

WORDS OF KENNETH REXROTH FROM
"DISENGAGEMENT: THE ART OF THE
BEAT GENERATION

Like the pillars of Hercules, like two ruined Titans guarding the entrance to one of Dante's circles, stand two great dead juvenile delinquents-- the heroes of the post-war generation: the great saxophonist, Charlie Parker, and Dylan Thomas. If the word deliberate means anything, both of them certainly destroyed themselves.

Both of them were overcome by the horror of the world in which they found themselves, because at last they could no longer overcome that world with the weapons of a purely lyrical art. Both of them were my friends. Living in San Francisco I saw them seldom enough to see them with a perspective which was not distorted by exasperation or fatigue. So as the years passed, I saw them each time in the light of an accelerated personal conflagration.

The last time I saw Bird, at Jimbo's Bob City, he was so gone--so blind to the world--that he literally sat down on me before he realized I was there. "What happened, man?" I said, referring to the pretentious "Jazz Concert." "Evil, man, evil," he said, and that's all he said for the rest of the night. About dawn he got up to blow. The rowdy crowd chilled into stillness and the fluent melody spiraled through it.

The last time I saw Dylan, his self destruction had not just passed the limits of rationality. It had assumed the terrifying inertia of inanimate matter. Being with him was like being swept away by a torrent of falling stones.

Now, Dylan Thomas and Charlie Parker have a great deal more in common than the same disastrous end. As artists, they were very similar. They were both very fluent. But

this fluent, enchanting utterance had, compared with important artists of the past, relatively little content. Neither of them got very far beyond a sort of entranced rapture at his own creativity. The principle theme of Thomas's poetry was the ambivalence of birth and death--the pain of blood stained creation. Music, of course, is not so explicit an art, but anybody who knew Charlie Parker knows that he felt much the same way about his own gift. Both of them did communicate one central theme: Against the ruin of the world, there is only one defense-- the creative act.

POVERTY

Prisca Stiles

I am my past and future
and forever
I am the taker and giver

In me all sight and sound
and taste
In me the saving
and the waste

My bosom holds all love
and sorrow
It all may lend and all
may borrow

Omniscience, Ignorance
- both my own
-Sin and Sainthood
- both are sown

The seas, the ships, the Universe
- but which to cling to?

There's the curse!

NOTE TO ALL STUDENTS

Won't you please co-operate with the Parking Committee? Join a car pool. Save money. Save wear on your car. Save parking space.
