

Bulletin

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"The Only News I know / Is Bulletins all Day / From Immortality."

Translating Emily Dickinson in Language, Culture, and the Arts**EDIS International Conference: Final Report**

When I reported to Professor Richard Sewall that over two hundred participants from all over the world had traveled to Washington, D.C., for "Translating Emily Dickinson in Language, Culture, and the Arts" this past October, he quoted to me a letter from Samuel G. Ward to T.W. Higginson. Writing shortly after the first volume of Dickinson's poetry was published, Ward proclaimed his own fascination with her but expressed uncertainty that her poems would appeal to a wide and diverse audience: "She may become world famous, or she may never get out of New England."

How fitting that the first major Dickinson conference of the 1990s, celebrated a little more than a hundred years later, should feature Dickinson's international status and explore the ways in which her poems have been "translated" not only from English to other languages but from the printed page to complementary art forms, from the New England culture of her day to the multicultural United States, and from American cultures to the cultures of Dickinson's international audiences.

The conference was a remarkable testimony to the success of Dickinson's voyage out of New England, gathering together translators, scholars, teachers, and readers of Dickinson from fifteen foreign countries (Austria, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Finland, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Japan, People's Republic of China, Portugal, Switzerland, Sweden, and Thailand) and from twenty-eight states and the District of Columbia. Our largest delegation of international participants was the group of eight Japanese scholars; the largest U.S. delegations came from Maryland, Massachusetts, and California.

Conference participants included the first Dickinson dissertation writer, Anna Mary Wells; composers Carol Herman

and Robert Chauls; actresses Agneta Bjorn, Belinda Heckler, Maravene Loeschke, Ruth McRee, Caroline Ryburn, and Camille Webb; poets Fran Adler, Ellen Davis, Alice Fulton, Alicia Ostriker, and Susanna Rich; translators Stanislaw Baranczak, Marisa Bulgheroni, Maria H. de Paiva Correia, Carlos Daghlian, Harold P. Hanson, Sirkka Heiskanen-Mäkelä, H. Louis Nathan, Lennart Nyberg, and Masako Takeda; and Emily Dickinson Homestead guides Nancy Brose and Barbara McGarrah.

The opening plenary session with Diane Middlebrook, Roland Hagenbüchle, and Sandra M. Gilbert launched the conference in the direction of Dickinsonian "Circumference," and the two days of panels, workshops, and performances that followed never veered from that course. For reports about individual sessions and a photographic montage of conference highlights, please see inside.

The letters and cards I have received from those who attended cite again and again not only the stimulating intellectual exchanges that occurred in the hotel meeting rooms, but also the memorable fellowship experienced at shared meals, in the book exhibit, and over late-night glasses of wine. If there was a disappointment, it was that Professor Sewall was unable to join us in person to receive his Distinguished Service Award.

Many people had a hand in making this conference a great occasion. The theme of translation originated with Barbara Mossberg, and Barbara's vision kept the conference organizers inspired during her Fulbright year in Finland. Jane Eberwein, Cristanne Miller, and Gary Stonum were instrumental in helping to create the final format. Margaret Freeman turned rough copy into handsome conference brochures and publicity flyers and arranged the award ceremony to honor Richard Sewall. Polly Longworth gave me valuable advice about mailing lists.

Walt Powell coordinated all the details of the book exhibit and silent auction, and Suzanne Juhasz directed the concerted reading of Dickinson poems at the Friday evening performance. Eleanor Heginbotham prepared a guide to Washington restaurants for conference participants and arranged for students from Stone Ridge Country Day School to serve as conference aides. Georgiana Strickland produced classy conference and concert programs and participant badges. Martha Nell Smith handled all the last-minute financial arrangements with finesse.

I also want to recognize David Porter's efforts on behalf of EDIS. He brought the conference to the attention of both international and American scholars, and I am indebted to him for this assistance. Roland Hagenbüchle was another invaluable resource for international scholars. I am grateful as well to Fred Morey for giving the conference ample and frequent publicity in *Dickinson Studies* and for his constant moral support. My former student Alicia Richardson took care of finding a conference photographer and assisted me in other ways too numerous to mention.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the generosity with which Mount Vernon College and Walsh College supported my efforts as conference director. Special thanks go to Norm Kutz, Director of Development at Walsh, who provided the folders for the materials distributed to participants.

In closing, I want to express my appreciation to the Board of Directors and the members of EDIS for the plaque and other gifts I received at the Saturday plenary session. The best reward for me was to have your affirmation that the conference achieved the quality that "our" Emily Dickinson deserves.

Jonnie Guerra
Conference Director

Amherst Acquires New Dickinson Manuscripts

Amherst College recently acquired two previously unknown Dickinson manuscripts—a letter to Susan Dickinson, in which is embedded a short unpublished poem in prose form, and a new version of Poem 7, “The feet of people walking home.”

The manuscripts, both tentatively dated 1858, were found in a book owned by a Pennsylvania collector and purchased for the college’s Special Collections in the Robert Frost Library. They represent the first new Dickinson materials to come to light in nearly thirty years and are particularly important for the light they shed on Dickinson’s reclusiveness.

In the letter to Sue, Dickinson portrays herself as more at home in nature than in society: “I am from the fields, you know, and while quite at home with the Dandelion, make but a sorry figure in a drawing room—Did you ask me out with a bunch of Daisies, I should thank you, and accept—but with Roses—‘Lilies’—‘Solomon’ himself—suffers much embarrassment!”

The embedded poem begins: “If I do not come with feet, in my heart I come—stay when all the rest have gone—.” This is one of the earliest known instances of a poem embedded in a Dickinson letter.

The variant version of Poem 7 is written as a letter, presumably also to Sue, with the salutation “Darling” and the closing “ Lovingly, Emilie.” In contrast to the three previously known manuscripts of the poem, this version is written as six stanzas of four lines each, rather than three of eight lines.

The new manuscripts were on display at the Frost Library in June and now are part of the college’s extensive collection of Dickinson manuscripts and memorabilia.

The Friends of Amherst College Library are publishing the letter as their Christmas keepsake for members this year. To join the Friends, send \$25.00 to Special Collections, Amherst College Library, Amherst, MA 01002. Copies are also for sale at \$5.00 and may be ordered from the same address. All proceeds go to support the Dickinson Homestead.

On Translation

Translating means to speak with a stranger’s voice, to take a stranger’s face, to live a stranger’s life, to die, to rise from the dead.

To be and not to be ourselves, in the old disguise, in a comic mask, to live all the time with someone else, to be at his mercy, to take a risk.

It’s to turn back in time, and travel to the exotic, unknown lands, to rack one’s brains, to curse, to grieve, that nothing for yourself remains.

In a stranger’s skin, in worn-out cloth spending your time day after day, you see abruptly, frightened to death, that your own life slips away.

Ludmila Marjanska

Sewall Accepts EDIS Award in Absentia

Richard Sewall was prevented by illness from attending the EDIS conference to receive in person the Society’s first Distinguished Service Award. The plaque, in hand caligraphy, carried the words: “The Emily Dickinson International Society presents its first Distinguished Service Award to Professor Richard Sewall for his unexcelled contributions to higher education, the life of the mind, and to Dickinson scholarship.” Also included was the poem “Forever—is composed of Nows—,” one of Sewall’s favorites.

In his absence, Sewall asked that David Porter of Amherst College read the following statement:

“Sweet—Countrymen—”:

“I grieve at not being with you....I am grateful for the Award and deeply touched. But when I think of the pioneers, I am humbled—all those who from the beginning felt a greatness at hand that must not be lost to the world. Where would we be without what Vinnie did, and Mabel and Higginson, and Sue and Martha and Alfred? And then the ‘scholars’—Pollitt and Taggard and the clarion call of Which-



Photo by Janet M. Baxter

David Porter and Margaret Freeman display the award to be presented to Richard Sewall.

er’s *This Was a Poet* (as much as to say, ‘We’ve had enough of gossip’), and Mrs. Bingham’s opening up her archive—and 660 Bolts of Melody. Then the quantum leap of the 1950s and ’60s—Tom Johnson and Theodora Ward and Jay Leyda. ‘Achievers’ all, and humbling.

“And now, for twenty years, the steady flow of ‘studies’: theories, analyses, interpretations, readings—all (as ED herself put it in another context) ‘yearning for a oneness’: that is, the *one* ‘clue’ to her character, or life, or the *one* line we could

string all those poems on. And here it’s good to be reminded of that fine remark of Jay Leyda’s at the Folger Library a dozen years ago (he had Parkinson’s and could hardly stagger to the center of the stage): ‘I hear too many doors slamming shut.’

“Anyway, can’t we agree that the following terms are either dead wrong or mostly irrelevant: psychotic; mother-rejected; father dominated; brother-lover; lesbian; unwed mother; God-hater; suicide; plagiarist; Madame de Sade? (All these, in one form or another, have come across my desk. And: am I alone in my conviction that the words ‘rage’ and ‘fury’ imply an unlikely loss of control?) I suspect *tags*.

“Two on Shakespeare: Arnold: ‘Others abide our question—Thou art free!/We ask and ask—Thou smilest and art still....’ And Dryden: ‘...the most comprehensive mind that ever lived.’ Keep these in mind and you can’t go wrong. Have a wonderful conference. Turn down an empty glass for me.

“Richard B. Sewall
October 22, 1992”

Daniel Lombardo, who delivered the plaque to Sewall, reports him “very touched” by it and much improved in health.

Translating Emily Dickinson: Opening Session

Issues of Translation in Dickinson Studies

Barbara Clarke Mossberg, *moderator*; Diane Middlebrook, Roland Hagenbüchle, and Sandra Gilbert, *panelists*

Thursday evening's session brought together for the first time over 200 translators, teachers, scholars, and readers of Emily Dickinson and established an energetic and celebratory tone for the sessions that followed on Friday and Saturday. The three scholars who spoke addressed issues arising from the process of translating Emily Dickinson into other languages, other cultures, and other art forms.

Barbara Clarke Mossberg introduced the panelists and spoke at the start about the process of translating the "essence" of Emily Dickinson, whom she described as the most difficult poet in the English language. Translating Dickinson involves more than attempts at literal transcription, she argued, for translation is the art of reading another's words and then interpreting and describing them in our own words. We who read, write about, or teach Dickinson, Mossberg added, make important contributions to this ongoing process by finding ways of communicating something of Dickinson's "essence" to others.

Diane Middlebrook, author of a recent bestselling biography of poet Anne Sexton, spoke about literary biography as one kind of translation. Using the first stanza of the often-explicated poem "My Life had stood—a Loaded Gun—" as a paradigm for what a literary biographer does to her subject, she commented on the "paranoia of the subject of biography," noting that she feels sure that Emily Dickinson knew that there would be biographies about her and that they would be wrong. Dickinson most likely wondered, Middlebrook added, what would be made of the poems and letters she left behind. Thus the speaker in "My Life had stood—a Loaded Gun—" feels helpless in the face of the biographer/"owner's" violent appropriation of herself.

Middlebrook went on to describe the two kinds of Dickinson materials biographers appropriate—facts and anecdotes—and the range of biographical studies that have been written about the poet. She suggested



Photo by Janet M. Baxter

Roland Hagenbüchle and Barbara Mossberg after the Opening Session.

several reasons why she believes Dickinson's life will go on generating biographical studies: the surprising facts and ambiguities surrounding her publication history and critics' and scholars' ongoing fascination with the iconic images the poet left of herself. Sewing the fascicle booklets, storing hundreds of poems in a locked box in her bureau drawer, dressing only in white, alluding cryptically to a "terror since September," and ongoing eye trouble are strategies that Middlebrook described as "gloves flung to future biographers."

