Excerpt from The Floating Bear

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Haiku (1967)

Like the other Beats, di Prima was interested in Eastern religious traditions as well as their poetry. She utilized the haiku form but stayed true to her voice, as shown in this collection which hearkens back to the peculiar tension and tenderness in relationships. The illustrations were done by George Herms—like her contemporaries, DiPrima loved incorporating art into her written works.

Postcard with an excerpt from Like Wind Dispersing (1972)

This poem showcases DiPrima’s love for the natural world; it also contains mythical elements, which figure prominently in DiPrima’s epic poem, Loba, published six years later in 1978.
On Bear's Head: Poems (1969)

In what may be considered Whalen's greatest shift in form, "If You're So Smart, Why Ain't You Rich" demonstrates his departure from structurally-confined poetry to a freer mode of composition. Whalen notes how his first experience with peyote "acted...on my spirit and mind and everything else as a great cure so that I began almost immediately afterwards, or not too long afterwards [to write] the first poem—of any length at all." The poem to which Whalen refers is displayed here, and, although it appears in this 1969 volume, was written in 1955.

The Calculus of Variation (1972)

Diane DiPrima didn't just write traditional poetry—she experimented with different forms, as shown in this collection of prose poems alongside illustrations done by William (Jakusho) Kwong. Kwong was the founder and head abbot of the Sonoma Mountain Zen Center. The illustrations are impressions of I Ching symbols.

Earthsong: Poems (1957-1959)

Some of the poems in this collection were written before DiPrima's first book, This Kind of Bird Flies Backward—they reflected her loving and often complicated attentiveness to familial relationships. Her eldest daughter, Jeannie, is the subject of many poems like this one.
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DiPrima’s mostly fictionalized novel gave outsiders a gritty taste of the Beat movement as it was happening. It is as much a coming of age tale as it is a commentary on what it meant to be a "Beat." In the novel, she urges readers to avoid monogamy as she shares her bed with a host of interesting characters.

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DiPrima’s collection of short stories is dedicated to "my three pads and the people who shared them with me." While it does contain jazzy rhythms and references to bygone poets like Shelley (true to the Beat tropes) its main charm is its humorous meditations on food—di Prima writes of her character, "...[after] a winter of exclusively Oreos and beer—she concedes OREOS MAKE U FAT but she still likes Oreos but not potatoes."
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