



*p o i n t o f v i e w*



POINT OF VIEW

1984/1985

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\*Mendy Sears recipient of the Vivian Stewart Award.  
 \*A.L. Wanderer recipient of the Point of View Award.

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\*Robb Miles Recipient of the Ray Mills Art Award



## Signs of Spring

Suzanne Smart

"Come on, Ginny, stand up straight and *please* get that damn hair out of your eyes," said the woman as she maneuvered herself and the baby-faced girl through the other shoppers. "And don't give me that I-don't-want-to-go routine. You should be thrilled to be going to your first dance," she added just before the girl dropped one of her packages and two low-heeled pink sandals tumbled into the middle of the aisle.

The girl, dressed in baggy sweat shirt and pants which *did* not hide her lumpy figure, stooped to put the shoes back in their box and stood back up with a reddened face. She glared at the back of the woman's head as it wound its way through the store.

The woman was smaller than the girl, and ordinarily she would have been hard to find in a crowd of larger people. But the girl just had to look for the turning heads of the men whose gazes followed the woman appreciatively.

The woman finally stopped before a shiny counter lit with pink-bulbed fluorescent lights. Panting, the girl came up next to her and *dropped* all her packages, this time deliberately, for they had reached their destination. The girl sighed with a look of resignation.

The counter was all glass. Under and behind its sparkling facade were bottles and boxes and brushes all in a muted surgical *green*. Above the counter was a sign announcing "Signs of Spring" with pastel colors arrayed on it like a painter's palette. The girl had to tilt her head *back* to take in all the colors. As she stared, her only distraction was the rat-a-tat drumming of the woman's red-lacquered right hand nails on the glass top. Her left hand rested calmly on the glass, fingers slightly parted, as if to better show off her raised *diamond*, as big as a plump pea.

The woman stopped drumming, looked at the girl, and gently *pulled away* two strands of fine blond hair that were *tangled* in the girl's soft brown lashes. She smiled at the girl, and opened her mouth to speak when a young woman approached them from the other side of the counter.

"May I help you ladies?" The woman wore a surgical green smock, and a small rectangular button labeled "Miss Smith/Technician" was pinned on the smock's smooth front. She was pretty, with the look of one who has sternly studied the art of cosmetology.

The woman looked away from the girl to the technician, looked back at the girl, and with a sense of collaboration among all three of them, said, "Yes, we're here to make someone beautiful for her first dance. First date, too!" She winked at the technician, and both of the women looked at the girl and beamed. The girl caught their beams and quickly looked down, *focusing* on her ragged cuticles and bitten nails. She curled her fingers into her palms.

"Have we picked out our dress yet?" the technician asked the woman in the manner of one who is an *expert* at coordinating all aspects of a look. "The *color*'s important, you know."

"The dress is right here, in one of these boxes. Here, let me show you." The woman *placed* a big broad box on the counter, lifted the lid and rustled the tissue until the hem of a pink satin skirt fell onto the glass. "It's soft pink, just perfect for her with her coloring and all."

"Exquisite!" exclaimed the technician. "Here, honey, let me hold it up to your face," she said as she rustled the rest of the dress out of the box.

The girl lifted her head and, *unsmiling*, looked to her right and left, as if to ensure *herself* that no one she knew was *standing* nearby. She felt the soft material graze against her cheek, and pulled back with a grimace.

"Let her look, Gin," said the woman; "she needs to get a feel for what the dress will look like when it's on so she'll know what colors to do you in. That's right. Now *smile*, sweetheart. That's a girl!"

"A real beauty," the technician agreed. "Now, if you'll excuse me, I'll bring over some samples. You want foundation, blush, shadow and lip tint, right?"

"Yes, all that, plus maybe a nice cucumber masque to put on in the afternoon — the tingly kind. I always love a masque myself. It makes my skin feel so fresh and alive and young!" The woman smiled as she said this, her even white teeth a sharp contrast to her red glossy lips. Her eyes shone clear and blue, and she *appeared* for an instant to be thinking of *herself* at another time.

"Wonderful idea," said the technician, "I'll be right back, then."

The woman didn't reply, because she still had a *faraway* expression on her face. Her eyes suddenly *focused* on the "Signs of Spring" sign, and she turned to the girl. The girl was now *leaning* her back against the counter, ankles crossed, both elbows resting on the glass.

"Ginny, turn around, dear. And try to *smile*. You look like a cranky little baby!"

The girl turned around in slow motion and began studying the bottles and jars under the glass: revitalizing lotions, *exfoliators*, toners, pore minimizers, under-eye creams and wrinkle reducers.

The woman looked down, too, and murmured, "That reminds me; don't let me forget to ask her about that new night cream, the one that comes with its own little applicator. That stuff I have now, I swear, hasn't done a thing for my frown lines. Do you know how much I *paid* for it?"

The girl was shaking her head, "No," when the technician returned to the counter. From both arms she spilled bottles and plastic compacts and trays of colored powders.

"Here we are," she exclaimed. "Ready to make you over, honey."

"Let's see," she said as she unscrewed the caps on several bottles filled with flesh-colored liquids. "We'll start with your foundation. I think the 'Porcelain Rose' may be for you. All the young girls seem to like it," she crooned as she dipped the liquid into the palm of one hand and started to daub it onto the young girl's clean cheek. "Perfect, don't you think, Mother?"

"Absolutely," said the woman as she prodded the girl over to her other side where a lighted mirror faced outward. "Look, Gin, see how it makes your skin look smoother? And that color's for you, sweetie." She looked up to the technician and said, "We'll take it."

"Good," replied the technician, "now, let's try blushes. With the color of that dress, I think we should stay away from all the coppers and bronzes. How about this?" she asked the woman. "'Sunrise Pink.'"

"Yes, yes," the woman agreed. "Look up now, Ginny, so she can put some on. Oh yes, that's lovely, isn't it, dear?"

The girl, still in front of the mirror, watched her left cheek turn the color of the dress as the technician dotted the cream on and rubbed it in with her fingertips. She put her own hand up to her cheek, felt the venerated surface, then brought it down. So the woman couldn't see, she wiped her fingers on her jeans.

"Yes, I like that pink on her. And with that dress! Miss Smith, you've been right on the button so far. How about her shadow? She's just a girl, you know, so nothing too dark or dramatic. I was thinking of just a soft blue, just something to highlight those big blue eyes. Doesn't she have beautiful eyes?"

"They're gorgeous," the technician agreed. "Now look at me, honey. Let me hold some of these colors up . . . to see . . . no, that's too lavender . . . how about . . . no . . . aah, here we are, the 'Misty Moon Blue.' Yes, yes . . . now hold still, honey, just shut your eyes and let me brush a little on . . . there! Well, Mother?"

"Oh, Ginny, it's beautiful! Look in the mirror; don't you like it? Oh, if I could have your eyes," the woman wondered out loud, while she smiled at the girl.

The girl looked in the mirror again, and almost smiled at the mismatched image. One side of her face was beiges and rosied and blued, the other clear except for its own pastels. She looked at all the colors, natural and unnatural, then focused onto the pupils in her eyes, which could not be tampered with.

"Lip tint, lip tint, . . ." the technician mumbled as she pulled off the lids from tubes and began streaking the back of her hand with different shades of lipstick. "What do you think, Mother, and you, too, honey? You haven't said a word. This is your face now, so don't be shy about piping up when you disagree with us on a color. Here, let's try this 'Champagne Rose.'" She held the girl's chin in her left hand and started to paint her lips with the other hand. "Open your mouth a little, honey. That's better."

"I like that," the woman said, "but will it show up in evening light? I'm sure they'll have the lights dimmed in the gym that night. Maybe something just a little darker."

The girl started to turn to her mother when the technician turned her chin again and began wiping off the color with a tissue. "Well, how about 'Blooming Cherry,' then," she said as, with the girl's chin still in her hand, she painted the new color on her lips.

"That's much better," said the woman. "I think we'll go with that. What do you think, Gin?" she asked as she watched the technician now deftly wiping off the foundation, blush, shadow and lip color from the girl's face. The girl didn't answer, and couldn't because the technician was still working on her with cold cream and tissue.

"Ginny, can you think of anything else, dear, that you might like?" The girl shook her head, her face finally cleared of colors and creams. The woman sighed, then opened her purse and reached in for her packet of charge cards. "I guess that's it, then, Miss Smith, except for that cucumber masque."

The technician gathered up her samples and told the woman she'd be right back with their purchases. She looked at the girl, who had turned her back to the counter again, then at the woman. Silently she mouthed to the woman, "She's so shy!"

The woman lifted her chin slightly, smiled, and nodded her head.

When they were settled in the car, with all the packages in the back seat, the woman put the key in the ignition and turned to the girl. "Well, you're all set, honey," she said.

The girl was turning the radio dial from one station to another, her head tilted to one side to better hear what was playing. The woman backed the car out of the parking space, and headed for the exit. She stopped at the intersection, looked both ways, then looked at her daughter and said, "Yes, you're really growing up now, aren't you?"

The girl didn't say anything. She was keeping time to the music by drumming her knee while staring out the window as if at something far away.



"Untitled," 16" x 22" Pencil Drawing

Mary Swenson



# Beirut Requiem

Nancy Bartels

For the 24th Marine Amphibious Unit, USMC

It started with Isaac's kids, I guess.  
Spoiled sons of an old Semitic shepherd,  
squabbling over who daddy loved best and . . .

The Inheritance.

Now millenia later —  
Their seed is at it still.

To the sulpherous stew of hate they add  
bombs and bullets  
to thicken more the turgid soup  
already brimful with the blood and bodies of  
forty generations of children.

And the question is the same.  
Who does Daddy love best?  
Who gets . . .

The Inheritance.

These days the blood feud spills  
over the boundaries of the little desert  
states — a family quarrel tumbling from  
the yard into the street.

Among the latest victims are now numbered  
the sons of a new Chosen People — the virile,  
cocksure, arrogant young princes whose fathers  
long ago ripped from Isaac's sons . . .

The Inheritance.

(Row upon row of barf green body bags,  
the latest sacrifice on the bloody altar.

Isaac himself was the last one who got lucky,  
his father apparently the last one to know  
that The Inheritance is not purchased by the  
blood of mortal sons.)

And the irony is this: In a blood feud  
over such questions the issue has long been  
settled. Forty generations and  
two hundred thirty barf-colored body bags  
each have earned an equal share of the  
only possible . . .

inheritance.



## The Rising Flame

Mike O'Connor

In gripping darkness crickets sing their song  
To lull and hypnotize my sleepy mind.  
One hundred billion brilliant stars emerge  
To glance upon the silvered mountain tops,  
And while away the night with gleaming cold.  
A penetrating haze of wispy blue,  
That starts the day — before the sun ascends  
To burn its arc across the blazing sky.  
A dancing wind that sighs in heads of trees  
Like distant swells upon a foaming shore  
The dripping drops of dew reflect the reeds —  
A running green beneath the rising flame —  
And melt into a silent, hidden pool.  
The algal blue of water thick with life.  
A speckled frog that leaps on lily pads  
To send a rippling wave across the pond.  
He jumps, to meet a fly, to eat his food.  
His tongue he lashes, like a whip it snaps  
To catch elusive prey; the fly is dead.



## SINGLE SETS OF TEN

A. L. Wanderer

... six ... seven ... eight ... nine ... ten counted Abby to herself as David brought his heavily weighted dumbbells overhead and back down again. Before she even opened her eyes, she could join in the count of the metal slipping and slapping. Each number was separated by a sharp forced exhale of deeply inhaled air. One peek at David, and she could know what routine he would go into next and exactly which set of noises to expect.

She did not remember how long ago the silver bars and the cold black discs had become a part of the bedroom. Now, because it suited David, they were a part of every morning.

Abby's eyes found the source of the numbers one through ten. "You know," she said, "weights are like coat hangers."

She waited a few seconds for David to respond, but he was on a four and would not speak until he had reached a ten. So she continued, "They have the ability to multiply. It's not scientific, so I don't expect you to understand this, but, when you close a closet door on a few coat hangers, there will be from forty to sixty of them when you open the closet door. Well, since you have uprooted the Metallic Tabernacle Choir from the basement, they've multiplied. Look at all of them."

David placed the dumbbells on the floor and paced around in circles to keep from tightening up: "I need more weight," he said. "I'm starting to get lines defining my biceps," and offered Abby proof of his discovery by tracing a line through his upper arm with his index finger.

Amazing, Abby thought, as she rolled over on her side and pulled the blankets in around her. How can a person make all that noise at this hour? Goddamn amazing, she said to herself, then sneezed. Reaching for some tissues, she sneezed two more times; each sneeze matched a grunt from David. A duct, she thought, and rolled back again to look at him. He continued his exercises, working his dumbbells through various movements, doing single sets of ten while watching himself in the full-length mirror.

