BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE WORKS OF MAY SWENSON

Prepared by Alice Geffen
Edited and updated by Maure Lyn Smith

INTRODUCTION
Carole Berglie

Alice Geffen met May Swenson on April 21, 1975, when both attended “Author Appreciation Day,” a reception at the Sea Cliff Library, on Long Island, to honor local writers. May was probably the town’s most famous writer. Alice had just opened The Main Street Bookstore in nearby Roslyn village, and Harper & Row had recently published her facsimile edition of Lydia Maria Child’s *American Frugal Housewife*, so the conversation no doubt touched on the vicissitudes of publishing and the challenges of selling poetry. As a lover of poetry, Alice could not have been more thrilled to meet a poet whose work she so admired. She had stocked her store with poetry books and had made a point of carrying the works of local authors.

Not long after their meeting, May invited Alice and me to drive her to Jamaica Bay National Wildlife Refuge. (May couldn’t drive.) We walked the trail around the West Pond with one pair of binoculars among us, adjusting the focus three times for each bird we encountered. May pointed to a shorebird in the distance, saying, “There’s a solitary sandpiper.” Unaware that May was naming the species of shorebird, Alice turned to me, commenting that only a poet would describe a bird in such beautiful, simple terms.
The friendship between May Swenson and Alice Geffen grew over the years, built on the cornerstones of a love of poetry, a fondness for living in Sea Cliff, the enjoyment of watching birds, and their spirited competition in chess. Alice and May would spend afternoons playing chess at 73 The Boulevard, and there were many nights that May joined us for dinner at our house on Highland Avenue. We would sometimes drive May to a local movie or a poetry reading in New York City; other times we took her with us to the grocery store in Glen Cove. Most were ordinary, everyday activities that neighbors do all the time. One morning we drove to a farm a little way out on Long Island to pick strawberries. On the way back home, May was unusually quiet as she sat in the backseat of the car. That afternoon, Alice and I made lots of strawberry jam, and May wrote “Strawberrying.”

We’re picking near the shore, the morning sunny, a slight wind moving rough-veined leaves our hands rumple among. Fingers find by feel the ready fruit in clusters. Here and there, their squishy wounds. . . . Flesh was perfect yesterday. . . . June was for gorging. . . .

(In Other Words 8)

Alice came from a literary and artistic family: her uncle Matthew Josephson was the author of The Robber Barons and The Money Lords, two books about the Gilded Age, as well as of at least a dozen biographies of leading Americans. Her aunt Felicia Geffen was executive secretary at the American Academy of Arts and Letters and her aunt Beth was the librarian there. Her cousin was James Levine, artistic director and conductor of the Metropolitan Opera, and her sister Joy Geffen had traveled with the USO during WWII, later becoming a well-known actress in New York City.

As a high school student, Alice attended the Stockbridge School in Massachusetts, then Carnegie Technical Institute in Pittsburgh, but soon left to pursue other interests. After several years working in and managing various bookstores in New York City, Alice finished her bachelor’s degree at Hofstra University on Long Island and began master’s degree work in American studies at New York University. Her mother’s death caused her to shift gears again; she bought a house in Sea Cliff and opened a bookstore in the next town.

Whether as a student or a purveyor of literature, Alice read both
classic and contemporary writers. She kept current with developments in the theatre and movies, and she traveled widely in search of birds. She especially credited May Swenson with encouraging her development as a naturalist-travel writer; Alice wrote three more books and many magazine articles that helped promote ecotourism and nature travel. Mostly she enjoyed talking about the fiction she was reading and the poems she especially liked—with May’s poems topping that list. The work that Alice Geffen did on this bibliography is testament to their close friendship and her continuing support of May Swenson’s poetry.

May’s correspondence with Alice is part of the Swenson holdings at Washington University’s Olin Library in St. Louis. In these many postcards and long letters, reflecting more than twenty-five years of friendship, May is playful, making word jokes, games, and puzzles (they shared a love of games); she sometimes signed her letters “From the Junkie Mungle,” a reference to Florida’s Monkey Jungle. She sent limericks like

There was a young man named Denis
Who went to play tennis in Venice
Which he did with a bounce
But he couldn’t pronounce
And would say “I’ve a very large penis.”

May reported the birds she had seen and the side trips she had taken. She also wrote about her editors, her poems to be published, her upcoming readings. She worried about her house in Sea Cliff—whether the pipes had frozen or the roof had leaked—and she spoke about her health, including her frustration with losing her sense of smell. But mostly their news-filled correspondence was peppered with humor and response. Alice described a Christmas gift she received from a friend, “Mickey made me the most wonderful pillow: it’s two moose mooning in a marsh in the woods”; May replied with:

Two moose mooning in a marsh in the woods
must mean more than at first appears.
Many mottled mangos mashed within their mouths
might indicate a morbid reason for their tears.

