



LD  
6501  
.H3  
P6  
2005-06

POINT OF VIEW

WILLIAM RAINEY HARPER COLLEGE



# POINT OF VIEW

2005 - 2006

Literary Advisor  
Art Advisor/Designer

Anne Davidoviez  
Scott David Gross

Literary Editor  
Art Editor

Christopher Brinckerhoff  
Russell W. Schiller

## Student Art Judges

Gautam Behal  
Cynthia Davis  
Eleanor deLzon  
Elena Ninkova-Kostova

## Student Literature Judges

Brian Bellows  
Karen Brady  
Lauren Losiniecki  
Rip Van Skye  
Jason Whiston

## Faculty Judges

Nancy Davis  
Alicia Tomasian  
Kurt Neumann  
Barbara Butler

## Award Winners

Ray Mills Award: Cynthia Davis, Untitled

Vivian Stewart Award: Amanda Nielsen, "Front Screen Porch"

Point of View Award: Sean Rafferty, "Going Home"

Thanks to everybody who helped make this book a reality,  
especially: Dennis Weeks, Jason Peot, Perry Pollock, Sam Rosby,  
Michael Hardesty, Michael Nejman, Joellyn Frieding, Kathy Shine,  
Sue Borchek-Smith, Shirley Pruyn, and the Harper College Foundation.

Professional Services  
Photography  
Printing

Steve Donisch  
Vis-O-Graphic Printing, Inc.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



LD  
6501  
H 3  
P6  
2005-06

- Front Cover  
    **Global Economy**  
    Mixed Media  
    Tavia De Felice
- 6 **Mia (Water)**  
    Eva Toma
- 7 **Pieces of Light**  
    Karen Brady
- 8 **Are We Not Mice In Glue Traps Waiting To Be Set Free?**  
    **Love Was Sacred, Now Emotion Is Defined As Poetry.**  
    Tony Hahn
- 9 **Loud Planes**  
    Laura M. Gross
- 10 **Standing Still, Walking Tall**  
    Michael Bentley, Jr.
- 12 **Fish with Whiskers**  
    Laura M. Gross
- 12 **Damaged**  
    Karen Brady
- 13 **Beneath the Surface**  
    Evan D'Orazio
- 14 **Lured**  
    Phillip Bassuk
- 15 **Blame it on Her Father**  
    Stephan J. Scanlan
- 16 **Mushroom Hunting**  
    Bethany Lindley
- 17 **Janet**  
    Jack Mitchell
- 18 **Cotton Candy and Merry-Go-Rounds**  
    Anna Basor
- 19 **Coil #1**  
    Elenor DeLeon
- 20 **Untitled**  
    Doug Fahh
- 21 **Rain**  
    Kristina Kunstler
- 22 **Pika-Don**  
    Kuniko Bab
- 23 **The Great Sacrifice**  
    Sara Schreider
- 24 **Uncle Jessie**  
    Vanessa A. Rodriguez Landeros

## Note from the literary editor:

Great works of art inspire and move people. With that in mind, we compiled the latest edition of *Point of View*. Here we have a wonderful collection of art and literature created and presented by Harper College students and faculty. In editing, we learned that gleaming an assemblage of submissions for the absolute best, and piecing them together into a single complete whole isn't as easy as it sounds. There's much more talent out there than we could possibly fit in this book. But this is an excellent example of our best work at Harper. I encourage all of you to keep creating and submitting your work for publication. And I hope you find these works as inspiring and moving as we do.

Christopher Brinckerhoff

**Note from the art editor:**

Each year, Harper College puts together a collection of the best and brightest artistic and literary works our fellow students have to offer. The time and effort taken to reach deep within ourselves and create something meaningful is what the *Point of View* magazine is all about. Not only are we all part of this great collaboration, but it reflects the willingness of our community to come together to create a magazine unlike any other. I am very pleased to bring you this year's edition, and I encourage everyone to keep striving for excellence in the pursuit for higher education.

Russell W. Schiller

<b>Front Screen Porch</b>	25
Amanda Nielsen	
<b>Who Am I?</b>	26
Cynthia Davis	
<b>Going Home</b>	28
Sean Rafferty	
<b>Craft Some Passion</b>	35
Kyle Jacobs	
<b>to do doo to do doo</b>	36
Gamaliel Gomez	
<b>Bear</b>	37
Amanda Nielsen	
<b>Joey</b>	37
Katie Christine Smith	
<b>John Doe</b>	38
Terry Torez Norman	
<b>Needle #483</b>	39
Bernie Bluestein	
<b>Four Pelicans</b>	40
Stephan J. Scalan	
<b>Joan of Arc</b>	41
Clarence Gregory Cruz III	
<b>Sensation</b>	42
Diane Shore	
<b>Moment</b>	43
Laura M. Gross	
<b>Stomach #2</b>	44
Elenor deLeon	
<b>Baby Doll</b>	45
Kelsey Bartsch	
<b>Tell Them</b>	46
Nicki Mann	
<b>Come to Me... Bend to Me</b>	47
Jack Mitchell	
<b>Notably Remembering Amy</b>	48
Benigno Boyas	
<b>Back Cover</b>	
<b>Inner Thought</b>	
Ceramic	
Mia Ishiguro	



**Mia (Water)**  
Ceramic 4.75" x 4.5" x 3"  
**Eva Toma**

## Pieces of Light

Karen Brady

Gather the crumbs of light,  
make a pile on the brown table top.  
Shiny shards of sunlight, in a round pile.  
I cup my hand along the table's edge  
and brush the dry pieces into my palm.

My hand tilts the crumbs  
over a glass of water.  
I swirl the glass in my hand  
the shards of light clink,  
soft and harsh,  
against the sides.

Ice cubes of light  
spinning in the warm water.  
White, green and pink  
moving in  
and out of the yellow sunlight.  
Appearing and disappearing,  
twirling hallerina faces  
flashing on and off.

The flecks of light  
sink in circles  
floating to the bottom.  
A small sandcastle  
gathers itself on the hard floor of  
my water glass.  
Twinkling, and shining,  
dusty crumbs of  
sunken sunlight.



**Are We Not Mice In Glue Traps Waiting To Be Set Free?  
Love Was Sacred, Now Emotion Is Defined As Poetry.**

Tony Hahn

The night was ordinary, except for the plunging of my heart  
To the depths of despair.

Behind that off TV set there was a high-pitched yelp-quick,  
But so desperate.

It was as if ten needle points rubbed the chalkboard  
In the instant it happened.

Before my rejoining heart could cease the pain,  
The shriek came again.

In what cruel plight had this mouse found itself?

A crumpling of newspaper was the next sound,  
As surely its feeble arms reached out  
Clawing for a chance.

I hoped fate would give way and unglue its pitiful prey this time.

Each new howl spoke to me as loudly as the first  
As if the small thing belted right into my ear.

I was as frozen as my heart; all I could do was shatter at each sounding spear of distress.



## Loud Planes

Laura M. Gross

From her bedroom window,  
a woman watches airplanes crash  
in her backyard. Her husband asks  
if she'd like anything to drink.

Maybe a little water.

He opens the window and catches raindrops in a glass.

Could you close the window?  
The planes are loud today.



## Standing Still, Walking Tall

Michael Bentley, Jr.

I once knew a man who was larger than life and stronger than time. When I was a child, he stood at the height of heaven, and he would walk with the sun in his left eye, rising when he awoke and setting when he laid to rest. When it rained, I assumed he was crying, but Chicago was a bright place in the early 90's, even at night. In his left eye was all the wisdom a man his size could hold. He kept music in his lungs, passion in his gut, and an unlimited supply of pure and golden faith in his back pocket. And, just in case any of that faith ran out, he kept an extra supply stored away somewhere in his bottomless heart.

This man I knew had a voice both strong enough and light enough to feel; something like the breeze, you could say. Even when his voice could not be heard you knew he was speaking, because leaves were blowing and birds were flying. "Lighters in the air!" you could hear him say, and picture him standing behind two spinning turntables and one magical microphone, making an entire city rock from side to side. "Lighters in the air!" and millions of grateful stars would come out across a 1990-something Chicago night sky.

The hands of this man were big enough to hold all the children in the world at once, and soft enough to comfort them. (Whenever he would see us children, he would give each of us gifts with pieces of his life and his energy hidden away inside. Like a crisp green bill inside a birthday card, we could always expect to receive a bit of his abundant wealth when we saw him.) This man's two hands were strong enough to rearrange the laws of the natural world, allowing him to have the child he physically wasn't supposed to, and still soft enough to raise her. Indeed, his hands were perfect for loving and even better for fighting.

Oddly enough, this mystical man had four legs. I remember my mother telling me something about a stray bullet as a child, but

the word "paraplegia" was too much for me to wrap my little head around, and a bit too weak to be attributed to a man that strong. "Besides," I would think, "How could a man who holds the world on his shoulders have any less than four legs?"

As a child I would sit in the giant hand of this giant man, looking up with the awe a soul his size demanded, growing under the sunshine and wisdom in his eyes. In vain, I would attempt to figure out how, I too, could send pieces of heaven hurtling towards the ground when I walked, or move an entire city to dance just by uttering a short phrase. I spent countless nights mulling over where one would find whatever pot of gold afforded the kind of wealth you could constantly give away but never run out of. I would wonder how it was this man became so much larger than life and so much stronger than time and destiny. In all my wonder, though, I never doubted that this man was any less than he appeared.

