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1982

BRUSHING





BRUSHING
Fall, 1982

The picture shown on the cover is a result of Dan dragging me early one Saturday morning to capture the "essence" of water splashing on rocks at the jetty in New Smyrna Beach. Whether or not we found the essence, we did find just the right picture. It was taken on Ektachrome 64 film using a 24 mm lens and a polarizing filter.

Scott Roth

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	1
John Narretta, Untitled	2
Lizz Jacobson, Beginnings Of A Storm	3
Jina Mullett, Quest	4
Douglas Storer, Untitled	5
Caro Walker, Untitled	6
Nancy Wilson, Final Days	7
Pippa Boyd, Untitled	8
Constance Kakavecos Riggs, The Last Word	9
Abby Ober, Untitled	13
Nancy Donlan, The Toilet Flusher	14
Kim McDowell, Pages	15
Cindy Shearer, Lake Prose	16
Karen Chalker, Nakuru	17
Corey 'O Gorman, Waterfall	18
Dan Richards, Frozen Razor/December Time	19
Nancy Wilson, The Empty Plate	20
John Narretta, Untitled	21
Judy Provost, Gentle Hibiscus	22
Judy Provost, Safari	22
Alicia Leatherbury, Kangaroo	23
Pippa Boyd, Untitled	24
Lizz Jacobson, Spin Me	25
Alan Nordstrom, Art and Ideas	26
Caro Walker, Untitled	27
Laurel Stadler, Daughter of a Patriot	28
Abby Ober, Untitled	29

Alicia Leatherbury, Soho	30
Monica Kiwus, Untitled	31
Roy Starling, The Game	32
Rich Ray, Untitled	33
Nancy Donlan, Untitled	35
Cynthia Darrach, Uprising	36
Pippa Boyd, Untitled	37
Karen Chalker, Untitled	38
Jina Mullett, Nativity	39
Nancy Donlan, 'Shrooms	40
K.R., Untitled	41
L.S., backward glances	41
Nancy Donlan, Lunar Landscape	42
Laurel Stalder, Untitled	43
Karen Chalker, Untitled	44
Karen Chalker, Untitled	45
Kara Provost, Morning	46
Fred Miley, Cameltrot	46
Nancy Donlan, Man	47
Dave Colage, Goats	47
Bob Duvall, Beachcombing	48
David Reed, Untitled	49
Kara Provost, Epitaph	50
Elizabeth Robinson, Rabbit	51
Nancy Donlan, Untitled	52
Lizz Jacobson, With A Breath Of Gold	53
Dave Colage, Squid	54
Dan Richards, The Jetty	55
Dave Colage, Untitled	56
Dave Colage, Untitled	57

Frontispiece by Ron Larned
Cover by Scott Roth

FOREWORD

"Lizz, what's an idea?"

"An idea, Dan?"

"Yeah, an idea!"

"Hmmm, an idea . . ."

We were dumbfounded — at a loss for words.

So, Lizz reached for the source:

"i • de • a (among other things) 'the Platonic archetype of which a corresponding being in phenomenal reality is assertedly an imperfect replica' . . . Imperfect replica?"

We still didn't understand.

But we did agree on this: Ideas are the essential ingredient of art and they grow from within . . .

DAN RICHARDS
November, 1982



John Naretta

BEGINNINGS OF A STORM

I

I beg for rain today,
and a friend who will understand why.
Sleep was a comfort for a while;
pillows get too soft, blankets too hot.
Showering cooled me down,
words made me smile.

II

Clouds are flying into place.
1:38 p.m.
Warm coffee soothes my aching thoughts
of jelly beans and beer on tap.
Soon the rain will come,
birds are nestling in branches of trees.

III

A powdered body passes time
by counting ways to fold a shirt
hang a skirt
eat an orange.
Come on rain.

IV

Drizzle begins to fall.
Good rain
sweet rain.
Wash rain
wash.

Lizz Jacobson

Quest

Through countless windows
do we crash,
leaving empty frames;
and looking back,
see pictures
marred by shards of broken glass.

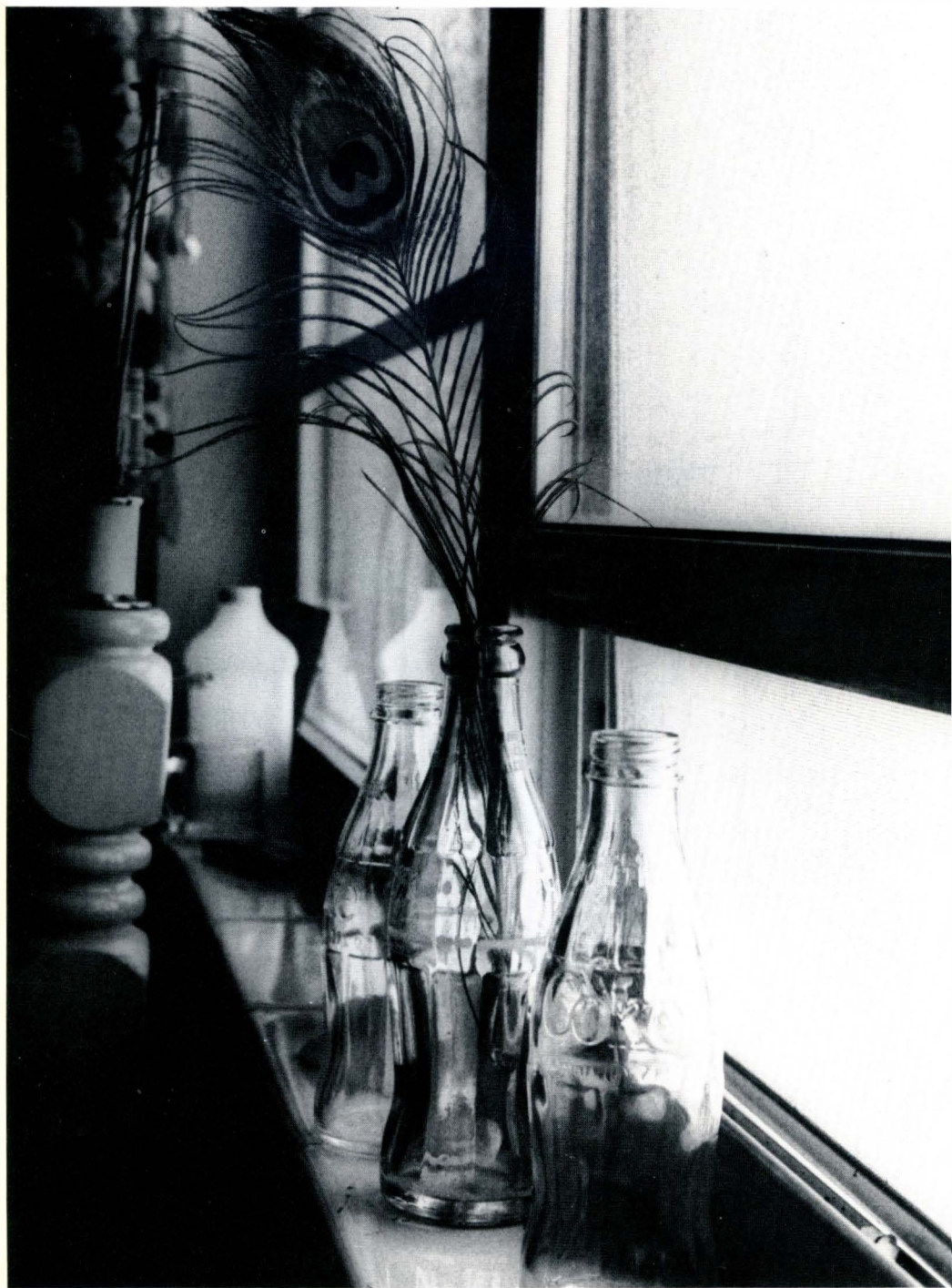
Ahead
there stands a window,
whole and closed,
framing,
as the others had before,
one
sacred
glimpse
of heaven meeting Earth,
of lost horizon,
land
against the sky,
a pedestal
beneath
the rising
star.

