

OTHER WORLD POETRY NEWSLETTER

Another Smoke-Filled Room

A'DAM ARTS MOB SQUATS NEW TURF

"The movement didn't fall of its own. It was pushed. For one thing it became political, and as everyone knows, Art and Politics do not mix."

Piero Heliczer
"L'Underground c'est moi"
P78 Anthology

AMSTERDAM (July 1979) — Afternoon of the Summer Solstice, weather for Amsterdam unusually balmy. Upstairs in a windowless room filling quickly with smoke, Stichting One World Poetry (SOWP) takes official possession of its first real office space, an indoor quonset hut situated on the mezzanine floor of the famed Melkweg (Milky Way) multimedia center, "where New Age freaks go to dance, get stoned & fry their brains under the probing strobe lamps of unlimited diversion," as one native-alien poet has succinctly described the place. The description is a good one, if only partially true.

This puts SOWP right next door to Melkweg's own bureaucratic nerve center, a 3-room suite of offices where all the typewriters are electric and nothing so humble as a hand stapling device can ever be found. SOWP's own private telephone connection is also set for imminent installation. Meanwhile, committees are being formed, meetings are getting scheduled and bold plans stretching forward a year or more are being systematically plotted.

One looks at it all and wonders: Isn't this maybe the way some of the big multinational sports organizations got started? Like, say, the World Tennis Organization (WTO) or whatever it's called. A bunch of guys who dig tennis get together one day and decide to promote a few matches. Of course, before they promote the matches they have to organize them, so right from the start their fingers are tainted by something resembling business, and bureaucracy. Maybe some of the guys have a vision of sorts, like getting

people more interested in tennis or opening up more public tennis courts or promoting greater contact between players from different countries and cultures. But just as likely most of them are primarily motivated by the simple desire to see more games and while they are at it give their own favorite racket-swingers a bit more exposure. A couple of the promoters might even be players themselves.

Things go well and before long not only matches but entire tournaments with grand-sounding names and circuiting across continents are being booked months and even years in advance. Soon they acquire a certain national prestige, somewhat in the spirit of the old Roman Games. The opening of one such tournament I attended, the Aryamehr Cup in Tehran, was presided over by the Shah of Iran, his beautiful Empress Farah Diba, and their good friend Mr. Spiro Agnew. Some great matches with some truly great names participating. Arthur Ashe and dudes like that. If I remember correctly, Guillermo Vilas, the Argentinean, pretty much walked away with it. In any event Bjorn Borg was definitely not in top form. Tehran was too high for him. He'd do well in Holland.

These days WTO possesses a full stable of players who are firmly signed to long-term contracts. During the course of a season they manage to trot the world over playing each other. Of course they all make a lot of money, with the best ones making the most. WTO owns the rights to all their professional activities, which are exploited to everyone's profit but mostly the organization's. If a player wants to play in someone else's tournament, they need WTO permission. Not that there's much to choose from really. I'm guessing, but I think that no more than two tennis promotion organizations have maybe 90% of the major world tournaments sewn up between them. And even someone like Jimmy Connors, if he goes too far out too often, can find himself blackballed and fined.

But why ponder the sordid details any longer? It's all too sickening.

VISION BLURRED

Of course One World Poetry *did* start with a vision, that of a proposed 1980 World Tribal Gathering in Hokkaido, Japan. Exactly what is supposed to happen at this shebang is still pretty much of a mystery, but perhaps that is its special charm, its raison d'être even. And the poets, it seems, are to be the tribes' messengers, possibly their prophets. But in great part they are that already, always have been. However it's meant to work, one can't help wondering if the vision isn't becoming a trifle blurred.

Certain recent and dubious occurrences make one think it is. Like the way SOWP utilized its superior connections to usurp two Melkweg poetry evenings in August which were originally promised to an independent organizer, a young and talented (if somewhat impetuous) American poet now residing in Amsterdam.

"We need those nights," Ronald Sauer was told. Yeah, right. Like Hitler needed Poland, maybe?

Or the way SOWP's chief organizer got all hot under his open-necked collar at a certain literary event he'd set up, just because the audience, alike with the performers, spontaneously overruled his judgement on the need for an intermission.

"You've got to understand," Benn (Soyo Benn) Posset said later to one disinterested objector, "it's different when you're an organizer."

"I know," mused the objector, "it's different when you're the president, too."

