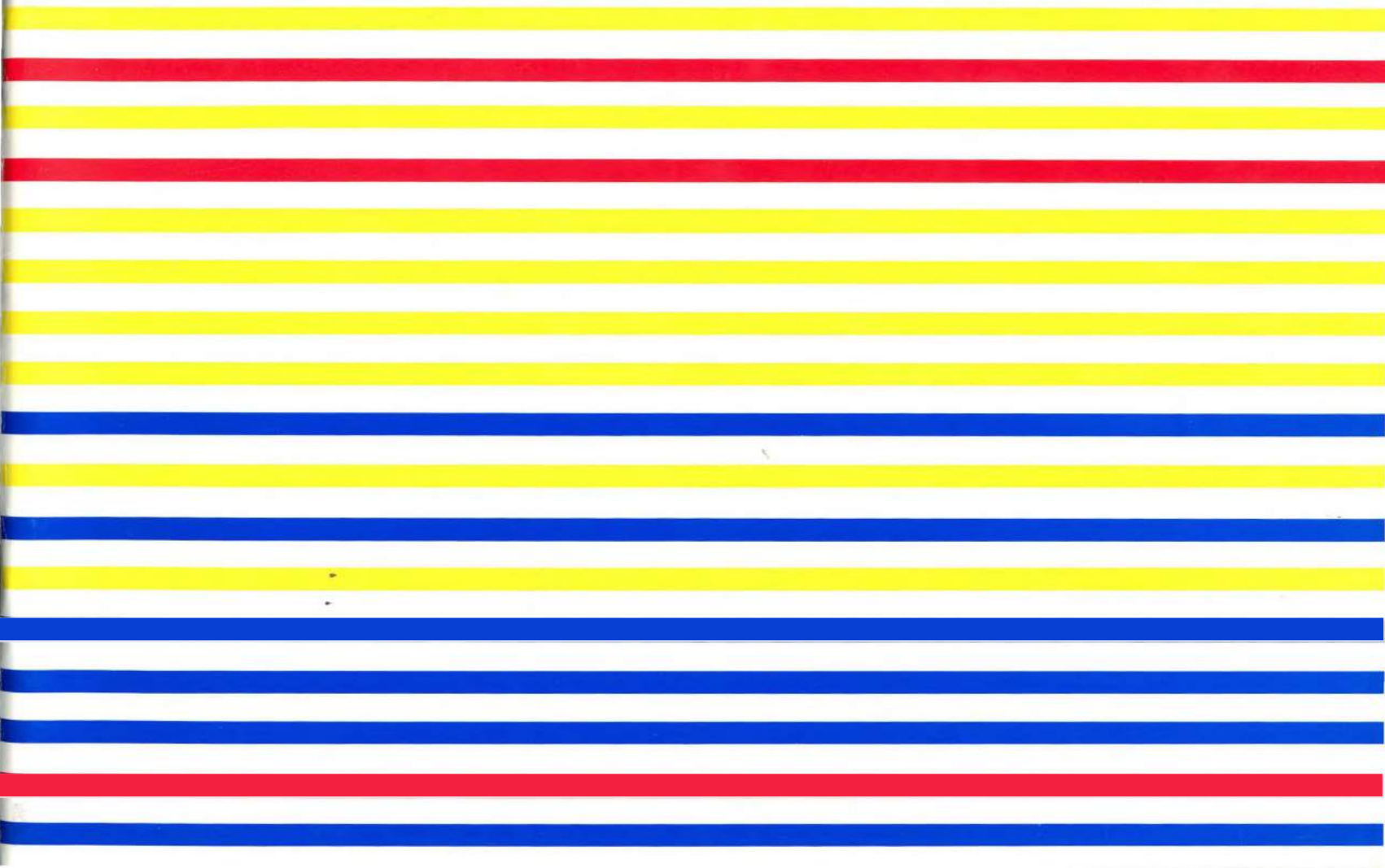


POINT OF VIEW
1986-1987



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This issue marks Ken Dahlberg's last year as Faculty Advisor for the *Point of View* magazine. We would like to thank him for his dedication and hard work.

—The Editors

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Point of View
1986-1987

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How Do I Love Thee?

Michael Charles Hammers

Chubby old broad's a body of jello,
yellow teeth, rat white hair,
varicose veins that throb
like the tell tale heart.
I love your mother.

She favors sweets to furs
which I guess is a blessing.
Bowling's her passion,
she enjoys the
ha, ha, ha,
fashion.

Ah, but she doesn't ask for
much.
Yeah, she's got what she wants.
We're bounded by . . .
We're bounded by a
ring.

I guess it's hard to
put up,
I mean
put in words
the way I feel.
Then again, I could be
alone.



Katie Pluth
Untitled

Purpose of a Habit

Lisa Langkan

It twists and turns and curls,
Thinning as it climbs higher.
And before it reaches any point,
It breaks, and fades away.
The red ring falls down the stick
And ashes crumble down.

A cracking throat,
A hacking cough.
A yellow smile,
And reddened eyes.
Sophistication and beauty
At its finest.

The burning stopped,
And the smoke is gone.
Your mind is empty . . .
But not for long.
So you light another
And inhale the smoke.
And as the death burns your insides,
What for
Is all I wonder.



Julie Eggert
Untitled



Senses Awry

Christine Andrews

*Deaf ears that hear only cries from within,
I'm shouting, listen, please.*

*Blind eyes that see only straight ahead,
I'm behind you, you've tread on me.*

*Closed sinuses, with nasal voices,
Why do you crinkle when I pass?*

*Tongues with costly, acquired tastes,
Your scars crisscross my back.*

*Fingers so used to the touch of satin,
Touch me, I am not rough.*

*Your unjustified, harsh ideologies,
Echo throughout your cavernous chests.*

Kym Damasco
Sky Lights

Consider the Source

Michael Charles Hammers

"Oh Lord," he shouted,
"let this Dark Continent
shed light on our covered past!"

He had wandered
Hot Hadar every year
for four summer months
of the last four years.

His colleagues and friends had parted like the
Red Sea.

Grants and funds had dwindled
down like his body weight
250

200

150

Soon
he'd exist
on the native Ethiopian diet.
Nothing.

Bedraggled,
dust covered
skin baked red,
crispy,
like the edges of burnt ravioli,
ready to crack.

But,
like Ahab,
he searched
for a clue,
a trail,
a sign.

"Four fucking m-o-n-t-h-s!"
Salty tears began to trickle

down his scraggly bearded cheeks.
"Four fucking y-e-a-r-s!"
He deliriously drooped to his knees,
forced to worship the desert sun.

Saw Spin Wobble Weave

"Them bones, them bones,
them beef bones.

Ha, ha, ha, ha!
Here's Lucy!
Johanson you bastard!
Australopithecus my ass!

I hope Leakey's right!
Here Lucy, Here Lucy,
I love Lucy!
What am I?
Am I Ricky Ricardo?
I am what I am.
Necrophelia would be nice,
I'd like to try it once or twice!
God, I need something to carbon date.
Hamlet, Henry's wives, Hemingway's head.
Wait, Whoah, What's this?
The jawbone of an ass!
To be or not to be?"

"I'm not, I've been."

"Whaaaat!"

"That's right asshole, it's me.
You're talking to an ass, don't you see?
O.K., so I'm not a poet.
Jack, Jack, Jack?"

"Had I three ears I'd hear thee!
Out, out damned spot!"

"Jack, cut the Shakespeare.
I'm not an armed head

**nor a bloody child.
I'm just an ass
quite meek, quite mild.
Ha, ha, ha, ha!
How about three wishes?
Nah, that's been done."**

*"I'm searching this forsaken inferno
for the source of man.
Where does he come from?
Why is he here?
Where is he going?
What will he be?"*

**"That's four questions, not three.
I'm sorry for acting like a god,
for bouncing you
like a helpless pinball
to
and fro side to
side,
for not allowing you
to divine my purpose."**

*"Hmm, I suspect you date from
the time of Christ.
Magnificent mandible!
that's when I'd date you.
Give or take a thousand years, of course."*

**"Way off course!
I'm ashamed to say I never dated.
I never danced the dance
that lovers do,
I'm a human hybrid,
a non-fucking mule.
Give or take a thousand . . .
Man wants to know
What isn't shown
and leaky faucets dribble**

**When they may be stopped
But man chooses drivel."**

*"You easily alliterate
my noble work as drivel
and compare it negative to dribble.
I should expect that from an ass."*

**"While you search barren waste land
and ancient fossil rock
for hollow footprints
and brittle bones
the Ethiopians,
the peons you dig up,
work for surplus grain
from silos back home.
Silos back home
filled with grain that gingerly
spills over the rim
like yuppie cappaccino.
For what!
Another theory,
Another page,
A chair at Harvard?
Behold, I'll make you immortal!"**

*"Class, if you look carefully
in the Hadar display case
you'll find the famous remains
of paleontologist Jack Headstrong
fabled to have been eaten by
famished Ethiopians during
one of his many fruitless
excursions to hot Hadar."*

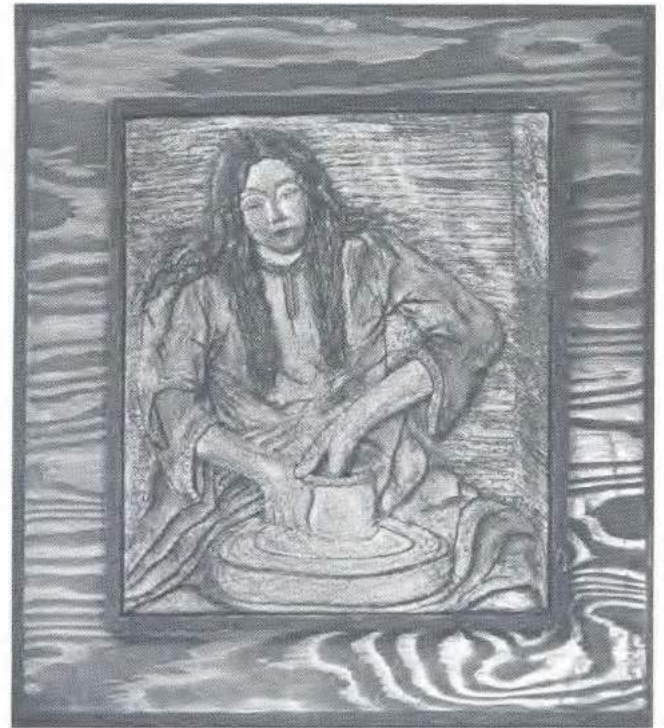
"What about the jawbone?"

