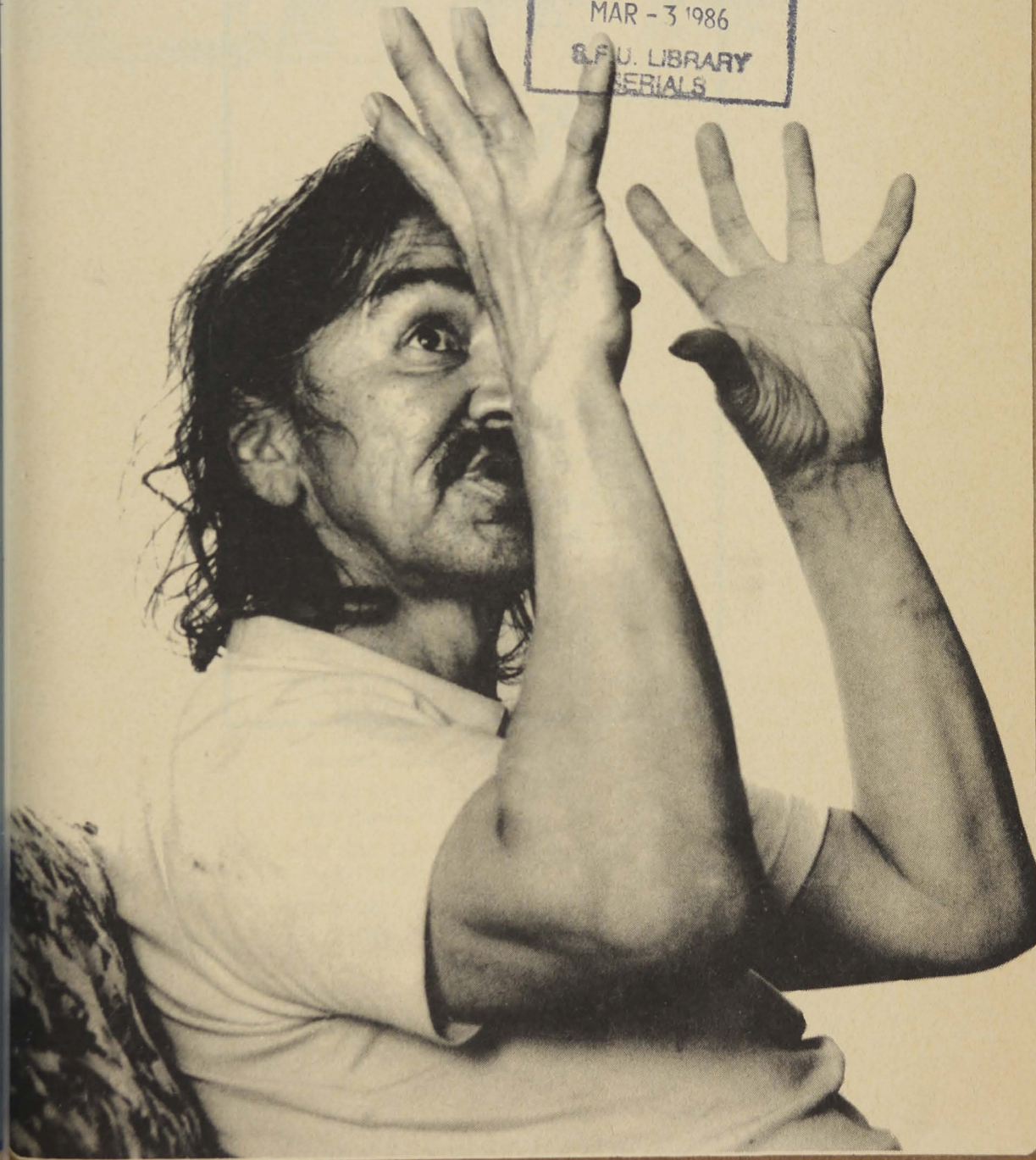


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A to Z of Pigeons

By
E. J. W. Dietz

"Pick up this book and read at least ten pages at random. You will be almost sure to become enthusiastic about Pigeons. I never knew there were so many fascinating color combinations, feather patterns and unusual physical characteristics combined in so many different varieties of Pigeons—both useful and odd—until I read this book."

