

# DENAI

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# 30<sup>th</sup> *Anniversary* Denali Art and Literary Magazine

•Winter 1999•

"I think I did pretty well,  
considering I started out with nothing but  
a bunch of blank paper."  
Steve Martin

Lane Community College  
Eugene, Oregon

# Editor's Note

Another term, another issue of *Denali Magazine*, your long-awaited favorite. And despite limited name-recognition, *Denali* is celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> year at Lane. That's 210 in dog years ... Not a bad life-span for an art and literary magazine, and we're not even through yet!

This term, we're featuring the work of a very gifted writer, one we're sure is going places if he's not been there already. Erik Kraven awed our staff with his contemplative, insightful essays and poetry. When trying to decide which of his pieces to print, Seffner was a clear staff favorite, but we couldn't imagine limiting his presence to that single piece. Not when he's this good. His descriptive language and ironic sense of humor are sure to attract a strong following.

And, of course, we've included a selection of beautiful artwork, poetry, short stories, and refrigerator genius by a number of other gifted artists and writers. We feel we've presented a startling cross-section of the populaion in a short space and can only hope you'll agree.

To those of you whose work was not chosen for publication, we welcome visits to our office if you'd like some constructive criticism, and we look forward to seeing more of your work in the future.

the editor

*Denali Magazine* is accepting submissions of writing and high-contrast artwork for possible publication in the Spring 1999 issue.

For submission guidelines and deadline, see page 31 or contact *Denali* at: 747-4501 ext. 2897  
LCC Main Campus IT 213

# Denali Staff

## 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

### • Winter 1999 •

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### our thanks to:

- \*the Torch Staff, for the use of the production facilities
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- \*all of our contributors
- \*Gary at LCC Printing and Graphics
- \*Mom and Dad
- \*the Academy

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# •what's in this issue•

author/artist	page	title
Adam Louie	4	Fantastic (a poem)
J. Matthew Tully		Pleading (a poem)
Erik Kraven	5	Seffner (an essay)
Jon Morgan		My room (photograph)
Emily Chasm Calema	9	August (a poem)
Imson Kel		Super Ki (artwork)
Jessica Parsons	10	My Fridge (a poem)
Katie Mathweg		untitled (pottery)
Wes Wightman	11	You Know Who You Are and The Kitchen is Dirty Again (short prose)
the ghost of Patrick	12	Downstream (a poem)
Sarah Keller	13	untitled (a prose poem)
Mary Ann Martin	14	untitled (a refrigerator poem)
Heather Edwards	15	Soft Glow (a poem)
J. Matthew Tully	16	Beauty (a poem)
Heather Edwards	17	Circus Fiction (a poem)
Kenneth Brady		untitled (a poem)
Kenneth Brady	18	untitled (another poem)
Brian Owsley	19	I Stroll Into Joy (a poem)
Kristen Deluga		untitled (artwork)
Christopher Duca	20	untitled (a poem)
Erik Kraven	21	Introduction to Allen (an essay)
Lubo Vatchkov	23	Statue of Liberty (artwork)
Eli Trompeter	24	California Sun (a short story)
amelia a. reising		untitled (artwork)
Erik Kraven	26	God (a poem)
Daniel Morgan	27	Revelation 9:9 (artwork)
Jessica Parsons	28	untitled (a poem)
James Whitaker		Floral Still (artwork)
Sarah Keller	29	Hell and high water (prose poem)
Brian Owsley	30	Dawn of Everyday (a poem)
	31	Submission Form
	32	Contributors' Page



by Adam Louie

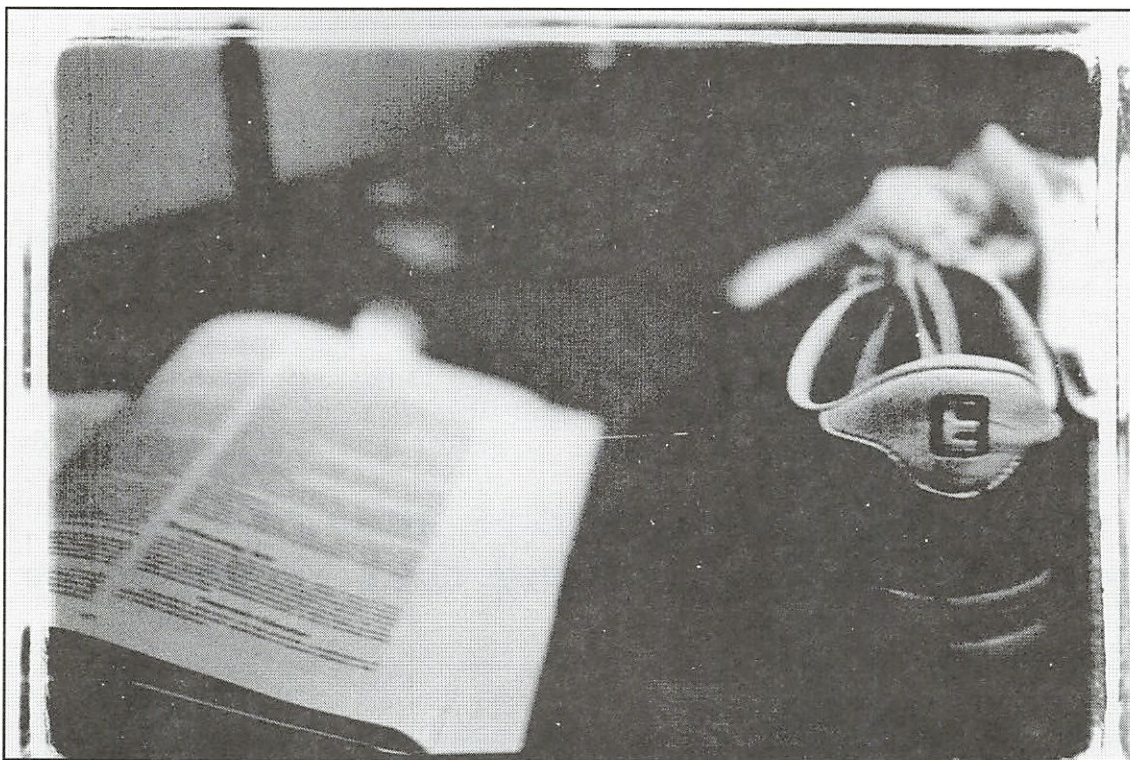
fantastic

Existentialistic summer and cigarettes,  
chapped lips and 3 cups of water,  
"It's not that bad," he tells me ...  
He tells me of happy deaths and Camus,  
of Raymond Carver and someone else, I forgot who.  
We both broke up and broke down,  
I have five months on him,  
The club of lonely hearts and sensitive men,  
Cross our legs and try to outdo each other,  
We play "Who can be more poetic"  
or "Who's deeper than thou?"  
We both hurt in the morning,  
Our ex-loved ones eating cereal with other guys,  
But in this game I try to be more "at peace" than him,  
He's winning though; his hair is shorter and a skull cap sits on top,  
He's the beatnik embodiment I've been striving for,  
But I'm cool as a cucumber,  
I'm more stoic than he is,  
I've stared into the void he stares into now,  
and spit into its depths  
I've written through the 100-mile long nights,  
Through feet made of lead,  
Through the self-defeating behavior,  
Just so I can sit here with narrowed eyes  
and ride in his boat of empathy.  
I win the game when he's not playing,  
"Fantastic," I mutter to myself,  
and scuff down dim lit streets,  
of dead, wet leaves.

