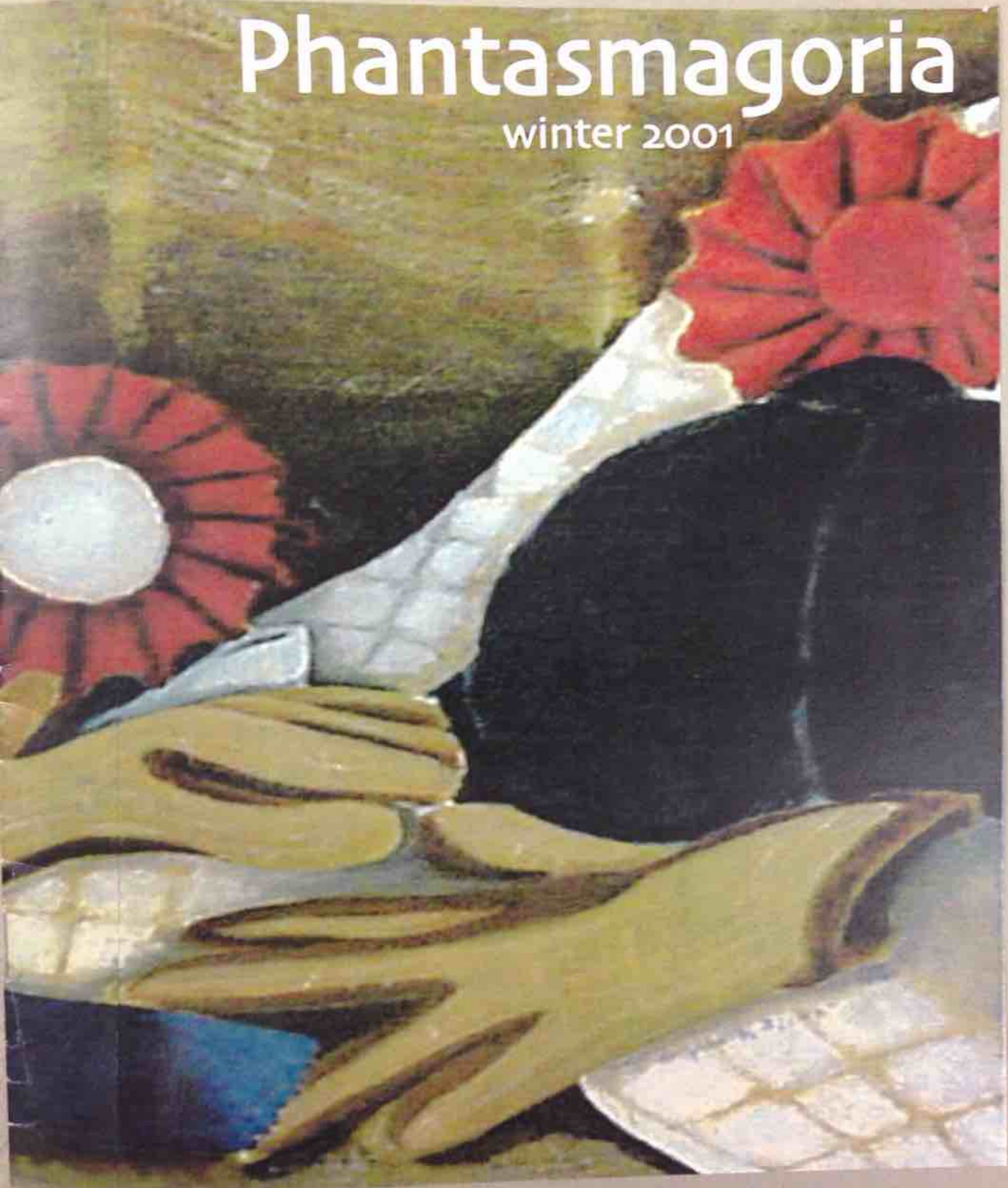


Phantasmagoria

winter 2001



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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.



Kristin Klosinski

“There is a great deal to be said about the arts. For one thing, they offer the only career in which commercial failure is not necessarily discreditable.”

