

SPRING

The Journal of The E.E. Cummings Society

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The Thirty-fourth meeting

"Viva Cummings" Blue Heron Production

Forrest Reviews "Viva Cummings"

Stephen Scotti Discusses Production and Review

Willard Thorp, Society Member, Dies at age 90.

Yasuo Fujitomi Reports from Japan

A Castle in Point, 0-0-0

Watch out, balloonMan

Cummings on Improving the Condition of Poetry

American Literature Association Call for Papers for May

1991; Cummings Panel Reviewed by Friedman ALA 90

Cummings & Goings (Janik/Margoshes) renascent

Science Academia at Work: Is 5 Revisited

Inscription on Fly-Leaf of Copy of XAIPB

BLUE HERON THEATRE, INC.

VIVA CUMMINGS!

Ardelle Striker
Producer and Artistic Director

presents

A New Musical Based on the Poetry of E. E. Cummings

Conceived and Composed by Stephen R. Scotti

Directed and Choreographed by William A. Finlay

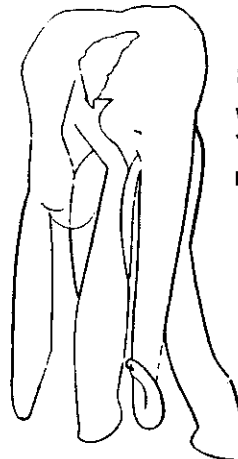
Lighting Design: Sean Dolan

Costume Design: Lisa Cody

With: Steve Mulch* Stephen Scotti Maggie Simpson Kyle Waters*

*Members of Actors' Equity Association

Production Stage Manager: Christine Cullen



By EEC

Eves 8 PM: October 10, 11, 12, 13; 17, 18, 20;

and 24, 25, 26, 27

(No performance Friday, October 19)

Sun Matinees 3 PM: October 14, 21, and 28

Presented at THE MAZUR THEATRE

555 East 90th St. (at East End Ave.)

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The Thirty-fourth Meeting

Date/Time: Saturday, October 13 at 8PM

Place: India City Restaurant, at York & 89th Street; The Mazur Theatre, 555 East 90th Street (near Gracie Mansion) for The Blue Heron Theatre's production of "Viva Cummings."

Those Present: Howard Bratches, Pat Bratches, Sterling M. Dean, David V. Forrest, M.D., Lynne Stetson Forrest, Susannah Forrest, Norman Friedman, Zelda Friedman, Michael Friedman, Doree Leonard, Doug Newton, Kathy Newton, John Leonard, Janet Raman, Rachel Raman, Ravi Raman, Ron Romano, Bernard Starr, Jana Starr, Pat Stokes.

The Thirty-fourth Meeting

The India City Restaurant seated the Society at a T-shaped arrangement of tables and plied us with a medly of Indian delicacies, made of chicken, seafood, shrimp and assorted vegetable dishes, hot inflated saucerlike breads, and tandori and curry preparations. We were honored to have, from the greatest distance, Mr. Sterling M. Dean, who came to know the Society through Dr. James Sibley Watson's widow, now his wife. Pat Stokes is a Barnard psychologist whose lab your editor Dave had visited, to see her "little itchy mousies with scuttling eyes rustle" (p. 25, Ps.; Tulips & Chimneys Chansons 2)--really albino rats, whose repertories of movements Pat is studying with extended implications for practically everything in motion. She brought her husband, Ron Romano, also like her a formerly in advertising, and their friends, Bernard Starr, also a psychologist, and his wife Jana. Michael Friedman is Norman and Zelda Friedman's son, Janet Raman is their daughter, and her well behaved children Rachel and Ravi are Norman and Zelda's grandchildren. The Bratches, Leonards and Forrests, frequently found at Society functions, reside in Rye.

Dinner conversation ranged over Immanuel Kant, about whom Michael Friedman had just lectured at Princeton (Dave later sent him a lecture on neural networks which poses Kantian epistemological

questions, in Dave's opinion), Bernard Starr's plan to lecture at Club Med in Guadeloupe. Besides Club Med, Pat talked with Zelda about social work, and Sterling spoke with balletic Lynne and Susannah, the latter now like her mother before her at the School of American Ballet, about library science, vegetarians, The Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, The Pittsburgh Ballet, and Bruce Wells. Pat Bratches talked with the Leonards about the pro's and cons of being a working wife. Howard discussed the search business and his multinational company. Norman Jana and Bernard discussed Norman's Gestalt Center in Queens. Dave called the meeting to order, and showed the group Gerald Locklin's latest book, **The Gold Rush and Other Stories, including the Bukowski Barfly narrative** (Appelzaba Press, P.O. Box 4134, Long Beach, CA 90804). Gerry, our loyal member, is also a well-known poet and literary figure. Dave and Norman also played, and the Society admired, the recording sent by Yasuo Fujitomo, Cummmings' Japanese translator, described in the Letters. Placing the Cummings photo in the Metropolitan Opera Gala publication was also discussed as an example of the way the Society has been of use. Time grew short, and the well-fed group repaired the block or so to the renovated asphalt plant, now the Mazur Theatre.

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DEEPAK KURIL

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Howard Bratches drew this for us



WHO WE ARE

Theatre can be something incomparably more than just a play...it is a special focus of social and intellectual life...a living instrument of social self-awareness, one that is, in an unrepeatable way, lodged in its own time.

Vaclav Havel "Letters to Olga"

Czech playwright, dissident (and now president of Czechoslovakia!)

BLUE HERON THEATRE is dedicated to producing contemporary and classical dramatic works about issues and ideas: freedom and oppression, politics and racism, the individual and society. Our goal is to challenge the intellect and the emotions of the audience in plays where language is used effectively in a rich and poetic fashion to communicate the themes which we consider important.

Our first season (1987-88) reflected these commitments with the New York premiere of Fernando Arrabal's poetic call for artistic and political freedom, *On the Tightrope*. An intriguing portrait of early Black civil rights leaders followed in Wesley Brown's *Boogie Woogie and Booker T.*, and we concluded with a new look at Moliere's *The Misanthrope* where the battle for social survival and influence in high places conveyed a distinctly contemporary message. At the end of our first season, we had attracted the attention of major press; we were honored with two awards from the Audelco organization for our production of *Boogie Woogie and Booker T.*; and we received a New Theatre Advancement Grant from the New York State Council on the Arts.

In February 1989, as part of Black History Month celebrations, we presented *The Estate*, by actor-playwright Ray Aranha. *New York Times* critic Mel Gussow wrote: "It is heartening to see the play again and to feel the surge of history that inspired Mr. Aranha... 'The Estate' is a play rooted in conviction and dramatic truth." *The Estate* was honored with six Audelco nominations.

The 1989-90 season opened with a futuristic "New Age" staging of the earliest known work about politics and power: *Prometheus Bound*. A series of staged readings followed: in November, a political fantasy by Mexico's most distinguished playwright, Emilio Carballido, *The Day They Let the Lions Loose*; for Martin Luther King Day, a celebration of the courage of Black women in an adaptation of Dorothy Sterling's book, *We Are Your Sisters: Black Women in the Nineteenth Century*; and in February, a collage of images and words on the theme of revolution—Heiner Müller's *The Task*. Our final production—a musical by Stephen Scotti based on the poetry of E. E. Cummings and titled *viva cummings!*—was sponsored by the Provincetown Theatre (Provincetown, MA).

With its 1990-91 season which will open with *viva cummings!* to be followed by a full production of *We Are Your Sisters*, BLUE HERON THEATRE continues its commitment to the belief that through the transforming power of performance the theatre affirms the human values of thought, feeling, and imagination.

(Blue Heron Theatre is an Annually Funded Theatre (AEA Tier Code 1), an Associate Member of ART/NY, and supported in part by funds from New York State Council on the Arts)

645 West End Ave., New York, NY 10025

(212) 787-0422

Ardelle Striker, Ph.D., Artistic Director

A Not For Profit Corporation

Blue Heron Theatre, Inc.

presents

VIVA CUMMINGS!

A Musical Celebration of the poet E. E. Cummings

POEMS and LYRICS by E. E. CUMMINGS

MUSIC COMPOSED and ARRANGED by
STEPHEN R. SCOTTI

DIRECTED and CHOREOGRAPHED by
WILLIAM A. FINLAY

Lighting Design: Sean Dolan

Costume Design: Lisa Cody

Production Stage Manager: Christine Cullen

WITH:

Steve Mulch*

Stephen R. Scotti

Maggie Simpson

Kyle Waters*

*Members of Actors' Equity Association

This production is made possible by special arrangement with George Firmage, Executor of the Estate of E. E. Cummings.

