

Waterways:

Poetry in the Mainstream

VOLUME

27



Waterways: Poetry in the Mainstream, Volume 27, #3

Once more Democritus, arise on Earth,
With chearful Wisdom and instructive Mirth,
See motley Life in modern Trappings dress'd,
And feed with varied Fools th'eternal Jest:

Samuel Johnson
from *The Vanity of Human Wishes*

WATERWAYS: Poetry in the Mainstream

Volume 27

Number 3*

Designed, Edited and Published by Richard Spiegel & Barbara Fisher

Thomas Perry, Admirable Factotum

c o n t e n t s

M. M. Nichols	4	Mary K. Lindberg	14-15
James Penha	5-7	A. D. Winans	16
Carol Hamilton	8-9	Ida Fasel	17-19
David Michael Nixon	10-11	Donald Lev	20-23
Bill Roberts	12-13		

Waterways is published 11 times a year. Subscriptions -- \$33 for 11 issues.

Sample issues — \$4.00 (includes postage).

Submissions will be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self addressed envelope.

Waterways, 393 St. Pauls Avenue, Staten Island, New York 10304-2127

©2006 Ten Penny Players Inc. *This magazine is published 7/06.

<http://www.tenpennyplayers.org/mags.html>



Democritus Digitized
Via Bruggen

Weatherways — M. M. Nichols

What a morning! I refuse to mourn
the disappearing world outside my window.
Hopes rising, cheerfully I observe
a siege advanced by ponderous white blobs —
silent, self-contained and indiscriminate
deaf-squads clogging the city's thickened
arteries.

Friend, does your mind fly
home with mine today? Home the place
in time where a clean cover-up at dawn
(abetted by radio news) first became
summons and cause for rallying our colors,
to join radical downplay of laborious
learning & right angles. Day of Liberty!
Tumbled thrills, the joy. A whirl in space.

In Vestments — James Penha

Golden shadows
cast fleeting brilliance

upon the red robes
the celebrant dons

on the holy day
of martyrdom

for red is the color of fire.
For red is the color of blood

on the celebrant so distinguished
and so reminded

he is taken
from us

to offer sacrifices and holocausts
for us.

For violet is the color of penance;
we shall have no purple prose.

An umbral mourning
our celebrant eclipses

in his folds of gold
sacramental

he excites our thoughts
to increase devotion.

Oh, golden age
when gold may bleach death

and resurrection, when gold
may dim green hope in gloom.

Ways to Think of Night — Carol Hamilton

The stars SOS their stories
every night, unless the clouds
congregate in my back yard,
so I can go out even where
all these street lights blind
(we choose to live
without the dark,
opposites to moles who tunnel away
from all available brilliance),
set up my telescope
and learn what happened
so long ago my mind recoils

at the thought, knows no
way to take in such a terrible truth.
Even if I stare the sun down
I only see how it fared
eight minutes past. How those twinkles
talk and talk! How the children early learn
to sing star's song, too young
to know these fearsome tales
of past and future, not yet
old enough to turn away
or calibrate or think of light
as celebrant or teacher.

Long Time Here — David Michael Nixon

I have been here
for so long
I almost belong,
but don't be fooled.
Being a fool
doesn't make one
part of the gang,
but only another
sad loner
without wisdom

Inside the English — David Michael Nixon

Someone is hiding inside the English
language, so that a pale shadow seems to
drift from among the solid figures of
speech and fall on innocent ears and eyes.
Only a subtle sense can detect the
shadow and begin to feel the way toward
the hidden one who has cast it, and whose
shy self can neither rise from the words, nor
retreat beyond them, back to silent lies.

The Cobra Clutch - Bill Roberts

Pro wrestling took a turn for the better,
Though honesty wasn't a priority,
When Nanjo Singh and his dreaded
Cobra Clutch came into steamy
Turner's Arena every Wednesday night.

Tickets were tough to buy, even my fifty-cent
Bleacher seat near the dressing rooms.
Though small in stature, Nanjo had
A barrel chest to defend the absurdity
Of his turbaned head, and each Wednesday
Closed out the feature event by applying
His patented Cobra Clutch, with sinewy arms
About his larger opponent's neck, choking off
Air flow to miniature brain and oversized body.
Twenty-some weeks in a row Nanjo put them

Down with his deadly snake lock until
A more attractive newcomer climbed through
The ropes and proceeded to unravel
Nanjo's turban, exposing a blond crewcut.
Nanjo disqualified himself, exited the ring
Quickly and ran, deeply embarrassed,
Past me to his dressing room as his
Former fans hooted at him all the way.
It was at a tender age, eleven, when
I discovered not all is on the up-and-up.