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Currently warming up in the SOWP bullpen are a host of local poetry readings, initially culminating in the 3rd International Poetry Festival, known as P79, slated to go down simultaneously in two Dutch cities—Amsterdam and Utrecht—during the second week of October. After Holland, the United States will again have the largest representation and at least six American

poets have already signed on, with many more to follow. For the rest a sizeable invitation roster is now being drawn up, with poets being separated into an 'A' List, a 'B' List, and so on. 'A' List poets will be assigned the biggest rooms to read in. They will also get paid the most money. That's the way it goes with structured events.

The venue for this circus—the Dutch often refer to their poetry happenings as *circuses*, as in *Dichters Circus* (poets ring)—is naturally Melkweg, whose excellent facilities will allow not only for several readings at one time but also film shows, theater, music concerts, video, special bookstalls and other sales counters, all of them in some way related to the festival. Quite clearly both P77 and P78 were only warm-up exercises. This year, baby, it's the big time.

Nor do the individual readings or even the festival tell the whole of the SOWP story. Already the promoters are busy acquiring exclusive recording rights to various performances, and at least two albums are scheduled for release before the summer is out. One of these will feature Allen Ginsberg, who more than made up for his disappointing non-appearance at P78 by putting on a knockout show at Melkweg in early June. He was accompanied by Peter Orlovsky, who read selections from his new first book, *Clean Asshole Poems & Smiling Vegetable Songs* (City Lights).

LOST CHERRY

Originally more of a moving spirit than any kind of formal organization, SOWP finally lost its visionary cherry just a couple of months ago when it came down from the poetic clouds, landed on damp earth somewhat below sea level and took advantage of Holland's greatest tax-cum-subsidy scam by forming a legal foundation, or *stichting*. Now SOWP can boast a board-of-directors register that reads like a Who's Who of Amsterdam's counter-culture bureaucracy. Included on the council are directors and leading staff members of Melkweg, De Kosmos, Paradiso, Athenaeum Boekhandel and other focal points of culture and everyday politics in and around Mokum.* For

the most part, however, these people—who must meet at least once each year and give formal approval to all stichting business—are mere figureheads, respectable freaks whose names look good on the letterhead stationery, especially come subsidy seeking time.

One subsidy application, made before SOWP legally formalized its existence, was promptly shitcanned by the advisory board to the Amsterdam Arts Council, admittedly for some very stupid reasons. But then when have bureaucrats, of whatever ilk, ever been known to act wisely, unless by pure chance? The result of this turn-down is that SOWP is still deeply in hock to De Kosmos meditation center for last year's festival, to the tune of 13,000 Dutch guilders.

Among SOWP's day-to-day functional hierarchy—which includes Simon Vinkenoog (poet-philosopher), Steef Davidson (poet-publicist), Jos Knipscheer (publisher-translator) and Harry Hoogstraten (poet-visual artist)—only Soyo Benn can as yet be nailed down to a categorical position, that of organizer-in-chief. The main architect of P78, Benn once took homely pride in describing himself as “just the guy who opens the back door.” Now he opens and closes SOWP's front door and keeps the key in his pocket. There will, so it seems, be no back doors into P79.

STAR TREK

Held during one week in September at the Amsterdam Kosmos, with a near-murderous grand finale (Grootse Slotnacht) at Paradiso, P78 was a financial disaster that succeeded artistically almost in spite of itself.

To begin with, its three most touted headliners never appeared. Ginsberg was much too busy, Gary Snyder apparently too spaced out, while Diane di Prima accepted her round-trip airfare all right then headed in a different direction. Although other name poets were on the invited list (sought-after performers like Anne Waldman and Ted Berrigan), none of them was quite big enough to guarantee consistently large audiences. What was originally seen as a sort of Beat Generation revival was, as the days and weeks rolled

on, looking more like turning into a general beating, for the organizers at any rate. Even as opening night approached, the frantic last-minute search for 'stars' continued.

Two American poets—Patti Smith and Charles Bukowski—strongly suggested to the festival organizers by Eddie Woods, New York-born poet and editor of Amsterdam's *Ins & Outs* magazine, were repeatedly pooh-poohed, perhaps because their projected auras did not quite harmonize with P78's intended spirit, whatever that might have been. Another poet whose aura (if not always his demeanor) more than harmonized but who was nonetheless being left out in the city's legendary cold and rain—until Woods and Dutch radical-traditionalist writer Hans Plomp turned every screw in the book to get him invited —was Ira Cohen, reckoned by some to be the most gifted and inspired poet writing in English today.