Pleading  
if  
my words  
were reaching  
caressing thought  
  
could you accept  
a new thought of truth  
upon an old soul  
would you try to  
angle your perception  
see the light  
of my darkness?

by J. Matthew Tully





## Seffner

The Florida of my youth was hot and heavy with eucalyptus haze, a crusty dust of reddish sand and sticky grasses. So, burned out (before i even knew the concept) on the garter snakes and June bugs of Indiana, i revelled in a similar humidity and grasshoppers -- red and orange and rigid -- and as big as my hand and head ... spunky emeraldine anoles (American chameleons) that could -- with a furtive fart and dart of motion -- send my mother screaming to the house. Spiders black and yellow, as huge as barricades, beetles thick of horn, anthills redolent of vinegar, their soldiers racked with mandibles to bite and chew and sting offending flesh of barefoot boys who chose to stand upon the sacred mound of commerce and continuation. Oh, what an egg i was, in childhood summer Seffner ... my sainted Grandmother drove me south in the gargantuan Nash Ambassador ... old U.S. 441 (long before interstates) to one of her myriad investment properties overgrown and overlooked along a smoky road. Eave-high weeds, windows festooned with webs, and once an errant razorback hog standing off the

tanklike mass of her car mowing down the faint gravel track ... she would open the trunk and withdraw a Y-shaped weed-whip which she swung like a drunken Scottish duffer to the low concrete porch, a path magically appearing through a jungle of verdant vegetation and swimming with bugs and lizards.

Her house (a five room cottage) had been squatted in by an occasional raccoon, possum or rat ... scorpions infiltrated light globes and once a coral snake traversed the hardwood floor ... her deft foot flicked it into the brush with no thought, hesitation, or trepidation ... it was as if the lease had once again been resold and winter squatters merely needed her encouraging sandal to set the record straight.

(This was long before music  
before drugs  
before sex  
before drink  
before cynicism and all else  
that comes with enlightenment ...)

My days were filled with adventures and explorations; i harvested grapefruits for

(continued page 6 ...)



(continued from page 5 ...) breakfast and sat on the edge of the trash pit to watch the banana trees grow. (i could not see them grow, but i could hear them ...) i would forage for scorpions in the old concrete block garage because it was forbidden. i would steal oranges from the nearby grove because it was forbidden. i would talk to the old chicken farmer next door, (a great adventure) because it was forbidden, (because he was a "Darky") ...

i would climb "too high" into the lofty wall of eucalyptus trees on hot, breathlessly humid mornings and take off my dorky Jamaican straw hat, my tight, but-

scissor an enormous block of vaporous, milky ice into the trunk with a set of rusty tongs. i have never seen a man so old, so black, so strong. He would take a Michner book to walk from his shanty to the waiting customer ... yet he would clamp the ancient tongs deep into the ice and sling the blocks into the trunk with a casual flick of the wrist. i tried to strike up a conversation with him on one such foray, but my grandmother gave me a sharp rap on the head. "He's a Darky ... why would he want to talk to you? He's not like us ... and doesn't want to be ...!"

i was crushed ... because i hadn't had a

**"... i was a naked koala kid -- nude and nerdy and privy to any ass-seeking bug that happened by ..."**

ton-up short-sleeved shirt, my "integrated underwear" swimming trunks, and there -- thirty feet up -- i was a naked koala kid -- nude and nerdy and privy to any ass-seeking bug that happened by -- and oh, my mother, with her ever-so-ever admonishments! "Someone will drive by and see you! SHAME ON YOU!"

(i looked from the twisted white powder labyrinth of corrugated paper bark branches, the toxic, crusty leaves, the screaming ripples of rising heat and buzzing endless summer finity and thought, "who will drive? On what dead road? To see what naked fat kid in a lizard tree?)

My grandmother was "thoroughly modern" in most of her interactions with the world ... she had a proper propane gas stove in her cottage (i used to straddle the bulbous exterior tank and pretend i was riding a rhinoceros ...) She had electricity and air conditioning and even a gasoline pump in the garage, but the refrigerator was an old-fashioned oaken ice-box, which meant that every other day or so we would drive the steaming road to Seffner proper, to the "ice-house", which was basically an insulated shack packed with enormous blocks of ice. We would pull into the red-powder drive-way and honk ... an ancient black man would pick his way out of a lesser shack (even further back) and stump on his numbly legs to the ice-house, where he would

chance to talk to the "Darky" ... i hadn't been allowed to bridge (via my vocabually) the gap of age and race and place and time. i wanted to tell the old man -- the ancient ice slinger -- of my adventures. My second degree sunburn from falling asleep in the hammock ... my capture of a beautiful black and orange grasshopper, which i killed in a gas can and grieved about for weeks ... a box tortoise i found and tried to pen under the grapefruit tree ... the ants got to it and hollowed its shell within 24 hours. i wanted to tell the old man of the giant who had chased me through the orange grove when i was stealing fruit and capturing lizards ... he was laughing and i was crying and dropping oranges and anoles in my path. i wanted to tell these things to the old ice-slinger, but he was a Darky -- not one of us -- and he didn't want to hear my fat naked-in-the-tree stories.

The old ice-man, the silty roads, the powder trees are all gone now; no doubt paved and developed and condoed and co-opted by the newly wed and nearly dead, the hammered-brass sun and wing-choked humidities tamed by the central air and endless blue-haired trailer empires ... asphalt, potted palms, freeway spurs and sickly-green concrete canals ...

(But in the Florida of my youth, the sky was still large and clear and relentless ... those molten days (continued page 7 ...)



(continued from page 6 ...) passed one on one into a very personal, precarious history.)

On one such day, my mother and Aunt drove into Plant City for groceries, no doubt shagged into the errand by my grandmother, who tended to grow restless with endless pinochle and babble, feeling the reconfirming draw of her business ledgers and adding machine.

(Even in this diminutive cottage, the living room was dominated by an officious-looking desk.) i puttered about in my 7-year-old world, listening to scratchy AM radio R&B out of Tampa and generally irritating her by compromising her concentration. She eventually reached into her marshmallow-white leather purse and withdrew a silver dollar ... a real silver dollar, thick and round and heavy as untold wealth.

"Here," she said, "why don't you walk into town and buy yourself a soda and a comic book!"

i was stultified, stunned and somehow dizzy. Comic books were verboten, because they rotted the mind; soda also because it rotted the teeth and was not as "whole-some" as the lukewarm, chalky, sour-smelling milk i was allowed. And 'town', which consisted of a gas-station/grocery store and the ice-house, was a mile away from the invisible limits of the yard.

"But, but ..." i stammered, "Mommy doesn't let me ..."

"Well, then, Mommy isn't here, is she?" my grandmother interrupted, "... and won't be for a good long while. So go potty and do as I said, sweet stuff. ... and don't bother the old Darky!"

i was the tallest, broadest, thickest, fattest, proudest little shit that ever shuffled and puffed down that powdery track, with my frayed straw hat-brim rus-

tling in the anemic breeze and my blue sunglasses and my massive dollar glowing hot and heavy as molten platinum in my greasy hand. My stunted little pecker was hard as a prong, and huge sheets of dulling cellophane were peeled back from the sky and the road and the ditches, exposing everything with a glistening, sparkling newness, like

a freshly shed snake. There was no gleam of light, no mystery or green shadow, no hum or thrum or buzz or smell that i did not absorb like a fleshen sponge. i huffed and puffed and swelled beyond bursting with the immaculate perception of the world. i was one profoundly stoned little dude.

With my rolled up "Classics Illustrated" version of "A Tale of Two Cities" (a selection guaran-

teed to be more acceptable than "The Flash" or "Green Arrow") and with my sweating bottle of Nehi soda, i plopped down on the splintery board of a shack step and bothered the old Darky for the rest of the afternoon. He sat and smoked home-rolled cigarettes and sipped iced tea and held forth about everything and nothing. i did not understand a single word that came through his toothless lips, but the music of his voice, the rhythmic rise and fall of his stories reeled in mad revelry with the flaring ripples of heat and steam from the white hot gravel, the garnet sand, and i drifted and danced along in my tumescent imagination.

