

# **BERN PORTER CHRONOLOGY - DRAFT**

**February 14, 1911** Born in Porter Settlement, just south of Houlton

**1916-24** Attends Houlton Public Schools

**1928-29** Attends Ricker Jr. College

**1929-32** Attends Colby College, Student Instructor in Physics

**1932** Graduates Colby College with BS Degree in Physics

**1932-3** Attends Brown University, Research Fellow in Physics

**1933** After being caught stealing small sums of money from students at Lyman Gym, Porter is forced to withdraw from Brown and returns to Houlton to work as a gas-pump attendant on the Ellis Farm and for a fertilizer company, in order to repay the money

**1933** Graduates Brown with Masters Degree in Physics

**1933-42** Becomes member of the American Physical Society

**1935-40** Becomes member of the Institute of Radio Engineers

**1935-40** Employed as physicist by Acheson Colloid Corporation (NYC /Newark, NJ / Port Huron, MI)

**1936-7** Attends Davinci Art School, NYC

**1936-7** Attends MoMA exhibition, *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism*. First comprehensive show of surrealism and “founds” in US

**1937** Tech work in England and France. Meets Gertrude Stein

**1937** Scientific Delegate to the International Exposition, Paris; Commercial project physicist, London

**1938** *Map of Physics* (Central Scientific Co, Chicago, IL)

**1938** *Colloidal Graphite: Its Properties and Applications* (Port Huron, MI)

**1939** *Map of Chemistry* (Philadelphia, PA)

**1939-48** Carries on private research evolving the theories of SciArt with examples reproduced in *Circle Magazine* and book *Art Techniques*.

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- 1940-45**     **Drafted to Manhattan Project (Princeton/Berkeley/Oak Ridge)**
- 1940-1**     **Assigned to Dept of Physics, Princeton, to work on processes for the separation of uranium, conferring with Einstein, Smyth and Wilson.**
- 1940**       **Exhibits in Princeton Art Department show, and in *View Magazine*. Includes sculptured forms taken from nature and directly and unaltered from the physics lab, photography from a Brownie Box Camera, and *Metamorphic Rhizomes* Print.**
- 1941**       **First Book - *Doldrums: A Study in Surrealism* (A.I. Press, Newark, NJ)**
- 1941**       ***Map of Chemistry***
- 1941**       ***Water-Fight* - Dedicated to his mother. (A.I. Press)**
- 1942-45**     **Assigned to Radiation Lab, University of California, to work on electromagnetic separation of uranium, commuting twice to Oak Ridge, first time as head of a group to test electromagnets used in separating uranium and second time to instruct in operating equipment.**
- 1942**       **Establishes Porter Prize in Physics for Colby seniors.**
- 1943**       **Listed as being invited to Federation of Architects, Engineers, Chemists, and Technicians meeting, used by Government Investigative Agencies as evidence that Porter had communist connections**
- 1944**       **Prints *Murder the Murderer; What Shall We Do About Alf; The Plight of the Creative Artist in the United States of America; and Semblance of a Devoted Past* by Henry Miller (Berkeley, CA)**
- 1944**       ***Circle* magazine founded, Bern regular contributor**
- 1944**       **Publishes *Franz Kafka: A Chronology and Bibliography* - by Angel Flores (Houlton, ME)**
- 1945**       **Atomic Bomb dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Porter leaves Manhattan Project**
- 1945**       ***Henry Miller: A Chronology and Bibliography* - First comprehensive bibliography of Miller. (The Waverly Press, Baltimore, MD)**
- 1945**       **Publishes *The Happy Rock*, Tribute to H. Miller, Porter's first experimental book. (Packard Press, Berkeley, CA)**

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- 1946** Publishes *Panels for the Walls of Heaven* by Kenneth Patchen. Forerunner of “concrete or visual poetry.” (Berkeley, CA)
- 1946** *Map of Joyceana* (Circle Magazine)
- 1947** Designs *Church of Light* (Sausalito, CA)
- 1947** *Art Techniques* (Gillick Press, Berkeley, CA)
- 1947-50** *Berkeley: A Journal of Modern Culture* - Published with James Schevill (Berkeley, CA)
- 1948** *The Union of Science and Art* - Later renamed SciArt Manifesto (Sausalito, CA)
- 1949** Tech work in Mexico
- 1949** *Crucifixion of the Virgin* - SciArt Photograph
- 1950 -54** Employed by Office of Price Stabilization, Guam Daily News from March 51-April 52, also worked as Junk Dealer, published three books, including *The American Fantasies*, by James Schevill (Guam)
- 1954** Visits Japan
- 1954** *Center of Impact* - Article on impressions of Japan (Christian Science Monitor)
- 1954** Letter published in Japanese English-language paper, *Mainichi* on SciArt (Osaka)
- 1954** *SciArt Manifesto* (Japan)
- 1955** Contacts Japan Society proposing atomic power for Hiroshima. Publishes article in Hiroshima's *Chugoku Press* on uranium and nuclear power use for Japan.
- 1955** Marries Margaret Eudine Preston
- 1955** Describes *House of Air* and *Church of Light* at International Institute of Design, Aspen, Colorado, June.
- 1955** Describes Solar Plant for Electrical Generation at World Symposium on Solar Energy, Tucson, October.
- 1955** *Coastlines* magazine includes Porter's list of publications, used as evidence that he had communist connections

