

KLAUS NORDBY

P O E M S

G R E E N

P U R P L E

B L U E

R E D



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P O E M S

G R E E N

P U R P L E

B L U E

R E D

AUT INSANIT HOMO,
AUT VERSUS FACIT.
—HORACE

(THE MAN IS EITHER
MAD OR HE IS
COMPOSING VERSES.)

LEGAL EASE

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NEED A LITTLE HELP?

- ❧ By sly design, this file uses your ADOBE READER in its splendid full-screen mode. So just relax and enjoy an uncluttered, stressless screen—for a change.
- ❧ Use your keyboard's PAGEUP/DOWN keys or the ARROW UP/DOWN keys to leaf through the pages.
- ❧ The bottom items are all clickable links, taking you . . . there. Ditto with the color-words at the top and underlined gray text.
- ❧ Press CTRL-L to toggle full-screen mode.
- ❧ Press CTRL-P to print one or more pages.
- ❧ When printing from the READER, please use the settings “Auto-rotate and Center” and “Page Scaling: Fit to Paper”.
- ❧ In full-screen mode, the READER has the good sense to hide your space-hogging WINDOWS taskbar. But no fear, to see your taskbar just press your WIN key.
- ❧ Ready to depart? Press ALT-F4.
- ❧ And now you know it all. Enjoy!

A Friend's Forward Foreword:

P O E T I C U S

A PICTURE worth a thousand words,
Is master Painter's claim to fame.
An image speaks to single glance,
What written volumes seek to frame.

BUT words, like colors, can cast hues.
And each a spectrum may disperse.
A word projects a thousand scenes
Through skillful Poet's nuanced verse!

—*John J. Kagebein (2010)*

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WRITING FREE VERSE
IS LIKE PLAYING TENNIS
WITH THE NET DOWN.

—ROBERT FROST

PROSAIC REMARKS

I HAVE WRITTEN POEMS since 1990, in happy fits, pensive moods, and drawn-out agony.

Although Norwegian is my native language, I have mostly written my poems in English. For I *love* English—and I am no stranger to unrequited affairs.

During the past 20+ years, I have occasionally shown poems to more-or-less-appreciative friends—under threats of violence if they showed my work to anyone else. For I have never before *wanted* my poems circulated or published: I have been—and will always be—so uncertain about their objective literary merits. But now, at the age of 54, I have finally decided to *stop worrying* about that—and to publish most of the poems in my hitherto tightly-locked digital drawer.

Now, what is the deal with these four colored sections, as named in my title? It's easy: The green ones are too silly, the purple ones are too didactic, the blue ones are a tad sad—and the red ones aren't nearly amorous enough.

Do I have anything to say to readers of my poems? Just this: take what you *want*—then ignore the rest.

KLAUS NORDBY

Oslo, March 17, 2012

Klaus@NordbyVerse.com

BUSINESS MODEL

EVERY POET SHOULD have a viable business model.

I swear by the “fairware” model: *You* are free to download, read, print, and redistribute my whole PDF collection of poems without *any* payments to *me*—just as if I had been graciously dead for seventy years.

But if you enjoy POEMS GREEN PURPLE BLUE RED, I ask that you *consider* paying me a poor poet’s pittance, as if this ebook were a regu-

lar magazine or book—costing \$3 or \$5 or \$12 or \$20. I will be grateful for any sum, no matter how small—or large—and I promise that I will not squander your money on any dreary necessities, but will invest it wisely in wine and women (which, for us poets, are even tax-deductible).

You can use www.PayPal.com to pay me. Please send your payment—and all comments, whether luscious praise or vicious diatribes—to Klaus@NordbyVerse.com.

ON USING PDF FILES

THE PORTABLE DOCUMENT FORMAT, PDF, is truly great software technology. However, many people are not getting the most out of their PDF files, so here are some useful tips.

In order to get the best view of PDF files on your screen, increase the screen resolution by going to the Display settings in your computer's Control Panel, and choosing the highest available figure—e.g. 1600×1200 instead of 1024×768.

If the text in the PDF file looks fuzzy on an LCD screen, it is because there is a mismatch between the screen's "native resolution" and the Control Panel's Display setting. The display should be run at the exact native resolution figures—which are stated in your monitor's manual.

When downloading PDFs from the web, the Adobe Reader has an annoying setting: it will open the PDF file *inside* your web browser. Not only does this interrupt your regular surfing, but you must then *manually*

save the PDF file from the embedded toolbar on your hard-disk for later use—which most people don't know, and so they lose the PDF file they wanted to keep. Thankfully, this annoying default can be disabled in the Adobe Reader's EDIT/PREFERENCES/INTERNET settings (CTRL-K). Just uncheck the "Display PDF in browser". It is due to this annoyance that I distribute my ebook inside a ZIP file, which bypasses this browser embedding issue.

As for printing from PDF files, that is pretty straightforward: they will always print as sharply as your printer's settings allows. You should (ordinarily) use "Auto-rotate and Center" and "Page Scaling: Fit to Paper". But you must not expect that the colors on your printed pages will match your screen—this is often physically impossible.