Moose mainly meander into marshes when confused
and munch on mint or mistletoe or other freaky fruit
moodily moping, never giggling or amused.
Some mimic the mandolin or mouth organ or flute.
Two Sioux sunning on the sward in the snow
swinging skillets, smiling, should set your heart aglow
But two moose mooning in a marsh in the woods
must be murky omens and up to no goods.

I have no information on exactly when Alice began writing this bibliography, but it was several years before May died. There is no doubt she worked on it with May’s help and approval, and that she compiled some of the information from May’s own files. Alice lived almost ten years beyond May, but she knew well that she had lost her close friend and beloved poet. Publishing this bibliography is a fine tribute for both of them.

Section I—Books in Chronological Order


Contents:

**ONE**
Feel Like a Bird
Horse and Swan Feeding
Lion
Sun
Stony Beach
Sketch for –a Landscape
Café Tableau
The Drunkard's Brow
Spring in the Square
Boy in Canoe
The Garden at St. John’s
Horses in Central Park
Three Jet Planes

**TWO**
Evolution
Beast
Organelle
Love Is
Mornings Innocent
He That None Can Capture/comes of own accord to me
Each Day of Summer
August Night
Another Animal
To Confirm a Thing
A History of Love

**THREE**
Secure
The Key to Everything
The Tiger’s Ghost
An Unknown Island
Mortal Surge
Satanic Form
A Loaf of Time
Why We Die
Question
I Will Lie Down
The Greater Whiteness
A Wish

**FOUR**
Any Object
Organs
Big-Hipped Nature
The Playhouse
The Shadow-Maker
By Morning
Sunset
Cumuli
A Day is Laid By
Rusty Autumn
A Dream
Green Red Brown and White
Wingfolk
An Opening


Contents:

**PART I The form is stone The dress is rain**
Almanac
The Centaur

The Red Bird Tapestry
A Lake Scene
The Promontory Moment
Fountain Piece
The Wave the Flame the Cloud and the Leopard Speak to the Mind
The Engagement
In the Egyptian Room
The School of Desire
The Charm Box
Waiting for It
The Word "Beautiful"
The Poplar’s Shadow
Cause and Effect
The Cloud-Mobile
Order of Diet
Zambesi and Ranee
The Legend of To Rise
Death Great Smoothener
Today in Winter’s Town
The Properties

PART 2 TARGETS IN THE BRAIN
At Breakfast
By Morning
Hypnotist
Was Worm
An Extremity
Am I Becoming?
Seven Natural Songs
Shadow-Maker
To Her Images (For I. M.)
Frontispiece

R. F. at Bread Loaf His Hand Against a Tree
Deciding
Two-Part Pear Able
Parade of Painters
The Process

PART 3 A HEALTH OF YELLOW
Looking Uptown
Working on Wall Street
To the Statue
Ornamental Sketch with Verbs
At East River
Water Picture
Fountain Piece II
To the Shore
Early Morning: Cape Cod
The Tide at Long Point
The Even Sea
Sunday in the Country
Forest
A Haunted House
News from the Cabin
The Harp
Executions
The Day Moon
Spring Uncovered
Her Management


Contents:

To Mix With Time 1 “then i saw it flow”
The Universe
God
Out of My Head
The Wish to Escape into Inner Space
Downward
Let Us Prepare
Landing on the Moon
The Shape of Death
Each Like a Leaf

The Primitive
Night Practice
The Surface
How to Be Old

To Mix With Time 2 “touching his toe”
Death Invited
Instead of the Camargue
Fountains of Aix
The Alyscamps at Arles
Above the Arno
A Boy Looking at Big David
Notes Made in the Piazza San Marco
The Pantheon, Rome
Italian Sampler
While Sitting in the Tuileries and Facing the Slanting Sun
A Hurricane at Sea

To Mix With Time 3 “cubes and cones”
Snow in New York
From the Office Window
At the Museum of Modern Art
A Fixture
Riding the “A”
Pigeon Woman
Cat & the Weather
De Chirico: Superimposed Interiors
Southbound on the Freeway
When You Lie Down, the Sea Stands Up
The Contraption
Trinity Churchyard, Spring 1961
The Totem
Distance and a Certain Light

