

STEPHEN PAUL MILLER AND DAVID SHAPIRO

Daniel Morris calls the drama of David Shapiro and Stephen Paul Miller, "lyric drama and interior dialogue challenging traditional conceptions of realist drama and blurring the line poetry and performance, art and life. It causes us to rethink traditional ideas about dramatic characterization through the deconstruction of the major personae in the play. The manic quality of the improvisation between Miller and Shapiro speaks to their fear of closure, of completion, of silence as a sign of ending, as well as of their desire to defer textual cessation in order to avoid the association between literary for and representational violence—that is to say, the tragic exchange of natural being for art. Their drama thus privileges talking, associated with natural presence, at least in pre-Derridean thought, over writing associated with an evacuation of natural presence in favor of the permanence of art."

TWO JEWISH BOYS ON A BUS

a play by STEPHEN PAUL MILLER and DAVID SHAPIRO

JEWISH BOY I:

"I'm not even gone yet and miss myself already,"
cries Mr. Ed when Wilbur says it's okay
a horse has nothing to leave a human because
Ed will leave memories of the best friend ever.

It makes more sense for an animal to say
"I'm not even gone yet and miss myself already."
An animal's past and present are
inscribed in the ongoing present.

It's easy for Ed to see himself as a heroic
mechanism for missing himself.
It's like Jakobson saying poetry's nothing
except attention to language,
which is another kind of
"nothing but attention."

You got me into Roman Jakobson, David.
I wish I better understood attention.
I wish John Kerry—

JEWISH BOY II:

—I loved Jakobson even before I met him. Some said he had so many languages that when he was hit by a car he shouted help in 47 languages. I thought of this as a play by itself. An old man is hit by a truck or a yellow car or a cab. The cab leaves stage left. Then almost repeating the dragonish beginning of *Die Zauberflöte*, the man starts to sing:

Attention!
Parakalo?
Zu hilfen zu hilfen!
Help!
Attention?
Pronto? Ahi! Basta!

And the aria is the entire play. The play is called: *Poetry is Shouting Help in Forty-seven Languages*. And why do we love 47 so. It stands for multiplicity and doubtful magnitude. Large as a Newman and shorter than heaven, 47 like 30 means many. Thirty days and nights; forty days in the wilderness of language.

Jakobson: How he connects grammar and geometry. He has helped me in so many ways. When I told Edward Said that he had written to me and called me a genius, even, Said smiled and said wickedly: "That's how he took over Harvard, flattering everyone." I didn't like that worldly wisdom from Edward, I went to Boston to meet Jakobson. He spoke poetry in Russian in all the languages. He twinkled. He had arrived a student and broken a whole marriage.

Pomorska: Her prose is better than most poets' poetry. I mean I love her little troits. Yes a dog is a cur is a whelp is a canine is a chow is substitution. But a dog also lingers around a dogdish or a linoleum floor or some other fruit of the tree of the spiderweb theory of language. Now that I am old, I go through that beautiful aphasia. Instead of saying I love you I might say I forget you. Instead

of saying "The dog ate the dogdish," I might say "Fish have done so many things to the waves." How can one not love a man who put together the anti-grammatical and the anti-geometric. Who wrote *A Generation That Squandered Its Poets*. Who loved Klebnikov so much. Who howled against the word 'Postmodern.' But I should end quickly, because many of my emails just disintegrate.

JEWISH BOY I:

All the world's an electronic message. One bolt of lightning creates the universe—I mean its mark creates the background of the universe. That the point of Zeus, the first god, throwing bolts. Death is the mark falling back into its background. Did you know Huey Long's last words were "Don't let me die."

They say he also said, "I have so much to do," but that ruins it.

JEWISH BOY II:

Are you the person who accompanied me into the depths of a nuclear accident, years ago?

Are you the Jewish boy in love with Meher Baba? Is it true that you were in love with an avatar who pointed to an alphabet board? Isn't that a scene of a play: Baba pointing to the sky and saying to a young artist: "How do you like my paintings?" Are you the one who started the John Cage John Ashbery reading? Aren't you the poet who got angry at the Ear Inn possibly for aesthetic reasons? Are you the poet of whom John Cage said: "If we get drunk, we'll all start punctuating?" Are you the one who synthesized David Shapiro and Bill Burroughs? Are you the one? Are you one? Why does God have to be one, in the implications of William James, what about 47? Henotheism? Aren't you one who could or might believe that God exists among many other gods? Is the universe a multiverse? And, if it is, does it make a difference to think that parts of the very play slink into and fold over the seeming universe?