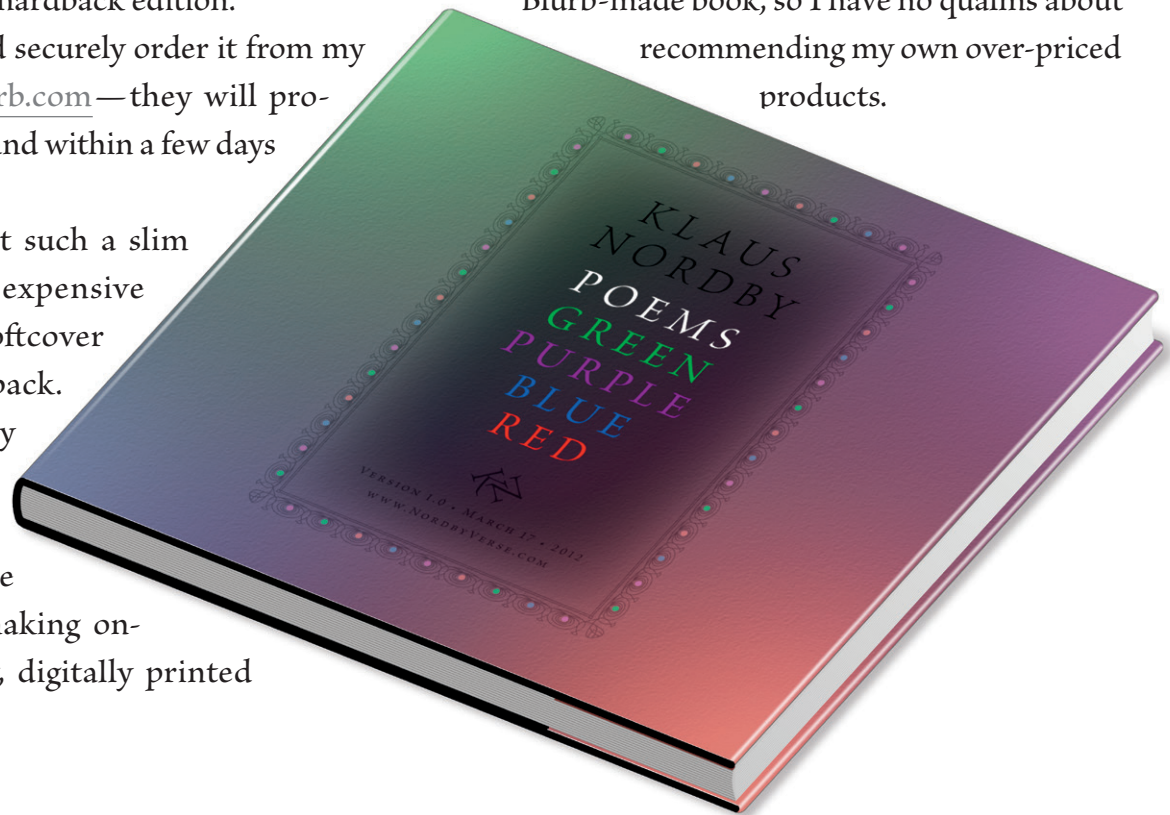
THE PRINTED BOOK

THIS FREE PDF ebook has a real-world twin. It is a physical book, looking exactly like this ebook, printed on excellent paper, and available in both a softcover and a hardback edition.

You can view it and securely order it from my webshop on www.blurb.com—they will produce the book on-demand within a few days and ship it globally.

I much regret that such a slim 70-page book is as expensive as it is: \$35 for the softcover and \$45 for the hardback. This is not due to any huge profit margin on my part—alas, alas—but solely due to the high cost of making on-demand, high-quality, digitally printed books in four colors.

But—as a long-time graphic designer and print production expert—I can at least say that I am quite happy with the technical quality of the Blurb-made book, so I have no qualms about recommending my own over-priced products.



A WORD FROM MY SPONSOR

I AM ALSO A dedicated landscape photographer, specializing in majestic scenes from my home country, Norway. My country has its faults, but for a landscape photographer it's a living dream—when the weather gods are on one's side.

At my website www.NorwayByNordby.com you can see more examples of my photos and order reasonably-priced, high-quality prints of them, both on paper and on canvas (the prints are shipped either from the USA or Europe).



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CREDIT DUE

I AM GRATEFUL TO the brilliant typographer Robert Slimbach at Adobe, who designed the superb BRIOSO PRO typeface, which helps make my collection look so good.

All design and typesetting was done by me in ADOBE INDESIGN CS5, with assistance from ADOBE PHOTOSHOP CS5 for image editing—great tools all from www.adobe.com.

Throughout the years, various friends have occasionally commented—both constructively

and destructively—on my poems, for which I profusely thank them: Dina Schein Federman, Christopher Schlegel and John Kagebein.

Finally, I owe Big Thanks to my expert editor, Clementine Davis, who spent many hours combing through it all: counting syllables, measuring feet, exchanging commas for semi-colons and other life-saving measures with which I am always too star- or grief-struck to properly bother.



NOTHING CAN
BE DONE IN LIFE
WITHOUT AN IDEA.

—AYN RAND

LINGO BINGO

1991

DO you wonder
Why up yonder
Nordic gringo
Writes *this* lingo?
Why not other,
Learnt from Mother?

JUST one sample
Should be ample:
“Akka bakka
Bonka rakka
Etna betna
Sogna donga.”

GOT the meaning?
Felt like cleaning?
Sounded senseless?
Seemed defenseless?
So why bother?
(Sorry, Mother!)

A POETIC APOLOGY

1991

A FAIR rhyme
I find prime;
Of sound scan
I'm a fan;
Dull content
I resent;
To bad verse
I'm averse.

IN this field
I will wield
All the skill
My weak will
Can supply.
And though I
Have a grip,
This shall slip.

IF I fail
To prevail
At my task
I do ask:
If you find
I your time
Do abuse
—Please excuse!

QUO VADIS, O NOVICE?

1991

SO — you don't like his style or his rhyme?
 You can't find in his themes The Sublime?
 You'd like him and his silly, stale verse
 To be stoppéd — before he gets worse —
 And you cry: "O, why do you verse make?
 "You're a fool who should jump in the lake!
 "It is arrogance, trying compete
 With the Giants of yore! What conceit!"
 But no matter how you shake your fists,
 He at writing and rhyming persists . . .

NO — this Klaus is no Kipling or Keats,
 But it's not in that class Klaus competes!
 So it's really unfair him to blame
 For not being like them! And no shame
 Shall inhere in unearthing from scratch
 What those Giants had *learned* to dispatch:
None with "talent" fair Nature endows —
 This also goes for rookies like Klaus.
 So no matter how you shake your fists,
 He at writing and rhyming persists . . .

A PLASTERED WOUND

1991

I PAUSE before my glass of beer
(I alwaysch like to have one near).

SOME say my drinking makesch me sad
— But drinking alwaysch makes me glad!!!

YET I must now a schnag deshcribe
(Though I would rather brew imbibe):

BEER hath a lov'ly froth on top,
But when I do my “Bottomsch Up!”

THE lov'ly froth runsch in my nose
— And *that's* what makes my mood morose!

A PLEA FOR A PLOT

1991

THERE's a plot that's afoot
To make Us go kaput:
It's a crime that corrupts,
For it *Thought* interrupts.

NOW, these plotters are known:
Everyone's epigon
Of the *first* to subvert
By (not) wearing a skirt . . .

(UN)FAIR plotters can snap
Chains of Thought with a strap;
Just by wink of an eye
They can Logic defy:

THOUGH they're round everywhere,
They oft act like a square!
Though they're fragile and frail,
They can whip up a gale!

AND they're '*round*' everywhere!
Everyplace they'll appear
And Mind-peace all perturb—
'Cause they *look* so superb!

STILL — though foes of all *Us*—
I just feel ambig'ous:
For they're soft to the touch
And I like them too much . . .

THEY *may* weaken the Mind;
May its Logic rewind;
They *may* Thought interrupt
But is *that* that corrupt?

