

The Richard Brautigan Collection from poet Joanne Kyger

Featuring an extraordinary archive of original artwork, inscribed books, rare ephemera and magazines, photographs, typescripts and more.

Left: Richard Brautigan, Muir Beach. February 1968.
Photo: Dr. John Doss.

Joanne Kyger met Richard Brautigan at a gallery opening in San Francisco in the spring of 1957 when they were both 22 years old. After dinner the following night Richard gave Joanne her first tour of North Beach.

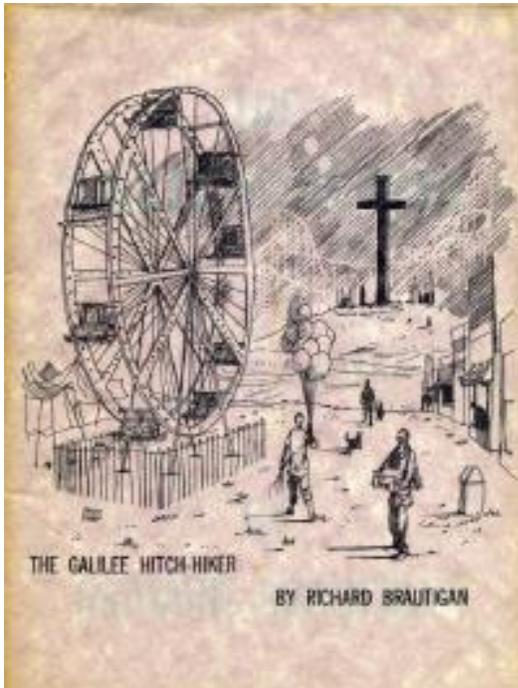
In 1960, Joanne left San Francisco and lived in Japan for several years where she married Gary Snyder and studied Zen Buddhism. She became close friends with Richard when she returned to San Francisco in February 1964.

Joanne and Richard were greatly influenced by Jack Spicer early in their careers and both were important and vivid figures in the remarkable literary and art scene in San Francisco in the mid-to-late sixties. They often read poetry at the same events and published in the same magazines, including the one-shot "Change" (1963) edited by Richard and Ron Loewinsohn, and "Wild Dog" guest edited by Joanne in 1965. They spoke on the phone nearly every day during this period and Richard would often read new work to her.

Richard's book "In Watermelon Sugar" (completed in 1964, published in 1968) was dedicated to Joanne Kyger, Donald Allen and Michael McClure. He began writing it while staying in Bolinas, and Joanne would sometimes visit Richard there while he was working on it. She eventually moved to Bolinas in 1968 where she now resides.

Richard bought houses in Bolinas and Montana and divided his time between the two while making trips to Japan. Though they were not as close as they had been, Joanne and Richard were in contact until 1984 when Richard Brautigan died in Bolinas.

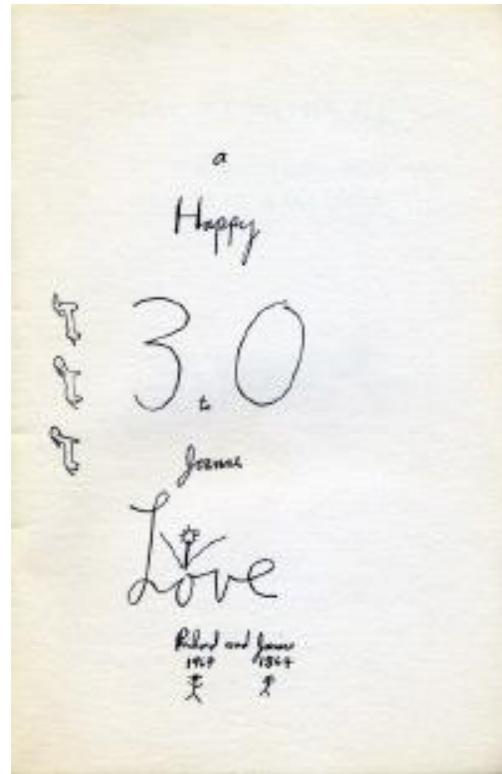
Selected Highlights from the Collection



Richard Brautigan. *The Galilee Hitch-Hiker*. White Rabbit Press, 1958. First edition.

Sewn in red wrappers with a white outer parchment wrapper. This extremely rare edition is one of 200 copies.

The Galilee Hitch-Hiker was published by Joe Dunn and White Rabbit press with Jack Spicer's encouragement. White Rabbit Press lacked binding equipment and so the books were delivered unbound to Brautigan. He and Ginny Brautigan, along with Kenn Davis (who did the cover), hand sewed the books. *** Laid in is a display card that was used for a White Rabbit Press exhibition when Joanne Kyger loaned the book. Also in the archive is the 1966 Or Books edition.

