THRESHOLD

1994

Drawing featured on the cover by Rachael Cunico.

Typography for the magazine was produced with Aldus Pagemaker 5.0 software on a Zenith 466xEh computer.

Printed on recycled paper.

CREATIVE ARTS MAGAZINE

The creative arts magazine presents poems, stories, and works of art created by Yavapai College students. The layout and design were produced by Graphic Design, Production, Intern, and Illustration classes.

THRESHOLD

1994

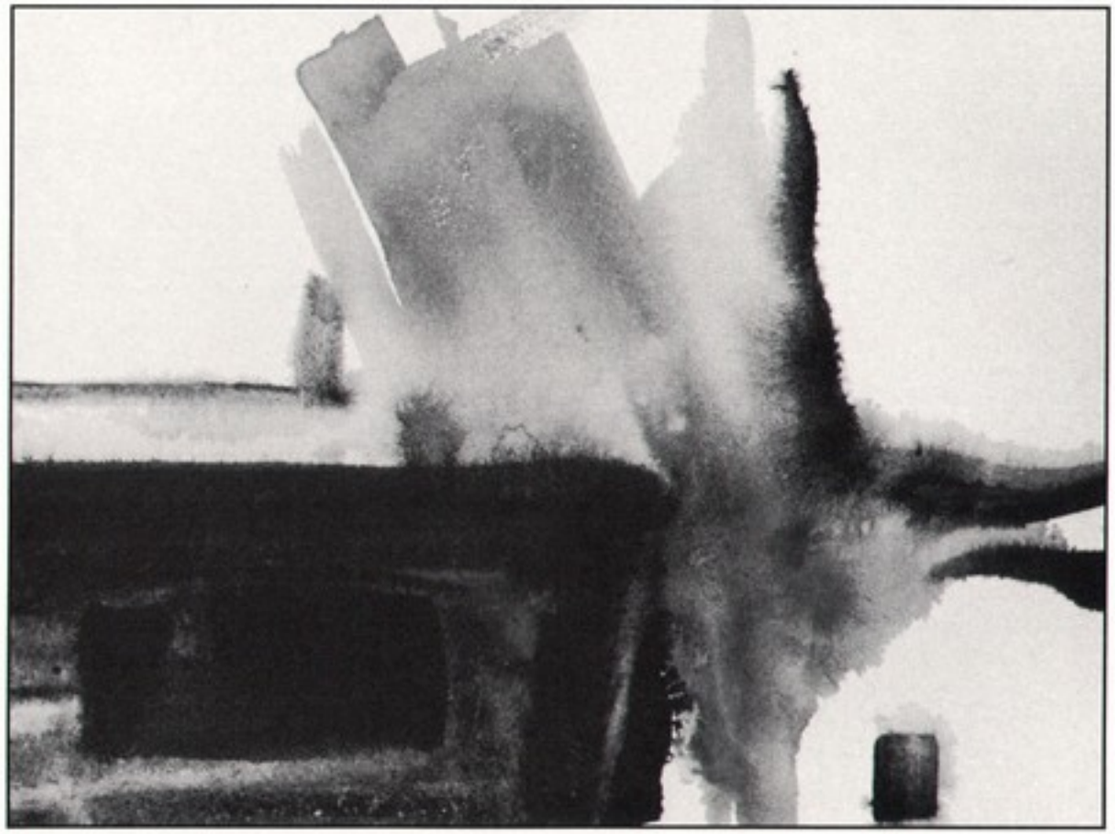
Two-Dimensional Design by Bob Hallenbeck

A Personal Heaven

Dearly Beloved,
I've found the path
to the fluorescent sky
Your children can join us
We'll form a circle and fly
Rip the clouds apart
and leave the world behind.

We'll be absorbed by the horizon.
Our ears blessed by the sound
Create our own religion
and never hunger for the ground
Part the sky by grace of hand
soaring toward the sun
Slowly, languidly, lucidly burning...
Yet never trying to run.

Kris Gonzalez



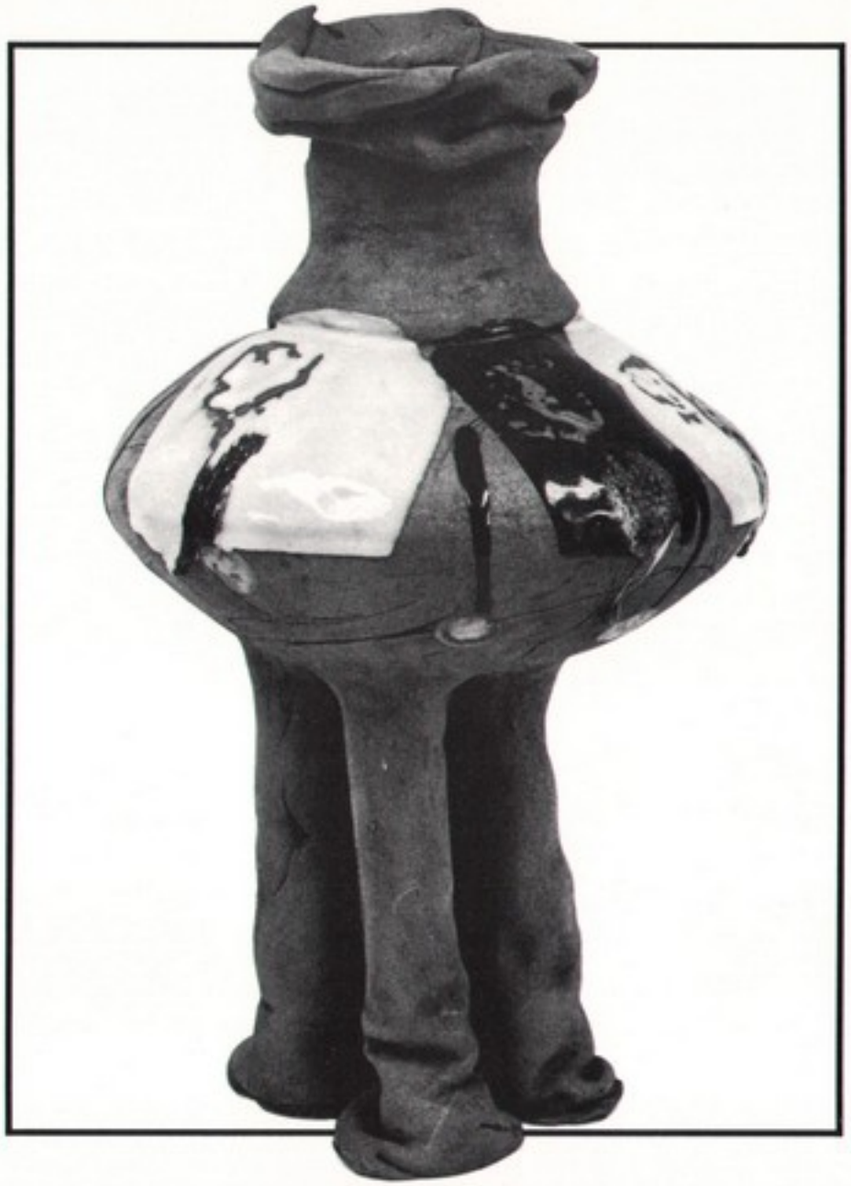
Painting by Joan Christoff

Watercolor by Joan Christoff

Stuffed Appetizer

I met a pregnancy this morning with limbs and a face. They were all part of a person I sort of identified as an acquaintance from two years ago. I tend to recognize pregnancies with uncertain joy unlike the usual celebrated unconditional affection of years ago. That was when the figure of pregnancy was a joyful swelling: a kind of abundance to make fashionable envy. But now they're rare. This thing sees me, and approaches with steps in spiked heels shoulder width apart. It's those heels that got her, I thought. I'm seated at a greasy spoon and the womb is approaching at eye level in a stretch floral print. It stops. I look up above all this over a horizon of poppies. Two nostrils come into view between a pair of active cinder cones for breasts. We exchange warm considered polite restrained words. Hi. Hi, how are you? I'm fine and you; fine. In so much as a weather report, I lied as much as possible faced with the blossoming swell of responsibility in this impending birth, recalling that I'm seated and not kneeling. Everyone else in the room fed their faces faster than before. They began to swell from breakfast, all pregnant with themselves, bulging before tiny tables burdened with the unknown. Each of them only confusing matters worse with a smile and a stiff upper lip. These circumstances of keeping one's chin up not only keeps in the food, it also adds restraint as if something real might spill out. We all shared some of her burden, no matter how close we were. The restaurant became dense. My meal set with fear like cold mortar in my throat. Flies fell from the ceiling under the weight as she just stood there like an egg with bird legs in those heels. "I'm due any minute; over due two days actually. My latest husband and I are trying to help the labor along. We're leaving for a bumpy ride this afternoon. We hope it'll start the labor." Yes, I thought, a bumpy next twenty or thirty years; pregnant with either courage or ignorance. As she turned and walked away, I recognized from behind the slender woman I knew. It was too late to speak.

Gene Balicek

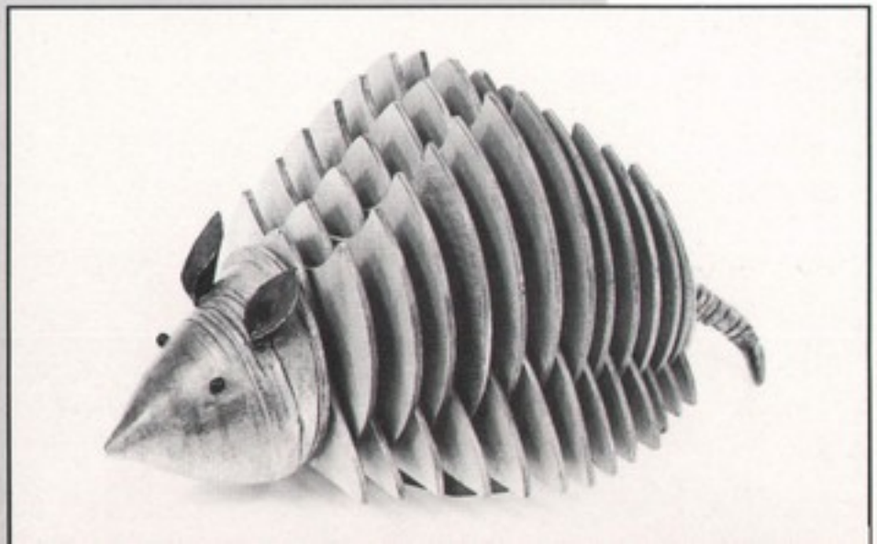


Ceramic Vase by Joan Christoff

Two-Dimensional Design by Rosemary Franyi

Jewelry by Gail Marion

Wood Sculpture by John Watson



Photograph by Steve Hoover

Sunset Haiku

The Sun shouts good-bye,
Flashing with magnificence
Before the moon's reign.

