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Although Whitman did not perform his poems in public on many occasions, he imagined them as meant to be launched by the human voice. For training, he says that he “spouted in the woods, down by the shore, in the noise of Broadway where nobody could hear me: spouted, eternally spouted, an (sic) spouted again.... I think I had a good voice: I think I was never afraid—I had no stage reticences (I tried the thing often enough to see that).”<sup>1</sup> Hailing his “sincerity of voice and manner,” audiences praised his public speaking as “devoid of tricks of elocution,” and in this he was in line with a revised sense of public speech (oratory as opposed to elocution) that emerged in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> An audience of mechanics and young men in Camden, NJ, commented in a letter to the *Springfield Republican* (July 23, 1875) on Whitman’s reading of his lyric “The Mystic Trumpeter” “in a manner which singularly combined strong emphasis with the very realization of self-composure, simplicity and ease”:

His voice is firm, magnetic, and with a certain peculiar quality we heard an admiring auditor call unaffectedness. Its range is baritone, merging into bass. He reads very leisurely, makes frequent pauses or gaps, enunciates with distinctness, and uses few gestures, but those very significant. Is he eloquent and dramatic? No, not in the conventional sense, as illustrated by the best known stars of the pulpit, court-room, or the stage—for the bent of his reading, in fact the whole idea of it, is evidently to first form an enormous mental fund, as it were, within the regions of the chest, and heart, and lungs—a sort of interior battery—out of which, charged to the full with such emotional impetus only, and without ranting or any of the usual accessories or clap-trap of the actor or singer, he launches

what he has to say, free of noise or strain, yet with a power that makes one almost tremble.

The poetics of naturalness that the correspondent points up here—one that eschews theatricality of voice and gesture, that is without affectation but powerfully affective—is, again, a sign of the times, with Whitman proposing to bring oratory to a new more intimate level, the poet not “ranting” but “leisurely” speaking.<sup>3</sup>

Readers of Whitman in his day and after found his verse ripe for recitation. Abraham Lincoln is reported to have read *Leaves of Grass* aloud—an “unusual” occurrence apparently, as it is reported that Lincoln rarely vocalized anything in his Springfield law office but newspaper extracts; *Leaves*, though, we are told, he “read with sympathetic emphasis verse after verse,” hailing them for their “virility, freshness.”<sup>4</sup> Henry James, despite writing some hostile reviews of Whitman’s work, nonetheless, according to Edith Wharton, was cured of his stammer when reciting Whitman, whose lines poured fluidly from his lips. Carl Sandburg lectured on Whitman beginning in 1906 and recited Whitman’s poetry as part of his performances. Langston Hughes recorded “When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom’d” on the Folkways album *The Glory of Negro History* (1958) <http://www.folkways.si.edu/search/AlbumDetails.aspx?ID=1384>. The beat poet Allen Ginsberg recited Whitman as part of his lectures at the Naropa Institute on July 4, 1975

[http://www.archive.org/details/Allen\\_Ginsberg\\_class\\_The\\_history\\_of\\_poetry\\_part\\_15\\_June\\_1975\\_75P016](http://www.archive.org/details/Allen_Ginsberg_class_The_history_of_poetry_part_15_June_1975_75P016)

[http://www.archive.org/details/Allen\\_Ginsberg\\_class\\_The\\_history\\_of\\_poetry\\_part\\_16\\_June\\_1975\\_75P017](http://www.archive.org/details/Allen_Ginsberg_class_The_history_of_poetry_part_16_June_1975_75P017)

and again on August 2, 1976

[http://www.archive.org/details/naropa\\_allen\\_ginsberg\\_class\\_on\\_walt3](http://www.archive.org/details/naropa_allen_ginsberg_class_on_walt3). Doc Searls, senior editor of *Linux Journal*, a leading technology magazine, reported on his popular blog that Whitman's poetry came alive for him in the voice of *The Prairie Home Companion*'s Garrison Keillor, whom he heard on the radio reciting Whitman:

The first time I truly heard Walt Whitman was when Garrison Keillor read selections from "Song of Myself," accompanied by Leo Kottke on guitar. I was driving North on highway 280 south of San Francisco, on the spine of The Peninsula. The setting sun made silhouettes of the mountains to the West, and brightened the fog in the long valleys below. Beneath the fog lay the Crystal Springs and San Andreas reservoirs, the latter of which gives its name to the world's most famous fault. The setting was perfect. So was the reading.... I was so knocked out by what I heard that I had to pull over and stop the car. Here, I knew, was Truth with a capital T.<sup>5</sup>

The contemporary San Francisco poet Jack Foley also felt the profound effect that vocalizing and auditing Whitman historically has had: "I read aloud Whitman's magnificent ... poem, 'Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking' on one of my KPFA [radio] programs. I know what an extraordinary experience it is to perform that poem. After hearing the program, some listeners phoned in to tell me they hadn't realized what an amazing poet Whitman was until they had heard me read him aloud.... (On another show I played a recording of Orson Welles reading selections from *Leaves of Grass*; it too was an extraordinary experience.)"