Performance Schedule: Wednesday through Saturday Evenings at 8PM,
Sunday Matinees at 3PM—October 10 through October 28, 1990

Presented by Blue Heron Theatre, Inc. at the Mazur Theatre of Asphalt
Green, 555 East 90th Street (between York and East End Avenue)

ACT I: (Titles in capital letters are sung)

1. OVERTURE	S.R.Scotti (S.R.) and Company
2. O THE SUN COMES UP-UP-UP IN THE OPENING	Steve
3. pity this busy monster,manunkind,	Steve
4. IT WAS A GOODLY CO	Company
5. "next to of course god america I	S.R.
6. my sweet old etcetera	Steve
7. my uncle	Kyle
8. first Jock he	Maggie
9. a politician is an arse upon	Kyle
10. RED-RAG AND PINK-FLAG	Company
11. KUMRADS DIE BECAUSE THEY'RE TOLD)	Company
12. THE WAY TO HUMP A COW IS NOT	Company
13. plato told	Steve
14. the first president to be loved by his	S.R.
15. remarked Robinson Jefferson	Steve
16. come from his gal's	Maggie and Steve
17. F is for foetus(a	Kyle
18. WHEN MUCKERS PIMPS AND TRATESMEN	Company
19. ygUDah	S.R.
20. THE BOYS I MEAN ARE NOT REFINED	S.R. and Company
21. mr youse needn't be so spry	Steve
22. oil tel duh woi doi sez	Kyle
23. MAY I FEEL SAID HE	Maggie, Steve
24. she being Brand	Steve, Maggie
25. THIS LITTLE	Kyle
26. (OF EVER-EVER LAND I SPEAK	Company
27. I'M VERY FOND OF	Company
28. JIMMIE'S GOT A GOIL/GOIL/GOIL,/JIMMIE	Company

INTERMISSION - 15 minutes

oil tel duh woi doi sez
dooyuh unnurs tanmih eeseez pullih nizmue tash,oi
dough un giv uh shid oi sez. Tom
oidoughwuntuh doot,butoiguttuh
bralkyooz,datsawut eeseez tuhmi. (Nowoi askyuh
woodundat maik yurastoin
green? Oilsalsough.)—Hool
spairuh luckih? Thangzkeed. Mairsee.
Muh jax awl gawn. Fur Croi saik
ainnoughbudih gutnutntuhplai?

HAI

yoozwidduhpaimnuntwaiv un duhyookuhsumpnruddur
givusuhtoonunduhphugnting

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ACT II:

1. IN HAMMAMET DID CAMPING	S.R. and Company
2. nobody loses all the time	Kyle
3. Buffalo Bill's	Maggie
4. since feeling is first	Steve
5. MAGGIE AND MILLIE AND MOLLY AND MAY	Maggie & Company
6. in Just-	Kyle
7. hist whist	Maggie
8. who knows if the moon's	Company
9. "SWEET SPRING IS YOUR	Maggie and Kyle
10. think of it: not so long ago	Steve and Kyle
11. SKIES MAY BE BLUE;YES	Steve and Kyle
12. let it go-the	Maggie
13. LOVE IS MORE THICKER THAN FORGET	S.R. and Maggie
14. come a little further--why be afraid--	Kyle
15. COME,GAZE WITH ME UPON THIS DOME	Kyle and Company
16. I'm	Steve
17. I SING OF OLAF GLAD AND BIG	Steve and Company
18. somewhere i have never travelled,gladly beyond	Steve
19. THEY HAVE HUNG THE SKY WITH ARROWS	Steve
20. when god decided to invent	Maggie and Kyle
21. ANYONE LIVED IN A PRETTY HOW TOWN	S.R. and Company
22. Now I lay(with everywhere around)	Kyle
23. LOVE IS A PLACE	Steve and Company
24. I THANK YOU GOD FOR MOST THIS AMAZING	S.R. and Company

ygUDuh

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yunnuhstan

ydoan o
yunnuhstan dem
yguduh ged

yunnuhstan dem doidee
yguduh ged riduh
ydoan o nudn

LISN bud LISN

dem
gud
am

lidl yelluh bas
tuds weer goin

duhSMILEYEzum

I'm
asking
you dear to
what else could a
no but it doesn't
of course but you don't seem
to realize i can't make
it clearer war just isn't what
we imagine but please for god's O
what the hell yes it's true that was
me but that me isn't me
can't you see now no not
any christ but you
must understand
why because
I am
dead

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"Viva Cummings" Cast Who's Who
WHO'S WHO

EDWARD ESTLIN CUMMINGS was born in Cambridge, MA, 1894. He was graduated from Harvard in 1915 and two years later went to France to join the Ambulance Corps. His first book, The Enormous Room (1922) is considered one of the finest personal accounts of the experience of World War I. The year after its publication, Cummings moved to Patchin Place in New York City which he made his home for the rest of his life. His summers were spent in North Conway, NH, where he died in 1962. Throughout his life, Cummings painted and drew. He considered himself as much an artist as a poet; in fact, the two were interchangeable and he referred to himself as "an author of pictures, a draughtsman of words." Cummings led the attack on conventional verse with his experiments in syntax, punctuation, and distinctive typography. (See examples on previous pages). He helped educate the reading public to accept innovations in prose and poetry. Cummings is beloved, however, not for these formal experiments but for his lyric intensity and his sharp satiric wit. In his poetry, he attacks conformity, the mass mind, institutions, and hypocrisy. He celebrates love, spontaneity, individuality, and a childlike wonder before nature. Spring was his favorite time of year.

WILLIAM A. FINLAY (Director/Choreographer), a Boston resident, has choreographed and directed throughout the New England area, including the Alley Theatre, the People's Theatre, the Theatre at Newburyport, Trinity Square Repertory, the Hartman Theatre Company, and the Huntington Theatre Company. He is Director in Residence for Blue Heron Theatre in New York for which he directed the New York premiere of Fernando Arrabal's On The Tightrope, the Greek tragedy, Prometheus Bound, and the contemporary Mexican play, The Day They Let the Lions Loose. He is a member of the American Society of Fight Directors, has served as combat consultant for films and television productions, and most recently, staged the combat sequences in Twelfth Night at the American Repertory Theatre in Cambridge. Mr. Finlay is on the faculty of Boston University's School of the Arts.

STEPHEN R. SCOTTI (Composer/Arranger/Performer) was born in Cambridge, MA, and is a graduate of Boston University College of Music. He is internationally known for his musical settings of the poetry of William Butler Yeats, E.E. Cummings, and Bertolt Brecht. As an entertainer, Mr. Scotti performs on the piano in the Boston area, specializing in the songs of Cole Porter, Noel Coward and John Latouche. Not only is he a "show business" pianist, but he has also been choir director and organist for several churches. Mr. Scotti studied Gregorian church music with Ted Marier at St. Paul's Church in Harvard Square, and he attributes his interest in setting poetry to music to this influence. Currently, he is composing music in the Ballad Opera style, using the many poems and legends of the early settlers in the Cape Ann area of Massachusetts.

WHO'S WHO, continued

STEVE MULCH (Performer) was last seen as Ben in the workshop performance of Alias Jimmy Valentine at the Crescent Theatre in Dallas, TX. Steve's New York credits include What's a Nice Country... at Actor's Playhouse; and at Playhouse 91 with Light Opera of Manhattan (LOOM), he played Dick Deadeye in H.M.S. Pinafore, as well as appearing in Pirates of Penzance, Desert Song, and Give My Regards to Broadway. Thank you, Mr. H. for getting me off the roof.

MAGGIE SIMPSON (Performer) is a recent graduate of Boston University's Theatre Studies program. A singer/songwriter/playwright, she has participated in the creation of several original theatre pieces in Boston, including "The Dream Café," and "Dreaming with an AIDS Patient." Most recently, Ms. Simpson was seen in the Huntington Theatre's production of O Pioneers! She was a 1989 winner of the prestigious Kahn Award.

KYLE WATERS (Performer) inhabits both the opera and musical theatre worlds. New York audiences last saw her in concert at the Gas Station in May and on stage with the American Ensemble Company's production of Dorian earlier this year. Off-off-Broadway and regional work includes Amahl and the Night Visitors, Chamber Music, Riders to the Sea, Stop the World..., Kiss Me Kate and Vanities. "Mille grazie," Blue Heron, Charles and JZ.

CHRISTINE CULLEN (Production Stage Manager) began working with Blue Heron Theatre in 1988. Recently, she was production assistant for the summer parks concerts of the New York Philharmonic and Metropolitan Opera. Christine is a graduate of Manhattanville College, where she has stage managed and directed various productions. This fall, she will be working at the McCarter Theatre in Princeton, NJ.

LISA CODY (Costume Designer) has most recently designed the costumes for the '89-'90 tour of The Odyssey by the National Theatre of the Deaf. She received her MFA from the University of Connecticut where she designed costumes for shows as diverse as Roshamon, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, and The Seagull. Lisa is on the faculty of Tufts University in Boston where she is currently designing Noises Off and The Eumenides.

SEAN DOLAN (Lighting Designer) returns to Blue Heron Productions for which he previously designed On the Tightrope and The Estate. He has assisted Curt Ostermann on such productions as The Devil's Disciple at Circle in the Square and Mr. Cinders at Goodspeed Opera House. Mr. Dolan's other recent works include Bob's Guns at the Directors' Company; A Midsummer Night's Dream, Transformations, The Fifth of July, and Prometheus Bound.

VIVA CUMMINGS!

A Musical Celebration of the Poet E.E. Cummings

Because he is so positive, and so clear about what he does not like, E. E. Cummings is a rare pleasure among major modern American poets. These settings of Cummings' poems and lyrics to music composed and arranged by Stephen R. Scotti may even seem delicious to most people, Cummings' unhyphenated term for the unselected many who lack the sensitivity and feeling to be alive and aware and loving in the ways his words unfold. Those who can feel what Cummings is talking about, to whom he refers in intimate address as you and me, will be still more delighted and inspired by Scotti's arrangements, which go beyond settings to become readings and interpretations of great intelligence. The twenty or so of us from the E. E. Cummings Society who heard and saw VIVA CUMMINGS! on Sunday evening, October 13, were unanimously enthusiastic and praising as we met afterwards with Mr. Scotti and the actors. We especially appreciated the great care that had gone into the order of the poems. The first act deals with Cummings' bawdy and political satire, the second with the big themes of love and death. The three actors were brilliant effective and creative. Maggie Simpson, who brings astounding acumen from the original Provincetown production has been joined by the very musically and dramatically successful Steve Mulch and Kyle Waters. To give an example of many, Miss Waters vamped "come a little further--why be afraid--" as a Russian. Rivalling the three younger actors' efforts, Mr. Scotti himself at the piano gave virtuoso renderings of many of the most sardonic dialect pieces, such as "next to of course god america i." "Even if the theatergoer arrived unfamiliar with the antipolitician, antijingiostic, antibigot point of Cummings' vernacular verses, the readings and dramatizations would teach them, for example the marching in "red-rag and pink-flag" and the kneeling Russian walk in "kumrads die because they're told)." The rendering of "Jimmie's got a goil goil goil, / Jimmie" in successive versions in the style

of the 20's, 30's, 40's and 50's, with everything from Durante to rock, torch and double-time, was a crown jewel of the evening. William A. Finlay's direction and choreography was more than adroit in the extensive range of emphases, the full use of the body and the use of simple props. My favorite was the use of a circular light from a flashlight for a balloon in rendering "in Just-" about the balloonman. The enormous bubbles in "anyone lived in a pretty how town" were so beautiful they slightly subtracted from the words, but who hasn't memorized them? Mr. Mulch's "she being Brand" in which he "drives" Miss Simpson automotively with her legs wapped around him, first frontally and then over his shoulder and upside down behind him, was "Divinity avenue" incarnate.

