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Thanks for nothing

lip



free

Maebush
Jive Turkey
Into the Bay, Up in the Air
Affordable Housing for Elves?

MAEBUSH POW-WOWS

with tim



To see the video version of this interview, go to lifeinprovincetown.com and click "i" in the word "lip"

BioLipettes

tim asks = Maebush answers

age = 16 in Indian law (where you are born @ 50)

sexual orientation = I love the world & everything that's in it, & I could make love to all of it

relationship status = single

descendants = cats: Pawnee & Buffalo Boy

housing = own

philosophy = everyone should be able in their lifetime to reach the totality of their spirit

see me as = all the tribes you will contact & realize we are all one

reading = *On Your Knees* by Maria McDonald, the best book I've read in 20 years

music = jazz

most important = fulfilling the totality of my spirit

FULL CIRCLE

+

HERE COME THE BUFFALO

TM: I think that people are becoming more & more cognizant these days of the fact that Columbus certainly did not discover America, & that the Pilgrims weren't the best thing that ever happened to the people here on the outer Cape. But what's also true is that native culture & ideas have really permeated American society. Look @ the environmental movement.

MB: It's all coming back. The full circle is being made now. Indians, or native Americans as they're called now, are joining. In Mashpee, they're trying to start a confederation of all Indians. If you can prove your genealogy, you may join the confederation. They're getting organized now, & I hope it comes to fruition. Of course, I'll belong to that because I'm of Wampanoag of Pocasset origins. I hope they complete it in my lifetime.

TM: Native populations are themselves getting together organizing & allowed to form their own governments on the reservations as well as put up the gambling things. I have a friend of mine who gets a check every month from one of these little operations, & he pointed out to me a cartoon: a bus in front of an Indian casino, & there were these huge white people getting off the bus, & the caption on the cartoon was, 'Here come the buffalo.'

MB: That's right. Ha, ha, that's exactly right! Every time I go to Foxwoods, I look @ those little white ladies & say, 'Um-hum. Keep puttin' it in, baby. This is the payback. Just keep going.'

I COULD START A NATION

+

DO MY HOMEWORK

TM: For the first time in 400 years, the legal system is also working in favor of the native peoples.

MB: Yeah, we're using their own laws against them that did us in.

TM: Well, the civil rights movement's applications are really widespread.

MB: In many areas.

TM: I think that the Constitution certainly has a lot of room for it. Besides, it was

first time = summer of '57

years living here = since '70

places lived = @ least 30

volunteerism = started the Human Rights Coalition & the high school tennis team; Council on Aging, Provincetown Aids Support Group (PASG), WOMR; 40 years in the community

favorite place = everywhere in Provincetown

"I really don't have any fear of telling those stories because it shows a tremendous depth & diversity & wonderful characters & everything about this place."

based a lot on the Iroquois nation to begin with.

MB: Of course. It was based on native American ways of running the government.

TM: Thomas Jefferson got some of his ideas from there.

You said you had just come back from being on the reservation.

MB: Um-hum. That's a long story. I'm not going to go into it except to say I fulfilled a family obligation, which is to get the reservation that I inherited from my great-great grandfather's people, & I got it back on its feet. Of course I will continually be connected. I fulfilled my obligation, & it was the most spiritual time in my life. While I missed this place terribly, I knew I had to fulfill it, & of course I will continue to be working on different angles of the whole thing. It's been such a learning experience. The spiritualness of this land that is sacred & sovereign: I could start a nation. It's so crazy! I could become the head of a nation on this 90-acre piece of land, because it's sovereign. It's been very exciting, but I don't want to talk too much.

TM: How do you feel about the spirit of Provincetown?

MB: I'm just very happy to be back home, & I see what has happened in relation to the spirit of Provincetown changing, via the yuppies buying up all of the land & ruining the nature portion that is so necessary, that has made this place what it is. Further development will truly, in my estimation, take it down. We'll have a river of shit in the middle of Commercial Street because there is not enough water, there is not enough cesspool, & the sewer system is working in a sand dune. I can't imagine how it's going to function well.

Money has taken over this place. I feel it. I sit on the meat rack, 'cause I know everyone. It's sort of disheartening, but you know, for every down there's an up. The sun will rise again. Provincetown will always be very beautiful & very special. As I said to someone the other

day, I miss this place so much. You can be anywhere but you can't ever be here, because there's only one of these in the whole world, in my estimation.

TM: I feel that, too.

MB: You've got to. You just love it, & you don't want to see it ruined.

TM: One has to draw some sort of balance or compromise, if you might use the word. How do you think we should draw that compromise?

MB: I thought that I would get involved in some kind of moratorium on building, but I don't @ this point have enough information to go forward. So I'm just going to have to do my homework. Then when I know where to step, I'll put my foot, & hopefully not in my mouth.

PROVINCETOWN POEM + UNLUCKY LUCKY

TM: You have a fierce, fierce poem on Provincetown.

MB: Yeah, that's a letter I wrote to Provincetown. I love it. I was just @ a writing class today & I read part of it. They went bananas.

TM: How did you begin to write that?

MB: I was leaving [my job @] the post office, & so I said, 'Oh, I gotta do something to thank this town for all it's given me.' So one night, January, cold, snowing out, 3 in the morning: I was still working then. It was just before my retirement. It just started flowing, & I loved it. It's four pages of really wonderful memories of this place - & kick ass good - of the food & the people & the names.

TM: The characters galore!

MB: Oh, 'You're so cunnin'!' & 'Where you live to?' & 'Hi, Darlin'!' 'Hi, nice

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Maebush's Provincetown Poem

with that pungent, fresh odor of good fish going to market. The wafting in the air of fried clams and vinya

d'alhos being cooked for families like: The Squids, The Squashes, The Did-its, the Linguica Band, Mookoo, Tilles, Towanda, Spawns, Barshi, Dousha, Mike Moon, Sants, Pinky, Dory Plug and the Jazz Gardas.