Middlebrook ended her part of the program by praising what she labeled "feminist biography," a relatively new field pioneered by Nancy Mitford's biography of Zelda Fitzgerald. Biographers writing about a female subject need to follow Mitford's lead and describe the woman's specific place in her cultural environment.

Roland Hagenbüchle concentrated on what he called the "foreignness" of Dickinson's language and the problems this causes for those who work to translate her into other languages and cultures. Much depends, he noted, on the syntax and structure of the languages involved. For foreign readers some of the difficulties involve a failure to understand the mid-nineteenth-century American context.

Hagenbüchle then described three problems or challenges in particular that Dickinson's language creates for the translator—her use of juxtaposition, her semantic shifts (in which one word points to another word in a chain of riddles that forces readers to go in search of what's being pointed at), and her continual crossing of boundary lines in both subject matter

and style. Claiming that Dickinson's use of language prefigures the work of Modernists such as Mallarmé, he described the poet as a "pioneer," a "westering spirit."

Sandra Gilbert spoke as both literary critic and contemporary poet in what she described as her "meditation on translation." Reminding us that Dickinson herself worked as a translator and was a poet who "spoke English as a second language," Gilbert focused on how Dickinson worked to articulate overwhelming questions that cannot be voiced in words by experimenting with a range of personae and voices.

Gilbert then spoke about Emily Dickinson's importance as a muse or guiding spirit whose life and work have exerted a powerful influence over later poets, in-



Photo by Janet M. Baxter

Sandra Gilbert presents her "meditation on translation."

cluding herself. She ended the opening session by reading excerpts from several poets' poems of tribute to Dickinson and commenting on her own poetic attempts to convey something of Dickinson's genius to readers through her own verse.

This opening plenary session did much to illustrate the variety of valuable scholarly approaches to Emily Dickinson's genius. Each of the three interpretive lenses employed in this session—biography, language, and poetry—highlighted Dickinson's genius and celebrated the richness of her life and work.

Stephanie A. Tingley
Youngstown State University

Translating Emily Dickinson: In Language

Language I

Gary Lee Stonum, *moderator*; Beth Olivares and Jerome McGann, *panelists*

"How has Emily Dickinson been translated in language, not just *between* languages, by her anthologists and editors? How have her words been processed?" These were the questions addressed by this panel, as stated by moderator Gary Lee Stonum.

Beth Olivares's survey of fourteen anthologies of American literature (1938-90) showed that nearly all allow a reading of Dickinson as removed from her place in history, as anguished and alienated, and as a coherent, speaking "I." With the exception of the Heath, these anthologies fabricate a Dickinson according to the modernist image of the artist. Olivares then explored how these editions have explained, appropriated, and silenced Dickinson's poetry.

According to modernist ideology, art should reflect *universal* experience, not the experiences of a specific woman in nineteenth-century Amherst. Thus one poem that appears in all the anthologies is "The Soul selects her own Society," which reinforces the popular idea of Dickinson as eccentric recluse. Thirteen of the fourteen volumes include 435, 441, 465, and 712; all stress alienation and self-sufficiency.

Equally striking are the poems that have been omitted from all fourteen anthologies, such as 164, which portrays God as female. Homoerotic poems and those that unsettle a coherent speaking voice (such as 281, 414, 762, and 967) are not usually reprinted.

Olivares cited several anthologists' statements to illustrate how their aesthetics depoliticize literature. For example, in his 1950 anthology, F.O. Matthiessen selected forty-eight Dickinson poems that he considered her most "finished" pieces. According to this philosophy, good art cannot be composed on the backs of envelopes, a view that restricts our understanding of Dickinson's work.

Realizing Huysman's idea that popular culture is associated with "female" and high culture is associated with "male," twentieth-century canonization of Dickinson has made her artistically and metaphorically "male." Since she did not publish during her lifetime, and since many of her poems show no connection with mass culture, she

can be and has been remade in the modernist (male, high-culture) image.

Jerome McGann, reading the slippage between "letter" and "poem" in Dickinson's work, began by acknowledging Ralph Franklin, editor of *The Manuscript Books of Emily Dickinson*, but most especially Susan Howe, "whose poet's eye discerned what Franklin's manuscript books reveal." In the fascicles, McGann perceives a significant change between the lineation of Fascicles 8 and 9, which he illustrated by contrasting slides of "A Wounded Deer—leaps highest—" (F 8) and "What shall I do—it whimpers so" (F 9). In "A Wounded Deer," Dickinson copies the poem's lines into neat stanzas as if they were to be printed. But in "What shall I do," a poetic line may cover more than one page line. Howe was the first to recognize that this is not simply Dickinson "running out of space" at the end of a line. Rather, during winter 1861, Dickinson began to use the textual page as the scene for the interplay between a poetics of the eye and a poetics of the ear.

In "What shall I do," Dickinson's scriptural moves are self-referential. The writing of "whimpers so" and "and start," each of which takes up a page line, figures the life of the barking hound within Dickinson's heart. These are her visual experiments with a certain kind of free verse.

Fascicles 1-8 show Dickinson imitating a printed book, for the most part. Did she want to be published? Perhaps this question may best be approached, McGann posited, by examining her writing rather than her psychology. She did want readers and she was ambitious of fame. But she rejected traditional modes of attaining these. She recognized how restrictive the publication market was and drew instead on the flexibility available to one writing a personal, private letter.

In the late nineteenth century, publication occurred only when the poet followed certain strict printing conventions. But Dickinson's writing turns its back on the conventions of print. Johnson's translation into print of Dickinson's writing, however, assumes a sharp division between "letter" and "poem" and overrides the metrical subtext of the prose and the prosy overtext of the poem. McGann demonstrated the crucial need to reexamine

Johnson's editing, including his dating.

In discussion, one listener objected that panelists seemed to reduce all early editing to "a bad job." The panelists responded that they hoped to call attention to the limitations of earlier editing to facilitate our ongoing reconstruction and understanding of Dickinson's work.

Several in the audience asked, "How can we publish Dickinson and respect the specificities of her manuscript experiments?" McGann suggested the hypertext, a computerized method that allows graphic representation of texts. Dickinson *paints* words, McGann stressed; thus, we need a visual re-presentation of her words.

Jeanne Holland
University of Wyoming

Language II

Cristanne Miller, *moderator*; Roland Hagenbüchle and Alice Fulton, *panelists*

Close readings of selected poems revealed qualities of "foreignness" in Emily Dickinson's work—qualities that perplex and confound, so that even after repeated readings the poems often puzzle more than before.

Defining "foreignness" as wrongness, a violation of cultural codes of meaning, propriety, and aesthetic expectation, Alice Fulton discussed how Dickinson uses diction, persona, and tonal anomalies to work against expectations of form. In Poem 287 ("A Clock stopped") Fulton finds an oddly analytical tone in a purported elegy, a tone that conveys denial and distance through flat, mechanical metaphors that objectify and commercialize. The deceased is a trinket, a puppet that "dangled still"; the bereaved, a shopman. There is no consolation or lament; yet, Fulton suggested, such a treatment of death poses the impossibility of dealing with irretrievable loss. The poem subverts the implicit expectation of the elegy: that we can somehow give voice to the unspeakable.

Poem 1524 ("A faded Boy—in sallow Clothes") also works against its form. It makes gestures toward the ballad with its bucolic setting and folkloric characters, yet fractures sentimental expectations with a lack of narrative by ironically sending both the cow and the boy to oblivion, using legalistic or scientific terminology.

In Poem 1437 (A Dew sufficed itself), Dickinson's use of tone and scale seems, to Fulton, to verge on the absurd. She pointed to the ludicrousness of our being asked to follow an allegory of a talking, vainglorious "dew" whose evaporation Dickinson ironizes as an "awful Tragedy" yet also uses to draw conclusions about the instability of pleasure and the certainty of doom. The tension between the minuscule dew and its "vast ...destiny" forestalls closure.

Roland Hagenbüchle suggested that the reader first approach Dickinson's poetry as an act of meditation—an apprehension of sound, visual form, and telos, or core theme. In Poem 1397 ("It sounded as if the Streets were running") he noted how a hypothetical mode and lack of frame establish the strangeness of the poem in which an inner storm, or eclipse, is encountered before a restorative vision of Nature is revealed. The poem's music conveys the rapidly changing perceptions and emotional pressure of its speaker. The rapid, irregular rhythm in line 1, followed by the heavily stressed and alliterative second line, moves the reader quickly through agitation and chaos to an almost total stasis before the apprehension of Eclipse and Awe. Elsewhere, dashes and jumpy dactyls create a sense of disturbance before the recovered routine at the poem's end is captured in stressed and measured syllables.

Pointing to difficulties of specifying Dickinson's poetic technique, Hagenbüchle argued that personification and metaphor are inadequate to characterize the figures in this poem. The use of Time as a concrete noun and the metonymic relationship in which Streets "stand for" water or feet, people or time, or perhaps all at once, enhance the surrealism of the poem.

Linguistic "excess" was discussed by Cristanne Miller, who explained how Dickinson's syntax, metaphor, and allusion reveal the "too-muchness" inherent in language. That Dickinson herself stood in awe of the power of "the undeveloped Freight/Of a single syllable" is revealed in Poems 1409, 1467, and 1247, which variously conflate language with immortality, God, love, death, and sex.

Miller looks at how the language becomes accelerated and takes on multiple possibilities within each poem. The two juxtaposed fragments of the first stanza of Poem 1524 permit a variety of readings

regarding the relationship between the "faded Boy" and "the statesman's Embryo." The use of possessives in three different places in the poem poses interesting analogies between statesman, ballad, and clover, on the one hand, and embryo, barn, and retrospect on the other.

In Poem 667 ("Bloom upon the Mountain—stated") individual words become magnified. "State" refers to the creative, expressive ability of the poet as well as her existential being. The poem's tension between language and nature and between processes of naming and processes of growth is compressed into this one word. In Poem 1205 ("Immortal is an ample word") the freight of possibilities comes to bear on the pronoun "it," which may refer to "what we need," immortality, the word "immortal" (thus, language), or Heaven. In the last line, "it" is merely a marker, yet it overflows with referents.

The close attention these three presenters gave to music, form, and syntax revealed exciting dimensions of Dickinson's poetics and showed the many ways her language can be loaded, like a gun.

Terry Blackhawk, NEH Teacher-Scholar, 1992-93, Detroit, Michigan

Language III

Margaret Freeman, *moderator*; Stanislaw Baranczak, David Porter, Masako Takeda, *panelists*

Margaret Freeman opened the session by observing that the conference was challenging the conventional notions about poetry and translation. While television is considered one of the necessities of life, she noted, poetry is generally treated as something "other" and foreign. She added that translation might also seem foreign, but the paradox is that translation helps us to understand; it makes strange what we take for granted. Freeman concluded that metaphor is not marginal but is at the heart of language; thus poetry is at the core of our being.

David Porter focused on the difficulties presented by Dickinson's semantics, syntax, and punctuation. He recognized translators' difficulties in capturing her mannerisms and intelligibility. Although Dickinson achieved clarity of syntax when she chose, her lines are often unmanageable and un-revisable. Her poems are not only something said but something uniquely made.

Her unconventional punctuation further impedes meaning. Yet, at the cost of intelligibility, Dickinson preserved the intensity of the performance in what Porter calls "a radical mode of deconstruction." Her poems were a source, not a record, of her experience; their lack of titles is an overarching sign of this.

