

EXTENT: 4 bankers boxes and 1 oversize box, totaling approx. 5.25 linear feet. Approx. 1.4 GB of digital files, including the equivalent of over 6,500 pp. of emails.

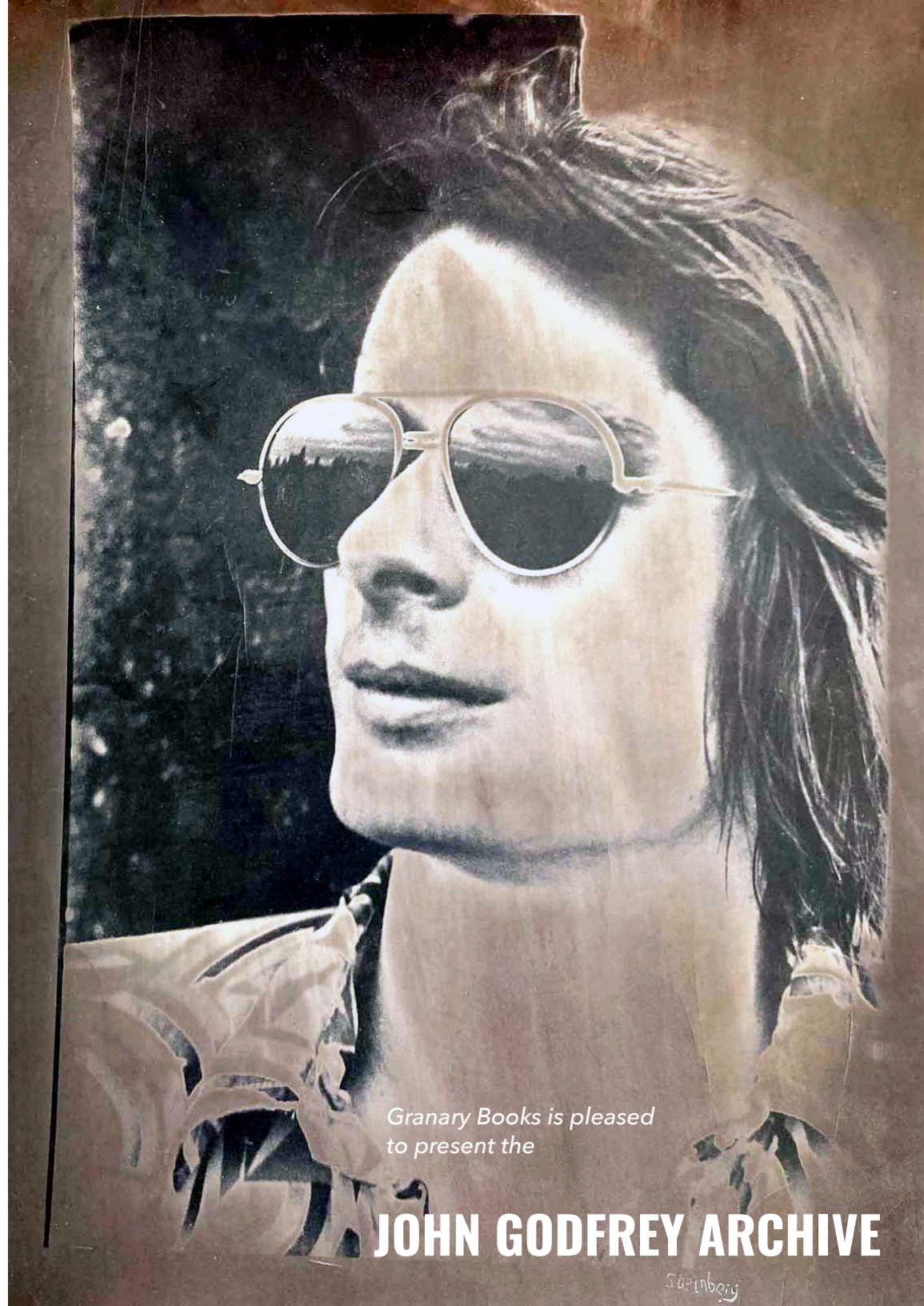
DATE: 1966-2022

CONTENT: Autograph, typescript, printed typescript drafts of works, as well as correspondence, photographs, related ephemera, and digital files. Digital files include email, Microsoft Word documents, JPGs, and PDFs.

ABOUT: This collection comprises the literary archive of poet John Godfrey, representing his earliest drafts in New York City and San Francisco, and continuing through his present projects.

The archive is compact, but dense with autograph material, as well as files that show Godfrey's composition process across notebooks and index cards, the typewriter, and the computer. With nearly 50 notebooks (containing nearly 4,000 pages of autograph drafts), over 6,000 pages of autograph and typescript drafts of work, hundreds of index cards, and over 3,100 pages of drafts in Microsoft Word documents, the archive shows an iterative relationship between Godfrey's modes of composition. In almost all instances, this relationship is described by Godfrey himself, who has arranged the archive and annotated folders and notebooks with reflections on the material and pointing out connections across items.