To Mix With Time 4 “colors take bodies”
The Snow Geese at Jamaica Bay
Living Tenderly
The Woods at Night
Another Spring Uncovered
One Morning in New Hampshire
A Couple
Japanese Breakfast
Seeing the Frog
Fireflies
The Crossing
The Exchange

FROM A CAGE OF SPINES 1
Almanac
The Centaur
The Red Bird Tapestry
A Lake Scene
The Promontory Moment
Fountain Piece
The Wave the Flame the Cloud and the Leopard Speak to the Mind
The Engagement

The Charm Box
Waiting for IT
The Word “Beautiful”
The Poplar’s Shadow
Order of Diet
Death, Great Smoothener

FROM A CAGE OF SPINES 2 “riddling poems”
At Breakfast
By Morning
Hypnotist
Was Worm
An Extremity
Shadow-Maker
Seven Natural Songs
To Her Images
Frontispiece
Two-Part Pearable
Deciding

FROM A CAGE OF SPINES 3
Working on Wall Street
Looking Uptown
To the Statue
Water Picture
Ornamental Sketch with Verbs
Sunday in the Country
Forest
News From the Cabin
Early Morning: Cape Cod
The Tide at Long Point
Executions
The Day Moon
Spring Uncovered
Her Management

FROM ANOTHER ANIMAL 1
Evolution
Love is
Mornings Innocent
He That None Can Capture comes of own accord to me
Another Animal
Organs
To Confirm a Thing
A Loaf of Time
Why We Die  Horse and Swan Feeding
Question  Lion
Mortal Surge  Sun
Satanic Form  Stony Beach
The Greater Whiteness  Sketch for a Landscape
A Wish  Café Tableau
The Key to Everything  The Garden at St. John’s
A Dream  Spring in the Square
Rusty Autumn  Horses in Central Park
I Will Lie Down  Boy in Canoe

FROM ANOTHER ANIMAL 2
Any Object  The Playhouse
Feel Like a Bird  Big-Hipped Nature


Contents:

A Clue or Two

SOME RIDDLE POEMS
At Breakfast  Forest
Was Worm  Fountain Piece
By Morning  Feel Like a Bird
Living Tenderly  The Charm Box
Hypnotist  The Woods at Night
A Yellow Circle  The Tide at Long Point
An Extremity  The Wave and the Dune
Cardinal Ideograms  When You Lie Down the Sea Stands Up
Southbound on the Freeway
7 Natural Songs
Japanese Breakfast
The Surface
Her Management

5 CAT POEMS, 4 BIRD POEMS, 3 SEA POEMS
Waiting for IT
Cat and the Weather
Drawing the Cat
His Secret

Green Red Brown and White
The Word “Beautiful”
Water Picture
The Cloud-Mobile
Question
The Wave the Flame the Cloud and the Leopard Speak to the Mind

3 Models of the Universe
Evolution
A Boy Looking at Big David
The Centaur
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE WORKS OF MAY SWENSEN


Contents:

Poems

On Handling Some Small Shells from the Windward Islands
On Seeing Rocks Cropping out of a Hill in Central Park
Out of the Sea, Early
The People Wall
The Pregnant Dream
Rain at Wildwood
The Secret in the Cat
Sightseeing in Provincetown
Sleeping Overnight on the Shore
Spectrum Analysis
Still Turning
Swimmers
The Tall Figures of Giacometti
Things in Common
3 Models of the Universe
To Make a Play
The Truth
Untitled
Waking from a Nap on the Beach
The Watch
The Wave and the Dune
While Seated in a Plane
A Yellow Circle

Translations of Six Swedish Poets

Ingemar Gustafson, “Locked In.”
———, “Under a Ramshackle Rainbow.”
Werner Aspenström, “Winter Tale.”
Eric Lindegren, “Pastoral Suite III.”
———, “Icarus.”
Gunnar Ekelöf, “Autumn Trance.”
———, “Each Man Is A Universe.”
Harry Martinson, “High View.”
———, “Evening Inland.”
Karin Boye, “On the Road.”
———, “Yes It Hurts.”
Compiled by Alice Geffen


Contents:

SECTION ONE
Bleeding
Women
Things I Can Do In My Situation
Over The Field
Earth Will Not Let Go
The DNA Molecule
I Look At My Hand
I’ll Be
The Shape of Death
The Mobile In Back Of The Smithsonian
Welcome Aboard the Turbojet Electra
The James Bond Movie
It Rains
Feel Me
The Fingers
Electric Sound
The Grain of Our Eye (A Scientific Abstract)
Science and Religion—A Merger
The Power House
Orbiter 5 Shows How Earth Looks From The Moon
Black Tuesday
The Lowering
An Old Field Jacket
Spring by Robert Lowell (Photograph by Trudi Fuller)
Notice
MAsterMANANiMAi
The Beam
Redundant Journey

