

*when i was alive*

there are nerves that pulsate  
inside your guts  
on the night before  
a big show

it feels like mice  
are stepping on your bladder  
and  
snakes are sliding  
around between the  
fins of your spine

but this is good

it keeps you on edge  
it makes you ready

I can only imagine  
it's the same feeling a fighter gets  
on the night before a big fight

when the only way to victory  
is through a beating-

you never want to  
get too comfortable  
reading your poetry  
in front of people

they want to know  
you're sweating a bit  
that you care

because if you don't care  
why should they?

and it is easy to say  
your audience is arbitrary  
and for the most part they are

but it's about the feeling,  
about the pleasure  
of connecting with another human being

of speaking words  
that crawl inside their heart  
and sleep there

making your unique joy  
understandable to the many

that is the true gift-

the night before my last big show  
I sat around a poker table  
with two musicians  
that shared my gusto  
for the physical act  
of artistic creation

bugs were drawn to the light  
like it was their mother  
handing out a lump of experiment  
to feast upon

we sat around for hours  
and talked art  
making ourselves feel like big shots  
betting nickels

we talked about everything  
and then we talked about it again

the beer bottles  
accumulating

each time we repeated something  
it sounded truer than the first time

and at that moment  
art hadn't been corrupted,  
the passion no longer beaten out of it

we were the only holders  
of the artistic future

and the future looked bright

revolution seemed obtainable,

it was one of those nights  
that I'll look back upon  
if death isn't just a blanket  
of wilted stars and lightless moons

for in that briefest of moments  
it felt as though I knew the true definition of life  
and how to live it