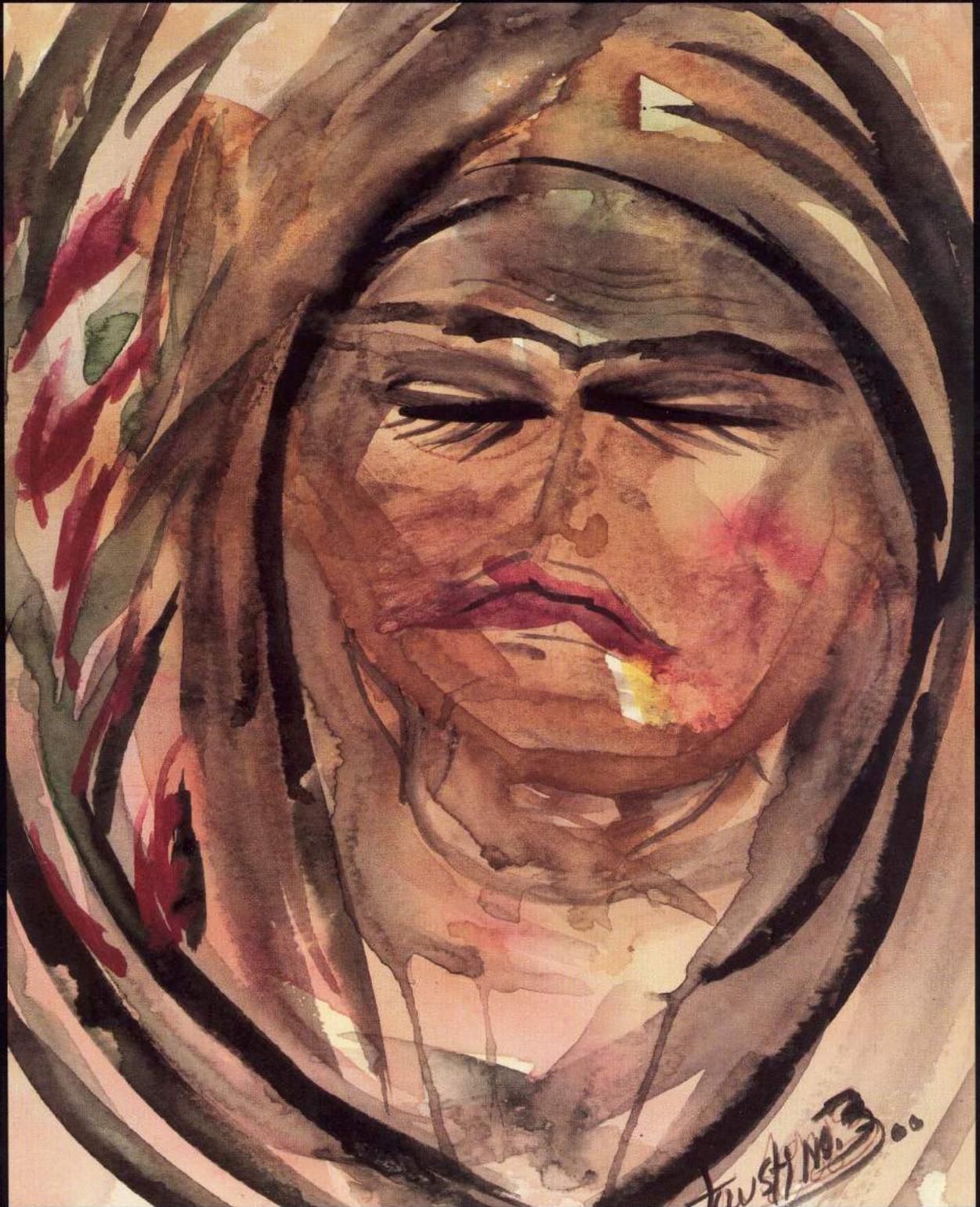


Point of View 2000-2001



Point of View 2000-2001

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Winner of the *Point of View* Award *

Winner of the Vivian Steward Award **

Winner of the Ray Mills Award ***

Eros

Mellissa Dionesotes

I
d r i f t
through the evening,
round round get around
i get around
spewing out the
trying-to-amplify speakers
with the netting bashed in bubble
inside the circle
for me to see,
on my left
a broken bodied insect
swatted
is plastered to
the painted canvas
that is the wall next to me
still containing
its lead shell,
a "6.99" price still stuck to
the pot of crying poinsettias
limp
reaching toward the ground
with death,
fake leather benches
and permanent stained
from last week Monday's coffee
rugs,
the haze of smoke broken
like doors of an elevator
sliding out of the way,
by the voice
of our ratted hair
bagged-eyed
waitress
asking
"more coffee?"
with a nod and pour
she disappears
as before
lost in the haze,
got to find a new place
where the kids are hip,
Jack and i sit,
our eyes stare motionless
at one another
as the minutes
d w i n d l e
away.



I'm Watching You

Ryan McVietty

dry point engraving

6"x4"



untitled

Lisa Marie Gennardo
ceramic
17"x15"x8"

Superman

Mary Rozynek

Tick, tick, tic. The sound of the clock seemed to penetrate Andrew's skull. He didn't know how much longer he would be able to stand it. He sat down, stood up, and started once again to pace in front of the small blue cloth chair. The elderly woman two seats down from him gave him an annoyed look.

"Don't glare at me you old hag!" Andrew wanted to scream at her. He was sure he knew exactly what the old lady was thinking: Here's some young punk who messed around with his girlfriend and got her pregnant. After all, that's the only real reason any man under fifty would be here looking so nervous. Well, if that was indeed what her thoughts were, she couldn't have been further from the truth.

Sweat started to collect under the brim of Andrew's treasured black baseball cap. He took it off and let his straw-colored hair fall out from under it. He pushed the chin length hair behind one ear, a nervous habit he had begun as soon as his hair had grown long enough.

Tick, tick, tick Stop it! Andrew's mind screamed. He took another deep breath and sat down, rubbing his sweaty palms on his baggy blue jeans. *"Calm down man,"* he thought to himself. What was it that Jessie had told him last time they were at the doctor's office? Oh yeah; don't be nervous. A small smile came across Andrew's face as he recalled how cute Jessie had looked when she told him this; like it was some tried and true cure to get rid of waiting room jitters. God, she was so brave. For what seemed like the millionth time that day, Andrew wished he could be even braver. He needed to be

strong for her. Jessie deserved at least that.