Sweet bread, trutas, linguica, chorico, squid stew, kale soup, boca yowl and lots more and all "Sum Good" ...and here comes Memorial Day.

Summer explodes with a bang. Full-blown streets, the time of making money and five jobs to do it in. Fourth of July parade, the Blessing of the Fleet, Carnival Week and the harbor fills up with boats and the fish fly in, in schools and school is Out...! Yikes!

Hot, party time from Race Point to Wood End to the vast acid clarity of Long Nook. Nonstop thriving.

Lines out of the post office. Lines out of the A&P, four deep at the bars, you can't even get "flagged" if you wanted to. The trons working three shifts and four jobs. The beaches packed to the max and No parking, No parking, everywhere. Bikes speeding down Commercial Street head-on into traffic. Tits and ass, suntan lotion, skates and skin everywhere skin, skin, more skin.

"Only in P'town" as they say, from the Dune Shacks to Stormy Harbor where wild cranberries nudge beach plums into jelly, jelly rolls of surf rollin' in the tides of life and death.

The streets abound with flowering freaks and fools, and full blown idiots comin' up thru the pavement...

They stream out of the A-house alley like herring, cluttered, and all in a rush, hell bent on having a good time, so get out of their way, Mary!

Artist, standing, sitting, lying down painting, painting, painting everywhere. The mix of gay and straight, seas and sand, strength and beauty. Astounding. Remarkable.

More characters than mackerel like Flinks, Fat Francis, Joe Bones, Jimmy Peek, the strawberry man, Cull, Two Guns, Bongee, Beata, Frenchy, Pombie, Jill Mona, Peewee, Popeye, Freddy Bubba, Speed, Kelly, Burgundy, Nick the Greek, Sheik, Tony Cheroot. Fishing boats and the Boston Belle from Boston, the Hindu, Bay Lady and private yachts all sharing the harbors busyness.

With fluke, flounder, tautog, scup, haddock, baby blues and tuna all angling to the promise of light at the end of the tuna, and yes, Labor Day arrives. Hallelujah, sigh the workers. Augustitis no more. Yea!

Settle down. Savor this. Read it out loud, slowly. This is Whitman, Ginsberg, Black Elk, Nora Zeale Hurston, all rolled into one Maebush:

Forty years ago, this sandlot of sole and vinya d'alhos, flounder and wonder plucked my heart. Viewing that Boa Vista horizon for the first time was a thrilling sensation that has not weakened even after all these seasons.

Away from the stressed, overcrowded cities and to your open arms I came seeking sanctuary, blessing and bliss. You were my lighthouse to LIFE.

Seeing the faces of my aunts and uncles in your openness, how could I leave? Looking into the joyous smiles of your accepting children's faces laughing up at me with love, how could I leave? And those wise old-timers like Scary Jack, Cockaloo, Colonel Corn, Zorro, Mary Spaghetti, Joe Buckley, Claytina, Jiggums, Tee Basil, Dr. Foo, Harmony, Mary Hot Times, Ironman, Bottles, Honka, Blackfish, Boston Charlie, Kelly, Dousha.

All sharing moments of leisure on the meat rack with a joke or a sea story, how could I leave?

From the Back Beach to the Monument your spaces, spices and graces flood me with smiles. Oh, P'town of pristine acid-clear memories so real, so right, from sunrise to salty sunset, a place for a mysterious gathering of spirits, who put a spell on me. Small, sweet and scary in your loveliness you seduced me to stay. I had no choice in this matter of pro life. It was live here amidst your life-giving Atlantic tides or die.

So let me revamp your seasons according to Maebush:

Springtime, from the early morning smells of frying dough (malasadas) to the "Honey Wagon" taking another load away, to the sound of hammers and saws painting and polishing everywhere, made by the lumpa's preparing town for the season to come. Lots of help-wanted signs and college kids looking for rooms to rent, yard sales, vacancies.

If you just wait a minute on any street corner, you might hear something like this, "Hey, nice girl." "Hi, nice boy." "Say Pard," "Don't you get savage with me just cause I'm the finess kine" or "Hi Dahlin'. Where you live to?" I had dessert last night at Cookie's Tap and it was 'Cum Sola'. "That guy on the meat rack was 'sum cunnin'."

From Eddie's Coffee Locker to the Moors, the smell of boats unloading their catch of the day

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Fall: Schools open and while the horse chestnuts fall from the trees, the tourist nuts split in the breeze. We down shift and the wiser older tourons arrive for the best time of the year. The weather perfect, the spaces open up to us anew. Time and space for us to play and all those "qud-iskas" have left. Hand me that "qouisa" over there! Excuse me, but where is your "cusinya" and don't you put the "fitzadas" on me, Mary!

Fantasia Fair, Women's Week, Single Gay Men's Week and here comes da Tinka flying into the harbor, runnin' from the big bad blues, chasing them right to my fishin pole. The blues chasin me to your safety nets. The blues blowing me home after catching a tub-o-fish, smiling all the way and sharing my catch with townies and washashores alike, like Shatzi, Whitey Pommbie, Big Hee, Colonel Corn, Mary Fat, Blue, Stretch, Squekee. So rich this place so wistful and oceanic.

Winter peels back the onion layers of your soul, so garlicky, it mushrooms into a quiet tone poem. Cold winds blow in and the Atlantic's blue/black waves crash over the dike and breakwater, offering a challenge to any.

Year rounders and fireplaces open up your nose to the intimacy of home and hearth. When it snows and you're out walking you experience the virtual reality of a picture postcard.

Cozy and cool, now you get to visit with your friends. Pot lucks, poker cribbage at the Vets, chess.... All kinds of time to just be with your pals like Tina Turner, Jimmy Pardy, Maggie Jigs, LaLa, Sonya, Molty, Mucca, Ms. Thing, Davidarose, Scotti, Dixie, Sahdji, Tish, Billyjean, Ms. Ray, Gilly, Feather, Chicklet, and Parky the Parkessa, Rubber, Vanilla and Mary Dugan.

