

# Collage

Fall '84

**Cover by  
Carl A. Nowak**

"All the arts are brothers;  
each one is a light to the  
other."

Voltaire

# Our Life with Grapefruit

—not thunder  
but the brass of the grapefruit  
calls to us from so very near  
the center of our lives  
it sounds distant

Hello there, Henrietta!  
How you doin' Jack?  
We were just about to have  
ourselves some grapefruit.

Its fragrance collects  
at the outskirts of our lives.  
When we stray it haunts us,  
muted.  
When I wake before you  
I run out in dark confusion.  
I return with my hands full  
of grapefruit.

But if the juice of the grapefruit  
mixes with our sleep,  
we cannot hope to awaken.

Kept too long it develops  
a black heart that grows.

Q: What's twelve o'clock all day?  
What never outstays?

A: Grapefruit

I do not ask for favors.  
I no longer ask for flowers.  
The grapefruit suffices.

It is the aspirin which cures  
any lapse of humor.

Your arguments are not oblique.

They center upon the grapefruit.

Sliced in half,  
two evil eyes.  
Sprinkled with sugar:  
a lie that fools no one.

We do not like pink grapefruit.  
Pink grapefruit is vaguely  
apologetic.

If there comes a frost  
in Florida, the citrus growers  
wrap the trees in blankets  
and burn oil near them  
all night.

In the middles  
of our nights  
We are free of grapefruit.  
Upon awaking we cease.

Karen Holman



James Tucker

# Rats on the Brain

Kathy Brady

She laid the paperback down on the shelf beside her cup of coffee, which had grown cold in her preoccupation with the book's final pages.

Her lips pursed, tried to smile. Yes, quite creepy.

That's one I'll give to Kelly. She'll love it.

She thought of her younger sister, and of her friend, Paul, who had given her the book, thought of them and all the others she knew who passed the Books amongst themselves. An odd assortment of characters, all very different from one another, yet alike, the similarity being the obsession they shared for Horror.

What was it? she wondered. Which cell was it throbbing away in their brains which hungered for fear?

She remembered the mutant rats snuffling around in their victims' skulls and shivered. Damn good book... Although it really was a lot like the one about the vampire bats that had descended on L.A.

It was her husband who had pointed this out to her, her husband who wasn't like herself and the others. Though he read the works occasionally, he could take them or leave them. His voice came back to her now, saying sarcastically, "I'm telling you, these books are all interchangeable. They're all

about bats, cats, gnats or rats. They should all be titled by ominous-sounding, third-person verbals, *They Rip, They Glut, They Suck*. This one should have been called *They Squeak*. He had twitched his nose at her, then made squeaking sounds and bared his teeth.

"Stop it," she had said, soberly, "I don't think it's funny." And he had laughed at her unease. Some superstition left over from childhood made her think it bad luck to make fun of monsters, made her fear that just the act of doing so could conjure them up, as though the creatures, their egos offended by a lack of respect, might appear just to prove their validity.

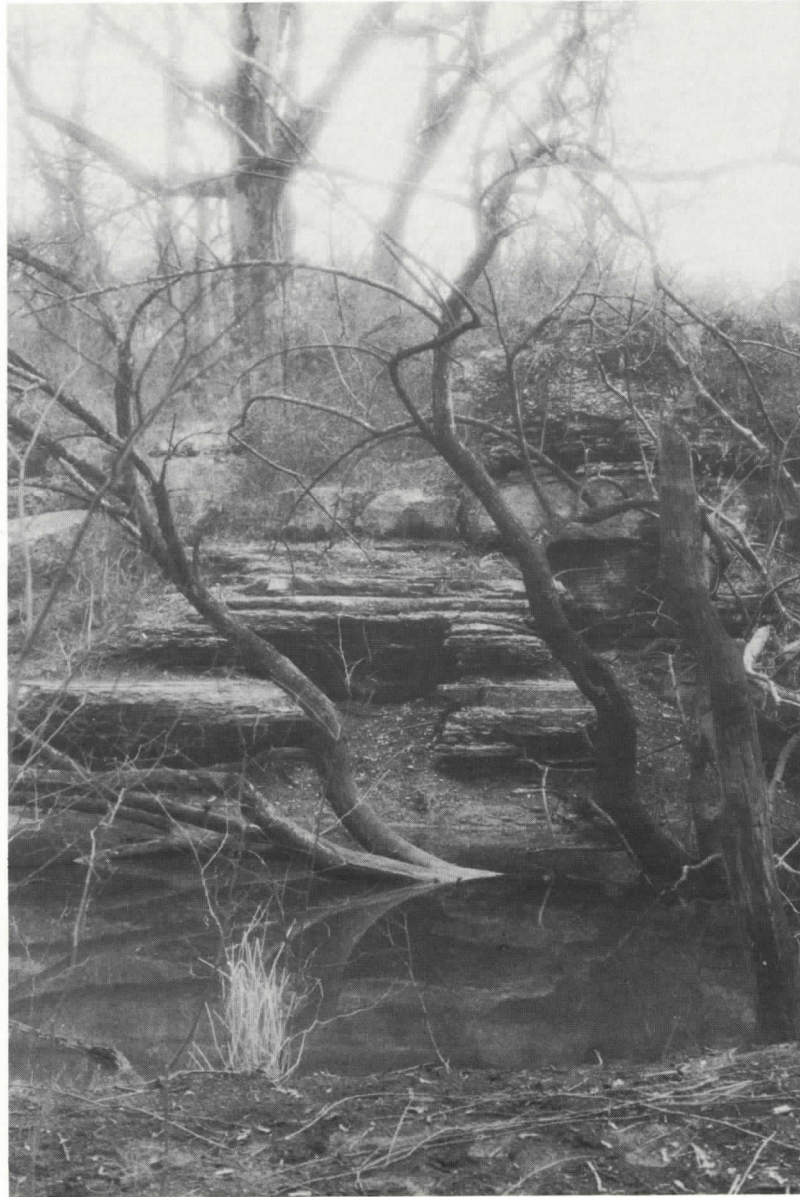
Kris had stayed awake until 5 a.m., riveted to the book, reading until her eyes refused to focus. When she reached up to switch off the lamp, she did so stealthily, as if some slumbering evil presence lurking in the shadows of her room must not be startled awake by the motion. She lay very still in the bed, her mind reeling with a reasonless fear which caused her to tremble beneath the warm down sleeping bag. She kept imagining the sudden scurrying across the carpet, the furry projectiles landing upon her outstretched frame, the sickening sound of her own flesh ripping.

Never, in her entire thirty-two years, had Kris screamed. She'd never had reason to do so. After reading one of the books she always wondered if she actually could scream, if she would be able to do so at the crucial moment. Or, if her imagined terrors had materialized right then, would she simply have lain there petrified, her sleeping husband oblivious beside her, until the oozing wetness within her spread to his side of the bed, his sudden discomfort causing him to awaken, an annoyed curse from his lips. And then, would he scream?

The phone rang, jarring her from the grisly scene playing in her head. She picked the receiver up quickly, the groundless fear of making noise still strong. Even after she had woken up later that morning, she had been cautiously quiet, almost tiptoeing, taking care not to rattle the spoons or bang the cabinet door shut as she made a pot of coffee.

When she said "Hello" into the mouth-piece, it was a breathless sound, barely above a whisper. The familiar voice on the other end comforted her and she managed to superimpose a light-heartedness onto her reply. "Kelly! I was just thinking of you. God, do I have a book for you. It's too creepy. Got me scared half to death. It's about these mutant rats that—"

(continued on page 40)



Scott Thomas



Frances Love

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Frances Love

## Werewoman

There's a full moon hanging low in  
the sky  
Quiet night broken by the lone wolf's  
cry  
Night sounds, bite sounds, restless  
spirits roam  
The kind of night good girls stay  
home  
  
Blood moon hanging by a thread over  
me  
A chill in the air where the heat used  
to be  
There's beauty, there's danger in the  
whispering breeze  
The feeling's really got me, I'm down  
on my knees

Werewoman  
Dancing in the full moonlight  
Werewoman  
After every man in sight  
Prowling, howling, screeching,  
reaching  
Seizing, squeezing, teasing, pleasing  
Clawing, mauling, my name you're  
calling  
Werewoman loving, full moon  
Saturday night

J. Hunter Satterwhite

8

## Coitus Electricus

Dawn lays pale sunlight  
'cross rumpled sheets  
wrestled emotions in defeat

Incest of the self  
conjugal love  
in empty air

Electric umbilical  
links Gemini twins  
voices strange polarities  
echoes off wires

Weep Weeper Weeping  
Laugh Laughter Laughing  
Janus faced Masks

Dance Dancers Dancing  
mind apparitions

unified clinging  
stillborn dream

Elliot P. Dawson

## Baseball

In high pine forests where the wood  
for the bats grows you tug your best  
girl,  
looking for the right needle bed to  
spread  
your lunch and tell her of your  
sporting intentions.  
If she resists remind her of the pain of  
Mickey Mantle,  
playing all those years on wounded  
legs, and together  
you can unwind the lengths of his  
long bandage to massage  
the chalky limbs, and bid him rise and  
steal second,  
hooking the bag with his glorious  
slide as you cheer  
and wrap your own good legs around  
the warmth  
of his passionate achievement.

