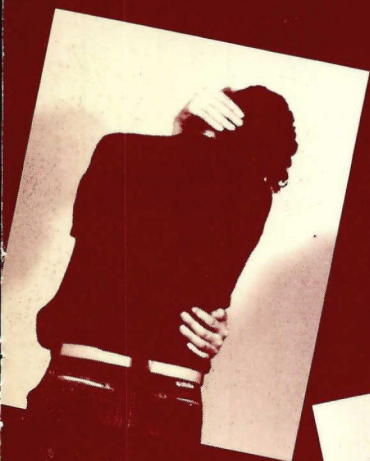


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The Three Roberts

ON LOVE



ON LOVE

March 25, 1984
Major Robert's Restaurant, Toronto



Robert
Priest

Robert
Sward

Robert
Zend

2

The Three Roberts

ON LOVE

Dreadnaught

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Introduction

My name is Alan Powell and I am the owner of this restaurant, the Major Robert's Restaurant. People who don't know me often think that 'Robert' is my last name and my rank in the army was that of 'major', therefore they are under the impression that the restaurant is named after its owner, Sir Major Robert.

The sad truth, however, is that this place got its name from the two cross-streets where it is located, namely Major Street and Robert Street.

Even so, at their first performance, the three Roberts made a vow that their second performance would be held at this place, due to no other reason than its name. 'The Three Roberts - at Major Robert's', indeed, has a strong resonance; it's a minor poem in itself, and I am happy and honoured that tonight they are going to read their love-poems here, in my restaurant.

The title of this evening's performance is 'The Three Roberts on Love'. They don't mean 'love' in its universal sense (that is love toward your fellow-men, toward mankind, toward God), but only in its narrow sense (that is, strictly toward women). They will read their poems in sequence: in other words, from the awakening of love. . . through longing. . . to its fulfillment.

Ladies and gentlemen, my staff and I are pleased to present:
The Three Roberts . . . !

Love, Love, Love

Unconscious hippopotami, large white hippopotami
run at a cliff. They lunge across a wild prairie ecstatically
lowing like cattle til they get to it and fall
forever off the world

screaming

Love,

Love,

Love

Meanwhile in the middle of the ocean
a wave of milk has been changed
into unicorns, a herd of cows, a row of white pigs
and has been dashed at a shore of glass
all the time screaming

Love,

Love,

and then smashing into foam
and laughter

Yes,

psychotic night creatures hang in the darkness
beneath trees.

They swing from tales of pain and mutter deep syllables
of discord.

There is no sound like those voices, powerful as jet planes
earth-shattering voices that split stones underground
Deep, bass voices that burst the leaves of trees with desperation.
saying

Love,

Love,

Love.

The Very Air He Breathes

She lies upon a tawny mat
Of effluence – and leopard spots.

And he (*he's hers*
and she knows it!)

Can but barely be seen, crouched
and to the left of her.

One ear, an eyebrow, and a bit of cheek
are all that show of him.

The caption (again) suggests that it is fun
(*fabulous fun*) being female

At a time like this! And, indeed,
it looks like fun.

Her eyes are huge and subtly closed
as leopard spots; and her lips are spread.

She is in fact a deodored leopardess
about to take the male.

But again, the caption: *You are the very air*
he breathes (the male is hard upon her).

She appears to be undisturbed by this;
and with both shaved armpits bared, she arches

For him. One is inclined to think of her
as being altogether without fear; she smiles,

And takes the male. Neither deodorant,
no effluence, could do more.

She smiles,
and she lies there, the very air
he breathed.

If . . .

If you didn't love someone else
and if I didn't love someone else -

If you didn't look what you look like
and if I didn't look what I look like -

If you had a different personality
and if I had a different personality -

If you excited me
and if I excited you -

If you loved me
and if I loved you -

then this would be a great, big love (perhaps) . . .

