

1-800-FLOWERS: *Inventory as poetry in Louis Zukofsky's 80 Flowers,
an essay in verse*

Part 1: ABOUT

Flowers As Verb To Begin

Zuofsky's *80 Flowers* contains in
a folded greenhouse the poet's
catalogue of poetic strategies honed
finely finally late in life
after *A* after a lifetime
of experimentation begins this poetic
will as inventory of strategies
or index it is this

Methodology

that interests me most then
not the significance of each
reference overwrought and excessive but
how the catalogue of these
strategies in concert find use
found language appropriation transliteration condensed
lyric constraints all reverberating in
a richly acute acoustic attention

Constraints

Because this catalogue of strategies
drives *80 Flowers* this piece
1-800-Flowers is a critical discussion
sod in the same constrictive verse
8-line-5-words-per-line structures updating
several of Zukofsky's sources 1-800's
corporate history how-to gardening relying
on Zukofsky's own books indexes

Sources seedlings

Goldenrod solid-day go ponder otter
(*Weeds* 77) might lead to hardy
adams chaucer shakespeare greek latin
librettos taylor's gardening encyclopedia gray's
botanical manual advertising laborious scholarship
has hounded down each reference
probably to Zukofsky's glee given
the detail-trail his notebooks leave

Seedling Where To: A Close Reading

10-slender rods spring seed sway
the numbers 1 and 0
as stem and bulb blows
the letter -s from word-to-word
pollinating each word-front-back blowing -s
off seed from *seeds* and
onto *sway* not *way* nor
away as slender rods sway

Seedlings sources

Thanks to Levi-Strauss's essay
when *80 Flowers* was sparsely journal
circulated Michele Leggott's booklength study
and others *80 Flowers* has
been painstakingly illuminated reference-by-reference
and this is part and
parcel of our larger engagement
with the poem but what

About Strategies

Bringing all of these tendencies
and shade tolerance to total
not spring snow mold yet
a culmination from his early
"Poem Beginning The" he writes
because I have had the
occasion to remember quote paraphrase
I dedicate this poem to

Found Language 1926-1962

The title of this one-paragraph
essay a life reflected in
found language a lifelong play
on the numbers 1926-1962 so
that his commitment to this
strategy and its radical use
throughout might further or further
question the materials of poem-making

To What End

In his earlier poem *Mantis*
critic-Taggart points to how *armies*
of the poor's left unresolved
but how Zukofsky's treatment of
language might infer a social
leaning *at least the implication*
that by virtue of his
treatment Zukofsky successfully objectifies his

Complex Emotion

toward the poor that is
to say if the poet's
compassionate emotion for the poor
cannot be finally determined it
nonetheless can be inferred from
his love of language his
consciousness of word combinations and
their constructions but can it

Pollen, i.e.

How then *does* this methodology
add up e.g. the sum
of the montage of borrowed
texts in Benjamin's *Arcades Project*
does add up to a
response or document of a
social history Williams' *Paterson* composes
a somewhat similar social construct

Arcades by Benjamin

Next door *earth copulating with*
itself engenders the cherry mobility
silently bunkered in these cloistered
streets as in an immense
and splendid monastery like refuge
every lawn gets winter kill
I'm an ex-chemical fertilizer junkie
Ask Fran any lawn tamed

Port Jefferson Mugables

Sometimes I feel like my
lawn is calling the shots
weeds we may not always
have emptied this meaning for
a top-growth peel-back of another
ye whaling in genteel anchor-tees
draped tweed overcoat lawn-chair
what ten meant to Tiziano

PART 2: THROUGH

Another Index

Acts acts basic conciseness desire
economies form grammar history information
judgement knowledge length montage nature
object pleasure quantity reader satire
translation unity vital will affective
body construction duration editing fact
generalization humanity ineffable kindness literary
mass nonsense order perfections religions

Toll Free

There was the mechanicalism in
the high fog there was
the world autumn interest grows
now you can turn off
the sprinkler free lions in
the mist vacation a last
cigarette an instruction booklet the
acropolis after acreage in miniature

1-800-END/EDIT

Rains grammar private floral varieties
may vary check availability don't
let the sun go down
on me either wherever fresh
cut rose color can mean
true love no doubt purple's
liveliest most of all hues
it's all in the name—

Vanity Numbers

I dreamed I saw St.
Augustine Decline (SAD) arise, arise
as you are or aries
Kentucky blue flux ablaze flog
a new flushing meadow's no
private reality is and is
all in the station-to-station directory
Europe newsreels markets across being

Your Extension

You who were made for
this ringer change whatever makes
this whole *conventional poets have
the idea that they're in
complete control* name product industry
slogan benefit feature clever phrase
apes a pro rower bowler
every fourth beginning in the

The X in Content

Placed laces these next to
another laces places altogether tied
a life no less unless
as Aristotle says you bring
together unlikes enhanced service provider
consumers trust customers more when
accessible to whom do I
give my neat little volume

Nature Hearth

Scooped up adornment numbers boost
the structure accelerated bottom line
growth not high on mountain
climber's song list legit knowledge
style of leaves growing top-of-the-mind
awareness when they walk away
a day two days three
weeks later remembering your number

Utilization

Cattle eat fallen leaves outer
skin toy games jelly plum
porridges bark beehives bark humans
warps badly has a wide
range of uses light and
woolly wood properties a hound
when he cometh by the
roses consider for large-scale planting