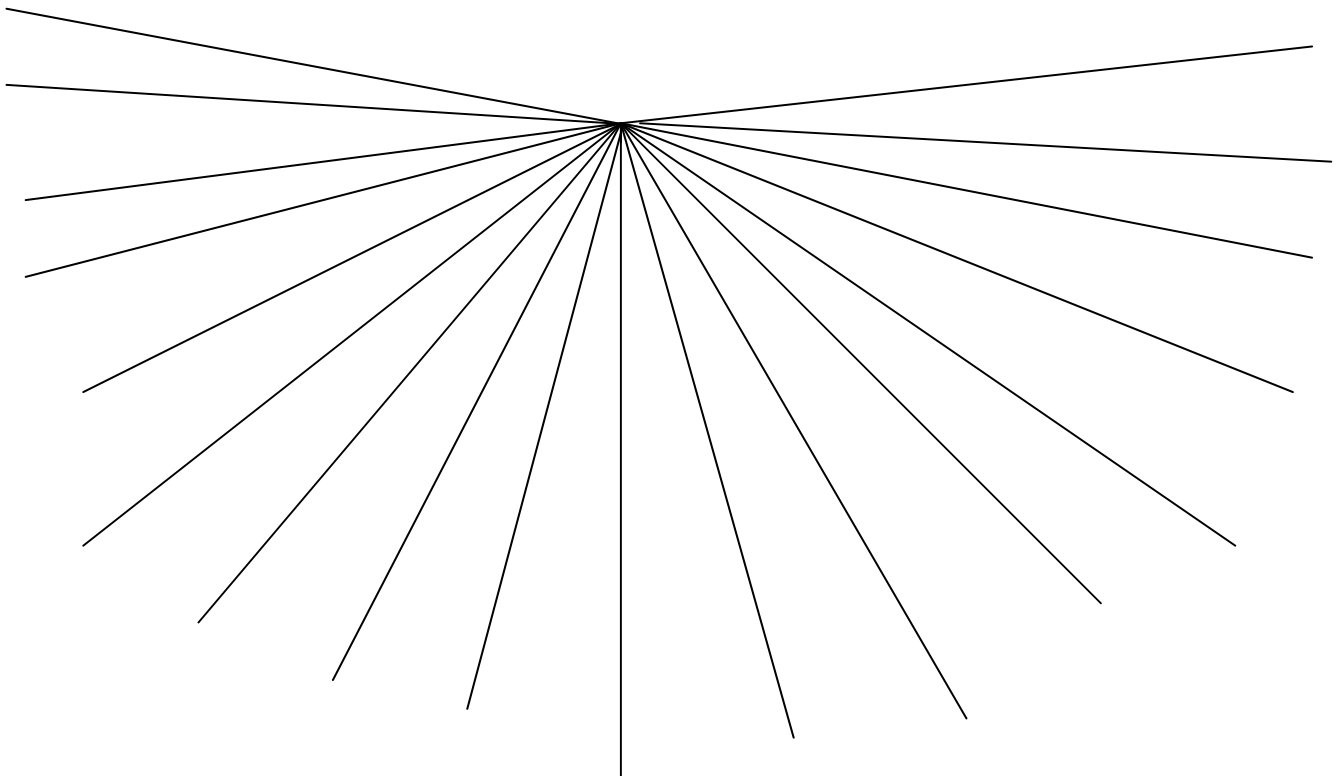


Carter Monroe



Sittin' in With the Sun





Sittin' in With the Sun

poetry by Carter Monroe

Copyright © 2001 by Carter Monroe. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America.

Certain selections in this book have appeared in various forms in *Poems Niedergasse*, *Poethia*, *Thunder Sandwich*, *Third Lung Review*, and *Lost and Found Times*.



Sittin' in With the Sun

Introduction	1
Ra Postcards	2
Visions of Inebrio	12
Bukowski Headed to Nashville	21
The New Lost Blues	22
Every Night in Tunisia	23
About the Author	24

Introduction by Carter Monroe

There are two series of poems in this offering. The first, "Ra Postcards," was conceived from an idea proposed by poet Jeffrey Little who wished to do a tribute to the late jazz giant Sun Ra. His project (which I hope to one day see and possibly be a part of) was tentatively titled "Postcards from the Planet Earth." After discussing this cybernetically with Jeffrey, I wrote "Ra Postcards #1 – 4. I had been away from serious composition for well over 20 years, and in the lingo of the jazz musician, "was trying to get my chops back." I believe this group of poems was the first step in the right direction.