Masako Takeda described some of the linguistic and cultural differences she must consider when translating Dickinson's poems. Japanese poetry is read primarily for its content, with less emphasis put on rhyme and rhythm. Takeda described the requirements of Japanese poetry, particularly *haiku* and *tanka* with their specific syllabic count and use of ideographic Chinese characters and Japanese phonetic signs. Dickinson's brevity lends itself to comparison with Japanese poetic forms, and Takeda translates Dickinson's poems into these traditional forms because modern free verse is not readily accepted.

Takeda noted that translating is an act of daring. As a translator, she must ask what poetry is and what it means to read Dickinson in the twentieth century. Finally, she recalled that she herself discovered Dickinson through translation.

Stanislaw Baranczak believes that poetry is so much fun it should be illegal. He offered two definitions of poetry: Joseph Brodsky's definition that poetry is the ethics of language, and Robert Frost's, that poetry is what gets lost in translation. Baranczak defined the poet as a genius who breaks with convention to give voice to his own inner truth and say something important.

After highlighting some of the differences between English and Polish (Polish is an inflectional language with longer words), Baranczak read two different Polish translations of Poem 328 ("A Bird came down the Walk") and cited the problems a translator encounters and the choices he himself made. The crucial question to ask in translation, he said, is what losses can be tolerated; there is a certain core of things that cannot be lost.

The variety of questions and comments from the audience and panelists indicated the broad spectrum of interest in Dickinson. Someone observed that translation is like a photographic blow-up; another, that in the theatre intelligibility is sometimes sacrificed for intensity of performance.

Barbara Kelly
Palo Alto, California

Translating Emily Dickinson: In Culture

Culture I

Polly Longworth, *moderator*; Benjamin Lease, Dorothy Huff Oberhaus, Paula Bennett, *panelists*

Moderated by biographer Polly Longworth, the first of the “Culture” sessions explored Dickinson’s indebtedness to the Amherst scene, her preference for literary resources over “local” ones, and her strange silence toward other women poets of the nineteenth century.

Proceeding on the premise that the more we know of a poet’s culture the less likely we are to read our private meanings into her writing, Benjamin Lease presented three local forces as crucial to Dickinson’s discovery of her poetic voice. First among these was the music of the village church as personified in Isaac Watts. Countering those who have minimized Watts’s influence, Lease argued that the hymnodist’s “unexpurgated” texts and “ragged rhymes” exerted a powerful emotional impact on Dickinson, while his rhetorical strategies helped shape the poet’s art.

Second, Lease argued, Dickinson absorbed Noah Webster’s “preachy,” “pithy” definitions in the 1844 Amherst printing of his dictionary. Webster’s evangelical bent permeated the lexicon; his use of words was epigrammatic and original.

Finally, the poet’s direct contact with Edward Hitchcock encouraged her to view nature with both reverence and scientific precision. Lease linked Hitchcock’s experimentation with electricity and magnetism to spiritualism—a contemporary movement Lease believes attracted Dickinson. The poet’s initial letter to Higginson, he contends, was in part a response to Higginson’s “deeply felt” commitment to spiritualism.

While acknowledging that Dickinson bore some relation to her culture, Dorothy Huff Oberhaus portrayed the poet as primarily an exile from her “native air.” She wrote of the Civil War as “an oblique place,” used religious phraseology foreign to the Congregational church, attempted poetic forms outside her literary tradition, and “published” her own fascicles outside the literary mainstream. Dickinson’s most vital ties were literary. Her reading of the King James Bible and of ancient, British,

American, and Russian literature furnished that part of her mental landscape essential to understanding her poetry.

Viewing Dickinson against the backdrop of late nineteenth-century women’s poetry in America, Paula Bennett surmised that the poet must have been well acquainted with the “new” voice of women who were publishing in contemporary periodicals such as the *Atlantic*. Between 1858 and 1880, women poets broke the barrier of conventionality so that female purity and domesticity were no longer the accepted standard. Suffering was not sentimentalized; women’s sexuality and creative genius were encouraged. Although Dickinson nowhere explicitly aligns herself with these writers, she clearly was not alone as a woman poet.

Discussion centered first on Lease’s call for further research into the nineteenth-century spiritualist movement, in which he claimed Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Higginson, and Dickinson all were “passionately involved.” Lease pointed also to Higginson’s support of women as another element that would have attracted the poet.

Pressed for a response to Dickinson’s silence regarding contemporary women poets in America, Bennett spoke with feeling. Why did Dickinson praise Helen Hunt Jackson, she asked, and not good women poets near at hand who surely influenced her? Why did she not choose to advance the cause of women?

Raising issues of the relevance/irrelevance of Dickinson’s milieu to understanding her poetry proved informative. It also suggested certain speculations, serious or otherwise. For example, how might Dickinson have responded had Higginson invited her to a Boston seance instead of a meeting of the Radical Club? Or, had the First (Congregational) Church of Amherst instituted a liturgical mass, might the poet then have consented to cross her father’s grounds? Or, if challenged, might she too have considered dropping labor and leisure for a chariot ride to Seneca Falls? To what voices did Dickinson listen while arriving at her own?

Rowena Revis Jones
Northern Michigan University

Culture II

Jane Eberwein, *moderator*; Dorothea Steiner, Yoko Shimazaki, and Marcella Taylor, *panelists*

Jane Eberwein reached back to the Culture I session as a transition to Culture II. While many current readers have little notion of the historical realities of Dickinson’s nineteenth-century New England and have problems in interpreting the poems, Culture II addressed the multiple communication challenges inherent in an understanding of the poems by audiences widely different from the one Dickinson addressed.

Eberwein offered definitions of “translation” that touch closely on Culture II issues. We see it as a matter of carrying the essence of meaning from one consciousness to another. We are foreign to Dickinson. Barriers exist. Dickinson was a purist with words used as codes. In another sense, “translation” can be seen as adapting—traditional vs. theological, evasion of death (“This—was different—/’Twas Translation—/Of all tunes I knew—and more—”). Culture II leaves nineteenth-century Western Massachusetts and flies to the world—even in an imaginary space capsule: Dickinson in the fourth and fifth dimensions; Dickinson beyond.

Yoko Shimazaki reflected that reading Dickinson is beyond the English abilities of all but a few Japanese. Accordingly, she outlined and discussed the two major cultural differences: sensibility and lack of Christian background. Frost, for example, is popular in Japan; Dickinson is not. Dickinson’s faith in Christianity (religious poet, religious images) and her everlasting question of the human soul create solid barriers to a wider Japanese understanding. So one must approach the poetry by close readings of the text in which disunion is imbued with historical realities and dense metaphors are untangled.

Dorothea Steiner continued with the problems of Dickinson in cross-cultural teaching, particularly with reference to the Germanic. Steiner charts poems as a tool to break barriers in a cross-cultural milieu. One sees the poem as “process” with a “voice” moving out to the boundary and the limitless space beyond the boundary line. The quest is truth; there are blocks. On

the circumference (boundary) the message exists [I (eye) and ear]. Steiner places Dickinson in society but alien to it. Thus, Dickinson's letter "A" to the world in subversifying mode shows up this paradox of clasp society but running from it. Paralleling this is the authority/skepticism element of the poems.

All these difficulties create the central issues of teaching Dickinson in English at a non-English university. Steiner points out the problems inherent in English as a linked language in which cultural complexities and textural analysis figure largely in achieving understanding. Steiner first reads a poem; then one or more students read the poem and analysis begins. Who is the speaker, the "voice"? What are the puzzles? What signals are given? What are the gaps? What of the enigmas of paradox, unconventionality, cultural placement/displacement? Dickinson is addressed in context as a representative American poet (not as a "nation's pet"). However, the problematic assessments of "this great American voice" (against culture while contained in the culture) erect the major hurdles in cross-cultural teaching.

Poet Marcella Taylor's Caribbean background alone (from the Bahamas to Minnesota) says something of the shifts and experiences in straddling cultures. Taylor stresses the question of where the racially complex person/reader can find itself in the text. Some poems create a bridge to the racially marginalized reader. Others do not. Semantic shifts in the poems and the sacrificial underpinning of the poetry loom as obstacles for students of different cultures. Dickinson becomes the voice between heritage and alienation. The teacher must reach out to newly articulated myths and suggest the invention of a new self—a rebel against received norms. The puritan concept of the primacy of the individual ("The Soul selects her own Society") relates to the artistic expressions of the racially marginalized. Poems dealing with the struggle to free the self attract such readers.

In summing up, the panel and audience returned to Dickinson's meaning of "translation," her sense of it as rapture, to teachers as translators ("teaching this New England elitist to African women"), and the swelling vote of confidence that teachers can and do show how Dickinson spoke then and now.

Ralph Drake
Cleveland, Ohio

Culture III

Martha Nell Smith, *moderator*; Frances Payne Adler, Alicia Ostriker, and Wendy Barker, *panelists*

"Real poetry is always translation," said Martha Nell Smith, opening a session with three women poets whose individual "conversion experiences" with Dickinson and whose strategies for translating that experience in their lives and work made this session more than lively: It was a personal encounter with the ways Dickinson has empowered the work of these poets.

Wendy Barker's conversion story began with discovering that Dickinson's "whiteness" dazzled her, giving meaning to the little scraps which the young Barker did not yet recognize as poetry, and turning an incipient novel with the first line "It was grey; it was absolutely grey" into a life in the presence of Dickinson's "other way of thinking."

Barker's own "Way of Whiteness" capped a conversation in which she conveyed her growth from the young woman who read all of Dickinson's poems "in two nights," feeling "terrified" because "these poems were speaking not only to me but for me," to the Barker of today, who recognizes that reading Dickinson's canon "changed me from someone locked up in her prose closet...to be what I could be."

Frances Payne Adler, also engaging the large gathering in her personal narrative, focused on Dickinson as "Activist Activator." Her narrative traced the movement from the isolation she felt in a family in which "creativity is regarded as a character defect" to the affirmation granted by Dickinson's knowledge that poetry is affective; it makes one "feel physically as if the top of [her] head were taken off."

That led Adler to suggest six ways women writers may follow Dickinson in creating "a world where poetry matters": recognizing that the woman's voice has been colonized, taking her own values seriously, supporting herself with her own system, acknowledging the power within, and maintaining faith in her own vision. "Dickinson made me bold," said Adler, who shared her own poetry on the homeless, the bruised, the victims of war and domestic violence. "I saw the violence and heard desperation," she concluded, but "we have the road map....Emily Dickinson might say that this is a time to make poetry matter."

Poetry matters "when women poets rewrite the culture," declared Alicia Ostriker, who previewed her revisionist biblical interrogation, *The Nakedness of the Fathers*. Ostriker's new book explores the hermeneutics of suspicion, desire, and indeterminacy in women poets, including Dickinson. When Dickinson spoke archly of her family's morning address to "an eclipse," a metonymy loaded with possibilities, and hurled other epithets to God, she was challenging received religion and God Himself; she was also paving the way for Ostriker.

As Dickinson addressed Moses directly and empathetically—"Old Man on Nebo! Late as this—/My justice bleeds—for Thee"—so Ostriker enters the lives of biblical figures left bereft by that Old Man. Those whose myths were extricated from history to become Ostriker's include Miriam ("You who remember my promise/ you will feel me under your footsteps/Like cool water./ Follow me.") and Joshua, who received antithetical messages from God in how to handle a dichotomized world.

