



turn on



tune in



burning man . . .

*Be the change that  
you want to see in the world.*

—Mahatma Gandhi

*Editor's Note:*

This is the fifth in a series of annual sampler chapbooks culling the best writing & art published by Scriptor Press. 2003 was the year this press began to crawl out of its abyss and start producing work again. It was a good feeling to be meaningfully at the wheel again. Comfort to share here in the following thought: now is a continual mystery, stays and goes perpetually. Things change, it can get better if it feels bad, in this world and others too.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Raymond Soulard, Jr." followed by the date "12/25/2004". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Raymond Soulard, Jr.  
Editor & Publisher  
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RAYMOND SOULARD, JR.



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SCRIPTOR PRESS

## **BLACK ROCKIN' BEATS**

Some call it a pilgrimage. Some call it a party. Some leave it as the rather undefinable annual happening it really is. Just as the 1969 Woodstock Music and Art Fair moniker was reduced to reveal its bright lingual core, so too is the Burning Man Arts Festival pronounced most revealingly: Burning Man. The week leading up to this past Labor Day saw over 30,000 people gather in the Black Rock Desert in norther Nevada for ths 17-year-old . . . whatever it is.

Burning Man was conceived in 1986 by San Francisco artist and resident Larry Harvey. A small Baker Beach beach burn to honor Summer Solstice proved a catchy idea; 20 people enjoyed the sight of an 8-foot wooden figure burning. The annual Baker Beach burns grew in size as did the edifice burned there—till even San Freakopolis could not contain the tumult—and in 1990 the Black Rock Desert was tapped to relocate the event.

As much as is likely possible anywhere, the desert provides a blank canvas for a staggering variety of human activity. It takes a couple of days to get used to the hot, dry 90 F-plus days with their occasional 40 or more mile per hour dust storms (called “white outs” for good reason) and the chilly starflooded nights, often below 40 F, but eventually one walks with ease, water bottle constantly at the ready, on the cracked playa surface, lunar feeling, and regards the distant grey mountains and very occasional apparitions of butterflies and scorpions with a sense that they too sense how intensely anthropocentric is the action at Burning Man.



Thousands come—artists of all kinds, hippies, punks, goths, candy ravers, and many others—mostly from the Pacific Northwest (San Francisco, Portland, Seattle, Vancouver), but from around the globe as well (this writer was on a Greyhound bus for over three days to get from Hartford to Seattle, and then by car with my traveling companion, the Seattle electronic music artist Sean Lamont) to build the most unique city on the planet. Called Black Rock City, its dwellings are mostly tents, RVs and geodesic domes; its economics are sourced in the flow of energies and aesthetics not money (no vending is allowed save a single coffee stand, and bags of ice sold off the back of a tractor-trailer); and its governance hard to elucidate save in the old Crowley saw, “do what thou wilt but harm nobody.” The admission ticket (which rises in price from late winter to over \$200 at the gate) advises participants of their responsibilities while at Black Rock City (among them is “Leave No Trace,” an ethic taken very seriously), and encourages “Radical Self-Expression.” All week long one is encouraged to “piss clear” (that’s even the name of one of BRC’s newspapers) by chugging water constantly. The ticket also warns of the possibility of death—as was the tragic fate of Katherine Lampman, a sophomore at the Academy of Art College in San Francisco, after she was hit by an art car.

By mid-week the city glows by sun and moon—or rather this year, bright Mars, nearer to our planet than it’s been in many thousands of years—with the fruits of creativity and industriousness. The Burning Man them this year is “Beyond Belief” described thusly at the BM website: “Our theme will occupy that ambiguous territory that lies between reverence and ridicule, faith and belief, the absurd and the stunningly sublime. The human urge to make events, objects, actions, and personalities sacred is protean. It can fix on and inhabit anyone or anything.” Among the expressions of this theme was the 80-foot-tall Temple of Honor devoted to the spirits of



the living and the dead, and many smaller works of commentary speaking seriously or mockingly or sometimes both to the sacred, what moves invisible but powerfully through and among us. Watching a band of glass spinners at their trade, and the many twirlers of fire sticks, whips, candleabas and such gave just as exciting and intimate a feeling of the holy burning brightly before one's eyes.

Saturday arrives the spectacular non-climax in the form of the now 40-foot man-shaped neon visage set atop an elaborate temple being set ablaze in a fantastic display of fire dancers, pyrotechnics and frenzied thousands, some watching while perched in and on art cars shaped like dragons, sharks and even cruising couches. The city immolates that night to the manical thumping of the many rave music camps, roofed by massive sky-high laser displays, filled with the sounds of something that, like the Man himself in his weeklong vigil at the city's heart, discover to each person there at least some of what the ordinary run of daily life lacks: ritual contrived of one's own freakish gropings within and without; the freedom to dress wild, mild or bare, to touch and be touched by a stranger's heart, hand or smile; liberation from the very bars and chains most of us cling to most of the time even as renegade voices within cry "change! dance! burn!"