The only sequential juxtaposition I didn't like was the following of "i sing of Olaf glad and big" about the tormented conscientious objector immediately by Cummings' loveliest love lyric, "somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond," which is prayerful in King James cadences. A rare error was the reversal of "easily will" and saying "textures" for "texture".

Mr. Scotti switched from piano to accordion for the second act, and Lisa Cody's all purpose costumes change from more tan slacks and loose blouses to evening colors, including purple.

Every college English teacher should have as a fondest wish that the students see this production. Though they may protest, anticipating a dull poetry reading (even some of Mr. Mulch's friends resisted this way, he said), none will regret having been, and all will see poetry richly realized. Just as Balanchine felt that some music is too complete to be danced, one often objects to gratuitous musical settings for poetry. Even settings of Cummings' poetry sometimes sound precious, stuffy, sepulchral, lugubrious or childish. But this night nothing disappointed, and the production set a standard showing what such musical settings can do when the composer is at one with the lyrics, and the poet's spirit. I shall always hear some of the poems Mr. Scotti's way.

This review was sent to The New York Times, urging them to review the production.

- Stephen Scotti Discusses Production and Review

645 WEST END AVE
APT. 7B
N.Y. City, 10025

DAVID V. FORREST, M.D.
88 CENTRAL PARK WEST
SUITE 1W
N.Y., N.Y. 10023

DEAR DR. FORREST:

WHAT CAN I WRITE OR SAY ABOUT MEETING YOU AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE E.E. CUMMINGS SOCIETY AT A PERFORMANCE OF 'VIVA CUMMINGS'. I WAS OVERWHELMED WITH JOY AND NERVOUSNESS (CAUSE I ALSO HAD TO PERFORM!) WITH ALL THE FEELING THAT WAS IN THE MAZUR THEATRE THAT NIGHT BROUGHT ABOUT BECAUSE OF THE LOVE WE ALL HAVE FOR THIS MOST REMARKABLE OF MEN E.E. CUMMINGS. AS I TOLD YOU, I PUT THIS WORK TOGETHER OUT OF LOVE FOR THIS POET. I HAD NO COMMISSION OR UNDERLYING MOTIVE TO PUT THE AMOUNT OF TIME IT TOOK TO REALIZE THESE SONGS AND THE ORDER OF THE POEMS TO CREATE THE EXPERIENCE OF THE SPIRIT OF THE POET AS IF BRINGING HIM 'BACK TO LIFE' IN A DARKENED THEATRE. I FEEL A DEEP KINSHIP WITH ALL OF YOU AND WITH CUMMINGS. I APPRECIATE YOUR LETTER TO ARDELLE STRIKER ABOUT THE ENTHUSIASM YOU ALL FELT IN EXPERIENCING 'VIVA CUMMINGS'. I AM ALSO NOT SURPRISED THAT YOU PICKED UP ON THE ORDER OF THE POEMS BEING CRUCIAL TO THE WORKINGS OF THE SHOW AND THAT THE ONE PLACE IN THE SHOW WHERE THE POEM 'SOMEWHERE I HAVE NEVER TRAVELLED, GLADLY BEYOND' SEEMS OUT OF PLACE BECAUSE IT FOLLOWS 'I SING OF OLAF' IS SOMEWHAT STRAINED OR TOO DIFFERENT A JUXTAPOSITION. I ORIGINALLY HAD THE SUICIDE POEM 'IN A MIDDLE OF A ROOM' IN THAT SLOT AFTER 'I SING OF OLAF' FOLLOWED BY 'ANYONE LIVED IN A PRETTY HOWTOWN' AND THEN 'NOW I LAY' FOLLOWED BY 'LOVE IS A PLACE AND I THANK YOU GOD' BUT THE SETTING TO MUSIC OF THE MAJESTIC POEM 'THEY HAVE HUNG THE SKIES WITH ARROWS' (WHICH WAS MY MOST RECENT MUSICAL SETTING) FORCED ME TO FIND A PLACE FOR THIS SONG AND THE SUBSEQUENT ELIMINATION OF 'IN A MIDDLE OF A ROOM'.

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THE ONLY PROBLEM OF WORKING THIS ALL OUT IS TRIAL AND ERROR. I AM STILL NOT TOO HAPPY WITH 'SOMEWHERE I HAVE NEVER ...' BEING WHERE IT IS BUT IT OFFERS SOME LIGHT AND RESPIRE IN AN EVERGROWING DOWNWARD SPIRAL TOWARD DEATH AND GLOOM TILL THE AWAKENING SONGS OF 'LOVE IS A PLACE' AND 'I THANK YOU GOD'. THE DIRECTOR FINLAY SEEMED TO LIKE THE LOVE POEM FOLLOWING 'OLAF' AND SO DID MRS. STRIKER SO I'VE LEFT IT THIS WAY FOR THIS PRODUCTION. BUT I WOULD LIKE TO TALK TO YOU FURTHER ABOUT THIS SOME TIME IN THE FUTURE.

MEANWHILE, WE CONTINUE THIS RUN AND PERHAPS THIS SHOW WILL HAVE A LIFE OF ITS OWN SOMEDAY AND BE PERFORMED IN MANY PLACES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD MEMORIALIZING THAT VIBRANT, LOVEABLE, ROMANTIC AND ENTERTAINING SPIRIT WE KNOW AS E.E. CUMMINGS.

WITH MUCH GRATITUDE
FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

Stephen R. Scotti.

NOTE: ENCLOSED \$10.00 CHECK
FOR MEMBERSHIP IN SPRING.
I WILL BE MOST HAPPY TO STAY IN
TOUCH AND KEEP AHEAD OF
CUMMINGS MEMORABILIA WITH YOU
THROUGH SPRING. PLEASE ENTER
MY ADDRESS AS:

6 MT. LOCUST PL.
GLOUCESTER MA.
01930

THANK YOU -13-

Niggling About Cummings with a Capital C
14 Jul 90

Ardelle Striker
Producer and Artistic Director
Blue heron Theatre, Inc.
645 West End Avenue
New York, New York 10025

Dear Ardelle,

I'm pleased to send the most active of our lists to you. There are countless other hangers-on but I don't have them on the computer. I may try to scare some up for the Saturday evening performance, and invite other friends too.

If you can send an envelope around your mailing, at least to the N.Y.C. contingent, why not enclose the enclosed cheery invitation from me for that evening?

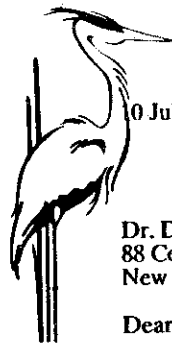
We'd be pleased to have you and any others interested in Cummings in our Society. Dues are \$10 a year and I enclose a form.

You may hear endless niggling from those of us in the Society who make a point of correcting the frequent error of spelling Cummings' name with a small c or claiming he had his name legally changed that way (an impossibility). Recently I helped to get the Metropolitan Opera Gala publication the perfect picture of Cummings (among expatriates in Paris in the 20's they were featuring) and was horrified to find they slipped the same gaffe in. If there's any way you can capitalize Cummings, I urge you to do it. We've corrected everybody from the *International Herald Tribune* to the *Britannica*. It's still a niggle, though, and it's the spirit of Cummings' work we'll come to your production to see!

Sincerely,

David V. Forrest, M.D.

Editor, SPRING



10 July 1990

Dr. David Forrest
88 Central Park West, Suite 1W
New York, NY 10023

Dear Dr. Forrest:

I very much enjoyed talking with you yesterday, and in line with our discussion, I'm enclosing for your information a brief history of Blue Heron Theatre as well as the program from the Provincetown try-out of the show and copies of the reviews and articles which appeared at the time. Please use this information in whatever way you see fit.

So that you can plan an evening for your membership, let me repeat the details: *viva cummings!* opens at the Mazur Theater, 555 East 90th Street, Wednesday evening, October 10. It will be performed Wednesday through Saturday evenings at 8 PM, Sunday matinees at 3 PM through October 28th. The tickets are \$12. Reservations can be made by calling (212) 787-0422.

I shall appreciate receiving your mailing list as soon as possible, since an announcement will go out by the end of July with a follow-up flyer early in September. Also, thank you for suggesting that I contact Lincoln Kirstein, Francis Mason, and Richard Severo. Let's hope support will emerge from these efforts. If any further thoughts occur to you, please call me. I'm ready to take action at a moment's notice. As I mentioned to you, my great hope is that we shall be able to move *viva cummings!* on to another theatre and a longer engagement by attracting the attention of larger producing organizations.