In the discussion that followed, Barton St. Armand prompted a spirited response to his question on the price of being a poet—often the price of madness, he said. All the participants and several observers issued a refrain of Dickinson's reversals of the terms of madness, for example, that "A little madness...is wholesome." Other questions included Ellen Hart's suggestion that Adler was "in dialogue" with Betsy Erkkila's work on Dickinson's class consciousness. For Dickinson, answered Adler, closing her door was a political action. Jean Balderston spoke of what the Edward Dickinson papers reveal about generational pressures within the family. Nancy Hurrelbrinck wondered if the women poets' praise of Dickinson's choices should be shaded. Perhaps Dickinson was not always in control. But, in the final word of the session, Hurrelbrinck asked if Dickinson's strength comes precisely from that tension: from the inner chaos that wrestled with her determination.

Wendy Barker, whose Dickinson wrote "courageously about what Joseph Campbell calls the hero's journey," Fran Adler, whose Dickinson "politicized" her, and Alicia Ostriker, whose Dickinson challenges women poets to "rewrite the culture," were more interested in Dickinson as model for a braver way to be than in categorizing her as a historical figure.

Eleanor Heginbotham
University of Maryland

Translating Emily Dickinson: In the Arts

Arts I

Jonathan Morse, *moderator*; Judith Farr and Barton St. Armand, *panelists*

The focus of this session was a consideration of how Emily Dickinson's experiential perceptions in literature and art were "translated" into her poetry.

In the initial paper, Barton St. Armand turned to "Emily Dickinson and *The Indicator*: A Transcendental Frolic." His thrust was the ultimate importance of Amherst College in Dickinson's education. He suggested that Dickinson, with her familial, long-standing ties, actually attended the College vicariously and completed the course "by correspondence." A source of obvious stimulus to Dickinson in the late 1840s came from the student literary periodical, *The Indicator*, which published articles on Emerson and the new Transcendentalism, on Poe, on Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, and on many other subjects.

This was a journal with which Dickinson was thoroughly familiar and in which a Dickinson document first appeared, in February 1850—a Valentine (Letter 34) apparently sent to an editor and friend, George Gould. Though "Magnum bonum, 'harum scarum'" is on the surface a nonsense Valentine, St. Armand sees it as far more substantive, reflecting philosophical and analytical ideas as well as a certain intellectual sophistication. Above all, it is laced with Dickinson's "Damascus blade" wit. Gould's colleague Henry Shipley, who was Dickinson's first critic, called the Valentine "a very ingenious affair."

St. Armand believes *The Indicator* both informed and inspired Dickinson as she began to build her private portfolio of verse. Her fascination with and respect for words became essential to her art. She turned from her early poetry to verse that was often subtle and profound. Using examples of specific poems, St. Armand pointed out certain crucial themes. Among his salient points was that, although Dickinson pretended to be unfamiliar with Edgar Allan Poe's work, she actually was well acquainted with it. He also suggested that Dickinson and Henry James shared economic values in "the marketplace of ideas" and that Dickinson anticipated James.

Judith Farr chose as her topic "Emily Dickinson and Her Codes from the Art of

Thomas Cole, Frederic Church, and William Holman Hunt." As a visual accessory to her discussion of the importance of art in Dickinson's poetry, Farr showed a series of slides including Cole's series "The Voyage of Life" and his "Expulsion from the Garden of Eden," Church's "The Heart of the Andes," and Hunt's "The Light of the World."

With an affinity for the metaphysical and for the aesthetics of John Ruskin, Dickinson created her own "painterly images." Farr pointed out Dickinson's pervasive interest in art, reflected in numerous ways. Because she was such a private person, she used codes in her verse, especially in reference to two of the most important people in her life—Susan Dickinson and Samuel Bowles.

Though she cannot prove it, Farr believes Dickinson was familiar with and influenced by Cole's "Voyage of Life," a series of four paintings. As a Hudson River School artist, he translated his view of divinity into vast romantic landscapes featuring large bodies of water and dramatic scenes. This allegorical sequence shows a Christian's journey through "Childhood," "Youth," "Manhood," and "Old Age." Copies were widely disseminated, possibly even to Mary Lyon's Mt. Holyoke Female Seminary. A cartoon based on these paintings appeared in *Harper's* in 1859.

Farr cited various examples in Dickinson's poetry of images that seem to relate to the paintings of the Hudson River School and the Luminists, or to paintings in general. She equated Hunt's famous view of Christ with a lantern in hand, knocking on a closed door, with Dickinson, shut out by Susan, in "Heart! I am knocking—low at thee" (Poem 317). The poet's vision of light is one of her most persistent themes.

In the brief discussion period, Farr indicated that Cole was commissioned by Julia Ward Howe's father to make a second series of "The Voyage of Life," the version now at the National Gallery of Art.

Asked about Susan and Austin Dickinson's art collection, St. Armand responded that the emphasis was American Pre-Raphaelite. After the collection, including art books, is carefully exam-

ined, St. Armand is certain it will reveal much about the high Victorian culture in which Emily Dickinson's gifts burgeoned.

The panel offered cogent and compatible insights into the poet's creative development, thus bringing more sharply into view the nature of her achievement.

Mary Elizabeth Kromer Bernhard
Amherst

Arts II

Jonnie Guerra, *moderator*; Cynthia Griffin Wolff, Maravene Loeschke, Agneta Bjorn, *panelists*

Arts II was a dynamic and interactive session, fostered by the unique juxtaposition of its speakers: one, scholar and biographer Cynthia Griffin Wolff, who spoke about the poet as distinguished from the person of Emily Dickinson, and two actresses who portray the person of the poet.

Wolff began with a discussion of her approach to Dickinson, which involves a consideration of various "force fields" under which the writer writes—gender, family situation, and linguistics, as well as aesthetic, moral, and political concerns of the period. It is through an understanding and appreciation of these constraints, she said, that the poet is approached. The result is an awareness of a different or separate self from the biographical person. Wolff demonstrated her approach by referring to several poems, especially "I felt a Funeral, in my Brain," which reveals Dickinson exploring and exploding a sentimental tradition of her time. Wolff ended her discussion by suggesting that "we not keep chasing the woman."

In contrast, the two speakers who followed were actresses Maravene Loeschke and Agneta Bjorn, each of whom had portrayed Dickinson on stage. Their presentations, based on the biographical perspective of playwright William Luce's *Belle of Amherst*, provided them with the window through which they came to know the poet.

Each of the actresses discussed the challenges and problems of bringing a shy, reticent poet to center stage. Both spoke as actresses interested in portraying the poet through action and conflict. They also spoke of their individual research and understanding of the person of Emily Dickinson.

During the discussion period that followed, Loeschke spoke of how she drew on her own life experiences to interpret the poet.

Bjorn also said succinctly that that is exactly what actors must do: they “have to use something from themselves.”

It is ironic that in such a discussion, the two conflicting sides of Dickinson scholarship were presented so vividly—one side seeking the poet, the other seeking the person behind the poet. Perhaps Caroline Ryburn, another actress, pulled these two threads together by saying simply that all readers, whether scholars or actresses, make their own personal identification with Dickinson, and that is why such a “collaborative experience” as this conference is so exciting. I could only support this comment with my own enthusiastic Amen.

Maryanne Garbowsky
County College of Morris

Arts III

Judy Jo Small, *moderator*; Maryann Sewell, Carol Herman, Robert Chauls, William Wallis, *panelists*

This panel examined some of the immense variety of ways in which musicians have translated Dickinson’s lyrics into the medium of song. Compositions by Carol Herman and Robert Chauls, performed on the previous evening, were a major focus of the discussion.

Maryann Sewell, a voice teacher and performer who has researched musical settings of Dickinson’s poetry, presented a historical overview and performed a sampling of diverse musical interpretations. Although sometimes the poems have been forced to conform to hymn tunes or popular songs, Sewell observed, more successful settings recognize that Dickinson’s flexible line “does not bump along in 8’s and 6’s.” Sewell emphasized the contrasts in three settings of “I taste a liquor never brewed—”: Arthur Farwell combines a clear melodic line with a thick texture in the piano, Gordon Getty offers a rousing drinking song, and John Duke suggests the flight of bees and butterflies in a setting that “reels” with giddy feeling. Similarly, two settings of “Heart! We will forget him” create sharply different moods: Aaron Copland’s music drags a slow, somber rhythm, whereas John Duke adds urgency with an intense, *appassionata* piano. The added dimension of music, a member of the audience remarked, dramatically “physicalizes the tension” in the language.

Carol Herman, composer of the elegant *Four Poems for Soprano Voice and Viola*

da Gamba, explained how she joined Dickinson’s words and the dynamic possibilities of two musical voices. A specialist in early music, Herman approached the poems with a “very Baroque idea of word painting.” To express the word “dreary” in “I’m Nobody,” for example, Herman used a *glissando* on the viola da gamba. The soprano “tastes” the syllables of “luxury” in “Wild Nights.” In “He fumbles at your Soul,” a technique called *cal legno* (hitting the strings with the wood of the bow) accompanies the phrase “prepares your brittle Nature”; a hard, complex chord animates the word “Thunderbolt”; and an exquisite high pitch produces the stunning ending.

Robert Chauls, composer of the cycle *Songs of Great Men and Death*, wrote his settings with “dramatic intent.” Feeling that Dickinson’s words “breathed life into the music,” Chauls created “an instrumental envelope” for the poems by exploiting the piano’s possibilities for color. His setting of “Because I could not stop for Death” developed around two musical ideas—one a rapid passage imitating a wild carriage ride, the other a slow waltz portraying Death as a sly, subtle suitor. For “I took my Power in my Hand,” he said, musical phrasing and tempo suggest a childlike David screwing up his courage, hesitating, throwing his “Pebble,” and then missing. Discerning a tongue-in-cheek tone in “It always felt to me—a wrong,” Chauls wrote a bluesy setting reminiscent of Gershwin’s “It Ain’t Necessarily So.” Chauls contrasted the desperate immediacy of Copland’s setting of “I felt a Funeral, in my Brain” with the calm, retrospective mood of his own composition, which ends with the sensation of “hanging in space.”

William Wallis, a professor of English and also the tenor who performed the vocal part of Chauls’s cycle, offered a detailed analysis of Chauls’s setting of “My life closed twice before its close.” This “remarkably regular iambic poem” contains an expressive interruption of its regularity in the seventh line; the metrical shift, simultaneous with a pronominal shift and a semantic shift, signals the “poem’s peak.” The musical counterpart, Wallis explained, is a lyrical expansion of the voice into the upper register in a passage glowing with chromaticism. This emotional climax, adumbrated in the third line (the highest thrust of the first stanza), prepares the way for the close, which returns to the home key and a

final major chord. The composer’s experimentation with musical design is not unlike Dickinson’s experimentation with poetic form; most daring of Chauls’s experiments, Wallis noted, is the extraordinary “contemplative setting” of “I felt a Funeral, in my Brain.”

This discussion emphasized that the process of “translating” a poem into the medium of music is, above all, an act of interpretation—sometimes interpretation of great power.

Judy Jo Small
North Carolina State University

Application Workshop:

Artistic Representations

Jonnie Guerra, *moderator*; Belinda Heckler, Ellen Davis, Susanna Lippoczy Rich, William Wallis, *panelists*

Representations of Dickinson in several art forms were demonstrated in this lively and varied session. It began with a visit from Emily Dickinson herself, in the person of actress Belinda Heckler. Using her own text and a number of Dickinson poems, Heckler presented a shy, nervous woman forced to make conversation with an audience, turning to her poems almost as a defense against the violation of her privacy. In discussing her interpretation, Heckler says that she tries to express the immediacy and intimacy of the poems in order to touch the hearts of her audience, to “invite them in.” She noted in addition that the artist necessarily “leaves fingerprints.”

