful experiences wear me out

I hunger but I don' t know what I want or to frame it as a question what do I want?

what' s our attraction and how can it hold up on any but the most ethereal level?

everytime I go out (at night) I feel like I' m leaving home

written mostly while reading **the professor** by Lydia Davis

## Self Deception

I once had a dream I was condemned to be executed it was what is at the core of all awful feelings I was glad to wake up

I once had a dream I was booked to give a performance at a club even though I had no sense of what I was going to do because I wanted to see what would emerge but as the time drew near nothing did and I had the same condemned feeling although not as deep and I was relieved to wake up

why don' t I generally like appointments? because there' s a feeling that any commitment is death

tentativeness is freedom and freedom is life

[but freedom is involvement and acceptance]

is this self deception?

the idea that we require or want a certain type of person implies that we **are** a certain type of person with certain limited and set traits which is not entirely correct what we really want is a person to meet a corresponding need at any given moment whom we may recognize immediately but not necessarily have access to in this way only can we experience wholeness even if these needs must be fulfilled without interaction i.e. fantasy imagination I'm thinking more about simultaneity than reaction where there is no reaction there is no betrayal therefore no rejection romance is both illusory and fragile love can survive illusion romance cannot

if I have a number of elements and I like them equally well then sometimes it doesn't matter how they're put together although content is the issue it's sense and motion that creates the form content being simply what I like so there are no weak links I find that what I like works and what I don't like doesn't to put something into your art just because it works is the death of creativity

drawing and the inner field of dark and light substance and modulating color images with the the eyes shut can coexist until one or the other becomes dominant the inner vision must take precedent over the object

the basic unit of my writing is a completed thought it can be as short as a word although the written word is a phonetic construct and also a visual image more important and deeper a word is a symbol of meaning sound is merely the means of conveyance the quieter the mind is in reading the closer to and more resonant the meaning because a word cannot be defined (verbally) except by analogy the hidden meaning can only be paraphrased

how to get to the complexity i.e. everything necessary and yet stay unfettered and clear so that the senses can absorb and adhere

it's in the borderline between the conscious and the unconscious that the image has the most impact facts are not enough they have to liberate you in some way or you stay trapped in them

the basic elements of art as I see it are rhythm and content form is just a result

I didn' t know you were going to read at that particular time I was just sitting there because there were chairs then I noticed they were starting to fill up so I left I came back a couple of days later and bought your book I read all of it

the content of a dream and the quality of sleep  
are not necessarily interrelated

the fact that we don't speak Italian doesn't hurt  
either a kind of musical counterpoint to the  
images and the sparseness of the text which has  
an almost subliminal effect

as I walk to my car I spot a small closed diner  
drawn to the empty ambience I look inside only  
to find a bright red waterfall of Hawaiian Punch  
sprouting in a plastic container on a stand above  
the counter for no one

it's not that I'm lamenting loss (any longer) it  
was  
just a time when I had friends when I felt I belong-  
ed this gives more substance to my desire now

arbitrarily there was some contention about the  
lyrics having to do with the song's apparent  
assertion that love and desire couldn't be separate  
equally valid entities or if so couldn't be  
reconciled

on the way back it started to drizzle and we got wet  
walking the mile south to our home surrounded by  
bean fields and the sound of crickets

sensuality can sometimes be related to the illusion  
of control she was perfectly right in distancing  
her-  
self from the possible sexual implications of my  
remarks it was the correct response

I didn't hear the song again until one night at sea  
it **resurfaced** so to speak a cooler hipper low  
swinging version that made me wonder what her

fascination with it might have been

creativity in the absolute has nothing to do with  
politics education or explanation what does it  
mean to be the center of attention? I want to be  
recognized but without equivocation

◇



it was a sensual bus ride from Atsugi to Yokosuka  
at dusk the colors and smells of earth above water  
after months of steel grey and ocean but it wasn't  
until sitting by an open window in a processing  
center at an Air Force base in Northern California  
looking at the geraniums in the dirt below the sill  
that I actually had the feeling I was home i.e. re-  
turned albeit briefly to an earlier (childhood) more  
peaceful mode.

