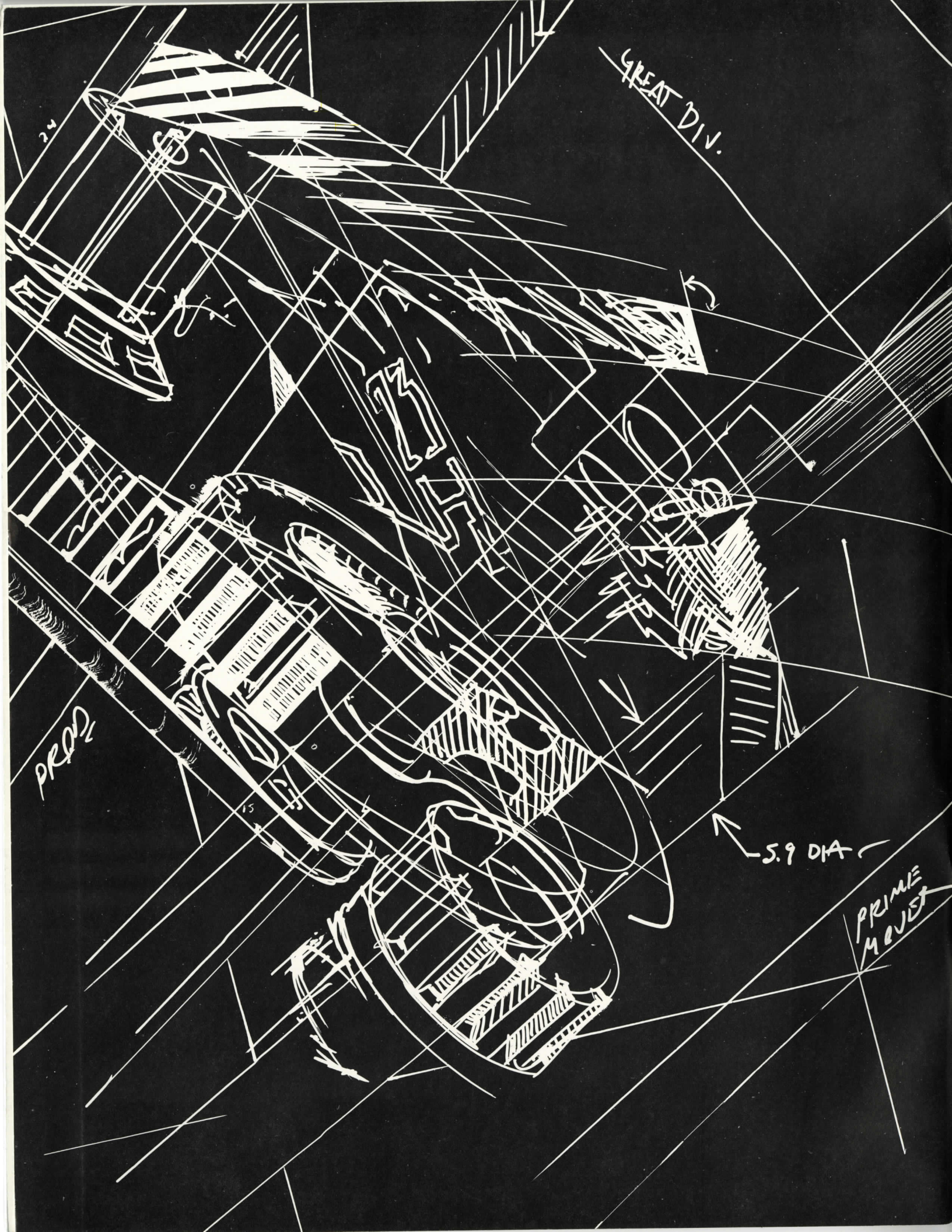


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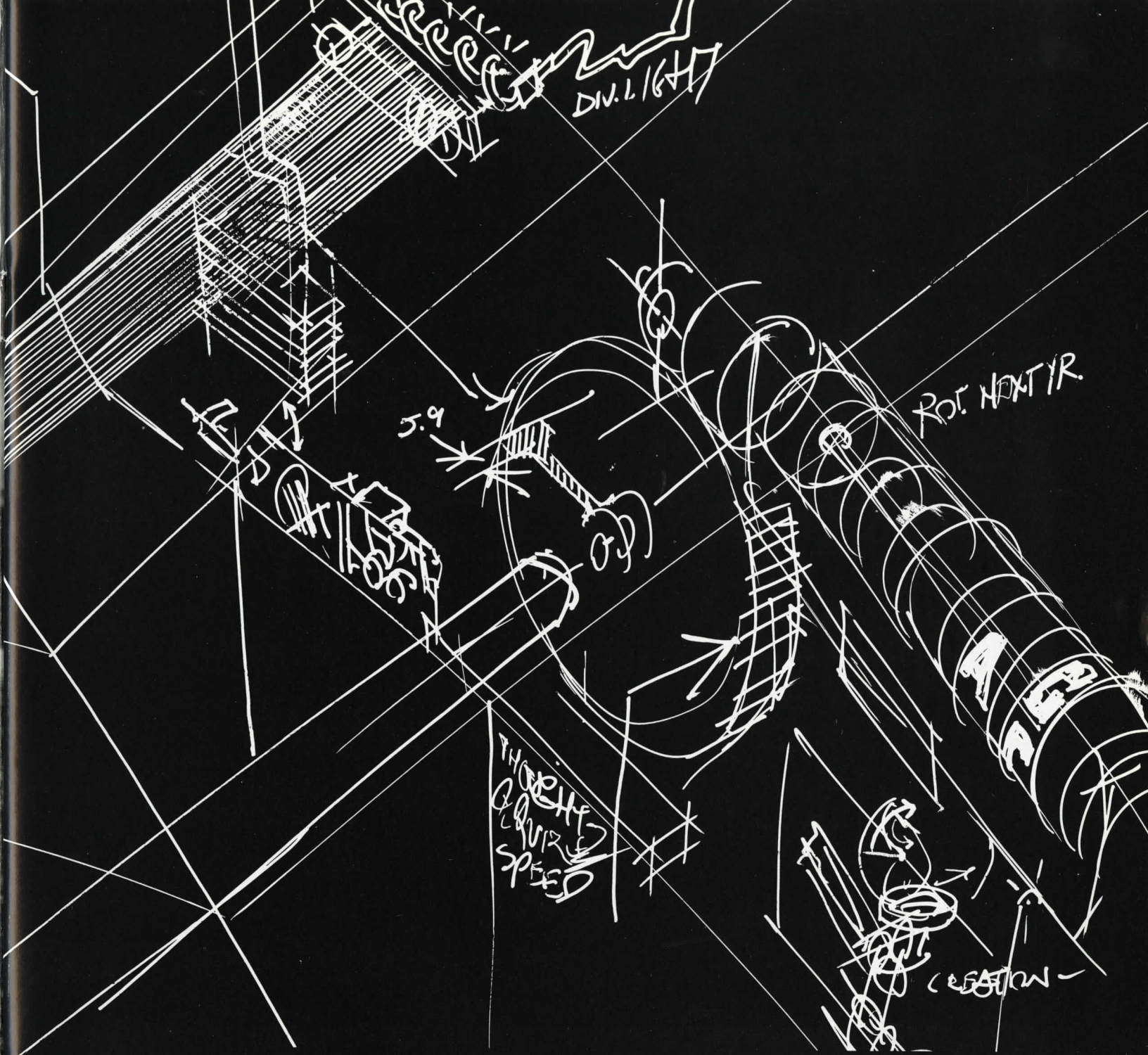


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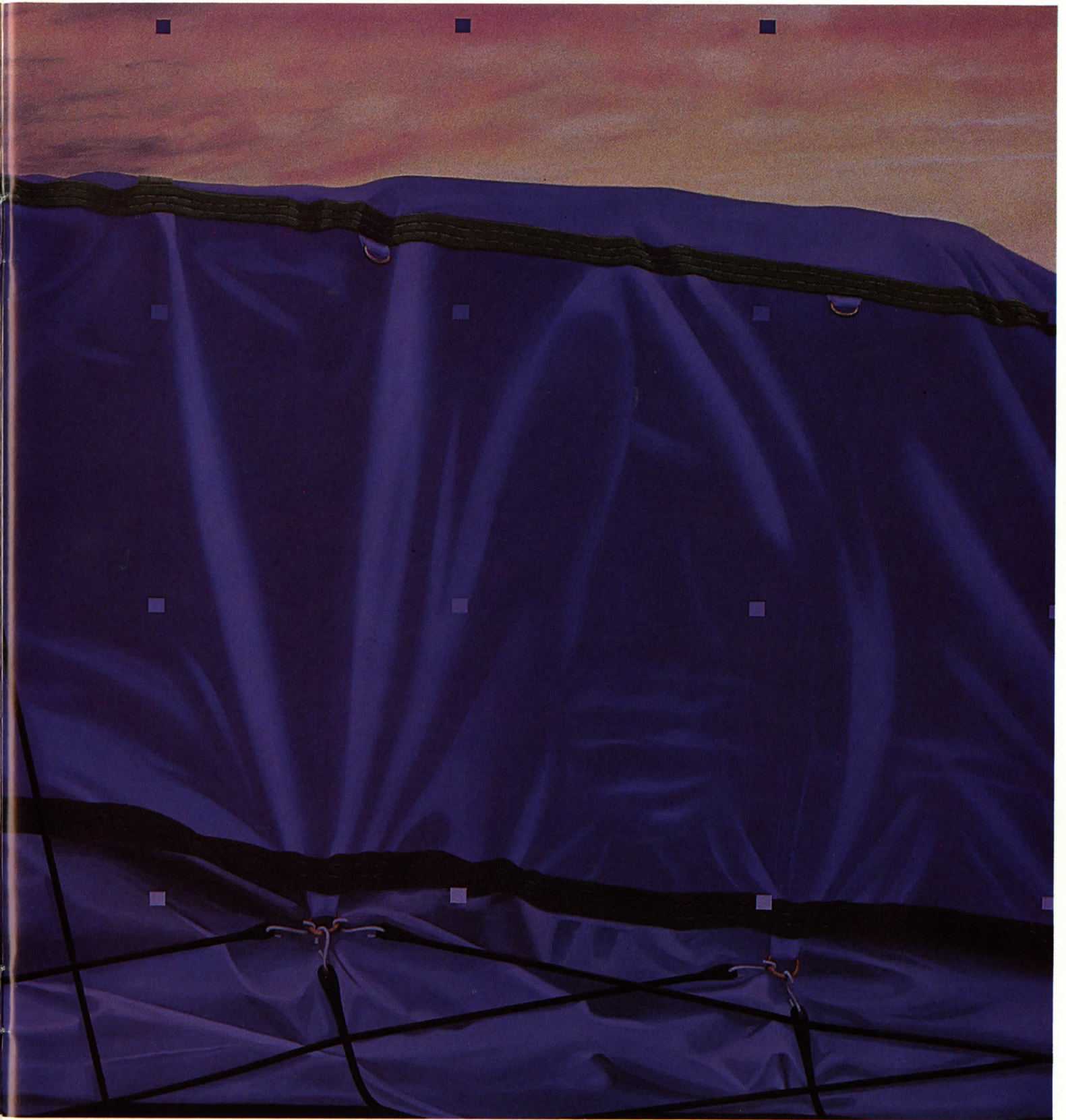
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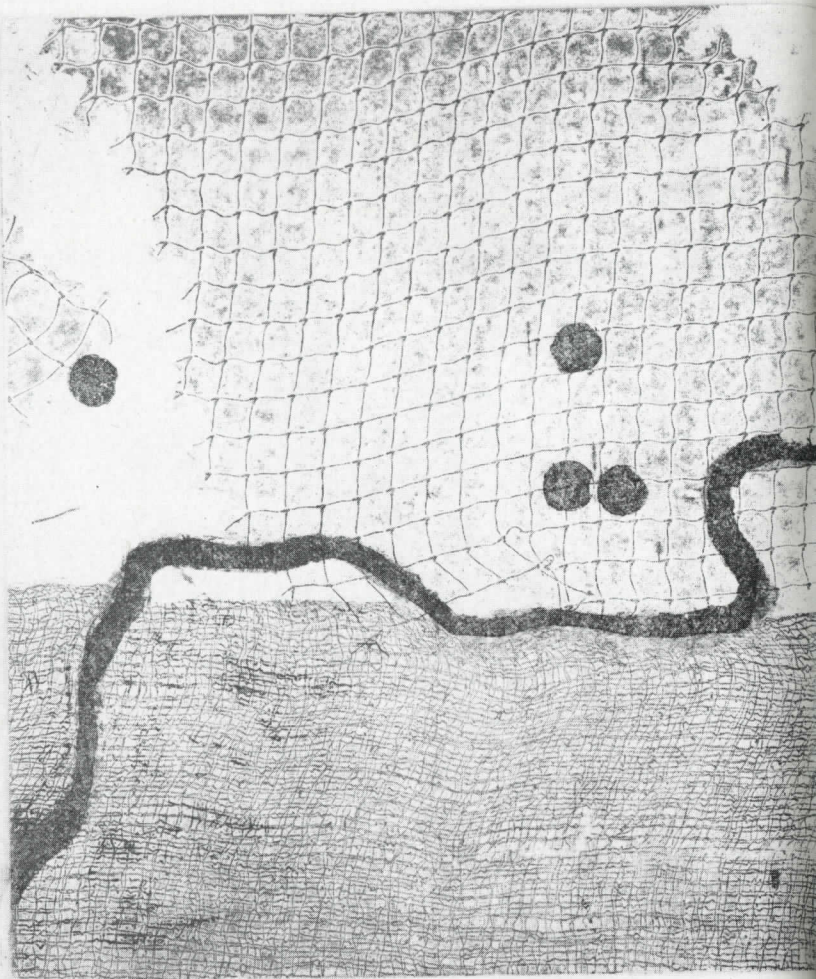
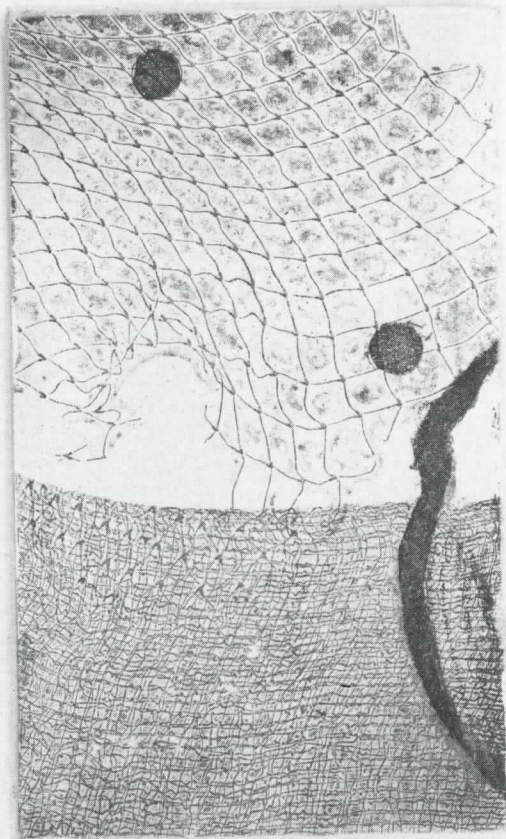
James TuckerEditor
Vince BuwaldaCover, Inside Cover, and Layout
Scott EmrickLayout
Bill SteberBack Cover
Jackie SolomonFaculty Advisor



