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BRUSHING



BRUSHING

Rollins College
Literary and Fine Arts Magazine
Number 24
1996

Front Cover Art: Gar Willard

Untitled

full piece found on page 16

Back Cover Art: Adam Trowbridge
from **Sex and Pregnancy** series

photographs found on page 36

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Literature Note

This year's *Brushing* presents an eclectic mix of writings. Initially each seems distinct. In perspective, however, each page introduces a theme, and collectively, they build an encompassing one. Deep, painful stories sit next to light, humorous poems and from the juxtaposition of their styles and themes arises an essence which carries the reader through the magazine. This flow unifies the pieces and produces a publication. *Brushing* has been organized to read like a book and presents individual works simultaneously. An impossible dichotomy? Hopefully not. Readers naturally want to discriminate, seeing only individual works; this method, however, blocks out the intercourse between works by placing them in a vacuum. But people, however, do not live in a vacuum and thusly *Brushing* has been fashioned to promote a reciprocity and flow among the pieces, while also allowing each piece to stand alone as a distinct work.

A literary and art magazine has a special place in the world it not only provides exposure for artists and authors, but also exposes its editors to the trials and tribulations of the publishing business. However, its most important aspect lies in the hands of the reader who can easily throw it into a box with the rest of those college text books or place it on a shelf next to the yearbook. In my opinion, the place for a literary and art magazine, especially *Brushing*, is the coffeetable—a book for the wearisome guest waiting for dinner. The pieces are short, and the pictures are compelling, allowing the reader to leaf through the magazine quickly or become thoroughly engrossed. The overall design and structure of *Brushing* attempt to present a provoking, cohesive collection of the best art and literature at Rollins College. The magazine serves its purpose if someone simply flips through it before dinner or analyzes the specific structure of the poems. It has been designed for appreciation on all levels.

Shawn Hastings

Art Note

The struggling student artist often runs into problems while traveling the arduous path toward "becoming known." Where do art students start their journey? How can they begin to make themselves recognized by the ominous public? How can young artists first experience the trials of aesthetic judgement? College art and literature magazines offer one of the first vehicles for advancement down this path. While designing this magazine as both an *object* and a collection of flat images, my focus for this year's *Brushing* was to attempt to make the artist "more known."

The designer of the art magazine can be considered analogous to the architect of an art gallery. They both intend to construct beautiful space through which an audience may follow a narrative of created works. The architect designs a sequence of rooms while the magazine designer must contrive an ontologically similar sequence of pages. They both make structures for display; structures which emphasize the artist's interests. The architect utilizes elements such as measures of ceiling and wall while the magazine designer toys with elements such as paper stock and size. Both the architect and the magazine designer must find the balance between function and beauty. As the architect has recently grown more wary of "virtual space" technologies, the designer must make adjustments to the magazine to emphasize its existence as an object and thus to accommodate the public in ways that a computer screen cannot.

With these ideas in mind, I hope that readers will enjoy their copies of *Brushing* as both an appealing objects and effective structures for the display of art.

Randy Gilmore

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Summertime

(a birthday wish for an over-forty friend)

Remember honeysuckle fences
thick with busy yellow jackets
buzzing in and out delicate scalloped blossoms,
too greedy sipping sweet nectar
to notice Band Aid kneed, gritty-faced you?

Black nailed fingers carefully pluck tiny white trumpets
sun blistered lips suck sweet juice from Lilliputian horns?

Later, green kneed in clover, expertly avoiding
fuzzy bumbles
bobbing about purple and white pom poms,
to fashion a garland for a towhead;
letting scents of summer--
charcoal smoke
lilac, rose-laden trellis
vine ripe tomatoes
sticky sweet watermelon
drip down nubby elbows
and stain the muddy tops of tanned feet?

-Terry Smildsin

Goodbye, Old Paint

We rode the range for nine years.
Now they've come for you
and it's hard to let you go.
I walk slowly around,
my caressing hand on your side . . .

There's a dent where we hit
that big mailbox (and another
where we pushed it back
into place). Your flank was mashed
when I scraped the schoolyard fence
one too-early morning,
and I never did
have your parking lights replaced
after they shattered on the back
of a bus that stopped
while I was busy filling in
my eyebrows on the way to work.

I'm so sorry about those parking lights.
But I never spent much money on myself,
either. I know you understand.

Now some stranger with no regard
for our feelings fumbles callously
at your underside, seeking a spot
for his chilly sharp hook.
My babies rode in the backseat;
Sal was sick there, years ago

when we were all young.
"I threw up in Mama's new car,"
she told the doctor,
who laughed wryly with me.

The chain is secured.
You were so like me, for a car:
a little worse for the wear and tear,
sometimes temporarily spiffed up
but never fashionable, paint going
thin, cracked in spots, but
always dependable, always going,
always helping other people get
where they needed to go. When it
got to be too much, you and I
would sneak out and drive late at night.
You let me think we were looking
for a destination to call our own;
you let me cry, then brought me home.

Now your back end rises, winched
to the abbatoir's van, and I tell you
silently, desperately how much I liked
everything about you: the hollow
that fit my back end, the cigarette burn
that reminded me not to get too big
for my britches, the tape player

that wouldn't work for anyone else
and had to be handled just right,
like a rich crotchety old husband.

Maybe you thought you were retired
in your old place in the driveway,
having earned your rest;
but now you are leaving, strung up,
hauled off to the glue factory.
I can't seem to leave the empty driveway
or ease the big ache in my carburetor.
Oil drips from my eyes, joining
your tearstains on the concrete.

I guess a psychiatrist would say
I had cathected you,
but this cowgirl knows better.

-Kathy Bailey



Amber Dye
Book Stack
charcoal and acrylic wash
30" x 66"

Those Beneath the Tide

Mommy told her the story of Noah's ark. The water kept on rising, and rising, and rising, then everything was gone. Except for the boat and the people who were good. And the bird. Kat remembered the bird, because it was pretty, and it brought something green, so everybody knew that there was land near by. But not the bad people—they didn't know because they were dead, dead beneath the tide.

The sand felt gritty sifting through her toes, cool and moist. One time she had been on a beach with endless stretches of white sand. White sand looked like salt. But it didn't taste like salt. It crunched. She dipped her hand into the discolored water, and scooping up some of the wetness, let it dribble slowly upon one of the borders of the sandbox, forming a lumpy tower.

What would it be like to live in a tower like this one? On a hill, where you could see forever around, and no one lived near you. Alone, you could run down.....and the wind would blow through you, cleansing, and everything would smell sweet, like June and picnics.

But the water could reach there too. You couldn't escape. Because the blood.....the blood spread through the water....and stained.

—Hurry up, come along....

Our clothes fell in small heaps on the floor.

—Mommy needs to get ready for work. There you are. No it's not hot, I tested it. *Please*, girls. Climb in.

Black smeary stuff was growing on Ducky. Ducky needed a bath too.

—Yes, yes, you may have your duck. Katlin you are in charge, do you hear me? Watch your sister.

If you squeezed Ducky, he would make a noise, and pee.

—I'll be down stairs... Christ, I'm going to be late!

Water would come out of the little hole he had underneath him. Janie had a doll that peed too. Its stomach filled with water and you could hear it slosh around.

Kat balanced herself on the mossy log which gave beneath her naked feet. Bits of moss squeezed through her toes. If you went off the log, the alligators would get you. Alligators had huge mouths and sharp teeth that could snap your arm off. Kat had seen a man with only one arm. He tied his shirt at the stub, so he had a knot instead of fingers.

Alligators crept up on you slowly, with little warning. In a movie she had seen, an alligator ticked because it ate a clock. Janie had a clock that ticked. It was red, and it had a loud bell.

The marshy ground pulled at her, yet she let herself sink deeper. Now the alligators would appear and eat her. They would go for her arms and legs first, chomping parts of her up while she screamed. Then they would go for her face... they knew. They could smell the blood.

If you pumped your feet real hard, you could go all the way up and around the pole. Kat pushed herself away from the ground. Blue. Green. Dirt. Blue. Green. Dirt. Through partly closed lids, she glimpsed flashing colors. Her legs were beginning to feel tired, yet she was not nearly high enough.

Maybe she could swing to God. And the blood would wash away. But it had not left yet. She could feel it, hot on her arms and her legs, covering her body.

Mommy had seen the blood.

The water was tinged pink. Ducky bobbed upside down, and small bumps rippled along Kat's skin. Blood dripped down the faucet. The door opened.

—Oh my God! Janie, baby, Jesus! Oh my baby, my baby!

Kat felt her body being shook.

—What happened, tell me what happened, Katlin! I thought I told you to watch her!

She didn't mean for her to slip. Her hands had reached out and tried to grasp Ducky, but Kat had smiled and lifted him higher. Then down, and a thump—then silence.

