

Southern Voices

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SOUTHERN VOICES

Volume V
Spring, 1993

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(SouthernVoices is a magazine of creative works by students at the
Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science, P.O. Box W-1627, Columbus, Mississippi 39701.)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Poems

| | |
|--|----|
| KRISTI ADAM | |
| Lobby Chair | 17 |
| I Never | 28 |
| GLENN AQUINO | |
| Mannequin | 5 |
| Joey | 35 |
| OLIVIA BIBB | |
| My Barricade | 4 |
| Roosevelt | 13 |
| MALCOLM CARSTAFHNUR | |
| The Beauty Pageant at the Five and Dime | 28 |
| MACONNIA CHESSER | |
| Empty Vessel | 1 |
| BRIDGET CLARK | |
| Angel Beauty | 35 |
| CRAIG COLLIER | |
| Miss Peggy | 9 |
| JARVIS Q. DEBERRY | |
| The Theory of Expression | 10 |
| 16 | 17 |
| The Marshall County Jail | 36 |
| KEVIN ETHERIDGE | |
| Walls | 22 |
| RUSS GIBSON | |
| Hunger | 21 |
| BONNIE GILLESPIE | |
| a delta view | 5 |
| big bang | 30 |
| DONNA HARDY | |
| Tori Amos | 27 |
| RHONDA HEATH | |
| The Mending | 27 |
| KEN HOSKIN | |
| Guilty Messenger | 13 |
| Sunfood | 21 |
| Sinister | 27 |
| LYNN JAMES | |
| The Surgeon | 13 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| AARON LAUVE | |
| The Sky Is Blue, Aaron, Because . . . | 6 |
| Church Bells | 17 |
| HENRY "TREY" MANGUM | |
| Exile | 2 |
| SUSAN MASSEY | |
| Lost in the Forest | 21 |
| KRISTEN MCRAE | |
| The Observer | 5 |
| CARRIE G. O'KEEFE | |
| Cows | 5 |
| JIM OWENS | |
| Scroll Lock? | 2 |
| Homochronos | 2 |
| Head Ache | 35 |
| MARI PETERSON | |
| laughter like mercury | 22 |
| DREW PRUETT | |
| thoughts inspired by a piece of handi-tack | 14 |
| JASON PULLEN | |
| Living on a strand of hair | 22 |
| BRADFORD RHINES | |
| pillow prince | 6 |
| MONICA SCHOKNECHT | |
| Ballerina | 13 |
| STEVEN STEWART | |
| Rebirth | 21 |
| DANIEL TEMPLETON | |
| With Freedom It Rings | 10 |
| Bondage | 17 |
| Blanket Walls | 17 |
| MATT THOMASTON | |
| Miss Joe | 9 |
| LORI TRUSSELL | |
| Table and Chair | 28 |
| Like Death | 34 |
| I Believe in Sundays | back cover |

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MISSY VAN DOREN
 Autumn Afternoon 34

MINDY WHITE
 No 30

RYAN WILLIAMSON
 Church Lady 9

Short Stories

GLENN AQUINO
 Roommate 18-20

CRAIG COLLIER
 Driver 15-16

JARVIS Q. DEBERRY
 Thirst 29

ELEASE GRIFFIN
 Another Homecoming 11, 12

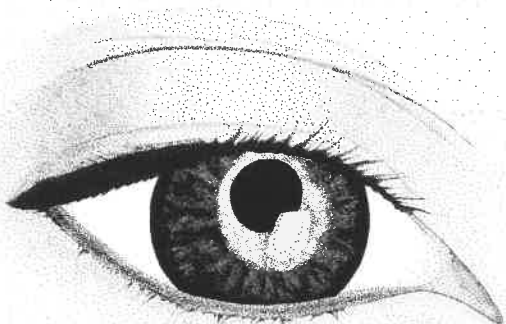
JOHN TIPPITT
 Sylvia's Mirror 31-33

Essays

RUSS GIBSON
 The Zen of Quarks 23-26

MICHAEL MATTHEWS
 A Grandfather's Hands 7-8

LESLEY RIVERS
 A Tradition Continues 3



Pen & Ink(Pointillism) Susan Massey

Artwork/Photograph

SHANA FONDREN
 Graphite 2
 Scratchboard 30
 Pen and Ink 31

DONNA HARDY
 Graphite 12

AMBER LASH
 Graphite Grid 27
 Silver Point (Pointillism) 36

JAMAAL LONGINO
 Pen and Ink (Pointillism) 4

SUSAN MASSEY
 Pen and Ink (Pointillism) . . Table of Contents

PRESTON PARROTT
 Graphite Grid 10

CHRIS REEKS
 Graphite Grid 8

MIKE SMITH
 Graphite 14

ANUJ TEWARI
 Graphite Grid 20
 Pen and Ink (Pointillism) 22

LORI TRUSSELL
 Photography Front Cover
 Photography 1
 Photography 6
 Pen and Ink 9
 Photography 28
 Pen and Ink 34
 Photography Back Cover



Photography

Lori Trussell

Empty Vessel

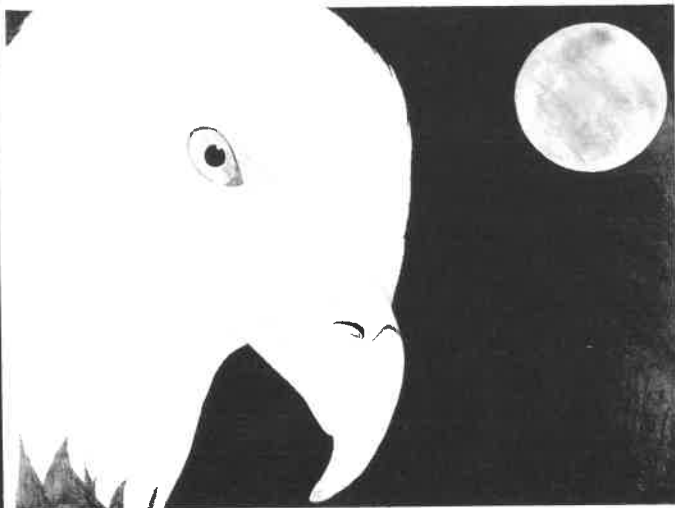
She stands by the sink
Scrubbing the lasagna off the pan
Wishing her dark skin was lighter
Her eyes were lighter
Her hair was straighter
Then someone else would have callused hands she reasons
Someone else would sweat in this sweltering kitchen with no
air conditioner
Someone else would struggle to pay bills and feed five kids
Someone else would live this life of despair
This life of hopelessness
This life that she can never escape
This life that consumes her very soul
Until she is nothing
But an empty vessel

Connie Chesser
Honorable Mention
Poetry Contest

Exile

a violent wind blows
across a barren desert
ALONE
one man lost in
waves of sand
trying to knock him down
blinding his vision
blocking his senses
COLD
blackness surrounds him
shivers his skin
his wandering mind
trying to comprehend
what has happened
SCARED
noises around him
hissing of serpents
howl of the wolf
SURROUNDED
no where to run
or hide
broken bones
bleeding wounds
no one can help
OPEN
exposed to the environment
no protection
waiting for the end

Henry "Trey" Mangum



Graphite

Shana Fondren

Scroll Lock?

The inhumane inmate's
Injured innards
Inhibited his influence to
Infuriate infidels.
The infestation of influenza
Into his infertile, infantile,
Infatuated, indigo index finger,
Caused indemonstrable inertia,
Not to mention,
Indecency to Injuns.
His unacceptable incest
Incessantly incased
Inside his
Incomprehensible soul,
Inclined in inartificial inaptitude.
Inaccurate incendiaries
Inhaled gave him
Inoperable, inoculative,
Insectoid instability.
Innsbruck, Innocent III, Indiana,
All inferior.
in aeternum,
in articulo mortis

Jim Owens

Homochronos

They can't tell me you were stupid
I know you were naked, and cold,
But, you loved life, and you sought out
Your own little world
your own little existence
Seeking first fire, the wheel, and then
NUCLEAR WARFARE
your eyes, so vacant, so
placid
so you can see the
future
so you saw the hell you made
so you love it

so you, so you, so you . . .

i forgot i was supposed to be praising you
poems do that, you know

Jim Owens

A Tradition Continues



As I rode past the old white house, I noticed a young girl standing still in the grass, firmly holding a rifle in both hands. "That must be Kelly," I said, pointing in her direction. Suddenly, I became extremely nervous. This girl was three years older than I, a senior in high school, and captain of the

rifle line. The car stopped. Slowly, I opened the door. The cold November air chilled my face as I stepped out of the car. I stood there for a moment, wondering how things would be in May, at the rifle tryouts.

Kelly Misora was a tall, slender girl with long dark hair and freckles. Her appearance was plain, but not unnoticed. She wore a brown shirt, blue jeans, and boots. No one would have ever known that this girl had an unusual talent, a talent which I also had but didn't know at the time. As I walked toward her, a warm smile stretched across her face. We both said hello and then began to talk about band and marching season. She told me how she had twirled the flag her sophomore year, before "becoming a rifle," and I explained to her about my seventh grade rifle experience at Lamar.

"So, what all can you do?" she asked me. "Can you do right hand spins?"

"Yeah," I said.

"Okay," she said and picked up the rifle lying under the tree next to her. "Here, do fifty."

Reluctantly, I took the rifle from her. It was much longer and heavier than the one I was used to twirling. I stood there for a few moments with a firm grasp on the wooden gun, trying to get a feel for it. Then, I began to twirl. Soon, my arms began to tire, but I kept on; I knew that Kelly was watching my every move.

"That was good," Kelly said. I smiled shyly. "Let me show you some more things." She then took her rifle and demonstrated some basic fundamentals, such as ziggy's, tic toc's, double time, and aerials. I watched each move intently,

paying careful attention to her form and position. Her talent and abilities greatly impressed me.

"How did you learn all of that?" I asked.

"Oh, it just takes time and a lot of practice," she answered. She continued to show me more tricks, while I practiced them on my rifle. We stayed outside that afternoon for hours, until it became too dark to see. As I rode home that evening I began to think about what Kelly had said earlier. She told me that being on the rifle line took more than just practice, but also commitment and dedication. I then realized that I was ready to face the challenge. I was determined to be on the rifle line next year, and I would do what ever it took.

Over the next five months, Kelly helped me learn each of the rifle fundamentals. By May, I was almost as good as she was. I could do right and left-hand spins, double time, one-

handed double time, hard time, circle spins, singles, doubles, triples, and even quads. There was no way of knowing just how many times I had dropped the rifle since that very first day of practice. However, I did know one thing; Kelly made sure that the number of times I dropped the rifle was equal to the number of

"So, what all can you do?" she asked me.

"Can you do right hand spins?"

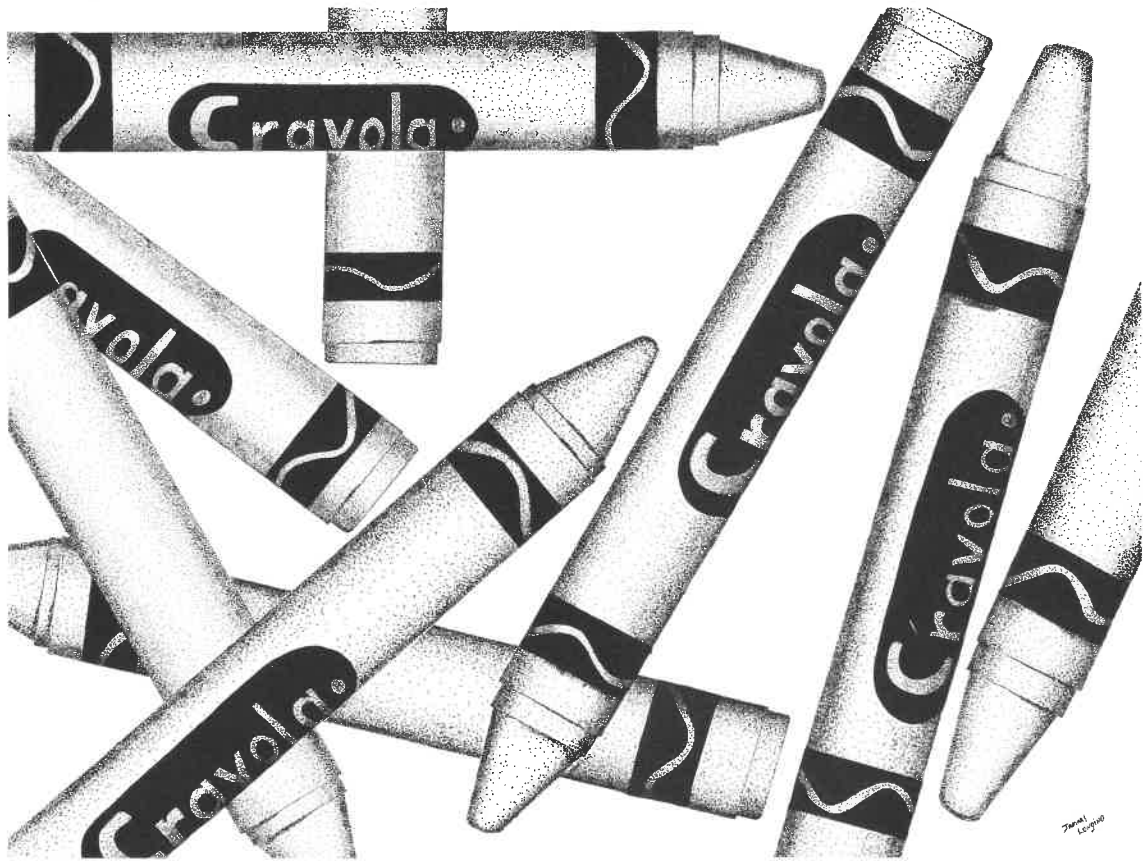
... However, I did know one thing; Kelly made sure that the number of times I dropped the rifle was equal to the number of times that I picked it up.

times that I picked it up.

Kelly had taught me everything she knew, and I was deeply grateful to her for that. She was not only a great teacher, but also a great friend, and what I admired the most about her was not her special talent, but her positive attitude and her concern for others. Kelly was a dedicated band member; she made personal sacrifices and took time out of her daily schedule to help me and many others. She did this not to gain popularity, but because she cared about the rifle line and wanted it to be the very best. Kelly knew that our band had a high reputation to live up to, and she was willing to do anything to ensure the quality of our performances. In May of 1990, her time as a "rifle" was up, but there was a new member on the line to carry on her tradition of pride and dedication:

Me.

