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SIGNATURES 1999
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Swing

Up, up, up
Into the air I soar.
Legs catapulting pendulums
Fleshed machinery with tremendous
momentum.

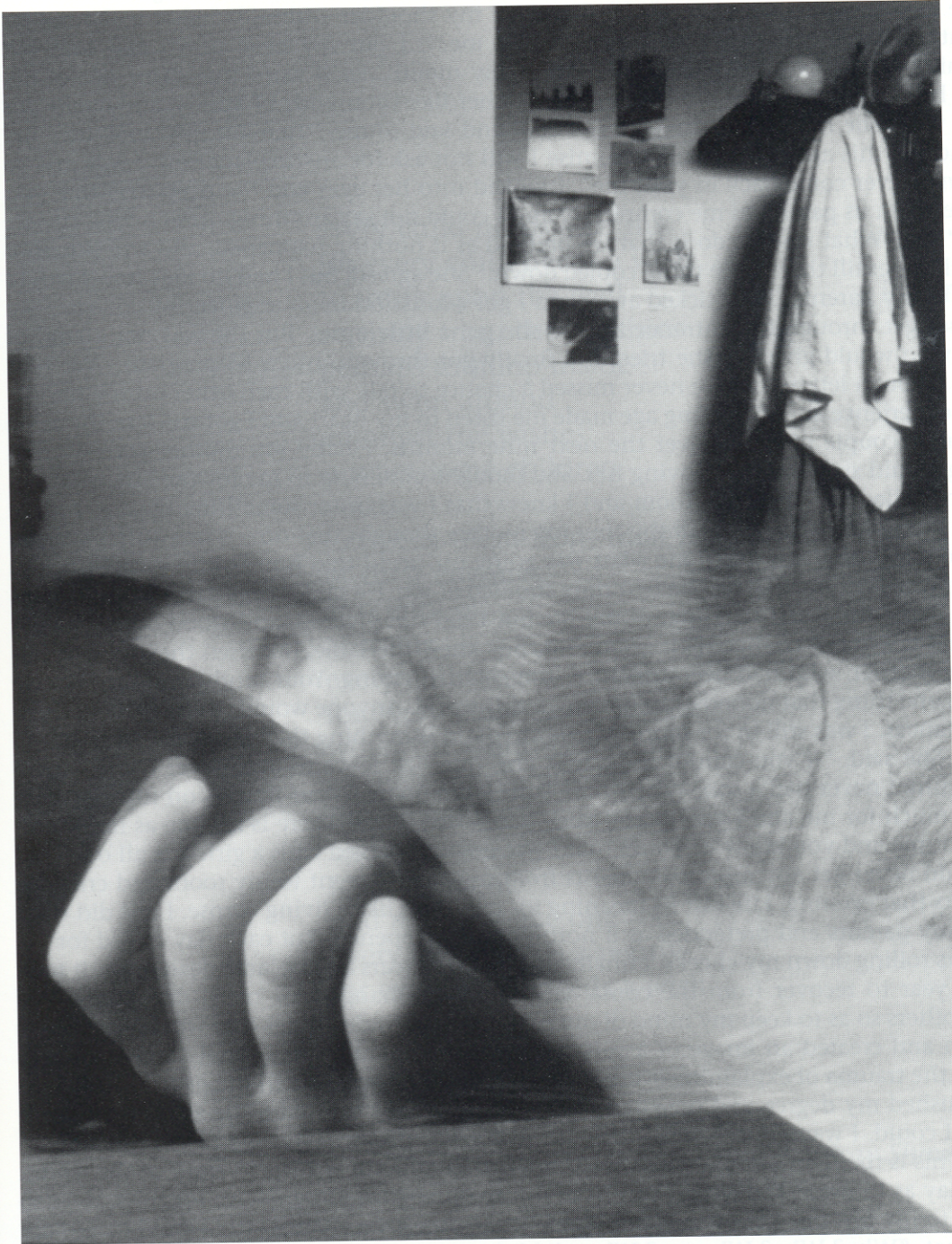
Katie Hanna

Love, Life & Sacrifice

Himani Bains

This story is about an Indian boy who dared to love. His name is Hemant. I wrote "is" because he is real and still among us. This story might not fit in to the societal framework of America but it is true to its last word. As long as this story lasts I would request you to place yourselves in his place and see how you feel and think what would you have done. Let me take you through to a point where we can see him standing at his window gazing at the setting sun. From here on he will tell you the whole story himself.

Hi, my name is Hemant. I still remember looking at that setting sun as I stood at my window. As I looked outside my thoughts took me through the memory lane. I had been brought up in a very conservative atmosphere. I had hardly had any contact with the fairer sex till I was fifteen and now I was a part of a co-education school for the first time in my life. The feeling is so unusual that it cannot be described. My parents left me in the dorms and I had just finished unpacking. Soon other students returned and we all introduced ourselves and formed a small group. The day ended and as I closed my eyes I thought of the future. Life had a new meaning, as I was finally free from all the restrictions. Days passed and each new day was like a promise for a brighter tomorrow. Teachers loved me for my hard working and sincere nature and the students for my sense of humor and friendliness. Just as everything seemed to be running smoothly, I found that I was having strange feelings towards one of my classmates. Her name was Ritu and though she was not one of the beautiful half of her kind she seemed to attract me a lot. It was a strange cocktail of feelings. I liked, respected, got attracted to and wished to know her better. This was a bit too much for a young boy like me, who had been never exposed to or made aware of the existence of such feelings before. I got confused and did not know how to react. I tried everything but there was no way I could get the desired guidance. Months passed and I kept my feelings hidden from her as well as the world around me. But she was making more and more impact on my life as the time passed. I reached a point where spending a day without seeing her seemed torturous. Saturdays bring happiness to everyone as they get a break from the busy schedule, but for me they were like these spells from the hell. I felt that this feeling was mutual but I was not sure. Finally after one year's long wait I gathered enough courage and asked her. I was very nervous and she was as strong as ever. She agreed and made me promise that I would never let anyone talk bad about us. She also told me that it would be a permanent relationship and that there would be no turning back. I agreed even though I was not sure about the second half of the agreement. After we started going out it felt as if I was in Heaven. I learned a lot from her and she became a source of inspiration for me. Everything was fine but we were still far from "Love". We simply liked each other. How much we liked each other and how close we were getting to love was very difficult to know. It is rightly said, "Love is God", and it was love that gave us a chance and showed us the way. I got sick due to chicken pox and had to leave for my house for three weeks. It was in these three weeks that we realized what each of us meant for the other. She could not write to me as my parents were totally against friendship with girls. I had no contact with her and each day passed thinking about her and waiting for the time to pass. Finally the day came and I went back to school. The news had already reached there and she was eagerly waiting to see me. As we met that day we confessed to each other about our feelings of love. After that day there was no looking back. The