James Tucker

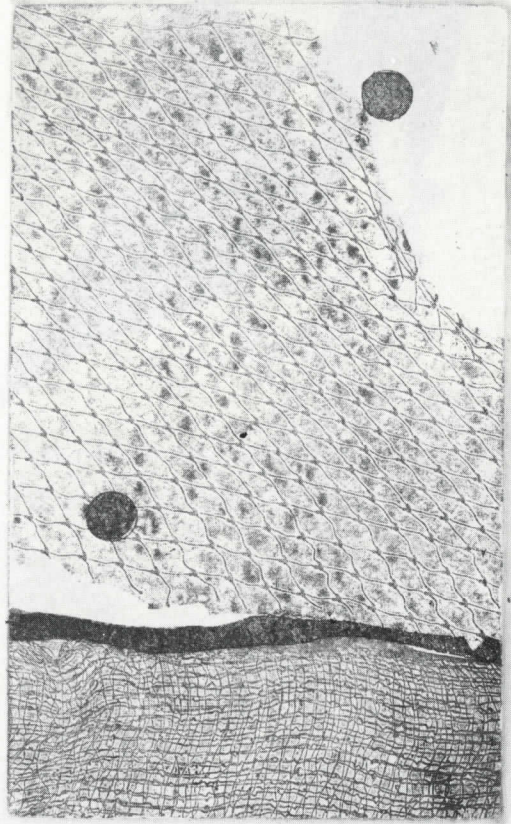


Ron Porter



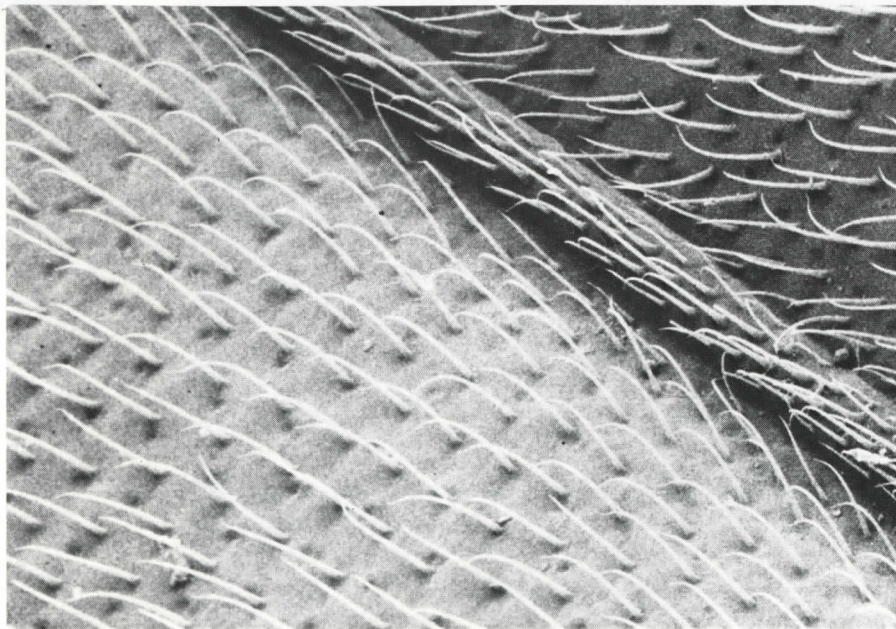
Setting down my nets





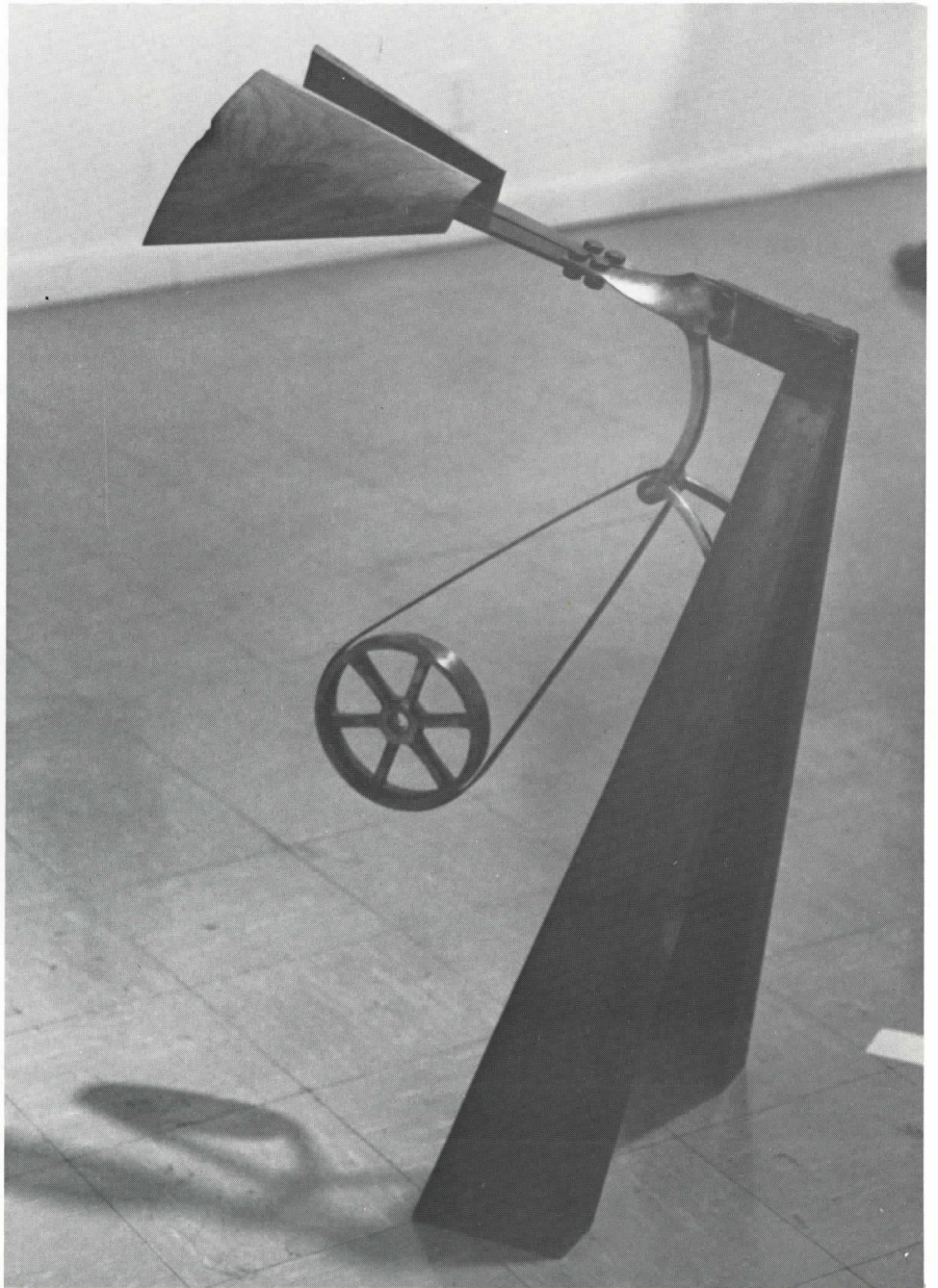
Julie Jack '86

Julie Jack



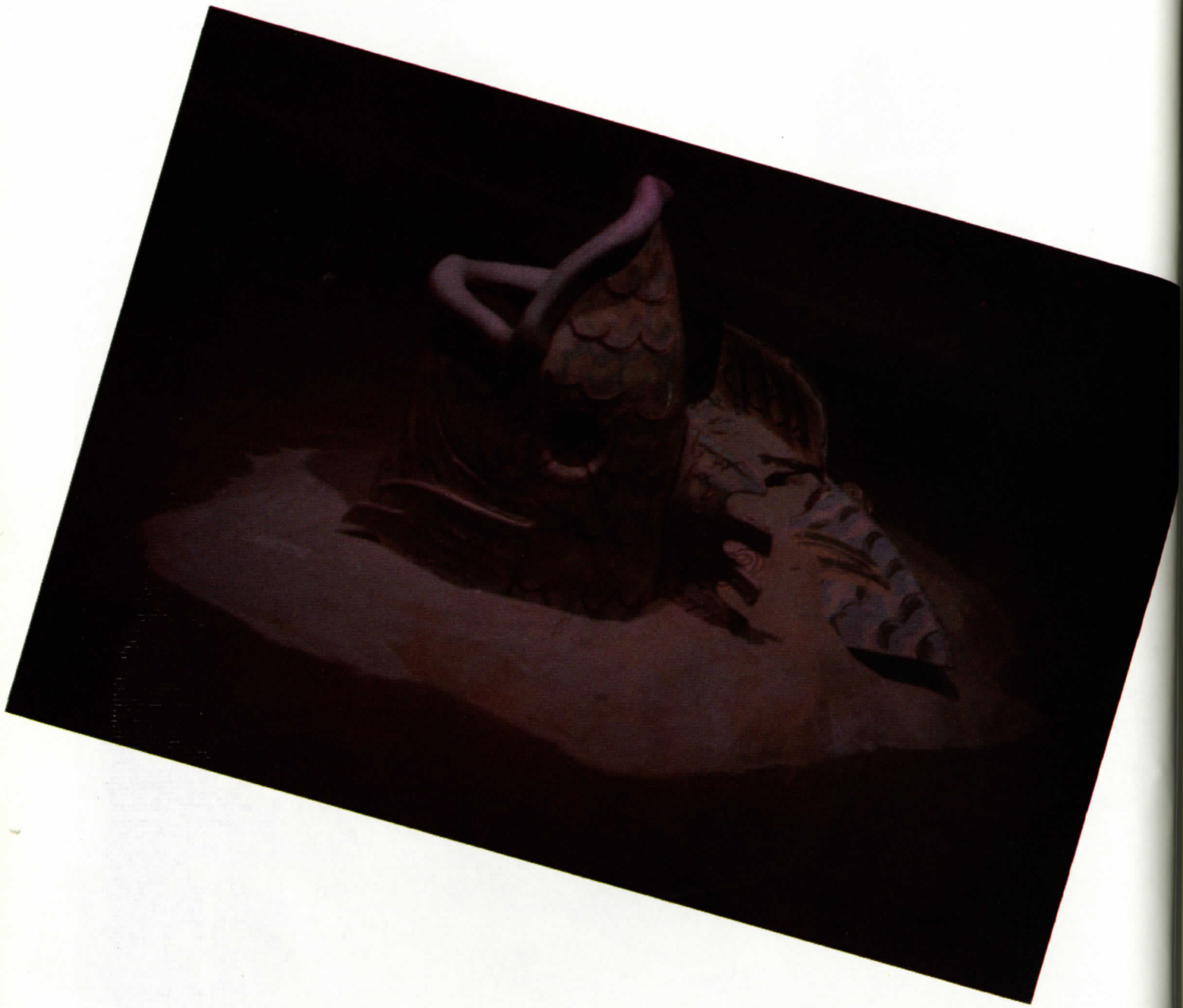