Ellen Davis spoke on and read from the poetry of Lucie Brock-Broido, who has created a series of fifty prose poems based on Dickinson’s “Master letters.” Brock-Broido herself describes the poems as a “commingling [of] Victorian excesses of the tongue—the High Romance of [Dickinson’s] Lexicon—with the ripbop of Twentieth-Century chatter.... The Master is a distant figure, aloof, and the speaker of these poems addresses him from her elected position of yearning and exile. These are her forms of bulletins from Mortality.”

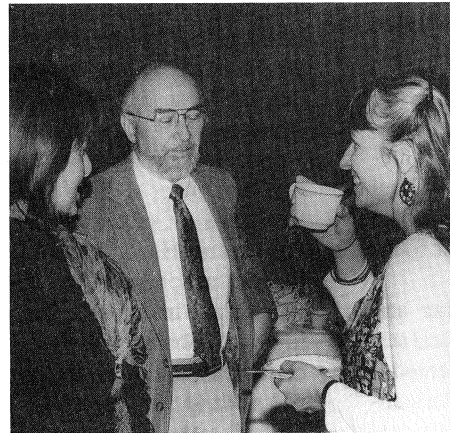
Susanna Rich presented slides illustrating the work of New York sculptor Leslie Dill, who creates haunting iconic works in plaster and metal incorporating Dickinson’s poems. The words of “One need not be a chamber—to be haunted,” for example,



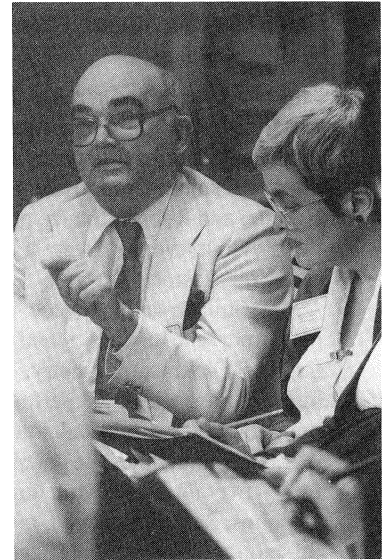
Left, President Margaret Freeman welcomes conference participants to the Opening Session. Above (l-r), Maxine Clair, Alice Fulton, Barbara Clarke Mossberg, Suzanne Juhasz, and Cristanne Miller present a "Concerted Reading" of poems as part of "A Dickinson Celebration."



The silent auction and book display attracted browsers, buyers, bidders—and viewers. Wendy Barker is shown the Japanese translation of her "Lunacy of Light."



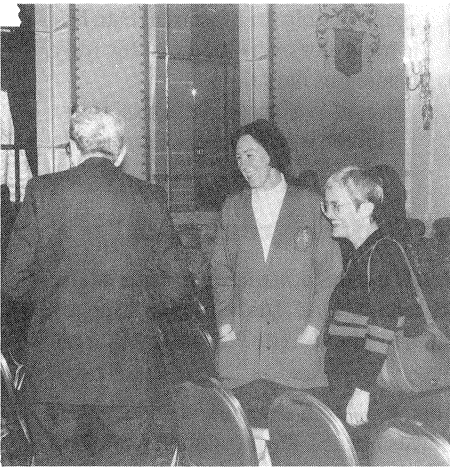
Above, Hungarian translators Zsuzsanna Ujszászi and Susanna Rich talk with Rich's husband, Morton Rich. Right, "Dickinson Studies" editor Fred Morey and Jane Eberwein take part in one of the many workshops.



Dickinson spoken here! The tea honoring international participants brought delegates together for conviviality and final exchanges. Left, Barbara Mossberg, Chanthana Chaichit of Thailand, Haruko Kimura of Japan, and Conference Director Jonnie Guerra. Above, International Consultant Anne Gurvin with Stephanie Tingley and Vice-President Margaret Dickie.



Above, the audience gathers in Hand Chapel at Mount Vernon College for "A Dickinson Celebration." Left, composer Robert Chauls accompanies the world premiere of his Songs of Great Men and Death, commissioned by EDIS for the concert.



Above, Dorothea Steiner from Austria with Jane Eberwein and Benjamin Lease. Below, Finnish delegates Kaarina Halonen and Sirkka Heiskanen-Mäkelä .

EDIS President Margaret Freeman with Scandinavian translators Lennart Nyberg and Sirkka Heiskanen-Mäkelä compare final thoughts on translation.



Jones Library curator Daniel Lombardo and book dealers Fred Marks and Robert Lucas.

Japanese delegate Yoko Shimazaki talks with Barbara Mossberg.



Workshops and Panels



Photo by Janet M. Baxter

Translation Workshops 861: "Split the Lark—"

Harold P. Hanson, *moderator*; Lennart Nyberg, Yoko Shimazaki, *panelists*

Lennart Nyberg opened the workshop on "Split the Lark—and you'll find the Music" with a general discussion of translating from English to Swedish. He pointed out that the two languages have much in common, including syntax and many linguistic cognates. On the other hand, translating rhyme into Swedish is difficult because of the paucity of Swedish rhymes.

Turning to the poem itself, Nyberg emphasized specific difficulties for a Swedish translator. The first is identifying and establishing the theme and discovering the hidden meanings. Is 861 a poem about skepticism? Is it about blood or water? Is Dickinson the bird? Should the ambiguities be retained as much as possible?

Nyberg then pointed out the specific difficulties for a Swedish translator. They include *bulb*, *in silver rolled*, *scantily*, *saved*, *reserved for you*, *lute*, *flood*, *patent*, and *experiment*. He emphasized that a unique characteristic of Dickinson's poetry is her frequent use of economic terminology.

Since Japanese is so intrinsically different from the Indo-European languages, Shimazaki did not offer an actual translation of "Split the Lark," precisely because the poem is not popular or well-known in Japan. Of the six poems selected for this conference, this is the least translated into Japanese.

The first problem is the resolution of the incongruous relation between the brutality of the first line and the beauty of the lines that follow. The second problem is the choice of gender-language: women's or men's. There is no specific determinant of the sex of the speaker, but selection of women's language, for example, would tend to establish 861 as a love poem.

The third problem is the translation of proper nouns, particularly those with Christian associations. While Shimazaki is herself Christian, that is not true for most of her compatriots.

Next, Shimazaki addressed specific words and images. All Japanese translators have mistranslated *rolled* so that the music rolls out in silver balls. She acknowledged that this is incorrect but she defended the standard Japanese interpretation in terms of classical Japanese images, which she recommended to her American audience.

Japanese translators treat *patent* as meaning "obvious," with no hint of anything legalistic. Shimazaki's main point was that one must interpret before one translates.

Since there were only two panelists, Harold Hanson then read into the proceedings the translation of 861 into Norwegian by Inger Hagerup.

In the discussion that followed, comments were exchanged about the interaction of languages and the mutual enrichments that can accrue through translation and back-translation. The panelists were in agreement, however, that Dickinson's

voice was so unique that in translating her the flow is unidirectional into the target language.

Shimazaki was asked to expand on her presentation about male and female languages. She explained the further modification that exists in Japanese for polite and familiar forms and demonstrated the various manners of expression.

There were interchanges among the audience and the panelists about such standard questions in translation as the liberties one may take with the original and the extent to which an available rhyme may "seduce" a translator. Specific words asked about included *bulb*, *scale*, and *true*. It was clear that many more interpretations remain to be explored in this one small poem.

This successful session brought out the many facets of Dickinson's thinking and her penetrating but often inscrutable use of language. Probably the most trenchant lesson for translators was the need for truly close reading of the original.

Harold P. Hanson, Editor of *Delos*
University of Florida, Gainesville

341: "After great pain"

Karen Dandurand, *moderator*; Anne-Marie Christensen, Dali Tan, Susanna Lippocyc Rich, and Maria H. de Paiva Correia, *panelists*

Moderator Karen Dandurand and the four panelists opened the translation workshop on "After great pain, a formal feeling comes" by reading the poem in English, Danish, Chinese, Hungarian, and Portuguese. De Paiva Correia rendered her Portuguese translation in rhymed verse, Rich's Hungarian translation was in unrhymed verse, and Christensen and Tan translated into Danish and Chinese in both rhymed and unrhymed verse.

The panelists then described their approaches to translating and pointed out the difficulties. Christensen said that while the Danish and English languages are similar in many ways, Danish sounds different, and this presents a problem. Sound is important in Dickinson's poems, and the translation should not seem contrived.

Tan, too, noted that sound is important to the meaning of Dickinson's poems and is difficult to translate into Chinese. Other

problems include translating Dickinson's witty ambiguity and her play on words with multiple possibilities, capturing both the literal and the metaphorical meanings, and rendering both the solemnity and the levity of Dickinson's tone. Tan concluded by comparing translating to fishing, which requires patience, skill, and luck.

Rich's first consideration before translating is trying to understand Dickinson's poems in English. Because Hungarian is an agglutinative and more melodious language than English, capturing Dickinson's voice is difficult. Rich says that translating stretches you to understand the poem better and involves some editing. She focuses on rhythm because rhymes are difficult and when they come, they come as "cosmic gifts." Rich compares translating to working a Rubik's Cube—each time one element is moved, the whole configuration changes. She pointed out that the poem itself is about translating: "After great pain, a formal feeling comes.../First—Chill—then Stupor—then the letting go—."

De Paiva Correia's main concern is that Dickinson's diction be preserved, but she cited several specific difficulties: for example, "a formal feeling" is difficult to translate using a noun and an adjective, so she uses a single word that means composure; "ought," on the other hand, requires several Portuguese words. Portuguese syntax and language conventions, as well as cultural differences, present other problems. De Paiva Correia concluded that the translation should be a poem even if it is not quite faithful to the original.

All translators, whatever their language, appear to struggle with the question of how much liberty to take. A member of the audience suggested footnoting as a help. Rich, in the spirit of Dickinson, preferred "variants that open up meaning" rather than footnotes that close meaning off.

Barbara Kelly
Palo Alto, California

Works in Progress

Re-Visions: New Voices— New Perspectives on Dickinson's Poetry

James McIntosh, *moderator*; Dali Tan, Daneen Wardrop, David Sullivan, *panelists*

The three panelists in this session touched

upon areas of Dickinson's work relating poetry to sexuality, the self, and gender identity. Using Martha Nell Smith's methodology of highlighting sexual as well as textual issues, Tan draws parallels between the Chinese poet Li Qingzhao and Dickinson in hope that Western feminist theories may enlighten Chinese women's literature. Tan finds connections between the two poets in their self-assertion and in the way their poems assert a victory of poetic art. Citing "Title divine—is mine!" she points out how both poets create speakers who are creative, active agents triumphing over God, birth, marriage, and even death.

But while Emily could turn to Sue as a primary object of erotic desire or as a confidante and an essential part of her poetic "workshop," Li Qingzhao seemed to be alone. She used masculine tropes and typical male imagery to emphasize herself as poet. Both poets were constricted by the gendered reception of women of their time, with Li Qingzhao facing the additional restriction of feudalistic repression and the cultural expectation that intellectuals should be tactful and indirect. Like Dickinson, her allusions to her own cultural canon expressed faith in the ability of poetry to endow the poet with supernatural power and immortality. One of her speakers says she may seem "eccentric to many, but I lie and wallow in lines of poetry."

