

The Griffin
Spring 1993

The Griffin

Spring 1993



*"This creature was sacred to the sun
and kept guard over hidden treasures."*

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| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
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Editor's Letter

April 11, 1993

At the end of last year, when I wrested control of the editorship for this magazine, I had no idea what I was getting myself into. I set into motion a series of "grand schemes" in order to make the question of ideal worth obsolete. I required members to attend at least seventy-five percent of the meetings in order to vote. I helped create a review board, consisting of four faculty members and the four editors. I made sure that only I knew the names of the authors to ensure fairness. Add that to endless hours of running back and forth between the administration and the advisors, trying to keep everyone happy without compromising myself and those who were relying on me, and maybe you could realize the enormous effort involved. It has been a long ride, trying to keep this magazine free of moralizing and pandering, but we did it and now we have produced a magazine that definitely has some literary worth.

The Griffin. The best our campus has to offer. As you hold it in your hands, know that it has taken hours upon hours to produce, been the cause of many a migraine and perhaps solely responsible for a few missed classes. I hope you enjoy it. And remember the immortal words of Jack Straw, "Writing and reading good poetry is the intellectual and spiritual equivalent of orgasm.... I hope this magazine comes like a wildcat." I think that you will find this true.

I would like to thank the Griffin Advisors, Dr. George Hickenlooper and Dr. Robert Crafton (for their support and advice), Dr. Howard Barnett (for the walks and the talks), Dr. Kido (for meeting after meeting with Dean Wilson over the budget), Dean Wilson (for meeting after meeting with President Spellmann over the budget), President Spellmann (for his patience), Jeanne Malpiedi (for all the printing estimates), Dorothy Payne-Brown (for all the inside information), Laura Beth and Chris Artale (for letting me sleep on their couch), Laurie Anne and Chuck McKinnon (for the trip to Big Bear and El Pollo Loco), Sophie Michals (for her constant watchful eye), Kay Whiting (for understanding), Jean Fields (for dinner), the Regulars (for keeping me sane by allowing me to be insane in their company), Vanessa van Parjis (for making me realize happiness was a sudden thing), Mike Wessler (for the trips to Collinsville), Kim Bonzo (for toughening me up), Bryan Audrey (for keeping me going with every snide remark), Ivan Tarnowski (for categorizing my psychological template), and Mom and Dad (for deciding to keep me even after I set fire to the waste basket).

A special thanks goes out to everyone who submitted material to the magazine. Without you, this magazine would not have been possible.

Stephen H. Snipes, Senior Editor



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I, Narcissus

I drip with dew
from a morning shower,
dance myself dry
in full view
of my alter-ego.

Dance near nude,
towel
hung round
my waist,
snort and bellow
as uncouth as
Caliban,
gaze into the glass.

Dance, flex, pose
at total ease
within my body;
I am beautiul,
enrapt
by my own
reflection.

A Duck Dies On Lake Wappapello

The end of the duck
came quietly;
a falling leaf
touching the water's surface.

We (the white-tailed buck
and I) watched the frantic wings
trying to take flight

as a jagged mouth reared up,
green-brown, sharp,
and pulled the bird
into the murky dark.

When it was over,
the white-tail bounded
into the wood.

Photo

I see them in their funny clothes,
The table spread under sheltering trees,
A sunny day. My mother shields her eyes,
Her hat slightly askew,
One hand resting on her stomach, while my father,
Hatless and already balding,
Bends over to look at something inside the basket,
As if seeing it for the very first time.

The wind stirs the leaves, I see them stirring,
And I stir (for the first time?) inside my mother's womb.
The ants stir, marshalling into columns
(They do what they must do, they have seen it all before).

But these two, posing while pretending not to pose,
(and for whom — that I'd like to know)
These hypocrites, do they suppose they can survive
The shadow that moves to obscure my father's hand,
The sun that causes my mother finally to blink?

