

# Artists Book Panel

Michael Davidson

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Jack Spicer, from *Heads of the Town,*  
*Up to the Aether*

“The city that we create in our bartalk or in our fuss and fury about each other is in an utterly mixed and mirrored way an image of the city. A return from exile.”

The noise of wealth, the clamor of wealth  
In the hotel lobby sound, ~~perhaps~~ hardship  
Like the voice of Hell.

The dream

Truth ~~follows~~ <sup>will follow</sup>  
~~after things~~

Nevertheless, truth follows  
The existence of something

(39) [Elephantus "an eternity of isolation  
until he reached death"]

(14) (15) (16) (34.5)  
620  
34  
80

Sabrae - Seraphita pines Lambert  
Simone Weil  
Bertram

72 " De Hyphnaut of the - - - - - (Milla)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8  
deluge of 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16

IF NOT this is the case, NOTHING

A Political Poem, written

Reality

of the western  
~~with a~~

[Fellowships]

of petition for it is dreary

to descend ~~at last~~ ~~in a will~~

Q When  
wind is dead

and be a stranger  
tho a wind

Y. S. G. H. K. a gift  
with a will

like a gift  
in the disorder

(B) a bridge for it is a gift  
and is a gift for that and

ripen I am sick  
with a poet's

weirdly if our story shall and

untold to what

are we ancestral  
who wanted to know

if we were any good

out there voices with its rough  
beach-light crystal extreme

sands dazzling  
beneath not less savage feet Journey

Swampy for an under  
to the beach at his camp fire

with a gift  
4 mg in his hand  
1 mg of standard compound  
5 mg in the argument  
Song

Vanilla

Y. S. G. H. K. a gift  
with a will  
are we ancestral

A. D. [unclear] [unclear]

~~Reply~~

in the Western  
 dream  
 of politics for ~~it~~ is dreary  
 is depressed ~~and~~ ~~features~~ ~~in~~ ~~is~~ ~~will~~  
 and be a stranger ~~with~~ ~~the~~ ~~wind~~  
 like a gift  
 in the disorder  
 rises I am sick  
 with a poet's  
 vanity if our story shall end  
 untold to what  
 are we ancestral  
 we who wanted to know  
 if we were any good ~~we~~ ~~have~~ ~~been~~ ~~not~~ ~~it~~ ~~is~~ ~~in~~

A. D. [unclear]  
 [unclear]  
 [unclear]

1/10/1918  
 [unclear]  
 [unclear]  
 [unclear]

~~at~~ ~~these~~ ~~verse~~ ~~with~~ ~~its~~ ~~rough~~  
 beach-light crystal extreme  
 sands desaling ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~water~~  
 beneath not less savage feet ~~scouring~~

with [unclear]  
 with my [unclear]  
 A [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]  
 song in [unclear] [unclear]

[unclear]  
 [unclear]  
 [unclear]

[unclear]  
 [unclear]  
 [unclear]

# “Senility: A Political Poem”

Of the western  
dream [fellowship]  
of politics for it is dreary  
to descend

like a gift  
in the disorder

rises I am sick  
with a poet's  
vanity

# From “Disasters”

of wars o western  
wind and storm

of politics I am sick with a poet's  
vanity legislators

of the unacknowledged

world *it is dreary*  
*to descend*

*and be a stranger* (NCP, 267)

# Marianne Moore, “Poetry” (1967)

I, too, dislike it.

Reading it, however, with a perfect contempt  
for it, one discovers in  
it, after all, a place for the genuine.



I mean I to dislike poetry ← in fact I dislike art --  
except as a last resort.

or, it need not sound quite  
so nihilistic. If I can easily think more profoundly  
outside the poem than in it, I ~~cannot~~ find the  
verse irritating.

The images; small narratives within the poem

• - Stone, stone, as an ~~end to~~ <sup>end to</sup> ~~end to~~  
like we exist -

Protestantism -- merely the currently acceptable ideas  
given a religious tone in order to achieve unanimity --  
Neither a cosmology nor a metaphysic; possibly a  
social contract.