Only Your Face

only your face fits that perfect shape
i have always wanted
it is only your face
that i would go otter for
and swim round hooting
it must be other lives
fish and lizard
eagle and insect
call out through me
for you
i am the grass
reborn
a broad savannah
of wanting
where only you may run
gazelle naked
and golden in the sun
all the trees
that ever wanted winter
over
shake their frozen limbs
in my limbs when you are near
i am no different than the rain
i am the same as all the animals
o draw from me the thin blade
of ecstasy
summon up my ancient tongue
have me singing hymns
chant with me
stand up shedding leaves
lie down with me
like autumn
be naked
like all the budding trees

Holding Hands

Always I am leaving people, missing them,
Going out to them and loving them;
Holding hands, doing turnabout, ah,
Going to movies with them, clowning
Reverential, an enthusiast - for what?
The certain good of sleeping with them,
Holding them, climbing into their bellies.
I am present in them, approving their skins,
Most foolish hopes, warmest impulses
 and the loss
Of vanity, the presence of which -
And all is lost.

 Huge stars are falling,
Great owls circle above us. We sit here
In wonderment -

 Is there anyone
Anyone anyone has not been with?
The truth is, nothing else matters.
You are, I am, he is. The world will please
Come to order. Be seated. Hold hands.
No it won't. No it won't. Don't be scared.
Cover up my love, we will all of us
Never not be in you, my love love's there first.

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.

If

if i could maim that part in me
which generates this need for you
believe me i would do it

if distances could cut the threads
which tie me to you
how quickly i would put a world
between us

if i could nullify your name
and wrench each memory and vision
of you from its painful place in mind
like some ecstatic madman
in the green grass
i would tear you loose

if by denying gods
i might deny this pain
your name engenders in me
trees would be uprooted in my fury
rivers halted, frozen at the source,
the winds contained, contaminated
with your name

i hack these words from silences
my loudest songs cannot dispel
if i could strike the summer
from its place among the seasons
though i wreck the whirling of the world
in its diurnal threads
to rid myself of memory
my love,
i would

Thousand-Year-Old Fiancée

We are alone, Death's thousand-year-old fiancée
And I. The thing suggests itself to me.
I step onto the front parts of her feet,
And stand like that facing her saying nothing.
In moments I lose twenty pounds and sweat. My nose
bleeds.

It occurs to me I may never before
Have acted out of instinct. We do not embrace.
She is in her middle sixties, with varicose veins,
Whitish hair and buttocks as large as Russia.
Things come off of her in waves, merriment,
Exuberance, benevolent body lice,
Hundred-year-old blackheads. I kiss her hives.
I lick her nose that shows she drinks bottles
And bottles of Fleishmann's every day.
I am standing there in my Jewish hair
Facing her with my life. Knock, knock.
It is Death in spats and a blue business suit.
I stand there in my Jewish hair facing him.
He is very still, grinning, grayish, bemused.
Pretty soon I begin to scream. All night I scream.

Yeah. After a while I go under and kiss
Her ass. It takes a bit. Fathers and sons,
I am up to my knees in the moon.
Kiss this ghost, she says of a certain light.
I plunge my tongue into it to the ears. Madam
I say, astounded, choking, feverish,
I have not as yet had you. Have me, she says.
Under my foreskin there is a star, whole
Constellations. Goddammit, I am not
Speaking to you here of sex! Kiss me here,
She says. Kiss me there. Stars, ghosts and sons,
winged

We are all of us winged -
the one thing

There is of us. Death, you old lecher,
I affirm you, I confront you with my balls;
I revere dead fish and sunken submarines,
The little red schoolhouse and the American way.
Let us in fact join hands with the universe.
Death, I have news for you; I climb into
Your young fiancée eleven times a night.
There are signs that she is pregnant.
Death, there is nothing I will not love.

Departure by Arrival

I met her once. Shortly after
she left the city
and I was sad.

