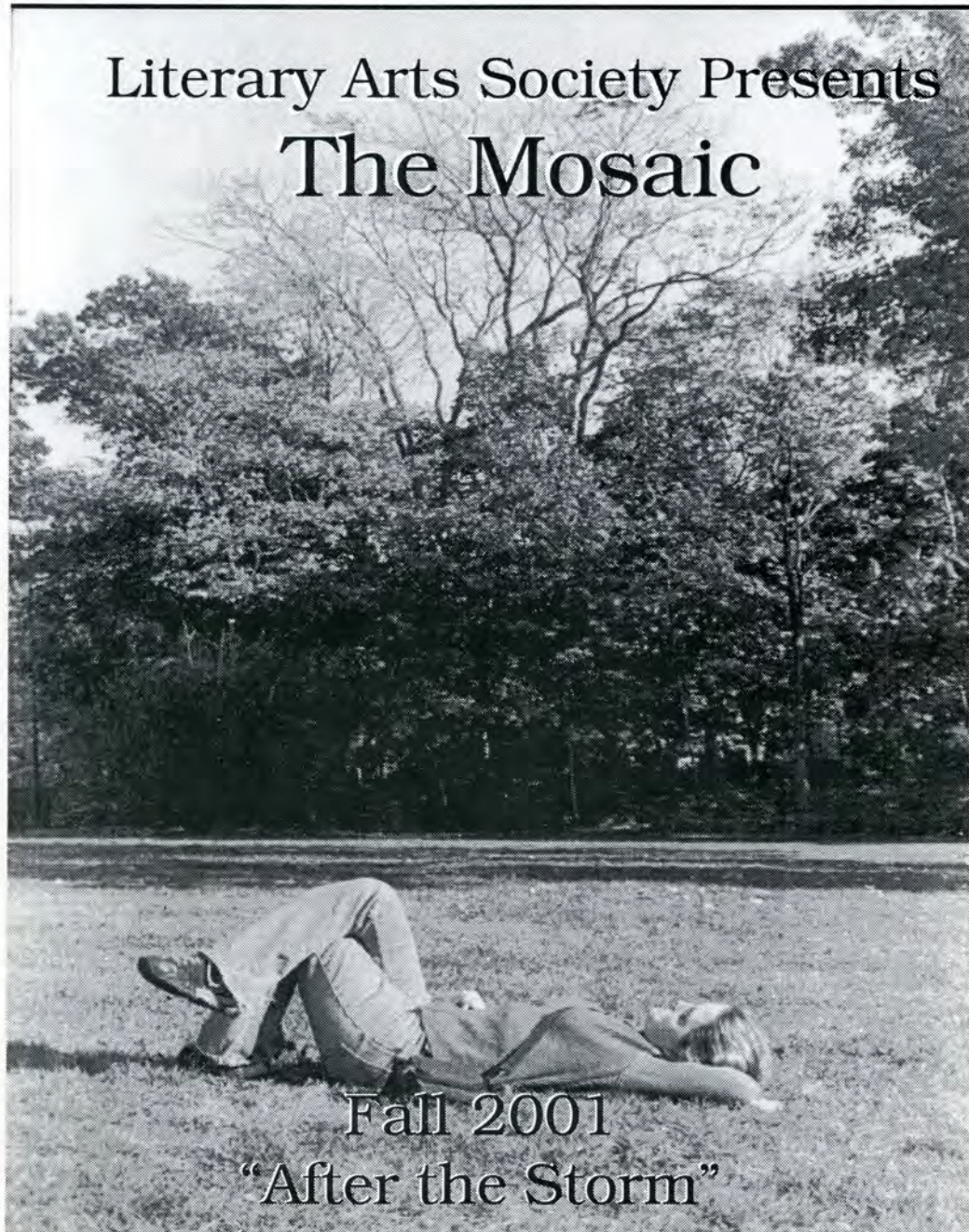
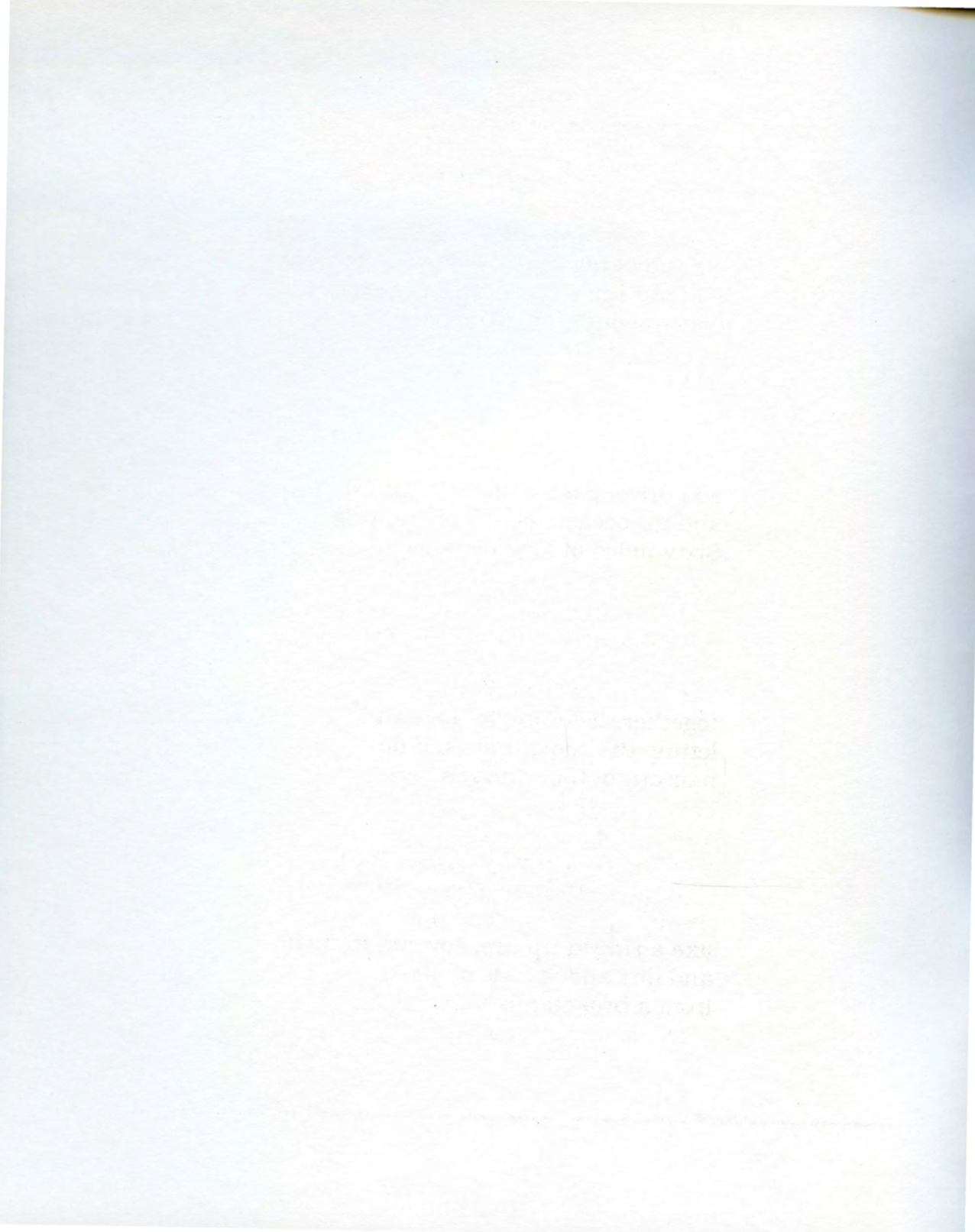


Literary Arts Society Presents
The Mosaic



Fall 2001
"After the Storm"



Sixty Miles

By Timothy M. Bruderek

Sixty miles apart, a long
stretch of highway divides our schools
and our busy lives. Edge of Seventeen
blasting out of the windows
of my grey Dodge. Yellow line,
white line,
dotted and spotted and striped lines
are painted slowly down the center
of the road
as I drive, past a lonely billboard
and an occasional telephone pole.
Sixty miles of long distance
relationships and phone bills. I pick up
the phone
after one ring, hoping it is your voice
each time.
We used to drive down I-95
together, listening to Joni and
letting the cool air stretch our
hair out of the windows
of your old Ford Escort.
You speed,
your car and your youth in the air
that blows through the windows. It
lies by the side of the road,
like a ripped up tire, covered in dust
and dirt and shards of plastic
from a broken mix tape
that I made for you.

