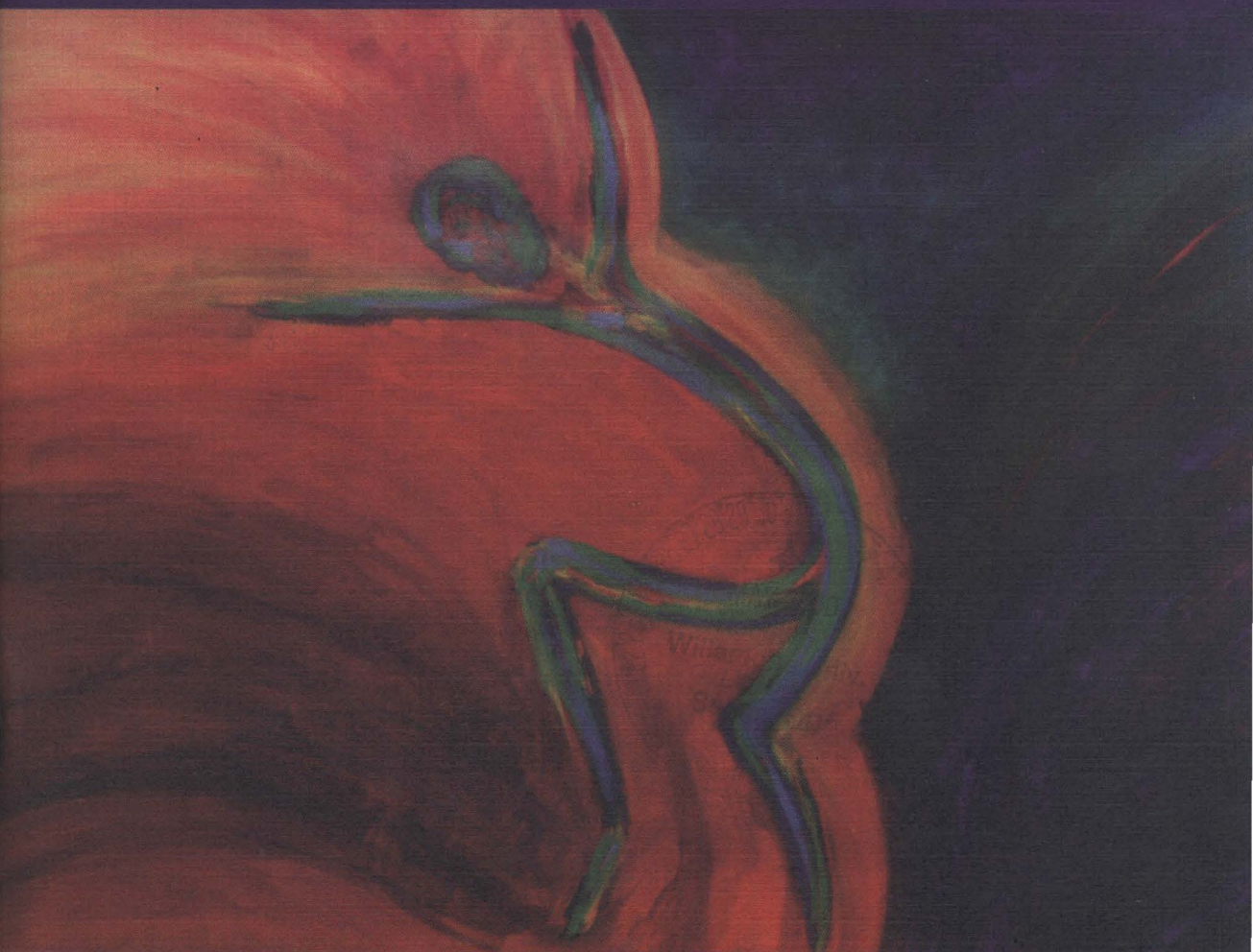


Chrysalis

PERIODICAL STACKS

Volume 2 Issue 1 Fall 1997



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Chrysalis

Volume 2

Issue 1

Fall 1997



Greg Amorelli

“Art does not reproduce the visible.
Rather, it makes visible.”

—Paul Klee

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Big Brotherman

Shelley Markwell

From Nowhere he came
like a rejuvenating thrill,
a *flash* in the dark.

With the posture of a seer
he danced with the earth
in blissful, momentary understanding.

On random occasions we walked a parallel line,
our focus in equilibrium,
our bodies brushed by the same south winds.

Comprehension came uncluttered,
as his works and my mind coagulated together
at the four-way stop.

Today he stands at the foot of my bosom
playing chicken with the safety that brings me comfort.
If only he knew the impact of our meeting.

I became a seer that day.

Letting grow

Liesa Kister

I.

My mother was told
she was too awkward to dance.
She believed she couldn't

grow household plants either,
so when I was a child nothing
green or rhythmic ever happened

inside.

II.

. . . and that first time
when I danced with a lover
pace matched to pulse . . .

I wanted to dig deeper
take root in that moment
bind myself to the swell.

I wanted the wind to pull
at my limbs, whisper my leaves,
and make my bones feel less

hollow.

III.

Mother always wanted big trees.
Enough shade to grow under
to move freely beneath.

Here in South Texas the trees
grow hunched and withered
like mean old men,

so now she looks for the widest
brim hat she can find,
her portable branches.

While, I plant herbs in
my garden window. Convincing
myself, they're hard to kill since
they're really weeds.