Whitman's poetic words have been performed in a range of media, as Kenneth Price chronicles in *To Walt Whitman, America* (2004) (see William Pannacker's review of Price's book in this issue). Perhaps one of the best-known modern recitations of Whitman occurred in the 1989 film *Dead Poets Society*, where the eccentric teacher Mr. Keating jumps on desks while

reciting Whitman's "O Captain! My Captain!" to inspire his students

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s8UL\\_9R\\_W-Y&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s8UL_9R_W-Y&feature=related). Whitman's voice has been

crucial behind the screen, too. In Martin Scorsese's *Gangs of New York* (2002), Daniel Day-

Lewis is said to have modeled his Bowery boy speech

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fxv\\_6WA6A6M](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fxv_6WA6A6M) on the alleged extant recording of Whitman

reading all but the last two lines of his poem "America" on wax cylinder

<http://www.whitmanarchive.org/multimedia/index.html>. In the second part of Michael

Cunningham's novel *Specimen Days* (2005), "The Children's Crusade," the performance of

Whitman is again front and center, as young boys roam the streets of New York, explosives

strapped to their bodies, reciting *Leaves*. Even Whitman's famous Lincoln lecture has been

subject to re-staging, by the writer Daniel Mark Epstein in April 2005

[http://www.loc.gov/today/cyberlc/feature\\_wdesc.php?rec=3681](http://www.loc.gov/today/cyberlc/feature_wdesc.php?rec=3681).

The audio files that *MSR* makes available in this issue constitute yet another medium—usually neglected—in which Whitman's poetry was articulated to the public in the twentieth century. In this introduction, I want to say a few words about the culture and poetics of verse recitation in America that shape the delivery style of actors reciting Whitman's work on a range of LPs dating from the 1940s to the 1970s, in an effort to better understand just how we are to hear them, and Whitman through them.

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Under the entry "Performance" in the *New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* (1993), we read that, in "the realm of expressive style," "The two general classes ... are realistic (naturalistic) and oratorical (declamatory, dramatic, rhapsodic, incantatory)." The contributor

adds that C. S. Lewis once identified two types of performers of metrical verse: “Minstrels” (who recite in a wooden, singsong voice, letting scansion override sense); and “Actors” (who give a flamboyantly expressive recitation, ignoring meter altogether). Much of the debate about the proper recitation of poetry in the post-World War II period in America indeed has depended on these distinctions.

The U.S. reading tours of the Welsh poet Dylan Thomas and his recordings of his poems in the early 1950s represent a watershed moment in the history of poetry in performance and helps to structure the debate. Writing to the poet Oscar Williams in 1945, Thomas envisioned how he could “earn a living” as a poet, boasting, “I can read aloud, through sonorous asthma, with pomp.” Five years later, the poet John Malcolm Brinnin, an admirer of Thomas’s work, invited him to give readings at the Poetry Center at New York’s Young Men’s and Young Women’s Hebrew Association. The fee was five hundred dollars plus Thomas’s airfare, and Brinnin additionally offered to sponsor further readings in colleges and universities across America. On February 20, 1950, he flew to America, staying on this first tour for 100 days. His second trip to America, in January 1952, lasted until May. His third tour ended after less than six weeks (he left in April 1953). On October 19, 1953, he arrived for the final time, and died in New York in November 1953.