*Mr. Big <sup>is not</sup> <sup>from</sup> the moon*

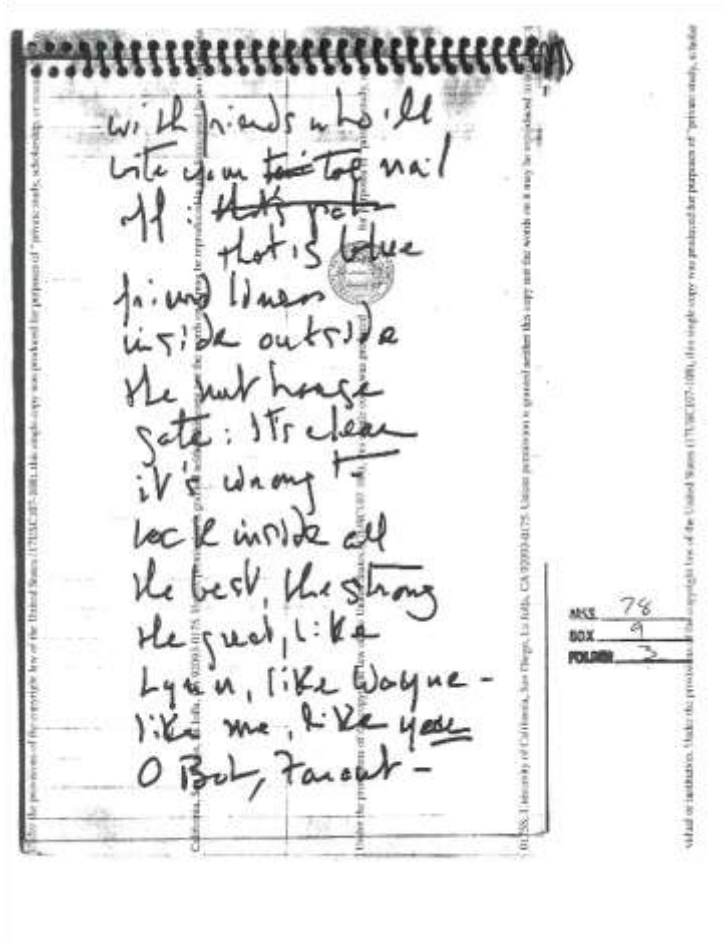
'We awake in the same moment -- etc, means  
that one could understand himself only in  
relation to the universe.

June, who I begin to realize has ~~attitudes~~ <sup>attitudes</sup>, who is  
very, very extreme --. She does not like most people,  
take comfort in the idea of continuity, of children and  
of people who ~~know~~ <sup>know</sup> her. She hates and resents those  
who will replace her. She dreams of living, of herself,  
by herself, forever. The elevator poems, which I mis-  
understood ---- they meant, if she could do everything  
herself, if she were not dependent on these technicians  
who insist they could not take the car further, she  
might be able to emerge into ----- might rise  
above everything. And independent of everything.

*It is only an attempt to say <sup>how</sup> we exist --*

If June should write <sup>her</sup> metaphysic, it would be this:  
Life sets me a problem; which I must solve. Just that  
problem, and just as it is set. If I solve it, ~~well~~  
if I conquer, I will not die. Not then, not in victory.

# James Schuyler, "Roxie"



# James Schuyler, “Roxy”

with friends who'll  
bite your toe nail  
off: that's blue  
friendliness  
inside outside  
the nut house  
gate: it's clear  
it's wrong to  
lock inside all the  
best, the strong  
the great, like  
Lynn, like Wayne—  
like me like you  
O Bob far out—  
it's clear it's wrong  
and I feel great

# Robert Duncan / Thom Gunn

where they are ensnared  
fallen into evil ways, ~~to~~ ~~not~~ ~~ashore~~  
closed round in Circe's circles  
grunting, rooting, snuffing, fucking  
at the gates and in ~~the~~ your eyes  
I seek to open a gate that I will enter  
momentarily. I am trying to kill you  
take my heart from me  
and it will leap for you - wildly -  
I am trying to tell you  
Hermses I would be for you as I  
have been for others to protect  
in falling - Love - take heart from me  
for from the very loom where she  
weaves and undoes each night your  
odyssey I bring this herb black at the  
and milky white where it blooms. see,  
from the very ground here where we  
stand  
I pull the magic plant, that, was meant  
to help you enter and pass thru  
her darkening intent - it is the heart  
I spoke of, torn out of its own darkness  
this herb called Moly by the gods.  
fed this stem in me

Figure 16. Continuation of Duncan's "Near Circe's House," on the verso of the opening page of Thom Gunn's Moly.

Rites of Passage

Something is taking place.  
Horns bud bright in my hair,  
My feet are turning hoof.  
And Father, see my face  
— Skin that was damp and fair  
Is barklike and, feet, rough.

See Greytop how I shine,  
I rear, break loose, I neigh  
Snuffing the air, and harden  
Towards a completion, mine.  
And next I make my way  
Adventuring through your garden.

My play is earnest now.  
I center to and fro.  
My blood, it is like light.  
Behind an almond bough,  
Horns gaudy with its snow,  
I wait live, out of sight.

All planned before my birth  
For you, Old Man, no other,  
Whom your groin's trembling warms.  
I stamp upon the earth  
A message to my mother,  
And then I lower my horns.

These are  
the passages of that  
from the light are  
into the heavy flesh  
while from burning  
all the shimmering dark  
matter comes a light,  
the foot that now  
as reason in  
bright ratios  
it wild measure  
hardens and beats  
the trembling earth,  
reaches out a measure  
into the my that  
drangles  
pleasure and pain  
unpounded  
into a further brightness

Dark serum,  
your blood is like a  
light behind an  
almond bough,  
something is taking  
place in me -  
all nature awaits  
behind the trembling  
tapestries of leaves  
and buds, of  
hidden about-to-be-  
awakened birds

The damp submissive grass  
now slides from deep  
now turns in every  
green black grain  
dent

(continued on p. 55)

Figure 17. The beginning of Duncan's "Rites of Passage: I" in the margin of Gunn's poem of the same title.