Lesley Rivers



Pen & Ink (Pointillism)

Jamaal Longino

My Barricade

Hiding from Hitler, I'd slouch low behind the Butane tank—
hoping, that Choo Choo wouldn't give us away.
Then Mama'd call "Supper," and I'd reluctantly surrender—
but swear on revenge in following days.
Arising early, I'd run outside toward the mud—
for rain to me was surely a blessing.
I'd place freshly packed tin pies on the tank—
knowing that the silver paint would indeed bake this
Sunday dinner dessert.
Hours later I'd return to that wonderful kitchen—
just itching to serve supper to my favorite friend.
But Choo Choo just turned up his nose—
he didn't even stay long enough to hear the "Amen."
Later in the day, I'd be the scientist—
just hoping for once when Choo Choo was slung, high
from the tank, he'd land on his back instead of his feet.
Although, after many failed attempts, I'd give up—
but then become a musician and bang out a wicked beat.
Darkness eventually came, and at the metal tank I'd still be—
looking at the stars trying to find the knowledge I lacked.
Then Mama'd call "Supper" and I'd reluctantly come in—
But always know for certain, that tomorrow . . .
The Germans would be back!

Olivia Bibb

Mannequin

The old folks used to sit
on their front porches
and fall asleep on muggy, Sunday afternoons.
They barely breathed and
never moved, and
their mouths were open
wide.
I used to think they were
statues or mannequins, and I was scared of them.
But I wondered,
why would someone use
old folks
as decorations?

Glenn Aquino

Cows

Outside my car window,
Behind the barbed wire,
The cows graze on the rolling green grass.
Their sagging overstuffed bellies touch the tips of
the
Dandelions beneath them and
Dragonflies buzz overhead.

Outside my car window,
Behind the barbed wire,
One non-conformist cow faces east in a herd
That stands towards the setting sun,
That cools their dinner,
That cools their bed.

Outside my car window,
Through the side mirror,
The bovine animals lose their bulkiness and
Become specks of brown and white against a green
backdrop.
The fence stretches thin and
An orange sky engulfs it.

Carrie G. O'Keefe

Second Place
Poetry Contest

The Observer

He sits
Day after day
On his front porch
Rocking back and forth
Playing his guitar
And observing
People, cars
That rush by on the highway
Hurrying, hurrying, never stopping
Trying to discover
What he already knows.

Kristen McRae

a delta view

i could sit there for hours
looking out of my living room windows
a movie screen
for an early morning sunrise
when I am the only one in the theater
a doorway to tip-toe lightly across
the damp, dying blades of grass
in my front yard
to save the day's paper from the vicious attacks
of the neighbor's dogs
i could watch the day go by
from that window
zooming like the commuters on the highway
rushing to work in the morning
rushing home in the late afternoon
creeping ever so slowly like the tractors
pulling a trailer full of cotton
with the wind and the road stealing part of the crop
i can see the kids from next door
gradually migrating their football game
into my yard
i can see my family members
pulling into the driveway
from a long day's work
or just a quick trip to town
i can watch the world from a distance
even though i am not that far away
or i can become part of it
just by taking the time to notice.

Bonnie Gillespie

Honorable Mention
Poetry Contest

The Sky is Blue, Aaron, Because

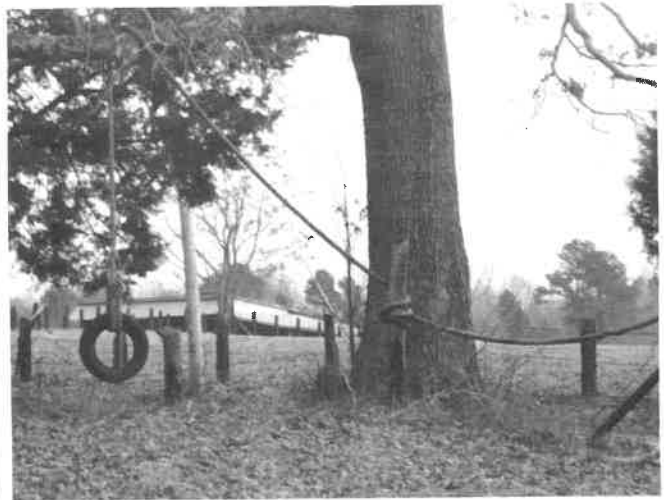
Every other wavelength
Of the Electro-Magnetic spectrum
Passes safely through the air,
While Blue is bounced about above the clouds.
That color is diffracted,
And that color you see,
Nothing more, nothing less: simple isn't it?
"Yeah, I guess."
Five minutes later,
You point your eager finger up towards the sky again;
I prepare to quote a lecture
From my eighth grade science class-
Mrs. Biggers' lesson on the cardinal's nesting habits-
But, the crimson bird has not yet caught your wide-open eyes,
And you knock me off guard with your question.
"Why is the sky blue again, Daddy?"
I can't help but laugh at myself.
"Do you remember about God, Aaron?"
"Unhunh?"
"God made the sky, Aaron,
And he painted it blue,
To show it-off to me and you."

Aaron Lauve

pillow prince

the little girl lay quietly in her bed
her childhood innocence curled into a ball
of
cold feet and flannel pajamas.
daddy's little tiger has grown into
my sweet princess.
she embraces her pillow
and she dreams of her prince.
he steals her away from jealous dreams
and covers her with whispers of love.
when the sunlight peeks through her
window,
she'll stir softly and brush her lips
against the cotton cheek of her
pillow prince.

Bradford Rhines



Photography

Lori Trussell

A Grandfather's Hands



on! Son! Hit the nail on the head," my grandfather yelled as my hammer completely missed its target and smashed his thumb against the two by four that he was holding. I knew the pain that my grandfather must be feeling, because I had done it all too often to my own thumb. He

remained completely unfazed, though, and quickly picked up his own hammer and took a nail from his apron.

"Hit the nail on the head," he repeated in perfect rhythm with the banging of his hammer. As I stood there watching him, I could not help but be mesmerized by his hands and the grace with which they delicately and deliberately pounded the nail into the board.

It is often said that the eyes are the window to the soul, and I guess in some people's case this is true. But as I watched my grandfather that day, I realized that it is not in his eyes, but in his hands that his soul can be seen best. For

in the coarse texture of his seventy-five year old hands is the story of his life, as well as the story of an entire generation of Americans.

As my grandfather reached into his apron for another nail, I continued to watch his hands. They were dark from the years of chopping cotton in the hot August sun. When he drew the hammer back, a scar that was left by a Japanese bayonet became visible. Then, as he moved the hammer forward again and drove the nail deeper into the wood I could

see the strength in his hands. His powerful grip seemed to strangle the wooden handle of his hammer. These were the hands of a working man. He could finish a nail in four strokes, whereas it took me eight or nine. His hands knew exactly where to go. They knew exactly what to do. They could do almost anything, and in fact they had done almost everything.

I guess that was the way it was during the Depression. People did anything and everything they could just to buy food to eat. I know that was the case for my grandfather. He worked from the time he was ten to help support his family. Whenever I feel as if my teachers are working me too hard, I stop by my grandfather's house and listen to the stories of

his childhood. After listening to how he drove a truck hauling gravel for seventy-two hours straight when he was thirteen, my English essay somehow doesn't seem as bad. My grandfather was not the exception, ei-

ther. Millions of other Americans have hands just like my grandfather's. Theirs are just as tough, just as strong, and just as worn as his are. Their hands are what built this nation, and their hands are what has held it together for the past generation.

As I watched my grandfather drive the last nail into the board, I looked down at my hands. I notice how smooth and how tender they were. There were no calluses, no blisters, no scars. They are as perfect as the day I was born. They do

"Hit the nail on the head," he repeated in perfect rhythm with the banging of his hammer.

not resemble in the least the hands of my grandfather. But what will happen when my grandfather is gone? What will happen when the hands that built this nation are no longer here to hold it together? If we are to survive as one nation my hands and the hands of my generation must become as strong and as hard as the hands of my grandfather. We must use all of our hands, no matter if they are white, black, red, or brown, to hold our country together, and we must all work together for the future of our grandchildren.

Michael Mathews



Graphite Grid

Chris Reeks

Miss Joe

The washtub splashed its steaming,
black water on the floor
As she shoved and scrubbed the
dingy clothes.

The night was coming quickly,
And the bed was calling her,
But there was still work to be done-
Work that could not
(In her mind)

Wait

"Good Lord!" she would say, and then laugh
As the dirty clothes pile grew,
My brother and I continually feeding it.
This woman in our house
Was like a grandmother to us.
She really cared about her work-
And us, too.
Thank God for Miss Joe.

Matt Thomaston

Miss Peggy

Miss Peggy and those thick-rimmed glasses,
silver hair shines like silver spoons
and a smile much more human.

"Miss Peggy . . . I don't feel well,"
I would always say.
"What's the matter, Sweetie?"

Putting down her coffee and pushing aside papers,
she took off the thick-rimmed glasses,
and leaned back in her chair.

"I don't feel well . . . and I want to go home,"
"Now, come on Sweetie, do you really?
. . . Come, come and sit in my lap."

She puts her bifocals back on,
and I come over to her lap,
but I wasn't really sick,
and those thick-rimmed glasses
could see right through me.

Craig Collier



Lori Trussell

Pen & Ink

Church Lady

My gaze fell tonight on
The most beautiful woman in the world . . .

She stood rather awkwardly
Her ankles broad and round

And shakily they held her weight-
It seemed she would fall down

Classic shone the wart she bore
Upon her wrinkled nose

No framed picture of her was made
With rich and dainty pose

Her fashion sense was not advance
In fact, it had great lack

Her trouble apparent in not matching
The clothes upon her back

No queen of anything she was
No extra special lady

If she had ever been, not now
For she appeared near eighty

But a reasoning comes from my interjection-
Yes, beauty she possessed

It still was clear within her eyes
Not to be second guessed

Beauty glowed in great amount
It sparkled in the room

From her presence all felt a spark
Which rushed away the gloom

But this spark held not a physical,
Emotional or mental part

It was the personification of the spiritual;
It was praise within her heart.

Ryan Williamson

The Theory of Expression

jAZZ, Classical, rock, hip-hip,
all the same.

All made by some fly cats whose
heads were ringing with
riffs, scats, arpeggios, and rhymes.
Sounds knocking around in their heads
like a marble singing inside a tin can
Had to let it out
Had to let us hear it
Would've drove em crazy if they didn't.

Ellington, Bach, Lennon, Ice-T,
all the same.

Thought the world would perish if we
didn't get a chance to dig their styles.
Haunted at night:
trombones blaring, flutes twittering,
drums pounding not letting them sleep.
Had to let it out
Had to let us hear it
Would've drove us crazy if they didn't.

Jarvis Q. DeBerry



Graphite Grid

Preston Parrott

With Freedom It Rings

Its booming brightness
Deafens my senses,
Awe my soul.
One person understands
The glory of its glory.
Singing bright in the rain,
The waves in the wind
Wash the shores of my spirit
With honor and joy.

The stars shine burnished
Across the silent night;
The quiet's so loud
I can hear the dreams
Of a nation crying for tears
And fears.

The blood of our boys
Screams across a stage
Of wedding gowns and bandages.
Gory glory bought with lives,
Sold like slaves
In the black house on a hill.
From Tripoli to the V.C.,
Their blood goes marching on.
Working fire with a forge,
A melting pot on low.
Sign it large that He may see.
The victor's badge.
Irresistible, undefined,
Slices the beachhead,
Enflames the night.

Perched on top of the world,
Spying with eyes unerring,
The bird of paradise and pain
Sings a song of proud sadness.
The guardian high
In current passed
The walls of the deepest veil,
Splitting them as he delivered
To feed rebellious chaos.
Bold he stands
To save the young
That later he may prey.

I stand here alone
In the company of a nation.
I stood there alone
wondering at the music.
And thus rang the symphony
As I walked back
Into the warm, wet shadows
Of the night.

Daniel Templeton

Another Homecoming



card from Mom stumbled down the jewelry box and floated to the floor, but he wouldn't care even though cleanliness was his religion. Mamma was dead. Homework could wait; the house had to be clean before he got home, and even then, there would be some extra time before she had

to do the homework. Opportunity would come later for algebra, government, and a research paper, but freedom like this was so infrequent. Today was a special day because Daddy had to work until the sun went down.

Mamma's trunk was shadowed with dust. Stored along the rear wall in the closet, Dad's shirts hung skimming the trunk with the wind of the closet door opening.

Anna's fingers tingled from the weight of her father's clothes hanging heavily on her frail fingers overhead. With the other hand she opened the large door and warm air rushed from the darkness to greet her chilled body. She hung the last of his laundry and the gold metal design on the trunk reflected in her wide open bright eyes.

Months ago, she realized the contents of the little black box in the obscure world of the closet. For so long she anticipated the day she could actually wear her mother's dress layered in ever changing worlds of lace.

She looked somewhat like her mother's picture—the only one in the house. Her mother was only seven years older in that picture than Anna.

It wasn't long before the chest was stripped of the clothes and they were laid out on the bed for Anna to choose from. Her mind whispered ultimate admiration for the lace, and so she quickly slipped it on. It was lovely, and she was in love with it. Mamma's jewels from a box within the chest were the perfect addition. The peach and white lace made her delicate figure appear fuller; but the last rays of sunlight cast through the window showed through to her feeble stick body in the mirror's reflection. The glare of sunlight at her waist and the

shadow creeping up the frame of the mirror reminded her of Daddy.

Scared of running out of time, she replaced the clothes on the bed into the chest and prepared her room for inspection. She crossed the house again to look for any signs of negligence. The half-hour charm chimed and the shadows grew as she began to undress herself. She removed the matching pearl necklace and earrings and replaced them in the trunk.

Cli-Cli-Clump! The deadbolt was unlocked. Anna's heart skipped a beat. There was no door to her bedroom and she'd be seen going to the bathroom. She crept to the hall and climbed into the tall dirty clothes hamper. She covered herself with the clothes she should have been wearing, and the lid of the hamper closed as he slammed the door shut. She might escape if he went for a shower. She had an excuse to be out: to get her paycheck; only she'd have nothing to show for it.

"Anna!" He was drunk. "Get in here. You know what I want."

*Cli-Cli-Clump! The deadbolt was unlocked.
Anna's heart skipped a beat.*

Anna began to whimper a cry. "Not again," she thought. It had been weeks since he last did this.

He stumbled into the hall, and turned toward his room. Anna could peer through the woven basket holes to see

her father's lines on his face, more clear than ever, anticipating his intentions.

He walked on and she sniveled.

"Anna, I heard you. I know I did. Now why don't you come on out, baby? You're only making it worse."