Knowing
that the star hangs
far beyond;
that once more
the horizon will escape,
we break the glass.

Jina Mullett



Douglas Storer



Caro Walker

FINAL DAYS

Like ancient wine, elegantly bottled,
She harbors the passions of the past,
Sheltering a child
Who plays in a long, starched dress
And grows sleepy in her father's lap.

Her name she carries beside another
On a wrinkled dance card.
Her dead sisters dangle on discs around her wrist,
Where she prepares to write her name
Upon an unmarked token.

For now the wine of her
Has turned to vinegar . . .
Sweet burgundy bouquet of youth,
So long uncorked,
So near consumed,
Is spilling now its last
In cold, dark rivulets.
She leaves herself among us in
Sticky
Sweet
Drops.

Nancy L. Wilson



Pippa Boyd

THE LAST WORD

Mattie sloshed the supper's dishwater into the mop pail and straightened slowly, the gnarled fingers of her left hand making a fist against the old pain in her back. Her red-rimmed eyes strained and focused in the gathering dusk, scanned the perimeter of the west field, and finally sorted from the fence posts the lean, tall figure plodding toward the house. Her spine stiffened.

"Not this time, Mr. Kimberlin," she muttered hoarsely. "Wife I am, and wife I will be, but this time you've gone too far." She watched him come. Almost eagerly, she waited.

Eyes on the ground, he passed the barn, the chicken house, the summer kitchen. Eyes on the sky, he washed at the pump. She waited.

"Coffee's on," she said.

"Bring me some," he grunted, heaving himself into the hickory rocker. He yanked tiredly at his dirt-caked boots, kicked them off, stumbled to his feet. Right thumb, then left, jerked the straps of his overalls, dropping them over his shoulders. He shucked himself out of them, stood with them around his feet as he peeled off the sweat-soaked shirt.

Mattie watched him from the doorway, then moved slowly to the big iron stove. Her fist sought again the ache in her back as she lifted the porcelain pot and poured a mug of coffee. Ignoring the boots, the dropped pants, the grimy shirt, she turned back the tablecloth and thumped the mug down before him.

"Sit," she said quietly.

"Tired," he mumbled, swishing the coffee. He tested it, inhaled a gulp, blew at the rising steam. "Tired, going straight to bed."

"Sit," Mattie said again. "I've got somethin' to say."

"Can wait till breakfast, can't it?"

"No. It can't. Can't wait no longer, Mr. Kimberlin."

Ben jumped, his tongue burnt, looked at his wife for the first time that day, and sat. He sat gingerly, as if there not being food on the table, it was not proper to be there.

"You've gone too far, Ben," Mattie began. She shook her head fiercely and lifted her voice. "No, don't you say one word . . . Not till I'm done. And don't put on that puzzled air. You know what I mean. You've done it again, and I won't have it. You hear me, Ben Kimberlin? I won't have it. Not this time."

She had started vigorously, certain of her rights, but now her voice broke.

"Never raised your voice to me before," Ben said anxiously, peering at her in the dim lamplight. "You must be real riled up over this one."

"This one?" She nearly screamed. "This one!" She pulled a chair from the table and fell into it, gasping with frustration.

"This is my house, Ben Kimberlin. You built it for me, didn't you?"

He nodded, his eyes trying to escape the too-bright ones she fixed on his face.

"You did," she prodded. "Say it."

"Aw Mattie . . ."

"Say it." Her voice, commanding him, was as hard and cold as the edge of his plowshare. She looked at him closely, repeating, "Say it."

"Now, Mattie."

"Say it."

"What? What do you want me to say?"

"It's my house. You built it for me."

He brought the words out slowly, "It's your house." He pushed back the chair and rose to his feet. "It's your house," he said soothingly, heading for the stairway door. "Your house."

He had his hand on the knob, one foot lifted toward the step when Mattie's howl of fury and pain ripped through the clapboard farmhouse, tore its way up the chimney, shuddered the grey shakes of the gabled roof. Lazarus growled and rose from his rags beneath the house, hairs bristling along his neck. In the barn loft, the owl swiveled his head and waited, eyes unblinking.

"Mine," Mattie screamed. "Mine! Mine! Mine!" She pounded the table with her fists, then jumped to her feet, her chair skittering across the floor behind her.

"Mattie," Ben said. "Mattie, listen to me."

Mattie Kimberlin rushed across the floor, her face contorted with rage. "Thief," she screeched. "Robber!"

As suddenly as her anger had risen, it fell. She stood, her hands working the fabric of the calico dress, her eyes fastened on the scuffed shoes she wore. Ben's shoes. Lucky she wore his size.

"I ain't never had nothing, Ben," she began. "I ain't never had nothing in this life but you and what you gave me. I was an orphan, Ben. You know that."

"Course I do, Mattie. I know that."

"An orphan. No mother and no father. No brothers nor sisters, too, Ben. Nobody. No kin, no aunts . . ."

"Mattie —"

"Let me finish, Ben. Just this time, let me finish." She drew a heavy breath and continued in a high, tight voice. "When you came along, Ben, it was an answer to my prayers. That's what you was, Ben. Straight from heaven. An answer to prayer. I knowed that the minute I set eyes on you. You was powerful handsome, Ben. Yes, you was."

Ben shifted his weight, started toward the table and stopped. Mattie barred his way, her eyes tacking him to the wall.

"You was right handsome yourself, Mattie Pearl," he whispered.

"Thankee," she said. "That's right nice of you to say so, Mister Kimberlin." She tilted her head to consider the wallpaper. "Oh, I wasn't so pretty as Lola Devore, but I did sew better, if I do say so myself. Cooked better, too."

"You did," Ben was sweating.

"Still do," she muttered, then continued with her interrupted thought. "Right from heaven, you was, Ben. And when you asked me to marry you, all I could think of was what if Miz Lanham said no. I would have killed myself," she whispered.

"But she didn't, and you didn't," Ben breathed.

"That's right," said Mattie. "We got married, and you built me a house. My first house." Her spine stiffened. Her eyes focused again on Ben's face. "And then you sold it." Her voice was cold and low.

Ben shivered, "You said you didn't mind, Mattie."

"That's what I said Mister Kimberlin."

"Well, how was I to know?"

"Know what?"

"That you did care?"

"If you never knew, how come you're asking me now?"

Ben's eyes darted around the room, seeking release. "Built you another one," he said stubbornly.