For a Good Cause

By Dan Buzi

Talk to your son tomorrow
For now, lift your head up to the wind
Feel that cool crisp autumn air
Imagine his voice is
Each crinkle of leaf on leaf a word.
Think what the browning leaves say
As each crangles in the wind
How those leaves could talk
If only you would listen
Sit on the rusty iron bench
Remove your shoes now one by one
And your socks off after those
How does the brown earth feel
On this cool crisp autumn day
As fallen leaves fly past your shiv'ring toes
Talk to your son tomorrow
Tell him those things you said in Spring
When the only red was flowers
And the leaves didn't crangle
Because their buds would sing.
Say, "war is noble,"
And bow your head to his stone
Try to tell him that you love him
Dry your eyes
And pick the weeds that have overgrown
Look then to the leaves again
Brown, blowing in a cold crisp wind
Touch your hands to the ground
As close as you can get to him.



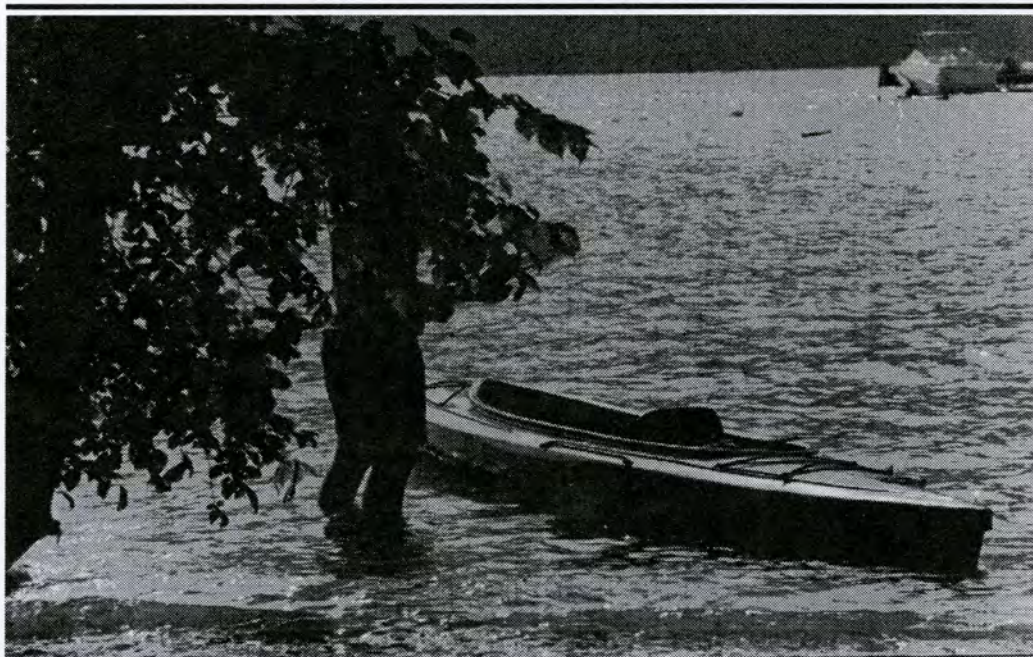
By Hem Borromeo

“TULIPS AND ORCHIDS”

by Nicole Tuttle

Tulips and Orchids
Entangled within one another
Like a lovers embrace.
They flourish like an
Already overpopulated city,
Grow as quickly as a
Newborn child,
Quicker even.

Tulips and Orchids
Hold tight one another
For fear of death,
Like the human mind fears death,
Like you and I fear death.
So why not
Hold tight
One another forever.



Cider

By Patricia Tarantello

By Caitlin O'Hare

Autumn orchards slipping under the tongue
Slyly pinching the back corners of the mouth
Crisp, dead air-cold with leafy flavor
Swallowed, gulped down
Swished with a bitter resonance drowning the taste buds
Like staring into the sun,
Forcing a glance into
Blinding illumination
Until tears stream
Uninhibited, thoroughly
A miserably sweet
Succulently sour
Cry of overwhelming
Salvicious sensation

Have you ever...

by Mike Sowter

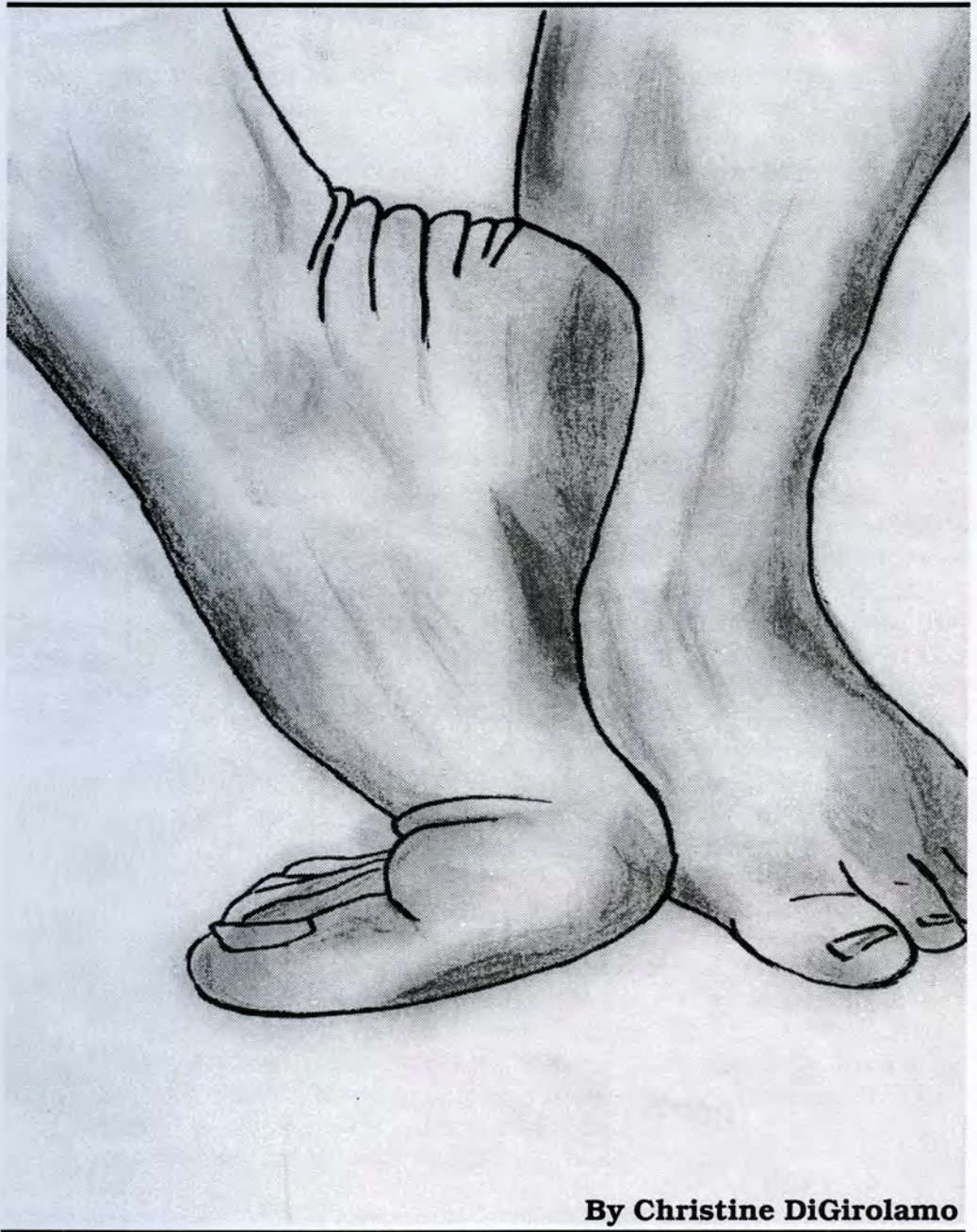
Have you ever taken a shit in the dark? If you've never done it, I can honestly say it's a mind-altering experience. There you sit, completely alone on the hard porcelain with nothing but your own thoughts. As the grimy little bathroom encompasses you, a sense of fear resonates from the pit of your stomach; the hairs on your arm stand rigidly to attention. "What am I doing?" you ask yourself. You suddenly become conscious of the fact that this is one of the weirdest things you have ever done. "No person in their right mind would do this. I can't see a thing!" Dread sweeps over you. "What happens if I don't wipe all the shit off my ass. What if someone accidentally comes storming in?" More and more questions rise up until you think you might choke.

