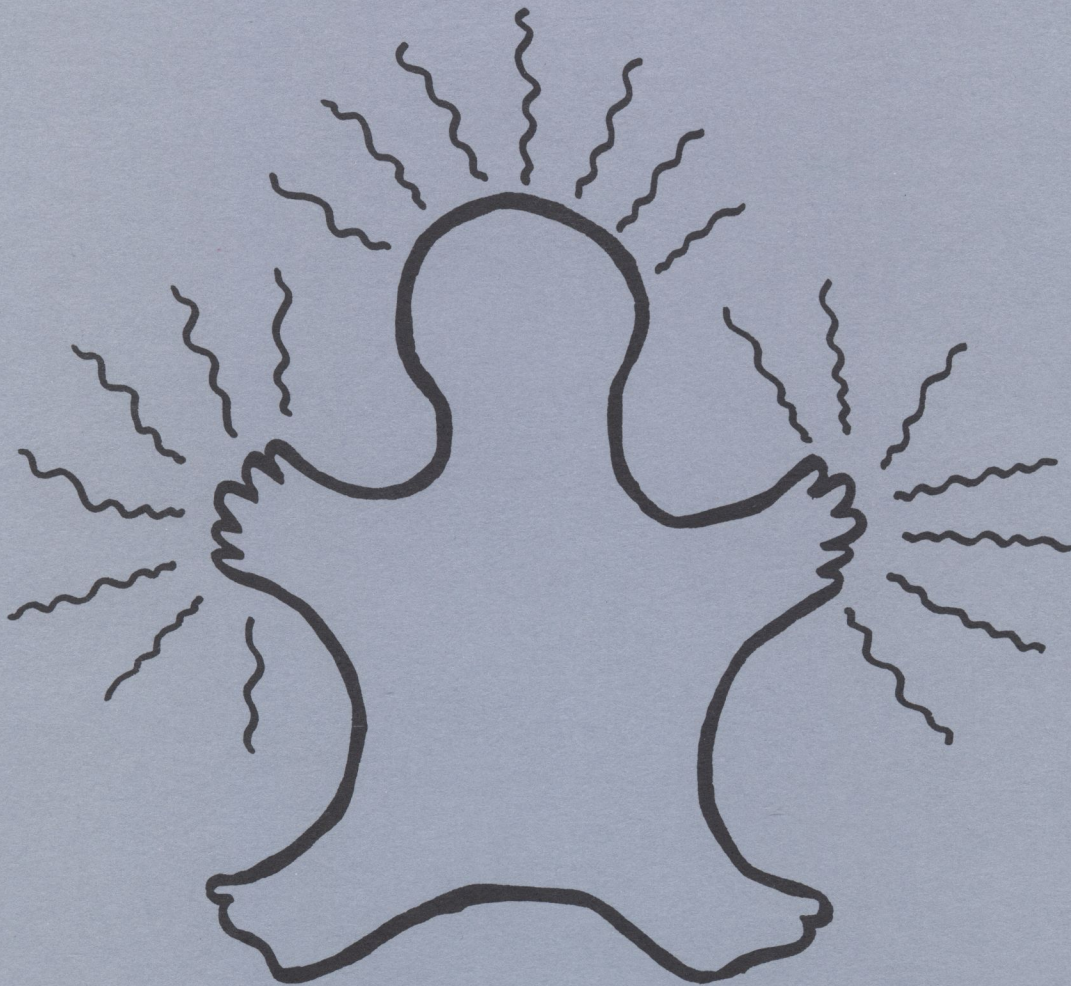


J^{the}ason '92



The Power of People, Expressed

Willamette University's Art and Literary Magazine

SPRING 1992

the
JASON

"What do you believe you are capable of?"

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"The Thompsons" By Mary Anne Johns

Lynne MacVean

Sunshine Days

Sparkles dancing on the water flit away
Like summer butterflies or long-forgotten
Memories of bygone sunshine days
When life was wretched but the world was new,
When sadness was the only weight on a windswept brow and
Greed and confusion the only sandbags on an innocent smile
When the waves broke and all colours were beautiful and
The hand that fell could at least be seen and hated
When puppies were a week's fascination and Christmas
Was the best holiday, no mention of a birth,
When to be liked was the only motive and
To be loved was enough to chase away
The shadows of forts and dark hallways and
Five minutes lasted forever and the thing most feared
Was to be called in to dinner before sun-down.
Sunshine days that were thrown away with popsicle sticks,
Unable to be appreciated until they were gone.

