

SIGNATURES

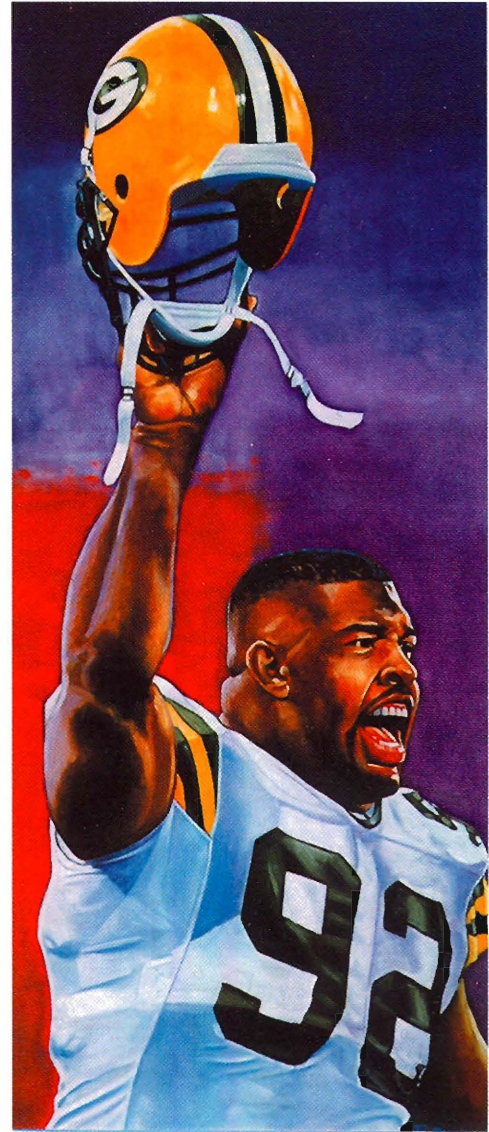
a magazine of art and literature

Todd Bachta

Reggie White
Mumford

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Signatures Magazine™ is published annually at Rochester Institute of Technology. It is a collection of original, creative works submitted by the students of RIT. **Signatures Magazine™** is generously funded by the RIT Creative Arts Fund, the College of Liberal Arts Language, Literature, and Communications Division, and RIT Student Government. Your comments and suggestions are encouraged and can be addressed to: **Signatures Magazine™**, c/o RIT Student Government, 127 Lomb Memorial Drive, Rochester, New York 14623.

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Back Cover: Natalie Hawryschuk • Gunshop

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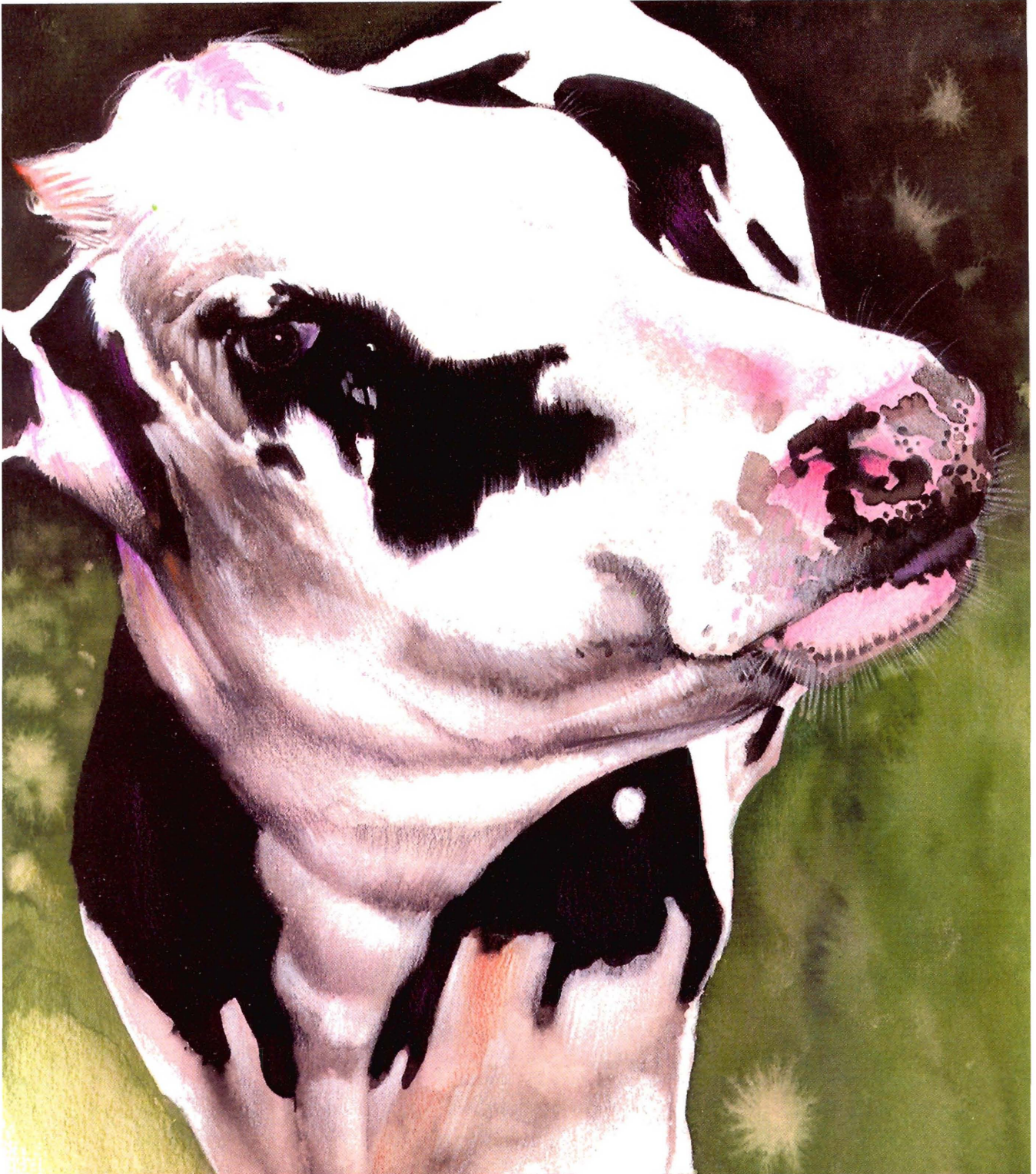
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Ben Owens
My Cow



Linzee Lia Braaten

Untitled



About Signatures

For twelve years now, Signatures has dedicated itself as a creative forum for the diverse gifts the students here at RIT have to bestow. Signatures strives to recognize rising talent every year and we feel the artwork and poetry we've seen this year has been, by far, amazing.

Signatures was originally a black and white publication which placed more emphasis on literature. Since, this magazine has evolved into a full color booklet with a nice balance between art and literature. We are proud of what Signatures has become. We hope it represents a creative community in which we can all feel proud to be a part of.

The publication of Signatures would not be possible without generous grants from RIT Creative Arts Fund, The College of Liberal Arts Language, Literature and Communication Division and RIT Student Government. We thank all three departments for their interest in the creative arts here at RIT and their philanthropic endowments to produce this publication. We also wish to personally thank our faculty advisor, Professor Mark Price; the NTID Desktop Color Separation Production class; and all others who worked hard to make this magazine happen.

Most importantly, because this magazine consists of the outstanding writing and artwork of RIT students, we would like to offer sincere thanks to all who submitted to Signatures. The selection process was a difficult one because of the many remarkable pieces we've received. We hope that Signatures illuminates the talent of the student body and provides a commemoration to our years here at this institute.

Thank you and best of luck to all!

Staff of Signatures 1997

Do Angels Return?

How long is an eternity?
Truly forever for you and me.
But what about a servant of God?
Is forever just a blink or nod?

Do angels require some time to rest?
Where would spirits be inclined to regress?
Somewhere sacred, somewhere in our grasp,
Or somewhere that craves the touch of grass?

