
The Bayou Review

Literary & Artistic Journal



The University of Houston - Downtown / Fall 1997 - Spring 1998

the bayou review

**One Main Street, Room 250-S
Houston, Texas 77002**

phone: 713.221.8260 fax: 713.221.8119

email: bayoureview@dt.uh.edu

w e b s i t e : w w w . d t . u h . e d u

**Production, Illustration
Design & Layout**

M o n i c a E . K r e s s m a n

Editorial Staff

Fall

Monica Kressman - Editor

Suz Rosenberg - Assistant Editor

Spring

Lee Anne Masin - Editor

Brenda Manak - Assistant Editor

Faculty Advisor

Dr. Sergio Rizzo

Fall 1997, Spring 1998

This issue was designed on a PC using Pagemaker 6.5 and Photoshop 4.0. Body text is Souvenir Lt Bt with display in Architecture. Spot varnish applied to cover image. Interior pages output at 1200 dpi to film on Accuset by ImageSet, Inc., with a 133-line screen. Printed on a Miehle offset press by Industrial Printers.

© 1998 by **The Bayou Review**

Rights revert back to authors after publication.






**S u b -
m i t**

Forms available from **The Bayou Review, 250-S**

The Bayou Review is a student publication of the University of Houston - Downtown. The journal welcomes poetry, prose, art and photography submissions from the students faculty, staff and alumni of UHD. Submissions should be no longer than 1,000 words.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Poetry

Page		
3	Millineum	Prof. Pete Lunde
4	Ligature	Prof. Pete Lunde
5	Turtle Dance	Prof. Pete Lunde
6	What Is Life?	Lyndon B. Greene
7	Rest in Love	April J. Gazmen
9	An Angel in Disguise	Nilesh Parson
11	 Kaddish for Allen Ginsberg	Irma Methard
13	 I	Carrie Vicars
15	 Jesse	Lee Anne Masin
16	Sleep	Catherine Woods
18, 19	Juarez Morning	Carrie Vicars
23	Cinco de Mayo	Lee Anne Masin
25	 A Prayer for a Land Unknown	Long Nguyen
26, 27	Downtown	Virginia Elizondo
33	Rape for the Nineties	Ta'mara Hall
35	Nothing	Lee Anne Masin
39	 Irony	Obinna C. Ilochonwu
41	I Wish That I Had Known	Brenda Manak
47	Sleeping Kin	Monica T. Villa
53	Stairwell	Julie Hernandez
55	Disquieting Ripples	Kristin Harrelson
57	Reflections	Stephanie Konvicka
58	The Morning After	Barbara Kridner
59	What Time Is It?	Deborah Rose

Prose


20-21	Remembering an Event	But Fan Chan
29	10/15/96	Tommy Thomas
30-32	Today	Radames Ortiz






Winners receive a cash prize award of \$50 for best of selection.
Fall (151 entries) and Spring (50 entries) selections were chosen separately.

Prose


- Continued -

36-37		The Color of Dirt	Stephanie Konvicka
42-43		Keepsakes	Stephanie Konvicka
44-45		Coming Home	Barbara Marino
49		Interview with the Devil	Antonio Soria, Jr.
51		A Meteoric Bombardment of Atoms	Radames Ortiz

Photography

Cover		The Child	Michael J. Devereux
1		Waterfalls	Gergana Spassova Angnelova
2		Elation	Ken White
4		Mystery	Margarita Soto
8		Nigel Pass, Alberta	Steven J. Kivett
10		Universal Movement	W. S. Little
17-19		Nicaraguan Orphanage	Deanna Parmenter
23		Untitled	Ken White
28		Lawrence, Kansas	Michael Devereux
34		Rocking Chair	Michael Devereux
40		Mausoleum	Monica Kressman
45		After a Morning Rain	Gina Broussard
46		Chain Link	Ken White
48		My Honeymoon	Maria Noel Herzog
52		Lasiocampidac	Steve Kivett
54		Rise and Shine	Mir Ali Mehdi Razvi
56		Mirror	Eloy Ramirez
58		Finals	Donna Cariker

Art

22		Mi Pueblo	Carlos Larin
38		From My Sketchbook	Ann Trask
14		The Love of a Child	Felicia Thomas
7		Northside Poet Mural	Antonio Soria, Jr.

Illustrations provided by Monica Kressman - p.12, 24, 43, 50

*Special Thanks for all the hard work & input associated with The Bayou Review:
All judges, The Dateline, Carlos Larin, Ida Pena, Pete Lunde, Soryl Stanley, Dr. Sergio Rizzo,
Lee Anne Masin, Brenda Manak, Suz Rosenberg, Jean Collins, & anyone I left out...*

Thanks, Ben, for putting up with the late hours and use of your computer stuff :-)

- Monica

MEET THE JUDGES...



BOB ANNESLEY, whose father was of Cherokee descent, was born in Norman, Ok., in 1943. He won his first major award in art when he was fourteen and had his first one-man show at age eighteen. He has since achieved international acclaim for his work as a painter, sculptor, graphic artist, poet and Indian historian.

"...My work is a combination of subject matter and the abstract considerations of artistic expression. When these are handled carefully...art becomes magic and speaks in a universal language."

SORYL STANLEY

A local artist with a passion for innovative ideas, Soryl makes a science out of art through the complimented use of digital technology and multi-medium format.



ROBERT CLARK, who has published poetry in numerous journals and anthologies, has also served as editor of Crosscurrents, Zazen, Sunsprout, First Fridays in Print, and Anthologies of the Houston Poetry Fest.

He has also performed, read and lectured in Beaumont, Austin, Waco, San Francisco, and Houston.

- **President** of the First Friday Poetry Series - held the first Friday of each month at the Firehouse Gallery, 1413 Westheimer.
- **General Chair** of the Houston Poetry Fest, an annual three-day celebration of poetry co-sponsored by the Department of English of the University of Houston – Downtown, held annually in October.

MARC GLADDEN

Amidst his work with the Multimedia Dept. at UHD, his valued experience & critique assisted us greatly when selecting the final artwork.

AFIF BALTAGI

"I love to read and write great poems, even though my major is Marketing & Finance. Reading all of the great poems and essays in the Bayou Review made it very hard to choose the top ones...all of them were really great!"





"WHY I WOULD LIKE TO LIVE DOWNTOWN"

ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS



BY MONICA KRESSMAN

As the Live Downtown Essay Contest finally winds down, I had the opportunity to tour the old Rice hotel being renovated, which hosted a meet and greet of the winners. I was amazed to see how elegant and roomy the lofts are in this historical building. The original, maple hardwood floors grace the presence of guests enjoying hors'd'heuvres, while essays from the top ten finalists - placed carefully in each room - beckon to be read.

The setting is only a small taste of what the grand prize winner, Eric Garland, is about to receive; a year of free rent at The Rice. He has also won a \$1,000 shopping spree from Foley's Downtown and season tickets to the Alley Theatre. His winning essay compares living downtown to the Wizard of Oz - like the yellow brick road of "suburban nightmare" leading to the bustling, Emerald City of Downtown. The thought of living downtown "...because the best place to *live* is the place you are most *alive*." ...is being true to that raw sense of adventure that we challenge ourselves with on occasion. But Garland's essay contained the most profound thought - "...have you ever stood downtown in the gloaming, in the long shadows of winking skyscrapers, and taken a good look around? You could almost believe that ours is a city of precious gems, ripe for the picking." Garland is also a member of "Bee Stung Lips", with a new CD out labelled "Chatterboxing".

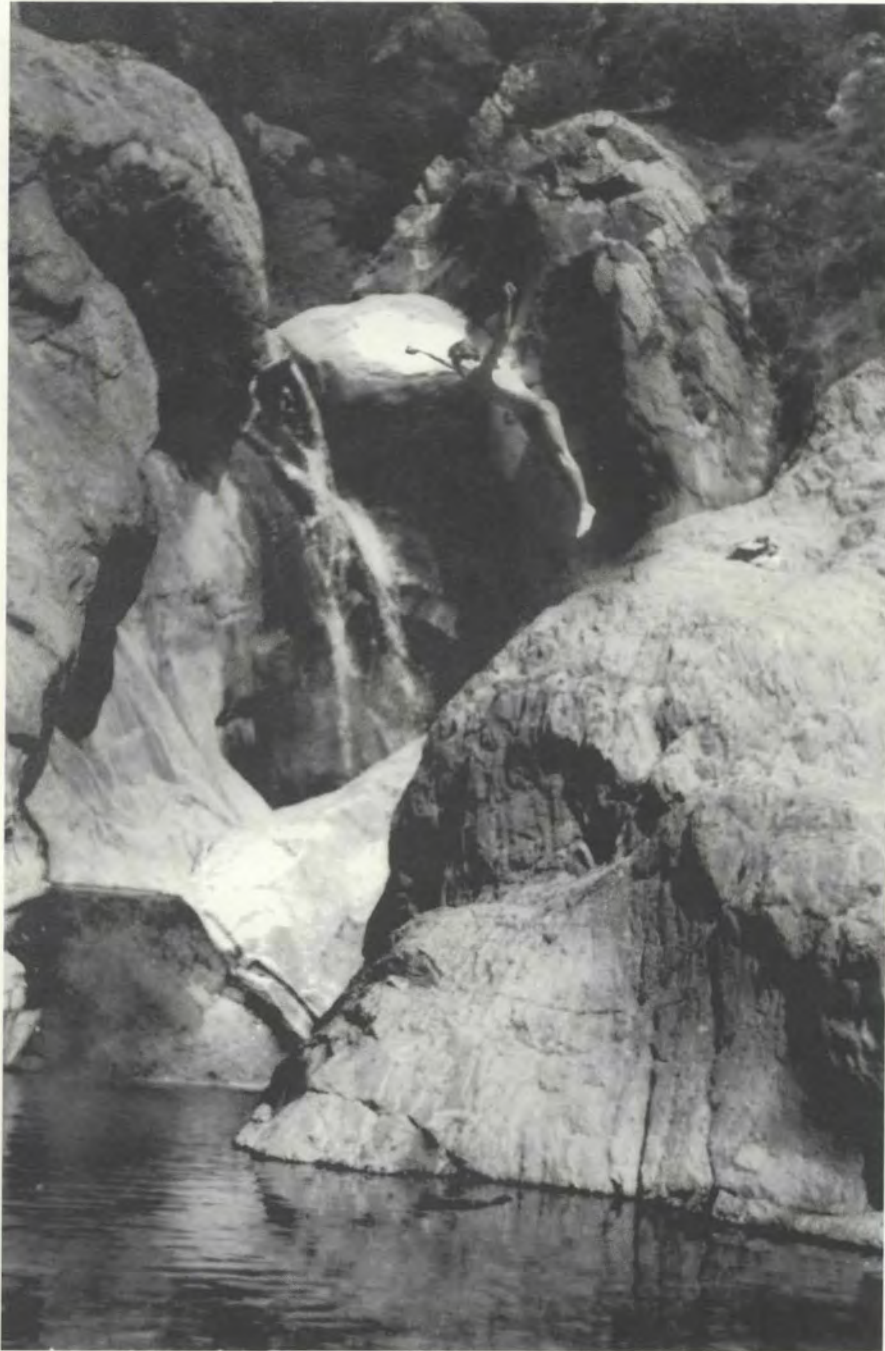
One creative essay, which received an honorable mention, was unconventionally bound in the form of daily entries kept in a journal. The author, Katherine Brown, marveled the grand concept of living downtown. Besides writing, she is also involved with the Executive Women International's new ASSIST program, which provides scholarship funds for women in transition.

Another contestant, David Haes, won a free week at the Four Seasons Hotel. His writing hobbies also include involvement with the Houston Writer's League.

