

Date: Fri, 23 May 1997 08:12:28 -0400 (EDT)
From: Lennon J Michael <lennon@wilkes1.wilkes.edu>
To: barbara mailer <nmncm@pop.tiac.net>
Cc: donna lennon <dplennon@wilkes1.wilkes.edu>
Subject: FedEx package coming

Dear Norris,

I spoke to Norman last night and he asked for some things. I am sending by FedEx to P-Town this afternoon the following:

- 1) a copy of the hardback edition of The Deer Park: A Play;
- 2) a copy of the script of "Tough Guys Don't Dance";
- 3) large print copies of the following: opening of "Miami"; opening of "Chicago"; ascent of Apollo 11; "Ngolo" from The Fight; "The Run" from The Fight; "The Language of Men"; "The White Negro"; "The Time of Her Time"; "An Imaginary Interview" (on Why Are We In Vietnam?); "The Man Who Studied Yoga"; "The Writer's Imagination and the Imagination of the State";
- 4) the three other imaginary interviews: "The First Day's Interview," "The Metaphysics of the Belly," "The Political Economy of Time" (Please remind Norman that I sent him three Edgar Allen Poe imaginary dialogues for comparison's sake--sent to P-Town recently.

Sending the foregoing will depend to some extent on how much Liz can do; I came in early and have been working on getting this package together but will soon be awash in the day's work. I will email you later if there is a delay.

Planning to work away on the project--the mother of all anthologies--over the next three days. We have Monday off for Memorial Day. Donna is going to see what kind of place in P-Town we can rent for a week or two in July--perhaps an efficiency at Ship's Bell Inn--so that we can work on the anthology in some proximity. She will talk to you about this, I'm sure. The last half of July looks the best. Hows about you?

Love,
Mike

Date: Thu, 29 May 1997 08:11:19 -0400 (EDT)
From: Lennon J Michael <lennon@wilkes1.wilkes.edu>
To: donna lennon <dplennon@wilkes1.wilkes.edu>
Subject: Re: more on Ancient Evenings (fwd)

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: Thu, 29 May 1997 00:24:56 +0900
From: John Whalen-Bridge <johnwb@ll.u-ryukyu.ac.jp>
To: lennon@wilkes1.wilkes.edu
Subject: Re: more on Ancient Evenings

Domo arigato on "After the White Negro"--I'd never heard about that before. On uncollected pieces I'll not venture a guess except to say leave the interview with Buchanan out for ever and ever. Amongst collected essays, I'm partial to Graffiti & Of a Harlot High and Low. Mailer as a thinker really comes through in those essays. One four or six line short story in the collected short fiction ends with a line like "it's just that their children keep dying." I loaned that hard-to-find book to someone before I knew better.

Excerpts from three novels. I would definately like to see a three-panel series that presents Mailer as a writer with Early, Middle, and Late periods, as I think he
It be understood in such a grand way some far day in the future, after much dust has settled.

I. From Naked I'd choose either the death of Hearn or the scene in which Cummings "goes to pieces" and pulls himself together during the night. Cummings presents a theory of self of sorts. Better, the dialogue between Cummings and Hearn in which the adolescent qualities of Hearn's liberal revolt are contrasted with Cummings' refusal of such pieties--the particular dialogue in which Cummings insists that groups (Jews, Negroes, etc) DO have certain tendencies, though good liberals like Hearn must pretend otherwise. This moment contains a) the old man/young man dialogue of every Mailer novel, b) his early dissatisfaction with unexamined liberalism and c) the naturalism of everything he wrote before Advertisements for Myself.

II. Middle period. I'd probably go for the "loss of ego" passages of the final chapter of AN AMERICAN DREAM, the final pages in which Rojack

sees the city of jewels, theorizes about the new breed of man, elides the "I" from his sentences, smells death everywhere, and talks to Cherry on the phone. This chapter or section (not sure how long the excerpts should be) has the surrealism of the middle period (Diamond as big as the ritz ref in beginning of AAD, Burroughsian style of WAWIV?, pataphysical extrapolation of Fire on the Moon, and Sixties wackiness, if I may, of Armies. Plus...it's a forbidden book of sorts. Some day I'd like to write an article about biography and critical reception incorporating an interpretation of AAD --as if it were written by a feminist activist. But anyway.