Bukowski, the 'dirty old man of LA,' of course never made it and to this day has probably never even heard of P78 or One World Poetry. But late one afternoon, with the festival now only days away, Woods received a surprising phone call from Soyo Benn.

"Ed, this is Benn. Can you help me get in touch with Patti Smith?"

"Why?"

"I want to invite her to the festival."

Obviously the September wind was blowing great changes. In fact, they had been blowing for several days already and Patti Smith was no more than the final link in a chain that had been synchronistically forging itself with little help from the organizers.

And in the end who turned up as the key man in the operation? None other than Ira Cohen—bearded, black-robed, mystical and mercilessly uncompromising in his artistic assessments.

But gratitude and understanding are often short-lived virtues and word has it that Ira, now back in his beloved Kathmandu, will certainly not be invited to P79. So much the better for Ira probably, so much the worse for poetry in Amsterdam.

POLITICS OF POETRY

The story of how Patti finally made it to Mokum for her first appearance in the magic centrum without her band is short, bittersweet and amusingly ironic. It also underscores a grave truth well-known to almost all counterculturists but one which, whenever it comes down to the nitty-gritty, we time and again refuse to put our faith in. Yet it must be crystal clear (and if not to us then to whom?) that no matter how hard you may try to justify it, even on the grounds of dire material necessity, straight linear planning, just like straight linear thinking, is nothing less than a total crock of shit. "Take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow will take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

Apart from this one truth, what really is there that makes us—the freaks, the fringe, the hippies, the counterculture, the Alternative Society—in any way different from the Establishment? Is it dope? Hardly, not with every two-bit adman rolling a joint after lunch and Jimmy Carter and the boys snorting coke in the White House. Nor is it dress, speech patterns, tastes in music, meditation, yoga or any other such things, for all of these were co-opted by the System and its slaves long before being adopted by the majority of us. No, the difference between Us and Them lies in nothing less than the total acceptance of that one truth. And the beauty of things like dope, meditation, modes of speech, certain kinds of music, even outward appearance, rests in their potential—when properly used and related to—for making us more aware of that truth and putting it into actual practice without ever thinking about it.

But the process is far from automatic and if one is not careful, attentive, even the use of such aids to awakening as dope and meditation can help turn you into nothing better than a more aware and cunning businessman or politician. Take a look at Jerry Brown, for instance. As that same Amsterdam poet quoted above has also written, "a world /of imprisoned minds/needs anarchy now." It's really that simple.

Anyway, P78 eventually panned out for the best. One day, as the eleventh hour was drawing nigh, someone hit upon the engaging idea to invite William Burroughs. Whoever it was—Benn, Harry, maybe even Jos—that person was displaying a propensity for genius-like thinking. Not only did William prove one of the festival's biggest hits but at a recent SOWP-organized Melkweg appearance, just one week after Ginsberg and Orlovsky did their thing, he gave a reading which will be talked about among Amsterdam literary audiences for years to come.

Actually, the P78 organizers came close to blowing the Burroughs invitation right from the start. For whatever silly reasons, over-enthusiasm maybe, after asking the author of *Junkie* and *The Naked Lunch* to come to Amsterdam, they then forgot to mention anything about payment. And Burroughs does not come cheap either. Whereas most of the other participants received 300 guilders (in addition to budget accommodations and travel fares, for those coming from abroad), William required one thousand American dollars plus full expenses (or approximately 10 times as much). He was well worth it.

Once it became known that William Burroughs was indeed coming, Ira Cohen stepped in to suggest, rather persistently, that Brion Gysin also be invited. After all, not only were the two men friends and literary colleagues from well before the days of the Beat Hotel in Paris; but without Gysin's influence working on him, Burroughs would never have fully developed his own unique approach to the cut-up method of writing.

This was a golden opportunity not to be missed, an international poetry festival in Amsterdam attended by two of the 20th century's most brilliant experimental artists. Even if they are, in the long run, really anti-poets.

*"You say that you have only a small room for India
and no room for Tibet... better make room for Tibet!"*

Ira Cohen

Unfortunately, hardly anyone in Amsterdam knew who Brion Gysin was. Yes, Simon Vinkenoog knew, but he wasn't organizing. Soyo Benn was organizing but was lucky to know who Burroughs was. Lewis MacAdams, who "knows every goddamn poet with something to say," must have mentioned the name in passing one lazy afternoon in San Francisco.

