

Steeple at Sunrise



Also by Burt Kimmelman

POETRY

Wings Apart, 2020

Abandoned Angel, 2016

Gradually the World: New and Selected Poems, 2013

The Way We Live, 2011

As If Free, 2009

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CRITICISM

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The "Winter Mind": William Bronk and American Letters, 1998

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Steeple at Sunrise



NEW POEMS

Burt Kimmelman



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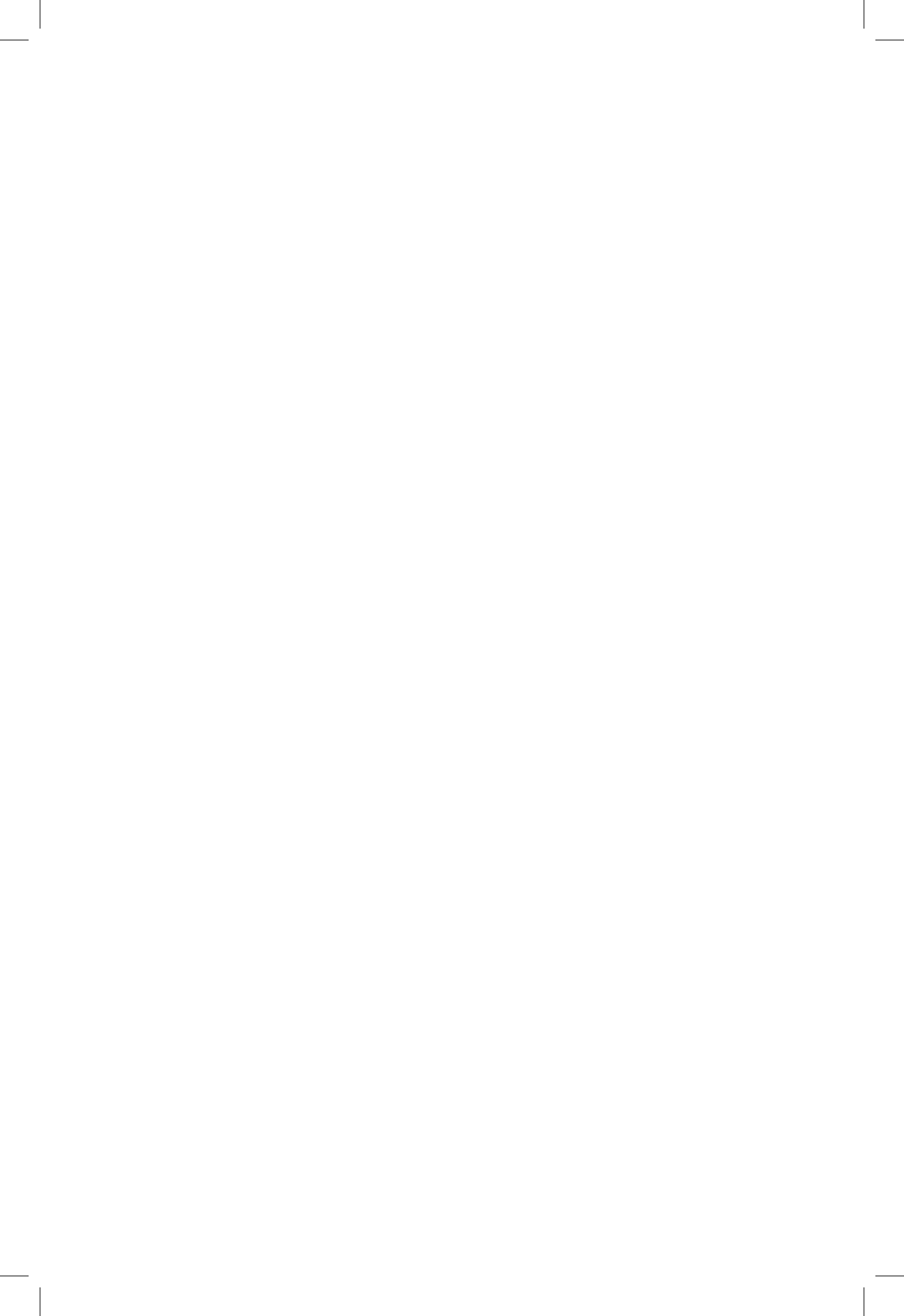
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For Diane and Jane

Tot iorn meillur et esmeri



“if the mode

be not pure”

— Joel Oppenheimer

“the quietness in the ordinary”

— Robert Rauschenberg



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Steeple at Sunrise





July Morning, San Giovanni

Everyone is up before the heat. Last
night we climbed on our bus where Caesar fell —
pillars jutting up in the square — people
trying to get home for the evening. Love
is an assassination in the dark.

Somebody picks at the morning's bottles,
one by one. From his window a naked
man looks down, his roof of peach trees, TV
dishes, gulls screeching. Motorcycles, cars —
yellows, reds — veer through the city's ruins.

The Mind's Arc

for Basil King

...the jagged
edges of oblivion stop the first humans from
jumping into vats of color.

from "Clyfford Still"

The jagged edges,
an oblivion,

were what I wanted —

what did I know of
color, its solace?

aurora borealis

Lines in my head all my adult life
Blown-dust texts pulled from shelves

Shorter Poems

“Hear her clear mirror”
“Come shadow come”

Bottom

“A”

Catullus

“Miserable Catullus” to “Miss her, Catullus?”
Paradigm of his speech/song poetics)

— Hugh Seidman

Poems to others become
requiems in time. Jackson
Mac Low charted the forms of

light: “radiance,” “refulgence,”
“resplendence” etc.

Verses he composed honored

people who entered into
light’s language. Open letter
to Armand Schwerner: “Is this

making excuses / trying
to see / a near-friend / in the
best light?” Dirge for Paul Blackburn:

“Let me choose the kinds of light
to light the passing of my
friend.” Barbara Henning’s new

book, her inscription, arrives
in the mail: “The whole thing so
swift blink & it’s over.” His

“57th Light Poem,
To John Taggart”: “A jewel-
like light gleams at the end of

a passage.” His “58th
Light Poem For Anne Tardos”:
“I know when I’ve fallen in

love I start to write love songs /
love’s actinism.” Ardor
in “Silent as curtains of

aurora borealis.”
His dislike of the common:
never Austin’s “how to do

things with words” or Hamlet’s “words,
words, words” to Polonius.
Walk in rain. Words like water.

Bridges on the Hudson

Riding south in the summer
solstice evening, the red glow
on the water, and ahead
of us the next bridge — so wide
the mighty Hudson — the sun

lighting up a white clapboard
house and nearby some tall smoke
stacks at a bend, as if we
could swim from there, darkening
trees across, a place to rest.

Ritual

At night I undress —
remove my shirt, pants,
socks, underwear, stand
bereft at the pit's

edge. Naked, I wait

for the stroke — then put
on my shorts to sleep,
slip beneath the sheet,
to lie back in peace.

It Is This

We live in a dream.

I sit looking out
at the trees, sky, sun
slowly ascending.

It is this to live.

Mid April Evening

One and
one, two,
three.

— *Robert Creeley*

Still house, door lamps
aglow, just one

bird, two birds, three
robins scamper

by — no strollers
it seems, at this

hour of dusk,
the evening's grace.