Nancy Gordon

AH, BUT FOR TENACITY

My father told me
 when I was very young
 "You don't get anywhere
 in life
 without sticktoitiveness
 Quitters never make it"
 He learned this from his
 father and he's
 lived his life this way
 often at the price of loneliness
 as he continues to tenaciously hang on
 (and I am my father's daughter)

My mother died
 for her tenacity
 as did her mother
 My mother-in-law died
 for its lack
 but her mother tenaciously
 hangs on
 (and I am my mother's daughter)

Ah, but for tenacity
 I might have
 married my true love
 I might have given
 way to creative impulses
 I might have been numb
 less often

Ah, but for tenacity
 I might have divorced
 in five years instead of 20
 I might have danced
 more often
 watered my flowers
 and played music

Ah, but for tenacity
 I might have
 stayed home with my children
 hugged my parents
 and said I love you
 more often
 Ah, but for tenacity

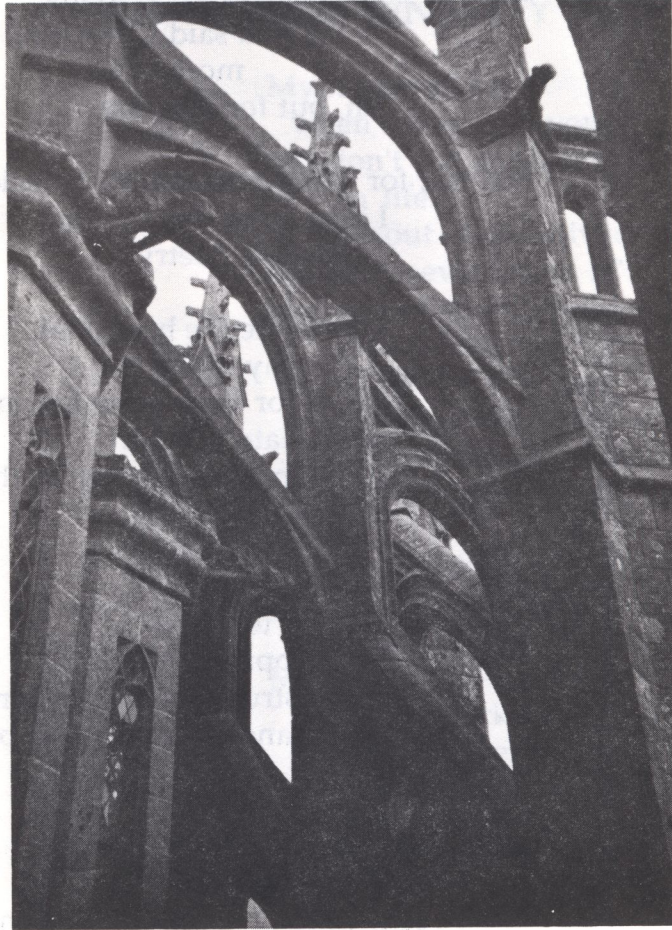
But Ah, for being tenaciously tenacious
 I now have the courage
 to write poetry

appreciate the beauty of
 my children
 allow for their mistakes and mine
 appreciate wisdom
 sometimes speak my truth
 love more deeply
 feel pain

Ah, for tenacity
 I can appreciate
 the struggle of my parents
 and their parents' parents

but most of all
 I can have hope for my
 children
 and their children's children

Ah, for tenacity
 and to balance
 it with
 the wisdom
 of knowing
 when to tenaciously change directions



"Strength in Stone" By Melinda Hoffman

Jeff Mullen

AROUND THE HORN

When the new season arrives
and the last ones memories have melted away
A fresh new spirit thrives
in a game that children play

In memory of the immortal
Tinker to Evers to Chance
Does the keystone combo thwart
the enemies bold advance
So often is the moundsmans
most fervent plea
Answered by the guardians
6 to 4 to 3

Hoover at the Hot Corner
stops fiery shots
And throws frozen ropes
the diamond across
At the other end
the man stretches and strains
For every inch counts
in the best of all games

And beyond the diamond
grow pastures of green
Three men roam and range
to cover the seams
They jump at the CRACK!
and follow the ball
Back to the track
they climb the wall
Day after day
they watch the sphere rise
They work in the fields
but only chase flies

The battery supplies
 the charge and the thrill
 The man at the dish glares hungrily
 at the man on the hill
 For it's the slugger's worst enemy
 that serves up the pill
 And a sharp slicing deuce
 that he's trying to kill
 He steps back in
 against the crafty, sly fox
 Looking for a straight one
 to send up the box

 'Tis a child's game
 that grown men play
 With a bat, ball, and glove
 on a hot summer's day.