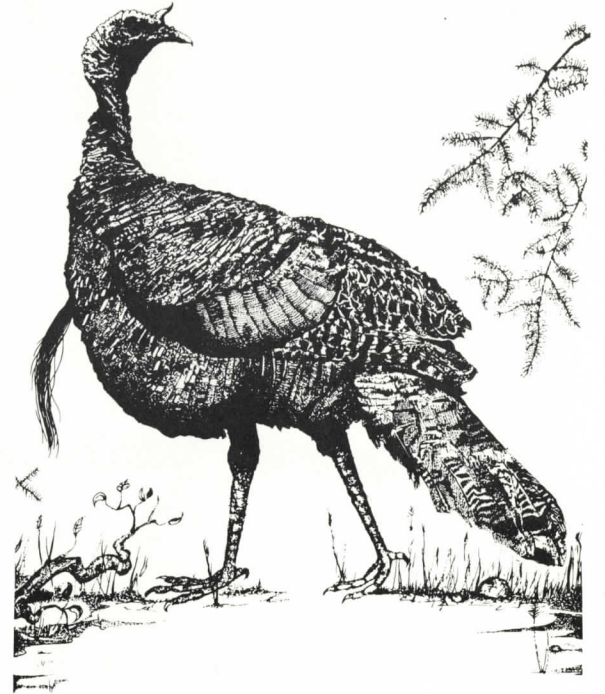
Crosby Hunt



Crystal Whitaker



Jim Null



John Reynolds



Linda Sydnor

10

## Labor at 3 a.m.

A nine years' weight  
Bears heavily  
On my slight frame  
Painfully pressuring,  
Hastening birth.  
Inky forceps in the  
Dim light  
Wrest the creature  
From its surreal home.

D. M. Adkerson

## Mr. Jones' Floor

Like palms before the Christ  
you stretch out your smooth path  
as far as the cord allows,  
buffing out the smudges of secular  
activity,  
exposing the mirror inherent in all  
surface.  
The clean way is what you offer.

But again we come to clatter down  
your immaculate halls  
in our hard shoes, seeking our  
resolutions not in towns  
that await us with crosses and high  
hosannas but in sleek labs  
that teach us what you don't  
believe—the dirty road to man—  
on paths that won't come clean, and  
though you buff and buff  
with humming machine,  
the monkey print remains.

Crosby Hunt

## Eyes

Her eyes follow  
the nicely clad man  
the dark beauty of her pupils  
enchants my mind.  
She gracefully moves  
her boot enraptured foot  
in one momentous  
flowing swoop  
and knocks the crutches  
out from under  
the passing amputee.

Jim Wise



Glenda Guion



Glenda Guion

# Foreign Chords

With the expiration  
of our Eurail pass and the imploring  
of your sister to stay and share  
in her good fortune in Paris,  
we acquired her small place—a year  
yet on the lease.  
She moved across the river, leaving  
us  
two stools for the pressed wood  
kitchen counter  
she had built without the consent  
of the concierge, and an old single  
mattress.

We grew  
accustomed to the smallness  
of the atelier. Its emptiness,  
at first a reward for our attempts  
at daring, was later a traitor  
of our spirit. In time  
we began to furnish it. An abandoned  
bedframe, discovered in the street  
one  
night on our way home from cafe  
voyeurism, started our collection.

Powered by Ricardi, we wheeled  
it home from a neighboring arron-  
disement—  
the squeaking wheels drowning out  
our nervous laughter. After this,  
sleepless nights went to treasure  
hunting.  
A small table for our small time  
betting or  
to support your coat-hanger  
music stand; a lamp you rewired;  
and a bird cage that housed  
the mannequin hand (the rest of the  
body  
a mystery) you found early one  
morning.  
We did our best to lug home  
an abused armchair for more com-  
fortable  
reading. You assured me your sister  
could recover it. But after  
two groaning blocks and an  
inquisitive  
gendarme, we were forced  
to return it to the gutter. As the room  
came to life, we forfeited  
a few petit déjeuners (mille feuilles)  
and bought a Montmartre special for  
the wall.

To our infrequent visitors,  
the acquisitions offered the ap-  
pearance  
of shared visions. Our stay  
took on an air of permanence;  
we hoped meaning.

We learned  
to leave when two  
were too many for the space,  
your music too personal or  
my reading became drama.  
When weather prohibited sidewalk  
adventures I'd retreat  
into the bathroom  
to shut out the disconcerting  
chords. Your solace,  
your dreams. You'd ride  
the rifts out the window past  
the concierge's carefully  
clipped garden into the streets.  
You'd run up and down  
the neck of your guitar searching  
for a song, a way to finger  
the present to take back  
to the States forever.  
Your present. My past.



Today duty bound I do the laundry in  
the half-tub,  
and even with the door closed,  
your current melody filters through.  
As I rub a stained shirt  
in time to the beat,  
images of white-washed brick homes  
roll in my mind.

I walk narrow cobble  
paths that trace patterns (unknown  
to me)  
from home to baker to church to  
sea.

I have no destination. I walk to  
breathe  
the Mediterranean air and to listen  
to the town  
wake. The sun teases me, warming  
me  
as I enter a plaza or cross-road,  
only  
to be blocked out again as I make a  
choice  
down another house-lined path.  
Shouts  
of good morning, good night,  
frustration,  
satisfaction, love and anger

mingle with the smell of the day's  
fresh bread.

These people understand the  
premises  
of proximity. Unafraid of close  
spaces,  
doorway looks into doorway. In-  
timacies

shared unashamedly, unabashedly.  
I take the laundry to the balcony  
to hang it out to dry. You play  
the same chords over and over  
again until perfect, or near  
perfect. I shoo the pigeons and clean  
the railing, drape a towel  
over it and over it  
place one by one our worn  
items of clothing. La vie  
le son, la tête. Les chansons  
de son guitare. Songs  
his songs. His booted foot  
taps out the time, tapping

sa tap  
sur la tête  
sa tap  
sur la tête  
sa tap  
in my head  
on my head  
his foot tapping.

R. Ridley

# Cryptic

1.  
the moths fly in  
the moths fly out  
flutter, flutter  
sketch on the window  
degree by degree  
so many possibilities  
the night must be  
penetrated  
piece by piece  
our bed, our wings  
the moths fly in  
the moths fly out  
degree by degree colder  
the night must be  
take heart  
in a corner  
of this alley  
we'll find a bit  
of cast-off grace,  
your limbs, your breath,  
your hunger  
so many possibilities  
our bed our wings  
piece by piece  
the night must be  
penetrated  
the moths fly in  
the moths fly out  
sustained by hunger.

2.  
gaudy moths  
neon, sodium,  
mercury  
night soup  
sensible vegetables  
alphabets  
the moths are dizzy  
with grief,  
the white blue lights  
mean something to me,  
too, those white blue  
pieces of TV screens,  
I am not sorry they fell  
they hear the call  
of the Zoo  
I too will turn  
to the world  
and pray, time to pray  
I died  
on a foggy day  
and didn't notice  
it continues  
to be a relief  
what a relief  
flutter and snap  
your sassy skirts  
sad moths  
the world continues  
to grow  
stranger

Karen Holman



Lorrie Anne Marshall

# Marcus Taylor: City Servant

Sanitation Engineer?  
My title and my job.  
Just meant trash:  
you throw I catch  
pick-em-up  
toss-em-in  
crump-em-up  
into convenient bales  
to bulk a landfill  
build a road  
heat a city.

Even now I hear  
in this final landfill  
squeaking brakes  
grinding compressor  
rattling tin cans  
clunking plastic cans  
recurring sounds all my days and  
dreams  
recurring smells all my days and  
nights  
recurring in an endless whorl  
in that old, in this new world.