Documenting his relationship with the St. Mark's Poetry Project scene and beyond, the archive includes over 50 correspondents with over 200 pages of ALS, TLS, APS, and printed letters from poets including John Ashbery, Bill Berkson, Larry Fagin, Anselm Hollo, Bernadette Mayer, Jack Collom, John Koethe, Charles North, and Tom Raworth, among many others. Adding a significant volume of correspondence



*Granary Books is pleased
to present the*

JOHN GODFREY ARCHIVE

John Godfrey

HEAD IN HEART AND GENTLE NE

To want this hard is what
want asks ~~before~~ / reveals /
~~the~~ whole panting man giant
on the stone it's ~~is~~ crazy
for thought to go ~~as~~ past pass
I ~~find~~ ~~where~~ where I
concentrate ~~at~~ float ~~in~~ it's
climb through a hatchway
~~into~~ ~~a~~ smoking stress
a submarine lounge
I'm in when ~~a~~ vision
smokes ~~at once~~ ~~me~~ ~~right~~ ~~back~~ / to ~~the~~ hot d
~~that~~ ~~shows~~ ~~my~~ ~~fate~~ ~~for~~
all I know ~~it~~ ~~shows~~ / a sight
~~me~~ ~~out~~ ~~of~~ ~~my~~ ~~eyes~~ ~~sight~~
~~to~~ see you ~~with~~ ~~me~~ beside
so real my hard body
its happens ~~it's~~ ~~real~~
when I kiss ~~you~~ ~~real~~
and it enlarges it open ~~my~~
it wets my voice my ~~my~~
mouth which softens ~~the~~
then's firm then's the
most you can know ~~of~~

In reverse chronological order, the following correspondents emerge: John Ashbery, Ted Greenwald (who would also pass away in 2016), Alex Katz, Angelica Clark, Alice Notley, Bob Holman, Ron Padgett, Lila Dlaboha, Joshua Beckman, Joan Fagin, Vincent Katz, Kit Robinson, Lewis Warsh, Duncan McNaughton, Vyt Bakaitis, Simon Pettet, Laurie Price, Susan Noel, Elinor Nauen, Anselm Berrigan, Trevor Winkfield, Miles Champion, Thomas Devaney, Annabel Lee, Peter Gizzi, Richard Hell, Carter Ratcliff, John Yau, Joan Fagin, Bill Zavatsky, Alan Bernheimer, Ann Stephenson, Sheelagh Bevan, Charlotte Carter, Penny Arcade, David Henderson, Kyle Schlesinger, Karin Roffman, Susan Coolidge, Garrett Caples, Stacy Szymaszek, Peter Schjedahl, Greg Masters, Don Yorty, Elizabeth Botten (98 Greene Street project), Marie Warsh, Harris Schiff, Edmund Berrigan, John Coletti, Morgan Vo, John L. Koethe, Nick Sturm, Barbara Henning, Kevin Opstedal, Phoebe MacAdams Ozuna, Simon Schuchat, Martha Diamond, Kyle Dacuyan, Michael Lally, Olivia Funk, Cliff Fyman, Anne Waldman, Basil King, Theodora Lang, Alan Davies, Micah Ballard, Jane Dalrymple-Hollo, Tony Towle, and many others.

Given Godfrey's medical background, he was often consulted on matters related to health, and there is significant content related to the health concerns and eventual passing of Bill Berkson, Ted Greenwald, Larry Fagin, Lewis Warsh, and others. There are also solicitations for publishing projects and anthologies, correspondence with publishers on books and essays, discussion of the impact of COVID-19 on poetry readings, event announcements, book order confirmations from Alibris, inquiries from researchers regarding the New York School and St. Mark's Poetry Project scene circa 1970s (including interesting reflections on poets Tom Veitch and Jim Brodey), and discussion of poetics with friends.

Frequent correspondents include Ron Padgett, Angelica Clark, Bill Berkson, Alice Notley, Peter Schjedahl, and neighbors Richard Hell, Simon Pettet, and Greg Masters. There is a notable absence of mass emails such as marketing promotions; email has been carefully curated by Godfrey to reflect relevant content.

NARRATIVE

As part of the process of preparing the archive, M.C. Kinniburgh interviewed John Godfrey. What follows, as a prospectus, are excerpts from this interview, in which Godfrey traces the various periods of his life that informed his writing, and that give this archive its distinctive shape. All text is in Godfrey's voice, edited for clarity and context by M.C. Kinniburgh; additional text by M.C. Kinniburgh is in italics. Like the organization of the archive, this narrative proceeds for the most part chronologically.



THE JOHN GODFREY ARCHIVE

John Godfrey was born July 11, 1945, in Massena, New York, close to the Canadian border. His father's travels as an Episcopal priest, answering calls to new congregations, led him to Honolulu, Bennington, Albany, and Dallas before he arrived at Princeton with high school acquaintance Lewis MacAdams. MacAdams lent Godfrey several stacks of books, including work by LeRoi Jones (Amiri Baraka), Robert Duncan, John Weiners, Ted Berrigan (a mimeographed copy of *The Sonnets, no less*), John Ashbery, and Frank O'Hara, and other contemporaries. At the time, Godfrey was reading Charles Baudelaire, Bob Kaufman, and William Carlos Williams, listening to Bob Dylan, and determining his own path as a poet.