now that I think about it part of it had to do with  
the cessation of motion the motion of the ship the  
motion of the sea there was a motion of course  
but subtler closer to wholeness

it finally dawned on me that at least as far as the  
Navy was concerned I was soon to be free

in the summer of 1941 when I was seven we moved to an undeveloped tract south of Pico still the domain of jackrabbits mice gophers and trapdoor spiders

on three sides were lima bean fields which began where our yard ended there was a creek with tadpoles frogs and small fish where Hillsboro and Monte Mar now intersect and a still lived in farm house with a windmill at Robertson and Sawyer

the Stadium on Pico Bl. was unique because of a half balcony that rose up from behind the Loges it was the **make out** palace for the kids from Pasteur JHS on sultry Saturday afternoons in the late 40' s Captain From Castile and Golden Earrings were two summer matinees from that period

*“so be my gypsy make love your guiding light  
and let this pair of golden earrings cast their  
spell tonight”*

in 1951 some hoods raided a beach party I went to at Playa del Rey the girls ran for help and they were quickly ousted one of them (who lived across the street from the girl I had taken) said to me

“**we**  
don’ t want you seeing that girl anymore”

on the school lunch court a short time later she and I were having a brief conversation as soon as we parted he came up to me again and said “I thought **we** told you **we** don’ t want you talking to that girl” we stared at each other a few moments then he turned and walked away

summer 1950

she resents having to serve us spaghetti lunch  
because she thinks we're squares

at Lake Arrowhead she has a change of heart the  
'boys' want to go bowling I want to distance myself  
from them and possibly be alone with her so I say  
I'm going to play miniature golf she quickly says  
she's going to play miniature golf also

a dream date trees lights and mountain air an  
elusive closeness and strangeness our commun-  
ication is mostly wordless a guy immediately  
behind us wearing a Fairfax High Cardinals club  
jacket says to his girlfriend "he never misses"

at an end to summer party at a run down country  
club in Sherman Oaks I get drunk for the first time  
on a full glass of straight gin (this is to set a  
pattern  
of behavior for many future years) she and I make  
out at her instigation in the parking lot in her  
parents'  
car with her brother and others in it there's a  
thrill  
in those first (french) kisses

fall 1950

I'm experiencing a let down I don't want to see  
her  
in school although I can't rationalize it I want to  
protect my independence my dreams I don't want  
to admit she isn't always attractive to me

problems about not driving problems about not  
dancing fear of getting into fights we never speak  
she skates circles around me at the Pan Pacific ice  
skating rink

winter 1950

the day before New Years Uncle Emmett come in  
from San Francisco he always takes his "favorite  
nephews" to dinner and a show when he visits  
he's disappointed I have a date that night he's  
narcissistic

we see King Solomon's Mines in the afternoon  
instead my heart isn't in it but the aura of the  
movie the repressed eroticism of Deborah Kerr  
the tall Watusi the romantic scenery stays with  
me for many years afterwards I can't think of it  
without a pang

New Years Eve the Boys pick me up two hours late  
we have dinner in a dingy restaurant in the Mid  
Wilshire district our romance flares again at a  
party in Beverly Hills I'm drunk a repeat of the  
Country Club experience

on the way home my head in her lap because of  
buried insecurities and inhibitions at her small  
breasts I flail and slap effectively killing the  
relationship my friends dump me on my front  
doorstep

spring 1951

by this time I have a new girlfriend someone nice  
whom I've had my eyes on for awhile

several years later on a whim we date again  
she's engaged to an older guy in the service I  
don't think we were ever really alone together  
she seems dispirited almost depressed as I'm  
about to turn and go she surprises me by saying  
"aren't you going to kiss me goodnight?" she  
gives me a warm tender sad kiss I never see

her again



story is less event than attitude towards it

the limits we impose on what we choose to say are not just aesthetic but physical regarding the state of our energy as well what we want to release and what we need to maintain not wanting to run down not wanting to get lost in it not wanting to tie up potential that liberating something else there's an issue as to how much writing the past is robbing the present and how far to go with it Proust chose to live in the past so his tolerance for it was unlimited on the other hand the past when it resurfaces involuntarily is a liberated moment i.e. vision the trick is to not interfere with what is emerging but rather to nurture the distilled meaning how much good is it going to do me how much is it going to change me the deeper past is subliminal yet it resides in the present it's not random but there's no choice involved it's absolute

all auras are the same an experiencing of or yearning for paradise in this life

ends and beginnings are very closely related perhaps contained in the same moment