Brian Buckley

Arriving at the College

We believed Paradise
 was upon us
 Despite its veiled demeanor-
 its hallowed, ethereal realms
 cloaked by ancient structures
 of brick, draped with ivy;
 The assorted seraphim
 masked by various degrees
 of scholarly expression
 and tweed sports jacket;
 The anticipated answers
 to Life
 disguised in the outlines
 of pedantic syllabi, Yet

Arriving at the College,
we must have thought it
Heaven,
For, loosed from the yoke
of parental passion
and Free
to just say no
we seldom did.
Was it acceptance of
some divine lawlessness
sparked that Dionysiac frenzy,
by which we were consumed?

With mid-terms tomorrow
I fear that God's leniency
May have been wrongly assumed.

The Red Beret

Out of place here,
certainly,
amongst the common caps
of scribbling heads gone grey
with focus on Physics,
The red beret

Tilts with graceful deference
 To Masses and Methods,
 To Quarks and Equations,
 like smooth, pensive
 Venetian water
 parting to pass a boat.

That misplaced shade
intrigues me
more than any solar flare
And in retreat
from Relativity,

I go to an irrational world
 of red romance,
 Where the moon escapes
 concrete, elliptic paths,
 It's only line of force
 the lover's eye.

Julian Snow

Boxes

What we are in need of are boxes:
 things that lie empty and stare
 for arms from our minds to fill them
 with meanings that beg to be there

meanings elusive, yet playful
 dancing among the blue winds
 escaping the gray one that sent them
 broken, unable to mend

broken one stares out in stillness:
 a silence that deafens the ears
 with the feet of those who are dancing
 jumping inside and outside at will

trapped in monotony of pattern
 same rhythm again and again
 tearing the glue from the cardboard
 increasing the speed of the winds

fragile one made out of cardboard
 fragile one feeling a chill
 fragile one moving to speak now
 fragile one utters command:

Fill

Julie Muñiz

LIES--

We live in a world of lies --
 like Bosch's Hay Wain*,
 we follow a haystack of lies,
 everyone grasping at straws of wealth
 as it rolls by.
 I imagine this hay to be unlike the rest --
 These fibers of fibs can be trusted, believed.
 And I do believe because I need to so much.
 So I weave these fibers into myself
 until ragged rye and chaffs of wanton wheat
 protrude from each follicle,
 and I knit them together
 making rough sweaters and blankets to hide beneath.
 But instead they only pierce and scratch.
 Because in reality,
 they are only lies:
 each broken straw
 and dead blade of grass
 another empty promise
 I sadly have
 believed.

* painting by Hieronymus Bosch, c. 1490-95

Jason Shamus McMillen

brush strokes

brush strokes
 images on canvas
 reflections of reality
 created to be
 not what is
 but what should be

to the sea

to the sea
 we're told to believe
 a grain of sand
 in the beach of life
 is just momentary
 only naive
 and just a glimpse
 of what is
 but what could be
 if we stood up
 and headed out to sea

Lynne MacVean

The Mirror

In the mirror I find my reflection-
 What else did I expect to find there?
 A lawyer, a politician, a rebel,
 A manchiquenga? My mother, perhaps?
 No, I'd hoped to find liberty. I'd
 Hoped to find a feminist, and activist,
 A writer, a shaker, a mover, a leader.
 I'd hoped to find a catalyst, a tiger
 I'd hoped to find Poet, McJenn.
 I'd hoped to find a christian existentialist,
 A strong woman, a child, a mother, a friend,
 A union of opposites, a marriage of needs,
 A whole, a part, a connection.
 I'd hoped to find the answers

To the questions I'd never asked.
 I'd hoped to find the man of my dreams
 be faulty and confused just like me
 Only different. I'd hoped to find complexity
 In its simplest form, obscurity
 Reduced to its basic elements.
 I'd hoped to see the future
 In the past, living in the present.
 I'd hoped to find a pathway
 That leads to itself yet
 With a rhythm to the passing.
 To be honest, what I'd hoped
 More than anything else was
 To find You there
 Looking back at me.