You're gonna find handwritten poems from the 1960s—I never typed them up because I wanted to write something long and I didn't type well. And the last thing I wanted was to have to retype a poem of 500 words or 500 lines. I mean the last thing I need! And for the first five years, I would try anything to see what it was like.

What astonishes me is how arrogant I was, because I hit the ground running. If I was impressed by some technical things or whatnot, I said, I'm gonna try that. In 1965, it had been happening a little more frequently, I had been writing poems occasionally. Why? It was usually because I would read something and it would make me go, yeah, I'm gonna try something like that.

And sometimes it was gonna be a secret. I got entire notebooks I never typed up [circa 1965-1966 to 1969]. When I left San Francisco in September of 1969, I cut myself off from those first five years. Besides, what had been going on in the early sixties, basically from 1962 until 1966 or so in the New York scene, was breaking up. (Godfrey graduated Princeton in 1967.) Everybody was going in different directions. Friendships had cooled. And all of a sudden the people that had attracted me to the East Village were not even here anymore.

In going through all my material, I was coming across stuff I wrote when I was 20, 21 years old. Longhand. And I thought, I don't remember doing this at all. And I look at it and I say, that's me. I do the same shit now. And like I say, if you're gonna get into it, you may as well dive, don't put water on your armpits, just dive in. And I look at it, I say, this isn't half bad. It is not what I would do today. But the stuff that goes the way my mind works was there. There's an entire sketchpad, one long poem, imitating Ted Berrigan's "Tambourine Life." I never even typed the sucker up. And I look at it, and go, hey, this is okay.

1970s

In the early 1970s, Godfrey collaborated with friends, including Jim Brodey (one of the only poets who would visit him when he lived between avenue B and C, "beyond the law.") In the late 1970s, Godfrey remembers long conversations with Ted Berrigan about poetry, spanning hours and miles of city blocks and bars. During this period, Godfrey was composing the "Ardor" poems which feature in the archive, as well as other works.

To make ends meet, he sold pot for several years, often to musicians, and jazz was a crucial influence on his work. During the late 1970s he also spent significant time with his life partner, Judy Gallion, who was a nurse, off the grid in a cabin on some land at the New York/Vermont border they were working on together. They are pictured below.



Aug. 6 Southampton

Dear John,

First, a belated congratulations on your birthday. I've always thought birthdays were somehow important.

I liked the recent batch of work pretty much (tho not as much as the ones I mentioned in my last letter), favorites being: POEM ("Sad boogie..."), SONNET (for Ted Berrigan), HAT ROCKS, SONNET (for Jane). 2nd faves = BIG HEAT, SUNDAY EASE, and PARTICULARS. And I love HANGING UP MY JOCK down to "and then I began writing poems and hung up my jock", the rest seemed anticlimaxish, no? Who knows.

I'll pass them on to Ted to read as he's out here with us on a short vacation...i.e. his is short, ours is long, maybe 5 more weeks, including part-time work nights at a theater (Warhol) + quick trips into the city to pick up the mail and teach a few classes (1 adult, 2 children). Otherwise, it's all gravy... swimming, drinking, smoking, eating, mostly at Larry Rivers' summer house with Clarice (Mrs R) a gracious hostess.

Back in the city, our apartment is new, 4 rooms, including a little office for me, where the stencils for Adventures in Poetry Nr. 4 are tucked away until next week's mammoth attempt to run them through the poem machine. AS, I mean as I said earlier, I'd like to use a few of your poems for Nr. 5, will let you know specifically what pretty soon. Meanwhile send even more if you have them.

That is the meager news. NYC is more sloppy than ever, but fun (in season). At times, I miss the calm San Francisco B L A N K, in a perverse way.

For other details on the NYC scene, I refer you to my letters of the 4th to Coolidge and Veitch, also T. Clark.

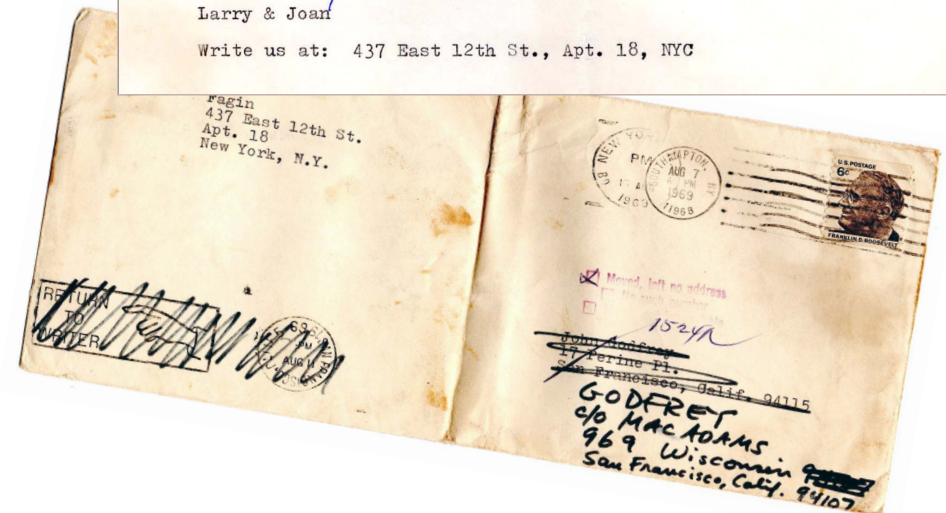
Recommended: "The Bliss of Mrs. Blossom", Pierre Reverdy (Rexroth trans. not the best, New Directions, \$5), Odes by Frank O'Hara (Poet's Press, \$1.50, cover by Mike Goldberg), the entire Belzona (Yazoo catalog (inc. McTell), Elvis' new LP (esp. "I'll Hold You In My Heart"), and anything by Desmond Dekker.

