

Tape: 7

CC 159

Side I Miscellaneous music; fragment of Blackburn reading Lorca translation; Paul Blackburn and friends in several tape 'skits', including "Jim Weeks at the Dentist," "Paul Blackburn's Orals," and "Closed Junction;" miscellaneous music.

1-68 music and Lorca translation fragment
69-182 "Jim Weeks at the Dentist"
183-266 "Paul Blackburn's Orals"
267-553 "Closed Junction"
554-end music

Side II Miscellaneous music; Blackburn reading; comedy; music.

1-310 music

312-430 Blackburn
 poems from Brooklyn-Manhattan Transit

430-451 comedy (recorded from radio)
451-end music

AN INDEX TO THE PAUL BLACKBURN TAPE COLLECTION

The Paul Blackburn Tape Collection represents one of the great resources to modern literary history. The poet, Paul Blackburn (1926-1971) was, in addition to his talents as poet, translator and editor, a great supporter of an ongoing oral tradition in poetry. He organized and attended poetry readings in New York City during the fifties and sixties at St. Marks, Le Metro, Deux Megots, Max's Kansas City and other bars and clubs. He organized his own poetry radio show, "Contemporary Poetry" on WBAI in New York. And he collected tapes from his friends and from these readings throughout his life, maintaining what is now recognized as one of the largest oral history collections in the country.

At his death in 1971, UCSD purchased Paul Blackburn's entire Archive, including poetry manuscripts, notebooks, letters and his tape collection. Paul Dressman and I have spent the past year listening to all of his tapes, annotating which poets read and which poems are read. We found that there are a wide variety of tapes which fit, more or less, into six categories: 1) whole tapes of Paul Blackburn reading in public and in private; 2) tapes of group readings or lectures in public; 3) recordings of conversations among Blackburn and his friends; 4) recordings made from the radio and television (such significant events as the first Sputnik orbit, the first Moon landing, presidential inaugural speeches, etc.); 5) taped "letters" from friends living in various parts of the world; 6) miscellaneous music and sounds. This latter category is interesting if only for locating the particular city ambiance in which Blackburn lived (and wrote poems) day-to-day.

Michael Davidson
June 23, 1975

Paul Blackburn Audio Collection

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