I look forward to talking with you soon and to meeting you at the theatre.

Sincerely yours,

Ardelle Striker

Ardelle Striker, Producer and Artistic Director
BLUE HERON THEATRE, INC.

645 West End Ave., New York, NY 10025

Ardelle Striker, Ph.D., Artistic Director

(212) 787-0422

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CENTER STAGE

Pianist puts cummings to music

By Johanna Crosby
SPECIAL WRITER

PROVINCETOWN — Stephen Scott's devotion to e.e. cummings began one day in a park.

It was 1957, and Scott was a student at Boston University's School of Music. He went to hear the Cambridge-born poet read his works on Boston Common. The budding pianist/composer was so struck by cummings' performance that he was inspired to set the poet's unconventional verse to music.

"I was very moved by him. He was an unusual man," Scott recalled recently.

Known for its distinctive style of phrasing, cummings's poetry lent itself easily to music.

"Many of his poems are very lyrical," Scott said. "He created his own voice with his use of language. His movement of language is so excitingly fresh and original."



Steve Scott plays piano as other players in the company rehearse "viva cummings" at the Provincetown Inn, Provincetown.

Over the years, Scott continued composing cummings songs. But it wasn't until he collaborated with William Finlay, a theatrical professor at Boston University, that "viva cummings!" a musical revue that pays tribute to the American poet, was born. The aim of the two-act, cabaret-style show, which is being presented by the Provincetown Theatre Company in association with the Blue Heron Theatre of New York, is to re-create the image of the man and pay homage to his spirit, Scott said.

"viva cummings!" does not follow a script, but is composed of a collection of 45 of cummings' poems, 22 of which are sung to Scott's melodies. The show combines theatrical elements of burlesque and the circus (forms of art cummings loved) with avant-garde theater and dance to depict cummings's poetry.

The first act highlights cum-

mings's lighter works and emphasizes his humor and satiric viewpoint. The second act shows cummings's serious, deeper side with a selection of his love poems and darker works.

"Some are very powerful songs that will leave the audience in a high spiritual state," Scott said. He performs in the show with three actor-singers: Katherine Hughes, Roger Keicher and Maggie Simpson.

Although Scott never got to meet cummings in person, he got to know the poet by tracking down some of his closest friends.

"I met some of them in strange ways," he said, recalling his chance encounter with cummings's closest friend, Slater Brown of Rockport, on a train from Gloucester to Boston. Scott happened to be carrying a book of cummings's poetry and the two men struck up a conversation. Brown spent time with the poet in a detention camp in France during World War I. Cumming was working with the ambulance corps and was interned for a time because of his friendship with an American who wrote letters home that the French censors thought were critical of the war effort. The experience intensified cummings's distrust of officialdom and was the basis for his first book, "The Enormous Room," in 1922.

Brown went to see Scott's first show in Boston six years ago.

"He told me it was the nearest thing to having cummings alive again. It (the show) re-created his spirit," Scott said proudly.

Scott met another friend of cummings, Foster Damon, who lives in Scott's hometown of Gloucester. Damon owned the Steinway cummings used to play on. Scott later bought it from him.

"Cummings left an indelible mark on his friends. He was such a remarkable man," Scott said. "He had a great sense of humor and was a great entertainer. He always remained a poet and a painter. He never sold out."

Like cummings, Scott hails from Cambridge. He's also dabbled in different art forms, including playing in theaters and burlesque houses. These days, the singer-pianist plays in clubs, performing Cole Porter music one night and cummings songs the next.

"viva cummings!" continues its run at 8 p.m. May 18-20 and 24-26, with a 2 p.m. matinee May 27, at the Provincetown Inn, 1 Commercial St., Provincetown. Tickets are \$8. Information: (800) 648-0364 or 487-3466.

The Register

Cape Cod's weekly newspaper

'viva cummings!'

one show you
should see

"viva cummings!" musical celebration based on the poetry of e.e. (cummings), conceived and composed by Steve Scott, directed by W.A. Finlay, P.A.P.A./Provincetown Theatre Co. in association with The Blue Heron Theatre of New York production, Provincetown Inn, One Commercial St., May 17 - 20, 24 - 26, 8 pm and May 27, 2 p.m. Tickets: 1-800-648-0364 or 487-3466.

THEATRE

Okay, your immediate reaction is "Poetry by e.e. cummings! Set to music!" It's okay, that's a normal reaction. But get beyond that feeling.

Forget that you think it's too long to drive to Provincetown. Forget that a number of Provincetown Theatre Company shows you have seen have not thrilled you. Don't think about how you were often only one of a handful in the audience at any given production in the Provincetown Inn. "viva, cummings!" is a different production — and you should realize by the intermission in the two-act presentation that if any production in Provincetown deserves an audience, it's this one.

This is a show that definitely deserves the exclamation point in its title. Conceived and composed by Steve Scott, the production is promoted as "a joyous new musical revue" but it's much more. It is a first-rate theatrical production — quite possibly the best musical entertainment of the Cape's current local theater season.

PAGE 50

SUNDAY CAPE COD TIMES, MAY 13, 1990

'viva cummings' a joyous celebration

REVIEW

Years later Scott collaborated with William Finlay who added the elements of dance, circus and avant-garde theater to Scott's songs to bring cummings' poetry to life on the musical stage. The result of their collaboration is an entertaining evening of humor, satire, whimsy and tenderness.

cummings' lyrical poetry lends itself easily to music. There is no script in the two-act, cabaret-style performance. Instead, the words are all supplied by the poet.

Scott, a skilled pianist who appears onstage with three young performers, showcases 45 of cummings' poems, 22 of which are sung.

The first act emphasizes the poet's humorous side and sharp, satiric wit. Imaginative theatrics utilizing a melange of motifs from burlesque and the circus to street entertainment (forms of art the poet loved), dramatize the poems.

Kudos go to the three young performers, Roger Keicher, Katherine Hughes and Maggie Simpson, whose acting and vocal abilities are first-rate.

Highlights of the first act include the amusing and suggestive "the boys i mean are not refined" set to a bouncy Latin beat, the lovely duet of "mav i feel," and the pretty melodies Scott composed for "this little pair" and "of ever-land."

Scott mixes up musical styles for "jimmie's got a goil," ranging from ragtime and blues to a hint of doo-wop with whimsical theatrics throw in for good measure. Clever staging makes "kumrads die" another winner.

The second act takes a more serious tone and showcases the poet's deeper, darker side. It also celebrates cummings' love poems and his penchant for spring.

Scott's romantic melodies for "sweet spring," "love is a place," and "love is more thicker than forget," are simply lovely. The tune he composed for "maggie and millie and molly and may" is one of the prettiest songs in the show. "skies may be blue" is a tender duet.

Scott's "i sing of olaf glad and big" is a moving and powerful piece.

-17-

Tuesday, May 8, 1990

Making A Case For Cummings

By Hamilton Kahn

To those that scoff at the notion of setting to music the work of one of America's greatest poets, composer Stephen Scotti has a quick and pointed response. After all, he says, some of the greatest opera composers of the 19th century used poetry as the basis for their works. "So it isn't something new, setting poetry to music," he says. "It's just that a lot of purists think it's a weird thing to do."

Of course, Mr Scotti is not creating opera, here. What's he come up with is *viva cummings*, a musical tribute to Edward Estlin Cummings, the innovative poet who died in 1962 and wrote many things, including his name, only in the lower case. The Provincetown Theatre Company, in association with the Blue Heron Theatre in New York, will present the show from May 10 to 27 at the Provincetown Inn, One Commercial Street.

A resident of Gloucester, Mr Scotti sings and plays piano in the show, accompanying three other performers—two women and a man. He says he first

Cummings—Continued

Cummings material, bringing the work to life in various ways—through drama, movement and comedy—in addition to the music itself.

In 1984, the show had a successful six-week run in Boston, where Wellfleet summer resident Ardelle Striker, a former instructor of Mr Finlay's, had a chance to see it. Last year, she approached the director and composer about putting together a production for her Blue Heron Theatre in New York City, and they agreed.

viva cummings is the second show Blue Heron has brought to the Cape this year, the first being a staged reading of *We Are Your Sisters*, an adaptation of Wellfleet resident Dorothy Sterling's book. This new show's Cape-tip run will be a shakedown cruise for a planned October production of the show in Manhattan, but to Stephen Scotti, it will be more than that.

"Cummings spent time in Provincetown," he points out. "And the Provincetown Playhouse in New York

became enamored of Cummings in the late '50s when, as a college student in Boston, he heard him give a reading. But he didn't approach the poet, who was at the peak of his popularity and prestige.

"I was very shy then. I wouldn't have dreamed of going up to somebody like that," Mr Scotti recalls. "He was almost like a god, he was so free with his expression. And he had achieved, finally, a place in the world where he was making money with his poetry."

Some years later, Mr Scotti conceived the idea of creating a musical show of Cummings's work—primarily as a tribute to the man, he says.

"This show is an homage to Cummings," he says. "I didn't write it specifically to be a commercial success, I wrote it because of the love I had for the poetry and the man."

The show has been many years in the making, and began after Mr Scotti learned that Cummings had written lyrics for an unfinished musical show. He was able to obtain these from the poet's estate and, after writing music for them, he expanded on the concept by writing music for some of Cummings's poems, as well as the work of other poets such as Yeats and Brecht.

When Mr Scotti hooked up with director-choreographer William A. Finlay, he began to realize more fully the potential of making a show out of his

(Continued on Next Page)

performed his only play, *Him*, which was very important to him. I always felt that *viva cummings* would be done in Provincetown."