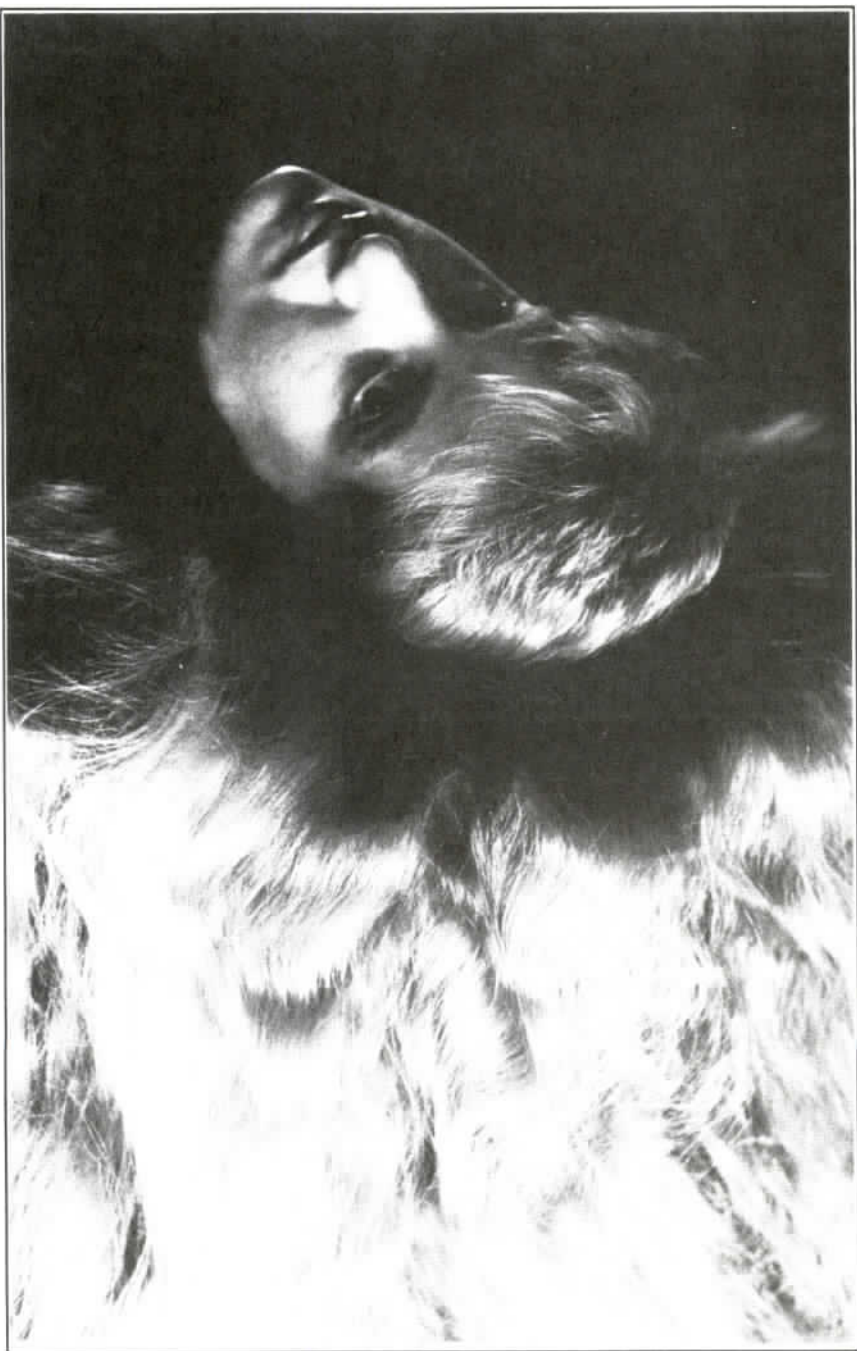
jack

i need a place;
an escape from the heat
where the cool blows from
window to window
where we can watch acorns split
and listen to Jack in his pulpit
discussing the condition of our souls.



"La Papéra Azzurra" by Judy Richardson

"Hair" by Heidi Hafer



Reflection

A man runs up a hill on the highway in the early morning light. The sky is white. He is black. I watch as he crests the hill, standing for a moment on the horizon line. He is a silhouette: negative space. I look away.

A young girl stands in line in front of me at the bank. She is barefoot. She sweats pimples and chews her fingernails. I watch her, fascinated, repulsed.

I open a door and enter a dark building. I blink quickly coming from the bright sun and nearly run into a man on his way out. He is small. As my eyes adjust to the light, his dark long-sleeved shirt reveals itself to be hundreds of tattoos, hundreds of skulls and snakes and tombstones. He smiles. I gasp my way past into the air conditioning.

In the park, a girl swings into the sun, her hair flying behind her catching the light. I smile at her childlike beauty, at the perfect blond haired blue-eye image burned into my mind.

I watch a woman in a wheelchair being fed her dinner in a nursing home. The young woman feeding her alternates spoonfuls of orange jello and instant potatoes. Food leaks from the woman's mouth. She stares at me. I give a tight-lipped smile. She stares. I look away. She stares. I stare back, then look away.

I see a young girl in the mall, maybe 14-15; she has bows on her barrettes. Her belly is round and full. I can't take my eyes off of it. Babies having babies. I'm horrified.

I come home at the end of the day. I hang up my hat, I have my dinner and brush my teeth. I look into my mirror at that familiar face and don't even recognize what it is that I see.

The Gray Heron

During our Ozark vacation,
the gray heron visited us each night
near dawn. Even now, here in St. Louis,
we think we see it
in all the gray, not the blue.

What other purpose should it serve
but to show that, when shadow starts
to throb, the gray becomes so lurid
that everything else is the blue
of some sky the heron left behind.

And this isn't the end. Autumn is
anxious to be included.
Who will tell the child
everyone will be allowed to color fall
in as much as we need except

for the gray which is best left saved
for the cold door closing,
for the lattice pattern on the back of the chair,
for the coatless, the road, for all
the shadow between all these.

On The Freeing Effects of Breath

Like a god
angered by the insurrection
of his own reflection
in the blue pool,
We are not peaceful, you nor I,
not in a blue moon, not in the red.
I have now learned all the secrets--
the long-held secrets of escape;

And now I need you not at all.

In Spring Breeze

We were walking, walked.
It all stopped.
the talking.
But my head was still saying,
as flowers swaying in spring breeze,
 I need another outlet
to letout
 everything,
the numbness
and the strange(r)
captives in my brain.

it resumed,
the talking, the walking.
I took your hand in mine
as mouth was saying
and hand was pointing
to flowers swaying in spring breeze.



"Three Faces" by Keith Beuckendorf

"Reclining Man" by Keith Beuckendorf



Doll

red bricks

lying

in a pile...

green grass

growing

through the cracks,

and a child's doll

half-buried

amongst

it

all.