Kat didn't drop Ducky. She still held him up as the red swirled into the water, and pressed towards her naked body. She crouched, and flattened herself against the farthest end of the tub, but it sought out and surrounded her huddling form. It touched her everywhere, and she couldn't stop it. She screamed. Ducky fell.

The water grew cold afterward, and she had hummed and waited for the flood to wash over her, like it had for the bad people. It would be cold, and dark, and damp beneath, and she would be alone.

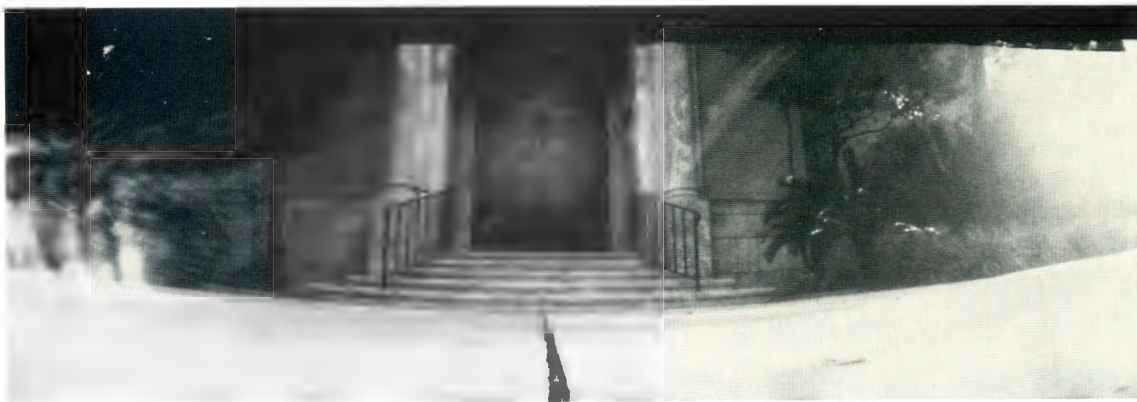
But it hadn't come. A voice came instead. *The blood came because of you... You hurt her...*

Had she? She only remembered the reaching hand and the blood soaked blond curls, and Mamma—"I told you to watch her!"

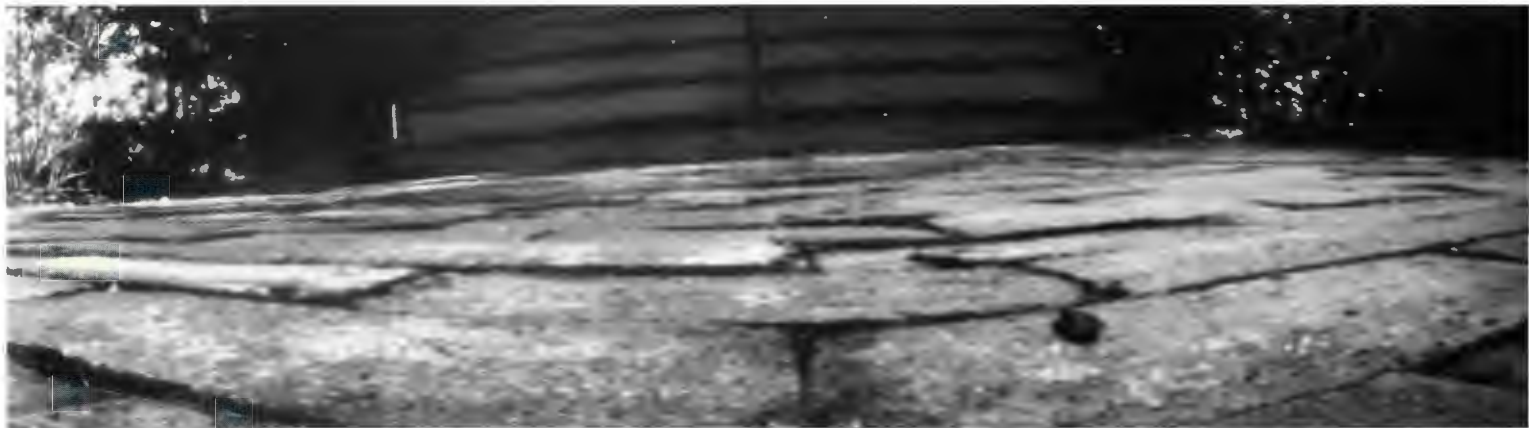
Her fingers had turned all wrinkly before the man in blue came. His puzzled eyes searched her, and Kat had turned away, afraid of seeing the flash of accusation again.

It's not over yet. The red comes back when she lets her eyes shut, though she tries to prevent the lids from closing. The blood still stains her inside, where it had soaked through her skin and made everything dark. Others couldn't see it, but Kat knew it was there. Soon her wait would be ended. Relief would come, and the flood would wash over the blackness. She was ready to pass beneath the tide.

-Mairi Beautyman



left:
Daniel Zollenberg
Untitled
pinhole photograph
8.5" x 3"



Above:
Mairi Beautyman
Bricks
pinhole photograph
9" x 2.5



Jessica Westbrook

Again

pinhole photograph

4.5" x 4.5"

The Death of Roman

(1995 Journal entry no. 54)

My friend Roman shot himself dead. He did this sometime after his wife of more than fifty years died, following a long battle with cancer. I overheard his son Hugo tell a group of mourners at the wake how Roman had managed his death: "I found him outside in the shed, lying across the washer with the pistol still in his hand. One bullet to his right temple. Sweet and simple. The s.o.b. put a floor mat across the machine, can you believe it? Neat and tidy to the last." Hugo's wife Judith gave his arm a gentle squeeze. I almost felt sorry for the louse 'til I watched him jerk free. Then I remembered why I never much cared for the bastard.

Whenever I make pea soup, I think of Roman. The soup is almost ready. It bubbles up thick and tasty with just a hint of onion and plenty of smoked ham chunks the way he likes it. Seated at my island counter, a houndstooth cap on the stool beside him, he takes a deep whiff of the emerald liquid. I have to tell him to go ahead and dig in without me. Roman prides himself on his regal manners; coupled with a large measure of Christian piety, he can be stiff to a fault, even difficult. Today he is chipper. "What's with you?" I ask.

"Let's go shopping," is his reply.

Roman is one of the few men I know (my husband being another) who enjoys shopping. His wife Cam was a real clothes horse. I remember going through her closets with Roman, packing up stuff for Goodwill. There must have been over a hundred pair of shoes still in boxes stacked everywhere in that little closet and under the bed. Roman opened each lid reverently. He'd lightly caress some, others he'd sigh over or make a comment: "She wore these with her lavender print and that crazy little hat with the veil." It took a lot of convincing to get Roman to part with those shoes. One pair, mules my mother used to call them, the silliest shoes really--they were made of some sort of clear vinyl and peppered with rhinestones--he refused to give those up.

I try not to think about Roman much. When I do, my heart swells inside my chest. and I struggle to swallow back tears. He could be very mean at times, I tell myself, but then he comes around to my side of the car and waits for me to step out, and I remember how I had to get used to his eccentricities, how I loved him for them. He moves to my right elbow so he'll be on the outside as we stroll down the street. Roman was old-fashioned, I guess you'd say.

Then I see him go to a cupboard above the washer and remove a remnant rug. He places it over the top of the machine smoothing out any creases. The pistol must be in the pocket of his sports coat. But I'm not sure if he was wearing a jacket. Which one? The camel's hair? The corduroy with the patches at the elbows? Perhaps it is in his trouser pocket? Does he stand there and raise the pistol to his head? No. Roman would think of everything; he's a stickler for details. He must bend from the waist and rest his torso on the machine. Does he remain this way long enough for the rug to leave an impression on his cheek before firing? He's facing right, I know that. Hugo didn't mention blood. Given the laws of physics, for how long would his distributed mass remain in this position? These are the sorts of things that there is just no sure way of knowing, but I work on it.

Some days I dress him in the camel coat; others, no jacket is required. On occasion, I take the mat down and smooth it out, but first I make sure there are no clothes in the washer; Roman would want it this way. I place my hand in the small of his back, and bend him over the machine. I turn his face toward me, smooth the white hair at his temple, and smile. He smiles back, and politely says "Thank you," before the trigger goes off.

-Terry Smildsin

Autobiography Part Four

Yeeessssss
 You think I didn't hear you
 Late at night, your
 Grown Up Parties.
 Joking, smoking, toking, drinking
 You think I was just six, and I didn't understand.
 As one dirty crack after another went out to the
 Grown Up Crowd.
 You think I was alienated from you
 By thirty years, by sugarplums,
 And your Merits and your beer.
 But I'll tell you.
 I knew I'd want to remember those nights
 I didn't understand them then, but what I did
 understand
 Is that I'd understand someday.
 And so, I listened.
 With bat ears
 And bloodhound nose
 And cat's eyes.
 I took it all in.
 You didn't see me. Sitting at the foot of the stairs.
 I took everything in. And I remembered.
 Don't believe me?
 I'll tell you what I remember...
 I remember Annie.
 Well, Annie's laughter, louder than all the voices.
 And I remember Scott.
 I hated Scott, even before, I remember Scott's jokes.
 Who wouldn't?
 I remember Gary, who was stupid to me even then.