\*\*\*\*\*

I saw my Uncle Steve alive for the last time at the end of 1999. It was the first time I had seen him and the first time I had been back to Chicago in quite a while. I was surprised to see how much had changed. The Chicago sky above our heads was black and empty and the city below wasn't dancing. The cold and stubborn November breeze ceased to blow when my uncle spoke, and when he hugged me, it took both of his, and both of his arms in order for me to fit. Everything had changed.

In that still night, I recall waiting in the backseat of Uncle Steve's car at a quiet Amoco gas station. As he rocked himself out of the driver's seat he stood, and I was quite surprised to see he was only a few inches taller than I was. I saw the bulge in his back pocket where he was keeping an old worn version of the New Testament—the black leather cover clearly showing the beginning and end of faith, and the torn gold-trimmed pages held inside were neither glowing nor flowing. I did as all

adults eventually do and began to laugh at the child I used to be.

As he made his way around the station, I looked down, overwhelmed by the weight of the shame and embarrassment that comes with the realization that all your childhood fantasies were only that. It was then I noticed Uncle Steve's two crutches still resting between the car seats.

Inside he pulled his paralyzed legs around the station with awe-inspiring ease, and outside I realized how we take a man's reality for granted when we see him defy it time and time again. Inside my Uncle Steve was rearranging his fate, and outside I was realizing how a wide-eyed child can see the world so much better than a narrow-minded adult.

With each step he took, the ground seemed to shake, and he grew. As he spoke to the smiling man behind the counter, I could feel a breeze come in through the open car window, and I grew. Uncle Steve made his way out of the gas station, and as he walked, pieces of heaven fell from the night sky, and he grew. Sitting in his hand I saw the moon appear in his right eye lighting up the black sky, reminding me that the sun was still around somewhere, and we grew. Sitting in the hands my Uncle Steve used both to love and to fight the world, I realized that some superheroes aren't strong enough to stop speeding bullets, but are more than strong enough to pull themselves back up, and to once again stand as tall as heaven. Just then the stars spread across that 1999 Chicago night sky, as the city showed its appreciation, and I never again doubted that this man was any less than he appeared.



## Fish with Whiskers

Laura M. Gross

I tried to board the plane in Savannah,  
but it was full of water,  
and the flight attendant  
wouldn't let me on  
without a wetsuit.

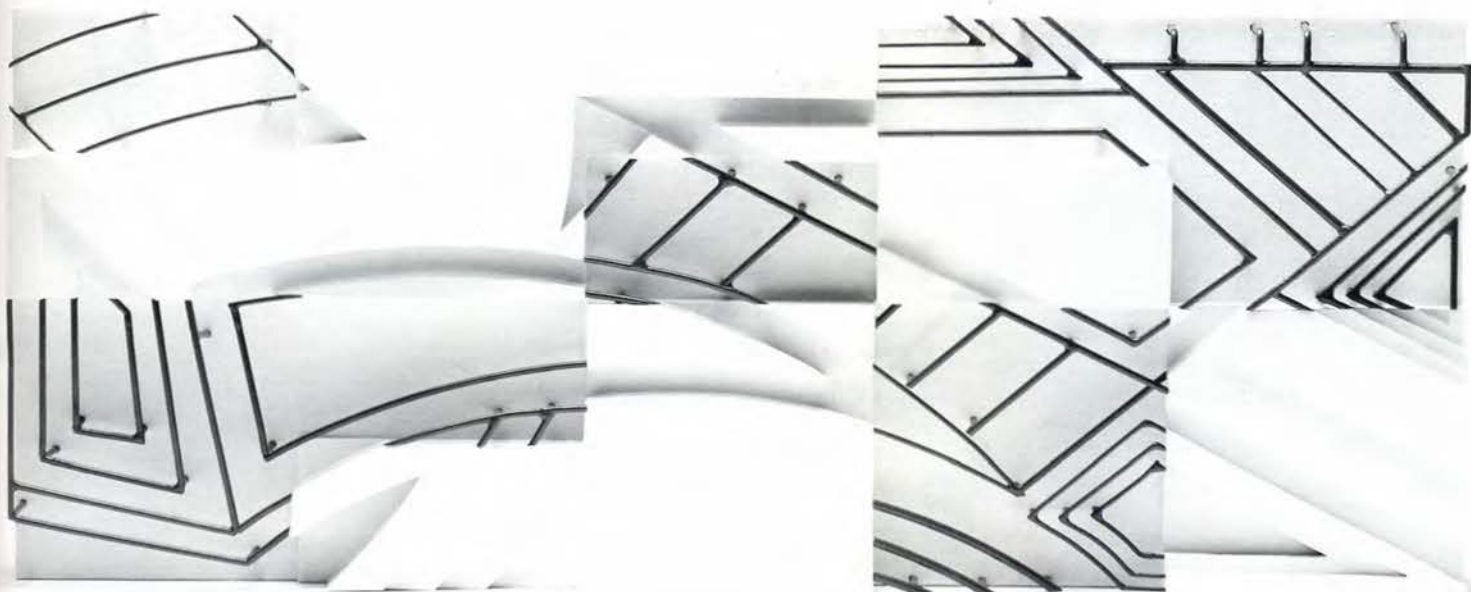
I went to buy one  
at the airport gift shop,  
but they had no duty-free  
scuba diving gear.

So I presented the flight attendant  
with some live catfish  
from the airport aquarium,  
and she let me board  
because, she said, she loves  
all fish with whiskers.

## Damaged

Karen Brady

broken china bowl  
long blue scars  
glued back together  
my fingers still trace the cracks



**Beneath the Surface**  
Wood & metal 19.75" x 2.5" x 8"

**Evan D'Orazio**





Lured  
Mixed media 45" x 34"  
Phillip Bassuk

---



Blame it on her father  
Stephen J. Scanlan

The digging spade felt right  
in her down turned wrists  
and her swinging was swift  
precise and metronomic.

With each sharp blow  
skull chips splintered  
the star-filled October sky  
then glistened like rubies  
when they came to rest  
on the dewy lawn.

No voice called to her back  
as she stumbled towards  
the shed to return  
one of his favorite tools.

She sat on a stump  
and gazed at her still hands  
laying in her lap  
each protecting the other.

## Mushroom Hunting

Bethany Lindley

I heard that the best time to hunt mushrooms  
Is after spring rains drench the forest floor  
And the sun warms the earth and flower blooms  
And from the ground emerge spore after spore.  
I have been to the woods in the spring when  
The water was deep in places and I  
Had to wade through the soggy mucky fen  
Not a single inch of dry land nearby.  
Buzzing mosquitoes and black flies in swarms  
Sticker plants and thorny briars that caught  
Hold of my trousers and scratched at my arms  
Made me ask whether or not what I sought  
When I came to the woods that fine spring day  
Was worth the price I was forced now to pay.





**Janet**  
Graphite 18" x 11.25"  
**Jack Mitchell**



## Cotton Candy and Merry-Go-Rounds

Anna Basor

There was once a Merry-Go-Round, with its long-haired mares  
that glistened in the heat

then,

a young girl's tongue oozed with Cotton Candy between smiles.

the rest stayed stuck to braces

and innocence.

now and then

as tides turn and crisp withering limbs of the willow in the yard  
collect fallen friends in bunches at its roots,

i try to unstick what will not come undone.

i pick at pink sugar,

once so pungent with pony-tails and lollipops

now stagnant with cheap perfume.

it's like black, liquid ink that nestles between crevices in rice paper,

ink that cracks as the father clock takes its mobility away, with each cry.

Oh, rapunzel with hair so frail and thin

left with nothing in her tower but wrinkles and gin.

it still sits there, in weeded ground.

