

# from<sup>+</sup> **A Notebook of Darrell Gray**

One of the notebooks of Darrell Gray came into my possession. It was one of those 5x8 hard-bound blank books —filled. It had a black, faux-leatherette textured finish. People buy them for ledgers or journals. I was visiting the poet at his small apartment in the basement of the Berkeley house and he had a footlocker full of these books that he liked to use for notebooks. He was never without one. He got them cheap somewhere in the Oakland Chinatown. I picked one at random, and started looking through it. It was inspiring to hold the actual raw creativity of a working poet in your hands. And here was a great big foot locker full of these treasures.

There were interesting drawings of friends, some of whom were, or later went on to become, famous poets. There were diagrams of systems and flows. And sketches of scenes. It was full of quotes and reading notes. And there were poems, first drafts, and some copied drafts. And first drafts of essays.

Because I asked about it, he let me take one home to read. I put it in my back pack. Then, when I went to take it back to him, and told him how fascinating and helpful it was, he said I could have it. I told him I couldn't accept it but that I would transcribe it for him at some point when I got an electric typewriter. They had electric typewriters in the basement of the Berkeley library, with a little meter that you had to keep feeding money to. I used the mechanical typer to do the PAWs. Well, it was years before I got an electric typewriter and he didn't ask about it, and it got lost in the shuffle, with all the moving around and ended up in my sister's attic in Texas and I found it later when she sent me a box full of old manuscripts.

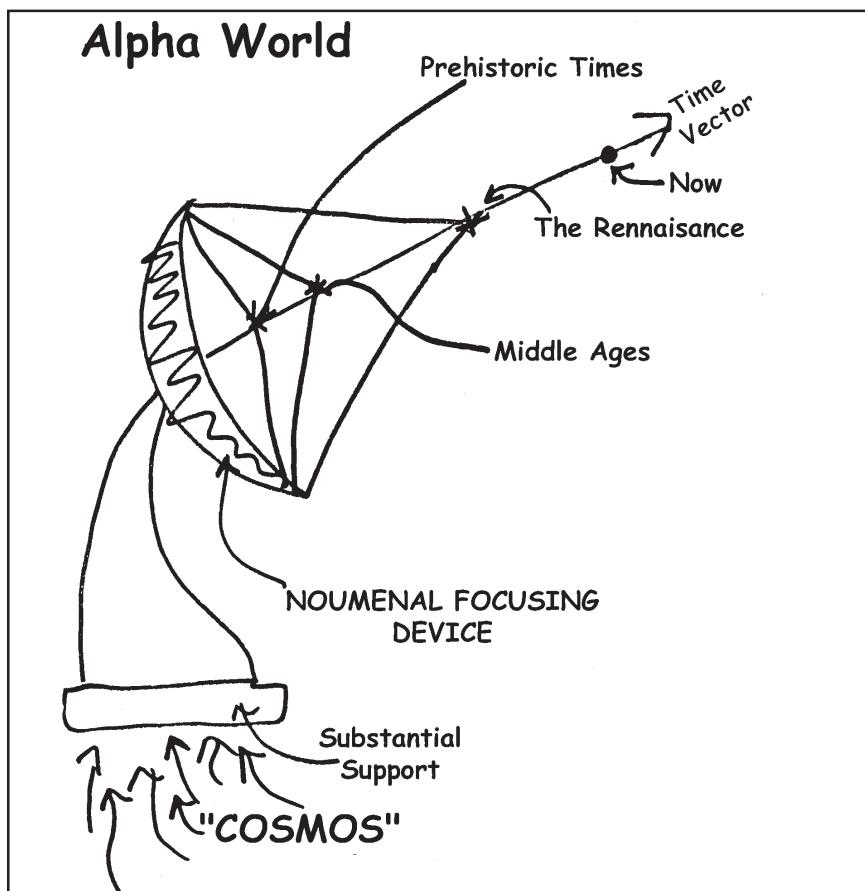
Here are a few examples of the pages from this notebook. I have annotated the tour through the notebook to give it a sense of relatedness to some of the material as it got elaborated upon and transformed into poems and essays. (I have a review of his *Essays and Dissolutions* in the appendix of this book.) The notebook topics range from Psychic Syntax, to Coleridge and the Poetic Imagination, Sound in the Mind, A Field Theory of Poetry — the topics go on and on and are fascinating. Enjoy.

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<sup>+</sup> (In the interest of brevity we have cut many pages from this Notebook presentation. Check the Sample area of Hitmotel Press web for the complete .pdf, available free.)

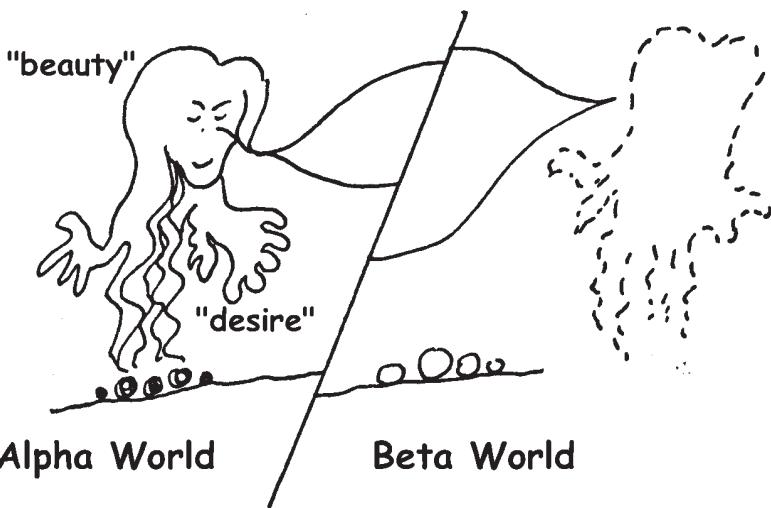
## Darrell Gray's Alpha World

Darrell Gray was an information engineer of the noumenal. He used the language of poetry as a kind of programming, or code, to speak to the noumenal, to invoke the noumenal, to call the noumenal with its own language, into being.



Gray was very original and was always at work synthesizing ideas. We will explore later the Transcendental Poetics of Actualism the way he did in a full Kantian exposition of the ancient Vedanta. All this creativity is about trying to know what is at the edge of the actual, to bring that world of what Peirce called Firstness, which you can only know through trails of abduction following the hints of tone and sense and suggestion and synchronicity into the unknown.

**"saved by her force field"**

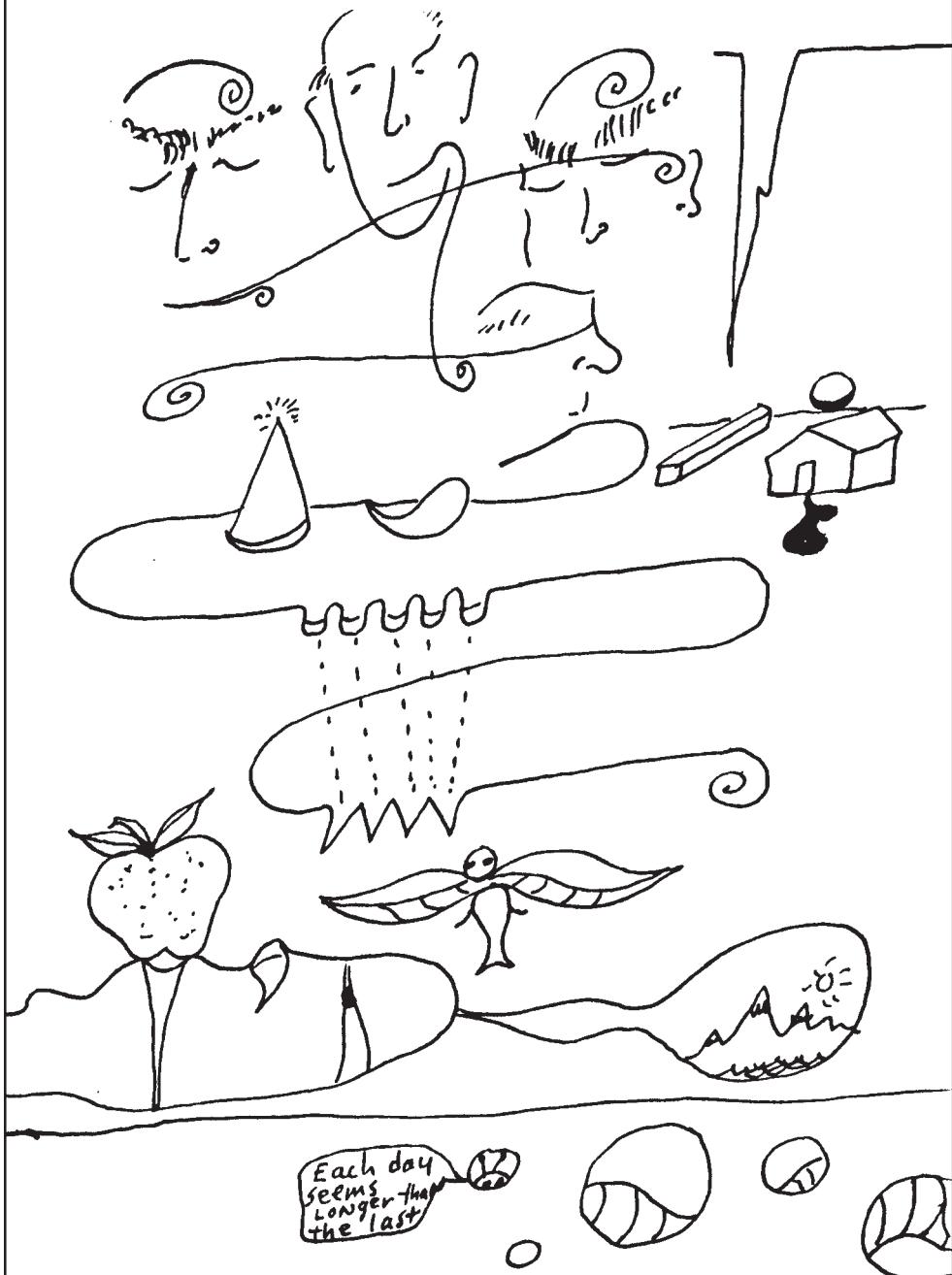


Writing for Darrell Gray was a way to see from this world into the Alpha world — a world in which one more fully participated in the ontology of being. The consciousness in his poems often goes from something very minute and particular to the much larger picture. The propositions he asks us to consider in the lines of his poems are strung like nodes on the network of the great chain of being.

