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*Point of View* is a publication of student visual and literary works edited, selected and produced by students. Sponsored by student activities, William Rainey Harper College in cooperation with the Liberal Arts Division.

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\*Appreciation to Media Services and for the patience of everyone involved. Special thanks to John Franklin, Canny Poppen, and Mark Steffen.

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## WORDS TO GO BY

Michael J. Acerra

I recently read somewhere that *TV Guide* has become the most widely read magazine in the U.S. This fact alone shouldn't surprise anybody who shares the same paranoid views of our society that I have. I've become one of those cynical types who are always sneering about America's apparent addiction to the idiot box. But casting aside my apocalyptic visions of television turning our kids into 'Gobots,' our teenagers into Rambo's, and our new post-teen population into the Reagan Youth of the eighties, I looked a little more objectively for a reason behind this fascinating popularity of *TV Guide*.

The findings I've made have not only corrected my old false assumptions about *TV Guide's* awe-inspiring readership but have also opened me up to a whole new perspective of literature in contemporary American society, namely that of John Literature, a place where America not only contains its largest reading population, but which may produce its next generation of writers.

I began to unravel the mystery behind *TV Guide's* popularity by going directly to the source and reading the thing front to back. It was then I asked myself the first serious question of my investigation, that is, where could I find it? I had no idea where our family's *TV Guide* was lying around. Then I asked myself, "Where would one of my normal everyday American Neilsonian family members have taken the *TV Guide*?"

I went to go ponder this question where I do most of my pondering, in the pink powder room next to our kitchen. And guess what I found? You got it. Coincidence would have it that exhibit 'A' was sitting right on the pink carpet-covered lid of the toilet.

Well, I went in and sat down and began reading. What I found was an interesting assortment of listings and advertisements, with scattered gossipy feature stories on stars and mini-series. And, interestingly enough, I deduced that the longest stories lasted no longer than it takes one to finish their daily duty.

That, of course, is when my idea about John literature came to me. But at that

particular moment of my enlightenment I thought the whole thing just too absurd. Gearing a magazine for a squatting readership?

But, why not? In fact it's really downright genius. What else would someone do on the bowl besides reading something, anything? And, what's better to read than a magazine that's got the John literary market seemingly cornered? [Its major rival among teenage adolescent males being primarily X-rated periodicals. But these wouldn't even enter into this argument since we're only correlating reading to 'digestive' excretion].

Well, to prove this point to myself I played my own devil's advocate. By putting the *TV Guide* down and continuing to do the most utilitarian thing one does on the toilet, I was going to attempt to observe my own reaction to a non-literate bowel movement.

Thirty-seven seconds had ticked by, and I was already overcome by intense boredom. It seemed that my brain was starving for some sort of stimulus, and counting 'curplunks' wasn't really cutting it for the old noggin.

I started snatching everything that was in arm's reach that had words on it. You see, it seemed that anything with writing on it satisfied to some degree my brain's insatiable appetite for literature of any sort. The sink provided me with a library of prospects.

After plodding through the lists of ingredients of Listerine, Right Guard Deodorant, and Vaseline (a petroleum product, YUK!), I felt as though I could test out of a 100-level course in hygiene chemistry.

My breakthrough discovery came when, picking up the box of Kleenex (this nearing the end of my powder room experiment), I noticed underneath the pink floral cardboard box writing. It was a neat little history capsule of some famous woman who fought alongside her husband in the Revolutionary War. She apparently had loaded his cannon, or fired it, or both. I can't recollect which it was. Just think of it! They're now marketing U.S. history on the boxes of the paper

millions of Americans wipe themselves with every day. But this isn't the point.

The point is that the *TV Guide* is so popular because of where it's shelved. In the John, its natural literary habitat.

So, John literature is a reality. But is the only available stuff in this medium what we find on the bottom of our Kleenex boxes and in *TV Guide*? The answer is a qualified "NO." And, that's the best part yet. For another group in our society besides the entertainment journalists and the advertisers has also tapped into this giant medium. You see, with the insatiable urge people acquire when going to the John, there are others who find that their urges are more expressive in nature. Instead of reading in Johns, these people write on them.

Obviously, I don't have to labor the fact that this population of ours contains perhaps thousands or even millions of John writers. All we have to do is open our eyes when using public rest rooms to see that they leave their mark.

What is really fascinating is the awesome potential of this medium of the written word. Think of it. There are more people willing to read everything that's written on a John wall than there are people willing to go to their local library and read a book.

Sound disturbing? It should. But, this dark cloud does have a silver lining, because from this new medium of John literature will bloom the next generation of literary expression.

Though, of course, as in any medium of literature, there exists junk not worth the effort to read. There does, however, exist a decent genre of John literature which has a ring of truth wrapped up in its symbols of the time. And, some of the John literature written by Harper College's silent student body members has merited mention in this issue of *Point of View*.

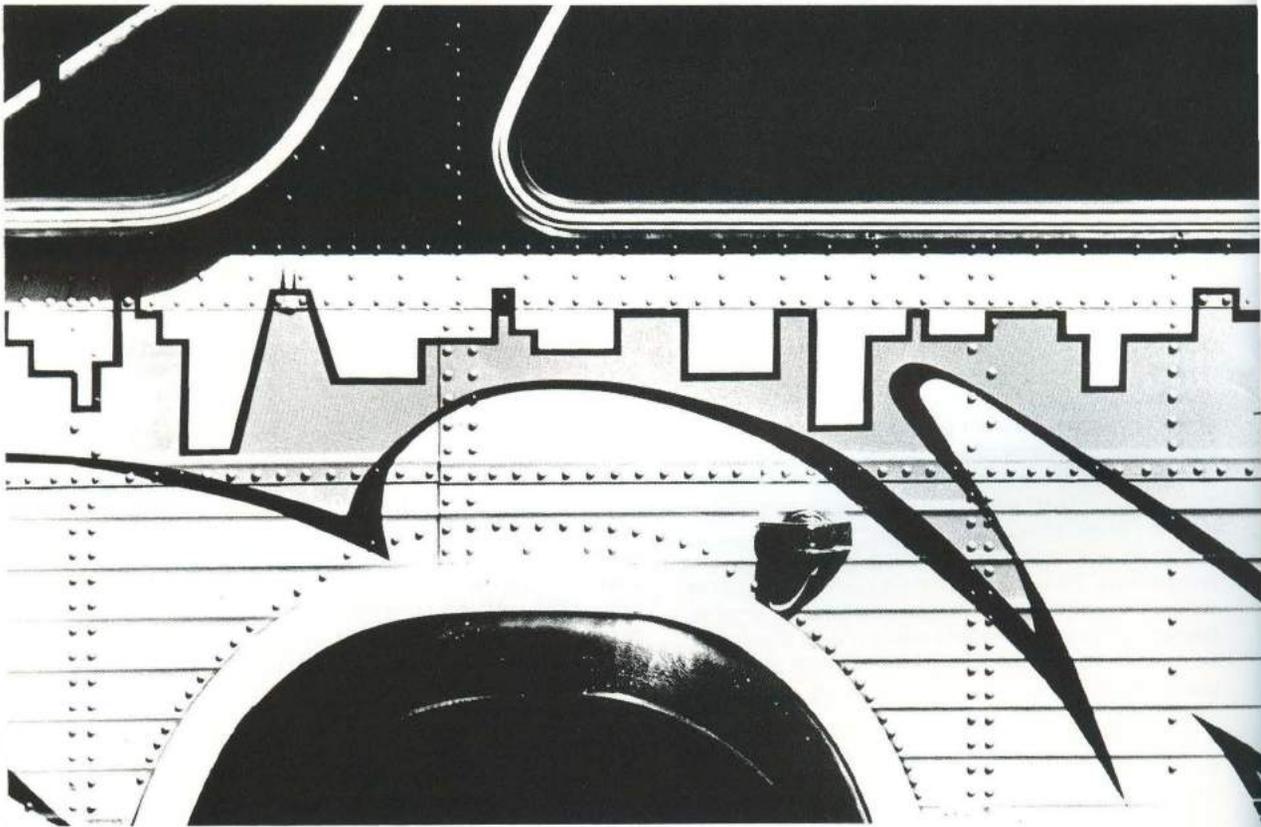
Interspersed among the submitted works are a number of selections from what I've entitled the 'Underground John Writers Guild Collection.' My intentions for putting these works in is to enhance

what I like to call a holistic impression of Harper College's artistic population.

