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Introduction / About the Cover

The Editor

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Introduction / About the Cover

The Editor

On the cover is Richard D. Cureton's rhythmic analysis of the first two lines of "somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond" (CP 367). Subjecting such a lyrical expression of love to such a rigorous rhythmical, metrical, and prosodic analysis may seem contrary to Cummings' professed preference for feeling over thinking. However, Cureton's temporal poetics is designed to offer a coherent account of "what goes with what in poetry—how sound relates to meaning, prosody to syntax, tropes to schemes" (20). Cureton's system creates a four-fold analogical map of the rhythmic feeling universe, the *Is* that is poetry. Indeed, the interpretive efforts in this issue all approach the carefully constructed little worlds of art with the clumsy tools of analysis. Though Cureton's system is the most complex seen in this issue, every interpreter employs critical analytic tools of various sorts to understand the life of the poem. And Cummings was not against understanding. As he writes in *Santa Claus*: "we are all so very full of knowing / that we are empty: empty of understanding" (135). It is our hope that we interpret Cummings' writings not as an empty display of knowledge but as a way of understanding and feeling more fully.

This issue of *Spring* presents a number of different approaches to understanding Cummings' work. Jeffrey S. Sychterz leads off with a look at how one Cummings poem transforms and subverts the Petrarchan sonnet tradition. Cureton's article, "Cummings and Temporality" is followed by Etienne Terblanche's examination of Cummings' "Yin Dynamic," an ecologically informed view of the yin (female) side of Cummings' poetry. Sheridan L. Steelman concludes this section of new views on the poetry with an exploration of some of the ways that the mirror imagery in Cummings symbolizes of rebirth.

Our featured poets this issue are a diverse group: John Edwin Cowen offers poems in the spirit(s) of E. E. Cummings, José Garcia Villa, and Arthur Vanderborg, while Gerald Locklin's new poems offer quiet insight and wry commentary on some paintings of Paul Cézanne and Camille Pissarro. Jacques Demarcq offers six "zozios" [birdy] poems, written in various lively combinations of English, French, and bird languages. All of the poets featured in this issue have recently published collected or selected volumes—for more information, consult News, Notes, & Corre-

spondence at the end of this issue. Along with our featured poets, we present new translations into Italian by Salvatore Di Giacomo of five Cummings love poems. Among these graceful translations will be found “somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond” (CP 367).

In the next section, we revisit the Enormous Room again, seeing it through four very different lenses. A contemporary view of the building complex at La Ferté Macé is provided by Gillian Huang-Tiller, who gives us a short account to her 2008 visit to the site, along with some photographs. E. E. Cummings provides our next two views: the first is a photograph of his map of the detention center at La Ferté, which we have enhanced with a more legible transcription of the same. The second contribution by our non-hero is a letter that Cummings wrote from La Ferté to his friend and mentor Scofield Thayer. Just before he left us, Jack Gill completed one last paper on *The Enormous Room*, a searching study of this letter. We are proud to publish the new Cummings letter along with Gill’s last essay.

A diverse group of poets follows, showing that Cummings’ influence still reaches far and wide (and near and deep). Two wider interpretative forays conclude our efforts to understand Cummings. Aaron Moe offers an essay that shows how Cummings’ poetry fits in with the “Ecological Self” that expands from and comes alive in modernist poems by Emily Dickinson, William Carlos Williams, and Elisabeth Bishop. Sarah Wasserman explores ways in which Cummings’ 1915 graduation speech, “The New Art,” prefigures his later poetic practice and shows the modernist roots of that practice.

It has been our practice to end each issue of *Spring* with book reviews and various news items and correspondence of interest to members of the Cummings Society. Thomas Dorsett reviews *Doveglion*, the collected poems of Cummings disciple José Garcia Villa, who later became a renowned teacher of poetry. The editor would like to apologize for the lateness of the second review, begun years ago and put aside. We print here at last a belated (but we hope still welcome) review of Isabelle Alfandary’s *E. E. Cummings, ou la minuscule lyrique*.

Works Cited

- Cummings, E. E. *Complete Poems, 1904-1962*. Ed George J. Firmage. New York: Liveright, 1994.
- . *Three Plays and A Ballet*. Ed. George J. Firmage. New York: October House, 1967.