*"Magnificent mandible!
Probably dates back to the time of Christ,
give or take a thousand years."*



Kym Damasco
Waiting at the Airport

Eugenia Makowski
The Potter





David G. Gentry
Raku Vessel

Some Thoughts about Poetry

The following essay was written by Gene Kimmet, Chairman of Harper's Economics Department. In addition to being an economics professor, he is also author of a book of poetry, In Fee Simple.

What makes good poetry? This is not an easy question to answer since poetry, like any other art form, tends to be subjectively judged by the reader, whose response is determined by his or her own background and literary experience. There are, however, certain qualities which tend to occur with regularity in most published work and certain things that almost never occur. Most writers agree that a "good" poem is one that the reader wants to read more than one time.

There seem to be two separate elements that somehow need to be blended in just the right way to produce poetry that is publishable and that lasts. A technical skill must be in evidence, and the poet must have something to say that the reader can identify with and be willing to respond to.

The technical ability necessitates a competency in vocabulary and the capacity to say no more or less than is necessary to evoke the desired response in the reader. The key here is compactness, the ability to condense the message or image into the simplest form that still retains clarity and flow. I like to think of this as a "spareness" which, if one is lucky enough to achieve it, produces a clear message or image with a small number of words.

Most poets I know rewrite their poems many times before they feel satisfied with them. The deletion of a single word, a punctuation change, a change in where a line ends, can transform a poem that is not quite right into a finished product. Getting a poem ninety percent finished is much easier than completing the last ten percent. Writing poetry, like any other art form, requires time and discipline. A good vocabulary is a

requisite, but hard work and care are also needed to produce a truly finished product.

In addition to technical competence, the poet must have something to say that the reader wants to share. The message from the writer must be grounded in personal experience and knowledge if it is to be believable. Lisel Mueller, one of my favorite poets, has a whole series of poems based on variations and twists of Old World fairy tales. These beautifully written pieces with their alternate joys and sadnesses, their mixture of truth and fantasy, could only have been written by someone whose heritage and experience was steeped in the folklore of that part of the world.

The experience or image the poet proposes must also be one the reader is willing to accept. The typical reader is no more interested in reading something that wallows in self pity, hate, cynicism, or vindictiveness, than they would be in having lunch with someone who concentrates on these emotions. The ability to evoke a desired response without belaboring the reader about the head and shoulders is a difficult task that requires long practice.

I am sometimes described as a "regional" writer. I'm not sure that I like this description because I try to deal with universal themes. Most of my poems, however, emanate from Midwest experiences because I have spent most of my life here.

I am personally interested in writing poetry whose syllabic form generates a sound when read. In terms of content, I try to develop something that offers the reader more than one level of meaning, a juxtaposition of two thoughts or images. In the following poem I attempt to relate what seems to be the great differences between the discipline and detachment of mathematics and the pure emotion involved in killing a pheasant, into a universal theme.

Calculus

*If the speed and height of a pheasant
killed instantly by a gun in the hands
of an untaught boy, is given to someone
with a skill in numbers, the curve
toward earth can be retraced, minus
the colors, sounds, smells.*

*A pencilled line, black on white,
a perfect parabolic path. A craft
that strips existence from events.*

In another poem titled "Pictures in a Cherry County Museum" I noticed a relationship between the rolling water in the Niobrara river in the sand hills of Nebraska and the beautiful names of Indian chiefs pictured in a museum. By carefully selecting these real names, the second stanza has exactly seven syllables in each line, giving me a desired effect:

*Their names tumble like the water
of the Niobrara that threads
the sand hills of Nebraska, flanks
the scarred land of South Dakota.*

*White Crane Walking, Turning Bear,
Poor Dog, Crow Dog, Stranger Horse,
Two Strike, He Dog, Hollow Horn.*

The rest of the poem deals with social themes related to the plight of these people, but I wanted to add the dimension of sound and order to the thought itself.

I am of the opinion that it is almost impossible to teach someone how to write poetry. The best route to success in this field is reading poetry, observing, and accepting criticism from those with some expertise in the field. The best critics are not necessarily writers themselves. Writing and criticism are two different skills. Developing the tolerance to accept good criticism is one of the most difficult steps in the pursuit of quality writing. This is a discipline and, like other disciplines, requires hard work and tenacity as well as talent.

Eugenia Makowski
Girl in White



James Iha
Flag

Close

Joseph Leonas

It was almost dusk. The three boys were inside their tent getting their shower kits together. The sound of the wind starting to pick up just about muffled out the noises of the surrounding campers, who were getting their grills ready and rounding up their kids for supper. This was the time the camp ground seemed its busiest. The entrance was usually blocked by cars coming back from the water slides and go-cart tracks, and the exit was filled with hungry families sick of barbecued hot dogs and in search of the House of Pancakes. The three boys, who were on their last night of their week-long vacation, knew the routine, and also knew that this was the perfect time to hit the showers, since they would be virtually empty.

“Ready yet?” Hank asked.

“Almost,” Dennis answered, searching for his toothbrush.

“Looking for your towel?” asked Hank sarcastically.

“Shut up, Hank!” Dennis answered without looking at him.

“I still can’t believe you forgot your towel,” Hank said as he started to laugh.

“Hey man, you say that one more time”

“Come on, guys; let’s not start again, huh?” said Benny, stepping in.

“That’s what I keep saying, but dumb shit over here won’t let up,” stated Dennis.

“Jesus, you’d think on our last night in Wisco you guys could cut the shit just once.”

“Come on. I’m ready,” Dennis said, still not looking up at Hank.

“Come on, Denny, lighten up. I was only kidding around,” Hank said, slapping Dennis on the back.

“Let’s go.”

The three of them unzipped the tent and got out.

“God, it’s freezing out here,” Hank said, wrapping his towel around his neck.

“Well, maybe if you put on your shirt instead of walking around like ‘Mr. Stud’ you wouldn’t freeze your balls off so quickly,” Dennis said as they started to walk to the showers.

But Hank gave no reply except to grab his genitals mockingly to Dennis’s comment. They made their way down the gravel path and then cut through a couple of campsites to get to “Yogi’s Comfort Station.” And by now Hank’s joke about what a stupid name “Comfort Station” was for a bathroom had gone stale. And hearing it for the eighteenth time, Dennis gritted his teeth.

Once inside the comfort station, they disrobed and entered the showers.

“God, I hope we don’t run into any stabbers tonight,” Hank shouted, making his voice heard over the running water.

Benny and Dennis just chuckled and agreed to Hank’s comment. Then, as the quiet returned, Dennis thought back to the first time he had ever heard Hank use the term “stabber.” It was the first and last time he had visited Hank down at I.S.U.

“Hey, Denny, come on in. Great to see you. Hey, what took you so long to get here?”

“Well, traffic was bad, and the elevator took twenty minutes to come down. Someone said that some guys were sneaking a keg onto one of the floors.”

“Yeah, it’s kind of a bitch to get those things up here. Well, come on in and grab a beer.”

Dennis entered Hank’s dorm room and saw that he was having a party. Instantly, he was alone. Hank had left him to go to the bathroom, or at least that’s what Dennis assumed. Now he was in a small cubicle with what seemed like a hundred nameless people. He stood in the corner pressed between the closet and the door. No introductions were passed, save a few glances every now and then. Finally, Hank made it back into the room, singing the lyrics to some song that Dennis didn’t know. As he

pushed his way past Dennis he head-butted a few guys and slapped a few of the girls' asses. Even with the return of Hank, Dennis still felt like an outsider. Here was Hank, his best friend since freshman year in high school, and now it was as though they didn't know each other.

"Hey, buddy, come on in and meet everyone," Hank yelled across the room. "Come on in. See, that's your problem — you're too shy!"

"Hey, this is Mike, and that's Paul, Felicia, Sharon, oh and Rick, Patty, and that's . . ."

Dennis looked around, not knowing who Hank was pointing to. As Hank trailed off, Dennis heard his name and then some smartass comment about his sexual preferences. He half waved to everyone surrounding him, knowing that they couldn't give two shits as he searched for a place to sit.

"Grab a chair from one of the lounges," Hank said insistently.

As Dennis made his way out of the room he heard someone ask Hank if Dennis was a stabber.

"No, he's cool," Hank replied with a grin. Once Dennis made it out of the door, he sighed heavily, and felt as though he'd just entered the twilight zone. Behind him were a roomful of people he didn't know, and someone he thought he knew. Now he was supposed to go to the lounge, wherever the hell that was, and steal a chair.

Walking through the halls and searching for the lounge, he could hear music blasting from the rooms.

"What a madhouse," Dennis thought to himself. Knocking on one of the open doors, he interrupted some guys working on their stereo. After asking how to get to the lounge, he promptly received mixed directions. After being led to the bathroom and then a janitor's closet he came upon the lounge and, as instructed, he snatched a chair and dragged it back to Hank's room.

Opening the door, proudly displaying his conquest, he looked to see that almost everyone had left. The four people remaining burst out laughing and again he heard the phrase "he's a stab-

ber" being placed upon him. This time his curiosity got to him and he asked what the hell "stabber" meant.

"Butt stabber," some girl said, giggling.

"What's a butt stabber?" Dennis questioned further.

"A homo," said Hank. "You just look like a homo."

Again the laughter started, but Dennis stood there silently, feeling almost betrayed by his one-time best friend. He lowered the chair and sat down. He knew now that things had changed between him and Hank, and he only wished that Benny was there to see it. They no longer shared the same friends, and no longer shared the same jokes. And right before his eyes, he could see their friendship beginning to crumble.

"Well, maybe I expected too much from Hank," Dennis thought, turning off the shower. "After all, he didn't really do anything; it was just the way he acted, so . . . different."