“all the volumes of Proust were nothing quantitatively compared to the 20-minute experience of eating breakfast on a spring morning at a Denny’ s in Mobile”      -Dave Hickey

the futility of what Proust was trying to do is made manifest in the last few pages of Swann’ s Way as the boy roams the Bois de Boulogne searching for Odette only to find in the last paragraph that memory is nothing more than regret an assertion (although it certainly works in the context he presents) I don’ t entirely accept there are flash points like the madeleine cake experience an opening of the field to possible liberation memory transcends regret at the moment it reveals what you’ ve been resisting this is vision

I still get a thrill out of looking at a woman

*romantic pain*

cont.

ironically as soon as I started turning on I stopped listening to jazz stopped reading books I suppose a more directly sensual aesthetic had begun to replace the more intellectually driven philosophical one now I was making art instead of talking about it the 60's was a Faustian endeavor but also a visionary one stoned I felt I had something nobody else had this was important

based on the absurdity that only **what's out there** is real a so called objective analysis of the universe had proven to be a negative one something had to be right or we wouldn't have been living but how to get to it? certainly not through more rationality leading to greater absurdity how to release the weirdness and wildness our craves told us was there?

the answer (if not the ultimate solution) was drugs to be 'stoned' literally is to silence the talking mind the result is heightened awareness no verbal or physical rhetoric because the senses can't assimilate it 'normal' relationships are static because conditioned reflexes are totally ingrained in social behavior totally expected

once sitting in a room stoned with others of both sexes who weren't I had the urge to shift my weight and either cross or uncross my legs the sexual implications in terms of the actual feeling in my body was so strong I was afraid it might be revealed to the others in the room and I froze the motion conversely if I hadn't been stoned the motion would most likely have been automatic



the connotations rhetorical and therefore ignored.

in the late 60' s I was given a pass to a Velvet Underground concert I especially recall a group of teenagers (girls and boys) sitting in a tribal circle smoking pot because they were so beautiful to watch totally silent sensitive to every nuance was this a negative response?

◇

NOTHING

1999

I began the Fall semester at UCLA 1953 with Winter Dreams hanging out with frat boys dating ex high school club girls and going to the beach every day in warm weather after an extended period of probation they finally asked me to leave

needing a place to hide I stopped off at the draft board on my way home and ended up spending most of the next two years stationed on a carrier floating back and forth between the continent of Asia and the coast of California

back at UCLA in the spring of 1958 I was now a part of the New Bohemia that had sprung up in my absence my first short story for John Espey's class gave me a needed sense of power things went well for a while until the old ennui set in again and I quit school for good at the end of 1959

going to a large university made it possible to live in many places and ages at once the auras of which were manifest in everything seen and done an archeology of a different sort than just the work in classes (although I've had dreams of my procrastination) the composite elements that make up the work and by extension the places and times the work evokes bodies buildings sunlight and shadow love that never happened neither process nor goals but living on the spot without knowledge afore thought is what makes the years come to pass

in 1961 I got married in part a result of or perhaps in spite of the incestuous legacy of my little group of friends

I met Wallace Berman a short time later he courted

me at first bringing over friends and sending me mail art collages

I met John Fles (also through Debby' s girlfriend Lynn) the following year we saw a lot of each other for about two years in a sense he threw me a lifeline during a social impasse giving me leverage just as Wallace had done earlier

the hip L.A. Underground didn' t last long by the late 60' s it was dead appropriated by the anti war movement the hippies and both the mainstream and so called underground press the appearance of Michael Snow (Wavelength) on the cover of Film Culture in 1966 formally marked the end of the Underground era of film

my life became increasingly less social after we moved to Topanga Canyon in the Summer of 1965 occasionally I' d drop by Wallace' s George Herms' or Dean Stockwell' s late at night these were the most pleasurable social diversions I had then and among the most pleasant of my life

◇

Ladies Man

my first short story **the lie** about a ginned out love affair ended with the rejected 'lover' calling his erstwhile girl friend and telling her he got slashed by some 'chokes' (a very derogatory word applied to Mexicans esp Pachucos in the 50' s) "you' re lying " she replied

Espey' s only comment (after an affirmative nod) was "we know a lot about Fran but what about Joe?"