( *from Notebook* )

### Poem

The tiny Etruscan ants are sailing  
Home again. On leaves  
The size of outstretched palms  
Their voices curl and darken  
Their love songs seeking the  
unknown nouns  
Or is it their children  
Awaking at last from their lives  
The eclipse crawls back into the fruit  
Many books have been written  
To capture the adolescent rainbow  
they left  
Balanced on the edge of each other's life.



# MIND - KIT

## #13

## The Greenhouse world is hermetic

In his notes I found this untitled passage. In it Darrell Gray invokes the semeiologist Peirce, defines the function of poetry, contrasts the surreal and the unreal, and touches on many favorite subjects. I have interjected various poems and notebook pages to illustrate points.

*(from Notebook, The Greenhouse world)*

The Greenhouse world is hermetic, and yet embodies the same creative processes found in the phenomenal world. There is therefore a continuum, not unlike Peirce's "psycho-physical" continuum—a coherent system of inter-related states which are resolved in the work of art in the form of a tension-structure which is at once self-contained and continually activating elements beyond the structure into new and dynamic configurations. The poem, like the imagination itself, contains as its integral structure that pulsating and basic silence which lies like a sea beneath all things—that infinite sea of possibilities from which what is known emerges merely as a frequency of the unknown.

*(from Something Swims Out 66)*

### SONNET

Beyond the immediate sensation lies a sea of light  
Where the objects of passion exist in their purest essence  
So as not to obstruct each other, or the passage of love.  
A fullness, unnumbered, and wholly beyond us  
As we move through this or that city, oblivious  
Even to the world in which our feelings lie immersed,  
Though what is only real can become much more.  
You may want to carry something out of all this nuance,  
A sort of memento of past resilience, in whose heart  
You divined new temperatures, thoughts, and connections  
Between even the fruit and the sunlight dividing attention.  
On the beach, for instance, you felt unique and happy  
Though alone, as though another world within this one  
Of water, trees, birds, and their impressions, appeared  
As you saw in the passive shallows the wet shells shining.

We see the astounding lushness of Gray's writing, the green house world, the Alpha world he is trying to bring us to the still point and the intersection of mirrors of being.

(from Notebook, *The Greenhouse world*)

The poet's function is to make visible/& immediate that underlying silence out of which the things of this world are made.

(from Notebook)

She approached  
carrying roses.  
There was a faint  
smile  
in the eye  
of the evening. There were streets  
behind her – streets  
breaking  
like ribbons of light.  
THE FUNCTION  
of such action – that  
beauty  
is simply  
this girl with roses  
and streets.

(*Greenhouse, continued*)

This means he is invariably transmuting the Known into the unknown, the experienced into the never experienced, and the common into the wonderful. His first attempt should be to break down those arbitrary and conventional categories of perception in order to evoke the underlying mystery which Gabriel Marcel has put succinctly: "that things should exist, as opposed to nothing." This, of course, means a radical and new approach to language is needed. Words must be seen neither as descriptive in function (cf. Williams & the Imagist tradition), or as ends in themselves (the symbolist tradition), but as tools or vehicles functional in the evocation of irreal. At this point I would like to make a distinction between the surreal & the irreal. The surreal, as I understand it, is a mental construction embodying purely psychic laws and actions, and achieves an absolute hermetic reality contingent upon nothing else and referring to nothing beyond itself. The irreal poem, on the other hand embodies and evokes that psycho-physical continuum and presents phenomena not as mental absolutes, but as constantly changing manifestations of the human involvement in that which lies beyond himself. Man is, as it were, on the threshold between two worlds, the psychic and the physical—the Inner and the Outer. Invariably there is a tension: he does not want to stand on the threshold forever. He wants to move from room to room. And he does.

(from SSO, 25)

## THE PLACE

I stood  
by the door  
thinking

I could  
be standing  
by the window.

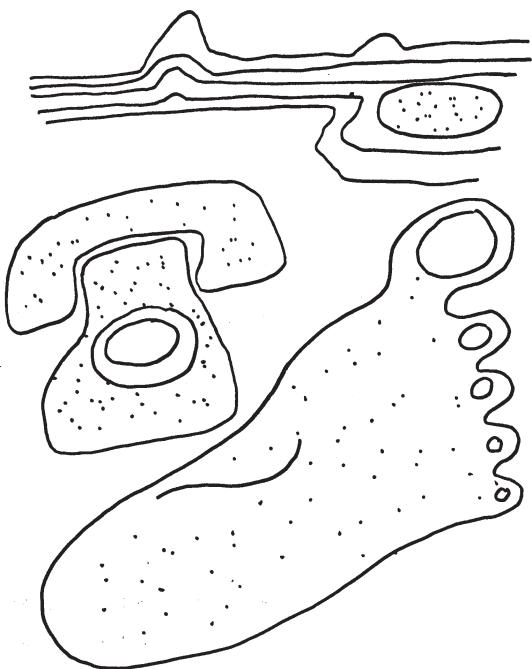
Then I  
would be  
over there,

not here,  
and would see  
things differently.

So move away,  
I think, to  
where I'm not,

and break the place  
by doing what  
I thought.

# MEMORY LOOKING FOR A MIND



( *The Greenhouse . . ., continued* )

He learns to call the wooden things he often sits on "chairs" and in the act of naming them he thinks he understands them. He has brought them under control. This surely, is the impetus behind language itself, to allow man some sort of control in a world he is continually forced to deal with. But in the other room, the dark inner room of psyche, the common objects of his experience often refuse to behave as the/Outward Man would have them behave. This is the place where chairs sprout wings and fly and monkeys play guitars at the heart of glaciers. This is the world of interior waves, rice pumps, and brass-corsages, where the objects seen in the sunlit outer world appear more immediate, 'essential, and new.

What a poet might call a "chair" in the outer world, he would not be so quick to call a chair in the Inner world, because the possibility that something could so simply and discretely as to be, as it were, summed up in a single 5 letter utterance, would not occur him. Only the experience of the thing itself would occur in him, and never in isolation.

from the other equally significant occurrences. Indeed, it is only from the interaction of these things and occurrences, their qualities of immediacy and intensity, that the whole complex can be known or felt at all.

If I write the word moon, I must mean by it not only the object in the sky which exists in a spatio-temporal matrix, but also that polyvalent image of it which exists in the mind and is capable, through the emission of connotative waves, of transforming the mental space into an area of intense psychic activity. Each object or thing experienced in the external world causes a corresponding disturbance in the mind-field, and each object once internalized has its own characteristic energy level. In the course of its psychic-activity, it emits this energy in the form of omni-directional connotative waves which invariably strike the waves emitted by other internalized objects, and, ultimately, the objects themselves. Waves of similar psychic frequency reinforce each other, and the objects emitting them are drawn together. And become “bonded” much in the same way that an atom of oxygen bonds with an atom of hydrogen to form water molecules. As psychic elements accrue, a coherent configuration is formed which embodies that spontaneous creative process which one recognizes, in the growth of a rose.

Again we see reflections of Gray's developing understanding guided by Valery's idea of language as a new chemistry for which we do not yet know the elements. Facts have their own dynamics.

C S Peirce: “The idea does not belong to the soul; it is the soul that belongs to the idea. The soul does for the idea just what the cellulose does for the beauty of the rose; that is to say, it affords it opportunity.”

Darrell Gray had an incredibly easy, loose way of laying out the lines of poetry. Like an expansion of space, like something going on on the surface of an expanding balloon. It was all about this expansion.

Notice how the word [Click here](#), sets up a bracing attention.

(from SSO, 25)

### **In a poem of the 20<sup>th</sup> century**

We photographed everything  
we could see.  
The click  
of the release aroused our attention.

## Types of Music

Here Gray applies the concept of open and closed texts to music. For example, a murder mystery is a closed text where the code is known and cause and effect chains are not open. “Open” texts, on the other hand, such as most poetry make complex demands upon the reader. Such texts are seen differently by different readers at different times. The stop sign is a relatively closed text, however, a photograph, advertisement, or painting, are much more open to individual interpretation. Modern poetry is usually an open text. A limerick or rap would be a closed text. The open text doesn’t have a political, social or other agenda, or if it does, it is not primary. The open text seeks to create an atmosphere of discovery, of exploration. We can easily see this in music: Rock’n’roll is a closed music, jazz (especially egoless jazz, Alice Coltrane, McCoy Tyner, T. Monk,) or raga, or the new phase shift music, Phillip Glass, is open.