~Evelyn Waugh

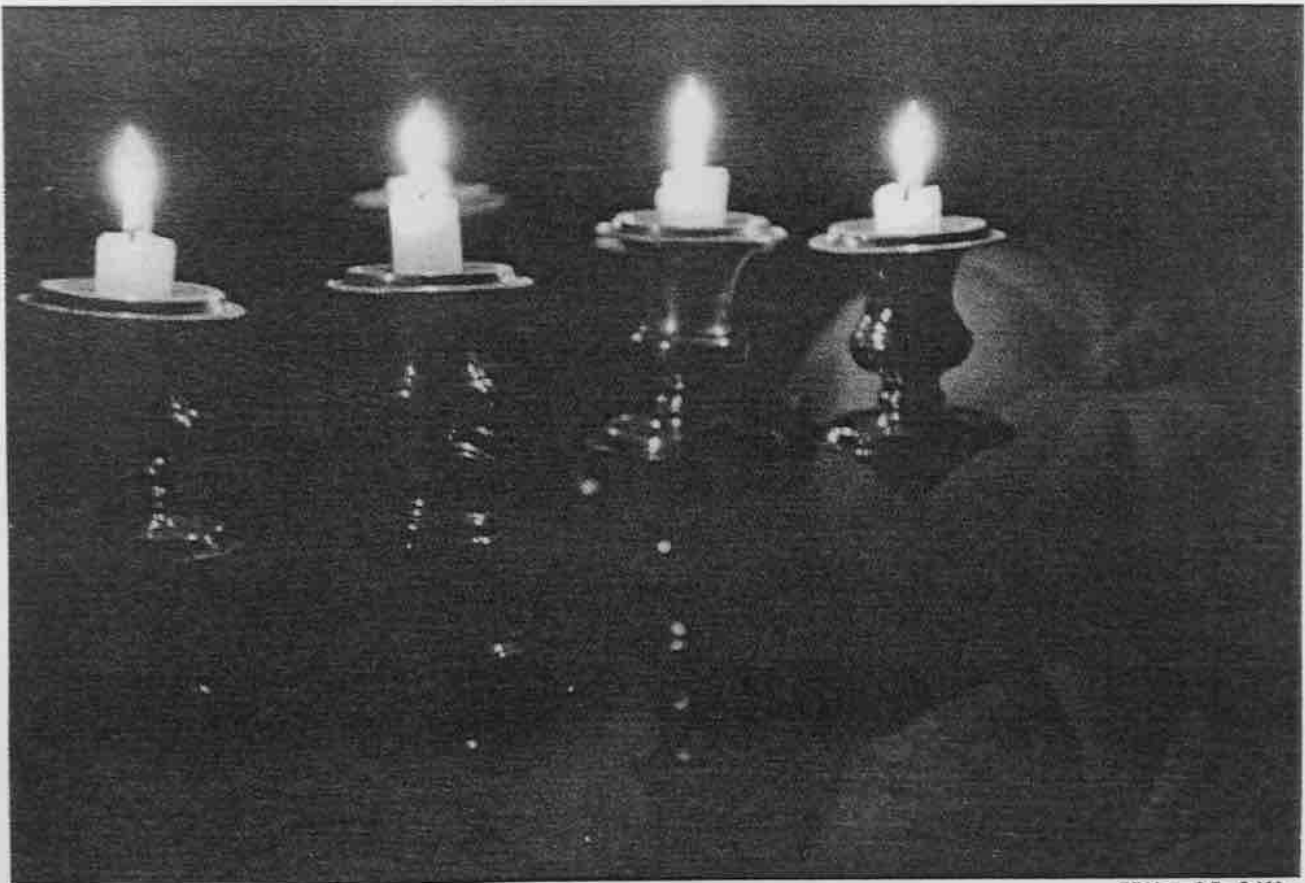
Winter

The biting chill of old man winter will
deprive the soul of pure unshamed thought.
The snow whips away ripe memories caught
inside you feel the bitterness distill.

Lost hope may rage in some old damaged minds
and hate may lead to madness, kneel and pray
for when winter was spring, a better day.
the sun was bright and gentle to all mankind

But fret not poor lost soul, it won't get you.
You haven't shown signs of want, need
or desire of hurtful bleeding hearts.
For when old man winter turns red hearts blue,
you need not worry for he will not feed
on fresh souls that can fight with love's cruel darts.

Anna Fuller



Kiira Naftilin

Prostitutes were little girls once

Prostitutes were little girls once
dressed in the bow-covered blouses
their mothers picked out,
with it draped over their flat-board chests,
while their thick bangs covered their coy glance.
Ya know, those little girls probably stood provocatively
at the corner
of the courtyard, with their hand on their hip
hiking up their cotton skirt
as the cootie-ed boys ran by.
They were probably born prostitutes.

But those petite girls with cheap fabric
stretched over their breasts, who stand
on the corner,
and glance your way
so seemingly confident,
but tremble with every cold touch
of wind that caresses their
exposed, vulnerable skin -
those prostitutes! - well,
they don't seem to resemble
the little girls they once were.

Diana Sette



Alex Dubilet

Sunset

Mystical Caravan, rolling across the sky,
unwilling King, getting ready to die,
they seal his tomb, with a golden sun in the sky,
they meditate and watch his spirit rise.
Fly away, fly away,
to the Kingdom in the sky,
But only if you're willing to lay down and die.

Jon Meister

Looking Over the Grand Canyon

I stand on the lower lip of the mouth of the Earth
Gazing through evergreens to view
Red, brown, and orange tinted teeth
Swallowing the sunlit sky.

On the horizon, golden rays illuminate
A revitalizing rainbow
Standing in contempt of fleeing storm clouds
Signaling a new day,
Inspiring a new beginning.