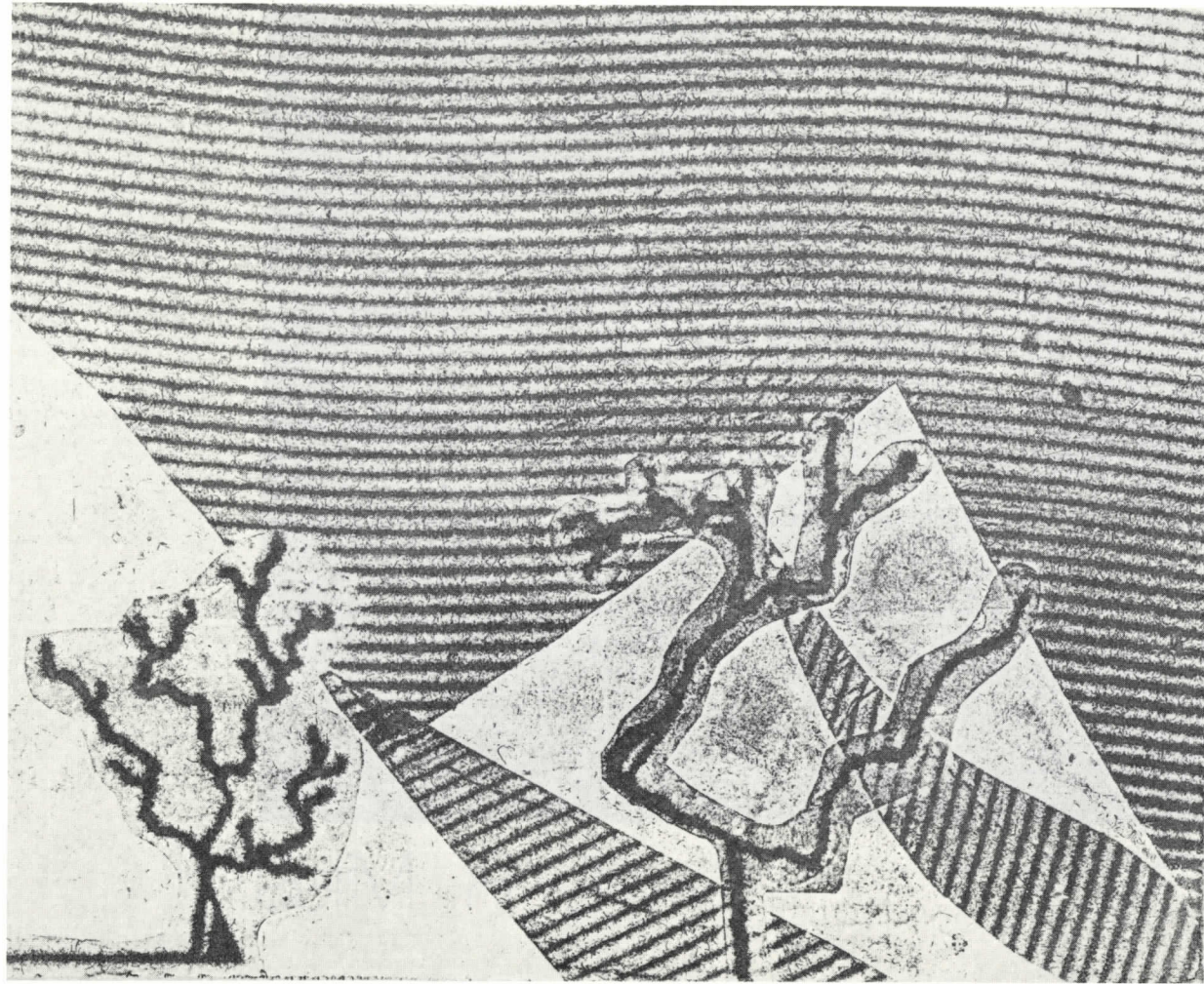
Waste colored the air  
with its residue  
burned, built, disappeared.  
Part did not,  
lingered, grew to my skin and being,  
harsh testament to my identity.

when I died  
they made me into a convenient bale  
and six pick-em-up trucks  
brought me home.

W. H. Holland



L. R. Miles



Joe Landa



Joe Landa

# The Dinner Bell

Maggi Vaughn

"Pardon me, sir, I don't mean to wake you."

The farmer pushed back his old sweaty straw hat which had been shading his closed eyes. He rubbed his gray bushy eyebrows.

"That's okay. Weren't sleepin' anyway. I always come out here before lunch. Kinda' rock and rest my eyes."

"You got a nice porch here."

"Yep, spend a lotta time out here. Figured I deserve it after spending all them years in the cornfields. Ain't seen you around these parts before," said the farmer.

"Well, I don't get to Bell Buckle very often," said the young man.

"Just as well. Ain't much happenin' here, anyway."

"I was told you own the farmhouse across the road."

"Ain't much of a farm. Just a few acres of land left, and an old farmhouse 'bout to fall in. Don't tell me you're one of them city slickers looking for a place in the country?"

"No, I'm a city slicker looking for an old dinner bell. I noticed one in the back of the old house over there. Thought perhaps you'd sell it."

"It ain't in good condition...rusted out a lot. Don't know if it still has a clapper in it or not."

"Well, sir, it doesn't have to be in top-notch condition. That's what makes it old."

"Let me yell to the missus. She's about got lunch ready."

The old farmer opened the front screen door.

"Mama, I'm taking someone across the road. Won't be gone long." He turned to the young man, "We can walk over. The weeds are kinda' growed up. Ain't scared a snakes, are you?"

The young man arched his eyebrows and said, "Wouldn't want to tangle with a rattler."

"They're out here in these parts. Charlie Lamb killed a six-footer last week."

"I always heard they wouldn't hurt you if you don't bother them," said the young man.

"Well, I wouldn't want one to make you hurt yourself."

"Tell you what," replied the young man, "if one gets after us, you just spit that tobacco between his eyes. Your aim seems pretty good."

"Watch your step over here. Lots of old boards with rusty nails and broken glass around here. They'd go right through them new tennis shoes."

"If you don't mind my asking, what did you have to pay for a place like this?"

"Twelve thousand dollars. Bought it for the

land. House ain't no good...gonna have her bulldozed down. Turn the land for pasture. Put some calves over here."

"Mind if I go in the house?"

"Reckon not, if we can get in it. Be careful where you step, big holes in the floor. Wouldn't want you to get hurt. Look at all those beer cans. Sallie Tishner would turn over in her grave. Never allowed alcohol in here. Kids come here all hours of the night and party. Be glad when it's torn down. Get rid of this mess."

"It's a shame to see a house run down like this."

"It's been run down a long time. Old Man Tishner died two years ago. His widow lived eighteen months after that; watch that loose plank. Me and the missus tried to help the old woman best we could. Seems after Mr. Tishner died, she didn't have much to live for. She and the old man are buried on the hill. I put a fence around the graves to keep the cows out. Watch for those broken windows. Darn kids come here, break out all the windows, play them radios loud!"

"Oh, they don't mean any harm," said the young man.

"Mean any harm? Just look at this place! Them walls there. Can you believe what they've writ on them walls! Why, I wouldn't



even let my missus come over here and see this.”

“Well, I guess young people today are more liberal in their thinking.”

“Yeah, well, when I was a young boy, liberal was politicians’ talk. Boy, I didn’t catch your name.”

“Uh-h, Grafitti.”

“Grafitti? What kinda’ name is that? Italian or somethin’?”

“Well, I don’t know where it came from, but it’s American now.”

“Guess this place holds a lot of memories for someone.”

“No, boy, houses don’t hold memories, people hold memories. The old woman had a lot of memories, talked about her son a lot. She hadn’t seen him in years. He lived in New York City, some kind of artist. Miss Sallie said someday he’d be well-known. She showed me a picture he had painted. It was supposed to have won an award, but if you ask me, he’d been better off if he’d come home and painted the house. I believe she called him Bill...naw, Will, that was it. Will.”

“What happened to the painting?”

“Went to auction, furniture and all. The old man and woman run up a lot of medical bills. First him, then her, being so sick. That’s how I come by the house, bought it at the auction. It weren’t hardly worth the money, but what is these days?”

“How long have you been living across the road?”

“About five years, had a big farm over in Manchester, gave it to my boy. Me and the missus decided it was too much for us. So we come over here, bought this small place, not as much to take care of. Watch that roof there, it’s about to fall in. Don’t really need this here place. Just bought it so I can keep them darn kids out, and keep someone from

building across from me. What you gonna do with the dinner bell?”

“It’s on my list.”

“You city folks get me. Always coming through the country buying anything. Feller come through here last week, big lawyer from Nashville...looking for a horse collar, wanted to make a mirror. I had one in the barn. Hadn’t used it in ten years. Just ain’t bothered to throw it away. Give me ten dollars—can you beat that? I walked to Patience, my old mule, looked her straight in the eye, and said ‘Patience, you stuck your head in that old collar for years, now that city slicker’s gonna see his head in it.’ Can you imagine that? Guess that’s what a college education can do for you.”

“I take it you’re not much on higher education?”

“Don’t mind education, it’s what you do with it. Did you notice that log cabin on the right just before you got here? Well, a city slicker bought it last year—a retired banker. Twice a week, I have to go down and pull his tractor out of the ditch. That’s what I’m talking about, he oughter had sense enough to have stayed at the bank and not go out on no farm. See that old plow in the field? Belonged to old man Tishner, hadn’t been used in years. But one day some city dude will come by here, pay me good money to make a mail box out of that old plow—people crazy—buy anything. Antique dealers come through all the time, buying up old milk cans, old farm tools, paying good money for this old junk.”

“It’s a phase we’re going through. It’s called nostalgia,” said the young man.

“It’s called insane, if you ask me! A feller came through here the other day, offered me fifty dollars for an old bath tub on legs. I had it out in the field catching water for the

calves. I figure if it’s worth fifty dollars to him, it’s worth fifty dollars to me. You’d never believe what the feller wanted to do with it. Said he wanted to take it home, paint it, put it on a platform in his bathroom, put drapes around it. If you ask me, a feller has to be turned mighty peculiar to want to do that.”

“Well, in the city we call it ‘different strokes for different folks’.”

“What kind of talk is that? You sound like one of them kids that come here. That’s the trouble with the world today, different strokes for different folks. That’s the ruination of our country.”

“Well, I didn’t mean to upset you.”

“You ain’t upset me. You made me mad. Look at this house; young people have no regard for anything. The Tishner boy never even came home for his father’s or his mother’s funeral. That’s what I’m talking about. Just no respect for anything.”

“Just where is it written that a son must come home for his father’s and mother’s funerals?”

“Where is it written? Boy, it ain’t never had to be written before. It’s just respect! The boy never even come home to see about his mama. That old man and woman lived their lives for that boy. For years they sold off land, just so he could stay in New York. He never even checked on ’em.”

“Well, maybe he just wasn’t the kind that liked to write.”

“Well, he didn’t mind writin’ home for money!”

“Now you said the boy was in New York, right?”

