

1980

This issue presents compassionate, empathetic views of those who are different and do not conform to the expectations of society. This issue can also be described as the first issue to put a major focus on the differences in age. An untitled work by Robin Martin explores how different lives can intersect with one another and affect other people. Another major topic of creative work is the Nature vs. Nurture controversy and many works focus on the effects of society expectations on an individual. The work by Kenneth W. Welch deals with artistic impulses that occur despite societal pressures to be practical. He shows the tension that is created when issues concerning being practical are confronted.

Selected Works:

Of separate worlds longing to touch by Stuart Arotzky
The tank by Patience Lenington
Untitled poem by Roberta Le Bourbon
A statement by Kenneth W. Welch
Afterlife by Kenneth Welch
Untitled by Robin Martin

A STATEMENT

by Kenneth W. Welch

Let them call me fanciful and emotional
As I totter with these embroidered words.
It is beyond me to doubt the purpose
I extend the coupling of ideals.
Love, beauty, elegance -- all fairy-like
May bring the vultures of practicality
Smoothing down upon my nakedness
But let them come
Melancholy is what they will bring.
Their attention will only enhance my course,
Lend fuel to the love I struggle with
And strength to my talent.
Poetry is a cage of nature's freedom.

Untitled Poem

By Roberta Lee Bourbon

This is not me that speaks
but my past experiences; my
perceptions of what is.

This is not me that laughs
but the society and its
contradictions I see.

This is the life which
I have led or has it led me?

This is not my tears I shed
but the tears of the world I see.

Do I exist because of life?
Or does life exist because of me?

AFTERLIFE

by Kenneth W. Welch

Greatness of a world beyond
is no excuse for death
Turn that dagger upon
the hallucination of life after death
Do not succumb
to the temptation of myths
Verbal hand-me-downs
resurrected life in the mind
Throw down that notched hilt
of those that surrendered
Vague are the theories of life
Death is certain.

Untitled Poem

By Robin Martin

A Pebble is cast
Into the pond
Without a choice.
A unique circle emerges
And ripples outward.
It's inevitable
for the rippling circle
To widen.
It meets other circles,
They clash
They merge
They change each other
The circle becomes wider still.
Too soon,
The edges soften
Fade slowly
Fade silently,
Until there's nothing left.

1980 Staff

Mark Amore
Andrea Anderson
Stuart Arotzky

Maria Alicia Avitable
Jean Bankowsky
Karlene Berman
Cynthia Bernett
Roberta Lee Bourbon
Lissa Brantly
Cynthia Burnett
Janet Champlin
Howard Chernikoff
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Aldo Cupo
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Taryn Schaeneman
Clare Shugrue
Donna Slacter
Brad Smith
Debbie Steader
Alice Stroberg

Julie Trzeciak
Robert Vecchio
Kenneth Welch
Nancy Willard
Patricia Yerrington

1981

The goals of Folio are outlined: to highlight the creativity of Southern students; to please, praise, and encourage freedom of self expression. There is a growing interest or concern with how life should be lived by an individual. An untitled poem by Michele LeBlanc uses nothing as the subject and she expresses her fear of it as a negative force. The 1980's became the generation of Me people who pursued pleasure and self promotion without concern for the well being of others. Perhaps this poem is an early expression of the end result of such self centered pursuits.

Selected Works:

Aviso by J.M. Velazquez
Untitled by Michele LeBlanc.
The sum of it all by Paul Zulkoski

AVISO

by JM Velazquez

man.
you better speak to your
gods.
your humans aren't reaching them.
your views are changing, you are getting
away from the mold.
you better believe in
something:
your car
your job
the bar
your mamma's hand
the Russian Czar.
a crutch to hold while begging
on this earth.
man.
you better believe in your games:
baseball
football
wars
all are the same,
because without them
you are not defined.
they give you life as grapes
do wine.
man.
you better believe in your gods.
go to church,
gamble during the afternoon
and dry-out on week-endings
sell
and dry-out on week-endings.

sell, buy and sell again.
man you had better get along
with your life,
because death is waiting
squatted behind your door,
waiting...for you,
and in your head
the doctrine has given birth
to oversize monsters that
will eat out your soul
and escape from you as
bats from their cave.
man.
you better believe
because there ain't no way
out,
and insanity is death's scout.
man.
you better be on your heels
ready to kick up some dirt.

UNTITLED

by Michele d. LeBlanc

Daddy tells me that Nothing's
there so I won't be scared.

But I hear Nothing making noises.
I hear him moving right next to
my bed.

Teacher tells me the big circle is
nothing.
And nothing's name is zero.

But I'm afraid of zero.

Because I hear Nothing making
noises right next to my
bed

THE SUM OF IT ALL

by Paul Zulkoski

Like the digital dial changes the minutes
My life rolls by
Like the melodies of the sitar

My life is spiritually present
I act when the moment presents itself

1981 Staff

Laurie Cancsos
Janet Celotto
Bernadine Coggins
Jennfer Compton
Elaine D'Espoo
Erin Eckhart
Marc Elig
Kathleen Francis
Cheryl Frankel
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E.J. Levin
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Jeffree McDowell
Michelle Minniti
Bud Molihan
Andrew Narcisco
Mary O'Connor
JoAnne Pennachio
J. Raucci
Paola Rubbo
Taryn Schaeneman
Donna Slacter
Alicia Smith
Elizabeth Strano
Julie Trzeciak
Tom Vallambroso
Jose Velazquez
Paul Zulkoski

1982

There is a return to rhymed couplets and verse. This use of form has not been seen for the last decade. It may correspond to the change in society where conservative values are starting to dominate in reaction to the attitudes expressed in the 1970's rebellion to the war in Vietnam. There are a number of very human stories that tell of personal struggle. The focus on the individual who has "fallen through the cracks" of society is paramount and very sensitive.

Selected Works:

Untitled by Barbara E. Galpin

Torn dignity by D. G. Bellmore

The mercenary from Armagh by Andrew Narcisco

UNTITLED

by Barbara E. Galpin

I feel like a snowbank in April.

I was once wild, free
and awesome in my beauty.

Then they came and pushed me--out of their way.

They came and played on me
making me into things I'm not.
They threw mud on me
and destroyed my purity

Now I am dingy, grey
and unwanted in my age.

I feel like a snowbank in April.

THE MERCENARY FROM ARMAGH

by Andrew Narciso

I remember the sound
of the setting sun
bringing screams from many
and laughter to none.
No halcyon street remained
absent from the gun
while the Johnny dwelled
along the statues hell
where children used to run.

I remember the fall
of the orange sky

red window shades dripping
restricting the eyes,
and all the doors were open
with no one inside
as vultures above
 like quisling doves
 hungered for human hide.