I missed the dazzling fireworks,
the baroque arabesques,
the sparkling soap-bubbles,
the purple shadow across an El Greco-like painting,
the brilliant patterns of a peacock-tail,
the fragrance of lilacs,
 all which seemed to hide behind
 the secretive curtain of her velvet smile. . .

Some weeks later
she came back to the city for a day
and when she left again, I knew
that her smile wasn't a curtain,
but a mural.

Since You Left

'Since I left you there seems to be so much more between us' – in a letter from my ex-wife.

Since you left there are more mountains between us. More wheatfields and winters. More fried people running out of forests, more frazzled antelopes writhing in pain. Since you left there are more car accidents between us. I could infect cities with my wonder at your absence and all the roads would curl into question marks and point towards each other in a useless period of pure distilled perplexity. They would put up road signs saying Why? and many wise scholars would stand by them all day saying Because. Because we are obedient. Because we have followed the roads to the ever present period and are now ending all our months with circular unanswerable confusions. Because there is a vast ignorance larger than my mouth and I can't get it out of me – I shouldn't be here. I shouldn't exist. I should be half a tiger. A semi-butterfly. I should be a spider without legs but you are there and I am here and like infinity it boggles me. Since you left, astronauts have danced on the moon and there are more footprints between us. More closed doors and sick Indians. More pipelines and Canadians. Big hooting ones with flags and border lines. I would have to go over many jingoists to get to you. Since you left several foetal mayors have been aborted on Main Street and there is more semen between us. I am sending you a picture of the doctor at work now on one of our streets trying to remove a suicide from it. He's saying, 'He's malignant! He's huge under there – already bloated into sewers and subways.' Since you left there are more black doves in oil slicks between us. More levity and false laughter.

More orchards and suns and stars. I have made a round ring of helium and send it to you now without regret. Catch it as you would a quoit. One on each appendage. O i would come to you. I would come to you but everywhere I turn there is this old lady in my way trying to scrub the shadow of a Z off the sidewalk. I say, 'Hey look, it is just part of the word Zoo you know, why not wait for night and begin again in the morning,' but No. She just moves onto the Os and throws me a little bit of meat. If I ever get to you I will have to be jumping and hungry. I will have to be very happy. If I ever get to you at all it will be like a scissor getting over to the other edge of paper. Two slices will fall away from everything and with a strange sliced face like a kiss I will say 'Hi.' And perform several miracles while you're not looking.

Honey Bear

She is a Russian honey bear
With very strong soft brown arms.
Hugging her is at once a feat
Of strength and an act of gentle
surrender.

One cannot hug the honey bear
With only half a heart. It's all
Or no honey bear. There's a snap
And vibrancy to her kisses

Pucker and snap – audible
Across a field of wild black
Berries. Honey bear loves fresh cream
And wild berries of all kinds

French cheeses and fresh homebaked bread.
She is earth tremors in the garden,
Laughter in the flower beds
Rough brown honey bear pulling weeds.

Her feet, large, perfectly
Proportioned
are powerful as
Angel wings. A pale blue light
Surrounds her toes as she waltzes

By the clover and the mint.
Lighter than air, heavier
Than a bear. Clear-skinned lady
O fairest of the fair

I bow to my honey bear.

Meeting

He went to see her. To make love to her. He desired her. He imagined a surprise-attack. She would defend herself in the beginning, maybe even scream a little. But then her resistance would melt away and she would only sigh and moan and thank him for being strong and irresistible.

She went to see him. To make love with him. She desired him. She imagined that she would seduce him and excite him until he could not pretend to play cool. Then she would take him in her arms and absorb him completely, pulsate with him together and lock him into her soft thighs.

They met on the half-way. 'Where do you go?' she asked him casually.

'To a restaurant,' he said indifferently. 'And you?'

'I am going shopping.'

'Well,' said he, 'in this case . . .'

'I'll see you around . . .' she said quickly.

And they parted in opposite directions.