Pruned

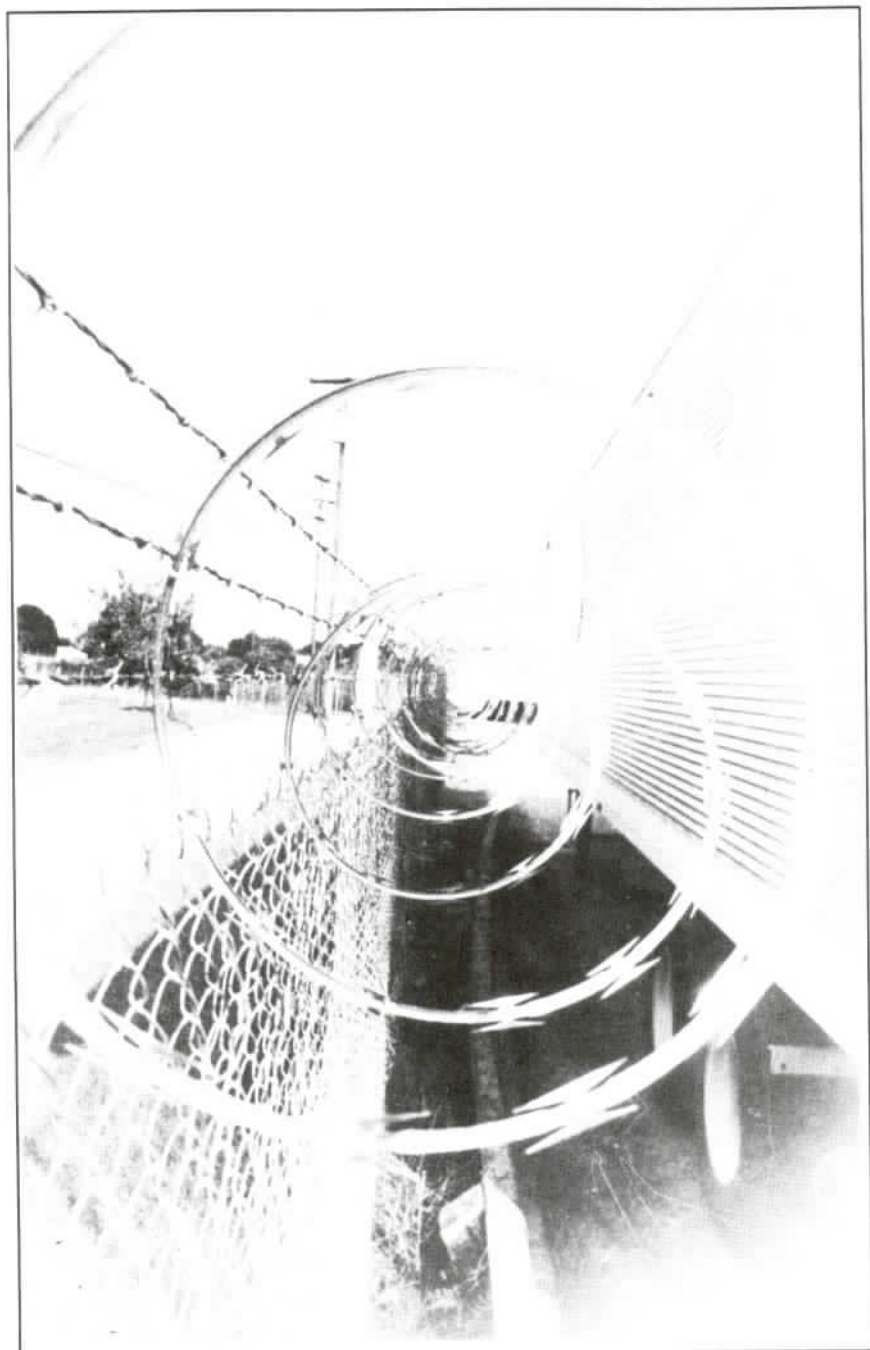
Dry is like me
dusty and dry
like falling leaves
crushed on cement.

Like me, dry is
shriveled and hard
as raisins in a refrigerator
too long.

