

Paul Blackburn Tape Collection

Tape: 243

Side I David Shapiro and Johnny Stanton reading
at St. Marks, no date listed.

Shapiro
0-74 World of the Will
75-100 Morning Prayers
101-150 Mistranslations
151-170 How I Tried to Sleep in Lowe Library
171-230 Two Songs

Stanton
231-312 Joe
313-450 from The Gism Trail

451-570 break

Shapiro
571-670 A Song
671-850 In Memory of Your Body
851-end Elegy to Sports (incomplete)

Side II David Shapiro and Johnny Stanton reading
continued.

Shapiro
0-18 Elegy to Sports (concluded)
19-35 Midnight
36-53 Ode

Stanton
54-430 from The Gism Trail

431-end blank.

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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