

Harold Norse Is Dead! Long Live the Carnivorous Saint!

Contributed by Eds

The End is the Beginning

June 23, 2009, From Eddie Woods:

Event: July 1st 14.30-15.30 Homage in rue Git-le-Coeur; Harold Norse

After lunch, the Homage will rendezvous outside No. 9, rue Git-le-Coeur for the installation, in collaboration with the management of the Relais Hotel du Vieux Paris, of a "plaque commemorative" to mark the historical site of the old Beat Hotel. There will be a small drinks reception hosted by the hotel, souvenirs of Burroughs recounted by poet Nina Zivancevic, reminiscences by the Scottish artist and former Beat Hotel resident, Elliot

Rudie, and readings in the street, including the texts of Fred de Vries' homage to Sinclair Beiles, Max Blagg's "Three Dollar Bill," and, in memoriam for Harold Norse, "Hydra Waterfront" by Neeli Cherkovski and a special tribute from his friend Eddie Woods.

To: Eddie Woods

From: Tate

With a heavy heart i must pass along the news that Harold passed early this morning, June 8th.

A nurse checked on him last night and he spoke a few words. He was saying that it is time to go and he wants to go.

He said, "The end is the beginning." Beautiful.

I will be in touch.

From: James Nawrocki

Hi Eddie,

I am very sorry to have to tell you that Hal passed away this morning (Monday, June 8) at around 7:30. For about the last week he deteriorated rapidly, and became very weak. I visited him this past Saturday...he was in bed when I got there, his voice at a whisper, and it was difficult to understand him. He drifted in and out a bit...but he did see me and our eyes met and I knew that he knew he was at the end. We had a good visit, all things considered. I guess it was a chance for us to say our goodbyes. It was just the two of us. Toward the middle of my visit he said he wanted to get up, and so, with the help of two nurses, we put him in a wheelchair and brought him to the dining room, where I sat with him as he ate a little...very little. It was a bright, sunny day. He sat there looking out at it with me through the big sliding doors. I had to help him with the fork and spoon he tried to hold. He trembled a lot. But...he was there. He had his faculties right to the end. I left him there in that bright room, promising to come back again soon, but it was, it turned out, the last time I saw him.

I don't know if anyone else has contacted you about Hal, but I wanted to let you know. I'll keep you updated on the memorial gatherings. I'm sure there will be a few. And I can send you copies of his obituaries, etc.

I hope you are well. I am sorry to have to share such sad news.

Jim

From: Eddie Woods

Dear Friends,

Harold Norse has passed on. Exactly four weeks short of his 93rd birthday. He went peacefully, knowing for himself that it was time to go. His very last words were, "The end is the beginning."

I intend to write about Harold. An appreciation of a truly great poet. And a magnificent human being. Also about how we met, the times we spent together. And so forth. There is so much to tell. But later, not now.

For the moment the best I can do is pass on the three mailings I received this morning. From his dear San Francisco friends Todd Swindell, Tate Swindell, and Jim Nawrocki. So good that Harold had them close by. Despite my tears, knowing that made the news easier to bear.

Today is being very hectic for me. As will the rest of June. And then, sometime fairly soon (?), there's Jane's house moving and all. But, enshallah and the creeks don't rise too high, I will get to it.

Meanwhile, as Todd Swindell says below, let us celebrate a life well lived. Knowing full well that Harold's poetry will itself live on thru the ages. And yes, God bless The Carnivorous Saint: Harold Norse, of oourse.

Om Kali Shakti Om,

EDDIE

ps Two of Harold's very many poems are appended below in Todd's mailing. I have added to that by attaching what is probably my favorite Harold poem, "Follow No Leader." Which will appear in JN Reilly's forthcoming anthology Venus Rising. And which I intend to read tonight at de Kring, Amsterdam.

From: Todd Swindell

Friends,

My dear friend Harold Norse passed away this morning after a noble and beautiful dance with death, Tough Queer Brooklyn Jew until the end. I do not mourn his passing, I celebrate. Harold Norse lived of pure creativity sorely lacking in our material world of Samsara. His life force will shine on for eons. The important task now is to read his work, to speak his words, to speak our own innately poetic voice.

In the next couple days I will launch <http://www.haroldnorse.com> as a memorial tribute. Also there will be an obituary. Do you have photos of Harold? If so, let me know. Please spread this information far and wide. Text it to your co-workers, spray paint it on the cafeteria wall, scratch it on your arm with a fountain pen.

There is more work to do getting Harold's books reprinted, unpublished works to an appreciative audience and deposit his archives according to his wishes. Anyone in the San Francisco area who is interested in helping, keep in touch with me. There will be a celebration of his life at The Beat Museum in early July. Does anyone know how to navigate wikipedia? If so, let me know as Harold's page is woefully lacking in substance.

Harold last words were "the end is the beginning."

IN MEMORY OF RONNIE BURK who introduced me to Harold because he was sick of cleaning Harold's kitchen and felt a youngin should do it, seeing as he was an old poet himself. Help out old artists who should be creative rather than doing housework. You'll learn so much!

A bottle of wine nearly finished and John Coltrane's Selflessness on my ipod, I bid you all adieu.

Love Conquers All,
Todd Swindell

From: James Nolan

Andrei,

I just got back from a week in the chilled Champagne air of San Francisco. Harold and I must have crossed paths in the sky. Another of our poet elders passes. Who will inherit Harold's wig and wit, his Peter Pan throne?

love, Jimmy

@the Beat Hotel
Harold Norse

July 6, 1916 - June 8, 2009