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20th century poetry: Britain and America

An exhibition from the Rare Books Collection



Introduction

The centrality of Ezra Pound as the chief facilitator and proselytiser of modernity in Anglo-American poetry is evident a century later. Pound's prescriptions for a musicalised prosody, that would free English verse from the metronomic beat of the iambic pentameter, and the emphasis he placed on the clarification of the poetic image, provide a definitive influence for the development and practice of twentieth century verse. His explorations of simultaneist collage techniques, utilising the field of the page as a template for composition, were encapsulated in the cardinal text of Modernist poetry, T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, featured here in its 1922 edition.

In spite of the misguided allegiances of his later political associations, the Pound influence endures across several generations. A second wave of American modernists emerged in the 1930s, labelling their work 'Objectivist': the valuable edition of the *Active Anthology* included here is signed by Pound's great contemporary, William Carlos Williams, and features major voices – such as Louis Zukofsky, Basil Bunting and George Oppen – whose work has only recently come to prominence. The post-war explosion in American poetry, best known for its counter-cultural emanation in the Beat movement, was equally indebted to the pioneering experiments of the first wave of Modernists: Allen Ginsberg was a protégé of Williams, who modelled his declamatory style on Pound's expansionary experiments with the potentialities of poetic rhythm.

An alternative pathway for this history can be identified through the French Symbolist inflection evident in Wallace Stevens' work. The New York poets who emerged contemporaneously with the Beats, including John Ashbery and Frank O'Hara, incorporated European *avant garde* modes of composition, especially those of Surrealism: their coolly ironic and intellectual poetry provides an obvious contrast to the expressive and overtly political approach of Gregory Corso and Ginsberg. The exhibition presents an extremely rare edition of Ashbery's first volume, *Turandot* (1953), alongside Stevens' important 1923 collection, *Harmonium*, to demonstrate this lineage of inheritance. The Cubist style of Gertrude Stein also responded to the revolution in visual arts that was occurring on the continent, and provides another line of influence for Ashbery and his tribe of contemporary followers, as well as for a range of visual and sound poetries.

Yet the formalist approach which can be identified in the two great voices of early twentieth century poetry, W.B. Yeats and Thomas Hardy, was never erased by these waves of poetic Modernism. The 'Georgian' style, of which Pound was so dismissive, can be traced in the work of the American, Robert Frost; and it has a continuing relevance for English poets in particular (Philip Larkin was notably sustained by the poetry of Hardy). The stark realities of World War One, as described by Siegfried Sassoon, and the political exigencies of the Spanish conflict – delineated by W.H. Auden and Roy Campbell (from opposing sides) - required a more direct and traditional response. The same might be said for other great poetries of witness, including those of the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s, which spoke for the first time of African American experience in a language of candid expression.

These contending currents which emerged in poetry at the beginning of the twentieth century, exemplified in the documents collected in this exhibition, therefore have a continuing significance for the manifold controversies of poets in the present day.

Dr John Hawke,
School of English, Communications and Performance Studies

14 June – 27 September 2013

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Thank you to Dr John Hawke,
Lecturer, School of English,
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LARGE UPRIGHT CASE

1. Eliot, T. S. (Thomas Stearns), 1888-1965.

Poems. (New York : Alfred A. Knopf, 1920)

T. S. Eliot was born in America but went to England in 1915 where he lived for the remainder of his life. His first volume, *Prufrock and Other Observations* (1917), established him as a poet with a new style. *Poems* (1920) was his first American publication, and includes most of his pre-*Waste Land* poems. "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," with its air of elegant tedium, is usually considered the best of these. It begins, "Let us go then, you and I, / When the evening is spread out against the sky / Like a patient etherized upon a table."

2. Eliot, T. S. (Thomas Stearns), 1888-1965.

***The waste land.* 2nd ed.** (New York : Boni and Liveright, 1922)

The Waste Land was first published in *The Criterion* (Oct. 1922) and *The Dial* (Nov. 1922). It first appeared in book form in the US (Dec. 1922). The second impression, on display, followed soon after. The first English edition was published

Sept. 1923 by Leonard and Virginia Woolf at the Hogarth Press.



It is the iconic 20th-century modern poem, presenting a sequence of vivid, disjointed images, written in free verse. The poet's point of view is professedly that of the cultured man standing out against the vulgar encroachments of contemporary society, "These fragments I have shored against my ruins."

Extremely contentious at the time, it was eagerly taken up by the younger generation, and continues to be the single most influential poem of the 20th century.

3. *Blast* : review of the great English vortex. (London : John Lane, 1914-1915) 2 v.

Blast, the magazine for the "Vorticist" movement was edited by the artist and author, Wyndham Lewis. Much of it was printed in a bold sans-serif type. It included a manifesto, art and poetry. Ezra Pound contributed several poems to the first number. Most were written in the "imagist" style popular at the time, but the first of his poems printed here begins, "Let us deride the smugness of 'The Times': / GUFFAW! / So much the gagged reviewers, / It will pay them when the worms are wriggling in their vitals; / These were they who objected to newness, / HERE are their TOMBSTONES." (p. 45)

4. Pound, Ezra, 1885-1972.

Exultations of Ezra Pound. (London : Elkin Mathews, 1909)

Alongside Eliot, Ezra Pound set the pattern for modern poetry. He helped Eliot edit *The Waste Land*, pruning it back for publication. Both Eliot and Pound were born in America but settled in England, Pound in 1908, and Eliot in 1915.

5. Pound, Ezra, 1885-1972.

Lustra of Ezra Pound. (London : Elkin Mathews, 1916)

Pound's poetry often shows the influence of Walt Whitman with a declamatory, colloquial tone meant to add intensity, and to lift his works above the level of the mainstream poets of the time whom Pound regarded as insipid.

6. Pound, Ezra, 1885-1972.

Poems 1918-21 : including three portraits and four cantos. (New York : Boni and Liveright, 1921)

This volume includes some of Pound's most important works, "Homage to Sextus Propertius," "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley," and "Cantos" 4 to 7. Pound, even more than Eliot, used earlier cultures as touchstones against which to test the culture of his own time. Provence, ancient Greece and Rome, China and Japan, all provided him with imagery. His *Cantos* began to appear in the magazine, *Poetry* in 1917, and he continued to write these for the rest of his life, using them to expound his cultural, political and economic views.

7. Pound, Ezra, 1885-1972.

***Active anthology* / edited by Ezra Pound.** (London : Faber and Faber, 1933)

In a note to this publication Pound states, "I am presenting an assortment of writers, mostly ill known in England, in whose verse



a development appears to be taking place.” It includes works by Eliot and Pound as well as William Carlos Williams, e.e. cummings, Marianne Moore, Louis Zukofsky and poems by Ernest Hemingway.

This copy belonged to Williams and has his signature and a ms. emendation to one of his poems (p. 32)

8. Eliot, T. S. (Thomas Stearns), 1888-1965.

Four quartets. (London : Faber, 1944)

Eliot's other major work was *Four Quartets*. This is a sequence of four poems which first appeared separately: *Burnt Norton* in 1936, *East Coker*, 1940, *The Dry Salvages*, 1941, and *Little Gidding* in 1942. They are philosophical poems tracing Eliot's spiritual and aesthetic quest. “And the end of all our exploring / Will be to arrive where we started / And to know the place for the first time.” (*Little Gidding*)

9. Stevens, Wallace, 1879-1955.

Harmonium. [2nd edition] (New York : Knopf, 1931)

Wallace Stevens attended Harvard, then worked as a journalist in New York before returning to study Law. After graduating he became a lawyer in an insurance company, but he is best-known as a poet. *Harmonium* first appeared in 1923. The reviewers noted his skills as a virtuoso, an aesthete whose poems displayed a “riot of gorgeousness.” They are clever and lyrical and had a profound influence on such later poets as John Ashbery. “I do not know which to prefer, / The beauty of inflections / Or the beauty of innuendos, / The blackbird whistling / or just after.” (“Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird.”)