“UCLA girls are ‘better looking’ than USC girls because they’ re more neurotic” mep 1958

“there’ s nothing a little success won’ t cure for any of us.” bbk 1959

“don’ t you make it unless I do” bbk 1959

“we’ re both naive culture lovers” bbk 1961

“throbbled at bbk” bbk’ s self portrait as odd man out in sd- hy menage a whatever 1962

“I’ m just beginning to understand how uncomfortable you are in your universe” jf 1963

“you’ re not the target” Debby (via Laura Huxley) 1973

there was a song Bing Crosby sang to Joan Caulfield while playing the piano in a movie I once looked at briefly on TV it was the guise of ordinariness that moved me

the house was cleared and no longer mine it  
was losing its associations and regaining a  
presence of its own it wasn't so much that I  
was leaving the associations as that the assoc-  
iations were leaving the house

if our lives weren't so static - boring that it  
takes  
a song to recapture meaning

nostalgia functions only as much as the possibilities  
it offers no less no more

you can be in an inner place and not be lonely until  
you have a little contact with others loneliness is  
always lurking when love has no connection once  
your self-sufficiency has been destroyed

listening frequently means listening to loneliness  
that's why the first escape is to allow the mind to  
talk

I love you (there's really no 'you') only need  
of a 'you' in a vale of silence

only loneliness (an absence of love) is making me  
write this

Wally and I both understood the inherent cruelty in  
all groups (large and small) there' s an element of  
immorality in all movements in practice no matter  
what the stated ideals we both knew better than  
to judge

Pollock took house paint and turned pure energy  
into art

culture can' t be bought



## Ears For You Only

if you cut off a piece of sky from a Botticelli or a Cimabue it will become just another patch of blue probably neither as interesting nor as beautiful as a piece of faded blue paper lying in a vacant lot this is the alchemy of creation and dissolution in art

eliminating “waste accents unnecessary halts and repetition” made Lennie Tristano’s **lineup** and **east 32<sup>nd</sup>** more lucid because of the increased momentum similarly in Albert Ayler’s **for john coltrane** the lucidity of the ideas were enhanced by the frequently modulating changes

at the other end there’s always been a craving for the familiar all the innovators played ballads

whether **for all we know** sung by June Christy at sundown is a cliché or a deeply moving experience depends on your receptivity at the moment you hear it furthermore it’s not the passion in these transformed moments to which we respond but a puritanical form of love

it’s Saturday afternoon and the small park across the street is filled the sounds and sudden silences varied and beautiful abstractions with no aesthetic intent once again give me cause to reflect

Dec. 1998

Venice Beach at dusk a golden light is arbitrarily  
falling on faces bodies hair buildings and clothes  
illuminated forms in deep shadows fill the entrances  
of shops making strangely beautiful and sexy  
ghosts no sense of home re place-geography  
sans opportunity keeps me in a suspended state  
as the sun sinks to a pink and red haze if isola-  
tion is the inversion of communication then this  
strange aura is romance with a 'good looking'  
woman in reverse I continue the search

## Small Spaces

Oct 5 full moon dry and clear  
possibly the most sensual night of  
the year but I'm still in it a feeling  
there's fucking out there in this dense  
universe but there's more to it than  
that my mother only 8 days passed  
am I being rushed?

Oct 6 evening once again a warm  
sensual dry wind I masturbated this  
afternoon so it isn't just sex now the  
realtor calls "I hope I haven't disturbed  
you pause goes on anyway "can I  
bring the husband of the lady who saw  
the house today tomorrow?" a disturb  
ance goes through me my neck locks  
I'm going to sit on my bed naked I  
want the peace of undisturbed nuance  
of a night that's receptive alive no  
locked up bottom lines possibility  
certain but not completely formed  
revealed or defined

