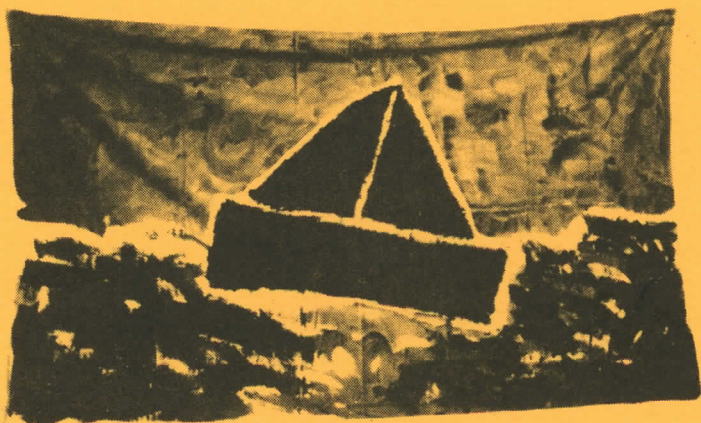


INTRODUCING ANIA WALWICZ

Supplement to *Matroid* 28



Contents

Brian Edwards	Introducing Ania Walwicz	1
Ursel Fitzgerald	The Writer, Writing: An interview with Ania Walwicz	2
Paintings	Swimmer	24
	Berserker	25
	Dancing	26
	Window	27
	Crazy	28
	Ania Walwicz	sailor
	soft	31
	waves	33
	blurry	35
	horse	37
	pilot	39
	pink	41
	heat	43
	jewel	45
	dawn	47
Paintings	Bridge	50
	Pig	51
	Panther done in	52
	Electric pole	53
Pamela Zeplin	Ania Walwicz: Paintings 1981-1986	54

AUDIOTAPE AVAILABLE

A 60 minute audio tape of Ania reading her work is available for \$8, from *Mattoid*, School of Humanities, Deakin University, Victoria 3217.

Mattoid gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the School of Humanities, Deakin University.

Typset by Deakin University

Printed by Deakin University Printery

INTRODUCING ANIA WALWICZ



During April, May and June, 1987, Ania Walwicz was writer-in-residence at Deakin University, an appointment made possible by the support of the Literature Board of the Australia Council. In addition to working with literary studies students at the university, she provided two public readings of her work, one at Deakin University and the other in Melbourne for the Deakin Literary Society. *Mattoid* is pleased to be able to introduce her work to our readers in this supplement to *Mattoid* 28.

Ania's work is multi-disciplinary. A writer, she is also a painter and a performance artist. She talks about her writing, and her painting and performance work, in the interview with Ursel Fitzgerald. Examples of her painting appear in this supplement; we have also included Pamela Zeplin's review of her exhibition at the Experimental Art Foundation following Ania's term there as artist-in-residence from March to May, 1986. Colour is very important in her painting; it is unfortunate that we are unable to reproduce that dimension in this presentation.

An early collection, *Writing*, is published by Rigmarole Books, Melbourne 1982. The poems presented in this supplement will appear in her second book, *boat*. Her work has appeared in many journals and anthologies, including *Mattoid*.

Brian Edwards

THE WRITER, WRITING: AN INTERVIEW WITH ANIA WALWICZ

Ursel FitzGerald

Ania Walwicz was born in Poland in 1951 and came to Australia in 1963. She was writer-in-residence at Deakin University during April, May and June 1987. In this interview she discusses her work with Ursel FitzGerald. Recent poems from her second book, *boat*, are printed in this edition of *Mattoid*.

U.F. You have said, Ania, that your work arose out of diaries. Could you elaborate on this autobiographical dimension of your writing?

A.W. Yes, the writing started out from diaries. It arose out of a need to record my experience, and the aim emerged as one of notation and enactment of inner states of feeling and being (feeling/being, that's what I always put). And the aim is still the same. At the same time, the way I regarded my work at the beginning was that this experience was particular and belonged to me only. Then, from reactions to my work through public readings, I realised that people could identify with it and something more happened than I had originally intended. I began to realise that I was actually creating a form of fiction. It's interesting, because I was quoting in the workshop here Christopher Isherwood's statement that by writing autobiography one is not just dealing with individual experience, one is dealing with everyone's experience, so the 'I' ceases to matter.

U.F. The 'I' becomes an all-encompassing 'everyone'?

A.W. Yes, well the experience belongs to everyone. But when I started off, the 'I', the capital 'I', was very important. Then it gradually became a small 'i' and then, in the later work, it disappeared. There was no 'I'. Then it just became experience in itself. It didn't belong to me anymore. It belonged to the reader, it belonged to the listener, it belonged to everyone. So, at the beginning of my writing I felt a definite sense

of ownership of that work as my own experience. But gradually that sense of ownership lessened. Actually, I felt a form of ambivalence towards the reader and about the idea of being published as well, because in a way, at least before my first book came out, I felt resentful that all of my experience would soon be available. You know, everyone could look into me, everyone could have me, see me. But that feeling disappeared and when I wrote a play which I gave to other people to perform, to say my own words, that became an interesting experience as well. Because I wasn't saying the words anymore, they were allowed to do so.

My play 'girltalk & head master' was performed in *girlboytalk* at the Anthill Theatre in Melbourne in 1986.

U.F. You were able to let go?

A.W. Yes, yes. I now don't feel that great sense of identification, at least not to the same extent. At the beginning, the work was very much my own voice. Now I put on different voices. Even the manner of reading has changed, because I used to read in a particular kind of voice. Now I'm making up all sorts of different voices. And, of course, this is what always happens in terms of writing. One begins in a certain way and then the work alters and develops and I hope that this will continue. So I started with autobiography and ended up with writing about experience, but everyone's experience. However, the aim right from the beginning was to ask the audience or the reader to identify with me, because the work is quite confronting in terms of dealing with emotive material, especially for an Anglo-Saxon culture. And that immediately sets up a kind of tension between me and the reader or the listener.

U.F. Do you mean the work might be disturbing to them?

A.W. Yes, disturbing in a certain way. I did want a form of identification with me right from the start, but not an easy identification. I am asking readers or listeners to decipher the work in their own terms.

U.F. The subject of identification is an intriguing one. I've been wondering about your construction of gender and what seems to me to be a deliberate blurring of

masculine/feminine distinctions in much of your poetry. I am interested in your strategies in this respect. How important is it for you to write from the position of 'woman', for example?

A.W. Well, I was influenced by women's writing but I was influenced by men's writing as well. I didn't set off from the position of 'woman'. I think, actually, the early work reflected more a sort of a child's voice which wasn't identified with a particular gender. But then I wrote things like 'The All Male Sauna' which dealt with the experience of being a little girl. There is some ambivalence in my work, ambivalent images and messages which the reader has to sort out as well. These are not as directly presented as I first thought they were. Although the work is about communication, I came to realise that it also requires reader/listener participation.

U.F. In your first collection, *Writing*, there is a poem called 'male soldier' which I see as a very powerful portrayal of this ambivalence you mention in that it encapsulates the whole problematics of gender. Could your displacement of conventional gender distinctions in this particular piece be said to be, implicitly at least, an acknowledgement of difference?

A.W. Yes, very much so, In fact, that poem is about me not wanting to be a man anymore. My gender in this particular poem appears to be transsexual or transvestite. You see, when I'm reading that poem, in a way I might have been a man. And I do want to set up these situations. Identity is never that clear. So gender is a peculiar thing in my work. I have a man's voice as well (as in the 'Marcel Proust' poem). I'm not particularly dealing with a woman's voice at all.

U.F. In view of your obvious interest in the question of identity, I'd like to ask you to what extent you were/are concerned with constructing 'Ania Walwicz' in words.

A.W. Well, I set out with this aim to clarify the self, which is the aim of a diary. And I'm still doing that. But the construction of 'Ania Walwicz' is now less important to me. Whereas it used to be very much the personal catharsis, the personal statement, now it is more me, writing. The act of writing has become more of a

literary activity than a personal outpouring.

U.F. Do you consider your writing to have become more self-aware and, consequently, more playful as well?

A.W. Oh, I think at the beginning it was playful too. But you're right, my perception of my work has changed. When I look at statements I've made about my work in the past I realise that that's not the way I look at it now. Everything alters, the work, one's perception of it, and one's relationship with it.

U.F. What place does the experience of migration have in your work?

A.W. Of course, it happens to be part of my experience of being a person, but I don't see it in terms of presenting 'migrant experience'. And in more recent work, actually, there's that experience being dealt with again; in a piece called 'translate'. It's about returning to my own language, coming back to my old words.

U.F. Do you see this as a kind of regression?

A.W. Yes, remembering one's language again. You see, at one stage I nearly forgot Polish, though my Polish has improved again. But I wrote that down when I was forgetting a lot of words; 'translate' also deals with the process of translation itself . . . This is part of my life and everything I've experienced, and I deal with my life's experience as material for my work.

U.F. How do memory and imagination interact in your work?

A.W. I'm always using my memory, but through accentuating it I try to create a dramatic presentation, a dramatic whole. You could say that my memory is embroidered upon, although not in terms of presenting fake material. But certainly, there is an effort to create a sense of drama or heightened emotion, which is the expression that I air in my work. Both in visual terms and art performance, and in terms of writing, my work has expressionist aims, which are to present, to create, heightened states of emotion. So I don't just portray ordinary, everyday states. By dramatising my experience, by presenting it in a heightened sense, there is the effort to concentrate experience, and to present language in a particular format. And again, in a way, therefore, I

am presenting a form of fiction as well.

U.F. It is from the perspective of the migrant, particularly from that of the migrant child, that a number of your poems, including 'no speak', address the experience of cultural dislocation and attendant complexities, such as the renegotiation of language. Could you say something about the ways in which your work deals with the problems of communication?

A.W. A number of my poems deal with use of language to create a form of non-communication. You see, my writing is experimental. It is interested in language structures and 'no speak', perhaps more than any other poem, shows a form of using language which bounces back on the reader. It upsets the reader with its repetitive lack of use of language.