:untitled
Katie hanna
photograph

letters and poems that she had given me. There was a strange silence for a long time and she felt the fear as well. She softly put her hand on my shoulder and said, "what is the matter Hemant? Is there something you want to tell me?". I put my head down and told her everything crying as every word came out of my mouth. Each word that came out of my mouth brought tears along with it, and struck her like thousands of spears. She could not believe what she heard. But she kept her cool and said to me, "Hemant, just look into my eyes and say this again once and I promise I will not ask for any explanation. I will just go away and never come back in your life". I looked into her eyes and the deep love that was there between us paralyzed me completely and I could not say anything. After a long silence I said, "Fine. What we will do is that we pretend as if nothing happened, and will not contact each other till this whole thing cooled down." She agreed, but I had no idea how I would tell lies to my parents. Time ticked away and I got admission in an engineering college. Ritu could not get through the entrance test, so she got a little upset. But she was not a kind of person who would give up. She tried and finally got through into a BS program. We kept contact through letters and we never missed a chance to talk with each other on the phone. Lack of experience and my young age made me listen to my heart and I got stuck in the same situation, a couple of times, over the next nine months. Finally my mother realized that nothing would stop me from loving her. She thought of talking to me for the last and final time. She called me into their room and I knew that I was in for something big and rough. My dad was not fully aware of all this, but my mother thought that now it was only him who could do something. He asked me what was going on, and I told him boldly everything. To my utter disbelief, my dad for the first time shouted at me. He said things that cannot be said in open. I got the worst scolding, of my life but I did not give up, and stood by my love. I knew that it will not change their mind and they knew the same, but then they are the parents. My mother, who had been quiet for long, started crying. Your mother crying because of you is one thing that nobody can handle in this world. Anyone would give up under these circumstances. I was still in for more. My mother said something that shook me from top to bottom. She said, "If you cannot leave that girl, fine Just leave us and never come back. I would think I never had a son. When I die don't even come to put flowers on my grave". It was too much for me and I got up and said, "Come on mom! There is no one as important as you for me and you know it. Think that I was never involved with a girl. It is all over and you would never get any more complaints from my side." I went to my room and cried for five hours that evening. Life lost its meaning for me. I was like a living corpse. I just did what pleased my parents and pretended as if nothing ever happened. But each day ended for me with tears rolling down my cheeks. I finally lost even my tears and became dead meat. It took me one year to recover from the coma, and so much changed for me. I did things that pleased others so as to keep my mind of my past. I started to do things that would make others laugh and created an image of a very happy and content man, so that I don't have to undergo the trauma of explaining everyone what happened with me in the past. Time passed and I finished my degree and prepared to do Masters. I just wanted to be as far away from India as I could. I wanted to begin a new life and hence decided to come here and study.

This is the first time I have partially opened my past in writing in front of the world. Even today as I look at the setting sun from my apartment window, I wish for those days to return into my life, but I know it is not possible. If I ever get a chance, all I would like to ask God is that, "Why? Why? Why me? What did I do wrong that I had to lose the only thing I ever loved in life?". Maybe I had to sacrifice one love for the other and the choice was mine. I choose to lose Ritu, and that is it. I know that I loved her and that I still love her, and will always love her. You might be wondering who I am. Well to answer your question all I would say is, "Himani is my future and I his past".

every child needs a penny
for every child needs a wish
to think upon the well
so shiny from the sunshine.
perhaps to jump inside
and swim around
amongst the wishes
is what some children
need,
to rescue them from their fears,
or their enemies,
at school or,
at home.

every child needs a penny
for every child needs a wish
when the world is so crazy
in their simple minds.
hold a hand,
and toss one in,
for a moment,
and maybe make one too.
every child needs a penny
for every child needs a wish.

Pennies

Lindsay Shaw

At Least I Die Happy Tonight

Though dirty dishes are stacked,
And the work is undone,
And the plan is undone
'Cause the plans were all changed
For the sake of the strange,
At least I die happy tonight.

Though once or twice I've been told
That the man is upset
'Cause the man is uptight,
And I know I'm the man
'Cause the shit's in my hand,
At least I die happy tonight.

Graham Mackenzie

Genocide

i hadn't yet seen it but
i believe it was like
schizophrenic carpenters
chipping away at brains
constructing new brains
refurbishing old brains
and chromosomes of the
perfect race
opposite of hitler but functioning
along the same ethical roadmap

testing the masses with farm
animals
watchful of anticipated criticism
and happy that society will stop
caring in approximately 2 to 5
years

Bob Diffenderfer

The Perfect Day
For Oral Sex

A warm breeze, gently challenging
the busty clouds outside.
to cast the willful sunshine
on this fair day in July.

The perfect day for oral sex!
But to give, or to receive?
Which reward shall rightly suit
a man such as me?

The perfect day, she agreed
But to give or to receive?
let's do it, and do it right
we'll both get what we need.

A warm breeze....Ah yes
The perfect day indeed!

James Leland Hill



I put something in the water,
I shot the priest,
It's my barmitzvah,
And I like my parties wet and wicked.

Touch the monkey, my fly brother,
Reach for the gill, Will,
And pull my breath away.

Wildly thrust your pen at me,
Regurgitate my words,
Rework my feeling,
Rekindle my youth,
Steal all that you can steal,
'Cause in loves army of the damned and tortured souls,
It's 99 cents a minute for rehab.

Like Molecules

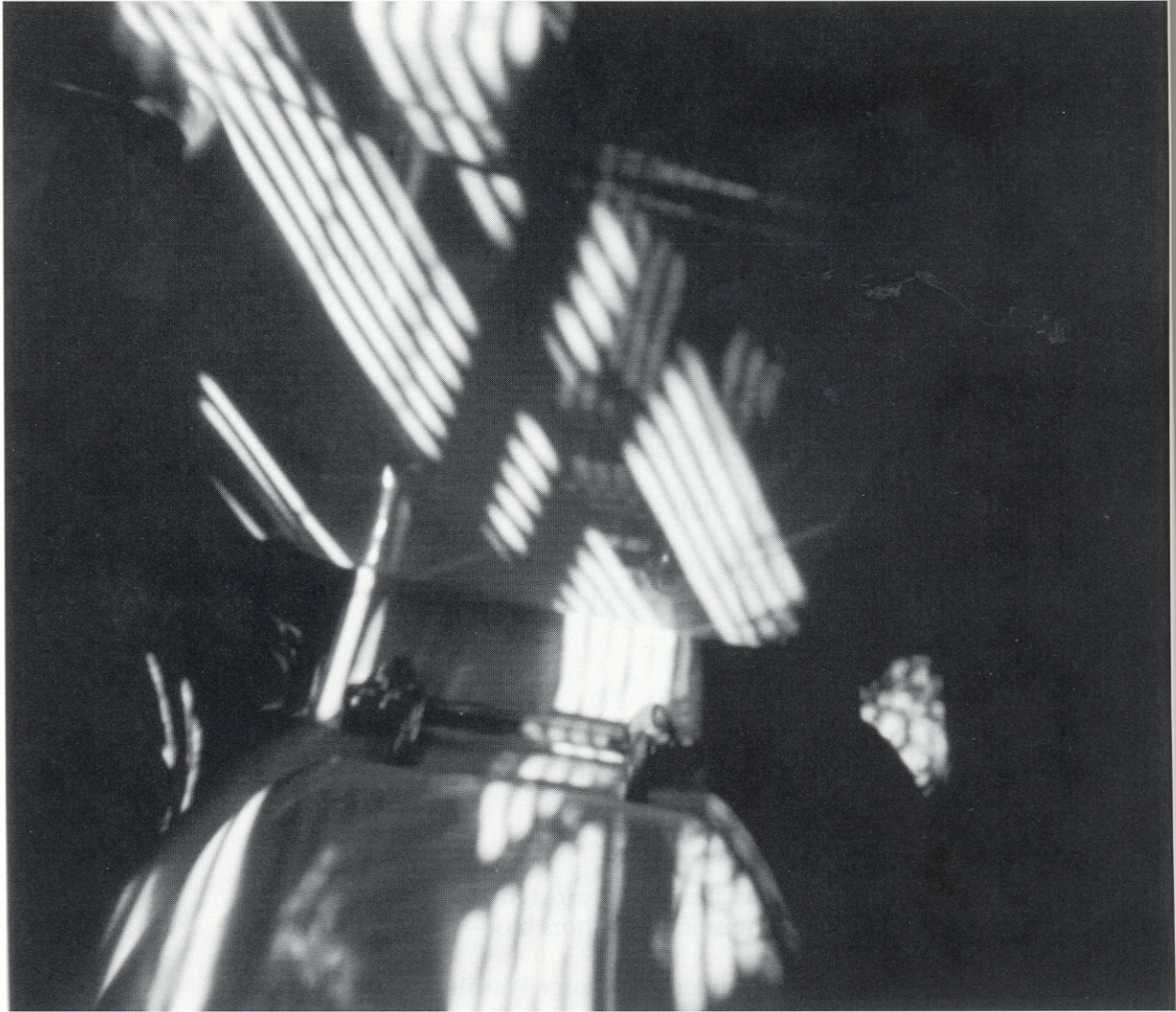
You'd better work,
At least play hard,
OK, pay attention, or give me the 99 cents,
I deserve that bit-o-honey,
Don't you love me when I'm angry?
Aren't we the perfect pair?
Aren't we like molecules in the air?
We love dance music,
We love liver,
We love rope,
And S&M,
And monkeys,
And smoking,
And coffee,
And the smell of fresh kitty litter,
And that new fucking Volkswagen bug.