the mares' smiles now those of contempt,

the hinges, with each circle, blare an old familiar sound

as i pick and pick and pick

and pick

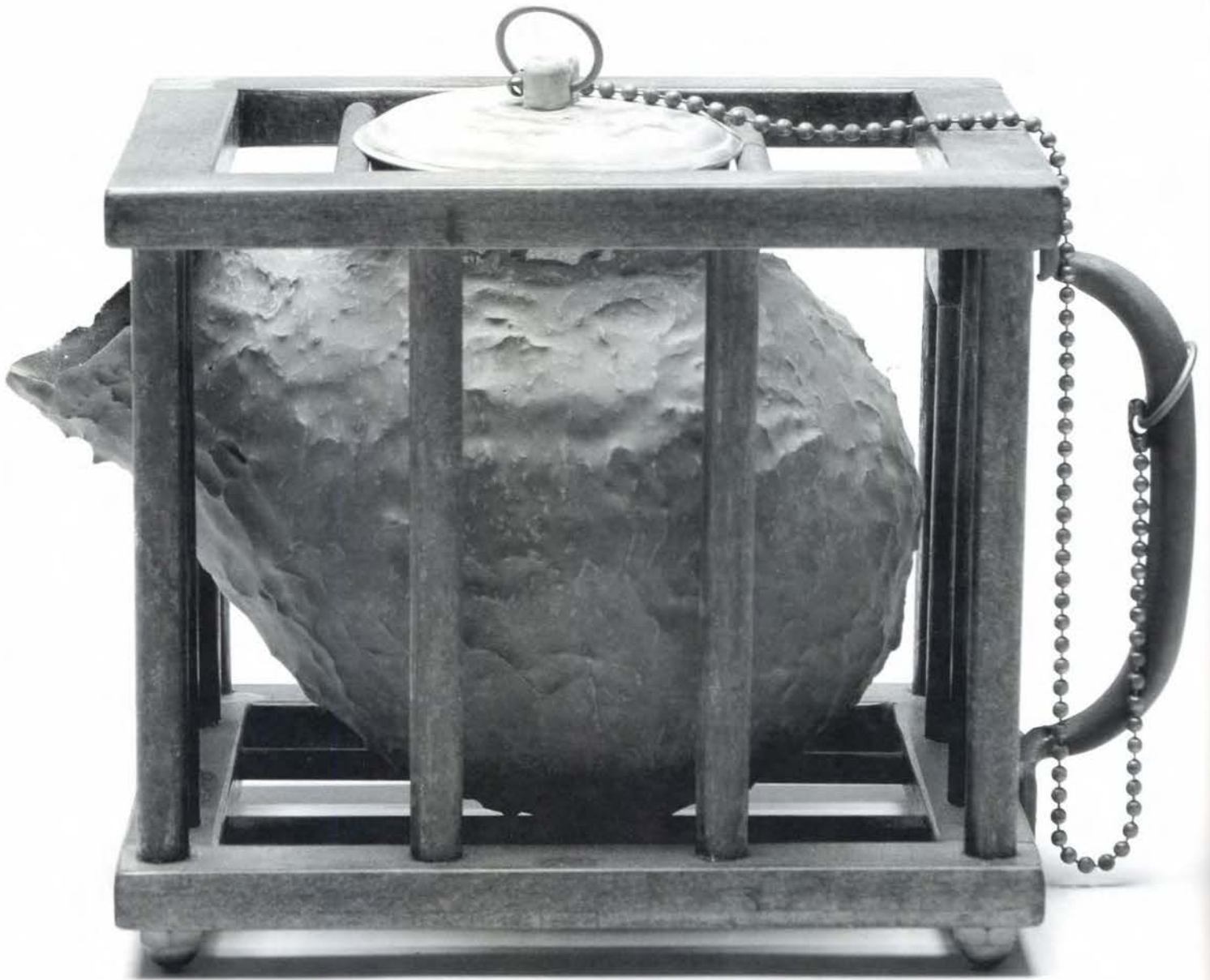
away at that web of stuck cotton candy all around

the glistening merry-go-round, with its long-haired mares, keeps spinning  
round and round.

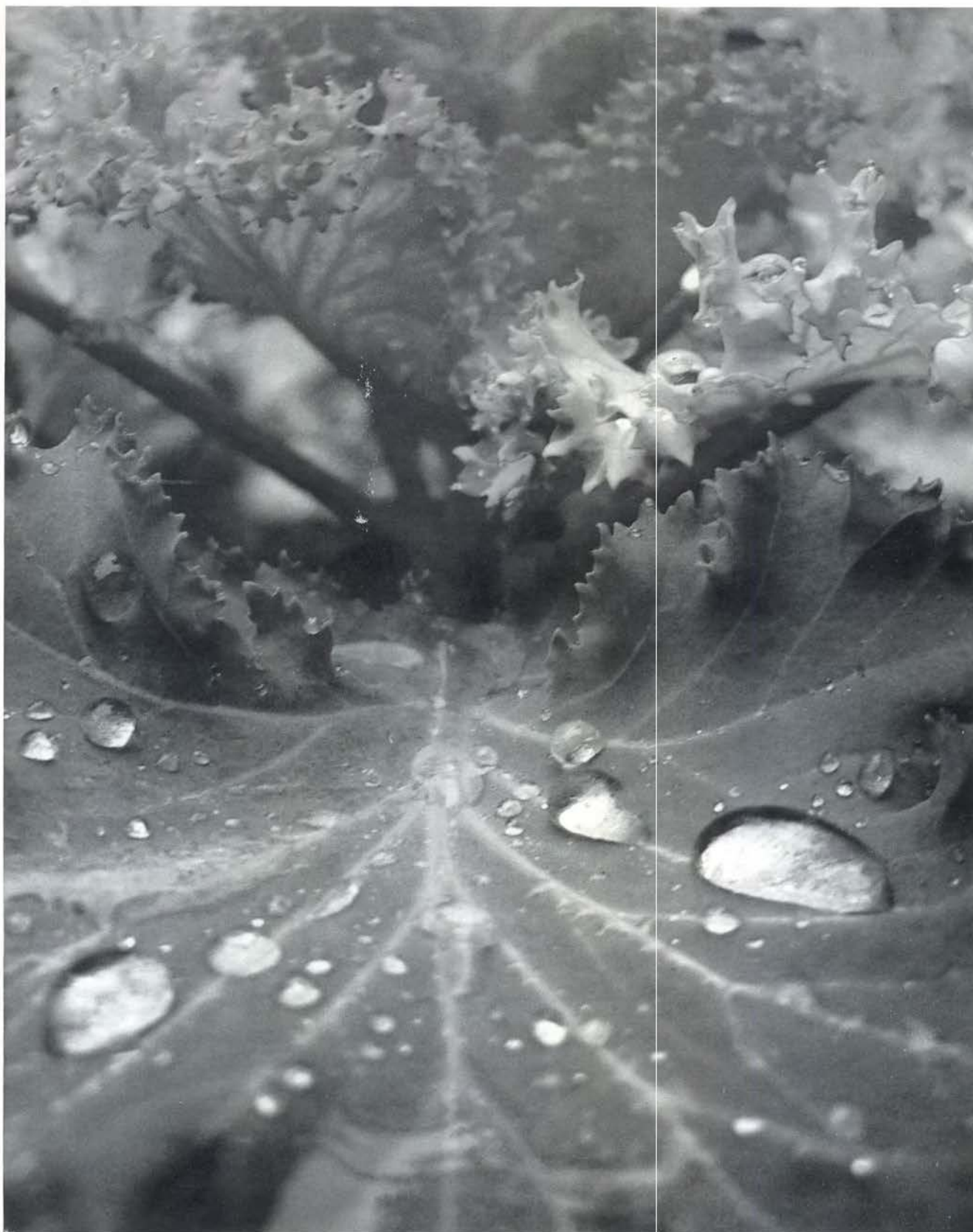


**Coil #1**  
**Ceramic 18" x 11.5"**  
**Elenor de Leon**





Untitled  
Mixed Media 6.5" x 8" x 5"  
Doug Tabb



## Rain

Color Photography 7.25" x 9.25"

Christina Kunstler



## Pika-Don

Kuniko Baba

On August 6, 1945, in the muggy morning,  
The blue sky carries a B-29.  
When the weird mushroom envelops the city,  
Time stops in Hiroshima.  
The watch shows 8:15 permanently.  
People see the dazzling flash, "Pika,"  
People hear the deafening roar, "Don."  
They call it, "Pika-Don."

Fire swallows up people and their houses.  
"Give me water...water,"  
They groan pulling their dangling skin,  
No tears for painful eyes,  
Nose and mouth lost.  
The baby cries, wrapped in blood sea.  
People wear blood and scars.  
They jump into the river,  
Carrying tens of thousands of charred bodies,  
The blue river runs red.  
—What does the river tell us?  
Drenched with the black rain,  
People drink the drops of radiation.  
Their scars, ashes, and the Atomic Bomb Dome  
Standing like a dark, lonely skeleton.  
—What do they tell us now?

A man's crooked shadow imprinted on the steps,  
As if he were being photographed for posterity.  
—What does the shadow tell us now?

At 8:15, August 6, every year,  
The siren echoes in the quiet city.

The survivors close eyes,  
Praying silently,  
No more "Pika-Don," again.

**The Great Sacrifice**  
Acrylic painting 30" x 30"  
Sara Schreider



## Uncle Jessie

Vanessa A. Rodriguez Landeros

We remember him.

His plaid shirt tucked into tight  
colored jeans held by a snakeskin belt  
with alligator boots and trucker hat.

The wall of smoke accompanied  
by aromas of Aztecs past would  
embrace us at the kingdom's entrance.

His hairy kisses on our cheeks  
followed by the triple tight hug,  
ending with a rough handshake.

His foul-mouthed laughter commanding,  
"Orale, como les fue? Relax and eat!"

Savoring the taste of his velvety pork-  
skin soup concoction as it caressed the  
circumference of our accents.

Reflecting to the definitive chat on the phone;  
the promise of a future visit lingered and lingered.

And then we mummified the sound of my  
father's quiet shock reaching  
the room where we hid our tears.



