

SATURA 4 March 15 1964///

SATURA is published twice a month by that fun-loving soul, John Foyster, from PO Box 57, Drouin, Victoria Australia. It is available for trade or comment - with occasional exceptions. Weakminded or unimaginative Australians may send 6 5d stamps to receive 5 issues. Within a short time of "no reaction", I lose patience, and you will receive the Foyster "So Long Chollie" Accolade, a rare (I hope) honour. Certain Australian fen are receiving theirs with this issue. Lucky them! This will NOT be an 8 page issue if I can help it.



BOB SMITH ATTEMPTS TO WRITE A "HOLE ISSUE BY HIMSELF, ILLUSTRATED.

I feel I should at least attempt to comment on Satura 2, because if you keep to this snapping regularity No. 3 will be in my lap before I know it and the murmur of "So long Chollie" will be heard whispering along the ether towards Bandiana. Never let it be said.

What's wrong with ditto? Why are you moaning and grizzling about having to use this means of reproduction? It looks neat and readable, and once you become used to handling the messy carbons, possible so turn out a fanzine of pleasing appearance (this is for the readers of SATURA who haven't the faintest idea what you're writing about, but read something to comment on). But I imagine you are a slave to that filthy Roneo at the club ... pitiful.

Totsu! (Pursewarden, you will recall, would respond to stupidities with "kwatz", but I prefer the spitting vicious sound of the other, especially when I have to deal with an educated twit like you) I can imagine your readers nodding their heads and thinking, "yes, yes, that is so - the opinions of others are important," and then they fall off the edge of that hyphen after "As the saying goes - " BANG! Are they going to take the trouble to find out just how the saying does go? Not on your nelly. And if you have, as I think, extracted a line from a poem written by the Sixth Patriarch, I'll be most interested to see how you interpret it for 'em. Will it be: -

"As there is nothing from the beginning" or

"The buddha-nature is ever pure and undefiled" or

"Essentially, not a 'thing' exists"; hmm?

I rather like Hui-Neng; he reminds me of myself.

And from where did you copy the characters? They have the genuine look about them. Les perhaps??? And just what the hell has all that got to do with the "opinions of others"? (I jest. What you were trying to get across hovers rather shakily in front of my mind, but I know what you mean...) Opinions are important; they are not important. They exist, absolutely pure-blank nothingness, waiting for the individual intellect to fill in a smidgin of colour, here and there.

For I see art more and more clearly as a sort of manuring of the psyche.

- Pursewarden

How are you fixed for maids?(overheard in a brothel)

I didn't particularly go overboard about the verse from EXTANT, and get the impression that you're slightly "hard-up" for material. Where, pray, are all these "writing types in near-fandom" who faunch to appear in SATURA? I doubt very much that the ancient EXTANT will have much worth salvaging. (Why not, if that is how your fine mind works, reprint material from ETHERLINE? Or even shhhh! PERHAPS?)

Rather insipid fanzine reviews; designed no doubt to bring forth roars of wrath from the editors. JESUS BUG I find a trifle 'cute' at times, and I'm not quite sure if Andy Main travels all over the US because he wants to see his friends or because it's real keen material for another fanzine. Avram entertaining, of course.

Where did you get the Blyth from? It's not, as far as I know, from the haiku volumes (but then I've only dipped into volumes 2-4, looking for the aspects that interest me. Indexing in 'em is a bit shoddy, I think) or the other Blyth volumes that I have. Presumably it is from his non-oriental studies? Please let me know, no? (Naturally, in light of what you know of my interest in Zen and Bach - or, more accurately, music

- that little hint from Blyth would have me hopping about! However, what he does write is, I feel, too much of a generalization; I might argue with his "only perfect expression of the psyche...", and why restrict it to Mozart and to Bach? Come to that, much remains to be done in any direction...



If you want to understand the invisible, look carefully at the visible. Talmud.

Music only achieves reality when, like nature, it is an organism with an inner life of its own, which we can apprehend because it is connected with ours, or, in other words, has a meaning for us. W J Turner, Mozart

owari

Bob

.....
CREDIT LINES. All the above, including quotes, and with the single exception of the Philby lib immediately above, is the unaided work of the said Bob Smith.
.....

I suppose ditto isn't so bad, Bob - certainly it can look fair - but the repro which I got from the AFPA Roneo, now that it has been "fixed", is very very good, and it is only the difficulty of duplicating that keeps me from using it regularly. You will be gratified to learn that, at long last, AFPA is ahead financially. I hate to think of the short time for which this will remain the case.