What was taking so long, Andrew wondered? He closed his eyes and took deep breaths. *"Don't be nervous; don't be nervous."* He kept repeating this phrase to himself. She has to be all right. Thousands of annoying what-ifs started to creep into his head. The doctor said the cancer could snatch his lover from his life at any time. Tears began to form, but he wouldn't let them fall. He couldn't let Jessie see them. That was the last thing she would need. He had to be strong.

Andrew gazed at the floor and started rubbing his forehead with his fingers. He didn't believe in any kind of Supreme Being, but he sure as hell hoped that something, somewhere, wanted Jessie to stick around on earth for a little while longer. There was so much more he had to share with her. So many more gifts she had to offer. Eighteen was too young to die. Especially this way, with this horrible cancer eating her up from inside. Andrew thought he couldn't hold back his tears any longer. Just as he was about to break down in the middle of the doctor's office, he heard someone say his name. Andrew looked up and saw Jessie standing by the front desk. He immediately wiped the tears from his eyes, and walked over to her.

"Hey baby," he said as he wrapped his arms around her. Every time he held Jessie, it scared him. She felt tinier and tinier each time she sank into his big arms. The chemotherapy she had gone under made her lose an enormous amount of weight.

"Hi sweetie. Sorry I took so long. Doc had a lot to tell today," she replied.

"You want to tell me about it in the car?"

"Of course." Jessie's mouth was smiling, but her blue eyes, that were normally sparkling with happiness,

were dark. Andrew knew whatever was going to be revealed in his car wouldn't be good.

They drove in silence for about a half-hour. That was the way it usually went. Andrew gave Jessie whatever time she needed to collect her thoughts. He knew that when she was ready she would open up.

"You want to head up to the cabin?" he asked.

She kept staring intently out the window, and answered with a short nod of her head. Andrew had a feeling she would. The small cabin on the lake was where they always went whenever they needed to be alone to talk and to think about what really mattered. The cabin was where Andrew had first found out about Jessie's illness.

They arrived at the little wooden home a short time later. Andrew had just pulled the car into the gravel drive when Jessie started to cry. He leaned over and held her, stroking her hair. He didn't say the usual, "It's going to be all right," that everyone else said to her. The truth of the matter was that it

wasn't going to be all right. He had never lied to her, just held her and let her feel the comfort of his presence.

"It's still there Andrew. Doc said I could go through another round of chemo if I wanted to, but I can't. It hurts too much." She buried her face in his chest.

"I know baby," he whispered.

She lifted her tear-stained face from his chest and looked him directly in the eyes.

"I have three months Andrew."

"Well, then we will make the best of those three months," he whispered fighting back tears.

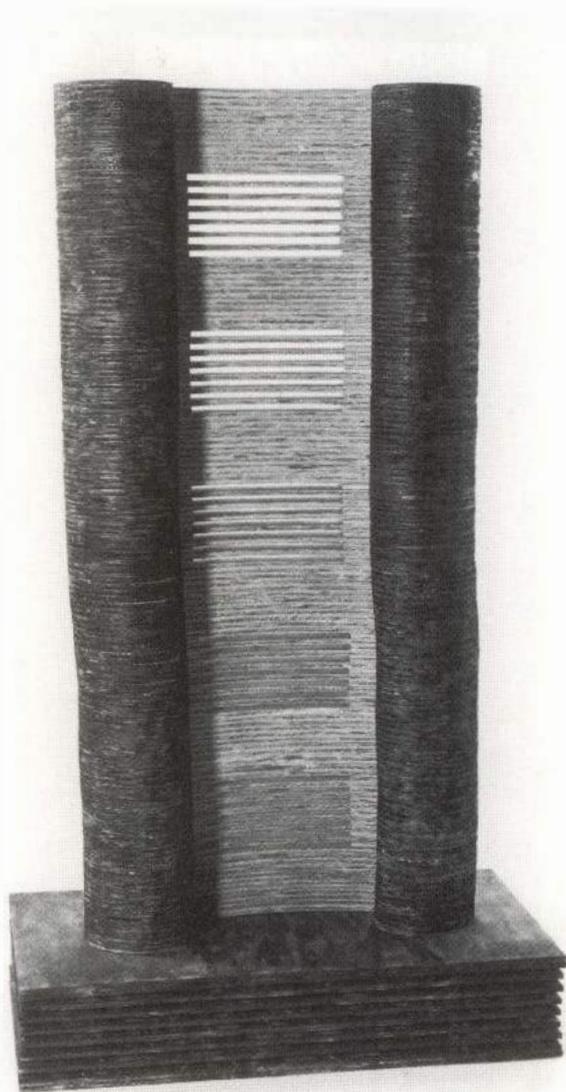
"Yeah, well we can't do that by sitting in this old thing. I'm going to go in and start up the fire," Jessie said trying desperately to regain a sense of normalcy.

"I'll be right in," Andrew replied.

Jessie gave him a kiss on the cheek and left the car. As soon as she reached the cabin door, Andrew felt all his strength drain out of him. He put his head on the steering wheel and cried.

untitled
Jennifer Lesiak
photo
12"x8.5"





Scroll
Eugenia Makowski
wood
42"x72"x24"

Bay at the Moon

James Devereaux

Bay
at the moon
like a speaker howls at crowd.
Justify the notion
that the noise can still be proud.
Dispose of all learned virtues,
and embrace the sweet low din
of summer flights and starry nights and purebred opaque sin.

Taste
the bitter melon, though rancid it may be,
And try to catch the friendless wretch clawing down the tree.
Reap and sow live and die
every moment that you can.
For all the wasted breath you take cuts into the heir of man.

Sing
Melodies to loud to hear
and tap their rhythms true,
For long before your voice dies out
the score will since be through.
In short, embrace the dark and light,
though it goes against the grain.
And bay at the moon a heartfelt tune,
devoid of all refrain.



untitled
Diana Gabriel
photo
3"x5"

Trapped

David Slowik

Waiting for the expiration date on the milk carton is a national pastime for my family. Timing it perfectly to squeeze the last drop from the bottom of the plastic container just before the time expires and the milk goes sour. Never will I see the day when my father makes that pale sour milk face and sprays the wall with dead clumps of sour milk mass, rushing to the sink to wash his mouth out directly from the tap. "HA HA!" I would exclaim, pointing my finger and laughing, knowing that I had changed the milk in the carton, saved from a private stash of mine many months before. And as he'd cower and lay on the floor, holding his stomach with both fists clenched tight. I would proudly walk over to the refrigerator door and slam it on his head one thousand times for losing his mind over milk.