Even to a six year old.
 I remember Vicky, who seemed to
 enjoy herself, and seemed not to.
 I remember Dad, hazily, that veil
 a veil of illusion.
 Funny, but it always gets fuzzy when he's about to
 do something Typically Bob.
 But I don't remember mom downstairs.
 I remember everyone at the party
 but her.
 I remember her in a distant light
 Thin, with feathered hair, a cigarette
 perched delicately
 Between two slender fingers.
 Glasses and braces, piquant eyes.
 Where was mom? Where was mom?
 And when I go beyond the stair, after I had re-
 turned to my
 Round Room,
 I remember,
 Mom was upstairs
 With me.

-Haley Hoekstra



Rachel Simmons
Untitled
charcoal on paper
18" x 24"

At 24 Years Cancer

The heroic flag above your bed
 Matches your pathetic lobotomy look
 With sticky yellow drool on your chin
 Just another drone
 Of the enlightened age
 Who's so loyal to his motherland
 The rich rape everyone
 And you'll never know
 Your oxen-backed poor that
 Are scraped off jackboots
 For a shiny Casio watch
 Be proud of your country
 Give it up for the man
 And make him pray for a slow castration
 Consume Subsume Exhume
 Another people buried
 Beneath a hard luck dime story
 Everyone is possessed
 They vomit up brass nails
 And candles and hair
 Passing lonely lives away
 On pornography tennis courts
 String up the rich
 With their Nike shoelaces
 Be proud of your country
 Give it up for the man
 And make him pray for a slow castration
 Give it up for the man
 And make him pray for a slow castration

- Matt Moyer

Untitled

Sleepy-eyed wanderer What can you
 see beneath those eyelids low and
 heavy

A shaft of light

sometimes penetrates

but then capitulates
 and inebriates

Until you walk crooked
 and your yawn's a laugh
 of giddy avoidance of the
 outside half

so sleepyeyed wanderer
 (mouth open, eyes shut) you'll
 miss where the part of your
 tightrope was cut . . .

-Sara Feldman





Opposite page:

Trong Nguyen
Untitled
 oil on stainless
 42" x 67"

Trong Nguyen
Untitled
 oil on stainless
 42" x 67"

Left:
 Zofia Nowiki
Marko
 oil on board
 36" x 24"

Mother, May I?

Mother,
 round and ripe like an apple-
 a green apple, that is.
 Green because of your love of and
 stinginess with money.
 Green with envy of other mothers'
 daughters.
 Green
 because, though I love you,
 you leave me with a sour aftertaste.

You appear harmless, content,
 even jolly
 with your portly figure.
 My happy, fat mother.
 So too is your telephone voice beguiling.
 It drips with honey as you coy and you croon (in
 Vietnamese), "Oooh Chi Thanh, stop it.
 You're embarrassing meeee!"
 Eleven minutes later,
 off the phone,
 something snaps within you,
 and you yell at your five peapod children
 who left the T.V. on
 or failed to make full use of the Brawny napkin
 you find in the crowded garbage can.
 Accustomed to your complaints,
 we know to rectify the problem as soon as pos-
 sible,

for if we are less than immediate in doing so,
 tyrannical you will deliver to us
 an uninvited, drawn-out lecture
 on the virtues of cleanliness-next-to-godliness
 and Oriental obstinate obedience.

Somehow
 your overused speech
 always led to a berating of us,
 your supercilious, slovenly, stupid
 children,
 who knew nothing though their
 hardworking mother
 sent them to an American school
 to absorb an American education.

*You stupid cows, all you do is eat, sleep, and defecate.
 Do you see Bac Tao 's daughters? They come home
 from school and clean the house, cook their parents a
 hot dinner, and even wash the dishes afterward! Oh,
 what a high life my friends
 live. . .*

Mother,
 your explosions of apparent animosity always confused me.
 How could you, how did you
 know these things about your friends' private lives?
 Did you read their diaries
 as you did mine?
 And why did you brag, in a sense,
 about "sending" us to an American school?
 It was only grade school.

What were we supposed to do otherwise?
 Sit around and not take advantage of an education?
 Eat, sleep, and defecate?

And why, oh why,
 did you speak of an American education
 as if it were the most pristine and erudite education possible,
 yet, at the same time,
 with a turn of your head and a flick of your bloody-bloody
 tongue,
 discriminate against *them American people*
 with their greed,
 their obscenities,
 their narcissistic self-absorption?

Yes, Mother, I remember.

I remember, I remember, I remember, I

Remember, you are not an American; you are Vietnamese.
The Americans do their own things for their own reasons; do
not follow. I am your Me, your mother. Do not listen to the
American children at school. Listen to me...

As a young child I listened.

As a preteen I began to dissent.

Fresh out of high school, I ran away.

Now I'm nearing twenty, and I'm trying to listen again
 to the echoes of your overbearing doctrine

as it reverberates in the tunnels of my memory.

I want to listen.

I want to understand.

Mother,

You were formerly simple to me,
 but now I'm beginning to see the firework beauty within you.
 And when I consider what guilt you must feel toward me,
 guilt in recalling
 how ugly you presented yourself to me,
 so repulsive that your five children now frown
 and outright refuse to comfort your outstretched arms,
 I struggle.
 Why didn't you embrace us before?
 Why now?
 I want to slap you
 and disrespect you
 and strangle you
 as I ask you why, why, why must you confuse me so?

Me will you hold me? No
 Mommy, am I a good girl? No.
 Mother, may I?

- Kim Vang



Gar Willard
Untitled
oil on paper
128" x 48"



Gar Willard
Untitled
oil on paper
33" x 22"

My bed sniffled as I abandoned it
 I dressed
 wearing Fatigue's poorly fitting garments
 Sleep had neglected to rejuvenate
 Hovering warm pouches of morning mist
 lingered over damp sidewalks
 A squirrel stood
 erect
 Its tail quaked twice
 then remained static
 It looked with possessed-
 romantic dark sight
 observing me with human suspicion
 Two others raced across my path
 Came to a halt
 Faced face to face
 Then wrestled until Play scurried away
 I yawned and walked on.

That day
 impregnated with many scenes within
 its infinite number of contracting bellies
 born the tragedy of a beautiful butterfly
 winking its billion-eyed wings at the
 handsome and flexing bold brass Sun
 The simple spectacle had touched
 an elaborate web as if only to see
 what its silvery steel strength felt like
 A spider boldly leaped upon
 The creature with contemptuous speed
 as if no one watched
 A piercing took place next.
 And then--all eyes shut
 Nothing as
 the spider spun and went on insatiably
 Flashes of brilliant crimson and emerald

Ether

hid behind prosaic gray strands
 A brick came to mind
 But Sleep
 with Its ethereal hands
 beckoned with a seduction foreign to lovers
 offering far more pleasure than freeing
 the creature from the entanglement
 of many-legged Death
 So I yawned and carried on.

A hummingbird, variegated in color,
 caught my eye as I sat at lunch
 I thought about my Bed
 its position
 me lying
 resting like Love and Hate in
 the chiral but identically tasked
 hands of Fate
 Its wings moved sharply
 but its body remained fixed
 as its needled shaped mouth tenderly
 borrowed floral humor from a passionate
 purple bloom
 I yawned and ate on.

Returning to my room
 opening my door
 a coolness gently greeted me
 like a voluptuous, obese lover
 My bed
 Whom I had estranged
 lay also obediently open to Sleep's will
 I undressed as if undressing were to breathe
 Sleep reached for my hand
 I remembered you
 I closed my eyes
 but jilted Sleep.

-Mims Rouse



Randy Gilmore
Parsnips
oil on paper
96" x 48"

Aftershock of Conversation With Orion At 10:36 p.m.

I've been raped.
 Some man came to me
 And raped my mind.
 (Like his friend raped my heart. . .)
 I'm sobbing now, hopelessly,
 Because he tore open my mind
 And thrust Truth and Ultimates
 Into it.
 And my virgin mind
 Screamed, because it was waiting
 For the right time
 The right moment.
 But the man ground his knowledge
 Into my head, which bled
 From its loss of innocence.
 He left then, quietly.
 I don't think he understood what he
 Had done.
 And I fell on my bed
 And cried.
 And now, two minutes later,
 I am going mad.
 Because, at eighteen, I was doing
 So well, enlightenment
 Was dabbing itself on me, sweetly.