Then it stops. Slowly your eyes become accustomed to the dingy yellow light from the lamp post outside, and bit by bit you develop a feeling of serenity. The turbulence that wrestled with your mind only minutes earlier gives way to a calm awareness of everything around you. You make out the wallpaper trim with the 19th century lighthouses that peels away from the paint; the vinyl floor in the shape of hexagonal tiles that feels cold and hard beneath your feet; the circular indentation on the floor where the door does not open properly. Gradually each of these things stand out like a rising flare that illuminates the night sky, begging to be seen. How is that you can only truly see in the dark?

You notice the lights of the cars as they drive past the mottled glass window. You try and guess what make of car it is and picture in your mind the driver - where are they going, what are they thinking? A sad realization brushes over you as you become tragically aware that life goes on regardless - the cars keep driving past, the light from the lamp post continues to squeeze into the room, the faint sound of your housemate's television hums incessantly - and there you are, completely oblivious to the outside world.

You notice that the shower door is always open and that your towel that's hanging on the rail hasn't been washed in almost a month. You see your roommate's paint smeared jeans crumpled on the floor. Suddenly you come to the realization that they are actually your own jeans. For a month and a half you've walked into that bathroom and seen those things, yet it takes three minutes sitting in the dark for you to fully comprehend that this stinky piece of clothing in front of you is actually your own. You try and decide whether this agitates or humors you when unexpectedly the sound of water dripping in the sink distracts you. Drip ...(wait 6 seconds) ...drip...(wait 6 seconds) ...drip, every six seconds a drop of water falls from the faucet to the basin without fail.

And then it's over. You wipe your ass a couple of extra times to make sure you haven't missed anything. This meticulous attention to ass-wiping concerns you but you acknowledge that this is just one of those things that manifests itself when you're alone in the dark. You pull up your pants, wash your hands with the same meticulous detail, and open the door. The light from outside blinds you momentarily as the halogen washes over you and you're reunited with the world. What was it that just happened? In the space of about six minutes, this dark and lonely place has somehow been transformed into a haven, a safe place where I'm free to think what I want and be who I want. It's no longer the dark that scares me, but the light and everything in it. So I ask you again, have you ever taken a shit in the dark?



By Christine DiGirolamo

Abstract

By Christine DiGirolamo

Everything is green as far as you can see,
And nothing is ever your fault.
At least that's what *they* said.
But something is on your mind
And you're screaming so loud,
Though no one else hears it.
You feel you're all alone,
But I don't know how
You feel you're the only one.
I guess it's true:
It always appears greener
On the other side.
Your pain has been magnified in me;
It's just one thing we share.
We are both the same inside.
Isn't it strange
That what's holding you
Is holding me too?
You came to me and I understood
Even though we're just two strangers
In the end.

Telephone Conversation

By Liz Hammond

When it is late at night.
I think about my future with you,
And sometimes all I will do is daydream.

When someone meets a friend on a ship
that is moving in one direction
And it is turned back to the port,
All they can do is simply daydream.

If we really have a destiny
Then I pray to find it together.

I may travel to distance lands with you.

When I am alone at night,
I find that words can comfort me.

I pour my soul out to the word processor
And it is like a confessional for me

He whispers to me
And I find a hymn to sing.

There are songs that will echo in my conscious.
And I would be a fool to press pause.

I reminisce about our first phone conversation.
It really does not seem so long ago.

I have to face the honest truth
Our phone conversations have excited me

Jellyfish Dreams

By Christina Lambe

Jellyfish dreams
They're not what they seem
They come and they go
Yeah, I ought to know

I have them at night
When my head's not quite right
Jellyfish in the sky
Watch them fly by

Tentacles trailing
In the bed-sheets I'm flailing
Luminescent in the black
God, please don't come back

Ugly sea monsters
Deep ocean mobsters
They run raids with the tide
They're not on my side

I'd better watch out
I won't get to shout
Long arms all embracing
My heart, it is racing

A jellyfish hug
One you can't shrug out of
Jellyfish fill my eyes
Shit, I'm gonna die.

 $1+1=3$

By Timothy M. Bruderek

One and one is three.
I think I'm hollow,
Just like you said.
And I think I hate living here,
Knowing that you're
Right upstairs
But I can't have you.

As the water swirls down the
drain,
My energy and hope dilute it.
Filling up a pitcher of pure,
filtered
Emptiness.

My ten fingers and ten toes
Have traveled enough.
They rest quietly and fade
And so does this day.
Today is without you,
And so is tomorrow.

THE JUNGLE**By Ann Metz**

Jungles entangling tender flesh,
Shredding and clawing savagely
At hands, wrists, baring white bones
Down to the cavernous empty holes
Of nerves, wires and souls.

The cannibals are slashing and chewing
And no one can escape the jungle.

Petrified in the forest,

Trees clustering close and choking,
Stifling the light,

Smothering smoke,
Extinguishing sight.

The Eden green vines cling sticky
To the damp sweat trickles bleeding dry.

They savor the taste of human blood,

The taste of our raw delicate meat.

These cannibals are devouring

Us crumb by crumb

As the savage drums

Pound and pound out

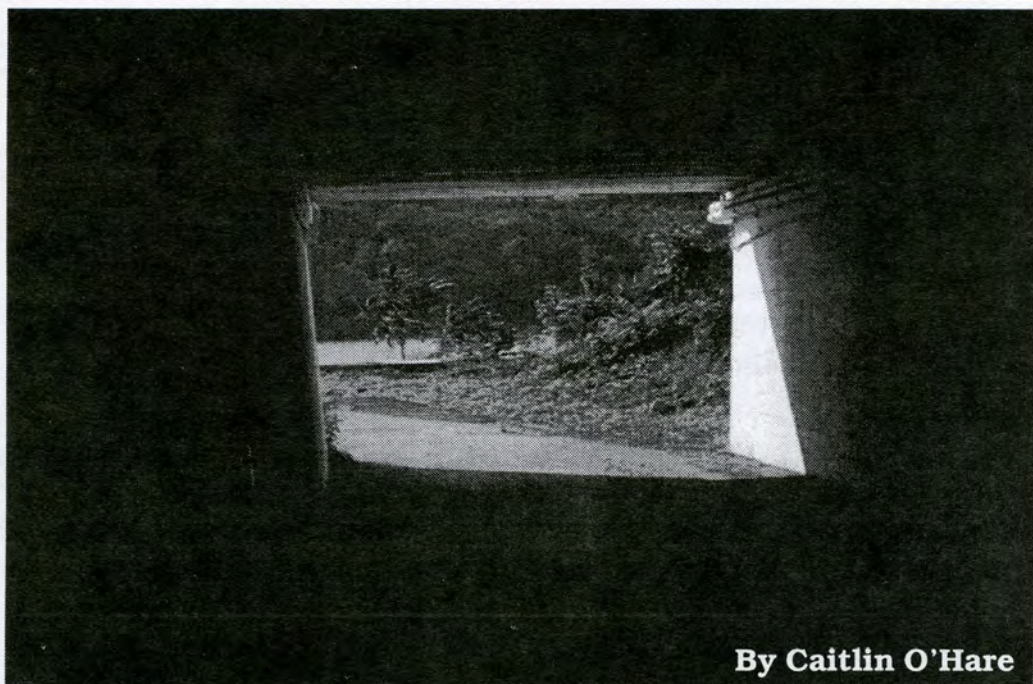
Each moment's final heartbeat.