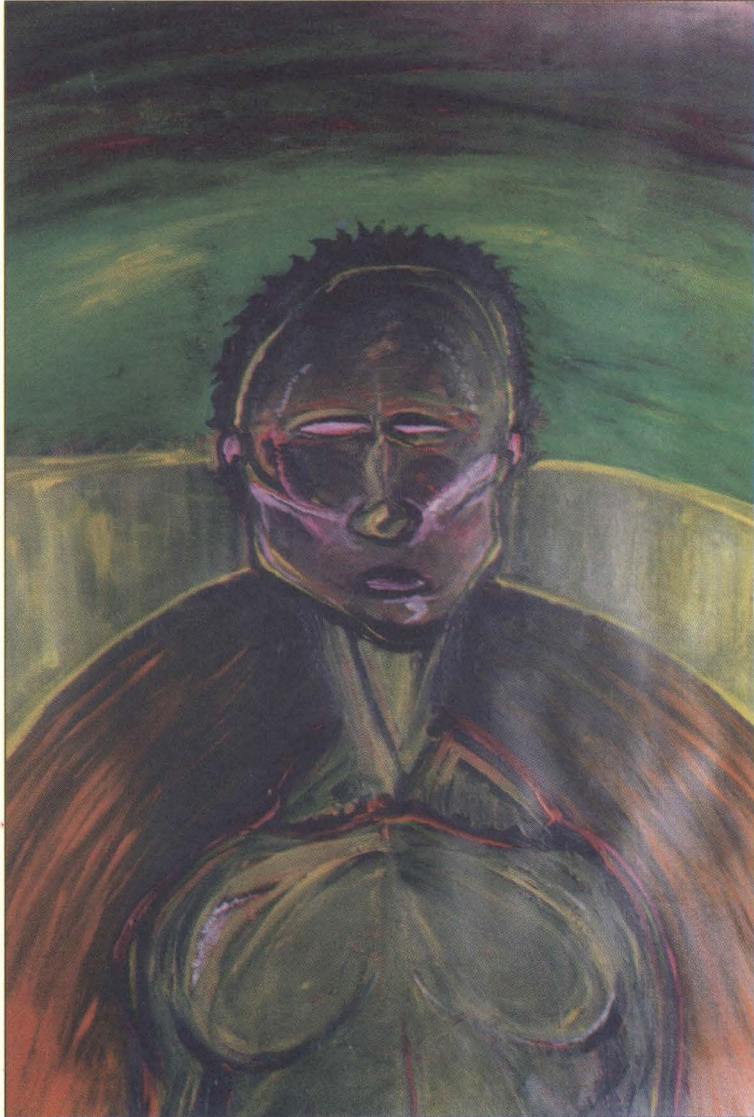
The Legless Wonder

Stephanie Timm

You won't forget the bargain basement black light love,
snug as a glove,
Or the gratuitous tangos at the evening parkade
with the coffee woman who you raised from dirt,
She was the woman in the leather coat working at the hot dog stand
who claimed she was a vegetarian,
And together you gave birth to colorful sandwiches,
Your toothpicks picked then tied with a ribbon
to form a clever bouquet.

One harsh word, a hickey shaped like a sword,
You are ready for the tub and a box of razor blades,
Ready for a pair of roller skates, a wooden match,
and a jug of kerosene,
That grab bag of joy was full of cheap, plastic toys,
And your red ruby dancing shoes no longer smell like home.

Now you sleep at my kitchen table,
face down in your cereal bowl,
My petunias melting in the rain like witches,
Nymphs crawling sideways along my staircase,
opening doors,
My papers saturated with crime and lemonade,
And you, you asleep there,
like a cow cuddled up with the moon.



Jeff Allman



Jennifer Kramer

depressed on the way to the concert

for you, Jenn

d. simone

was it strange that I cried
as we rode?
you laughing, flippant
seeing humor in every roadsign
and song on the radio
or any topic you please
but I didn't smile
or move a muscle
except to carefully deflect your attention from me
as I, mute, stared past the window
and two tears crossed my face;
I was most at peace, happy,
when you asked and I did not have to answer
when you touched me quietly
and asked no explanation
even when the tears dried and I laughed,
a little, and spoke a little
and you did not press what I could not say
although I had my theories
and you, what did you think?
or did your contentment efface the memory
of my pain

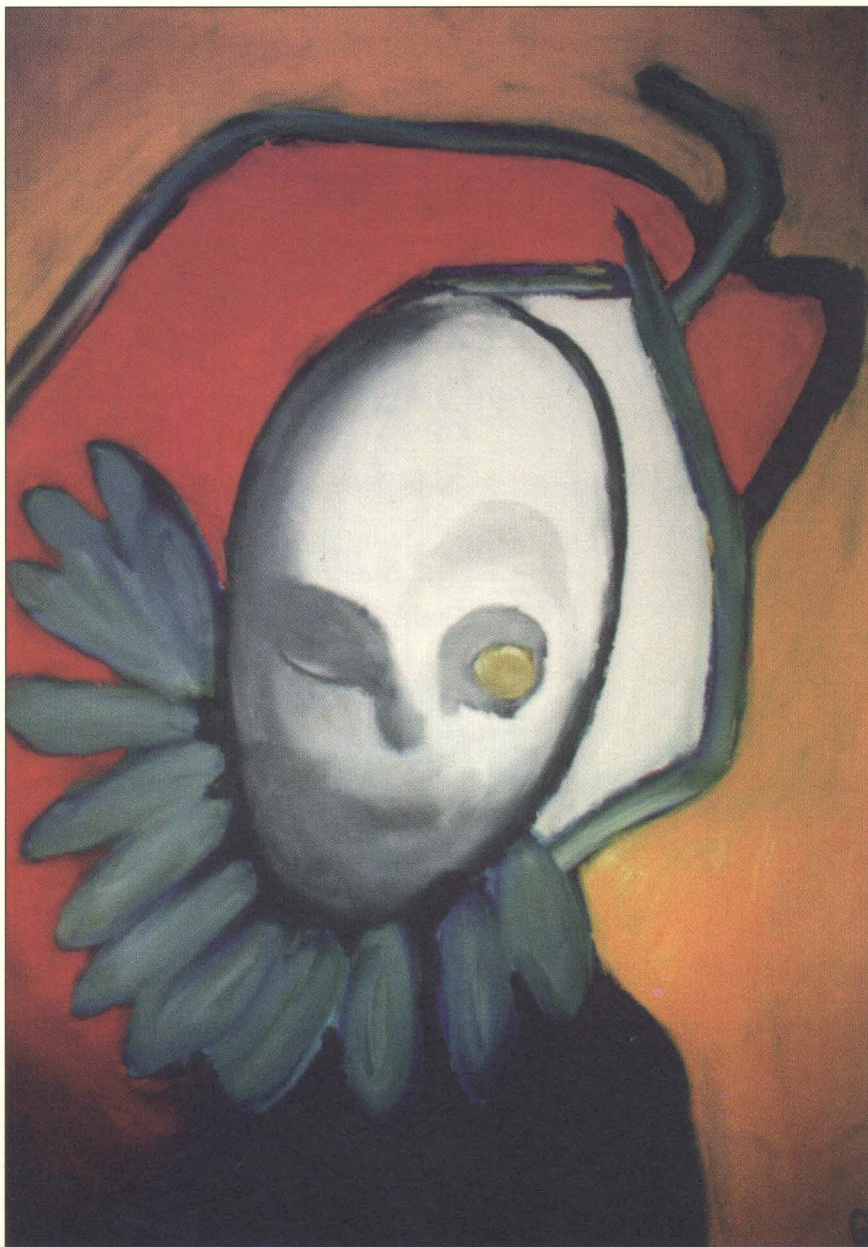
Kenny, with Blue Lips

—based on a character from a novel by Kevin Canty
Marie Diamond

The envelope of nudes snuck out,
Uncamouflaged soldiers marching before your eyes
Turned by my uncontrolled hand, doubt
Tensing my shoulder you touched in the October moon.

