

Alexander Laurence

## INTELLECTUAL VIETNAM

November: Yes, Get out the white snuffbox.  
Dear me, I must respond to your note and briefly erase  
the misconceptions about the palatable and the digestible  
spirit in you, and the means to simplify yourself.

Beyond that is someone's pleasure barking.  
Smoke fills the black room: there's talk.  
An audience coughs when I write my story.  
I have never heard of the other "you."

A catharsis? Fuck you, you got to be kidding.  
I am really indifferent towards.... "the personal bores me"  
says the ghost of Jack Spicer. Art is not an apolitical attack  
on reality, but a bed of nails to sit on.

So, you have an interest in "urban writers?"  
I have rated the writers you have mentioned.

Old goat: who continues to be name-dropped.  
Not of any use, but shows that you're well-read.

Cream-puff: a martyr who is praised  
by the young, and who will soon be forgotten.

Computer nerd on speed: who writes and writes  
and who has never heard of living.

Blanchot without the juice: middle aged American  
who obviously has a French connection.

And a lot of hot air if you can't breathe anymore.

Angst? Depression? What a cop out!

Ass end of metaphysics? Itself is the reality.  
I am amazingly bored with you, the poem.  
I am also bored with my face in a mirror.  
Patience is good, but boredom is bad for me.

This is my one chance at life and I am learning.  
I am patient enough to find a good hat for life.  
Let me explain: all the best hats are profound,  
while some poems have no hat at all.

Have you seen the pictures of our youth?  
It's cute and meaningless being that young.  
The singer is still on the stage waiting....  
Is it time? To wring his neck? Poor Laszlo!

*In every room go solo, snakebitten  
the untried wishes, maybe this is life standing  
in the hallway with some sort of uniform  
walking on carpets that offer trust  
refuse to lose rhetoric and trouble  
I've got so much trouble, pooh  
black king attack, paranoid, pooh-pooh  
expose the flesh, terror in your ears  
raw metaphysical errors and apologies  
I'm the hustler of culture  
dropping the bomb  
the color, uncover  
undercover and quiver*

But about my bus business  
with trying to write a poem.  
I will write more. Please no more!  
A novel this year? Maybe not.

## THE WINDOW-PANES

The window-panes hide the yellow fog.  
The window-panes muzzle the bleak  
Row of houses from any noise.  
The window-panes can lick itself.  
You don't have to question it.  
I have a candle lit in window  
For someone.

I will return to those days  
of decadence and soixante-neuf.  
Along the white houses on  
West Cromwell Road, I remembered  
Lady Ottoline licked me.

The window-panes are indecisive.  
The window-panes allow me to see  
A drunk couple trying to have sex  
From directly across the street.  
These are the wonderful things in the world.  
But if I read about them in a novel,  
I wouldn't actually believe it.

## THE NEW SCENE

Sure. It was dead for a while.

But it awoke from the coma.

A distinct line reminded  
us of the surface.

Too bad no one can draw anymore.

Instead it is "Do your own thing"

or "Try to express yourself."

Bands are rehearsing down the street.

I have left the magazine.

They erased the image tediously

without remembering what came before.

Now there are bands like The Strokes.

My days are numbered.

ERIK SATIE

Three Gilberts in the form of a pear.  
A pear? Maybe an "M."  
Is that any more believable?

You want form, you got it.  
I think that I can hear Edith Piaf  
In the background.

This annoyance is preventing  
The next great poem.  
Poets die, and artists continue to die.

Who is preventing this?  
I know your answers already.  
It's all "La Vie En Rose."

Satie died, and Piaf died.  
And you say, "So what about Marilyn?"  
You bastards!