We'll be dead, we'll be dead

As the cannibals sleep

Heavy with thoughtless content

By Hem Borromeo



By Caitlin O'Hare

Jim Drinks

By James A. Rovello

They always serve the drinks heavy in this bar.
I don't know why I can't get something light.
Everything's got to go to your head in a hurry, else it's not
worth the trouble or tire.
Gotta wear liquefied eyes and see through a tunnel to
appreciate the one bright spot on the other's belly.
Can't see fades cause that takes away the effect.
Faults are for realists and down the road divorcees,
Nothing but the ideal when they serve you a drink here.
I don't understand why you can't get something light
Because it all tastes the same when you go heavy.

Falling in Tune

By C.U.

Falling in tune
And floating far fast
The sun it is past
Now its blacker than black
I can hear as you tap on my glass
And I am listening to hear where you are
I am listening to hear where you are

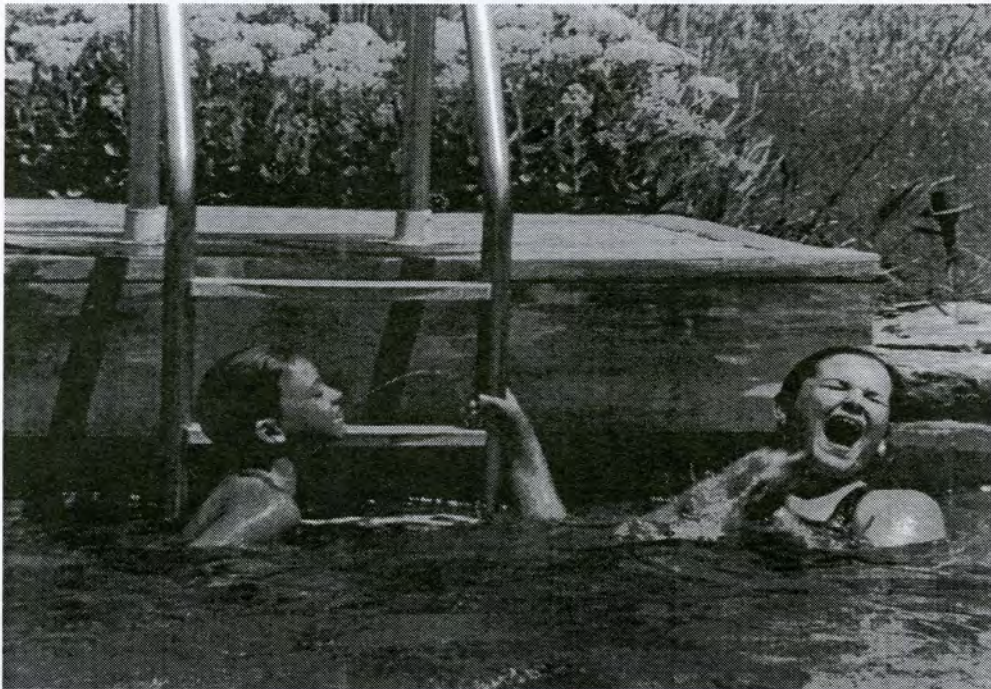
Falling in tune
Put on ruby shoes
And dance round the room according to
Beats of the music that sings in your heart.
Catching signals that sound in the dark
Catching signals that sound
In the dark we will take off our clothes
And there'll be tracing fingers through the notches of your spine.
And when all is breaking, everything cuz you can't keep the si-
lence
Now your eyes they beat in time with the movements of your
heart.

Falling in tune
With cold ease and fates
Creating the play just for two
Coated in armor with a moon across your face
And through the music he's sweetly displaced
Silver beams that will sparkle and grace
Made for your lover who's floating and stroking
Her hands across your face
And in the dark we will take off our clothes
And they'll be tracing fingers through the notches of your spine

(continued from the previous page)

And when all is breaking, everything cuz you can't keep the si-
lence
Now your eyes they beat in time with the movements of your
heart.

And I am asking you once for a while
Let me run down your skin, that soft mile
As it twists and it turns through your body, my world.



By Caitlin O'Hare

Tell Me Something

By Braden Russom

If decolonization is represented,
Time after time,
Within the small sphere of Algerian police work
By one set of handcuffs
And one list of victims, why then does nothing change
When a schoolteacher makes a moral decision
To respect a culture
And respect its ways
Even though he couldn't despise it more?

Listen to Unspoken Words

By Tatiana

Another cry from a beaten child
Is heard while I walk by.
The people hear them day and night,
And no one wonders why.

A little girl sneaks out the house,
Hoping that when asked, people will lie.
She tells me of her dreams,
And I see the tears well in her eyes.

I know not what I do for her,
And why she visits me.
I also do not know
Why she smiles when she leaves.



By Hem Borromeo

“A SINGLE SHELL”

By Nicole Tuttle

Raging emotions come out from within and splurge over
In my cup of thoughts-my tipped cup, my crooked cup.

I wonder much of things I should not wonder about-

Worry about what the future may shoot at me-

A bullet maybe!

I rip myself into pieces; I don't need another to do that for me-

I will always be my own critic -

My own judgmental jury!

And I, seem to be always standing alone

On my un-lighted highway to nowhere, land of broken everything-

Hearts and dreams

And I must be the Queen of this disserted land for I have a broken
heart and

I have broken dreams that are too scared to dance again their
sweet magical dance of...

HOPE

I, well I am lost!

So I am this someone who never learns how to love-

And if I were to ever feel such a thing

I am sure that somehow my icicle heart froze it

And broke it to pieces.

So maybe I will go on raging about something in this twisted life of
mine-

This may just be do to the fact that I can't show love!

“Love me tenderly,” he would say

And I would reply, “how?”



By Kristin Gari

I'M DOWN WITH SUPERFICIALITY

By David Rodriguez

If I had an open mind
Then I would find
That who I used to be
Was down with superficiality
The bonds we make are frail
'cuz what does it entail
no intimacy
I'm down with superficiality
I saw you at a show
So I guess you really know
What it's like to be me
I'm down with superficiality
I dig the clothes you wear
So I don't really care
About your personality
I'm down with superficiality

Jazz Iz

By Jeff Berner

I pick up my jazz box and hug its bulky contours
And dream of Bird and Diz and Lester Young.
I daydream how I am suddenly seated in Minton's in the late 40's,
With the great Thelonious Monk seated at the battered piano not
ten feet from me.
He grumbles to Coleman Hawkins about the chord changes to the
bridge of "Epistrophy."
"Naw man, it's B-flat to C-minor to G..."
Monk takes a sip from the half-empty bottle of Dewar's on the
piano.
In his mumbling way, he counts off the next tune.
He plays like he speaks-in fragments, hard to discern at times but
always something that
knocks you out.
In the corner, Max Roach is drumming, lines of concentration
etched in his head.
His sticks are a fiery blur, radiating intensity and concentration of
the utmost.
And Ron Carter over there, holding it down, counting out the time
on his big scarred
standup bass
The loping bassline he plays suggests a drunken old man's walk
Sometimes stumbling, sometimes loping, but with a crazy feel like
no other.
I can almost hear the old man's shoes shuffling against the side-
walk,
And when he flies into the upper octaves for a solo, watch out now.
Fingers flying, slapping the fretboard, truly an amazing feat to
watch.
Coleman sits patiently on a chair, waiting for his moment to create
his own sound painting.

Face is motionless and expressionless, save for the glowing eyes
receded within.

They seem to scrutinize and take in all that surrounds him.

Pressing the metal mouthpiece to his lips, he begins to play

His rich tenor fills the room with its golden tone.

Aloft on a sea of melody, he flirts with some notes, yells at others,
and pleads with others

still.

Sometimes he uses his instrument as a weapon of war, like the
Mystery Horn in the

Grand Wazoo.

Other times he argues passionately with lost lovers and laments
the death of those before

him.

Max is in a frenzy, playing seemingly faster than the sound can
catch up with him

A ball of fury barely restrained enough to sit on a drum stool.