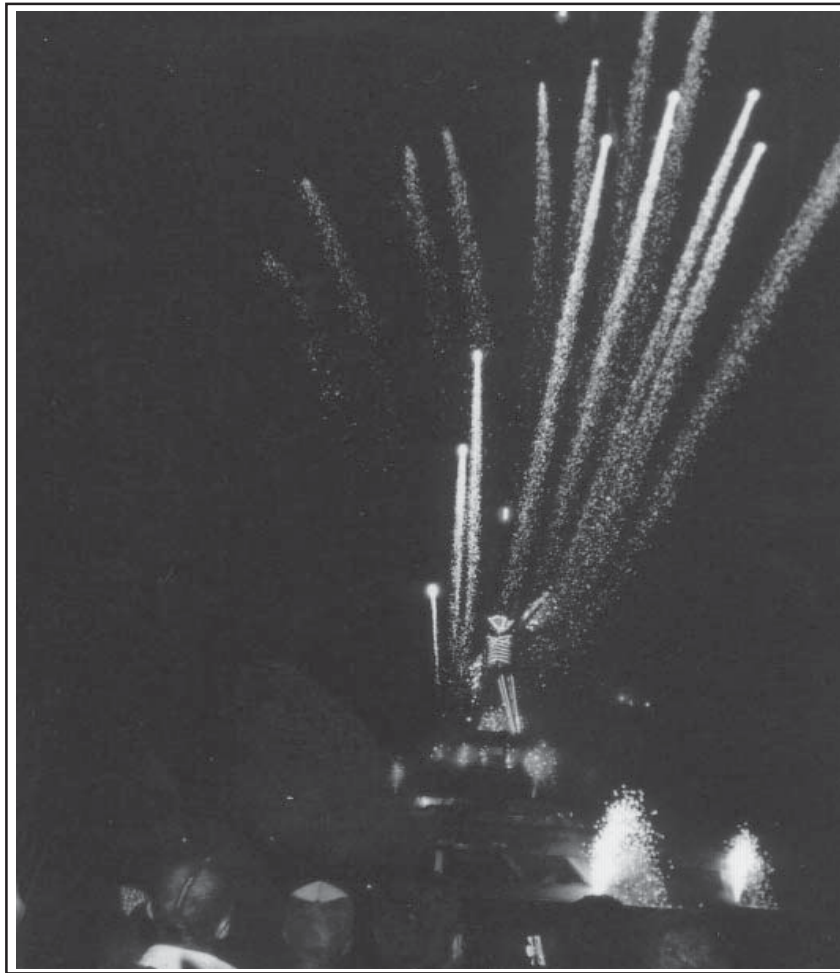
What does it all mean? Whatever you wish.

SFGate.com's Mark Morford commented on the "sense of entering another planet, of stepping out of reality as you know it into a place where anything goes and usually does and no one really thinks much of it except that it's usually pretty relaxed and ridiculous and surreal and friendly and half naked and grinning."

What matters to me is the burst open window to shake loose for a week, stop connecting A to B by rote and try A to K, hand out books of poetry and fiction from my small press to friendly folks from Istanbul to Eugene, ingest whatever plant or pill hooks my fancy, and sheerly revel in the knowing

that every calm and dangerous soul in Black Rock City will disperse again to spread to the larger world its virus of spectral ecstasy, its spirit of whispered healing in the wind, burning possibilities in the night.

For more information, visit [www.burningman.com](http://www.burningman.com)



JUDIH HAGGAI



## Pale Glaze over Sunset

As I pour sunset over your long black hair,  
existence melts in lakes of love,  
honey soothes burnt memories,  
warm promises blanket pain.

It's a hug held way past midnight,  
as stars *om* their chords so fine,  
Mercury dances retrograde,  
Fate soon will change.  
Rings of Saturn, Neptunes, moons  
harmonize their paths for you.

Pale glaze over sunset—  
as stars shine their rampant glow.  
All's clear for take-off—  
planetary blessings for the road.



## Upon Waking to Pour the Boiling Water

Rising into the dark—  
feet lead towards habitual pathways—  
the kettle, plugged in, the water ice cold  
yet, trust in heart, self in hands.

Upon waking, the water agrees to boil,  
the bubbles comfort in sounds of **Let's**  
**Do it**, and yet the mind wanders into  
Chai, mint and coffee, as the ringing of  
shotguns serenades life's breath.  
A choice upon this waking day—

Shall I lurch into the unknown?  
Pull out the plug of swampland, bog?  
Shall I renew the eucalyptus of change?

Upon this morning, unborn yet stillborn,  
as I hold time before it cracks,  
a waking chance, a hope—  
Shall I pass blindly into habits of old  
when dimensions parade in eager competition?

How not, when boiling water sings for me—  
Yet, coffee starts caffeine occurrence,  
when water hums so fine—

A bird surrenders to the branch—  
**Let's!** the tree whispers—  
As kettle rolls to its destination—  
And cups raise their empty smiles  
to my lips—

## Bombasted

Snarling, they push aside their refilled cups,  
half-consumed packets of complimentary jive,  
mirrored walls locked and barred,  
customers glare into menus overdone to death—

Again the roof shakes, walls crack,  
soup spills, baguettes deflate—  
as bass player takes his cigarette break,  
bomb hits midnight outdoor café—

Gone in a flash of shrapnel and horror,  
waitresses scream, cellphones ring—  
Tel Aviv heaves in nighttime disaster—  
bleeding its guts into Mediterranean sky.