When you paint my toe nails and read my YM magazine,
I almost cum with anticipation of the authors bio—

Tammy is a sixteen year old student at George Washington High,
She also writes for the sch—
AAAHHhhh OH BABY,
Put down that magazine and let's watch this uncut Jerry Springer episode that my cousin
Johnny stole for me.

Don't Lie, you love it when I moisturize your elbows,
I know you,
We've been together for almost ever,
We're like molecules,
Like molecules...
Like molecules...

PJ Gaynard



:untitled
Katie Hanna
photograph

Zephyr Czar

Of all the ages traveled far and free,
On rare occasion captured breathing in.
A transfer taking place, so they may be,
In tortured tempo working deep within.

A rapid rush and out, the labor done,
To dissipate as most words do when yore.
But boundless now for eons more to come,
Though not the same as it was just *befour*.

Today, again, I'm captured. Sudden! Deep!
But this time something's diff'rent. Shudder He!
No work. No transfer. Rhythm fade and sleep.
A sudden violent exit out of thee.

But now at last I'm free. At last I'm free
And swirling 'round a Memphis balcony.

Jimmy Walker

Allegheny State Park

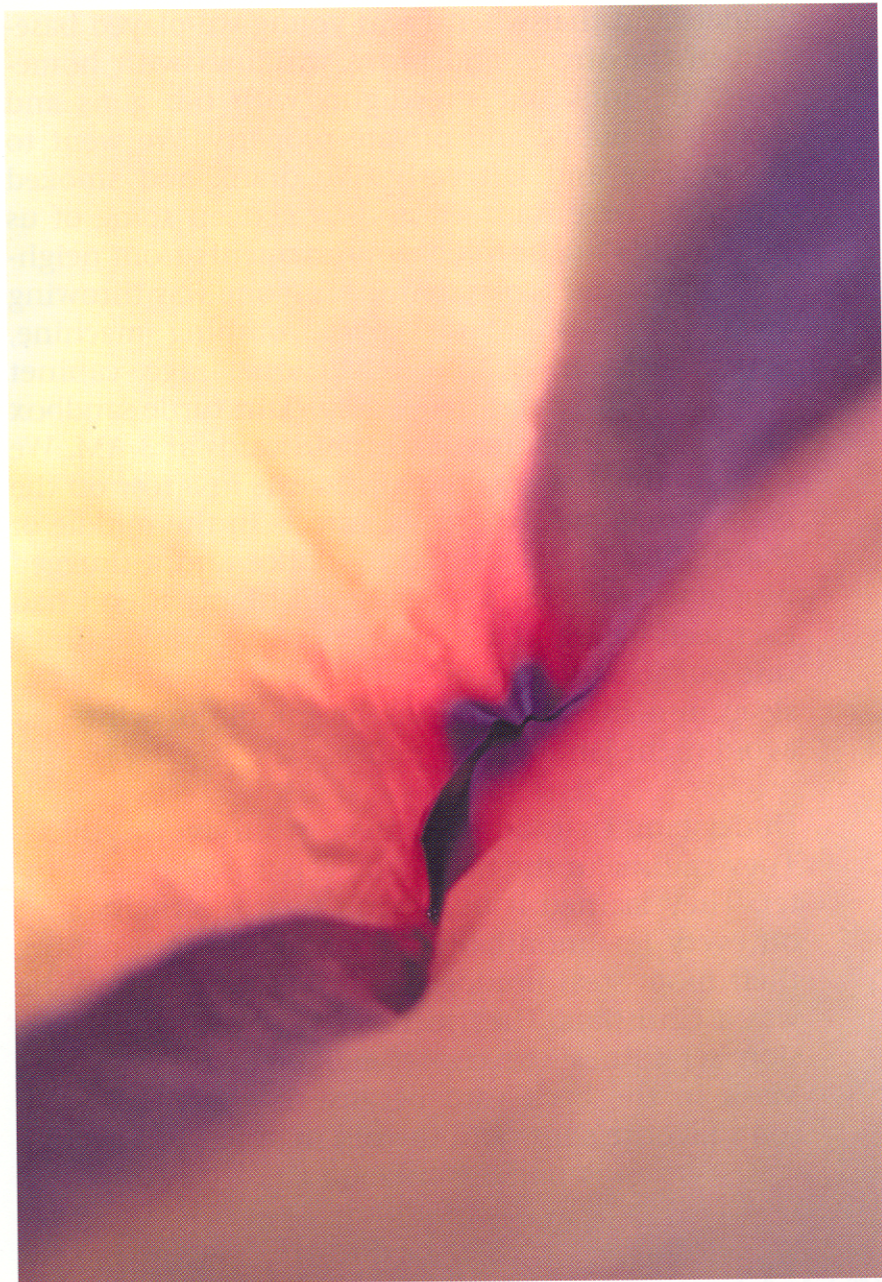
C. Bielmeier

As the chilling rains fall and the snow melts, waters rise around me. While my pavement gasps for dry asphalt, my lines fade. In some places, my road is completely washed away by the excess water draining from the mountains I surround. This is resting time. I am no longer frozen from chilling northern winds and I await the heat of the summer tourists. They come from all over to take in my views. They especially like Lookout Point, a stretch of C shaped road overlooking a valley of Civilian Conservation Core planted trees. Like systematic bushels of broccoli they stand, covering the valley and beyond—the trees that is. The tourists only see me as a thin black line weaving through the valley. For many from the city, the vastness of nature is startling.

First they trickle in, the adventurous souls, and then as the waters recede and the heat intensifies, my pavement burns. The weight of their houses on wheels is enormous and the whole park feels it. The noise. The noise intensifies as the constant vibrations of family sized autos are perpetually in motion. The great expanse of miles that I stretch leaves too much space for the tourist to walk. They get in their cars to take a hike and to see a view. What a ridiculous sight!

I was here before the auto, a secluded time. I was gravel then, with weeds as a median. I witnessed men tear out the trees and decades later replant them. Thousands of young males worked, saving the park. They built, dug out, and stocked the lakes. They erected the stores, cabins, bridges, dams, and bathhouses. They may call it Allegheny State Park now, but I have been here long before. I saw the destruction of the loggers, and the white man. I have seen the rebirth. I feel the way people's attitudes have changed as their autos' speed increases.

Now they cruise by at dangerous speeds, and stop just as quickly. What was mundane scenery now has become a fantastic moment. Drive through nature is what I name it. They stop hard to see the nature crawling along my side, foolishly viewing large nocturnal rodent scavengers gathering their dinners. The autos stand amazed, photographing and even feeding the showboating animal. Never fearful of their volatile bite.



:untitled
Katie Hanna
Photograph

UNDERSTAND

Understand that when I was young we played baseball in the streets and broke windows with home-runs. We took out streetlights with b-b guns and destroyed public and private property. We went to school late and left early. We drank and smoked when we were fourteen and by sixteen some of us had fake ID's. We stole lawn ornaments from neighbors' yards and took anything anyone was throwing away including a small pool, washing machine, dryer, dishwasher, old television, huge cabinet stereo, 14 Christmas trees and a giant turtle sandbox and planted them in each other's yards at 3 AM. We blew up the same mailbox five years in a row on the exact same day. We roamed streets in the middle of the night and got chased by police and a drugged hippie who was swinging himself higher than I had ever seen before in a deserted playground. We broke into our school and stole 15 hockey sticks and had to sleep in a friend's shed in the middle of winter to avoid night janitors and police.

Understand that kids like this can survive anything. They can see in the dark and keep warm in the winter. They learned it by having their electricity shut off every few months. They learned it by watching their mom steal hotdogs from Wegmans before she was a Christian. They learned it by wiring a television set into a car cigarette lighter and watching Mash in the back yard because it was the middle son's favorite show and the old man felt bad again.

Bob Diffenderfer

A hard north strut
smokey clouds billowing
flashing rampant electricity
Another storm arrived.

COMING DOWN

On a steady line,
thick pulsating rain
crashing business hail,
it was all coming down.

A solid pocket of power
meat fed gut,
muscling staggered wind
pushed and pushed again.