10. Ashbery, John, 1927-

Turandot : and other poems, with four drawings by Jane Freilicher. (New York : Editions of the Tibor de Nagy Gallery, 1953)

Turandot is Ashbery's first book, published in an edition of 300 copies. He quickly struck the note which he has maintained throughout his career, mixing lyricism with a light, humorous, at times parodic tone. “Much that is beautiful must be discarded / So that we may resemble a taller / Impression of ourselves. Moths climb in the flame / Alas, that wish only to be the flame.” (“Illustration.”)



It was *Turandot's* publisher, John Bernard Myers of Tibor de Nagy Gallery, who coined the phrase “New York School” in referring to Ashbery and his fellow-poets, Kenneth Koch and Frank O'Hara.

11. Ashbery, John, 1927-

Some trees, with a foreword by W. H. Auden. (New Haven : Yale University Press, 1956)

Auden was another of Ashbery's early influences, and in his Introduction he comments on the need among modern poets to achieve a new “rhetoric” which will include “strange juxtapositions of imagery, singular associations of ideas.” Certainly Ashbery creates striking images, “The boy seemed to have fallen / from shelf to shelf of someone's rage.” (“Boy”)

12. Auden, W. H. (Wystan Hugh), 1907-1973.

Spain. (London : Faber and Faber 1937)

Auden, Spender, MacNeice, and Day-Lewis were the most prominent English poets during the 1930s. Their poems are typically of political unrest, often using industrial imagery. Auden was very much the dominant figure. He was influenced by Eliot in adopting a modern, discordant tone, although he mixed this with a fond awareness of everyday English life. In the 1930s his work began to take account of the political turmoil in Europe. During the Civil War he went to Spain as a volunteer for the Republicans, and on his return, published his poem “Spain.” “To-morrow for the young the poets exploding like bombs, / The walks by the lake, the weeks of perfect communion; / To-morrow the bicycle races / Through the suburbs on summer evenings. But to-day the struggle.” (p. 11). Later he refused to allow this poem to be reprinted.

13. Spender, Stephen, 1909-

Poems. (London, Faber & Faber, 1935)

The group around Auden was sometimes referred to as the “pylon poets,” from one of Spender's most anthologised poems, “The Pylons,” (1930). It begins with an evocation of the English countryside, “The secret of these hills was stone, and cottages / Of that stone made, / And crumbling roads / That turned on sudden villages. / Now over these small hills they have built the concrete / That trails black wire: / Pylons, those pillars / bare like nude, giant girls that have no secret.”

14. MacNeice, Louis, 1907-1963.

Plant and phantom : poems. (London : Faber and Faber, 1941)

MacNeice was born in Belfast, and was in Ireland in 1939 at the outbreak of the war. He writes of the comfort and familiarity of the place, but then, hears the news on the wireless, "Only in the dark green room beside the fire / With the curtains drawn against the winds and waves / There is a little box with a well-bred voice: / What a place to talk of War." ("The Coming of War")

The Beat Poets

15. Corso, Gregory, 1930-2001

Bomb. (San Francisco : City Lights Books, 1958)

Gregory Corso, Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac were the core members of the "Beat Generation" of the 1950s. This movement began in New York but by the late fifties had moved to San Francisco. They consciously lived in the shadow of "The Bomb." Corso's poem is printed in the shape of a nuclear explosion and begins, "Budger of history Brake of time You Bomb / Toy of universe."

16. Corso, Gregory, 1930-2001

The mutation of the spirit : a shuffle poem. (New York : Death Press, 1964)

In 1959 Corso returned to New York. By 1963, although, by this time an alcoholic and heroin addict, he continued to write and publish. This "shuffle poem" is influenced by his friend the novelist, William Burroughs, who was

experimenting with "cut-ups," a technique where he would cut his writing into pieces and shuffle them into random order. "Etherized Popes their desperate nods / raise welts of confessional memories on my lips."

17. Corso, Gregory, 1930-2001

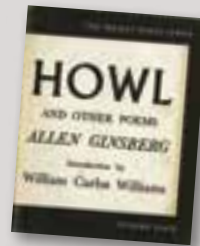
Gasoline, with introduction by Allen Ginsberg. (San Francisco : City Lights Books, 1958)

This was Corso's first book. Ginsberg begins his Introduction, "Open this book as you would a box of crazy toys." Corso writes in his epigraph, "it comes I tell you, immense with gasolined rags and bits of wire and old bent nails, a dark arriviste, from a dark river within." ("How Poetry Comes to Me.")

18. Ginsberg, Allen, 1926-1997.

Howl, and other poems, introduction by William Carlos Williams. (San Francisco : City Lights Books, 1965, c1956)

"Howl" is the poem which created the Beat phenomenon. People typically heard the poems read aloud by the poets themselves. They are Whitmanesque, written to be declaimed, chanted as an anti-establishment litany. "I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness, starving hysterical naked, / dragging themselves through the negro streets at dawn looking for an angry fix, / angelheaded hipsters burning for the ancient heavenly connection to the starry dynamo in the machinery of night."



19. Ferlinghetti, Lawrence, 1919-

Pictures of the gone world. (San Francisco, Calif. : City Lights Books, 1976 printing, c1955)

Ferlinghetti's paperback bookshop, City Lights Books was the headquarters of the Beats in San Francisco and he published their works in his "Pocket Poets" series. His own *Pictures of the Gone World* was no. 1. He was older than the others and saw himself as a bohemian rather than a beatnik. He wrote in praise of the classical sculptor, "In hintertime Praxiteles laid about him with a golden maul / striking into stone his alabaster ideals / uttering all the sculptor's lexicon in visible syllables / He cast bronze trees, petrified a chameleon on one, / made stone doves fly. His callipers measured bridges and lovers and certain other superhumans whom / he caught upon their dusty way to death."

20. Red cats : English versions : [Russian poems / translated] by Anselm Hollo. (San Francisco : City Lights Books, c1962)

The Beats wrote during the Cold War and helped popularise some of the young Russian poets such as Yevgeny Yevtushenko and Andreii Vosnesensky, both of whom toured with Ginsberg. They appear in Anselm Hollo's *Red Cats*.

Hollo was born in Helsinki, and migrated to England in the early 1960s then to America where he lived until his death. He was a poet himself and took part in many readings and underground poetry events. He translated Ginsberg into German and Finnish.



21. Sanders, Ed, 1939-

The toe queen : poems, with a foreword by Consuela. (New York : Fuck You/Press, [1964])

Ed Sanders ran the Peace Eye Bookstore in New York and, using a spirit duplicator, printed poetry which he published under his "Fuck You" imprint. He is best known as a member of the satirical band, "The Fugs."

22. *Bugger : an anthology / edited by Ed Sanders.* (New York : Fuck You Press 1964)

The anthology includes a long, autobiographical poem by Ginsberg.

The Imagists

23. Imagist anthologies

The Imagists were a group of poets who gathered in London around 1910. Their aim was to seek clarity and precision in their works, avoiding emotional language and allowing their ideas to communicate through the image itself. The Japanese "haiku" flavour was apparent. T. E. Hulme was the first of these, but the group included, Ezra Pound, Richard Aldington, D. H. Lawrence, F. S. Flint, Amy Lowell and Hilda Doolittle ("H.D.") They published annual anthologies from 1914-1917. The first, *Des Imagistes*, was edited by Pound; later anthologies by Amy Lowell.

24. Pound, Ezra, 1885-1972.

Ripostes of Ezra Pound : whereto are appended the complete poetical works of T.E. Hulme, with prefatory note. (London : Elkin Mathews, 1915)



Pound's *Ripostes* includes "the complete poetical works" of the original imagist, T. E. Hulme; only five short poems. In 1917, he was killed on the Western Front. His works have often been anthologised, "Above the quiet dock in mid night / Tangled in the tall mast's corded height, / Hangs the moon. What seemed

so far away / Is but a child's balloon, forgotten after play." ("Above the dock"). The cubist cover design is by Pound's wife, Dorothy Shakespear.