At the canal, pregnant gray of early winter
Seeped into us as my worm of a scar
Wiggled out, stopped by your icicle finger,
Leaving a “ssshh” mark still felt in June.

My camera captured that day, your lips
So blue even in black and white, a stolen
Sideshot of a living corpse.
I later exposed you in the silent darkroom,
The orange light like the lamps at dinner that night
Melting the blue out of you, the secrets staying behind.



Greg Amorelli



Fraser Island
Eric Stocker

Star-tear

Brook Houglum

Lobster sautéed over wine and cream on pasta,
angel hair,
she told me where they'd been.
We talked again of angers, sadnesses
that one can only give to sisters, mothers.

Angel hair,
I swear!
The pair of them have wings
clipped as the swans
swimming round around that pond.
Bright eyes who watch the stars revolve,
their mirrored beauty raw and magical.

I wish they could abandon him;
father, husband, friend,
who seems to take away the wind,
and looks a lobster,
talks a pinch,
who drinks the wine-cream,
cannot touch the angel hair,
but keeps them there.

We ate in laughter, later,
onion rings,
the last one sitting crisp in grease
until we finally reached in sync
for knives to slice it with,
to share.
It is this care which keeps us meeting
'round the table,
keeps them from attempting flight.

Hablar

Derek Hevel

No tenía las palabras. De una edad joven, cuando todos empiezan a hablar, Gonzalo no estaba haciendo ningún ruido, ni aullidos. Y sin esto, no vinieron las sílabas ni las palabras. Debía empezar a hablar, con todos los demás de su edad, pero no ocurrió. Sobre los juguetes, no dijo nada. Sobre su comida, no dijo nada. En general, llevaba una cara sin expresión.

La persona más preocupada con la condición: su padre. El hombre por algunos años, desde el comienzo, estaba confundido. «¿Por qué no habla? Tenía una lengua, una garganta, los pulmones jóvenes y fuertes, pero no hace ni siquiera un ruido» decía a otras personas y a sí mismo. Quería que su hijo hablara, para decirlo algo, para mugir, o por lo menos para canturrear.

La casa era casi un biblioteca, llena de libros, y el padre decidió leer al hijo, porque muchos hijos repiten los ruidos y las palabras vocales de sus padres. Tenía libros y los leía, pero el hijo no dijo nada. Se turnaba la cabeza, pero no hablaba. Le leía los libros de humor, de las ciencias y del arte. El hijo no decía nada. No tenía las palabras.

«¿Es posible que mi hijo hable con su música?» El padre tenía muchos discos, una grande colección. Eran antiguos, pero el padre esperaba ponerlos para que Gonzalo los escuchara y hablara con ellos. Aunque se rayaban los discos, trataría. Cuando se los ponía, el hijo no hacía nada. No abría la boca, se ponía más reservado y confundido. Cuando la aguja del tocadiscos pasaba por los rasguños, que pareció agudo y estrepitoso, el hijo daba unas sacudidas a la cabeza. Era extraño, pero no era mucho. Todavía él no tenía las palabras.

Pensaba el padre, «Todos hablan, ¿no? ¿No es natural para hablar y comunicar con otros? Cuando se matricula en la escuela, debe hablar. Habrán muchas nuevas caras y personas y Gonzalo, mi hijo, va a querer a hablar con ellos».

Pero por los primeros años de la escuela, por las lecciones de la lectura y las matemáticas, y luego la historia, la política y la escritura, Gonzalo no hablaba. Nunca. Era un gran problema para los profesores y ayudantes y también para los consejeros, porque no podían forzarle dar un ruido, ni siquiera un miau. Lo rodaban todo el tiempo, pero nunca podía decirlos nada salvo expresiones vacías. No les decía nada. No tenía las palabras.

Por los años cuando Gonzalo se hizo hombre, los dos viajaron de la casa mucho. Esto era a causa de la idea del padre que Gonzalo si iba a juntar con algo o alguien. Esperaba que su hijo fuera a encontrar algo para cambiar todo. Fueron al Podo del Norte para

visitar con los esquimales, pero Gonzalo no habló nada. El padre envió al hijo a acampar con otras personas de su edad, ahora cerca de los 20 años, pero cuando volvía, no había cambiado.

