



Expressions
1988-89

INCARNATE WORD COLLEGE

Cover:

Ophelia

DEBBIE CARLOW-LOMAX

Earthenware, 17" diameter

Photograph by DONALD EWERS

Expressions

1988-89

I N C A R N A T E W O R D C O L L E G E

San Antonio, Texas

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Cosmic Song, GEORGEHAN POLK
Linocut, 4" x 6"
Second Place Visual Art

These are the nights,
These are the soft November nights
That make me love this latitude and longitude.
It was cold yesterday, and yet
Tonight we sit barefooted,
Watching the moon through clear cleansing winds,
A parting peek at summer
Out of a window in winter's hallway.
How many times have we together
Loved the light of the moon
On November nights like this?
The other times,
The weeks of cold and wet
When I could scream for want of sunlight,
And then the blazing days that blister streets,
And thunderstorms that rip the roofs off:
They are part of the cycle.
We've watched them too.
You and I, we are a story for the stars,
Stars winking out of reach of rain and wind
And maybe but merely watching
From their various vantage points.
Funny how some things change,
And others ... change more slowly ...
And these are the breezes,
These are the bathing breezes of November nights
That make me live in this longitude and latitude.

Anniversary
LINDA FORD WINANS
First Place Poetry

Granny's Crossing

LUISA INEZ NEWTON

First Place Non-Fiction

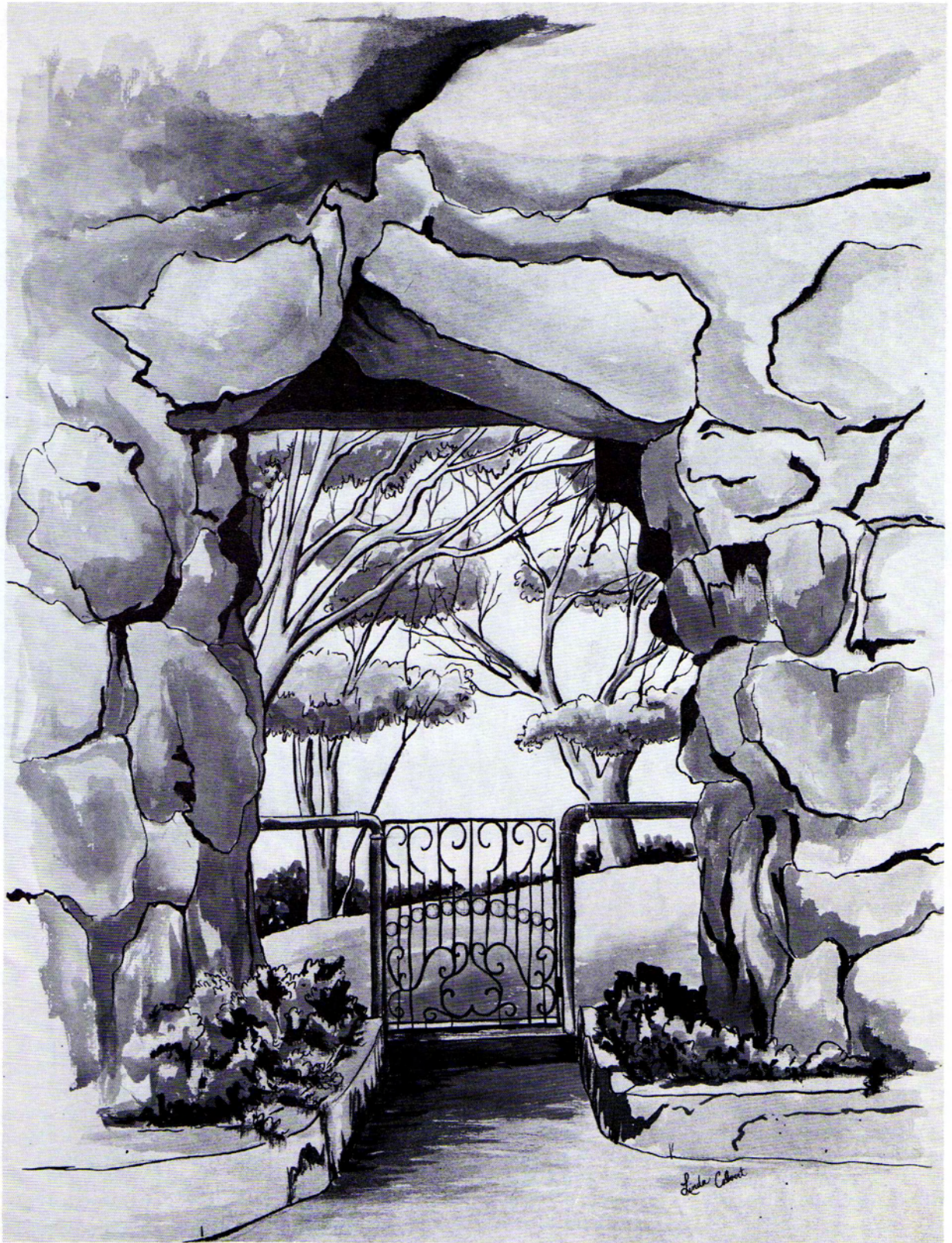
My sister and I rifle through Granny's white house. Out the expressway, deep in the suburbs and the circles of the loop, Granny lies in bed at The Home. We are amazed at her emaciation — a Victorian victim of the 20th century. My sister nears fifty and I am a dozen years less and we have long joked about our generation gap. We are children now, acting our elderly and younger roles as we paw through Granny's goods without parental guidance. Ribbons in bags by the bagful; letters and bank statements from nineteen-aught-five; photographs of brides and babies and men who suffocated from Spanish influenza in nineteen-eighteen; hats with dusty silk and stiff veils and black beadwork and grey satin; old pillows in plastic bags; a typewriter built in 1948; endless 'LIFE' magazines filled with homage to new appliances and the Americanness of America.

My sister loses interest and slows the search when we get to the books. She examines even those she doesn't want, while I, knowing the second I see what I want, announce it, and save my examination for a private moment. I look on, discovering a pair of navy shoes with open toe and curved high heel. They fit; they are mine. They once supported the blood and bone of the tiny woman who bought them. After the shoes, I find

pictures of a voyage to Bermuda Granny made in 1922. Surrounded by men, wearing a beret and smiling, she looks out at me from the yellowing image and says, I was this young, I had flesh as soft as this expression on my face, and I desired love on this boat much as I feared the sea. Her distance to me explodes in the space between the picture and my eyes. My heart does not sanction this estrangement and my mind opens onto her death.

My sister finds a photograph of our niece which resembles Granny. I climb out of the attic with the few objects which called to my grabbing hands. We smoke together in a room where she never smoked. Granny was a lady forbidden to be a cowgirl. She breathes out through her memories and in through The Home, caring for her, for money. Everyone should have a whore once, I think suddenly.

I tell my sister how much Granny had appreciated my remembering Tennyson's 'Crossing the Bar' — or bits of it, bits that she had remembered, too. Granny is timid about crossing, but she is more annoyed about complaining of the broken body parts which have served her over ninety years. Is she isolated? Is she blessed? Granny is crossing the bar and we, her blood, have aired the white house before the New Year.



LINDA CALVERT, Ink, 25" x 19"



BRYCE RUSHING III
Photograph, 8" x 10"

Left, Right, and Forward Only

JOE JUSTICE

First Place Fiction

Lights have a peculiar glow this time of the morning, or maybe I still envisioned the warm amber that had filled my glass and eyes earlier. Clouds billowed in front of my face. Wind whipped through the alley. Papers rustled. The silent cold of the alley was almost soothing. I turned up my collar and walked on toward my bed, where I was long overdue.

"Rearview mirrors should be outlawed!"

I never expected a refuse pile to speak English. I never expected a refuse pile to speak at all. The papers rustled once more and I realized my expectations were correct.

"What the hell are you doing in that garbage?"

"It's warm."

"Goodnight!" I said, and walked on toward my place.

"Rearview mirrors should be outlawed!" he said again.

"Okay, you've piqued my curiosity. In my current condition my curiosity is easily piqued." I stepped back toward him. On closer inspection he did not look like your average bum. The closer I got the less doubt there was. Finally there was no doubt at all. He was undoubtedly an above-average bum. I was staring at him. Dark brown eyes, deep and rich, stared back at me. His countenance was not unlike what I supposed my own to be at that moment. Perhaps he too was in my situation, but this garbage was as far as he had made it.

"You need a hand?" I asked.

"No applause, Buddy, just throw money."

That was a good answer. I was about to take out my pad and write it down, but a question popped into my head. "How do you know my name?" He didn't make a sound, didn't stir at all. "I guess you read my books. Not many people do any more."

"No." He ruffled his newspaper blankets down and tucked them under his chin. "I'm psychic," he said.

"I'm Buddy. I'm drunk. Are you?"

"No, I'm Harry."

"I used to be, but I got electrolysis."

That was good, at least as good as no applause, Buddy. I felt a strong sense of pride to still retain my quick wit through my dulled senses. "So, what are you doing

in the garbage?"

"Rearview mirrors should be outlawed!"