25. Flint, F. S. (Frank Stewart), 1885-1960.

In the net of the stars. (London : Elkin Mathews, 1909)

Flint is credited with introducing the works of the French symbolists to his fellow Imagist poets. *In the Net of the Stars* was his first book. It shows the influence of the 1890s as well as early imagism. "One rose petal / Falls to the moss / With the weight of dew, - / Dusky red on darkening green. " ("Evening")

26. H. D. (Hilda Doolittle), 1886-1961. *Sea garden.* (London : Constable, 1916)

H. D. was born in Pennsylvania and met Ezra Pound when she was 15. In 1911 she went to London where, through Pound she became part of the literary set, publishing in the Imagist anthologies and *Poetry* magazine. *Sea garden* was her first book. Some of her poems seem rather over-heated but she could paint a vivid picture, "Sea Gods" ends, "We bring the hyacinth-violet, / sweet, bare, chill to the touch - / and violets whiter than the in-rush / of your own white surf." (p. 31)

27. Lowell, Amy, 1874-1925.

Men, women and ghosts. (New York : Macmillan, 1916)

Amy Lowell began to publish poems in 1910. Her first book appeared in 1912. She was impressed by H. D.'s poetry and her claim to be an "imagiste," and subsequently went to London to meet them. Pound published one of her poems in his anthology, *Des Imagistes* (1914) and Amy became the editor of the later Imagist anthologies. "Red Slippers" is an imagist prose poem, beginning, "Red slippers in a shop-window, and outside in the street, flaws of grey, windy sleet." (p. 348) This copy includes a ms. inscription by the poet, dated 1916, a quote from her war poem, "The Allies," "This is the war of wars, from eye to tail the serpent / has one cause : PEACE!"

Penguin Poets

On the bottom level of the case is a selection of some of the Penguin poetry series. The *Penguin Modern Poets* ran from 1962 to 1979 in 27 volumes. Each volume included three modern poets. The best-known were no. 5 which featured the Beat poets, Corso, Ferlinghetti and Ginsberg, and no. 10, which featured the English equivalent to the Beats, "The Mersey Sound," with Adrian Henri, Roger McGough and Brian Patten.

SMALL UPRIGHT CASE

28. Lawrence, D. H. (David Herbert), 1885-1930.

Birds, beasts and flowers : poems, with wood-engravings by Blair Hughes-Stanton. (London : Cresset Press, 1930)

First published in 1923, this is a limited edition with wood engravings by Blair Hughes-Stanton. It includes some of his best poems, such as "Bat," "A circle swoop, and a quick parabola under the bridge arches / Where light pushes through; / A sudden turning upon itself of a thing in the air. / A dip to the water." Although primarily a novelist, Lawrence also wrote poetry, bringing his own vigorous free verse style to the contemporary scene.



29. Lawrence, D. H. (David Herbert), 1885-1930.

The ship of death and other poems , with wood engravings by Blair Hughes-Stanton. (London : M. Secker, 1933)

These are from Lawrence's *Last Poems* (1932). He died in Italy in 1930, from tuberculosis, and these poems are heavily weighted with thoughts of death. Perhaps the best is "Bavarian Gentians." The colour of the flower represents the descent into the underworld. "Bavarian Gentians, big and dark / darkening the day-time torch-like with the smoking blueness of Pluto's gloom." (p. 101)

30. Wakoski, Diane, 1937-

Trophies. (Santa Barbara : Black Sparrow Press, 1979)

Diane Wakoski is noted for her confessional style, writing sharp poems centred on herself and those around her. In "Pamela's Green Tomato Pie," she observes her hostess, " I sit there sipping my burgundy, asking myself / what the puzzle of this woman is, that she should be special in so many ways, / yet nothing quite fits together, / none of it adds up to 'extraordinary human being,' something / we all call her husband." (p. 10)

Black Sparrow Press published several of Wakoski's books. It was a Californian publishing house specialising in avant-garde authors. The watercolour design on the cover of *Trophies* is by the author.



WALL CASE 1

31. Shaped poetry : a suite of 30 typographic prints : chronicling this literary form from 300 BC to the present / edited, with an essay ... by Glenn Todd ; and with printer's notes by Andrew Hoyem. (San Francisco : Arion Press, 1981)

Poems in the shape of their subjects, and concrete poems which form patterns on their own, have long been features of modern poetry. This Arion Press portfolio includes many historical examples, including possibly the most famous, Mallarme's "Un Coup de Des" (1897). On display are Gertrude Stein's "A Rose is a Rose" (1920), and Ian Hamilton Finlay's "Redboat" (1963).

WALL CASE 2

32. O'Hara, Frank, 1926-1966.

Biotherm : (For Bill Berkson), lithographs by Jim Dine ; essay by Bill Berkson. (San Francisco : Arion Press, 1990)

Frank O'Hara was at Harvard with John Ashbery and later joined him in New York, where they became part of the avant-garde art scene. His poetry is urban in focus and more colloquial than Ashbery's. O'Hara died after he was hit by a dune buggy at Fire Island Beach on Long Island. The long poem, "Biotherm", was published in *Audit* magazine in 1964.

WALL CASE 3

33. Ashbery, John, 1927-

Novel, [drawings by] Trevor Winkfield.
(New York : Grenfell Press, 1998)

The prose poem is another style Ashbery has explored. His *Three Poems* (1972) consists of three long pieces in prose. *Novel* was written by Ashbery in 1954, very early in his career. He was influenced by Raymond Roussel's surrealist prose, and played with the concept of a narrative form which only appears to convey meaning. "No action finally mingled on Valentine. She on the point of seizure instead of tricking soared past librarians, they fleeing servile."

WALL CASE 4

34. Bishop, Elizabeth, 1911-1979

Visits to St. Elizabeths : (Bedlam) : for medium voice and piano / music by Ned Rorem ; text by Elizabeth Bishop. (New York : Boosey & Hawkes, 1964.)

In a note printed inside the cover, the composer writes, "The words of this song were written after a visit by the poet to her colleague Ezra Pound in the mental institution of Saint Elizabeths where Pound was interned for many years after World War II." Elizabeth Bishop visited several times and wrote her poem in 1950. It was first published in *The Partisan Review*, 1957. The cover illustration is by Jean Cocteau.

During the war, Pound stayed in Italy where he gave radio broadcasts critical of the US. He was afterwards imprisoned and returned to Washington in 1945. Found mentally unfit for trial, he was confined to St. Elizabeth's Hospital for the insane where he was visited by some of his old friends. Pound was released in 1958, and returned to Italy, where he died in 1972.

FLAT CASE 1

Hardy, Yeats and Frost

35. Hardy, Thomas, 1840-1928.

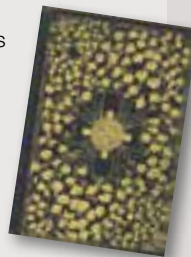
Human shows, far phantasies : songs and trifles. (London : Macmillan, 1925)

Thomas Hardy achieved fame as a novelist, but after the public outcry over *Jude the Obscure* (1895) he turned exclusively to verse. His first poetry book, *Wessex Poems*, appeared in 1898. His verse is set in the countryside and often has a tone of regret. The focus on local details and personalities and a pervading air of disappointment have influenced later English poets such as Philip Larkin. Hardy continued to publish up to his death in 1928. Old age was one of his themes, "Do I know these, slack-shaped and wan, / Whose substance, one time fresh and furrowless, / Is now a rag drawn over a skeleton" ("In a Former Resort After Many Years")

36. Yeats, W. B. (William Butler), 1865-1939.

Poems. (London : T. Fisher Unwin, 1908)

With its gilt, art nouveau cover decoration centred on the Cross and Celtic Rose, this volume presents a selection of Yeats's Irish revival poems. "The Lake Isle of Innisfree" is perhaps the best-known, "I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree, / And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made; / Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee, / And live alone in the bee-loud glade."



37. Yeats, W. B. (William Butler), 1865-1939.

The wild swans at Coole. (London : Macmillan, 1919)

Yeats changed his poetic style from the dreamlike verse of the Celtic twilight to a tougher, more colloquial diction expressing personal and contemporary themes. The war poem, "An Irish Airman Foresees His Death" is a dramatic monologue which builds perfectly from its beginning, "I know that I shall meet my fate / Somewhere among the clouds above; / Those I fight I do not hate, / Those that I guard I do not love" to its end, "A lonely impulse of delight / Drove to this tumult in the clouds; / I balanced all, brought all to mind, / The years to come seemed waste of breath, / A waste of breath the years behind / In balance with this life, this death."

