

IN THE MARGINS

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5/18

Open Reading. 7pm. Featuring Gene Grabiner, with ten slots for open readers. Book Corner (1801 Main St., Niagara Falls, 285-2928)

Unseenamerica. 5:30-7:30pm. Book launch and art exhibit featuring work by local health care professionals, presented by the Bread & Roses Cultural Project. CEPA Gallery (617 Main St., 856-2717).

5/19

"Fahrenheit All Night." 3-10pm. Focus on Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* in conjunction with Just Buffalo's "The Big Read." Part of Gusto at the Gallery, Albright Knox Art Gallery (1285 Elmwood Ave., 882-8700); free.

Lecture. 7:30pm. "The Healing Spirit of Haiku: Haiku, Zen, & Jung's Psychology," by analytical psychologist Dr. David Rosen. Analytical Society of WNY (CG Jung Center, 408 Franklin St., 854-7457); \$15. Call to register.

5/20

Open Reading. 2pm. Featuring Joanna & Larry Bachman, w/ ten slots for open readers. Screening Room, Northtown Plaza (3131 Sheridan Dr., Amherst 837-0376); free.

"A Poet in Buffalo." 7pm. Community celebration of the life and work of Robert Creeley. The Church (341 Delaware Ave., 854-1694) www.hallwalls.com.

Art21: Art in the 21st Century. 1pm. Laylah Ali and Alexis DeVaux will host "Women Artists, Women's Voices," a multi-media exploration of current themes in art and literature in conjunction with the PBS Series *Art21*. A reading and discussion of Octavia Butler's novel *Wild Seed* will follow. Buffalo and Erie County Public Library (1 Lafayette Square, 858-8900); free.

Workshop. 10am-4pm. "The Healing Spirit of Haiku: Haiku, Zen, & Jung's Psychology," by analytical psychologist Dr. David Rosen. Analytical Society of WNY (CG Jung Center, 408 Franklin St., 854-7457); \$75 (bring a lunch). Registration required.

5/21

The Films About Robert Creeley. 2pm. Presented by Bruce Jackson and Dianne Christian. Albright Knox Art Gallery (1285 Elmwood Ave., 882-8700); info at www.hallwalls.org

Open Reading. 7pm. Featuring Kristi Meal and Dave Le-witsky, with ten slots for open readers. Rust Belt Books (202 Allen St., 885-9535).

RECURRING EVENTS

Children's Writer's and Illustrators Group. Meets 1st Thurs. each month, 7pm. Borders Books (2015 Walden Ave., Cheektowaga, 685-2844). Info at <http://firstthursdaycreative.blogspot.com>

EM Tea Coffee Cup Open Mic Poetry Series. 7-9:30pm every Tuesday. EM Tea Coffee Cup Café, 80 Oakgrove Ave. at Hughes St. (884-1444).

Just Buffalo Writers Critique Group. 7pm, meets first and third Wed. of every month. Flux Gallery, Market Arcade Arts Centre; just buffalo literary center members only. (832-5400).

Moonlight Poetry Circle. 9pm, first Fri. of each month. Share poetry informally through spoken word, song, music, art, etc. 289 Winspear Ave (upper). (903-2884).

Northside Writers Group. 7pm, first and third Thursday of each month. Ascension Lutheran Church, 4640 Main Street, Amherst. (626-4204).

Send weekly literary event info (name, description, location, date, time, and admission) to: editorial@artvoice.com or fax to: 881-6682. Due the Wednesday before publication.

Back by Popular Demand:
POETRY IN ARTVOICE!

In the Margins features poetry by local writers on an irregular, though roughly monthly basis. The poetry editor will be Florine Melnyk. Submissions of no more than 5 poems and no more than ten pages in length can be sent by e-mail to florine@starcherone.com or by mail to Florine Melnyk, Poetry Editor, Artvoice, 810 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14202 Please include a self-addressed stamped envelope to have manuscripts returned.