## Front Screen Porch

Amanda Nielsen

Mom calls us  
We sit on the wooden toy chest  
built by Dad  
on the  
front screen porch

We watch as the royal blue-gray  
and densely packed  
storm clouds approach us  
slowly rolling in

It is a symphony of  
bass drum thunder and  
cymbal-like cracks  
echoing off the trees and houses

A brilliant laser show of  
electric lightning  
splitting the sky  
from top to  
bottom



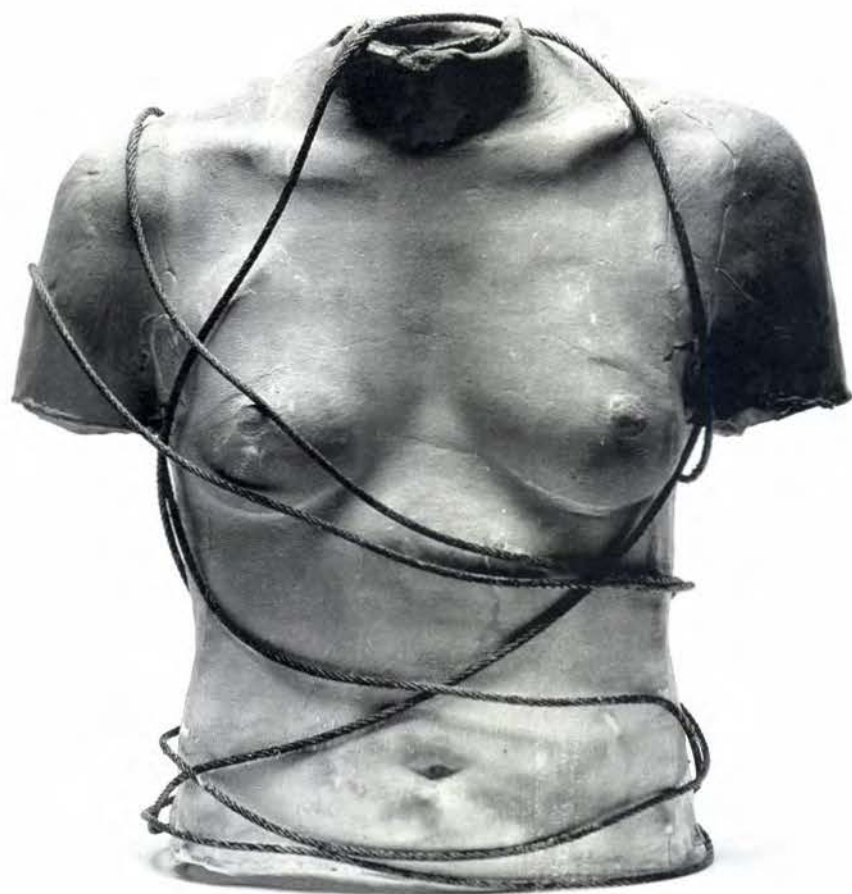


**Who Am I?**

**Ceramic 17.5" x 32.5" diameter each**

**Cynthia Davis**





## Going Home

Sean Rafferty

The day's final rays of sunlight retreated through the tunnel-like gauntlet of branches and steel, clinging to the train tracks like golden gilding. Two boys rode in the same direction as the setting sun. One of them, the taller of the two, Darby, a boy with broad shoulders and some scraggly hairs poking out above his upper lip, rode directly on the tracks, gripping his handlebars with steely tenacity in an attempt to overpower the uneven wooden planks that were jerking him to and fro. The other boy, Colin, much smaller in stature, skin pale to the point of near translucence, rode beside the tracks, breathing heavily and kicking up pebbles in his wake; the arms of the flannel shirt tied around his waist flickered in the wind; his right pant leg was gnarled and black from having been caught in the bike's chain.

"You tired yet?" Darby called out to Colin, who was beginning to lag behind and breathe more heavily.

"No," he stammered. He tried to say more but the words did not come.

The metronomic clicking of Darby's tires on the tracks sent floods of robins and sparrows into the sky, speckling the reddening sun with their black silhouettes. The air was host to the earthen smell of birth and decay.

Darby looked over his shoulder and slackened his pace. He jerked his handlebars to the left, hard, and veered off of the tracks at a ninety degree angle; then he jerked his handlebars to the right and rode even with the outskirts of the woods, ducking beneath protruding branches, hacking away smaller ones with blows from his fist. Looking back over his shoulder and realizing that Colin was on the verge of collapse and that there was no point in pedaling any farther, he swung his right leg over the frame of the bike and leapt off, letting it roll on ahead and topple over into the dirt. Colin followed suit, swinging his right leg over the frame just as Darby had

done, leaping from the bike, letting it roll on ahead and crash. His now still legs quivered as he doubled over, hands on his knees, choking, mouth dry and hot.

There was already a cigarette in Darby's hand. He lit a match by striking it on the underside of one of his front teeth, a trick his father had taught him. He lazily inhaled, savoring the warmth and fullness that swept over him. He did not exhale so much as he grudgingly let the smoke escape from his body. He would have held the smoke in forever if it were possible.

"Did you guys play any games? Sports or board games or anything like that?" Colin asked between fits of coughing and spitting.

"No," replied Darby. His eyes were squinted. He was looking back in the direction from which they had come. The sun was behind him.

"What'd you do if you didn't play games? Huh, Darby?"

"I dunno."

"Whadduya mean you don't know? You had to have done something, right?"

"I don't remember."

"You were there for seven months.

How do you not remember? Did they give you some memory-erasing pills before you left or something? Is that what they did?"

"That's a stupid question." Smoke billowed out of his nostrils.

"Then what did you do? You must remember. It's not like you can spend seven months in a place and forget everything. Can you?"

"What does it matter?"

"I just want to know. That's what I kept wondering about the whole time. I was going to write a letter and ask what you were doing, but . . ." he trailed off.

"But what?"

"Nothing. Forget it. Just tell me what you did, Darby. I really want to know."

"I talked," he said, eyes still squinting.

"Whadduya mean you talked? You just talked for an entire seven months? That

doesn't make any sense at all. It sounds crazy...I mean..." he trailed off again.

Darby sat down in the dirt and leaned against an oak tree, tossing handfuls of pebbles at the tracks. Plumes of smoke intermittently obscured his face, the fading sunlight flitting through, casting his face in a sickly, jaundiced glow. He did not speak. He was still squinting. Colin stood five paces from him, leaning down and examining the damage done to his pant leg. He spat into his palms and rubbed away some oil. Every now and then he looked over at Darby and opened his mouth, but nothing came out. He remounted his bike and started riding in circles, right over the tracks and back again. Darby did not look at him.

The train tracks cut a winding swath through the woods. The clearing was narrow, and the overhanging branches bridging the divide created an archway overhead. The sides of the tracks were littered with cigarette butts and empty beer cans; they baked in the sun, slowly surrendering their gloss and pomp.

"Is that what the rest of them did at that place, too? Just talk?" Colin asked.

"There was no them. Just me."

"There had to have been other people. They didn't just put you in that big old building by yourself, did they?"

"No."

"Then what did the other people do?"

"I dunno. I never saw anyone except for the guys who came in to ask me questions." He lit another cigarette but did not smoke it. He did this quite often. He liked to watch the flame march onward until only an ashen husk remained.

"Why'd they keep you separated from everyone? Huh, Darby? Why would they do that?"

"Listen, do you have to ask so many goddamn questions? Why do you have to blab on and on all the time? Can't you stop talking for one goddamn minute?"

Colin stopped riding his bike. He and Darby were on opposite sides of the tracks.

"I'm sorry, Darby. I didn't mean to make you mad."

"I'm not mad, dammit. I'm sick of answering questions."

"Okay, I'll leave you alone," Colin said. He was still. Only his nostrils moved, flaring wider and wider with each successive breath.

They stared at the tracks in silence. Darby removed a butterfly knife from the waist of his pants. He flicked it open and closed repeatedly.

"Christ, Colin. I don't want you to stop talking entirely. I just want you to stop asking so many goddamn questions," Darby finally said. He looked down at his extinguished cigarette, eyes still squinted. He blew a gentle stream of air towards the blackened remnants, fragmenting them into miniscule specks. Some landed in the grass; most landed on his pant leg. He did not brush them away.

"I don't know what else to talk about. This is all I've been thinking about for the last seven months," Colin said.

"Don't talk then. Just come over here and smoke a cigarette with me. You smoke now, don't you?"

"No."

"Why not?" Darby asked.

"Mom says it'll stunt my growth."

"So what? What the hell do you want to be tall for anyway?"

"It's not that. I don't care about being tall. Actually, I think I'd kind of hate it if I ended up being tall." He looked onward, in the direction they had been heading, staring at the horizon line.

"Then come smoke a cigarette if you don't care about that crap."

"But it's bad for you."

"Everything's bad for you, Colin. The entire goddamn world is one big mess of badness. The cars and buildings and even the air we breathe—all of it's bad."

"What about this?" Colin asked.

"What?"

"Being here in the woods together after you being away for so long. Is this bad, too?"



Darby stopped squinting and wiped the ashes off of his pants.

"No. This isn't bad," he said.

"Good. If something about this were bad I think it'd make me doubt if there was anything good at all in the entire world."

"Hold onto that."

"Hold onto what, Darby?"

"Doubt," Darby said. "It's something you should hold onto. You should always doubt if there's anything good in the world."

"Why do you have to say stuff like that? Saying stuff like that makes people think..."

"Listen, do you want a cigarette or not?"

"I guess," Colin said, coming unfrozen and pedaling back over the tracks.