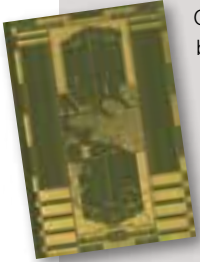
38. Yeats, W. B. (William Butler), 1865-1939.

Later poems. (London : Macmillan, 1922, reprinted 1926)

Later Poems is a selection which includes "Michael Robartes and the Dancer" (1921) and one of his most famous poems, "The Second Coming." In the first verse Yeats tells us, "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold; / Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world, / ... The best lack all conviction, while the worst / Are full of passionate intensity." The poem builds to its climax with the ending, "And what rough beast, its hour come round at last, / Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?"

39. Yeats, W. B. (William Butler), 1865-1939.

The tower. (London : Macmillan, 1928)



One of Yeats's best books, it begins with "Sailing to Byzantium," a poem on one of his major preoccupations in the later works, the fear of growing old. "This is no country for old men. The young / In one another's arms." Yeats underwent treatment with monkey glands to reverse aging.

40. Frost, Robert, 1874-1963.

North of Boston. (New York : H. Holt and Company, 1915)

Robert Frost was the most famous 20th-century American poet. President Kennedy called upon him to recite a poem at his inauguration. His poems, using his love of nature to convey views on humanity, are comparable to those of Hardy. *North of Boston* includes one of his most-anthologized poems, "After Apple-Picking." It begins, "My long two-pointed ladder's sticking through a tree / Toward heaven still, / And there's a barrel that I didn't fill / Beside it, and there may be two or three / Apples I didn't pick upon some bough. / But I am done with apple-picking now."

FLAT CASE 2

Georgian Poetry

41. Georgian poetry, 1911-1912; 1913-1915. (London : Poetry Bookshop, 1912, 1915)

These are the first two of five anthologies of Georgian poetry, the final volume, for "1920-1922," appeared in 1922. It was edited by Edward Marsh and published by Harold Monro's Poetry Bookshop. In the tradition of the Victorians and the poets of the 1890s, the poetry rhymed and scanned. Nature and beauty were the typical themes. The anthologies included most of the major names of the time, Rupert Brooke, W. H. Davies, Walter de la Mare, James Elroy Flecker and John Masefield. D. H. Lawrence contributed to four of the five volumes.

42. *Wheels : an anthology of verse* / [edited by Edith Sitwell]. (Oxford : B. H. Blackwell, 1916-1921) 6 v.

The Sitwells produced a series of poetry anthologies in opposition to *Georgian Poetry*. *Wheels* appeared in six volumes from 1916 to 1921. The poetry tended to have a brighter, more modern air. Nancy Cunard and Aldous Huxley contributed.



43. *Oxford poetry 1915* / edited by G.D.H.C. and T.W.E. (Oxford : B.H. Blackwell, 1915)

Oxford Poetry is an annual anthology by Oxford students and staff. It began in 1910 and is still being published. The 1915 volume includes a poem by Tolkien, "Goblin Feet." Written in an 1890s style, it begins, "I am off down the road / Where the fairy lanterns glowed / And the little pretty flittermice are flying."

44. Bottomley, Gordon, 1874-1948.

The riding to Lithend, drawings by James Guthrie. (Flansham, Sussex : Pear Tree Press, 1909)

Bottomley's ambition was to revive verse drama. He had some success, but it was not until Christopher Fry in the 1940s that the genre regained any popularity. *The Riding to Lithend* is written in the style of an Icelandic saga.

45. Monro, Harold, 1879-1932.
Judas. (Cranleigh : Samurai Press, 1907)

The Samurai Press was set up by Monro and Maurice Browne, named after the "voluntary ruling class" in H. G. Wells' *A Modern Utopia* (1905). They published poetry by Monro, Drinkwater and Wilfred Gibson. It was a financial failure and in 1913 Monro opened the Poetry Bookshop in London. This was a popular success, combining bookselling, poetry readings, and publishing. Monro published nearly fifty books.

46. Davies, W. H. (William Henry), 1871-1940.

Nature poems and others. (London : A.C. Fifield, 1908)

W. H. Davies was from a poor background. At 22 he went to America where he lived doing casual jobs and begging. While on his way to the Klondike he fell under a train and lost his right leg. After his return he worked as a pedlar before having a volume of poems published in 1905. In 1908 he published his *Autobiography of a Super-Tramp* and this caught the public's attention. His poetry was admired by many of the writers of the time including George Bernard Shaw and Arnold Bennett. The poems are usually simple observations of nature or of the hard life of the under-classes.

FLAT CASE 3

World War I

47. *Lest we forget ; a war anthology / edited by H.B. Elliott ; foreword by Baroness Orczy.* (London : Jarrold, 1915)

Baroness Orczy, famous for her novel *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, writes in her "Foreword," "This book is inscribed to every individual woman and girl of Great Britain," and the constant theme in the poems is that of the noble sacrifice women must accept. Maurice Hewlett in his ballad, "Soldier, Soldier," addresses the soldier's sweetheart, and ends, "Poor child, poor child, go to church and pray, / Pray God to spare you your sweetheart O. / But if he live or die / The English flag must fly, / And England take care of his sweetheart O!"

48. Brooke, Rupert, 1887-1915.

1914 & other poems. (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1915)

Rupert Brooke was the most promising of the young poets who went to war. He joined in 1914, but died at sea on the way to Gallipoli on 23 April 1915. His five war sonnets had been published in the poetry magazine, *New Numbers*, and they became very popular for their spirit of patriotism. They were included in his posthumous book of verse *1914 & Other Poems*. The most famous, "The Soldier," begins, "If I should die, think only this of me: / That there's some corner of a foreign field / That is for ever England." He was buried at Skyros.

49. Graves, Robert, 1895-1985.

Over the brazier. (London : Poetry Bookshop, 1916) [Donor: Jack Bradstreet]

Graves joined early in the war and was sent to France where he was badly wounded during the Battle of the Somme (1916). *Over the Brazier* was his first publication. It includes many graphic war poems.

In "Limbo" he describes "a week / Of bursting shells, of blood and hideous cries, / And the ever watchful sniper ... / Can't sleep, must lie awake with the horrid sound / That roars and whirs and rattles overhead / All day, all night, and jars and tears the ground ; / And the dying whisper: 'Parapet's too low, / Collect those bodies .. quick .. build them up there.'"



50. Herbert, A. P. (Alan Patrick) Sir, 1890-1971.

The bomber gipsy, and other poems. (London : Methuen, 1918)

A. P. Herbert served at Gallipoli and on the Western Front. He made his reputation with *The Secret Battle* (1919), a novel about a soldier at Gallipoli who has a nervous breakdown and is executed for cowardice. His book of war poems is altogether lighter, more concerned with colourful characters and keeping your spirits up, but it contains clever things. The title poem is a play on Matthew Arnold's "The Scholar Gypsy," and "Ballade of Incipient Lunacy" deals with the pressures on the Adjutant in the Battalion Orderly Room, beginning, "Where is that list of Wesleyans I made?"

51. Sassoon, Siegfried, 1886-1967.

Counter-attack, and other poems. (London : Heinemann, 1918)

Sassoon served and was twice wounded on the Western Front. He was awarded an MC and recommended for a VC. He and Wilfred Owen are the best known of the World War I poets. *Counter Attack* includes one of his most powerful poems, "The General," "Good morning; good morning! the General said / When we met him last week on our way to the line. / Now the soldiers he smiled at are most of 'em dead, / And we're cursing his staff for incompetent swine. / 'He's a cheery old card,' grunted Harry to Jack / As they slogged up to Arras with rifle and pack. / But he did for them both by his plan of attack."

FLAT CASE 4

The Twenties

52. Cullen, Countee, 1903-1946.

Color. (New York ; London : Harper & Brothers, 1925)



Countee Cullen was the best-known poet of the Harlem Renaissance. He was African-American, born in Louisville and brought up in Harlem. *Color*, his first volume of verse, was published while he was in his final year at New York

University. Cullen was among the first to write poems that dealt with problems of race. He was also bi-sexual. His poem, "Tableau" alludes to both issues, "Locked arm in arm they cross the way, / The black boy and the white, / The golden splendour of the day, / The sable pride of night. / From lowered blinds the dark folk stare, / And here the fair folk talk, / Indignant that these two should dare / In unison to walk."