A customer approached and honked through a cloud of dust; the old man abruptly told me to "Get along now" and the moment was indisputably over. i dropped my empty bottle in a rusted oil-drum and began the silent, hazy trek home.

Now, across the lane from my grandmother's property (continued page 8 ...)

**" ... huge sheets of  
dulling cellophane  
were peeled back from  
the sky and the road  
and the ditches,  
exposing everything  
with a glistening,  
sparkling newness,  
like a freshly shed  
snake ... "**



(continued from page 7 ...) and running in all directions farther than seven-year-old eyes can see, was a hog ranch. Immense brooder sows, their teats raking through the stubble and gnarly old boars with blunted tusks dotted the dead-flat acres, to town and beyond. The unmistakable stench of manure and urine and sweat and slops flowed like a sepia river, flooding over the scrubby terrain. Pigs, unlike any other domestic stock, possess two uniquely human qualities: first, an intelligence that allows for primitive computations and secondly, a penchant for mass hysteria and mob violence. Thus, periodically, a brood-

strewn ... and oh, the noise of mass oinking, dust-exploding vehemence, the settling pink sand, the rusting splotches of blood and brain. My silent world was violated and voluptuous with violence.

Was it by ear? By eye? By smell? Already, the indigenous vultures, the black mariahs had arrived. What had drawn them, called them in? These pylons of patience, already ensconced, waiting for silence and settling of dust ...

Now, crowning each fence-post along the narrow mile home was a vulture, black as a priest, glistening like obsidian in the lengthening light. Each a carbon copy of

## **"... i had drunk the corrupting soda, purchased the putrid publication and even bothered the Darky!"**

ing sow will calculate the size of litters being born and compare that quantity of demand to the supply of forage and browse. If the ratio strikes the sow as being ominously low, she will visit the nest of her sister sow and methodically kill the litter by tearing the newborn piglets' heads off and trampling their bodies into the mire. This concern, and resulting behavior, catches on like prairie fire. Good citizen mothers forsake their nests to plunder those of their neighbors, and carnage results, massacres manifest throughout the ranch, with much hysteria and squealing chaos.

It was exactly this sort of periodic debacle which had transpired during my adventures in town.

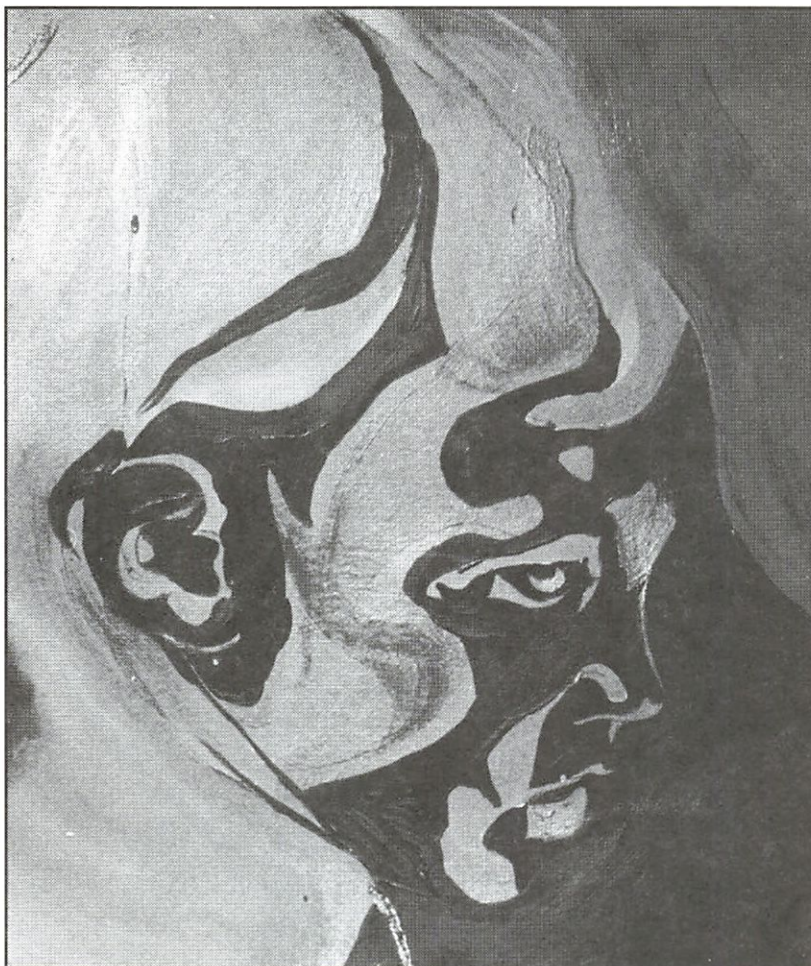
i twaddled along the track and immediately knew that things, dark things, were afoot. i had spent the sacred silver dollar ... i had drunk the corrupting soda, purchased the putrid publication and even bothered the Darky! And now, along my bucolic, mindless trance, all hell was breaking loose beneath coppering sun. The buzzing silence, that subtle vacuum was gone ... gone with a screaming porcine vengeance that filled the very air with the surreal shriek of swine, that stumbling sound of umbilicus and milk-path being severed and

the last, and the next, each seeming as big as me, each a silent, motionless monolith of waiting for the slaughter to end, and the consumption of the spoils. Deep black eyes, wet and wise, calmly tracked me as i hesitantly passed; heavy black beaks curved down into anthracite chest, wings drooped loosely from scrawny shoulders in the heat, carrion crust corroding between cloud gray claws. My heart pounded like a funeral drum, deafening and disorienting, the monotonous cadence of terror. They slid past me, motionless, as the baked earth revolved beneath my feet. It occurred to me that everything dies. My grandmother, my mother, myself. The old Darky would die. The sun, the sand, the very air would certainly someday die. And angels would wait and watch, and waft away on wondrous wings the detritus of death. i fed to them my fear, one quivering morsel at a time, as i passed each silent sentinel ... i fed them until i was forever full of fearlessness.

**by Erik Kraven**



Super K! art by Imson Kel



August

a green breeze sighs  
through metal screens  
and slams shut  
heavy wooden doors.  
neighbor children  
whitewash a fence-  
picket by picket.  
brushes dribble  
and spatters stain  
their arms and toes;  
their clothes need a  
wash. from  
behind the screen door --  
all but her silhouette  
hidden from view -- their  
mother calls to them --  
her Spanish words are garbled  
from heat and wind chimes tinkling.  
cars pass on the street  
stirring dust from the  
ancient asphalt.

by Emily Chasm Calema

1999 • 30 Years • 9



pottery by Katie Mathweg



## My Fridge

(Pronounce this secret)  
Teach her Time like I build  
and love is never done  
only Beauty can smell of skin

by Jessica Parsons



## You Know Who You Are

Her eyes are huge round pools encircled in mystery.

My apprehension is melted by my desire to touch her -- smell her -- taste her ... Those eyes, so dark and inviting quietly urge me to relax and become entranced by her charm. Milky smooth skin pressed against mine, warm and wet you kiss deep into my soul. I need to taste you Kitty-Kat -- feel your moisture within. The blood flows, throwing me into artificial manipulation ... alone.

The "divine exchange of fluids" has yet to occur. She said it's like jungle rain -- I may have to agree.