II. Late Mailer. There is absolutely no way to sum up this group of novels (counting Executioner's Song, AE, Tough Guys, Harlot's Ghost, GATT) with a selection from any one, but I would somehow try to make a selection that manifested the Odyssean range and the stylistic mastery (utterly unrecognized by majority of reviewers) of these books. Tough one. It would be tempting to grab a chunk from Book of One Man Dead...but the purity of that writing is contrapuntally shattered by the godly bodily fluids of the next book. The architectural designs of these books are hard to excerpt, ne? I'd probably balance the young/old dialogue of Naked against the ending of AE in which Meneketet I a) gives a summary view of the empires to rise and fall b) declares that Osiris would welcome the birth of many kinds of gods and c) dissolves in the Duad as Meni II makes it across.

It's supposed to be III above, not II, obviously.

I'm home now, not in my office. I suppose I could track page numbers, but I have to go on memory for now.

I'll be interested to hear what you choose.

G'night,

John

Date: Thu, 29 May 1997 16:40:33 -0400 (EDT)
From: Lennon J Michael <lennon@wilkes1.wilkes.edu>
To: barbara mailer <nmncm@pop.tiac.net>
Cc: Elizabeth adams <adamse@wilkes1.wilkes.edu>,
donna lennon <dplennon@wilkes1.wilkes.edu>
Subject: duplicated pages

Dear Norris,

The xerox machine is clacking away and Liz will send off a FedEx parcel late this afternoon.

Included will be:

A copy of "Of Women and Their Elegance"

A Copy of "The Short fiction of Norman Mailer"

All requested pages (in large print) from the following"

Cannibals and Christians

Pres. Papers

Of A Fire on the moon

Existential Errands

An American Dream

Deaths for the Ladies

Advertisements for Myself

Short Fiction (so you will have both the book and some requested stories in large print)

Tough Guys Don't Dance

The Deer Park

Conversation with Erlichman

"Gadiators: For Hemingway"

Still to come: excerpts from

Genius and Lust

Pieces and Pontifications

Ancient Evenings

Harlot's Ghost

Oswald's Tale

Picasso

GATT

I will have problems, nay, impossibilities, with Oswald's Tale because Norman's page references are to a British paperback, the Abacus edition. We'll have to work this out; I don't have this edition.

There are other odds and ends, but we can almost see the next to last bend in the long xeroxing tunnel.

Also, I am working on getting a selection of Norman's best letters to the editor for the humor section

And: the auto-obit from Boston magazine

And: The pages requested from Naked (faxed to me at 2pm today).

And: Description of Houston at beginning of "By Heaven Inspired"

And: More pages from The Fight

And: More pages from Why Are We In Vietnam?

And: Pages from Barbary Shore (but remind Norman to look at the ones he selected for inclusion in Advertisements)

And: Pages in Executioner's Song

Looking forward to seeing you,
Love,

Mike

Date: Fri, 25 Jul 1997 15:16:06 -0400 (EDT)
From: Lennon J Michael <lennon@wilkes1.wilkes.edu>
To: donna lennon <dplennon@wilkes1.wilkes.edu>
Subject: Re: book for Norman (fwd)

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: Fri, 25 Jul 1997 12:03:49 -0400
From: jmwordcraft <105360.3360@compuserve.com>
To: Lennon J Michael <lennon@wilkes1.wilkes.edu>
Subject: Re: book for Norman

Mike,

Yes, Norris was telling me about that house across the street. I suppose PT real estate prices are absurdly inflated and I personally would be wary of extreme fixer-uppers, especially so close to the ocean where everything seems bent on returning to the sea post haste--either through rotting away or blowing off in a storm. This may have some mystical satisfactions and poetic resonance--but the bills are sure miserable. You'd probably save a bundle if you moved a bit down the Cape where it's actually possible to find something "inland."

