

PHANTASMA
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FALL 2002

Phantasmagoria

Winter 2002-2003

Editorial Staff:

Jessica Benjamin
Caroline Fox
Mackenzie Haberman
Jake Heft
Emma Kline
Robin Kralik
Alissa Lyons
Beth Nugent
Khetisuda Suvarnasuddhi
Linnea Svahn-Jaccoma

Layout Editor:

Caroline Fox

Cover Art:

Ash Pierce

Faculty Advisors:

Mrs. Mathews
Mr. Trachtenberg

This magazine is dedicated to the belief that the arts are a necessary and important force in our lives, and to the support of the young artists who bring them to us.

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Drowning in a Sea of Strangers

I'd like to just stick my toes in and check for cold water,
Or sit in the back with a life vest strapped on.

But I have to get out there, have to pull myself up
On smooth skis of tarnished self-esteem.

It always feels a bit wobbly and unsure at first.

I've got to balance carefully and hope things will smooth
out,
Bracing myself against unavoidable waves
And waters rough with prejudice and deception,
Always careful so that I don't fall off.

It's a long and terribly lonely ride down,
With nothing but a hollow splash to greet me.

I'll have to start all over again,
Resurface and gasp for fresh air.

Sometimes I'll float for a while, all by myself,
And collect my scattered, bobbing thoughts.

The next chance will come round
With the boat of hope and happiness to pick me up.

I wonder if I will be ready.

Larissa Long



Marybeth Snyder

Phantasmagoria Fall 2002

Wailing Wall

A Wall stands strong
Somewhere in the Disputed Land,
Glowing white
Against a fiery sky;

Its battered bricks
Wrinkled and
Eroded
By the merciless seas of Time.

Deep scars,
Embedded in rock,
Tell the tales
Of a history
Ripped at the seams;
Divided
By a wire fence
And stacks of chairs.

The air is thick with prayer,
Murmurs rising briefly
Over the sounds of
Shuffling feet.

Hearts ache,
Mouths decry,
Silent protests
Ring out

And bounce back

In defiance,
Flattening inflated souls.

A Wailing Wall indeed,
Crying out through
Gritted teeth
As streams of history
Flow forth from every
Crack and crevice.

It is a place where
Time stands still,
Where Past and Present collide
In perpetual equilibrium.

A mass of black and white
Appears through the haze of twilight,
Swaying slowly
Back and forth
To an unknown rhythm.

Surrounded and
Alone,
Shrouded men and
Shrouded women;
Divided,
Their prayers rise together.

Folded hopes and dreams,
Some fresh,
Some stale,
All compressed
Into thick wads of paper,
Poking out
From between the ancient stones;
Forming uneven puddles beneath
Innumerable pairs
Of multicolored soles.

Somewhere beneath the
Hot desert sun
A Wall stands strong,
Glowing pure and true
Against an uncertain sky.

Jessica Benjamin

Day's End

The sun returns to its fiery den
Casting orange stardust rays
Of warmth and hope.
Cattle gather in, sleepy-eyed,
Lulled by the eerie hoo
Of the awakening owl, echoing
In the distance.

The door scrapes open as
He hobbles in,
Dirty denim and they day's toil
Burdening each stride.
Heavy boots drag like the ball and chain
From his prison of solitude
As he shuffles across trodden wooden planks.

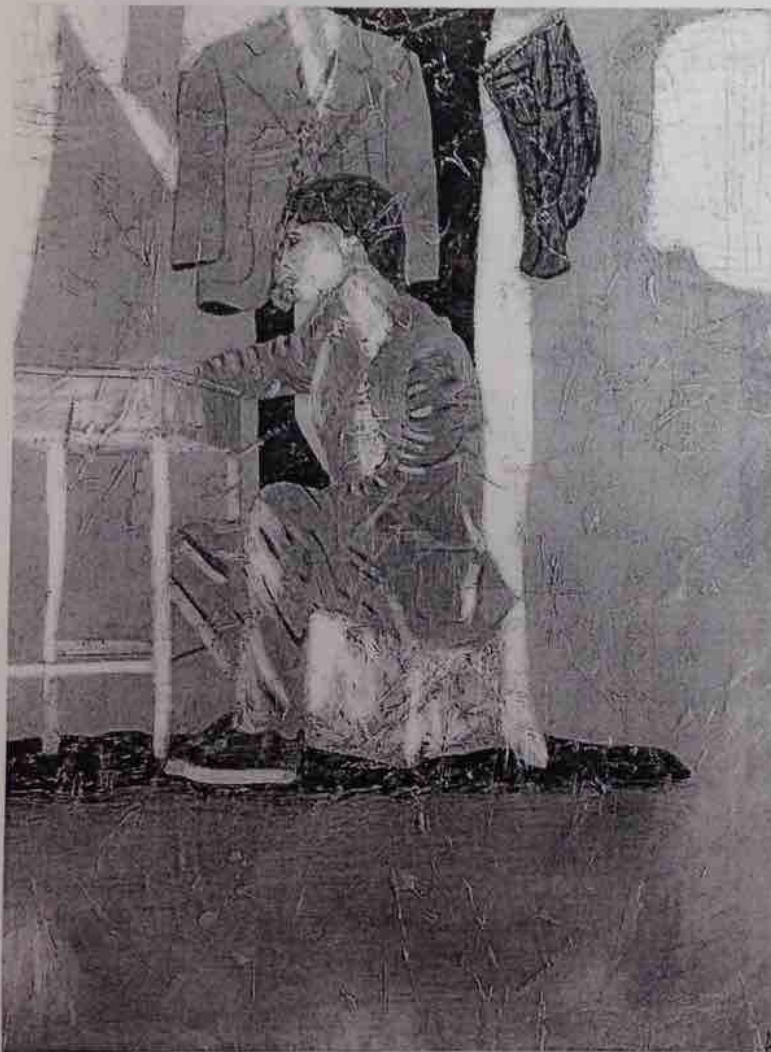
His hands, gnarled, rough and weary
Slide through greasy, limp hair
Combing the golden wheat rows
And scratching stubbly porcupine cheeks.

The cold cling of loneliness follows close
A chill, not cured
By the meager sunlight shining in
That once offered so much hope.

Stony gray eyes turn cold
At the sight of empty house
A catch of last night's burnt cornmeal
Hanging, stale.

And just like everyday
With the same tired grace
He sets his soiled hat
Upon the rickety wooden table
As the sun-soaked door
Gently swings shut
Choking the last of the
Radiant stardust rays.