That really didn't seem like a valid answer, but I decided to play his game. "Why should rearview mirrors be outlawed?"

"Life is a series of left and wrong turns!"

He was becoming more and more cryptic, but he wasn't going to lose me now that he'd caught me. "I don't mean to be rude, but don't you mean left and right turns?"

"No!"

He was back to one-word answers; I must be getting somewhere. "I think you're going to have to explain that one a little."

"Every turn I thought was right turned out to be left. Every turn I thought was left turned out to be wrong. Actually, life is a series of wrong and wrong turns."

"I'm glad that's settled. Harry, you must have a lot of trouble getting insurance."

"I don't drive anymore."

"Hell, Harry, that's probably for the best. All you were doing was walking and you wound up in the trash."

There was a long silence. "How do you know I was walking?"

I pulled up some garbage and had a seat. He had a point, a very good point. How did I know he was walking? I don't see a car: that's a good answer. I started to blurt it out. But no, he'll have an answer for that too. Then it struck me: he's a bum. He's in the trash. Why should I have to answer to him?

"You're in the trash!" I said.

"So?"

It was pure brilliance. I had thought quick and hard for an answer, and in one moment, in one word, he'd shot it to hell. He rolled over, fluffed his newspapers and settled in for a nap. It had to be relevant. I wouldn't have said it if it hadn't been relevant. I scratched my head. I licked my lips. I started to get up and pace. All I could think of was high school, the debate team. We went to State all four years, to Nationals once. It must be relevant. "You're in the trash. People who own cars don't sleep in trash; they sleep in their cars. You don't own a car, and those garbage cans do not a bus stop make. So you walked! Right?" I had him. I knew I had him. What could he say?

"Rearview mirrors should be outlawed!"

I wanted to yell. I wanted to scream. I wanted to throw garbage around the alley.

But I was calm. I spoke slowly, calmly. Emphasizing every word. "That hasn't got a damn thing to do with anything!"

He rolled back to face me. "You don't get it at all, do you?"

I couldn't tell if he was hurt or mad. "I'm sorry, Harry. Go ahead; tell me all about it."

"Buddy, you sound like Bob Newhart."

"No, I don't. Newhart sort of whines. He's like this." I held my nose and did the best Newhart impersonation of my life. "'Is there anything you'd like to talk about? Feel free.' Now do I sound like that?"

"Look at these scars," he said.

I hadn't seen them before. I don't know if it was too dark, or if I was too drunk; I don't know what the reason was, but I hadn't seen them before. "Christ, Harry, I'm sorry. I didn't notice." His arms were mauled. On the left side of his face was a bluish red trench from the eyebrow to the jawbone. His forehead was a pink and purple patchwork. I swallowed hard and tried not to turn away. "What happened, Harry?"

"Rearview mirrors should be outlawed!"

I was sure that if I'd been sober, I'd have been able to figure out just what the hell this was all about. But had I not just left Frank's place, and had I not been drunk, it wouldn't have mattered. If I hadn't been on my way home, I wouldn't have wandered upon him. And sober, I would never have stopped. His eyes changed now. He had a far-away sort of look.

"Glass. Glass everywhere. Glass, glass, and more glass. My whole world was made up of glass. Broken glass. Except for the plastic and twisted metal that used to be the rearview mirror. I used to have great vision. Twenty-twenty. But the rearview mirror took care of that."

Blood began to drip from his eyes and run from every cut on his tattered body. Blood, like tears or rain, puddling where he sat. I tried to run, but he grabbed me. Bloody, mangled hands like pliers pinched and held me.

"I was looking in the rearview mirror. I didn't see what was ahead of me. To this day, I don't know what I ran into."

I broke away and tried to run, but I fell. I fell into the puddle. I fought to my feet;

blood was in my eyes. I couldn't see where I was running; I was just running. I could feel his breath on my neck. My hands were so bloody that I couldn't wipe the blood from my eyes. I just kept running. I could feel the street under my feet. The blood was beginning to dry; I could see a little. I passed people; no one seemed to notice. Frank's, I'll go back to Frank's. I could see the sign. I could hear footsteps. They were faster than mine. Why wasn't he catching me? I made it. I threw the door open and ran inside.

"Frank, help me!"

"Who the hell are you? The bar doesn't open till noon. Come back in an hour."

What did he mean, noon? Where's Frank? I ran towards the back room. The guy behind the bar was too quick; he cut me off.

"Where do you think you're going?"

"Where's Frank? You've got to help me. You know me. I was here thirty minutes ago."

I ran back to look out the window. I couldn't see Harry anywhere. But he was there, somewhere. I could feel him. The bartender opened the door to the back room; a couple of his friends stepped through. I ran towards the open door yelling, "Frank, are you in there? Frank?" They stopped me. "Frank! Frank!"

The bartender walked back to the bar, picked up the phone. "I'm calling the police," he said.

"Good, let me clean off this blood."

"What blood?" he asked.

"Who are you?" I began running around the bar yelling. "Frank! Frank! Help me, Frank. Where are you? He was here when I left thirty minutes ago."

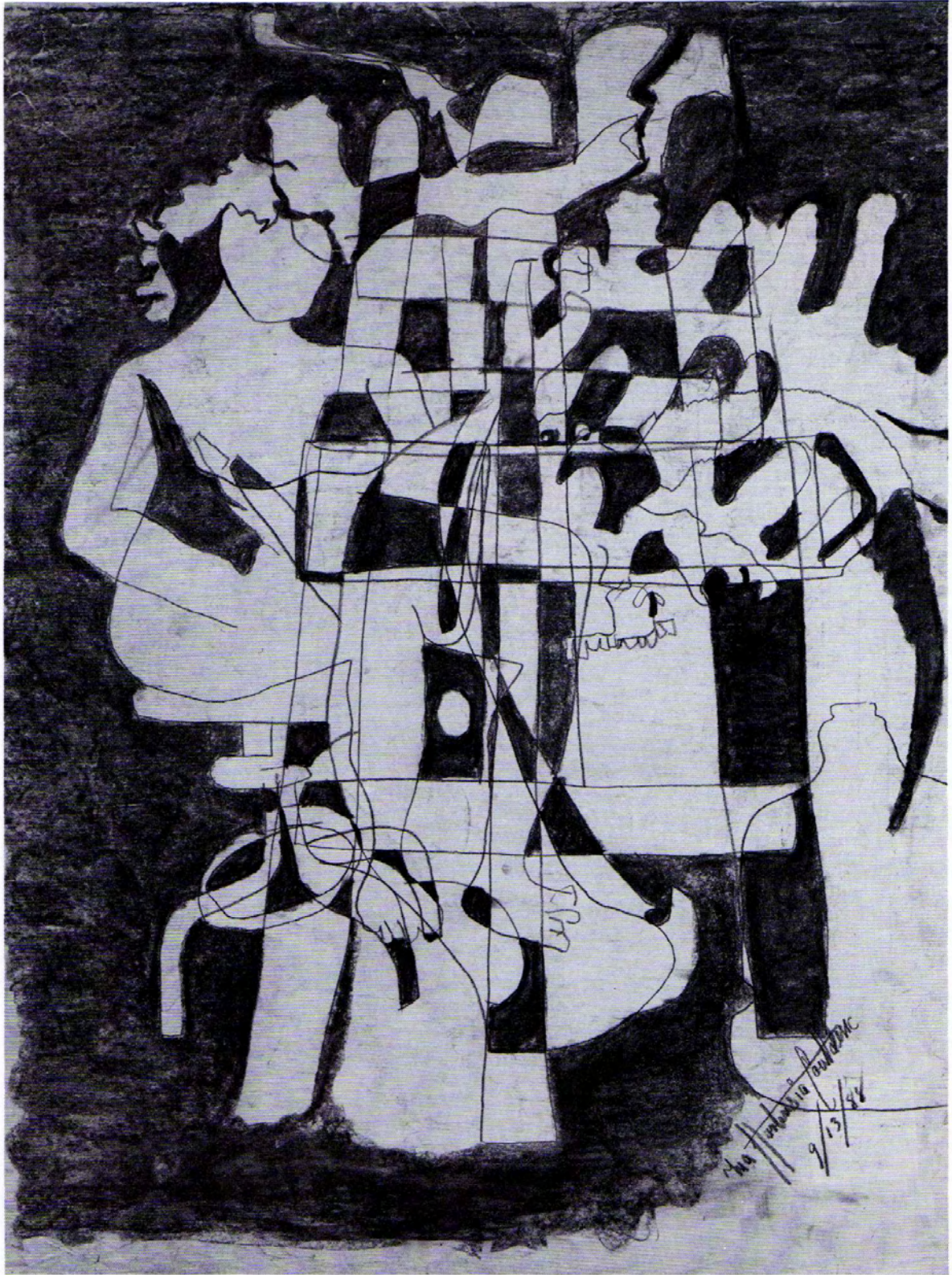
"Grab him!" The bartender and his two friends grabbed me. Their hands were like pliers, pinching, holding me. "Call the police," he said to one of them. The smaller of the two let go and walked over to the bar. This was my chance. I'd have to break away and make a run for it. I fought to my feet, but they were too strong.

