

Abstracts

- 16 **Avital Ronell, On the Misery of Theory without Poetry: Heidegger's Reading of Hölderlin's "Andenken"**
 The article considers the tendency among young theorists to forget or repress poetry. As symptom, the aberrant dissociation of poetry from theory reflects an increasing technicization, not to say impoverishment, of critical language. The theoretical elders, on the other hand, clung to poetic insight with the urgency of hunger. Focusing on tropes of greeting, celebration, and sending, I explore an exemplary instance in the encounter between poetry and thought—when Heidegger met Hölderlin. Still, Heidegger's appropriation of poetry leaves a violent residue, a kind of critical warping that has remained largely uninterrogated. I turn to a moment in the unprecedented testimony of Hölderlin's late thought in which the poet names the modern experience of mourning. While Heidegger's later work appears to be characterized by a similar tonality of mourning, Hölderlin's thought of finitude is often more joyous and affirmative. I zero in on the figure of "dark-skinned women" in the poem "Andenken" to show how philosophy is tripped up by the permanent insurrection that poetry conducts. (AR)
- 33 **Joseph Campana, On Not Defending Poetry: Spenser, Suffering, and the Energy of Affect**
 Early modern defenses of poetry, such as Philip Sidney's influential *Defence of Poesy*, respond to long-standing anxieties about the validity of poetry by asserting the primacy of its moral function. Sidney's heroic rhetoric locates poetry's "power" in its capacity to create iconic portraits ("speaking pictures") of unchanging moral truths. Edmund Spenser departs markedly from Sidney's static moral vision of the function of poetry. Whereas Sidney privileges *enargeia*, or vividness, *The Faerie Queene* works consistently to disarm the heroic masculinity that violently produces *enargeia* as a form of iconic, moral clarity. Spenser's Legend of Temperance finds *enargeia*, or vitality, in moments of suffering and in corresponding moments of sympathy. Through suffering, Spenser highlights the dense networks of affect and obligation that defy moral and visual clarity. For him, poetry resonates with the affective energies of corporeal experience, from which language derives its capacity to move. (JC)
- 49 **R. Clifton Spargo, The Ethical Uselessness of Grief: Randall Jarrell's "The Refugees"**
 From among the varied American responses to the events we now call the Holocaust, the most notorious of which may well be the United States' illiberal policy on refugees from 1938 to 1944, there emerged a canon of internationalist-minded literature that included Randall Jarrell's "The Refugees." In his refugee poem, Jarrell experimented with the form of public elegy, interrogating poetic conventions of mourning in order to consider the ethical and political consequences of our statements of grief. With its extremely economic form, "The

Refugees” offers a study of the lyric’s investment in an economy of identity all too readily coinciding with nationalistic modes of belonging. As the poem positions itself as an interventionist yet fatalistic response to contemporary refugees, I argue, it helps us articulate a definition of ethics, which necessarily involves the negotiation of cultural boundaries and remains always a matter of eminently political concern. (RCS)

66 **Eric R. J. Hayot, The Strange Case of Araki Yasusada: Author, Object**

The essay reads the authorial hoax surrounding Araki Yasusada, said to be the author of poems relating experiences in post-Hiroshima Japan. The case—Yasusada’s poems seem to have been written by a white American man—recalls (not for the first time) the difficulty the literary imagination has in dealing with biographical authorship. After examining the polemics the case generated around poetries of witness, the essay connects Yasusada’s imagination to three other ideas: first, the collectively pathological memory associated with historical trauma (exemplified by Binjamin Wilkomirski’s *Fragments*); second, subject-object relations in modern poetry (the essay closely reads two Yasusada poems in terms of their phenomenological concerns); and, third, a debate around the question of “woman’s writing” carried on by Nancy K. Miller and Peggy Kamuf and inspired by another authorial hoax. The essay concludes by thinking about authors as historical objects—objects of readers’ subjective perception of them. (ERJH)

82 **Daniel Tiffany, Fugitive Lyric: The Rhymes of the Canting Crew**

This essay examines the correlation between lyric obscurity and lyric communicability—that is, the capacity of lyric poetry to serve, even in the absence of understanding (for certain communities of readers), as a matrix of social and cultural cohesion. The essay takes up this question by examining the contours of a little-known vernacular tradition in poetry and by considering the correspondences, in a limited sense, between slang and poetry. Specifically, the essay examines the permutations of the so-called canting tradition (lyrics written in the jargon of the criminal underworld) and its relation to the dominant poetic tradition. (DT)

108 **Carrie Noland, Phonic Matters: French Sound Poetry, Julia Kristeva, and Bernard Heidsieck**

This essay recounts my attempt to teach poetry through theory and theory through poetry by juxtaposing Bernard Heidsieck’s sound poem *Canal Street* with Julia Kristeva’s *La révolution du langage poétique*. The psychoanalytic model Kristeva applies to her exegesis of Mallarmé’s “Prose” proves insufficient to account for Heidsieck’s materialist poetics. However, by reading Kristeva beside Heidsieck, we can gain a glimpse of the resources held in reserve by

both texts. Kristeva's attention to poetry's phonematic material facilitates a sound-sensitive approach to Heidsieck's poem. Heidsieck's poem, in turn, suggests that such material reveals not the libidinal drives of a subject but the nonlibidinal, impersonal, acoustico-physiological instrument undergirding the expressive potential of the human voice. The juxtaposition of theoretical and poetic texts demonstrates that poetry possesses an analytic force that can be applied to the theory meant to explicate it. (CN)