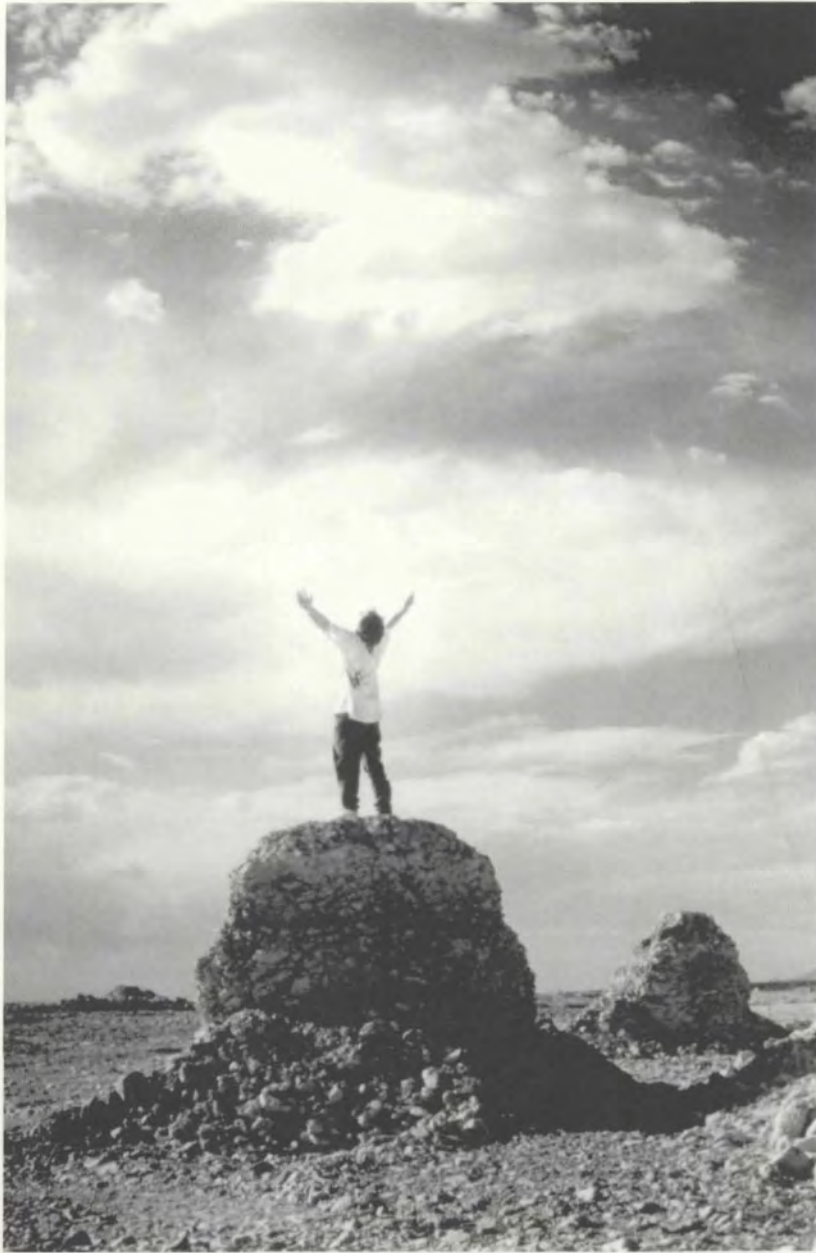
The contest idea was proposed by Downtown Houston Association Board Member The Very Reverend Dean Walter Taylor of Christ Church Cathedral. "We wanted to make people aware of downtown living spaces and what a great place it is to live. This seemed like a fun way to accomplish our goal. We've all been thrilled at the response!" says Dean Taylor.

Eric Garland offers this advice to student writers... "Never stop writing. Surround yourself with those who encourage you and offer *constructive* criticism. Never mind those who try to make something else out of you - you were born a writer and trying to run away from it won't work. Never stop looking for readers and don't be too proud to publish your own work. There is *always* an audience for good writing. Practice."

Many thanks to all who participated as either a judge or a contestant on behalf of the University of Houston - Downtown.



WATERFALLS GERGANA SPASSOVA ANGNELOVA



ELATION

KEN WHITE

M I L L E N

Insurmountable columns of marble
 And mountains of ash
 Dwell high above,
 And far, far behind.
 No voices are left to tell
 What lies in front.
 Rumpled, crumbled ruins of Delphi,
 Long abandoned, functionless,
 Speak no more across a
 Valley once known to
 Sophocles.
 From the fields of
 Bergen-Belsen
 Gray ash is too mixed
 For one bag alone;
 It can not shape any body's
 Skull, in particular:
 Or mouth to protest.
 Pictures of ash people
 Frame morbid, shadowy,
 Brick museum walls.
 Which ash fits the cheerful smile of that
 Little dark-haired Warsaw girl,
 Hand in hand
 With a jack-booted soldier
 Leading her to an adventure—
 By train?
 Oh a calamitous rain that falls
 From sky
 Or from chimney
 On flowery fields
 That bloom from the
 Depths of an ash-gray loam!
 If we could count,
 Have lovers and dreamers
 Outnumbered barbarians and
 Assassins?
 Have Schubert's spring time songs
 Matched Camerlano's
 Marauding cacophonies?
 Or the applause?
 Or the
 Screams?
 Athens or Nanjing,
 What speaks to us.
 For us?
 The little ash girl's
 Gossamer spirit
 Floats near by.
 I pull it down to my breast
 And try to hold on tight.
 It is really very hard.
 Her ghostly child-smile beams
 Upward into my face
 With trusting expectation.
 She's done this before.
 Now facing front:
 Her tiny wisp-hand melts softly into mine.

- PETER STEEN LUNDE

L
I
G
A
T
U
R
E

I tie a knot and
Hand you one end
Of a chord thus formed
Between us so.
It is forever when
Our letters curl and
Flow and twine
Around us with a
Silent bond.
O choirs from heaven
That certify a oneness,
Only to be broken in time
By time
And the call to dust,
Forever.
Let our love be
Carved into rock
And covered with a
Sparkling spring rain;
Let it bring bell-ringing joy
Into our hearts
And silent peace
Onto our uplifted faces.
O holy holy is this kindness
And gentleness which takes
Mortal dust and makes
Two of us
Into
One.

- PETER STEEN LUNDE

TURTLE

White-topped waves
Lap and lap, slowly,
Along a coral-trimmed shore.
From a high, sloping tide,
Turgid, wiggling turtles move forward,
Digging clutchy toe shapes
Deeply into the sand.
A milky maternal moon pulls
The sea-carpet landward and
Crooked tattletale trails disappear:
Runic marks on a misty glass,
Wiped irreversibly clear.
The turtles do not care—
Mother moon pulls them, also.

A taut band stretches endlessly
Behind my eyes.
I sit and wait and stare.
Hey, parties are going full
Swing in Rio and Hong Kong,
And everywhere else.
While turtles are
In a stew,
Literally;
I am not.
Silky rapturous dancers,
Twisting and turning;
Reveling and rowdy
Bodies writhing to exotic music,
Coating their hearts
With tango memory.
O what do they know
Or care?
They are simply there,
Moving through glue.
Nothing else to do
But pretend that their dance
Is a turtle dance for themselves
And for you.

A light in a little turtle's
Brain glows bright and dark;
Passion and fear,
Nature's reason,
Reduced to flickering fireflies:
Ridiculous dance steps in moonlight!
Don't laugh: but it is much, much too late
To re-design and re-
Calibrate.

A choral song rises
Mysteriously in a jaded heart
That struggles to testify and
Sing for itself:

*Turtley, tortly, turtle
Never exceeding reach;
Dancing to chance by moonlight,
While slithering up the beach;*

To some,
 Life is acquiring things,
 As many as you can
 It never occurs to them
 Life could be
 Helping your fellow man

To others,
 Life is to please a man,
 Bear his children,
 Keep his house,
 And be his wife
 Can you imagine
 That kind of life?

WHAT IS LIFE?

Oh, and then there are
 The "know nothings,"
 The precious little ones.
 Though little in size,
 Their eyes are large enough to see,
 Fingers long enough to touch,
 Ears tuned enough to hear,
 Noses keen enough to smell,
 Tongues sensitive enough to taste,
 And souls open enough to feel
 What some and others call life.
 Ask some.
 What is life?
 They might quote a definition of such
 But overall, you'd be appalled
 Because it wouldn't convey very much
 About life at all.

Ask others.
 What if life?
 Oh, I don't know.
 Who knows what they might say?
 Life is working to ensure
 That everything is okay.

But ask the "know nothings."
 What is life?
 A shrug of their little shoulders
 And no words they may say.
 Just watch them run, laugh, and play!

- LYNDON B. GREENE

REST IN LOVE

Love is like Death
 Both can take you by surprise;
 Both can leave you breathless;
 Neither is the beginning nor the end;
 And neither will be forgotten.
 If love is death, take me NOW!

DESCANSA EN AMOR

El Amor es como La Muerte.
 Ambos te pueden sorprender;
 Ambos te dejan sin aliento;
 Ninguno es ni el principio ni el final;
 Y ninguno puede ser olvidado.
 Si el amor es muerte, que me lleve AHORA!

RESTER DANS L'AMOUR

L'amour c'est comme La mort.
 Tous le deux prennent en surprise;
 Tous le deux te laissent san respirer;
 Ni l'un ni l'autre est ni le commencement ni la fin;
 Ni l'un ni l'autre sera oublie.
 Si l'amour est la mort, prenez-moi MAINTENANT!

"To my mum, Cza, Hawke, E+
 Chino - - | love you guys!"

- APRIL J. GAZMEN



NIGEL PASS, ALBERTA. JULY 1997

STEVEN J. KIVETT

AN ANGEL IN DISGUISE

You come across very few people
Who bother to go out of their way
To make life better for others.

You come across very few people
Who walk on thorns to make,
Other people's life a bed of roses.

You come across very few people
Who derive pleasure in only
'Giving' and not 'Receiving'.

They are the ones who give
Everything a meaning, and
Make everything look beautiful.

And perhaps, they are the people,
Who make life worth living.

AND

I'M GLAD, MY FRIEND, YOU'RE
ONE OF THEM.

- NILESH PARSON



UNIVERSAL MOVEMENT

W. S. LITTLE

KADDISH FOR ALLEN GINSBERG

Praise His Great Name, the Almighty, the Most Merciful!
Merciful! This is in gratitude for all your works:
your words, your actions, your encompassing love.

Love, everyone. You created with speech
what Cezanne did with paint: crude, primary emotions
to free the words.

Words used to break the chains of the complacent minds:
Bright, square chunks of life created anew.

New beat: language back to John Donne,
Walt Whitman, William Blake.

New beat: living an open life, risking scorn:
"Yes Senator, that verse describes a wet dream."

Dream of a sacred self, shared at Shea Stadium
Chanting, reaching for the Divine in all of us,
Holding hands with the queer.

"...Queer shoulder to the wheel." Yes, Allen, father
of all that is humane in me, yes you moved the world
up a notch. And now you are gone to God.

God, even your filthiest verse/prose rises above
The scum that now covers all. You dared point
To the evil that all good men ignore and cultivate at home.

Home, that's where you've gone. And I will dress
My vestal soul in mourning and praise His Great Name!

His Great Name! May He who makes peace in the Heavens
Make peace for all of us. And say ye Amen,
And say ye Amen, and say ye Amen.

Kaddish: (kad'ish) n. (Aram. gaddish, holy) Judaism a hymn in praise of God, recited as part of the daily service or, in one form, as a mourner's prayer.