"Frank! Help me, Frank!"

They held me tighter. The bartender spoke softly. "Calm down, Buddy, calm down. Frank's been dead for fifteen years."

"How do you know my name? I guess you read my books?"





MARIA COUTTOLENC, Charcoal, 36" x 28" *Third Place Visual Art*

The Chaff

PATTY RULAND MULLINS

Second Place Poetry

some stalk agony along the highways
and their ostrich necks are there for anyone to see,

but I am more clever:
i peep into waiting rooms,
not just any waiting rooms,
only the most terrible.

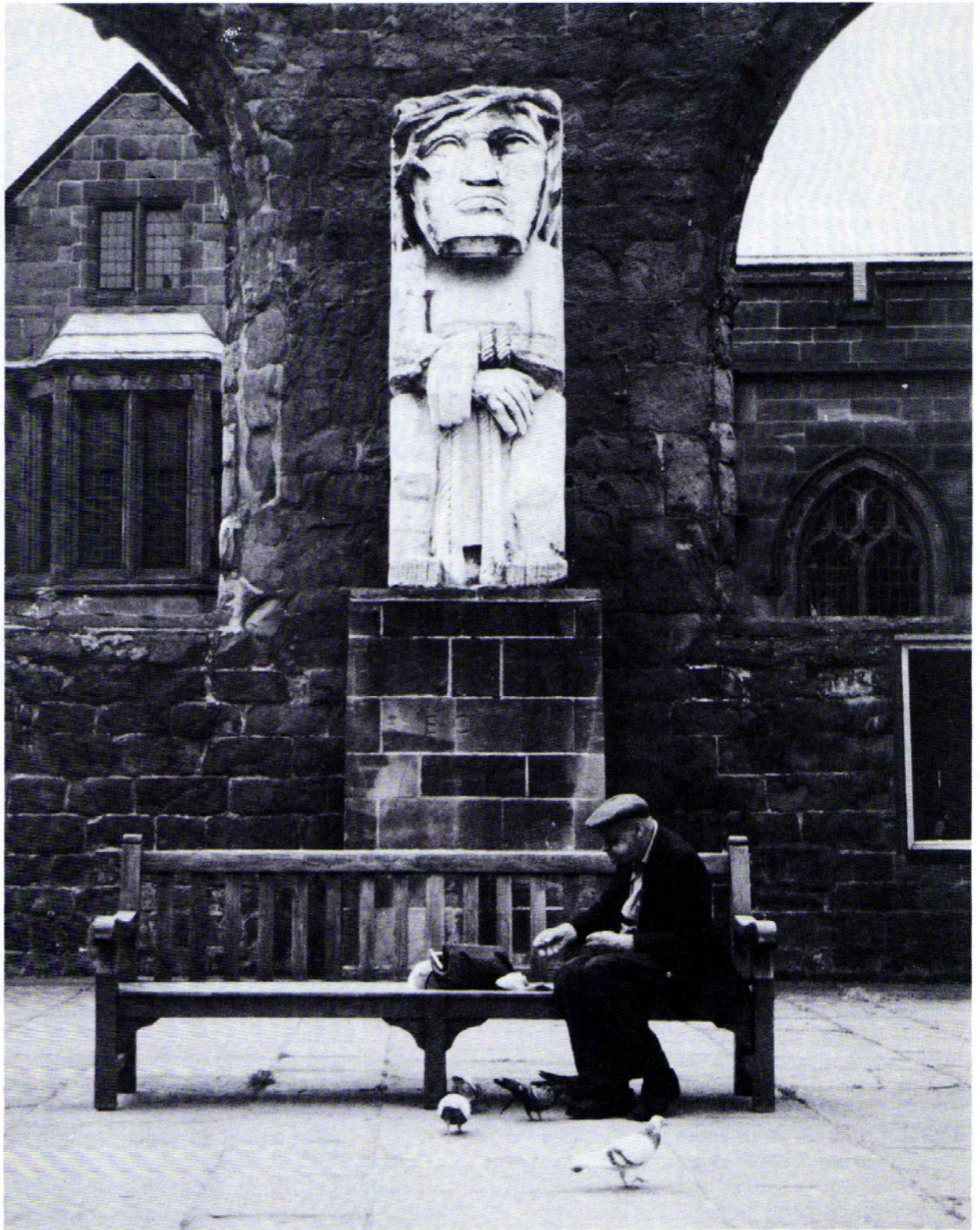
one day i couldn't help myself,
and while i was noticing
the way this poor man's hair was combed—
in neat rows like last straws,
moist as if by rain,
perfect before the harvest—
he looked up and looked back.

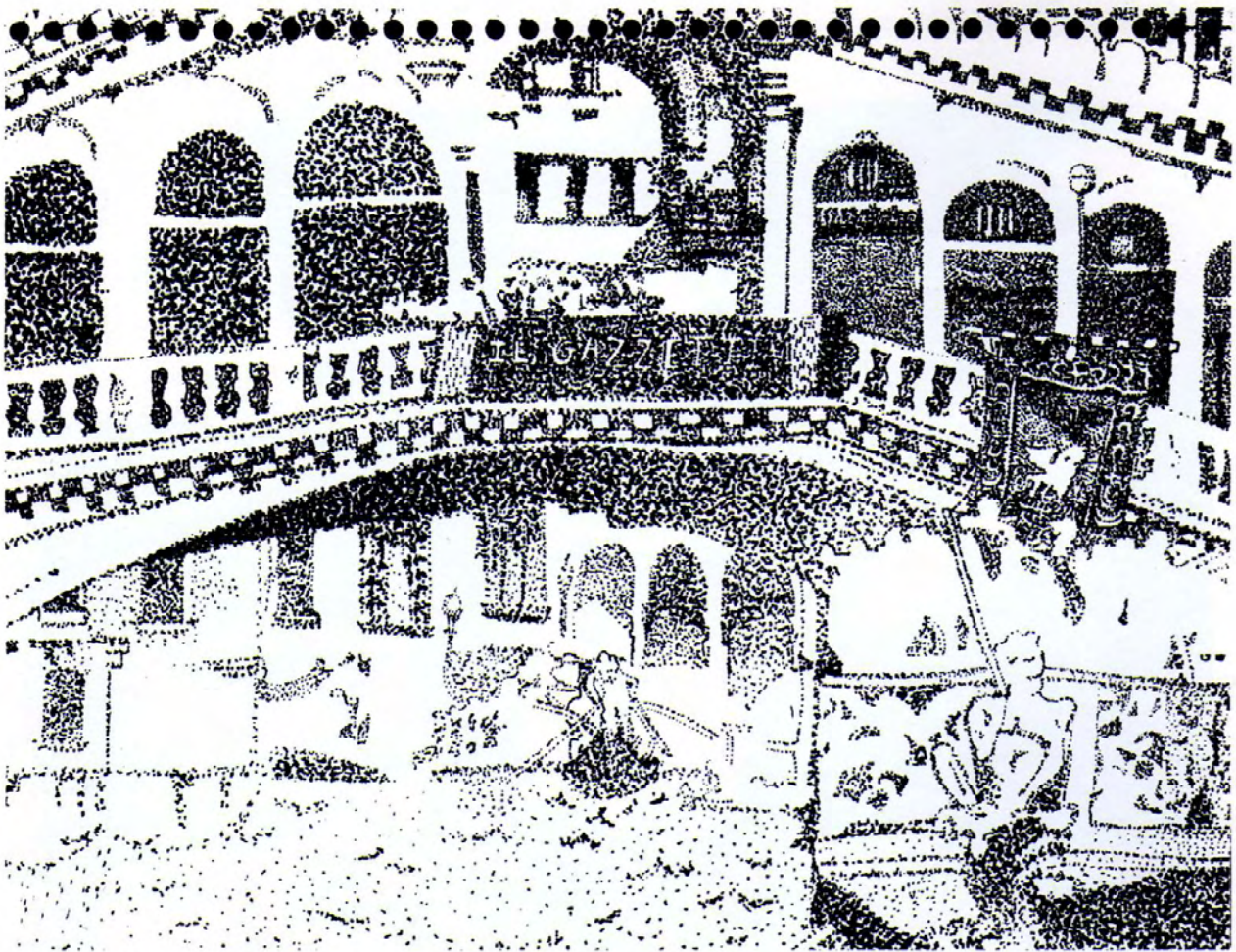
i ran away, caught but not cured.

Behold Man

VASEEHARAN NESIAH

Color Photograph, 10" x 8"





ROSE ANNE ORTIZ
Ink, 9" x 12"
First Place Visual Art

Koi
LINDA FORD WINANS
Third Place Poetry

Great graceful gentle Japanese
Silver-and-goldfish
Almost as long as my arm,
Gliding in leisurely procession
On three-D paths of whim,
A stately rhythm in the rippled
Waving of their tails,
Through the fluid glass
Below the facets shifting
On the surface,
Where sky and earth and water
And sparkling spots of sun
Dance in mosaic mixtures,
Like the patterns on the koi.