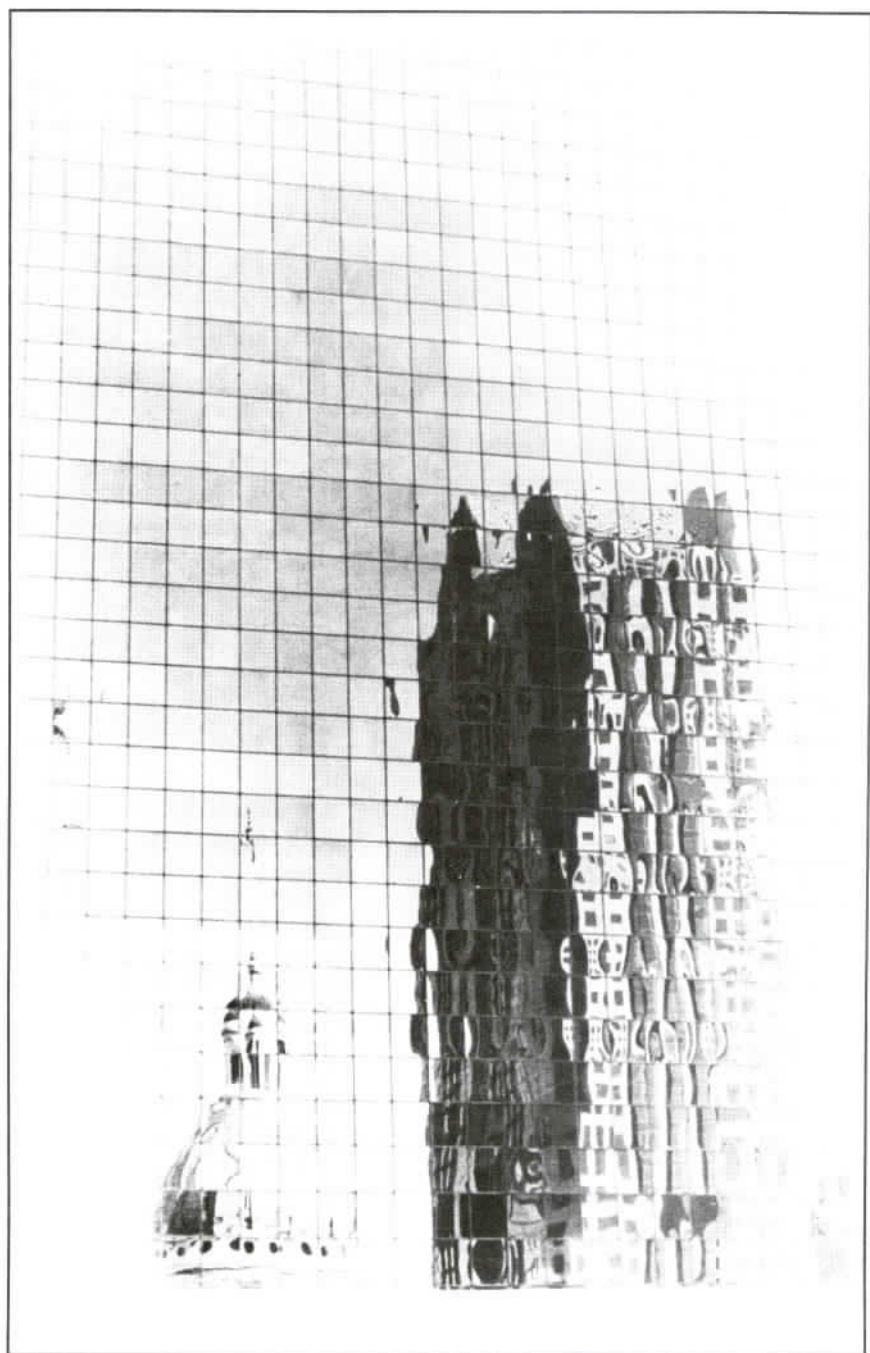
Like dry, me is
thirsty for wet love;
a kiss.



"Girl" by Mark Allen

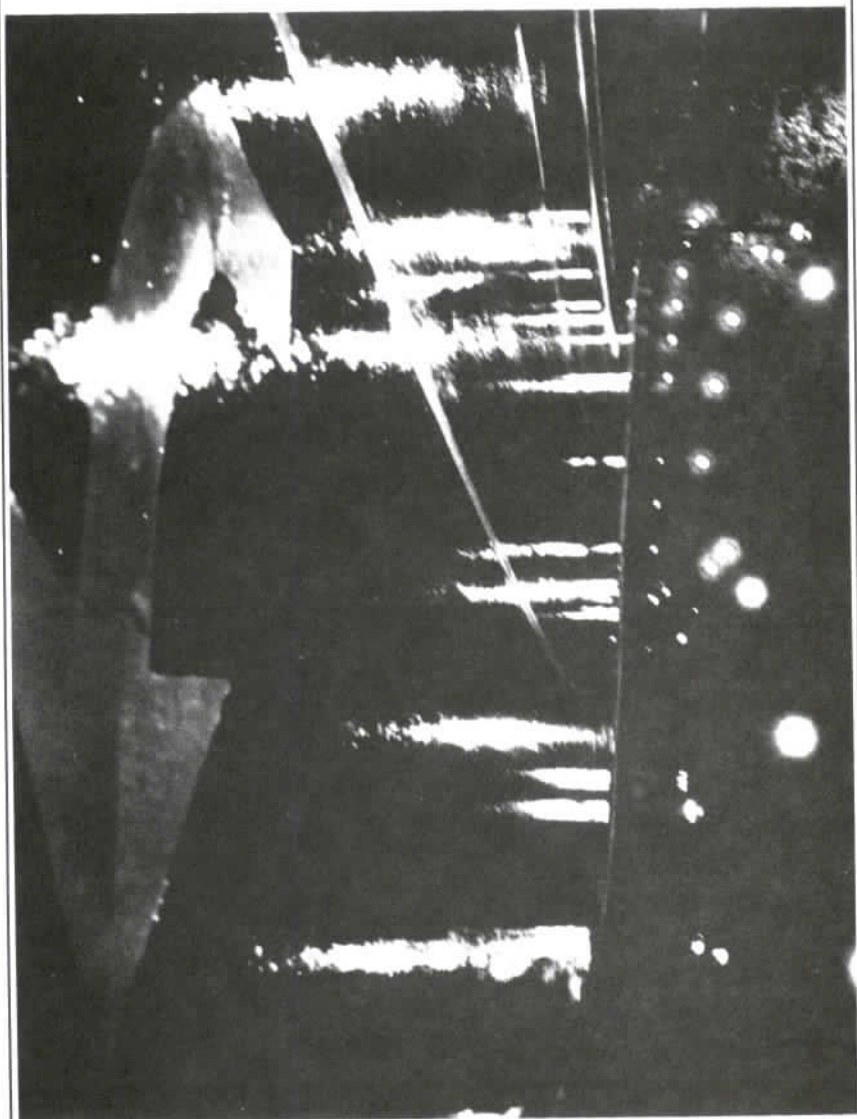


"Razor Wire" by Mark Allen



"Reflection of Building" by Mark Allen

"Arrow on Street" by Mark Allen



Paper Messiah

The poet is the Lord God Creator of His paper universe,
Breathes life into the unliving page,
ink surging from pen to paper
as blood from an opened vein.