Peggie Southwick

Meditation

As I'm arranging all my thoughts
 Impatient shoulds and I should nots
 Keep pushing pulling crowding shoving
 All the beauty, all the loving
 Back into a someday place
 Where life allows a Slower . . . pace,
 Where life Allows . . . a slower pace,
 Where Life . . . allows a slower pace . . .

Tip-toeing from my darkness,
I stretch away the aches
and splendor in the memory of how
I love it here, so open and free . . .
so full of Being and Seeing;
sometimes I feel I shall burst inside
from all this Me-ing!
Now, bubbling through their universe
Living Waters wash over me
and I am filled to their depths.
Sun bathes me warmly in my own truth
as I unfold into its mysteries my total being.
(Every petal of me craves this freeing!)
"Darling because my blood can dance and sing" . . .
Why can't I stay here always?
I am robbed by my own absence when
so much to share and I will not.
Darkness slides back over me as

Alarms go off inside my head
And call me back among the dead.
I fold myself back unto me
As, armored for "reality",
The ticks and tocks of reasoned rhyme
Again--march my thoughts in measured time.

Nancy Gordon

A GLIMPSE OF THE SOUL EATERS

I have
just visited
the Soul Eaters

and they quietly
began to serve my
soul up for their supper

Oh, they were
very proper
about it all

I stood back
in awe
as I watched them
quietly prepare for
the dining

I wondered why
I did not protest
as they set the
table and lit candles
in my honor

Why had I given
them such a
feast without so
much as a squabble

Fortunately I
realized I was just visiting
and hadn't really
been invited
for dinner

and certainly
wasn't
staying
for dessert!

Marc Kroop

THE BURIED TREASURE

In the corner of a kingdom
beyond the rocky shore
there lies a buried treasure
which holds a great allure

The worthy and the bold
search endlessly in vain
for the unimagined riches of
which they hope to gain

Many men are driven
by unrelenting need
and many more are buried
by their gluttony and greed

Each succeeding generation
a new crop will endure
the hardships of their fathers
beyond the rocky shore

Those lucky to survive
will gladly tell their tale
however so embellished
of women and of ale

For glory and for gold
will search forever more
to raise the buried treasure
from beyond the rocky shore

Do raise up your glasses
tonight we'll laugh and sing
for tomorrow starts the journey
which makes a common man a king.



"Antique Market" By Cindy Hawkins

Shelly Tomlinson

Honor and Other Things

A fresh-faced naval officer sits a row in front of me. His appearance is deliberate, from careful haircut to creaseless midnight blue uniform set with two rows of shining brass buttons. He is smiling and talking to a young couple next to him. The man twists his wedding ring around and around and around and around, asking the naval officer questions. The couple leans forward on the hard plastic airport seats, listening intently. They seem afraid of missing any small word from the mouth of the young man. Every few words, as if on command, they smile measured toothy smiles. They hold hands tightly, knuckles standing out in white relief. The woman looks nervously at her husband a few times, imagining him wearing a uniform. She shakes her head to rid herself of the image. The officer's words float up to the ceiling and hang like a smoky haze over the crowded rows of black seats. The harsh artificial light of the terminal shines in his black patent leather shoes. He shines. Laughing, he shows everyone an I.D. card with his picture. The people near him laugh too, some without seeing the picture.

A fragile, stooped old woman near him hangs on his words, worshipping the young military man. She pulls the battered blue skycap wheelchair closer, wanting to be next to him, wanting to be a part of all this, in any small way. She stares at him as if he is not a naive boy/man that she has just met, but someone else, someone that she wants him to be. She is old enough to remember other young military men who shined like this one, other soldiers who dreamed of foreign countries and died in them. She pats his large calloused hand with her pale blue-veined one and smiles, listening to the sound of his speech and ignoring the words.

A large, florid matron perches on the edge of a seat across from him, her words heavy and thick under the high blissful chatter of the young couple. She rummages around in her worn bag for something. In her frustration she spills lipstick, Kleenex, gum wrappers and other things over the sides, onto the floor. Finally, she finds the picture. She sighs, finally satisfied, hands the naval officer the picture and speaks in a continuous stream about her son in the Navy, in Saudi Arabia. She speaks of the glory of fighting for America, but punctuates her sentences with the word, pray. She

fawns over him, petting him, repeating her son's name so that he won't forget.