Gray called open music — constant state music; he called closed music — commuter music.

**Commuter Music** is written and performed for the purpose of transporting the mind to higher states of consciousness. It is written and performed by minds that choose a particular vision as the “Real.”

[ Van Morrison, Donovan, The Who]

**Constant State Music** is music which is always a complete whole, existing independent of the Reality Structures appended to It. Once there, it is almost impossible to return. (CJ & Fish)

Commuter music takes the mind only in one direction at a time. Usually either vertical or horizontal.

Constant State Music cannot be schematicized.

However ALL commutes are plastic.

Music includes all worlds. It is the world of worlds. When the music living in words is released, at first it does not want to leave. The edges of the word grow stiff! Trying hard to hold within it all its music. When two external objects collide there is usually more than one sound emitted. Gradually, a whole world of sound shorts out into the waiting region. I say the region is “waiting” because it is so totally released to [that-which-regions] that it abides in the expanse of all music, thus open to new accumulations.

A tone can decide where it goes. If it goes in circles, or in straight lines. If it vibrates softly or harshly; if it radiates branches of tone that do not refer to the human mind, but continue to grow, condensed and unhampered.

A long silence is no more intense than a short one, no?

(LONGSILENCE)

What if everything we consider Real were only the “gaps” or fluctuations of some Higher Energy? Life, as we know it, would consist of varying status of deprivation. All the five senses will merely be ways of plugging into the absence of the Real.

Still, things continue to take up time and space in the observed world. A dictionary contains many sensible alternatives, each surrounded by a separate sense of how the Real submerges itself in a many colored distance / and each word floats up to the surface, which is only the undersurface of Maya.

Some voices enter a new space. The Knocking occurs at the door thought it is entirely the wrong room and within it on the desk the paper weight retains the characteristics of sunset.

A light full of tones is between us. Nothing opens as deeply as that – an azure charm as between two highly charged clouds, and on the separate clouds a premonition of agitated leaves. Each leaf is a note from the Rolling Stones’ version of Carol – great rhythms resurgences in the midst of tremendous gloom.

### The Ear of Creation

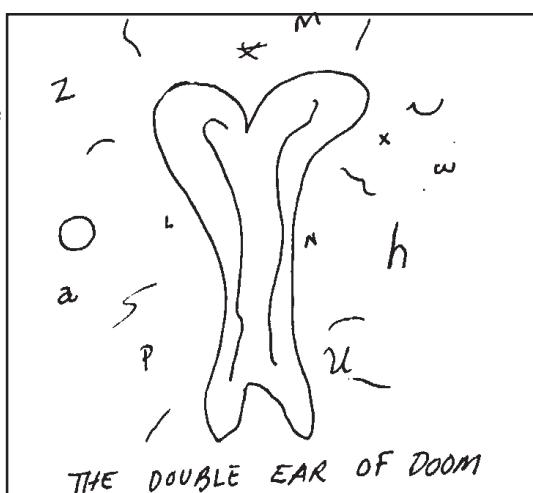
- 1) Evanescent – The most fleeting of tones entrances it.
- 2) Absolute – It can go anywhere.
- 3) Amazing – It gives birth to the world.
- 4) Eternal – Nothing can alter it.
- 5) Blissful – Everything wants to be heard by it, though nothing hears it.

\* That is which is not Heard, Though hears ALL.

\* The Ear of Creation is Infinite and Silent. Though in it all this Cosmic Manifestation is constantly varying.

### 3 Questions

- 1) What is coming out of where?
- 2) Why is so much silence containing It?
- 3) If the outside is really “out” how come so little of everything is exposed?



Toward a review of Darrell Gray's book *Essays and Dissolutions* in the appendix, let us examine a few more notebook pages as a form of what he would call "concept tenderizer" to get us ready for the plunge into his philosophical disquisition. Gray filled his notebooks with sketches, reading notes, quotes and inquiries into the creative process. The poems were a by-product of the experimental effort. He often began a work with an image.

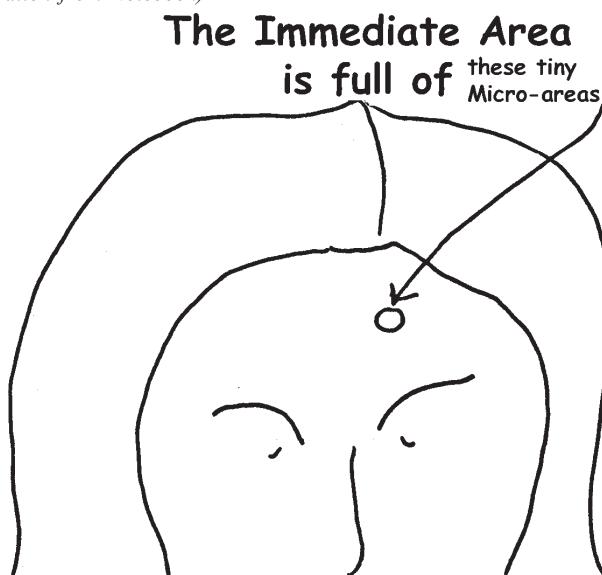


The semiotic flow from image to diagram to writing, traces in signs the emergence into form of primitive qualities and feelings and hunches. Peirce divided signs into icons, symbols and indices, according to how they signify. An icon would be the pencil marking on a paper signifying a line. An index would be the way smoke signifies fire. A symbol could be a sign as an information delay system like the x for the unknown in algebra. Poetry is exploring the modes of inference. Gray would later go on to develop this into a field formalism, of interconnected nodes of being. The four pillars of Actualism are Olson and Peirce. And Steiner and the Vedas. In the following we see Gray working on the concept of word as object.

## Semiosis and the Word as Object

As we will see in Gray's essay *The Transcendental Criticism of Knowledge*, as he looks to the ancient Vedas for a non-dualistic philosophy upon which to base the poetics of Actualism, he is taking his cues from the idea that the sound vibrations on which the *Vedas* are based are not necessarily derived from the sensory experience of hearing per-se, but that they are analogous to vibrations the fundamental of which is in a noumenal dimension and the harmonics of which are in our local sensible phenomenal dimension.

(Illustration from Notebook)



Words: energy rec'd in / discreet vibratory / sensations

### The hope of transcendental philosophy

(ED, 118 *The Transcendental Criticism of Knowledge*)

The sound vibrations on which the *Vedas* are based are not derived from previous sensory experience. Therefore, their ingressions within the phenomenal sphere of material activity is not directed at the adaptive and differentiative modalities of the lower mind. Emanating from the anti-material Source, these vibrations penetrate directly to the receiving facility of the individual atomic anti-material particle.

In this page Gray is considering the phenomenology of the object, to be specific, the apple. He has the image of the apple in mind and he draws it on the page where it appears, as an icon. He uses the name of the apple, in a sentence: "There is no "gap" between the Word / Sound Apple and the phenomenon itself." By doing that he brings the machinery of language to bear — in particular the indexical (subject of the sentence) which draws our attention to the icon (the image of the apple). In semiosis, the apple which had been beyond our pur-

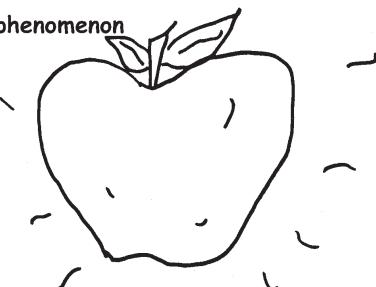
I am concerned with the distance [ N-Space ] between WORDS & OBJECTS Some words seem to be at the heart of objects, while others recede at their edges.

There, for instance, is no "gap" between the Word / Sound

**APPLE**

and

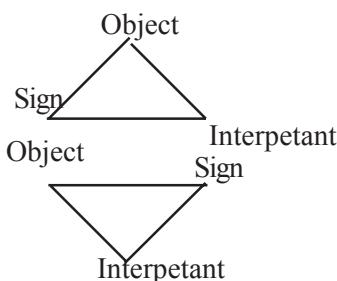
the phenomenon



**Itself**

view has come in search of taking up a brief presence in our consciousness, as a symbol. This symbol, "apple," interacts with the index and the icon through being a word in a sentence which itself is a composite symbol. With this we have gone around the semiotic triad a couple of times at least.

A signal trying to become a sign remains only a signifier until it becomes significant for some interpreter. We have seen the icon as an image of, a schematic diagram that depicts, or is similar to, some thing — an apple through another thing — its sign. We see the apple image as the sign of an apple while deep down we know full well that the image itself is not an apple but the interdependent, interrelated, interaction (in the traditional term, "re - presentation") of our apple image with an apple.