Cristina Falcione

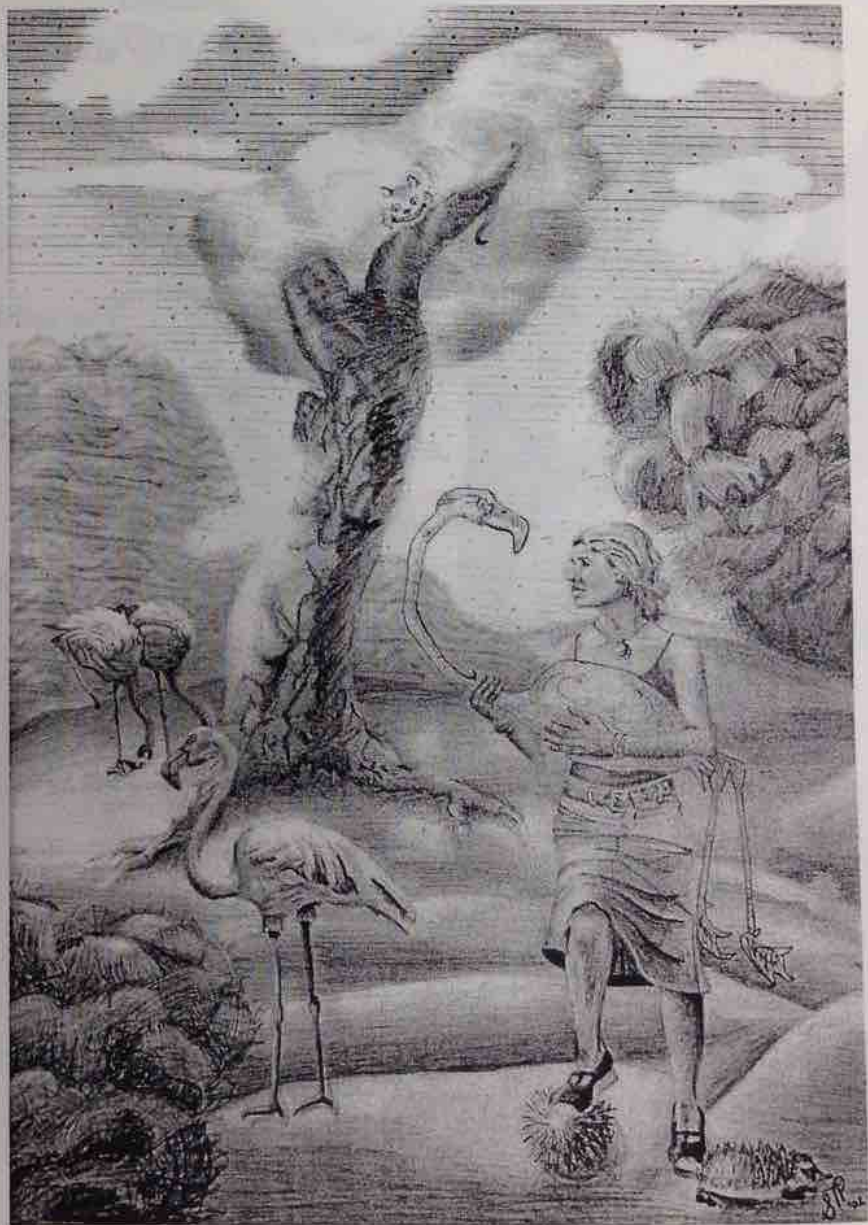


Tom Scalse

Panic

Wandering life's path,
Panic
Gives the sensation of being slammed
Into the thin ice coating of a frozen pond
And descending to the lifeless bottom,
Breathless.
Don't worry, she'll be fine on her own.
Sadly mistaken as they look on,
My lifejacket is too my addiction;
Small, round, pretty in white
And it's locked away with the key held tight
In the first of the quiet disablers.
And let me drown, they will
Because they fail to recognize-
I have a key too.

Kelly Dittmore



Suzanne Pawlovich

An Autumn's Kiss

Standing in the bitter October air,
Watching my breath turn into a fine mist,
And drift with the wind
Past his powder-blue eyes.

The party's upbeat, dance music
Seeps through the cracks
Of the weathered barn door,
And echoes through the trees,
Which blanket the surrounding landscape
And dilute the light from the stars.

The rapid flicker of a lighter's
Saffron flame
Nicks the surface of the darkness,
While laughter, from some rabble-rousers
Getting high behind the old barn,
Attempts to break our
Textbook, lover's scene

Our eyes lock;
Harmonizing our thoughts.

In the darkness, we know the
Time is right to press our lips
Together and

Silence the music, and the hyena like laughter,
Shake the foundations of the towering trees,
And explode the stars like fireworks,
Fracturing the night's charcoal surface,
And illuminate our tender expression of human emotion.

Linden Lalley-Chareczko



Ash Pierce

Grandpa and Me

We walk slowly toward the peninsula of elevated, soggy wood.
Ready to cast our lines.
Twilight has already cast,
A multitude of oranges and yellows, reds and purples across the entire lake.
In a fluent motion,
The bobbers become projectiles,
As they pierce the inescapable heavy cover of humidity.
With a hollow splash,
They submerge momentarily into the vast murky water,
Only to spring back to the surface.
Sitting peacefully, the bobbers are the only islands in the large lake.
Losing interest, I wander about,
Seeking another activity.

Below I observe ants scatter along the shore,
Fleeing from the intimidating roar of the speedily approaching ripple.
Skip, skip, skip, skip, skip, karplunk.
The dull stone dissolves into the glossy water.
My attention now returns to my rod.

A startling thrust.
The water engulfs my palm-sized buoy.
Excitement paralyzes my tiny arms rendering them useless.
Grandpa firmly steadies the rod.
His patient hand supporting mine,
Together we drag in the catch.

The metallic creature resists its inevitable abduction,
A small struggle ensues.
The war has ended, Grandpa and I the victors.
Embracing Grandpa, his aging hand resting proud,
On my shoulder.
The summer night's illumination seems much brighter.

Together we toss back the beached creature,
Forever holding onto the memory.
My first fish.