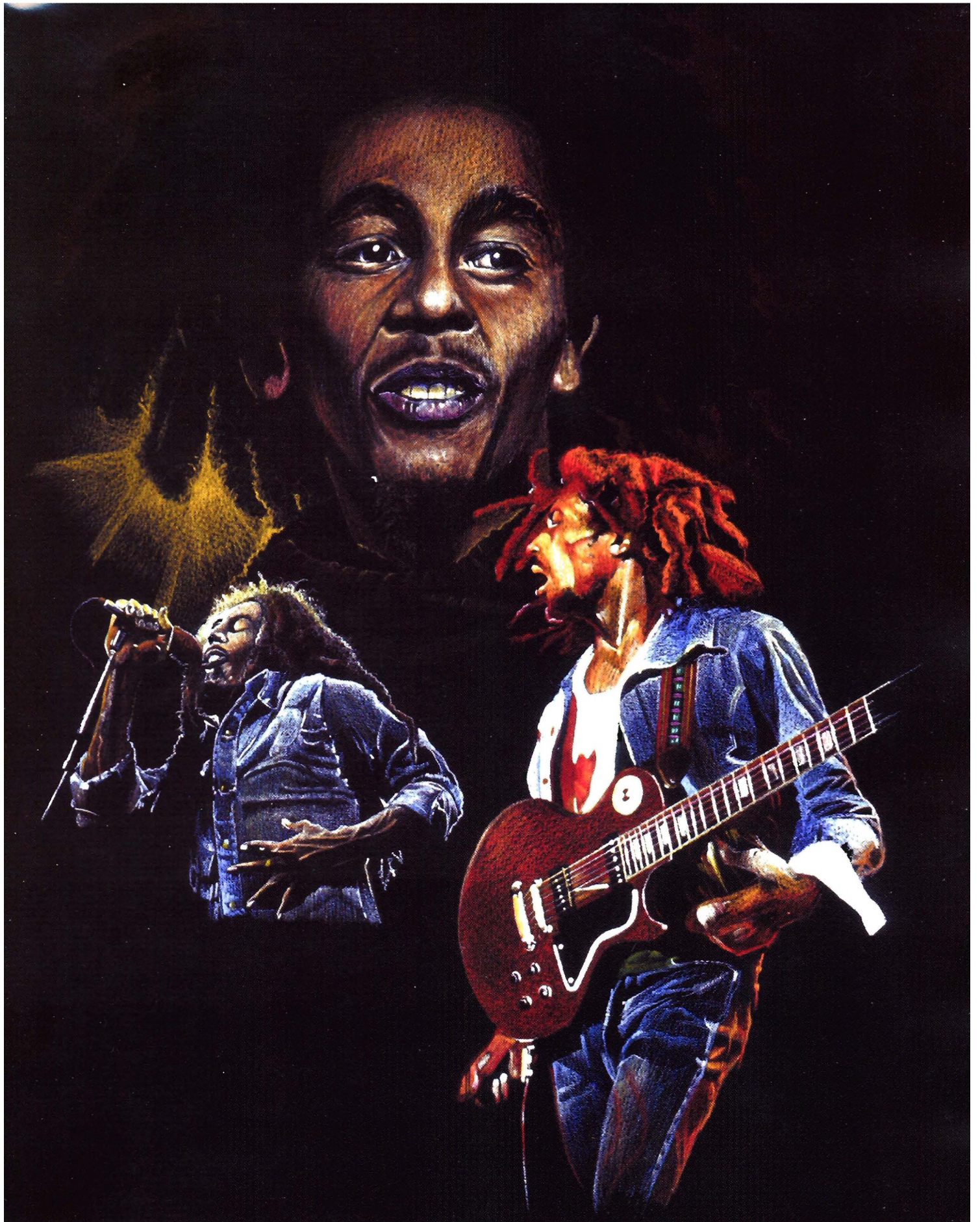
I suggest that you and I,
Are two angels just passing by,
On a 70 or 80 year retreat
Just a place to put up our feet.

This may explain the following query:
The ones that leaves us dark and dreary.
The fact that when we grow old, we're ready for Him
without a fight, without a care, not even a whim.

What about those that are suddenly taken,
the innocent ones that make us feel forsaken?
I submit that when we are called back in line
Our presents are required for more urgent divine.

So the next time you see a bird or a bee
Flying around a magnificent oak tree
Not to exclude both man or beast
Try to envision a soul at peace.

Ralph Donatelli, Jr.



Bare

Like a tiny butterfly
Beating its multicolored wings
Against a monsoon storm
Like a weightless white feather
Taken off a dove
Surrendered to an August wind
We need to let it go
Like a river bed run dry
Like an ocean with no waves
With a thirst that can't be quenched
With a half empty glass of nothing
I need to take a sip
A dozen roses with no stems
Petals picked that have no color
Orchards bare of any fruit
Branches that refuse to hold the leaves.
I need to climb those trees
Like holding your breath
Like holding someone else's
Like hearing your pulse
In a passing stranger's chest
I need to bleed
Asleep for all these seasons
Either that or close my eyes
Dreaming when the sun comes
Nightmares in the moon
Like having a place to go
Like wandering home again
Becoming lost inside your head
I need to be there
Like having your words all used up
Like forgetting what to say
Like whispering underwater
Like shouting in outerspace
I need to say it
Like the most beautiful things in life
That are tarnished by our touch
Like sand to salt and then to air
Like keeping faith as a souvenir
I need to be resurrected.
I need to find your love

Christopher Irick



Capital Shit

In this world of confusion
and distorted reality
In this world of crime
and visual fantasy
In this world of wars
and imagined peace
In this world of guns and knives
and stolen lives
No chance to grow
and no chance to be
what your parents always wanted
you to be
no chance to escape
from the ugliness and polluted air
you try to be fair
and give peace a chance
you try and let them know
you'll be willing to help
but when you're stark naked
on an open street
shivering in the cold
the lamplight reflecting
in the puddle at your feet
you come to think
that warmth is an impossibility
and coldness an enduring trait.

Jenna Leon





Untitled

Things seen and yet unseen
Just as the golden sun lights the sky
Casting long shadows on the frozen ground
Warmth, it would seem, should prevail
Yet winter's touch is all around

Evidence of what should exist
Lies scattered about apparent to all
Subtle truths though, will still be missed
What may seem real may not truly be
What one imagines he feels might all be dreamed

But to see the world for such a long time
Through eyes so often filled with tears
May cloud the real, may make him blind
To the slow change of events
The fade of winter over time

And so what may have once been fake
May now indeed be what is true and real
What was once hoped for ever so long
May have arrived in its silence alone
And suddenly warmth, it would seem, does prevail

Andrew Hessler





On a Chilly Rochester Morning

It's a few minutes to eight o'clock
 On a chilly Rochester morning
 Like a stream of fresh water
 A mass of bodies inches forward
 In the dull westward direction.

If you were a bird up in the air
 Looking down on the winding stream
 Your eyes would be mesmerized
 By the masses of red hair, blond hair,
 Black hair, dyed hair, the rainbow colors.

Like an army in training
 Or like a train of black ants
 Scurrying to the academic buildings
 Depicted by the beckoning red bricks
 Indifference written on their faces.

Diversions tear up the train
 Across the bridge it pushes forward
 The heels making plain music
 Faces unsmiling at the fresh air
 Gratitude all but gone with the wind.

Like the sun setting on a summer evening
 The train disappears in the distance
 Till tomorrow announces its arrival
 Like the well-fed mighty river flowing
 The routine never ceases.



Margaret Kangai

Closet Mountain

◀ Read this poem from bottom to top ▶

top
 led on
 der, one crump-
 black, white, laven-
 folded Russian roulette of
 sweaters on shelf above not
 my clothes are on the floor; my
 hangers wound round bar because all
 skirt falling off the hanger; bare sticking
 terned rubber soles, nylon shoelaces weaving
 my eyes, my sneakers thrown in upside down, pat
 der, black—disorderly scenery; the sight is offensive to
 sion drifting haphazard clouds, knotted knitted white laven-
 round bar across mountain peak, over peak of vertical protru-
 entities off tops of silver branches from hard twisted trees, wound
 the rocks, dappled white and green currents uneven ripples and falling
 snake tracks, weaving print of their bodies; pale pink waterfall spills into
 mess, nylon vines woven between the sharp black edges, on underside of rocks
 I open the creak door to the foot of the mountain where rocks lie tumbled in disheveled

Susan Bernhart



Untitled

So you say you want to dance

Snow Falls
 Snow Melts
 Trees Bud
 Leaves Fall
 Time and
 Time Again

A symphony of sight
 A torturous delight
 A hope beyond hope
 Yet pressures ever so present
 Cease to exist

For once in my life
 I am just myself
 Nothing more, nothing less
 Such a relief to simply
 Smile, laugh, and dance

In all the sunsets I've seen
 Never have I been
 So happy and free
 Just being me
 No facades, no walls
 Three people instantly friends

With all of my heart
 I extend a thanks
 For showing me the obvious
 I am more than
 Books, rules, roads, and lies

And with a bow and a kiss
 I let go of an instant
 of love and peace
 I will forever miss
 Freely given by two women
 Luckier than I'll ever be

Snow Falls	I come
Snow Melts	I leave
Trees Bud	I return
Leaves Fall	I go
Time and	One more time
Time again	Who knows?



