Robert Duncan

The Collected
Later Poems and Plays

Edited and with an Introduction by
Peter Quartermain
Contents

Preface . . . xix
Acknowledgments . . . xxi
Introduction: Discovery Making . . . xxv

The Opening of the Field (1960)
Often I Am Permitted to Return to a Meadow . . . 3
The Dance . . . 4
The Law I Love Is Major Mover . . . 6
The Structure of Rime I . . . 8
The Structure of Rime II . . . 9
A Poem Slow Beginning . . . 10
The Structure of Rime III . . . 12
The Structure of Rime IV . . . 13
The Structure of Rime V . . . 14
The Structure of Rime VI . . . 14
The Structure of Rime VII . . . 15
Three Pages from a Birthday Book . . . 16
This Place Rumord to Have Been Sodom . . . 17
The Ballad of the Enamord Mage . . . 18
The Ballad of Mrs Noah . . . 20
The Maiden . . . 23
The Propositions . . . 25
Uncollected Work 1957-1960

A Stray Poem (Notes Reading from Rene Fulop-Miller's
The Power and Secrets of the Jesuits) . . . 91

Melville after Pierre . . . 93

Solitude . . . 94

The Song of the River to Its Shores . . . 95

Pre-face . . . 97

I Saw the Rabbit Leap . . . 98

Roots and Branches (1964)

Roots and Branches . . . 101

Roots and Branches . . . 101

What Do I Know of the Old Lore? . . . 101

Night Scenes . . . 103

A Sequence of Poems for H.D.'s Birthday . . . 107

A Letter . . . 113

Nel Mezzo del Cammin di Nostra Vita . . . 117

A Dancing Concerning a Form of Women . . . 120

The Law . . . 122

Apprehensions . . . 126

Sonneries of the Rose Cross . . . 137

Now the Record Now Record . . . 140

Variations on Two Dicta of William Blake . . . 141

Cover Images . . . 146

Come, Let Me Free Myself . . . 147

Risk . . . 148

Four Songs the Night Nurse Sang . . . 152

Structure of Rime XV . . . 156

Structure of Rime XVI . . . 157

Structure of Rime XVII . . . 157

Structure of Rime XVIII . . . 159

Osiris and Set . . . 159
Windings . . : 162
Two Presentations . . 162
After a Passage in Baudelaire . . 165
Shelley's *Arethusa* Set to New Measures . . 166
After Reading H.D.'s *Hermetic Definitions* . . 169
Strains of Sight . . 172
Doves . . 174
Returning to the Rhetoric of an Early Mode . . 176
Two Entertainments . . 179
The Ballad of the Forfar Witches' Sing . . 179
A Country Wife's Song . . 182
What Happened : Prelude . . 184
A Set of Romantic Hymns . . 193
Thank You for Love . . 201
From *The Mabinogion* . . 202
Forced Lines . . 203
A New Poem (for Jack Spicer) . . 204
Sonnet 1 . . 206
Sonnet 2 . . 207
Sonnet 3 . . 208
Answering . . 209
Adam's Way: A Play upon Theosophical Themes . . 211
Cyparissus . . 244
A Part-Sequence for Change . . 247
Structure of Rime XIX . . 249
Structure of Rime XX . . 250
Structure of Rime XXI . . 250
The Continent . . 251