Mr Scotti also believes that this show's freewheeling music hall flavor is true to the poet's spirit. Cummings was a connoisseur of circuses and burlesque, and Mr Scotti's research has revealed that the poet also had a penchant for performing in social situations—playing the piano, doing impersonations of political figures of the time, or playing the sort of clever word games in his conversation that he sometimes played in his poetry.

"What I've tried to do, and it's kind of a crazy idea," Mr Scotti says, "is to use his own words and poetry to create the sort of musical work that he loved to see, which was full of comedy and singing and wit and movement."

Mr Scotti and Mr Finlay have even found a way to convey subtly the poet's preferred method of communication in one number, "comrades die," a poem about the Russian revolution.

"The performers do it down on their knees, Russian style," Mr Scotti explains. "It's lower case in a way, a little inside joke."



Edward Estlin Cummings, American poet, circa 1939-40.

The Cape Codder



Composer Stephen Scotti will accompany his musical, *viva cummings*, during its run in Provincetown beginning Thursday night.

Willard Thorp, Society Member, who read and awarded your Editor's Princeton thesis on Cummings

PRINCETON NOTEBOOK

Willard Thorp *26 Dies at Age 90

WILLARD THORP *26, the Holmes Professor of Belles-Lettres, Emeritus, and one of academe's leading Americanists, died on February 15 at the Merwick Nursing Home in Princeton. He was ninety.

Educated at Hamilton, Harvard, and Princeton, Thorp joined the English department in 1926. He became a full professor in 1944 and, eight years later, was named the Holmes Professor, Princeton's oldest endowed professorship. He served as chairman of the English department from 1958 to 1963, and retired from teaching in 1967, after forty-one years on the faculty. Throughout his career, Thorp's lectures and precepts were perennial favorites among undergraduates.

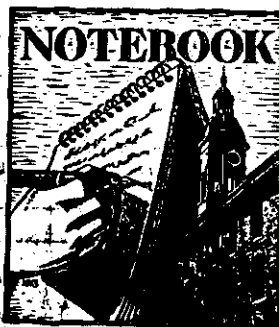
Of Thorp's many contributions to the university, the most lasting was his work toward the creation of the Special Program in American Studies, now called the Program in American Studies. Before this interdisciplinary program was established, the study of English-language literature at Princeton was limited largely to the "lonely

dead "greats." With the institution of the Special Program in American Studies in 1942, all that changed, and during his thirteen years as director of the program, Thorp revolutionized the curriculum. The university honored his efforts in 1972 by creating the Willard Thorp Thesis Prize in American Civilization, which is presented

each year to the senior in the program who writes the "most outstanding thesis of a clearly interdisciplinary nature."

Thorp was also a prolific scholar. He was one of four editors of the *Literary History of the United States*, and produced the first fully annotated edition of *Moby-Dick*. He edited numerous works and wrote seven books, including *American Writing in the Twentieth Century*, which has been translated into four languages. Thorp was widely honored for his contributions to scholarship, and he was active in many professional organizations. A loyal Princetonian, he also served as president of the Association of Princeton Graduate Alumni, edited *The Lives of Eighteen from Princeton*, and coauthored a history of the Graduate School.

In 1978, Princeton awarded Thorp an honorary Doctor of Letters degree. The citation described him as "a man of discriminating judgment and catholic knowledge, revered by the members of forty-one Princeton classes as a giant among teachers, to whom scholars of the present and the future owe their gratitude."



8 • Princeton Alumni Weekly

Yasuo Fujitomi Reports from Japan

May 2, 1990

Dear Dr. David Forrest

Please forgive my long silence.

I'm sending you one audio-cassette by another air mail.

You can hear my voice in Japanese recorded on Oct 13, 1989.

I gave a talk on e.e.cummings at OTSUKA-forum in Tokyo. Oct 14 is, as you know, e.e.cummings birthday.

I had an exigency on his birthday. So I had a NON-LECTURE on the day before his 95th birthday. I gave the handouts on which e.e.cummings' poems were printed to the audience.

This audio-cassette was recorded by my friend. I'm very sorry that his dubbing was very late.

I sent these ones to Maryette Charlton and Rodney G. Dennis III, curator of manuscripts Houghton Library.

Sincerely

Yasuo Fujitomi

[FUJITOMI yasuo]

Contents [A-side]

- e.e.cummings' death
- Michael Reck and I
- e.e.c.'s translation in Japan
- What made me start to translate e.e.c.
- Michael Reck in Salzburg. ^{in Tokyo}
- Studies together with Michael Reck
- e.e.c.'s individuality
- Marion's "Adventure in Value"

-20-

—about 20 minutes till here

1. maggie and milly and molly and may
this explanation and interpretation

2. Spring is like a perhaps hand
my reading and explanation and interpretation

3. "sweet spring is your
my reading and again explanation for
Spring is like

4. 1 Ca [The first poem of 95 poems]

I gave the explanation writing this short
and slender poem on the blackboard.

[B-side]

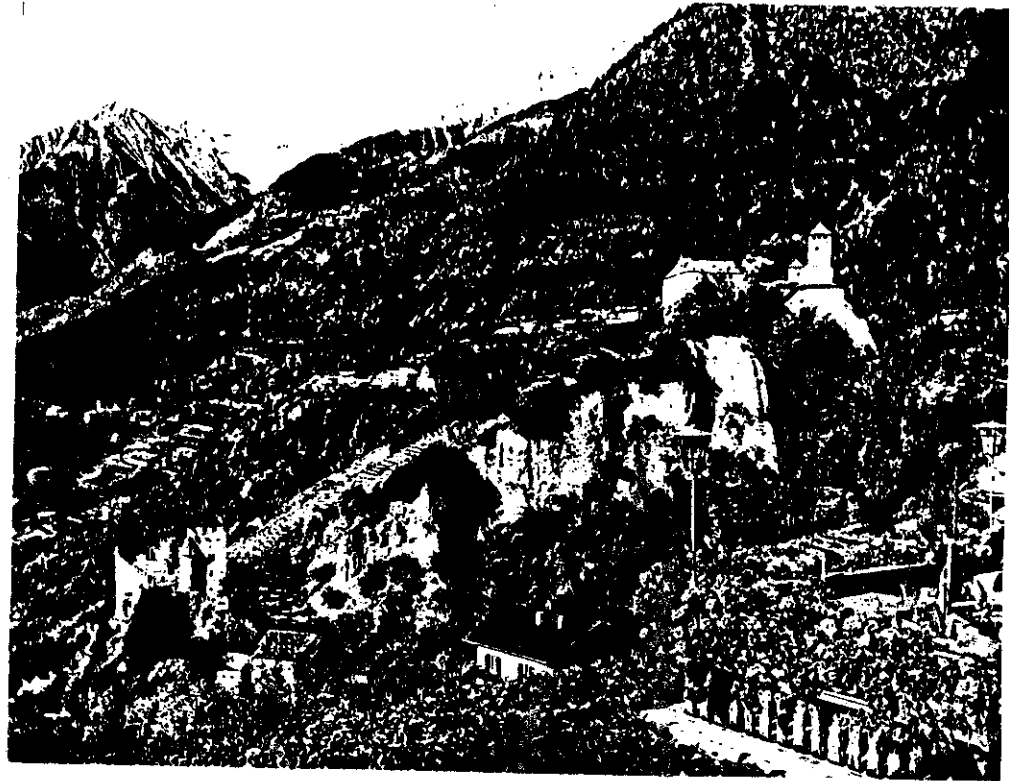
1. continued 1 Ca
2. in Just -
this explanation and interpretation
3. from "i six-non lectures" in Harvard
explanation of non-lecture by me.
His talking.
(As my recording was poor, the sound was
not good.)

4. "sweet spring is your
by his reading

5. The Elephant & The Butterfly
from his FAIRY TALES
reading in Japanese by me

6. About his grave

A Castle in Point, O-O-O



Ezra Pound: see Poems, p. 440.

Unter schönes Südtirol

Castel Tirol con Castel Fontana
e S. Pietro presso Merano
Schloß Tirol mit Burggarten
und St. Peter in Meran

Nov. 6 '90

Dear Dr. Forrest,
I enclose a check,
that SPRING may
come again.

In the castle on the
left, Cummings' friend
on whom "they shot/
and shot encore" lived
for a few years, off

and on, after his
release from the
bug-house in 1958.

Please note my
new address:
KRISTENE BEN 33
6094 AXAMS
AUSTRIA

Yours cummingsfully

Michael Reck

© by foto detter drescher meran
1990, Abbr. Schallhofer, 4a Tel 0473 3450

Cummings' Italian translator,
Mary Jo Kachavilla (daughter of
aforementioned father) lives in the
castle now.

-21-

The Watson Archives

James Sibley Watson, Jr. LIBRARY
6 Sibley Place
Rochester, NY 14607

6 Sibley Place

Rochester, New York 14607 February 7, 1990

(716) 271-4260

David V. Forrest, M.D.
Editor, SPRING - Journal of E.E. Cummings Society
88 Central Park West, Suite W.
New York City, 10023

Dear Dr Forrest;

Thank you for your letter; you certainly spread out the acknowledgements in a grand fashion in the January SPRING 1990.

Here are just a few thoughts I want to pass along for the Society to consider about memorializing Dr & Mrs Watson.

We think that any of the money spent to Index the SPRING Journal of the E.E.Cummings Society would be a fitting way to memorialize them.

Consider that such an Index of all the "goodies" spread out in the SPRING, over the years would provide a convivial banquet for all the Members. It would give those who have contributed Poems, Letters, Articles and Memoirs a wider recognition. An Index would make the publication a useful tool for Scholars, Bibliographers and Librarians, As has the Indexes of the DIAL proven to be.

