



## OPENINGS

- *Forty-seven today, I was forty-three last year, and next year I expect to turn fifty-six.*

Richard Kostelanetz,  
*Openings & Closings*, 1976

## CLOSINGS

- *Reaching the end of the story, I closed all the books and immediately trailed off to sleep.*

Richard Kostelanetz,  
*Openings & Closings*, 1976

## CAGE

- *Conversing with Cage* by Richard Kostelanetz
- *John Cage — Writer: Selected Texts* by John Cage and Richard Kostelanetz
- *John Cage: Writer — Previously Uncollected Pieces* by John Cage and Richard Kostelanetz
- *Conversing with Cage: John Cage on His World and His Work* by Richard Kostelanetz
- *John Cage (Documentary monographs in modern art)* by Richard Kostelanetz
- *John Cage (Ex)Plain(Ed)* by Richard Kostelanetz
- *Writings About John Cage* by Richard Kostelanetz

- *John Cage (Documentary Monograph)* by Richard Kostelanetz
- *John Cage: Imaginary Landscape, Concerts & Musicircus* by Joan Cerveró and Richard Kostelanetz
- *American imaginations: Charles Ives, Gertrude Stein, John Cage, Merce Cunningham, Robert Wilson* by Richard Kostelanetz
- *John Cage* by Richard Kostelanetz
- *Thirty years of critical engagements with John Cage* by Richard Kostelanetz

## INDEXES

The A-Z information flyer published by the Society of Indexers warns: “*Information that cannot be located might as well not exist.*”


Nancy Mulvany, *Indexing Books*, 2005

A puzzling statement but not surprising in light of its source, perplexing especially considering the many sources of information that have physically been lost or whose whereabouts are currently unknown but the memory of who still informs our everyday. Or how Pynchon calls it in

*The Crying of Lot 49*, "a mattress full of memories vestiges of every nightmare sweat, helpless overflowing bladder, viciously, tearfully consumed wet dream, like the memory bank to a computer of the lost." Generally indexes are referred to as road maps, guides, or short cuts that help navigate the ever-increasing amount of information. The index promises to guide us like Ariadne's red thread past the useless — to the promise land of the useful — information. However, there is a claim to be made about the bad index, an index that allows for detours, diversions and misguidances to perhaps lead the researcher to that very piece of information that previously could not be located.



**FIST:** An expression for an index mark, sometimes called a mutton-fist in England, and made thus: . It is also called a hand in America. It serves to call attention to the words following.

**INDEX:** The mark , commonly called a fist or hand in a printing office. ...As a mark of

reference an index is the seventh, immediately following the paragraph.

Hasler, *A Show of Hands*, 4.  
The standard sequence of "reference marks" was \*, † [double-dagger], §, ||, ¶, and \*.

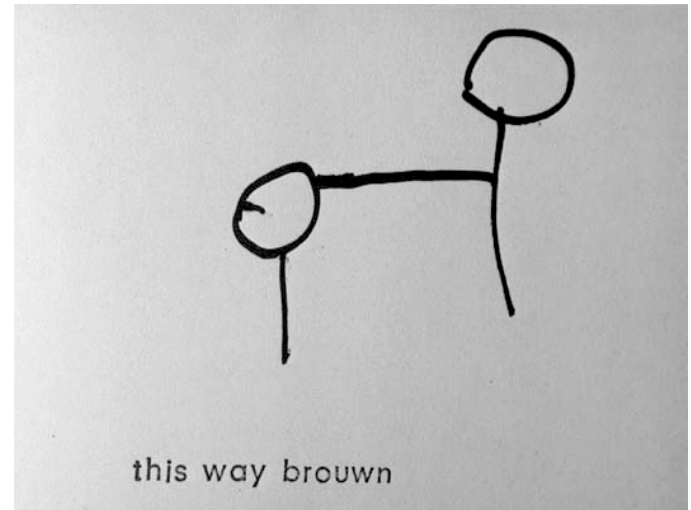
#### OTHER INDEXES

(see p.3)