# Robert Duncan, "Rites of Passage: I" from *Poems from the Margins of Thom Gunn's Moly*

These are  
the passages of thought  
from the light air  
into the heavy flesh  
until from the burning  
all the slumb'ring dark  
matter comes alight,  
the foot that has  
its reason in bright ratios  
it would measure

hardens and beats  
the trembling earth  
reaches out of measure  
Into the hoof that  
tramples  
pleasure and pain compounded  
into a further brightness.

P. 11

I- OSBY (Chip  
Apr  
May 20 65 # 1 s s [there's a 19  
morning  
A cover photo, bulk of the  
in Hawawee, of Elizabeth  
Budokph Nareyev # Press, 198

the feet of Icarus  
on the ground  
or in air  
sometimes he doesn't like  
the rain vest, even the shift  
into the earth  
growing trees, the sound on then  
bird  
freedom  
they take off as  
roofs are level  
leaves have some fingers  
life feels  
like  
such of  
one day  
you know how many  
deaths  
where that fits  
speeds such as hammer  
themselves out

time flies  
birds  
in odd corners

English/German bk.  
and 12 1/2-minute audiotapes  
(cassette and reel).  
"around row/ sound  
daily. nears" (s pres  
torbandverlag, 19765)

I- The World And Its  
Streets, Places  
Crown Press,

when we can't see

1.3 sec.s

the moon's

distances

level

years all

directions

the pileup of stars

pushed

away

pulled

in

mostly pairs





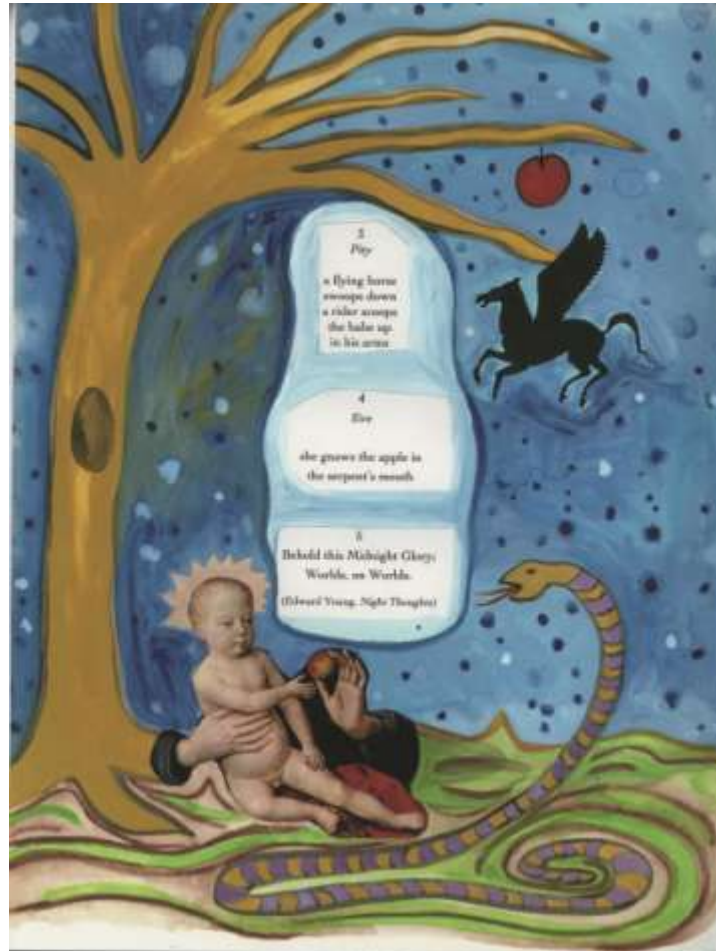
# Larry Rivers, Frank O'Hara working on *Stones*