After toweling off, Dennis moved out of the shower stall and approached an empty sink. Taking out his toothbrush and razor, he could hear Hank singing "My Girl" out of key. Benny came out of the shower next and grabbed the sink next to Dennis.

"So, ya ready for tonight?" Benny questioned.

"Yeah, I think so," Dennis answered, after which he stuck the brush full of Crest into his mouth.

As they stood at the sinks with their backs to the showers, Hank came out with a sly grin on his face. Benny saw him in the mirror just in time to escape being hit by the rat's tail that Hank had made with his towel. Hank then contemplated hitting Dennis, but decided to turn his attention to admiring himself in the mirror.

"God, am I good looking or what?" Hank asked rhetorically.

"What," Dennis answered through the foam in his mouth.

"Very funny," Hank said as he too then started the routine with his toothbrush.

After spitting out the remaining toothpaste in his mouth, Dennis grabbed the can of shaving cream and started to shake it.

“When did you start shaving?” asked Hank.

“I don’t remember, a while ago,” Dennis said.

“Do you do it because you need to or because you want to?” Hank asked.

“What the hell kind of question is that?” Dennis said, pissed off. “Just because I’m not a fucking hairy W.O.P. like you doesn’t mean I can’t shave.”

“Well, just look at yourself. You’re putting shaving cream all over your face, when you know the only place you need it is under your nose.”

“Fuck off!”

“Listen, I’m sick of getting in the middle of you guys every fucking time. Why don’t you both just mellow out for a while, huh?”

With that remark, Benny closed his shower kit and walked out of the bathroom. Dennis and Hank looked at each other for a moment and then went back to getting ready.

When they both finished, they walked back to their tent in silence. They found Benny already dressed and sitting down on the bench next to the tent, listening to David Bowie on his ghetto-blaster. Still no words were passed, as Dennis unzipped the tent and looked for the lamp inside. Hank followed and they both changed into their “ready for action” clothes.

Once they were ready they squeezed into the cab of Hank’s truck. Making their way out of Yogi Bear’s Camp Ground, they headed for the major stretch of the Wisconsin Dells. The sides of the streets were filled with neon signs, and it seemed as though every single attraction was labeled either “the biggest,” “the original,” or “the best” at whatever it was trying to be. Skipping past the once fun but now boring scenery, they came to “Magillins,” a bar that they frequented often on their seven-day stay.

They got out of the truck, and before walking up to the door



Cheryl Shimuk

Untitled

they made sure that their hair was combed, their flies were zipped, and that they were rid of all their farts. The ritual of being carded at the door no longer held their interest and, instead of being “neat,” they thought it a pain. Walking through the entrance, they passed a lady selling T-shirts with the bar’s name and logo on the front.

They then proceeded to walk up the ramp that led past the dance floor to the bar.

“Looks like it’s S.R.O. tonight,” said Benny.

“Yeah, it’s pretty crowded. At least we didn’t have to wait in line to get in this time,” Dennis said to both of them.

He received a nod from Benny but Hank wasn’t listening. He was standing on his toes looking around behind the bar.

“Is she here?” Benny asked.

“I don’t see her yet, but she could be on break,” Hank returned.

“Hank, I don’t see why you try. She’s a waitress. You know that guys probably try to pick her up all the time,” said Dennis.

“Yeah, I know, but I really think she likes me,” Hank said. “And, anyway, what do you care who I try for?”

“I don’t. I just think you’re wasting your time, that’s all.”

The conversation ended there with the exception of deciding where to sit. But since all the tables were taken, even that communication ended up in a dead end. They ended up standing at the end of the crowded bar together trying to look natural. Hank leaned over the bar and motioned for the waitress.

“Three watermelon shots and beer chasers,” ordered Hank.

Hank asked the waitress who brought their alcohol about Marcy, the one he was hot for.

“She doesn’t come in until seven,” the waitress answered.

“Alright, thanks,” Hank said with a wink.

“Oh, God, now he’s going to try and hit on her,” Dennis thought to himself.



Donna Diamond
Free Style

But surprisingly, Hank left it at that and turned to both of them, handing them each their shot.

"Here's to better days and better lays," Hank shouted, trying to get a laugh.

Dennis heard himself chuckle, then closed his eyes and swallowed the shot of watermelon, following it quickly with a sip of Miller.

The three of them stood there until Benny noticed an empty table.

"Over there, guys," he said motioning with a tilt of his head.

Now sitting, they felt more relaxed and, as they were finishing their first beer, Hank noticed the waitress Marcy coming through the doors.

"Hey, guys, be right back," Hank said, getting up.

And Dennis and Benny watched Hank make his way through the crowd to the door.

"Think he'll get her?" asked Dennis.

"I don't know," Benny said. "But even if he does, where is he going to bring her? Back to our tent?"

"Yeah, and he'll tie a sock around the flap so we don't walk in," Dennis joked.

They both sat there kind of watching Hank from their seats.

"I don't know about that guy," Dennis said, shaking his head.

"Ah, come on, you know Hank. He's one of a kind," Benny said defensively. "I mean, I know you guys don't always get along, but, come on, can you really say you'd want him to change?"

"Yes, I can," Dennis stated, and with that they both burst out laughing.

The waitress came around and took their empty glasses and promised more on the way.

Dennis looked down and lit a cigarette.

"I don't know what it is, ya know?" Dennis said. "I mean, me and him have been at each other all week and, still, I consider him a friend," he paused, "all week, hell, what am I saying — all year."

"Come on, Den, the three of us . . . we go back a long way. I mean, well, think of this week as a sort of test or something. Like you said, you're still friends. You might get on each other's nerves once in a while, but deep down you guys still care."

Dennis just shrugged his elbows and took another drag off his cigarette. The waitress brought another round of beer and emptied the ashtray, obviously looking for a big tip.

"I don't know, it just seemed like we were a lot closer back in high school. We used to go to parties together, get wasted, and stumble into White Castle and order a million sliders. Ya know? I mean what ever happened to the plans we made — to go to college together, then get an apartment or whatever?" Dennis paused again, "Now look at us. We hardly talk, and when we do it's about getting drunk and getting laid. You're at Princeton, Hank's at I.S.U. and I'm stuck at Northern."

"Look, Den, things happen, people change."

"Yeah, but I thought we'd be different."

"Why?"

"What do you mean why?" asked Dennis. "We always thought we were better than all the others. We were going to show them all, remember?"

"Yeah, I remember what Hank said. When we went to our class reunion, he was going to wear a pink tux and drive up in a pink Caddy."

"You know, I wouldn't doubt it. He'd do it just to piss people off," Dennis said, looking back over to Hank at the bar.

"So, what changed it?"

"What do you mean?" asked Dennis.

"I mean what changed your mind about the future," Benny said further. "I mean there was a time when you and Hank were in-

separable. Jesus, even I was sort of jealous.”

“I don’t know.”

“That’s bullshit and you know it,” Benny said, this time not smiling. “You guys were tight once, and then all of a sudden . . . everyone saw it. I never asked either of you because, I don’t know, I figured if you didn’t want to tell me, then I shouldn’t ask.”

“So don’t.”

“Come on, Den,” Benny said. “I want to know what went down between you two . . . now I’m asking . . . and I think you owe me something.”

Dennis looked at the ashtray. His cigarette was one long ash because he’d forgotten he lit it. After taking another swig of beer he pulled out his lighter and smokes, figuring he’d try again.

“Come on, man, don’t keep me shut out,” Benny said seriously.

There was a long look between them, and for that moment they were both oblivious to the surroundings. And, without blinking an eye, Dennis answered him.

“Ellen.”

“My God.”

“I found them together after his graduation party.”

Benny said nothing.

“Remember she wasn’t feeling well?”

“Yeah, and you were too drunk to drive her home.”

“I wasn’t too drunk. I know I could have driven. But Hank convinced me that I shouldn’t. What a nice guy, he offered to take her home himself.”

“And that’s when”

“Yeah. After a while I got worried, you know, I thought maybe they got into an accident or something. So, I got ahold of Marty and borrowed his car since we drove to the party in Ellen’s car.

I was such a fucking dumb shit, because there they were in Ellen’s driveway.”

“Holy fuck.”

“They didn’t see me, so I thought I’d scare them or something. But walking up to the car I saw them . . . I mean the way that they were kissing . . . well, it didn’t look like their first time. I could see her shirt was off and . . . well, I watched for about another fifteen minutes. I still can’t believe they didn’t see me, I mean, I was standing right on the lawn. God, I never cried so much as that night.”

“What did Hank say after you told him?” Benny asked.

“I never have. I don’t know, I guess I was waiting for a confession from either one of them, but I never got one. Anyway, if you remember, we broke up two weeks later.”

“Yeah, but man, I still can’t believe you never confronted either of them.”

“What was there to say?” Dennis said. “I had already lost Ellen, in fact, I’d probably lost her a long time before that. Anyway, after we broke up, Hank felt so sorry for me. It was as if he had caused it, which I suppose he did. I don’t know, in some weird way I think Hank could tell that I knew without me saying anything.”

“I still can’t believe that Hank”

“Me neither; we were buddies, you know? I mean, girl friends come and go but friends are supposed to be forever. Ah, I don’t know, I suppose somehow I felt if I never said anything it wouldn’t be true, you know?”

Benny just shook his head in disbelief. In a way he felt betrayed by both Hank and Dennis for never telling him. And Benny, looking at things differently, was seeing for himself where he stood with both of them.

“So that’s what happened. Are you glad you know?”

“I’m not sure.”

"You know, I really think Hank was sorry for what he did, but I can't help feeling that he never regretted it."

"It must be tough for you sometimes," Benny said.

"Yeah, I mean I try not to think about it but still, sometimes"

"Hey, what are you stabbers talking about?" Hank interrupted. "You guys look too serious, you're supposed to be having a good time."

"We're just tired, that's all," Benny replied to Hank.

"Well, what do you say we get cruisin'?" Hank asked.

"What happened to Marcy?" asked Dennis.

"Ah, she's a bitch," Hank said. "I spend all that time on her, and she ends up telling me she's married."

"So what stopped you?" asked Dennis, looking straight into Hank's eyes.

"Come on, Den, you know I don't fool around with other guys' chicks."

"No, Hank, I never knew that," said Dennis.

