

Act III of *Him* to Appear in Anthology

*Cummings' play *Him* has long been out of print, but we are pleased to announce that at least Act III of the play will soon be available. On June 12, 2009 Sarah Bay-Cheng wrote to inform us that she was "about to publish an anthology of modernist poetic drama (including the third act of Cummings' *Him*)." The anthology, edited along with Barbara Cole, called *Poets at Play: An Anthology of Modernist Drama*, was published by Susquehanna University Press (Associated University Presses) in April of 2010. The cover features Cummings' drawing of burlesque and vaudeville comedian Jack Shargel. The publisher's blurb follows.

Poets at Play: An Anthology of Modernist Drama is the first book in more than thirty years to consider the dramatic and theatrical legacy of American modernist poets, making these plays accessible to students and scholars in one volume. This critical anthology presents selected plays by American poets writing between 1916 and 1956—Wallace Stevens, Edna St. Vincent Millay, H. D., E. E. Cummings, Marita Bonner, William Carlos Williams, Gertrude Stein, and Ezra Pound. Beginning with Stevens's *Three Travelers Watch a Sunrise* (1916) as a dynamic introduction to the modernist transformation of poetry into performance, the collection also includes Millay's biting anti-war satire, *Aria da Capo* (1920) and H. D.'s *Hippolytus Temporizes* (1927), loosely adapted from the Euripides play. Despite being out of print for more than twenty-five years, Cummings's *Him* (1927), combines absurd wordplay and nonlinear dramatic structure, in what may be called American dada, to comment on the theater, popular culture, and sexual politics against the darkening background of pre-World War II geopolitics. Equally political, Bonner offers a decidedly different perspective on American poetic drama in her allegory of Black life in *The Purple Flower* (1928). Though often overlooked, Williams's play *Many Loves* (1942) challenges the definition of poetic-drama with "reality" depicted in verse and the play-within-a-play written in realistic prose. The collection concludes with one of Stein's last two plays, *The Mother of Us All* (1945).

About the Editors: Sarah Bay-Cheng is Associate Professor of Theatre at the University at Buffalo/SUNY. Barbara Cole is the Education Director for Just Buffalo Literary Center.

Hardcover, 6 X 9 inches, bibliography, notes, index, 360 pages

ISBN 978-1-57591-128-1, Price \$80.00 (Susquehanna University Press)

Cummings' *Erotic Poems* published

Gillian Huang-Tiller wrote to alert us to a new compilation of Cummings' *Erotic Poems*, published, according to the title page, by W. W. Norton. The spine of the book, however, lists the publisher as Liveright (a subsidiary of Norton). Though the compilation was edited by George James Firmage before his untimely death, it contains no afterword and no indication of when the poems were written or first published. However, it is apparent that most of the 51 poems in the volume are from the 1920s and that all have been chosen from the text of the 1994 *Complete Poems*. The poems are even printed in the order in which they appear in *Complete Poems*, with the identical numbers they have in that text; for example, a poem numbered "16" is followed by a poem numbered "72." This procedure is completely contrary to Cummings' practice: for him, poem numbers did not function as titles but rather as indications of where a poem appears in a specific collection. When Cummings assembled two different selections of his poetry for the press [*Collected Poems* (Harcourt, Brace, 1938) and *100 Selected Poems* (Grove, 1958)], he renumbered all the poems in sequence and in the latter volume indicated in the table of contents the volume in which each poem originally appeared. Besides the 51 poems, the volume also features 13 of Cummings' erotic drawings.

One can view eight of the drawings and poems in the February 10, 2010 issue of the online magazine *The Daily Beast*.

A Note on the Princeton Encyclopedia Entry on EEC's Early Volumes of Sonnets

Gillian Huang-Tiller

The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics (1993) considers sonnets in E. E. Cummings' early volumes as sonnet sequences: "and Cummings' several s. ss. in his early volumes *Tulips and Chimneys* (1923),