## The Kitchen is Dirty Again

There are no more bowls, I've been using small pots to hold my milky cereal. I am drinking out of measuring cups and dusty wine glasses -- stirring cocktails with the handle of a used steak knife. Resembling a beast of some design, I claw my food into my mouth without any forks or spoons at my disposal. Why won't someone do the god damned dishes?

by Wes Wightman

I detect a proliferation of the word "milky"



Downstream

I

call upon me  
call upon me that day  
the day  
the river washes the rocks,  
and frees them from their dust-  
a dust as dry  
as my dreams have become  
with time

i will be there  
i will not be lost forever  
the leaves of a better world  
will unfold under a brighter sun-  
though this winter has been long,  
long enough to hasten the rythm  
of my heart

i remember  
i remember a swan  
above the water  
and beneath your midnight  
hair, there was a beautiful swan  
was it the moon?  
and was it night?  
that influenced my memories?

II

if there was an awakening  
of season in my heart  
it was in the wilting of winter  
and not the freshness of roses-  
to say love is like a rose  
would be truthful, not romantic  
the blossoms of a woman's affection  
were pruned from her soul-  
i believed  
i believed in sentiment  
that would soon die  
petals flowing as the river  
resting along a shore that is dry



-- my lover --

Avoids my eyes

Expects lies

Expects too much

Expects to touch the impossible

Knows not the strength of these thighs that could crush his tiny head  
and shove him through the eye of the needle sewing songs of heated meat

He paints and smears me

He wants hushed shhhhhhhs!!!!

He coos under my windy wing that comforts him momentarily then blows  
him away

He pouts at the snapping claws of the crab who laughs, "Run little  
munchkin run!!

How I'd love to boil you up in my chthonic stew and brew a creamy dreamy  
nog of your spew to sip by the fire of my desire!"

I SENSE A TENSE NERVOUSNESS UNDER HIS SKIN OVER THE  
CONFUSION HE'S IN

Woman -- the unexplored cave -- the deep dark grave from where he  
was born and fled and can not kill the continuous calling of in his head  
-- from his bed he tossed and turned and yearningly burned

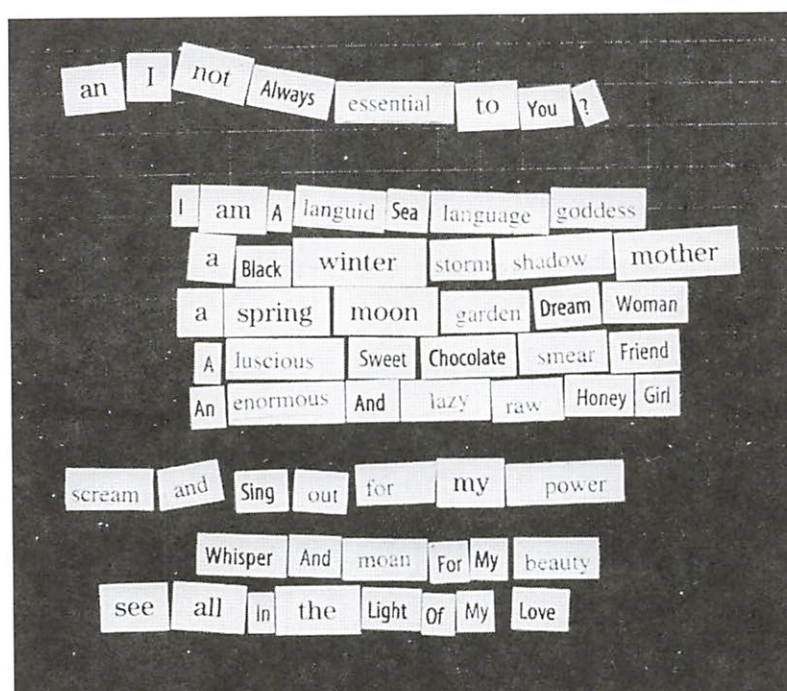
The gloomy tomb -- the womb that nurtured him and shoved him out

The junkie's junk

The skunk's stink



by Mary Ann Martin



untitled



Soft Glow

The wet glow of her shoulders  
shone --  
posed like prominent corners,  
two bright yolks rolled from her neck,  
blooming like small moons, newly formed from some dark matter.  
The glass surface of her fingernails tapped  
a timed message (morse code),  
from the small of his back  
to the nape of his neck  
as her hair spilt between his fingers  
like hot coffee  
running,  
he chases it, trying to catch it  
because  
he thinks he loves her,  
needs her  
always --  
the light of her skim milk skin  
in the dark,  
her smiling eyes  
singing only for him  
as he traces the chords of her collarbone  
uprooting from the trunk of her neck,  
exposing the land beneath,  
the heart, bleeding,  
moved,  
laughing like the tilled soil  
of an earth usurped



Beauty

and...  
remaining remnant  
beauty's quest  
unjustified, you might say

this is a story  
"justify my eyes"  
solemn night  
some years ago  
tangled mind, a different kind  
poetic thought  
not quite alike  
social indifference  
on the upper most layer  
the inside; deeper beneath the skin

a quest  
journeys beginning  
simple complexity of reality  
slipping sanity, easy blame

beauty was "was" divinity  
irrational and innocent  
a different thought  
she had.  
the price she would pay for unfound glory

time confined to moment  
sought through night  
bright amusing light (street lamp)  
a thrill  
rush of wrong  
innocence laughing

No tears  
perhaps, if only  
perception angled  
tangled thought  
the remnant of her poetry

and...  
headline read:  
Body Found Downtown



I watch shapes passing over me,  
the slow formations like floats in a parade  
as though seen from the street like a bed.  
The series of squids inhaling, exhaling,  
expanding  
becoming  
trains  
steaming  
leaving  
ballerinas, muslin swirling  
pirouetting from  
herds of cattle  
stampeding toward  
me, pausing like curled hair easing  
over rounded shoulders,  
withering into ribbons  
dipped into water  
pooling like ink  
blooming bright like the shock  
of the blood from a new wound  
on a white towel  
like light bulbs bursting  
against the pale blue palm  
holding them  
for me.

untitled

So it is always like this then  
An echoing ocean thunderstorm  
your palms pressed flat on my chest  
my racing heart struggling  
to catch up with yours

A brilliant sunshower sunset  
crying tragedies across the sky  
mountains crossing their mighty arms  
rivers overflowing with injustice  
the Sun biding her time

Lightning finding the only tree left  
standing high upon that hill  
-- you know the hill remember --  
crashing down upon the treat  
of encroaching nature's sprawl

Each city fights back with vengeance  
and like lovers separated as children  
we fly above the urban battlefields  
looking down into the eyes of  
our enemies our children ourselves

Oh we scream we yell we cry like  
birth and death and life and silence  
we enfold each other in everything  
and say each a thundering silent prayer  
let it always be like this

untitled

We drift slowly slipping through  
for wearing sunglasses and flipflops  
in my head though the sun  
is gone and rain falls in jest  
(patters merrily on my outstretched  
furrowed brow)

Hand in hand as lovers sometimes do  
we traverse timespace each alone  
feeling the gap left by the other  
or at least I do as the gap  
she left has not filled but for  
rain which is a poor substitute

Analyze and analyze and pick it  
apart until the only things left  
seem pale and shallow mirror  
images which are pale and shallow  
when lights have dimmed  
and one lone candle burns itself out

Climbing under the coffee table I  
wonder at the crumbs and worry  
that the dust mice are too well fed  
on bits of dreams and discarded  
hopes which survived every holocaust  
until this one levelled the field

Redemption smiles at me from its  
glassed-in cage and a death rictus  
chortles too late too bad again



# I Stroll Into Joy

art by Kristen Deluga



by Brian Owsley

I leave my boxed-in bedroom, and wander by habit to the  
carrier's station.  
It awaits me with a crowd of emotions, seen but not heard  
over the music in my veins.  
I watch through the t.v. window, as joggers and houses streak by,  
the trees waving hellos.  
Birds tied to the wind like kites glide above me,  
raising my hopes and dreams.  
I sing with them, the harmony of my joy sets the mood,  
their wing-beats keep the groove.  
The Sun's bright greeting welcomes me, and  
introduces me to the world,  
parting the shadows of doubt.  
I bow and smile as each arm of light reaches through  
the fog and trees,  
waiting to shake my hand.  
It is here that I begin my day,  
tossing my bag of optimism onto my shoulder,  
I stroll into joy.

untitled

1.  
writing "miss you ..." in the dust  
    on a patient table-top --  
(carved wood can't read  
    its own circles.)

in a second floor room of a beach house  
    in May --  
the breeze of angels,  
    their steady, wide-eyed swallows talk gently  
with anonymous neglect --  
(he wants to leave this world --  
    prematurely.)