An old man dressed in his Sunday best, sticks his head in the
door and says,

"Allriiiiiight!", and walks away, groovin' out to the rhythms inher-
ent within.

Now I know where James Brown got the urge to give it up or turnit
a loose, and at the

same time marvel at the true American "classical" music.

The smoke curls up from the ashtray on the chair next to Max's
hi-hat and slowly makes

its way to the ceiling, fighting for space amongst all the notes
clustered in the room.

Monk's right foot shuffles and strides across the floor as he comes
with fractured chords and bass runs.

Never staying still, it seems to suggest the energy apparent in this
music.

And for this I mourn the death of The Great American Note.

To Socrates

By Ann M. Metz

Socrates, I have walked beside thee on Athens's streets
And I have heard the wise softly speak,
And seen the foolish tremble weak
When thou comest to question all they fathom.

Socrates, I have observed thy inquiring mind
Hold what slumbering souls cannot find.
I strived to touch that eternal truth,
But it shriveled away, distorted by youth.

Still I sought, and with vigor pursued,
Thinking back on inebriate half-mad brothers,
Wasting away of unknown hunger and thirst,
Smothered by shadows of human illusion.

Socrates, at times I have stood at thy side,
Other times I stumbled unsteadily behind.
But always I pursued the path set by thy feet,
Always I imitated the meter
Of thy poetically contrived lines.

Socrates, I have tasted the fruits of intellect,
Ripened in thy aged hand.
I cultivated the seeds of Academe,
Scattered by thy learned voice.
And the words were harmony
To everyone else's discordant noise.

(continued from previous page)

Socrates, I call thee teacher, friend, mentor, guide.
Thou art all of these and words I cannot describe.
I followed thee, but time comes, and I must journey.
I must journey away with the wisdom you imparted,
The knowledge I always held but was afraid to touch.
I feared to break into the expanse uncharted.
I feared the loss of so much.

Socrates, once I walked beside you,
Once I stepped only in the streets of Athens,
Once I followed only the paths you made.
Now I depart my own way,
With your words always residing inside.

The Lament of the Astronomer's Wife

By Christina Lambe

Oh Ptolemy,
Star gazer! Mad lover of untouchable perfection!
Why did you forsake me for your lady Night?
Your eyes are weak from seeking her shaded glance.
"They cannot bear the brilliance of the day or the sheen of light on
your hair,"
You say, as you turn away, close the shutters, dream of the sun's
and my departure.
Your skin is as pale as a sliver of almond from the Moon's touch.
"Get away!" you shout as I reach for you.
"Your hands are too hot, you'll burn me, and leave blisters on my
cheek!"
We are like a double star, you and I. When you rise I set,
Forever circling, eternally attracted and repelled.

Crayons and Hand Grenades

By Jim McGrath

Where do I wear this I can't stand the stare
Hits the man at the back of the elevator
But was intending to cross paths
With me and my
Red leotard

We met in the bargain bin
I couldn't pass up the chance to
Mingle
And now I pay the price
Of humiliation

The cashier never mentioned that
When she rang it up for
Seven dollars forty eight
Sense
I lost it for a moment there

She said it was a
Steal
She was right
My dignity is gone

The Green Rose

By: Brian Wills

A touch and a shadow
A soft caress in the moonlight
A finger tracing the outline of my face
My hands searching for something
Yet never leaving the sheet

Light streams in from the outline of my window
Night has descended on us
You sit beside me
I am laying down face upturned
Looking into your eyes

Time is forgotten
Time is forever
Time shared together
Time to heal each other
Time to write again

In my mind danced two roses
The first has wilted in my heart
It broke in wind long past
The other of emerald green
It blossoms in my soul

The moments grow longer
I begin to hope
My heart trembles
I begin to hope
As fingers trace my face

(continued from previous page)

I lay there trembling
I lay there hoping
I lay there praying
I lay there wanting
I lay there

You whispered me words
You answered my prayers
By embracing my soul



By Scott Neville



By Caitlin O'Hare

Epidermis (or The Next Layer)

By James A. Herman Rovello

I was passing through Franklin Street, my fingers numb from the autumn air. I had dipped them deep into my pockets and leisurely mumbled to myself. Marlon had taken up the walkway in his aimless travels. He was a heavysset man, with thick, stupid glasses that had been broken almost as often as his promises. I had opted for the grass alongside him. It was cramped with moisture and my feet sank with each step. I felt like I was walking on soggy cereal, precariously balanced between the edges of a cheerio. I was trying to navigate the great white bowl and the silver spoon at the lip.

Cars rebounded off one another with slow, successive stop and starts. The sun was glaring at me from the horizon and I had wished the afternoons were just a little bit longer. Those days were gone and Marlon was too absorbed to care.

“Tell me something I don’t know” Marlon moaned.

“You’re an idiot” I shot back, shoving my hands deeper into my pockets. My nose felt numb and my lips cracked. I wanted a cigarette, but I’d be damned if I was going to take my hands out of my pockets.

“Got a light?” I inquired, severing the agitation in my voice in one clean motion. Amputation never felt so good behind a prosthesis. I grinned inwardly, behind my mask.

“Yeah, yeah” Marlon shifted himself between steps and felt around for his signature lighter. Somewhere he had acquired an antique Zippo, told everyone it was his grandfather’s every time.

With a clean motion, Marlon lifted the shiny tin can.

A spark erupted and I dove into the flame. The brief heat seeped into my lungs, and the ashes of my cigarette reminded me of marshmallows roasting on a campfire. I'd been an honorable Boy Scout for less than a year. The uniform didn't fit.

"The way I see it," I exhaled the concealing fog into the frigid, contemptible air. "You've got two options, stick with it and hope things get better," which they won't. "Or, cut your loses and find another."

"I don't know" Marlon answered, that dumb look on his face. He was a primitive chap, if that was the right word. Always second-guessing himself. He was slow to react; he dragged his knuckles a lot. I was about to serve him a wise crack when I remembered his raw and bloody knuckles. Marlon had a temper that wouldn't quit.

"Mirel, that bitch" Marlon groaned, stomping his foot at the invisible onslaught. The concrete absorbed him; it shot back a reminder with electric clarity. Leisurely, I took another drag, while he went about his fusion process with the earth.

"Listen," Marian bent close, his lips quivering, eyes dilated. "You got to know something about this guy, where he lives, what he's doing. You've talked to her, your friends. She ain't moving for nothing."

I gave him a pathetic smile. It was all I could offer, anything to give him some kind of sign of my feelings. He was clutching for air, trying to breathe the situation through his callused skin. He was a fish, driven from his pond, gobbling the poison in the atmosphere and calling himself a man. I'd be damned if I thought he could do it, and I didn't care whether he learned to walk or not, but somebody had to set him straight today. Silence was my tool. I blinked,

refocused, and then looked him in the eyes.

“Who is she seeing?”

It was a guttural inquiry, a dying man’s plea. Somewhere inside the wire had snapped, the cables turned to jelly and his dignity had drained into a pool at his feet. This was war; I remonstrated myself for forgetting. It was cold, brutal war that he had waged and everyday it was turning up new bodies behind those sleepless eyelids. It was time, I thought, time to take him out of the front lines. I struck with fragrant venom in my voice.

“Who stuck the knife in your back?” I shot him a cold glare. “Who cheated on who and how often?”

My adversary choked up and coughed. He tapped his foot in some subtle rhythm and gave the ground an apologetic glance. His nose was running and he sniffed cold, stale air through it. “I just want to know.”

I glanced down Franklin Street, then back toward Main. Traffic was getting congested and we could part now, or stick to the sidewalk a little further. I opted to keep walking a little further.

“You messed up.” I told him, “Sleeping around like that, what did you think was going to happen?” The wounds were superficial. He had heard them all before. I peeled away the layers of flesh with finesse and ease. I peeled with subtle contempt and aimed, with careful intent, my severing shot. “She started looking after the first time,” I watched him shrivel. I watched him die. He was a drowning man, just another sailor out to sea. “You lost her a long time ago.”