Come to Me

Come to me
I know we are out of sync
I know they will call it dying
but come to me anyway
I have tried to hate you with the strength
of many animals and I cannot hate you
so come to me burning
and I also will burn
come to me with ancient music and I will be a snake
writhing with my many wrists
each one more undulant than your long hair
o I still have nights and nights of you
all queued up in the thirst of a single slave
to work out
come to me with snow and I will promise
to be red in it
come to me unique and I will match you
stare for stare
come to me in greek in spanish in french in hebrew
and I will sing that I found you
because I overthrew reason
because I live in the wreck of my senses
by wish and magic
like a roc in the ruins of its egg
come to me dancing
that dark bacchanal of your kiss
so wet on my lips for days I will not want
drugs or water
just your own sea broken like a sheet of lightning
on your thigh so sensual
come to me because we will arrive
anyway at each other
because it has been many lives
and each time we touch
great forces

are again able to move
come to me cruel and lovely
because I am abandon
because I am silver
because a million years
you have suffered in slavery to men
and know at last how to be free

Bear Mother in the Kaleidoscope

Her lips are kindly and full.
Her eyes are blue,
Mouth like pale cherries
 ripe on trees
 with snow.

She appears without clothes
 or fur
In a white velvet tent
On an enchanted island.
She's a white hummingbird
At the float house
In the evening
Circling clockwise
Round the fire.

Dark goes into light.
Dark is a black cord on a silver needle
Drawn by a bear
Through a cave
 shining
 glistening
In the dripping darkness
Reflecting fire.

In our boat at night -
With herself as passenger -
We navigate
 over rocks,
Submerged, undiscovered islands,
Moons like gigantic human eyes,
Lunar gardens and small mansions,
Wooden houses
 floating
 in the sea .

So That We Could Meet

The Interstellar Space tossed and turned
 so that we could meet
Spiral nebulae rotated
 so that we could meet
Galaxies collided
 so that we could meet

Earth quakes thundered
Volcanoes erupted
Tornadoes swirled
Oceans flooded
Continents sank
 so that we could meet

An ape stood up onto his hind legs
Prometheus stole the heavenly fire
Wars raged over the globe
 so that we could meet

And we met
And we looked at each other
And we said:
'It wasn't worthwhile . . .'

Poem for a Tall Woman

If you have ever seen the green in water that is forever flowing out to mystery and adventure then you know somewhat the colour of her eyes. I would not talk so foolishly but there is a space in me that she steps into – a tall shadow – an absence, that howls like a grave or a dead wind when she is not there. I am a fool for her, letting all of me be a mile long night breeze if she is but a straw held up – a single golden hair that I might rush over forever. I love Marsha Kirzner like the taste of my own spit, like my own blood in my veins, ready to melt in her heat like snow carried south and dropped in Pacific surges, my mouth dissolved in tropical mangoes and sweet papaya. She is another tall self I keep inside and lean on like a prop – a magic self that sets me whirling and dispersing – an anchoring self like a two ton idol thin and heavy in the bed, me fastened to it like a small burnt lizard. Let me just hold this mantis woman in my hands this tall beautiful fire with green eyes. Let me just lick the length of this green blade, this lightning filament of her love and I will sizzle, O I will sizzle with it – a long green furrow in my spirit where a jade lake reaches for the peaks. Her hand is like a leaf that can calm the passage of a storm and yet it is a leaf that sings in its work like a reed of Human flesh, a musical flesh of gasps and sighs – a high sweet strand of water that is like a violin string. Aaaaaah draw the bow down again my loved one across the heart, across the soul, draw the bow down again and play forever the long sweet notes of our love.

Kissing the Dancer

Song is not singing,
the snow

Dance is dancing,
my love

On my knees, with voice
I kiss her knees

And dance; my words are song,
for her

I dance; I give up my words,
learn wings instead

We fly like trees
when they fly

To the moon. There, there are
some now

The clouds opening, as you, as we
are there

Come in!

