MORTON MARCUS (1936–2009)
Born in New York City

POETRY
Where the Oceans Cover Us (Capra, 1972)
The Santa Cruz Mountain Poems (Capra, 1972; 2nd ed., Capitola Book Company, 1992)
Pages from a Scrapbook of Immigrants: A Journey In Poems (Coffee House Press, 1988)
When People Could Fly (Hanging Loose Press, 1997)
Pursuing the Dream Bone (Quale Press, 2007)
The Dark Figure in the Doorway (White Pine Press, 2010)

MEMOIR
Striking Through the Masks (Capitola Book Company, 2008)

TRANSLATIONS

NOVEL
The Brezhnev Memo (Dell, 1980)

EDITOR
In A Dybbuk’s Raincoat: The Collected Poems of Bert Meyers (University of New Mexico Press, 2007)

THEATER AND OPERA


POEMS IN PERIODICALS

POEMS IN ANTHOLOGIES
devoted its thirteenth issue to his work, and one of his poems was chosen to appear in TQ20, an anthology of the best writing to appear in the TriQuarterly Review for the past twenty years (1985). Several of his innovative prose pieces were broadcast on National Public Radio's The Sound of Writing. In 2010, Morton's poems were included in Dennis Maloney's, Finding the Way Home, and The Place that Inhabits Us: Poems of the San Francisco Bay Watershed, foreword by Robert Hass.

READINGS AND LECTURES
Marcus read his poems at universities throughout the nation, including Columbia University, University of Notre Dame, University of Iowa, Ohio State University, University of Oregon, University of Washington, Lewis and Clark College, University of Wisconsin (several campuses) Gustavus Adolphus College, State University of New York (several campuses), Providence College, University of Arkansas, and the Berkeley, Santa Barbara, Irvine and Santa Cruz campuses of the University of California. In 1989 he was invited to do a reading tour of Australia, and has given workshops in poetry, the prose poem and the short stories of Raymond Carver in numerous high schools, community colleges and universities.

IMPORTANT ARTICLES ABOUT


Cruz Mountain Poems, masculinity in poetry, getting past writer’s block, and his comments on six poems from his new books, including "The Request," "My Encounter with the Eternal Mystery," "Monsters," and "Suffering."

"Imagination and The Shape-shifting Beast: An Interview with Morton Marcus" by Robert Sward, Caesura 25, 2004, pp. 48–56. Another long interview that focuses on the writing process, the place of the imagination, and the importance of "human-heartedness," empathy, compassion, poignancy, and naming things in writing and life.


OTHER LITERARY ACTIVITIES
Morton was active in the Poetry in the Schools program on both coasts. He served as the director of the Monterey and Santa Cruz County programs from 1973–1975.

He was selected as a MacDowell Fellow and was in residence at the MacDowell Colony in New Hampshire in the winter of 1975. In 1980 he was elected to the American chapter of PEN International.

Since 1986, Marcus was on the permanent teaching staff of the Foothill Writers Conference in Los Altos Hills, CA.

Marcus gave many short poetry workshops across the U.S. and was poet-in-residence at the State University of New York at Buffalo (Jan. 1974), the State University of New York at Alfred (Feb. 1976), Mt. Hood Community College, Oregon (Nov. 1992), and the University of Arkansas (Oct. 1997). In the fall of 1998, he was Visiting Poet at Providence College, Rhode Island, a position he repeated in the fall of 2001 at Fullerton College in Los Angeles, and also served as a judge for many poetry contests, including the state poetry awards for Delaware and Oregon.

Marcus’s memoir of the short story writer Raymond Carver appeared in Remembering Ray (Capra, 1993) and was reprinted in several journals. A similar memoir of the poet William Everson (Brother Antoninus) was reprinted in four different literary journals. Marcus served as the president of the King Fisher Flats Foundation, the non-profit organization committed to preserving and promulgating the work of William Everson.

In 1999, Marcus was elected the sixteenth Santa Cruz County Artist of The Year by the Santa Cruz County Arts Commission, only the third poet to be honored by the Commission, the other two being William Everson and Adrienne Rich. That same year he was named contributing editor to The Prose Poem: An International Journal.

In 2006, Marcus taught graduate-level writing courses for the Prague Summer Program in the Czech Republic.

Marcus was a longtime co-host of The Poetry Show, on KUSP Public Radio – the longest running poetry show in the U.S.

His biography is listed in The International Who’s Who In Poetry (England) and Contemporary Authors (Vol. #105), Gail Pubs., Detroit, 1982.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL PURSUITs
A film historian and critic as well as a poet, Marcus taught film as well as English at Cabrillo College in Aptos (California) until his retirement in 1998. In 1989, he was invited to give a series of lectures at the Australian National Film School in Sydney, a project that was planned to coincide with his poetry tour of Australia that year. His sixteen-part TV history of film has been the prime visual source of film history at the school ever since, and has been shown on a number of cable TV channels in California. His film reviews, profiles of contemporary authors and book reviews appeared regularly in the Metro newspaper chain from 1985–1998. In 1999, he curated a festival of Ernst Lubitsch films at Santa Cruz’s McPherson Museum of Art & History. In addition, he lectured several times on film at the Steinbeck Center in Salinas, California.

Marcus was the co-host of a bi-weekly TV film review program on the Comcast Broadband cable channel, and then Santa Cruz Community TV called CinemaScene, which was shown in San Francisco, San Jose, and Santa Cruz County.