

FOUR POEMS from *THE GETHSEMANI POEMS*

—by **Ron Seitz**

UPON FIRST MEETING T.M.

a happy new time then of first friends
 finding mutual mirth in Zen
 Tom-foolery koan quips

*“Got to don Gandhian garb of lean loin
 cloth & sunkcheek hunger hunch as I
 sandal me way to bare ricebowl breakfast”*

—winking mock-mimicry of Holy Card
 sanctity image forever cartooned

To fire a bouncing-ball duo singalong:

*Han-shan giggles . . .
 In our ploop haiku . . .
 Shamble signatures*

the Holy Indifference of innocents
 let loose in paradise play

grins so wide with poemed paradox
 you’d think St. Francis slapstick
 in his stigmata

not a cloud-wisp of tracery
 in our passing-thru

Monks Pond. Old Hermit. Hai!

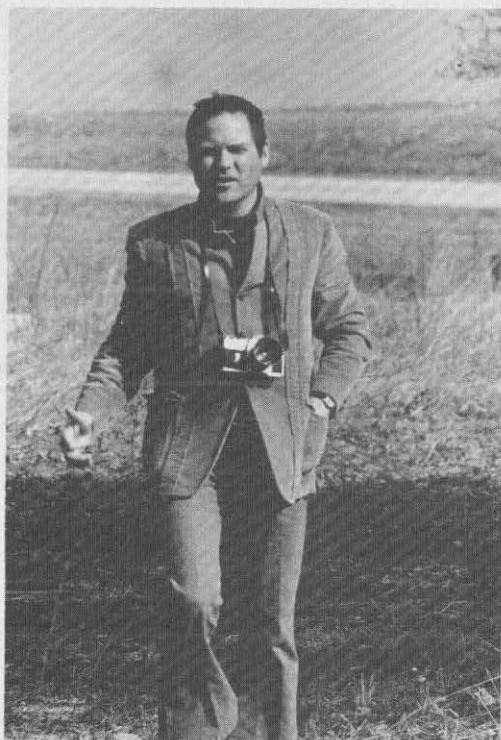
NOH SATORI

at Monks Pond

an insect sound
lone
in the darkness
after rain

a cold black voice
wet

then a bat!
chasing me
at midnight



RON SEITZ
At the Abbey of Gethsemani
Photo by John Hutchison

WHEN WRITING MERTON

not in Yeats' trance but back afloat
prone as Eskimo Rasmussen knew
the cold dark passing-thru
of sacred song

in mid-air hung by open ear flow
of music'd images unchecked

much as van Gogh binding blinders
to shut the sun
or Blakean trees translucent
angel aura'd

so sing now rhythm's language dance
a memory move beaming his head
this long light ray'd
theatre of eyes

an interminable visual flash
a deafening verbal scratch
of vision'd writ
smearing the silence

the best of me sinking sound
down an endless spiraled echo
etching its initial to that phantom
beauty brief and fled

+

he at the hermitage
in solitary rite the same moment

sitting his rocker before the fire
unfolding this paper with fingers
flickered by flame
heat eating the page edge
wrinkly crisping gray to black
a light ash float up the chimney
out to unvoiced words wavering
syllable by syllable on the still air
printing darkness hard to trees
beneath a dome freeze December sky
roofing silent in snow
those chalice'd high hands
warming the monastery

Whole Earth's Eucharist

+

now too outside this cell

the zero night air breathes
its hushed signature through stone

a porous prayer emptying white
my window with praise

the gift glow touch:
Presence

IN MEMORY OF THOMAS MERTON

at the hermitage

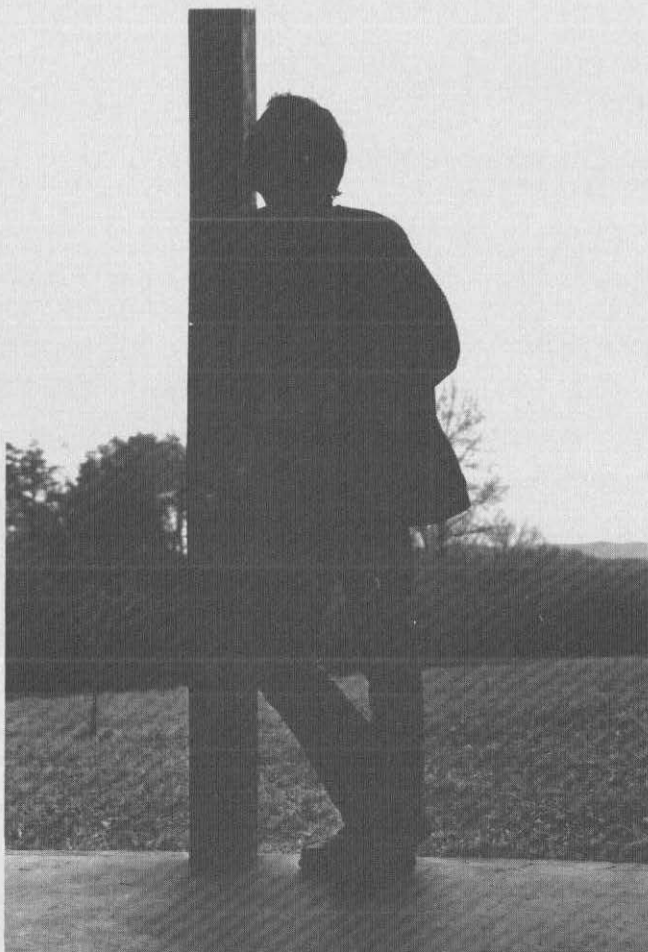
strange
that I should be here
the eve of your 15th year
into death

listening to locusts
chirk the trees
in darkness
down the road

waiting for winter
and haiku
poems to appear
on my writing tablet

sitting
with sad mustache
to be iced
in December

my Zhivago white eyes
empty
with
light



RON SEITZ
At Merton's Hermitage
Photo by John Hutchison