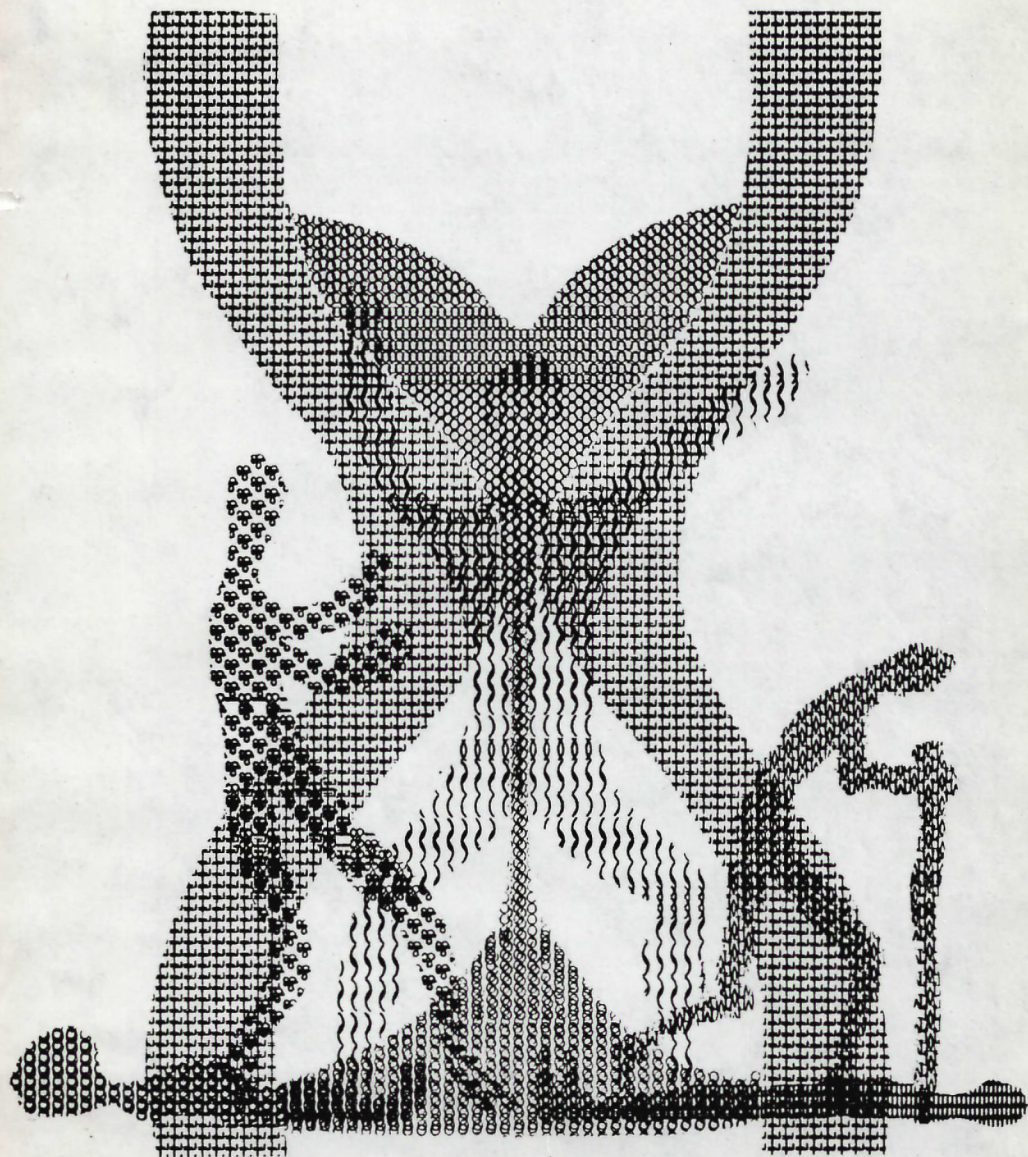
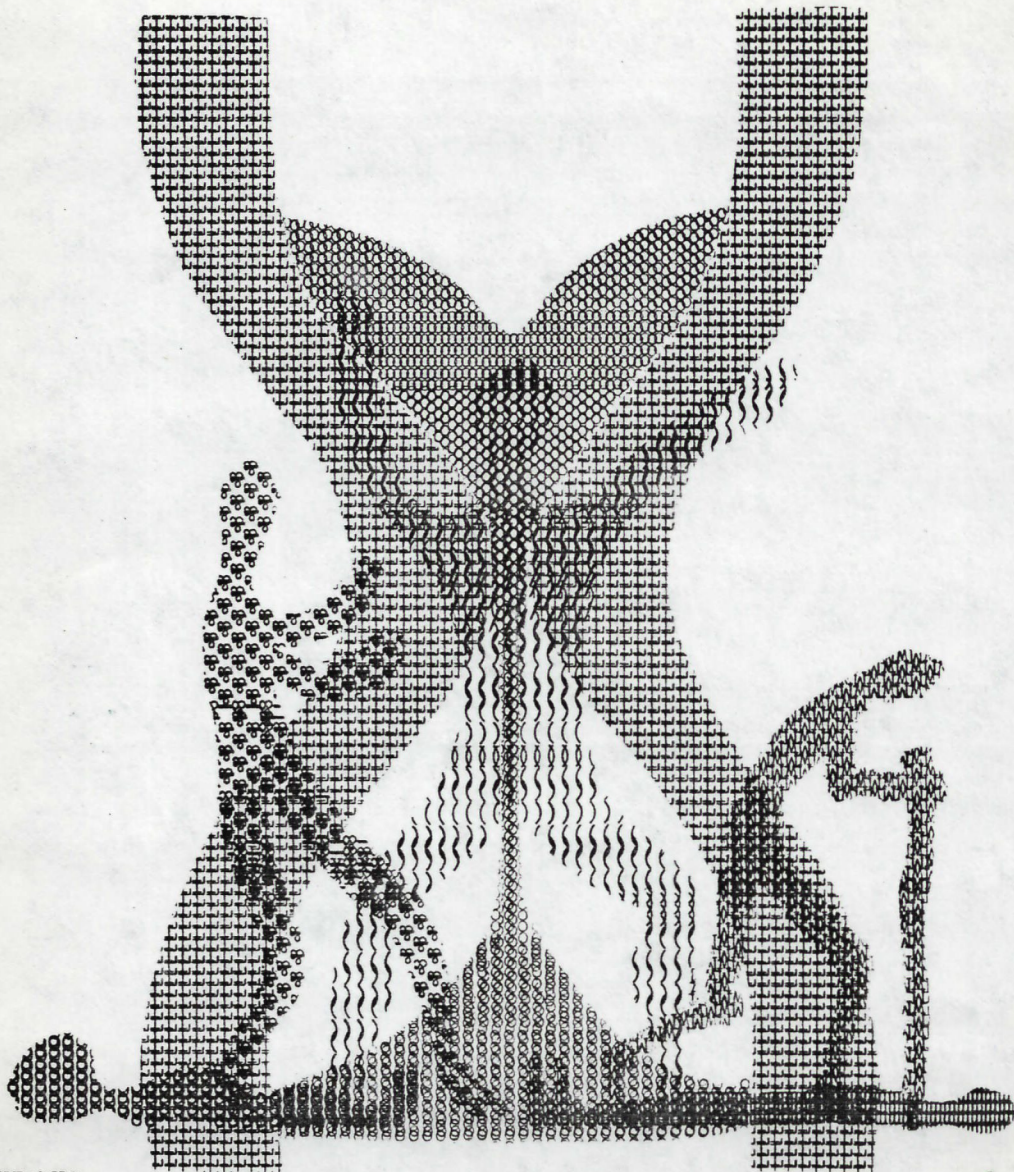


A BIOGRAPHY OF ROBERT ZEND



BY NATALIE ZEND



MUTAMUS

("Mutamus" is a Latin word. It means: we are changing. Against the hour-glass in the background, you can see the five stages of Man: a baby, a young man, a mature man, an old man and a dead man.)

