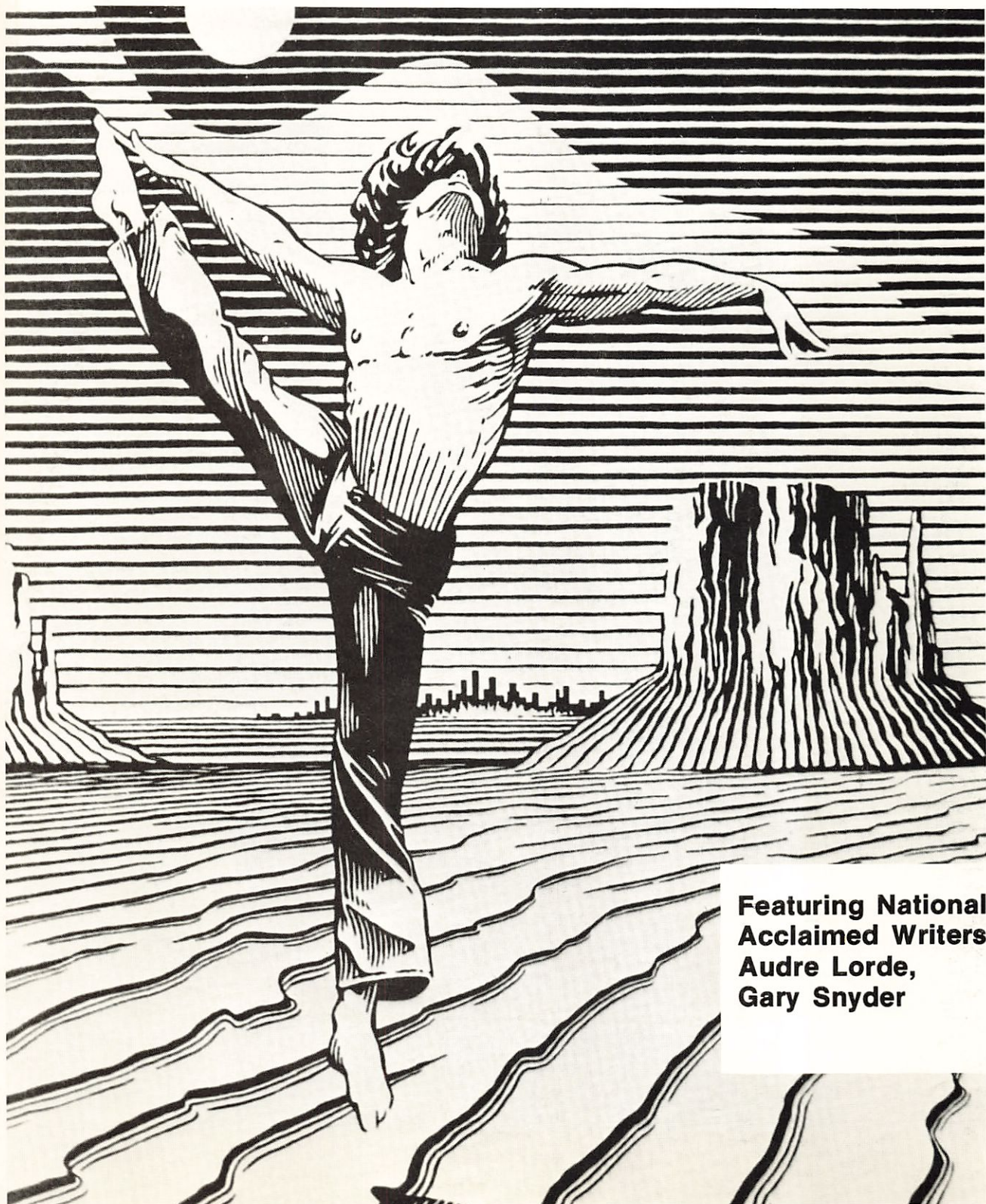


Denali

Vol. 5, No. 1

1983



Featuring Nationally
Acclaimed Writers
Audre Lorde,
Gary Snyder

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Waiting...Again in Oregon

1. Shasta

Out of the pre-dawn darkness
Still dreamheld from sleep
 but two hours come
The mountain face greets me
Haloed in the silhouette
 of promised light...
(If by this wish I could return
 to your yet dreaming side
The deep folds of your arms
 my comforter
 wrapped against the chill
 of this almost dawn.)

2. The second full moon

The full moon has left again.
A clear night almost day bright
Under this yellow sadness
 gone.
We did not walk hand warmed
 within the other
In the cold silence
 of the late evening.
Only in my mind I held your hand.
Eyes "love declaring to eyes"
under this harsh round witness.

3. Devil's Churn

The waves less intimidating
 than remembered
As if they sensed my silent plea
 for calmness,
Inside I churn and battle against
 each lonely night
Where nightmares have drowned dreams.

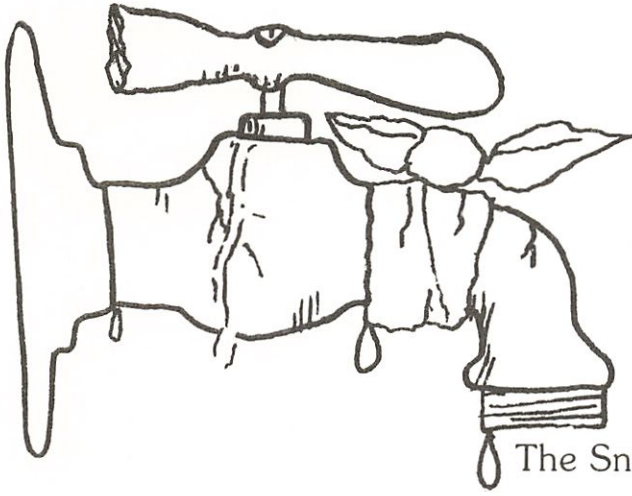
4. Today

If you stood before me
The tears would come
With the unbashfulness
 of an Oregon rain.
Do not run away.
Sometimes loving needs tears...
Even this deep darkness
 on a blue-brilliant
Afternoon.

Patty McDonald

photo by Melodie Sue Conley





graphic by Jason Anderson

The Sneaky Faucet

Arching in the morning window light
sparkling chrome neck
quick-silver streak
up your spine of steel
Leftover steam
from your hot iron breath
rises wispily
like a soft snore
a vapor trail against the glass
Sizzling drops of saliva
fall in drooling hotness
as you doze
with one eye open

Grinding up
from your twisted entrails
far below the surface
there is a cunning seed of power
unknown
to your shiny tail
angled awkwardly
at the sun.

Melodie Sue Conley

Wooden Desks

On Thursday during 6th period,
I sit hunched over a day old poem
suffering
post natal blues.

Bobbie Woods

Spirit's Limbo

Two pieces of brown rice
 remain
beside
 a dry
 neglected
 wooden spoon.

Bobbie Woods

Samsara

Through with the hard lean years
 of grasping confusion,
I see reflections of a calm blue soul
 touched with crimson longing
 for the other half of my spirit.

Bobbie Woods

While Child Naps

Two loaves of wheat bread
cuddle like embryos
to the wood stove's womb

as I sit in the heat
of the late noon sun
listening to myself.

Bobbie Woods

The Dance

Heartbeat.
Steady, constant.
Push
To the ends
And back again.
Strong,
Sure,
Predictable.
And, if not...

Breathing.
Inhale, exhale.
Fill
To capacity.
Release.
Regular,
Rhythmic,
Vital.
But, if not...

The pulse.
The breath.
The rhythm.
The dance.
Pulse.
Breath.
Rhythm.
Dance.
And, if not...

Marty Schwarzbauer

A Little Night Music

A leathered biker backfires
Into belligerent night.
Sour exhaust rises
In a gravel alley
By the all-night beer stop.
Stopped, the booted biker
Tunes his pipes in harmony
With the red planet resonating
In the hot summer sky.
Across arid asphalt,
A recent conversation lingers
In the smell of cigarettes
Squashed on a phone booth floor.
Flashing past the fat cashier
Locked in solitary
Behind glaring glass doors,
The biker breaks for the cooler.
As he bolts with the beer,
A T.V. camera guns down
His image in black and white.
He remounts his machine
To spur in asphalt arenas.
Fading behind furious fumes,
He runs a stoplight on Second.
Two black and whites wail past
A red light in pursuit.
At the Southside apartments,
A chorus of sirens shriek,
Searchlights scour
A hive of tenants
Swarm on the asphalt table
Succulent with sacrifice.

Stan Fink

Audre Lorde: "Poetry is never a luxury"

Cynthia Whitfield

"There's a certain urgency I want to communicate. The earth is falling apart, but living in Eugene, you may not know it yet," asserts Audre Lorde, nationally acclaimed writer and black feminist.

Lorde lectured at various locations around Eugene in early February as part of a four-day conference of black women writers on racism and sexism.

The lecture at Lane Community College was entitled "Writing as a Creative and Political Process," and to a full audience Lorde claimed that "poetry is never a luxury."

Her poems, concise and graphic, often express anger at racism or ignorance of some whites; almost as often they reflect the pain she feels on behalf of all women abused by men.

After the reading Lorde opened the floor for questions by asking one of her own: "What do you want and why did you come here?"

One woman responded that she'd come to seek a connection between black and white feminism.

"Let's look at our differences as well as our similarities," Lorde replied. "Black feminism isn't white feminism in blackface."

In a later interview Lorde said she wanted to reach as many people as possible with her work. When asked if she felt that poetry as a vehicle for mass communication was feasible in the light of a perceived lack of public interest in poetry reading, Lorde appeared at first not to have considered this possibility.

"Poetry does something nothing else can do. The fundamental thing as I see it is not only (for art) to bring about change but form that vision toward the long haul. . . the poetry of our dreams helps us imagine what has not been. What we've already seen is why we are where we are. Some people are afraid of dreams," she said.

"We were taught to really hate poetry," continued Lorde, "and the reason for it is that most poetry is little more than art for art's sake instead of art to bring about positive change. Art must reflect what is important to people's lives."

Lorde criticized the prevailing social and educational systems that teach children to ignore their feelings and hide their emotions.

"We're taught to say 'I think, therefore I am.' What we should say is 'I am, therefore I feel.'"

Lorde believes that more public readings and visits by poets to schools would make poetry more "real."

"I speak out of all of who I am. I expect that the people who are closest to what I am to be most attracted to my work. I think we're in a process of reclaiming poetry--people of color, women, working class people." But, on the other hand, reflected Lorde, almost anyone could learn to understand her work.