The second series, "Visions of Inebrio," gets its title from the journal I kept while attending college in the early 70's. I recorded verses here and there in a manner similar to Kerouac's "Blues" efforts. They served as a kind of poetic charting of events. As a fiction writer, I've found that I have to set aside a regular period for creative thought and planning. I view the actual writing of prose as a transcription of sorts, the idea or the story having been conceived at some point in the past. When I'm in between projects for whatever reason, my creative time comes in the form of my afternoon ritual. This includes watching a soap opera, reading poetry, listening to music, and drinking. Sometimes all four things may be taking place at the same time. Virtually all of my fiction has been created during these sessions. "Visions of Inebrio" is the first verse to present itself in this manner.

Ra Postcard #1

spouted riffs like leaking jars in meandering mode planned but not
sky rocketed sax/keyboard/rhythm section traveling in feigned dilemma
the sun, himself, thinking of words philosophy negotiated through striking
black/white keys in sync understood and garbled only in terms of the seemingly sane
where does it go, did it go, is it going in time/place, distance/space, planet/race
and bird and diz, miles and mingus, monk and trane watch from heaven's bandstand
squinting, off and on, perusing, straight and stoned, peering perilously into saturn-ringed zone
waiting for a caustic moan to acidify and define that which they can only hear
maybe ornette can help maybe sid or mo or even jc maybe they can ask louis
if he ain't busy and if he is who's left, fletcher don't wanna be bothered

Ra Postcard #2

the cards and money watch the players cynically
through taint-plastered regression
saint louie chicago 1949 transit shock
comes blaspheming in fire balls of blue light
surrounding this gideon ideal with a hellish glow . . .

sonny motions to the tenor man who moves from the stand and nods

Ra Postcard #3

cracking crackling periodontic sidewalk
college town 1955 coulda been
the cars gave things away
48 yr old man, drunk
coulda been 1972 with a different head
no beer no wine not even in a bag
tattered golf shirt, tail out
prominent bulge egotistically protected
a sandwich shop-renaldo's net
combat boots and bodies laced with metal
designed arms, legs, and faces
and places you can't see
"gimme a ham sandwich and a budweiser"
they don't write it down or hide their smirk
"you eat boring food"
they snicker
he pushes the glass away
drinks from the can
a half gone before first bite
non-music blaring buzzed-up guitars
"you know who that is"
they ask and grin
"i know it ain't the sun, man
i know it ain't the sun"

the drummer sets his sticks aside, grabs his brushes and goes light

Ra Postcard #4

a dancer from across the street calls herself tangerine
'62 more or less and she's got more cat tracks than a white bird fan
they usta let'er in for head, now it's for laughs
"nothin' but horns tonight," she says for no reason then
"come on man, jesta little touch, get me by this one time"
a suit tie fedora pulls away-moves his hand/fingers across a thin mustache
"all i got's a cigarette babe"
she looks at the sky, righting herself against the back of a chair
"reefer, man . . . all you got's reefer"
she scans the room, head shaking voluntarily unlike her free hand
"tobacco . . . you know like a chesterfield"
head falling as face finds a smile
"i don't smoke that shit . . . it'll killya"

the music stops, sonny begins a yoga chant, the rhythm section answers, they dance

Ra Postcard #5

chops not great-not returned
old fashioned rehab pre betty ford
they locked the door from the outside
took turns standing guard
no food for the first three days
the landlord complained
about the noise, the screaming
he ate on the fourth, soup and bread
kept it down on the fifth

philly joe had shown him
years back, had been his man
never played with more than five
til rescued by the light
now methodical and precise
he tries to recover his soul
keeping time all the while
and remembering

sonny, standing, playing with one hand, the stage lights reflect a purple aura

Ra Postcard #6

no trepidation in points to be made
as standard work rock fair increases visions
and it ain't gotta be night
his sky is prominent, stars out always
the lectures from the heart
pontificating in scat laced karma
the direction of saturn, the birthplace
never in doubt, no hazed confusion
this is where it's at, he says
it's all for real and there's this plan,
predestiny, and another level

for once there is a soprano sax, he solos briefly, the sun shines

Ra Postcard #7

word man now decked
out in opulent regalia
the mysticism reflects
the constellations/the musics beam
as if alabama has become
some astral mirror
providing rebound for
the revelation

june turns a slight whirl as she approaches the mike the sun is elsewhere, frowning

Ra Postcard #8

crafted design of want
belies a thing
called judgment
the wafted craving
a signal of the need
creates its own pillage
from images of sate

inscriptions marked
as spots brown
emerge on the hand
face fingers touch
each other
in nervous contrast
ignorant

The bass player takes a seat, wipes the sweat from his brow

Ra Postcard #9

it escapes
the sound
like a metaphorical
binge of sorts
searing its way
past blatant forms
of non-consciousness
the jackknife aspect
volutes itself
and regularly

a preface
barricades the light
in pompous revolution
hurdlng a satellite
carousel into
a black hole

deep in the background, a triangle is touched lightly. only the sun hears.

