

Gazette Poetry

New York in verse

by Greg Croft

If there is any one city that epitomizes the spirit of 20th century North America it has got to be New York. In **New York: Poems**, edited by Howard Moss, we encounter what amounts to a poetic atlas of a city which has captured the imagination of artists in all fields of endeavour.

The poems found in this anthology have been chosen on the basis of their relevancy to place. The effect of the book tends to be visual; themes emerge from the city itself as subject-object of poetic design. Moss has concentrated on late nineteenth and twentieth century artists with the emphasis on poets from the latter period. Included in the anthology are such greats as: Walt Whitman, Wallace Stevens, W.H. Auden, Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams, and Frederico Lorca. Contemporary artists are also represented here among them: Ginsberg, Mark Strand, Erica Jong, Rika Lesser and many others too numerous to mention.

All in all, not less than one hundred and thirty perceptions are presented here, making **New York: Poems** a vehicle for sampling some of the finest writers of this century.

ALLEN GINSBERG

I Am a Victim of Telephone

When I lay down to sleep dream the Wishing Well it rings
 "Have you a new play for the brokendown theater?"
 When I write in my notebook poem it rings
 "Buster Keaton is under the brooklyn bridge on Frankfurt and Pearl . . ."
 When I unsheath my skin extend my cock toward someone's thighs fat or thin, boy or girl
 Tingaling—"Please get him out of jail . . . the police are crashing down"
 When I lift the soup spoon to my lips, the phone on the floor begins purring
 "Hello it's me—I'm in the park two broads from Iowa . . . nowhere to sleep last night . . . hit 'em in the mouth"
 When I muse at smoke crawling over the roof outside my street window
 purifying Eternity with my eye observation of grey vaporous columns in the sky
 ring ring "Hello this is Esquire be a dear and finish your political commitment manifesto"

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The Last Turn

Then see it! in distressing detail—from behind a red light at 53d and 6th of a November evening, with the jazz of the cross lights echoing the crazy weave of the breaking mind: splash of a half purple half naked woman's body whose bejeweled guts the cars drag up and down—No house but that has its brains blown off by the dark! Nothing recognizable but the whole, one jittering direction made of all directions spelling the inexplicable, pigment upon flesh and flesh the pigment the genius of a world artless but supreme . . .



EZRA POUND

N.Y.

My City, my beloved, my white! Ah slender,
 Listen! Listen to me, and I will breathe into thee a soul.
 Delicately upon the reed, attend me!

Now do I know that I am mad,
 For here are a million people surly with traffic;
 This is no maid.
 Neither could I play upon any reed if I had one.

My City, my beloved,
 Thou art a maid with no breasts,
 Thou art slender as a silver reed.
 Listen to me, attend me!
 And I will breathe into thee a soul,
 And thou shalt live for ever.

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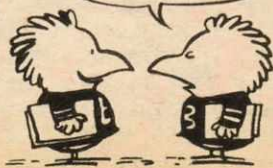
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