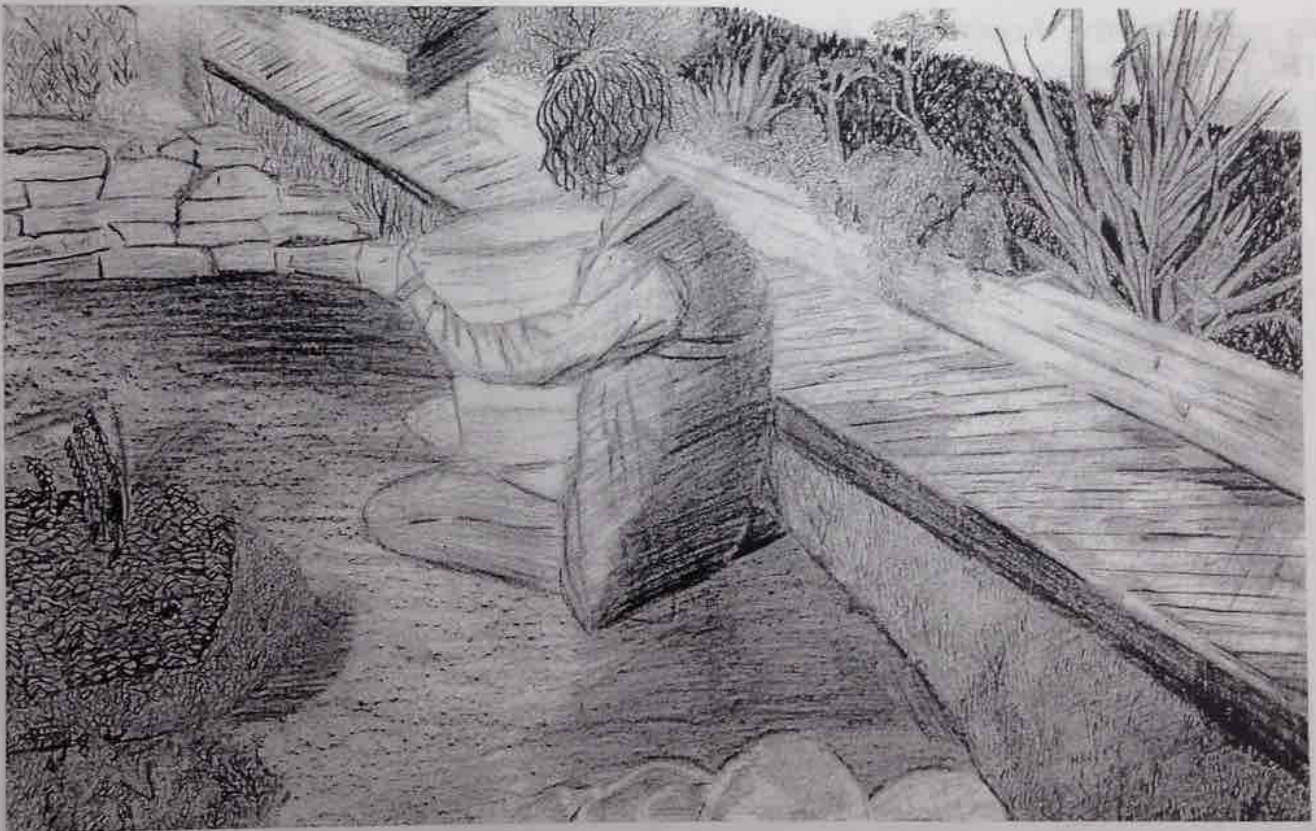
Tim Morris

Day Dreams

A lazy September Sunday afternoon,
I lay settled in the passenger seat,
for the disappointing drive home from the shore.
Exhausted from a day of sun,
but trying to stay awake.
For you.
Peering through my half-opened eyes,
I know you think I'm sleeping,
So I can stare.
At the way your fluffy chocolate hair
hangs just above your eyes.
Pushed down by your weathered tomato hat-
a second part of you.
Your eyes stay focused on the road,
and I wish it were me you were staring at.
Dave, Live from Chicago,
blares from the speakers.
You tap your hands to the music and sing along.

And as you look over at me,
curled up next to you,
I squeeze my eyes shut.
But I can't make my smile disappear.

Laura Washburn



Brittany Schwartz

The Old Woman

She peeks out through a hold in the door
The sunlight washes her dark bedroom eyes orange
The eyes sparkle at you
And the warmth of the sun is reflected in them

Her face comes into the bright sunlight
Warm, welcoming eyes greet you
Moved into a squint by her comical grin
Showing teeth tarnished yellow with age

A dress, obviously saved for a special occasion
Shows wear from years in a closet
Waiting for the day to show its shining sequins
And the design prowess of old

As you cross the threshold
The room darkens
Her bulk turns to lead you farther in
Curiosity consumes you
What has changed?

The back of this dress is destroyed
You realize it wasn't saved for a special occasion
You can see her past in this dress
Sitting, lagging, dragging

As she turns to beckon you further,
Her eyes are intent on yours,
She gazes warmly because she knows nothing else to do
Now you can see that she doesn't understand why

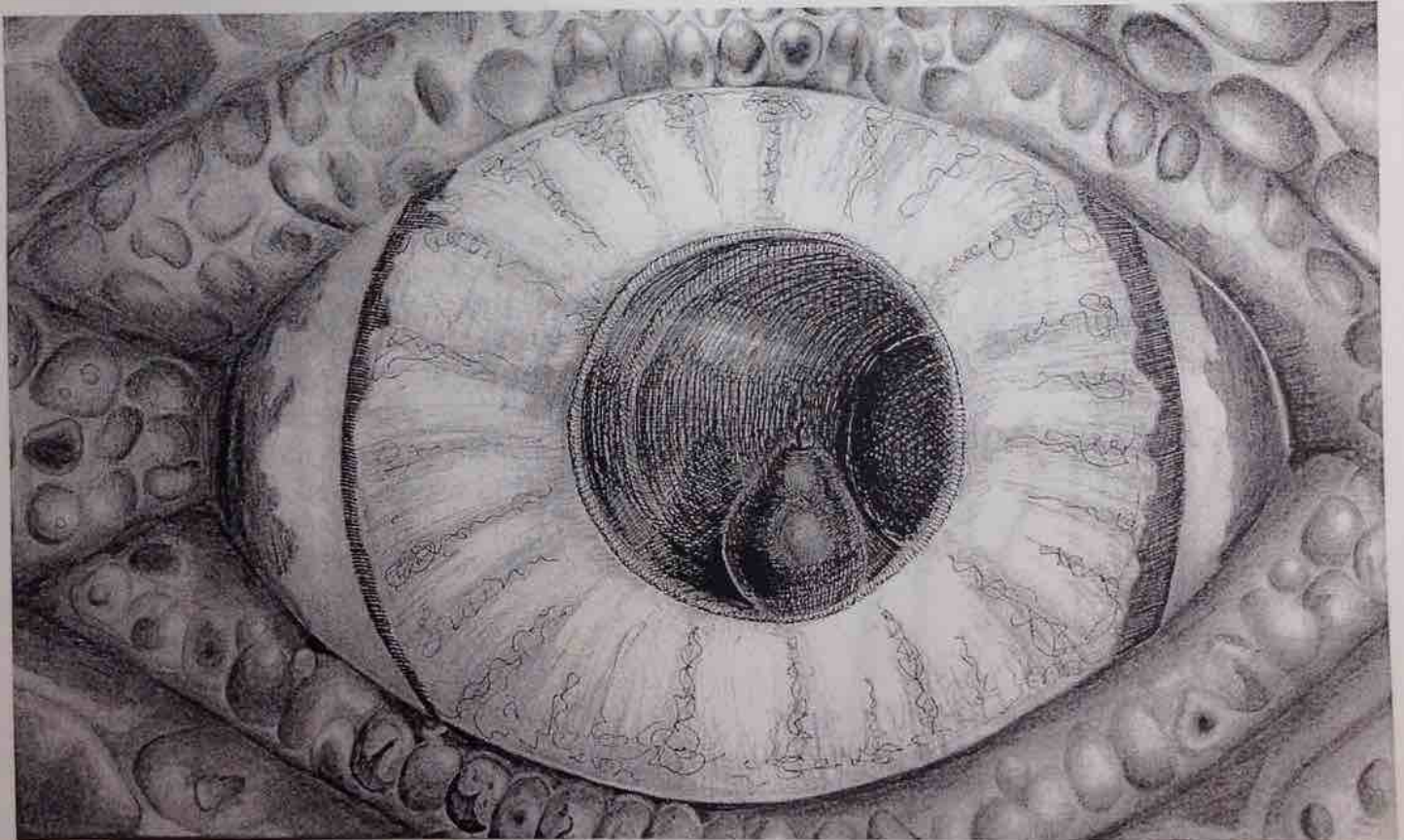
She turns again to the living room
As she hobbles forward,
It is evident this injury is one of her own making
Obstacles never challenged, defeat without battle.

Jamie Rubin

Water Reflections

Tiny droplets meld together into one
Shimmering like the lights in the sky
Drawn into the hollow chasm of the earth
A fine mist lingers above
Held up by invisible strings
You look down and see
Its eyes are always open, seeking
It shows you what's inside
Held down in its depth
This peaceful setting covers the fact
That there is a great turmoil
Hiding underneath the surface
Your heart's shadow is revealed
In the mirror
You watch as tiny insects skim along
Ripples following their every step
Momentarily shielding you from the truth
Staring right back at you.

Sara Jarossy



Mackenze Haberman

Phantasmagoria Fall 2002

Piano

Blue light seeps down from catwalk ether-fixed
While casually I steal the waiting seat
And place it by its mother in the midst
Of screaming banshees echoing the heat.

Familiar buttons patiently sit still
And wood grains' falsehood suddenly made known
By artificial sunlight forced to spill
And wait upon my footsteps' cautious tone.

The stage erupts with music my hands made
And vocal chords of comrades standing near
A piano-player's purpose is to aid;
Give birth to noises pleasing to the ear

In awe I stand, my friends shout and rejoice
A simple box became my second voice.

Kyle Schuster

Bagpipes

It all begins with a sheep's used bladder,
Discarded, empty, what could be sadder.
Add hollow wooden legs and shaven cane
(Although this combination sounds insane.)
Listless and inert it droops towards the floor,
It appears unable to do much more.