On February 22, 1952, Thomas made his first recording for the fledgling Caedmon Records. It was the first of many albums Thomas was to record for Caedmon and launched not only Caedmon, but the spoken word industry as a whole. As a *New York Times* reviewer observed in 1956, “One thing these Caedmon recordings are bound to do and that is to alter the course of future scholarship. A hundred years from now, no Ph.D. candidate will dare to be without his hi-fi set, and critics of the future (Freudian, New and semantic) will have a high time pondering slurred words, dropped lines and changed rhymes. And the House of Caedmon will

rank with the Domesday Book and the Exchequer Rolls of the Middle Ages as prime source material for doctoral theses.”<sup>6</sup>

At the same time as Thomas was making a name for himself as a poet in the popular culture, one notes a rash of interest in the oral articulation of verse in academic New Criticism. Yvor Winters had much to say on the subject and its prosodic underpinnings in 1951 in his essay “The Audible Reading of Poetry,” declaring baldly there that “without audible reading, and adequate audible reading, you simply do not have poetry.”<sup>7</sup> As he finds, there is no mis-speaking a poem if the poet has handled correctly his accents, and he disparages Gerard Manley Hopkins’s diacritical markings of his texts and the linguist Walter Ong’s defense of them, accusing Ong of not knowing the principles of versification that would make clear where stress falls without the need for Hopkins’s arbitrary system. The issue of rhetorical stress and its relationship to meter, and the relationship of both to audible reading, that Winters raises is of course vexed with respect to Whitman, who was writing free verse. Nonetheless, Winters tells readers to “deal with rhetorical stresses with the utmost restraint,” and insists that the value of a poem relies on the proper oral performance of it, with a fine printed poem not “amount[ing] to anything if its rhythm is not rendered with great precision”: “[T]o read the poem so that its rhythm does not emerge in its totality and in every detail is to reduce the poem to lifeless fragments.” The proof of the poem lies then in the oral performance of it.

Winters places the burden on the reader properly to realize the poem, noting that “You cannot buy expert readings of these poems on disks, as you can buy expert renderings of Bach and Mozart; nor can you go to a concert and hear them—every man is his own performer. It is important, therefore, that one read properly. But to read properly one must understand the principles both of English meter and of English rhythm, and not in a haphazard manner, but precisely; and one must understand the use of one’s own voice; and after that one must practice.”

Referring to the quasi-incantational reading style that he believes verse demands, he concludes that “Any poem which cannot endure the impersonal illumination of such a reading or which requires the assistance, whether expert or clumsy, of shouting, whispering, or other dramatic improvement, is to that extent bad poetry, though it may or may not be a good scenario for a vaudeville performance.” He further finds that there is a problem with actors who try to recite: “they cannot read poetry, for they try to make it appear to be something else, something, in brief, which they themselves can understand”; Winters insists on reading “with a minimum of dramatic improvement on the text, and with a maximum of attention to movement,” noting that when T. S. Eliot reads “dramatically”—that is, when “he puts into his voice [what] is not in the poem”—he descends to the practice of the actor who is salvaging a weak text.”<sup>8</sup>

Two fellow New Critics, W. K. Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley, in their 1959 essay “The Concept of Meter,” call into question the value of any ephemeral oral enactment of verse, contending that “There are many performances of the same poem—differing among themselves in many ways. A performance is an event, but the poem itself, if there is any poem, must be some kind of enduring object.”<sup>9</sup> The linguist Roman Jakobson confirms this statement when he cites the independence of “the verse shape of a poem” from “its variable delivery.”<sup>10</sup> Wimsatt and Beardsley caution against making too much of oral performance, what Jakobson calls the “delivery instance”: “There is, of course, a sense in which the reading of the poem is primary: that is what the poem is for. But there is another and equally important sense in which the poem is not to be identified with any particular performance of it, or any set of such performances.”<sup>11</sup> While it is true that we should not take any one performance of a poem as defining it, such a performance does become part of the repertoire of the poem. A set of performances further enlarges that repertoire, which is capable of giving us insights into the meanings that a poem is meant to convey—meanings that may change, with the poem, over time. In 1980, Beardsley, in

“Right Readings and Good Readings,” would express his view that any reader first must perform (literally articulate) a text to understand its meaning fully.<sup>12</sup>

The institutionalized poetry reading that begins to take hold in the U.S. in the 1960s, but that was in no way new, reframed many of these same issues, particularly that of the personality of the poet as it figures in the occasion of recital. Denise Levertov, writing in 1965 in “An Approach to Public Poetry Listeners,” takes note of a renewed interest in the oral performance of poetry, particularly by the poet, “whose voice, even if he stammer, is individual and authentic,” as opposed to the actor, reciter, or elocutionist who, she feels, would impose his own personality on the poem.<sup>13</sup> She locates an exception to this rule in a BBC tape of the actor Albert Finney reading poems by D. H. Lawrence: “The structure of the poems is beautifully realized; the subtleties of expressive emphasis always arise out of the notation, out of the written word: they are never merely superimposed ‘interpretations’”; as Levertov reasons,