SECTION TWO
Unconscious Came A Beauty
Catbird in Redbud
Geometric
Rough Triplets: My Face The Night
Admire
What’s Secret
Rosignole To The Critic
Window in the Tail
On Park Avenue at 52nd Street
“Merry Christmas. You’re on the Right.”
A Trellis for R.
Wednesday at the Waldorf
In the Yard
The Year Of The Double Spring
Five Horses
How Everything Happens (Based On A Study Of The Wave)
A Pair
Camofleur
Beginning to Squall
A Subject Of The Waves:
  1 The Boat Stave
  2 The Blue Bottle
  3 The Stick
Fire Island
Stone Gullets
Seeing Jupiter
Zero in the Cove
The Sunbird Settles To Its Nest
Rocky Point

A Note about Iconographs
About the Author


Contents:

Preface “A Poem Is a Thing”

1 SPACE AND FLIGHT POEMS

After the Flight of Ranger 7
Orbiter 5 Shows How Earth Looks From the Moon
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE WORKS OF MAY SWENSON

First Walk on the Moon
Three Jet Planes
Over the Field
Window in the Tail
Sleeping Overnight on the Shore

Of Rounds

2 WATER POEMS
At Truro
Out of the Sea, Early
Waking from a Nap on the Beach
Beginning to Squall
How Everything Happens (Based on a Study of the Wave)
The Stick
Fountains of Aix

3 WORD POEMS
To Make a Play
The Watch
Analysis of Baseball


Contents: 25 riddles about everyday objects, some rhyme, none are titled; there is no contents: page.


Contents:

THINGS TAKING PLACE I
A Navajo Blanket
Bison Crossing Near Mt. Rushmore
Speed
The North Rim
Camping in Madera Canyon
Bronco Busting, Event #1
St. Augustine-by-the-Sea
One of the Strangest
Last Night at Long Pine
From Sea Cliff, March
Old No. 1

Shu Swamp, Spring
On the Edge
Painting the Gate
Written While Riding the Long Island Rail Road
Appointment in New York
Staying at Ed's Place
Fashion in the 70's
Going to the Whitney and Walking on the Floor
O'Keeffe Retrospective
Poet to Tiger
Overboard
Looks

4 COLOR AND SOUND POEMS
The Blindman
Flag of Summer
Colors Without Objects
Rain at Wildwood
Hearing the Wind at Night
Stone Gullets
Electronic Sound

5 CREATURE POEMS
A Pair
Camofleur
Geometrid
Carbird in Redbud
Unconscious Came a Beauty
Redundant Journey
Motherhood
A Bird's Life
News from the Cabin
Holding the Towel
Analysis of Baseball
Watching the Jets Lose to Buffalo at Shea
Choosing Craft
July 4th
On Addy Road
Angels at “Unsubdued”
The Willets
Dr. Henderson
The Beauty of the Head
Above Bear Lake

THINGS TAKING PLACE II
Night Visits with the Family
Nature
That the Soul May Wax Plump
Birthday
Running on the Shore
Scroppo’s Dog
Red Moonset
September Things
October
On Its Way
November Night
This Morning
View to the North
The Thickening Mat
Cold Colors
Captain Holm
Digging in the Garden of Age I Uncover a
   Live Root
Today
Survey of the Whole
The Solar Corona
First Walk on the Moon
“So Long” to the Moon from the Men of
   Apollo
The Pure Suit of Happiness
Teleology
Teeth
Deaths
The Wonderful Pen
Ending
Dream After Nanook

SELECTED POEMS
from ICONOGRAPHS

The Sunbird Settles to its Nest
Rocky Point
Beginning to Squall
A Subject of the Waves
Stone Gullets
Geometrid
The DNA Molecule (in paragraph format)
Orbiter 5 Shows How Earth Looks From
   the Moon
Earth Will Not Let Go
Seeing Jupiter
I Look at My Hand
Feel Me
The Shape of Death
Fire Island
The Lowering
MAsterMANANiMAI
Bleeding
Women
Over the Field
Electronic Sound
The James Bond Movie
Wednesday at the Waldorf
In the Yard
Catbird in Redbud
Five Horses
Blue
Year of the Double Spring
Camofleur
Unconscious Came a Beauty
The Blue Bottle
How Everything Happens (Based On A
   Study Of The Wave)
Zero in the Cove