Stanley Brouwn,  
*This Way Brouwn*, 1961

#### PAGERANK

Google is in many ways probably the most prominent and most used indexing system available today. It is less a traditional index and more an instrument to rearrange information. Despite its use as an instrument for browsing the promise is to quickly seep through the junk to get to the relevant bits. Everyone who has ever googled oneself knows about the baffling hierarchy that a google search can uncover. This hierarchy is in fact based on an algorithm titled PageRank, developed by Larry Page for Stanford University, through the algorithm a numerical value is assigned to the various elements of a



Stanley Brouwn, *This Way Brouwn*, 1961

hyperlinked set of documents, with the aim to determine its relative importance within the set of available pages. A less streamlined mode of research is offered by the “I am Feeling Lucky” button that the search engine offers. When a user types in a search and clicks on the button the user will be taken directly to the first search result, bypassing the search engine results page. It presents a more undirected research, reminiscent of the stroll through the corridors of a library tracing the relief cast by book spines settling one for its texture, shape or proximity to another, rather than for its for the pertinent title.

RK: *“I used to take pride in being able to find things. Books are easier to find than long-playing records, which have skinny spines that are barely legible. For videotapes, which I started collecting around 1987, I numbered all the tapes and established an index. I have a second index of audiotapes that record only sound, which is something few people do, though videotapes are much better than audiocassettes and cheaper per hour of*

*recorded sound. However, recently my retrieval has broken down, in part because I’ve run out of space while I’m planning to relocate.”*

Richard Kostelanetz,  
*Collected Stories, 2001*

## SHELVING

(see p.5)

Whether or not a library is equipped with an external indexing system the physical arrangement of the books functions as its own index. The geography of the arrangement, color of the book spines, smells, temperature, and lighting levels aid the mnemonic processes reminiscent of indexing. Rick and Megan Prelinger relied on this strategy when they combined their libraries to build the Prelinger Library located at 301 8th Street (corner of Folsom Street), Room 215 in San Francisco. Megan Prelinger describes the organization of the shelves as *“iconoclastic. They represent the realms of thought that bounce around the insides of both our minds, and I designed their order in the way that best made sense to link those realms associatively in six*



Richard Kostelanetz’s house on Wyckoff Ave.  
Ridgewood-SoHo, 2011

rows of shelves. To make this linearization possible, the library's rows are each arranged with a "start" on one end and an "end" on the other. The flow of the subjects starts at the beginning of Row One, and where Row One ends it continues across the aisle at Row Two. Each row is therefore "read" left to right in the conceptual flow, all the way to the end of Row Six. (...) Our shelving strategy also diverges from that of other libraries in our approach to materials integration. On our shelves, maps, government documents, books, periodicals, and ephemera are all shelved together within commonly-held subject headings. This promotes an integral approach to research and browsing, and opens wide the possibility of discovery. It is one way we have put into practice our goal of being a browsing-based library rather than a query-based library. In a query-based library, when you know you are looking for a map you go to the map section. In our library, you may be drawn toward a subject without knowing that a map of its related area would be relevant to your inquiry, until

you arrive at the shelf and learn so for yourself."

Megan Shaw Prelinger: On the Organization of the Prelinger Library: <http://www.home.earthlink.net/~alysons/LibraryOrg.html>

## SENTENCES

Sentences by Richard Kostelanetz about Richard Kostelanetz:

- I have a certain knack for turning adverse situations to personal advantage.
- All the books visible on my shelf I have read; unread books are hidden away to keep me from being distracted by the desire to read them.
- In my house are seven desks, each one of a different work in-progress.
- My persona is better articulated in print than in everyday life.
- Five years ago I purchased a forty-dollar supply of round toothpicks that I have chewed to this day.
- I have fulfilled every book contract I ever signed except one – the first, for a critical biography of Henry Miller – because the publisher – inspired less confidence than

a drunken auto mechanic.

- I estimate that I have slept with two-thirds of the women I have concertedly tried to seduce.