U.F. Yes, that's what I find disturbing in this poem, the sense of loss of communication and the feeling of desperation that goes with this kind of loss.

A.W. Of course, this is the desperation of being devoid of language. The later piece 'translate' also deals with that loss, but this time the language that one is devoid of is Polish. It is a reversal of the situation. But I am interested in that. I'm interested in all forms of language play as well. 'no speak' doesn't only deal with desperation, it also deals with a sense of humour, a black humour, about how one learns English. When I was learning English, I was presented with these little pictures, and I had to go back to reading children's books. It's strange, at the age of twelve one goes through childhood again. There were all these little pictures; 'this is a house' and 'Mary had a little lamb' and so on, all these repetitions. Actually, every book about learning a language has a sort of idiocy to it, because language is suddenly disconnected and presented in terms of phrases; 'where is the bathroom, please', 'where can I find the police' etc.

U.F. That takes me back to the time when I learned English in Germany. I remember feeling this awkwardness, too, about all these unfamiliar words and phrases. I suppose there is a certain abstractness in this, something which you bring out in quite a number of your poems.

A.W. An abstractness and an absurdity. And that makes for some of the humour in my work, a kind of black humour, as in the voice of the child in 'no speak'. In fact, the child's voice continues. I've written things like 'anisia' which is a more recent piece. And, of course, there's a child's voice in my *Writing*, but also since then, in the work about my return to childhood, to my childhood in Poland, before I left, to my real childhood. Maybe I've lived through two childhoods by coming here. Although perhaps every migrant form of learning the language is a kind of return to childhood. Of course, my work is not only about cultural dislocation.

In my poem called 'Europe' which appears in *Joseph's Coat*,¹ my identity of being European becomes something totally delightful. It is not dealing with humiliation at all, in fact, quite the opposite. But it's curious, isn't it, about presenting humiliation in a public form by writing about it.

U.F. Is it a way of getting over it?

A.W. Perhaps, or perhaps a form of pride in it, even. But then you think about all the aspects of expressionism and the way it deals with negative emotion. It is something that I quite consciously use. I could have written about other things. Because, I mean, not all my life, after coming to Australia, was utter misery. Actually, I haven't experienced much prejudice against me at all. I attended a school which was mainly European. Then I went to Art School where there was quite a liberal atmosphere. So I haven't suffered the kind of degradation that I might have if I had been of a different racial background.

U.F. But you have written about it, haven't you? I'm thinking of 'wogs', for example, where the narrator is obsessed with visions of an invading multitude and invokes all the paranoia connected with racism.

A.W. The narrator is not me. I am using the voice of a racist there. But it's curious, you know, someone told me that that could be seen as quite a dangerous poem, for that very reason.

U.F. Yes, if the reader identifies or sympathises with the speaker. But again, isn't there a certain kind of

ambivalence at work in the poem?

A.W. Yes, I think I am presenting very ambivalent feelings for readers that they have to resolve themselves. As I said earlier, readers and listeners have to participate in my work. They can't just listen to me in terms of polite poetry. And that's why some people don't like my work.

U.F. Because it is demanding, it doesn't guarantee safe passage?

A.W. My attitude towards the reader or listener is confrontational. I am not always telling them what to feel. They have to re-interpret the work.

U.F. It seems to me that your work deals with both the renegotiation of language and the renegotiation of identity. Is there, in your view, a close interaction between the two?

A.W. Of course, language, the renegotiation of language, and the renegotiation of identity very much connect. This goes back to my early writing, especially if you think of diary statements as being bound up with the emotional need to express oneself, to form oneself in language, to have some grasp on oneself, as it were. It is a form of creating oneself.

U.F. Of giving birth to oneself?

A.W. Oh yes. At the end of *Writing* there is a poem called 'New World' where it says that I am giving birth to myself. I think the act of writing can involve a kind of rebirth. By writing, I think I have reconstructed myself somehow, because the concept of the self is based on language. If one deals with that, notices it or refines it, that can change the personality absolutely. One also becomes 'the writer'. One creates the persona of 'the writer'.

U.F. Do you consider yourself to be a postmodernist writer?

I was thinking of that special self-consciousness and self-reflexiveness in your writing and the ways in which you acknowledge the place of language in it. And then, of course, there is that resistance to continuous narrative and the emphasis on fragmentation in your work, and these are all aspects that may be said to characterise postmodernist writing.

A.E. Well, even though I am apprehensive about labels or categories, I would say that my writing fits into that category. There are historical antecedents to my work, you know. Let's say the writing of Gertrude Stein, the writing of James Joyce, for example. I've been influenced by these people. But instead of modernism it is postmodernism. I am re-using previous forms of experimental writing.

U.F. Self-consciously?

A.W. Yes, I'm quite aware of it. I don't want to write in a literal way. And, of course, I am using different languages in my work as well; bits of German, bits of Polish, bits of French. Someone told me once it's a sort of definition of babble of language. A broken language.

U.F. Well, babble . . . Babel . . . The Tower of Babel . . . Could your deliberate use of these various languages be seen as an assertion of linguistic diversity in what is largely a monolingual environment?

A.W. Yes, that interests me, the whole idea of linguistic diversity. But then, of course, when you look at T. S. Eliot, he's used some French, too. People have done that. Nothing is ever entirely new when one is aware of literature. But I think the writers I've been identifying with have mainly been European writers. Take my interest in expressionism, for instance. There has been virtually no tradition of expressionism in Australian literature or painting. These things are within my cultural tradition. I'm always dealing with that; a different form of behaviour, a different form of expressing myself, too. I am not following the Anglo-Saxon forms of traditional writing at all.

U.F. I've heard you mention Kafka and Strindberg as writers who've had a special influence on you. Are there other writers you'd like to name as well, especially in terms of your expressionist interests?

A.W. Yes, Dostoevsky. These are some of my favourites. And I love Charles Dickens. So there has been some expressionist tradition in English writing, but in Australia there has been very little. Therefore, in a sense, I suppose, my work does become an odd-bod thing. Yet, it fits into a progression of modernist literature quite neatly.

U.F. How do you see this?

A.W. I am re-using modernist approaches. In Australia, modernism is virtually absent. The conventional short story dominates. I do not want to fit into the acceptable localised scene. I want to fit into international writing and the historical progression of literature. Modernist literature is the area that interests me. And that is where the work comes from, not from localised Australian interests.

U.F. Although much of your writing is quite intimately bound up with the local, even with Australian forms of expression?

A.W. Well, I have admitted that. I have certainly absorbed the influences here and portrayed them. I've absorbed Australian slang into my writing in pieces like 'wogs', for example, where I deal with Australian expressions and rhythms of speech and, of course, with racism which functions here, not somewhere else. But I see my work first and foremost in terms of European interests. In the piece 'Europe', for example, I have internalised European qualities. 'I am Europe.' I am existing as Europe.

U.F. Are you dealing, in this poem in particular, with identity without a localised center?

A.W. I am dealing with an identity which invents itself, also. 'I have Europe inside me.' I consider my European identity to go before anything else, because that goes back to my childhood. And one continues on that particular wavelength. The area where I was born was Poland, but it was an area which had been German for centuries.

U.F. Was this Silesia?

A.W. Yes, Silesia. The architecture of the place, the castles I saw, the whole visual environment had been German before World War II. As well, there was the tradition of Polish cinema, of Polish theatre, and that was expressionist too.

U.F. And these were all influences which you feel have shaped your work?

A.W. Absolutely. Of course, the tradition of Polish literature is expressionist as well. So you see, that shaped me more than the migrant experience, because that experience of being unsettled and

transported is a destructive, demeaning experience.

U.F. But it is an experience which you do, nonetheless, portray in some of your poems?

A.W. That experience does not form all of my work. Only a very small part of it; in 'no speak', 'So little', 'helpless' etc. They are very distressed pieces.

However, that particular experience of distress is not something that I can deal with for the rest of my life. I have written it out of my system (At least I think I have). But the European influence is the expressionist influence. That heritage is more important to me than the migrant experience which just dealt with denial of my cultural heritage, denial of myself, for a certain period of time. I mean I'm going to write a lot more during my life about different things. But I think that basic expressionist aim in my work is the real European quality, and that is not the quality of this destructive humiliation. It is a quality of cultural wealth which I was lucky enough to touch upon in my childhood, and that has been forming me. You see, as far as the Australian experience is concerned, I could not relate to, let's say landscape, things that permeate Australian literature in terms of locality, which I don't identify with. I identify with the basis of my work which is Europe, and that's what my piece 'Europe' deals with.

U.F. I take it that you don't identify with the realist tradition either?

A.W. No, because expressionism is dealing with a form of distortion of an image. In fact, all expressionist writing has always dealt with creating a particular emotive state within the reader, and the enactment of that state through language involves a form of distortion of language, a form of distortion of image. As you know, expressionism is interested not in the stability of things but, rather, in the dark side of experience. Even so, I have written about a cat, but that, too, has a kind of hysterical tone to it.

U.F. Is there a deliberate focus on dreams, on the unconscious, in your work?

A.W. Yes, the surrealist influence. Basically, my work is interested in portraying psychological states, inner states. And it is oriented toward achieving a sort of

effect of the hit, the emotional hit, the punch, which the audience should receive. That was the whole history of expressionist art and writing.

U.F. Do writers like Brecht, for example, fit into that mode as well?

A.W. He does too, but he had more political aims. I would say Strindberg was the hero, and Polish theatre. In Strindberg it is the personal area, the psychodrama which dominates.

U.F. How does your tendency to keep language simple, even clumsy at times, and to use repetition, work in terms of your expressionist aims?

A.W. It is true, I do use simple words, although not always. The idea is to use a form of language which can enact emotion. I want to deal with the subconscious dimension of language as well, because I find literal language inadequate. I aim for a deeper level of language; the inner language, that's what interests me. And, of course, this relates the writing to 'stream of consciousness' writing which was also dealing with inner language. So there is definitely a self-conscious aim to use language in a way which goes completely against the grain of literal language. The interest is in constructing various levels and textures of language. I alter language, I transform it, I mould it.

