

Leo Masliah
Donna Trussell
Lynn Grossman
Angela Jackson
Leo L. Litwak
Kate Kaufman
Margaret Broucek
Fyodor Dostoevsky
Athina Papadaki
Sandra McPherson
Betsy Fogelman
Franz Wright
James Reidel
Mary Kinzie

Paul Mariani
Belle Randall
Adrienne Rich
Robert A. Fink
Josephine Jacobsen
Eleanor Wilner
Ingeborg Bachmann
Czeslaw Milosz
Laurie Duggan
Forrest Gander
Peter Schwendener
Roger Mitchell
Photographs by Mark Steinmetz

TriQuarterly 74

Winter 1989

TriQuarterly 74
Winter 1989

Northwestern
University

\$7.95



Publication of *TriQuarterly* is made possible in part by the donors of gifts and grants to the magazine. For their recent and continuing support, we are very pleased to thank the Joyce Foundation, the Lannan Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Illinois Arts Council.

NOTE: *TriQuarterly* welcomes financial support in the form of planned gifts. Please write to Reginald Gibbons, editor.

Editor
Reginald Gibbons

Associate Editor
Susan Hahn

Managing Editor
Janet Vander Kelen

Executive Editor
Bob Perlongo

Special Projects Editor
Fred Shafer

Design Director
Gini Kondziolka

Assistant to the Editor
Janet E. Geovanis

TriQuarterly Fellow
Beth DeSchryver

Editorial Assistants

W. Douglas Fitzsimmons, Amy Rosenzweig, Jo Anne Ruvoli

Advisory Editors

Hugo Achugar, Robert Alter, Michael Anania, Cyrus Colter, Rita Dove, Gloria Emerson, Richard Ford, George Garrett, Gerald Graff, Francine du Plessix Gray, Michael S. Harper, Bill Henderson, Maxine Kumin, Grace Paley, Michael Ryan, Alan Shapiro, Ellen Bryant Voigt

TRIQUARTERLY IS AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF WRITING, ART AND CULTURAL INQUIRY PUBLISHED IN THE FALL, WINTER AND SPRING AT NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY.

Subscription rates—Individuals: one year \$18; two years \$32; life \$250. Institutions: one year \$26; two years \$44; life \$300. Foreign subscriptions \$4 per year additional. Price of single copies varies. Sample copies \$4. Correspondence and subscriptions should be addressed to **TriQuarterly**, NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY, 2020 Ridge Avenue, Evanston, IL 60208. Phone: (312) 491-3490. The editors invite submissions of fiction, poetry and literary essays, which must be received between October 1 and April 30; manuscripts received between May 1 and September 30 will not be read. No manuscripts will be returned unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. All manuscripts accepted for publication become the property of **TriQuarterly**, unless otherwise indicated. Copyright © 1989 by **TriQuarterly**. No part of this volume may be reproduced in any manner without written permission. The views expressed in this magazine are to be attributed to the writers, not the editors or sponsors. Printed in the United States of America by Thomson-Shore, typeset by Sans Serif.

National distributor to retail trade: B. DeBoer, 113 East Centre Street-Rear, Nutley, NJ 07110, (201-667-9300). Distributor for West Coast trade: Bookpeople, 2929 Fifth Street, Berkeley, CA 94710, (415-549-3030). Midwest: Illinois Literary Publishers Association, P.O. Box 816, Oak Park, IL 60303, (312-383-7535); and Ingram Periodicals, 347 Reedwood Drive, Nashville, TN 37217, (615-793-5000).

Reprints of issues #1-15 of **TriQuarterly** are available in full format from Kraus Reprint Company, Route 100, Millwood, NY 10546, and all issues in microfilm from University Microfilms International, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. ISSN: 0041-3097.

COVER STORY

If you like this issue's cover, you'll love the 18" × 24" poster version thereof, similarly colored and identical in all respects except that the poster does not have the issue number or date—just the *TriQuarterly* logo. Created by TQ Design Director Gini Kondziolka and printed on heavy, coated stock, this is a poster to be proud of—and one you may wish to have framed. To order, send \$9.00 check or money order per poster to *TriQuarterly*, 2020 Ridge Avenue, Evanston, IL 60208. Or, to charge your VISA or MasterCard, please so specify and include your account number and the card's expiration date. (Please note that the \$9.00 price includes handling and shipment in a sturdy, specially designed mailing tube.)

