

Journal of Beat Studies

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Letter from the Editors

To our readers,

The Journal of Beat Studies is devoted exclusively to the scholarly criticism of Beat Generation writing and writers. Our mandate is to provide readers with intelligent and penetrating criticism across the range of Beat writing, including fiction, poetry, drama, autobiography, life writing, travel writing, and screenplay writing. The ultimate goal of the journal is to advance the quality of Beat Studies scholarship through application of diverse critical perspectives that address Beat production as both complex art and cultural critique. There has never been such a journal.

We are at a pivotal moment in the history of Beat Studies, one that provides an opportunity to reform practices in and philosophies of Beat scholarship over the last fifty years. Our mission is to model and stimulate paradigms of methodologically sound and critically innovative scholarly readings of Beat movement and associated writers. The journal accommodates interdisciplinary methodologies since Beat poetics and aesthetics did, and still do, promote border crossing. To those ends, we proudly offer in this inaugural volume essays that speak to this mission.

Tim Hunt's "‘BLOW AS DEEP AS YOU WANT TO BLOW’: Time, Textuality, and Jack Kerouac's Development of Spontaneous Prose," based on archival documents consulted for the first time, foregrounds the emphasis on orality in Kerouac's mature compositional practices. In "A Trap Well-Enough Woven of Words: The Many Worlds of Brion Gysin's *The Process*," Jimmy Fazzino introduces an important early Beat novel, documenting its place in Beat transnational writing. William Mohr's "‘Hard Blows of Love (Pick up on it like a horn, man, & blow)’": Stuart Perkoff's 'Round About Midnite' and Community Formation in Venice West" attends to scholarly recognition of Stuart Perkoff's under-studied role in West Coast Beat jazz poetry. These works, by both established and new scholars, typify the kind of criticism that sustains and advances a vibrant field of scholarship.

The Journal of Beat Studies will always include reviews of new and significant scholarship. In this inaugural issue, we reprint a sampling of recent reviews from *The Beat Review*, the online publication of The Beat Studies Association. In future issues, we will present previously unpublished reviews of scholarly books treated at length by specialists in the relevant fields. Additionally, we plan to provide periodically a multi-review essay, which will survey and assess the state of the field of Beat Studies.

As long-time scholars of Beat literature, we have been painfully aware of resistance to the integration of Beat scholarship into canonical U.S. literary critical discourses. We hope that *The Journal of Beat Studies* will act as a counterforce to this resistance, clarifying the classic line of American writing staked in the nineteenth century and carried forward by Beat poetics even into the twenty-first. We undertake this project on behalf of Beat writers whose literary innovations continue to inspire readers around the world.

In closing, we wish to acknowledge and thank our colleagues on the executive board of The Beat Studies Association and members of the journal's editorial board for their unwavering support of and confidence in this endeavor.

Onward!

Ronna C. Johnson
Nancy M. Grace