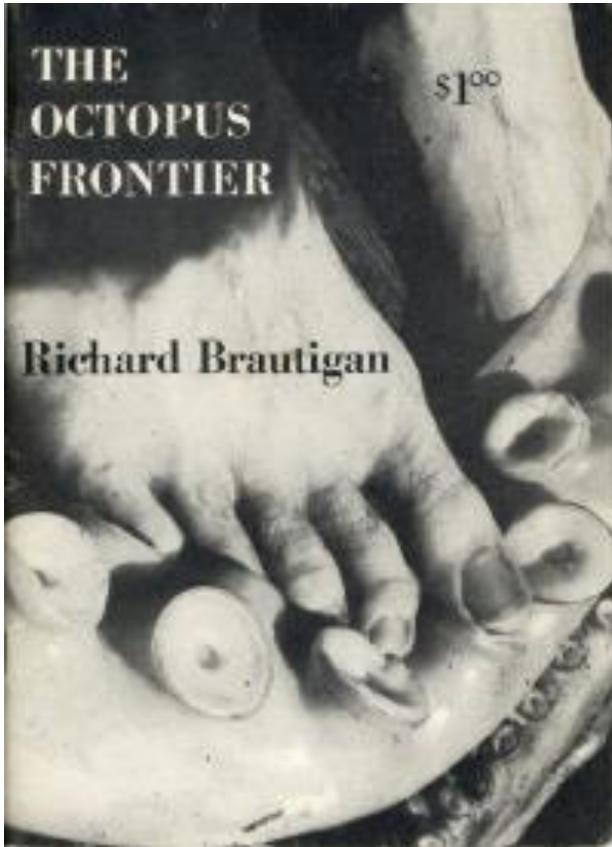


Richard Brautigan. *Lay the Marble Tea: Twenty-Four Poems by Richard Brautigan*. Carp Press, 1959. First edition. Left: Cover. Right: Inscription on f.f.e. to Joanne for her 30th birthday (1964).

Stapled wrappers. This is from an edition of 500 copies.

This rare copy of *Lay the Marble Tea* is inscribed to Joanne for her 30th birthday (1964) with drawings by Richard Brautigan. He signed it with both his and girlfriend Janice Meissner's names.

Richard took the book's title from an Emily Dickinson poem, which is also the book's epigraph. This collection of poetry is praised by Philip Whalen as "really wonderful...from somebody who had his own voice, his own vision, which was quite terrific. It was just totally authentic feeling." ***



Richard Brautigan. *The Octopus Frontier*. Carp Press, 1960. First edition.

Stapled wrappers. With Richard Brautigan signature and the ownership signature of Joanne Kyger.

Carp Press was Richard Brautigan and his wife Virginia's self-publishing company. The publisher's address of 575 Pennsylvania Street, San Francisco was their home.



Richard Brautigan and Ron Loewinsohn, eds. *Change*. [1963].

Side-stapled mimeo. Joanne Kyger ownership signature on the cover. Includes poems by Kyger who was living in Kyoto at the time. She has penciled several corrections to her poems in this copy.

"I remember, in the winter of 1964, coming back from Japan, where I had lived for four years, and realizing that Richard was almost a different person. He and Ron Loewinsohn had started a magazine, *Change*, in 1963, and I had sent them some poems to publish. Despite its title it was a very modest typing-paper size stapled publication with a photo of Richard and Ron looking very solemn. Only one issue came out." **



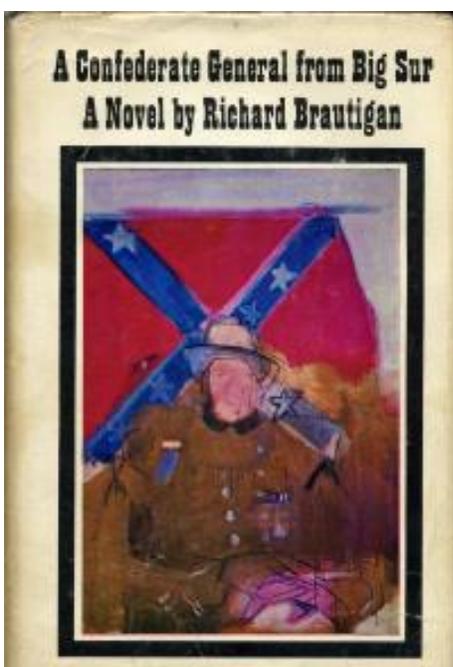
Richard Brautigan. Happy Birthday card. [1964].

Collaged ink drawing, 11 x 8 ½ inches. Signed by Richard and Janice (Meissner).

This card for Joanne Kyger’s thirtieth birthday is “pure Brautigan.” It includes Richard’s drawing of a fish and a horse holding a pelican holding John Lennon with Brautigan’s words of wisdom: “A good horse is always thirty years old.”

In 1964, Richard and Joanne Kyger began collecting Beatles cards as an attempt to learn who was who in the Beatles. According to Joanne, “It was an obsession with us because we’d go over and over the names.” In March, while sitting at Vesuvio, she and Richard were able to talk Jack Spicer (in spite of his distaste and hostility toward popular music) into writing a collaborative letter to Ringo Starr inviting the Beatles to San Francisco. It is uncertain if the letter was ever actually mailed; however according to Kyger it was “part of the fascination of being part of this subculture.” Moreover, she also thought that Brautigan’s interest also arose from his belief that he would also soon be the recipient of such celebrity.

According to Michael McClure, “In the front of this book is the first sight of Richard's trademark—his teardrop-shaped trout drawing.” **



Richard Brautigan. *A Confederate General from Big Sur*. Grove Press, 1964. First edition.

