

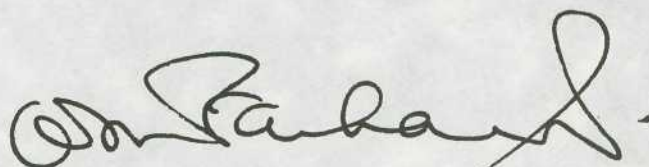
In answer to query of MISSISSIPPI REVIEW FOR WRITERS, for special poetry issue Spring 1991:

It has sometimes been said that contemporary poetry, however technically brilliant, is without a "statement" or "vision".

Well, I would hope so. God knows we've suffered through enough eras that were so hellbent on "statement" and "vision" that the poetry itself got lost in the wash. Too much emphasis on "statement" and "vision" leads to impotence and academization of Poesy, obfuscation of intuitive truth on more subliminal levels.

To say nothing of fact that Contemporary Poetry has been in desperate quest of radically new coordinates since 1945, has hardly had time or talent for "statement" or "vision". Modern man and woman have had to adapt, and adapt quickly, to monstrous developments in nuclear energy, ballistic missile foreign policy, urban dehumanization on Gargantuan scale, worldwide nonstop population explosion, rape of planet ecology, media exploitation imagery, rampant random crime and drug culture proliferation, AIDS epidemic so we are afraid to touch one another for fear of Virus annihilation. Acceleration of all these phenomena going on all around us simultaneously, we need "statement" and "vision" like a hole in the head -- our job as poets is to maintain inner pipeline to music of the Muse under these worst of circumstances.

At least Contemporary Poetry has accepted its Karma of evolving new forms out of all this god-forsakenness, what more could anyone ask?



William Packard