"I want to reach as many people as possible who can use the work."

After one of her lectures, a white woman from the audience said, "I bet you wouldn't come to a talk on white women."

"Don't you understand?" replied Lorde. "we've had to study you all our lives."

When asked if she had formed any impression of Eugene during her rather short visit, Lorde said, "I drove around a lot. There's a certain air of *civility* here. I thought, 'What a relief not to have to move along the street as if you were going to war.' But then I thought, 'What is all this silence covering up?' Any place you find a conspiracy of silence, there's trouble."

Lorde, who hails from New York and is a professor at Hunter College there, has raised two children herself and expresses extreme anxiety for the future of black children.

"Either we kill them at birth," she says, "or we raise them as warriors. You want them to know they have some security, but on the other hand, most of what's out there is very insecure."

Part of Lorde's ability to communicate with widely varying groups of people could well have resulted from her diverse pool of experience. She's been everything from a factory worker to a librarian, from a nurse's aid to a poet-in-residence at Tougaloo College in Mississippi.

Lorde's past accomplishments include a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts in 1968 and a public service award from the New York State Council on the Arts in 1972. Her most recent works include an anthology, ***Chosen Poems Old and New***, and two biomythographies--which, Lorde says, combine autobiography, history and mythology, "all ways we perceive realities"--***Cancer Journals*** and ***Zami***.

Lorde was perhaps the most prolific of the four black women, all nationally known, who spoke during the conference at various locations throughout Eugene. The conference was made possible in part by grants from the Oregon Committee for the Humanities, an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, as well as local sponsors, including LCC's Language Arts Department. ●

Gypsy Queen

Her voluptuous outline reflects lightly in my eyes:
Her fading illumination fills me, sheened as a silken flower
 this golden threaded feeling

Whispering; her thin dress billows to the floor;
Brushing warm, electric cheeks we became unfolding nocturnal
 orchids,

Reaching out into the expanse of the moment, we've become
 coupling shooting stars
Breathing in amorous passion; our accelerating hearts race in unison like
blue-marine dolphins

To run, to fly, to be, to die in her lips of satin
Those luscious emotions smolder in the messages of piercing
 wolf-grey eyes

As gasps of impassioned breath fills my dreams, her memory. . .
Is turned, forming sparrows through Morpheus' whims

Cinnamon hair, jasmine mind, her celestial moment lingers
 like floating, graceful butterflies
Warming all the yearnings until they shower upon my head
 in icy cascades of memory.

Seeing the signs of her pristine cycle, I lift my soul
 singing. . .
I have seen the Gypsy Queen

Gary Keifer

On the Snowdrifted Malahat

road my brother and i
eight years ago brought my
father's ashes home

i held that grey cardboard box
that was so heavy and so small
in my lap with my two hands

and now on this road again

tears and images
of my father

my father in his boat in the fog
in englishman's bay and the
whales diving and leaping
around him poised him between
fear and joy
their great size and the great
joy and ease of their motion

my father alone with them
on the ocean unable to see
the shore

maia penfold



"I Know What I Know, Right?"

I am sitting here with a cup of tea
feeling good, feeling O.K.
I glance over to the T.V.
And a door opens somewhere in my mind
And memory steps out.
Before an eye can blink
or a breath be taken.
Then I feel like crying
But I don't know why.

A little girl on a street corner
looks up at me her eyes so open
her warm hand in the hand of her warm mama's
And a door opens somewhere in my mind
And memory steps out.
Before an eye can blink
or a breath be taken.
I catch the scent of violets
And I feel like smiling.

A jovial man named Fred puts out
his hand to be shaken. He says hello.
And a door opens somewhere in my mind
And memory steps out.
Before an eye can blink
or a breath be taken.
Memory makes for a me a movie
complete with 3-D, color, smellavision,
and a sound system so realistically accurate --
I hear a gasp
and I feel afraid.
But I don't know*why.

Bjo Ashwill

And a Sucker for My Friend

by Helen Elliott

The highway was sheeted with rain, oncoming headlights shimmering through the deluge. Gloom penetrated and possessed the northbound bus, and it would have taken a keen observer to notice the small moth hole in the sleeve of Janice MacComber's camel's hair coat. She was otherwise well groomed, and it seemed unlikely that the imperfection would have escaped her attention. But then, many things were escaping her attention these days.

There **were** things she should be thinking about -- practical things -- but when she tried to deal with them her thoughts kept drifting away. This bus trip, however, was a concession to the shrinking bank account, as was her useless, immobile car. Was it worth fixing? Bill would have known, but Bill had been gone almost nine months now. David, their only child, had flown in from Seattle for the funeral.

It had been a rare February day, high white clouds strung like banners across the deep-blue Oregon sky. The flowers covering the casket and surrounding the grave were obscenely bright and alive; and Bill was dead. For two years she had rushed home from work to fit his translucent self together again, to try and make him feel whole for just a little while longer. Finally -- at the end -- she couldn't hold him together any more, and he had slipped away.

The bus plowed on through the drizzle, the lowering clouds occasionally rising just enough to create misty islands along the roadside. Janice didn't notice. Although it was only noon, just out of Salem she had turned on the tiny beam spotlighting her book, and hadn't lifted her eyes since; nor had she turned a page in over one hundred miles.

If only her job had lasted. She had received the word with disbelief, and in another time would have given them a good professional battle. But it was too soon after losing Bill, and the numbness had disarmed her. If there were still dragons to be slain, someone else would have to do it. She packed fifteen years of her life into a cardboard box, said her goodbyes, and went home to her empty house. She hadn't found another job; nor had she even looked, this past two months. If there was no one to talk to or laugh with, there were at least no rejections. Her money might last another six months, if she were careful. She couldn't think past that point. Beyond that -- behind the numbness -- hovered the nebulous fear of the rest of her life.

Somewhere in the back of the bus, a child wailed. Janice lifted her head, roused from her

reveries. This was, after all, supposed to be a happy trip. When David and his wife called yesterday to let her know the baby had finally arrived, she had been happier than she had been for months. They needed her for at least a week. Janice laid her head back and closed her eyes, deliberately shutting out the remembering.

"Ladies and gentlemen," crackled the speaker, "this is Portland. Those of you continuing north will have a two-hour layover. If this is your final destination you may claim your baggage...." The voice continued, but Janice had stopped listening. Two hours. She stretched a little, touching her hair to be sure it was still neat. The rain hadn't let up, and she was glad she had worn her boots and brought her umbrella. It was going to be dreary, spending two hours in the bus station. Maybe she would take a walk -- have a nice quiet lunch. With a jolt, the bus sighed into the terminal.

Janice trailed along with the others, toward the lobby entrance. Inside, she paused briefly, letting her eyes adjust to the fluorescent glare. It was merciless, exposing every dirty crevice, every ashtray overflowing with paper cups and candy wrappers, every rumpled sleeper. She picked her way toward the cafeteria, threading her way through the weary, dirt-streaked children, stepping over and around the baggage and the sprawled legs of the desolate travelers. As expected, the cafeteria was no better than the lobby. Well, maybe -- hopefully -- there was a coffee shop nearby.

Wind whipped at her coat and tugged at her umbrella as she left the terminal. In the next block, she turned in gratefully at a glimmering neon cafe sign. She slipped into a chair at the end of the counter, ordered, and smiled a mechanical acknowledgement when her coffee was placed before her.

Janice had just taken her cigarettes out of her purse when the door opened again, letting in a blast of cold air. She involuntarily looked that way, and averted her eyes only with difficulty. It was hard not to stare. The old lady looked like a gargoyle, taking refuge from the storm. Her sagging hat had done little to keep the rain from her bloated face, and rivulets dripping from her oversized shiny coat marked her trail. Squishy tennis shoes on bulging ankles bore her slowly, but relentlessly, down the aisle.

Janice stared into her coffee, hoping the old woman wasn't heading her way, afraid she was. A covert glance confirmed her hunch. She drew her

coat closer, not looking up, trying to be invisible. She didn't want to talk, didn't want to acknowledge this person at all.

There was a lot of wheezing, grunting, and rummaging before the old lady got settled, followed by a loud snuffle and some incomprehensible muttering. Janice didn't look up. Dirty fingernails on fat fingers prodded her arm and she stirred, removing the touch. Glancing over, she said distantly, "Pardon me?"

"Wet out there."

"Yes, it certainly is."

"Uh...how about if I could borrow a cigarette?"

The relative silence was broken by more snuffles and heavy breathing, more rummaging. Finally, with an inward sigh of resignation, Janie shoved the pack toward her. On second thought she retrieved it, shaking one out and laying it on the counter.

"Uh...got a match?" Silently, Janice slid the matches over. Obviously relieved that the old lady was going to be Janice's burden, not hers, the woman on the other side gathered her things, grabbed her check and hurried away, leaving half her lunch. A yellow uniform brought Janice's grilled cheese sandwich, then checked briefly with her neighbor. "Can I get you anything else?"

Anything else? Janice looked up in time to see a pudgy old hand motion toward the empty coffee cup. The left-over lunch had been salvaged and was disappearing rapidly into the toothless, munching mouth. The waitress drew her eyebrows together, looking at Janice. "Was she here before?"

Janice felt a pang of discomfiture. She didn't want to get involved. Still, if the old thing was really hungry....Janice looked noncommittally at the waitress, and shrugged. Annoyed, the uniform turned again to the old woman. "Did you order this lunch?" She was answered by more indistinguishable mumbling. Why, she does that on purpose, Janice thought. How very convenient...and how very sad.

Clearing her throat, Janice signaled the waitress. "I'd like a little more coffee too, please, and my check." Distracted but still frowning, the uniform brought the coffee pot. She grudgingly filled Janice's cup, handed her the check, and deliberately walked away. Janice shoved the steaming cup toward the gargoyle, who accepted it with a quick, barely perceptible nod. The scalding coffee didn't seem to bother her, and it, too, disappeared rapidly.

Janice rose, standing uncertainly by her chair. The old woman was also leaving, the stool screeching as she heaved herself up. Standing

beside her, Janice looked down upon a once-splendid pearl hat pin which secured the wilted old hat to the stringy gray hair. There was something about that tiny remnant of glory that stirred a wave of compassion and nudged ever so gently at the wall of numbness behind which she had so carefully laid her emotions to rest. If that wall were reached, all of life would come tumbling out again -- and she would have to deal with it. Impatiently, she picked up her check and followed the swaying figure toward the door.

