



**P**  O I N T O F V I E W  **W**

# Spring 1984

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"Untitled"

Veronica S. Potter

# Wiper Town

Joan T. Sherry

Drops of rain kerplopping down  
On pooled and puddled Wiper Town,  
As drivers sip the stir of day  
And wipers whip the blur away,  
Till blotches pinkle, green and blue  
Are really children off to school.  
Their bright umbrellas bob and yawn,  
Their tiny g'loshes slurgle on  
T'ward Willy Sugar's Doughnut Shop  
For one sweet sticky, licky thtop.

The tourists up from Sunny Crown  
Are mesmerized by Wiper Town;  
Its gurgling guttered alleyways  
And water-drizzled glass displays,  
Its splishing—splashing dashing feet  
On multi-colored mirrored streets.  
They gaze as sopping shoppers race  
To bottle up in awning space;  
To sneeze and wipe their noses dry,  
Then chi'n'chat ... as motors sigh.

With every wiper synchronized  
In perfect time ... with April skies,  
A fond wide rainbow circles 'round,  
As drops kerplop on Wiper Town.

# Not Bargained For

Gerry Sparks

You wandered in quietly  
On a boring afternoon.  
I approached you  
With my usual spiel,  
"Hi! Need some help?"

I took in a beard,  
Magnified brown eyes  
Behind scratched lenses,  
A green Brooklyn T-shirt and  
Spreading wetness under your arms.

I cased you as you talked  
But you refused to fit.  
I pushed and shoved with all my might  
To get you in a slot.  
"What nerve!" I thought.

The subject turned from IBM  
To deserts, sphinxes and strange foods,  
Egypt and a geologist ...  
My bytes and RAM lost precedence  
As adventure coyly beckoned.

Our conversations passed us by  
And turned to days  
To weeks to months.  
We grew and stretched and shared  
And played at love.

And in our play by accident ...  
We bumped!  
The impact caused our  
Shells to break and  
Left us naked in our game.

We stared, bewildered at the view.  
"What happened to us?"  
We exclaimed!  
"We're changed, we're different,  
Can't go back."

We flowed and floated on and on  
And struggled with our phenomenon.  
"It shouldn't have happened!"  
We cried.  
But it was too late:

And now you're gone  
Your dream fulfilled—  
Israel for good.  
And I am left in my new state  
In no computer mood.

# Final Beginning

Jo Ann Neis

The total peace and tranquility experienced while in the state of limbo teetering between life and death belonged to the woman for only seconds. A sudden explosion illuminated her mind with bright beams bouncing off one another. Their violent energy magnetically drew them together to form a solid image of light. The tremendous radiating force of the image left her weak and powerless. Her will became subject to this new power and its transcendent strength. An intense desire to be absorbed by this light began to swell within her whole being. She felt herself slowly emerging from the stiff form that sheltered her wondering soul for these long years. Aware of a voice calling from somewhere within the image, the woman desperately tried to reach it. Straining with all the force of her will, she could not yet leave the familiar body. Despair descended upon her psyche as she became conscious of outside forces working to keep her from her desire. Life for this woman had always been like this. Gradually, the piercing shriek of a siren began to arouse her semi-conscious mind. The descending invasion of torturous pain would not be held off any longer. It charged in on her helpless fragile body, engulfing, devouring and tearing at her frail nerves. The pain ravaged and penetrated her whole being beyond any horror she could have ever imagined. She tried to scream, but there was no sound: she was beyond the ability to produce any noise.

"The patient is going into deeper shock." The words seemed to come from a foggy closeness. She fought desperately to open her eyes, but the light in the room was too intense. More talk above her kept the old woman from drifting back into the desired respite of sleep. Strange words, words from a different language, were filling her ears. Someone's hands were wrapping her shriveled, cold, trembling body with a blanket. She could not stop her body from shaking so violently. She tried to recall what had hap-

pened. Vaguely, the woman remembered that she had been on her way to the neighborhood bakery. Because of persistent sharp pains from her bowed veined legs, the three block walk to the store took the woman forty minutes. Fearing a draft which would cause more pain to her bent body, the woman wore a heavy black winter coat and a woolen scarf on her head. She was very old, eighty-eight on her next birthday. Still, she could care for herself. She had little choice; she had no one. Her two daughters had died years ago, and the grandchildren scattered to places unknown. Occasionally, a letter would be sent, and at Christmas there were always cards and small presents. The feeling of loneliness never left her. When this empty pain left, she knew she would be dead.

"What is your name, lady?" Someone outside her world was speaking to her again. More words were filling her ears. She tried to understand, but her English was too poor. Her neighbors, too, had tried to talk to her for a time. Because of her broken English, she was ashamed to speak to them. For this reason, the old woman knew they gossiped about her unfriendliness. "She's not responding," a different, more harsh voice jarred her senses. It began to scream more words, more questions, that she could not answer. The pain and frustration were becoming unbearable again. In Polish her mind questioned why she never learned to speak English. Then, she remembered the children, and the everyday demands that kept her from pursuing her own needs. She had really never minded. She was brought up not to mind, "To mind, but not to mind!" she began to laugh with pain and hysteria. Saliva slowly trickled down the right side of her dry parched lips.

"She's beginning to respond; give her less oxygen!" commanded one of the unseen voices. She slowly felt a release from pressure somewhere on her face. From a short distance came a sharp cry from a child. Was it one of her young sisters crying for her mother? Once more the woman's mind slipped back into a semi-sleep. She was back with her parents in the country of her birth.

How happy the earliest memories of her family were! Before the great war in her homeland, life was filled with laughter and hard work. Then came the bombings. Her father was killed, her mother went insane. As the old woman grew older, she would often question how God would permit such things. Immediately recoiling from the horror of such thoughts, she would cross herself, asking forgiveness from her God.

The pain reached a new crescendo as she felt her body being elevated and placed on a hard table. A new kind of fear began to take over her whole being, the fear of the unknown. She could no longer control her bladder. The pain that consumed her body and the intense shame she felt made her wish for death. Again, her breathing became more difficult, and once more she felt something quickly being placed about her face. More strange words came from the voices of authority above her. Again, the woman shook violently with fear. "She's going into shock again," cried one of the authoritarian voices. A face began to emerge in her mind. It was the image of her husband. His entire face shone with love for her, his eyes smiled gently. She began to recall the days of their secret courtship. How his family had vehemently disapproved of their intended marriage! His father, a rich and arrogant man, grew livid thinking that his family would be associated with this girl, orphaned and penniless. So, together they made plans to leave their families and travel to America. In their parish church they secretly exchanged their marriage vows, begging God's forgiveness and blessing on their new life. Life in America was filled with hardships. The woman soon realized that those same sweet, kind attributes, which made her love her husband so dearly, made finding employment so difficult for him. Unable to speak English, lacking labor skills, no longer receiving accustomed respect, her husband slowly lost his fight against despair and depression. So, she, too, went to work. Her world became divided into two; a day-cook in a small restaurant for twelve hours, then, a seamstress at night. Living frugally, they were able to save enough

money to buy a small four flat apartment building. Oh, the exuberance she felt for months after they had first moved into their new home! The joy of their achievement once again made them giddy with laughter and happiness. How strong was their desire to have children to share in this happiness! However, after many years of frustration and quietly crying to herself, the woman made herself accept this sign as God's disapproval on their unsanctioned marriage.

"Give her more oxygen," again the voice broke through her thoughts. The baby's cry was sharper than before. She began to think of her own two little girls. They were babies when she and her husband brought them into their lives, abandoned by a young woman who could no longer care for them. What happiness they shared on that small income! Where did those happy years go? They ended abruptly the day her husband fell from a scaffold while repairing the window frames of a department store. Ten years later, after her daughters died within a year, she began to yearn for her own release from life.

"She's coming around." Again the voice of authority above her head was speaking. "Open your eyes! Can you speak to me?" The cold demanding voice frightened her. She desperately wanted the soft caressing embrace of her husband. Once more the old conflict between authority and desire fought within her.

"You must do as you are told!" the angry face of her parish priest began to scowl at her from somewhere deep inside her memory.

"But I love, him, Father. I need him." She shook uncontrollably now as he leaned closer to her in the confessional, so like a coffin. She left without the final blessing. The horror of such an action haunted her the rest of her life. Again, the present pain shot through her wretched body. Then, she remembered! She was going to the bakery, or no, was she running from the confessional? She failed to look up, and it was too late. She failed to ask forgiveness in the confessional; it caused her

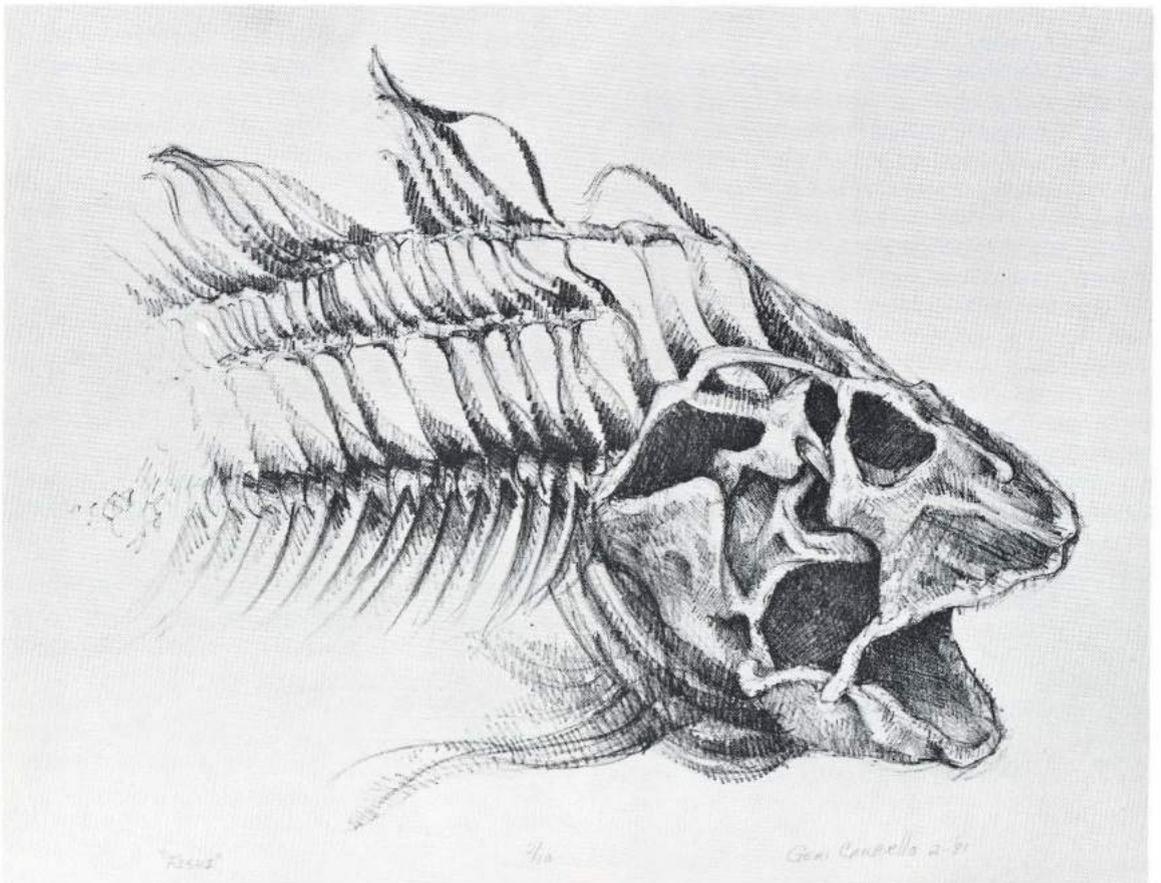
such anguish for nearly seventy years.

"Father, forgive me my sins!" she cried. Suddenly, her body began to convulse so violently that she could no longer control her thoughts. The old parish priest, her children, parents, the car speeding toward her, and the sharp stabbing pain, began to merge into a single vivid image surrounded by radiant energy.

"Beth, come to me," the image softly called to her.

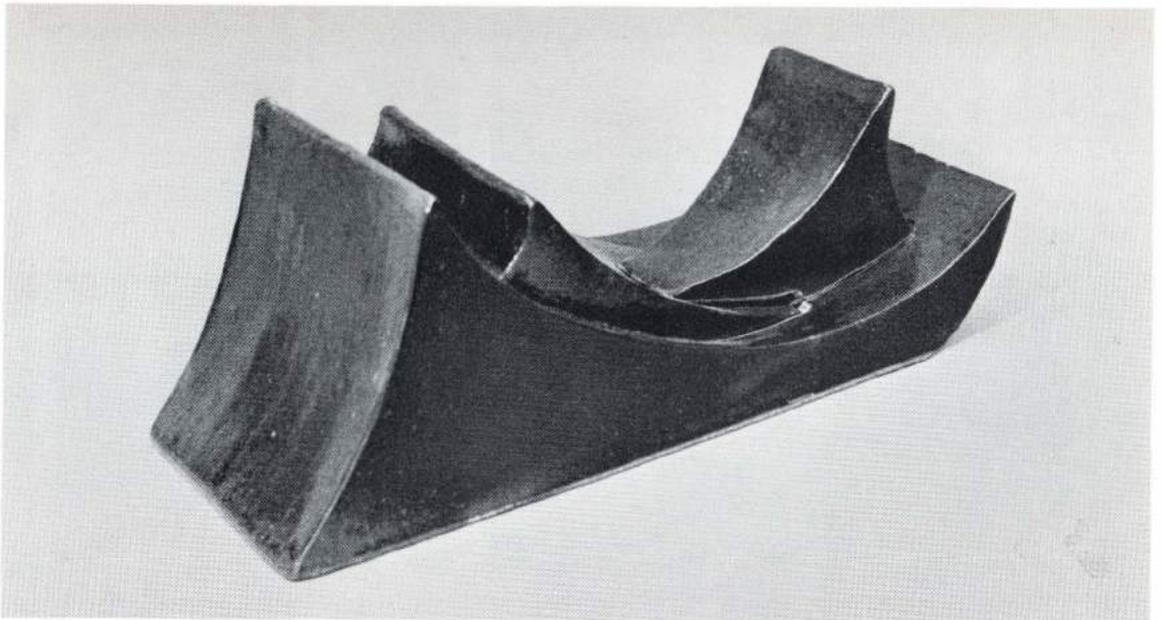
"I'm coming," she opened her eyes into the bright light; immediately the pain left her.