& (1925), and *XLI Poems* (1925)” (“Sonnet Sequence or cycle” 1171). This reference to Cummings’ first three volumes of poetry might need reconsideration. Ronald Greene, the author of this entry, appears to reach a conclusion either based on the sonnets grouped under each division title or on a group of sonnets in numerical sequence. The publishing history relates how Thomas Seltzer (Liveright) and Lincoln MacVeagh (the Dial Press), the editors of Cummings’ first two books of poetry, *Tulips and Chimneys* and *XLI Poems*, gingerly selected Cummings’ less radical poems from the original folder, or later, the 1922 manuscript, and how Cummings self-printed the remaining poems and sonnets in the volume titled & [AND] (Kennedy xiii-xix and Firmage 185-88). In this sense, the arrangement of the sonnets in the early volumes probably cannot be taken as sequences since these sonnets did not follow the original typescript order. For *Tulips and Chimneys* Seltzer only selected seventeen sonnets from the manuscript: six in “Sonnets-Realities,” six in “Sonnets-Unrealities,” and five in “Sonnets-Actualities.” Clearly, these seventeen sonnets cannot be taken as a sequence, for the original sequence is already truncated. MacVeagh printed sixteen more sonnets from the remaining manuscript without the division titles in *XLI Poems*. Twelve out of these sixteen sonnets originally belong to “Sonnets-Unrealities” in the 1922 manuscript, one belongs to “Sonnets-Actualities,” and three belong to “Sonnets-Realities.” If we follow the original divisions in the manuscript, the sonnets in *XLI Poems* seem to begin with eleven sonnets in “Unrealities,” followed by one sonnet in “Actualities” (“perhaps it is to feel strike”) and one sonnet in “Realities” (“when i am in Boston,i do not speak.”), then one sonnet in “Unrealities” again (“will suddenly trees leap from winter and will”), and finally ending the so-called sequence with two reality sonnets: “a fragrant sag of fruit distinctly grouped.” and “by god i want above fourteenth.” Since there is no coherent progression, it seems implausible that Cummings would have intended these sixteen sonnets as a sequence. Finally, after re-incorporating thirty sonnets from sonnets-realities and sonnets-actualities from & [AND] (1925) into the 1922 manuscript, Cummings’ final version of & [AND] retains sixteen sonnets from the original volume: nine in “Sonnets-Realities” and seven in “Sonnets-Actualities.” This final version of & [AND], thirty-four poems in total, is printed in George Firmage’s 1991 and 1994 edition of Cummings’ *Complete Poems 1904-1962*. The 1925 edition of & [AND] mentioned (along with *XLI Poems*) in the *New Princeton Encyclopedia* appears to be the older version of the volume reprinted in

Cummings' *Complete Poems 1913-1954* (1954) and *Complete Poems 1913-1962* (1972), not the final typescript version authorized by Cummings. It is doubtful that the forty-six sonnets (twenty-two in "Sonnets-Realities" and twenty-four in "Sonnets-Actualities") in the older version would have constituted another sequence, especially given the restoration of one sonnet ("even a pencil has fear to") from & "Sonnet-Realities" to "Sonnet-Actualities" in the 1922 manuscript.

As the arrangement of the poems in Cummings' early volumes of poetry is not Cummings' original, the *New Princeton Encyclopedia's* entry on Cummings' sonnets as sonnet sequences can be misleading. Since we all accept Firmage's 1991 and 1994 revised, corrected, and expanded edition of Cummings' *Complete Poems 1904-1962*, which adopts the 1922 manuscript of *Tulips and Chimneys* and the final typescript edition of & [AND], I think that it is important to note the non-existent volume of *XLI Poems* in Firmage's corrected version of Cummings' *Complete Poems*, to distinguish two different versions of & [AND], and finally to call attention to the misleading encyclopedia labeling of Cummings' sonnets in the first three volumes of his poetry as sonnet sequences.

—University of Virginia's College at Wise

Works Cited

- Greene, Ronald. "Sonnet Sequence or cycle," *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, eds. Alex Preminger and T. V. F. Brogan (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1993), 1171.
- Kennedy, Richard S. "Introduction to *Tulips & Chimneys*" in E. E. Cummings, *Tulips & Chimneys*. New York: Liveright, 1996. xiii-xix.
- Firmage, George James. "Afterword." in E. E. Cummings, *Tulips & Chimneys*. New York: Liveright, 1996. 185-88.

Patchin Place Timebends

Gillian Huang-Tiller



How interesting to compare these two photos! Patchin Place has not changed much at all, except notably fewer trees on either side now. We also can see a manhole and small gardens in front of the apartments today, but no bushes at all or manhole as in Marion's picture. The paint color could be different, too. I always wondered how Cummings climbed the

stairs to his studio on the third floor every day, while passing another tenant in the same apartment building on the second floor, and how Marion could ring the bell to get Cummings if they had visitors. The mystery was solved. Behind the entrance door is a hall that houses a staircase that goes to the second and the third floor. From Marion's first floor apartment, Cummings could step into the hall and go up to his studio, while hearing the radio coming out of the apartment on the second floor. I don't know if Cummings' readers have ever wondered about the floor arrangement, but it puzzled me a long time until we saw it with our own eyes. (Cf. *Selected Letters* 174-5.)

Part of Cummings' text facing Marion's photo in *Adventures in Value* reads:

miracles never cease:a certain diminutive deadend lane of hundredyear-old houses hasn't yet been—&,while an extraordinary mortal named Hugh Keenan lives,probably won't be—supplanted by one of those hugely hideous hyperboxes teeming with moneyed subhumanity which Marion long ago christened “hatcheries” (III 15)

—*University of Virginia's College at Wise*

Works Cited

Cummings, E. E. *Selected Letters of E. E. Cummings*. Ed. F. W. Dupee and George Stade. New York: HBJ, 1969.

Morehouse, Marion and E. E. Cummings. *Adventures in Value*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1962.

