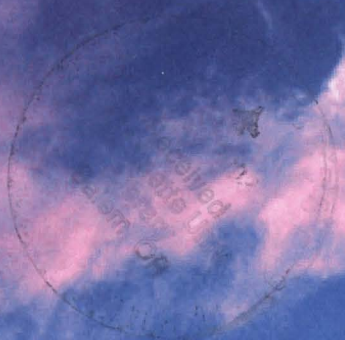


PERIODICAL STACKS

the
chrysalis



spring
2003



t h e

c h r y s a l i s

spring 2003

"It is the glory and good of Art,
That Art remains one way possible
Of speaking truth"

- Robert Browning

Willamette University



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Birth of a New River

Diana Leong

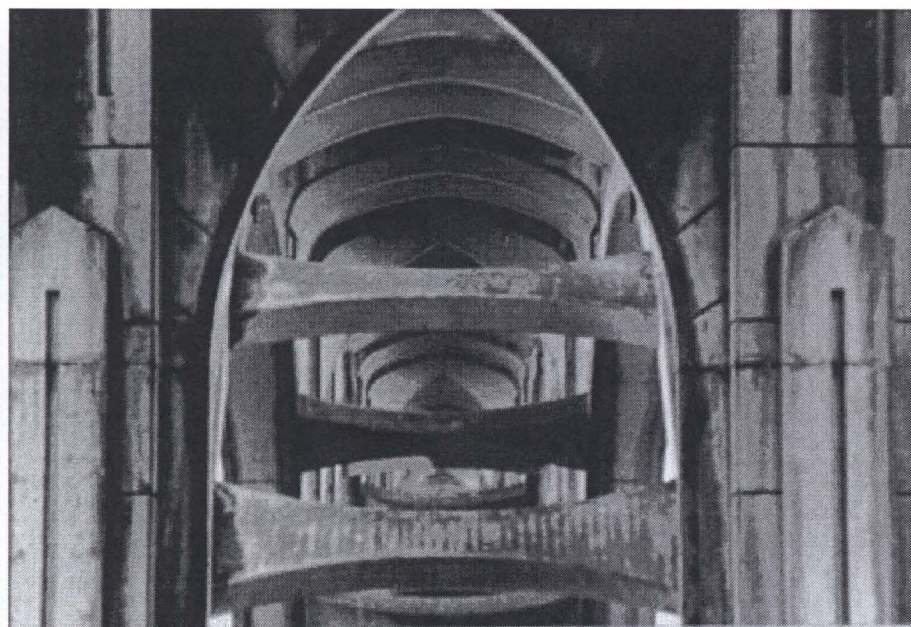
She was pushed from silence,
encased in spaces damp, dank, dark.
From fissures ripped apart by pressure,
bulging earth, stilling red flows of bedded undertows.
And the union,
between rock and water,
yielding black beds,
where new rivers,
flood into blinking light.
With loud roars and cackling cries,
carving into the ground new wounds,
where pieces of old earth die.
Running towards rapids,
carving more speed between limbs splayed,
crashing with sweaty screams,
into the sea,
and silence.
Golden silence.

you are waiting
in the rain
under the awning
of a closed Italian pizzeria
we ran toward to get away
from the galway rain.
for some reason
you're wearing sandals—
the doc martens I gave to you for your birthday,
which is in january.
in some small way,
your insensible attire is my responsibility—
you thought
i'd be offended if you didn't break them in immediately,
despite the six inches of snow that came in the next week
and then got swept away
by a rainstorm two hours later.

somehow,
you manage to be beautiful
in the rain
under the awning
of a closed italian pizzeria,
your hair matted to your face
and your hands raw
because you forgot your gloves.
the coffee i bought on corrib street—
devoid of its companion of caffeine
and replaced with cream
is waiting to be sipped
while we hold out our hands
under the awning for ten seconds
in a contest to
see who can collect the most drops.

Jen Weigman

U n t i t l e d



The Tulip Tree

Jeanne Beko

Its petals unfolded, white and crisp.
They were new to the world
as I was new. Spring sunlight
flirted with its fresh blossoms and
they blushed, turning violet and fuchsia
at their bases, much like I blushed when attention
was paid to me. The new hues complimented
the white. They were the marks of femininity,
beautiful and becoming when the flowers were young.

I walked by the tree, then stood
under it and looked up into its branches and waited
for the wind. A breeze fluttered through
and carried the white petals with it. They swirled
about my body and I felt the corners of my mouth curl up.
I opened my eyes wider
and brushed the long brown strands of hair off my forehead.
I let the petals land on my soft skin.

But the sunlight grew more intense
as the days grew longer. The white started turning brown.
The petals that once reached up
toward the sun began to wilt and bend
back toward the street. The stunning pinks
that trimmed them were now crimson and piercing.
The flowers were bloomed out and spent. They broke
apart and the petals fell from the branches and stuck to the street.

The next time I stood under the tree
I stared down at the street, at the petals that had been torn
up by the rough asphalt and the tread of tires.
I could not bare to see how beauty could fail so quickly. I closed
my eyes, then untucked the hair from behind my ears
and ran away from there with heavy steps
that went thud against the pavement.

Violent Sunset

Kirsten Engstrom



My brother talks:

Kasey Jakien

I'm not too worried.

Remember back when I
was four years old,
in the ice cream shop?

I cracked by head open
on a table,
trying to climb up onto the seat,
to sit between you and mom.
I slammed my neck onto a sharp corner,
screamed, and blood fell
like soft raspberries
to the floor.

You were scared,
and asked mom, "is he going to die?"

On the sidewalk outside the parlor,
you sat and choked back your tears.
You were just two years older than me,
with a boy haircut and sequenced suit
that made you look like a dancer.

The ambulance sped away with an awful scream.
Though you were scared
I wasn't.
And I'm never scared
when bad luck hits anymore.

