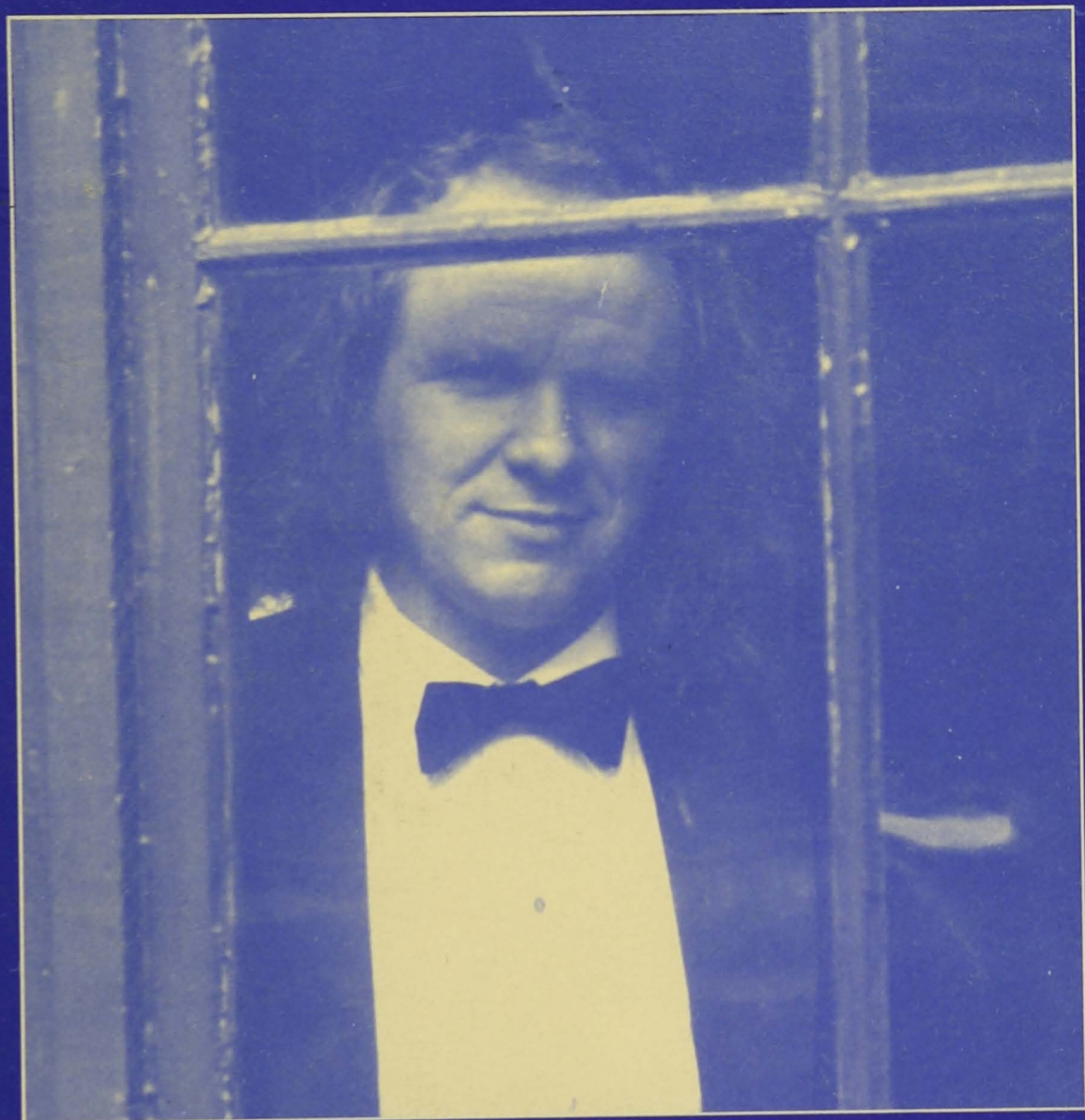


Read the Way He Writes:
A Festschrift for

bpNichol

Open Letter, Sixth Series, Nos. 5 - 6: Summer-Fall 1986



Read the Way He Writes: A Festschrift for bpNichol

Edited by Paul Dutton & Steven Smith

JOURNALIST: Why don't you write the way you talk?

GERTRUDE STEIN: Why don't you read the way I write?

