

William Packard's plays include THE LIGHT OF LIFE (1981) and THE KILLER THING (directed by Otto Preminger in 1980); his FOUR PLAYS (LIVING POETS PRESS) includes SANDRA AND THE JANITOR (published in BEST SHORT PLAYS OF 1971); THE FUNERAL (staged by The Dove Company, by Jose Ferrer, later translated and produced in Paris as CEUX QUI RESTENT); THE MARRIAGE and WAR PLAY (produced and directed by Gene Frankel).

William Packard has published several collections of poetry and prose, including THE CONDITION FOR ALL POETRY, GENIUS IS DESIRE, WHALES & TOMBS, TO PEEL AN APPLE, VOICES/I HEAR/VOICES, WHAT HANDS ARE THESE, and THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE. Of his FIRST SELECTED POEMS, 1977, James Dickey wrote: "William Packard's poems are firm, concise, and deep. He has a fine ear and a marvelous sense of imagery. American literature is praised to have him." Richard Eberhart wrote: "William Packard's poems are disturbing, powerful, full of dark truth. They are keen, immediate, display tactile energy, pierce through barriers to show many kinds of reality, and spread before us in generosity the zeal of a fearless poet. It is action poetry of acclaim, insight, total realization." Muriel Rukeyser wrote: "These poems are the acrid smoky lyrics of the love that haunts our nightwalking. They have the murderous drama of Ty Cobb, along with the laugh saving the suburbs - the fine life line. They are the life of the energy in the eye of William Packard." Packard's poetry has been recorded at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., and was used on the sound track of Tinto Brass's film THERMIDOR, spoken by Irene Worth and Ben Gazzara. In 1980, Packard was one of the American poets honored with a reception at the White House, and in 1983, National Public Radio devoted a program to his poetry.

His translations include a 1964 verse adaptation of IKKAKU SENNIN, a classical Japanese Noh play for the Kita troupe of the Noh in Tokyo (CLASSIC ASIAN PLAYS, PENGUIN); and in 1965, he completed an alexandrine translation of Racine's PHEDRE, directed by Paul-Emile Deiber of the Comedie-Française, produced off-Broadway with Beatrice Straight and Mildred Dunnock, which won the Outer Circle Critics Award (SAMUEL FRENCH and NEW DIRECTIONS); in 1970, he created the English sub-titles for the French film of PHEDRE starring Marie Bell, directed by Pierre Jourdan; in 1982, his translation of PHEDRE was presented at the Public Theatre in New York with Michael Moriarty as Theseus. In 1970, he completed a verse adaptation of THE WHITE SNAKE, a Peking Theatre opera (DAVID GODINE). In 1975, he translated FEMMES/HOMBRES, the erotic poetry of Paul Verlaine (CHICAGO REVIEW PRESS). Packard edited an anthology of erotic poetry, DESIRE (ST MARTINS PRESS, 1980), and an anthology of poems about death, DO NOT GO GENTLE (ST MARTINS PRESS, 1981). He has written the standard text on PLAYWRITING (DODD, MEAD & COMPANY, 1984).

Of his novel, SATURDAY NIGHT AT SAN MARCOS, Richard Eberhart wrote: "Swift would have relished the savagery of William Packard's satire on Writers Conferences, on people and on style itself, and Dante would have noted his deliberated hell without purgatory or paradise ... Viciousness of life is reported with faithful integrity. It is a book which is unique in its serial exploits of brutal comedy. Behind all these words is a novelist in masterful control of what he has to say." Leo Connellan wrote: "This book took guts enough to write ... With his first novel, as far as I'm concerned, Packard joins the very small group of outstanding American writers, perhaps Nathaniel West, Ken Kesey, Hubert Selby Jr., William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, William Packard ..."

William Packard graduated with honors in philosophy from Stanford University; in 1957 he received the Robert Frost Poetry Award to Bread Loaf, Vermont; in 1964 he succeeded Louise Bogan as Professor of Poetry at the Washington Square Writing Center at NYU. For many years he introduced the guest poets at the 92nd Street YMHA Poetry Center. He teaches classes in acting and playwriting at the H.B.STUDIO in New York.

William Packard is founder and editor of THE NEW YORK QUARTERLY, a national magazine devoted to craft and a cross-section of the best of contemporary American poetry. He also edited THE CRAFT OF POETRY (DOUBLEDAY, 1977), a collection of NYQ craft interviews with outstanding American poets including Ashbery, Auden, Blackburn, Creeley, Ginsberg, Kinnell, Kunitz, Levertov, Rukeyser, Sexton, and Wilbur.