Some mornings, before he used his weights, he spent time doing sit-ups, push-ups, leg lifts, and other routines. When Abby awoke to those, David's labored breathing would alarm her. She would be shocked to consciousness by words circulating in her brain, MY GOD! HE'S HAVING A HEART ATTACK! Then, she would lunge toward his side of the bed, ready to pound her clasped fists into his chest and reach for the telephone, all at once. Finding the bed empty and seeing David on the floor folding and extending himself, she

would lay back and let the motion of the waves in their waterbed soothe the painful pinch of adrenaline release. At the same time, she would wipe away the perspiration above her lip and feel the moisture collect at the back of her neck and behind her knees. David, who concentrated only on the task at hand, and who continued to breathe noisily, never noticed a thing. Given a choice she preferred to wake up to "the count" that the weights ticked out in their momentum.

Abby turned to double-up her pillows; David was now in the bathroom. She began to think about the day that lay ahead, but her mind changed subjects on her, and she soon sat in bed and studied the room. It was like the rest of the house, big, and a combination of pre- and post-medical school furnishings. Seven years ago they had installed the beige carpeting to temporarily warm the floors and cut down on the noise. Their choice of color was based on the notion that shortly they would decorate the bedroom using one of those professional decorators and they would simply toss the beige carpeting out. Now, it was "weathered beige," and every two years the walls were painted "more weathered beige" to keep up.

The curtains were selected from Sears on the same principle. Ivory sheers hung from the rods which barely stayed in the walls. Not being able to find the correct mollies, or David, Abby screwed the curtain-rod hardware directly into the plaster board and waited for the inevitable rejection factor to take place.

Three large pieces of furniture, the long dresser, David's oversized armoire and the small chest of drawers, were dark and richly carved in Queen-Anne fashion. All three were purchased after it had been decided that Abby's childhood bedroom furniture was too brittle to withstand any more nails or staples. David had hated to spend the money; Abby had loved it.

She recalled what the finisher had said to her when he came to touch up the scratches on the furniture. He was a short, dark and very round man. He was excited to work on the pieces, and with his European accent, he had told her to never give them up. "Heirlooms," he had called them. "Something for your children," he had said. Abby sunk down into bed again as she thought about her children, ... no, tubular steel and glass.

From the bathroom she could hear David popping dental floss. When he finished with his teeth, there were a few silent minutes of contact lens adjustments, and the decision making process of whether to clean or not to clean his continuous wear lenses. The technique was to roll up the bathroom window shade and place the right hand over the right eye and squint out the window with the left eye. David then covered the left eye and squinted right-eyed. Abby enjoyed thinking that David did this in single sets of ten, too, because she knew that he never realized the bathroom window faced east and the glare prevented his

seeing anything. The drone of the shower lulled her back to sleep.

A noise caused Abby to drop through miles of black space. Opening her eyes ended the anxious flight. Catching her breath, she realized that she had been startled by the spin of a door knob. David had returned to the bedroom to dress. She had once demonstrated the skill of door knob turning to him. Clenching her teeth she explained how to keep a grip on the brass bulb while the metal fittings completed their rotation, but it proved useless; David just gave Abby his YOU-GOTTA-BE-NUTS look.

*What the hell am I doing here?* Abby sighed. It was more of a feeling than a question, and it hung around her as if the aroma of a gardenia wafted through the room, sightless and thick and unforgettable.

David sat at the edge of the bed and pulled on his socks. Next, Abby watched as he glided from his walk-in closet to the mirror, one trip for his tapered-bodied shirt, another for his reedy slacks, and a final trip for his designer sports coat. He maneuvered himself into his shoes as he walked around the bed. He leaned over Abby and kissed her good-bye.

"Are you going to play golf today?" Abby asked.

"If I can get out of the hospital early enough," David answered as he left the room.

"I'll meet you for lunch," Abby suggested, but it was too late. David slammed the bedroom door, then the door to the garage, finally the car door. The room was full of the fragrance of Paco Rabanne, David's favorite cologne. *The telephone hammered at Abby's ears. David picked it up... no, Frances, you can't speak to Abby; she died two months ago — killed herself. He firmly placed the telephone down.* He's mad at me, Abby thought. I probably overdosed on a great day for golf. I wonder where I'm buried. The Jewish cemeteries wouldn't have taken me; suicides aren't kosher. Under the ninth hole would be okay. She imagined how David's face would appear to her as she watched him tee-off, then his cleats pressed into her face and blocked the sunlight. At least I'd get something out of the country club membership. And they shouldn't mind, either; a Jewish country club that serves shrimp and lobster and celebrates Valentine's Day can't object to a Jewish suicide.

Grasping the navy-blue sheet, she extended her arms straight up and then over head. She let go; the soft air held her before the sheet settled over her thin contour...buried...she rolled away from the direction of David's image, coiling the sheet around her. The telephone rang. She hated telephones. Struggling from the sheet she crawled across "David's-half," causing the mattress to shimmy and slosh.

"Please," she said to the ceiling, "don't let that be my mother."

"Hello." The ceiling had betrayed her.

"What do you mean if the mountain will not come to Mohammad, Mohammad must go to the mountain? I was going to call."

"Believe me, if you dropped dead I'd know about it." Abby pulled back the ivory sheers, wondering if the sun actually had gotten brighter at that moment, or if she was merely being prophetic.

"The kids are fine. They'll be home in a few weeks. Listen, if you want to send them packages you ought to learn how to spell our last name. It is C-O-H-E-N, not C-O-H-N, not K-A-H-N, not C-O-W-E-N, and not C-O-N-E, or anything else you've come up with over the years."

"Yes, David is well. . . . How is my father making you crazy? . . . You did! You said he's making you crazy. . . . No, I haven't thought about what I'm getting him for his birthday yet — a new winter jacket, maybe. Look, I was just on my way out the door. I have some stops to make before I go to school."

Abby grabbed the pillow next to her and bit the corner of it. "A car! You think I should buy him a car? Mom, I really have to go now. Say hello for me."

"Do you believe it?" she howled at the ceiling. "I don't believe it," she repeated as she nodded her head. "Nobody would believe it," she said to convince herself. "What am I saying? Anybody who knows her would believe it. That substantiates it, only my mother!"

"A car! For THEM! Christ, I thought that when I came up with the idea for a jacket, it was a good idea. But what's a jacket going to mean to someone who is expecting a car?"

Abby stepped onto the tiled bathroom floor; the cold sensation spread through her and mingled with the feeling of guilt that was beginning to strangle her.

Looking in the mirror, she stroked her dark brown hair away from her face. The mirror held an attractive image which escaped Abby's awareness as she scanned her likeness. She felt their disapproval radiating back at her. How do they do it? How can they still make me feel this way, she wondered. She inspected the image for evidence proving that she was forty-two years old, not five, or six. Pointing her toothbrush at her solo audience, she declared that it was not exclusively her. Her whole damn generation had done something wrong, for they were the victims of guilt, not only of their parents, but of their children as well.

"Where have you been all day?" asked David, as he approached Abby.

"What day is this, David?" Abby answered back.

"Thursday, it's Thursday. Where have you been?"

"Can you see that I am standing here with my arms full of groceries? Would you either help or get out of my way, please." Abby slid past David and went to the kitchen. David followed her.

"Every Thursday, David, I go to work, I'm teaching two classes this summer, remember? Then I go to my racquetball game, and I go to choir rehearsal."

"That's right," sighed David.

A coffee can fell from Abby's hand and rolled across the kitchen floor. Abby took after it and scooped it up before it nestled itself under the oak table, amid the jungle of chair legs. She returned with it to the pantry and placed it on a shelf. Finally, she folded up the grocery bag and put it with the others, between the wall and the refrigerator. "I talked to my mother today." Abby needed to change the tension level. "She asked about you, even got your first name right."

David laughed his sinister laugh, then asked, "What did you and what's-her-name talk about?"

"First, there was the when's-the-last-time-you-called-your-mother nonsense. That was the prelude to "we could be sick and dying and you wouldn't even know it." Next, was the claim that my father is making her crazy, but it seems that was merely the segue to the subject of his birthday."

"What does she want now?"

"Oh, you know, just a small token of appreciation for all that they have done for me: the braces on my teeth, shoes on my feet, a year's worth of piano lessons with a child molester. She wants something to measure up to all of that."

"Abb, just tell me what she said."

"I am telling you. You have to remember that they don't deal in abstracts. They want the down payment on nineteen-thousand meals."

"I got it! Your mother wants to give your father a microwave oven for his birthday."

Abby picked up a piece of mail from the table and held it against her forehead. "Wrong, Karnac. She wants a car."

"A car!" He choked with laughter. "What did you tell her?" he gasped.

"I didn't tell her anything. I said that I had to get to work. I said good-bye, maybe, I don't know." Abby could feel the squeeze of the vise that was one part Mother, one part David. She fumbled with the salt shaker; the quiet was so heavy that it made her uneasy.

"We are not going to buy them a car, so relax. What they really want I don't have to give them. Have you had dinner?"

"I ate at the club," David answered.

"Today at racquetball, I had to play against this woman who plays for blood. She's an advanced player who drops down to intermediate level so she can take home a trophy." Abby paused; it had been several years ago, but she still remembered when winning had been important to her. She sat back down and worked each shoe off with the opposite foot.

"Did you win?"

"Are you kidding? I played like such a klutz. I kept telling her that my single interest in being there was to run around and sweat. I'm only here for comic relief, I told her." Abby shuddered. "What is the thermostat set at? God, I'm cold."

"Same as always," said David. "Tell me, what was the score?"

"She had forty-five; I had nineteen. Choir rehearsal was unusual. We didn't sing at all. Everyone sat in a circle and waited for our turn to tell each other off. Some people were vicious; I wonder where they get their nerve."

David grinned. "So, who did you tell off?"

"Me? I didn't tell anybody off; I explained my theory regarding the choir."

"You have choir theories?"

"It's not a theory — I was just protecting my flanks. Or maybe I marshaled my forces. When it was my turn I explained that I have a lot of music in me, but I wasn't about to harm anyone in order to get a solo, because I never know how well that music will come out. But since it is a volunteer choir, they have to let me sing."

"They — have to let you sing? You told them that?"

"Absolutely. I'm a volunteer; you take what you can get when you ask for volunteers."

"Very good point." David began to play with the pen in his shirt pocket. Abby took this as a sign that David was planning his departure. "I'm going back to the hospital now; I have a large stack of films to look at before tomorrow."

Abby tossed her head back in an effort to shake her hair from her face. "You've got to go back to the hospital?" she asked, as if questioning David could have changed the situation.

"Uncle Marty is coming by for a short visit, and I had hoped that we could spend the time together."

David, noticing Abby's disappointment, shrugged his shoulders and said, "Maybe I'll get home in time to say hello to your Uncle Marty. I'll try."

Abby watched as David left the kitchen. That's right, David, she thought, go and look inside all those people. Find the source of their pain. The garage door rumbled. "Go help strangers," she whispered. Abby went to the refrigerator and removed all the fresh fruit that she could carry.

At the sink, she ran the water, washed the fruit and placed it in a bowl retrieved from the lower cabinets. Having saved the strawberries for last, she pulled off the rubber band and the cellophane from the pint container. The strawberries were spoiled. They look as good as I feel, Abby thought.

She tried to salvage something to give to her uncle. If David were here, he would insist that the strawberries be put out to eat. Although they were not intended for the serving bowl, Abby rinsed each one before dropping it down the garbage disposal. "Say good-bye to all of this," and the

disposal ate them. To make herself feel better Abby hummed a song and imagined David rushing home one day to tell her that he had found a soul in a patient's x-ray.

Abby looked at the clock. It was eight-thirty. Uncle Marty had not said what time she should expect him. He had so many people to see when he came into town that she did not mind being on hold.

She opened one of the kitchen's junk drawers and fished around for a pen, then looked in the cabinets for paper. The stationary box that was kept wedged between the cookbooks was empty. Abby had been about to write a letter to Julie or to Scott, but changed her mind at the thought of running upstairs to find some paper. She put on her shoes and went, instead, to the garage. From the front seat of the car she removed her purse and from the trunk her gym bag. Back in the house she put her purse on the stairs and brought the sports bag to the laundry room. She emptied the contents of the bag into the washing machine and added the few clothes that were in the laundry chute. She set the dials, poured the soap, closed the lid and pulled the knob that started the wash cycle.

Abby sat in the kitchen reading a paperback edition of *The Plague* and waited for Uncle Marty. When the doorbell rang, she put the book down and ran to the door. Abby welcomed Uncle Marty, who looked at her adoringly and hugged her ruggedly. It was a complete contrast to the way her father would have greeted her. His manner consisted of stiff words and an awkward kiss on the cheek.

"Oh, Abby, how good it feels to look at you," Uncle Marty said. "Florida may have sunshine, but I miss you. Here," he said, handing her a shopping bag, "these are for you."

"What have you got in here?" laughed Abby.

"Look, look, look," teased Uncle Marty, raising his voice an octave.

"How in the world did you grow these in a condominium? Come into the kitchen. I'll put this down." She placed the bag on the counter top at the back of the kitchen so it would not get in the way. They sat at the table, next to each other. "How are you, Uncle Marty?" Abby asked.

"I'm wonderful. Why not? I'm getting old, and I like it. I have time to think about what I would like to do, and I do it." And Abby knew that he did.

In the light Uncle Marty stared at his brother's daughter. "Abby," he said, "do you remember the victory garden Aunt Sarah and I had when we had the house on Pine Avenue? Or are you too young?"