And I am not "hard-up" for material, mate. For a moment I thought I might prove it by printing the material for the fifth in with this, but I remembered my decision to keep under 8 pages.

These things are not particularly important, of course, and first I want to deal with my word of two in Japanese. Your translations all have the germ of the idea that I wanted to put across, but I think Blyth translates it better as

Not a thing exists of its own nature.

Superficially this bears directly on the matter in question, but also it has the meaning you give. The quote is, in fact, from Sodo, via Blyth. Blyth gives Sodo's haiku as

In my hut this spring,
There is nothing, -
There is everything!

which Blyth connects upon in his sometimes muddled way. He then goes on to quote the following as expressing the same idea.

Without going out of his door, he knows everything in the world, without looking out his window, he knows the way of Heaven. The further we go, the less we learn. Thus it is that the wise man knows by not-going, perceives by not-seeing, does by not-doing. (Ruhhi)

And also

The western window is not at dusk;
Through the northern door comes a cool breeze
Sitting there, I feel like there
I have not left the door all day,
but if you wish to be the breeze attached to
nothing.
at home or abroad is just the same.

And also (Hakusenzon)

I thought
I would like
to give you something,
But in the Daruma sect
We have not a single thing.
(Fugaku)

All this is very fine, but your 'alternate translations' are more illuminating to the Western mind. The single equating of opposites, which is so satisfactory to Blyth, is hardly so for an

audience which is essentially logic-directed, rather than having feeling for authoritative illumination. For this reason I quote the above; that a comparison may be made as to the more useful explanation or hint.

It would be too easy to assume, on my part, that a fanzine has no objective existence - this one most certainly does. To date there has been no egoism at all.

Obviously it occasionally happens that an idea which originates in this way will profoundly affect the opinions of the reader, but I think this happens less often than 'we' might like. The reader is rarely capable of applying your "smiggle of colour". But why not try?

I did the Japanese characters, copying them from the highly-esteemed Blyth. I find it rather difficult to reproduce with biro what is originally done with brush. But it is certainly more interesting than copying out English characters. Maybe, when Poppe Harding isn't looking, I may do it again.



(Please note that the previous page was thoroughly Thilloed)

Your quote of Pursewarden seems very much on the ball. I suspect that what Pursewarden says is what Durrell would say if he were a little younger, a little more daring, a little more off-balance. There's a lot to it - but. I prefer to think of this along the lines of - art is something which helps us grow - which isn't really a profound thought, but as for the quote from Sade, there's more to it than meets the eye.

I disagree with Blyth about music as an expression, perfect or otherwise, of the psyche. What he says may have a lot of truth if we view only the emotional psyche; I do not think the intellect can be satisfactorily expressed through music (maybe this is another bait for Harding). As for 'perfect expression', that is going to far altogether. Be more moderate, I say.

I am familiar with the unprinted picture of Hai-Neng.

BEAUTY

I once thought I'd write about beauty in this space. It wasn't very long ago, either. I suppose this can be a subject with which it is very easy to become obsessed. Anyway, after 5 or so years of on and off thought, together with some pretty intensive weeks of study in the last six months or so, I thought I'd be just about ready to tackle the thing. But it isn't so easy - explaining myself to Lee Harding yesterday I said that there were no young philosophers. This is true, but not all the truth. The young cannot be adequate at such things for more reason than simple lack of years or experience. There must be a certain fixedness of ideas, of personality, of attitude. This I have not got, as you will certainly find out as this magazine continues, if it does, and to describe an attitude to such a thing as beauty is too binding, too permanent, too over-~~ripe~~. Maybe that's it - I should go away and manure a bit. In preparation for this great effort, I picked some other ideas, and I guess I can quote them now and have a bit of a rubbish and perhaps vaguely interest you, whilst mentally clearing a little air.

Rare is the union of beauty and virtue - Juvenal.

Poor Juvenal is no doubt badly translated here, but he is talking solely about female sexual beauty, a rather limited subject, no matter how interesting and rewarding. What he wants to talk about, no doubt, is moral beauty, but this is a rather tenuous thing. The opposite view, that of Keats

Beauty is truth, truth beauty - that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

would be a delightful panacea, if accepted axiomatically. But starting from this point produces a whole mess of troubles. Stay, I must not give the game away by going into this too deeply. How much more easygoing is Emerson's

Beauty is its own excuse for being.

