

disturbed, interrupted, accompanied by conceptions of all sorts; by aberrations, nightmares, daydreams, fantasies; even the phenomena, the perceptions—so far as we can focus and fix them—keep on joining, disjoining, connecting, conflicting, relating, failing to relate. Poetic order is still *order* of a special kind. Something has to hold the bits and pieces together, they won't do it of themselves. Even logic and classification are *human*. An enormous part of language has directly to do with all of this; far too much of it to be disregarded by poets, whose material it is. You can't escape by arguing, as Olson does, 'The harmony of the universe, and I include man, is not logical, or better, is post-logical.' All that amounts to, is appealing to a superior logic.

There are two other rules for projective or open form verse, for which I can find no ground in common sense or experience; but I'd better mention them because so much of our current new verse looks as if the poets believed in them. One could be called physiological, and the other mechanical, or manual. Briefly, we are reminded that the poet breathes as he composes—okay, citizen. Ergo, he composes as he breathes. Olson reminds us that in Latin the word *spiritus* means breathing, which I suppose lends a little tone to this notion. Then, by using the keys of his typewriter, he is said to 'score' his breathed poem on the paper, like a sheet of music: spaces or diagonals, for instance, give the reader the pauses, the durations equivalent to the poet's own breath in the act of composition. Of course, it is true that the cadence of a phrase, the accenting and rhythm of a line of verse—or prose for that matter—are governed by the natural stresses of good speech, and one can't speak without breathing. But it simply does not follow that this 'breath' of the line corresponds to the breath I breathe as I write it or compose it by ear. Anyone who was ever taught singing, as I was, knows that the ins-and-outs of the lungs, the suspensions and releases of the breath, have as much, and just as much, to do with the form of the music as the bag of the bagpipe has with the strathspey or the lament which the piper is playing. As for the typewriter; well, it has its conveniences. Does anyone remember Don Marquis's cockroach, Archy, who could write only by butting his head on the keys, and used no capital letters because he couldn't use the shift key? More seriously, one thinks of E. E. Cummings, whom Olson mentions in passing, with suitable respect. As long ago as 1923, Cummings had explored almost all the poetic possibilities of the typewriter as a means of engaging the ear and the eye of the reader. Here is a question: does the particular genius of Cummings lend much support to a *general* principle of poetics, elaborated by Olson and Creeley some 30 years later? I am inclined to think not.