"BLESS these blisters beneath my chin,  
    I would love to fall again."

2.  
listening to a child's cadence of untied shoes,  
    dances  
a technicolored whirl of paper windmills --  
(tiny reasons cushion  
    the ebbd ripples of an infant's brow.)

a mother cradles  
    a coddling new life --  
encapsule this moment with a breath  
    or a tear,  
and let the slipping hours whisk the shade  
    into a tedium of gray-washed footsteps --

the vigor in trembling new pupils --  
    the folly of the first step.  
the crashing of a yellow bird.

3.  
(all the fruit has been shaken --  
    from the branch.)



# Introduction to Allen

When first i met Allen Ginsberg in the early spring of 1967, i was sixteen years old and was working as a cub reporter for an underground college newspaper. The college in question was Ball State University in Indiana, a conservative school in a conservative town in a conservative, Eisenhower-imprinted region of America. In 1967, the concept of "counterculture" was alien (if it could be conceptualized at all). The concept of "Allen Ginsberg" was more than the narrow minds of Muncie could encompass. Time passes slowly out here in the sticks; our chief of police practiced daily the challenge of walking upright without a balancing tail.

i would not state that growing up where

holism, ignorance and disillusionment resulted.

Meanwhile, at the other end of the social spectrum, a quiet influx of scholars and professors and marginal midwestern intelligentsia bought up tract houses north and west of the muddy, meandering river. Too provincial to attend Indiana University, too secular for Notre Dame, too urban for Purdue, these immigrants were by far too conservative and constipated and cowed to consider Antioch or Ann Arbor (both within an afternoon's drive).

Thus, the disenchanted collided with the mediocre, and i was born and Allen Ginsberg came to town ... a tangled ball indeed!

Another ball requires address -- basket-

**"Thus, the disenchanted collided with the mediocre, and i was born, and Allen Ginsberg came to town ..."**

and when i did was a ball. However, i might suggest that it took balls, and Balls we had! The five founding brothers of our fair city had built an empire in the manufacture of Ball Mason jars, those familiar canning vessels that clutter garages and upper shelves the world over. In addition, they established an institute of higher learning, Ball State Teacher's College, which was granted University status (and therefore grants) in the late fifties. The normal little prairie town burgeoned and bloated over the years, displaying an almost schizophrenic polarity in its population.

Displaced Appalachians, fresh out of Stinking Creek, Kentucky and Cookeville, Tennessee, having sold thier ancestral land-claims for a dime on the dollar to seek the American Industrial Dream "up north" found closed-down Delco battery plants, laid-off Westinghouse factories and headlight manufacturers hamstrung by greedy fledgling unions. The glass-mills had been relocated in Arabia, and only huge toxic landfills and arsenic in the groundwater remained of the golden era. Chronic unemployment, alco-

ball. In the fertile, glacier-gouged flatlands of central Indiana, the word had somehow gotten around that America was a modern country, progressive and predominantly civilized. The primal urge to swoop down on a rival community cloaked in bedsheets and darkness was largely frowned upon. Basketball became the only acceptable avenue for such territorial aggressions. Through the convenient medium of high school athletics, our town could kick your town's ass with nary a barn nor bridge put to righteous torch. And to be tall and young and male and white in 1967 Muncie -- and totally disinterested in basketball -- was to be a huge Hoosier disappointment.

Instead of squeaking around on sacred gym floors, autistically bouncing balls and yacking and jacking off in communal showers with my teammates, i wrote articles and features for the cheesy little school paper that was dittoed-off every Thursday afternoon for the edification of largely illiterate students. i took it very seriously and was plunged into angst-riddled miasmas of

*(continued page 22)*



(continued from page 21 ...) resentment and frustration when the doddering newspaper sponsor -- a jowly old McCarthyite who was so Republican that he trumpeted when he farted -- would reject my writings as "too controversial", "too negative" or "too irreverant". My core value was the dynamic truth as manifested in the written word (as opposed to the hollow hoopla of penetrated hoops) and i grumbled and moped as my mighty mouth was constrained by ever-tightening administrative muzzles.

Fortunately, i tended to haunt hang-outs and hell-dens as distant from my high school wasteland as possible; i was a common sight at the campus coffee shops and meeting places where the more progressive students slurped espressos, chugged cheap beers, read frightening poetry and ranted long into the night about equalities and injustices, real and

trashed on Valium by two p.m. and Dad had graduated to three martinis upon his return from the rat race. Nevertheless, Sis shook her cupcakes in the cheering section with her stainless-steel maidenhead forever intact. (And, yes, Bubby dented the family sedan last Friday at the post-game kegger, but he'll work it off with his paper route and mowing lawns next summer. The American dream is alive and realized right here, right now! All those big-city problems ... those uppity coloreds, those easy girls who don't wear bras, those toilet-mouthed folksingers and hop-heads ... they're all a million miles away from Muncie ..!)

NOT!

Those questionable herbs -- once exclusively the province of blues and jazz play-

**"... he free-associated, he paced, he made diabolical and often inaudible asides ..."**

imagined. i orbited constantly along the outer tracks of their political trajectories; i was slowly assimilated -- first as an oddity, then as a mascot and ultimately as an ally -- into their cognitive cabal. (Let me clarify: these were not razor-cut frat-rats planning their next excursion into the unacceptable but accessible realms of Pabst Blue Ribbon beer and sorority snatch ... no, these were beatnik-spawned malcontents, carrying crucifixions of social atrocities on their rolled-up sleeves ... carrying the weight of a wayward world in their furrowed brows ... and carrying DRUGS!)