"Young!" Abby protested. "I think I'm older than you are, Uncle Marty. Of course, I remember. It was wonderful. I remember all the kids hiding between the corn stalks. How are my cousins? Tell them I said thanks for sharing you for a few hours. How was your trip?"

Uncle Marty told Abby that his children were well, that his trip had been fine and that he would never come to town and not take the time to see her. "And," he said, "you should see the baby, *kayn aynhoreh*,<sup>1</sup> what a doll."

"That's what I hear, *Mazel tov!*<sup>2</sup> Uncle Marty," and she gave his hand a squeeze. His hand was warm, his fingers worn and cracked. "You travel all this way to see them," she remarked. "You know that Mom and Dad won't even drive twenty-five minutes to see their grandchildren. They have this principle they live by; their children have to go to them. I can't understand how that makes them happy."

"Ah, my brother! Al is Pa all over again. Why do you think I come here? Because, my little Abigail, when you were growing up I saw a child that was frightened of everything. I had no doubt that my brother had provided for you with the sweat of his brow, but who was going to take the fear from your eyes? I should have tried to spend more time with you." The old man spoke with his shoulders swaying, and his voice *davening*.<sup>3</sup>

"Uncle Marty, you make things sound terrible. Nothing was so terrible."

"I understand, Abby; I even understand your need to protect them." Uncle Marty ran his tough fingers over his mouth and stopped at his chin. "So, where's your husband the doctor? Where's your David?" he asked as he surveyed the bowl of fruit.

"He's at the hospital," Abby answered. "He should be back soon."

"Then, tell me, how have you been?" He put his hand on Abby's arm.

"There's not much to tell. Julie and Scott are working at a summer camp. David works or plays golf. It's been quiet around the house."

Uncle Marty picked up Abby's hand and held it in his. "Abby, I asked about you, and you told me about the children, the house and the doctor. What can you tell me about you?"

Abby gazed at her uncle, and marked how his hair had changed from deep gray to a dull gray and white. "Can I get you something to eat or drink? Would you like some coffee?" Uncle Marty shook his head. "I..." Abby inserted into the silence. She looked away from him and studied the grain in the wood table.

"Tell me what is disturbing you," Uncle Marty persisted. "Why do you feel as if you're older than me?"

She flipped the corners of the pages of her paperback again and again. The anxiety that was building caused her to take a deep breath. Presured by the quiet, Abby spoke. "I'm not anything to anybody. David exists in another place. He sees me for twenty minutes, then, he disappears. I can hold his attention for as long as it takes to make him laugh." Abby unconsciously scratched the nail polish from her fingernails. "I'm tired of what we have."

Uncle Marty asked, "What do you have, Abigail? What do you want?"

"I have expectations; therefore, I'm lonely. I've got a lousy marriage, but I'm married to a man that has a great marriage. I have things, but they don't cause me to be less lonely. David thinks all he has to do in life is acquire things and more things. I don't know what I want. I want the answers to be easy."

"Now," Uncle Marty said softly, "you listen to me. What you have is a husband, and two children. We've all shared bad times; believe me! But you don't walk away from family. That's your answer. Abby, time will take care of everything."

"Time? Time is a problem. You see, I don't want to say years from now that I should have started a new life years ago."

"Look at you," Abby turned away, but Uncle Marty turned her face toward his by touching her chin gently with his tough fingers. "You know, you haven't changed. I look at you now and I remember how my mother loved you. You were the apple of her eye. In your pinafores or your dungarees she always said you were the prettiest. She loved to watch your curious looks every time she pulled out those old photographs of hers. She liked to tell you stories."

Abby looked down onto the table rejecting his words. Poor Uncle Marty, she thought, he must be thinking of one of the other kids. I wasn't anything to anybody.

Uncle Marty saw Abby's reaction to what he had told her. "You think that I don't know what I'm talking about, *nu*, it's all right. But I'm telling you that your grandmother cared. She used to make us all crazy; she wanted everyone to explain to her why you never talked. I bet you don't even remember that, do you, Mrs. Cohen, teacher? You never said a word." He smiled as he spoke of his mother. "You think things over. Think about what I've said. Tell David I'm sorry I missed him." He stood and turned to leave. "Abby, you'll be all right?"

"I'm okay, Uncle Marty. Thank you for everything; have a safe trip. Come back soon, please." They shared a vigorous hug, then Uncle Marty left.

One step below the hum of the running water, Abby heard an echo impersonate Uncle Marty . . . you never talked . . . never said a word. That was me. Abby nodded, not my cousins, but me. The memory of being so terribly shy caused a biting twinge in Abby's chest. She drew up her shoulders and folded her arms across her waist; she even curled her toes so tightly that they ached. Abby still lived within reach of that world. Survival taught her to change her exterior; she created a veneer out of her good looks and by arranging her life into a design that left her no time to contemplate her existence.

A warm jellied feeling replaced Abby's chest biting ache for one moment. "She loved — me?" Abby whispered. Staring at her vague reflection on the blackened kitchen window she wondered if it was true, or if it made any difference.

From the bag that Uncle Marty had brought, Abby removed tomatoes, carrots, onions, cucumbers and radishes and carried them to the sink. Washing the dried earth from the radishes, she thought of her grandmother. There had never been a time when the woman hadn't seemed ancient.

Her grandmother had soft, shiny, deeply etched skin. She used to tilt back her head, and with her mouth opened slightly, look through the bottom of her eye glasses and out over her cheek bones and brush the hair from Abby's forehead with a satiny touch. Grandma had loved to bring out bowls of chicken soup from the white enameled pot that eternally sat on the kitchen stove. The same old woman controlled everybody in her home by hissing, "*Shaaa! the kinder!*" She had always wanted to learn how to drive the "machine" but never did.

Gradually, Abby accepted Grandma's love.

The garage door opened. Abby rinsed off the last tomato. "Abb?" David called. "My God, where did you get that tomato? I don't think I've ever seen a tomato that size. These are from your uncle, aren't they? Sorry I missed him."

"Me too. It was good to see him. He said to say hello."

"Did he sit around and tell you stories of yesteryear? You love that *mishegoss*, don't you?"

"It's not *mishegoss*. Yes, I do love it. Yes, he told me one story from yesteryear."

"Which one?" David wanted to know. "The one about how poor they were, about the envelopes for their money, an envelope for the rent, and an envelope for the groceries, etcetera."

"No, he told me a new, old story. He told me that my grandmother loved me. How about that?"

"How about that, Abb? I don't get it, of course she loved you."

"Of course she loved you," Abby mimicked David, "but I never knew it. I didn't know that anyone ever loved me without expecting something from me. Now I find out someone cared about me and I didn't even have to give her words." Abby turned off the running water.

"Mind if I slice one of these open?" asked David.

Abby took a slicing knife from the drawer in front of her and passed it across the counter top to him. "David," she said, "that's how you solve everything, isn't it?"

"What?"

"You look inside it."

"Well, yes."

"You look inside it and see what's good, and what's not. It's all physiological, a growth here, a strangulation there. You have all the answers you want in those translucent-gray works of art you study."

"Are you looking for a fight, Abby?" David wanted to know.

"Yes, I am," replied Abby, "because I just realized . . . I married my mother."

"That's a dirty thing to say."

"Doctor Cohen, I have a pain. It starts here," Abby traced a line starting at the side of her head and stopped over her heart, "and radiates to here."

"Well, you've got the head part right. You're acting nuts."

"That's very professional," Abby shot back. "Why don't you ask me if I have any idea what the cause might be."

"Jesus! Okay," this time David mimicked Abby, "any idea what the cause might be?"

"Indifference."

"Listen, I've had enough of this. I'm going upstairs. When you come up bring some of those strawberries, please," David's voice trailed off.

In the morning David felt Abby stir next to him. "Abb," he said, "I waited a long time for you to come upstairs." He moved closer to Abby and put his arm around her waist.

"It took me a long time to decide to come upstairs."

"We're not terminal, you know. You just have to tell me where it hurts," David said. "What happened to those strawberries?"

"Uncle Marty and I ate them," Abby told David. "What happened to the count?"

"What Count? What were you doing, dreaming of Dracula?"

"No, what happened to the weights? Why aren't you pumping iron?" Abby asked.

"Oh, I thought I'd let you sleep," said David.



"Untitled,"

9" x 4 1/4" Photograph

Robbin Hampson

<sup>1</sup>*Kayn aynhoreh* (kane-a-HAW-reh) phrase said to protect a child or show honest praise

<sup>2</sup>*Mazel tov* — congratulations

<sup>3</sup>*Davening* — chanting voice, as in devout prayer

<sup>4</sup>*mishegoss* — nonsense



# Blue Roses Grow on Brother's Grave

Beverly Rose Enright

The coffin concaves down to drop  
into the freshly dug concave up  
and this meagre mourning family set  
watches as one golden maple leaf  
slowly drifts its head on your lid.

We were schoolchildren once  
and teacher's pets, I always first  
and you but one year behind me  
best in the class too.  
We slipped a little in Jr. High.  
I flirted with Elvis and rock,  
and you dreamed of motor bikes and cars.  
But still we clung to school and the Baptist church.  
In ninth grade you decided to fail and turn delinquent,  
and all your life since has been  
the rotting away dance with death.  
What a beautiful boy you were, brother,  
practicing the family violin,  
or making up comic routines with me  
with our exaggerated laughs and grins.  
The stories we made up about our stuffed toys,  
and the books we shared as we grew,  
the Laurel and Hardy movies,  
and old radio shows, could not have foretold  
how tragic and fatal your fumbling with crime  
and the madness, drinking and debauch of your decline.  
Justice concaves down like a coffin,  
and mercy concaves up like a grave,  
but you were a long time adying  
and hope hung many times on your cross.  
What a sad stinkweed life to live, brother,  
blessed with all that beauty and brain.  
What a hard heartbreaker you were, brother,  
as you killed me again and again.

But if death is a spiraling function  
that spins through the fires of love  
burning away all but the beauty  
that beats in birth and rebirth,  
then you will reach heaven as handsome  
as the shy boy that once graced the earth.



## freeform

Kristen J. (Katia) Rojek

your life's a mess  
your mother says  
too much runnin'  
in small circles  
clean up your act  
your dad demands  
why do they think  
you need a change

why not explain to them  
as nicely as you can  
that life's a circle, square  
and lines to be reviewed  
and you're a freeform in  
a world tightly braided

the world is strict  
not much for room  
the freeform lost  
in all the rush  
you're not a bum  
but a free shape  
your spirit lies  
in lines and forms

a ghostly shape of lines  
and circles, squares appears  
and shows that you, freeform  
are a brother of life  
that life is circles, squares  
and shapes of lines itself

spiral thoughts of great intensity  
find the corners of your mind  
you are not the only freeform lost  
in tightly braided silence

the world is running in  
circles near the freeform  
traveling around you  
drawing lines, circles, squares  
braiding you into the  
tight uniformity

the world is strict  
not much for room  
the freeform trapped  
in closed off minds  
you're not shut off  
but a free shape  
in a world of  
straight lines and squares



"Untitled," 8½" x 11" Photograph

Robbin Hampson



## A Weak Gaze at Week Days

Marilou Arnold

MONDAY is never my funday,  
It's an Attila the Hunday, no time for a punday  
it's usually a runday  
Monday

TUESDAY is a full of the bluesday  
a nothing to lose day, a not really good newday  
a time to pay my duesday  
Tuesday

WEDNESDAY is my sews and mendsday,  
a writing with pensday, a look through a lensday  
a see my fender get the bendsday  
Wednesday

THURSDAY is a warm fursday,  
a little kitten's purrsday, a stick to my socks burrsday  
a small and sad-eyed cursday  
Thursday

FRIDAY is a rather wryday,  
a sunny, bright dryday, a get up and tryday  
you won't see me cryday  
Friday

SATURDAY is my really doesn't matterday  
my clothes are in a tatterday, a time to mix the batterday  
an eat and get fatterday  
Saturday