I've selected what in my humble opinion were the most tasteful and lively samples I could locate of this oppressed genre. I hope that you find these poems and anecdotes as stimulating and as engaging an experience as when I first encountered them.

The other purpose of *Point of View* exposing these John pieces is to demonstrate that this is a valid medium of literature. In fact, I'd go even farther to say that in the better interest of culture and education at this institution we should allow and even encourage the Guild. Instead of spending money on the time it takes janitors to scrub off the writings in the Johns, the money could be put towards more positive enterprises. Like installing in each rest room stall pens similar to the ones in the bank that have the little chains on them.

Such a move would further arouse the Muse in us that flows out (as it's been verified) when we relax in Harper's rest rooms. But we'll leave that for the 'Goal List' of the next Student Senate. For now, though, let this magazine serve as a brief supplement to the unharnessed artistic energy existing in the ivory towers of Harper College, and the porcelain Gods of its Johns.



Todd Partyka  
"Untitled"

B/W Photo

53 miles from VENUS

Gummy  
is  
alive  
+  
well  
+  
living  
with  
buckwheat!  
NOT  
by alfalfa  
the way  
How's  
Pokey?

words flow out  
like endless rain  
into a paper cup  
They shimmer as  
they float across  
the universe...

↑  
DON'T WRITE ON  
THIS STALL  
ARE YOU PEOPLE  
ARE IN  
COLLEGE

## RIVERBOAT CAPTAIN

Stooped

Between training wheels  
and tricycles  
Your potty-trained bare-butt  
shadows the concrete commode.

A Summer's Fountain!

Spraying

Tributaries of fragrant vinegar  
Beneath ant bridges  
Beneath roley-poley bubbled bodies

A boy's dream

to see his stream  
floating dead red ants  
and canoes of pine cone chips.

Scratching here

scratching there  
as if you really had  
some hair.

Young Riverboat Captain!

Proudly creating

Confidently cultivating  
Sidewalk cracks.

My little Cherub!

Spying through spokes  
for parent monsters  
who lurk and gobble  
hiding buns.

My little Captain!

Commander of concrete  
of forests of streams  
Always dreaming Always beaming  
You are invisible  
As you stroll away  
cigar in hand.

— Janice Extrom



Kenneth Anderson  
"Cry to Me Tomb, Fuck You"

Acrylic, Pastel, Marker



Todd Partyka  
"Untitled"

B/W Photo



Dave Thomas  
"Dolphin"

Color Photo

## **SEARS TOWER**

Mountain of the Midwest;  
Soldier of Lincoln, saluting  
the prairie.

Insert for Sandburg.

— Mary Carroll

## **Alcoholic**

Staggered self in potted feet,  
Men and women on the skids,  
Sit the stools in bars of dark,  
Tote the bottle, smash the can,  
Shake the glass.

Burn the brain; bake the kidneys,  
Stone the gall; flush the gut,  
Freeze the blood; close the ear,  
Break the eye; burst the lung,  
Eat the stomach; stifle love.

Men in sorrow drown;  
Women bent in lent.  
Bottles hid and beds that bind.  
Stories spun around the bend  
Stoned.

Fade the smile in waves of rage,  
Break the barrier, give the howl.  
Cry aloud and make them hear,  
Ears that bleed; backs that bow.  
Feel the pit and take it plain  
Grab the truth and cut it loose.  
Grab the truth and cut it loose.

— Mary Carroll

## **Sunday**

Thick colorless sky  
Invaded by keen-edged rain  
And wind that plays windows  
— Like ocarinas

The mist on glossy streets  
Mutes the vibrations that  
Seep, into foundations,  
Bonding traffic to nerves.

Wooly sounds brush by.  
A hungry telephone  
Unsatisfied with dreams,  
Sings for secrets.

A subterranean stereo  
Kicks out a rhythm,  
Makes a hostile statement,  
My socks rock to it.

Gradually rooms succumb  
To a newspaper shroud

As I . . .

Burn time in fireplaces

Inhale the shadows

Hear the light

Touch the calm.

— A.L. Wanderer

## **EULOGY FOR A FORGOTTEN ACTOR**

For Mary Jo Willis — Teacher and friend extraordinaire

Pictures — coolwater thoughts  
Floating down back recesses  
Of an isolated mind.  
Silence — still, soothing, suffers  
Thoughts drawn in a line

Towards the Applause.

Fragments — broken crystals  
Of color and choral chaos  
Split the smoke  
Yet one — things still fit  
Tightly together as one

Hears the Applause.

Eyes — smiling soft sights  
On endless whitelight stages  
Melt mutely together,  
Til faces, names, and places  
All become the same

Feeling the Applause.

Rest — finally peace  
From burning neon lances  
And muffled laughter.  
Leaving — to enter again?  
Enter upstage left to the

Silent Standing Ovation.

— Larry A. Paullin



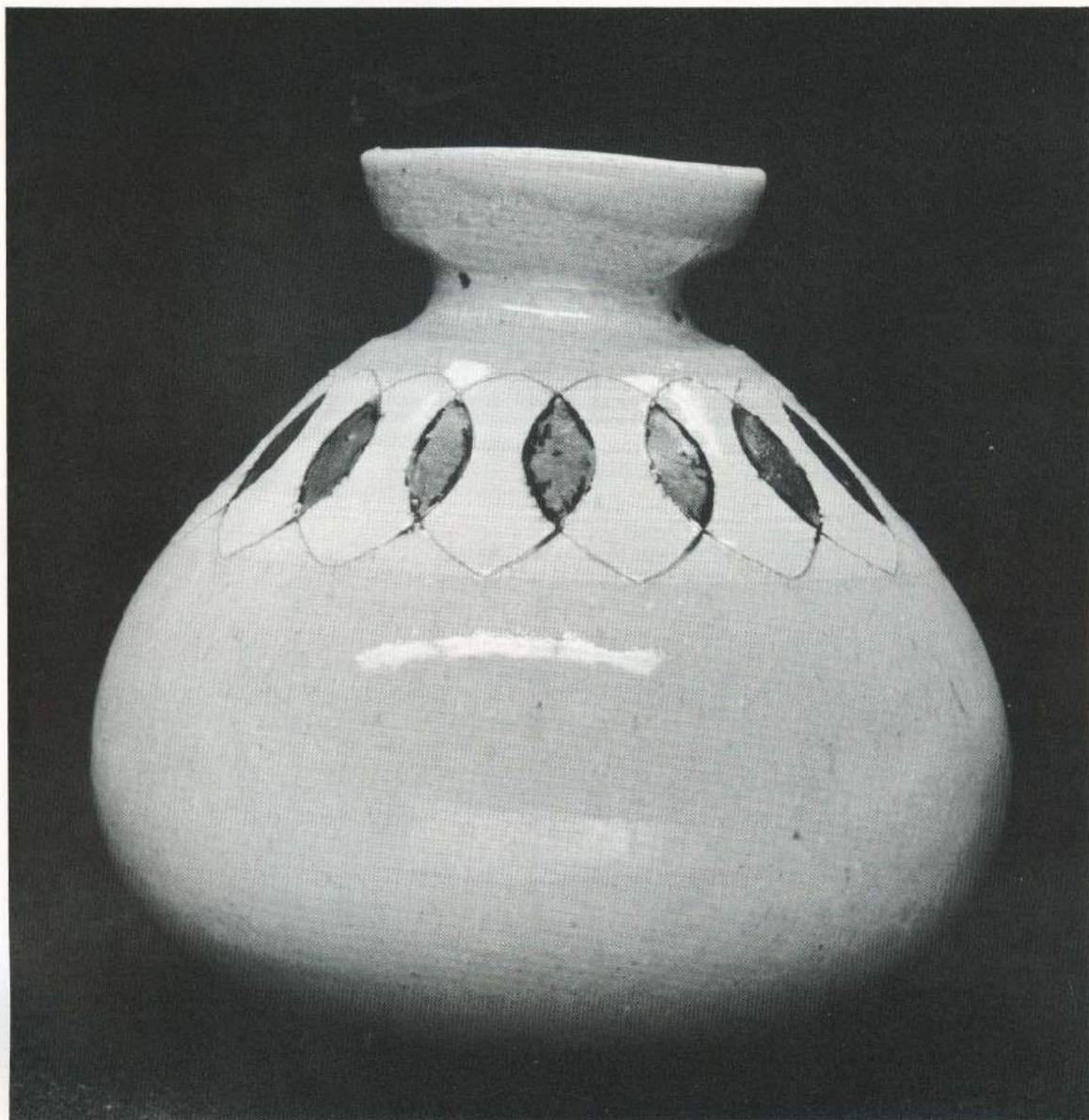
Barbara Kurth  
"Wood Block"

Laminated Wood



Joan Brinkworth  
"Untitled"

Pit Fired



Mary Lang Nieller  
"Black Almond Vessel"

Stoneware

## LOOKING DOWN THE ROAD

"... and with a growing company like ours, you never know what kind of opportunities will open up. Down the road, of course ..."