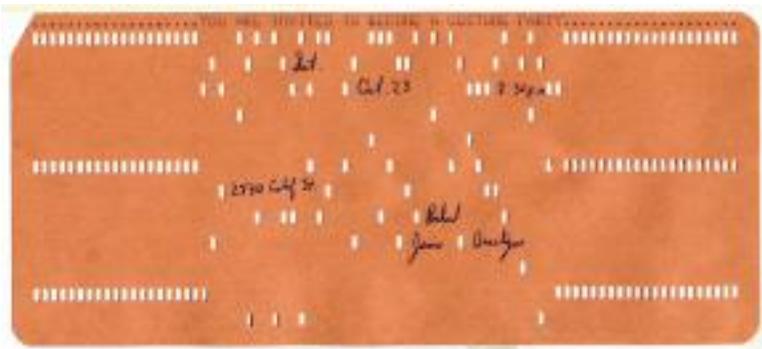
Boards with dust jacket. Newspaper clippings of an ad for the book and a newspaper column about Brautigan are laid in. Signed by Richard Brautigan, November 19, 1964.

A Confederate General from Big Sur was Brautigan's first published novel. His earlier novel *Trout Fishing in America* (1961) was not published until 1967.



Page from Joanne Kyger's journals with the invitation to the Grove Press book party for *A Confederate General from Big Sur*. January 22, 1965.

Brautigan read from his novel at the California Club at 8:30 p.m., followed by a 10 to midnight reception at the Tape Music Center in San Francisco.



“You Are Invited to Become a Costume Party.” Halloween Party invitation, October 23, 1965.

Richard and his girlfriend, Janice Meissner, threw a Halloween Party at their shared California Street apartment in San Francisco. It “was attended by all the royalty of San Francisco counterculture.” ** The invitation had been pasted in Joanne’s journals and removed. She has transcribed her entry from October 27, 1965 (and signed it for the archive):

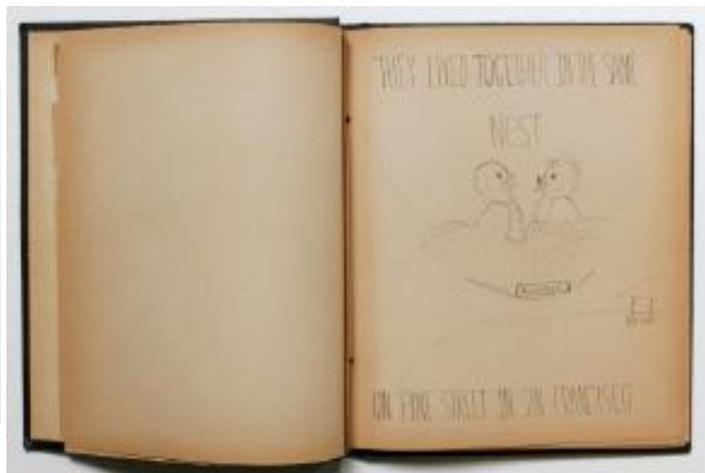
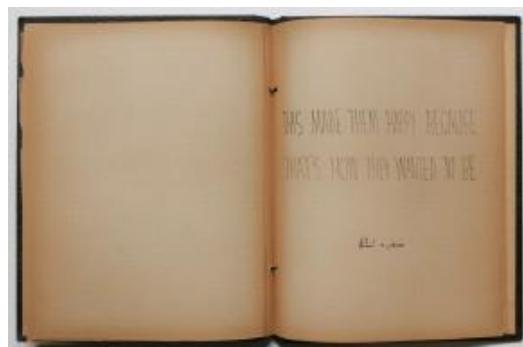
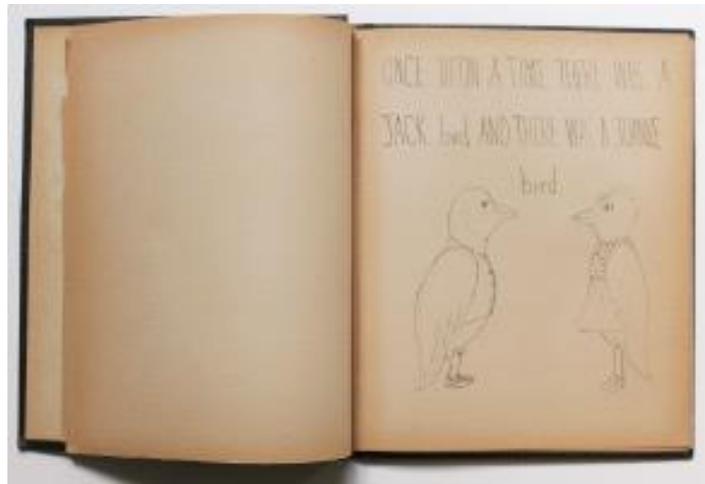
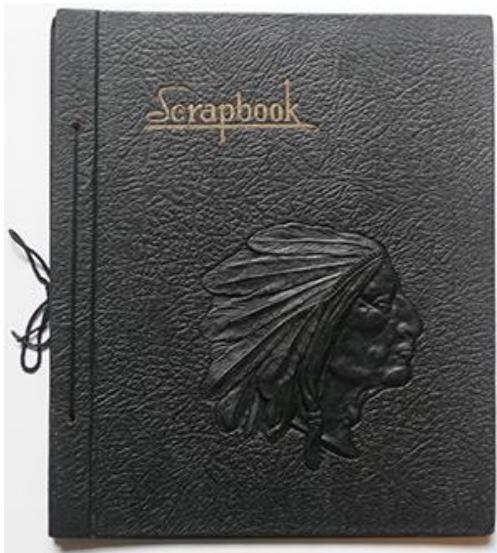
“Richard’s Halloween party was Saturday night. Janice [Meissner] went out to the back yard with one of the Fugs. Nemi [Nemi Frost is one of Joanne’s oldest friends] couldn’t find her pocket book and screeched about it a lot. She brought Elvin, [Elvin Jones at the time was the drummer for the John Coltrane Quartet. His wife Shirley was a friend of Nemi’s] who rolled his eye and seemed out of his skull. Ginsberg came as Ginsberg and Don Allen returned from his trip to the southwest with Steven Schneck and said he had a book from Creeley for me. Later Elvin banged McClures’ tambourine so hard he broke it. Michael was devastated, but tried not to show it because it wouldn’t be ‘cool.’ Punch had vodka in it.”