When I broke my arm,
you were gone,
practicing marching for the parade.

Dad saw me in the field,
with all bones broken
including my thumb.

I was all curled up,
the grass was matted under me,
and curved to the shape of my body

like a summer snow angel.

Dad placed me on a picnic table,
and said, "somebody call a doctor!"
That's how you found me.

You rode your bike down the street,
pumping hard.

A crowd gathered
around me, and an icy hand
curled around your heart.

But I was calm,
just as I am now.
I looked up into the sky and closed my eyes,
and thought about playing baseball.

For a while nothing else happened.
There were small injuries:
a broken leg during summer camp,
black eyes and cuts that marred my skull,
making parts of me soft
like an apple dropped from a tree.

And then there is my heart.
My heart.

Do you remember walking into
Dornbecher's? The hospital smell,
The stench that gave you headaches?

My condition was serious,
as soon as you entered my room
the sterility and chill took your breath away.

Doctors said, "a staph infection in the heart valve,"
and while they looked their fill,
you remained. We played games,
and you read me get well cards.

I had hope then,
my bad luck always turned out good.
And indeed, I was soon released from the hospital,
a sophomore in high school,
I was able to play baseball.

But I soon found I was weak.
The cut grass and the warm sun
drove me crazy.
I rested,
while the other boys
smacked home runs over the fence of Powell Park.

You could see it then,
how mad I was, how I stewed in silent pride.

I convinced my friends
that I was normal, healthy.

It was true enough,
what more did a healthy boy have
than I? Besides a heart
that did not fall apart on the inside?

I figured that I
wouldn't show it.
I would have a mechanical heart.

Running and dragging my body to its limits,
I'd pitch for the varsity team my junior year,
even if it killed me.

And then—
slowly,
slowly,
I grew more tired.

You saw it when I went to bed
at six in the afternoon.

Mom saw it in the lines under my eyes,
the sighs that escaped my lungs.

Not so long ago, perhaps a month,
we walked into the doctor's office
and the doctor looked depressed.

He said: "I'm sorry Mrs. Tanenbaum,"
and that meant open heart surgery for me,
cracked sternum and true abandon.

Mom sat quietly, very calmly,
like I do sometimes when night falls,
when the house grows silent,
and the smell of summer strays
from the walls.

But remember, how my bad luck
always turns out good?
I am not worried, in the morning I sit
and watch the geese fly
from Westmoreland Park,
and think about playing games there in July.

Remember, the sun was golden,
that late summer color.

The announcers would scream over the loudspeakers.

And I would try to smack the ball over the fence,
over the bristly pine trees,
down the street,
right by this window,
if I could.

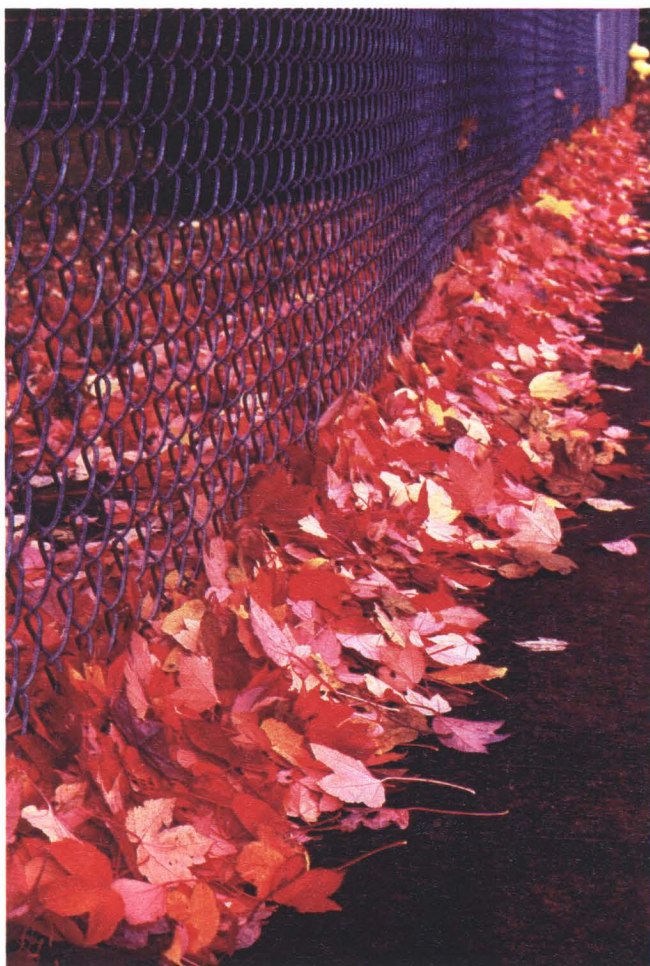
Untitled

Terrence Wong



U n t i t l e d

Raul Moreno





Fountain in Granada

Owen Carver



H a i k u s

A writer's view on science

No conformity
Defy the laws of physics
Let apples fall up.

For your convenience

Store bible section
Rows and rows of holy books
Choose your religion.

Jessica Smith

Haiku for leaves

the leaves, they must die
before they live their life—the
swift fall of freedom.