Insanity

Passion Pleasure Power Pain
How it feels to go insane
You're the lucky one you see,
'Cause who I am you'll never be

John Camiolo

Eyes

Her airy breath on my glasses
Fog my mind, my lenses, so I am
To blind to see to reason, and
Her voice carries on like nothing is wrong

Ringin' in my ears, the decibels louder
Drowning out my common sense
Her laugh pounds my heart like a hammer
Pound my heart into a broken shape

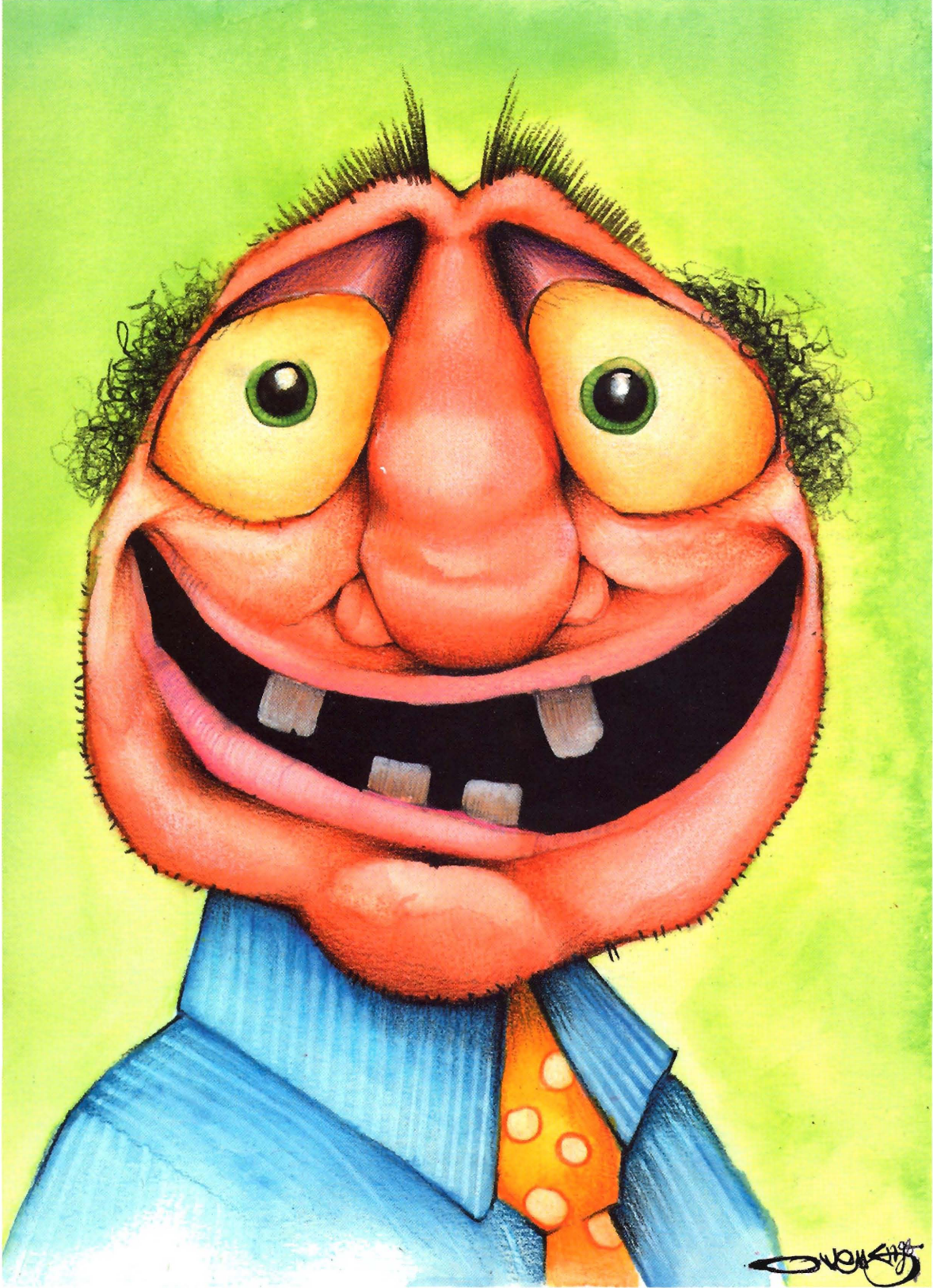
Bleeding in the aisle, crying on the pew
I can only pray for her smile
To brighten my day, my corner, my abode
And to warm my confidence so that I might
simmer

Her airy breath on my glasses

Drawing eyes in the vapor on the lens
So she can see me behind the fog
Her smile blinding my eyesight

Why does she do this to me?

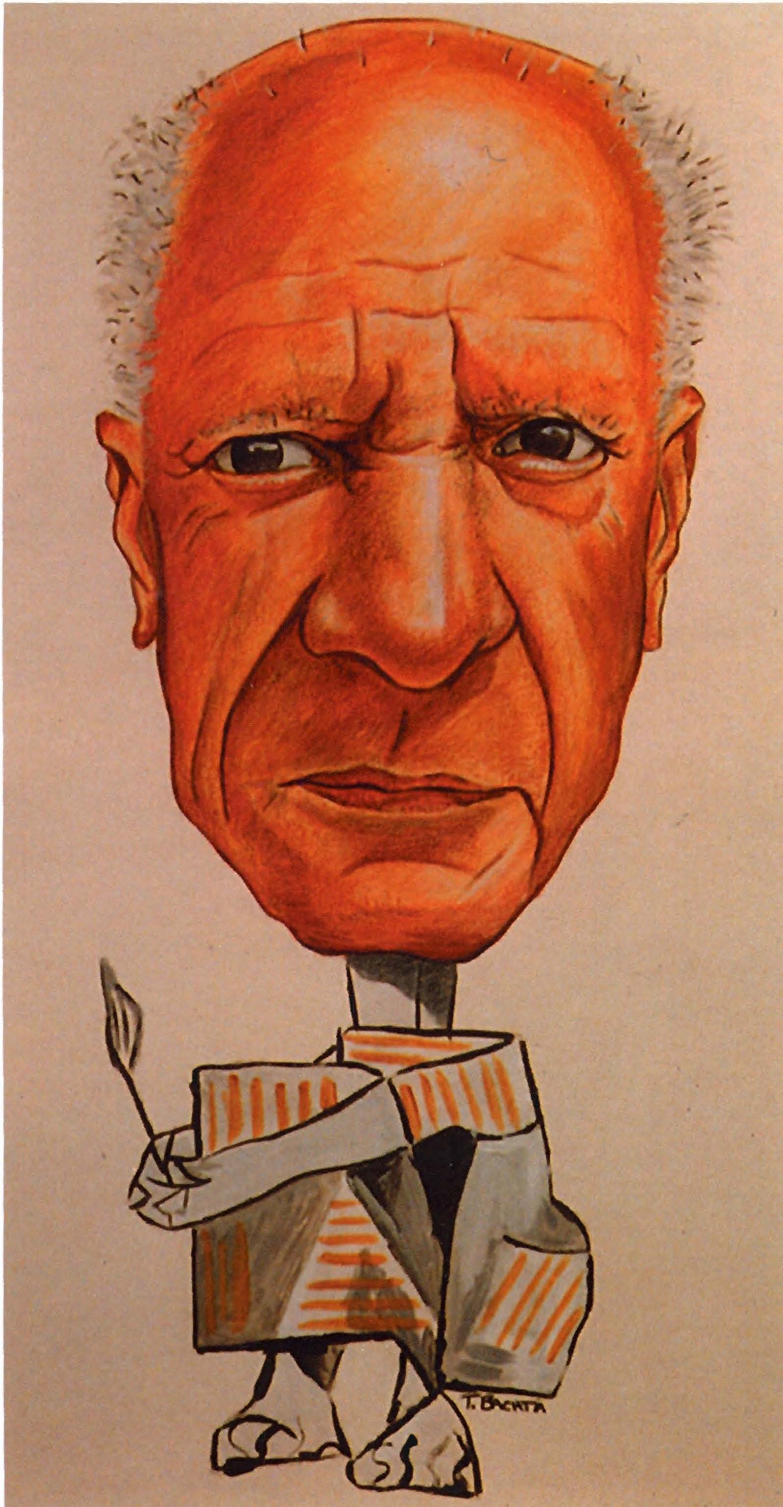
Jeffrey X Izbel



Furiously

and she wrote furiously
with blood streaming from her knuckles and eyes
and she forgot all but the pain
kicking her in the stomach, killing any life that might have chosen to grow there
and she hurt furiously
his spill still burning beneath her stomach, a fire whose embers still glowed devil-red
and she prayed furiously
to a god she didn't believe existed
but feared nonetheless
and blood poured over the paper and down her cheeks
and she screamed in delight
and she stretched her tongue out to catch her release
and as her own life spilled down her throat
pain thought to be long dead howled in mischievous laughter
and swallowed her inside out and escaped through her own voice
bouncing against walls that closed in simultaneously with the fast beat of her heart
and she smoked furiously
puffing deep and long and swallowing smoke 'til it burned at her throat and stung the corners of her
weary eyes
and everything sucked
life love death hate
it was all the same when she pondered it
and she thought furiously
an engagement ring caught fire on her hand
and she used water from her boyfriend to smother the flames
and a police report tickled the small of her back
and she cackled at the walls who had finally sat still
and she paced furiously
practicing her march into battle
arming herself mentally but neglecting her emotions
but pacing made her dizzy and her knees gave way and she fell to them in an ironic stance of worship
and she knew the battle had been won
because slowly she started
and before she could laugh
she cried. . .
furiously





Graduation Day

I was there, inside the room,
Dark and crowded with silent friends.
Tiny bats waiting to appear,
Out of trapped space, to open light.

