

DIONYSUS

Thomas Burnett Swann

I am the leaves green-tender on the vine,
 The grapelets swelling into purple bait
 To tempt the bee, that harvester of air.
 I am the honied freight
 Cradled in baskets by sun-coppered hands;
 The wine press cornucopia-heaped with fruit,
 The dancing feet that liberate the juice,
 The piper with his flute.

Why do they call me drunkard and buffoon,
 Fat-bellied Dionysus, libertine
 Carousing with the Maenad and the faun;
 Shrill as a tambourine?
 Dullards they are, and blinder than a stone,
 Who cannot apprehend me in the vine,
 The vintager, the silver-throated flute;
 Myself the ultimate wine.

CUBA, 1959

Edward C. Baugh

To the cold north the press described your triumph.
 The reporter, as he himself would say, excelled himself.
 We caught the frenzy of his keys.
 And after us ?

The volleys of the ticker-tape are stilled.
 The words have been gathered for the garbage.
 The bodies have been gathered for the graves.
 It need not be repeated

That even jubilation can exceed itself,
 That though there were saviours before you
 It was found meet that you should save.