

### BIG MUMBLE

Notice I'm not listening.  
Someone speaks to me  
but I don't tune in  
& miss it. I hear only  
an expanded mumble:  
tv, dishwasher, clothes  
dryer, radios, helicopter,  
scream next door, dog  
barks & other voices  
I can't identify.

### FRIGHTENED DUMB

While practicing sutras  
I hear my heart  
beat in chest  
top of spine  
left ear & sometimes  
in hands but  
never in right ear.  
It was frightened  
dumb by sound  
of 54 rounds  
fired thru 57  
recoilless rifle  
one afternoon  
training in 1955.

### NATURE'S MEADOWS

Sometimes I can  
hardly stand up.  
Body responds like  
an over-stuffed  
sandbag. Legs  
(God bless them)  
wobble but hold.  
They remind me  
of loyal old work  
horses I've seen

in movies. As  
long as blood runs  
in their veins  
they'll answer  
my commands.  
I'd love to turn  
them loose watch them  
romp in Nature's  
meadows before  
they're too old.

6:30 SATURDAY MORNING

Twin explosions wake me.  
On feet think shotgun.  
"Want to shoot it out?"  
someone out there yells.  
"Is that what you want?"  
I hear someone running  
door slam & "I'll  
kill the sonofabitch!"  
Then a puzzling vacuum.  
I sneak around  
straining my ears  
groping for continuity.

ARTIST FRIENDS

I'm surrounded by artists,  
good ones, male & female,  
friends, & I'm grateful.  
Being around artists  
keeps you on your  
toes. They can look  
thru you, nail or  
lift you with a  
word. They support  
the child & help  
keep me honest.