White dots popped in my small face,
Which left behind a bright blue trace.
My dark squared cap nearly fell off,
Onto the ground near my shoe.

I gathered myself together,
And smiled to the blurred misty crowd.
Strutted in my dark papered gown,
Towards my tall, friendly fellow.

Boldly, I held my papered roll,
Tied a bright yellow stained band.
In black bold writing which stood out,
Showing to the world, my unique name.

I stumbled to my mother who,
Embraced me into her thick arms.
Her warmth and comfort was enough,
To calm my mini-shaking hands.

A mix of gladness and dismay,
Overcame me as I did not
Know what my life in the dim light,
Will have ahead for me.

Marina Rossit

Todd Bachta

Five Man Jazz

Trick of a Color

Pink stripes on a black stone,
White polka dots on trees.
Purple bears with blue claws,
Birds with neon green wings.

Orange cars with red tires,
White sperms with black eggs,
Chocolate and vanilla twisted kids,
Not at all, but a forbidden race.

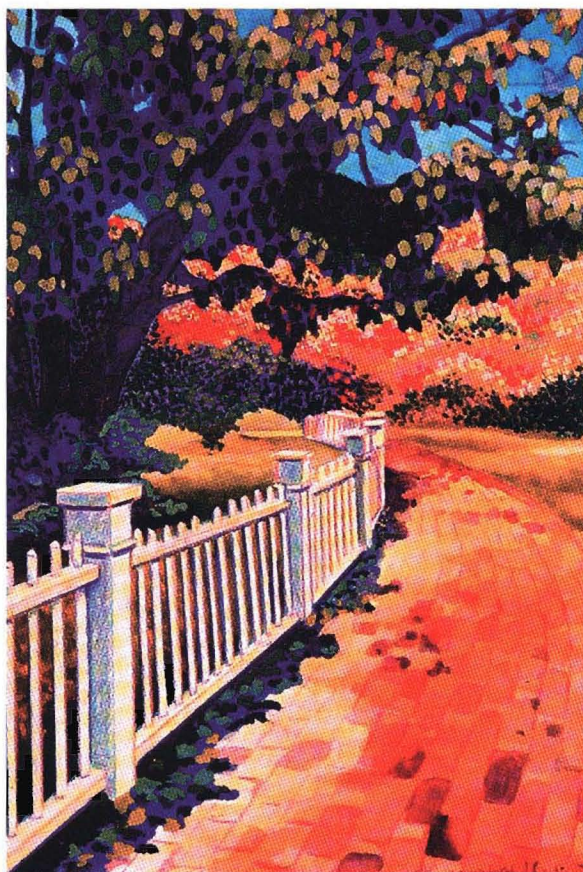
What about the rainbows,
and our colorful lizards?
Why are they considered beautiful,
while their colors are also in a
mixture?

All in a form of one's preference,
to shape our world's fate.
It's only by the trick of a color,
that gives us reason to hate.