Richard Kostelanetz, *Autobiographies, Sentences about Myself*, 1981, p. 45-60 (excerpts)

## SERIAL, N.

A literary work, usually a story that is not true, creeping through several issues of a newspaper or magazine. Frequently appended to each installment is a "synopsis of preceding chapters" for those who have not read them, but a direr need is a synopsis of succeeding chapters for those who do not intend to read `_them_`. A synopsis of the entire work would be still better.

The late James F. Bowman was writing a serial tale for a weekly paper in collaboration with a genius whose name has not come down to us. They wrote, not jointly but alternately, Bowman supplying the installment for one week, his friend for the next, and so on, world without end, they hoped. Unfortunately they quarreled, and one Monday morning

when Bowman read the paper to prepare himself for his task, he found his work cut out for him in a way to surprise and pain him. His collaborator had embarked every character of the narrative on a ship and sunk them all in the deepest part of the Atlantic.

Ambrose Bierce, *The Devil's Dictionary, The Cynic's Word Book*, 1911

## SERIES

Seeing the world in series, appreciating any given unit always just as the promise of its next reiteration.

## DOUBLINGS

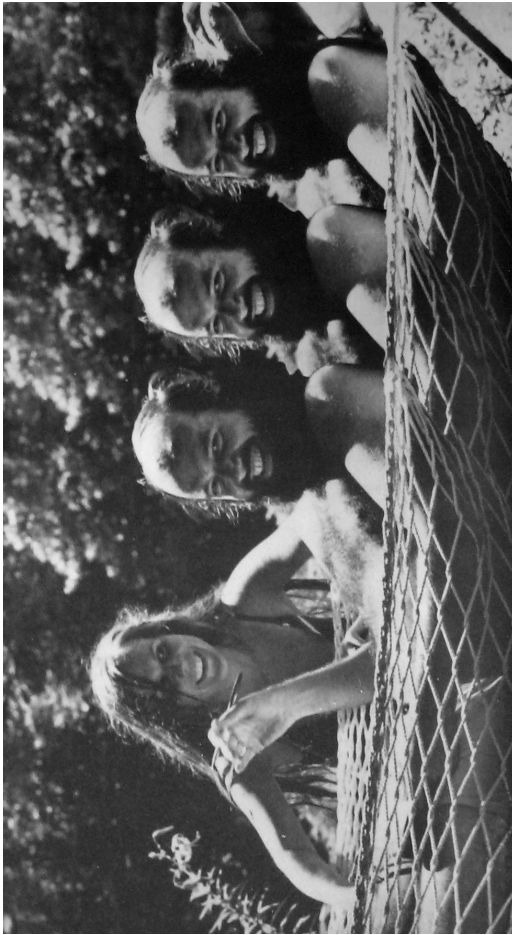
(see p.8)

There never seems to be just one Richard Kostelanetz at work. The exhaustive output of his production, the numerous autobiographies and contradicting personal narratives suggest an existence as a multiple.

## EMMA GOLDMAN

(see p.9)

(Jun 27, 1869 – May 14, 1940) an anarchist known for her political activism, writing and speeches. She played a pivotal role in the development of



Richard Kostelanetz

<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">CLASS OF SERVICE DESIRED</th> </tr> <tr> <td>Telegram <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Day Letter <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Night Message <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Night Letter <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table> <p style="font-size: small;">Patrons should mark an X opposite the class of service desired. CHARGES AND DELAYS WILL BE TRANSMITTED AS A FULL-RATE TELEGRAM.</p>	CLASS OF SERVICE DESIRED	Telegram <input type="checkbox"/>	Day Letter <input type="checkbox"/>	Night Message <input type="checkbox"/>	Night Letter <input type="checkbox"/>	<h1 style="margin: 0;">WESTERN UNION</h1> <div style="text-align: center;"> <h2 style="margin: 0;">TELEGRAM</h2> </div> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">NEWCOMB CARLTON, PRESIDENT      GEORGE W. E. ATKINS, FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT</p>	<p style="font-size: x-small; text-align: right;">Form 1217</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Receiver's No.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Class</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Time Filed</td> </tr> </table>	Receiver's No.	Class	Time Filed
CLASS OF SERVICE DESIRED										
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Send the following message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

June 27 1919

To Emma Goldman

Street and No. Missouri State Penitentiary

Place Jefferson City Mo.