Todd Bagnall

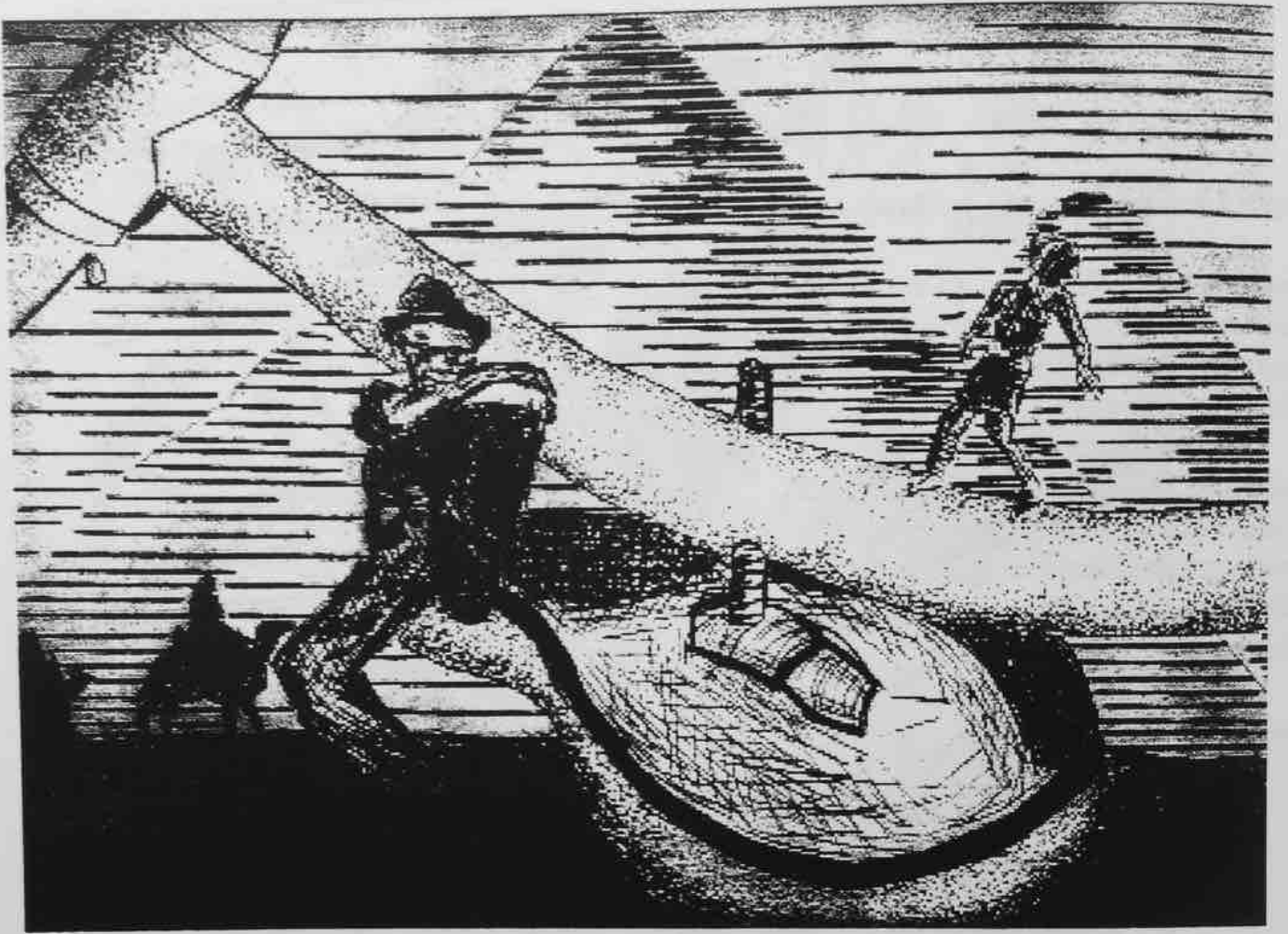
Bliss

Eat sleep drink army
dream coca cola dreams
lay your life with dignity
but in the dark what can you see -
revolution screams it so slowly
hysteria becomes desirable
as clarity (madness?)
however becoming the new
is added drop by drop
sizzling each step you take now you're
pondering the value of your time here
in sandcastle majesty
and to the glory of what we drink.

Denise Donaghy



Kevin Kralik



Justin Wood

Flannel Moon

Oblongs of clean sunlight stretch across the street.
His essence hangs gnarled and authentic in the chill of October.
Ashy-blond locks fight his green flannel,
struggling for a warm place on his neck.
His face, stained with time,
floats in front of me.
Wind blindly bumps into his cargoes,
robbing heat from the khaki threads.
His fingers flow across the weary frets,
soft, raking noises escape from this acoustic inferno.
Though the light stands mute, his face is bright.
He bares his teeth at me,
the smile of a cherub.
His aura, magnetic, points out over the burgundy slabs.
Waves of glassy haze rise from the labyrinth of wool that caps his head.

Words and melodies pour from his every chasm, thick as molasses.
A curtain of clearness suddenly drapes over me,
and digest the lyrics that rally around me.
The sun runs scarcely up my back,
while his voice slides down my spine in a warm draft.
Curls blow playfully across my face,
but I bat them away,
attempting to clear the path between my eyes and him.
The Earth feels friendly under my feet.
I have never felt so much of myself,
as in his plethora of perceptions.
So much emotion is crammed into his simple guitar case,
along with heaps of coins and a few straggling bills,
I stare like he is the first wonder of the world.
He strips down to the bare one of himself,
to a world of nobodies.
All gravity ceases.