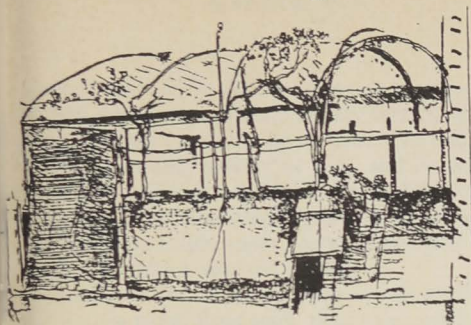
—S. L. Althouse, Mg. Editor, Poultry Item.

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contents

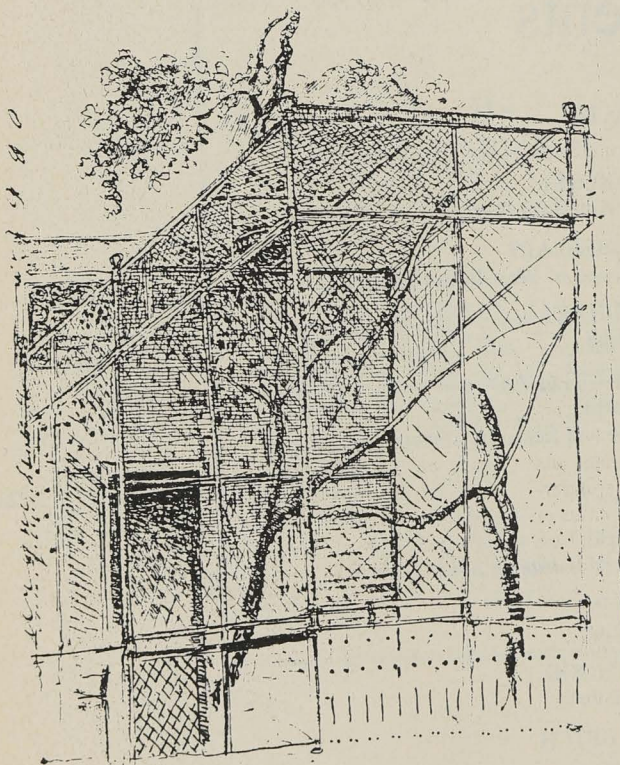
BRIAN COATES	5
Diary	
DIANE WAKOSKI	6
The New American Poetry	
TED CHAMBERLAIN	14
The Language of West Indian Poetry	
JANE URQUHART	21
Emily Brontë	
ROSEMARY SULLIVAN	25
<i>Fifth Business:</i> The Centric and Eccentric Debate	
FRED WAH	28 58
Elite 2, Elite 8	
ROBERT FYFE	29
<i>The Engineer of Human Souls</i>	
PAUL WILSON	34
On Translation	
RAY ELLENWOOD	37
Serbian Relations	
ROBERT KROETCH	40
John Hawkes	
RICK JOHNSON	44
Sheila Fugard	
P.K. PAGE	47
A Brazilian Journal	

FRANCES DUNCAN <i>Steveston</i>	56
STAN DRAGLAND Norval Morrisseau	59
CHRISTOPHER SLEPPO Archives	60

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diary

Today Dennis drives the lawnmower in a more exciting way than the weather or his character seem to indicate. Bruce, 'the boss', is appearing at Slane. The radio has a Springsteen special, midday till five, and Dennis slogs through it — working on the railroad, in construction, 'at' his marriage. The noise is not a problem. Bruce agreeing to come to Slane Castle seems a personal favour to Ireland as well as to fifteen year old Dennis.

The estimate for workshop paint is over £400. Wall paint, ceiling paint, floor paint, door paint, white spirit, brushes, sandpaper — all in two or three varieties. I began work with the first batch swiping desperately at the wall expanses in the hope that the 'Kilroy was here' principle will encourage others to follow. Eileen tells me over lunch that my painting is 'like weaving'. It is not until I start in again that I register this as an insult — and do try to paint the space just once.