The EEC Image Database Project

Steven Katz, ophthalmologist at Ohio State University and avid collector and researcher of Cummings' paintings, is compiling a database of images of Cummings' artworks. So far he has amassed a digital record of some 2000 images from institutions, internet, print, and private sources. In addition, he has collected announcements and ephemera from the various exhibitions of EEC's art. Eventually, Steven would like to make this database available on the *Spring* website so those who are interested in Cummings' art would have a central source of information. Also, new images and information about Cummings' exhibitions could be incorporated into the data-

base. Steven would also like to post a list and description of exhibitions of EEC's art, of works held at various institutions, and a bibliography of catalogues, articles, and books that refer to Cummings' artwork. He writes: "We could also keep a running list of auction history. As I get access to new images, it is most important to learn if a particular work has any distinguishing tags or numbers on the back. Because I have most of the catalogues from the exhibitions, it may be possible to establish provenance in some cases. Categories in the database that I am considering: Title/Subject, year/date, media, dimensions in inches (width x height), Gotham Book Mart number, Luethi-Peterson Camp number, exhibition stamp, signature (if any), source of photograph, and current location (institution or private)."

Contact Steven at stevenkatzmd@yahoo.com if you are interested in finding out more and/or contributing to the EEC image database project.

Society Members View Cummings Paintings

On Sunday morning after the 2009 Boston ALA, Steven Katz, arranged for Michael Webster, Bernard Stehle, and Gillian Huang-Tiller and her husband Ken to visit the Pierre Menard gallery in Cambridge, which has about 50-75 EEC paintings. A short subway ride across the Charles River brought us to the Harvard Square gallery, where an assistant pulled the EEC paintings out of storage for us to view. The gallery one of four dealers (Ken Lopez is another) who ended up with the vast trove of EEC paintings that Cummings' daughter, Nancy, deposited at the Luethi-Peterson Camp in Connecticut. Bernard Stehle's research in Nancy's letters to Richard S. Kennedy shows that Nancy gave the paintings to the camp because she received a notice that she must get them out of storage in New York within 10 days. At the time (in 1969, right after Marion's death) Nancy was living in London, had little money, and didn't yet know George Firmage, so she simply sent the paintings to the place in Connecticut where her children had gone to summer camp.

One of the better things at the Menard gallery was a small Jimmy Savo painting that shows him on stage in a spotlight. It's not as good as the Ordeman painting reproduced in *Spring* 6 [<http://www.gvsu.edu/english/cummings/Ordeman6.htm>], but it's very evocative. [See the photo of it, taken by Ken Tiller.] We also saw a very small but expressive moon painting in which a ghostly moon worshipper floats in a liquid landscape flecked

with gold, yellow, and even a blob of orange. A turquoise cloud floats about this ghost. A large (especially for Cummings) portrait of Joe Gould appears to have been cut down (at the top and right side) since it was photographed for *CIOPW* [See <http://www.gvsu.edu/english/cummings/CIOPW/JoeGould.jpg>. See also the Joe Gould drawing reproduced in Kennedy, *Dreams* 362.]



Another painting that stood out was a portrait of Russian artist Mikhail Larionov, who was a friend of Cummings in Paris in the 1920s and '30s. The painting shows Larionov dressed in a double-breasted suit, asleep on a bed. Next to the pillow is a balalaika, indicating Larionov's Russianness and perhaps symbolizing his status as an artist as well.

*In the last issue of *Spring*, we reproduced a new Ruth Shackford painting of Cummings' New Hampshire house, Joy Farm "as it was" (see *Spring* 16, pages 183-184). We thought it worth mentioning again that the Flickr site of the Madison, NH Library contains—amid the photos of kids making origami animals and license plates (Live Free Or Die!)—two photos of the library's "E. E. Cummings Exhibit." See:

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/madisonlibrary/799694541/> and
2. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/madisonlibrary/799694567/>.

Ruth's painting appears in photo #1. Here are the two captions to the photos:

Photo 1:

Here are some of the items exhibited at the “E.E. Cummings and Silver Lake” program presented on July 12, 2007 by Ruth Shackford and Carol Batchelder. On the left is a painting by Mrs. Shackford of Joy Farm as she remembers it from Cummings’ time there. On the right is a painting of Mount Chocorua by E. E. Cummings. The sweater shown on the right belonged to Cummings.

Photo 2:

Here are some more items exhibited at the “E. E. Cummings and Silver Lake” program. The paintings were all done by Cummings. The doll belonged to Cummings’ sister Elizabeth, and the dress on the doll was worn by Cummings’ mother, sister, and Cummings himself. Carol Batchelder told how, when she delivered some special delivery mail to Joy Farm (“up that awful driveway”) for her mother, Silver Lake’s Postmistress, she heard the typewriter displayed here as Cummings was working.

- In March, 2010 Franck (Po-Ting) Liu sent us a report from Taiwan. In July 2009, he earned his M.A. degree from National Dong Hwa University. His thesis is titled “Nature, Image, and American Modern Mystique: Gestural Forces in Visual Poems by Ezra Pound and E. E. Cummings.” He writes that “without Cummings, I would not have finished my thesis.” He also mentions that *Spring* has “provided me with great help towards my thesis' accomplishment. . . . Thank you all.” Since completing his thesis, he has been busy exploring “the inter-relationship between the avant-garde American poetry and ancient Chinese poetry,” as well as “translating our non-hero.”