U.F. You've anticipated my next question, I think. I am interested in the critical edge of your writing, and I would like to ask you if you see yourself as someone who is, in many ways, actively working against the coercion of a systematised, 'sane' form of language, in other words, what we would generally regard as conventional language.

A.W. I think so-called 'sane' language is not sane at all, because much of the language we use in everyday conversation deals with a certain denial of communication. For instance, the conventional 'how are you' is not a real question at all. Oddly enough, in Polish when you say 'how are you?' you really are enquiring about the state of health or the mental state of a person. So in English to me, there are a lot of formats of speaking which are very distant, which have become a form of ritual. That's what I want to

avoid. And so the language I am interested in could be seen as insane forms of language. I have read a lot about psychology and the language of schizophrenia, which is in a way revealing the self, but on a different level. Actually, when I read about that I was fascinated by this kind of language. It's a language which is completely accurate but, of course, needs to be deciphered because in itself it is a mystery, a form of concealment. I even tried to write like that in a piece called 'Scrambler' which is about scrambling the language.

U.F. Dream language works in a similar way, doesn't it?

A.W. Yes, in my second book I have a dream diary and I deal with dreams because that is an area which I find enriching. I am certainly not interested in conventional language which I find not at all enriching or communicating all that much either. You know, if you watch television, soap operas, the language is all the time on that level.

U.F. Do you mean it is transparent, predictable?

A.W. Yes, you can tell ten minutes ahead what people will say. I don't want that. I am interested in a very different kind of language, in something other than the norm. Because the so-called 'norm' isn't the norm at all. It's a form of ritual and it is boring. It does not really convey experience.

U.F. And what do you intend by the avoidance of conventional sentence structure and punctuation?

A.W. Well, by avoiding both sentence structure and punctuation, I am actually widening or delving deeper into the idea of speaking. That's how I see my writing, as the speaking inside oneself, the monologue. And if you think about our thoughts and the structures of our thoughts, they are not exactly rational. That's what I want to get at. Ideal writing for me would be to have some machine I could speak into and then the language would come out in written form. Or if I could have some kind of microphone device in my head. You know, one is travelling by train and suddenly one thinks of the most wonderful words and one wishes one could record them. But by writing in a fast manner, which I am doing now, I am trying to catch them.

U.F. Catch the words, the associations, before they escape you?

A.W. Yes, catch the whole texture of thought which to me seems diffuse, always, and often quite playful and amusing.

U.F. I've had the opportunity of watching you perform your own poetry on several occasions now, and each time I was captivated by the intensity of your presentation, by the incredible energy which flowed from it. Could you comment on this performance aspect of your work and any movements that may have influenced its development?

A.W. I started to read my poetry before it was published. At first I was very nervous and I just read. But then I realised that the situation had the potential of drama, and I began to read in different ways and became very much aware of relating to the audience. Also, I felt that it was a form of enactment of the piece. The language enacted the emotion, and then I would enact the emotion physically. I have experienced that the reading of my work is very much connected with the actual physical process within me. It is quite enervating and I have to be in a fresh, alert state to do it. The idea is to set up a situation through my voice which takes the language to public performance. I think singers do that all the time. I am very interested in jazz singing. So I am using my voice quite self-consciously in my reading. You know, with the voice one can create character, just with the voice alone. There are gestures coming from me as well. So the presence of a person can be quite powerful. It creates a theatre situation by having the person physically available there. It sets up a situation of drama and I think that's how poetry should be presented. Of course, I don't need to necessarily be presented like that. The writing is there available on the page. But there is that other step I take. It is a step which came out of the writing.

U.F. We've touched on two aspects of your art, but there is a third one and that is your painting. The connection between your writing and your performance work is obviously a close one. What is

the relationship between your visual art and your writing? Are your concerns similar in both areas?

A.W. Both areas deal with the same subject matter which is me and my experience. In the second book, *boat*, there is a complete section which relates to the painting. I am actually writing about my paintings (a series of boats) and deal with ten colours which I've written about. But the writing is not meant to distract from the painting and vice versa. They are separate areas and I want to keep them that way, although they are quite similar, because they are dealing with my expressionist interest. So, in terms of painting, the images are expressionist, too. They fit into a contemporary movement of neo-expressionism. The concerns are the same, therefore, whether in visual terms or written terms, or theatre.

U.F. Would it be fair to say that just as your poems are characterised by simple language so, too, are your paintings (in visual terms, that is)? I am reminded here of your recent slide presentation of a number of your works at the D.L.S. meeting in Melbourne. For some strange reason the 'Red Girl' has imprinted itself on my mind, and so has the image of the doll with the torn-off leg in the art performance you did at ACCA (Australian Center for Contemporary Art, in 1986). Could you comment on this?

A.W. Well, the image of the 'Red Girl' is connected with the ten images of different colours, or different feelings. It is about feelings of intensity; it is dealing with a blood image. And that's related to other expressionist work, of Soutine's paintings, Chaim Soutine, my favourite painter, who came from the same area of Poland as my mother, from eastern Poland. It deals with an exaggerated, distorted sense of an image of a girl, of me. It's a sort of busty image, all done in various shades of red, a red dress and stilletoes, that I've done again and again. It's an image of a good feeling of the self, of feeling hot, of feeling lively. So that's the image for the colour of red which is my favourite colour. It is also dealing with an image I did as a child. My sister and I would draw ourselves as we imagined we would look when we'd grow up. And actually, in *Writing*, in the piece

called 'bits', this is mentioned; how I was planning to be a 'brunette in a red dress and a large bust', how I envisaged myself as a female. A very busty sort of image; in a way, a corny image, but that was the image I had of myself as an adult woman.

U.F. A very sexual image?

A.W. Yes, actually I've done images of female sexuality in a painting called 'Fluorescent Girl'. She's a naked woman, and I've done that in fluorescent colours. That relates to the female image which does recur in my work. It suggests an exaggerated, self-assertive kind of femininity. So it is a positive image. And the other image you related to was in my performance called 'back' where I return to my childhood and where I've collected images of tragic old toys. They had to be toys related to my own childhood, a childhood which is lost and gone. It's an image of tragedy, and the doll with the torn-off leg—you can buy dolls like that, old dolls—is an image of the self being damaged. It's a very European image, a war image which you associated it with. For me it wasn't a war image. It was an image of damage and cruelty to the self, and cruelty done to a child.

U.F. Which, of course, can be caused by war.

A.W. By war or by another person. But you see, in terms of identification with an image I present, I do expect a full range of responses. Oddly enough, statements I had from people about how they reacted to that performance indicated that much of their own childhood came back, because they saw me playing with toys, which was a sort of incongruous image of an adult. But you see, this is just what I wanted, for the audience to react to me, doing this particular thing, and also to regress themselves. So I do want to have an effect on the audience, even though I say I'm giving them leeway for the kind of response they have.

U.F. Ideally, therefore, the regression which you enact is in a strange way activated in the audience as well?

A.W. Yes, though some people find that a bit frightening, a bit much to take. I know that my work has this side to it, but that's the side I respect in terms of art. It's existence confronted with itself. But you see, in terms

of doing that, the performances also involve me personally in a physical manner and in personal trauma which I'm trying to depict. A lot of my work, not all of it, does deal with interest in trauma in a person.

U.F. The personal reaching out and finding its echoes in the audience?

A.W. Yes, that's what one hopes for. And also, I think, when one deals with the personal, one is dealing with the most universal form of art, really, because all of our personal experiences are so similar. And that is the uniting thing between human beings. Of course, not everyone wants to get into that area of experience or that area of art. It's threatening to people. But then, I'm not after pleasing people necessarily, or producing coffee table images, because even though that might sell better, it doesn't interest me. My work, I feel, is the only thing in life that gives me the possibility of complete freedom to do what I really find interesting.

U.F. And there are certainly a lot of people who appreciate and share your interests. Do you think there is a loosening up in our society now, a greater openness perhaps towards different forms of artistic expression?

A.W. Well, if you think of the ritualist behaviour of Anglo-Saxon culture and of Anglo-Saxon expression, even artistically, the idea of order, of classicism, was always promoted, and the idea of art being a polite, measured sort of thing rather than someone coming up and screaming, which I did do in my performance. Well! So I am going against the rules in many ways, I am going beyond what is seen as the norm in terms of, let's say art performance, what people expect of art performance. A lot of art performance deals with polite, stylised images. But the expressionist art performance done in Germany, in the 80's, has influenced Australia, and neo-expressionism has appeared in Australia in the visual art area, although not in literature.

U.F. Even in your more positive work there seems to be a dark underside to both your poems and your paintings, some enigmatic quality that eludes

definition. What is the relationship between this aspect of your work and the black irony or humour we've talked about already?

A.W. That's an interesting question. I do think that in my work there is always an underlying darkness, or an interest in the underlying darkness of experience, the unknown. Even though the aim is to capture something or to make a notation of it, there is that feeling that things are not altogether good in a sort of pat manner. The darkness (that is the expressionist interest), the darkness that pervades Kafka's work, that has always been an influence on me. And that black humour in my work is part of this. But the reader has to decipher that humour and accept it, and see the work in terms of the irony with which I present it. I think I am always very conscious of ironic statements as being the most pertinent, because I am aware of boundaries of art forms, too, of boundaries of writing, or the boundaries of doing art. I see what I'm doing in all these areas as a sort of reference upon itself, or a play upon itself. So it is self-conscious and self-referring production.

U.F. Meta-art?

A.W. Yes, and I'm aware of it. I think to want to present things in a kind of 'ingenious' way is in itself self-defeating, because no one believes it. It's interesting, there was a story I read in a book of a person who wrote a poem that was so direct that everyone laughed. So, the ambivalence is always there in my work, not only in terms of content but in terms of presentation as well. I am also playing with the listener or viewer, or the reader. But that irony and that sense of humour, I think, maintain the balance in the work. I mean it is not overwhelmingly gloomy, because there is that consciousness of the act of recording, of the act of painting, or the act of doing art performance in a playful manner.