It should be noted that many sources date this party as having taken place on October 30, however the invitation (and Kyger’s journal) clearly date it as October 27.



Richard Brautigan, "15 Cents." 1965.

One of six typescript poems in the archive, submitted by Brautigan to *Wild Dog*, edited by Joanne Kyger, Gino Clays Sky and Drew Wagnon, in 1965. Although these poems were not published in *Wild Dog*, other Brautigan poems were. The address on the typescripts is 2830 California Street, where Richard was living with his girlfriend Janice Meissner.



Richard Brautigan and Janice Meissner. *A Tale of Two Birds or The Telephone's in the Hall.* 1966.

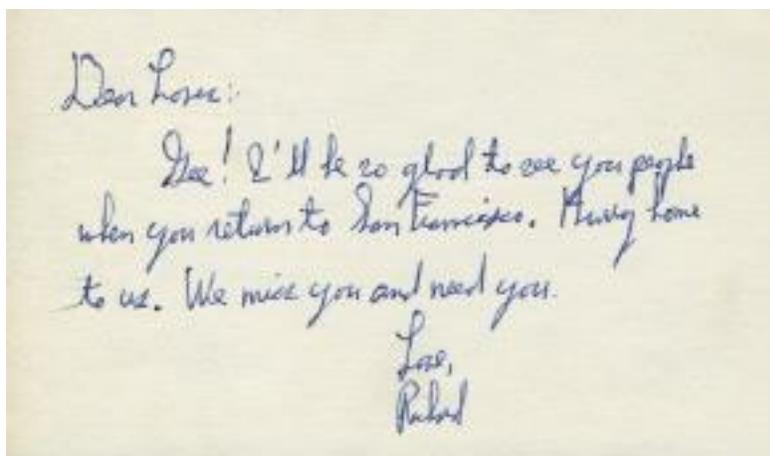
A one-of-kind book, created in a 12 ½ x 14 ½ inch scrapbook. It is the story of two lovebirds, Joanne and Jack, who were illegally living together on Pine Street in San Francisco (coincidentally the same street where Joanne Kyger and Jack Boyce lived), but after many years decide to wed to the shock of all their bird-pals.

The book "was a wedding present to Jack Boyce and myself. We married in February of 1966, the reception at Margot Doss's house, which they attended. And then a week later Jack and I traveled in Europe for about nine months. We saw Janice and Richard frequently as they lived nearby—we were on Pine Street and they lived on California Street. We played monopoly together, watched TV etc. (*Batman*) [Brautigan did not have a television], had dinners etc. So there were certain shared 'domestic' interests. The scrapbook was [a] collaboration between the two of them, but Janice seemed to have been the 'artist' and the one who wrote down the story line as Richard dictated.—Personal correspondence with Joanne Kyger.



Richard Brautigan. Postcard to Jack and Joanne [Kyger]. ca. 1966.

Unsent postcard. "Dear Lopez: Gee! I'll be glad to see you people when you return to San Francisco. Hurry home to us. We miss you and need you. Love, Richard."



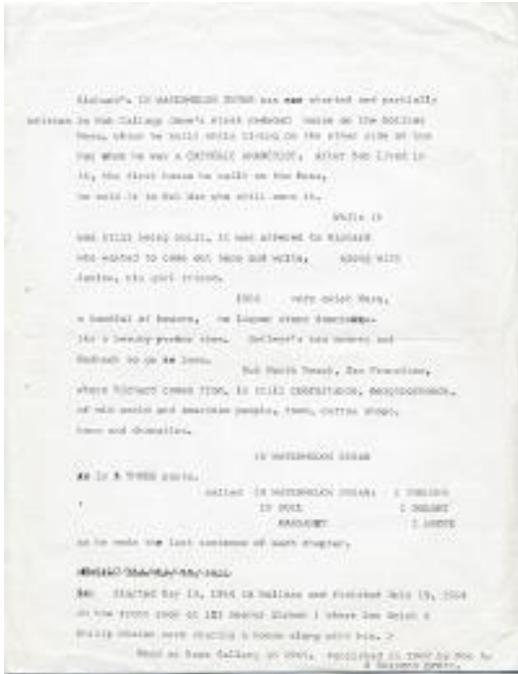
"In watermelon sugar the deeds were done and done again as my life is done in watermelon sugar."