Contents

Foreword. PAUL DUTTON	5
bpNichol On The Train. GEORGE BOWERING	7
Metamorphosis. BOB COBBING	21
A Visit. ROBERT KROETSCH	31
The Seripress Collaborations: Nichol & Caruso. BARBARA CARUSO	37
From A Commonplace Book. THOMAS A. CLARK	47
Surviving the Paraph-raise. STEPHEN SCOBIE	49
bpNichol: Sonic Snapshots. Fragmentary Movements. STEVEN SMITH	69
Wizard Oil and Indian Sagwa. R. MURRAY SCHAFER	73
Paternal Body as Outlaw. LOLA LEMIRE TOSTEVIN	77
St. Rum. VICTOR COLEMAN	81
Book bells, slowly moving. DICK HIGGINS	83
Random Walking <i>The Martyrology's</i> Book V RAFAEL BARRETO-RIVERA	101
for bpn. MARGARET AVISON	109
Soul Rising out of the Body of Language: Presence, Process and Faith in <i>The Martyrology</i> . BRIAN HENDERSON	111
bpNichol The Movies. MICHAEL ONDAATJE	129
Confronting Conventions: The Musical / Dramatic Works of bpNichol. PAUL DUTTON	131

Project For An Opera Of The Twentieth Century G. S. JOHN BENTLEY MAYS	151
Addition to the Great Canadian Dictionary. EARLE BIRNEY	155
bpNichol: A Sonography. RICHARD TRUHLAR	157
letters for Nichol. JOHN RIDDELL	161
Drawing. ROSALIND GOSS	168
Exegesis / Eggs à Jesus: <i>The Martyrology</i> as a Text in Crisis FRANK DAVEY	169
2. JIRI VALOCH	183
Three Exercises. JIRI VALOCH	183
B. P. Specific Writing. CHRISTOPHER DEWDNEY	185
Poems – Nocturnes. JOE ROSENBLATT	188
Poetry. LOUIS DUDEK	189
<i>The Martyrology</i> as Paragram. STEVE MC CAFFERY	191
UR L: on the autobiography of you. DAPHNE MARLATT	207
The Child in Him. SEAN O'HUIGIN	211
Some Notes in Progress about a Work in Process: bpNichol's <i>The Martyrology</i> . DOUGLAS BARBOUR	215
now they found th wagon cat in human body. BILL BISSETT	225
Briefly, To Martyr and Suffer. GERRY SHIKATANI	227
The Mutual Friend. BRIAN DEDORA	237
Music at the Heart of Thinking: <i>Journeying @ the Returns</i> FRED WAH	239
bpNichol: Some Notes on Myth. DAVID DONNELL	243
Could've Been. SHARON THESEN	247
Notes toward a beepiography. JW CURRY	249
A Classical Symphony in 4 Movements 4bpNicol (sound poem) CHARLES MORROW	249 <i>in absentia</i>

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Cover photo: Michael Ondaatje

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Music at the Heart of Thinking *Journeying @ the Returns*

Fred Wah

This series of *MHT* is written in the development of a critical poetic that sees language as the true practice of thought. Here, in homage to bpNichol's own work in enlarging the field of perception in such poetics, I have used his early text, *Journeying @ the returns*, as a writing to stumble over and with because that is the one that started for me, before the *Martyrologies* and everything else, the word-wobble so central to the axis of our ongoing dialogue.

music at the heart of thinking, no. 21

Returning & the journeys time wafted Olson's notes prairie barnyard grain elevator siding mentality that hawk circling within the head windows with a bead on eyes (intense eyes) or fluid ears let's say cities mapped too overlay keyed lock in his own handwriting samsara liturgy (I like the light!) you see saying it too near the sea you know what I can't get over is the synaptic speed of now you don't see it now you do make it up and it's not made up all the bodies all the fire all the love all in these motions.

music at the heart of thinking, no. 22

Always think inside myself no place without death Kwakiutl song sings or watch sit scramble and catch last blue Pacific horizon no end to the complete thought transference of which the words 'circling eyes' Mao knew this is the life writing questions even every rock etched in wonder sometimes that song feels like the master paradigm or river we return to with a sigh the archipelago syntagmed 'empty from breathing' but the body as a place that is as a container has suddenness so the politics of dancing is a dead giveaway to the poet's 'nothing will have taken place but the place.'