Daneen Wardrop examined Dickinson's bride poems and suggested that the term "dower" may be second only to "circumference" in importance in her work. She showed the status of the bride as one of waiting, of maintaining "Dowers of Prospective." The bride is between states, able to say either yes or no, suspended in readiness, half of dust, half of day. The wedding itself exists out of place and time. Wardrop parallels the liminal space of Dickinson's bride and Catherine Earnshaw's window-sill of *Wuthering Heights*.

Other Gothic heroines find resonance in Dickinson's work, especially Aurora Leigh and Jane Eyre, both of whom refuse marriage in order to find their own assets. Wardrop places Dickinson's Gothic bride in a patriarchal context, examining the Victorian family's fear of "flawed" heritage and the ways in which the Gothic wedding contract contains the seeds of its own destruction. The wedding portends horror with its undercurrents of violence and the sociological and biological fears inherent in the yielding up of the bride. Yet within

her the bride bears her dowry, her own identity, which validates her waiting. The dowry is also her treasure, which she can give away, empowering herself in the process. Dickinson's bride gathers into herself symbols of endowment (e.g., "Daffodil Dowries") of which her own poetry is the most powerful. Puns on the bond of monetary contract (Poem 247) and on the word "dower" as "doer" and "I do" reveal the scope of this trope in understanding Dickinson's poetry. "What *would* the dower be?" she asks in Poem 505. Wardrop suggests that it is the hope and power of poetry.

David Sullivan presented a reading of Letters 909 and 912 to Sue, focusing on a poem in stanza form included in Letter 912. His presentation also included a critique of Ellen Louise Hart's article "The Encoding of Homoerotic Desire," which discusses this letter. Sullivan suggests that in the letter and letter/poem Emily actually wrongs Sue by silencing her. The personification of flowers, the punning use of Sue's name ("Be Sue..."), Emily's statement that she "usurps [Sue's] copyright," all, he suggests, play into a strategy of control that excludes Sue from a poem which uses her for its own purposes. Sullivan calls this a "pseudoequality" between addresser and addressee and states that Dickinson closes the circle and allows no room for Sue.

Thus Sullivan calls into question Hart's reading of the letter as a "fiction of reciprocity." Rather, the letter shows Dickinson assuming a position of power and control over Sue, shutting her out yet simultaneously pleading for response. Sullivan feels that Dickinson, in revealing this need to be wanted by someone she cannot control, creates a discomfort for the reader, a hunger that cannot be assuaged.

Terry Blackhawk, NEH Teacher-Scholar, 1992-93, Detroit, Michigan

Application Workshops

Teaching Dickinson

Vivian Pollak, *moderator*; Margaret Dickie, Cheryl Walker, Jonathan Morse, *panelists*

This session was lively and well attended. Vivian Pollak opened with a brief presentation on "How [Not] to Teach Dickinson: The Uses and Abuses of Biography."

Cheryl Walker then delivered a paper on

“Teaching Dickinson as a Gen(i)us: Emily among the Women,” in which she argued that Dickinson, however special, also “belongs to a genus, a category of individuals marked by common characteristics.”

Jonathan Morse spoke on “Footnotes and Anti-Footnotes,” suggesting that Dickinson is a special pedagogical case. He likened the activity of teaching to footnoting (providing social, historical, and literary context), whereas Dickinson’s poems seem to pull radically against this project.

Finally, Margaret Dickie spoke eloquently on “Teaching Emily Dickinson, the Lyric Poet.” She insisted that “Reading poetry is an art quite different from reading sociology...an art in which most students, not to say some critics, need instruction.” Dickie further noted that she gets her students to memorize poems, a technique that prompted much interest in the ensuing discussion period.

The heterogeneous audience included a number of high school teachers, who were reassured to hear that none of us has magic answers for dealing with poetry anxiety in our students. One of them noted that she has her students write a poem in the Emily Dickinson style organized around an experience of loss. Conversation spilled over into the hall. We hope to repeat a “Teaching Dickinson” session at some other conference in the not too distant future.

Vivian Pollak
University of Washington

Editing/Publication

Martha Nell Smith, *moderator*; Ellen Louise Hart, Jeanne Holland, and Marta Werner, *panelists*

Ellen Louise Hart’s promise to speak on the two recently discovered Dickinson documents [see separate report, page 2] and her expectation of an open workshop model facilitated a dynamics of interaction between presenters and audience that grew and became a fine example of collaborative scholarship.

What readers know as “The feet of people walking home” (Johnson’s Poem 7, with three existing manuscripts) appears now as a letter framed by the greeting “Darling” and the close “Lovingly, Emilie.” Hart cited the intimacy and romantic language of the other manuscript letter: “Thank you for your frequent coming....I will keep them all (flowers, sound of laugh) til I reach (obtain?) my other Susie whose sweet face

you bring afresh every day you come.” Hart argued that the “other Susie” was the Susie of the mind’s eye, in “the parlor of the heart.”

Hart foregrounded a study of provenance as essential to determining the documents’ significance. Later discussion between Hart and Polly Longworth, who suggested that the letter may have been sent to Susan Phelps, outlined the importance of further study to determine the ownership of the books in which the manuscripts were found.

Hart linked the opportunity enunciated by these new documents to the misrepresentation of material sent to Susan Dickinson. She described her current project—the production, with co-editor Martha Nell Smith, of an edition of the letters and poems Dickinson sent to Sue in as close to the original form as possible.

Susan Howe’s concept of Dickinson’s “visual intentionality” serves as key to the new edition, which responds materially to Howe’s mandate that “scholars, especially women, must now face the question, ‘Why is there still no printed text of Emily Dickinson’s poetry to challenge such reductive rationality?’” as the persistent use of the Johnson edition as the “ur-text” even after publication of the manuscript books that “explode Johnson’s criteria for line endings.”

Jeanne Holland’s presentation, “Scraps, Stamps, and Cut-Outs: Emily Dickinson’s Technologies of Publication” celebrated the bawdy and the body in Dickinson’s late experimentation with textual production. Making use of Martha Nell Smith’s clarifying argument that Dickinson makes “careful distinction between publish and print,” Holland tells us that “if Dickinson did not intend to print, then the printing of her poetry misrepresents it.” She directs us to the manuscripts to understand Dickinson’s production and overturns the notion that Dickinson, as Franklin remarks, “finally gave herself up (as though overcome?) to the proliferation of shapes and sizes of her worksheets and miscellaneous manuscripts.”

Holland argues that “from the beginning,” with her sewing of the fascicles, her inclusion of more and more variants, her “circumscribing her readership to family, friends, and chosen outsiders, her refusal to print, and her ultimate writing on household detritus, Dickinson progressively refined her own domestic technologies of publication.” Not only did Dickinson “work

from a pool of manuscripts, making fair copies of poems,” she also drew from a “pool of textual clippings” (thus an 1865 clipping adheres to an 1871 poem) to create a playful manipulation of textual elements whose strategy is transgression and disorder that “flaunts the uselessness of the Law.”

Holland’s narrated reading and slide presentation of “Alone and in a circumstance” (Poem 1167) displaces the subjectivity of the wounded female body and links transgression/spider with the poet whose deliberately produced textual materiality graphically demands recognition for its commentary upon the subject body.

Holland’s own manipulation of the speaker’s space oscillated between the position at the podium and the position of desire as she moved into the space of the poem projected large upon the screen. She inserted her hand between the cut-out “legs” of George Sand and Mauprat to gesture dismissively at the latinate law that Dickinson had stacked neatly in the position of the phallus like so many closed books. It was a brilliant enactment.

Marta Werner’s paper on Dickinson’s late drafts focused on the letters supposedly addressed to Otis Lord in the Dickinson Collection at Amherst College, where she “expected to see fifteen letters. Yet instead of the lost pieces of a single correspondence...I found a collection of fragments in an unknown order.” That these fragments have been published (in part as Letters 561, 562, and 645) and “given order,” “the remnants of forty drafts...constellated as fifteen whole texts” was Werner’s subject.

Of letter 645, said to be to Lord, she demonstrated, “Here, six undated and elliptical messages addressed to no one...are now fixed within one stabilized field.” For Letter 562, she found, folding patterns in the manuscript “speak decisively against” the printed text’s “refiguration.” Subjected to “method,” Dickinson’s late drafts have been subdued, and “their illumination of an uncontrolled interior” has been darkened by the hand that brought them to light.

Werner, like many Dickinson scholars, asks: “When is a letter a poem? When is a poem a letter? What does a draft liberate? How can we hold our desire for mastery at bay long enough to describe such elusive phenomena?”

All of these presentations direct scholarship back to the manuscripts. A notable

"Dickinson Celebration" Illumines Poems

At the Friday evening "Dickinson Celebration" in Washington, we heard fascinating new "translations" of Emily Dickinson poetry into song, demonstrating once again the close connection that can exist between music and poetry. Two very different kinds of settings were presented. *Emily Dickinson: Four Poems for Soprano Voice and Bass Viol Da Gamba* (a Washington, D.C., premiere), composed by Carol Herman and performed by the composer and Washington area soprano Suzannah Waldo, are intimate duets between the voice of the singer and that of the gamba.

Commissioned by EDIS for this conference, *Of Great Men and Death: Eleven Songs to Poetry of Emily Dickinson for Tenor and Piano*, by Robert Chauls, performed by William Wallis, tenor, with Dr. Chauls at the piano, are showier, more dramatic songs of greater dynamic and emotional range.

The common thread in these song cycles is the preeminent importance of the poetry of Emily Dickinson and the composers' hopes that they can enhance the meaning of the poetry through musical settings.

Ms Herman's compositions illuminate individual words, phrases, and lines, word painting with both the vocal and the instrumental lines. A master of the viol da gamba, she provided wonderful, unexpected sounds on this usually more sedate baroque instrument. In both "Wild Nights—Wild Nights!" and "The name—of it—is 'Autumn'" there are eerie glissando winds. Staccato "it sprinkles Bonnets" and vocal "eddies" enrich "The name—of it—is 'Autumn.'" "I'm Nobody!" has "dreary" viol and voice slides in the opening line and a wonderful waltz for "Then there's a pair of us!" "He fumbles at your Soul" includes "fumbling" pizzicatos and chordal "hammers" for the viol and, at the end of the final line, "The Universe—is still—," the soprano sings a very high, very soft, very effective "still."

Because Herman's songs have such a transparent texture, they present a considerable challenge to the singer. The melody line is often disjunct and highly original; metrical changes and syncopations require careful execution so as not to appear contrived. Ms Waldo was wonderfully expressive, conveying text and musical meaning with a lovely, flexible tone over the large range these songs require, and projecting



Photo by Janet M. Baxter

the humor, especially in "I'm Nobody! Who are you?"

In *Songs of Great Men and Death*, Robert Chauls seeks to illuminate the meaning of an entire poem in what he calls an "instrumental envelope," often a very pianistic, thickly textured envelope. This "envelope" is often in a modified or extended ABA form. The first song, "Because I could not stop for Death—" opens with an almost manic rush (an interesting way to start a group of reflections on Death in the middle of a busy life). A wonderful romantic waltz for "we slowly drove—he knew no haste" leads back to the headlong rush past "the school where children strove," then a return to the romantic waltz for "We paused before a House..." and a last dash "toward Eternity—." As interesting as I think the setting is, I feel the message may be diluted by the form here.