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- 1956** Employed as Engineering Writer by General Dynamics subsidiary, Convair (San Diego)
- 1956** Elected Associate Fellow of the American Astronautical Society (NY)
- 1956** Elected Fellow of Technical Publishing Society (San Diego)
- 1956** Writes technical specs for Atlas Intercontinental Missile, Convair Astronautics Corporation, San Diego [Porter explains work as “reversal of early bomb position, forced by nothing to eat”]
- 1956** *Drawings : 1955-1956* (Bern Porter, Berkeley, CA) Copies ordered by National Library of the USSR in Moscow
- 1957** Engineer, Collins Radio (Dallas, TX)
- 1957** Tech Work, Ionospheric Radio Communications, Collins Radio, (Caracas, Venezuela)
- 1957** Supervises design production of *Roaring Market* (James Schevill)
- 1957** *H.L. Mencken, A Bibliography* (Geddes Press, CA)
- 1958** Moves to Anchorage to work as electronics engineer on tropospheric scatter with Civil Aeronautics Administration
- 1958** Returns to Pasadena in September
- 1959** Moves to Tasmania. Works as Assistant Instrument Engineer for Associated Pulp & Paper Co
- 1959** *Physics for Tomorrow* (Rockcliff Printers, Burnie, Tasmania)
- 1959** Porter Collection established at Colby Library
- 1959-60** Offered and then denied positions with government agencies, including physicist job with Long Beach Naval Shipyard; Civil Aeronautics in Alaska; electronic engineer position at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard. Active Government investigation ongoing.
- 1960** Leaves Tasmania. Returns to Maine. Visits new Colby campus. Attends University of Maine Orono for education classes.

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**1960** Proposes establishment in central Maine of an Institute of Advance Thinking, during meeting with Madison (Maine) town councilmen.\*

\*According to Porter, in later years, the Institute of Advanced Thinking was founded in Ireland in 1630, moved to Maine in 1830, and to Belfast in 1972 and "is the oldest institute of its kind in the English-speaking world." It is dedicated to free thought, free association and free lunch, he says.

**1960** *The First Publications of F. Scott Fitzgerald - Bibliography* by Porter (Alan Swallow, Denver, CO)

**1960** *What Are Legends* by Dick Higgins (Bern Porter, Calais, ME)

**1960** Teaches at Ashland, Maine Community School

**1961** *Aphasia: A Psycho-Visual Satire* (Madison, Maine)

**1961** *Scandinavian Summer: A Psycho-Visual Recollection* (Madison)

**1961** Tech work, Travel. (Scandinavia, Russia)

**1961** Teaching at College of Advanced Science (Canaan, NH)

**1962** Teaching (Castaner, Puerto Rico)

**1962** Engineer, Federal Electric Corp, Division of I.T.T. (Paramus, NJ)

**1963** Establishes Automated Training Program at Federal Electric Corp

**1963** *I've Left* (Marathon Press, Pasadena, CA)

**1964** Moves to Huntsville AL to work for the National Space Program / Boeing with Von Braun and German scientists on Saturn V Rocket