Left: Richard Brautigan. *In Watermelon Sugar*. Four Seasons Foundation, 1968. First edition.

Above: Snapshot of Ianthe Elizabeth Brautigan, Richard's daughter. September 1963.

This picture of a three-year-old Ianthe Brautigan is laid in Joanne Kyger's copy of *In Watermelon Sugar*. The book is dedicated to Don Allen, Joanne Kyger, and Michael McClure. Brautigan has inscribed this copy to Kyger and drawn a trout, December 13, 1968. Michael McClure has praised *In Watermelon Sugar* as Brautigan's "most perfect book." A clipping from the San Francisco Sunday Examiner & Chronicle with Lew Welch's review of the book is also laid in.



Joanne Kyger typescript notes on *In Watermelon Sugar*. 1969, 1 page.

A quick page of notes on Brautigan writing *In Watermelon Sugar* by Joanne Kyger.



Richard Brautigan. *Please Plant This Book*. Printed by Graham Mackintosh, 1968. First edition.

Folder with 8 seed packets (four of flowers, four of vegetables). On the front of each packet is a poem and on the back are planting instructions. There is also a small brochure for "Water-In: It's Miraculous." (It is uncertain whether the brochure was in the folder when originally distributed). This and the *San Francisco Weather Report* broadside, also printed by Mackintosh (and also in the archive), were the last of Brautigan's independent publishing and was meant to be distributed for free.



Richard Brautigan, Victor Moscoso, and Jack Thibeau. *The San Francisco Public Library: A Publishing House*. 1968.

"It all started with an obituary. Richard Brautigan tore the column from the back pages of the San Francisco Examiner in September of 1968, another piece of found art. He kept it among his personal papers for the remaining sixteen years of his life. The headline read, 'Mrs. Myrtle Tate, Movie Projectionist.' " ***

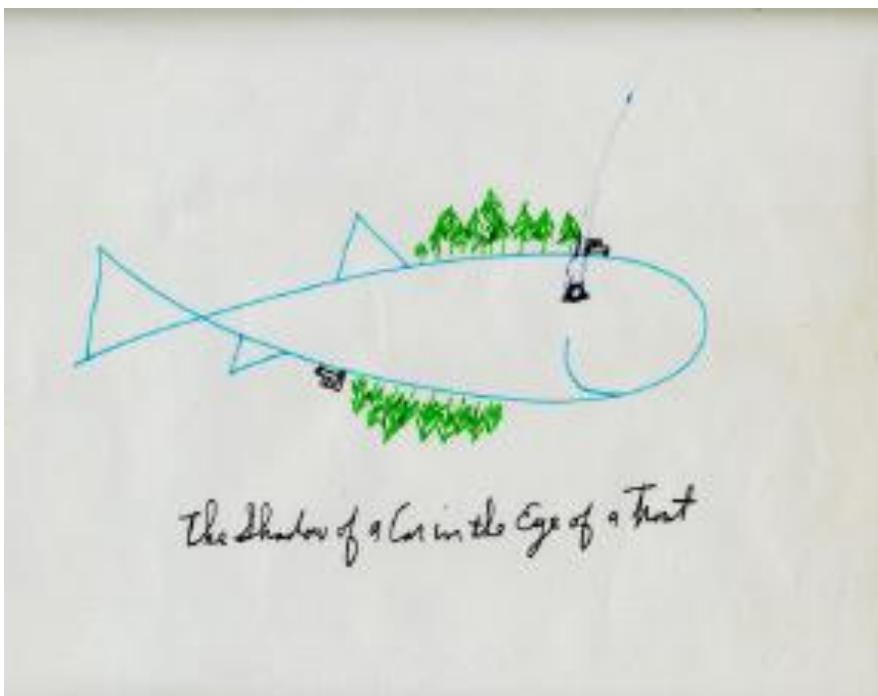
Some claim that this book is the most rare of Richard Brautigan items.

"Created and Xeroxed at the Main Library in the Civic Center using their ten cent Xerox machine on December 5, 1968 by the authors." The cover was spontaneously created by Jack Thibeau, placing his hirsute belly upon the Vico-Matic copy machine. Victor Moscoso's back page was created by placing a cat on the machine. And Richard Brautigan copied his poem "Mrs. Myrtle Tate, Movie Projectionist" against the background of a newspaper's movie ads. According to librarian David Belch no more than twenty copies were run off. Due to the nature of Thermofax, few copies have survived. This rare copy is in near fine condition and is still bound by its staples.



Richard Brautigan, Muir Beach. February 1968.

