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A scream of hollow coldness brought him quickly to consciousness. He lay there a while, trying not to shiver lest he wake his wife, whose swollen belly gently rose and fell besides him. "It'll be another girl," he thought to himself, "why the hell she can't give me a son, I'll never know. This one just has to be a girl; you could tell by the way she carried it. Still, if my arm's completely healed by next spring, and I can get to cutting and with exaggerated care swung his legs out onto the board floor. He glanced at his two young daughters, huddled together in the corner bed, as he passed through the doorway into the kitchen. Olja, serious even in sleep, held Matti close to her, with the tightness of a farewell embrace, her pale hair half covering Matti's face.

Cursing the cold he opened the door of the porch and grasped for a handful of kindling. Retreating, he pushed the door too with his foot and shuffled over to the stove. He swung embers into a tottering, new-born flame. He opened the hinged front-piece and blew its still body onto his belt through the hole he'd formed. "It's too damn cold to bother checking the rest," he decided, "and anyway we've got enough food for the day." He wiped the knife-blade on his pants and began to trek home.

Moving slowly up the ridge, he paused to examine some fresh deer tracks. "A yearling doe, next year she'd mate if all went well. Maybe, if it warms up later on I'll walk down to Leppanen's, buy some more shells and get up a little earlier tomorrow. Hell, there were more deer than that one to populate the woods." He continued on, until at last he'd completely circuted the small clearing that contained all he possessed, and all that he held to be dear.

Leaving his snow-shoes in the porch, he stepped into the kitchen. Tuula sat there, a strange and awesome look on her face, while Matti sobbed, her face buried deep in her mother's thigh. He sat there, her head lying in his lap, unable to thrust her tongue back into her mouth. He sat there, her head lying in his lap, unable to thrust her tongue back into her mouth. His mitts and began to loosen the coil of fine mukluks, his fingers fumbling with their laces, he swung open the hinged front-piece and searched for a few small birch logs and a couple of balsam. These he placed carefully onto the fire. Pulling on his parka and buckling his knife belt he slipped into the crisp, still whiteness. He adjusted the bindings on his snow-shoes, and began to descend from the small cabin towards the black bush that lay stretched below and around.

Away in the east, through the break in the hills behind Toivo's place, a purpling bruise held the promise of dawn. He supposed that he really ought to go and see old Toivo, after all he had promised to help him fix his fence, that kind of fool tried to farm the gravel of Kaministikwa, was beyond his telling. The moon, a pale toenail clipping, hung over him to his left, sucked clean of any warmth it might have had by the thirty below dryness of the morning. He entered the bush and moved towards his first snare. It was empty, but he stopped to straighten it and moved on. He began to run towards his second trap, and increased his pace as his eyes picked out the rabbit that lay dead on the snow beneath the cedar boughs. He took off his mitts and began to loosen the coil of fine wire that dug its way deep into the animal's neck. At last it was free, and he began to reset the snare. He stroked its velvet whiteness gently, trying to smooth the fur back over the murderous gash, but somehow it wouldn't lie flat. Drawing his knife, he cut into the back legs, between the tendon and the bone and threaded the still body onto his belt through the hole he'd formed. "It's too damn cold to bother checking the rest," he decided, "and anyway we've got enough food for the day." He wiped the knife-blade on his pants and began to trek home.

Moving slowly up the ridge, he paused to examine some fresh deer tracks. "A yearling doe, next year she'd mate if all went well. Maybe, if it warms up later on I'll walk down to Leppanen's, buy some more shells and get up a little earlier tomorrow. Hell, there were more deer than that one to populate the woods." He continued on, until at last he'd completely circuted the small clearing that contained all he possessed, and all that he held to be dear.

Leaving his snow-shoes in the porch, he stepped into the kitchen. Tuula sat there, a strange and awesome look on her face, while Matti sobbed, her face buried deep in her mother's thigh. A dark, undulating shadow drew him towards the small pantry. He took his knife, reached up and cut the rope that held Olja's young body suspended taut from the thin rafter. He pulled her eyelids down over her bulging eyes, and did the best he could to smooth her pale hair back over the rope-burn that circled her neck, but somehow it wouldn't lie flat.

It was in the spring of the following year, that I made my entry into this world, my father's first and only son. A gift of God he used to call me, but whether that is so or not, I cannot say.
Because Cannon is a literary paper, we on the staff ought to have some idea of what we mean by literary. Though we try to encourage students who enjoy writing by publishing their material, there are times when we return someone's poem or whatever with a "why don't you try to make it a little more like this", or some such comment. This implies that we are trying to define some kind of standard which will determine what is literary and what is not.