James Pitts





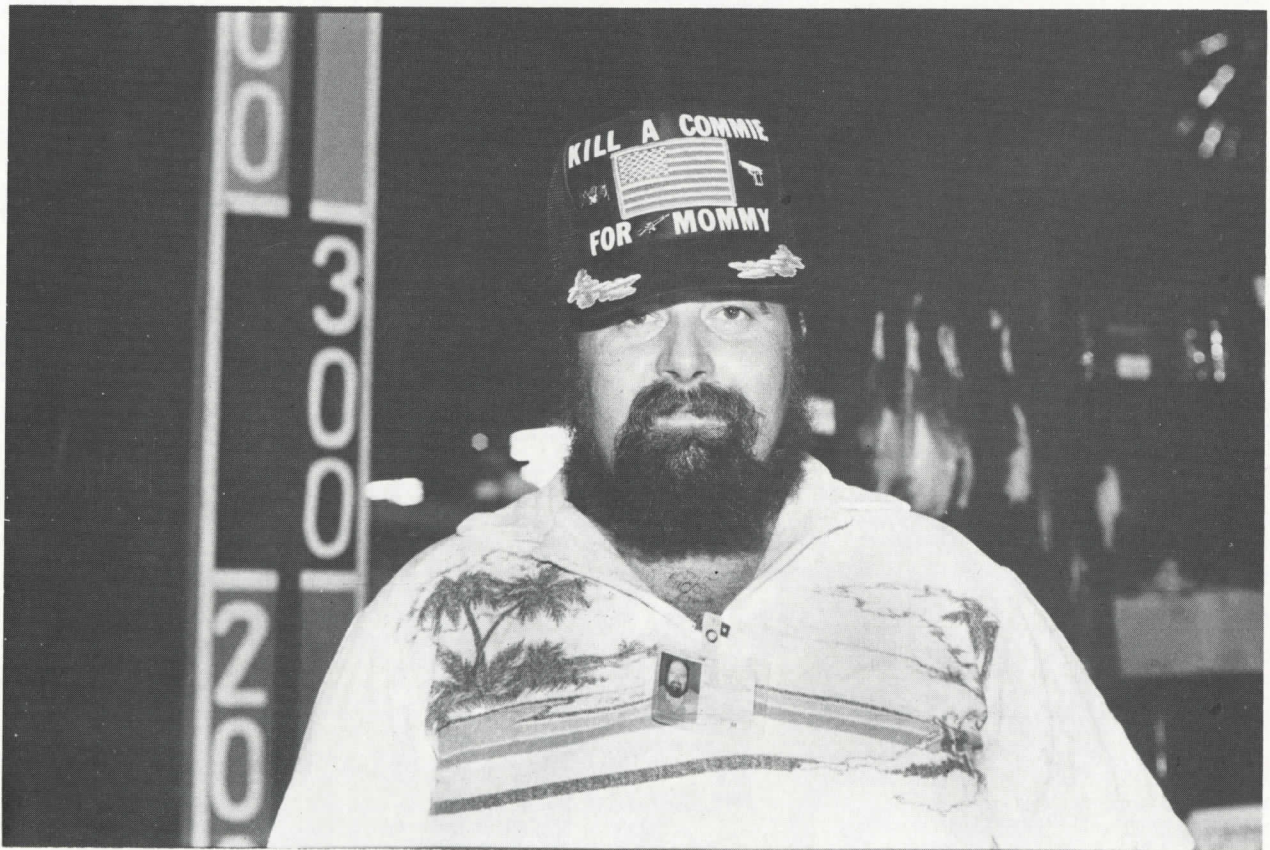






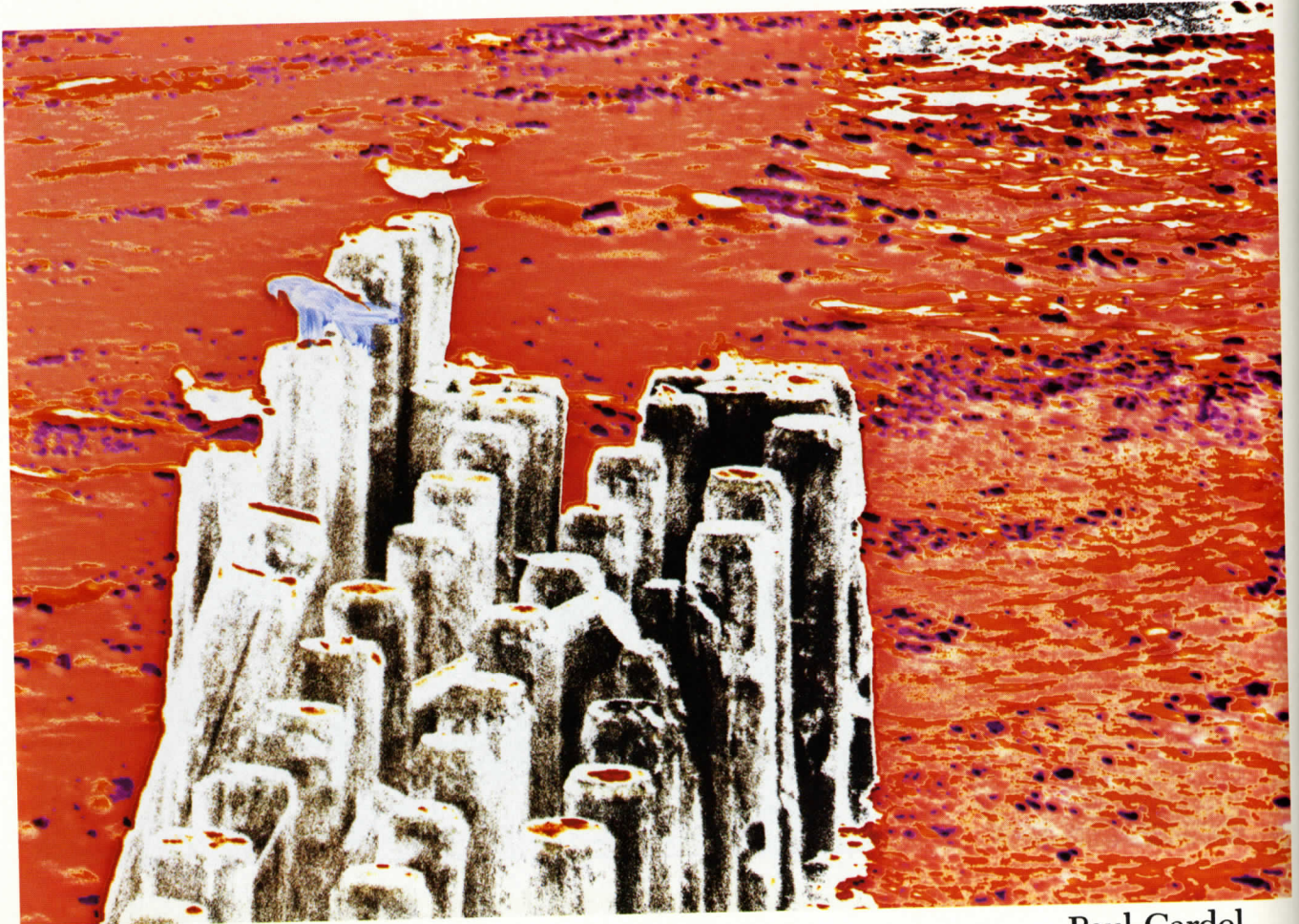








Paul Cardel

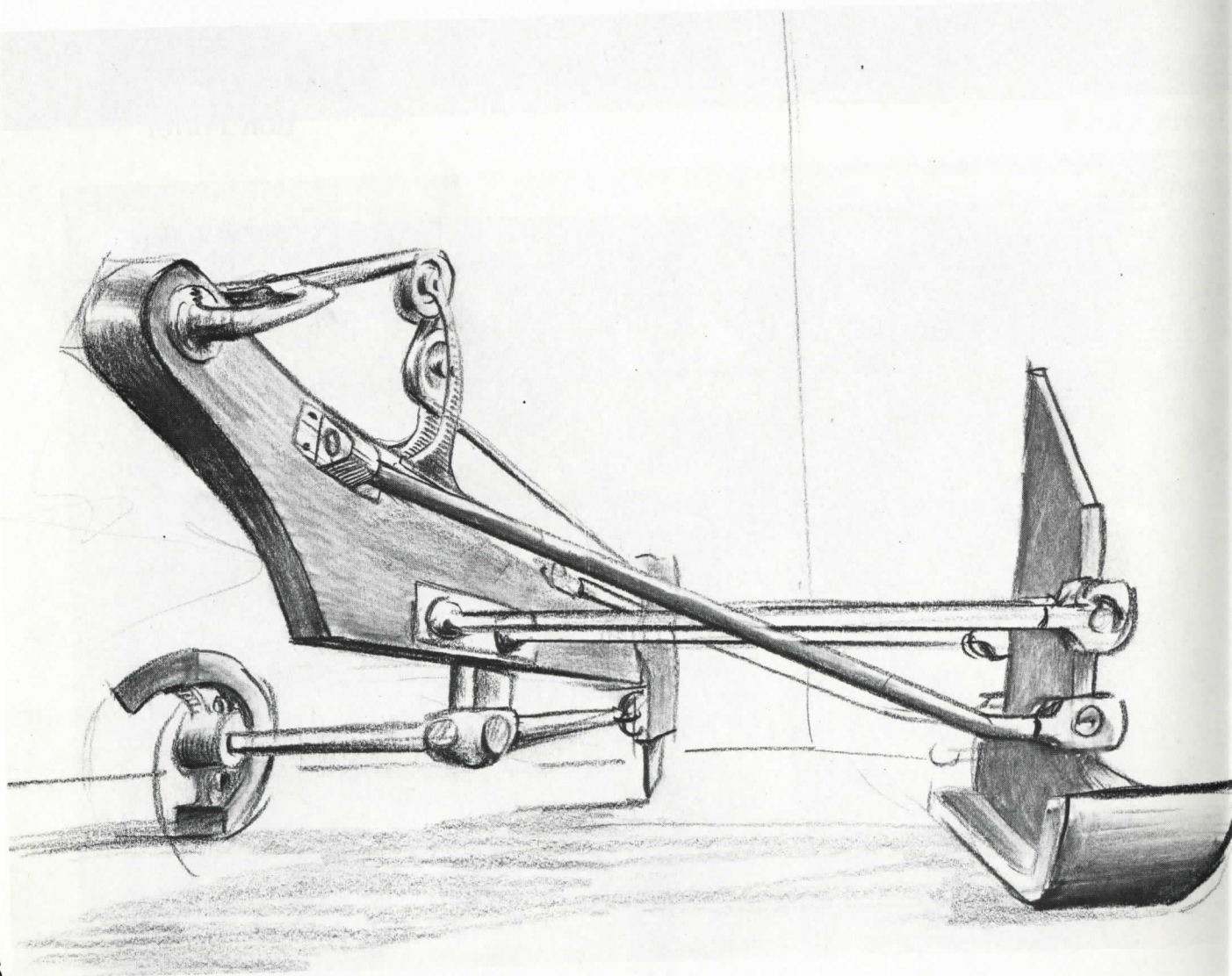
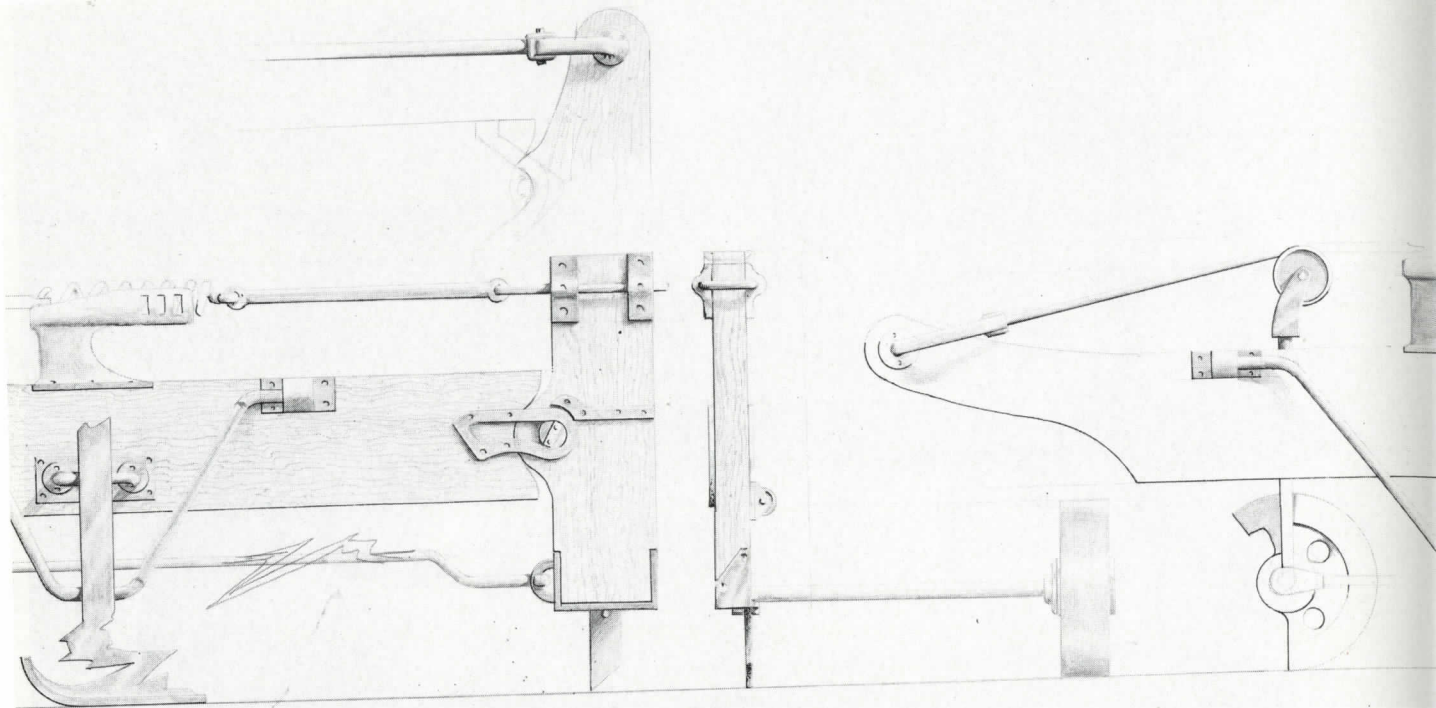