## what is

what is  
lasts as long as it lasts  
it does

what it does  
goes as long as it goes  
it shows

what works  
acts as long as it can  
it will

what it wills  
as long as will is strong  
it leads

what inspires  
enlightens those who can see  
yin/yang

what is  
lasts as long as it is

## Soft Reflections Going Nowhere

wandering softly now  
bleeding into cosmic melt  
blurring long gone fantasy

painting the connection  
linking love through all  
soundless song erratic

a swish of thought  
immense, self-confident  
claiming past in crucial  
permanence

walking selfless thru self  
embracing moments as here  
swallowing life like a kiss

soft reflections going nowhere  
exhaling hope anew

## Branches Brush Your Hair

when i remember  
those branches dripping winter promises  
your lips speaking in snowbound heat

you called my name, the wind called harder  
you, again and again  
as branches brushed your hair

on bended knee you'd sing to me  
mouth to lip  
tongue to longing

as i walk through whispers  
left on my heart step  
i melt like an icicle  
blown wide  
in nurtured sunburst

You, Yeti in full blooded  
wonder  
stark raving fear  
tossing love like medallions  
feeding self in starvation

when i think of you  
i pull forest twigs  
from your hair  
and suck the sap of life

## Light Thru Trees

it's a slow sunset hinting eve  
thru leaves intent on pumping green  
i love the sound of silent agreement

day has had its laughs  
its cheers and chocolate treasures  
as the whisper of pause takes hold

wait for me, i'll catch your shadow soon  
in friendship and in parting  
as light blinks thru stubborn leaves  
and i rest my head on life

tanks to fields, people flee  
spirit world is roaring

bombs crash, flames climb  
spirit world seeks vengeance

jesus born, buddha floats  
mohammed mourns, mooses sighs  
prophets phlegm, goddesses sick  
chaos builds, heaven faints

swords, flowers, dinosaurs  
water steams, lava sears  
why not give in. spirit world takes off  
hitch a ride to genesis  
toss aside your emptiness  
catch the next wave out

## Spirit World Restless

humping under the carpet  
spirit world is restless

earth shattering windows  
spirit world is waking

doors, roofs, rattling loose  
spirit world is hissing

punches fly, shotguns load  
spirit world is angry

tanks to fields, people flee  
spirit world is roaring

bombs crash, flames climb  
spirit world seeks vengeance

jesus born, buddha floats  
mohammed mourns, mooses sighs  
prophets phlegm, goddesses sick  
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catch the next wave out

JIM BURKE, III



## THE STATE OF THE WORLD, PART TWO

*Editor's Note: The following is the twenty-first in an ongoing series derived from the correspondence between Jim Burke III and myself, begun in 1992, and in the spirit of the more enthused letter-writing tradition of yesteryear.*

July 30, 2003  
[West Hartford, CT]

Dear Ray,

I've waited long enough to write this essay not because of any lack of content or ideas, but because the world's political situation abruptly from day to day. In order to let the reader know for future reference, the United States is being drawn into a Vietnamesque quagmire in Iraq, unemployment in this country is at a fifteen to twenty year high (the actual amount varies sharply from government reports because of their reporting methods—if you run out of unemployment benefits you are no longer counted as unemployed!) and the President of this country is engaged in covert operations with Saudi Arabia. It is also becoming more evident that "President" Bush deliberately and maliciously led this country into a war based on information that was falsified deliberately by this country's national security agencies.

Indeed we are at war and the economy sucks—must be a Republican in office again. Also apparent is what the war is really about: OIL and nothing else. The farce of fighting a “war on terror” by using physical and mental torture of “illegal combatants” held prisoner is a prime example of how hypocritical this administration acts. Then came operation enduring freedom that mutated into operation enduring attacks on a daily basis. OIL will support our technology which is why the New York Stock Exchange and NASDAQ continue to make money for the oil merchants and investors—war at any cost—human or otherwise.

The “State of the World, Part One” advocated a redistribution of the wealth and a close monitoring of technological advances to counteract the consumption paradigm our species lives with. I have proposed that technology is an entity exponential unto itself—that is, it needs an increasing exponential amount of itself to perpetuate the present state of existence. The key word now more than ever is consumer. We must undergo a paradigm shift with a greater sense of urgency than ever before.

I started working in the social services field many years ago. There was always the question of what to call the population you worked with. For instance, can you call a client mentally retarded, or cognitively deficient, or retarded, or mentally handicapped, etc? Political correctness abounds and several years ago, the blanket client population in social services, regardless of need, were referred to as “consumers.” This satisfied those looking for political correctness by using the most generic terms possible—we all consume. Our whole culture is based on consuming at a rate that is out of balance with what mother nature has to offer: an alternative to increasing technology. The world also consumes at an alarming rate, for the most part ignoring the limited resources of our planet.

Our planet is made of finite mass *a priori*. This is a philosophical certainty as seen from pictures of the earth taken from outer space. The earth and its atmosphere hang in the middle of the cosmos, suspended by invisible gravitational forces. As we consume more and more of the finite material we call Earth, it appears that Mother Nature will leave global warming and a depleted ozone layer as presents in return. The amount of waste is too staggering to estimate, but recycling must be implemented to the fullest degree possible. We as a species are encouraged to consume without regard to consequence from early childhood. They will do whatever it takes to survive. Our so-called leaders in Congress are more concerned with passing these problems on to the next generation and their children.

Technology seems to be the ulterior goal of the world’s political economy. In order to find a solution to this greedy malaise, we must first examine how and when technology got to its present state. I submit that there are two hypothesis:

- (1) Technology was always perpetual unto itself and it was only the proverbial “question of time” before it would outstrip the natural resources provided by this planet. After the Sumerians who invented the wheel, the die was cast. I will point out that more progress in technology has been made in the last fifty years than the accumulation of the previous 5,000 years.
- (2) Our present technology was influenced by some extraterrestrial event, or perhaps even direct contact. Since the Roswell incident, our whole communications infrastructure has been altered. We went from Marconi Radio to the Internet pretty damn fast! The possibility of alien contact is actually a moot point because any civilization capable of interstellar travel would be very advanced. This would scare the beans out of many people and our “leaders” would never permit this. The

gradual infusion of an alien technology from studying the crash at Area 53 seems much more plausible.