*Sue Swartzlander wrote to alert us to a mention of Cummings in Roger Ebert’s blog post for October 25, 2009. Despite its use of the lowercase for Cummings’ initials, the end of Ebert’s post, titled “The autumn leaves of red and gold,” is worth reading:

When I enrolled as an Illinois freshman, the challenge of autumn was

like a jolt to my being. This was the big time. At 8 a.m. of my first day, I walked into a class taught by Daniel Curley, which I am essentially still taking. He handed out mimeo'd copies of "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," which is now so beloved by me and was then, as far as I could tell, hardly even written in English. And poems by e. e. cummings that seemed written on a broken typewriter. I believed I had entered at last into the realm of Great Writers, where Thomas Wolfe had told me I belonged.

It was late on a crisp autumn evening, after walking a girl home, reciting "anyone lived in a pretty how town, with up so many floating bells down," that I made love for the first time. And then walking home, always in the air, the knowledge that someone, somewhere, was burning autumn leaves.

children guessed (but only a few
and down they forgot as up they grew
autumn winter spring summer)
that noone loved him more by more

*James Dempsey is writing a biography of Scofield Thayer, friend and patron of EEC. In late August, 2010, he wrote to bring us news of an amusing wager between Thayer and poet Amy Lowell.

June 2, 1920. [B 34/68/1839]

Writing pad paper margined, lined, in ST's hand.

"Miss Amy Lowell and Scofield Thayer bet each other one hundred dollars that Edward Estlin Cummings will have achieved a position in English or American literature equal to that of Edwin Arlington Robinson, Robert Frost, or Carl Sandburg in fifteen years from this June, 1920. Judgement to be given and payment made June 2nd, 1935. In case of the death of either signatory, this is void,

Amy Lowell
Scofield Thayer"

Thayer never collected on the bet, for Amy Lowell died in 1925. In any case, since 1935 was the year that EEC self-published *No Thanks*, a book that Cummings undedicated to the 14 publishers who rejected it and dedi-

cated to his mother who paid for it, we may doubt that Thayer would have been able to persuade Lowell to pay up. But the bet does show Thayer's high regard for Cummings, even early in the poet's career when he had published very little. By 1935 Cummings had certainly not achieved the prominence of Frost, Sandburg, or even Robinson in their day. As Richard S. Kennedy relates, Cummings became more popular after he began to give more public readings in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

The News from Poets and Translators

*At the beginning of July 2009, *Spring* contributing editor Michael Dylan Welch sent us the bibliographic details for his two most recent books, including sample poems. He writes: "for the first book I include the Japanese, Romanized text, and the English translation—perhaps you can include these?"

Welch, Michael Dylan and Emiko Miyashita, trans. *100 Poets: Passions of the Imperial Court*. Tokyo, Japan: PIE Books, 2008. 424 pages, with color photographs by Yukikazu Ito. ISBN 978-4-89444-757-8. [Translation of the *Ogura Hyakunin Isshu*, a 13th-century collection of *waka* poems compiled by Fujiwara no Teika, most of which are love poems from the Japanese Imperial court; the modern term for *waka* is *tanka*.]

風をいたみ岩うつ浪のおのれのみくだけでものを思ふころかな 源
重之

*kaze wo itami iwa utsu nami no onore nomi kudakete mono wo omou koro
kana*

strong winds
shatter the waves
against unmoved rocks—
so, too, I suffer alone
from unreturned love —Minamoto no Shigeyuki

Welch, Michael Dylan. *For a Moment*. Pointe Claire, Quebec: King's Road Press, 2009. ISBN 978-1-895557-20-6. [haiku chapbook]

dwindling fire—
our conversation shifts
to death

sparrow at dawn—
how slowly the light changes
with the song

Christmas Eve—
bits of a price sticker
stuck to my finger

Although the *Hyakunin Isshu* book isn't distributed in the U.S., it's still possible for people to order it through Amazon. It's a little harder through the U.S. Amazon, easy through Amazon in Japan (but you may need to know Japanese).

More recently, Michael Welch sent us word that he has published *Noh*, a cotranslation with Emiko Miyashita and David Cobb of Noh play summaries and associated poems (Tokyo: PIE Books, 2010). It's an art book that includes numerous photographs of Noh masks and costumes. He has also published *57 Damn Good Haiku by a Bunch of Our Friends* (Sammamish, Washington: Press Here, 2010), co-edited with Alan Summers. In 2010, Michael was selected to participate in the Seattle Jack Straw Writers Program, which includes publication in an anthology, numerous readings, podcasts, and recordings

If that weren't enough, in 2009 Welch started a new website titled *Graceguts*. It contains hundreds of his published essays, reviews, and other material, mostly haiku-related, as well hundreds of haiku, senryu, tanka, translations, and longer poems. The title of the site derives from the Cummings poem "let's start a magazine," in which Cummings calls for "something authentic and delirious / you know something genuine like a mark / in a toilet // graced with guts and gutted / with grace." You can find the site by searching online for *Graceguts*.