Then Benny stepped in. "Come on, guys, lighten up. What do you say we go back to the campsite and knock off a case?"

Dennis broke into a smile. "Sure, let's go. This place is getting old anyway."

The three of them got up and walked down to the exit, stopping long enough to buy a T-shirt.

"What a great vacation! We'll have a lot of good memories," Hank said, opening the door.

"And a lot more to come," Dennis said with a half-smile.

Getting into the truck, Benny looked at both of them. He wanted to think of them as best friends, but the best he could do was "good acquaintances."



Susan Akmakjian
Visions of Four

The Hole

Jennifer Caldwell

I look at the grass; it is green. The dry black clumps inconsistently smother the green. I look up and see the familiar blue, approached by the rolling rush of grey. "I think it's going to rain," I say.

Amos stops. The beads of sweat stream down his face and neck as he looks up and squints. Then he looks at me. Amos has dirt on him and his red shoulders show off his radiant green eyes. He says, "You wanna dig for awhile?"

I accept the heavy shovel and begin to scoop the loose black clumps out of the hole. Within one of them writhes an earthworm. Thrusting the shovel into the particles, I hear the curved blade sliding under and breaking them, emitting a low-pitched scratch. Then, tossing them onto the mound, I hear consecutive tiny thuds. Some of the loose dust blows up into my face and mouth; the dirt is tasteless.

Amos sits down on the ground that's still green and removes his worn black boots. They lie lifeless. I remember how much darker the boots were when they were new — even darker than the soil. Amos asks, "You go into town last night?"

I stop digging and notice that his head is turned away. It's hard to talk to him when I can't see his eyes.

Last night. Neon light glowing through hazy air, littered cement walkways, a line, no children, and no stars. The city atmosphere of cigarette smoke and the strangers' muffled voices fill the dark room. Walking to my seat feels strange because the floor sticks to the bottom of my shoes. Then everything goes quiet, as words and names float up the screen. Collective gasps and single, sporadic screams lead to sighs and giggly acceptance of the two-dimensional monster. Before long, a leathered man casually sits next to me. He smells like a drugstore.

"Of course," I tell Amos, "yesterday was Wednesday."

"I know that, but you were gone for so long." His head is still turned away.

I smile at him with sorrow. "Why, did you miss me?"

"Well, sure. I mean, it's just that I kinda worry 'boutcha, bein' out after dark in the city lately." He turns his head to the sky, perhaps using his peripheral vision to see me respond, yet still avoiding eye contact.

I look into the hole.

Last week. The large, white columned building is full of sculptures, tables, bright lights, shelves, and scattered individuals breathing into books. Everyone has a pen, except for one unhealthy woman that sleeps on the taped-up bean bag chair by the paperbacks. I listen to her calm snores.

"Amos, you know I can take care of myself," I say, still looking into the hole.

I'm almost certain he yields a slight childish whine before complaining, "But, Ruth, you used to let me take care of you . . . an' you wouldn't mind me coming over so often. Don't you want me around anymore?"

The wind gusts and I feel dirt in my mouth again. I am silent.

Amos turns and I can tell now that he's looking straight at me. "You know," he says in a louder tone of voice, "all y' have to do is say so an' I guess I'll stop comin' around. Dad's gettin' me a job now anyways, so I don't have to be around so much."

I feel I cannot say anything to him. I know he's acting. Maybe he wants me to feel guilty. No, he doesn't know how to scheme up those strategies. He simply acts independent. Still, I feel guilty. "I never said I didn't want you around. It's just that you're so possessive of me."

"What do y' mean?" he asks.

"Well . . . it's as if I have to rush home every Wednesday night."

The other week. The endless parking lot leads the way to a colorful world of objects. Silver mannequins behind glass greet me as I enter one of the many heavy doors. Ahead lives an enormous fountain, encircled by wandering shoppers. Music comes from nowhere. I get lost exploring silly calendars, brass lamps, hot cookies, silk underwear and caged puppies.

"Amos, you shouldn't worry so much about me," I say. "Don't you trust me anymore?"

"Well, I'm sort of scared," he says. Pause. "You're changing lately, that's all."

I start digging again, my tired body reluctantly resuming its struggle. "Nobody stays the same all the time," I say. I lick my salty chapped lips and glance at him directly for a moment. He's now staring into the grey vapor mountains in the sky. Then, I slowly empty the heavy dirt onto the dead mound, wishing everything would be silent, but Amos still goes on.

"You remember 'bout a month ago," he says in a lighter tone, "when your folks an' mine would meet at church early Sunday morning?" Pause. "And you and me would go out an' sit by the patch of trees an' watch folks come greet Pastor Lyle . . ." Again he stops. He looks at my dark jeans and continues, ". . . an' you'd wear a pretty blue dress an' have your hair up in a fancy way."

A sharp pulse of pain in my hand causes me to drop the shovel. A splinter. A sudden throb of heat surges within and below my eyes. Tears blur my vision, yet I remain silent. But the loud thud of the heavy shovel catches Amos' attention, and he notices me holding my hand. "What's wrong?" he asks.

I quickly answer, "It's just a small splinter; that's all," and I pick up the shovel again. Please don't treat me like a child, Amos. Still, he approaches me and takes the shovel and carelessly tosses it aside, raising a dark cloud of dust which obscures my vision even more. Then, he gently, firmly takes my hand and removes the sharp needle, so fast. Relieved, I gaze up to the closing sky and feel a dry kiss on the palm, where the small, empty incision is. I look at his innocent eyes; he still holds my hand, with such adorable sincerity. The clumsy boy then gives me a smooth kiss, holding both hands this time. He pulls away to scratch his cheek; I guess my hair tickles his face when the wind blows.

I now look off to where the grey clouds were and notice that they're sort of black. It is grey above us. The wind blows stronger, causing my sight to be full of moving hair. This is what it felt like between the tall buildings, where the festival with

foreign musicians was. Only then, the people would say such odd things instead of brushing the hair out of my eyes like Amos is silently doing now.

"I'm getting wet."

"What?" he asks.

"The rain. It's getting on me . . . and you. We're both getting wet." I hear several raindrops slap the metallic shovel. Slowly, we walk towards shelter, as the faraway thunder gently explodes.

Next Wednesday. I take my nephew's small, strong hand into the patch of buildings. His wide eyes and grin greet the strangers. Together, Amos and I enjoy the new adventure.