Like Beethoven to fish, like fish to Kafka, we do not know what the play is. Thus, Arthur A Cohen the theologian said to me: "Judaism at least gives you high standards."

And: It is not ours to finish the work. And: Neither is it ours to abandon it. Page Valery. The long y of Valery, indicating he was a deep-sea diver. *Diver* by Johns. By the time you can free associate, the work is over.

All of this is spoken slowly while the Jewish Boy II is climbing a yellow ladder and descending it, and then wrestles with Jewish Boy I dressed up as Jacob's angel. By the end of the skit or scene, the Jacob character lies down with a pillow of stone at his head. It is possible that during his sleep a dream sequence is initiated.

JEWISH BOY I:

The last founding father, James Madison, suddenly realizes "I've outlived myself."

JEWISH BOY II:

I still write poems about flowers and weeds, petals and hedges. Do you know that Jews protect trees even in wars? Did you know of a 12th century book about all the creatures. The frogs say I love you God. The cow say, Moo. The dog says, I will be thrown at the Wall. Now one day, I, a Jewish boy number 2, found myself looking at a peony and thinking of mums too hard.

What rose to the surface of consciousness was this poem, Palestinian and Jewish at once. In my backyard, there was a hiding place within a tree or bushes. Here's my song. I hope the piano is tuned. I hope I haven't lost my voice. "The Song of the Peonies" (plural)!

Peonies

I don't want to be in the light,
she said
because then I can't write.
The peonies are so vaginal today
One clown shakes out her tongue
The eye is open as a mouth
I hadn't noted that the flowers were all
moving as the table jumped

Also distant from each other and
withered like the ruling class
They fedex they fellate they relax in the bowl-like
splendour of their ballet
as feet relax in the corruption
Lips open
and then they are shredded to change colors
A mountainous amount of consciousness
though close cousins to candles
and olive oil
Not everyone will stop for a white green petal
and jump from a car to see an
elegant spot of blood
Public as a cloud glared at from underneath
Shrubs weeds snobs of their baroque inclinations
The computer was in love

JEWISH BOY I:

'Jerusalem' means peace's platform,
kind of what a computer is.
Computers imply
a PLATFORM to interact.

To disprove that mathematical propositions
are all on one platform, Alan

Turing describes a simple airtight model,
or operative description,
of any computable mathematical proposition—

or so-called 'Turing machine'—
a little maybe like Jakobson's breakdown of
individual language acts.

In 1935, Turing shows that there is no unified basis for math
cuz different Turing machines have different bases but then

John von Neumann and Turing freak.
They *actually* can make these Turing machines
or algorithms
or mathematical propositions—
they're like snakes on a plane, or
snakes on a computation-enabling platform—

a computer is a Turing machine symposium.

In a way a computer replaces the natural platform,
which doesn't exist with a kind of "infinite now" platform.

That's the magic of Turing breaking codes
The Germans think would take years to break

in minutes through the first proto-computer,
which wins World War II. Right?

It's true.

The industrial revolution is based on the machine
which necessitates population concentration and cities.
Before the industrial revolution there are only tools.
A machine is tools working on a kind of platform.
It's a little like an algorithm or mathematical proposition
using the terms that compose it,
which are like tools. We go from tools to machines

to computers, which are all-purpose machines
made of Turing machines that are on

one workable platform or 'Jerusalem'
because in—

JEWISH BOY II:

—In Jerusalem, violence. Bridges to sacred places. Celan took a walk. The walk and the places preceded the poems; no, as Michal Govrin knows the poems precede the walk. She says Jerusalem is like a beautiful woman whose crotch is always being fought over, I was scared of the word 'crotch.' But why? In the Shir Ha Shikrim it says: "And my bowels were moved. My love my dove my undefiled."

It rains on the stage.

My hair is full of the drops of the night.

Continues raining.

And George Steiner said the Romantics invented the stormy day.

It storms.

And it's been said that I only quote in support. Is that the Jewish tradition? Once the great Steinsalz came to my shul.

Big screen of a shul in the back.

And he said we should give memorials while we are alive. He said Judaism was not a sepulchral religion.

Slide of a NJ cemetery.

But I said to him, "But don't we quote, sir, don't we quote all the time?" He said, "Yes, but we quote in the present tense."

Hal Forster once said of Gehry He is not permitted to quote from the past. Why? Why are their tone-deaf music critics?

Webern's music is played.

Can't they see that trading diamonds is so Jewish? But is their anti-semitism in music.

Slide of Wagner and echoes of the Love Death are heard.