*On this your birthday in the city where you worked struggled and have most friends we send you love and assurance of devotion. Hope that the next half century will have greater possibilities for service and self assertion. Trust that the coming year will see you free*

*Ben Reitman*  
*Walter Merchant*

SENDER'S ADDRESS FOR ANSWER      SENDER'S TELEPHONE NUMBER

Telegram to Emma Goldman, June 27, 1919, AWS, Rose Pesotta Papers, NN

anarchist political philosophy in North America and Europe in the first half of the twentieth Century. Richard Kostelanetz was born on the day she died, whether this had any effect on his life is unknown, but he wrote his Autobiographies in memory of her.

#### NEWS

Dead sick of himself after reading the book by Samuel Smiles (Know Thyself), a judge just drowned himself at Coulange-la-Vineuse. If only this excellent book could be read throughout the magistracy.

Félix Fénéon, *Novels in Three Lines*, 1906

#### MISTAKES

- 1955 Breaking up with Leslie Heye.
- 1959 Not continuing with folk music and guitar-playing. Accepting a job (my last) as a summercamp counselor.
- 1964 Not letting Bunny go to England by herself and thus not remaining single, in New York.
- 1968 Not challenging Richard Hofstaedter, by then my principle graduate school advisor, to persuade his

colleagues in the history department to ask me questions I could successfully answer on my doctoral orals.

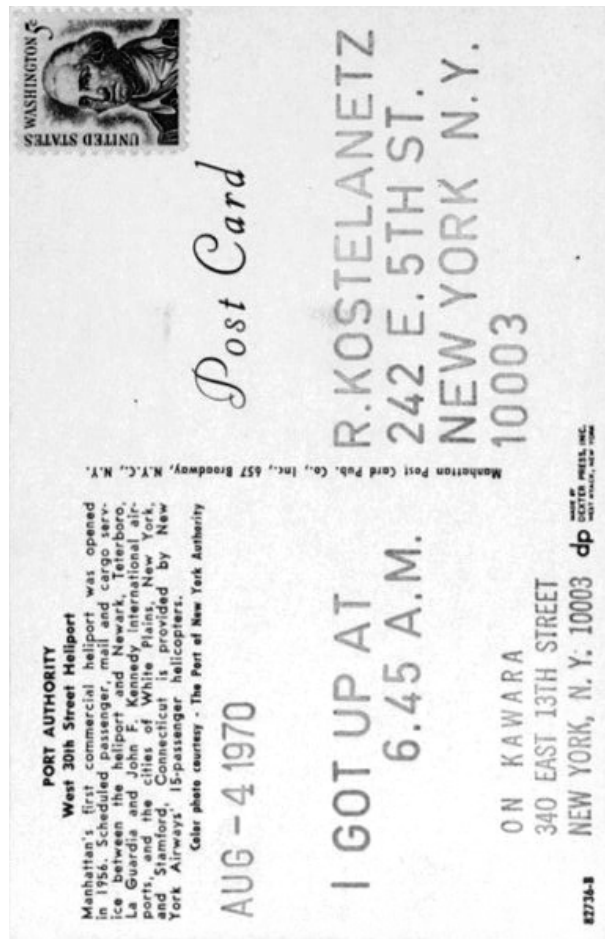
- 1973 Not getting a Selectric typewriter sooner.
- 1975 Not pushing my visual arts strongly enough, when the gallery scene as more receptive not only generally but particularly to my kind of arts.
- 1979 Not learning Hebrew during a month in Jerusalem
- 1980 Not finding more items for this list-especially more mistakes of commission, rather than omission. It would be a mistake voluntary to look like a smug twit.