He was sleeping well.
heavy swarming comfort
Easing his hangover Sunday

and dreaming...

The planet flinched
Clumsy knocked the tree

In slow motion silence
it buckled the house

He's dead.

James Leland Hill



Ne11
Antonio Maria D. Chiarenza
Digitally Manipulated Photograph



:untitled
Michael Governale
Acrylic on Canvas

Calm Waters

My uncle was the calm water.
His innocence was the dam.
The war was the rushing water,
pouring over uncontrolled.

As a medic he tamed his water.
Being a healer was his dam.
Dying soldiers were his rushing water,
their blood poured uncontrolled.

My uncle became the rushing water,
the war broke through his innocence.
A tight eyed sniper broke his dam,
and his blood poured uncontrolled.

They sent him home to calm his waters.
Giving a purple-heart to rebuild his dam.
Trying to slow the rushing of his water.
Trying to help him gain control.

My uncle is the calm water.
His sanity is the damn.
His memories are rushing water.
Pouring over, under control.

Brenton McNeil

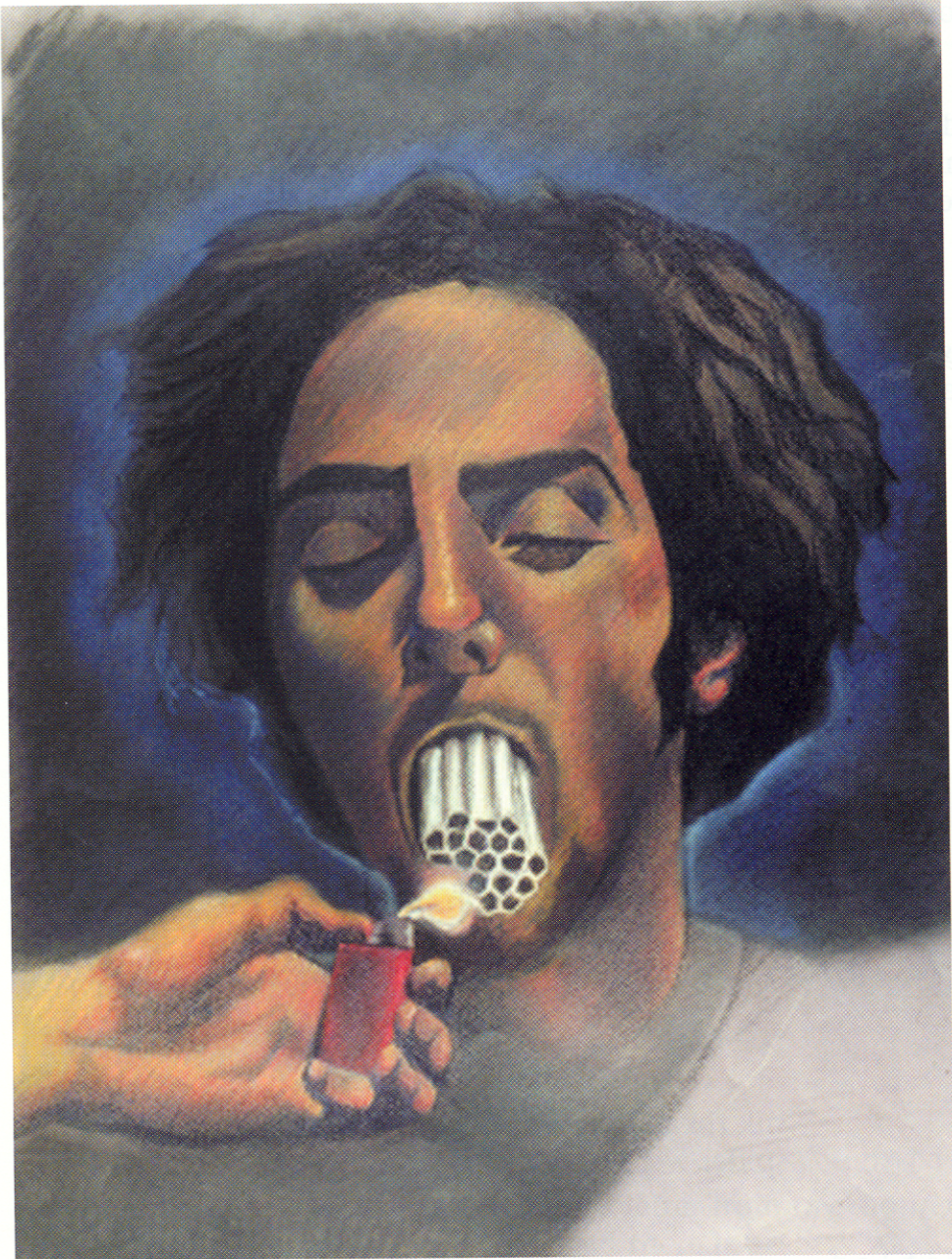
Ganges

the stream runs warm
the water dark
a bit bloody
and the sweat and the dirt from the bathers
gives it the stench of a dead-man's body.
"Do you intend to drink at this shore?"
the assembled mass inquires behind me
rising from the shore and turning
I see them
gray and undefined.
I see them but a moment
A fish flickers through the air
the people plead
I turn and leap to follow
for I see
all are dying of thirst.

Antonio Maria D Chiarenza

Bus Stop
Michael Governale
Oil on Canvas





:untitled
Mike Olson
Pastels on Canson Paper

Maroon looms out of grey day :untitled
 lady walking in the rain

mist drops gather on her hair
 Touch
 them
 fall

She is carrying white violets :untitled
 because she knows the rain
 \it has washed the colors all away

It has been days?weeks? ...no
 you could call it itthinkmonths
 months that have gone
 by since I felt you
 r wanting
 me near
 you. I
 feel... springsigh

A Boy Has Died
 or

What a Beautiful Day

All the girls are gathered in [the] chapel.
 The deaf man's word[s] echoe[s] from the quiet stone\marble.
 Birds chirp happily in the garden beyond.

:untitled
 silk theads drip\trail from your lips
 spider webs binding my tongue

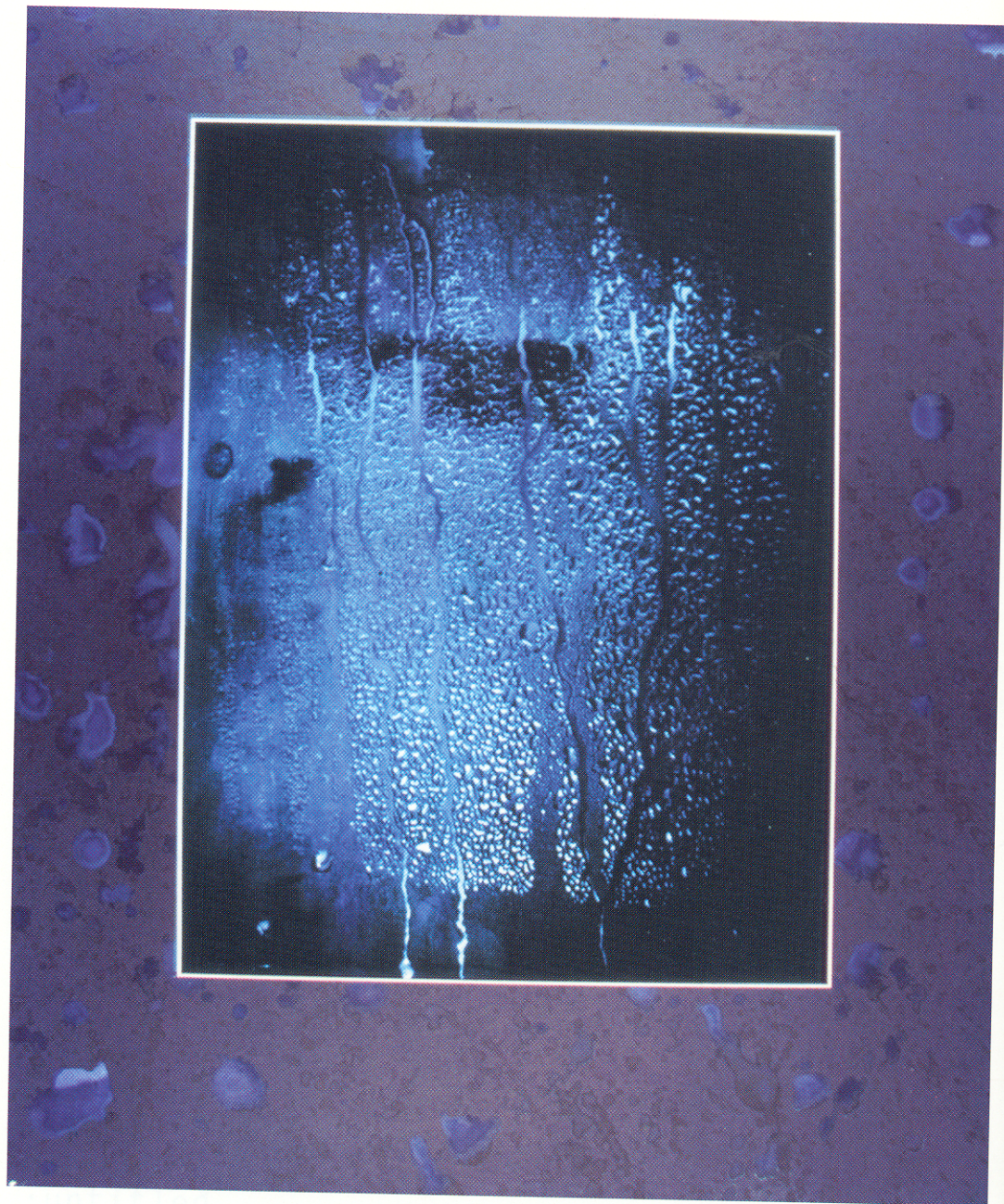
:untitled
 your fondness lingers on my face
 & all is right in the world