The ink is the poet's blood.
The parchment is the poet's body.
The poet's message is the word of God.

Acolytes in the robes of the canon
Carry an electric dogma to a waiting mass;
The Gospel is delivered in smoke filled rooms,
dimly lit, where goateed men in Wayfarers
read Beat poetry as a novena.

I Have Led The Life of Tea

I have led the life of tea:
I have been bubbled and boiled
(chilled or served piping I have always steeped first);
I have been milked and sweetened by the spoonful;
And here I am, a quite exquisite Indian brew,
Served in a lackluster pot:
Yellowed and pale with apathy and misuse.
But oh!--the scent:
The vapors rise and are smelled for miles
And people come to sip and dwell.

Today I'll be served with biscuits and scream.

Birdseye View of the Windy City

Look into the void,
all encompassing blackness
of night, surrounding
the aircraft,
surrounding the
city below, filling
my thoughts with a dark noel.

Chicago sprawls below,
encroaching the midwest
as far as the I can see.

The city glows orange—
an amber gilt-copper glow
like a circuit board on a field
of charred green.
Orange grids marred
by diagonal parallels—
a city lit for traffic—
pedestrian and automated—
paid by steelworker's sweat,
taxpayer's tears,
everyman's blood.

I have walked those streets below,
have seen the manmade wonders
the city boasts.

I have dwelt in cheap hotels,
a thrill-seeking youth
(with other thrill-seeking youths);
watched soft-core porn on pay-per-view;
drunk illegal underaged whiskeys;

felt silken thighs beneath high school skirts;
wrestled drunken in the hallways;
and disturbed 16 stories of DO NOT DISTURB signs.

I know this city and it gleams
beneath me.

Orange, orange, orange!

A smattering of green!

A smidgen of white!

A slash of blood red neon visible from so far away!

Chicago! City of wind!

Chicago! City of cultured marvels!

Chicago! City of elevated railroads!

Chicago! City of industry and communications!

Chicago! City of gridlock and gridiron!

Chicago! City of organized crime!

Chicago! City of street cuisine and sidewalk freakshows!

Chicago! City of panhandlers and hustlers!

Chicago! City of garbage streets and storefront wonders!

Chicago! City of ghosts...

Do bootleggers still sell redeye bathtub gin?

Do fat Irish cops (on the take) still walk a beat
in the dead of night?

Do gangsters still wear pinstripes and dine in speakeasies?

Do press men still wear bowlers and bowties?

O! Chicago! Do these shades pester you at night?

Sweet home, Chicago,
nothing more to me now
than any other
hatful of fading memory.

Goodbye to a myriad dark monoliths
set upon the backdrop of the

glowing copper gridwork.
The subtle craft wings
its way to earth, beyond
the obscene glow of the city.