Nor did it help to explain that writer-painter-filmmaker-songwriter Brion Gysin, co-author (with Burroughs, Sinclair Beiles and Gregory Corso) of the first-ever book of cut-up writings, *Minutes To Go*, had already undergone 69 cobalt treatments for cancer, was even now walking merrily around without an asshole and—no doubt because of the usual perversions of life that so often mismarry fame and fortune to the wrong people—almost never gets invited to gatherings of this sort. There was no money left in the kitty for him and that was that.

Ira was adamant, however, and although himself nearly broke at the time, insisted to the point of putting up his own money to bring Brion to Amsterdam and secure him a prime spot on the program. As it was, Gysin's performance may have even topped that of Burroughs. When the festival was over, the organizers—at least temporarily enlightened by the experience—gave Ira back most of his bread. But they still found it hard to forgive his alleged 'arrogance,' the one character trait for which he is most constantly damned. As for his poetry, very few of his accusers bother to read it. But that's a blind spot they share in common even with the likes of Allen Ginsberg.

No sooner had Brion been contacted in his Paris flat than he immediately asked, "Is Patti coming?"

"Patti who?"

"Why Patti Smith, of course. She's in Europe, you know. She'd love to come. She *must* come."

And so Patti came, even though Ed Woods was unable to help Benn make the connection. Not only did she come, on a fast plane from Vienna, but she did her gig for free. Not bad for a rock 'n roll star who believes that "everything is shit."

(Clearly, what the organizers saved on Patti they were then able to put aside for Brion. Ira, who couldn't afford it, offered to pay. Patti, who could well afford it, actually did pay. All one poet washing their many hands in the same giant wash basin, just like it should be.)

Another old friend of Burroughs and Gysin from the Beat Hotel days who also made it to the festival was Harold Norse, whose recent big book, *Carnivorous Saint* (Gay Sunshine Press), contains some of the finest examples of gay poetic writing ever published. Exactly how Prince Hal came to be invited to P78 is still uncertain. But the rumor that he would come was put abroad in *Ins & Outs* long before the invitation was extended. And who started the rumor? Ira Cohen, of course.

So much for P78 and the politics of poetry. For a closer look at the moods, writings and diversity of impressions which that festival bequeathed to us and the world, one must become intimate with *P78 Anthology* (In de Knipscheer, Haarlem, Netherlands. ISBN 906265-037-6). Edited by Harry Hoogstraten & Jos Knipscheer, it is *the* definitive presentation—with more than 40 contributors—of whatever poetry the festival inspired that could be captured in print, and is also chock full of photos and original artwork .

As for what P79 will bring, that's anyone's guess. But unlike last year, there is already a breath of dissidence moving in the air. It is unorganized, unstructured and totally anarchic. It is also very poetic. Furthermore, its name is open to anyone to either use or disregard. It calls itself Other World Poetry. Who knows, maybe this time even Charles Bukowski will be attracted.

ALL DUTCH SOWP

SOWP's inaugural office party wasn't much of anything really. Strictly an inner-circle affair with more bottles of beer and wine in attendance than living people. Soyo Benn was there, bearlike as ever but not quite as light as he used to be, in the days before poetry organizing became Serious Business and time for family affairs a luxury he could ill afford.

Then there was Simon, at only 51 already the grand old man of the Dutch lunatic fringe, being his usual unpredictable self, at one moment dead earnest regarding some topic under discussion, in the very next totally flippant about the same subject. Once looked upon as an important philosophical poet and prose writer, Simon has lately become more of an encyclopaedist than anything else, collecting in enormous quantities odd bits of psychedelic and other knowledge from every possible source and recirculating it all in an endless stream of books and magazine articles, poems and descriptive narratives and machine gun-like rap after amazing rap. Although the importance of such work cannot be denied, there are those close to him who feel that Simon is sacrificing his finest talents to what is no better than a hack's job. One contemporary even accuses him of "guarding a gate that leads to nowhere."

Yet it is hard to believe that this veteran Provo and constant revolutionary spirit, who once designated as "creeps" and "vulgar chunks of ballot beef" those who clung to the "deathly discipline" of their dads' political parties...it is hard to believe that the same Simon who regularly quotes D.H. Lawrence on "revolution for the fun of it" and Julian Beck on the need for breaking the law and shattering it on the rocks "to see the scattering of the pieces" will for very long toe the organizational line in any kind of operation that is obviously becoming too structured.