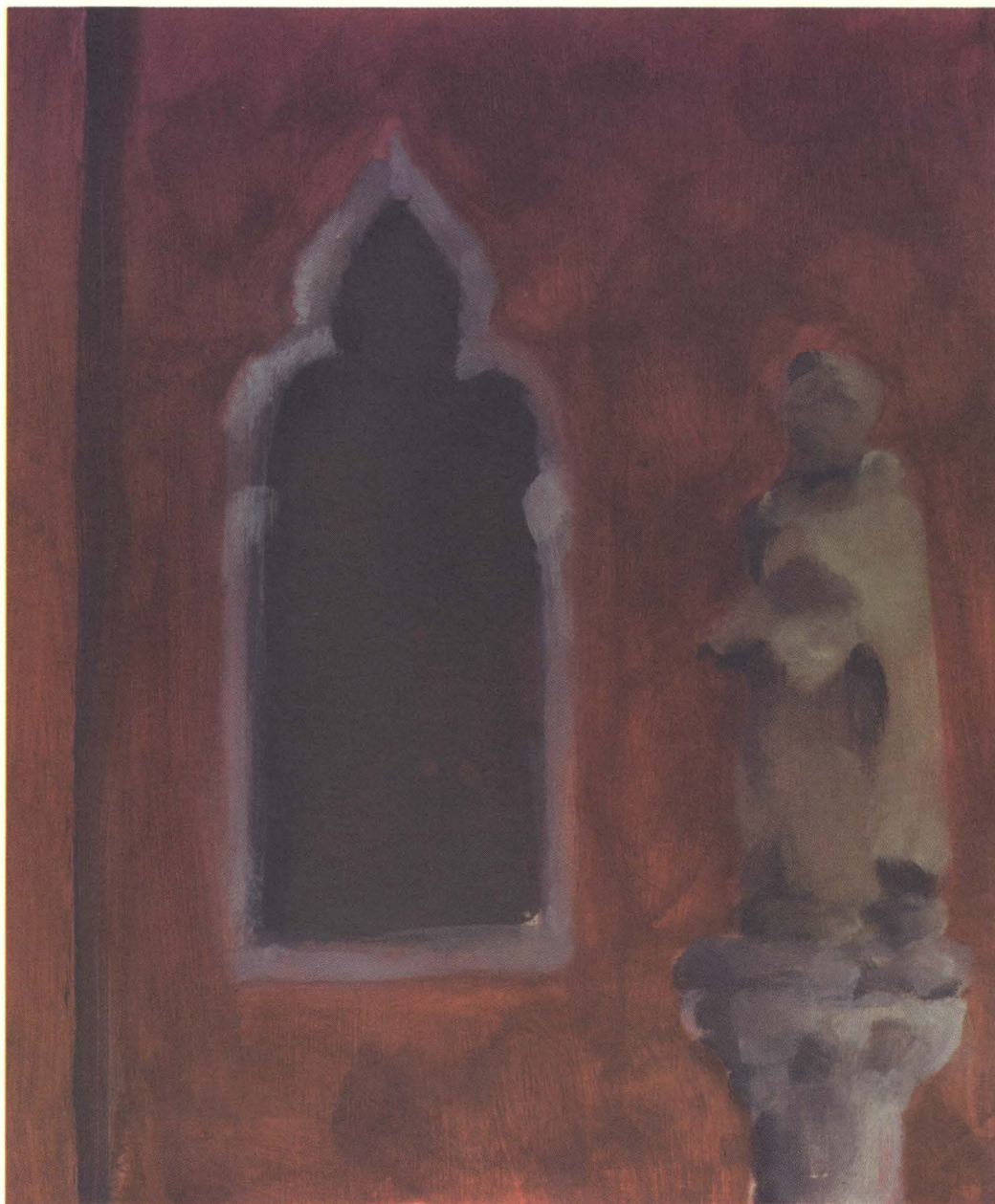
No había esperanza de que Gonzalo hablara, y ahora, después de muchos años sin un ruido de la boca de su hijo, el padre se había acostumbrado, más o menos, al silencio. No se lo gustaba, pero había tratado de todas maneras para comprender y enseñar a Gonzalo, y nada iba a ayudar.

En el momento en que él renuncia su búsqueda para que su hijo comunica consigo, algo increíble pasó. El padre y el hijo estaban dando un paseo por un parque cerca de un río y lejos de la ciudad. Los grandes árboles a sus lados se elevaron juntos para formar un paraguas de verde. La hoja en el suelo era espesa y esponjosa, y sus pasos desaparecían debajo. Al silencio ellos andaron, entonces y gran ruido de alas aleteando y picos gritando. El padre creía que los gritos de los pájaros alrededores de ellos surgieron del lado de él, pero tenía que haber sido sus orejas. Pero, de repente, lo miró al hijo y veía que su hijo, Gonzalo, estaba graznando, también, con los pajaritos. Su boca estaba abriendo para producir las mismas pias de los otros. Gonzalo estaba buscando una buena vista de estas animales, para comprenderlos y juntarlos en los gritos, y cuando colonizaron en las ramas de los árboles, podía verlos: un grupo de gorriones pequeños. Dió voces altas arriba a los árboles para que ellos lo oyeron, pero nadie le respondió. Trató otra vez, con pias grandes, y un pocitos de ellos volaron a bajo para escuchar. Gonzalo se puso alegrísimo, porque los había encontrado. Por las conversaciones, vinieron más y más de los pájaros hasta que todos estaban cercando en el aire. Parecía que ellos estaban negociando algo importante. Continuaron por unos minutos, media hora, hasta que Gonzalo paró. Estaba silencioso otra vez, sin mirar a nada especial. Muy despacio, el turnó la cara a su padre, lo miró con una mezcla de culpa, emoción y con gracias y los miró a los pajaritos otra vez. Empezó a caminar en una línea al bosque, y los gorriones rodearon arriba en la misma dirección. Gonzalo continuaba caminar hasta que había salido.

Entonces dijo el padre de Gonzalo, «Por fin, tiene las palabras».



Jennifer Kramer



Jennifer Kramer



Brook Gauthier

Ambuscade

Julie Ford

I caught a bit of Nature yesterday
And set it in a cage of molded clay
To gaze upon as I sit here encased
In concrete walls amid this modern waste
I wonder, should I set it free once more
To sink its roots into an earthen floor?
I'll keep it in its brightly painted pot
Methinks that I am just as squarely caught.



Hidden Spirit #1
Greg Amorelli



Greg Amorelli

He never asked me to dance.

Liesa Kister

He just took
my hand and pulled me

among the dancers.
Wearing jeans, a plaid shirt

and black cowboy boots
stitch in red, he is

armed with the lazy
smile of a dictator.

His breath seeps
into my hair and skin

as we move across the floor.
Careening backwards, I

struggle to match his steps,
resist the urge to escape.

It's only a dance, just
dancing with a stranger.

Arms bind me against him,
legs press between mine.

He smells of shower soap.
I count comb furrows

in his damp hair. As
the song ends I try to

pull free, mumble "Thank you."
Catching me up again

folding around me like a fist
he whispers "No" against

my temple, the music
rises up again to cover us.