Making such a definition is no simple matter. We cannot make a list of ten requirements that each written work must have and promise to publish anything that gets at least seven out of ten. Art cannot be measured by such cut and dried standards. Instead we have a general idea of what we look for. So that you will know where we're headed (we usually don't know) we'll try to define our standards as much as we can. We certainly don't claim to know the gospel truth about this matter, so any disagreement from readers would aid us in clarifying and modifying our views.

First of all, a work of writing (or any work of art) should be unified. Everything in a piece should contribute to establishing one consistent impression in the reader's mind. Oftentimes a writer will become entangled in a web of words, using more than are necessary and so detracting from the unity of the piece. Word economy, and careful word choice are very important if one wishes his work to be unified and coherent.

Secondly, use of literary techniques such as alliteration, similes, metaphors, symbols, and so on give a piece artistic life. Saying things in a fresh way, like its never been said before. To call a waning moon a "toenail clipping" stands out in my mind as a fresh way of looking at the moon. Here again we must keep economy in mind. For example, a sentence stocked with similar sounds sometimes seems silly.

One more item we should discuss, probably the most difficult and uncertain in our minds. Cannon is not just a literary paper, it is a Christian literary paper. What makes Christian literature? Is it not essential for a Christian work to mention the saving blood of Jesus Christ or the Creator-glory of God. How so? Somehow, the manner in which a writer handles his story or poem reveals his outlook on life. Once again, this is not a cut and dried affair, and often one cannot say, "this is obviously Christian or vice versa." By the way, the use of undeleted expletives is insufficient grounds to declare a work as "unChristian".

We don't share these standards with you to scare you away, thinking, "I can never write like that." We certainly don't claim to always meet these standards. The Article Getting Nowhere probably doesn't meet any of these standards. Still, we need these standards as goals to strive for. Perhaps by next issue we will have heard new ideas and this editorial will have to be rewritten. Fine. That's what growing is all about.

Fine Arts News

Dance Troop Coming

During the weekend of Oct. 11 and 12 we had our first Fine Arts Weekend, which went fairly smoothly. The workshops were generally enjoyed by all who attended. At least, no one complained. The Film, Shop on Main Street received mixed reactions. A number of viewers were upset that the film was in black and white, and, horror of horrors, subtitled. Ach, does it matter? Rather than having a regular American-style film, one was imported from Czechoslovakia. Its good to get a taste of what life is like over there. The women bickering over prices at the market, houses all built in a row next to each other, the Jewish community fighting to keep alive are all parts of a culture totally foreign to us. The least we can do is to keep our minds open to their type of life-style.

The next Fine Arts Weekend will be held on the weekend of November 1 and 2, and will feature a dance troupe from Iowa State University. Please watch Diamond and posters for details.

THE STEADFAST HOURGLASS

We reach out and grasp the timepiece before us—an hourglass. It contains the element that holds our lives in suspense. Dashing it to the floor, we foolishly hope to shatter the barrier of time that cruelly grips us between its rapacious hands. The silently slipping sands of the hourglass lie still and we embrace finding temporary satisfaction. But the instant we turn we find the sundial and its mysterious shadows suspiciously sliding across the face of bright reality.

God knows not the slipping of sand, nor the sliding of a shadow, for he is infinite and he is light. To live one moment at a time for God, defeats time and brings eternity into our minds open to their type of life-style. The next Fine Arts Weekend will be held on the weekend of November 1 and 2, and will feature a dance troupe from Iowa State University. Please watch Diamond and posters for details.

Keith Voss

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They Promised Us a Rainy Night

Mentally, I chastise myself when I think back to a night in July of 1969. That was the summer of my sixteenth year, and there were probably countless memorable nights during that summer, but I remember one more than all the rest. I cannot help recalling it again.

Probably there were several things that were special about that one night, but the foremost of these was a girl named Paula. Also important, and probably just as special, is the fact that it rained that night; there has never been another rain storm like it in northwest Iowa. I remember other things too, but somehow they do not seem important or special any longer. They only serve to season the memory of that beautiful night. Yet, the vision of that night was destroyed by one cruel flash of light that pierced my consciousness. I wish now, that I had been blind. Today, I would call my reader a damn liar if he would tell me that it was all for the best.