"We've lost the old woman!" the voice of authority cried.



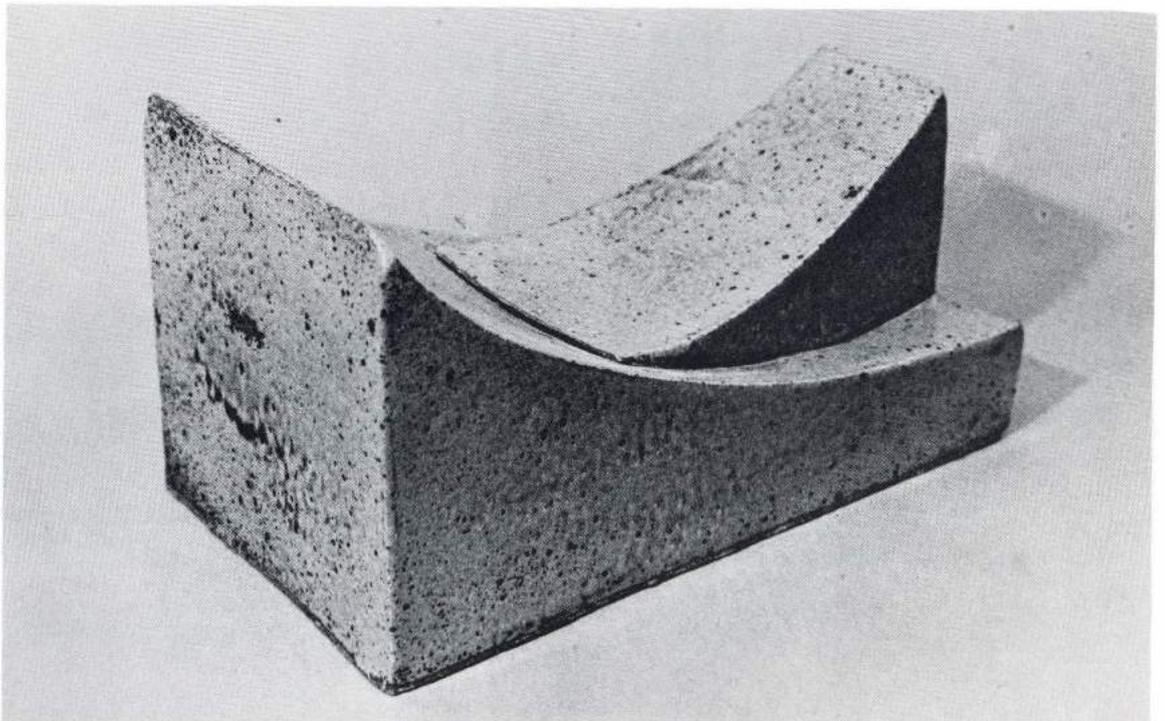
"Fishi"

Gerri Caravella



"Sailboat 3"

Steve Zeilstra



"Untitled"

Steve Zeilstra

# Coffee At "The Acropolis"

Ruth Erbach

Searching for the price of brew I brushed inside  
To have a cup or two and clear my mind.  
The native fare, you know the kind, old flannel,  
dirty shoes perched in line, all postured there  
like yesterday's Tribune,  
The last of which I drew myself aside.

Understand not I—the type to revel in the sheer delight  
of hirsute men but there, right-side one I surmised  
A spectre of Aegean Grace, an Icon of exalted face,  
A positive first issue.

Abashed I turned,  
to hail a recognition, a shellac coiffure  
that blurred and bleared my vision "HERE!" I cried  
and she intoned with article in hand.

Yes, I gestured with my spoon and noticed sidelong  
silhouette upturned, an aquiline of full-blood moons  
and sultry Spartan passions.

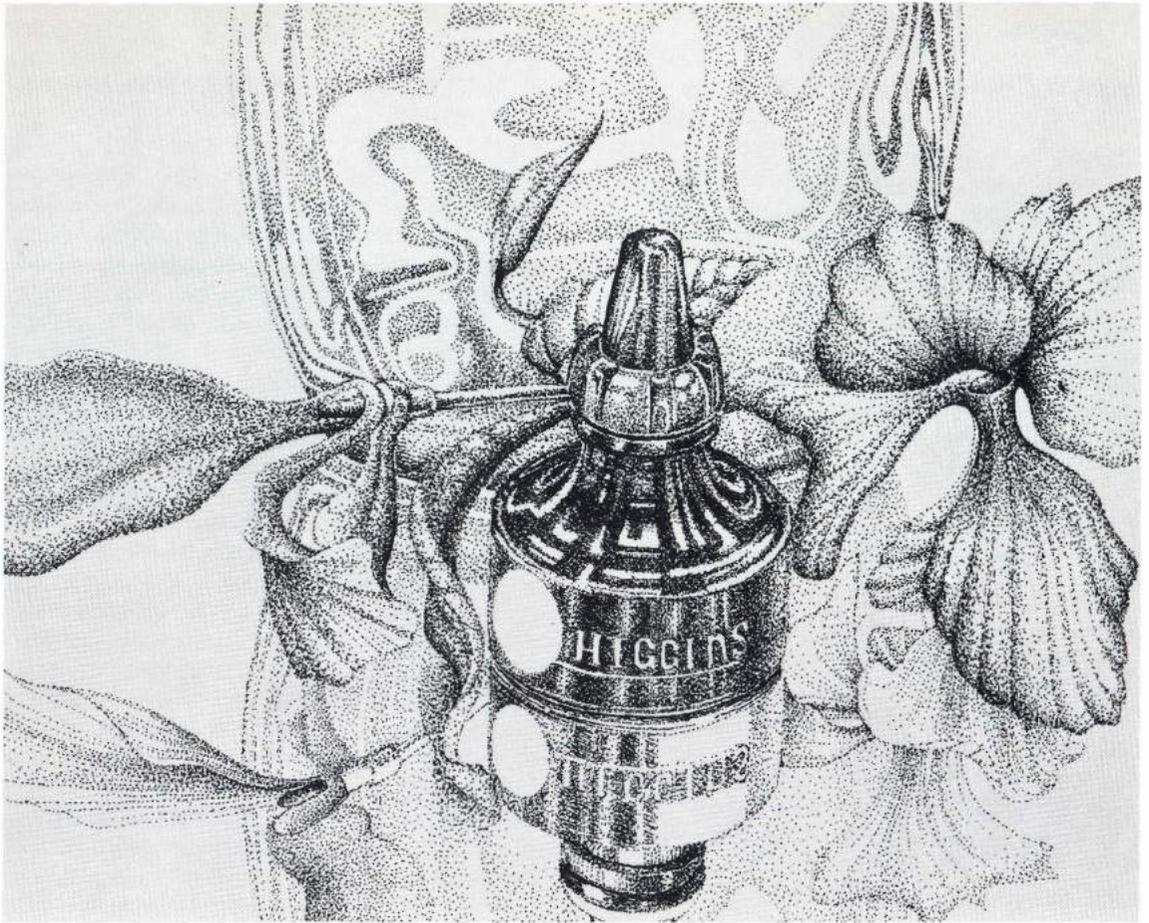
And there —

Amidst the ranks of Special K  
and rows of double pie tins,  
There I stood, wreathed in laurel, inhaling ropes of gold  
and flaxen tufts beneath my nose  
and all the salty brine of Homer's seas.  
"Athena," I felt mumbled to my brow.

"Adonis," I returned beneath a gasp,  
"I hear the chanting throngs, I fear, a summons  
to your fate my dear," I yearned to call "I'll wait!"—he silenced this  
"Excuse me ma'am, you're sitting on my coat."

So startled here, I made a move that sloshed and spilled my cup of  
brew, "Oh Sorry," I replied and guessed he knew my thoughts  
arrested at their height.

"Check PLEASE," I flushed and stammered as I fumbled with a bill,  
and, lurching toward the door, I burst outside  
to walk a block or two and clear my mind.



"Untitled"

Gary Montalbano

## Corner to Tomorrow

Darrin Ballman

Searching for light in a molasses like night,  
Moving is slow,  
Time sails by.  
Some wonder what happened to the noonday sun.  
It went home,  
A day's work done.  
Familiar shapes turn patternless and dark.  
Taking on new forms,  
New meanings,  
New life.

# Prom Night

Gordon R. Fisher

Oh, yes, but the whole school was up for it. Everyone celebrated in time-honored ways: pulling fire alarms, planting white mice in girls' lockers and dousing the old Armenian janitor with milkshakes.

The janitor was a good sport. Every afternoon when he came into the "caf" to clean up, grinning kids would ask the old man how his girlfriend was treating him. He'd only shake his head. This meant, everyone was certain, that he had gotten lucky the night before. So then he'd be pelted with questions concerning the taste, position and so on. The janitor wouldn't say a word. He really was a good sport.

About the only guy who wasn't celebrating was Declan McManus. He never went to the cafeteria; he spent his lunch hour in the library. He read quite a bit there, but mostly Declan wrote poems to and about Tina Scarpelli. The hour after he usually blew off his study hall to watch Tina in her gym class. Every day Declan swore to himself that today, today, he would muster up the courage to show her one of his poems, but he always got stuck on which one he should show her.

**Declan:** (Dressed in a dirty trenchcoat, thinking to himself.) Ah, those canny Reds. They almost had me there, crouched down at the bottom of a mine shaft, surrounded on all sides by two brigades and the KGB. And a platoon of gooks, too! Good thing I was able to make that atomgrenade from my Zippo, cigar and ham radio. (Chuckles.) A stink bomb took care of the rest, least long enough for me to scam. Course those chinks can't wear gas masks ... their heads are too small! (Laughs.) Anyhow, now that the good ole U.S. of A. has their precious microfilm back, and now that the KGB is on ice, I think it's time for a bit of feminine distraction. (Spots Tina across a dim, crowded bar.) Say, there's a doll.

**Tina:** (Makes eye contact with Declan, blushes.)

**Declan:** Hey, babe. Would'ja keep a lonely man company for a drink? Bartender, a whiskey sour for me and a Shirley Temple for the pretty lady.

**Tina:** (blushes even more furiously at first, then loosens up and smiles) I think ... I think you're cute. (Giggles.) Are you ... you wouldn't be busy Prom night, would you?

**Declan:** (Just smiles.)

Ah, but fifth hour was heaven for sweet young Declan! To merely catch a glimpse of his fair Queen, as she comes skipping out of the girls' locker room, why a more loveable lass never drew the sweet breath of life. Tina is such a true-hearted maiden, with always a sparkle in her blue-pool eyes, a spring in her light step and a kind word on her cherryred lips—ah, the very stuff of all his midnight passions. Why look at her, just look at her enchanting the burly Joey Slarne. He, captain of the football team and a veritable Apollo—oh, if you could only have seen him against Fairview last Saturday, dropping back to pass, dark mane in the wind, powerful arm bent back, firmly set proud leader of men. With ten short seconds left, his penetrating brown eyes discovered a slight crack in the Cougar's front line, and off he flew, flew, flew! Across the field, he sprinted like a wild mustang, and he sprinted on to last-second Victory! Hero! Now look, the same savior and champion is begging lovely Tina for a Prom date. He is on his knees for her! But our dove is not to be easily won. Regrettably, she informs him, truly sorrowfully, but she is fully engaged that evening. She must attend her goldfish's funeral and/or type out an exhausting term paper for her advanced Basket Weaving class. Oh! she is really honestly sorry that these wicked matters stand in the way of their love. After all, they had spent many gorgeous nights together, watching the pale blue moon and unblinking-bright stars from the back seat of his '73 Malibu. Those nights were wonderful, she whispers sweetly to him, but alas these important-oh yes, so vitally im-

portant responsibilities keep her from him. Keep her from him on the very night they should be together most, O terrible! Sorry sorry sorry. And Tina skips over to a group of girls, giggling, to discuss matters feminine. Unfortunately, Joey isn't of a maturity to comprehend the full weight of either the social implications of a pet's death or the importance of maintaining a high GPA in all classes. Joey is wailing—O lost!—and slamming locker doors. He is kicking the wall. He is starting a fight with his friend, whom he accuses of stealing his girl. The friend doesn't understand; Tina was always faithful to you, he cries. For an answer, Joey slams him a hard right. They fight like crazed zoo animals for her hand.

Young Declan, witness to all this, is in the clouds with happiness. After all, now that Tina has broken up with the ogre Joey and so is free for Prom, he may actually have a chance. The bell rings, the gym class scurries off to its next class and three teachers break up the fight. Joey will be suspended for at least a week. Declan leaves the gym without the usual regret of not finally asking Tina out. All the rest of the afternoon Declan thinks only of taking Tina to Prom.

## 2.

When Moby Dick awoke one morning from unsettling dreams of her, he found himself changed in his bed of kelp into a monstrous Ahab. He rolled over, rubbed his face, and thought about last night's party at Gatsby's house. Outside the library, down the winding stairs, someone called out coarsely: Come up, Kinch. Come up you fearful Jesuit.