**1964** *What Henry Miller Said and Why It Is Important* (Marathon Press)

**1965** *Wernher von Braun - Unpublished Bibliography* (Huntsville, AL, currently in UCLA Library Collection)

**1965** *Art Productions: 1928-1965* (Marathon Press)

**1966** *468B: Thy Future* – Contains computer printouts saved from Saturn V project (Huntsville, AL)

**1967** Arrested and committed to Bryce Mental Hospital, Huntsville.

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- 1968 Moves to Rockland, Maine from Huntsville
- 1969 *Dieresis* – First book of Founds (Rockland, Maine)
- 1969 *Knox County Maine, A Regional Report, 1969 Summary* - Major Report for the Knox County Regional Planning Commission
- 1969 Runs as Republican Candidate in Primary for Governor of Maine
- 1969 *Maine Can Solve Its Own Problems* and *Maine Brains should be solving Maine problems.* (Articles in Maine papers)
- 1970 -90s Participates in Energy Department tests on the level of radioactivity in his body. \*
- \*When Bern participated in DOE research on radiation in his body, he stated that he was required to sign a document saying that upon his death his body would be sent for continuing radioactivity studies. (Bern Porter International, Vol 2, No. 2, April 1998, Bern Porter on The Human Genome Initiative)
- 1971 *I've Left* - 2nd Edition (Something Else Press, Millerton, NY)
- 1972 *The Manhattan Telephone Book* (Abyss Publications, Somerville, MA)
- 1972 *The 89 Offenses* (Abyss Publications)
- 1972 *Wastemaker: 1926-61* (Abyss Publications)
- 1972 *Found Poems* (Something Else Press/Dick Higgins) [Conceived as seven-part series of Founds: *Found Poems*, *The Book of Do's*, *Here Comes Everybody's Don't Book*, *Sweet End* and (unpublished) *The Book of Light*, *The Devil's Wishbone*, *The Porter Book*]
- 1973 Moves to Salmond Street, Belfast
- 1974 *Where To Go, what to do when in New York, week of June 17, 1972*
- 1974 *What Henry Miller Said and Why It Is Important* - 2nd Edition (Strange Faces Productions)
- 1975 *Run-On* (Bern Porter, Belfast, Maine)
- 1975 *Selected Founds* (Croissant and Company, Athens, OH)
- 1975 Funds creation of Art Exhibit space in memory of his late wife Margaret at the Belfast Library

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- 1975**      *Black Box* (Sound Poetry by Porter)
- 1975**      **Receives Carnegie Author Award**
- 1975 -7**    **Receives PEN Awards**
- 1976**      **Receives Diploma Merit Centro Studi E Scambi Internazionale (Rome)**
- 1977**      **Receives Authors League Award**
- 1977**      *Gee-Whizzles* (Maine Coast Printers, Rockland)
- 1977**      *The Last Acts of Saint Fuck You* – Poster
- 1978**      *American Strange* (Special ed. “Spanner #14, London)
- 1978**      **Meets Mark Melnicove at Maine Poets Festival in Bar Harbor**
- 1979**      *Earum Magnus* (Super-8 film conceived by Porter, with Charlie Morrow, Dick Higgins, Scott B)
- 1979**      **National Endowment for Arts Literary Award**
- 1979**      **The Eternal Poetry Festival. First collaborative performance with Melnicove.**
- 1979**      *Anatomical Parts* - SciPho Photography with David Luchak.
- 1979- 1980** *Porterana Retrospective* on National Tour - Exhibition of Bern's Books, Periodicals, Photographs, and Magazines. Exhibitions at: Franklin Furnace, NYC; San Jose State University Art Department Gallery, CA; Artworks - Venice, CA; Robinson Room, Colby, Waterville
- 1980**      *Vote Yes on September 23rd* - An Artistic collaboration to shutdown the Maine Yankee Nuclear Facility
- 1981**      **Bern Porter Commemorative Stamp Series (Carlo Pittore)**
- 1981**      *Isla Vista* (Turkey Press, Isla Vista, CA)
- 1981**      *Found Sounds* (New Wilderness Audiographics, NY)
- 1981**      **Files as intervener to block Greyhound Bus Fare Rate Hike**
- 1981**      *Bern! Porter! Interview!* - By Margaret Dunbar
- 1982**      *The Book of Do's* (Dog Ear Press/M Melnicove, Gardiner, Maine)



