



Ike and Tina Turner

Ike And Tina Here Saturday

Their story is typical. A young boy who is entranced with show business meets an aspiring female vocalist, they team up, and become successful...a bit trite in one aspect. But what they have produced as a duo is not typical or trite; it is exceptional, phenomenal.

At first, Ike performed for school groups and family gatherings. But later, his musical interest became more serious and he decided that he would spend his life "...giving people music sounds that they could really dig...and pat their feet to..." He then formed the Kings of Rhythm (one of the groups that now performs with him) and produced a R and B smash, "Rocket 88".

While all this was happening, a young girl named Annie Mae Bullock (now Tina Turner) was growing up in Knoxville, Tennessee. She became involved in music through a local gospel group.

In 1956, she had a chance to sing impromptu during a nightclub performance of Ike's band. Impressed with her voice, Ike invited her to join the group.

Tickets for the concert are on sale now at the Union information desk for \$2. The Union's policy for selling tickets to students requires that each student present his ID which entitles him to four tickets. Student sales always open one week before sales to the general public.

Leaven Reviews

Poetry of 'If' Unguided

"???If In The Beginning And I Had???", the most recent publication of Carolina's YMCA Press, is a collection of poems written this summer by black students participating in Upward Bound. This fact alone makes the book intimidating. The critic has to beware of charges of snobbery and prejudice if he intends anything less than encomiums. Judith Soucek, the volume's editor, provides grounds for such charges in her introduction:

"It is the honest voice of the poets in this volume that makes it wonderful. These young writers are not playing at word games...What they say is always 'of the soul.'" In other words, criticize this human document at your own risk. The poets, she adds, are "what poetry is."

Unfortunately, Soucek, who taught the class in which many of the poems were written, is wrong on every count. Honesty alone does not make good poetry. The poets, whether they know it or not, very often are playing at word games. And the poetry is seldom "of the soul." Or, if it is from the soul, it's from the untutored soul; only on occasion does it strike the reader with the force of genuine communication.

I do not mean to imply that there is nothing worthwhile in "In The Beginning." But the seven poets included seem to have been either misguided or totally unguided, with the result that this anthology is, indeed, only a most tentative beginning, a groping toward a vital and individual language. It is marred by derivativeness, technical awkwardness, and immaturity, so much so that it should never have been printed. The poets deserved the benefit of mature advice before they faced the public.

Anyone who claims that blacks have been robbed of their culture without receiving another in return can find his refutation in this anthology. Most poetic styles and many poets, usually undigested, are represented here. The

author of "Black Boy" and its companion piece—pretty good poems, too—draws on Blake. "How Beautiful Be The World"

derives most clearly from the tradition of the English hymn, from Isaac Watts through Victorian celebrations of home and mother. Embedded in the poem's twisted syntax is a tribute to all the grammatical and metrical peculiarities that went out of English verse with the advent of Ezra Pound.

"Delectable Vonna," which begins, "Black as the night that covers all" (remember Henley's "Out of the night that covers me, Black as the pit...") is in fact nothing more than a pseudo-Petrarchian catalogue of the lady's charms: pretty as a flower, priceless as diamonds, graceful as a butterfly, etc.

Lee Allen, who in many ways is a very fine poet, consciously or not draws his inspiration from sources and diverse as Wallace Stevens, Eleanor Wylie, and Archibald MacLeish, not to mention other black poets' experiments with jazz rhythms. His poem "Untitled" ("Fall off your wall"), however, speaks in clichés, where his teachers speak in metaphors that touch the blood. "Fall off your wall/Break your shell," says Allen. Wylie, with a different point of view, writes, "Avoid the reeking herd, Shun the polluted flock..." It is not that Allen is any less sincere than Wylie; it's that his lines are in their very essence lightweights.

Worse than direct borrowing is the incessant use of shopworn images, that have been bad poets' stock and trade since English poetry began. To cite a few examples:

Rosy light, birds that sweetly sing, bells, flowers, meadows, clouds; black as tar, darkness midnight; life's "curl" (i.e., wave); salty spray; frozen tears, thoughts; and still more flowers.

Then, again, there are the grammatical constructions which are either unintelligible or self-contradictory. The little poem "The Loving Group" demonstrates this last perfectly:

Sitting in a class
Waiting excitedly to begin
Everyone is steadfast
Hoping it never ends.

We know what this poem is but that's not enough. Other instances of this slumshiness are lines like "on me you fell/implanting seeds of death for un-dying/bastards in my womb."

Finally there are the lines that are simply flat and unpoetical: "I am Black/And I am Proud"; "What is Upward Bound?/ Is it an organization...?"; and whole poems like "Things I Hate" and "A Meeting with Death."

Sometimes, a poem appears simply because Miss Soucek, or whoever taught class that day, seems to think that anything which falls from a black student's pen must be memorable. Hence, from a poet of some power, we get a poem which begins, "How strange and quaint it is to see a butterfly that thinks herself a moth!" Butterfly and moth are bad enough, but if you're in any doubt, you need only to substitute "swan" and "ugly duckling" to take the true measure of this poem.

My point is not that there are no good poems in this anthology. Catherine Mason, Lee Allen and Jacky Vincent seem to be promising writers. Individual poems like "If In The Beginning," the title poem, and "Happiness" ("Saw a white boy run from a Black Man") are effective and powerful statements.

Too often, however, "???If In The Beginning And I Had???" is clogged with sentimentality and with technical problems. The poets are very much at the beginning. They've learned their craft mainly from the common poeticisms of today, and from a few very good, though poorly imitated, poets. These young writers have a long way to go: they need practice, and they have to consult both their own roots and the roots of English poetry, and do so in all humility, before they can begin to tap their potentialities.

The poem "Black," which Miss Soucek calls a "song of sisterhood," (because a girl wrote it, if for no other reason) is perhaps the best example of how incompletely the young poets have realized their theme. In rather conventional rhythms, the poet sings, "Black/Deep Black/Strong Black..." Three hundred and fifty years ago, another poet wrote:

"Thou Black, wherein all colors are composed,
And unto which they all at last return,
Thou color of the sun where it doth burn..."

I am not criticizing the poets of "If In The Beginning" for not being sophisticated professionals. If there is any blame to be meted out, it must go to Miss Soucek, for failing to fulfill the functions of a teacher. All I'm asking the seven poets is, Do they know that something like what I've quoted above—do they know it's possible?

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