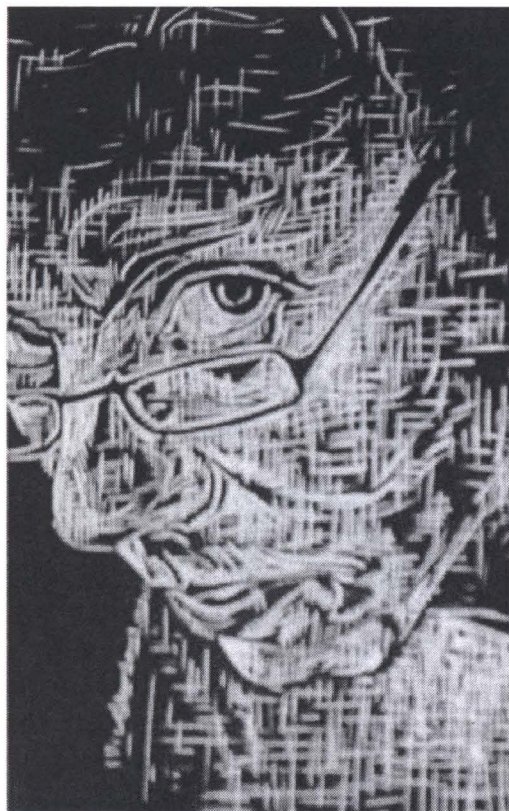
Poem about hair

it grows.
that's how it goes.

Matt Iverson

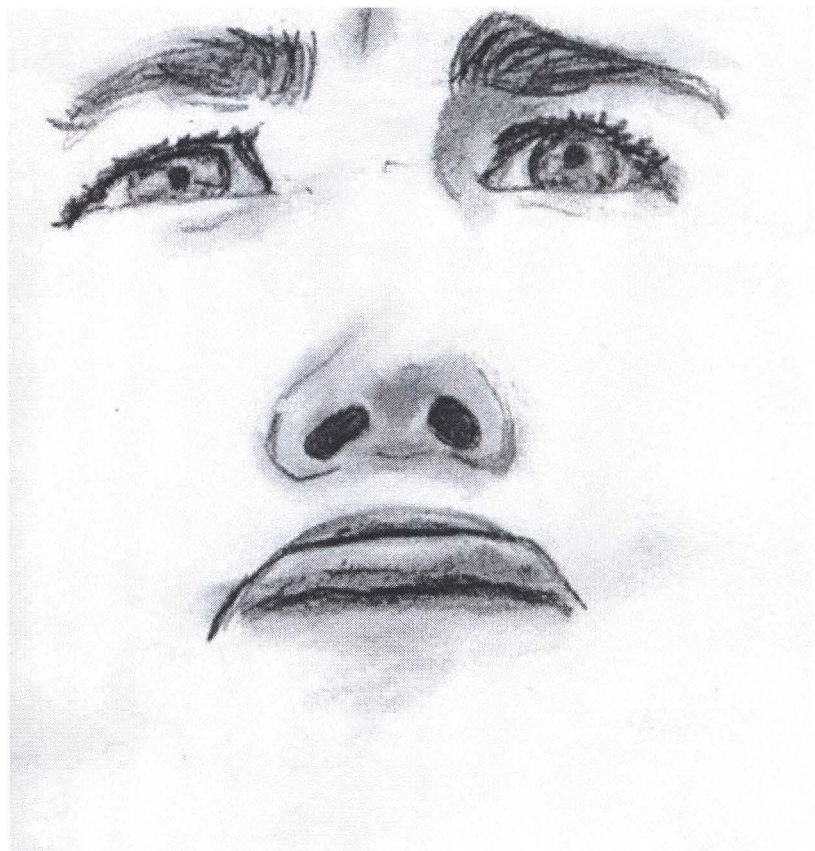
Gwennie Seemel

A l e x



U n t i t l e d

Sun Yu



You
On your mountaintop
Kept company by the hiss of falling snow
And shrieks of frigid wind
Beset on all sides by a silent emptiness
Unbroken by human sound
For 30 miles, easy.

Me
In my single, shoebox room
Kept company by the whine of distant sirens
And droning radios from down the hall
Beset on all sides by a cacaphony of voices
An unbroken buzzing like so many flies
For 10 miles, easy.

Us
Achingly apart for so many
Moments
Counted in endless time.
Soon, now?
Each heartbeat that sounds
Alone
Pulses the answer
Through a network of viens -
Not yet.
Not yet.
Not yet.

R e s u r r e c t i o n

I don't know why I even try. I seriously don't. Nothing really makes sense anymore.

A nightmare plagues me, every time the sun rises. I feel as though I'm walking on a straight line of train tracks. It keeps stretching out, far as the eye can see, in either direction. If I keep walking, more track lies ahead of me, and I can never see, much less reach, the end. And I take some comfort in that, that the journey will go on and on, forever. I'd breathe a sigh of relief, and I'd keep walking, and walking, and walking. I never get anywhere, but I don't care. But I still peer over my shoulder every few seconds. Some would say it's a nervous tick. Some that it's some faded recollection of a survival instinct, long since past its usefulness. But somewhere inside I just know that, the moment I make the tiny insignificant decision not to look back, a silent train will crush my frail body under a thousand tons of steam and steel.

Unto eternity. Never-ending. Forever. Infinity. It's not a concept we really understand, even if we think about and try to visualize it. But I'm in a unique situation, one that requires me to think about it. Some people think about eternity as a sea of drops of water, each representing an hour or a day. For some, infinity is an almost microscopic grain of sand on an endless beach. For others, it's the vast, ongoing reaches of space.

For me, I imagine forever as the simple emptiness in my heart in my heart every day, emptiness that made a moment into an hour, an hour into a day, or an awkward, shy gaze into a heartbreaking eternity.

* * * * *

I vaguely remember the ride to the hospital, the desperate attempt to breathe life back into my shattered body. But I hardly felt it. The pain in my heart, my final failure, was the true triumph over life and love.

My last image was my beloved's face, as she watched in blissful ignorance, wondering what poor fool had been caught on the tracks and ended.

The trail to the hospital became a path to the light. I felt the cold of death surrounding me, the darkness of chilling flame all around. I clawed back, reached for every handhold that I could find, tried to go back, to live, at all costs. I would give anything—anything!—to be alive once more, to remain in this mortal place. One chance! Not for me, all for her! I didn't care about my life—I hated every aspect of myself, hated being a failure, hated being a destroyed wretch. It didn't matter what happened to me. All I wanted was her happiness, and to be happy *with* her! Anything.