A small lonely octopus, deflated,
Creature of the deep, adrift and sedated.

Then comes along a kilt-clad piper
Who can this strange anomaly decipher.
Observe the power of transforming breath,
That lifts this sodden sack from pseudo-death
To full-blown life. And now we march along
Behind the swelling sounds of drones and song.

By Maggie Bryant



Mackenzie Haberman

The Sandcastle

A cheap plastic bottle of a restaurant.
Mauve vinyl booths, mirror covered walls,
and the artificial brightness of fluorescent lighting.
Waitresses snapping gum in their black skirts,
and white shirts. With ruffles.
The kind of place where grilled cheese
is their specialty,
and the counter, with swiveling stools
and a full view of desserts
is the best seat in the house.
A chubby eight-year-old little girl's favorite place to go
on Friday nights out with Dad.
Where a tackiness clings like the
cotton candy pink Saran wrap they sell at Easter
to every square inch.
A place that can only be appreciated
by young girls and boys
with views as unsoiled as their shiny faces,
who find joy in the little things
like grilled cheese and swivel stools.
A place held high on a pedestal.
But where with time, the little things just aren't the same.
The vinyl booths become tacky, instead of pretty.
And you no longer like to watch yourself eat in the mirrors that surround you.
And you never go out with Dad
on Friday nights anymore.
So you keep hold of the memories, and cherish every one.
But you don't go back.
Instead, you keep a hold of that picture,
of a chubby little girl,
sitting next to Dad at the counter,
eating a grilled cheese
and staring at the desserts.

Laura Washburn

Tears in the Rain

Clouds that resemble immense puffs of
Cigar smoke fill the thickened,
Sultry air, which masks each of
Your senses.

Without warning, sensing the
Tribulations of the day, the huge
Puffs open and begin to cry
Along with you.

Cool droplets slide down your cheeks,
Melding with hot, salty tears,
And futilely try to cleanse
You of your pain.

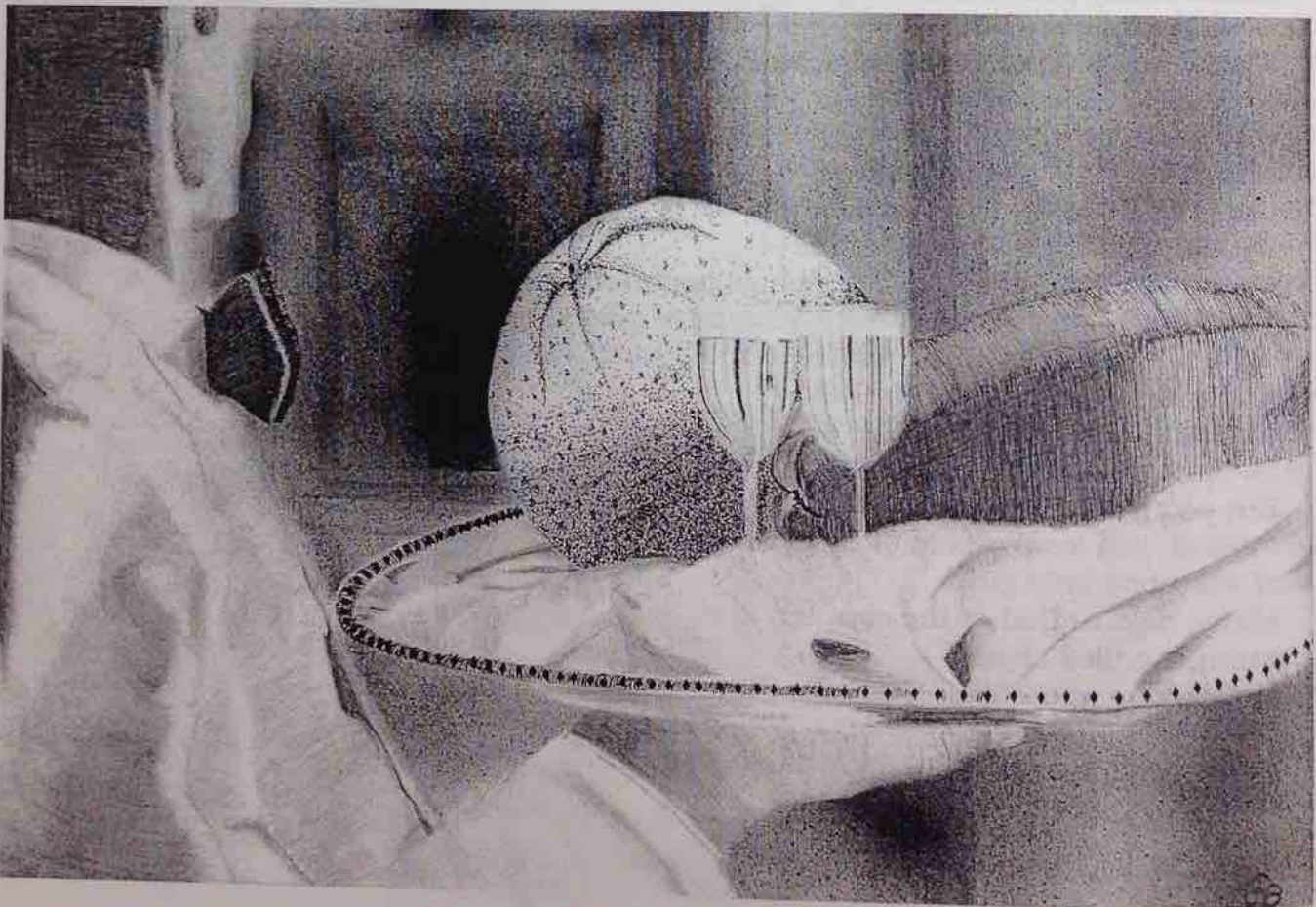
You throw your eyes towards the
Sky, hoping to catch a glimpse
Of who is so gently saying
"I love you" ...
Who is also crying away the
Sins of the day.