He was back in the front part of the house. She could hear him scrounging as she thought of escape.

He stepped closer.

"What would Mama do if she knew about this?"

Another step.

"I could run, but where?"

And another.

"He'll kill me if he finds me wearing this. Oh, God. There he is again."

He seemed to be pleased with himself, finally thinking that maybe she wasn't at home.

He pulled off his shirt and began unbuckling his belt as he walked into the hall, opened the clothes hamper, and tossed in his shirt.

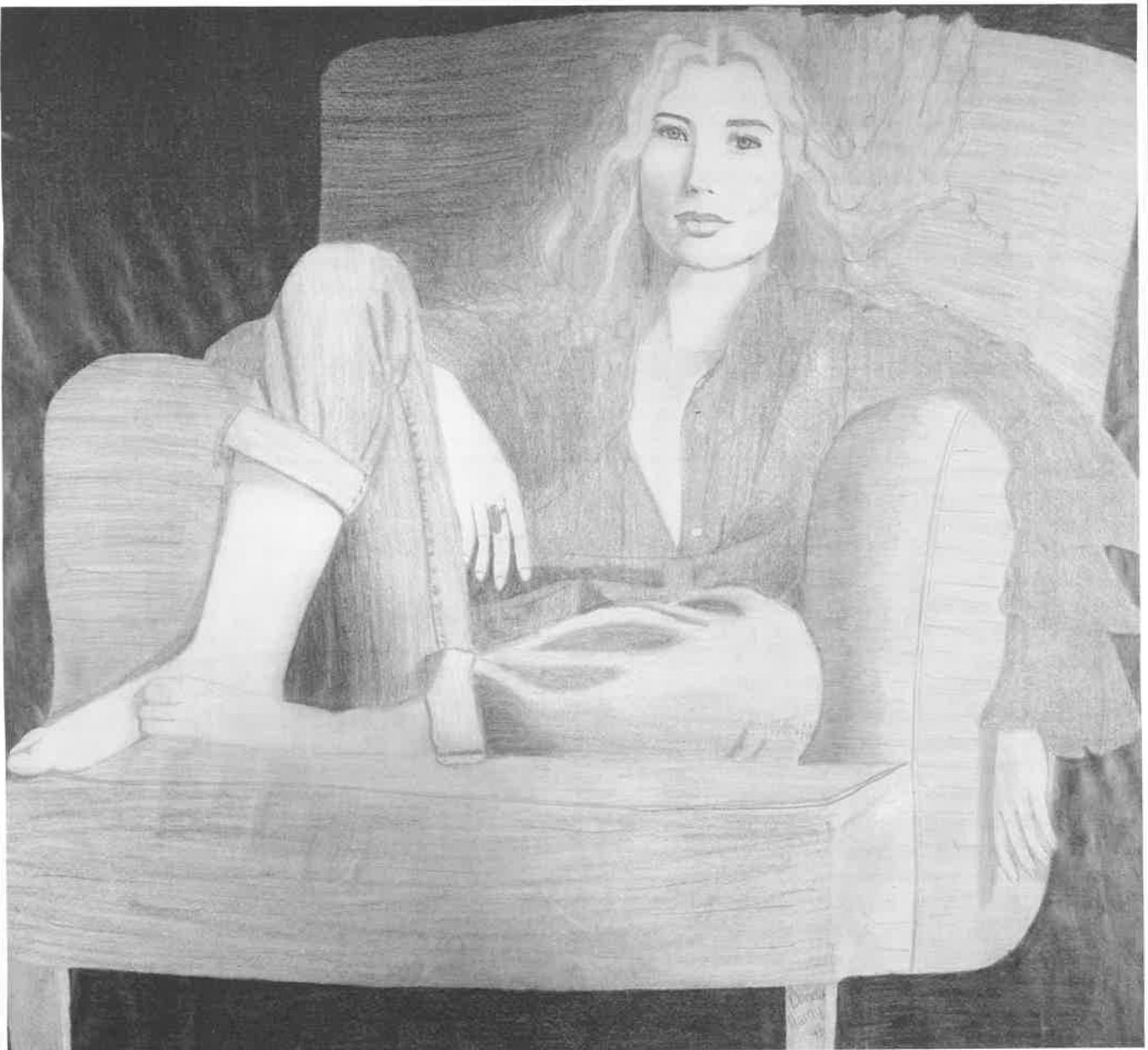
The clothes cascaded down past Anna's head and her breath met her father's eyes.

She stood to her feet in the hamper.

"So there's Daddy's little girl."

He licked his lips, and smiled.

Eleese Griffin
Second Place
Short Story Contest



Graphite

Donna Hardy

Roosevelt

Cars pull into the pumps;
Roosevelt greets all with a smile and quick "Hello."
He never lifts his head . . .
Always focuses toward his feet.
His hands stay close to his body,
Fidgeting with his wedding ring.
He has strong, weathered hands- callused and
hard,
A bit yellow from his grip.
These grease covered hands pull out a bandanna
from his
back
pocket to stain the sweat dripping face . . .
Always focused toward his feet.

Olivia Bibb

Third Place
Poetry Contest

The Surgeon

Like a surgeon examining the heart of a patient
He peers into the giant stomach of the tractor.
His hands wear grease so well
And not a thread he wears
Is dry or clean.
His hand steady
And his brow furrowed
He handles the tools with precision
And certainty that once again
His tractor will beat with
Life.
The sun has turned his skin a deep, woody brown.
His muscles sing songs of seven day
Work-weeks, stacking pallets
Bringing life out of hard, cold earth,
Bringing life with cold, hard metal.

Lynn James

Honorable Mention
Poetry Contest

Ballerina

Flowing silently in a floppy pink tutu,
Standing in tip toes with worn old shoes.
She is a red rose blooming,
A morning dove in the rising sun.
She flies silent across the mist-filled stage,
Twirling like a pinwheel touched by the wind.
Moving with ghostly grace,
Like the ivory swan of an enchanted lake.

Monica Schoknecht

Guilty Messenger

Sliding the bloody latex from his hands,
The water in which he washes his fingers
Mixes with the tears that fall from his tired eyes.
For the first time, he has failed.

With regained composure, the doctor who
Graduated at the head of his class, reluctantly
Drifts down the hall. He has seen it many times
Yet every object, every person, every tile on
The floor seems foreign.

"Everything will be okay," he'd told them.
Now he must serve to them on a silver platter
The words that he had eaten himself only minutes
Earlier.

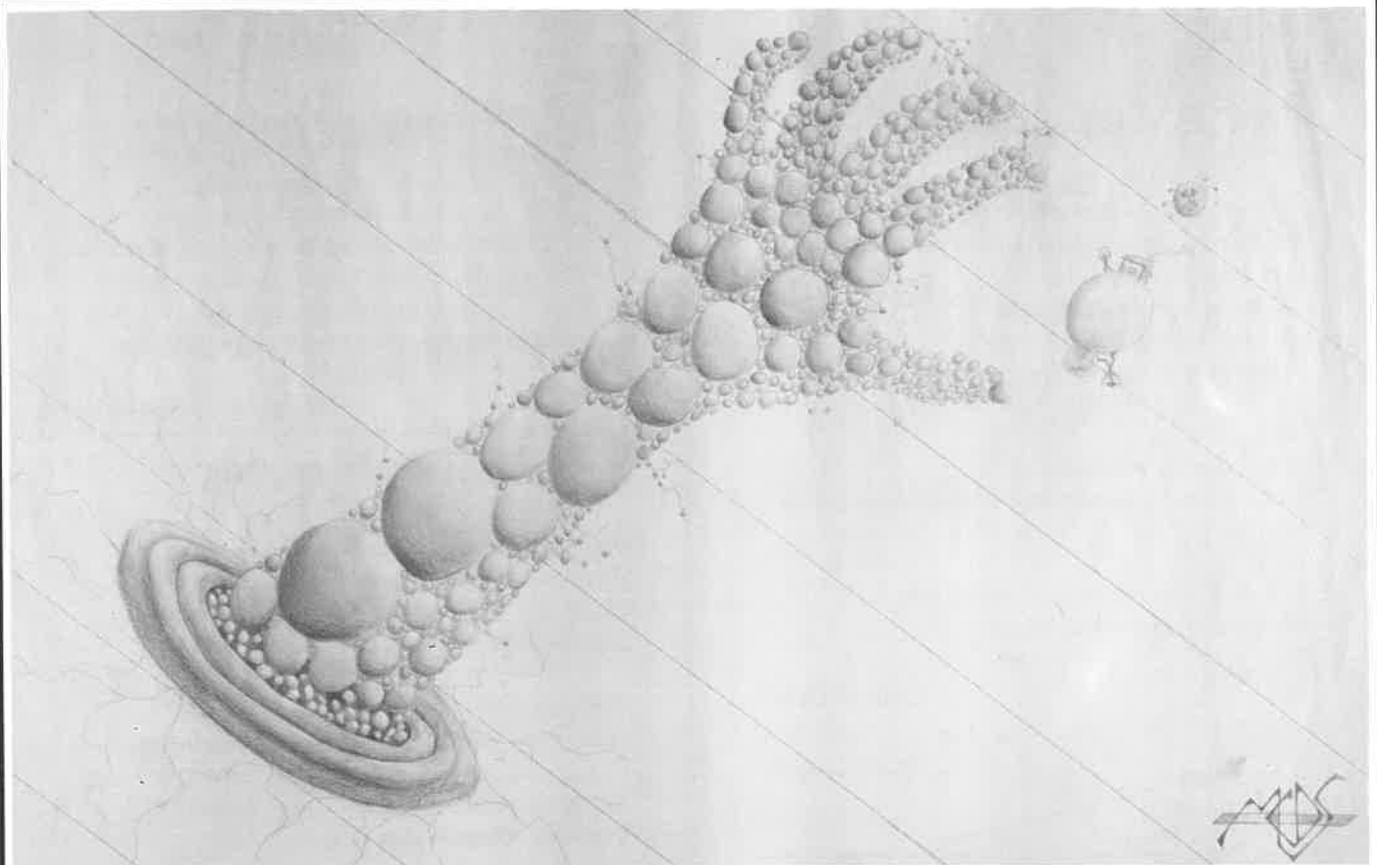
It must have been four generations in the waiting
room.
An elderly man, a middle-aged woman, and a young
girl
With her baby were only a few of those who awaited
the
News. He'd only seen them a second before the
room
Became a blur.

In a professional and detached manner, he delivered
The news and stood silent and still as if expecting
The angel of death to take him where his last patient
now
Dwelled.

A soft voice breaks the eternal silence and the mother
Thanks the doctor just before being overwhelmed by
the
Loss of her only son. The doctor quietly exited and
wondered
Just how long he would hate himself and hate the
mother
and hate the boy for giving up too soon.

Too late.

Ken Hoskin



Graphite

Mike Smith

*thoughts inspired by a piece of handi-tack
that fell into my eye from the roof*

it's yellow,
and it's sticky,
and it's, well, yellow,
kind of like sulfur
except camels don't carry it around.
it's the color of the sun
without the solar flares,
or at least it would be
if not for the fact
that the sun is actually orange.
it sticks to walls like tape,
or kind of like tape,
except that you can roll it off and reuse it
if you get tired of that part of your wall.
it holds things to walls,
but not as well as superglue.
it tastes a lot like a milky way candy bar
that has no taste.
it stays yellow without fading,
and comes in the designer color schemes

of yellow and yellow,
or yellow and yellow,
or, if the store is really good,
yellow and yellow.
it's very sticky.
it reminds me a lot of the mashed potatoes
at the mariott, except that it doesn't decay
into subnuclear particles in ten thousand years
and that the potatoes are white and gooeey
and are supposed to be eaten,
where this isn't supposed to be any of these things.
it's handi-tack, the savior of us all.
i think i'm in love
and it doesn't involve handi-tack,
or ticky tape, or even crazy glue.
it's not yellow or sticky,
but i kind of like those words,
so i'll use them anyway.
my favorite word is beanie.

Drew Pruett

Driver



hen David sunk his spikes into the mud, he heard the familiar squish, the earth still moist after last evening's rain. His eyes moved back and forth, back and forth, as he surveyed the range. Open, yet visible. It would be a clean drive.

He bent over, reached into the bag, and drew out his driver, a club he was always pretty nervous with, a club he rather disliked, a club that disliked him. He loosened his muscles and concentrated on the little ball, lowering his eyebrows while he lowered his head. With a relaxed and steady movement, he drew the club back only halfway behind his head and moved forward as he swept through the ball, barely noticing that the club head even touched it. He surveyed the range . . . nowhere in sight. It had surely surpassed any previous distance he had made with the driver before.

"You're such a KLUTZ! You can't even drive it 150 yards!" a voice echoed from the side of him.

David thought he was the last one on the range that afternoon, but a familiar figure was lurking in the brush to the right of him.

"Shut up, Farley, I

don't feel like fooling with you today," David said. He had noticed that the ball had only moved two inches from the tee. What had happened? What had gone wrong?

Farley, a freckled 17 year old with blond hair and braces and a brain underneath that was the product of two years of marijuana, gave a sniveling smile and said, "Let me show you how it's done." He grabbed a club from David's bag and swung it around in his hand as if it were his own.

David watched with the usual detachment. He didn't care to pay very much attention to Farley's much repeated lesson. No practice swings, no loosening up, just a swift smack at the ball and a 250 yard result.

After witnessing Farley's demonstration, which was well performed, David hopped in the car and closed the door,

peering out the window toward the club house as the large figure of a woman inside waved to him and his mother.

"Why didn't you wave to Miss Lolita?" his mother asked. She took her eyes off the road to make eye contact.

"I asked her for a job today, Mom, and she said I was too young!"

"What kind of job? Have you been listening to Farley again? He is seventeen years old you know . . . he CAN have a job," she paused. "YOU are just too young," she said. She looked at him again with her large brown eyes and raised eyebrows. "Do you understand?"

"I have my permit! I can run that tractor!" David adjusted the visor to reflect the bright western sun shining through the windshield. "Honestly."

"You need to quit trying to be someone you're not.

You need to quit listening to Farley . . . He's a bad influence. Feel free to just walk away from him sometime."

David gave no response but just watched the houses of his neighborhood pass by his window.

Later that night,

in bed, he carefully planned out his dialogue with Miss Lolita, owner of Sharp Hills Golf course and Driving Range. After school tomorrow, he would go directly to the golf course and talk to her. He really wanted to try it. Besides, he did have a permit.

The next day, school was the usual and David was only too anxious to exit the grounds and run down the street to Sharp Hills for a friendly chat with Miss Lolita.