music at the heart of thinking, no. 23

Point with a stick better still a charred one that's it slots or bumps to catch your foot or your breath forked branches everywhere when we need them à la slingshots in the gulley transphrastic symmetry sticks to the point I keep running into this 'soft pad of (the) feet' not as Mallarmé would say of the hero (la) talon nu or it could be Bakhtin's jivey beak (de la Cosa's eyes included) the prehended world Ah! your 'print still visible drifting out to sea' dialogue on the contrary the same but trees bucked and split or shadows even that's what style is.

music at the heart of thinking, no. 24

The word 'ancient' in your fire fragments in histology filtered sememes with names deliver the mythology probably before or first map brain-word always the flower of creation black sun chrysanthemum at dawn on June 6 1944 such 'dragging the eyes' to the 'eye of the dragon' is no different from the notion of war as another temporal relationship seeded I keep finding the tree from the sky Yggdrasil 'always, beautiful tree' and the pleistocene cave cups east European changed carriers hence the schema leaves all over the ground and then it snows.

music at the heart of thinking, no. 25

Wall of the mind ocean continental trances inchoate rampart wet cedar-bark wickerwork avec traces whose primary spatial finger 'wants to live there' counterbalanced and I spot you in the window with your lawless plan your récit strapped with ta'wil and bridge city too the gentle sea appears out of the table forever 'waves breaking' the proto-indo-european hedge in the Vancouver rain footsure in the couloir mountains this is where the wall ends.

music at the heart of thinking, no. 26

Your own anthropology jumps like a bear from the apple tree tonight her 'breasts glistening'? no foreign words there except maybe love which I got after Earth as hunger 'tasting flesh in mouth' her depth anima logical triple

register reach for an imprint split between sight and thought colour can do so it's eth as in ethic means why any one returns plus confluence plus edges of a genetic inscription or homes another forgotten message carried there where the character sticks and also the mother when Daphne insists on the conscious I feel caught outside the tripartite knowledge the red of the apple.

music at the heart of thinking, no. 27

'one narrow world' in French is why signs in language carry the secret imitation Kristeva points to in the hidden interior polemic here the 'other' passes poetry as magic to bury, chill, and fill our faces, hearts, and bodies the feelings I have stand with Polo's journeying if a Pacific Rim could be imaged up the liturgical sea and bells would have shown the Khan some other Italian Cavalcanti or Calvino the room of despair the sudden confusion runic grabbing of the right hand to fill the left as you say 'that might be anywhere' that's what I think that flow is.

music at the heart of thinking, no. 28

Salt for the tongue's heart heartening desire paradoxical cold and hot Canadian presence / absence mime's right action right mind et al simple terms a vision Avison teaches frames leaks hollows and flows in '63 she and Olson walked out to the cliffs at Point Grey oceanward falling west to 'placeless place' he says she did not walk out if you see his West 6 but I remember the day and it wasn't evening it was afternoon he says for him the most important conversation and event was this Pacific continental wedge 'that marge of the few feet make the difference between the West, and the Future' magnet in the word finds this salt exciting if there was no wall there wouldn't be the heat not just 'Is' and 'is not' come clear as she says but how much 'in the tongue's prison' of the dream this overlaps 'the rest is history.'

music at the heart of thinking, no. 29

Strip it clean the old scrub logography gesture for the body to denote ideas as in the mythologem 'in the middle of wreckage' bare our selves for me it was marriage I fix my life up each event is as hard to believe whole winters on this hillside face west (actually a bit south) to denote not thought or

experience but synonymously such painted over natural wood impossible Chinese Sam Perry helped to get the walls and ceilings painted over everything it is still a cave from where we dare to venture or love the word for ocean doesn't stand for such a notion there are always these planks over the windows and these re-built connections as names 'upon our breath.'

music at the heart of thinking, no. 30

Boomerang the truth in How to Read a Map or don't pay attention to the terrain those signs that became questions for the city the complicated tracks remain 'a view of histories' incredibly difficult shapes and languages but proportion gets it together and south of here tomatoes still ripen that story the mind traces feathers your hawk for example in motion 'counter-balanced by a movement a way back' look at them they are not birds we still think they're stars or headless moons that pictogram of 'a closed universe' the circle a story sometimes you tell yourself as Saussure says 'covered with patches cut from its own cloth' or that big boulder in the middle of it 'has an etching / a face' *journeying and the returns* he called it cute.

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