No one has explained what that meant, or what the leopard was seeking at that altitude. But, seeing as it was the best of times, seeing that it was the worst of times, Declan pondered along with fathers and teachers about the nature of hell. Dostoevski maintained that it was the suffering of being unable to love, for he received a telegram from home

that read, Your mother passed away, and that left the entire matter in doubt; it could have been yesterday. Or, maybe, today. Declan awoke when he spied a walrus and a carpenter talking to Tina, of many things. They were crying over such huge quantities of sand ....

Declan had dozed off during a psychology film. More experiments with white mice. "Put that fat one in Mary Deeny's locker," someone cracked. Mary swung her folder at him.

"Blah, blah," thought Declan, and started to put some polish on a poem. He had a bold plan. Two more hours and he'd be at his final class of the day: creative composition. The class he'd waited for all day. All his life. Tina Scarpelli was in this class. A sonnet was due today and, when things got underway, they'd be told to find a partner, switch, and interpret each other's works. At 2:55, Declan would stride across the room, and bravely speak his first words to her. She would read his sonnet, a heart-breaking religious vow of devotion. She couldn't help but be touched. In this dizzy moment of her weakness, he would propose Prom to her. B. F. Skinner was declaring that pigeons were just the sort of something-or-other to prove his theory on the this-or-that. Declan drifted off, and wondered what three would bring.

**Declan:** (Dressed in torn shirt.) Come on, babies. I gotta go on in a few minutes.

**Throng Of Women:** Noooooooooo! (A short blonde throws herself at his knees and pledges an undying vow of heart-breaking devotion. However, this certain kind of devotion is still illegal in thirteen states. A tall red-head begs to hear "his howling thing," like in the song "Republicans Suck (Feed All the Bastards to the Sharks)!") The other girls squeal at the prospect.)

**Declan:** Lay off. I gotta show to do. Hey, you crazy chick, leggo my shirt. Don't tear it! I paid a lotta bucks to a famous French designer to rip it this way.

**Brunette:** (Still clawing at him.) Listen to me, Declan. I'm Susan Easy from Rolling Stone ma-

gazine. I was wondering if I could get a statement from you before (Incredible roar off-stage) ... before ... (Even more incredible roar.) ... preferably in your dressing room. (She grins.)

**Declan:** Lissen! Doncha ya hear it? They're waitin' for me out there! My fans are waitin'! Sorry girls, but I gotta go perform my music for my fans!

**Tina:** Oh please just stay a second longer! Please oh please!

**Declan:** Jeez, Tina, cut it out. I used to like ya, ya know, but now I got 'em waitin' in line. (Nods at the reporter Susan.)

**Susan:** (Sultry look to Declan, dirty look to Tina.)

**Tina:** You bitch! He's mine! (Dives for Susan, huge brawl breaks up between dozens of women over Declan's body. But Declan escapes unharmed, and goes out and plays four hours of the most awesome, loudest....)

“ Mister McManus ? Can you read me, Declan ?”

Waving Jung in his face, Mr. Acripolsky asks again if he's been paying attention. Titters from the class. And the cruel Mr. Acripolsky, with a face as blue and bloated as a drowned man's, leers at Declan for a moment. Then he turns abruptly, as if to completely dismiss Declan from the realm of the living. "I'll see you after class, Mister McManus," he throws over his shoulder and launches directly into the concept of humanism as defined by Maslow. Mary Deeny says something under her breath—something Declan can't quite catch, except for his name—and the whole class laughs. Declan, for the remainder of the period, is sure everyone is staring at him.

**Acripolsky:** Zo, you von't talk, eh? Vell, Ve'll soon fix dat. (To a nearby Gestapo officer.) Get da Captain! Mach schnell!

**Declan:** My name is Declan McManus. My rank is colonel. My serial number is....

**Acripolsky:** Shut up, Amerikaner pig! Das Captain vill soon loosen your God-forbidden

tongue!

**Declan:** Yeah, and your Fuhrer's mom wears army boots and chews bubble gum.

**Captain Mary Deeny:** (Enters in full military uniform, brandishing a whip.) HA! Dis little runt! No problem; das ist a vimp! He couldn't even get a date for Prom! HA HA HA HA HAHA HAHAAAAHA HAHAAAAHAHAHAHA! (The two Nazis laugh madly for about twenty minutes.)

**Declan:** Keep laughing, clowns. My division is on their way and we'll teach you a real comedy lesson—in English!

**Acripolsky:** Bah! You lie, swine! Captain, administer dis torture!

**Captain Mary Deeny:** Gladly, Herr General!

**Declan:** AHA! while you were busy yukking it up, I sliced my bonds with my watch-switch-blade. (Springs up from his chair and deals Capt. Mary Deeny a left hook that sends her sprawling.) Take that! (To Acripolsky) Listen—(A far off rumble) The first airborne division is on their way! Now we'll see who's asking the questions! (A loud bell rings)

Class is finally over. Everyone files out, murmuring about him, Declan is sure. Red-faced, Declan stays behind to deal with his punishment at the cruel hands of Acripolsky. Thankfully, he is brief. Shape up or ship out, grades are coming out soon, blah blah blah blah blah.

With a bad taste in his mouth, he doesn't hear a word of the lecture. He just revises his sonnet. It's nearly perfect when the bell rings.

Even so, he isn't able to concentrate during geometry either, for the excitement is mounting and Declan can't seem to sit still. He keeps dropping his pencil, for instance. Then he knocks his books over. He manages to knock his neighbor's books over. He drops his notebook. Instead of completing a worksheet, as instructed, Declan doodles the name "Tina," in a rich variety of letters, all over the answers column. Declan is shocked when three arrives. Already!

Declan walks down to room 333, creative

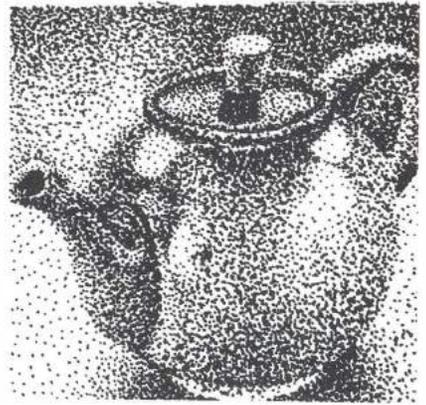
composition. He feels as though he's walking on another planet; everything seems strange. He sits in his seat, and it doesn't seem like the same seat. Tina comes in a minute later. As usual, Declan looks at the floor when she walks in. Mrs. Alridge scurries in late, with three armfuls of "sloppy themes" with "very poor grammar and content." She becomes more specific, using Declan's paper. But he doesn't even notice. He's watching Tina. She's laughing at something Joe Dawson, captain of the basketball team, just said. Declan sees the makings for a complete disaster. Later, he isn't at all surprised when he hears that they are going to Prom together.

Declan takes out his perfect sonnet, crumples it and lets it fall to the floor. A disapproving look from Mrs. Alridge follows him out into the hall. Declan thinks that the library would be a wonderful place to visit now. After all, he hadn't yet read Finnegan's Wake, or The Red and the Black, or Sentimental Education, or Les Miserables or....

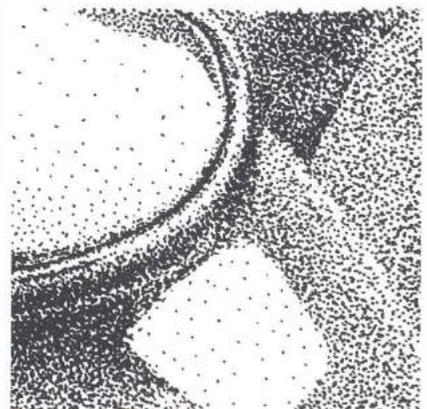
3.

The remainder of the school year was like what dentists try to convince their patients a tooth filling is: quick and painless. It flew by in a tornado of missed homework assignments, tardies, after school detentions, etc. At least it was that way for Declan.

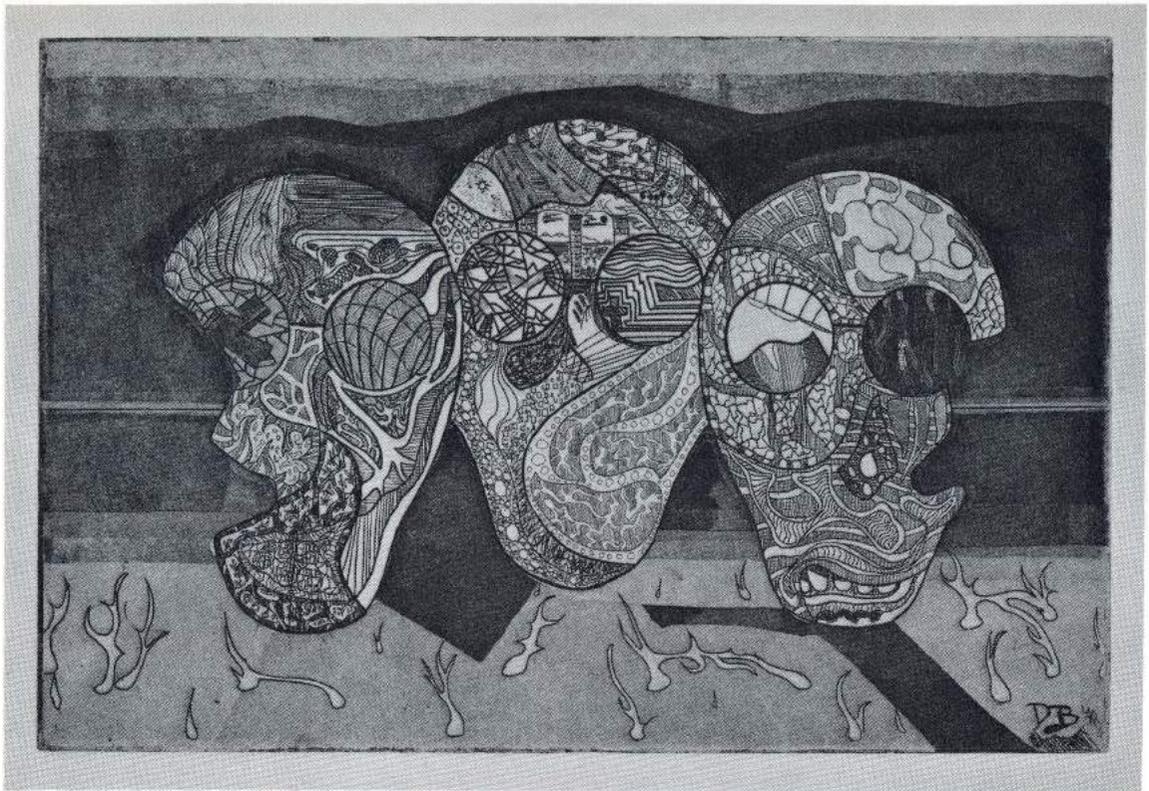
As for the morning after he saw Joe Dawson and Tina talking and made a quick exit, it was pretty normal. Declan woke up, realized he'd forgotten to write an English theme and practically wrote it on his steering wheel on the way to school. Somehow, though, the theme turned out well. The paper's subject was failed expectations. He received a B-Even before he got the highest grade of his semester, Declan knew the composition was good and gloated all afternoon over it in the library. It wasn't until fifth hour that he remembered that his heart was broken.



"Tea Pot"



Daniel G. E. Skaggs



"Face Skulls"