But the old lady hadn't gone. She was straining, on tiptoes, to reach into a jar of brilliant suckers that adorned a tall, grimy glass case by the door. For the first time in months, a ripple of amusement stirred behind Janice's eyes. "Here," she said, "Let me help you." She selected one and a fat hand grabbed it, fingers fumbling at the wrapper. Cellophane fluttered to the floor as, without a backward glance, the gargoyle waddled her way out the door and into the pelting rain. Through the steamy window, Janice caught a glimpse of a placid face, the wrinkled mouth punctuated by a sucker stick.

Scurrying over, the yellow uniform jarred the cash register open. Janice handed her the money, and the check.

"And a sucker for your friend?" the uniform inquired sweetly.

"Yes," Janice replied with an inward smile, "And a sucker for my friend."

As she accepted her change, she noticed a small moth hole in the sleeve of her coat. That would have to be attended to just as soon as she got home. Pushing the door open, she raised her umbrella and stepped out into the fresh autumn rain.



Possession of Herself

Although she often goes about
Within the sights of man and God
Without a hat or head covering
She will not make her eyes modest
She, too, knows a clean, well-lighted place.

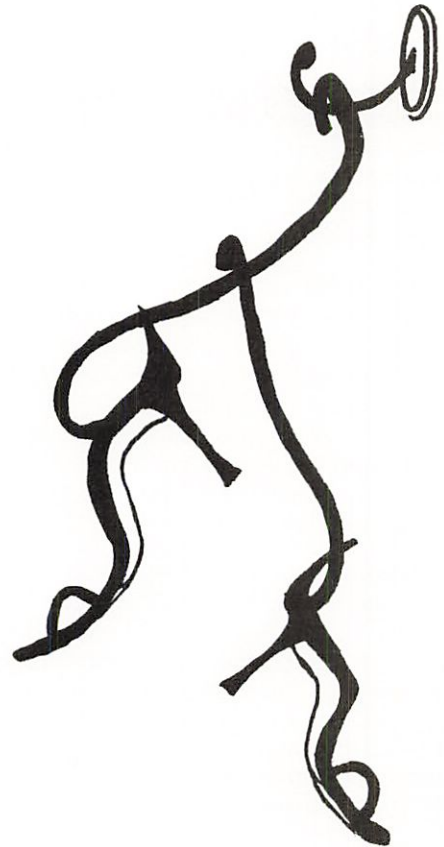
With her lips stained a scarlet spice,
She invites frequent kisses.
Her blouse dips and tumbles open.
She smiles through the orange darkness
Imagining orderly rooms of fine family.

Her ankles are displayed in silk
Shadows and straps of black velvet,
Heels perched on the dowels of wooden stools
Heels clattering up concrete steps
Remind you of other men's fantasies

If you ask her softly, she will dance
Letting you hold her here as close
As you may need. She needs this too.
You whisper. She does not hear.

Occasionally, her thighs flash
Straight as a switchblade
And soft as your mother's pillow.
But after these smoky bars close
She has no angry prayers.

Shasta Hatter



graphic by Melodie Sue Conley

Lace of Passage

The lace today is of hand;
taut, tedious stitches of filament
Knotting my collar,
 cuff,
 hem. . .
binding the light of yet another slant:
my hands no longer cross
my shoulders, my forehead;
friends shifting levels:
 lips,
 eyes,
 ears. . .
fresh lace barely covering my breast.
 Unwinding.
 Unraveling.
 Undone.
The auburn of dawn sleeps in the boxed closet.
The peach of dawn drips off lace windows.
Lace shadows.
Handmade lace.
Taut lace.

Christina Gonzalez

Sex Life of a Poet

If we were Brownings,
God, the nights would drag:
a word whispering at your ear,
a line screaming at mine.
Time,
 Rhyme,
 Line
slipping in our sheets,
 metering our night,
 riddling our sleep.

Walking in the morning
to the sounds of scratching lead.
Kissing before rising
with poems in our heads.

Christina Gonzalez

Xerox

The way you are made
nothing will happen
between us
unless I start.
I caress you,
fumbling for
your sensitive spot.
But it is your eye
that takes me,
pulls at the core
of my need.
Lifting your lid
you look at me,
hard.
I give you myself
fully, completely.
You see every inch
of my original.
Once your powers
are activated
we must go
through with it
to the very end.
There's no turning back
the heat and light
of your force.
Oh, mother of millions
I make love to your box
of glass and metal
reproducing myself
in your electronic womb.
Before your coming
I lived an age in darkness.
Because of you,
I now see my self
in my own image.

Stan Fink

Justice

When you yelled
beatnik nigger hippie
and dragged us
through the streets
of justice,
did you think
it would be your turn now
farmers
to storm the steps
of state capitols
raising your fists
like angry blacks
against government
collection agencies
screaming through bull horns
at the justice
of America
stealing
 your tractors
 your animals
 your barns
 your lands

Stan Fink

All i do is write about it...

Yesterday i bought a Laura Nyro record
Cost me sixty cents in a
Salvage Store Last Chance
Salvage Store
I couldabeen a singer played guitar
Pulled tunes out of that
Hole they put in the middle of guitars like a
Magician
Pulling rabbits from a hat i
Couldabeen a physicist an astronaut a
Model a concert pianist a dancer an
Extrovert

Laura Nyro has the kinda face that
Makes me think there never was a time when
She didn't want to be going where she was
Going
Going somewhere even standing still
I imagine her locked up in her
Studio surrounded by a clutch of session men
Knowing she has that kinda face

All i have's a candle burning and a
Record cover with another woman's face on it whose
Eyes look to the future and
She's already in my past i
Couldabeen a shop assistant a car mechanic
Ladies room attendant a putter on of that
Little thingamajig that makes the
Light come on when the refrigerator door is opened a
Wife a mother an
Introvert

All i do is write about it
Always looking backwards
Looking at the dead ends of
All those open roads
Redreaming old realities
Telling paper
Wondering if there will
Ever be a time when
I'll want to be going where i'm
Going. Going Nowhere.
Standing Still.
Wishing i had that kinda face

Pearl Milam

Last Call

The streetlights are not blinking
as you wrap me 'round the table legs;
no hope dims before a pauper fire
begging neighbors at the mailbox.
No.

These are the days of memory.
When Mother, wrong or right,
brings the anchor home.
And someone breathes.
Delight.

A delicate dance in the plaza,
a maul down at the mall,
everything is taking place.
Such disgrace
between napkins perfectly placed.

Oh, there is room for all the blood
ready to secede.
And all the tongues that lick the sky
and prayer, pretense, need.

Bill Crompton

Ode to Nothing

A jar of cotton.
A door's ajar.
But the windows are mirrors.
You are my nightmare.
I trace the blue flame of your body
with my fingertips,
groping for the lightswitch
that will extinguish you.

Lee Evans

Untitled

The sun is shining
though
the rain is falling
means
there must be a rainbow somewhere

Couldn't we plot it's trajectory?

The angle of the sun's shine
through
the angle of the rain's fall,

to see if it has any velocity?

If
the clouds run away
before the sun goes down
then
the sun will come winning out
but
the clouds take the rainbow with them

-or does it escape?

I know rainbows are viewer dependent.
That's not enough to prevent me
from setting them free.

Peter Daniel Kinsey

God Kidnapped Her a Rainbow

Stacey Kiner

Many years and many tears slipped by us since we had last seen each other. I was never told the severity of her turmoil. Her name was etched in black ink upon the pages of our family history. We had been cousins once, long ago, but now the heavy steel doors that "protected" her from the world, also enclosed her in such a tomb that I could receive no information. For how can you interview the "dead?"

In the years that elapsed between her childhood and young adulthood, she had been imprisoned of her own accord. At one point my cousin attempted suicide so frequently that her stays in the institution became consecutive terms, with only another upheaval to mark the end of one from the beginning of the other.

The years that filled the crevice of our absence from one another left me uncomfortable asking her about her life. Or should I say her "death." After hours of relaxing conversation, my cousin began to speak of death in terms of her own attempt at termination of life.

She spoke of freezing her vein until it rose from the surface of her skin, blue and enlarged. After the vein was pulsating and swollen from the effect of the applied ice, a tourniquet was tightly wrapped around her arm to further enhance the swollen vein. When the time had arrived for the vein to be exposed and for her life to flow from the hole that death would enter, she locked all the windows and doors, and lay down on her bed.

When the pulsating vein was sliced with the blade in the same fashion that a bull's horns rip into a matador's thigh, the blood exited the vein with such force that her walls were redone in crimson red.

She lay in her bed feeling the coldness of her life flow out, as the enveloping warmth of death entered. Soon afterward, however, dizziness, nausea and loss of bodily functions began to fill death's once warm reign. She tried to stand but with the river of blood she had lost, she had also lost all strength.

Shortly after she had lost consciousness, her mother, responding to a "mysterious maternal instinct," came pounding on the door. When there was no reply, she obtained a pass key and entered. She waded past a bloody floor, and walked across the soggy mattress to where my cousin lay dying.

The night that this story was told to me, the clouds in the sky separated to reveal a glimpse of another universe. While listening to my cousin's portrayal of death, I felt as if I had temporarily journeyed into a realm that was far beyond that which our everyday lives are conducted. I gripped the edge of my chair, closed my eyes, and tried to imagine my life's blood flowing out of me. However, all I could feel was the warm path that the tears of pain made as they rolled off my face.

The night that this story was told to me, the clouds in the sky separated to reveal a glimpse of another universe. While listening to my cousin's portrayal of death, I felt as if I had temporarily journeyed into a realm that was far beyond that which our everyday lives are conducted. I gripped the edge of my chair, closed my eyes, and tried to imagine my life's blood flowing out of me. However, all I could feel was the warm path that the tears of pain made as they rolled off my face.

Young leaves unfolding
Grey moth drawn to gentle flame
On wavering wings

Elizabeth Paul

Inside the wood frame
Pink blossoms reclaim
asphalt into dark rivers

Shasta Hatter

Sacrifice

I'd never run anything down before, but
it was just as I might have foreseen:
with the sudden dull thudding, an almost
imperceptibly slight hesitation in the car's
forward career, then some wondering how
it would be best to feel
about the last the little back-up mirror saw
(receding fast)

of those three wasted white geese which lay bruised
and smashed amidst their honking brothers'
innocent millings under the subsiding
flurry of feathers
in the middle of Highway 40
(Utah).