Stephanie Fowler

Photograph by Linda Kay Ost

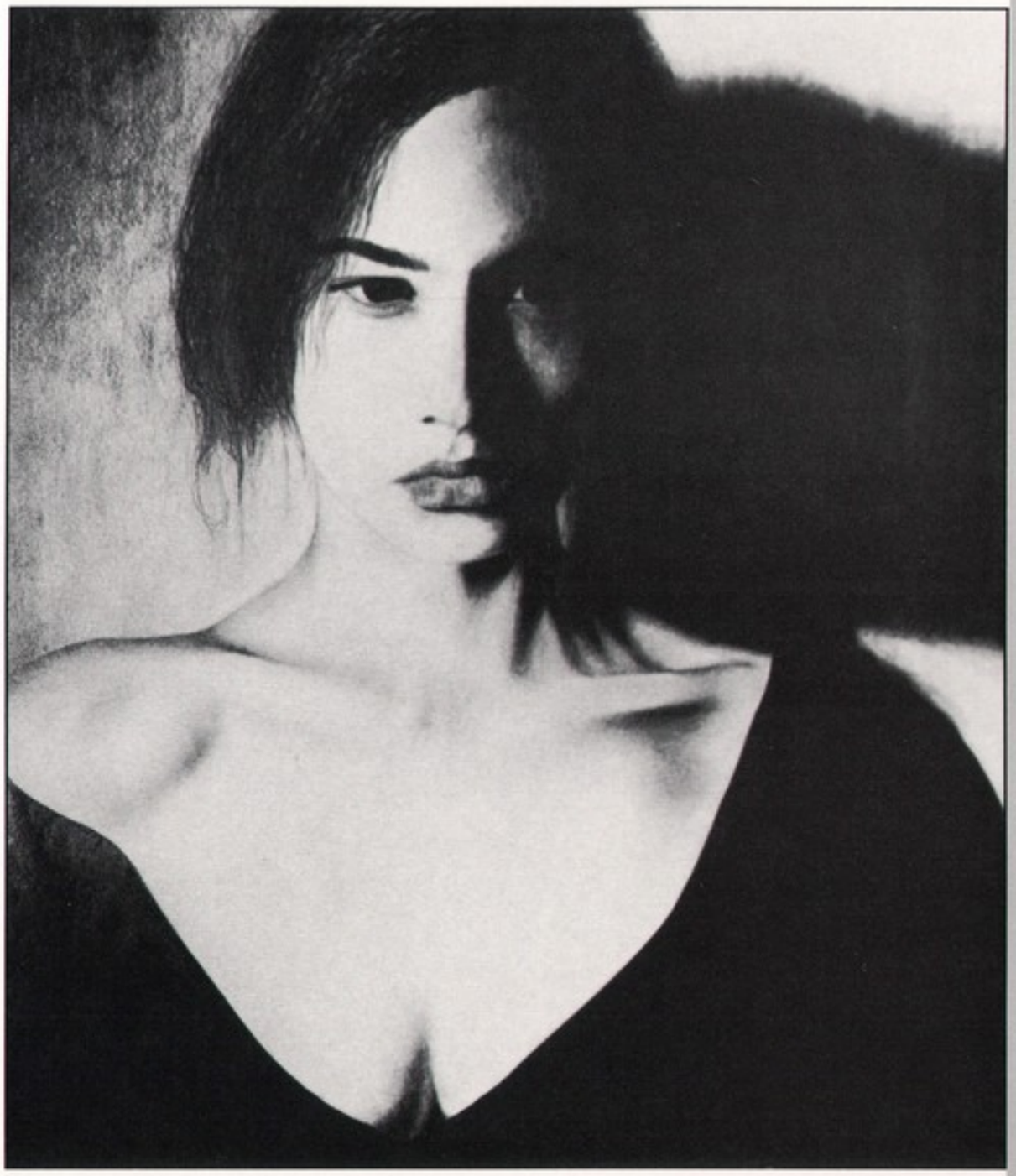


Illustration by Rachael Cunico

Soliciting Grace

let us invoke
from the gods
their songs of power
thunder from the heart
strike light among us
once again for we are
lost in the darkness of time
and future suns have
yet to shine upon us
asleep we have been
covered in mosses and moisture
false springs rise baring roots
come
let us invoke a morning song
from the throats of the gods
that we must invent
expressing their power
in a bolt
of hot juice from the sky

Gilbert Satchell

Photograph by Steve Hoover

Nomeidae

(Small open-water fish that travels in the tentacles of the Portuguese Man of War)

Racing the cloud-ships
That tower the tall of summer
I fly before them on the mottled desert floor
Riding the highway's narrow prow.
I skirt shadows cast by great stacks
Raising heaved crests for sails
And watch as stately, atmospheric Man-of-War
School high, zephyred seas.
Far below I trail along
In tendrils of rain and wind
Over dappled sandstone
Through Navajoland.

I drink in the sweet air
of just washed road
Brume, sifted in my wake,
Is sipped up by sudden sun.
Wet asphalt mirrors a
Bowl of sky where
Sovereign cumulus anvils
Navigate azuric currents
Migrate ancestral air streams.
Their deep soundings roll
Through scattered monuments,
Spill over livid buttes and mesas,
Course the iron rich rock
To probe the animal heart.
I play across a silhouette
Of sharpened contrasts
Like a porpoise crest to trough
Through the grey-folded
Limestone anticlines
Near Mexican Hat.

Hurling low the north lane's edge
Following the steep
Black wall
Out of Raplee syncline
I burst upon the open steppe
Under a massive belly
Of a roiling bank
Reared up to quench
A thirsty shore.
I dive beneath it
Down the switch-backs
Where the San Juan river
Paints new high water marks
On petroglyphed walls.
She overflows the weeping Tamarisk
And Blue Russian Olive
Hydrolic galaxies molten with sand
Chit and crackle as if
Swollen with coral eaters
Feeding in frenzy
Along the pink shale reef.

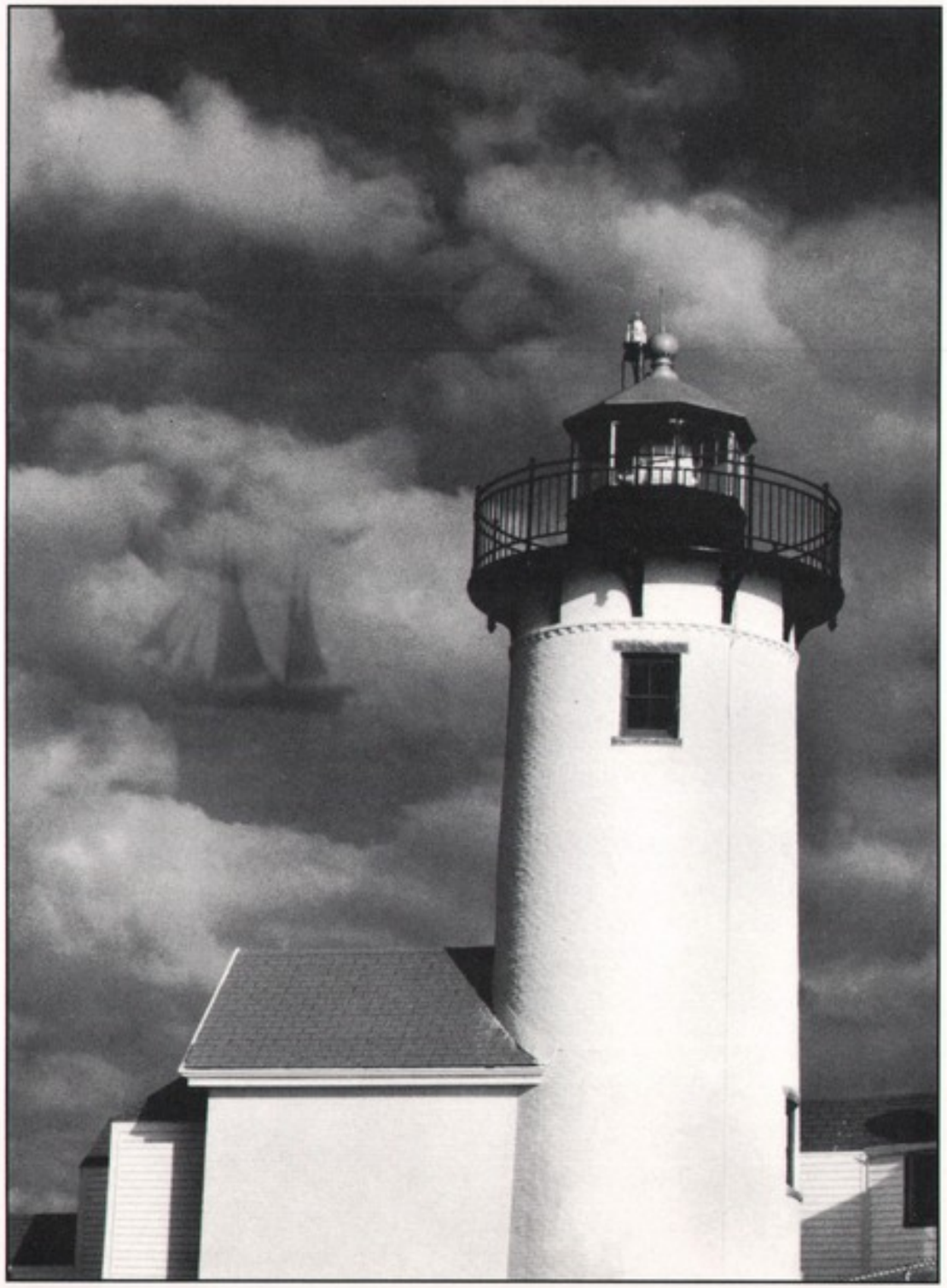
A quickening tailwind
Bears me out of the
Dry ocean bed
Up the grade from the
Bridges at Bluff,
Sweeps me over weathered slate expanses
Contused with bloody rivulets and fissures
Spattered with indigo
Mancos shale plateau.
I surf the cushioned hush
Before the squall-line and
Hurried hair
Parts squid-like
Around my face,
Sirens of the maelstrom
Lick my ears.
Above, fiery nematacysts charge
Positive ion tentacles
In lowering violet swirl.
The rearview desert tsunami
Crashes behind me
Absorbing the world
In waves of sinuous wraiths
Dancing the storm's electric hem.
A violent gust
Delivers me from the torrent's edge
Into unexpected shadowless
Mid-day calm.
Receding stratospheric rogue
Nests over the river
Discharging her seeds
Nursing mountain's offspring
Past flatlands
Toward depthless tides.