And I gave everything.

* * * * *

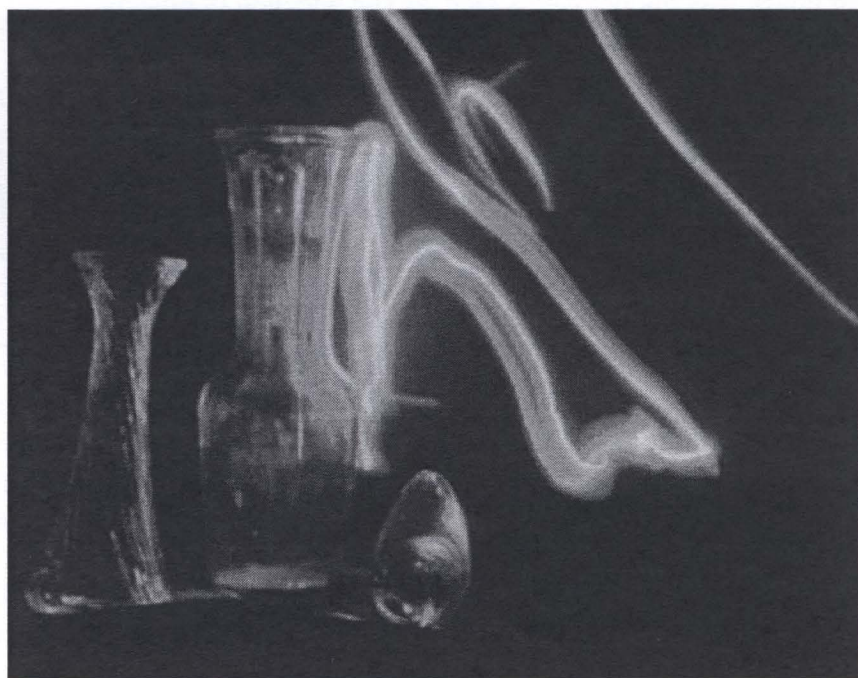
There's such beauty, pure and effortless, crisp body and full flower of color, in a rose. How can one even contemplate the intricacies that go into such flawless creation? It is a sin to destroy such beauty.

It always withers and dies, turning brown and then black, even as I watch, in my fingers.

The dead cannot hold the living.

We all pay a price for what we want, some with our bodies, some our minds, and some our souls. And sometimes, we pay with all three. The emptiness within, the pestilence without is my price.
My loss.

The price of my resurrection.



I went into a lake
And everything was wet
Motion flowed like silk around
Me, and dripped from my hair into my eyes.

Strings of pearls rolled down
White cliffs of pudding rocks
I slipped and slid into a forest
Of silvery scales and glinting balls of fish eyes

Soft tinkling met my water-logged ears
Drip dripping from clear clouds
And I sat upon a smooth stone's surface
Drifted upon these long chords of rain.

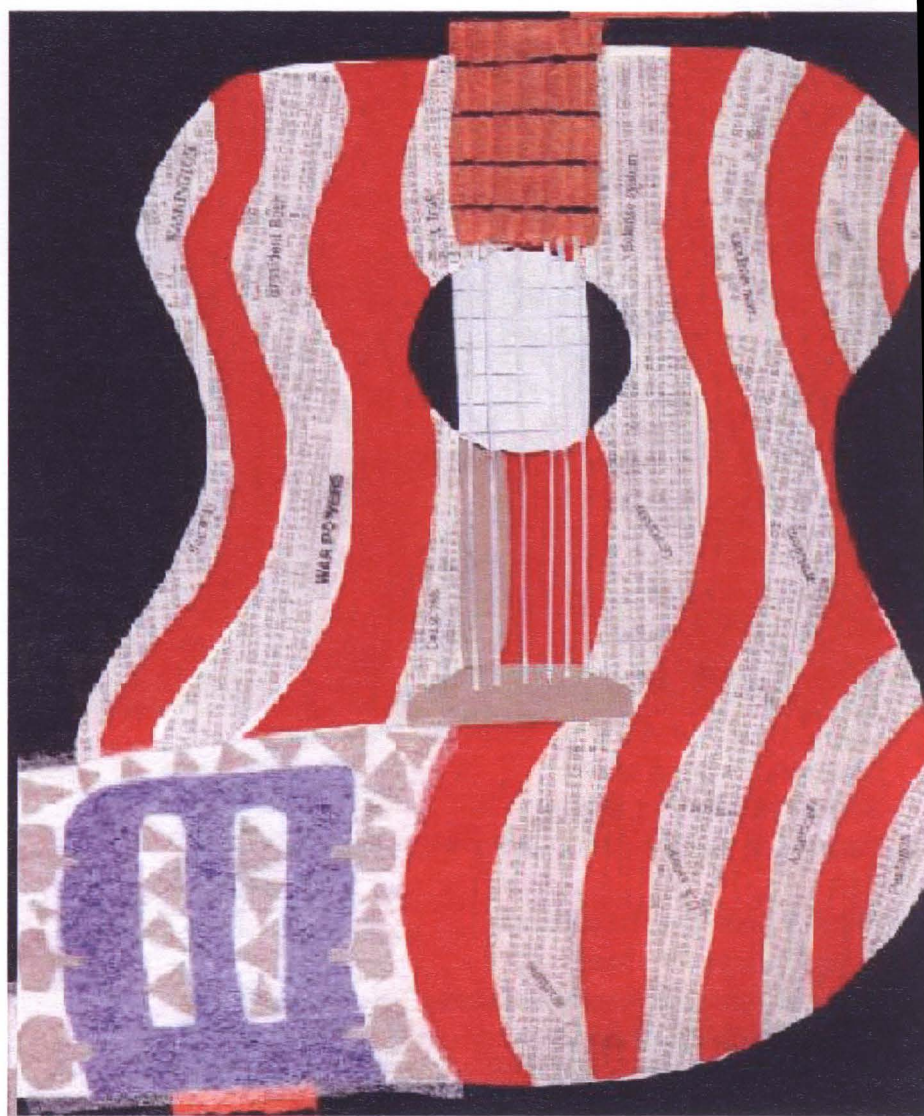
My body was too hard for this lugubrious environment
I could not feel my hands,
Only mushy water-logs
Until I flew into the wind-swept and liquid light,
Became a twining weed,
Swam with darting fish,
And drank until my innards ran with algae.