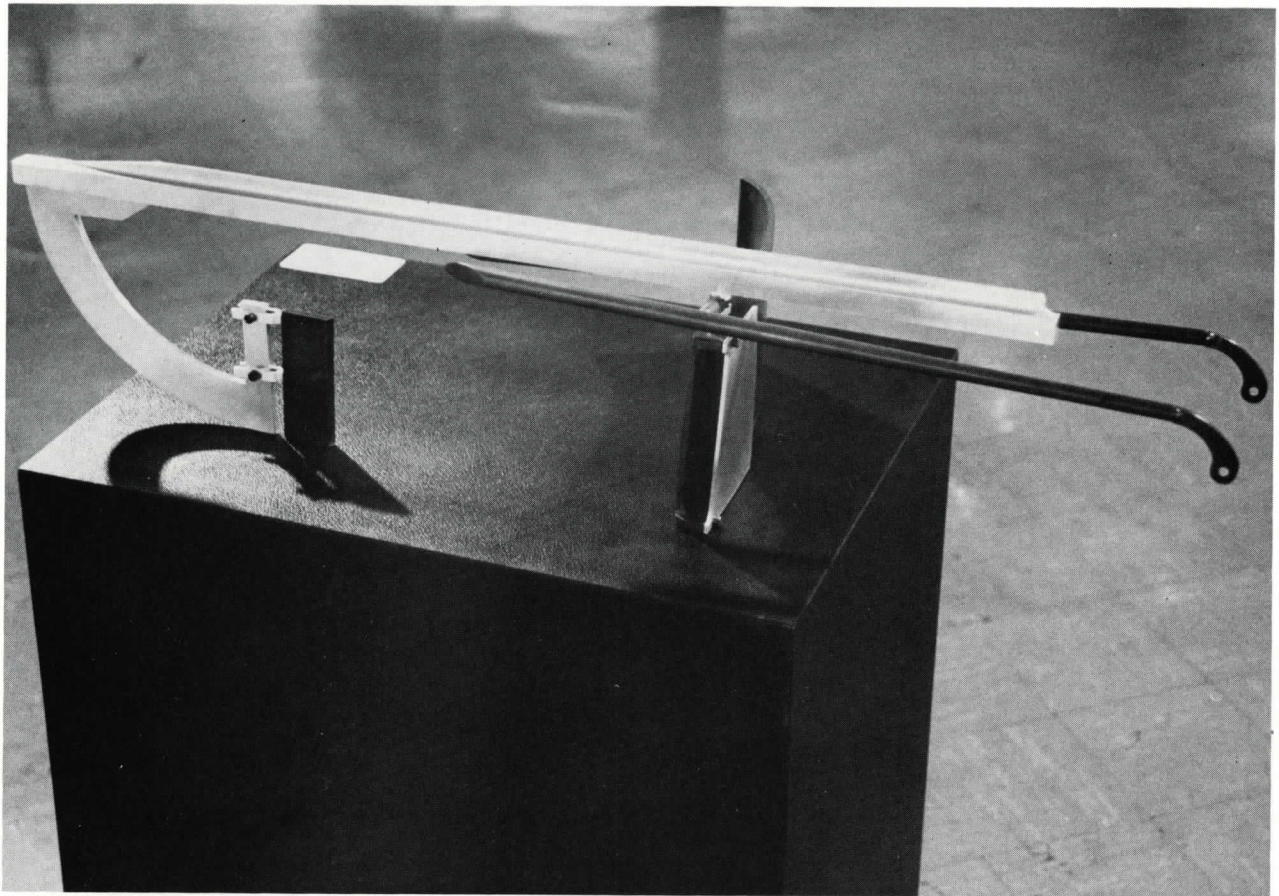


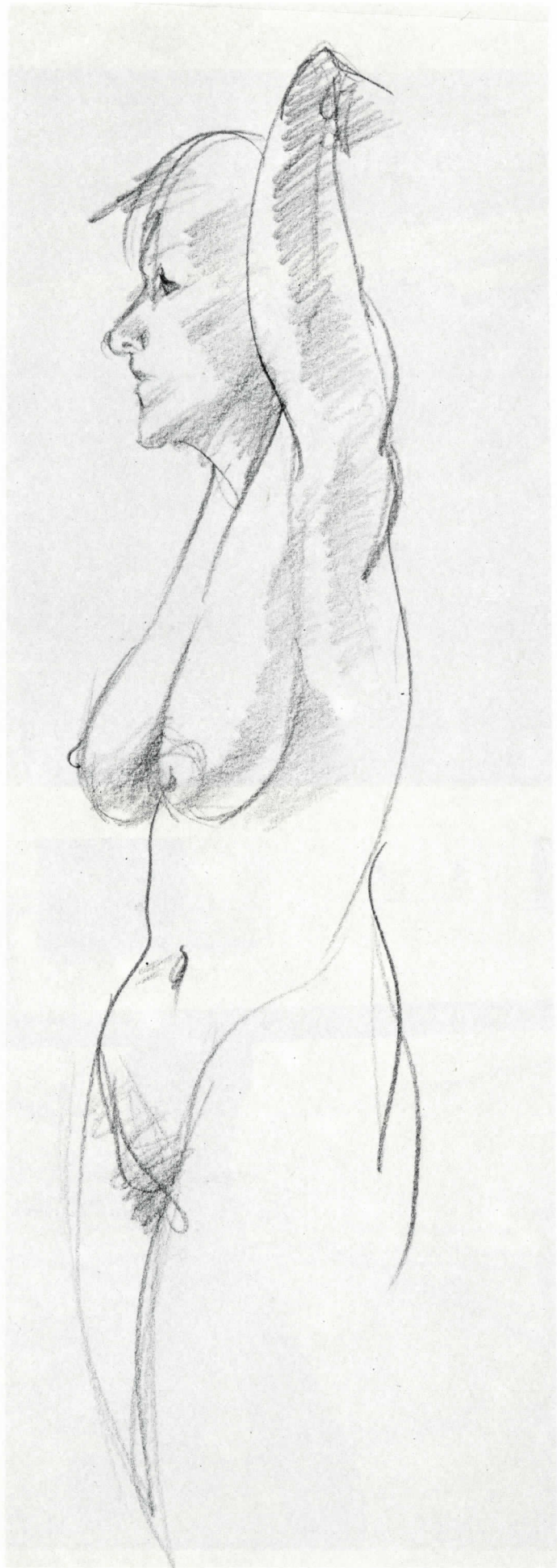
Ron Porter

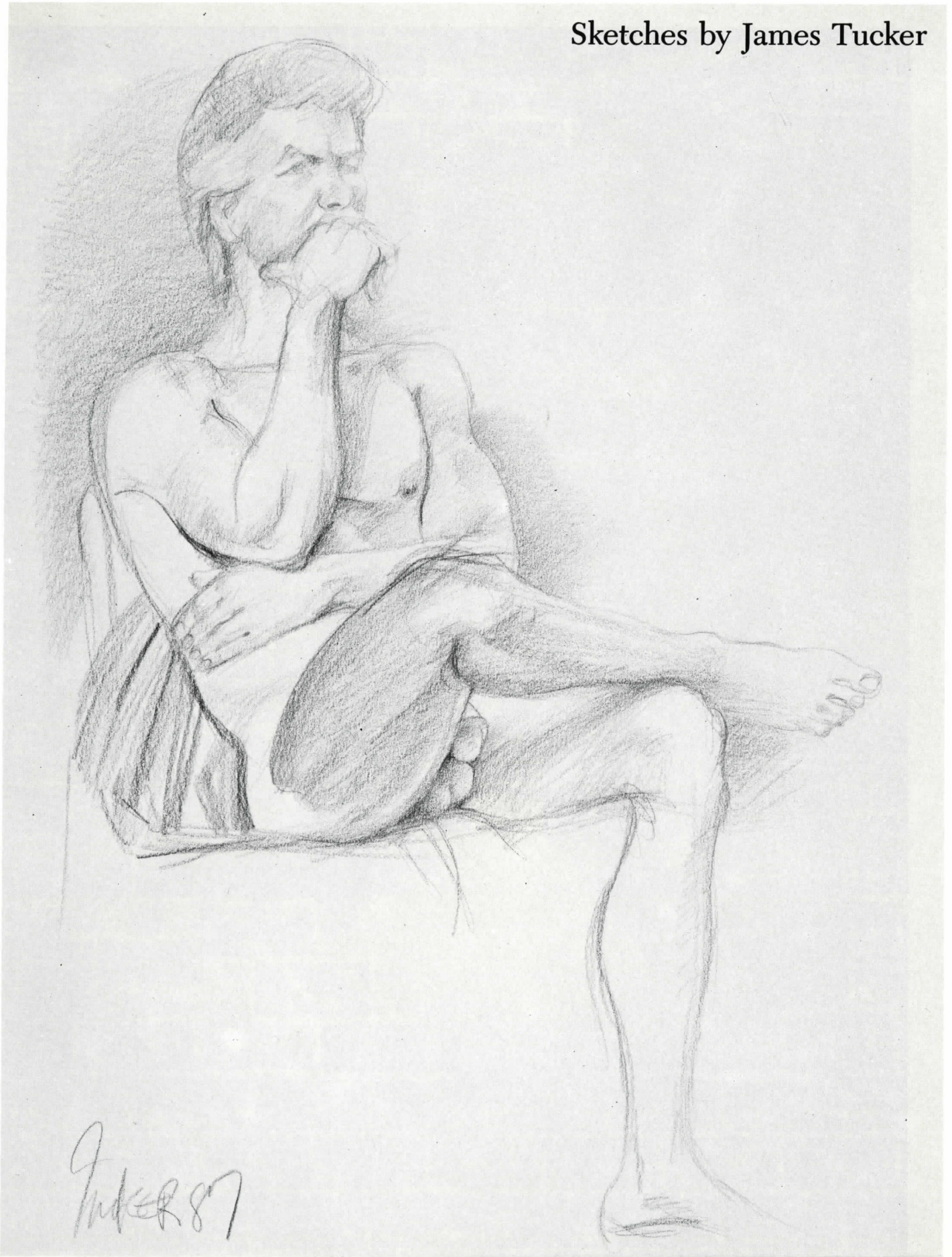


Ron Porter

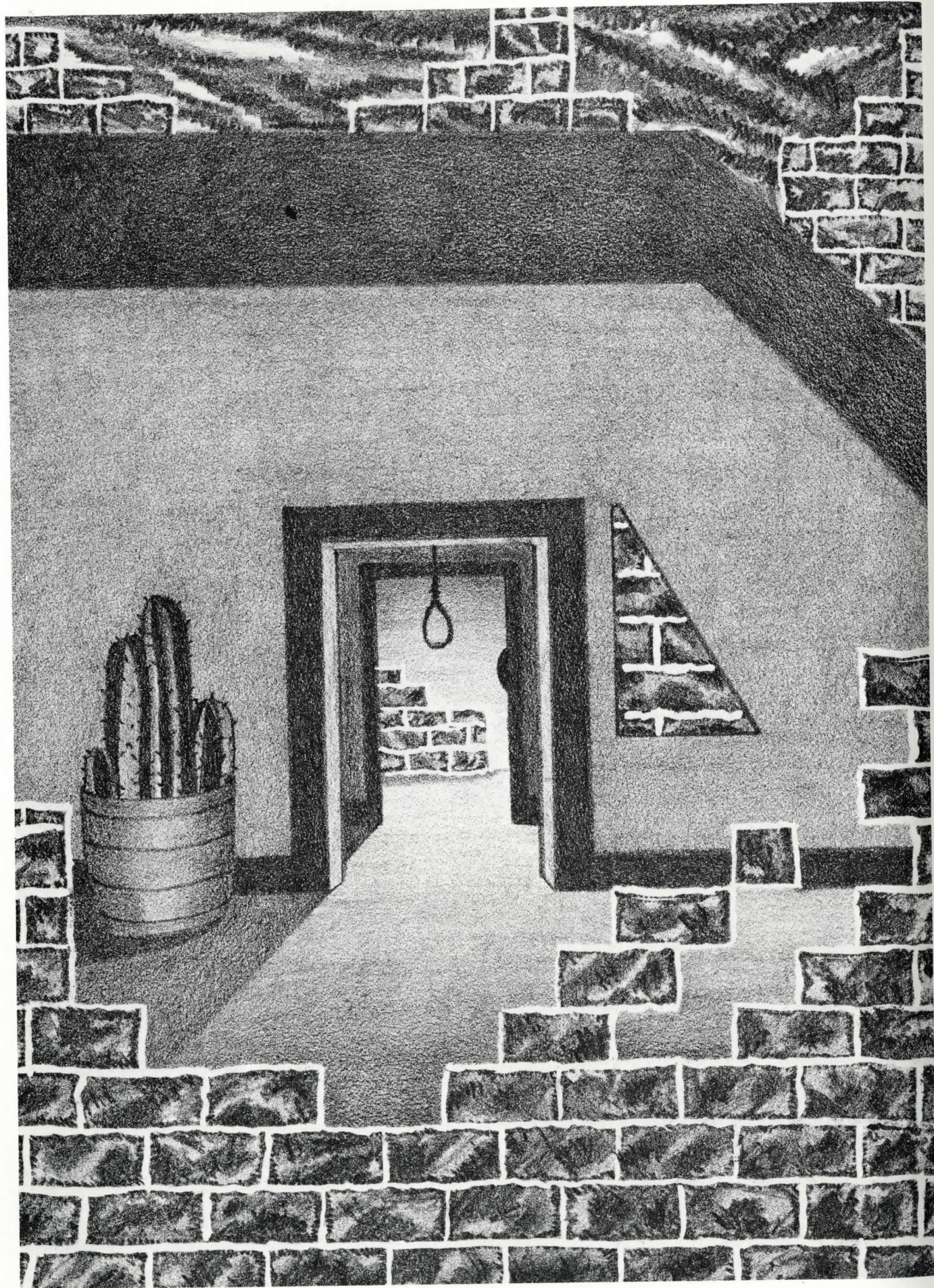


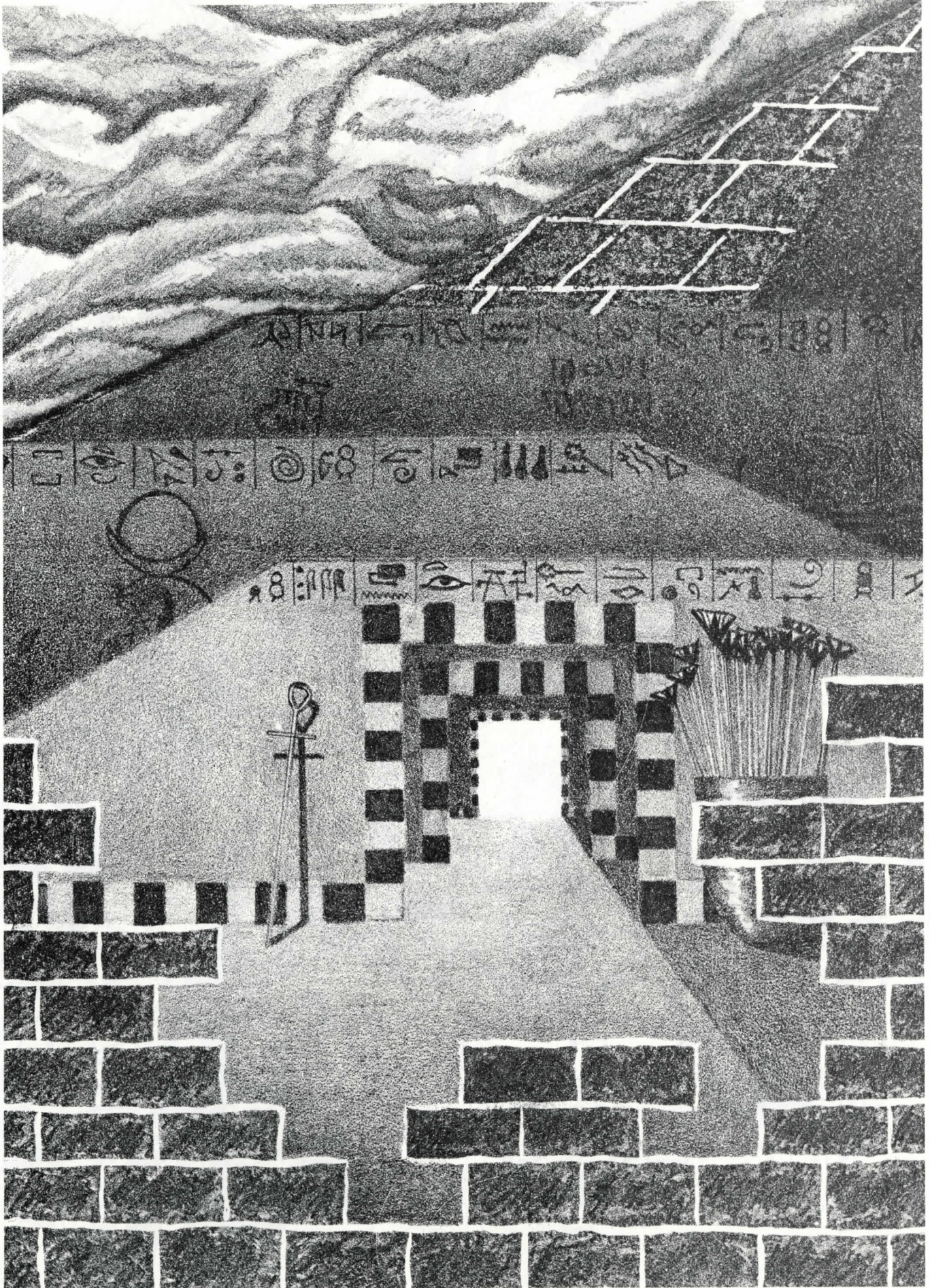






Tucker 87





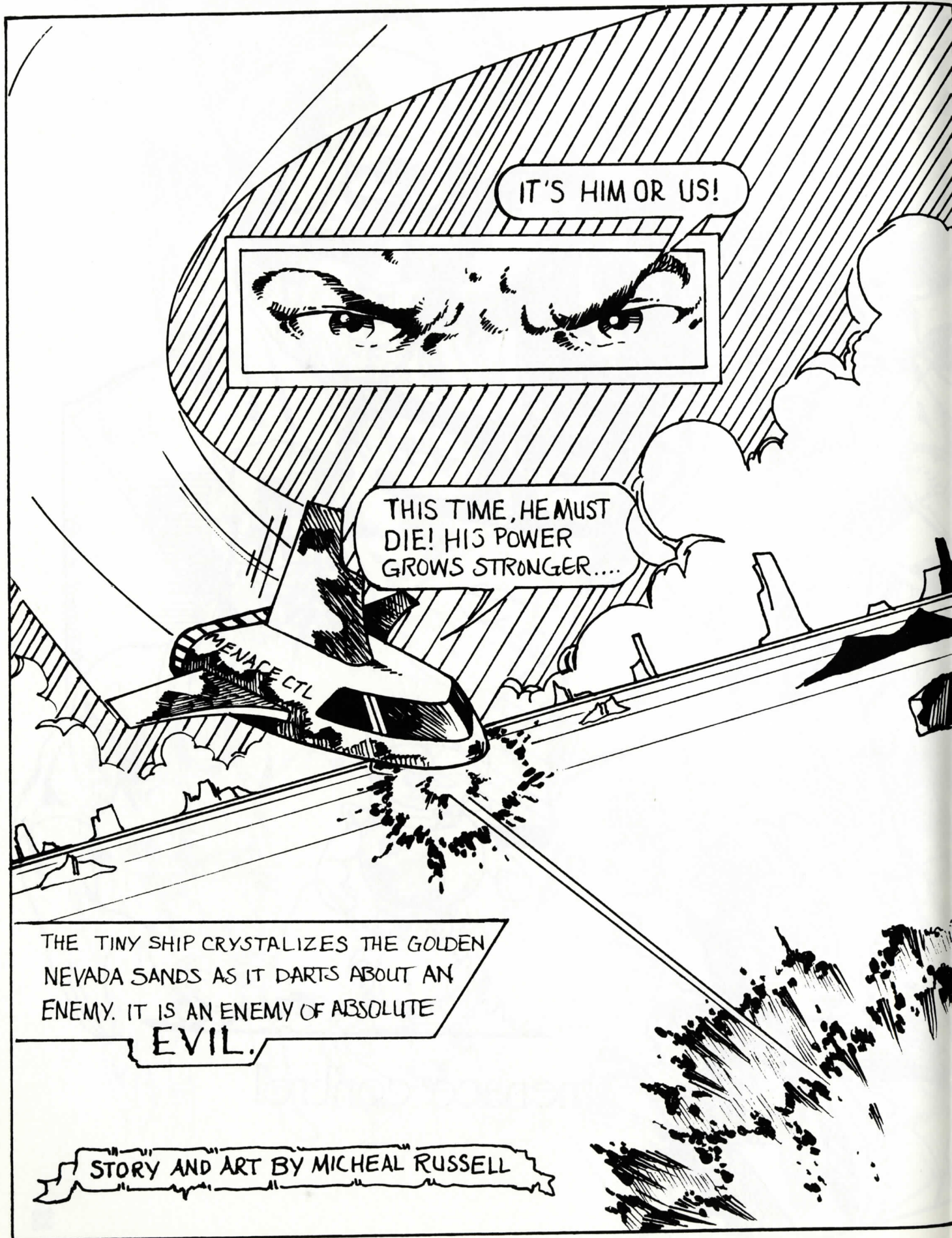


COLLAGE COMICKS



menace control

Menace Control by Michael Russell