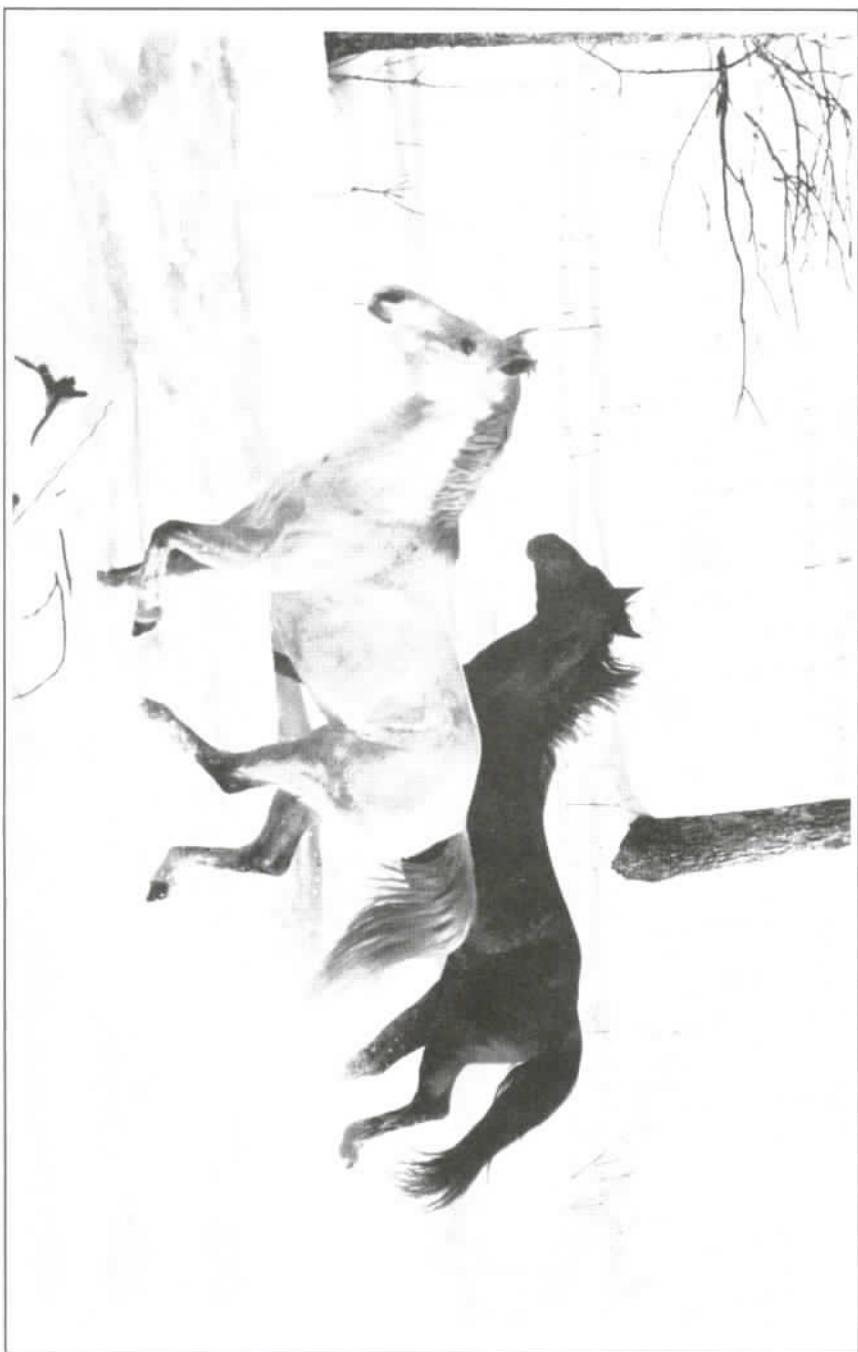
Weekend End

Sunday evening steals in like a thick fog,
And coats my soul with wet gloom.



"By A Nose" by Marcia Gay

"Two Horses" by Marcia Gay



In Memory of Christopher Paul Oelson

He was young.
Only eighteen.
He had great potential.
Sadly, he didn't see it that way.

He shot his brains out
in a white sedan
parked along
a straight and narrow
desert road,
which, for him, led nowhere.

He had hoped to solve all his problems,
but he left

 a mother,
 a father,
 a brother,
 a sister
 and a friend;

all left standing
on hallowed ground.

I return to his grave
when the sun has gone down,
to share a bottle of whiskey with a dead friend
and dance with a ghost
created from old memories.
I strike out at him,
but only scrape my knuckles
against the cold tombstone.

Also

you, as well, are much too deep
 eye cannot see
and i cannot scale your walls
so i lie and listen to you breathe
hoping that i won't run out of air.
 (you say you will keep me as long
 as you like.)

i cannot see the door from down your
wellsodeep
your smile is not mine to see
and you, as well, are much too deep.

War Gyro

1945 the war is over.

Hitler: dead

slug of poison, hole in his head.

Mussolini: dead

killed like a rat by a people he led.

FDR: withered away to a mote of dust,
like Hiroshima and Nagasaki...

They saw the light;
(fires of Hell

that burned bright faces,
left shadows on sidewalks)

A quick flash

and the cities became

the charred byproduct of technology.

Of all parties involved,

America truly rejoices, escaping

relatively unscathed by the machinations of Ares and Marduk.

America emerges to influence the actions of the world,

a new force to be reckoned with.

America whipped the Nazis, the fascists, and those
sneaky little islanders...

who or what can America fear now?

It was the beginning of a golden age

in America...at least that's the

impression my generation gets from

fathers that knew best inside an idiot box.

When we think of this era, we think in B/W.

We think of...What time is it?...

It's Howdy Doody time.

We think of...Lucy and Ricky in separate beds...

That's just so ridiculous.

We think of Tonto and the Lone Ranger...

Right, Kimosabe?

It was a simpler age.
Good guys wore white hats,
bad guys wore black hats...
now they don't even wear hats.

What muse did these simple people follow?
Did they waltz, did they foxtrot or rumba?
Yes, and then some. In the early years
after the war some still clung to the
lilting strains of jazz ideology.
Louis Armstrong, Dizzy Gillespie, and the Bird
blew up quite a storm with their fat horny sounds.
Man, those cats could wail!

What else was a-cookin' in those days?
The seedling of rocknroll

(as we know it now)

was planted in the early 50s.

Buddy Holly and the Big Bopper...

both ground-breaking pioneers in the field,
nurturing the growth from bebop to rock;
both died, broken on the ground
in a frozen cornfield in Iowa.

Jerry Lee Lewis, Elvis Presley...

'nuff said

Elvis was the king and now the King is dead...

Long live the King!

Beneath the nostalgic art-deco surface
a hidden terror lurked...

The RED SCARE!

One man's paranoia brought a nation
to its knees.

One man's fear and delusion sparked

hatred across the nation.
A witch hunt had begun.

BETTER DEAD THAN RED!

Thank you Sen. McCarthy,
your twisted sense of reality,
bloated faux-morality,
and skewed ideology
resulted in great artistic movements
and political melodrama!

Thank you Sen. McCarthy, for:
the Beat generation

whose voices still howl their influence,
who are still starving hysterical naked,
still mad looking for an angry fix
(no longer narcotic,
but of politics religion 1st amendment
rights)

scandalous Hollywood

no Communist sympathy blacklist
can scathe the drooling monster now—

SEX SELLS and it's a consumer's market
defining UN-American activity

What do you call institutionalizing one of
this country's great golden-brained literary mad
men?

re-defining and outlining exactly what

FREEDOM OF SPEECH
FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

really mean

For all these precious gifts, Senator McCarthy,

We the people
of the U-
nited States
of A-

merica,
Thank you, from the depths of our bleeding red hearts!

This phase, too, passed.
The censoring Senator was censured.
He was a paranoid delusional alcoholic.
He died,
broken,
but not forgotten.

America was still in love with its big screen heros.
This was when MOVIES were made!
This was when all those films
that everybody
has seen
has heard about
or wants to see
were made!
It's a Wonderful Life...
so is the movie!

What else is happening here,
amid the purple mountain majesties
and amber waves of grain?

ART!