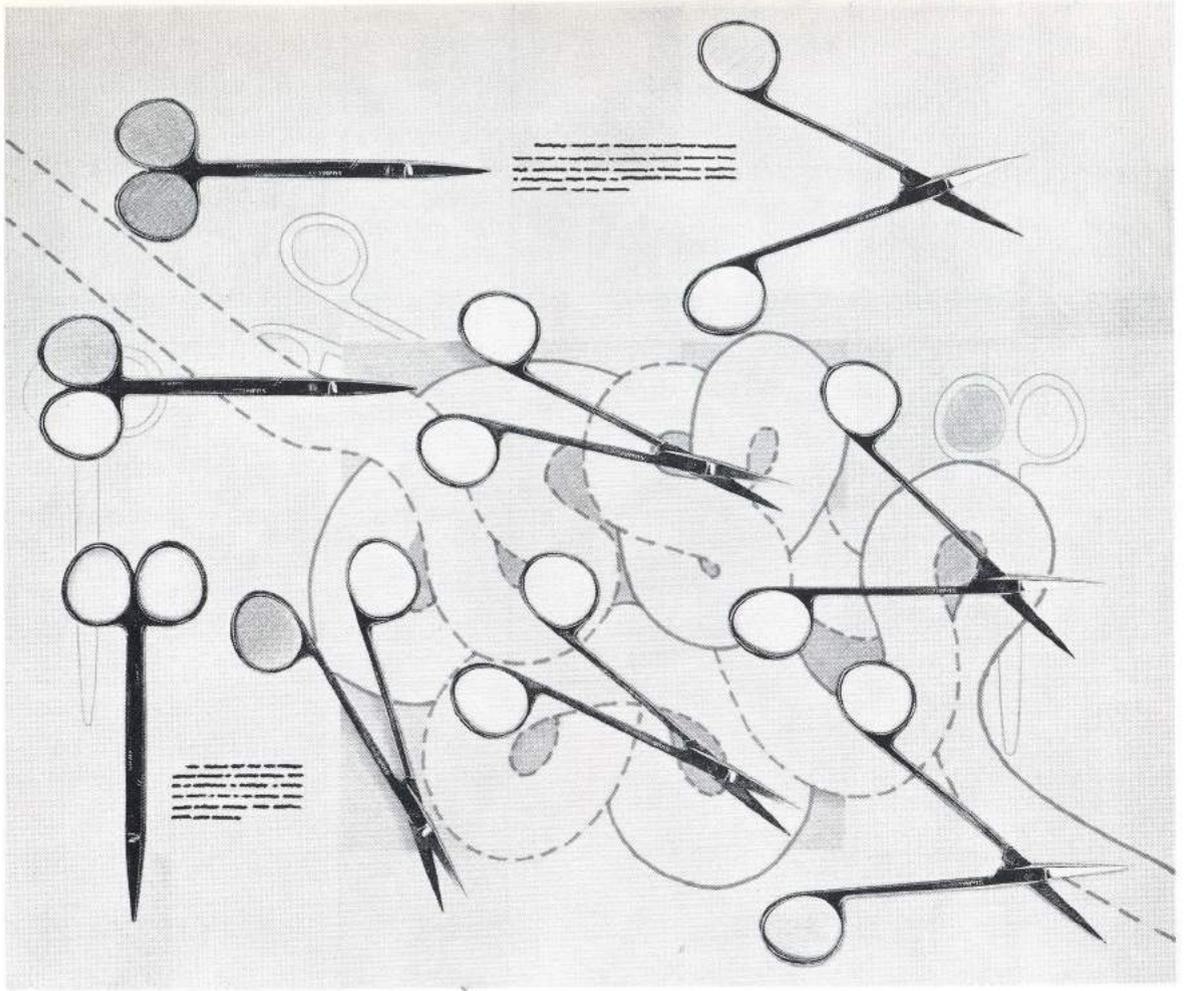
SUNDAY is made for a nunday,  
a cowboy who shoots his gunday, on Easter a hot cross bunday  
for God it's His oneday  
Sunday



## The Tigers

Jean Kealy

Tigers play, hidden  
in wild grasses,  
friendly furry paws in air,  
rolling, purring, scratching,  
leaping out of touch.  
Gentleness and strength combine  
to tease,  
til scent weaves through the air  
and  
warns of khaki poised and prone.  
Muscles tighten and  
grip the skin  
Hairs moisten, ears  
flick and turn . . .  
Tall grasses are bent.  
a lick on limp paws.  
Then wind whips the thighs  
as life again engages.



"Scissors and Squiggles," 15" x 14" Mixed Media Drawing

Robb Miles



# Everyself

Kim Hoffman

Daki walked along the ruins. It was one of her favorite places to be. She knew that it was wrong to be out at self-hour, but the Chicago ruins seemed to call to her. She was beginning to really understand this terrible world. All of the slogans about, "Do for the self and the self will serve," were all wrong. Daki knew she was showing a terrible emotion — caring — but somehow she liked this ancient feeling.

Upon the second tomorrow, Daki had stopped taking her self-pills. Self-pills made her think only of herself. She hoped that her mother wouldn't find out. The Old One had died recently . . . he had been disintegrated. She had done something very dangerous for him: she cared. The Old One had told her of things his old friend had passed on to him. Reminiscing was very dangerous and bad for the "now self." "Mother" would have given a re-education for this. The Old One's suggestion for not taking self-pills had been followed, only to show Daki that all he'd said was true. Everyself was disoriented, almost as though living in a separate world . . .

Daki jumped. Someself had followed her to the ruins. Her only hope was that it was not her mother. Mothers could read bad thoughts. It was Ramea's mother. It flashed its hollow smile and told Daki she must report to her compartment for self-hour at once.

Daki thought about their hollow, uncaring society. Had Everyself once been like she'd just become in the last seven tomorrows?

Upon returning home, Daki went to her compartment to feign self-contemplation. Daki felt extremely isolated, even at self-sharing hour, when everyone held hands and hollowly smiled at eachself, chanting.

Daki had reached her decision early on the eleventh tomorrow. She would have to set out to destroy this world's lack of feeling, and the only way to accomplish this was to, somehow, end the distribution of self-pills; that had to be the key.

The Old One had told Daki of a man called Shan, who had been off of self-pills half of his time. He lived in the city of Good Selves. Daki had to break into the room of knowledge somehow, and find out how to get to the city. She had heard, in self-education, of "bad ones" who had tried to steal the forbidden knowledge. Daki read a little, and she knew that therein was the knowledge she sought. She decided that the best time for this was self-hour.

So on the fifteenth of tomorrow, she acted.

She made her way out of "home" inconspicuously. She reached the outside of home and did something totally forbidden. Daki ran. It was difficult at first, for her breath came jaggely, and

her chest heaved and burned, but Daki concentrated. She reached the room of knowledge shortly. She was surprised at how fast her body could carry her.

The room of knowledge was bolted and locked. Daki thought that it was very hard to remember things; she'd never had any reason to remember before. She remembered something the Old One had told her about rocks.

Violence was a new feeling, and Daki felt a strange exhilaration when she tossed the rock through the room's window. She quickly entered and scanned the area for mothers. Seeing none, Daki looked among the cobwebbed "writings." She found a large writing with "Chicago" printed on it in strange, even letters. Opening this writing took great courage, as it was like self-unconditioning. She opened it, and felt an emulsion of freedom never felt before.

Some of the words in the writings were unfamiliar. Cars seemed to be the past civilization of Chicago. She wasn't sure what they looked like. Turning page after page, not sure she would find what she was looking for, Daki found a picture which seemed to portray a miniature Chicago. It showed many other places near Chicago. She quickly stuck it in her self-clothing and hurried back to "home," before her mother missed her.

Daki saw that mother was being repaired by other mothers in the corridor. Now she would have to be extra careful. A repaired mother was a ways sharp in finding unself and caring thoughts. She walked nonchalantly to her compartment. She stored the book in her dream place.

Soon it was self-education hour. The selves entered the room and sat in their specified chairs. The Educator addressed them in the usual manner, "A good self is an educated one."

"My goa is selfism," was the answer. It was so simple! Everyself was out of contact with reality! They probably didn't even know that they were capable of caring about other selves.

Daki didn't realize how loudly she said, "Oh!"

The Educator looked at her. "Daki, did you concentrate on your words?" The question was more accusing than inquisitive.

"Yes, Educator, of course." Daki thought . . . she would have to be more careful around other selves from now on. Late on this tomorrow, she would venture once more into the room of knowledge, and she needed non suspicions aroused.

Upon the self-hour, Daki prepared to slip out of her self-room. She would have to find out more information to locate Shan.

She read more writings and came across the idea of "books." She also read about maps, and now understood their idea.

Daki tiptoed out of her room and made her way to the room of knowledge, and was shocked to find that the window had been repaired. She found a rock and sent it crashing through the new window.

She was in the process of finding the newest map book when she heard the scuffle of a mother's feet. She panicked, then darted under a bookcase shelf. She knew that it was hopeless . . . a mother could detect herself alive . . . but she felt a little hope of escape in her position.

The mother entered, unlocking the door with her scanners. She scuffled around the room, scanning Daki. Daki saw that it was Leato's mother. The mother leaned down and shone a light beam under the bookcase. Daki felt her heart race, just as when she'd committed running. She gasped as the mother's hand pulled her to her feet. . . .

The selves went off to self-education . . . Daki smiled, "A good self is an educated one."



## Schroedinger's\* Cat

Nancy Bartels

Schroedinger's cat's a peculiar beast.  
He laps quirks and quarks from an  
N-dimensional bowl  
And sits in the lap of Einstein's ghost,  
relative and enigmatic.

He's neither here nor there —  
nor anywhere —  
Except, of course, in Herr Doktor's  
famous box,  
Whence he can be called into being  
by the wave of a theory . . .

Or not, depending . . .

At night, when Herr Doktor goes home  
to his pipe and his fire  
and his three-dimensional cat —  
The one with fur and fleas and feline concerns,  
birdlust and mousedreams —

Does Schroedinger's cat jump from the box,  
leap from wave form to wave form,  
pick delicately amid universes on  
silent, padded feet and,  
grinning like his Cheshire cousin,  
howl at the moon?

\*Erwin Schroedinger, German physicist, developed the wave form theory of sub-atomic physics. The cat is one in his famous riddle used to explain parts of quantum mechanics. When the box is opened, the cat is either alive or dead, depending on its position on the wave function at the instant the box is opened. It can also be both alive and dead in parallel universes having no knowledge of one another.



## Daylight for Sixty Seconds

Mike O'Connor

Gossamer rain veils the darkling sky.

Anticipatory faces gaze

At floodlit steel and aluminum.

They stir, nervously awaiting fire

To flash before binoculars.

A rocket aimed for orbit.

Velvet, cumulus curtains drawn;

The silver moonlight revealed.

Towers of hydrogen

Thrusting unsparingly,

Flames of volcanic force;

Exploding — billowing.

Daylight for sixty seconds;

Distorted, reflected across

Torpid, unwholesome water.

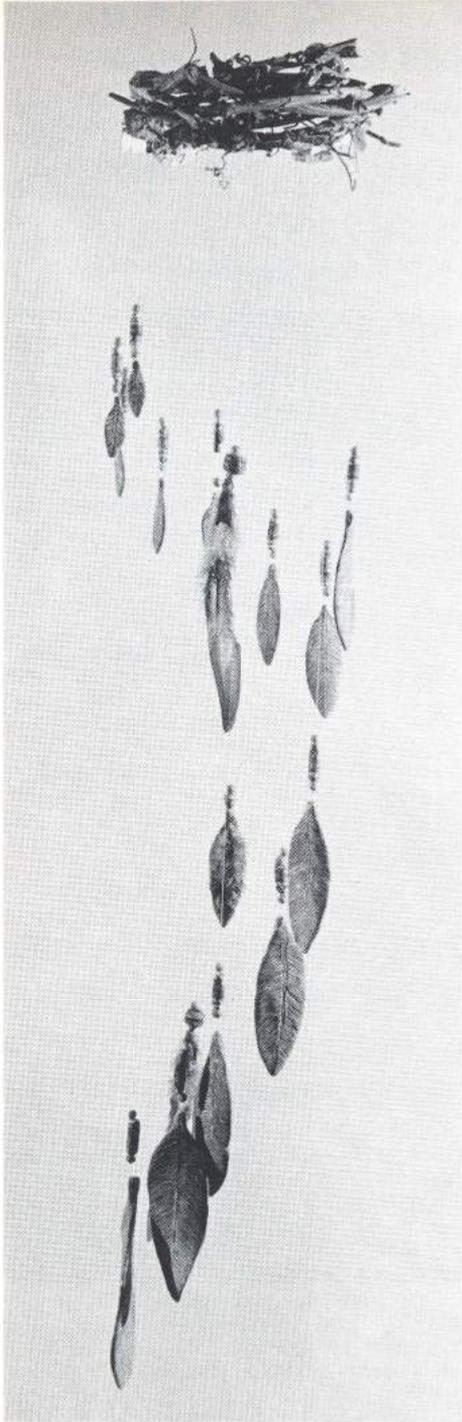
Delayed avalanche of thunder.

Rising slowly against gravity,

A coiling snake of smoke groans moonward.

Memories forever frozen on

Blurry photos of flaming dragons.