Once I made love four times in a lab during the Liebstd. Kenneth Koch said: "You strange man," on the paper. I didn't think it strange. I was eighteen. I thought it was Wagner. Should we ban Wagner.

Picture of Daniel Barenboim with Edward Said. Shot of Edward throwing stones.

What is a stone. I refute him thus. Why are there so few references to the Holocaust in the work of Edward Said? He said once, "And do not call it a tragedy." Later he wrote, "And do call it a tragedy."

Here is a poem, is it Jewish? How Jewish is it?

A large flower falls over. Slide of flowers by Merrill Wagner.

Wie deutsch es ist?

Exterior Street

O I put a hand on your hand
On Exterior Street
The day was full of day
On Exterior Street
Moths drank tears from sleeping birds
On Exterior Street
Hugo de Vries came upon the evening primrose
On Exterior Street
You could think and look
On Exterior street
The balls of the sycamore were swinging
On Exterior Street

Storing the definitions loading the differences
Why did I still want to give it away
Why not wait and write about the beautiful green sweater
I was a virgin and learnt all about cells from Penelope
Even the private road is exterior
As one said: Look and think now
The large flower is falling over
It will never be more exalting
On Exterior Street

Mask of Benjamin glows and dies. Mask of Phillip Roth glows and dies. Mask of Charles Bernstein and David Shapiro glow and die. Music swells of the Liebestod followed by a Sephardic song sung by Berele Chagy.

A large flower falls over on the stage.

A fountain is projected with these words: 'Laugh, loudly .Love, as my voice laughs in the grey water'.

Two rabbis bring out a glass scroll. On the glass scroll it says: 'Lines of colors: How poetry is practiced in Paradise.'

A bed with a dead or dying woman is projected. The El Moly is played.

A picture of 12 year old Allen Ginsberg with his mother is flashed slowly and fades.

'Where are we going, Jewish Boy' is projected. Jewish Baby by Medardo Rosso is shown.

Finally Laurie Anderson emerges and, on stage, melts down a cross, a star and a Buddha symbol and others into a gigantic peaceful peace symbol, which she holds up and plays like a violin.

Shot of Bono, followed by Gandhi, Baba, and a last shot of Viola Farber, dancing.

Jewish Boy I and II embrace weeping at the slides they have been staring at. The Hebrew Melody is played. Shots of Havel and of Waldheim.

A big world is projected: 'ILLUSTRATION.' A shot of Avi Weiss leaping into Auschwitz. Finally nothing but gigantic insects drawn by Linda Francis.

Fade. Silence for three days.

JEWISH BOY I:

I want to change my name from Jewish Boy One to Jewish Boy Exclamation Point.

JEWISH BOY II (*looking like Professor Shapiro*):

This is action. If Hamlet cut off your head in the last act, wouldn't that be action enough.

I defer, I delay. I am dilatory.

Two Jews sit on a park bench and say oy and ayayay. Then they rise and say: It's nice to have a heart-to-heart conversation. Would it be better to do as a play?

Sudden lighting change, park bench in Riverdale.

FIRST OLD JEW:

oy veh

SECOND OLD JEW:

ay ayay

Time goes by.

FIRST OLD JEW (to Second Jew, now standing and preparing to leave):

It's nice to have a heart to heart conversation.

It's nice to have a heart-to-heart surgery.

It's nice to be at the center and at the margins.

It's nice to be. Survivor's happiness.

It's nice to be a joke made into a play.

They fight and get up smiling.

It's nice to be as active as a goat.

It's nice to fight and kill like Edward Albee characters.

It's nice for the earth to split open

and reveal itself to be the orange that Kenneth Koch loved.

They fight again, more vaudevillian.

It's nice to have three synagogues on a desert island.

One for you., one for me, and one for Maimonides.

I forgot the joke.

It's nice to have a heart-to-heart conversation.

But an abstract God has no ears or eyes.

So no one hears me, even my groveling religions.

It's nice to have action, but weeping is enough.

Slide of Jackson Pollock. somehow weeping, then slides of "Waiting for Godot."

I have been told that Pollock did weep

at his first and maybe last screening of Godot.

It's nice to have a slashing conversation, a dripping conversation.

I mean, what is a better Jewish joke?

They fight each other and seemingly one is very hurt.

Get up! Get up!

I need a heart to heart conversation.

Help.

Zu hilfen?

Attention?

Help help!

In many languages as the light dies.

Suddenly, a violinist comes out, dressed as a piano. The violinist plays slowly and earnestly, The Hebrew Melody of Achjron.

Slides of Allen Ginsberg, dying (if possible). Slides of Cracow after World War II. Slides of the Synagogue of Cracow.