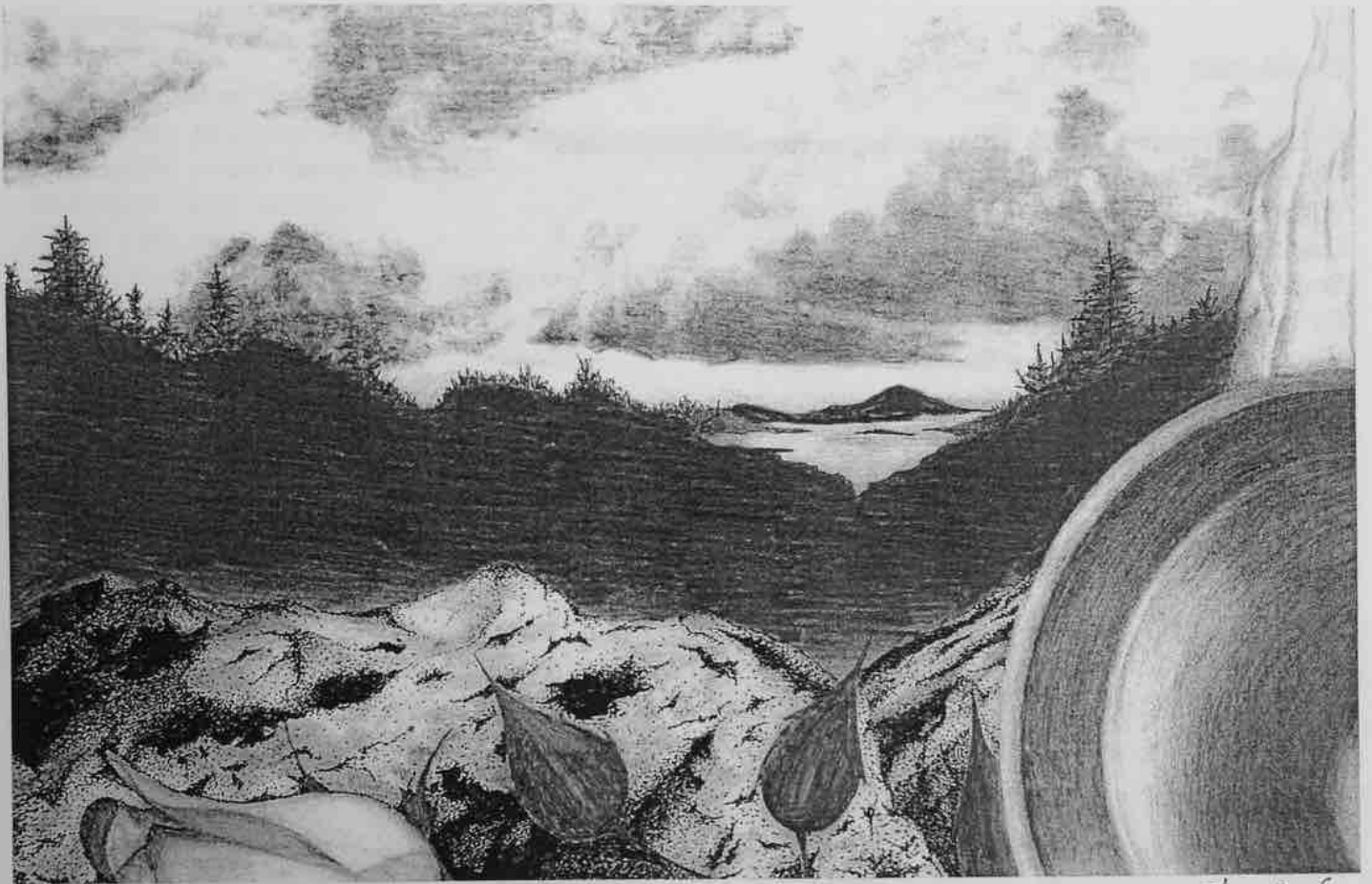
But the rain keeps falling,
Falling,
Falling.

Onto your shoulders and feet,
Onto your chest and back;
Until you are drenched.

The rain finally pulls the despair
From your pores,
And each minuscule bead seems
To whisper in your ear
Consoling your heart,
As it beats and bleeds,
And convincing your legs
To take your weary body home;
Out of the rain

Linden Lalley-Chareczko





Tom Scalse

Pulse

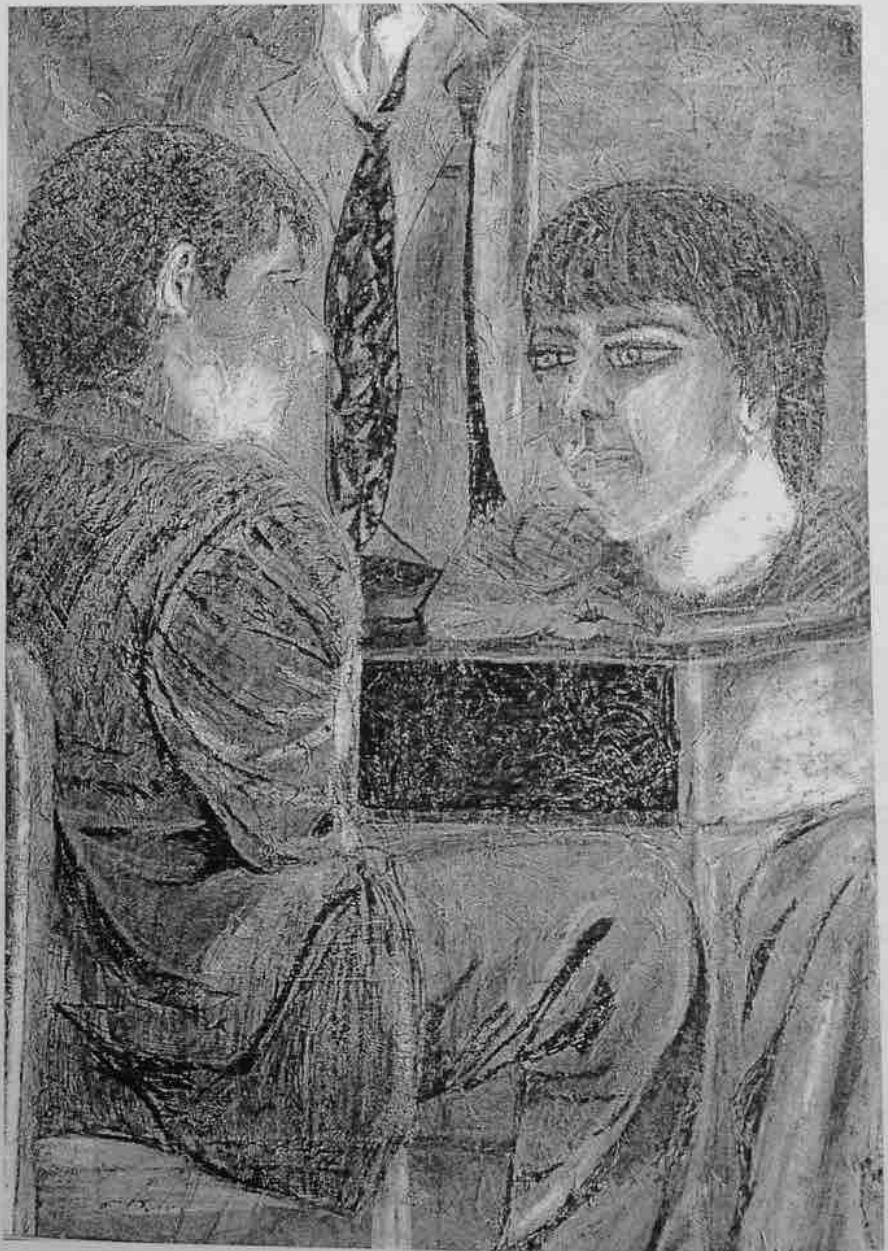
Low tide, my spirit slips into the sea
As visions vanish, leaving, taking me
Beyond the space with which I was endowed,
Back home a shadow lingers in the crowd.
All forces in this ocean merge to one
Volcanic power born within the sun,
Explosions blast, revealing what they can
Of this, the evolution of a girl
Once more a mighty wave comes crashing home
And flocks of birds give way to rushing foam
Which soon recedes revealing on the shores
A different girl than whom we knew before.
With new found power far beyond my pains
I feel the spirit coursing through my veins.

Beckie Walsh

Counterfeit

Every morning I apply my makeup concealing my flaws.
My skin soaks up the lies.
With a single stroke of a brush,
Dark circles of sleeplessness are erased.
Somber eyes are instantly enlightened,
By a deep thin black line coated with gold twinkle.
Cheeks shimmer with a deceptive cheer,
A façade of rouge blankets my colorless face.
Within a few brushes a thin wand with dense bristles,
Wakens my weary eyes.
I build this front to make you think I'm content.