And more worthy of thought, too. Far too often people refuse to accept beauty for its own sake, and seek it in combination with other 'good things'. Think of old Juvenal above. Or Petronius Arbitr

Beauty and wisdom are rarely

joined together

- I think I have a pretty good idea of the sort of conjunction old Petronius had in mind. This fault does not occur only in seekers after beauty; it is a universal fault, demanding, damning.



I am the greatest; I'm the King

Beauty is at once the ultimate and the highest aim of art

(Goethe)

This is not too bad, but the word aim implies a straining, a yearning which, if it shows in the work of art, will only make it less beautiful. Beauty is relaxed.

The idea of concealed truth is a fairly old one, so perhaps Goethe is saying the same as Keats in

The beautiful is a manifestation of secret laws of nature; which, but for this appearance, had been forever concealed

Hm, very Zen-ish, eh, Bob Smith? Not very useful, either, as a guide to beauty. I'm straying here, for the concepts of utility and beauty are often opposed (or, perhaps these days, equated). Or is it Art which must be useless. Both, perhaps.

The next two quotes make a lot of sense to me. Is beauty beautiful, or is it our eyes that make it so?

(Thackeray)

and

That which is striking and beautiful is not always good, but that which is good is always beautiful. (Nanon de Lenelos)

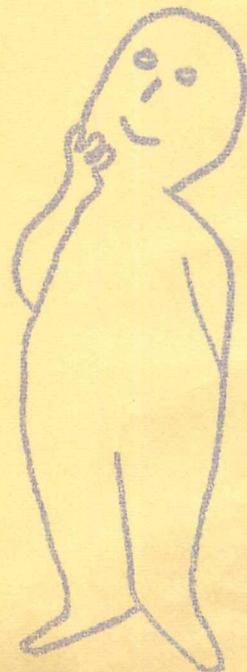
The first makes sense, but the question Thackeray poses is hardly worth answering, or even considering - having answered his question we should have learned nothing, benefitted not a whit. I don't know who Nonon de Lenelos was, but he does assume part of what Keats told us, and I cannot accept Keats' axiom. Finally, and having revealed nothing of my own feelings and thoughts beyond what is absolutely necessary (therefore beware), I have a nice little Platonic bit for you.

I am of opinion that there is nothing so beautiful but there is something still more beautiful of which this is the mere image and expression - a something which can neither be perceived by the eyes, the ears, nor any of the senses; we comprehend it solely in the imagination.

Not Plato himself, but Cicero.

MARIENBAD STRIKES BACK

It certainly should, after the way it has been treated by critics, amateur and professional. LAST YEAR AT MARIENBAD is a beautiful film. A rarity, really - outside of Cocteau I cannot think of any films whose entirety could be described as beautiful. Anyway, this beauty has been debauched by critics - even the local wallah mild-mannered and all that, managed to suggest that the choice of an organ was a bad one - he would have preferred strings. But this is only





THE LAUGHING CAVALIER
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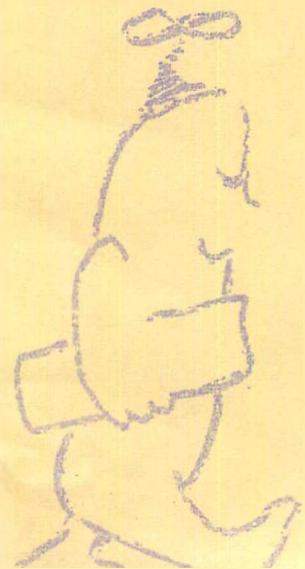
a minor matter, compared with the most common attitude, that of puzzling out what happened. I had read much of this sort of criticism before seeing the film, and I found that none of it was of any use or interest, none of it told me anything about the film - don't mind if it would have helped me enjoy the film, it wasn't even related to it!

But let's not get carried away. I swore this would only be a six-page issue, and KARIENBAD deserves more space than I can give it here. Next time, therefore, in addition to another Letter from the US, I'll brush off these light comments on Kariénbad. Besides I've only seen it twice, and I can't follow the time-sequence properly. ***** Illoes this issue by Philby, Sait and Soeur, to whom thanks. Unfortunately I've tried some old masters halfway through (no choice) and I'm not too happy about the new ones I can't use them for illoes.

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