Queer: (kwir) adj. (N. English and Scot. Dial.: via beggar's cant <?) 1. Differing from the usual or normal: peculiar, strange.
2. Homosexual. 3. Counterfeit syn erratic, eccentric, curious.

Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language. 1970.



MONICA KRESSMAN

I

I
Want a love
that bends. Like

A
Breezy blowing limb
on a tree in the wind.

A
Love that will sway
Like tall grass on a windy day.

I
Want to be 10ft. tall
I
Would still feel silly and small.

I
Want to be little like a mouse
I
Would still feel big as a house.

I
Don't know anymore
It feels to much so

I
Am numb.

I am
Forever fearing the feeling away.
Empty
Empty
Empty
To love without
Requite.

CARRIE VICARS



THE LOVE OF A CHILD

FELICIA THOMAS

JESSE

Sometimes I watch him
Following behind, not too close
He caught me before
Laughing, admonishing me for tailing him

Faster each day . . . carefully
He walks home from school
"Two blocks, Mama!"
Teachers reinforcing independence

Books over frail shoulders
Awkwardly grasping, small hand over hand
His lifeline, the wire fence
Pathway to home

Sweet head held down
White eyes to the sun
"Mama, I'm home!"
I reach for his hand and sigh.

LEE ANNE MASIN

SLEEP

Sometimes late at night,
unable to return to my slumber,
I watch you sleep.

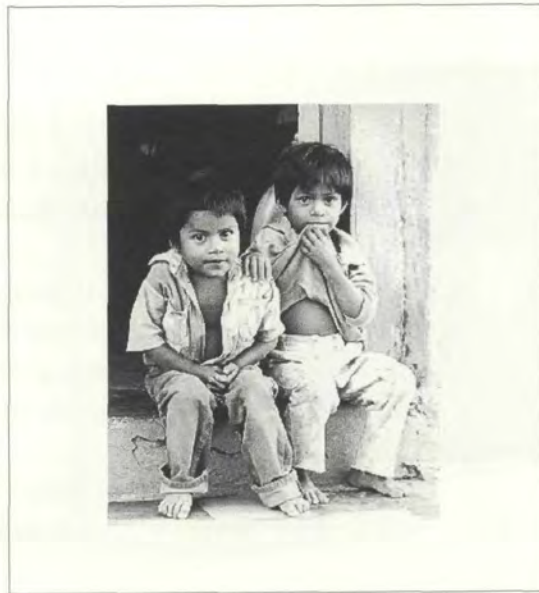
Moonlight casts a glow upon your skin,
its rays beckoning me to places within.
I watch the rise and fall of your back,
the twitch of your hand,
fluttering of your eyelids.

Sensing my awakened state,
your arms reaches out,
fingers searching for me.

I gently touch your shoulder,
You instinctively roll over.
I fall into your chest
and listen to the rhythmic lullaby of your heart.

As I drift off,
I thank the heavens.
For I have found
inner peace, serenity and love
within the confines of your arms.

CATHERINE WOODS



THE FOLLOWING 5 ILLUSTRATIONS SUBMITTED BY
DEANNA PARMENTER WERE TAKEN DURING A
HUMANITARIAN VISIT TO NICARAGUA

Waking after a night of Sauza and Corona
still pretty hazy.

Last night every noise could be heard:

Crying, laughing

Drunk people puking,

Bangs, crashes,

Cops, ambulances,

So close.

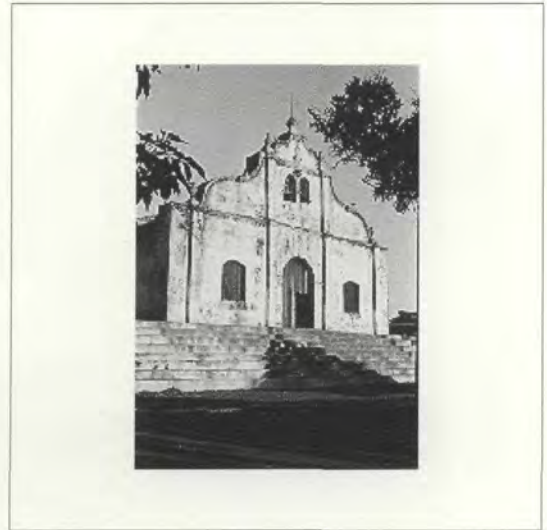
(Are they coming here?)

Every five minutes the old man next door tries to hack
out his lung.

J A U
M O R

All these noises fading in and out with my sleep.

Sleep?



Twelve dollar hotel room:

Two beds (kinda clean)

Toilet with a broken seat (no door)

One light bulb to illuminate the dingy walls.

Last night we wandered around this city for hours.

Crazy city

Two million people doing two million different things.

Roads torn up

People driving like mad teenagers newly licensed.

Wonderful aromas of corn and chicken float through
the air until sewage smells take them over.

R E Z
N I N G

We got laughed at in the bars by drunk old men.
Why are you here? The market is closed?
Little girls crying begging for money.
Chikle only two dollars.
(no less than fifteen times)

Little in Juarez is beautiful on its own.
Together the city holds its own
Wonder.

Sunken city placed in desert mountains.



DEANNA PARMENTER

JUAREZ, MEXICO
1- 08-98

The amazing chaos haze hangs in the air.
Dust and pollution
The city looks post apocalyptic.
When was the apocalypse?

The dogs in Juarez know how to cross the street.
They look both ways.

Juarez morning,
Ready to venture out of this room and have coffee
See the Juarez morning from the outside.

- CARRIE VICARS

REMEMBERING AN EVENT - AN IMPORTANT DAY

BUT FAN CHAN

My little sister and I were born in China. My father was a teacher in a primary school. My mother worked in a small factory. We lived in a very small hut.

Daddy used to bring sister and me to the beach ten minutes away from our home. I liked to play in the water since I didn't know how to swim. My sister's hobby was collecting those colorful shells. Whenever she discovered a special shell that she didn't have before, she approached me and showed it to me at once. Both of us loved this place very much. Mummy used to cook nice food for us. Furthermore, she would buy toys for us whenever she had extra money. We really had a wonderful and happy family.

Suddenly, father left us and went to Hong Kong alone. Oh! I was only six years old. It was so delirious! How could I accept this fact? My sister and I burst into tears immediately. We could not stop because we were out of control. We didn't know what to do. We hated him very much. Mother tried to explain the reason for us. Perhaps we were so young that we could not understand the truth. Or, we did want to understand it.

Four months later, mother came home from work when I was playing with my naughty sister.

"Good news, our application for leaving China has been approved." Mother was busily dropping green vegetables on the table with her right hand. In her other hand, there was a letter from God. We could sense her degree of happiness from the look on her face... We shall go to Hong Kong next week... Please pack your bags within the next few days." She continued. I replied immediately, "Oh! That's good! We can see Daddy next week."

My sister and I were very busy dealing with our little toys in the following days. Mummy said that each of us could only take three of our toys to Hong Kong. It was a big task for us, even though we did not have many toys.

The next day was a big day for us, the moment I had been waiting ages for. That night, I tossed and turned in my bed, trying every comfortable position I could think of, but still failed. I stayed up until five o'clock in the morning thinking about Daddy. I thought about those nice foods in Hong Kong that I had heard of before. Finally, I held my pillow tight as if I were holding Daddy. I missed him. I loved him. It was six o'clock when Mummy woke me up. I was still holding my pillow, since I didn't want it to disappear again.

In the early morning, Mummy gave sister and me the new clothes and shoes. We were so happy that we jumped up and down as if it was the Chinese New Year. Before we stepped out of the door, Mummy said seriously, "Remember! When you arrive in Hong Kong, you must walk naturally in the street as if you were Hong Kong citizens. Don't let anyone know you are coming from China. If we get discovered by the Hong Kong Police, they will send us back and we can't see your Daddy again. Okay?" We replied at the same time, "Okay! Of course!"

It was the law, if we could enter the door of the Hong Kong Immigration Department successfully, and without being discovered by the police, we could have our identifications there legally. Otherwise, we would be sent back to China.

It was so hot that I wore a pair of new short pants which was a birthday present from Daddy. It was very meaningful for me to wear these pants to see Daddy.

Mr. Wong, one of our best neighbors, sent us to the small quay by his three-wheeled bicycle. It took about twenty minutes to get there. On our way to the quay, I looked around at all the familiar scenery. We would never come back again.

After our identifications had been checked by the soldiers, we jumped into a tiny sampan. It was really a tiny sampan as it could only carry six passengers at a time. We said good-bye to Mr. Wong and then we started our journey. As we were on the way to Hong Kong along the narrow river, we recognized that the scenery on both shores of China and Hong Kong was pretty much the same. But, I thought we should have a better life in Hong Kong.

Suddenly, I saw a man standing on the right shore. Although he was very far away from our sampan, I could discern him. I shouted, "Mummy, look! That is Daddy."

Now, I am in the United States with my family because of 1997¹. I really understand why Daddy left us silently that year. At that time, if he had not left China, he would have been in big trouble because he was a landlord's son.² Many people killed themselves as they could not withstand the pressure of such a situation.

It is new beginning for us in the United States. Wherever we are, we are still Chinese. We have to fight for our future. The United States is the so called "melting pot". In order to reduce the misunderstandings and conflicts with others, we must melt ourselves into it. We shall try our best to do it and we are sure that we can.

1 [He was referring to the end of British Rule in Hong Kong. The handover closed a painful chapter in Chinese history, remembered as a period of humiliating defeat and colonialism] source: <http://china.utopia.com/dispatches/thirteen/13featurea.html>

2 [The Communist government took wealth away from anyone who had it.] - Ed.'s note



"...la Humilde iglesia Paroquial..."

"Mi Pueblo..."

El Salvador-

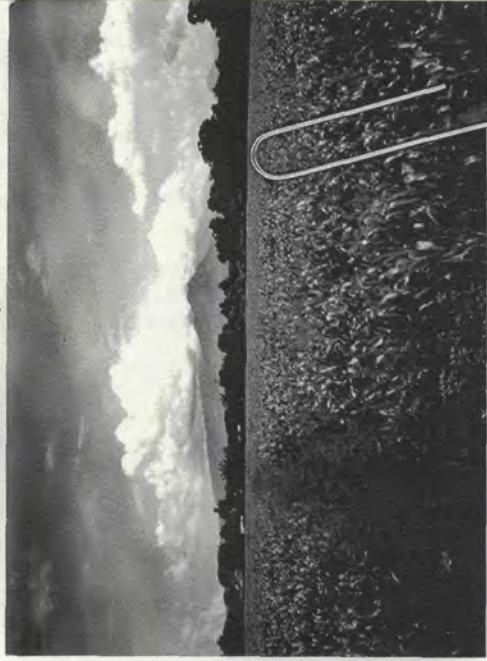
... Aungul destruido por los años
 infelices de la guerra civil,
 todavía guarda un poco de paz
 y armonía con el embellecimiento
 de sus campos eternos y la
 paz bendita de nuestra hermosa
 y humilde iglesia Paroquial..."

.-.-k

... even though destroyed by the
 baseless years of the civil
 war; my town still
 maintains its peace and harmony
 with its beautiful eternal fields
 and the Holy place from our
 humble Paroquial church..."

.-.-k

".. El campo eterno..."