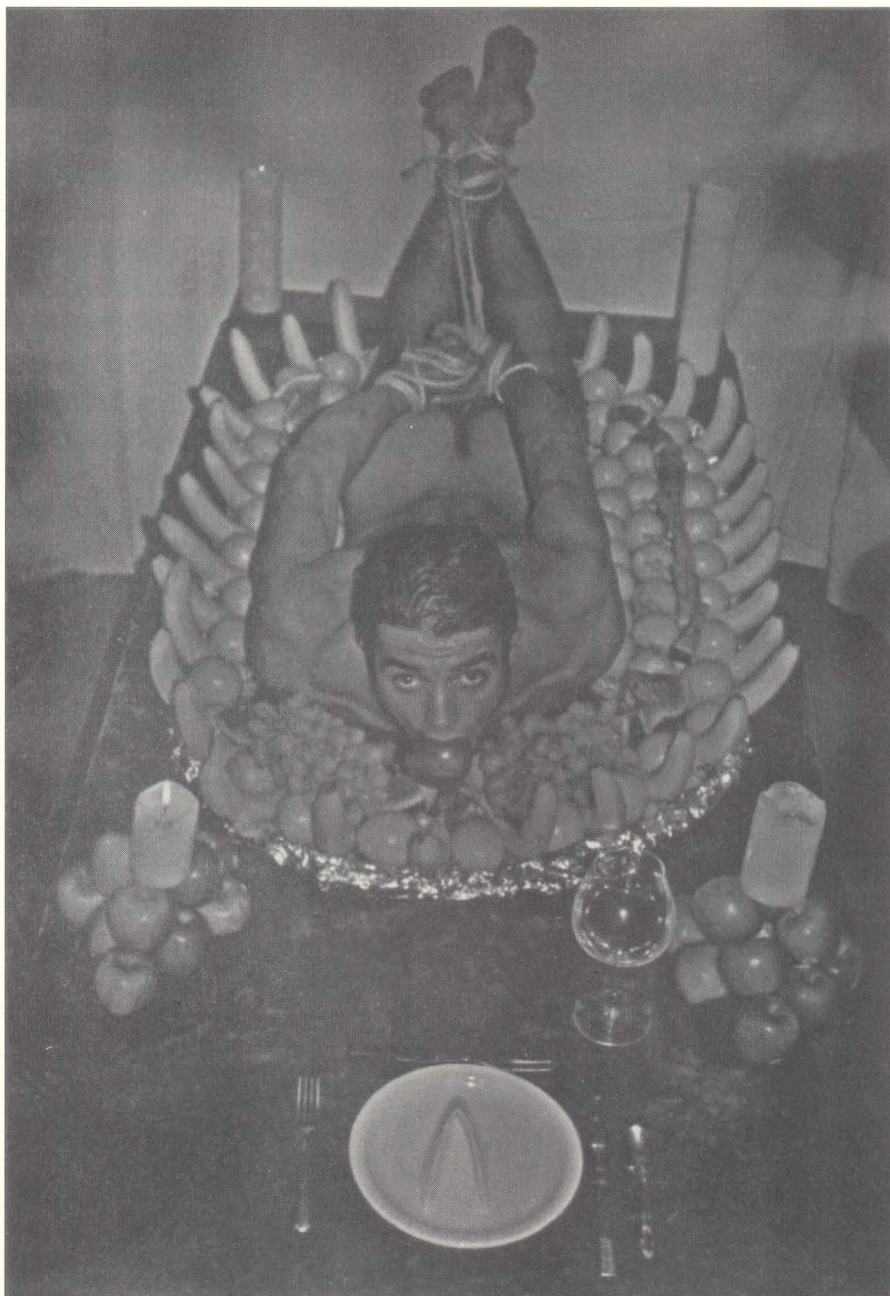
His voice rumbles along,
mingling with the urgent

wail of the singer, as they both
promise to never let me go.

Clearcutting

Marie Diamond

Oh, may I be one of your bitches
so that I may stand with you
in your circle of gangster guyhood?
No, I'd really rather stare at your
hairy legs, thick like
trees in some haunted forest,
I'll be Little Red Riding Hood
but I won't need the woodsman
because I have my own axe
with which I'll cut you down
so that when I stand
I'll be able to see
the girls in the band.



Kiyoshi Grollman



Marissa MacDonald

Road Man

Matt Schrumpf

I've gone from coast to coast
Of this mighty big nation
Livin' off my thumb an' good boots

I've slept in barns an' fields of stars
An I tell ya, I got a good look
Well the flags just the cover
Take time to discover
This country reads a pretty good book.

I've drunk water from a ditch
An' I learned how ta stitch
But I'm real proud to say
That there ain' nothin' wrong
An' ya oughta come along
Ta be a road man some day

Well, I've seen people hope
An' I've seen people pray
I even seen em' up and just walk away
There's a pride in their eyes
I can tell the kind
These people seen the evil on the rise

If ya wanna see a man
Be humble as the lamb
Show yer fancy friends the door
Cause Boxcar Rick
Will give you his tick
To warm you from the cold metal floor

The bond you can make
is all that it takes
when you feel another hand's good grip
when the chips are down
An' your friends aren' around
A stranger helps you giv'em a rip!

Well, I've seen people hope
An' I've seen people pray
I even seen em up and just walk away
There's a pride in their eyes
I can tell the kind
These people seen the evil on the rise.

Here

Paul Jungwirth

I am here,
overlooking the city
grocery store.
From a gray ledge
where a window opens into the rain,
I am here.

Amanda has gone to the store,
in search of pineapple
and trinkets for dinner.
She will walk,
a slanting raincoat,
into the rain,
across the glitsy parking lot
all bright with traffic lights.

Someone is working the old-fashioned
cash register this evening in
the glowing Mecca of produce
Surrounded by a city
Filling up with rain.

The rain is like gossamer curtains
waving through the empty parking lot
where Amanda is slanting.
Her yellow galoshes
are one with the streetlights.

I feel the rain
on my shins,
in my hair.
It is close,
caressing my goose pimples.

So close, I wonder
am here I?
I know the grocery store,
and the boys who work there.
I know Old Man Davey
with his bland cigars
dribbling dust.
This city won't stop
explaining itself.
Am here I?
I know the dust most of all.
We are washed
by the rain.

Amanda could tell me,
alone in the store
with a boy and a man,
if the beans have gone brown.

Here am I,
sodden, wet,
redundant.