I remember the past
like a sweet May wind
the Village was festive
to the love within.
And I was secretly singing
my cowling, growling hum
when the lights did glow
 I received the souls
 that were drunk in their sin.

I remember the sight
of a house in flames
when the family poured out
the bullets did the same.
So little was left
but a charred locket and chain
 of a picture in time
 beneath a silvered shine
 without the touch of pain.

I remember the voice
of ten-thousand men as one
chanting in parallels
that they had won.
And all the sickly mighty possessions
of the last regiment begun
to roar in the waste
 of victory's bittered taste
 marching in the field of blood and dung.

I remember the calls
of the screeching gulls
drawing my attention
towards the splintered hulls
Where the bays had been buried
under bleached, scarred skulls
that clench the growing shore
 as the tide sways "Once More"
 to an inland that forever lulls.

And I remember the rise
of the very next day
with the desperate drizzle of rain

resembling night in every way.
And such a sad groan of failure
went out to me to say
 of what fools we are
 to claim a star
 for each price that is paid.

And how I remember my knife
facing a cloud above my heart
gleaming in the chest of a stranger
loaded away in the caretaker's cart.
And nothing of this is gain.
And nothing of this restarts.
 For I am your reaper
 a mere mortal, carnage keeper
 who stalks humanity when it's blown apart.

I am your reality
when your humanity
 is blown apart.

TORN DIGNITY

by D.G. Bellmore

She speaks of a dignity that is torn,
And of a woman never born,
Into the light of security,
Of freedom and equality.
She keeps it locked inside herself,
Seldom unleashing its potential wealth,
When she puts it to the test,
She settles into what's known best,
But, again come those final rounds,
Runner up to what else she's found,
"No, don't do it. Not this time."
"You don't need him!" That echoing chime.
The churning struggle tears her in two,
What will she do? What will she do?
"Did we mean them, Those things we said?"
"Can't we forget them and go to bed?"
The familiar arms wrap around her flesh,
Fasten their touch and begin to press,
Drawing her down against pliable wall,
They both spontaneously begin their fall.
Compromising each other for each other's sake.
Staying contained, fearing to break,
Through the habits of the past,
Has an answer come at last?
Her dignity once again is torn,
And she remains a woman never born.

1982 Staff

Michael Barone
D.G. Bellmore
Art Carey
Lisa Cicarella
Kathy Conklin
Lois Cronin
Sharon Foy
Barbara Galpin
Wayne Grindle
Greta Immermann
Dorothy Jablonski
Judy LaMarche
Bernice Margolis
Paul Marottolo
Ron Savage
Claude Solnik
Christine Tranquist

1983

The works in this year's edition exhibit a much greater awareness of the importance of nature and its resources. Perhaps this is the beginning of the nationwide concern for the impact that our industrial and consumer practices were having on the environment. Coupled with this are pieces that question the role of academics in preserving natural resources. The Work of Susan Looker is an example. There is also a renewed critical interest and an insightful perspective of history which is apparent in several pieces.

Selected Work:

Titus by Susan Looker

The Golden Age by Norbert F. Markiewicz

Stars by Leslie McFatter

TITUS

by Susan Looker

Sweet pungence of blood, soil
Creeps between blue inked pages,
Drowns slow drone of ritual,
Draws him from classroom by the nose
Golden threads stretch
From his waist to the door
Behind him in a net, shimmering.
Black-robed Professor Dust
Strains to reel him in,
But he's running too hard, he's
Greyhound drooling after rabbit.

he tumbles on pine pin ground
Soft, fragrant, crackling.
Writhes, rubs, severs: the cords
Recoil like stretched taffy, curling.

Green-lit forest's arms encircle him,
he searches them for olive-speckled
Creature of hollow bird bones
Crouching in branches, robin's egg eyes
Poised for quick flight.
A call flutes through the stillness.
He bounds into waiting trees which
Follow no lines, feel no strictures,
Know no rules of academia.

THE GOLDEN AGE

by Norbert F. Markiewicz

Skies in whirls of crimson fires
years filled with warm desires
Men on roads, seeking fortunes
Women with children, caring for their homes

Dust in the valley
Gold in the hills
Like meat in a wild cage
Vast lands were conquered
Raped were the mines
Plowed were the rivers
Slain were herds of wild north moose
To feed men their dinners

It was the flame of the glory
That came upon us
Like a shooting star
And the madness that struck
Was the awakening flame of power
We burned too far

STARS

by Leslie McFatter

A few stars fell last night and I caught them in a dream;
I longed for them to warm my soul,
 I wanted to be free.
Searching for that pot of gold, that calling
 of the wild;
How truly sad I was not told, "You must first find the
 key."
A few stars fell last night and I caught them in your eyes;
I saw a glow, a pleading fire;
 a burning need inside.
The flicker of a flame; its warmth calling me close to you.
Light the vision of a young heart-trapped in a
 weary mind.

A few stars fell last night and united the dream.
The bugles cast a distant cry in chords of
 mystery.
How often we forsake our thoughts and tend to disbelieve;
 that KEYS, and FIRE, and LOVE, and LIGHT
are in EVERY soul; just waiting to be
 freed.

1983 Staff

Sandra Bancroft-Billings
Jeannette Cole
Holly Crawford
John Dalvet
Robert Dornfried
Irma Felix
Lynn Hagopian
Teresa Kliczewski
Donna Linlauf
Susan Looker
Leslie McFatter
Wendy Mount
Andrew Narciso
Cheryl Paules
Florence Pietrofesa
Jim Piotrowski
Laura Spel
Shaun Twiss
Rose marie Yitts

1984

The sensitivity toward the environment carries through to this year, as well as a new and highly developed student eye for details of nature and subject matter. Robin Cornell's story was awarded a first place prize in the student prose contest sponsored by *Folio*.

Selected Work:

Now you are so long ago by Robin Cornell

A coastal retreat by Jim Piotrowski

NOW, YOU ARE SO LONG AGO

by Robin Cornell

We talk of religion, of the Holocaust and the Jews. He says he is Jewish, and I say I had guessed by his name. We talk of transsexuals and homosexuals. He is not gay, he says, although he once had a friend who was. Neither am I, I say back, and we agree it is a good thing for us not to be.

He is stretched out on his side, leaning against my shoulder. I move my arm across his back. ...falling asleep, I explain. Watching TV with the sound off, we sing along to the commercials we know by heart, improvising dialogue to the late night movie. We are drunk, or getting there, an evening ritual I've come to look forward to. Used to be I'd throw up whenever I drank -- lately, it's the only thing that keeps my stomach calm.

Ash...try... he mumbles, reaching across my lap for the overflowing dish. His head drops lower onto my chest. I don't push him away. I watch his hands as they light his cigarette. Not as graceful as yours, I think.

