



and Che felt throbbing
precisely in Marx
the same pulse as in Baudelaire

what luck these two extraordinary figures
capable of etching their collected challenges
for always in our blood
have had the inclination
and the time
to shore up their infinitesimal
and colossal rage
with such a wedge from the soul
such a reasonable diffidence such a
fragile and impregnable
barricade.

POEMS

Ghost

On this October evening
it is very quiet
very still
inside this house,
the sound of wind
the sound of trains
the silence

the silence of old leaves
and I can hear
with my left ear
a wrinkled foot
upon the stairs,
a crispy hand
the grasps the rail
and hoists a dry, frail body
to a bed
that is not there

I hear the springs creak
she will lie in space
remembering
October evenings
very quiet
very still
the sound of wind
the sound of trains
the silence of old leaves.

Sylvia Ridgley

for leaving
once you were a wild bird
the color of dusk and night
and sounds of wings
carried
across silver waters
and white trees
from where you rested
to where you began
in the wintered prairielands

once you were a river
the flow and rush of
tide come in
and tide gone out
and between the motion
and the silence
you carried the sounds
of the past
and the passed by
holding fast
the secrets of the sea

once you were a cloud
an element of zeus' sky
suspended
a shadow of white
soon turned to wind
d, hunter

Hieroglyphics

I.
The focus
blurs
and shades off
into larger circles.

II.
And time
ripens times
as time glides
on the circumference
of perennial love

III.
From lucid blue
her eyes
piece together
the splintered boat
on a sudden flow.

IV.
A few tarnished hieroglyphics
on a totem-pole
becloud the eyes
and ostracize
the bird
off the eye-lashed nest.

V.
In his half-conscious reverie
he saw
the neo-trojan horses
blitzkrieg
vegetarian shepherds
and icons,
and,
with a stroke
of her petalled handkerchief,
the
the trodden butterfly
recapture
the rainbow. M. Deeb

Mario Benedetti was born in Uruguay in 1920. Currently he resides in Montevideo where he contributes to and is on the editorial staff of the progressive weekly 'Marcha'. Besides a half-dozen volumes of verse, Benedetti has published novels, plays, collections of short stories, and a large number of excellent critical essays and interviews on Spanish American politics and literature. His 'La Tregua' was published in English ('The Truce') by Harper and Row in 1969. From late 1967 to early 1969 Benedetti was in Havana where he organized and was founding director of the Centre for Literary Investigations, a branch of the Casa de las Americas. His most recent work, 'El Cumpleanos de Juan Angel', 1971, ('Juan Angel's Birthday') is a short biographical novel in verse, narrated via a sequence of flashbacks by an urban guerrilla in Montevideo.

The poems translated here are collected in 'Inventario '70, Poesia'.
4a Edicion. Montevideo: Editorial ALFA, Coleccion Carabela, 1970.

The translations are selected from 'Juan Angel's Birthday and other Poems',
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David McMurray
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