*In late October, 2009, Ivo De Gennaro sent us his translation of *Santa Claus*, with the English text on facing pages. The title of the book in Italian is: *Santa Claus—Un'allegoria di E. E. Cummings*. For more information,

see: <http://www.eudia.org/index.php/ebook/126-santa-claus-unallegoria>. Now *Santa Claus* is available in both French and Italian editions, but not, unfortunately, in English.

*Also in late October of 2009, Jacques Demarcq wrote telling of his travels in the US and sending proofs of his afterword to a new edition of his translation of *No Thanks*:

I have been in North Carolina this month for a conference about Black Mountain College. I visited Thomas Meyer, friend of Jonathan Williams who died last year and met Fred Dewey, grandson of the philosopher, editor of the LA magazine *Beyond Baroque*. It was mainly holidays for me, after a summer spent on the *No Thanks* postface.

Mes amitiés

Jacques wrote again in October 2010 to say that the publisher of his translation of *No Thanks* had backed away from his commitment. Fortunately, Jacques found a new publisher, Éditions Nous, who has scheduled the book for release in June 2011. Jacques has also finished a translation of *is 5*, which will be published by the same Éditions Nous in May 2011. We hope to publish translations of at least portions of both of Demarcq's afterwords for these books in a future issue of *Spring*.

*E. M Schorb's collection *Time and Fevers: New and Selected Poems* won the latest *Writer's Digest* Award for Self-Published Books in Poetry. The book was also a 2007 recipient of an Eric Hoffer Award for Excellence in Independent Publishing. In addition, Schorb has recently published *Words in Passing: a selection of formal verse* as an e-book with New Formalist Press. The book and a selection of Schorb poems is available at <http://www.newformalistpress.com/>.

* Also at the New Formalist Press site, readers can find six poems by long-time *Spring* contributor George Held. (Held is the one of the Featured Poets for August 2010.) Held's *After Shakespeare: Selected Sonnets* (Cervená Barva Press) will appear in 2011. One can also find copies of his chapbook of poems about the moon, *Phased: Poems, etc.*, at the Lost Bookshelf of Cervená Barva Press. See <http://www.thelostbookshelf.com/>.

*Milton Cohen's new book, *Beleaguered Poets and Leftist Critics: Stevens, Cummings, Frost, and Williams in the 1930s*, was published by the University of Alabama Press in October 2010.

*Just before we went to press, Claudia Desblaches sent us a review copy of her new book, *Dire le réel en poésie: Edward Estlin Cummings, William Carlos Williams*. She wrote:

It is with pleasure that I am sending you a copy of the book I recently wrote on E.E. Cummings and W.C. Williams.

I am quite busy at the moment with a 10-month child (A girl named Liv, born last June) and I am also pregnant a second time ('due' next November). But I hope to be able to renew my activities with E. E. Cummings and the society very soon.

I hope everything is fine for you,

Yours truly, Claudia Desblaches

*María Teresa Gonzalez Mínguez writes: "Good news! Our book *Dimensions of Humour. Explorations in Linguistics, Literature, Cultural Studies and Translation*, edited by Carmen Valero Garcés, has just come out. Of course, there is my chapter on Cummings entitled: "Visual Rhythm, Iconicity and Typography: The Ways to Humor in E. E. Cummings' Poetry." It was a project we started a long long time ago and I think the results are very good.

*Another long-delayed (is there any other kind in academia?) publication is Etienne Terblanche's "Iconicity and Naming in E. E. Cummings's Poetry," appearing in the ninth volume of the Iconicity in Language and Literature group, called *Signergy*. (For more information on the publications and triennial conferences of the Iconicity group, see <http://es-dev.uzh.ch/> .) Here is the abstract to Etienne's paper:

Moving on from a visual-iconic emphasis in the study of the i-o dance in E. E. Cummings's poetry (Terblanche and Webster 2007), this chapter shifts the focus to a sound-symbolizing element of that dance, in tandem with its iconic features. Reading Cummings's poems "anyone

lived in a pretty how town” and “my father moved through dooms of love” among others, the chapter shows how Cummings uses sounds such as [ʌɪ] and [eɔ] to intimate a movement from isolation, individuality, and “lightness” into a movement of integration, deeper selfhood, and greater resonance and reverberation in the natural world. This is a complex poetic example of what Brent Berlin terms size-sound symbolism. Based on this finding, the chapter finds further that arbitrariness in Cummings (such as isolating the lower case “i”) serves to enhance motivation (such as miming dynamic integration within a larger “o”-world of being). Evidently, this further involves a certain inseparability of what Max Nänny terms imagic and diagrammatic forms of iconicity: “i” mimes smallness, uprightness, and the joy of a dot jumping out imagically, while this goes on to indicate entrance into a sense of movement, growth, and being (as embodied not only in “o” but also in the semiotic movement “into” it) — a movement which is in the nature of diagrammatic iconicity. The chapter concludes that arbitrariness and motivation end up in loops of enhancement in the case of Cummings, contrary to the current stock response that language is only or nearly only arbitrary.