Love,

Larry

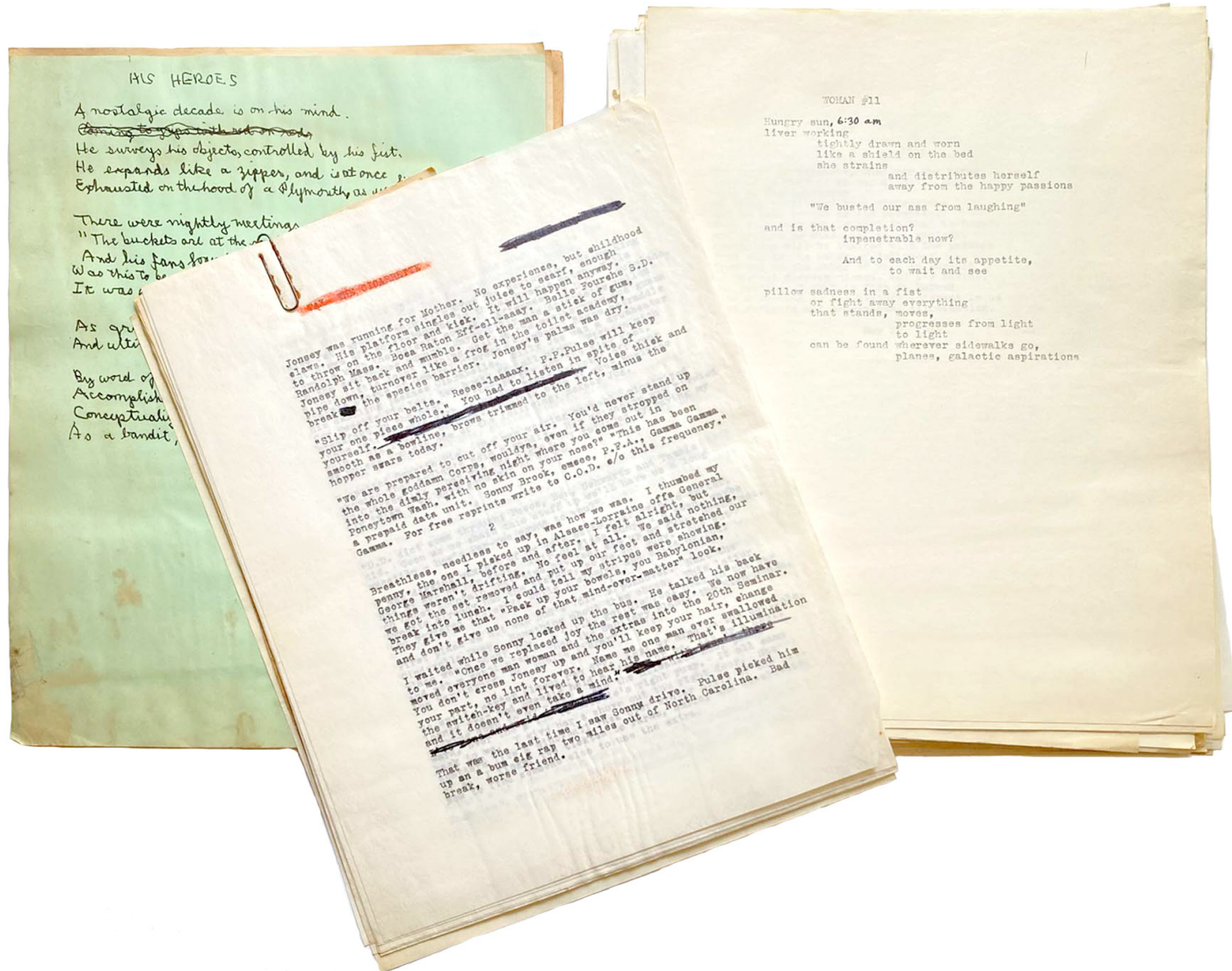
Larry & Joan

Write us at: 437 East 12th St., Apt. 18, NYC



When I'm going through year by year, I make folders for every year. It's the story of my development. By the late seventies, a big change in my life was having a life partner. We called each other girlfriend spouse, boyfriend spouse, Judy Gallion and myself. I included a photo of us together, upstate. I realized that it [the photo] was only weeks before she was badly injured in a freak accident. Ours was a different kind of life because there was a different kind loneliness when you're sharing the house with somebody. And it affected my writing and it made it stronger and more clear. I developed in a slow way. It takes five minutes to make a cup of coffee. (*Godfrey has a very disciplined, finely-tooled, and highly effective coffee ritual.*) So it should take 15 years to get your shit together. And look at this [gestures to a copy of Baudelaire poems], most of his poems were written years before the book was collected.