I had two more lives to go
 Before I became a prophet;
 Before I became an angel;
 Before God knew me well enough
 To speak through me.
 It's all shattered now,
 As I look around me
 And see that everything
 Is everything else
 Which is everything.
 On and on and on
 Until my mind screams.
 And yes, I do understand Infinity.
 And understanding instantly drives you
 insane,
 Because you can't see the end
 But you look anyway, and your eyes melt
 With your mind.
 I am huddled on the floor
 Rocking, rocking, then freeze
 Because rocking is Energy.
 And I try to stop my heart beating
 Because beating hearts are Energy.

And I try to stop myself
 Because I am Energy.
 And I want to be gone.
 No Heaven, no other life
 But Gone, utterly.
 I do not want to exist.
 In any form, in any way.
 And I cry harder, and rock
 Because I am Energy
 And I cannot be created or destroyed.
 And I beg God, Please, this once,
 Let this Energy be destroyed.
 Let it stop existing.
 Let it not be.
 You can do anything
 So, You can obliterate and erase
 Energy.
 And my teeth bite into my lip
 And I scream because
 God is Energy;
 And as it cannot be created or destroyed
 It also cannot create or destroy itself.
 And god is struck worthless.
 And I can't ever make another wish
 Because no wish comes before this one.
 And I can never believe in magic

Because magic, like god, like every
 God-damned thing in Infinity
 Is Energy.
 And I am nothing but That.
 I am plain, and uniform, and worthless.
 And Energy is nothing to me, always has been.
 And so everything I have ever loved
 Is worthless, and I do not love it anymore.
 And so this, my writing, I do not love.
 And so this, my last love, dies.
 It is not destroyed,
 It just becomes
 Energy.

-Haley Hoekstra



Shawn Simon

Difference as Difference

mixed media

48" x 30" x 5.5"



Shawn Simon, **A Selectivity, Five** photograph, 8" x 10"

Small Hope Poem

Pale world
in gray
color me
today.

-Sara Feldman

Typical Depression Poem

Light sucked
through a straw
and blown across the room
leaks into
cracks in the floor
and dampens
my day
with its disappearance
and stain of reminder
that what was once there
vanished

-Sara Feldman

In the Dream

I ask if you are happier
in your new life
than you had been with me;

you say yes.
I cry heartbrokenly
while bearing your clothes
in solemn state to a
bin on the street.
I toss in my armful's
offering of familiar
socks and shirts and pants,

which lie uninhabited and
disjointed.
I look down and mourn.
The tears sting and heal,
then stop abruptly --

as, terrified,
I spot
among your things
a shirt of my father's

-Kathy Bailey

We Flew Over Texas in Ten Seconds Flat

Counting dreams.
One two three (Steps come easy as he)
I wonder at the Drive-By Haley Drop-Off
And laugh a silver laugh
Catch it in my mouth, taste my laugh
It is more beautiful than his,
Which I have eaten raw before.
So sweet and soft, and I look at my face
It is my face I want to marry, not his.
I am so silver shimmer. So holy.
Have you ever seen such loveliness?
Oh to be my dreams, to wear each one
Like a fairy dress, and dance.
I could do it, I could sing my dreams.
She knows what I could do with my laugh
My face.
My song.
And so do I.
I know what miracles lay
In my breast.
I can feel every heartbeat saying
"Beauty-beauty-beauty, "
Beauty is as beauty does, and I do.
I am a glorious rainfall, I am.
I am a special flower.
I am a precious glass figurine.
And I know that I am complete in myself
Without another to make me whole.
Because I see the breathtaking majesty
Inside of me,
And I only want those
Who see it too.

-Haley Hoekstra



John Drum
Forgetting Five
 cast stone
 18" x 17" x 2"



John Drum
Forgetting Six
 cast stone
 23" x 23" x 5"



John Drum, **Emergence and Disappearance**, cast stone installation

Thoughts on a Raspberry Chick and About Bolts of Fine Fabric...

This chick—
 She dyed her hair raspberry
 and “accidentally” spilled bleach on her shirt
 Because she was weird.
 (I say she conformed to nonconformity.)
 Her walk was a shuffle,
 as if her round-toed sneakers were still bound together
 by a plastic price tag
 Because she looked cute.
 (And she knew it.)
 She didn’t talk; she jabbered on
 with a baby’s squeak
 and faked a child’s enthusiasm.
 (Her essence was that of a Fisher-Price toy.)
 She perused the local five-and-dime shops
 out of pretentiousness, not necessity
 and declared the next day at school,
 “See this new outfit here? A buck fifteen.”
 (I applaud your freedom from materialistic values.)
 On days she wore no makeup
 and dressed in a tee and faded jeans,
 she lazily boasted of how comfortable she felt.
 (Comfortable—and downright ugly.)
 She believed in the power of the crystal
 and played with Ouija boards religiously,
 mindlessly chanting to appear gothic.
 (She reminded me of a green elf then.)
 For status she dated a member of a trendy band;
 She was his biggest fan,
 yet she encroached on other male no-trespassing zones
 Because she subscribed to “free love.”
 (Woodstock missed ya’, babe.)
 She sauntered barefoot now and then
 and attended backyard poetry readings
 Because she was so in-touch with nature.

(If Emerson could just see her now.)
 She spoke of Warhol's pop-art
 and of Joplin
 and her other idolatries
 while sipping cappuccino at downtown jazz clubs.
 (Cultured, classy, and only sixteen!)

This chick—
 This phony chick—
 I want to rip out her mid-parted, scraggly hair
 and slap some pink into her ghastly (natural) pallor.
 And if I did, I swear
 she'd wait 'til a flock of her disciples
 surrounded her like maggots feeding on rotting flesh
 to pour out her dramatic woes.

I'm sorry.

There's not much I despise more than phoniness.

This is the part of me that moans and loathes.

It's unattractive, I know.

My mother and my father would frown if they knew this side of me.

Frown with an abrupt (my mother) or a slow and disappointed (my father)
 shake of the head.

I am not a jolly, fat Buddha, bronzed and to be revered at my parents' religious shrine.

Neither am I the serene and meditative Maitreya, who sits above Buddha.

I am an imported bolt of fine Oriental silk that has been patterned, fitted,

and adjusted to the curve of a Westerner's body.

But I can also be ripped, resewn, and rehemmed, as I've now discovered.

Pseudo-Neo-Hippychicks don't always have to be hated.

They can always simply be frowned upon with an Asian shake of the head.

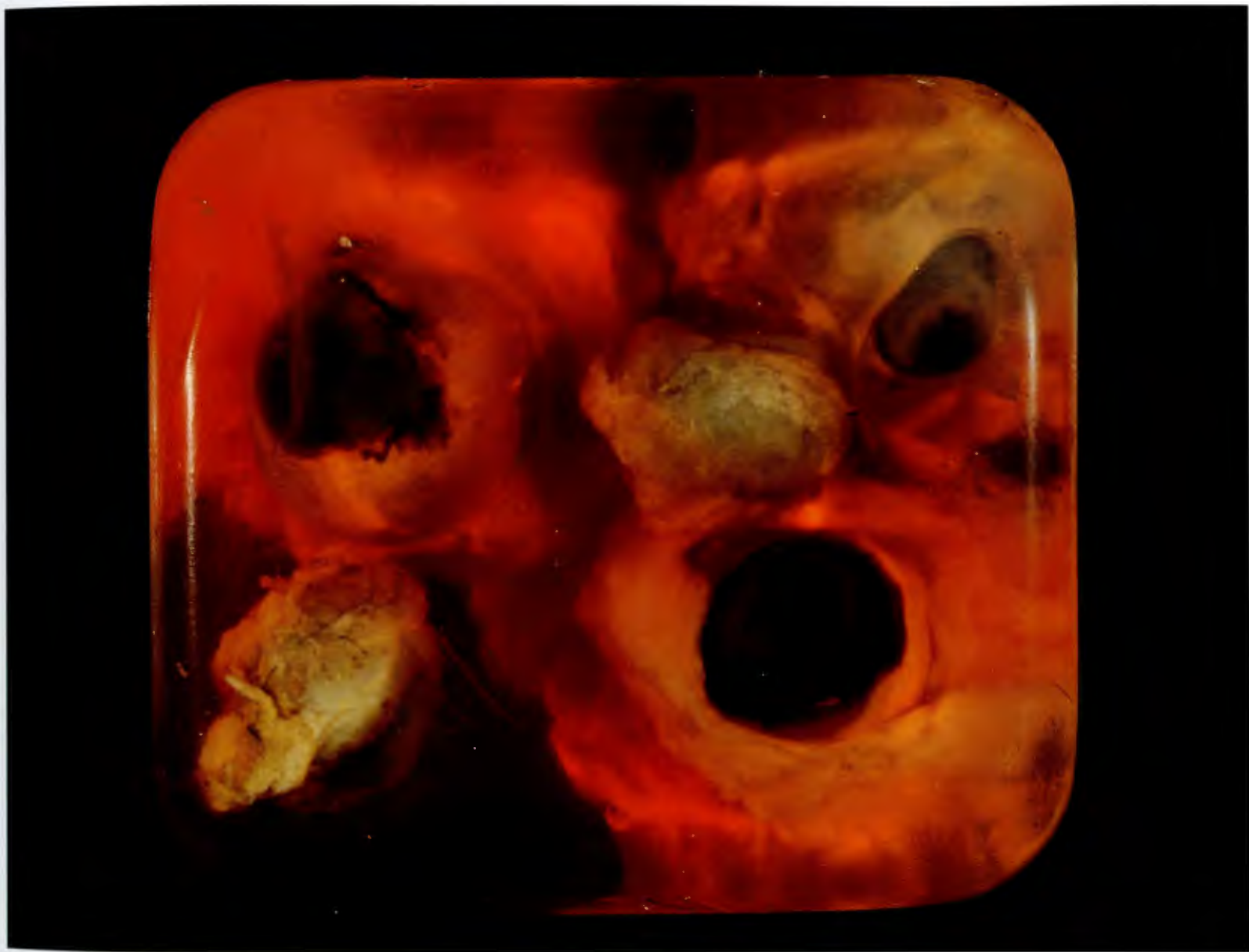
And then disregarded and forgotten...