Yes, I think NM's basic scheme makes a lot of sense and should hold together well.

I just spoke with Joy who tells me she pestered the contract dept this week--she's getting lots of "the dog ate my homework" excuses but the basic approvals are in place and now it's just a case of persisting. They promised her papers next week--which she wants to see before sending to you so she knows they were really created.

Take care...
Judth

Date: Mon, 11 Aug 1997 08:35:57 -0400 (EDT)
From: Lennon J Michael <lennon@wilkes1.wilkes.edu>
To: robert lucid <rlucid@dept.english.upenn.edu>
Cc: donna lennon <dplennon@wilkes1.wilkes.edu>
Subject: Norman

Dear Bob,

I had a good talk with Norman yesterday. He is still at approximately 2400 pages and intends to give half of the ms. to Jason tomorrow. He will send us a new table of contents. By the way, I seem to have lost the first page of the four I gave you which comprise a table of contents.

Please save for

me, for the file I'm keeping. I am keeping notes on the whole enterprise and wrote up a bunch yesterday.

I tried "American Refractions" on Norman and Norris and it was summarily and rightly blasted out of the sky. He is still toying with "The Midnight Ride (or Visions) of Norman Mailer." Also: "All the Pirates and People." Egad.

The more work he does the more he comes to believe that the novels are his best work; he is disappointed with Advertisements, Cannibals and Presidential Papers, the ital portions. He says that they promise much, but do not deliver.

I think he will ultimately hold on to the Battle of Khadesh, but the imaginary interviews are slipping in his esteem. He doesn't know what to do with "The Executioner's Song." So far, all he has used is the execution and the autopsy. Ditto for "Of a Fire on the Moon." What to use?

He must follow his own inner light at this point. I'm virtually out of it now that his scheme has coalesced. We can both listen and encourage at this point. But we still plan to go down the Cape on September 12th and stay till the 14th, assuming that the closing is scheduled for then.

We'll talk upon your return. Have a good trip.

Best,

Mike

Date: Mon, 11 Aug 1997 15:36:50 -0400 (EDT)
From: Lennon J Michael <lennon@wilkes1.wilkes.edu>
To: donna lennon <dplennon@wilkes1.wilkes.edu>
Subject: Re: Norman (fwd)

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: Mon, 11 Aug 1997 15:36:33 -0400 (EDT)
From: Lennon J Michael <lennon@wilkes1.wilkes.edu>
To: Bob Lucid <rlucid@dept.english.upenn.edu>
Cc: Bob Lucid <rlucid@dept.english.upenn.edu>
Subject: Re: Norman

Dear Bob,

You are, of course, right about the nonfiction. I think we will have a better sense of things when we see how much of Dream, Vietnam, Armies, Fire, and Prisoner he uses. But there is no doubt that he is prone to undervalue the groundbreaking nonfiction and overvalue the novels. Harlot's Ghost lends itself so well to this project that it may reinforce this tendency. Then we must ask, are we going for historical coverage or the best writing? I will keep trying to ask this question. We should get the new table of contents soon.

Best,
Mike

Date: Mon, 11 Aug 1997 16:36:55 -0400 (EDT)
From: Lennon J Michael <lennon@wilkes1.wilkes.edu>
To: donna lennon <dplennon@wilkes1.wilkes.edu>
Subject: Re: Norman (fwd)

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: Mon, 11 Aug 1997 10:49:48 -0400 (EDT)
From: Bob Lucid <rlucid@dept.english.upenn.edu>
To: Lennon J Michael <lennon@wilkes1.wilkes.edu>
Cc: Bob Lucid <rlucid@dept.english.upenn.edu>
Subject: Re: Norman

Mike,

I will leave the "contents" sheets you gave me on the kitchen table with my Chap. 3 and the check.