Ra Postcard #10

recalcitrant precipice
exposed in secret
all the dogs
and other canines
roost in stagnant
metaphysical improbability

narcissus lies
to himself
to herself
the audience
defines itself
as falsely accurate
the percussion builds
to a crescendo

the sun takes a bow

Visions of Inebrio

For Jeffrey Little

Visions, I.

afternoon miraged escapist endeavors miranda'd by fact
of sacrificed dreams/potential now released in scandalized
malevolent anonymity-the sounds of which differ with the
protrusion of the sun and the intake of the stimulant

inebrio sits in buddha-like silence for 11/12 hours each day
patience is his key - an adult for periods then a pleading child
released w/out repercussions or self-analyses from neowomb
and overhead blanketed pillars reflective of tintured prison

at first he begins to sing, watching all the while an archetypal
blonde image showing through screen of cabled electronics
the first tune is always a subconscious billy-the-kid thing
from which he awakens and reads back-and-forth poetry

Visions, II.

clocked revolution, an issue only in terms of magnum p. i.
not much beyond to capture that whirling interest possessed
and dylan sings, “sugar for sugar and salt for salt, if you go
down . . .” jack’s letters, the second version, always within
reach of wandering, nervous hands and journey flattened
by remotes not in use, but sometimes exchanged - the channels
commercials might force a roam but who knows

after six this day the mute calls, bellowing dogmatically
arrangements are made for the melodies to take the lead
the augmentation begins to come full circle w/three
things, now, being done at once w/out lines or separation
he can’t hear that one, he whispers, but loudly, it’s
not comfortable to remember days of wine and flowers
dead, rotted, like so many four-leaf clovers suppressed

and the words compose themselves inside like a waitsian
rap discoursing among the iconoclasts invisible in stereotype
of crumbling brick alleys, burn barrels, broken glass, and
sterno carries it skyward like the reminisce of hostages
and ghosts – flaking the paint of preconception – ideals
are a thing from a shattered, valvoline-slicked yesterday
where ruination was a condition reserved for the wealthy

Visions, III.

forced exits to veranda-placed ashtray, feet negotiating
steps toward earth, he has a vigil, a policing, is the red
car home or the gray one, are those lights connected to
a timer-dogs barking why and why not – the baby's on the way

how long can this peace last – the speech left a half-hour ago
it's only the sounds now, neil young, trane, lyle lovet
their words and theirs alone he thinks in appreciation
gratitude, as it were, precedes wayfaring somnambulism

no need for alarm – clothes shed – language brooding
the lifetime channel-female biography hosted by subjective
link to lives impassive and “in this business you have to . . .”
finally, the pillows placed w/valentine candy nearby

Visions, IV.

there's a thinly veiled undercurrent
beyond which a reaming drum roll
sears as if rhythm is all inclusive
in terms of chafed benevolence

the monastery closes at eight
leaving the entrails tempted by
fantasies replete with jungian
subjective counterparts pulsing

and the walkers continue raising
their arms - an act of unknowing
defiance, but the best that they
can do, circumstances dictating

partial indemnity and a low budget
final resting place between a native
american burial ground and joe's
funeral home, 515 south grant st.

Visions, V.

in between piles and stacks
cd's, jewel boxes, cassettes,
envelopes, unlabeled videos
there's a life entrenched and
flypapered to a shaman grip
of ethereal explanations in-
serting thoughts abandoned
and left for waif uncultured

the double-negated illiterate
contractions running through
the screen set up portably
in benign, ancient popcorn
movie house of soul/black
and white the dreams always
lack color or so they say

Visions, VI.

caricatured insomniac peeps through a bellicose vein
les and eddie, carter and ralph, zappa and varese
fiddling around in sync to a series of constellations
that ramificate in a cerebral bouquet of metaphor
untouched by misunderstanding and confusion is
an infected battering ram leading to a platonic MRI

he don't wish it was christmas 'cause there'd be
real people, flesh-and-blood types, walking in and out
of this wood/brick/vinyl/carpeted studio arrangement
and they'd be saying, "i like it, but i don't understand it"
and he don't know howta take that 'cause it's the same
way he feels about most things, primarily foodstuffs