David Burch

## Assemblage

Sherry Maday

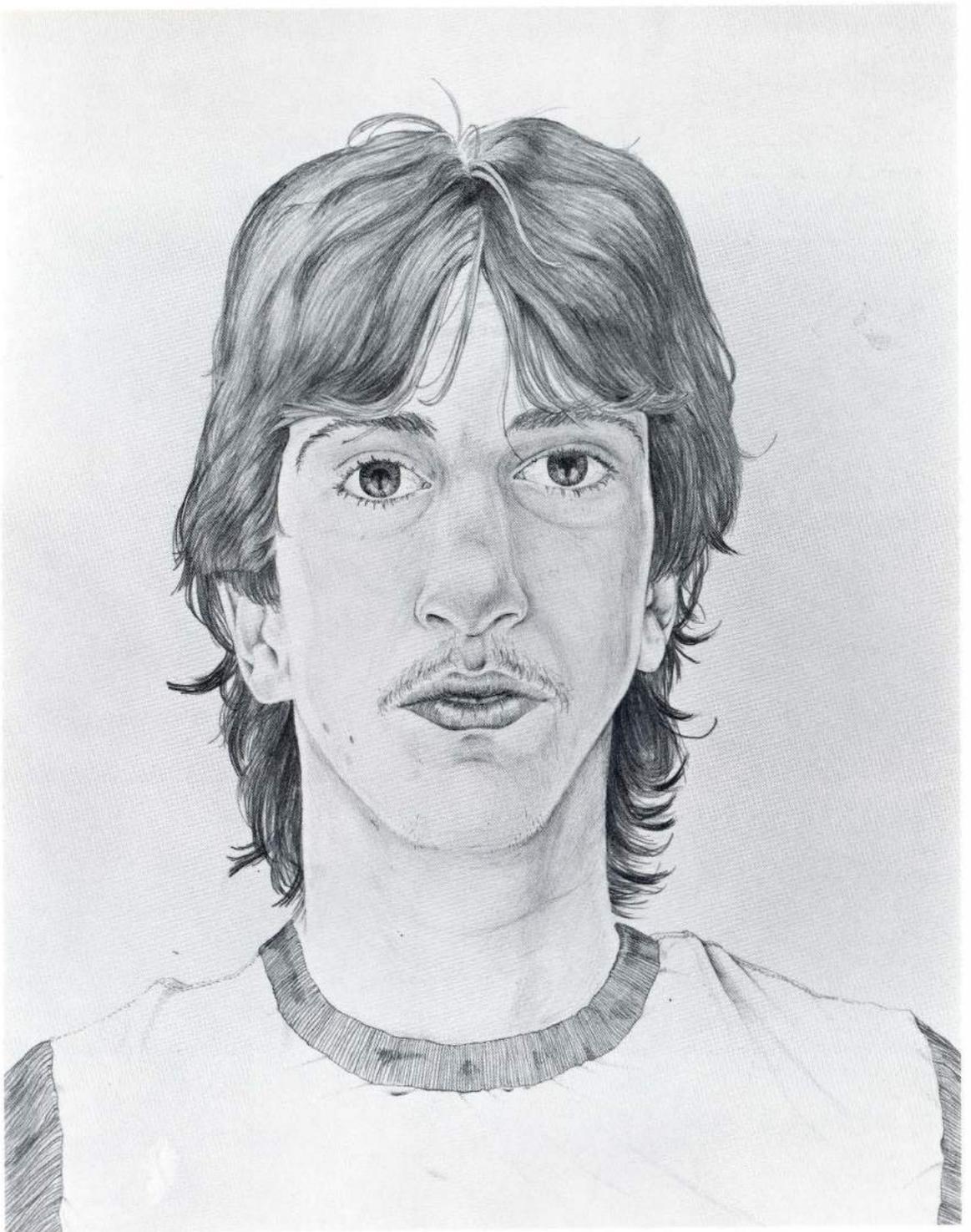
Hissing, the Dragon swooped, it shrieked and flew,  
 beating its wings against a heaven fraught  
 with poisoned breath. The grim marauder brought  
 a scourge of grisly glory, sparing few.  
 By gory slaughter so its pillage grew:  
 bold by the poverty of youth, it sought  
 the most resplendant, finest treasures wrought;  
 and grasping, unrelenting, slew and slew.

But Dragons lose their teeth as they grow old;  
 their softening bodies mold their vast undue  
 plunder. Forever waking, guarding gold,  
 they watch, and, searching, wary, trying to  
 secure their hoard, they sink deep into holds  
 and darkly disappear—as Dragons do.

## Stormy

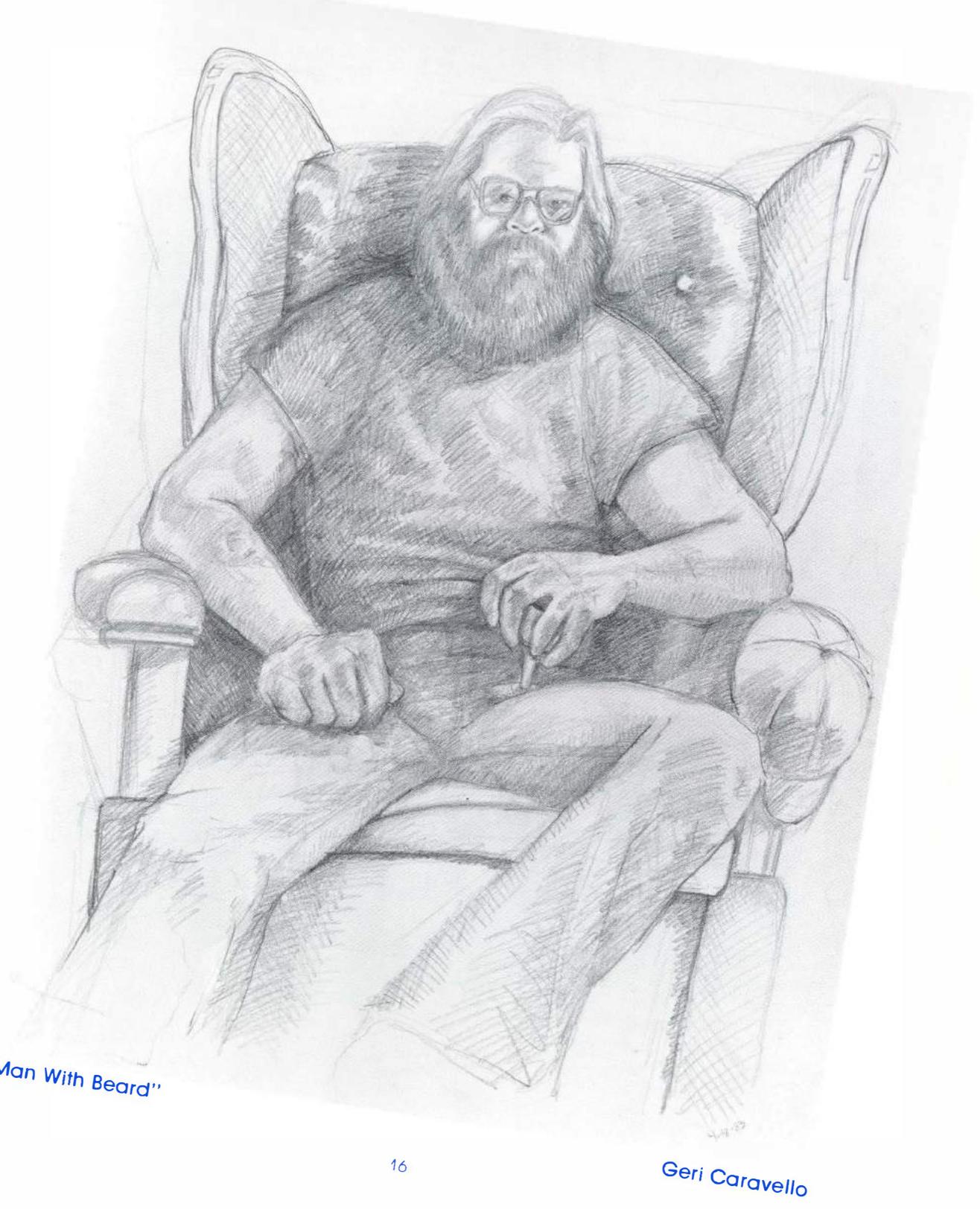
Jeffrey Hill

The clouds flow over;  
 The rains pound down  
 And flush the dirt  
 From the sky.  
 The barriers break;  
 The pools spill  
 And wash the dirt  
 From the land.  
 Engulfing whirlpools form;  
 The waters rush  
 And pull you  
 From life.



"Self Portrait"

Mike Mulkey



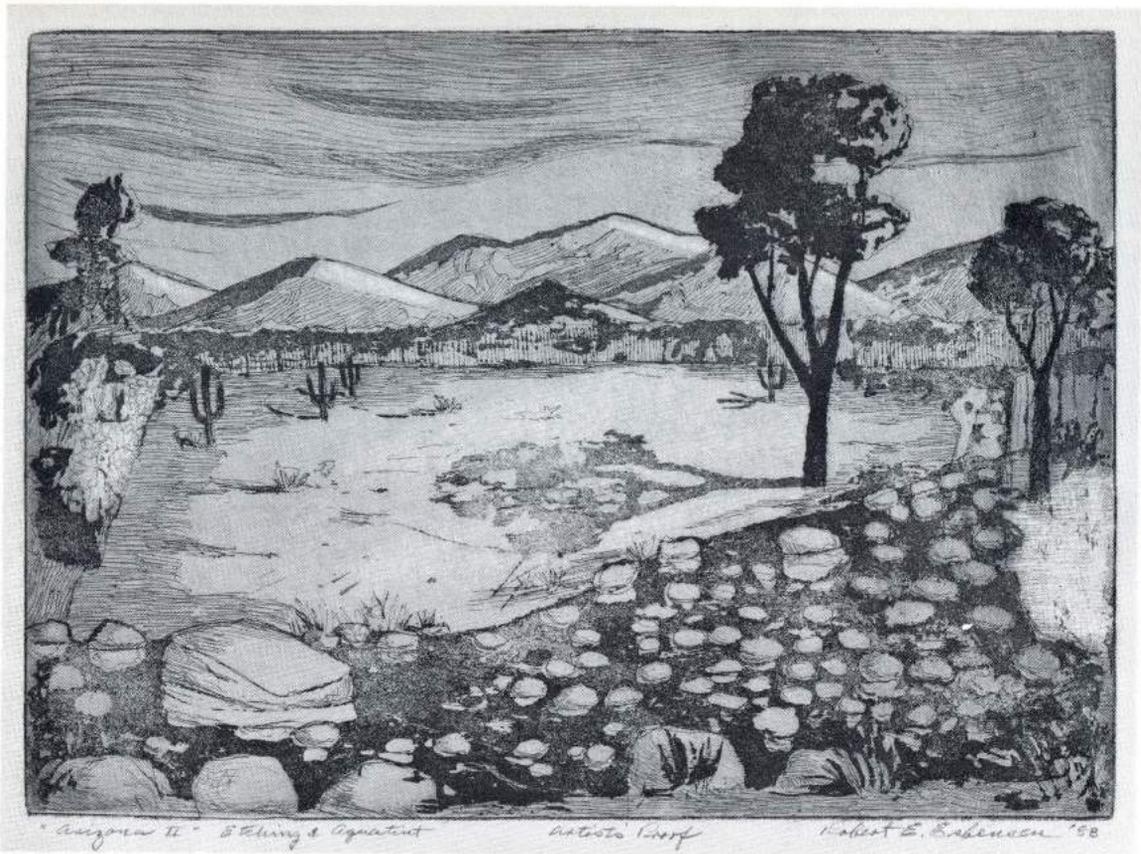
"Man With Beard"

Yvette '83



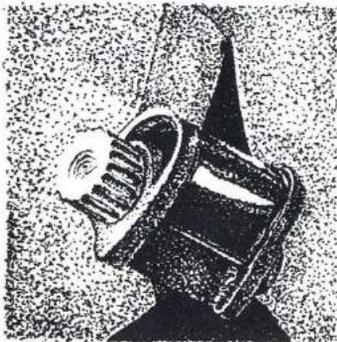
"Untitled"

Yvette Levita



"Arizona 2"

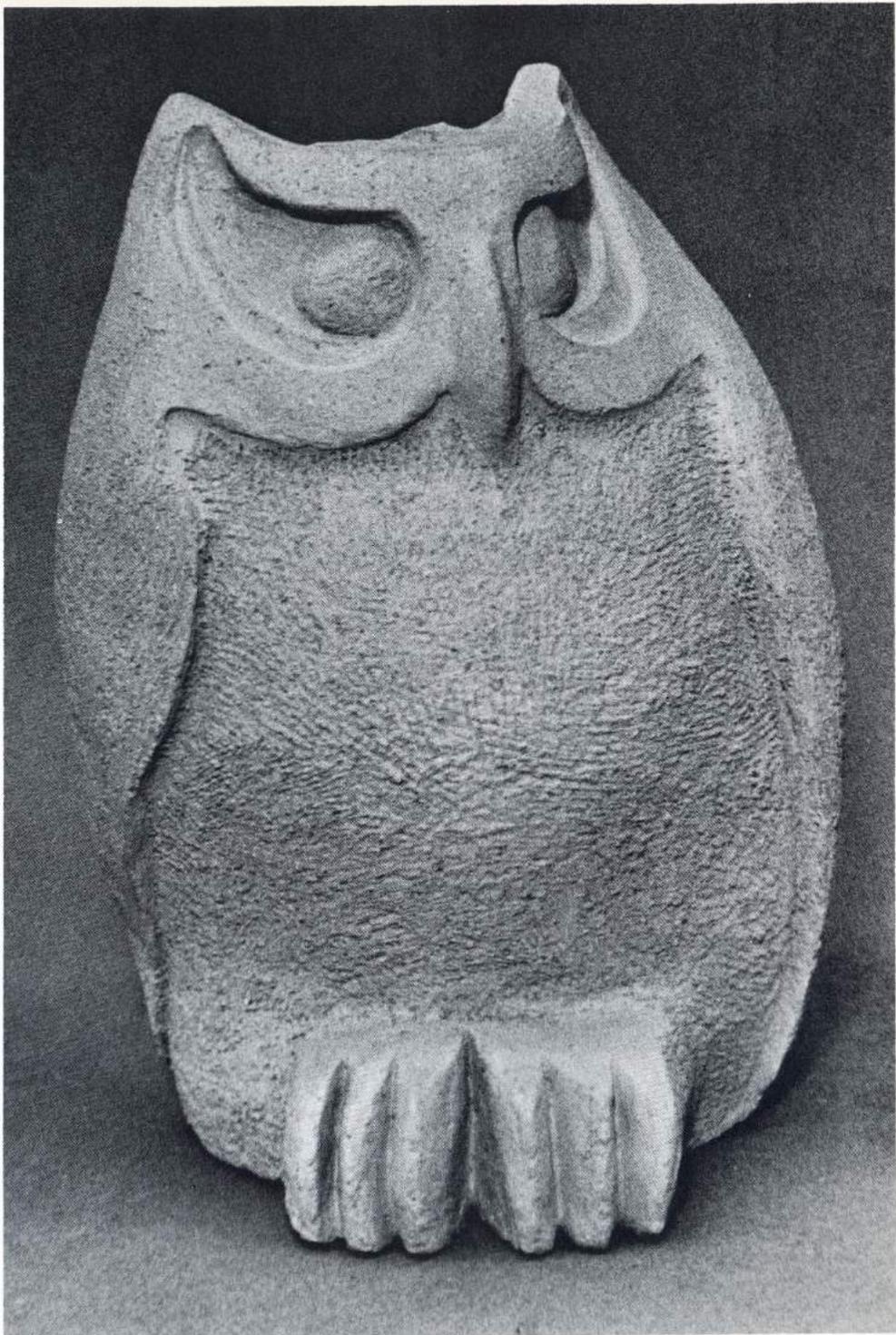
Robert E. Esbensen



"Untitled"