A featureless girl occupies one of ten plastic patio sets,
some yards from his back.
She doesn't even glance of divided concentration for him,
even to fuel his dreams.
Why doesn't she picture what's beyond his outfit?
Or beneath his sunglasses, where, if you look closely,
you can still make out tiny white Alps at the back of his eyes.
Yet she still sits oblivious.

Blurs of pedestrians streak the scenery,
the passing faces are as empty as plates.
His hypnotic hymns fall forgotten to the ground as they trample,
unnoticed over them.
But he doesn't seem to be looking at them either.
Their shadows, bat like, curve up store windows,
ghosting over the landscape.
I watch for a touch of emotion, the faintest glow from any one of them.
"Don't let the wicked city get you down."

He plays on, suddenly they are all dissolving away.
None of them matter anymore.
I don't know them.
I have never known them and I am very pure.
Standing on thin air in the back of my head,
he conjures up a conversation with my gravity.

Look at the way he cradles his guitar,
he knows it and he is gentle.
I wish my size tens fit his brittle, brown hiking boots.
I've got the timber-stringed contraption,
his sunglasses are patented at every five and dime,
take me back to the sixth grade where I had his flannel,
and I've got the heart.
But he's there and I'm stuck here.
What implant would let me cross over?

I don't have the strength to handle my insides on the
outside.
Put me on the same street,
and I'll stand there just as he does.
But put my guitar in my hands and I'll shrink,
Searching for the soundproof confines of my room.
No one, no audience, could draw it out of me.
Confidence.
God himself could not re-tune my shaky voice,
or oil the creaky buckling below my thighs.
He couldn't massage my heart out of its fist,
or stop me when I binge on fear,
the moment I recognize life with ears,
beside my Martin and me.

He's the symbol of my dreams.
One person's struggles is another's aspiration.
He lives in a world with my future.
He is the moon.

Lacey Norvilas

I used to be a cloud, floating around, thinking about nothing.
But now I am a rainstorm, pouring out my thoughts.

Christy Hediger



Kevin Gordon

Shadow

The day dreams outside my window
With chin upon palm in an endless gaze.
Following the dirt path into a murky start of morning twilight.
Dim Mars creeps up from the eastern horizon at daybreak
Only to trip me into a book of mazes.
Swimming to a shipwreck, tangled in black sheets-
Gasping for light.
A hand seizes my arm secure in a rowboat,
The shadow removes his top-hat and bows.
Stunned, I beckon for a rope swing dangling from the clouds.
Soaring , grazing the river bank,
Like a piece of cloth that hangs from a line, blowing in chariot filled sun-showers.
Spoken words break the clench to hold on,
“give up, give up, your wishing stream is all dried up.”
The shadow returns to hush the whispering.
Translucent black hands gliding through my hair, pushing me into the water
I’m nothing but a fluttering eyelash blown on a wish,
Into the scorching flame of lust.
The repeating voice echoing in the depths of my soul
“give up, give up, your praying hands are all bruised up.”
The shadowed hand appears again to rescue the screaming tears,
Running away down my cheek.
Knowing the things I dream of
And the things I’ll never be.

Michelle Lala

Photograph of Myself, Years Ago

I sit by myself,
With innocent grace,
On a porch worn from play.

My hair is wavy,
Blown softly by the breeze,
That rustles through the vibrant green shrubs
Which border the lawn behind me.
My brown locks fall loosely,
Framing my face.

My new Easter dress,
Pretty and pink,
With ribbons and bows,
Is tucked under my knees
As I sit
On this dingy porch,
Worn-out from years of play.