END

A
BIOGRAPHY
OF
ROBERT
ZEND

BY
NATALIE
ZEND



GRADE 5
MARCH 8, 1983.

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1

Introduction

My father, Robert Zand told me bedtime stories ever since I was two years old. I really enjoyed them and always wanted more. He told me a series of stories, each series lasting months. (See some of these in Chapter 3.) Some of these were:

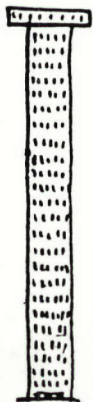
A Novel of Fantasy about Atlantis;

Bible Stories;

Stories of the History of the World; and finally, Childhood Stories.

I'm going to make this project using mainly my memory and putting everything together. I hope you like and enjoy it!

A DOODLE OF TORONTO



2. A General Outline of His Life

Born in Budapest, on December the 2nd, 1929. Robert Tend was an only child. His father, Henrik was a foreign correspondence clerk in a big rice mill. He wrote letters in five languages: Hungarian, German, English, French and Italian. He worked for the same company for forty years. His mother, Stephanie was a housewife and a mother.

In his childhood, he got all the contagious sicknesses; scarlet fever, chickenpox, etc.. When he was one and a half and six years old, his parents took him to Italy because he had rickets; a sickness of the bone.

When he finished eighth grade, his father put him in an Italian school so he could learn a second language. After he went to university, where he studied Hungarian, German, Italian and Russian literature, he started to write articles, poems, humorous writings and children's stories for newspapers. He also worked for the Hungarian National Filmboard as an idea-man in the film promotion department.

In 1956, after the defeat of the Hungarian revolution, he came to Canada by boat with his wife, Elbi, and his eight months old daughter, Aniko.

Soon he started to work for C.B.C., first as a shipper, then as a film librarian, and then as a

film editor.

In 1967, after twelve years, he visited Hungary, found his university diploma, and brought it back to Canada. The University of Toronto accepted him as a graduate student. In 1969, he received his Master Degree and a grant from the Canadian Film Development Corporation to produce and direct a film. In 1970, he received an invitation from the Italian Government to study for his Ph.D. in Florence. He became a radio producer for C.B.C.-F.M. Radio. In the following years, he produced about one hundred and twenty one-hour long documentary programs on art, science, literature, religion, etc. with Northrop Frye, Marshall McLuhan, Norman MacLaren, Glenn Gould, Voznesensky, Velikovsky, and Borges.


In 1970, he got remarried with Janine, and in 1972 his second daughter, Natalie was born.


In 1973 his first book of selected poems, From Zero to One, was published. He started to publish poems and short stories in anthologies and literary magazines. He also had several poetry readings at Harbourfront, Royal Ontario Museum, The University of Toronto, art galleries, and coffee houses.

In 1977 he stopped working for C.B.C. and started to write books. In 1982, he published 3 books My friend Jeronimo, Arbormundi (16 selected typescapes) Beyond Labels.

In 1981 and in 1982 he was invited as a resident poet with fifteen other Canadian poets to the Great Canadian Poetry Festival in Collingwood. In 1983, he was invited to a Western Canadian poetry reading tour to Saskatoon, Regina and Edmonton.

Presently, four of his books are under preparation with various publishers, OAC, Nicolette, The Tragedy of Man (translation) and An Evening with Zend.

	
RESIDENCE: 790 EGLINTON W. APT. # 106 TORONTO 10, ONTARIO, CANADA.	POST OFFICE: P.O. BOX 463, TERMINAL "A" TORONTO 1, ONTARIO, CANADA
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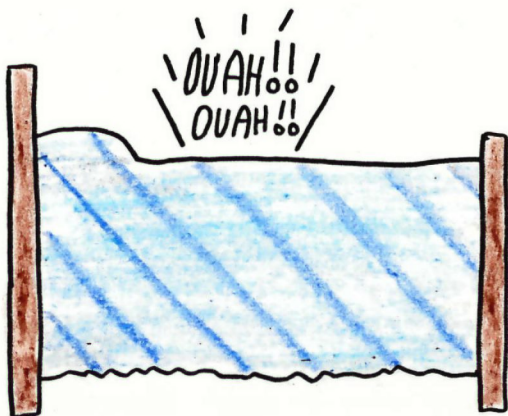

CBC FM IDEAS RADIO ARTS PROGRAMMING
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82 HILLCREST DR. TORONTO, ONT. M6G-2E6 CANADA
Robert Zend
(416) 656-7775



First Memory

When Robert was about one and half years old, the family doctor came to examine him because he was sick. He was lying on a big bed close to the wall. When the doctor was about to leave, Robert's parents walked him to the door, in the meantime Robert was practising his new discovery: how to turn from his back to his stomach. Suddenly, he fell down between the bed and the wall. It was very dark there, so he got scared and started to cry. All the three ran back to the room, they pulled the bed away from the wall, and liberated him from his dungeon.



The First Loss

When Robert was two years old, he was taken to Grado, Italy for health purposes. His doctor said his bones were weak and he needed sun. The beach had lots of sun, and the water and sand was good for him too.

His parents had bought him a set of toys to play with in the sand, a pail, a shovel, and a little plastic rake. He enjoyed playing with these toys on the beach very much, and he dug big holes and made castles, but one day he dug an extra big hole and decided it would be fun to hide his pail, shovel, and rake inside, so nobody would be able to find it. The only problem was that he couldn't find it either. So here poor Robert was with nothing to play with. His parents had to buy him a new set of toys.



The First Storm

Robert remembers vividly the first storm he experienced when he was three years old. The family visited Henrik's brother, a lawyer in a small Yugoslavian town, Eszék. When they got off the train, they walked through the town in pouring rain. There was loud thunder and blinding lightning. The little boy thought it was the world's end, and cried. The parents were nervous, missed the uncle's house, and got lost in the town. His father picked up the exhausted, sleepy, frightened boy who nuzzled into his father's coat and fell asleep.

That's all he remembers from this trip. He has no recollection of the town nor of his uncle and his house.



The First Fire

When Robert was four years old, the family visited the father's sister, who lived in Csorna, a small village in Western Hungary.

One night, his parents woke him up, and took him to the window. Further down the street, a house was on fire. The noisy fire engines soon extinguished the high flames.

Robert doesn't remember the village, or his aunt Nina, but he still remembers the giant flames as if it were yesterday.



God Talks To Robert

When Robert was five years old, one evening his parents went to a theatre. His babysitter invited over her boyfriend, a fireman. At 9:00 P.M., Robert still didn't feel like going to bed yet, and gave a hard time to the loving couple who were anxious to be alone.