Richard Kostelanetz, *Autobiographies, Mistakes*, 1981, p. 235, 236 (excerpts)

#### SETTINGS

(see p.11)

- 77 Park Terrace East, New York, New York, USA
- 186 Riverside Drive, New York, New York, USA
- 21 Shawnee Road, Scarsdale, New York, USA
- Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, USA
- 117 Hope Street, Providence,



On Kawara, *I Got Up*, 1970

Rhode Island, USA

- 1305 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, New York, USA
- 32A Stockwell Park Crescent, London, England
- 242 East Fifth Street, New York, New York, USA
- 21 Woods Grove Road, Westport, Connecticut, USA
- 141 Wooster Street, New York, New York, USA
- 2408 Longview, Austin, Texas, USA
- 1600 Norman Street Ridgewood, New York, USA
- 1051 Wyckoff Ave., Ridgewood-SoHo, New York, USA

### SOHOS

Richard Kostelanetz identifies the NYC L TRAIN as the new SOHO, ascertaining artistic settlements no longer bound to a geographic area, but to a subway route.

### BAY 8, ROCKAWAY BEACH, QUEENS NY

I myself have favored Bay 8, between the two crowds, because it has always been comparatively emptier, which is to say that the number of people at bays 9 or 7 are roughly 50% greater than that at bay 8 on weekends as well

as weekdays. Bay 10 is likely to have twice as many people as Bay 8, and bay 11 yet more. The best way to explain why bay 8 should be so empty is, simply, that "no one goes there" for some three decades now. The only signs identifying the individual bays are small medallions mounted high on poles on the ocean side of the boardwalk; but if you can't locate them, ask the lifeguards. They usually know the official number of the bay to which they are assigned. Since I once before recommended Bay 8 in print without noticeable effect on the beach itself, I don't fear mentioning it again.

Richard Kostelanetz, *The Best NYC Beaches Near the MTA*, 2003

### THIRTEEN

Avoid being thirteen at table; it brings bad luck. The strong-minded should not fail to crack jokes: "What is the difference? I'll eat enough for two!" Or again, if there are ladies, ask if any is pregnant.

Gustave Flaubert, *The Dictionary of Received Ideas*, 1911-13

## CHOUTEAU REVIEW

BOX 10016  
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI 64111

Dear Richard:

Many thanks for sending along Openings & Closings. I selected about six pages of material, mostly from the middle and last parts per your instructions. We had them set into type, the openings flush with the left-hand margin in italics, the closings margin-right in Roman. It looks very good, reads fine, and should provide a tasty and tantalizing offering to our inaugural issue. Many thanks again for sending it along. Later this week we'll look at the proofs; if all goes well, the review should be out by mid-October. I'll send you a couple of copies then.

Chouteau was the name of a French fur-trapping family that settled in the Kansas City area in the 1820s. Previously they had lived in St. Louis and New Orleans. From Kansas City they carried out far-ranging fur-trading expeditions to Santa Fe and the Pacific Northwest. They are our model for a regionalism that knows no geographic boundaries. A quick check of the Kansas City Chiefs roster turned up no living ancestors, or dead for that matter.

A favor: I want very much to write Kenneth Gangemi and solicit material from him for our second issue which we want to have out by next February or March. If you have it handy, could you possibly send his address to me? I would appreciate it.

Hope, as always to make it to New York this fall. I'll let you know; if I do I sure'd like to see you.

Thanks again, Richard, for your fine contribution. I'll be in touch.

Sep. 30

Best,

Tony

Letter to Richard Kostelanetz



## CHOUTEAU

(see p.13)

Chouteau was the name of a French fur-trapping family that settled in the Kansas City area in the 1820s. Previously they had lived in St. Louis and New Orleans. From Kansas City they carried out far ranging fur-trading expeditions to Santa Fe and the Pacific Northwest. They are our model for a regionalism that knows no geographic boundaries. A quick check of the Kansas City Chiefs roster turned up no living ancestors, or dead for that matter.

