



Mark Bartholow



### Editors:

Chris Croton Scott Sedlik

#### Contributors:

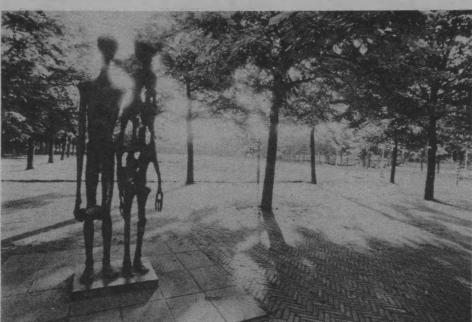
Mark Bartholow Franci Boyce Jan DiVincenzo Betsy Finegan Johnny Graham Jeff Kildes

Greg Lawson
Mary Ellen Mason
m. scott
Mark David Spence
Luke Trent
Lauren Schlesinger

### **ALARM CLOCK**

Underneath
With the fish
Asleep
The dreamer dreams
of sharks and screams
of bullet birds from above
Dolphins barracuda
Fishing nets and yellow buckets
Swimming round and round
A perfect paranoia
A link in the chain
A food source
Afraid to die
Waking to the churning
of the boat prop alarm clock

— Mark David Spence

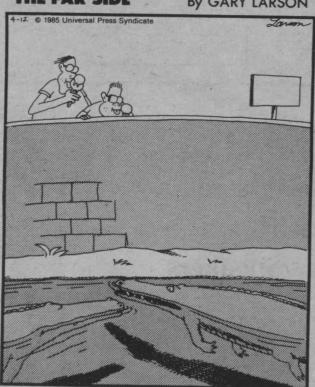


# WOODSTOCKS PRIZZA PARILOR

THE FAR SIDI

D

By GARY LARSON



"Great ... Just great, you imbecile! I've been floating here for hours like a harmless log and you come up and start talking to me!"

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### Poet Of Patient Hardihood — Dick Davis

#### **Interview by Christopher Croton**

Dick Davis is a visiting lecturer from England who is teaching both a creative prose and a poetry class this quarter. I interviewed Davis, a soft-spoken poet and translator, after his poetry reading Wednesday afternoon at the Literature symposium in the College of Creative Studies. Davis has published three books of poems, the latest which is entitled The Covenant.

Why do you like to explain your poems before you read them?

The reason I do it is that if you have the poem on the page in front of you and there is something you don't quite catch you can always go back and look at it. But if you just hear the poem and it's being read to you and you don't catch it that's it, you've lost it. I think when you're giving a reading it's best to give the poem some kind of background so the people know where they are and they know what to look for. That's the only reason I do it, because people haven't got the text in front of them.

People have said to me, "Why do you print poetry that no one can understand the meaning of?" I know that clarity is very important in your poetry. Do you think writing poems with meter can make a poem more clear?

Meter can indicate what is happening emotionally very accurately, as long as the reader is responsive. I prefer to make a poem work, to get its message and feeling across through the meter rather than a heavily rhetorical language. It's just a personal preference.

Writing is certainly lonely. Do you think translating is

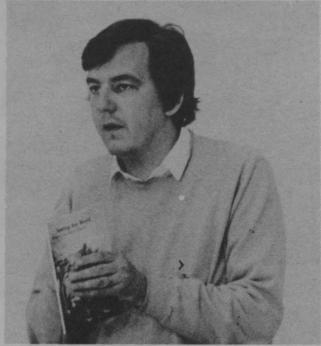
Writing is lonely obviously because you're by yourself. The only arbiter is your own sense of judgement and conscience. But in translating it's sort of a love affair. You've got this other mind there which you're trying to approach, which you are wooing. And when you feel you break through to that mind, you do know what this other poet was about, what he was doing, where he was at. When you feel it — that is marvellously exhilarating. It's kind of a conversation across the centuries and across cultures which is very moving. In a sense it is lonely but it has great compensations, this communication across cultures.

One of your books of poems is entitled Seeing the World. Do you think travelling and knowing other cultures in todays world is a very important part of being alive?

For me it is, yes. You can't legislate for other people but I get very unhappy if I just have to stay in one environment all the time, it would drive me crazy. One of my great joys is going to new places and different kinds of cultures; I really enjoy it and get a lot out of it. You meet people and learn things and you just see different ways of living. It modifies your own way of living and shows you other approaches to problems. Also life is not boring if you travel, not yet anyway.

Do you find it possible to teach people how to write

That's difficult. You can teach some things. You can teach the basic techniques of the craft. The way I write poems which is meter and rhyme, you can teach that. You can direct people toward poems which you think are good and show them which kind of form are useful for which kind



CATHERINE O'MARA/Nexus

of experience. But you can't teach people to have talent, obviously. Yes, you can teach the craft but the talent has to be there too.

Do you find there is a certain spark running through the greatest poets which is something divine?

