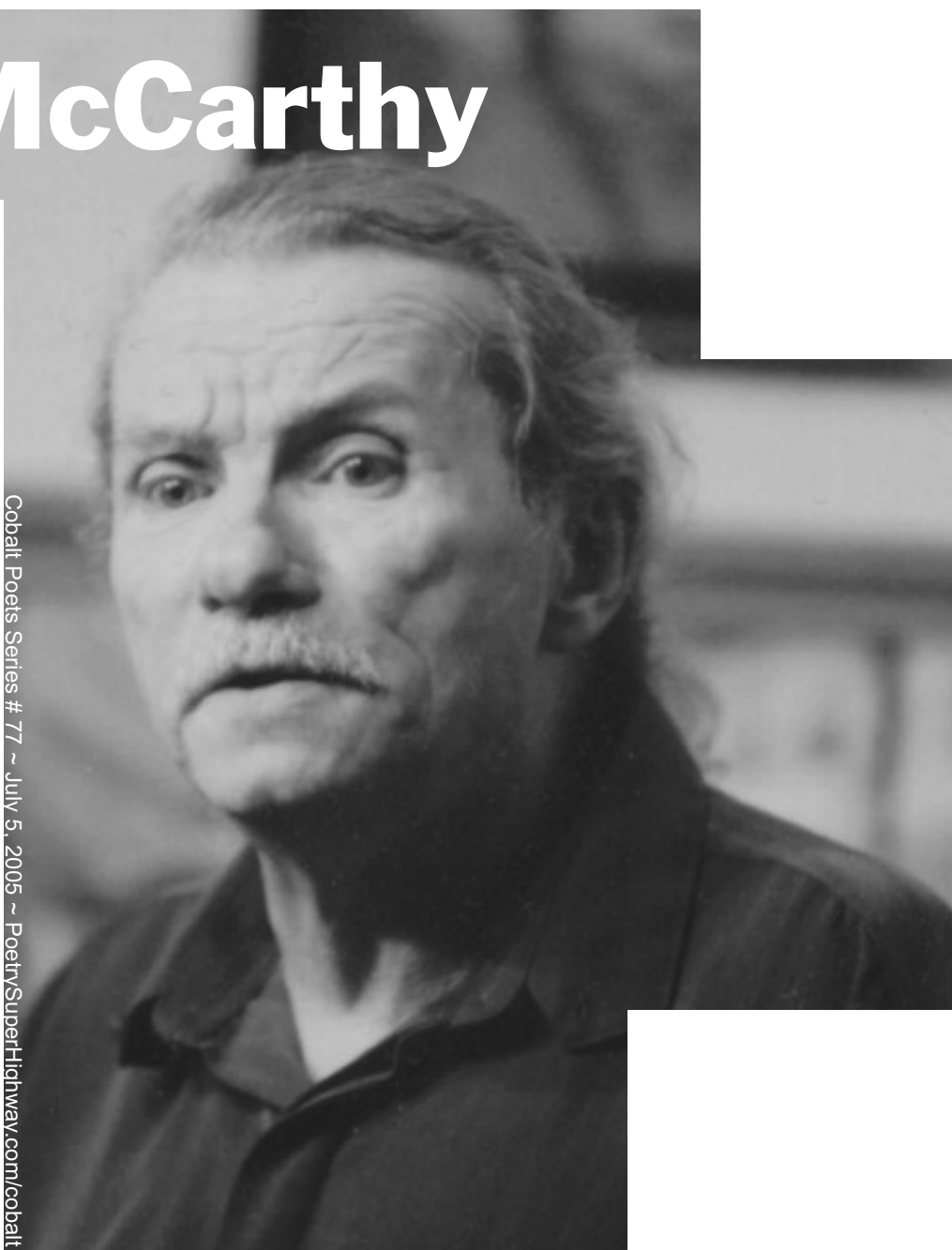


# Jack McCarthy

Jack McCarthy calls himself a "standup poetry guy." Others have called him "legend" on the Boston poetry scene, the national Slam scene, and in his own mind. The Boston Phoenix named him "Best Standup Poet," The Boston Globe said, "In the poetry world, he's a rock star." Poet Stephen Dobyns calls him, "one of the wonders of contemporary poetry." He's an engaging minor character in the film "Slamnation" and was a semifinalist for the Individual Slam Championship in 2000. His work appears in the anthologies "The Spoken Word Revolution," "Poetry Slam," and "Complete Idiot's Guide to Slam Poetry." His most recent book, from EM Press, is called "Say Goodnight, Grace Notes." His website is [www.standupoet.net](http://www.standupoet.net)

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## IRISH HISTORY EXPLAINED IN 16 LINES

As anyone who's considered being God will know, at Pentecost the gift was not of tongues, but ears.

Their lovely bloody language was the weapon did us in, the pleasures of it, the treasures of its lexicon, the endless ways of telling what to do, what god to worship, and what arse to kiss. They pronounced death sentences; listening, we heard troubadours. They dictated terms of our subjection; faerysong to us.

It wasn't us that they betrayed, but English. They didn't live up to it, they were not grand enough, magnanimous, and now it's ours. By fierce, barbaric love, because we let it charm us and seduce us, we own it now in ways they never did, and never will.

or,

Did

You

Ever

Wonder

Why

so

Many

of

the

Great

Writers

are

Irish?