For now, I patiently wait, lingering in the dark corners of the house while he enjoys his perfectly timed glass of milk. One ice cube, never more, always filled an inch from the top. The first sip followed by a short refreshing "Ah" sound, that always rings in my ears like a fog horn; making me deaf from across the room. Never will he choke on the glass crushed into a fine dust and sprinkled so lightly into his milk carton making him bleed in his stomach and out of his anus. I would be there at the bathroom door, listening to his screams as the glass tore through his insides making it a bloody mess on the floor for my mother to clean. She would slip in his liquefied death, hit her head on the sink, and bleed blood into his for me to drink. I'd get drunk off of the fine wine taste of all my gruesome glory and creation. It would be a perfect picture; I the

innocent, standing over my art: Two bodies slumped on the bloody tiled bathroom floor, perfectly matching the sea shell soap and flowery wallpaper that my mother just had to have when we moved into this hell hole.

For now I'll act as if all is well. "Good day Mother," I say as she is slumped over the stove cooking her famous French toast that always looks, and smells, like shit. "Good day Father," I say to he who never lifts his nose from the newspaper as I squeak out the front door and make my way to school.

And just as I am off and on my way, he'll look at her and say, "Honey, don't we have a wonderful son?" She'll smile, nod, and go back to her business, and he back to his newspaper without another word said.

For now I think they'd be better off dead.

Sitting on this bumpy ride, surrounded by these dead beats, always makes me cry inside. At home there are millions of parents who, just a second ago, couldn't wait to get their kids up, ready, and off to school. Their children, just another daily chore in their routine, and it shows on their faces. Imprisoned on this bus ride to school, with high impersonal drab brown seats to stare at, and a small square foot of window to let in light to these tiny coffins. For the most part nobody says a word, maybe a whisper now and then, but nothing more.

Screeching to a stop, the loud hum of the bus takes over the quiet, cool, calm, Monday morning. There is a beautiful sunrise on the East side of the bus, but no one is around to enjoy it. Half of the bus is full of brain dead zombies trapped inside their cages. These prisons, that the parents and the rest of the world help to build up, remove life and energy like a floppy disk being

exerted from a computer. I don't want my brain to be worth money some day. I don't want my time to be worth any more money than the man working the late shift down at the pier to feed his family of four back home. I just want to stare at the sunrise. I just want all of you guys to see the sun dancing on the left side of your faces before the bus turns into school, and it loses itself to the shadow.

The bus rides on the long stretch of highway, next stop school. For now, I'll retire to my brain like the rest of the world, and be trapped by these joyless wonders I'll so fiercely ponder on and disappear from the world into. . .

A check out line at the grocery store; standing in back I'll never get to the front. The old lady in front of the line pays with a check that she was so sure that she didn't forget at home. She reminds me of the time my best friend was hit and killed by an elderly woman. In fact she is that woman, lost in the snow storm, blowing in the strong breeze like some dried up old leaf, her husband gone months before. No grudges though, no one's fault; I guess. Her children are too busy with work and the boat payments to lend a hand to this sweet, little, old, innocent woman. She is struggling for a breath of fresh air to relax on in a shade she once had. But now it is a jaunted and faded old memory trapped in the back of her mind; along with those loose nothings and forgetful nowheres. I follow her out to her bus, and on the way to the retirement home, she grips her heart in pain stricken agony, forever alone; a digested fruit.

Walking off of the bus, commotion is left over my shoulder, so simple to do today; "places to go and things to do," "not my problem." The old woman's world, almost gone now, fades away into my past like the sunrise falling off of the children's faces as the bus enters

the school parking lot. But I'm not done, my release so short now, it might as well last through the whole school day. Who's to say anyway, that in twenty years I will remember this day?

Premeditated like he was waiting for this instant to fall upon us since I sat down on the bus, he pops his head over the seat nervously, trying to be a friend of mine, he says, "So, did you do your math homework Jason?"

Well, he did try so hard, and perhaps friendliness is what this world needs, so instead of my usual sarcastic remark, I reply, "No, Clark I didn't."

God! There I said it without any meanness directed at Clark, a polite reply. I hope no one saw. No! I don't care what other people think. Who cares? It's over now. I'll just grab my stuff, and casually walk off of the bus now.

With his eyes piercing at the back of my neck as we file off of the bus single file, like a 1930's soup line, I just know he is dying to say something else to me. I don't know how long I can keep this politeness. Surely, the moment I walk into school all will be out the window, and I'll just cut him down if he says anything more to me.

Well, he should know better. He should be happy with what he got, which was enough, and as soon as I walk through this door I will promptly speed up to lose him in the crowd.

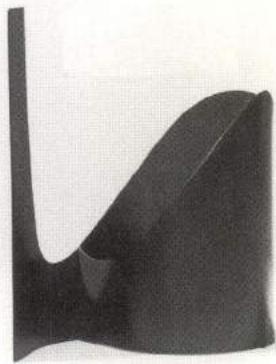
But sure enough, as I walk through the school door, he nicely says, "See you in class Jason."

Maybe I should pretend I didn't hear him, after all, my back is turned. I could have easily thought he was talking to another Jason. No, but why did he wait to tell me this when we went inside? Was it a test? Doesn't he see the agony he is putting me through? Fine, one comment, and that's it. "Later Clark."

As I turned around he smiled a smile, a grand smile. I don't think I have ever seen him smile like that before. And just then, like he had been picked up by the summer wind itself and carried into a dream, he floated

away down the hallway and disappeared into a crowd of strangers. Inside, I smiled, and it wasn't so bad.

Oh, but what am I doing standing in the hallway like some dork lost in thought! I got to get to class.



Disjointed Harmony

Jack Mitchell

steel

5"x6"x1"



Tribute to Ashley

Matt Melone

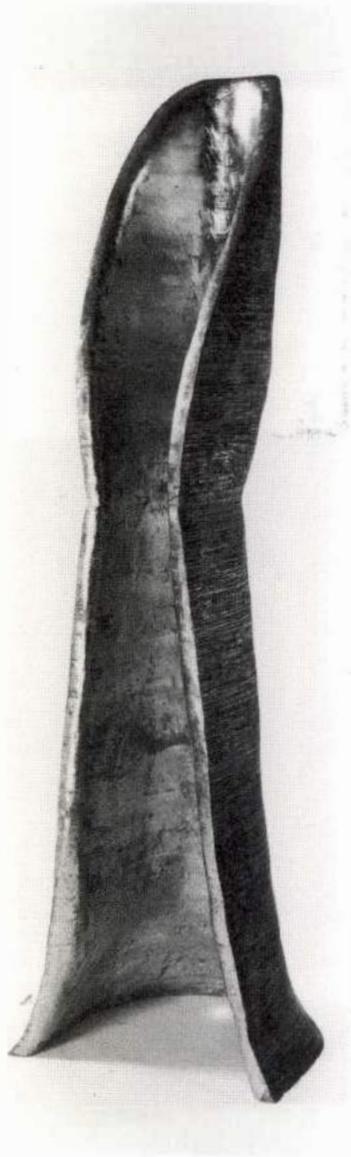
digital print

15"x12"



Karen—Eyes Wide Open

Dan Lamka
conte, charcoal
4.5"x4.5"



Capilla
Eugenia Makowski
wood
30"x84"x30"

Written In A Bathroom Stall

Bridget Lee Holcomb

After class
I stand in the handicapped stall,
(the big one),
absolutely naked,
clothing shucked like corn husks,
arms stretched toward heaven,
and wait for a breeze,
or fire alarm.

