THE PROSE POEM:
AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL

Volume 2 | 1993

After the Ashbery Reading
P. H. Liotta

© Providence College

The author(s) permits users to copy, distribute, display, and perform this work under the following conditions: (1) the original author(s) must be given proper attribution; (2) this work may not be used for commercial purposes; (3) the users may not alter, transform, or build upon this work; (4) users must make the license terms of this work clearly known for any reuse or distribution of this work. Upon request, as holder of this work’s copyright, the author(s) may waive any or all of these conditions.

The Prose Poem: An International Journal is produced by The Berkeley Electronic Press (bepress) for the Providence College Digital Commons.
http://digitalcommons.providence.edu/prosepoems/
AFTER THE ASHERY READING

I step out to a Denver evening neither beginning nor ending, unsure if the words I hear around me, bubbling up to chorus and refrain, mean anything more than nothing. Did you understand what he was saying?—Every word? Moments before, the poet, looking up from the podium, confused and unsure of who we were, prefaced his last piece with an anecdote; but then abruptly said, I don't know why I'm telling you this... Is it something in the passage from clarity to possibility that makes us certain of the surface of our lives we pass so smoothly over, when what it was we wanted was so far lost, out in the cold? What explains what we come to in passing? I can't separate myself from this business. Even if I wanted, I could not turn to the stranger beside me on the street, and tell her how the dark consumes worlds within words within worlds, each uncertain as before.