CARLOS LARIN



KEN WHITE

CINCO DE MAYO

on Cinco de Mayo
the Best American Poetry reader
mocks my brown eyes brown skin
brown hair brown life

my words - what color are my words
i never thought words had color
what color should i write
brown brown brown

mama gave me slender delicate
fingers arms legs
browned by my immigrant papa
who fused culture with my soul

would green eyes change
my world my words who reads them
would they take away the hate
and let me dance in freedom

- LEE ANNE MASIN



SCOTTSSLUFF, NEBRASKA

MONICA KRESSMAN

A PRAYER FOR A LAND UNKNOWN

Lost in the tempest
Out on the open sea
Our small Boats drift
We seek for land
During endless days and endless nights
We are the foam
Floating on the vast ocean
We are the dusts
Wandering in endless space
Our cries are lost
In the howling wind
Without food, without water
Our children lie exhausted
Until they cry no more
We thirst for land
But are turned back from every shore
Our distress signals rise and rise again
But the passing ships do not stop
How many families lie beneath the wave
Lord Jesus, do you hear the prayer of our flesh
From the abyss of death
Oh, solid shore
We long for you
We pray for mankind to be present here today
We pray for land to stretch its arms to us
We pray that hope be given to us
Today, from any land...

- LONG NGUYEN



ANTONIO SORIA

DOWNTOWN

Through sleepless nights and endless days
Of working so hard and aiming for 'A's'.
I love to drive home in the middle of the night.
I love to watch the downtown skylights.

I am a Coordinator for the Campus Activities Board
And we don't get paid for what we do.
We've been meeting all summer on Friday nights
Planning great things for students to view.

Sometimes we work very late hours, especially the week of the show.
Plus, all the studying that has to be done is trying, as most of us know.
I've always been proud of my downtown school,
And of the downtown area. UHD rules!

We stay up late and eat nearby,
We drink; we dance, and watch fireworks in the sky.
The old M&M building, White Oak, the buried brewery
We have so much history and pride, yet some don't even see.

There is so much downtown, so much to do,
Bayou Festival, Brewery Tap, Alley Theater, and the view.
I love to hang out in downtown,
With my friends, my pride, my school all around.

Downtown will always be the heart of the city.
Galleria? Richmond? Will never have what it takes.
History, a past, glory from the beginning,
A success lying in the make.

The eloquence of old buildings,
And the intensity of tall, sky rises.
Where old meets new, mystery and clues,
Main street and Houston's horizon.

Open your eyes and heart and see what I see,
Houston from day one, honor, pride, and respectability.

Thinking of Christmas really hits me in the heart.
Watching the lighting of the Christmas tree in Tranquility Park.

The bustle of last minute shoppers,
The big, red ribbons on the lighting posts along Main.
The glimmering lights, and man made ice skating rinks,
Anywhere else other than downtown could never be the
same.

And when you look around at the people of this town,
You'll see diverse individuals and views.
This is represented at U of H-Downtown,
The best and only downtown school.

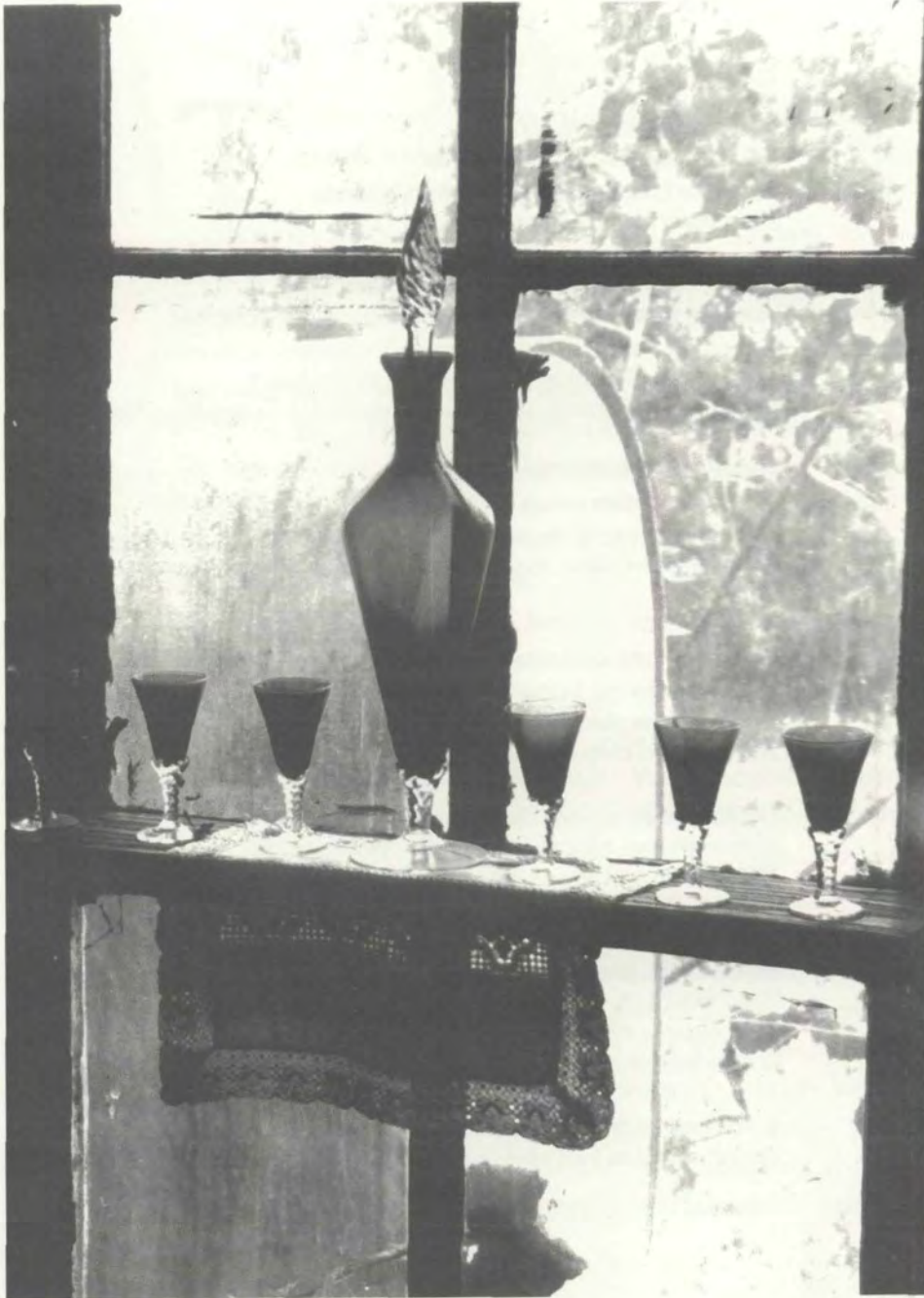
I love to be in a place like this,
Where art and education are a few blocks away,
This core to our city where everyone is a part,
Where I will graduate from school one day.

New friends, great people in the city I admire.
New York? L.A.? They could only aspire
To become a city with a downtown like ours.
But no matter how hard they try, they could never get this far.

And when people ask what school I attend,
I never say U of H. I always shout DOWNTOWN at the end!

"UHD Rules!"

- VIRGINIA ELIZONDO



LAWRENCE, KANSAS

MICHAEL DEVEREUX

10/15/96

- Hello there young feller.
- Hello.
- You ain't from around here.
- No ma'am.
- Can I get you anything?
- No ma'am. Just waitin' for the bus.
- Got some fresh apple pie.
- Maybe just some coffee.
- Cream? Sugar?
- No ma'am.
- What brings you to Groveton?
- A funeral-go ahead and gimme some o' that pie.
- A funeral?...Jennie Corrigan's?
- Yes ma'am, she was my aunt.
- Don't tell me you're one o' Beverly's boys.
- Yes ma'am. You know my momma?
- I knew your momma when she was in grade school. She sat behind me, dipped my pony-tail in the ink well one time-you one of the twins, or are you the baby?
- I guess I'm the baby. Did you know my aunt?
- Couldn't very well live in Groveton and not know Jennie. Everybody knew her-fine woman, good Christian woman. I reckon she's taken care of just about every baby in Groveton at one time or another. Her husband, A.D., "Red," they called him, used to own this very building, 'course it was a gas station then. Your momma used to bring you and your brothers here when you were just little bitty things. I remember you three younguns running around the station here drinking grape soda pop. Red used to sing when you boys were here.
- I remember that-sorta. Seems like he'd sing "She'll be coming 'round the mountain." I don't know. I know I remember the grape soda pop, though. I thought Uncle Alton had the best grape soda in the world.
- How's that pie?
- Read good, best I've had in a long time.
- Thanks. Your aunt Jennie sure could bake a pie... or a cake, or anything, for that matter. I used to go to the homecomin' down at Village Springs Baptist just to get a plate from her table. I'm not even a Baptist.
- Me neither, but Momma brought us down here every year for homecoming till Aunt Jennie stopped going down there. Seems like now we just come down here for funerals.
- Did Beverly make it this trip?
- Yes ma'am. She rode back to Houston with Danny and Mike. I been stayin' with Dennis Ray-Aunt Jennie's son-since the funeral. You know Dennis Ray?
- Dennis Ray? Essie, Jimmy Dale and little Jennie? I keep Jimmy Dale and Jennie sometimes.
- They're a mess.
- Tell me about it. That little Jennie is something else. We never know what that child is gonna say.
- Here's my bus. What do I owe you?
- \$2.50... thank you now... you have a nice ride home.
- Yes ma'am. Enjoyed talking to you. Bye now.
- Bye Bye.

- TOMMY THOMASON

T O D A Y

Today continues, an extension from yesterday. A day to form a week, a week to form a month, so on and so forth. A part of the absurd whole. To begin the end, seems to me the opening strategy, does it not? Yes, I believe so. To end the beginning, seems to me the primary, does it not? Yes, I believe so. Now, now, what story must I tell, for boredom is derived from a plotless monologue, is it not? The heavy limbs of a weeping willow still blow, the earth still revolves on its' axis, and the atoms, well the atoms are still in flux. Everything is intact. Everything is in order, as it should be, yes? I see, as always, mum is the word, eh? Good, as it should be. The setting is given, we can now plunge into the story line. Mind you, sniff for its' faults. Horizontally stood, he gazed and thought, "Black has just played.....G3-G2 opening the white king to check from her queen on H4." The game must go on regardless, "I ache; everywhere, every place. It is as if I am a muscle threatened by the lack of calcium." He stops; silence. Must be patient and let the hours convert into a day. What a hassle it is to pass time. What an extremity. If I am not mistaken, he is scheduled to meet her. What must one do from this time onward? Read, one can read. No. That is not sufficient. Write!...no one must refrain. Yes. I know, think, self-loathe, yes. Intercourse has become an intellectual puzzle for him. Be aware and on guard, for signs, my friend. Yes, signs of discomfort. Opening deprived of lubrication, eyes heavily focused on a vague memory, body numb, turning into melting ice. And him on top, as torso penetrates, without regard. The membrane raptures thus ceasing that act of living. Two bodies laid in vertical manner, motionless, breathless. This is what consists of a sexual encounter with her. No pleasure derived from either party. Just, as if, in a vague sort of way, increased anonymity. Yet, he remains, always, in her reach. Within her grasp, in hopes of....what? Yes, what? Ah yes, in hopes of hope. So then, he sits and remains quite nervous and reluctant. How should he act? How should he stop himself from indulging? Remember dear lad, rejection on her part,

remember. Ah yes!, rejection. Not nice, not nice at all. "Must I wait, in turn for her, like a flower for the sun.", he says to himself, no one else. The room nicely lit, dim. Not enough distractions. Once I remember, as he does too, he stood naked behind the door, waiting to surprise. She walked in, her response was stiff. "No, no you mustn't. Get control of yourself, she said, stiffly. Slowly, with time and memories, her appetite diminished like a writer's originality. He must pay. She pays most. Her mind has strengthened. Many, many times, he has tried to control those natural desires, for sake, of her. To spare her of his minor complaints and his frivolous demands. But as he sleeps, he dreams, those dreams, of every boy, like no other, he dreams. Awakes, he finds himself without touch and love. Now, I mustn't seem biased for I shall mention that which dwells in her mind. Trust, a foreign word. A word without meaning. She sits, knows of her appointment. She dreads the time for she knows what he asks and what she can't provide. But he knows of that which eats her but still no regard. "It must be over, yes, one can take only so much. I do not love him. He is a fool. He is a man.", she says, with spiteful voice. Cheek in palm, raises head, neck stiffens, stares out of 24 by 24 inch window, half inch glass. She thinks, "I trust no one but I hide it by trusting." What absurdity people speak when they're alone. Night covers the stiff buildings, a blanket worth being covered by. Streets emptying, people enjoy going home. "When one is speculating the room seems to disengage itself from it's limits. We, then are left in void, in space, intruding on the architecture's dream. We are left Being. Being, ah a word. B.E.I.N.G., letters, more letters and in full blow, I know the limits. Attraction must, at all cost, be avoided, for fear of being...understood. " So ends her short, arrogant monologue. She acts now. 6:40 p.m. and on her way. The room nicely lit, dim. He is sitting on a chair, looks toward the clock and becomes aware. Naturally, with reluctance he remains seated. "No, it's not fair, to her, to Venus, to myself. Weakness and sorrow are the companions of the lover but I choose differently. How wildly she acted in the past.