Lots of it!
Painting abstract
imageless antiformal improvisatory energetic and free
Jackson Pollock drips his art
emptying, atomizing
space:
while Mark Rothko
equilibrizes w/ broad flat
color masses.

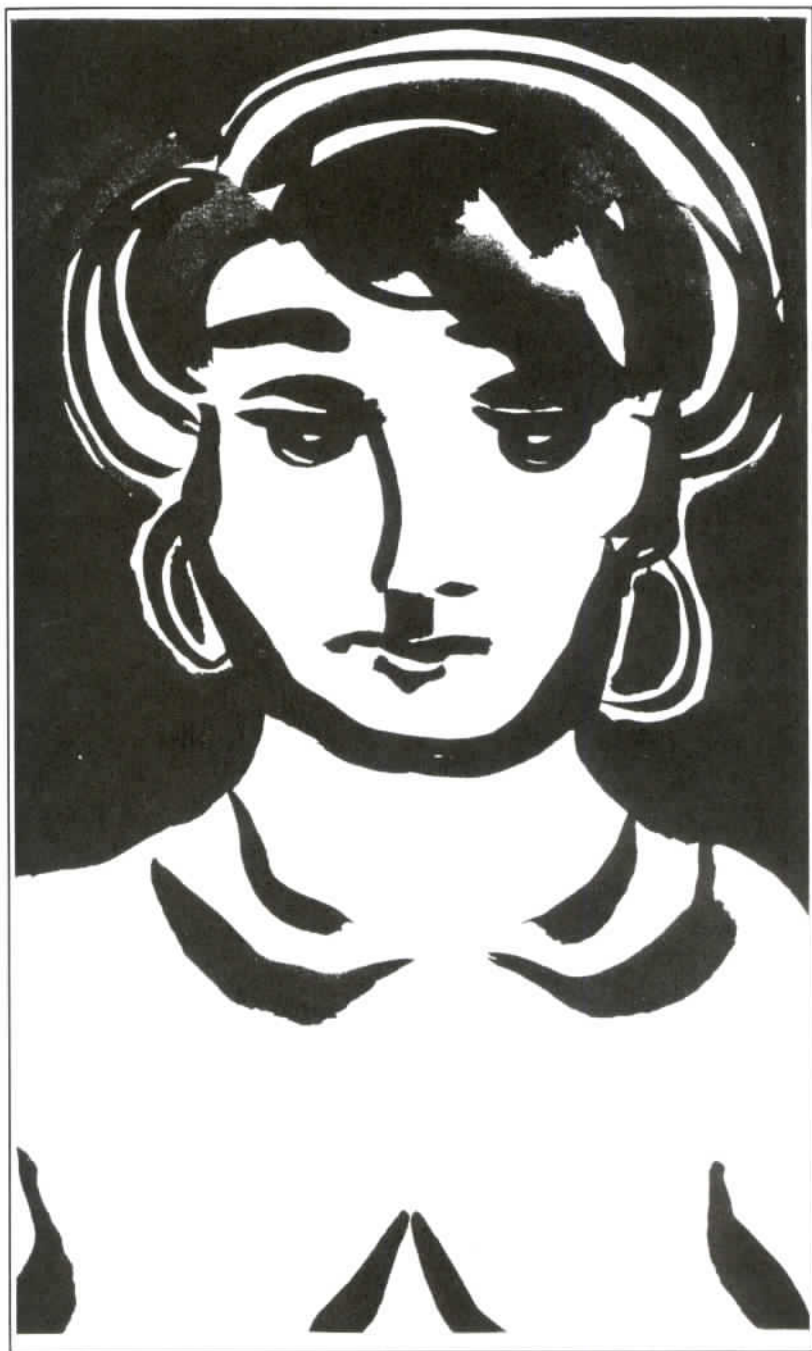
But in the distant middle ground of the 20th century,
heard beneath the drip and slap of paint,
heard beneath the din of rocknroll radio,
heard beneath the bark of TV dogs,
heard beneath the hiss and whine of drive-in movie speakers,
is the slow grinding of gears

in the machinery of war.

Someone is trying to start ol' Bessie battle wagon
and take her for another ride.

On Jeans

The sweet intelligentsia,
serving feasts of meats and puddings
to no one, are smiling
as if they saw a hungry guest.
“Will no one eat the foodstuffs brought?”
she cries: the learned one,
clothed in bright and unmatched colors
sporting still the misbuttoned sweater
of her idealistic youth.



"Nude" by Lori Voes



"Nude" by Carrie Alden

Pain

“They’ll give you paper slippers to put over your socks,” she said, staring into space, styrofoam coffee cup in hand. “And the gowns they give you close in front, but they are so old, the ties are missing. Everyone walks around seeing each other half naked, clutching their gowns closed.” I try to look at her while I listen, but the expression on her face always spooks me. I examine a tile on the floor.

“Some of the women are quiet and anxious. They stare out at everything like they aren’t really there. A few women talk. Mostly out of nervousness, I imagine—but they chatter on and on, curled up under pink blankets in the waiting room. They tell everyone who will listen why they are there, and how many times they’ve been there. A nurse comes in to get you when it is your turn. People leave the waiting room one at a time, and their spots are filled again by girls shuffling in their paper slippers. They feel so funny on your feet. By the end of the day they are dirty and torn. It takes all day...have I told you that?”

I nod.

The young woman, heavy circles under her eyes, shifts her position on the bed to stare out the barred window for a while. She sips from her cup and continues.

“When my turn came I decided to be somewhere else. Out-of-body experiences we used to call them. In high school, a friend of mine and I used to play the out-of-body experience game during boring assemblies or unpleasant dates. All you have to do is fully imagine yourself somewhere else, doing something else until it becomes so real that you cannot hear what is going on around you. Have you ever had an out-of-body experience?”