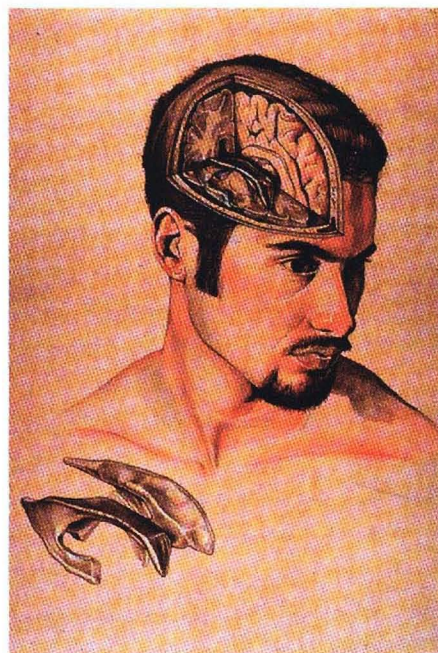
Rosa Lee



Emily Huthsteiner
Untitled



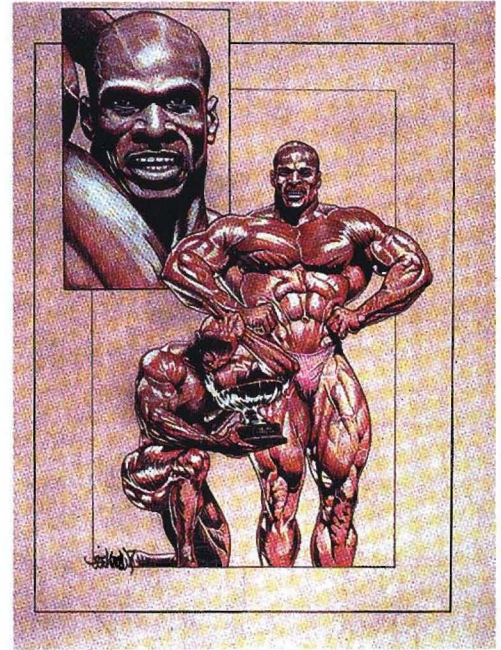
Anthony Ryan
Untitled



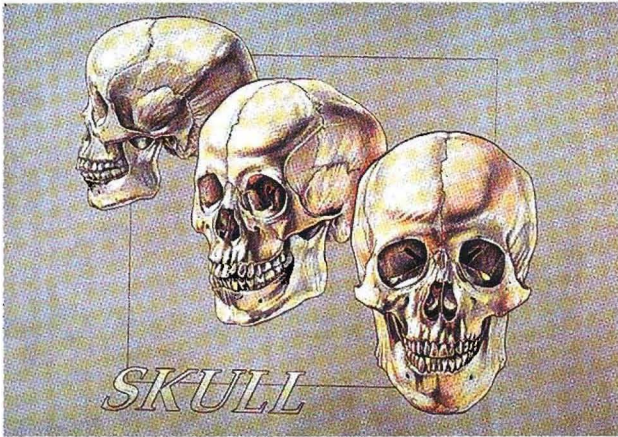
Kevin LeVick
Untitled



Paul Waldinger
Untitled



Anthony Ryan
Untitled



Linzee Lia Braaten
Untitled



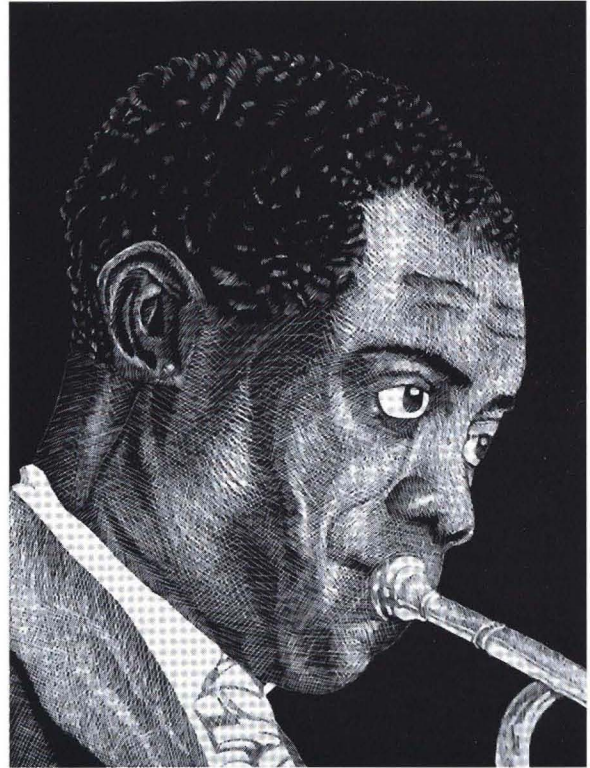
Aaron Eddy
Room of Warped Space



Louis Armstrong

Unconditional

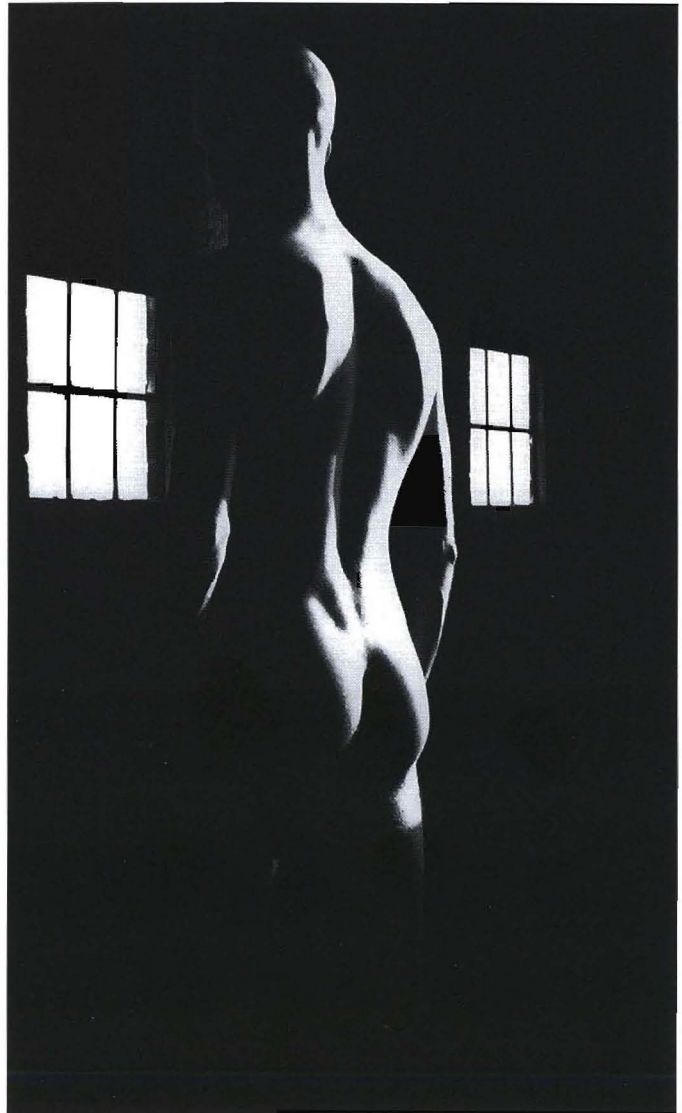
my fingers are numb
 and my eyes are deemed blind
 compared to a rose
 i grow stem and petals through my skin
 completely vulnerable
 as i sit indian-style on the bed
 naked as eve, and i too long to taste the forbidden fruit
 to sink my teeth into not only fruit,
 but flesh
 his flesh
 which is now equal to mine -
 naked and open and exposed
 to the harsh red light bulb that hangs above my window
 raining over our bodies with a shower so sweet and honest, that it smells
 faintly
 of
 love
 numbness creeps on
 and i can no longer feel my legs
 my senses deprived
 responding only to him, the man who called me queen
 who labels me beautiful when im not
 and loves me when i shouldn't be unconditionally
 my arms are next to go
 but hey still hold him fast in my mind
 the spreading tickles over my breasts
 and self-control is made a stranger; a fictional character that lives only in the dreams of the innocent
 i am consumed and defenseless
 swallowed whole by depth and reality
 enveloped in red, my king looks up towards my face with
 unconditional
 understanding, appraisal, and the deepest emotion speaking honestly through his features
 and
 is
 relieved
 to see a mirrored image in my own eyes



Inspirations From the Boy I Turned Away

Kind is he
although I tear him so
his chivalry will always be
I do suppose I showed him no rose
even though, he has to know.
Smile he
does he hide in disguise
or be him true a bud in bloom
I hope he is for him and me
I see him glow, he must know.
Stand will he
a certain delight upon I illumine
a smile to me he often will bring
trifles of happiness bestowed
but is it known

Anonymous



Kissing a Girl

You wanted rainbows and oceans
tied up in a pot of gold
didn't want to feel the pain
that seemed to surface when it'd rain

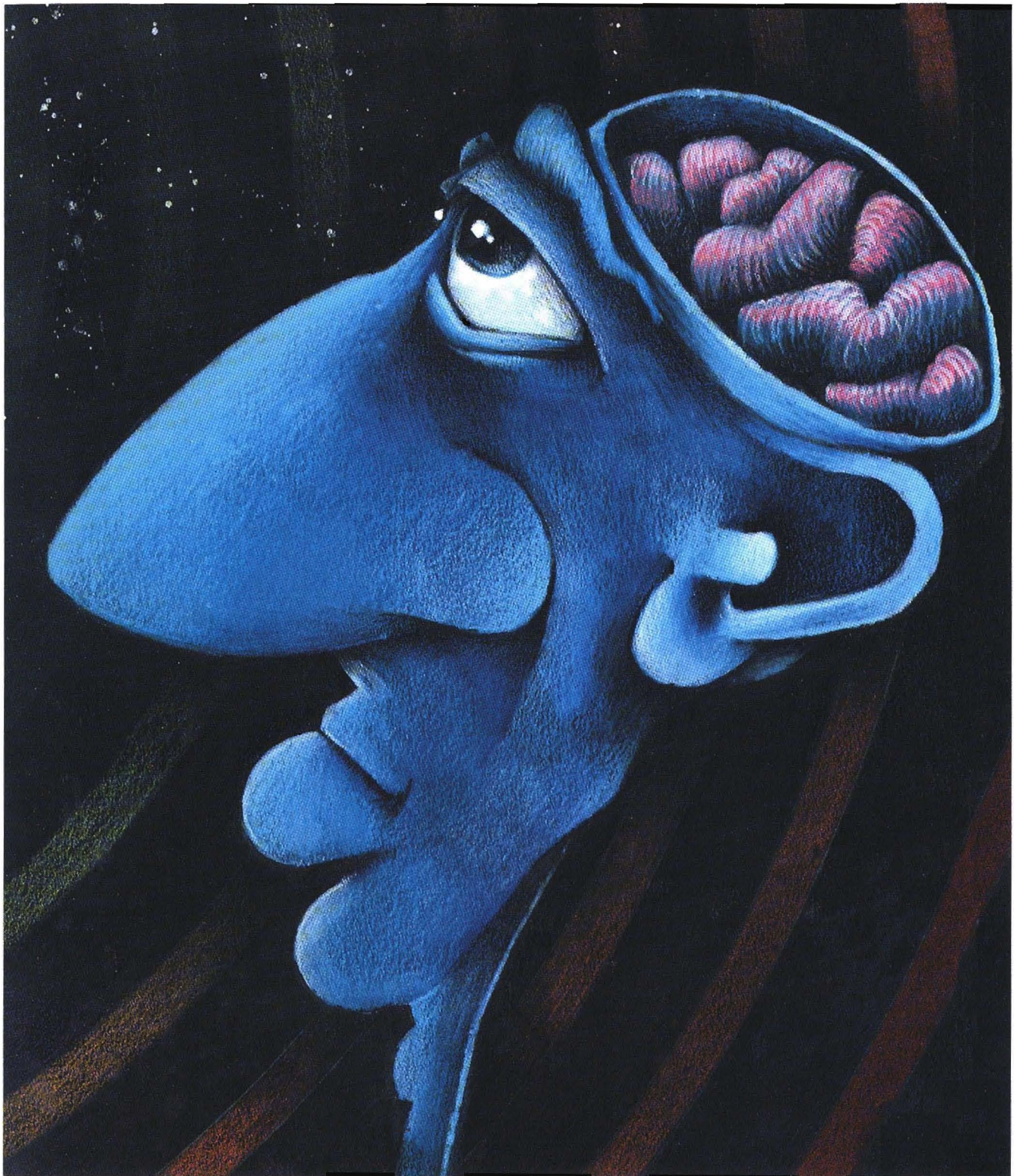
and you teased me with your kisses
and daddy asked why I was kissing a girl
all I could say in reply was that
your kisses tasted sweeter
and purer than pearls and honey

it was funny
and I traced outlines of shadows on naked walls
while we made love in marble halls
didn't know the essence of spontaneity
didn't care much for logicity

brazen angels spoke to me
in voices of the Gods I could not see
before I could turn back and change my mind
and fall back freeze the hands of time
I was in love with the sweetest taste
of your flesh and my skin merging

you told me this would never end
that the sweetness
that the purity
would eclipse the sun
and if I just relaxed
the world would explode