I love you, kiss your knees
with words,

Enter you, your eyes
your lips, like

Lover

Of us all,

words sweet words,
learn wings instead.

A Poem Love

A boy
and a girl
loved each other so much,
so very much,
so very, very much
that this alone would be
enough for a poem

But they loved each other
for such a long time
that finally both of them
became one rhyme.

Poem

like two branches
locked in skins of ice
my arms are made beautiful
with reaching for her
i want something impossible
entangled in them
and it becomes me

o she has breasts, world
small breasts
that tilt up
into something in me
that overflows

every day
by her laughter in my house
by her eyes seeing me
by her gentle hands upon my body
i am made more beautiful

and when she lies naked on my bed
there's not a field of wheat
or slender stem of anything
can rival
the slender golden way
i am
as i bend
to kiss her

For Love

If sex
is the
base element
and love
the divine
then loving
is alchemical
and the only point
of marriage
is the making
of love.

An Afternoon with Virginia

For E. W.

The conversation stopped in the middle of a sentence. Suddenly, both she and I realized that we were all alone, sitting on the sofa. The bright afternoon encompassing the room turned into dusk. Only her two eyes glowed in the twilight, drinking me, absorbing me, swallowing me. I reached for her hand and pressed it, while my heart was throbbing in my throat. 'Oh, your touch,' she sighed, 'it's like that of my childhood-beau.' My lips fell on her lips, our saliva mingled. 'Oh your kiss,' she whispered, 'just like my first husband's.' Peeling off her dress, I gently placed her onto the carpet, and started fondling her breasts. 'Oh, your technique,' she gasped, 'reminds me of my lover, between my second and third husband.' I entered her and with powerful thrusts made her body wave and tremble and jerk. 'Oh, your cock is as huge,' she exclaimed with pleasure, 'as that of Rodrigo's, a life-guard at the Havana-beach!' I spurted into her, my gushing desire. 'Oh, your orgasm,' she screamed, 'is exactly the same as that of my fifth husband, I remember it well!' We rested for long silent moments beside each other, then, in a faint voice, I asked her anxiously: 'Oh, tell me, my sweetheart, how did you find me? Am I a good lover, compared to other men?' 'How would I know?' she muttered bitterly, 'I don't have enough experience . . .'

Wedding Poem

Come let us be
joined in holy coitus
Here by this
wave lapping in
Here by this
tongue I swear
by
our love
that we are
heaven's dynamo -
two industrial
strength people
spelling out our
alphabet to industry and love
Yay, and I do
part your petals
with this
simple piston
And we do
bang together
Letting up great
hosannas of our most religious
and saved up
exaltations
Yay, Yay, my love, and
my Rod is hard within you
Right in the
clench of Godhood
We are two
rocks on a string
Two wings
of an angel
Our bodies
when they meet
Are like
two hands praying

Nightgown, Wife's Gown

Where do people go when they go to sleep?
I envy them. I want to go there too.
I am outside of them, married to them.
Nightgown, wife's gown, women that you look at,
Beside them - I knock on their shoulder blades
Ask to be let in. It is forbidden.
But you're my wife, I say. There is no reply.
Arms around her, I caress her wings.

Telephone Connection

I whispered hot words into the receiver. Her left ear was in flames. 'I love you, too,' she whispered feverishly at the other end of the line. My eyes were moist with happiness, so I tightened my grip on the waist of the receiver. 'You are mad,' she almost screamed, 'don't hurt me!' Her lips brushed against the receiver, and mine were scorched from the kiss. Then I switched off the table lamp beside the telephone, and nine months later our son was born.