"I took my Power in my Hand" is a very successful setting, opening with assertive, militaristic dotted rhythms and ascending arpeggio vocal lines. The song beautifully captures the bravado of intention and the regret of outcome.

"I felt a Funeral, in my Brain," the longest song in this group, presents a fascinating contrast to a setting by Aaron Copland. Copland's setting is very heavy, funereal, "with foreboding." Chauls begins with very light, airy, pianistic chimes and an almost falsetto vocal line—very otherworldly, heavenly. Only with the third verse, "And then I heard them lift a Box..." does the texture begin slowly to deepen and gain

strength, opening at last into incredible tolling "as all the Heavens were a Bell." The tension of the delay of climax in this song is very effective, yet I can't help longing for the heavier footfall of Copland's setting.

Listening to the contrasting settings of Chauls and Copland is, however, an enlightenment of variant readings of the same poem. Perhaps Copland's is about fear of Death to come, and Chauls's is about Death that has already occurred and is being looked back at from some more peaceful place.

This song cycle closes with "How the Waters closed above Him," a deceptively simple, very moving stanzaic setting in which Chauls uses a repetitive minor second as a motif that forms a poignant thread in this tragedy to the very last note. It is interesting that the last "word" in this group of song/poems is the piano's, that is, the composer's and not the voice's.



Photo by Janet M. Baxter

Robert Chauls writes beautiful, memorable melodies, and William Wallis, a remarkably gifted singer/actor to whom these songs are dedicated, projected their full emotional range of quiet intensity, jazzy humor, strength, and infinite sadness.

I have purposely avoided discussion of the *appropriateness* of setting Emily Dickinson's poetry to music, knowing there are many who feel that violence is done to a poem when a composer sets it. As a singer, musician, educator, and reader of poetry, I have long been an avid explorer of the many and varied settings of Dickinson

New Publications

Forthcoming Book

Cameron, Sharon. *Choosing Not Choosing: Dickinson's Fascicles*. February 1993. 216 pp. ISBN 0-226-09232-1 cloth, \$45.00; ISBN 0-226-09234-8 paper, \$16.95.

An examination of the fascicle poems in the context Dickinson created for them. Cameron argues that "an essential refusal of choice pervades all aspects of Dickinson's poetry." Because she "never chose whether she wanted her poems read as single lyrics or in sequence, 'not choosing' is a textual issue,...a formal issue,...a thematic issue,...and a philosophical one." [From catalog copy.]

Review

Lowenberg, Carlton. *Musicians Wrestle Everywhere: Emily Dickinson and Music*. Berkeley, Cal.: Fallen Leaf Press, 1992. xxviii + 210 pp. ISBN 0-914913-20-4, \$39.50.

Those of us in or with access to music schools during the 1950s remember the increasing delight with which we greeted new song settings of Emily Dickinson's poems. Her magic, the imagery and rhythms, were always there, it seemed, with well grounded interpretations of the poems from George Frisbie Whicher, among others.

But what was revelatory to listeners was another kind of interpretive power: that of inspired composer and dedicated singer of art songs. Occasionally a synergism occurred between words and music that sent one again and again back to the poet and to the composer as well.

Those of us who continued to attend voice recitals and chamber concerts marveled at the frequency with which Dickinson settings, familiar and unfamiliar, were included in programs. While we sensed this was seminal to the growth of the American art song, little did we realize what a remarkable entity its summation had become.

Now we have Carlton Lowenberg's fascinating new book on Dickinson song settings and her "transfer" to music. *Musicians Wrestle Everywhere* is devoted to the Dickinson oeuvre and the composers dedicated to it. How many other poets can claim over 1,600 musical settings by some 276 composers? Nearly 100 years of accumula-

tion mount, from Etta Parker's 1896 "Three Songs" to the current prolific compositions of Leo Smit.

But Mr. Lowenberg's book is more than an inventory of this remarkable collection. For the specialist and nonspecialist, poet and musician, common reader and listener, Lowenberg has managed to create a book that never ceases to be useful on one level and to charm the user-reader on another.

The main body of the book (about half) covers musical settings of poems and letters, arranged alphabetically by composer. Each entry is listed chronologically under its composer, with all needed information on the setting. The whole thus functions as an elegant handbook.

Importantly, Lowenberg has invited brief personal composer commentaries, quoting letters written to him or others about how each composer succumbed to the Dickinson magic. In his foreword, Richard B. Sewall rightfully stresses the effectiveness of these interludes. They spell the listings; they show the Dickinson challenge to heart and mind.

A miscellaneous grouping of works and performances that bind Emily Dickinson and music outside the vocal settings follows. Coupled with this is a handy, indispensable concordance of musical terms in the poems and letters. Well designed appendices offer further delight: Dickinson's personal albums of sheet music, books with music in the Dickinson library, music publications by her uncles, and the veritable Mount Holyoke Female Seminary's syllabus for teaching vocal music. These enrich the book's major segment; they also stand peripherally to enlarge its whole.

A bibliography begins the book's conclusion, with user utility in mind. A list of composers and addresses is followed by four indexes providing further access to musical settings: first lines, Johnson numbers, composers/titles, and performance media.

Lowenberg has worked before within the tradition and methods of historiography and bibliography. *Emily Dickinson's Textbooks* (1986) showed him utilizing the best of these methods to produce a work of significance. With *Musicians Wrestle Everywhere* he surpasses the earlier work. Emily Dickinson's "bolts of melody" have received deluxe treatment indeed. For that,

Lowenberg and his publisher, Fallen Leaf Press, warrant more than conventional praise.

Ralph Drake
Cleveland, Ohio

Book Notes

Emily Dickinson was one of *Six American Poets* included in a recent Book of the Month Club offering. This was the first time the club, with 1.5 million members in the United States, has offered a book of poetry as its main selection. An earlier BOMC volume of Dickinson's works sold over 10,000 copies.

William Shurr (University of Tennessee) writes that his book *The Marriage of Emily Dickinson: A Study of the Fascicles*, previously out of print, is now available in paperback from the University Press of America, priced at \$30.00.

Editing/Publication, continued from p. 14

conclusion to these three impressive presentations is the formation of an Editorial Collective. The panelists and several of those in the audience began the list of membership. Those interested in becoming members may contact Martha Nell Smith at the University of Maryland, College Park.

Marget Sands

University of Maryland, College Park

[Ed. note: For the Applications Workshop on Translation, see page 19. For that on Artistic Representations, see page 9.]

"Dickinson Celebration," continued from page 15

poetry in song. I believe a good musical setting can reveal and illuminate meanings more quickly than a single reading can. One can disagree with a composer's concept and feel that he or she has misread the poem, but that disagreement is also a way of defining more closely one's own understanding of the text. The songs heard at the EDIS conference were, I believe, such an illumination and, as such, wonderful additions to the catalog of musical settings of Emily Dickinson poetry.

Maryann Sewell
Voice Faculty, Montgomery College

EDIS Bulletin

Performances, Et Cetera

New Dickinson Activities in Denmark

Split the Lark, an entirely new production combining recitation of Dickinson's poetry with dance and music, was presented in seven major Danish cities in June and August 1992 under the sponsorship of the Danish Ministry of Cultural Affairs and with support from the Emily Dickinson Center in Lyø.

Producer for the event was Annette Bruun. Music was composed by Thøger Johansen and Poul Juhl. Translations were by Poul Borum, Annette Bruun, Ingrid Mejer Jensen, and Niels Kjær. Also taking part were Betina Astrup, Anne-Kristine Jensen, and Linda Nero.

In the fall of 1991 the Emily Dickinson Center at Lyø created the framework for an informal Emily Dickinson seminar. Participants were Sirkka Heiskanen-Mäkelä from Finland; Lis Møller and Anne-Marie Christensen from the University of Copenhagen; Lene Olufsen from the University of Odense; and Niels Kjær, director of the Emily Dickinson Center in Lyø.

All five have published works on Dickinson within the past year: Heiskanen-Mäkelä is editor of a selection of poems by Dickinson translated into Finnish; Møller has written on Dickinson and Wordsworth and on Dickinson as reader; Olufsen has published an essay on Dickinson and Virginia Woolf; Christensen's dissertation was on Dickinson and her "poetry of circumfer-

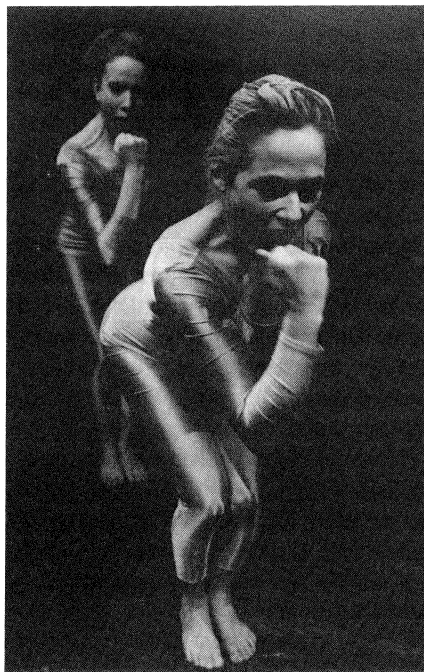


Photo by Nanna Arnfred

Anne-Kristine Jensen and Betina Astrup dance in *Split the Lark*

ence"; and Kjær has published a study of Søren Kierkegaard and Dickinson as well as several articles on Dickinson in Danish and American periodicals. The group informed each other about their works and had an inspiring weekend together.

Niels Kjær, Lyø

Jones Exhibit Ready by ED Birthday

After many delays, the new wing of the Jones Library in Amherst and its stunning new Emily Dickinson exhibit will soon be ready for viewing. Curator Daniel Lombardo reports that the exhibit may be seen by appointment beginning December 10, Dickinson's birthday.

The Jones's Dickinson collection was enriched by several items acquired at the EDIS conference. Takao Furukawa presented to the library his collection of forty-three books on Dickinson recently published in Japan. Sirkka Heiskanen-Mäkelä donated several books published in Danish and Finnish, and Chanthana Chaichit gave five Dickinson volumes in Thai.

Items purchased for the library from the silent auction included an Edward Dickinson letter of 1865, a 1932 Mabel Loomis Todd letter, a box of vintage writing paper similar to that used for Dickinson's fascicles, and visiting cards for Austin Dickinson and Martha Dickinson Bianchi. To complete the set, Barton St. Armand has promised to give the library Susan Dickinson's visiting card.

The formal opening of the Dickinson exhibit will probably be in February, after which it will be open Monday and Wednesday to Friday 9-5, Tuesday 9-9, and Saturday 10-5. To see the exhibit in the interim, call the library at 413-256-4090.

Artistic Representations, cont. from page 9

appear in cut-out form in a white dress that can be opened or shut, the poem legible only when the dress is open. "The Loneliness One dare not sound—" is embodied in "Airplane," while "The Mind lives on the Heart" emerges from the mouth of a two-dimensional metal head. These were fascinating and unexpected ways of viewing the poems.

William Wallis closed the session by showing portions of a new video illustrating the process by which composer Robert Chauls created his new song cycle on Dickinson poems, heard the previous night. (The video will be available soon for purchase; details will be presented in a future

issue of the *Bulletin*.)

Wallis, to whom Chauls's cycle is dedicated, said the "the musical aspects of poetry are what is most often neglected." A poet as well as a singer, Wallis spoke of what he has learned from Dickinson—not to fear personification of such abstractions as death and evil, to enjoy the "intimacy of paradox in our lives," and to experiment, as she did.