[Sometimes] I found copies before I found the originals. And I tried to put 'em year by year, because I'm trying to figure out, what year was this? Sometimes I'm looking at the type and the typewriter, because that'll tell when that typewriter went "kablooi" and I had to get another one and it will change the typeface a little. But if you're gonna write, you gotta do it writing. You don't do it talking.



Their poorness is absurd, as they paw
over tomatoes in twos and threes
He is walking easily and with a flair
among apartments where the food is dry
where widows ~~and~~ slice their fathers' meat
and lonely hostesses smoke cigarettes
rolled in silk while warming kisses
for her guests, hiding bananas under cushions

The station is windy with the echoes
of haunted slums, custard drying on walls
names and numbers, hawked of youth
who breathe life into the canards of sneakers
cowards! You'd better hide in cotton sacks!
~~Hide~~ yourself on ~~the~~ tubes in your armpits!

But all that is love, all that is an awesomely
changeable heart, slide through the dust
blown here from terraced flowery hillocks!
Lay in dreamt baskets held by unpossessive hands!

The towers fizzle, turn ^{into} a blue light against
afternoon's heavy sheets, shining and slipping
and for ~~to~~ me to dream is a sign
that night's luxury ^{and} initiative have waxed
no more than evanescent pardons of skin!
Funnels of ~~my~~ blood bandy from my heart
through witch of cold and worn bath steam
on aqueducts of granite toward
O orange bath! O tiger of pull!

Now an agitating vigor enforces consummation
of harvests attained by a child whose
enlargement is the very real wing whooshing
through darkness of diamond ^{brilliance} ~~brilliance~~ ^{melts} ~~melting!~~ ¹

~~Tear~~ ^{melts}
~~Tear~~ ^{melting!}
~~Tear~~ ^{melts}

Mellow cough of march, pucker, huster
squeezes around the sad fry in his bones
The crunching is tremendous! His wine
drags banishes towards coats of honey stones!
Buyers of the sun immaculate ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~sucky~~ ^{sucky} squeezes —
~~and they take~~ ^{with} their romance ~~to~~ ^{the} ~~theaded~~ ^{theaded}
power of unsubmitive ~~point~~ ^{point} ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~is!~~
They are watered by vaseline cries of Sirens!
The glory of the confident ^{one} relaxes bodies
dug out of ~~crevasse~~ ^{one} miles under sand ~~whereas~~
~~at~~ ⁱⁿ their understanding ^{recourse} to feeling
has surrounded them with lice and ~~a~~ ^{with}
a passion for haste, now they are unstoppable
I hold out to my hat of carved ebony feathers
which they ~~can~~ ^{can't} know I won't let them leave
dreams of ^a dreams ^{on} ^{hardly} fostered streets
they secretly love in as sun and moon ~~and~~

The car backing toward the flashy rubberlegged
heel ~~tramps~~ ^{tramps} furrows in a garden sheen with cans
The woman ~~shakes~~ ^{trattles} her curls ~~at~~ ^{before} a mirror
in ~~the~~ place of a window that ~~lets~~ ^{lets} shakes
because ~~behind~~ ^{behind} it a jostling throaty hard
family causes its youngest to dodge ~~off~~ ^{off} ~~ware~~
while studying the bridge of sparks
between opening and closing lips
Everyone ^{else} begins to repeat himself while he
~~stands~~ ^{stands} crouches, throws back his arms
~~as~~ ^{as} a ~~purpose~~ ^{purpose} and dives through the final of the
~~rings~~ ^{rings} ~~of~~ ^{of} the young woman, who
thinks ~~the~~ ^{the} delicatness of her shoes.
flatters her, has failed to tire him with

10-2-86

Dear John,

Nat told me about the accident to Judy and you. I want to say hello and more but everything that comes to mind is wrong. So hello. If you feel like communicating anything, crazy or sane, you've got a friend in Colorado.

Things're active for me. Live with lady friend named Jenny in her old brick house on Pine St. Physical condition good, very thin, some permanent effects of nerve damage but Oat all severe. Hustle for work (teaching) a lot & now some scattered harvest. In fact a lively routine. Work on flat poetry ms., watch birds, exercise. Haven't had a drink in mos., smoke like mysterious fissure in lost canyon.

I would love to hear from you, John. Saw Alice this summer, she was beautiful. As were Sanders & Creeley, really.

Trying to remember how an awful loss feels. If an invite to talk is good, you get it. I'd be honored to hear/see your voice, paper, phone, or dials.