They smoked with the sun on their shoulders, looking backward at the tire tracks they had left in the dirt and soft, reddish clay. The train tracks were lit up like a waning beacon; the darkness was advancing. Colin tried to emulate the way Darby smoked, the way he let the smoke slither out. His lungs refused to cooperate. Each successive drag brought pangs of nausea and fits of violent coughing. Afraid that showing signs of weakness would make Darby lose respect for him, he tried to stifle the coughs. He would have chewed on glass if Darby had asked him to.

Lungs filled with smoke, coughs accumulating in his throat, tears bubbling forth from his bloodshot eyes, the nausea overtook him. His chest heaved in spastic fits. He tried to resist it just as he had resisted the coughs, but it was no use. Vomit pooled out of his pursed lips, running out of the corners of his mouth and out through his nostrils. He turned his head away from Darby.

"Christ. Put the damn thing down if it's going to do that to you. What's your problem?" Darby said.

Colin curled into a heap right beside his vomit and closed his eyes. He breathed through his mouth so that the smell of the mess he had made would not cause him to start vomiting again. He imagined flowing rivers,

powerful and forever frenetic. He wanted to move.

"You shouldn't do things if they hurt you," Darby said.

"That won't always happen," said Colin. "I just have to get used to it."

"You shouldn't force yourself to get used to things that hurt you," Darby said.

They sat in silence again, staring at the tracks. It was nearly nightfall. The route home was a four-mile ride along the tracks to the nearest clearing leading into town. After nightfall the only light source for miles would come from the faint flickering of the flashlights mounted on their handlebars.

"Come on. Let's walk around," Darby said. "It'll be a little while before the train comes."

Colin, still lying in a huddled heap, waited beside his vomit until it became clear that Darby had vanished into the woods. The sound of snapping twigs underfoot grew fainter. Afraid that he would get left behind, he rolled away from the vomit and scrambled to his feet. He wanted another cigarette.

Darby's darkened figure danced around the maze of roots and trunks. Thorn bushes, rocks, divots, and undergrowth that threatened to ensnare and trip were all traversed gracefully without incident, his broad shoulders swaying back and forth like a ceaselessly undulating counterbalance, his gaze never once falling upon where his feet tread. His steps were uncalculated, haphazard. Colin, on the other hand, eyes alert, lurching forward in cautious fits and starts, brushed up against every thorn bush he passed. His right leg, left exposed by the hole that the bike chain had chewed through his pants, oozed blood. He shouted a few clumsy expletives, mispronouncing some of the more obscure ones that had recently found their way into his lexicon; his prepubescent mind not yet sullied enough to have perfected them. Darby did not turn around to see what was cursing about. He stopped walking and looked upward.

"What is it, Darby?"

"A nest."

"Where? I don't see anything."

Darby pointed into the tree. Colin still could not see it. It was tucked away behind leafy outgrowths, positioned near the trunk on a triangular wedge where a thick branch forked in separate directions, acting as dual support beams. It would have been the perfect spot for a nest had it not been located on one of the lower branches where boys with keen eyes and destructive impulses could, with some effort, remove it from its haven.

"I'll boost you up and you grab it,"

Darby said.

"What for?"

"Just come over here so I can boost you up."

"I don't want to."

"Christ. What's the big deal?" Darby asked, reaching into his pocket for his pack of cigarettes.

"I don't want to hurt any baby birds."

Colin. "There aren't any baby birds up there. Just eggs."

"They're the same thing."

"No they're not. Eggs can't feel pain."

The cigarette dangling from his lips bobbed up and down as he talked.

"There are babies in those eggs. Just leave them alone. Why do you always have to do stuff like this? Why do you always have to..."

Darby was not listening. He had turned his back and was clawing at the tree, trying to anchor his sneakers in spots where the bark had rotted away and left indentations. He gained a foothold and boosted himself upward in one fluid movement, grasping the branch right below the one that housed the nest. He dangled there for a moment, his limp legs swaying slightly, the handle of his butterfly knife poking him in the ribs. He looked down at Colin, cigarette still dangling from his lips. He said nothing. His face was black. He and the smoke seemed as one. Streams of it sprouted from him and died away, dissipating into nothingness.

"Don't," Colin said softly, his back to the tree.

No response came from Darby. He pulled his body upward, his face cresting the branch where the nest laid, sleeves rolled up over his upper arms to reveal burgeoning muscles and pinkish lines criss-crossing his forearms. When his waist had peaked over the top, he swung his right leg over and straddled the branch at the point where it forked, right beside the nest. Blue eggs speckled with black dots were clustered in the tidy encasing of twigs and mud. There were four of them. One was noticeably smaller than the rest. He looked out across the vast expanse, the silent sprawl, away from the tracks, and removed another cigarette from his pocket, tucking it behind his ear. He hummed a song to himself. He made it up as he went along.

Colin led the way back to the tracks. Thorn bushes once again tore at his right leg, opening new wounds, scraping across old ones sticky with half-dried blood. He did not curse this time. Darby trailed behind, humming to himself and cradling the nest between his right forearm and his chest. He let his still-smoldering cigarette fall from his lips and removed the one tucked behind his ear with his left hand. He placed it in his mouth but did not light it. A train whistle bellowed in the distance.

Emerging from the woods, Darby looked in the direction of the oncoming train. The sun was gone, but the distant horizon revealed one lingering line of beaming blue beneath the falling black curtain. A white hot light blazed in the distance like a vacuous pinprick in space. The twigs from the nest bristled against the skin on his forearm. He was not humming anymore.

"What's the big deal with this place?" Colin asked.

"What place?"

"The railroad tracks. Why do you come out here all the time?"

"I dunno. I like it," Darby said. The unlit cigarette bobbed in his mouth.



"But why?"

"I dunno. Do you always have to have a reason for liking something?"

"I guess not. It's boring out here though. It's not like the trains are ever going to do anything new. They'll always head in the same direction and go to the same places over and over. They're stuck on the tracks."

"Not always," said Darby.

"Whaddya mean? It's not like they can fly or anything. They can only go where the tracks let them. They're stuck."

"Sometimes they come unstuck."

"What the heck is that supposed to mean, Darby?"

"Sometimes they come right off the tracks."

"Geez, Darby. Why do you have to always say stuff like that? No one wants to hear things like that. That's why..."

The grinding and clanging of the train grew louder. The ghostly, white hot light loomed larger. The blue sliver on the horizon disappeared. Darby removed a cigarette from his pocket and extended it towards Colin. He had not asked for it. He struck a match from his pocket and extended it towards Colin. He had not asked for it. He struck a match on the underside of one of his front teeth, lit his cigarette, and extended the flame towards Colin. They smoked together in the darkness, Darby with languid ease, Colin coughing in violent fits. Darby removed the cigarette from his mouth and wetted his upper lip with his tongue. The scraggly hairs above his lip glistened. The train neared.

"It sounds like a world war," Darby said, his words inaudible over the din of the train.

The faces of commuters showed vaguely through the green tinted windows of the train as it roared past; most were asleep. The train's baritone whistle blew. Colin felt like his ribs were going to open up and his guts were going to spill out, but he continued to smoke, holding it in for as long as he could, the orange glow lurching towards his lips. The train's greased

wheels glided smoothly along their plotted path with mathematical precision, the green tinted windows continuing to flicker past like a perverse slideshow of apathy and malaise. Darby, squinting, removed one of the eggs from the nest and threw it at the train. It exploded across the sooty steel. He removed two more, cigarette dangling from his mouth, smoke snaking its way through his nostrils, and hurled them at the garish faces in the windows. Only the smallest of the four eggs remained. He did not throw it.

The iridescent red lights on the back of the train began to vanish into the distance; the roar died down to tinny, rhythmic clicks, leaving only the lingering smell of burnt diesel. It was pitch black. Only the orange glows of the boys' dwindling cigarettes showed through the night. They continued to stare at the tracks.

"Why'd you do that?" asked Colin.

"What?"

"Why'd you throw the eggs? That was a mean thing to do."

"I had to," said Darby.

"No you didn't."

"Sure I did. It's impossible to watch a train full of morous pass without wanting to break something."

"How do you know they were morous, Darby? Maybe they weren't."

"Of course they were morous. Almost everyone is. You're too young to understand."

"I hate it when you say that, Darby."

"I can't help it. It's true. Most people are morous."

"No, not that. I hate it when you say I'm too young to understand."

The air was growing colder. Colin untied his flannel shirt and put it on, leaving it unbuttoned. There was a rip in one of the elbows.

"Please tell me what you talked about, Darby."

"Why? It's pointless."

"I really want to know. I've been wondering for seven months."



"It doesn't matter. None of it does. They were all morons."

"You know what, Darby?" I don't think you like a single person in the whole world anymore."

"That's not true. I like you." He was still holding the nest with the lone egg in it.

"You only like me because you have to, because we're brothers. Brothers have to like each other."

"Where'd you get an idea like that?" asked Darby.

Colin shrugged his shoulders.

"You only like things, not people. Trains and junk like that. Stuff that is predictable and never changes," Colin said. His lungs were now accustomed to the smoke. He wanted to hold it inside forever.

"Trains change. They rust and age and get graffiti sprayed on them. Sometimes they come right off the tracks."

