## YORKER, MARCH 27, 1995

Inter and

openly an reriously about accorded love long 1 are that was fashionable. In his nervo: a writes, "As in the classic account 0 mth Bernhardt descending a spiral sta nee-whe stood still and if revolved ar full her-my good fortune to the open account of blocks was to stuy some place while the closet simply disin egrated.

TH

WHEN met.Merrill, he was forty-ate, ad had earned his first full measure of 40°. "Nights and Days" had won the 12° Metional Reach Armes whose judges (M. H. Auden, James Diekey, and Heward Nemerov) singled out "his instruct on tailing the kined difference between esthetic success of failure." Act he had just published failure." Ard he had just published "Braving the Elements," whose exquin-He austeritiermark a kind of extreme in his work. Deuse and raptitious, the for-ema are set vid the hazards of history and romanet-Fils narrative skills turn out Chekhe vin vignettes like "After the Fire" or "Day of 1971," where the ord of an affair "hpt juin to a wistful selfknowledget

"Preserve Lawyers your latter of?) Is two-a What least; in our self-low long for most Others inside were withhold;

b) Only when one has alain desire Is his wishing wei to a unifing ghost. Neither harms nor warmed, now, by the firm

When "Buring the Elements" was awarded the 273 Bolingen Prize, Mer-rill was the adject of a Time, editorial at-tacking those who continue to "reward" poetry that are ny private, traditional." That has been a screiment, a perjuliarly American fei of the Fancy, distother readers have mired. Some early critics condecende to his work by calling it "betweller" onrally, their contompti-on durnissigned at a large-testing territ toor his he arings clements — earth, sir,

> the once told ayour op recious but the same op resist" And His et carefully the natural the once told ayoung

b resist" And, like most

seemed largely in-listics. He knew his

A LAST SA

## THE MAD SCENE

Again last nigh I dreamed the dream called Laindry. Again her night 1 dreamed the dream called Laindry. In it, the sheet and towels of a life we were giving to share, The miller still align the shroud, each ing to be ever Trampled on system bled on or grouped for blindy. Came two rules out of an encorrow will we have from order on tay boards. We had just net, 1- vatched From outer discuss. I had there exist more that here Of a new hit that never stains or writkles, nevr Wear (first correst house markled with the And there of a like miny enlarged by belling the And there of a like miny enlarged by belling the Trained into: There I save the cloud citor, gor by guit. Form, and the like hiting bits, and the roan man unboard. Trained inwa There I saw the cloud-clot, gont by gust. Form, and the lightning bite, and the routh many unloaven. Engen were during in panic over the flute's rd-je gates. Why did I flireh? Hoved you, And in the flow poor laughed To have all wring white, gnarled together, one Topmost more at of wisteria,

As the leapine burst into grief.

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he had typed a stanza from Byrron's poem "Beppo"-lanes that be imagined at the time described a perion he might grow to resemble:

Then be was faithful, ten, ar ell as anomus, 80 that ho sort of dennife quak complains. Although they're now any then a little classorous, the never sut theoreties a class boling in sort of the preserves and the solar

etamonoag Wax to receive and marbie a reain: He was lover of the good of technol, Who still become more conta - as they cool.

Rather likehisfieher, 7 Ierrill was a lower of the good old should He'd found his own humbers of should 1953 with 1953 with 1955 Whe Id play the ff a waterhis own bonbeur conjugal David bekson, Jackson piano, write astory, color; he was all irrealists to a line drain ng, funny,

strair

ellingbox, a windum to the duine upheld hand of a Buddha. A beginned to beginned to beginned by the beginned to beginned by the beginned by the beginned by the beginned to beginned by the beginned by the beginned to beginned by the beginned by the beginned to be beginned to be beginned by the beginned to beginned by the begi Borges's description flove as "a religion with a fallfble god," nd few poets have looked on love wit, such a voinerable and wary eye:

-J MES MERGELL (1962)

Where This my factorize toors, species, merceful, Bindfolded res. A gate statistic from my ilpa-te dynamics, and volume and statistical day Cranting and volume be testined from top age dentilis to cz. bis be aronge clements — carth, sir, this many of his poems r embodiment. Crystal brooch, waterfail of ge-re planet, or whatever least he chose; if was i carefully the natural carefully the natural or pain. I hoped it would are the heights Even of degradation, Seemed, thost dup, t lette a world of wild Flowers, Seasting tre Backing, heights, do Inte a pool of each But yeawere seen.

o was th Merrill's sex

dye let falling

dued hets

together,

CTCLEDIDE. tayed to-

Colter Jacobsen, Holding My Breath, 2013 graphite on found paper, 11 x 8 1/2 in. Jacobsen, Colter. 2018.003