The mention of possibly interesting the ALA, causes me to think that maybe some student at one of your colleges or Schools of Library Science, would like to pick up some change and recognition by doing the indexing for the Association.

Inclosed is a list of the last of the Cummings's collection here. More money can be forthcoming to your Society when they are sold also.

I do enjoy the Journal, keep up the good work.

Sincerely,

Sterling M. Dean
Sterling M. Dean
LIBRARIAN

Enc.

Squid October 15th

It was de light full!

(I've sent copies of the announcement to several of my friends who would also love the show).

Pat Stokes, Barnard Psychology Dept.

The Watson Archives

6 Sibley Place

Rochester, New York 14607

(716) 271-4260

James Sibley Watson, Jr. LIBRARY
6 Sibley Place
Rochester, NY 14607

BOOKS BY E. E. CUMMINGS: Some Association Copies

CHRISTMAS TREE New York 1928 (Colophon page states: "Xmas Tree by E.E. Cummings here printed by Permission - Typography arranged by S.A.Jacobs - the whole made into a Book in in New York -In this Year of Grace MCXXVII by the American Bindery, Inc.) Inscribed: "Happy New Year"! to BHW from eec". A good copy of a fragile book, end-paper loose, five uncut pages.\$300.00

FAIRY TALES New York(1965) Pictures by John Eaton. First Edition.(These tales were written for Cummings' daughter,Nancy, she was a very little girl, M.M.C. Mrs Cummings suggested he try his hand at illustrating FAIRY TALES which resulted in this lovely book. sm. quarto clo. d.w. \$15.00

HIM New York, Boni & Liveright, 1927. 8vo decorated line drawing on cover bds. Good clean condition. 1st ed. \$25.00

i SIX NONLECTURES Harvard Univ. Press, Cambridge 1953. 8vo.clo.d.w. Unscribed: "inscribed for 'a wonderful friend named Hildegarde Watson' by the more than fortunate co-author" February 18, 1954. (p. 50 Cummings in speaking of friendship gives praise to Scofield Thayer & Sibley Watson's first rate magazine, THE DIAL) \$150.00

is 5 New York, Boni & Liveright, 1926. 8vo.bds. \$50.00

SANTA CLAUS, A MORALITY New York Henry Holt & Co. 1946. Lge 8vo.clo. good copy, lmted. signed. no. 50, signed,EEC and also inscribed: "to Sibley & Hildegarde !Merry Christmas! from Estlin & Marion 1946". \$100.00

TULIPS and CHIMNEYS New York Thomas Seltzer MCMXXIV (2nd prntng March 1924) Inscribed: "mighty glad to see Mrs Lasell in possession of this book E.E. Cummings" 8vo.clo. good cond. \$50.00

SELECTED POEMS, 1923 - 1958. London, Faber & Faber (1969) pa.\$10.00

E.E. CUMMINGS Oeuvres choisies traduites et presentees par D. Jon Grossman. bibliographie, portraits et documents. pub France Pierre Seghers #142 of paper bound series 1966, 6 sketches and 3 portraits, good clean condition, \$10.00

An Association copy inscribed: to Sibley and Hildegarde. "bonne chance! Estlin & Marion Xmas 1943. A bound copy in bds. of A WREATH OF CHRISTMAS POEMS edited by Hayes and James Laughlin, designed and printed by Maurice Kaplan at the Blue Ox Press. New Directions, Norfolk, Connecticut, \$25.00

Sent by Sterling M. Dean

Cummings on Improving the Condition of Poetry

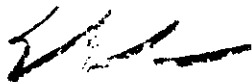
A Note from e. e. cummings

In 1960, Marie Bullock, the late founder and President of The Academy of American Poets, was asked by President Eisenhower to serve ex-officio on the Advisory Committee on the Arts for the National Cultural Center in Washington, D.C. Mrs. Bullock then wrote to a number of distinguished American poets, requesting their advice on what might best be done to improve the condition of poetry. Her letter read, in part:

My only purpose in accepting this invitation is further to serve poetry, which I long to see properly appreciated in America. To my way of thinking there are only two fundamental things that can ever be done for poetry: 1. Good poetry written. 2. A wide audience built up that is interested in poetry. The first boils down to one question: How does one create the right atmosphere for the production and encouragement of poets? What is needed to achieve the second?

The reply of e. e. cummings, in its entirety, is presented below.

1. **Favor everything without exception that makes people different; discourage everything whatsoever that makes people alike (i.e. destroys individuality)**
2. **The rest follows**



Unpublished letter by E.E. Cummings
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E · n · v · o · y

Number 52

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New York, New York 10128

MLA

MLA International Bibliography

MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

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27 March 1990
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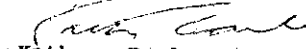
Mr. Norman Friedman
33-54 164 St.
Flushing, New York 11358

Dear Mr. Friedman:

Following our phone conversation this morning, I spoke to William Gargan about the E. E. Cummings Journal. He told me that it was possible he'd been sent an issue of the journal, but in any case he no longer had it, so I think it would be best if you or Dr. Forrest could send the sample issues we discussed so that we could determine whether or not to add the publication to our Master List; either way, we will index it upon receipt.

Thank you very much for bringing the E. E. Cummings Journal to our attention and for your continued interest in this matter.

Yours sincerely,


Kathryn Earle
Index Editor
MLA International Bibliography

Maryette Charlton in Performance
Announced at 34th Meeting

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Music:

Elliott Sharp, Boshio, Mimi Goese

DREAMING OUT LOUD is about: time, the fourth dimension, listening to realities and linear thinking, synchronicity and multiple realities. The imagery is the stuff of dreams, day-dreams and nightmares are made of; objects are weightless. Scenes take place in industrial environments and in black voids, stacks of tires glow, men laugh and dance, machine workers figure out their own theories of time and space, water flows up. Everybody dances. Everybody acts. Some people float.

OCT. 6-21, 1990 (THURS.-SUN.), 8 PM
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AMERICAN LITERATURE ASSOCIATION

*A coalition of the Societies
devoted to the study
of American Authors*

Conference on American Literature

May 31-June 2, 1990

Bahia Resort Hotel
998 W. Mission Bay Dr.
San Diego, CA 92109

Conference Director: Alfred Bendixen, California State University, Los Angeles

SESSIONS IX: 10:30-11:50: Friday, June 1, 1990

IX-C. E.E. CUMMINGS: 10:30-11:50
Bay Room

Chair: Norman Friedman, Queens College and the E.E. Cummings Society.

1. "Cummings' *Him* - and Me," Linda Wagner-Martin, Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
2. "E.E. Cummings, a Major Minor Poet," Richard S. Kennedy, Temple Univ.
3. "E.E. Cummings and *The Dial*," Milton A. Cohen, University of Texas, Dallas.

E. E. CUMMINGS session

of the AMERICAN LITERATURE ASSOCIATION spring conference

(May 24-26 1991, Washington D.C.)

CALL FOR PAPERS

Scholarly papers on any aspect of Cummings's poetry and/or painting are welcome.

length: 8 - 10 pages (or ca. 15 minutes reading time)

Format: MLA Style Manual

Deadline: 20 December 1990

Send 2 - 3 page proposal and/or precis to:

Prof. Milton Cohen

School of Arts and Humanities JO 4.5

University of Texas at Dallas

Box 830688

Richardson, TX 75083-0688

(submissions will not be returned)

American Literature Association Cummings Panel Reviewed by Friedman

CALIFORNIA 1990

by

Norman Friedman

The Cummings panel at the American Literature Assoc. Conference in San Diego was a fine occasion. I enclose a copy of the program face sheet and of the page showing our event.

As you can see, Milton Cohen spoke on Cummings' contributions in the 1920s to *The Dial*, which included drawings as well as poems, and Milton enhanced his talk by showing slides. Linda Wagner-Martin put *HIM* in the context of Cummings' biography and of feminist thought. And Dick Kennedy assessed Cummings' stature as it appears now.

The audience, which numbered about 30-35--not bad when you notice that 6 programs were running at the same time!--was very appreciative and responsive. In particular, Dick's challenge was taken up and dealt with. His point was that Cummings was a "major minor" poet rather than a major poet, because he didn't create a sufficiently impressive and/or large body of major works--whether major lyrics, as with Keats, e.g., or major longer works, as with Browning, e.g. Surprisingly, he cited Dickinson and Melville as also being "major minor" writers, and my own feeling was that, if this be the case, then Cummings is certainly in very good company and no one had anything to worry about.

Perhaps Dick was being deliberately provocative and spoke partly with tongue in cheek, but he was no doubt treating a serious concern as well. The effect was to spur the audience and the other panel members to come to Cummings' defense. Nevertheless, it seems appropriate, almost 30 years after Cummings' death, that a more objective re-assessment should be taking place. Neither Milton nor Linda refrained from pointed criticisms in their talks when it seemed called for. This is surely the time for a winnowing-out process, and Cummings' essential values can only be reinforced by being separated out from his more ephemeral traits.

Alfred has assured me that we may have a Cummings panel again at next year's conference, which is being planned for the Memorial Day weekend in Washington, D.C. I am also pleased to report that Milton has agreed to serve as the chair for that panel, and I expect that ideas back and forth will be percolating soon.

Further, the current panelists have expressed an interest in seeking to publish the three papers, and Dick and I have agreed to work together toward that end.

Membership in the E. E. Cummings Society is \$10 a year. Past issues of *SPRING* are available at \$2.50 and past volumes 1-10 at \$10 each. Make check to *SPRING*. If you are a member or prospective member and are coming to New York City, let your Editor know so we may meet with you if possible.

Another aspect of my being at this Conference was the opportunity to speak with the representatives and collect the flyers, brochures, and/or newsletters/journals of other author societies, for the sake of pursuing the twofold goal, previously expressed, of enlarging our Society and of opening our Journal to more criticism and scholarship.