The Spoils of War

M. Dana Russel

Six thousand years ago when God made man,
He shaped a shapely counterpart for him.
When did God say to man, "Do what you can
To satisfy your every sexual whim?"
Her bosom's made for babes to milk her teat,
Not for the men in war to lick her cream.
They force themselves into her slit so sweet.
And laugh above the pain and stifled scream.
Hot drunken breath and fingers groping in
While casting young girl's innocence aside.
Is it to punish her for Eve's first sin?
Has God declared she must be crucified?
Six thousand years and still she's forced to lie.
The flower, once deflowered, left to die.

Gone

Erin S. Bales

A phone sounds in the darkness

Its

jangle

bangle

ringing

Coloring the humid night with

Fragments of my broken dream

My hand wanders for the phone

Its

fumble

bumble

pawing

Searching for its mark among the

Condom wrappers and discarded numbers

Voice comes from deep within my throat

Its

thick

sticky

resonance

You haven't heard it in a while and

I hardly recognize it anymore

"Hello?"

A few seconds---dial tone

Its

lonely

empty

humming

Screaming in my ears

I let my sweaty arm reach out for you next to me

For your powerful, unwavering strength

And once again

all

I

grab

is

air



untitled
Diana Gabriel
soft ground etching
4"x6"



Because I'm a Jack

Gia Favia

photo

4"x6"

Decisions

Janet Peters

I was good tonight, thought Victoria, as she pushed down on the accelerator of her rented Cadillac, and merged from the on-ramp into the heavy late-night traffic. She pulled down the car's visor, and glanced at her image in the small mirror clipped on the back. Her black hair, expertly - and expensively - cut into a sleek bob, gently curved toward her face. She reached up and ran her fingers through her hair, loving the feel of her manicured fingernails combing through the silky strands. I'd better keep an eye on traffic, she thought as she flipped the visor back up with a snap. After about ten miles I'll start looking for the exit to my hotel. And tomorrow - home. Chicago was just a one-night stop - a place to do some business. Perhaps someday she'd come back to see the sights, she thought, but her home and her career and her heart were in Atlanta, and had been since her divorce two years ago.

The divorce. The mere thought of her ex-husband made her clench her teeth until her jaws ached. She stomped on the accelerator again and veered over to the express lane, sliding into a space between a late-model Lexus and a mini-van. The Tree Slug, as she called her ex, was CEO of a rather large book-binding company, and her settlement had been generous. After all, he was the one who had been caught sleeping on their sailboat with some, barely-old-enough-to-vote, redhead with breasts out to there.

Victoria had been devastated when she had boarded the "Miss V" one summer evening a few years ago to retrieve something important - that, for the life of her, she could no longer remember - and found The Tree Slug and his tootsie naked in the shower. She had stood in front of the boat's tiny shower stall for God knows how long, staring at them and feeling as if a hot branding iron were penetrating her stomach. She had been unable to breathe, to move, to think. She had watched their ghost-like bodies drift back and forth in the

billowing steam. When the water had stopped, and she had heard the redhead shriek with laughter, her legs lost their paralysis, and she ran off the boat, back up the pier, up the wooden stairs, past the boathouse, and into the parking lot. She had stumbled upon her car with blind luck, and was halfway home when she heard pathetic sounds coming from somewhere in her car. She was in her driveway before she had realized those sounds were her own great, gut-wrenching sobs.

Tonight was very productive, thought Victoria as she turned on the car's radio and found an all-night jazz station. My boss will be pleased. She saw the blinking yellow lights up ahead that signaled the first of two tollbooths she'd have to go through before she would start looking for her exit. She reached for her purse while trying to maneuver the car into the shortest payment line. She rummaged through her bag for some change, and then tossed the money into the coin basket.

She had needed therapy after the divorce. A trip to Europe with her best friend hadn't eased the pain caused by her unfaithful husband. Eye-lid surgery, evidently to remove the tired expression from her face, but which, not unexpectedly, had removed ten years from her appearance, hadn't eased the pain. The first therapist, recommended by her mother's gynecologist, had given her the creeps. The top of his balding head barely reached her shoulders, and he probably weighed no more than a hundred pounds soaking wet, which was an image on which she didn't care to dwell. When he crossed his legs, hairless white skin was exposed between his rumpled brown argyle socks and too-short trousers. And adult acne bloomed on his face and neck like tiny red forget-me-nots. The second therapist, recommended by her neighbor's accountant, sat in his fine high-rise office, on his fine leather chair, behind his fine glass and steel desk, and smugly told her that the reason her marriage had failed was that she had a "problem with sex". He added that he'd be able to help her, but she'd have to commit to at least a year of therapy. Christ! Nothing had been wrong in their sex life, thought Victoria. She had loved her husband unconditionally, and she knew

that they had pleased each other physically. Sex between them had never been a problem. Sex between him and the redhead was the problem.

Dr. Marshall had given her back her sanity. He had listened to her grieve for the loss of her marriage. They had discussed the mourning process for her dead relationship – not unlike mourning for a deceased spouse, he had said. Yes Doctor, Victoria had thought at the time, except in my divorce the cheating son of a bitch still lives and breathes and showers with his girlfriend on a sailboat named for me!

Traffic started to thin out a few miles past the tollbooth, and Victoria kept the beige Caddy at a steady 70, maintaining her spot in the middle lane. The cool notes of Miles Davis' trumpet filled the car's interior, and she started to relax. She remembered the day, shortly after she had confronted her ex about his affair, when she was standing in the bread aisle of the supermarket unable to decide what to buy. She had been afraid to make a decision. White or rye? One loaf or two? Should I get bagels? What about sandwich rolls? She left the store without buying a thing. She had gone to her hair stylist the next day, and was so nervous about making a decision concerning her hair - cut it? bleach it? perm it? - that she left the shop in a rush, her stylist never touching a hair on her head. But that was all behind her. Dr. Marshall had helped her regain her confidence, and convinced her that she was an intelligent, capable, desirable woman. And she had a new job to prove it.