"Please stop saying stuff like that, Darby. It's morbid."

"Life is morbid."

"Darby, ever since..." Tears started to roll down his cheeks. Darby did not see. It was too dark. They smoked and stared at the tracks like silent sentinels, Darby squinting, Colin's face wet with tears. There was some rustling in the distance, vague sounds of leaves being tousled, then silence. A coyote unleashed a howling lament moments later, ominous and resonant in the stillness of the night. Another coyote, sounding faint and weak in comparison to the first, responded.

"Was there anyone at that place that you liked at least a little bit?" Colin asked.

"There had to have been someone."

"Well..." Darby stopped squinting and relaxed his broad shoulders. "There was this one guy, Doctor Richmond, who was okay, I guess. He was still a moron like the rest, but sometimes he said stuff that I liked."

"What kind of stuff?"

Darby took a long drag from his cigarette.

"One time he talked about this one

philosopher, some guy who said that time is a big circle instead of a straight line. The past, present, and future are all sorta happening at once. Everything repeats. It just goes on and on and never ends. No one ever really dies because the circle just keeps going and going. Even if someone is dead, they're alive within that circle; they're alive and you're with them."

"But you can't replay things over and over," Colin said. "All that stuff about no one ever dying sounds crazy...I mean..."

Once again, they stared at the tracks in silence, their cigarettes extinguished. Colin did not ask for another. In the distance, farther away than before, a rustling once again arose. The coyote howled, more prolonged and piercing than before. There was no response from the other coyote. Darby could feel the butterfly knife poking him in the ribs.

"I didn't mean to say that stuff, Darby," said Colin, his face still wet.

Darby thrust his hand into his pocket, removed his pack of cigarettes, fingered the three remaining, left them in the pack, and thrust them back into his pocket. He said nothing.

"That actually sounds kind of nice," said Colin. "The circle, I mean." He picked up a pebble and threw it in the direction of the tracks. "I like the idea of things happening again and again. Not everything, of course. But there are some things that I wish would go on forever."

Darby once again withdrew his pack of cigarettes from his pocket and thumbed the three remaining ones, his calloused fingers on the soft, cottony fibers of the filters. He withdrew two, struck a match on his teeth, placed them both in his mouth and lit them. He extended one of the cigarettes to Colin and began to burn. The song he hummed began as a despondent dirge and then built itself into a flourishing, bombastic crescendo, only to die down again. He made it up as he went along. Colin hummed along too, but not loudly enough for Darby to hear, anticipating every tonal and rhythmic change, locking into

perfect synchronization. Cigarettes still blazing, the song ended and a strong wind swept through the treetops, causing branches to collide and scrape together, giving rise to a hollow, percussive rattling, like a million bones commingling.

"Hey, Darby. Do you remember what that one guy said after the funeral? The guy with the moustache and the red spots on his head?"

"Yeah."

"He said that when you die you're just going home."

"Yeah, I remember."

"I liked that, Darby. I thought about that a lot afterwards."

"He was stinking drunk," Darby said.

"I don't care."

"He was also a moron."

"I don't care."

Darby took the lone egg from the nest and held it in his palm. He rubbed his thumb across the top of it, exploring the coarse, minute bumps on its surface. The weightlessness and fragility were unsettling. He did not like the idea of life existing in such a flimsy container. Everything in the world seemed incapable of being protected. It was all too fragile.

The sounds of snapping twigs and rustling leaves echoed out of the woods directly behind Colin.

"Darby?" he called out. "Is that you?"

No response came.

"Darby? Where are you going?"

The darkness was pervasive. Colin grabbed his bicycle, righted it, set the kickstand, turned on the flashlight, and raced into the woods.

The light from the bike's handlebars jetted into the woods but fell flaccidly against the dense jumble of trees. It cast a luminous wall near the tracks; everything beyond was enshrouded in darkness. The crunching sounds continued. Colin called out repeatedly, sprinting as fast as he could, scraping his wounded leg on thorn bushes, stubbing his toes

on large rocks littering the ground, hands extended in a blind, desperate attempt to save himself from running headfirst into a tree trunk.

"Darby? What the heck? Where are you?" He wheezed and spat out of the corner of his mouth. The mess of saliva and snot, hot and sticky, tethered itself to his cheek.

Darby stood at the base of a tree, looking upward, cigarette blazing, broad shoulders poised. He held the nest at waist level.

"Darby? Geez, what the heck is going on?" He could see only black outlines converging as one monstrous mass.

"Come over here so I can boost you up," Darby said.

"Why? What's the big idea?"

"I'm putting the nest back."

"Darby, it won't matter. The mom won't come back now, not after you touched it."

"I know."

"Then why the heck do you want to put it back?"

"Just come over here."

"Is that even the same tree you pulled it out of?"

"I don't know. Just come over here, goddammit."

Colin walked over to where Darby was standing. Darby handed him the nest, hoisted him into the air, and began to hum, making it up as he went along. Colin joined in, this time humming loudly enough for Darby to hear. The nest now secure, Darby stopped humming. He could feel the butterfly knife poking him in the ribs. He felt no desire to remove it, no desire to do what he had once done.

## **Bear**

**Amanda Nielsen**

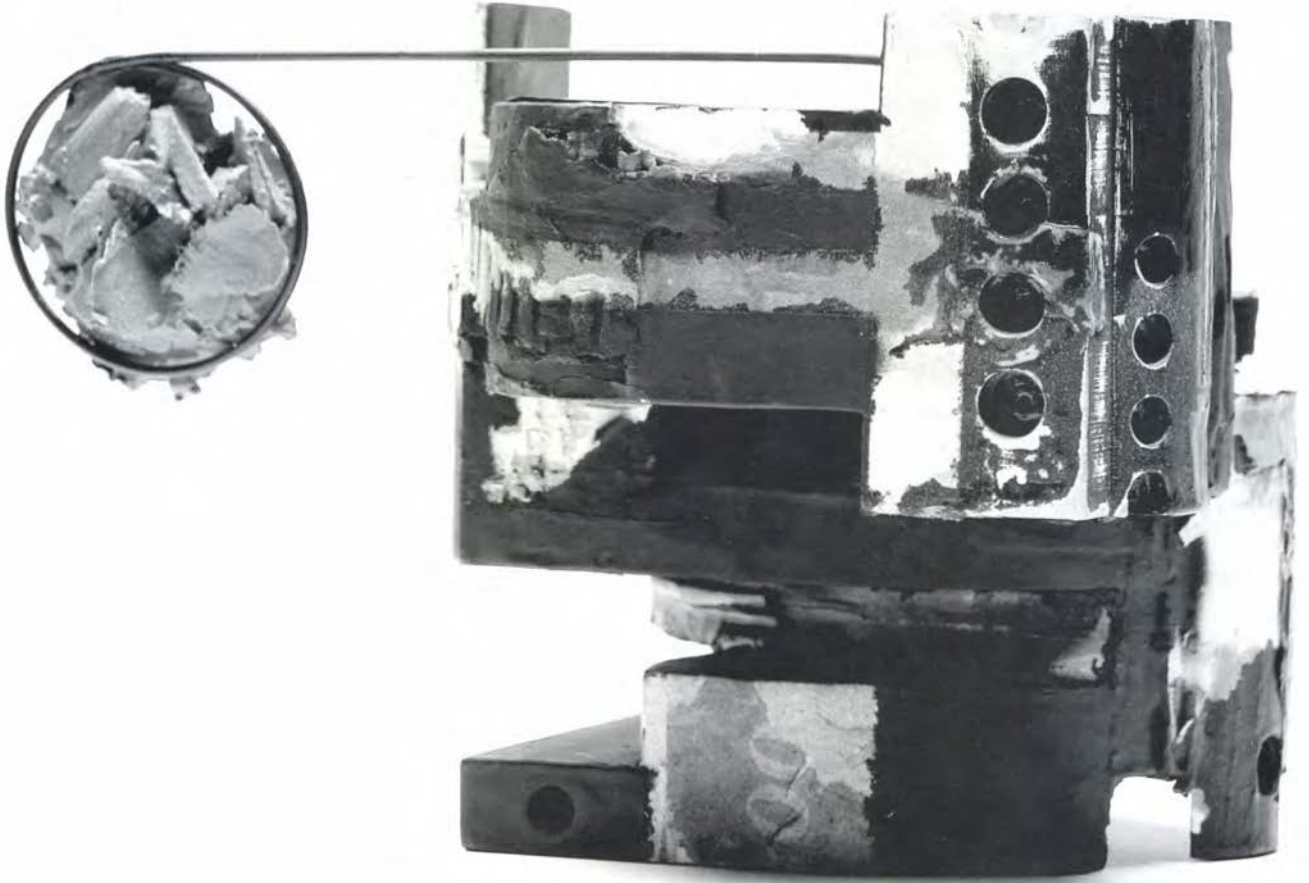
that lovely stench of  
your wet fur  
permeating the entire car

you had to experience  
the river one more time  
before we  
left the lakehouse

## **Craft Some Passion**

**Kyle Jacobs**

Craft some passion  
To hold some traction  
On the ice  
Of my life  
Synthesize divinity  
To keep my affinity  
To a truly wholesome path  
God knows I try