I also want to mention that Zelda's neice, Lisa Steinman, poet and critic--whom the Society had the pleasure of sharing dinner with awhile back, when she and her husband, Jim Shugrue, were in NYC for a year--was at the Conference and gave an excellent paper on Wallace Stevens. I enclose a copy of the program page for that panel as well.

Finally, the icing on the cake came later, after Zelda and I left San Diego for a vacation in Yosemite and then a weekend workshop at Esalen in Big Sur. Entitled "Poetry as Food for a Full Life," the workshop was conducted by Brother David Steindl-Rast, a Benedictine monk, psychologist, and author from a nearby hermitage, who has evidently been studying modern and contemporary poetry for its value in enhancing a religious attitude--broadly conceived--toward life. All of his examples came from living poets--most notably Stephen Mitchell and W.S. Merwin--with one exception: E. E. Cummings.

During the course of the weekend, he read and discussed perhaps a half-dozen Cummings poems, and he did so in relation to the categories according to which he organized his presentation: being in touch with the aliveness of the world, e.g.; respecting its separateness; loving; reverencing; being silent. It is this perspective, as Zelda especially felt, which demonstrates the essential value of Cummings, and it was experiencing it in this setting--as the only "older" poet among a host of brilliant younger poets--which reveals Cummings' true permanence.

The other members of the workshop--say, 20-25 people--were generally favorable in their response to Cummings, but one or two voiced the usual objections about linguistic hi-jinks and/or clichés about Love and Spring and Children. It almost seemed like another version of our experience at San Diego! I could hardly contain myself, and I did offer some kind of statement to the effect that, when it comes to Love and Spring and Children, in the words of Dr. Johnson, men need not so much to be informed as reminded. Brother David, however, was much more accepting of diversity of opinion and encouraged all responses. Once again, people rallied to Cummings' defense, and once again I was impressed by the risks he took and by the fact that he rarely leaves people feeling neutral.

Editor: **SPRING: The Journal of the E.E. Cummings Society**
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Enormous Room Taught? Graduate English, 215 Stong College
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To: The Editor,

I'm hoping that you or your readers might be able to assist me in acquiring some information for a research project that includes a survey of the reception of E. E. Cummings' The Enormous Room. I am trying to discover early instances of the novel's having been included on university course reading lists. Any information on when, at what institution, and under what professor the novel was taught, during or prior to the 1950's, would be a great help to me.

Sincerely,



Paul Headrick

6 Feb 90

Dear Mr. Headrick,

Thank you for your interesting query. I shall publish it in the next issue of SPRING, which perhaps will appear by the summer. Meanwhile I have photocopied it and sent it to a number of Society members [Lidz, Friedman, Grossman, Kennedy, McIlvaine, Rotella] who might reply directly. What about using MLA and getting a list of emeritus English professors to recollect?

I was at Princeton in the English Department from 1956-1960 and, despite R. P. Blackmur's critical interest in the poetry, on which I wrote my thesis, I don't remember the novel courses offering it even then. But I'm not sure.

Sincerely,

Dave Forrest

P.S. Needless to say, it was considered risky to write on someone still alive at the time. But Cummings helped me with the thesis and it got highest honors, to the surprise of many classmates [who considered me a dark horse, especially as a premedical student majoring in English].

Dear Dr. Forrest,

Thank you very much for your reply to my letter inquiring about The Enormous Room. I look forward to hearing from the society members to whom you have passed along my questions. The information you have given me with respect to your own experience is very helpful itself. I will keep in touch, and let you know what progress I make.

Sincerely,



Paul Headrick

33-54 164th Street
Flushing, NY 11358
11 February 1990

Paul Headrick
Graduate English, 215 Stong College
York University
4700 Keele Street
North York, Ontario
Canada M3J 1P3

Dear Mr. Headrick,

Dr. David Forrest, editor of SPRING, has forwarded your letter of January 30th to me, concerning your request for information about the reception of The Enormous Room.

Although I do not have any information on when, where, and by whom it was taught during or prior to the 1950s, I can suggest how you might find out.

Two approaches occur to me:

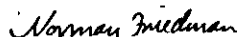
- (1) Write to Random House, who published the Modern Library edition in this country, and ask if they have records of academic sales for the period you're interested in.
- (2) Check with the course catalogues of a number of colleges and universities covering that period to see if any courses in 20c American Literature included it.

Perhaps Prof. Richard Kennedy, of Temple University, could offer additional suggestions.

Incidentally, it is my own preference to call The Enormous Room a journal rather than a novel: it is really an autobiographical account, however artfully arranged, rather than fiction.

I'm sure we'd all be very much interested in what you turn up, so I wish you success in your endeavor and hope you'll let us know its outcome.

Sincerely yours,



Norman Friedman

Dear Mr. Friedman,

Thank you very much for replying to my request for information about the reception of The Enormous Room. As you suggested, I have written to Random House, and to the other publishers who have produced editions at various times. Unfortunately, I don't have the resources to conduct an extensive search of university catalogues, but I will be looking at a few key universities.

One of the issues I will be looking at is the lack of consensus on how to classify The Enormous Room, and how distinctions with respect to genre have shaped responses, so I appreciate your comment on the autobiographical nature of the work.

I'm grateful for your encouragement, and I will certainly share the results of my efforts.

Sincerely,



Paul Headrick

Cummings & Goings

Ada Janik's Cummings & Goings Seeking Southwestern Tour

Steve Margoshes, who with Ada Janik was responsible for the lovely concert of Cummings set to music at the Cooper Hewitt and the Village Gate in 1983 (reviewed in SPRING 3:3) called to obtain the review for promotional use as they are considering a tour of campuses in the Southwest. Your editor of course referred them to Our Man in Dallas, Milton Cohen, and wish them every success with a program that deserves a wide audience. Others who could be of help should contact Steve at (914) 534-3632, or write Steve Margoshes and Ada Janik, 72 Mill Street, Cornwall, New York 12518.

PACEM IN TERRIS

To the Editors:

Senator Moynihan modestly informs us ["The Peace Dividend," *NYR*, June 28] of his prescience in predicting the exhaustion of communism as a world force. "The truth is that the Soviet idea is spent," he quotes himself from a 1984 speech. "It commands some influence in the world; and fear. But it summons no loyalty. History is moving away from it with astounding speed." He wisely refrains, however, from reminding us some of the statements he made a few years earlier when, as Nixon's ambassador to the United Nations, or in the pages of *Commentary* and *The Public Interest*, he bemoaned the "decline of the West" and the "failure of nerve" of American foreign policy elites that were hobbled in their "responses to communist aggression (by)...the superior capacity of Marxist argument to induce guilt." In the 1975 speech just quoted (*Pacem in Terris* IV, December 2, 1975) he also deplored the "decline in authority" of elites obliged to justify their actions to rude protesters, and, tipping his hat to Leo Strauss, "the foremost political philosopher of his time in America," noted the "long term ideological drift away from liberal democracy" by Marxists and third world intellectuals presumably hypnotized by utterances once heard at the (formerly) leftist London School of Economics. In the *NYR* he reminds us that six years ago he stated that "we should be less obsessed with the Soviets." Presumably we were not supposed to take him seriously when as late as 1979 he was breathlessly informing us that "quite soon now the Soviets will have the capacity to destroy our land-based missiles, and thus in one nuclear strike wipe out much of the retaliatory capacity which we have counted on to 'deter' them" (*Newsweek*, November 19, 1979). At that time he also maintained, like other neoconservatives, that the Soviets were running out of oil (sic) and that their next "move is obvious: into the oil fields of the Persian Gulf in order to reverse the decline at home and preserve national unity." Having in 1975 approvingly quoted Strauss's comment that "the only restraint in which the West can put some confidence is the tyrant's fear of the West's immense military power," Senator Moynihan now warns us in

the *NYR* of the dangers of the national security state. This is not meant to criticize the Senator for changing his mind. Indeed, the twists and turns, backs and starts of his intellectual processes are one of the great entertainments of American public life. Rather, it is simply to observe that those who quote themselves as sources of wisdom should be careful to note which of their former selves they are referring to.

Ronald Steel

University of Southern California
Los Angeles, California

NYRB
11 Oct 90

Daniel Patrick Moynihan replies:

With apologies to e.e. cummings:

Mr. S will not be missed,
Who once a Lippmannist.
Toiled too long on dense citations;
Ended with hallucinations.

As, for example, stating that I was "Nixon's ambassador to the United Nations."

Moynihan
With Apologies to Cummings

LITERATURE/
New Books POETRY NYRB
Sect. 25 Oct 90 p. 37

Articles of War: A Collection of Poetry about World War II. Leon Stokesbury, ed. Poets such as E.E. Cummings, Marianne Moore, Howard Nemerov, and Richard Wilbur respond to the impact of the war on our society in this first anthology of American poetry about World War II. Pub. 10/90. LC 89-48872. 5 3/4 x 9 1/4 in. 256 pp.

Arkansas ISBN 1-55728-148-3 C/\$24.95
Arkansas ISBN 1-55728-149-1 P/\$12.95

Science Academia at Work: Is 5 Revisited

Letters

Two Plus Two

If Daniel E. Koshland, Jr.'s editorial "Two plus two equals five" (23 Mar., p. 1381) reflects how the scientific community views its critics, it goes a long way toward both explaining and justifying the antiscientific attitudes it decries.