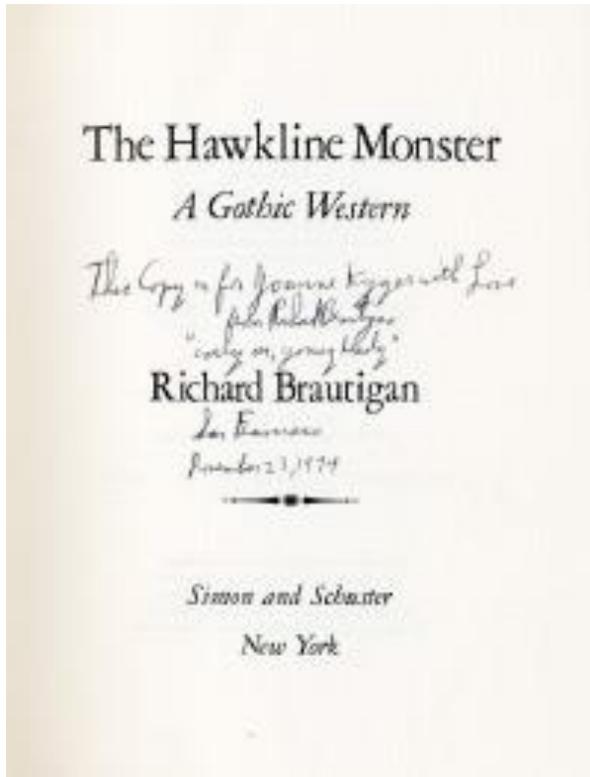
8 x 10 inch black and white photograph taken by Dr. John Doss. Doss and his wife Margot were part of the literary and art scenes in San Francisco and first met Brautigan at Don Allen's Christmas party in 1963. The three became long-time friends and Richard would often visit their home in Bolinas.



Richard Brautigan. "Shadow of a Car in the Eye of a Trout." [ca. 1969].

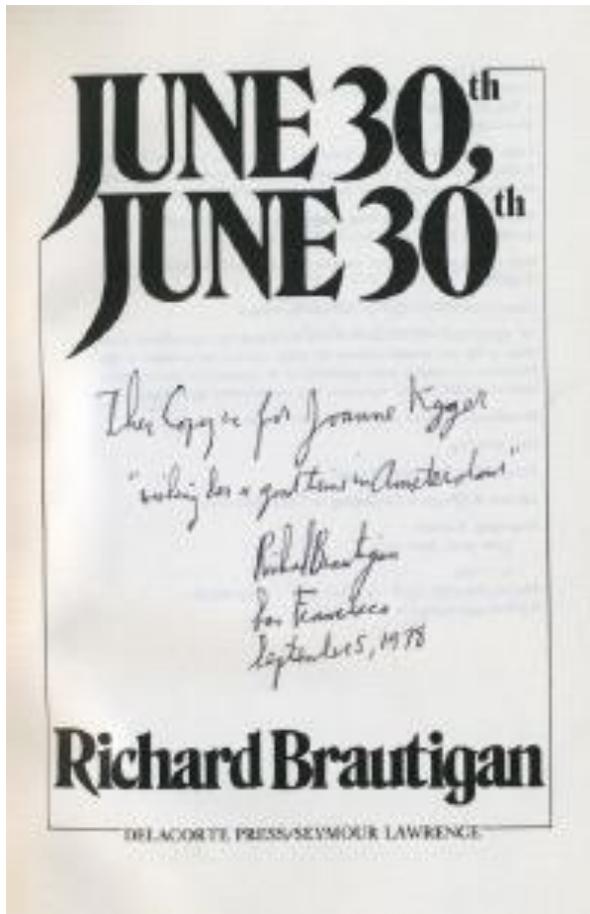
Detail of a drawing by Brautigan made with colored pens and torn out of a 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ inch sketchpad. Richard made a hole in the paper for the trout's eye. Joanne Kyger recollects that Brautigan drew this around 1969–70 while they were in Bolinas.

Joanne Kyger remembers Brautigan making the drawing: "I don't think it happened at a special occasion. It was in a large notebook with other drawings by myself and others. But I saved Richard's because it was so 'perfect'. He was very careful where he put his signature and any of his spontaneous but studied 'graphics.' I think he was out visiting Bill Brown on the Mesa, and stopped by Purple Gate, where Jack Boyce was building his house. He was by himself, I remember that, so [he] felt more at ease." *



Richard Brautigan. *The Hawklime Monster: A Gothic Western*. Simon and Schuster, 1974.

First edition. Boards with dust jacket. Inscribed "This copy is for Joanne Kyger with Love / from Richard Brautigan / 'carry on, young lady' / San Francisco / November 23, 1974."



Richard Brautigan. *June 30th, June 30th*. Delacorte Press, 1978.

Boards with dust jacket. Inscribed "This copy is for Joanne Kyger / 'wishing for a good time in Amsterdam' / Richard Brautigan / San Francisco / September 5, 1978."



Richard Brautigan at the Pen Conference,
January 1980, San Francisco.

According to Joanne Kyger this snapshot was taken by Dr. John Doss at the San Francisco Pen Conference.

Complete listing of The Richard Brautigan Collection from poet Joanne Kyger

WRITING AND ARTWORK BY RICHARD BRAUTIGAN

Richard Brautigan. *The Galilee Hitch-Hiker*. White Rabbit Press, 1958.

First edition. Sewn in red wrappers with a white outer parchment wrapper. This rare edition is one of 200 copies.

Richard Brautigan. *The Galilee Hitch-Hiker*. Or [O'ar / O'er / Oar] Books, 1966.

Sewn in wrappers. Published by David Sandberg and printed by Clifford Burke of Cranium Press. This is one of 700 copies.

Richard Brautigan. *Lay the Marble Tea: Twenty-Four Poems by Richard Brautigan*. Carp Press, 1959.