Lisa Strissel

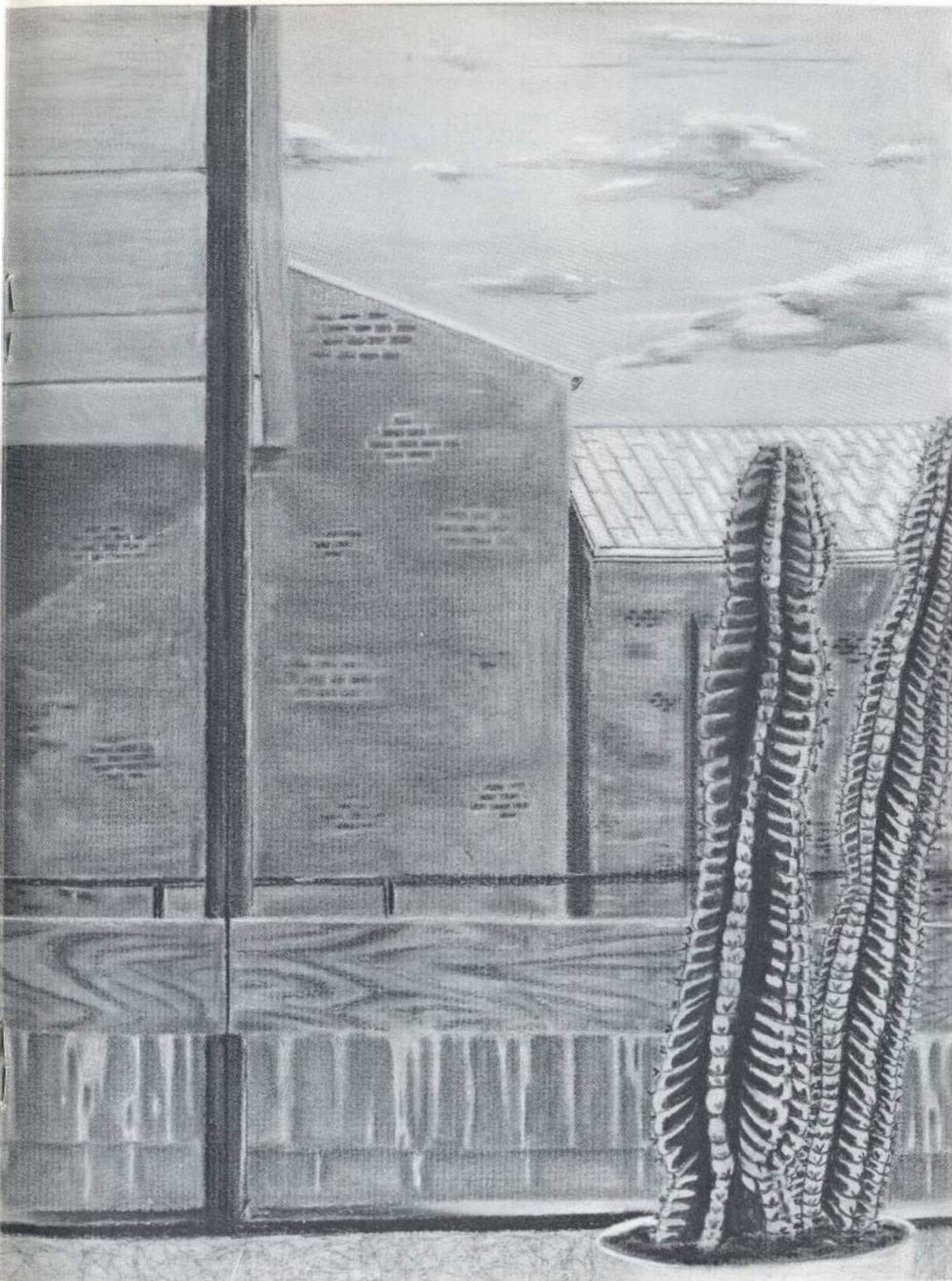


"Untitled"

Mike Neville



"Untitled"



Michael Milkey



"View Master"

Kristina Neville

## [Untitled]

Ruth Erbach

There is a scheme which must direct this trend,  
Weaving colored straws of yours and mine.  
And yet there is no visible design  
To the hues of like and contrast that we lend.  
This tapestry of rich and ragged blend  
Explodes in vivid jigsaws in my mind,  
Immersed and meshed, the texture of this twine  
Composed one fabric destined to one end.  
The artistry of wool and gossamer,  
Braided and engaged in gilded tender,  
Are you, I and us, in syncopation.  
Distinguished and defined in every member,  
Devoid of pattern, reason these threads render  
One unique magnificent creation.

## Nicknamed Coteca

Ana Marie Machado Lee

A black shadow dressed in white  
Story-teller  
Full of songs and threats  
Care, schedules and duties  
My pleasure, my play, my shelter and cosiness  
Translator of life's expectations  
My nanna, you are life and mysticism  
I hear you saying:  
"Girl, girl, my child — if you run the beast gets you,  
If you stay the beast eats you."

# Love Affair — An Enthusiastic Liking

Ana Maria Machado Lee

The unbuttoned buttons of a silk blouse  
Lying over the rocking chair  
The swimming suit that was never worn  
The crystal-like water of a frozen lake  
The various reasons of many chances taken  
My attitude of freedom being free  
I've survived, we have overcome the exasperating vicious circle  
Passion, illusion, drama, fantasy.  
Let's make an honorable pact  
You the man  
I the woman  
We are companions, friends  
You are not my playing-card king  
I see you  
You can look at me  
Forgive me if I don't say I love you  
I enjoy liking you.

## Quality

Mark Elkins

Do this poem stink.  
It do no smell. It do no give odor.  
Poem do no stink.

## Value

Darrin Ballman

Hello dear friend, I'm glad you're with me now.  
Sitting near and listening to me.

Understanding.

Tell me what it is you think  
About my life compared to yours.

The blackest of nights will stand  
against the day,  
But only when they stand together.  
White on white is only dead black in  
the daytime.

Where are my areas of gray?

# Excavations In A Buried City

William T. Williams

1930

Rain ...

Glistening deluge ...

Descending from dark and rolling regions that overhang the city.

Cold and lacking pity, it falls in undulating sheets;

In angry, blowing curtains that sweep across the streets

And flail against the wounded edges of the land.

A clutch of people stand beneath its power.

Huddled, as though uncertain of the hour,

They watch and wait;

And seem to gaze across a courtyard through an open gate.

The church behind them rises vast and grey

Out of a heavy veil of mist that scores the day.

Inside, a funeral moves toward its faltering conclusion.

A sickly sweet infusion penetrates the air around the altar,

Rising from sprays of waxen flowers, and from an open coffin.

The youth within it smiles as though asleep.

His dreams seem deep, seem to smooth and soften

Lines around his mouth pulled taut with pain

Through all the days and nights he fought with cancer.

The question asked by all seeks for an answer

That somehow remains concealed within the droning benediction.

No prediction made a year before would have it

That the school's star forward would lie stone dead this noon,

Nor any other rune foretell of this unanticipated grieving.

Believing that, his red-rimmed classmates look around in wonder,

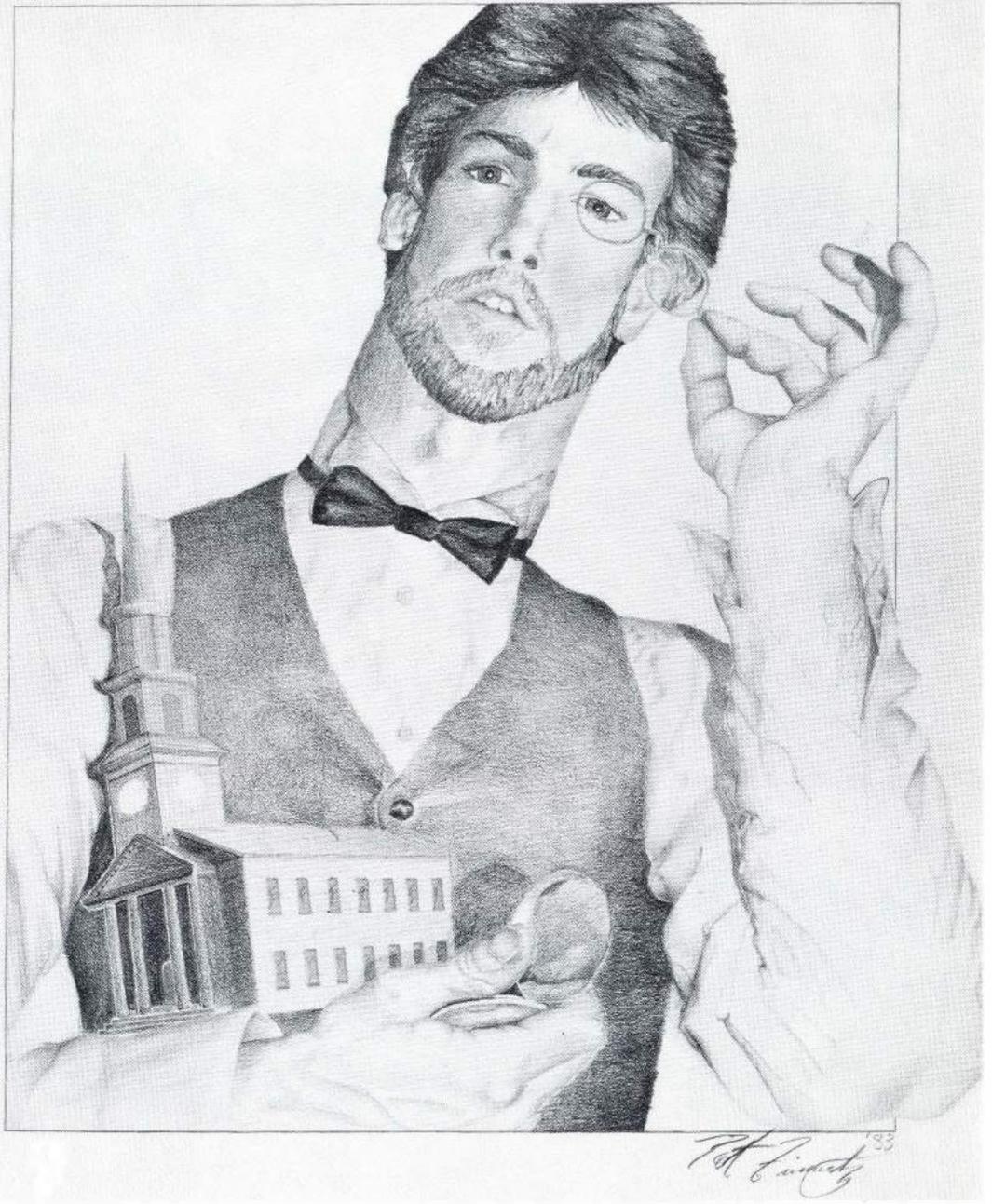
A bond that joined them each to each now broke asunder.

Each alone and drifting knows, although striving hard to mask it,

That no little of himself is also in the casket.

And as the service draws to close, each one seems to learn

That the happier years of the long before might not again return.



"Self Portrait"