IT'S HIM OR US!



THIS TIME, HE MUST DIE! HIS POWER GROWS STRONGER....

MENACE CTL

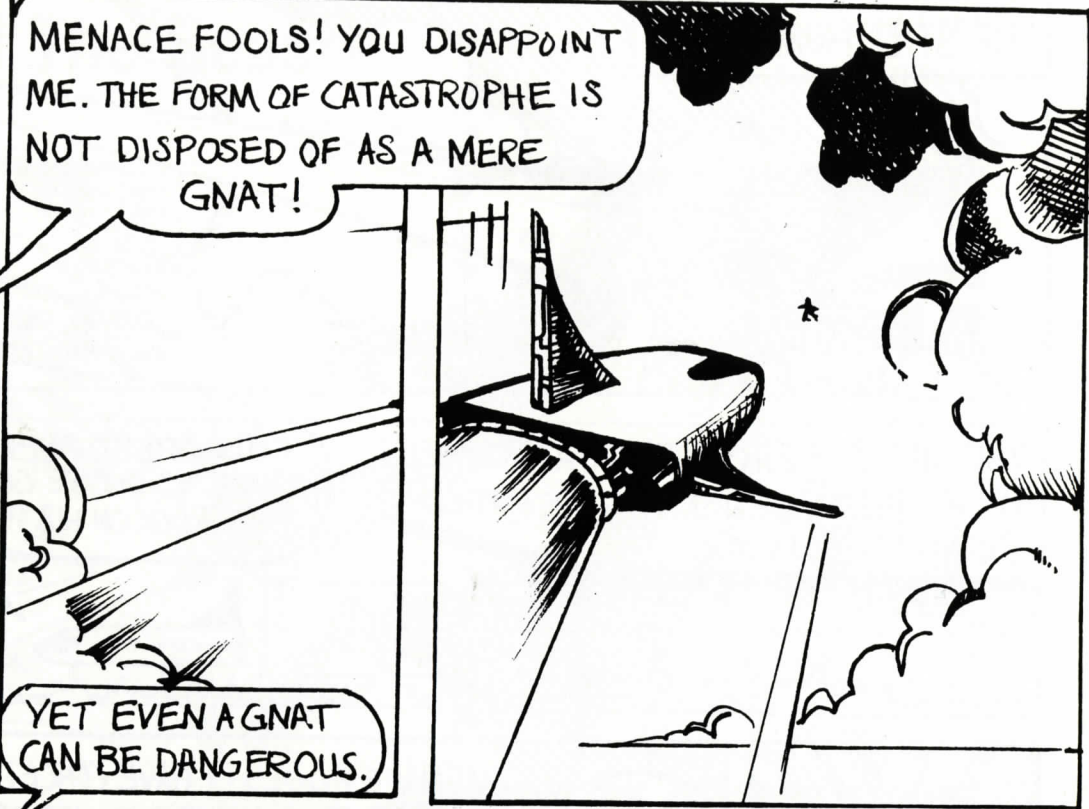
THE TINY SHIP CRYSTALIZES THE GOLDEN NEVADA SANDS AS IT DARTS ABOUT AN ENEMY. IT IS AN ENEMY OF ABSOLUTE EVIL.

STORY AND ART BY MICHEAL RUSSELL



MENACE FOOLS! YOU DISAPPOINT ME. THE FORM OF CATASTROPHE IS NOT DISPOSED OF AS A MERE GNAT!