I am sad. He senses this and reaches his arm around my waist, pulling closer. He means comfort, but succeeds only in deepening the pit of my stomach. With my free hand, the one not holding my drink, I absentmindedly stroke his hair. When I realize it's not as soft as yours, I stop.

We talk about art and Jasper Johns, of writers and football. I wonder out loud, What are the calories in whiskey? He doesn't know, but listens patiently, adding the numbers I estimate from my day's meals. He sums eight hundred or thereabouts and laughs. Don't worry! Oh, but I do! I laugh with him and stretch out my leg, shifting in my seat so that it lies alongside his body. Feel these knees! He feels them and says I could store acorns in the flesh.

In what is meant to be a playful grab, I throw both my arms around his neck. Take it back! Take it back! I demand. He refuses and reaches up over his head to grab my shoulders. It is during this mock wrestling that our lips first come together -- perhaps by accident, perhaps not. Not as warm as your lips, I think. His touch is not as tender. Yet, I don't pull away.

I do not remember the first time you kissed me. A kiss has a way of knowing when it's been long enough. When ours was, we held each other for a long time.

Finally: Fat knees, huh? he tries to laugh. I try to laugh, too, and he says something about the movie that I don't try to counter. Hey -- he nudges me in the side. Did you hear me? I nod my head against his chest. It is all I can do to keep from crying.

A COASTAL RETREAT

by Jim Piotrowski

Overhead is a rough, slate-colored threat,

A swollen gray accommodates a network of electrified veins.
The raw air swirls under some gulls,
Winged buoys on calmly pitching water,
Or feathered aircraft gliding along runways in the atmosphere,
When the wind slows to catch its breath, the hovering creatures
 slink confidently toward the sand,
Victims of gravity.
The sand, sculptured by countless a passersby, washes coolly around
 each step,
And lies low to escape the force of racing sea breezes.
Oaken limbs, long ago cast to the tide, find petrified refuge on
 the beach,
And settle as abandoned monuments to all weather-beaten seafarers.
The surf thunders with the resonance of firing cannons,
As aquatic arches rise and curl toward the land,
To topple and spew layers of ocean skyward.
To the blue and black horizon, all is churning and violent,
A nation of white spires,
Which leap for a moment of frothy glory,
Then dive.

1984 Staff

Melissa Anderson
Ellen Bleau
Toula Buonocore
Dana Carpeneter
Chris Chrisholm
Nancy Dahm
Michele Eligio
Beth Ferguson
Joan Francesconi
Mary jacobs
Dennis Kwesell
Barbara Longo
Kelly Millbauer
Monica O Callahan
Miriam Palumbo
Rebecca Relyea
Roseann Staplins
Sharon Wise
Barbi Wood

1985

This year marks the 1st issue where *Folio* is to be published as an insert in the *Southern News*. The editor makes a call for more submissions to be made so that the publication may become a monthly insert. The varied backgrounds of the student body are clearly evident in the diverse subject matter and voices used in the writings. The selection by Tim O'Reilly gives a realistic sense of an aspect of student life in 1985. The poem by Marian Wilson is quite interesting because it describes a completely different aspect of student body life, that of: balancing a job, running a home, and finding time to voice oneself through art and poetry as well as keep up in the academic race. Her work expresses the tension experienced by many contemporary SCSU students.

Selected Work:

Fred Mertz by Tim O'Reilly

The End by Joann McFarlane

Liberation by Marian Wilson

LIBERATION

by Marian Wilson

Maybe I'll write a poem about a kind of weekday in March
When it's seventy degrees
inviting me to sit in the park
or ride a bike
or anything, outside.
Too bad I have to wear high heels
and cart a briefcase
for half the day, if not more.
Then I have to get the car fixed
and go grocery shopping
and eat.
When finally, I become myself
in bummy jeans and old jacket
and sneakers
ready to give in to my HUMAN-NESS,
the sun has gone down. It's cold.
And night.

Maybe I'll write a poem
about a Saturday in March
When it's seventy degrees
inviting me to take a long ride
or sit in the yard.
After all, it's my day.
Too bad I have to do the laundry
and entertain uninvited guests
for half the day, if not more.
Then I have to get my hair done
and go grocery shopping
and eat.
When I finally become myself

in the faded-denim skirt, cheap cotton blouse
and sling-backs
ready to give in to my HUMAN-NESS
The sun has gone down. It's cold.
And night.

Perhaps I'll settle for a poem
about the hum of 'air quality control'
in the office.
and cars that need fixing
clothes that need washing
hair that needs "doing"
...and grocery shopping
and eat.

When finally I become myself
with false teeth, in a rocking chair
on the porch of an old-age home
I can then give in to my HUMAN-NESS
in the sun.

THE END

by Joann McFarlane

The cobwebs are torn
and the spider is gone.
You can see the damage
by the light of the dawn.

The grass is all brown
and the trees are all bare.
The mother stops and listens
but there's no one there.

The rabbits all vanished
their numbers grew dim.
And all through the end
man thought he could win.

The mushroom grew larger
it covered the earth.
And with it's growth
the end of rebirth.

The sire with a frown
gazed at his hands;
Amazed at the damage
by the furies of man.

Goodbye Mother Nature
I'm sorry you had to go.

Goodbye Mother Nature
We had "brains", but didn't
know.

Goodbye Mother Nature
Man did it with such ease.
Goodbye Mother Nature
Rest in Peace.

FRED MERTZ

by Tim O'Reilly

When we polish off the kegs, we'll nip from the case
We're gonna chug all night and get shit-faced
We're gonna pound down shots until it hurts
Everyone put down your beer and do the FRED MERTZ

CHORUS:

Do the FRED MERTZ (yeah, yeah)
Do the FRED MERTZ (yeah, yeah)
Everybody get in line and do the FRED MERTZ

We're gonna play drinking games and party round the clock
Down some funnels until were cocked
have tolerance for flamboyant flakes and flirts
Everyone take off your shoes and do the FRED MERTZ

REPEAT CHORUS

Upstairs the D-students are smoking a bong
The Rugby players are shouting to their favorite sing-along
The Keg Busters are spilling suds all over their shirts
Everybody follow me and do the FRED MERTZ

1985 Staff

David Brothers
Nancy Dahm
Ed Francis
Katherine Haley
Michaael hayes
Heather Johnson
Stacey Kucher
Rob Nelson
Tim O Reilly
Jaie Palmero
Gina Pannone
Alexander Shaumyan
Laura Vhay
Robin Wilson
Marian Wilson

1986

Students write to explore their own past. The memories they describe are that of growing up, both good and bad. For instance, in a prize winning essay by Debra Bee, the effects that war and divorce had upon her life are discussed. Multifaceted elements of the past are revealed.