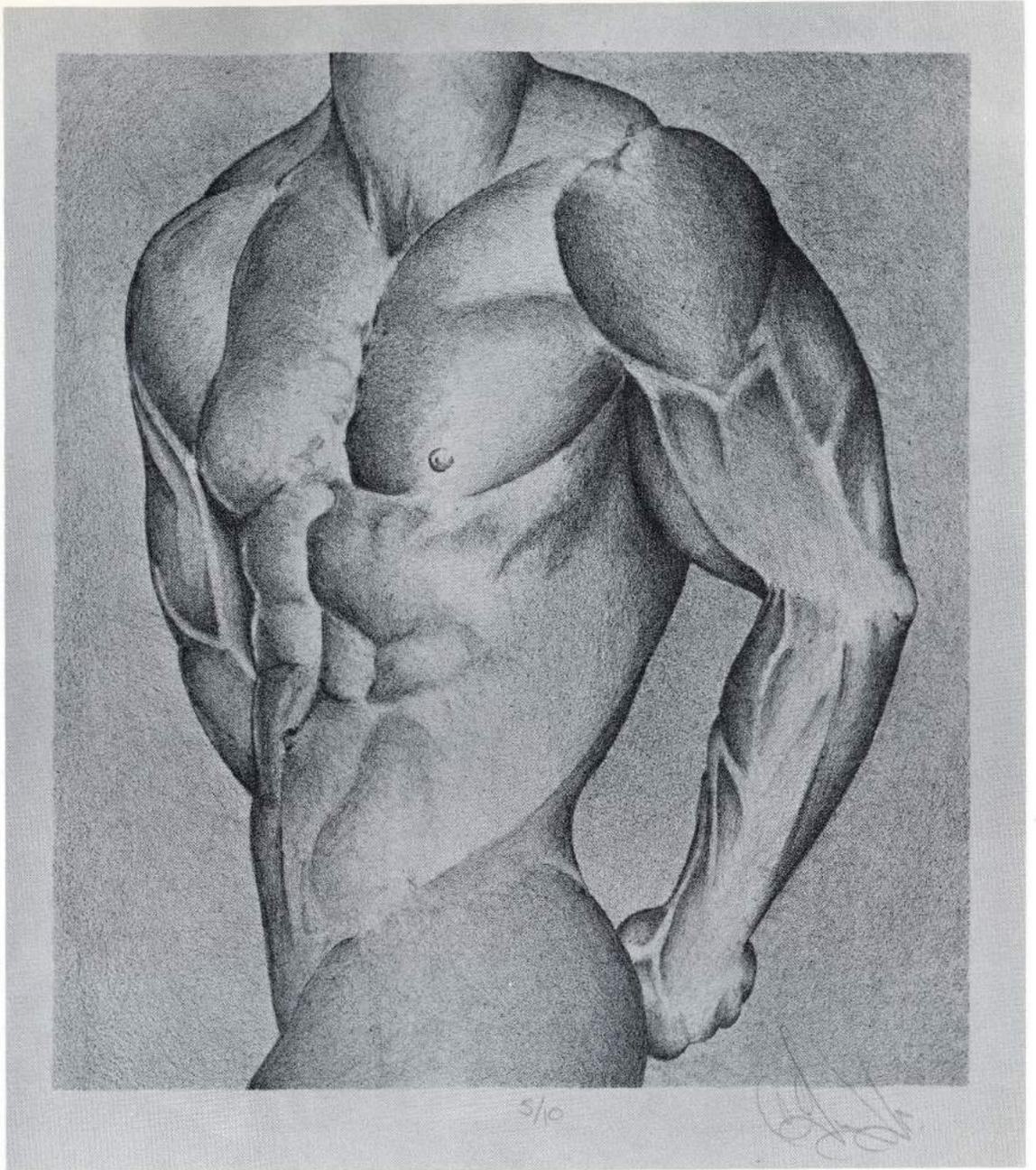
Pat Finnerty

# Excavations In A Buried City

William T. Williams

1934

The snow falls, wet and heavy, through the trees,  
A white and billowing screen that conceals the overhanging branches.  
Blustery and raw, it strikes the cheeks  
Of those who trudge along a winding road  
And lands in drifts around their frozen feet.  
Sweet is the reverence for a risen Christ  
That would bring them forth on such an Easter morning.  
As though adorning, the day itself strives hard against the clouds,  
To cast them back as one might throw shrouds,  
Or roll a stone from off the rough-hewn door  
Of a tomb that moves through time by some far shore.  
By some far shore—  
By some rocky shelf far from this place of time and drifting snow.  
Some far sanctuary where the dead may rise,  
Some far land where dying dreams may go.  
And yet, the snow falls heavily on this Easter morn:  
Upon hopes borne by those struggling through the wintry deeps,  
And upon the earth asleep beneath this unanticipated cover,  
And over branches laden with buds now glazed with ice.  
The road to church seems twice as long this day.  
The incline up the hill seems far more steep.  
Sheep half-vanished in the storm stand huddled by the fence,  
Pensive as they gaze at those who pass.  
They might appear to ask: Why is it that they go,  
These wavery images dark against the drifting snow;  
These phantoms that the pealing of a bell draws onward?  
But woe to those who cannot read these Easter signs;  
Whose heavy steps move elsewhere on more martial lines.  
To a land far from this good place of Christian slumber.  
Far away, where pagan forces clash in countless number.  
Yet here the snow falls upon the morning of the Resurrection,  
Filling up the woods with deepening drifts of silence,  
And clinging to the coats of the believers  
Who trudge across the deep, white fields like mournful grievers—



"Male Torso"

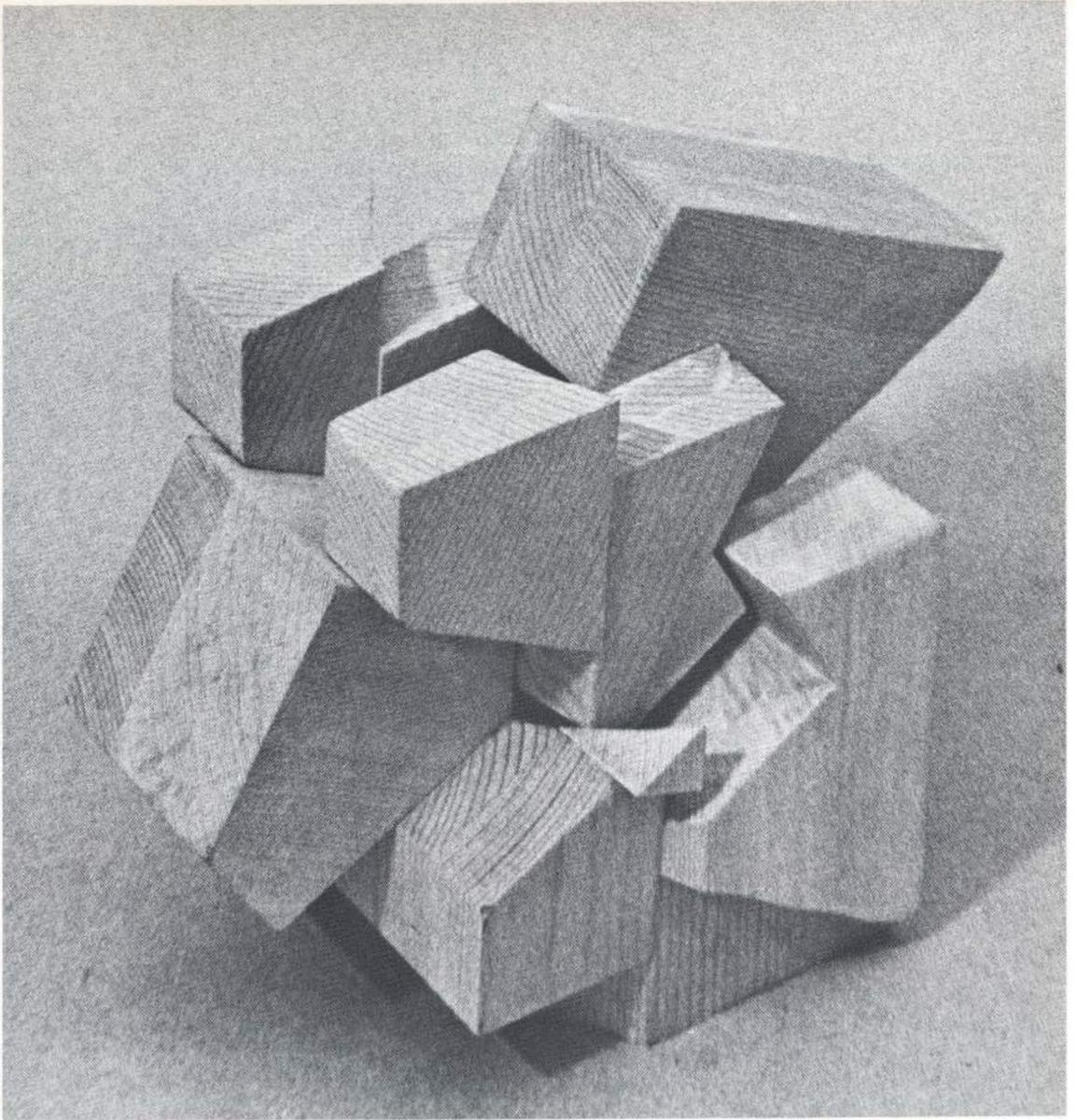
Charles E. Gniech

# Excavations In A Buried City

William T. Williams

1937

Lightning forks across the deepening bowl of sky,  
High above a garden  
Where amid marshaled rows of blood-red snapdragons  
And following along flanking lines of marigolds and mums,  
Laughter erupts like a rolling volley of gunfire  
From the large white house in front.  
A tiny, wooden punt carrying two china dolls floats in a pond,  
Bumping against islets made by lily pads  
That cluster at the western edge of this small, man-made sea.  
The women in the house drink tea and talk of church affairs.  
The cares of the community are mentioned.  
The times are not good and Christian folk must aid  
Those less fortunate. The old and pensioned.  
The disabled and dispossessed.  
And all the rest.  
The guild ladies drink tea and eat their cake  
And all the while discuss what they might forsake  
To aid Christ's poor.  
Outside the door lightning forks again across the sky  
While branches of great trees writhe and sigh  
And billowing clouds extend themselves  
Above the garden.  
Pardon is sought in prayer for all who transgress against God's plan.  
Man is excoriated for his sinfulness.  
More cake is passed.  
The last shall be first on judgement day  
And the meek shall inherit—  
What?  
The book falls shut upon the question  
Outside, the long awaited rain commences.  
Running in rivulets down window panes.  
Glistening on flowers and shrubs in the garden.  
Falling obliquely into the pond.  
Beyond it falls silently on other places.  
Faces drown in its downpour.  
And far away on a lonely siding  
Two tramps in a boxcar shiver in hiding—



"Untitled"

W. J. Helmen

# The First Lesson

Carol Johnson

March 3, 1983

I hate the word "No." It's been told to me all my life. It's the first word I ever learned and the last I'll ever hear. It's the philosophy of their life. The shrink here asked me yesterday in what color I see my family. I said black—he asked me why. I said because of their perspective, their attitude. They seem to expect doom around every corner, and, when it wasn't there, they were disappointed. My mother and father would sit in front of the television, fixated and immobile when the news came on. They seemed to soak it into them like nourishment for their constantly growing black views: bombings, kidnapping, rapes, family tragedies and murders. Murder and death was their favorite headline; they were indifferent about embezzlement. This black mood has even infected my little brother. One time I caught him giving a mock funeral to his G.I. Joe. My mother is the worst. I've heard her spend ten minutes on the details of a wedding and forty-five on a funeral.

After that session I felt really depressed. Since the accident I've tried to stay away from self pity; I hate it. Writing about it doesn't really help. I'd rather scream and beat my head on something, but, never mind.

1:30 a.m.

Everybody's asleep except for the night nurses and me. I wish I could get up to go use the bathroom instead of this damn pan. But then, that's dreaming and my mother doesn't approve of such stuff. She called tonight. I thought it was to wish me a good night. Instead it was more like, like, I can't even explain it. We used to be close, but as I've gotten older we've grown apart. I'm going to sleep.

March 4, 1983

I'm waiting for the escorts to take me to X-ray I had to write this down before I forgot. Last

night I had the most beautiful dream. In the dream I was holding this baby. I don't know if it was mine or not, but this baby was beautiful. Holding it in my arms I felt peaceful and happy; I haven't felt like that for a long time. It gave me a strength of energy from its presence. I still feel that way. So I'm going off to X-ray with a light heart and a positive attitude. I know the results will be good.

1:30 p.m.

How do you spell cripple? C-A-R-E-Y.

March 7, 1983

Been going though a bad time. The shrink said I should just write it out, but I can't. It's getting hard to keep smiling.

March 8, 1983

I had a sobering experience yesterday. A friend of mine, Mrs. Odway, (everybody calls her Maggie) came down to see me. Between you and me I think my doctor sent her. Maggie has cancer, it's terminal and it's painful. Getting around is starting to become harder for her, so I know the trip down to me wasn't just an ordinary friendly visit. The first part of the conversation she teased me about all the cute doctors on her floor. She promised to get me all their names, numbers, and marital status. I asked if she'd seen any cute new escorts, she waved away my question and said don't go after small fry when there's a whale to be had, or something like that. While she was there I kept waiting for her to start on a traditional pep talk. Then I realized that it came from the fact that she was even there. Her type of cancer usually ate its victims up, leaving them with bones and sagging skin. She had on a big thick robe to hide what damage it had already done. Her face and hands were the only evidence I could see. The skin on her face was sagging and lifeless; the chemotherapy had made it gray; some parts of it were yellow. Her hands were skeletal, and usually cold and clammy. But that wasn't the Maggie I loved—my Maggie was underneath all that. She was making it, living against all odds. Statistically speaking, she should have been dead months

ago. She was a living pep talk. I feel ashamed when I realize what she has to live through and what I do. I'm tired, so this is me signing off for now.

March 9, 1983

Nothing spectacular has happened today. Tomorrow my doctor's coming. He's kind of cute. I think I'll fix my hair.

March 10, 1983

Why is it that every time I try to be hopeful about walking, everybody is quick to assure me that'll never happen? They jump to the negative as if it's their civic duty to protect me from my own dreams. Dr. Brenmen practically mimicked my mother today. When I asked if I'd walk again, the first words out of his mouth were, "We have the best handi-capped facilities ..." I tuned him out. I thought of Maggie. I hear the lunch cart coming, or should say "smell." Anyway, next time I write I swear I'll be in a better mood, I hope.

March 12, 1983

It took me two days to be in a better mood, but I'm in it. An hour ago I had a cheese, sausage and mushroom pizza delivered to my room. It took the help of some rebel escorts, but it was done. Right now my stomach is happy and I'm fairly happy too. Here's good news: my mother hasn't called in three days. What else good has happened? Oh, yeah! For forty-eight hours no one has poked, pinched, or prodded me. What a relief. My sense of dignity is starting to recuperate nicely. I also checked the TV Guide and discovered that The Long, Long, Long Trailer is coming on with Lucille Ball and Desi Arnez. My evening is nicely booked. How sweet it is.

3:15 a.m.

I just had the scariest nightmare. I don't even want to think about it. I wouldn't doubt if it was the pizza. I want someone to talk to. I wish you could talk, Diary. Your lips could be your pages, your eyes your cover, your ears, well, we could stick them somewhere. All I

can hear is the nurses talking quietly. It's 3:25 a.m. I think I'll try sleeping again.