"Yes," she seemed surprised. "You did just that. You built me another one. Now let's see. Whatever happened to that house you built me, after you sold my first to the Soapses?"

"Mattie, you ain't never acted like this. You make me — uncomfortable. That's it — uncomfortable."

"Uncomfortable." She repeated the word as if it had been spoken in a strange tongue. "I've made you uncomfortable, Mister Kimberlin? Why now, that's not wifely of me, is it? Wife's duty," she intoned, "is to make her man comfortable, to be sure he's got clean clothes, and good food on the table. Wife's duty is to keep a clean house, help in the fields if she's needed, and in all things to obey her husband."

Mattie turned her back to Ben and walked to the table. Her hand touched the embroidered tablecloth. "That right, Ben? Did I tell that the way Miz Lenham taught me all them years I was cleaning her house and caring for her younguns and washing her clothes, separating her milk and setting her hens? And for what, Ben Kimbelin? For what?"

"Mattie," he pleaded. "She was good to you in her way."

"In her way?" The voice slid up the scale, darting shivers along Ben's spine. "Her way was to work me to death and give me nothing but bed and board. I was — I was — dependent on her, Ben Kimberlin. I didn't have a nickle to my name. Not never. For ten years of backbreaking labor. If I hadn't pieced it at night with a stolen candle, I wouldn't even have brought that one measly quilt to our marriage bed. Ten years, Ben," she said dully. "Nothing."

"Mattie," Ben stirred himself, started toward the bowed form, the heavy form that shook with the strange half-sobs of one who has never cried.

"Don't you touch me," she whispered venomously. "Keep your hands to yourself. Them's thief's hands." Her voice was almost a growl.

"Them hands has always worked for you, Mattie. You."

"Liar," she whispered. "Thief and liar. Worked for me? Built for me, you mean. Built a house for me. Two houses? Three? How many, Ben Kimberlin? Can you even count 'em on your two hands? But you never let me keep a one." She whirled to face him and nearly fell. He reached for her, but she warned him off.

"Keep away, Judas," she warned. "Keep away."

Outside Lazarus keened into the rising wind. The two old people, silhouettes in the lamplight, cocked their heads to listen.

"Someone's going to die," Mattie said.

"Come to bed," Ben said. He said it firmly with a great intake of breath. He turned to go, shoulders set against their quarrel.

"Go along, then," Mattie said. Her voice had altered; it was dareless, soft, unconcerned. "I'll just finish your coffee. No use letting it go to waste. I'll just bank the fire and see to Lazarus. Then I'll be along."

He hesitated once, thought better of it. Morning would do. That would be soon enough to calm the old lady's fears. He could always build another house. How many was it, he asked himself. The Soapshes had bought the first one, the Barnses the second. Was it Miz Alderbright who had talked him into selling the third one — the one with the white columns that Mattie had set such store by?

"Ten," Mattie said across the space between them. "It was ten, Mister Kimberlin. And each one the house of my dreams. New porch, the columns, the cement geranium boxes. Nice. My rhubarb patch and the devil's darning — neddles — sweeter than ramblers even. Mine, Mister Kimberlin. Mine. You gave 'em to me." She stared at him, keeping her distance. "And you sold 'em."

"Mattie, I only sold 'em because we got good money for 'em. And I always built a better one."

"Ben Kimberlin," the old lady stirred herself, picked up the fallen chair, smoothed the tablecloth and turned the wick down, deepening the shadows in the room. "Ben Kimberlin, there was never a better house than the first one." A single tear glistened, fell.

"Then why didn't you say so?" he cried out in torment. "Why didn't you ever tell me you wanted that blamed house so bad. Why?"

"Because I loved you," she said simply, "and you was all I had. I'm old now, Ben. We're both old. You've given me me ten houses with one hand, and you've taken them away with the other. You ain't God, Ben, and I can't stand no more. Each time we left, I left part of me behind, till there ain't no more left, Ben Kimberlin. Nothing."

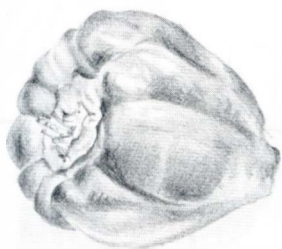
"You're tired, Mattie," was all he could say. "Come to bed." He went up.

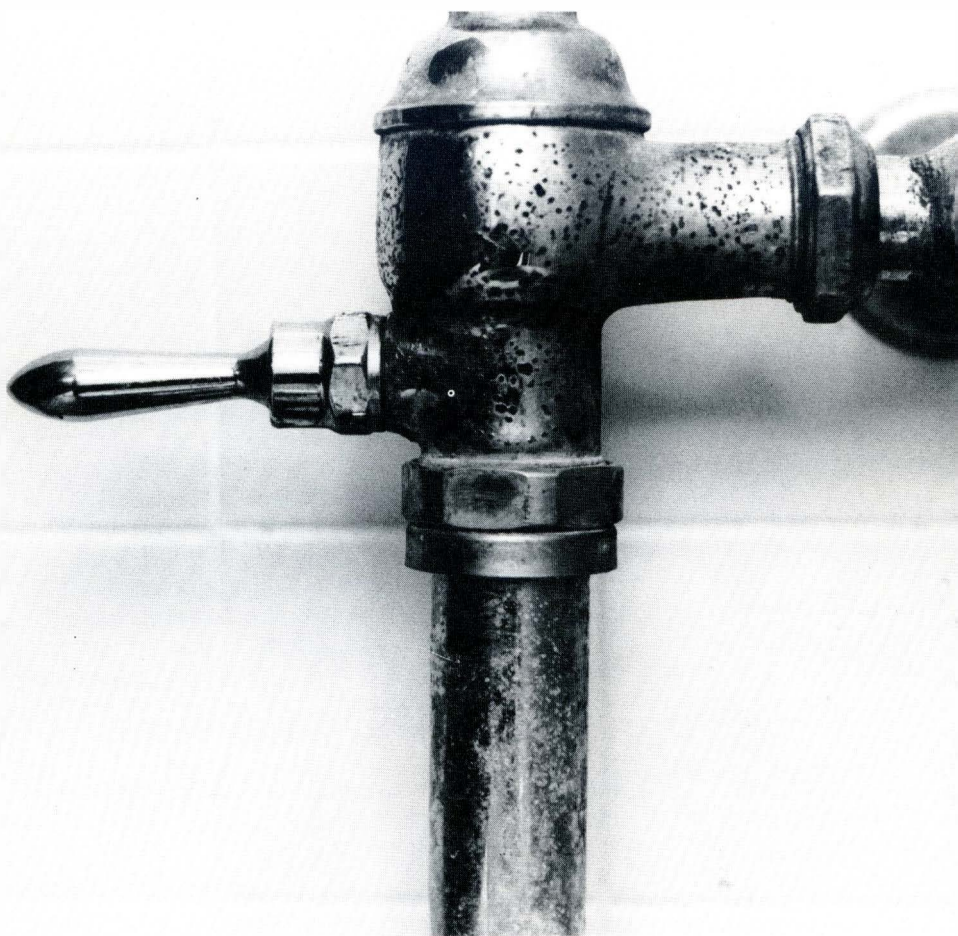
He waited, but his bones were tired. He tried, but his brain wouldn't work. Tomorrow, he thought, as his eyes closed. Tomorrow, I'll make it all right. I'll show her where the new house will stand. She'll like the willow. Pretty place. She'll get used to it. Same as the others. He slept.