Jennifer Porter



Rachel Baker

Freeway

Feet planted at the roadside
A pathway to Paradise; long, branching, wavering
But neatly paved nevertheless.
Yellow-painted arrows,
Worn with age and use
Direct the lost toward the horizon,
Illuminated by an orb of rising light.
They attempt to pull me in its direction;
Toward the promising brightness
But mind, reeking of reminders
Those of dodgeballs spawned from cruel reality
Tell me to wait another day.
A hand out, a hand back...
Simple gestures reveal shattered intentions.
A foot out, a foot back...
Memories of a childhood dance.
And broken road signs bleed color
Along with the hieroglyphs of our world,
Cluttering the sky,
Creating a hovering haze
That only adds to the confusion
And fogs out the hand of Providence
Reaching for the outcries of the distressed.
Perhaps someday these feet will rebel;
They'll split apart from the tyrannical brain.
Then, this person will be able to
 accomplish his dreams
And become someone
Just not this soon...

Kyle Schuster



Erin Longello

Into the Night

Looking down at dirty feet,
He sits pensively on the worn
Mattress as day fades into night,
Contemplating each heavy beat of his heart,
Each somber footstep through the shadows,
And thinking only of escape.
As time wears on, thoughts escape
His mind like prisoners without feet,
But he remains still, shadows
Wrapping him like the striped uniform he has worn
For fifteen years. His weary heart
Beats faster as the night
Closes in on a future as uncertain now as on the night
He arrived; thoughts of escape
Have plagued his heart
Ever since, impelling his feet
Towards the ultimate action. A path worn
Only by thoughts now lies before him in the shadows,
Waiting to be taken. Using the shadows
For cover, he slips silently into the underground night,
Burrowing through the worn
Earth with only thoughts of escape
To keep him company. Soon his soiled feet
Tread on softer dirt, and his heart
Rejoices at the sight of wild grass, singing a hearty
Song of renaissance as the thick shadows
Envelop his body. Salty waves crash to shore not five feet
From where he stands, spraying the night
With lonely echoes of freedom. Between him and escape
There lies an endless ocean, but his worn-
Out muscles will not surrender now. The clothes he has worn
To pieces are removed. His heart
Pumps harder in preparation for the final leg of the escape.
Tall, concrete walls behind him cast foreboding shadows
On the rocky beach as he says goodbye to the night.
His sinewy body pierces the water, submerging both head and feet.

Gasping for air, icy liquid fills his worn lungs. Fleeting shadows
Grow dim, and his heart gradually succumbs to the darkening night,
Providing unforeseen escape in place of imminent defeat.

Jessica Benjamin



Kim Arata

Preening Ignorance

My glass face is void;
I am but the sole creator of duplicates.
Through depressing nights of darkness
I await the day to
Bring my sight back so I may
Judge their sordid appearance
Without eyes of my own
All the while restricted
To my noose,
Eye level to narcissism.

Kelly Dittmore

Women

Women don't flock to me,
They migrate.
Slowly.
Once a year,
When summer blooms,
Someone shows up
Hungry
For a fat, juicy worm
To keep them satisfied.
During the summer,
They use up all my cash
Going to movies and restaurants,
Buying adorable souvenirs,
And wasting money on items they
never use.
I try to make sure they're happy,
But their moods are always changing.
One minute they are warm and sweet,
The next minute they are depressed
and sour.
Yet I stick with them,
Because of the fool I am.
Then fall returns.

A cold wind blows them away,
Returning them to their homes and schools.
They look for love there,
But never find it.
Going to "bad boys" for it.
Wanting both a wild time
And compassion.
Impossible.
Then they're hurt,
And look for a good boy during the summer.
I'll be there.
I'll help them with their problems,
And they will be happy again.
But I know they will leave.
It is a cycle that will never end.
But why am I here
If I know they will leave me alone in the dust?
Well, I don't care too much,
Because I know they can't help it.
They're only
Women.

Mark Bartolanzo



Phantasmagoria Fall 2002

Katie Boucher Katie Boucher

Hall of Echoes

Dimly lit,
And hauntingly still,
The songs of the past
Echo, with a ghostly chill.

With tension I step,
As memories flood my mind,
Down the barren isles
Everyone else has left behind.

The stage is empty;
A skeleton of a place.
The spotlights are out;
Now, just a vast, darkened space.

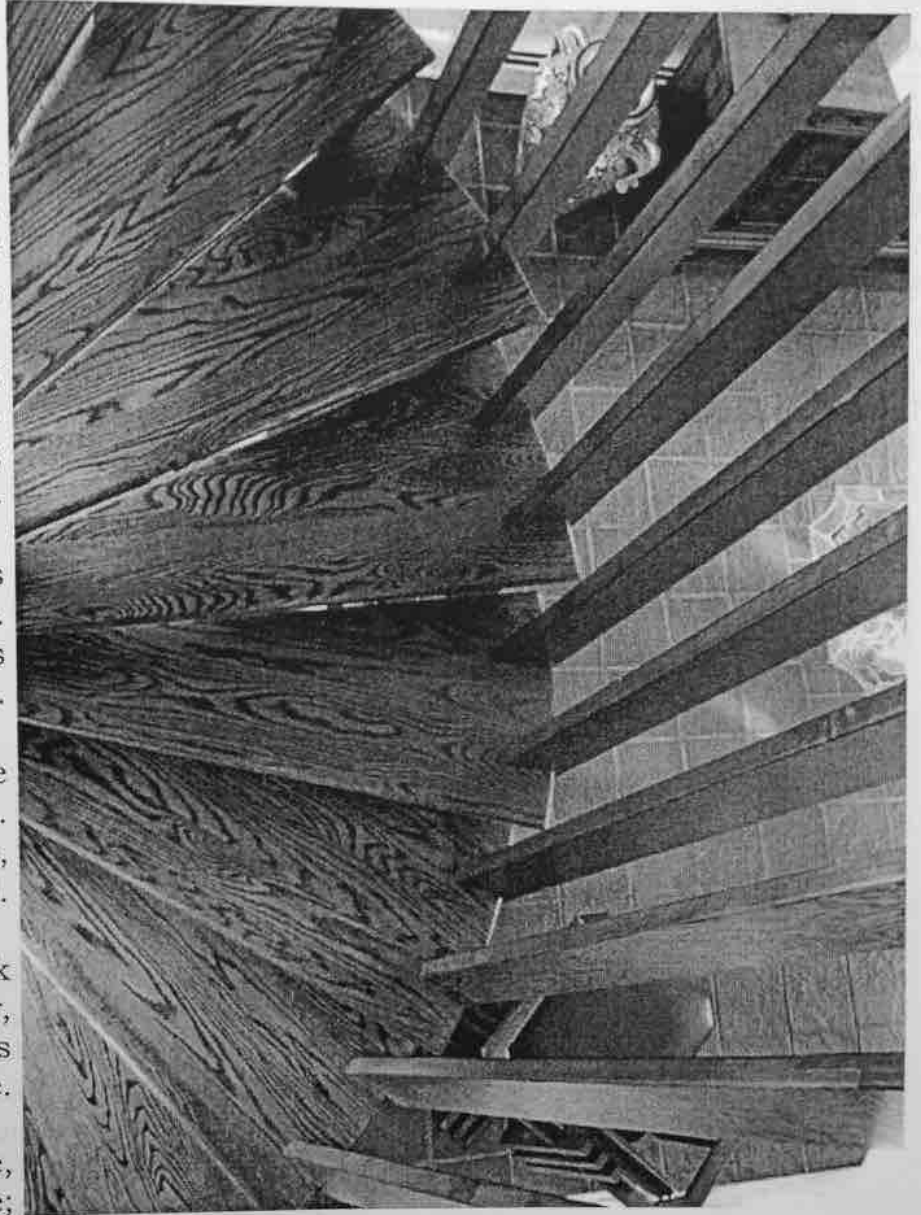
All that remains
Is a spectrum of glitter on the floor.
Lively reminders
Of what once came before.

I gently cradle
A twisted sequin in my hand.
It still has the spark of the lights,
And the life of the band.