Jenna Leon

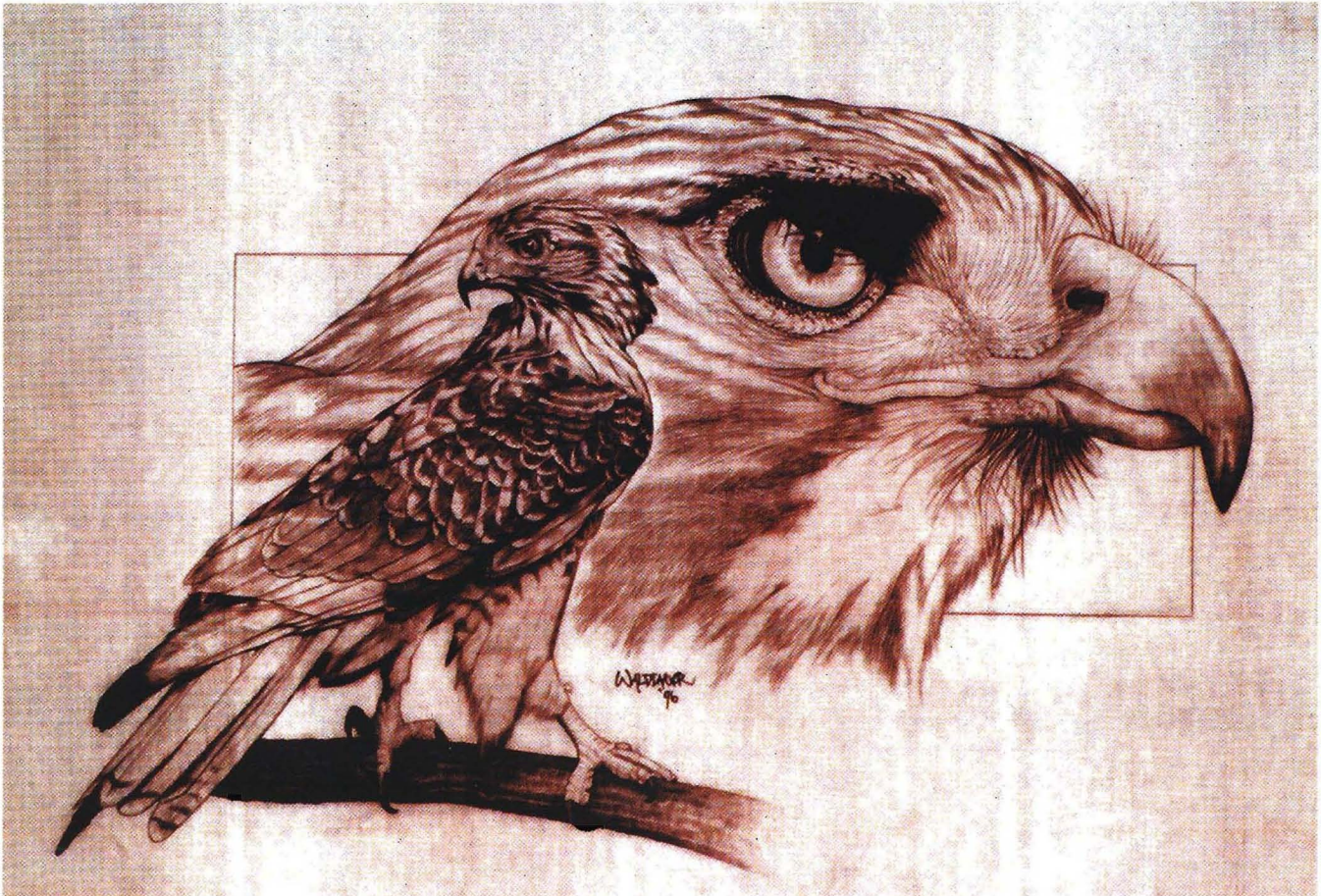


My Guardian Angel With Nappy Hair

he needed a haircut
the ends of his nappy - but almost good hair had already started to curl
but i ran my fingers over them lightly anyway
ignoring the grease that settled in under my nails
(and still refuses to wash out)
i hated men
but i let him hold my hand and touch my hair and my face
(and he sprouted wings)
i don't know where you hang your halo
and your tears of radiance can't play their games of light across my skin
because time and distance and ignorance sit between us like a schoolteacher
and i can't get past her to slip you the note with three words scrawled in childlike
simplicity

you have wings

truth falls from my eyes blurring the words on the paper



and i crumble hopes of my gratitude finding you
closing my eyes in that certain way brings me right back...
i sat drunk in your lap, my jeans unbuttoned my head thrown back and eyes closed in
indifference
and the moon smiled down the blessings and labeled me a sacrifice
my mouth uttered not one protest that my heart screamed
believing that any man desiring me should take without asking
the price for damaged goods
but instead of rising as a man
(you sprouted wings)
instead of seeking your pleasure that only the true definition of woman could sate
your crumpled feathers brushed over my cheeks
collecting salt as they rustled in the too perfect night
and wringing themselves out in the black of the caribbean
they flew inside me and i flew with them
perfect white, snow-soft feathers representing an innocence that he had blackened with an
ejaculation
staring over the edge unable to distinguish night from sea
i flew with them
and when the moment was over they laid me down
in a bed of acceptance and forgiveness
covered by a blanket of enlightenment
sleeping on sheets of true understanding
my head cushioned on a pillow of regained trust
and i dreamed
and when i woke
you were just a boy of 16
(but i saw your wings)
my guardian angel
i hold a perfect feather in my hair
plucked from your wing while you were busy holding my weight
and often times i hold this feather
half in my heart, half in my hand
and often times i dream of an all white bed
(and glimpses of wings)
even when sleep is not mine
i often dream of flying
for Eric and his wings