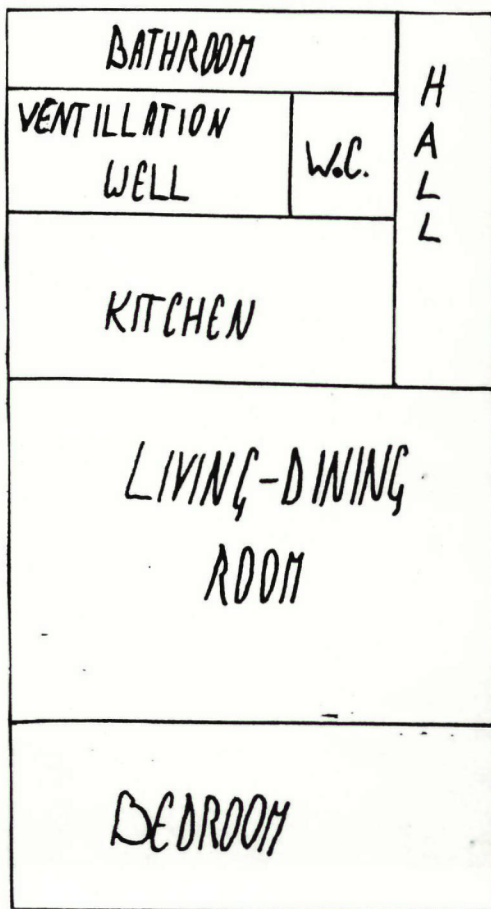
In Budapest, the houses are built in such a way that there is a ventilation-well between the kitchen, the bathroom and the separate toilette.

The babysitter sent Robert to the washroom to wash his hands. Suddenly, he heard a deep, thundering voice, coming from Heaven, through the well:

"Robert, Robert, where art thou?"

"Here. Who is it?"

"I am God! I am very angry with you! Thou art a bad child, for thou art still awake! Go to sleep at once!"



Hotel Exelsior

Just a few weeks after Robert turned six years old, he was taken to Italy by his parents because his doctor said that his bones were still a bit weak and that the sun would do him some good.

They went to Laurana with a new kind of train. It was called the "Rail-bus" and it looked like a huge subway car on tracks. The "Rail-bus" ticket was very expensive. Therefore, Robert's parents, being poor, wanted to save money, so they explained to Robert that if the conductor asked how old he was, he should say that he was just going to turn six, because children under six were admitted for half-price.

However, when the conductor came, Robert, being a truthful child, right-away yelled out:
"I'm already six! I'm already six!"

His parents tried to convince the conductor that Robert was just about to turn six, but he didn't believe them and simply said:

"Señor, Señora, children always tell the truth!"
So they had to pay the full fare for Robert.

Finally, they arrived at their destined place, the luxurious Hotel Exelsior. Every day a Chinese gong called the guests down for breakfast, lunch, and supper (which Robert remembers very clearly.) Robert loved the Italian spaghetti and

"Okay, God."

"And don't tell anybody that I talked to you."

"I promise."

So Robert went to bed and kept the secret for three days until he could no longer keep it. Then he asked his father if he could keep a secret. His father said yes, he could. Then Robert revealed to him his frightening adventure with God. His father started to laugh:

"It wasn't God, but that fireman! He was hiding in the kitchen when he talked to you through the window. He just changed his voice to sound like God."

Robert was relieved that God wasn't angry with him.

Robert's mother had to find another baby-sitter, a serious, elderly lady.



always ordered it for supper. They would go for long promenades on the curvy sea shore from village to village, from town to town.

Oh, was it fun!

There was only one problem; Robert's father had borrowed the money from his bank and it took him ten years to pay it back.



"Robert sucking up
his beloved spaghetti"

The Minister and The Doctor

Győr is a big city in North-West Hungary. When Robert was around seven years old, his father took him to Győr to visit his older brother who was a minister, and his son, Alex, who was a doctor. Robert's father was the youngest in the family among his brothers and sisters and he married late, therefore all Robert's cousins were ten or twenty years older than him.

The minister showed Robert his holiday garment, the altar and his room behind the altar, while Robert kept asking him very embarrassing questions like;

"Where is God?"

"God is everywhere," the uncle replied.

"Then why is this called the house of God?"

"Because that's where He lives."

"Is He everywhere or is He here?"

"This is the house where we pray to Him."

"Can't we pray to Him in our own house?" etc.

It was in Győr that Robert found out that even ministers die, although they are the servants of God who talk to Him constantly.

Alex was sick. Until that time Robert thought that priests and ministers live forever like God, and doctors are never sick, that's why they can cure the sick. He was very disappointed.

To Swim or To Sink

When Robert was ten years old, his mother took him to Balaton, a huge lake in Hungary. It has about thirty little villages on both of its sides. Most of the people in Budapest spend their summer holidays in one of these villages.

Robert learnt how to swim and knew all the movements, but he never dared to swim because he thought he would sink. Therefore, his mother brought him a life-jacket that he used all the time. One day, he had just gone swimming and had taken off his life-jacket when his mother said, "I'm going swimming."

"Can I come?"

"Sure!" So they went into the water and swam and swam, until they were far away from the shore. Looking back at the shore and seeing his life-jacket, a breeze of panic swept through Robert. He touched the spot where his life-jacket would have been, to make sure it wasn't there, and it wasn't. Suddenly, he sank.

"Blurb, my life-blurb-jacket is on the-blurb-beach!!!"

"Then you know how to swim!!"

"Blurb - you're right-blurb!!!"



The Pitcher

When Robert was thirteen years old, he was invited to his uncle Dori's birthday party. Uncle Dori was fifty-five years old. He was a very powerful, successful, rich and rude man and the whole family was afraid of him.

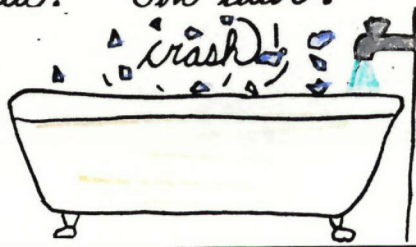
There were twenty people sitting around the table and there was only one pitcher which got emptied quite quickly. So uncle Dori shouted at Robert;

"Fill up the pitcher! Let the water run until it's cold!" So following his uncle's orders, he let the water run until it was cold, then put the pitcher under it. Unfortunately, the stream of water was so strong, that it ripped the pitcher off its handle, filling the bathtub with broken pieces of glass. Robert walked back to the dining room, and holding up the handle in his hand, said;

"This is what has been left of your pitcher." Uncle Dori covered his eyes and yelled;

"I knew it, I knew it!"

"If you knew it, why did you send me out to fill the pitcher?" asked Robert logically. Uncle Dori looked at him and didn't know what to answer. Finally he said: "You idiot!"



Growing Up

Robert was very dependent on his mother because she spoiled him. Many times his father had disagreements with his mother because of this. Therefore, his father decided to send him to a camp, but, unfortunately, his mother came with him. The children at this camp made fun of Robert because his mother was always pampering him. The boys called him "Mother's soldier."

After a while, he got so humiliated that he decided to write to his uncle, Dori. The letter went like this:

Dear uncle Dori,

Please tell my mother to leave this camp. She's making a nuisance of me and embarrassing me in front of all the other kids.

Robbie.

When uncle Dori read this letter, he got very angry and right-away wrote a letter to Robert's mother. His letter went something like this:

Stephanie,

Come back here right away! Stop embarrassing your poor child!

Dori.

When Stephanie received this letter, she became very scared because Dori was her oldest brother (twelve years older than her), and since their father had died, he acted like a father to her, so

she didn't dare to disobey him). Therefore she left the camp right away with tears in her eyes because she felt betrayed by her only son.

Once she had left, all the boys changed their attitude towards Robert and accepted him as a friend. That was the night when he smoked his first cigarette at the age of fourteen, and doing so, he felt like a man.



