

John Giorno

THE DIARY-A-POEM POETS

At this point, with the war and the repression and everything, we thought this was a good way for the Movement to reach people.



DIAL-A-POEM HYPE

One day a New York mother saw her 12-year-old son with two friends listening to the telephone and giggling. She grabbed the phone from them and what she heard freaked her out. This was when Dial-A-Poem was at The Architectural League of New York with worldwide media coverage, and *Junior Scholastic Magazine* had just done an article and listening to Dial-A-Poem was homework in New York City Public Schools. It was also at a time when I was putting on a lot of erotic poetry, like Jim Carroll's pornographic "Basketball Diaries," so it became hip for the teemies to call. The mother and other reactionary members of the community started hassling us, and The Board of Education put pressure on The Telephone Company and there were hassles and more hassles and they cut us off. Ken Dewey and the New York State Council on The Arts were our champions, and the heavy lawyers threatened The Telephone Company with a lawsuit and we were instantly on again. Soon after our funds were cut, and we couldn't pay the telephone bill so it ended.

Then we moved to The Museum of Modern Art, where one half the content of Dial-A-Poem was politically radical poetry. At the time, with the war and repression and everything, we thought this was a good way for the Movement to reach people. *TIME* magazine picked up on how you could call David and Nelson Rockefeller's museum and learn how to build a bomb. This was when the Weathermen were bombing New York office buildings. *TIME* ran the piece on The Nation page, next to the photo of a dead cop shot talking on the telephone in Philadelphia (an unrelated story in the next column). However, Bobby Seale, Eldridge Cleaver and The Black Panthers were well represented. This coupled with rag publicity really freaked the Trustees of the museum and members resigned and thousands complained and the FBI arrived one morning to investigate. The Museum Of Modern Art is a warehouse of the plunder and rip off for the Rockefeller family and they got upset at being in the situation of supporting a system that would self-destruct or self-purify, so they ordered the system shut down. John Hightower, MOMA Director, was our champion with some heavy changes of conscience, and he wouldn't let them silence us, for a short while. Then later John Hightower was fired from MOMA and Ken Dewey recently flying alone in a small plane crashed and died.

In the middle of the Dial-A-Poem experience was the giant self-consuming media machine choosing you as some of its food, which also lets you get your hands on the controls because you've made a new system of communicating poetry. The newspaper, magazine, TV and radio coverage had the effect of making everyone want to call Dial-A-Poem. We got up to the maximum limit of the equipment and stayed there. 60,000 calls a week and it was totally great. The busiest time was 9 AM to 5 PM, so one figured that all those people sitting at desks in New York office buildings spend a lot of time on the telephone, then the second busiest time 8:30 PM to 11:30 PM was the after-dinner crowd, then the California calls and those tripping on acid or couldn't sleep 2 AM to 6 PM. So using an existing communications system we established a new poet-audience relationship.

Dial-A-Poem began at The Architectural League of New York in January 1969 with 10 telephone lines and ran for 5 months, during which time 1,112,337 calls were received. It continued at The Museum Of Modern Art in July 1970 with 12 telephone lines and ran for 2 and a half months and 200,087 calls were received. It was at The Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago for 6 weeks in November 1969 and since then has cropped up everywhere. This was with equipment working at maximum capacity and sometimes jamming the entire exchange. At MOMA, the 12 lines were each connected to an automatic-answering set, which holds a pre-recorded message. Someone calling got randomly one of 12 different poems, which were changed daily. There were around 700 selections of 55 poets.

On this LP of *Dial-A-Poem Poets* are 27 poets. The records are a selection of highlights of poetry that spontaneously grew over 20 years from 1953 to 1972, mostly in America, representing many aspects and different approaches to dealing with words and sound. The poets are from the New York School, Bolinas and West Coast Schools, Concrete Poetry, Beat Poetry, Black Poetry and Movement Poetry.

John Giorno Aug 1972

side 1

ALLEN GINSBERG - Vajra Mantra (recorded Western Illinois University, April 15, 1972)

DIANE DI PRIMA - Revolutionary Letters Nos. 7, 13, 16, 49 (recorded GPS, New York, March 21, 1969)

WILLIAM BURROUGHS - excerpts from The Wild Boys (recorded Duke Street, London, November 19, 1971)

ANNE WALDMAN - Pressure, Holy City (recorded GPS, New York, June 9, 1972)

JOHN GIORNO - Vajra Kisses (recorded GPS, New York, August 9, 1972)

side 2

EMMETT WILLIAMS - Duet (recorded GPS, New York, December 1968)

ED SANDERS - Cemetery Hill (recorded Berkeley Poetry Conference, California, July 19, 1965)

TAYLOR MEAD - Motorcycles (recorded GPS, New York, January 1969)

ALLEN GINSBERG - Green Automobile 1953 (recorded Sacramento State College, April 23, 1971)

ROBERT CREELEY - The Messenger for Allen Ginsberg, I Know A Man (recorded Bolinas, California, July 1971)

HARRIS SCHIFF - Poems (recorded 98 Greene Street Loft, New York, April 4, 1972)

LENORE KANDEL - Kali (recorded Berkeley Poetry Conference, California, July 19, 1965)

ARAM SAROYAN - Not A Cricket (recorded GPS, New York, February 1969)

PHILIP WHALEN - excerpts from Scenes Of Life At The Capitol (recorded YMHA Poetry Center, New York, November 15, 1971)

TED BERRIGAN - excerpts from The Sonnets (recorded Berkeley Poetry Conference, California, July 19, 1965)

side 3

FRANK O'HARA - Ode To Joy, To Hell With It (recorded New York, September 1963)

JOE BRAINARD - excerpt from I Remember (recorded Calais, Vermont, July 1970)

CLARK COOLIDGE - Small Inventions: Suite V (plurals) secante, Suite IV (recorded Mills College, California, January 1969)

JIM CARROLL - excerpts from The Basketball Diaries (recorded GPS, New York, March 1969)

JOHN CAGE - Mushroom Haiku (recorded St. Mark's Church, New York, April 1972) excerpt from Silence (recorded Carbondale, Indiana, March 1969)

BERNADETTE MAYER - These Stories About After The Revolution (recorded New York, September 1970)

MICHAEL BROWNSTEIN - Geography (recorded GPS, New York, November 1970)

side 4

BRION GYSIN - I Am That I Am (recorded BBC, London, 1958)

JOHN SINCLAIR - The Destruction Of America (recorded Berkeley Poetry Conference, California, July 19, 1965)

ANNE WALDMAN - How The Sestina (Yawn) Works (recorded GPS, New York, June 9, 1972)

HEATHCOTE WILLIAMS - I Will Not Pay Taxes Until (recorded GPS, New York, March 1969)

DAVID HENDERSON - The Louisiana Weekly No. 1 Ruckus Poem Part 1 (recorded GPS, New York, December 1968)

BOBBY SEALE - excerpt from Fillmore East speech (recorded New York, May 20, 1968)

KATHLEEN CLEAVER - excerpt from Fillmore East speech (recorded New York, May 20, 1968)

ALLEN GINSBERG - Blake Song: Merrily We Welcome In The Year (recorded Corning Community College, New York, November 1971)

THE DIAL-A-POEM POETS

Ted Berrigan

Joe Brainard

Michael Brownstein

William Burroughs

John Cage

Jim Carroll

Kathleen Cleaver

Clark Coolidge

Robert Creeley

Diane DiPrima

Allen Ginsberg

John Giorno

Brian Gysin

David Henderson

Lenora Kandel

Bernadette Mayer

Taylor Mead

Frank O'hara

Ed Sanders

Aram Saroyan

Harris Schiff

Bobby Seale

John Sinclair

Lenora Waldman

Philip Whalen

Emmett Williams

Heathcote Williams



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GPS-001

THE DIAL-A-POEM POETS

Stereo
33 $\frac{1}{3}$ RPM

Side 1

Time: 28:20

1. ALLEN GINSBERG - Vajra Mantra (2:00)
(recorded Western Illinois University, April 15, 1972)
2. DIANE DI PRIMA - Revolutionary Letters Nos. 7, 13, 16, 49 (7:07)
(recorded GPS, New York, March 21, 1969)
3. WILLIAM BURROUGHS - excerpts from The Wild Boys (6:53)
(recorded Duke Street, London, November 19, 1971)
 4. ANNE WALDMAN - Pressure (4:00)
(recorded GPS, New York, June 9, 1972)
 5. JOHN GIORNO - Vajra Kisses (8:20)
(recorded GPS, New York, August 9, 1972)

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THE DIAL-A-POEM POETS

Stereo
33 $\frac{1}{3}$ RPM

Side 3

Time: 26:40

1. FRANK O'HARA - Ode To Joy, To Hell With It (4:52)
(recorded New York, September, 1963)
2. JOE BRAINARD - excerpt from I Remember (4:03)
(recorded Valais, Vermont, July, 1970)
3. CLARK COOLIDGE - Small Inventions: Suite V (plurals)
secante, Suite IV (2:07)
(recorded Mills College, California, January, 1969)
4. JIM CARROLL - excerpts from The Basketball Diaries (3:33)
(recorded GPS, New York, March, 1969)
5. JOHN CAGE - Mushroom Haiku (4:55)
(recorded St. Mark's Church, New York, April, 1972)
excerpt from Silence
(recorded Carbondale, Indiana, March, 1969)
6. BERNADETTE MAYER - These Stories About
After The Revolution (1:50)
(recorded New York, September, 1970)
7. MICHAEL BROWNSTEIN - Geography (6:40)
(recorded GPS, New York, November, 1970)

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THE DIAL-A-POEM POETS

Stereo
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Side 2

Time: 26:21

1. EMMETT WILLIAMS - Duet (1:50)
(recorded GPS, New York, December, 1968)
2. ED SANDERS - Cemetery Hill (4:08)
(recorded Berkeley Poetry Conference, Calif., July 19, 1965)
3. TAYLOR MEAD - Motorcycles (1:52)
(recorded GPS, New York, January, 1969)
4. ALLEN GINSBERG - Green Automobile 1953 (6:30)
(recorded Sacramento State College, April 23, 1971)

5. ROBERT CREELEY - The Messenger for Allen Ginsberg,
I Know A Man (1:17)
(recorded Bolinas, California, July, 1971)
6. HARRIS SCHIFF - Poems (3:53)
(recorded 98 Greene Street Loft, New York, April 4, 1972)
7. LENORE KANDEL - Kalf (2:20)
(recorded Berkeley Poetry Conference, Calif., July 19, 1965)
8. ARAM SAROYAN - Not A Cricket (09)
(recorded GPS, New York, February, 1969)
9. PHILIP WHALEN - excerpts from Scenes
Of Life At The Capitol (3:07)
(recorded YMHA Poetry Center, New York,
November 15, 1971)
10. TED BERRIGAN - excerpts from The Sonnets (2:35)
(recorded Berkeley Poetry Conference,
California, July 19, 1965)

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THE DIAL-A-POEM POETS

Stereo
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Side 4

Time: 26:18

1. BRION GYSIN - I Am That I Am (2:45)
(recorded BBC, London, 1958)
2. JOHN SINCLAIR - The Destruction Of America (5:38)
(recorded Berkeley Poetry Conference, Calif., July 19, 1965)

3. ANNE WALDMAN - Holy City (2:05)
(recorded GPS, New York, June 9, 1972)
4. HEATHCOTE WILLIAMS - I Will Not Pay Taxes Until (4:50)
(recorded GPS, New York, March, 1969)
5. DAVID HENDERSON - The Louisiana Weekly No. 1
Ruckus Poem Part 1 (2:00)
(recorded GPS, New York, December, 1968)
6. BOBBY SEALE - excerpt from Fillmore East speech (3:10)
(recorded New York, May 20, 1968)
7. KATHLEEN CLEAVER - excerpt from Fillmore East speech (3:10)
(recorded New York, May 20, 1968)
8. ALLEN GINSBERG - Blake Song: Merrily We
Welcome In The Year (4:30)
(recorded Corning Community College,
New York, November, 1971)

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