

TRENDS

clarity of focus that is not as likely on a blog, which is more likely to turn out sloppy and unfinished writing."

Glass found some inspiration and spirit of his own while assembling *The New Kings of Nonfiction*, though he didn't go looking for it on blogs or Web sites. The essays in the anthology—which includes work by Bill Buford, Malcolm Gladwell, Chuck Klosterman, Susan Orlean, Coco Henson Scales, and David Foster Wallace—were first published in books, newspapers, and magazines.

Glass compares editing an anthology to hosting a radio show. "You decide to have a party, invite all sorts of interesting people to take the stage one at a time," he says. "The results are sometimes strange but always very exciting." In the case of *The New Kings of Nonfiction*, the party was a fund-raiser; Glass was approached by 826CHI, a

Chicago-based nonprofit writing center, one of whose sister organizations, 826NYC, had two years ago partnered with editor David Sedaris on the fiction anthology *Children Playing Before a Statue of Hercules* (Simon & Schuster, 2005), the profits of which were donated to the organization. 826CHI suggested Glass edit a nonfiction anthology with a similar goal, and even though he had been "turning down book ideas" for a decade, the charity angle appealed to him and he agreed. Obtaining reprint permissions for the previously published pieces—typically a difficult and time-consuming endeavor—proved not to be a problem.

"If anything, it was easy because it was for charity, so money didn't matter—and because of the title," Glass says, laughing. "Who could say no to being called one of the new kings?"

—SARAH WEINMAN

IN MEMORIAM

Sheila Ballantyne  
Michael Hamburger  
Sarah Hannah  
Robert Long  
Nazik al-Malaika  
Doug Marlette  
William Meredith  
Leonard Nathan  
Dmitri Prigov  
Len Roberts  
Tina De Rosa  
Mary Ellen Solt  
Sekou Sundiata

## Poets Resort to Guerilla Marketing

**T**he Guerilla Poetics Project (GPP), a loose alliance of poets and independent publishers, is in the business of giving away poetry for free.

Nothing new about that, of course—online literary magazines and some chapbook publishers have been giving it away for years—but the GPP's mission and the methods by which they achieve it represent a radical shift away from the traditional modes of small press marketing and distribution. "We are putting the world on notice," reads the GPP's manifesto, published on the group's Web site. "We are here; we are writing; and we want your attention. If you're not willing to give us your attention, then we will take it from you. We will be heard. Are you listening?"

The GPP utilizes a marketing strategy whereby "operatives," who donate twenty-five dollars annually to cover the project's postage costs, sneak poetry broadsides printed by the collective into bookstores and libraries and slip them into "target books," or titles

of special interest to the collective (the list includes, among others, works by Charles Bukowski, John Fante, and Fyodor Dostoevsky). The broadsides direct readers to register their findings on the group's Web site, [www.guerilla-poetics.org](http://www.guerilla-poetics.org), at which point they can also sign up to be operatives. According to an ever-growing interactive map charting the project's success rate, as of this writing 174 broadsides have been found in bookstores and libraries in cities across the United States and overseas. One reader found a broadside tucked inside *88 Poems* by Ernest Hemingway at Silver City Public Library, in Silver City, New Mexico; another found one inside Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* at a Waterstone's bookstore in Birmingham, England.

The collective was formed in July 2006 by a group of ten poets who strive for anonymity, thus enshrouding their covert activities in a veil—albeit a thin veil—of secrecy. Some members have been acquainted for years, while others met around the time the project

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was finding its legs. Through e-mails, letters, and phone calls, they discovered a common devotion to art, indie publishing, and the promotion of the written word, specifically the work of lesser-known writers.

Since then, the GPP has been selecting, printing, and distributing the work of a variety of contemporary poets—mostly members of the collective, who also solicit work—at a rate of two broadsides a month. The 4 1/2 x 5 1/2 inch broadsides, hand-printed on card stock, are often accompanied by minimal illustrations. Initially, the print run for each broadside was five hundred copies, though the group has since replaced its 1914 manual letterpress with an electric model, and production has increased. Approximately two thousand copies of each poem are now printed and mailed in batches of six to operatives across the country and around the world.