*The editor of *Spring*, Michael Webster, has published “Cummings’s Silent Numerical Iconic Prosody” in the book *Media inter Media*, edited by Stephanie Glaser. The volume honors Professor Claus Clüver, a longtime teacher and mentor at Indiana University and a world-renowned expert on concrete poetry.

Books and Publications by Society Members and Friends

Alfandary, Isabelle. “Poetry as Ungrammar in E. E. Cummings’s Poems.” *Modernism Revisited: Transgressing Boundaries and Strategies of Renewal in American Poetry*. Ed. Viorica Patea and Paul Scott Derriick. Amsterdam / New York: Rodopi, 2007. 111-120.

Basinski, Michael, ed. *Gerald Locklin: A Critical Introduction*. Buffalo, NY: BlazeVOX, 2010.

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Cowen, John Edwin. “The Anchored Angel and the Dylan Thomas / Jose

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- . *No Thanks*. Trans. Jacques Demarcq. Caen, Normandy: Éditions Nous, forthcoming in June 2011.
- . *font 5*. Trans. of *is 5* by Jacques Demarcq. Caen, Normandy: Éditions Nous, forthcoming in May 2011.
- . *Erotic Poems*. Ed. George James Firmage. New York: W. W. Norton, 2010.
- Denander, Henry. *The Loulaki Bar and other Poems from Hydra*. Calumet, MI: Miskwabic P, 2009. [Poetry and artwork]
- Desblaches, Claudia. *Dire le réel en poésie: Edward Estlin Cummings, William Carlos Williams*. Paris: Michel Houdiard, 2010.
- Farley, David. *Modernist Travel Writing: Intellectuals Abroad*. Columbia: U of Missouri P, 2010. [Contains a chapter on *EIMI* based on his article in *Spring* 12.]
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- Jinkinson, Roger. *American Ikaros: The Search for Kevin Andrews*. London: Riding House, 2010. [Book about the second husband of Cummings’ daughter Nancy]
- Locklin, Gerald. *The Dodger’s Retirement Party: A Novella of the Good Old Days*. R)ν Press, 2010.
- Locklin, Gerald and Wilson, Beth. *Modest Aspirations – Poems by Gerald Locklin & Stories by Beth Wilson*. San Pedro, CA: LummoX Press, 2010.
- Mínguez, María Teresa Gonzalez. “Visual Rhythm, Iconicity and Typography: The Ways to Humor in E. E. Cummings’ Poetry.” *Dimensions of Humour. Explorations in Linguistics, Literature, Cultural Studies and Translation*. Ed. Carmen Valero Garcés. Valencia: PUV, 2010. 171-197.

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- The Spoken Word: American Poets*. London: British Library/ BBC, 2010. Audio CD. [Cummings tracks are: "she being Brand," " 'next to of course god america i,'" "MEMORABILIA," "of all the blessings to which man," "anyone lived in a pretty how town," and "THANKSGIVING (1956)."] See <http://publishing.bl.uk/cd/american-poets>
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Performances, Celebrations, Talks, CDs, and Scholarly Presentations

*On April 26, 2009, Fred Sanderlin performed his one-man show, "Afternoon Tea with E. E. Cummings" at the Muskegon Women's Club.

Publicity for the show included the following sentence: “the most wasted of all days is one without laughter.” Recently retired from Western Michigan University, Fred wrote to us about himself and his performance:

I’m a resident of Muskegon, MI. and have for some 35 years performed my one-person show on the life and poetry of Mr. Cummings. Recently I resurrected it, revised and renewed copyright permission from Norton (local performance April 26th at Muskegon Women’s Club). Of course I was delighted when I came across your site to see Grand Valley so actively engaged in his work and memory.

*At the beginning of December in ’09 Stephen Scotti sent us a self-made CD with performances of his settings of three Cummings poems: “O the sun comes up-up-up in the opening” (CP 773), “(of Ever-Ever Land i speak” (CP 466), and “i thank You God for most this amazing” (CP 663). He writes:

Dear Mr. Webster,

I’ve been enjoying the copies of SPRING since you have become editor. I know Norman Friedman as he came to the opening of *VIVA CUMMINGS!* which I conceived and wrote the music for. [Editor’s note: see Stephen R. Scotti, “*VIVA CUMMINGS!* On the Road in South America (April 1992)” *Spring* 3 (1994): 97-101.] I’ve never put any of the songs on CD, but recently I did record three of them and would like you to have this copy. I learned everything I know about Cummings from Slater Brown who lived in Rockport, MA with his amazing wife. I performed “i thank You God for most this amazing / day” at his memorial service in Rockport. He asked me to sing it for him before he died.

I once had dinner with Slater and his daughter Rachel and her mother in Provincetown, MA. Esther (the mother) sat next to me at dinner and she kept asking me questions about my musical settings of Cummings’ poetry. She scoffed at me about attempting to set Cummings’ poetry to music. She said it could be done probably, but it would inevitably come out badly because she felt his poetry was not meant for music.

I guess Slater showed her.