In the case of the writer himself, such ‘personality’ as gets into his ‘delivery’ is already in the poem anyway; his voice will clarify, not distort. This doesn’t mean that poems should be read aloud only by their authors! But if tapes of the poets themselves were more often available, readers would learn to distinguish better between the true form of the poem, read as written, with line-breaks, punctuation, every typographical device functioning notatively, and the distortions of poetry that occur in many quite popular commercial recordings (and ‘concert evenings’) by professional actors who do not understand that the poem is not a vehicle for displays of vocal virtuosity. The theatrical school of reading tries to add to the poem. The poet-reader, if he is any good at all—that is, if he is a good poet, never mind his voice timbre—aims at revealing the poem. (430-31)

A December 1957 article in *College English*, however, does not hold in such high esteem the recital skills of poets, issuing the opinion that “most good poets are not good readers,” with notable exceptions being Dylan Thomas, T. S. Eliot, Robert Frost, E. E. Cummings, C. Day Lewis, and Edna St. Vincent Millay, “and (to some tastes) [Carl] Sandburg.”<sup>14</sup> When an actor is engaged to read a poem, another risk presents itself, namely, that of overdramatization (a sentiment that Winters shares): “Actors certainly do not suffer from the poet’s inability to read aloud; their trouble is that they often do not understand what they are reading.... Whatever the reason, most actors do not give a reading but a performance, often expert and superficially striking, but still an intrusion of the actor’s art and personality into the poem.” This same writer deems the recordings of Whitman’s verse by Allen, Moss, the University Players, and Austin Warren as “no[t] satisfactory” on that score

<http://www.folkways.si.edu/search/AlbumDetails.aspx?ID=1688>.<sup>15</sup>

Recent forays by high ranking poetry officials in American culture have sought to promote the oral recitation of poetry in more democratic spaces, including the Internet. On the Library of Congress website “Poetry 180,” a program designed for American high school teachers, former U.S. Poet Laureate Billy Collins gives “pointers” on performance, which include reading the poem slowly; reading in a normal, relaxed tone of voice (“It is not necessary to give any of these poems a dramatic reading as if from a stage. The poems selected are mostly written in a natural, colloquial style and should be read that way”); and pausing only where there is punctuation, just as one would when reading prose. As Collins declares, in echo of Beardsley, “learning to read a poem out loud is a way of coming to a full understanding of that poem.”<sup>16</sup>

The history of the performance of poetry in the U.S. that I have been taking a backward glance on here tells us a great deal about how poetry in its relation to orality has been conceived historically and how the performance of it often flowed from definite ideas about what poetry

should be, the extent to which it is subject to interpretation by outside forces, and, if so, what outside forces. It also puts into a proper frame the fate of poetry in the age of mass-marketed and mass-produced entertainment, and the concomitant pressures of publicity and celebrity, which only have heightened over time. The issues of naturalness, expressiveness, authenticity, and personality inevitably swirl around the spoken word albums that are digitized in this issue.

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Of the Ralph Bellamy album archived for audition here, a February 1944 *New York Times* review noted its timeliness: “With an eye on the state of the world, Victor has released an album of selections from Walt Whitman’s ‘Leaves of Grass’ (Album M-955, four twelve-inch records). The verses, many of which dramatically represent militant American democracy, are read by Ralph Bellamy, currently of the stage play ‘Tomorrow the World.’”<sup>17</sup> In a world at war, the album thus is heard as bearing ideological freight, imagined as having been shaped by nationalist sentiment. The review goes on to remark that Bellamy’s readings “are commendable for their sincerity and their unpretentiousness. He makes rather startling voice modulations to fit in with the varying moods of the selections and the brevity of some of the passages makes these changes seem awkward. But the over-all effect is not unpleasant.”