First edition. Stapled wrappers. This is from an edition of 500 copies. This rare copy of *Lay the Marble Tea* is inscribed to Joanne for her 30th birthday (1964) with drawings by Richard Brautigan. He has signed it with both his and girlfriend Janice Meissner's names.

Richard Brautigan. *The Octopus Frontier*. Carp Press, 1960.

First edition. Stapled wrappers. With Richard Brautigan signature and the ownership signature of Joanne Kyger.

Richard Brautigan and Ron Loewinsohn, eds. *Change*. [1963].

Side-stapled mimeo. Joanne Kyger ownership signature on the cover. Includes poems by Kyger who was living in Kyoto at the time. She has penciled several corrections to her poems in this copy.

Richard Brautigan. *A Confederate General from Big Sur*. Grove Press, 1964.

First edition. Boards with dust jacket. Newspaper clippings of an ad for the book and a newspaper column about Brautigan are laid in. Signed by Richard Brautigan, November 19, 1964.

Richard Brautigan. Happy Birthday card. [1964].

Collaged ink drawing, 11 x 8 ½ inches. Signed by Richard and Janice (Meissner).

Richard Brautigan. Typescripts. 1965.

Six typescript poems submitted by Brautigan to *Wild Dog*, edited by Joanne Kyger, Gino Clays Sky and Drew Wagnon, in 1965.

Richard Brautigan and Janice Meissner. *A Tale of Two Birds or The Telephone's in the Hall*. 1966.

A one-of-kind book, created in a 12 ½ x 14 ½ inch scrapbook. It is the story of two lovebirds, Joanne and Jack, who were illegally living together on Pine Street in San Francisco (coincidentally the same street where Joanne Kyger and Jack Boyce lived), but after many years decide to wed to the shock of all their bird-pals.

Richard Brautigan. Envelope. 1966.

Empty envelope sent to Joanne Kyger in Bolinas. Brautigan moved to his 2546 Geary Street apartment in 1966. He lived there until December 4, 1974.

Richard Brautigan. Postcard to Jack [Boyce] and Joanne [Kyger]. ca. 1966.

Unsent postcard. "Dear Lopez: Gee! I'll be glad to see you people when you return to San Francisco. Hurry home to us. We miss you and need you. Love, Richard."

Richard Brautigan. *All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace*. Communication Company, 1967.

This book of poetry, published by the Diggers, is unbound with holes that appear to have been meant to hold fasteners for a binding. (Most copies were stapled.) An extra spread, printed on one side, that includes the colophon, is laid in.

Richard Brautigan. *Trout Fishing in America*. Four Seasons Foundation, 1967.

First edition. Perfect bound. Clipping of the review of the book from the *Los Angeles Free Press* by John Montgomery, librarian and character in Kerouac's *Dharma Bums*, laid in. With bookplate "This is Joanne [Kyger] & Jack Boyce's Book" on f.f.e. Signed by Richard Brautigan, September 29, 1967.

Richard Brautigan. *In Watermelon Sugar*. Four Seasons Foundation, 1968.

First edition. Perfect bound. The book is dedicated to Don Allen, Joanne Kyger, and Michael McClure. Brautigan has inscribed this copy to Kyger and drawn a trout, December 13, 1968. A clipping from the *San Francisco Sunday Examiner & Chronicle* with Lew Welch's review of the book is also laid in. Also laid in is a snapshot (September 1963) of Ianthe Elizabeth Brautigan, Richard's daughter.

Brautigan, Richard. *The Pill Versus the Springhill Mine Disaster*. Four Seasons Foundation, 1968.

First edition. Perfect bound. Signed by Richard Brautigan, November 14, 1968.

Richard Brautigan. *Please Plant This Book*. Printed by Graham Mackintosh, 1968.

First edition. Folder with 8 seed packets (four of flowers, four of vegetables). On the front of each packet is a poem and on the back are planting instructions.

Richard Brautigan, Victor Moscoso, and Jack Thibeu. *The San Francisco Public Library: A Publishing House*. 1968.

Some claim that this book is the most rare of Richard Brautigan items.

"Created and Xeroxed at the Main Library in the Civic Center using their ten-cent Xerox machine on December 5, 1968 by the authors." According to librarian David Belch no more than twenty copies were printed. Due to the nature of Thermofax, few copies have survived. This rare copy is in near fine condition and is still bound by its staples.

Richard Brautigan. *San Francisco Weather Report*. Broadside. Printed by Graham Mackintosh, 1968.

Prints "Gee, You're so Beautiful That It's Starting to Rain" (re-published in *Paris Review*, no. 45, Winter 1968). This broadside and *Plant This Book* were Brautigan's final free giveaways.

Richard Brautigan. "Shadow of a Car in the Eye of a Trout." [ca. 1969].

Drawing by Brautigan made with colored pens and torn out of a 15 ¾ x 12 ¾ inch sketchpad. Richard made a hole in the paper for the trout's eye. Joanne Kyger recollects that Brautigan drew this around 1969–70 while they were in Bolinas.

Richard Brautigan. *Richard Brautigan's Trout Fishing in America, The Pill Versus the Springhill Mine Disaster; and In Watermelon Sugar*. Delacorte Press, 1969.

Second printing. Boards with dust jacket. Signed by Richard Brautigan, May 14, 1971.