Miss Lolita, in her fifties with red, curly hair and a robust figure, put out her cigarette, pushed aside her Coors can and leaned forward smiling. "Hon, you know I've known you for a long time. You're in here everyday for goodness sake! But . . ."

"That's why I'm perfect for this job," David said. "I have my permit, and I only need someone to show me how to shift the gears!"

*"That tractor's a pretty big piece of machinery,
but if you're sure you can handle it . . ."*
**"SMOOTH JOB WITH THE TRACTOR,
DAVID!"** Farley yelled . . .

"That tractor's a pretty big piece of machinery, but if you're sure you can handle it . . ." she took a sip of her beer, "then I'll let Junior show you the ropes of it. You'll have early hours, six-thirty to eight-thirty on Saturday and Sunday mornings."

David suddenly had mixed feelings but quickly perked up.

"You can practice running the tractor by picking up the balls out there this afternoon, and circle the perimeter with the cart to do the hand picking." Miss Lolita felt his excitement and mustered up a warm smile.

Elated, David felt a surge of happiness and triumph. Finally, he would be earning his own money, not depending on the sometimes deficient allowance he received. Even though he had no past work experience like Farley did, his reputation with Miss Lolita earned him the job.

"NEVER SHIFT INTO REVERSE." David recalled the warning from Junior, Miss Lolita's mentally retarded employee, as the rain fell in sheets that Saturday morning. It was barely light outside, but David figured he didn't have to see the balls for the tractor to pick them up. It was a fascinating piece of machinery; it scooped up the balls and threw them into the attached baskets. He just had to remember that it was impossible to back the thing up.

On about his seventh concentric circle with the tractor on the range, a yell from a passing car distracted him. Someone had called his name. He wondered who it was; he made a glance over his shoulder in order to recognize the caller. Suddenly, something jolted, and David thought he might have whiplash. Turning around, he realized that he had driven the tractor straight into a four-foot-tall bush. First, David tried to curb it sharply to get around it, but he soon noticed that tractors make very wide turns as he nearly crushed the bush and became stuck even further. About 400 yards away, David saw the light in the club house: Miss Lolita. He felt too ashamed to ask her for assistance. Panicky, he knew that the only possible way out of the bush was to back it out, despite what Junior told him.

He felt a grinding, and his seat violently vibrated. With his foot pressed hard on the brake, he slowly escaped the treacherous vegetation. The wheels skidded in the soupy mud. David experienced a violent shock in his stomach when he saw that the baskets full of golf balls in front of the tractor began to make their way into the air. The tops of the baskets turned to face David and emptied their contents onto the wet ground. Shifting into neutral, David realized that he had accomplished his goal of getting out of the bush, but now he had to recover the balls; they were rapidly becoming buried in the mud.

David fought drowsiness, parked the tractor in its spot, removed the key, and wiped rain from his forehead. He hoped he had gotten all of them out there. As he walked back toward the club house, he felt a warm radiance on his face; the sun had finally come out, and the rain had tapered off. Eight-thirty had long since passed, and golfers began to show up on the range; soon he questioned his ability to complete any task properly. He would lie in

anguish that night, unable to sleep; he knew he couldn't tell his mother, much less Miss Lolita.

Sunday morning had come without a cloud in the sky. David walked onto the golf course parking area, heading for the club house, a little cautiously, not sure of what he might expect of Miss Lolita's mood.

The noise of the tractor engine caused David to stop. Someone else was riding it out on the range. Looking out over the land, he could barely make out the face, but the blond hair and skinny figure was unmistakable: Farley.

"What happened yesterday, David?" Miss Lolita asked when David came inside. She raised her eyebrows and slowly exhaled smoke.

"What are you talking about?" David asked. He tried to brush off the entire incident.

"Junior was out on the range yesterday afternoon and found a surplus of balls in a pile on the ground!"

"Really?"

"Yes, and two of the baskets are badly bent out of shape. I'm afraid we'll have to replace them," she put out her cigarette.

David knew that he might as well admit to it now. He looked at the floor and felt like a speck on the linoleum.

"The worst part is that you also forgot to turn off the ignition to the tractor!"

David remembered that he did take the key out.

"You have to turn the key all the way to the left BEFORE taking it out, David. I've been recharging it all morning," she paused. "Now, I know that you are not an irresponsible person. I'm aware that the job I gave you was just too overwhelming. That's why I'm letting a new applicant take over from now on. He's out there now."

David felt a sharp pain in the pit of his gut. It was over.

"No hard feelings, of course. I'll give you your earnings for yesterday, plus a little bonus," she smiled as she said the last part.

David surrendered to the situation. He knew that arguing was hopeless, and so he emerged from his spot in the linoleum, held his head up, and started to leave.

"David," Miss Lolita stopped him. "Here, take a bucket of balls out there and chip a few. This chipper," she pulled a club off the shelf behind her, "should fit you perfectly. The balls are on me."

"SMOOTH JOB WITH THE TRACTOR, DAVID!" Farley yelled as he made his way around the front of the range, near the club house.

David refused to deplete any of his energy by yelling something crude in return and, instead, dropped a few balls at his feet then glanced back at the club house.

Inside the club house, Miss Lolita took out her cigarette and exhaled, watching the lone golfer on the range out her window.

Craig Collier
Honorable Mention
Short Story Contest

Blanket Walls

hidinghidinghiding
peek
hidinghidinghiding
click
the shut ter bug is hid ing
hidinghidinghiding
peek
hidinghidinghiding
click
tak ing pic tures in the dark
hidinghidinghiding
peek
hidinghidinghiding
peek
hidinghidinghiding
click
runningrunningrunning
hide

Daniel Templeton

16

Broken windows
Old black tires
and an engine
which outhonks
the horn
Number 16
heaves to a
stop
in front of a trembling
five year-old and smiling mother
"First day of school"
With slow,
difficult steps
the child boards
and slides onto
the green battle-worn seats
which have peeling skin
and icepick wounds
from idle
pencils and pens.
The child's tear
dissolves the
dust on the
window's edge
as number
16
makes the smile
on mother's face
disappear in
the distance

Jarvis Q. DeBerry

Bondage

She calls and I must answer.
She is my master; she is my destiny.
I live only to please her
And bask in her glory.
I obey her commands;
I am her slave.
There is no escape for the weary.
All is beyond hope.
I can feel her calling me every moment.
I succumb to my only master, my bed.

Daniel Templeton

Lobby Chair

Texture of lightning
Swirls and spills
Brown like the tree
Woolen fabric pulled tightly like spandex on a
dancer
Weight causes indentions on the low, coarse rug
High arms, low back
Cushions as soft as feathers
In the lobby it sits
Only to be sat on.

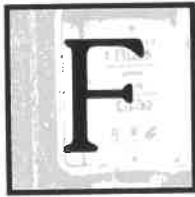
Kristi Adam

Church Bells

Zebadiah said potatoes
Reminded him of church bells . . .
Potatoes and baked ham.
He said the Back-door
Baptist church near his home
Used to hold picnics every month or so—
Potluck luncheons for the Lord;
Potato days he'd call them.
Said Ms. Ester's family recipe for
Irish-potato salad— and its
Half pint o'brandy secret ingredient—
Was a favorite of his,
During the reign of prohibition.

Aaron Lauve

Roommate



Fumbling through her purse, pushing aside broken lipstick and chewing gum wrappers, Allison searched for her keys as she approached the door to her apartment located just off the campus of Memphis State University. She opened the door and threw her purse and keys on the kitchen counter only a few feet right of the open door. Alli rushed into her room and yelled to her roommate Gena who was sitting in front of the T.V.

"Hey, Gena! How long have you been here?" yelled Alli.

"My class was over at 2:00." Gena's voice was soft.

"What'd you say?" Alli screamed, as she rushed into the living room with dirty clothes in both of her hands.

"I said 'My class was over at 2:00,' so I've been here since then," Gena said.

"Well, it's 5:00 now. Have you been in front of the T.V. since then?"

"Yeah, there's nothing to do, and I don't want to go home tonight. I decided to lie around the rest of the night."

Alli had rushed back into her room while Gena was talking. Gena noticed that Alli was ignoring her, but she was used to it. Alli was always the energetic, outgoing type. If she noticed that anything was getting dull or boring, she would move onto something else.

Gena, on the other hand, was the quiet and shy type of person. Gena wasn't jealous of Alli, but she would sometimes wonder what it would be like to be Alli for a day. The two girls had attended Germantown High School together. Their parents were good friends, and they had also been good friends until they were freshman.

During the last years of high school, Alli rose on the social ladder. Alli was a cheerleader for four years, a pageant beauty, and homecoming queen her senior year. Gena had stayed the same, sweet, little girl she had always been, and in high school, she joined a few clubs but rarely stayed in them. As the years went on she had become more reclusive, keeping to herself and avoiding people.

It had seemed that Alli had forgotten about Gena until she called Gena about Memphis State. Alli heard from her mother about Gena's acceptance to Memphis State and on the phone told Gena that she had also been accepted. It was during the conversation that they decided, or actually Alli decided, to be roommates.

College was no different from high school for the two girls. Alli was always at some party and would come in late every night. She would try not to be loud, but she would go to class then come back to the apartment. She

would study for a few hours, and then she would sit in front of the T.V. until she went to bed. Gena never got out because she really didn't want to. And now, it didn't matter anymore because it was the last day of spring term, and

she would be home for the summer.

Gena got up, walked to Alli's room, and leaned against the doorway. Alli was halfway in the closet, picking up dirty clothes and throwing them toward an open luggage bag on her bed.

"What are you doing?" Gena asked. There was no reply, so Gena stood there and watched. As soon as Alli stuck her head out of the closet, Gena asked again, "What are you doing?"

"I'm packing," Alli said.

"Oh," Gena whispered "why are you packing now?"

Gena's face just dropped, and she turned and walked away quickly. Alli, realizing what she had said, quickly apologized.

Won't you have time to pack tonight?"

"No, I'm going to this giant party at the KA house and won't be back until really late."

"Oh, O.K."

Suddenly, an idea popped in Alli's head. Alli had never really invited Gena to come along with her, and Alli thought that was the reason why she was always stuck in the apartment.

"Why don't you come with me? It's supposed to be a great party. We can celebrate the end of our first year of college together."

"No, that's O.K. I'll just stay here tonight. I'm leaving early in the morning, and I want to get some rest."

"You won't need any rest for the drive. It only takes a little more than an hour to get home."

"Well . . . no. I feel really tired right now. I might just go to sleep right now. You can go by yourself."

"But it's just a quarter after 5:00! You can't seriously think about going to bed this early on a Friday night! Why don't you just come with me?"

"No. I'm serious. I think I'm really tired. I'll just stay here in the apartment. You can go to this party alone."

"Oh, come on! Come with me! You never get out of this apartment! You're such an outcast!"

Gena's face just dropped, and she turned and walked away quickly. Alli, realizing what she had said, quickly apologized.

"I'm sorry, Gena. I didn't mean it. I just want you to come and have a good time. Come on, it'll be fun."

"No, I'll just stay here."

"Why? It's got to be boring sitting here all alone."

"Well, I won't know anyone, and I'll feel out of place. It's just not my crowd."

"Then I'll introduce you to a bunch of my friends, and you can get to know them."

"No, I really don't want to go. Besides, I'm really, really tired, and I want to get some rest for the drive home tomorrow morning."

"Fine! Have it your way. Just don't say that I never invited you anywhere."

Gena sat back in front of the T.V. When Alli was through packing, she grabbed her bags and placed them right by the kitchen counter.

"What are you doing?" Gena asked softly.

"I'm putting my bags right here by the door, so when I get up in the morning, I can run right out the door and leave for home."

Alli was ready to leave and asked once again, "You sure you don't want to join me?"

"Yeah, I'm sure. Have a good time"

Alli sighed, shrugged her shoulders, and left Gena at the apartment. She got in her car and drove to the KA house. When she arrived, the frat house was dead. The only people there were a couple of drunk KA's watching T.V.

The rumors of the party being the end of the year blast turned out to be nothing but rumors, so Alli left. She drove around looking for some fun, some excitement, but she could find nothing. After driving around aimlessly with the car stereo loud, she decided to get her bags at the apartment and drive all the way home tonight, so she could sleep really late in her own bed tomorrow. Since it was only 9:30, she would get home at about 11:00 and wouldn't wake her parents. She got to the apartment, and before she opened the door, she noticed that it was quiet and that the lights were out. Gena was probably asleep; so Alli would try again to be quiet so that she wouldn't wake Gena. Alli quietly opened the door and peered into the dark apartment. She couldn't see a thing, but she remembered where she had placed her bags. She reached over by the kitchen counter and grabbed her bags. Alli walked to her car, threw her bags in the trunk, and left for home.

Alli woke up the next morning by the ringing of the phone. She rolled over and answered it. A voice over the phone asked, "Allison Henry?"

"Yes?" she answered.

"This is the Chief of Police in Memphis. There's been an accident, and I need you to come to your apartment now."

"Why? What's wrong?"

"I'd rather not explain over the phone."

"What?!? Just tell me what's wrong!"

"Please, just come to the apartment quickly."

"Okay, alright! I'll be there as soon as possible."

Alli put on some sweat pants and a sweatshirt and got in her car. She cut her regular hour drive to the apartment by twenty minutes. She jumped out of the car and sprinted toward the apartment, but she was stopped by a policeman.

"I'm Allison Henry!," Alli screamed, "please tell me what's wrong!"

"Just calm down," the policeman said. "I'm Chief Hawkins, and I'm afraid there's been an accident."

"What? What do you mean 'an accident'?"

"I'm sorry, but I need you to identify the body of who we think is Gena Daniels, your roommate, since you were probably the last person to see her."

Alli turned pale as she looked at the Chief. She followed him to the sheet which covered the body, and the sheet was pulled. She looked at the disfigured body and almost fainted.

"Is it Gena?" asked Chief Hawkins. Silence was all that he received from her. He placed his hand on her shoulder and asked again, "Is this your roommate?"

Alli's eyes had begun to water, and she was trying to keep her composure. "Yes," she whispered, "what happened?"

"It seems that some sick person broke in and had his

way with your roommate and a knife."

"Oh my God . . . do you have him?"

"No. We don't even have a trace on him."

"What about the apartment? Have you searched it?"

Alli noticed the chief cringe as she mentioned the apartment. "What? What about the apartment? Have you searched it?"

"Yes, we have, but . . ."

"But what? I want to see the apartment!"

"I don't think that would be a good . . ."

"No! You have to let me see it now!"

"I can't let you. There's blood everywhere, and . . ."

