

Texturality

by Bill Yarrow

A.

The poem of rational progression is dulling.

Make the leap. Go beyond juxtaposition to collision.

We like poetry that does double duty, triple duty, quadruple duty. We like poetry that mixes the grit, poetry that has the *texture* of complexity.

Reason asserts an abnormal restraint.

Irrationality, once a force for good, is now self-generating chaos. True Surrealism is as refined as sugar.

Pudovkin was a poet. Dovzhenko less so.

The poetry of clash.

Vertov and Vigo were exquisite visionaries. They knew the ecstasy of energy, the sonority of bravado.

The optics of sonics. The metachemistry of mechanism.

There's no *mise-en-scène* in modern poetry. Study Christensen. Study Von Sternberg. Study the *requisite* excess.

Why is there no superimposition in postmodern poetry as there is in Sjoström, Mamoulian, Murnau, and Freund?

The passivity of plastic words.

You want to write poetry? Study Godard.

The greatest efforts are falsely measured by length.

Two boring metaphors do not a poem make.

Simple stories falsify life.

B.

Most anecdotes are ineptly anecdotal.

I have no more time for emptiness.

I have no more time for poems under the sign of the dandelion—one puff and they disperse.

A poem must be a vanishing that lasts.

The monomania of perception: too many monologous poems! The monomania of singularity: too too many analogous poems!

Write less but with more *energy*.

C.H. wrote crap because he could not be clear. C.R.B writes crap because he can only be clear.

The only admirable virtue is precision.

We need less prissy disclosure in poems. We need more naked irreverence.

Tell bald-faced lies with complete honesty.

Every metaphor worth its salt is a bald-faced lie.

Let poetry kill off God once and for all (and when God dies, the bullshit Devil must go with him.)

Pound's "In a Station in the Metro" is not about one thing—it's about the interconnectedness of at least three things: perception ("this apparition"), reality ("faces in a crowd"), and memory ("petals on a wet, black bough").

Every metaphor worth contemplating is a dire memory: there is no good metaphor not grounded in electrified experience.

C.

Form: a rule applied to a series of discrete instances.

Before it is ever adopted, every rule is first invented.

Every poem is a game in which the rules are understood last.

Good poets incinerate—they don't adopt.

Just four syllables create rhythm. Just four lines can create a world.

Oulipo misunderstands poetics, but it understands poetry!

D.

Form need not be formal.

Long poems are indulgences and must be curtailed. No one not on cocaine should endure or indulge a long poem.

If a line is consistently a word, the poem is not a poem.

Bukowski's short line = Ginsberg's long line—both are alimentary as in the imbricated stanzas of D. H. Lawrence.

Poems are opportunities for surprise. A poem without surprise is a flat tire—it takes you nowhere.

"Ghana" is surprising in Frank O'Hara's famous poem about Lana Turner.

The emphasis always falls on surprise.

The unexpected is the testosterone of poetry. That's the vas deferens between it and prose.

The poem that builds to one surprise may as well just go home. One surprise is not a surprise.

Do not practice in print. No one wants to read a rehearsal.

A poem is a performance. A good poem is a first performance *never before seen anywhere!*

Poems are NEVER gratuitous but accidents are the stuff of poetry—they gird the fertile.

The poetry of the overwhelming *in service of the overwhelming* is like an excessive dinner: it leaves one bloated and unhappy.

Excess, though admired, is seldom loved.

I don't want to be overwhelmed or underwhelmed. I want to be charged electrostatically and brought to heavenly perdition.

E.

A poem is a seduction into surprise.

Surprise is always pleasing; shock never is.

A poem is either interesting or it is not. It doesn't "get" interesting.

When magazines say they are looking for poems which will be a good "fit," they are advancing a Procrustes-bed theory of acceptance. No wonder all their poems sound exactly the same.

Poems of one texture, one pitch, one sound, one surface, one intention, one idea, one way, one note, one diction, one meter, one strategy, one summit, one duty, one understanding, one implication, one outcome are poems of no reach, no extension, no thinking, no knowledge, no grounding, no dimension, no improvement, no array, no meaning, no ambition, no hold, no motor, no mixing, no fission, no excursion, no destination, no explosion.

To read a true poem is to feel infested.

A good poem is not an exclamation but an infiltration.

A great poem is not inscribed but engraved.

Tropes have a tropism to be abused.

Poets today: mere Crusaders. The Mongols are the *true* poets.

F.

Most movies are too one dimensional to be poems. Most stories and plays are too one dimensional to be poems. Most poems are too one dimensional to be poems.

Anecdotes written as anecdotes remain...anecdotes.

Frank O'Hara said he just goes on nerve—well, you've got to go on *something!*

Is no one willing to call out the dullards? Is no one willing to write the prose Dunciad of today? Don't just call out the poets. Call out the lazy mags and listless zines, these things of caution or rashness but never newness, never supra-beauty.

Lovely images sit in terrible poems.

People people people pumped fat with praise. Everywhere praise. Praise praise praise. Deflation by inflation. Everywhere.

G.

Too many contests! Too many opportunities to come in first. The longer your writerly resume, the worse your poetry.

How can you tell the contest from the fraud?

Contests are just operating budgets in search of entry fees.

Outlets for outrages. To the victor goes recoil.

I thought beauty had to be convulsive. Have you seen that yet? Me neither.

Most writers are too timid to reimagine experiment; therefore there's no authentic experimentation, no true experiment in writing. It's all only what it's always been.

It's easy to write formula. It's easy to publish formula. It's easy to prefer formula.

H.

Whatever you've been doing, stop it and do something else.

Whatever you're doing, stop it and do something else.
Whatever you plan on doing, stop it and do something else.

Don't belabor the obvious—belabor the unexpected!

Stop roaming the corridors of everything.

Read narrowly.

Promiscuity in reading leads to venereal thinking.

Go NORTH for exasperation. Walk SOUTH for vice. Look EAST for visages. Live WEST as long as you can.

POUND the pavement. Scrape off the FROST. Be SMART. Split the loot even-STEVENs.

Play in the molasses *until you understand the molasses*.

Reuse your eggs.

Find out about brine.

Do not trumpet. Do not French horn. Saxophonetics.

Fashion a sword from asphalt. Build your roof of knives.

Eat the pomegranates that fall at your feet, but save the tumbleweed for fasting.

In the beginning was the text.
In the middle there is still the text.
In the end there will be something else.