In those contents the only novel stressed at all is HG. If Norman is serious about SUBSTITUTING novel material throughout the collection, and eliminating his various non-fictive forms of historiography, the book will be panned by the huge audience that has never accepted him as a conventional novelists (after N&D), but has valued him as the creator of a novelistic non-fiction of immense historiographic importance. That audience must be respected and, in the collection, appealed to. It is going to want Miami and Armies in rich measures and also Executioner's Song. These are his winners, and he has to back the winners in a collection like this.

Bob

Date: Tue, 12 Aug 1997 16:22:27 -0400 (EDT)
From: Lennon J Michael <lennon@wilkes1.wilkes.edu>
To: Judith McNally <jmwordcraft@compuserve.com>
Cc: donna lennon <dplennon@wilkes1.wilkes.edu>
Subject: response to Random House

Dear Judith,

Here are my responses to the questions of Leslie Oelsner at Random House concerning my role in the Mailer anthology, "The Good Parts."

1. Have any of the essays in the book been published?

Yes, everything in this retrospective of Mailer's entire career has been previously published. The collection will continue selections from Mailer's novels, nonfiction narratives, poetry, drama and from uncollected magazine articles, interviews and newspaper columns and letters. The only new writing in the collection will be a general introduction and scattered headnotes.

2. Does Mailer control rights to all the selections. No, not all of them, but the great majority. Rights for three books must be obtained: "The Executioner's Song," "Oswald's Tale," and "Portrait of Picasso as a Young Man." Lawrence Schiller has claim, in part, on the first two; Atlantic Monthly Press published the latter. There may be one or two others. No final determination of permissions needed can be made until the final selections for inclusion are made.

3. Exactly what is Lennon to do, specifically. Lennon has been working for several months with Mailer to gather and evaluate selections from the latter's work. Lennon is one of Mailer's literary executors as well as a commentator on his work and his chief bibliographer. He is therefore familiar with all of Mailer's work including obscure essays and contributions to literary quarterlies, newspapers, "Parade" magazine and the like. He has assisted Mailer in determining the selections and their sequencing and tracked down passages and odd pieces that Mailer could not find. Lennon will not write an introduction. He will, however, work with Judith McNally on obtaining permissions and assembling the permission page(s) in the collection. He has spent ten days in Provincetown at Mr. Mailer's home working

on the project, and will visit again in September. He speaks with Mailer about the project several times a week. Faxes, FedEx packages, email and snail mail move steadily from Lennon to Provincetown.

4. Is Lennon to deliver a final manuscript to us? If so, is he to have obtained Mailer's approval before delivery? What's the due date? Mailer will deliver the full manuscript by September 15, 1997.

Approximately 60% of the collection will go to Jason Epstein by the 20th of August; the remainder following within a month. Lennon has a full copy of every selection, available for question or reference. The book will be published on May 6, 1998, the 50th anniversary of the publication of "The Naked and the Dead," and the 30th of "The Armies of the Night."

5. How long is the manuscript to be? How many essays? The manuscript will be 1600 book pages in length. The total number of selections will be 60-80, excerpted, as noted above, from almost every one of Mailer's

6. What are payment terms? Expenses up to \$2500 to be paid upon submission of receipts, in no more than two batches. \$5000 to be paid on January 1, 1998 and \$2500 on publication date.

7. What's Lennon's credit to be, on the book and in any advertising & publicity. Has Mailer agreed with this? Lennon will be a co-editor, or something resembling this. Exact credit to be determined after consultation among Lennon, Mailer and Jason Epstein. Lennon will be available for assistance on publicity, research, evaluation of reviews, etc. for as long as necessary.

Judith, let me know if this will serve. I can have typed up or sent to Joy by email as you prefer. Norman didn't ask to see, but send it to him by all means if you think he should see it.

I'll wait to hear from you.
Thanks and Cheers,
Mike