Julie Wiley

Dancer



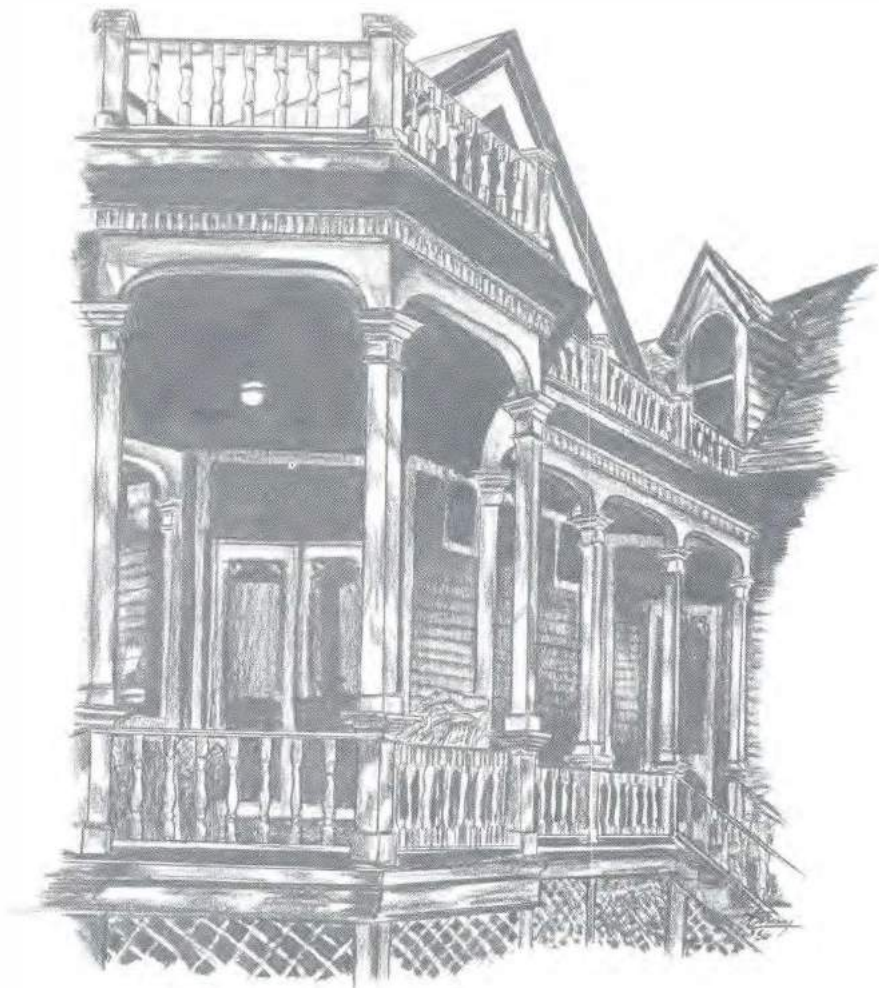


Jenna Caldwell
Laugh at the World

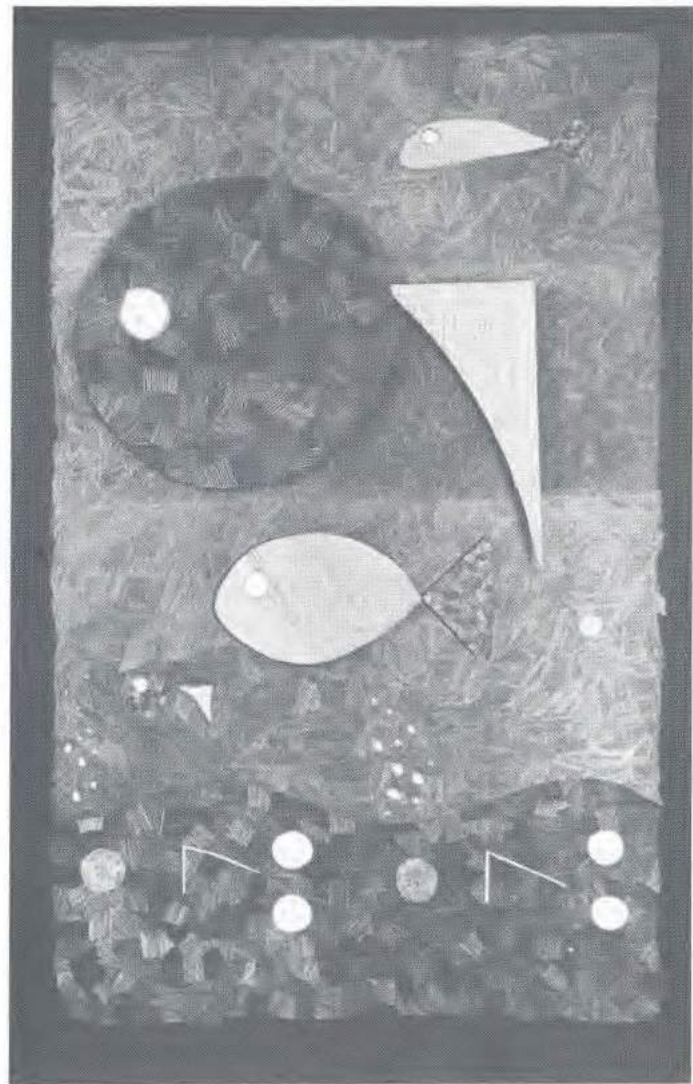
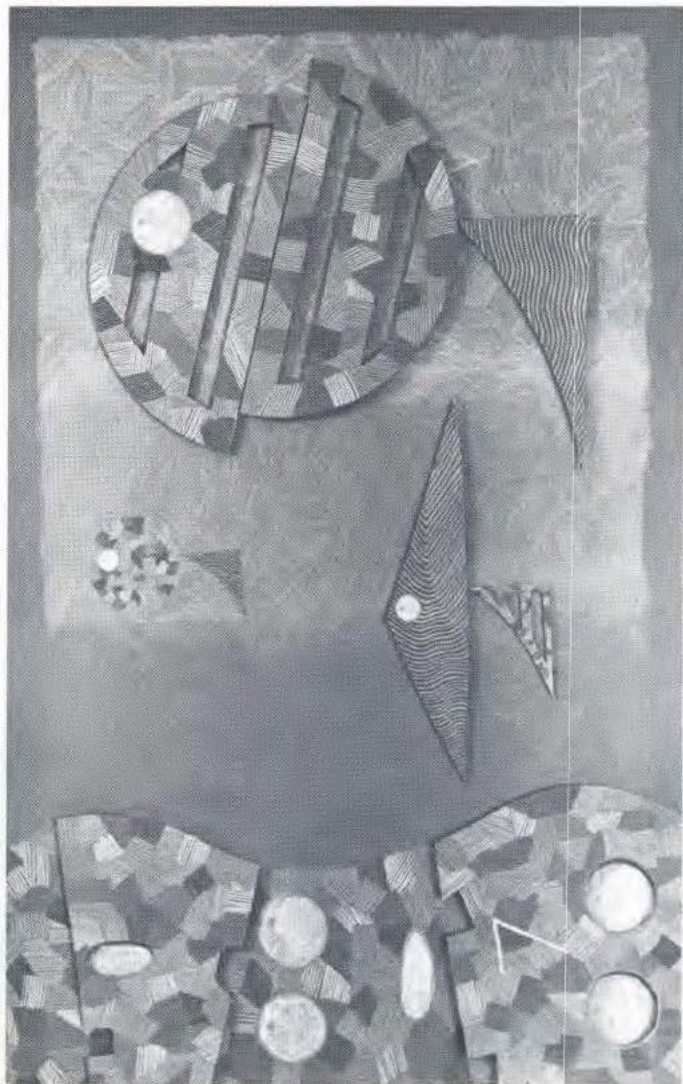


Mary Applegate
Woman with Shell Necklace
Woman with Masks

Tadson Bussey
Front Porch



Jennifer Helsing
Fishes



Summer in the Cul-de-Sac

Mark Petersen

Friends gather in the late morning heat
crushed glass
white spray painted bases
blown firecrackers
litter the street.
Cars and windows hit
refusing to move for our softball game.
Ice cream truck
breaks up the game.
Tiptoeing quickly
as the hot pebbles burn my feet.
On the other side
Kelly's pool waits to be jumped in.
Everyone disappears
only to come back with a supper's energy.
Softball game continues
this time ending with the brothers fighting.
Elliot is shamefully in at Eight.
More kids and bikes gather
girls too.
Joey is the unlucky one picked.
The can is kicked
and I am off in the night
diving into bushes
jumping over fences
scratching mosquito bites
running from barking dogs.
Someone is caught.
Who is it?
Escaping the backyard lights
annoyed old neighbors turn on.
Sprinting with all my might
Joey yells as he sees me
only seconds before my foot hits the can.
The prisoner yells,
like a happy savage
into the freedom the darkness offers.

Joey quits.
Half have already gone in.
My mom calls
heard throughout Cook County.
And I go in for the night.
Sleeping only to pass the time,
for tomorrow in the cul-de-sac.



Christine Jankowski

Untitled

The Political Party

Ray Olinger

As soon as the defense counsel finished his remarks and had turned to resume his seat, Phillip Arnett was out of his chair. He shouted his demand at the jury, "Do you believe that? Do you believe what you just heard?"

He continued as he stormed toward the lectern in front of the jury, decreasing the volume of his voice as he reached his place. "Do you believe that Officer Myers lied about any of his findings at the accident scene or about what the defendant said to Officer Myers or how he acted in front of Officer Myers?"

"Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, if you choose to believe what the defense counsel suggests, then you must also believe the following: that Officer Myers is willing to put his sixteen-year police career — a career marked with three citations for bravery — on the line.

"You also have to believe he is willing to risk his job, risk his pension, risk his good name, and risk going to jail for perjuring himself. Ladies and gentlemen, you would have to believe that Officer Myers is willing to risk everything just to convict this defendant."

Pausing now, he drew in air, grasped the sides of the lectern and, enunciating each word as if it were a separate exclamation, he again shouted at the jury, "That! Is! Absurd!"

Now, his pause was uncomfortably long. He shuffled through his notes. He leaned his elbow on the lectern, his hand on his forehead covering his eyes, and uttered a sound like a sob being cut off. The judge raised his hand to his mouth, but his smile could still be seen at the edges of his eyes. Some of the jurors harrumphed, shifted in their seats and looked around. Phil continued in a hushed, almost whimpering voice, "Defense counsel called this a tragic accident. Ladies and gentlemen, that is truly an understatement. We've lost an entire family here, John Rathke, Marie, his wife, and Jonathan and Jeffrey, their twin boys. We all suffer their loss."

The whimpering suddenly gone, he continued in a clear voice increasing in volume, "Defense counsel stopped at calling this an accident, but I won't. We have proven criminal negligence here. You've heard all the testimony these past four days. You've now heard the arguments of counsel. As the judge explained earlier, since we have the burden of proving the guilt of the defendant we get to talk to you first and last.

"I won't go over the facts again. But we have shown, primarily through Officer Myers' testimony, that the defendant was staggering at the accident scene, that his speech was slurred and thick tongued, that he reeked of alcohol, and that he admitted to Officer Myers that he was driving. Even though the defendant refused to take a blood test to determine the amount of alcohol in his body, you can use your common sense and find that he was driving drunk, and the judge will instruct you on that point.

"Because he was drunk, he is guilty of these reckless homicides. Ladies and gentlemen, go back now to the jury room and find him guilty of the facts. Let's put this case to rest, and give the family and friends of the Rathkes some peace. Thank you."

It was the end of a long day. Phil's well-fitted pinstripe suit was now rumpled, the paisley tie askew, his tanned face shining from sweat. "Overkill Phil" gave the slightest bow to the jury with his head and, though he looked tired, he turned his tall, muscular frame around with assurance and strode back to his seat. On his way he purposefully dropped some of his notes to the floor, and just as purposefully affected not to notice — a last opportunity to demonstrate to the jury how distraught he was about the deaths of the Rathke family.

His detractors called him "Overkill Phil." This case, indeed, had been won two days ago but, as was his style, Phil kept pushing, kept prosecuting a case that needed no further prosecution. And he overprosecuted every case the same way. His supporters said he was thorough. Both sides agreed he was a talented, dramatic trial lawyer.

Now, sitting and listening to the judge read jury instructions, Phil did an uncharacteristic thing. He would normally catch the eye of each juror during jury instructions, but this time he found himself easing back in his chair and closing his eyes.

His thought took him far from the courtroom, to fishing on a clear water northern lake edged with white-barked trees, to working wet earth with his hands in his garden, then to sailing the Atlantic with his family. He was jostled out of the daydream by the sound of jurors rising and filing out of the courtroom. Phil rose, and after the jury was gone he walked over the group of Rathke family and friends who were sitting in the first row of spectator benches. There were six of them and they had come to court every day of the trial.

Phil thought how sad they looked now, at the end of the trial. He had asked them to come, of course, but they would have anyway. It was common in reckless homicide cases, especially where drunk driving was a part of it, when the lives of loved ones are taken unexpectedly, that the family and friends come to the trial of the accused. They come with conflicting feelings of justice and vengeance, forgiveness and hatred, and a non-verbalized hope that, if only the defendant were found guilty, they would be made whole again.

It is then at the end of the trial, when the verdict is announced, that they finally and fully accept their loss and are again plunged into grief.

Phil knew this, had seen it dozens of times before in other families and, though his conscience bothered him because of what he intended to do with the Rathke trial, he immediately dismissed his guilty feelings. Their grief, after all, would be brief, and he thought if they balked he might even pull one of them in front of the television cameras and force their public support of him.

In talking to the Rathkes now, he only thanked them for coming every day and assured them it would all be over soon.

He was back at counsel table gathering papers when the defense counsel, Tom Heller, approached. Heller had been a

tough criminal lawyer for over forty-five years. Now sporting a full head of stiff grey hair which was trimmed too short around his large ears, with his tall broad-shouldered frame and thick cataract glasses he looked like a recommissioned battleship. He had befriended and coached many young lawyers in trial techniques, and one of his most successful students was Phillip Arnett.