Her husband sits beside her, his arm thrown casually over the back of the seats next to him. He brushes the top of his steel grey crew cut and nods his head at the words of the naval officer. He says nothing. He cannot find the words to tell the ardent young man what he feels. Yes, he thinks, there was a certain sort of honor in defending my country. There were other things, too. Other things that changed me. I wonder if there will be honor and other things for this boy. He abandons the question to study the floor, unwilling to consider the answer.

A polite, muffled voice announces boarding for our flight. We all move toward the gate, dragging our belongings behind us. The fresh-faced naval officer hands his ticket to the agent, smiling. She smiles back, staring at him for a long moment as he strides down the walkway to the plane. He fades, turns a corner, and disappears from sight. She takes another ticket.

Dyan Watson

VIETNAM: Two Perspectives

I wanted them! I wanted them!
All we wanted was freedom, independence and unification.

And I remember there were two guys that were
 going through some grass --
*And I remember there was my daughter standing in
 the fields, feeding the pigs --*

And bam!
 And bam!

I dinged in on one of them and I nailed him.
The sky lit up and my daughter's body exploded.

And I felt good, and I wanted more.
And I wept and cursed the god of America.

Lisa Golda

the leaving riddle

fall

so

far

don't

see

the

drop. Paper

thin screams

in colors claw the sidewalk

scratching somersaults crawl under

branches catch breath (some cracking now)

end up drowned

in puddles suffocated by children eaten

in the wind

they leave hiroshima shadows sometimes

Julie Muñoz

Depression

A lion in tall December grass,
 creeping,
 prowling,
 ravenously stalking its prey
 who sits unaware.
Quiet and slow it approaches--
 glum feelings that gnaw the minutes,
 chew the corners of each day into a
 snarl of confusion.

It attacks with a pounce
 and hangs like a heavy bag
 strung tightly around the neck
 until
 its dragging weight
 becomes too heavy to fight:
 resistance lost.

A strangulation
 with each throttling bite
until incessant tears
 bleed from the wounds,
 choking chances of hope.

It consumes every last part
 of the relinquishing game
 until there's nothing left
 but scrapes of flesh
and a dead layer of skin
 hanging
 on some very
 weary
 bones.

Benjamin Carson

Untitled 14

Slowly a sweetness of color somehow
Found its way to my salt-stained eyes

Then it changed, a shoulder in darkness
But I caught its time encumbering motion;
Each wave had its own face of silver
And its own face of grey, each one

Smitten with a life of hue from the earth
or sky it surveyed

There was evidence of the sun when she came.

Teri Watanabe

Chains of Rainbow Love

Relationships are links of color
The tones--calm green--of father, mother
The gentle shades of sister, brother
Yet without the familial realm there lies
The romance with its broken ties
The blackened love as it dies
And all the ones with answered hope
Have a chain as light, white rope
A weight of naught with which to cope
Yet there exist the other hues
Those we do not, cannot choose
First chaining me, then chaining you
As circles grow from each contact

Of loves once tight now relaxed
 There hide the questions never asked
 Red fiery sphere of jealousy
 Hangs on the air for all to see
 Thrown from eye of him to me
 A blissful blue, a twinkling gem
 That signifies the thoughts of them
 When we're together--me and him
 Then the amber, brightly golden
 Shows that at this very moment
 Yet another heart is stolen
 From this heart which inside glows
 The yellow light of longing grows
 Faced with rejection: this it knows
 And while one winks that carefree blue
 Red, green, and gold are present, too
 And endless links are forged anew
 Thus the chains of rainbow love
 Connect the many of "is" and "was"
 Bound together with . . . Because