"why do ya call it a casserole"

but yes, there's a rapture, a sweet, cunning barbarosa
medicine man in route to mexico to sweat out his mind
in clay construction of resurrective initiatives cloaked
in a post-mescaline haze, purposely masterful in a
sort of strict nine manner - the closet door can't be
locked away, so light is something he'll have to deal with

Visions, VII.

as the sun's lamp
grooms the fabric
of the furnished
room – he wonders
and doesn't know
if he actually speaks
or not – what is
love – has he
known it/does he
feel it/has it ever
been returned or
was it something
he, himself, gave
like a donation
to someone who
had more to
begin with than
did he

Visions, VIII.

what he really wants,
but he won't say it,
is a box of crackerjacks,
the new kind, the toffees

nobody else would
eat them with beer
but who makes taste
rules anyway

nothing left but the
remains of a bag of
pork skins and a
can of mixed nuts

four packs of
cigarettes lie in
the basket – one
is unopened

today he's reading
creeley and gets to
him pretty quickly
four beers/five smokes

by nightfall it'll be
a wash, but he'll
know something that
he didn't know before

Visions, IX.

unwanted/unwelcome nostalgic binges
clamor for a residence permanent in
rustic residue of past temptation - the
walls become flexible, entrancing a
vague capitulation of pining yesterdays

no more david crosby - it's too late for
purity of sacred non-promises - his face
turns red as embarrassment always
pushes the past to the day at hand, but
thank god for discipline and for being a man

Bukowski Headed to Nashville

"Let it be known that on June 7, 2001, Dude discovered Charles Bukowski. A little bird sat on my shoulder and read it with me. The bird cracked up and fell a couple of times."

- Edison Edwards

a caustic mugginess surrounds the territories this day
light becomes dots - the phone is scratchy - the banjo
sits in the corner beckoning, work -vs- play the theme

he reads of morning vomit, first light beers, and a dirty
bathtub replete with lines and green and rusty water
the women are there, always, and buk don't make love

somewhere, probably a clock radio, there's a bach
fiddle song running up and down a consciousness
held together by cynicism and a fifth of scotch

the nasties come from time to time, but he chooses
not to separate the fear - emotions are all the same
the only thing that's funny - that makes him laugh

is the over and over seeking of rut - the white rat
negotiating the corporate trails - the cheese is
somewhere at the end w/a BMW and a time-share

The New Lost Blues

andy warhol ain't pop no more 'cause contrived ain't what
it's all about - tarantino don't know shakespeare, but he
don't want to - my banjo playin' friend calls the place
"trashville" and art ain't likely to be made in no studio
everybody sees the old towns as death and what if i
tell you that nothin' is relative and not to argue with me
or with the heads on the corner stoppin' cars and comin'
away shakin' their own heads and squeezin' their spirits

base sounds extend themselves for blocks and gritty
glass lies helpless, the dust of broken empty "40's"
what would jack think about this "real" about this
excrement of progress that feeds on everything but
itself and souls can never be maggoty there's always
somethin' worth savin' gerard'll tell ya if ya know how
to pray - the secrets revel on the other side on the
dark levels under the ground the rocks the manholes

surreptition ain't what it used ta be - the signs are there
for the invisible taking - a tramp's vision might be just
the thing for this millennium moment - a traipsing of statues
shunning a block of bastilles - the morals got lost in
the growls persistent gnashing of maw and rotten ties
and swarms of termites cloud the barren trout streamed
desert - "is that what that was" - dunes - "i can't hear you"
and i drive by - aware of platitudes - in a 1952 mundane

every night in tunesia

how strange you should refuse to know that I know
that you should hide in eastern jungian confines

anima/animus melting in a forge of buddha
hardening to keep the heart from itself

no bellows can cool such a cauldron of loss
i'm freudian as such, there's no medicine here

the fortresses of books, magazines, local dailies
keep the public verbal dogs at bay - a cage

without windows from which you could view
your insides collectively meshed is more than

a trap you've set for yourselves unacknowledged
and "i don't want to think about that now"

parents gone, eaten alive, offsprings back and forth
ignoring the innocence, pursuing the guilt - the path

is too tough, has always been stymied by shame
the blankets spread about, the order you require

all this i know as I sit with eyes closed my own
closure being sought in fantasy of word and sound

About the Author

Carter Monroe lives, works, and writes in the provinces. His novel, *Journey*, is available online at 1stbooks.com. He participated in a conspiratorial effort with Robert Canipe and Tim Peeler entitled *Writers on the Storm*, which is to be published Fall 2001.