



The Decree

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N.C. WESLEYAN COLLEGE, ROCKY MOUNT, N.C.

MONDAY, APRIL 24, 1978

Jonathan Williams to speak at Wesleyan

Jonathan Williams, poet and publisher from Highlands, North Carolina, will be visiting Wesleyan on April 25 and 26.

At 9 o'clock on the evening of the 25th, he will give a reading of his poems in the Browsing Room of the Library. At 11 o'clock on the morning of the 26th, he will present a slide lecture on twentieth century poetry titled "An Iconography of Poets in Our Time." The lecture is sponsored in part by the North Carolina Arts Council and is presented as the concluding event of the exhibition "Art and Education at Black Mountain College," shown at the Rocky Mount Arts and Crafts Center this past January and February.

Williams attended Princeton University for two years and studied painting and design in Washington and Chicago before discovering the educational opportunity afforded him nearer home by Black Mountain College. There he studied writing under Charles Olson with such distinguished contemporary writers as Joel Oppenheimer and Fielding Dawson. There also he found a situation where his ideas about writing and his ideas about publishing could develop together. In 1951 the first publications of what Williams chose to call The Jargon Society appeared.

The Jargon Society has continued for some 27 years as a unique publishing venture.

So far some 90 items have been published. All are characterized by meticulous attention to the design of the book. The writing chosen for publication is generally characterized by its opposition to literary fashion. Distinguished writers such as Williams himself, Joel Oppenheimer, Kenneth Patchen, Charles Olson, Robert Creeley, Robert Duncan, Louis Zukofsky, Irving Layton, Denise Levertov, Michael McClure, Henry Millet, Larry Eigner, and Russell Edson, many connected with Black Mountain College, are represented in the series.

Williams himself has published many volumes of poetry often in small editions by

alternative publishing ventures such as his own. A selection of his poems published between 1957 and 1967, *An Ear In Bartram's Tree*, published in paperback

by New Directions, is available in the Wesleyan College Bookstore, along with a more recent collection, published by Truck Press, called *Untinears & Antennae For Maurice Ravel*. A selection of books

written designed or published by Williams will be on display in the library display case beginning April 17.

In November of 1977, Williams was honored by the state of North Carolina with the Governor's Award for distinguished service to the arts in North Carolina. Wesleyan is privileged to have him on its campus.

Ruppert Mundy

Wesleyan has first art show

Wesleyan's First Annual Art Show opened on Monday evening, Feb. 13, 1978 in The Browsing Room of the Library. More than fifty pieces of work completed by faculty and students in mediums ranging from needlework to sculpture were on display and were viewed by members of the College Community. A reception was hosted for the viewers by members of the Art Show Committee which was chaired by Ms. Jane Wilson.

The concept of an art show at Wesleyan began in August of this past year and grew into an actual event as a result of much hard work and prodding on the part of Jan. Students and members of the faculty and staff were invited to enter their works in the show, with only the students being eligible for prizes to be awarded.