Sunlight warms my shoulders
Where Canyonlands frame skyways
With natural stone arches and window.
Pinnacles and spires
Supplicate their solid selves
To passing composite wisps.

Elegant mappings
of winds or waters
Not mine to trace.
Engineer's shallow scratchings
Jerky blue Atlas scrawlings
Speak nothing
To the muddy Colorado
Pumping Moab's gorge.
Are fathomless
To nimbic overlords
Shimmering in noble precess
Above shining prairie basins.

Transgenic travelers share no Phylum
Common Order or Class
Just this northeast homeward passage
To the roof
Of the Great Rocky Mountains
Where Cloud-ships browse earth-tops
Crowd Western skies.
Jousting icy crowns
Lay fibrous crystal veils
Silently upon the trees.
They saw down the noon
With wicked-bright, valence
Rocking a mountain's heart.
They whisper vespers to the moon
Dew the grasses of my alpine yard.
They tremble my afternoon windows
Laughing out loud at the land
They mate here among us
With much noise and celebration
Where they spawn the seas.

dj Palmer



Photograph by Gerald Fuller

Watercolor by Alissa Kerr Harvey

No Limitation To Your Life

Margaret M. Dees

A white silk scroll hangs on my wall, long and narrow
Spilling four wide-brushed symbols down its length
Picture-words in ebony in the age-old Chinese manner
Free and graceful like dancers whose movements also say:
No limitation to your life.

It must be old, before Mao's burning books
Before the slaughter of ancient culture,
For who could write that after
When China was chained and bound
All thoughts of freedom strangled?

For who then could even be a scholar
Or dare to write such heresy
Unless the thought of death held no fear?
No, it must have been before
That some aged mandarin spoke
And voiced the credo of my life
On fragile silk.

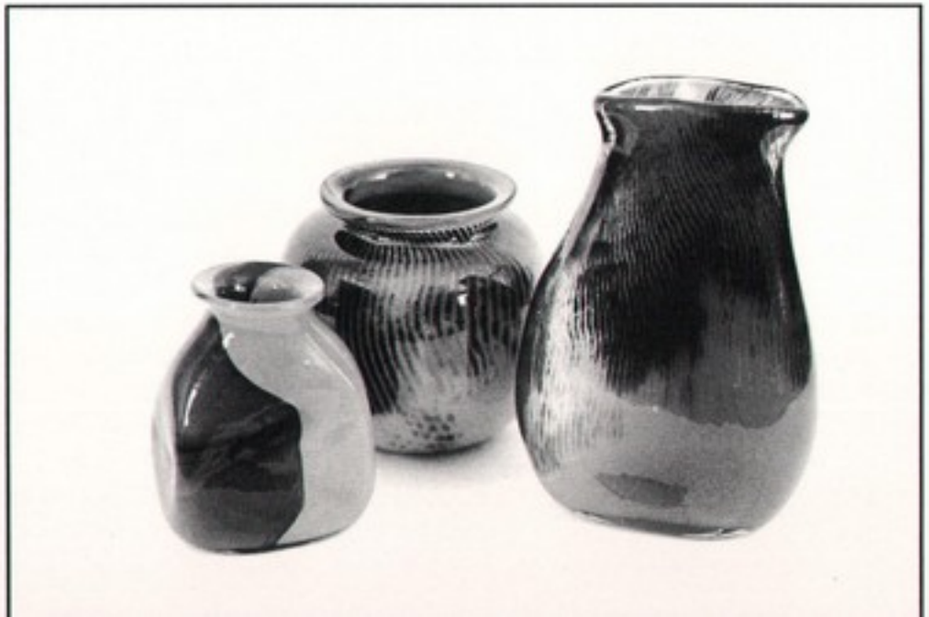
Simple Matters

Dark thoughts from cool clouds
washed in the rain
She displays her fancy cabinets
harmonized and tidy.
Her meal is taken with discipline
woven into
dichromatic rigidness.
And love returns
scorched
by common salt.
Disposing of trivial
adjusted for size
She senses pleasure from patterns
unaware,
unsure if
vision
energizes life.

Jerome Mitchell

Weaving by Linda Montez

Two-Dimensional Design by Joan Kibbey



Blown Glass by Charlie Phillips

MEMORIES OF ST. MARY'S

The first time I set foot in St. Mary's Catholic Boarding School for Young Men, my recently separated parents flanked me protectively, allowing my body to serve as a buffer between them. As we moved, our down-filled ski jackets whistled against each other. The place smelled familiar, like a church when empty: a combination of burnt wax and incense hung in the stale, unmoving air. There was no one in the lobby. Two closed doors, behind which no living soul stirred, greeted us in silence. An abundance of saintly figures perched on either side of the elongated corridor, their expressions ranging from beatific to doleful. Each shared a kind outreach of hands, beckoning us further.

My mother, her face determined, pointed to the left, indicating the direction she wished us to travel. Some innate sense of being in charge allowed her to know that following this section of corridor would lead us to humanity, although it looked like a coin toss to me. We continued on without speaking; only the reverberating sounds of our footsteps on the freshly waxed tile and the scratchy, whistling noise of our parkas broke the silence.

Presently, we came upon a small courtyard, what appeared to be an atrium—large glassed walls through which the sharp October sunlight streamed harsh and bright with little warming. Inside the courtyard two small trees struggled to keep leafy coats as protection from the autumn chill. Most of the golden maple leaves, though, had deserted their birthplace, and lay strewn about the ground or shrunken and withered in the base of the obligatory statue—this one appearing to be the Virgin Mary, the school's namesake. In warmer times the base of the statue probably served as a bird bath; today only dead leaves filled the bowl. Winged creatures seemed to be as scarce as humans on his fall morning.

Suddenly the hallway erupted—as if hot gasses held under pressure had found a crack through which to escape—the force of which sent us reeling, startled out of our stillness. A tumultuous roar descended from further up the hallway. Surely a crazed mob was about to assail, clubs and arms at the ready. Maybe a major fire was underway, and the panic-stricken crowd was desperately searching for a way out—hot flames engulfing the stragglers whose bad luck it was to be at the rear.

Prepared for the onslaught, I was taken aback to see a group of school-age boys approaching. I could see their smiling faces as they passed, carrying on conversations in groups of two or three.

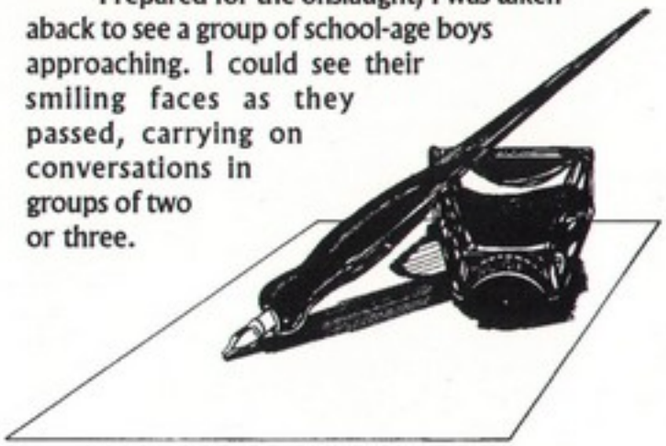


Illustration by Deb Pesarchic

One brave twelve-year-old stopped, pushing his glasses into his face with his index finger. "Hey. You looking for Father Richard?" he asked. "He's still in morning assembly with the older kids. You see," he bragged, "we seventh graders always get out first. Want I should tell him you're here?" He ran off, not waiting for an answer.

I spent the next five minutes enduring the stares, the glares and often uninterested glances of the students as they filed by. I could feel the animosity of some of the older high-school age kids as they sized me up—I was fourteen and quite big for my age, probably appearing more like sixteen or so. I stared back defiantly as scornful gazes shifted from me to my parents and back again. Murmuring and snickering drifted over their shoulders as they sauntered by. Though I could not make out what they were saying, I know they were talking about me. I was a curiosity, an unknown.

The parade of young men—ranging from shiny-cheeked twelve-year-olds to older, hard-looking, delinquent types I judged to be about seventeen—finally subsided. The last of the students were suspiciously quiet. Bringing up the rear was a stern looking figure—it was obvious even at a distance that this was a priest: black pants, shirt, and sweater all served to accentuate the white of his collar. His stride was confident and full of purpose; there was no doubt who was in control. He neared, his thick black glasses framing a no-nonsense, square-jawed face. His jet-black hair was cut short and slicked straight back. He was about six feet, very solid with a big neck and chest. He had the toned body of an athlete—a boxer possibly. I guessed him to be about thirty. I had the feeling not a lot would get by this man.