Richard Muller

Roses so Red

Running rivers in the bareness of youth,
 crescendos crash the sparkling stream,
 as my mind looks upon visions past.
Tough calloused feet sweep fields alive with thistle and
 bright yellow tansy.
Under white bulging characters on blue mural palettes,
Jesting, frolic, tumble, even with tomboys you've
 been humbled.

Swimming deep in clear green pools,
 laughter chases the chirping cricket.
Who rubs his legs for the waltzing hues of a
 lavender sunset.
Bouncing ruckus of skinned up knees,
 you dart and flirt like a busy bee.
Pollen sticks about your legs until the memory
 of childhood taste like raw honey.
Ripeness of puberty, proud, bright and true,
 shines efflorescent like the heavens.

Has grown and torn, shredding the brier and holly
 bush.
Tearing flesh, heart and bone,
Leaving you helpless, starved and alone.
While guilt of choices rides your breast

Like some demon cresting on waves of consciousness
You swallow hard the pride of false manhood,
 Accepting the poultice of reality.
Rinsed in red-blood roses that run gouging thorns
 deep into paralyzed legs and arms
That spasm and jerk to neuro-impulses.

Sending fire, your mistakes chase you down gloomy
 corridors
Until in exhaustion you stop, soaked in sweat
 and tears.
The beers youth chugged coupled with the drugs
 of experience choke the green vines of
 individuality.
But as all vines grow, you burst forth claiming
 victory as the resurrected.

Gary Keifer

Shasta Hatter

Gary Snyder, a Pulitzer Prize winning poet and leader in the Beat movement that included Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg, visited Eugene March 7, 1983. Snyder presented a reading at the Erb Memorial Union Ballroom on the University of Oregon campus before an enthusiastic and responsive crowd.

After a lengthy public service address disguised as an introduction, a neatly dressed man in a blue suit walked across the stage. The packed auditorium quickly became silent.

With a clear, steady voice, Snyder explained that in recent years he has stayed close to home while he raised his children and built a homestead. He has, in his own words, been "practicing a sense of place" while sorting out "the complexities and contradictions" of the fifties and sixties.

Snyder explained that his new collection, *Ax Handles*, was not political in the same way as *Turtle Island* (1974). He instead uses detailed descriptions of natural phenomena and his encounters with nature to express his concern for the environment. One poem was particularly graphic in its portrayal of chasing a raccoon up a tree. I felt as if I were a hidden observer to the event.

This feeling was intensified by Snyder's habit of telling the specific incidents from which his poems emerge. Frequently these stories include the people he has met, as if he were only a leading character in a novel. One such story was about a couple who lived near him in the Sierra Nevadas. The couple was soon to be mar-

ried, so he asked them what they would like for a gift.

"A splitting maul," came the reply. Pausing momentarily to allow a ripple of laughter from the audience, Snyder continued. "So I asked, 'eight or ten pound?' When they answered ten pound, I knew they were serious." As he drove to their wedding with the splitting maul, he felt "I can't just give them a maul," so he stopped along the road and wrote them a poem.

"The next day I got to thinking about it and decided, 'Hey, that was a pretty good poem,' so I went back and copied it down."

And, hey, it was pretty good poem, which the audience loudly appreciated with a burst of applause.

Before beginning to read poetry, Snyder spent several minutes talking about the Greens, an organization he had travelled with in Sweden. He explained that the Greens had combined the "strands" of the anti-nuclear, ecology, and labor movements with democratic-socialism to form a new political party. Snyder called nuclear war "the greatest threat to the environment you could ask for" and expressed his approval that the ecology movement and peace movement have discovered their mutual interest. He hoped that a coalition similar to the Greens would soon be formed in the United States.

Snyder began his reading with the works of a Japanese poet who now resides in Taos, New Mexico. Snyder's hilarious delivery of the poet's satirical lines set the tone of the reading. Throughout his reading, Snyder freely interspersed the works of other poets with his own poetry.

Interview

After the two hour reading, Snyder granted Denali a brief interview. While waiting backstage, I listened to Snyder discuss subjects ranging from how to make composts in dry weather to a comparison of Asiatic and American folklore. Snyder is a thin, gray-haired man who looks as though he frequently engages in physical labor. He has spent several years in Japan studying Zen.

Noting that the Beat movement was once a rebellion but that now several of its leaders are established literary figures, I asked Mr. Snyder how he felt about this.

"I wish it were true," Snyder replied. "The literary establishment has remained in the hands of the same group. The same people still decide who will run the national magazines and who will be hired and fired as professors at the English departments of the major universities.

"The Beats," he continued, "are widely known because people like to read their poetry." The Beats have endured because people have found their poetry accessible and are still around only because people still buy Beat poetry.

Asked why he thought he was given the Pulitzer Prize he answered, "The 'doctrine of fairness'...they like to pass it around."

He noted that "nobody like me" has won the Pulitzer Prize since he received it in 1975 and added that the awarding of literary prizes has become "very conservative" in recent years.

Did being a professor at Berkeley have anything to do with his winning the Pulitzer Prize?

"No," says Snyder, "definitely not. I wasn't a professor, I was a lecturer. I had a very low status position. You see, there's a lot of grub work done by assistants at universities." He explained that there is a strict hierarchy at universities and "I wasn't a tenured professor."

Snyder's personal style is at once humble and confident, while his poetry radiated wit and an awareness of the world in which we all live.

"From the feedback I get, my poetry, at least some of it, communicates well with everybody." Some of it, says Snyder, is more polished and for these works the readers would need some knowledge of the devices and history of poetry. He said he liked having written poetry with "different levels of accessibility."

Being a poet, Snyder said, is a lot "like being an architect. They have to build tract homes, but then they also build buildings no one but another architect can appreciate." After a brief pause, Snyder noted that architecture was "not the best analogy" because "a very fine poem can often be something everybody likes."

In a more specific question, I asked Snyder why he still used the convention of capitalizing the first letter of the first word of each line.

"Why not?" he answered curtly but then went on to explain that not capitalizing "looks affected."

"Look at e.e cummings," he directed, "Not capitalizing adds nothing to the poem." In fact, Snyder felt that not following the visual conventions of poetry often detracted from the meaning of a poem. Besides, "it's a well-established tradition...and I have nothing against tradition." ●

How do I know if I'm in love
or falling in love or out of it
so many things get confused along the way
that I don't know if I'm lying to myself
about love felt for someone so new
dare I say

I love you

How do I know what you really feel
or what you could feel had we done it differently
what if I'd waited to make my move
or you'd come along sooner (or later)

Would I love you

How do I know if true love arrives
and how to act, react and respond
why the hell do I want to take the ride
and spin about through extremes
of pain and pleasure

I will not love you

Cynthia Whitfield



photo by Marty Schwarzbauer

On Contemplating a Vasectomy

1. legs crossed
I prick my conscience
considering how easy
my mind leads my body into
buying specific pain
at cut rates
2. the vessel of my body
mutanies
at the thought
presenting stiff objections
as one thousand semen
huddle the craft
of their sinking craft
3. I am a father
and will be forever
never again
4. going going
gone
so I can
freely exist
coming coming
came
5. will I then be
inhabited by uninhibited
haphazard hardons?
hopefully!!!
6. as I ride away
on the stallion of anesthesia
I see the doctor
put on his mask
and turning to the nurse
say, "let's cut him off
at the pass."
7. doctors cleverly bind me
to my past
and separate me
from my future
as they ask me to dance
with their blade between
my balls.
8. over the years
they mince my meat
and toss the diced
pieces seven come eleven
come back home hard again.
first by foreskin
then my sacskin
I skeptically place
my finer genes
in the rubber hands
of a man who would
never consider stitching
down his designer jeans.

Kaz Sussman

Cynthia Whitfield

"I write because I have to," says Shasta Hatter, poet and Denali staff member. "It's as essential to me as breathing."

I don't know if I'd put my own need for writing that strongly but I do have an overwhelming desire to put my thoughts to paper. That's why I'm doggedly sitting here at this typewriter on a beautiful spring day, right?

While editing *DENALI*, I began to wonder just what other writers were writing, how much influence they wanted to have on their audience and how deep was their need for success.

My own love for the field seemed to develop naturally beginning at age eight when I won a spot in a Chicago paper with one of my first poems. Typically, during my teens, I wrote moody and sometimes mushy what-is-the-meaning-of-life-and-love poems and essays. After high school however, I became one of an all too familiar breed of humans who claim to be writers but never write anything. Finally, one marriage and one baby later, I returned to school and to my first real love. The direction I want to take my work has changed -- I'm far more interested in writing feature stories and plays -- but the need to communicate ideas remains.

Hatter, a twenty-eight year old single mother, talked to me about what she wanted her poetry to do -- and not do.

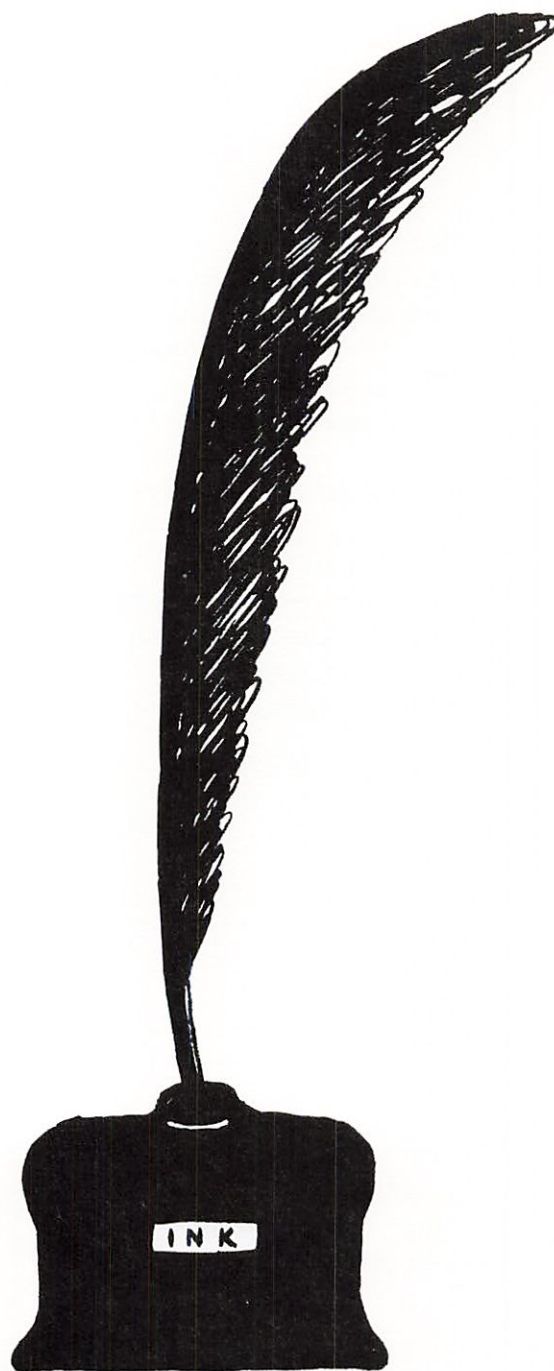
"I don't like cosmic reality (inserted) in poetry," she asserts. "There is no cosmic reality."