**Uncollected Work 1961-1964**

A Play with Masks . . 259
Weaving the Design . . 286
Old Testament . . 287
New Testament . . 289
Bending the Bow (1968)
Introduction . . . 293
Sonnet 4 . . . 301
Structure of Rime XXII . . . 301
5th Sonnet . . . 302
Such Is the Sickness of Many a Good Thing . . . 303
Bending the Bow . . . 304
Tribal Memories Passages 1 . . . 305
At the Loom Passages 2 . . . 307
What I Saw Passages 3 . . . 310
Where It Appears Passages 4 . . . 310
The Moon Passages 5 . . . 312
The Collage Passages 6 . . . 313
Envoy Passages 7 . . . 316
Structure of Rime XXIII . . . 317
As in the Old Days Passages 8 . . . 317
The Architecture Passages 9 . . . 319
These Past Years Passages 10 . . . 321
Shadows Passages 11 . . . 323
Wine Passages 12 . . . 325
Structure of Rime XXIV . . . 327
Structure of Rime XXV . . . 328
Reflections . . . 329
The Fire Passages 13 . . . 330
Chords Passages 14 . . . 336
Spelling Passages 15 . . . 338
A Lammas Tiding . . . 340
My Mother Would Be a Falconress . . . 341
Saint Graal (after Verlaine) . . . 343
Parsifal (after Wagner and Verlaine) . . . 344
The Currents Passages 16 . . . 346
Moving the Moving Image Passages 17 . . . 348
The Torso Passages 18 . . . 351
The Earth Passages 19 ... 353
Structure of Rime XXVI:
   For Kenneth Anger, An Illustration Passages 20 ... 355
The Multiversity Passages 21 ... 356
In the Place of a Passage 22 ... 360
Benefice Passages 23 ... 362
Orders Passages 24 ... 363
Up Rising Passages 25 ... 366
The Chimeras of Gérard de Nerval ... 369
   El Desdichado (The Disinherited) ... 369
   Myrtho ... 369
   Horus ... 370
   Anteros ... 370
   Delphica ... 371
   Artemis ... 372
   The Christ in the Olive Grove ... 372
   Golden Lines ... 375
Earth's Winter Song ... 376
Moira's Cathedral ... 378
A Shrine to Ameinias ... 379
Narrative Bridges for Adam's Way ... 383
The Soldiers Passages 26 ... 392
An Interlude ... 397
Transgressing the Real Passages 27 ... 400
The Light Passages 28 ... 402
Eye of God Passages 29 ... 403
Stage Directions Passages 30 ... 407
God-Spell ... 412
Epilogos ... 413

Uncollected Work 1965-1968
At the Poetry Conference: Berkeley after
   the New York Style ... 419
We heard it as a cry. It was the Word. ... 421
Keeping the War Inside ... 422
Yes I care deeply and yet . . . 423
Christmas Present, Christmas Presence! . . . 425
From a Poem by John Ashbery . . . 426
If I Had Kin . . . 428

Ground Work: Before the War (1984)
Some Notes on Notation . . . 431
Achilles' Song . . . 434
Ancient Questions . . . 437
A Song from the Structures of Rime Ringing as the Poet
Paul Celan Sings . . . 439
Despair in Being Tedium . . . 440
The Concert Passages 31 (Tribunals) . . . 442
Ancient Reveries and Declamations Passages 32
(Tribunals) . . . 445
Transmissions Passages 33 (Tribunals) . . . 451
The Feast Passages 34 (Tribunals) . . . 457
Before the Judgment Passages 35 (Tribunals) . . . 461
Santa Cruz Propositions . . . 470
A Glimpse . . . 482
And If He Had Been Wrong for Me . . . 483
For Me Too, I, Long Ago Shipping Out with
the Cantos . . . 483
And Hell Is the Realm of God's Self-Loathing . . . 484
Childhood's Retreat . . . 484
Fragments of an Albigensian Rime . . . 485
O! Passages 37 . . . 486
Bring It Up from the Dark . . . 488
Structure of Rime XXVII . . . 489
Structure of Rime XXVIII: In Memoriam
Wallace Stevens . . . 490
Over There . . . 492
The Museum . . . 493
Interrupted Forms . . . 497
Poems from the Margins of Thom Gunn's Moly . . . 498
  Preface to the Suite . . . 498
The Moly Suite . . . 500
  Near Circe's House . . . 500
  Rites of Passage: I . . . 501
  Moly . . . 503
  Rites of Passage: II . . . 505
A Seventeenth Century Suite in Homage to the Metaphysical Genius in English Poetry (1590–1690) . . . 506
  1. Love's a great courtesy to be declared . . . 506
  3. Go as in a dream . . . 508
  5. "A pretty Babe"—that burning Babe . . . 512
  6. George Herbert, Jordan (I) . . . 513
  7. George Herbert, Jordan (II) . . . 516
  8. These Lines Composing Themselves in My Head as I Awoke Early This Morning, It Being Still Dark,
     December 16, 1971 Passages 36 . . . 517
  9. Ben Jonson, Hymenaei: or the Solemnities of Masque, and Barriers . . . 521
 10. John Norris of Bemerton, Hymne to Darkness . . . 528
    Coda . . . . 530

Dante Études . . . 534
  Preface . . . 534
  Book One . . . 535
    We Will Endeavor . . . 535
    Secondary Is the Grammar . . . 537
    A Little Language . . . 539
    To Speak My Mind . . . 540
    Everything Speaks to Me . . . 541
    In the Way of a Question . . . 543
    Speech Directed . . . 544
    Enricht in the Increment . . . 545
    The Individual Man . . . 546
    Of Empire . . . 547
The Meaning of Each Particular . . . 548
The Whole Potentiality . . . 549
The Work . . . 550
The Household . . . 552
Let Him First Drink of the Fountain . . . 555
And Tho They Have No Vowel . . . 555
Letting the Beat Go . . . 556