I bite back a sigh and shake my head.

“Anyway, I was led by a large black nurse into a room at the end of the hall. I sat on the cold metal table all alone for quite some time. I was pretending to be someone else instead of somewhere else because I couldn’t quite manage “elsewhere” that day. I

saw some very old instruments and bottles on a dirty windowsill. I noticed that the windowsill was dirty—probably because the lights in the room were so bright. I tried to stay outside myself—to be bright and curious—you know, I just sat there wondering what each of those things were for, when a nurse and a doctor and someone to hold my hand entered the room. They wheeled the machine in with them and told me to lie back on the table, that it would only take a few minutes and I would feel some pressure. There was a poster on the ceiling for me to look at and I thought that was nice, don't you think that was nice?"

She looked at me for the first time since I had been coming to see her. Her crazed eyes told me she knew. And so even though I had heard the story every Sunday for a year, I asked her once again.

"What was it a picture of?"

"Oh it was lovely," she said. "It was a window with the sea and a sailboat outside and a table in front of the window with a cup of tea on it. The curtains and the tablecloth had such pleasant patterns on them."

"Quickly, then came the pain," she said, and she sat bolt upright, hands clenched in fists, fingernails digging into her palms, scratching away the scabs of the week before and the week before that. Her cup, abandoned, drifted to the floor. "I couldn't ignore it any more. I could feel it and smell it, and worst of all, I could hear it. The scrape, scrape, scratching sound, then the whir of the vacuum, that big ugly horrible machine. I held back screams, sucking in the smell of death through my nose, staring at that damn calm picture. I could not believe anyone could live through that pain. My nails bit into the hand of the person whose job that was....But only one tear escaped me. Only one."

And always, at this point, one tear, unwiped would roll down her taut dusty cheek. She returned to her catatonic world, her weekly piece said. She sat limp and staring, rubbing endlessly at the scars on her wrists, vacancy behind those cold eyes. But I knew she was in there. Today she had looked at me. Pleading.

This was the last Sunday I would endure this story. I too had dreamt it, had felt it and smelled it, hearing that scraping and scratching in the middle of the night. She had somehow transferred her pain to me as she sat in that room all week, still and silent. I leaned over to her for a moment, kissing her quiet sweaty forehead and pressing the pills into her palm. She held them. I knocked on the door to let the guard know I was ready to escape. As I walked down the corridor I began to feel free as I left the pain behind. I never looked back, but I can still feel the burn of the guard's eyes on my back as I stripped the collar from my neck and stuffed it in the trash.

Earth-Conscious

I buy a lot of aerosol cans,
spray them to the sky.
In a cloudy metaphor,
I scream "We need more sun."
I cut my grass,
and catch the clippings.
My lawn is neater
than my neighbors'.
If there's not enough
landfill space,
the answer is,
they'll have to find more.
I drive my car
when walking would do.
Me and the missus
love our Sunday drive.
I shot a bald eagle last week.
Guess it was our national bird.
I couldn't stand the tension,
so I do my part to end
their stay on planet Earth.
I see it as God's plan.
First the dodo,
now an equally unfit species.
Styrofoam is a friend of mine.
I respect anything
that can outlive me.
I don't worry much,
Cause I know
the scientists
will figure out a way
to make us live,
and propagate our nasty ways.

Contributors

Carrie Alden is a sophomore art student. Her boyfriend is an alien, and she has always wanted to be a pizza (vegetarian pizza, of course).

Mark Allen is a biophysics major who hopes to keep himself and others from being vaporized by radiation.

Keith Beuckendorf is a sophomore studio art major whose art, a development of the poetry, rhythms, and forms of the subconscious, reflects how his mind responds to images he perceives.

Mat Carruthers is a graduate student whose accomplishments include poet, world traveler, Deadhead and potential Lit. Professor.

Eustace DelaVeritas is an actor and artist whose abilities have led him around the globe and inevitably back to St. Charles. His dreams consist of a small farm in the New England backwoods where he can live like Thoreau.

John D. Evans has been a professor of psychology at Lindenwood for 19 years and is a purveyor of odd and perverse thoughts.

Marsha Gay has a B.A. in studio art and is currently working towards her graduate degree in photojournalism, specifically in equine photography. She says she took up photography in the 1960s to capture moments that she couldn't with pastels and oils.

Heidi Hafer is a junior at Lindenwood and if it weren't for the Art faculty she would have committed suicide two years ago.

George Hickenlooper, Sr., who joined Lindenwood this year and teaches in the English and Foreign Language Departments, is a writer published in a variety of media and a produced playwright.

Marijean Jagers is a sophomore English major with an emphasis in creative writing. She carries a full load, works full time, and still finds time for her husband Mark and three-year-old son Aaron.

John M. Nichols is a senior English major who wants to ride every roller coaster in America.

Judy Richardson is currently working on her graduate degree in studio art and art history. She attributes her love of art to a printmaking class twenty years ago that introduced her to creative freedom.

Stephen Snipes is a junior working towards a degree in English Literature. He is content most of the time.

Ivan Tarnowski hails from Northampton, MA. He will be graduating in May with a psychology degree. He hopes to be a guitar someday.

John Samuel Tieman teaches and advises in the L.C.I.E. program. He is active with veterans' rights and has previously published poetry in *River Styx* and *America's Review*.

Lori Voes feels that "It's great to finally make it to college and study what I've always dreamed of doing since those first painting lessons when I was 13."