Hanging Picce

Sandra Reading



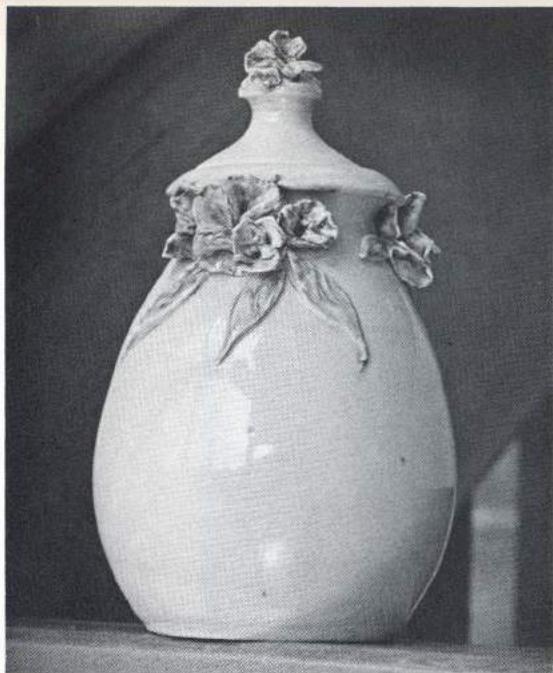
Shell and Coil Pitcher

Sandra Reading



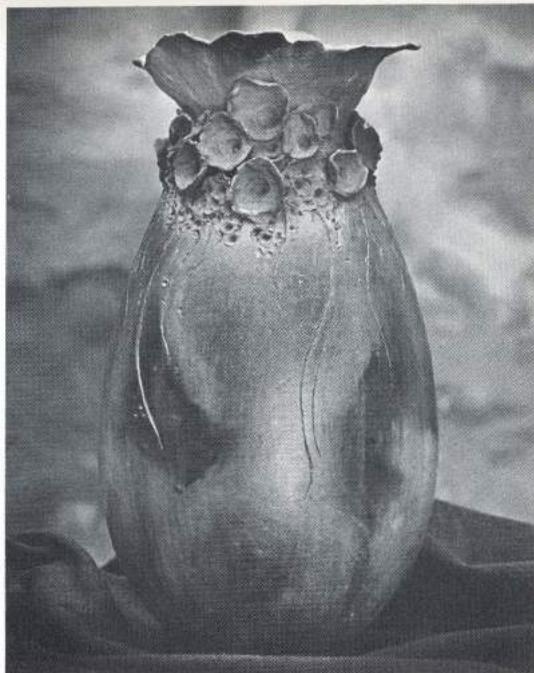
Japanese Woman

Pat Rotello



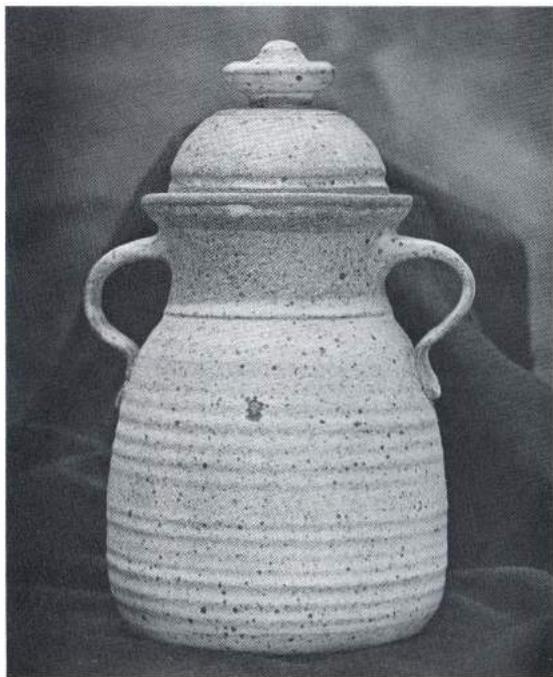
Porcelain

Joan Brinkworth



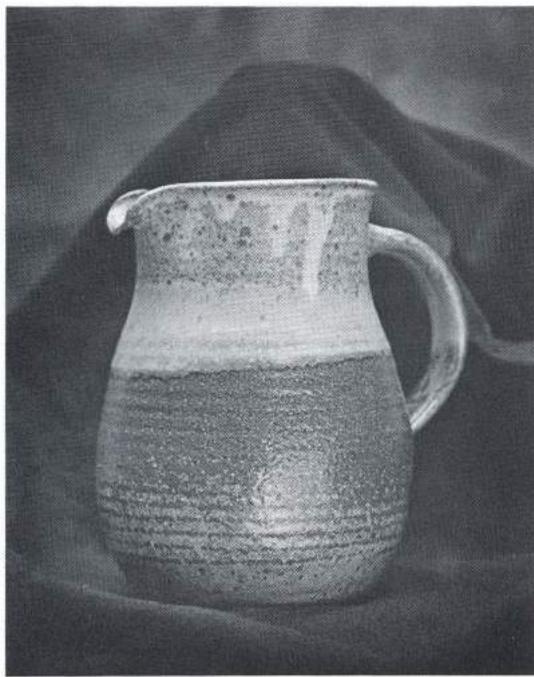
Pit Fired Vase

Joan Brinkworth



Thrown Stoneware

Mary Miller



Thrown Stoneware

Mary Miller



# Rape of a Continent

Paul P. Sipiera

Yellow snow on blue ice  
a sure sign that man has arrived  
For so long it remained pure  
the virgin of the southern ocea  
Its beauty hidden beneath a white shroud  
with harsh climate and distance its only protectors  
Where ma kind cannot flourish  
its existence was secure.

Penetration by man  
has brought about an irreversible fate  
For millenia to come  
what we have done will remain  
From the equipment that brought us  
to the food that sustained us  
Future generations will know us  
by the rubbish left behind us.



## Revlon Enamel No. 3

Mendy Sears

Inspired by some light feeling of Spring  
She painted her toes  
Tried on some summer clothes  
Set her eyes on diffuse  
and modeling for the mirror,  
Spiked the world with her heel.

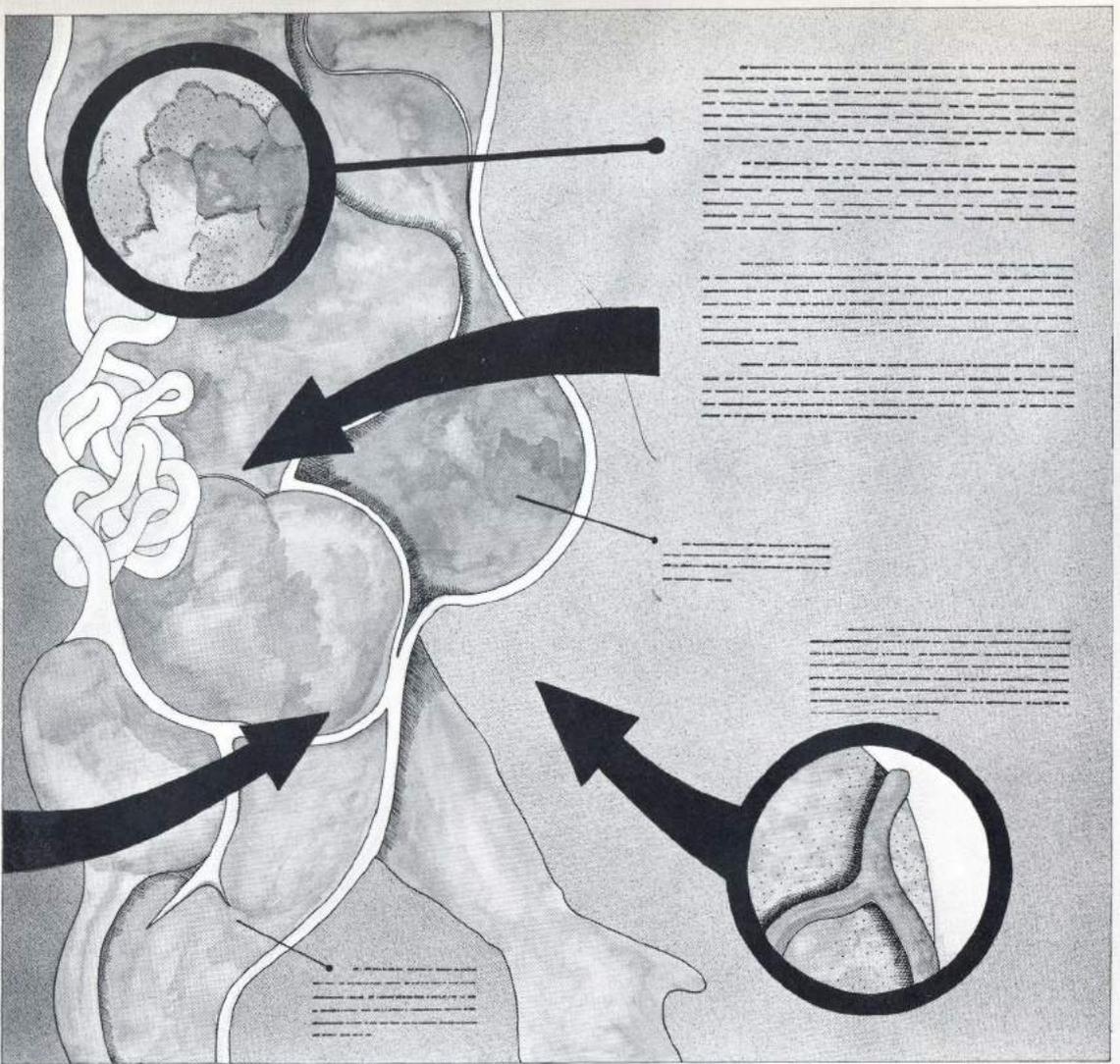
Thinking, None of this is real,  
She kicked aside the shoes  
Then dropped the sultry clothes  
and wished she didn't have  
to wash her pantyhose.  
She brushed her hair fifty strokes  
and rubbed the corns on her feet  
before she feel asleep.

She awoke in a land she'd never k own,  
made of light and precious stone.  
Her dress was blazing white and swirled about her feet;  
Stepping back to look around,  
She tripped on the clumsy gown  
And all the holy heads turned to see  
shining on her toes, Revlon's Latest  
Enamel No. 3.



"Ashes to Ashes, Lust to Dust," 20" x 30" Oil Painting

Thomas Billings



"Cross Section," 12" x 14" Ink Drawing

Robb Miles

# Grand Canyon — May 1984

Nancy Bartels

The canyon is old.  
Older than memory  
Or comprehension.

And vast.  
More vast than imagination  
or dreams.

You cannot grasp it whole — only in pieces.  
A lizard in the sun.  
A jewel-like fall of water.  
Rock in red and black, bearing scars  
of the birth agony of a planet.

And always the river.  
Clear sea green at first,  
then silty brown,  
running fast and hard for the sea.

To midwestern eyes, used to broad lumbering streams  
dumping rich black loam, ripe for planting,  
it is a fearsome, alien thing,  
a killer.  
It takes no prisoners, but dashes boat and  
body against the rock with equal abandon.

We've tamed it now, they say.  
Put a dam at each end,  
and we play on it in the  
warm season, laughing and splashing  
through the rapids.

But at night, lying on the sandy beaches,  
watched by stars,  
Or stretched across the rubber pods,  
adrift through quiet stretches,  
One always hears the river rushing,  
Waiting.



## The Seder

A. L. Wanderer

Time never seemed to enter that fortress.  
Sheltered within was their apartment,  
Up so many steps the faded halls  
Echoed, "Slow down. Don't look down."  
Down was easy, shiny smooth bannisters  
Wound round and around worn stair  
And indistinguishable landing.  
Sunset darts hit us at every turn.

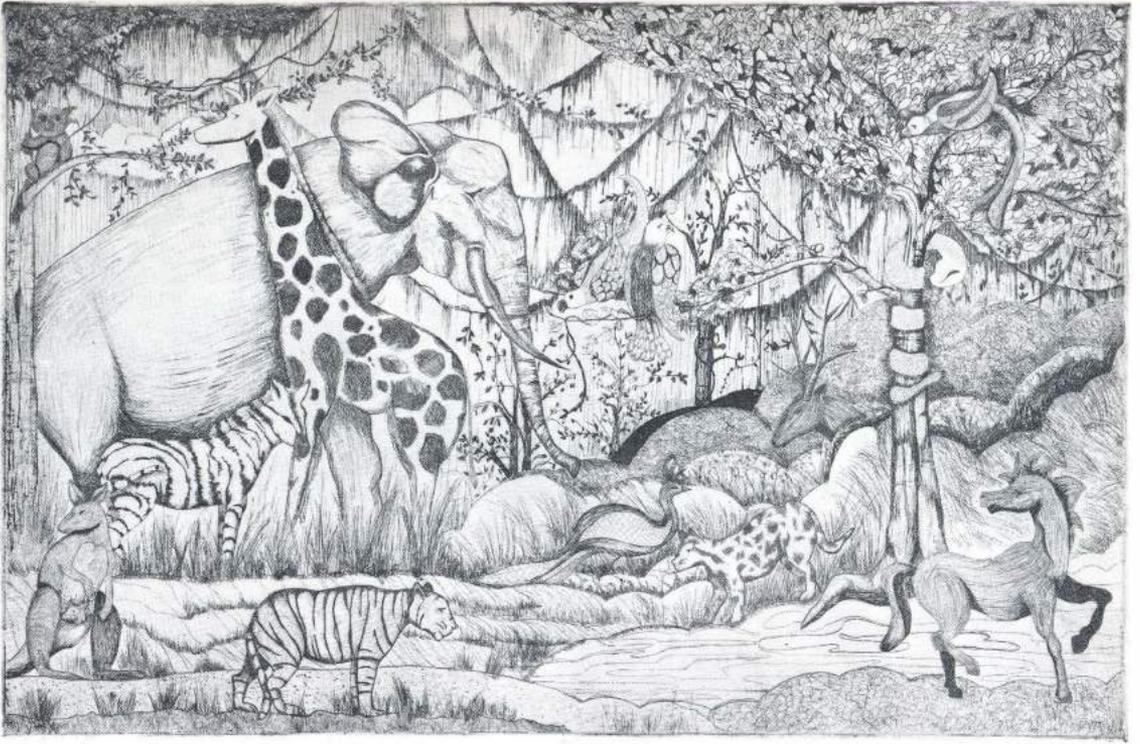
Pa stood to lead the Seder.  
With words I did not understand  
He chanted from the small book.  
Reader of pictures, my eyes — jumped from the page  
As unexpected, "Amen's," surrounded me.  
A young trembling voice, rising, falling,  
Questioned us all, "Mah Nishtannah . . .  
Why is this night different from all other nights?"

