

Tekst 1

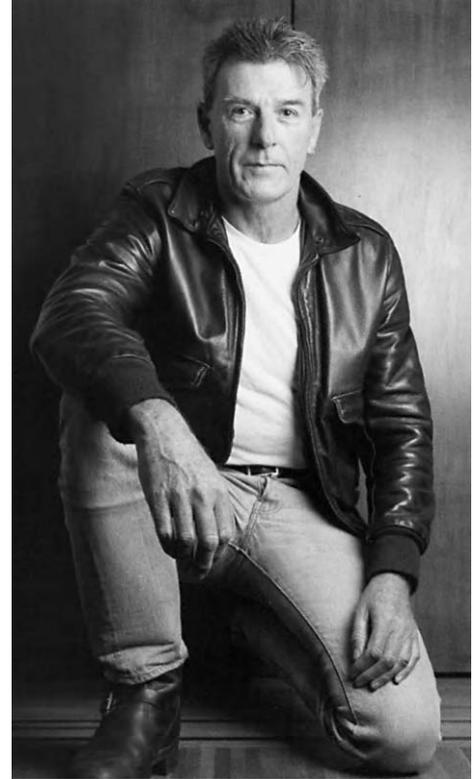
THOM GUNN

Poet (1929-2004)

*Key works: The Sense Of Movement (1957).
Moly (1971)*

CELEBRATED GRAVESEND-BORN poet Gunn (first name Thomson) has died in his sleep at his San Francisco home, aged 74. As recently as his final book, 2000's *Boss Cupid*, Gunn's poetry still mixed melancholy with the rush and buzz of electric youth. Outside of the American Beatniks, he was arguably the first 'serious' poet to embrace and eulogise the restlessness of rock'n'roll, motorbike culture and the teen spirit. In "On The Move" from '57's *The Sense Of Movement*, he quoted the Brando film *The Wild One* ("Man, you gotta go"), and covered (then radical) subjects like Elvis, Hell's Angels and the open road.

After growing up in London during WWII and then studying at Cambridge, he moved to California in the late '50s with lifelong partner Mike Kitay. Often mistaken for an American poet ever since, he was initially promoted by Faber as an establishment figure, alongside the likes of Larkin and Hughes. But his open gayness and dress sense (a leaner Marlon Brando) confused and inspired many in equal measure. *My Sad Captains* (1961) contrasts Englishness and Americanness; in *Touch* (1967) he was liberated by free verse. The '60s in San Francisco were "the fullest years of my life, crowded with discovery, both inner



Gunn: poetry's own Brando

and outer", and '71's *Moly* – joyous, drug-fuelled, implicitly soundtracked by the era's music – was soon a youth cult. His UK profile faded, but *The Man With Night Sweats* (1992) was one of the definitive responses to AIDS. On a recent visit to London to receive the Cohen Prize, he was greeted ecstatically by his largest ever audience. It's hard to overstate how important Gunn's role was in loosening poetry's tie, and getting it to join in with the counterculture's dancing.

CHRIS ROBERTS

UNCUT

Eindexamen Engels vwo 2006-II

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Let op: beantwoord een open vraag altijd in het Nederlands, behalve als het anders is aangegeven. Als je in het Engels antwoordt, levert dat 0 punten op.

■ Tekst 1 Thom Gunn

- 1p 1 ■ Which of the following does Chris Roberts see as Thom Gunn's greatest merit?
- A He attracted both old and young audiences, in the US and in Great Britain.
 - B He bridged the gap between high culture and popular culture.
 - C He was both a gifted poet and an important film writer.