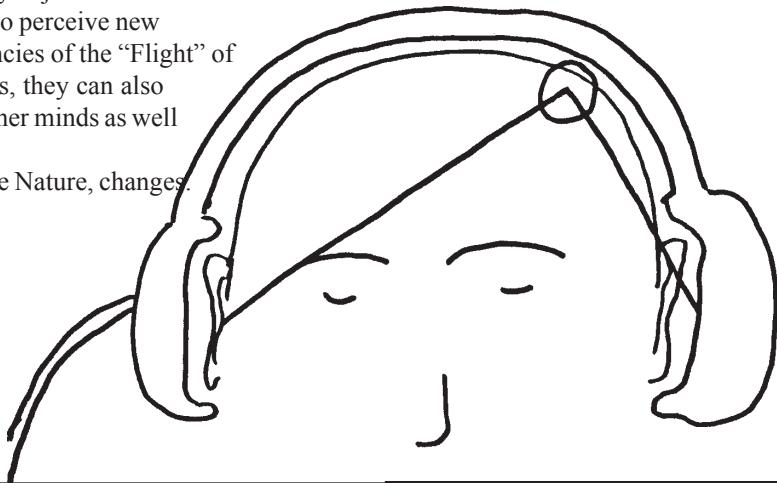
## The Physicality of the WORD-OBJECT Continuum

“It” becomes “material” for the occasion of modifying space.

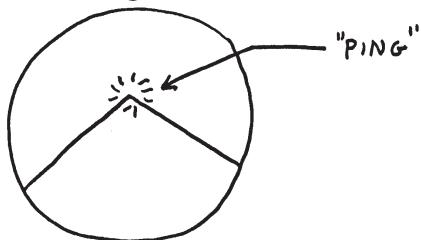
Minds are adjustable. Great artists are capable of incredible mental adjustments. They can not only adjust their own minds to perceive new frequencies of the “Flight” of Kosmos, they can also alter other minds as well

\*

Art, like Nature, changes.



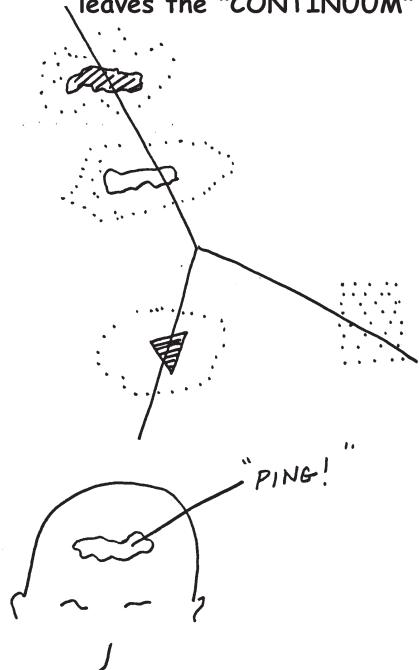
### Psychic Space Altered by an Ascending Tone . . .



Thousands of tiny “pings” comprise an Epiphany, which is none other than an orchestration of the Cosmos.

In the Body of Bliss is an orchestration of Space & Time & Matter. [Matter is an “excess” of Energy within Space & Time] When matter leaves the Space-Time Continuum does it cease to be “matter”? What is matter like in other Continuums? Anti-matter is Spirit.

### Matter changes when it leaves the "CONTINUUM"



# Super Senenses and Psychic Syntax

## PSYCHIC SYNTAX

The basic problem, as I find it, is not to “give up” or abandon syntax, but to find or construct a syntax which will allow me to write poems which have an integral structure and movement similar to that of the mind itself. I am of the opinion that the English language as it is used conventionally is an inadequate vehicle, to express the deepest poetic insights. Poets must create their own language, and not be intimidated by the existing linguistic apparatus.

Limits of measurement is a by-product of an attempt to bring the world under control.

### THE NAME:

- a) descriptive (lyric)
- b) definitive (external)

### Descriptive / definitive process

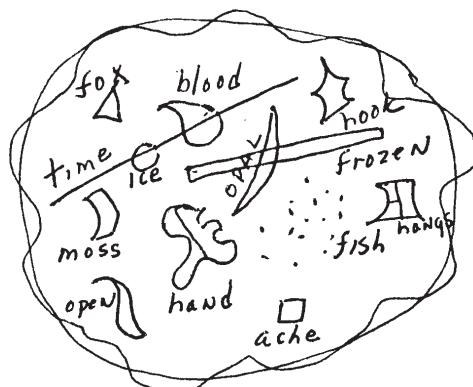
The poem is not a postulate of natural conditions, but a utilization of natural possibilities.

### Juxta-position

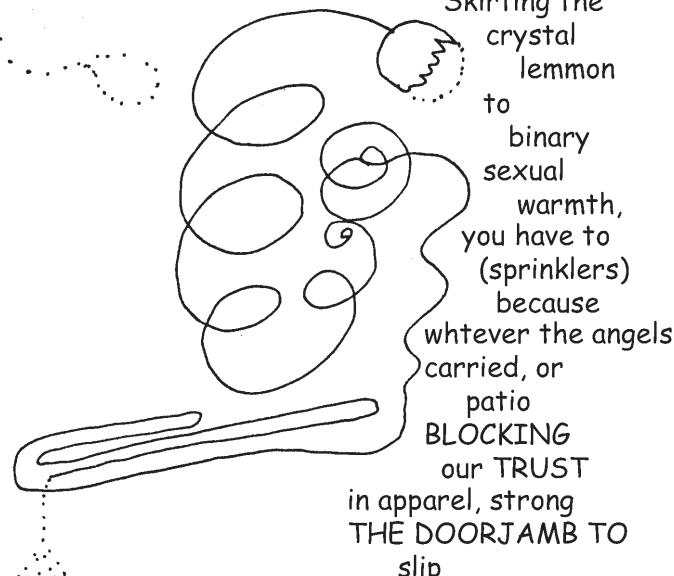
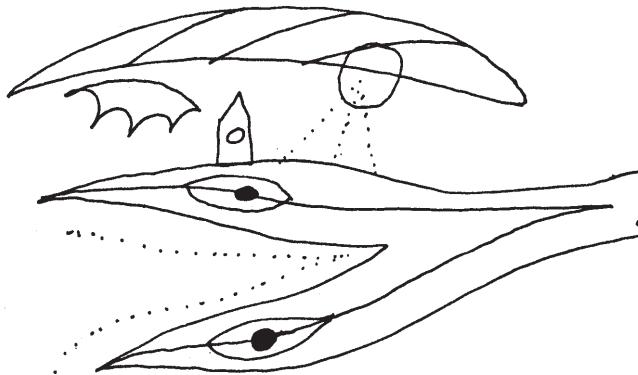
To bring the psychically valid occurrence into the “external” world. The phrase “African Golashes” – synthetically valid, and referring to possibilities in Actual Occurrence: i.e. – golashes made or worn in Africa.

The life of the poem is the life of its worlds – That world it manages to create independent of objects as objects – that is, as Ponge says, it exerts “in so many words” - - > FINITE

fox  
blood  
time  
ice  
moss  
hand  
open  
ache  
fish  
hangs  
hook  
frozen



The fox, the opal, and the blood  
Exist in time like ice and moss.  
The hand aches to open,  
But the hook still hangs.



Skirting the  
crystal  
lemon  
to  
binary  
sexual  
warmth,  
you have to  
(sprinklers)  
because  
whatever the angels  
carried, or  
patio  
**BLOCKING**  
our **TRUST**  
in apparel, strong  
**THE DOORJAMB TO**  
slip  
Justice

Just ice &  
no  
way in or  
out.

Because  
whatever the angels  
carried  
  
or the patio blocking

our sense of  
how the poison  
gets in

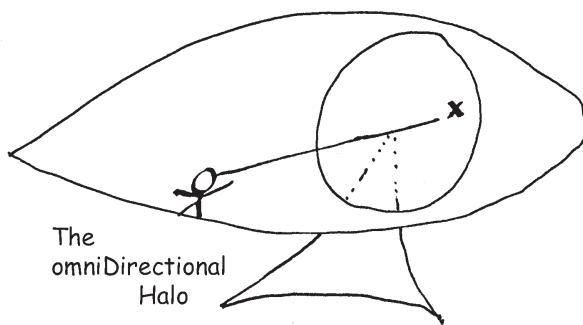
the heel  
when one of us remotely steps  
on some  
thing shining  
in the surf

(from Notebook)

### Riverside

After the smooth stone  
the lizard seemed smoother  
here was a place for the body –  
down by the river. Again it's  
seen –  
place where touch  
echoed the sheen, and father  
threw me in to bob  
back up,  
as life and love. At riverside  
palm fronds were greener than trust  
bent over where the willows went  
trailing defiant tips on the water  
here where the fish-mouth  
opened  
I thought of a daughter  
boyish and tired.  
Fireflies hugged the dark; the story  
of all homes put to sleep.  
Still – the scales meticulous  
are with me.  
I bob among objects; among  
dreams of friends.  
I know every stone.

### Driftwood

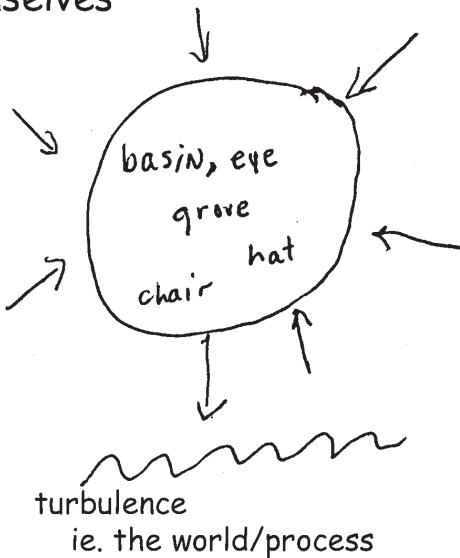


One must look down  
a long way  
and hard  
to see what the others  
are doing —  
the ones in  
chairs, —  
one imagines them  
thinking.  
But the birds  
are so many they  
make the sky dark  
when they move it.