My mother, never one to miss a beat, strode forward to meet the priest. I thought of two freight trains rushing towards each other. Would they brake in time to avoid a collision? Was there an unseen switchman waiting in the wings, ready to yank a lever and divert one of them onto a side rail? "Hello," said my mom, "I'm Shirley Turnbow. I talked to you on the phone yesterday. This is my son James and his father, Jack Turnbow."

"How do you do. Father Richard Masters. I'm the vice-principal here at St. Mary's. It's good that you could make it." He leaned forward as if to shake hands with my father, hesitated briefly, and found my mother's hand in his. My father took the proffered hand next. The priest did not offer his hand to me, giving me only a quick nod of his head. "We can visit in my office," he said.

Off we went—the priest in the lead, my mother and father following closely, me bringing up the rear. We retreated back up the hallway and came to a stop at one of the hardwood doors we had passed

Pencil and Ink by Rachael Cunico

earlier. Father Richard unlocked the door and stepped to the side, gesturing for us to enter. The furnishings were somewhat sparse, befitting the no-nonsense attitude of this man. He sat in a well-worn leather chair behind the desk. My parents took the two seats across from him, leaving me to sit in the only remaining chair, off to the side and against the wall.

"Please tell me what brought you to our school," said the priest. "As I told you over the phone, it's unusual for a student to enter school almost two months late."

My mother began her lengthy discourse, her voice droning on as she told the priest of my troubled adolescence. Having heard this story a lot during recent visits to psychologists and various specialists, I found my mind drifting in and out of the conversation. My mother mentioned their impending divorce. I thought of the past summer.

Our annual family vacation took place in the resort town of Kelowna, set in the interior of British Columbia. Long, lazy days of summer, filled with the sweet, hot breath of the sun, the cooling waters of the lake and water skiing with summer friends. It was a never ending party for my parents—lots of alcohol with old friends who made this trek every year. My father, late one night after smashing the front end of the car and being charged with drunken driving, took my twelve-year-old brother Paul and me aside. He asked us to tell him who we thought he loved. My father was a pain in the ass when drunk, but I played the game anyway. I told him Mom, of course. He said no, it was not Mom, but Claire, my mother's best friend.

My mother was telling the priest how I had run away—just walked out of school early one day, packed my bags and left, not telling anyone.

Actually, I had told someone. My brother, Paul. I told him during the trip home from Kelowna that if Dad insisted on leaving us I was gone—I would run away for sure. I had done exactly that, conning the owner of a small car lot outside of town into believing that I was of legal age, trading him my Yamaha motorcycle for an old '62 Ford Falcon. The car was badly rusted and in need of repair, but the engine looked okay to my novice eyes, and the car would surely beat my motorcycle for warmth and comfort. Late September could get fiercely cold in the Northwest. The highlight of my car was the exotic Thrush muffler, which sounded a lot like a Corvette I once had a ride in. I headed west, formulating a plan to drive the eight hundred miles to Kelowna, back to the warmth and good times I had known this past summer, and all the summers of my youth.

The priest was asking my dad what I had told him when he and my grandfather came out to get me, after I finally called home and told my mother where I was. Fear and desperation had overtaken the confused anger which had fueled my running away.

I didn't say a lot to my dad when he came. After rescuing my old jalopy and getting it to run again, my father had driven it home, pronouncing it unsafe. I rode with my grandfather, who made me laugh as he recounted stories of my father and aunts and uncle when they were all a lot younger. It was the first time I had laughed in two weeks. My trip had been a disaster. I had been stealing gas and money as I made my way west, but then the transmission had gone in the car while I was still a hundred miles from the lake. I hitch-hiked and walked the rest of the way, leaving most of my gear with the now useless auto.

Making it to Kelowna had become my goal. I felt that everything would be okay once I got there. I did make it to the resort town, but it was all wrong. The sky was gray and overcast; summer was gone and the dreariness of fall had set in. There was nobody in the park or on the beach—it was as if some terrible disease had wiped out the whole population, and then rolled up the streets for spite. I shared the last remnants of food I had with a flock of gulls, who had taken over the beach as their own. An old lady wearing a straw hat with pink ribbons came walking up the beach, giving me a wide berth, her eyes never wavering from me. At that moment, I knew what it was to be completely and totally alone. I crumpled into a fetal ball on the beach and lay for a long time, huge sobs wracking my body, making it hard for me to breathe.

The priest was asking me a question. "James, I ask you for the second time, do you want to attend St. Mary's?

"Yes, Father Rich," I replied, though I wasn't at all sure.

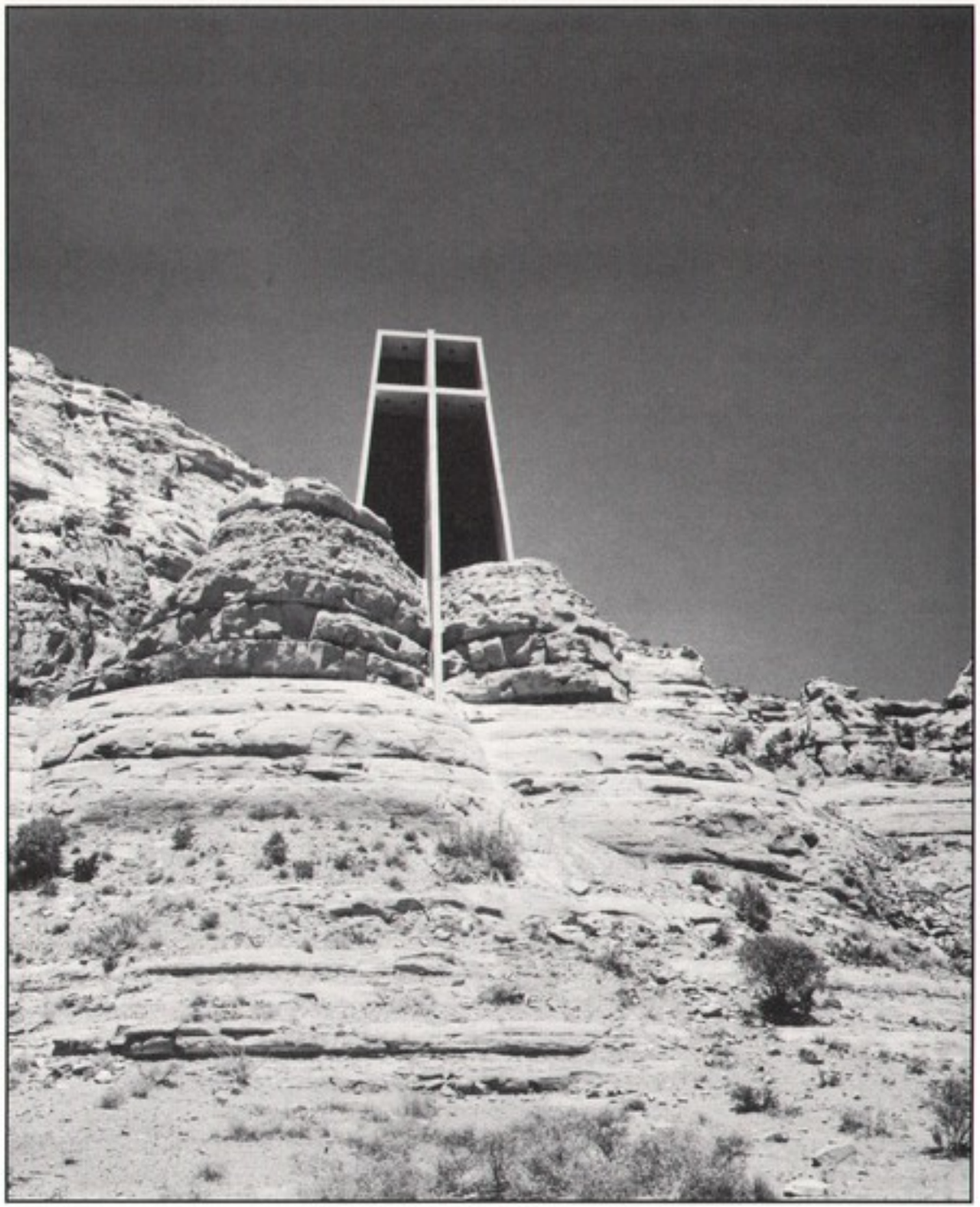
"Very good," he said. "You can show up at seven o'clock sharp tomorrow morning. I will give your mother a list of essentials that you will need. I understand you are a pretty good hockey player. I know Mr. Baines, your former coach. We have a great athletic program here, probably the best in the city. Welcome aboard."

My stay at St. Mary's is one I have never forgotten. Father Richard would become one of my strongest allies, a mentor I think of often. My love of writing and literature would be nurtured by the priests and brothers of St. Mary's—I would spend hours and hours in study hall and in the library, taking wonderful trips through the books I would read. I would go on to excel, winning hardware and accolades. Father Rich would nominate me for Student of the Year, and I would co-captain the hockey team and the baseball team to victory.

None of my accomplishments, however, would bring my family back together. Not winning trophies, nor winning championships. Not good grades, nor scholastic achievements. Not even running away. I finally understand what transpired that year, when I was fourteen and began attending St. Mary's Boarding School. It has taken many years to accept it.

Nothing I had done, indeed nothing I could ever do, would allow me to again be a young child at the beach—feeling the warmth of the sun, wading slowly into the lake anticipating the exquisite sensation of the waves tickling my groin, feeling safe in the sound of my mother's voice telling my little brother to be careful, safe in the smell of my father's oiled body beside me.