She tosses back a mane of dark hair and laughingly gives an example of what she would call "cosmic reality:"

Daffodils in a field

Each one is an individual.

"Some people use the word 'white' (in



graphic by Melodie Sue Conley

poetry) as if it evokes some kind of vision. White is the color of paper before you write on it."

I asked Hatter who she thought her poetry had the potential of reaching.

"I think my poetry reaches a hell of a lot of people," she replied. "Friends of mine who absolutely hate poetry come to accept mine. I use very ordinary images that everyone has seen, even if they're not aware of having seen them. My emotions are subdued but very apparent. My poems tend to be little self-contained anecdotes."

Stan Fink, a creative writing instructor at Lane Community College, and poet in his own right, is alternately skeptical and hopeful about the marketing potential of poetry.

"People who read poetry" muses Fink, comprise "a small group. The most prestigious poetry magazine has a circulation of only seven thousand. To be realistic, who's going to read it?"

On the other hand, Fink says, there may be a publishing boom going on right now, as he remembers a market newsletter that had seven pages of listings requesting poetry.

"I think if poetry were printed in the Sunday paper, more people would read it," he speculates.

I asked Fink what he found himself writing about most, and if he felt his environment played a part in it.

"Some of my poems have a strong sense of place -- city and nature influenced by the climate and the weather. I wrote twelve poems in March called Almost Spring. I deal with nature and the city. I've lived in Minnesota, Los Angeles and San Francisco.

I think of myself as a city person. I'd be more likely to write about what spring is like in the city -- the smell of sour mold in the house, a garden full of junk to be raked

away -- the conflict of city versus nature."

I rake the garden

Old twigs, wrappers, broken glass

Where is the crocus?

"I think we need to get away from the 19th century poetry of nature. I was down in L.A. and it was beautiful -- skies with tall buildings can look beautiful. Running away from the city is like running away from life. I think poets would do better to be where they are involved with life. I've written in restaurants, in buses, in offices. You don't have to be by a clear brook in the middle of the forest -- (and I do that occasionally like everyone else) -- it might even be distracting."

But Alfred Gross, an area poet who originally hails from New York, does find a good deal of inspiration in just such country nature scenes.

"I spent a lot of time camping in the woods and country near a creek as a child. A lot of my stuff is an internal reliving of the country and the woods. I think that has had a lot of influence on me."

Gross says he has an ambition to make a modest living with his writing but since "that could take years," he's studying programming as an option.

"I've had my poetry in a book on sale in other parts of the country such as Wisconsin, Northern California and New York, but I don't need a big audience. I'm not particularly concerned with reaching a lot of people. I don't think of myself as a prophet."

"There's been a total telecommunications revolution resulting in a usurpation of the printed work," says Gross. "I'm not morally judging television watchers, but there're missing something."

"Money is always nice," laughs Melodie Conley, Denali associate editor, "but I'm most interested in bringing my own personal observations of the world to other

people, hopefully to help them get through the world. You know how nice it feels when you've read a good story and it relates to something in your own experience? I don't want to write just for writing's sake."

Conley says she wants to write about everyday people "like people on the bus." She is particularly interested in writing juvenile fiction in the form of novels and short stories.

"There are two different kinds of books young people are reading," she continues, "novels based on movies and your basic single plot juvenile novel. I want to write something to bridge the gap here -- there's not enough books geared toward people aged sixteen to twenty-one."

Conley says that when her environment changed, her writing did too.

"I lived in a small town and I began to get stagnant," she explains. "I probably saw the same two hundred people for ten years. When I moved to the city my horizons opened up. Cities make you aware of more people, so you have more to write about. I do like new ideas and new ways of looking at things."

Marty Schwarzbauer tried his hand at playwriting in a creative writing class last year and found that he had a natural talent for it. Also, with his background as a musician and songwriter, he easily moved into entertainment feature and poetry writing. "I got a chance to meet a lot of interesting people, including Mimi Farina (folksinging activist and sister of Joan Baez), Jerry Garcia, Quaterflash, and Tom Paxton. I find playwriting, though, to be more fun than most kinds of writing because I can explore personalities," he says. "There is probably more of a market for playwriting and television and movie scripwriting than for fiction and poetry writing."

"I'm also interested in doing more non-fiction" such as features and reviews, he adds. "It isn't as free and it isn't as much

fun but it's worthwhile. It's also a way of getting exposure and meeting interesting people."

Has anyone else been painted a picture of the writer as an alcoholic, eccentric or drug-hazed loner? I have, and used to have visions of myself smoking long cigarets and becoming "inspired" with too much wine.

Schwarzbauer thinks there is good reason for this cliché.

"One thing that's necessary as an artist is to put yourself in an unfamiliar place (mentally) and be something different than what you've always been," he speculates. "That's why so many artists and writers will develop drinking and drug problems. It's all a part of experimenting with reality, and while working under the influence of these things might be detrimental in many ways, they could also open you up to new ideas and images. The problem comes when the alcohol, drugs, or even religion *become* the art instead of opening you up to the art that is there."

"I like to have fun with my writing," muses Schwarzbauer, "so my audience would be anyone who has fun reading. I do try to get my point across, but in a light, humorous way whenever possible."

But sometimes the fun turns into frustration for the beginning writer hoping to break into the market.

"Like most people," admits Schwarzbauer, "I have a profound fear of rejection. When I write something, even if I think it's good, I hesitate to submit it. Often editors have a tendency to disregard people's writing for reasons other than the quality of the work itself. That's my biggest frustration."

It appears that in spite of the problems inherent in pursuing a career in writing, most writers are optimistic that they will get the exposure they're looking for and make some sort of profit in the process.

I'm counting on it. ●

REQUIEM IN THE RAIN

I went walking in the rain today and found a shadow following me.
The grey sky fell quietly down
Breaking the surface of puddles into rings.
A song I'd heard earlier in the day kept filling my head.
It made me think about the curvature of your breast
and the firm flesh of your thigh so soft and warm.
So soft and warm my blood fills with a hot rage just thinking about it.
But you wouldn't let me hold those gentle memories for long.
The rain continued to fall, as I stepped through the puddles
leaving my own sets of rings rippling across their surfaces.
In my mind I damned you for being
so young, so beautiful, and so quickly extinguished.
I thought about you on the emergency room stretcher
A flurry of doctors and nurses working around you
Like a storm thundering around a mountain.
Your young supple body writhed and kicked
with the poisons that filled it.
I was there holding you down
As the tubes were forced down your nose and throat.
I fastened leather restraints around your wrists and ankles
Your slender legs tried to break away from my grip
and run to where senseless pain couldn't reach you.
Then there was a black recussitator bag in my hands.
I squeezed the bag I watched your firm young breast
Rise and fall as the air filled your lungs.
I was terribly afraid to hold your life's ebb and flow in my hands.
But finally you stopped fighting, you stopped running
you lay still on the stretcher
Like a beautiful piece of ravaged meat.
It enraged me to see you robbed of your dignity.
Your tongue forced into the corner of your mouth by one tube
and your still nostril flaired around another.
I wanted to scream at the waste of it all.
But I didn't.
I put on my best professional composure
and tried to ignore the raw injustice before me.
But I couldn't walk away from that haunting image
even after I'd left the sterile light
of the emergency room.
Today I heard a line from a song that went
"Your hair across the pillow like a sleepy golden storm,"
and I was suddenly seized by the urge to cry.
It all came back again with merciless clarity
Your golden hair streaked with sweat and vomit.
Your head straining to rise up from the pillow
And falling back down again.
The hollow which formed in the flank of your youthful thigh
as your muscles fought against leather straps
Today I went for a walk in the rain,
And though there was no sun to cast it,
I found a shadow following me.

Girl Child in the City

She has no choice.

She walks a few steps ahead
and points.
The blurry blues of a flag
fluttering at the top
of the tallest building.
There may be options,
but there is no choice.

She walks to a fountain.
Apollo
shooting water
every which way.
Apollo has no choice
in the water.
He is frozen in stone
in a concrete fountain.
Shooting water.

She splashes.

Marty Schwarzbauer

Incognito

The king of an entire nation
(he calls it insignificant)
cocks his crown to one side
and challenges "expert" advice.
The king's will, after all, will be done.

Late at night, in the privacy of his chambers,
the king contemplates his crown.
Turns it slowly in his hands.
Sidelong glance, symbolic toss.
Ascension to commonality.

Stranger enters crowded inn,
ragged overcoat drenched with rain.
Pays his fare for room and board
and casual diversions for the night.
Something familiar about his tone.

Marty Schwarzbauer

Foreigner

A foreigner
is closing in
on me.

He lives
where water is scarce
and hatred is high.

He plants trees
on a patch of sand
and defends his fruit
with bullets and prayer.

He also lives
in a city
wears a long, black coat
and never cuts his hair.

On Saturday
he touches no money,
refuses all work,
and prays loudly to God.

I am afraid
of this foreigner
who wants influence.

I am afraid
he will ask many questions
and demand answers.

I am afraid
he will assign certain days
and make me accountable.

I am afraid
he will have me
put on strange garments
and make me look ridiculous.

I am afraid
he will force me
to eat bitter food
and starve me whenever he wants.

I am afraid
he will cut me off
from my friends,
saying they are unclean
and not fit for his company.

I am afraid
he will tell me
who to love
and who to hate.

I am afraid
he will show me
how to die.

Stan Fink

Mimosa

Bees hovered around
That mimosa tree
For years,
Singing its innocence,
Enticing pink heads
To silken blossoms.

It seemed to thrive. . .

Later,
The blossoms were sluggish--
Not quite pink
Or freely spread--
The branches brittle
As though the sap had fled.