Tenderly, I place it back
In its tomb upon the floor,
Amongst the scattered remains
Of what transpired here before.

Back up the aisle,
I tread lightly, with care;
Watching the many ragged banners
Flutter slightly in the air.

Linden Lalley-Chareczko



Ashley Buchert

Sleeping Through the Sunrise

The darkness, with its brilliant stars,
A tiny crescent moon
As beautiful as this has been
It will be changing soon.
The darkness fades and color starts to stream into the sky,
But few of us are watching,
And I have to wonder why.
This grand display is free of charge,
No need to wait in line.
There's never been a screen so large,
Or better set design.
You have to get up early
But it sure is worth the view.
I'd really be surprised if you have better things to do.
The beauty is all around us
Comes in rhythms like a dance,
Each day an opportunity to join or miss your chance
By sleeping through the sun rise
At the very birth of days
So why not start
To treat your heart
And be there when it plays.

By Beckie Walsh

Shoes

My shoes are pack mules
Beasts of burden who obediently
Carry the cargo wherever it desires to go.
They never complain about being dirty
Or loosely tied even though
They are worn out like war-weary veterans
They willingly stomp through
All the puddles and lumps of dirty snow
And they don't seem to mind being seized by a dog
They have never asked anything of me
And they are always there when I need them
Yet when they are past their prime
And their soles have been broken down and beyond repair
All I can do to think to repay them
Is throw them in the back of my closet
And replace them.

Paul Wilburn

Laundry Service

Falling out of love
Is the red sock that got mixed into
The white load.

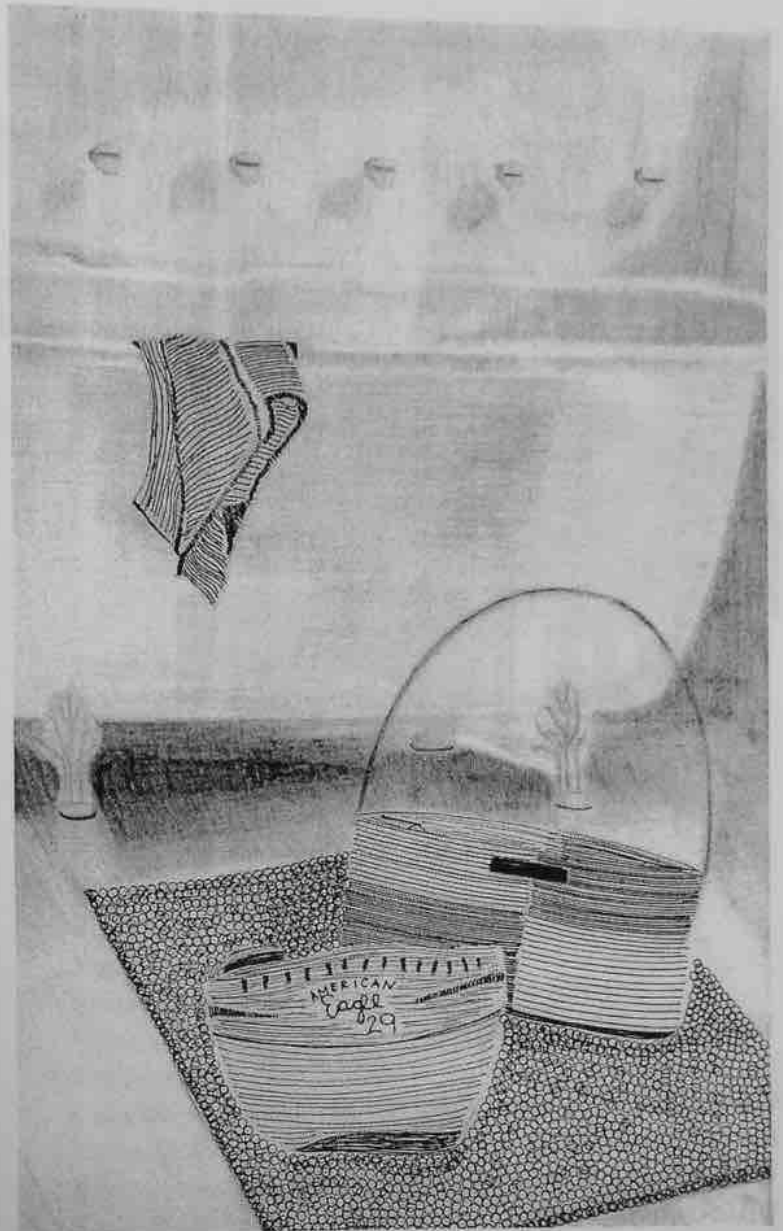
Trying so hard to make sure
The whites came out perfect
Perhaps the "sock stealer" decided
To throw it back in.

All the time spent
Figuring out
How long to wash for
What temperature
Or speed
To have a whole load of laundry
Completely change
Instead of having perfect white
Cotton tees –
Now pink –
It will never be the same again.

As you pull out the clothes
You begin to think
Did you...
Rush and not realize the red sock was there
Or
Did you have no control?
Maybe Cupid and the "Sock Stealer" were both out to get you.

As you start pulling out shredded tissue
Unintentionally left in your shorts
You realize
There is no point in stressing
Over the reddish pink clothes
Instead –
Realize you have a whole new look –
Being single.

Heather Herritt



Beth Nugent

Kevin McLaughlin



When the West Came

Once an exquisite dominion,
Richly populated
With an abstract, cultured people,
Untouched
By the elite societies
Of the "civilized" world.
The land was picturesque,
Its thick, grassy plains rolling
Over the vast countryside,
Only interrupted
By its wide, teeming rivers.
The scenery was illuminated
By the glow of the sultry sun,
Habitually cleansed
By the heavy tears of heaven.
However, this land stood in oblivion,
For, unbeknownst to it,
This Eden's golden age
Was about to be halted.
When the West came.

When the West came,
The greedy hands of European capitalists
Clawed at the beautiful land
And its people,
Taking both prisoners.
Soon the magnificent land
Had been raped of its handsomeness,
Carved into pieces of "territory"
For self-important plutocrats.
This realm's age of splendor
Was suspended prematurely
When the West came.

Now this venue
Is a shadow of its former glory.
It lies in the ashes of Western conquest.
Slowly, it has shaken off
The oppressive manacles
Of the sophisticated world,
Only to be left vulnerable
To its current angst.
It is plagued by poverty, ignorance
And an epidemic,
So violent that it orphans children
Daily.
It could have been glorious,
It should have been powerful.
But it isn't.
Its ambitions were retarded
When the West came.

Lindsay Konsko

Maybe It's My Jealousy

Pretentious

Rattling off fed trivia about so-called weighty affairs.
Spewing out mispronounced words.

False

Forging forceful make-up upon her premature face.
Having unneeded posture when eating with her salad fork.

Meaningless

Suggesting sly wit when entertaining.
Minding no one but her numbed self.

Ridiculous

Having hard incorrect motives.
Spending too much time on nothing.

Unneeded

For after all—
She is his.

Liz Jenei



Jenna Paraczsky

Rapture

When first I saw you,
I knew.
I knew that I loved you.
Others had spoken to me,
Spoken to me of you.
Your virtues were recounted to me:
Your enveloping warmth,
Your smooth, dark physique,
Your sensually bitter undertones.
Thus, upon first sight,
I knew you were my truest
Devotion.
Since our first fervent encounter
Your esteem has swelled in
my heart.
You are my companion.
You've been there in celebration
and in tears.
My passion for you runs deep,
Deeper than any passion I've known.
You better me, make me whole.

Our first engagement is etched in my mind,
Never to be erased.
I will never fail to recollect.
My first rendezvous with my beloved,
My Coffee.