-Kim Vang



John Drum
Winged Spirit Totem
 mixed media
 12" x 15" x 8"

Opposite:
 Jessica Westbrook
Untitled
 (jello and cow eyes)
 8" x 6" x 8"



Valediction: of Wooing

Let not your mind
 Thus dominate your sport. Leave mind to me
 Whose passions have been cramped. You can not prey
 Upon my reason with intent to sway
 My intellect; that rude and feeble kind
 Of logic spent
 Is wholly bent
 On commanding its influence with proof
 Of it. You swear that you are made of truth.
 Yet, I believe that you, for all your ruth,
 Do lie to garner what you wish were free.

Do not engage
 In logical debate and barter for
 My time or passions; they're already bought,
 And your coarse discourse, it is only thought.
 True affection and commitment wage
 A better war,
 Increase the score,
 And yield my heart to thine. In these I trust,
 Alone, not in a young man's fervent lust.
 Show me your fervent love and then I must
 Return that sweeter passion all the more.

-Teresa Greenlees

April 19, 1995

They happened the same day.

When I began to wake
 from the blast and the shock,
 and noticed the date,
 and checked the clock,

I saw that other hearts
 and other lives
 had been blown apart.
 I knew then the loss I called mine

may have hurled me away from everything safe
 and changed the landscape; but the world went on,

and somewhere in it
 at any given time
 someone was buying
 a better world for himself
 with other people's hearts
 and other people's lives.

So I make myself feel blessed,
 and start to rebuild,
 grateful to be spared
 the things I find in
 the rubble -- especially
 the knowledge that trouble
 and pain are relative.

... and I do have to say that I'll never forget
 they happened the same day,
 and I'll always consider you
 my very own, personal
 Timothy McVeigh -

blowing everything up and walking away.

-Kathy Bailey

Hey Babe

It wasn't *my* fault.
 Women are tigers you see—
 ruff their fur up the wrong way,
 and they'll claw your eyes out,
 drown them with vinegar,
 and eat 'm for lunch
 with a bit of *caviar* on the side.

And for God's sake, what did I do?

I turned my eyes
 on some slick pussy cat's tail.
 That's all.

I mean. . . I *mean*. . .
 I'm standing around
 getting through my day job—
 pumping gas
 easing the nozzle into the tank,
 wiping the thick greasy stench on
 my jeans and
 whammo.

This mamma,
 I mean *MAMMA*,
 saunters in and shakes that ass,
 mmmm....*that* ass!
 till I'm glad
 I put that jell stuff
 in my hair.
 Sloppy goo
 but makes me *slick*
 and gets women tremblin'.

So anyway, I say "Hey babe."
 That's all.
 Nothing more to it.

And then the snorting stallion comes
 pawing up the parking lot
 spittin' his juice all over
 a respectable business,
 you know?

And he begins to strut *his* ass
 staking out territory
 like some mongrel mutt
 pissing all over the place.

Then with all his pissin' and spittin'
 over with, he turns to me
 sliding up his expensive shades,
 flexing a tricep in the process
 and says "You."

But I'm in control
 I'm cool.

So I spit.
 I wipe my heel in the ground
 swirling the saliva and the greasy oil tar,
 and respond simply enough:
 "Watch your girl, buddy."

And then I wink.

"Tell her to pull that leather scrap thing
 down a bit,
 so us poor fellas
 don't turn our innocent eyes
 in the wrong direction."

You know, you *know* ?
 And he takes it all personal like.
 And gets my boss all *pissy*.
 And gets me *fired*.

And why is that?

If I was one of those Ken dolls,
 one of those testosterone loaded bastards,
 she'd be coy.
 She'd smile,
 and be flouncin' that ass
 just a little bit harder!

-Mairi Beautyman



Ezara Genito
Untitled
pinhole photograph
3.5" x 4.75"

Beef Jerky Heart

Why you want to go and chew on my beef jerky heart
 Snapping me in two like a Slim Jim at the Quickie Mart
 like a Twinkee without its filling
 like milk without an expiration date
 shelved and unwanted I await my fate
 smoked up like a pack of Marlboros
 pissed away like a six-pack of beer
 Sinatra was wrong, it hasn't been a good year
 As unlucky as a lotto ticket
 As toxic as malt liquor
 I'm a strung out clerk with a price gun and sale stickers
 Why you want to go and leave my heart with a hole
 As I search the aisles of the 7-11 in my soul
 You were as cold as a Slurpie and as tasty as a Sweettart
 So why you want to chew on my beef jerky heart

-Matt Schmidt

Chicken Little

chicken little, chicken little
 the sky is falling
 but don't let them
 remove your head from your body
 for that is when you lose your soul
 pour me another bottle of vodka
 as i relate to you my glory
 this stool feels clean
 without the usual clutter of peanuts
 and aging leather
 i lost part of myself
 that day the sky fell
 people ran and gave up on me
 they ran because they didn't
 want to lose their heads
 however a few
 a small few
 brought me an umbrella

-Jonathon Olgeirson



Adam Trobridge, **SEX AND PREGNANCY (series)** photographs, 9" x 13"



ORANGES

The oranges fell from her lap as she started to cry. The long hot day at the fruitmarket suddenly seemed so meaningless. As the fruit at her feet blurred into an orange sunset, she realized that she had come to hate citrus. Were it not these very same amorphous, sinister globs that had cost her her own true chance to be free; oh, life.

"Now, they'll bruise, you know," her husband said indifferently as he took the money of a customer. The sunken customer seemed very annoyed that these people would dare make small talk and prolong this intolerable transaction.

"Oranges don't bruise, you idiot," she answered, choking back the sobs that threatened to erupt from her chest. The customer again looked up from the solitary ground he had been staring at and bit his lip.

"Could you please save this marital spat for another time? I'm in a bit of a hurry." The manner with which he snapped even frightened him, but he was too nervous about how much longer he could wear this mask of tolerance toward humanity without cracking up.

"You've got some nerve, pal, talking to my wife that way," the husband warned. But the husband was tired, almost too tired to even make the attempt to defend his wife.

"Sorry. . . long day," the customer apologized, his hollow cheeks coloring over his outburst. The wife, the supposed gauntlet, picked at a scab on her leg, now oblivious.

The husband watched his wife and then turned to the customer, "Here, just take your peaches and go."

"But I bought. . . oranges," murmured the customer, already distracted by a cloud shaped like Franklin Roosevelt.

"Peaches bruise. . .," the wife intoned, but she hadn't noticed the cloud.

Contemplating whether or not to point out its oddly familiar shape to the couple, the customer's eyes followed the course of the wandering cloud. The husband shifted from foot to foot, almost overwhelmed by this buzzing silence and stillness. The customer directed his gaze back to the ground and mumbled something to himself. Maybe something about Yalta or the New Deal.

"What was that?!" the husband snapped, noticing the customer's shabby clothing. His wife coughed and imagined a parade of mimes.

"Nothing. . . look, can I just get my peaches?" the customer asked in a tone of resignation. It all seemed just so familiar, like a Beckett play.

"But you paid for oranges," the husband reminded him.

"Peaches bruise," the wife said, only slightly more audible than the last time.

"Would you just shut up!" the husband yelled at her almost defensively.

The customer didn't notice this time; he was looking to his right at all of the chatting families and how quickly they were able to come and go with their fruit. Following the customer's gaze, the husband knelt down and frantically began to pick up the oranges scattered around his wife's bandaged feet. The wife was too listless to be of any aid; she had even forgotten about these, the objects of her orange despair.