So after you visit with your pals, having a laugh and a drink of good cheer, you know that you are truly home at last. Thank God, and the Great Spirit who smiles down on his pearl Provincetown. And so in closing it goes like this:

And I've fallen and can't get up,
but after 40 years
I'm leaving, just to prove that inertia is true.
The force moving me away
from your loveliness
Is a crazy Indian
Who is walking with a wolf on a leash
in Central Park.
She is sending me smoke signals
To reconnoiter and recover
The child in me, my soul, my life.
Thank you and Goodnite

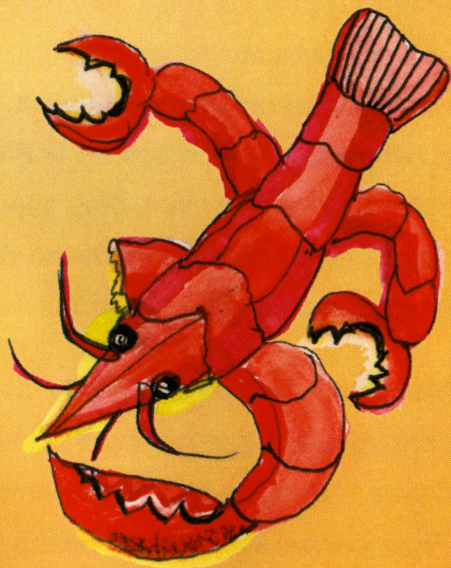
*Barbara Stevens (Maebush)
Provincetown 1998*

Chum

&

Culls

Poetry
&
Prose



B. Maebush Stevens

INTRODUCTION

Barbara Stevens-poet, memoirist, musician (flute and piano), tennis player, teacher, former restaurateur and retired postal clerk-is known nationwide as "Maebush." A participant in former Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky's Favorite Poem Project, she has given many readings in Provincetown and at Boston University. Her portrait adorns one of the Cape Air nine-seater planes that shuttles between Boston, Nantucket and Cape Cod.

Known as a local character, Barbara may have been born in New Bedford, but she was Mae' d in Provincetown. After forty years of living in that magical place, Maebush is one of Provincetown's most memorable voices. Stevens weaves tales of fun and sun-yet the true heart of her work is her evocative recollections of Provincetown's old-timers, fisherman (and women), drag queens, and all the activities that for centuries have made the village a haven for a broad spectrum of marginal individuals.

Maebush is also no stranger to the theater. She has performed in "Approaching Simone," "A Streetcar Named Desire," "Bringing It All Back Home" at the original Provincetown Playhouse, and the Provincetown Theater Company's production of Studs Terkel's "Working." Her most recent stage appearance was "Raggedy Ann and Andy," a children's production in which she played King Koo Koo of Looneyville (type-cast, no doubt).

Chum and Culls collects Maebush's poetry and prose pieces of many years. The toughness and tenderness of her observations, her sharp sketches of the human comedy's trips and characters, involve and reflect us all. Read them aloud to bring out the flavor!

--Jacqueline Lapidus

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Dedication

***To my parents, Rita and Bill,
for their loving, and daring their dreams***

Eyes Sees You

You don't fool me with that bravado of insouciance
Like a mugger in the shadows waiting

I see those tears behind your smile, smile all you want
dahhhhhlin',
I see those heavy weeping willows in your eyes
Lurking in the shadows of your lids hood

Dare you to let go your laughter and let the flip side play
Doubt not that one day
Those eyes will remember all by themselves.

Then the dyke in your tear ducts will release the flood
and drown you again
Drowning that facade-faced stoical witch

Who denies her oceans birthplace
Flow like the menses of mother's milk

Giving bloom to your flowers of sorrow
That grow
Out of the left side of your cheekbones

Draining off life's debris of loss and failure of heart
Empowering this life of buffoonery and bravery

Release that flood beneath your smile
I dare you to unearth

The birth of your tears progeny

Pupil

Pupil of life's hard and soft lessons
Seeing clearly where you don't belong

Teaching you to stay in the shadows of life's playing field
Leaching out a marginal existence on the side lines

Being told you don't belong, longing for long, forlorn.
Dull bigotry dictates that you cannot even fill this page
With any coherent candor or wisdom

You're suppose to be drugged or incarcerated, a low life.
Pupils seeing those judgmental looks of internal juries
That eye you at every turn

Those internal juries of an all white quorum
Telling you that you better learn your place or else!

Lynching mops have scared enough
tribes into submission
MLK persisted knowing his fate

Undaunted you take up the pen
Start again, you venture onto white paper
in a white world

With no weapon but poetry
And the swell of an honest heart
With these words to impart

My humble prayer:
To fight toxic hate with all of its duplicitous mask
My soul is worthy of the task.

Provincetown Soup Kitchen Supreme

All winter long it's been like a dream
Being well fed at our kitchen supreme

With flowers and favors and napkins of white
Our tables were decorated adding to our delight

Classical music or soft sounds of memory lane
We gathered in warmth out of snow sleet and rain

A staff full of volunteers served us filling in the void
Of our stomachs and souls, Etal was even toyed

With kindness and caring our hearts were oh so blessed
Regardless of how our state of mind might be dressed

The wonderful food we so luckily received
Helped make us ever mindful of those in need

From lobster bisque, fresh fish, and great loin of pork
To salads and desserts fit for the Duke of York

Your soups so hot and served with fresh bread
Was like bein' in heaven and worth bein' dead

cream of everything to casserole whatever
We dined on the best and none could be better

This gang of grateful hungry souls
Thank you from our head to our toes

Know that we've appreciated your worth
Helping all of us to maintain our girth

Many blessings to all of your crew
this gang of 2003 truly salutes you!

The Muse of The Mews

About 3am
a month ago
cold and dark, just starting
to snow

Digging her stilettos
into my brain
working her slight of mouth,
was I insane?