A Prediction

One day, when Robert was already sixteen, his friend, Tibor came to pick him up because they were both invited to a party. Before they stepped out of his apartment building, Robert said to Tibor:

"Wait a second, I want to make a prediction. When we step out, my mother will be on the balcony, and will yell the following things:"

"My Robbie, take care of your self, look around when you cross the road, don't jump on and off the streetcar, don't smoke too much, don't come home too late."

"Come on!" said Tibor. They started out onto the street. Robert's mother already stood on the balcony and yelled out:

"My Robbie, take care of your self, look around when you cross the road, don't jump on and off the streetcar, don't smoke too much, don't come home too late."

The two friends broke out laughing so hard, that tears came out of their eyes. They couldn't go on, so they sat down on the sidewalk, and laughed for ten minutes.

Stephanie seemed to be puzzled. Then she asked: "Did I say something funny?"

The First Business

Every year, Robert and his friend, Mitzy, would sell their old school-books to used-book-stores, but there was one book that would never sell because it was out of fashion and nobody used it anymore).

Therefore, Robert and Mitzy thought up a plan. Mitzy went to a certain store saying that he was looking everywhere for a rare textbook, and would they happen to have it? He made them write down the title and author of the book.

A few days later, Robert went in to the same store showing his book. The storekeeper recognized the title and author and bought it for a high price. That day Robert and Mitzy ate a lot of ice-cream. Of course, Mitzy never went back to buy the "rare" text-book.



4. Talents

When Robert was a little child, he was different from the other children of his age. He didn't play soccer and games like that. He was shy with girls. He was bad in physical education. He thought a lot and read a lot. In other words, he was a misfit. His parents were under the impression that he was somewhat retarded.

When he was 6, his father planned that after grade 4, he would take him out of school to be the apprentice of a carpenter.

However, in grade 2, when Robert was seven years old, a surprising event happened. In the class, there was a reading-exercise. The children were reading a short story about the flood of 1848, when the Danube flooded and destroyed half of Budapest. Every child read 3 sentences, syllable by syllable, then the teacher called another child to continue the story. When it was Robert's turn, he read the first sentence, syllable by syllable, and while doing so, he discovered that, if his eyes read a few words ahead of what he uttered, he could read continuously. The teacher didn't interrupt him. Then Robert began to emphasize the sentences and went on reading the story, entitled "The Hero of the Flood," like a real actor. Instead of three sentences, he read two pages. After he finished, the whole class applauded, and there were

tears in the teacher's eyes.

When Robert was 8 years old, his parents had another surprise. Every month, the family visited an old couple, with whom the child had nothing to talk about, therefore he would read a book, the poems of the greatest Hungarian poet, Petőfi, especially one long ballad, entitled "The King's Path." He never tried to memorize the poem, but one day he felt he knew it by heart. He stood up in the middle of their tea-party, pushed the book under his mother's nose, and recited the poem, all 145 lines of it. Both the parents, and the old couple were very astonished.

At the end of grade 4, Robert's father consulted the teacher about his plan to put Robert in a trade-school. The teacher was very shocked, and told Henrick that that would be a crime.

In grade seven, Robert learnt Latin, but he didn't understand it. There was a day when he got 3 E's (the mark below D,) and his teacher was very mad, so he sent a note to the parents, saying that Robert would fail if he continued like this. Therefore, Robert's parents hired a private tutor. After a month, one day,

the Teacher asked a question which nobody could answer in the class, except Robert. This happened three times within the hour. Robert got three A's that day and at the end of the year, he was the best "Latinist" in school.

When Robert was ten years old, he started to learn how to play the piano. He could play anything by ear with perfect harmony, but he was unable to play by sight. His piano teacher always asked him,

"Do you know who should teach you?"

Robert said "Yes, Kodály." (Kodály is a famous Hungarian composer.)

"No," said the teacher, "Magyari!" (Magyari was the most famous leader of a gypsy band in Budapest.) Very soon Robert started to compose his own little songs. Everybody who heard Robert play, predicted that Robert will become a great concert-pianist. But Robert said that he didn't want to become that, he would become a writer.

"Show us what you wrote!" people said. But he had nothing to show. He hadn't written anything. Yet, he still felt that he would be a writer.

He wrote his first poem when he was 9 years old, the second when he was 13 years old, but

he started to write seriously and regularly when he was fifteen.



5. Languages

Robert Zend's mother tongue is Hungarian. When he was ten years old, he started to learn German in his school from 5th grade to 12th grade. In grade seven he started to learn Latin. From 9th grade to 12th grade he learnt Italian. At the University he studied Finnish and Russian. When he came to Canada in 1956, he learnt English. In^{the} University of Toronto he studied Provençal and Old English. From his wife and friends, he picked up a little French and Spanish. He also studied Esperanto from books.



This picture is right up to date but the event itself is a bit delayed. Robert Zend of Original Film Editing in Toronto is congratulated by his 13-year-old daughter Anika on receiving his MA from the University of Toronto. Zend came to Canada from Hungary during the troubles there having earned his BA in 1953. He went back in 1967 and found his papers so he could continue with his education in Canada. With the Corporation's co-operation he earned his degree over the past couple of years and it was presented on June 12.

6. List of Travels

TRAVELS IN HUNGARY, UNTIL 1956.

AGE	CITY	COUNTRY
1 ½ years old	Grado	Italy
3 years old	Eszék	Yugoslavia
4 years old	Csorna	Hungary
5 years old	Csaktornya	Yugoslavia
6 years old	Laurana	Italy
7 years old	Győr	Hungary
10 years old	Balaton	Hungary
11 years old	Balaton	Hungary
12 years old	Balaton	Hungary
13 years old	Balaton	Hungary
14 years old	Köszeg	Hungary
15 years old	Máriabesnyő	Hungary
16 years old	Máriabesnyő	Hungary
21 years old	Pécs	Hungary
22 years old	Baja	Hungary
23 years old	Szeged	Hungary
24 years old	Miskolc	Hungary
25 years old	Debrecen	Hungary
26 years old	Szárvas	Hungary
27 years old	Bratislava	Czechoslovakia

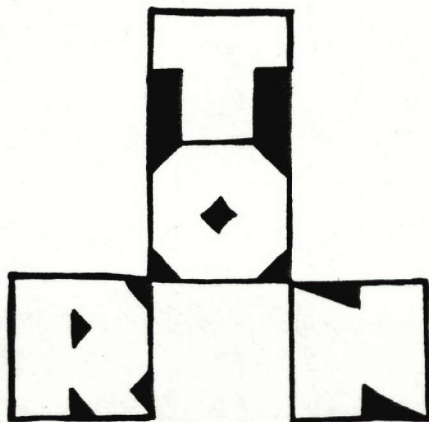
TRAVELS SINCE 1956, FROM TORONTO

CITY	PROVINCE OR COUNTRY	HOW MANY TIMES
	<div>NORTH AMERICA</div>	
London	Ontario	3 times
Guelp	Ontario	4 times
Niagara Falls	Ontario	5 times
Chudbury	Ontario	2 times
Lake Simcoe	Ontario	3 times
Lake Muskoka	Ontario	10 times
Ottawa	Ontario	4 times
North Bay	Ontario	2 times
Peterborough	Ontario	5 times
Bellefonte	Ontario	2 times
Montreal	Canada	18 times
Quebec City	Canada	2 times
Gaspé	Canada	1 time
Cape Breton	Canada	1 time
Charlottetown	Canada	2 times
Calgary	Canada	1 times
Vancouver	Canada	1 time
Saskatoon	Canada	1 time
Regina	Canada	1 time
Edmonton	Canada	1 time
Barry	Canada	1 time
Cape Cod	U.S.A.	1 time