Selected Works:

Pulling weeds: A memoir by Debra Bee

You can't see me by Debra Bee

66-85 by Dianne Bilyak

Colin is deaf by Rob Nelson

COLIN IS DEAF

by Rob Nelson

Colin is deaf.
His eyes are shafts of innocence,
open to the soul --
floodgates for the black and light of life.
His thoughts dance like the shadows
of butterflies behind burlap,
or a candle flame wrestling with summer air.
He smiles,
humming the dull tune
he sees in the faces around him.
I know Colin reads more than my lips.
He burns through my waxy finish,
to my ribcage, tangled with feelings,
and my red heart, pumping hope
and old hurt out into my dry eyes.
Colin is deaf,
but he knows my song
inside and out.

66-85

by Dianne Bilyak

The pampers child,
reverse psychology
never worked on you.
You knew what you wanted
and cried till you got it
you still do.

Those Happy Days
in the Land of the Lost.
A dress code of religion,
faithful to bellbottoms
and barbie dolls.
Not anymore.

The soap opera youth
passing notes of gossip.
Disco till you die.
Roller skate in Limbo.
Pre-party pimples,
Conform!

A victim of peer pressure
and complaining hormones.
A church of puberty
worshiping hunks'.
Mindless meowing,
Almost ripe.

Sixteen plus happy squared.
Obnoxious frivolity,
quartas buyin' frienz.
Seventeen plus fear cubed.
Cornered by rituals,
What now?

Visions of prunes.
Adulthood tapping
on your shoulder.
The "perfect young lady"
tailored and hemmed to
a raging fit.

YOU CAN'T SEE ME

by Debra Bell

When I was a little girl,
I thought if I closed my eyes
the world would go away,
and I could grope along the walls
with small arms outstretched
traveling room to room unnoticed.
Texture at finger-tips, I explored the
smooth slick sides of a door
in studied search for the rounded knob
to freedom -- or just another place.
And if the endless space of
my imagination scared me,
I would open my eyes to Mom
who stood smiling --
she understood.
I knew because I saw her shut
her own eyes sometimes.

PULLING WEEDS : A MEMOIR

by Debera Bell

By-the-book-Blake, they called him, the last of the "mustangs" and he was -- both the strict disciplinarian who never broke the rules, and the man who rose recklessly from the bottom of the military career ladder to the upper echelon in rank. That's what a mustang was -- someone who begins his military life as an enlisted man and is able to transcend that boundary into the ranks of military officers. It's a tradition no longer allowed; one that was acceptable in a war-time military, its function is presently obsolete. The new peace-time Navy has no need for the barn-storming, courageous men who fill our history books; this Navy, with its psychological media slogans, is heralded by the slick ad agencies who sell ideas, not ideals, as "just another job." My father gated the new Navy with its slack ideals that needed appeal to replace the draft.

Commander Blake wouldn't bend a rule to save his own life. Likewise, he raised three children who were forced to walk a taut line. Everything, everything was either right or wrong. He gave no reasons; questioning simply wasn't allowed. We were to embrace it as the gospel truth coming from Commander Blake, our father. It could be anything from why we had to be up by 8:00 a.m. on week-ends, to why the government would not tell its citizens exactly what was going on. As a child, I decided that there must be hidden somewhere an enormous book filled with rules that were written and memorized by Dad. His rules were an inescapable as death, which is what we feared when one was broken. These rules chased us through the years like hounds on our heels.

Life became difficult in my teen-age years when I knew that I could stay up as late as I wanted but had to be out of bed, ready for the dreaded Saturday morning housework at the prescribed time -- no matter what.

Sneaking in at 2:00 a.m. was easy; getting up at 8:00 was impossible. As soon as we were old enough for responsibilities of any sort, they were doled out in the form of Saturday morning chores. There were beds to be made, closets reorganized, bathrooms scrubbed, mountains of clothes to fold into even bigger mountains. It was hard to say which we hated most: Saturdays or Dad.

Mother sat in a quiet corner of our lives, her shade protecting us from the heat of his anger. She was a beautiful adornment on his arm at military functions. Quiet and dignified as every young southern woman is raised, she bowed to the household's head, interfering only on the rare occasion when I had pushed my father a little too far. I thought she possessed every trait a woman should have, not knowing until much later the insecurities she possessed beneath that calm exterior. She was Mama then, and I laughed at her when she tried to spank me because it didn't hurt like when he did. She was the quiet love in my life who calmed rising tempers with surprising strength, but I sometimes wondered if she was given her own chart of tasks like we were.

The chart was tacked on a wall, eye-level to us, always eye-level, so we could see exactly what was expected even if we couldn't yet read. It waited for us to finish breakfast. We ate slowly, reluctantly. One column was a list of work next to each child's name, another column to be checked when the task was completed, and finally a third column, which would be checked when the job had been thoroughly inspected by none other than our father. It was typed -- even the lines separating us and the assignments were neatly typed into long straight columns.

I remember that detail mostly because of time I spent overseas during my own brief stint in the Navy. My father typed every piece of correspondence he ever sent. When I was in Italy, his letters would arrive in official envelopes from Commander Blake, USN. My commanding officer there was both impressed and threatened by this relationship to his new recruit. Dad's letters were meant to strengthen the ties between father and daughter, yet

they felt stiff and unyielding, typed and signed Commander Blake, USN.

Typed and signed, those charts were to be completed by the day's end. The day's end indeed. I believe Dad must have given God His orders to make Saturdays last an eternity. I shouted bitter complaints in my mind as we went about our chores, listening to friends; laughter in the neighboring yards. That bitterness would turn to humiliation when it came time for the yardwork portion of our day. I don't know why, exactly, but I always felt ashamed to be seen squatting in the yard when my friends rode by on their bikes. I can remember pulling weeds and hating him through clenched teeth. A perfect yard with straight, perfect lines unmarred by weeds seemed to be an important part of the perfect man. He felt the unvoiced hate. We both knew how much anger was building but he didn't care -- it was part of the discipline I had to accept.

As I grew, I found my voice, which was often raised as high as I dared. A young teenager in the 60s, I was involved with the fervent ideals and questions that were being raised by America's youth. The bottom seemed to have fallen out of everything I had taken as true. Why? Why shouldn't the government keep the people informed; why should people fight for causes they didn't believe in -- for wars they didn't start; why was it more important to make a good living than to enjoy life? To my father, all this was heresy. There were no discussions; his convictions were as bolt upright as his stance. A single amazing eyebrow shooting up into his hairline could stop a word even as it leaped from my mouth.