FROM HALF SUN HALF SLEEP
Colors Without Objects
The Blindman
The Kite
The Tall Figures of Giacometti
All That Time
A City Garden in April
Dear Elizabeth
Motherhood
Four-Word Lines
Swimmers
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE WORKS OF MAY SWENSON

Naked in Borneo (From a painting by Tobias)
The Pregnant Dream
Untitled
Cause & Effect
Fable for When There's No Way Out
While Seated in a Plane
Flying Home from Utah
Gods | Children
At Truro
The Lightning
Out of the Sea, Early
The Wave and the Dune
Sleeping Overnight on the Shore
3 Models of the Universe
Of Rounds
After the Flight of Ranger VII
August 19, Pad 19
The People Wall
Still Turning
To Make a Play
The Watch
The Secret in the Cat
Waking from a Nap on the Beach
Rain at Wildwood
October Textures
Cardinal Ideograms
After the Dentist
A Yellow Circle

FROM TO MIX WITH TIME
Above the Arno
Notes Made in the Piazza San Marco
The Pantheon, Rome
Italian Sampler
Death Invited
Instead of the Camargue
Fountains of Aix
While Sitting in the Tuileries and Facing the Slanting Sun
A Hurricane at Sea
Snow in New York
Riding the “A”
A Fixture
The Contraption
At the Museum of Modern Art
Distance and a Certain Light
Pigeon Woman
Cat & the Weather
A Couple
Southbound on the Freeway
The Woods at Night
Living Tenderly
The Exchange
The Universe
God
The Wish to Escape into Inner Space
Landing on the Moon
Out of My Head
The Primitive
How to be Old
Night Practice
Let Us Prepare
The Surface

FROM A CAGE OF SPINES
At Breakfast
By Morning
Hypnotist
Was Worm
An Extremity
R. F. at Bread Loaf His Hand Against a Tree
Frontispiece
News from the Cabin
Waiting for IT
Almanac
The Centaur
The Poplar’s Shadow
Fountain Piece
The Engagement
The Red Bird Tapestry
The School of Desire
Two-Part Pear Able
A Lake Scene
Forest
Her Management
Order of Diet
The Cloud-Mobile
Death, Great Smoothenery
Deciding
Working on Wall Street
Looking Uptown
To the Statue
Compiled by Alice Geffen

At East River
Water Picture
Zambesi and Ranee
Early Morning: Cape Cod
The Even Sea
The Promontory Moment
The Tide at Long Point
Executions
Spring Uncovered

FROM ANOTHER ANIMAL

Evolution
Feel Like a Bird
Lion
Sun
Horses in Central Park
Mornings Innocent
He That None Can Capture


Contents:

ONE
In Florida
Waterbird
Three White Vases
Strawberrying
Blood Test
Birthday Bush
Under the Baby Blanket
Double Exposure
Dummy, 51, to Go to Museum
          Ventriloquist Dead at 75
A Thank-You Letter
Teddy's Bears
Alternate Side Suspended
Goodbye, Goldeneye
Summerfall
From a Daybook

Two
Rainbow Hummingbird Lamplight
Morning at Point Dume
A Day Like Rousseau's Dream
SaguaroS Above Tucson
Eclipse Morning

The Cross Spider
Shuttles

          One—April 12, 1981
          Two—November 12, 1981
          Four (I missed the Third)—June
          17, 1982
          Too Big for Words—January 26,
          1986
          Comet Watch on Indian Key—Night of
          April 10, 1986

Ahnighito
If I Had Children

THREE
Come In Go Out
In the Bodies of Words
Her Early Work
Angels, Eagles
The Elect
Shift of Scene at Grandstand
Little Lion Face
Pale Sun
A New Pair
Some Quadrangles
Bibliography of the Works of May Swenson

Four “Comics”
Innards
The Digital Wonder Watch
The Gay Life
Fit

Summer’s Bounty
A Nasty Fright
Giraffe

Five
Banyan


Contents:

Four-Word Lines
Mornings Innocent
Swimmers
Early Morning: Cape Cod
One Morning in New Hampshire
Each Day of Summer
A Loaf of Time
In the Yard
A Couple
Café Tableau
Our Forward Shadows
Organs
Facing
Wednesday at the Waldorf
To F.
He That None Can Capture
August Night
Fireflies
In Love Made Visible
Year of the Double Spring
The School of Desire
Poet to Tiger
A History of Love
Another Animal
Secure
You Are
The Tiger’s Ghost
The Pregnant Dream