Below, Mattie closed the stairway door and poked the fire to leaping flames. Tenderly, she fed the corners of the embroidered tablecloth into the blazing wood. Carefully, she took a shovelful of the burning cloth and nested it on the hooked rug beneath the lace curtains. She trimmed the wick of the lamp and set it on the sideboard. From the press she took the worn, old quilt, spread it with loving hands over her lap, and treading lightly, began to rock.

Outside, Lazarus howled into the wind, and the grey owl took a turn around the barn.

Constance Kakavecos Riggs





Nancy Donlan, The Toilet Flusher

PAGES

Tender pale green
ones only half
uncurled
reaching out
for a breath of
earth.

Now they're darker
stronger
bigger
like a palm
waiting to hear
my echo echo.

Wandering off
into the cool deep I
sat down in a mound
of gold and waited.

And waited
with pen in
heart
while trees grew bare
and dreamed of days
when only the leaves
would listen.

Kim McDowell

Lake Prose

This does not happen:

I wake up in the morning
and walk leisurely to the lake
I arrive at the boat dock
and am not tired

I sit down among wood
underneath still green trees in November
with my shoes off, my legs bare
I think only of my body sunning,
the cool perspiration on my cheeks

This does not happen.
It never happens.

This happens:

I drive the back way to work
just so I can travel around
the lake, pause occasionally and
remark to myself "it's beautiful, lovely,
just beautiful."

Each day I look for
a new vantage point
a new perspective
a new way to see into the water

When I find one, I'm happy
when I don't, I'm not
but drive on
forgetting
neglecting
only outwardly
my fantasy
sure that I will tell you
the new/the not new way
I've seen the lake

content, let's say, with more revision

Cindy Shearer



Karen Chalker, Nakuru



Corey O'Gorman, Waterfall

Frozen Razor/December Time

Now
I am warm
distance and time
overlapped
the cold
celebration
turn it hard
with a grip
I still remember
brittle suffocation
wet lungs
heaving air
in and out
waiting for
the end
chilled tickets
snatched blue
fingers drumming
music and time
fulfilling favors
dragging days
quickly
it was heavy,
thick, movement,
restrained
tempers
I was alone
yet, you were there
slicing memories
with your frozen
razor.

Dan Richards

THE EMPTY PLATE

His absence, like a bold, obtrusive guest,
Without the grace to wait, like all the rest,
Stretched out across the room to every chair,
Intruding on the person sitting there,

Assuming rude advantage of the space
That held his voice and non-existent face.
The meal was served and, as the others ate,
His absence overflowed his empty plate.

The conversation struggled to defeat
The apparition in the empty seat,
And when the hour was late and they were done,
The guests departed, thinking they had won

But hovering still, with midnight's jasmine bloom,
His absence, like a vapor, filled the room.

Nancy Wilson



John Naretta

GENTLE HIBISCUS

Hibiscus petaled, opens
To split-second's eternity.
In time-lapse frames release.
Sighs, without self-conscious urgency
That accompanied the battering
At her doors.
As if up a mountain side
He struggled
To plant a flag in conquest.

Judy Provost

SAFARI

Dreamer tastes golden lips
Thinks of Africa and
Snow Leopard spirits.
Hums songs to travel on.
Shapes words for gifts.
Obsessed with laughing
At the loneliness
Of looking for a home.

Judy Provost



Alicia Leatherbury, Kangaroo



Pippa Boyd

SPIN ME

Spin me, spin me
oh yes my love,
float me away
away,
to a place without decision.
I am exquisite
with a fluffy feather head
and a body toasted lightly from the sun,
I can soar above the most eager bird,
run faster than a fleeting doe.
I am so overwhelming
I am for all to see
float me
float me
away
my love
to a land where low is high
and fairies fly,
to a place without decision.
Take me away,
yes away, my love,
quickly, take me now my love,
for soon the whirls will cease
the heat will cool
the conscience of our hearts will collide,
and then, my love,
we will be forced to decide.

Lizz Jacobson

ART AND IDEAS

To think or tinker, which is best?

Or is it either-or? I'm blessed
If I do either one and damned
If every word's not crammed
As much with music as with thought,
Each note a notice, sung and taught.
Why fight delight of singing sound
Or think unsound thought music-bound?
Applaud instead wit's aptitude
When rhyme and reason most collude.

Alan Nordstrom



Cmo

Caro Walker

DAUGHTER OF A PATRIOT

Orphaned daughter of a Patriot
Threads the worn stairs of Kilmainham
— Like the bowed shelves of Marshes' —
Her gentle feet graze, where others,
Heavy, torn have waited, worn
Steps of inverted books and graves —
This, her inheritance.

Ghosts of an age or a man
Scraping design on a wall of a cell
With a rusted nail.
The echo of a curse,
The echo of a human cry,
A serpent and a chain.

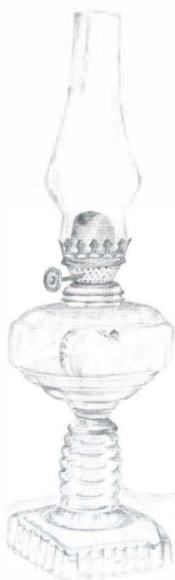
Thick, deadened walls —
Thick deadened cries
Of men masked in scales of ideals.
Fissures, figures behind bars
Swollen with sickness these hands,
These feet that grope and cannot see
To cease their course.
The sneer of a madman,
The chapel, and the trees that uproot it.

Orphaned daughter of a Patriot
Glides into some pebbled garden
Where once they toiled
Breaking stones, prayers, bones.
And he, condemned, released,
Spreads free arms like a cross.
She draws, fires.
He will not fall.
She, behind the pistol;
She, under the cross that will not move;
Hearing the whistle of another bullet
On another empty cross.
Father?

— The slam of solid door,
The click of key in lock
The silence, the fear,
The anger of this blinding void —

A stair, a cross, a silent book
She, sealed behind these living, bleeding walls;
Kilmainham, that held him once
Whom she can never hold.

Laurel Stadler



Abby Ober



Alicia Leatherbury , Soho

Optimistic Fatalist,
Product of the sixties,
Symbolism — a cancer of your bone marrow.

Images,
Thought out, planned, created,
Held to the light — negatives,
Undeveloped gray matter.

Fighting Brutality,
Hypocrite in tact,
Cynical Spiritualist.

Lost in a world of unrealities,
Baker of bread . . .
Carver of leather . . .
Digger of graves.