My Body

Fallen from the heights onto your body
my body broken on your body
trashed on your body
My body is a wave that has been dashed against
your body
It is the arrival like bells of a grape
upon your body, a well of brass, a love-gong
that I with full flesh set to ringing.
My body is the wing of lead falling
through the rainbow
The widespread wing of lead that lands
in the dark and burning oil of your body
in the smoke and the heat of your body
a beautiful moth caught in the burning pigments
of your body
its white wings fluttering in the purple and fire
as it burns
My body is an orange moon in green water
sinking on some foreign sea.
It is the drop of rain, the red leaves drifting
the snows, the grasses, the torrents
My body is the dew, beautiful on blades of longing
running into yours from meadows
from mists and petals
a billion bright drops in a river in the sun
My body is your body looking back –
A bird sipping at its own reflection
My body on yours is a lion
in the Africas
wild with the scent of wind
tawny and free, perched on its high ledge
ready to fall
onto the back
of the earth.

Socrates at the Symposium*Sonnet for 2 voices*

Socrates: Of Love, my friends (after such sophistry
and praise as yours), may one presume? Well, then
let me begin by begging Agathon:

Good sir, is not your love a love for me?
And *not* a love for those who disagree?

Agathon: Yes, true!

Socrates: And what is it that Love, again,
is the love of? Speak!

Agathon: It is the love again
of 'Socrates.'

Socrates: Love, then, and the Good, are me.

Agathon: Explain!

Socrates: Is Love the love of something, or
the love of nothing?

Agathon: Something!

Socrates: Very true.

And Love desires the thing it loves.

Agathon: Right.

Socrates: Is it, then, really me whom you adore?

Or is it nothing?

Agathon: O Socrates, it's you!

Socrates: Then I am Good, and I am yours.

Agathon: Agreed!

FIVE SHORT POEMS

What It Is To Love

When we are in love,
we love to make love
because many love-makings
extinguish our love,
freeing our captured hearts
for new loves to come.

Loving someone
is a preparation
for loving the next one.

A Love Affair . . .

A love affair is ended
when in the next one
you start to suffer.

Making Love . . .

Making love
when you love
is a hymn.

Moment

I hate you
she said
I love you too
I sighed.

A Shadow . . .

A shadow
falls on the kiss;
on the now the future.

More!

More! More! More! Bring down your miraculous mouth over mine and make me green to the throat. Make me plush velvet to the breast. O leave a kiss at the base of me at the broken axle where the blood spins round. Kiss me where you can with hot kisses you have saved up – soaked through your weeping body in nights of longing – kisses caught in you – captured like shoals of struggling fish desperate to get out and melt at my mouth, to be immolated by the heat of having me. Save up for me those kisses love. Save up those kisses I save for you and we will let them like a horde of crimson warriors destroy one another. Then we will be locked together – share the same bone of pleasure, the same ache of fulfillment to ease afterwards the soft words out of us all stored up and unspeakable for so long. And let us keep kissing even then like animals who have fainted by the water and unconsciously lap there, long past satisfaction til we are brimming over with each other, aching with the intense pleasure.

Toronto Island Ferry Poem

(From: *Toronto Island Suite*)

'Okay, we're here! Stop scribbling,'
she shouts back at me
climbing down the iron ladder
expecting me to follow.

The boat goes sailing off
to Centre Island,
me with one-half a new poem standing
waving at her from the railing.

'Pink light round your white body,
your blue eyes flashing,' I sing
into the wind.
'What's that you're saying? I forgot
to get off?
'It's all over now between us?

'All I care about is poetry?
O listen, my love, just listen.
You know that's not true.
I know you'll like this one, these lines
written exclusively for you.'

Farewell

I do not know
what I will do
without you.

You do not know
what you will do
without me.

I do not know
what I will do
without me.



Robert Priest

Robert Priest is a poet and singer-songwriter who writes for both children and adults. Born in England he emigrated to Canada at an early age and attended school in Toronto. In 1979 his first book of poetry, *The Visible Man*, was released by Unfinished Monument Press to widespread critical acclaim.

Of his second book of poems, *Sadness of Spacemen*, (Dreadnaught Press, 1980) *Poetry Canada Review* wrote: 'Priest is a perfect poet of the eighties.'