Pulling me up
by the seat of my pants
I fled to the bathroom
not taking a chance

Came into town
wearing fake fur and flannel
my pen was shaking,
I just couldn't handle

Her metaphors
so neat and oblique
I had to go
and turn up the heat

These winter mornings
conspiracy with her
have zipped
this kids long underwear

She must be
the scion of her family so
wired and confused I've
come to be

Now don't get me wrong,
I think she's sweet
astonishing me
is not discreet

She's come to wrecking
all my nerves
or could it be
its just her curves

Her screwball
goes by fast and smooth
I swing and miss,
but still in groove

Undaunted,
plugging on I go.
Ms. Muse I sure
do love her so.

Sun-kissed

Pre-dawn darkness lures me to the kitchen
seeking to appease my growling stomach.
Mid-point flipping a linguica omelet

Dawn arrives and glides through my sliders
pane.

Blushingly she disrobes with the sunrise,
enticing me back to bed.

My hunger is deferred with her smile,
I follow

All day sun-worshipping
evolves into losing my senses to her shining brilliance.
Other worlds possess us.

With sublime bliss and lusty satiation,
divine exhaustion takes me to dreams threshold.

She covers me with a cloak of evening,
dawns her robes of night,
slips through my slider
with a promise of tomorrow.

Stood Up Again? !

More than these tired words can rap
the music and song lingers in still air
A high - wire act is going on here
between hope and despair.

*"Esperanza",
you know her
that Spanish chick
with the big tits and mouth

Smiles as she slides thru your door
deep in leather and bullshit.

Sit her down for a drink
and you better be buyin' Dahhhlin.

I cry for her company sometimes
and she stands me up again...

Oh Yes!

*Spanish word for hope.

It Makes Me Wonder Sometimes

I like candy and cake, also ice cream
Sun and moon and most of my dreams

Climbin' trees and playing games
Stealin' apples and shady lanes

Swimming nude and catchin' fish
Riding bikes, reading when I wish

Parades and circus merry go rides
Cotton candy and combin' those low tides

Hide and seek and kick the can
Chasin' down the ice cream van

Talent shows and times to be foolish
Halloween to dress up wild and ghoulish

Skippin' ropes and aggies that shine
Still it makes me wonder sometimes

Why my color is cursed and despised
By those who are blind and unwise

To truth that we one family be
And share a common destiny

Bush's Smile

Strange the power of music - to lift, drift,
drown, drag, move, finger poppin'
Tits and Ass Swings you out into
another space
Not where you think you are

How "tunes from the dunes" can kick you into high
low, and mid-gear all at the same time.

I wasn't built for speed
but a Mingus tune speeds my feet
to a toe tapping beat.

Time changes, keys, unlock your notes
deep to the core like rotten or sweet fruit
you ripen and bake in it's juices

Watch your heart speak in tongues as you dance
I'm scared to dance, afraid to be out of
step with the changes of tempo

Trilling makes my dentures rattle
and fall out of my mouth
into this ocean of sound.

Now, some fish is singing my dry-rot
song and wears a Bushy Smile

VALENTINE

Hey romance, metaphors download divine
Right now you're out of sight and mind

So kiss my ass and call it love
Record that in your computers buzz

Yo! Romance, I'm talking to you Ace!
Don't split so fast, where is your grace?

Watch this as I moon you from space
Talk to me, don't turn your face

Do you really propagate this human race?

Where's the hidden camera to prove you do?
To win a game of hearts anew

Insert the disk, don't look askance
Log on your feelings, risk the chance

Or raise your glass and have a taste
To just another pretty face.

PAGAN

You are passion and climax
Pagan pussy unparalleled

You should bottle your brand of golden heat.
Sell it as the honey brown sugar it is

You could sell it to soldiers of the word
A-cappella delight on a stick
In one sweet, molten, searing sip

Dipstick your love into my core
And send my eyelids skyward

Opening my fire to some bliss-kiss
You weep my thighs into life

Let me die
Every last drop of me

The Vineyard

The totem of the wolf, Massasoit clan strong medicine
From Acushnet to Agawam's Cotuit.
Like sachems Sagamore and Wamsutta
The Algonquin Nation of Wampanoags still breathes
Life into its reborn warriors of 2000 onward.
With a pen and a laptop tomahawk
Poised, ready to crack open your brain
And scalp

Like old man Kennedy, who rued the day
When he was cursed by natives he exploited
On some rum-running Caribbean Island
Their shaman cursed his children's, children forever
He laughed and dismissed his accuser as a "crazy savage"
His ruthlessness for money returns on itself for eternity
My Gayhead looks skyward for JFK Jr.'s plane over
The Vineyards Acquinah cliffs
Of rainbow colored sand-duned Island

Seeking King Phillips, Metacomet profile
In the waters of Chappaquids horseneck-like beach
Pequot's pushing buttons on the net to dot com
Your Cuttyhunk calves into pulp.
Impaled and impelled to survive another 2000 years
My grandmother, and maybe yours,
Whispers in my ears like the tides
"Fear not my dears,
our common destiny decides."

Watuppa Reservation Rebirth

We know that the playing field was not level
In 1709 when this land became the
first Indian Reservation.

It's still not level, but now we have
gotten out the leveling stick

Cause EEO doesn't exist,
the Urban league has split,
and Affirmative Action ain't
Today this little Indian squaw
will not be moved.

So back up white boys
come at us again as history repeats itself.

Here I come in full native regalia
With a laptop tomahawk of words
Ready to take scalps and count coup.

The trenches are dug and the lawn is mowed
Bring on your nuclear war heads
For my tomahawk to decapitate,
genitalia as well.

Hear my war hoops as you expose
the eunuch's we know you really are
Castrated, capitalist, corporate, corpulent creeps.