53. MacDiarmid, Hugh, 1892-1978.

Sangschaw, preface by John Buchan. (Edinburgh : W. Blackwood, 1925)

Most of the poems here are in Scots dialect. M'Diarmid was a dedicated Scottish nationalist and, although he wrote some of his works in English, he did his best to revive the use of Scots as a literary medium. "Sangschaw" refers to the strength and resources of the Scottish language. It is now the name of an annual poetry prize for works written in dialect.

54. Mew, Charlotte Mary, 1869-1928.

The rambling sailor. (London: The Poetry Bookshop 1929)

Charlotte Mew published most of her work in magazines. *The Rambling Sailor* was the second of her two volumes of verse. It appeared shortly after her death, with an introduction by Alida Monro of the Poetry Bookshop. Thomas Hardy was an admirer of her poetry. Typically her poems project emotion through descriptions of nature, but there are some, such as "Monsieur Qui Passe," set in Paris, which describe lesbian encounters. "Then suddenly she stripped, the very skin / Came off her soul, – a mere girl clings / Longer to some last rag, however thin, / When she has shown you – well – all sorts of things: / "If it were daylight – oh! One keeps one's head – / But fourteen years! No one has ever guessed – / The whole thing starts when one gets to bed."

55. Zeitlin, Jake, 1902-1987.

For whispers & chants, illustrations by V. Angelo ; foreword by Carl Sandburg. (San Francisco, Calif. : The Lantern Press, 1927)

Jake Zeitlin was a Californian poet who lived in Echo Park, San Francisco. This was his first volume of verse, and was printed by the Grabhorn Press. Zeitlin is best-known as a bookseller and fine press publisher.



56. Jeffers, Robinson, 1887-1962.

Roan stallion, Tamar, and other poems. (London : L. & V. Woolf at The Hogarth Press, 1928) Hogarth Living Poets, no. 4

Robinson Jeffers was also a Californian poet. The heroine of his long opening poem, "Roan Stallion," is even named "California." In his introduction for the 1935 edition, Jeffers was critical of the tendency of modern poets to follow Mallarmé and write poems which were more akin to music but lacked intelligibility.

FLAT CASE 5

The Thirties

57. Turner, W. J. (Walter James), 1889-1946.

Miss America : Altiora in the Sierra Nevada. (London : Mandrake Press, 1930)



W. J. Turner was born in Melbourne and educated at Scotch College. He left for London in 1907 to establish himself as a writer, and became the music critic for the *New Statesman* and the theatre critic for the *London Mercury*. He had a great facility for poetry, publishing sixteen volumes in twenty years. Yeats admired him, saying Turner's verse left him "lost in admiration and astonishment."

58. Day Lewis, C. (Cecil), 1904-1972.

From feathers to iron. (London : L. & V. Woolf at Hogarth Press, 1932) Hogarth Living Poets, no. 22

Cecil Day-Lewis met Auden at Oxford and together they edited *Oxford Poetry 1927*. *From Feathers to Iron* is a long poem sequence celebrating the birth of his first son. His manner was more that of a Georgian nature poet, but he strove to include specifically modern images. The final poem in the sequence describes his feelings once the child is born, "Now shall the airman vertically banking / Out of the blue write a new sky-sign; / The nine tramp steamers rusting in the estuary / Get up full pressure for a trade revival; / The crusty landlord renew the lease, and everyone / Take a whole holiday in honour of this." The book ends with "A Letter to W. H. Auden," in which the acolyte describes the effect the master has had on his poetry.

59. Lewis, Wyndham, 1882-1957.

One-way song. (London : Faber and Faber, 1933)

Wyndham Lewis was a talented artist who also wrote satirical novels and poetry. *One-way Song*, with its cover design by Lewis himself, was his only volume of verse. He was a major figure in artistic and literary circles between the wars but made many enemies, such as the Sitwells, whom he pilloried in his novel, *The Apes of God*, and T. S. Eliot whom he describes in "The Song of



the Militant Romance," "I seem to note a roman profile bland, / I hear the drone from out the cactus-land: / That must be the poet of the Hol-low Men: / The lips seem bursting with a deep Amen."

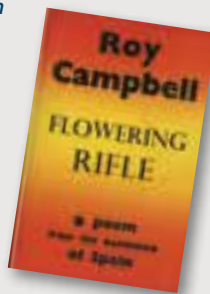
60. *Poems for Spain* / edited by Stephen Spender & John Lehmann ; with an introduction by Stephen Spender. (London : The Hogarth Press, 1939)

Although poetry of the 1930s is characterised by its political flavour, it was the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) which was perhaps the main focus. Auden, Spender, and MacNeice all went to help the Republicans. Roy Campbell was also in Spain, in support of the Nationalists.

61. Campbell, Roy, 1901-1957.

Flowering rifle : a poem from the battlefield of Spain. (London : Longmans, 1939)

Roy Campbell was living in Toledo when the Spanish Civil War began, and was there during the bombardment. He escaped and was evacuated to England. He later returned as a war correspondent for the Catholic journal, *The Tablet*, and was wounded during the fighting in Madrid. *Flowering Rifle* is stridently pro-Franco. His "Author's Note" ends, "Viva Franco! Arriba Espana!" This made him unpopular with the modernist literary set in London, and over-shadowed his undoubted skills as a poet.



62. Bell, Julian, 1908-1937.

Work for the winter and other poems. (London : Leonard & Virginia Woolf at The Hogarth Press, 1936) Hogarth Living Poets, 2nd series, no. 4.



Julian Bell was second generation Bloomsbury Group; his parents were Clive and Vanessa Bell, and Virginia Woolf was his aunt. His poetry was exact in its observation and polished in style; more Georgian than modernist. His second book, *Work for the Winter* moved away from nature, and into poetry which was socially committed. He felt some unease about espousing Marxism while living a privileged life and his poem, "Autobiography," ends, "For here was good, built as it was, no doubt, / On poverty I could not live without, / Yet none the less, good certain and secure, / And even though I see it not endure, / And though it sinks within the rising tide, / What can for me replace the good or sure?" In 1937 he went to Spain as an ambulance driver for the Republican side in the Civil War and was killed.

FLAT CASE 6

The Forties

63. Mogg, R. P. L.



For this alone : and other poems / by R.P.L. Mogg. Germany. 1943 ; [illustrated by Sgt. J. W. Lambert] 2nd ed. (Oxford : B. H. Blackwell, 1945)

Sgt. Mogg was a journalist who joined the R.A.F. during the war. He was shot down over Germany and taken prisoner. While in the POW camp he wrote these poems and had them smuggled back to England. They were published in 1943, handwritten as received and with coloured lithographic illustrations from drawings done by one of his fellow prisoners. His poems capture the excitement of the war in the air, "No time / for thoughts of peace / or home, or gentleness. / Caught in this sharp surge of war, / only war / can hold the flickering thought," but, naturally the ever-present threat of death is the main theme. In the Introduction, Edward Aldington writes, "it is possible that he might be accused of being morbid, but the dividing line between operational flying and Death is of a very nebulous character."

64. Moore, Marianne, 1887-1972. *Nevertheless.* (New York : Macmillan, 1944)

Marianne Moore went to Bryn Mawr College, graduating in 1909. She began to publish poems in *The Egoist* and *Poetry* in 1915. Her first book, *Poems*, appeared in 1921. She was editor of *The Dial* from 1925 to 1929. Eliot wrote the introduction to her *Selected Poems* (1935). This included one of her best-known works, "Poetry," which has her definition of poems as "imaginary gardens with real toads in them." This copy of *Nevertheless* has a long ms. inscription by the poet which ends, "The problem of style? Effect your meaning and stop."