March 15, 1983

I just got through talking with my friend Lisa. I feel confused. The call was supposed to be one of those no-matter-what-we're-still-friends calls. Let me just say it didn't go off well. It was an uncomfortable conversation. She didn't know what to say because everything she said no longer pertained to my life. What I'm confused about is my reaction to what just happened. If I had had this conversation a week ago, I would have cracked; but now I just accept it. I feel as if I knew it was coming. After a half-hour of talking in spurts, I hung up by saying I had a headache. I knew it was inevitable because Maggie warned me. When she first told me, I laughed, thinking my friends wouldn't do that to me. I see I was wrong. Mag said it happened to her. She said people fear the unknown, the different. She also said they have a tendency to think that bad luck is contagious. I really laughed at that one, until I remembered that my mother would stop seeing women whose husbands had died. Lisa may have given up on me, but I'm not ready to, not yet.

March 18, 1983

Luke and Laura might be breaking up. I hope not, but it would be typical for the warped mind of some writer to pull that stunt. Gotta go, it's back on.

5:30 p.m.

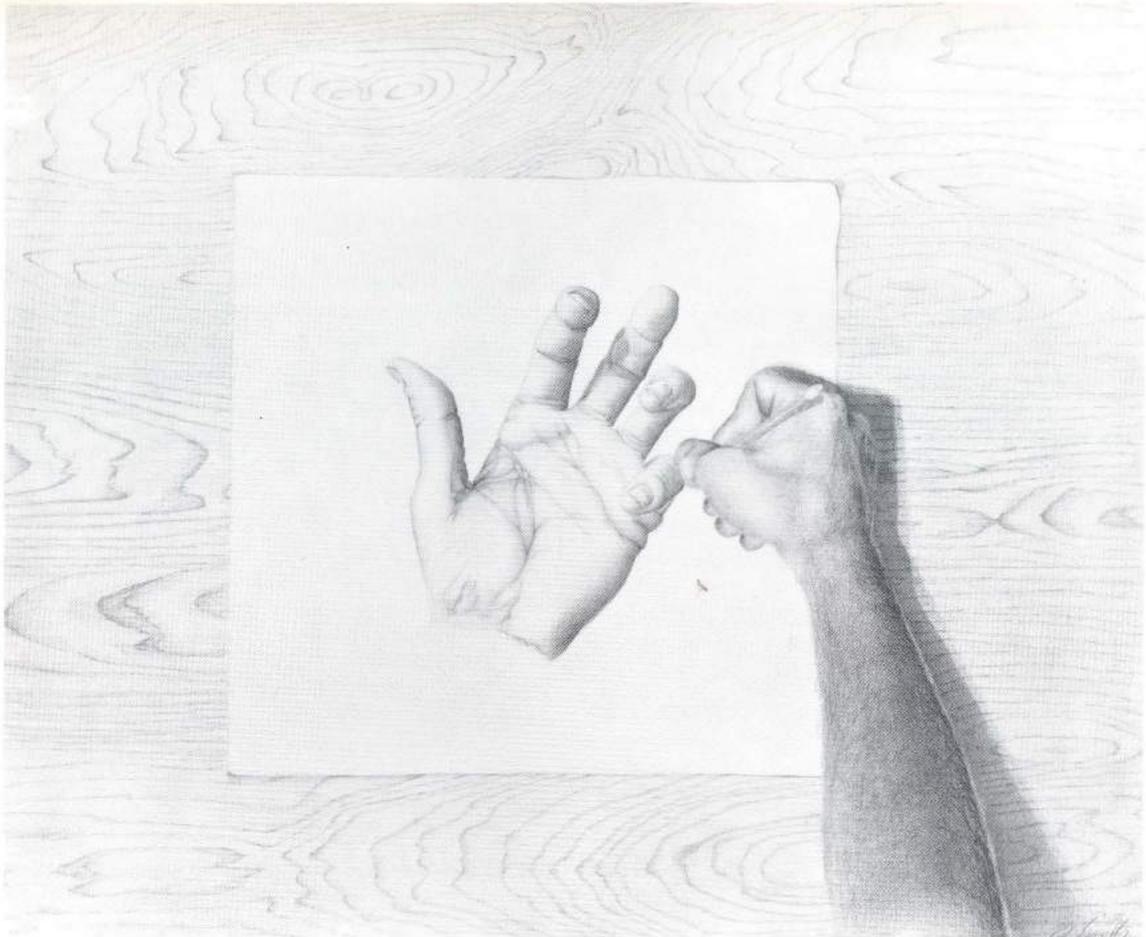
I feel tempted to call down to the kitchen and ask them what the maroon stuff was. It tasted good. Maybe I shouldn't, it might have been a mistake, and since I ate it, I don't want to know about it.

March 19, 1983

I'm so excited I'm going outside! Doc said I could; what a guy. I still hate him, but in a loving way. As soon as I come back, I'll write all about it.

Some time later

I'm back, a new, wholly refreshed me. I feel more inspired than ever to show them that I



"Untitled"

Pat Finnerty

can do it. I've also forgotten what fresh air smelled like; I've been smelling this preprocessed, prepackaged junk for too long. You know, if you close your eyes when the leaves are rustling, it sounds like waves coming in. I've never been a nature freak, but I've had a deficiency in it lately. I could kiss Dr. Brenmen, almost, for letting me go out.

Some more time later

I just ate some more of that maroon stuff and it tasted awful. I think I really did eat a mistake that first time.

March 22, 1983

Today the crafts lady is coming. She's so

smiley and good she makes me want to puke. She reminds me of Betty White who used to be on The Mary Tyler Moore Show. I hated Betty White. Her eyes practically glowed with humanitarianism when she found out my problem. I can hear her now telling her every other Wednesday bridge club how she's involved with a young, handicapped girl. She's been bringing all these dorky craft sets for me to work on. Luckily I've managed to foul up every one of them. I wonder if throwing my bed pan at her when she came in would be too obvious.

March 23, 1983

I've got an appointment with my shrink this

afternoon. I hate going to him. As a person I like him, but I'm always depressed when I come out of there. The most interesting thing is that we have a bet going. I said I'd figure out whose school of thought he uses before he figures out me. So far I've gone through Freud, Jung and Erickson. The winner gets a free dinner at his choice of restaurant. I told him to start saving his pennies because my choice is the Pump Room.

3:05 p.m.

Just call me Hot Rod Hannah. Today, me and my shrink spent the whole day doing wheelies. He taught me how to do a pop up without killing myself. The halls of this hospital will never be the same. I'll terrorize young children and old women, and maybe a couple of maintenance men. Well I don't know, they're a pretty tough breed.

March 30, 1983

Seven days of neglect. Yes, I'm ashamed of myself, but when your life is in the fast lane things do tend to slide. My most major event this week was an argument I had with Brenmen. I asked for therapy and he said no. He went on to say it was futile, useless and a waste of money. Those weren't the exact words but once the medical jargon was siphoned out, the meaning was the same. I'm surrounded by believers of the word "No;" their minor deities are "never," and "absolutely not." I'm signing off with disgust.

Later

I've just returned from being outside. I asked to be taken out, hoping my argument would be forgotten, or at least eased. No luck! My first time out was so happy I was oblivious to people. But today I felt miserable. People would either look through me or glance, then turn quickly. This is the fear Maggie spoke of, only she didn't tell me how much it hurt. I remember doing the same things myself. I swear, if it were possible I would apologize to every handicapped person I've ever met. It's too late though; now it's my turn.

March 31, 1983

Nurse Kasha just asked me what was wrong.

She's been throwing out her regular insults, only this time I wasn't responding. I wish I had a hole to go crawl into, and just hide from life and the picture of myself. I don't want to disgust people. Yesterday a pretty little girl was playing with her mother. When she saw me she stopped smiling. If this is what life is going to be like, I want no part of it. Think of Maggie, think of Maggie; she keeps telling me that life is a delicate shell. I forget sometimes.

12:30 a.m.

I just had that dream again about the baby. It was just like the first one, only in this one I got to see its eyes. They were blue. I feel calm and less desperate. This is sort of spooky. I don't know what this dream is, but since it's helping me, I'm not going to question it.

April 2, 1983

I've turned over a new leaf. I'm going to be more positive, even if it kills me. I mustered up the best insult for Nurse Kasha that I've ever had. I called her a fatty acid (well, you had to be there). I went down to the children's ward and showed them how to pop wheelies. I told them when they're good enough we'll make a convoy and descend upon the doctors' lounge demanding better food. What else did I do? Oh yeah, I went upstairs to visit Maggie. I usually hate her floor because it's the terminal ward. She was looking grayer than usual, but her spirits were still good. I swear, that woman is unbelievable. We had a good talk. She told me what she used to do when she was small. One of her best memories is that she was a notorious cookie stealer. Her mother cured her of this vice by baking a batch of cookies laced with pepper. This legendary batch reformed her for good. I'd like to think life was simpler then, but it really wasn't.

April 3, 1983

The doc is thinking of sending me home. For as warped as it sounds, I don't want to go. It's difficult having to deal with my mother over the phone, doing it in person is really going to be a feat. I wish I could go into a relapse or something. It's scary to think that she will

have total control over me; where I go, when I go, how I get there, and who I go with. I don't like being controlled or harbored, it feels like I'm suffocating. I had kept hoping that my being away would change her attitude, but no luck.

1:40 a.m.

Morbid, morbid, morbid. I just read what I wrote and it sounds ridiculous. To an unsuspecting listener it sounds as if I'm about to slit my wrists. There's no need to worry, Diary, the most suicidal thing I've ever done is to have eaten mass quantities of their food. For lunch today I did something really life threatening. I asked for seconds on the maroon stuff. I'm just too wild for my own good. I'm in a good mood, the sun is shining, the birds are singing (at least I think they are, my windows don't open). Wait, this is getting too mushy. Okay, I'm going to calm down and tell you my news. Today Dr. Brenmen said I could go into therapy. I'm pretty damn happy about that. It means I've got a second chance. I'm signing off to go watch Lucy. Chow.

April 4, 1983

Today's the day, I'll tell you about it when I get back.

Some time later

I actually feel like I'm accomplishing something. Now all I have to do is wait until my body starts responding. I can see it now, I'll do one of those dramatic out-of-the-wheel-chair-onto-my-feet scenes. It'll be so astounding that I'd write a book, I'd call it There and Back: Memoirs of an Ex-Cripple. No, that that sounds too stupid, it'll be Memoirs of an Ex-Paraplegic. My finale would be to have a movie done on my life. Then I'll lay back, retire, and rack in the royalties.

April 9, 1983, 2:30 p.m.

I've just had another nightmare. It was about the accident. So far I've been able to avoid any thoughts on it, lately it's been harder. Small stuff will happen, like a certain word will be said, or a sound and it'll all come back. I want to explain what I felt and saw, but it can't be done. The shrink's been telling

me to write it out, so here is my attempt. When I think about the accident I see it as if it were happening to someone else. There's no pain or horrifying thoughts that accompany it. I guess apathy describes it best (this is coming out wrong). In my mind I see a dark street, its surface is wet. A biker is crossing the entrance of a small alley. From the mouth of the alley at the same time, an accelerating car exits. That's it—the end of my story. Upon contact, I didn't know what was happening until I woke up in this room. It was the waking up and finding out what I had become, that was fear. The accident is a removed image, being paralyzed is reality. I don't want to deal with it; going home will force me to do it, I'm not ready yet. I'm afraid of the shock of my friends, I'll no longer be one of them, one of the gang. I know they'll patronize me. I'm going to make a promise to myself, when this situation happens, I'm going to understand it and accept it.

April 10, 1983

I've done something decisive, after reading my last entry I have decided I can't hide any longer. I've decided to go home. It's time I started handling the situation. With the doc's advice I'm going to continue therapy on an out-patient basis. I hope I'm not kidding myself by keeping it up. I've called my mom and tomorrow's going to be the day. I've finished saying my goodbyes to everyone. Maggie and I had a good long cry. We made promises that I know we'll never keep, but it felt good saying them. For instance, Mag said she'd babysit for my kids and visit every day. I wish it could be true. Kasha's been in here three times today, she's been throwing the last of her insults at me. Yesterday she finally got the fatty acid joke (I think they've been working her too hard).