Richard Brautigan. *Listening to Richard Brautigan*. Harvest Records, 1970.

33 1/3 rpm stereo phonodisc.

Richard Brautigan. *Rommel Drives on Deep Into Egypt*. Delacorte Press, 1970.

First edition. Boards with dust jacket.

Richard Brautigan. *Revenge of the Lawn: Stories 1962–1970*. Simon and Schuster, 1971.

First edition. Boards with dust jacket. "With the compliments of the Author" from the publisher laid in.

Richard Brautigan. *The Hawkline Monster: A Gothic Western*. Simon and Schuster, 1974.

First edition. Boards with dust jacket. Inscribed "This copy is for Joanne Kyger with Love / from Richard Brautigan / 'carry on, young lady' / San Francisco / November 23, 1974."

Richard Brautigan. *Willard and His Bowling Trophies: A Perverse Mystery*. Simon and Schuster, 1975.

First edition. Boards with dust jacket. With Joanne Kyger ownership signature.

Richard Brautigan. *Loading Mercury with a Pitchfork*. Simon and Schuster, 1976.

First edition. Boards with dust jacket. "With the compliments of the Author" from the publisher laid in.

Richard Brautigan. *Sombrero Fallout: A Japanese Novel*. Simon and Schuster, 1976.

First edition. Boards with dust jacket. "With the compliments of the Author" from the publisher laid in.

Richard Brautigan. *June 30th, June 30th*. Delacorte Press, 1978.

Boards with dust jacket. Inscribed "This copy is for Joanne Kyger / 'wishing for a good time in Amsterdam' / Richard Brautigan / San Francisco / September 5, 1978."

MAGAZINES WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY AND ABOUT RICHARD BRAUTIGAN

Keith Abbott, "When Fame Puts Its Feathery Crowbar Under Your Rock." *California Magazine*, Apr. 1985.

Richard Brautigan, "1/3, 1/3, 1/3." *Ramparts*, Dec. 1967.

(entire issue)

Robert Creeley, Brad Donovan, and Greg Keeler. "Richard Brautigan Remembered." *Rolling Stock*, no. 9, 1985.

(entire issue)

Peter Manso and Michael McClure. "Brautigan's Wake." *Vanity Fair*, May 1985.

(entire issue)

JOANNE KYGER'S FILES ON RICHARD BRAUTIGAN

"Brautigan" folder.

Assorted items including: photocopy of Kyger's "I Remember Richard Brautigan" from John F. Barber's *Richard Brautigan: Essays on the Writings and Life*, that has been extensively marked up with corrections by Kyger; correspondence with Steve Helig, also a contributor to the Barber book, and Kyger's notes for a reading given at Point Reyes Books in 2007 for the book.

Richard Brautigan Invitations folder.

— "You Are Invited to Become a Costume Party," Halloween Party invitation, October 23, 1965, and signed transcription from Joanne Kyger's journal, October 27, describing the event.
— Page from Joanne Kyger's journals with the invitation to the Grove Press book party for *A Confederate General from Big Sur*, January 22, 1965.

"1984 Newspaper Clippings Richard"

Folder with assorted clippings from local papers in Marin, Bolinas and San Francisco, among other places, following Brautigan's death. Included is a newspaper article sent to Joanne Kyger from Alistair Johnston (Poltroon Press). On the envelope he has written, "Great Party! / * Do not open if you are / a) happy b) depressed."

"Richard by Joanne" folder.

Includes: two drafts of "I Remember Richard Brautigan"; notes on *In Watermelon Sugar* (listed above); a color photocopy of a Mike Nathan painting with notes by Joanne Kyger; and two photographs by Dr. John Doss of Richard Brautigan—a color snapshot taken at Pen Conference, San Francisco, January 1980 and 8 x 10 inch black and white photograph of Richard Brautigan at Muir Beach, February 1968.

"Richard Brautigan story / Joanne / 1964–1965" folder.

Assorted items including: letter from William Hjortsberg, Brautigan biographer, with a copy of Kyger's "The Richard Brautigan Story"; and a holiday card and an email from Ianthe Brautigan.

Watermelon Sugar publicity folder, ca. 1989.

Watermelon Sugar was a band that included Steve Sato, a student of Joanne Kyger's at Naropa. Kyger has written a short explanation of the Brautigan connection to Sato and the band. It is clipped to the folder.

Charles Martell. *Halsey and the Fine Art of Murder*. Pagent Books, 1989.

Photocopy of a chapter from the novel that is set in Bolinas. The character D.D. Flanders is purportedly based on Richard Brautigan.

Donald Richie. *The Japan Journals: 1947–2004*. Stone Bridge Press, 2005.

Photocopy of a section of the book about Richard Brautigan in Japan. Kyger has highlighted parts.

Footnotes and Reference Information

* Personal correspondence with Joanne Kyger.

** John F. Barber, ed. *Richard Brautigan: Essays on the Writings and Life*, McFarland & Company, 2007.

*** William Hjortsberg. *Jubilee Hitchhiker: The Life and Times of Richard Brautigan*. Counterpoint, 2012.

The following sources were used extensively for research:

John F. Barber's Brautigan.net (<https://www.brautigan.net>)

William Hjortsberg. *Jubilee Hitchhiker: The Life and Times of Richard Brautigan*. Counterpoint, 2012.
