

Buddhism, Hua-yen, Latihan and American Sentences

Sixty years after the legendary Six Gallery reading, the Buddhism of the Beats is well-known, having been cultural pioneers in introducing it to Western minds. Gary Snyder's Buddhism is best known of the Beats and well-documented. How Eastern Wisdom traditions by two of the other participants that night have influenced and play out in the spiritual life of the presenter will be discussed.

The presentation will have three main components:

- The spontaneous poetics/Hua-yen-inspired approach of Michael McClure.
- The “Meat Reason” (in McClure’s words) of the Indonesian Latihan Kejiwaan, in which McClure and Allen Ginsberg were initiated and which illustrates well the deep connection between spontaneity and spirituality &
- The American Sentences of Allen Ginsberg. A seventeen syllable form he created as a way to make American the haiku.

Sub-themes include correlations with other West Coast North American approaches to literary spontaneity (Duncan/Blaser/TISH), audio clips of exclusive interviews, and examples of the form Ginsberg adapted from haiku from the presenter’s personal practice of writing one American Sentence every day for 14+ years. How the daily practice opens the practitioner to “notice what he notices” to paraphrase AG. (A book of such poems is expected this summer, Apprentice House, Baltimore.) Examples will be culled from that. A performance featuring such sentences would be possible and collaborations with musicians usually work quite well given the approach is often to have the musician (interpret) the sentences musically.

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