Unfortunately my own convictions were as important to me as his were to him -- he had taught me well. (My brother and sister were spared as they were younger and not yet involved in the battles frequently held at the dinner table.) My father felt that deserters, draft-dodgers or people lacking total respect for the government/establishment should pretty much be shot. There were rules, and there were rule-breakers who had no place in society regardless of their beliefs. Where Dad was a brilliant commander in a war-filled world, he fell somewhat short in understanding his children. He taught us to be coldly logical in addressing any situation by striking us down with his lethal tongue. I remember once trying to make amends for some disobedience by beginning my defense with, I didn't think... that was as far as I got when he broke in to remind me that my problem was precisely my lack of thinking. He never explained his commands; he didn't care that we understood, only that we obeyed. He wanted us to be as well-trained as his subordinates, so I wrote for an underground publication that he was in charge of investigating for possible communist backing. If he had ever found out how my afternoons were spent in conspiracy with other restless teenagers, I would have been punished to an extent that I can only imagine.

A drum sounds in the distance. All rise around the dining room table. The air is thick with tension as the judge seats himself at the head of the table.

Elizabeth Ann Blake, do you know that you stand accused? Are you prepared to be sentenced? (Jesus he was such an asshole.)

Yes.

That's yes-sir young lady. Referring to me as a young lady became of paramount importance to him in my young teenage years. I took it as a reminder that I was somewhere in limbo between the young and the lady.

Yes-sir.

You will take this chart and do exactly what it says. The Saturday morning schedule will be your daily schedule from now to eternity. Weed-pulling will commence at exactly 0800 and continue until I give the command to halt.

That pathetic little paper we worked so passionately on was nothing; it was certainly nothing that needed investigating. My own modest contributions were usually trite little poems published under a pseudonym which I would never divulge to anyone. I guess we, I specifically, made life miserable for a man who didn't understand. He was so incapable that I could almost forgive his unbending, harsh ways -- almost.

Commander Blake was not an affectionate man. He expected his children to know that he loved them, and for that knowledge to be enough. I don't recall being held in his arms very often; I only saw him cry once. It was the strangest thing I had ever seen -- that time I saw my father cry. We had a calico kitten who was the most gentle creature alive. My sister and I would dress her in our doll's clothes and cuddle her for hours. We would stroll her up and down the hall, and she would sit, quietly accepting the clumsy love of small children. One night my parents took her to the vet's office because she was struggling for breath. They came back without her. She had to be put to sleep because her diaphragm had been fractured. My father took me back into his bedroom and hugged me tight against his body. It felt awkward because I wasn't used to this physical display from him. He started making a strange noise in his throat, and I at first thought he was making fun of my crying. When I realized he was crying, I was so surprised that I stopped. I never really understood why he broke down that night, because he never cared for the family pets that much anyway. I knew that there must have been more to it; I had witnessed something secret, watching my father cry -- something that should never be spoken about or referred to.

In 1971 my father received orders to Vietnam. I was in high school. We were living in a civilian community for the first time in our lives; it was difficult for the children, probably worse for my mother. I can now, as an adult, imagine just how hard it must have been for her.

As children, though, we didn't see the problems of an adult world -- the demands that were set and met; we were busy adjusting to peers whose experiences were as foreign to us as ours were to them. We dressed differently and we talked differently. We went to a high school where the children had known each other since childhood. My mother's situation was worsened by the fact that she had always been encouraged to be totally dependent on my father. She had learned to fit the mold, to become what he wanted as wife and second-in-command. His absence forced her to venture into areas she had never been -- she learned to drive only three weeks before he left.

When he returned a year later, he divorced us.

There weren't many explanations given to us children, and we never saw them fight or give any indication of what was coming. My mother quietly told me that it was over. Twenty years of marriage and our mixed up gypsy lives were ended.

To this day, I have never been able to fully understand what could have happened to cause that; it would be too simplistic to say that his going to war changed him. It certainly must have -- we were all changed.

My mother survived, but not without a great deal of bitterness. She found a career at the age of 39 after having never held a job in her life. Twenty years of marriage and the promises of a quiet, autumnal life vanished in a courtroom. It was done secretly and behind closed doors. When the lawyer brought Mother home from the courthouse, we knew only that we had been betrayed by the man who had been such a strong force in our lives. It was messy in the emotional sense that we children, who are now adults, are still trying to sort out. If we could just understand, we could put it in a neat little file to be stored somewhere in the past.

My own son has been raised for the most part by me alone. His father is an officer in the Navy and spends six months out of the year at sea -- an interesting parallel. My marriage to him, which lasted only five years, was second to his marriage to the Navy. I pictured myself waiting -- forever waiting for his returns. The constant struggle for a Navy wife and the roles she is forced to assume were too much for me. I did not want to live like my mother did, although I had walked blindly into the same situation. We re-divorced because I opened my eyes and saw that he was just too much like my father.

In January of 1973, I followed my father's footsteps and joined the Navy. I had no choice really. There was no money for college; my mother and my pride couldn't support

me; and I couldn't find a job. Joining the Navy was not as strange as it would seem to people who have never been around the military. It was all I had known for the first 16 years of my life. But it was probably more than that. I loved my father because I was so much like him. All my life, as much as I resented him, I tried to win his approval. The funny thing about that was, I never knew if I had succeeded or not. He had gone.

My father lives only a few miles away from me; he has since remarried and has a new family to share his life with. I see him sometimes -- usually at his office. I have a hard time accepting the fact that his new family is enjoying a life that should have been ours. My grandmother's antiques sit in a home that has four cars parked in its driveway. She cried for my mother, for us, and for herself when we were all divorced. There was a big overstuffed Victorian chair I used to sit in when I was little. The chair's legs had claws that clutched metal balls -- it moved -- and when I was little, we were afraid it might slide across the room to come after us. My grandmother rocked me; she let me sit in her lap and watch her peel apples with a sharp knife that I wasn't allowed to touch. That chair was big enough for the two of us, side-by-side.

My father got custody of all her love -- that's what I felt when I sat in that chair after she died. It's stuffed in the corner of his formal living room now, but no one ever sits on it. My step-sisters both wear diamonds and gold given on special occasions. They seem really nice, and I'm glad that they have all the things I couldn't have when I was their age -- they don't pull weeds. But Mother still struggles to stretch a meager check, and we've all gone our separate ways searching for an elusive something to explain our lives. I fight the feeling that my father destroyed our family. I'm an adult now and should be able to accept whatever forces that helped shape my life. I can even understand that responsibility has its won statutes of limitations. Yet I often think of the way things could have been.