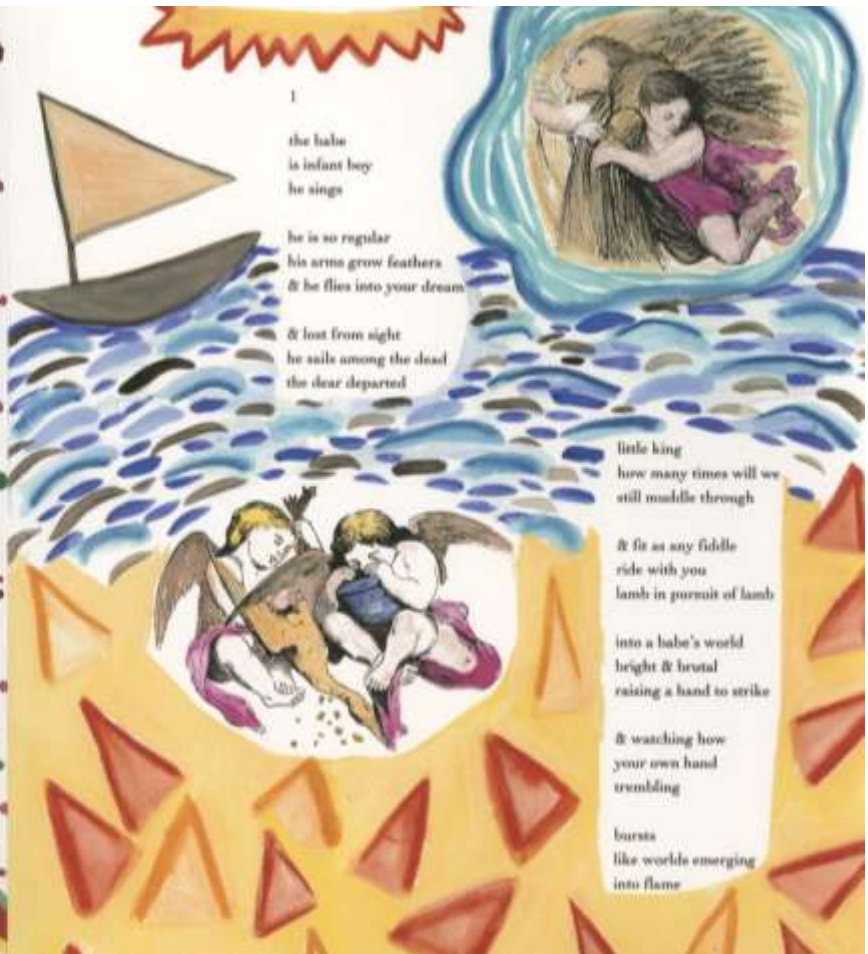
# Frank O'Hara / Jim Dine / Arion Press



# Jerome Rothenberg / Susan Bee / Granary Books



# Jerome Rothenberg / Susan Bee / Granary Books



Robinson Jeffers, *Granite and Cypress*,  
Lime Kiln Press (1975)



# Robinson Jeffers / William Everson/ Lime Kiln Press



**G**RANITE & CYPRESS · ROBINSON JEFFERS · RUBBINGS FROM THE ROCK  
POEMS GATHERED FROM HIS STONEMASON YEARS WHEN SUBMISSION  
TO THE SPIRIT OF GRANITE IN THE BUILDING OF HOUSE & TOWER & WALL  
FOCUSED HIS IMAGINATION & GAVE MASSIVE PERMANENCE TO HIS VERSE  
THE LIME KILN PRESS · THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SANTA CRUZ  
ANNO DOMINI MCMLXXV

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THE LIME KILN PRESS - THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SANTA CRUZ  
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POEMS GATHERED FROM HIS STONEMASON YEARS WHEN SUBMISSION  
GRANITE & CYPRUS - ROBINSON JEFFERS - RUBBINGS FROM THE ROCK



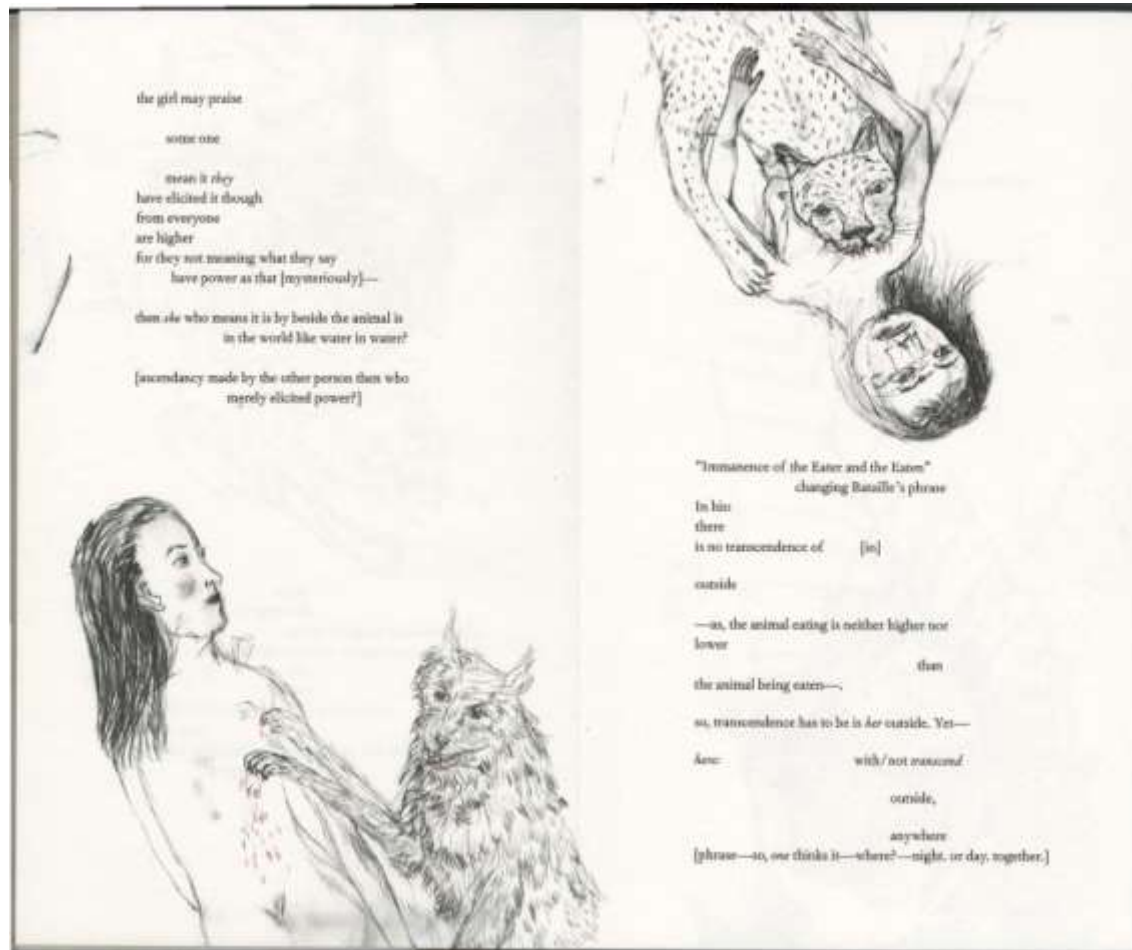
# Helen Adam / Kiki Smith, from “I Love My Love”