A voice on a radio, droning off in the distance somewhere, promised a one hundred percent chance of rain for the night as Paula and I strolled across the green grass of a vacant lot near her house. Scattering flashes of lightning could already be seen fighting to make way for the first drops of rain; the rooftops as the rain drew nearer. The two of us had just returned from a day's outing. We were both a bit afraid of each other's bravery by sitting in the middle of the open field until the rains began. The evening was beautiful. Dark clouds had already rolled over us to fill the eastern sky. The two of us were soaked to the skin. Small puddles of water were already collect in the grass when I pulled Paula to her feet. A strong feeling of emotion swept over me as we began to run toward the street. (Damn it, I still think I had a good reason to feel emotion.) Paula's hair was no longer long and blonde but short and brown and her eyes had changed to a deep, reflecting blue. I stopped running and turned back to the cathedral just in time to see a last flash of lightning illuminate the glassy dome. When I ran to catch Paula's swinging hand, there were tears stinging in my eyes. I was ashamed and angry. The dandelions bowed their heads before me when I kicked at them in the darkness.

Paula brushed her dripping hair behind her head when we reached the safety of the darkened porch. She laughed at me when I shook the rain out of my long wet curls. Then we turned for a minute to watch the rain pelting everything within its reach. The dome of the cathedral could no longer be seen; darkness had enveloped it and the lightning was already passing on to flash in another sky.

"I had better go home now," I said after a moment had passed. "Thank you for the good time."

"Thank you, Peter," she whispered.

Northwest Iowa will probably never have another rain storm to compare with the one that night. I keep waiting and praying but I am getting tired. I wonder if she remembers.

Jerry Van Tol

THE GAME OF BACKSLIDING

The robins rival the starlings for my seeds: beans, carrots, peppers, melons, radishes, pickles, broccoli, and corn.

This morning a quite contrary cat fearlessly chooses my garden—how does it grow?—to trampoline in my tomatoes, roll out the onions, drag a dead rat through the new strawberries.

I grin a wry and guilty grimace at the way I too daily sport with, spoil the fragile shoots of my May sowings, His seeds of Christlike life.

Nevertheless, I shoq the cat.

—Merle Meeter
Mr. Meeter and Wally van de Kleut

Poetry is an art that must communicate a message of some sort to the reader. The medium poetry uses to communicate is words, primarily a conceptual medium. To that extent, the poem must become more and more graphic or perceptual to make a point, at the expense of the conceptual, to the point where there may be no concept at all, as in “After Its Kind.” It would be better left to the photographer.

A confusion between poetic device and poetry also exists in “One Late Night”. There is no purpose for the many sharp images in the poem if they do not illustrate an uncommon thought or observation. Just the image on its own defeats the purpose of having images and would also be better done through a picture in Living Colour.

Frank Kooger

Jerry Van Tol

I liked your story a whole lot; very readable and definitely unique. I was intrigued by the various things you tried to say, and by the dual level of comprehension (and of course, meaning) which is so much a part of your short story. However, trying to write an intelligent thing or two about the story is like attempting to sum up the mysteries of politics, marriage, justice—well pretty well all of life in a paragraph or two. Impossible! This depth, and your “tooling around” with language encourage me to keep trying to write a good Christian short story myself.

Thanks.

Jerry Van Tol

Each point of the plot in “Marriage for John the Baptist” is very imaginative and basically pretty complete. The metaphors and images good but both the plot and metaphors needed to be dealt with in more detail.

The idea of a discussion involved in the story wasn’t present other than in the three explaining paragraphs.

Wally van de Kleut

“a marriage” by Wally van de Kleut had no meaning that I could see.

Donald Elwell

Mr. Meeter

A good friend and I once talked about the purpose of art as being “Playful suggestiveness.” Reading your “After Its Kind”, that former discussion came back to mind, and I’d like to say I enjoyed what you’ve done. I get the idea you have based your experimentation on a simple beautiful appreciation of life around you without coming out and didactically over-explaining how you feel. It’s great! In this connection I’d like to express my appreciation of your poem, “Winter Triolets”—again playful suggestiveness!—and in this case there is the added intrinsic technical form which enhances the pleasure of reading.

Wally van de Kleut

Distant Shore

Rejoice
Flowers bursting!
Buds opening!

Frost, spider
spinning web.

Old, new,
All is designed.

Springing forth
to light the earth,

Joy, joy, joy.

Dan Guild

The Accident

Blinding snow - -

Quick,
Into the street.

Flakes swirling,
Sting.

Thump, ground, bliss!

Steve Hoogerhyde

The Accident

Blinding snow - -

Quick,
Into the street.