Parents became restless, insisting,  
"It's enough, Pa! Sit! The kids gotta eat!"  
Until Pa shot them the Look:  
That shamed them to silence.  
Sovereign was the guardian of observance.  
By candlelight we experienced our freedom  
As we waited for the stranger  
Amid our unleavened bread crumbs.



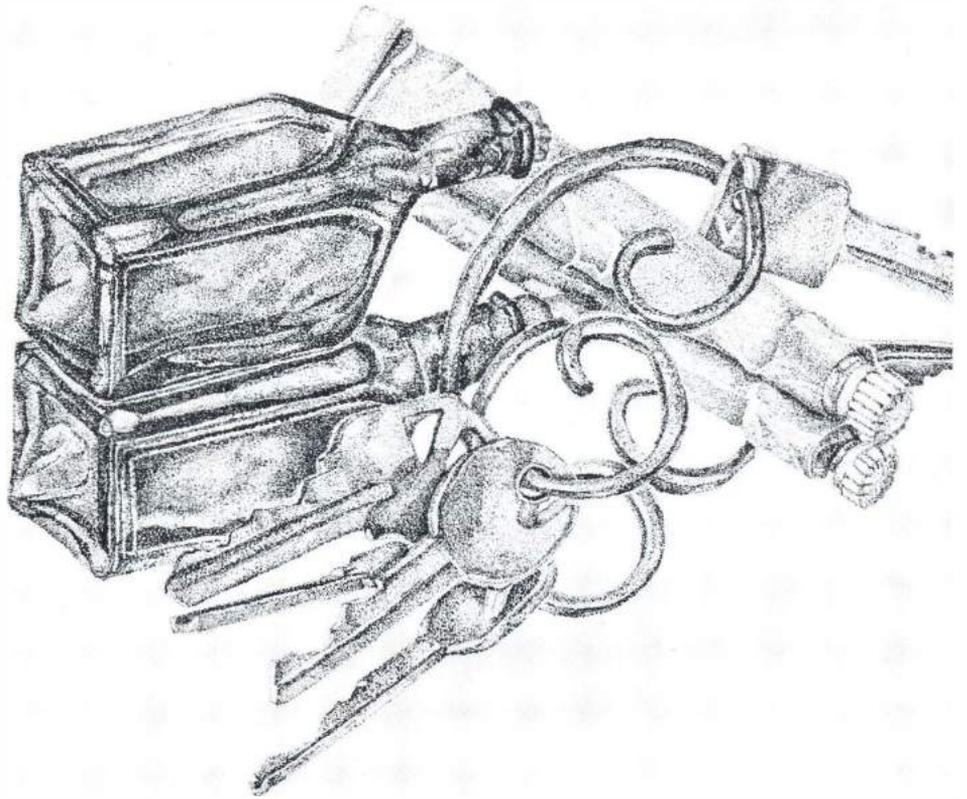
"Mary," 4½" x 3½" Soft Ground Etching

Veronica Potter



"Jungle," 17" x 11½" Etching

Yvette Levita

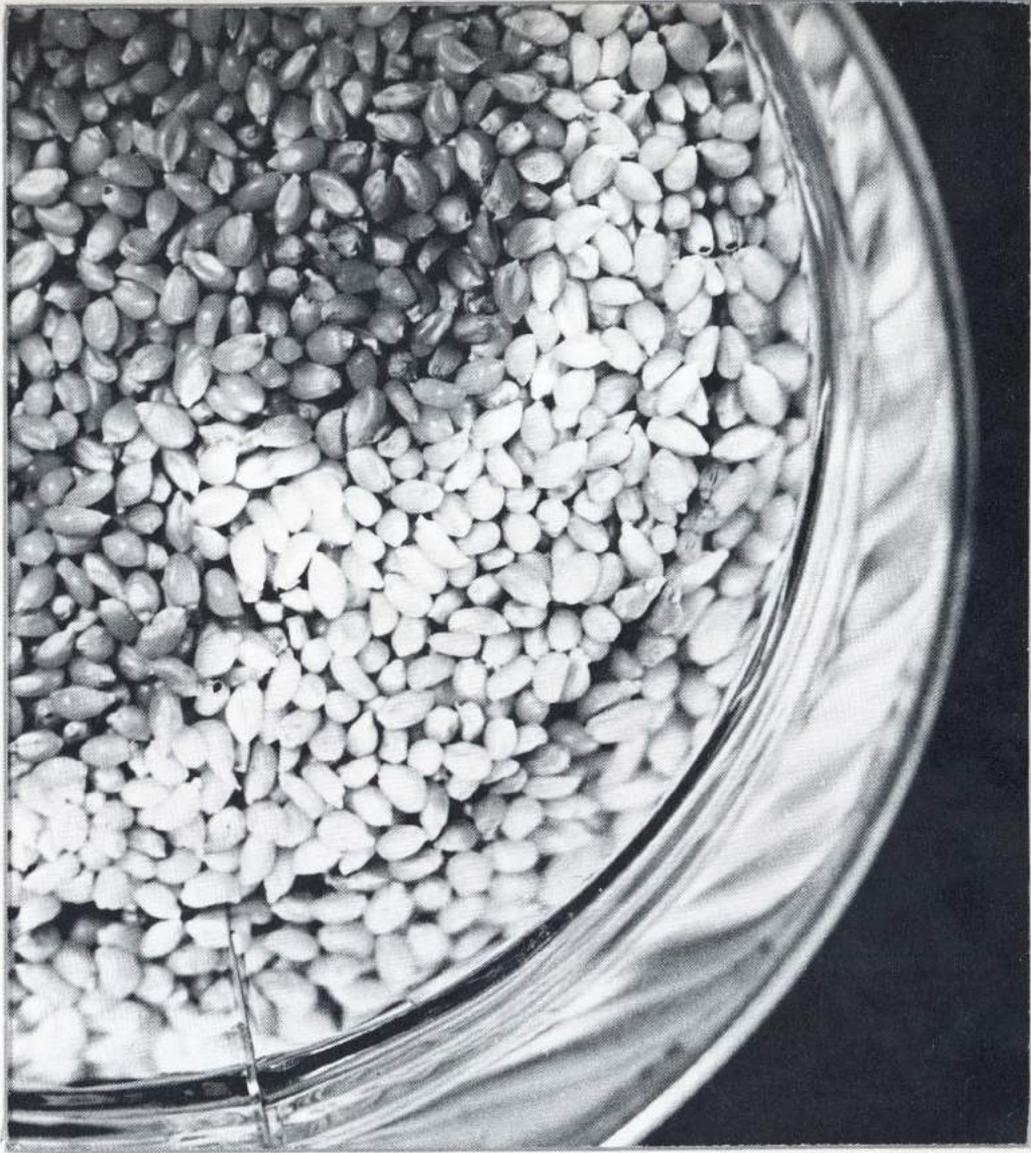


*Reflections*

*Chris Wilson*

“Reflections,” 5½” x 6” Pen and Ink

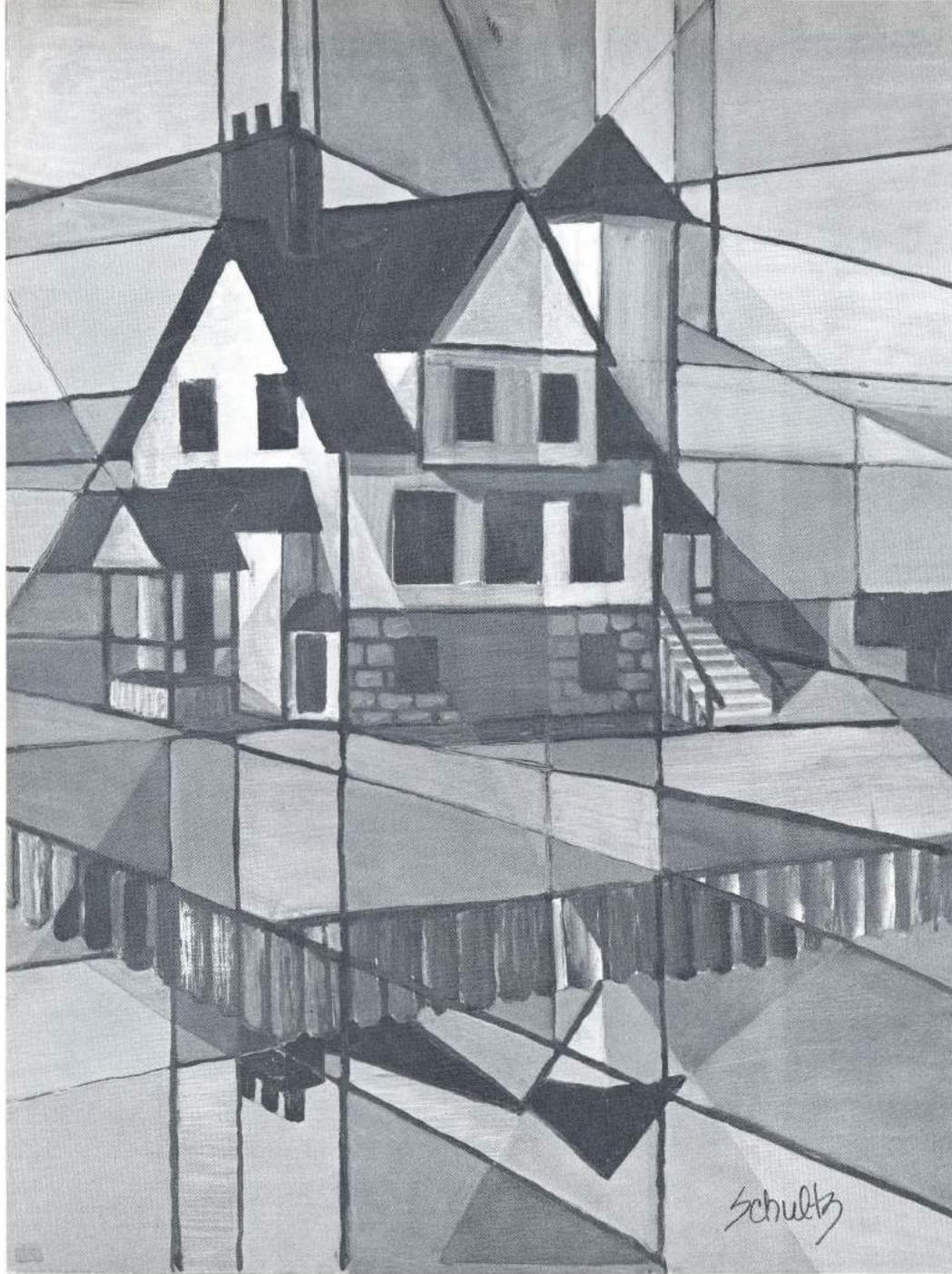
Chris Wilson



R Hampson

"Untitled," 8½" x 11" Photograph

Robbin Hampson



"Still Life," 18" x 24" Oil Painting

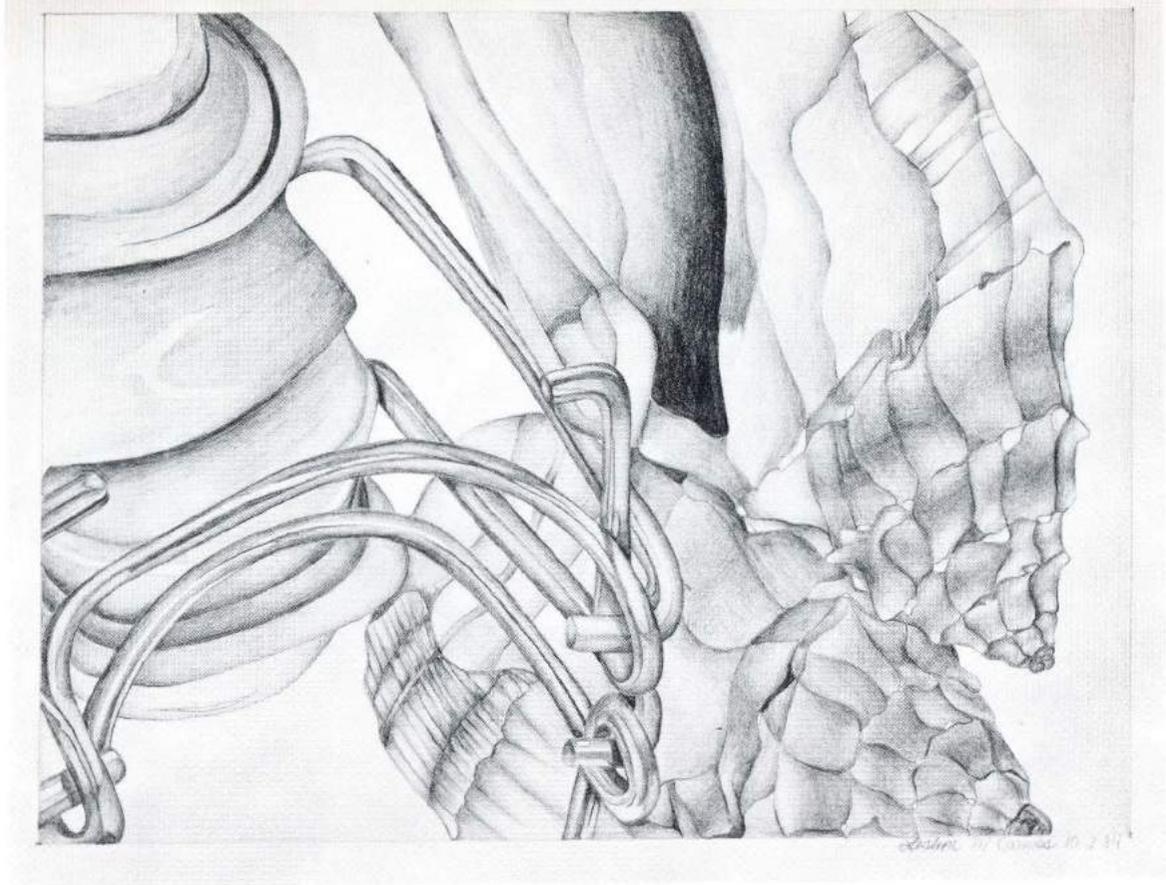
Sue Schultz



“Angels Fear Crows that Burn in Flight,”