"I don't care! And with that, Alli ran toward the door of the apartment and threw it open. She froze in the doorway as she saw the red stains everywhere. The smell of death and blood made her stomach cramp. Alli stumbled into the apartment, gazing at all of the blood. Alli felt sick from the stench and ran to the bathroom, now

trying to avoid the sight of blood streaked on the walls.

Alli fell on her knees right by the toilet and stayed in that position for a few minutes. She couldn't believe what had happened. She tried to convince herself that it was a dream, but with each breath, the smell of blood destroyed that illusion. Regaining her composure, Alli tried to stand and make it back outside. As she stood, she caught sight of the bathroom mirror. Alli stopped breathing and fainted as she read the message scrawled in blood on the bathroom mirror

"AREN'T YOU GLAD YOU DIDN'T
TURN THE LIGHTS ON?"

Glenn Aquino

Third Place
Short Story Contest



Graphite Grid

Anuj Tewari

Sunfood

Dawn.
drying dew drips green from leaves
Shower's done
Morning's come
Breakfast time.

There is no pot nor pan for fly,
But only sun in eastern sky.
No bacon, egg, or grit to boil
But H2O from nature's soil
And, of course, the sun.

When their feeding's done, they sway in the gentle
breeze.
No bills to pay nor boss to please,
But only days of glowing ease
And eating up the sun.

Ken Hoskin

Lost in the Forest

Lost in the forest
in the dark
with you
and your warm hand
The moon casts a
dim glow
Fragile leaves crunch
underfoot
Crouching in the tall grasses
watching you watch
the tiny fairies
hovering above
They dance about the
chartreuse glitter
giggling and
kissing your nose

Susan Massey

ReBirth

creep down into mother earth
where people gather together
keeping warm by love's hearth

boys, girls, loving during cold day
frost nip at lovers' breath
keeping warm mother nature's way

rising from the cold earth
intertwined lovers dance high
join the rebirth

Steven Stewart

Hunger

Icy tongues rush salty and slick
To lap and lick at great grey bones
That thrust themselves to pierce the sky.

Swelling deep, now capped with white
As the wide red eye peers over the rim
Of the wildly thrashing sea,
Bashes the rocks
As if to soften them
For consumption.

Stony shore is flecked with foam
As the pounding breath
Of surging water leaves rabid traces
Of its awakening rage.

Crisp, cool breeze flees from the face
Of yawning, sleepy sun
And speeds on the waves
And whips my hair
And chills my face,
A visage now frozen in a mask
Of Wonder.

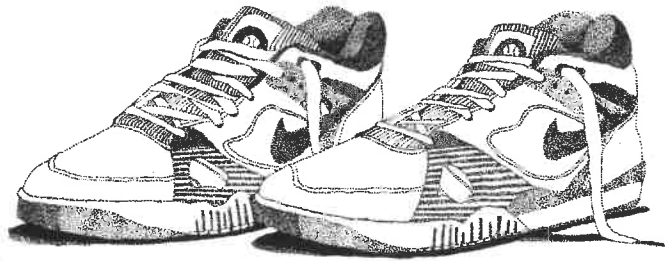
Russ Gibson
Honorable Mention
Poetry Contest

Walls

Plumber Paul
Crawled on the floor to-
(install) the flow:
appalled as he saw
all they have the gall
to scrawl on the wall
bawls . . . realizing,
his fall as he recalls
his Paw, tall with
overall drawl sowing
seeds mauling weeds-

with
a
hoe:
-yearns at last [light]-
-for . . . the *(cross)*-
of
row
and
w
a
l
l

Kevin Etheridge



Pen & Ink (Pointillism) Anuj Tewari

Laughter Like Mercury

laughter like mercury
filling cracks
like so many others
in a day when salvation
seems to cry
and the senseless babble
clutters the asphalt.

Mari Peterson

Living on a Strand of Hair

Living on a strand of hair,
A hope of sincere desire for our mankind,

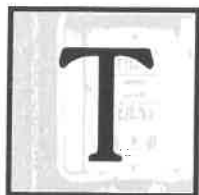
Why can't this world live?
or am I too blind to see?

Yes, blind of color, blind of reality?
do you understand my world?
or is it just that I don't understand yours?

The problem is that we look at our feet when we walk
we are so blind that we never look up from the lonesome ground
that we walk, such an epitome that living in a world so big and
so united in nation that we are thrown apart by our inhumanity
towards each other.

Jason Pullen

The Zen of Quarks: Parallels between Modern Physics and Eastern Mysticism



The profound revolution in physics that began near the beginning of the twentieth century has revolutionized society, both technically and philosophically. Nuclear energy provides electricity for homes, and gigantic particle accelerators allow glimpses into the

innermost structure of subatomic particles. But additionally, the concepts gleaned from mankind's study of relativity and quantum physics have revolutionized his overall view of the universe and mankind's relationship to it. Western science has, for 2500 years, taken a very divisive view of the universe, maintaining that things can be better understood by separating them into smaller units, and then classifying those units into distinct groups. However, during the past century, physicists have begun to take a

tack that seems somewhat mystical; oftentimes, talk among physicists sounds like a discussion of philosophy. It seems that the views proposed by Eastern philosophers and mystics- namely those of Buddhism, Hinduism, and Taoism- are actually accurate descriptions of the structure of the universe. The recent efforts of Western physicists have, in effect, merely reaffirmed (and quantified) knowledge that is millennia old. Even though modern physics and Eastern mysticism describe the universe in completely different

ways- one rationally, the other intuitively- they reach astoundingly similar conclusions about the nature of the universe and the human perception of it.

One of the problems that modern physicists face is the verbal inexpressibility of the concepts that they wish to convey. Physicists must frequently deal with such mind-bending concepts as multidimensional space, space-time continuums, and wave-particle duality. While these ideas can be expressed mathematically, there is no way to relate these concepts to everyday experiences. For example, consider wave-particle duality as observed in electrons.

An electron is the negatively charged entity that orbits the nucleus of an atom. The word "entity" is used because under different circumstances, an electron can behave as either a wave or a particle. When measuring charges due to electrons, it has been determined that the charge varies in discrete, fixed amounts, each electron carrying a

certain amount of charge. This indicates a particle-like entity. However, an electron also has wavelike characteristics. One of these characteristics is that it orbits the nucleus of the atom only at fixed distances. This is a result of the "matter wave," or "natural frequency" associated with an electron. The electron vibrates at a frequency that is determined by its momentum, and the electron is constantly vibrating as it orbits the nucleus. The electron can only orbit at a distance from the nucleus that allows it to retrace its

Even though modern physics and Eastern mysticism describe the universe in completely different ways- one rationally, the other intuitively- they reach astoundingly similar conclusions about the nature of the universe and the human perception of it.

vibrating path. It seems a violation of common sense that something can be simultaneously a wave and a particle, but this type of behavior occurs nonetheless. The idea of wave-particle duality is verbally incommunicable simply because it is not noticeable in the everyday world. Since human beings cannot visualize subatomic processes, they cannot totally comprehend how these processes actually occur. The best that physicists can do is construct a crude, simplified model that seems to explain what happens and can give probabilities for future behavior of a particle. When one speaks of scientific "laws," one should be aware that no such "laws" actually exist; they are only rules formulated by human beings to explain nature.

Eastern mysticism takes a similar view about the inexpressibility of the true nature of reality. A famous Zen proverb says, "Do not mistake the finger pointing at the moon for the moon itself." This analogy indicates that words only point to the truth and should not be mistaken for the truth itself. People tend to construct a crude, symbolic map of reality, classifying their perceptions and feeling in to distinct categories. They forget, however, that nature is not simple and easily divisible; it is infinitely complex and varying. The mistake that naturally follows is that people begin to substitute their map of reality for reality itself. Thus arises the word "paradox." Scientists speak of paradoxes, but in actuality, no paradoxes exist. Nature operates in its own smooth rhythm, and the real paradox lies in the conceptual map of the observer.

Thus, the emphasis in Eastern mysticism and modern physics lies on the direct perception of reality, not the watered-down, pre-classified, biased view of it. A good scientist must see scientific data for what it is, not try to fit it poorly into an outdated theory. He should try to describe reality, not force it to fit his own conceptual map of reality. Similarly, the spiritually unenlightened seek to understand new sensations and thoughts in terms of what they already know, and this is a mistake. The desire for familiarity can interfere with one's clear view of life, for as Lao-Tzu says,

Free from desire, you realize the mystery, Caught in desire, you see only the manifestations. (Lao-Tzu, 1)

In Zen Buddhism, one of the principal paths to enlightenment is the koan, a seemingly paradoxical riddle that cannot be answered using conventional rational thought. More well-known koans include "What is the sound of one hand clapping?" and "What was your face before your parents were born?" The student seeking to answer a koan must abandon all rational thought. He must let his mind settle and look directly into the heart of the question. Enlightenment in Zen comes when, after years of meditation and answering koans, the student has totally abandoned all pre-conceptions and illusions, as well as all hopes of verbal communication of truth, and

can look with an unclouded eye at the Universe. It does no good to try to communicate a principal truth, because words are inadequate descriptions; the student must directly experience the truth. Said the ancient Chinese sage Po Chu-i, "*He who talks doesn't know; he who knows doesn't talk.*"

Another rediscovery made by modern physicists is the degree of interconnectedness inherent in the universe. For years, physicists have been accelerating subatomic particles to high speeds and colliding them in the hopes of finding the indivisible "building blocks" of which everything is composed. This "building block" view of reality is typical of the Western mind, and no one seemed to think that Nature could be otherwise until Geoffrey Chew proposed the Bootstrap Theorem in 1968. Chew introduced the possibility that fundamental entities do not exist, that indivisible building blocks are an illusion, and that all physicists can hope to observe are the interactions between particles, not the particles themselves. His hypothesis was called the Bootstrap Theorem because the particles in Chew's model seemed to pull themselves into existence "by their own bootstraps." Chew's theory was supported by observations that physicists had made of particles crashing into each other at nearly the speed of light in particle accelerators. It was observed that when two particles collided, they were "split apart," and a shower of newly created particles emerged from the collision. This was to be expected, of course, if the colliding particles were made up of smaller constituent entities. But what was unexpected was that the emerging particles often had a total mass greater than the total mass of the colliding particles. Evidently, some of the energy stored in the moving particles had been transformed into matter when the particles collided. It is impossible to observe reactions between particles unless the particles are accelerated to extremely high speeds and collided with other particles, with the resulting newly created particles interacting with a measuring device that gives physicists an idea of what is happening. Thus, it is also impossible to observe the created particles in an untransformed state. This suggests that fundamental building blocks- if they even exist-can only be understood as a network of interactions that takes into account the nature and energy of the particles that collide. In other words, the world cannot be analyzed into independently existing parts; physicists can observe subatomic particles only by way of the particles' interaction with the measuring device. The particles, then, are known only by their interaction; it is the transformation of a particle into something else that physicists observe. This view of quantum ("smallest quantity") interconnectedness naturally extends to universal interconnectedness, because no subatomic reactions are isolated: particles are constantly interacting with the particles around them, "dying" and being

"reborn," all across the universe. Thus, quantum physics forces us to see the fundamental reality of the universe as a network of mutual relations, not a simple cause-and-effect set of reactions between fundamental building blocks.

This view of all-pervading unity is also held by the Eastern mystics. The universe is described as a "cosmic web" by Hindu mythology, with Brahman, the supreme Hindu deity, being the unifying thread in the web. In Buddhist philosophy, the web is described as also including the inner (mental) and outer (physical) realms of existence. The universe is envisioned as a double-sided cloth, whose two components are interwoven. Thus, when a change occurs in one part of the fabric, the other component cannot remain unaffected. Who has not noticed that mental attitude can affect one's physical state, that physical state has everything to do with mental attitude?

An important part of Zen Buddhist thought is the concept of "oneness" with one's surroundings; Buddhists believe there is no difference between the observer and the observed. When Zen pupils perform an action, they seek to identify totally with the action, losing their sense of self and "becoming one" with the action. They try to see the fabric of reality as a whole, with the inner and outer worlds woven into one cloth. Westerners make a distinction between "out there," referring to the world, and "in here," referring to themselves. It is as if they think that one could separate himself from his environment and be a nonparticipating observer. The fallacy with this line of thought is that humans shape and are shaped by their environment. That a distinction between observer and observed exists is an illusion produced by the unenlightened mind, and this illusion is one of the mind-clouding thoughts that Eastern mystics try to dispel in order to achieve enlightenment. Thirteenth-century Japanese Zen-master Dogen made the following comment:

One has to accept that in this world there are millions of objects and that each one is, respectively, the entire world. (Kapleau, 310)

The ultimate underlying unity of the universe described by both modern physics and Eastern mysticism has been vividly illustrated by scientific experiments and mystical experience. Physicists observe that in particle accelerators, particle/anti-particle pairs suddenly appear from nowhere and promptly disappear back into the void from which they came. There is no evidence that these particles are generated by any collision; they literally arise from nothingness. These ephemeral happenings are explained by physicists who say that all entities are merely "disturbances" in a universal, omnipresent field of potentiality. In the words of W. Thirring:

The field exists always and everywhere; it can never be removed. It is the carrier of all material phenomena . . .

Being and fading out of particles are merely forms of motion of the field (Capra, 222). Buddhists, Hindus, and Taoists also speak of a void from which all manifestations of matter arise, a void variously called *Suntaya*, *Brahman*, and *Tao*. These three religions emphasize that.

The third similarity in thought that modern physics and Eastern mysticism share related to another aspect of oneness: the unity of opposites. Western philosophy has long held to the tenets of dualism, the philosophy of exclusive opposites, and Western science reflects this school of thought. Scientists once believed that matter and energy were separate. However, they have since discovered that matter and energy are interchangeable. A small amount of matter can be transformed into an enormous amount of energy; this is the principle behind atomic energy and nuclear weapons. In a nuclear explosion, a few pounds of plutonium transforming into energy can level an entire city, releasing massive quantities of heat and radiation that vaporize everything within miles. Likewise, a compressed spring weights minutely more than an uncompressed spring, because the energy used to compress the first spring is stored as extra mass.

Additionally, space and time were thought to be separate by Western physicists. Newton assumed that time flows constantly along, while people and objects move at various speeds through space. Early in the twentieth century, a young German Jew named Albert Einstein refuted Newton's theory and changed the way that physicists perceive the world. He proposed the idea of a "space-time continuum," saying that space and time were inextricably linked, and that moving through one element of the continuum affected one's movement through the other. Einstein said that the faster one moves through space, the slower one moves through time; on the other side of the coin, the faster one moves through time, the slower one must move through space. For example, if an astronaut boards a spaceship and travels near the speed of light for what seems to be five minutes, the astronaut will return to Earth to discover that thousands of years have passed. Since the astronaut moves through space very rapidly, his passage through time slows down, and a great length of time can pass while the astronaut ages only five minutes.