Time passed between us. The poison did its work. His pupils were dilated and at the closing of a minute the gulf between bodies was

too great. The tendons, and sweet ligaments had been severed. The stretcher had risen from the earth and he was pronounced dead, if not disabled. Marion didn't look me in the face. To be honest, I didn't want him to either. "When am I going to see you again?" he asked.

"I don't know" I lied, "College is a tricky place I'm told. Not sure when I'll be back."

"All right, all right. I trust you." Marlon conceded, slipping his eyes beneath the concrete walkway. Without warning, he rushed me and gave me a sharp, heavy hug. Struggling flesh yearned for life. His fingers clawed at my sides, they dug for flesh, and he rocked me like an invalid within his grasp. He whispered his own venom, his dying whimper "You're my best friend." I smelt the dried blood on his knuckles, the cracked skin and split flesh. I remembered who I was dealing with, and for a moment I feared he would look me in the eyes. I waited, waited for him to smell Mirel's scent on my jacket. I waited for the twisted moans to creep up from the abyss of my ears, and serenade his soulless form. I waited for him to catch her undressing behind my eyes.

Instead, limping like an amputee, the veteran retreated from the front lines and carried on his way across Franklin. Back to civilization and on his own. I think I felt sorry for him, and flushed with myself. I think about what would have happened if he had looked back. I think about Mirel. I think about silky white linen dripping off peach cream shoulders. I'd kill a friend, a best friend, for that woman's scent. If opiates even had a clue about disease. I'd spent my summer tasting Marlon's desire with a stirring spoon, and adding a drop of bourbon to flavor. I wasn't sure what Mirel was yet, the desire, or the bourbon. To be honest, I didn't really care anymore. She was just a photo in an album now.

I lit up another cigarette, satisfied that I had conserved enough heat in my hands for a minute's work. I breathed Marlon's toxin. Best *friend*.

I felt better. I glowed. It wasn't the cigarettes. It was the sensation. It was the look. I baptized my new mold with a tap of my cigarette. Flaky ashes, like skin, dripped into the air. I was changing. I was shedding, that much I was sure. Marlon was just the next layer.



By Kristen Alldredge

Mystery

By Patricia Tarantello

You hide behind your stained glass,
your rock walls.

I try to look in, but you're concealed, enshrouded.

What demons do you hide?

Let me in.

But I'm left outside looking in

with the gargoyles, the grotesque angels, and the marble saints
with outstretched hands

Guarding you, warning me not to keep this vigil

to intrude this place kept sacred

in fear.

Reveal yourself to me.

I will not turn from you.

Why won't you tear down this veil between us?

Are you afraid of what I might see—some lack

of virtue, some fall

from innocence?

No,

I will adore you

whatever tattered state of grace

Confess yourself to me

Unconditionally

Let your words spill

over like blood,

blood flowing from your wounds

hidden from the world

Let it wash over me,

Baptize me until my skin is crimson with its stain

and you are reborn.

The Edge of the World

By Tatiana

You want to run
To the edge of the world
So that you may peer over.

You hope and pray,
Expect to find
The answers to all hidden mysteries
And questions
That you've always searched for.

And I see you,
Far off in the distance,
And the sun is slowly
Making its way to the other side.

Its rays hit you,
And you realize that there
Is no edge,
Or maybe there is,
But with nothing there
Except this huge ball of fire
Making its way closer
And closer to you.

So you decide to jump inside
While I stand
Far off
Watching,
Without the ability
Or time
To save.

SIN ORIGINALE

By David Rodriguez

I'm the serpentine that's circling in your
dreams
Surfacing where nothing seems of purpose
But believe temptations curses reverses
what you achieve
So be nervous when verses convert the
focus to hopelessly in need
and concede to forces that causes effects on
what to believe respect the free
that neglect the threat of the enemy
me, I've seen everything from the beginning
who's winning? Ask Eve



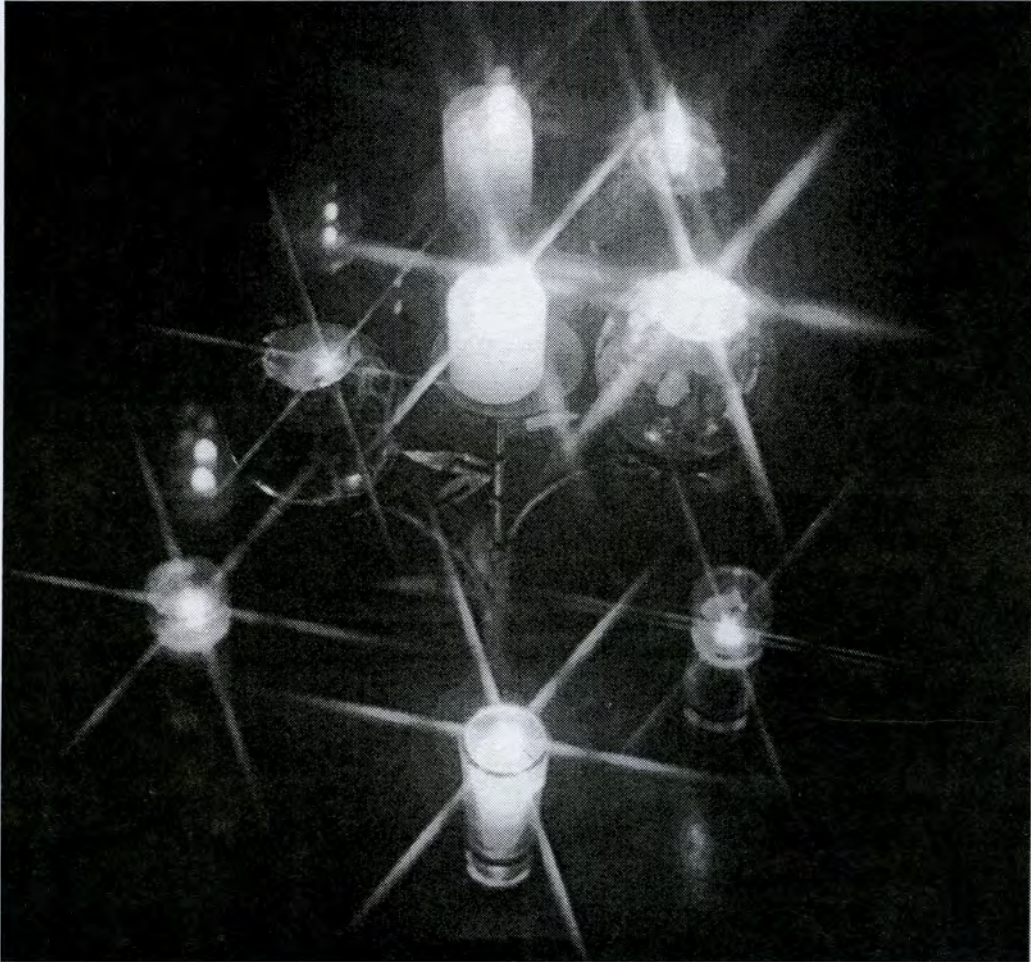
By Hem Borromeo

American Sobriety

By Dan Buzi

Oh say can you see,
By the dawn's early light,
A drunkard sitting sober
Contemplating, head down, slouched shoulders?
Can you see his thoughts? A thousand images
Shared by America all over.
The crumbled buildings,
Broken dreams,
Shattered as the glass around him
With his head down, and slouched shoulders
"God bless America," he mutters,
"Land that I love. Stand beside her"
"And" his words crumble into mumbling tears.
But his cheeks aren't wet for his own troubles
Not after so many years.
They are not wet for the arm he lost long ago,
Fighting for the land that he loves
Nor for his long lonely nights huddled into cardboard.
Drop by drop his tears fall as love
Dripping from his cheek to make mud,
Of the gray ash around him.
He weeps for the wounded and weeps for the dead,
All of those who will surely pass away
If war begins again.
Oh say can you see,
By the dawn's early light,
A drunkard sitting sober,
One arm, one war,
His head hanging low, slouched shoulders?
"In the name of the father and the son and the holy spirit," he
prays

That no one else will have to die
The way he died long before today.
"There is no honor in killing" he mumbles,
And drops the full bottle to shatter,
As he slowly walks away.