SHORT POEM WITHOUT TITLE
for a boy I used to know

My shadow is thick
thin
double wide
a ghost of itself propositioning the grass
it slides across
so smooth.
I ache.

:untitled

Last night I got a letter from my mother
and in it she said there is no easy way
to tell you this.
I'm leaving your father.
The papers are filed.
I'm sorry.



:untitled
Katie Hanna
Photograph

:untitled

Mary O'Halloran

Color Infrared Slide Film



Don't we all have such a taste for it?

We perk our ears, lick our lips and suck our teeth with every new bit of news ("We got 'em good today!"). And we let a ticker tape rain cleanse our palettes. Singing ballads of victory, songs of valor, hymns of triumph while we down a toast of wine with their blood.

I have yet to hear a casualty sing.

How easily we forget the way a newly displaced son can sound when drowning under his own blood (thanks to a keenly placed stomach shot), never thinking he'd be here (there), wishing to his respective god that he was anywhere but in that trench slash fox hole slash jungle slash desert . I suppose that it is song enough (that is to say the: gasping gurgling crying praying wishing dying)_ whether written for or by the performer, it's the same either way.

Somehow the "mother always said there would be days like this" rationale doesn't quite fit in this case.

But how the sun shines here, so bright in spacious skies reserved for the free and the brave (no loitering under penalty of son-we-do-things-differently-here law). Oh how the sun shines like gold off of the lake today. Oh how the bullets shine like gold (slightly devalued due to extensive wear) under that very same sun, x-number of miles away.

It was never supposed to be like this. Please, tell me how it came to this.

Do we fancy our boy a killer? Is it just part of honor and/or duty? Or is he heroic and brave to watch the only friend he has catch a 60mm shell with his teeth ("An' I tell ya, tomorrow, I'm going home, I just know it_")? The plane ride over seemed more spacious_ why does this compartment smell like wood_ boy, it sure is dark in here. No, I'm sorry, I stand corrected, it was only 52mm. And he'll wonder how long it will be before he's the only friend someone has (& he'll note how worry and wonder are far from synonymous).

Oh how opaque their veils be in the sun.

There's a new bit of news for the hungry (beyond another unknown cemetery). Set the table with the good china (another victim lies) and get the crystal. There's a telegram at the door ("_regret to inform you_").

matthewburns.

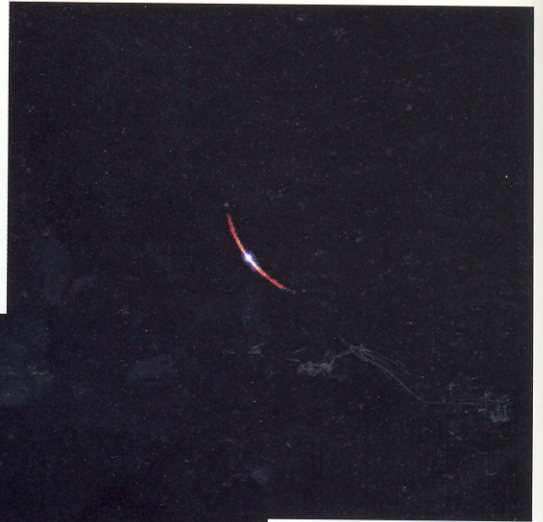
[a refined taste for that which we are fed]

Eclipse:aruba

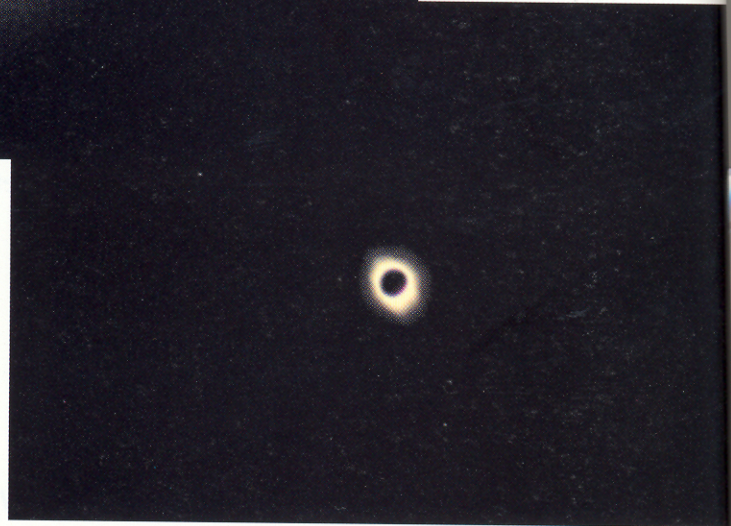
1. Bailey's Beads
2. Corona
3. Total Solar Eclipse with
Jupiter and Venus

Mary O'Halloran
Photograph

1



2



3

Slow Eye Movement

I close my eyes and see red carpet on the ceiling
Pigeons on the wall
Dragons roaming the land as if they were never extinct
The lights in the room turn into stars
The stars are scattered and red shift away from me
I am the center of the universe and the universe is the center of me
I raise my hand to my face and rejoice as my fingers begin to multiply
I don't want to open my eyes because I feel at home inside my head
Now I drown in water
Tears overflow the bags in which they were kept
Two waterfalls of tears coming from my eyes
I see a light, which makes me smile, because I think it is the sun
But it is a star that ended its life
Caused a bang and made me shake
The bang left me startled and it shook my universe
I tripped and stumbled into a pit
The only means of escape were to commit suicide or to fall in love
I promised myself to do neither
I see sheep in the pasture
Dumbfounded, the sheep refuse to jump
I plea for the sheep to wince from my screaming
Slowly, slowly
I drift to sleep

Brian Moon

The Art Gallery

I didn't go to the art gallery today.
Forgive me,
I was at home
Instead
Listening to the piano
and drinking wine,
Kissing
a boy
I like kissing
And time just flew by,
Until
the gallery was closed
And so,
I just thought
you should know.

Jillian M. Ejbisz

Technically sound
Moist lips meeting...4 supple breasts collide
Body pensive...hands still
He told me I did not have to be monogamous
I said I would kiss no other...
boy

Final Essay:

Sara Arnold

friends tongues
touch

"we are.....
happy."

(we are happy? I am
not
I think.)

I Dream Friend

"I am not."
I say

but we are....."

we made out
before
the touch
the stay I did not
stay
I left

I am not I say I know
happy
we are.

Seperate I am
Super I ron Island Rock

Make out
to
make
up

Micah Pastore

tongues touch
we are
I am not.