Lindsay Konsko

Undone

I cup the fragile light bulb in my trembling hands,
Watching as its golden glow transcends,
Illuminates my skin.

Its potential
Throbs with resonating thuds
Against the translucent glass,
Mystifying my eyes
With its pulsating rhythm.

Will it fly?

I separate tangled fingers
In anticipation,
Painfully revealing my Achilles' heel.

With hands thrust into a crystal sky,
My bulb escapes,
Slowly peeling back
Viscous layers of stale air
In pursuit of the zenith.

Shudders of trepidation
Seize my spine
As the distant spot of Hope
Cautiously navigates through
A windy, rock-speckled maze
Far above my head.

As it glides silently towards the sun,
Dodging white dwarfs and red giants in its wake,
My bulb begins to falter.
I watch as its ochre core
Fades to mustard,
Contaminating the shine of nearby stars.

Already I can hear,
Even at this astronomical distance,
The hairline cracks begin to split its thin glass,
Sending noises like dying seagulls
To impinge on my confidence.

I stagger slightly,
Squinting with all my might
Into the methylene blue sky
While a nimbus rolls by overhead.

Is this the end?

No longer is my bulb alight
With the fire of ingenuity;
No longer do its wires buzz
With palpable energy
Like the hum of an excited crowd
Before the concert lights dim.

Instead it has atrophied;
Has become a drooping latex skeleton,
A sad, melting light bulb
Blinking on and off with all the promise
Of a cheap neon sign
Fizzling outside of Motel Six.

I watch in disgust
As cold, celestial fingers
Poke (fun)
At my curiosity,
Threatening to dissolve
The intricate pattern of Possibility
That I have so delicately woven between the
Doubts and Dismays

I look on and hang my head,
Knowing all too well that
The journey back is
Always more trying than the one there.

The sputtering cough
Of a dying flame
Informs my senses
That it has returned.

I see it
Without seeing,
Looking up
As I look down.

It hovers crookedly now
Above a leaf-strewn ground,
Staring at me sideways through
One jagged eye.

I stare back,
And there is only emptiness.

Jessica Benjamin

William

One time, we were laughing together
I sprayed you with the hose

One time I saw you let go
Your face was dirty
And your body was bruised

But I saw you unclench your fist
Your eyes screamed of the abuses you suffer
And you had nothing

But I saw you shed your veil of sadness
It slipped away

And
You
Laughed

With me

Then the shadow of your life called you inside
You were heartlessly arrested from your play
The next day, your eye was swollen

Can a six-year-old boy laugh?
Is that the price you pay when you smile?
One time
One time
You were laughing

Meredith Sexton

Joey Randazzo



Pompeii

Down in the valley I looked,
A pale creamy look covered my face,
The slick walls rise from the ground,
Surrounding the valley was two towering mountains,
Then a rumble, an avalanche occurred,
The rocks skipped and fell,
Finally settling in the valley,
The second mountain began spewing,
A white milky substance,
The liquid and rocks mingled together,
Like guests at a ball,
Finally, with no warning,
Hail fell from the sky,
Reigning terror at the ball below,
I blinked once, then twice,
I picked up my spoon and began to eat my
Breakfast.

Bill Bourque

Tired

Need to keep eyes open, keep myself aware.
So very torturous, I just wanted to cry.
Lids like Atlas, world's weight too much to bear.

A voice is warning me, "Beware, beware."
The teacher stops class, telling the whole room why.
Need to keep eyes open, keep myself aware.

"With dire consequences, sleep if you dare."
Whole class watching, I escape with a witty lie.
Lids like Atlas, world's weight too much to bear.

I must sleep. I can't take this wear and tear.
I'm passed out with the mere blink of an eye.
Need to keep eyes open, keep myself aware.

One person being so tired, just isn't fair.
I'm awakened again, why do I try?
Lids like Atlas, world's weight too much to bear.

I swear, knockout gas lingers in the air.
I fool myself; I need sleep or I'll die.
Need to keep eyes open, keep myself aware.
Lids like Atlas, world's weight too much to bear.

Ryan Stetler

More Than Just Chap Stick!

I try
so hard sometimes.
But now and then
I feel just like a cheap prostitute.
So many different customers,
none ever satisfied for long;
they're always coming back for more,
twisting me 'till I give them enough.
I just want to tell them
to lay off for a while.
(at least 'till those blisters heal)
They're so gross;
I don't want to go near them
let alone their lips.
Who knows
where those suckers have been.

Larissa Long

Forgotten

A nearly imperceptible ant
Scuttles along the floor,
Skin pillars crashing in front of him
Releasing soaring adrenaline.

Amongst fleshy walls
He maneuvers
Climbing tirelessly
Over boulder pebbles and gravel dust.

A flashy red cavern
Looms before him
Aromas drifting
Out from within
Pulling his antennae
Enraged in lust,
Into the plastic opening
He could pilfer a treat for his queen

A lone knight
Returning with dragon's fang
For his majesty.
Exoskeleton cuirass battle-worn, smelling
Of sweet sugar that tingles the senses of
his comrades.
The peak of the quest has now been passed.

He ventures
Out of the cave,
Bounty in jaw.
The sugar sirens have been defeated.
No longer
Shall any unsuspecting knight
Be lured into their blissful grasps.

Our knight marches down the hall
Head held high
A split in the wall becoming larger
As our hero nears the end.

A shadow is cast
A thought of peril had
And in an instant
The life of our hero gone.

Kurt Cziriak



Shannon Sweeney

The Collapse of the Sand Castle Empire

I was
Constructed with small pudgy hands, but big dreams.
My walls stand sturdy and creatively designed.

I am a stronghold,
To harbor a mighty crab king,
To rule over the wavering sand dunes and fluorescent umbrellas.

The ocean
Is soft rolling hills in the distance.
I will rule over this docile beast.

The sun
Moves slowly across the sky.
Is shows me that the day is coming to a close.

The ocean
With its gentle caress moves seemingly closer.
It reaches farther this time than the last.

The next wave,
Like a dragon's muzzle, sniffs my foundation.
The gentle ocean has awakened.
The dragon's head raises high above me
And crushes down in one quick bite.

Ashlee Finan



Jennifer Hulmes

Clover Field

When the leprechauns have faded
With the memories of a March holiday
All that remains is the mediocre.
Children rummage through the natural carpet,
Their dancing eyes sashay back and forth hoping to catch
A treasure in their young, untrustworthy vision.
They search for the unique,
For their diamond eyes have been chiseled away from the granite.
And the trefoils huddle with their families
To throw off a first glance,
To imitate their deviant brethren.
But their three leaves do not limit their beauty
As a patient eye will discover.
And so thrusting a hand downwards,
I select one.
True, it is not a four-leafed clover,
It is for that reason that I chose it.

Kyle Schuster

Bittersweet Experience of Sour Patch Kids

Angelic infant smiles spread over jolly, rolling mounds:
Face.

Red, orange, yellow, green,
Shades borrowed from Crayola.

With intentions to brighten their miserable existence,
Tears of hardened sucrose blanket gooey sweet insides,
Protective shield attempting to hide their vulnerable bodies.

Happiness wilts from once-blissful expressions,
Molded upon artificially flavored faces.
Steamy exhalation overwhelms.

The petrified bodies can do nothing but grin.
Slowly the blanket of sugar dissolves in a sea of molten liquid,
All the while being forced nearer and nearer toward their demise;
Rows of ivory plateaus intended to incinerate.

How sour fate is.
Crush, smash, grind, and enjoy, then retract.

Angelic smile spreads over the jolly child's face.
How sweet fate is.

Tim Morris

Phantasmagoria Fall 2002



Christina Troll