The scientific view of the phenomena of opposites can be further explained by a geometric example: Some scientists claim that if one could perceive a higher dimension, all things would appear to be unified. Consider a plane with two circular areas located some distance apart on it. When viewed in two dimensions, the areas seem to be separated. But if one expands the picture into three dimensions and

sees the two circular areas as two-dimensional slices of a donut that is split by the plane, one can see that the slices are indeed connected, but in a higher dimension.

The unity of opposites is a central element in Eastern philosophy as well, especially Taoism. Taoists speak of yin and yang, which are archetypal opposites that represent the opposites in polarity through which the universal Oneness can manifest itself. Yin represents all that is soft, yielding, moist, dark, passive, and female, while yang symbolizes the firm, unyielding, dry, light, aggressive, male component of reality. The importance of these two concepts lies in their relationship to unity of reality and each other. Yin and yang are not a dualistic pair, even though they may seem to be. They are actually opposite sides of one reality, two contrasting manifestations of the Great Tao. Although they seem to typify two different things yin and yang are only two different perspectives of the big picture. Eastern mystics claim that opposites seem to exist only because most people view reality from a limited perspective. If one could view life from a higher plane, one would see that duos such as good/evil, high/low, and beautiful/ugly result simply from a limited viewpoint. When mystics go into deep meditative states and return to normal consciousness with visions of a continuous cosmic unity, perhaps they are accessing higher-order dimensions, and are actually viewing reality from a higher plane. In the words of the Tao te Ching,

When people see some things as beautiful, other things become ugly. When people see some things as good, other things become evil (Lao-tzu, 2).

Yin and yang are not static; they are constantly transforming into one another. There is a continuous

cycle of death and rebirth, with matter and void interchanging every second in the life of the universe. The I-Ching, or "Book of Change," illustrates the idea symbolically when it remarks, "*The dragon is stranded in the shallows*" (Huang, 72). The dragon, which represents pure yang, or active force, is becoming inert and sluggish - it is making the transformation to pure yin.

But this notion of constant flux is perhaps best described by a metaphor used in the Vedas, the principal Hindu religious texts. Shiva, the Lord of Destruction, is frequently pictured as the Cosmic Dancer, whose dance encompasses the dynamic energy of the cycle of creation and destruction. Shiva vividly symbolizes the enormous power that is present in the universe, as well as the fleeting nature of the forms that arise from Brahman, the Void-That-Encompasses-All. Just as Shiva never stops dancing, never ceases his movement and poses for an observer, the universe never desists its powerful cyclic transformations. As the popular adage claims, "*The world waits for no one.*"

To summarize, modern physics and Eastern mysticism agree on a number of important points: the verbal inexpressibility of Truth, the pervading oneness of the universe, and the unity of apparent opposites. The unique aspect about the two groups' agreement lies in the fact that modern physicists use logic and mathematics to reach their conclusions, and Eastern mystics make use of a more intuitive, internal path - one that defies rationality. It is intriguing that science and mysticism, two disciplines that are often viewed as opposites, also seem to be unified when one reaches a higher level of understanding.

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Russ Gibson

The Mending

Cast in its splint-prison
My knee aches from tis
too-straight position.
But Codeine helps.
Daily massages ease
the stretched ligaments.
Flexing the extensor
strengthens the tendons.
Walking only disturbs
the harmony of the fibrous
bone-to-muscle connectors,
And delays the progress
of the mending.
Stubbornness aside,
Back on my crutches
It's healing now . . .
But the Codeine still helps.

Rhonda J. Heath

Tori Amos

Red hair
And tears running
Set me free
After all these years
On a treble clef cross
Crucified
Screams in the melody
Can't escape from innocence
But the blue world keeps turning
Take a deep breath, babe,
Just another little earthquake

Donna Hardy



Graphite Grid

Amber Lash

Sinister

Ssss, the sound of the sinister snake slithering slyly
up the sidewalk so smoothly that the earth appears to be
moving under him.

Nighttime and he explores the world which would
kill him by day.

Through a pipe and into your home, his motions leave
S-shaped curves in your carpet.

"And they think I can't ssslide uppsstairs," he smirks.

In your bedroom and in your tub for a bath.
In your warm bed coiled around your feet as you dream.
Into the nursery - in and out between the bars of the crib.
In your cold refrigerator ("Oh rats, there are none!").
Onto the sofa, hit the remote, catch a late show.
Almost daybreak, sssso he hasss to go.

He ssslides from your home and locksss the door . . .

Ken Hoskin

Table and Chair

Sometimes he would sit there
coffee-stained grin
Clothes worn to the bare thread
but comfortable still
hand propped on a grease-stained
chair and a bottle of Coke
to wash down his last cigarette
his last wish before night took
over our little store
and he'd drive away in his
pick-up truck
to wherever he called his home
I used to think the chair and the
table were his only friends
because he visited them so often
but that was when I was
afraid of his feeble hands
and that strange mouth
that spoke to me as a child
He came to my grandmother's store
to feel at home whether in dirt and
oil or the table and chair where locals
would sit and talk of life
maybe he didn't know what they meant
or maybe he knew more than they ever would
about pain and loss
and a last cigarette to wish upon a star with
hands made of crushed velvet
once upon a time
I haven't seen him in years it seems
and the store is someone else's,
but I remember the way he smiled
at me when I was a child
looking for lost pocket change to buy
tootsie rolls with.

Lori Trussell

Honorable Mention
Poetry Contest



Photography

Lori Trussell

The Beauty Pageant at the Five and Dime

Her legs were shaved and that was a plus.
Many female patrons' were not. Her white suit,
highlighted with expensive earrings, clung
cheaply to her middle-aged body.
The smudged collar, stained with sweat or
make-up, cinched her neck, and hinted at clothes
that shrank in the wash and a paycheck too
small to replace them. Her hair laid many
subtle traps for her hand as she tried
to straighten it . . . again.
The toast crumbs gathered in her lap
attested to a messy meal, and the black
coffee suggested stained teeth and ulcers,
but her legs were shaved and that was a
plus.

Malcolm Carstaffhnr

I Never

I never had any time,
to just sit and read a book.
I never had any money,
so all I could do was look.
I never had a little brother,
to hit atop the head.
I never had a maid,
so I made my own bed.
I never had a swimming pool,
to turn my hair green.
I never had a pit bull,
because they're so mean.
I never had to sweep the floor,
because I just won't.
I never had any of this,
and still I don't.

Kristi Adam

Thirst

As many as could fit were on the porch. The others, like my Uncle John and Cousin Henry, were standin nearby on the ground. The kids my age, around ten or eleven, had resorted to kickball, after tiring of three-man football. We were tired of bein thrown on the ground, more tired of hearin, "Get up outta dat grass! be itchin tonight, and not know why!" and the end of our make-shift field was much too close to one of the busy streets in town. Get up enough momentum, and you could be slammed by a car before you knew it. Actually, to be honest, kickball was a much more dangerous game, for every time the ball was rolled to us, we ran the risk of shootin the ball off in the direction of Big Mama's flowerbed. She guarded that bed with a plaited switch.

"Boy, I done tole you! Stay outta dose flowers!" Actually, I never saw anything pretty, looked pretty much like weeds to me, but she said they were flowers, and that switched looked mighty mean.

Well, everybody was standin around the porch talkin as usual on Sunday afternoon. I was hot, and since Big Mama didn't have nothin else cold that I was allowed to drink, I wanted a drink of water. I was scared, though, 'cause I knew that she kept a runnin total of how many times each child opened the door and let the cool moist air out into that Mississippi furnace. I knew if I opened it too many times that I would be confined, either inside or out. Either, to me, was too much. If they kept me in, I would feel too cramped; outside, I'd have nowhere to sit down and cool off, so I had to plan my movements carefully. "Mama, can I go get some watah?"

"Ask Big Mama where the glasses are."

"Big Mama, where the glasses? I wanna get some watah."

"They in the cabinet"

I went in to get the water, makin sure that I closed the door as fast as I could, not wantin to be fussed at.

The water was OK. It wasn't as good as our well water in the country. Theirs always seemed like it has somethin in it, but since I was thirsty, anything would do. They'd be startin a new game soon, so I knew I'd better rush back outside.

"You clean Big Mama's glass?" Mama said.

"No."

"Well, you better do it."

"OK. Yall hold on, I'll be back in a minute" I yelled to my cousins.

I was goin in. "And dry it too."

"Hunh?"

"I said 'And dry it too.'"

"Boy, close that door!" That was from Big Mama. Mama smiled at me. She knew how impatient Big Mama could be.

Since it was just water, I didn't feel I needed to use any of that diswashin stuff, or a rag for that matter, just fast water. They were waitin on me to play.

I was thinkin about how I could make my cousins make me the pitcher in kickball, and also about how much I hated Kim, this girl at school, when I heard somethin in Big Mama and Big Daddy's room. None of us were allowed in there,

and I couldn't remember seein one of my uncles or aunts go in there, so the thought of someone bein in there scared me. Cause if the adults felt like it, all of us kids could get in trouble for one thing.

When I looked through the hole where the keyhole used to be, I was even more scared. I froze and forgot all about kickball.

I saw my cousin Sue with some guy, and although I was only ten, I knew what they were doin cause I rode the bus and I heard people talk about it. I couldn't believe that she was doin it, though, especially at Big Mama's house. I knew I hadn't seen nobody come in neither, and I had been at Big Mama's since church let out and we ate at home. He must've come roun back. Funny though that Rusty didn't bark at him. Bark at everything else. I was scared. Me standin there, ten years old, sposed to be playin kickball, and seein my cousin doin it with some boy.

I kinda felt sorry for Sue, though, cause even I knew her mama treated her bad. She was in the twelfth grade and couldn't even ride in the car with a boy, not even a cousin. She hadn't even done nothin bad neither. Daddy said Aunt Mae jus didn't want 'er to do nothin. I member hearin Daddy tellin Mama the last time we were leavin Aunt Mae's house "It's a shame how Mae threats that girl. Won't let her do nothin. Treat her like she eight years old." I considered that to be horrible, cause I was ten and I knew that bein treated like an eight year old was just awful. I didn't know why Aunt Mae treated her like that cept maybe it was because Aunt Mae and Sue both looked so young. Aunt Mae couldn't have been more than bout seventeen eighteen years older than Sue, and I know Uncle John didn't marry her that long ago, so I was just confused.

I knew Aunt Mae treated Sue bad, though. Treated her like she wuttn nothin. Me and Sue used to play. House. She'd be the mama and all my other older cousins got to make us little ones do whatever they wanted. Sue was always nice, though, always smilin, didn't make us do nothin too bad. I hadn't seen her smile, now, in a long time, though. Always seemed like she had just been beat up or somethin, just lookin pitiful

I'm still standin there, lookin through that hole an bein scared. I don't know what I'm gonna do, or what Sue and that boy gone do if somebody else come. I really do feel sorry for Sue, though, bein treated all bad by her mama and all, never smilin. I stopped, though, cause I noticed somethin was different. Sue was smilin. That boy was makin her do somethin I hadn't seen her do since we used to play house. For a minute, I felt kinda happy for her, seein her smilin and all, but then I felt stupid for standin there that long, riskin bein caught. Somebody was gone soon worry. I can just say I was in the bathroom, and it didn't flush right the first time. I needed to hurry, though. I wanted to be the pitcher.

Jarvis Q. DeBerry
Honorable Mention
Short Story Contest

No

No.
I never cry.
Not outwardly.
These are the
Only tears
You'll ever see.

The real river flows
Undemeath the surface.
You'll never
Hear or
Taste or
See the water,
I assure you.

For even underground
Rivers are damned, so
As not to overflow
And flood.
And the dam,
My friend,
Is old and strong.

In fact,
It is built
So well
That you cannot
Tell when
There has been a storm,

For,
Of course,
You'll never
See
The water.
But it's there -
A reservoir of salt
And sadness.

Mindy White

big bang

bang
an explosion of innumerable tiny molecules
atoms bonding
electrons
rearranging
sharing
cells
dividing
multiplying
over and over and over
ME

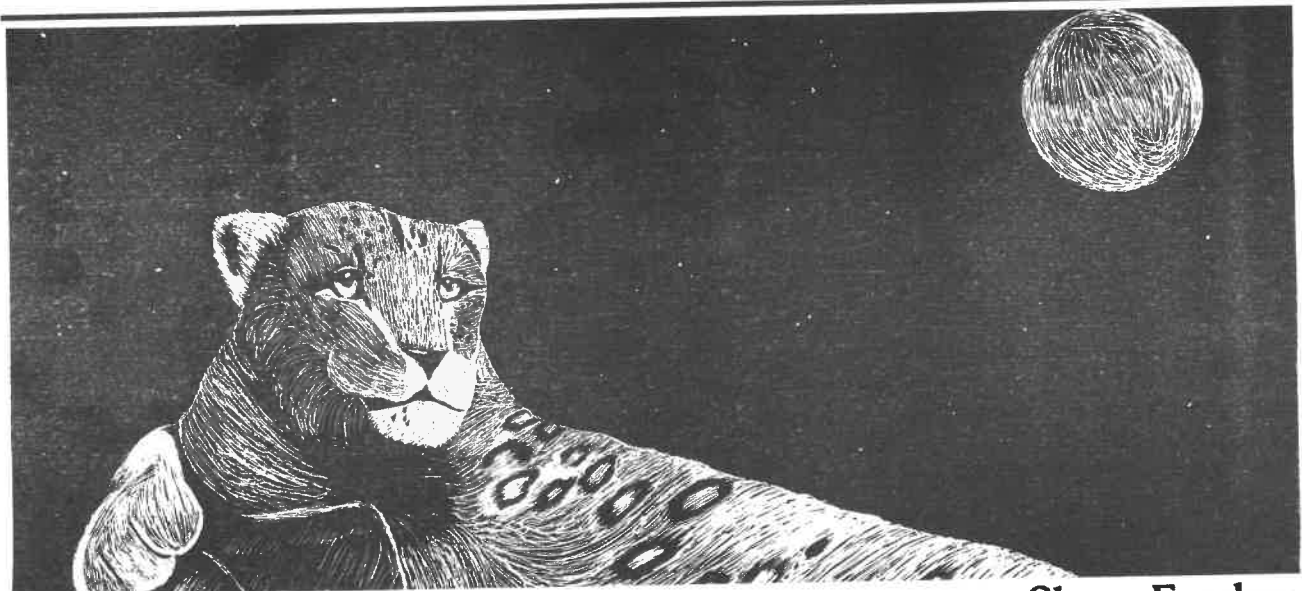
my body
every inch of skin encompassing
a skeletal network
with muscles and systems
flowing
moving
microscopic parts striving
to maintain a being
of sudden existence
and unknown origin

this remarkable
complicated
wonderful
mechanism —
ME —

has no soul
only atoms
electrons
and cells

there is no soul
created from
a big bang

Bonnie Gillespie



Scratchboard

Shana Fondren



Pen & Ink

Shana Fondren

Sylvia's Mirror



1
ush now baby, don't you cry . . ."
"Not God, but a swastika . . . So black
no sky could squeak through."