Later

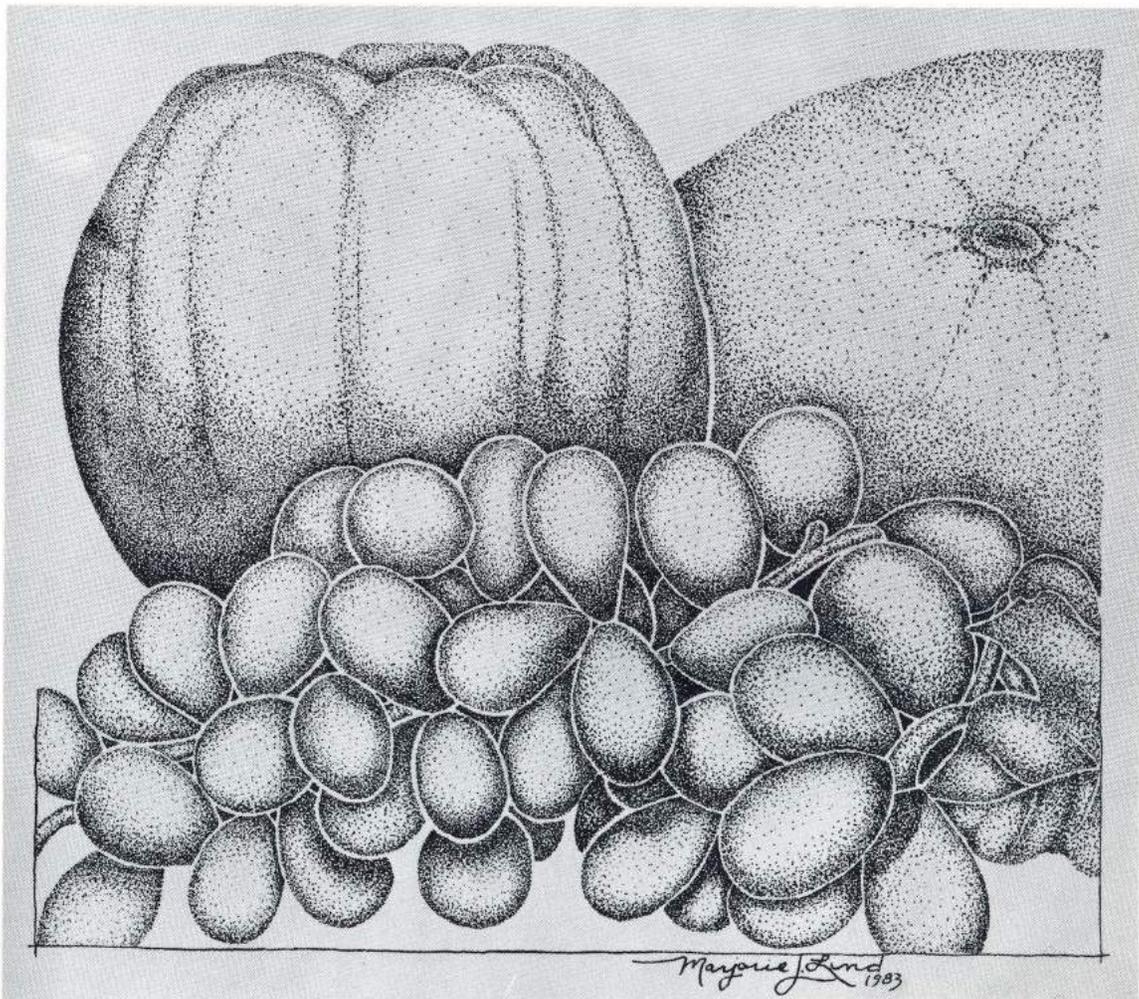
I hope I'm not being stupid by going home. I've got to do it sometime, a decade would do nicely. My mom was so happy (can you believe it), that she wanted to throw a party. I told her no, my stomach can't take plastic smiles at the moment. I don't think she understood. I've noticed that adults have a

tendency to forget what this time of life is like. Explaining these things are impossible, they see things only in black and white; whereas my generation sees things in gray and beige. When I do something they see as immature, I see it as staying alive, keeping up with the group. To them peer pressure is this cute term to toss around at cocktail parties, but I live it. All of this doesn't matter, the situation has changed, I've changed. For the better, I hope.

April 11, 1983

I'm here, I'm home, and it's sweet. It's great,

they've rearranged the furniture so that I can move around anywhere without colliding into something. They've lowered the shelves in my bedroom. When I rolled into my bedroom I was surprised to find that they had cleaned it. In days past my mom had sworn never to enter it when it was in a state of catastrophe, which is how I left it. The first thing I did was to saunter over to my stereo, I practically kissed it. I didn't realize how much I'd missed my music. Right now I'm listening to the Psychedelic Furs. I've been blasting them for an hour now and no complaints from headquarters yet. I gotta go, it's time for dinner.



"Untitled"

Marjorie J. Lind

April 12, 1983

I've just noticed that I'm developing a definite roll. If I have to be a cripple I refuse to be a pudgy one. I'm starting on a diet and lifting weights. I've even considered racing around the block a few times to give the old ticker a work out. I haven't had the guts to poke my nose outside yet.

6:30 p.m.

My father came home and mentioned the word school, he then followed it with the word tutor. He's just blown my whole night. Even though my school's equipped for wheelchairs, I don't want to go. I keep picturing myself in this crowded hall. My perspective would be a sea of navels and tail ends, no, I can't deal with that. Wait, I'm lying, what I really can't face are my friends. I don't want

to make them think that they have to be nice to me if they don't want to. I'm not giving them much credit because the majority of our conversations were cruel. They usually consisted of making fun of the other kids. If no likely targets were around we'd make fun of whoever wasn't there. This is all I knew of friendships. Without a doubt ours has been annulled. Seven "beautiful people" and one wheelchair, it just sort of blows the image. I've known for a while that our relationships have lacked something. I've overheard conversations of the "unbeautiful people" and felt jealous. To talk with a friend about a problem, a dream, even share a joke; in my group these just weren't done. Secretly I've felt jealous of these relationships, now I've got a chance to experience them, I'm at their level now.



"Shoes"

Wendy Scanlan

April 14, 1983

Stuck my nose outside today, around 9:30 a.m. By that time I figured everybody was out of the house and at their prospective job or school. There was this kid outside whom I've always considered a pain. He's about seven, has red hair, and a mean over-bite. My new personality moseyed on over (it's hard to mosey in a wheelchair, it gives the impression that you're drunk). I challenged him to a race, his big wheel against my chair. He sized me up with an experienced eye, calculated, and then agreed. By this time I was regretting my decision. We decided that to the end of the block and back would be our goal. We lined up on a crack in front of my house; the signal was given, and we were off. It's the first excitement I've had since I got out. The wind felt good in my face, my blood was pumping more than it had in a month. I'm ashamed to say it, but he beat me pathetically. Being the big person I am, I offered him some cake and milk, which he accepted. It was kind of fun talking to him, but it's also given me determination, I'm going into training. Tommy offered to be my coach. It's going to be innumerable runs around the block, before I can get it together. Getting beaten by a seven year old does horrible things to the ego, just horrible.

April 16, 1983

This afternoon I was eating a candy bar. Tommy grabbed it out of my hand, I gave chase, and he crawled under the kitchen table—out of arm's reach. Between mouthfuls he told me it was no good for me. I wondered if his parents would mind having one less kid around the house. They'd probably thank me, possibly even pay me to do it. I could just roll over him with my chair, no jury in the country would convict me.

9:30 p.m.

My father cornered me tonight when I was watching Laverne and Shirley. It was a decision over school or a tutor, I choose school. My new policy is not to hide anymore. I've noticed lately, my family is no longer a basic black, they're a light shade of purple. They're still a far journey from yellow, but at least

they're on the quest. Also the words "it's possible" have slipped into their vocabulary. I'm amazed, I never knew they could do it.

April 30, 1983

I return to you with tidings of great joy. Today at our usual time Tommy and I approached that fearful crack in the sidewalk. We positioned, poised, then were off. The winner was yours truly. Being a true trooper, Tommy invited me in for cake and milk, which I accepted.

10:37 p.m.

Bear with me I'm in one of my introspective moods. So much so that I wrote a letter to my ex-boyfriend. This had taken a lot of guts, nerve, or stupidity, but I did it. When I was in the hospital, he sent me a "Dear Jane Letter." This happened in my pre-diary stage, I retaliated by starving myself. Anyway that's in the past. Tonight my letter said that I forgave him, it suggested he give me a call to meet the new me. I still feel like doing a "La Machine" on his face, but I can handle it now.

May 2, 1983, 2:37 a.m.

I just had a nightmare, in it I dropped the baby.

May 3, 1983

I received a small package today. It was from Maggie, inside was a necklace with a small cross on it, and a note. The handwriting on the note was shaky but legible. It said the necklace was a gift from her grandmother to her grandmother when she was sixteen. It is to belong to me now. The cross helped her through many a bad night, she hoped it would do the same for me. It read as a prophesy, "I'm tired of fighting." The rest of the note read, "With love and respect I give this to you. Think of me often. Love Mag, P.S. When it does happen, I told them not to contact you. It's time you lived your full life. Don't spend that time weeping over a spent one—Mag." I feel confused. I can't understand her wanting to die after showing me so passionately how much life there is in a minute. I've got to call Dr. Brenmen.

May 4, 1983

I'm so tired. My eyes are puffy. I've cried, screamed, cursed, and even howled. Mom's stayed close to me these past days, giving me support. I've been horrible, refusing to eat, throwing tantrums, just being doggish. I can't seem to help it. I've lost the biggest support of my life, now that it's gone I feel alone. I've been fooling myself, this is no life, it's a punishment.

May 15, 1983

Mom's been getting on my back about my attitude, Tommy's becoming a pest. Dad's having a fit because I told him I'm not going to school, period! My therapy is going nowhere. The worst one of them all is Dr. Brenmen, he refused to tell me anything about Maggie. I'm sick of the whole deal, they can all go screw themselves.

June 3, 1983, 12:37 a.m.

I'm scared, I just had the baby dream, it was in my arms again. Plus it was smiling, it's never smiled before; at least I don't think so. I must be cracking. I don't want to go to sleep, I know something's going to happen.

June 4, 1983

I've just been crying, only this time because of joy, not self pity. All day I've been paranoid. Around 5:00 p.m. my father brought in the mail, he handed me a dirty, crumpled envelope. There were so many "return to sender", and "wrong address" messages stamped on it, that it was hard to make out who the sender was. In scrawly letters it said "Margaret Hemmert". I rolled quickly to my room and closed the door. Before even opening the letter I started to cry, I realized what I had let myself become in a month's time. I opened the envelope gently. The letter was dated May 5, 1983. In the beginning paragraph she said Dr. Brenmen told her I called. It was then she realized she wasn't being fair with me, she wanted to explain. She wrote that she wanted to be alone only because she didn't want to be seen dying, "Carey I want to be remembered as the cookie bandit, not a gray old lady. If you

were here I would have to hide the pain like I've done in the past. I've stopped fighting, yes, but only because I've gone my full circle. It's time for me to rest." The letter wasn't long, she ended it soon after that. Since reading it, I've been sitting feeling like an idiot. Not only did I doubt her, but I turned on my family and Tommy. In that one afternoon I threw out everything I had learned over the months. I've got to go, I have several apologies hanging over my head right now.

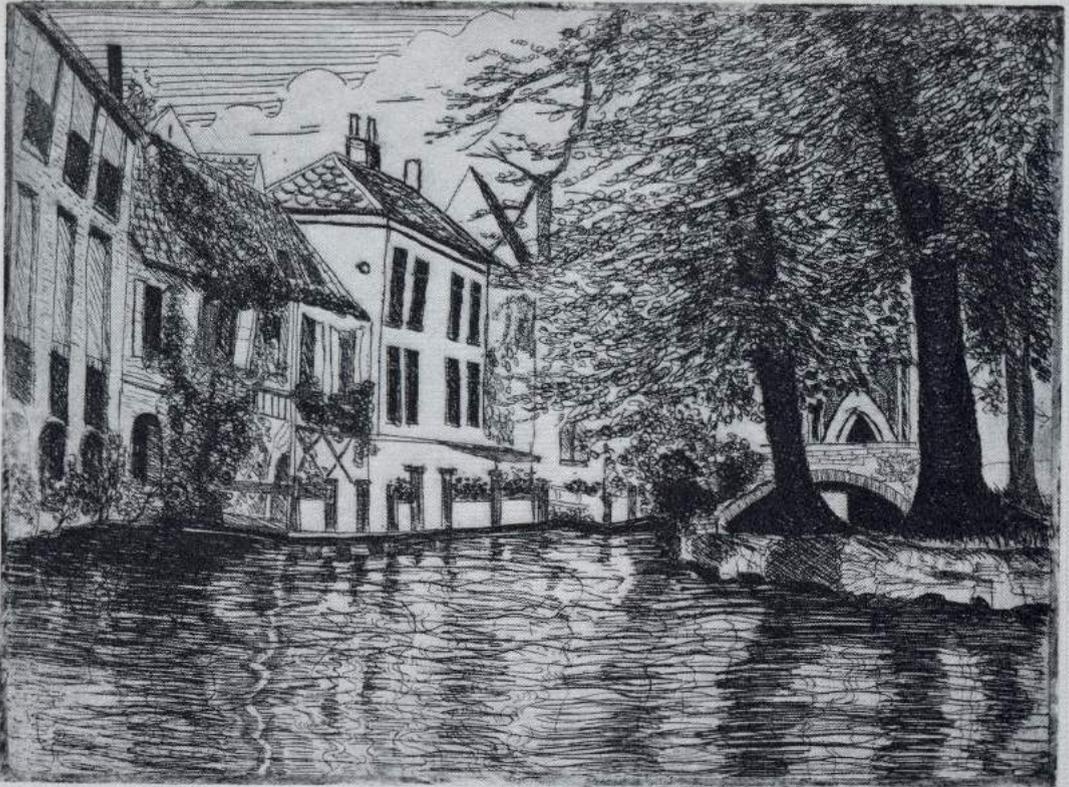
June 7, 1983

I wrote a letter to my shrink yesterday. I told him that my family was a definite shade of yellow. It felt good writing that letter, it showed we'd come a long way. At the end of August I'm starting school. In preparation of the great event I've had Dad paint my chair a delicate shade of lavender, and the seat cover's dyed a darker shade. I've also been contemplating taking a "La Machine" to school with me, seeing as a certain person hasn't returned my letter—but then again, it's his loss, not mine.



"Blue Tree"

Kristina Neville



2/25 Brugge, Belgium

Sheila Herdrich '83

"Brugge, Belgium"

Sheila Herdrich

## [Untitled]

Ralph Hollingsworth

The day ends  
a wisp of blue smoke  
haunts these last few minutes.  
One last sip from the  
bottle  
before I call it a day, and  
I'll sit here and think about  
tomorrow that threatens every thoughtful moment.  
Refuge in the  
future  
hides from the past.

## Carousel

Carolyn Gorr

Silent Stallions  
Prance in painted coats.  
Up,  
Down,  
Round-n-round.  
Fierce-eyed steeds  
Tugging at imaginary reins,  
Try to win races  
With the Calliope's cadence.



**William Rainey Harper College**

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