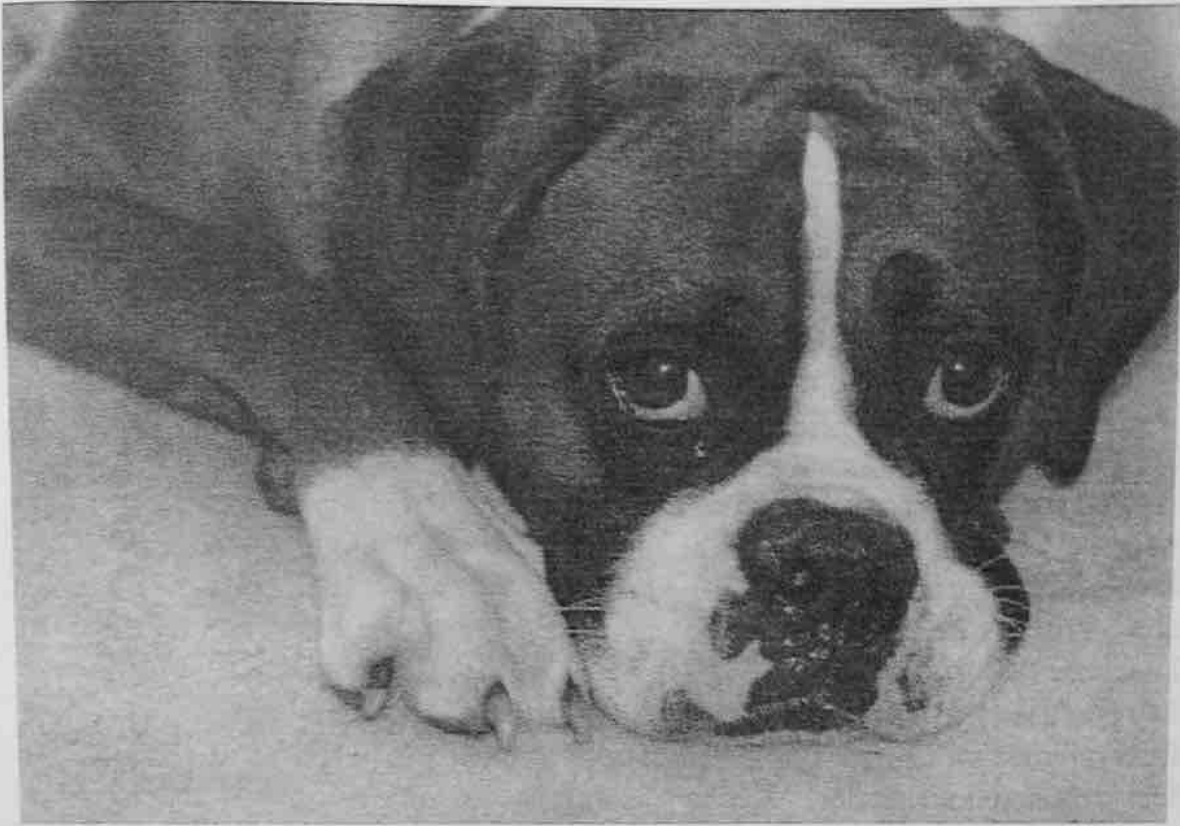
My hand grasps a truck.
A large, menacing thing,
Brick red and gleaming,
That I roll along gently.

I sit guarded by wrought iron railings,
And watchful eyes,
Which protect me from harm.

But I don't know what danger is...
Or sadness.
Or fear.
My mind is content
With this truck,
And this simple life.

"Say 'Cheese!'" my daddy calls,
As he snaps one more memory,
Interrupting my serene world,
Only for a moment. I'm unknowing,
To me the world is a mystery,
Yet to be unraveled,
Too vast for me to understand yet.
But I'm happy.

Erin Whittaker



Amy Weber

Only Picture With My Parents and Me

In a room filled with chatting parents
Mom and Dad posed together on foldable gray chairs.
Mom's face gleaming with a smile,
As Dad sits looking annoyed.

I am on Mom's lap as my legs dangle down,
I am in my turquoise suit and pale pink shoes.
My tiny hand is occupied with my plastic sunglasses.
The chair to my right, my cabbage patch doll sat.

Dad rarely comes to school-related functions.
I exploded with joy when he did.
Mom never misses events like these,
She loved them, you could see.

My eyes full of joy,
A big smile on my face,
Thoughts of unconditional love on my mind.
I feel amazed that I am with both Mom and Dad.

Renee M. Fox

Faux-pas

Slowly stepping up the hill until
I trip. Rolling short of falling ninety
Long, hard feet. Although I really haven't.
A man could tell you what a pain felt like
How do you know? It's hard to live a day
As someone else; forget about a fall.
It's tedious explaining how you tripped
More so to listen than to speak. And still
They do. They got their feet mixed up and tripped
As they walked the road the sun before them trekked.
Careful as could be, which is never quite enough,
They scanned for pterydactals. Should have watched
Their feet a bit more closely. Would have seen
 The rock.