“Yep.”

“Well, just suppose that when the father died, he didn’t have the money to come home on.”

"Well, he could of got here if he'd wanted to. That's no excuse. Besides, he was doing all right when his mama died. He'd won an award for that dang picture."

"Now, just suppose when his mother died, there was nothing left to come home for. Besides, winning an award doesn't mean money in your pocket. It just means somebody recognized your work."

"Recognized your work?" Said the farmer. "I wished you could have seen that picture. It was called 'Sunrise.' But I don't know how you could of recognized it. Miss Sallie called it abstract. Sunrise, my behind! I ain't never seen no sunrise like that. It hung right over there. See on that old wall? You can still tell where it hung. Miss Sallie looked at it for hours. Sometimes that was the only sunshine the old lady had. Lord, the sufferin' Miss Sallie went through!"

"She suffered?"

"Suffered? Lord, yes, but that wouldn't hold a candle to her broken heart. Just look at that hill, boy. They're gone—won't be back this way again."

The young man looked through a broken pane to the hillside. "Why did you let her suffer?"

"Why did we let her suffer? We didn't break her heart. But I'll tell you one thing, we buried her in style. Even on her deathbed she asked that what little money she had left be sent to her son. She didn't know what little money she had left was spent a long time ago. But we buried her right. That hillside was covered with spring flowers. Her boy might not have been here, but everyone else was. That hillside—now there was a picture."

"That's a waste of money! Dead folks can't smell flowers."

"Well, it ain't all for the dead. It's for the living, but guess you wouldn't know much

about that, boy."

"Well, at least she saw the Sunrise picture before she died," said the young man.

"Why the darn picture, you can't hardly hang it anywhere, it don't fit in the bedroom; and if you put it in the living room, people come in wondering what it is and thinking you're crazy. The bathroom is about the only place you can put it. At least your back is to it part of the time."

"Sounds to me like you bought the picture."

"What would I want with the picture? I told you I ain't seen no sunrise in it. What's that list you got that dinner bell on?"

"It's a game."

"What kind of game?"

"Oh, about five of us were going on vacation this year—different parts of the country. I had to come to Nashville on business. So, I combined my vacation with the business trip."

"And that's a game?"

"Well, it's a game we're playing. A list was made of items to bring back, and on old dinner bell was on it. Bet I'm the only one to find the bell."

"Well, this is it. Like I told you, it ain't much of a bell. Won't be no trouble gettin' it down, though. Post's already rotten."

"How much do you want for it?"

"Well, I don't know. How about twenty-five dollars?"

"That seems a little high."

"I figure anybody driving a big car like you can afford it. Besides, it's worth twenty-five dollars for me to come over here and walk through all this mess. Don't necessarily want to sell it. Had one man try to buy my barn—wanted to make it into a house—can you believe that? Think we can get it in your trunk? Told him if I sold the barn, wouldn't

have no place to keep Patience. Feller said he'd make a place specially for Patience. Wouldn't want to do that to the mule. Patience wouldn't want to live with no kook."

"Well, I guess twenty-five isn't too much. Think you can help me carry it to the car?"

"Yeah, kinda heavy. Glad you just wanted the bell, thought you might be one of the them city slickers wantin' to buy the place. They worry me to death."

"Well, I didn't mean to disturb you. I just wanted the bell. I appreciate you helping me with it and all."

"I'll tell you what I'll do. We'll double or nothing," said the farmer. "If you can tell me what kind of tree that old stump was in the front yard, I'll give you the bell. If you miss, you owe me fifty dollars."

"How do I know you wouldn't trick me? I would say one thing, and you'd say something else."

"Boy, I ain't never tricked nobody in my life. Guess it and the bell is yours."

"Well, from the looks of that old stump, I would say it's a maple."

"Well," said the farmer, "a maple it was, so it's your bell." He shook his head, "I just don't understand why the Tishner boy wouldn't have painted that pretty old maple tree instead of some sunrise you can't make out."

"Sure you don't want the twenty-five dollars?"

"Naw, it's yours. How'd you get the trunk to pop open without a key?"

"A lever on the panel. Here, see?"

"Don't that beat all! What'll people think of next? Smell them beans and cornbread cooking? You're welcome to stay for lunch."

"Thank you, but I'm meeting a friend in Nashville for lunch."

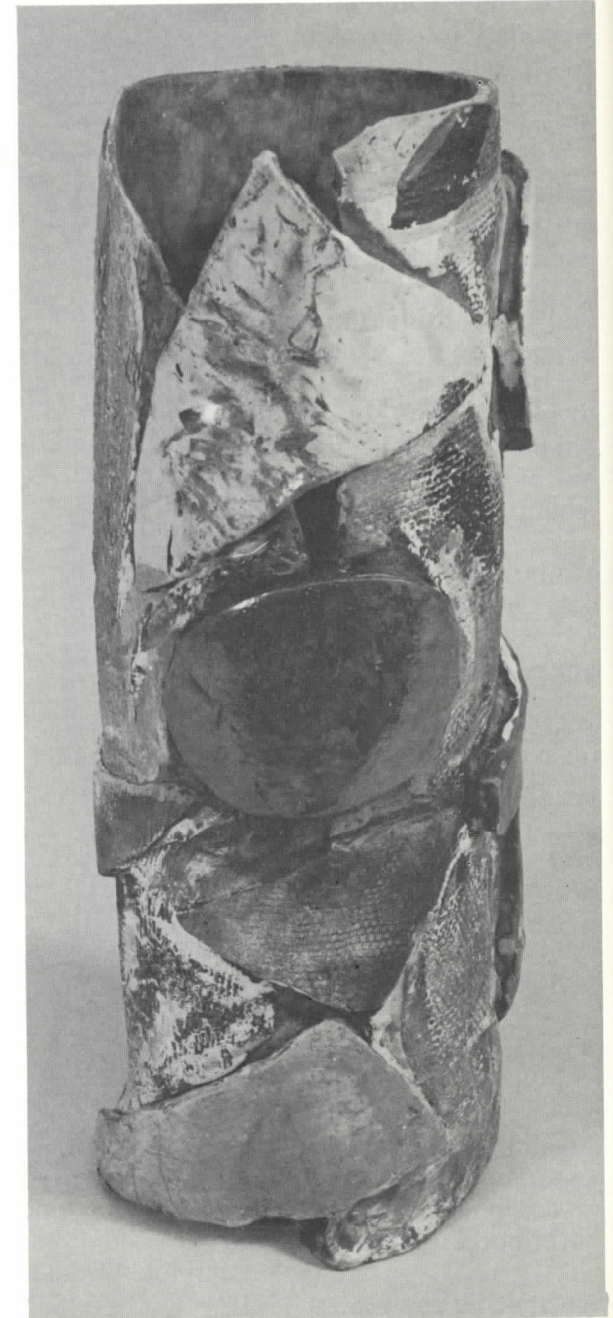
*(continued on page 40)*



Sandra Parker



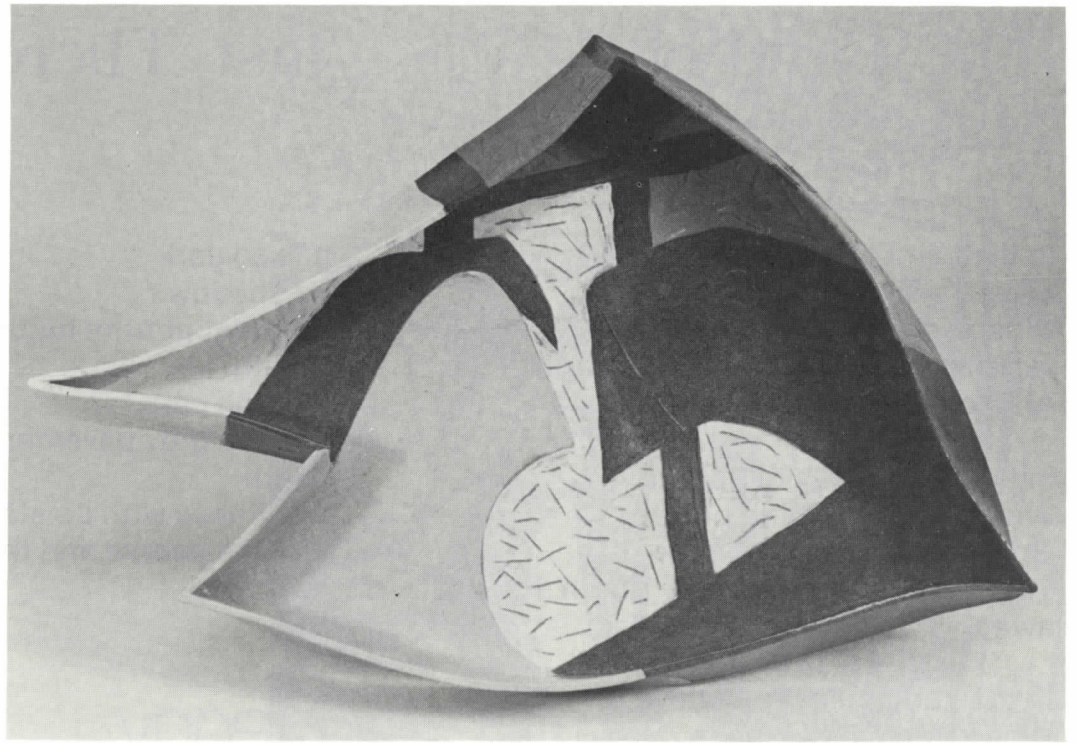
Tim Butler



Tim Butler



Glenda Guion



Glenda Guion

## The Land of Make Believe

In the Land of Make Believe  
Where me and Robin played  
Where days were warm and nights  
were long  
And love was strong, so strong

In the Land of Make Believe  
Where me and Robin played  
One day the sky grew dark  
The cold rain came and Robin flew  
away

In the Land of Make Believe  
When Robin flew away  
I sat and cried, I couldn't fly  
And so, I had to stay

In the Land of Make Believe  
Where me and Robin played  
My wings grew, I learned too  
And yet, I choose to stay

In the Land of Make Believe  
Where me and Robin played  
Pretty Polly came and fast became  
The light that lights my days

J. Hunter Satterwhite

28

## Just There

it is so dark  
no shadows  
no whisper from nature's  
breath  
just the cars  
and the grey pavement of  
death  
a stillness with no stars  
just the people and their  
next step

Denny  
Trousdale

## Inebriated Nightmare

An arsonist runs amok,  
Lighting the gray matter,  
Burning the cells of my mind.