POETRY EDITED BY FLORINE MELNYK

Violence

Parked near the corner of
Cottage and Allen
silence comes like
a tidal wave
there is glass
in my boots I wonder
who I am
pastiche of blood
and swollen eyes
throbbing
in the
rearview mirror
cuts on these hands
they must be mine

faces gather
under the orange glare
of streetlights
hands reach out
pointing live
local late breaking
pay per view

love
the word
shot in a vein
spilling silveryblue
blood on the
sidewalk before it
reaches
the heart
—the thought
dragging wings
down some secret
alley

stars

dropping
scattered in
the street
abandoned, bleeping
from sad puddles under
an empty sky

image flickering
silent
forgetting
who I am

who sees Ymalla blazon
from the backdoor kitchen
Yumalla
who loves his mother
and wears a white apron
who in the wide-screen vision of
the world slays the dragon
with his shining fist
not knowing me
or ever knowing me
because I no longer am
I've disappeared from this
fairytale
disappeared from this
screen

—j. oakes

Loose Change

Change came to me in the form of a snake,
bearing apples.
I said, "Aha, Mr. Snake. The laws of entropy are
well known by now. Change equals loss, you
know." The snake just stuck out a glittering
tongue, childish, impolite. "Surely, Mr. Snake,
you understand my needs. I have only one soul,
I must keep it whole."
Then the snake rolled over in the grass, to show
me the pictures on each of its scales: thousands
of scenes of evil and beauty unlike anything in
myself.

Oh, Bathsheba

Accounts of this got it all wrong. First of all,
Uriah the Hittite is alive and well and working as
an auto mechanic at Frank's Parts-n-Service. I
divorced him last year, and it had nothing to do
with King David. Second, King David and I never
had an affair, much less a second marriage. I
don't deny that he loved me first—and maybe
last—for my beauty. But people take such a
narrow view.
Beauty is more than physical. Nothing made
the King happier than to sit on my patio talking,
drinking Kir Royale, just talking.

—sam magavern

BOOKREVIEW



Directed by Desire: The Collected Poems of June Jordan

Poetry by June Jordan, ed. Jan Heller Levi and Sarah Miles
Copper Canyon Press, 2005 \$40

Copper Canyon's posthumous tribute to June Jordan's verse, *Directed by Desire: The Collected Poems of June Jordan*, demonstrates the poet's range was as varied as her experience. Spanning four decades, *Desire* samples portions of Jordan's poetry revealing a voice that resists classification, despite her involvement with a wide range of causes.

In her "Preface" to *Passion: New Poems, 1977-1980*, Jordan objected to elitism, in which "great poems, Shakespeare included...are poisonous to the idea of pride and dignity of the common people." Mimicking black English, feminist rhetoric, or satirical impressions of the upper-middle-class privileged, she often addressed timely issues in a direct and, at times, hilarious vernacular. Nonetheless, Jordan was as attuned to the poetic tradition—especially the lyric—as she was to the rhythms of protest. In "Let Me Live with Marriage," she responds directly to Shakespeare's 116th sonnet—albeit in a context alien to Shakespeare: "I am black within/ as is this skin/ without one pore/ to bleed a pale defense..." Here Shakespeare's infamous "Dark Lady" is re-imagined literally, as is the Renaissance fixation on bodily humors.

In spite of—or because of—such contradictions, Jordan's poems are marked by an unmistakable energy. In "Poem about My Rights," private and public concern weaves seamlessly through incantatory rhythms that demonstrate how personal experience is structurally similar to the political: "in France they say if a guy penetrates/ but does not ejaculate then he did not rape me...which is exactly like South Africa/ penetrating into Namibia penetrating into/ Angola..."

The insight develops alternately through confession and observation in language alternately intense and comical, sincere and sarcastic.

Not every Jordan poem succeeds. As Adrienne Rich admits in the foreword to *Directed*, "Some of her long declamatory poems, specific to certain moments or written for public occasions, don't survive on the page absent the vibrancy of her live breath and bodily presence." Thankfully, Jordan was accomplished in a number of styles. Whether she shows an appreciation for Imagism, or offers spirited cries of protest or renders the absurdities of post-colonial politics with tongue-in-cheek, Jordan tells time and again "about the howling/and the loss."

—tony leuzzi