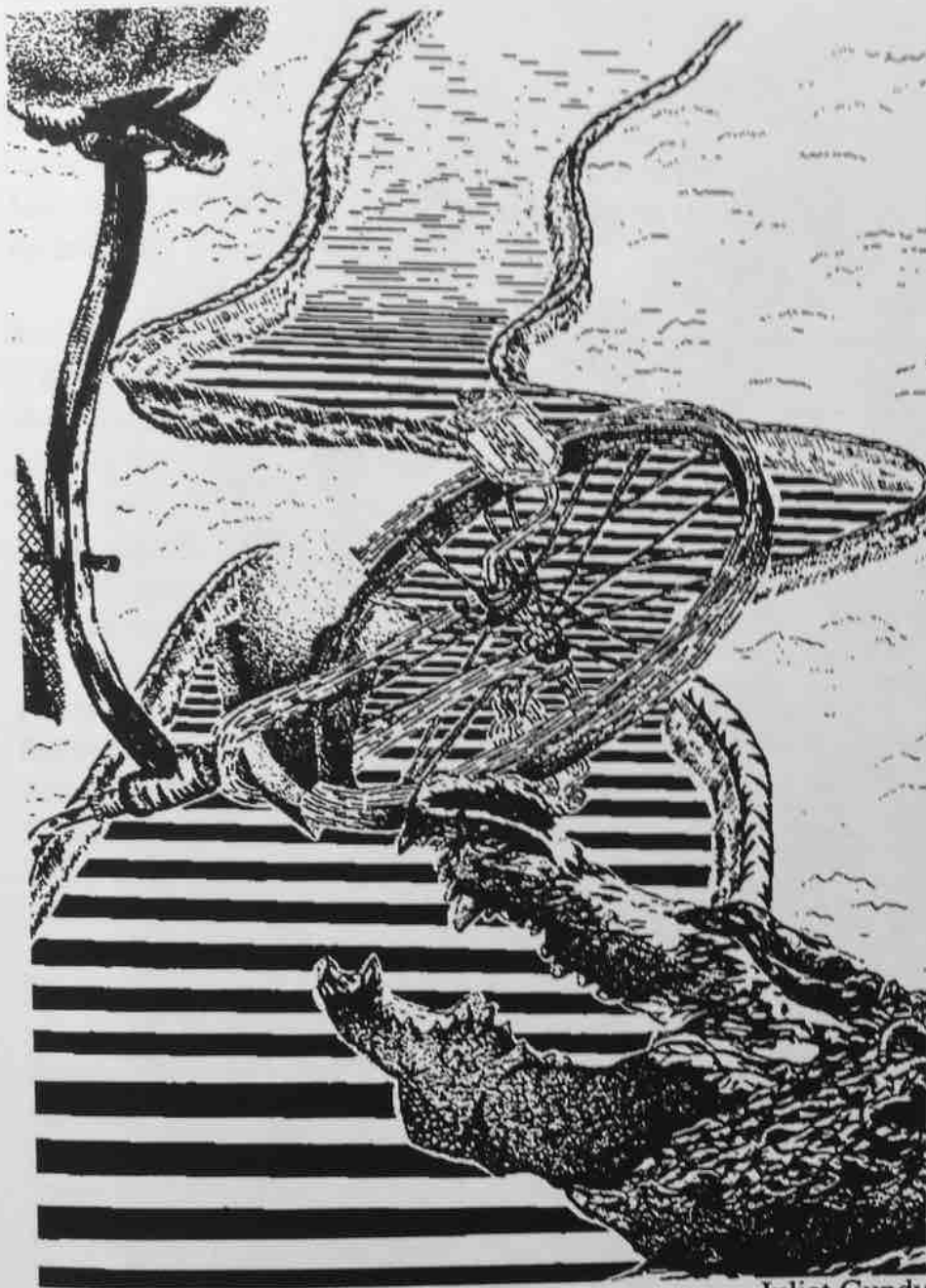
A bit out of place they will say it was.
Then for the fall they will spare you no detail;
Gorey, borey, monotonous stories,
From the center of their pain.
Though they know you can't relate.

Dan Connelly

Alone. Empty. Scared.

 write to quiet white.
quiet writing all night long.
 hold me closer,
can't take this abuse much longer.
 my heart is,
thriving upon innocence.
 but my mind is,
beating with cold blood of betrayal.
 and with a turned back.
I hold out my satin guard against you,
 let you to break it down.
 force you to break it down.
 please.
 oh please.
 don't leave me here and give up on me.
you know how to break me but you won't.
 can you?
 casting silence,
 silent dreaming nightmares,
 during my roughest waking hours,
 kiss my hidden scars,
 love the deceptive ocean of my honesty,
smash my forgiveness and forget selflessness,
 for I will not win.
 not this.
 I will not win.
 these things have become a cancer,
all I need to do is hunt them and catch them,
 walking the painful path.

Dan Remus



Juliet Gundy

As the Purebred Emperor

As the purebred emperor,
I am allowed to bestow
upon some lowly cur,
my annual reprieve.

down
to
the
dankest
pits of the prison

Past
the mangiest souls,
just hairy piles on
urine soaked floors.

Each gauges my step
anticipates penance.
Desperately,
They yelp in foreign tongues.