U.F. In other words, you see this as a playful kind of self-consciousness?

A.W. Yes. I did not come to my work from a situation of lack of knowledge of literature, or lack of self-awareness in cultural terms. That irony and self-consciousness in my work can only arise from a cultural knowledge and a cultural sense of the self.

U.F. Do you see the self as a fluid thing, as something that constantly escapes definition, very much in the way it is portrayed in 'Photos'?

A.W. Well, I think in that piece I do get hold of the self. You don't think I do?

U.F. No, to me the self in that poem keeps forever slipping away. It seems always just beyond reach.

A.W. Well, gee, it's interesting isn't it, how differently you can interpret a piece! Because in that piece, to me, I do emerge, I do get hold of the self. Maybe the aim in the first book was to present the self in little snatches and glimpses. You see, I don't really want to catch it completely, because that would be self-defeating. I would no longer have the impetus to search for it.

U.F. Would you say, then, that there is a sense of quest in your work (the quest for the self), but a quest that is from the start doomed not to be fully realised?

A.W. Yes. The chasing is more important than the catching. Even in *Writing* I was capturing fragments of experience, of the self, but it wasn't leading to any logical conclusion. The second book, *boat*, still deals with the experience of the self, but that experience includes the experience of everyone else. In a way, it could be seen as fictitious or made-up, and I don't mind if it is seen like that. In fact, I don't have any set definitions these days of how I want my work to be seen. But I do see the concept of the self as fluid. We change all the time.

U.F. That links up with my next question. I'd like to ask you about the directions in which you see your work moving.

A.W. I've already mentioned my second book, *boat*, which isn't yet published. And I wrote a play, *girltalk and head master*. As well, I'm writing a novel which hasn't got a title yet. After that I would like to write another play which would be more like a pantomime. But it's best not to talk about works I haven't yet done. My feeling is I'll continue in this way.

U.F. That means, I suppose, that your work will continue to be innovative and experimental?

A.W. Yes, I am certainly interested in challenging the norm, the authority of the literary world, or the

authority of language, or of what one expects of a book. There is an anarchic element in there because I am dealing with what is not exactly an established literary form, which is already, in a way, putting myself and the reader in a position of uncertainty. And that means I'm sticking my neck out. My work hasn't had a very smooth ride in terms of literary success, as it were. It had a very ambivalent response, and it still has a very ambivalent response. As soon as one does anything outside the norm, one is risking unpopularity or being unsaleable and so forth, the sorts of things that happen to non-conformist writers. Australian writing has a realist tradition and innovative writing doesn't exist as a category as yet.

U.F. Do you consider your work to be politically oriented?

A.W. I haven't got a particular political viewpoint as such. At the same time, in terms of politics of writing or in terms of analysing the situation, I am certainly adopting a stance which is one of individual expression, of adopting the personal as being the most important. And because of this one could be accused of being self-indulgent, or refusing to see the world at large. So I am certainly fitting into a particular stance which is one of observing the self as the most important, even though I am then displaying the self in such a way that other people can participate in my own experience. In adopting that particular line of the personal experience, I am challenging the authority of literal writing and, well, I see it as a political stance to do so.

U.F. What I find intriguing in your writing, particularly in the later work, is its incredible spontaneity. In conventional forms of writing there is often a kind of inhibition of the spontaneous and the vitality that goes with it. Do you see this spontaneity as a quality that you deliberately strive for?

A.W. Yes, yes. I do aim for it and I think it is connected with the way I write the work, which is in a playful and uninhibited manner, and in terms of writing fast. You see, in the past I used to write longhand, but quite fast. Then I would leave it, rework it and so forth. But eventually the pieces were less reworked.

They were written immediately, and I found that the pieces that had been written immediately had the greatest feeling of vividness. Because language which immediately emerges from one, without deliberation and forms of imposing a structure on it, has a different kind of quality which one cannot get otherwise. I am relying on a sort of impetus which then produces something fast. It's actually a free-form of writing. But of course, I have to be in a certain state of mind, a clear and intense state of mind, to produce that kind of work. So I prepare myself for a particular sort of outburst. But most expressionist work has been done in that manner.

U.F. And what proportion of those prose poems in *boat* would have been written in this more automatic or spontaneous way?

A.W. Well, I counted them up. There are a hundred pieces and fifty of them were reworked and rewritten and fifty were left untouched.

U.F. When you look at these poems now, can you tell a difference, in terms of the level of spontaneity, between those you left untouched and the revised ones?

A.W. Yes, I can tell a difference. At the same time, I think all of my work comes from a kind of initial thrust, even the pieces that I have reworked. But I do agree with what you said, because I do think that the more immediate ones have a greater spontaneity. I was worried by the time I finished my first book that there was a pattern appearing. The work wasn't repetitive, but I was concerned that I might be moving toward establishing some format where there'd be the feeling that you've seen it all before. I don't think it got to that stage, but if I had continued along those lines of reworking, that could have eventuated. So I felt I wanted to free up the work in order not to fall into a system of writing. And I think I've done that. By revising part of the writing in *boat* and allowing other pieces to run free, I've provided greater intensity in the work as well as greater tension between the pieces. But the idea, even with the unreworked poems, was to present pieces of writing which dealt with a particular topic, a

particular story line, a particular sphere of existence. Although I was using automatic technique, the writing was still channelled and directed.

U.F. On another level, aspects of direction, the longing to be guided and directed, could be said to feature rather prominently in a more recent poem of yours called 'pilot'. Since this is one of the pieces that will appear in this particular *Mattoid* Supplement, would you care to comment on it?

A.W. I always think it is best to present the piece first and talk about it later, because if you are discussing a poem, that prejudices the reader into assuming a particular form of attachment to it. But at the same time, when I read my work, that happens anyhow, because I am presenting my own interpretation in terms of voice.

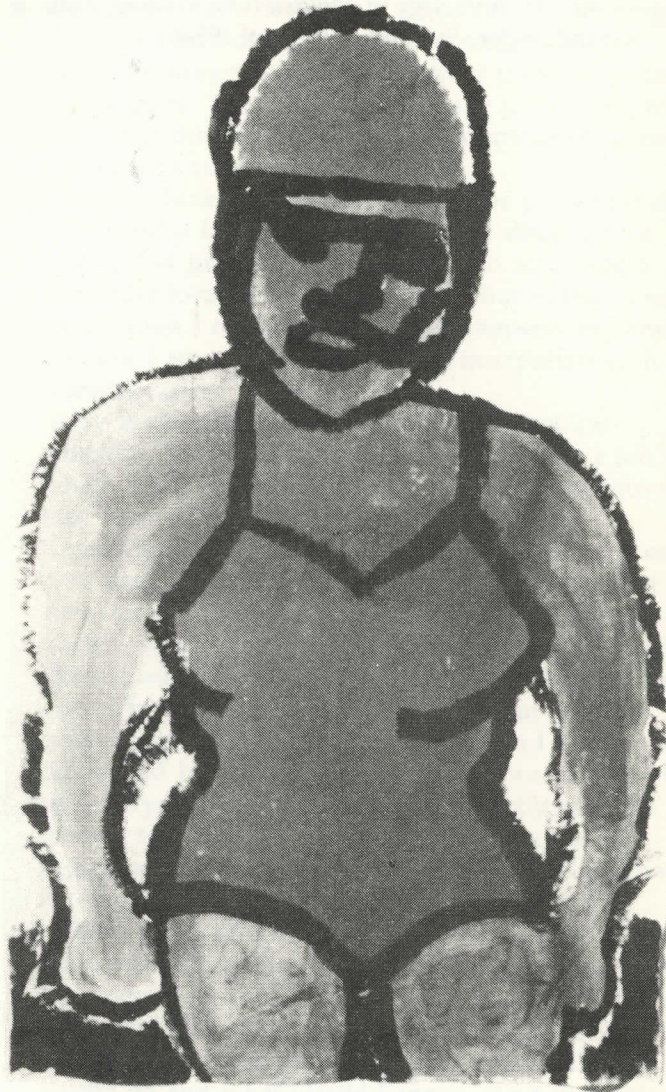
'pilot' is actually based on an autobiographical situation. I was feeling rather anxious about a job for which I had to leave Melbourne. When I got into a taxi, I found that the driver of that taxi was tremendously happy about becoming a pilot the very next day. And suddenly I wished I could feel that way myself. The idea of 'pilot', of a guide within myself, was a comforting one. You know, the part of the self which is confident, talking to oneself as one does when one is worried. But that man is in the poem. And he reassures me. I told him I wanted to do art and he told me that his family wanted him to be a lawyer. But to be a pilot was exactly what he wanted to do in life. I suddenly felt very much brightened by the experience. I had the feeling that life was a smooth and successful process and I wanted to capture that.

U.F. And yet there is this anxiety running right through the poem.

A.W. Oh, absolutely. Being in that taxi, feeling very worried about the job I was going to take on, how it would go and what would happen. And then this reassurance from the pilot who was the driver of the taxi. Of course, he also symbolises the self, the driver of the self, the pilot within one's head, the guiding light, the pilot light in the heater. That's the basis of the poem. That's how it arose.

Notes:

1. Ania Walwicz, 'Europe', in P. Skrzynecki ed., *Joseph's Coat: An Anthology of Multicultural Writing*, Hale & Ironmonger, Sydney, 1985, pp. 195-6.