THOUGH some plotters I've known,
To this day I'm alone;
So to plotters I plea:
"Please, please plot against me!"

GIRLS WILL BE GIRLS — I HOPE!

1991

LIKE lightning,
They're frightening;
Like thunder,
They'll blunder;
Like our God,
They're so odd!

... *but* ...

NO white wine
Is so fine;
No premiere
Has that air;
No substitute
Is so cute!

A REPORT FROM HELL

1991

IN winter, I'm a frigid man,
A calm and pensive artisan.
Then nothing makes me lose my cool
—Serene I am and no one's fool.

THEN Summer comes! The season's heat
Is turned on once again! *Don't* treat
Me to these sights of swaying thighs
And legs and busts that burst my eyes!

WHEN shapes designed with slender line
Glide past me—as if by design—
No rung in hell is hotter than
The city streets' black frying pan!

CRAZY LOVE

2012

THOSE dearest, bulging eyes!
Those sweetest, frothing lips!
Sleek tongue—which sense defies!
My darling’s mind, it strips
Dull logic from my life:
“Too sane you are!” She screams,
And sates my days with strife
From maddest-hatter dreams!
She stabs my heart with spoons
To prove She hates my guts!
She croaks Her cackling tunes
Designed to drive *me* nuts!
Deranged, unhinged—*or* sane
—I love Her all the same!

THE WILL TO WOO

2012

IF She's fallen, my frame will support;
 If She's hungry, my food will Her feed;
If She's stumbling, my arm will escort;
 If She's blind, my clear eyes will Her lead;

IF She's baffled, my brains will explain;
 If She's weak, my will's might will Her steel;
If She's crazy, my thoughts will stay sane;
 If She's pained, my kind words will Her heal;

IF She's poor, my own wealth will bills pay;
 If She's cold, my last clothes will Her heat;
If She's fearful, my guts will angst sway;
 If She's ill, my hands' strokes will Her treat;

IF She's sad, my jests' mirth will delight;
 If She's lost, my firm path will Hers be;
If She's bored, my hot kiss will excite;
 If She's jailed, my just speech will Her free;

IF She's *mine*, there's no end to my joys!
 If I'm *Hers*, there's no thing I can't do:
I'm the Prince of men—and King of boys!
 And hence *She* I *will* endlessly woo!

MISS 'N ME

1991

OF merry, mirthful mood is She,
The only Miss who's right for Me;
A sparkling, shining sight to see,
That's just how Miss must be.

OF slender, slinky shape is She,
The only shape that's right for Me;
A luscious, lustful elf is She,
That's just how Miss must be.

OF mindful, musing wit is She,
The only soul who's right for Me;
A pensive, probing self has She,
That's just how Miss must be.

ALL these things my Miss must be,
If She is to be dear to Me;
But most of all—not mess with *Me*
—If Miss is to be *Mrs.* Me!



EVERYTHING SHOULD
BE MADE AS SIMPLE
AS POSSIBLE,
BUT NOT SIMPLER.

—ALBERT EINSTEIN

SANS ANESTHESIA

2012

MY scalpel's crimson, but held firm,
As I my naked nerves dissect:
All sinews' strength and thrust affirm
My will to ill-formed parts correct.

I BLEED a Nile of bluest ink,
As every slash engraves my breast.
My mind will guide, my eyes won't blink,
As razored lines put all to test.

I ACHE! I wince! I cry aloud!
As steely scythe my guard-less gut
Embowels—yet my head's unbowed;
Erect I stand with every cut.

IT *matters* how I use my art;
This bloodied blade inscribes my scroll:
My pen—the healer of my heart;
My verse—the surgeon of my soul.

POINTS OF VIEW

1991

“THE trees,” some say, “with truth throughout run rife.
By knowing bark and roots we know of life:
There, flies seek flee from spiders’ web-attacks
—And he who *this* ignores, he something lacks.”

YET I cannot regard this as profound.
For *any* creature crawling on the ground
Can trees perceive. But only those who soar
Above can *forest* know—and bugs *ignore*.

KYRIE

2012

ERECT they prayed, the Greeks,
When goddesses and gods
They *glimpsed* in creeks, on peaks,
At sea, on shore, in quads.

THE Greek, he *never* knelt!
Nor crouched! Nor stooped! Nor bowed!
Erect he prayed . . . and felt
Divinest Grace bestowed.

AND yet—he *never* knew
His prayer-power's source,
The *one* God who stayed true:
He glimpsed *himself*—on course.

LINES COMPOSED ONE WEEK AFTER ØBAMA 2.0

2012

Vast billions came before me:
They trod the Earth, through eons,
And built the world I *now* see
—A globe of self-chained peons!

But am I chained to *their* bans
Because they penned my Man's Rights?
Am I enslaved to *their* plans
—Because they lit my street lights?

For Rights are not a mere gift
To meekly eat from my plate;
Not garbs to give up through thrift
—Nor sacrificial vote-bait!

Deny I will, their legal
Usurping of my *own* Earth!
Assert I will of *my* worth
—And fight my battle regal!

TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT (OR, JUST WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS: A TREATISE ON METAPHYSICS IN RHYMED ANAPESTIC TRIMETER)

1991

IN a way, there's not much we can say
 'Bout The Real—'cept that's *all* we survey,
 And it's Law to us all. "But—Real keeps us in thrall!"
 —Some have whined! So let's enter this brawl:

ALTHOUGH some have insisted we're blind,
 There's no Real that's unreal to our mind.
 There's *no* thing that can *be* I can't think:
 All that's Real can be spelled out in ink!

BUT—if all that is Real were destroyed,
 Would there be *nothing* left but The Void?
 No, for Void *means* "No Thing in No Place"
 —And hence Void is *unreal* in each case.

BUT a thing *like* "The Void" hides in some
 Who won't march to the beat of Real's drum.
 Void's the thing inside those who'll revile
 The Real's "NO!" to their Wish infantile.

AND *here* lies the whole clue to The Real
 —And to those who its Laws will repeal—
 Here's the truth which some creatures annoy:
 What is Real is what Void *can't* destroy.