15" x 36" Linoleum Print

Thomas Billings



“Shells,” 8” x 6” Pencil Drawing

Leslyn Coombs

## Nebraska

Kirsten Franzen

Just at dawn, bare trees silhouette themselves  
 against autumn's morning sky.  
 Together, the bare trees make a beautifully  
 intricate pattern against spectrum  
 colors of the sky.  
 When I'm here, I don't feel the pain of  
 everyday urban life.  
 All my problems and fears seem to disappear,  
 if only for a while.  
 Friendly people are all around.  
 When I'm mad at home, there's not much I can  
 do except endure it.  
 Here, I race through the fields, chase the  
 cows, and run with the dog until I can't  
 breathe anymore.  
 I am all alone . . . just me.  
 No one to see me cry.  
 No one to ask me why.  
 I just bury myself in the hay, wishing it  
 would all be in my backyard.



## Depression

Kim Payne

Some call it anger turned inward,  
 I call it fear of a consuming helplessness.  
 Nothing helps; everything hurts.  
 Talking only heightens the flame  
 burning me inside and out.  
 Thinking only kills the lone fireman  
 trying to save me from the blaze.  
 Sleep is close to death, but  
 not as comforting.  
 Hope is the microfine lifeline on  
 which I balance —  
 the fireman grasping one hand  
 the flame burning the other.

## The Arms of Someone New

Gena Parkhurst

The Arms of Someone New  
 Don't feel right.  
 The Arms of Someone Old  
 were wonderful!  
 What to do?  
 The kiss of someone new  
 all wrong.  
 The kiss of someone old  
 Gone.



## Old Testament Trinity

Beverly Rose Enright

If I peel away with knowledge, skill, and care,  
 each of the blackened varnished layers of centuries  
 of repaintings on the icon of my faith, Rublev,  
 O beloved Andrei Rublev, will I at last find you?  
 Or have the Kommissars taken over my hands  
 and axed it into pieces and burned it in the fires  
 of their blasphemy? Wherever you are, painting still  
 in glory, in the communion of saints, reach down  
 your arms to me and make my hands your hands again.

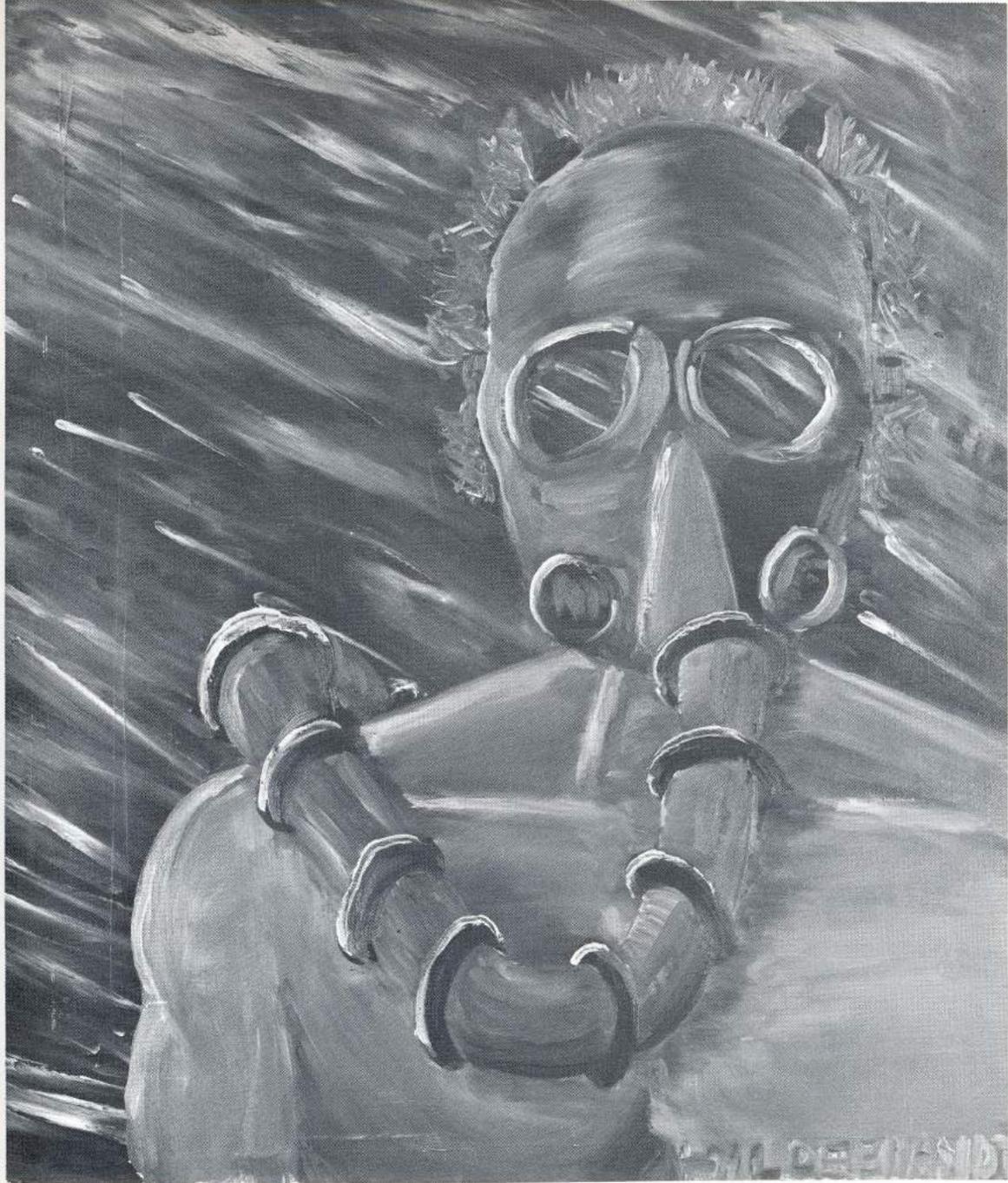
Three men seated at a round table, and I  
 at a table nearby, trying to do homework as I recite  
 the twenty-third psalm, falling deep in the cave  
 of shadows, and I overhear the mocking words,  
 to become a creature of the shadows, a cornered animal  
 that trapped strikes! O why did I remain?  
 Why did I not leave immediately when they came?  
 Three men came in, sat down together, and I saw  
 the shadow world, the negative, the crumminess,  
 and heard the mock of Satan, and I laughed his laugh,  
 even as I read the twenty-third psalm. Three angels  
 seated round a table in your window into heaven, Rublev,  
 and I can see it now. But not then . . . not then.

O icon master, I am now but your broken egg yolk.  
 Use me, use me, to paint again the Holy Mother of sorrows  
 on this Mother's Day of 1984, her sacred heart ringed  
 with roses, and the blessed child at her cheek.  
 I am only your poor broken golden egg yolk, beloved hand,  
 into which you dip your brush, pour your holy water, mix  
 your finely powdered colors to make the paint  
 to paint the icon of this great Christian faith forever.