65. Thomas, Dylan, 1914-1953. *Deaths and entrances.* (London : J. M. Dent, 1946)

Dylan Thomas had his first volume of poetry published in 1934, with the encouragement of T. S. Eliot and Stephen Spender. He was seen as one of the most promising of the young poets of the 1930s and 1940s. His style is rhapsodic, with lush imagery and extravagant word-play, but he was criticised for his obscurity. *Deaths and Entrances* includes two of his best-known poems, "Fern Hill," and "Poem in October," where Thomas celebrates the innocent rapture of childhood and his direct response to nature. "A springful of larks in a rolling / Cloud and the roadside bushes brimming with whistling / Black-birds and the sun of October / Summery / On the hill's shoulder." ("Poem in October")

66. *Transformation* / edited by Stefan Schimanski and Henry Treece. (London : Gollancz, 1943-1946) 4 v.

Henry Treece was a poet who was involved in the New Apocalypse and the New Romantics, two of the main poetry movements of the 1940s. He edited anthologies and magazines promoting these groups. They typically included poets such as Herbert Read, G. S. Fraser and Dylan Thomas. Thomas was seen by them as a model for the new anti-classical style with his poetry of strong emotion and colourful imagery. The issue of *Transformation* on display (no. 4) includes poems translated from French. Apollinaire's "Zone" is featured, as is poetry by Eluard, translated by English surrealist, David Gascoyne.

67. Gascoyne, David, 1916-2001. *Poems : 1937-1942, with drawings by Graham Sutherland.* (London : PL [i.e. Poetry London] Editions, 1943)

David Gascoyne was the first professedly Surrealist poet in English. His first volume of poetry appeared in 1932 when he was 16. In 1933, he published a novel, and with the royalties went to Paris where he began research for a book on Surrealism, published in 1935. *Poems 1937-1942* marks a change towards greater accessibility. Wartime London can be felt in many of the poems, but there are some set in pre-war Paris where Gascoyne first explored his homosexuality, "A young American, intent / On finding a chance bed-fellow, / pursues a vagrant matelot's / Slim, likely looking form / An English drunkard sits alone / On a small bistrot in Les Halles / And keeps rehearsing the Lord's Prayer / In a mad high-pitched monotone." ("Noctambules")



68. Williams, William Carlos, 1883-1963.

Paterson. (New York : New Directions, 1948)



William Carlos Williams was a doctor who began to publish poems in 1909. He appeared in the Imagist anthologies, but as his poetry developed he concentrated more on his love of America. He also had a commitment to experimental styles which meant his poems were not in the tradition of poets such as Robert Frost. His long poem, *Paterson*, appeared in five parts from 1946 to 1958. The copy on display includes parts 1 and 2. Written in reaction to Eliot's *Waste Land*, and Pound's *Cantos*, it aims to show that poetry can be made from details of everyday life, "Say it, no ideas but in things / nothing but the blank faces of the houses / And cylindrical trees."

He spent time in America, becoming friendly with Ginsberg and the Beats in the late 1950s. His "Sestina at 34" begins, "I have come down half the overcrowded avenue / O Rhadamanthus, you to whose kingdom I journey / With seven children and several books on my shoulders / All screaming."

70. Larkin, Philip, 1922-1985

The less deceived : poems. 5th ed. (Hessle, Yorks. : Marvell Press, 1962)

Larkin's first volume of poems, *The North Ship* appeared in 1945 and was heavily influenced by Yeats. It was not until the 1950s that he found a voice of his own. *The Less Deceived* was published in 1955. His tone is sardonic, with an air of disappointment, and was taken by the critics and the public to be characteristic of post-war Britain. "Why should I let the toad work / Squat on my life? / Can't I use my wit as a pitchfork / And drive the brute off?" ("Toad")

71. Bishop, Elizabeth, 1911-1979.

Poems : North & south : A cold spring. (Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 1955)

Elizabeth Bishop was encouraged by Marianne Moore. Her first volume, *North and South*, appeared in 1946. Robert Lowell reviewed it favourably and became a friend and mentor. Her second book, *Poems : North & South : A Cold Spring* was published in 1955. It reprinted poems from the first book as well as her new material. By this time she was living in Brazil with her lesbian lover. "See the thin flying of nine black hairs / four around one, five the other nipple, / flying almost intolerably on your own breath." ("O breath") As her reputation grew she accepted academic positions back in the US, including Harvard in 1970.

72. Lowell, Robert, 1917-1977.

Life studies. (New York : Farrer, Strauss & Cuddahy, 1959)

Robert Lowell was one of the Boston Lowells. He came to feel guilt at the exploits of his forebears, one of the themes in *Life Studies*. This was the key book in starting the trend for confessional poetry; Sylvia Plath cited it as an influence. "One dark night, / my Tudor Ford climbed the hill's skull; / I watched for love-cars. Lights turned down, / they lay together, hull to hull, / where the graveyard shelves on the town / My mind's not right." ("Skunk hour")



73. Hill, Geoffrey, 1932-

For the unfallen : poems, 1952-1958. (London : Deutsch, 1959)

Geoffrey Hill is seen as the most distinguished English poet still living. *For the Unfallen* was his first book. He writes typically about the countryside and its history, in a muscular, sinewy style. The opening poem, "Genesis" contains striking images, "And the third day I cried: 'Beware / The soft-voiced owl, the ferret's smile, / The hawk's deliberate stoop in air, / Cold eyes, and bodies hopped in steel, / Forever bent upon the kill.'"

FLAT CASE 7

The Fifties

69. Barker, George, 1913-1991.

News of the world. (London : Faber & Faber, 1950)

George Barker was the son of a butler. He became part of the literary set in London during the 1930s and his first book of poetry appeared in 1933. T. S. Eliot encouraged him to write for Faber who published his subsequent books. His poetry is similar to that of Dylan Thomas, written in a booming style but rather opaque.

74. Wilbur, Richard, 1921-

Ceremony and other poems. (New York : Harcourt, 1950)

Richard Wilbur was born in New York. His first volume of poetry appeared in 1947. His style is lyrical and extremely polished. Wallace Stevens is the main influence. He has been criticised for not betraying strong emotions or showing any polemical bent, but his poetry is arguably the most skilful and accessible of his generation. "The tall camels of the spirit / Steer for their deserts, passing the last groves loud / With the sawmill shrill of the locust, to the whole honey of the arid / Sun. ("A World Without Objects is a Sensible Emptiness")

FLAT CASE 8

The Sixties

75. Beckett, Samuel, 1906-1989.

Poems in English. (London : Calder & Boyars, 1961)

Samuel Beckett is best known as a playwright and novelist but he also wrote poetry, publishing *Whoroscope* in 1930 and *Echo's Bones* in 1935. These poems and others appear in *Poems in English*. The best of them draw on his life in Dublin, and the depressing effects of his native city, "On the hill down from the Fox and Geese into Chapelizod / a small malevolent goat, exiled on the road, / remotely pucking the gate of his field." ("Enueg I")

76. Hughes, Ted, 1930-1998.

Lupercal. (London : Faber and Faber 1960)

Ted Hughes was born in Yorkshire and loved to explore the countryside. His first book, *The Hawk in the Rain* (1957) is notable for animal poems, more realistic than those of traditional English nature poets. These continued to appear in his later volumes. *Lupercal* was his second publication. "Pike three inches long, perfect / Pike in all parts, green tigering the gold / Killers from the egg: the malevolent aged grin. / They dance on the surface among the flies. / Or move, stunned by their own grandeur, / Over a bed of emerald, Silhouette / Of submarine delicacy and horror. / A hundred feet long in their world." ("Pike"). He married the American poet Sylvia Plath in 1956.

77. Plath, Sylvia, 1932-1963.

Ariel. (London : Faber and Faber, 1965)

Sylvia Plath was born in Massachusetts. Her father was a Professor of German at Boston University. She graduated with Honours from Smith College and won a Fulbright Fellowship to Newnham College, Cambridge, in 1955. She met Ted Hughes there and they were married in 1956. Her first volume of poetry, *The Colossus*, appeared in 1960. Ted's infidelities and the pressures of two young children led to a marriage breakdown in 1962. Her novel, *The Bell Jar*, written about her depression in adolescence, was published in 1963, a fortnight before she committed suicide. The poems she had been writing during this difficult time were published posthumously in *Ariel* (1965). Many



of her poems are very personal. They vibrate with anger and resentment. In her poem, "The Rival," she writes of Hughes, "And your first gift is making stone out of everything, / I wake to a mausoleum; you are here, / Ticking your fingers on the marble table, looking for cigarettes, / Spiteful as a woman, but not so nervous, / And dying to say something unanswerable."