Tony, editor CHOUTEAU REVIEW in a letter to Richard Kostelanetz, CHOUTEAU REVIEW, Box 10016, Kansas City, Missouri, 64111

## ANDRE KOSTELANETZ

(see p.15)

Another Kostelanetz

## MULTIPLES

RICHARD KOSTELANETZ is the name of a cultural collective composed of twelve identical elves, none of whom considers himself more important than the others. One has authored books of criticism and cultural history. The second edits anthologies of

contemporary literature, art, criticism and social thought. The third publishes essays and reviews on cultural subjects, serving as a contributing editor to several magazines. The fourth took his M.A. in American history and received fellowships for his work in that field; he belongs to Phi Beta Kappa. The fifth was last seen doing visual poems and stories that have been published in periodicals and anthologies, exhibited around the world, and collected in several one-man books. Number six makes prints and canvases of verbal and numerical art, drawings of “construc-tivist fictions,” and creative videotapes, audiotapes and films. The seventh leaves the house only infrequently, giving lectures and “illuminated demonstrations” of visual literature. Universities have employed the eighth to teach writing and the arts; he has been a Visiting Professor of American Studies and English. The ninth has curated traveling exhibitions of language and art. Number ten, he has written and narrated radio and television programs about art and literature. Assembling lists the eleventh as its co- founder-



Andre Kostelanetz,  
*Today's Golden Hits*, 1966

compiler who annually contributes a provocative preface. The twelfth, who edits both *Precisely*, a critical journal, and the publications of *Future Press*, was born like the others, May 14, 1940, in Manhattan, where the elves currently reside. He also sweeps the place in which they live and work, murmuring, "*There is only one Richard Kostelanetz, and I am he.*"

Richard Kostelanetz,  
*Autobiographies*, 1981, p.103

#### FILM SCENARIOS

"*You are educated,*" she said.  
"*Well, I've got some swell ideas for pictures. All you got to do is write them up and then we'll send them to the studios.*"

Faye Greener in Nathanael West,  
*The Day of the Locust*, 1939

- A famous writer marries his childhood sweetheart, who turns him into an alcoholic.
- Rustlers hiding for the night in a frontier town find themselves inadvertently at the center of an Indian attack.
- A young prison guard finds his attitudes changing

before the impending fate of two equally young charges who are sentenced to be electrocuted.

- A nervous young advertising executive so neglects his wife, less by infidelity than through distraction, that she flirts promiscuously to make him jealous.
- A bankrupt Middle Eastern king orders all of his noble-men to woo wealthy widows.

Richard Kostelanetz, January 2010.  
*1001 Film Scenarios – Selections from a Proposed Chapbook*, SCRIPTjr.nl 1.1.  
<http://scriptjr.nl/issues/1.1/1001-film-scenarios.php>

#### SELF PORTRAIT

(see p.17)

#### ASSEMBLINGS

- Assembling, 1970
- Second Assembling, 1971
- Third Assembling, 1972
- Fourth Assembling, 1973
- Fifth Assembling, 1974
- Sixth Assembling, 1975
- Seventh Assembling, 1977
- Eighth Assembling, A-J, 1978
- Eighth Assembling, K-Z, 1978
- A Critical (Ninth) Assembling, 1978
- Tenth Assembling, 1980
- Eleventh Assembling: Pilot Proposals, 1981

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Richard Kostelanetz, *Autobiographies*, 1981, p.128

- Assembling Assembling, 1978
- Reassembling Assembling

#### AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

— *So is it your theme that a multiple autobiographical perspective is better, truer than a mono-perspective?*

At least for me, yes. Although I am continually acknowledging time, the book's structure is finally more spatial than continuous, and thus finally more analytical than chronological. One epithet you might like is "cubist history." Another reason to break it up, so to speak, is that 1980 is not the nineteenth century. Perhaps a secondary theme is that strict chronology ranks among the least edifying ways of writing any personal history – whether of oneself or someone else. Once there was a good reason to envy Chateaubriand (1768-1848) who could spin out his windy memoirs into six volumes. Now we realize that anybody with a tape recorder and a secretary could produce an autobiography that is long and even longer.