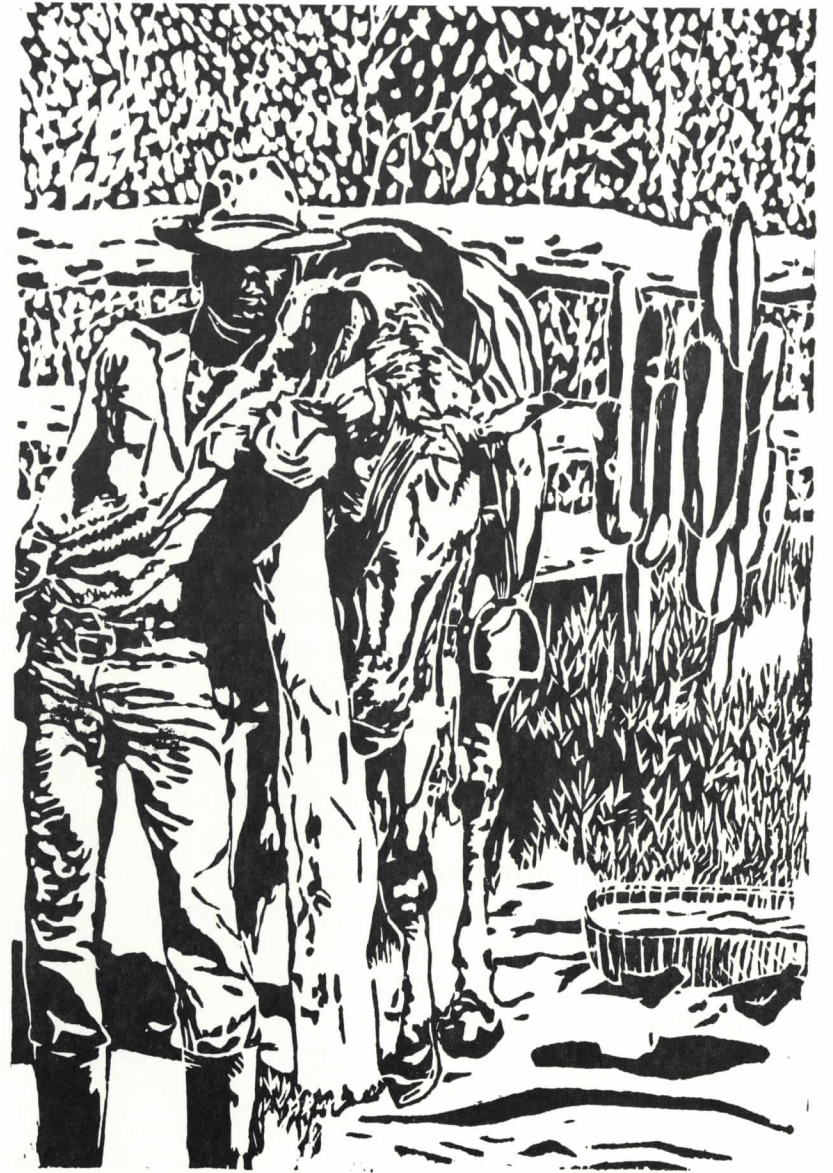
Logic oozes away,  
Leaving a void in sense  
And a parking space for unreality.

And when the sun rises,  
The fireman stamp out the fire  
And scrape away the dead cells.

Bill ClenDening



Ling Tan



Ling Tan



J. R.



# What We Don't Have

*The earth abounds with luxuries, but precious few are musts. Valuable objects do exist which are so inventive, so desirable, and so sensually pleasing that to want them is simply not enough.*

*One must have them.*

—from an advertising supplement. . . .

We make love listlessly.  
Our bodies speak to us  
from distant stations,  
faintly and interspersed  
with static.  
Our goodbyes hang white,  
terrifyingly,  
as if small fires  
had started in our throats.  
The smoke is undisputed  
by days which vary  
like newsprint.  
The white peaks of these  
houses reflect alpenglow.  
When spring comes  
they will evaporate.

—going down to the river  
go and take a long swim  
keep on swimming  
'til up rolls Glory Day,  
Lord, save a place for me.

“Dear Bob: I wish I were drunk. What was there exactly  
between us? I write you in a  
fog, myopic,  
no longer seeing through you. I  
let your cat  
out, now I can't leave here. The  
humane society  
is after me.”

—tweedlee dee, tweedlee dum  
the world is a rocking chair  
oiled with rum

*...and those with discriminating taste  
can distinguish  
graceful lines—all the brilliance of  
the heavens  
combined with the intimacy of the  
heart.*

—tweedlee dee,  
tweedlee dum  
snow is confetti  
nighttime's a drum

“...on clear nights I think I hear the  
jingle  
of your keys, and rush to the door.  
It is only the cat's icy paws on the  
sidewalk...”

—up rolls Gory Dei...

“...wakes up with claw marks...”

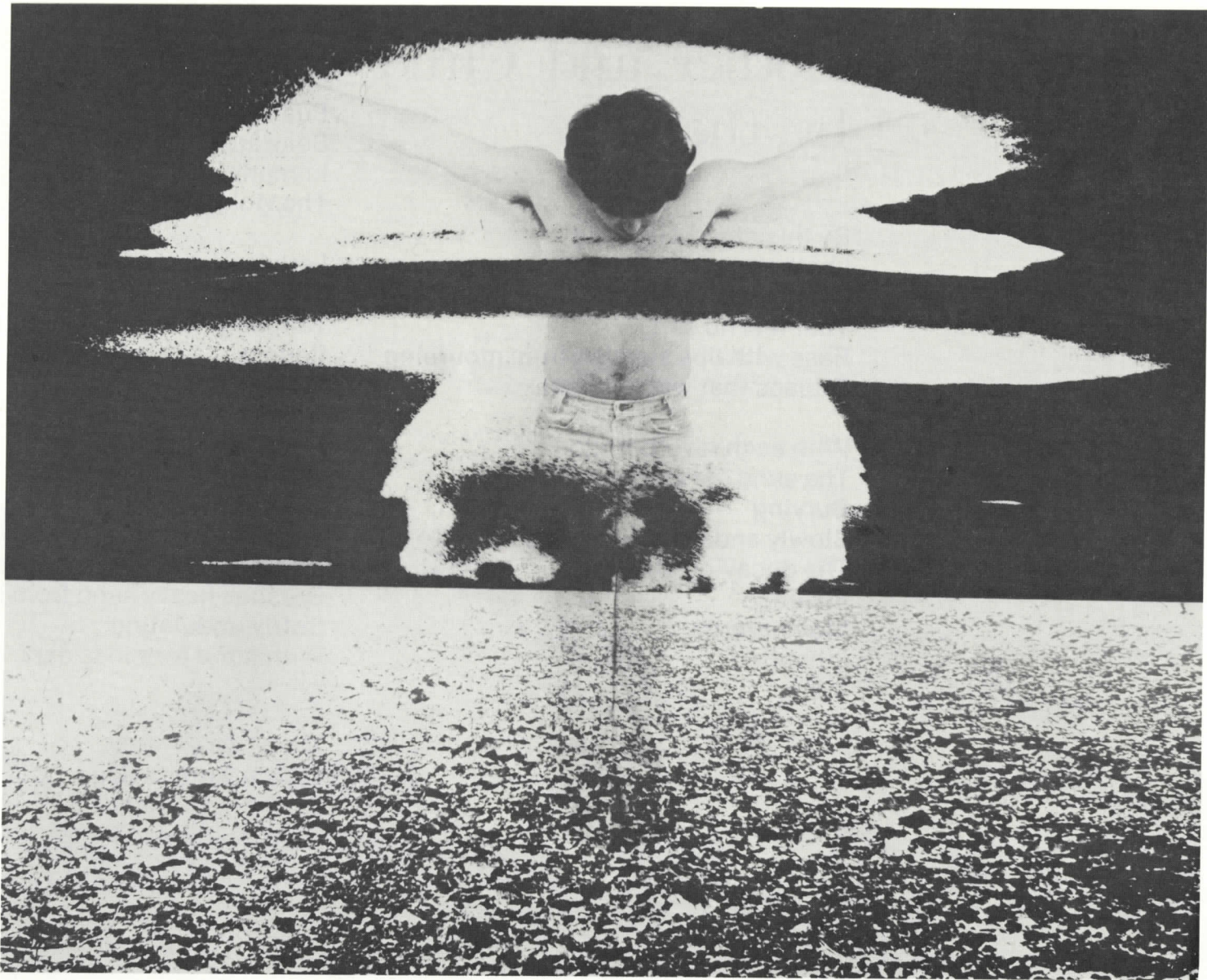
We do not speak at midday,  
yet by evening your arms  
are not comfortless.  
Night pulls close  
like a slow march  
but our sorry bodies  
do not beat.  
If this night you walk out  
into a January that holds us tight,  
Bob, don't come back.  
Don't come back  
if you've stopped loving me.