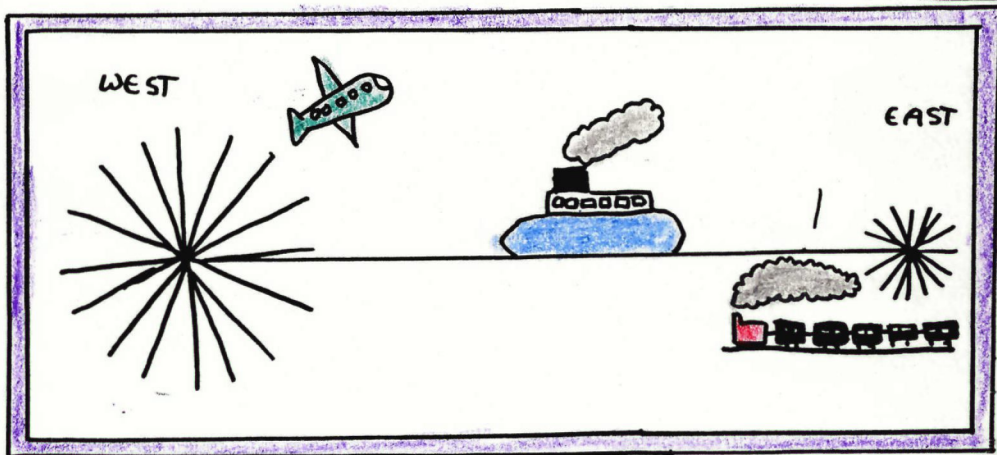
CITY	PROVINCE OR COUNTRY	HOW MANY TIMES
Buffalo	U.S.A.	1 time
Vermont	U.S.A.	1 time
Chicago	U.S.A.	1 time
Boston	U.S.A.	1 time
Princeton	U.S.A.	1 time
Los Angeles	U.S.A.	9 times
San Diego	U.S.A.	1 time
New York	U.S.A.	5 times
	SOUTH AMERICA	
Rio de Janeiro	Brazil	1 time
Sao Paulo	Brazil	1 time
Buenos Aires	Argentina	1 time
	EUROPE	
Vienna	Austria	5 times
Alpbach	Austria	1 time
Budapest	Hungary	5 times
Gyöngyös	Hungary	2 times
Pécs	Hungary	1 time
Szeged	Hungary	1 time
Miskolc	Hungary	1 time
Győr	Hungary	1 time
Balaton-Csopak	Hungary	3 times
Munnich	Germany	1 time

CITY	PROVINCE OR COUNTRY	HOW MANY TIMES
Chezelle	France	3 times
Poitiers	France	3 times
Paris	France	3 times
Lourdes	France	2 times
Versailles	France	1 time
Mallorca	Spain	2 times
Valencia	Spain	1 time
AFRICA		
Tangere	Morocco	1 time

TORN IN TORONTO



7. Two Homelands



In one of his radio programs called "Exile as Passenger," (made in 1975) Robert Zind talked about the journeys of his life. He visualized them as two stars with a line between them.

The star on the right (in the East, in Europe) is small because he lived in Hungary, he travelled mainly in that country, and always by train. The center of this star was Budapest.

The star on the left (in the West, in North America) is a huge star because he travelled all over the world in the second half of his life, and mostly by airplane. The center of this star is Toronto.

The line connecting the two stars represents the boat-trip in 1956 when he came from Budapest to Toronto. This trip was the turning point of his life.

In the first part of his life, Hungary

was his homeland). In the second, Canada. (The first homeland was the one he was born into, the second, the one he chose to live in. The two countries are so different that he feels that he had two lives. The first one was poor, the second rich, not only regarding money, but also regarding experiences and possibilities. He was happy in his first life because he was surrounded by his parents, his relatives and his friends, but he didn't like the political system of Hungary. In the second life, he is happy with the freedom he enjoys in Canada, but he is nostalgic for his native land.

It took a long time for him to get over the culture shock, to get used to new people, to the new landscape, to learn a new language, and to be able to write in English.

Now he feels at home in both countries, and writes in both languages.

IN TRANSIT

Budapest is my homeland
Toronto is my home

In Toronto I am nostalgic for Budapest
In Budapest I am nostalgic for Toronto

Everywhere else I am nostalgic for my nostalgia

CONCRETE BUDAPEST

(between the hilly Buda, and the flat Pest, flows the river, Danube.)

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P E S T

CONCRETE TORONTO

(When he wrote this concrete poem, in 1970, the Toronto Dominion center was the tallest building in Toronto.)

TORONTO DOMINION CENTER

T O R O N T O

BUDAPESTORONTO

PESTORONTOBUDAPESTOR

T E U D O A N T E S T O E R C N A T P O E S O R B O N D A C P T
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 O N T O P E S T T O R O B U D A N T O T P E S T O R O N B U D A T O T O P E S T R O N T B U D A O T O R
 P E S T O N T O B U D A

"Nicolette" which is the love story of a writer who falls in love with a girl called Nicolette, and with the book called "Nicolette" in which he writes about the girl;

"The Tragedy of Man" written in 1862, is a Hungarian classic by Imre Madách, Translated into English by Robert Zund, it is a mystery play about the fight between God and the Devil, for Adam and Eve;

"An Evening with Zund." A book containing the poetry, readings and slide projections of Robert Zund in the last four years (at Harbourfront, Co-Clingwood, University of Toronto, University of Alberta, etc.)

PENCIL

Someone writes with me
his fingers clutch my waist
he holds me tight leads me on
holds me tight again

The poem done he drops me
I feel diminished
and with surprise I read
the part of me he wore away

8. Works

Robert Zend published a lot of poems and short stories in many literary magazines and anthologies.

His first book, "From Zero to one" is a collection of poems (translated from the Hungarian from different periods and moods of his life).

The portfolio "My Friend Jeronimo" contains four original silk screens by the Spanish-Canadian artist, Jeronimo, and three poems by Robert Zend.

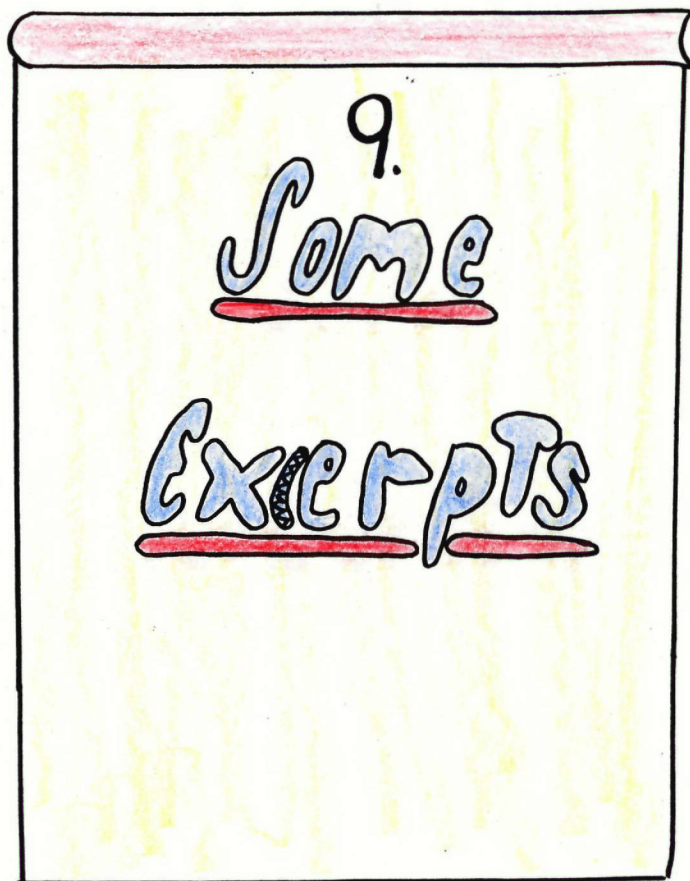
The portfolio "Arbormundi" contains 16 selected typescapes by Robert Zend. "Typescape" is a new art form that he invented. He makes them with a manual typewriter, not using computers, glue, or trick photography.