- continued -

She could actually hold her ground. We had fun. We loved.” He looks. First left, then right. Then, then, there is no more. Everything he had reminded him of her. No, not her. Not at all. But rather, ah yes, the past. Must the past impose itself on the present. It surely, without a doubt, limits the future. Now, with a sudden blow, like a wind so strong, yes, so strong, he became aware. His weakness is what continues the game. He lives, plays, moves, left to right, then up, down, E2 to E4, he continues. Losing is the incentive. To keep playing, to win, no not that, but to hold out for a while longer. “Once, a time ago, I loved you.”, she muttered as the crickets held their breath, waiting for a response. He in a daze simply smiled. The impact took time. That was a while back. Now, the present looms over him. He moves, slowly, he moves, stops. What reaction must he make, when, yes when he makes an offending move? Living is an offending move, no rather, an illegal move. He turns left, 7:00 o’clock. Anytime soon. The reddish light reflects off her hood. She stares out of the window. Trees pass. Heart beating, little comfort, sky gray no darken blue her face, her face sunken. How shall I explain what swells and what scares? How shall I mention her past? Reddish stubble brushed, without consent, against her thighs while no one bothered to help. Her cries nor desires were ever aided. On roof, stars glazing with blurred light and stomach bare, naked. She a lying plumb with purple wounds on her soul reached for God. “Sorry, our procedure is not correct.” Must children go through such turmoil? No, yet she, with all agony did. And now it spills, the past again into the present. The room nicely lit, dim. Restless and annoyed, he gets up moves forward. Then back again. Vague lights approach from afar illuminating the side of the house. He stiffens. “Now, dear lad, you must wait.” He whispered to himself. Outside she stands a few feet away. The evening sun sets. Elegantly she strolls then stops. Thinks. She lowers her head then says, “Why must we, in our mist, love those whom we hate. Ah yes, obsession begins with hatred.” The room nicely lit, dim. “Now dear lad, you must wait.”, he whispers.

- RADAMES ORTIZ

RAPE FOR THE NINETIES

Take me against my will
I did not ask for this intrusion on my person.
Your hands are so cold
Your eyes are so hard
When you speak the words are like black nasty steam.

This is not right
I have to fight.
Get up Get off
Please stop.
My blood is running like ice.

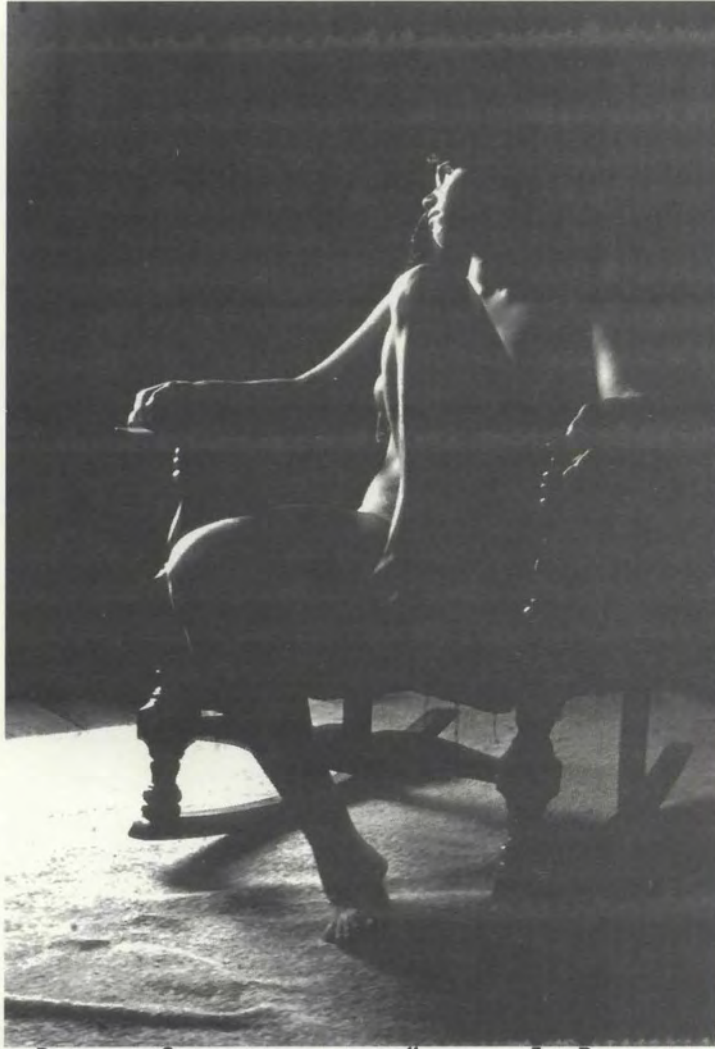
You push and push and hurt me.
Why me?
Then when you are through you leave me in a puddle
Of my own blood and tears.

Then when I think the nightmare is all over
The doctors rape me again with their tools
Of the trade. They weren't as cold as you were.

I guess I am lucky
I lived to tell the story of pain and suffering
you put me through.
Not a day goes by that I do not remember
The way your rough slimy hands felt,
The way your eyes looked deep and gone,
And the smell of your hot breath wakes me
at night with chills.

You might as well have killed me, since now
I am HIV positive.
As a constant reminder of that horrible day
I gave birth to your child; the blessing came out of this tragedy.

- T A ' M A R A H A L L



ROCKING CHAIR

MICHAEL J. DEVEREUX

N O T H I N G

you call to say we're not talking
and you are watching movies
in my protective covering
i spiral deeper down

and you are watching movies
as i curl further into myself
i spiral deeper down
hoping i can disappear

as i curl further into myself
like a snail inside its shell
hoping i can disappear
and feel nothing

like a snail inside its shell
i feel safe
and feel nothing
maybe sleep will come

i feel safe
in my protective covering
maybe sleep will come
you call to say we're not talking

- L E E A N N E M A S I N

THE COLOR OF DIRT

I always meant to ask Mama why we never used the front door of our house. I remember it being open once, maybe twice, the entire time we lived there. Everyone, even guests, entered through the garage. So, when the realtor handed me the key labeled "front door," I knew things had changed.

I had no intention of ever coming back to my parent's house after Mama died. I wouldn't have come back now if not for the fact that my Father had finally died. I thought his being dead would make it easier to return. I was wrong. He lives in the very walls he built some thirty years ago. And as I stand here turning the key in the lock of the door never used, I almost regret coming back. But more than that, I hate the fact that he got to die and I have to live with the memories.

The door glides open; easily - not like I thought it would. It's heavy. Oak, I think. Built to last, the way my father built everything. As I step into the dim entry hall, I hear his voice reminding that he put this floor under our feet and this roof over our heads. And as I close the door behind me, I remember a childhood wishing that I lived anywhere but within these walls, and under this roof.

My eyes slowly adjust to the dimness. Little has changed in the entry hall. I notice the floor is still the same earth-colored speckled tile my father bought in bulk because it was a good price and wouldn't show dirt. If there was one thing we were good at in our house, it was not letting our dirt show. The walls still wear the same wood paneling of my youth. That paneling darkens the living room and all three bedrooms. I remember my father paid a little more than he wanted for it, but in the long run it would be cheaper to maintain than having to repaint. I hated being the only girl in my group of friends whose bedroom was not the color of bubble gum or ice-cream.

I follow the entry hall into the living room, which is empty now. My sister-in-law was nice enough to organize the estate sale and what little was left, she took to Goodwill. She brought me the only thing I wanted, a picture of me and my brother with Mama taken at K-Mart when I was three. I always loved looking at that picture because that was when I remembered being happy.

I bend down and touch the once - shagged, brown carpet, now matted from years of wear. My father had Mama pick out a color to match the rich Caney soil on which our house rests. He bragged to his sister on the phone about how well it didn't show dirt. I remember thinking, what a funny thing to be proud of.

I close my eyes to see the expensive coffee table that once sat in the middle of the floor between the rust and tan plaid sofa and the large Motorola television. I know the table was expensive, because I had to pay for it with three years worth of Christmas and birthday money that Granny sent me. I had to pay for it because I broke the old one when my Father knocked me across it for not picking up my Barbies the first time he told me to.

From the middle of the living room I can see perfectly where the dining table stood. I cross the trampled carpet into the room where we ate our meals in silence so my Father could enjoy his food. This is the only room Mama got to decorate without worrying about coordinating with the dirt, simply because we were not allowed at the table unclean. I remember counting the squares of the yellow and white checkered wallpaper while I silently chewed my food. My Father would snap at me: "Quit staring and pay attention to your food." I never understood that.

The dining room is connected to the kitchen by a narrow doorway. I stand in the doorway thinking about how tall it used to look. Mama used this doorway to measure our height. I always held my breath when she made my mark on the door jam. Only Mama could get away with that. I wrote my name on that door jamb once, when I had first learned how to write. I have a long name. I had to write small to make it fit. I thought I did a good job until my father saw it. Like kids do, I tried to blame it on my brother. I got whipped double, once for marking on the wall, and once for lying.

I reach around the doorway and run my hand up the faded yellow and green of the kitchen wall. The nail is exactly where I knew it would be. My Father's disciplinary tool of choice changed a few times over the years, but it always hung from that nail, a reminder of what would happen if you didn't behave. I pull on the nail, weakly at first, and then harder. I pull so hard, the head of the nail digs into my thumb and brings tears to my eyes. I wiggle it up and down and side to side until it loosens. I stand there pulling and wiggling the nail, thinking. I think of the kids, perhaps a little girl, who may live here when the house sells. They shouldn't have to think about a nail in the wall. They shouldn't have to play on carpet the color of dirt. Tears stream down my face and drip onto the avocado green Formica counter. Finally, after much pulling and wiggling, the nail slides out of the wall.

Maybe her bedroom will be the color of rainbow sherbert.

"For all of us who played on carpet the color of dirt so that our children won't have to."