THE VAULT AND THE LAW

1991

“OF unknown origin, Sent to keep us from sin, There’s a vast Vault above, Meant to crush our Self-love; There’s a Law deep within, We just feel is Sovereign.”	FOR that Law to be free, It’s been set against me; For that Vault to be Real, It must Truth all conceal: So the Truth I shan’t see, And what’s Right defies me.	THAT’s the fate to befall Those who’re willing to crawl. For <i>that</i> is the intent Of those who Life resent; Those already made small By succumbing to <i>all</i> .
“THROW a douse on your glow! Try not Pride to let show! Before Nature you’ll shake, Thus your Will you will break! Self-esteem do forego— Make yourself your own foe!”	TO hold <i>Self</i> as a crime And name anguish “sublime” Carves a chasm in me Where there’s no remedy: It can’t heal over time, Thus I’ll plunge in my prime.	BUT the things that <i>I</i> see, Don’t intimidate me: For the Vault that I <i>know</i> Can’t deal <i>my</i> self a blow; And in Law that’s <i>for</i> me Lies my right Destiny.

BECAUSE

1992

ONE climbs the tallest tops
He finds outside; his rising stops
On reaching Nature's bounds.
In given facts he finds his grounds
For chasing strain and pain.
Attainment makes his triumph wane:
The *doing* of the deed
Fulfills the climber's inner need
 To life and limb outdare
 — And all because IT's simply *there*.

ONE climbs the highest hills
He sees inside; on top, he tills
His lot, despite all pain.
Fair future gain does him sustain;
Completion of his task
Lets him in contemplation bask.
His *need* mandates the *deed*:
It makes him Nature's tenets heed.
 He'll self and soul lay bare
 — And all because IT *is not* there.

THE RIGHTS OF SPRING

1992

AT the time when leaves fall
And supplies grow too small,
I discovered a seed
That my hunger might feed.
But alone it can't grow:
It would die in the snow—
And preparing for Spring
Can't be done by dreaming.

FOR my wants to prepay
The wee seed I'll obey:
I will grope in the ground
And dig dirt by the pound,
I will withstand the strain
Of all cold and all rain—
Just *because* of something
Future seasons *might* bring.

Some see dread destiny
And in strain mystery:
“Why take trouble to toil
And to slave in the soil?”
“Why be serf to some seed
We can't *see* serves a need?”
“Why endure suffering
And crown strain as your king?”

BUT today's ruthless strain
Is not borne all in vain.
Future seasons *demand*
What today I'll withstand;
For my *aim* is the fuel
That lets seeds my life rule:
It's *for sake of* some thing
I'll *possess* the next Spring!

PARTY LEFTOVERS

2012

SOME only leave behind their flock
To crawl on Earth: their likeness lives
A while, then stops their clock.

SOME only leave behind their gold
To stay on Earth: their purses live
Long after they are cold.

SOME only leave behind their thought
To walk on Earth: their logic lives
Forever to be taught.

SOME only leave behind their art
To soar on Earth: their values live
Eternal in each heart.

ILLUMINATUS

2012

SOME will accurse the sun's hot blaze:
Its harshness hate; its spectrum slight,
And never solar gladness praise . . .
. . . While I'll await—a softer light?

SOME will bemoan the moon's cold glow;
Its dimness damn; its shadow spite,
And never lunar calmness know . . .
. . . While I'll await—a brighter light?

SOME will lament the limelight's glare;
Its glitz gainsay; its tints indict,
And never urban brightness cheer . . .
. . . While I'll await—a kinder light?

MOST will illuminated days
On Earth accurse, bemoan and fight,
As they deprive themselves of rays . . .
. . . While I'll have *gleaned*—the Ideal light.

THE TABLES RETURNED (DEDICATED TO ROMANTICS OF ALL COLORS)

1991

OH, Wordsworth! Now *thou* shouldst be here!
I *your* new teacher then would be!
No Art—of course!—I’d volunteer,
But hear: your *Nature* you did flee . . .

TRUE—field to hill you would ascend,
To Nature’s praise you’d sing, you’d laugh;
Whole Truth, *Whole* Right you tried defend
—But ended with far less than half.

YOU blamed “dull Books!” and sages past
For *our* Sight, Right and Truth to lose.
I here agree: they’ve us harassed
By preaching “truths” of useless use.

BUT *then* we part: your hail to Heart
—The thing which “watches and receives”—
Is to the marrow false from start:
The Heart *confusion* but achieves.

FOR short of Thought, Heart’s on its own:
Held hostage to all it perceives
It’s *slave* to forces unbeknown,
And *Knowledge* butchers and deceives.

“WISE passiveness” is Mind’s collapse;
Your “impulse from a vernal wood”
Is venom that Mind’s powers saps:
For passive Mind soaks up falsehood.

BUT need we blame *our* Minds, *our* Thoughts,
For failures found in “sages” Schemes?
No! *Monsters* helmed these shrewd onslaughts,
Disguised as kindly academes!

‘TWAS *they*—*not* Science and the book—
Who turned the tables on us Men;
Who Reason made into a taloned hook
With which they drag Men to their den.

They Reason “murdered to dissect”
With fuzzy words as only tooth,
Instead of seeking to *perfect*
Man’s tool of probing for all Truth.

AND here’s where *you* did join with *them*:
You *all* turned Heart against the Head
To follow urges’s stratagem,
—And not your Nature *heed* instead!

FOR passive Mind to All obey,
Or active Mind to All create,
Perverts the rest of Nature’s way:
One’s based on fear, and one on hate.

OUR only hope to decay stay
And mend what monsters’ Schemes unweaves,
Are *active* Minds to World *obey*:
Such Minds that watches and *conceives*.

FOR—it was *half-way* right, your way:
Whole Nature should us teach *all* Laws;
Thus *active* Minds which Laws obey
Would *heal* all wounds from monsters’ claws.

IF you were here and *learned* my word,
Oh, William! *Your* Art could cheer
And chant and charm all undeterred
A *whole*, rich world that’s *really here*!

THE ART OF SECOND SIGHT

1990

WE need a means supplying scenes to see
Of things that are and things that ought to be;
Through gifts from others' eyes and minds and hands
We may see vistas from our own homelands;
Through views which we can give our full consent
Some precious moments of respite are lent.
This is the Art of Second Sight,
It *shows* a world that *seems* all right.

BUT not with others' sightings well content
I sought more worthy worlds to represent;
Now thanks to my own eye and mind and hand
I found land I was first to understand:
I courted likely fictions to create
For dream-begotten facts to contemplate,
And through the Art of Second Sight,
I *make* a world that *feels* all right.

BUT feelings not merely from sense arise,
These also stem from sums that soothe the eyes:
Smooth shapes of light and line and hue
Yield views that I with beauty, too, imbue;
These let me face the things I want to be
In the sole way that's truly real to me.
So through the Art of Second Sight,
I *have* a world that *looks* all right.

IN these pure sights, my longings lie declared
— But *left* with me, my work would live impaired:
For my request—my craving—with my art
Is your assenting mind and greeting heart,
My work's for you to take or you to leave . . .
But if the latter, this may me aggrieve,
Since through my Art of Second Sight,
We'd *share* a world that *is* all right!