I've never considered that question. I'd be very cheery (cautious) about using the word divine about it. Where good poetry comes from nobody really knows. The craft is something you can see and imitate but the talent is something that's there or it isn't. Where it comes from God knows. I guess it comes from genes and what happens to you when you are a child. I think all poets are people to whom their childhood is very important either as a bad time or a good time, perhaps more important to some than to others. Perhaps talent has something to do with an attachment to childhood experiences. I don't know.

You couldn't put your fingerprint on it, you probably wouldn't want to, especially if you were a poet.

No. It's not the kind of thing you feel that you could put your finger on. I remember reading an interview with a poet and he was asked "What are you afraid of?" and he said "Losing the ability to write." And I think lots of poets have that and I have that. It's my great fear because you don't know where it comes from and so you don't know how to keep it. Because you don't really know what it is, you don't know how to nurture it and look after it. It's a mystery

Are there any schools of poetry teaching?

There probably are. I haven't talked to many other people who teach creative writing. They probably all contradict each other so what's the poor student to do I don't know. It's just pot luck I suppose.

How did you become interested in writing poems?
I can't remember a time when I wasn't interested. I'v

I can't remember a time when I wasn't interested. I've always wanted to be a writer.

You were schooled in England. Do they have different

ways of teaching?

Not especially. I was lucky in that I went to a school that had very good English teachers. They encouraged my interest and so I was lucky in that way. I read a great deal of poetry as a child both because I wanted to and because it was taught a lot in English schools. I think it's taught more in England than here. English children used to have to learn a lot of poetry by heart, which means that meter becomes a habit. You can think that's a good thing or a bad thing but it's not a problem then, it's just there.

Do you feel that there is a need for poets to be very well read in so called great poetry?

Well it certainly helps. You can't write well unless you've read a lot I feel. I'm sure that's true. It's like music, it's a craft. You can't play the piano unless you learn to play it. You learn to write by reading.

Is poetry something that requires a dedication which does not permit other disciplines?

I don't really know the answer. Almost all poets I know have tried, probably for financial reasons, to split their lives between poetry and something else. But I don't think it does their poetry any good. I think most people compromise on that

Why don't housewives and people with a tremendous amount of time on their hand become wonderful poets?

Well the housewives I know wouldn't think they have a lot of time on their hands. It's a question of what you care about. I'm not saying I write good poetry and I'm like this, but writing good poetry is not easy; you have to give a lot of time to it. It's not something you can do in your spare time. You have to worry about it and revise your poems. It's a major undertaking.

Dylan Thomas said "There is always one right word — use it." Do you tend to write in this way?

Well you always look for the right word. Sometimes you give up and think there isn't a word which is exactly right so you change it in some way. But yes, you look for the right word, certainly.

Do you see a relationship between political life and poetry?

Only in so far as both come out of a sense of decency or indecency, otherwise no. That is, you act well you write well, and those two things aren't that different. I think there is something ethical in poetry. The good poet is usually a good man, that is a risky thing to say. But I don't believe in poets joining political parties and propagandizing at all.

### St. Christopher

Curled fingers tighten in his curly hair; But if, by any prescience, he knows The nature of that burden He must bear Whom now he bears, no recognition shows.

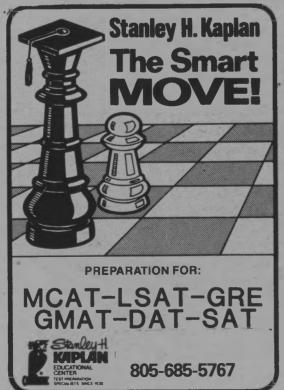
The weathered body and tenacious mind Venture like partners with but one intent—Low, they are one, as cautiously they find The safe stones through the unsafe element.

And thus, subsumed by what he does, made sure

That though his task is humble it is good, He navigates toward the furthur shore— Secure in skill and patient hardihood.

- Dick Davis





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Jeff Kildes

### Forbidden Fruit

Cindee eats the manzanita berries in the little woods I think they taste like sugar as I lick them from her palm Dave says they are poison and we both will surely die only not when we expect it someday after we have parted and the woods are all apartments and our tree-fort has been taken by the fires at the landfill I will feel it in my innards I will curl up in a ball I will beg for it to kill me only then I will expect it and I'll live another day 'till it comes as a surprise - Greg Lawson





ildes



A crazy movie

That's what I feel like I'm in right now

Except I didn't really pay to get in

And I have this weird feeling

That an usher's going to walk up

Ask me for my ticket

And when I come up empty handed

He'll shine that big flashlight of his in my face

Then tell me loudly to leave

Embarassing me in front of the whole goddamned theater,

(cause for this movie I want to sit right up front)

and then what?

I mean

I just hate missing the end

Of a good flick — and jesus this is my life!!

I know that it's not oscar stuff

But it would be nice to see how it comes out.

It's cold outside

And if they throw me out

Then I have to just sorta wander around

Until it lets out.

Then I suppose I could ask someone how it ended

But they'd just say,

"Why, he died of course."