I came to him at night,
Half in my sanity,
Half in the bottle.
I found him there, waiting,
Lips glistening from the t.v. light.
His hat on backwards,
Shirt all a mess,
Waiting, for what?
Waiting, for me?
His caress so familiar.
His touch so comforting.
I lay in his arms for hours,
Never sleeping, just staring,
At the wall,
As it spins,
around and around.
I arise, and leave,
Feeling no less than the average man,
With my stay than leave tactics.
Honesty is what he received,
I think.
But the memories of his timid voice,
still lingers.
History repeats itself they say.

History Repeats Itself

Lindsay Shaw

ONE TIME,
GOD TOLD THE BEE,
"MAN IS
AFRAID OF YOUR STING,"
AND THE BEE
SAID, "REALLY?"

THE BEE

Graham Mackenzie

The paint of the strong woman
severed the walls of the room. Sweat poured
down her face and the light shined in the
last rays of the sun. The sound
of slicing was heard.

osmosis

I will paint my bedroom walls yellow,
And let them heal me when I sleep.

Jillian M. Ejbisz



Death Drawing #2
Graham Mackenzie
Pen and Ink on Paper

History
Book
Joline Jozokos

She raised her hand slowly and in one strong motion severed the stalk, letting it fall onto the pile. Sweat poured down her body and her protruding belly glistened in the last rays of sunlight. A whistle blew and the zipping sound of slicing sugar cane ceased. Yanribo took her machete and returned it to the foreman, receiving a small ration of flour to feed her and her growing child. She took it back to her small hut and ate her only meal of the day in silence. As darkness came she heard the songs of other slaves rise up in an evening celebration. Yanribo slowly dressed in the clothes she had stolen months before. She tucked a small journal, chronicling everything her family had been through since their capture in Abeokuta, Nigeria into the cloth tied at her waist. Aside from this, she took only an old yellowed Maryland newspaper she had begged from a traveler who had stayed at the plantation one evening.

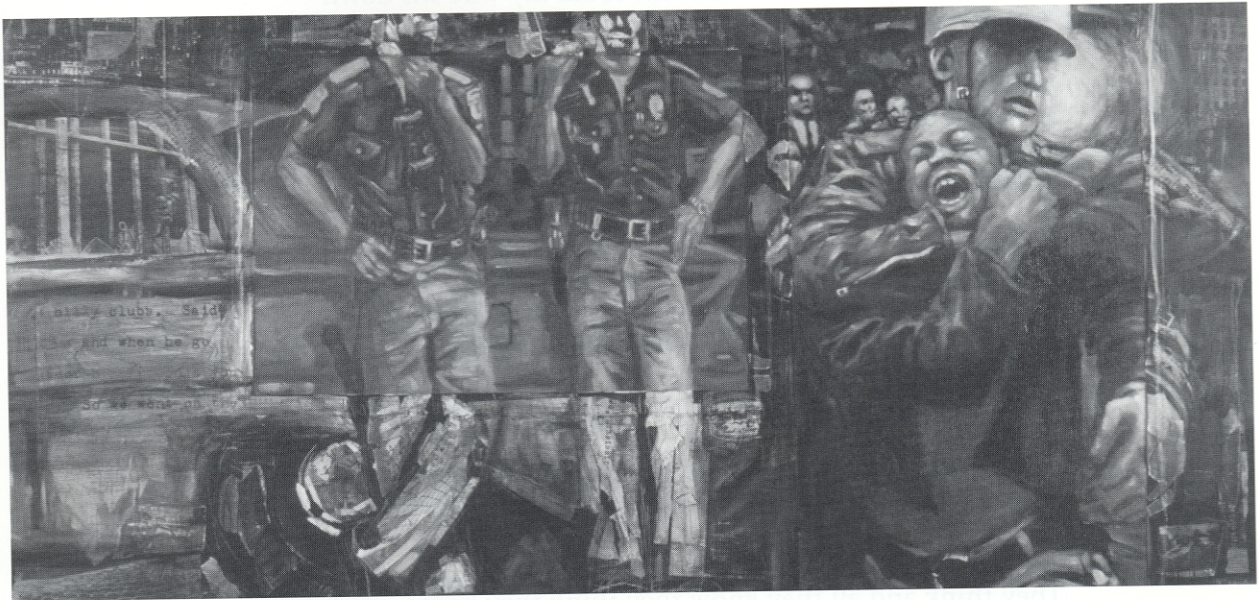
On the train she read the newspaper over and over again. She knew each story by heart, memorizing the faces and places in the drawings until she knew them like the faces and stories etched in her family diary. She took on the identity of Nancy Adams, a woman featured in the newspaper. The train journey was the most difficult part. She worried for the child in her belly, and hoped the pains she had been feeling would not get worse before she reached the North.

Yanribo crawled on all fours into the house. Two nurses ran to help her into one of the birthing rooms. The birth was difficult, blood flowed onto the floor and Yanribo prayed silently for the life of her child. The sun rose and set,

and still Yanribo lay on the reddened sheets shaking and drained from her efforts. The midwife and nurse asked her questions, but in her pain she confused her own past with the one she had memorized from the newspaper. As the first stars appeared in the sky, her daughter was born. After seeing her for one brief moment, Yanribo fell into a deep sleep lasting four days.

The nurse helped her learn where Ibilola had been placed. A free family had adopted the beautiful baby. She walked up to the house where a woman stood in the doorway. She introduced herself as Nancy Adams, asking simply if the small brown parcel could be given to Isabella. Yanribo was pleased that the name the family had chosen for her daughter was similar to the one she had given her at her birth. In the journal Yanribo had written the story of her own life in the few blank pages left. She wanted the story to be given to her daughter so that the history would always be remembered. Although she could not provide for Ibilola, she felt that one day, Ibilola may wish to know of her blood lines. The woman smiled and took the package from Yanribo's frail hands, wondering why this old woman, dressed in rags wanted to give her, what felt like a book through its paper covering. She thanked her, inviting her in for some soup. Yanribo refused and hobbled away. She returned to the almshouse where she sat down beneath the trees and fell into a deep sleep.

I stared down at the grave. I opened the oldest of the three little books and began to read the words written there. When I was done I whispered to the earth: "thank you, grandmother". Her grave has the name Nancy Adams marking it, but underneath lies Yanribo, my namesake. I thank her for ensuring that my children will know where they came from.



Civil Rights

Andrew Baker

Acrylic and Mixed Media on Board

Let them stare at it

Busy streets honking little yellow cars honk honk
Lifestyle stylish jeans and purple pumps
We are art critics bright light it touches me dancing butterflies
Flashing disco lights after the show come to my house for coffee

I am lost here backwoods front door weather stick wilderness
Moose come drink my wine to graze fields of birds of feathers
Stars light my studio a small little room my wife sits down
Makes the best of the best blueberry muffins a paint brush blueberry pie

You can live in a world a crowded street building number 102
At 7 met me that lady at the LA Mela
Great food for such happening people I studied art history in school
A bottle of this and a break of smoke to calm you down baby daddy o

Loon watcher paints loons on the blue sparkle lake
Ever green trees I draw to be ever green seas I see
Just an old man that sits and sketched Joes gas and stop
Portland's crazy streets are not even home to me

Art gallery opens and they want to see loons purple loons
Cool calm want to be a critic
I am in all the magazines and newspapers and on that web thing
I am the new ate hip hop maine trippin really trippin painter

They think and all they know they think they know
I painted the maine sky orange
cause dancing butterflies amaze me
New York's crowded streets you squeeze into a show of orange skies

I sit and laugh in an open field alone painting them
I can be the artist you can be the critic
Don't even think that that bridge over the river pink
A painting I did asleep is worth millions cause its not

Bless the people in life that praise art
For get together and all wear black art critic
Black shoes and hats and skirts for orange skies
Glasses of wine to celebrate me that Maine orange sky.