MAKING THE SIMPLE
COMPLICATED IS
COMMONPLACE; MAKING
THE COMPLICATED SIMPLE,
AWESOMELY SIMPLE,
THAT'S CREATIVITY.

— CHARLES MINGUS

A VISION IMPAIRED

1991

ACROSS the room there greets my famished eye
A feast of polished light and shape in paint
That sense and soul and mind all satisfy.
In seamless craft I bask without complaint:
My prize in paint has been by Master signed!
Then I approach, its details to enjoy
—When vision wanes! My feast now floats behind
A veil of strokes by brush that eye annoy:
For paint is flung in gobs by stabs—these show
The vision-maker's marks from parryings
With all who'd stroke and stab him from below.
And then I grieve for life's well-painted things,
Those gleaming, glowing sights which—seen up close—
Their makers' marks and scars too clear disclose.

CRIES FROM THE PAST

1991

WHEN those who wrenched from matter truth
 To light our days and renew youth;
When those who polished dreams to gems
 To light our nights like diadems—
When those were made to hear applause
 For frauds and fakes who's *only* cause
Was waging war on light's ideal—
 How do you think *they* then did feel?

BY WAY OF GOODBYE

1991

“We’re so sorry to lose you,” they said,
 “It’s a shame you’re not going our way.”
But whenever the way I’m to tread
 Seems to compass and map-marks betray,
I must masses and throngs then defy,
 And old allies and loves start combat.
Still, there’s solace in words of goodbye:
 “*You* can’t lose me—only *I* can do that.”

THE SONG OF SHELLS

1991

AMID debris I find when searching shore,
Amongst all wrecks and wastes the waters bore,
Sits shells I never ever saw before.
I'll pick some up—if I see symmetry—
And hope that they will sing a melody.

SOME shells no sound at all will hum to me:
 This is the silent, large majority.
 They suck all sound from all the air around
 And gulp it down a drain quite unrenowned:
 These are mere empty shells; there Life's not found.

SOME shells a faint, fine sound will lilt to me:
 This is the humming, small majority.
 They will return all sound that soars around,
 And may these even mix 'till they rebound:
 These are the decent shells; their Life is sound.

SOME shells a grand, great sound will chant to me:
 —'Tis the composing, great minority.
 They do create all sound we hear around,
 And new ones fuse in ways beyond profound:
 These are the soundest shells—their Lives' astound!

AMID debris I find when searching shore,
Are shells I thought I here did see before;
I pick them up, to hear them sing no more.
No matter how I search my shore's domain,
I'll miss some shells I'll never hear again.

A REAL GEM

1991

A PRECIOUS stone she had mislaid
Was found again in crowd-filled shade.
‘Twas whole and hale—but lusterless:
No lucid spark could it express.
For ‘round her gem would baubles prance,
All flashing fakéd elegance.
Although one *can* find gems by night,
Gems sparkle not, deprived of light.

WHAT FELINES FEEL

1994

LIE still, my raven cuddly-cat;
Lie still; feel free; surrender war;
My lap is where your ease is at
—Lie still, and let me you adore . . .

UNFLINCHING eyes, lids lowered low,
Yet shiningly aware of all;
Her mind alight with inner glow
—She purrs, I think, in pure enthrall.

WITH arching back and chest all bared,
To me her trusting tummy's turned;
With me, there comfort lies declared
—I know her trust I must have earned.

BUT trust's and comfort's ties are mild.
For Man can't know what felines feel,
Nor deal with beasts, if they are wild
—So how to know what purrs reveal?

MY raven cuddly-cat's now gone;
Her eyes and mind and purrs and trust
Mere fancies now, to dwell upon.
—To empty lap I must adjust.

I DOZE to cope with yearning's ache;
But mind yet roams for where she's at,
So when I dream that I do wake
—Here's *still* my raven cuddly-cat . . .

I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN

1991

I KNEW of combat's clangor
With comrades all too few;
I knew of hurt and anger
When debts were overdue
— But rue I rarely knew.

I KNEW that Man was mortal;
That deeds and words decide
Our stance beneath life's portal,
But now I rue all chide
— I never knew friends died.

PALINOPSIA

2012

BEHOLDING Green, my eye,
Once moved to Grayish ground,
Will Purplish patch espy:
Green's complement is crowned
By run-down color cones;
Each briefly leaving space
For their opponent tones
When my eyes slow their pace.
The colored circle shows
All tints as mated pairs:
Though each does each oppose,
They still share their affairs.
 But sunny Yellow hues?
 They leave behind the Blues.

HUNG, DRAWN AND QUARTERED

2012

WHEN I behold my entrails on the floor;
My wrinkled, weary brains all splattered on the wall;
My clawing hands both nailed upon the door:

THEN I must loudly scream—but have no lung!
Then I need bursting eyes to close—but have no lids!
Then I will sharply speak—but have no tongue!

WHEN I am more than mad—yet not insane;
When I am merely crawling flesh—yet not a worm;
When I have zero will—yet will's my chain:

THEN I recall . . . I *yet* have Love to give;
Then I resolve . . . I *yet* have wondrous Work to do;
Then I decide . . . I *yet* have Life to live.

THEN I collect my shattered, scattered parts
And piece myself into one whole and holy Man,
—And once again I thrive through healing Arts.

DECLINING CHARON

2012

WHEN I have hopes that I will cease to be
Before drained heart inflames my fevered brain,
I then implore the Fates for injury
Or malady—to hemlock drops obtain.
I dwell in hell: envisioning Her face,
My world *completed* by a Grand Romance . . .
—Then vaporized, like dew in space!
My vision’s magic now a gazeless glance.
But when I feel I’ll not endure one hour . . .
. . . I grasp: white marbled forms would live no more,
Nor myriad words would world empower
If not for pains I can’t—and shan’t—ignore.
Alone in world, I’ll lie—and of this think:
My heart will heat cold stone and kindle ink.

CHOICE PARTS

1991

IN my garden we sat, just we two,
And enjoyed a brief hour's repose.
Then we'd speak of those aims we'd pursue
If agreement our hearts would disclose.

I'D first point to the rose by my side,
With its petals of shimmering light
That in purple-red gold had been dyed
'Till the sun and the sky made it right.

THEN I'd point to the grass by my feet,
At the ocean of green that us spanned
With its diamond-like dew so replete,
And I'd smile, hoping she'd understand.

BUT my partner could not these things read.
She'd start curse all the thorns on the stem
Of the rose; then she'd turn to some weed
That did grow in the grass, and condemn.