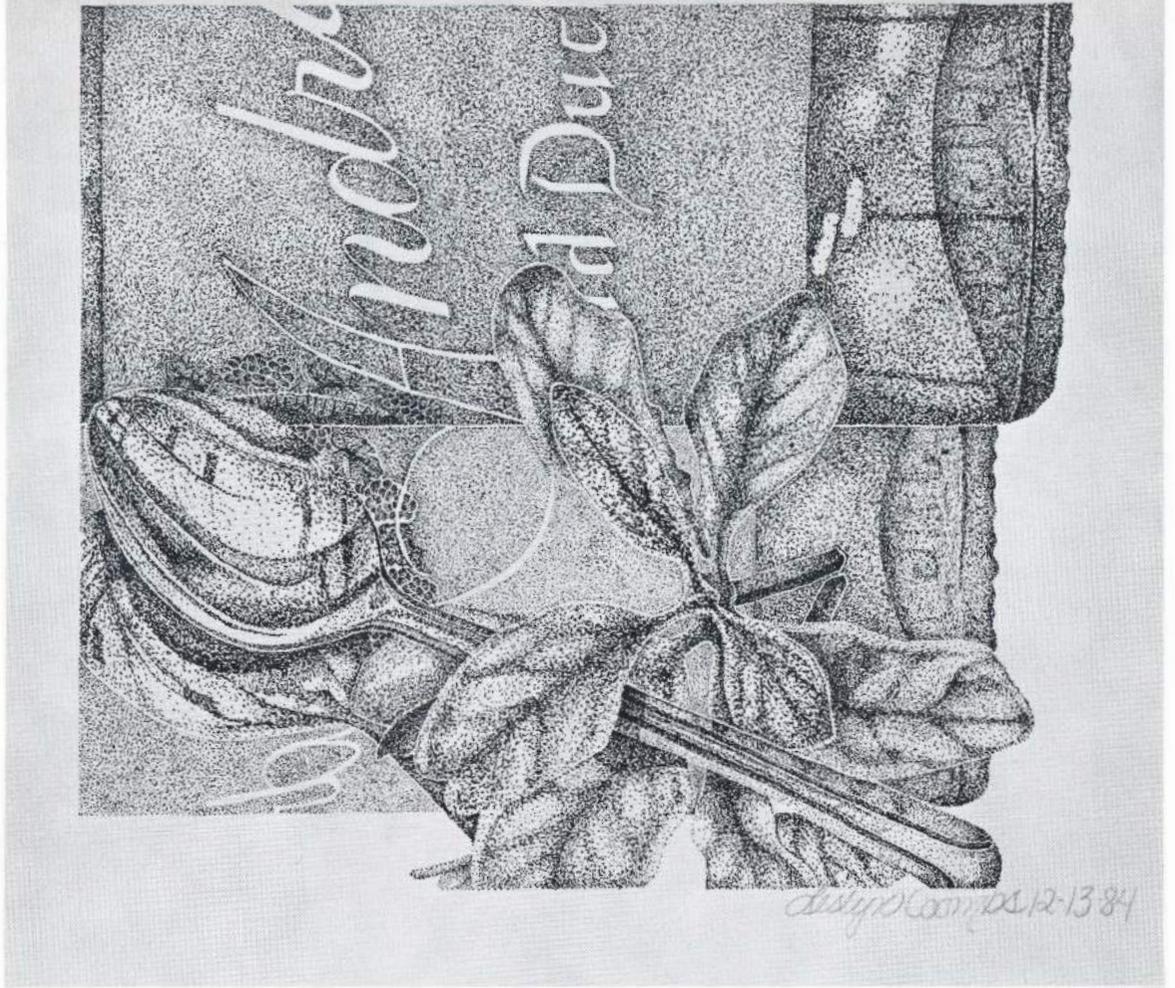
"Arm," 21" x 22" Graphite Drawing

Jim Hildebrandt



"Gas Mask," 29" x 34" Oil Painting

Jim Hildebrandt



"Bottle and Spoon Reflection," 5½" x 6" Pen and Ink Drawing

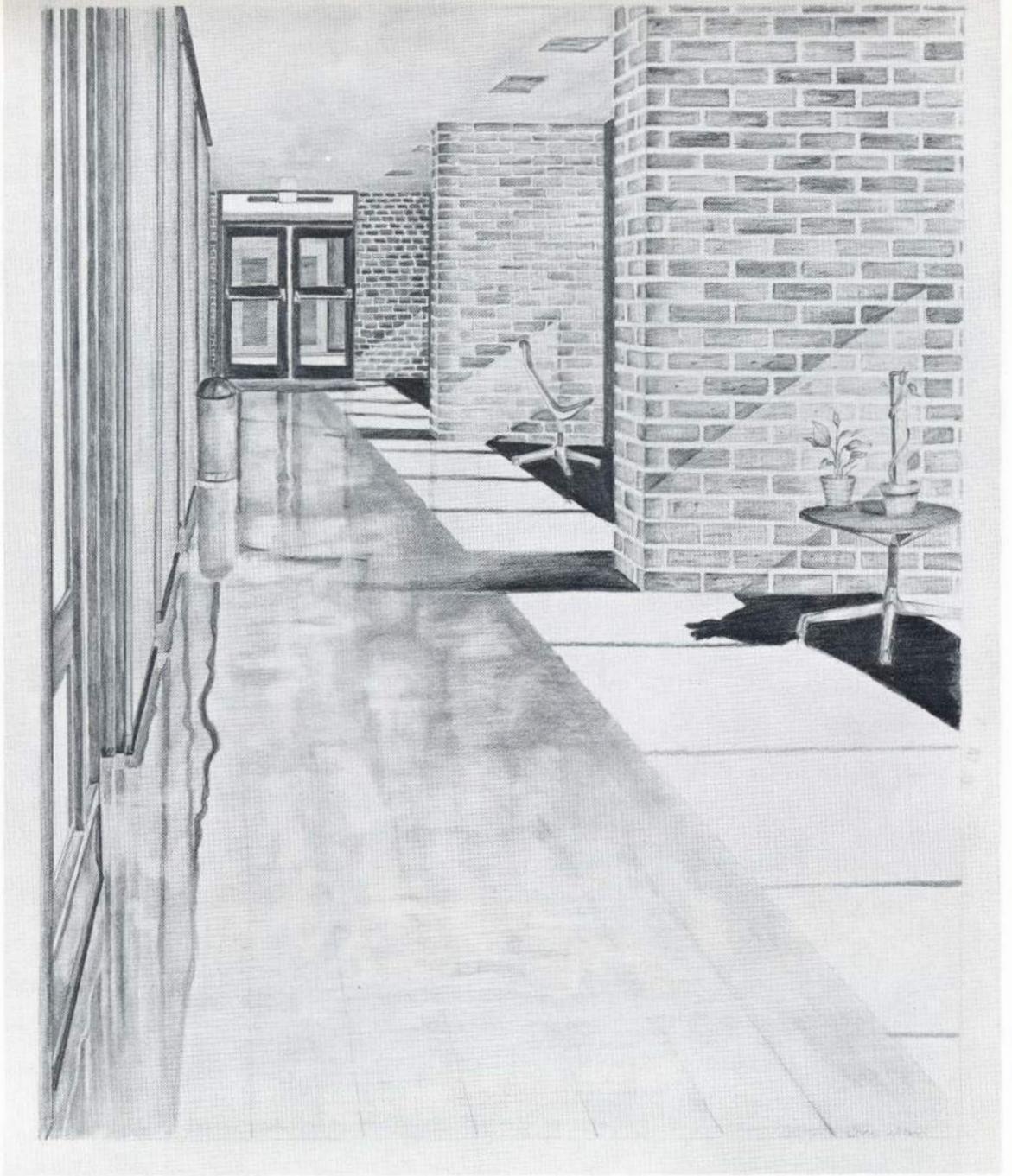
Leslyn Coombs



SP-2 2-20-81 (LITHO) "HELP MY PEOPLE" Robert Lucning 1980

"Help My People," 13" x 17" Lithograph

Robert Lucning



"Untitled," 10" x 12" Pencil Drawing

Chris Wilson



FLIGHT OF SOCRATES

Thomas Billings

"Flight of Socrates," 18" x 24" Etching, Engraving

Thomas Billings



"Intimate," 4" x 6" Soft Ground Etching

Veronica Potter



"Still Life with Red Chairs," 22" x 30" Oil Painting

Geri Caravello



“Untitled,” 13” x 14½” Pencil Drawing

Sue Chon



# The Witch

Ana Lee

Coming out of an abyss of abandonment and consternation  
My lifetime drowsiness  
My imprisonment nightmare  
With the rest of my strength, carrying my disoriented, uneven being  
Confusedly, exasperated, fascinated I went to her hallucinating session.  
A long-awaited event,  
My heart filled with fear,  
A prodigious experience, a phenomenon.  
My fantastic speculations,  
My fabulous wonders,  
The interminable wait.  
Tormented I take the risk,  
Uncomprehendingly I witness the abnormal spectacle,  
Contaminated by her unusual apparatus, her ways, her means, her infinite secrets,  
Her intuitions, her predictions.  
She is an earthquake, a herald of a supernatural echo.  
She mixes the herbs, recites an incantation,  
She boils the potion,  
She pleases her various gods,  
She exercises her clairvoyance.  
She wraps me in her frightful look.  
I am in panic, livid, full of affliction.  
My sorrows, my fate  
The candle I light.  
She makes the tea,  
She washes my soul,  
She strips it of its old patina.  
Enchanted, overwhelmed by exhaustion, having deciphered the labyrinth of my spirit,  
Full of spontaneous enthusiasm, exalted, rejuvenated,  
I became her miracle  
I am her magic.



## Untitled

Lori Delzer

Loneliness is  
an empty room  
and a full bottle  
of chilled wine.



## Untitled

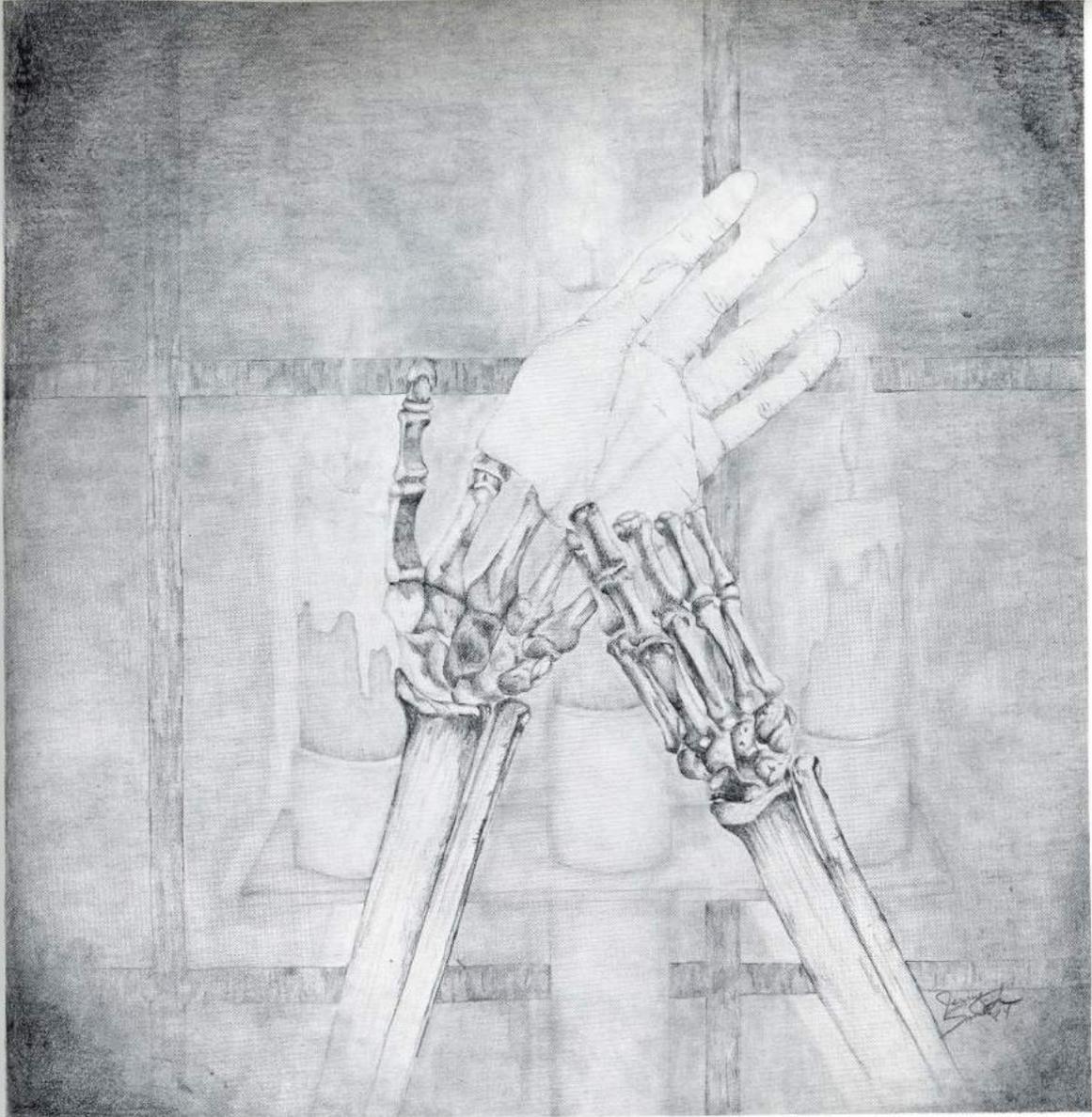
Lori Delzer

Reality is  
finding a piece of gum  
stuck to the bottom  
of your glass slipper.



“Fat Women Are the Best,” 18” x 24” Conte Drawing

Thomas Billings



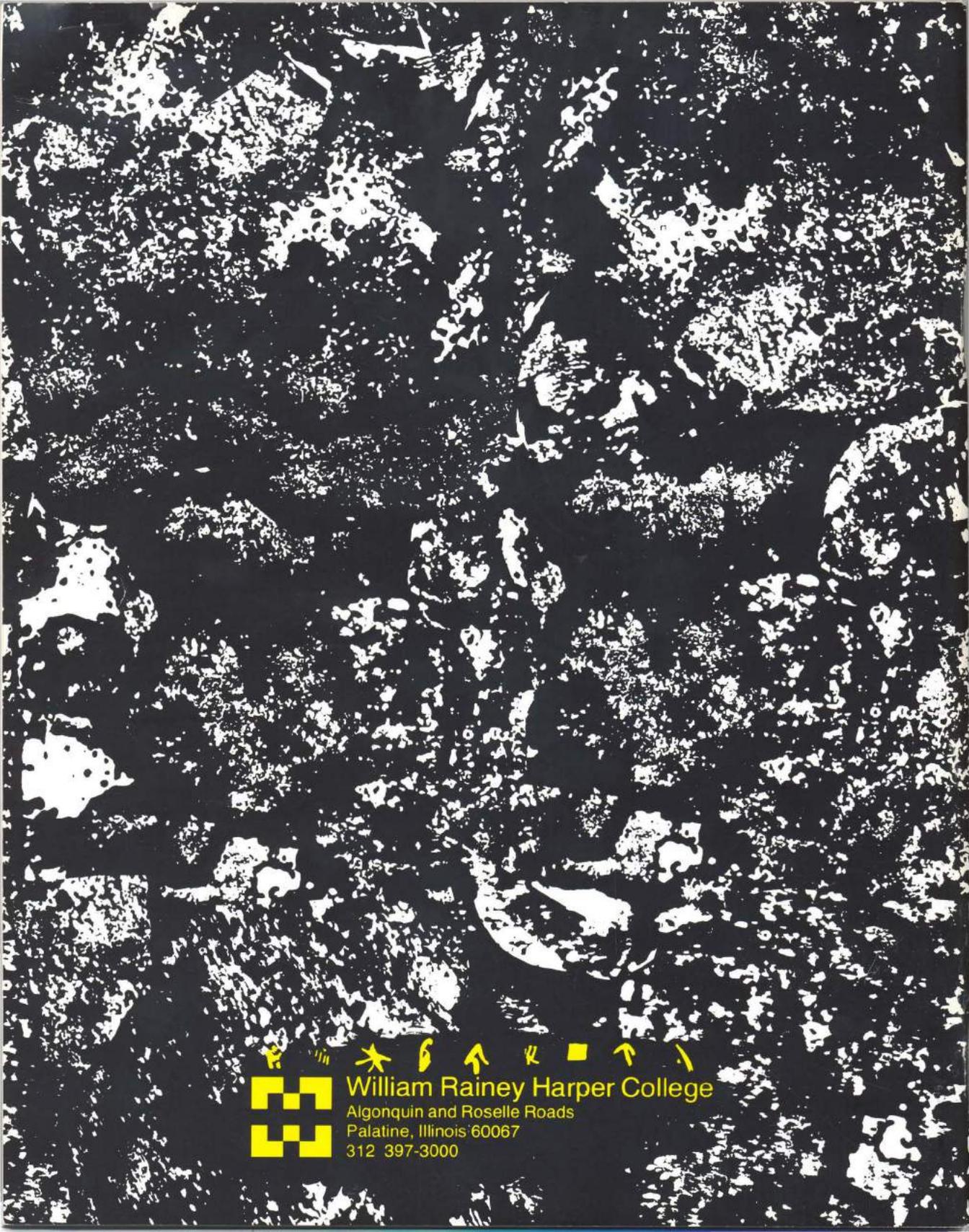
"Midnight Hour," 15" x 15½" Drawing

Jenny Smith



“Untitled,” 15” x 12” Pastel

Mary Swenson



  
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