The book "Beyond Labels" contains a variety of writings: a lecture, poems, concrete poems, innovations, translations from old Hungarian literature, and gasket-art.

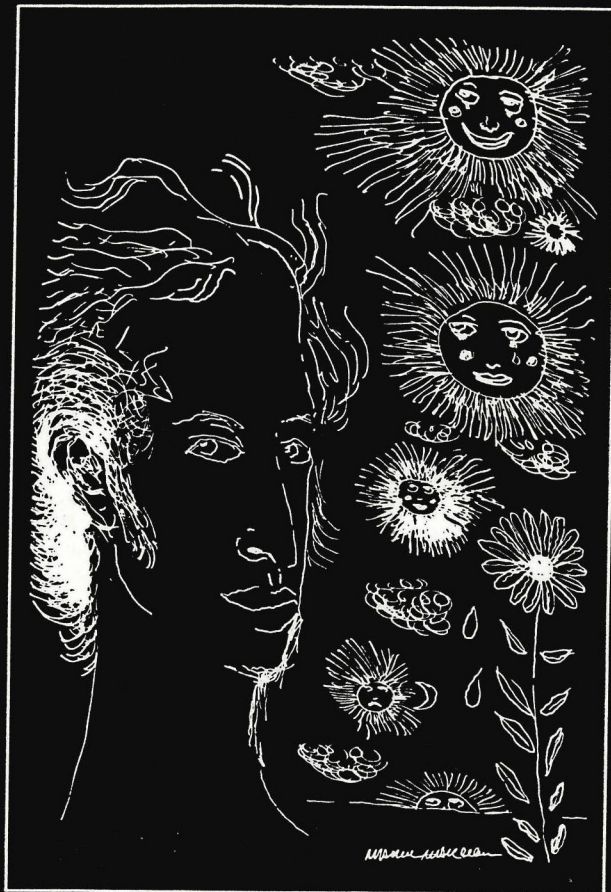
Robert Zend also wrote, researched, directed, and produced about 120 one-hour radio programs, all broadcast in the C.B.C.

His next books to be published are:

"OAB", the story of an imaginary creature who grows from a two-dimensional existence on the paper to a three-dimensional existence and becomes more than his creator;



FROM ZERO TO ONE



FROM ZERO TO ONE

Robert Zend



BEYOND LABELS
ROBERT ZEND

ELEVEN YEARS IN ELEVEN LINES

"I must have dialed the wrong number,"
 she said, apologizing,
 but he surprised her by replying: "How do you know?"
 and carried the conversation for a while,

he took a fancy to her voice,
 made a date,
 met her once,
 then once more,

and, after a few months, he married her
 only to realize after a few years,
 how right she was in the beginning.

THE DIFFERENCE

The pseudo-poet uses the medium
 of poetry to speak;
 the true poet is used as a medium
 through whom poetry speaks.

FIRST PERSON

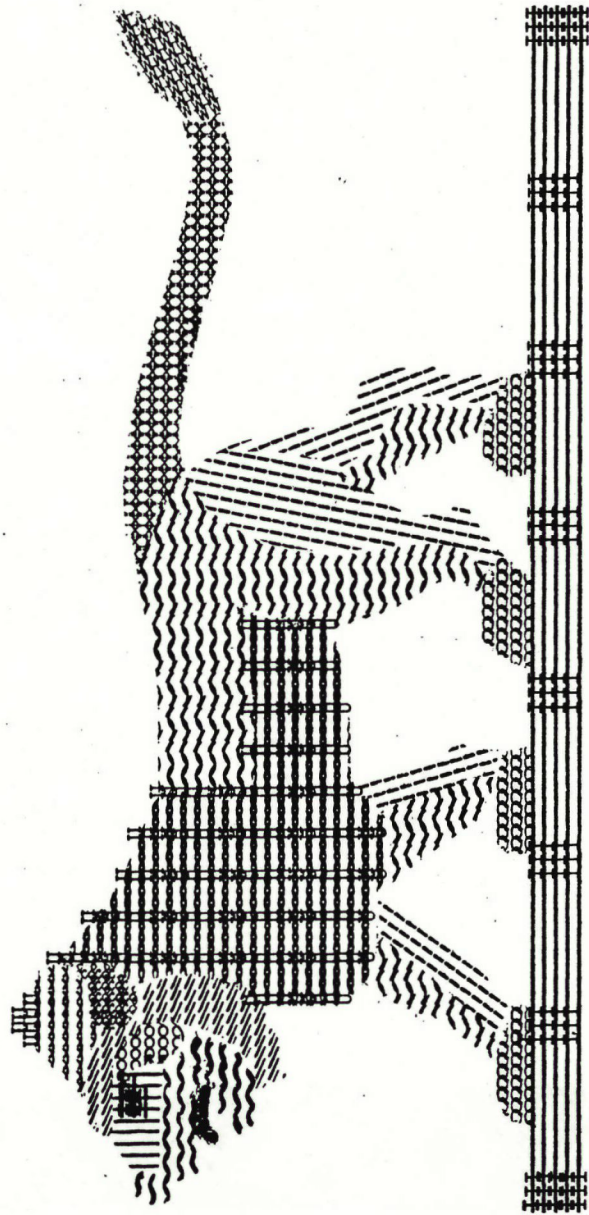
When I talk about myself,
 I talk about you, too.

WHEN

Death doesn't
end life
death just
interrupts it

a bookmark between page 256 and 257
a dental appointment of Friday at two
guests tonight
a movie tomorrow evening
a discussion that didn't end
coffee percolating on the stove
six shirts at the laundry
a holiday in Mexico this winter