In 1953 the [BBC](#) hired Orson Welles to read an hour of selections from [Song of Myself](#). Of the recording, Kenneth Sherwood offers that “Those who find Welles’ voice pleasing will enjoy the performance for certain. It raises some of the familiar questions of melodrama etc. common when actors record poetry. Still, without a significant ‘authorial’ performance to prefer, this is quite wonderful to hear.” He goes on to say that “Like the poetry of many, Whitman’s is certainly composed for reading aloud and auditing. As we have largely lost this tradition (outside

of the poetry slam), Orson Welles provides a useful instance of what it means to ‘sound’ the text.”<sup>18</sup> “Song of Myself” in particular, he finds, is read “with astonishing variations of pace, tone, and inflection.” John R. Searles in the *English Journal* (September 1973) likewise senses that “The reading by Mr. Welles is remarkable. His voice is usually deep and melodious, but he is capable of great variety in pitch, voice-quality, and tempo. If at times he exaggerates his effects, so did Whitman. For better or worse, depending upon one’s opinion of the poem and of Welles, one must concede that they are perfectly suited to each other.”

Alexander Scourby (1913-1985), an actor and voice actor, perhaps most noted for his accomplished reading of the Bible on tape (Audio Reviews, LJ 8/91), renders Whitman on the album *Spoken Arts Treasury of Walt Whitman: “Leaves of Grass” Read by Alexander Scourby* (1966). We read in the liner notes that Scourby is “considered the foremost reader of poetry on the American scene today,” and the *New York Times* reported on January 1, 1967, that “The poems are read with faultless diction by Alexander Scourby, who is currently playing the role of the poet in the off-Broadway ‘A Whitman Portrait.’” Something of the precise, button-downed nature of the performance flashes forth here.

Of Arnold Moss’s 1955 Library of Congress performance, Thomas Lask, writing for the *New York Times* on October 28, 1956, finds that he “preferred Mr. Moss in his quiet performances, as in ‘When I heard the learned astronomer,’ to his more dramatic and pompous style. Mr. Moss is not afraid to lay it on a bit. But it is probably difficult to read Whitman’s long lines and prophet-like utterances without adopting the manner of a seer.”<sup>19</sup> Again, the tendency toward a fluid orotundity is attributed to the lines themselves, and not seen as an improper imposition of the personality of the performer.

As part of its release of a 1956 recording of the voice of David Allen reading Whitman, Poetry Records explains that as a company it exists as “the outgrowth of the two-fold idea that a

large proportion of poetry was meant to be read aloud, and that reading poetry aloud is an art—as demanding of technique and sensitivity as the interpretation of a musical score or the acting of a play.... We earnestly believe that a broader, revitalized interest in poetry is an important factor in the healthy cultural growth of our country. In helping to give the spoken word a significant place on the nation’s cultural shelf we hope to contribute to this growth.” In a review in the *English Journal* (September 1956), we are told only that Allen “reads very beautifully,” and the critic Louis Untermeyer comments on Allen’s “flexible voice” as evidenced by earlier performances.

Living Literature presents in 1961 a recording of Dan O’Herlihy reciting Whitman, and with the 4 12” long-play high-fidelity records comes a complete book of the poems (and passages of poems) read. On the inside cover we are reminded that with this record you can listen to Whitman’s verse “in your own home...at your own leisure,” “for yourself alone, or together with family and friends,” and that the poetry “takes on a new depth of meaning for you that it never had before” in the audition of it. Thomas Lask in the *New York Times* (October 22, 1961) wonders about the choice of instrumental accompaniment: “The producers have, for some reason, supplied a musical background that runs like an irritating counterpoint under the voice. What’s the matter? Don’t they trust the team of Whitman and O’Herlihy?”

In 1959 *Walt Whitman’s Leaves of Grass* (Volume 1) featuring actor Ed Begley appeared on the market. In the *New York Times* (September 20, 1959), Lask affirms that the poetry is “sensitively read.” When the follow-up volume was released in 1964, Lask again complimented the recorded performance (*New York Times*, November 1, 1964): “Ed Begley who made something fresh out of an earlier reading of Whitman does so again on a second disk.... His voice is strong and very American and in ‘Song of the Open Road’ he handles Whitman’s long lines and personal rhythms with a natural ease.... ‘Fresh’ was used advisably because there is something new, clean and open about Whitman. Perhaps he stands out in contrast to the

agonizing of our existential present. The certainty and unflawed optimism he feels holds out unending hope.... Mr. Begley makes Whitman natural.” Lask is led to counterpose Begley’s album to Scourby’s earlier one (*New York Times*, January 1, 1967): “Mr. Begley brings a rough touch and a colloquial tone to the lines. Mr. Scourby’s approach is more cultivated and precise. He gives the poems a literary wash; Mr. Begley takes an open-air approach. Each is pleasing. It depends a little on how you think Whitman should sound. You won’t go wrong with either.”