Clint Niedzwiecki

Zenity- I am/not

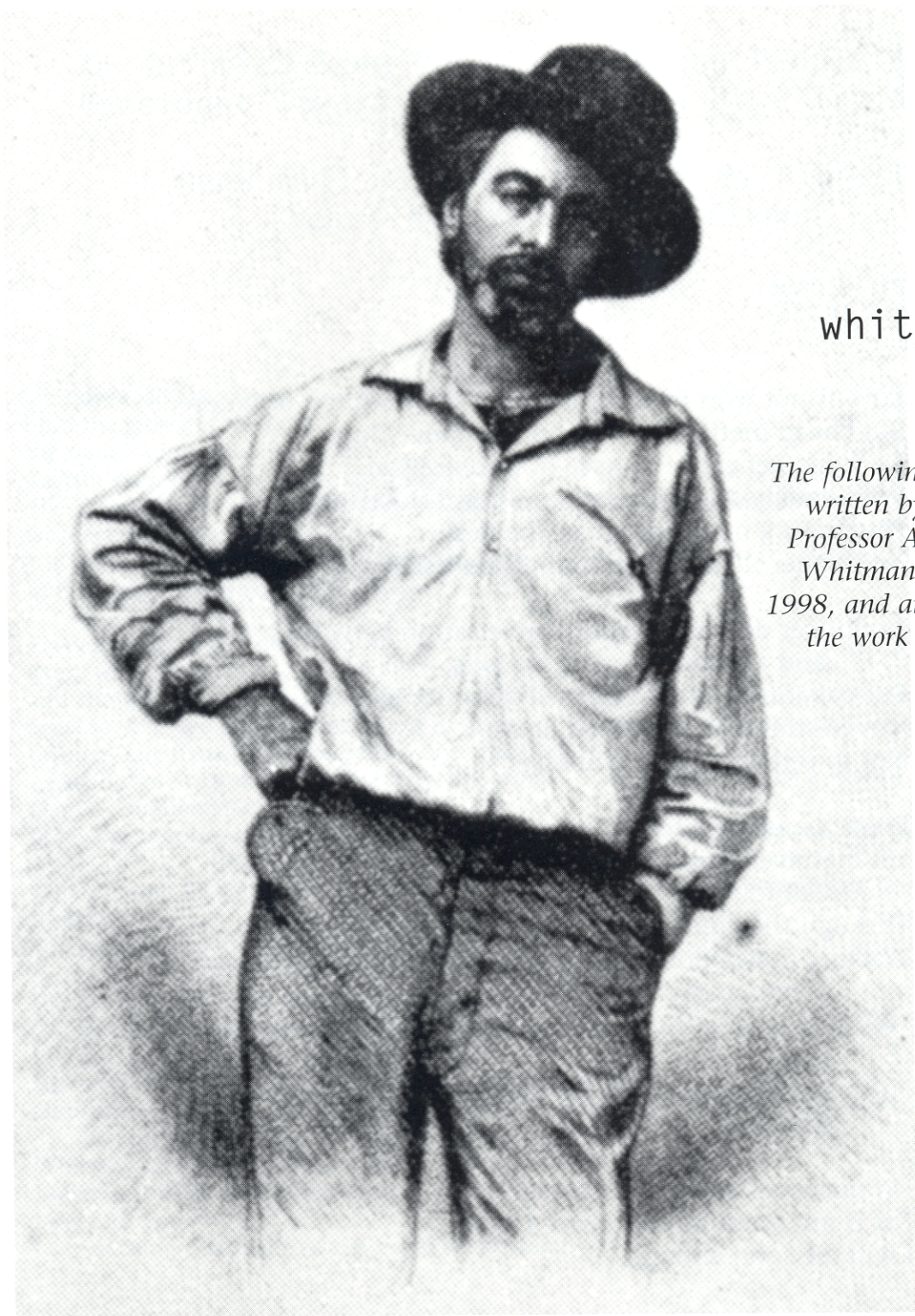
foggy sunlit roads.
a sign on the corner reads:
 spirit north
 body west
 mind east
free of judgement
free of fear, my heart sends me south.

Chad Dellerson

MAG: Bar Scene

She sits,
left flank of the bar,
grieving,
trying to maintain some pride.
Anxiety.
Her yellow blouse,
dips low,
shaping to her right breast.
A brown fur coat pulls her down,
slouching,
into the rear of the bar stool.
Red lips.
Rose cheeks.
Saddened,
she looks away,
about face from the man peering at her angrily,
wearing a dark business suit,
and hideous bright green tie,
downing the last mouthful of beer.
His cigarette hand reaches around,
over her shoulder.
She patiently waits.
Clearly upset.
Resisting tears.

Diane Kucharczyk



whitman

The following pieces were written by members of Professor Abrams' Walt Whitman class, winter 1998, and are inspired by the work of Whitman.

Modern Love

Davis Terrell

Love is not won by soulful loving conversation anymore,
But cheap ineffectual slop on the dance floor.
Declared beneath the haze of intoxication,
With smelly sweaty breath and mad bloodshot eyes.
Penetrating no deeper than the flesh,
No further than sweaty slippery soft skin.

No longer does intelligent conversation between a man
and a woman constitute love,
But passionate moans birthed in a moment of ecstasy.
Not to stimulate, but to titillate.
Not to cerebrate, but to arouse.

Do not mock me today Love, for I know your touch.
Let me travel through the land, with a loud voice I will
call for you.
Through the greenest of green in my great Vermont,
Walking down along the Appalachians to Pennsylvania,
Virginia, and Kentucky,
West across great rivers and plains, searching there for my
love,
Further west to the high Sierra-Nevada, perhaps there to
find you.

Do not mock me today O Love,
For if my truest desires prove foolish,
I will die soon enough.

An Untitled Song For The American People & Their
President Toward The Conclusion Of A Trying Time

or

I Know Bill, I Spent Most Of My Highschool
Years Not Having Sex Either

We have really become such a country of pussies!
both the girls and the boys.
the nation's inhibitions are rank
and the nation's hypocrisies are ranker!
The U S of A just isn't a land where you are permitted to get a decent blowjob.
Or maybe *you* can;
I, at any rate, am sickening with genteel, effete little licks
as if I were a frozen non-dairy desert.

Everyone who is sick and tired with me
Every woman and child, every adult or man,
and all other people who are simply themselves
because their genitalia are not frozen to stone and therefore their cunts—man, woman and child
owning—are harder than freeze and hotter than melt
need all stand together . . . in the street shouting in the halls of the powerful, the halls of the
people . . . immovable . . . sitting , protest
or lay back on sunny park benches declaring, "Fuck me!" to all comers and take it no more

Tell me, what do you think of the repressed and frightened way Americans are learning not to give
head?

You know, it is because they are so thin.

Do you know which is making them mad:

is it the fact that she blew him? or

is it the (so called) fact that she's fat?

Human history has always advanced on such hips as those

and likewise the Common Cause walks boldly: her beautiful buttocks, arrogant cock, inciteful lips

. . . . ignoring the act read her she carries on.

What is wrong? I tell you nothing.

I say it is time and long past time

I say fuck you, too.

I say nothing is wrong that has never been wrong.

Do not be alarmed at my words—our words . . . the common common everyday words for everyday everywhere things

These words are part of you, part of me, of us all
no one can be rejected:

Each and every part makes the body sound

Each and every part has its own proper pleasure

Each and every part must speak its own sound

Each and every part of a body must voice out its name

Each and every part likewise of the political body must name his or her own body

Each one must name and own her or his parts.

Those who say, "Do not say thus," and expurgate

—my words or yours—

Those people are trying to censor the very parts of the bodies of men and the bodies of women

Those people are trying to censor the individual parts of The Body of Woman and Man

I will tell to you now a better commandment:

If your sight is offended when you enter the restroom because there are two or three of your
Neighbors on the floor

doing it like dogs—or with dogs—and you are preoccupied with making it
to heaven, but never tonight

then you may—if in indignant self-righteous rage you wish to castrate your Neighbors—pluck out
your worn eye or other organ of pleasure as was done in days old

but better, far better, that you just close your eyes and looking into that darkness give thanks

instead to those who have made you thanks that your sense is yet whole and wholly good . .
if dormant

and waiting for the day at last you consent to glimpse glory.

Bring me any man or woman who is not lured by beauty . . not drawn to power of arms nei-
ther legs . . nor belly

who does not respond in kind to the fecund scent of her or his own kind

whose heart is never quickened with pure lust

whose faculties are never weakened by tenderness

: this person does not belong among us!