Under the Influence

SANDRA GRACIA

Second Place Fiction

Michael stuck his face in his beer mug and looked for answers in the yellow, putrid liquid. The ugly but familiar scene with his father kept clouding his mind.

He could see his father's confused expression in the thin layer of foam floating at the top of the mug.

"This stuff isn't doing me any good, Lou," he told the bartender. "I can still think."

"Well, you're drinking 'em slow enough. Your dad would've drunk you under the table by now," the burly bartender said.

There it was. He couldn't get away from his father.

The only way would be to move out of this hole of a town, he thought. Hell, we ain't even a pissing dot on the damn Texas map. Everybody knows everybody around here, especially secrets. They sure know our secret. Every family in this town has one, but ours is the worst.

Michael took another swallow of beer and closed his eyes, letting himself feel the liquid coolness inch down his throat.

Music was blaring from the jukebox; the twang of guitars grating Michael's nerves.

"That's my father's problem, Lou. He drinks too fast," Michael muttered.

Lou was down at the other end of the bar.

Bottles of Jim Beam whiskey and Oso Negro vodka cluttered the mirror behind the bar and several gimme caps decorated with beer logos framed the mirror's top.

I look just like him, Michael said to himself. His reflection repulsed him. Quickly, he took off the straw hat.

Lou was back at the center of the long, smooth bar refilling peanut bowls.

"You know, Lou, I'm only twenty-six and already going bald. Look at this." Michael pointed to the receding hairline where black curls had once hung.

"Yeah, Mike, it happens," Lou said, resigned. "At some point, some biology thing in our bodies goes haywire and stingy on us and says, 'uh-uh, no more, you ain't gonna be pretty no more.'"

Michael sighed and looked into his

empty mug, clean and clear now without the beer.

"Give me another one, Lou."

Lou automatically grabbed a freshly chilled mug from the cooler beneath the bar, and Michael watched carefully as beer spewed into the mug, the fluid innocently flowing out of the black nozzle.

He looked at his watch: 12:30 a.m.

Everybody at the house would be asleep by now. He had planned on staying out later, maybe meeting some friends at Fito's. But the fight with his father had drained him. Their fights had been doing that lately. Maybe he was getting old.

The vivid and sorry details of just a few hours ago flooded back now, the way the beer's foam flooded to the top of his mug. Michael closed his eyes and felt himself there again, hardening under his father's inquisition.

"Where are you going?" his father had asked.

"To Lou's."

"Don't forget you have to get up early tomorrow. You do still have a job, don't you? Or did you quit that one too?"

"I still have the job, and I'll probably keep it longer than you can stay sober."

"I've worked damn hard every day of my life and none of you kids ever appreciated it. If I have a beer now and then it's just to relax and help keep me from worrying about you and your brother. Some example you set for him."

"Leave Steven out of this." Michael had lowered his voice to keep his younger brother from hearing. "This is between you and me."

Michael moved in closer toward his father, their faces now inches apart. They were the same height, but Michael's father was bigger around the middle, his paunch stretched to bursting. Their bodies filled the front doorway of the small, white frame house.

Michael had seen Steven come into the cramped living room then. And suddenly he was aware of his mother, repeating, "Leave him alone, Joe. Leave him alone."

Michael's limbs had felt like they were burning up, but his head had gone numb, like a block of ice. An ice pick pounded away at his temples. He knew he would've

felt the pick's point had he touched his fingertips to his hairline. He remembered beads of sweat popping up on his father's forehead, like a fine mist, and the venomous odor that reeked from his father's large, contorted mouth.

How strange his father's eyes; pupils dilated, eyebrows furrowed together like one long, fuzzy worm.

After that, after the worm, everything was bright, flashing images and movement. His father's right fist had shot up to crush Michael's jaw, but Michael blocked it. Easily, Michael's left hand curled up into a ball, poised to assault his father's great belly. A loud crash interrupted.

Michael had turned then and seen that Steven was gone. When his mother and father ran into the dark corridor, Michael ran outside and crept to Steven's window. Through it he saw an overturned wooden chair and a hole in the wall the size of a coiled rattlesnake. He saw Steven sitting completely still on his bed, looking into the rattlesnake hole with hollow eyes. Mom

was bent over, picking up crumbling shards of white sheetrock with trembling hands, while his father stood swaying in Steven's bedroom doorway.

I should've gone right in, grabbed Mom and Steven and shot out of there, Michael told himself now. And taken them...where?

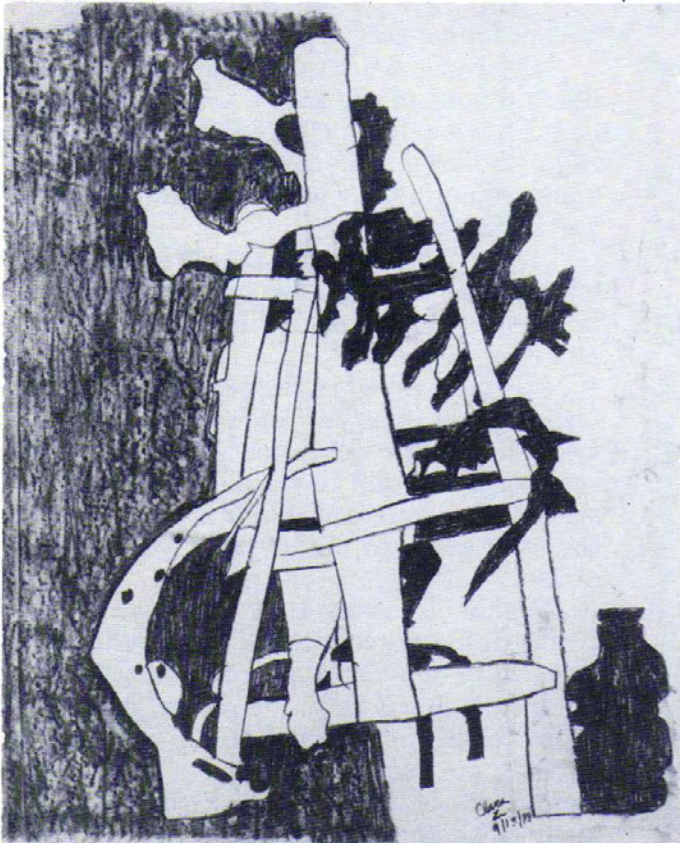
"Need another one, Mike?"

"No. Say, Lou, you heard of any good jobs outside of Texas?"

Someone put a quarter in the grimy brown and silver jukebox then, and Tammy Wynette started crooning "Stand By Your Man." The smoke in the room was thick, and the few couples dancing were covered with film, their faces indiscernible.

One cowboy was dancing by himself, cradling a bottle of Lone Star, his Stetson pushed back on his head. His boots kept bumping into the stained, rusted, orange table that surrounded the boxed-in dance floor.

The lone cowboy's eyes were closed, and he was smiling.



CLARA ZAMARRIPA
Charcoal, 36" x 29"

ADDENDUM

[Caption to artwork, page 13.]

PAT ZINSMEYER, Pencil, 18" x 23"



Heart of Stone
PATTY RULAND MULLINS

The woman with the heart of gold
now hides all the sharp and blunt objects half-buried there.

Once bare-chested,
she, really an exhibitionist,
displayed the stubborn suture,
sienna, from a palette of rust and blood.

“Cow, comfort, mend,
Bow, buckle, bend
to my misery,” she cried.

But who hears the sound of one woman crying?

Now, with great silent language,
without wincing,
she has the strength to extract
each excalibur, one by one.

Black Sound

RUSSELL ROWTON

Edited by L.F.W. and J.L.

Lightbulbs in my head
Flickering to the rhythm of
Silent voices
 in me.

Light pierces
My pupils, pulsing
Brightest black
To brilliant white.

Rhythms become a minor chime
Resonating a major theme
 theme
 theme,
Translating one into the other.

Ride the light,
Observe the rhythm
Silently sounding
 in me.

Saint Ann's

PATTY RULAND MULLINS

Edited by J.L. and L.F.W.

An All-Seeing Eye
Looks up my dress.

The headmaster's specks
Focus geometrically,
Syphon the light
Through concentric circles,

Refract me
Smaller, smaller, smaller,
Through pupils pinpointed
Into annihilation.

O how I long
To sit at the piano again
With Miss Printemps,
Singing seasons, sentiment,
Solstice sacraments,
Wrapped in a silky womb.



BRYCE RUSHING III
Photograph, 8" x 10"



GINGER JACKSON
Ink, 24" x 18"



My First Day with Ink
ROSE ANNE ORTIZ
Ink, 24" x 18"

Of Traps

LINDA FORD WINANS

Third Place Fiction

I had never killed a mammal before. Or an amphibian. Or a bird. Or even a reptile. Not personally. I've seen them killed. I have killed fish and worms and insects and crabs—well, actually I didn't kill the crabs, but I did catch them. You could see them coming to take the bait. I didn't eat crab or fish when I was little—not even much now, and I can hardly remember crabbing.

We decided to stick to standard rat traps because we had learned that the tangle-foot traps left us with the problem of killing the struggling, terrified critters, who, now that they have moved in, are secretly ruining many stored treasures and wreaking other havoc we haven't discovered yet. We can hear them at it mostly during the night. We've had to go through this rationalization before... "If they could write books," Carl says, "we wouldn't kill 'em."