But am I here?
I mean—am I really here?
Or am I a figment
of the rain's
imagination?
That crazy, giddy rain
all loose and bewildered
on the sidewalk,
just the thing
to conjure up this
twisted city,
the debauched rain.
I suspect, in those times
before I fall asleep,

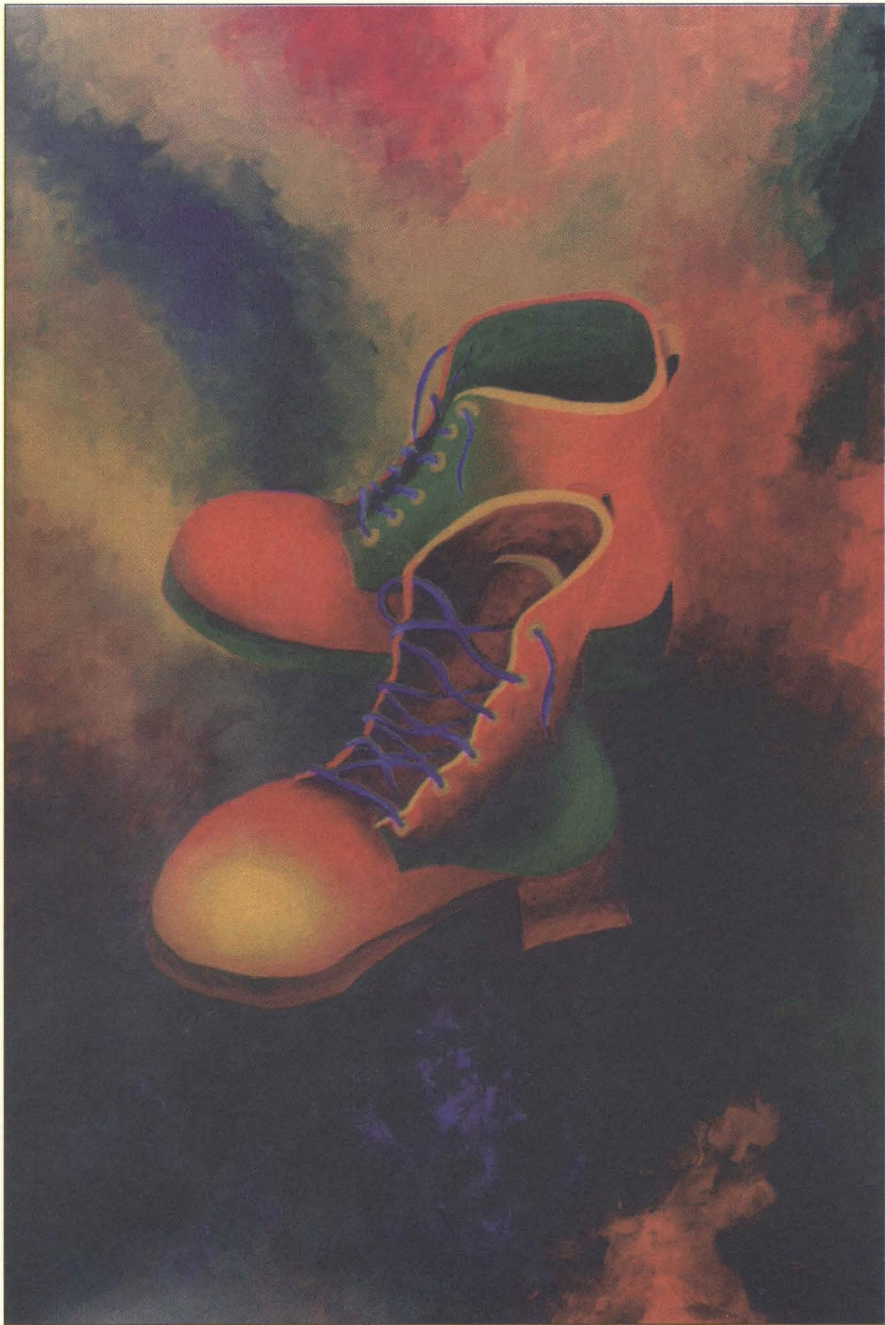
or in the shower,
or in the rain,
Descartes was begging
the question. On a day
as gray as today,
I find it hard to believe
in the light of reason.
In a metaphysical daze
I am drumming my heels
on the flank of the
building, of course feeling nothing.

This technicolor wash is fading,
replaced by black and white.
Somewhere in the background,
over organ music,
I hear Em,
her voice like a rainbow.
I could care less
how many stones you drop
on the beach—
Sticks and stones may break my bones—
Because I here am.

I hear boots slosh, too.
Amanda is on the steps
with groceries.
“Paul! Where are you?”
She shouts.
“Here I am,” I say,
“Just watching rain.”



Erin Stocker



Torry Bend



Anonymous

Silent visit

Brook Houglum

(written after a trip to the German concentration camp "Dachau")

The face of god
in compassionate form
lay behind the storm
and under a forest in shades of green
where sang the grassblades
come this spring
to try to understand the sky.

Rounded it was
like the chapel at Dachau
where no grass grew
for expanse of cement
and a deadness of earth.

The ones that were murdered
were burned there, they say,
just a space away
from the candle now lit
which speaks solid glows to the desolate gray.

Through a strange deafening wind
and a brutal barbed wind
and a loud empty wind
stood the candle still just enough hidden
to not be extinguished.

The face of god
in compassionate tones
lay behind the song
near the open door
where those who sing
think perhaps next spring
the grass may grow.

Still
here
below,
midst desolate stones,
no laughter rings
and it seems in some unsettling sense
that the face of god
was burned with the rest.

Scars remain,
as does the flame.