His next project was the writing of a series of children's poems which were put to music by composer Bongo Herbert and eventually became a children's space opera called *Summerlong*. Together with Bongo Herbert and the illustrator Rudi McToots, he then formed a performance group for children - The Boinks.

In 1983 while writing the poems for his third book, *The Man Who Broke Out of the Letter X* (Coach House Press), Priest recorded his first solo project: *The Robert Priest E.P.*

At present Robert is working on a novel - *The Disappearance of the Invisible Man*.

OTHER WORKS

The Visible Man Unfinished Monument Press 1979)

Sadness of Spacemen (Dreadnaught 1980)

The Man Who Broke Out of the Letter X (Coach House Press 1984)

The Three Roberts: Premiere Performance (HMS Press 1984)

Recordings:

The Robert Priest E.P. (Airwave Records 1982)

Summerlong (by The Boinks - G'Tel Records 1984)

Robert Sward

Writer-in-Residence at the University of Iowa's Writers' Workshop, at Cornell University and at the University of Victoria, Robert Sward now lives in Toronto and is an Associate Fellow at York University's Stong College.

A freelance writer, book-reviewer and contributor to the *Toronto Star*, *Canadian Forum*, *Paris Review*, *New Yorker Book of Poems* and *The Oxford Book of American Light Verse*, he has also prepared such features as 'Poetry As Performance' and 'Spiritual Poetry in Canada' for the CBC radio program, 'Anthology'. He is active in the Artists in the Schools program and is working on a new book of poems for children.

Sward is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship for Poetry, Canada Council and Ontario Arts Council grants plus the D.H. Lawrence Fellowship. Author of 14 books, his most recent publications include: *Half A Life's History, Poems: New & Selected (1957-1983)*, Aya Press, Toronto; *The Toronto Islands*, an illustrated history, Dreadnaught Publishers, Toronto; and *Movies: Left to Right*, South Western Ontario Poetry, London. *Impulse to Art*, a collection of interviews with writers done in collaboration with Pat Keeney Smith, will be published in 1985.

Earle Birney has written that Robert Sward is 'one of Canada's finest poets. Energetic, adventurous, versatile, he is by turns the surrealist, whimsical lyricist, meditative Swami, family man, and hardfisted satirist'.

The *New York Times Book Review* calls Sward's work 'fierce, new-minted and convincing . . . he has a voice and a range'.

OTHER WORKS**Poetry**

Advertisements , Odyssey Chapbook Number One (1958)

Uncle Dog & Other Poems (1962)

Kissing The Dancer & Other Poems (1964)

Thousand-Year-Old Fiancée (1965)

Horgbortom Stringbottom, I Am Yours, You Are History
(1970)

Hannah s Cartoon (1970)

Quorum/Noah (1970)

Gift (1971)

Letter To A Straw Hat (1974)

The Iowa Poems (1975)

Cheers For Muktananda (1976)

Honey Bear On Lasqueti Island, B.C. (1978)

Twelve Poems (1982)

Movies: Left to Right (1983)

Half A Life's History, Poems: New & Selected (1957-1983)

The Three Roberts - Premiere Performance (1984)

Fiction:

The Jurassic Shales , A Novel (1975)

Non-Fiction:

The Toronto Islands , An Illustrated History (1983)

Impulse to Art , A Collection of Interviews With Writers
(1985)

Recordings:

*Thousand-Year-Old Fiancée & Other Poems Read by the
Author* , (Aural Press, Michigan, 1966)

Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Robert Zend

Robert Zend, who was born in Budapest, has lived in Toronto since 1956. He received his B.A. from the Péter Pázmány Science University in Budapest in 1953, his M.A. from the University of Toronto in 1969.