Koshland's derision might have been appropriate had it been limited to perpetual motion machines and quack medical cures. However, by implying that all who disagree with scientists on public policy issues are either stupid (not knowing how to "add") or malicious (rewriting the "laws of arithmetic" to their advantage), he dangerously trivializes the policy process. We cannot think of any significant public policy controversy where one side has insisted on the equivalent of "2 + 2 = 5," although we've seen quite a few where the technical evidence marshaled by one side's scientists was simply immaterial to the concerns raised by the other side.

Public policy issues with simple answers don't remain issues very long. The ones that stick around involve conflicting philoso-

phies, values, or interests that go a little deeper than knowing how to add. Scientists who don't understand the limits of scientific contributions to policy debates risk not only personal embarrassment but political irrelevance.

GERALD L. EPSTEIN
WILLIAM C. CLARK
Science, Technology, and
Public Policy Program,
John F. Kennedy School of Government,
Harvard University,
Cambridge, MA 02138

Koshland's interview with Dr. Noitall directs the discussion about the "poor" image of science into a debate based on public opinion. Missed is the opportunity to "educate" Dr. Noitall about "fourness." Rather than letting Noitall control the agenda, we all need to be able to direct such discussions into areas that can teach and possibly change opinions. How would the "public" respond if we were able to take what most people think is a simple problem with only one correct answer and provide an infinite set of correct responses?

Such an infinite set was provided by the programmers for the early PLATO system. They said that a proper computer program would accept many correct answers to the

problem, "How much is 2 + 2?" Among their suggested answers were 2 + 2 = 5 - 1, 2 + 2 = 2 x 2, 2 + 2 = 8/2, 2 + 2 = 1 + 1 + 1, and even 2 + 2 = four, 2 + 2 = fore, and 2 + 2 = for.

It is not easy to get people to change their ideas, especially when the ideas are controversial and seemingly obvious. But if we cannot provide a new, different, or broader perspective, we may not even get their attention. Sometimes changing the question or redefining the problem is the only way to get that attention.

MICHAEL R. COHEN
School of Education,
Indiana University,
Indianapolis, IN 46202-5155

SCIENCE

8 JUNE 1990
VOLUME 248
NUMBER 4960

p. 1174

It Used to Cost a Dollar; Your Editor Has One Too.
Apparently Cummings Didn't Like It as Much as We Do

Spring:
The Journal of the E. E. Cummings Society
c/o David V. Forrest, M.D.
88 Central Park West, Suite 1W
New York, New York 10023

Dear Dr. Forrest:

A member of my dissertation committee has just given me a little (24 pages) book by E. E. Cummings which he discovered in an antique shop here in Muncie, Indiana. It is a 1923 hard-bound edition of *Puella Mea*, brought out by S. A. Jacobs under the imprint of THE GOLDEN EAGLE PRESS, and illustrated with drawings by Picasso, Klee, and Modigliani.

Since I have not noted any references to this book in the Cummings bibliographies I have seen, I wonder if you or any of your readers know the history of this very handsome edition. I would welcome any information about the book.

With sincere regards,

-33-

Raf
Raf Peterson
2801 West University Ave.
Muncie, IN 47304

p. 62

The Balloons Are Up, but Look Out, Here Come the Kids

* * *

Children's Crusade Is Battling Ceremonial Launchings As a Threat to Wildlife

JUL 26 1990

By DAVID STIPP

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
LANCASTER, N.H.—Kids are saying the darndest things about balloons.

Suppose, they are saying, some grown-ups set free a batch of balloons at a grand opening or something. And suppose one of the balloons landed in the ocean.

"An animal could eat it mistaking it for a meal," Annie White recently fretted, in an essay for her fourth-grade class. The balloon "could block its stomach, so it could not eat anymore. So it would die. Then it could be hit by a boat repeller or get injured."

Miss White isn't the only one who is concerned about turning balloons loose in the environment. In Pennsylvania, sixth-graders asked the state legislature to curb balloon launches. So did eighth-graders in Southern California, who flew to the state capital to lobby. And in Connecticut, the children have clobbered the opposition.

Mighty Lobby

A bill in Connecticut's legislature to curb the launches faced opposition and "wasn't going anywhere," says State Rep. Mary Mushinsky of Wallingford. "Then the fourth-graders came in all dressed up, with bow ties and dresses. They looked the members in the eye, and each read two sentences" favoring the bill. "That did it." Now Connecticut has a law banning all open-air launches of 10 or more balloons.

The balloon industry is fit to be tied. It says crafty environmentalists lacking proof have spread false alarms to whip up a children's crusade. Balloons are attacked mainly because they're a target kids can't miss, this \$1 billion industry says. Environmentalists tend to agree that in terms of threats to marine animals, latex balloons are much less of a problem than plastics. And only balloon launches into the air, not balloons as such, are the subject of criticism.

An industry point man on the issue is Rick Tillotson, who has deep roots in the balloon business. His father, Neil Tillotson, is credited with inventing a latex balloon in Watertown, Mass., in 1931. The younger Mr. Tillotson runs his own firm in Dixville Notch, N.H., called Tilly Balloon Co., and when he gets wind of balloons being bashed, he doesn't clown around. Mr. Tillotson charges that "evil" manipulation of children's minds of the sort practiced by some anti-balloon adults "would be a good way to bring on Nazism."

Up and Away

Lately, balloons have been soaring. U.S. balloon sales have doubled since the mid-1980s, and rose 34% last year alone, says Debra Paulk, editor of a magazine called *Balloons Today*. However, now some firms find their sales hurt by the flap. "We've lost upwards of \$60,000 of business in the last year" because of it, says Philip Levin, president of Balloon City USA Inc. in Harrisburg, Pa.

Some vendors are rumbling ominously about suing two New Jersey teachers they blame for starting the crusade. The balloon people are financing studies they hope will prove balloon launches benign. They have hired lobbyists to quash kid-backed balloon bills.

To protest the Pennsylvania bill, Mr. Levin took to launching balloons daily next to the state capitol. However, a foe came along and tried to pop them with a knife. The balloon man blew up.

"The guy [with the knife] was screaming. Please Turn to Page A9, Column 3

Continued From First Page

ing. "The balloons are killing animals," says Mr. Levin. "He broke three or four before I could push him away. It was on TV, showing me pushing him."

What set all this off was the discovery, in July 1985, of a sick sperm whale washed up on a New Jersey beach. It eventually died when dashed against a pier, and Robert Schoelkopf, founder of the nonprofit Marine Mammal Stranding Center of Brigantine, N.J., did a post-mortem. Inside the stomach he found a Mylar balloon. He concluded that the silvery, heart-shaped plastic balloon—which isn't the sort used in launches—had plugged the whale's digestive tract, making it too weak to swim.

Two years later, on a different New Jersey beach, a leatherneck turtle turned up dead with a latex balloon inside it. It was found by Peter and Susan Hibbard, who

The Balloons Are Up, but Look Out, Here Come the Kids

teach high-school biology in Toms River, N.J., and are associated with Mr. Schoelkopf's center. A few months later, the couple formed the Balloon Alert Project.

It has built a growing network of like-minded teachers and students. And in recent months, balloon launches have been canceled in several states. Under pressure from environmentalists, Walt Disney World and Disneyland have halted balloon releases. Ms. Hibbard makes clear that "we aren't against balloons, only balloon releases."

Nevertheless, says Dan Flynn, spokesman for Pioneer Balloon Co. of Wichita, Kan., "Some children are getting the idea that all balloons are bad. And when kids are brought [into legislative hearings], you don't have a chance."

Here in Lancaster, 58 students have formed the Balloon Launch Terminators, or BLTs. In May, the group stopped a school balloon launch, then sent a letter to a local paper urging others to do likewise.

Two days later, Mr. Tillotson phoned. "He was after my hide," says Andrea Craxton, a third-grade teacher who had helped the BLTs get started. Soon, Mr. Tillotson marched into the school (by invitation) armed with latex samples, a scripted lecture and a pop quiz to set the record straight. First question: "I understand that silver metallic and ordinary rubber latex balloons are different. Yes or No."

Then came a comic book featuring Lex Latex, a talking balloon. "Balloon releases," Mr. Latex advised, "are safe and beautiful."

Few in the audience were won over. "I still do not think balloon launches are very safe for animals," wrote Miss White, who will be in the fifth grade this fall. "Because one day my dog swallowed a piece. And she died."

The BLTs concede some of the industry's points seem valid. But, says fellow fifth-grader Erin Fogg: "It didn't make much sense when he said our 'little hearts would be broken' if we couldn't have balloon releases. We can live without them."

With the help of teachers, the BLTs are doing an in-depth study of balloons before making another move. They have learned there are few documented cases of balloons being found inside animals, and no clear proof the animals died from eating them. They are looking at an industry-sponsored study indicating that released latex balloons typically rise about five miles, then shatter into bits that decay fairly rapidly. They have heard that when

University of Miami biologist Peter Lutz fed balloon shreds to sea turtles in another industry-funded study, the pieces eventually came out the other end.

On the other hand, they have learned Mr. Lutz is concerned because some balloon shreds got balled up inside the turtles and took months to pass through them. From their own experiments, the students have found that balloon bits can take months to fully decay outdoors. They have heard that in a 1989 national beach cleanup lasting only a few hours, volunteers found 18,251 balloons.

All this is a bit overwhelming, but it has "encouraged a lot of questioning by the kids," says Ron Pelchat, one of the BLTs' teachers. Elizabeth Riff, another teacher, says: "The more we read, the more we're getting fired up."

The BLTs aren't entirely sure what they're getting fired up to do. But whatever it is, wrote Sarah Tetreault in her fourth-grade essay, "I want to make the world a beautiful place."

Inscription on Fly-Leaf of Copy of XAIPE
Sent by Sterling M. Dean

for Sibley and Hildegard

most thank you
with
XAIPE

from Estlin and Marion