*Here is a shimmery array of high-  
quality, hand-cut pieces.  
Fiery. Iridescent—the kind of  
astounding beauty  
that comes along only once in a  
lifetime.*

Karen Holman



Steve Newman



Steve Newman

# Mother and Child by the Sea

By this eternal rocking  
I bathe you,  
Wash tears and blood from wounds  
That feel no salt,  
Ease with lips swollen from mourning  
Bruises that will not heal.

With each reverberation  
The sand caresses  
Burying  
Slowly and without malice  
The decaying shell  
Essence  
Momentarily  
Inhabited.

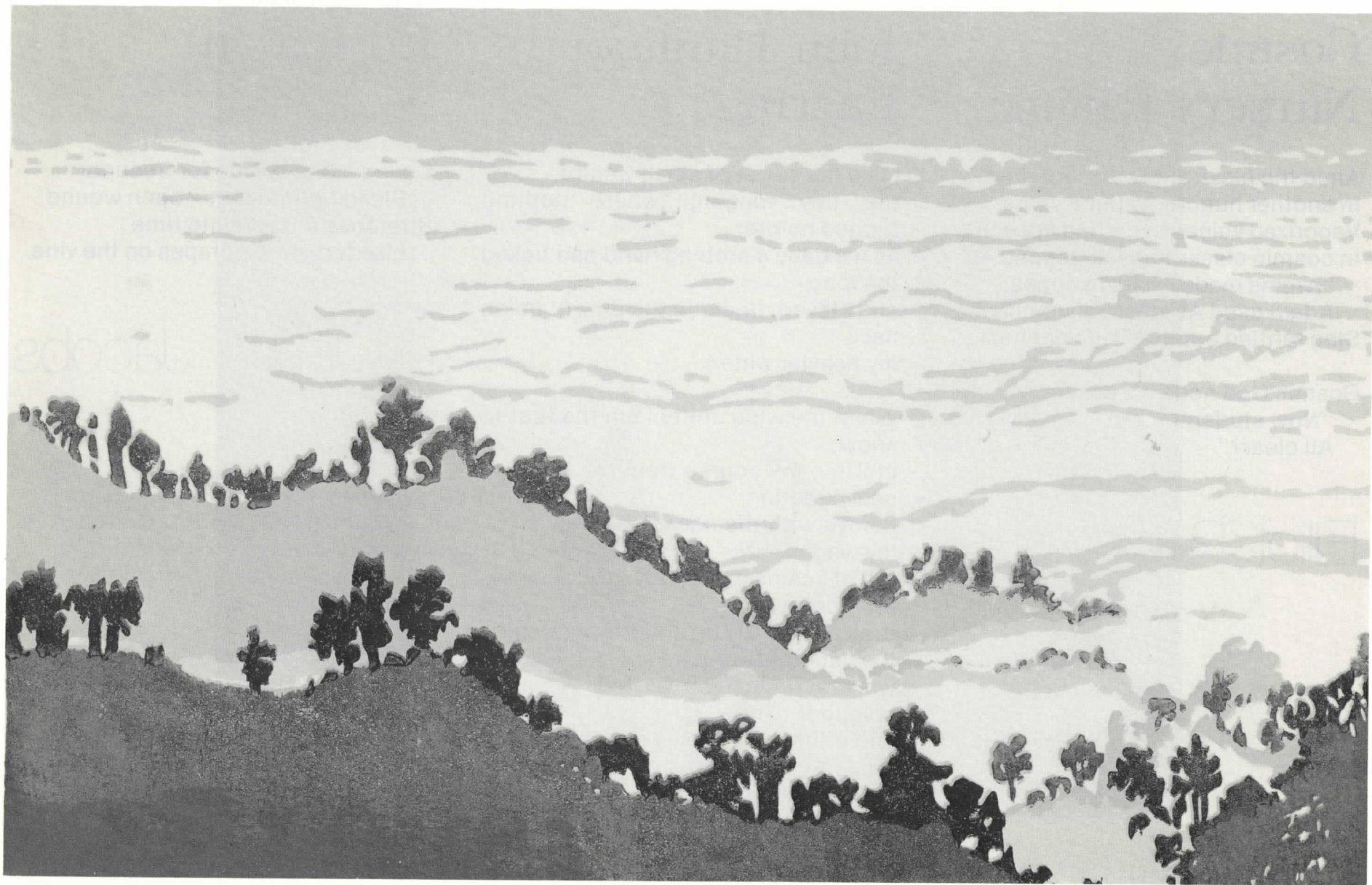
Only the water  
Moves you,  
Pulling the numb limb  
Seaward,  
Immense womb urging  
The violated form.

I grasp your cool arm  
From the sea,  
Tangling among your unresisting  
fingers  
My own,  
Hold you to my breast  
Remembering nurture.

But the sea  
Tugs blond tresses waterward,  
Makes whole the broken forehead,  
Brushes heavy sand from limbs  
Softly undulating  
Within the formless dark.

A woman  
On the water's edge  
Rocks in the sand  
With empty hands.

D. M. Adkerson



Ling Tan  
35

## Cosmic Nursery Rhyme

Amid the bleak and black out there  
In another hundred million years  
Vaporized voices in unified speech  
In cosmic classrooms do repeat:  
    "Atoms made Adam to appear,  
    Adam used Atoms to disappear."  
Sing rarified pupils of nuclear heat.

Cosmic God nods his assent,  
    "Now students:  
    All clear?"

Elliot P. Dawson

## John Hammond's Earring

I like the sense of small weight,  
the tiny tugging (where nothing  
tugged before)  
as if a baby's probing hand had ticked  
the lobe  
and stayed, finger in the dike (it holds  
back  
my heavier water).

When the wind shifts I am the first to  
know;  
plotting my course from the tinkle of  
new direction  
I move with the necessity of gypsies,  
my wagon  
full of scams and gaudy stuff, looking  
for more  
trinkets to sell and children to steal—  
the daughters of bankers—  
who will marvel at my pendant  
splendor  
and offer up their own clean ears.

Crosby Hunt

## Education

College is the place for freedom  
    Bleeding freedom—open wound  
Stretches out and into time  
    Like fermented grapes on the vine.