The brief visits to his office are as important to me as they are dreaded. His secretary shows me in after a discrete phone call to make sure he isn't too busy. He rises to greet me, and I feel like another client to be dealt with. We talk about what we are doing, careful not to reveal what we are feeling. Last week he was complaining about his need for better tax shelters, and I couldn't help thinking about having recently had to borrow some money to buy food while I waited for my school loan to come in. I try not to remember the times he wasn't around when I needed him. Those times belong in that little file that won't stay closed. And yet there's a table by his desk filled with pictures of his two families -- he keeps them on display like war ribbons in a military museum. I look at him and try to see through the barrier we have both so carefully constructed. I want to know if he looks at me and sees my mother (so many people do). How can he forget 20 years of marriage? If he does see her in me, does he like what he sees? Does he see any of himself? I've tried hard to make him proud of the adult who was once his little girl, but I wonder if the adult is just some stranger who drops in for a visit now and then. Mother says that my father used to be so proud of me, but my memories are always memories of failure. I never knew what it was he expected. He seems so much a stranger to me in the three-piece suits that have long since replaced his military uniforms. I want to reach out and shake him out of his reserve, but I'm afraid to. I think of the awkward comforting times when I was little -- mother says that he loved the spirit he tried to break in his child. I think of pulling weeds and hating him with every breath. I want to tell my father that I love him. But I'm afraid that he'll say he loves me; and I'll face him across his desk and know he doesn't.

1986 Staff

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George Hale
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Mary Hanson
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Donna Sass
Robert Tobin
Faye Walker-Pelkey
Michael Walton

1987

A sense of experimentation with form is displayed by using a technique of splitting up of a poem into numbered stanzas. This technique was used on a sporadic basis in earlier issues. In addition, there is a sense of sexual tension and resentment that has not yet been encountered in the creative work in this journal. The poem by William Shepa maintains a bit of sexual tension which utilizes the classic *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird* by Wallace Stevens as the model for this poem. There are also multiple examples of poems which try to discuss the emotions, or lack of, encountered when there is a death in the person's immediate circle. Interestingly enough, all of the death poems are about either a father or mother dying. The account of death by CW. Smith is about how the rest of the family deals with life after the death of a mother. Poems by Peterdavid Rivera and Barbara Hogan discuss the loss of a father.

Selected Works:

When the ever-green girls danced the can-can by Ed Biro, p. 7.

Four ways of looking at a dog by William Shepa Jr, p. 8.

And the river lives by CW. Smith, p. 8.

The Fields of Father by Peterdavid Rivera, p. 35.

My father's hands by Barbara Hogan, p. 35.

THE FIELDS OF FATHER

by Peterdavid Rivera

I spread the ashes of you
onto damp fields and twirl,

a dervish in fall mist,
dew under my feet,
the grey slipping through my fingers,
thick water.

We are living in dreams
like the bursting of autumn trees;
the taste of their colors on our tongues,
while my fingers sift you like rice at a wedding
of earth and sky.

I perform the rude rebirth:
throwing you over thick grass,
onto the backs of shiny beetles
that return to holes beneath the deepest root.

On green occasion
I'll carry you on the knees
of tattered jeans and pack your
old thoughts into mudpies.
You'll stare back at me
from the eyes of a deer terrified into statue,
reflect on me from the cool wet soul

of a white riverbank stone.

Passing sparrows
think I scatter seeds,
devour your ash with yellow beak,
carry you aloft in their cramped bellies, out
beyond the oak and pine,
over rotting fences
and back roads blanketed with weeds, the power of wings.

MY FATHER'S HANDS

by Barbara Hogan

corded with tendons
interlaced with veins
 strong enough to split winter
 firewood, forge tools
 from glowing steel, plant
 Fourth-of-July peas and hoe
 potato rows

traced black with ingrained oil
soap never reached
 skillful enough to restore time
 to weary watch, turn
 war-time bombsight parts or
 carve an eagle in
 a walnut block

finished with large blunt fingers
ridged in knuckle folds
 gentle enough to make hot lemonade
 for a child swathed in
 misery of a cold or
 coax a splinter from
 a hand half-grown

so
 my heart holds
 your hands
the rough-formed, man-sized model
 for
 my own

WHEN THE EVER-GREEN GIRLS DANCED THE CAN-CAN

by Ed Biro

1.
leafy boas swayed to and fro

the air stroked their hair with a windy finger
shadows kicked the picket fence
I watched shoulders dipping to the ground
green pouting lips blowing dark kisses across the yard
spidery hands crawling up wooden thighs
writhing in the flood lights

2.

T.V. talk of tooth paste
while teeth and fresh ever-green breath
lips smacking in the moonlight
what is sex-appeal?

Dogs mounting in the garden
paws squeezing flanks
deep thrusts and squeals
are they waltzing?

3.

I watched you kiss that boy
you moved in slow ever-green motion
his hands stroked you like the wind
your eyes were two little insane worlds tossing in their sockets
your face was flushed with autumn fire
your arms dropped all inhibitions like October maples

FOUR WAYS OF LOOKING AT A DOG

by William P. Shepa, Jr.

(inspired by Wallace Stevens's *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird*)

I.

Exploring the backside of desert dunes
in the soft cool-colored night,
we are tugged together
around a symmetrical center
by our instinctively magnetic mutts.
They meet -- as Eskimos -- with a kiss,
and then merge as moths
 lusting a light,
 and risking a burn.
Dogs detach,
we slide our separate ways,
silently,
adapting to the shifting fringes of jungle.

II.

Christmas Eve at the Country Club:
silent, alone, and working.
You drive all the way out here

decked in your leather, denim, and Doberman.
Lit joint passed,
you say quickly,
 quietly,
 eyes shifting away,
"Where do we go from here?"
which I pretend not to hear
 (as I stroke the dog).

III.
Christmas time in the mall:
the four of us on Santa
 (you, me, and the two dogs)
in the matching marshmallow-champagne sweaters
and pixie hats.
Candy cane antlers in place,
we sing simultaneously,
 "Cheese!"
disregarding the scowling security in blue.

IV.
Rest stop, the front porch:
the dogs encircling our feet.
Cordial kisses, our eyes glance
toward the running car in the street.
Custody of canines complete,
you slide away with your latest lover,
exploring the uncharted World's Fair.

AND THE RIVER LIVES

by CW. SMITH

I used to watch this leaf
On a tree in my backyard.
I just sat there on the couch
And watched it shrivel to nothing.
I turned around one day
And saw my mother
Old and tired
From the couch.
I watched her die
Just like that leaf.

I didn't do a damn thing.

Dad shrugged his shoulders
To it all.
He's gone off to some island
where he's screwing three bikini queens,
And sis

Walked away from mother's death bed
Without a tear.
I knew something was wrong.
She ran her car into a tree that night.

I didn't do a damn thing.

"The sun still shines",
The doctors said.
My brain screamed,
"The sun kills leaves"
But my mouth said
"ok."
Dad listened to them.
I tried for awhile,
I really did.

I was with this girl Lynn,
My arms were around her
And we were pecking away at each other
I was almost happy.
Then I felt her heart shrivel
Just like the leaf.
I thought of a foot
Pressing down on an accelerator --
Metal hitting wood.
It took me awhile
Before I realized
I was cringing
Away from her.
She thought it was her fault.

I didn't do a damn thing.