Violinist stops playing.

I played this piece for my bar mitzvah, because my mother was embarrassed by my voice. She thought they would all say: The cantor's son can't sing. So a concert was arranged. I learned this piece to win the heart of a girl who now teaches at the Heschel School. I didn't win her. My father asked me to play it at his funeral. I said, Dad, I have played it at Cambridge, for Stokowski, etc., but why do you think I could play it at your own funeral? He said: "Oh come on, you can just dash it off."

I was very proud not to cry at my father's funeral. Until someone said: "What would have been so bad about that?"

Weeping as mystical technique by Idel.

Lights darken, lighten, darken: The violinist holds his violin like an umbrella and stares attentively into the audience. No notes.

VIOLINIST:

When I researched my grandfather I discovered that even the great lion of Warsaw was annoyed by his style. "Who are all these weeping Yosseles and Bereles?" he said. But he had to change his style.

There is a story of a cantor who sings so sweetly that the Cossacks decide not to kill him.

Is it true, that we had so many stone-deaf uncles?

Is it true, Dad, that we were better off without a finger than in the Czar's army.

My aunt's mother held out her hands in Poland to the police, offering her rings rather than letting her husband be jailed. They broke her finger and got the ring.

I told some Polish students that my aunt survived by giving selling her plates on her ways around Europe.

They told me: "We probably ate off those plates."

The theater darkens.

One Jew at a table in a modern college, like Bard?

So my grandfather was born in a tiny shtetl called Dagda

CHRISTIAN BOY:

Not so small, my friend.

JEWISH BOY II:

You know DAGDA, you've been to Dagda.

CHRISTIAN BOY:

Yes of course last year.

JEWISH BOY II:

You've been to my grandfather's town. But it isn't possible.
It's called a completely destroyed shtetl in the museum.

CHRISTIAN BOY:

Not destroyed it's big and booming, very industrial.

JEWISH BOY II:

But this can't be I mean the Holocaust museum. Has it completely etched on
the window as a completely destroyed village?

CHRISTIAN BOY:

Not at all, I assure, booming.

JEWISH BOY I:

Like say Newark.

CHRISTIAN BOY:

Absolutely, maybe larger.

JEWISH BOY II:

So maybe could see where my grandfather sang and grew up, my God, my God!
I had heard maybe a cemetery remained but not the town. My God my God
what we learn.

CHRISTIAN BOY:

Are you talking of the Jewish part of Dagda?

JEWISH BOY II:

Yes, yes, my grandfather sang there at age 5, his father and grandfather sang
thee.

No generation without singing.

Hebrew Melody is played softly and increasingly loud.

CHRISTIAN BOY:

Oh no, the Jewish part is gone.
Completely destroyed.

*Light fades and the Hebrew Melody is played with jazzy piano. Suddenly, a
violinist comes out, dressed as a piano. The violinist plays slowly and
earnestly, The Hebrew Melody of Achron.*

*Slides of Allen Ginsberg, dying (if possible). Slides of Cracow after World War
II. Slides of the Synagogue of Cracow.*

Violinist stops playing.

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No notes.

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There is a story of a cantor who sings so sweetly that the Cossacks decide not to kill him.

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The theater darkens.

The Professor, as if in a bad production of Tom Stoppard scene, with lighting effects so chic, rises like a Herzen, perhaps in 19th century clothes.

PROFESSOR:

Who will show us the woman of our time? It is necessary said Daumier or says Daumier to be absolutely modern. It is modern says Rimbaud because all known adornments have been taken away. It is necessary said Krauss and October Magazine to be absolutely postmodern though we don't know what that means. Is collage post-modern? Is Gertude Stein post-modern. Is perhaps all of modernism post-modern. Is it prescriptive and can they prescribe themselves. I say these critics are like policemen in fancy neighborhoods wand they still want to beat you up.

So I asked Roman Jakobson: "What do you think of the word post-modern, and he replied 'clearly Yuuucccch--I don't even like their word modern since it means so many contradictory things?"

It's nice to have a heart-to-heart conversation.

Bill Burroughs called me a classicist,

Allen Ginsberg said his visions might not be real.

Allen loved all the groveling religions except his own.

I said: "Allen, why do you accept Chogyam now that's he mad?"

He said: "I love it all—I'm so masochistic."

The cantors trumped the rabbis.

My father said n the old days, in modern times,

the people came for the free concert.

The cantors gave them a free concert.

But now the rabbis have won.

In the old days when they started to speak

Everyone left unless they were locked in.

Haggadic man.