Monica E. Kiwus

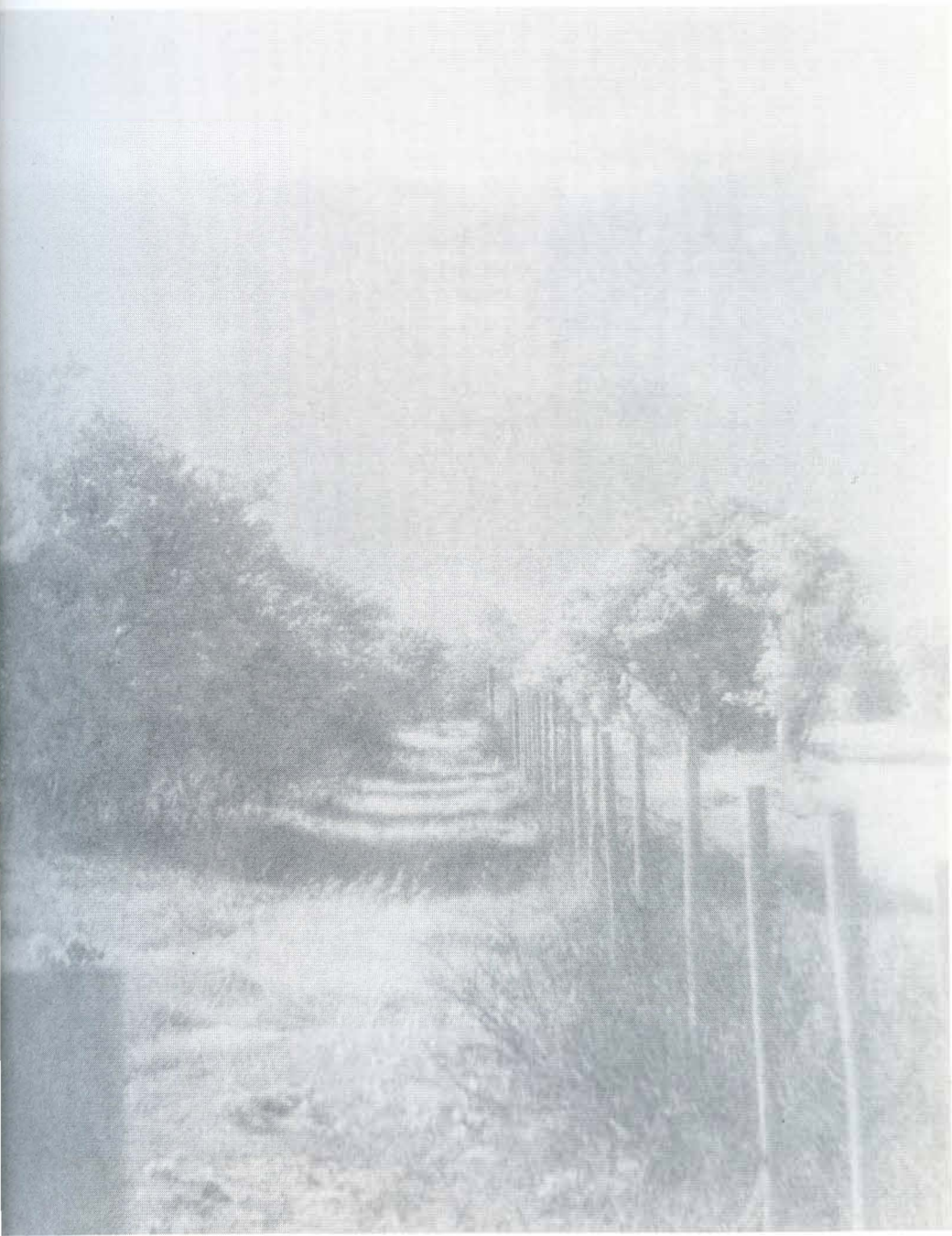
The Game

They was teams in Pinewood and Twin Lakes and Coley and Franklin. Nobody had no more'n ten or eleven on a team. We only had nine. George Elwin, he's Jim and Eileen's boy, you know, was overseas at Okernawa; he was our reg'lar catcher and could thow clean to second base sittin' down. I seen 'im sit there one game an' thow out a feller tryin' to steal second an' not even get up. It was Coley an' us, an' this feller took off for second. J.D. Gagney was pitchin' for us . . . no, it wasn't J.D., it was . . . 'scuse me, yes it was J.D., and he never even looked over to see if that feller was gonna run. An' he took off for second an' 'bout that time George just sat there, caught the ball and in jus' one motion, he never even stopped to think, pulled it back behind his ear an' flicked his wrist, SNAP! By the time the feller got to second base, the ball was waitin' on 'im. Butchie Hardin played second, an' he was standin' there with the ball in his glove, smilin' at the feller when he tagged 'im. But George couldn't play for us that year because he was already overseas. And Freddie Parker had to load watermelons so we really only had eight players that day, but we was playin' Pinewood an' they hadn't lost ere game. We'd lost one game an' that was to Pinewood, two to one, so we was gonna play 'em, it didn't matter how many players we had. An' ever' feller on their team could hit it in the woods.

We always rode in Billy Saxton's Dodge truck when we didn't play over at the schoolyard. Two or three would sit in the front and six or seven of us'd pile onto the back. I remember nare one of us ever wanted to sit in the middle of the cab because when Billy put it in second, that floor shift would always hitcha on the knee. And if you rode in the back on Billy's side of the truck, you had to watch out for his tobacco juice. But on the Saturday we played at Pinewood, Billy's truck was broke down. Somehow he broke a axle, I think it was. So Dennis Williams had a cousin, Jimmy Baker, who just got a new truck. It was a Ford. Dennis was the leftfielder an' he could run like a jackrabbit. He had this little ol' glove, I couldn't even get my hand in it, but he never dropped a ball and he could chase down anything. An' durn if he didn't smoke, too. I remember watchin' 'im roll them things. Prince Albert. An' it was Prince Albert papers, too. But that joker could flat out run. An' it was his cousin's new Ford truck we took to Pinewood.

Well, we piled in. Jimmy drove, of course, 'cause it was his truck. He was pretty rough on it, even if it was new, but he'd have a conniption fit if anyone of the rest of us so much as touched it. Dennis sat up there with him an' so did Charles Johnson, the firstbaseman. Me an' J.D. an' Billy an' Dean Sims an' Richard Wilson an' Butchie Hardin an' Thomas Crews sat in the back.

Listen. We hadn't had no rain for days an' days, maybe a week or so thereabouts, but when we got on the truck an' was fixin' to go, it looked like it was gonna come a good one. Them big ol' black clouds, doncha know, all along the tips of the trees, right in the direction of Pinewood.



Rich Ray

Dean Sims said it was gonna rain hard as a cow pissin' on a flat rock. Ever' time he seen a dark cloud, he'd say that. But he always did have a nasty mouth an' was always gettin' into some kind of meanness. I remember Wiley Brett — Preacher Brett's oldest boy — coming to school with a new hat on, an' Dean took it from him an' went aroun' to th'other side of the school building an' peed in it. Jus' for the meanness! Wiley chased him all over the schoolyard an' out into the woods a piece, an' when he caught 'im he likened to of killed him. But it didn't faze Dean a lick. If you didn't watch 'im, the very next day he'd turn aroun' an' do the same kinda thing again.