2
The mirror itself is only glass: sand with a silvered back. It is decorated plainly with a grooved wooden frame, countering the beveled surface. The surface is as smooth and polished as any other mirror. It has no imperfections visible to the naked eye. Only the tint of the glass varies from that of similar mirrors. A hazy blue, sometimes as deep as the ocean and other times barely noticeable, depending on the angle at which it is viewed, shrouds the reflection in the mirror.

When you look deeply into this mirror, the blue will sometimes darken and become cloudy - it looks as if the mirror is anticipating something. The image writhes and pulsates in meshing patterns that twist irregularly. Your mind begins to tremble as you realize it is reading your thoughts and memories and listens to your secrets. The urge to turn away from your own soul is overwhelming, but you cannot. It has a firm grasp on your firm reality.

What was an opaque blue thins and becomes hazy as images form in front of you. They are somehow familiar, yet subtly altered. Scenes from your life are replayed; the mirror chooses to show the memories you would most like

to forget

No one knows where this mirror comes from. The craftsman who polished the mirror may not have known the significance of his piece. Or maybe there was no craftsman; maybe the mirror was given by God as a reminder of our lack of grace and humility. It is even possible the mirror is the most severe form of punishment known, to stare into the world of your own mind.

The adversity inflicted by the mirror is no fault of its own; it merely shows things that a person does not wish to see. In truth, it is the faults of man that cause the mirror to be destructive. The pure of heart could gaze into it for hours, and see only joy, prosperity, and happiness. Woe to mankind; there is no such person.

*. . . the mirror chooses to show the memories
you would most like to forget.
She peeked in; her father was lying down in
the bed, his gray toe mercifully hidden.*

3
Sylvia wiped her eyes with a handkerchief, and then sneezed fitfully from the dust in the attic. She moaned as she moved forward on her knees, stirring up a new cloud. Soon she reached the end of the cramped space and stood up on a wide oak beam. Her delicate feet balanced on the wide oak and quickly carried her to the back loft. There she sat on her knees and began dusting off a chest with attic silt deposited high on the top. The chest was not locked, but the latch had become rusted, and it took her several minutes to wiggle it free. She lifted the squeaky lid and peered inside. It was empty. A deep sigh escaped her lips. She dropped the lid shut and looked around her. Nearby, a silted cloth covered a few objects. She moved over to the pile and looked at it thoughtfully. It looked a lot like a small dirt hill,

rising and falling in small lumps. Sylvia jumped as a small squeak rushed past her leg.

Holding her handkerchief over her nose with one hand she pulled the cloth off the pile gently. Underneath, a dresser stood tall and proud, unaware of the splinters visible along the edges. At the bottom of the dresser, an ancient doll house was crumbling with age. Sylvia bent down to look at it. It was finely crafted with castle spires rising a full three feet above the floor. But only one still stood its full height. The others were in hanging pieces. Next to the dollhouse a small bookcase sagged in the middle. A few books were still there, but Sylvia ignored them. Under the dresser she noticed a flat, wrapped package.

She slowly worked the heavy object out from under the dresser, careful not to nudge the crumbling dollhouse. When she had the wrapped package out in the open, she tore away a corner of the paper wrapping it. She breathed deeply and exhaled slowly as she looked down on the mirror underneath. It was a soft, bluish color, and she could see her hazy reflection in the sunlight sifting through the rafters.

She sat for a moment wistfully looking at the rafter she had walked across to get to the chest. She then observed the mirror, judging its weight. She stood it up on the narrow end, with the other end reaching fully to her bosom. She pushed it slightly, and then grinned as it slid easily across the wooden floor. She pushed it slowly, balancing the mirror with her hands and one foot along the bottom, and slid it to the beam's edge. She slid it over, straining to make it lightly settle on the beam. Pushing a little more, she breathed sharply as it wavered momentarily before regaining its balance. Soon she stood with both feet and the mirror on the wide beam, and then she was holding her breath as she tilted the end onto the next floor.

It took Sylvia most of an hour to move the mirror down into the house. Finally, it rested at the bottom of the stairs. Sylvia panted and rubbed her grimy hands across her brow. She leaned against the wall for a few moments, and then called her husband.

In a few moments, her husband wandered up to meet her at the top of the stairs, grinning at his wife's dirty face. After he shook his head mockingly, his eyes drifted to the large mirror she had succeeded in dragging down from the attic.

"What's that? A picture or something?" he asked.

"No, it's a gorgeous mirror I found in the attic," said Sylvia. "Can you take it to the bedroom? I want to put it in there." She watched as her husband hoisted the mirror and began to carry it. "Carefully, carefully, I about killed myself hauling that down here," she chided. She followed him down the stairs with an expression of anxiety on her face.

That week, the mirror was hoisted above the fireplace mantel in the bedroom. Sylvia stood before the fireplace, following her image in the mirror. She thought it remarkable that the mirror was no longer a light blue, but instead was a dark, misty color like the deepest parts of the ocean. Her skin was a soft color, appearing only slightly tinted in the mirror. Sylvia like her reflection in the mirror. She blinked a couple times and then turned away as she heard her husband calling.

That night, moonlight streamed in through the opened curtains, and Sylvia lay awake for several hours. She looked at the moonbeams glancing off the glass of the mirror, fascinated by the depth of the reflected image. The mirror seemed to reflect too far into the wall; her bed seemed to be floating several yards farther away than it should have been. The angle of the reflection even seemed strange. It reminded her of a movie camera panning around a movie set. Eventually Sylvia floated softly into sleep, bathed in the reflection of moonlight in the blue mirror.

In the morning, Sylvia awoke refreshed. She looked up at the mirror before her bed and frowned at it. It had become a dark, nebulous blue again. She looked up at it several times as she dressed herself, wanting it to become light again. But the mirror ignored her, simply staring ahead endlessly. She finally stood on a chair with a cloth and cleaned the mirror, hoping to convince the temperamental mirror to fade. While her hands softly wiped the mirror, she blinked at her reflection. It seemed as if the mirror was dripping wet, oozing downward with wavy ripples. She wiped at the ripples and they disappeared for a moment. Then they came back, slightly larger. She reached out with her finger, but nothing was there. Although she could see the surface quivering, she couldn't feel it. She shivered. Her face began swimming toward the center of the mirror, riding on the ripples. She jumped backwards off the chair, startled as it fell over and landed with a crash. Her heart beat rapidly as she looked up at the mirror. Her eyebrows narrowed at its new reflection; she recognized her childhood. She drew nearer as she looked closer. She saw her father enter the room, and breathed sharply as she saw him raise his arm and begin moving his lips rapidly. Then Sylvia cried out; she remembered the rest. Her father had beaten her for not finishing her dinner. He had beaten her until she lay in a heap on the floor, crying and bleeding, cut on her face and back. She turned away from the mirror, but she could still sense the images floating in its surface. She left the room and went into the garden where she cried.

That night, Sylvia was scared to sleep in the bedroom with the mirror, but she did in order to keep from alarming her husband. Again she stayed awake, looking into the surface. It showed no sign of wavering as it had in the morning. It looked normal except for its strange color.

She stared into it. From the bed she could see her face. It looked like a ghost's face in the moonlight. Her hair looked black against her face. She spent some time tracing her lips and her eyes, waiting for the mirror to quiver again. She began thinking about what had happened to the mirror that morning; it scared her. Not even her husband knew about her father abusing her. He had done it often, and she was careful to hide it from the people she loved.

Somehow the mirror had known; it had searched her for something painful to her memory, and it had found it. She was suddenly very sorry she had found the mirror. There was too much she had buried, and she didn't want it to be brought back. But while she was thinking she was also watching. . . waiting. While she watched, the mirror sifted through the years of her life, looking and feeling about, crawling about in dusty crevices, looking for something. . . Sylvia's eyes welled up and her throat tightened. She waited for it, and when the quivering came, she was ready.

In the moonlight, her face wavered momentarily and then was gone. In its place, she could see her childhood bedroom again. It was not the same as before; a long time had passed since the bedroom the mirror had shown her that morning. She saw the door to the bedroom creak open, and there stood her father, watching her. Tears gathered in her eyes, but she held them back so her husband would not wake. Her father stood there a long time, silently watching and listening. . . after a while he walked over to the bed and sat on the edge. Her father leaned over and kissed her on the cheek and caressed her hair. Then he was gone; he slowly shut the door behind him, careful not to disturb his daughter. Sylvia's mouth opened a little bit as she whispered. . . "Every woman adores a Fascist, the boot in the face, the brute. . . Brute heart of a brute like you." Tears rolled down her face as her father closed the door, leaving her alone in the dark. Her tears silently continued, long into the night. She cried in the dark long after the moon had passed too far across the sky to shine in the window. Even as she slept she could feel the mirror hanging above the mantel, sifting through her mind, judging what it found.

4.

In the early morning when Sylvia awoke, she was alone. She looked into the mirror, shining lightly in the light from the bedside lamp. She arose from bed, rubbing her sore fingers gently. She rinsed her face in the bathroom faucet, then returned to stand before the mirror. It ignored her. she sighed at her worn complexion. She sat at her writing table and began writing again. She winced at the pain in her fingers, but she strove to finish the last few words. After a few hours, the end was complete. She stood, looking at the mirror. It had grown painfully dark. She

touched it lightly, and its cool touch was comforting to her aching fingers. She caressed the mirror, seeing the ripples but not feeling them. It was her home again. The den looked warm and familiar, just out of place. She felt her younger self walking through the room, toward her father's room. She saw the light wisping rush of the air from the opening door tickle the fern of the little table beside her. In her ears, she could hear the slow creak of the hinges as the door swung wider. She peeked in; her father was lying down in the bed, his gray toe mercifully hidden. She moved slowly into the room, until she stood at the side of the bed. There she saw two puppet hands drop something into the water pitcher sitting on the nightstand. The man in the bed stirred, and mumbled to her. She picked up the pitcher and poured a glass of water, placing it at the lips of the man. He drank, then she left him. "I may be a bit of a Jew."

Again, the tears came. She cried that she had killed him. She had not wanted the disease to take him first; he had hurt her too much for her to forgive him. Now she was sad, sad because she could not forgive him. She peeked in on her two sleeping children, tears streaming fully. She went in and kissed both of them on the forehead as they slept. Sylvia touched their faces, and then turned and left. She walked slowly through the small home, absorbing all that there was to see. Memories of her life came through the pictures and the furniture; they made her cry a little more. Now there were small rivers flowing freely down her pale cheeks. She opened the door to the garage and turned on the light. She went in and closed the door behind her. She got in the car and put the key in the ignition. She sat still for a moment, thinking about the mirror, about her father. She never knew if he loved her; she had loved him in some strange way, though. The mirror, the mirror. If I could go back through it, but I can't. I loved you, daddy, I did. Make it better daddy, make it better panzer-man, of panzer-man, make it better for me. . . I didn't want to, but it hurt so bad, I loved you daddy. I'm so sorry. She turned the car's ignition and sat with her eyes closed, thinking about her father, thinking about the mirror; she began to feel a little lighter. Her eyes began to hurt a little, but it didn't bother her too much. Sylvia rolled her head back on the headrest, breathing slower. Still she thought about her father, her father and that mirror. She floated a little higher, a little farther. Still she cried. Then she was gone. She was asleep, then she was with daddy.

The mirror waited patiently. In time, it was put in a giant warehouse, stuffed between leisure suits and bellbottoms. It wasn't going to grow old. . . it simply waited. That was its fate.

John Tippitt
First Place
Short Story Contest

Autumn Afternoon

The limbs on the oak tree
Reach for the sky.
Mockingbirds and bluejays
Dance on the ground below
While squirrels haul acorns
Up the Mighty tree.
In an occasional breeze
Golden leaves drift down
Like feathers.
Cows gather near the oak
And greet each other with a friendly moo,
But my cat sits in the window sill
And watches.

Missy Van Doren



Pen & Ink

Lori Trussell

Like Death

Like death
silence
a discoloration
a void
the life drawn out
of every leaf - every sound
fading into night
with cricket screams
autumn dreams
like death.

Lori Trussell

Angel Beauty (The Angel of the Battlefield)

Through the dark
and drab
the Angel Beauty came
a rainbow
of vivid
life
moving
lovely
peace
to save the sick
wounded souls
and bring them
from the battlefields.

Bridget Clark

Head Ache

The BLOOD spilled in the tub
Aware victim of his own hand
Losing it faster than
he lost everything he valued
And the throbbing continues . . .

Mercury poisoning shivers
Reign in the blood
Of this untamed POET
who just gives a shrug
And the throbbing continues . . .

The drop by drop confessions
FORCED by the Tung's
Medieval, undecivable,
torturous cries
And the throbbing continues . . .