We are called to Todds department store for a photocall. They are offering a week's promotion of the pottery. Assistant Manager, McDermott, O Flanagan from Small Business Development, Eileen and I and a passing manageress. McDermott lifts a plant pot in his hand, turns to me, "Does this line show it's handmade?" The pot shows a design of lines. It has too its own "lines" as an artwork. I ask him what he means. "Just making natural conversation for the photo," he hisses, "say something back to me." I pause — and the photo shows me with that professorial, interrogative half-smile that I so dislike in others.

Lena is back from hospital. The stroke has taken away her speech. Her mind is still active and we chat away. I am reminded of the extent to which a conversation is made up of predictable responses. The frustration and anger she showed in the early days has mellowed now. We understand more of her gestures, her odd changes of taste in food and interests. Ways of keeping up the friction are devised. Diversions, games, little mistakes and problems give her some sense of coping with the day-to-day irritations of life.

We arrive, complete with a sharp blue and white display for the store promotion week. I am made anxious by their set-up which is plush, pine and curvy. By Tuesday lunch when I go on duty, two pots have moved, one to an appreciative customer. Many shoppers seem able to 'block out' the stall. This confirms my view that there is a context problem. The store is geared up for tourists. We are seeking long-term local trade. They display with tricky mirrors, hidden lighting, subtle directional aids. We are pushing earthenware aimed at plant-growers and mug-lovers. A week is a long time in a shop. By Friday

evening, I treat customers with the vagueness and insouciance of a regular worker.

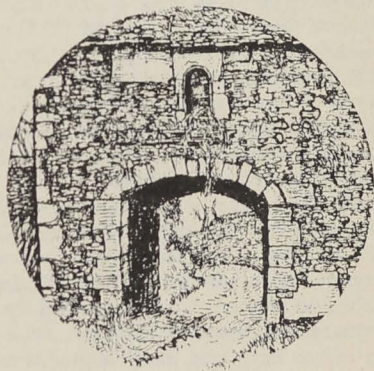
The finals meeting on Wednesday seems a welcome break until it over-runs by two hours for the usual reasons and throws my shop assistant / domestic worker / entrepreneur / employer out of kilter.

Thursday night: I have given Mike a deadline. Finish this workshop by the weekend or no payoff. He arrives with Paul, Séan, sand, cement, plaster and lime. Paul, for his part, is complete with taps, tanks, Wavin tubing, rubber tubing, screws, washers, tape. A lot gets done and the gentle rain that falls on Friday morning baptizes the project, tests the new guttering and refreshes the spirit.

This workshop is six months behind schedule (and a work of art). Lacking a bay window (yet a tribute to the new technology). Idiosyncratic in its wiring (but here and finished, all but). Personalised in its drainage (which is of a clever design). Possessed of a non-bonding floor paint (which I don't recommend). Expensive (an investment).

Writing out Mike's last cheque, I meditate on whether Mike (or, for that matter, God) is indifferent, awkward or just unpredictable.

Brian Coates
Limerick, Ireland



elite 8

I try to "place" you and the hand or head can't, try to get you into my mountains for example but your China youth and the images of place for you before you were twenty are imbued with the green around Canton rice fields, humid Hong Kong masses — I can't imagine what your image of the world was, where you were in it (were you always going home to Swift Current, were you ever at home, anywhere). How much did you share of how small or large the world was after we left the prairies — Trail, Nelson, Cranbrook, Calgary, Vancouver? That "reward" of a real holiday down the Columbia and then up the coast to Vancouver when you sold a share in the Diamond Grill. A few trips to Spokane, hikes into the hills around Nelson for fishing, the gravelly drive to Trail and back. Did any shape of such places ever displace the distancing in your eyes? You looked out at it all but you never really cared if you were there or elsewhere. I think you were prepared to be anywhere. The sun, the warmth, was something you went outside for, outside yourself, stretching and relaxing your working moving body, inside, inside, you never betrayed any imprint of a "world" other than your dark brown eyes.

Fred Wah



contributors

Brian Coates teaches English at Thomond College in Limerick, Ireland. He is married to the potter Eileen Coates. "Diary" appears regularly in *Brick*.

Diane Wakoski is one of the best known poets and critics in America. Her latest book is *The Collected Greed Parts 1-13*, from Black Sparrow Press. She was a long time columnist for the *American Poetry Review*. "The New American Poetry" was originally a talk given at Humboldt State College of California. Wakoski teaches at Michigan State University. Her article originally appeared in *Poetry Flash*.

