



Anno Uno Die
aut septem

This is a large exercise that can be accomplished as a “day song” or as a “morning pages-type” exercise over a week or so. How to dig into one year, discover something about your personal mythology, about the culture in which your enmeshed, and see what realizations can burst forth.

Brenda Hillman wrote about 1967 from a 2018 perspective in the poem “1967.” In an 8 page, completely original poem *with fond smoke on her hands*, Brenda relates cultural differences between the two years, looking at age 67 back at the year she turned 16. Written in or around Berkeley, when the deaths of Aretha Franklin and John McCain were fresh, she weaves memory of her early womanhood/Vietnam-era with 2018’s cannabis dispensaries offering CBD skin cream and ageism, along the way pointing out her use of tropes such a cliché, antanaclasis and anadiplosis, as well as her personal touches like electrons and the minutes.

1967

—the thought of electrons
giving off their light & their glory
while every bit of otherness is betrayed . . .

i’m walking up Telegraph during speeches for
Aretha Franklin & John || McCain delivered
in eastern rooms where || caskets are displayed . . .

heading to Amoeba || for extra Aretha music,
stopping to ask || the young man
what is this & he says: it’s a dispensary . . .

& i say *oh for smoking pot*, — — & he says
not just for smoking, you can eat it, rub it on (big
pot smell puffing out, big contemptuous look from him

& fortunately i do not start a sentence *in my generation*
the wrinkles in my face
open their personal gates to the lyrical

fog allowing color—). || Electrons pour into
the brain till light || brings minutes.
Someday there will be a happy medium (cliché

of a happy medium looking into a crystal ball—
antanaclasis—) Many shops are closing now.
Is Amoeba Records doomed & if so, when?

Apple charges \$9.95 for music you can’t touch . . .
(Stop pausing, sunlight; there is nothing)

In 1967

A bit of research helps any poem and here using two well-known but disparate characters to anchor the poem grounds it. As do phrases that help us understand what motivated Brenda back in the day when she writes: "Poetry was II secret dope."

Ed Sanders wrote a whole book for the following year, 1968, as well as three books for the whole 20th Century in his Investigative Poetry/History in Verse style, also completely unique and also written from the perspective of a poet (& rock musician) active in the Vietnam anti-war movement. Ed was one of the leaders of The Fugs and they were not afraid of creating anti-establishment spectacles:

Ronald Reagan was then the right wing governor
of California

(and we would have bet big money
in the spring of '68
he'd never be president)

so I ordered Reagan's "Win just one for the Gipper"
football uniform from *Knute Rockne: All-American*
and a tuxedo from a Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers movie
plus an Errol Flynn D'Artagnon renaissance
puff sleeved outfit
with a sword.

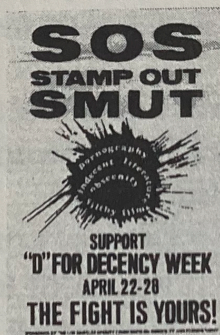
We went to some Warner Brothers sets
The place where they shot the TV series "F Troop"
with its famous falling tower
and to the sets of *Camelot*
Francis Ford Coppola's *Finian's Rainbow*
and, I think, *The Alamo*
(the Mission church you can
see on the back cover of the album)



Reprise supplied some limber-limbed damzels
who frolicked with us for the session
clad in scantness
and breasts exposed
in the F Troop air

We learned that the Week of April 22
had been designated as "D for Decency Week" in Los Angeles
by the LA County Board of Supervisors

We noted a groovy "Stamp out Smut" poster



We couldn't let that pass by without

some fun

We selected a Supervisor named Warren Dorn
for our focus

He had been particularly vehement

against erotic literature

We were scheduled to play a

large psychedelic club, with a rotating stage,

called the Kaleidoscope the weekend of April 26-27

The press release from the Kaleidoscope
was headlined:

**FUGS PERFORM MAGIC RITE
FOR WARREN DORN
DURING DECENCY WEEK**



".....The Fugs will lead a gathering of gropers, chanters, lovers and toe freaks in a magic ceremony to be performed in a 1938 Dodge, the back seat of which is an important symbol of the American sexual revolution.

"In the parking lot of the Kaleidoscope, where they are currently engaged, the Fugs will declare National Back Seat Boogie Week and will conduct a magic rite to sensually refreshen and testicularly juvenate Supervisor Warren Dorn...."

The club had rented a searchlight
the night of our rite
which beamed white tunnels
of psychelalic allure
up toward Aquarius

I doubt there are many people in the world, except maybe Pussy Riot, who would have the kinds of experiences like this one to write about once the fires of youth have settled a bit, but we all have stories, and your job is to relate yours, or at least put your whole being into the act of writing as an occasion of experience like Brenda Hillman and Ed Sanders. You could do it in a "day song" or you could write it serially, over 5, 7 or more consecutive days as a sort of "morning pages" exercise.

If writing the over-several-days version of the Anno Uno Die aut septem, you could learn something from Michael McClure's "Afterword to 'Portrait of the Moment.'"

I have finished "Portrait of the Moment," and each day's lines seem like a miracle, a miracle of writing and of consciousness, and each day that I re-read it, preparatory to writing the new lines, I tapped my foot to the music I heard in it.

I wrote sitting on this couch, with the sun through the windows on my shoulders or the sound of rain in my ears as the plum blossoms budded and then opened day by day in January,



February and March. It was written after walking through the trees and forests and streets of houses and with the calls of jays and juncos and redtail hawks, and with airplanes passing over...

McClure's poem is not about one specific year of his life, but is completely autobiographical and looks in part like this:

Wet streams over the feet
on the metal floor
with smell of Roquefort
from another coterminal dream
of the original dimensions
beaming PASSION into
meat,
muscular meat.
Reaching out into stars
and down into stars
inside of stars.
No collar on the worn shirt.
Poems about high heels and a baby
on velvet

in a flash of sun.
Grinning out from his little cap
and sweater.
Monkey in the barn with the horses
of instruction while the black
'34 Ford boils over in the snow
and big green-brown tadpoles
waft through the pool
over their shadows.
A dot of light in each shadow
proves it.
Taste of Butterfinger bars in
the bright hot sun, like
silver, and patterns of lichens
over the volcanic rock hills
in red yellow green blue brown
black. A LAUGH
OF
PASSION
with the nothingness of meat
expanding in all directions

as the extension of them.
Big blue-black jay imitating the hawk's
call.
It's

a
bluff

a
cliff

a
ledge

beating like a heart

from outside where it emulates
itself, limited only by senses.
Let there be ten trillion of them
and like light everything
is everything
in an illusion of infinite flatness
in all directions and writhing
most
lucidly
in meat
and doorknobs
of brass and face-shaped galaxies.
So quaint
so old-fashioned
as sweet and sour as Grandma's sex life
with clear wings of liberty and joy.
Just the air in the room outside the ears

is
EVERYTHING

To Summarize:

- 1) Write a poem about a year in your life.
- 2) Do research about that year before you start.
- 3) You can write in one whole day (day song) or write each morning over 5-7 or more days about that year.
- 4) It helps to have prompts for when you feel stuck. (Michael once said: “I get writer’s block 6 or 7 times a day.”) A Personal Universe Deck comes in very handy for these occasions.
- 5) You can write anything as long as you don’t show anybody.
- 6) Buy the spouse a night in a nice hotel or go somewhere else to write.
- 7) Use different approaches in this one long poem: haibun, acrostic, phrase acrostic, prose poem, mesostic, you can insert found text (with attribution) &c &c.

10:38am
23-JAN-2023
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