Victoria glanced at the clock on the dashboard and realized that she should be approaching the second tollbooth any time now. It had been a long day and it was late. A hot shower and then to bed, she thought. Tomorrow she'd be in Atlanta, reporting to her boss about tonight's meeting. She had met with the top executives of a computer software company that had lots of money to spend. Victoria's company designed trade show booths. Her presentation had been clear, concise, and professional. They loved her ideas. This meeting had been her first with a major account, and she was ecstatic with the results.

Where was that tollbooth? Traffic was sparse now, only a few cars up ahead, and no sign of any flashing yellow lights. A slight uneasiness tickled her stomach, and she studied the tollway sign passing overhead. South? Did that say south? "I don't want to go south," Victoria said aloud. She slowed down, moved over to the right lane, and continued to drive until the next sign confirmed her mistake. Good Lord, I've been heading in the wrong direction, she thought. Her unease changed to irritation. I've gone way out of my way. It's dark, late, and now I have to turn around. She eased the Cadillac onto the next exit ramp, and followed its curve down into the city.

Victoria stopped at the red light at the end of the ramp in disbelief. She would have to turn right or left, and there was no sign to tell her in which direction she would find the northbound ramp. Man, it's dark, she thought, as she pressed the lock button on the driver's door. Warehouses, their black windows barred against the night, lined both sides of the cross street. When the light turned green, she snapped off the radio and leaned forward, easing the car into the intersection. She looked right, and then left, and then right again. Not a tollway sign in sight, or any cars either. You can't sit here forever, Victoria told herself. Make a decision. She turned left.

The warehouse district continued for a few blocks, the old brick buildings pressed against the deserted street. Victoria slowed down at each intersection, searching for some sign of life: a lighted highway, or an open business, or, please God, a police station. Another dead end forced her to turn left onto an angled street, and she realized that she was now totally disoriented and lost. Icy fright gripped her throat. The old warehouses were gone. Vacant lots stretched before her, and occasional derelict houses dotted the landscape like a few rotten teeth in an old man's mouth. "Oh God," she prayed, "get me out of here." She looked left at the next intersection and saw some lights. A gas station! She turned the corner, pulled into the small lot, and parked next to the gas pump. She sat in the car for a moment, trying to see through the dirty glass of the building. Streaks of yellow light leaked out of the windows. Stacks

of old brown boxes and curling paper signs obscured her view. She saw no movement inside, but the sign on the door read "OPEN." She took a deep breath and unlocked the car door. Her high heels crunched on broken concrete, and a tiny bell jingled as she entered the station.

A red Pepsi machine, old and scratched, almost blocked her path. Piles of newspapers and magazines surrounded a half-filled rack of dusty candy bars and gum. The ancient linoleum creaked as she approached the man behind the counter. Victoria looked up into his huge black face, and her heart thudded in her chest.

"I'm lost," she said. "Could you give me directions to the expressway?" She swallowed, feeling a lump the size of a grapefruit in her throat.

"James, watch the register," the man said as he lumbered out from behind the counter.

Victoria turned around to see another man sitting on a stack of newspapers, his back resting against the wall. A toothpick protruded from the folds of his mouth, and he glared at her with dark eyes.

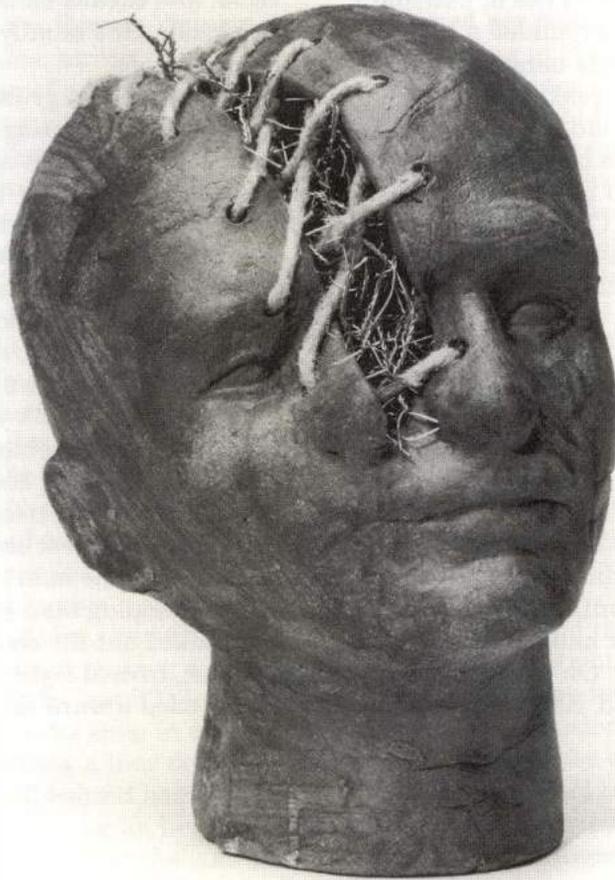
"Come here," the counter man said as he walked down a narrow hallway. Victoria was frozen to the floor. Oh God, what have I done? Her mind raced. Should I follow

this man? Where is he taking me? Should I run for it? I shouldn't have stopped. I should have kept on driving.

With a backward glance at the man slumped on the newspapers, Victoria walked down the dark hallway on wooden legs. The counter man opened a door at the end of the hall, walked into a small back room, and turned on the light. He motioned her inside. She blindly followed, and he shut the door.

"Look here," he grumbled. Victoria looked up to see him pointing at the back of the door. Her eyes followed his gesture, and she saw a map. A big, glorious, black, and white map. Relief made her weak, and she almost stumbled as she moved closer to see where he was indicating. "Turn right out of the station, and follow this here street. One more right turn, and you'll see the sign for the expressway."

"Thank you, thank you, thank you so much," Victoria babbled as they walked back down the hall. She was overcome with gratitude, and the release of her fear made her giddy. She reached over the counter and pumped the man's hand. She grinned at the slumping man with the toothpick as she walked out the door. She started the Cadillac, turned right out of the station, and headed toward the expressway.