## The Poem as Feedback Machine Process

The aesthetic of WCW — “no ideas but in things” — is a rallying cry of modern poetry. Gray built on that idea. It was a reaction to the way poetry had been driven into academia by Eliot and Pound. Though we did not like the mood of dry despair in Eliot, one had to admire how he created it. TS&EP, their poems were a net of intersecting synchronic and diachronic allusions reaching across the language and mythology of the world.

That the words be committed only  
to themselves

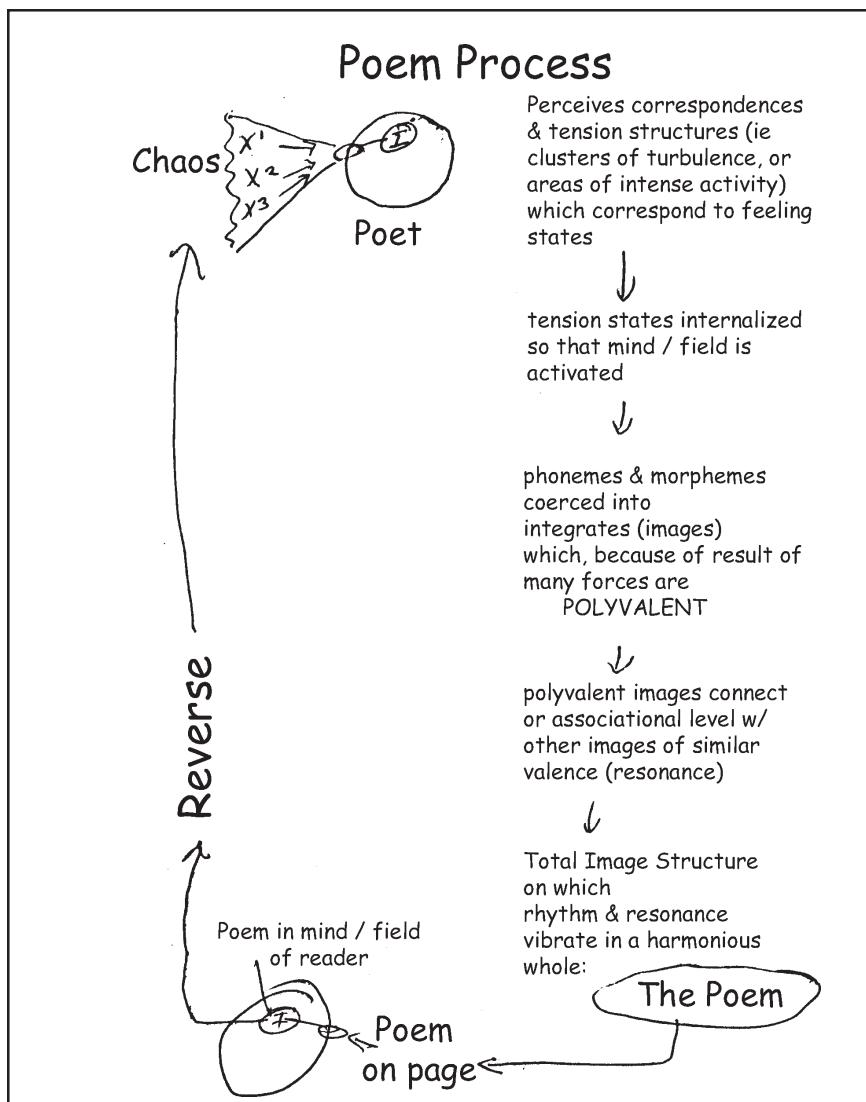


A complex organization of phonetic  
affinities

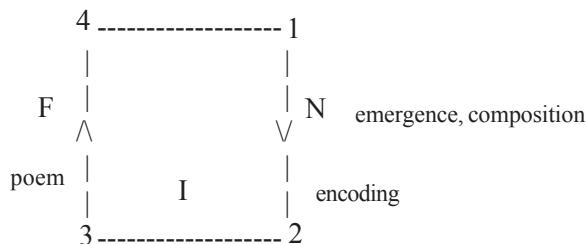
↓  
Integral Motion

↓  
The Poem  
(i.e. its  Movement)

Other great ideas in the modern cannon: the looseness and autobio-graphical familiarity of Frank O'Hara; the cunning linguistical ejaculations of ee cumings; the magical way Wallace Stevens used precise and exotic words to sharpen the sense perceptions and reify concepts; the open spiritual thrust in Kerouac's be-bop focusing in the movies of the mind; the whole Beat / existential insight from Whitman; the surrealist program of exploring metaphor; or the language school, or the spiritual mantras. The possibilities of poetics are many.



If we can abstract Gray's model of the poetic process from the previous page, we will see that it is congruent to Peirce's system of phenomenology and semiosis, as it must be.



Where

N, is the Natural sequence of emergence into coding from primary

2a, perceives correspondences & tensions

2b, these perceptions are internalized, into field

2c, sounds meanings align into image

2d, image is the language of the mind flowing, associationally  
to other images so they stick together in resonance - - > 3

F, is the Formal system (or model as it exists in the mind of  
the reader and the poet.)

1, is causal entailment

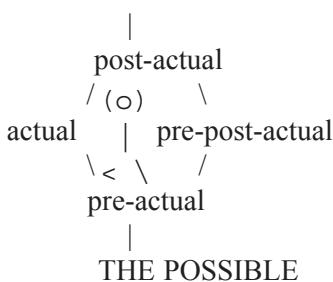
2, is encoding

3, is inferential entailment and

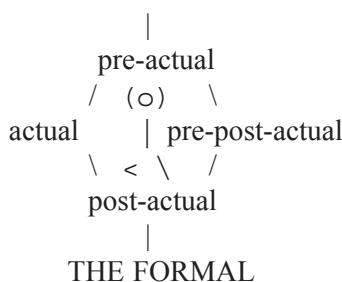
4, is decoding.

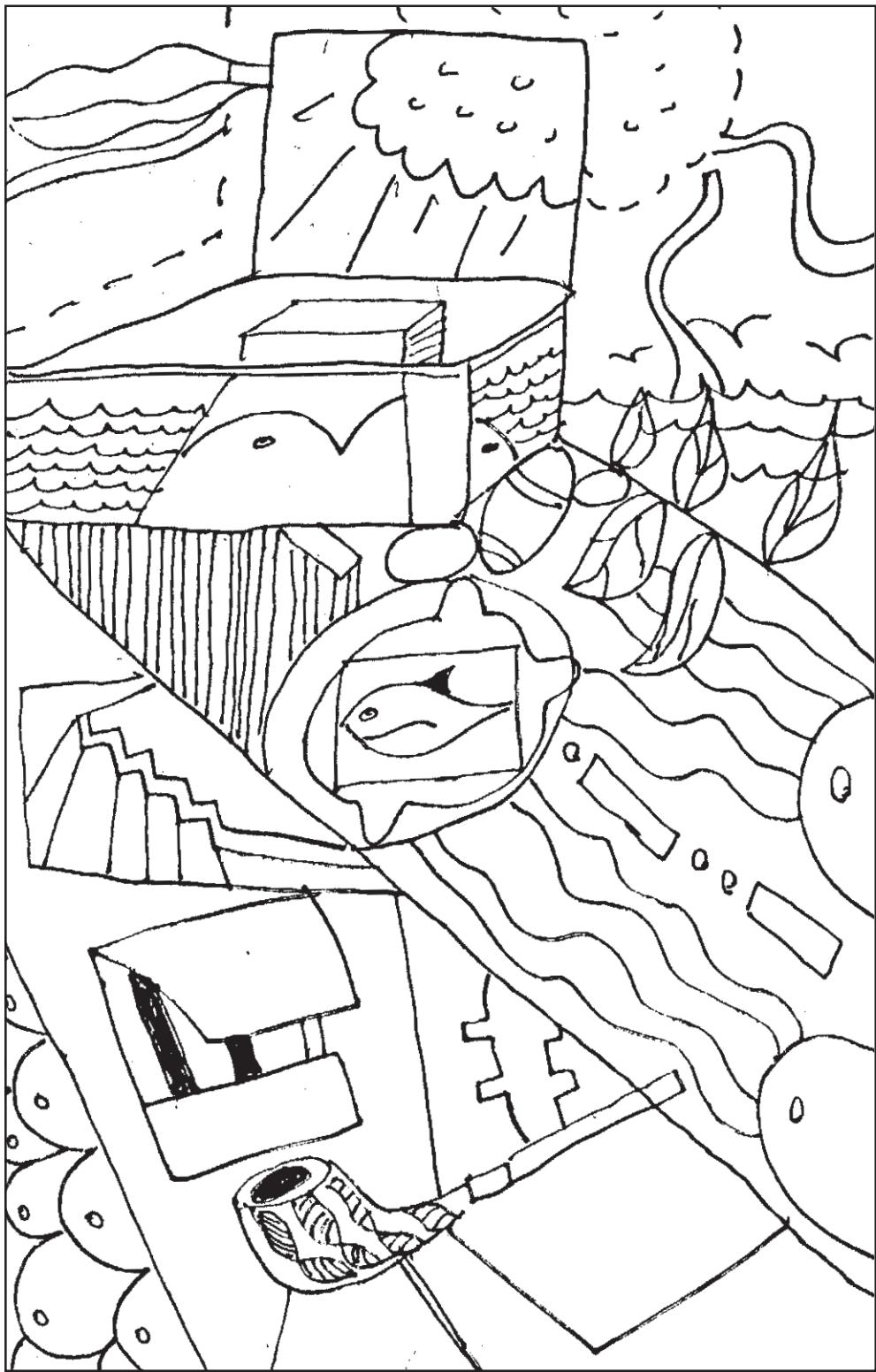
There is the I, the interpreting of field events in the process of  
encoding the poem and there is the interpretation that the reader or  
hearer of the poem is doing. We picture these two process as the  
inverse of each other. In the cyclical-permutation group, finite algebra,  
register-shifting mathematic of semiosis,  $1 = 2 + 3 + 4$ .