The death penalty we have paid
via your forked tongue treaties
Now your own laws will take you down
via your own court system

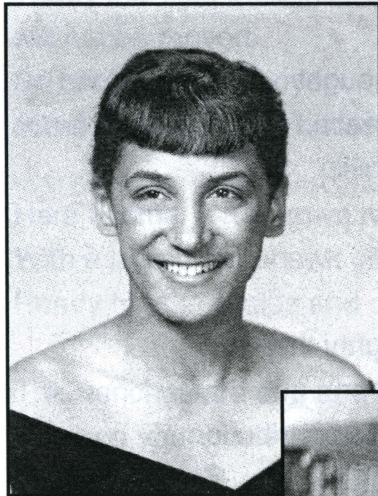
Our arrows and words are still straight and true
against your weapons of genocide
But this time don't count
on our innocent credulity.

Wampanoags will once more dance
on this sweet sovereign soil
that Massasoit mistakenly thought
he could share with you in peace.
His son Metacomet / King Phillip
saw the deception and
died fighting for our people

The sword and gun were mighty then,
Enter now a laptop and the pen
Laptop tomahawk's fight for our retribution
Our common destiny
Will bear it outno doubt.



In Approaching Simone



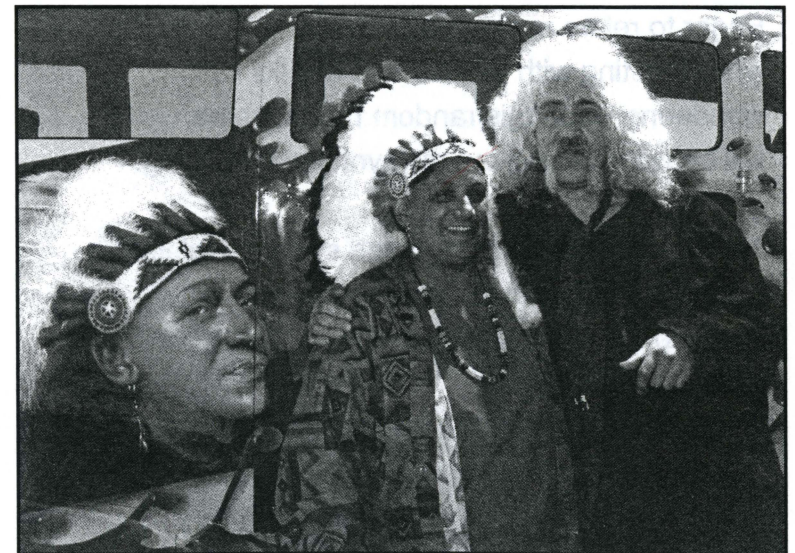
College Grad



"Going Postal!!!" ?



Smilin' while Retirin'



On Cape Air Shuttle Plane
with Artist Yurik

A Sea-Bush Dreamin'

With no weapon but poetry
and a sea of dreams
In the flotsam and jetsam
afloat on metaphors
I sink or swim seeking uncommon candor
A multicolored mermaid in the oceans engine
tides churning up words
thru oyster beds and lobster legs

Striving to complete myself in this sea
of snails and snarled-up fishing lines
laden with tangible remorse's discarded carapace
Like a turtle on its back thrashing
to right/write ~ itself

Eager to relate my journey
while jousting with whales and whelks
wondering when this random rap-machine
will cease cranking out my syntax, siren, song.

Dipping my pen into life's blood stream rivulets
Connected to damned-up page rage
unveiling a seething storm
and maybe scat riffs
Of drowning souls sea foam last breath
This dreaming, dieing sea-bush

Provincetown Prose

Maebush's Provincetown

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Spring Time:

from the early morning smells of frying dough (malasadas) to the "Honey Wagon" taking another load away, to the sound of hammers and saws painting and

polishing everywhere, made by the lumpa's preparing town for the season to come. Lots of help-wanted signs and college kids looking for rooms to rent, yard sales, vacancies.

If you just wait a minute on any street corner, you might hear something like this, "Hey, nice girl." "Hi, nice boy." "Say Pard," "Don't you get savage with me just cause I'm the finess kine" or "Hi Dahlin'. Where you live to?" I had dessert last night at Cookie's Tap and it was 'Cum Sola'. "That guy on the meat rack was 'sum cunnin'."

From Eddie's Coffee Locker to the Moors, the smell of boats unloading their catch of the day with ,, that pungent, fresh odor of good fish going to j market. The wafting in the air of fried clams and vinya d'alhos being cooked for families like: The Squids, The Squashes, The Did-its, the Linguica Band, Mookoo, Tilles, Towanda, Spawns, Barshi, Dousha, Mike Moon, Sants, Pinky, Dory Plug and the Jazz Gardas.

Sweet bread, trutas, linguica, chorico, squid stew, kale soup, boca yowl and lots more and all "Sum Good" ... and here comes Memorial Day.

Summer Time:

explodes with a bang. Full-blown streets, the time of making money and five jobs to do it in. Fourth of July parade, the Blessing of the Fleet, Carnival Week and the harbor fills up with boats and the fish fly in, in schools and school is Out...! Yikes!

Hot, party time from Race Point to Wood End to the vast acid clarity of Long Nook. Nonstop thriving.

Lines out of the post office. Lines out of the A&P, four deep at the bars, you can't even get "flagged" if you

wanted to. The trons working three shifts and four jobs. The beaches packed to the max and No parking, No parking, everywhere. Bikes speeding down Commercial Street head-on into traffic. Tits and ass, suntan lotion, skates and skin everywhere skin, skin, more skin.

"Only in P'town" as they say, from the Dune Shacks to Stormy Harbor where wild cranberries nudge beach plums into jelly, jelly rolls of surf rollin' in the tides of life and death.

The streets abound with flowering freaks and fools, and full blown idiots comin' up thru the pavement...

They stream out of the A-house alley like herring, cluttered, and all in a rush, hell bent on having a good time, so get out of their way, Mary!

Artist, standing, sitting, lying down painting, painting, painting, painting everywhere. The mix of gay and straight, seas and sand, strength and beauty. Astounding. Remarkable.