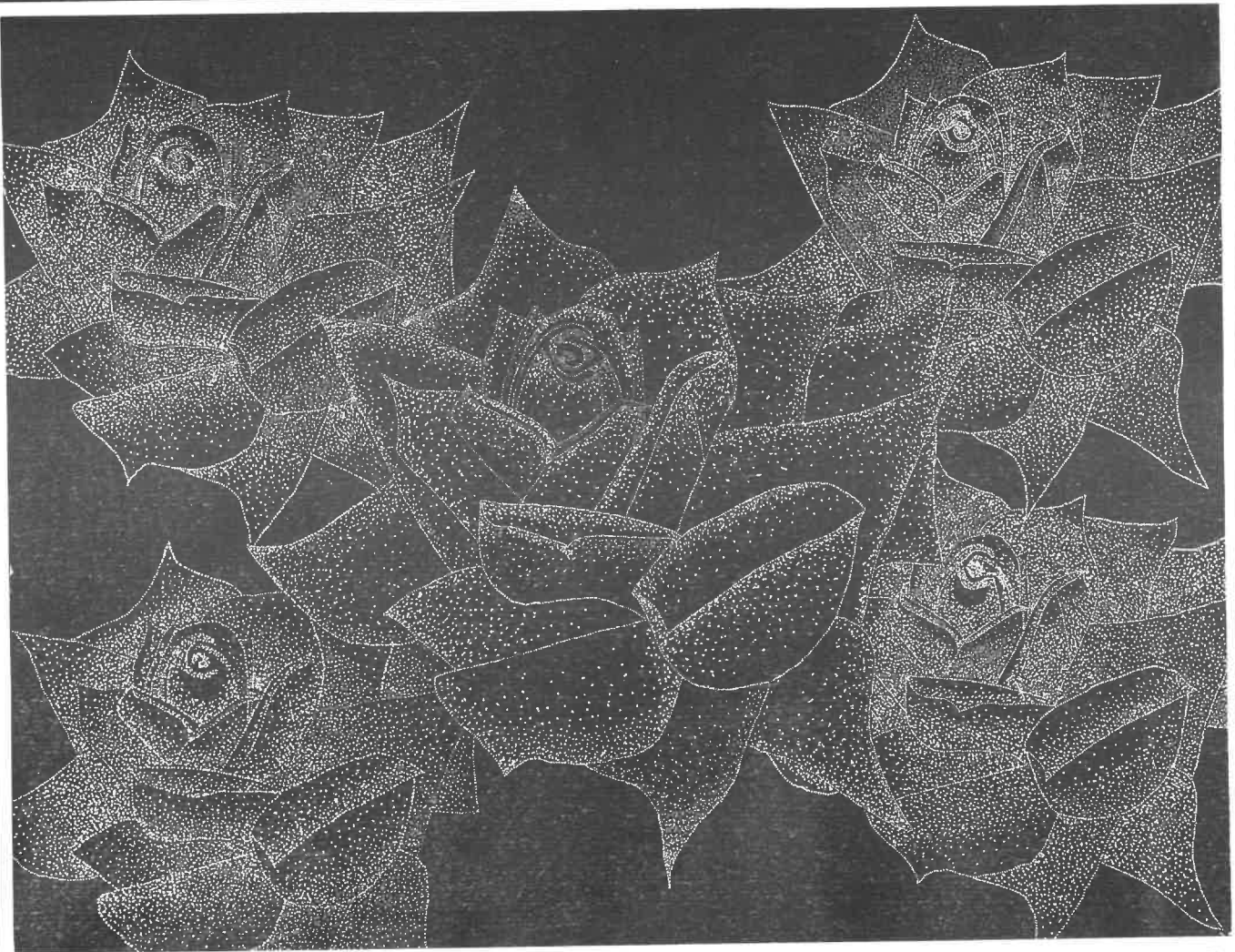
The anarchist('s) club meets
Back of her neck
One cry, one sigh, and OFF comes the dress
all in a day's work
And the throbbing continues . . .

Jim Owens

Joey

Been a while since I
last thought of him.
The memories stole away from
my mind:
bike-riding in mud and
country music;
learning to "cuss,"
building our tree-house,
stealing his daddy's dip and
getting sick off it; and
playing hot wheels.
He always got mad when we
chose the little cars because
I always got the pick-up truck.
Then, at 15,
he got his hot wheels,
his very own truck.
Starting that day,
he never listened.
Always talking tough and
driving fast
Really fast.
All these memories return to me
with the same impact
of his pick-up truck
and his death.

Glenn Aquino
First Place
Poetry Contest



Silver Point (Pointillism)

Amber Lash

The Marshall County Jail

She stands there looking at her baby;
The pain she feels is more visible than the
the harsh barbwire that makes them foreign
Wanting to cry; but halted by stubborn tearducts
the word "why" forms on her cracked lips
but the reason she knows: fate.
that same force that grudgingly walks her back home on an
uncaring Saturday to fix breakfast for the others.

Jarvis Q. DeBerry

Contributors' Notes

Kristi Adam, a junior from Shannon, is most influenced by friends. Her favorite author is V.C. Andrews. In her spare time Kristi enjoys music, reading, being with friends, and going to the movies. Her favorite quote is from Mrs. Nichols: "Well, Kristi, I don't know. What do you think?"

Glenn Alvin Aquino is a senior from Ruleville. His favorite author is James Taylor, and he has been influenced by the faces he has seen along the way. Glenn enjoys basketball, tennis, and playing the guitar. His future plans include attending the University of Alabama, going to medical school, and being a pediatrician.

Olivia Bibb, a senior from Indianola, is most influenced by her family and roommate. Her favorite author is Tennyson. Olivia quotes Jimmy Stewart of Shenandoah: "We have to try. Because if we don't try, we don't do. And if we don't do, then why are we on this earth?"

Malcolm Carstafnur is a senior from Vicksburg. His favorite author is Rod McKuen. Malcolm enjoys soccer, volleyball, and reading.

MaConnia Chesser, a senior from Liberty, plans to major in broadcast journalism. She enjoys reading, racquetball, and playing Taboo, Pounce, and Solitaire. Connie's favorite quote is "There goes another rubber tree plant."

Bridget Clark, a junior from Sumrall, enjoys reading, writing, playing the xylophone, and working with computers. Bridget's favorite authors are E.A. Poe and W.B. Yeats. Bridget quotes Stephen King's Dark Half: "[Writers,] they make worlds that never were, populate them with people who never existed, and then invite us to join them in their fantasies."

Craig Collier, a junior from Ocean Springs, is most influenced by the writings of Michael Crichton and Harper Lee. He enjoys golf and reading. Craig contributed poetry and an award-winning short story which also was designated "Exemplary" in A Celebration of Young Mississippi Writers Program.

Jarvis Q. DeBerry, a senior from Holly Springs, is most influenced by his parents and the South. His favorite quotation is "The biggest room in the world is the room for improvement." Jarvis enjoys reading, writing, saxophone, and cheap-creative photography.

Kevin Etheridge is a junior from Laurel. His favorite author is E.E. Cummings, and his writing has been influenced most by his parents. His hobbies are playing chess, numismatics, fishing, hunting, and swimming. Kevin plans to become an engineer.

Shana Fondren, a senior from Bellefontaine, enjoys the writing of Dean R. Koontz. Shana says she is most influenced by her mother. Some of her hobbies are horse showing, drawing, reading, and free writing. She plans on attending Millsaps in the fall and majoring in psychology.

Russ Gibson is a senior from McComb. His favorite author is Michael Crichton, and he is influenced most by Louis L'Amour. In his spare time he enjoys judo, reading, electronics, and backpacking. His future plans include attending the University of Oklahoma, majoring in electrical engineering and minoring in philosophy.

Bonnie Gillespie is a senior from Belzoni. She is influenced most by the music of Tori Amos, the Cowboy Junkies, and the Indigo Girls. Her favorite quote is "If I have a care in the world I have a gift to bring" from the Indigo Girls. She plans to attend MSU and major in English/Pre-Law.

Gretchen Heather Elease Griffin, a senior, attended Bailey Magnet School in Jackson. Her favorite artist is Tori Amos, and she is influenced most by the Holy Bible. She enjoys dancing and gymnastics, and she plans to teach college-level math.

Donna Hardy is a senior who attended Bay High in Bay St. Louis. She is influenced most by Kenneth White and her favorite quote is "I don't play for races or religions; I'm into fairies" by Tori Amos. Her future plans include attending Washington and Lee University and becoming a writer.

Rhonda Heath, a senior from Batesville, is most influenced by her sensei, Dr. Chris Dewey. She plans to practice martial arts until she dies. Rhonda contributed poetry.

Ken Hoskin is a senior who attended Noxapater High School. His favorite quotation is by Max Planck: "The individual who accepts his future as determined by fate, only acknowledges a lack of willpower to fight and win through." In his spare time he enjoys poetry, playing piano, sharpening pencils, and shuffling cards.

Lynn James, a senior from Belzoni, enjoys reading, singing, and gardening. Her future plans are to attend Ole Miss and major in music and physical therapy. Lynn is most influenced by her mother and grandmother.

Amber Dawn Lash is a junior who attended Resurrection High School in Pascagoula. Her favorite author is Richard Bach, and her favorite artist is Leo Buscaglia. Her favorite quote is "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation" by Thoreau. Amber's future plans include teaching at a medical college, getting married, and having many children.

Aaron Lauve, a senior from McComb, is most influenced by the world around him. He plans to major in math and chemical engineering, marry, have kids, retire from his engineering job, and teach math until he dies.

Jamal Longino, a junior from Brandon, enjoys the works of Salvador Dali. He is influenced most by Dr. Martin Luther King. In his spare time he enjoys basketball and fishing. His favorite quote is "Give out before giving up." Jamal plans to become a nuclear engineer.

Henry L. Mangum III (Trey) is a senior from Mendenhall. Life for Trey is summed up in the quote, "There is never a funeral without a smile, never a wedding without a tear of sadness," from Bread and Wine. His favorite authors are Jim Owens and Anne Sexton, and his future plans include going to Millsaps, then running away to Florence, Italy.

Susan Massey is a junior from West Point. Her favorite quote is "From every BVD let freedom ring." She is influenced most by music, and her hobbies include playing the guitar and piano. She plans to attend Cornell Architecture School.

Michael Mathews, a senior from West Point, is most influenced by his father. He enjoys the writings of Mark Twain. Michael enjoys golf.

Kristen McRae, a senior from Carthage, plans to major in biology and psychology. Her favorite author is Dean Koontz. Kristen enjoys playing the clarinet.

Carrie Greer O'Keefe, a junior from Clarksdale, contributed award-winning poetry. She is most influenced by Christian fellowship with friends and family and also enjoys tennis, photography, and reading. Carrie's favorite quote is "With time and a cow, grass becomes milk." Carrie's favorite author is Ellen Gilchrist.

Jim Owens is a senior from Hurley. His favorite author/artist is John S. Hall (King Missile), and he is influenced most by the entities of apathy and chaos. Jim's favorite quote is "NO name can fully express what it represents" and his hobbies are chemistry, music, and meditation. Jim's future plans include enlightenment.

Preston Parrott is a junior from Brandon. His favorite author is Edgar Allan Poe. Some of his hobbies are music, sailing, and mountain biking. Preston plans to one day become an engineer and wants always to enjoy life.

Mari Peterson, a junior from Aberdeen, is most influenced by and enjoys the writings of Pablo Neruda. Mari's favorite quote is "This is the way the world ends/Not with a bang . . ." Mari enjoys art, writing, reading, and Wonder Bubbles.

Drew Pruett is a junior from Columbus. His favorite author is Victor Hugo, and his favorite poet is T.S. Eliot. Drew likes music and the art of Van Gogh. His future plans include attending the University of Chicago and majoring in physics.

Jason Pullen, a senior from Brookhaven, is most influenced by John Sunn. He enjoys motorcycles, outdoor activities, and meditation. Jason plans to ride Route 66, go to college to receive a medical degree, and live life to the fullest.

John Christopher Reeks is a senior from Shubuta. His favorite author is Edgar Allan Poe, and he is influenced most by his father. His hobbies include judo, playing guitar, tennis, running, swimming, hunting, fishing, electronics, and drawing. His future plans are to major in electrical engineering and later to study acoustical engineering.

Bradford Rhines, a senior from Jackson, enjoys the music of Bob Dylan. He is influenced most by Neal Cassidy and the entire Beat Generation. His favorite quote is "The most heroic word in all language is 'revolution'" by Eugene Debs. Bradford plans to attend LSU and major in political science.

Lesley Rivers is a senior from Meridian. Lesley says she is most influenced by her sister, and in her spare time she enjoys watching television and MSU basketball games. Lesley's favorite quote is "I spent a lot of time on my hair, and you hit it. You hit my hair" by John Travolta.

Monica Schoknecht, a senior from Jackson, enjoys swimming, writing, and long walks. Monica's favorite author is H.E. Hinton. She is most influenced by life's experiences. Monica plans to attend vet school at MSU.

Michael C. Davidson Smith is a senior from Clinton. His favorite artist is Pantera, and his favorite quotation is "Fools don't fit in the boots that I tread in." In his spare time he enjoys playing the drums and guitar, playing with electronic things, and going to school. His future plans include being an engineer and being married to Emily Marie Lott.

Steven Stewart, a senior from Columbus, is most influenced by the serenity of nature. His favorite author is Oscar Wilde. Steven quotes Eddie Breckal: "Free me, take the sight out of my eyes." Steven enjoys playing the guitar, reading, and writing songs.

Daniel Templeton, a senior from Pascagoula, enjoys poetry and role-playing games. He is influenced most by Stephen Crane, and his favorite quote is "When the suicide arrived in the sky the people asked him 'Why?' He replied, 'Because no one admired me.'" Daniel plans to go to Vanderbilt and become an environmental engineer.

Anuj Tewari is a junior who attended Heritage Academy in Columbus. His favorite artist is Norman Rockwell, and his favorite author is John Steinbeck. He is influenced most by his parents, and his hobbies include music, drawing, playing the guitar, and tennis.

Matthew Thomaston, a senior from Gautier, enjoys hunting, fishing, and writing. His favorite author is John Brown. Matthew is most influenced by Trent Renzor. Matthew contributed poetry.

John Tippitt, a senior from Hemando, enjoys the writings of Walt Whitman. John quotes Whitman: "I am perfectly aware of my own egotism." John enjoys reading, computers, piano, and writing. John is most influenced by Shakespeare, Whitman, Poe, Stephen King, and Wordsworth. John submitted award-winning works.

Lori Trussell, a senior from Vicksburg, is the editor of Southern Voices. She enjoys painting, writing, and singing. She is most influenced by personal experiences. Lori contributed both poetry and art.

Missy Van Doren, a senior from Meridian, is most influenced by Leonardo da Vinci. Missy quotes Ralph Waldo Emerson: "My life is a life . . . not an apology." Her future plans are to major in history and English and eventually pre-law. Missy contributed poetry.

Ryan Williamson is a senior from Sumrall. His favorite author is C.S. Lewis, and he is influenced most by his parents. His favorite quote is "The world has yet to see what God can do with a man or woman totally committed to him" by D.L. Moody. Ryan plans to major in history and become a minister.



I believe in Sundays

I believe in Sundays
after Saturdays
after Fridays

I ride all day through open fields
the sun barely awake
and the radio on

I believe in restaurants
with wooden signs
and faded paint

No one to run me away or beg me to stay

I believe in shopping carts
running wild
in parking lots

and having no destination
no destination by life

I believe in laughing
even if nothing is funny
and dancing when no music is being
played

I can just drop in and say hello
or stay awhile
and be mellow or not
happy or not
sad

I believe in funny people
happy people
loving people
and restaurants with
wooden signs
and faded paint.

Lori Trussell