Jenny Jacobs

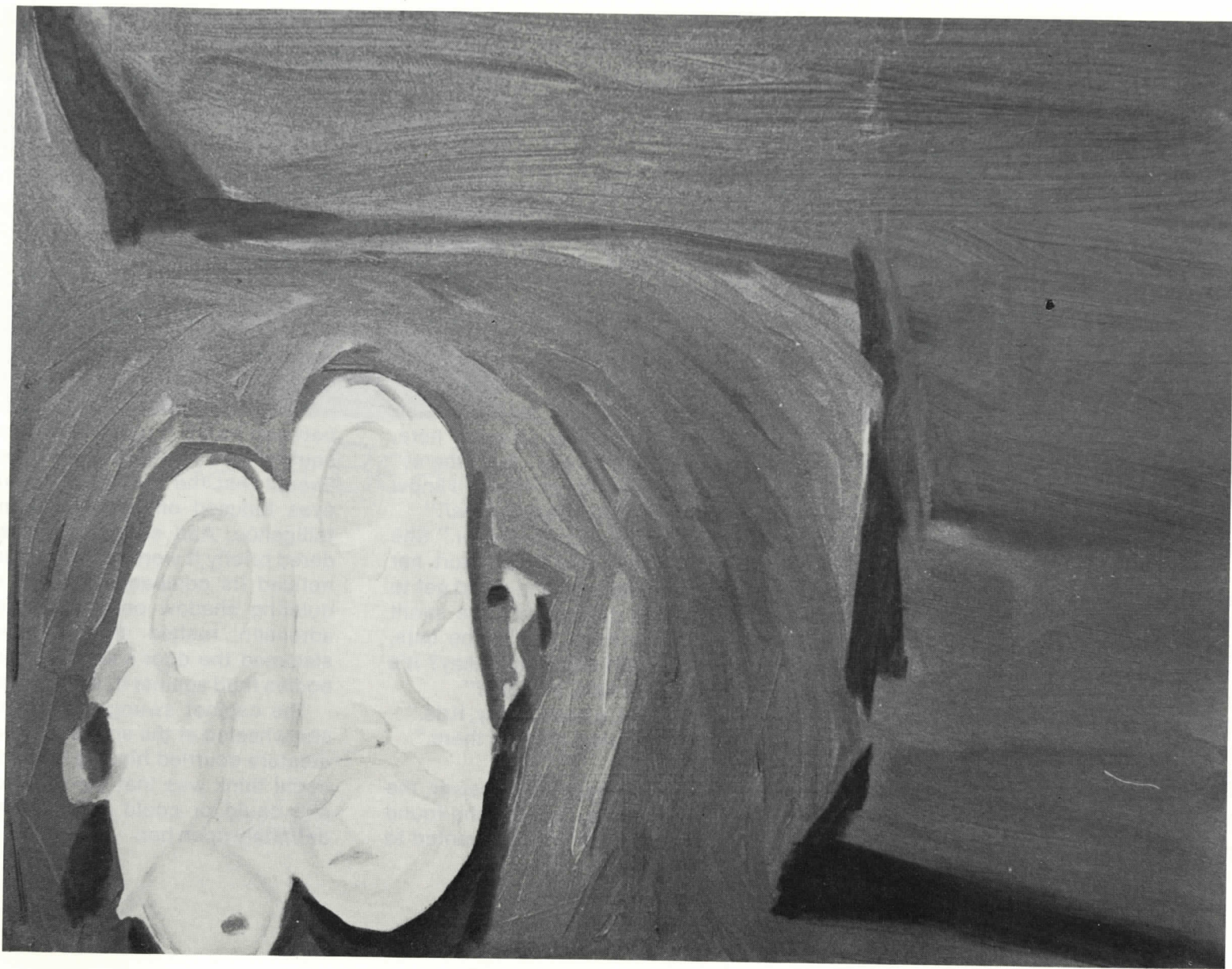


Debbie Vaughn-Gillis



Jan Hatleberg





Bourne Killebrew

## The Dinner Bell

(continued from page 4)

"Lord, last time I ate in Nashville, I swore it was the last time. My fancy niece took me and the missus out to eat for our anniversary. Some place called the Hearth. Knew when I sat down to the table I was in trouble. Hadn't seen so much silver by my plate. Right then I knew it was going to be a lousy meal. Anything over a knife, fork and a spoon is always a lousy meal. First, they brought me some soup that didn't have nothing in it. Then they brought out a snail and put it on my plate. Thought it must be a souvenir. Surely to God, they didn't expect me to eat it. City folks don't know how to eat. You better eat here, or you're going to miss a good meal."

"Thanks again, but I've got to go. You take care of that picture you've got hanging in your bathroom. See you around."

The old farmer walked back up on his porch and into the kitchen.

"Daddy, that you? It's time for lunch. Who was that young man?"

"Said his name was somethin'—I can't remember."

"What'd he want?"

"His mama's dinner bell."

## Rats on the Brain

(continued from page 24)

Her sister interrupted, a tension in her voice Kris had never heard before. "Listen," Kelly said, "Something's wrong over here with...with me, I guess. I'm, uh, imagining things or something. Oh, Kris, I'm frightened out of my wits." She began to sob softly, "I'm here by myself. Can you please come over?"

"What is it, sis? What's happening?"

"I don't know. It's probably just the book. It's the—the bats, Kris, the bats from the book you lent me. I swear, they're here, they're watching me. I can feel them!" Hysteria was creeping into her voice. "I know it sounds crazy, *but they've become real!*"

"Okay, calm down. I'm coming over." She tried to think of some way to comfort her sister, to keep her calm until she could get to her. She sighed and glanced out the sunlit window. "Kelly, look here, if it is the bats, they won't be out until nighttime, okay? It's broad daylight. You're safe, all right?"

"Oh, thank God. But, please, hurry, Kris."

"See you in ten minutes. Hang in there."

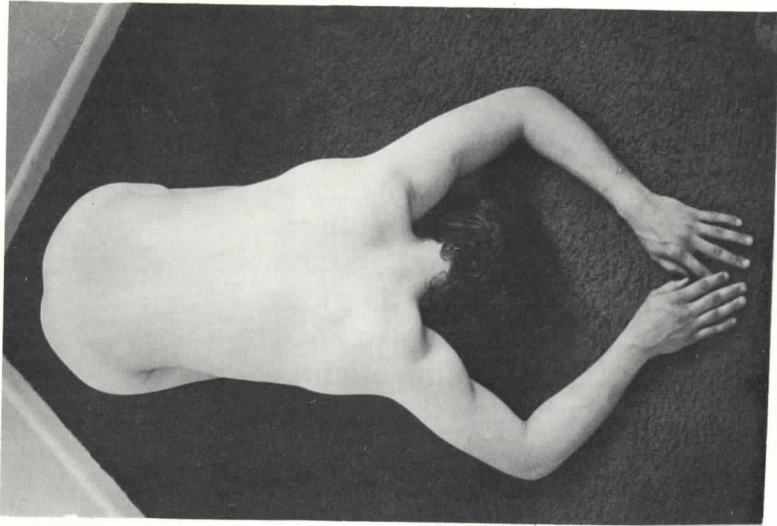
"Okay. 'Bye."

As soon as Kris replaced the receiver, the fear settled on her again. Quietly, she found her shoes and laced them on. She wanted to

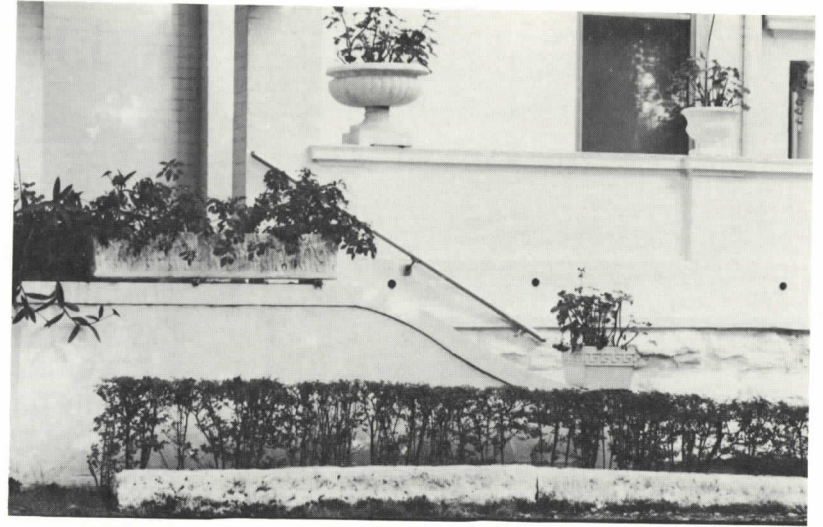
bolt from the house, but force of habit made her act normally, to switch off lights, unplug the coffee pot, scribble a note to her husband saying where she'd gone. She grabbed her purse and located her car keys within, cringing at the harsh sound their jangling produced. As she was closing her purse, a distinct scratching sound came from the cabinet beneath the sink. She froze, listening, but the sound did not repeat itself.

Got rats on the brain, silly goose, she told herself sternly and forced herself to walk across the kitchen and open the door which led to the garage. The first one she noticed was sitting atop the roof of her Pinto, up on its haunches, nibbling on something held between its front paws. Like some harmless squirrel one might chance upon in a park. Except that the rat was huge and its beady eyes focused on her with a malicious intelligence. And something else. She wondered briefly it were lust or hunger. Then she noticed its companions like a massive undulating shadow on the garage floor. The adrenalin rushed through her and she slammed the door shut. She could hear the bodies thud against it, trying to get in.

The cabinet swung open behind her and she wheeled at the sound. As the monstrous creature scurried hissing toward her, all she could think was that the time to discover if she could or could not scream was most definitely upon her.



Seana Beaty



Shirley Glascock

## A Doll's House

Oh, come now.  
You don't expect me  
to believe that, do you?  
That these years of joy  
I've given you—  
    at some sacrifice  
    on my part  
    I might add—  
can be chucked out  
like so much garbage?

It amuses me when  
you cloud up like Ibsen's Nora  
and fling thunderbolts of anger  
to purge yourself  
at my expense.