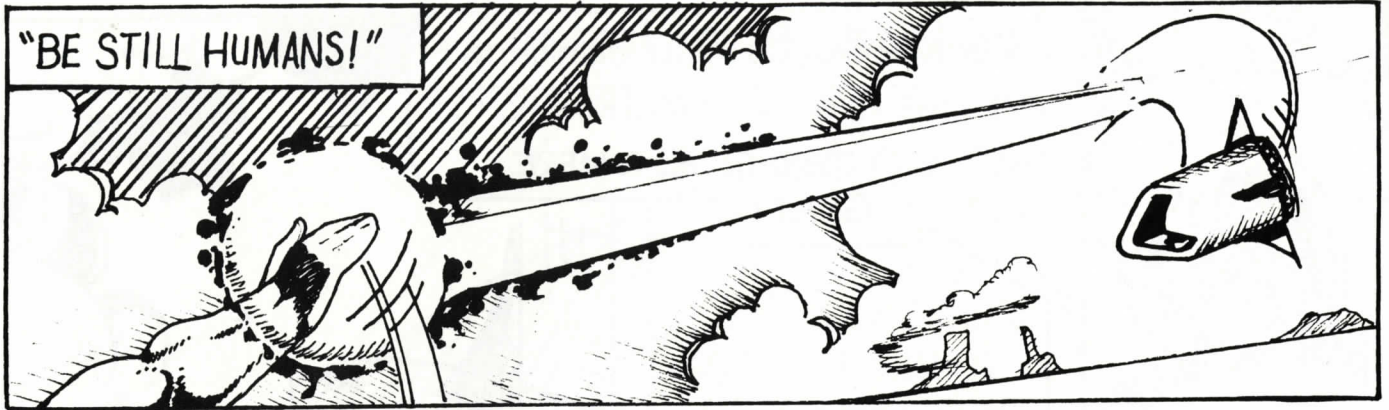
YET EVEN A GNAT CAN BE DANGEROUS.



CATASTROPHE ATTACK AT 3:00. PREPARE FOR A 360 LOOP. I THINK HE IS GETTING MAD.

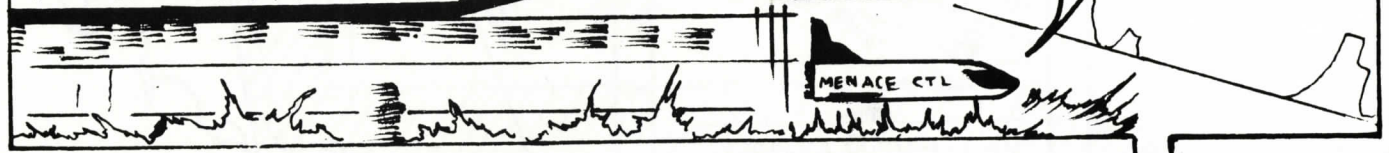


"BE STILL HUMANS!"



THE TINY SHIP ZIPS OVER CATASTROPHE'S HEAD. THE GOLDEN SANDS ARE RIPPED FROM ITS LOW PATH.

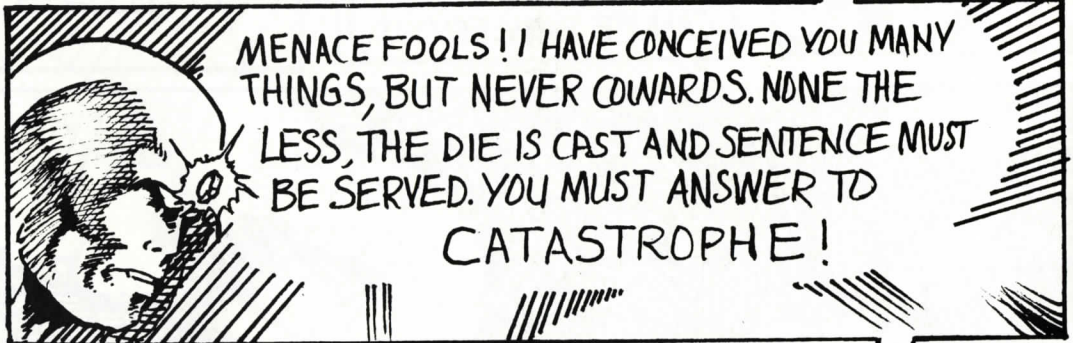
FULL SPEED AHEAD! MAKE HIM CHASE US. WE'VE GOT TO BURN OUT THAT ROCK ON HIS HEAD.



I BRING YOUR DESTRUCTION.

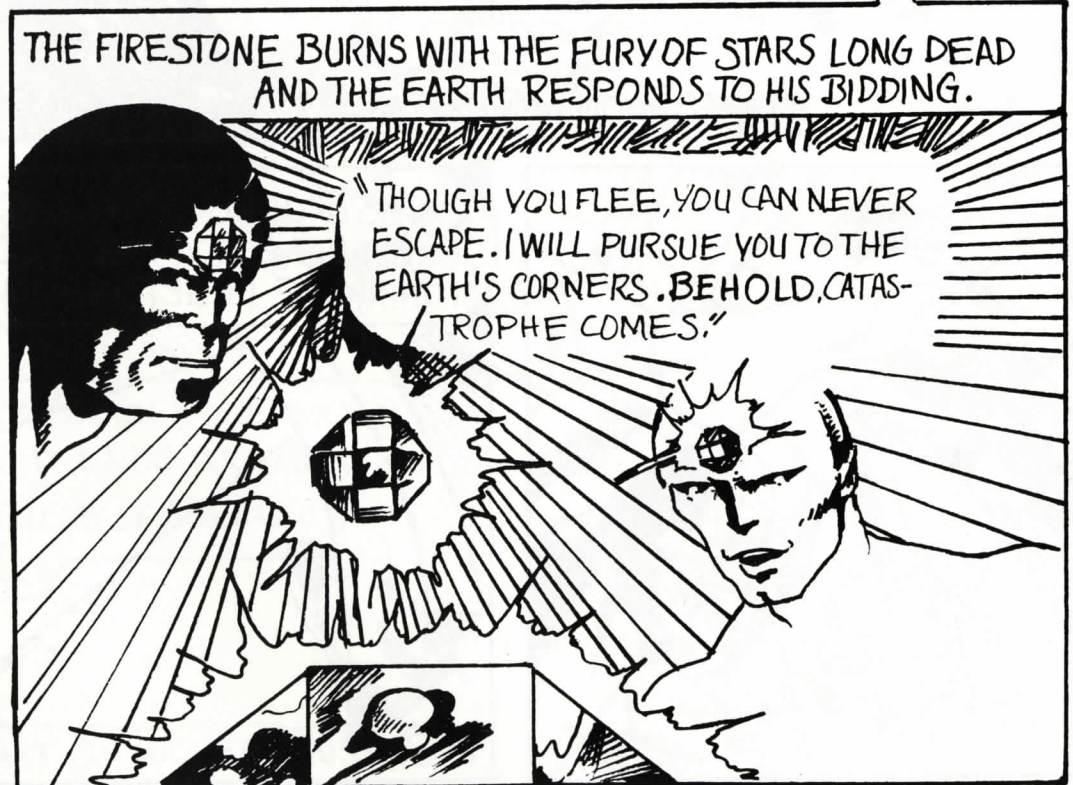


MENACE FOOLS! I HAVE CONCEIVED YOU MANY THINGS, BUT NEVER COWARDS. NONE THE LESS, THE DIE IS CAST AND SENTENCE MUST BE SERVED. YOU MUST ANSWER TO CATASTROPHE!



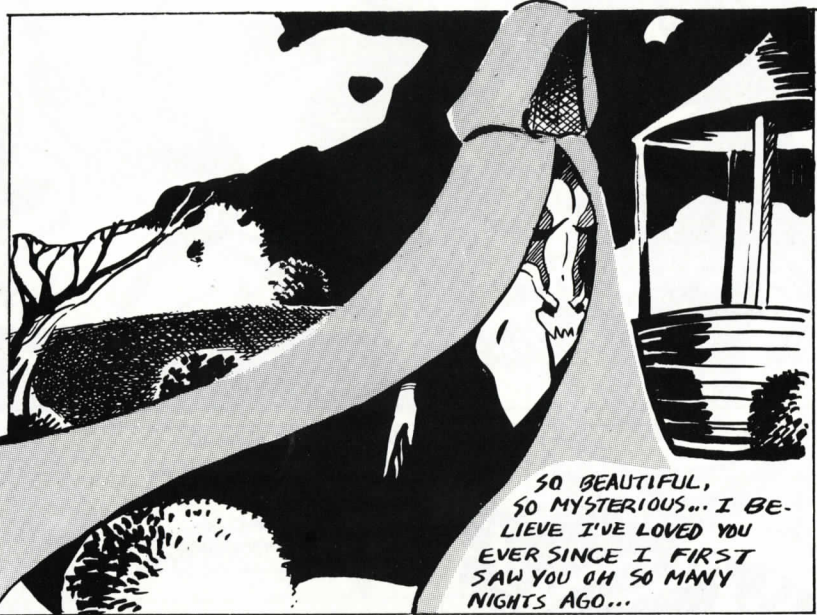
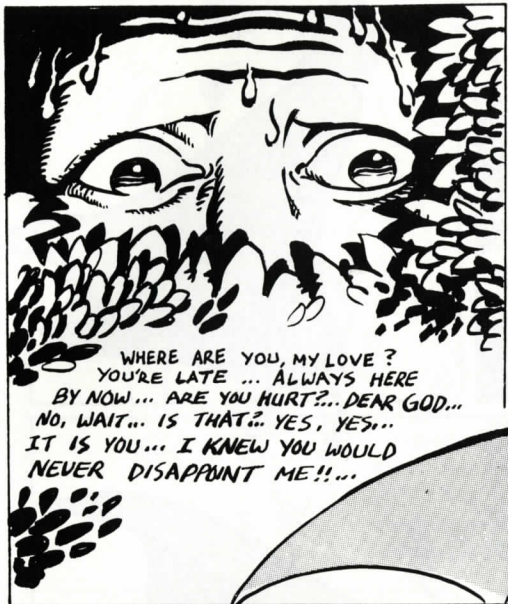
THE FIRESTONE BURNS WITH THE FURY OF STARS LONG DEAD AND THE EARTH RESPONDS TO HIS BIDDING.

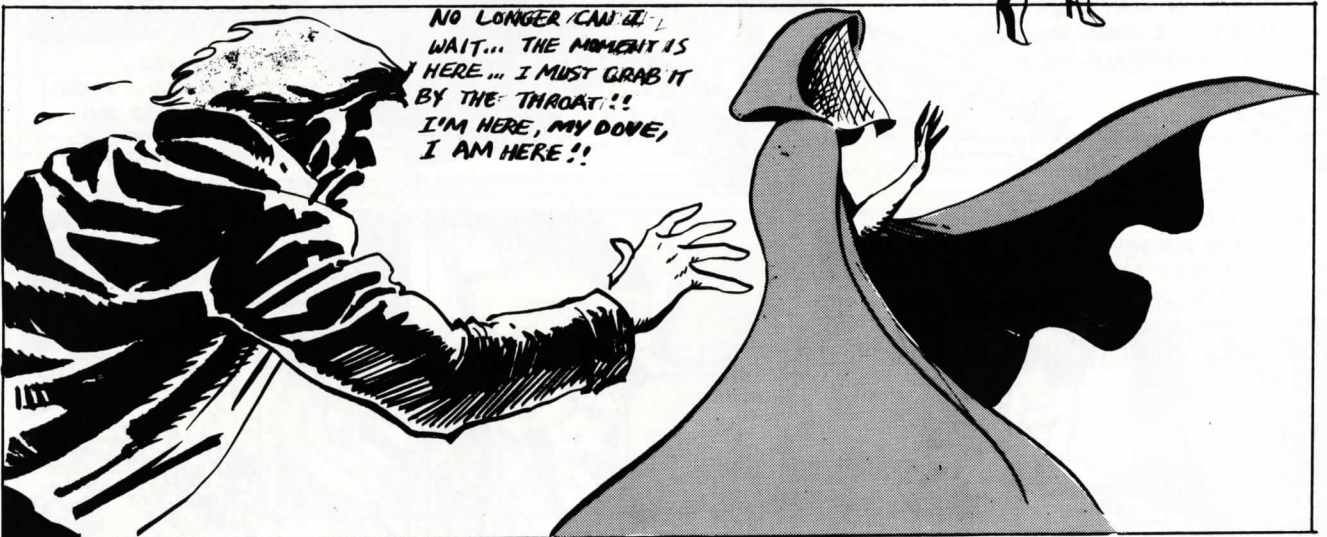
"THOUGH YOU FLEE, YOU CAN NEVER ESCAPE. I WILL PURSUE YOU TO THE EARTH'S CORNERS. BEHOLD, CATASTROPHE COMES."



Beauty and The Beast

Plotting: David Babb
Art: James Tucker







HOW WONDEROUS,
HOW STUNNING, HOW... FIRM!
NOW ALL THAT IS LEFT TO
FULFILL MY WISH IS TO PEER
LONGINGLY INTO THAT GORGEOUS...



... FACE?