By Caitlin O'Hare

Upside Down

By Timothy M. Bruderek

Does it have to be shared?
I'm sorry I can't
wish it all for you
or finish pretending to mind.
The wind makes this room cold
and I don't care.

You guard the music
and drop a sword of inferiority
upon me.
Stop kicking me around
like a lost stone
every time I smile at you.

Not everyone with a pen and a hairbrush
can exit my life.
If you meant nothing to me
then I wouldn't ask you here.
Believe
that I'm going to cry
when you get on that plane,
Like I'm doing right now.

The First Day I Went to School

By Jim McGrath

I was scared, for a number of reasons. We were all herded in, one by one. My mom told me to listen to the teacher and to do whatever she said. I didn't count on the bats. Hundreds, maybe thousands, hanging from the ceiling of our little cave. The teacher said they wouldn't bite you if you were quiet. So we were. For seven years. Then we found out that Mrs. Huffington wasn't a real teacher.



By Caitlin O'Hare

Tonight I Say

By Diana Ventimiglia

Tonight I say,
To you I whisper,
A breath upon your ear
I love you.
The night seemed to shimmer,
Twinkling its song among your
eyes,
A frightening glow
Soothed and caressed me tight.
But the look you gave.
I wander around the room.
It seems the suns lost its bloom.
Rainbows are the dreams
That kiss your skies,
Hand in hand we ride their
tails.
Silence was the scar
That cast your spells,
Moment by moment we slip
away.
Cause its all a facade,
The hour less days,
Your walls of frames,
The spooning of lies
That fed my aching belly.
I scavenged for the hopeful
grace,
You nourished a bomb.
Dreamers are the fools
That lick your tears,
Step by step you crash.

Waiting was the vision
That dried my eyes,
Day to day I lost you.
I see through your case,
The looking glass stripped deep
My ladder of escape:
It was all the glory,
The chapter never turned,
I was waiting for the fall
That knocked me down
Never to pick me up,
I found you.
I waited for my clouds
Before the storm,
To rain its light on me,
I found you.
Words are the sins
That make forever,
Fist after fist a mold built.
Weeping was my potion
That killed your story,
Night after night I love you.

The Gift
By Tatiana

I dreamt of you.

We met each other
In the mid of night,
You with gifts of small tidings.
Placed delicately inside
It's fragile shell,
Lay a teardrop caught
From a goddess' eye.

It symbolized the tragedy of the
world,
So much so
As to make her cry.

But inside was a world of collections
Of the greatest beauties of earth.
It shone with the magnitude
Of a thousand stars
And reflected as a mirror
Perfectly set before the sky.

In it I say twin waterfalls
With the hidden cave behind
That leads us to our secrecy.
I saw our horses galloping free
And flowers scattered among fields.

By Caitlin O'Hare

I saw a forest at night
With vibrant lights
Shining through the tangled treetops.
I saw a clearing with two people - us
Standing together.

In-between was an energy,
A force
So great that light was emitted
And shone to see closed flowers
And mushrooms that grew along mossed
trunks.

As I look inside this teardrop
Placed ever so carefully
Atop its velvet interior.

I see a love for passion,
Independence,
Uniqueness,
The present touch of your hand,
And you.
You with all your glory
Have met me in a hideaway
To give the greatest gift of all,
A gift from the gods,
The gift of beauty,
Appreciation,
Understanding,
And love.

It is to thee I ascribe my belonging
Out here in the dark,
Beyond the imaginary wall
Of my dreaming.



Atoms and Void

By Christina Lambe

By Caitlin O'Hare

We burst forth like Phoenixes, rising from each other's ashes.
Electrified bones and blood, clay bodies filled with lightning.
We are like the stars - comets streaking forth illuminating
The night in a fierce combustion, a moment in eternity.
I love you, but there is no certainty in love or life.
Who knows when the capricious lady Fortune will turn you
And me upside down?
This is a haphazard life we lead. Nothing but Atoms and Void.
You and I blaze forth leaving trails of desire and tears,
Trails of broken hearts.
Only to be hit from behind by the unpredictable, unavoidable
swerve.

Stale Memory

By Dan Buzi

It was the stale memory of him that she inhaled, two fingers pressed to her lips like a lifeline. Her hair was black, curly. It fell over her face carelessly. She was a little stocky maybe, but not fat, by no means fat. She wore her weight like a sort of burden. She was an average height. Her cheeks were a little red now with the cold breeze. They contrasted with her pale skin.

It was an October night. The breeze was cold. That's true, but the air was pleasant. The day had been surprisingly warm, the sun shining. She had slept, and she would be up all night now with her cigarettes, her black curly hair over her red cheeks. She breathed the smoke in deeply, held it there a while, her mouth open, and let it out in a cool billow of grey, her lips almost kissing it as it left.

"One year," she thought. "One year since the stale smoke room poets." That's what she called them, the stale smoke room poets. They never said much, but they had coffee and they had something else that she wanted, something she couldn't quite put her finger on. One year, two days ago, like it was yesterday.

She had walked into an old cafe. It was small and out of the way. A friend had been talking about it with some contempt earlier in the evening. It occurred to her now that she had probably gone in for exactly that reason. Her friend said that the place should be condemned. Her friend liked what was in style.

The place had the feel of an old western saloon in an abandoned ghost town. It was dusty and not well lit. The owner blended in with the customers. He didn't say much. Some of the tables wobbled on mismatched legs. They were all chipped on the top.

There was a small stage at what could roughly be called the front of the room. But she hadn't noticed any of this right away.

Almost before her foot made contact with the first squeaky floorboard of that room she caught Jesse's eye. He was turning his head one way and she the other. Their glances met for only a moment. It was all that was needed. Jesse had her. He didn't know it yet. Neither did she.

She had sat down then, and she remembered looking at her watch. It was 11:07. She remembered that somehow. She remembered every little moment of that night. She sat down and took in the room. It was old, and just about ready to fall down, that was true. The ceiling was low, the walls were all a sort of dark wood color. There were little words carved into the table: "I love so and so." Some were crossed off and some were highlighted with foul language.

It had been a bit chill. October was just starting to move in. That's the nature of October nights, a bit chill. The door was open. It was always open, even in late January...you had to ventilate somehow. It was still stale.

She didn't smoke then. She sipped coffee slowly, always sneaking glances around the room as if it were inappropriate. Somehow it was. Here and there her gaze locked on Jesse. He sipped his cigarette. It was almost as if he were thinking through it.

"Hello, my name's..." "I was just noticing..." "Ummm, I just gotta tell you that you look..." "I've been looking over here all..." "Do you know that you are the single most..." and the possibilities played on all night in her head as the stale smoke room poets went up one by one to read what they had written.

The owner read too, he blended in with the customers. The ceiling hung low. The walls were dark. Her table read "I love so and so." It was crossed out and "you slut" was in its place. It was the potential of him that she sipped.

She hoped she wasn't staring too much. His hair was dark, his jaw firm, his nose sharp. His skin hugged tight to his face. His cheeks were bony. His lips were full and red and they kissed the smoke. His shirt hung loose off his shoulders. His jeans were worn. He didn't care about a thing. She kissed her coffee.

She looked at her watch then. It was 12:04. She had the same cup of coffee. It was lukewarm. The stale smoke room poets were done reading. They sat around talking to each other. She got up to leave. Jesse shot a glance her way. She didn't notice. The door opened to a chill October night.

She walked home, her hair neatly tied back in a scarf. Her clothes were worn, but she bought them that way. The cold wind pinched her pale cheeks. Her smile was the memory of him.

She remembered each of those year-ago steps home as if they were yesterday. The taste of coffee had been sticky in her mouth. Her feet almost skipped. The next day had come and gone and she hardly even noticed the sun that was shining bright all day. Her thoughts were in the small stale smoke filled room of the night before. She skipped classes that day, sat around in bed, her head a little bent, with an immovable smile. A few naps later and it was almost time. 10:05 her watch read, and she plucked at her eyebrows, filed her nails, brushed her teeth, brought a few mints along, made her hair perfect, no makeup though, he wouldn't like that.

