

Race Relations I

I used to
HATE
James Brown
What does 'funky' mean?
But now
I hear myself say
To friends
That I love to get down
They have a name for
people who do that
'Honky'

II
Phil is
Black
and beautiful
but emphatically
Black.
WASP Pride died
with the Emancipation
[Didn't it?]
so when he
combs his Afro
I somehow feel
Empty.

III
I learned to
Talk cool
[no jive, man]
and shuffle
and ask Lloyd
for soul music
at the Cosmo club
but I don't want to
Think
Black
I don't want to
know
what they
know
about
Hate.

IV
I am
WASP
When
Ethnic is In.
Straight
while watching
The Orgy
Young when
maturity is demanded
loving
in a world
that doesn't
CARE.

Therefore
I guess
I missed the
Party
but speaking
of the flower children
I don't really
mind.
and besides
DAMNIT
I still like
Aretha Franklin
Shaft
and
Boogie.

Lorna Pitcher

Do You Not Remember?

Do you not remember when we saw life on the wing as it meandered by
And we closed our eyes and thought of nothing but each other
And listened to the lure of the ocean as it came and went,
Sifting sand as the sun, the sun painted the sky.

And do you not remember the glory we saw in the candle glow,
Sitting cross-legged on the bare floor in that bare room,
Surrounded by solitude, only our breathing to hear,
Praying to whatever there was.

And do you not remember walking through the meadow as the sun went down
Crossing the bridge from one life to another
And making monuments in the old abandoned church
As I read you lines from The Book of Yesterday.

And do you not remember talking to the old man on the village road
He asked us where we were going, we could only tell him where we'd been
We looked back down the road we'd never walk again
If only it were possible to do something again.

And do you not remember playing with the poor boy and his sticks and stones
He built for us a castle, using his fingers as his only tool,
A smile of compassion was all he waited for,
He looked into our eyes and turned and walked away.

Brian Ashworth

Testament
[from "Prelude and Fugue"]

I see His power
Linda
beyond the furied galaxies
in every blade of grass
but were it mine to choose
sweet girl
I'd spurn the face of God
and kiss your little feet

Maurice Spiro

The Hero

You're waiting for a time
When a hero will emerge
To batter down the doorways
Of your passive urge
You wave your flag on-high
And move yourself with skill
A look, a touch is what you need
To feed upon your ills.

Ah, love is lost in leisure
And passivity in pain
To find what you're looking for
Maybe in a future game
Jane, Carol, Jan or Cris
God dammit, it's nothing new
But it's so hard to find the key
And unlock what's inside of you.

Maybe with your body
Maybe with your heart
Maybe the mind will rescue
The end of another start
Maybe your hero will move
In a saner manner of view
With clearer thoughts of life and love
And discover what is you.

Ed Gates

Goodbye!

Goodbye!
We said goodbye without tears.
It was such a natural thing.
I watched him leave as at other times
When he was to come back,
And we kissed, too, as at other times,
With no emotion:
And I did not even stand in the doorway
To watch him go,
Nor did he turn his eyes to me again.
It was all so matter of fact, so lacking in emotion!

He was carrying away bits of my life,
In his mouth, his hands, his skin,
And in all the corners of his soul.
And he left me shreds of himself
Tucked away among my nights
And that cry—
His most tremendous cry—
piercing my anguish ...
And around my neck
The pearls of his tears,
And his nudity sewn to my skin ...

Nevertheless,
We said goodbye without tears,
And we kissed without emotion.

Goodbye!
Goodbye!
But it was to be forever.

Seagull