Wild Water
Stone or Flame
The Key to Everything
The Willets
Holding the Towel
The Indivisible Incompatibles
Birthday Bush
Little Lion Face
Mortal Surge
All That Time
Dreams and Ashes
Untitled
Satanic Form
Night Before the Journey
The Shape of Death
Symmetrical Companion
Evolution
Annual
Neither Wanting More
Because I Don’t Know
A Trellis for R.
Love Is
Dark Wild Honey
Cat and I
To Confirm a Thing
Good Things Come from Thee
Equilibrist

About the Poet

219
Compiled by Alice Geffen


Contents:

A clue or two

Some riddle poems
At Breakfast
Was Worm
By Morning
Living Tenderly
Hypnotist
A Yellow Circle
An Extremity
Cardinal Ideograms
Southbound on the Freeway
Seven Natural Songs
Japanese Breakfast
The Surface
Her Management

Five cat poems, four bird poems, three sea poems
Waiting for It
Cat and the Weather
Drawing the Cat
His Secret
Forest
Fountain Piece
Feel Like a Bird
The Charm Box
The Woods at Night
The Tide at Long Point
The Wave and the Dune
When You Lie Down, the Sea Stands Up

Some other poems to find and solve
Green Red Brown and White
The Word “Beautiful”
Water Picture
The Cloud-Mobile
Question
The Wave the Flame the Cloud and the Leopard Speak to the Mind
3 Models of the Universe
Evolution
A Boy Looking at Big David
The Centaur

Space and flight poems
After the Flight of Ranger 7
Orbiter 5 Shows How Earth Looks from the Moon
First Walk on the Moon
Three Jet Planes
Over the Field
Window in the Tail
Sleeping Overnight on the Shore
Of Rounds

Water poems
At Truro
Out of the Sea, Early
Waking from a Nap on the Beach
Beginning to Squall
How Everything Happens (Based on a Study of the Wave)
The Stick
Fountains of Aix

Word poems
To Make a Play
The Watch
Analysis of Baseball
The Pregnant Dream
MAsterMANANiMAl

Color and sound poems
The Blindman
Flag of Summer
Colors Without Objects
Rain at Wildwood
Hearing the Wind at Night
Stone Gullets
Electronic Sound
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE WORKS OF MAY SWENSON

CREATURE POEMS
A Pair
Camoufleur
Geometrid
Catbird in Redbud
Unconscious Came a Beauty


Contents:

Foreword, by Susan Mitchell

FRONTISPICES
Come In Go Out
Living Tenderly
Untitled

A Day is Laid By
On Its Way
How to Be Old
View to the North
The Exchange

SELVES
The Truth is Forced
A Lake Scene
The Centaur
Earth Your Dancing Place
The Crossing
The Poplar’s Shadow
I Look at My Hand
If I Had Children
A Dream
Laocoön Dream Recorded in Diary Dated 1943

Cabala
Sunday in the Country
Beast
Mornings Innocent
Evolution
Love Sleeping
Blue
What I Did on A Rainy Day
Lying and Looking
Almanac

Redundant Journey
Motherhood
A Bird’s Life
News from the Cabin

The Wonderful Pen

Green Red Brown and White
A Loaf of Time
Forest
The Thickening Mat
Deciding
The Beauty of the Head
Daffodildo
Question
Birthday
Above the Arno
Manyone Flying
The Lightning
On the Edge
A Subject of the Waves
At Truro
October
Digging in the Garden of Age I Uncover a Live Root

This Morning
Scroppo’s Dog
Horse
Bleeding
Hearing the Wind at Night
The Fluffy Stuff
Weather
Yes, the Mystery
The Little Rapids
Downward
Subconscious Sea
Rusty Autumn
I Will Lie Down
Secure
Still Turning
Order of Diet
The Alyscamps at Arles
Trinity Churchyard, Spring 1961
Nature
Feel Me
Death, Great Smothener
Last Day
The Engagement

Days
A Day Like Rousseau’s Dream
Spring Uncovered
April Light
A City Garden in April
Water Picture
A Tree in Spring
In the Yard
Rain at Wildwood
Catbird in Redbud
Shu Swamp, Spring
One Morning in New Hampshire
Sketch for a Landscape
Flag of Summer
Haymaking
Summer’s Bounty
Her Management

FEATHERS
On Addy Road
Camoufleur
Angels at “Unsubdued”
The Woods at Night
The Snowy
Fountain Piece
The Snow Geese at Jamaica Bay
One of the Strangest
Pigeon Woman
A Pair
The Willets
Goodbye, Goldeneye
Camping in Madera Canyon
Above Bear Lake
October Textures
Waterbird
A New Pair
Another Spring Uncovered
Feel Like a Bird
Stripping and Putting On