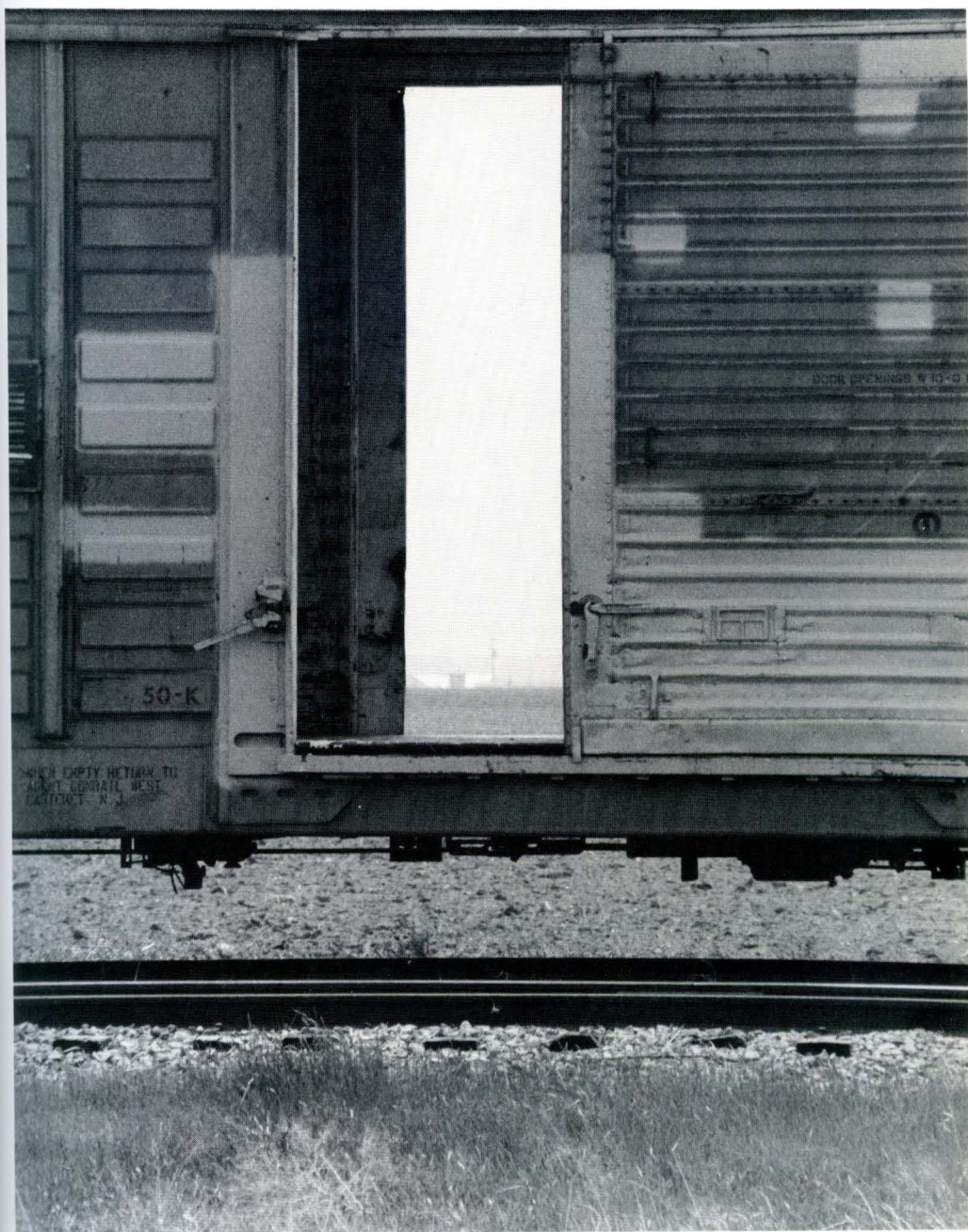
Why, on the way to Pinewood, Dean picked up one of the bats and takened to swingin' it around over his head like a club or a sword, an' I was afraid he was gone hurt somebody. But directly he stopped and looked up the road apiece an' says, "Looka here. Watch this." We all looked aroun' the cab, an' way down the road we seen this nigger walkin' along, an' fore long we could tell he's headed in the same direction we was, he had his back to us. So Dean says, "Looks here. Watch this nigger." An' he taken hold of the bat with both hands an' held it out over the side of the truck, jus' like he was'bout to hit a baseball. It was 'bout level with his waist.

Course, we was on a dirt road. There wasn't a paved road to Pinewood back then. But Jimmy was still goin' 'bout thirty-five, forty mile-an-hour. So Dean jus' held the bat still, an' pretty soon we was up with the nigger an' it just goes POP! right on the back of his head. Dean didn't really have to do much of nothin'. He jus' held the bat there real still like an' the nigger came to him. POP!

Well, we couldn't tell what happened to him 'cause, like I say, it ain't rained in a coon's age an' the dust was a-swirlin' up behind the truck like a buncha clouds. It was so thick we couldn't see ere sign of the nigger. An' there was some shore 'nuff black clouds up ahead an' we didn't know if we's gonna get to Pinewood before it started pourin' down rain.

Well, funny thing about it: it didn't rain, it blowed over. And we played that game. Lemme tell you somethin'. Pinewood had ever' last one of their players, an' we was playin' without George Elwin who was overseas in Okernawa an' Freddie Parker who was thowin' watermelons. An' listen here: we whupped 'em an' whupped 'em good. Five to two, an' they bigger'n us on ever' base an' in the outfield too. But we whupped 'em. You wanna know why? 'Cause we played as a team! We knowed each other an' we knowed what we could do. We played together like we was one man. And Pinewood couldn't whup that. They never had a chance.

