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| Olson, Charles (1910-1970) |
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| Actively writing in the 1950s and 1960s, poet and critic Charles Olson is a key figure of both the New American Poetry and the Black Mountain School. He is best known for articulating the idea of an open field poetics opposed to inherited stanza form in his essay “Projective Verse” as well as his exploration of the long poem in *The Maximus Poems*. His poetry draws from the earlier work of poets such as William Carlos Williams and Ezra Pound as well as writers from his own generation like Robert Creeley and Robert Duncan. Olson’s influence is felt across the North American poetic spectrum, but most notably in the work of the Vancouver-based TISH group (George Bowering, Daphne Marlatt, Fred Wah, among others) and American poets like Susan Howe and Rachel Blau DuPlessis,  Over the course of his career, Charles Olson produced extensive amounts of poetry, criticism, and correspondence, leaving behind an unwieldy and influential body of work. Key to an understanding of his work is the 1950 essay “Projective Verse,” published originally as a pamphlet and republished more widely in Donald Allen’s anthology *The New American Poetry* (1960) and Olson’s essay collection *Human Universe and Other Essays* (1967). Olson’s “projective” verse is counter-academic in the sense that it seeks to resist the then-dominant formalist poetics favoured by the New Critics. |
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| Further reading: |