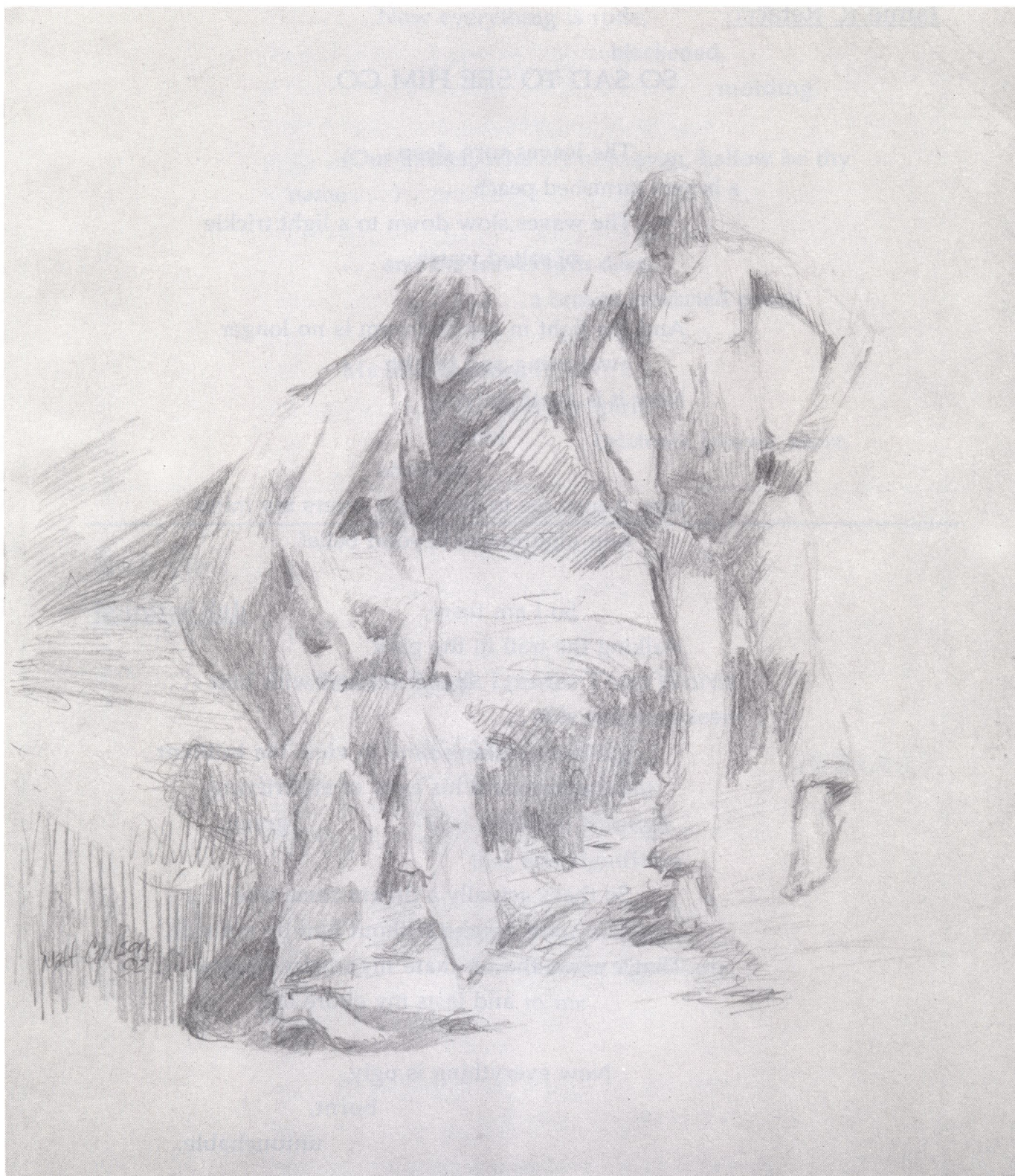
Dan Beacham

4 a.m.

I left her room ten minutes ago; she
 sleeps like a porcelain doll, and
 I hated so much to move, to stir
 those petal soft fingers from the fetal curl, to call
 her hair across from the drawn, waxen mouth
 where lay the fleeting and feigned peace of sleep.

Actress, poetess-
 her words are a painful echo chamber, all
 quite real, in touch
 and she wants a child someday
 but would rather that no father imposed.
 I asked why, and made the same mistake later
 when we were this close and the tears had come
 to claim their ground after a touch;
 -it might have been my whiskers rough on her neck
 like an old lover's, or it might have been
 my breath too heavy in her ear, as
 the pulses quickened like lightning onto clay and
 the eyes shut tight as
 the strained jaw- With or without me
 the tears had come to keep her
 in line, on line
 in touch
 with the actress, the poetess
 and like I have any thing to do with it,
 I ask why,
 not realizing just how little I know, just how much
 it must take.

"I just want to be nice to you," but something else
 inside me steals the words; like us
 they are brief in their entrance and
 breathless in their stay. So
 now I slip from a place that she will not miss me-
 -would that morning came less swiftly.