The defendant moved uncertainly toward them. Tom noticed him when he stepped into his field of view and ordered him to wait outside the courtroom with his family. The boy left quickly and without comment. Tom's clients either obeyed his drill instructor commands or he would fire them.

He offered his hand to Phil and said, "Nice job, Phillip, as usual."

"Thanks, Tom. I had a good teacher. Stop by Sally's later. I'll buy you a drink."

"No, I won't make it tonight." He watched Phil's face briefly, carefully, and then said, "Am I butting into something if I say you seemed a little off during this trial? All the theatrics were there, but some of the vigor, your polish, was missing."

"Yes, I've been like that for three weeks or so, Tom. I guess I ought to thank you for mentioning it because I haven't talked to anyone about it."

"What's the matter?"

"I don't know. Maybe I have too much going on." He sat and slouched deeply into the heavy wooden chair. "I've been on trial almost every day for a month, and my political activities take up all the rest of my time. I'm stealing time from my family to do things that — I just don't know. Have you ever been in an automobile accident?"

"Sure I have."

"You detach from yourself in an accident. You're like an outside observer watching yourself slam on the brakes and turn the wheel. You watch the cars slowly sliding to impact. That's how I've felt for the past month."

"Can you get out of town for a week or two with the family?"

"No chance. I have a hard campaign coming up."

"Well, I don't have a cure for you, my friend, but if you need my help, you have my home phone."

"Thanks, Tom, I appreciate the offer. I'll see you when the verdict comes in." They parted and Phil walked to Sally's.

Sally's was the place to go after work. A friendly Polish restaurant and a bar half a block from the courthouse, it was one of the few Polish businesses left in a neighborhood now mostly populated by Mexican immigrant families.

Phil walked in triumphantly. "Sal, bring me a double," he called out to Sally from the door. He walked toward the table where he saw Frank Kelly seated, passing out smiles and few good words to all he saw on the way.

Frank Kelly looked like a tired lawyer, which is just what he was. Fifty-five years old and forty pounds overweight, at five feet two the extra weight and his shiny, bald scalp added to his used-up look. For the past thirty years he had been a member of a high pressure, go-getter law firm. He and his partners took every case that came in the door, which was too many, and, consequently, they couldn't give good service to any of their clients, few of whom stayed with the firm long.

Frank had made a lot of money, but he was tired of the daily hustle of private practice. He wanted a judgeship so he could slow down and enjoy his money. And to get the judgeship he had to get political.

When Phil sat down, they exchanged greetings but were distracted by Sally, who was struggling toward their table with Phil's double brandy.

Sally was sixty-two and had been on her feet as a cook-waitress-bartender in her place for the past thirty-five years. Her legs hurt almost constantly now, and she walked as if her legs only followed behind the smile that actually carried her forward.



Jeannette Bodner
Self Portrait

"Hi, sweetheart," Phil said, and gave her a little one-arm hug. "What did the doctor say about your legs?"

"Oh, him! Retire, stay off them. I paid \$75 for him to tell me what I already know."

"Well, are you?"

"I'm thinking about it, Phil, more and more."

He directed her attention to Frank. "Meet Frank Kelly, Sal."

"Hello," she said, and did a little curtsy that was all wrong because she couldn't bend her knees. Frank smiled at that and said he was happy to meet her.

"Frank has planned a press party tonight, Sal. I'm going to announce for state senator this afternoon. We'll do it right outside during the evening news, then invite the press in for a drink. After that, Sal, I'll pick up all the drinks for an hour or so. Okay?"

"Okay, Phil. So you're going to be governor and leave us."

"Not governor, Sal, state senator. It's hard to start at the top." He smiled to himself at her mistake because he often greeted himself in his shaving mirror by saying, "Mornin' gov'nor."

He heard the sadness in Sal's comment, but he ignored it. Phil was a showman and timing was important to him, and now it was time to talk to Frank and to cut Sally off. "I'll talk to you later, Sal, and can you send us another drink?" He patted her arm in dismissal.

Sally hobbled to the bar to give Phil's drink order to Eddie, her bartender, and then went into the kitchen to prepare several large trays of cold cuts and bread as a surprise gift for Phil's party.

"What about the press, Frank?"

"You cut it too close, Phil. They'll be here in about ten minutes, Channels 6, 10, 17, and the city and suburban dailies."

"Good. I'll have to work on the *Suburban Times* and win them

over. I'll need their endorsement to win in that district. Let's hope the verdict doesn't come in before I make the announcement."

"You're betting they come back with a guilty verdict. But, if you announce and they come back with a not guilty, then you get egg on your face."

"Yeah, it's a gamble, Frank, but the press is already following the Rathke case, and my announcement will be more newsworthy if I make it while waiting for the verdict. Let's have another quick one and go out. I see Channel 6's truck pulling up."

"Go easy on the drinks, Phil."

"Yeah, I guess I should. I don't need it anyway. I'm on a natural high tonight. Everything's working out fine."

Frank excused himself to the washroom. Phil walked over to the bar. "Eddie, set up a tall, clear, cool one."

"That's not a brandy, so what the hell is it?"

"A club soda."

"Sure thing, Phil." Eddie clap-clapped along the raised planked flooring behind the bar with Phil's soda. "So, tonight's the big night." He laid the drink on the bar.

"I hope so. I hope I catch on."

"I'd bet you will, Phil."

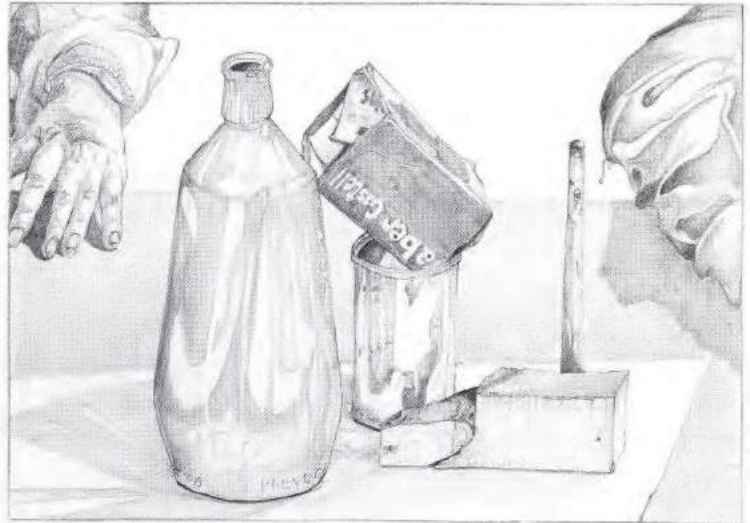
"Say, Eddie, what's going on with your friend Sam? You know, the guy who can't work any more."

"Still pretty bad. He still can't work, but he's getting aluminum cans from three taverns now. It helps some, but with three kids it ain't much."

Phil reached into his pocket and took out a folded wad of bills from which he pulled a hundred. "Give him this, Eddie, and don't tell anyone where it came from. Okay?"

"Sure thing." Eddie took the hundred and added it to his own

Tami Laibly
Arched Woman



Brian R. Doney '87

Brian R. Doney
Untitled

roll. "Say, how's Ritchie?"

"Great. He'll be seven years old tomorrow."

"What did you get him?"

"Oh, he's gonna love this. It's a five-foot long aircraft carrier model."

"Oh, yeah, he'll like that. Excuse me, Phil, I gotta fill the cooler."

Eddie clap-clapped away again, and Phil moved down the bar and joined a conversation with his co-workers. They wanted to toast his victory in anticipation. Phil didn't want to tempt fate. But to the victor go the spoils, they urged, and Phil couldn't argue with that. He had worked hard on this case, and he was about to work even harder on his campaign. He ordered a brandy and joined their toast, dismissing a foreboding thought that the jury would come back not guilty.

Twenty minutes later he was in front of three television cameras and many reporters announcing his decision to run for state senator in the 34th District. He sincerely reminded the cameras of his record as a vigorous prosecutor of drunk drivers, that he had testified before the senate committee hearings on the state's new tough drunk driving law, and that some of his recommendations now appeared in that law.

Near the end of his formal announcement, a runner from the courthouse appeared and told the crowd that the Rathke jury had reached a verdict. It was just perfect and what Phil had hoped for. The two stories now blended into one, and live on the evening news.

Phil invited the press to follow him to the courthouse and to resume the press conference after the judge took the jury's verdict. They eagerly agreed, though before breaking up one young reporter from the *Suburban Times* shouted out her question: "Don't you consider yourself an opportunist, Mr. Arnett, using the grief of the Rathke family to advance your career?"

"I consider myself a concerned citizen," Phil shot back, covering his anger with a plastered smile.

Other than that one question, everything went well that late afternoon. He had begun his announcement on the five o'clock news, was busy in the courthouse during the national news, then back live on the six o'clock local news to announce the guilty verdict in the Rathke case and to finish his press conference. He was relieved when told that the Rathke family and friends had quickly left the building after the verdict was announced.

Many in the press and the crowd of hangers-on joined Phil at Sally's for the celebration. On the way through the door Phil was reaching in his pocket for a cigarette lighter and felt a tugging on his arm. He turned to face a reporter who handed him a scrap of paper.

"Here, Phil, you dropped this." Written on the paper was the figure 45,000. "Is that your salary?" he asked.

Gushing a forced laugh Phil answered, "Don't I wish," and thanked him and pocketed the note.

Inside Sally's, he accepted congratulations and wishes for success from many there. He grabbed a couple of sandwiches and a beer and worked his way toward Frank Kelly. He took Frank by the arm and pulled him to a quiet corner.

"Frank, I almost forgot. The party wants a \$45,000 contribution for the judgeship."

"Jesus, Phil, it used to be thirty."

"I know, Frank, but judges make so much more now. Besides, you've been in practice for thirty years. You should have no trouble raising that amount. Oh, you've got four weeks to get it together, so you better get hopping." Without waiting for a reply he continued, "I have to make a call. See you later."

Phil walked into the kitchen where he saw Sally cleaning up and setting up for tomorrow's breakfast crowd.

"Sal, can I use the phone?"