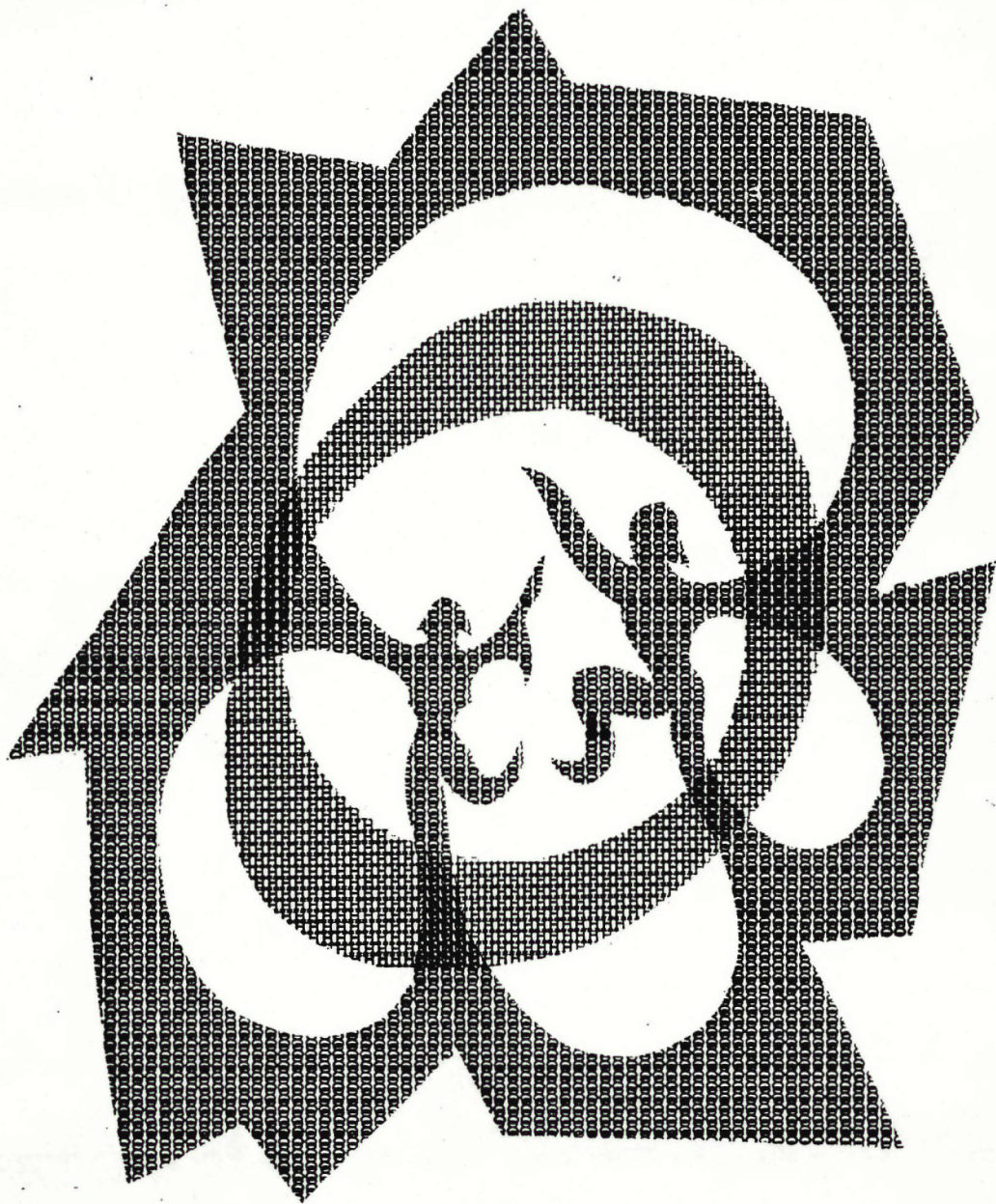
this is what things are like
when a period is placed
in the middle of a sentence



HARLEKING

(King Lion dressed as Harlequin)

END



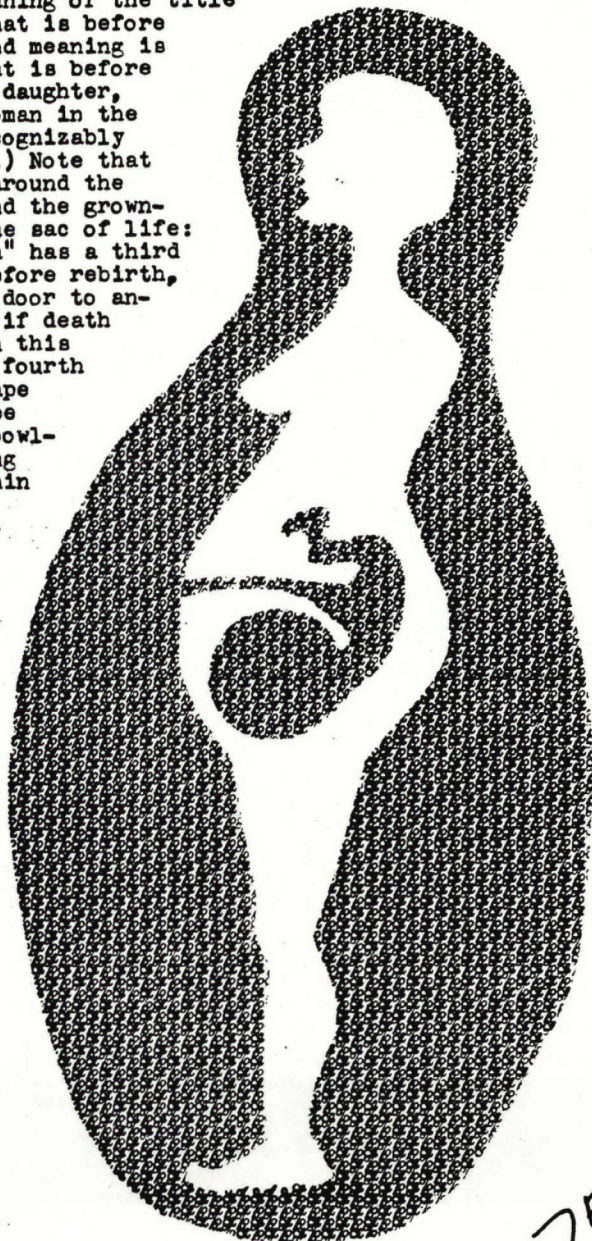
RHUMBALLION

ZEND

PRENATALIA

(Experiment: using only one symbol: &. The white of the paper is both outside and inside, the typing is also both inside and outside, like a Moebius-strip or a Klein-bottle.

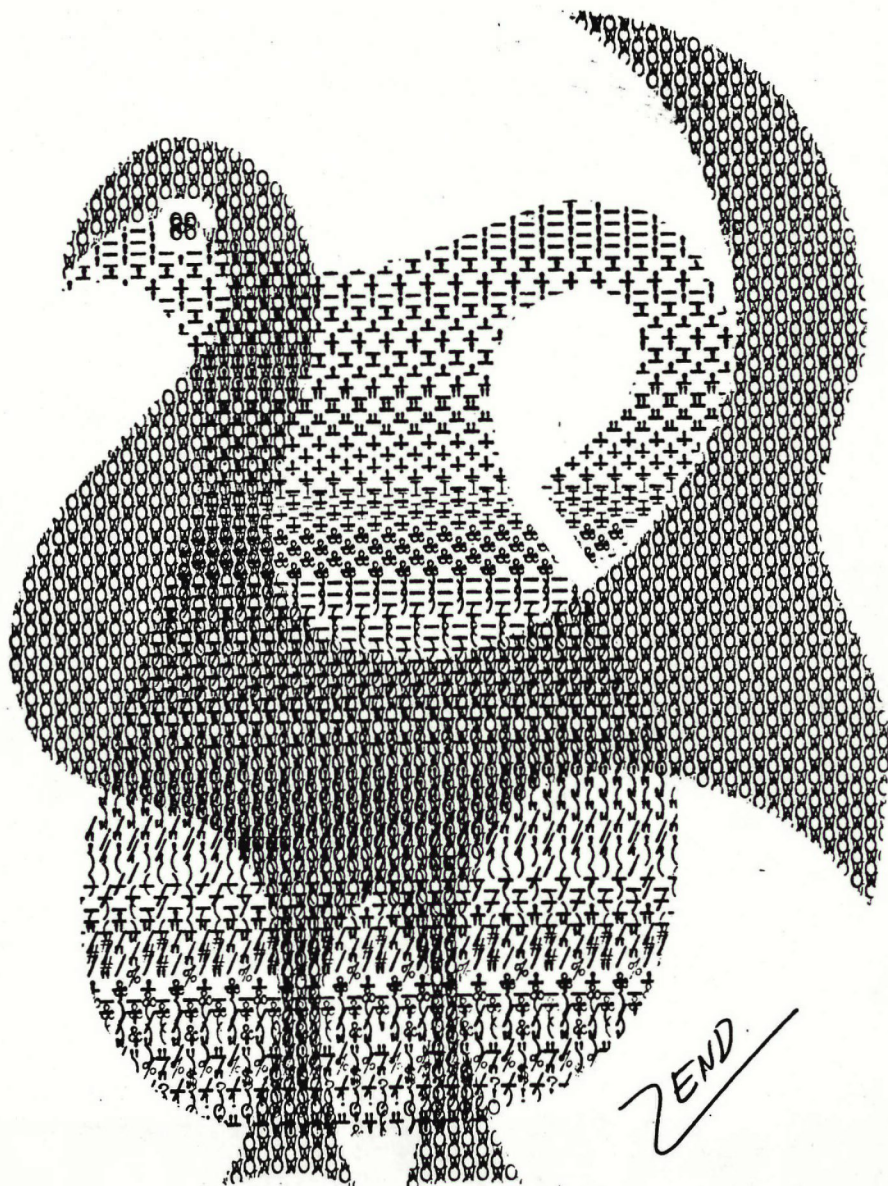
The first meaning of the title is pre-natal, that is before birth. The second meaning is pre-Natalie, that is before the birth of my daughter, Natalie. (The woman in the typescape is recognizably my wife, Janine.) Note that the sac is not around the fetus, but around the grown-up. She is in the sac of life: thus "Prenatalia" has a third meaning, too: before rebirth, if death is the door to another life. But if death is the end, then this typescape has a fourth meaning: the shape of the sac can be conceived as a bowling pin, carrying generations within it... a bowling pin whose destination is to be hit by a fatal bowling ball and fall. I see this last meaning especially if I imagine the picture in the negative: a white bowling-pin surrounded by blackness.