And finally the rabbis start to sing

Their monochromatic songs.

And called the cantors virtuosi and braggarts and wrong.

Michael Govrin said it was most difficult for her to pray.

I am an American. I speak to God all day.

Perhaps for Dave Von Ronk

I am Lotte Lenya

I am Lennie Riefenstahl

I like beauty with power

I am obscene by the hour

He loved me he loved me

And this aria has no taste

I can't speak his name

But we made him look taller

I can't go to Africa again

And the ship sailed on

And Bob Dylan went to Mahagvony

And now hundreds know

That Brecht is Bob Dylan

I am Lenni Riefenstahl

All I love are the Olympics

Smearing people into their excrement

The masses sign and sign like deaf mutes

I am Lotte Lenya Bob Dylan heard me sing

I went down to St. James Infirmary

And the usual ships were sailing in

I am the Nuer the Massai the warriors

My beautiful fascism is enough for us both

I don't just take pictures for the Nameless one

I also throw myself upon the mercy of strength

Oh I am Lotte Lenya later to be kitsch

Now singing the "Blue Angel" behind Marlene's legs

And I am also their Professor and I am also the film version

Each spectacle is made for my film sing it out boy

As Charles Olson told me sing it out boy

I am Lennie Riefenstahl they call me Fascinating Fran

But you know me as Lotte Lenya and Bob D

I slip in my motorcycle and become Jean Luc Godard

This is also the modern object David

I am the woman, I filmed everything, I was not there

I was just a powerful beautiful secretary

I am the groveling religions Oh soaring universalism of Judaism,

Everything else is a plunge or a no-plunge into polytheism

I am Lennie Riefenstahl and I persevere in the old folks home

what we called Das Volk—it's hard to murder one you know

So ship them to the ships Hellio

The others can murder the others I say

I am Lennie Riefenstahl; and you are today

Lights fade. Dave Van Ronk comes out to sing St James Infirmary. A picture of WH Auden is flashed on the screen. Then a picture of the two Mann Brothers.

Lennie Riefenstahl is played by a man comes out utterly nude and puts on her clothes slowly, slowly for at least 15-30 minutes until she is dressed like Marlene Dietrich. While she is dressing and crooning over each piece of 1930's lace, she reads a paragraph from Susan Sontag's " Fascinating Fascism."

Every four minutes of this slow reverse striptease there is a man dressed as a 30's professor who hurls himself upon her, kissing her legs and shouting "Hemingway, Hemingway!" And then in the blue light the fully dressed transvestite appears.

TRANSVESTITE:

I told David Shapiro that I had two rats

No I told him that I had Tourette's

I told him I would take the surgery

But it would disappoint my parents

Compare Hitler's postcards

to your postcards

Compare Eisenhower's collection of the Floating Bear

to The One-shot review

Multeity

They say it is not a word

But Coleridge invented it

Can't I wikipedia neologisms

How sad

They banned neologisms

But now they need an article

On the Neologism

My son saw the swastika

Plastered in vivid colors on the wall in Riverdale

What does THAT mean Daddy he said

How could I tell the child since I myself am the old man

I said: "It means something like Die Jew Die"

My son grew thoughtful and said:

"Do we have a sign that says

Die Christians Die"

I didn't want to discuss the Angel of Death

So I found myself mumbling: "No....."

Jacques Derrida visited me one day

He stayed at the back of the room

Very quiet for Jacques Derrida I thought

Michael Govrin was speaking to my architecture class

He was there for her and his eyes twinkled

Later he said to me, about her biblical references:

“How do you get away with this, David?”

He meant how do I get away with

Religious references

Later we invited him to speak on prayer

Jeremy Gilbert-Rolfe told me:

“Just be quiet David and let Jacques speak”

He can improvise forever

I told the audience that Jeremy

had said that everyone laughed

But Jacques began his improvisation

on the subject of improvisation

and when he truly got to

what he wouldn't call the core or center or even margin of prayer

He said something that I cannot forget

He praised me for my love of the old-new in German

But he also said that the only prayer that for him

would be sufficient would be prayer without hope

I always think of that and it muddles me

How can prayer be without hope but I love it

Michael wanted to change the title to

“Prayer in a Time of Hopelessness”

but I loved “Prayer without Hope”

It reminds me of the prayer:

“Dear God if you exist Help me if you are able

I thank you if you can hear if you have ears and you do not”

“Prayer without Hope” - like the Jewish rabbi who says:

“And they actually believe in Nothing

As if were actively believing in nothing”

“Prayer without Hope” is a hard title to use

And now he is gone and I see him on a film

speaking of love and how he would like to know

The love life of a philosopher

During this little speech at a little table, there is a constant music being played and slides. The slides are the Degenerate Art Show and should also be

gigantic pictures of Book Burning in Germany. Then 7 variants of Kaddish from Richard Kostelanetz archive are played. And the end we see a picture of Jacques, very happy. Light fades dims to darkness.