In 1958 he joined the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation where he has worked as a shipper, film librarian, film editor and radio producer. He has researched, written, directed and produced over one hundred radio programs with Northrop Frye, Glenn Gould, A.Y. Jackson, Norman McLaren, Marshall McLuhan, Harold Town, Isaac Asimov, Robert Easton (the Mr. Higgins of Hollywood), Richard P. Feynman (Nobel Prize-winner physicist), Immanuel Velikovsky, Marcel Marceau, Andrei Voznesensky, Jorge Luis Borges, Princess Martha de Ruspoli, the Dalai Lama, etc. His series 'The Lost Continent of Atlantis' was broadcast not only in Canada, but also in the United States, Great Britain and Australia.

As a visual artist, he won Fourth Prize in the International Photo Contest, 1968, Budapest, and has had works exhibited at the International Craft Show at the Ontario Science Center. In 1969 he received a grant from the Canadian Film Development Corporation to produce a film, and a scholarship from the Italian Government to study in Italy for his PhD.

He writes in both Hungarian and English. His literary work has appeared in the following Hungarian-language publications: *Hungarian Life*, *Mirror*, *Hungarian Panorama*, *Menora*, *Toronto Mirror*, *Literary Gazette* (Paris), *New Horizon* (Munich). He is also a contributor to the *Anthology of Hungarian Poets Abroad* (Vienna).

He has published in the following English-language publications: *The Tamarack Review*, *Canadian Literature*, *Performing Arts*, *Chess Canada*, *Earth and You*, *The Sunday Star*, *Canadian Fiction Magazine* and *The Malahat Review*. The excellent literary quarterly *Exile* has published excerpts from his longer visual works: *Oab*, *A Bouquet to Bip*, *A Bunch of Proses*, *Limbo Like Me*, and *Type Scapes: A Mystery Story*.

He is a constant contributor to *Rampike*, a forum for post-modern expressionism within a thematic format. He edited *Ariel and Caliban* by Peter Singer (Aya Press).

The following anthologies feature his work: *Made in Canada*, *Volvox*, *Sounds of Time*, *The Speaking Earth*, *To Say the Least*, *The Poets of Canada*, *In Praise of Hands*, *Colombo's Canadian Quotations*, *The Maple Laugh Forever*, *Lords of Winter and of Love*, *Shoes & Shit – Stories for Pedestrians* (Canada); *A Critical Ninth Assembly*, *Stellar 6: Science Fiction Stories*, *Peter's Quotations*, *The Writer and the Human Rights* (U.S.); *Blue Umbrellas* (Australia).

He has given poetry readings at the Eglinton Gallery, The Royal Ontario Museum, Harbourfront, the China Court Café, the University of Toronto. He has given poetry readings all over Canada and was invited as writer-in-residence at the Writer and the Human Rights congress (Toronto), the 6th and 7th Great Canadian Poetry Festival (Collingwood) in 1981 and 1982, the David Bohm Symposium (Carleton University, Ottawa) and at Trent University (Peterborough) in 1983.

OTHER WORKS

From Zero to One (Sono Nis Press 1973)

My Friend, Jeronimo (Omnibooks 1981)

Arbormundi (blewointmentpress 1982)

Beyond Labels (Hounslow Press 1982)

Oab Vol. 1 (Exile 1983) and *Vol. 2* (Exile 1985)

The Three Roberts: Premiere Performance (HMS Press 1984)

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Their three voices carry international inflections. Robert Priest was born in England; Robert Sward spent most of his life south of the border and Robert Zend began his writing career in his native Hungary.

Their material is grounded in reality, but it usually quickly moves into the magical, fantastical nature of things. As a general rule, the voice of Robert Priest, when they work in combination, expresses his social concerns, while Robert Sward represents the mystical side and Robert Zend provides the humour. They pay particular attention to the selection of material that is accessible and interesting to the public, while still being of high quality.

The feeling is that in this culture we are being saturated with crudely presented information – sensationalist journalism, rock-videos, etc. – and what is now called for is more exposure to the poetical, imaginative and artistic.

SHERON TYMINSKI (Toronto's *Common Ground* – FALL ISSUE, 1984)