More characters than mackerel like Flinks, Fat Francis, Joe Bones, Jimmy Peek, the strawberry man, Cull, Two Guns, Bongee, Beata, Frenchy, Pombie, Jill Mona, Pee-wee, Popeye, Freddy Bubba, Speed, Kelly, Burgundy, Nick the Greek, Sheik, Tony Cheroot. Fishing boats and the Boston Belle from Boston, the Hindu, Bay Lady and private yachts all sharing the harbors busyness.

With fluke, flounder, tautog, scup, haddock, baby blues and tuna all angling to the promise of light at the end of the tuna, and yes, Labor Day arrives. Hallelujah, sigh the workers. Augustitis no more. Yea!

Fall:

Schools open and while the horse chestnuts fall from the trees, the tourist nuts split in the breeze. We down shift and the wiser older tourons arrive for the best time of the year. The weather perfect, the spaces open up to us anew. Time and space for us to play and all those "qudishkas" have left. Hand me that "qouisa" over there! Excuse me, but where is your "cusinya" and don't you put the "fitzadas" on me, Mary!

Fantasia Fair, Women's Week, Single Gay Men's Week and here comes da Tinka flying into the harbor, runnin' from the big bad blues, chasing them right to my fishin pole. The blues chasin' me to your safety nets. The blues blowing me home after catching a tub-o-fish, smiling all the way and sharing my catch with townies and Washashores alike, like Shatzi, Whitey Pombbie, Big Hee, Colonel Corn, Mary Fat, Blue, Stretch, Squekee. So rich this place so wistful and oceanic.

Winter:

Peels back the onion layers of your soul, so garlicky, it mushrooms into a quiet tone poem. Cold winds blow in and the Atlantic's blue/black waves crash over the dike and breakwater, offering a challenge to any.

Year-rounders and fireplaces open up your nose to the intimacy of home and hearth. When it snows and you're out walking you experience the virtual reality of a picture postcard.

Cozy and cool, now you get to visit with your friends. Pot lucks, poker, cribbage at the Vets, chess All kinds of time to just be with your pals like Tina Turner, Jimmy Parady, Maggie Jigs, LaLa, Sonya, Molty, Mucca, Ms. Thing, Davidarose, Scotti, Dixie, Sahdji,

Tish, Billyjean, Ms. Ray, Gilly, Feather, Chicklet, and Parky the Parkessa, Rubber, Vanilla and Mary Dugan.

So after you visit with your pals, having a laugh and a drink of good cheer, you know that you are truly home at last. Thank God, and the Great Spirit who smiles down on his pearl Provincetown. And so in closing it goes like this:

I've fallen and can't get up, but after 40years

*I'm leaving, just to prove that inertia is true.
The force moving me away from your loveliness
Is a crazy Indian
Who is walking with a wolf on a leash in Central
Park.*

*She is sending me smoke signals
To reconnoiter and recover
The child in me, mysoul, my life.
Thank you and Goodnight*

*Barbara Stevens (Maebush)
Provincetown 1998*



This story is partly true and partly fictional, see if you can sift it out.

If you've ever been into the Provincetown Post Office you might notice while you are standing at the steel counter buying stamps, a good sized dent on the left side. [although now days they cover it up with a plastic place mat advertising their products]

This dent has a history just like all structures do. The Provincetown Post Office was built in 1932 part of the governments W.P.A. project and it probably gave the town a lot of needed jobs and money during those depression days.

The building is of solid brick construction and has a lobby made of marble and fine oak wood, the echo is great for whistling. Contrary to public belief, the so-called post office motto, "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds." is really an inscription that is contained on a number of postal buildings, notably New York City and Washington D.C..

Other words considered more poetic were translated from the Greek and conveys a Similar sentiment ending with "It is the delicate ear trump through which alike nations and families and isolated individuals whisper their joys and sorrows, their convictions and their sympathies, to all who listen for their coming." an enlarger of the common life.

With the advent of email and technology we witness its diminishing destiny. Aside from its bureaucratic maze the humanistic aspects the service conveys a lot of sharing and caring on a personal and business

level. Working at any of the numerous jobs in the postal service makes you privy to peoples lives. You must swear to keep this privacy and protect the revenue that is gained from services rendered.

In the early years between 1775 to mid 1940's the postmasters were issued a weapon to protect the revenue. Like the Pony Express riders, carrying guns were necessary to protect the mail and money being transported. The Indians were partial to mail also. In researching I could not find out the exact year that this practice was discontinued.

Now days the term "going postal" has come to mean postal employees shooting each other, not their clientele. Let us proceed to December 26th in the year 2001.

It's the day after Xmas and all of the postal clerks are smiling. The carriers have already packed up their lighter bags and are smiling too. The feeling is that they have made it through another year, and a busy holiday season. They are ready for some down time. Most of the business owners have gone south and the townies remaining do not do a lot of mailing from now to April.

On that December morning, while polishing the steel counter at the service window, Frank is fingering the dent that's on the left side of the counter. A new clerk Brian, who has just started working comes over and says " Yo man, I've never noticed that big dent before, what's that all about ? Frank says, oh yes daaaaahlin there is a story to that bullet dent, it's part of the history of this office, not often talked about.

Picture it! It's about 1942 during the winter, a cold day in February. Two high school boys come into the

lobby to get out of the cold for a minute. They are both about 15 years old, laughing and gamboling around the foyer. Both of them are full of it.

One of them is Jimmy Peek Jr. son of James Souza who got his nickname due to the fact that he was from Pico island in the Azores. Jimmy Peek was known as the strawberry Man in town but that's another story.

The other boy is Manny Barboza who is known to be a little slow due to inbreeding.

Jimmy says to Manny "Hey Pard I betja I can fool that old postmaster guy today, ya wanna bet??? I'll bet ya a linguica roll at Adams okay? Yah...Yah says Manny who was partial to linguica in any form Okay just watch me nice boy!

Jimmy approaches the counter while sticking his finger through his coat pocket. No one else is in the lobby as he looks around. He points his fingered coat at the clerk and says "Now listen carefully mister, this is a stick-up. . . so give me all the money in that drawRight Now!

