

Koan Kinship — Bill Mohr's Blog

Poetry, Art, and Geographical Politics

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« Wanda Coleman: "Word Game"

Gallery Shows on La Cienega and Koreatown »

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The Resilient Visions of Barbara Romain

Beyond Baroque – Friday, January 24

Last night Linda Fry and I attended an event at Beyond Baroque on Friday night that I originally thought was two distinct events, but turned out to be interconnected. Doren Robbins, a poet I met in Los Angeles around 40 years ago, has been married to Linda Janakos, a novelist, for many years; after years of moving around the country, including a serious stretch of residing in Oregon, they settled in Santa Cruz, but they have always maintained an abiding affection for L.A. and its poets and artists. Most recently, Linda has produced and directed a short document film about Barbara Romain, a visual artist who faced an unexpected challenge to her poetics as a painter at the mid-point of her career. Refusing to be daunted by an eye disease that has eviscerated her eyesight, she has continued to produce a vigorous and intriguing body of work in the past two decades. Last night's program at Beyond Baroque started with a screening of *Can You See Me?*, which included interviews with Romain as well as filmed reproductions of her work. *Can You See Me?* is available as a DVD.

The second half of the evening surprised me in that I hadn't realized that Chris Peditto was the late husband of Barbara Romain. I had met Chris a couple of times before I moved to San Diego in the mid-1990s, but we never had much of a chance to get to know each other. He started a small press about the time we met that published several books by writers such as Eric Priestley and Charles Bivins, the latter of whom had appeared in *"Poetry Loves Poetry."* Chris died in early November last year, just a month shy of his 70th birthday. I wasn't able to stay for the memorial at BB last evening, and I asked Doren and Linda to stand in for me.

Here is the poem by Chris that appeared in last night's memorial program:

POET'S EPITAPH

poems come from heaven

why do poets scream?

poems come from heaven's land of angels

why do poets die in screams of heaven

POETS

POETS

POETS

die

Contents

About Bill Mohr

About Bill Mohr

Hold-Outs: The Los Angeles Poetry Renaissance, 1948-1992

Poetry/Performances

The Chico Library Massacre: "Whose Gun"

Forthcoming Surprises, Surmises, and Reprises

50 Years Ago – Bill Mohr's Second Anthology Appearance

INTERMEDIA No. 7 (with Harley Lond on the cover)

Harley W. Lond (February 5, 1946 – March 11, 2026): Avant-Garde Editor of INTERMEDIA Magazine

Forthcoming in April: "Allen Ginsberg in Context" (Cambridge University Press)

Ed Foster (1942-2026): Poet, Publisher, Literary Critic

"Poem" by William Carlos Williams (or would a cat looking in a mirror while crossing a jamcloset recognize herself?)

Michael Silverblatt: KCRW's "Bookworm" (1952-2026)

"Catching Fire": Anthology Launch, January 31st, at Beyond Baroque

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Categories

Anthologies

Autobiography

in recoil of the dream in lands of night

& sleep upon the pillow of everlasting light.

Sleep well, Chris, and keep the covers well pulled up until it's our turn to snuggle up next to you, dear brother in poetry. If this seems a wish imbued with sentimentality, so be it. I will not change a syllable.

Posted on January 26, 2014 by billmohr. This entry was posted in Books, Painting and Sculpture, Poetry and tagged Barbara Romain, Charles Bivens, Chris Peditto, Doren Robbins, Eric Priestley, Linda Janakos. Bookmark the permalink.

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