128 **Christophe Wall-Romana, Mallarmé's Cinepoetics: The Poem Uncoiled by the Cinématographe, 1893–98**

Between 1893 and his death in 1898, Stéphane Mallarmé experimented with a poetics permeated by the emerging technology of cinema. Close to technicians and journalists of early film, Mallarmé developed what might be called a cinepoetics, especially in *Un coup de dés* (1897)—the ur-modernist visual poem whose preface recoups the single declaration he made on cinema—and in the unrealized project known as *Le Livre* (1893–98), a poetic performance involving electrical lighting and image projection. Close readings make explicit Mallarmé's cinepoetic aesthetics. Its epistemology of *déroulement* 'unfolding' is compared with that of other 1890s figures: Étienne-Jules Marey, Henri Bergson, and Loïe Fuller. Cinepoetry has not been recognized as the distinct practice it was, although Walter Benjamin and Jacques Derrida came close to theorizing Mallarmé's interest in cinema. Cinepoetic experimentation has shadowed the whole French vanguard. The study of its genealogy should reshape our understanding of the intersection of modernist lyricism and new media. (CW-R)

148 **Catherine Robson, Standing on the Burning Deck: Poetry, Performance, History**

This paper considers the significance of the memorized poem in Victorian schools across the English social spectrum. I use Felicia Hemans's culturally ubiquitous "Casabianca" as a lens to examine the processes by which compulsory recitation forged short-term and long-term bodily relations between individuals and measured language. I argue that the denigration of regular poetic form prominent in the twentieth century's rejection of works like Hemans's poem is an inevitable, if disavowed, response to their institutional histories in the lowest-status echelons of the educational system. The fragmented survival of "Casabianca" in English popular consciousness today is the last remaining trace of its pedagogical past, of a time when the iamb connected to the heartbeat in a manner that we no longer appreciate and cannot feel. (CR)

163 **Lucy McDiarmid, A Box for Wilfrid Blunt**

This essay analyzes the testimonial occasion organized by Lady Gregory, Yeats, and Pound to honor the poet and anti-imperialist Wilfrid Scawen Blunt (1840–

1922). On 18 January 1914, Blunt welcomed six younger poets to his house in Sussex, where they dined on a peacock culled from his flock. At the ritual center of the meal was the presentation to Blunt of a marble box containing his guests' poems; on the top of the box, designed by Gaudier-Brzeska, was a reclining nude woman. The dinner had a double purpose: to construct a poetic genealogy that would give meaning to a distinctly masculine literary tradition and to make that genealogy visible. Accounts of the event were planted in four journals, and the famous photograph, with the tall, impressively bearded Blunt surrounded by his scions, appears in all the poets' biographies. With its potent combination of homosocial intimacy and artistic glamour, the "peacock dinner" claimed an important place in its participants' memories and resonated in their writing for many years. (LMcD)

181 **Michael Clune, "Everything We Want": Frank O'Hara and the Aesthetics of Free Choice**

The accumulation of contingent personal details characterizing Frank O'Hara's poetry should be read in relation to his representation of personal choice. Examining O'Hara's poetic and critical texts in the context of American economic and political theory of the fifties, this essay suggests that the question of how personal choice becomes the ordering principle of a poem is identical to the urgent contemporary question of how personal choice becomes the ordering principle of a nation. Cold war discourse depicts personal choice as the guiding principle of a liberal society directed by the sovereign individual citizen. In his personal poetics, O'Hara reverses the liberal dynamic. Instead of reflecting the interiority of the chooser, O'Hara's choices are open to the contingencies of the social environment. Through this radical representation of choice, O'Hara raises the utopian specter of a collective national subject. (MC)

197 **Eric C. Walker, The Muse of Indifference**

This essay is about the pressure on the words *poetry* and *marriage* to pair off homologously, to behave isomorphically, and about the forms of resistance to that pressure, examples of which I locate under a term, *indifference*, that in Romanticism is coupled with conjugality to signify not apathy but recalcitrance. Reading Austen, Hegel, Kierkegaard, Schlegel, and Barbauld, I adopt *indifference* to describe writing that works in fugitive ways outside the forensic boundaries of marriage culture, which constrain marriage writing whether it is epithalamic or anticonjugal. I then argue that Marianne Moore's "Marriage" (1923) and Anne Carson's *The Beauty of the Husband* (2001) do not write narrowly for or against marriage as, outrageously, freedom's necessary form but, more widely, write against the foundational grain of a pervasive marriage culture that would preempt the subjects and forms of writing, as well as the question of freedom. (ECW)

219 **Virginie Greene, Three Approaches to Poetry**

In this essay, I reflect on the empirical and subjective foundations of critical readings of poetry. I use my own experience, not because it is more valid than anyone else's but because I have direct access to it. The first section, "The Used-Book-Store Approach," addresses the formation of poetic canons and the position of the reader as an agent and a consumer. The second section, "The Subway Approach," gives an example of close reading in a setting where the world within the poem, the world within the reader, and the world outside the reader lose their borders. The third section, "The Rare-Book-Room Approach," examines the impulse to seek the real thing that poetry can trigger and proposes that the first critical step for the reader consists in assessing the status of the poem as his or her object. (VG)

235 **Susan Stewart, What Praise Poems Are For**

This essay is concerned with the relations between praise and aesthetic freedom exemplified by the practice of making odes. The ritual, economic, and agonistic functions of Pindaric odes and the mastering of subjective enthusiasm and objectification of value that Hegel found at work in such poems are compared with the belated, self-transforming expression of emotion characterizing Coleridge's composition of his "Dejection: An Ode" of 1802. (SS)