All the best,

Stephen Scotti

At the ALA Conference in Cambridge, MA, May 2001, I vividly remember Stephen performing “Jimmie’s got a goil” (CP 233) five times in succession, each time in the pop music style of a new Cummings decade—the ‘20s, ‘30s, ‘40s, ‘50s, and ‘60s—proving that not only are Cummings’ poems “meant for music,” they transcend pop genres and fads. Bravo and Viva!

*The British Library and the BBC have issued a three-CD set called *The Spoken Word: American Poets* (NSACD 63 – 65, 2010). The blurb for the collection notes that about “30 poets are included, from Gertrude Stein, born in 1874, to Amiri Baraka, born in 1934. The 20th century was a time of enormous energy and variety in American poetry, embracing such illustrious names as T. S. Eliot, e e cummings [*sic*], William Carlos Williams, Ezra Pound, Robinson Jeffers, Langston Hughes, Anne Sexton and Sylvia Plath. Each of the poets is heard reading from their own work. The recordings are mostly taken from previously unpublished BBC broadcasts.” The Cummings readings were broadcast by the BBC on March 8, 1962, in the last year of our nonhero’s life. Cummings reads the following poems: she being Brand,” “ ‘next to of course god america i,” “MEMORABILIA,” “of all the blessings to which man,” “anyone lived in a pretty how town,” and “THANKSGIVING (1956).” See <http://publishing.bl.uk/cd/american-poets>

* Isabelle Alfandary presented a paper “American Literature and Becoming A-grammatical” at the American Comparative Literature Association’s Annual Meeting, at Harvard University, March 26-29, 2009.

*In April of 2010, Salvatore Di Giacomo presented his book of translations *E .E .Cummings—Poesie D’Amore* to the Faculty of Letters at the University of Messina.

* Laura Ruby sent us an announcement for “The Image and the Word,” an exhibition of Artist-Writer Collaborations of prints by Laura Ruby and poetry by Tony Quagliano, held in Honolulu in August, 2020. She writes: “The works are complements of visual and verbal interplay, and the subjects range from the world of art, to jazz, to events in Hawaii.”

Presentations at the Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture since 1900, February 18-20, 2010

E. E. Cummings and Popular Modernism (Organized by Gillian Huang-Tiller, E. E. Cummings Society)

Chair: Gillian Huang-Tiller, University of Virginia at Wise

1. Rai Peterson, Ball State University, "E. E. Cummings, Out with the Old, in with the 'O / L / D' "
2. Eva María Gómez Jiménez, Universidad de Granada, Spain, "The Avant-Garde and Social Linguistics: Minority and Marginalization in Cummings's *95 Poems*"
3. Kaitlin Mondello, Stetson University and Daytona State College, "E. E. Cummings and the Politics of Small-Scale Aesthetics"

Music and Literature: Aesthetic Interrogations

April D. Fallon, Kentucky State University, "*O Sweet Spontaneous: The Significance of Paris and Erik Satie on E. E. Cummings's Aesthetics*"

Presentations at the Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture since 1900, February 19-21, 2009:

Genre Issues: Rereading E. E. Cummings and Modernism (Panel organized by Gillian Huang-Tiller, E. E. Cummings Society)

Chair: Michael Webster, Grand Valley State University

1. Adam C. Vander Tuig, Jesus College, Cambridge University, "The Stuff of Expression: Interpreting Cummings's Artistic Thought through Pinker's *Mentalese*"
2. Michael Webster, Grand Valley State University, "'Almost All I Don't Know about Art': E. E. Cummings Explicates His Dust Jacket Blurb for *Him*"
3. Gillian Huang-Tiller, University of Virginia, Wise, "'3 Dimensional Human': E. E. Cummings' Shakespeareanism and WWII Conceit in *I x I*"

Richard D. Cureton, University of Michigan, "Pararhyme in E. E. Cummings's *Sonnets – Realities*"

E. E Cummings Society Presentations at the American Literature Association conference, San Francisco, May 27-30, 2010

Session 1

The Word (and the Punctuation Mark)

Chair: Bernard F. Stehle, Community College of Philadelphia

1. "Two Converging Motifs: E. E. Cummings' *llook*," Aaron Moe, Independent Scholar
2. "'A world of made / is not a world of born': E. E. Cummings and 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,'" Michael Webster, Grand Valley State University

Session 2

Cummings and the Culture of Modernity

Chair: Millie Kidd, Mount St. Mary's College

1. "Modernist Faiteur: the Influence of Paris on E. E. Cummings," April Fallon, Kentucky State University
2. "'not into nothing': Form, Cultural Catastrophe, and Cummings' Post-WWII Sonnetry in *Xaipe* ('Rejoice' 1950)," Gillian Huang-Tiller, University of Virginia at Wise

E. E Cummings Society Presentations at the American Literature Association conference, Boston, May 21-24, 2009

AnOther Cummings: Life and Culture

Chair: Taimi Olsen, Tusculum College

1. "Nancy Cummings' Letters to Richard S. Kennedy," Bernard F. Stehle, Community College of Philadelphia
2. "E. E. Cummings, Theorist of Modernism," Michael Webster, Grand Valley State University
3. "Signifying 'X': The *Metaxy*, the Apocalypse, and Shakespeareanism in Cummings' *One Times One* Sonnets (1944)," Gillian Huang-Tiller, University of Virginia at Wise