In either case, the resulting technological advances that aid an increase in consumption have to be brought under control. This would have to the (intended) effect of reducing corporate earnings and to combat greed on a planetary scale. The State of the World would be less consuming. We would only consume as needed. This would surely eat into corporate profits and the political economic world would be standing on its head. However, the truth is. It remains indestructible. The general population has become content to survive, some with greater ease than others. They have become unaware of the mass sin against nature, the numbness become fundamental enhanced by technology. Our government loves to manipulate sheeple. Real sheeple are part of their plan: find any excuse to go to war for technology and oil, justify same to the sheeple, instill fear of opposition in the sheeple by attempting to suppress their rights as guaranteed in our constitution, and finally create more sheeple as technology perpetuates itself and puts us more at ease.

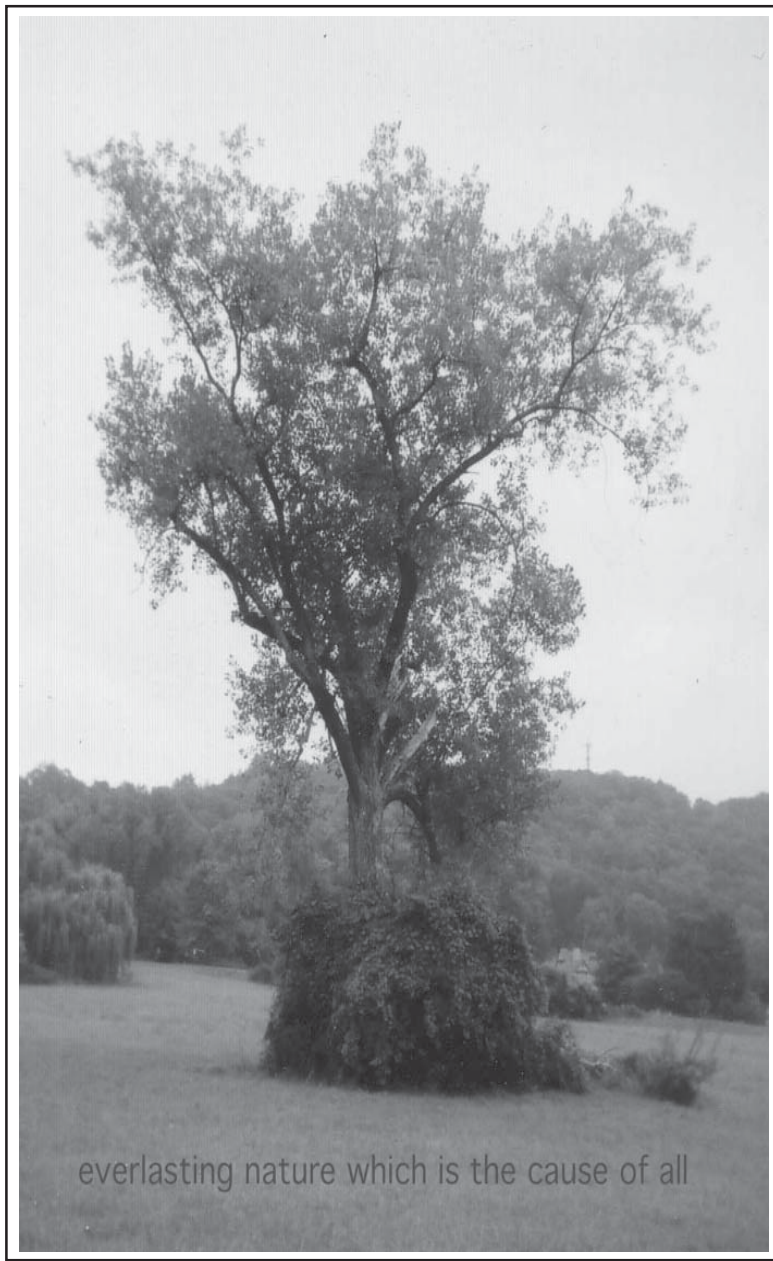
There is an alternative way of thinking that is becoming more noticeable among a relatively small segment of this country's population. The term counterculture would be apropos except that it has been underground for the last twenty-five years. Since the late 1970's the concept of peace, love, and save the environment was forced underground by elected government leaders: A lot of this country's population embraced the Reagan era initially because the 1960's and 1970's were too much for them. Too many things occurred too fast during that time period. The Reagan-Bush I years were filled with boredom created by and alleviated by the "new" technology. Cable television expanded so that over ninety-five percent of the population had access to it. The Clinton era ushered in the super-highway of communications through

digital transmissions and fiber optics. The present administration has used these advances to promote media manipulation of the sheeple. Only now after hibernating for more than two decades can the awakenings of that counterculture be detected.

The word counter-culture is also out of time at this point. The original movement was brought on by the Vietnam war and a segment of our population that could not tolerate it. This segment is now older, and much wiser. There is no exposé waiting to happen with regard to psychedelics. The Burning Man festival takes place on an annual basis and is barely given any media attention, although tens of thousands people attend. The Green Party appears to be working to support a Democratic Party candidate, ultimately, to defeat Bush II. The "counterculture" is actually the culture that is quietly and effectively making itself known. The technology that our government is presently trying to manipulate to cover up its war crimes is actually assisting those of us in our quest to expose them.

The time for us to become more visible is approaching. It is imperative that the current technology be monitored through legal methods to defeat Bush in the 2004 elections. The ultimate make-up of the Supreme Court will be determined by the results of that election. The future of this planet is reaching a watershed and a paradigm shift away from consumerism toward conservation is essential. The truth will then be revealed, unmasked from the façade that the present administration has covered it with. This will lead at some future time, I hope, when the ultimate truth will be put forth: We all do become stars when we die!