78. Snyder, Gary, 1930-

A range of poems. (London : Fulcrum Press, 1966)

Gary Snyder was born in San Francisco. His poetry is in the American landscape tradition of Robert Frost but often showing a Japanese Zen influence. As well as going to college to study Anthropology and Literature, he worked in the forests of Washington State and northern California. He later came to know Ginsberg and his circle when living in San Francisco. Ferlinghetti referred to him as "the Thoreau of the Beat Generation." Unlike many in that circle, Snyder retained his own style. *A Range of Poems* introduced Snyder to English readers. It reprints many of the poems from his earlier books. His images typically chart his responses to nature, "A hawk sails over the roof / a snake went under the floor / how can hawks hunt in the rain? / I walk through the hallway: / the soul of a great-bellied cloud." ("The Levels")

79. Horovitz, Michael, 1935-

Children of Albion: poetry of the 'Underground' in Britain / edited and extradicted by Michael Horovitz. (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1969)



This was a seminal work in bringing the UK “underground” poets to a wider audience. The cover illustration is a detail from “Glad Day,” by William Blake. Blake was undergoing a revival of interest in the 1960s. Poets, and the young in general, saw him as a visionary, inspiring them to cast off their

shackles and live as innocents. The anthology is dedicated to Allen Ginsberg and begins with a quote from a poem he read at the International Poetry Incarnation, 1965, at which many of the poets in *Children of Albion* performed.

FLAT CASE 9

The Seventies

80. Morrison, Jim, 1943-1971.

The lords, and, The new creatures : poems. (New York : Simon and Schuster, 1970)

In the early seventies, Jim Morrison was still alive and The Doors were about to make their last album, *LA Woman*. In 1969, Jim had privately published two slim volumes of verse under his full name, James Douglas Morrison. This 1970 edition was the first commercial publication of his poetry. On The Doors' second album, *Strange Days*, (1967) Jim recited one of

his poems, “Horse Latitudes,” famous for the line, “In mute nostril agony.” One of the poems in “The Lords” section of the book reflects his hatred of the paparazzi, “Baths, bars, the indoor pool. Our injured leader / prone on the sweating tile. Chlorine on his breath / and in his long hair. ... Near him / the trusted journalist confidant. He liked men / near him with a large sense of life. But most / of the press were vultures descending on the / scene for the curious America aplomb. Cameras / inside the coffin interviewing worms.” (p. 15)

81. McGough, Roger, 1937-

Gig. (London : Jonathan Cape, 1973, repr. 1979)

Roger McGough was published with Adrian Henri and Brian Patten in “The Mersey Sound,” *Penguin Modern Poets* no. 10 (1967). They were all from Liverpool and used colloquial language and word-play with pop culture references to write about contemporary life. McGough formed a band, “The Scaffold” with Mike McGear, Paul McCartney’s brother. Their act combined songs, comedy and poems. In 1968, they had a no. 1 hit with “Lily the Pink.” *Gig* was written while on tour, describing the towns where they played.



82. Kinsella, Thomas, 1928 - .

Notes from the land of the dead : poems. (Dublin : Cuala Press, 1972)

Thomas Kinsella was born in Dublin. Most of his poetry has an urban Irish setting. *Notes from the Land of the Dead* was published by

the Cuala Press, set up by Elizabeth Yeats in 1904 to print the poetry of her brother, W. B. Yeats. It ceased operation in 1946 but was re-established in 1969 by W. B. Yeats's children. The format remained unchanged, with the pale blue papered boards and the canvas spine. This book was published at the time Kinsella's poetry was changing from Audenesque observations on nature and personal relationships to a style more influenced by Pound and Williams, dealing with Irish issues, but it is his descriptions of the Dublin scene which are most appealing, “A horse trotted past us down Bow Lane; / Pad-nop Carty sat in the trap / sideways, fat, drifting along / with a varnish twinkle of spokes and redgold / balls of manure scattering on the road behind.” (“The High Road.”)

83. Knight, Etheridge, 1931-1991.

Belly song and other poems. (Detroit, Broad-side Press 1973)

Etheridge Knight was part of the “Black Arts” movement of the 1960s and 1970s. He was from a poor background in Mississippi. When he was growing up he discovered a talent for “toast-telling,” composing and reciting long poems. In 1960, he was sent to prison for armed robbery and found that in jail, if you could “rap or write, you didn’t have to fight as much.” He rose to prominence with his first book, *Poems from Prison* (1968). After his release, he became part of the black literary movement, continuing to write poems encouraging racial pride and political involvement. His poem, “A Watts Mother Mourns While Boiling Beans,” begins, “The blooming flower of my life is roaming / in the night and I think surely / that never since he was born / have I been free from fright.”

84. Kyger, Joanne, 1934 - .

Trip out and fall back, with drawings by Gordon Baldwin. (Berkeley : Arif Press, 1974)

Joanne Kyger is a Californian poet, who lives in Bolinas, near San Francisco. She studied at the University of California and began to mix with the Beat Poets in 1958. In 1960 she went to Japan where she married Gary Snyder. They then went to India to join Alan Ginsberg. Zen Buddhism is still an influence on her poems. Her poetry blends nature and relationships with personal observations, "Indeed are they my

forces of the forces / I am within.
That no children come from me
to love. And I / am this space in
time, this focus, of articulation,
that hears / the bee buzz round
and round." ("These Several
Selves")

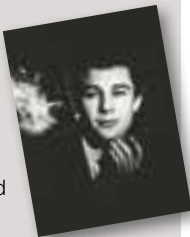


FLAT CASE 10 The Eighties

85. Buck, Paul, 1946-

No lettuces for Miss Lush. (Thornhill : Stingy Artist, 1981)

Paul Buck is a London poet, author and translator, best known as editor of the art and literary magazine, *Curtains* in the 1970s which published work by Georges Bataille and Jacques Derrida. Among his interests are outsiders such as criminals. He approaches poetry as performance art. The cover shows a portrait of Buck with a gun and cigarette smoke in a careful noir pose. The



poem itself is written in a tough guy staccato style, "wrists twisting the sheath Miss Lush talking / sauce no throat theatre beyond / yeah jaw thistle" (p. 5)

86. Wain, John, 1925-1994.

Mid-week period return : home thoughts of a native : a poem, with illustrations by Arthur Keene. (Stratford-upon-Avon : Celandine Press, 1982)

John Wain came to prominence as a novelist with *Hurry on Down* in 1953. He continued to write novels, but also wrote poetry and radio drama. *Mid-week Period Return* is a homage to John Betjeman and describes a train trip from Wain's home in Oxford to Stoke-on-Trent.

87. Fenton, James, 1949-

Dead soldiers. (Oxford : Sycamore Press, 1981)

James Fenton made his reputation writing poems about the war and post-war conflicts in Vietnam and Cambodia. He travelled in South-East Asia and spoke to those in power. *Dead Soldiers* is a poem based on Fenton's encounters with two of the prominent people in Cambodia at the time, Sihanouk's cousin, and Pol Pot's brother.

88. Wright, Charles, 1935-

Five journals. (New York City : Red Ozier Press, 1986)

Charles Wright shows the influence of Pound and the ancient Chinese lyrical poets. Descriptions of landscape are used to convey his personal meditations. *Five Journals* includes poems written on trips to England, Italy and Greece. He tells the story of Leonardo using

wax paste, "from which he fashioned delicate animal figurines, / Hollow and filled with air. / When he breathed into them, they floated / Like small balloons, twisting and turning, released by the air / ... What does it mean to you, / Amber menagerie swept from his sun-struck and amber hands?" (p. 34)

89. Smith, Dave, 1942-

Gray soldiers : poems, frontispiece by Barry Moser. (Winston-Salem, N.C. : Stuart Wright, 1983)

Dave Smith is a southern US poet, born in Virginia. He writes regional verse, often with a strong sense of the history of the landscape. Many of the poems in *Gray Soldiers* deal with the American Civil War, and the way it still pervades life in the South. In the title poem he writes farewelling someone going to fight in Vietnam, "I remembered / you leaving for Da Nang, the plane's track / in scrimps of snow. Before that, the hole / in the slivery wall, you in uniform, shouting / something like do good, hunt for me."