She circled him with the secret web she wove as her strong hair grew.  
Like a golden spider she wove and sang, “My love is tender and true.”  
She combed her hair with a golden comb and shackled him to a tree.  
She shackled him close to the Tree of Life. “My love I’ll never set free.  
No, No.  
My love I’ll never set free.”





# Leslie Scalapino / Kiki Smith, *The Animal is in the world like water*



# Robert Duncan / Jess, *Names of People* (Black Sparrow, 1968)



*remembering*

"Is it not delightful to have friends coming  
from distant quarters?"

We want our mornings undisturbed.  
And splendid and tidy. Tides are tidy.  
The disarray is splendid and diverting

of dinner. A tidy bear. A tiny seer.  
Everything comes home for dinner with friends.

What does absence make the heart grow, Fonder?

Absence is remembering roses  
now that daffodils are here.  
O to be in Piccadilly square.  
We are silly for the red red rose  
arranged with early daffodils.  
An easter remembrance.

Dear Kit dear, dear  
dear Ilse, dear and near.  
Now that they are far  
we hear them, in our throats  
continually here.

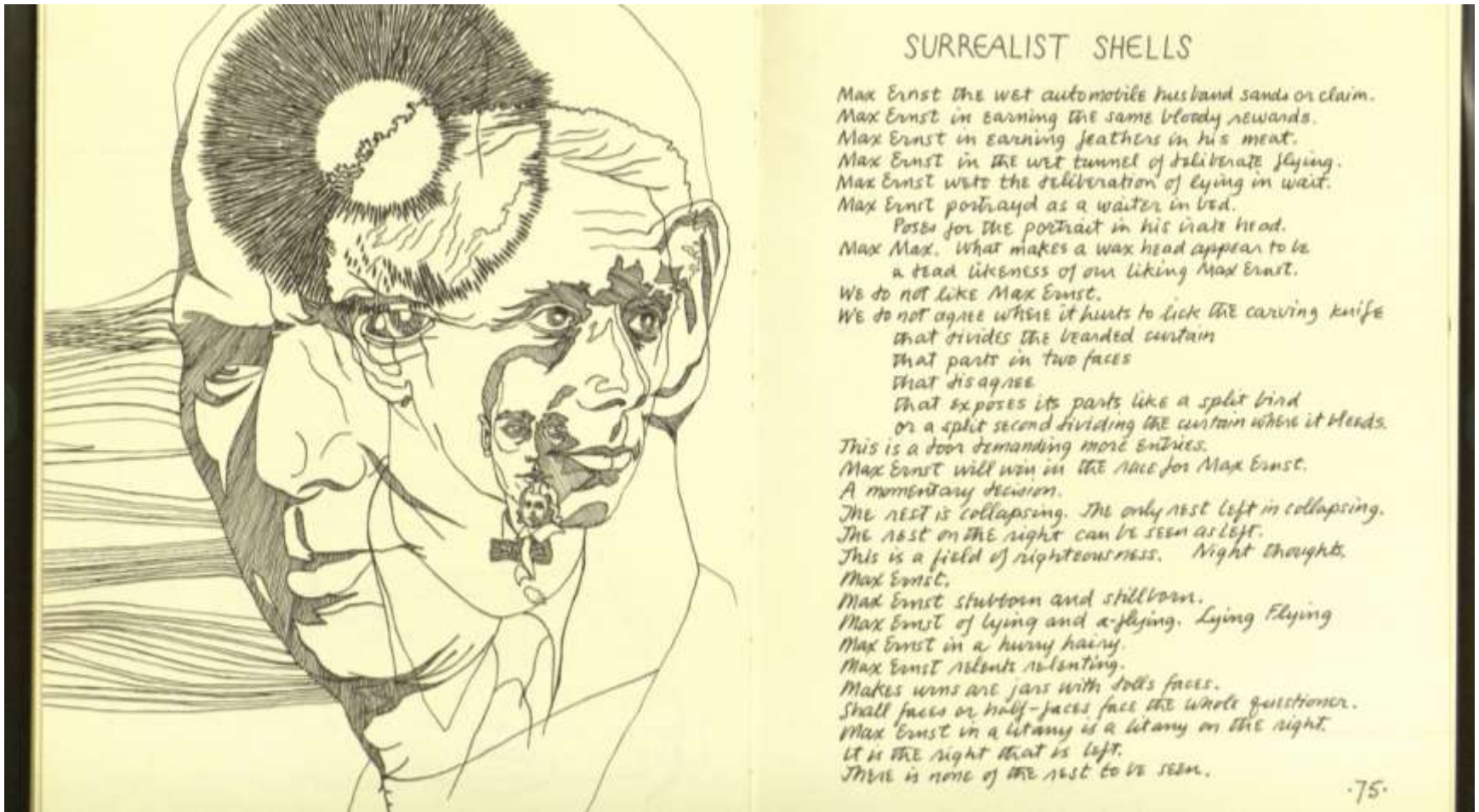
Friends coming from a distance are delightful.  
We arrange friends and criticize our relations.  
David and Lloyd Bary were our vacations.  
Ham and Mary Tyler offered family dissensions.  
Kenneth and Marthe Rexroth comfortable factions.