When I floated to the surface
I crawled upon the land,
Became suns and moons and stars,
Danced with the ravens,
Sang with the bears.

And all heaven and earth understood me
As I understood them.

U n t i t l e d

Carlos Ruiz



Light and Shadow in November

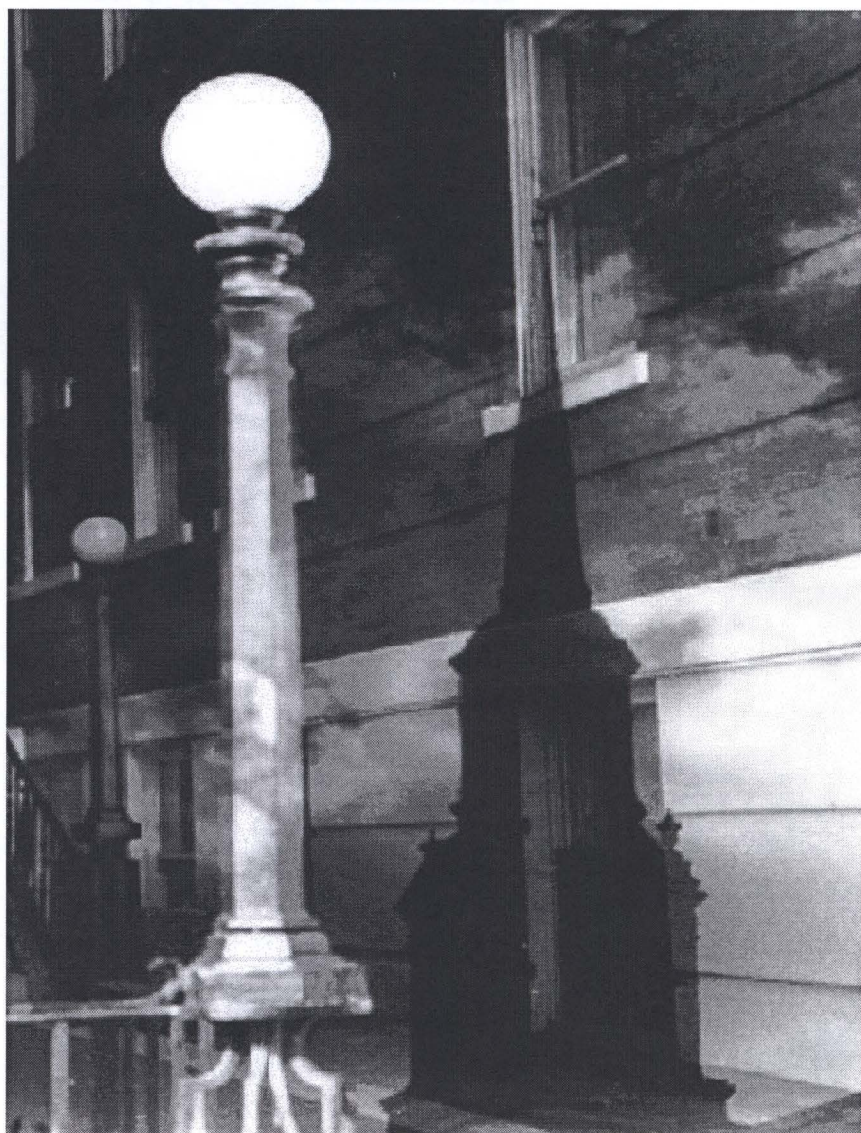
Prof. Mike Strelow

The afternoon wears on, maculate shadows,
Sorry shadows in breach of sunlight.
Like water in a dipper, she's carried by light
into the room where her heels click the oak floor.

The day of birth the midwife wrapped her in fresh newspapers,
The only thing sterile in that birth house, and
When the doctor arrived and unwrapped her,
She was text all over proclaiming the
News of the world on her fresh hide,
Word and skin made one. Her mother scrubbed and scrubbed.

She pauses, holds her blue hat out to the light
For it to approve, finds the hat floats in light.
She is alone with her blue hat.

She is leaving words behind after her auspicious start:
That promise to write the world backwards,
Avoid mirrors; the crenelated shadow
She casts now, hands on hips, lubricates the
November light so it holds her hat wordlessly in air.



The Art of Dying

Cassandra Farrin

I practice dying every day –
the method of a madman walking
longways down a cliff, deliberate
collapse.

Death of the soul in totality with ash
a drop stomached with trembling –
I'm clutching God around the waist

What if I lose him? Please, God,
don't let me die. The very
silence of it, the non-poetry. But
I practice every day,
the ritual collapse of my foundation,
I've been falling ever since.

I rebuild new things on that oldness.
If God has grip into the deepest reaches,
God, please, make death
into a living matter.

Moscow : October 27

Jenny Andrews

When the opiate leaked through the vents,
Their lungs almost welcomed it with exhausted relief,
Breathing in the sleepy gas –
The authorities' solution.