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- 1982 *Aspects of Modern Poetry* (WBAI, NY)
- 1982 *Jacquelin and Rosa* (New Wilderness Audiographics, NY)
- 1983 *Place Stamp Here* – Part of Mail Art collection [Porter claimed he invented mail art as a boy in rural Maine]
- 1984 *Here Comes Everybody's Don't Book* (Dog Ear Press/M Melnicove)
- 1984 Included in Tom Bryan's *Not Famous Enough Americans Series*
- 1985 *My My Dear Me* (Xexoxial Editions, Madison, WI)
- 1985 *The Last Acts Of Saint Fuck You* (Xerox Sutra, Madison, WI)
- 1985 *Horizontal Hold* (Bern Porter and Todd Transformer, Clarksville, TN)
- 1985 Porter featured in Mail Art exhibition at Colby College Museum of Art
- 1986 *Pages*
- 1986 *Venture - Art Cut-Up Book*
- 1986 *An Evening of Sound - Sound Poetry with Melnicove and Elizabeth McKin*, Theater of Fantasy, Portland
- 1986 *Do's* collage made in November at the Visual Studies Workshop (Rochester NY)
- 1987 *Why My Left Leg is Hot* (Video, Xexoxial Editions)
- 1988 *Williamson Street Blues* (Recording)
- 1988 *Neverends* (Runaway Spoon Press, Port Charlotte, FL)
- 1989 *Williamson Street Night* (Recording)
- 1989 *Sweet End* (Dog Ear Press/M Melnicove) – originally titled *The Book of Death*
- 1989 *December Ninth* (A Jeff Brewer Recording, Newton Center, MA)
- 1990 *Sleepers Awake* (Recording, Cedar Grove House, Dresden, ME)
- 1990 *The Book of Light* (Unpublished Manuscript)
- 1990 *Vocrescends* (Collaboration with Malok, Runaway Spoon Press)



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- 1990 *CRCNCL* (Xeroxial Editions)
- 1990 **Fifth Annual Intergalactic Festival of the Swamps (Institute of Advanced Thinking, Belfast)**
- 1991 *Belfast Berning* (Video, Vanessa Barth, Cyclops Video, Freeport, ME)
- 1991 *Numbers* (Runaway Spoon Press)
- 1991 **80th Birthday Celebration (Belfast)**
- 1993 *Less Than Overweight* (Plaster Cramp Press Chicago)
- 1993 *Performing Objects* (The Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati)
- 1992 *Sounds that Arouse Me* (Tilbury House)
- 1993 **Interview with Patsy Wiggins on MPBN's *Personally Speaking***
- 1994 *See (MAN) TIC* (R.B. Menschel Photography Gallery, Syracuse, NY)
- 1994 *Slithy Toves Newsletter - Bern Porter Special*
- 1994 *Why My Left Leg Is Hot* - Video
- 1995 *These Fifty Years Gone* - Written at request of Hiroshima officials
- 1995 *Henry Miller: Semblance of A Devoted Past - A Study in Censorship* (Roger Jackson, Ann Arbor, MI)
- 1995 *Questions about Henry Miller That No One Ever Asked Me – With Answers* (Roger Jackson)
- 1995 *Okrazoidical* - By Porter and John A. Pyros Internationalists. (Dramatika, Tarpon Springs, FL)
- 1996 *The Best Period of My Life* (Roger Jackson)
- 1996 *Bern Porter's Pillow Book* (Roger Jackson)
- 1996 *Signs* (Runaway Spoon Press)
- 1996 *The Sorrow* (Roger Jackson)

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- 1996**      *Night Thoughts on Henry Miller, Ben Abramson and Claude Houghton Following A Reading of 'Writers Three'* (Roger Jackson)
- 1996**      *A Sex Oriented, Woman Connected Guy Doing His Own Thing - Bern Porter on Henry Miller* (Roger Jackson)
- 1997**      *"I Pursue Her Still": Bern Porter on Anais Nin* (Roger Jackson)
- 1997**      *Crossfire* (Roger Jackson)
- 1997**      *My Affair With Bern Porter - By Natasha Bernstein and Alan Abrams* (Roger Jackson)
- 1997**      *Rites of Spring* (Roger Jackson)
- 1997**      *A Walk on the Wild Side: A Photo Tour of the Sculpture Garden at the Institute of Advanced Thinking* (Roger Jackson)
- 1997**      *Open Letter to O.J. Simpson* (Roger Jackson)
- 1997**      *Redundant Redundant* (Roger Jackson)
- 1997**      *Bern Porter - Marilyn "Mo" Monroe - Lava Love: A Postcard Exchange* (Roger Jackson)
- 1997**      *Time* (Roger Jackson)
- 1998**      *Bern Porter's Book of Wisdom* (Roger Jackson)
- 1999**      *Monica Lewinsky - 4 Part Series* (Roger Jackson)
- 1999**      *Belfast Common - Artifacts, Sculptures, Objects d'Art, Founds, Ready-Mades, Toss-Aways, and Forgotten Items...* (Roger Jackson)
- 2001**      **Named Belfast's First Poet Laureate**
- 2002**      *Bern Porter's 2002 Postcard Series* (Roger Jackson)
- June 7, 2004** **Dies in Belfast, age 93.**
- Buried in the Evergreen Cemetery, Houlton**