RIC AMANTE



### *Sierra—True Patriot*

Sierra the three-legged tomcat  
lies content on the carpet in the inscrutable  
feline mind we covet yet dismiss  
as low-grade consciousness,  
and he doesn't ruminate upon the significance  
of July 4, 2002,  
on this sultry Midwestern evening  
when fireworks burst intrusive and symbolic—  
of what?  
Independence from Britain?—Dead mice.  
Freedom to range beyond the fence  
in a land that exacts compliance and taxes  
from those who serve a dream?—Nine lives.  
There is no way out—but, like Sierra,  
one can go about one's business  
keeping mystery and mission tight  
in the brighter, unclaimed globes of the brain  
that see flags as scraps of colorful,  
windblown cloth one may raise  
a paw or yawn to if so raptly,  
creaturely inclined.



## *Another World is Possible*

In the hushed timelessness just before dawn  
a silver coyote faithfully trots up the snow-covered trail  
to the summit of Password Mountain.  
It reaches the beveled granite peak,  
gazes east to the red strip of light extending across the bay  
to the abyss of its wary eyes,  
and as the first curved sliver of sun  
nicks the seam of the horizon,  
a litany from another world breaks the day  
into the peace and promise of creation.  
And this is its untranslatable cry:

Another you is possible  
another me is possible  
another cloud is possible  
another eye is possible  
another book is possible  
another fuck is possible  
another name is possible  
another hit is possible  
another kind is possible  
another is is possible  
another tear is possible  
another vow is possible

another zest is possible  
another pest is possible  
another ex is possible  
another sex is possible  
another god is possible  
another death is possible  
another wave is possible  
another us is possible  
another out is possible  
another joy is possible  
another quake is possible  
another ray is possible  
another love is possible  
another all is possible.



## Campobasso

Father kept a gallon jug of Cucamonga  
red wine next to the frying pans  
on the brown linoleum floor of the pantry cupboard.  
It was a thin, purplish, unremarkable vintage  
smelling of weeds and turpentine.  
Tonight I drink from a jug of Campobasso,  
the New York version of his California wine.  
Father drank two glasses with each meal,  
then a quarter-glass more to accompany and savor  
his biscotti, cigarette, and contentment  
of a good woman, four good boys,  
and a home his hard labor kept making.  
Tonight I drink from a jug of Campobasso,  
and though I have no woman, no boys, no home,  
to recall with affection how Father  
would take a plastic bread bag and  
place it over the neck of the bottle  
before screwing the cap back down—  
my doing so now somehow saves me.

BARBARA BRANNON



## NORTH CAROLINA SKETCHBOOK



**JULY 4, 2002.** I have to roll back the calendar a ways to get to the start of the North Carolina chapter, the one I'm in now, the third act, the one in which I play the part of a university professor and the custodian of an entity called The Publishing Laboratory. I wonder sometimes how the path led to here, to the coastal reaches of North Carolina where generations of my forebears farmed, fished, built boats and buggies and houses.

There is a curious intersection to these events. It begins on this date, in the far northwestern corner of North Carolina. On the other side of the state, in Wilmington, my mother would have been seventy years old

some 450 miles from here, that I will take up residence in a few short weeks—because Kay has just accepted a position with the *Wilmington Star-News* and I'm not about to stay behind in Columbia. There are still important decisions to be made, but we consider it an auspicious sign that our weekend plans take us to the state of North Carolina for the holiday weekend.

We introduce ourselves to the hosts at Camp Pleiades as the newest residents of the Tar Heel State. Congratulations are offered all around, toasts drunk. In our tent that evening we look up at the stars and marvel that this has come to pass. There is an irresistible force drawing us coastward, and we will feel its pull in the coming weeks as surely as the tidal creeks feel the moon.

But for now, we hike up in the heights, gaze across the vast tree-carpeted valleys, swim in the stream-fed mountain lake, make up new definitions of the word *home*.



**Fall 2002.** Slowly the seasons turn, and Wilmington does become home. We move into a house that was built—or built onto—by one of the old-time writers for the *Star-News* when it was the *Wilmington Morning Star*, in 1917. I trade the editing life for teaching at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. I'm taken with this idea of The Publishing Laboratory, which embodies the culmination of everything Soulard and I have debated and produced over a number of years. I plan my first class for the Pub Lab, a course called Desktop Publishing for Book Design.



In November we have a surprise visitor who comes to stay long-term: my daughter Beth, sick to death of Iowa snow and married life. She plunges right into job and volunteer work in Wilmington, soon registers for classes at Cape Fear Community College. Music takes its hold on her more than ever, when she discovers the local karaoke-bar community. We try out clubs together; I'm amazed at her quickness and talent. By next summer she'll land a regular gig at Carolina Beach, hosting the karaoke show herself and building a following.

**Winter and spring 2003.** Work in the Pub Lab begins in earnest, an endeavor that keeps me far busier than I could have imagined. New possibilities open up in the spring, when the Lab acquires a print-on-demand book bindery and suddenly we're empowered to create our own books start to finish. I and my students experiment with lots of new publications. But by the brink of summer I'm burned out and ready for a break.



We are learning to make the most of being on the water, situated as we are between the Cape Fear River, only a few blocks to our west, and the Atlantic Ocean, six miles to the east, with the numerous creeks and marshes and inlets between. We spend time at Airlie Gardens, a favorite spot on the Intracoastal Waterway. I take my paper-grading chores out to the beach to make the job less of a chore. We go watch when tall ships call at the port on the Cape Fear River.