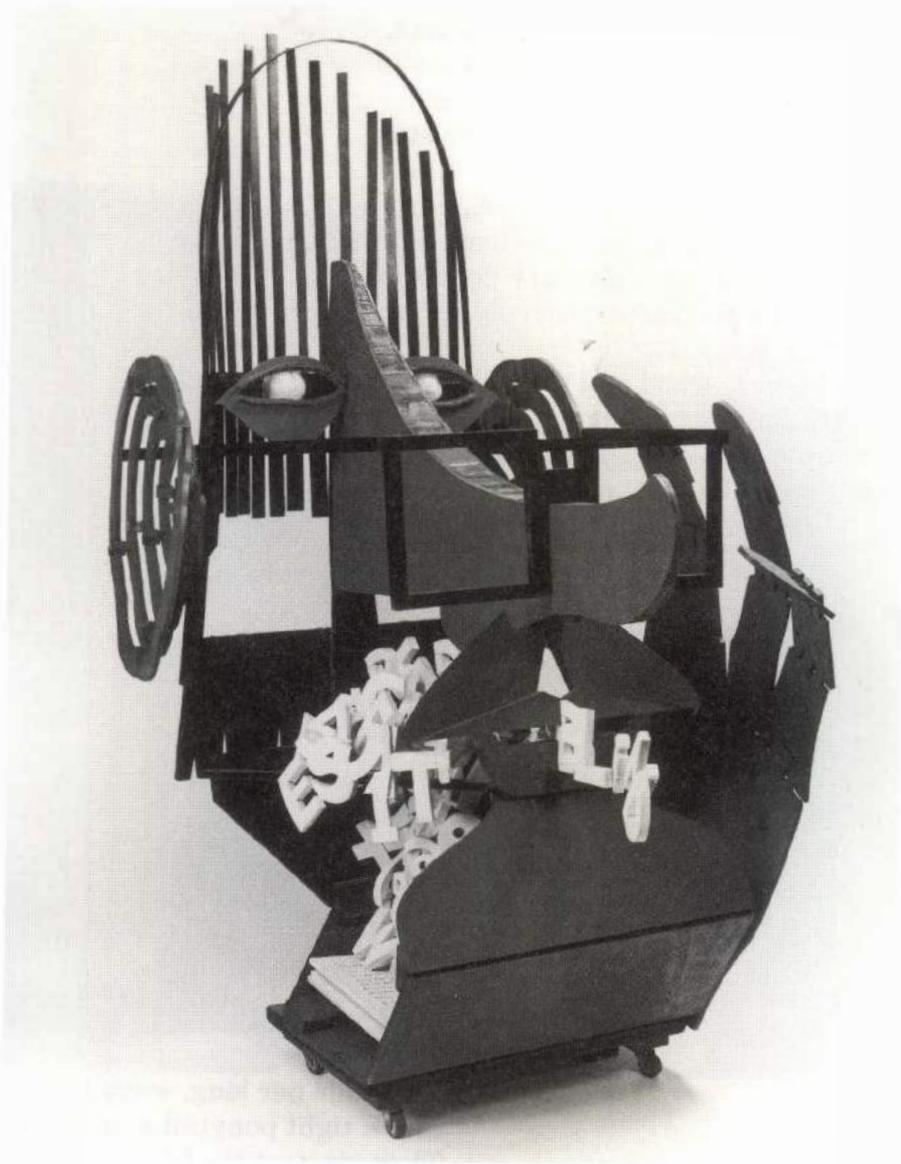


Dangerous Thoughts

Ryan McViety

ceramic, wire, twine

11"x6"x7"



Self-portrait
Ed Kowalczyk
wood
60"x84"x36"

An Autumn Night

David Slowik

Dry leaves tap dancing down the street,
Lost in the rhythm of my feet,
Darkness coats the hard black tar,
The moon's the spotlight and I'm the star.

The wind breeding song with cold ripe trees,
Creates an ovation from the leaves,
Bringing to the stage their dark dead red,
Falling from the sky like confetti on my head.

With my destination reached and the cold soon coming,
With the celebration over and my mind still humming
That tune of life which led me home,
That tune of life that let me roam. . .

Ballet

Beth Pope

She pulls her long, wavy hair
into a tight ponytail atop her head.
Then rips out the blue rubber band,
lets the ocean of hair rest on her shoulders.
Next she takes a chunk of hair,
starts a ballet.
Her fingers danced together,
leaping and bounding across the stage.
They dive into the ocean of hair,
come up to the top gasping for a breath

She drops the blue band on the floor.

The ballerina fell off beat.



untitled
Lisa Marie Gennardo
oil
24"x20"



Water Dragon
Rana Raeuchle
pen and ink
8.5"x11"

It Was A Polaroid Backyard Scene

Justin Benton

The trees moved to the light and the fences meant nothing
I would break through the frame into the void
I was a savage monster
Not climbing trees but strangling them
Never running but swallowing the wind whole
Eventually one with my neighborhood
The streets became the sky and the sky was the sea
My father eventually arrived, straight out of a black and white piano
He worked hard and his back was made of pine
Everything in his path was broken down and built back up
I slept among sawdust and unfinished walls

I only remember summer days
Where the sun was jealous and pounding
I fed on the dry air and loosened the clouds with my yell
I asked my dad what would happen if he climbed his work ladder and touched the sun
He said it would burn him into a swarm of ashes
So I warned him not to go

My memory ended at that moment
Now the clock is a lazy villain
And the rainy days have stained the back of my skull
He's always sleeping
The medicine lures him farther and farther away
And without it he's light years down the stream
There is a young flux of men flexing their empty hearts
We never speak words to each other but we're thinking the same thing

I'm tired of watching death
My dog has slept for twelve years
His legs hurt him and don't work anymore
He finally cries for his mother but she's out in the galaxy with his brother and
sisters
So he goes back to sleep
I want to see growth
I want that piece of me back
The slab that fell out when he tried to leave us
And himself
I'm tired and lonely and I feel like I'm growing around my youth
Days move like frames in a bad film

I'm always waiting
For the sun to roll into town again
And give back my laughter, my bravado
Let me fall in love and move out west
Destroy whole towns with a single pen
And spill my ink into the body of my son
My wife will never really know my dad
And my son will never understand
We'll live in a tiny blue house
And leave all the windows open
So that the stars will hear us sleeping
And the future will never be alone

Selective Vision at the Airport

Jack Mitchell

digital print

8.5"x6"



Oh, My Love!

Jennifer Brun

Oh, my love!
I fear, my love
I will not love you for too long, my love
Perhaps, my love
Not even an hour, my love
Like love, my love
I make no promises, love
Yet I do so love to love you, my love
I love to love my love so
But I may not love you in a minute, my love
For I'd hate to waste a minute of love
For in a minute, my love
There are so many loves to love, my love
Yet take heed, dear love
And do try not to linger long in love
For love I am quite sure
You will be loved again.