ALL bewildered, I'd point to the soil
That *all* good and *some* bad will let grow—
But from this mere idea she recoiled:
Of the earth, she would mud only know.

THEN my garden she left. More alone
I'll pursue what remains in my heart.
By her choice I'll abide, though bemoan:
Choice of parts is a choice to depart.

NOW, it's *true* that the soil is mere mud;
That green grass hosts some weeds; that the rose
Possess thorns that can sting us to blood
—But are *those* parts those choice *ought* expose?

ALLIES AND ALIENS

1991

A FEW roses now bloom on my lot—
But I think they have *chosen* my ground:
For I found them—I planted them not.

OF themselves they have grown up so sound.
In the midst of all grass I must mow
They've appeared—despite what us surround.

WHAT spare water I have I'll bestow
On these plants, and try not to be crass—
For I *need* to see decent things grow.

AND should water spill onto the grass
I'll be glad—well, unless wicked weeds
On my plot and my plants do trespass.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE BLUES

2005/2012

THE Blues are sad, they say—but I deny
Their lie! The saphir skies; the beryl brooks;
The navy-azure seas—do *they* imply
A state of darkly stained, moroseful looks?
Just gaze into a lake's clean cobalt glass
Of boundless shades in joyous, unpained hues:
No other Earthly hue can Blue surpass,
It sky and sea and soil—and *us*—will fuse
Into one integrated, whole concord. . . .
Where lesser-tinctured hues would melt and fade
Into a desiccated, grayed-out horde,
All beaming Blues remain—no tint betrayed!
 But then . . . I see the hue of my own eye . . .
 No more can I the Blues' true state deny.

A LIFE ON EARTH

2012

UPON this soil, my soul
Has, ever since my birth,
Held freedom as its goal
— And roamed with ease on Earth.

MY hands and eyes and mind
I've used to prove *my* worth.
To *no* cause I've been signed,
— Nor lived to please the Earth!

YES, other souls I've known:
A *few* bestowed me mirth,
But most I left alone
— Desiring peace on Earth . . .

OF fertile soil and plans
I'll one day find a dearth.
Then mind and eyes and hands
— Will rest at ease in earth.



NOTHING CAN BE REASONABLE
OR BEAUTIFUL UNLESS IT'S MADE
BY ONE CENTRAL IDEA,
AND THE IDEA
SETS EVERY DETAIL.

—AYN RAND

THE HOLY HAUNT

1994

IN chambers void I lived with no one there;
No Sentience disturbed my private spell.
But now . . . a *Presence* I've become aware:
A Being, born not here, does with me dwell.
Unseen, unheard—Its aura emanates
Through all my space, like purified perfumes;
And though I Phantoms fear, this fascinates:
I never knew I needed scented rooms.
And where I roam at home, my vast abode's
Suffused with Present Being . . . 'tis a Muse
Whose breathless voice delivers unsung odes;
Whose holy haunt my dwelling will seduce.
No longer shall my chambers' space be void:
My Seraph's scented breath has spell destroyed.

THE EMPTY CAGE

1994

At Zoo, in section North, I something see
Defying decency and reason's creed:
In cage confined; from hunt barred by decree,
An untamed Tiger treads at restless speed.
This Tiger, feared like few, with weary eyes
Seems doubt if bars can break and freedom win.
In corners all hide flies and mites and lice;
Beneath his Tiger-eye, they spawn and spin
—Too sundry to dismiss; too stale to eat.
Though pained by cage and creeps, his eyes seem keen . . .
And lo! I hear his cold, wild heart's mild beat!
Then I see *aid* for Tiger's trite routine:
 Ignore the cage and creeps—he needs unite
 With Tigress Right, to dreary life excite!

THE FAIREST TRADE

1994

WHO stuns by sending roses to relieve
Your ache, confessing fault and love at once?
Who pens you tender verse, seeking achieve
Both ordered thought and joyous felt response?
Whose wit amuses mind and tickles gut,
'Til your elated laughter lifts the roof?
Who brings you wisdom and through bunk can cut
With razor words, quick facts, and piercing proof?
Who shares his art in cherished privacy,
And basks in your response of knowing glow?
In sum: Who *else* can measure up to *me*—
And squander wealth and spirit—and *this* know:
What's roses, wisdom, wit and verse and art
As payment for possession of *your* Heart?

I SWEAR THIS TRUE

1994

MY Love, I swear this true: I want You *not*.
For now—tonight—reduced by wine and wit
And whispered sweets, You're helpless prey for plot:
In short seduction sleeps no benefit.
I court no course that hurries Love's relapse;
I seek no scheme inducing Mind to spin:
My acts be *not* seductive tricks and traps;
Not clownish circus-stunts designed to win
Applause in union blinking brief—but rounds
Of joy enduring, all inspired by Thought
Of earning eon-lasting Love on grounds
Uniting Mind and Flesh in ways they *ought*.
Of scheming lust please do me not accuse:
I Soul want own—not Shape briefly seduce.

DIVINE DESIRE

1994

WERE I a God, I you might make anew
To suit divine, volupt'ous appetite;
With ease redo what Nature set askew,
I'd form your flesh to taste—and lust excite!
Your raven hair I'd tear; instead, red flames
Would warm my nights. Your skin I'd turn from dim
To snowy bright, to kindle kisses' aims.
Your soft, short limbs I'd elongate and trim;
Broad nose I'd narrow; waist would slim; raise breast
—And other precious parts to whim adjust.
But I'm a Man—thank God!—and I attest
I crave no change! Our flesh's *not* source of lust:
What you have willed in Mind and made of Soul
Excites my Whole to make *Yourself* my Goal!

THE POWER OF FUSION

2012

THIS Earth's *not* cold. It heats
Of own accord: its core's
A molten flow which beats
'Gainst crusted crests and shores,
Erupting up to reach
Chill lands: A frosty field;
A glacial lake; blue beach—
With fire each is healed.
But inner heat sustains
No Life. *Alone*, Earth's stark
And bleak, all barren plains;
A deadly void—and dark.
But centered Sun bestows
All Life—because *She* glows.

THE SPIRIT OF THE SUN

2011

OH, *can* I kiss The Sun?
I'd soar the earthly skies,
Then sail through space, then run
To Sun! My eyes would prize
Her sphere; my hands would feel
Her searing heat; Her core
Would glow and pulse; I'd kneel,
And on Sun's surface pour
A thousand kisses light
—Yet *hotter* than *all* stars!
My lips would burn the Night
From Sun, and heal Her scars . . .
Oh, *may* I kiss The Sun?
Or will she *my* lips shun?