Contents

FICTION

- Two Short Pieces** 5
Leo Masliah
- Fishbone** 10
Donna Trussell
- Cartography** 32
Lynn Grossman
- From Treemont Stone** 35
Angela Jackson
- The Eleventh Edition** 84
Leo L. Litwak
- Engraver's Cove** 110
Kate Kaufman
- Alvin Jones's Ignorant Wife** 118
Margaret Broucek
- From The Brothers Karamazov** 128
Fyodor Dostoevsky

POETRY

- From Holy Ewe-Lamb, Madonna
of the Pressure Cooker** 170
Athina Papadaki
- Diary: Day of Rest** 180
Sandra McPherson
- Three Poems** 182
Betsy Fogelman
- Three Poems** 186
Franz Wright
- Devils Night** 189
James Reidel

From *Holy Ewe-Lamb, Madonna of the Pressure Cooker*

Athina Papadaki

The ten poems appearing here for the first time in English translation are from a nineteen-poem cycle, Holy Ewe-Lamb, Madonna of the Pressure Cooker, published in Thessaloniki in 1980. A leftist and a feminist, Papadaki writes in the tradition of Elytis and Ritsos; she uses a particularly Greek form of surrealism, centered on the concrete realities of daily life. Drawing on liturgical and mythological references, and on the many levels of spoken Greek, she evokes a rich literary and popular tradition while always staying close to the experience and speech of a wide audience.

—Thalia A. Pandiri

Persephone

Ever since my husband's shift began, I am dense night.
As for the old days,
In my mother's house, I've got to admit
My dowry was white and my days full of sunlight.
They've profaned spring with my name.

From My Window

1

Motor vehicles and the sea
Opposite me, moving rhythmically,
A pulsing extension of my heart.

2

Obeying rules and mealtimes
I move along the boundary-line,
The richly-dowered window.
Some day I might cross over,
Volatile.

Dusting

I turn my memory back to material objects.
The wood, the glass
Intuit my love, and they gleam.
I even take good care of the dust rag
Hanging on my line.
"Washed so clean," I think,
"it must be remembering the cotton fields of Boeotia."

Just a housewife, just one cheap cotton print after another,
I'm bulldozed by the dust,
And I give in
until
my head
clothes
feet
escape, uncared for, Missing In Action.

Hanging Out the Wash

For the space of one morning, my wash dowered the roof.
Here it is. The Great Shepherd, the sheet of my marriage bed,
snaps loud in the wind.
A breeze recites the white embroidered linens.
When I take the sheet down, dry
Holding my arms up like a hierophant
I am shaken,
A votive offering that has etched deeper the boundaries of
desecration.
This insignificant duty
Earns me the title of Lady of the House;
I glide towards the stairs, a black freighter.

Ironing

Brain-shaped clouds
Rowing past the clean windowpane,
As the blue sky stretches high
I iron,
Heat forcing steam out of a damp shirt.

The order of things repels me.
A heavy anchor names me the deep, therefore I'm necessary.

And yet,
I burst out, leaving the ranks, as if I'd never crossed
The rows of callalilies.
This virile
Planet, with its precious needs.
Not to dwindle into respectability takes staying power.

For years now
The laundry basket
Cradling clothes like curled-up lambs
Has seized me,
Devouring my song.
Panicking
I try to find a name for my bare elbows as
The silent sideboard looks out at the sea
And I lean on it,
Its dust on my fingertips is my good friend.

K.P.

Dust motes falling in the falling light.
A mound of dirty dishes waits for me
Like the mountain waiting for its prophet,
An escape route tunneling its way to whiteness.
No hope, and I'm worn down by rules and schedules.

Other times,
I am gone, translucent.
The baby's feeding time leaves no taste in my mouth.

Cooking

At the stove,
Monotonous sizzling of meatballs,
An odor without fire.
Suddenly I find myself up-ended,
Cornerstone china-services explode
lewdly, in slow motion.

A civilization of things diminishes me.
I throw off my apron.
Assumption,
My foot planted firmly over the abyss,
Turning everything inside out—
Only a child could recognize me now,
The child clutching at my skirt
as beautiful as an apple,
I take a bite
With pain and love I report to those who will come after
. . . always keep afloat and keep away from dams.

If they ask after me, I'll come back fast
To set the table.

Tidying Up

There are times when habit is fulfilling.
With love and submissiveness I protect my men.
For their sake, my needle wounds their clothes.
The swaggerers of rooms and drawers have never learned
—it's a talent—
that I elevated my humble pillow-cases
into high priestesses of dreams.
I am a woman, something
like midnight, my precious darkness still raw material.

Kitchen Cupboards

1

These linens, mute witnesses of love,
Tablecloths, napkins
That embrace the table
Or the knees,
Are they what reduces me to nothing?

2

Some day the dishes
Will reveal their inner light,
Reciting for my mother's hands
Poetry of clay or glass.
Even the mighty mountain-ranges
Will marvel at their cleansing.

Housewife

Time to rest
Hands folded over the harvest.
I'd measured the flour accurately,
But there was a slight debit in the sugar column.
It couldn't have been otherwise.
This is my life, the corridor
That joins the bedroom to the formal parlor,
What else? I don't dare say it,
Something slyly sucks me dry,
The walls like white-robed Patriarchs bless
my work, I bend
so they don't see that
as I wring out the mop
my tears flow back toward their roots.

Translated from the Greek by Thalia A. Pandiri