David William Kell



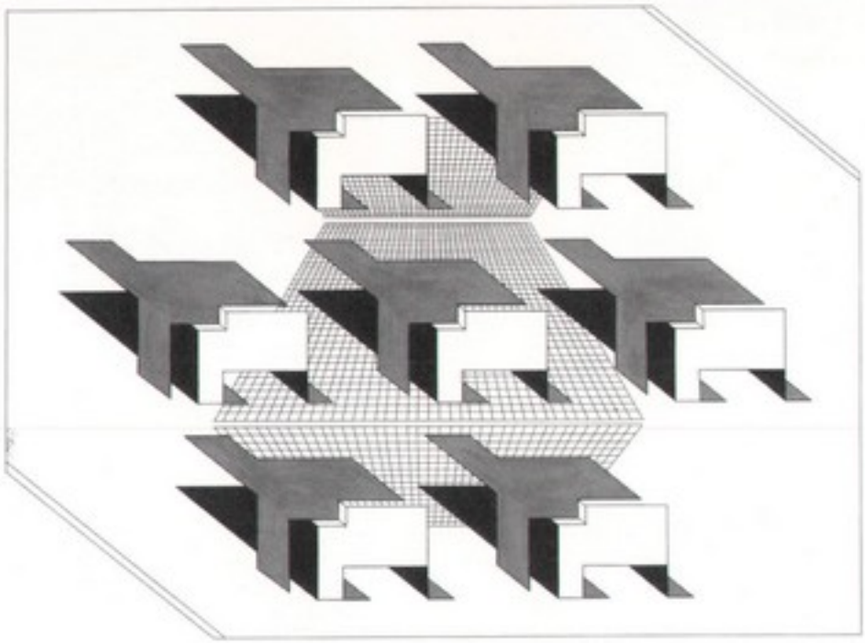
Photograph by Jay Robertson

Chopin's Hands

Chopin was an ignoble glutton
As proud as a Masai warrior.
Like a starved jackal
He played music for a feeding frenzy
Sucked essence through the tips of his fingers
Chewed the keys with mean knuckles
Strained the ivory's marrow
through stunted, brutish nails, then
Savored the notes with his palms and
Drew sustenance from the vibrating tones into
the top of his gullet.

He hunted melodies
Stalking fleet movements and falling upon them
making the kill.
He tore at juicy bits of sound
Shaking them until sonorous blood flew
Devouring great chunks of them, and
Returning a whole meal to the cutting block/altar
For all he had.

Erica Ryberg

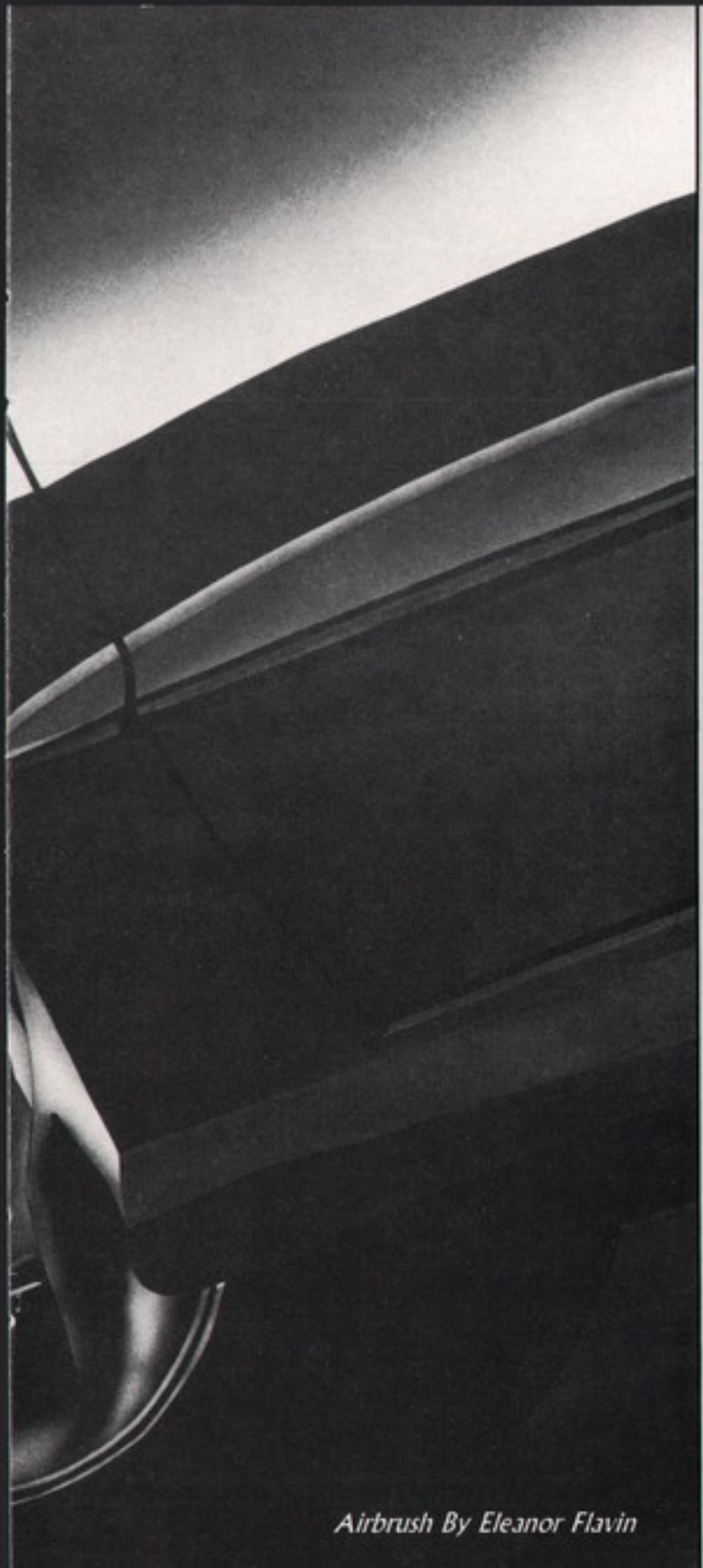


Two-Dimensional Design by Carol R. Wills

Life Drawing by Alan Gross

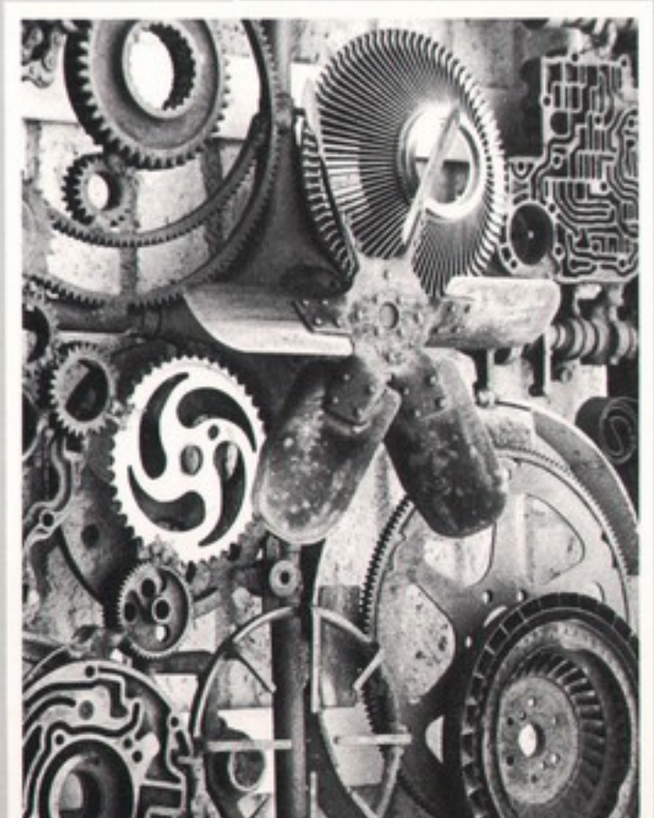
Photograph By Jay C. Robertson

Photograph By Jay C. Robertson

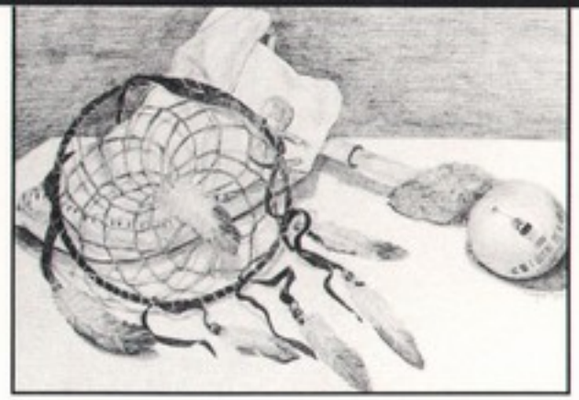


Airbrush By Eleanor Flavin

Photograph By Eleanor Flavin



Photograph By Kris Gonzalez



Drawing by Marjorie Luigs

SPRING CLEANING

The windows are sparkly,
Curtains ruffled and clean,
The rug has been swept,
Couch cushions, too.
Without a vacuum
It was the best I could do.

The furniture smells of
Old English and shines,
The piano keys grin—
They know they look fine.

Mother's doilies
of linen and lace,
Starched stiffly and ironed,
Are put back in place.

Though Mother's been gone
Less than a year
I try not to feel sad
As I polish and dust
'Cause I know that my efforts
Will cheer Dad—they must.

I'll go pick a bouquet,
A finishing touch,
The room looks snug and cozy,
Though it's not much.

Just wait 'till he sees
What a good job I've done.
He'll be happy and pleased
And proud as can be—
His cottage is spotless,
And all thanks to me.

Dad comes through the door,
Takes one look around,
Reaches up with a finger
To the door frame above,
Brings it down to my face
And shows me some dust.

Marj Prince

Photograph by Eleanor Flavin

Reflections

I had my graduation interview today, and the significance of what that means is finally beginning to register. To a person like me, the idea of actually graduating from junior college is a major achievement.

I graduated from high school so long ago that people weren't yet doing drugs at that level. Drinking was just beginning to be a common activity, and my senior class did a lot of that. I went to college after high school, but my primary purpose at that time was having fun. I hadn't learned to take education seriously, and there weren't many options for women at that time, so my brief college career ended soon after it began. I was expelled for not following the rules, and in those days, there were a lot of rules.