THE FORMAL



THE POSSIBLE





## A Vedic-Vorticist's View of Time

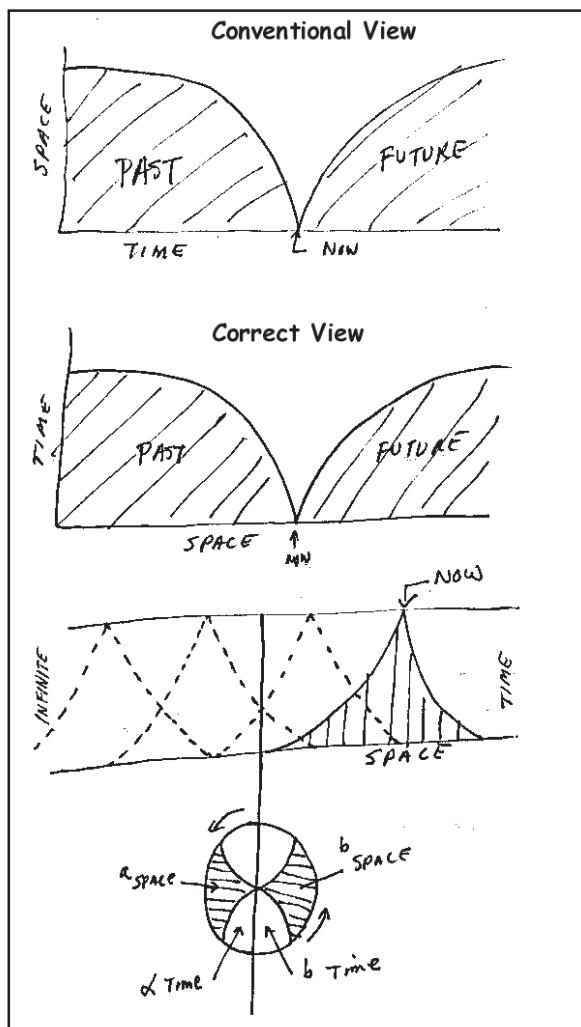
Darrell Gray thought of the natural world as full of hermetic metaphysical processes. He understood the deep image, used the idea of the image as central in his poems. Pound the arch-Vorticist defined Image as an intellectual and emotional complex not in an instant of time, but, as it were, at the vortex of time — beyond the category of the instant.

### Hovering, Focusing and the Irreal

Darrell Gray was involved in the practice of Actualism.

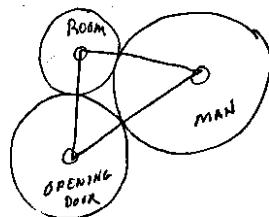
There were various methods and practices to help the initiate reach the state of being actual. Usually this state only lasts for a very short time, but with practice it can be obtained more often. Some of these methods were Hovering, Focus Alignment Process. These practices were the basis for an “autistic generative phenomenology” that he called Automorphism.

Focusing involved holding up the process mirror to the neumonal mirror. As explored in the essays, Gray saw Pounds Vorticism as a precursor to Actualism.



Noumenal Essences are Omnidirectional, being the unobstructed source of all Phenomenal manifestation — as a result they are not subject to simple linear coercion of integrities in Spatio/Temporal Realm.

Complex conjunction of Simple Occasions Determined by Numenal Essence



Poetic Movements

Low Pressure System

We get to the edge: no use

that the edge is within us —

particular

in my mind

you live — particle

after a month

“the world’s richest man is dead”

H.L. Hunt —

And the bath-tub

drain

is clogged

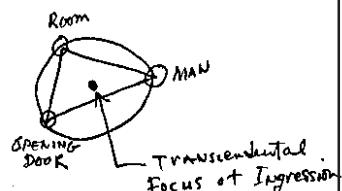
that’s the News

folks

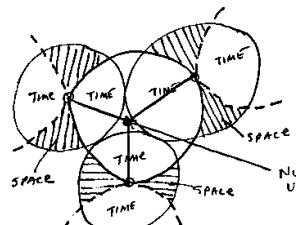
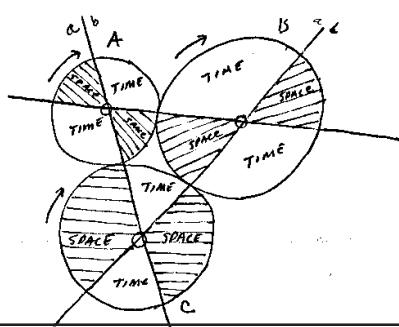
that’s the

hot-dog

29:IX:74



Transcendental Focus of Ingression



(from *The Beauties of Travel*)

### BUBBLE

Around no point in particular  
around no given summer  
around any small enough town it begins  
to exist  
hanging around the street lights and  
surrounding available insects waterdrops  
and parts of speech lost in  
parking-lots at night  
enclosing night itself in a flexible skin  
growing expanding carrying away  
the universe  
while we go to work eat lunch make love  
and fall asleep inside it



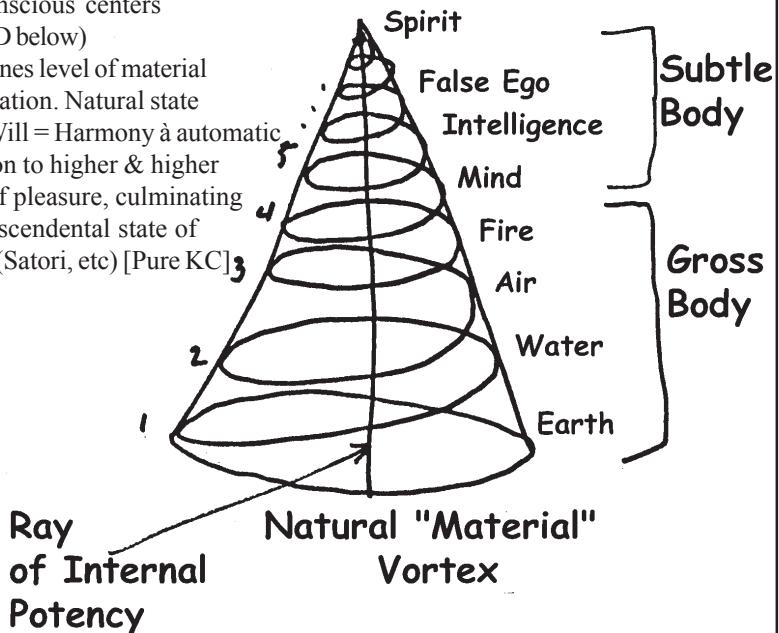
Gray first mentions Rudolf Steiner in the context of Krishnamurti and Buckminster Fuller. This shows him thinking about the forces of myth at work in the world and its role in the emergence as being. One of Steiner's spiritual principles involves the vortex spiral as a key component found throughout nature.

### Veda is vortical

The conscious centers

[Will] (D below)

determines level of material organization. Natural state of the Will = Harmony à automatic elevation to higher & higher states of pleasure, culminating in Transcendental state of Mosca (Satori, etc) [Pure KC]



Pound started using the vortex as a model of all the things you need to know circulating around you as you set down to write the poem. He thought of the poet as the center of revolutionary movements and currents. In his hands this model was a proposition of the ego in resistance.

Olson bridged the gap between Pound and WCW especially with his infusion of Jungian archetypes into the mix. In Olson's program of *Projective Verse*, Pound's Vortex gets analyzed and generalized to be an image of the zeitgeist. The whole oeuvre of the modern from quantum mechanics to cubism is, at core, projective. The sense of the projective in Olson contains Pound's sense of vortex. The vortex is one manifestation of the projective.

Olson's program of *Projective Verse* was so liberating for poets working after him that it becomes a prolegomenon for future poetics. (At the time I delighted in his celebration of the typewriter as an instrument, and his grounding of metrics in the breath.) I think many of the topics in Grays poetics can be traced to ideas in Olson's text. Even the word trace has its origin in the idea of the projective. We will see in the review of Gray's essays found in the appendix of this book how he worked out these implications of the projective.

Briefly, some of the ideas he explores which first occur in Olson's manifesto are: The Poem has its own time; The poem exists in a Field; The objects in the field are not always symbols; Sound is of a more lasting and primitive aspect because it is closer to the head (Gray developed his ideas of Trace Tone Poetics); The open poem searches for coherence on its own terms, (these terms include "other" games: Gray wrote essay on Wittgenstein and the logic of the unreal); in the pursuit of coherence, the open poem seeks its own key, (key is as analog of the concept of key in music, meaning a whole register of conventions in which performance and composition occur.) Gray explored the "field of form" as the Idea. The field of form as distinct from the force field, is not anchored in space. It is the IDEA — the "roseness" of the rose — manifesting in millions of places. The idea is that which is recognized by mind.