I worried for a while,
But the tree seemed to be
Alive.

The last snow,
Though,
Was more than it could bear:
The frail tropic branches
Bent beneath the weight. . .

I tried to brush the snow,
But winds
Froze
And cracked
The branches
One by one
And splintered the trunk
To earth.

Spring tries to breathe
A scent of passion,
But the bees
Cluster near
The white magnolia.

I dig my pink mimosa
And pull the stubborn roots.
The earth is cold.

Sheila Juba

Ode to Claude

My Claude, though never asked,
takes off his muddy boots
by my door.

Then I think of my son's
father

He strode across
my clean floor
(boots on) 23 years.

From the barn with manure,
From the muds of wet springs,
The streets and the sewers.

"Clean it up" he would say.

"That's your job

I work for my pay,
Don't bother me with
trivia,

I've had a rough day"

Then mind slips back

To our home on the hill
of children and flowers,

of birds, and of trees,

open windows, Spring breeze

The Lord, the master, the King
comes,

Home for his mail, his dinner and tea
had better be ready,

hot on the table,

No kiss at the door

No soup or cold meat,

dessert every meal

Where is the mean man
now enthroned?

In an office of course.

And my Claude,

Still breaks his back

(at night)

On a rinky dink cat

And leaves his

muddy boots

by my door.

Nancy Ann Penman

The Facts of Life

As routinely miraculous as breath
men exist perpetually pregnant
with their childrens' needs.
I see them in markets
carting their urchins through artics
of frozen fish sticks and anchovy
pizzas, past pyramids of animal
crackers and fortified flakes
snitching grapes.
I see them, womenless,
in the blare of laundromats,
arms pit-deep in steaming
bergs of diapers.
Toddlers, on their marks
getting set to go.
I see them in playgrounds,
skates, kites, cones and
kids awhirl and teetertottering.
Dads, reborn swinging singles.
I see them in pharmacies
decoding the cuneiform
of prescriptions and the litany
of peroxides: pondering
the heft of floss and gauze.
Fathers and their children:
I see them striding before
a frieze of wonderous birds
in flight.

Kaz Sussman



photo by Marty Schwarzbauer

Pictures

by Jeff Keating

Jake Gruder stood in his cell in the town jail, looking out onto the windblown, dusty streets of the tiny Oklahoma town through a barred window.

A jingling of keys and a short cough behind him announced the presence of the jailer, a pleasant if somewhat uncomfortable fellow named Jim.

"Um, the Reverend Holmes is here to see ya, Jake," Jim said. "He wants to talk to ya about. . . well, you know what he wants to talk to you about, I guess."

Jake smiled quietly as the preacher was ushered through the cell door. The Reverend Holmes was a big man, not tall but broad, and large-featured. He took the two short steps to the cell's tiny bunk and seated himself.

"Jake," he began. "There's an awful lot of people in town who're hopin' I'll come out of here with a confession from you. Folks aren't real comfortable, thinkin' that maybe the wrong man was put in jail. So why don't you just tell me, get it off your chest, feel better about yourself. Surely make a lot of folks feel better about what's going to happen early tomorrow mornin'."

Jake turned away from the window and looked the Reverend Holmes in the eye. "I got nothin' to confess, revernd," he said. "I didn't do nothin' wrong. That little girl was dead before I even got to the river. I jist dragged her out. I didn't kill her. And I know that the Lord knows I'm right, and nothin' will happen tomorrow. The Lord don't let innocent folks die."

Holmes sighed and shook his head. "You'd be makin' things better for everybody concerned, Jake," he said. "Please say you'll do some more thinkin' about it."

Jake nodded. "Sure, revernd. I'll come to the same answer, but for your peace of mind, I'll think about it some more."

The preacher smiled ruefully. "Well, I guess that's all I can ask," he said. "I'll be seein' you tomorrow mornin', then."

"Bright and early," answered Jake with confidence. The preacher looked at him once more, shook his head, and called for the jailer.

As the Reverend Holmes walked out of the cell, he muttered to Jim, "Maybe he's guilty, but he's

puttin' a better face on it than any man I've ever seen." With that, he walked out into the dusk falling on the town.

The pictures had started when Jake was ten.

At first they had seemed like nothing more than daydreams, little pockets of imagination that would come to Jake out of nowhere. In each dream, he would see a situation unfold, and then the same situation again but with different endings. And in each dream Jake Gruder was the main character -- what he did altered the sequence of events in each instance.

Jake never thought much about it until the "daydream" about the Kelly girl. Jake was playing with some friends down by the river when one of the pictures began playing in his mind. In it, little four-year-old Susie Kelly, the daughter of the man who owned the town's hardware store, had gotten a bit too far out into the street in front of her father's store.

Jake gasped as, in his mind's eye, he saw a team of horses bear down on little Susie as she stepped into the street. And then the alternative pictures began.

In the first, Jake yelled at the driver to get out of the way. The man did, but killed himself and other people on the sidewalk in the process. No, Jake thought, not if more people get hurt.

The second picture showed Jake dashing in front of the horses to knock the girl out of the way only to be killed himself. Only if I have to, Jake thought.

In the the third picture, Jake grabbed Susie and got her out of the way just in time. As a reward, Susie's father let him pick out a new bicycle from the hardware store.

That was the one Jake picked.

He dashed toward town, hollering to his friends that he'd be back, and reached the hardware store just in time to see little Susie Kelly step out onto the street. He ran toward her at breakneck speed as people on the sidewalk saw what was happening and began to yell. Jake grabbed the little girl and hauled her away from the horses. The team rushed by, right over the place where the girl had stood just moments before.

Half an hour later, Jake was explaining to his



friends by the river how he had happened to come by a brand new bicycle.

And so it began. Jake's friends were in awe of how he managed to be in just the right place at the right time. If Mr. Cutter needed his barbershop swept out and was willing to pay someone fifty cents to do it, Jake was there. If Mr. Thomas at the grocery store needed someone extra to help with the day's deliveries, Jake was there.

But, during all of his life, he never abused his talent, because he knew it was a gift from God, a gift that he couldn't take advantage of for money or power. So he kept his "luck" to a minimum and lived a quiet but comfortable life.

Until the thing with the Henderson girl had cropped up. Jake had been sitting in his living room when a picture popped into his mind. In it, a dark figure tossed a limp body into the river down the hill from Jake's little house. Without waiting for the picture to finish, he ran out of the house and down to

the river, where he found the Henderson girl and brought her into the town doctor.

But she was dead, had been dead when he found her. Accusations from the townspeople began to fly, fingers started to point -- where had Jake been, what had he been doing, and wasn't he a strange sort of hermit anyway? In the end, Jake landed in the town jail with a murder conviction and an early-morning hanging awaiting him.

It was not until he had been in jail for a few days that Jake finally let the picture with the Henderson girl run its course. In it, he carried the girl into town and was arrested for her murder. If only I'd let it finish, he thought. If only. . .

But that was the past, and Jake was confident about the future. He'd looked at the pictures.

He'd picked the one where the rope broke and he fell onto the platform. While the police replaced the rope, a cable came through from the governor granting him a pardon. Although Jake hurt himself

when the noose broke, he liked that one the best because it gave the governor enough time.

And so he was prepared for the next morning.

• • •

Reverend Holmes walked into the Jake's cell at 6 a.m. the next day. The sun had just begun to peer over the horizon, and the shadows from the bars in Jake's cell played across the preacher's lined face. "Jake, it'd make me feel better if you'd get on your knees with me here and pray for forgiveness before you go out there," he said.

Jake looked at the preacher for a moment. "Sure, revernd," he said. "But ain't nothin' going to happen out there today. Everything's going to be just fine. You'll see." Jake climbed out of his bunk and knelt on the cold concrete floor with the preacher. Holmes murmured a quiet prayer and then looked at Jake. "You are perhaps the bravest man facing death I've ever seen, Jake," he said. "I'm sorry to see you go."

Jake smiled. "That's nice o' you, revernd, but I ain't goin' anywhere. A call will come through from the governor before it all happens."

The preacher sighed. "Very well, Jake." He looked at his timepiece. "Looks like we'd best get out there." The pair stood up and walked out of the cell into the main room of the jailhouse, where Jake's hands were tied and he was blindfolded. The jailer and the preacher led him outside and up the platform. Jake could hear the flashbulbs popping as the newspaper photographers took their pictures. Although it was early in the morning, most of the townspeople had turned out for the hanging.

Then the moment arrived. The noose was fitted around Jake's neck, tightened, and suddenly he was being lifted in the air. And then, just like the picture he had picked, the noose broke and he crashed to the platform.

The area around the platform erupted in a bedlam of noise. Townspeople climbed up to haul Jake to his feet. "Get a new rope!" someone hollered. "No, no!" shouted Reverend Holmes. "You can't hang a man twice in one day! Let him be!" But no one listened. They were starved for vengeance, this small-town crowd. They had come to see a hanging, to see justice done for the Henderson girl, and they would not let it be snatched away by a faulty rope.

In the midst of the confusion, a young deputy rushed from the jailhouse waving a small piece of yellow paper. "He's pardoned!" he shouted. "From the governor! He's pardoned! We got to let him go!" But the deputy was overwhelmed and knocked unconscious by the townspeople as they swarmed over him to get a new rope from the jailhouse.

Jake stood, arms firmly gripped by two strong men, and suddenly realized that he was really going

to die. The pictures had failed him. And as he looked over them in his mind one more time, he realized why.

Just as he had done with the Henderson girl, Jake had failed to look at the *whole* picture. In each option, the deputy ran out of the jailhouse with the pardon in his hand. Jake had always stopped the pictures at that point. This time, he watched the rest of each picture.

In each instance, the deputy was stopped by the crowd and Jake Gruder ended up hanging limp from a rope on a platform in the middle of a tiny Oklahoma town.

"No!" Jake shouted as he felt his neck fitted with a new rope. Uncontrollable anger welled up in him as the noose tightened around his neck and the platform once again cleared of people. "There we go!" shouted one. "Get it right this time!"

"No," moaned the deputy from the ground. "He's pardoned. . . governor called. . ." His voice trailed off and someone kicked him, once again knocking him unconscious.

"String 'im up!" someone shouted. The crowd roared its approval.

Suddenly, Jake's anger took form in the pictures. He had never seen pictures such as these, of violence, of death, of destruction. These people were full of hate, Jake realized, and hate was the only thing they would understand. His anger became greater, and he decided to teach them a lesson, a lesson they would never forget. He began to pay close attention to the pictures.