All such persons should be cast out from our band

if we are to be a free and earth people . . hearty.

A people with strong bodies and healthy appetites

Treading boldly on any land or world

Asking no pardon for plain uncouth ways

Not wielding any grudge nor harm

Altogether a nation of virile women and men!

then a person such as that will never have the balls to lead us

A person lacking those drives can never stand at the fore and lead a Free World

No, let us never again be subjugated—

No, let us never again be subjects to tyrants—

No, let us never again bow . . be borne down by wizened old eunuchs

taking no pleasure in food not in sex

I see now that Americans are a people in need of tutelage.
I see now that Americans are starved for a good example to study.
They need to go back and relearn their most remedial lessons.
They have forgotten their most basic values. So I Volunteer.
I will show all as befits a poet—or lover—to do:
Behold, I will go naked into the school rooms.
Behold, I will stand before all the classes without wearing so much as a single stitching of shame

Why should you study only the word of dead writers!
when I invite you . . . worship my living rhythm with your mouth
my rhymes? Why should you not read the lines of my hand—the bumps of my head—with your
own also live finger?
Yes, perhaps you will find no truth therein.
Perhaps these things may not reveal any truth to you
but next to the tongue and the pen that do lie these are mute;
The body is true : the body can not lie
Must we speak silence then because all words are lies . . . have been lied . . . could yet be used as lies?

No!
Lie them on me—your hands. They will know when we speak . . . together . . . your skin knows
. . . truth
I know. Your skin aches to be written with such Truth;:
These Truths . . . we hold we holding . . . every citizen —obligated
to tell and to tell and unceasingly tell
tell we are united in loves and in lusts, one World united
over all gods and the dead bodies of dead gods and dying
ideologies that keep us apart
that keep us from touching.

Antonio Maria D Chiarenza

The Dread Red Raspberries

Through the dread red raspberries
taste the wasted heartlands of America.

The infrequent berry-
like the patch that it came from,
surrounded with desolate brothers-
is juicy and flavorful.

Most taste like water, or nothing.

Graham Mackenzie



Round the fallen comrade, the
fire did faster circle

Round the fallen comrade, the fire did faster circle.

Flames tickled playfully at the hero's feet

And gently rustled his soft blond hair

As he called for Death by his mother's name.

Davis Terrell

reaction to: The Sleepers, 1855

We awaken from the crippled coffin in which we lay. . .gate to the egalitarian life.
No longer sealed by a varnish of ill reasoning and antipathy.

Wonderful that we are all Sleepers. They can rouse themselves and become aroused.
The loins that opened to concieve you had prepared you for nothing but to exist in this
transcending similitude. Are we not the vulvas that will produce and reproduce
thousands upon thousands of fantastical meandering thoughts?

It is also you and I that go from beside to bedside sleeping close to each other. Every
being combined to request that each necessary cell exist personally to them. Summoned
even in mutiplicity, I will go to each dreamer and you will go to each sleeper. . .who
would have you.

The strongest becoming the most subservient and incapable, the weakest taking anything
that wants him. Changed each one of us, and in this transformation. . .beauty as only
we can remember it.

Jeff Asbrand

Infundibulation

You perpetuate the music with the motion in your arms,
Feed the rhythmic flame with the steps of you feet,
Flow from here to there, gliding on a film of hyper-unctous vibes.

You recreate the room infundibuliform, with you at the apex
And all of us spinning madly about,
Subordinate to your fleshy magnetism.

Davis Terrell

1.

Onto bodies of the truest perfection I say:
With due respect to the mind, the soul, the heart, the totality of
an entity, all kept
With due honor to the talents and gifts bestowed, all kept as well.

My America says it is to be not so.

A subversion of the subversives is being instituted. The truest
beauties are the revolutionaries, and the oppressed.
The truest beauties are the carrion for gloss-clad & electronic blue
vultures.

Picking the meat as if it were nothing more;
Stripping the dignity, the respect from the son bleached bones;
Tearing the remaining hope from each of the remaining few who
maintain their posts with an unrelenting fervor.

I ask you dear patriarch....
I ask you if you can claim innocence from these said accusations.
I ask you to prove your humility, your humanity, in the swollen eyes
of your accuser.

I say you cannot.

2.

Your mere acceptance, my brothers and sister of a common mother,
is currency of the greatest value. More than any earth metal, or sky
metal, more than any paper or coin.
From each generation to the next there is bestowed a new beau ideal. Fashioned
in every way by those that are extrinsic and labeled as right.

An observable spinal column was never meant to look well.
An observable patch of rib, or a spot of clavicle shining through the rice paper called flesh
was never meant to look well.
An observable and protruding cheekbone was never meant to look well either.

Yet they do in the eyes of too many (as I see it).

Sons of Eve, Repent!

(for J. Elizabeth)

Do we call a disintegrating corpse a beauty?
(self-initiated and gaining momentum)
Do we see ancient Egyptians preserved as beauty?
(in a way not the same as the previous)
For, they are one in the same.
They are the dying and dead, the tortured or victims there of.

3.

Hiding, like a children's game, behind an apple tree, the same one that is
said to be the worldly downfall.
You know what there is my sons, my brothers, my fathers, you do know
what there is to be done. Ingrained like the swirls of sienna within
an oak or maple cut.
You know how to take and order, how to instruct and drill and curse.
You know what you want and it cannot be anything than your deserved.
I say otherwise. I say contrary. I say that this is a lie, a fib, a falsity, an invention
by those that are blind to the true and the truest perfect.
Let us come to an answer between the poles of each other.
Otherwise we will no longer speak, only quarrel and slur.
We cannot, will not make the misnamed humble any poorer.
The devaluing shall cease and we shall begin anew with a new sense of unwilting
beauty.

Let our daughters, our sisters, our mothers hear the new calls with an ear of understanding
and forgiveness.

4.

Where dying is more promising than losing a body,
Where an opportunity such as this exists, an oppression exists.

-matthewburns.

response to: You Felons
on Trial in Courts

Ecclesiastical clamoring!

Who would deny you, devilish composer of unconditional love?
You will be one more suffering unheard wretch and join and combine hearts to unify
appropriately.

Expose genitals and shout! Let all creatures know I am obscene with loyalty
and know that even as weary craftsmen build monolithic legal erections
I cannot maintain a distinction, my bard, between such men and those chained
to burden the yokestone of guilt.

I too, cannot deny my deserving of such shackles and humility.

I too, have exhibited excesses and ill-temper and hell's wash of wickedness and lust.

And before I separate myself from any (or let denominations stratify and exclude)
I wish to remember what you had taught me.

I too, cannot deny myself!

Jeff Asbrand

My voice, I will raise

"Life doesn't come with instructions, which is why we have fathers."
I sing a song for you, father because it is you who in part gave me life
You cradled me in your arms and taught me a lullaby
As I sing I hope it brings you half as much joy as you have given me
I cherish the times we spend even if they are times of anger
You have never walked out on me even at the worst moment
You were proud to call me your son and I am proud to call you my hero
I sing a song for you, father because it is you who in part gave me life
I cradle you in my arms and sing my lullaby

Brian Moon

Walt Whitman Personal Ad

Personal publicity is far from belittling one's spirit. No one can deny that they are always looking for something. I, too, am looking for something. I haven't yet found the IT that is necessary in my life. IT isn't something I can buy at any store, or have shipped to me from China. My life is quite fulfilling and I continue looking - not waiting for IT - looking at the earth, its' people, myself, and the changes that evolve each day. My gender is irrelevant: I wish to remain ambiguous. If you are the IT that shares these curiosities and splendors with life, we shall one day meet on a street corner and share stimulating life experiences. I cannot be reached at any house address, as though I only exist in one location. IT is everywhere; you and I are one, the same. Only after looking intently at all that passes before you, will you and I meet and you will know what IT is.

Katie Hanna

Personal Ad for WW

Modern bard seeks a Great Person of any age
For long jaunts in the countryside,
And moonlit baths in the sea.
Must be a first rate loafer
And must not be afraid.
Must assume what I assume,
For I assume no sexual taboos
And I assume the divine in you.

Davis Terrell

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