TYPESCAPE #25

May 29, 1978

2 END



END

PEAPOTEACOCK

(A verbal pun translated into a visual pun: the combination of a teapot and a peacock)

If Robert Zend were writing in English or French, he would be recognized as one of Canada's leading poets. But because he writes his witty, inventive, resourceful and extremely imaginative poems in his native language, he is known only to a handful of Canadians. I have translated his poems into English to remedy this sad situation.

JOHN ROBERT COLOMBO

He is a poet of power and originality, a brilliant fantasist whose ideas are oddly compelling, a writer of fairy tales for adults. One reads many books without encountering anything so interesting.

ROBERT FULFORD

A wry geometer, Robert Zend takes measure of the chilly no-man's-land of present-day Western urban life with penetration and pity, whimsy and wit. Like laser beams aimed at a holographic plate, his poems unscramble scene after scene, in which, I suspect, most of us figure — an unheroic crowd, perhaps, but oddly "game."

NORMAN MCLAREN

Among many exciting discoveries, Robert Zend was the big one for me. He has arrived wham-bam into the North American scene which he is both a part of and apart from. Though ego and energy, driving force and central insight into our culture like this could easily disperse the poetry, I suspect we'll be hearing more from Robert Zend.

PHILLIS WEBB

Once Robert Zend told me that I was a poet of gestures. Once I told him he was a mime with words.

Robert Zend is a poet in every moment of his life.

MARCEL MARCEAU

I am looking forward to see you again, Robert, in Toronto or in Budapest or in Moscow or on the Moon, and show our poems to each other: they have so much in common.

ANDREI VOZNESENSKY

Contemplating Zend

If I were a gallery curator, Robert Zend would pose a problem.

"Where do you want the stuff hang, boss," my assistant would ask, "in with the Mondrians, maybe?"

"No, I don't think so — the sense of line is similar, but there's more sense of humour in Zend — so try wedging them between the Miros and the Klees, and better set up an exhibit of Saul Steinberg in the foyer as a teaser."

If I were a symphony manager, the problem would be similar.

"Out of ze question," Maestro von Zuyderhoffer would declare. "I conduct no Zend before Bruckner, not even mit Webern to raise curtains."

"But, maestro, Zend takes the cosmos for a plaything, as does Bruckner, and wrings out of it an epigram, like Webern. However, I suppose we could try him on a chamber concert with early Hindemith, maybe . . ."

"Ja, besser."

"... and then, perhaps, Kurt Weill . . ."

"Viel besser!"

"... and finish off with Satie."

"Nein, kein Satie. Zat vun is not knowing secondary dominants, und ze vork of Zend is full of modulation."

Ah, well.

But if I were a book publisher, no such problem would exist.

Robert Zend could stand alone — his cynically witty, abrasively hedonistic, hesitantly compassionate, furtively God-seeking poems could mingle with each other, find their own program-order, and settle among themselves the question of what goes where and how much wall-space will be needed.

Gee, what an easy life book publishers must have!

GLENN GOULD
July 1972

Serious? Funny? It's the same 47 to our 'most musical' poet

By Robert Sward

Glenn Gould called Robert Zend "Canada's most musical poet" and, in a blurb for *Beyond Labels*, Margaret Trudeau remarks, "I had a very pleasant afternoon while reading your poems." As Immanuel Velikovsky notes, "Zend's feet are planted in the ground, his heart is forgiving, his head is in the clouds."

Zend is a poet, humorist, artist, philosopher, mystic and doodler. He is one of those rare creative beings whose everyday speech is indistinguishable from his writing and vice versa. In one representative poem, *In Transit*, he writes:

*Budapest is my homeland
Toronto is my home.*

In Toronto I am nostalgic for Budapest.

In Budapest I am nostalgic for Toronto.

Everywhere else I am nostalgic for my nostalgia.

Writes for CBC

Zend has lived in Toronto since 1956, where he has written, directed and produced over 100 CBC radio programs including a series called *The Lost Continent of Atlantis*. Zend translates serious things into funny things and funny things into serious things because, as he notes, "they are the same." Zend's story, *Labels*, which he delivered at the Panel Discussion on Exile for the Writer and Human Rights Congress in 1981 — it forms the preface to this new book — is an example of the reversibility of serious things with funny.

Zend (right) wears a tuxedo, his label, so to speak, for acceptance into high society. The eight-ball, he says, "stands for obstacles that need to be overcome." The figure "8" lying on its side not only contains but is a symbol for infinity. Zend provided the design and artwork for the book.

Whether he works with visual forms or language, Zend tries to simplify his materials into their essential components. Having simplified what is, presumably, complex, the poet then makes a new construction, one that plays with, mocks and teases the constituent parts. Zend translates music into poetry and poetry into music. He also says, "I translate myself into other people and other people into me."

A happy man

Zend's is a split personality, but also a fused personality. He is a man happy in himself, happy with his surroundings and, in most respects, a playfully experimenting and performing poet-translator-magician.

PAPERBACK REVIEWS

Beyond Labels

by Robert Zend

Translated by John Robert Colombo

Hounslow Press, \$8.95

□ Robert Sward is a Toronto-based poet and novelist.



Behind the 8-ball: Robert Zend, poet and radio producer, designed his own cover for book of poetry. The tuxedo, he says, is his label for acceptance into high society. The 8-ball? Well — read on.

10. Bibliography and Research

1. Urbumundi (portfolio)
2. Beyond Labels (book)
3. From Zero to One (book)
all by Robert Zend
4. Exile as Passenger (radio program; Tape by Robert Zend)
5. OAB (manuscript by Robert Zend)
6. Robert Zend himself (interviews)
7. Newspaper clippings
8. Photo Albums

The

End

SPECIAL LIMITED EDITION
FOR ROBERT ZEND'S FRIENDS
ON THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH
PRODUCED IN TORONTO, JUNE 1986
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COLOURED LIMITED EDITION OF <u>12</u>	NUMBER 12
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