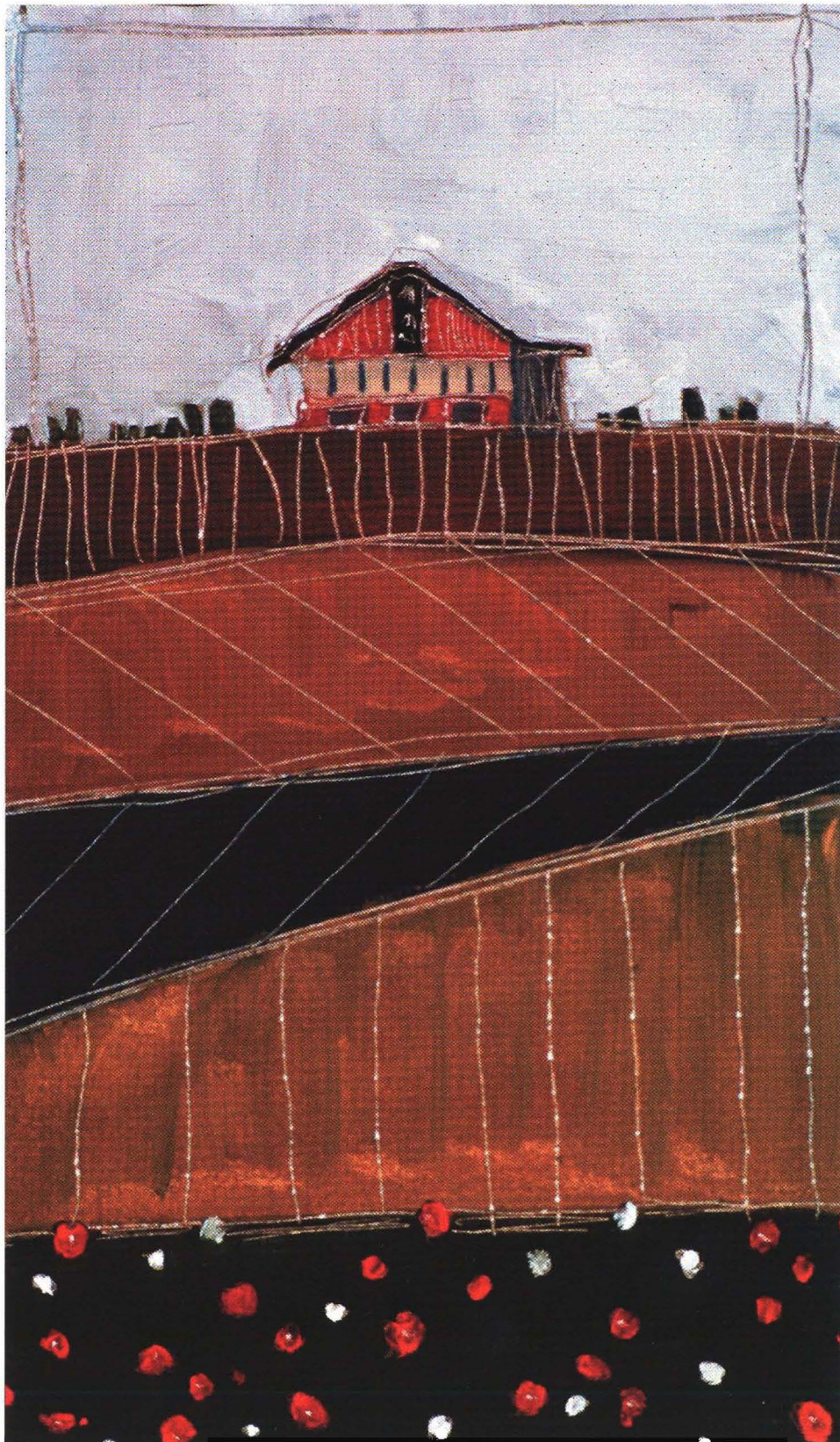
Jasmine

A Moment in the Exhale of the Newport

a flick of my thumb, a light at my fingertips and the fire is lit,
a moment in the life of my cigarette
put to the same mouth that has touched so many others
my lips close around the circle, a phallic symbol mocking me, and they draw in smoke
gaseous fire fills my head, swirling like a toilet, and tickling my throat like secret kisses
smoke curls from the end of my stick and i almost expect a shape to appear amongst the mist
my eyes close as i hold the poison in my lungs and my head becomes uncensored
he said he was falling in love with me
and my heart said i was still in love with another
yet it is still another who sleeps in my bed
and another who has already fallen
and i wonder why they all missed the caveat emptor sign that hangs about my neck
or maybe the sign is what makes me intriguing
a keep out sign you have to cross
a triple-double dare you can't resist
a gagging sensation (not totally unfamiliar) fills my throat and escapes in a cough
spilling my air in a rough exhale, returning the little black box to its position over my thoughts
and my eyes shoot open
random incoherent mumbles trickle across my brain as i fight for sense
i raise cancer to my lips and once again inhale deeply
the dark of night is the only witness to my confessions
the long hours before dawn are alone privy to my pain
i return my eyes to blackness as i feel death float over my heart
and puzzles of my brain fit together
all my weakness disgusts me
the beloved other sex captivates me, and i am the one who is intrigued
foolish and believing
selfish, sometimes cruel
easy, and occasionally lost
without fail, always the fool
the miasma constricts my vessels and the slow in my blood creates a rush in my head
webs of men entangle me, clouds of sexuality blind my vision, chains of adultery hold me motionless
and through it all i enjoy myself
my breath begins to run short and i soon will feel a loss
silent prayers covet a complete release,
an uneasy sunset that will rise as sweet dawn
but my exhale leaves me nothing but silence

Anonymous





Loneliness Turns Pale

I've come across this field once in a dream
the sky and the sunsets and the old baron trees.
No whispers just shadows of both you and me
puppets surrendered to each other's fantasy.
Marionettes who are pulling each other's strings
on a stage with no audience among other things
both fallen angels devoid of our wings
and even through despair we share ecstasy.

It's not as though our hearts cast on to sail
white ivory visions of our own fairy tale
Love turns a deep blue and loneliness turns pale
reliving old pasts that were soon doomed to fail.
The trees and the poppies and the soil are all dead
but that is what happens when things go through my head
better left to more harmless devices like darkness instead
my scars are hard poison of my slow creeping dread
and my heartache sinks lower as if weighted by lead.

Discovering the places where we used to hide
finding these emotions that we left inside
my love runs as deep as the ocean is wide
flying like angels or the sweet butterflies
and still I, don't know why, that I still cry!
Maybe it's these empty arms where you used to lie
or maybe those crazy things that we used to try
or the love between us that God denied
when tragedy was born on the day that you died
and still I, don't know why, that I still cry.

Prose Tea

I hope for a spot of tea,
for you and for me,

And I know things could be thought of
more gently on tea.

So hold the cup close,
And warm your hands,
From the cold of my words,
And of your heart.

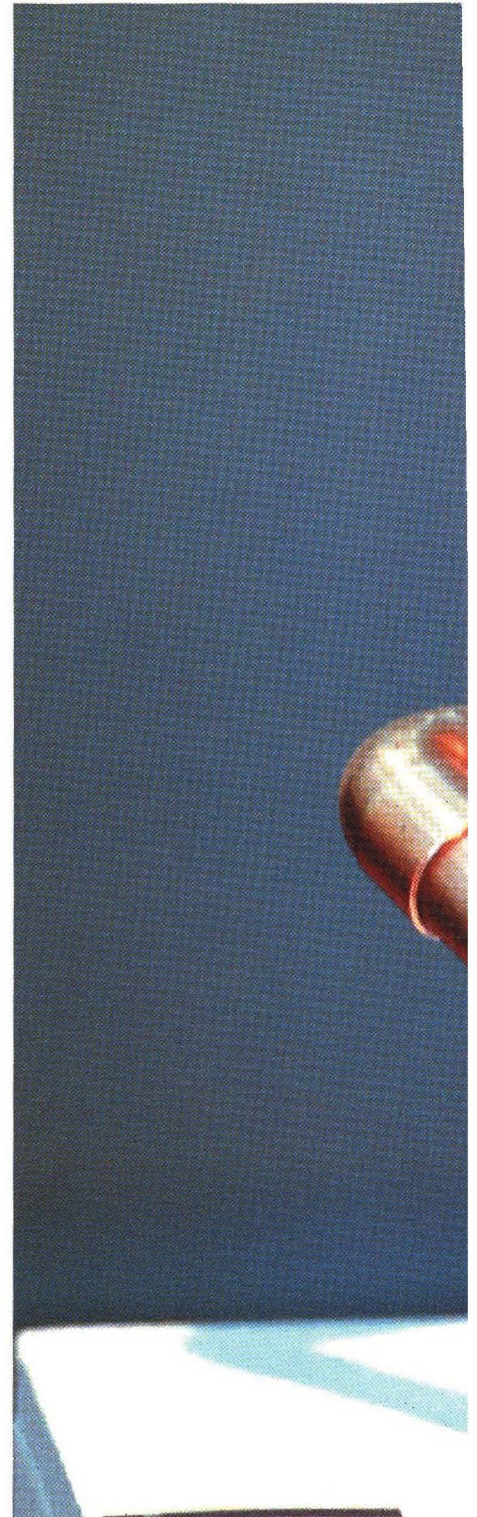
Sip loudly,
To cut cold uncomfortable conflicts
("I used to have problems with my C3").

And follow the flame
To a lighting smoke,
Try to ask for one,
With a smile...

And you're trying to steal from me.
My vision of what I know you are about.

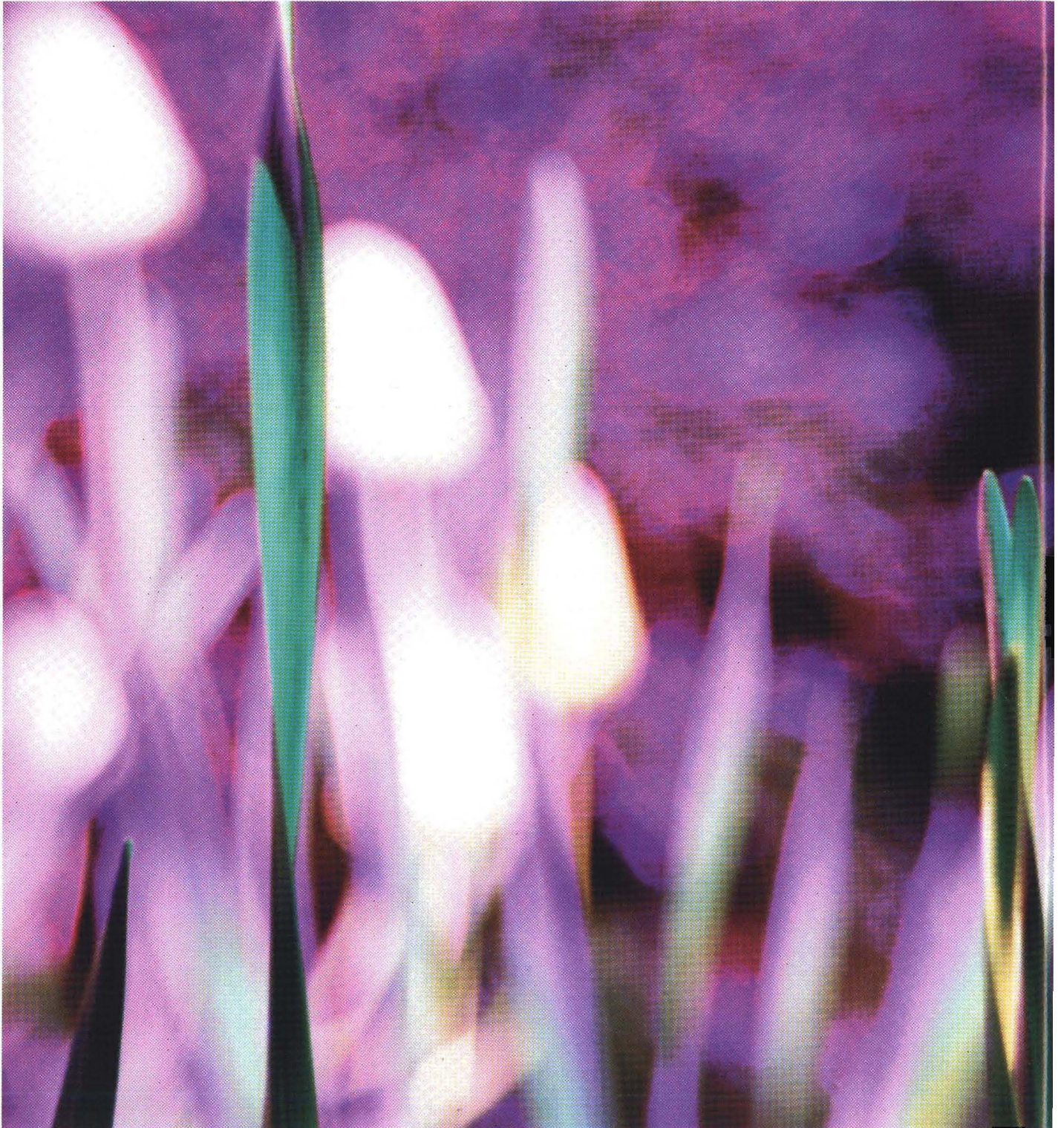
Don't cry..
I will still dry your tears,
over tea,
talk of you and me.

