

Essays from The Olson Festival

Prefatory Note

The lectures that follow, delivered at the Charles Olson Festival in Iowa City, 5-11 November 1978, are in a double sense only tokens of that occasion. Over two years have passed, and that intense week has become a pleasant memory against which to place—or with which to measure—such results as can be transmitted. Besides these lectures, there is a video-tape of “highlights” gleaned from all the lectures and poetry readings. It is called *Olson at Iowa*, and may be viewed at the University of Iowa or at the following repositories: The Charles Olson Archives at the University of Connecticut, Storrs; The Lockwood Memorial Library, State University of New York at Buffalo; The Archive for New Poetry at the University of California at La Jolla; and the American Poetry Archive of the San Francisco State University.

The lectures published here are also token because they are only a partial representation of the lectures given. They are the lectures for which there were prepared texts. Robert Duncan (“Ideas of ‘Primordial Time’ in Charles Olson’s Work”); “Timing and the Creation of Time in Charles Olson’s *Maximus*”) and Edward Dorn (“Charles Olson”) spoke extempore. These lectures were recorded on video-tape and are well-sampled in *Olson at Iowa*. They have been transcribed, but transcription is merely the beginning of the task of preparing copy for print. This is true as well of the discussions that followed the lectures.

Other results? The Windhover Press of the University of Iowa commemorated the occasion by publishing a handprinted book, Charles Olson’s *Some Early Poems*. The photographs by Lynn Swigart, entitled *Olson’s Gloucester*, have now been handsomely published by the Louisiana State University Press, a few of which we are pleased to be able to reproduce.

Sherman Paul