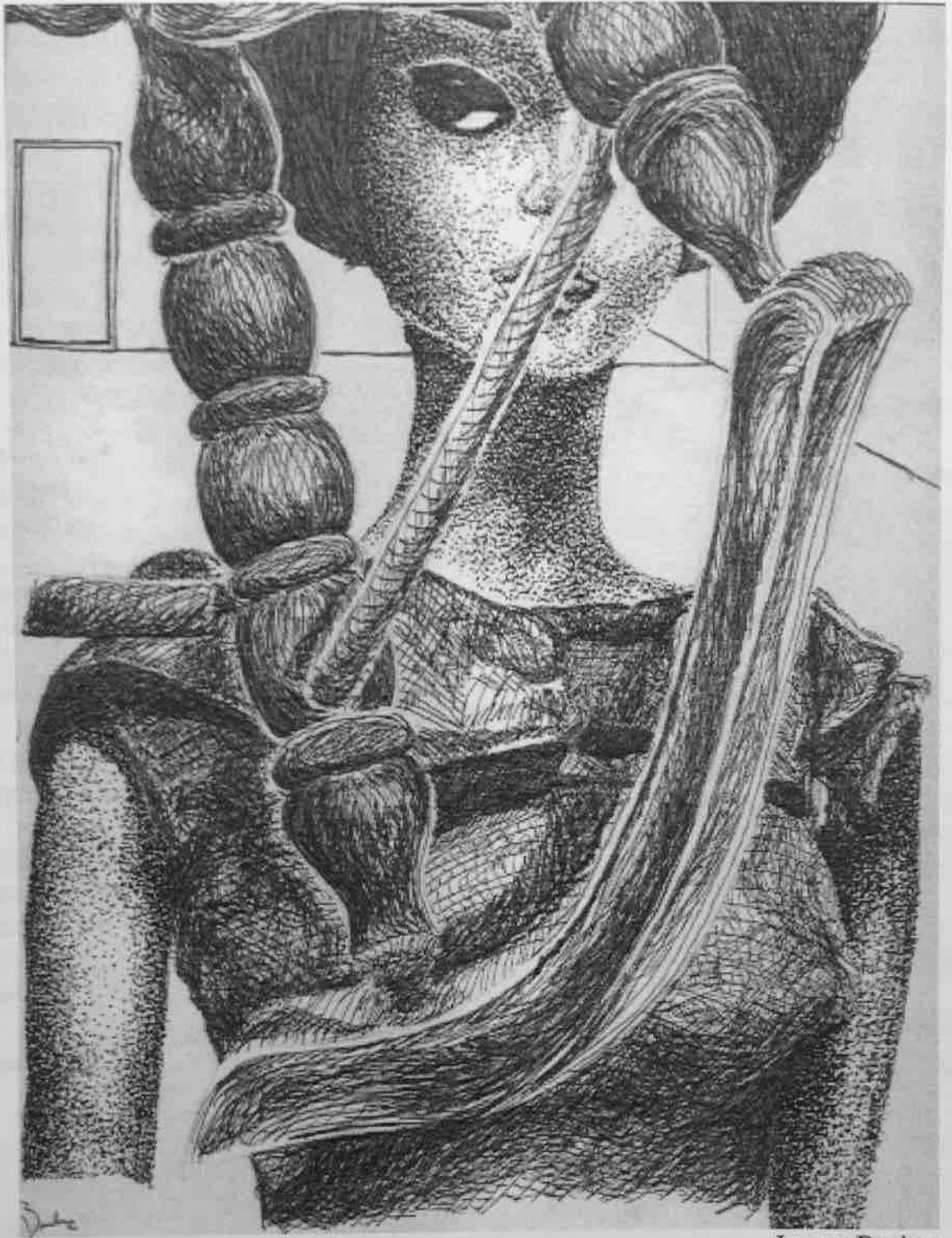
My eye catches
that of a champion runner.

Ghostly gray tones
flow through his angular face,
the sunken blue eyes
once wide for the
home stretch.

Unbarring his cage,
my friend
salivates
salvation.

We depart and
he speaks gutturally in gratitude,
licks
my hand,
wags
his tail.

Dave Alff
15



Jensen Bucher

An Unbreakable Bond

"Becki, Laurie, smile for the picture," Mom utters through her tears,
We step away from the chaos of the occasion and into a warm, sisterly embrace,
I, in my strapless summer dress striped of blue, green and white,
My sister in her flowing white gown, and cap with dangling, patriotic tassel,
My silver necklace, her emerald class ring, our smiles radiating the sunlight,
Flashbacks of an imaginative youth, an argumentative adolescence,
And premonitions of two successful women on the verge of greatness...
An unbreakable bond.

Red carnation, fragrant, flowering, held in the hand of the recent graduate,
It was a trophy of her achievement, but now it is so much more,
Hope for the future, the last thing she will ever receive from this school,
Anxiety about moving on with life, by herself,
Expectation from the world to achieve greatness,
Sadness about leaving a care-free childhood behind,
And excitement towards the freedom of adulthood...
The red carnation, fragrant, and flowering, is change.

A white program with black lettering, creased from being held in my hands,
Followed along line by line as my sister moves on without me,
Always being a spectator with the program to my sister's life,
Jealous of her always being first, and never really feeling caught up,
Being the last to experience everything, never unique,
Absolute love and devotion to the girl who taught me everything,
And asking myself "Why does she have to leave me, and what will I do without her..."
The creased, white program with black lettering, is loneliness.

Shelved dolls coughing in a dusty mist, a world without make-believe ribbons,
No more whimsical journeys through the mall, or giving each other manicures,
Sisterly squabbles on the phone just don't have the same effect as in person,
There will only be me staring at an eerily tidy room, empty and untouched,
Graduation day, ultimate finality,
Sighs of relief heard from the graduates,
Parents hiding their teary eyes behind cameras...
And two sisters coming to the realization that they are growing up.

Flash!

Becki Benner



Alex Dubilet

Flies

Have you ever walked upon a stretch
Of land not touched by man?
Or drank the water from a creek
Not overrun with cans?
Have you ever headed out to eat
Without a single dime?
But rather paid for filling meals
With the perfect lay of line?
Have you ever worked the 10 to 2
For just a Brown a day,
And thrown your earnings back to the brook
To watch it swim away?

If you have (I doubt it much),
A lucky one you are,
So take a seat, and rest your feet:
You must have traveled far.