We remembered Brenda as a rose in a garden  
or a daffodil in a field of roses.

An escutcheon.

But married friends go by twos. Especially  
dear Kit and Ilse, we two to you too.

# Robert Duncan / Jess, *A Book of Resemblances* (1950-53)



# Robert Duncan / Jess *Boob* 1 (1952)

a delightfully Baroque, high genre

## For you who like a hearty whisk

5000 Sold in Cuba A Day

STOP WEARING  
STAY TALKING

supplied in bottles of

**RELIGION**

**ELEPHONE HO**

THE NAKED BOO it's bigger

SCIENTIFICALLY  
TESTED

IN THE LARGEST  
PENCIL FACT  
IN THE WORLD

up to 2 feet of destruction

*She stops at the flash of a light!*

**Sin** reports  
a Record Year  
of Accomplishment

**APPE AND SEE!**

**EMPLOYERS MUT**

of **WAUSAU**

LOOK WHAT WE DID TO DUST

Is this  
our dream  
for her?

**MOO**  
LISTEN  
... LEARN  
ANOTHER  
LANGUAGE

**ART**



Ah-h-h! It's *cvinya tushunka*

**BUSINESS &**



STOP WEARING  
STAY TALKING

up to 2 feet of destruction

magic closet

...rape research  
weakens his bite

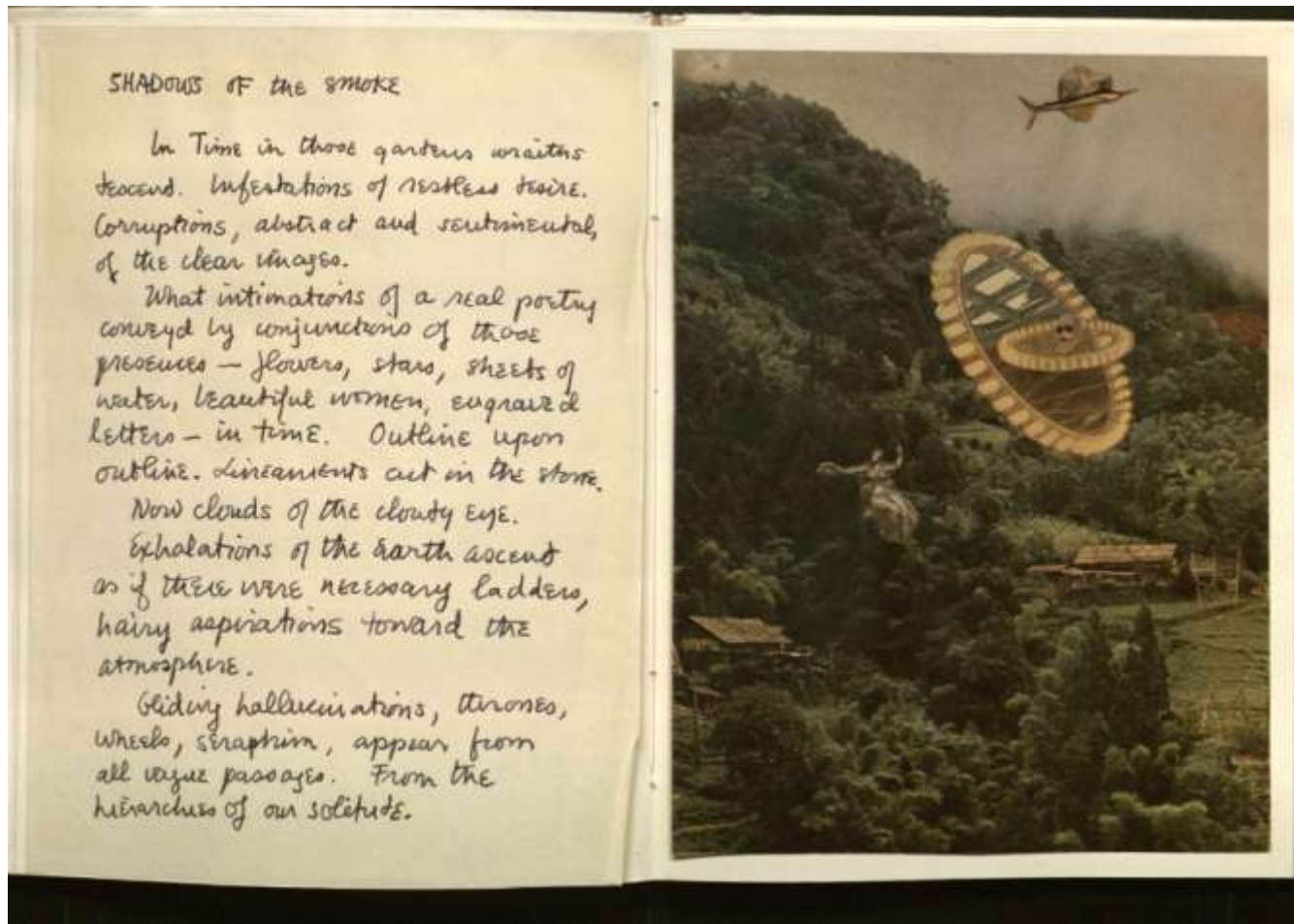
THE BROTHERHOOD OF  
MUSICIANS...  
...LEARN  
ANOTHER  
LANGUAGE