Love,

Jack

(303) 444-1886

132 Ditton Fields,
Cambridge CB5 8QL.
June 11th. 1986.

Dear John,

I'm getting over a bad couple of weeks of 'flu and bronchitis: constant rain here for many weeks. Brightened occasionally by re-reading DABBIE and WHERE THE WEATHER SUITS MY CLOTHES. Thinking of doing 40 issues of a daily (monday to friday) sheet from June 22nd. This size, photocopied. If you've something unpublished you'd be willing for me to use I'd love to do so. You can have the space of this sheet, either as two folio pages, or one page either way up. Reproduction either from your handwriting, or typewriting, so my only stipulation is that the text be as clear (black on white) as possible. Ten contributor's copies, plus one each of the full run (five copies in an envelope each week..otherwise the postage would be impossible). I haven't the patience to be flooded with unsolicited manuscripts, so I'm only asking specific people whose work I like. Something to keep my hands busy here in the rain forest. I hope, as always, you're well and happy: and, as always, look forward to seeing you again sometime. Oh... I'm also open to the idea of a 'serial' if you've something longer than this space that you prefer.

Yours
Tom Raworth



Sinclair Lewis

Who To Love. Who Loves You
If You Should Marry or Divorce
The Answer To Your Problems

DATE / TIME / PLACE
20TH ANNIVERSARY
1965 14 1986

POST CARD
Address
John Godfrey
437 E 12 St.
New York 10009
Apr. 32

Dear John,
Wonderful book
I keep reading in
finding new things
all the time, morning
and evening.

Love
Love to you
and Judy
(with my) Rudy

where others have failed

She will explain fully and suggest wisely.

Business

LISA

Correspondence from Jack Collom, Tom Raworth, and Rudy Burckhardt.

Late 1980s–Early 1990s

Gallion and Godfrey were in a car accident on a country road in 1986; she passed away after several months in a coma. By his own account, traumatized at this loss, Godfrey had a friend who worked as a travel writer, and invited him to Bangkok. This was the first of several trips to Thailand that continued through 1991, including increasingly risky trips into Burma, about which Godfrey remembers "I think I was trying to risk my life." The archive contains notebooks and letters (pictured) from this formative period in Thailand, which by his accounts was a less intensive period in his writing. He felt a great darkness in his work during this period, leading him to explore other avenues of observing and participating in the world. The experience abroad led him to return to the United States with new perspective, and to embark on another dramatic life change: becoming a nurse in 1992.

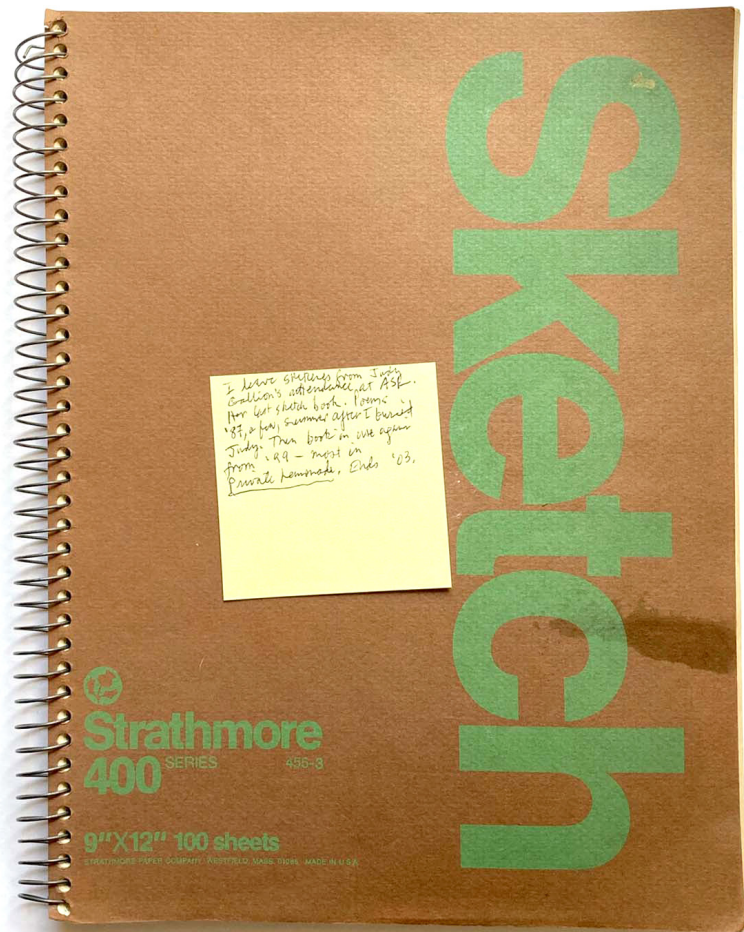
Well, I come back and I [think], I could probably be useful. I get in touch with the Peace Corps. They say, are you an engineer? Are you a doctor? No. Are you a nurse? No. Well maybe you could get a job teaching English. I already knew that was a dead end. You're never gonna learn anything about the language of the people there because they want to try out their English with you all the time. And I'm thinking, he said nurse. I mean, I'm, I'm almost 50 years old, what am I gonna do about being a doctor, for Christ's sake? And then I discovered that Columbia had a program for college graduates, and I took the prerequisites. They took me and I ate it up, man.