Rich

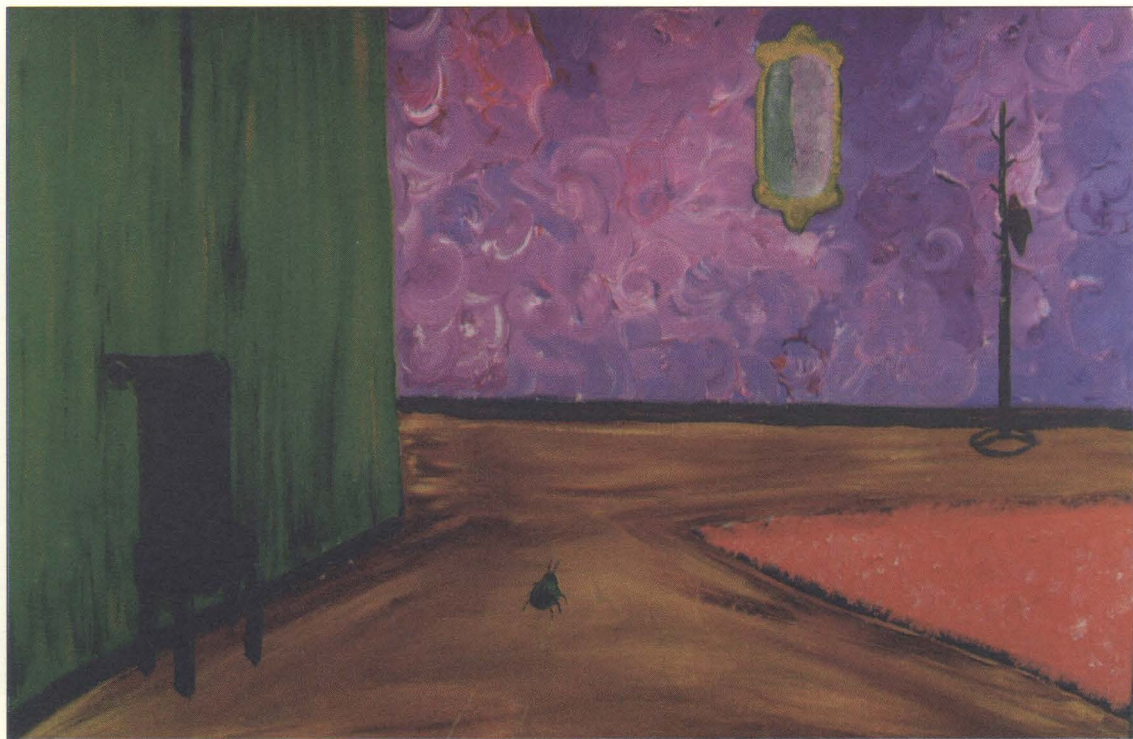
Stacey Caillier

I would like to tell you
that you are beautiful
through the bottom
of this glass.

When I pass you
this glass
know that I am dreaming
of dancing on old linoleum,
opening cans of creamed corn,
sharing tongue kisses across
fake wooden tables.

Passing this glass
I am telling you
that I don't expect a life
distorted by lace and chiffon.

I am telling you
that I am content
to run my stubbed toes
along your shins
in coffee shops,
grocery stores,
cafés lolling to Billie Holiday,
passing this glass
even after it is empty.



Jeff Allman



Brook Gauthier

In a Moment's Journey

Tobin Addington

There once was a boy who burned his village. One by one the glass huts were licked by the bloody flames as the fire spread. And there, in the center of the village common ground, stood the boy, peacefully. The wind blew hard and the fire burned hot. Some of the villagers tried to call the boy to safety, but he did not heed their cries. He burned that day, and never uttered a sound.

A pale woman bathed in blue iridescence, floated over the boy's dead body. He woke and upon marking this strange apparition asked her who she was. She responded by gesturing for him to follow. The woman in the blue light glided slowly down a dark cave-like corridor. The boy walked several paces behind.

At the end of the corridor, the woman floated into an immense room with a vaulted ceiling and enormous stained-glass windows. The light and beauty of the room astounded the boy's eyes, so much so that he covered his face with his hands. The woman smiled warmly and offered him a goblet of soothing liquid. He drank deeply and felt calm inside.

With another minute gesture from the woman's hand, the great windows opened easily. The boy gazed out. He saw his mother sobbing through flames, being held by a number of villagers. He saw several peers staring in wonder and amazement at the power of his act. The boy took this in passively. He did not look away. He did not hide his feelings. He did not lose himself. He was at peace.

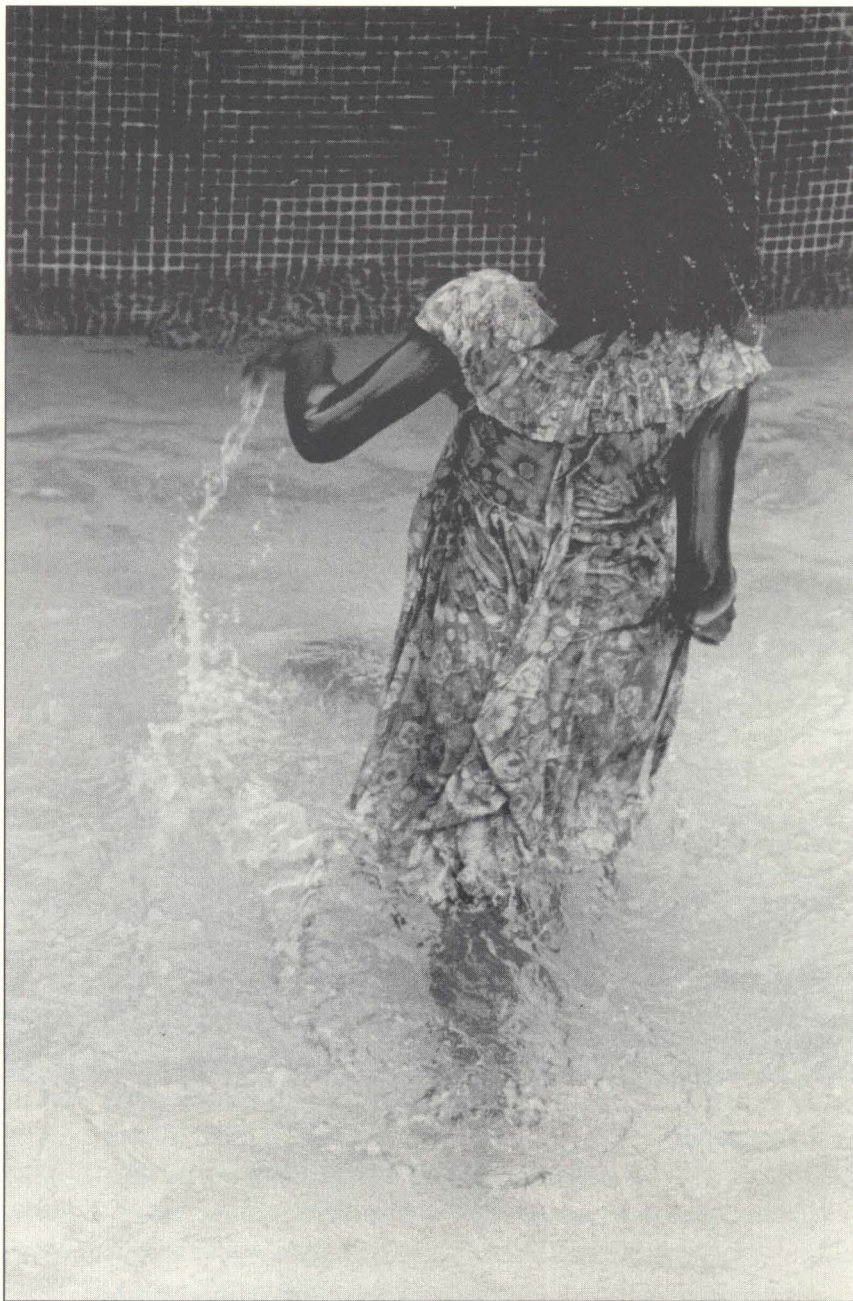
The woman gestured for the windows to close. The boy looked to her. Her eyes met his and they spoke soul to soul. It became impossible for him to look away. He saw himself in her. He saw all he hated, all he loved, all he wished for, and all he wished to avoid. She smiled.