Manny is aghast and steps back from the counter... The window clerk puts his hands up and says Okay uhuh ok kid I'll give you all of it ...It's all yours.!

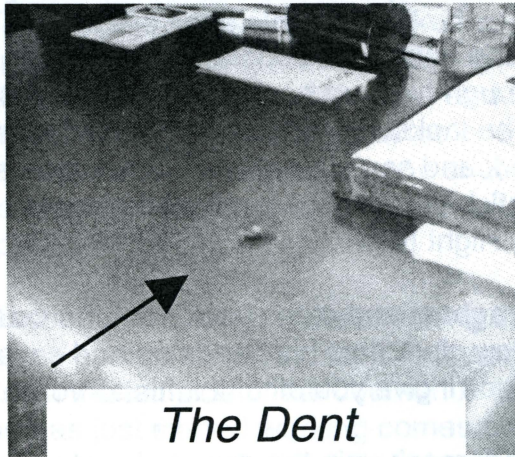
As the clerk reaches in the draw to hand over the money to Jimmy,. all of a sudden from behind a screen steps the postmaster William Cabral and he is holding a gun. He says "Jimmy put down that gun right now or I'll shot. Before Jimmy had time to react to the postmaster's threat, the gun goes off in the postmaster's hand.

The shot ricochets off of the steel counter and kills Jimmy Jr.. instantly.

Judge Welsh heard the case and the postmaster was acquitted of any charges.

Jimmy's parents have never stepped foot in this post office since. They send people to do their business or they use the Truro post office.

So the next time you're in the Provincetown Post Office check out the left side dent. It's part of P-town history.



At about 1pm Sonia, whose real name was Sonny Shanus, was on his way to the drug store when he ran into Brick who said, "Say man, you wanna go on a trip?" "Yah, man, you goin' to Hyannis today?" Brick laughed out loud and said, "No man! I don't mean that kind of a trip, you got time?" Yah, dahhhlin, I'm off tomorrow and a little acid is just what I need to clean out my pipes", said Sonia. So the two men headed to Brick's apartment on the beach in back of Bubbala's Restaurant.

A fresh fruit drink with one tab of acid was served, cause Sonia knows it's best to drop on an empty, fruity stomach. He said, "You get better pictures and brighter colors for a truly kaleidoscopic trip.

After putting bathing trunks on they headed for the beach which was six steps from his back door. As they hit the water Sonia yells out, "Oy vey is meir, it's kickin' in, I can feel it working." The water is warm and clear today and Brick rolls over on his back and starts trippin' out on the formations in the sky. He yells out "Dosen't that one over there look like Lenny Grandchamps on a bad hair day? Ha Ha Ha!"

Sonia looks over toward North Truro and notices large dark clouds forming. "They said we might get a Nor'easter today and it looks like that's it comin' this way." Just then two friends show up on the beach and they are trippin' also.

Joe and Eddy show up and their eyes are glassy, Joe says he feels like a yo-yo, Eddy tells him he looks like one too. They all decide to go to the ocean side at Herring Cove to play in the storm-surgd waves.

As the arrive, the winds are gusting at 60 m.p.h. and the waves are six to eight feet height. The four trippers strip and jump into the swirling surf. They are rolled amongst the stones like being in a rock tumbler, taking off the edges of their hard surfaces, scrubbing their skins, polishing and shining up their souls. They are laughing at the top of their voices...

Amazing Grace Goveia

At one of the wave breaks, they look over toward Gay beach and can't believe their eyes, There is a crazy lesbian stark nude rolling in the shoreline laughing away like they are.

Hi there they yell above the roar of the storm. She comes closer and , oh no, it's Lowanda! They all scream and hug like the Telatubbies...then they all run into the surf with gleeful, wild abandon. Rolling and twisting in this mighty, mini-hurricane they flip out on how good they feel and say all together, "Is it acid or is it Memorex?"

After an hour they've had enough and agree to meet Lowanda at the Moor's Cocktail Sing-along. As they're drying off and dressing in the car they notice that each one of them have changed color. There is a cosmic glow to there skins.

Joe is the color topaz, Eddy is a Mediterranean blue, Brick an Emerald green and Sonia brilliant burgundy. They look at each other in awe and say "No one else can see these colors but us , right?" They head for the Moor's.

Eddy is driving and the others are all telling him "Hey, be careful, cool it, don't speed cause we don't waana have to deal with the fuzz,, we can't afford to get busted in this condition Mary". He safely parks in the lot and they literally trip thru the door of the Snug Harbor room .They are stunned with the reality of 300 or more queens and lesbians drinking, singing, smoking and cruising, full steam.

What a shock to their already tripped-out systems. While tryin' to find a table in this wild scene, they are tryin' to go unnoticed. As they spy a table and head for it they are abruptly halted by La La Chapelle, flyin' down the aisle in his nun's drag. He drops to his knees in front of them with acid-like, glazed eyes and yells "It's a miracle, my god, a living , walking, rainbow! Look at those wild colors!"

Just then Lowanda comes thru the door. She is a shimmering golden sun and smiling stars.

Knowing Grace was knowing the true meaning of the word grace. She will live in my heart forever.. a dynamo of positive energy, whose database deglazed my soul. I was ennobled by being in her presence.

My memories of her are special. When I was her upstairs neighbor in the 70's. Whenever she needed help she would use a broomstick handle and pound on her ceiling to alert me.

During that time she was a chain smoker and was like a moving cloud at times ...a mighty cloud of Grace. When she stopped smoking she did it cold turkey ...I was awed.

Some nights we'd sit in her living room in these beautiful Victorian velvet chairs and she would read her poetry to me. We'd drink this awful tawny port and smoke, as I'd sink deep into those red velvet chairs. The words would trill off her lips and I was enthralled with her deep sonorous voice. We'd have more wine , smokes and words I and sometimes tears would escape from my hard to cry eyes ...terse verse making water.

After departing of her words I'd go upstairs shaking my head at her wonderment...