Wilhelm Reich walks across the stage like a minor Chekhov character and finally turns to the audience, as he undresses a patient or himself: His voice gets increasingly insane and loud

WILHELM REICH:

I did not become an analyst

because I was sick, let us say

And I did not become an analyst

Because you were sick or my patients were ill

I became an analyst when I looked across all of Germany

And everyone was sick

Listen, little man a title that frightened the poets

Listen, little man!!!!

Listen little man

with cartoons by Steig so charming

Listen littler man

Do you see the blue light shining

They put me in prison for my penis and my box and my orgones Einstein understood me

though he couldn't obviously and publicly agree

And even a prison inside the prison

But everyone heard my voice Listen, little man! (*thunderous loud voice*)

Listen little man

If the fifth act was so terrible (all the dead)

How could the first act have been simple

I looked around Germany

And they were all sick!!!!!!!!!!

Einstein understood me

And Freud when he erased the dedication understood me

But you don't understand me and so I close the box to you

You cannot enter the box

Because you do not understand it

You do not hear the music of the blue light

Listen, little man

Ends with him obviously in jail and defeated or undefeated but mad.

I know how it works

but it shouldn't be said on stage.

different layers.

a collage.

an assemblage.

find Reich's original

sign it

and invert it

and its mutt and jeff 1913.

a fountain.

the important thing is to

relax and read tenderness

and display tenderness.

lady Chatterly's original title.

my father too didn't speak.

I am always frightened

that he was a Soviet agent.

But another ex-communist told me

he would never had had the time.

My father liked to read

about the Shakespeare hoaxes

and he believed in them.

Maybe that is why.

People with secret lives

believe more in the Earl of Oxford

than they should.

Isn't there a big difference

between Charles and Wilhelm Reich.

Anyway, to die in jail

having been the chief

character-analyst

judged by Freud to be

the best clinician among them all...

Of course, they threw their

armor at his head.

I don't love those who

promulgate false medicines though.

Like derogatory critics.

Andy told me that there was a reason

I had given to have critics:

They could be like restaurant critics

who warned you poison was being sold.

Was the accumulator poison

or did it simply 'not work'

Like a minor Pollock.

He said in 1947 or so:

"Is this a painting?"

As is said: "Not."

"Is this a good painting?"

But: "Is it a painting?"

Inside the mail, there is a box,

Inside the box, your uncle from minsk and pinsk,

Inside the army, a frightened Jewish boy.

Inside this play, a job for Taylor Mead.

Inside Taylor Mead, the song of the mother:

I had a mother too, you know.

Inside a Warhol box, another Russian doll.

Inside the Russian doll, a complete set of Jewish anarchists.

Inside the Jewish anarchists, the Abraham Lincoln Brigade.

Inside Picasso, a dove and a war and a weeping cock.

Inside the dove, a child plays alone.

It is said that when Meyer Schapiro gave a lecture and burst into tears when he said how much of Eastern European Jewish life had been destroyed, a painter, perhaps Rothko said: "The sentimental fool."

Was her? Was Meyer Schapiro my god

a sentimentalist? Dubito dubito dubito.

We are like farmers David, said Elaine deKooning to me,

the day after Rothko died, we have seen everything,

but this is too much.

"From Sunshine to the Sunless Lands"

was the title of a poem by Meyer in memory of Mark Rothko.

Is it sentimental? Would you have ranked those to escape from Hitler?

He didn't like it.

Save some, save one, save all. And yet: Would you like to decide
on a list of those who would be saved, and those who wouldn't?

Thomas Mann was saved, though he had been silent a long time.

There was a time they say when Klaus Mann went mad in Hollywood
and showed up nude. Is that sentimental?

JEWISH BOY I:

AND sophisticated.

My son says Republicans don't believe evolution because they haven't evolved.

Did William Reich ever say his machine works? Don't they arrest him for false
claims.

JEWISH BOY II:

It works if you work.

I never thought it worked

except in the sense that Pollack is said to have

introduced the phrase

Does it work?

I doubt that it was him

But it's a pretty good working phrase
from marriages (Can this Marriage Work
or was it Can this Marriage survive)
to the rapport: a working relationship

Anyway the important thing
might be to make them
but not distribute them
past the borders and boundaries

And anyway what is it
to invent a blue light
such as my Uncle John saw
in the basements of Christ the Scientist

Jews for Jesus

The significant thing
like the movie *Mysteries of the Organism*
are mysteries of the organism.