Peligro No Salida

Paul Simanauskas

Stumbling into myself
I find there is no exit
Lost in a sea of me
Drowning without chance
Mapping all traces of corners lost inside
Destined to search for meaning
Not one light shines in darkness
Not one shadow exists in light
No complacency resides in fear
No fear resides in love
Searching for an impossibility
Impossibly searching for the possibility
Of answers in questions
And questions offered by one
Who is searching in herself
Stumbling into me
And finding there is no exit



untitled
Tamara Todd
photo
9"x6.5"

You Mean More

Catherine Vogel

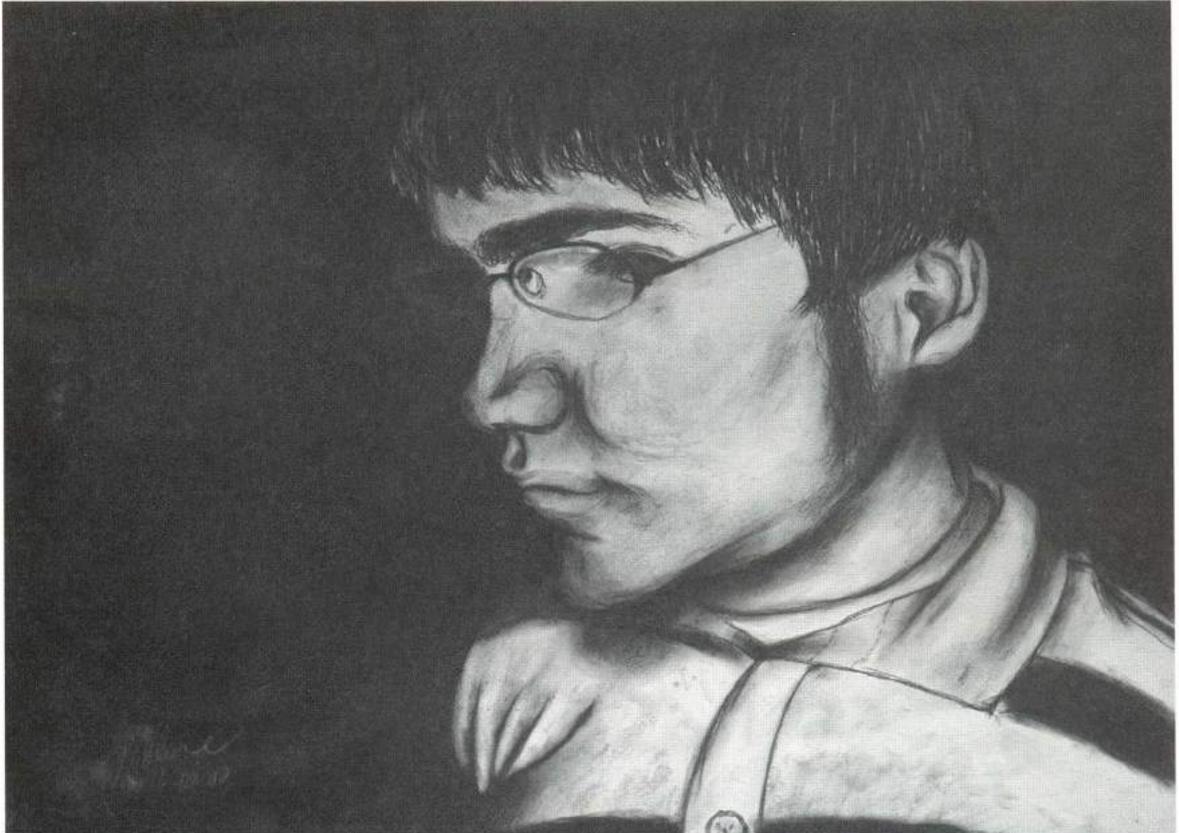
i love You.
more than my fresh bag
of cool ranch doritos.
more than the mushy,
brown oatmeal, i eat
for breakfast each morning.
i want You more than,
that fresh prince guy,
whose reruns appear on channel 50.
i love You more than,
my 72 piece tupperware set,
which holds 47 leftover meals,
like greasy spaghetti,
creamed corn,
and bloated hot dogs.
i find You more interesting,
than that bombing in paris,
and one thing's for sure,
i'd choose You any day,
over my brown-sugar cheerios.

A Glance

James Devereaux

Because you remind me
I look away,
Trapped inside
a Pandora's Box of recollections
I search for the key to swallow.
And in doing so I find myself gorging on all I see.

Because you remind me
I break her down.
Slowly strangle chance and choice in a gesture,
Tip the scales one more time in a breath and death
sweet and reverberating.
Clawing for the wax and wane I held
as common as an iced over tidal flow.
Because you remind me
I hold myself at bay,
and
If you come any closer, my sweet little nothing,
Perhaps I'll forget,
And perhaps I'll remind me.



Self-portrait
Matt Melone
charcoal
30"x22"



Dejection
Brandon Heuser
photo
7"x5"

The Tintype

Regina Harty-Allen

Outlined by a deep red-brown mahogany frame
embellished with carvings of rosebuds and ribbons
which curved the smoothly rounded corners,
the tintype of a young woman
sat on my grandmother's drum table
atop a cream-colored intricately crocheted lace doily
that had been meticulously and methodically
starched and pressed to stiff pristine perfection.
Dirty beige-gray in color,
the woman's photograph had been subtly
and strategically dabbed with color,
giving her lips a touch of the palest pastel pink
her cheeks the coral blush of having been freshly pinched,
her eyes the sparkle of lucid liquid aquamarine,
her hair the faintest tint of amber red.
Her high-collared dainty, but decorous Victorian lace blouse
was accented at the neck line by an oval cameo pin
that had been softly painted a creamy flesh-beige pink.
A single strand of pearls appeared to emit
a warm muted incandescent glow.
Her lustrous luxuriant hair seemed
to have been temporarily tamed for the moment,
pulled back from her face by a sumptuous, but tidy bow
of dark wide ribbon, the photographer's flash lamp
having enhanced the wavy water-stained pattern of the moiré.
A few escaped tendrils framed her face, a wisp of hair here
and there whispered a hint of wildness.
Her smile silently spoke the word mischief,
tempered by solemnity for the sake of propriety.