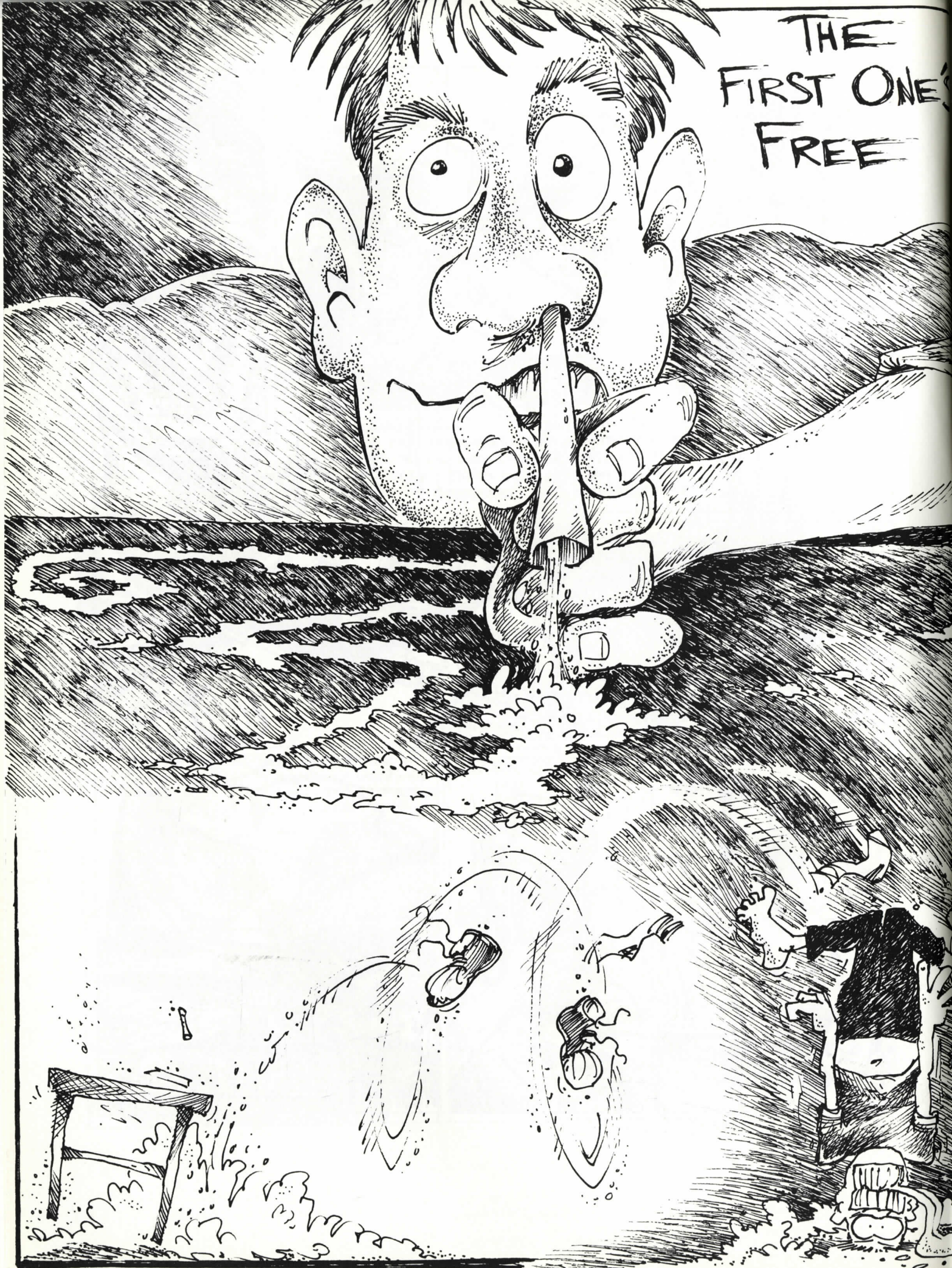


NO, MY
LAMB, MY
LOVE, MY
HEART,
MY HOPE,
NO...



The End

THE
FIRST ONE'S
FREE





Lightnin'

Kathy Brady

Whenever it would storm his mother would turn out every last light in the house and unplug everything except the refrigerator. She'd lie very still on her white-chenille-covered bed, hands folded across her chest like some stiff laid out for a wake. Every little crackle of lightning would make her holler out "Lordy!" in a silly terrified voice.

It started to storm last Tuesday, and the crazy old bitch flew around the house unplugging all her plastic-still-over-the-shades Early American lamps. She came and told me that I'd best get away from that ironin' board if I wanted to have babies. I ignored her and went right on ironing her son's snot-stained hankies. She hurried from room to room, all the while telling me stories I could only half-hear for the thunder. Told about a bunch of friends of friends who'd died via lightnin'. Fire shot right outta the color tv and fried one old geezer in his naugahyde recliner. "Turned some woman from out Halls Mill black as a log in the fireplace. Lordy!"

"Ironin's shit work," I say. "And I despise doin' it."

"You best unplug that thing, girl!" She rushed through and flicked off the light I had been using. I just stood there, ironin' away, with the lightnin' flashin' outside the window. She laid her fat self out on the bed. It commenced to hail.

"Put that ironin' aside now, girl."

"Cain't," I say. "This is my only day off this week. Gotta get it done."

"The Good Lord will provide. Unplug that iron."

A little blue spark shot outta the iron, but I knew it was a short in the dial, so I didn't stop. My husband's old momma drove me near crazy with her superstitions. Her God was a real weirdo too. People say her husband went on and died early just to keep from listenin' to her.

"If you have faith on the Lord, He'll give you what you need. You ain't got to do that



ironin' now. Unplug it!"

I laugh and say I reckon God is gonna miraculous do my ironin'. Gonna jump right outta them clouds and do up all her son's underwear. I laugh good and hard, thinkin' about that long white beard slavin' over BVDs.

"It say in the Bible to trust in the Lord and all things shall come to you. God will punish your laughin'. Best unplug that thing quick!"

"I ain't unpluggin' a damn thing!" I yell. She shuts up a while then. The apple trees out back is all bent low with wet wind. Hail's peckin' at the screendoor like a hungry chicken. I start in on a tee shirt, thinkin' about his old momma laid out in the dark like somethin' silly. Thinkin' how I wouldn't mind seein' her catch a big blue bolt in the bathtub. Her all the time tellin' me somethin'. How to take care her sweet baby boy. Sweet precious Junior. Same one has all them pictures in his wallet of girls with donkeys and German Shepherd dogs. Uh-huh.

"My son would be alright if he'd ever once step his foot in a church door. You should make him come to church. It's your duty to see he gets saved. God says so, you know."

She waits a long time before sayin', "You hearin' me?"

"I'm hearin', but I ain't listenin'."

"Unplug that iron this minute, Miss Priss! You'll catch this place afire and I'll die with ya! Burnin's a bood way to go! Lordy!"

Thunder shook the old place good then. Somethin' landed with a thud on the back stoop. I set down the iron and went to see what it was. Looked like a bird. A bundle of black feathers, drenched and shiny. Outside everything looked solid gray.

"Them feathers is a sign from God! Unplug and repent!"

I was surprised to realize his old momma must've moved off her bed and went looked out the window. Usually she just lays there,

won't move a muscle, like she's in a trance or somethin'.

"I ain't moved off this bed, girl. God speaks to me through the thunder. You cain't hear Him 'cause you got no faith. Put that iron aside now. God ain't gonna tell ya again."

All afternoon I ironed, till it got so dark I burned my hand. I never did cut the light back on or say one word to the old witch. I went out at 5:00 and got into our Mustang. I drove over to the market to pick Junior up from work. He's learnin' to be a butcher for the Jackson Brothers.

Soon as I come into the store, the lil' check-out floozy goes runnin' off to the back, her eyes all wide at seein' me. I wonder what the hell's goin' on. Big Bud Jackson come up then, hold to my elbow and say, "Your man ain't here."

"Where is he then?" I ask.

"Out the funeral home," he say. "Lightnin' got him back in the cooler. He was done stiff time we found him."

The lights was still out when I got back to the house. There weren't no moon a tall, and it was still rainin' right hard.

"Lightnin'! Lordy! I told you God would punish. You should have unplugged that iron!"

I took off my raincoat and hung it up. When I was there in the closet, I could still hear her talkin'. It sounded like the words was comin' right outta the walls.

"Now it's just you and me here! Lordy! If you'd just once listen to me! But no! Now look what you've done!" She started wailin' and prayin' at the top of her lungs.

Later that night the storm came back. The lamp in my room flickered on and off. I could hear her hollerin' "Lordy!" clear across the house. I got up and went into her room. I plugged in her bedside lamp and turned it on.

"Cut that thing off! Unplug it quick!"

She was starin' up at the ceilin', tremblin' all over and rollin' her eyes like some dumb-ass horse.

"God says..."

"Shut up!" I scream. "Just shut up about God!"

Lightnin' flashed 'hind her closed-tight drapes. She twitched once and said, "Oh! Lordy!"

I took the bedside lamp and hit her in the face with it. I got some kitchen matches and set the white-chenille-covered-bed on fire. I put on my raincoat and got the wad of money she kept hid in her bid black Bible. I went out and got into my Mustang.

They say car's the safest place to be anyway — when it's lightnin'.



Singing the Blues with God

you asked me where I had been
while you were trying to explain your
stockmarket technique
and how you had made a million dollars in one day (for someone else, of course)
if I told you I had been on a bareback ride
through rainbows of stars
if I told you that i had been conversing with the shadows of the sun
that I had seen a thousand children
defy the laws of human nature
and raise their voices in song, not war
if i said that I had been racing with the moon on a silver cloud
and that I had won
and that the moon had laughed with me
as we quenched our thirst
and the milky way dribbled down my chin
if I told you that I had been singing the blues with God
would you believe the truth of it?

Kathy Custer

Element 94

Metal, silvery-white, brilliant
Radiance of the sun
You form stars in the cool haze of morning
Shedding light
On the dead eyes of ignorance
The world bows at your feet
Oh master
You were pure, silent, innocent
Man released your fury
Great fungal interjections of power
Traversing all reasoning
Our way

Bill Steber





STILL DRUNK

when i knew trisha she
lived in the back
of the animal hospital
and drank herself silly
frequently.

now she's got a baby
and talks a blue streak
about soap opera characters
and every Avon product
from nile green eyeliner
to tub toys that do tricks.
now instead of vodka bottles
lying sideways in random places
she's got "the cutest little"
homemade Christmas stockings
and a foil-covered pot
of plastic poinsettas
with fake velvet ribbons
perched atop her toilet.
i've heard it said
she's doing better
but it seems to me like
she's still drunk
on something.

Kathy Brady

The Hill In Snow

Whoever built the road didn't, I suppose,
Take into account what would happen when it snows.
They cut away the top of the hill
So it wouldn't be so steep
And laid the road between
The cliffs left by their cutting,
Twenty feet high on either side
The cliffs block the sun
So that, safe in the shadows,
The ice lingers on for several days
After the rest of the road is dry and clean.
Those who know are not fooled by appearances
And take another route.
Which is fine for those who know
But doesn't help those who don't
The hill is famous for miles around.
Just as you're picking up speed over the top
Suddenly and without warning
You're on ice and then a sharp curve to the right.
And it is purely up to chance
Whether they send a tow truck or ambulance.
The country puts up a sign that says, "Danger Ice",
But they must think it was placed and forgotten.
Many times as boys walking home
We would yell and motion slow down.
Perhaps they didn't hear us or thinking
It a boyish prank kept on.
After all, what they could see was dry.
Too much confidence, I guess, being human,
Or not enough sight.
Probably it is just as well.
Else how could we sleep at night?

E.A. Day



Lived in / Abandoned

Empty . . .
I sit and listen
to the memories
Bound-
ing, re-
bounding
uncaught
by no drapes, no rugs.
Quiet loud echoes
Flying--stop.
Flying--back.

The old lady is gone
on a stretcher.
The throat of the tea kettle
remains forever caught in the noose.
No clicking needles or
Wheel of Fortune. Bye Pat.
No stealth of grandchildren
as the lid of the cookie jar tins.

The newlywed couple's dog
lies buried in the yard
under the oak once sapling
crackling fires.
Shared dreams.
Clink--zaz, zaz, zazz
Champagne--Jazz--New Year's Eve
Warm words on cool nights
neath downy quilts
Gentle lowing to the pink squalling.

The man of words
The last.
The pace worn boards mirrored
last embers in the soft pop of the fire as
He read.
Words, and words, and words.
No more.
Echoes of older words wrapped
in his old breathy enraptured voice.
Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow.

The afghan's gone,
So too the crystal glasses and the bassinets
The sharp tinge of leather books
no more mingles with my pine.
Atoms long ago dispersed.
No cookies

No Lady Esther--
Sight gone--darkness pours into darkness.

Echoes
bound-
ing, re-
bounding
pungent and unhazy.

Deborah A. Collier



The Serpent In the Garden

Serpent in the garden,
What miscalculation
Caused you to be birthed
Out of the swirling suns?
What star out of alignment,
Dropped decimal, improper fraction?
What error seen too late,
Hand slipped, the planets fallen,
The forces loosed,
The winds in motion
Put breath into your lungs?
Did the universe shriek
Or stand apalled
When on that first dawn
You reared your diamond head,
Stared empty-eyed into the burning sun?