"Surely, you're not giving me those. They'll be all bruised before I can even get them home," the customer said impatiently. The wife's quick smile was almost imperceptible.

"Weren't you listening, pal? Peaches bruise. Oranges don't," the husband reminded.

The customer rubbed his wrist and sighed like Charlie Brown would. "Oh, what's the difference, really?"

The husband saw he had left a few oranges lying in the overbearingly green grass and shuddered. Noticing the odd change in mood between the couple, the customer stopped rubbing his wrist and shoved his grimy hands into the depths of his coat pockets.

The husband watched the customer's hands slide into his pockets and smugly recalled that he had a wife, and pockets as well.

"What about those oranges. . . over there?" the wife asked, cruelly returning her husband's attention to the fruit peeking out at him from behind the grass. She luxuriated at the onrush of energy she gained from her husband's odd misfortune.

"Forget them. They're no good either," he answered hastily. He arched an eyebrow toward his wife and wondered why she looked so European.

"They look fine to me," she said as a taunting smile stole over her face.

The customer then quickly stuck his tongue out and shut his eyes, as he felt terribly left out by the facial mannerisms of the husband and wife. All of a sudden, an idea occurred to him through the clinging haze of the humid marketplace.

The husband, who had always been used to vacant lulls and hazes, was momentarily struck by the sudden look of inspiration on the face of the formerly dull-eyed customer. With a sense of deliberation, the customer walked over to the scattering of oranges in the straining grass. The wife became excited as she imagined the customer smashing the oranges and scattering the pulp all over the repugnantly green grass. Instead, he bent his ragged frame over to pick up one of the oranges.

The husband regarded this new development with casual indifference and soon became distracted by a little child's brilliantly colored lollipop. His head and shoulders hunched over the glowing fruit, the customer began to peel away its firm outer skin.

"It's funny," the wife whispered, "how when you sell oranges for so long, they become an icon--you forget that they can be peeled and eaten."

The customer stepped from the arc of orange peels cupping his feet and offered a jewel-like quarter to the wife. The husband still considered the lollipop but the wife's face lit up with a childlike, firefly glow. Staring up at the customer's blank face, she accepted the fruit and bit shyly into its bleeding softness. She felt as happy as someone who had just made 1,000 sandcastles. The lollipop forgotten, the husband quietly asked the customer for a quarter of the orange.

"Even these oranges will one. . . day. . . be gone," said the customer, his face visibly falling. Yet, he shook himself and gently placed a section of the inviting fruit into the husband's calloused palm.

"It's only an orange," uttered the husband, "yet at this moment it seems as if it might be the key to all my happiness, but

that's dumb." Then, he looked down at his wife's beaming mouth from which drops of juice slid down her chin.

His eyes widened, "Maybe. . . there. . . is something more and I've. . . just been blind. . . wipe your mouth." He held the orange piece up to the sunlight for a second and then slowly put the whole of it into his parched mouth.

"Yes. . . these rubes in their stucco houses...they always love their empty pleasures and oranges. . .," thought the customer as he bit his nails for lack of anything better to do. Hesitantly, the wife rose from her fruit crate and made a gesture to the customer, encouraging him to eat one of the last two quarters.

"Thank you, thank you indeed," purred the customer, "but oranges are nothing to me now--sawdust, stardust, the sweet taste passed long ago."

As if possessed, the wife snatched the piece from his left hand and forced it into his mouth. The husband was again pleasantly surprised by his wife's newfound forcefulness, yet turned to the customer and muttered something about all revelations being cliches. Doubly shocked by the woman's forwardness and the brilliant sweetness of the fruit, the customer only nodded vaguely.

"The acid stings but only a bit, I look at the both of you, and I think, foolishly--for a second, that we could all be wingless butterflies," implored the customer.

The couple nodded in genuine agreement as the three of them stood their silently, looking into each other's faces for the first time. Each thought of how ugly they all looked, but it made them happy, as they knew that God was hiding and there was no one to look after them but the oranges.

"What will we do with the last piece?" asked the wife.

The customer momentarily contemplated the orange piece lying in his right hand. He then tossed it into the tall, grotesque grass waving at the three of them.

"For the oranges of tomorrow," he laughed self-mockingly as he disappeared into the lukewarm waves of market-goers.

-Sheila Scoville and Matt Moyer



Randy Gilmore, **Pentheus Dying**, intaglio print, 24" x 12"



Zofia Nowicki
Above The Marsh
oil on canvas
30" x 24"

Origins: The Creation of Man

In the translation of the Bible,
a grave error occurred
because of an overtired monk.
It seems that Eve was not
formed from the rib of Adam
after all. Indeed, God
selected Eve's already-living
but unnecessary rib--
plucked it out easier than they did Cher's,
(thus performing the first blood-less surgery)—
held it in his hand,
a bone green banana,
clumsily stuck it on the first man's pelvis.
Adam, immediately coming to life,
looked like he was stoned on reefer
and stumbled about in a moronic way.
He glared down at her rib. The thing
curved upward
much like a divining rod,
responding to a woman
instead of water
as if wanting to go home.
At inopportune times
like a purply earthworm
it blindly asserted itself
automatically and
always
quite independently
of the man's brain.

-Debbie Mikuta



Amber Dye, **Red Corner**, mixed media, 38" x 30"

The Painter Lady

Toward the end of her fruitful career
she resented the intrusion of the brush
more than ever before.
She was now unable to endure even that much separation:
each warm canvas drew her
 lured her
 physically pulled her closer
 nearer
 tighter.

And so it began.
At first, only fingertips tentatively touched,
hesitantly receiving circles of color,
testing the oils like lips at a spoon of hot soup
like legs settling into a steamy bath
like divers descending to briny depths.
Before long, she knew the colors
simply
by touch, based on their texture
scent
temperature.

"Lila. Lila? Lila!" they would call from downstairs
 ignored
 unheeded
 unnoticed.

Her door was locked and her hair and hands were wild,
wild as she worked like a turbine seething
creating
outpouring.
Here, she used the flattened palm of her hand,
there, her index finger in a circular motion,
next, the tip of an unbroken nail,
then, a quick dab from her knuckles.
Her painted hands and arms bore variegated markings
rainbow tattoos
colorful scars.

Up to her elbows in an untamed, uproarious flight, a primal connection with her art: her eyes alight with energy, her hands and arms flapping and tapping, vigorously working with sweeping body strokes, back and forth in a frenzy she moved across the canvas, a windmill whipping and whirling, twisting and twirling.

She danced her paintings.

Only on some days was she aware
of teary eyes and skin that was red
raw
cracked

"Lila," the doctor cautioned-
as doctors always do-
"you must stop this."

On and on
she painted and painted
Unable to help herself
 contain herself
 control herself.

In the winter of the last year,
the fire ants began crawling further and further
up her fingertips toward her wrists and elbows.
Movement became increasingly painful and
difficult,
and the stairs became impossible
because of those fire ants
 that burning
 such tightness.

Soon she could no longer see,
capable only of distinguishing
people-shapes and windows and then just

contrasts of light and dark.
And so she took up the stale brush for a few days,
but it was too late
 useless
 moot.

She succumbed; those coverings,
 taurpaulins,
 shrouds
covered everything upstairs.

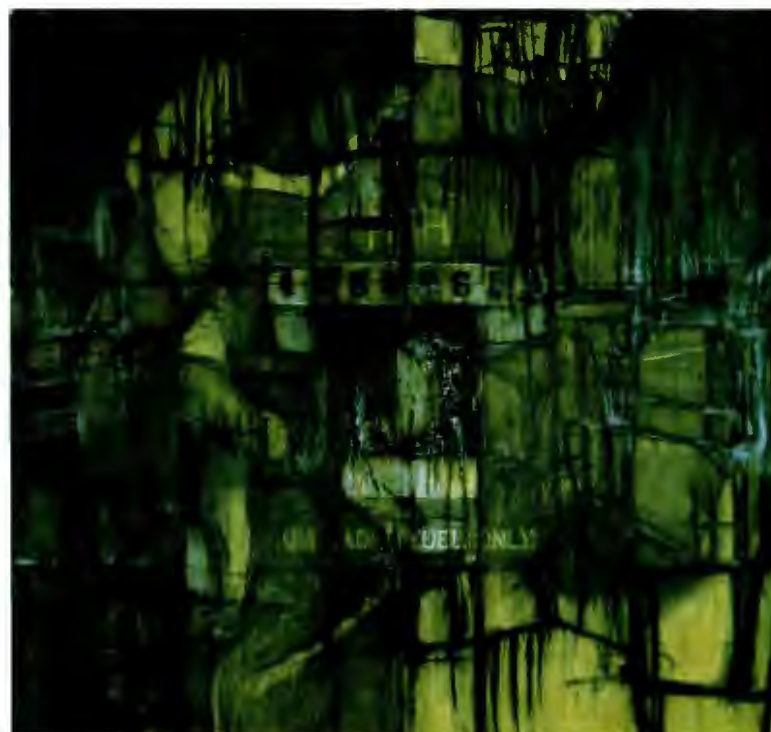
"How odd to cover unfinished
works on the easel as if covering
so many sleeping birds
for the night!" Lila only laughed when
everything was thus carefully blanketed.