MOONLIGHT SONATA

2012

I AM the Moon: so dark,
So cold, devoid of air,
Deprived of sound, so stark,
So bleak . . . and *yet*—so *fair*!
Emblazed in joy, I glow!
No stars outshine my light;
No satellites bestow
The clarity of sight
I yield—to dim, grim Earth.
Yet *all* my golden wealth
Derives not from *my* worth,
But comes to me, by stealth,
From She who *makes* me run:
My one and only Sun.

INTERACTION

1994

IN trancèd tune our frames entwine . . .

And yet—She blames mild music's mead

For state inebriate, and wine

For making Her Her nature heed.

BUT let not music mind bedim!

Lust's allure merely now *appears*

To rise from what She fears is whim:

The tune She hears in *Me* inheres . . .

. . . A TUNE that only *She* can sense,

And, in a sense, also produce:

For, without *Her* experience,

My tune could not us *both* seduce.

FAIR harmony's a compound pair;

Please cease unfairest fretting fuss:

It's not in each, nor just out there—

Wild music's mead's conceived in *Us*!

THE CONCERT OF CONSORTS

2011

WHY whisper, Love? Why mute
Your body's tautest string?
Release *all* air! Your flute
Should *shout*, your chords should *sing*!
Be *loud*, my Love, be *loud*!
Our Ecstasy and Bliss
Is unashamed and proud
When we entwine and kiss!
When I myself in You
Invade, intrude, infuse;
On loud and common cue,
In pain we won't refuse,
We *both* our Selves release
— Into eternal peace . . .

THE CHALLENGE

2011

I *know* why people pray:
To plead with God for Health
And Life another day;
Divinely granted wealth
Implored! Frames bent, on knees,
Heads bowed, their spirits pale,
All dying fast to please
Their Lord—who *caused* their fail!

BUT I'll *deny* you, God!
Refute! Defame! Dispute!
—If *my* Girl's Hands are trod,
Her Eyes are dimmed, or mute
Her Mouth, or dulled her Mind!
I'll guard my Girl Divine
'Gainst ills *all* gods designed:
Her *Life* is my sole shrine.

THE SOLACE OF SOL

2012

OF *all* I seek on Earth,
My Sol, she beams and shines!
She to my sight gives birth,
And lights up my designs.
She glows—but also *s*peaks!
And lils! And rhymes! And sings!
Her voice calls me on peaks;
Her *s*peech, it gives me wings!
My eyes, if they went dark,
I've *said* I could not cope
—And would then douse my spark.
But *now* I have a hope:
If sightless, *still* I'd hear
Her Solace in my ear.

HIS HOLY BOOK

2012

IN oldest store in town
He found his rarest Book:
It would Collection crown,
He knew on second look.
Its Cover, type and ink
—Immaculate to eye!
Its Paper, faintly pink,
So soft in hand did lie . . .
But Text astounded mind!
Its structure, pace and sense
With brilliance was designed!
. . . He then saw Book's expense:
 "Loans *only*: thirty nights."
 Its Text he *still* recites.

THE FROST GIANT

2011

I DWELLED in frigid fog:
Unfazed by glaze, my heart's
Slow, frozen, mired jog
Each dawn despised its parts.
Then You I *won*! I *owned*
Your Heart—it warmed my Soul!
Its fire, hottest known,
Enfusing parts to whole!
But then—I lost Your Love . . .
Still, ever now, my brain
Knows peaceful pride *above*
All loss, *beyond* all pain.
I won You once. Then lost.
And yet . . . You *thawed* my frost.

THE FINAL BIRTHMARK

2012

MY pale, pink skin was struck
By Sun-hot rod—but burned
By ill will or bad luck?
For answers I have yearned.
I feel it will not heal,
This bruise; 'tis burned in flesh,
A searing, schorching seal,
Its rawness staying fresh.
Yes, I can hide my hide
From every dilate eye.
But *I* will know I've lied
If ardor I retry.
 I know there's naught to do
 But live with Sun's tattoo.

TRANSFUSION

2012

I *love* this pulsing vein:
So blue, so faint, yet real,
On hand of prideful pain,
Denying *naught* I feel.
My airless blood shall ooze
Through arctic, heatless heart,
Which circulates these blues
Into my every part.
I *will* not pain negate,
Undo, defuse, deny
—Nor strangled vein sedate.
This vision's in my eye:
Two hands enjoined; veins red,
All shades of blue now shed.

LESS, LOVE, OR MORE

1994

OF lately, Love, I've wished you liked me less.
Yes—even your sweet scorn have I half-craved
To fill Life's void: to *part* of you possess.
If you me relished less and nearness waived;
'Twould prove you too perceived me thus, like most:
A glassy element, like air or ice
In half-way state; a speaking, unheard ghost.
To note not, so not to feel, with sense complies.
But with *you*, I'm real! Solid! Colored bright!
A *whole* before awareness—clearly seen!
A *comprehended* Man—who does delight
You too—as few! So why stay crownless, Queen?
For you to love me more—or me more hate—
Seems only way to end our half-way state.

THE FOUNTAIN

2012

“IN Sickness or in Health . . . ”
Those words, they once have palled
My hardy heart: by stealth,
An open road was walled
With icy, future fears
Of hours *by* a bed,
Accumulating years
I could have *spent* instead
On me—*no* vigor drained
By consecrating vow;
No dual life enchained
Through words which pain allow.
But *now* I see their Truth:
They hold Eternal Youth.

WHY RED, O ROSE?

1994

A BLOOD-RED Rose of rare design
I found, of hue exciting eye:
A deeper red than cherry wine,
Or autumn sun, supine in sky.
More sweet than wine, more bright than shine
—A color I could glorify!

I REVERENTLY bent to raise
Red Rose, its petals press to breast;
To transport plant to sheltered place
Where we'd have water, light—and rest
From toil in field we both would grace
—When *stung* the Rose arousing best!

A THORN, unseen on dark-green stem,
My finger ripped; I roundly bled!
Ought I the Rose—or me—condemn?
Could hue's allure have me misled?
Could blood-lust be its stratagem?
When read blood-red as signal red?

ON gloveless, gentle hand, a sore
From blood-red Rose that my blood drew
Now darkly glows and cools my core . . .
I will well love all Good and True
In Roses fresh I can't ignore
—Yet ever rank their hue with reddest Rose I knew.