As for Steef Davidson, whose own recent series of hastily organized poetry readings at Paradiso, "Poësie Explosie," in the main came across better than any strictly local event SOWP has yet staged: *his* enthusiastic move into the One World Poetry camp represents Soyo Benn's most clear-cut organizational coup to date. But Steef is tricky and despite a seemingly eternal optimism for every conceivable alternative project, or perhaps because of it, continues to maintain a fiercely independent nature. Definitely not a man to take orders or follow rules. As long as he and the rest of SOWP see eye to eye, his service to the cause will be invaluable and unstinting. Yet the moment anyone tries to force his hand or move it in a direction he is not in tune with, then the shit will certainly hit the fan and Benn could well find

Steeff on the outside, if not exactly throwing stones through SOWP's windows then at the very least erecting his own visionary dome somewhere else.

Besides, Steeff always has so many red-hot irons in the fire that it is difficult for him to devote much energy to more than a very few of them at one time. And come this fall the poet-editor-translator-publicist has his own major international project to be concerned with, a Russell-style tribunal on American Indian lands and territories being held in both Amsterdam and Mexico City.

Harry Hoogstraten and Jos Knipscheer have nothing to lose and everything to gain by allying themselves with SOWP. As part owner of a small but growing Lowlands publishing house, and one that will soon be turning out as many books in English as in Dutch, Jos can only win by getting on the inside of any operation that will bring him increased contacts with international writers of merit, no matter how they get here or who brings them. On top of that Jos has his own tiny stable of writers to plug, including Harry and Cherokee Indian Craig Strete, both of whom will get prime times and places at the festival. Harry well deserves it but Craig, who hasn't written poetry for more than ten years and never fails to fall completely apart in the middle of a performance, should stay in North Hollywood churning out his sometimes fascinating, sometimes dead boring short stories. Although still in his twenties, he says himself he has only two or three good writing years left. What is more, he once wished Ira Cohen dead; so why the fuck *should* I like him?

Harry is perhaps in the most enviable position of all. If the festival happens and indeed goes well, he has a place in it, a good place. Exposure, a bit of money, some new contacts and the inevitable reading invitations that making them will bring. In short, all those bright little perks and goodies that come from being on the inside. On the other hand, if something about SOWP or the festival should ever piss him off badly enough, he could probably walk straight across town and set up a counter festival, taking half the American contingent with him along with a healthy slice of the European one. He is

that well liked. While it was through Harry that many of Benn's own early contacts were made.

But Harry has a lot more going for him than mere likability and a few close poet buddies. He has talent, a raw flexible kind of talent that, especially when wedded to his own peculiar brand of self-confidence, should enable him to get along very nicely in the world of poetry whether he ever attends, let alone participates in, another major poetry festival. To get the feel of that talent, at least as it comes across between the covers of a book, the reader is recommended to *Boxing Days* (In de Knipscheer), Harry's just-published collection of poems short and not so short, all of them in English, the language in which he began his writing career. The book also contains a welcome quantity of the poet's photographs and photo-collages. The front and back cover designs are also his.

Ira Cohen, a poet of an entirely different school of thought and style, firmly disagrees with my assessment of Harry Hoogstraten's work. But even the great Ira Cohen is not an infallible critic. I stand my ground.

Apart from these five high initiates, the only persons present at SOWP's pitiful little office party were two gently-tolerated outsiders, which is also to say two non-Dutchmen. Holland is growing very insular these days, maybe with good cause. Yet Simon Vinkenoog has predicted that Amsterdam in the 1980s will be like Paris was in the Twenties and just before and after the Second World War, an artistic mecca for artists from all over. Possibly the insularity only denotes a period of getting ready for it.

The two intruders were this reporter plus Italian poet Aldo Piriomalli, founder of the School of Analphabetica. The latter came because he was under the impression that the main parties present were interested in talking about poets and poetry. He was wrong. Their only real interest was in politics.

SO-SO

For the past couple of hours now, between sips of wine and lukewarm spa water, or hanging a new poster on the wall or halfheartedly dusting off a still-empty bookshelf, the small conclave has been discussing, in a decidedly desultory fashion, the strengths of the 'A' List versus the weaknesses of the 'B' List, ruminating with only mild irritation the annoyances of last year's debt or this year's hoped-for subsidy that in truth may never come; debating, too, the pros and cons of giving a big spot to Harry Mulisch because "after all he does know a lot of important people." Stuff like that. All necessary, of course, but total bullshit nonetheless.

Finally, after most of the others have either made a move for the door or already passed through it, Soyo Benn gets up off his chair, paces a little, frowns, jangles a couple of keys loose from his pocket and says, in his quaintly accented English, "Well, I'm getting ready to lock up now."