Now I live alone.
I stare at the sky a lot
And sleep by this river
I really like.
Sometimes I think of going to live
With dad on the island
But this river
Keeps flowing on and on...

1987 Staff

Derek Blain
Ed Brio
Gary Carlson

Robert Charest
Denise DeCaprio
Debbie Hayden
Barbara Hogan
Jesse Michael Irish
Karen Jastermsky
Ed Johnson
William Shepa Jr.
Judith Kusha
Lazao Lima
Chris Madden
Martha Marinara
Donna Norman
Stephanie Ann Ong
George Peterman
Peterdavid Rivera
Heather Sancomb
Alexander Shaumyan
Alex Shaumyan
Clifford Simpson
C.W. Smith
Mary Voytek
Janice Weyl
Lincoln Wilson

1988

The work in this issue is characterized by several nostalgic strolls down memory lane. Jeannie Plasan's work offers an example of prose that attempts to recreate who she was as she grew up and then attempts to show how those experiences shaped who she is now becoming. An additional impersonal analysis of how background shapes behavior can be found in the poem by Cate Ferrucci that mentions Sylvia Plath's senseless death by gassing herself in an oven.

Selected Works:

Writing to you from 25 by Jeannie Plasan

Hunter of the Enemy by Karen Jastermsky

Out of context by Cate Ferrucci.

WRITING TO YOU FROM 25

by Jeannie Plasan

Now, I remember you sitting alone in your corner room. You were a shadowy little girl. Hair long and mousy brown, hanging thin like tinsel off a tree. You were slight but tough, all dungarees and hiking boots, Led Zeppelin and Aerosmith. Your days were filled with Marlboros and Angel Dust; your nights with agonized dreams of a man chasing you, the same dream, the same man, night after night. You'd run stumbling through the dark afraid of his knife or his hands about your throat. Exhausted, you'd fall to your knees and you'd scream. The light on your bedside table would fall from its stand as you fumbled for its cord. It would stay on for the rest of the night.

I remember the nights you cried afraid that you would never grow old. You could tell you weren't changing, even then.

I remember the purple double dome, small tabs of mescaline, dropped on the tip of your tongue. The fizzed, tingling softly in your partly open mouth and then you swallowed. Your lips and tongue went numb as it rushed up your throat to your nose to explode behind your eyes. You were caged at night -- a young cat trapped in a bedroom cell. You paced, your hands scratching your clothes, fumbling across your face confused. Over the bed to the wall, off the wall to the closet, out of the closet to the window, from the window, from the window to the desk where you'd sit and drum your pencil, thip, thip, thip, until you'd throw the pencil on the floor, up from the chair over to the door. You whooshed open the door to see the hallway -- silent and dark. Scream... you wanted to scream -- Let me out! Let me go! -- but you stamped on it. You squashed it and packed it into a nice little square and you swallowed it. You swallowed your scream just like you did the mescaline an hour before. I threw that scream up yesterday.

I remember the smell of you Jamaican hashish burning in your pipe; the smoke lingering in your clothes, your hair, your mouth. It was a small stone pipe, marble with an inlaid flower. You were proud of it and treated it like a child.

Freak Hall was long and barren, peppered by kids like you who went to school to hangout. Burnouts. Frybrains. Kids that wouldn't graduate -- who would never amount to anything. Especially you. You were one of the worst. You were never in class -- always high. Man, how the heck did you graduate? How did you stay alive?

Pot, I remember you smoking pot and drinking. You'd drink so much -- like you couldn't stop. You couldn't stop. You poor girl, you couldn't stop. You weren't just being rebellious were you my friend?

Your jeans jacket was so nice, so worn. Its sleeves covered everything. The scars on

your arms from playing chicken in the playground behind the Sports Complex. I remember the slide, it was a white and blue castle with the ladder up the tube which you used to climb, awkwardly, because it was made for a child. I remember the moment of terror when you were inside the tube, cramped, neither up nor down, fearful that someone might hate you and play a joke like throwing down a dead body or a bag of sand. The rungs were smooth, bare metal, thinner in their middles from so many years of cold feet. From the turret on top you waved, shyly, down to your friends who were riding in the play pumpkin bouncing on springs. You sat down on the metal chute lifting your feet, wishing that you were three and that the slide was more slick. Your boots hit the pavement smack solid. Waffle stompers with red laces, worn rough from miles of aimless walks down suburban streets. The three of you going uptown to hangout on the library stairs or down by the river by the sewer pipe where the water ran under the street.

I remember you gathered about the graffiti bench which stood lopsided and abused on the fringe of the park. Your arm was pressed up against hers, both were bare, your hairs twitching. You were sitting side by side. It felt awkward, but when didn't it. She dropped her cigarette and it lay nestled, burning, between your arm and hers. Your hairs curled and sizzled and smoked. The cherry coal bit deep into your skin and you resisted the urge to bat it away. I felt like a black fly, biting you over and over as if its feet were stuck and it had nowhere else to go. You stared at the feet of your friends, who stood holding their breath, in a circle around the bench. They all wore boots, waffle stompers, with red or blue laces. Most were worn and covered with mud. You make your mind wander to the clouds -- how bundled and soft they would be to sit on. How much fun it would be to romp from cloud to cloud as they breezed across the sky or how exciting to cut through the mist on sheets of brown and white feathers hooked to light wings of hollow bone.

I remember your friend jerking her arm away and the cigarette rolling to the ground between the boards of the wooden bench. I remember the blister on your arm rising high and proud. I remember feeling you smile inwardly, hoping you'd been cool, feeling you'd done O.K. You wiped at the blister breaking the skin leaving the raw angry pink flesh exposed. I remember you standing all and proud against your father as he screamed, his hand raised above your face the desire to kill in his eyes. I heard you call him a bastard and a fucker beneath your breath when he yelled at your brother who stood whimpering behind a chair -- unable to fend for himself.

I remember the feel of your jacket as the denim rubbed the naked spot, absorbing the fluid which dripped from the burn. I remember you picking at the minute bits of blue and white fuzz that gathered there, on the burnt wasteland, glued.

I remember your decision to shut yourself down. You listened to Elton John's High Flying Bird and cried. That is I. I, too, am cold, distant and impenetrable. You zippered up your facade and almost died.

I feel you coming alive inside me now. A small child crying out from deep within my heart. I can feel your hands pushing against my chest, your eyes peeking through my ribs. I feel your nose pressed up against my heart when you cry I'm here! It is I. Remember me? I remember you when I recall the burn of a cigarette pressed against my skin. I remember you when I scream myself awake in the dark and fumble for the light, sweating. I remember you now as I choke up squares of hoarse screams stored up from long ago. I keep them on display, stacked up against the wall, paneling the den. I remember you now that I am twenty-five.

HUNTER OF THE ENEMY

by Karen Jastermsky

Evening sun died behind mountains

but these weren't the mountains of home
this wasn't the smell of home-cooking
tracks in mud weren't from horses
but from tanks, tanks, tanks.