ETERNAL WEALTH

1999

YOUR tears are gold to me—my well-earned wage
For labors never done for wealth or fame.
When dry marks on my solitary page
Can cause your eyes to moisten without shame,
It matters not if gleaming saline streams
Will taste of sweetest joy—or bitter woe.
What matters is how *strong* your soul esteems:
Your *mind* perceives—your *body* lets it show!
I then do you adore! And my own eyes
Must rest—as gratitude grows into bliss—
When I behold your cheek's wet, precious prize.
No higher wage can I command than this:
 That *you*, my dear, can *feel* with beating Heart
 What *I* have *thought* and wrought and caused through Art.



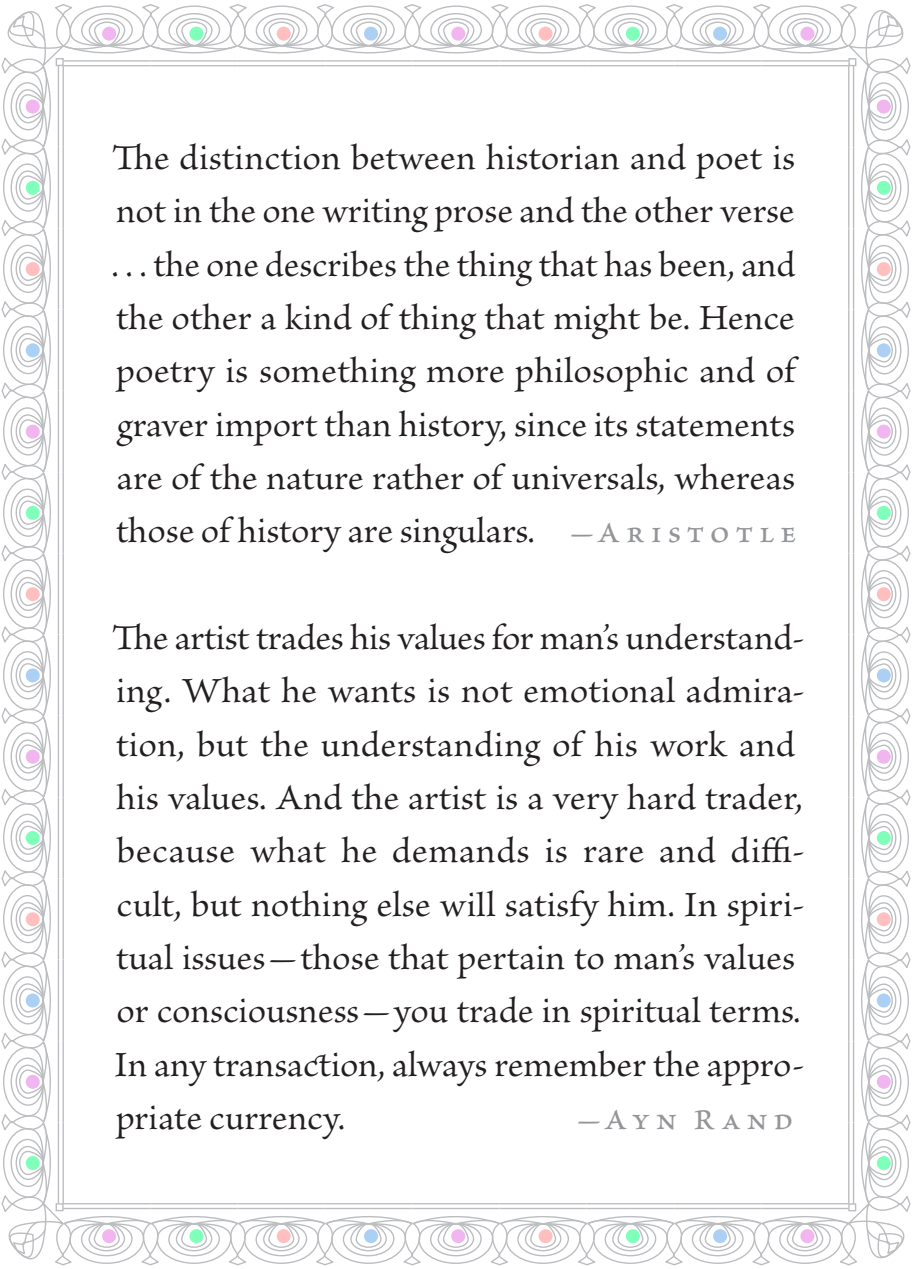


ABOUT THE AUTHOR

I was born in 1958 in Oslo, Norway, where I also grew up. At 17 I quit high-school and eagerly began working as a self-taught graphic designer, illustrator, photographer and retoucher in the Norwegian advertising and publishing world. At 40 I retired from commercial art to fully concentrate on my own intellectual and artistic projects.

In 1990 I began writing poetry in English—the language I love the most. I am fond of many of the older British and American poets, and especially of Keats and Poe. I despise “free verse”—and most “modern art” in general—for I regard these movements as vile, nihilistic assaults on all *genuine* artistic and human values. Hence, all of my poetry is proudly traditional in its form—if not in its content.

—KLAUS NORDBY



The distinction between historian and poet is not in the one writing prose and the other verse . . . the one describes the thing that has been, and the other a kind of thing that might be. Hence poetry is something more philosophic and of graver import than history, since its statements are of the nature rather of universals, whereas those of history are singulars. —ARISTOTLE

The artist trades his values for man's understanding. What he wants is not emotional admiration, but the understanding of his work and his values. And the artist is a very hard trader, because what he demands is rare and difficult, but nothing else will satisfy him. In spiritual issues—those that pertain to man's values or consciousness—you trade in spiritual terms. In any transaction, always remember the appropriate currency. —AYN RAND

THE 2,020 WORDS I NEEDED

*T*HIS, TO ME, quite fascinating list contains all the 2,020 words I have used in my poems, including their titles.

Yes, *I* think this list is fascinating—and I have the skills to produce this concor-

dance without too much trouble. So eat your hearts out, dear William, John and Edgar—for, as a graphic designer and ebook technologist—if not as a poet—I’ve got you all beat.

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KLAUS NORDBY sees the world through the eyes of an expert graphic designer, photographer and visual artist. He sees a world of light and shadow, black and white, bright and dark and, above all, a vivid spectrum of color. In POEMS GREEN PURPLE BLUE RED, his perceptual clarity serves him well as a poet.

In this collection of 56 poems, written over the span of more than two

decades, the silliness of GREEN, the depths of PURPLE, the sadness of BLUE and the amorousness of RED are wryly, thoughtfully, mournfully and passionately depicted. With words used as brushstrokes, each poem is a subtly painted landscape, as envisioned by a man who has mastered the skill of seeing the world through his own eyes.

—JOHN J. KAGEBEIN