Book Two . . . 557
A Hard Task in Truth . . . 557
Lovely . . . . . . 558
The One Rule . . . 558
Our Art but to Articulate . . . 559
In Nothing Superior . . . 560
Enacted . . . 561
On Obedience . . . 562
Zealous Liberality . . . 563
We Convivial in What Is Ours! . . . 564
Mr. Philip Wicksteed Stumbling into Rime in Prose in
Translating Dante's Convivio . . . 565
Go, My Songs, Even as You Came to Me . . . 566

Book Three . . . 568
My Soul Was as If Free . . . 568
Nor Dream in Your Hearts . . . 569
For the Sea Is God's . . . 570
Where the Fox of This Stench Sulks . . . 571
In Truth Doth She Breathe Out Poisonous Fumes . . . 573
Then Many a One Sang . . . 574
In My Youth Not Unstaind . . . 575
And a Wisdom as Such . . . 576

Four Supplementary Études . . . 577
Of Memory . . . 577
Hers . . . 578
I Too Trembling . . . 579
But We, to Whom the World Is . . . 580

The Missionaries Passages . . . 580
The Torn Cloth . . . 582
Songs of an Other . . . 586
Empedoklean Reveries Passages . . . 587
Jamais Passages . . . 592
An Interlude of Winter Light . . . 595
“Eidolon of the Aion” . . . 601
The Presence of the Dance / The Resolution of the Music . . . 606
Circulations of the Song . . . 611

Uncollected Work 1969-1982
O tree of lights! tree of colors . . . 625
Childless . . . 625
After Shakespeare's Sonnet 76 . . . 625
Second Take on Shakespeare's Sonnet 76 . . . 626
She . . . 627
Something Is Moving . . . 628
A Fantasy Piece for Helen Adam . . . 628
Feb. 22, 1973 . . . 629
I have / nothing to go on . . . 630
A Prepucal Face for Nigel Roberts . . . 630
Johnny's Thing . . . 631
An Epithalamium . . . 632
Poe et Cie . . . 633
Let Me Join You Again This Morning, Walt Whitman . . . 636

Ground Work II: In the Dark (1987)
An Alternate Life . . . 643
In the South . . . 643
Homecoming . . . 646
Supplication . . . 649
The Quotidian . . . 652
To Master Baudelaire . . . 658
Toward His Malaise . . . 658
Among His Words . . . 660
The Face . . . 660
At Cambridge an Address to Young Poets Native to the Land of My Mothertongue . . . 661
Le Sonnet Où Sonne la Sonnette dès Dernières Jours Toujours Fait Son Retour . . . 663
Pour Souffrir l'Envie Jusqu'à l'Amour en Vie . . . 666
Sets of Syllables, Sets of Words, Sets of Lines, Sets of Poems Addressing: Veil, Turbine, Cord, & Bird . . . 668
Preliminary Exercise . . . 668
Notes during a Lecture on Mathematics . . . 668
The Recall of the Star Miraflor . . . 669
The Naming of the Time Ever . . . 670
I Pour forth My Life from This Bough . . . 671
The Turbine . . . 672
What the Sonnet Means the Sonnet Means . . . 672
For the Assignment of the Spirit . . . 673
The Cherubim (I) . . . 675
The Cherubim (II) . . . 676
Styx . . . 678
The Sentinels . . . 679
An Eros/Amor/Love Cycle . . . 680
Et Passages . . . 683
In Wonder Passages . . . 685
Constructing the Course of a River in the Pyrenees . . . 689
In Waking . . . 690
From the Fall of 1950 / December 1980 . . . 693
Two Sets of Tens: Derived from Confucian Analects . . . 696
Regulators Set of Passages . . . 697
The Dignities Passages . . . 697
The First Passages . . . 700
Stimmung Passages . . . 703
Enthralld Passages . . . 706
Quand le Grand Foyer Descend dans les Eaux Passages . . . 707
In Blood's Domaine Passages . . . 708
After Passage Passages . . . 711
With In Passages . . . 712
Seams Passages . . . 713
You, Muses Passages . . . 715
Structure of Rime: Of the Five Songs . . . 716
   The Five Songs . . . 716
Whose Passages . . . 723
Close . . . 725
At the Door . . . 727
Illustrative Lines . . . 728
After a Long Illness . . . 731

Uncollected Work 1983-1988
In Passage . . . 737
Hekatombé . . . 737

Appendix: Table of Contents for Roots and Branches . . . 739
Notes . . . 743
Selected Bibliography . . . 861
Index of Titles and First Lines . . . 865