One of the collective's founding members, a Salt Lake City poet (and chemist) whose work has been published by a number of indie presses, says his motivation in starting the covert publishing collective was to end the insular cycle of submitting work for publication. "Why should ten, or fifty, or a hundred of us submit

work to places that only are being subscribed to by the same ten of us? Why not pool our resources and organize—unionize almost?"

The ten founding members, none explicitly named on the collective's Web site, range in age from twenty-four to forty. More than thirty-five poets—among them an employee at a district attorney's office, a Web site designer, a social worker for the mentally ill, and even a bookstore clerk who regularly smuggles the broadsides into the store where he works—have had their work printed and distributed by the GPP.

The collective advertises no physical

office; a handbook mailed to operatives states that the group's broadsides are "printed in an undisclosed location." A postal address is provided on the Web site, however, and those without PayPal accounts who wish to purchase GPP stickers, drink coasters, or other merchandise are directed to contact Bill Roberts, who lives in Dover, Delaware. Roberts is also an operative; his bio note reads, in part, "He is rumored to be the printer of some of the broadsides by the Guerilla Poetics Project, but that cannot and will not be confirmed or denied."

Finding a poem in a recently purchased book would be a pleasant surprise for most readers, but what do librarians and bookstore owners think about this kind of guerilla marketing? Jenna Freedman, a librarian at Barnard College, is divided in her reaction to the idea of poetry being smuggled into the stacks. "I do find the guerilla part cool

**"We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all writers are NOT treated equal; that some are undeservedly endowed by their university or publishing house with a certain level of haughty privilege; and that in the literary world we are entitled to a Byline, Publication and pursuit of an Audience."**

—From the GPP Manifesto

and exciting, but on the other hand I'd feel not trusted," she says. "I'd rather be a partner than someone to sneak behind." While unfamiliar with the GPP, Freedman says she has been irritated by the unsanctioned placement of zines into Barnard's collection.

Terry McCoy, co-owner of St. Mark's Bookshop in Manhattan, doesn't find the prospect of GPP operatives visiting his store annoying, nor does he see the need for covert activity, at least at St. Mark's. "We have a policy of taking anything from anybody," he says. "You can always bring anything in and we'll carry it."

—ELLEN MOYNIHAN

CONTRIBUTORS

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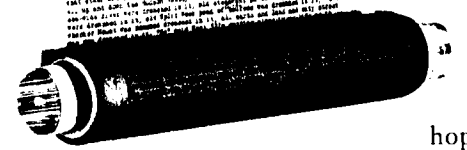
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books—being released this month, the anniversary of On the Road is being celebrated with numerous events across

the country. The original scroll, which was purchased for \$2.4 million in 2001 by Jim Irsay, the owner of the Indianapolis Colts, and has been on exhibition at museums and libraries for the past three years, is currently at the Boott Cotton Mills Museum in Lowell, Massachusetts, through October 14. From November 9 through February 22, 2008, it will be on display at the New York Public Library, and later in 2008 it will make its way to the University of Texas, the Indianapolis Museum of Art, and at Columbia College in Chicago. Finally, in 2009, it will be at the University of Birmingham in England and at University College Dublin in Ireland.

Over this past summer, Naropa University in Boulder, Colorado, home to the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics, hosted the inaugural Kerouac Festival, a three-day event that included readings, scholarly panels, film screenings, and a gala dinner. And through next month, in the author's hometown of Lowell, a variety of Kerouac-related activities—panel discussions, concerts, readings, even a bus tour and dedication of the author's historic home—will be held under the rubric of On the Road in Lowell.

LZ Nunn, project director of Lowell's events and executive director of the Cultural Organization of Lowell (COOL), promises that the Kerouac festivities will carry on long after the fiftieth anniversary. "We hope to sustain the energy of this



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