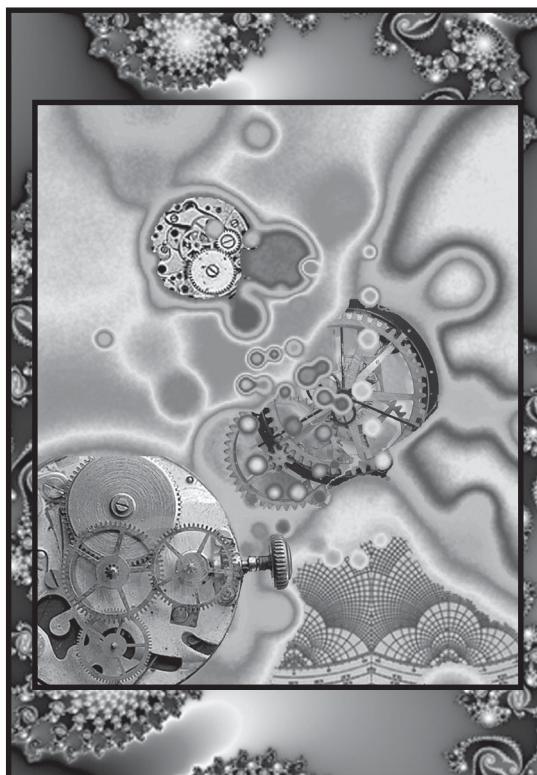
In *Projective Verse* Olson express a desire to get "rid of the lyrical interference of the individual as ego, of the 'subject' and his soul, that peculiar presumption by which western man has interposed himself between what he is as a creature of nature . . and those other creatures of nature." Gray's idea of the Automorph is born out of this struggle with the ego. Actualism was how Gray worked out the problems that Olson challenged future poets with in his program.

What does it mean: the poem as vortex. The time internal to the poem of rhythms coming back to relate to other parts of the poem.

For Gray the vortex is a chaos attractor or a freshness attractor in many dimensions. The vortex is a model of all life evolving on this orbiting, spinning, precessing planet who took this ancient diurnal dimension of time into our hearts so that we experience time as a projection, an average, over these cardioid constrictions and expansions and neuronal pulsations ebbing and flowing.

A classic clock with hands for hours minutes and seconds shows the end of a cycle coming back to the beginning. Some watches show phases of the moon, and other sidereal circadian movements. Time as embodied in the clock is a representation of the classical cyclic group, a finite arithmetic of mod 12. Time is a vortex. Time can be seen as a fractal vortex, if you convolve the second hand onto the end of the minute hand onto the end of the hour hand. We could express each of these circulating hands with the rotating phaser  $e^{i\theta}$  simply by putting the h, m, s into the argument:  $e^{ih}$ ,  $e^{im}$ ,  $e^{is}$ . Time becomes a vortex, a spiral of spirals moving on the path of a helix.\* Time is the projection of rhythm. These orbital rhythms become vortical time. We can start to understand the projections onto our weeks, days hours minutes seconds. Time as a vortex can be seen as zooming in on these time scales. The vortex rotation is like the period of a day, the mixing time inside the vortex is on the order of hours. The interface flux at the edge of the vortex is the realm of the seconds.

\* (Time viewed as a Vortical Fractal by superposition of second hand on the end of minute hand on the end of hour hand (i.e.  $e^{id} \cdot e^{ih} \cdot e^{im} \cdot e^{is} = e^{i(d+h+m+s)}$ ) in which chaos is attracted out of randomness and the internal mixing is equal to the interface spin.)



The natural language of a turbulent vortex is time. The turbulence and motion of the entity is a response of internal forces meeting external forces and becoming commensurate on time scales. External influences force the vortex to move and in its spinning to meet and equilibrate with external pinning forces impinging on the vortex in relation to a nearby wall or other interface. The reaction is spinning. The result is the time it takes to move a distance equal to its own diameter. In human terms this would be minutes to days, the period of rotation. In addition to rotation period, the vortex has an internal mixing time, and an interface flux time. Mixing would take place during a day, while interface flux is in the range of seconds and minutes. There are relations among these. For example, the mixing time is the deceleration time of the rotation rate. Finally, the flux at any nearby interface can be represented by a flux time which depends on the ratio of the vortex moving in a line to its rotation time. This is called its persistence.

In his essay Gray sees the whole history of poetry, in particular the movements of structuralism and vorticism, moving toward Actualism. He starts with WCW — The poet thinks with the poem. He invokes Olson and thinks about the projections of higher dimensions into ours, reflected in the harmonic ontology of the Vedas. The Parmedian world of the ultimate source leaves traces in our world at every moment, along the unfolding path curve of the great chain of being. Steiner was an inspiration as were Korzybsky, Castaneda and Dorn, and de Bono.

Forms were opening up. The modern poet at the end of the 60s human potential movement was part shaman, part physicist, part monk. He was a poet in the sense of autopoiesis, self making. The oroborous, the self referential. Openness and coherence are not easy to make commensurate. Just as to essay is to *try* and bring things together, by projecting them out of a field of potential, so the poem was the *making* through an open form that emerged into being on the potentialities and reflections of the ideal forms. For me the moment of being actual was a great mixing of eros and logos; it goes back to childhood, of feelings and ideas being like transparent forces pushing across the membranes of my self. (The Greeks thought of it this way too, in the childhood of humanity.) Children know this. Poem is the first making, the essay, the trying to catch the emergence of being in the moment.

We see Gray was very much involved in a dialog with Olson.

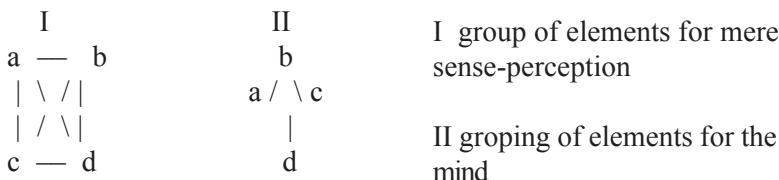
This notebook entry refers to Olson whose ideas on the poetry of ‘open form’ in his essay “*Projective Verse*” became famously influential. Called sometimes organic, ‘open form’ emphasized authenticity, the speaking voice, and the ‘natural look’ of lines cut on sense and content carried on the rhythm of breath and the poet’s mental momentum. Through syntax as a mimesis of action in the poems, momentum became an active verbal force. Gray is working on these ideas which he designates with the algebraic X, to be essayed. Then Gray solves for that involuntary element. He starts from the primacy of tone and moves to the other elements of poetry — content, association. He deduces:

Core — node: ie. it seems most likely that there is, within language a center away from which devolves the originating nuclear energy.

Tone, being primary devolves less acutely than either content, association or involuntary psychic processes.

Then Gray asks about the relationship between Tone and Intention. He establishes the primacy of tone, and this is a statement of the idea that one is *in* a process rather than *conducting* a process.

**Rudolf Steiner note:** Steiner, was a big influence on Gray. In his essay *On Goethe's Theory of Knowledge as an Epistemology* Steiner has a diagram illustrating how an arrangement of equally present sense data, I, is organized by the mind into causal linkages, II.



Steiner uses this diagram in a discussion of inorganic vs organic science. Inorganic science is governed by Natural Law which is wrongly applied to organic science. The Form of Natural law is: “when this fact interacts with that, this phenomenon arises.” Indeed Goethe had written an essay *The Experiment as Mediator between Subject & Object*. The simile pre-echos Peirce, in his phenomenology of events moving to law: something might happen - -> something had to happen. This is an appeal by understanding to natural law. It is nature being brought into a kind of congruence to the mind. Rather than staying in the natural law habit,

Steiner wants us to address the organic object with an evolutionary question: Ask whence comes it instead of what purpose does it serve. The essential statement from Steiner is this: Look into every entity in its inner completeness. And for Darrell Gray seeking a “natural law of poetry” it was this poem as ‘completeness of being’ that he thought was the highest criterion for a poem to be satisfying. To observe an object in its becoming  $O_{t1} \rightarrow O_{t2} \rightarrow O_{t3}$  was the essence of inorganic science for Steiner and would become Gray’s *Trace Tone Poetics*. What Gray calls tone, Peirce calls quality and Steiner Type.

For Steiner Type meant that one looked on an organic entity as a special instance of all possible and that there were other factors besides the facts of natural law. “We must conceive at a deeper level than the influences of external conditions. Something which did not passively allow itself to be determined by the conditions but actively determines itself under their influence.” The type plays in the organic world the same role as that of the natural law in the inorganic.

Here is another cross pollination from Steiner. The entity on a deeper level that actively determines itself  $\dashrightarrow$  automorph.