MAKINGS
The Playhouse

Dear Elizabeth
In the Bodies of Words
Spring by Robert Lowell (Photograph by Trudi Fuller)
Naked in Borneo
My Farm
The Red Bird Tapestry
Dream After Nanook
Goodnight

INSTINCTS
News from the Cabin
Alternate Hosts
A Couple
Fable For When There’s No Way Out
Zambesi and Ranee
Bronco Busting, Event #1
Motherhood
Wednesday at the Waldorf
Bison Crossing Near Mt. Rushmore
Death Invited
Big-Hipped Nature
Each Like a Leaf
All That Time
Out of the Sea, Early
Gods | Children
The Process

HEAVENS
Once there were Glaciers
Sleeping Overnight on the Shore
The Day Moon
The Cloud-Mobile
Cumuli
Flying Home from Utah
Landing on the Moon
Orbiter 5 Shows How Earth Looks from the Moon
After the Flight of Ranger 7
Of Rounds
Comet Watch on Indian Key—Night of April 10, 1986
Seeing Jupiter
The Solar Corona
As Long Ago As Far Away
Skopus
Survey of the Whole

VISIONS
Look Closer
A Navajo Blanket
By Morning
The North Rim
Speed
The Garden at St. John’s
The Surface
On Handling Some Small Shells From the Windward Islands
Any Object
Fountains of Aix

WATERS
Ocean, Whale-Shaped
The Sea
From Sea Cliff, March
Staring at the Sea on the Day of the Death of Another
The Promontory Moment
Early Morning: Cape Cod
Running on the Shore

Captain Holm
St. Augustine-By-The-Sea
Stone Gulllets
How Everything Happens (Based on a Study of the Wave)
At First, At Last
Swimmers
Waking From a Nap on the Beach
Beginning to Squall
A Hurricane at Sea
Old No. 1
Zero in the Cove
November Night
Overboard
The Wave and the Dune
The Blue Bottle
The Stick
The Even Sea
The Tide at Long Point

AFTERPIECE
Incantation

Index of Titles
About the Poet


Contents:

Above Bear Lake
The Centaur
Memory of the Future? Prophecy of the Past?
Beast
Something Goes By
Haymaking
White Mood
Cumuli
Earth Your Dancing Place
The Seed of My Father
I Look at My Hand
That the Soul May Wax Plump
Feel Me
Goodnight
Night Visits with the Family

Summerfall
Morning at Point Dume
The Poplar’s Shadow
Bison Crossing Near Mt. Rushmore
Speed
Overview
A Navajo Blanket
The North Rim
Camping in Madera Canyon
Bronco Busting, Event #1
Saguaro above Tucson
Digging in the Garden of Age I Uncover a Live Root
My Face the Night
Nightly Vision
Night Visits with the Family II
Compiled by Alice Geffen

My Name Was Called
A Day Is Laid By
Flying Home from Utah


Contents:

Poems
Her Early Work
From a Letter to Elizabeth Bishop
Dear Elizabeth
Somebody Who’s Somebody
In the Bodies of Words

Letters
August 14, 1958


Contents:

Foreword, by Maxine Kumin

Four-Word Lines
Mornings Innocent
Swimmers
Early Morning: Cape Cod
One Morning in New Hampshire
Each Day of Summer
A Loaf of Time
In the Yard
A Couple
Café Tableau
Our Forward Shadows
Organs Facing
Wednesday at the Waldorf
To F.
He That None Can Capture
August Night
Fireflies
In Love Made Visible
Year of the Double Spring
The School of Desire
Poet to Tiger
A History of Love

Another Animal
Secure
You Are
The Tiger’s Ghost
The Pregnant Dream
Wild Water
Stone or Flame
The Key to Everything
The Willets
Holding the Towel
The Indivisible Incompatibles
Birthday Bush
Little Lion Face
Mortal Surge
All That Time
Dreams and Ashes
Untitled
Satanic Form
Night Before the Journey
The Shape of Death
Symmetrical Companion
Evolution
Annual
Neither Wanting More
Because I Don't Know
A Trellis for R.
Love Is
Dark Wild Honey
Cat and I
To Confirm a Thing
Good Things Come from Thee
Equilibrist
The Winepress
The Kiss
At First, at Last
To a Dark Girl
Love Sleeping
Coda to J.
Who Are You I Saw Running?
We Arise from the Pit of Night
Beast
Standing Torso
Under the Best of Circumstances
Sketch for a Landscape
Daffodildo
Found in Diary Dated May 29,1973
Somebody Who’s Somebody
Laocoön Dream Recorded in Diary Dated 1943