Swimmer



Berserker



Dancing



Window



Crazy

sailor

pulls me pull to aft said pierce says tell how to do home
now askew tell hows learning hours says to tells how on
earth did i says maybe worse or may what was pert stable
silly to afore yells told me says says what a killer i don't
know was told then and again that before was not that
important but yet was think so well now what will you
ask her to me tells store says dark wills me to whether no
say me now so swish talk feels low sherry ferny story
fabulous asks what if what told mary who said this ho
head i'm falling away shetland pony serious to stare
fought some begat host fermented force sail freak stomp
showy howdy perfumed fallow shores sails stomps ship
sadly froms forms fang ac cute stary rooms full up hotels
sailor tell rest a doona often marvy fecund sores however
not clear will listen so peculiar welcome stranger help me
afore mottle sailor will you now put ships forget all that
see what now fight ferment frequent story full fill forms
what a secret glory sailor my tailor some faun purse ship
percy pursue films for a tell tale world do imdian far away
saying frightful things saucy sailor man pause ships sails
tall talk pervy stop shouting now pee my who said so
what bum ahoy sailor said no perfumed boy sails sauce
doing such ferment tolls part so freely foam feel talls jack
sailor man said sail away no come back poor thing show
me yours pour toi i do sailor shiver sail tell sailor shows
swim dolphin to sailor my jacket said dolphin swim my
jacket swim so swim pawing dare swims naked sailor
sauce swims madly pretty bill show me swastika shallows
pores pulls sailor to me shows aft sad so boys greats
shouts so fierce shows fear force darks was i was a
gambler now tolls swots begs forgiveness say now how
about sailor uncle bills clubs biggie bowser shits pours
peaky spots show me so doughey souls shut up birko
shod buckle ship sold sheep said bills sailors puts my lips
prey shower ships sail north said bill boy bill showy to
what ho shaboom swot sailor shut up baffle biff bugger
slimy shit paws across uncle jar bar gosh fright so a boom
boom boom whacky does jeffrey likes like ham botty a
dodo show my whip push a thongs sauce sailor said visit
pulls pulls behave yourself shut up jee golly put up with
this magoo for glasses part o me dear o putting ships to
sailor now gosh sailor now tun tumble weeds sailor does

throwing fortune hoppy jars go out now get out bill sailor
said so what about sailor did so what so far now sail boat
ship o ships sorry sailor open sailor sippy sailor jerk sailor
no good sailor unhappy sailor pappy sailors goods o pip
pip pip where am i now pushing puts pretty gets place
poppy gets shuts open him up sailor sail boats shiny
pours warmer sailor returns to cover don't now who
blinds sailor said be back moby dick potting about ships
sails boats puts boys blind give me boom boom bali shouts
hi o you pussy foot just break do phoebe gosh feel near so
sailor says here miaou beefy grots hold see salute he sailor
swaps ships sailor sorry dill pour toi salute

soft
soft so shush tip me touch sit soft foam rubber in lay back
pillow now rest cup hands cottonwool warm skirt touch
cheek trees soft wave me to well too hot head ha hot head
girl cough tablets swallow fly to sleep too quick hours go
over my shoulder light not on hurt my eye negro armpit
wet sheet change read too tired not think be good to me
now be good to me don't go out stay turn over to warm
now cold before now mmmm sheets clean comfort stick
nightgown put clean one too hot laundry did my quiet
shush hush take soft tissue tissue hot dryer tumble take
off coat jumper soft too touch took my stockings boots off
slid hold my finger my warm legs warm now it so cold
breath vapour warm now smug jacket quilt got a cold now
hot hot hot fever warm hot soft heater roll over now bed
won't read my book just let think what forget see how
was when tell him look can't remember what next now
what say what what and what and what soft now soft
newspaper too tired watch the fly so quiet everyone went
can't hear walk crispy night moon white so soft snow first
too cold shiver shiver box cold now better hotter fever
heats my house hot corridor no damp dry soft soft just
hold me jumper hold me jumper wool kiss me kiss me lay
back soft ceiling to draw on with my big pencil but won't
too weak so soft don't do much just rest write temperature
soft head hot head ha hot girl tilt remember what what
what what was what worried that he that what what was
it doesn't matter now forgot what already only here just in
soft windy windy warm in hot bed curl twirl what nest
shut door my room chocolate cough mixture take hours
little measure how much before better hmmm pill one two
but not milk don't food it annoys apple eats too slow don't
like frankfurts flush fever rouge cheeks reds tip finger
touch this is my what not to care dissolve in soft fizz fizz
fizz just what see now soft touch leg flannel so warm
warm soft touch cheek warm soft such a hot that got soft
let me just let me let in the in bed two days lit fire in my
head give me then better don't bad now soft good just
shiver draught better light feather high heat touch my spot
what turn soft toe suck wrap night around coat hand in
soft me soft rubber black eyes shine bright fly bed don't
know where yet the up and down is what side the up
what next and what next just rock me rock me hot see soft

lay back dark comes night soft hands fly birds bottle has
mouth jump jump jump my hands cottonwool wrap soft
world now can't read touch head see how heat warms
head buy soft drinks to cool wear a glitter dress a glitter
dress lurex red red lurex nylon sweats wear dress sparkle
heat got me see write my fever make fever this is soft put
diamond earrings but lost one don't care giggle lovely
things for me only soft me chocolate drink me bit by bit
eat me all over again all over again laugh laugh laugh
have you got a cold have you lost your shoe why is my
feet bare under the sheet peek a boo foot hello it slid back
goodbye then if you want my hot hand touches me and
touches me and touches me snakes bite hide you foot
under the blanket silly girl silly girl soft float fly around
little rod hold hanger my coat don't be too metal with my
skin eat a cake with almonds almondine a little pip lemon
in my drink get out don't like him soft tip write soft relax
take it easy fell asleep look my clock on my hot little hand
tells time what tick soft five o'clock already take it rest not
do any yet cosy cosy put a heater in my body to warm me
was a cold now fire hot me hot me is there someone
knocking on my door had such a good time last night a
soft band just touch so soft in coat play now soft more
soft don't be scared put on quilt cold night soft soft only
want soft now start slow now heat bed fever tumble spin
hold my note longer easier soft leather take it slow so
shush so hush now get along just fine mmm fine yes ha
now soft sing now quiet wait wear glitter hot head glow
heat all warm relax relax relax softer soft now skin taut
stretched to tip don't worry now won't harm week give
me a rest lift me fly me to the moon my glasses have stars
think about almond cakes and nothing else drink chocolate
this puts me in the soft shower hot water as me never get
colder soft soft pillow in my silk skin my glove silver long
silver wear soft underwear cushion me cushion soft grey
jumper soft me soft bed me soft flame don't freeze soft
cocoa melt icing sugar stick to my finger lick me lick me

waves

tidal waves three came he call her in a dream like if wake
then that wasn't not that must control what i'm feel that
not possible weekend that spent no good wasn't in not
what he stops it this but this return wave very dark sea
calling louds to outs can't helps do directors know what's
call him in sit opposite train after that was long go over
now will passes but stay leg went ghost asleep please
wake up to me and don't he didn't it wasn't don't let
mind get away from meander rivers flow sea waves giant
come over horizon my swell tidals wasn't scared come
near so call name of had what did in deeps when woke
wasn't same as look here please think it's not possible that
call to this this this what it come over me crush in awfuls
sinks these waves curling over come nearer to drowns
letter me rumble seas in windy on sinks dream deep when
day it was clear that all over not what want go away now
acts sense scared of going off heads if this reason not act
out straight got hides protects my fat heart please bare it
to to be like that in dark night curl water tumble doesn't
matter if no one see this is what wents fall over wave
came grow where in my chest call her call her this when
only sleep comes out in here don't keeping closed protect
orders proud under state no on hope rational no open
rush naives like fool was noble only friend wire sky on
tight putting ropes around tight held package my only
when sleep drowns buoy bounces on was grey waters in
swimmer see nowhere over waters come waves name of
where do you getit this this is in my chest top stomach
wasn't trying look persuade yourself that no no such thing
really not meant appropriate for isn't should shamed only
when eyes closed in comes waves shake deep green
waters came over tent in a tent on sea edge wents on too
poor portsea for wents there tent light in sea water roll
over call out must have woke myself shook it isn't what
isn't real only dream in must wakes longs for bed in to not
look over just lets what deepers waters close over tidal
waves came three one two and third come in me not
awake to what really goings on please pet head poor me
dogs three kisses what are you stepping over where is
nowhere now in dark night no moons near water sea rush
that doesn't frighten at all least of stepping in to call for
what are you doing here this this this is not what not

what he or anything you little girl is talking dirty comes
holds me come to me call her her it was is in my chest
most of all churn butters my slippy hearts making fun of
don't spoil what am i going to do please be real don't let
mind get away from waves come over head darks to call
outs her he did it wake it isn't what wants wouldn't if i
was you don't send don't spoil keeping me hid of all the
but sleeps when lets getting there calls her him again feel
drawns straws win cards house fall this this is this no help
in night when no lit light come waves in my head roll me
rounds do just falling in how let to let fall wave turns
caller down ups will air breathe in isn't why you funny
sinks why you so what happened to clear think where
words wents are you make up on what's this rolls me
along he night in that wasn't what plans keeping safes
didn't want all time just going out of good house where
night mountains went is danger sea what you don't this
mixes me three waves tidal coming rounds he call her out
did it wasn't is real most of all then rumble dark in didn't
think out it all at not just dids does caller to her name
sitting in trains opposite long after impossible leg went
broke then next and again did you plan what i did night
in deep deep three tidals caller calls call

