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***NARRATIVE AND TEMPORALITY:
THE CRUX OF THE LYRIC AND THE EPICAL IN CONTEMPORARY
US POETRY***

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Abstract: *The paper tackles the issues of temporality and narratives in lyric and epical poetry, in a context in which a strong revival of genres like the novel in verse questions the ability of lyric poetry to include genuine narratives and to cover areas of experience and culture which are typical of narrative poetry solely. Back in the 80's and onwards, poets like Frederick Turner, Fred Feirstein, and Dick Allen started to work towards a poetry that was meant to return to "real meaning", while also promoting a subsidiary return to the traditions of meter and/or rhyme. "Real meaning" referred to categories and modes of signification that were closer to common knowledge, perception, and rendition, rather than the abstruseness, non-conformity, and apparent nonsensicalness of much of modernist and contemporary lyrical poetry. Through analyses of narrative and cinematic elements in major lyric poetries, like the ones of Frank O'Hara and Charles Simic, and symmetrically, the lyricism of David Mason's novel in verse Ludlow and John Tranter's verse narratives in The Floor of Heaven, the paper weighs and diagnoses the contemporary differences and intersections of the lyric and the epical, in terms of expressing temporality – a concept which also receives a theoretical treatment and brief overview in contemporary US poetry.*