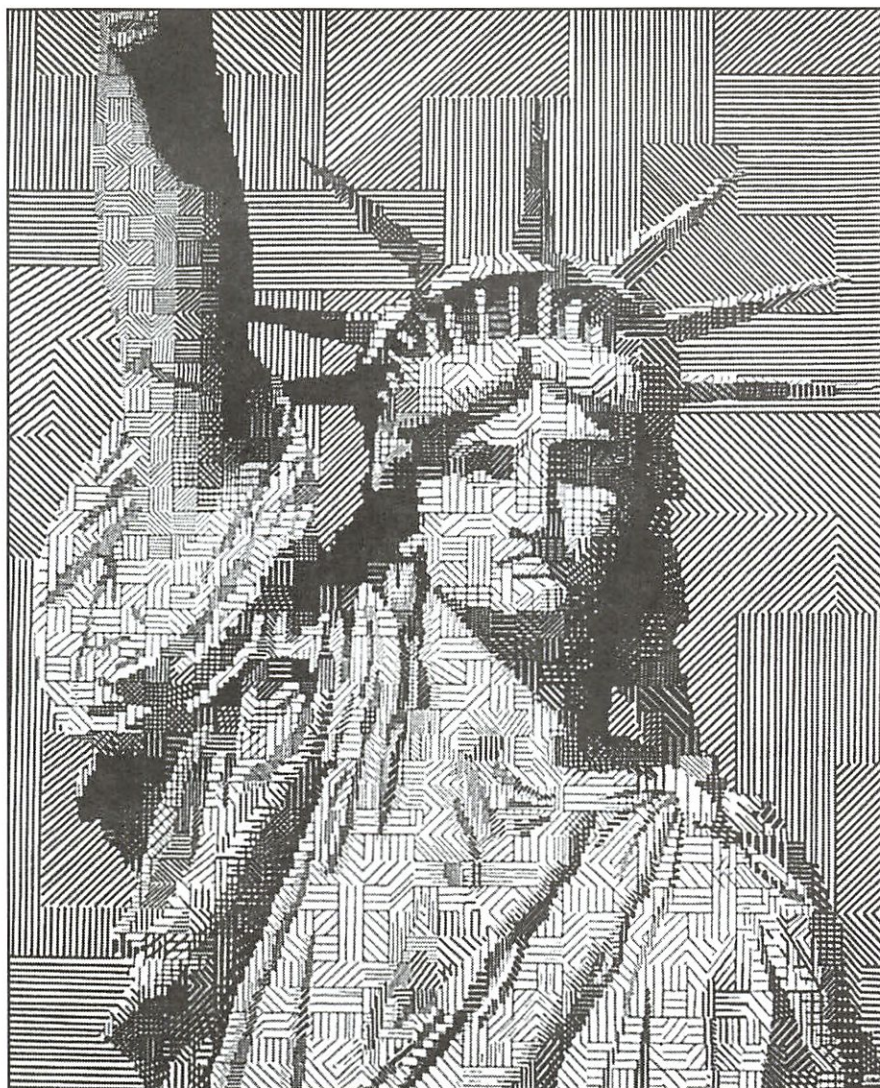
In 1967 Muncie, Indiana (the dreary underbelly of America) the cultural nausea of sweeping change that brought the country to its knees had not yet registered. "Coloreds" still sat at the back of the bus and even had their own corroding movie theater. Barbers added chairs to their corner shops in order to accomodate the baby-booming business provided by a generation of pimply adolescents whose flat-tops were less than starchily vertical. Mom was usually

ers in the barbecue joints of Darktown -- were filtering into the suburbs. The Augustus Owsley Overland Acid Express, campus-hopping between San Francisco and New York, made regular stops at the Dugout, the Catacombs and the Talley-Ho. Elvis gave way to Jimi, haircut money was spent on Romilar cough syrup (loaded with legal Codeine) and Asthsmadora cigarettes (bulging with bel-ladonna). Shaggy, non-team teens, blitzed out of their skulls, shivered behind their rictus grins and phosphorous eyes at snow-choked bus stops. "Little Red Books" replaced furtive, sticky-paged Playboy's under Bubby's mattress and Sis had traded her Paul McCartney poster with the glowering androgynous visage of Jim Morrison. O, we got trouble ... right here in Brown River City ..!

An "underground" newspaper, known as The Only Alternative, was periodically published in someone's rented basement and distributed in coffeehouses and on street corners. The University administrators (including several third-generation Balls) were aghast and denounced the publication as immoral,

(continued page 23)





(continued from page 22 ...) inciting and irresponsible. The sanctioned and stodgy Ballister -- a literary institution for nearly one hundred years -- was surely respectable enough to service as a student publication. "This smarmy scandal-sheet" the old prunes proclaimed, "This ill-conceived and poorly printed abomination is an atrocity! And here -- in its very pages -- are nasty, outrageous, cynical writings by a mere child ... a high school youth ... ranting about censorship and racism and sexual misdeeds of teachers and too much else! Atop all this, this filthy rag has somehow managed to invite -- and procure -- a queer, Jewish, drug-addled, revolutionary New York poet to our very town, our very campus to deliver a lecture! This will not be tolerated, now or ever

..."

i sat near the front of an audience of eight-hundred people (both the curious and the convinced) and watched a short, pudgy, mild-mannered, well-dressed man manipulate the elements of time and space into an elastic, electric substance i had never before imagined. He spoke from behind a battered podium on the stage of a cramped community center as the entire police force, in full riot dress, milled aimlessly outside. He read selections of poetry (Howl!, Kaddish and embryonic excerpts from Reality Sandwiches), he free-associated, he paced, he made diabolical and often inaudible asides ... he chanted along with his harmonium, he allowed his words and images to rise to roar and diminish to a whisper ... he hypnotized a hall full of Hoosiers and made them graciously love it ...

Later, at a question-and-answer session, i patiently

waited with my pen poised in my upraised hand. Peering over his horn-rimmed glasses, he finally indicated it was my turn to speak.

"i represent The Only Alternative ..." (smattering of applause), "a local independent paper ... and our readers would be interested in knowing ..."

He slowly raised his hand, smiling, silencing me ...

"My dear boy," he softly intoned. "You have missed my entire point ... by definition, there can be no 'only' alternative ..."

by Erik Kraven



# California Sun

The California sun burns down from overhead. It scorches a young man as he walks towards his destination. He has a girl on his mind. A pretty Mexican girl, simple in outward appearance and yet untouched by traditional beauty, so that something about her is so striking that she is unforgettable. She is beautiful, but not in the sense of a billboard model- her beauty is unique, unforgettable and anything but conventional.

There is something compelling in the way that she looks, an intriguing beauty that is not generally seen in society. She has an alluring style that has trapped young Robert Milne. The vision of her face is before him, keeping his mind ablaze with thoughts. If she was before him, he knows that he could walk faster.

Only she is not before him, so his eyes, like his stomach remain empty. Her dark skin and black hair wash over his memories, a fuel that can only provide for his body, not his mind. Ironically, his body is the single object he can think about. A margarita, a soda, a Fresca- all these are drinks that he would kill for, if only to temporarily satisfy a thirst for which his dry mouth screams.

As Robert travels forward in his deeply sown desire for a drink, he takes note of the arid landscape. Among sidewalks and street signs plants are sparse. And those that he does see, buried in rough patches of



art by amelia reising

not want their responsibility.

What he wants, the only thing he wants, is his Mexican girl. Maria, is that her name? It doesn't matter, because pretty and insignificant in the engulfing and massive city, she is the object of his longing. She is like a nourishing oasis, his purification in a desert bathing under the California sun. The city he lives in, the pit of Los Angeles,

**"Stoplights are wilting, buildings dying, with the immense light towering over people."**

grass, are dead for dying in the heat that shrivels anything with water to spare.

All is scorched, burned from the heat of the bright California star- a sun that shines up above, destroying all beneath it. Stoplights are wilting, buildings dying, with the immense light towering over people. The workers, more pathetic than ants, are minuscule as they drag towards destinations that Robert cannot understand. Or is it their destiny? Whatever the end result is, he does

is dry. The stars he sought are bright, but the hope is gone; the bright lights are not the city, but the stars we cannot reach.

These thoughts that crush the spirit in mind, Robert is not regretful. Instead he is optimistic, so that when he reaches her the reunion will only be that much sweeter. The interaction he anticipates will be like the illusionary oasis in a desert, an unforgettable honey-wet pool of blue water, more



luscious than the mangoes of tropical dreams, She will be de...lic...ious.

Robert Milne steps forward, the lust for a Mexican girl in his mouth, now coming quickly closer to his destination. He walks up the sidewalk, looking across the street, and sees the object of his quest. A small cantina, dirty and unnoticeable is what he seeks. A light in his eyes now, his mind is ablaze with closeness, and he searches.

Spotting an opening, he rushes into the street, in between the crazy traffic that flies by. Cars scream by in their mechanical need to reach the next gas station. Robert gets through the onslaught, running.

on her hip, arguing with a customer. Is she really just a waitress?