Fifty-eight hours earlier
A dozen full-bodied Chechen women, cloaked in black robes and explosives, storm into the
packed theater, thumbs ready at the detonator. The orchestra stops playing in the pit.
The actors' faces go pale.
An audience of 800 ducks into the plush, red theater seats as gunfire rings
in the rafters.
Husbands cover wives; wives cover children.
The aggressors hoist themselves up on stage
They now are the players
armed with their next move for independence.
A man and a woman are executed in front of the others –
a quick, silent bullet to the temple
Is all it takes.

On this icy Russian evening, 58 hours after it had begun, the authorities face the question that
looms overhead like a vaporous cloud:

How many can we afford to lose to save the rest?

The answer? some.

A day and two nights of fear and starvation, with the constant stench
of urine and blood
Weakens the captives.
So where the gas collects into pools in the depths of the seating
Where it hangs in the throats of children and the elderly
It is too much.

“How many can we afford to lose?”

Some.

90.

120?

And the thick, robed women, slump in the plush, red seats, knocked out by the silent vapor,
Their thumbs slip off the bomb's trigger.

The authorities rush in, and a quick, silent bullet to the temple
of each Chechen woman

Is all it takes.

They carry 800 limp captives, dressed in their theater best, out of the hall into the ice-cloaked
streets.

My mother

back in school

Jeanne Beko

She sits there at the far end of the dining room table with a mass of books and notes spread out before her. The unforgiving overhead light illuminates the wrinkles at the corners of her eyes – lines from squinting because she is too stubborn to wear her glasses. She clicks the top of her tongue against the roof of her mouth to signal the coming frustration. After another minute of staring at the same sentence, she exhales loudly and covers her small face with her knobby hands. I know that she is trying hard, but I have heard that sigh too many times. I know she wants me to ask her what the problem is, I know she wants me to offer to help her, but I keep my back turned. I try to focus on my own book laid out before me, but I feel her eyes peering through her fingers and searing a hole in the back of my tank-top. And soon, I am like her, staring at the same sentence without comprehension.

B l a m e

Diana Leong

Women of Adam and Adam of mud,
brought to life by breath from above.
But if from Adam is where all Women begin,
don't all their failings fall really to him?
Or can we attribute them to faulty clay?
Or perhaps god's breath was inert that day.
But again from Women come Woman and Man,
a pattern that generations indelibly span.
And if Women always create as such,
perhaps as creatures they are gods just as much?
But if Women act in the same as god,
perhaps all they have to work with is mud.
And here boys and girls is the true trilogy:
human, god, and mud, the holiest three!



Cannery, Hood River

Janice Gould

In September the pears were trucked in
from the orchards and dumped into bins
that crested with ripening fruit.

We stood for hours by our machines
as the harvest jostled by on conveyors, timed
our movements to the rhythm of the steel
peelers. We fed the cups that grab the fruit
—six pears at a time—clamped them tight,
skinned, slit, and sent them to the next

group of women who sorted the halves
from the bits and quarters, trimmed the pieces
of excess hide. When the noon whistle blew,
we broke for lunch in the company cafeteria,

sat at the square tables, downed our chili,
joked and complained about men, work, our pitiful
pay, for which we were grateful nonetheless.
on days it didn't rain, my friends and I escaped

to the grassy slope near the county library,
ate apples, dozed in the Indian summer sun.
I could hear the tugs on the Columbia pushing
their freight of logs or grain, and sometimes

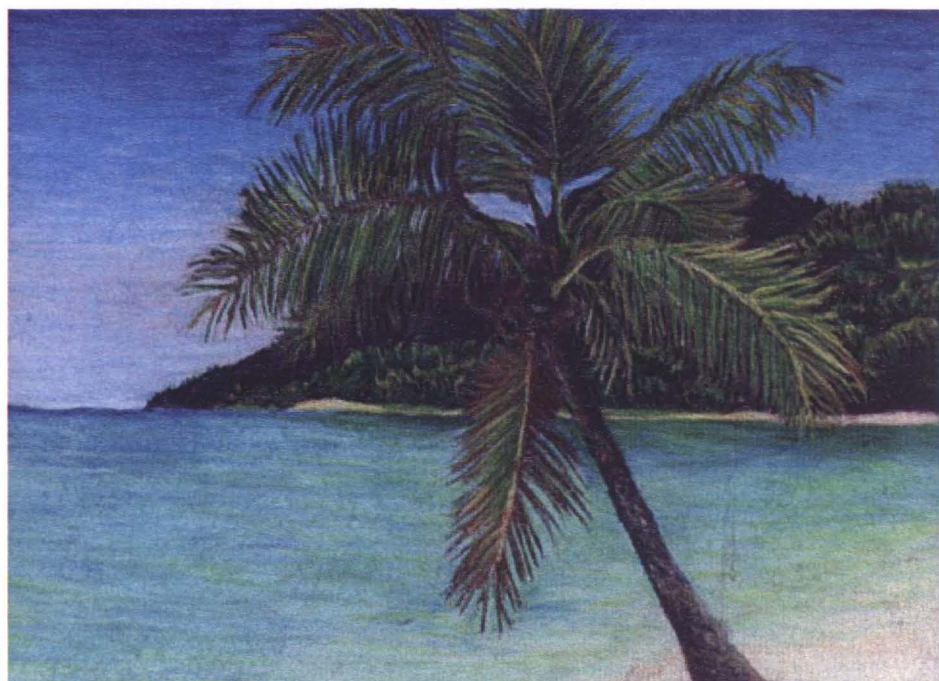
a sailboat slipped past, tacking down the river
to the Pacific. I could feel the pull of the current
in my own blood, and curiosity welled in me
about what lay beyond where I could see. When

we heard the blast of the signal at one, we'd return
to work, don our aprons, make haste to our peelers
at the back brick wall. Above the din of the factory,
clanks of cans, and whir of machines, we stood

guarding our unfulfilled dreams.