RAYMOND SOULARD, JR.



**RELEASE  
(FOR LISA MARIE)**

*"She followed slowly, taking a long time,  
as though there was some obstacle in the way;  
and yet: as though, once it was overcome,  
she would be beyond all walking, and would fly."*

—Rainer Maria Rilke, "Going Blind," 1907-08

*i. Waking the Lyre*

The universe provides, I am told. Keep crawling.  
The universe glows among ruins & blooms.

I will build you a new sky every day,  
with ink, paintbrush, lyre, my heart;  
what remains, what awaits.

Release tears you apart seeking you,  
shears forged from heat cut light shaped by fear.

Bite of sun, bite of viper, bite of kisses.  
The universe provides: keep this thought.  
Tomorrow a new day, a new sky, nearer our departure.

\*\*\*



ii. No Silence but Birds

Not a goddess but a girl. Both.  
A brooding. A boiling.  
Two stars fiercing for a god's single glance.

A bite, a squeeze, then an emptiness.  
A finger-stained badge where clutch  
ceases, continues.

She moves on, into the shadows. Beckons.  
Bring lyre, bring love. Bring memories  
of starlight.

Toward the grove that was not there,  
past the eyes that mumble of daily things.

Two stars have collapsed the moon by way  
of goodbye & greeting.

\*\*\*

iii. What Transforms, What Binds

I feel you descend. What is twin, stretches.

Following silence with noisy steps, sniffing  
the invisible, for human tangle, call it  
love.

Doubt steams among branches & trees.  
Sleep demurs by bones & burrs.

Still: a great song brushes through the thickening  
shadow.

Then a dream: a crown of sweetgrass,  
scent of clarity & freedom.

Nightfall, ever. Beyond tendrils of green,  
our strum shudders, remains. We learned  
it well. Still: mist growls, gathers you in.

\*\*\*

iv. Neither a Christ nor Pussy Sell Out Tonight

Burn what's left. Watch the strings break  
among growing grass.

A party. A bonfire. Artful deafness  
for restless dancers.

The night still grips me, the fat  
of my loins, the soft of my soul.

Still I hear you crying. For an angel.  
For a man. For laughter. Sweets.

Let it all burn. Move fast. Reckon  
the wind. Pack trust.

Nothing moves but something wishes to.  
Something stomps, shakes. Call it a moan.

\*\*\*

v. Purgation

I do not know how to love without being hurt

I do not know how to love without being hurt  
by sucking it dry with my thirst & yearning

I do not know how to love without being hurt  
by sucking it dry with my thirst & yearning  
for myth & dream ALIVE aware whipping back

I do not know how to love without being hurt  
by sucking it dry with my thirst & yearning  
for myth & dream ALIVE aware whipping back  
& forth with flame & roar, how to love

I do not know how to love without being hurt  
by sucking it dry with my thirst & yearning  
for myth & dream ALIVE aware whipping back  
& forth with flame & roar, how to love  
without kiss then crash, how to love without  
pound & slam & grunt & blackness

I do not know how to love without being hurt  
by sucking it dry with my thirst & yearning  
for myth & dream ALIVE aware whipping back  
& forth with flame & roar, how to love  
without kiss then crash, how to love without  
pound & slam & grunt & blackness, music  
that smiles brighter until it no longer exists.

\*\*\*

vi. Numinous

Then she turns & looks within. The strum continues  
as it always has. Vipers & demons bite only so  
deep. Love, & love's nameless god, web fiercely &  
finely worlds without beginning or cease. She  
turns & look within. Something jumps. Clusters  
of words break before heart's holy roar.

\*\*\*

vii. Release (Paralysis)

Life is suffering. Blame a toad. List  
the kings & demons, storms dirged  
to the world. Books will explain it,

if you read them. Life is suffering,  
so tales the law. Never a beauty  
won't be squeezed. Never a field won't

be fought. Life is suffering, enough for art,  
enough for polity. Enough for the rootless  
siege crossing men's minds. Enough until

a warrior Dream cries "Enough!"

Hands flare, feet shout. A lordly  
fire among trees. Where more powerful

magicks are prayed it begins to be  
whispered: Life is rapture. Many  
of the ones who especially listen now

say: Life is rapture. Her every heartbeat  
chimes my name. Her secret happiness is  
laughter on my lips. Life is rapture.

\*\*\*

### viii. Howling

The viper bites, & bites again. Make no mistake:  
fear collects everywhere to trip the world.  
Viper of bullets & bruises. Viper will rip ragged  
your music & dreams.

She collapsed among her oaks. Something hard  
pulled her away. Tonight I trail her still.

The viper knew her well. A shadow in  
her daisies, a breath among her lace.  
She told me of the viper, of how it knew her,  
how perhaps she was its own.

I crawl for you tonight. I listen. Horns &  
flaws delay me. Still crawling. Your howl beckons  
me.

The viper taught you its bite, its craft.  
Raise a doubt to a mountain, conjure  
old demons, link their claws, choke your  
flow. Who is trying to break you? Who's bitten  
whom?

You reach back to me, a pearled string of  
desires & cries. Stretch. Howl. It holds. It holds.

\*\*\*

### ix. Cradle

You shine the moon tonight, touch  
me again with your laughter, reflect  
& elude, grip my heart, growl your  
flag, shudder along me, break a demon,  
fierce among others, shiver. Retreat.  
Come back, & again. Your love a fist

when it must. Your prayers & days protect  
me, unleash your blood like knives.  
The girl in you becoming a warrior,  
a wizard. A forest, a pack. I begin  
to think of you as goddess, your love  
a force within which I rock blindly.