**tododoo tododoo**  
Wood & collage 8.5" x 6.5" x 6.5"

**Gamaliel Gomez**

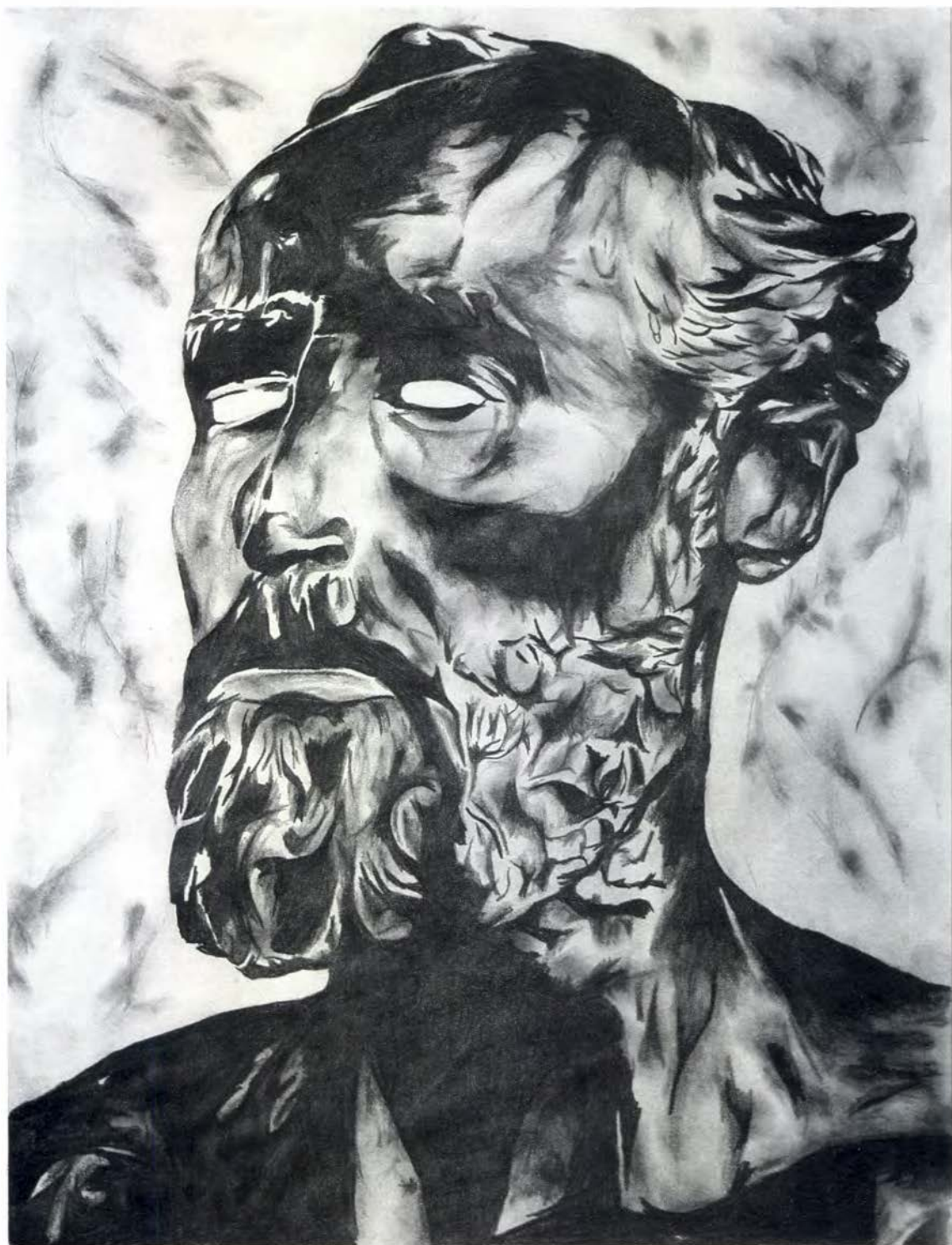
## Joey

Katie Christine Smith

He was born from his mother's womb, as his heart ticked-tocked  
Before long he escaped and had surgery on his clock  
He returned to his mother, as she gave him a kiss  
He began to live life as a normal young boy  
With very few limitations, he had a life to enjoy.

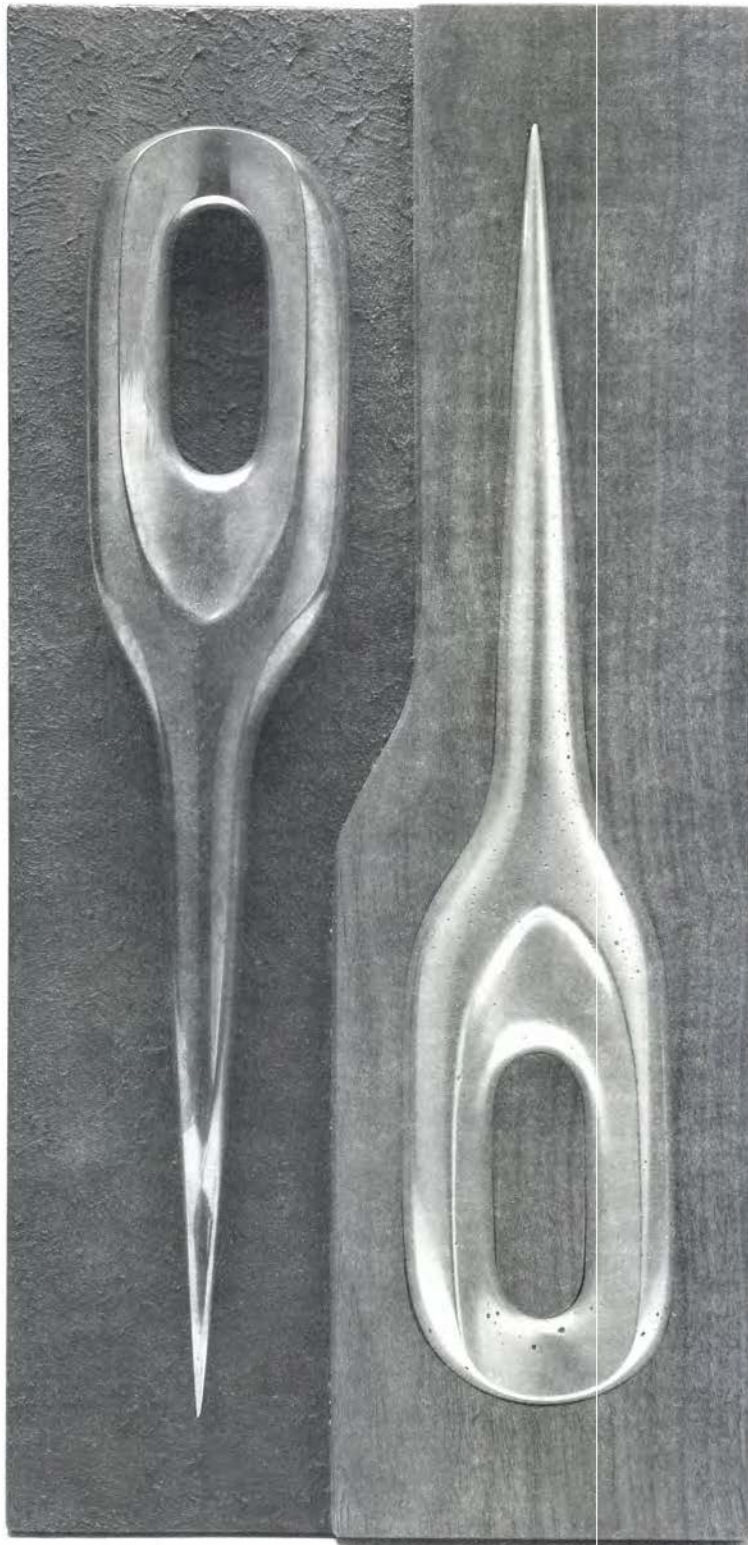
He caught the pitches that were made  
And fired back with his hand grenade  
He was a great friend for all I knew  
When his heart collapsed I knew what to do  
He was turned over and gasped for air  
The lips blueberry blue smiled with no fear  
He stops his heart to shut his eyes  
And expands his wings to the skies.





**John Doe**  
Graphite 18" x 23.5"  
**Terry Torez Norman**





**Needle #483**

Metal, wood & acrylic paint 17" x 7" x 2"

Bernie Bluestein



HARPER COLLEGE LIBRARY  
PALATINE, ILLINOIS 60067



## Four Pelicans

Stephen J. Scanlan

I'm on back in beach chair  
and open eyes reveal  
four pelicans parallel  
to earth,  
wings still,  
outlined to blue sky.

Again eye sees light  
not light then light  
as pelicans traverse  
path of sun.

Eye to memory is so fond  
of scalloped wings  
broad and unwavering  
against infinite blue.

Their shadows are quick  
and ripple like serpents  
across the uneven balconies  
of oceanfront condo.

There is a pause  
then the crash of the surf  
as four pelicans  
simply ride the wind  
and glide overhead.