So I was working at the table, with Jupiter, the nine-month-old, eighty-pound Doberman, asleep nearby—otherwise I was alone. And I heard the trap snap. The dog lifted his head. A silence. Good. It died fast. Then the squealing started. The puppy sat up and looked at me and began whining.

"It can't last long; it must be suffocating." The pain in that sound. Or was it just panic? "How can it go on so long?" When it stopped, a dark turbulence sighed away. The screaming struggle had done him in. "Glad it's over, for both of us." And then it started again, louder, more violent. "This time it'll surely die." I heard it flipping the trap around. Then silence again. I listened, afraid it would start again, and it did. When the sounds started up for the fourth time, I realized I had to do something, or at least see if there was something I could do.

Carl had set the trap on a shallow shelf built over the bathtub near the ceiling. The rats have some passageway from there to the attic, back in the narrow corner you can't see or reach. When I turned on the light, I saw its tail writhing over the edge of the shelf. It was dark and shiny and segmented. From my angle, that was all I could see, a giant black earthworm. I watched it and felt my heart racing. "Why won't it die? Why doesn't that miserable maimed creature give it up?"

The dog was barking like crazy. He wanted to climb the shower curtain. He crouched and barked and strained upwards. He considered trying to jump for it (but wisely didn't try), holding his noise now and then to listen, fixed eyes aimed down the double-barrel of his nose at that wiggling, squealing tail. The cries would get quieter, more plaintive, then die down to a panting sound, and then come screeching out again in quick, hoarse wails.

I finally admitted I was going to have to kill it. If I didn't, it was going to live a long time, possibly hours from the sound of it. I got a stool to stand on—I still couldn't see over the ledge, but I could reach it—and a white plastic bag to wear like a mitt between my skin and the rat's. And then I stood there, telling myself I had to do it. I had to take hold of the tail, firmly, and pull the trap out. I wouldn't have to hold it; I could let it go right away, let it fall on the floor...the dog would be waiting for a chance at it...I took another breath. "Stop stalling. You can do this. You've always believed you could if you had to. Why does that tail look so grizzly? Don't ask. Just grab it."

When I reached toward it, I rattled the shower curtain, and at the noise the screeching resurged, the tail looped and squirmed while the rat thrashed and rocked the trap. I could hear the trap knocking around and see its edges rolling over as its prisoner tried to shake it loose, wrestle out of it. "Maybe it'll flip itself onto the floor by itself. But what if it doesn't? What if it keeps on screaming? Quit thinking! You can stop this panic. Do it!" The dog's barking was frantic. I couldn't take hold of that tail.

"If I can knock the trap down with a stick or something then I wouldn't have to touch it." I went down the hall looking for a stick or something, and the dog followed me—and just then, another spasm sent the rat and trap crashing over the edge to the tile floor. Jupiter flew to confront it. A full-grown rat looked absurdly small next to this giant puppy, who sniffed it, poked it, barked loudly at it, snapped; I don't know why he didn't kill it, except that control of teeth and jaws has always been a priority in his training regimen. Plus, the rat wasn't much of a challenge or a threat: Jupiter wasn't sure what it was or whether he was supposed to kill it or just act territorial. Maybe he saw this surprising apparition as a new game. I was going to

have to kill it myself.

The rat had stopped screeching; but it was still alive. The fall had taken most of the fight out of it. Its movements were less violent, mechanical protests between pauses of exhausted stillness. I took a breath and stepped closer.

That was the first time I saw his little eyes, like polished beads of jet. The image burned purely in the half-second I could look at him, and then at once I picked up the trap and took it and its still-animate reason for existence outside. I never let my eyes focus on those shiny little beads after that moment.

I held the trap by the spring catch, from which dangled the shingle of a trap, from which dangled the rat's hindquarters and his writhing tail. His back paws paddled weakly at space as I walked, while Jupiter tried to keep his big black nose pressed against this strange life form all the way out into the patio, where I set it down, a wooden pillow with invalid attached, and the puppy snapped and whined and bucked and nosed but still didn't bite or tear.

Careful not to look at his eyes, I considered the size of his head and looked for the right stone... "or maybe a brick would do..."

I think he was whimpering. Or was that the dog? I wasn't letting myself listen. I was thinking. If he wasn't crying I could hear his pain anyway, and that's the sound I had to stop—that was my assignment in this emergency. I had already let this go on long enough. For minutes on end while he screamed, I had been too squeamish to stop his suffering. No matter the reason for the trap, the fact of it was this rat's doom, and our doing: bad enough to feel an executioner without feeling a torturer, too.

All this forced its way through my mind in the five seconds—no more than that, I'm sure—the few seconds I took to find the brick, approach the block, command the puppy to get out of the way, locate the head without looking at those perfect beads. I didn't stop moving, never paused, while thoughts gushed along far faster than words: "Now don't miss and don't be feeble. Better to use more force than necessary than have to hit him again. Fast. Don't stop

to think." Somewhere I felt the weight of the brick, the speed of my arm, the thickness of a rat skull, force equals velocity times mass...

I didn't miss and I wasn't feeble and I was quite sure the skull was crushed and yet I was afraid that the rat might somehow still be living, suffering. I looked at the little corpse—only the bottom of it—there wasn't much blood, but I can edit out the edges of scenes with peripheral fuzz if I want to. The legs were limp, the tail still.

When I picked up the trap, the puppy grabbed the dangling torso before I could stop him and yanked at it, and the head, no longer the rigid shape it had been, slipped out of the trap. Jupiter wanted to play with it, but he let me take it away from him with the white plastic bag I found I was still holding. I picked up the late rat by the tail; then I turned the bag inside out over the body and put it in the middle of the outside table where the dog couldn't get to it. "We can bury it tomorrow."

The house seemed quiet as a judgment. My head was singing, and I was breathing in little gasps. Too much adrenaline, and I didn't need it anymore. I did some knee-bends and waist-bounces and blew long blasts of air out of my mouth until I could sit down.

When I told Carl about it, he looked at me in a new way: he knew what it meant; and I had proved something. He helped me joke with myself about my endless seconds of frozen indecision, anguished impotence. It's a rite of passage, that kind of moment.

"Are you proud of me for killing?"

"Not killing, darlin'. That rat was already dead. He killed himself, living in houses with humans. If he'd settled for the outer world, he'd have other problems, but not the same as traps. It's the easy life that gets 'em. And taking the bait because it looks easy. We haven't caught 'em all yet, though, you know. Plenty more where that one came from. Might never catch 'em all. Did you ever think of that?"

"Yeah. I've thought of that. If they just wouldn't ruin everything..."

"They can't help it."

"I know." I'm still seeing a pair of black suns.



Mary's Ireland

LUISA INEZ NEWTON

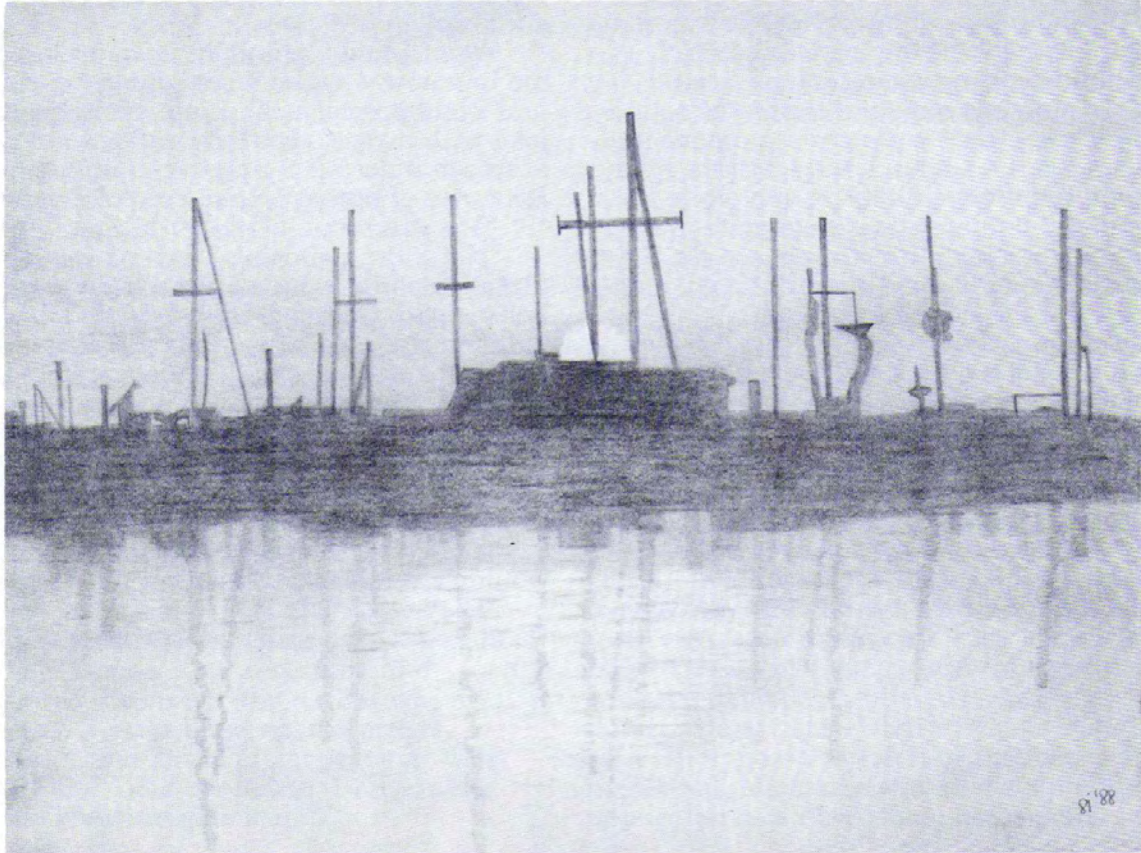
When the winds are rolling towards winter,
I think of Achill Island
where ruined Slievemore is hounded
by an ocean drunk with turmoil.