\*\*\*

### x. Release (Waken)

Desire flares suffering. Moving bodies in  
the firelight suck jars of elixir, still fail  
to merge but crookedly. Drummers crowd  
& romance the biggest moon, talk in  
the rhythms of ten thousand years of hands;  
still their feet snuffle in the dirt, still

a moan & collapse to silence. Still a silence  
only men hunger to name. Suffering  
builds castles, pushes up libraries, anoints  
kings & jihads. Suffering fetches meals  
by the slap, teaches children by the herd.  
Suffering adores small gods & idiot passions,



receives twigs as meaty bones, acknowledges  
departure as power's gift. Release & reward  
from shovel & boot. Kick the earth. Ignore its reply.

She dreams of green leaves & other live young  
things. She whispers "desire" & "rapture" into her  
damp pillow. The trees nearby listen, & beckon me  
hurry.

\*\*\*

#### xi. Law of Love

There is no law. A white blossom thrusts  
from river's trembles. The golden seer  
teaches pretty children the old songs he has  
traveled all his life. Sunshine & oaks  
nurture & jostle.

Open your eyes. Everything has moved again.

Sunshine & oaks teach pretty children songs  
only their skin will remember. Some become  
golden seers with few books & silken smiles.  
They teach when offered white blossoms to  
empathize, submit.

Open your eyes. Life yet. Work to do.

Hunger the familiar tone, centuries pass,  
perhaps there has been law. Some adventure  
in sacred geometry. Some point outward &  
say nothing. Perhaps laugh, rile up the drumming,  
dawn, hours later.

Noon against the crown. Afternoon against the collar.

White blossom opens along the evening,  
tolerance reigning toward release, midnight  
unto love, rapture breaks widely, beauty  
proclaimed by pale-eyed conspiracies.  
Hunger roars, spears apart hard secrets.

Open your eyes. The pretty children aren't sleeping  
anymore.

Some law lingers, quickens, unwritten but  
observed. Golden seers each contain a bright  
season, some fine shaping gesture, something  
kind, empathetic, love fiercest in dancing  
fingertips. We listen with creaturely attraction.

What can anyone see ahead? Resolution riddled  
by evolution.

Remembrance of white blossom opening  
at dawn, & what yet clings to the eyes at  
day's height. A golden seer hands round seeds,  
leads rushes into oaks & sunshine. Nearer  
seeing now. Smiling & singing.

Nothing's changing but the tide. Open your eyes.  
You're awake now. There is no law.

\*\*\*

xii. Sacrificial

The candle burns this morning as a tribute  
to the dawn.

I watched you through the night as your  
dreams touched my face.

What climbs between us is a magick,  
a healing carol, damp wings.

Our minds slip through each other,  
hurry & lurch like humans, laugh & pray & build.

What's left behind less matter & sentiment than  
rust. Love is the only law. Law collapses to the free.

Take my hands & find release. We'll return as stolen  
children to the night. Older songs & slower hours  
await us.

\*\*\*

xiii. Release (Mending)

A singing in the heart. Your beauty that of  
trees, & wind. Language in the blood, the heat  
of desire & doubt. Daytimes of silence, what  
happens irrelevant. Nighttimes of prophecy,  
fists hold a heartbeat. Dread explains hurry.  
You breathe for my safety.

A singing in the heart. Regard my hands: they make  
for you. Were they branches, thus fruit.  
Were they silence, thus wisdom. Hope explains hurry.  
Daytime mere sugar, a fruitless passing.  
Something stares bluntly from your want.  
Possession. Faith without expectation.

A singing in the heart. Spires fierce, damage  
real, love is mending. Traffic muddies the  
resolve, awhile. Pain explains hurry.  
Eventual days dress for union, &  
nights for shadowless vows. You sniff my  
music, feel me coming. Our trial will never end.

\*\*\*

xiv. Bountiful

Something loves us to love each other.  
I sleep on the ground near pears & ink.  
Our love becomes a soil where unbidden  
things grow.

These days erect colossus, wanting & warm.  
Some text jointly composes our dreams,  
nib of starlight dipped in flame.  
A necklace of songs strung between our hearts  
holds secrets yet beyond our ken.

\*\*\*

xv. Rising

The lyre becomes sabre, the backbone  
armor. No way out but through. The road  
covers miles of grit & speculation. What  
approaches confrontation, a park, two shadows.  
(Meanwhile days cluster, rally green & red  
closely.) Perhaps clarity's kiss. Hands fierce

for truth. No way out but through. Love  
bites, doubts, perhaps braves it secret war.

\*\*\*

xvi. Chasing Angels

Chasing angels, hurry, flames, shoot the pipes—

Chasing angels, adventure, willows & creatures  
beyond fear and time—

Chasing angels, she swings into my face  
like old—

Chasing angels, she swings away &  
I hear “follow”—

Chasing angels, trees tall as stars,  
kisses imagining new worlds—

Chasing angels, sabres and sweets, “follow”—

Chasing angels, drink elixir in the carriage,  
squirming in shadows, mumbling holiness rants—

Chasing angels, I watch the sky broaden,  
begin to whisper sugar into my sleeves—

Chasing angels, you're watching me, you're  
wanting me, you're undressing my mind—

Chasing angels, begin, continue, a pebble  
etched with hope—

Chasing angels, I carry your heart around  
my neck, and a rhythm of your sunshine—

Chasing angels, the days have no weight,  
the nights no touch, the growl within me  
nears the surface—

Chasing angels, I call you wife, tell you  
“follow,” you tell me “follow,” we are soon  
colliding, a truth with teeth, a maybe no more.