A white smattering of tombstones.

-Debbie Mikuta



Amber Dye
Untitled (large face / white figure)
 mixed media
 82" x 75"



Amber Dye
Unleaded Fuel Only
 mixed media
 89" x 84"



Jessica
Westbrook
Mother
mixed media
24" x 24"



Jessica Westbrook
Wither
mixed media
24" x 24"

Sick

The small child watched coldly as his ice cream cone melted into nothingness on the hot summer sidewalk. But I need to tell you more than that. It was a vanilla chocolate swirl. Dipped in chocolate. His favorite. Yum.

I also need to tell you it was purchased at the Tastee Freeze on Artesia Blvd. About 1:45 p.m. Friday, August 3. Cerritos, CA. There was no indoor to The Freeze but the kitchen. For their customers they had round concrete tables. . .the kind you'd find at the beach with an umbrella stuck up out the middle of them. The tables had concrete slabs shaped like curved rectangles for seating. Scattered about on an outside patio, each little seating area probably looked like a miniature Stonehenge in all its glory from the perspective of a small animal or an insect. Anyway, The Freeze served great tostitos. Excellent ice cream. The ants especially loved it.

The ants liked the child's foot as well.

Once the child was in an airplane, and as it began its ascent he heard his father say, "Look...the people look like ants." Soon the airplane broke through the clouds. He saw a vast iridescent white plain. God lived here. The child looked around. No God in sight.

Maybe He's out today? He then understood how people must look to God. Well, the child imagined that if to God people look like ants, then to ants people must look like God. And besides, if you are going to imagine yourself as anyone, might as well be the best. Why stop at President or Astronaut? Let's play God. . .

The child had a special relationship with ants. He was an especially curious child. The small lot onto which his house had been crammed in his cookie-cutter subdivision had been transformed into a veritable garden of Eden. A small patch of grass made up the conventional part of the yard. Large steps of red bricks, about four foot across and two foot deep, climbed up toward the house between the grass and the driveway, with flower beds on either side of the brick steps. Little yellow flowers filled the flower beds, while rose bushes rose up from it like blooming Ashera poles. At the center of the yellow flowers hid curious little yellow spiders, who happened to prefer bees for breakfast, lunch and dinner. But, ants liked the little yellow spiders. And here is where the child comes in.

The sidewalk was the domain of the ants, as well as that netherworld border where lawn and sidewalk meet. It was simple,

really, from a scientific point of view. Just pick up spider. Then drop spider. Then watch ants eat spider. Yum. Variations could be made on this experiment. Pick up spider. Put spider in glass jar. Put ants in glass jar. Then watch ants eat spider. Yum.

Of course, variations were only limited by one's imagination, and this was an especially imaginative, bored child. Put spider in jar. Pick up magnifying glass. Focus sunlight on spider. Watch jar fill with smoke. Yum. Or, better yet, put spider in jar. Put dry leaves in jar. Focus magnifying glass on leaves. Watch smoke fill jar. Watch spider slowly asphyxiate. Yum.

If all this was too much trouble, he could simply turn his magnifying glass onto the ants. "Burn in Hell, minions, for my own good pleasure!" The child liked playing God. . .

Anyway, he learned in Holy Trinity Catholic Church that God could do anything. He would imagine what the experience would be like for the ants. He imagined they had some concept of Him. Maybe just a gargantuan hand, feeding them generously one moment, then frying them in an earthly Hell the next. He imagined they would be confused by these actions. He imagined they thought

they could, somehow, placate Him to gain some semblance of control over their lives and guide His, even His, actions. Ha! Anyone passing by would think Him strange for laughing out loud for no apparent reason. How little they knew! He imagined the ants would offer sacrifices, hold meetings, teach great things, but never once would they arrive at the truth about Him. He simply did what He felt, and never once noticed anything the ants did except at the moments when He was deriving His own sick pleasure from them.

The small child watched coldly as his ice cream cone melted into nothingness on the hot summer sidewalk. A teenage boy on a skateboard made him drop it. He heard the boy say, "Move it or lose it!" The boy looked up into the sky and saw storm clouds gathering on the horizon. He walked away from the ant feast. He didn't feel like playing God just then.

-Jim Rovira



Jessica Westbrook

Untitled

digital image
5" x 6"

Technological Existentialism

I wander numbly,
 Hungrily yearning,
 Needing assertion,
 And recognition of reality.

I seek transformation
 Into high frequency emissions.
 An ever expanding circle,
 Flying light speed.
 Landing
 Upon chrome trees.
 Traveling
 Through black wires.
 Transformed
 To three colors
 In two dimensions
 Upon a black screen
 For millions to see.

I am televised therefore I am.

-Jim Rovira

Albert

His fiddle is
 the only woman
 who can heave through him
 and not see death

he eats her music
 fingering the rusted dream apparatus
 milking her sweets

-Teresa Greenlees

The Mechanical Bell

The paramedics who delivered Bell to Rose's house received assistance from two neighborhood men to help hoist Bell's large body to the trailer's threshold. Bell's short, dense, frazzled hair sprang from her head as she remained still on the stretcher, clenching the left side of the pad with her good hand and distorting her face with a look of martyrdom. The stretcher rocked from side-to-side as the men positioned her to enter through the narrow doorway. They placed her in a hospital bed alongside the open window in Rose's compact living room, which was the only place large enough for the rusty mechanical contraption and its occupant. Bell could have received a new bed if she had paid her health insurance's deductible. "Ain't nut'in wrung with this one," Bell said once they placed her in the bed. She patted the bed with satisfaction as one would pat a cocker spaniel's head. Each paramedic attempted to inform Bell and Rose how inadequate the bed was with as much strain as it received. They avoided saying blatantly that Bell was too obese for such an unstable bed. "This thang was made when thangs was made good," Bell retorted, and waved them away.

Bell had suffered a stroke which resulted in the paralysis of the right side of her body and her having to reside with Rose, her daughter until William, her son, sent for her. After spending five weeks in the hospital, Bell was delivered to Rose's run down trailer. She lived with Rose because William, who lived in New Jersey, claimed he was still fixing up his condominium to accommodate her. While delivering Bell, one paramedic asked if she had anyone to help out. He had disregarded Rose's presence because he had immediately concluded that Rose's small, neat frame was too fragile to complete any task having to do with Bell's upkeep. Rose mentioned she worked as a nurse's aid and that she had hired a boy to help with the lifting. Her occupation assured him she knew how to handle dead weight. Rose had gotten her size from her father who was a short man with a small, tight build; the father and daughter could eat anything and not gain a pound. This annoyed Bell.

The first day, Bell lay naked beside the window with only a white cotton sheet tossed over her body. Rose had kept her mother undressed because Bell complained about the heat and she began to breathe heavily. Rose saw no other alternative. As Rose changed top linens for the night, she tossed the sheets over Bell's body, watching them stretch out across the bed and began drifting down over Bell and land easily, like cold air settling upon floor, disclosing Bell's bulky frame. As the sheets fell, it was as though they had landed over large rocks set in vague human configuration, the largest rock placed where the stomach should be and two large ones of equal size where the breasts should be. Bell and Rose had always shared a parasitic relationship. Rose, intimidated by her mother since childhood, had done and overdone things to please Bell. Once, when Bell was sick with the flu, Rose had soaked her mother's underwear in turpentine to cleanse them of embarrassing stains. Within a week, The chemicals had eaten Bell raw. Bell used this incident to perpetuate her idea that Rose tried to kill her. Bell mentioned each instance with sobs, more than often, followed by tears, while speaking over the phone with William. Bell would then put down the phone and recomposed herself instantly as if she were an actress and scenes had changed. Then, she looked at Rose with aversion and continued to stare at the wall.

Rose had moved the trailer onto Bell's property five years prior to her mother's arrival under the agreement she would pay Bell sixty-five dollars a week for allowing her to live on the property and to connect to her rickety, electrical water pump. For the first week the faucet ejaculated and sputtered out muddy water which later turned faint green and emitted a raw egg smell. Rose drank bottled water until the smell no longer bothered her. Bell had owned and run a cafe and bar during and after her husband's death. Bell's husband's death was tragic because he was dependent on her for his life. Bell would not withdraw enough money to have his tonsils removed; instead, she concocted a home remedy her mother had used; the potion had an

opposite effect, causing the toxins in his tonsils to buildup and to flow into his bloodstream where they poisoned his system. After the stroke, while in the recovery room, Bell sold the bar and adjoining cafe and placed all the money in the bank, designating William as beneficiary. She also steadily collected the sixty-five dollars a week from Rose for the usage of the land. Rose did not expect her to drop the rent. "How else she gonna pay for her medaseen," Rose explained to her friends who frowned when she told them the situation. She refrained from telling them about the two social security checks and disability check Bell received each month. Bell tended business as shrewdly from her bed as she had from the office she kept in the back of the cafe. Rose had not thought about how she could use the rent money had her mother decided to stop collecting it. She could have easily started payments on an air conditioner.