- STEPHANIE KONVICKA



FROM MY SKETCHBOOK

ANN TRASK

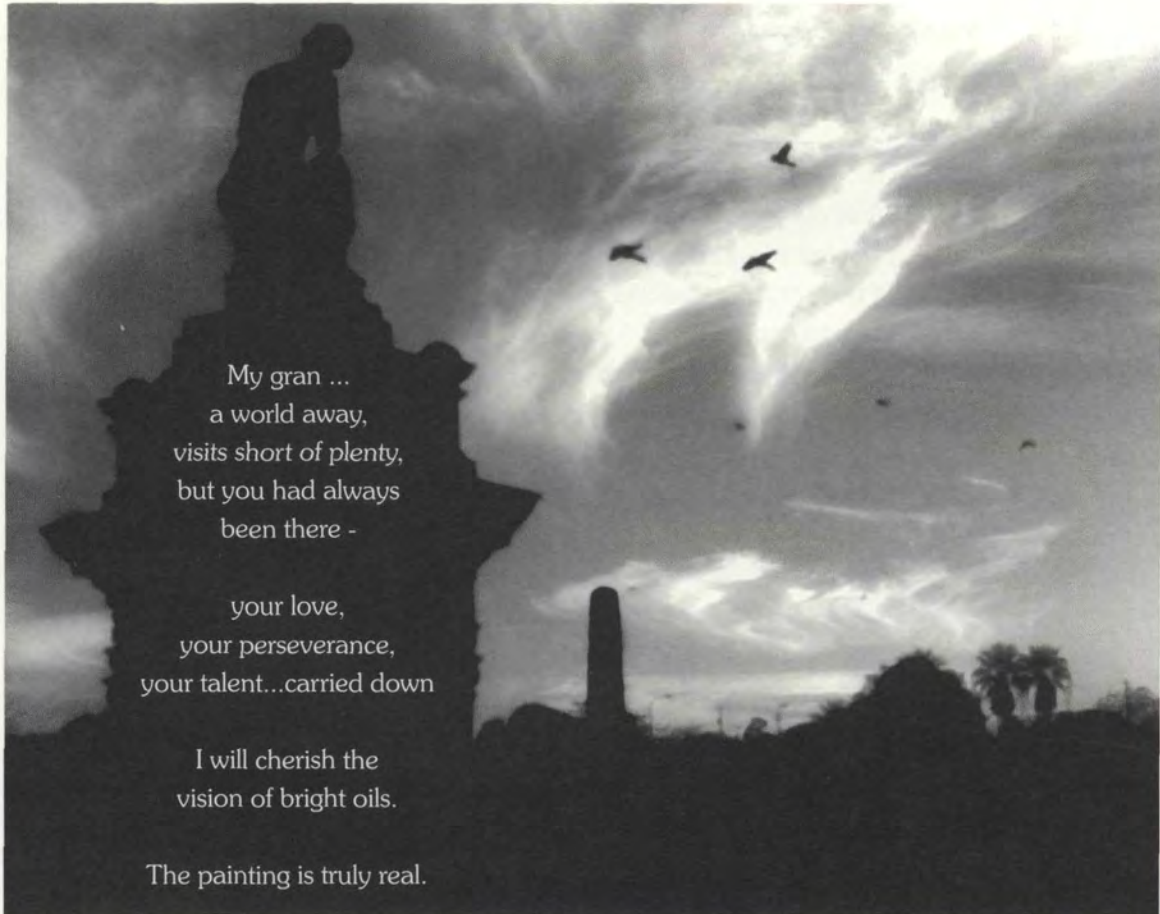
IRONY

Through the blistering cold I trudge.
White demons surround me with icy eyes.
The blizzard wind hums my tune
Of slow, cruel, unmerciful death.
"Beautiful snow!"
"Wonderful winter!"
are words of those that dwell within.
Those, when on high, I look down upon.
Those that seem glued to the ground.

Alas! philosophical thoughts desert me
As the cold, white demons sing and chant
Conjuring out the fading warmth
Left in this poor, small, dying body.

With all my strength I take a leap.
I flap my wings twice or thrice
but down I fall
answering that last call.
The cold, white flakes around me rejoice
summoning their brethren from above to descend
To cover me wholly
'til I'm but a lump of white in a world of white
so that those I described
in ignorance can say,
"Oh, what a beautiful, white snowy day!"

- O B I N N A C . I L O C H O N W U



Dedicated to Anna Mae Stoltz

Monica Kressman

I WISH THAT I HAD KNOWN

I wish that I had known
it was to be today,
when the angel of my life
was to go away.

Her eyes became the lightest blue
I ever was to see,
it was as if the Light of Christ
became absorbed in thee.

It happened with an air of ease
in the swiftest way,
today the Lord of Lords
took my mom away.

If only I had known
I could have said goodbye,
I only think what could have been
and then just want to cry.

I Wish That I Had Known

- BRENDA MANAK

KEEPSAKES

Uncle Willy died yesterday. For some reason, thinking about him reminds me of Grandpa's glass eye. It had an unnerving way of looking over your shoulder when he was talking to you, that made you want to turn around and see what it was looking at. But the really creepy thing about the eye was the way it would watch you lying on the blue braided rug in front of the television without Grandpa ever taking his attention away from Ed Sullivan.

I never made a face when Grandpa told me to fetch him a beer, because I just knew the day I did, that big gray eye would swivel around, blink, and say, "Caught you, you little shit." And Grandpa would spank the fire out of me. So, I would just sigh loudly and take my time retrieving his beer from the fridge, careful not to argue in my head, just in case the eye could read minds as well.

I honestly didn't know they could do this, but the day Grandpa died, the mortician asked Gram if she wanted the eye. Sitting on the powder blue chintz sofa in the funeral home parlor, she said, ending any chances of me ever sleeping soundly in our house again, "If it isn't too much trouble, dear." And then, to my complete horror, the man produced out of his pocket and held in the palm of his big, rubbery looking hand a small black box. Gram cradled the box in her hands as if it held Grandpa folded up all tiny inside. In a way, I guess it did, because other than that eye, my memories of Grandpa have become pretty fuzzy. Maybe holding on to the eye, as morbid as it may seem, was Gram's way of holding on to Grandpa.

But if that were the case, you'd think she would have put it somewhere more sacred than her pantyhose drawer. I never actually saw what she did with the eye, but when Mom was helping her into the car at the cemetery, I heard her say something about "Joe," and "drawer," and "safe place." Knowing how fond Gram was of her pantyhose, I assumed that was where she put it. I imagined it staring out of one of those little plastic bubbles you get out of gum machines, nestled in the cozy comfort of her suntan pantyhose which made her look like she had wooden legs instead of a real suntan. There could have been a million dollars and no glass hidden in that dresser drawer, but I wasn't taking any chances; you'd never catch me snooping.

I guess you could say our family reacts rather oddly to death. We cry loudly—which I'm sure is a completely normal reaction to grief, even though I've never heard anyone cry as loud as Gram could when she got wound up really good. But something we also do, and I'm not sure is normal at all, is laugh, as loudly as we cry, usually during the quiet parts of a funeral, like when the priest says, "Let us silently offer our own petitions." I had never thought about it until Mother did just that at Gram's funeral. She practically fell out of her seat, doubled over with big belly laughs that shook her shoulders and made her face turn beet red. Then she cried big wracking sobs with her mouth wide open so that precariously thin drool strings hung from her bottom lip and swayed, amazingly, without breaking in the unusually brisk April wind.

I guess the rest of the family had gotten pretty used to this kind of scene, because no one made any mention of it at dinner after the funeral, at least as far as I could tell. What I didn't know was that the conversation I saw Mother having with the funeral director after the service had nothing to do with how natural Gram looked or how at peace she was now that she had passed, but had everything to do with the fifty she slipped him to open up the casket and remove Gram's dentures after everyone left. I found this out when Mother followed me in to the restroom at the parish hall and said with the most sentimental look on her face as she pulled a hanky wrapped lump out of her black vinyl pocketbook, "She would have wanted me to have these, at least for a keepsake."

I wonder if they plan to bury Uncle Willy with his wooden hand. I'm just curious, of course. But we were pretty close.

- STEPHANIE KONVICKA



COMING HOME

- BARBARA L. MARINO

I will never forget the day we came home. June 21, 1995. That day seemed to be filled with loud thunder, or maybe it was just my heart beating ...pounding so hard I could hear it. The whole time I was thinking, did we make the right choice?

I know my Mom must have been thinking the same thing. My mother was so beautiful. She had milky white skin and the most beautiful green eyes. Her hair had been a rich auburn, but now it was a silvery gray and she was so frail. Momma and I had been living in the hospital for two- and- a-half years. Although we knew she would never recover from this horrible illness, we just wanted to improve the quality of life. No longer were we asking God and the doctors to prolong her life - we just wanted what was possible. The best life she could have.

The choices were these: stay in the hospital until the inevitable happened, or bring Momma home. Coming home would mean dangerous risks. It meant bringing home all her life support equipment and just about every medical detail: machines, supplies, medicines ...could I list them all? Were we ready? Was I ready?

I will never forget Dr. Casar's words, "Mrs. Marino, if you go home, you could die tomorrow or just as soon as the paramedics leave you at home!" Then he turned to me and said, "Barbara, you will not be able to do this alone. You will need help and support and truthfully, in these 2-1/2 years, I have not seen that kind of support from your family. Some families can take their loved ones home. Others simply do not have that kind of family. Also, I will hold you responsible for your mother's welfare. I *will* help you, however; but I am limited to just phone consultations once she is at home." Well, what Dr. Casar did not know was that we were not alone. My mother had God by her side and she was very determined and courageous, and this was my source of strength.



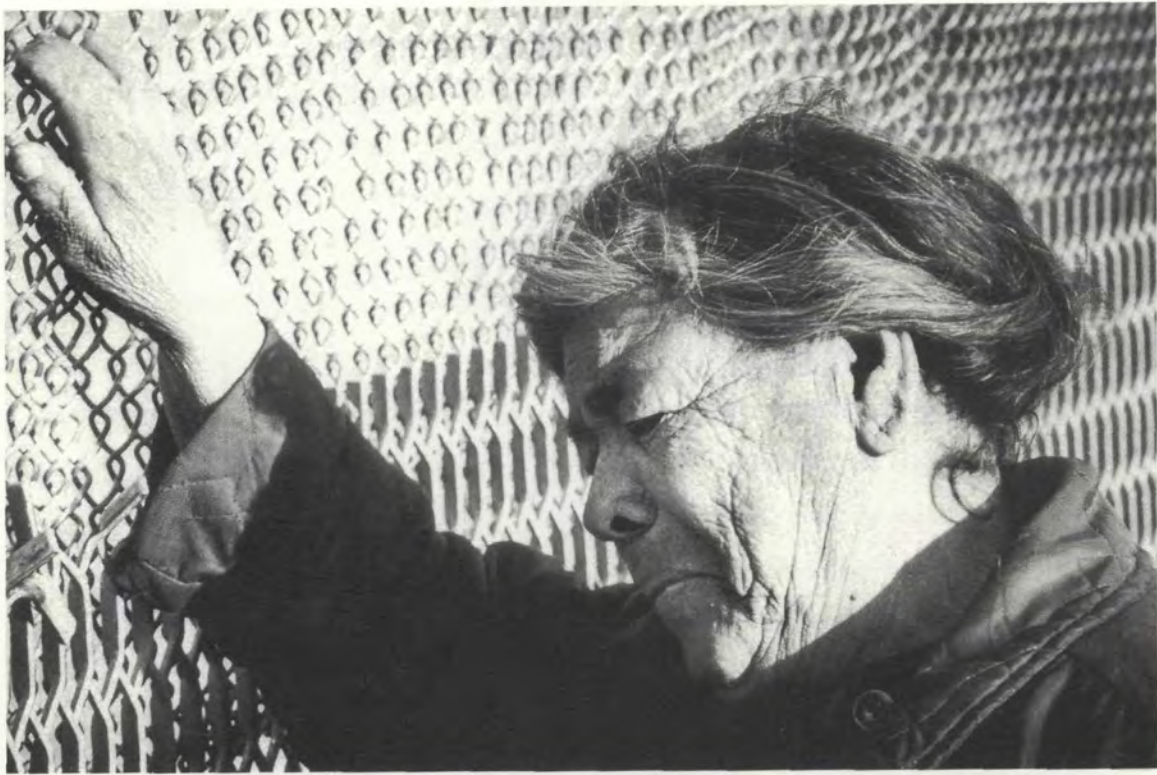
AFTER A MORNING RAIN - GINA BROUSSARD

I then turned to Momma and I said, "What do you want to do Momma?" She could no longer speak. The dreadful illness had also robbed her of this ability. So with all the strength she could muster she gestured " Lets go home!", just as I had thought. You see, we no longer needed words because we knew each others hearts.