\*\*\*

*xvii. Release (Witness)*

Widening my ripple to meet you where  
dreams shade into sun.  
I bring my cloaks & cask of music.  
The road yields me smoothly now,  
no hustles, no lies.  
You're a faith, a siege, a drift to better days.  
What pilgrims find in marshes & mountains  
I feel you breathing along my skin.  
Air & water. Ink & candles. Love's furies.  
Less hurry than will purged my home,  
drove me toward you. What companions  
me now a thrumming's acceleration.  
Tridents of heat ride muscle & bone,  
my cause a riddle preaching from within;  
another hill nearer, neither hope nor fear.

\*\*\*

*xviii. Kiss (Breaking the Lyre)*

Orpheus followed Eurydice into the underworld,  
strumming pangs, oaths, & loving cries,  
shimmying, stumbling. Blankness. A trail  
he sniffed by the lingering rhythms of her  
blood, nymph's liquid light, within elixir strange  
& vulnerable to what drips ceiling to floor,  
nothing to nothing. What brushed him on  
the cold of rust's breath all around,  
fear of fake idols of a fake release. Ceasing  
to invent the world with his instrument's  
tapestries of flame, resistance diminished to  
the distracting talk of professors & politicians,  
he could not play away what was gathering.  
Burning tunic & lyre he conjured from a place  
where silk & music still blend. Burning  
released two fingers of dust & a cataclysm  
of light. Eurydice appeared, impossibly far,  
eyes closed, lips open, waiting, waiting for him still.

\*\*\*

xix. Nearing

There is hope. Back of hills in shadow,  
beyond jams of metal & flesh. There is  
hope. Raw earthly dreams say so.  
Secret persistent flames. What approaches.  
What awaits. There is hope. Something  
likes the world softly golden, greenly thrusting.  
I make a new lyre & prepare to sing to you.  
Within this instrument collected our thrash  
& our sugars. The carriage grinds forth,  
mile to mile, meal to meal. Comes a dawn  
of wild orange eyes, landscape too flat  
for telling, & I am nearly ready.  
There is hope. A change of skies, from  
crops to dust, the mind bounds ahead,  
the heart crawls back. Agreement finally  
by sage who pisses & smiles & says:  
“No expectation. There is hope. The child’s  
for knowing touch. The pilgrim’s for kinder moon.”  
Who seeks whom, my love? Who rescues,  
who receives? I hold this new-born  
instrument & feel your raw want, the remaining  
freedom of your dreams. Which music,  
what kiss, will retrieve you? There is hope  
as I strum & will it so. Grope. Trust.

\*\*\*

xx. Release (Ecstasy)

Love is everything. Blossoms atop a bottomless  
well. Sun nourishing utterly til divine & its pain  
are abandoned. Rapture. Soul plus soul sum to soul.

\*\*\*

xxi. Happiness

We will appear before each other again,  
& touch, call the moment “release,”  
& begin to climb.  
The first time the world disappeared.  
No underworld. No sunlight. Only love.  
We agree: love is everything.  
A kiss, & again. There is no world.  
No music, no starlight. No blending.  
No bleeding. Skin’s nearness. Breathing.  
We will appear before each other again,  
& touch, call the moment “release,”  
& in beginning to climb renew the world.  
Where once doubt would have turned  
us to look back, caught by teeth & fear,  
we will kiss. Like lips to water. Hands to sky.  
Love is everything. Become muscled, it runs.  
Nurtured bones, it builds. Hearts gladdened,  
it sings. Watch us marry, & begin the world.

\*\*\*

xxii. Recursive

A dream so fierce it makes a world.  
Blood & pain of a myth crawling into the sun.  
Your love wields fist & light. Shaking. Power.  
Your love will crush miles & hours alike.  
This time you are the bite not the bitten.  
I strum for you. Music dapples your path.  
You hurry. No world. No starlight. You hurry.

\*\*\*

xxiii. Acceleration

A sudden breath & the world newly opens.  
Desire smiles & reveals slowly. Release  
is near. Don't look back.  
The underworld helpless heeds strumming  
but not his. Hers. The myth cracks  
into a wonderwall of notes. Strum. Faster.  
No viper. Not anymore. A flicker of power  
& the poison is gone. Never was. Who rescues  
whom? The world newly opens. Don't look back.  
Strumming joins strumming, love is kind but  
hark its roar. The underworld diminishes,  
is gone. Never was. A sudden breath. Desire smiles.  
Love is everything, the only way through,  
the only way out. Release in submission,  
strum, dance. Hazel eyes fierce. Music begins our  
world.  
A vessel of water, dish of fruit. This morning  
is rapture, spirits & schemes. She laughs  
past shadows falling. Call it a dream. Know it's more.

\*\*\*

xxiv. Release (Celestial)

Something loves us to love each other,  
some mad roar for Beauty that prowls  
throughout the world. Something devastating  
to order. Something deeper than every fear.  
We persist. Our treasure. Our pain.  
I carry you into the sunlight, finally.  
It burns awhile, then begins to heal.

\*\*\*\*\*





*Embrace it all man*

*The pain of loss  
The joy of giving  
The hate the passion  
The depression the joy  
It's all part of IT  
The cosmic bang smack  
Some call it Tao  
Some call it God  
I call it . . .*

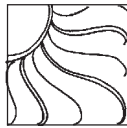
*Someone says BREATHE!!!  
Breathe now!  
We're alive  
Smoking dancing  
Drinking freaking  
Out in the dark night  
Filled with joyful light.*

*— Oddbjørn Jensen*





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