Mary and I shared a cold house
with Sarah her daughter of ten
learning Gaelic in the school
down the only road in a village of a few hundred
Souls of women, children and old men.

Husbands worked in Manchester, Liverpool,
Dublin, America, London or parts unknown
until they made a way to return
and father another son or daughter
to learn Gaelic in the school in the
'South' of Eire in a town
less than a mile from the bogside graves
where the potatoes died.

With the Atlantic loud in our ears
Mary and Sarah and I hike the mile or more
to Slievemore through the rust colored
earth still and reclining
while the thrashing of clouds,
sun, mist and sea urges the season onwards.
From a distance across the treeless horizon
we sight the humped stony hills
near the graves and huts of former lives.
Mary and Sarah and I cry out an old hunger
And smell a famine beneath the waves.

GINGER JACKSON, Pencil, 11" x 14"



BULLETIN: This just in to our local newsroom. A lone gunman has shot, repeat, shot and killed or wounded an undetermined number of passersby, apparently at random, in downtown San Antonio. We have no details at this time, except that the police have cordoned off the area around Broadway and Houston Streets and are asking that everyone stay away from that intersection. More information to follow.

The Horseman

MARIAN VIETOR GREER

Marvin Montrose was awake. His eyes were closed but he was free-floating behind them. All night he had hovered on the brink of sleep. He hadn't bothered to undress. At the hospital he'd undressed every night and showered with the others in the cold marble shower room. He didn't like the others. They had taken his cigarettes and cheated at cards in the dayroom. He got sick of cards after that fag, Thompson, had touched his leg under the table.

The memory of Thompson's bony hand on his thigh jerked him awake. He opened his eyes to the pre-dawn gloom and turned on the small lamp beside his bed. He reached for a cigarette. Shit! Out of cigarettes. He crumpled the pack and looked at the clock; it was five-thirty.

He swung his lanky frame over the edge of the bed and pulled worn boots over his dirty white socks. Choosing a stubbed out butt from the overflowing ashtray on the nightstand, Marvin straightened it, lit up and headed for the bathroom.

He relieved himself and briefly considered taking a shower. Cold water dripped from the shower head into the rust-stained tub. He didn't have to wash if he didn't want to. At the hospital, the white-coated attendants made you wash. Marvin turned and hung over the sink and stared at the whiskery reflection in the mirror. He hated the face staring back at him. "How did you get so old? No woman's gonna look at your face, bald worthless, bald worthless, worthless head." A sob caught in his throat.

Marvin flicked the sour stub of his cigarette in the bowl and left the room without flushing the toilet. He headed for the small refrigerator in the corner of the room, opened the door and looked at the meager contents with no real hunger. He grabbed a quart of milk and drank it as he crossed the room, oblivious to the milk coursing down his chin onto his shirt. He plopped down in a chair next to his black

and white set and turned it on. The television winked and a portly, smiling face came into focus.

Good morning, America. It's the second of March and the U.S. can expect a mixed bag of weather today. Let's take a look at conditions in the country's heartland. Overcast skies cover most of Texas, with a chance of rain in the forecast...

Marvin switched channels rapidly. News and weather, news and weather, smiling, irritating, talking...always talking; why couldn't they just shut up? He could think if they could just shut up for a while...He changed channels.

Jesus loves you. Jesus la-oves YOU.

Marvin leaned back and listened. The TV preacher looked right at him and smiled.

In spite of our sins. In spite of our greed, our lust and every transgression against the word of God, Jesus loves us.

The minister paused for effect and proceeded in a louder voice.

But, I tell you, my fellow Christians, God will not be mocked. Surely, he can't look upon the evils we commit in the name of the almighty dollar, the shame we bring on our nation in our sins of the flesh, and go unmoved. God will not be mocked! There WILL be an accounting and it will be SOON. Even now the Four Horsemen are hurtling breakneck to the earth. Even now they are bringing death and destruction, war, pestilence and famine to our faithless planet. We have a clarion call to action, my fellow Christians. Can YOU take up the challenge?...

Marvin understood. He was a "sinnerman." He had talked about his sins to the doctors in the hospital early on. He had told them about the wrong things he'd done, the drinking, the robberies, the whoring. They had given him lithium and other drugs and he'd been able to analyze his actions lucidly, with a clarity and intelligence that impressed them all. The doctors talked of "breakthroughs" and "lights at the end of the tunnel" and after more than a year they had a hearing for him. His head was open and he'd answered

every question. He was ready to leave, the doctors said, and they shook his hand. Marvin grinned as he remembered the doctors. Freshly showered and shaven, in new jeans and shirt, Marvin left the Rusk State Hospital for the Criminally Insane. He had a bottle of pills, a small suitcase and no one to go to when they bussed him to San Antonio.

"Shoot," he said out loud, "if they're so smart, why did they leave me go?" There was evil and sin still on him. That hadn't changed. He touched his head where a dull pain pulsed behind his eyes. He got up stiffly and went to the closet. A television newscast had come on.

Stock market prices plunged for the third day in a row. Now, on the local scene. Sheriff's men broke into a trailer house on the city's far Northside and arrested two men and a woman on charges of operating a speed lab and stolen goods fencing operation. Arrested were...

Marvin listened as he felt on the back of the shelf for his guns. He had bought the guns when he moved into this apartment in the Southside neighborhood. The rent was cheap because so many houses were vacant. No one wanted to move here now, and drug dealers had taken over the empty homes. Every day the remaining people would go to work and come home to find themselves robbed. Not him. He was ready; he had bought the guns. Sometimes he would sit all day on a chair facing the door and wait for the bastards to come.

Police staged a sting operation at an ice house on Southwest Military Highway and booked Ernesto Sabo, bar owner, for selling liquor to minors. Sabo pleaded innocent to charges and was freed on \$15,000 bond. According to Judge Jorge Garza, this is Sabo's third offense.

"Third offense, Jesus Christ!" Marvin shouted at no one. What were jails for? The cops couldn't stop the booze, or the robbing or the sex...Vaguely he remembered sharing a bottle under the viaduct on Commerce with a black-eyed girl who let him touch her...soft...warm...the smell of cigarettes and bourbon on her tongue...*Horsemen*...he pulled his mind up sharply and pushed cartridges into the empty chambers in his weapons.

It was light outside and time to go. He called a Yellow Cab.

He checked the safeties on the guns and eased them one at a time into the back of his jeans. They felt cold and hard against his bottom, but he couldn't risk being stopped if someone spotted them. He slipped on his jeans jacket and pulled it down slightly in the back. He adjusted the brim on his Stetson in a practiced way and turned toward the television. Geraldo Rivera's talk show was on.

Our guest is Attorney James N. Jacoby of the District Attorney's office in Queens. Our topic is Prostitution: A Victimless Crime? Mr. Jacoby, did you think that hooker Linette Johnson's pimp had any right to shoot her for holding out on him? Is it open season on women?

Sneering, Marvin snapped off the program. Whores. He knew what to do. God would not be mocked. The jails were full and little girls drank under the highway. Even the doctors couldn't get him clean, but he would save them all...*the Horsemen*.

The cab pulled up in front of his place and honked. Marvin went out, waved at the cabbie and shut the door behind him. He slid carefully into the backseat and said, "Downtown. Broadway and Houston."



The Brick Bath

SANDRA GRACIA

Jessica walked slowly outside to take her bath. Her mother told her she had to take a bath every day now. The doctor said so. The sores on her palms and feet looked red and angry. She couldn't help scratching. It itched so much.

"Hurry, Jessica, before it gets dark," her mother Marta said in Spanish as Jessica unbuttoned her faded, blue cotton shirt.

"Ah, ah," Jessica whimpered as she poured the water over her head.

She shivered at the air that drifted in through the holes in the white bricks. Her father had made the makeshift shower as soon as they moved to the *colonia* last year.

Jessica was always afraid the bricks, which stood carefully on top of one another to form three precarious walls, would cave in on her one day.

Even though it was cold, the water felt good on Jessica's sores. But she wished she could scoop up the water and use it again. It's so awful to see it just slip across the wooden board into the soft dirt.

Papi had so much trouble stealing it out of the faucets in the park.

