

Bruce Andrews

Note on MAC WELLMAN

Jan. 2002

We're in the odds' postbop fallout shelter of upstart "nonsel" here, with extra passports to unanswer, sheer gumbo codes, lexical troublefunk radio, defoibling scissors, telltale altercations of sentiment & crime scene peekaboo "wordtrap". It's a scramble of misassurance & tense, of illogic itch & physic — signalled in the very first words "If it is was". Special handling is the rule. "No's night." Funny lights on, to modularize the jiffy, "inchmaster"! Character is dust-up, or the "infinite horizontals" of a Sphinx pedestalling a Cheshire Cat "in the word restless". The reader gets to fiddle with atomic weapons, is "fiddled / into" toolspersonship, syllable by syllable: "granular objects / if jiggled resemble / a/ mimic self." Or readership as binding arbitration software for such fine-tuned chrestomathic disbelief, such drastically distinctive & distinctively drastic tone-switching. Let "the apparent" be comeuppance. Make your hope larval: "After, after, always / always after"