Nothing

I stand still waiting for the desired objects to walk  
by casting their reflections onto the store front  
window panes

but in actuality the process is too static and I lack  
the patience to wait milling with the crowd how-  
ever numerous moments of sensual ecstasy  
present themselves gone as soon as the eye sees  
the remnants linger and I once again face the  
futility that the best shots are not to be

it' s foolish to negate an experience on the grounds  
of impermanence it' s only when you don' t question  
duration that timelessness is possible

time and the past are not equivalences the past is  
not temporal time is not a physical entity nothing  
exists in time time is a measurement not a condition

I hear music in names

I grew up around bean fields she was raised in  
the high desert which was much more extreme  
but her recall touches shared things what I like  
is that both her perception and interpretation is  
personal imagination once encased and en-  
coded in myths is cut off destroyed

I' ve never liked having sex and then going to sleep I' ve preferred the afternoon when there' s activity and visual stimulation it' s ironic because when I was growing up I masturbated every night before I went to sleep even as a young adult it' s true (I suppose) that sex in the night can be deeper and more mysterious but unfortunately I' ve never had a relationship that enhanced that experience

although I didn' t always I abhor the phrase 'going to bed' with someone as though sex is the end of life though if you really get into it it may be in some species it is I also admit that 'sleeping' with someone is more intimate if the context is right satisfaction can allow peace meaning and appreciation without the 'urge driving you for awhile

yes the night is more mysterious I' m changing

## The Grace A Shape Makes

my first drawings were doodles done on napkins to counterpoint (and counteract) the arguments and discussions at all night coffee shops essentially all my subsequent drawing has come out of that the difference between a doodle and a drawing is that the form of a doodle is semiconsciously rendered because the mind is elsewhere a drawing on the other hand demands rapt attention it's focus is not just on the external image but on the inner source from which the image emerges the greater the distance the more leverage

a purely academic language is a language which has to be broken down a step further than the plainer language it's built upon thereby making it heavier (more work for the brain) and at the same time reducing the connotative power without giving any more complexity or nuance to the meaning what it does do is allow the brain to be in a more absolute state because it gives the illusion of being more self-contained there is a tendency towards abstraction but this does not make it more functional because rather than reduce to essences (as in pure abstraction) it tends to trivialize with erudition not by giving more information but by camouflaging the word

in the wee hours a mocking bird is filling the  
night with insistent exuberant song I' m convinced  
that noise and pollution is making this bird nocturnal  
energy needs sufficient space like the hard drive on  
a computer to receive it or it can' t be absorbed



from the non events in my life

non event # 1

love is a many splendored thing

one night in 1955 I had a date with a girl named Marlene who having seen me playing volleyball at the beach one day initially thought I was sexy but later rejected me because I didn' t live up to her expectations (her agenda) we were standing in front of the box office at either the Fox Ritz or the Four Star on Wilshire Blvd it was still light out and a pretty girl wearing shades emerged from the lobby and stopped where we were just before Marlene said "Jerry this is Sherry" or was it "Sherry this is Jerry?" the girl told us that James Dean had just been killed in an auto accident aside from this there was nothing particularly auspicious about the evening

*"once on a high and windy hill in the morning  
mist two lovers kissed and the world stood still"*

non event #2

Okinawa  
(1956)

a ten minute cab ride on a winding dirt road through gently sloping hills of rice paddies in a soft rain still remains the most idyllic 'nature' event of my life the shanty town literally in the middle of nowhere was a bit surreal however one of the girls waiting in themud took me to her house she and her 'mother' immediately began to insult me did she mean to intimidate me and at the same time cleanse herself (even before having sex)?

non event # 3

in 1958 a friend signed up for a Sunday morning jam session at the Hillcrest Club on Washington Bl he hadn' t played more than a few chords before Les McCann who ran the sessions gave him the hook after another session in Hollywood some time later Charles Mingus came up to the same friend and said "you' ll do." Stan Brakhage said the same thing to me after seeing my first film

non event # 4

we were true to one another there was no hidden world between us (except that which was impenetrable by resistance) until one night sitting on the toilet and seeing me look in she closed the door

nevertheless (as in the Bible) we 'knew' each other

non event # 5

excerpt from a 1960' s Les Crane TV talk show featuring Mel Torme Tommy Sands and Bob Dylan

Bob and Mel trade barbs

Les (mock but real horror) "you talk that way to Mel Torme?"