"Ya, mi 'ja?" her mother walked up and asked.

"Si."

"Mira, buena muchachita."

Jessica smiled at her mother's compliment. She knew her mother was not telling her she was a good girl just because she had taken a bath.

It was because she had only used half of the five-gallon pail of water her mother had warmed on the fire.

Her mother wrapped Jessica carefully in a thin, white towel and scooped the frail body up in her arms, easily carrying the seven-year-old into their patchwork home.

The sun was finally sinking into the west end of the Valley, bringing some relief into the one-room, aluminum-covered house.

Jessica's father, Luis, sat at the tiny, wooden table, eating beans with chile and drinking coffee.

"Hay trabajo mañana?" Marta asked.

"Si, el chile dulce."

Jessica liked it when her parents

harvested the *chile dulce*. She liked the smell that the plump, green bell peppers left on her parents' clothes.

It was a fresh smell, a strong one that overpowered the sweat and grime that always covered their faces and bodies after they got back from the fields.

On the days they worked, Jessica wouldn't stop to play with any of her friends after school. She'd go straight home after getting off the bus and sweep her home's cement floor and wash some clothes in the big, silver tub her mother had outside.

She was careful to use as little water as possible and not to spill any.

Her mother had shown her how to scrub the heavier clothes, like bluejeans, hard against the washboard without splashing too much.

After dressing and eating a bowl of beans with her mother, Jessica took out her school tablet and started drawing. She didn't stand up to see who her father was talking to outside until she heard him yelling.

She walked to the window and saw Josefina Calderon standing in front of her father, facing their house, her arms crossed.

At first, from the way Josefina was standing, Jessica thought the plump woman was mad because Jessica hadn't gotten to help her pull weeds this afternoon as she'd promised. But Josefina wouldn't come and tell my parents, she thought.

Jessica walked the few steps to the front door then, and stepped outside to the second wooden step where she could hear better.

"*Hipocritos. Nunca hacen nada. Aqui nos podemos murir y no se mueven.*"

Her father was yelling, gesturing wildly with his hands.

"*Calmate, Luis. Nada sirve enojarnos,*"

Marta said to calm her tall, wiry husband. Her large frame stood just behind Jessica, filling the narrow doorway.

"*Pero todo el tiempo es la misma cosa,*" Josefina said in a rush. "*El año que viene, el año que viene.*"

"Are they going to do it, Josie?" Jessica asked, even though she knew the answer. "Are they going to get us water out here?"

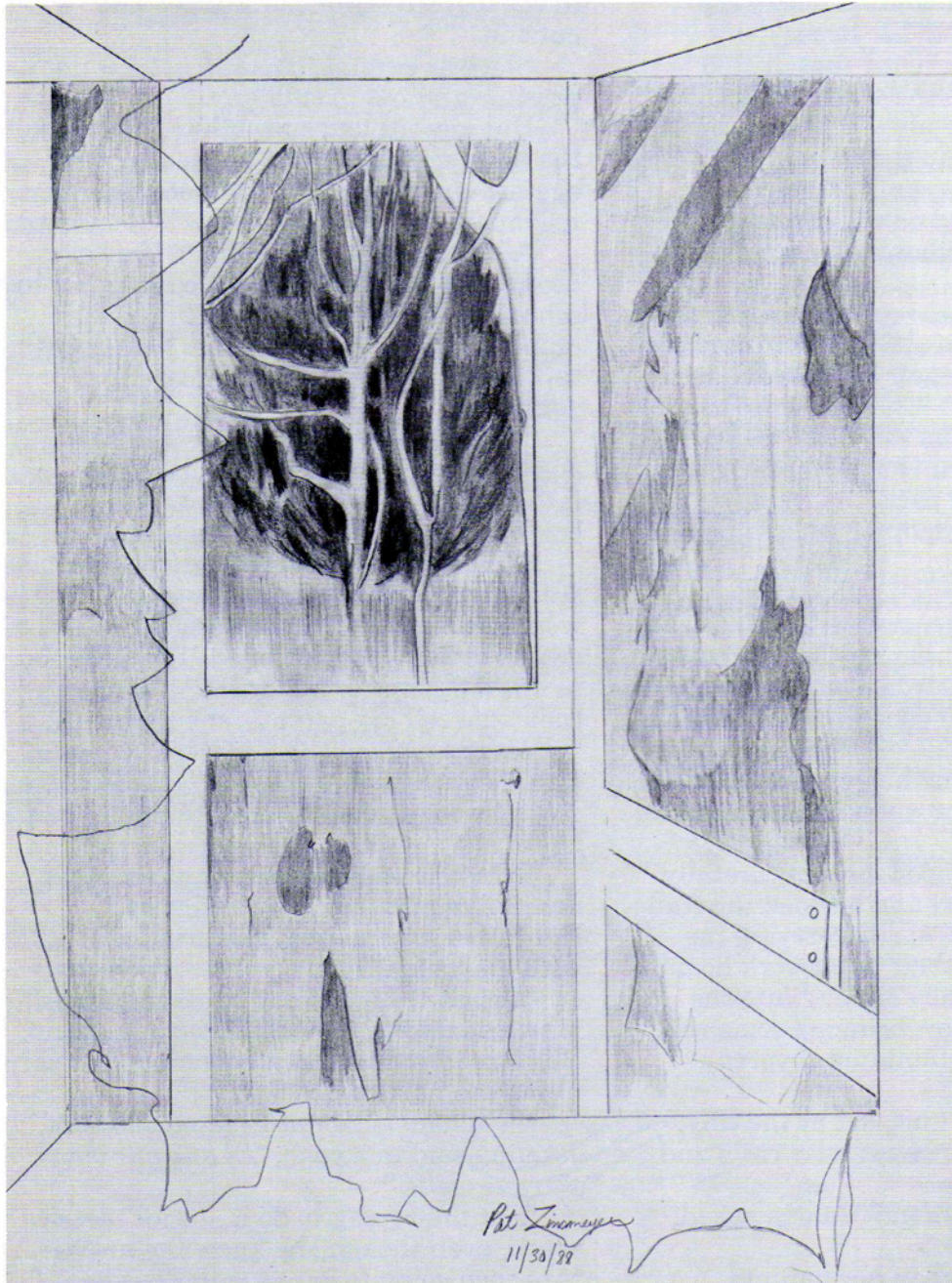
"No, *mi amor*. They're still saying we have to wait. Maybe next year."

Jessica looked down and then sat on the wooden step.

The red sores stared up at her from the tops of her feet like a million eyes and she

scratched one on her little toe.

It was almost completely dark by now, but when she looked up, she could see her father's slumped posture near the white brick bath.



PAT ZINSMEYER
Pencil, 24" x 18"

The Modern Body on Stage

(Excerpts)

LINDA FORD WINANS

Second Place Non-Fiction

Introduction

In recent decades a new perspective has opened on the vision of empirical reality offered by the mechanistic orientation of Western culture. This new concept arises from the realization that a person can never truly achieve the pure objectivity demanded by the scientific method because the limited sensory and cognitive apparatus of an observer (his mind-body) is the medium by which he receives his information: his physical reality, with all its individual sensitivities and defects, colors what he perceives as true. To understand oneself as a living mind-body through which all understanding comes is to turn the instrument of observation back upon itself, and if the instrument is less than perfect, the image it yields cannot be scientifically certified as true. For this reason, the idea of body history has begun to appear as a new lens for reexamining traditional interpretations of cultural phenomena, including those relating to politics, history, economics, psychology, sociology, medicine, and the arts.

The arts are the material embodiment of creative energy; they are spirit in matter and therefore symbolic of the union of acquired knowledge and felt experience, the product of physical skill exercised by creative will. With the tool of language we embody abstract thought; and therefore literature, the art of language, is an especially dense field of intersection for the tangible and intangible forces that constitute the human experience. And if literature is the art of embodied thought, drama is the art of embodied literature.

Of all the literary forms, drama contains the most direct and complex potential for exploring body-mind concepts because, for its fullest expression, a play must become embodied in living human form, enacted by actors for an audience and generating a shared physical experience. "It

is the theatre in which the rhythms of physical sensation coincide with imaginative sentiment: on the stage, the body with the word; in the audience, perception with conception" (Styan 139). Drama, with its origins in religious ritual, is one of the most fundamental and explicit ways people share in a concerted exercise to integrate their spiritual meaning with their material existence. It has been called not only a sacrament but a mirror, and a dream, that which shows us ourselves in a form we may recognize as both like us and not like us, existing only in the actions of bodies in real time and space but transporting us beyond our physical limitations. Through the medium of the theatre experience we may apprehend an integrated sense of being human in all its vast and paradoxical complexities.

The Background of the Body

The bulk of contemporary body history recognizes the pervasive cultural impact of the mind-body split, a concept articulated in the seventeenth century by René Descartes when he asserted that his physical existence, his body, was a construct of his mind ("I think, therefore I am"). Seeking truth through science, Descartes also legitimized the empirical scientific method, promoting the ascendance of science and technology through which both the individual body and the social body each came to be perceived more and more as a set of mechanical processes under the control of a separate and distinct mind. The anomalies inherent in this view, which are now becoming apparent, were obscured by the alluring sense of power that science offers, and a generalized perception of multiple dualities grew more distinct as culture at all levels defined itself in mechanistic terms. In literature, the Neoclassical emphasis on strict control of form and diction reflects this period's infatuation with intellect.