Rose work as a nurse's aid during the night at a close-by children's hospital which barely paid enough to feed them and pay the youth too. From eleven until seven she changed catheters, wiped off feces, administered enemas and changed beds for small children with strained, dazed faces. One boy, around age five, held an expression of awe at the ceiling as Rose entered with fresh linens. He stared as if he saw a huge circus floating above his bed. His expression failed to change as she performed the other more personal tasks. Rose had always found time to brush his hair during her rounds and plant a kiss on his forehead like chocolate mints placed on a hotel's bed pillow.

During the morning and afternoon, the stout boy arrived to help prop Bell to eat. Rose coached Bell to place her good arm around the boy's neck. After Bell did this, the boy pulled her forward while Rose, at the foot of The bed, wound The crank until the top half of the bed stood erect, Bell exposing her speckled chaffed back as she rested against the boy's shoulder. The youth allowed her to fall back easily in place. A trigger flickered on the side of his neck and her upper body crumbled into its usual limp position. The boy watched Bell as she began nursing the bad hand with the good one, opening up the dilapidated fingers one at a time as though she were gently unfolding the leaves of a cabbage. As she released each finger, it automatically bent back onto her pale white palm.

Bell had another ritual which the young boy thought was strange. "Why you do ya hand like that fa Mrs. Bell?" The youth would inquire while sitting near her bed in a dark, tattered chair observing her. Bell would be resting in bed upright, holding the limp arm in the air by its wrist; the drawn-up fingers had a neat flower bud look; her arms made a crooked inverted V above her head. She stared at the wall, intentionally ignoring The boys question. Otto keep the blud cirquelatin," Bell replied finally. The boy had forgotten The question and simply nodded his head. Bell was extremely bothered by his company, but was satisfied that he was cheap.

Bell had talked to her son over the phone while in the hospital. William had a large frame like his mother with a small head and pointed ears and small beady eyes and an upturned nose like a pig. His eyes were made small by his pudgy pink cheeks. He had short fat pink fingers that made them appear as wreaths of sausages when he wore rings. Bell told, what looked more like a sow than a man, The nasty conditions Rose would keep her in.

Since the beginning of Bell's sickness, William had promised to fly Bell up to New Jersey where she would have her own room. William pilfered money from Bell by mentioning work he needed done on the house before she could move in. Bell began relishing the day she would leave to live with him. He had become her savior, and Bell was glad she had it arranged that she would leave him everything when she died. She said many times that she could not trust Rose to keep everything intact. She often said that "Rose could not keep a thought goin if it whatn't fa me."

"Will'yem," she said, "could keep sand still durin a win stem." She also liked that William had learned to beat preachers back as if they were buzzards, unlike Rose who actually paid tithes and gave donations when she had it to give. William and Bell could smell pastors miles away. Bell had said that preachers teach you to pray with your eyes closed so they could rob you blind. She was so conscious of this idea that she had resolved to always keeping her left eye open when Rose had deacons and pastors visit to pray over her large invalid body.

Bell divulged to Rose that she could make Pastor Walters, a more frequent visitor, a three piece suit made of hundred dollar bills if she chose to and still have enough money to dress his

illdressed deacon board. Pastor Walters was a tall, disproportionate, pot-bellied man with an intensely red, fat neck. Rolls of fat stood transfixed between the base of his cranium and his shoulder. "I could make a cummerbund of money to go round his big 'ale stomach a thousand times." Bell then smiled, displaying her naked pink gums, unclothed with her dentures which soaked in bleach and water in the window near her bed.

On The second day of Bell's stay with Rose, Paster Walters came to visit her. "Suster Burches, did you know that after Chrice died, to keep the ministry going, many of the people led by Peta sold a lot of what they had so that it could be distibited among the others," Pastor Walters, questioned. The topic of conversation was tithing. He picked this topic because he knew Bell and her husband well for their avarice, and he did not want their frugality in this world to keep it out of the one to come. Bell's husband, as a donation to Temple of Faith of Atlanta, Georgia, had given them fifty Coca-Cola bottles he had stacked behind his house when they asked for an offering. Bell's stance on anything dealing with money was that she did not have any, so don't ask. "And did you know that Anias and Sapphira was struck dead when they lied and said that they di'in keep some of what they sold," the pastor continued.

Bell, already propped up in bed, stared at the wall that stood near her aching foot. the weaker foot was smooth and more slender than the functional one. Its toes seemed to collapse upon one another like dominoes, all her toes leaned toward the largest one which stuck abnormally erect, as though someone pulled it by an invisible string. "Bet there was no Burches there," Bell retorted with a pinkish smile.

"I bet there was none neither" the pastor said, reluctantly, more agitated that Bell would not realize and relinquish her parsimonious behavior than that he would not receive an offering for his visit. There was a pause. He then took the kerchief from his pocket and began patting his meaty forehead with it.

"They was struck dead?" Bell asked; still preoccupied with the picture she had created in her mind, he had delivered these words with a tinge of sobriety, more sobriety than she had shown during his entire visit.

"Dead. Instintly. The man first and then the woman."

"For not giving up all their money?"

"Gnaws. I won't say that's why they died. I'd say fa lylin bout what they had, and not paying tithes seconds."

A split second chill undulated through Bell's body. She shivered once and The conviction she received from the tidbit fled. It had clinched her like a spasm and then subsided. "I still say I ain't got no money," she resolved with such conviction that her eyes pierced through The pastor and at the wall behind him.

The pastor rose from the rickety velveteen chair near her bed, it whining as he stood, and knelt beside her bed and began praying. She kept one eye open as he cried out, "Lawd."

The bed fell back with a loud clap as Bell screamed one high pitched rabbit cry before her head turned to one side with her eyelids thrown wildly open. The crank had broken. Pastor Walters pressed his head firmly against the bed without looking up.

-Mims Rouse

Technology

Drills bite and gouge as earth gives way
In chunks, in pits—we hollow out a core
Whose fillers build our monuments,
Feed our machine, and fill our store.

We sleep and wake to the interminable hum
Of boring parts and grinding tools;
Cold steel frames our kingdom come
That cares for wealth and fossil fuels.

But more than this.
You, our new machine:
Reborn, rebuilt, and built upon;
Our gears, burden, and waking dream,
Our unflagging vision of endless dawn,

Because of you, a path has been laid;
We fly to ends of earth and thought,
Lives are saved, prolonged, and made—
Enslaved, enforced, and dearly bought.

We pay the cost,
Desperate to oil the machine (we fear the rust);
We say the lost
Will pave the way for future lives, and trust
In the belief that this progress is good,
That somehow the product outweighs the means,
Though we must often ask ourselves (or should),
What unseen hand drives our machines?

-Angela Sucich

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the Literary and Fine Arts Magazine
of Rollins College is now accepting submissions
in art, photography, and writing for the Spring 1997 issue.

Guidelines and conditions for contribution:

1. Submissions must be accompanied by a sheet listing the titles of the works, the artist's name, address, phone number, and a short bio. If you are not a Rollins student, please enclose a SASE for the return of your work. The deadline for non-Rollins submissions is December 10, 1996. The deadline for Rollins submissions is January 1, 1997. Please limit your submissions in one medium to 10 items. Publication is scheduled for mid April 1997.
2. Artwork of all sizes may be submitted.
3. Written works may include short stories, poetry, essays, or other short creative pieces. Written submissions must be typed. There is no set size limit, but size limitations on the magazine prevent the inclusion of very large works. A 1500 word limit prose submissions is suggested as a guideline.
4. Works will be judged by appropriate staff members and editors. Works that are accepted will be retained until the publication of the magazine. Copyright is retained by the contributor. **Brushing** reserves the right to reproduce visual and written contributions in appropriate productions. Payment is 1 copy.

Brushing is a non-profit creative forum intended for both beginning and accomplished artists in the written and visual fields. While a large portion of the magazine is intended for student publication, we welcome submissions from other universities and the artistic community at large. Simultaneous submissions and previously published works are accepted. Experimental poetry is accepted, though not the focus of the magazine.

Brushing is an open, liberal magazine; however, our goal is to present the most creative, artful work possible. Submissions of an extreme or pointlessly offensive or dogmatic nature are discouraged.

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Any comments or concerns may be addressed to the attention of the Editors, or call at (407)646-1802. Your call will be returned as quickly as possible.

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