On the album cover to *Crossing Brooklyn Ferry and Other Poems*, also recited by Ed Begley and released in 1969, it is announced that “In his free verse, Whitman called upon the traditions of oratory, and the opera, making resourceful use of the human voice. Rhetorical devices, recitative, and techniques of declamation—all make his poetry especially appropriate for recorded interpretation.” Recalling for us the auditory culture out of which Whitman ascends, we are also made to know here that his poetry is itself shaped by the devices common to oral poetry through the ages. On *Walt Whitman: Eyewitness to the Civil War* (1969), again by Ed Begley, the poems of *Drum-Taps* are on vocal display, with the drawing on the album cover purporting to represent Whitman himself standing in a queue of soldiers.

Finally, the two installments of *Walt Whitman’s The Body Electric*, with music by Rod McKuen and words by Jesse Pearson, who, McKuen observed, has a “smoky Southern baritone voice,” foreground the sexually charged nature of Whitman’s poetry, and in particular its homoerotic element, as we encounter on the album cover a photo of a naked man. Both released in the early 1970s, these albums are in many ways signs of the times, updating Whitman in such a way as to help underwrite the counterculture’s “sexual revolution.”

<sup>1</sup> Although Whitman was “pestered for recitations,” he told Traubel, “You know I never read my own poems” (Horace Traubel, *With Walt Whitman in Camden* 9:125, 124). When a newspaper report of his encounter with Sir Edwin Arnold claimed that Whitman recited passages from the *Leaves* for his distinguished visitor, the poet was indignant: “I don’t recite [my own poems] because I don’t know them. *Could not recite.*” (WWWC 9:124). However, Whitman credits his oral performance of his poems with giving him insights into them: “I seem to get a new angle on [my poems when I] read them aloud,” he told Traubel. “[I] see things I could not see in any other way” (WWWC 3:375).

<sup>2</sup> Qtd. Larry Griffin, “Walt Whitman’s Voice,” *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 9 (Winter 1992), 127, 126.

<sup>3</sup> Maurice Bucke, *Walt Whitman* (Philadelphia: David McKay, 1883), 53-54.

<sup>4</sup> Henry B. Rankin, from *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1916). Quoted in Horace Traubel’s May 1916 *Conservator* (27:40) [see *Conserving Walt Whitman’s Fame: Selections from Horace Traubel’s Conservator, 1890-1919*, ed. Gary Schmidgall (Iowa City: U of Iowa P, 2006), 95-97].

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.searls.com/whitman.html>

<sup>6</sup> Thomas Lask, “Poetry on Records” (June 24, 1956): X8.

<sup>7</sup> Yvor Winters, “The Audible Reading of Poetry,” *The Function of Criticism: Problems and Exercises* (Denver: Alan Swallow, 1957): 83.

<sup>8</sup> As Winters alleges, Ong’s concept of reading aloud is indicated by the following passage: ‘If the poem calls for shouting, the shouting need not be kept imaginary for fear the beat of the rhythm will go. Shout, declaim, and you will only have thrust this rhythm home. So, too, if the shout should need to die to a whisper...’ This clerical type of rendition strikes me as about equally impractical, insensitive, and indecorous” (88).

<sup>9</sup> Wimsatt and Beardsley, “The Concept of Meter: An Exercise in Abstraction,” *The Structure of Verse*, ed. Harvey Gross (New York: Ecco Press, 1966), 153.

<sup>10</sup> Roman Jakobson, *Language in Literature* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1987), 81.

<sup>11</sup> “The Concept of Meter” 152.

<sup>12</sup> Monroe Beardsley, “Right Readings and Good Readings,” *Literature in Performance* 1 (November 1980): 10-22.

<sup>13</sup> Denise Levertov, “An Approach to Public Poetry Listenings,” *Light Up the Cave* (New York: New Directions, 1981): 49.

<sup>14</sup> *College English* 19.3 (December 1957), 111-21: 113.

<sup>15</sup> *Library Journal* (June 1, 2002): 220.

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.loc.gov/poetry/180/p180-howtoread.html>

<sup>17</sup> *New York Times* (Feb 27, 1944): X5.

<sup>18</sup> Kenneth Sherwood review on amazon.com (December 21, 2005)

<http://www.amazon.com/review/R25KWA562QMHM1>.

<sup>19</sup> Thomas Lask, *New York Times* (October 28, 1956): 127.

[Mickle Street Review](#)