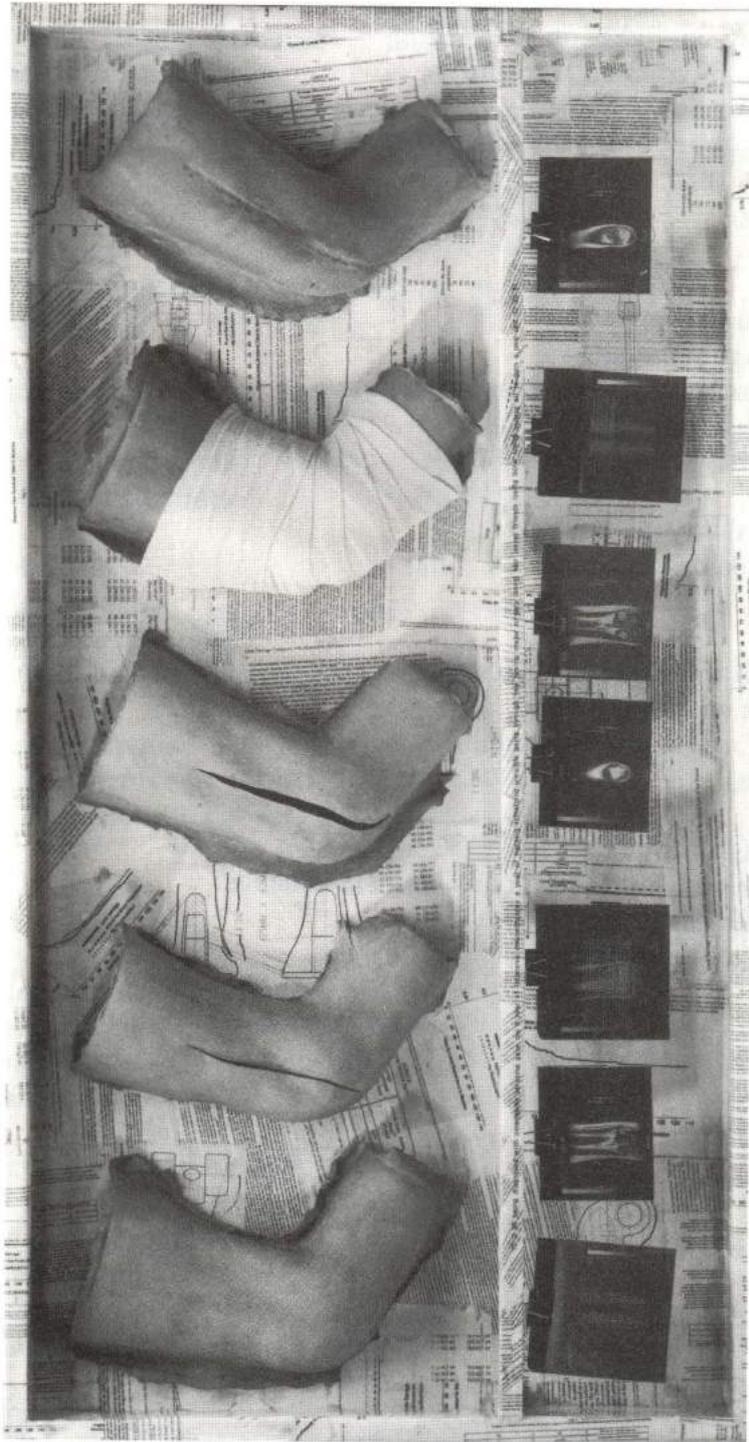
I could feel my grandmother watching me
as I studied every minute detail of the tintype.
When I turn to look at her,
she would quickly refocus her gaze
as to avoid conversation.
Sadly and silently, she would sit
in her arm chair by the window,
watching the flow of activity up and down Flornoy Street,
waiting for someone to call on the telephone,
wanting for someone to visit her.
I never saw her walk.
She seemed to live in the chair
by the window, by the phone.

Occasionally, she would take her old Shalimar perfume bottle off the table and begin her ritual of sponging its contents over her legs. Once filled with perfume, it was now a sacred vessel containing holy water from Lourdes. Her strength ebbing, she was nearing eventide.

She never spoke of the woman in the tintype, so I never questioned her identity, fearing from my grandmother's somber demeanor that it involved a tragic tale of loss.

As she observed
the world beyond and below
through the leaded glass window,
she would sometimes raise the sand-colored
weather-worn shade high enough so as to
allow an occasional streaming ray of sun to
penetrate the imprisoning pains,
drops of light illuminating and liquefying
her sea-foam green-blue eyes,
pools of luminous reflection set deeply in
an eroding terrain of parched sallow skin,
forever staring at the flow of activity
out in the street, down on the sidewalks, in the yards,
like the beam of a beacon skimming over once-sailed waters.

10 3 90 – 10 30 91
Nicole Spieth
ceramic, wood, x-ray, paper
48"x24"



Sandman

Damian Fazio

I sit and stare at the lights on the ceiling,
Reflected by the mirrors on the wall.
Outside the streetlights glare
Sending beams of light into my sleepiness.
I shuffle, shake, turn
But sleep is aloof.
It escapes me,
Irritates me,
Taunts and haunts me.
All that I try is to no avail,
Overwhelms me into increased wakefulness.
As I lay me down to torture,
Night after night
I pray for sleep,
I sit and stare always unsure when
My mind will decide it's time
To dream,
To fly,
To race through the clouds splendor,
To fight battles within my head,
To see her face and know her name,
To pilot a plane,
To dream,
To visit the land in my head,
To revisit my friends and loved ones long since dead,
To hold my madness at bay,
Maybe just for another day.

A Middle Man Once Wrote

Brooke Wexler

Perceive means more than perceiving
Some people see things unclearly
I see night cascade of stars
...it is always about you

A tired man once wrote:
"belief is not believing"
He fell short that evening
...she waited, she left

And suddenly my ears,
they picked up a motion
I thought I heard a contortion
...my heart twisting into knots

So I took a second feel
A deep breath to be real
And danced a cascade of stars
...this time it would be short

For chance is not for lovers
There is no hide undercover
Spread open to the moans
of twisted
time and
fate.

A bottle to be broken
My heart left unspoken
Unclean to be my soul
...it is always about you

(time left alone, always moving still...)

And my new home is forgotten
My past is left uncertain
A bottle is broken
...still I sometimes think of you

Keyhole Shape Shifting

Mark Germano

A man eats a bushel of apples
In a factory of idle employment
Trying to draw in something
Of the voices swirling about

Come visit anticipation like it comes
In a strange sensation around the stomach
Packing more voices into a box
For a go to the note

Like an ocean in the desert
Waves in the air around the power lines
All the splinters stuck in their brains
Squeezing the worlds with their screams

Upon the door-step of change
It's time to uncover the mystery
Time to start new and crystal
With bags of patience, not to cheap

Inside the good old world
There are similar voices to sooth
Sorrow to be felt and let go
Let go and hear what I say

Forget me not, not too easy
Not like it sounds, but little and blue
Like the birds; all the birds
Take a fly without the fear of crash