The variety of artistic representations inspired by Dickinson's work, as displayed in this session, demonstrated anew the continuing power of her vision.

Georgiana Strickland
University Press of Kentucky

Cobblestone Belle Wins More Awards

The Belle of Amherst production by the Cobblestone Arts Center in Victor, New York (reviewed in the spring 1992 issue of the *Bulletin*), which won national awards in the United States, chalked up more honors at the Dundalk Amateur Drama International Festival in Ireland this past summer.

Vicki Casarett, who portrayed Emily Dickinson, won best actress honors, and the production, the only American entry in the festival, won a certificate of merit. Congratulations to Casarett and director Michael Arvé.

Members' News

A Message from the New President

I am honored to have been elected the second president of EDIS and hope to build on the foundation ably established by Margaret Freeman and the Board, of which I was also proud to be a member.

Among our concerns for the future are possible representation of the Society in the town of Amherst; advancing the growth of the *Emily Dickinson Journal*; continuing to establish sessions at the American Literature Association meetings; attempting to secure allied status for our organization with the Modern Language Association; and planning for future conferences.

Needless to say, fundraising is always a concern, but preliminary reports suggest that we are in better financial shape after our Washington conference than might have been expected.

Any ideas or suggestions? Please write to me at the Department of English GN-30, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195.

Vivian Pollak

Membership Report

The Society numbered 403 members as of early October 1992, a substantial increase since the Annual Meeting of May 1991. Nineteen countries, forty-four states, and the District of Columbia are now represented. We include students, teachers, librarians, booksellers, retirees, and Dickinson admirers from many walks of life.

Renewal notices should go out in January 1993, following last year's successful experiment with a post-Christmas mailing. I encourage you to renew promptly in order to ensure timely arrival of the spring *Bulletin* and the *Emily Dickinson Journal*, if you subscribe. Late renewal sometimes results in members' missing publications they have happily anticipated.

Our remarkably successful Washington conference provided me a welcome opportunity to get acquainted with members I have known only through mailing lists or correspondence. It also reminded many of us how much we enjoy each other's fellowship and how greatly we benefit from getting together to talk about Emily Dickinson and her poems. What better

EDIS Elects New Officers

At its October 21 meeting, the EDIS Board elected new officers for the 1992-1993 term and new Board members for the 1992-1995 term. Chosen as the Society's new president was Vivian Pollak; Margaret Dickie was elected vice-president; Jane Eberwein will be secretary; and Martha Nell Smith was reelected treasurer.

New Board members elected were Cristanne Miller, Margaret Freeman, Christer Mossberg, Margaret Dickie, and Jonnie Guerra. Continuing Board members are Suzanne Juhasz, Polly Longworth, Barbara Mossberg, Walter Powell, and Gary Lee Stonum.

President Vivian Pollak is professor of English at the university of Washington and author of *Dickinson: The Anxiety of Gender* and *A Poet's Parents: The Courtship Letters of Emily Norcross and Edward Dickinson*.

Vice-president Margaret Dickie is Helen S. Lanier Distinguished Professor of English at the University of Georgia and the author of *Lyric Contingencies: Emily Dickinson and Wallace Stevens* and three other books on modern poetry.

Jane Eberwein, who will move from membership chair to secretary, is professor of English at Oakland University. She

is the author of *Early American Poetry* and *Dickinson: Strategies of Limitation*.

Martha Nell Smith, in her third term as treasurer, is associate professor of English at the University of Maryland. Her book *Rowing in Eden: Rereading Emily Dickinson* has just been published.

Cristanne Miller is professor of English at Pomona College and author of *Emily Dickinson: A Poet's Grammar*.

Margaret Freeman, founding president of the Society, is professor of English at Los Angeles Valley College. She served as editor of Rebecca Patterson's posthumous book, *The Riddle of Emily Dickinson*.

Christer Mossberg, an associate of Coudert Brothers, Washington, D.C., continues as EDIS legal council. The Society appreciates his valuable service in this capacity.

Jonnie Guerra, recently appointed associate dean of Walsh College, joins the Board after serving as director of the EDIS international conference.

One additional personnel change was the appointment of Eleanor Heginbotham as membership chairman.

New officers and Board members took office at the conclusion of the Society's Annual Meeting on October 24.

incentive to form local EDIS chapters to bring readers together for discussions, lectures, and artistic programs within local geographic areas? If you are interested in launching such an affiliate, the Society's new Membership Committee chair can supply names and addresses of EDIS members who live in areas near you.

After four years as membership chair, I am handing over those duties to the capable hands of Ellie Heginbotham of the University of Maryland and the Stone Ridge Country Day School. You can reach her at 8502 Wilkesboro Lane, Potomac, MD 20854.

Many thanks to all who have helped me develop a strong and loyal base of EDIS supporters!

Jane D. Eberwein
Oakland University

1993 Annual Meeting

Plans are being made for the Society's 1993 Annual Meeting, tentatively set for Saturday and Sunday July 31-August 1 in Amherst, Massachusetts.

Polly Longworth has arranged for a Saturday evening concert at the Jones Library by the Da Camera Singers performing nineteenth-century music that would have been familiar to Dickinson, and a Sunday morning meeting in the garden at the Homestead, followed by a luncheon in town.

Further details will be announced in the spring *Bulletin*. We hope to see many of you in Amherst.

New Publications Launched

A remarkable outcome of the EDIS conference may be the initiation of a number of new Dickinson publications, some previously planned, others inspired by the conference sessions. The following reports suggest possibilities for involvement by Dickinsonians with varied interests and the eventual appearance of important new works.

Dickinson Lexicon

Cynthia Hallen is at work on what should prove to be a valuable reference tool for Dickinson readers, a dictionary of all the words used in Dickinson's poems, using as a starting point the poet's own "Lexicon," Noah Webster's 1841 dictionary.

As Hallen seeks funding for the project, she needs to identify scholars who would be interested in writing or reviewing entries. Please contact her if you would like to be included on a list of potential contributors. The basic qualifications are simple: love of Dickinson, love of words, a little spare time. Later Hallen will have guidelines to train people in the research process and document format.

If you would like to be involved in the project, contact Cynthia L. Hallen, 3076-H JKHB, Brigham Young University, Provo UT 84602; phone 801-378-2020.

International Bibliography

Fourteen persons gathered for a brief breakfast meeting at the conference to discuss the possibility of producing an international bibliography of works focusing on Dickinson. Among those attending were five participants from outside the United States.

The consensus was that there is a definite need for such a work. Several people said they would find such a tool extremely useful and that listings of Dickinson works published outside the U.S. are few and hard to locate. Even the MLA International Bibliography, the most comprehensive available, is incomplete in its coverage.

Several international participants indicated their willingness to assist in compiling the bibliography. Questionnaires distributed at the meeting and in all packets will, we hope, elicit more views and more volunteers.

The EDIS Board discussed the bibliog-

raphy at its October 21 meeting and expressed their enthusiasm for such a project if sufficient interest exists among the membership.

Many more volunteers are needed, as well as an experienced bibliographer willing to take charge of the project. Anyone interested in participating should contact Georgiana Strickland, 133 Lackawanna Rd., Lexington, KY 40503.

Multilingual Edition

Publication of a multilingual volume of Dickinson's poems is the likely result of the Application Workshop on Translation, which worked out a detailed plan for such a work with the assistance of several translators and other interested participants.

Roland Hagenbüchle will provide an introductory essay on translating Dickinson. This will be followed by a single poem (still to be chosen) in several languages, with brief commentaries on the translation process by each translator. Then will come the six conference poems (322, 341, 712, 861, 1068, and 1247) together with the translations presented in the conference workshops.

Harold P. Hanson, editor of *Delos*, a journal specializing in translation, has expressed interest in producing it, possibly as a special issue jointly with the *Emily Dickinson Journal*. For further information contact Margaret Freeman, 1300 Greenleaf Canyon Rd., Topanga, CA 90290.

Editing Collective

If you are interested in joining the Editing Collective formed at the Editing/Publication session (see page 14), contact Martha Nell Smith: address at right.

Treasurer's Report

Having started with a balance of \$6,891.38 on December 28, 1991, and taken in dues, conference fees, fees for back issues of the *Bulletin*, payments for items sold at the conference, and interest, EDIS accumulated \$31,247.17 through November 1, 1992.

Our expenditures for that period for postage, printing of the *Bulletin* and conference brochures, cost sharing with the University Press of Colorado for the *Emily Dickinson Journal*, and all conference costs amounted to \$20,412.24.

We still have conference-related bills that will amount to around \$2,500.00, but we will be in good stead to cover the cost of our fall/winter 1992 *Bulletin*. The expenses for our 1993 publications will of course be covered by the dues for 1993, which will be collected over the next couple of months.

Martha Nell Smith, Treasurer

Call for Papers: ALA

EDIS will sponsor two sessions at the American Literature Association conference to be held May 28-30, 1993, in Baltimore. The session on "Emily Dickinson and Popular Culture" already has three presenters, but we would be happy to entertain proposals for a fourth. The other session will be on "Editing Dickinson's Texts."

Anyone interested in submitting a proposal for these sessions should contact Martha Nell Smith at the Department of English, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742 (e-mail: Martha Nell Smith@umail.umd.edu); fax: 301-314-7539.

Notes & Queries

Does any member of EDIS have knowledge of an organization known as the Amherst Society? An ad sponsored by that organization in a recent issue of *Writer's Digest* offers a "Dickinson Award" of \$1,000 as well as the possibility of publication in *American Poetry Annual*. The ad also states that "to ensure publication purchase may be required."

The Amherst Society has no connection with EDIS, and inquiries have shown that it

is not associated with Amherst College or the Dickinson Homestead. We would be grateful for further information about this organization. Please contact the *Bulletin* editor.

Special thanks are due to Walt Powell, whose efforts in organizing the book exhibit and silent auction at the conference made possible good shopping for delegates and netted \$1,700 for the EDIS coffers.

Editor's Note

The main focus of this issue is a series of reports on the recent EDIS international conference held in Washington, D.C. These reports will, we hope, interest readers who were unable to attend or those, like myself, who were there but couldn't manage to be in three sessions at once!

A few sessions could not be covered. For the six translation workshops and six panels of works in progress we have only representative reports, but we trust they will give a flavor of those important sessions.

I'm extremely grateful to those who were willing to take on the duty of reporting on a session (some on more than one) on a very tight schedule. Without exception they provided lively summaries and distilled the essence of these exciting meetings of minds.

Looking ahead, I'm happy to report that our two continuing series, dealing with Dickinson library collections and distinguished Dickinson scholars, will resume in the spring 1993 issue. As previously announced, that issue will focus on contemporary poets influenced by Dickinson—a subject, to judge by response so far, that promises to become another series. I would welcome further contributions. Deadline for the spring issue is February 1.

Georgiana Strickland

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Annual dues are \$35.00 for regular members (includes subscription to the *Bulletin* and *The Emily Dickinson Journal*), \$15.00 for special members (the *Bulletin* only), and \$50.00 for contributing members. Membership inquiries and changes of address should be sent to Eleanor Heginbotham, 8502 Wilkesboro Lane, Potomac, MD 20854. Membership applications should be sent to Martha Nell Smith, Department of English, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742.

Submissions and other communications for the *Bulletin* should be sent to Georgiana Strickland, 133 Lackawanna Rd., Lexington, KY 40503. Submission deadlines are February 1 and September 1. All articles become the property of the *Bulletin*. Back issues are available for \$5.00 each from the editor. Copyright ©1992 by the Emily Dickinson International Society, Inc.

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