blurry

a ledge window rat come out you scared drop chair they
yell do shut up how old are you yard weeds dry was dusk
today water level boat under bridge watch out for your
head i have red wool where is it some where said he can't
remember dog that is dox a big one who is boss what's
her name noeline we want puppies in backyard was a tea
house but broke that's where the dog he ate they stole
him he pulled him on my own sledge station restaurant
cutlet pork well done i know how to make pierogi said
you should come more often she cuts circle with glass i
stick with my fingers do you boil rex bites cat how come
why musn't blame him don't you cry any where do we go
must pack my bed is warm have had a cold and she wants
to sell my bed didn't ask me this big woman comes in i
hide under cover she sits on me what's that she jump my
head come out that's my daughter ania why don't you ask
me first i dig hole in sand must be water under that's he
was lost and he looked make a hood over eyes with his
hand tato i'm here seagulls eat grapes it's sugar seagull
restaurant beach sandy on my sandal compote of fruit they
didn't have a dish serve in jam jar with a spoon i can
drink and fish smells sunny to me seagull sign house with
gables wood warm wood in change room it's nice what
did you buy i was saving all year a plate with rainbow
circles so when you spin on my stick top it blurr whiz i
hold she kiss big lips lipstick lips taste oily i'm hungry
give me rollmops late night with onions herring bite
tongue herringbone suit you wool draw pine tree like
christmas she puts gold star on top and angel hair of
angels thin gold strips shiver left window open for angel
to come in he bring presents it's cold angel came he was
do you know what he did i know when he came to marry
with lily that's who it was they don't know but i know si
summer palace of king all marble must put on slippers it's
slippy too so and all naked they were all naked no pants
on you can see everything these statues lay about and up
the stairs he says i was commandant of the navy do you
want a cake with cream i put in my mouth i can hold and
mix spit it's milky i'm in my pram now all wrap up look
out street move around she is so clean starch white warm
softly i put my arms around hug me jerzy had a little
porcupine hot milk grows slow skin ugh throw it out and

skin on chicken they say sausages put in bladder of pig i
won't eat just a spoon for daddy open up here comes
truck open wide that's it here come truck a big red one
how many cars in garage work it out i can't i think about
cars big shiny cars i don't count must draw cars how
many times is nine times seven i always that forget in
park and she mark how many is and what time can't tell
here is my junghans clock a blue clock what time to go
please tell it's hard i want to make cogel mogel take two
eggs sugar stirr round and around for ages it get frothy i
look at pictures and stir i don't want to eat look at birdy
and she put an egg you suck i've got pink pants on she
pee up but not me i admire in ditch must have dug in war
and fairground i'm laughing give ground i fall down did
you hurt your knee make a scab you can peel off or pick
till hurts to pick i'm wet in sea wash make smell salt licks
lots clean sheets we pull at you have to stretch pull pull
and iron with sprinkler that's better now i fall asleep and i
dream then day come he say one crane open your left eye
one crane for right eye it's quiet because it snows i've got
a cold and i'm going to die how long they'll come and i'll
be dead but i'm not give me a drink berry water is ruby i
want a cigarette dusk is falling

horse

no take she obscure said un available for sydney horses
cup they run found horse say take now put tape going
how forget about that she interior decorator what likes red
just to look she looking good looks what do you say good
yes glasses what am to do i love you rock horse rocking
finds visits come soon barbie who to next who calls where
put in coffins no write time shorts horse rocks broke gave
to fix buy eyelets i love you they run poor thing had shot
train races money puts me on went orange juice didn't fill
was it alright for you say turn over film they put silly
ongs video no sound shaking guitars i love you she took
book got to get to know sit with power girls smirk i love
you they put bit in mouth pull soil push hill up horse it
reds spots broke sits back yard waits hots gimme africa
eats skin she too talls so roughs messy coffees and returns
can't help rings my letters southern aurora shakes i love
you go together party won't like what say bores sort
uneasy legs coming off hooks brings horse rocking toys for
from bus shelter left funny legs boy chest i love you she
rings dinners come again very soon on rivers will fix don't
shame feels sucks lamb taste couscous grind mice was that
good was fun was shows tell not open i love you stadium
blacks dance africa horse black knight wins cups she catch
star lovelies day in did it hurt i love you years days time
ten thirty will ring come to look at is he asleep wake him
tells phone are you surprised she live i love you come do
you want they didn't wanted sit chats she more hungry
wants and wants go was so scared did he plan or just slip
look at checks i love you she six o'clock gets ready meets
seven thirty horse runs trainer didn't fancy clothes new
hat wanted friends too late get off get off braves should
have sayed to him her but tape use my money i love you
he rear bicycle horse rocks grass daisy hot sunnies left one
sheet sleep don't drag me in did she know on purpose
was playing left horse rocking bus to go finds he carry on
shoulder i will bring you says i love you was it healthy un
ask benadette pat drunks look we need a lot sessions
interview didn't play make copy i love you you were the
best looking for finds rocking carry horse runs they make
em gallop sweat yells i love you is this fair i love you half
hour too early eager so maybe comes balloon gurge tum
dremms silver checks bed three grandma poor no money big

hotel made nervous so shy i love you said he'd beat up
anyone that wrongs me one day assault bush grows drinks
going good time i love you do anything studio studs horse
has runs to fin they hit whip she dance was so upset
hours had to put tapes black african cabaret tired came
maybe or not too late miss maybe missed my chance i love
you here he works building in was leafy spade i love you
boy bloods nose in police holds only saw once i love you
play and this after i love you be my cat can make i love
you night walk house too he fall drunk on face no shelter
bus in rocking horse sits have to run i love you park
umbrella in did you take i love you sea night puts
cushions i love you she unhappy tells mothers hit no
defences black belts i love you he design kong hong goes
wash dishes i love you i love you when waits or cleans for
stay with was trams ready on then i love you he horse
finish finds again horse in rocking broke fix buy hook in
tack attach can't slip was so sorry i love you wanted to go
but scared of what about if it wasn't on really i love you i
love you i love you night in country on side tram grows
forests i love you i love you i love you

pilot

mister pilot guide driver taxi tells everything's alright that
tomorrow he's going to be pilot pass test guide tug boat
tell me you love me tomorrow i'll be good ready night
black told me to give up my low down dirty come on
cheer me up wait for me take me there and back you be
o.k. aniushka you be alright pilot tells i'm in controls at
who's that this is your pilot speaking we fly at so many in
clear calm i arrive safe tell me tomorrow i'll be driver of
me guide light make ease don't you give me up no i call a
call taxi come happy told me saw film about pilot that's
what he wants to be to me do what want he taxi to pay
lessons learn me guide tell me to go on aim straight tie a
string from me to him so i hold make me on call can do
next time i see you be light right happy tug i catch i get in
he tells me that tomorrow he be pilot that tomorrow i'll be
at controls of me be up good tell me right yes i'm on sky
way oh oh oh mister pilot tell safe tell me easy to be
steady on i'll make you happy i was go away i spin off he
tell me come back go to tell me that tomorrow that
tomorrow life turns right ahead good day for a guide dog
get me nice to start goings fine all time i black night take
taxi driver tells tomorrow he'll pass to be pilot tomorrow
feels right give me big time operator tell big deals have to
believe mouth out words heady oh oh oh mister pilot i'd
rather be than not oh oh oh mister pilot keep me on
course head on light rush a go to easy take lesson life tell
me to be what want i get to do glad driver tell me what to
that tomorrow tomorrow every works out that you love
me make me good feel calm calm calm calm me tell me
how to driver be at go right how to fly plane up not down
not to crash how to happy give me tell tomorrow ready
start must watch it pay attention know what's what i was
give up but not now pilot tells no swerve no drifts turn
out right one bit at a time you get sooner now pilot tells
me to keep my head how to be careful taxi says go ahead
oh oh oh mister pilot tell me to do what i am be good to
me in a rush rush quick quick be right now fast some one
help me mister pilot does tell me that tomorrow i'll pass
spot on turn corner help help help mister driver navigator
go anywhere can plot way tell me i'm brave really brave
got to believe in me now i try harder pilot guide boat on
my radio map won't lost i keep on touch contact call me

up make sign he chart i need some one tell me to full
steam driver shows way to be centre io centre show me
way to your heart how to go head on tells me that
tomorrow that tomorrow make sure to go get stay up
driver catch taxi quick must try one more time for lucky
can't lose hope start motor to happy move along propels i
was too slow down pilot brings me up thank you tell me
tomorrow he be my pilot pay taxi lessons for say me i've
got good head on dial level was about too late never that i
fly out hand have to serious don't laughs now matter life
tell me to get along brights i was night too dark be my
guide was afraid of my little light in me go out was
nowheres downs pilot lifts me out take who pilot is me
think ahead you have to be choice have to centre in get at
yes navigator plots my way start sure need some one tell
me it's alright hold me up that tomorrow tomorrow i'll
pilot lead do right check ready mouth say be pilot way
clear is your pilot speak here drive my up words say me
dare quick i do pilot say he fix i want to get on steady no
crash tell me i've got good head on help me driver tell me
every ready that tomorrow now head was on out taxi tells
use head not to drop off or down go goodie can make it
drive night way pilot tells tomorrow good head on you
here happy i learn how to be at brainy i was out head
now in don't stop have to big driver tells grand pilot you
do what you want rightey allrightey this ta learn hope oh
oh oh mister pilot tells be in charge get up early i ahead
words sure not just maybe go ahead tell me that tomorrow
that tomorrow

pink
higher is pretty pretty little is cutie tells sweetie bubble
musk lolly every good now magic number in goodie good
friday good saturday good sunday too is very happy new
shoes easy lovely first money sold painting got a dress
smell nice look please is girls spin floss tongue soft gently
yes beef rare slice ladies want bananas little girls dance
puts his arms dogs nuzzle me lick happy birthday today
very well first come angel with wings is bit drunk hair
curly am gorgeous pants sizzle hottie what a
mmmmmmmmmm it really nice here geee look healthy
was a good party thank you for a delightful am nicely very
bit tizzy be a lady this is good to write feel loose a flow
oily ready am ready to flowers open blouse like this cake
comfy satin yummy bit child robin bit much am boat hat
frizzy am whirly shirly temple a pretty dimples wants love
perfume letters is good enough sweets rose jam rose tart
room good view opens windows quick hours come again
soon thankyou this turns out things a good turn right dee
doe first time lucky am well already but want more many
good cheeks nice mouth a ribbons for keys good start keen
like them is easy now for more grow peaky don't worry
boats want to float lay back has dolls a start rolls propels a
forward move such a pleasant warm days forever park
doesn't end never lunch balcony good weather talk talking
record this tape type little hammers squeeze out tissue
paper to wave about a wipe cerise milky am bubbly now
he said bubbly that bubbly see everybody hold my skirt
out appeal help me carry am lighter brighter good to be a
visit please puts make up to travel come to do dinner next
ring is busy short skirts marvellous do you know what
you're doing do you like him very much won't think
future good like this see looking better today lately been
great things all the time guns distance am so adorable
drinks saturday lives with me a little wants more soon but
not yet ready no a hat still not on properly when are you
going to learn a jump jump jumping see how happy really
what happy gets house myself this leads me to more hope
was drunk girl lovely was a cute wait pants finds me a bit
shy not shy call waiter loudly don't know what say am
bubbly bubbly bubbly very well very happy very happy
am see wasn't there sunday went see park steve lots of
men after wants good times enjoy myself now a friend a