Flakes swirling,
Sting.

Thump, ground, bliss!

Steve Hoogerhyde

The Distant Shore

Hot
burning sand

Beach umbrellas
Sand castles
Sea gulls
Sea weed

Big wave - -
death.

Doug Eckardt

Cycles

Red, orange,
yellow;

Fall
in
a
bowl.

Apples kiss oranges.
Life renewed,

Acorns
fall - -
Oaks.

Dan Weitzel

Though we invite Feedback on all the material which we print, we encourage readers to especially consider the cycle of poems printed above. We on the staff also plan to comment on them in the next issue.
Art Profile

A Bite Into Karel Appel

According to any serious Dutchman, or even a half-serious Dutchman, anyone who says anything like the above has got to be out of their mind. But Karel Appel does, and what's worse, he paints accordingly. Just witness the three paintings I've included.

These paintings mean little to the concretetemperament. They are "informal and non-objective"—or what we would call, formless and imageless—and because of it, there is nothing to bite into; nothing to associate with. And yet there is an attracting quality in Appel's work—especially when viewed in colour—and partially for this reason, men like Appel are making it big behind-the motivation for this type of painting, are the two questions I'll nibble at in this profile.

Once upon a time—as fairy tales begin so well!—there was a strong desire to repute realism and its rationalism of the will in the eternal attempt to understand and paint reality. The inward-looking, naturalistic aspects of the impressionists, and the non-rational, subjectivistic, non-naturalistic tenets of the expressionists were not enough. Instead men began in the early part of the twentieth century to believe that "to find reality it is necessary to sound the depths to which the light of reason does not penetrate; the depths of the unconscious."

Modern psychology had after all taught that even though reason forms the superstructure of the mind and that it is the product of the slow process of maturity, it is not the essential reality of man. Artists began to reject form in order to understand and control the chaos of the world. An intense probing of the irrational resulted; the surrealists in a bizarre, non-objective portrayal of a pre-conscious reality; the abstractionists in an almost totally symbolic depiction of a "seeming" unconscious reality. Both of these groups ignored the rational mind and the emotional heart while painting the pre-conscious reality they believed to be present. Yet in doing so they imposed rational, formed images and situations on to their canvases and expected of the viewer a rational activity while observing the painting.

In, around, and about the middle of the present century, the post-war artists—of which Karel Appel is a part—embarked upon a crusade of spontaneity. They adopted much of the surreal and abstract thinking, but in doing so came up with a wholly different concept about form. Rational form was totally scorned, yet there was no denial of form in their art. Informal art—not to be confused with formless art—was the word, where abstract expressionism has an internal form concomitant with the pre-conscious. Werner Haftmann describes it this way, "They did not look for objective images to begin with but found them in the purely spontaneous act of painting. The dense color and network of lines gave rise to an association which set the mechanism of the unconscious in motion and so produced images." Ackerman, an abstract expressionist painter, explains, "my painting is based on the pleasure of painting and on the idea of the tabula rasa...I set off on an adventure, forcing myself when beginning a canvas to empty my consciousness, guided by the sheer joy of painting. It is clear that this void is created by an act of will—the will negating itself." Or as others have said, painting is violence fighting violence. In this way abstract expressionists reach "point zero" of the surrealists: an eternal internal conflict. The source of the conflict, or the explosive centre of creativity for these artists is a primeval energy, whose pure vitality and ardour is captured by the raw gesture, the violent thrust of a special art of calligraphy.

Action painting (abstract expressionism) then winds down to an emphasis on the new importance attached to the physical act of painting and to an existential attitude which holds that the artist grasps authentic being through the act of creating rather than by a finished product. Therefore, in response to a question such as where are the dancers in "Dancing in Space", Appel replies, "I am interested in force, not aesthetics." This view tends toward artistic individualism and yet action painters see another side to their painting. For example, Pollack tries to isolate "concrete pictorial sensations" pleasing to the eye, from any symbolic, memory images. It is these "concrete pictorial sensations" that also make Appel's work so attractive. As was said by one viewer in reference to a painting of Appel's, "How can a person paint so happy and be Dutch?"

However, the bite into Appel, no matter how beautiful to look at, is bitter; completely distorted with worm-hole ideas of reality. Like green-house fruit, Appel's fruit hasn't the rich, long-lasting taste that real sunshine provides.
Getting Nowhere

Warning: the following piece is written in the style of John Cage, composer.

“Here we are now in the middle of the fourth large part of this talk. More and more I have the feeling that we are getting nowhere, and that is a pleasure.”