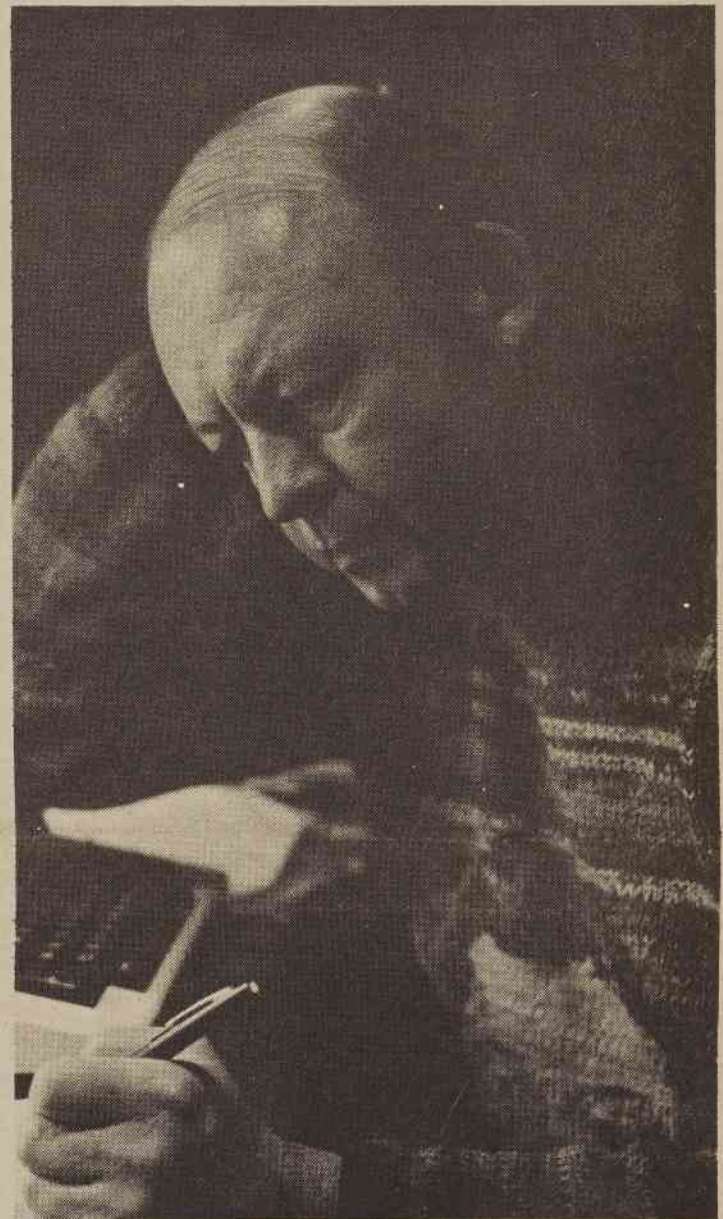
Prize money was made available for the show by the generous contributions of the Wesleyan Women and the SGA Senate. Prizes were awarded as follows: First place — Mary Kinley for a still life

rendered in charcoal; Second places — Johnny MacCormick for a photograph, "Sunrise over Nags Head" and, Pam Sandersen for "Sun on the Horizon" done in loopings.

Honorable mentions were awarded to the following: Teresa King for two special etchings, "Baby" and an Untitled work; Ann Kirby for photography and for a pencil etching of Catfish Hunter; Jan Wilson for "Home" done in water colors and charcoal; Mary Kinley for a work in ink; Steve Bryant for "Egypt" done in pastels; and, Ashlen Hyatt for a needlepoint bell pull from her original design.

Judges for the event were Ms. Daisy Thorpe and Ms. Bunny Ryals who is currently serving as Artist in Residence at Wesleyan.

The art show was considered a success by the artists who participated and by the members of the College Community who were in attendance for the opening. Plans are to continue the art show as an annual event on the campus.



JONATHAN WILLIAMS

An "internationally unknown poet"

Like all good poetry, Jonathan Williams's is made up of two apparently irreconcilable elements, which he blends with humor and intelligence. Williams calls himself an "internationally unknown poet" and thinks of himself as being "insanely refined." His poems are filled with references to forebears in the arts of music, painting,

and writing, many of whose names are unknown, or little known, today. This gives his poetry a surface obscurity. "It is to sound/such unknown men/I write —" he writes.

Such a purpose makes his poems initially hard to read.

What brings this insane refinement into balance is an equally strong commitment to the so-called "commonplace." Williams writes that "I like to catch people speaking 'poems' who never heard of the word poet. It has been my business, along with many others my superiors...to try to raise 'the common' to grace, to pay very close attention to the earthy, for one thing." "Poems," he says elsewhere, "are but the deified prosaic speech of plain men and women." The two poems printed in this newspaper show the congruence of these two disparate ideas of the nature and function of poetry.

(Continued on Page 4)

Don't Miss

Jonathan Williams