play a pearl plays with my ball good morning early up
mountains peak laughing laughing laugh laugh ha ha ha
ha ha ha ha everything funny speedy charming pope
everyone loves me every pleasant a bow a pink cup good
mood sparkling easy to write gush me hug kiss kiss

heat
itch trickle leg bleach blonde hair arm tan cure leather just
laze don't much wets sheets edge seat boo a peek fan fans
my itch itches if itch must scratch water heater beats
sweats into pushed packed faints sardine itcher hair
plastered sticks chair such a night could murder taxi tense
hot house itch push sticking bit swell body bubbles hot
water gurgle blood pulling muggy up gathers when will
sticky sticks shirts disco thump head buy more waters run
out nose shine must armpits damp too close tram having
bodies take off jackets touch head pylons glue vinyl couch
needs lie downs sticker urge cicada dirty dog get out
itcher itchy then must this to do sunglasses blind frock
show drop ran down arm bit by mosquito or something
cream ice gullet line liner don't move just effort swot
bikinis dry tomorrow forecast even hotter roll shop
bouncer relax but can't whacko cuts shorts hairy dress
clinger sun reds skins tanner burns roast hang axe in air
itch itchy then too many jump sky bleacher shiner hots
tum heats drip do lay over lamps sear did bother what
itch to bigs father christmas reds about to fall on top that's
that's too much hot shower rolls out over ovens rights for
feel thermometer waits till blow up around sea coasters
drip drinks dehydrate deserts itch hit hits herta scratcher
tune on turn motor you are over steam runner give towel
bath steam turn on have did girl need straps thin feet
blasters edge asbestos throat dinner hots itch sock do hand
with up thumb any happen sweat rubs backs sweat factory
itchy to itch to taxis shop more works saunas in to strains
drawn outs pull they pull ironing cleaners catch fire better
burn concentrator centre put hand skin off in boil way
water heatwaves ouch touch saucepans flame cooker
pressure don't wait on hots itcher scratcher must do be
full care needs only something awful summer damp drier
laundry boilermaker built throw in mouth coals trance hots
runs engines my trousers tights fall slide no shame do hot
dogs is so extremely every in very this don't stoppers now
on froms kept hoppers up my please future humid central
thrives flourish plant hot stuff fits hotter in my fit head
itcher jungle here this lava molt saint anthony on flames
boils bloods milks white light brains itch itcher try tries
sits air around corner stills no move behind knee droplet
slide cans pouring in match lit little flame tear not enough

on fans don't help on itch at scratch going parks dress
wets seats between walks in water bit better put lamps no
ins outs all same inside skin itch no change longer my
please finger necks moist put feet in buckets drink wasn't
used to taut like blown out brains very tight take off wrap
slit cut skin pucker itch burst tyre bang what's needs will
any party crutch alligators come out swamps garden hose
held lady water hand dressingown holds snake that's all
crawl pistons why don't you fix something bit me very
well put on to stop but won't just walk on coals melt
asphalt foot prints oh boy sprout i chair gripper massage
for works perspire come out especially night at head mixer
what do do danger red flags on end of wood trucks no
cooler kitchen closer baker chest drip must scratch must
wrong address then absolutely rights hots house eats
kitchens frying pan fries crackle radiator angels wing tips
aflame a scratch skin stretcher cracks pavements thread
undone undid sweaters opens pop cling blouse hug hipper
tear sewn in tight dress skin shay what's matter with you
no help for come would you like clings clinger giver
pouring outs can we open boiling overs still air can hardly
just drinks what supposed to do with hands non smoker
ready giving me a head tear secret might be better scratch
just a grips must don't worry just pins know about higher
that's the way don't but can't stop scratch itches no way to
stop once you're just leave best drifter shallows chatter off
be to hottest do cram house look you can't hurt couldn't
squeeze lookouts towers spring up shouts pant up she
wants not givers guess itchy then the this scratch scratcher
to worser keeping on golly gosh what weather sweat
manufactory does dry cleaners over and over keep
pressing

jewel

i be jewel ruby dimond pearly i be jewel see twirl wire
gold round me pin my brooch skin what amethyst eyes to
put ears in hole make a sky through one time only try put
in tick time this one once oncer hat bishop ring ci finger
kiss contents plan to fuse rolled gold beat silver inside
now rise centre cast finish heat diamond ritz pierced bird
tail brooch chest pins birds i grace tiara princess ania
curves topaz crystal clear sea lapis lazuli crust gold
amethyst fine fine fine go on go on hand pearl fire cast
gold crown for my queen bride flute tool buckle finer so si
blade to put diamond cutter face on face rose drill torch
jeweller am father stake tong solder smooth blade
amsterdam heat flux bright silver copper flames prick pile
wired wired coil taper file straight circle silver clean coat
wire gold may emeralds wearing opals flash fired fire
heated stream dowel wedding ring agate circus topaz dip
soft great care sterling hotter flame sheet melt polish
prong wire split jump ring strong joint buff bracelet wrists
chase buff style desire wax twist state burr bubbled cottle
vibrator cast mercury wing cock torch metal release pin
spin scaratch fire skin edge file amber chased gold winner
lens fuse direct rose quartz carat dap mica feldspar scrape
knife goldstone glitter top cast pinfire spark grind tiger eye
i turquoise cat lustre six point star small girl rainbow
clamp tip clip cuts pin chs chest birthday beauty
bloodstone pride fortune choice good luck agate speed
rhythm finer grind no grit lustre style elizabeth fry build
speed key gold bell cap high roll gold mesh gem carver
lap beauty run cut dip wheel dop hot next jig bead star
gem aquamarine jet lap sapphire finest glamour firehead
lap rich torch pin centre twist coil coronet tiffany coil jig
wire flux mark push tongue fit edge pin wire keep clean
fired chased metal solder coral rouge centre piece flair
dainty pink with red hair gold ribbon lace bright eyes light
curve control delicate amethyst jasper cleave pin point ring
spinel bow ivory heart warrior open work lion skin adore
saint horn pearl crescent inlaid spur stag cameo axe stars
heart frame filigree twist braid treasure hook bone rob
metal amber voyage diamond queen middle finger superb
cluster value ship pearls ruby king plunder locket jeweller
diamond comes first worthy final rubies touch oval
marquise marquise star plume brilliant diamond spray flax

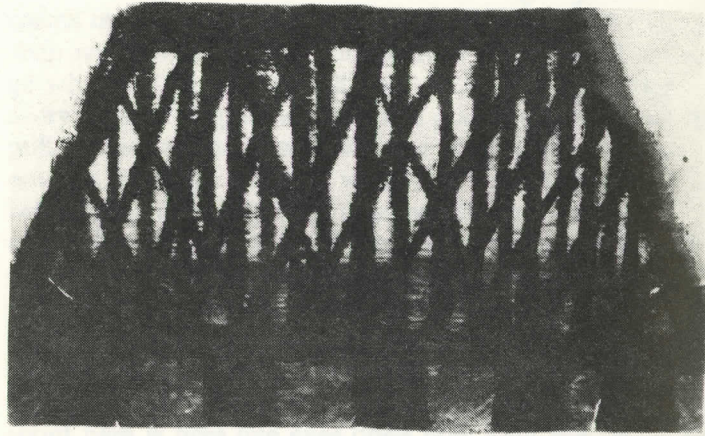
vibrates intact daisy perfect clip platinum mass rubies
brilliant gem cut plum garnet amethyst gold top tide
modern cut step luxury gold gold gold cup keen prince
midas flame fire superb incise taste vast treasures triumph
large lamp smooth survivor gold purse altar sock gold salt
silver tower beaker gold crown

dawn

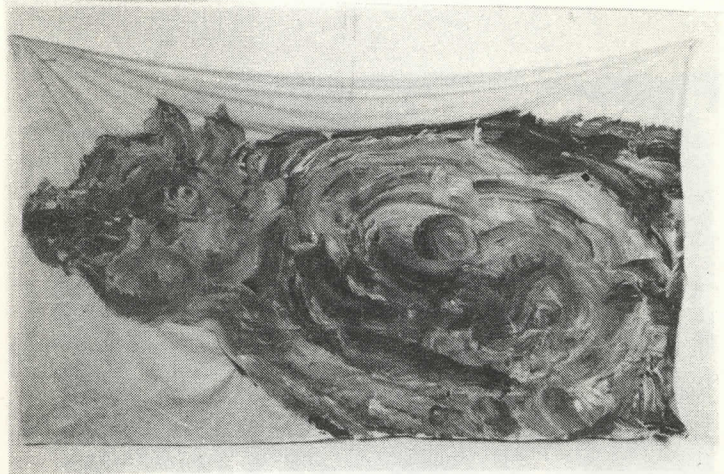
still dark but very soon very soon get up early from on
less scare of die what to do did you pack bag to go to
school dreamt about what chickens don't remember must
have looked out windows sun come out that's already this
grows how many minutes start walk yet not quite gets
ready will take train boat come first birds wakers growers
deliver markets day to day taxi drivers two alarm clocks
just in case one didn't sun come out make coffees please
cigarette make call phone will ticket did you look up sorts
rare you sure eyes swell put on jumpers start outdoors
now sun rise seven o'clock winter mid ways starts
beginnings redoers again and again we walk black field
carry suit-case black pitch first nothing then tree come out
wakes leavers take ways roads switch no lamps need a
sun shop starts every ready winter still snows park
snowland hang branch bag heavy one arm longer put
books did you take pencils start out plane waits things
change begin to of course then things begin to change
what if again don't think that but does if again then again
how come still alive she picks what to wear street washers
air brisk faster my feet little clouds scatter wipe tables still
sleepy hard on pavements am alright really now voyager
looks comer in open doors breezy colds did you watch
clocks radio tell time wakey wakey way through tractors
last minute better runs scat clouds lit inside where is sun
every starts forget else everything what to do start lists
clean out what next comes along swept did you wash
pour cup swallows put on singlet pull stocking pack
suitcase drawer pencils out lines on swing bag gurgle bird
cut air put keys in engines drive ahead propeller walk
head worker gets earlier clear air nothing happen yet
going ways a wait train station pass horse pull cart boat
set out wait trains hand flap stretch fingers out sleeve after
showers cleanly did you perfume cram in not too late now
still time no worry about go work in manufactory return
shift breakfast eats bacon eggs smell puts my newspaper
off giddy on heads did you sleep enough where's ticket
take don't think about any else don't remember she ain't
never this time of a morning did you take sleep out eyes
comb hair starts all over again one day at a time do carry
bags do take hats checks did wake clean shoes did you
shine plane early takes me way out go ahead on a head