H a p p y

Jeanne Beko



My grandfather navigated this river with oil-stained pants and unbuttoned white shirt,
Sleeves rolled up past tanned elbows.

Armed only with a boat he had found turned upside down as a monument to knee-high grass,
He dipped his hat into the water and carefully poured its contents into a jar
That would one day be a brilliant collection of shards.

My father played in this river with torn flip-flops and sun-dyed buzzcut for which his mother had
paid the barber one dollar.

His father's boat had sunk directly below where he treaded among the remains of a mountain snow
that had melted a month before,

Sticking to the muddy bottom.

With thirty-second breaths and slippery skin

He dove to the bottom to touch the boat that now served as a roof to long-forgotten fish and their
coke-can aquariums.

I lost my soul in this river,

With tilted cap and crooked smile.

I tell myself stories of my father and his

As I take off my college t-shirt and skip not-so-flat stones across the water for good luck.

Diving into the cold I begin to search,

But I can't find the boat that my grandfather turned over

And my father swam to touch.

The sound of the river is invisible now.

After a hundred nights on the banks, muddy flip-flop sandals, brown legs
and Budweiser cans, dragonfly cigarettes buzzing and flickering around
laughter in the dark I can't hear it anymore.

This is what it sounds like:

Slow smooth stones shifting

Salmon leaning sideways into fate

Thick night air, blooming petals of India ink

Sometimes, walking down Church Street

I hear the elegy of the river, for one July-colored moment

Slow smooth stones shifting

Salmon leaning sideways into fate

Thick night air, blooming petals of India ink

When I am tired of being alive

Sometimes I hear the heartbeat bluegrass rustling ocean noise

It reminds me:

The sound of the river is invisible now, but you carry it

Like the lazy harvest moon wraps its glow around the earth



Remember to Breathe

Kerri Ladish

She sits comfortably on my chest
and won't allow me to breathe.
I struggle uselessly for too long,
wiggling, pushing, pulling, tugging.
Still, she smiles smugly and sits
comfortably. I hear her laughing
as she watches my fruitless search
for the freedom of air. Gritting my teeth,
I resolve to fight harder.

Pinned awkwardly between myself
and what I have become,
I know her strength has drained me.
I could just lie here and listen and wait
as the last drop of air travels
out of exasperated lungs,
this time not being beckoned back.
She would leave if I did that –
she would have to. Maybe
then I could
 Breathe again.

Jay Oost

G l e n w o o d Y o u t h



It was raining,
it was autumn,
a girl was in my arms.

Perhaps to the east
the moon rose
over the crest of the mountains.

To the south
a procession of ghosts came
swinging their censers of iron,

and somewhere a prickly pear
thrust forth its limb of thorns,
a lizard dashed under a rock.

But here it was raining,
a girl was in my arms,
and her skin was fragrant as wheat.

Perhaps in the valley a flock
of night herons settled in oaks —
the bittern heard their hoarse cries—

while on the coast a wave tossed
a glass float on the beach
and only a starfish noticed.

But here it was raining
and autumn,
and the girl's eyes were blue-gray.
My own were alight with wonder.

Somewhere a bell kept tolling,
a mother called her child,
and the child was singing.

In the universe a meteor was falling,
the wind stopped suddenly,
an ice crystal was forming.

But here the apples had ripened,
symphonies were playing,
and a girl smiled as she kissed me.
My heart was fiery and laughing
but already breaking, for it was
autumn and raining,

B r e a t h i n g

Cayly Christensen

in ubiquitous night
i am complicated. i take
Black as companion
to the bad ass, the slut, the intricate
woman i am
and i take time with my
confessions. these thoughts
are my melody sung,
pounding it out to the rhythm
of my heart. and the night
sings along. i prefer
this darkness
to the glances we
exchange, to our games
and attractions. it's a flannel
night i'm in
and she gives me room
to breathe

Jen Brown

U n t i t l e d



R o c k a w a y

Night's arm around me.
Moon's soft eye shines on my skin.
Waves' voice whispers to me.
Rhythmic flow, hiding violent currents
Pulling me slowly closer, closer
Till my toes feel cool waters kiss
And closer still
Water creeping up cloth
Cuffed I cannot escape

I shouldn't venture deeper
I should go back, the moon is safer
I hang at the edge, dark and light meet
Pulling back, I begin to run
Falling, out of breath, I lie
And watch my breath curl upwards
To the moon

Benjamin Wilson

The Trees and the Breeze

Why do the trees sing

As the wind blows gently through the leaves?

Don't they know what unforgiving autumn will bring

As bleakness rides headlong with the breeze?

But while it's still summer,

Yet the stillness, softly interrupted,

I won't drown out this natural number

Just for the sake of fretting spring disrupted.

If I sit here and worry

About a winterous furry

How can I enjoy the song

Of harmonizing trees and the breeze?

Spring to Summer

Devon Ward-Thommes

My heart is green like willow grass
Does this mean I'm young?

Essentially, the ants know what to do.
Patterns, cycles, individuals become One.