He's had a couple of good weeks, Benn has, for an organizer. The Ginsberg and Burroughs nights are neatly tucked under his belt, a Dutch Poets Day in the Vondel Park only a few days earlier had drawn a hefty crowd—"Ladies and gentlemen, One World Poetry presents: Dutch Poets Only, half of whom will read mostly in English and the other half in a Groningen dialect"—and now the long dreamed of office is at last open. On top of that, the chief organizer had successfully won back for SOWP those two all-important evenings in August that an upstart foreign poet had mistakenly thought to cash in on. An obvious case of a heavyweight creaming a lightweight with one punch and then feeling proud of it.

Or maybe not so proud. For even with that minor victory, along with a recent month-long, round-the-world promotion trip successfully concluded, Soyo Benn is looking tired, a little puckered you might say, psychologically as much as anything else. But then I guess I'll be looking somewhat knackered myself once I get done writing this story—probably several hours through the night, after my lady has gone to bed and even the window girls across the canal from my own front window have switched off their red lights

and called it a morning. Several hours, plenty of strong coffee and maybe even a dexedrine or two. That's the way I work when I put my mind to it: incessantly, just like Soyo Benn.

Indeed, Benn and I resemble one another in many ways. We're both stubborn, both selfish enough to be more concerned with our own needs or visions (as the case may be) than with those of others, even others who are very near and dear to us. And we are both easy prey for the ever-present temptations of ego-tripping and of jockeying about, sometimes very seriously, with the tinhorn levers of petty power. Ambition is what it boils down to, regardless of motive; and, as Shakespeare had Mark Antony say, it is a grievous fault.

Soyo Benn doesn't read books much. He has his reasons for it, too. Someday, when he's finished with organizing (something he's been doing for close to 20 years now), like maybe when all the tribes have gathered and scattered themselves a few more times, he intends to sit down and do a little writing. And when that time comes he would like for his mind to be as free and uncluttered as possible, especially from the styles and impressions, perhaps even the views, of other literary people. I suppose there is something to be said for all that. Surely there are moments when I not only get the feeling, but am positively convinced, that we'd all be better off if we read less, wrote less and most of all talked less. But that's a matter of a somewhat different order and not meant to be deliberated here.

Granted, it is not necessary for a poetry organizer to himself write poetry. And it may not be necessary for a poetry organizer to read or even like poetry, though I tend to think it helps. What *is* absolutely vital is for whomever sets themselves the task of organizing and then promoting poetry events to have a *feel* for poetry, an inborn poetic sensitivity that may very well have little or nothing to do with words and the oral recitation of them. What I am trying to say and giving up a lot of valuable ground in the process, is that a good poetry organizer must at all costs be much more than simply a good hustler. In his soul, even if nowhere else, he must be a Poet.

There was a time when I thought Soyo Benn was precisely that. Now I'm not so sure. And because I'm not sure I cannot help but wonder about the entire future, and still more the present, of One World Poetry. It's a question merely; and as with all such questions, time alone will answer it.

I like Soyo Benn, I surely do. But I liked him a helluva lot better when he was just the guy opening the back door.

"So-so."

Yeah, that's it. So-so.

WOODSTOCK JONES

Bill Levy: "Did anyone fall in love at the festival?"

Soyo Benn: "Well, there was sure some ass grabbing going on."

MUSINGS

*Some came running
others ran away
wise men know
running doesn't pay*

*Some ran for fame
some ran for power
the wine seemed sweet
but soon turned sour*

*Fame comes easy
not so the Word
the finest poets
are seldom heard*

*Some came running
some ran away
all that running
on feet of clay*

*Poets must be heard
not herded
imagine organizing birds*

▪

*If one world means
one police force
I prefer borders*

▪

*P79
10 years too late
69's better
than fucking straight*

▪

*Listen to me
how sweetly I sing
but the cliques in the corridors
are still clicking their heels
You cannot hear me
can you now?*

EW

Other World Poetry Newsletter was originally published as a tabloid-style broadside by Ins & Outs Press, in an edition of 1000 copies, and distributed internationally. Some years after their reconciliation, Benn Posset and Eddie Woods agreed to sign the remaining 50-odd copies and sell them as collectors' items. Alas, Benn died before they got round to doing either.

Mokum: nickname for Amsterdam (since ca. 1769), from the Yiddish for 'city'; though in Amsterdam's case, 'the city.'

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