In the first, a tornado swept across the town, destroying most of the buildings and killing dozens of people.

"Not enough!" Jake gasped.

The second picture showed a huge fire which covered the surrounding farmlands and the town, ruining farmers' livelihood and leaving few survivors.

"Not enough!" Jake repeated.

In the third picture, enemy planes swept across the land, mercilessly bombing towns and killing hundreds of thousands of innocent people on a mission of vengeance.

"Still not enough!" Jake shouted as he felt himself being lifted into the air.

The final picture showed the sun, looking like an overinflated orange and red beach ball, spinning crazily toward the Earth as the planet's surface erupted, entire mountains melting, rivers boiling, people literally burning to death in their own homes.

As he felt himself passing out, Jake picked that one.

Miscarriage

1

Locked muscled thighs
clench.
The fluid flame
that burns
this broken sparrow
is momentarily blocked.

I begin to keep track of time
(in minutes and in seconds)
between the sloppy devil kisses.
The pain so dark --
the area surrounding it
a golden buffer.

2

The safelight glow
diffuses
the swollen sensation
of the fat bloody finger
that travels through my darkroom
at a distant speed.

With both my hands
I scoop the fetal form
from a yellow acid pond
and pat it dry
with a soft brown
paper towel.

3

A row of stuffed Angoras
follow me with ancient eyes
as I wander,
bundle clapsed to belly
into the Biologist's lab.

I must reconcile this
twenty-three hour nightmare
on terms that are my own.

4

I bury the placenta
alongside two gold fish
and a small bird
decapitated by
a neighborhood cat.

I deny
the Biologist's request
to dissect.

Lee Evans

Zygomorphesus

Evolving
takes eons
and lifetimes
There used to be an age
that knew no flowers
 petals unseen
 untouched
 unrealized
Until the first seed
 sprouted suddenly
 and irrevocably.

The first flowers
were symmetrical
and being so
enhanced their superficial beauty
But inner strength
was lost
 in the tight cramping
 of petal bases
 always drawn together
 towards the circle center self.

I learned
these petals
can be splayed
 fragile and crippled
 by a strong wind.

At last
a new flower has been unearthed
I've found the dappled
 splotched
 and speckled color
 of the zygomorphic flower
adapted for storm.
The banner hovers
protecting and enfolding
Wings
stretch to fly
 and somewhere
a sweet nectar center
lies to be discovered
behind angles and corners
 and folded
 tucked-in secrets.

Melodie Sue Conley

Untitled

Spilling over your army-green collar
-- dusk merging with moss --
soft and shadowy
I dabble in the curls.

Currents of knowledge
slip to the surface
Your mind splashes into mine
and sudden
 impartial
 thoughts
 cascade between us.

They ebb to hard impatience
or sometimes to a sweet,
unchallenged breathlessness

I long for unfathomable ocean.

High in my sight
 a sundog stretches.

Melodie Sue Conley

prelude to an afterthought

What I could have done,
if I had thought...
but then again,
maybe not.

If only I...
well, actually...
no, I guess
I wouldn't have, anyway.

But, on the other hand,
when I said...
I mean, what I meant was...
I mean, what I should have said...

What I would have done
if I had thought...
but then again,
maybe not.

Marty Schwarzbauer

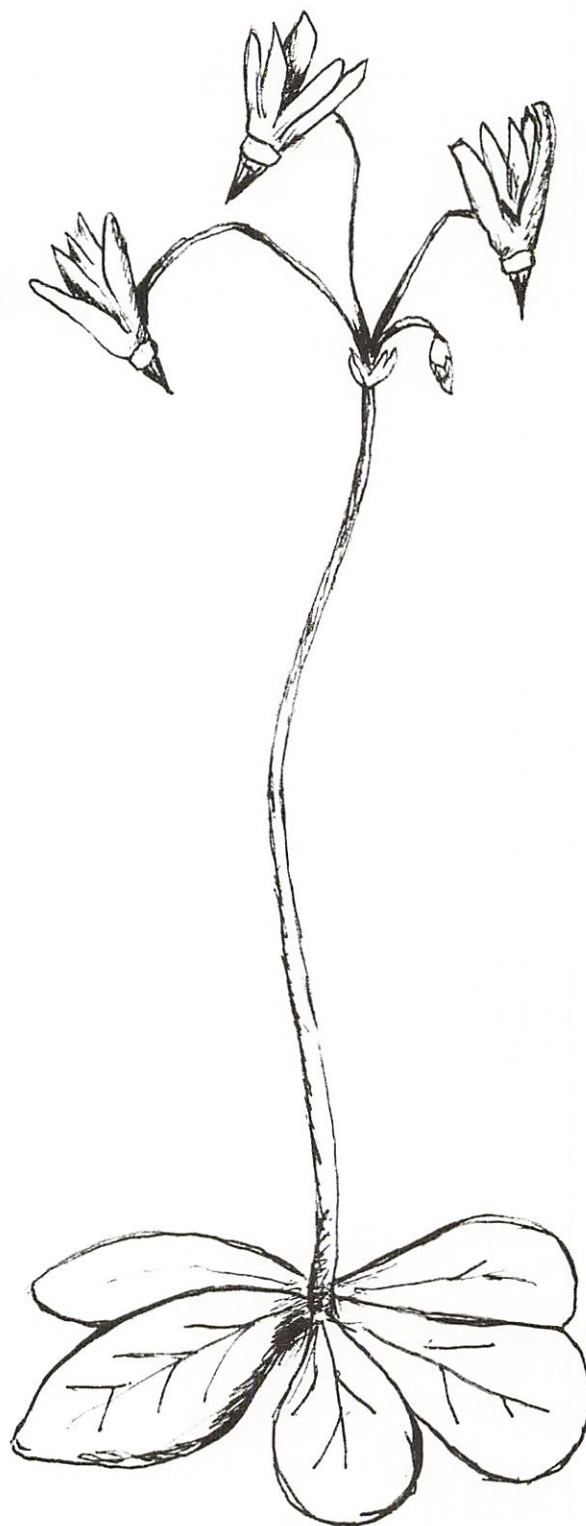
Visions

I saw an MX missile railroad,
a Minuteman in a silo,
and a B-52 in a hangar --
So peacefully they wait. . .
I saw Brezhnev making toast-and-jam,
Reagan loading cargo ships,
and a wheat farmer counting money --
So peacefully they hate. . .

I saw a fanatical dictator,
a million unmarked graves
in a thousand different languages --
So quietly they lay. . .
I saw the belly of a rich man,
and a million starving children,
whose hunger is one language --
So quietly they pay. . .

I saw Moses on the mountain,
Jesus on the waters,
and Muslims seeking Mecca --
So warriors might cease. . .
And I wondered if the mountains,
and the deserts, and the oceans
were created with a whisper --
So we all could cherish peace. . .

Margaret Burke



graphic by Ray Bartram

These sections of poetry are taken from a larger piece of work entitled "The Roaring Stream."

9

A child wonders long
in the branch-fine silence
of the first tree,
like an apple shaped
in sunlight, an echo,
perfect, of a wilderness
buried in the heavy
sounds of years.

11

The child learns the I,
learns the pain
of a slow and enormous
separation, from animal
to woman, woman
to memory, everywhere to
one green leaf
in the green-splashed forest.

13

I am the mother
of images bone-struck
from my mother's body,
the metamorphosed memories
of the births of stones,
hammers, hands. I know objects
only when their outlines grow
familiar in a foreign night
and they return to
my eyes like flying
fish to water.

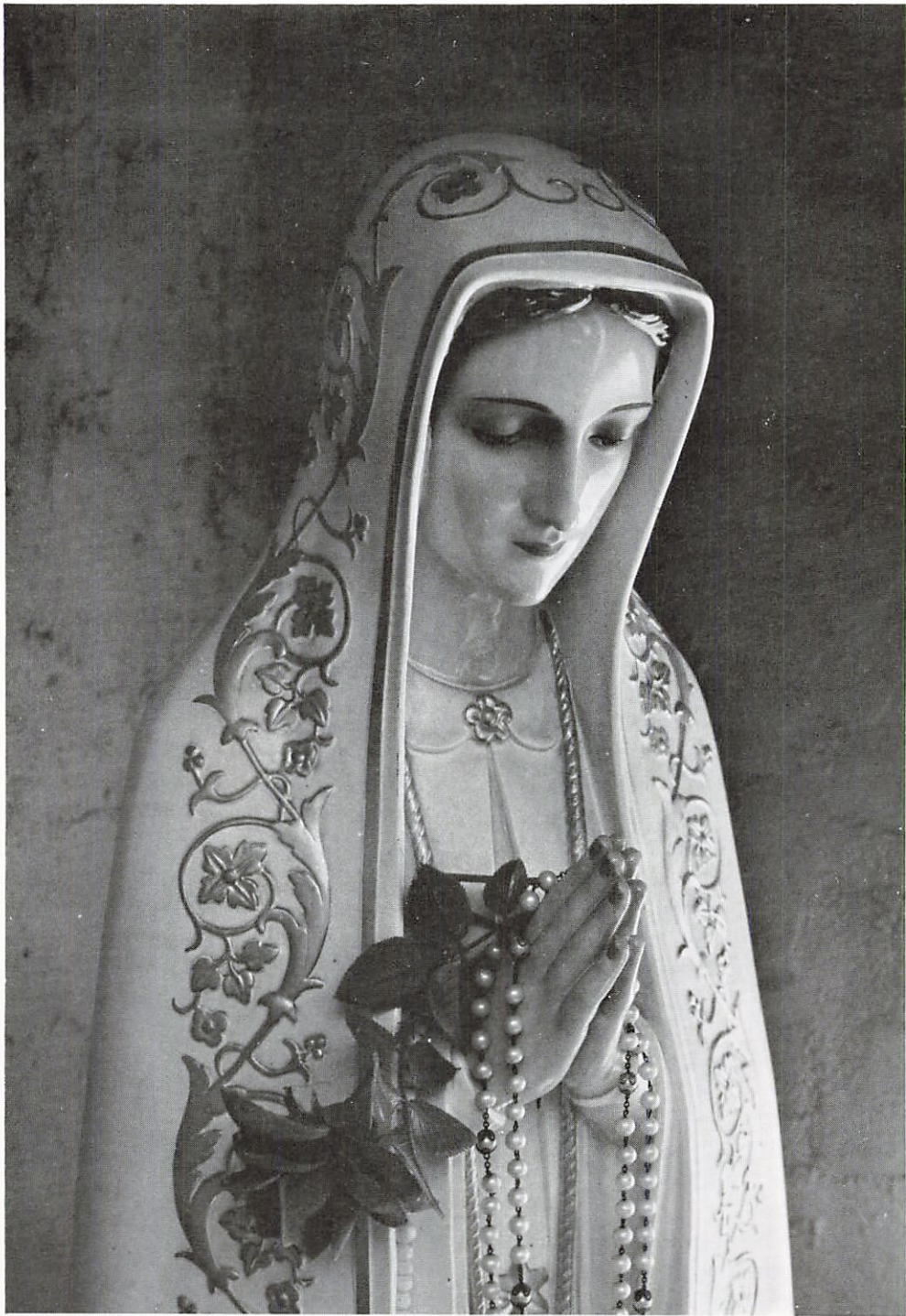
16

I am of blood, of
the slow motion
of the ocean's heart,
by blood beginnings.
I grow like a forest,
from the thick
loose songs of birds,
the rapid motions
of many wings.