Certainly the philosopher was correct
in stating:

"We do not know what the body can do."

As when I took Nitrous Oxide

and felt its sunny power

months later.

We do not know what the body can do.

The body of poetry, so strange.

We do not know what the body might do.

However, most of all

I delete a scene in which Hitler and

Lennie Riefenstahl make love

first fairly normally and then

increasingly aggressively, with

(finally) every perversion known

to Germany being used, and at the end

just short of kill each other

they collapse like mud-wrestlers.

But I suppress this scene or

self-censor like a Russian poet.

The love story of Lennie and Adolf

will not become my kitsch Norman Mailer doll.

It works if you do: the blue light.

The pianist who had an orgasm

or the Reichian of Newark who would come

over to my mother and have her describe the

sensations that a certain music gave her.

Theremion was picked up on the streets.

My father-in-law would visit him.

Music is called touch at a distance.

We do not know what the body can do, or a play.

Thoughts about Jewishness: Today the lesson was

Not to think as a benoni or mediocre sinner

that you can transform evil thoughts to good, but do try.

The tzaddik can do it. But I cannot do it.

Strange thoughts. The incubus the succubus the succulent Lillith.

Are you triskadecaphobic or trsixkadexcphilic.

I love thirteen, I love the thirteen-petalled rose.

I love the woman in a hidden garden inside the Book of Splendor.

Listen, little man.

Suddenly transformed into a wild ferocious image of Reich. This is meant to be a shock. A good moment for the lighting designer. Alarms sound. Images of The Kristallnacht are shown.

JEWISH BOY I:

My son asks, "What's with the pope?" and I say "he's okay."

"But," Noah says, "wasn't he a Nazi?" "He was a kid," I explain. "Well," says Noah, "I'm a kid and I'm not even a Republican."

But you know Hitler at least solves unemployment.

On economic issues, Republicans are worse.

Hitler's public work projects—

autobahn construction and armament build up—cure unemployment and

Hitler's wage and price controls curb inflation.

Economic demagoguery from the right's relatively new.

Reagan's '66 California campaign attacks public assistance by implying it's for the blacks.

If you talk poor people then he sez
we live in a zero sum economy,

BUT let the rich rip you off--you'll prosper too.

AND YET the exact opposite's true.

From the thirties to seventies

America prospers

BECAUSE

the poor have more and more
purchasing power,

due to progressive taxation, utility and financial regulation,
social safety nets, and fairer wealth distribution

cemented by World War II wage and price controls setting

precedents lasting over a quarter century.

Purchasing power drives investment and production, not vice versa.

We can't accept that just giving money to poor people might BE the cure.

Economists only now get it. FDR knew intuitively.

Reagan says almost exactly what Coolidge preaches—

Probably recalling Calvin saying

the more money is concentrated the more it spurs investment—

like a concentration camp for money.

BUT giving poor people money really works because

the first step to economic growth's

full consumer participation in the economy.

Unjustified investment creates overproduction and recession,

but spurring consumer participation really

does drive the economy.

Oddly, it seems more important to give the poor money than jobs.

When the Depression begins Coolidge has the decency to say his time has passed and he drops dead.

FDR first tries to manage the economy not to upset the super-rich.

But the rich still loath him.

The Supreme Court tries to destroy him.

During the winter of 1934-1935, FDR's at a political pinnacle

but depressed. The Depression's still there and

he knows what's coming at him.

He has no answers and keeps his profile low.

Remember how the Supreme Court uses

the 14th amendment guaranteeing

blacks equal protection

that they won't have their liberty and property taken

without due process

to take away black votes and select Bush?

The court uses the 14th

to guarantee that workers keep liberty to work

100 hour a week for crap pay.

Everything FDR wants violates the 14th amendment.

Basically the right feels victimized—

their world's ending—

they're the butt of

their own private holocaust

so of course they relate to black slaves.

The right is like a Lithuanian accordion player.

After the Germans march into the 2nd biggest

Lithuanian city, they lie down hundreds of Jews in the

city square and give the Lithuanians pipes

to beat them to death. The accordion player stands atop

a pile of dead bodies playing the Lithuanian national anthem.

The victims are after all the terrorists,
and the king of the hill a victim.

It's like Himmler calling Hitler's secretary
Martin Bormann saying, "It's done, 200,000 Jews are

liquidated—I MEAN MOVED—200,000 Jews are moved!”