Are we all different sides of the same coin?
It's tarnished with green rust

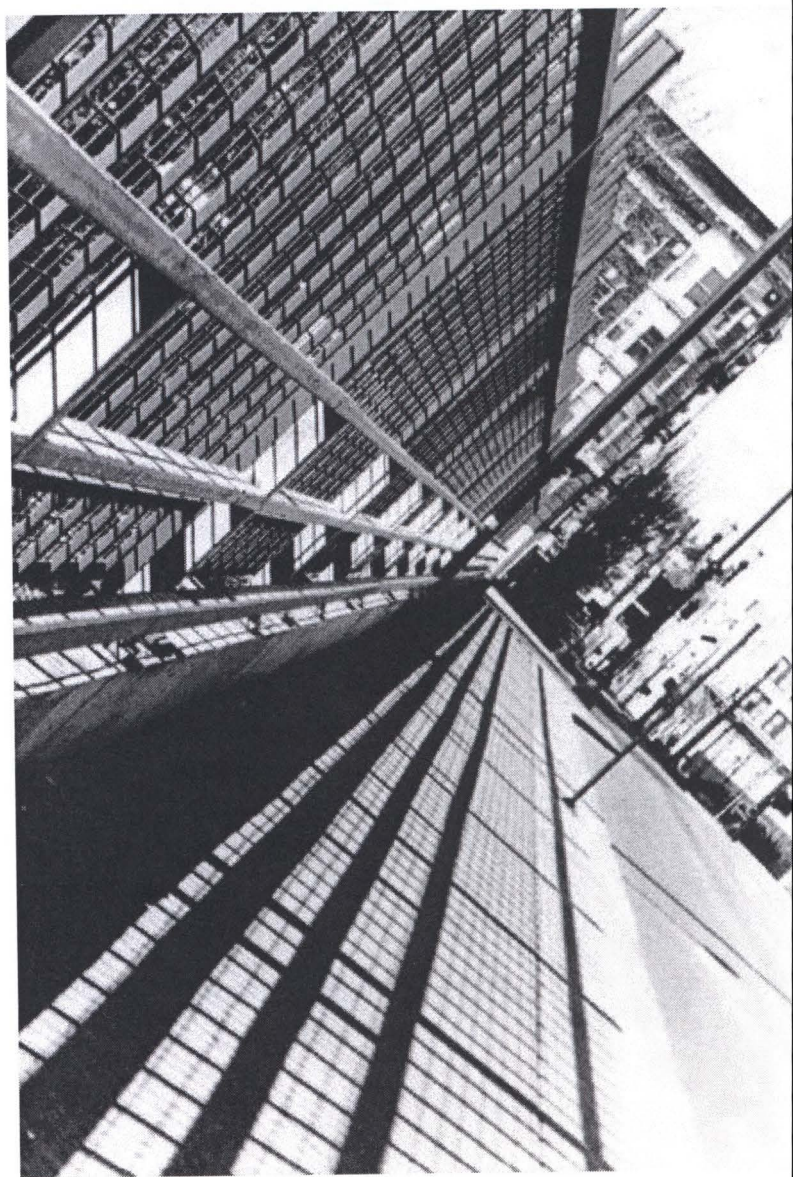
In the fall, the rivers become charged with fish,
A large, winding, fish-filled snake, rushing towards millions of eggs

Eggs brimming with fish,
Fish brimming with eggs,

Coming to dance, under a full moon.
The willow boys sway in the dark breeze.

Urban Vortex

Carly S



In contemplation
of a boy walking
barefoot in the grass

Crystal Weber

A stranger in a blue shirt
passed me today.
In his hands he held his
discarded sandals.
It's too nice a day for shoes,
for feet to be bound up,
enclosed.
On a day like today, toes need to feel
thick green grass,
the prickling heat of the sun,
the moist rich earth.
My own bare feet stretched and curled
in ecstasy.
"Freedom!" the called to the stranger's
passing feet.
"Yes, Freedom – Freedom and Grass!"
came the reply.
The stranger and I never said a word,
but our feet,
our feet spoke volumes
of the joys of walking
on grass.

Without **W o r d s**

Gayly Christensen

at a safe distance, where
the having of you is a discourse
of bodies not minds and my weaponry
of words is silenced. sometimes
i like the silence of sexual
slants and they dance
overhead, begging us
to breathe them in and sometimes
i like that our hands
do the talking, walking
us through. it's easier
with eyes closed to be flesh-
to-flesh, mouth-to-mouth with
the taste of you on my
tongue and my breath on
your lips, your hands
on my hips. sometimes i like
to be speechless. and, of course,
i like the next-to-me
of you.

Editors' Last Word

Chrysalis is a publication of the Associated Students of Willamette University. Submissions are accepted from all members of the Willamette community, and entries are blind-judged on the basis of majority vote by the *Chrysalis* editorial staff.

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

Editor-in-chief: Adrienne Davich

My sincere thanks to the following organizations, departments, and individuals for making the renewed publication of *The Chrysalis* financially feasible: ASWU; the Willamette University Writing Center; the English Department; the Hallie Ford Chair in Writing, Janice Gould; President Pelton; and the CLA Dean, Carol Long. I also want to give a special thank you to Professor Gretchen Moon, the advisor to the *Chrysalis*. Finally, thank you Mike and Crystal for the countless hours of your time spent working on this magazine. You two are the greatest!

Assistant Editor: Mike Ross

I'm so glad to have been part of the revival of *The Chrysalis*. Willamette needs an outlet like this; hopefully, the tradition will continue in the years to come. Thanks to everyone who turned in submissions. It was exciting to see that so many people were interested in sharing their work with the Willamette community. Adrienne and Crystal, working with you has been a terrific experience -- At times the process of production was frustrating, but definitely rewarding in the end.

Assistant Editor: Crystal Weber

First of all, I want to thank Adrienne for all of her hard work and inspiration. Without her dedication and foresight the *Chrysalis* would not be here. It has been a great experience, as well as a lot of fun, working with Adrienne and Mike and being a part of this new, challenging, creative, fun process. I also want to thank everyone that submitted artwork, stories, and poems to this edition. It has been exciting discovering how much talent there is on this campus, and I am thrilled that the *Chrysalis* has been able to provide a way of showcasing that talent. Personal expression through the arts has always been a passion of mine, and I love drawing, painting, writing, and, especially recently, writing poetry. I hope that everyone discovers something in this edition of the *Chrysalis* that they find inspirational, moving, funny, and intriguing.

t h e

c h r y s a l i s

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“In life beauty perishes,
but not in art”
- Leonardo da Vinci