Roy Starling

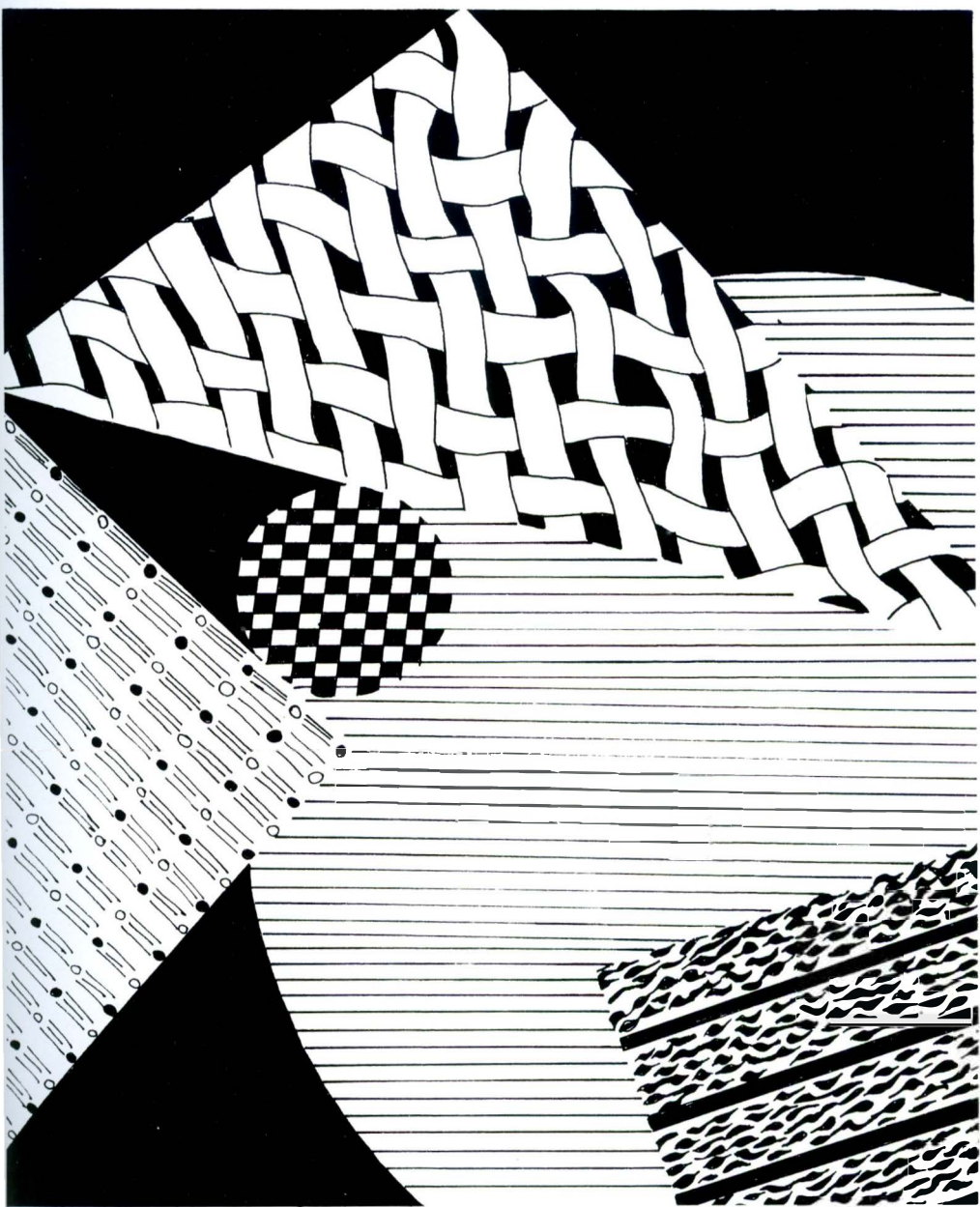


Nancy Donlan

UPrising

Bright, Big
Whirling, swirling
Synthetic colored bubbles
on a string.
like a giant tutu twirling
high
overhead
reaching ...
 br e a th ing
LEAPING!
 bu r st ing
speckles in the sky.
Independence
in July.

Cynthia J. Darrach



Pippa Boyd



Karen Chalker

Nativity

Within
the creator,
the giver of life,
there rest
the children.
Living
in a womb
of green
muffled softness,
where a tree rises
hiding the sky.
Wanting
to know
the fruit of life,
drawn
toward the serpent
they learn.

Naked.
Outside
the gates of horn,
the children cry
in fear
at the hugeness of the sky,
the brightness of the sun.
Then they smile,
and reach.

Jina Mullett



Nancy Donlan, 'shrooms

Home
Heart
Halfway there
my private debate.

K.R.

backward glances

the ghost of my rationality
smooth and cool
glides right by you
ignoring your sweet signals
oblivious to your just request
leading me harshly along as I
glance back
to see you glancing up —

forgive me, Love
forgive my vulcan love

L.S.



Nancy Donlan, Lunar Landscape

Lady of twin white wing
Sails, sings at my side;
Adorned — Bound by golden chain;
Her voice, the whisper of a whelk.

Lady of twin white wing,
Rocks, reels to the spin of a wheel,
To the whim of a hand,
Skimming timeless mirrors of wave;
Idol — Slave.

Her face dips, sips,
Kissing puckered sea-lips,
Exchanging estranged sea-smiles with a wave;
And she, driven up, plunged down
By a wave,
Or a man at the helm.
Assaulted by sprays of tears

She could-not, would-not cry
That cling, cake, erode her shrinking skin.
She bobs, bows to a star's dying ray,
This maidenhead, highest dream of mermaid's song.
We, three united, divided by an apple and a moon.
We, winged woman.

I fly inside this moon,
Inside her shrinking skin
In heady, dizzy spin
Alone, in the brilliance of a sister's shadow.
Awakened to mists of the East,
To inverted dawn
Or a glowing, growing neon sign.
I run, beckoned by the light above this flaming water
And wonder of seas and ships that drive me.
I sing, the flight of wet wing.

Laurel Stalder



Karen Chalker

Who can I send
to breathe,
to warm
by simple love,
Easy tenderness?

Who will I bring
to watch,
to dream
in honest sleep,
Deep remembrance?

Myself, my ancient Self.

Karen Chalker

CAMELTROT

Tired camels trot
where the sun doesn't blink,
and you could be shot
if you think to wink
at an Arabian princess.

Fred Miley

MORNING

I face the morning
looking like a school picture.
Put your feet on the X and
please turn your chin, smile.
The cameraman ducks
so the black camera swallows
his head.
His legs, thin, stick out.

Kara Provost



Nancy Donlan, Man

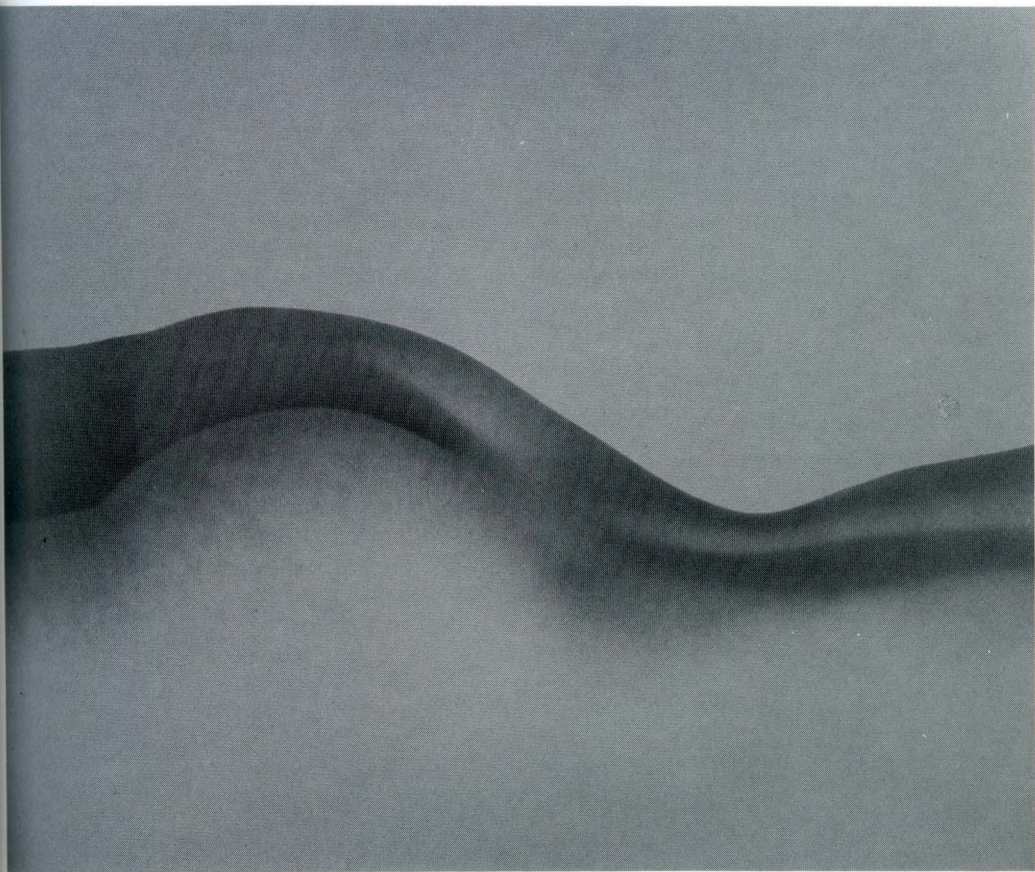


Dave Colage, Goats

BEACHCOMBING

This is the way we make up our minds.
We hear the gray ocean roll over us,
break from left to right in our brain,
and we walk on an edge in fierce light,
while counting things backward to birth,
like picking up shells as we find them,
small, some cracked, reddish and round,
each one, one at a time, and touched
with our memory's seeming precision
about such bright, singular objects,
until we complete our collection
and carry away all our hands hold,
away from white ships of our dreams
to be put on a wooden shelf in memory,
where things are acquitted and stored
and saved for a long winter's night.