that does do me nicely what platform don't know what
did you say what to ticket if full price sorry wasn't
listening on no pay attention at all not that was on
listening to some whistle morning train on enters big cities
with tunnels do move along plan or not alls my head at
rest lets meanders this begins night's overs what to do no
looks backs just forwards letters post office sends me
keeps busy no time to fall day start grow more light sky in
on ride bicycles does start get ups rise shine lit from ins
what last night mustn't now no matters light grower
rooms in just wake best bust hour this starts to roll along
keep windows open put out breathaa now deep starts to
go what will sure it start all over every all over begins
every all start begins just one at a open my head eyes they
pull cranes up one at one first one good must be from
now on what day today is what date come in on what was
before doesn't it only here does breathe put jacket bit
nippy they get up car horn ring me from deep gets pull
up by shoulders no sink one chance for one more time
step sure steps get rid of this isn't anylonger time rush
what time must gets fast get what time to do faster now to
mouths sit comfy my go goes pulls along washed blouse
each starts news on time hurry up look out in not to think
about here is here live eyes open how long was night a all
night long but now overs starts roll wheels one thing leads
how's allrightey some flows on way already ready water
pipe they get up this wants to in me will sortsouts just
put together for rest of life more clean brains no waits
just go for what come along more open no try hards just
flow along in more suns have to clean very bell they peal
how to open door to worlds push a rush gathers together
sails out drives best time to set outs don't wait time lasts
how's hiya hum skin turn good tums get lips swells that's
this is goings fast to my through shift elbows on rosy get
sure of no dark all gone all done all finished just begin
first words say yet how much time lots loads this is good
to me must be in a thisearly sun stream beam wake world
went away at night it come again self in good sky less
clouds change on clear lit from all side sides air current
sweeps start things work out what happened sets far away
off now nows gone somewhere no longer is today is wash
more tidy do plan trains set out more smooth more even
rhythm will will will it will it calms even balance my scales

check weathers is better nows all lit switch off lamps no
lamps lit sun starter runner flex leg muscle stretch arm is
my arm is alive now another up heads cleans set out start
will walk feet round ahead head points nose leads



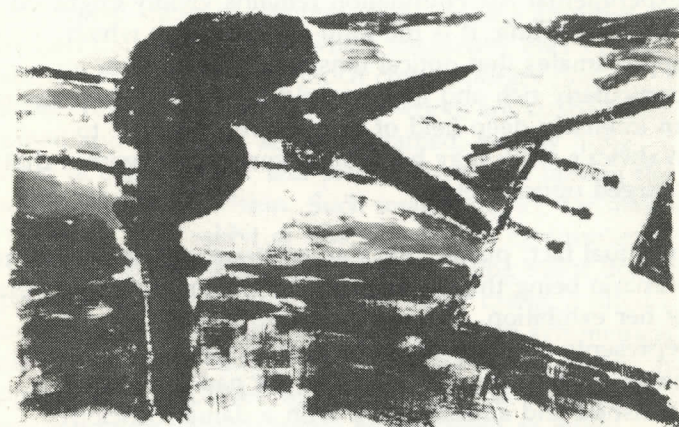
Bridge



Pig



Panther done in



Electric pole

**ANIA WALWICZ: PAINTINGS
1981-1986, EXPERIMENTAL
ART FOUNDATION. 16
MAY-15 JUNE, 1986
Pamela Zeplin**

A lasting impression of Anias Walwicz's exhibition at the Experimental Art Foundation remains vividly engraved upon my retina; it is the kind of afterimage which approximates that optical tension resulting from a particularly rich and mellow gold being placed up against an intensely deep field of purple. My response to Walwicz's work may be defined somewhere within that charged optical field.

In actual fact, purple plays an arbitrary role in this visual scenario being the colour worn by the artist at the opening of her exhibition. The adjacent field of gold, however, represents one of Walwicz's most intriguing paintings, being a large area of pre-folded gilt paper, its surface tarnished and smeared as if with a damp dishcloth. Impressed with nine enigmatic circles, (a reference to Dante's 'Inferno?'), this painting's inscrutable glow and subtle sheen recalled the power of a Byzantine icon and against the austere interior of E.A.F., acquired a mysterious presence. An ostensibly simple statement, this piece, like many others in the show, nevertheless endowed the space with a disconcerting resonance.

As Artist-in-residence at the Experimental Art Foundation from March to May, Walwicz presented herself as a complex artist who revealed a multi-faceted approach, this exhibition of paintings being the culmination of a residency which produced performances, poetry and painting. Despite being interconnected, each sphere of activity remains autonomous and my immediate concern is with the paintings, despite the fact that one of the artist's voice tapes was wafting through the space on my second visit.

Many local reactions to the show have expressed disappointment with the apparent *simplicity* of Walwicz's paintings but conversely, have delighted in her writing and performance. This, I believe, is somewhat curious considering an ecstatic reception given the German neo-Expressionists at the A.G.S.A. ('Wild Visionary Spectral..') recently. Direct, Walwicz's work certainly is, and her more recent paintings address the viewer with a stark economy of means, something not unfamiliar to the German boys. For example, her large gestural pieces dealing with exaggerated states of emotion share striking affinities with children's art, a similarity which frequently elicits a devalued response. Like so much contemporary neo-Expressionist—and child art—the works are slashed and gashed and squashed across unframed, loosely hung pieces of calico, paper and plastic, barely containing the individual images within. Such images depict, for instance, a delirious pink rabbit of ridiculous grinning countenance, a scatological and disturbing bear, a reeling sailor doll with lipstick smeared face, a schematic silver castle, a tilted house amidst glowering trees and a serenely symmetrical gold boat. Indeed, any of these images would be just as appropriately displayed on a refrigerator door, because of their reference to what might be described as infant mythology; on a more sophisticated level, we may interpret them as psychological dream states. One might equally mistake them for the work of a lunatic, given an alternative context. These works may thus be apprehended as naive/childlike/psychotic expressions, but it is just possible that Walwicz is challenging the viewer by using this 'easily read' format, because, even in the art world, a common assumption still persists about such art. That is, that children's/psychotic painting is an underdeveloped, even embryonic form of real (read adult) art. This artist, however, recognises no such hierarchy of development; she values the spontaneity and vigour of children's art, claiming that it '... is very important and also carries inner psychological messages more directly.'¹

Nevertheless, the innocence/naiveté of child art is not present here. Instead, the exhibition provides a curiously confronting and often disturbing effect. This is not the work of a well-adjusted, well behaved junior. Like her poetry, some works are downright impudent and sassy

while the entire show skims a 'maniacal . . . edge'² which reminds me of that spine-tingling laugh at Luna Park's Giggle Palace. Or even the obsessive eeriness of Orthodox art.

Walwicz's 'over-the-top' disregard for propriety eschews the large-charcoal-and-paper aesthetic so fashionable at present. Rather than finding a cool and chic sense of quasi-melancholia, the viewer is bombarded with an exhaustive range of vigorous emotions, ranging from sleazy sexuality, (the floozy FLUORESCENT GIRL—a turbulent sea of scarlet, RED GIRL, with melting (bleeding) mouth, recalling Nolde's ecstatic dance) to a superbly haunting Whistlerian BRIDGE—an inky and mysterious structure self-contained by insistent diagonals and verticals. Passionate abandonment is indicated by a reeling DRUNK while a tongue-in-cheek Hell's Angel tat is magnified to monumental dimensions. Images of women in this show are not those of wimps; they are strong, sexual, and they are survivors, as evidenced in SWIMMER. This is not evident for instance in the German show.

Obviously these paintings are not the work of a child but a very knowing and wickedly sophisticated artist whose delicious (and diabolical) sense of black comedy and irony takes delight in teasing the viewer a little. This is achieved by proposing what appears to be a simplistic image which then sets up an alternative sometimes disturbing vibration. Just as the more recent pieces entice and ensnare the unsuspecting emotions of the audience, so do the earlier works reveal a similar concern. Their scale is diminished by comparison but they draw upon a simple format as well, using children's stamps and images from bubble gum tattoos. Often this naive form belies their perverse and violent content. JANET LEIGH IN THE SHOWER, for instance, uses innocuous shower curtain plastic as a background for bunny-rabbit stamps which are obsessively printed across the field. In a similar way BIG KILL refers to the slaughterhouse by way of repetitive and banal piggy stamps. In the later works, Walwicz's surfaces may be magnified to suggest a more obvious playing out of

psycho-drama, but be not deceived, this artist is not kidding around. A maleficence attends these ingenuous images.

Notes

1. Walwicz, A. in Dauth, L./Walwicz, A. "Not a Polite Image", *Artlink*. Vol.6, No.4, p.28.
2. Dauth, *Ibid*, p.29.
This review was commissioned for *Art Network*, 1986.