FLAT CASE 11 The Nineties

90. Heaney, Seamus, 1939-

The spirit level. (London : Faber and Faber, 1996)

Seamus Heaney was born in Northern Ireland but now lives in Dublin. He won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1995, and is one of the major poets of the 20th-century. He was inspired to

write poetry by finding a copy of Ted Hughes's *Lupercal* while at university in Belfast. His poetry draws on Ireland, its people and cities, the countryside and its history. In *The Spirit Level* the troubles in Northern Ireland and the recent peace are dealt with in "Mycenae Lookout," through the imagery of ancient Greece. This includes descriptions which mix the casual yet brutal nature of civil war, "Small crowds of people watching as a man / Jumped a fresh earth-wall and another ran / Amorously, it seemed, to strike him down." (p. 34)

91. Seth, Vikram, 1952-

All you who sleep tonight : poems.
(New York : Knopf , 1990)



Vikram Seth is a novelist and poet. He was born in Calcutta, but has lived in London and lives now partly in England and partly in Delhi. His poetry, though written in English, has a distinctively Indian voice. Many of his poems use rhyme to tell of everyday life, "Voices in my head, / Chanting, 'Kisses.

Bread. / Prove yourself. Fight. Shove. / Learn. Earn. Look for love, / Drown a lesser voice, / Silent now of choice: / 'Breathe in peace and be / Still, for once, like me.'" ("Voices")

92. Hudgins, Andrew, 1951-

Babylon in a jar : new poems. (Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 1998)

Andrew Hudgins is a Southern US poet, born in Texas, but raised in Alabama. His first book, *Saints and Strangers* appeared in 1986 and was nominated for a Pulitzer. His poetry deals

with the tension between the spiritual and the worldly, order and disorder. The title poem is a dramatic monologue with the speaker remembering how he envied drunks he saw sleeping next to their cars as he drove home from work, "I want to lie down with them / on pea gravel and crushed oystershell still warm with the day's heat / and burrow into it and sleep for a long time". (p. 33)

93. Koethe, John, 1945-

The constructor : poems. (New York, NY : HarperFlamingo, 1999)

Born in San Diego, John Koethe is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. His poetry is in the style of Ashbery, but with a more philosophical, less ironic, narrative thread. In "What the Stars Meant" there is even an echo of Eliot in *The Waste Land*, but the "fragments" of cultural memory which well up in Koethe's mind are not in the grand style, "I found myself beneath a canopy / Of scenes left out of someone else's life / – the dog that didn't bark, Rosebud, Cain's wife – / Arrayed above me in a panoply / Of glittering debris. (p. 41)

94. Rowson, Martin, 1959 – .

The waste land. (Harmondsworth : Penguin, 1990)

Martin Rowson is a cartoonist whose work appears in *The Guardian* and *The Independent*. His *Waste Land* is a graphic novel. By the 1990s the world was ready for *The Waste Land* as a comic. The cover graphic is a parody of pulp cover art, with Eliot showing the woman "fear in a handful of dust."



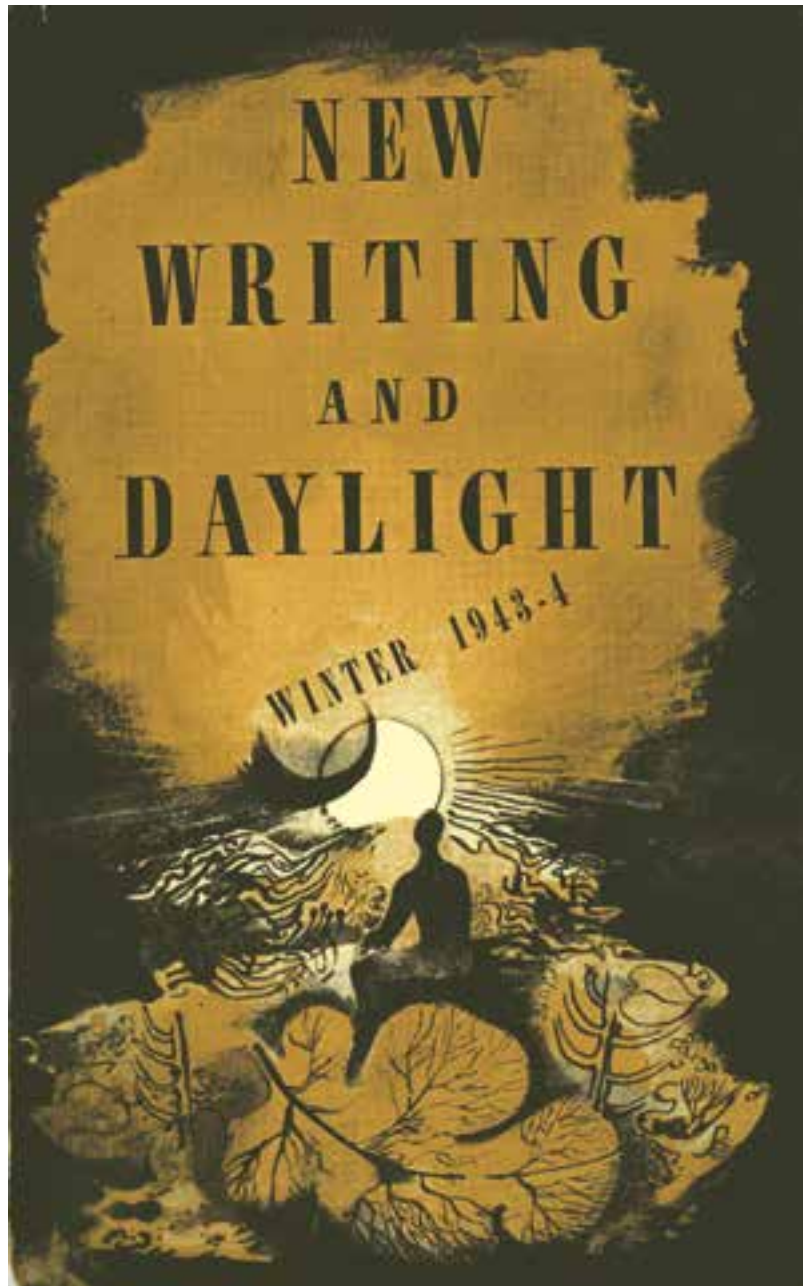
SCREENS

On the screens are reproduced images and poems from the Faber series of *Ariel Poems*. These were small booklets, each with a single poem and a coloured illustration. 38 were produced from 1927 to 1931. They were intended to be sent as gifts at Christmas. A new series of eight appeared in 1954. Six of T. S. Eliot's poems have appeared. Many of the prominent artists of the period were used as illustrators, including Graham Sutherland, E. McKnight Kauffer and Eric Ravilious.

CORRIDOR CASES

On display in the corridor outside the Rare Books Reading Room is a selection of poetry magazines and anthologies. Perhaps the most unusual is *Locus Solus*. This was published in France, in five numbers (1961-62), edited by Ashbery, Koch and Schuyler.

Also included are wartime magazines such as *Poetry London*, with covers by Henry Moore and Graham Sutherland, and *New Writing and Daylight*.



New Writing and Daylight was a poetry magazine published between 1942 and 1946.



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The Rare Books Collection comprises material considered rare because of age, uniqueness or physical beauty. Housed in the Sir Louis Matheson Library on the Clayton campus, the collection provides a reading room for researchers and is supported by a team of rare books librarians. For more information visit monash.edu/library/collections/special/rare.

Cover: *The Vorticists at the Restaurant de la Tour Eiffel*, Spring 1915, (1961–2) by William Roberts, Tate Gallery. Illustration © The Estate of John David Roberts. Reproduced with the permission of the William Roberts Society.

This group portrait shows the Vorticists, Cuthbert Hamilton, Ezra Pound, William Roberts, Wyndham Lewis, Frederick Etchells (holding the first issue of *Blast*), Edward Wadsworth, Jessie Dismoor and Helen Saunders, the waiter – Joe – and the Tour Eiffel's proprietor, Rudolph Stulik.