E.A. Day



A Victim of Fiction?

Craig Conley

Yankees are moving to the South in droves, building condos and sipping mint juleps under magnolia trees. But can their souls ever truly become Southern?

Some people say Southern-ness can't be acquired; it is like class — either you have it or you don't.

But I must take issue with that view. I am a Hoosier by birth, but a Southerner by the grace of God and of writers like William Faulkner, Eudora Welty, and Flannery O'Connor.

While well-meaning adults fight to keep Mark Twain's books out of classrooms, other writers are quietly planting seeds of Southern-ness in our youth — seeds which, once planted, can never be uprooted.

I ought to know.

As a child, I had always felt a certain affinity for the South, but it was my first taste of Southern literature that made my obscure impulse to head for the Natchez Trace irresistible.

In *One Writer's Beginnings*, Eudora Welty recalls that her mother was aware of the profound impact books can have on young people. She forbade her daughter to read *Elsie Dinsmore* because Eudora was "too impressionable" and might be unduly influenced by the heroine's dramatic behavior.

My parents, happy that I had a love for books, never imagined the stirrings going on in my soul. And while I never left home, I "ran away" to Yoknapatawpha County. How could they have guessed, when the place isn't even on the map?

Though my family lived in seven different states when I was growing up, I always sensed that something was drawing me toward the South. I never felt comfortable west of the Mississippi River.

When packages came in the mail from a friend in Biloxi, Mississippi, I was less interested in the contents than in the Spanish Moss packing that protected them.

I judged restaurants by whether they had



catsup on the table and people by whether or not they'd ever been to Yazoo City. I wanted to plant kudzu around the saguaro cactus in our yard in Arizona, and always thought with envy of Louisiana's live oaks.

As I grew older, however, I tried to look beyond the obvious and to understand more exactly what it was about the South that had so strongly grabbed me and wouldn't let me go.

Southern identity is not a matter of being peculiar or quaint, of eating corn bread and black strap molasses, or of whistling Dixie and walking barefoot.

True Southern-ness is not an external attribute, I discovered; it isn't recognizable on the street. It is an indefinable phenomenon marked by such qualities as romanticism, individualism, recognition of the grotesque all around us, and a desire to plunge ever deeper into life's mysteries rather than trying to solve them.

Southern-ness also embodies a sense of identity and place. It is marked by the concept that "home" consists of all the elements which give one a feeling of familiarity, comfort and acceptance.

Home can be a plantation or a mobile home, as long as it affords a kind of solace that comes only from a sense of complete belonging. For the Southerner, home is usually a refuge of first choice, but always available as a place of last resort.

My family lived in Colorado for seven years, in a beautiful spot with a view of the majestic Rocky Mountains. But I was never happy — I had read Harper Lee and was nostalgic for a front porch, a quiet street, the smell of newly-mown grass, and lightning bugs.

I imagined that my life would be fuller, richer, and more interesting if I were growing up in the South.

I got my first sense of the complexity of the Southern soul and the colorfulness of the Southern character from Flannery O'Connor's short stories. I was uneasily

aware that no Manley Pointer ever came knocking on our door to peddle Bibles, as he did in "Good Country People." Our door-to-door salesmen only sold Mutual Funds.

When, as an adult, I finally crossed over into Dixie, it was as though I were revisiting places I had always known. The settings of the books I'd read were so well drawn that when I actually visited them, I felt as if I had come home.

And the more I explored the Deep South, the stronger the feeling became that this was indeed where I belonged.

In a small park facing the Louisiana State Capitol in Baton Rouge is a statue of Huey Long. When I stood before it, I had a feeling of *deja vu*. It was as though I had known the man personally.

Later, I realized that I knew him only through Robert Penn Warren's fictionalized account, *All the King's Men*. Meeting Long's biographer, T. Harry Williams, at Louisiana State University that same year only slightly dispelled Warren's effect.

From the court house in Oxford, Mississippi, which figures so prominently in his novels, I found my way almost instinctively to William Faulkner's home, Rowan Oak.

The house, surrounded by 32 acres of cedar woods, is in a state of passive diminishment and elegant decay. The whole setting is so peaceful, quiet and secluded that I found myself wandering around, trying to take it all in, absorbing the atmosphere and getting in tune with it.

A Japanese visitor — the only other person there — had apparently acquired Southern-ness just as I had. I watched him as he stood at the end of the cedar-lined walkway, stretched out his arms, and deeply inhaled Rowan Oak.

In the car, I never tired of listening to Eudora Welty read "Why I Live at the P.O." and "Petrified Man" on tape. The soothing melody and rhythm of her voice

took me straight into the stories. From the car window, I spotted people who looked just like her characters: Stella-Rondo, Papa-Daddy, Leota and Billy Boy.

Then I stopped to consider how much my perceptions were being influenced by the authors. Was I a victim of fiction?

Was the light shining through the Georgia pines really so soft and beautiful, or were my eyes tired from reading *The Violent Bear it Away*?

Was the timelessness I felt actual, or did I pick it up from *As I Lay Dying*?

Was that Col. Sartoris who just rode by?

I didn't dwell on these questions for long, however. Of course all of the things I was experiencing were real — except, perhaps, Col. Sartoris. The authors I'd read had simply — yet miraculously — captured the spirit of the South on paper.

A friend and I were sitting in a restaurant in the French Quarter of New Orleans not long ago. My clothes clung to my body — the temperature and humidity were both 90 — and a roach crawled purposefully across the table. We were discussing the teaching of evolution, and I referred to the famous Tennessee "Snopes Trial."

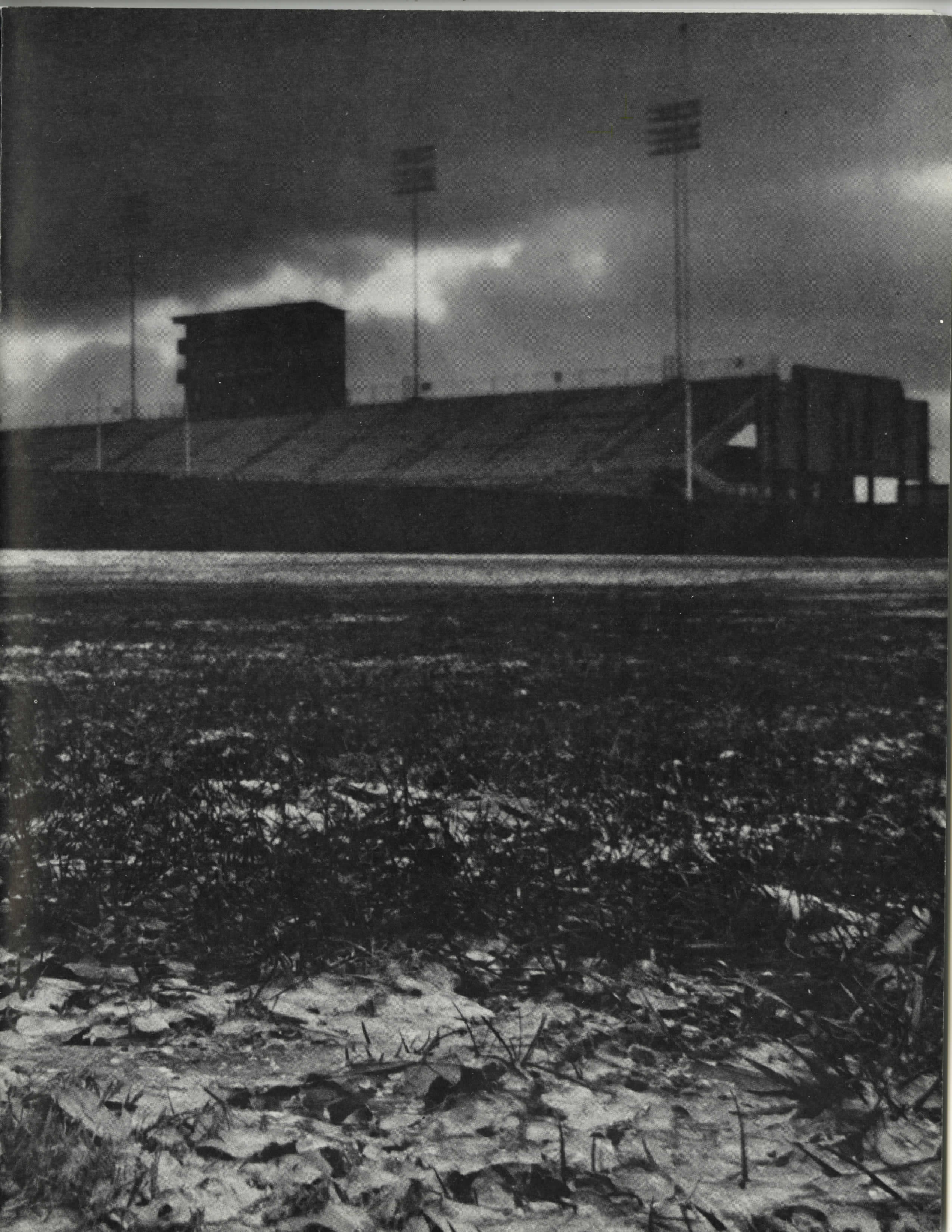
"Did I say 'Snopes'?" I asked.

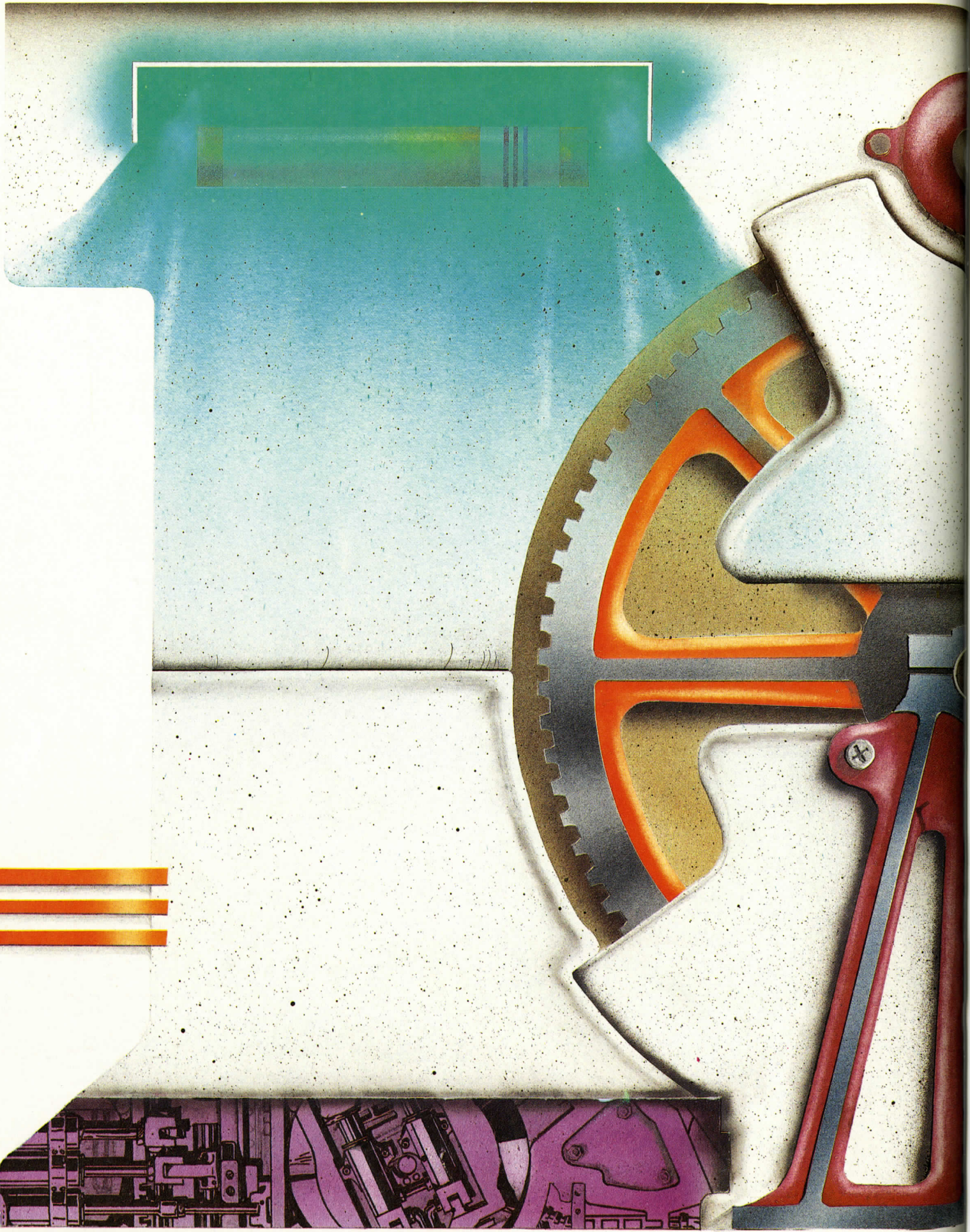
My friend said, "That was slip of the Mississippi lip."

Now that's what I like about the South.









MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY