

EDITOR'S NOTE

John Hollander, who died on 17 August at the age of 83, was present at the creation of this magazine. He remained an integral part of it for more than thirty years. We will miss his tact and taste, his sharp critical perceptions, his probing curiosity, his generous spirit. Above all we will miss his poetry and his prose. Few writers moved as gracefully between those realms. Like his good friend Richard Poirier, Hollander embodied the *Raritan* ethos in his life and in his work: the commitment to open-minded inquiry, the combination of analytical rigor and intellectual playfulness. It was characteristic of his sensibility that one of his last poems, published in these pages, considered the world from the vantage point of a stationary bicycle in a gym—circling back around, in a sense, to his first piece for *Raritan*, a series of lyrical but pointed meditations on “The Poetry of Everyday Life.”

One of those reflections advises the reader to “*Consider the Space You Inhabit When You Can See Nothing*. Lie down in the sun, suspended, preferably, by a deck chair, lest the curving hardness of the ground, the scratching of grass against your back, be too touching a reminder of all that earth, the horizontality of death, the vulnerability of our surfaces, has come to mean. Inhabit for a while, instead, another region of bodily experience: let the heat of the sun on your closed eyes and left shoulder blend in a most painterly fashion with the faint, cool breeze leaking out of the stand of invisible trees over your right shoulder. (If you cry out for color, smell the tincture of mown grass in it, then.) This is the checkered shade of paradise.” I do not know much about paradise, but I think that Hollander caught a version of it here, and I like to imagine him inhabiting it.

As we mourn John Hollander's death, we celebrate the arrival of the distinguished poet Rosanna Warren, who has agreed to serve as an Associate Editor of *Raritan*. Few contemporary authors could more compellingly represent the *Raritan* tradition—which includes a skeptical outlook toward unexamined tradition. We welcome her proudly to our masthead.

Jackson Lears