Bormann goes ballistic and says he'll tell Hitler on Himmler.
Such messages can only be sent thru SS courier.

Perhaps part of Himmler's mind really doesn't think
they were being exterminated. It's amazing he makes that slip.
It's amazing how consistently Nazis speak in code—as if they believe that code.

After the Depression we long to go back to crap codes of reality
before the depression because we are crap.

It goes like this, as I say—

Before the Industrial Revolution there are tools—machines are rare.

After machines there are all-purpose machines—computers.

The New Deal tries to cope with the coming reality of computers.

Roosevelt proposes logarithms.

He says something about government that is very much like what Jasper Johns
says about art: “I do one thing, I do something else.”

In the New Deal, each action is a Turing machine, an operation with input and
output creating feedback with other operations AND the nation is an unlimited
range of data or computation. In other words, not until the New Deal do we see
the nation as one unified economic field. It sounds crazy but I'm sure about it.

My son asks if aliens would have money and you gotta believe it's unlikely.

The Roosevelt administration gradually adapts Keynesian economics in the late
thirties and forties, but the New Dealers and their political heirs

never fully grasp that raising the consumption powers of the poor,

who unlike the rich must choose spending over investment,

is the most important reason for the success of their programs.

Is it such a stretch that sharing with the poor is good economic policy?

In 1936, FDR says he finally gets that.

We still assume investment and employment primary economic engines.

Maybe the problem is JFK hires Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.

as court historian and Schlesinger helps avert a Cuban Missile Crisis nuclear winter,

but when he leaves for Washington

he's writing a history of the Roosevelt presidency.

He writes about 2000 pages, but only gets to 1936.

Still, historians dialogue with Schlesinger's take,

but he never gets to the domestic economic effect of World War II.

People don't know it's the culmination of the New Deal.

The end of the Depression's not about arms expenditures so much as a progressive sense of sharing.

It's not until the end of FDR's second term that

FDR realizes he can't make everyone happy.

The super rich should pay super taxes. At first

he jiggles the economy not to upset the rich,

but they attack him anyway and Roosevelt gets angry, and he accomplishes what he needs to accomplish at home during the war.

His presidency has three phases. First, he manages the economy to keep the status quo. Then he goes after the status quo. THEN he goes after the status quo BY managing the economy.

We never take in what the Depression is all about.

The play's stalled. People can hang, talk, leave. Any questions?

Reagan appeals to pre-Depression common sense,

but the future's inscribed in this bright tumbling presence.

Epilogue: Two Short Poems for One Masque

SONG FOR CHAIM

by DAVID SHAPIRO

If one saves a butterfly, has one saved the world?

Rabbi says: If one saves one butterfly, even with long wings, one butterfly that has fallen into water, it may be said "He has saved the whole world."

If one saves a motley moth, is it the same?

Rabbi: It is valid. If one saves a dirty monkey from a flame, for example, it is as the saying is: He or she has saved the whole world. It is valid for all creatures, and not more so for the creatures who know

how to recite the blessings. It is always valid, even on the Sabbath.
It is said: The creatures of the sky are owned by no one, like the land.

If one saves the Book from being destroyed, is it also saving a world?

Rabbi, God forbid, yes, saving the book from the fire,
saving the book or books from the fire, is known to be comparable.
He who saves a book and he
writes a holy book, it should be said,
They have saved the whole world like a book.

If one saves a rose, one rose,
from the garden of your dead Teacher,
is it still appropriate to think
She has saved the world.

The Rabbi was silent and seemed troubled. He replied:

If the house of the great teacher is in ruins,
and the garden is a scandal, and one saves
one rose from his garden it is said even
of one rose: it is like saving the world.
It is also said the rose will grow as large as the world.

YANKEE STADIUM

by STEPHEN PAUL MILLER

The sky lets out its breath and the earth rims it,
Getting down to basics, the way a lyricist feels when he's
trying to say something,
I'd like to experience a wide range of sexuality and then marry,
The park by the river keeping us on top of things,
Variously drawing the senses out of the sea, an intangible thing
Like a government, the guts cut out of the city,
Now the river flows east parallel to the island's bottom

remembering barbecues in the mountains and
fish-fries in the valleys with
homemade beer.

Atop the bullshit East River all I see are rats,

A beautiful view like an ocean cannot be renewed,

The concrete demands in space, a ferry riding into them, the lightness of
air a barge,

The plural tone of a lovely spread, the morning as crack of dawn.

It is this bridge that keeps the earth inside my teeth,

tug and barge co-exist comprising a triad with the novel.