Careful not to break the gaze, the woman floated nearer to the ground until she stepped from her shimmering blue light and stood before the boy. She mouthed words that he could not understand. He wished to look away, but could not.

Then he stared back, matching her insensibility. He turned his eyes into mirrors of her soul. Now she found herself begging to look away. He showed her who she was. He showed her all she hated, all she loved, all she wished for, and all she wished to avoid. He smiled.

A tear slipped down her cheek. But it was not a tear at all, it was a moment in time. The boy reached out and took it from her face. He looked at it intently, and it grew in his hand. It grew to a size comfortable for him to step in. Once inside, he offered a hand out to the woman. She looked at him. Against her will she took his hand. The boy pulled her into the moment with him.

The moment began to rise steadily upward, ever gaining speed. As it approached the ceiling, the roof split down the middle and opened. A dark, churning ocean writhed above the room. The moment passed into the sea, still rising. Up through the ocean it sped. Out of the waves it leapt, into a night of total blackness, punctuated by stars . . . billions of stars. The moment continued to fly, reaching for the stars, carrying the pair forever.



Erin Stocker



Kate Russel

Certainty

Paul Jungwirth

They're testing the universe to see if Euclid was right.
Some bitter mathematician lost his faith in parallel lines.
Across the country scholars cross their fingers,
Hoping the fall of reason's two thousand year old dynasty
Won't affect their tenure.
They're drawing interstellar triangles with photoreceptor vertices,
Waiting eagerly to see if light curves or flies straight and true.
The mystics with hair as rampant as their minds
Snicker softly at seminarians who bet on Kant.
Modern science holds its collective breath.

1.

If the light misses the familiar film,
If the angles won't add up to one hundred and eighty good old degrees,
Plus or minus,
Then down shall fall the straightedge tower straining toward the sky,
And mathematicians will have to hire interpreters
To read each other's textbooks.
Only civil engineers will still hold fast to Euclid's myth.
At last we will know with certainty
That for all their triangles sturdy in the sand,
The pyramids are great big yellow lies.

2.

But at the bottom of the photon is hope,
For if the light falls on the tiny film defending sanity,
Everyone can drive inertly back to work—
Their freeway lanes will never meet to pile up twisted metal—
Where workers build more precise instruments for another heavenly query,
Because maybe our film was too wide,
And the universe is crooked after all.

My Secrets

Tobin Addington

From the steel-trap bellies of killer
teacups
Come the deafening beads of sweaty
contempt.
Outlawed emotions simmer in excruciating
silence.
Creases and furrows reveal anger encrusted
labyrinths.

Calm melts over me like blue
beams
of moonlight.

Bathing my withered body in a loose
sheath
of comfort

Ecstasy far from creaking hinges
broken
from closets

Where the skeletons go to dance
alone
and in pairs
and in pairs.



Hiroko #2
Erin Stocker

Contained

Liesa Kister

Your voice is a tongue
against my skin
leaving my ears
damp and cold.

I watch the cream
swirl and spin through
my coffee, the wisdom
of the universe churns
inside the solid blue pottery

Blue, blue fire, the color of Anglo Saxon eyes.

I glare at you,
a tuft of hair escapes
the confines of your brow.
It juts upward like a wick.
I dream of lighting you,
—how you would look
melting.

The sky is growing bluer,
deeper, so blue it is black.
But the stars above us
are just tight little flames.
You orbit around me
pushing at my atmosphere
tightening my gravity

(I want flowing,
shooting stars
flowering galaxies,) but

You are too busy
complaining that
I never fold
your socks correctly,
“Everything must be
neatly stacked.”

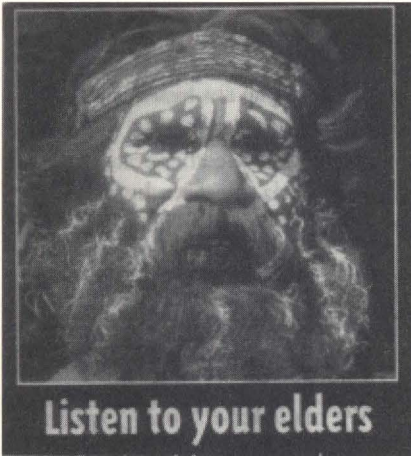
I want to set my mug
on the table

(walk away, beyond the air
you breath in,
leave you,) but

It would make that sound
of a foot coming down.

Editors' Last Word

Chrysalis is a publication of the Associated Students of Willamette University. Submissions are accepted from all members of the Willamette community. Entries are blind-judged on the basis of majority vote by the *Chrysalis* editorial staff. Staff members may not vote on their own material or material they recognize.



After hours of pouring over art, poetry, prose, and photography, the editorial staff remains firmly convinced that creativity is an underexposed yet significant part of the Willamette community. Your creativity is innate. Find your inspiration in creamed corn, empty mail boxes, raging storms, or butterflies. Have a black and white day or a colored one, then put it on a page. The whole is formed from each small scratch.

Many thanks to Professor Linda Bowers for her help and support!

This issue of *The Chrysalis* was brought to you by:

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“What does the poem do?
Its most radical purpose
is to remind us of ourselves.”
—Susan Griffin