— Sounds promising.

"When can you start?"

— One week ...

"Where's the new guy? There he is. Okay, look. You're taking too long to pack up this order. The last guy could handle it in five minutes."

— Sorry.

"Don't let him shake you, kiddo; he's like that all the time."

— Swell. Hey, Frank, how long you been working here?

"Six years."

— Oh.

"Where's the new guy? There he is. Okay, this is important. Did we receive anything today that looks like this? Also, what's that in your shirt pocket?"

— That's called a pen.

"Where did you get it?"

— It was just ... here.

"Okay; let me explain something. See those little marks there? I put them on all my pens. That way nobody can grab one while my back is turned. You're new here, so I wouldn't expect you to know, but nobody uses these pens except me."

"Where's the new guy? There he is. Listen, we got any more of these in stock?"

— I, uh, don't know, really ...

"Look, you're not learning fast enough. The last guy knew everything on the shelves within a week."

— But I've only been here three days. I don't really think ...

"You don't have to think. Just do what I tell you."

"Who left this door unlocked? The new guy? Where is he? There he is. Look, if this happens again, we'll be forced to let you go."

— Uh oh.

"This isn't funny. Look at it this way: you need this job more than it needs you. Remember that."

— I will.

"Where's the new guy, Frank? He quit? Huh. Just like that, eh? Huh. Some people just have no motivation, y'know? Listen, Frank, we're all starving."

— Tom DeLong



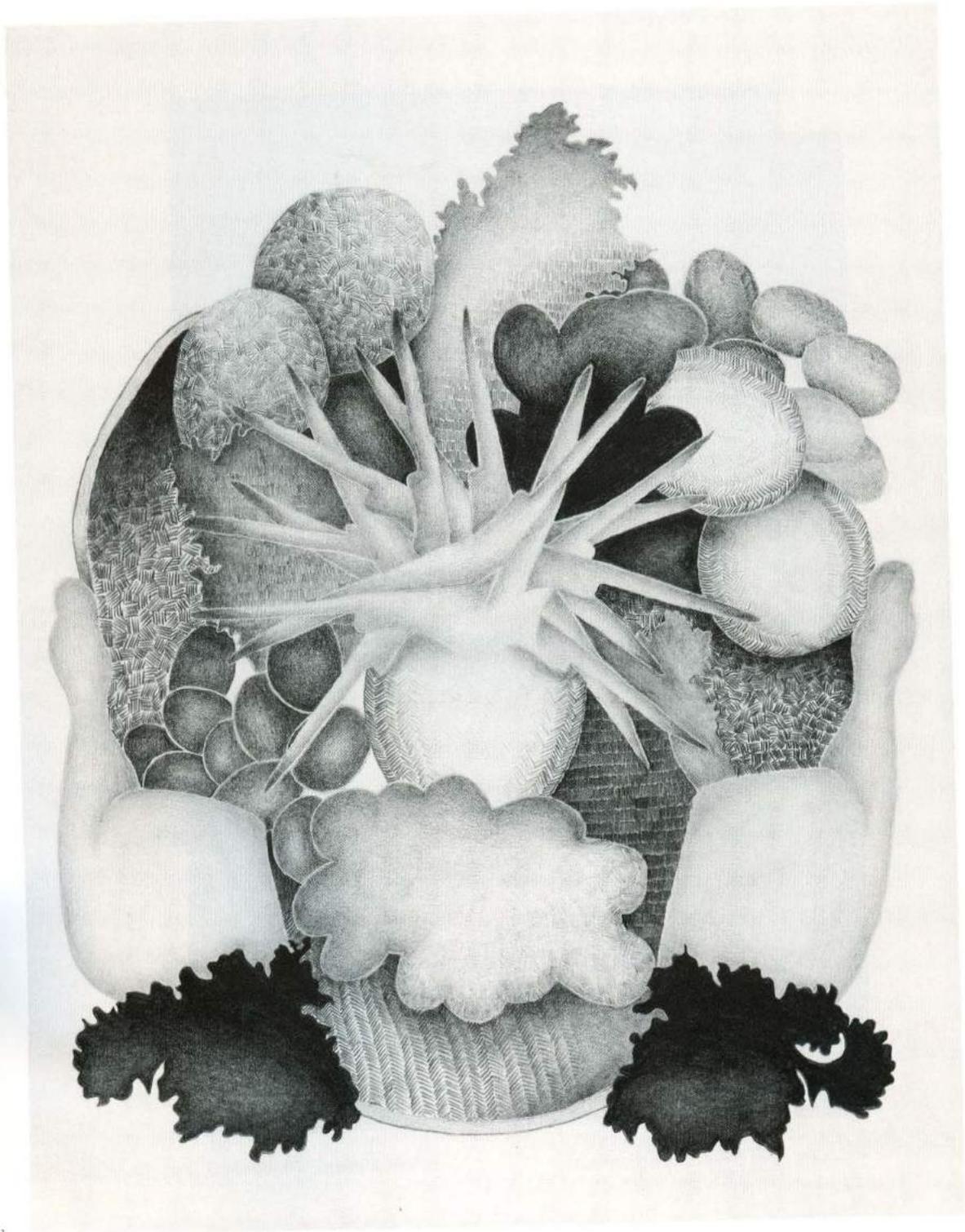
James T. Emmerson  
"Untitled"

B/W Photo



Roberta B. Cohen  
"Figure Study #1"

Charcoal



Kathy Harte  
"Untitled"

Pencil



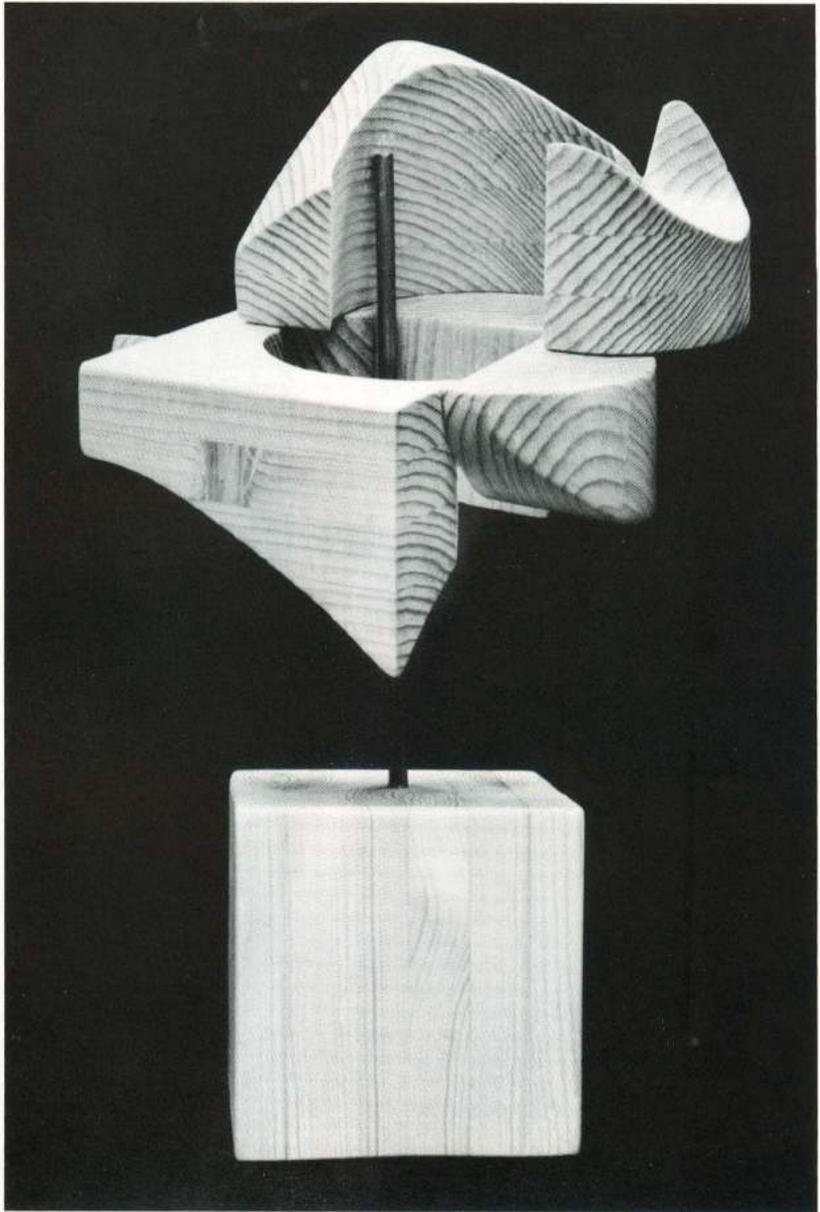
Lisa Zera  
"Untitled"

B/W Photo



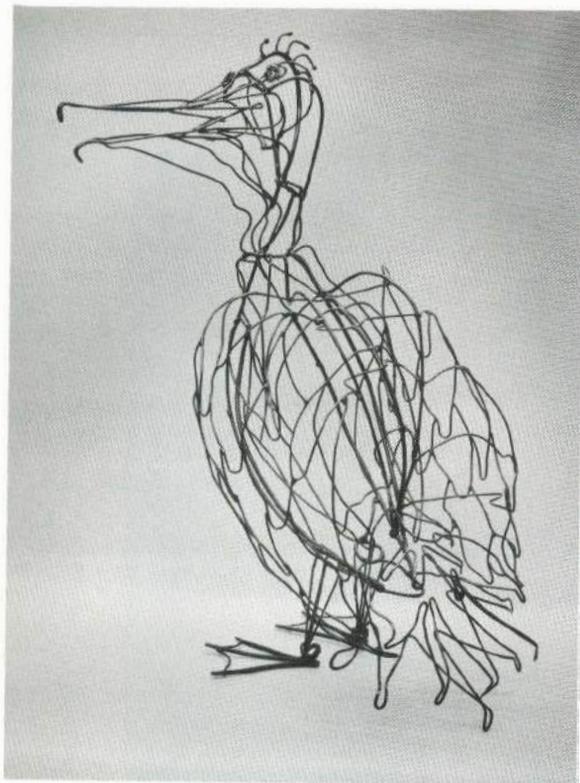
Wendy Thorup  
"Flower"

B/W Silverprint Photo



Eugenia Makowski  
"Cube II"

Laminated Wood and Steel



Barbara Kurth  
"Brown Pelican"

Painted Wire



Eugenia Makowski  
"Untitled"

Wood, Wire, Raku



Edward Mariner  
"Untitled"

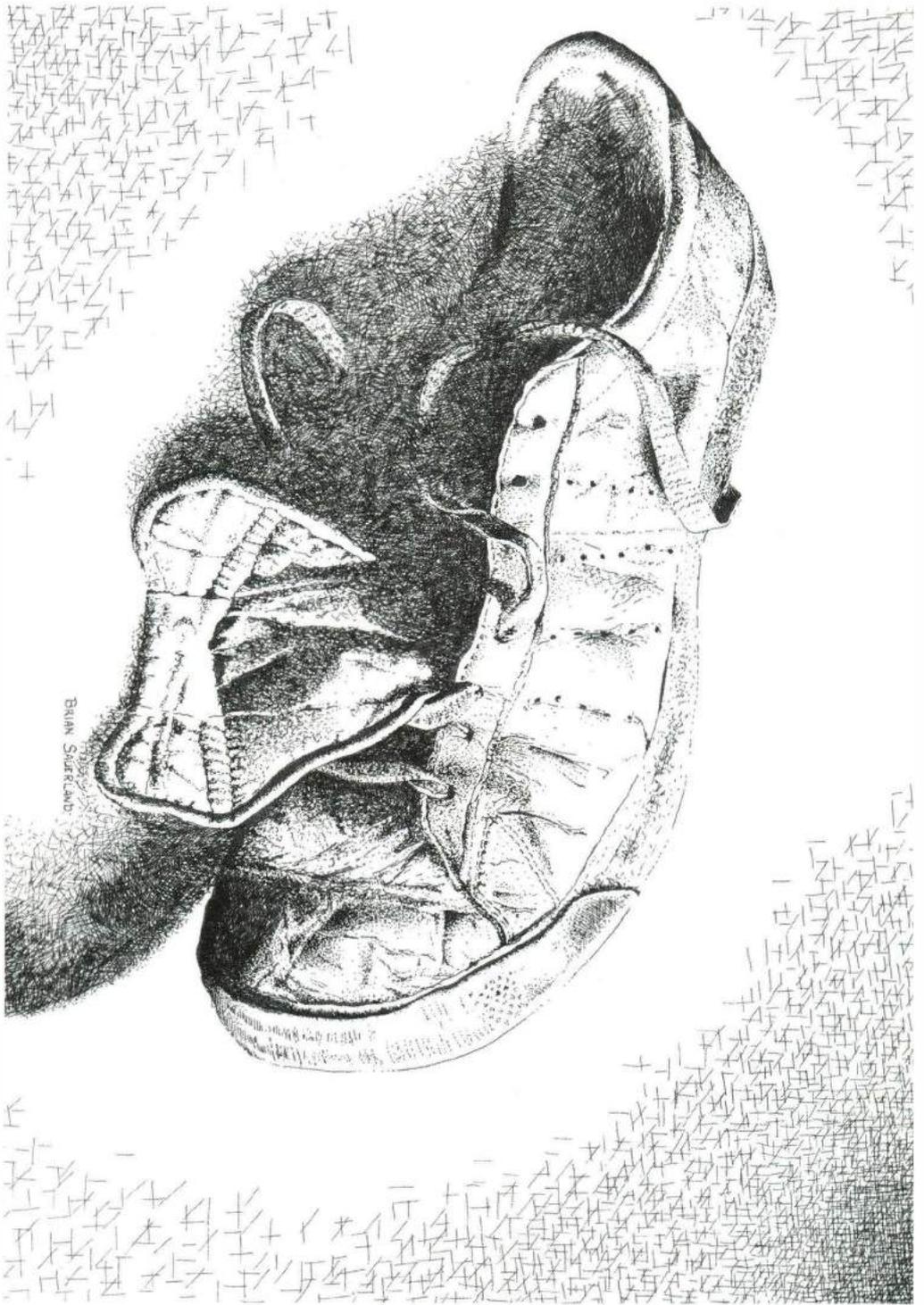
Raku

**As editor of *Point of View*, I would like to dedicate this year's issue to the memory of Ed Mariner.**

**— Mike Spooner**



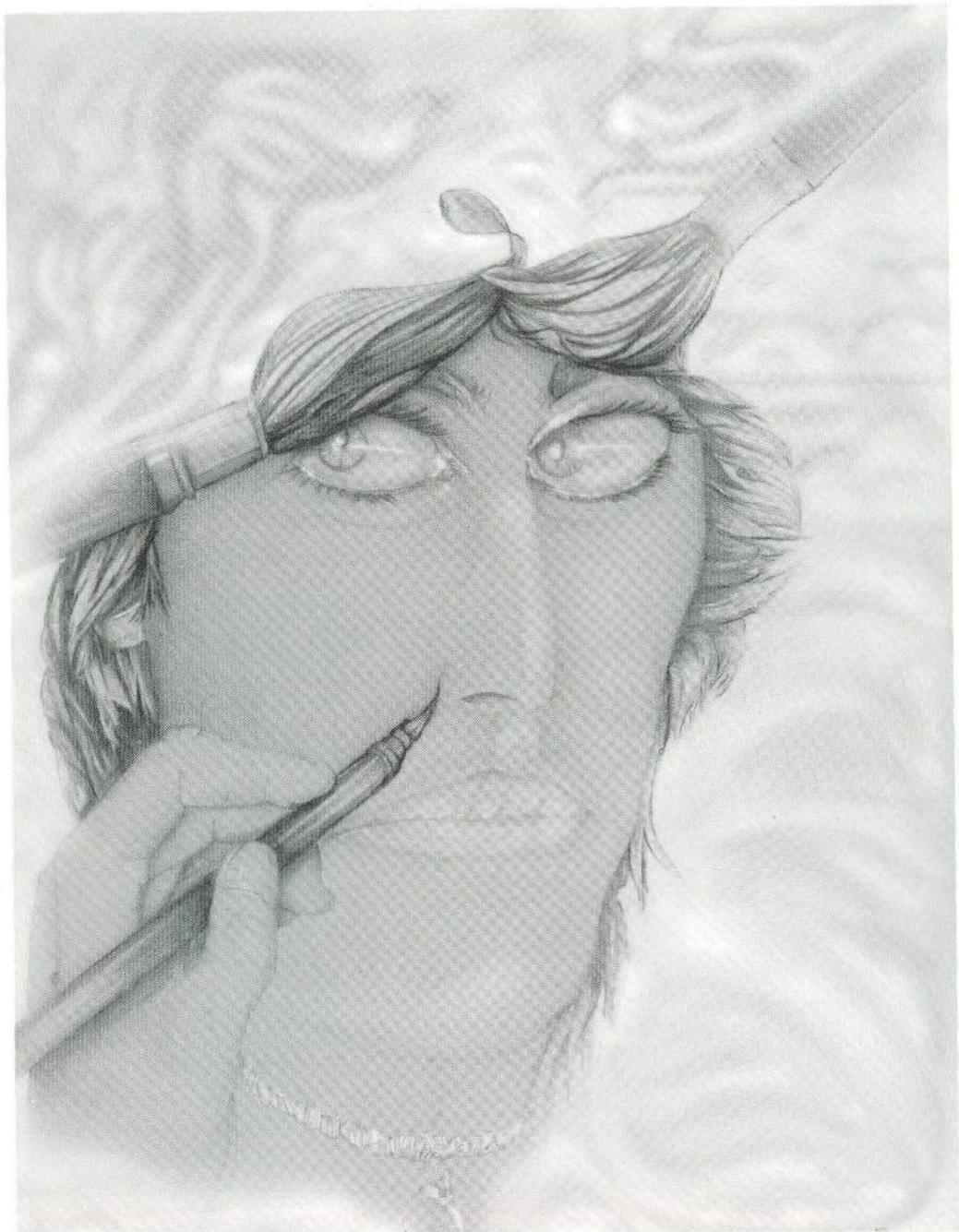
Edward L. Mariner  
"Untitled"



Brian Sauerland

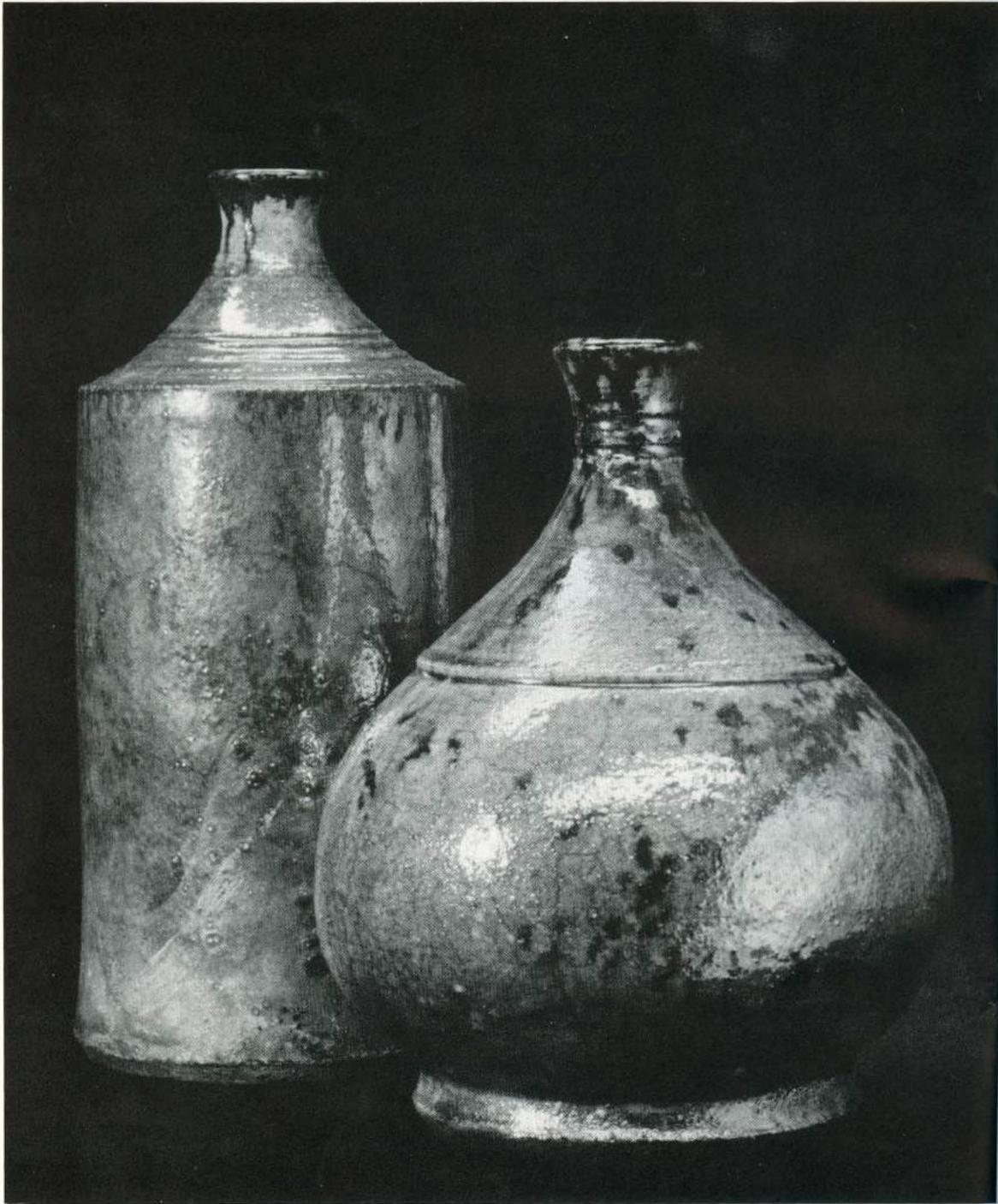
Brian Sauerland  
"Shoe"

Pen and Ink



Mike Spooner  
"Self Portrait"

Mixed Media



Rachel Wyatt  
"Male" "Female"

Raku

## THE PAY TOILET

My toilet has a nickel  
in the bottom  
of it

Anyone can see it  
It won't flush down

My boyfriend asked  
What is a nickel  
doing  
in the toilet

I was too embarrassed  
to tell him the truth  
so I told him  
I use the toilet  
for a wishing well

Oh shit said Paul  
You dropped it  
and you're just too middle class  
to fish your hand in there  
and take it out

It's not I who is too middle class  
I said

It's my maid  
Well order her to take it out  
he said

I can't I said  
because a job must have  
dignity  
The pay isn't everything

But Paul had a fine  
solution  
which he tried  
and sure enough  
next week  
after the maid had left  
the nickel was gone  
along with the quarters  
he had thrown in

When I thanked Paul  
he asked me  
to pay him back the quarters  
I told him

I think it is undignified  
to ask a lady  
for money

Money isn't everything

He agreed with me  
but after he left there was  
another nickel in the toilet



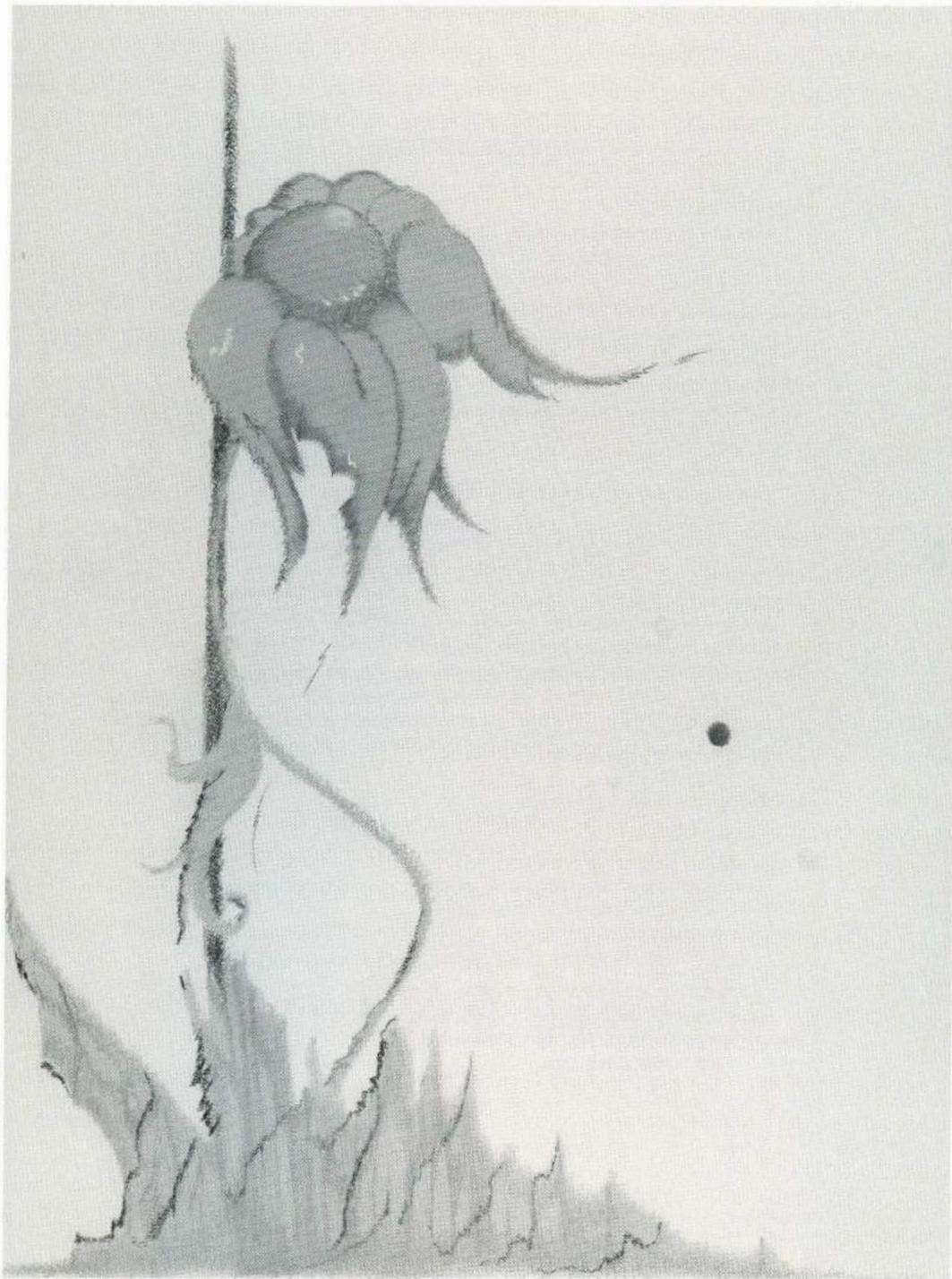
Kenneth Anderson  
"Prisoner in the Grips of Mortality and Immortality"

Oil



Joan Wiegand  
"Release"

Colored Pencil



\*Joan Wiegand  
"Sinking Feeling"

\*Ray Mills Award

Chalk Pastel



## Passing Glance

Picture Dreaming  
Van Gogh, Monet, Gozzoli.  
Their brush

my key.

Sheer cliffs stretched by frame  
of golden mind, watercolor fields  
soaked in crimson oils.

Their vision

my sight.

To seek a blade of grass,  
a whisp of yellow brush —  
flimsy life or death  
sowed in my heart.  
Yearning to plow,  
to harvest the vision.

Through a waterfall of ink to stretch  
the canvas another inch.  
To sneak a peek through the side;  
to meet the painter eye to eye,  
to see

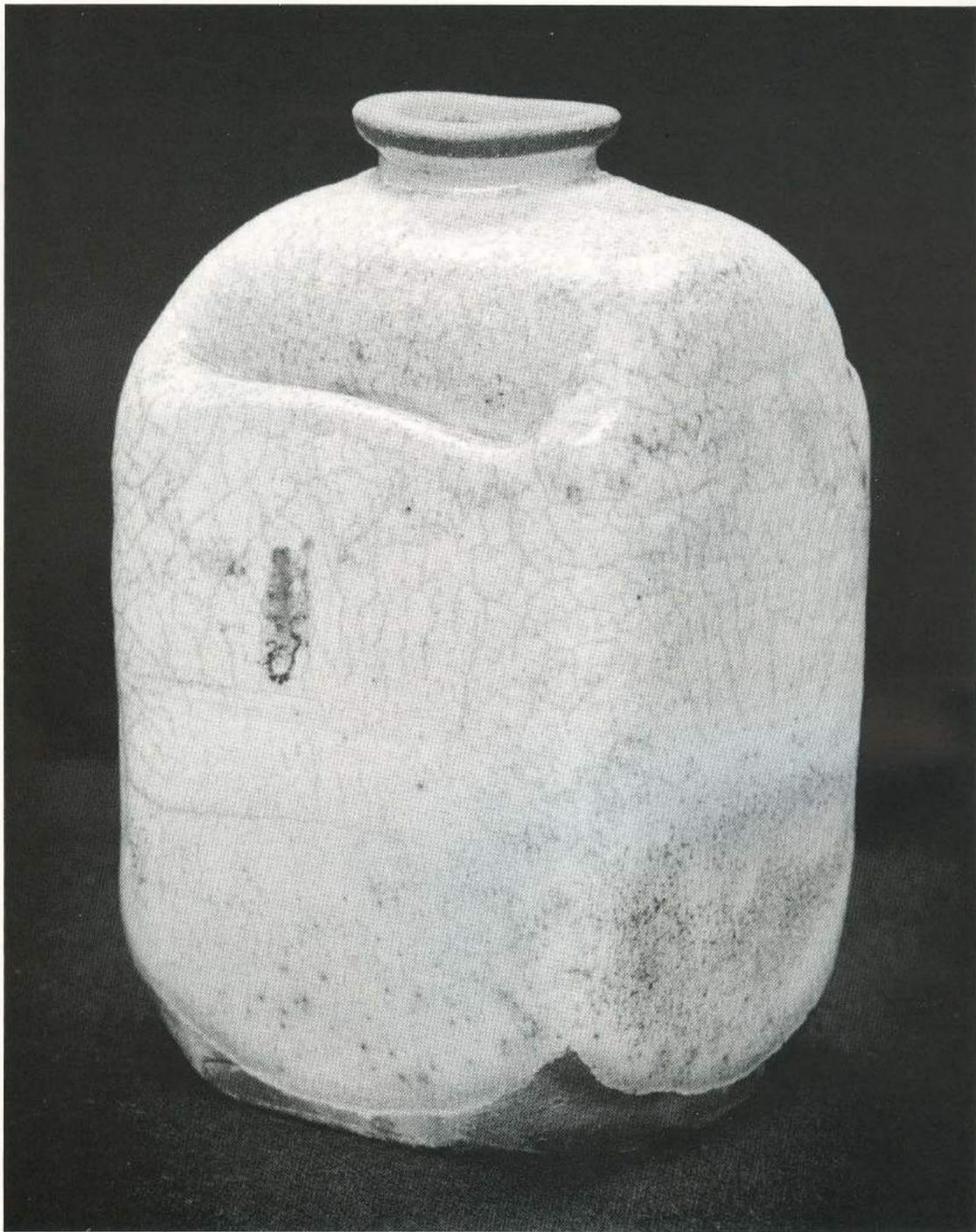
envision

create

behold.

Oil, watercolor, pen, engraving, carving — life.

— Donald B. Koneval



Joan Allen  
"Altered Bottle"

Raku



Mary Lang Nieller  
"Red and Blue Vessel"

Stoneware

## MARRIAGE FOR THE MERE PURPOSE OF CHANGE MERE CHANGES IN THE PURPOSE OF MARRIAGE

The why eludes me now,  
as always,  
que pasa?  
All around me succumb to the allure of  
syncopated espressos, coo phrases of pitpat,  
snatched expressions dripping with syrup,  
concerned exuberances.  
But then those around me erode into  
spats of spitfires, eruptions of irritations,  
erroneous expectations.  
Pourquoi?  
The why eludes me now,  
as always.

— Susan K. Busse

### **Fictitious Facsimile**

The stage is set,  
the glittering glare is gone.  
Blue tied lawyer with dereanged wife,  
spicy mistresses singled out —  
beautiful, blonde bombshell.

The host in white.  
His secret past, absurd obsessions abound.  
The smiles of decadence served —  
silver platters and lacy doilies.  
Same brand cars,  
no litter allowed.

no empty coke cartons behind the seat  
no bank slips, torn and crumpled  
no ripped vinyl, torn dash  
nothing, but  
the glare of polished seat belts — never used.

Suits and dresses for relaxation.  
Jovial jokes — no one slandered.  
Two tone bars, one drunk per family.  
Shattered ruin, suicide, incest —  
one per episode.

American dream in stereo color,  
stage set, take fifty-seven.

— Donald B. Koneval

## STRUCTURES

Fish of aqua deep and purple hued  
racing time through its choked and  
weeded graveyard. No thought to  
dine and peruse scholarly sights.  
Dashing recklessly in, out, stop.

Stop.

To understand the beauties trampled.  
To see growth in barren bottles,  
acclaiming the world for . . .

Greenish love ten fathoms down.  
Dark life beneath the swells  
caressing the weak, while the  
strong strive radiant death above.  
Twisting, breaking through — stopping.

Stopping.

For law and order.  
The civilized way beneath the cover,  
clouding all judgement.

Frozen white, water confining common  
fish beneath, while swordfish dance  
with the wind and whales blow their ire.  
They challenge and are arched, twisted,  
and stopped.

Stopped.

To feel the pain.  
To see the cause.

— Donald B. Koneval

## SAND IN MY TOES

“Do you have cousins in Samarkand?  
Sandbox existence dreary?”  
I could befriend a grain of sand,  
Talk, and grow weary.

“Have you always wanted to live by the sea,  
Brotherhood of the pebble,  
In sand castles tumbling loose and free,  
Never a trouble?”

Or in stereophonic corridors  
Of a shell oft twisted,  
Through which a symphonic ocean roars,  
Do you wish you existed?

Or in a caravan of the East,  
On a desert named Desire,  
Riding the wind from drift to beast  
To encampment fire?

Have you dreamed of becoming royally rich,  
The pride of an aging earl?  
You might be, with a crown of oyster liquor,  
A cultured pearl.”

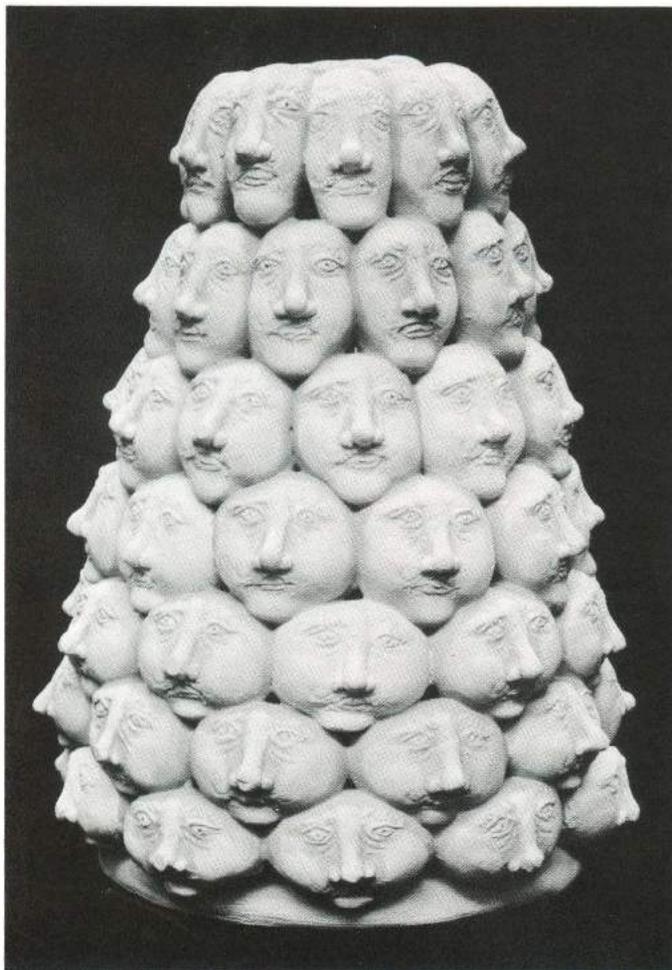
I could befriend a sandbox rover  
Stowed away in my sandal,  
Destined a grain of sand forever,  
Instead of a candle.

— Davea E. Faust

**MY LOVE,  
I ONLY WANTED YOUR MIND FOR AWHILE**

to take it for a walk  
and play in the park.

— Susan K. Busse



Sandra Reading  
"Corporate Structure"

Porcelain

**FORTUNE**

An old, sleepy cat  
Paw rests where, for a moment  
A careless mouse sat.

**AMERICAN**

He sings a hate song  
With his guitar, and votes for  
The right to be wrong.

**POWER**

A shimmering band  
Thousand cameled riders rise  
Suddenly from the sand.

**NEARING DEATH**

With thorn wounded wing,  
Butterfly, condemned to grass  
And what fate may bring.

— Davea E. Faust

## IN CELEBRATION of the SEEDS OF LABOR

Between her ivory birthing skin and rags  
All spent and bloody warm and torn in pain,  
And from her sacred womb, her withered bag,  
She squeezed her final child from which to gain

Strong hands for giving birth, to stock, to feed,  
And land that thrives on used and weathered men,  
Who throb in leathered calloused pain and bleed  
Each night to rise the precious dawn again.

These men, this land, both birthed in pain unclothed  
and cold, alone, unfed, unsucked they die.  
But through God's grace they join in breath betrothed  
to seed the land and bleed just to survive.

Damn to the one who ceases giving breath!  
For then we've damned each other into death.

— Janice Extrom



Todd Partyka  
"Untitled"

B/W Photo

## THE SECURITY GUARD

Donale B. Koneval

John Bartel stood in the Marsell Export store's main lobby, his hand moving rhythmically over his .357 Magnum, as if to console the gun until another day.

"Here's this week's bulletin. Watch out for the last two on the bottom, John. We've caught 'em seven times rippin' off Seikos. Take it easy," said the store's security manager, "and watch out for those Seiko thieves."

John stood impassive and silent, but he nodded his head in agreement. His eyes never wavered from the lobby floor, his hand was never out of the gun slinger's slouch. He looked down at the memo sheet and sneered. Here was the True Grit of the eighties looking over the shoplifter hot sheet, when he should be out riding his horse across the plains of western Montana. Holding the horse's reins in his mouth and wielding his six shooter for law — "bam" — and justice — "bam." John "Wayne" Bartel searching the horizon for bandits and murderers. All kinds — child, axe, multiple, homicidal, but not rustlers of Seiko watches. He caught himself getting ready to twirl his revolver and tightened. He steadied himself and glanced around, as if looking for possible shoplifters. No one had noticed. He sighed outwardly and relaxed. He stood a little straighter and surveyed the morning crowd of shoppers. No bulges near the waist, no shifty eyes, no nervous twitches, not even a baggy coat or suspicious shopping bag. Nothing. Just a bunch of nervous, bent old ladies who henpecked the cashiers over the high prices. He wiped the sweat off the handle of the wooden commando grip that covered the upper quarter of his gun. He wished the heavens for some excitement to come through the community, or better yet, right through this store. John remembered the Morning Mart holdup and wished he had been there. Two customers dead and the friggin murderers were never seen again. Damn! he thought, if only they would stop in here. He could picture it now. Two spaced out teens with shot-guns hidden in their army jackets burst through the door. "Everybody down!"

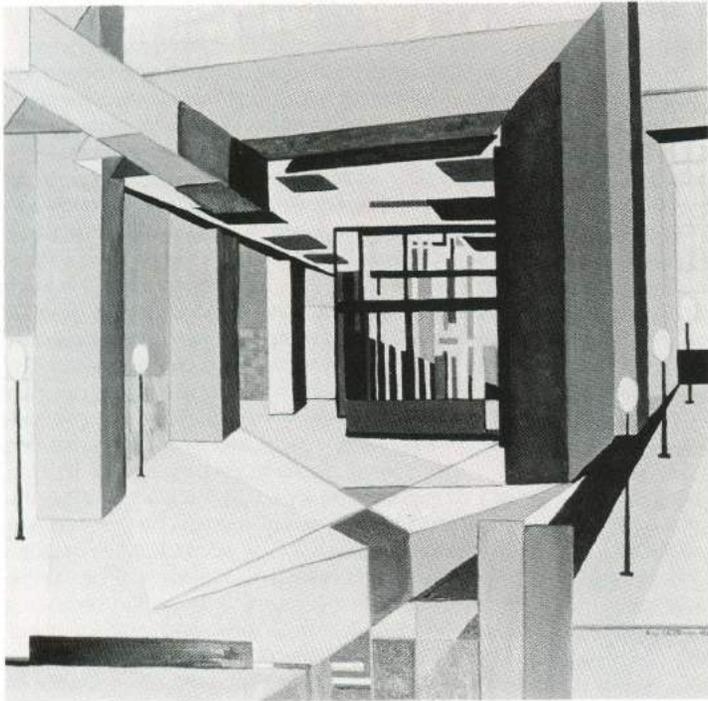
they scream. John would in slow motion let off two perfect shots that strike them both in the . . . no. They both come in and yell, "Everybody down!" John throws himself in front of two women, and takes two slugs in the stomach . . . No, the left arm would be better. Bleeding badly, but not too badly, John smoothly draws off two shots with blinking speed that knocks 'em dead. John could hear the manager's praise now.

"That boy's speed reminded me of the Duke in *Union Gold*. The way he gunned down those kids was incredible. Why, I bet that boy saved at least twenty people today."

John respected his manager, a big, burly fellow oozing with authority. A real man, John thought, unlike that kid, by the records. Long hair, no muscle, probably never been in a fight during school. What use were they? He took that back. Their kind are used down at Benny's Grill or at McDonalds, or, perhaps, slinging hash in the army. These were the kind the girls went crazy after. John knew; he watched. Watching beneath his casual surveying glances. He saw the girls with their sweet delicate curves and their lips and tongues swaying like snakes to a charmer's flute. Yes, John knew all about it, and he knew they wouldn't survive. He knew because that was never the way in the West. In the West, the Wild West, the only man fit to survive was the strongest and the fittest. The man with the pure white stallion, the slight swagger of authority in his walk, and the dead-eye draw. And, of course, the women were no fickle lot either. They would never choose the weak, droopy eyed symbol of today's male society. They would only succumb to a real man's passion. He thought back to his passion and nearly trembled with desire. His .357 was his mistress, his manliness, his expression of power. Every time he pulled the trigger, it was as if the gun-powder were the blood in his veins; and it had been ignited. The tingling coursed through his body. The gun became him, and the bursting bullet was his unleashed passion. Then the feeling was

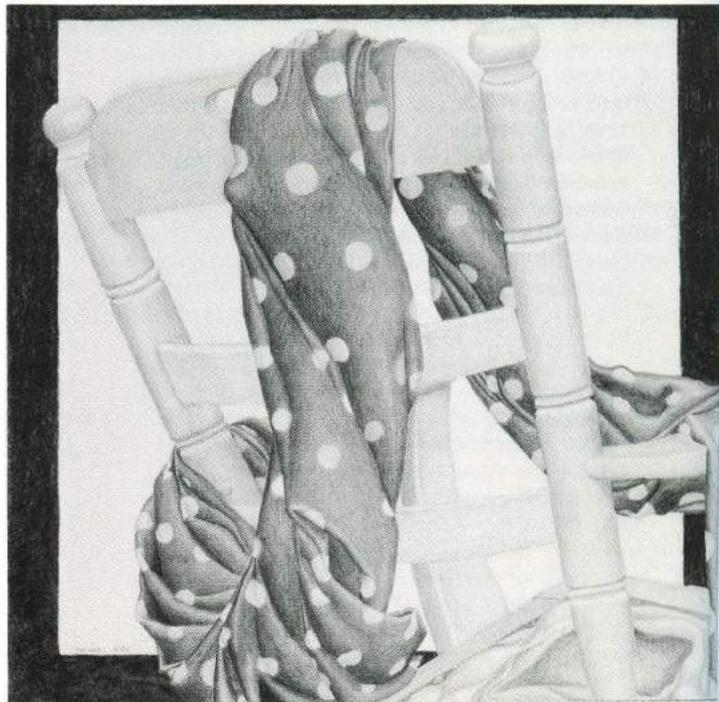
gone, leaving him drained. His watch convulsed and buzzed its alarm. Time for lunch, John thought, as he wiped his sweaty palms on his uniform. John was very careful not to get any on his gun.

He waited a few minutes for his relief but became impatient and left for lunch. Once in the break room, he headed for the bathroom and locked the door. He made his way to the mirror and took out his mirrored sunglasses. Yes, he thought as he ran his palm through his hair, a modern day hero born too late. He sank down into his best Duke pose, and then he drew, aimed, and fired at imaginary villains. John stopped and took off his glasses. He lifted the gun as if to blow away a smoke ring and straightened out. "Damn if you aren't something," John said to the corpse in the mirror. He put away his gun and went outside to eat his lunch. He sat down and took out his piece. Laying it out on the table, he stared at the gun's lacquer finish. Mesmerized, as if hidden inside the dark chambers, an intellect lay waiting to show John the secrets of life. John stared into the gun. John longed for the act that would make his gun perfect, the etching of a straight and narrow groove in the upper handle of his gun. This was the true stuff cowboys were made of. The tiny nicks in the handle of their gun — their identity. John, with skillful ease, took apart his gun and cleaned out every facet of it. Each chamber was oiled, and each bullet was cleaned of grime. The Duke was content, as he waited for his next shift.



Kathryn C. Haines  
"Boston Mall (Via Kupka)"

Oil



Dan Norris  
"Cloth and Chair"

Pencil

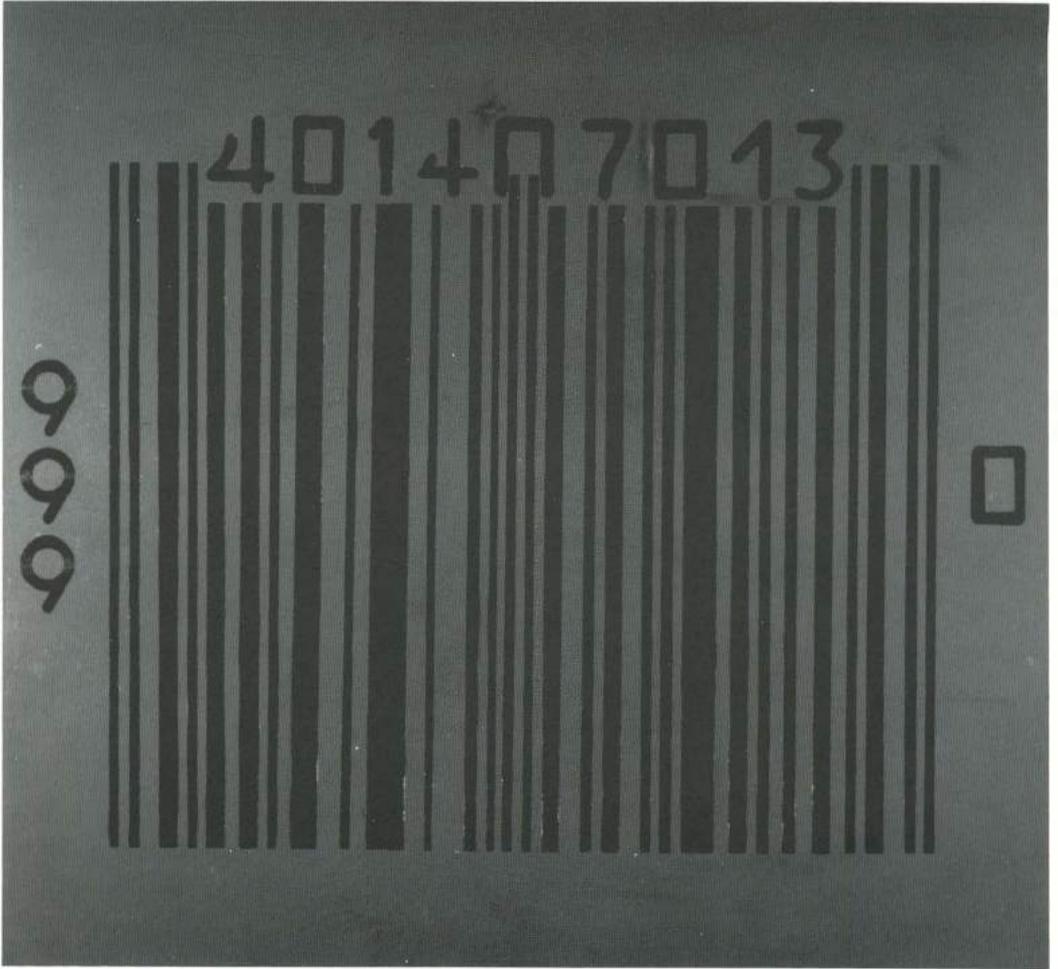


Jennifer Helsing  
"Figure Drawing"

Chalk



Sandra Reading  
"Nude"



Richard Fox  
"Evolution"

Enamel





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