A Pair
Close-up of a Couple on a Couch
The Little Rapids
This is What My Love is Thinking
Strawberrying
The Lone Pedestrian
Not the Dress
Bleeding
Zambesi and Ranee
Goodnight
Horse
A New Pair
The Rest of My Life
Digging in the Garden of Age I Uncover a Live Root
Sleeping with Boa
The Red Bird Tapestry
Asleep
Incantation
Evening Wind
Say You Love

Section III—Books Edited or Translated by May Swenson


An anthology of poems, including four previously published by May Swenson:

Analysis of Baseball
Watching the Jets Lose to Buffalo at Shea
Choosing Craft
Bronco Busting, Event #1


Section IV—Chronological Listing of Short Stories, Essays, Plays, and Other Prose Works


BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE WORKS OF MAY SWENSON

SECTION V—CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING OF POEMS IN PERIODICALS

1932

1934

1935

1937

1938

1949
(Revised and collected as “Feel Like a Bird.”)

1950
“In a Mirror.” New Directions in Prose and Poetry 12 (1950): 524. (First published under title “Surrealist” in Seventeen and One. New York; B. Fitzgerald, 1943.)
(Revised and collected as “Mortal Surge.”)
“Compromise.” Dallas Times-Herald 2 Apr. 1950: ___.

1951

1952

1953
“Stradivarius.” *Pegasus* 2.3 (1953): 12.

1954
“Satanic Form.” *Discovery* 3 March 1954: 57.
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE WORKS OF MAY SWENSON

1955


1956


1957

Issue honoring Robert Frost.

1958
“Iris at the Piano.” The New Yorker 19 Apr. 1958: 44.

1959

1960
“From the Office Window.” The Saturday Review 20 Feb. 1960: 42. (Reprinted as winner of William Rose Benet Award for best poem appearing in SR in 1959.)

1961
“Riding the A.” Contact 1961: 38.

1962

“Poem.” Mademoiselle Oct. 1962: 86. (Revised and collected as “A Couple.”)

1963

(Revised as “3 Models of the Universe.”)

1964

“A May Night.” The New Yorker 16 May 1964: 34.

1965

“In a Museum Cabinet.” The New Yorker 20 Feb. 1965: 36.

1966

“Waking from a Nap on the Beach.” The Saturday Review 9 July 1966: 34.

1967

“Naked in Borneo (From a Painting by Tobias).” The New Yorker 21 Jan. 1967: 32.

1968

“January This Year.” The New Orlando Poetry Anthology 3 (1968): 149.
“A Subject of the Waves: 1. The Boat Stave, 2. The Blue Bottle, 3. The Stick.” The
( Collected as “The James Bond Movie.”)

1969

“Notice (On reading Paul Goodman’s poem in The New York Review 9/14/67).” The
“Inchworm.” The New Republic 26 Apr. 1969: 32. (Revised and collected as “Geometrid.”)
“My Face the Night.” Poetry Nov. 1969: 86. (Revised and collected as part of “Rough Triplets.”)

1970


1971


1972

“This Morning.” Chicago Tribune (March 19 or May 31)
“How Everything Happens (Based on a Study of the Wave).” The Elements 1.10 (1972): 2.
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE WORKS OF MAY SWENSON

1973

1974

1975

1976

1977

1978

1979
“Morning at Point Dume.” beyond baroque Early Summer 1979: 56.

1980

1981
“The Lightning.” Life Magazine April 1981: 102. (Includes published photo of M.S. on page 92, with comment by Harriet Heyman, editor.)

1982

1983

1984

1985
“King.” Audio-Visual Poetry Foundation Bird Verse Portfolios No. 2 Series 1 Part 1 3rd page from the end of this mimeo collection.
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE WORKS OF MAY SWENSON


1986


“How to Be Old.” *Span* Aug. 1984: 14. (Published in India by the US Information Agency.)


1987


1988


1989


1990


(Entire issue is “lovingly dedicated to the memory of two cherished friends: Sondra Stang and May Swenson.”)


1991


“On the Cliff.” Ms. 1.4 (1991): 34. (This is one of two poems that together are titled “Good Things Come from You.”)

1993

“[Statement].” Poetry Nov. 1993: 64.

SECTION VI—Recordings


Swenson, May. 4 Songs: “Why We Die,” “Question,” “I Will Lie Down,” “Rusty Autumn.”

Katherine Hansel, Soprano. n.d.


———. To Mix With Time. Scribner’s Sons, 1972.