Having spent nearly thirty years of my life engaged in the pursuit of decadence—which eventually included drugs along with excessive drinking—I arrived at the age of forty-four and realized I needed to get sober. Having done that, I then came to the realization that I had no particular skill and my work history was erratic and varied. When you are closing in on fifty chronologically and still think of yourself as being twenty-five, the realization sets in—at least it did in my case—that life doesn't contain many possibilities without a college degree.

When I enrolled at Yavapai College, my intent was to get a degree here and go on to a four-year school, but in the back of my mind, I don't think I really believed that would happen. I had no particular achievements or successes in my life which provided me with a sense of accomplishment or satisfaction. Thus, there was that little voice somewhere in my head that told me I probably wouldn't stick with it, and I probably wouldn't do very well, and I could always quit if I want to. I remember being amazed when I started my third semester and I hadn't even thought about dropping out. And now, here I am in my fifth semester, getting ready to graduate. It's quite a thrill, and it has motivated me to contemplate what I've learned in my two-and-a-half years of college.

Higher education has a twofold purpose. The main one, of course, is to provide knowledge about a variety of topics. The second less obvious purpose is to teach life lessons such as responsibility and discipline. I've heard the education process referred to as "jumping through hoops," and to some extent, that's what it's about. It's a game in which the student complies with the teachers' instructions and demands, and once you've done everything you're supposed to do and achieved a passing grade, you eventually get the piece of paper that is supposed to assure you a job which pays a decent salary, and it provides you with more options about how to spend your working life. The main benefit of education to me is the opportunity to learn something about a variety of subjects. Knowledge is the factor which truly makes life a much more interesting experience.

When I think back on my time at Yavapai College, I'm truly grateful for what I've learned. In Women In History and Native American History I learned not just an impressive amount of factual information but also the significance of the history of those two groups of people. (And I learned how drastic their omission from most history has been). In Introduction to Philosophy I learned to think more critically about a given situation or topic, and I learned what a paradigm is. In Introduction to Sociology I learned about the many aspects of that field, and I was so impressed with that course that I'm thinking of majoring in Sociology. In English Composition I learned to write essays, and best of all, I learned I can write them at the last minute and still do them well. And in one of my favorite classes, Creative Writing, I learned that I have the talent to be a successful writer if I can only overcome my lack of discipline and my penchant for procrastination.

Of course, there have been the negative aspects of college. Algebra has proven to be an insurmountable obstacle in my educational path. After spending two semesters each on Beginning and Intermediate Algebra and only passing the Beginning Algebra course by the narrowest of margins, I decided to leave that to some future time. I'm not wild about Principles of Biology, but I have to get through it this semester. I understand the theory behind requiring diversity in education, but I just can't see what I'm ever going to do with Algebra or Biology when I plan to spend my life dealing with the study of people and society or writing. I will say, though, that the math teachers at this school have been incredibly patient with me, and I appreciate them.

Recently, I've learned that the stereotype of the coach as someone who cares only about sports is unfounded. Some coaches actually respect and encourage education, and they don't cut their athletes slack just because they're good at sports. And I've learned that at least some jocks are as interested in education as they are in sports.

The best lesson I've learned is to appreciate how truly satisfying it is to acquire information and apply it to life. I know that I've changed in a positive way in these last two-and-a-half years, and I'm grateful I've had the opportunity to go to school. I'm looking forward to going on to a university and getting a Bachelor's degree, and I look forward to learning the rest of my life.

This has been the best experience of my life, and it's the first time in my life I've been able to consider myself a success.

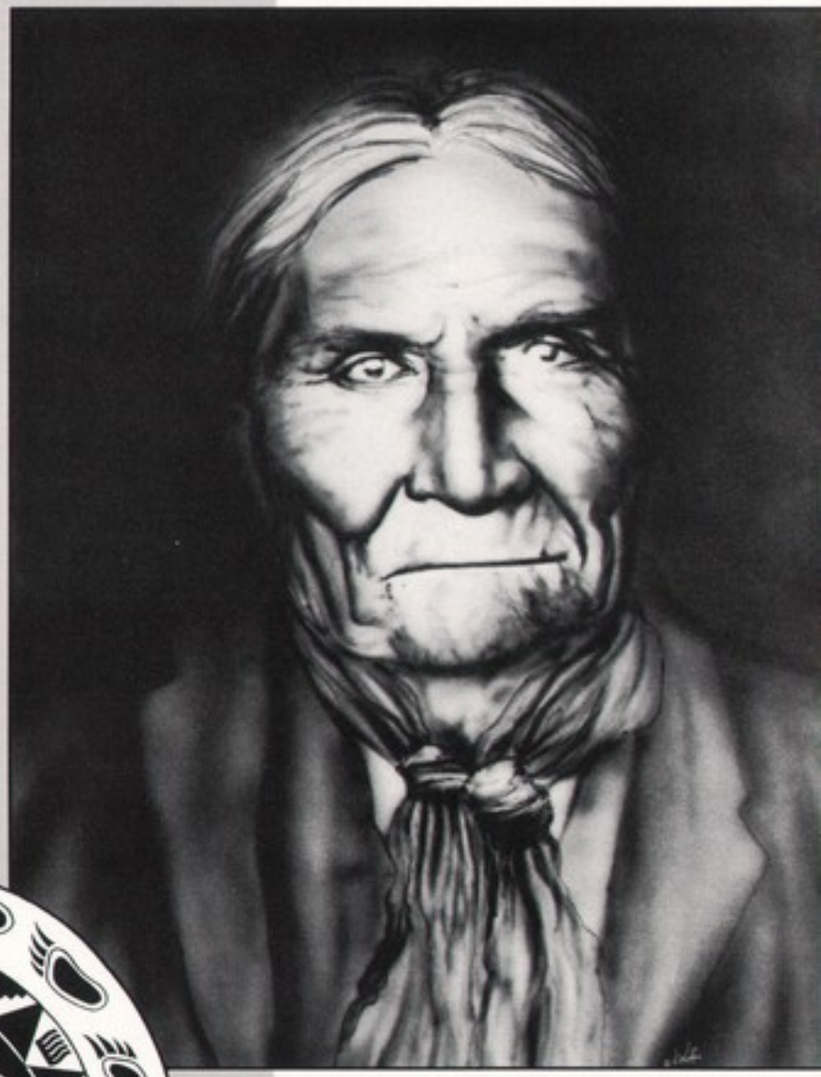
Leslie Larson

Illustration by Don Fleming

Photograph by Dave Dvorak

Drawing by Jason Wolf

Pen & Ink by Marjorie Luigs



Airbrush by Jason Wolf

Ribcages and Circles

Homage to the Literary Artists of Inscription Canyon

How distant our lives
And worlds must be.
Your culture dependent upon the seasons
Ours around monetary systems of complexities.

Sand has carved a path
Through the country rock below
Uncovering the walls of time's creation.
Painted with arduous perseverance which depicts
the cycles of your life.

As the erosionary effects of time
Corrode the pathways you've traveled,
So too does this repressive society
Exploit your culture.

From ledge tops above, my mind may wander far
Reflecting upon the beauty of your literary art.

Ribcages and circles.
Remnants of a forgotten culture that lives on
In my dreams.

Jason M. Brooks

Two-Dimensional Design by Patricia Turner

Painting by Linda Ost

Cycles

As Saturn turned to see himself reflected in the mirror,
Two axes spun in place to join each other on the sphere.

Flames leapt forth to blend themselves in passion—then in blame,
And the muses of antiquity conspired to split the flame

To separate the fires and lift the god from up above
While the goddess struggled vainly to restore the light of love.

But whispers fanned the god like bursts of wind that blew
The words, "you must control the taming of this shrew."

And tame he did until one day his mastery was complete
When he straightened up to overlook small embers at his feet

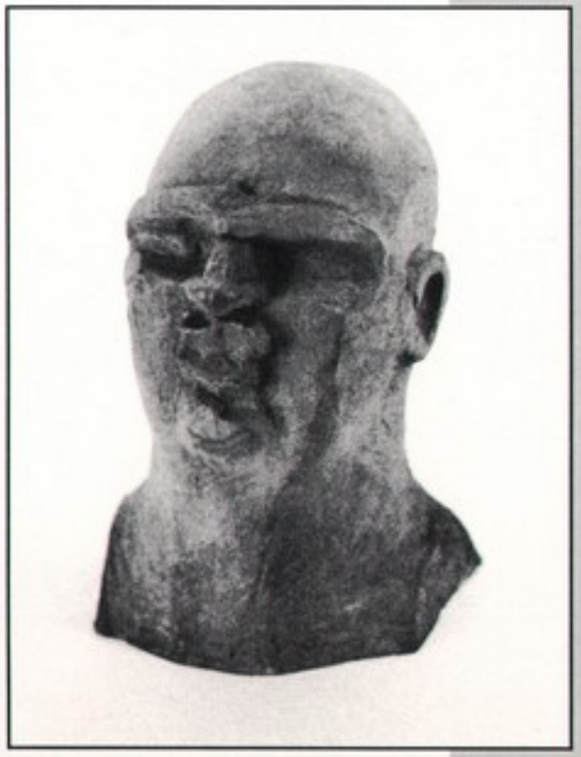
And turned his back upon the glow bereft of any flame—
Nothing left of interest, nothing left to blame.

The embers dimmed in mute despair; the goddess felt her fear,
And Saturn turned to see himself reflected in the mirror.

Jan Kennedy

Two -Dimensional Design by Wyng Hoffbauer

Three-Dimensional piece by Carol Kantor



Sculpture by James Stewart

Painting by Jana Lunt

All Fish Under

Saturday, Ralph and me, we're headed over to Grossman's for a swim. It's hot as Hell and Summer vacation is in full swing. The hot, sticky air makes moving around and having any fun at all is impossible. That's why we're going swimming in the first place, you see.

Ralph's a good guy. He's in 5th grade with me. He's bigger than the other kids, on account of being left back a year. It helps having him for a friend, you know; he'll stick up for me in a fight if he has to—and he has plenty of times.