The coffin shuffled from side to side
like an impatient boy.
The train breathed down tree barks,
pulsed in pollen,
stalked in bushels of yellow hay.

"And what was it all for?
she wept that night
in her feathered pillow.

Brought home in a Ford pickup
the American flag rested on a still heart,
flapping in the open country air.

Placed in her rough but smooth hands
that held child after child,
pounded bread, made beds
they close her bedroom door
and then, all is still,
like a purpled heart.

OUT OF CONTEXT

by Cate Ferrucci

I can't put toothbrushes in a poem, I really can't.

Sylvia Plath

Funny,
how she couldn't do that,
but could
put her head inside an oven
in a house she said
Yeats lived in,

cheek resting
sideways on the rack,
a limp
caricature
of innocence
at Daddy's knee.

No blood reds.
No knife whites
No burst of murky black.

Just
that one

long song
pulling
at her,
down
into
his lap.

Upstairs
her babies, damp with sleep,
her breath
still hot against their necks,
dreamt of pale gray sheets
hovering over

silky mouths.
The taste of linen
turned to
dust. The moon-soaked
tattered robes. The wild
abandoned things.

Musky reds.
Toothy whites.
Bat black.
The endless
flapping
longings
of ragged
aching wings.

1988 Staff

Patsy Blauner
Chris Buckridge
Jacqui Drobis-Meisel
Cate Ferrucci
Michael Ginsberg
Barbara Hall-Hogan
Alexandra Hollauer
Linda Krausnick
Mary Katherine Oliveri
Geoge Peterman
Jeannie Plasan
Marc Roberts
Susan Rubinsky
Heather Sancomb
J. Terenzi
Victoria Tischio
Michael Walton

1989

Racial division is evident in this issue as several poems refer to the problem. There is an example of the increasing use of Spanish language in America as a poem is written in both English and in Spanish. Work by Alexander Shaumyan demonstrates the increasing numbers of Spanish speaking people in the U.S. A piece by Aggie Vegso is particularly interesting from a racial point of view because it obviously written by a white woman who had been ostracized in her old neighborhood for being a gringo. Furthermore, Aggie yearns to be able to return to her old area to see the jumprope, hopscotch, etc. This is particularly interesting because it is not the minority of America who is the outcast. In addition, many of the works in this issue concern themselves with childhoods that were not spent in this country. For the most part, they appear to have taken place in Latino countries. Interestingly enough, most of the poetry written in this year's journal use metaphor quite effectively. Michael Tarney uses metaphor extensively in his work. Different from past years, much of the poetry is concerned with the memories of the past but do not directly mention occurrences of the past. Instead, they describe them through other artistic means such as metaphor.

Selected Works:

The death birds by Michael Tarney

Deborah, I think you' ll understand... and Deborah, je pense que tu comprendas... by Alexander Shaumyan

Gringo by Aggie Vegso

GRINGO

bu Aggie Vegso

driving wedge
yes, the colours of our skins
now separate us,
who were once sisters
on the same swings,
monkeybars and slides
of martin luther king school,
who once shared
hand-clapping schemes
to ms. merry
macmacmac all dressed
in blackblackblack--
yes, the colours of our skins
was all they could see,
was the way of their ideology
was all it took me
to feel ashamed to call myself an american.
that driving wedge
saw me white
saw fit to divide me so soon
from you, it seems.
put me in that white, stuffy
neighborhood, where no one sits
on the stoop,
where there is no speakeasy

on the streets, where in the driveway the
swept
away the last hopscotch slots
I would ever see,
where no one jumpropes side-
steps
overstep-one-two-three
cross-over, jump-over
slideinbetween--
where I am still alien among my
own.
oh, I know
too much time has slipped
away when I stray
into old back-streets
only to hear, in shoe-
factory alley the echoes
of geraldine, yvonne and juanita
who no longer recognize me.
oh, I know
when I wander to the east
end of broadway
where the shell
gas station sign
revolves and natives walk slow
under a hot white sun
that I am gringo, I am separate
and I want to run,
reclaim my past and shed
this geography of skin,
catch juanita as she
walks her skinny
mongrel to the 5 & dime store
and tell her, show
her that I want to come home,
that I miss blue chalk on asphalt,
and singing songs over the
phone.
remember juanita, how we
used to braid each other s hair
on abuela s backporch stairs?
do you remember? can you
remember?
her eyes upon me are dead.
yes the colours of our skins.

THE DEATH BIRDS

by Michael Tarney

I feel it now as children's hair
that flutters to my scything arm.
I hear these hairs of wheat as songs,
their burning necks of music aired.

Locusts tantrum in the heat;
they feed like phantoms on my sweat.
These are death-birds;
I am wheat unto their gnawing.

Each fiery song of wheat I've scythed
since the shrill-winged gnaw began.
What are we in the spells of cutting
but self and wheat-blood merging?

Scything, stroked as hairs of song,
locusts sing me.
I am cleaving;
I am cleaved.

DEBORAH, I THINK YOU'LL UNDERSTAND...

By Alexander Shaumyan

Deborah,
I think you'll understand what I mean
when at night I sleep on the surfaces of books
and dream of paper attics

Through the green mesh of your eyes
I see rooftops of innocence
and hills of joy

O how brilliant you are in the milky moon
O how tender is your walk through my eardrums

I collapse in my drunkenness
and watch the skies of wonder, O Deborah
I kiss the thin fabric of your lips
and journey through your hair

I'm lost, my love, in your negligee
of white horses amid silky winds
Teach me the arithmetic of who you are
for I can neither add nor subtract your splendor

The rain falls blue above your wild eyes
my love
and I'm born again to wonder

if that sweet kiss
has made me whisper
upon your fair skin.

DEBORAH, JE PENSE QUE TU COMPRENDRAS...

Alexander Shaumyan

Deborah,
je pense que tu me comprendras ce que je veux dire
quand je dors la nuit aux surfaces des livres
et reve des mansardes en papier

Dans le reseau vert de tes yeux
je vois des toits d innocence
et des collines de joie

O toi qui es si brillante sous la lune laiteuse
O toi qui marches si gentiment par mes tympan

Je m ecroule dans mon ivresse
et regarde le ciel de merveille, O Deborah
J embrasse le tissu fin de tes levres
et fais un voyage par tes cheveux

Je suis perdu, mon amour, dans ton negligee
de chevaux blacs et de vents soyeux
Enseigne-moi l arithmetique de qui que tu es
parce que je ne peux ni additionner
ni soustraire ta splendeur

La pluie tombe bleue au-dessus de tes yeux enjoues
mon amour
et je nais de nouveau a me demander
si ce baiser doux
m a fait chuchoter
sur ta peau delicate.

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