She looked up. "Oh, Phil! Sure. Help yourself."



Julie Eggert
Granny



Kurt Kiesel
Running Aztec

He dialed home and his wife, Kathleen, answered.

"Did you see me on the news?"

"We both did. You looked good."

"I'm at Sal's. I want to do a little politicking here so don't hold dinner."

"Well, I'm a little peeved that you're not coming home. We haven't seen much of you lately, and it doesn't look like we will in the future either."

Phil gripped the phone harder, then started lying. "I know, Kate, but I won't be long. There are some people here that I have to talk to."

After a lapse of time she said, "Okay. I understand. And congratulations on the guilty verdict. I was proud of you on TV tonight."

"Thanks, Kate. I'll see you later." He hung up and sat at Sally's desk asking himself why he lied. "To get ahead" was the answer, but there wasn't anyone there tonight who he really had to see. He knew that.

He walked out and stood by the bar. The thought flashed in his mind that he would rather be home right now, but, before he verbalized it, he heard himself asking Eddie to bring him a double brandy. Then, a reporter approached him and the public Phil took over.

The party continued for an hour or so. After seven-thirty most people started for home. But, for the regulars at Sally's, the party went on until one in the morning, as it did every night. Those who stayed had more to drink and more to eat. They played pinball, shot craps, and yelled to be heard over the jukebox.

Phil had sprung from this crowd. He discovered Sally's when first assigned to this courthouse. He liked the friendship it offered, and he liked to drink. But he realized early that the hangers-on at Sally's did only that, hang on. They never got anywhere and he was ambitious. He got politically active and

learned that fund raising was the quickest route to political success. He had raised \$130,000 to get the party's state committee endorsement for state senator.

No, Sally's wasn't the place for him every night, and especially not tonight. He had a strategy meeting with his campaign manager in the morning so he said his goodbyes at eleven o'clock. He poured his last drink in a foam cup and went out to his car. He put the drink on the roof, then went to the trunk. He removed his son's birthday present and put it in the back seat. He retrieved his drink, got in the car, and headed west on Scott Boulevard.

He got out of town and into the suburbs without incident except for one traffic light near Sally's. He thought it odd that he would confuse the sequence and slam on his brakes coming up to a green light. That spilled his drink in his lap. And he thought that odd, too, that he couldn't smell it.

He also didn't notice the flashing lights of the police car behind him until the officer pulled alongside and shined a spotlight in his face. Phil powered his window down after he stopped. He checked his smile in the rear view mirror, caught himself, and looked again. He saw that he was drunk. He was lost in worried thought when the officer walked to his window.

"Step out of the car, please."

"What?"

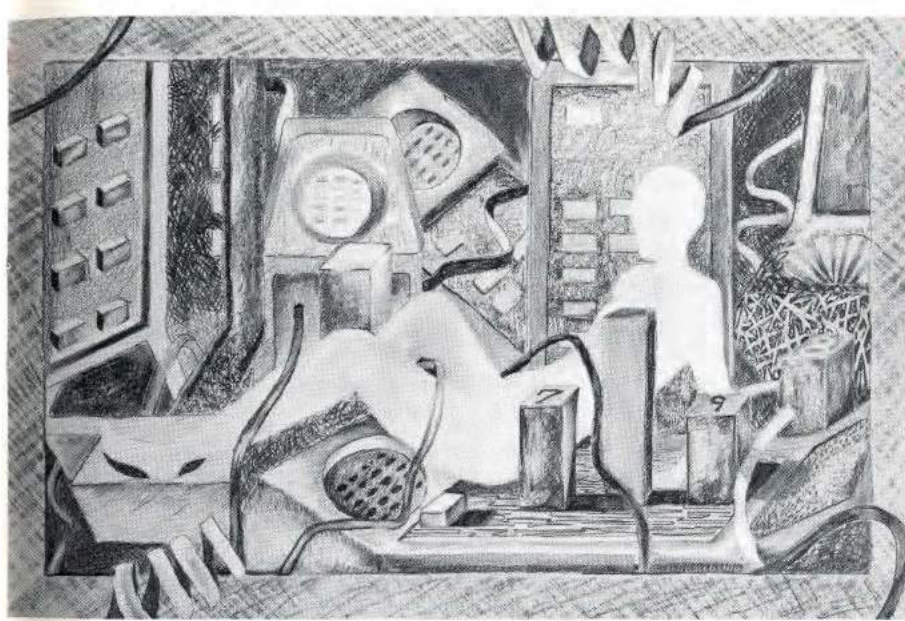
"Step out of the car, sir."

"I'm trying to find my wallet."

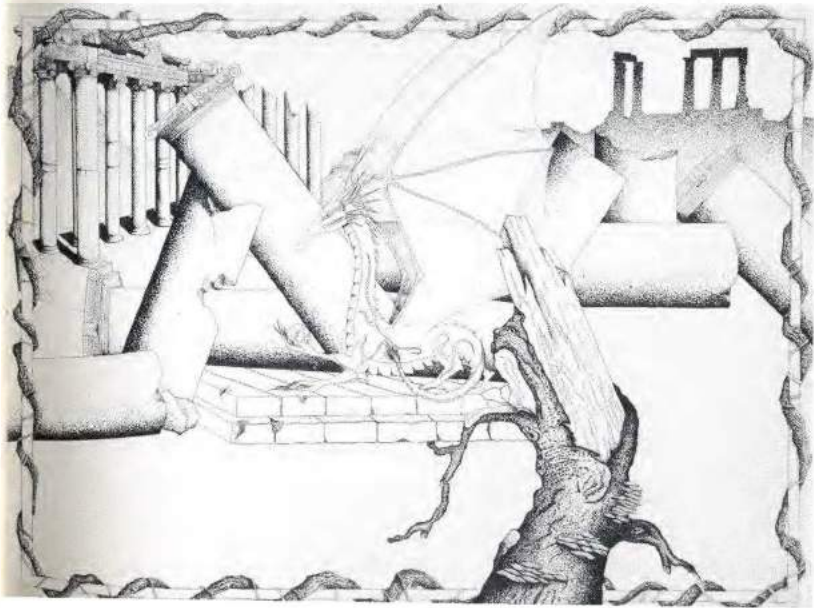
"You can find it easily if you get out, sir."

Phil stepped out of the car and grabbed the door to steady himself. He had to keep one hand on the roof and trunk lid for support as he walked to the rear of his car and into the headlights of the squad. He took his business card from his wallet and handed it to the officer who looked at it and read it aloud, "Phillip G. Arnett, Assistant District Attorney."

"That's right, and I'm tired and I've got a busy day tomorrow."



Jeannette Bodner
Drawing



Donna Diamond
Life in the Midst of Ruins



Kurt Kiesel
Mona Lisa

He pulled himself up straight and tried too hard to look and act sober.

"Mr. Arnett, I want you to try walking a straight line by placing your feet heel to toe and —"

Phil wasn't listening. He looked closely at the officer and saw a serious-looking man, about six feet four and over 200 muscular pounds. The officer looked straight back at Phil without blinking. He looked like he wouldn't be intimidated.

"You're not going to go through with this, are you?" Phil said. "I can hurt your career, you know."

"Mr. Arnett, you reek of alcohol and you needed support walking back here. I'm a sworn officer of the law, just as you are. What do you suggest I do?"

"What's your name?"

"Jack Robertson."

"You can give me a break, Jack. I can also help your career."

"How much did you have to drink, Mr. Arnett?"

"Two drinks, and I spilled the second one in my lap as I got in the car. I'm all right."

"Why the celebration, Mr. Arnett?"

"I announced I'm running for state senator this afternoon, and I'm telling you I have the backing of a lot of powerful people."

"Yes, I'm sure you do. Now I've got you pegged. You're the one that specializes in drunk driving cases, aren't you?"

"Yes, that's me."

"Then why the hell are you driving drunk? Are you crazy?"

"Look, I'm asking you to please give me a break on this. I'm not drunk." Phil was afraid now. He felt panicky. "I have to control myself. I have to get past this asshole somehow," he thought.

"Do you want money? I'll give you \$500 to forget about this. Okay?"

Officer Robertson dropped his lower jaw and widened his eyes, but he didn't respond.

"All right, a thousand."

"You better shut up. You're getting yourself in a lot of trouble."

"Trouble! You don't know what trouble is, you son of a bitch — all right, I'm sorry, I'm sorry. I lost my temper. I apologize. Now, what do I have to do to get out of this? There must be something I can do for you." Phil had moved close to Officer Robertson and was pleading face to face.

"Look, Mr. Arnett, you got stopped by the wrong guy. I'm going to forget the bribe attempt, but you'll have to just take your bumps on the drunk driving."

"This is my career, you bastard!"

"Now I'm ordering you to shut up. I'm placing you under arrest for driving under the influence of alcohol. You have a right to remain silent . . ."

* * * * *

Phil was tying a four-in-hand knot in his tie when Kathleen came into the bedroom.

"Phil, there are reporters and TV cameras downstairs."

"Already? Well, I'll talk to them. Are my eyes too red?"

"Yes, and puffy. You look like you have a hangover."

"Well, I do, so I guess I ought to look the part."

They walked downstairs together. In the foyer Phil stopped and turned to Kathleen. "I think I should go out alone. The nasty ones will try to eat you alive, too."

"Thanks," Kathleen said as Phil turned toward the door. "What are you going to tell them?"

"I guess the best thing for us and them. The truth. I'm going to withdraw from the senate race, too."

"Oh, Phil!" She moved toward him.

"You can listen behind the door. Keep it open a crack. This'll be short."

"Okay." She smiled at him.

"Later we'll get Ritchie off to school after getting him excited about his party. Then we can have a couple hours to ourselves."

Kathleen gave him a powerful hug and said, "I love you, Phil."

He returned the hug and said, "Thanks, Kate. I love you, too." He turned away and opened the front door and was met by a voracious group of questioners. Kathleen stepped back out of sight behind the door. Phil pushed his way onto the porch.

"If you would step back, please, down on the lawn. I'll use the porch as a podium." The group reluctantly retreated. "Last night —" he paused, remembering his awestruck fear when he first argued a brief before the state supreme court. He was just as apprehensive now. "Last night I got what I deserved, a charge of drunk driving. I wish to commend Officer Jack Robertson for the professional manner in which he conducted himself.

