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Wor(L)ds 23

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GROSS SECTION OF THE KANSAS LILAC I SAT IN AT SEVEN

— The Secret Garden —

transfigured night:

nodal strand of light out of pebble:

The Pleiades off snail's back:

moon behind cloud behind bloom beyond eye, within juxtaposed

black

afterimage:

zig-zag twig, live silver:

a tranquility of minute balances:

“melodies of five octaves apart,” as the wind lifts

leaf:

wring from the heart

Wor(l)ds 23

& THE RAINBOW COME FULL CIRCLE

IN THE COCK & BALLS

Henceforth: everything to be real.

From the flow-er comes the wor(l)d, its globe-like flower

sprout out your eyes.

The head is meadow to The Mover .

and from its multiseeded soil

we copulate the void.

:madness compassed to what we call a rose

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:love, at interplanetary center, rhymes 'yellow' with 'pollen'
:thorn from greenstem equals what the mind climbed
:blue balances it in boundless pendulum of air
:inviolate Night its source, course.

"Now in the play that woman, led before the mystic crib, began to sing in her quavering voice, and then the voice changed, changed from the voice of a witch to that of an angel, and from an angel's voice to a child's, and then the answer came . . ."

"great planes that intermingle"

". . . the absolute north, the absolute south . . ."

(Van Gogh)

"I am going to put the black and the white
in a green park with
pink paths."

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**CRITICISM / CHARLES ALTIERI**

The Poem as Act: A Way to Reconcile Presentational and Mimetic Theories

In pre-Romantic poetry the poet's or speaker's acts of mind serve to supplement the context or the argument; in poetry since Romanticism the act of mind tends to become the content of the poem. This oversimplified but useful generalization should help us understand why the theory of the poem as act of mind strikes us as an important subject and should make clear the stakes involved in our attempts to construct a theory that will at once suffice for poetry in the Romantic tradition and afford a new perspective on more traditional poetry.

We need terms for discussing the act of mind in poetry in large part because we have come to trust so little in older views which subordinate the qualities exhibited by the mind in action to the generalizations the mind achieves. Since Romanticism, however, our poets have come to share, even to precipitate, our culture's increasing scepticism with respect to abstract