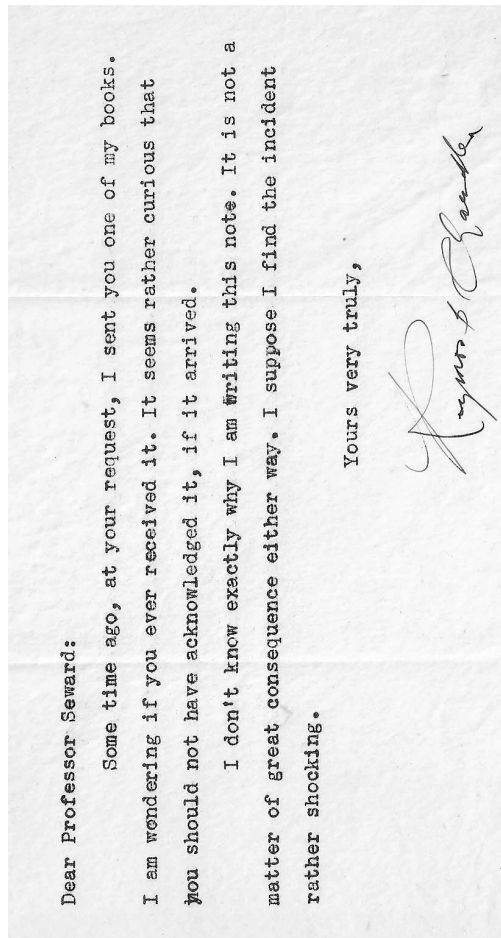
Richard Kostelanetz, *Autobiographies*, 1980, Self-Interview (excerpt), p.14

#### KAREN WRIGHT Portrait of Richard Kostelanetz

- 1 jar garlic salt
- 1 can black pepper
- 1 radio
- 1 100 watt electric bulb
- 1 skillet
- 1 pan
- 3 boxes of Kleenex
- plastic cups
- 1 package lentils
- 1 tea kettle
- 3 rolls toilet paper
- 1 jar mustard
- 1 loaf of black bread
- 1 six-pack beer
- 1 bottle sherry
- 1 bottle wine
- 1 bottle brandy
- 1 jar mayonnaise
- ¾ jar yogurt
- 2 bottles salad dressing
- ¼ bottle gin
- 1 package of Chinese black beans
- 1 jar plum sauce
- 4 record albums
- 1 bottle orange juice
- 1 plastic pitcher
- 1/2 bottle hand lotion
- I always gain something from every relationship.

*Austin, Texas*

Richard Kostelanetz, *Autobiographies*, *Remembrances*, 1980, p.264



Letter by Raymond Chandler, 27 March 1946

## CHANDLERS

(see p.19)

[http://www.eratiopostmodernpoetry.com/issue14\\_Kostelanetz.htm](http://www.eratiopostmodernpoetry.com/issue14_Kostelanetz.htm)

### VOCAB

- *Confabulation*: a deceptive story.
- *Currode*: making a wolf disintegrate.
- *Dialectable*: susceptible to a certain style of antithetical intellectual analysis.
- *Earsighted*: someone who hears better than they see.
- *Flagass*: someone whose country's flag is sewn into the back of his pants.
- *Gliborrhea*: nonstop talking.
- *Gluve*: a tight-fitting hand garment.
- *Groon*: a humongous future husband.
- *Husband*: a married man who talks only softly.
- *Illhumorate*: people who miss good jokes as well as bad.
- *Irection*: self-foreplay.
- *Soxy*: someone whose most attractive attribute is their feet.
- *Statusfying*: successful social-climbing.
- *Taxhaust*: going bankrupt from paying taxes.

Kosti's Words the favourite words of  
Richard Kostelanetz (excerpts)

This booklet is published on  
the occasion of 'Openings & Closings —  
The Richard Kostelanetz Bookstore',  
Kunstverein Amsterdam, 2011

Text by  
Anna Gritz

Editing & Design by  
Goda Budvytytė  
and Hyo Kwon