Bob Duvall



David Reed

EPITAPH

"She was not busy.
She was dead."
I was the greatest lover
Ever to write in Red.
Red — not allowed in school.
I loved Bananas.
I was buried under the banana tree
By the Banker's house.
I never liked blonde hair —
It reminded me of Tina Caputo.
I didn't like belts —
Cow skin on my middle.

Kara Provost



Elizabeth Robinson



Nancy Donlan

WITH A BREATH OF GOLD

Let me go then, my old friend,
for all those times you made me cry
like a hurricane sweeping through the sky
onto the streets of a certain unknown town;
twisting your tail end tightly round
parts where water could not be found.

Let us look through all those scenes
from emptied barroom glasses
and girly magazines.
Of hazy thoughts with boys on boats,
broken dreams
drippless cream.

Let me go then, my old friend,
to the place where visions come to end.
Where lives are bound, but not tied
for each of us who have to fly.
I am ready now to take a chance:
eat from the tree,
sever a branch.

Fate has taken me in her arms;
so, my old friend you are but a breeze,
a harmless kiss,
a dangling charm.

Lizz Jacobson



Dave Colage, Squid

THE JETTY

I threw my pencil down. "Maybe you should go running — let your mind relax" my friend advised. My thoughts would not flow; in fact, they stagnated in a pool of frustration. The table, typewriter and crumpled paper stared at me, waiting for ideas. Recently I've been thinking a great deal of the time, only unable to put my thoughts down on paper. One could say I've been writing on my mind. I was supposedly on a weekend vacation, relaxing and of course, catching up on my work. Mustering some exuberance, I suggested, "Lets go for a walk!"

New Smyrna Beach is a wonderful place in the fall. The crowds vanish and the hospitable sea washes away their traces. My friend and I set out for the jetty, a three mile round trip walk. Outfitted in a sweatshirt and barefeet, I cleansed my lungs with deep inhalations of the crisp air. Although cold air blew off the sea and a mist had settled on shore, I felt warm and secure. Low tide is great because you can find all sorts of things the sea has let slip through. A tiny crab caught my eye. The first thing that amazed me as we bent down to examine the creature was its boldness and spirit. It's claws were defensively snapping, outstretched into it's perception of the atmosphere.

The late afternoon mist kept rolling in; the gusty wind was wet. A congregation of sandpipers floated in streams over the sand. I wondered about the source of energy within these tiny birds as I watched their legs moving faster than my human eye could detect. "Sandpipers are prob-

ably the happiest birds I know; they run all the time, only stopping to eat," my companion observed. "But they are tiny birds" I replied. "They don't think — everything is instinct." "Aah" he stopped walking and smugly smiled at me, "what makes them any different than you?" Well, he had me there. We resumed walking. "So many times," I said, "we convince ourselves that we really are debating a decision when we know our choice exactly from the start." We held that thought in between us for a while.

The beach ahead was desolate except for a woman and her child. From a distance I could discern that she was sitting motionless in a chair facing the ocean, with an easel in front of her. The child, perhaps a year old, was sitting on a blanket with two stuffed animals. Except for an occasional movement from the child, it was a still image, as if they were posing for an artist. I noticed there was nothing on the canvas nor were there paints or brushes. Her eyes focused powerfully onto the sea and for the first time she moved to gaze at us. Her eyes contained the same depth and azure as the sea. The baby looked up and gurgled; his eyes matched hers. "Hello" she said with a smile. We slowed our pace to make sure the canvas was empty. "What are you painting?" I asked curiously. Her hair was pulled back, giving her face a clean and stark appearance. She spoke calmly, "I am painting the sea. It is snowing and there are islands with mountains on them. There are waves, about six feet, frozen in air . . ." My friend and I searched the empty water for her visions. I looked back at her. She smiled, "I guess you realize I haven't begun the actual process of



Dave Colage



Dave Colage

painting. That's the easy part. It is this idea that consumes all my energy. I am merely visualizing on this white canvas." "I understand," I said, and I probably understood more than she realized. The baby was mesmerized by a flock of seagulls. He began to flap his arms in a circular motion as if he was flying. My friend bent down and waved his finger in front of the child. The baby's eyes followed the finger and then, without warning, grabbed it and tried to eat it. "It may take me a week to see this one . . . there is a lot to think about," she concluded. We wished her luck and continued our walk. I glanced back and noticed she had resumed her concentration as if we never interrupted her.

The jetty was now within sight. My thoughts were spinning deep in my mind. "Art is not pure imitation," I stated. My friend looked at me inquisitively. I answered the expression on his face, "Art is the perception of the artist, what the artist observes. The world is a large amphitheatre and the artist is an observer." We reached the jetty. It happened immediately. The day started changing and so did I. The sun sent down purple and orange to the horizon. I understood. My imagination was at full speed again. The day was beautiful and seemed eternal. The hazy sun watched us as we climbed the huge rocks and found a flat one to sit on. The tide slammed into each side of the jetty, almost trying to touch us.

Dan Richards

CONTRIBUTOR'S NOTES:

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KIM McDOWELL — The short, blonde-haired, early morning runner.

KARA PROVOST — loves cats, blue eyes, and ink pens; hates telling time, station wagons and squash!

JUDY PROVOST — is learning from Kara and from all the other amazing people whose paths have crossed hers.

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CONNIE RIGGS — with 2 books, a dozen short stories and over 400 features published, is convinced that writing permits her not only the last word but the first and almost everything in between. Her ambition is to retire to the mountains of Greece, where the ultimate transgression is **not** writing.

DAN RICHARDS — has conceptualized this idea and now has a thousand more to pursue.

K.R. — To be better than you are.

LIZZ JACOBSON — is under the illusion.

TERI COLE — "... could fill a book with reasons, and they would all be true, though not true of all. Only one same reason is shared by all of us: we wish to create worlds as real as, but other than the world that is."
— John Fowles

JINA MULLETT — Beyond the crystal eye there breathes the life of revolution. Beyond the prism lie the colors of refracted light.

NANCY DONLAN — enjoys finding objects on the ground, putting them in her purse, and sometimes keeping them.

LAUREL STALDER — A Rollins Senior and a hopeless idealist.

NANCY LEFFEL WILSON — I am a writer and Assistant Director of the Winter Park Artists Workshop, Inc. I am married, have four children and live on Merritt Island, FL.

KAREN CHALKER — Whose idea was this?

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