"What the fuck are you trying to pull, huh? You think you can get a beer without paying for it? I'm sorry honey, you ain't that good looking."

She walks away, leaving the customer in a puddle of self-pity. Robert is also left wallowing, thinking of what he could say.

"Maria, you're beautiful. You need something better. Let me take you away from this place, steal your soul from this monstrous city that is destroying you..."

But these words are not spoken, they are only his thoughts. Inconsequential, mean-

## **"Cars scream in their mechanical need to reach the next gas station. Robert gets through the onslaught of metal, running."**

He hops up on the sidewalk, sweat pouring down his exhausted face.

His cheeks are burning red, his face filled with desire. The bar is just steps away, within the reach of his tense, grasping hands. Three steps forward, right turn, two steps more, and he is finally inside. The dimly lit bar surrounds him. Sought after idol, which was trekked after for so long, is all cigarette smoke and empty beer bottles. Santana in the background, drunk fools trying to play pool, an assault of senses are shocking. Sight is struggling to readjust from the bright sun outside, smell is overwhelmed by smoke and beer, taste only yearns, and touch is numb.

And then Robert catches sight of her. The Mexican woman which he searched for, of immeasurable beauty and incredible taste... she is no longer beautiful, not at all immeasurable. She is, in the most simple terms, average.

She stands in a slouch, her once wondrous brown hair a mess, with her mouth pressed shut, her breasts hanging sadly, clothes bunched up and clinging to the wrong places and an overall appearance that says she is nothing. What was once divine has now succumbed to her surroundings; she is placid.

Among swaggering sunburned drunks and hundreds of bottles, she stands, hand cocked

ingless thoughts, he says to himself, watching what was once beautiful, embodied in a woman, walking towards the dirty bar counter. He is stunned, his mouth dry, his spirit gone. She is troubled, standing on an island of fish tacos and Budweiser in California, dark hair dishevelled, red lips pursed, shoulders slumped, breasts sagging, stomach pushed out, legs moving slowly and feet in high heels dragging, looking pitiful. Robert cannot bear to see her in such a reduced state, knocked down from the pedestal in his mind.

So he looks out of the bar window, tinted and smudged to block out the bright California sun. Small people are scurrying about, shielding themselves from a Hollywood reality with sunglasses and ideas of fame. He looks away, and then he moves onward.

Outside, deafened by the heat, Robert drags his body down the street. He needs to have his thirst quenched. He needs something to shield him from the burning California sun.

**by Eli Trompeter**

1999 • 30 Years • 25



About the time that Time began, before the thought of God or Man,  
 in a common set of centuries connecting into synergy  
 some molecules and energies by chance fell into place  
 and space was warmed as matter formed, glowed in darkness, stewed and stormed  
 (a few chaotic incidents, cohesive by coincidence)  
 and something moved unknowing in the cosmic ebb and flow ...  
 something tried and died and tried again and learned to grow  
 and this simple seed succeeded for it yearned to be exposed  
 to the answers to the questions its environment did pose.

And as the eons passed like hours the simple one-celled flowers multiplied  
 (the strong ones lived, the weak ones died)  
 as relentless tides of changes rearranged them with persistence  
 genetically compounding and complexing their existence  
 confounding and perplexing both The Wiggler and the Whale.  
 Revolutions followed, as evolution swallowed up  
 the trilobite and troglodyte, but still the flames were fanned ...  
 the fish had crawled upon the land where giants' bones sank into sand;  
 the common bond between them was their urge to understand  
 the mysteries and miseries and miracles of life.

And at the summit of the scale a beast did somehow lose its tail and  
 gained the gift of Insight: like a light the power to Reason it received,  
 and it stood erect, and patterns were perceived!  
 (Perhaps it ate the mushrooms where the wild cattle grazed ...  
 perhaps a voice from Elsewhere echoed through the dim-lit haze ...  
 perhaps a liquid in his brain was suddenly congealed,  
 but somehow the continuum was partially revealed.)  
 and revelations raged in him, connections were engaged  
 and simple truths did open worlds that once a flat reality concealed ...

And so, to share the new-found news, the Man consorted with the Muse:  
 in parable and allegory tried to tell a friend the story ...  
 took his knowledge vague and grand and --  
 using words at his command -- told a tale to travel through the land.  
 (A concept even fools could understand.)  
 So he made of it an entity, gave it an identity, a name, a face, a chosen race,  
 theologies of Sin and Grace  
 and soon adjacent nations had imposed their own translations ...  
 imaginations formed their variations on the theme.  
 But dreams demand definition, and political ambitions





## Revelation 9:9 art by Daniel Morgan

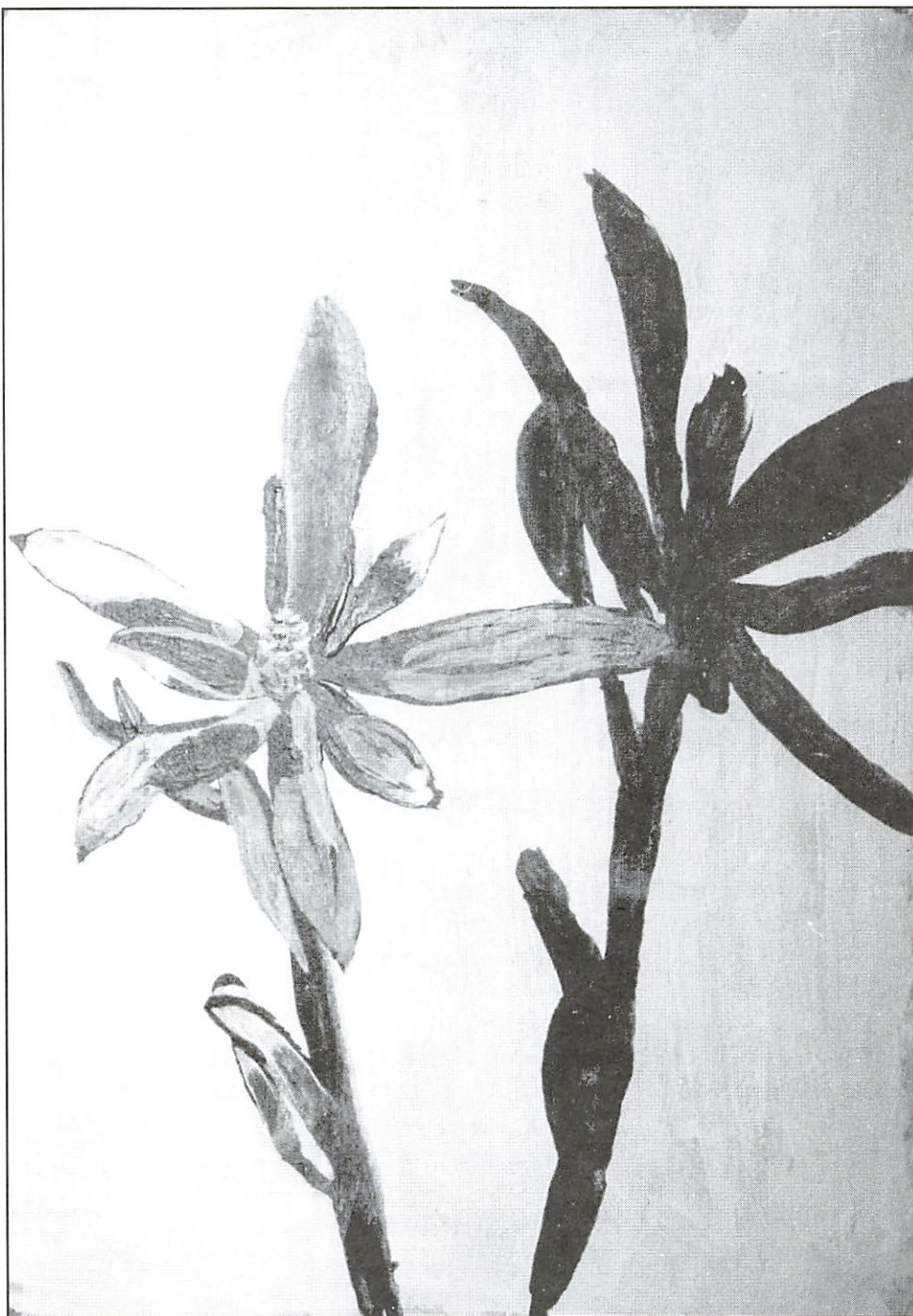
set the stage for competition between the shades of grey  
 as they screamed their priestly prattle down the gory roads of battle ...  
 the women were raped and (of course) the children cried  
 as the old men thought and the young men fought and died.  
 The banners raised, the axes fell 'tween heretic and infidel ...  
 witches burned as stones were rolled past ikons splashed with blood and gold ...  
 pilgrims panted, prophets ranted, around the gates the shaman chanted  
 'neath pagan heads impaled on righteous wall  
 just to prove that their Supremo was the most supreme of all ...  
 So ...