...rape research  
weakens his bite

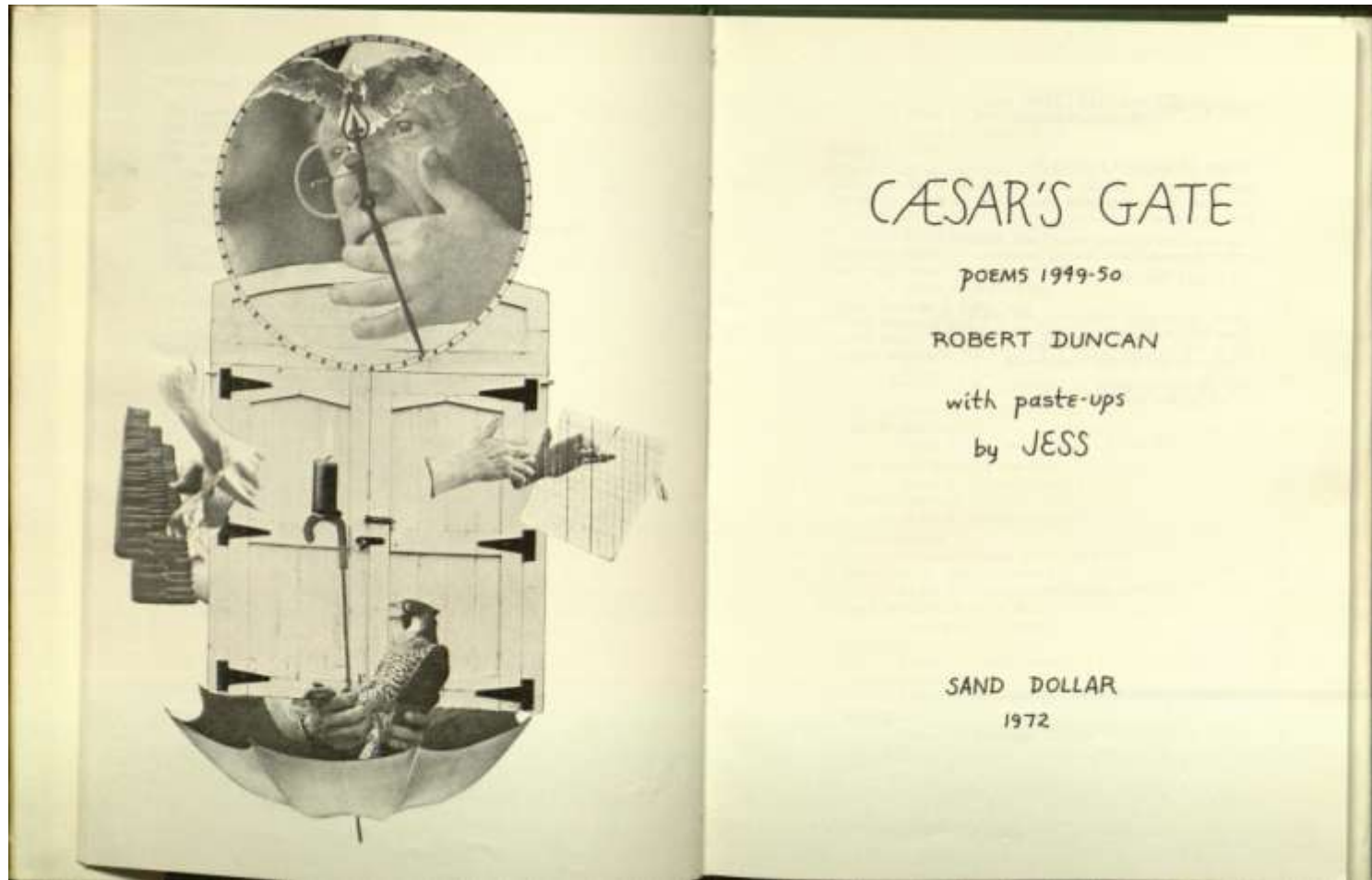
Ah-h-h! It's *cvinya tushunka*

BOOB MURDER ONE + A MAD, MURDEROUS + LOVELESS LOVELESS LOVELESS BOOB MURDER ONE +

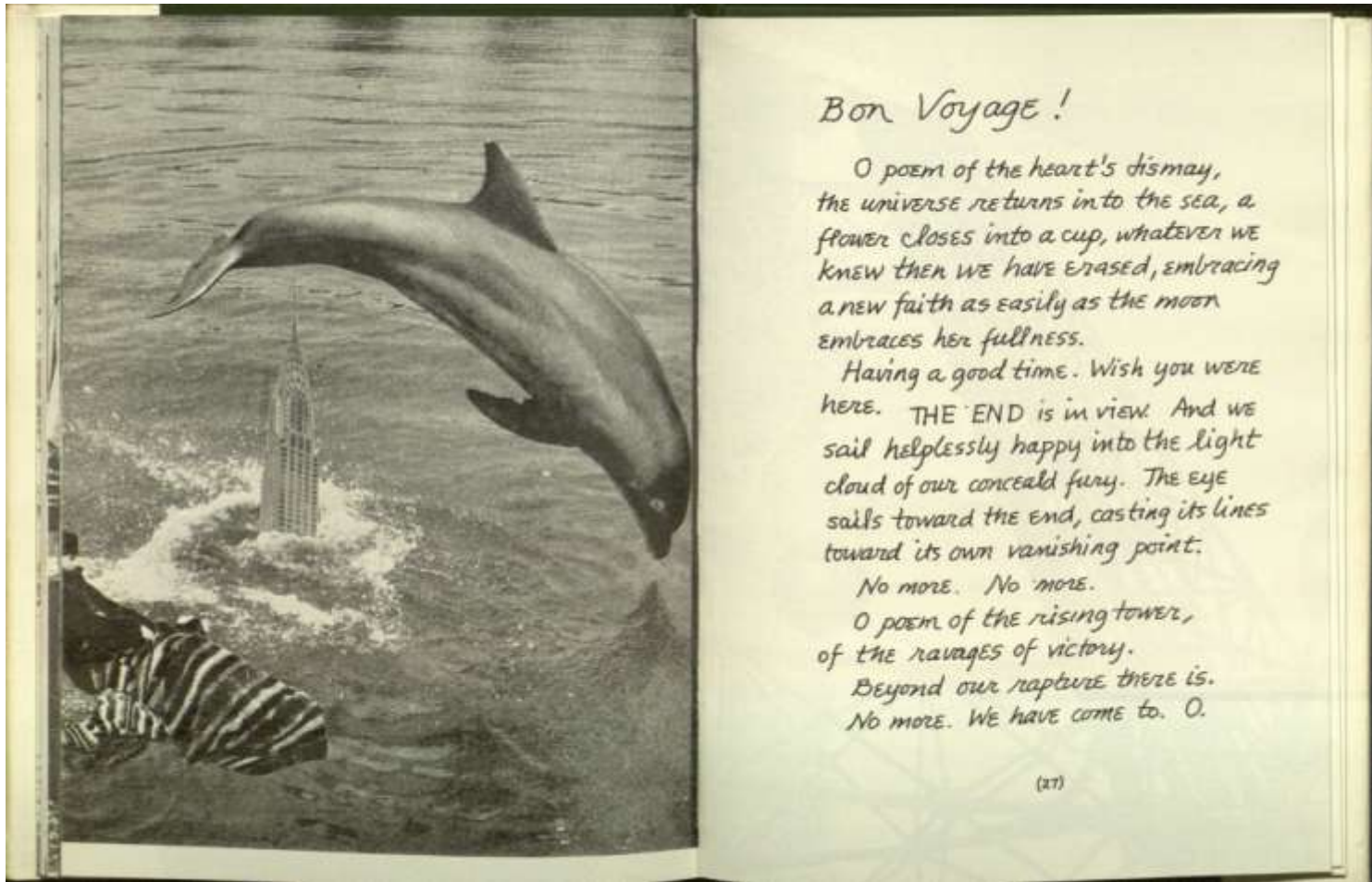
# Robert Duncan/Jess, *Caesar's Gate* (Divers Press, 1955)



# Robert Duncan / Jess, *Caesar's Gate* (Sand Dollar, 1972)



# Robert Duncan / Jess, *Caesar's Gate* (Divers Press, 1955; Sand Dollar, 1972)



## *Bon Voyage!*

O poem of the heart's dismay,  
the universe returns into the sea, a  
flower closes into a cup, whatever we  
knew then we have erased, embracing  
a new faith as easily as the moon  
embraces her fullness.

Having a good time. Wish you were  
here. THE END is in view. And we  
sail helplessly happy into the light  
cloud of our concealed fury. The eye  
sails toward the end, casting its lines  
toward its own vanishing point.

No more. No more.

O poem of the rising tower,  
of the ravages of victory.

Beyond our rapture there is.  
No more. We have come to. O.