Alfred Gross

photo -- courtesy Alfred Gross





Alice's Dream

Slowly as words rub quiet
Like ink-black night from day,
Alice woke
And there she's gone up in clouds,
Stretched and stately clad in new sky
Flaunting at the moon's wan cloak

Courtly as she is pretentious
Whirl and curtsie smile,
Alice wheels like summer hawks
With patterned grace,
As would a child

A quickened morning breeze like
Waft and tumble butterfly,
Thus Alice plays
Until she cries, her
Silver splashing cold-face droplets
Trickle, brook-like pantomime

Blossom's swell in chorus
As she nurtures every green,
Like some enchanted mother-child
Who tends the morning
In her dream

Jay Peterson

Untitled

in the distance i could
see
a vague half-remembered
form
the shadow of the years
passing
i remembered the song
of wind and wave
and thoughts not spoken
in the night
memories of stars and pines
so long forgotten blazed in
cold ashes
the silent mountains
etched a velvet sky.

Stephanie Ames

Potter's Vessels

Brick-red mud
Rich earth-blood
Pliant soil wheeled
Yields smooth brown curves
Like sand dune swirls
patiently wrought
Priceless

Jay Peterson

I TRAVELLED UP

to totem pole country
up to the shadow
of mt. arrowsmith
waters of georgia strait
wash up driftwood debris
a handful of sand dollars
round skeletons incised
with the five-pointed star
a natural pentacle. . .
grey roots and branches
broken shells wet glitter
as the tide goes out
underfoot
at dawn a bridge of light
from the mainland
mountains to my feet
and the sun climbs
a ladder of clouds

maia penfold

Fast Forward

I am not made
for stopping.
Saddled
to glass and metal,
instruments and dials
measure my rush.
I cannot be caught
even in the net
of your eyes.
I am here for
a split second
on my way
from the past
to the future.
This metallic stallion
drinks the bones
of dinosaurs.

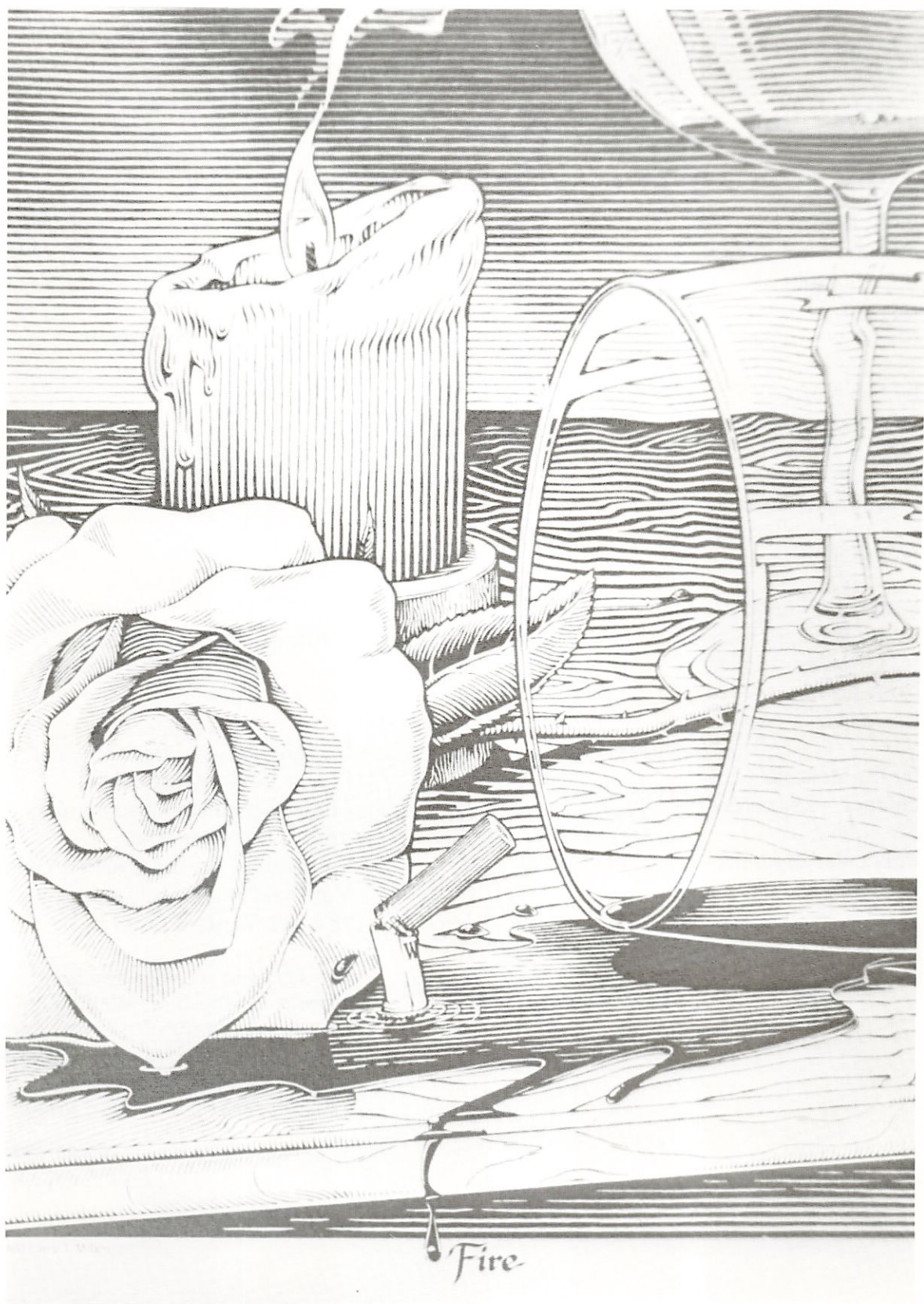
Stan Fink



The Suicidal Teaparty

I am a ghost.
I am living in time past
and time future.
In the present time
there is no form to me.
I float in empty space
Untouchable.
I am a spectre.
I have lost the dream
that gave me form
and now there is
no shape to me.
I practice the stretching
of the lips.
I practice the lilting
of the voice.
I wonder about the
suicides
Silvia Plath
and the others.
I wonder if one day
I will join them.
Perhaps we will all
sit around together
at the round table
of broken hopes.
Perhaps we will sip
tea together,
Anne Sexton, Ernest
Hemingway, Felix Krull's
drunken father
and the others.
Perhaps we will swap
tales and slap each
other on the back.
Perhaps we will compare
scars.
Discuss details.
Laugh over transitions.
Murderers all, we are.
Fellow conspirators.
Abusers of the body.
Disbelievers in the soul.

Joan Dobbie



Driven Back Again Into Poetry

Driven
back
again
into poetry

by the foggy
night before
and the blonde Kentucky
mountain girl at
my side "I'd like
to see you again"

by the blurred
mimeographed sheets
of past teachers
lying scattered
on my kitchen table
in Oregon afternoon
fading light

by the thin boy
at the Palace Hotel
two thousand miles
from home "To see
this chick"

by the delicate wire
balance of structure
not unlike a
molecular diagram

and by a pause
music can't communicate.

Alex Balogh

The Future

Flipping forward into darkness.
Where's the floor?

Phil Turchin

Junkies on the Beach 1970

Do larks sing at dawn?
I have never heard them,
I have heard sirens screaming
from a too-near alley.
Red pulsed on the cracked ceiling.
You held me loosely and said,
"It's not for us. Forget it."

We stood in a leaky pavilion
waiting for the bag. Waiting
with arms empty of passion and
as I watched the cawing pigeons
picking garbage by the sea,
I still wondered how you knew.

Shasta Hatter

Connections

Cynthia Whitfield, *DENALI* editor

If you've read any of the popular non-fiction around in the past few years you're aware of one thing if nothing else -- we are supposed to talk to each other more, express what we feel, and not be afraid to reveal our real selves to others. This is what's called communication, right? The problem is that "communication" has become more a ready made formula than an actual process.

We all know the "right" questions to ask ("So what are you doing these days?") and how to offer appropriate support ("Oh, that's really great!"), but do we really care? Not as much as we should, perhaps.

Much of the material submitted to the magazine this year expressed an almost agonizing sense of loneliness and alienation. Obviously we have not taken the time to care. We don't really hear what other people say, we merely interpret it to fit what we most want to hear. Years ago I found a simple remedy for this problem. It entails trying to see things from the other person's perspective, taking in consideration the whole body of what that other person says and is. It is nothing short of amazing how much easier it is to understand

other people this way

In fact, most of the current problem -- at least in Eugene -- could be attributed to a general tendency not to really pay attention to others. I saw it this winter when mothers walked about town with shivering children wearing grossly inadequate jackets. I hear it when one of our college instructors totally misunderstands a point a student is trying to make -- not because the student isn't being clear in what he's saying, but because the instructor has a program operating in his head that doesn't include a more sensitive way of looking at things. I see it when one person ignores another's distress and need for help because they just "don't feel like it right now."

How the idea came about that we need only pay attention to others when we happen to be in the mood, I'll never know. We don't go to work only when we're in the mood. Usually we do it because we know that if we don't, we won't get anything back -- perhaps in this case money or recognition. This should apply to our relationships as well. If we continue to put energy into other people only when we feel so inclined, we shouldn't get miffed when we don't get anything back.



photo by Marty Schwarzbauer