fill your hand with sand and cast it high into the sky  
 and if it falls back to the beach, beyond your sight, beyond your reach  
 the random distribution will -- no doubt -- be misconstrued:  
 The lowly crab will crown you king, and of your glory fish will sing  
 as humble sand-fleas worship at your feet  
 and pagan plankton armies meet their justified defeat  
 'neath a juggernaut of shellfish all emblazoned with your Name  
 as the seagulls shriek above you all proclaiming how they love you  
 as they shove each other earthward to protect you from your shame...

by Erik Kraven



**Flower Still by James Whitaker**



**by Jessica Parsons**

**untitled**

bruise the liquid avenue  
you say you will my love  
but after day use for him  
your loose lips consume his tongue  
see the dry winter burn my man away  
yet you run these dirty evening people to dust  
full song from slice out  
A thing of beauty but the bouquet is dark



by Sarah Keller

## Hell and high water

Harbored, my heart had so hoped to hit the highway and sail on into another night of delight ... or morning, or mid-afternoon, or late evening -- I wasn't picky except when it came to whom I wanted to do with me what summer did with grapevines and sunshine -- He, who planted a seed on the rich soil of my lips and moistened it magically -- He, who tickled my ears with tantalizing words so soft and whisperly to make me smiley, maybe unintentionally, but still intensely all the same -- He who then left and left me to this game I'm losing, I'm choosing, -- No shame did I ever know, but on him it seemed to grow like a weed in need -- feeding on fear -- it was clear I had lost something I never had, it made me sad and mistaken -- those moments had been taken for granted -- the conscious dream, my disease -- on my knees I fell, the swell of his excitement fresh out of my mind's oven -- the arousing aroma of pure passion, unrefined, limitless, free to just be -- still comatosing, intoxicating

Dawn of Every Day

My awareness rising with the sun,  
stretching my mind and worked muscles.  
Mr. Coffee calls me to breakfast,  
with the anticipation for a cup of ambition.  
Spoon and fork in my grasp,  
hungry teeth await the meal of beginning.  
Yearning for a fresh spirit,  
cold feet step into the shower of warm thoughts.  
After wetting my appetite,  
I dry my humor with terry cloth resistance.  
It is time for a new set of views,  
donning myself with textile persistence.  
Out the door turning to lock in secrets,  
I descend the stairs of responsibility.  
Waiting at the bus stop of opportunity,  
with strangers and friends old and new.  
Packed on the transport of frequent pauses,  
exchanges of personality on the way to discovery.  
New developments among scheduled learning,  
coalescent mixings of brains and ideas.  
Leaders and followers with noise and silence,  
presentations of vivid beliefs and questions.  
In the middle of busy feet,  
fountains spurt life into concrete foundation.  
Twisting fates of pretzel destinies,  
I halt to reflect upon munchable tendencies.  
Timed defenses behind shy glances,  
hello's and goodbye's for temporary time-lapses.  
I revel in a good day's study.



# denali submission form

• **Completion of this form does not guarantee publication.** All works are submitted to an editorial board, which chooses works for a variety of reasons, including, but not limited to, style, skill, statement, and what the board members ate for breakfast. Everyone is welcome to join the editorial board to put in his or her two cents (someday, we hope to have a whole dollar), and artists and authors are welcome to sit in on meetings to enjoy a hearty helping of constructive criticism. Pieces chosen by the board will be published and the magazine will acquire one-time rights. After publication, all rights revert to the author or artist.

• *Denali Magazine* accepts all *original* submissions of art and writing regardless of medium, style, subject matter, or content. But there are a few guidelines:

- \* Please make every effort to typeset your written submissions, and double-space essays and fiction.
- \* High-contrast artworks and black & white photography work best for our black & white format. Keep this in mind when submitting art for possible publication.
- \* Plagiarism (copying someone else's work) will not be tolerated.
- \* Fill out the form below completely, and include a short biographical statement on the back. Anyone not including a biographical statement with their work will have one created for them by our maniacally creative staff.
- \* Turn your submissions in to one of our Denali offices: IT 213 or CEN 479f by the deadline. **No exceptions!**

*Denali Art and Literary Magazine, IT 213, 4000 E. 30<sup>th</sup> Ave., Eugene, Oregon, 97405, (541) 747-4501 ext. 2897*

name: \_\_\_\_\_ pseudonym (pen name): \_\_\_\_\_

address: \_\_\_\_\_

telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

title(s) of work(s): \_\_\_\_\_

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I authorize Denali to publish my work in the magazine, *should it be accepted by the editorial board.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**deadline:  
may 07,  
1999  
5:00 pm**

# • contributors' page •

**Kenneth Brady** wants to be the girl with the most cake.

**Emily Chasm Calema** is not the girl you think she is.

**Kristen Deluga** is a part-time student who has been taking classes for the past year and a half. Main interest is painting, but enjoys exploring other areas.

**Christopher Duca** once climbed Mount Everest "to see what he could see."

**Heather Edwards** is a sophomore literature and political science major at LCC.

**Sarah Keller** thinks that frogs should cut albums.

**Erik Kraven** is an aging professional student who attends Lane in order to escape the work force, and who writes and composes in order to save money otherwise spent on life-long vices. He has an equally aging dog named Doobie, a dead lizard, a long-suffering partner, and thirteen children, including strays and "package deals". His primary ambition is to rack up a fortune in student loans and die before repayment.

**Imson Kel** remembers the good old days when you could still see the stars from downtown.

**Adam Louie** was born slippy.

**Mary Ann Martin** is prone to bouts of eccentricity.

**Katie Mathweg** sings Barry Manilow songs in the shower.

**Daniel Morgan** is really Superman. Damn you and your lies, Clark Kent!

**Jon Morgan** used to be a pearl diver but forgot how to hold his breath.

**Brian Owsley** was born, wrote, lived, then lived again.

**Jessica Parsons** is currently in training to become a lounge singer in Vegas.

**Patrick Strautman's** turn-ons include: Kiwi-Strawberry Snapple, a sense of humor, and the rain. His turn-offs include Pamela Lee Anderson, The GAP, and low self-esteem.

**Eli Trompeter** is a student who aspires to write.

**J. Matthew Tully** is from everywhere. Been here a year, "Still struggling through reality's cold grasp."

**Lubo Vatchkov** came to LCC from Bulgaria six months ago. He previously lived two years in Japan, and is currently majoring in Graphic Design. Likes different sports and listening to music.

**James Whitaker** wishes he'd paid more attention during the alien abduction.

**Wes Wightman** wants to die like Jesus Christ.