“The type is this: the Idea of the organism; the animality in the animal, the general plant in the specific plant” Type is fluidic, it imbues the organic entity. Gray used deBono’s hydromorphic models of cognition. (This is fractal. How Steiner would have loved fractals if he had been around to see them. He certainly loved projective geometry and nonlinear dynamics.) Steiner reminds us to think of Organism as a particular shaping of the primal form. Type is not something finished it is fluidic. The analog of proof in the organic is intuition. “We must not confront the single form with the type in order to show the type governs the form; we must cause the form to issue from the type. Natural law governs a manifestation as something standing above this, the type flows into the single living entity, identifying itself with this.” The type must create the content with the form. This is certainly a dictum worthy of Darrell Gray: intuition as the main principle of poetic science. The poetic act is to trace the movement of type. Steiner then says “intuition is the actual being-within, an entrance into the truth which gives us all that comes in any way under consideration in regarding truth.” The central essence of the world flows into our thinking; that we do not merely think concerning the nature of the world but that thinking is an entrance into connection with the nature of reality.

This ‘actual being-within’ is what is meant by Actualism. Gray sought to avoid poems that were commenting on reality he wanted poems that traced the emergence of being into reality.

Dissolution is finding the meaning within the thing. It is a kind of dissolving through intuition and contemplation into being. His was the way of the Pilgrim, seeking to know how the type flows into specific Form. Type Token Term stand before phenomena with just your intuition to enter into it.

Gray then uses a matrix to display and consider the characteristic dichotomous elements intendent upon the emergence of the poem.

Most easily shown

S/T	A/C
-	+

$$S = I \quad A = E$$

$$T = E \quad C = E,$$

$$S = ACT \text{ (space = action)}$$

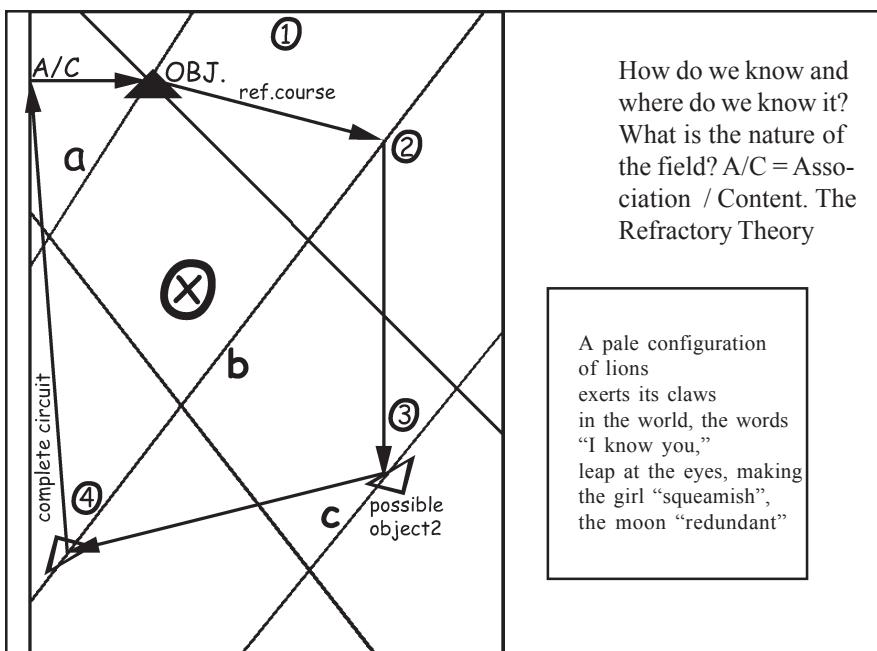
--> ) O ( --> synapse space neuron

Here the ratios S/T and A/C show Gray is considering  
 $S = I$ , Syntax = Intention ;  $A = E$ , Association = Energy  
 $T = E$ , Tone = Energy;  $C = E$ , Content = Energy.

He sums up with the equation

$$S = ACT, \text{ Syntax = Association, Content, Tone.}$$

The Involuntary X-element in conjunction with association divided by content.



Next Gray speaks of the tension(s) created by structure, the yoking together of disparate categories in metaphor, with the concept of “Perceptual Distance.” He works through several examples of structure, essaying the repellent capability of the imaginary object. He eventually goes into a Kantian discussion of Synthetic Reverb.

### **Non-Synthetic Reverb**

Here we might ask: What is this non-synthetic reverb? What a concept! If we ask Euclid, he would say Synthetic geometry is elementary as opposed to analytical geometry of Descartes. If we ask Kant he would say, I use the term synthetic as opposed to analytical when I am talking about propositions that do not and that do contain their own predicate. You can answer the truthfulness of an analytic proposition from the proposition itself, but a synthetic you have to look outside, pull in other facts.

Or we might ask an audio engineer, about ‘synthetic reverb’. He would say that it is a circuit in his reverb box, that causes delays in the transmission of sound, and this circuit does harmonic filtering on the sound to make it sound like it was traveling around in a big room, maybe a cathedral or a tunnel. So these diagrams that Gray is drawing are diagrams of the movement through syntax of the creative impulse as it gathers momentum in the semantic space of the poem and is undergoing delay and relay and transformation from associational impacts while bouncing around among these various categorical imperatives in the design criteria of the poem: We have seen these imperatives being yoked together by syntax are opposing Intentions, Emotions, Tone Energies, Associations, the Core Nucleus of the Poem and the Content proper.

These notebook entries continue with:

A poem is self-evident only when the Field factor involves in its being activates all particulars within the field(s).

Deflection of all verbal particles from N must penetrate into the O (or operative) field of behavior.

The O Field

It should not be treated as a “container.” The world does not “contain” phenomena – it enacts them

^  
<-- N --> } [S = M + C]  
  ^

We get a sense of Darrell Gray involved with the process of semiosis here. Using linguistics modeling in the essays on syntax. Linguistical modeling as a kind of notation or pseudo-code for the movement of feelings in the poem.

## Birds

As we wander through the garden of Darrell Gray's poems we are often treated to the perception of birds and flight. The birds serve to delineate the space.

### Example a (SSO 75)

I take the pill  
& am gone. Birds fly because they have more imagination.

Darrell Gray begins his book *Scattered Brains* with an invocation of birds. Here as in many poems he quietly takes us into participating in an opening fascination.

### Example b (SB 9)

#### TIME WITH BIRDS

My shadow is also theirs  
when they're within me.  
I feel the wings widen,  
I roost  
in the new  
bones, opening  
world for world.  
Is the head an amplitude,  
a  
swerve  
embodied?  
What would it hit?  
I become a child.  
The wild rose opens  
its soft machinery—  
a tenseness fired into  
song, or a nest  
for losses.

The poem Time with Birds sets us off trying to answer a rhetorical question. Is the head an amplitude? This suggests the harmonic ontology in the Vedas, with the levels of existence thought of as organizations of higher and higher frequencies, over base or sub-harmonic frequencies. This suggests flight. Rhetoric explores the two powers of “is,” predication and identification.

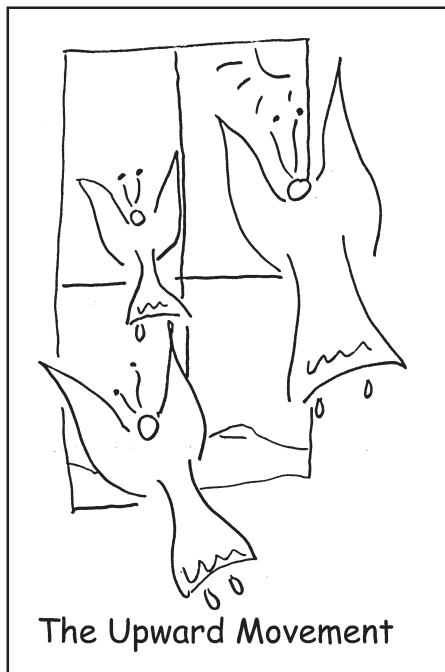
“Is the head a swerve?” The concept of the Great Swerve is from the first atomist Lucretius. The early atomists thought nature was the result of a swerve in the rain of elementary particles. The swerve also suggest a shimmer in the landscape like a shifting heat lens, a mirage. This goes back to

the harmonic ontology again. Swerve then suggest the next question if we have swerved off course what would we hit. We have this scene of a bird in flight, and it is coming back to the nest in which the poet has set himself to roost in an earlier line. We are going back to a moment in the child's imagination to enter the soft machinery, the cellulose that affords the beauty of rose.

So we are looking into nature on several levels, going back to the primordial entity out of which it all emerges and its variations on a theme. The poem is a flight out from and back to the nest, where we are alone with loss, and we have a place to be with that. Succor comes to mind, self-calming flights of imagination and penetrating intuition represented by birds are the vehicle of imagination. This poem has some nice feedback loops. Flights of fancy take off from the “roost” and “nest” positions. Flights into childhood, ancient Greek philosophers, the childhood of humanity. There is something in the motion of the lines too, the cut lines of WCW or the enjambment of Creely the short line asking us to see at every step. Ultimately this poem is a triumph of sweetness and intense imagery trading back and forth, wings widen and become a child, the rose opening as against machinery, losses, shadows. Once you notice it, you see that there are many identifications with birds in Darrell Gray’s poetry. Birds represent the place of the imagination, or the intention moving with the will in the world as idea.

*(from Notebook)*

everything is being lifted



mars, the zodiac, everything  
the trouble of love  
each has grown separate  
but is lifted

the wheels coordinate  
the summit of the dark  
the golden —they are lifted  
still.

invisible futures  
are lifted  
a ship, while as it turns  
in mid-stream to return  
because of some eminent  
danger  
is lifted—  
the same scene in an old  
park  
is lifted  
the girl lifts her chin to  
survey the weightlessness  
of the lifted bird.