

“The Heart Beat of America: A Beatnik Collection”

Nicole Nguyen

Bibliography List

Bukowski, Charles.

Sifting through the Madness For the Word, the Line, the Way. Ecco, an imprint of Harper Collins Publishers: New York, 2004.

Play the Piano Drunk like a Percussion Instrument Until the Fingers Begin to Bleed a Bit. Ecco, an imprint of Harper Collins Publishers: New York, 2003.

Bukowski is one of my very favorite poets. His free-flowing form and frank subject matter are so refreshing when so much of the poetry that we are taught in school is structured and deals with lots of metaphor and symbolism. I love the way he can write about simple things, like talking on the phone or liking D.H. Lawrence - I love the way he sounds incredibly honest and gruff.

Burroughs, William S.

Naked Lunch (1959). Grove Press: New York.*

My first reading of this book made me want to sell it back to the used book store I had just bought it from - almost. Burroughs writing is incredibly intense and complements the insanity of the subject matter and the narrator.

Corso, Gregory.

Gasoline. City Lights Books: San Francisco, 1995.

Mindfield. Paladin, an imprint of Harper Collins Publishers: London, 1992.

Allen Ginsberg and William S. Burroughs wrote the introductions to Mindfield, paying tribute to the influence that Corso had on the Beatnik movement. Gasoline is No. 8 in the City Lights Pocket Poets Series, and includes "Vestal Lady on Brattle", one of Corso's first works. The collection in itself is a remarkable representation of the Beatnik era.

Di Prima, Diane.

Memoirs of a Beatnik (1969). Penguin Books: New York, 1998.

Diane Di Prima is one of the very few women associated with the Beatnik movement.

Memoirs of a Beatnik is a fictional account of what being a female Beatnik was - seeing the world from a woman's point of view is quite unique. This book is often criticized for being merely pornographic in its story, but despite its many sex scenes, the book is artful and poetic.

Ferlinghetti, Lawrence.

Pictures of the Gone World (1955). City Lights Books: San Francisco, 1995.

Ferlinghetti began a Beatnik tradition in founding City Lights Books in San Francisco.

Pictures of a Gone World is Ferlinghetti's first work, as well as the first of the Pocket Poets Series. Unlike Kerouac, Ginsberg, and Corso, whose images were forceful and delightfully absurd, Ferlinghetti's poetry is subtly and quietly beautiful.

Ginsberg, Allen.

The Fall of America (1972). City Lights Books: San Francisco.*

Howl. City Lights Books: San Francisco, 1997.

After having gifted copies of Howl to several friends without securing my own copy of the poem, I finally picked up a used copy that I found on a neglected bottom shelf at a used book store. The Fall of America was gifted to me by one of the recipients of Howl. I continue to read and re-read segments of both books; Ginsberg's imagery is so striking that every time I read it, I experience it differently.

Kerouac, Jack.

Selected Letters 1957-1969. Penguin Books: New York, 1999.

On the Road (1957). Penguin Books: New York.*

Dharma Bums (1958). Penguin Books: New York*

Book of Blues. Penguin Books: New York, 1995.

Big Sur. Penguin Books: New York, 1992.

Lonesome Traveler (1960). Grove Press: New York*

Scattered Poems (1945). City Lights Books: San Francisco*

These books are really the treasures of my collection. They are not first editions and they are not hardcover. The only distinguishing things about them are the notes in the margins and inscriptions in the covers. Most were purchased for \$5 or less at a local used book store, after much speculation and price comparison - pristine quality is not a high priority for Jack Kerouac. The only requirement is that all the words are still there. Flipping through these, the pages are littered with underlined passages and stars marking things that I particularly liked. These are the books that I lend to friends and invite them to mark things they like as well, so that every time the book is read, the reader is having a conversation with Kerouac and with those before who have held that copy.

Kesey, Ken.

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest. Viking Press: New York*

This book is a commentary on mental institutions that ultimately touches the sense that the loss of individualism is inevitable. The copy presented here is one of three copies that I have owned: this one I purchased at a used book store; the other two I received from my mother, who enjoyed the book so much when she was young, that she kept buying for me, not realizing that I already had a copy. In 1975, Kesey's most famous work was turned into a movie starring Jack Nicholson as Randall Patrick McMurphy, with Louise Fletcher as the infamous Nurse Ratched.

McDarrah, Fred and Timothy McDarrah.

Kerouac and Friends: The Beat Generation Album. Thunder's Mouth Press, New York, 2002.

This book truly is an album: the many photos of the main Beatnik players in their natural environments allows a visual understanding of the incredible madness with which the likes of Kerouac or Ginsberg wrote. Jack Kerouac's "Belief and Technique for Modern Prose" is printed, with necessities as "4. Be in love with yr life" and "21. Struggle to

sketch the flow that already exists intact in mind." Also included in the album are articles printed about Beatniks as they were emerging as a movement, as well as the Beatniks reflections on themselves as Beatniks.

Suiter, John.

Gary Snyder, Phillip Whalen, Jack Kerouac in the North Cascades: Poets on the Peaks (1948). Counter Point: Washington, D.C., 2002.

I received this paperback coffee-table-esque book as a gift from a friend to whom I had enthusiastically recommended Big Sur. The book is chock full of black and white photographs and stories about the three Beatnik icons as they adventured in the North Cascade Mountains, culminating in Kerouac's famous summer stay on Desolation Peak. Reading through the book, I found myself constantly referring to Big Sur for parallels between the events.

* Most recent publication dates were unable to be obtained because these books are in my hometown, safely tucked away on the bookshelves in my bedroom.