(I know that but what about the in between stuff)

"Well you should have bought your own ticket."

"Instead of trying to sneak in the back way."

Moralists bug me

Especially when they're right.

I wonder who'd play me?

No 'Tiger Beat' cutie I can guarantee

Probably be some no-name with a smile

And not much else.

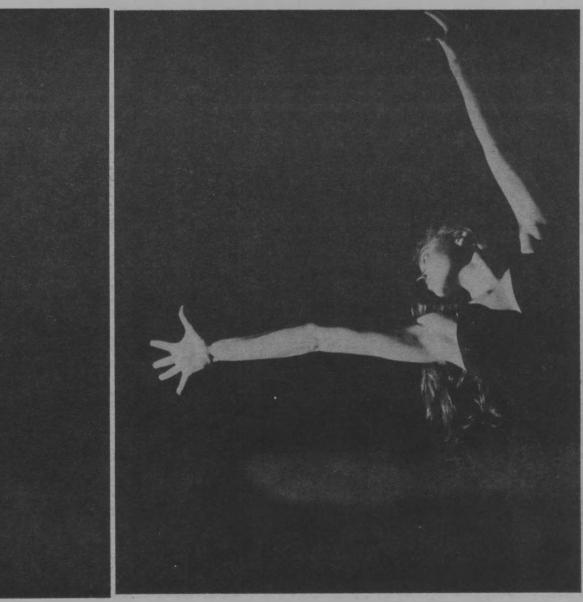
It's funny, I wonder if my life is worth the price of admission

Maybe on some Monday bargain night

Shit, I'd even have money left for popcorn,

That wouldn't be so bad would it.

- m. scott





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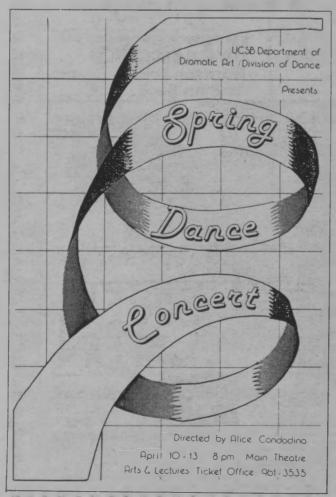
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### marble girl

you sat on my bed like you didn't know what was going on and either did I. we talked about Everything and even though you contradicted yourself several times I let you go on because I was as much into your sound as I was your meaning. you told me that 3 and a half months was the limits for you being all young and such and I agree: but just wait cause one day your's will come when in your little top and long legs someone will move you for quite some time and you'll want to love that person forever; you'll think of him and your little house together and that will be Everything, though maybe you already know that sitting there, cramped in the corner and fidgeting while very much in charge of your uncertainty.

— Johnny Graham

### Nothing Is Wrong

The papers in my desk drawer have piled up and become wood again. I walk through the plastic cups embalmed in dry beer, scattered like dead leaves on the Sunday ground. They are kicked aside easily to roll around their bases then settle. Everything has become what it is.

— Jan Di Mancenzo



Franci Boyce

### **Carving A Niche**

Professors have such elegant libraries Longinus through Derrida, even the names suggest it, Chaucer, Herbert, Dryden ...

I'm happy with the simple slab of wood between my desk and wall that holds my few books: thesaurus, dictionary, text.

A miracle of order in my corner of the room — two plain candles for marble bookends, and notes to "work hard" tacked to the wall. — Luke Trent



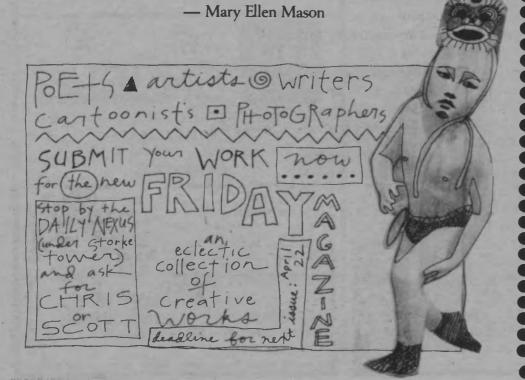




Franci Boyce

### An Itch I Can't Scratch

I sit. I stare. I gaze into tomorrow, Into a long and Difficult Waiting. The second is Tedious. The minute, Unbearable. The fly Buzzing Around the room Makes my skin Itch. It makes me twitch, It makes me nervous. I pick up A hardback book, and Hurl it at the Annoyance, and it's gone. If time could Fly, it would be my Greatest friend. My eyes are full of a Saline solution. Watch my reservoirs Overflow, and my Lip will start to Quiver. If time could fly I could see you. But until then, I sit and I stare.



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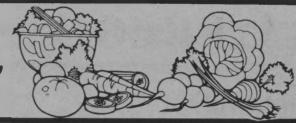
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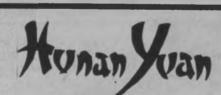


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