Bob "Mel Schmell"

Les (mock but real stricken) "Ohhh"

they move down to their seats Mel sits with mouth open and says no more

Tom "look..Bob? (takes off his tie) here' s my tie .....will you give me your guitar?"

Bob "now why would I want to give you my guitar?" (mumbles something like what am I doing) gets up and goes

Les (acting like nothing' s happened)  
"take it easy Bob"  
(then to Tom) "how does it feel to be

to be the son in law of Frank Sinatra?

Tom "he doesn' t bother you but it' s a good feeling to know he' s there if you need him

non event # 6  
(1958)

sitting in the living room of an attractive girl I don' t know who' s in the kitchen discoursing with the person who' s brought us here (for what reason?) I don' t know what to do with myself until a song from the past comes over the radio and I become completely absorbed "you really listened" says the friend I' m closest to in the group as we walk out the door

non event # 7

Moonlight In Vermont  
(1953)

one evening laying on my bed before dinner listening to a Gerry Mulligan record with a red night light on for atmosphere my father comes into the room and says "it sounds like an opium den in here."

non event # 8

My Foolish Heart

(outside the boys' locker room Hami High  
Friday afternoon 1951)

Me "I' m glad it' s raining"

Mark (immediately projecting) "you' re glad  
it' s raining because you' re feeling blue"

Dick (adding the psychological twist)

"you' re glad it' s raining because now  
nobody else can go out tonight either"

non event # 9

we were watching Ubu Roi at the Coronet on  
La Cienega the artificiality of theater has rarely  
move me but looking at her partially illuminated  
face lost in happiness and quiet laughter I realized  
how much she suffered with me how little I gave  
of the silliness (translated into tenderness) that she  
was responding to in the character of Pere Ubu if  
I had perhaps she would have wanted something  
else

Moving

4:45 a m April 7 1999

dream - brothers and I in car leave off mom  
at freeway entrance she' s to walk on adjacent  
road so as to not get hit by traffic going to? Steve  
Allen or someone perform watch her walk  
towards the entrance walking slow (like she did  
when I let her off at the doctor) brown dress  
carrying handbag a metaphysical aura to it

dream 2 - just me going to let her off by high  
chain link fence bordering side of freeway she' s  
going to take a bus on the freeway and look for  
a place to stay somewhere like south east  
downtown or skid row then I say "I can' t let you  
off you don' t even have a place to stay" she  
agrees "I' ll take you you can' t look for a  
place yourself" reveals she was willing to try to take  
care of herself without help even when it wasn' t  
possiblereveals the absurdity of my letting her go on  
with so little help in both dreams we were  
abandoning her both dreams reveal my  
apprehension about moving as well as my  
identification with her

the freeway is a flow of life on a very dangerous  
level leaving mom in that situation demonstrates  
my feelings that we didn' t give her enough help  
and even more so that it was her journey

in the second dream looking for a place to stay  
(after life?) again my feeling about moving but  
why in that area homelessness? LACE, on  
Industrial street



when is it not too late? Hannah Arendt seemed to think there was a time when it was not too late a time when something could have been done about it who was not part of the syndrome?

two quotes

“The best kind of censorship is self-censorship and that’s what the blacklist did to the people in this town. They censored themselves, and all the realms of imagination and morality became eliminated from their work. They needed no committee to enforce it. That’s the effect of Fear.”

- Abraham Polonsky

“if my understanding is correct, Utopia is conceived of as a state, rather than a process, and mine would always be a process. I think it’s dangerous to pause at an end, utopian or otherwise, because that thinking requires ideological structure which I am suspicious of and very skeptical of, and I can’t conceive of an end point. I would be horrified if that could be conceived or realized. I’m more comfortable with having tendencies towards supporting certain forces which contribute to the evolution of structures that lessen suffering and open space for human potential and growth. But not Utopia.”

- Carolyn Forché



what Polonsky said is so obviously right I almost hate to make this observation but Kazan for whatever reason made his best most influential films after he gave names to HUAC

I agree with Carolyn as far as she takes it but there's a reciprocal relationship between change and resolution change and resolution are just flip sides of each other both have to be there this has nothing to do with either external structures or concepts on the one hand or process as an end in itself on the other