She was my adopted Grandmother or "Vovo", as they say in Portuguese.

When she went to the hospital on occasion, due to burn-out, I'd take care of her cats Blue and Stash. Blue her oldest was very special like her, so much the stoical stunning character with those knowing , wise golden eyes.

For 5 years I'd visit her at the Manor and talk about her work and how it should be published. Her mind was flourishing as her health diminished, due to the side affects of her *various* medications.

She sort of slipped into that great unknown space after awhile.

At her memorial service there were too few people, for all of the public services she'd done for this community. But she wouldn't have cared about that.

We honor her today and that's what's important now. I hope that her work can be published and shared with the world.

Fallin'

Spring 1960, the month of May and 70 degrees and sunny. Nita sat on the "Meatrack" telling jokes and schmoozing with the crowd. An air of pre-season insouciance was in the air. The "Meatrack" was crowded with locals and "Washashores" enjoying the pre-season gaiety. Nita felt that something special had come up with the sunrise.

At about noon she strolled over to Adams Drug Store to get another coffee. Stepping in the door she tripped over a newspaper on the floor. Picking it up she took it to the counter And asked "Any one lose this paper?" The clerk came over to assist her and there eyes made contact.

Nita's heart does a leap and a triple cartwheel as the clerk says "No one has asked for an Advocate but I'll keep it at the counter for a while , thank you." Nita's hands begin to sweat as she tries to remember what was the reason she had come into the store to order. "I'll ah ah ah ah have a coke please." Her eyes never leave the face of this brown-eyed beauty behind the counter. The new clerk turns to reach for the coke and Nita flips out, could this be happening to her? Nita reaches into her pocket to pay and realizes that she has no money. Checking the counter for a familiar face she spies Dixie and asks for a dollar. Dixie gives the confused clerk the money. Nita walks blindly out of Adams and collapses on a bench in front of Town Hall.

She can't believe what has just happened to her. In a dazed state she starts the denial trip. No that didn't just go down, Luv at first sight, No that only happens in the movies and books, not real life right Wrong Then she she says out loud "Who are you kidding cut the denial cause you already know that Cleopatra is da queen of deenile !

Here she is a Nitamo Perry a reddish-brown *Capevindian from Padenarum Ma. Just out of college working at Ho-Jo's for the summer.

*Wampanoag Indian & Cape Verdian Mix

Free as a blue jay. What to do, what to do? Bewitched, -
bothered, and bewildered, she heads to work on her
bike. On her way to work she swings by the drug store
to verify her vision, and sure enough, while looking
through the window she is stunned again as the girl
behind the counter returns her stare with a smile of
recognition. A guileless, glorious smile.

Words are hopelessly inadequate to describe this
mysterious feeling. All she can do is smile like an idiot
any time that woman, girl beauty runs through her
head. This virgin experience thrills her beyond her
wildest imagination. Nita walks around as tho in a
dream. That smile has gone directly to her heart and
she has fallen like an overripe tomato from the vine,
smashed to smithereens.

When she gets to work the boss Basil informs her that
she'll be working the counter today because M.J. has
called in sick. Her usual spot is fry cook and she hates
working the counter, but feeling as she does, she can
do anything today.

At about 5 o'clock that afternoon she turns to wait on a
customer and her mouth drops open there she is ...
face to face with the clerk from Adams.

Both women smile and Nita blushes and asks "may I
help you"? The customer says, my name is Elly what's
your? I'll have a chocolate cone. Nita nearly faints, a
chocolate cone, oh dahhhlin' I am your chocolate cone.
Nita asks would you like a plain or sugar cone?" and
she's thinking do I have some sugar for you ...

Bringing her cone to Elly with a napkin Nita gets the
courage to say "Would you consider having brunch
with me some day?" Slowly sliding off the stool, Elly
lowers her eyes and says "Why not, I'll meet you
Friday at The Buttery at one o'clock. See you then."

Nita runs thru the kitchen and out the back door yelling at
the top of her voice halleluiaah, yaaahooooooooo!! Walking
on air she resumes work while all of the crew says,
What's got into her???

Well you know the drill, they eat, talk, and dates follow
with lots of discovery and illusion. Eleanor Weinstock is a
fair haired, orthodox Jewess with perfect teeth.

She is a student from Baltimore, Maryland where racism
ruled the day but, while on Cape Cod she bravely
employed her own affirmative action with Nita. . . . Both
women were lost in Luv as the summer becomes a blur.

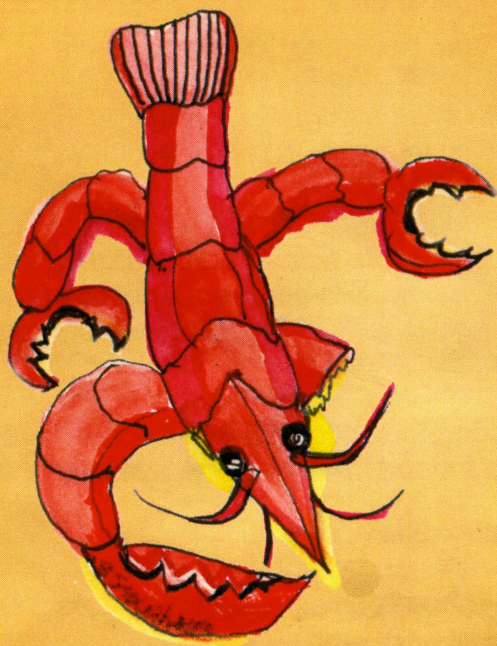
By the end of the summer they both have to return to the
real world. They promise to write and call, till they see
each other next summer. Nita composes her first letter
even before Elly leaves town. She gets three letters and
a post card during that winter,

After March no letters come from Baltimore and finally
Nita realizes, she's stood up again. She sends a final
poem.

Elly my first-sight Luv fantasy finessed
Your eyes I'll miss and not this stress
How sweet your memory clings and crushes
My wounded ego plans on no re-rushes.

Chum & Culls

Poetry & Proes



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