Dan Connelly



Alex Dubilet

Frozen in Space

The edge looked like the very end of the earth.
like whatever dropped off,
disappeared from existence.

The slightly overcast sky,
The crowd watching below,
The murky water waiting for my presence,
The way the wind pushed small,
meaningless stones over the edge.
It was like a dream,
or a movie.

With two fearful leaps I launched from the proud cliff
How deep is the water?
Frozen in space
mud-green water closing

I plunged into the ice cold, punishing water,
like a cannon ball from the heavens
I did it
no one can take that away from me.

Brett White

Fire-walker

The trees are on fire again.
But rather than put them out,
I think I will enjoy the view.
Soon they will burn to the ground
and scatter the forest floor with coals.
In truth, I consider myself to be
a fire-walker, strolling along,
kicking flames in the air. I walk
through the burial grounds, the ghostly
gray skeletons swaying and bowing
to my feat of endurance.

Dan Connelly



Elizabeth DeLaurentis



Katie Dempster

Vacuum

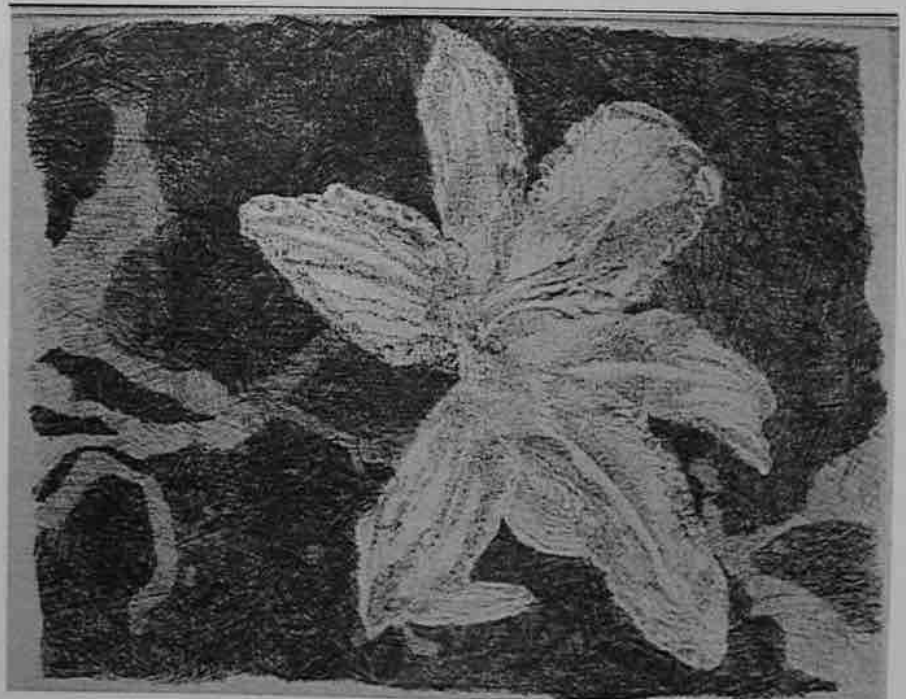
I'd love to know the exact moment
You stuck the vacuum nozzle
In your ear
And sucked your brains out.
If I knew, I could have
Reached into the lint bag,
Picked off the needles fallen from the evergreen tree,
Scraped off the crystals spilt from the sugar bowl,
And tried to stick the slippery
Gray lobes back past your eardrums,
Or perhaps up your nasal canal,
Anywhere close to their
Rightful place.

But I don't, didn't.
You controlled the power switch.

The lint bag has been disposed;
Its contents nourish cockroaches and rats
While your empty skull wanders,
An artifact of urban life.

I don't vacuum.
Instead, I wash windows,
Squinting in the sunlight
As I gaze at the vast Windex-blue sky.

Melissa Hediger



Aunt Mich-Moo

Seeing my sister's belly enlarge
Nine months of mood swings and growth spurts.
Wondering if he/she will have
Jackie's hazel eyes, brunette hair, small feet, or
Pete's dark hair, fair skin, tall height.
Wondering if it will be Sean or Emilie.
Praying no mishaps or miscarriages happen,
But always knowing what is there.
Feeling little feet kick and waiting.

The phone call 8:30 at night.
She's at the hospital in labor.
We wait and wait and wait.
Visiting hours are over but we go anyway.
In a floral room Jackie and little ball of blankets sit.

Mom goes first and all are relieved.
Then I go, making sure to sit first.
Mom tells me to be careful and support the head.
Emilie Anne just like a little baby doll.
Eyes closed, face yellow from jaundice,
tiny hands and a peach fuzzed head.
I was now Aunt Mich-Moo.

Fifteen years ago, Mom was here with me.
Jackie, my age, maybe feeling the same way.
Strangers always asking if I were Jackie's baby.
She was my second mom.
Telling me what to do, helping me when I needed it.
She wasn't around much when I got older,
Attending college, staying in her own apartment,
Then getting engaged and married.

Now I can do the same to her little Emmie-Lou
Watching her grow older, seeing the stages.
Sucking her thumb, raspberries, and walking too.
Holding her hands as the waves roll up our legs
while our feet sink into the sand.

Michelle Lala

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