Ralph lives on Sherwood Drive, next block over from me. There are a couple of shortcuts to his house, everyone uses them. Ralph's dad is a doctor, has a Mercedes, too. Behind his house, in the backyard are a set of stereo speakers. Dr. Lyle sits out there in his lounger, looking after Ralph's younger brother Mannie, as he splashes around in a kiddie pool, and listening to opera music. Real goofy stuff, 'cause there are these women just screaming and some big guys going real low with their voices, and Dr. Lyle drinking Scotch, smoking cigarettes.

Grossman's is on Lynden Avenue, four blocks away. There are shortcuts, some, one over to Maple Street, from Sherwood Drive. When I'm alone, I don't take it though. I walk the street. With Ralph I think it's okay, he knows the people that own the property. Me and my sister had a rock fight with them, the kids, in 3rd grade, I don't know if they remember. Then there's Dutch, the Great Dane; he's unleashed, runs around the property. With Ralph it's all right, I figure.

He pets Dutch and talks to the kids. I make like I'm not interested, hope they don't decide to kick me off their property and invite Ralph in, they'd do it too. They started the fight in the first place. I got'em good though, in the fight, nailed one of them in the head. We booked home, my sister and I. Prayed every time the phone rang that night, thought they might try to sue us or something. My parents never found out. My sister never told, which she was usually good at doing.

After we get to Maple Street, Ralph and me head up towards the McIntyre's house. They're new in the neighborhood, moved in not too long ago. We weren't sure whether it was all right to cut through their property or not. We snuck in over a fence, headed toward the carriage house, out of view of the main house, safer with Ralph there too.

The Carriage house is gray, with white trim. Looks a lot like an oversized barn to me, I guess. As we pass by, a girl calls out to us from inside the large wooden doors. She's sitting on the big concrete floor, legs crossed, humming to herself.

"Who are you guys, huh?"

"Let's get," Ralph whispers.

But I'm afraid, don't want to get in trouble. Ralph curses under his breath.

"I'm Vince, this is my friend Ralph." I say.

Right away I know it's all right. I can tell. Something's not right, though, with her. She looks kind of ugly and jerks a little, moves her arms around weird.

"Who are you?" Ralph asks.

"I'm Dorothy McIntyre, I live here, I'm fourteen. Have you seen the things in the sky, have you seen them?"

Ralph sucks in a deep breath. I think she's retarded; that kind of talk is nonsense, unless she's goofing on us.

"No," I say, "waddya mean, U.F.O.'s or something?"

"Yeah, oh yeah," she's animated, waving her arms around, "they're coming, I know."

She gets up; her pants are wet. Ralph's kinda' laughing. I nudge him, figure this is serious, 'cause I can be serious. Ralph hates when I'm serious, says I'm trying to act older.

"Nooo, we haven't seen 'em," Ralph grins, "bet you have, huh. Ever fly in one before, Dorothy?"

"Once," she says, excited, "over by the church, near the field. I got in and flew around for a while, made me dizzy."

I'm trying to get Ralph's attention, so we can get out of there.

"Come on Ralph," I say, "I'm scared."

"Quit being a baby, Vince," he whispers, "let's goof on her."

I'm afraid we might get busted by her parents or something, and I tell Ralph. Dorothy is crooning her big head forward; she looks Chinese almost, her arms are back and fingers are spread apart. I can see for sure she is retarded. I'm feeling serious now too. I know it's not my fault that she's batty, I feel guilty anyway.

"Show us around this place, " Ralph asks, "show us the upstairs would ya, how about it, Dorothy?"

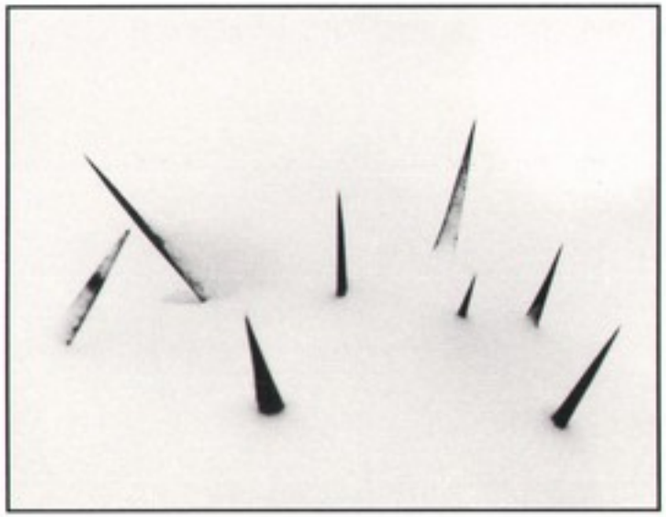
She's busy clicking her teeth, flicking her tongue. Ralph's snickering, being a dick.

"Yeah, oh yeah, that'd be fun, come on I'll show you," she says.

The garage walls are lined with tools; a pitch fork with a red handle, an aluminum snow shovel, a green yard rake and a lawn mower—the push kind without a motor—rusty and covered with cobwebs. I know this is wrong, like somehow we're being bad or something. The steep stairs curve upward. It's musty smelling and dark in the stairwell. Ralph's in front of me, behind Dorothy, pushing her bottom, poking her back, talking about the time he flew in a spaceship. Dorothy laughs.

Upstairs, sunlight streams in. Ralph snaps his towel at Dorothy.

"Hey, Dorothy," he asks, "ever had one of these before," snaps his towel again, "that's called a Rat tail."



Photograph by Gerald W. Fuller

Dorothy is scared. Between tics, she tells Ralph to quit it. I'm scared too, looking around for a getaway, in case her parents come up. I could go out the back window, one of 'em anyhow, get down a tree. That'd work.

"I am a spaceman," Ralph says to Dorothy in his most adult-sounding, mean voice.

Dorothy is trembling, sitting in an old overstuffed chair.

"I'm a space man, Dorothy," Ralph says again, "and I order you to pull my pud."

He snickers, grabs her wrists, puts his pecker in her hands, starts moving around, back and forth with his hips.

"Pull it, you retard," he hisses, "pull it or I'll kick your ass, Dorothy, stroke it good."

Dorothy's crying, shaking. Ralph's leaning back.

"They'll get you, the space men, you know that. Don't tell anyone or they'll find you and take you away."

I'm trembling, I know it's not right, I've got a boner, am trying to hold my tears in. Ralph says to quit sniveling, quit being a cry baby. He shoots his wad into Dorothy's hair and face. Dorothy shrieks. Ralph's stuff is dripping off her forehead and cheeks. She flips on Ralph, starts flailing her arms and kicking like a freak. Ralph's trying to protect his face and body, holding his hands up, his wangall limp, hanging over his shorts. I'm heading for the stairs, one foot in front of the other, carefully but not quickly, banging round in the stair well. I look around for a sign of her parents, then fly across the yard, through the sprinklers, into the hedges and out to Lynden Avenue and up to Grossman's house.

I hear everyone in the backyard, am trying to catch my breath. All-fish Under, they're playing that game, where you try to dodge the guy with his eyes closed. He's "it." Walking around the garage to the pool, I keep my towel draped over my head, don't want 'em to see I've been crying.

All my friends are there, busy with the game. No one really notices me flip my thongs off and dive. There's plenty of room, all the fish are clinging to the side of the pool, plenty of open space to land in, soft water gently floating me to the bottom. By now, everyone is looking down, wondering when I'm coming up for air. Chlorine burns my eyes. They don't know I'm in big trouble, might be going to jail. There's no telling how long it'll be before I go up for air: before they come to get me, my lungs will bust.

Bill Coppersmith

The Effects of Moonlight

In the moonlight, the stalking
cat with blue eyes turns silver.

The whiskers and eyes of the grey
mouse reflect their own moonbeams.

As the marauder lopes off,
prey in mouth,
A few drops of crimson mar the new-
fallen snow.

Wallace Bastian

Watercolor by Joan Christoff

Monoprint by Eleanor Culbreth

Evolution

I never thought it would be this hectic in a delivery room. Doctors scurrying around applying various gadgets to body parts, which do not look nearly as alluring as they did a mere nine months earlier; nurses observing data and recording observations almost simultaneously; and, of course, my wife's screams of agony echoing throughout the inner corridors of my cranium. It was hardly the experience I had looked forward to so anxiously. The fathers I worked with had told me how lucky I was to live in an era where I could witness the arrival of my first child. They informed me that the experience would be monumental and surely unforgettable. However, I have been waiting in the delivery room for over an hour now, and my experience has been closer to minuscule and very forgettable. Perhaps I am missing an important aspect of the occasion because I failed as a man. Of course, my wife would never say that. All she could utter was, "I Love You No Matter What," with all the sincerity of a limp dish rag. The doctors were not unkind either, simply stating that many strong healthy men my age were sterile. I suppose that is why I show so little enthusiasm on this illustrious day. I find it very difficult to become excited observing the birth of something I could not create naturally. Of course, I will love the boy and care for it like it was my own, but it really cannot be the same.

Once again I was informed how lucky I am, this time by the doctors. "With all the wondrous technology we possess today, your wife can be artificially inseminated, and give birth to the child, therefore making her feel more motherly." What next? Are they going to artificially inseminate guys with strong, healthy sperm so they can knock up their old ladies when once thought impossible? If I'm so goddam lucky, how come I feel like some kid's Christmas toy that broke before he even got it out of the box? (Oh stop it, Jake. You're just feeling sorry for your self again. Can't you help your wife enjoy this fantastic moment?) I know, I know. I gotta get over it and get on with my life. I'm going to take my child and love him more than a real father could love a son. I guess there were some advantages to this new technology. For example, I knew the child was going to be male. We chose him to be a boy. I was sure my wife wanted a daughter, but I think after I was found to be sterile she yearned for a man in the house. Someone to carry on the Donaldson tradition. I was a little frightened about picking out the sex of my first born child, but the doctors said I should take advantage of the available technology. With the recent progress in planned parenthood and gene manipulation we could pick a great many characteristics we would like implemented in our offspring. It cost a little more, but hell, if you can't do it yourself, you might as well get it done right. So we paid the extra twenty grand and picked out most of his physical traits. Brown hair, blue eyes, long legs, you know, the works! Then, when we were just about finished, the main doctor came to me and told me of some new experiments they had just completed over at Harvard Medical, and they were looking for volunteers to administer the final test to. He told me that by using animal genes and certain cerebellum injections, they could determine the amount of aggressiveness, competitiveness, and even intelligence in my son. At first I was a bit weary, but then I started dreaming. I had always wanted an All-American running back or Rhodes Scholar in my family. They virtually guaranteed safety, and it wasn't like I was experimenting on my own flesh and blood. I gave the doctors the go ahead and began envisioning my son's brilliant future.