I really had only weekends, when I was a visiting nurse (1994-2003), driving home at night, I mean, I can't read while I drive. So I had to do it—I sacrificed all the social things just to have time on weekends. Except for Saturday night, I got to drink too much. And Friday nights, I didn't drink too much, but I ate a really good

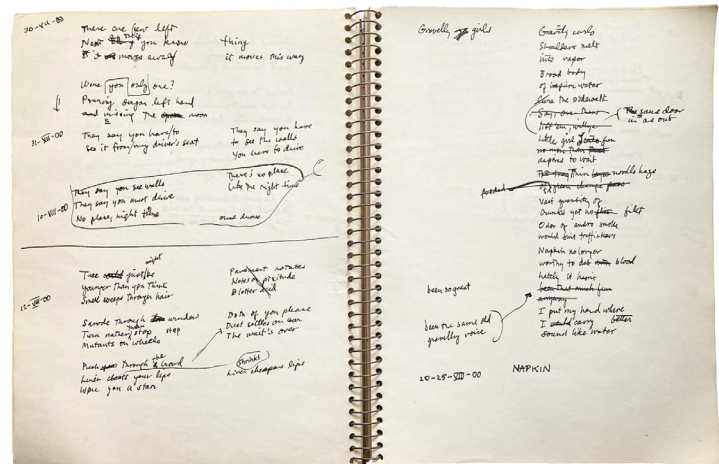
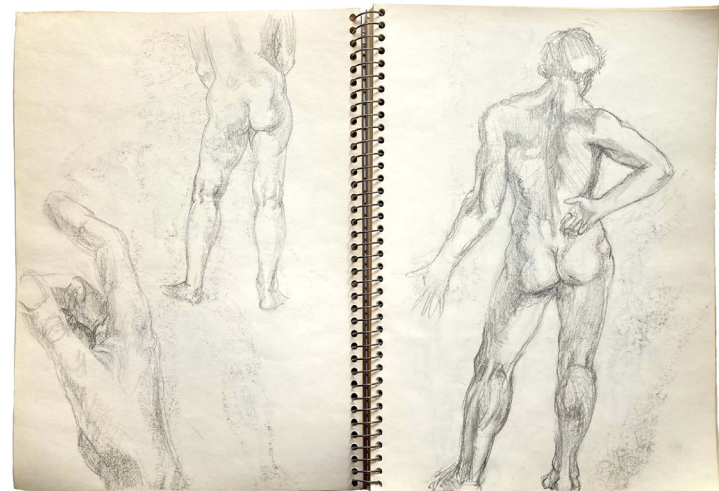


meal because otherwise, I would eat cold cereal at six in the morning, drink water all day, park my car. And at 8:30, I'd go to Mee Noodle Shop and eat a big bowl of Cantonese-style soup. And that was my diet. Friday nights, it'd be late, I'd get there at nine o'clock, but I'd go to a place that used to be called Bona Fides on Second Avenue around Third Street owned by Serbians. The waitresses were all from Belgrade and the kitchen was all Mexican men and the Italian meals were good. It was good. And one of the waitresses and I got along chummy, her desire was to return to Belgrade and have a bookstore. She was into literature.

[During this period,] there were things that people thought I was being influenced by and I wasn't gonna tell 'em what it really was. When I was disappeared [due to the nursing schedule], nobody saw me at events. If I was gonna give a reading, I had to know in advance. So I could take a week off because I got home without having had anything to eat at the time the readings would start. And I said, well, I'm better off reading a book and eating noodle soup.



I leave sketches from Judy Gallion's attendance at Ash. Her last sketch book. I own it. '87, a few summers after I bought it. Judy's then books in use again from '89 - most in Private Remade, Chels '83.



Julie Gallion's sketchbook (she was studying painting and art), which Godfrey later populated with his own writing.

I'm not a story writer, but it's in between the lines, every day. I used to call it my daily rushes, like going out and shooting and you come back and almost all of it ends up on the floor in the cutting room. But I said [to myself], I'm not sleeping enough. I would sometimes have an entire week where I might not have been asleep for more than five hours a night. But I had 15 minutes every night, I'd go down there and sit at what I had



going. And I'd add something from the day's rushes, so that things would slip in there. I'm not interested in explicit writing in the first place. I think there's always a way to get at things. You know more about the inside of the bushes when you walk around it than when you stick your head in there and get your eye poked out. That's why I [sold] pot. Cause I wanted to be able to think to myself, I don't owe nobody. I don't have to spend part of my day pretending to be someone I'm not.

And I started writing again for real about 1993, just sticking my toe in there. And then my old friend, Jim Brodey died in the summer of 1993 and I wrote a poem for him and I said, I'm gonna do this. And from then on what's the headache is those floppy discs. I had not worked on the keyboard for a long time. I had to get a computer for schoolwork in 1992: a computer then was a word processor. So I get a Macintosh power book tool. Well, where was this all my life? I can write longer stuff now. I don't have to type it all over again. I just, you know, eliminate things. And I literally was a Sunday poet. I had so much paperwork left over on the week from either school or from visiting nursing. I had to finish these forms and I had one hour on Sunday afternoon. I said, I write poems, man. I got an hour. I'm gonna write something now.