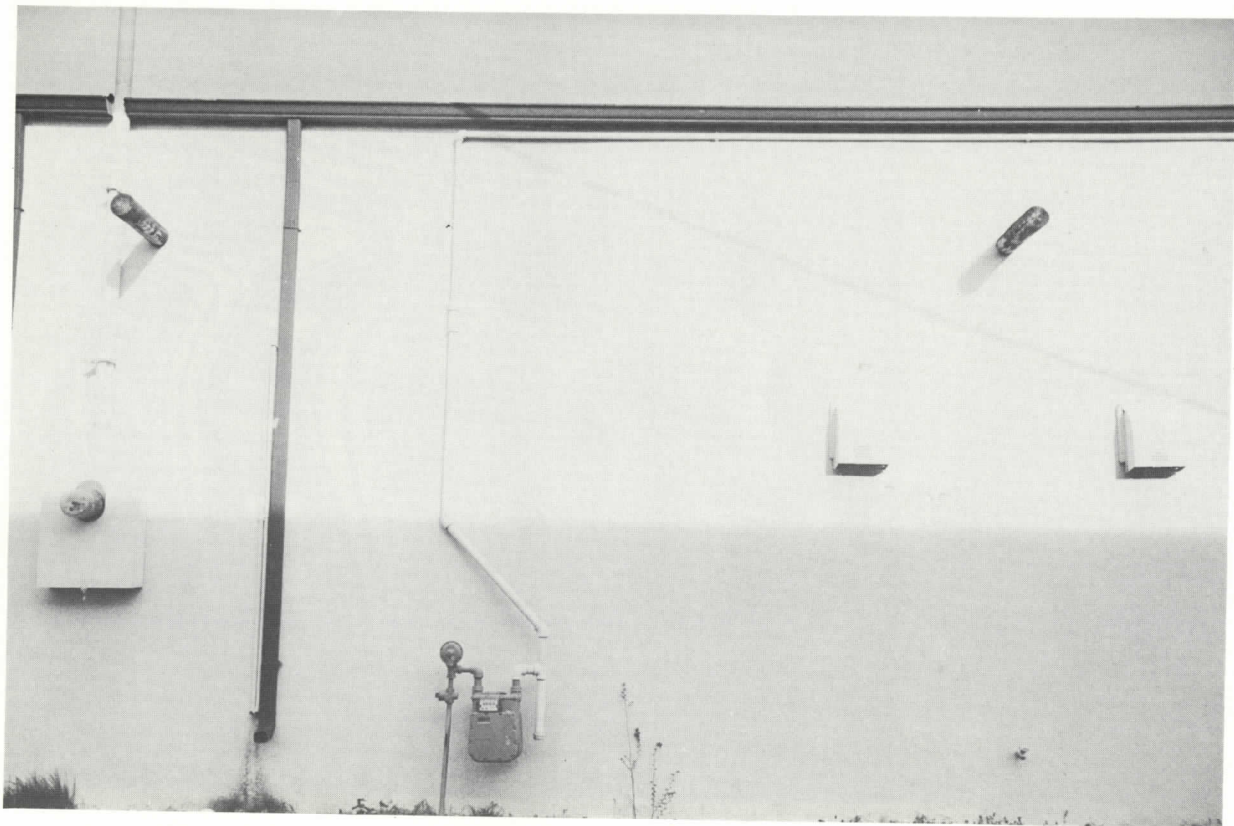
Well, my little wren,  
that's ok.  
I understand.

I'm miffed, of course,  
and a teeny bit hurt;  
but, I do understand.  
Come, give us a kiss  
and let's make up  
and resume our life  
of gladness together.

What? What did you say?

It's what you choose?  
Leaving? But, my dear...  
    But, let me...  
        But you can't...  
        But....

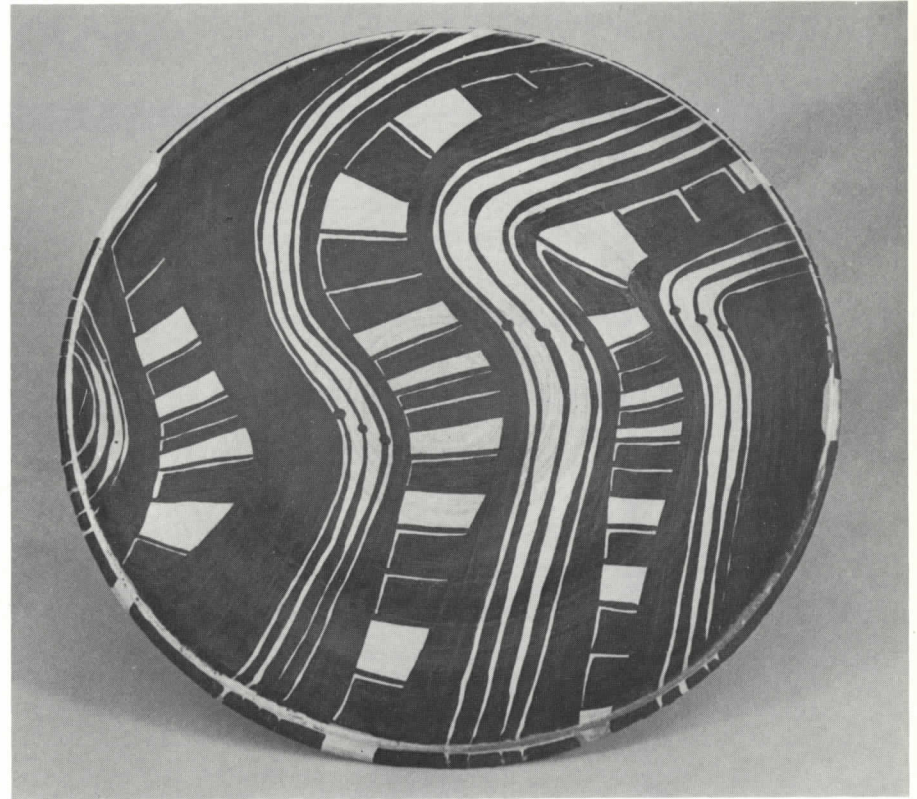
W. H. Holland



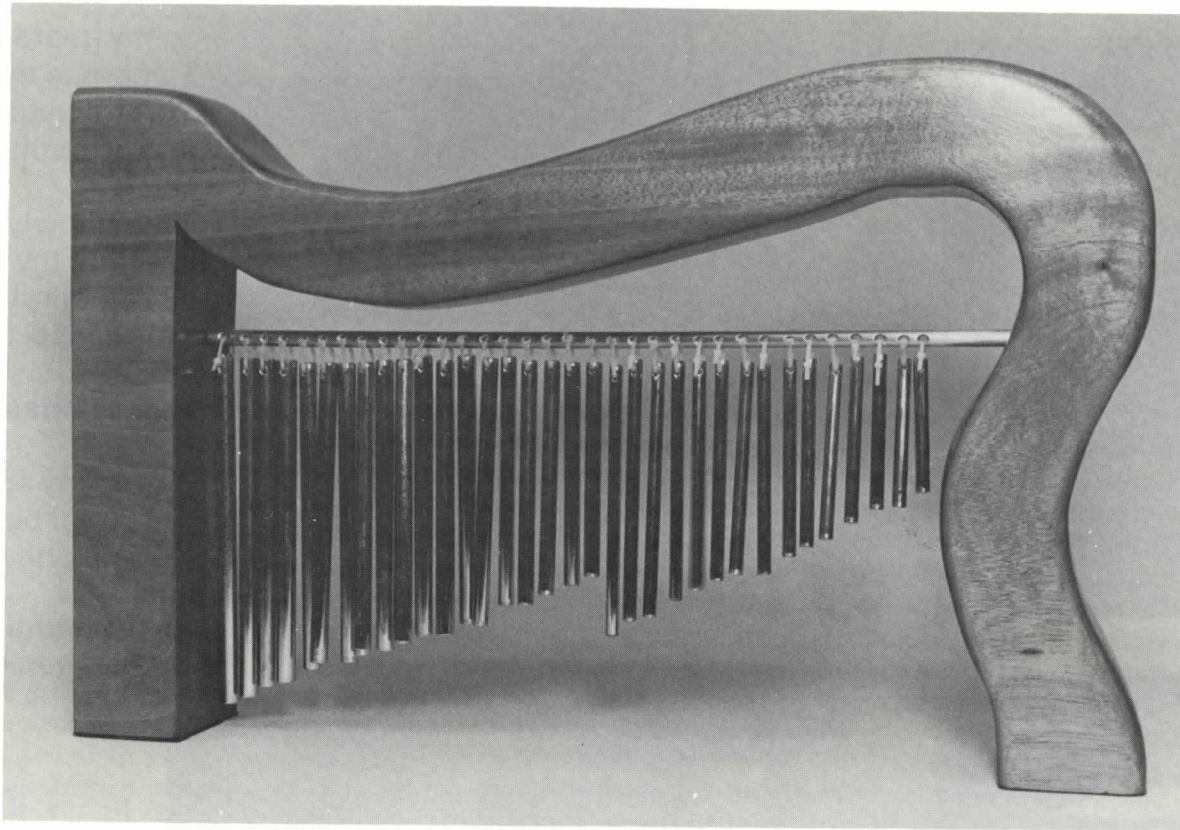
L. R. Miles



Patti Lane



Michelle Rothaker



Joe Landa



## Striving to Survive

The paper flutters across the street,  
Lonely and cold, striving to survive.

A gust of wind caresses it  
Like a vibrant emotion  
Lifting the paper  
With the buoyancy of hope.

As it spirals upwards  
It reveals all its secrets  
That are written within,  
Baring itself to the world.

The rapture of living  
Has inflamed the paper,  
Causing it to glow brightly  
With the energy of truth.

It calls to people  
Who carelessly pass it by  
And dwindle out of existence,  
As the words erode their facade.



Shirley Glascock

46

I drop my guards  
And embrace the paper  
Then, for a tragic moment  
I taste the reality of life.

The light slowly bubbles  
Giddily into my being  
But, still I thirst  
Yet, the vessel is drained.

A bitter aftertaste

Bites into my essence,  
As the paper becomes  
Heavy and one-dimensional.

I stand searching in the street,  
Lonely and cold, striving to survive.

Joe Estes





L. R. Miles

# Editor's Note

Creating *Collage* this semester has been an experience I won't soon forget and one I'll never regret. I have learned enough in these few short months to make me realize how little I know.

We have made a few changes this year in the design and organization of the magazine, and I'd like to thank the Design and Layout staff for its enthusiasm and Mr. Oliver Fancher for guidance. Also due a pat on the back is the student publications staff, the editors specifically, for their enduring patience with the new kid on the block. I'd also like to thank the Creator for allowing "Tank" to keep working right on through to production deadline.

But, when all is said and done, it is the students who lend us their talents who are the reason for the existence of *Collage*, and along with every student who peruses this issue, I thank you.

Kelly Hayes

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