Pompeii, Italy — Mary K Lindberg

Elsewhere there was daylight by this time, but they were still in darkness, blacker and denser than any ordinary night... — Pliny the Younger, 79 A.D.

Just think, Marcus! Only last week we made love under the Wedding of Mars and Venus. You wanted to do it in the garden but the servants would hear.

Our Greek slave had just finished painting Narcissus Gazing on the peristyle wall. Remember? We laughed: he might fall into our pool.

Now, like Paolo and Francesca
in Dante's hell, we are yoked
since Vesuvius woke and shattered
our dreams with hot hail, stealing the moment
of ecstasy we share forever.

We're anchored here under glass, two
naked Roman patricians embracing,
a dubious, erotic immortality. And —
I think I don't love you any more.

Digital Age — A. D. Winans

I told you not to take a snapshot
I don't photograph well
but you did nevertheless
and sent it to me by means of attachment
and there it was on the screen
in black and white the only colors that matter
and it split into two parts on the screen
neither of them doing me justice
an injustice I am sure not intended
this faceless face staring back at me
smashed into a thousand lines
this snapshot more like an empty face
stuffed away in a shoebox
in the far corner of a closet
life a series of quick winks lost
in cyber space

Who Needs Poetry — Ida Fasel

Who needs
poetry when
stores in the mall - "Pipe Dreams,"
"Ups & Downs," "Great Expectations" —
give you

the time
of your life? Who
needs poetry, who won't
rouse to advertising slogans:
We all

have dreams.
you stuck to yours.
Who needs poetry when
newsprint is a daily whiplash
against

the house,
when the paired voice
of TV skins you raw,
when the momentary wipes out
all the

noble
notions of our
past, and soap operas
serve superficialities —
set-ups

of light
and sound without
light or music? Who needs
the silent thrill of reading when
you can

drop out,
dope out,
dope up, become
a celebrity by
scoffing a good thing down? Who needs
the taste

of slow
cookery, the
subtle persuasions
when you can get an instant meal
by phone?

On the Film Match Point — Donald Lev

A little bit of *Crimes & Misdemeanors*, a smattering of *Crime and Punishment*, a smidgen of *The Sacred and Profane Love Machine*, a bisser of *American Tragedy*; the big difference is these other works of art did not, like this one, suck.

Well, the music was good, and Scarlett Johansson, well who wouldn't go ga-ga over her; but what did she see in him?

A tennis pro with so little personality?

If he'd played Raskolnikov that would've been that for that classic (I know William Shattner didn't

completely destroy Aloysha Karamazov—though some say he did—which still doesn't destroy my point).

Maybe Woody should have played the part himself.

The bullets would have had to be blanks in that case.

(Hey, it couldn't hurt, might have helped!)

Woody: take it from one septuagenarian, who wishes you well, to another: hang it up.

Look at all the time you could be devoting to tennis, travel, and other pursuits.

On the Film L'Enfant — Donald Lev

The glowing complexions of the actors makes for an observation. What else? One thinks of Ron Kolm's Duke & Jill, who Are probably not as young, nor certainly so handsomely complected; nor did mobile phones count for so much of their drama. Of course, there's the "children having children" theme that is such a sociological cliché, and the physical set while so convincing could be anywhere, not only the slums of Euroland. Leaving the theater, I spent some moments in something still resembling the world of the film: my basic test for effectiveness.

A Sweltering Farewell — Donald Lev

Nothing is really solid.
Not the lights of
Gas stations and convenience stores along
Coney Island Avenue;
not the lines in highways to and from New Jersey;
not in the Village restaurants and gourmet groceries,
nor the lightly garbed bodies
dancing in and out of them.
I feel like swimming away;
But only succeed in treading water.



Democritus Digitized
Via Velazquez

ISSN 0197-4777

published 11 times a year since 1979
very limited printing

by Ten Penny Players, Inc.
(a 501c3 not for profit corporation)

Subscriptions -- \$33 for 11 issues.

Sample issues — \$4.00 (includes postage).

www.tenpennyplayers.org/mags.html