It was warmer that night. The breeze still blew a bit chill. She walked a little slow, didn't want to get there before him.

10:42. She stepped into the room. Jesse sat exactly where he had the night before. She wondered if he had moved.

A man held an acoustic guitar delicately on the stage. He strummed out something barely audible. His eyes were turned in on himself. Jesse watched him intently.

She took her seat, same place as she had the night before. She could hear the cars driving by outside more clearly than the guitar. She watched Jesse. He was wearing the same clothes he had the night before. His hair was black and curly and thrown over itself carelessly. His mouth hung open just a little to let his thoughts in through smoke. His eyes were wide and questioning. They noticed every small movement of the man's hands on stage.

The song sunk in little by little as if it were getting louder. The cars outside faded away. She could hear herself breathing. Her heart was beating quickly. She sipped on the potential of him. She could hear herself slurp.

He wanted to turn around. He knew she was looking. The man on stage was his excuse. He took a drag of meaning and breathed it out slowly.

She was done with her coffee by the end of the song. She turned the mug this way and that and watched the small ring of brown at the bottom that would not come out. The audience had a moment of silence in place of applause. Then the cars could be heard again.

Jesse walked up to the stage. He belonged there somehow. His long thin fingers held the cigarette delicately. He had nothing on paper.

His voice was low and calming. He wanted to look at her.

Her hair was tied back neatly. Her clothes were appropriate for the room but placed with care. Her rosy cheeks contrasted her pale skin.

She watched him from the corner of her eye. His hair was out of place, black and curly. His words were slow. She didn't catch their meaning. His jeans had holes in the knees and on the thighs. She knew it wasn't for fashion.

He walked off the stage towards her. She could hear her heart beating. She tried to sip the last of her coffee. He pulled a chair away from the table and his eyes asked if he could sit. She smiled shyly and motioned for him to go ahead. She stared into the brown bottom of her mug. Her pinky finger outlined the rim in circle after circle.

Someone else was on stage reading. He was a blur behind the smoke. Jesse was in perfect focus in the corner of her eye. He put his hand on hers. The table wobbled. Her chair flinched. Her eyes matched his. She saw they were intense. Jesse had her. He knew it now. So did she.

He smiled. She bit her lip and her cheeks curled up with her shoulders. His smile grew. He produced two cigarettes, offered one to her. She didn't smoke. She took it. She leaned across the table and his lighter clicked, hers first then his. The smoke tasted like the room amplified a thousand times.

She coughed and tried to hold it in. He grinned. She felt his hand on her knee. She leaned in.

The poet was done on stage. Jesse stood during the moment of silence and walked towards the door. Her eyes followed. She could hear the creaking of the floor.

A smooth ring of smoke followed his face as he turned to meet her eyes. She got up to follow him. He had her. They knew it.

They walked the midnight pavement. She could hear each of her steps. A pair of headlights drove by. She thought her shoes would deafen her. The occasional streetlight brought Jesse into focus. He walked as if he were naked. Jazz music fell from a nearby window.

"Listen, I..." He put his finger over her lips. It was rough. She kissed it. He kissed her. They stood in the streetlight amazed with each other. She kissed him. Her eyes were closed. He produced another cigarette for each of them. They breathed in meaning and walked on.

His apartment was small, cluttered. Papers were everywhere. An old word processor sat his desk. It was all that wasn't gathering dust. One lamp lit the room. It didn't have a shade. He shut it off, lit a candle. He pushed the papers from his bed. They kicked off dust. She wondered where he slept.

A cold breeze snuck in through a slightly cracked window. She shivered. It was an early October night. Her eyes adjusted to the candlelight.

He stood in front of the bed, took off his shirt. He was thin, almost transparent in the candlelight.

Her eyes motioned for the door. "It's Jesse" he said. She came to him. Her hands rested on his chest and slipped down.

"I'm..." He kissed her. She grabbed his back and squeezed. She wanted to make him part of her. She forgot her name then. His face was rough against hers. They melted to the bed...

She woke up naked. It was an early October morning. A cool breeze snuck in through the slightly cracked window. She was alone. She sat up, gathered her clothes. They were soaked in dust and sweat. A scrap of paper sat on the desk looking newly placed amongst the dust. She picked it up. It read, "I loved you." Her eyes closed up tightly, they almost pinched out a tear.

She crumpled the scrap, got dressed, put it in her pocket. She got one foot out the door, turned around. She scribbled, "call me" on the scrap, jotted down her number, put the scrap on the desk...

It was a dark evening, early in October. The breeze was cold. That's true, but the air was pleasant. The day had been surprisingly warm, the sun shining. She had slept, and she would be up all night now with her cigarettes, her black curly hair over her red cheeks. She breathed the smoke in deeply; it was the memory of him. She held it there a while, swallowed it, and coughed a bit.

She gave a little smirk filled with tears thinking of herself. He still hadn't called...

Andre's Departure

By Ann Metz

At the end of the driveway he sat
Between the rusted tan of the Chevy
And the fallen pine tree needles.
I watched through the windows,
Wet cheeks adhering to the sun-warmed glass.
We said our good-byes and sayonaras
But the words were melted
Crayola Crayons and forgotten make-believe tales.
They were not like those we imagined together
In the fragments of our jungle gym playground,
Spoken in a Morse code of
Flashlight bulbs and finger puppet people.
Instead an emptiness spoke
In the curled toes of the pet canary,
Car tires hissing, Mourning doves murmuring.
I saw the sunbeams glare on a blue metal hood,
Witnessed my father's weak embrace,
And somehow I knew
That my brother was dissolving
To a place where I couldn't hug him.
Entering and exiting he moved,
Forever between the overture and the entr'acte.
Here at ten, at fifteen, and then at twenty.
We never arrived at Act Two to see the show end.
He was always that indecipherable hieroglyph,
Eyes staring to the side away from us.

THE LAST HUMAN ALIVE

By David Rodriguez

I wish I could be alone for a century or two
To think about the things that all humans do
I wish I could dream for millions of years
Living all my fantasies, confronting all my
fears
I wish I could hibernate for a millennium
To wake up and see what the world has
become
My place in history is lost
Memories have turned to dust
Wading through the sands of time
I want to be the last human alive
I wish I could be washed away and live out on
the sea for days
escaping reality, floating on eternity
I wish I could go to heaven someday
Alive but be there anyway
Just to see what's up there
And to see if anyone cares
I wish I could go to hell and see the devil dwell
In all his burning glory and still come back to
tell
My place in history is lost
Memories have turned to dust
Wading through the sands of time
I want to be the last human alive



By Hem Borromeo

If Your Eyes Are Brown...

By Timothy M. Bruderek

If your eyes are brown, await me.
I long for pink strands in my crown
and to swim free from it.
To knock them down like game pieces,
the stale figures,
into a pool of tin.
Swim, swim away...
Tie me up with seasons,
and self, and your prettiest textures.
What to do, not read you and
plagiarize? To sing down
without plugging their mouths?
To sing you...
I blow like brass
to hear from here to there.
You left without your home,
you swirled my placid face into a trance.
To survive on herbs by the sea.
To survive...
If your eyes are wet, await me.
Fortune will make it like this.
I will balance this wire for you.
I'll lie in porcelain
and break it into points.
To break this...

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A Special Message from the Chief Editor

This is my first semester as chief editor of the Mosaic. Although the work has been arduous and difficult at times, I have enjoyed working with the staff of assistant editors. They have a great sense of humor, enthusiastic energy, and great commitment. They are some of the best people I have ever worked with. I would especially like to thank James A. Rovello for his technical expertise and Caitlin O'Hare for her assistance with the photography. Most importantly, I would like to thank all of you who submitted material to the Mosaic. You have all made a significant contribution to the voice of creative expression here at Marist College. It is my hope that this issue marks a new beginning in the history of the Mosaic. This is the longest issue ever produced and it represents some of the best work I have seen to date. I look forward to reading the submissions in the spring.

Chief Editor:

Ann Metz

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Caitlin O'Hare

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Back Cover Art

Caitlin O'Hare

Sincerely,

Ann M. Metz



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By Hem Borrromeo