"Parents' Unexpected Return" By Matt Carlson

Jamie R. Retacco

SO SAD TO SEE HIM GO

The leaves turn deep,
a brown tarnished peach . . .
The waves slow down to a light trickle
of salted water.

And the light in my bedroom is no longer
awakening and bright.
Now it is death defying,
lonely,
tiresome . . .
now it puts me to sleep and enters my mind
into nightmares beyond belief.

So I am there,
walking the trail in the park
hand in hand with him . . .
trees on either side . . .
taking time to view the brilliant
sunset, and his eyes' of electrifying
green.

So that's actually a dream come true . . .
until I wake without him by my side.
That's when the ultimate nightmare begins,
and lasts my entire life.

Now everything is ugly,
burnt,
untouchable.

(God help us all to heal . . .)

Now everything is rude,
blackened,
molding.

(Our Father, who art in heaven, hallow be thy name . . .)

. . . and the leaves turn deep,
 a brown tarnished peach.

My love is gone . . .
as is my spirit-
catatonic forever more.

Jennifer Sah

Actions Speak Louder Than Words

You said something
it was significant
You followed through
that was significant

Through your actions
You became significant
to me.

Blythe Gardner

Moving Day

The day you left I helped you lift
your big black chair down the front stairs.
I was a child of ten;
You were a man, suddenly alone.

I felt the weight, it pulled my arms
I thought I carried it all;
But silently you stood
and took the weight I couldn't bear.

Together we moved your big black chair
down the stairs and to the street.
We set it gently down
and together we rose and sighed.

Lisa Golda

my mother tells me I wanted to be peter pan

I walk to the coffee shop often these
days cold my hands in pockets of my
little girl old new coat.
never finish the whole cup I don't really
want it all warmth soaks my
fingers are red maple leaves falling on
concrete beauty underfeet

Always after going home, seeing
 the sad pieces of people they have become
 if I never bear I will never be them telling
 mine a kiss is but spit and breath letting
 mine taste the coffee they always want too
 bitter sweetening mine with cream and sugar
 for them

I have switched to earl
 grey sky my little girl coat for a woman black
 coffee he made me drink cold
 my hands so

Benjamin Carson

A LITTLE PORTRAIT FOR YOU WHICH I SHOULD NOT HAVE TITLED, BUT DID

Fascinating people on the avenue
 Lady give your flowers to the child
 Keep your balance keep your balance at the winery
 Mister give a nickel to be reconciled

The one without the hat has such a smile
 The craziness of music in his eyes
 The remainder of the crowd is at the doorway
 Swatting away swatting away the flies

Thoughts I've had since then are mostly new
 Referring only slightly to the book
 Walking through a walking through a bakery
 To get the joke I only had to look

You see love, with you there are no sequiturs
Context is a relish for those who can't commit

Father holding daughter trois, deux, un
Launching off the shoulders of the hillside
Into pools of moonrise over Giverny
A mannerism in which to reside

Kiss me upside down and spin to blue
Do not fix it while it's underneath us
Painting with the painting with the scenery
Strokes to paper fastened will release us