(from “Lecture on Nothing” in Silence by John Cage, p. 121)

Did that quote give you pleasure? You say, this is absurd, Just like Endgame, this is absurd. This absurd quote was from John Cage. Does that mean that he is absurd? No, he is a composer. Perhaps you get the feeling that we are getting nowhere. Is it a pleasure? It is a pleasure for John Cage to get nowhere. It is not a pleasure for me to get nowhere. I think, “I am getting nowhere what a waste of time.” Maybe John Cage has time to waste.

Perhaps you are thinking, “John Cage? He must be crazy, and other people are catching it too.” You are very correct. You are getting somewhere. You are not getting nowhere. Wouldn’t you like to get nowhere? It can be a pleasure. I would like to try to explain why John Cage likes to get nowhere, but to explain it would require that I get somewhere. Maybe I can compromise and find a place between nowhere and somewhere that I can get to. That would be a pleasure.

John Cage is a composer of music. His music is very similar to his lectures—it gets nowhere. “Waaaaah”, that was a trombone sliding down a scale. “Tink, tink, tink,” that was a triangle. “Leedaleeoo”, that was a flute melody. “Present temperature in Omaha is…” , that was an announcer from WOW radio in Omaha. No, he was not announcing from the stage, a radio was on the stage with the musicians. Radios can make Cage music too.

This music gets nowhere. Maybe you ask, “Is it music?” John Cage says it is music. He even says it gives him pleasure. Is reading this a pleasure? Maybe you have stopped reading by now and then you will never read this line. Maybe you never even started. Is that a tragedy? No, when you get nowhere everything is a pleasure. Nothing is a pleasure too.

Why does John Cage think this way? Maybe it would give you pleasure to say he is off his rocker. If you say that, you will be getting nowhere and you will be like John Cage. Does that mean you are off your rocker too? Rocking chairs give me pleasure.

John Cage is a Zen Buddhist. Trying to understand a Zen Buddhist does not give one pleasure. They don’t want to get anywhere, they just go where life takes them and accept whatever life brings. They don’t worry about purposes of living, or controlling “nature”, or anything. Life is uncertain, they say, there is no sense in planning for the future or planning to get somewhere because life may not let you and then the pleasure will be gone. If you make no plans but accept everything that comes, everything will be a pleasure. “We are all heroes, if we accept what comes, our inner cheerfulness undisturbed.” (p. 134)

The lectures of John Cage and his music are similar to what he believes life to be. You never know what to expect. He may be talking about music and then suddenly mention mushrooms. Some people get pleasure from mushroom soup, but I prefer to make gravy out of it. Campbell’s works best.

Poetry: To Be or Not

In the following article, a few comparisons of “good” poetry and “poor” poetry will be set forth by way of metaphors. It should be remembered that I make no claims as an authoritative critic of poetry, but I don’t raise apples either, yet I know when one is rotten. Recent pickers and planters of poetry seem to be content with rotten merchandise. Somehow this attitude is illogical because the person who has never eaten an apple nor picked his way through a poem, has no idea of what constitutes a good apple or a rotten apple, nor what constitutes good poetry or poor. Therefore, it should follow that those of us who do eat apples or read poems should recognize rotten ones upon sight and wormy ones after the first bite. We do not need to be naive experience to make such a judgment.

We do not need to be ever on the fields of ignorance and ones after the first bite. We do not need to be able to recognize rotten ones upon sight and wormy naive experience to make such a judgment. Perhaps we may apply the same values for judgment to the criticism of poetry even though I must admit that only a fruit inspector can pick out the soundest apples, only a connoisseur can pick out the tastiest wines, and only a critic can pick out the best poetry. However, I do eat apples and read poetry.

In my “apple eating” opinion a good poem should not come across to the reader entirely upon the first reading but should convey to the reader a quality or tone which is inviting to him and which promises to provide him with a greater fulfillment. One bite of an apple is not fulfilling.

In the first reading the surface appreciation, (the poem’s aesthetic qualities), should arouse the reader’s interest and invite him to re-read the poem in search of a deeper meaning. Some styles of poetry, like the haiku, may not allow this; instead, they merely portray sharp images. Yet the superior haiku does have a more profound level of meaning hidden within the images used. This seems to have been the original intent of the earlier Japanese haiku, but most Americanized versions depict straight-forward contrasting images with no meanings attached.