AnOther Cummings: Genre and Intertext

Chair: Gillian Huang-Tiller, University of Virginia at Wise

1. "E. E. Cummings: A Small Eye Painter from New England," Steven Katz, Independent Scholar, The Ohio State University
2. "E. E. Cummings' 'Jottings' and José Garcia Villa's 'Xocerisms'—Invoking Lyricism in Creating the Poetic Aphorism," John Edwin Cowen, Farleigh Dickinson University
3. "Revisiting Greek Studies: Poetic Treatments of E. E. Cummings," Taimi Olsen, Tusculum College

*Your intrepid (but overworked) editor has written down comments on only one of these conferences, the 2009 ALA in Boston. In the first session, Bernard Stehle read some tantalizing excerpts from some of Nancy's 37 letters to Cummings biographer Richard S. Kennedy. According to Bernard, in *Dreams in the Mirror* Kennedy quotes from only two of Nancy's letters, so there is a lot of information left to explore. Bernard also took a side trip from the conference to go to Cape Cod to visit with and interview Nancy's oldest daughter Elizabeth. He has discovered the whereabouts of all three of Nancy's surviving children (the executor of Nancy's estate, Alexis, lives in Antigua; Ioanna lives in Athens, Greece) and plans to interview them all. Michael Webster's paper was about an unpublished 1918 Cummings essay on modernist art, written while EEC was in basic training at Camp Devens. Gillian Huang-Tiller trained her X-ray vision on the X section of wonderful *I x I*: the X is an image of in-between-ness, the moment that can't be killed or captured. Steven Katz outlined his project to catalog EEC's paintings and their provenance, and to make an even more complete list of EEC exhibitions than appears in Milton Cohen's *Poetand-Painter*. (By the way, Milt Cohen was at the ALA, giving a paper on Hemingway and, naturally, attending the Cummings sessions.) Steven showed some beautiful slides of some of EEC's paintings from his own and other people's collections. Then on Sunday, he conducted us to the Pierre Menard Gallery to view some Cummings paintings in their actuality. (See "Society Members View Cummings Paintings" above.) John Cowen's talk was spurred by his recent edition of Garcia Villa's collected poems, titled *Doveglion* (Penguin). Taimi Olsen explored some implications of the surprising number of Persephone motifs in EEC's early poems.

* **The wooden man from *The Enormous Room* found?**

After studying several photos of a wooden crucifix sculpture at the Musée de Cluny in Paris, it occurred to me that this sculpture might be the “little wooden man” that Cummings writes about in *The Enormous Room* (38). [See: <http://www.pbase.com/bmcmorrow/image/101046003>] As Jack Gill noted in *Spring* 16, neither Cummings’ letters nor Kennedy’s biography mention any encounter with a roadside crucifix (114). However, we know that Cummings did visit the Musée de Cluny, making it quite likely that he invented the roadside part of his “wooden man” encounter and that he is remembering a medieval sculpture he saw back at the museum in Paris. Here is Cummings’ account of his meeting with the wooden man:

After two hours walking he called a halt, bidding us rest. We all lay flat on the grass by the roadside. The moon was still battling with clouds. The darkness of the fields on either side was total. I crawled on hands and knees to the sound of silver-trickling water and found a little spring-fed stream. Prone, weight on elbows, I drank heavily of its perfect blackness. It was icy, talkative, minutely alive.

The older presently gave a perfunctory “alors”; we got up; I hoisted my suspicious utterances upon my shoulder, which recognized the renewal of hostilities with a neuralgic throb. I banged forward with bigger and bigger feet. A bird, scared, swooped almost into my face. Occasionally some night-noise pricked a futile minute hole in the enormous curtain of soggy darkness. Uphill now. Every muscle thoroughly aching, head spinning, I half-straightened my no longer obedient body; and jumped : face to face with a little wooden man hanging all by itself in a grove of low trees.

—The wooden body clumsy with pain burst into fragile legs with absurdly large feet and funny writhing toes; its little stiff arms made abrupt cruel equal angles with the road. About its stunted loins clung a ponderous and jocular fragment of drapery. On one terribly brittle shoulder the droll lump of its neckless head ridiculously lived. There was in this complete silent doll a gruesome truth of instinct, a success of uncanny poignancy, an unearthly ferocity of rectangular emotion.

For perhaps a minute the almost obliterated face and mine eyed one another in the silence of intolerable autumn.

Who was this wooden man? Like a sharp black mechanical cry in

the spongy organism of gloom stood the coarse and sudden sculpture of his torment; the big mouth of night carefully spurted the angular actual language of his martyred body. I had seen him before in the dream of some mediæval saint with a thief sagging at either side, surrounded with crisp angels. Tonight he was alone; save for myself, and the moon's minute flower pushing between slabs of fractured cloud.

—*The Enormous Room*



Christ on the Cross [Auvergne, 12th century, Polychromous wood (poplar); Musée national du Moyen Âge, Paris, France] Photo courtesy of Brian J. McMorrow.