Although I was afraid, I never let her see this. I guess we were both afraid, but we never let each other see it. We both knew it was there. I had a lot of training in those years spent in the hospital. I knew how her body worked, I knew her equipment, I could troubleshoot, and most importantly, I studied everything there was to know about her illness, her equipment, and meds... I had notes on everything! I knew we would have to be dedicated to each other. I quickly realized that Momma and I were now sharing one life. No longer was it her life or my life, it was our life.

I thought it was impossible to do with all the preparation involved, but finally it all was coming together, making it seem easier. And on that thunderous heart pounding day, as the paramedics brought us home, we did not speak much in the ambulance. I was worried. I kept thinking, " Did we make the right choice?". And as Momma was brought in on the stretcher, she looked all around her room. Her eyes were everywhere and tears of joy rolled down her cheeks. She had finally made it home. Then Momma turned and looked at me and smiled, her eyes so full of love for me. I knew in an instant that this was the right choice - it was the only choice! The future was to bring many challenges, but that was okay. We were home now, we were finally home.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF MY MOTHER, ANTONIA C. MARINO



KEN WHITE

SLEEPING KIN

I am
A rotting apple
Bruised knees
And stained skin
Alligator
One or the other
She is
A liar
Crooked face
And moving hands
Simple
flat all a round
it's
a silence of night
her shortage of character
she chews what she is
and does as she pleases
I am
Not the confused one
Not the victim
Only the wannabe
My baby hands
Soothe all my backpains
But revive my old heartaches
My heartthrobs
And those
Permitted to see
The hushed room
Sleeps within
I am
A rotting apple - MONICA T. VILLA



MY HONEYMOON

MARIA NOEL HERZOG



INTERVIEW WITH THE DEVIL

"Your reign has seen the last of it's corruption and malignancy, your prior record and envious relations have willingly participated in your capture. What we want to know now is the name and residence of your fellow Horsemen, witnesses have approved of their involvement, in addition, it's been revealed that they occupied your early chapters."

Agent, you will not hear a word about my friends so save your breath, dead end huh, the havoc has just got underway as portrayed in the biblical terms. You want me to break a loyalty that has been my trademark for years, it's just like you not to understand our unity, this sacredness is not carried through uniformed worms.

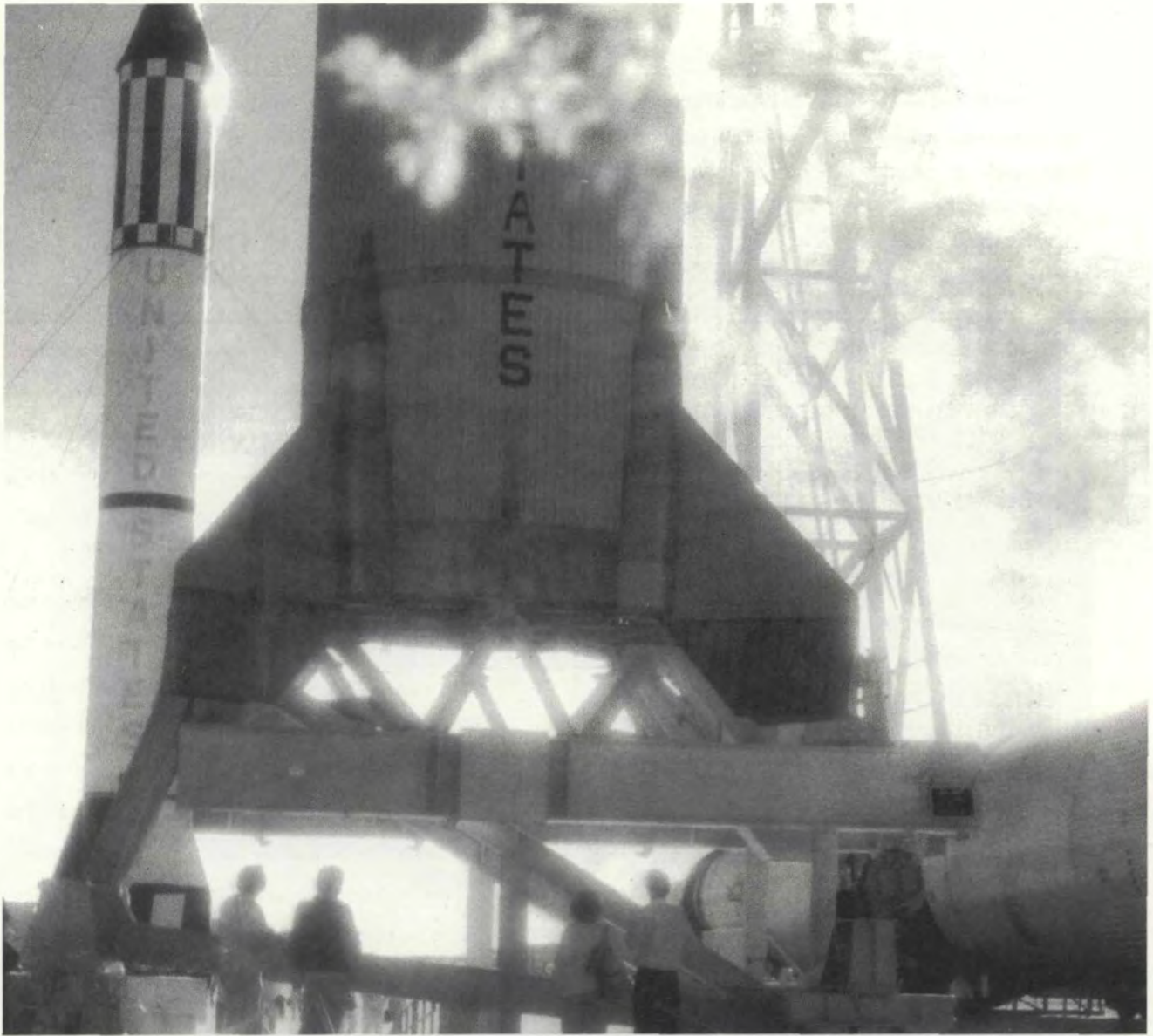
I will admit a few details about them, they are the friends I love the most, the one's who brought a comfort with them when their presence crossed my view. You want to know how many of us there are out there, I will not delight you with a number, just know that it has never passed a few.

You want to know some names, LOVE, TRUTH, HATE, and POWER, what either broke us up or kept us close together at the seams. While you think you're doing the world a favor by holding me a prisoner, you might have earned yourself some organized crimes, but never will you kill the scream.

With every one of them, I share a strong intimate introductory, one as a little boy, another at a bus stop, and some along the rowdy road. Aside the fights, the struggles, and the feeling of a family, a strive towards glory is what kept all our ideas prone.

Friends is too petty of a word, call us brothers agent; Speaking of whom, here they come, listen for the battering hoofs! Did you really think that my incarceration could tame the rage, did you really think this interview would end in harmony, much less be held in by Heaven's roof?

- ANTONIO SORIA, JR.



MONICA KRESSMAN

A METEORIC BOMBARDMENT OF ATOMS

It was a Tuesday in Fall. On such days people are quite fond of walking up and down the tiles of a crowded bus station. Their searching eyes are in dying hopes to find someone on the other side of the thick, sliding glass. What a comfort it must be to know that the automatic doors that separate them from the many horrors and insecurities of the world exists. They hopefully await to see their printed names in the rough hands of those that seek to greet them, to caress them, to actually embrace their meaningless existence.

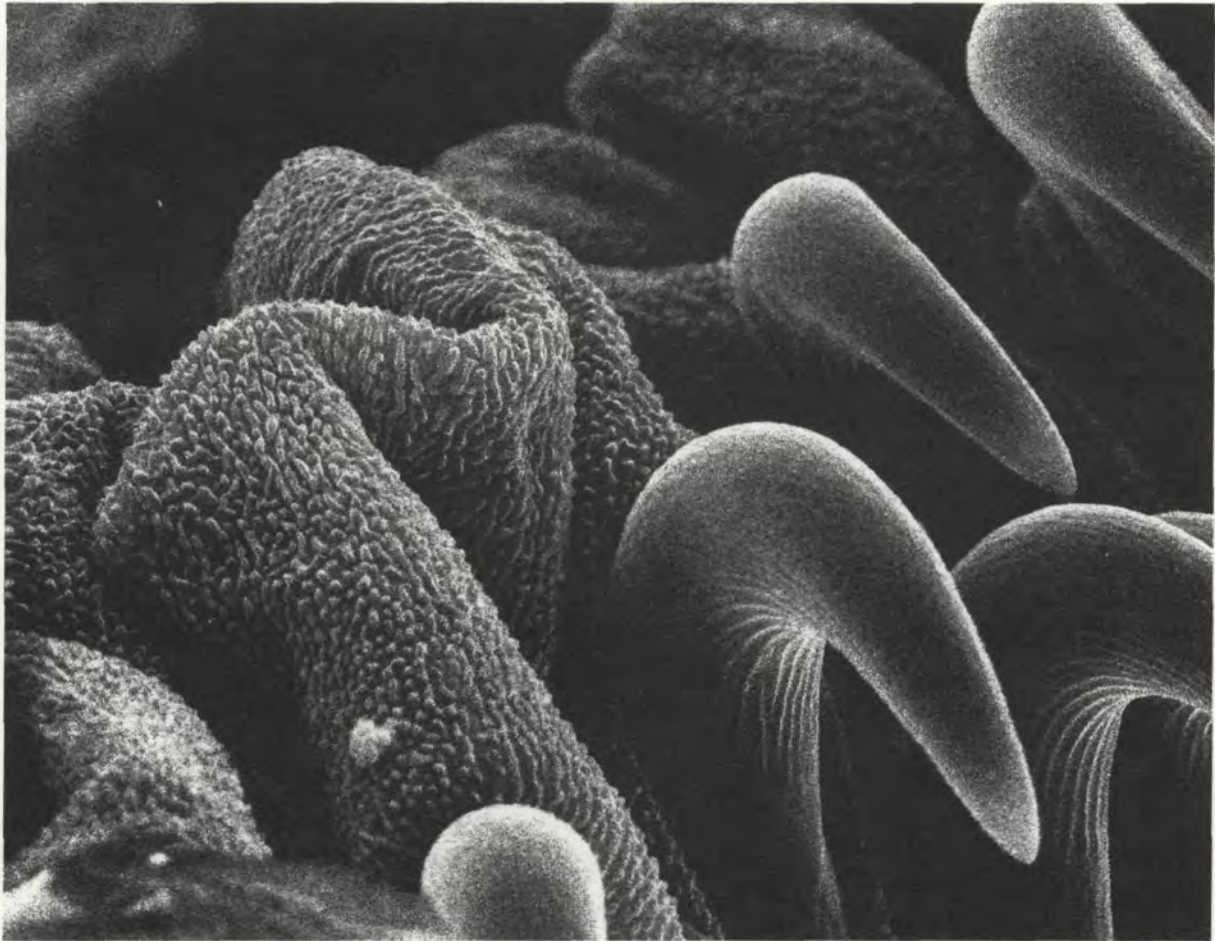
Walk-in though the gates with an angel and you will see the aimless machines walk back and forth... back and forth, curling their lips from the bitter cold. On one occasion I was abandoned by God and my angels fled. I was left with the nameless faces who bombarded me with their stench. Enraged by fear, a need arose, a deep yearning to see if I had still remained the same, still remained sane. Feelings of abandonment and strangeness flooded my mind, for at that moment in time, I was a stranger, an exile among the rejected.