"I also at this time withdraw my name from the 34th District senatorial race. I also expect to resign soon from the District Attorney's Office and to go into private practice —" he spotted the reporter from the *Suburban Times* — "and, Miss Eisenberg, to truthfully answer your question of yesterday, I used to be an opportunist but not any longer. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen."

He quickly moved backward and slid into the house and closed the door on the now angry baying of the newshounds. He had a strained look on his face as he stood with his back tightly against the door. Then he looked at Kathleen and started laughing.

"They attacked you."

"They did, but I got away."

"Come on, I'll buy you a coffee."

They ignored the ringing doorbell and retreated to the kitchen. Kate poured two coffees and they sat at the table.

"That doorbell will have Ritchie up in a minute."

"That's okay." He sipped some coffee. "Well, I'm done with the hustle and I just don't care. All the pressure's gone and I feel good. I'm out of a job but —"

"I'm not worried about our future, Phil."

"Neither am I. You'll be out of school soon and teaching. I could go back to the university and get my teacher's certificate renewed. We could even relocate, maybe southeast, along the coast. You know, Kate, I don't see a sad ending for my career. This could be a great beginning for us all."

Kathleen tilted her head toward the hallway. "Here's Ritchie."

Phil looked and saw his brand new, puffy-eyed, seven-year-old in pajamas standing in the foyer looking at the front door. He cocked his head back and forth, then turned and walked to the kitchen. As he came in the room he said, "Why don't you answer the door? Are you crazy?"

"No," Phil said, "at least not as crazy as I used to be."

Bud Hansen

An Evening Ride





David G. Gentry
Wooden Weezil

Insignificance

Julie Setser

***The vivid sky reflects your eyes
I look up and they shine into my soul.
Wind brings laughter
Sun a sparkle
Standing tall on the ground,
I'm too small for you to see.***

Visit To A Church Cemetery

Larry Paullin

Near the hour of His birth
I visit His house.
Less than Faust,
I wish no bargains,
but only to see
Gardens of Gory Glory.
Tributes to the slain.

Sea of rolling mounds —
great stone, small cross
total the Costs of
searching
for Immortality.

Swiftly silent nuns
fly before the coming
of whispering night.

When Ghosts cry.



James Iha
Jesus Saves

Shooting Stars

Janice Barker

A starry night, but not quite dark enough —
A near-full moon lights up the summer sky.
We lie together, closely, on our backs
And breathe the cool and dewy August air,
Eyes watching, awed, the silent giant screen
Awaiting, with impatience, shooting stars.
The quiet vastness whispers hauntingly
“It’s magic! You are now a wide-eyed child.”
Believe with me that if we’re very still
And hold our breath, we’ll see a streak of light.
You laugh and say that stars are not like fish
That only can be caught when not disturbed.
We snuggle to keep warm and watch the sky,
But lids grow heavy and the fading spell
Releases us; regretfully we rise,
Abandoning our quest for shooting stars.

Housefire

Marianna Mayer

**Everything was gone at dusk.
A winter day,
The sky was eerie pink.
A stunned, funereal crowd stood with us, watching.
Home was a charcoal skeleton,
Risen out of steam and ice.**

**We were lucky to breathe cold air!
“All here.” We looked from face to face,
A family portrait etched into my mind that night:
Toby, Judd, Lou,
Rolf the dog, badly singed.
Shock of recognition,
Shock of loss,
Stop-time.**

**When we realized there’d been no “its” —
And that we’d all survived,
We started numbering what was gone —
There’d been no time to salvage anything.
Pulled away, into the dark, that night,
Supported by friends.**

The past was bulldozed the next day.

The Broken Life of a Celery Stick

Jonathan Firme

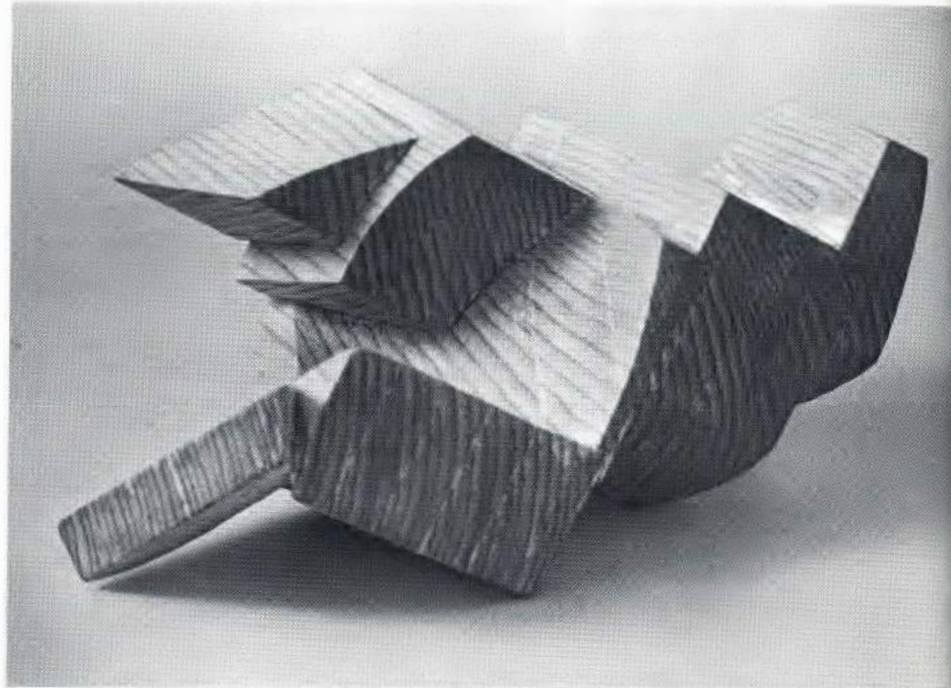
*Happy, growing for weeks on end;
A little bunch of celery.
Grown so strong, the wind can't bend
This happy, growing family.*

*The day then comes,
Inevitably,
The farmer shows up and hums,
As he chops down the celery.*

*Torn from their roots,
They're clinging to each other.
Their life is in cahoots;
As they're stolen from their mother.*

*Doomed they know,
They are, indeed.
Packed in snow,
They're shipped off at great speed.*

*Poor, poor little celery sticks.
They soon will be decapitated,
Laid to rest on a tray of picks;
With party dips — inundated.*



David G. Gentry
Staircase for Nude

I Came Outside . . .

Julie Setser

*I came outside to sit alone
To watch the ducks
And listen.*

*I came outside to feel the sun
To smell the breeze
And dream.*

*I'm sitting in my comfy chair
Smelling summer in the air.
My rabbit watches through the bars
Smelling scents from afar.*

*Next door a newborn infant cries
Next door a newborn father sighs.
I hear the chatter of the ducks
I hear the roaring of a truck.*

*The sun burns me through a haze
Of clouds. I wake up from my daze
And realize the breeze has gone
Along with the ducks from my lawn.*

*I come inside to where it's cool,
And gaze out through the glass.
Duck feathers lay still beside the pool,
Like dead moths in the grass.*

*I came outside to sit alone
To watch the ducks
And listen.*

*I came outside to feel the sun
To smell the breeze
And dream.*

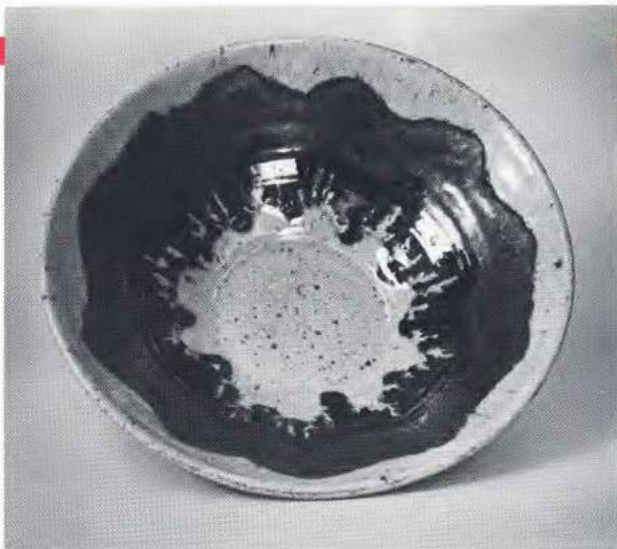
New Birth

Nancy A. Wahl

**I lie
curled
in fetal configuration,
enclosed
in wombish warmth,
enveloped
by velvet darkness.**

**Luciferous lances
pierce
my dusky sanctuary,
encroaching upon my quiescence.**

**Now,
coerced into consciousness
by the emphatic emergence of dawn,
quotidian genesis concluded,
I emit
the primeval wail —
“God, how I hate to get up in the morning!”**



Joan C. Allen
Indian Bowl



Eugenia Makowski
Revelation I



Al Arns
Look into the Future

Adolph Eichmann's Last Night

Larry Paullin

The bill for service rendered now comes due.
A brief delay is all that's needed now
before you make that final rendezvous
with God. Or man. He thought about the town
where God let man be Him and bloody crimes
became crusades to light the way through black
and fearful streets where crimson spurts in time
to goosesteps, children's cries and air attacks.
The stench and ash and cries did not invoke
the loves or lives of men as white as bone.
And still he wonders at the times the smoke
would rise, a phoenix carving names on stone.

A dream of order melts in human kilns.
His fate to give the ghosts revenge, fulfills.

The Drunk

Christine Andrews

The toothless man lies in the alley,
A broken bottle lies at his side.
His matted, gray beard rests on his bony chest
Where the ragged shirt that hangs from his jutting
shoulders meets.
His frayed pants are stained, wet on the groin,
And drip into a spreading puddle next to his thigh.
The soles of his bare feet are muddy.
An open wound gapes on one heel.
Suddenly, his red eyes pop open, he turns, he coughs.
And swimming in the sea of vomit,
That comes from his gagging throat,
He sees,
Faces with shining white smiles
Thin, suntanned, bikinied bodies,
Clean-shaven little men with briefcases,
And little silver Maseratis that zip around him,
Splashing his bile in his face.



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