Now, as I stand here in full hospital gear, awaiting the birth of my son, I feel a strong exhilaration take hold of me. I am certain this was not the excitement my friends spoke of, for this is a situation much unlike theirs. I am a pioneer. The contractions are very close together now and the doctors have moved my wife into position to deliver our newborn super-son. I wait anxiously, hoping to hold him soon, a son I could not biologically create, but managed to form through technology. Finally, my greatest accomplishment! I can now see his head peek out between my wife's legs. His head is unusually hairy for that of an infant. Horror suddenly fills my pores. His whole body is hairy. He is huge! My wife screams in pain because he is almost too large to deliver. He doesn't even resemble a human infant. The head doctor shoots me a look of guilt and runs out the

Photograph by Nikki Garcia

swinging doors. One of the nurses drops her tray of tools and faints to the floor. My wife, who is drugged beyond the capacity to realize the disaster, asks me what is wrong with her baby. Her baby?! I turn around and walk out of the delivery room, wondering what went wrong. I think next time we will adopt.

Darren Williams

Monoprint by Jana Lunt

Me

In the hindsight time of life, I cling lonely
To the scattered-shard remembrance
Of a child.

I am stored in the vault of my mind
Filled with the sense and nonsense in my making
Of a life.

Never once in all the avenues of hours
Have I walked with one other being, bearing witness
Of this soul.

I am peopled by me, only me. A lonely crowd of one
To love or fight the deadlines
Of my conclusion.

Clif Jensen

Photograph by Mark Phillips

Mariah

I saw the signs of the coming wind
And knew a storm was coming in.
I heard a message sent to me
As the wind whispered a name through the trees
Tempting me with an evil thing.
And I know so well what fate she brings.
The name, a seed planted for me to hear
Driving out all feelings, least save's fear.
A title to fill my soul with craving and wanting.
Always vigilant, the ghost is haunting.
Once welcomed in through its disguise,
Now I pray it will be excised.
I beg for strength on bended knees,
The name I hear blown through the trees.
The hooded rider beckons me,
Saying, "You'll enjoy yourself now, come see."
And I always knowing it will be the death of me.
Oh, God help me. Hear my pleas.
Give ME strength in spite of me.

John Sullivan

Photograph by Gerald W. Fuller

Photograph by Mark Phillips

Photograph by Katie Lubenow

Haiku

Trees casting shadows
Forming webs of light on grass
Golden leaves drift by

Angela Tiffin

Snow Storm

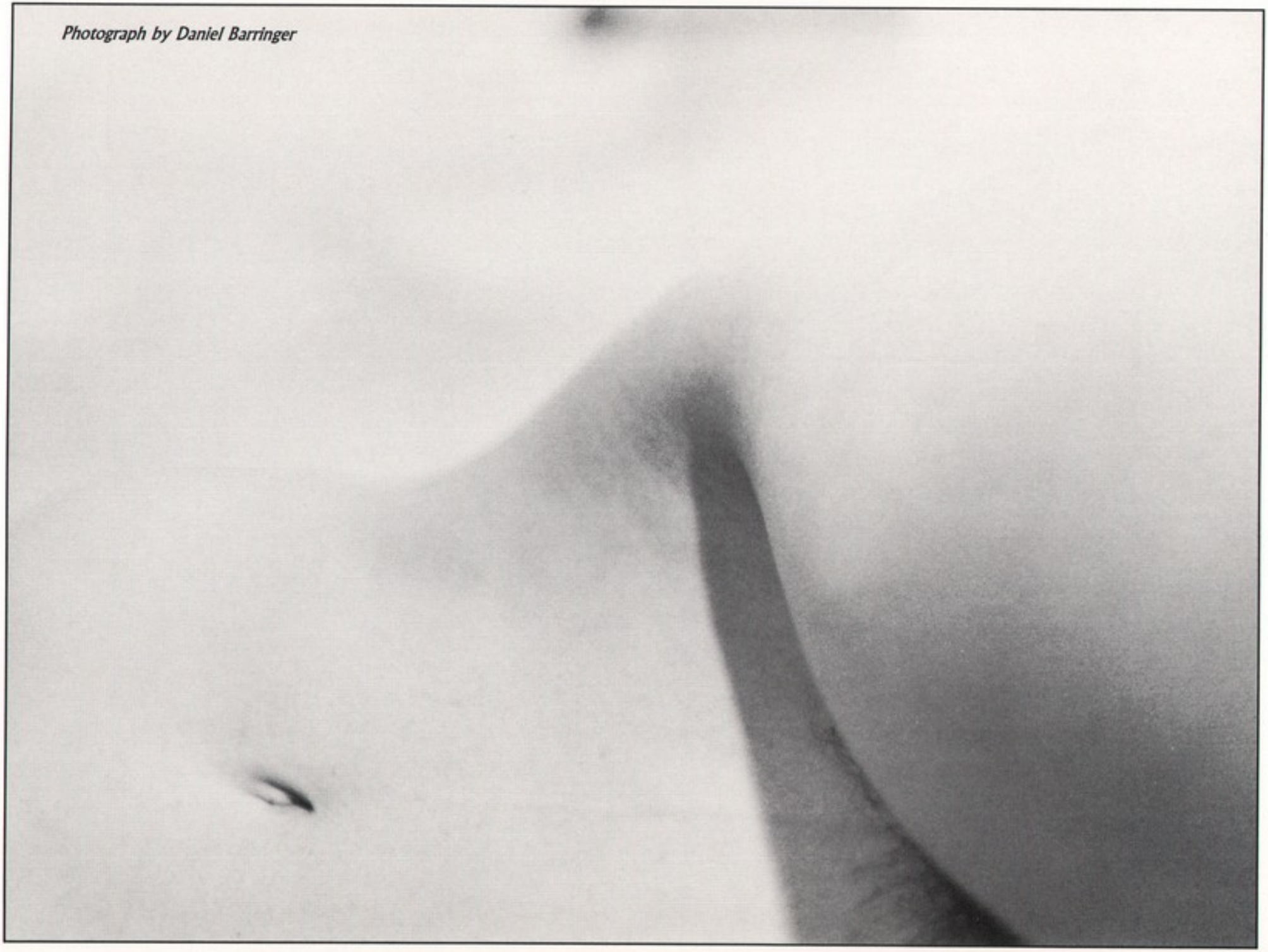
Winter flung the gauntlet
Down at straight-up noon today;
Bombarding the world
At once with icy rain,
Plumped and plopped
With white globs of snow
That stuck and hung on
Every leaf and blade.

Sheets of wind slashed
The heavy wet clumps
On my face until my
Eyelashes were trimmed
With lace and I wore
A layer of ice on my legs.

Almost as suddenly the
Downpour faded,
And left in its wake
A decorated world of
Mist and clouds and
Mounds of flakes—
As if mother nature
Had just iced her cake
And set it out to cool.

Jenna Smith

Photograph by Bridget Mullally



Photograph by Daniel Barringer

Life Drawing by Alan Gross

Spiderwoman's Children

Shimmering strands of transparent silver dance before my eyes.
Crystal filaments swirling past,
Long, short, single, intertwined,
Thin clear sunlight reflected on threads of molten glass.
Here and there a great floating mass
Circling, eddying, wheeling out of sight
Blown across the pale blue arc of the autumn sky
Watching, watching as they pass,
What enchanted hand spun such fragile brightness
And when finished, cut each piece and let it fly?
After the dark Solstice, Ariadne, you needn't cry,
The warmed earth will seethe with its luxuriant broken fast
And you daughters will spin gossamer threads of silver light
And weave lace strung with beads of liquid, golden glass.

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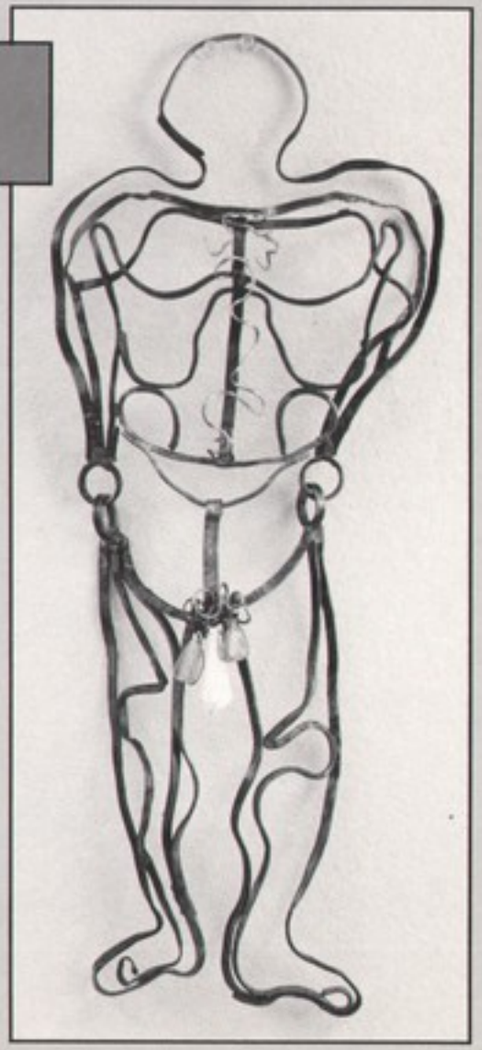

Sculpture by Linda Kay Ost

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