Ted Chamberlin teaches English at the University of Toronto, and is Principal of New College. He has written on nineteenth and twentieth century literature, and on relations between aboriginal people and settlers. His books include *The Harrowing of Eden: White Attitudes Toward Native People*, and *Ripe was the Drowsy Hour: The Age of Oscar Wilde*. His recent work has been on West Indian and Northern Irish poetry.

Jane Urquhart is the author of *False Shuffles*, *The Little Flowers of Madame de Montespan*, and her forthcoming novel, *The Whirlpool Dream House*, from McClelland Stewart. The photographs of Haworth are her own.

Rosemary Sullivan teaches at the University of Toronto. She edited *Stories by Canadian Women*, and her book of poems, *The Space A Name Makes*, is forthcoming from *Black Moss*.

Fred Wah has written several books of poetry, including *Among, Loki is Buried at Smoky Creek: Selected Poetry*, and *Brethin' My Name with a Sigh*. Wah was one of the founding editors of *TISH* and is a co-editor of the electronic journal, *Swift Current*. The excerpt included here is from *Waiting For Saskatchewan*, Turnstone Press.

Robert Fyfe teaches English in a Toronto highschool and writes for film and video. He is currently working on a project about the artist Carl Schaeffer.

Paul Wilson lives in Toronto. He spent the years of 1967-1977 in Czechoslovakia and he has translated several books by Josef Skvorecky. At present he is working on a translation of Skvorecky's new novel, tentatively titled *Dvojak in Love* and *Letters to Olga* by Vaclav Havel, the Czechoslovakian playwright.

Ray Ellenwood teaches at York University and has translated Jacques Ferron, Marie-Claire Blais, Claude Gauvreau, and others. His most recent book is *Refos Global*, the 1948 manifesto of the Quebec *automatistes*, Exile Edition.

Robert Kroetch is a novelist and poet whose novels include *Badlands* and *Alibi*. He has an on-going sequence of poems called "Field Notes" and his most recent book of poetry is *Advice to my Friends*. The article on John Hawkes was heard on CBC Radio's State of the Arts programme.





Rick Johnson is a writer and broadcaster living in Toronto. With his wife, Judy Wells, he has written two cookbooks for Penguin: *The Pie's The Limit* and *The Noble Spud*. He is currently working on a series of radio programmes on contemporary poetry.

Sheila Fugard was born in Birmingham, England in 1932 and has lived in South Africa since the age of eight. Married to the playwright, Athol Fugard, they spend half the year in New York and half in South Africa. She has two poetry collections: *Threshold* (1975) and *Mythic Things* (1981); she is also the author of three novels: *The Castaways* (1972), *Rite of Passage* (1976) and *A Revolutionary Woman* (1985). She is now working on a fourth novel and a collection of poetry.

Frances Duncan is a Vancouver novelist who has written *Dragonhunt*, *Finding Home*, and several books for children.

P.K. Page is the author of several books of poetry, the most recent of which is *The Glass Air*, selected poems. The excerpt printed here is from *A Brazilian Journal*, forthcoming from Lester & Orpen, Dennys.

Stan Dragland is the author of *Wilson MacDonald's Western Tour*, the novel *Peckertracks* and, most recently, *Journeys Through Bookland*, from which "Shapechanger" is excerpted. He is a founding editor of *Brick*.

Helena Wilson came to Canada from Czechoslovakia seven years ago. Her portrait of Norval Morrisseau is one of a series she made while working on a study of Ontario Indian artists which travelled, as an exhibition, around the province.

Tony Urquhart teaches in The Department of Fine Art at the University of Waterloo. His work is exhibited at the Baux-Xi Gallery in Toronto. A collaboration with Matt Cohen, *In Search of Leonardo* will be published this spring by Coach House Press.

Susan Musgrave lives in Sidney, B.C. She is the author of *The Charcoal Burners*, a novel, as well as several books of poetry including *Tarts & Muggers* and *A Man to Marry, A Man to Bury*. Her most recent book is *Cocktails at the Mausoleum*.

Christopher Sleppo resides in Rome.