Melinda Hoffman

NATURE LESSON

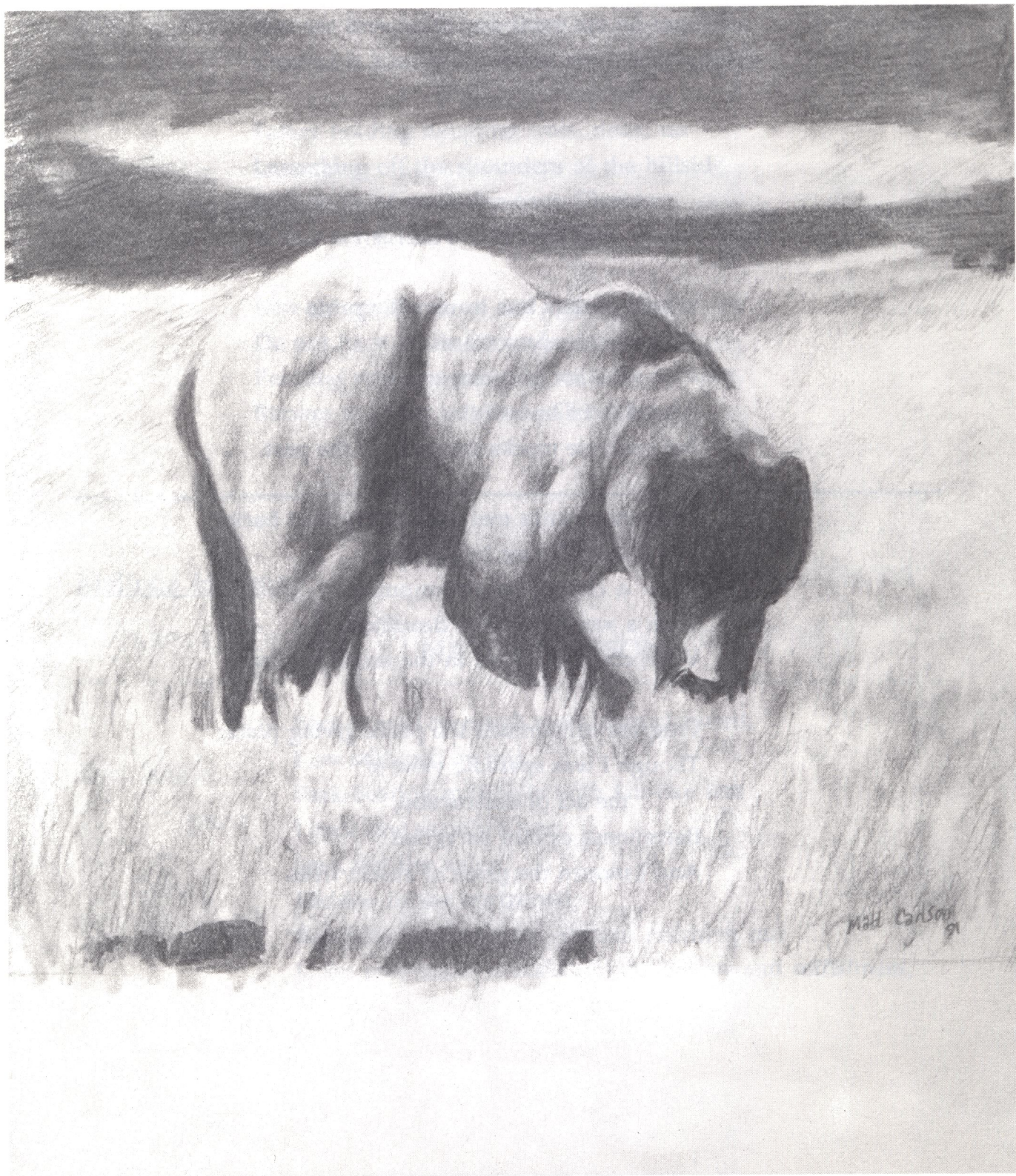
Back braced on rough roots, eyes skyward,
I am schooled by this
Bark-bearing millipede with fan-like feet
I once saw as only a tree:
Seek out the value
Hidden in the horizontal;
Reaching heavenward without reaching out
Is the man-made mistake of skyscrapers and selfishness,
Not the stuff of living things.

FOR THE TREES

Where girders rise in metallic pride
And machinery screams in
 the act of construction
It used to be beautiful.
But concrete mocks the grass of the past.

Once tree trunks met with worry-bent backs:
The touch of their living bark
 a chance for communion
With a world without deadlines.
What comfort found in the touch of steel?

Progress condemned the peace-giving place;
Though I was spared a view of
 the act of destruction,
Barrenness cannot be veiled.
And I mourn the grace of absent trees.



"Admiralty Island Shiras Brown Bear" By Matt Carlson

Dyan Watson

INDIANS ARE NOT DINOSAURS

bones are dug and marvelled at
you polish them
put them in museums for display

artifacts are stolen and marvelled at
you polish them
put them in museums for display

Indians are not dinosaurs
we are not ancient animals to be studied
we are a nation of people to be respected

the rocks cry out
mourning their loneliness
give us back what is ours
we are still here

tears from She Who Watches
fall on the ground
return to us what is ours
we are still here

Indians are not dinosaurs; we are not extinct

Nancy Gordon

FLIGHT

Wings spread
 hovering
 on the
 brink
 of opportunity
the slight feel of
 a breeze in the utter stillness
the sudden flurry
 of wings . . .
flowers quiver - their colors change
Thousands of butterflies
 merge and separate
 in the sky.

This is not the end,

this is only the beginning.