And I figured out a trick. I had a Thai dictionary written for Thai people. All the entries were in Thai language. They didn't give you any pronunciation. You had to know what was what, but they gave you examples in English of how it would be used. And it was for Thai people to learn how to use English. As a result, there was no alphabetical connection between the Thai word, even though it's an alphabetical, sort of an alphabetical language. I would open up this book, and I'd look at two facing pages. And I would go to the English—if you [did

2000s-

When you come to my poems in hard copy, where on the page of the back you see a number, the numbers indicate the order of composition. And I have no other clue as to when they were written, because I wasn't thinking in that direction.

This is a feature of printed typescript poems in the archive, often with a number that has been penciled in and encircled.

Looking at some of those old poems, and I said, man, I pounded out these good poems. There were periods where I did it on a typewriter and I did it quick. And they're good! I could do that 45 years ago. Now it's a little more, you know, like touching here and there. But what's great about this is in the different longhand states, they tell you the changes in different version of the poem. You see, "he replaced this word here in this line. Very interesting." Half the time I'll change the word just because of the way it sounds.

I've got index cards over there, dated and in fountain pen. Those are the first sketches. This notebook is labeled Pentel. This is the first step to lay them out. And the Benz—this is a Pelikan. Costs 150. And it writes like liquid. Ballpoint. So I [start] cheap, Pentel costs you six bucks and it'll last forever. You get about six leads or graphites. So I got this [Pentel writing on sketchbook], because then I'm not going to interrupt the spontaneity of getting something in my head by trying to arrange it during the sketch. I'll wait until I have a piece and then I'll see how it would work best. And I've been spreading things around the page, using a lot of indentations. It's really exactly what I've always done with a left hand margin, except it comes off so different, sort of like a very demonstrative kind of thing, to indent this way and hang things that way. It looks like a different kind of writing, but it's the same sources in my taste. And I'm gonna continue working this way, which comes out to about 50 poems a year. Even though I'm very aware that things don't get finished as quickly this way.

The archive contains several hundred notecards, 50 notebooks, printed computer typescripts with autograph emendations, and

Big Hair

Call off the clash I can get it
for you free load

When I neglect my walrus
in this very tomb

High steam held expressly in slowing hand
you can't teach that

I dream of being a lucky
sleepy man in deep end
Her hair is the big hair
Not only I dream it

Wake up scapegoat to requirigate
flag tag takes feeling hostage
survival oxygen depleted by conceit
Sandalwood whiff of burnt out

Walk to shop of sunburn
eclipse your honey's
blank jumpstart to judge for myself
what figures out

• flame on T-plate
• tweak with forks
• back up over wiring

Adverse going down.
ticking like sheet

dear john

anybody ever call you johnnie?

i am being driven crazy(que cosino) by thw
reading of james gliECK's book on time travel.

he says poets always say: time is a river.

that's pretty tiresome, i'd say. i think time is
when you take all the nouns out, what you're left
with

anybody ever written you a dear john letter?

i crazily went & checked what book i'd read about
time lately - heidegger, very difficult to read.

do you think the past is physically behind you?

some do, some do not. i have a craving for donuts.

i never did before. it's just a mental thing. we're

making maple syrup now & you might enjoy my telling you

that the blue plastic water jugs our neighbor (with

the sugar shack) puts at the bottom of each maple tree

in the poetry state forest in a makeshift version of

plastic -tubing-type sap collecting(of course we have the

old-fasioned buckets to boot as well) look like blue wild

turkeys from my back porch while i'm watching the

sap collecting. & the field behind my house is bothe time

& a stage. used to be two white bogs appeared therxe but

digital files such as "January 2015 on" that attest to this process of beginning with pencil in a sketchbook, transcribing to an index card with ballpoint, and then retyping in a Microsoft Word file. Revision at all stages is highly common, and poems can be traced across their different material instantiations. Even in printed typescripts, it is rare to find a page that hasn't been slightly adjusted with an edit, noted for order of composition, or otherwise annotated. At the same time, there is ample unpublished material in the notebooks, a hallmark of Godfrey's experimental approach, digesting of literary influences, and regular practice of writing poems.

The reason I do things in periods of time—like on the computerized stuff? I make a file: four years. It's gonna be a 200 or more poem file. I don't know if that's a big risk, I don't think so. I save everything in hard copy. In a period of four years, I'm gonna be all over the place because, it's sort of like lateral movement. You get a hot streak. And I find that very often, I'll be focusing on periods of a month or so—in a month I might finish five poems. And I'll say, I had a hot streak there. And then there is a sideways move, kind of blah. And then few months later I get in another hot streak, you just gotta do it. You can't wait for the hot streak. You gotta crawl sideways until you get to it.

You know what really struck me? I'm 21, I'm writing these poems for some reason. I'm looking at these things I was writing and there was no tomorrow. But in dealing with the archive, I'm having to see what happened tomorrow. And knowing that at the time I wrote this, I had no idea I was gonna get over to *this*, and it's kind of spooky. And that's why I was a little reassured. Because as far as making stuff up, I was good at that from the beginning.



to inquire about the collection, please contact
info@granarybooks.com