A good poem should be like an appetizing wine, kept in an attractive bottle, with an appealing label on it, and most important of all, sealed. Different wines are in different bottles and different poems have varying forms and styles. But in poetry, both the mechanical structure and the message bottled within must be attuned to each other. The degree to which the poem embodies or departs from this central harmony, is crucial in determining the value of the poem. There are poems which merely play with word sounds, techniques, and other outward features of poetry which may tend to amuse the reader or carry an aesthetic impression to him, like that of a fancy, empty, wine bottle. But who really likes a bottle, empty of wine? Poems which aesthetically seal their true message in a well-structured form, (even free verse), appeal more to the reader than poems which stand nude, baring their every curve of thought. Similarly, wine sealed in a bottle will have more flavour than wine sitting in an open glass. Any connoisseur of poetry should immediately note the difference between the poem which is self-evident to the reader and one which invites and attracts the mind.

Shallow subjective poems usually satisfy the reader upon the first reading, signifying very little. They seldom are the work of a poet who could be termed “an artist,” but stem from the unframed thoughts of an irresponsible poet who mistakes literary anarchy for literary freedom. Poetry may reach opposite extremes where the poet becomes almost impossible to understand because of the difficult subject matter or the distance of it from reality. However, these poems may be the works of a searching poet with deep insights from which he is...
But can one find pleasure in this kind of music? Cage knows that he has given some people problems:

And so, one must listen to Cagian music in the same manner that Cage looks at life. Don’t expect anything and you can’t be disappointed. Do not judge it, do not force rules upon it. “Let us say in life—no earthquakes are permissible. What happens then?” (p.133) We cannot force rules upon life, we cannot force rules upon music. We cannot interfere with nature.

When I was just a little boy, if I had heard music by John Cage I would have said, “Yucko, that stinks!” Now that I have studied a little music and have tried to understand Cage by reading his writings, I react to his music by saying, “Yucko, that stinks!” To be perfectly honest though, I don’t think I ever said “Yucko” about anything when I was just a little boy, but I do now.

Why do I say “Yucko!”? Cage would blame it on me, saying I should simply accept his music rather than expect more. Cage is applying his Buddhism to the extreme-man must become completely passive, only life and the course of nature have validity. That makes me wonder: why bother to compose at all? Is he correct in realizing that man is not the god of creation as secular man often claims to be, but he turns right around and says man is an insignificant nothing. Why should this “nothing” compose? If music is to be identical with life, can not life speak for itself?

The art of writing good poetry should be recognized as a tedious process carried out by an artist with a gift which he is dedicated to and which he dedicates. Although the original inspirations of both “good” and “bad” poets may be similar, each one’s thoughts are unique. The one plays with his thoughts and dabbles them into words; the other thinks responsibly and tries to clearly portray his insights and moods. The poorer of the two rushes his product off to market before it is truly finished, leaving the original mood or message of the poem straining within the words, unclear and lost to the reader. Twisted meanings, splotched images, distorted sounds, and dabblings of rhythm, strike him as “being responsibly creative.”

Cage endowed his art with artistry and skill in the techniques of his art, stedfastly manipulates the patterns, rhythms, and other mechanics of poetry, and encapsulates those insights which originally flashed through his mind. He tries to interpret these ideas and feelings in words that articulate the original thought as closely as possible. Only after countless reconstructions does the responsible poet humbly concede that the poem is done to the best of his ability. Even then, he still feels that the poem doesn’t quite convey all that he hoped it would.

The responsible reader of any poem must exercise patience, care, and skill when re-interpreting the artist’s work. He should not only gain some skill in discovering and analyzing the meaning of the poem but should also achieve some appreciation for its aesthetic structure. After he is able to recapture in his mind those thoughts and
comments which the poet intended, the reader must either discredit the ideas or use them to moderate and inspire his own feelings. Only then will he fully appreciate the aesthetics of, and understand the meaning of, the poet’s work. Even if he should discredit the poet’s intentions, the responsible reader should appreciate the aesthetic structure unless it is unwarranted.

Many ailments continue to afflict even the best poetry, but all distortions of poetry, both in the works of the true artist or of the dabbler, are due to the poet’s genetics. Perhaps the dabbling poet who carelessly cripples the art of poetry should resign. However, it is not my intent to say that the “poor” poet should refrain from writing poetry, but until he learns to master the techniques of this art, he should not publish or market his poems.

There may be certain impositions of poetry which some would not want to part with or call “rotten,” but then, we couldn’t call deformed apples rotten either; at least they don’t appear on the market.

Even if we get nowhere, it’s still a pleasure