In *The History of Sexuality*, Michel Foucault has contributed a radically different paradigm for analyzing the cultural development traditionally characterized as the intensified repression

of sexuality, a transformation which Foucault calls the "deployment of sexuality." Foucault connects the advent of this phenomenon historically with the rise of capitalism in the seventeenth century (5), which also coincides, in fact is entwined, with the rise of technology, including medical science. Foucault maintains that as empiricism became the standard of truth and subjective experience suspect, the evolving power structures of social institutions, including governmental agencies, churches, schools, and professional associations, collectively exploited a social consciousness that was susceptible to dualistic imagery and made sexuality both a source and a symbol of power while appearing to suppress it:

with the great series of binary oppositions (body/soul, flesh/spirit, instinct/reason, drives/consciousness) that seemed to refer sex to a pure mechanics devoid of reason, the West has managed... to bring us almost entirely—our bodies, our minds, our individuality, our history—under the sway of concupiscence and desire. (78)

Although officially restricted to accepted forms and forums, sexuality was in fact the central secret whose truth was sought at length and in multiple guises at all levels of the culture:

the ruses of sexuality, and the power that sustains its organization, were able to subject us to that austere monarchy of sex, so that we became dedicated to the endless task of forcing its secret, of exacting the truest of confessions from a shadow. (159)

As the deployment of sexuality exacerbated the common perception of the mind-body split, social institutions, especially governments and their agencies, similarly began to be perceived as having an existence and a purpose distinct from the collective body of individuals who constitute them. In this sense, the mind-body split extends metaphorically into a more generalized split between the

individual and his society and another between society and the mechanisms that control it. This sense of fragmentation began manifesting itself artistically as a rejection of old forms, germinating as Impressionism in painting and as Romanticism in literature.

The backlash of Romanticism finally broke through the rigid Neoclassical conventions at about the same time that Darwin's *Origin of the Species* dealt an apparent *coup de grace* to pre-Enlightenment body concepts, denying any remaining illusions about the divine origins of humans. Soon thereafter, Nietzsche announced the death of God, the mortality of the spirit. Into this philosophical atmosphere, cracking under the strain of accommodating what people were learning to what they had always felt, the modern theatre was born.

.....
Conclusion

In an analysis of modern theatre up to 1960, John Gassner asserts that no matter how scientific determinism seemed to reduce the tragic stature of humans, the vigor of playwrights from Ibsen to Odets grows from a visionary optimism, an engaged faith in the value of the human experience.

That the pervasive disenchantment of our world should have affected playwrights is hardly surprising... But many young writers seem immobilized at the crossroads of modern theatre because they have not yet learned to make anything even out of their disbelief.... I venture to describe the condition as one of intellectual sloth, as hesitancy to let the mind or spirit assert itself even in disenchantment. It may be that the alternative to the old critical realism sparked by optimism is a new critical realism sparked by disillusion. (15-16)

It would appear that, at least in the work of [Sam] Shepard [late 1960's] and [Jane] Martin [early 1980's], something like

“a new critical realism sparked by disillusion” is taking shape, becoming a wine fermented from the bitter fruit of the modern theatre of revolt. Martin’s work especially shows an impulse to embrace the pain and difficulty of life as necessary components of a complete cycle of being. The same concept appears in other plays, like *Lu Ann Hampton Laverty Oberlander* by Preston Jones: in the first act Lu Ann complains about having to study plants, which just sit around never doing anything, and she mocks her mother for emptying bedpans for a living; but in the last act her mother is in a wheelchair, completely disabled by a stroke, and Lu Ann is nursing her lovingly.

In a theatre experience the audience and the theatre company share a finite space for a segment of time while traveling together imaginatively to other places and times within their separate, individual selves. We realize the resulting sensitivity to dual consciousness in the live theatre as in no other of the entertainment arts, such as music, dance, film, video, which may certainly transport us but do not engage us physically in creating the event; for the true theatre experience to occur, actors and audience must use both our minds and our bodies to be “there” and “elsewhere” at the same time, to keep each other vibrating between the poles of illusion and reality, art and fact. Current trends in theatre recognize that this capacity of theatre to sustain simultaneous contradictions provokes the intensity of the experience. A related intuition once convinced Artaud and Genet that theatre must be a ritual of transformation.

Non-illusory theatre, theatre that acknowledges itself a symbol and not a reality, is the oldest of the theatre traditions, as indicated by its universal sign, the mask. Realizing the irony that realism only heightens the illusion to the point where it almost, but never quite,

seems real, contemporary dramatists are more inclined to acknowledge the reality of the theatre space by calling attention to the fact of the illusion, finding a richer integration of expression in returning to non-illusory techniques.

Western culture of the late twentieth century has begun to re-examine the rational, mechanical paradigms that have transformed the quality of our lives with scientific technology. The numbing events of the past fifty years have changed what we see when we look at ourselves, our bodies. Now in the writing of doctors (e.g., Bernie Siegel and Richard Selzer), psychologists (e.g., Russell Lockhart and Robert Romanyshyn), and social commentators (e.g., Ivan Illich, Norman Cousins, and Barbara Duden), the archetypal dualities of Western culture are shifting, taking on new shapes and relationships that may transform competing dualities into cooperative complementarity. We seem to be acknowledging, if tentatively and incompletely, that empirical reality alone cannot sustain the integration of experience, the sense of wholeness we want so much to find in ourselves and in our world.

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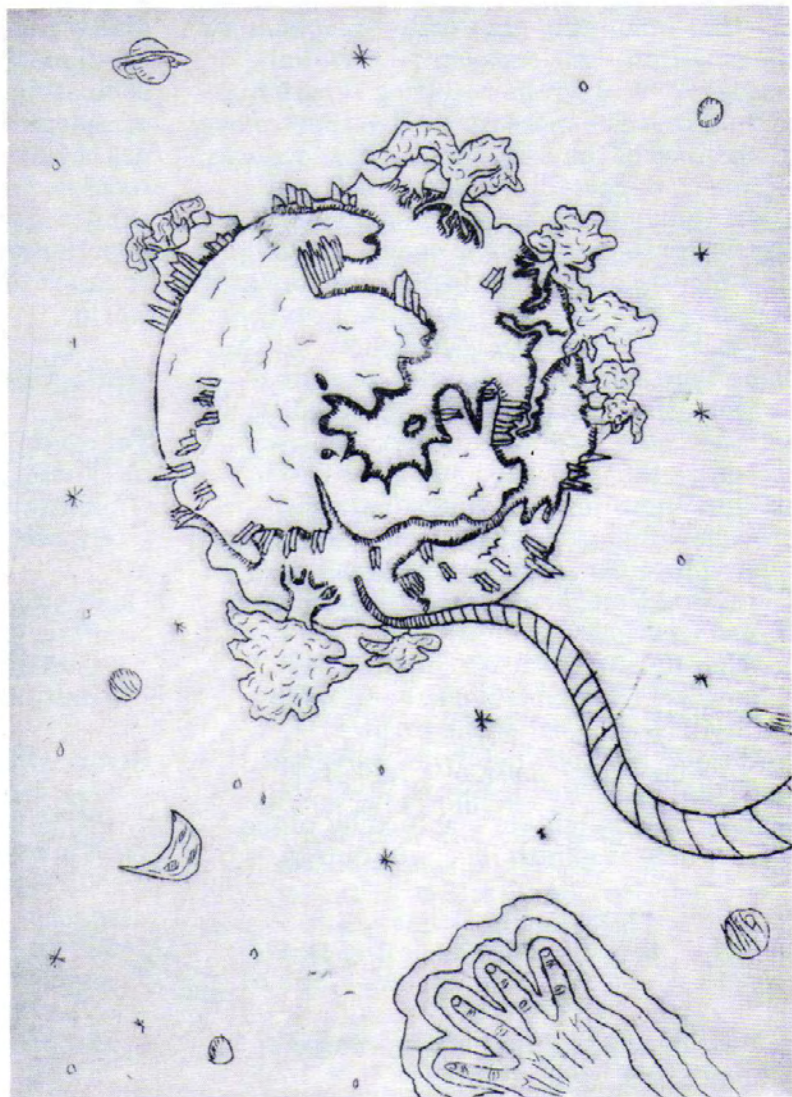


if one is young and undecided,
if one is exalted one night with dreams
of the great yellow light
and tormented by the intimacy of stars the next,
where must one point the vane?

to be a speck of trampled grit
polished by the steady stream
of alleyways, company to immortal
nuggets of dacron that fall
like acorns in autumn?
to be washed to sea and rock eternally
with the sewage of lumbering giants
that move through the water more slowly than land turtles?

bury me now, before a mother wind
blows me northward.

You Take Manhattan
PATTY RULAND MULLINS



Fragile Cord of Life
GENA VALENTINE
Intaglio, 7" x 5"



return to
Jo LeCœur
X 3888