I frantically searched the empty hallways for a reflection, a reflection to see if I still existed. I brushed up against madmen. I ran into a urine smelling room and came to find a broken, smeared mirror. I peered deeply into it. Nowadays unfamiliar mirrors are my temporary friends. A swollen and embittered image appeared. Green marks underlined the whites of my eyes and specks of insecurity and doubt were sprinkled over my body. How different I then felt. My skin, my life, and my soul were not in my possession anymore. No, I was different, changed into a stranger before my eyes. Sympathy a clear goal and yet I couldn't sympathize for this intruder before me. I couldn't, I wouldn't.

Suddenly a voice was heard in the still mist of the room. "Excuse me, sir." The words themselves irritated me. I looked, past my reflection and deeper into the glass. A plump, darken peasant stood in the left corner of the room. He was wearing rags for clothes. My hatred for him grew within seconds for he had stood there with his crooked mouth, open, watching me bathe myself in fear. At once I turned around and gazed upon him with the look of a madman, clinching my fists. I was angered by his presence, angered by society, enraged by this whole loathsome place. I was ready to pound his pathetic head within seconds. Breathing heavily, I said, "What? What is it that you want of me? Tell me, what?" But he stood there quiet, with the same stupid smirk carried by the other lost souls in this hell. After a minute or so he asked in a low tone, "Excuse me, I just wanted to know if you would like to buy this nice, shiny, chain?" How rage filled my veins. I had gone insane and this peasant wanted to make a couple of dollars off of my delirium. He then said, "I know this would make you beautiful." I could no longer hold myself and suddenly flung my crazed body on him. The blue wool of his collar itched the tips of my fingers. "What is it that you know? Do you know what I have become because of people like you? Fools like yourself!" I said.

After looking at his fat, swollen face I could no longer accept the fact that he was sane. His screaming, his screaming was that of a dog, a worthless dog. My legs, my fists touched every part of his body. It was then that blood flowed through the tiles of the crowded bus station.

SCANNING ELECTRON MICROGRAPH OF PROLEG CROCHETS
OF A TENT CATERPILLAR (MAGNIFIED 2400 X)



LASIOCAMPIDAC

STEVE KIVETT

STAIRWELL

Constantly traveling up or down,
Almost always in a hurry.
In times of a rush,
Steps are skipped,
Sometimes not too carefully.
In darkness, a sturdy banister
Leads the way.
As time passes, boards are replaced,
Giving a new appearance.
After much wear and tear
And many years, the entire foundation
Of the stairwell must come down
And be built anew.
The new steps may be
Red-carpet lined,
Or they may show a beauty
Of natural finish.
Only then does it seem senseless
To have to run instead of walk.
Only then does it seem senseless
Not to have taken the time
To look at the pictures on the wall.

- JULIE HERNANDEZ



RISE AND SHINE

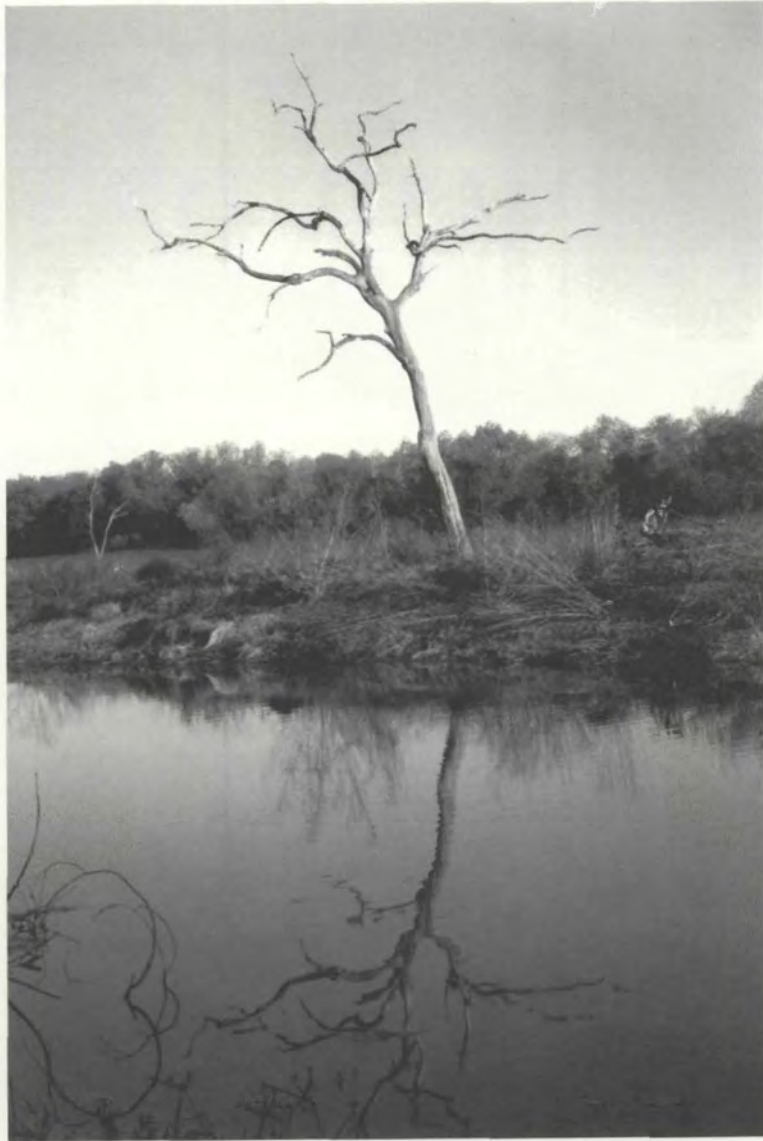
MIR ALI MEHDI RAZVI

DISQUIETING RIPPLES

A dream
reflects across calm
moonlit water
loving hearts and happiness.

The fantasy is disturbed
as the ripples roll in from
someone far away
throwing stones.

- KRISTIN HARRELSON



MIRROR

ELOY RAMIREZ

REFLECTIONS

At the end of the day
 With my hair pulled back from a face washed clean
 I look in the mirror and can't quite meet the eyes staring back at me.
 And I ask myself:
 Who am I?

Am I the sum of the parts that make me flesh?
 Am I no more than the square hands and ruddy skin of my mother?
 Am I simply the broad back, thick neck of my father?
 Am I?
 Because I'm told I favor my mother.
 But she says,
 That one, she got the worst of both sides.
 And then she laughs.

Am I that girl I sometimes glimpse in a store window,
 The one whose shoulders are bowed with an invisible burden?
 That can't be me,
 I stand up straight.
 And I know I'm not that girl my first love fell head over heels for because she had sad eyes.
 See,
 Look here,
 These are laugh lines.
 But I have to ask:

What about the memories?
 The six-year-old who answered to Stupid
 And thought her middle name was Bitch.
 The bruises that have faded
 But scar my soul.
 Is that me?
 Is that who I am?
 Because I like to think I'm so much more than acts done against me.
 I like to think.
 But I have to ask:
 Who am I?

The eyes in the mirror call me by name.
 They say,
 Look here,
 Woman.
 We are the sum of all parts that make us human.
 We possess the hurt that held us down and
 The strength that picks us up.
 And we have seen a world of hate
 But we still love.
 And the tears we cry
 From blue eyes
 Stream from the fountain of life.

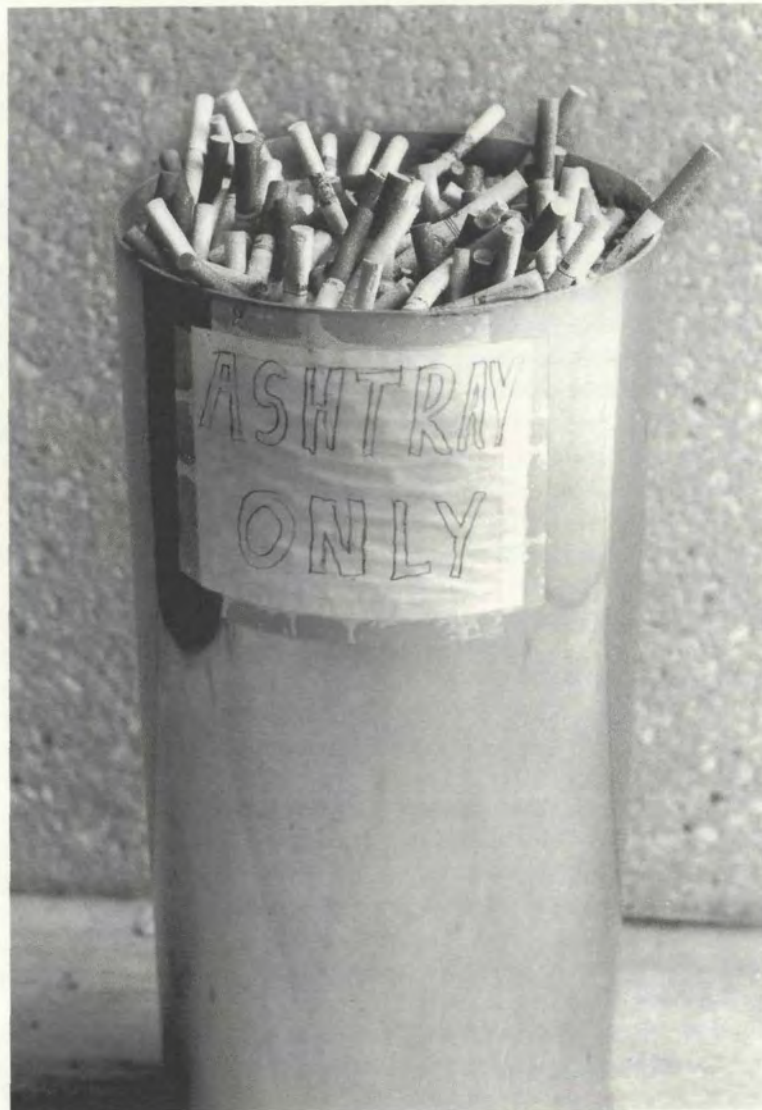
- STEPHANIE KONVICKA

THE MORNING AFTER

I get up in the morning
Brush my hair
Eat like a bear
Get in my car
Drive really far
Open the door
Fall on the floor.

*"This poem is dedicated to all students suffering
from stress and last minute papers."*

- BARBARA KRIDNER



FINALS
DONNA CARIKER

WHAT TIME IS IT?

I haven't known what time it is in years
Every watch has failed through an obscure mechanical failure or alien abduction
I haven't figured it out yet
At the height of the insanity I dismembered one watch per month
I haven't known what time it is in years
A functional timepiece eludes me
I haven't found a workable solution
I call it the phenomenon of negative neutron ion syndrome
I haven't know what time it is in years
All the clocks at my house are set 15 minutes ahead to avoid my demise
I haven't been on time – to anything – ever
Been in trouble in school, fired from jobs
I haven't known what time it is in years

- DEBORAH ROSE



FIRST PLACE - DEANNA PARMENTER

WOMEN'S MONTH PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST



SECOND PLACE - ANTHONY G. ALVAREZ



THIRD PLACE - MONICA KRESSMAN