Joan of Arc  
Acrylic 24" x 30"  
Clarence Gregory Cruz III



## Sensation

Diane Shore

I grab my ears  
and listen to the subtle hum of silence.  
I close my eyes  
and see the distant color of darkness.  
I let the air enter my lungs  
as it makes its constant exchange-  
Something for something.

And I smell the aroma of life.

## Moment

Laura M. Gross

At Kennedy Union Pub  
I stand in the shadows  
with my underage friends.  
They're watching Gulliver's  
Traveling Medicine Show,  
the band on stage. I'm watching you,  
your mouth closed  
around a beer bottle lip  
as you swallow  
your last drops of foam.

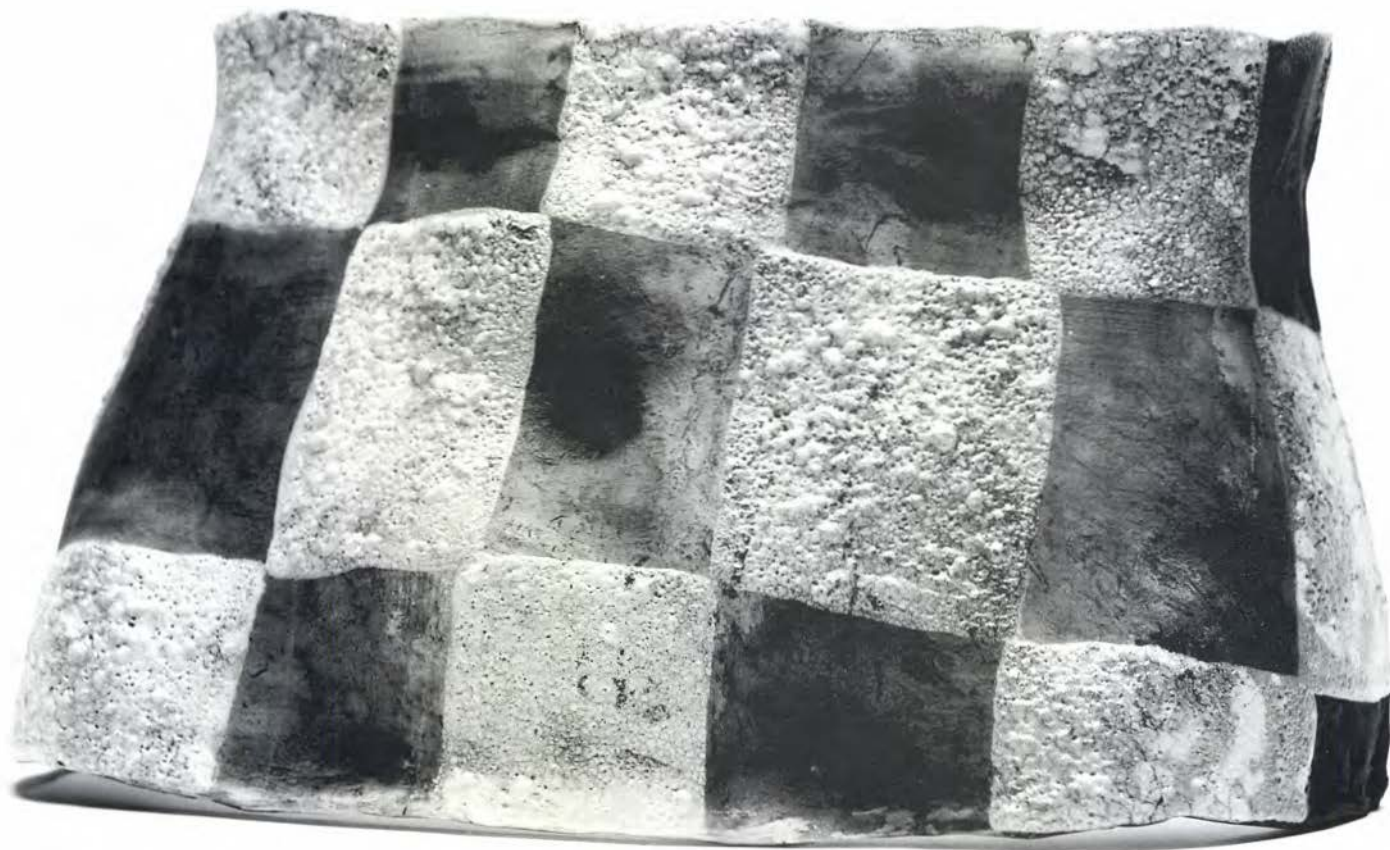
A tall girl nibbles at your ear.

I wait for you to push her away,  
but you follow her to a table  
where your intertwined coats lie  
in a dull, dark lump. I can't tell  
where your coat ends and hers begins  
until you pull them apart. Your form  
disappears in the crowd  
as you leave with the girl  
and the guitarist strums  
his final chord.



**Stomach #2**  
Ceramic 10.5" x 6.75" x 5"

**Eleanor deLeon**



# Baby Doll

Kelsey Bartsch

bend me  
shake me  
take me  
break me

I won't feel a thing.  
pop off my head  
there's nothing there  
but empty air  
no Brains.

just beauty  
Artificial as your smile

put me up on a pedestal,  
then watch me as I fall.  
I'm as pliable  
as a pretty, plastic doll.

Warp me  
Twist me  
Take me  
Fist me

I'll let you do it all.

I'll smile as you turn me, burn me, screw me.  
Because my grin is pasted on.

Like the Mona Lisa,  
my smile never fades.  
I simply sit inside my tortured, blissful cage.

CRACK me,  
HACK me,  
RACK me,  
SMACK me-

like I love the Pain.

I must, I confess,  
Because I let you trample me.  
my dignity.

And then you  
degrade me,  
strip me,  
parade me,  
rip me.  
and I'm naked and perfect and flawed.



## Tell Them

Nicki Mann

I will not tell them about the nights I made them macaroni and cheese  
From powdered milk and no butter  
And put them to bed on the floor with "The Simpsons" on TV  
While you got high in the bedroom.  
I will not tell them that when I was at work you left them  
With drug dealers to babysit  
I will not tell them that they cried for you sometimes  
But mostly didn't care that you were gone.

Instead I will show them the photo you took of us  
At the carnival on Labor Day weekend.  
The children are beaming into the camera,  
Their arms full of stuffed animals they've won,  
Their faces smudged with cotton candy.  
I stand behind them  
With my hands on their shoulders,  
Holding them into the picture.  
In the background a crier begs people,  
To play the Balloon Bust and win a prize.

I've Photoshopped your boyfriend out of the picture because  
I don't even remember his name.  
Now there's a cartoon balloon where his head used to be.

I will not tell them you sneaked us on most of the rides  
Or flirted with the carnies to get us on  
So you could save your money for crack.  
I will not tell them I stole the food tickets  
So they could get the cotton candy.  
I will tell them you loved them  
Enough to take them to carnivals.  
I will tell them we went on the rides with our shoes and socks off,  
The summer breeze tickling our toes.  
I will tell them you did not leave because of something they did.  
I will tell them you had problems,  
Big problems.  
But I will tell them the good things too  
And I will take them to the carnival every summer  
Forever.



**Come to Me... Bend to Me**  
Bronze Left 7.5" x 6.5" Right 7.5" x 6"

**Jack Mitchell**



## notably remembering Amy

Benigno Boyas

a piano, having only twelve-tones before coming back to the same,  
implausibly, will have to capture  
the entire essence of your touch and your breath on my skin,  
that comfort that you brought along in the warmth of your eyes, made of glass,  
those silk-spun kisses,  
and your ribbon-like hair that entranced me  
and lured me to you at first.

soon, your tongue would be filled with tranquility  
and despair  
at the same time,  
as you kissed my lips and bit softly on my skin,  
as the lights dimmed low and the candles burned, bright.  
This soft flame, we two  
at once  
became.

so this song that I write,  
with heated, loving thoughts and tears,  
dripping,  
on the inside of my lungs,  
will be a song reminiscent of love once desired,  
but now lost, like the resonance of a French horn's whisper,  
which, as it blows,  
speaks warm, billowing air.

music written while thinking of a girl  
— a peach September face,  
dressed with the naiveté of a plastic heart,  
and eyelashes that flutter like dragonflies at snowfall—  
this song, will be  
beautiful  
like your lust.



with your pleasant cheekbones and your third-grader smile,  
the notes from this song that you inspire will do justice  
to our passion and, hopefully,  
that relentless, fragile soul of yours that I wish for it to capture,  
a haunting, lustrous, low-note calamity,  
conjuring thoughts of waking in bed, together  
with your dimples touching my pillow and your arms  
intertwined with mine,  
this song now becomes  
my good morning.

much like the sounds of tenderness,  
like an elephant choir singing lullabies, a capella,  
your breath on my neck was  
to me  
like a comforting ballad,  
bringing hope through the moment,  
like a hot cup of soup in a poor beggar's bowl.

Yet still, very fond of the creases in your smile and the  
roundness of your lips and nose,  
I hope that you'll hear this song  
as you rest your head on your new lover's chest,  
dreaming funny things as you drift asleep,  
and warming his neck like you did mine,  
breathing cool, rhythmic love that soothes just like thunder,  
a storm I once listened for and yearned to have,  
but chose to follow a more peaceful cloud, instead.