PJ Gaynard



Jonathan Schmuck
Untitled



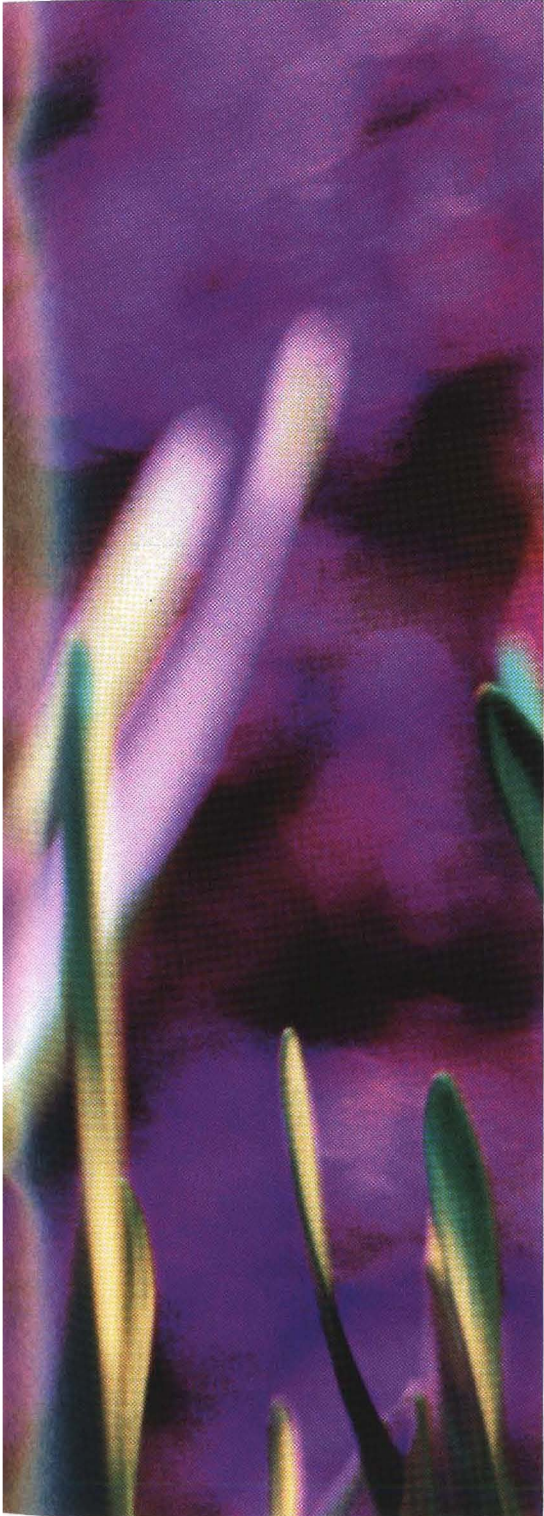


Untitled

you pull me back
 into your stare.
 trying to escape,
 I climb up to the bloody,
 muddy,
 riverbank of lust,
 that lets me
 lie in your bed,
 on your chest,
 with your fingers
 touching mine
 feeling me
 inside and out.
 through my soul.
 and you play
 your crazy mind games
 with me.
 lying by your side
 naked.
 my vulnerability
 making me evil,
 and dirty,
 to sin under god
 and the sun.
 with the moonlight
 on my bare leg
 closing down my mind
 and my freedom.
 pulling the sheet
 over my aching body.
 not to be pornographic

anymore.
 and still be pure.
 smoke surrounding me
 in a dream.
 and the light in the
 hallway
 grows dim
 and the frames
 fall to the ground
 from the plaster:
 rashing in my mind.
 floating through the hall
 my majestic beauty,
 failing to enthrall you.
 my eyes
 blank as pages
 yet deep with cold, cold
 thoughts.
 like emeralds
 hidden by lying feelings.
 enthusiastic screams
 hide inside
 my withering soul.
 my body creeps
 so close to yours
 and my evil aura
 dwells in you.
 because you corrupt
 my thoughts.

Larissa Barnes



Untitled

Amy hobbles wobbles everyday.
Limps are (barely)
unnoticeable on her best days
but you know she's in agony
every step
hurts me; No, I can't
walk for her.

Amy struggles everyday
pleading for understanding
from her peers yet
only friends hear her
(I do hear, yet I can't
do anything
but to comfort her)

Amy looks everyday
for her stolen youth.
There are no hops and spirits
(or spirited hops)
in her life; She can't
by choice already
made for her.

Amy questions everyday
her life, her future
(and why she has to be
this way)
I can't do anything
but to comfort
and pray I can be a reason
in her life.

Daisei Konno



Rose

Emily Huthsteiner

Untitled

Rosie-
 Rose colored eyelids
 Round hips,
 thighs
 Wristbands of terrycloth
 Wrinkles undercover.
 Rolling shoulders
 set high,
 deny
 guilt.
 Reading glasses in a case.
 Ready for Revenge
 but
 oh, so tired.

 Released from motherhood
 fifty years
 and not before
 then
 Ran over; Rolled over; forgotten.
 Respected only by a punch press
 these days...

 Wiry hair
 knotted finger
 Wrapped in a ring,
 meaningless...
 Ranting (the cat would say)
 for a man worth

 Respecting, but
 Ready for some action.

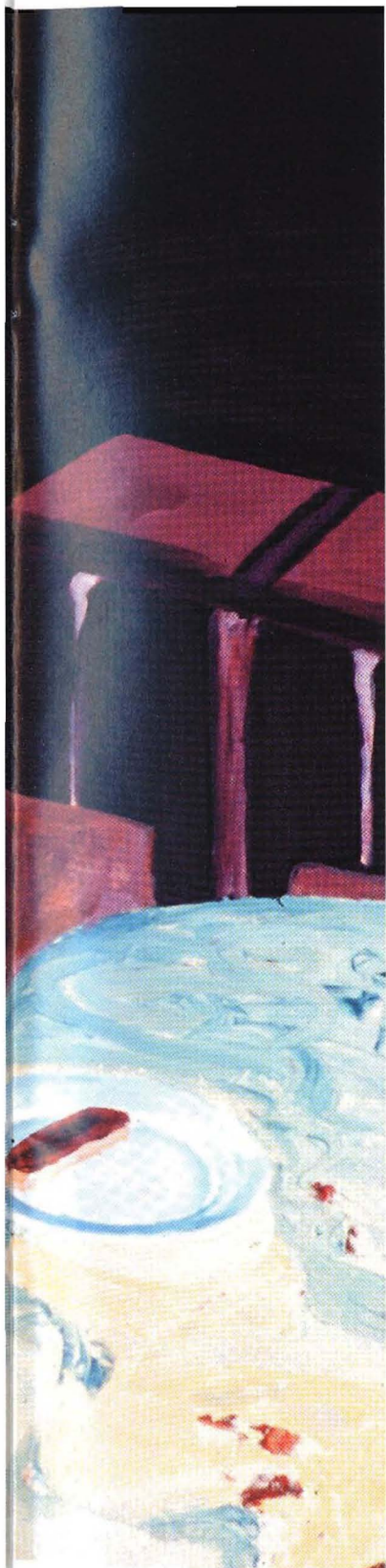
 Reality got her down,
 Rum and cokes got her up, and
 Randy Travis made her cry
 so she stopped listening.

 Repentance wasn't in her nature-
 but survival was,
 Reaping small benefits with knobby hands
 Washing the subtle insults of life away
 Raping the darkness of its terror with all-night TV

 There she is-
 Recycling smiles.
 Resilient
 Rare in this America of loners:

 Rosie knows the mailman's name.
 She still says hello to him each night as she leaves for work.

 Sarah Brownell



Seasons of Time

Softly your loving arms surround my body and soul -
guiding me to the path of love and joy.
My fingers are entwined within yours,
Mirror I am to you.

The twinkle in your deep eyes and strong smile
embrace the naiveté of the child within me,
tightly in time.

Changing with the passing of the sands, your
rugged hands imprint my heart and body
pushing me to a path of despair and solitude.
My fingers are scarred permanently
Mirror I am to you.

The coldness in our souls is evident
turning me away into the lonely, gentle night,
passing in time.

Revealing the true side of our love
as we follow the generations of unhappiness.
Mirror I am to you -

no more.

Kelley Harsch





What Is Sound?

Does a flower speak?
Does it emit sound?

Will you lean down,
despite their stares,
place your ear,
next to a blossom?

What do you hear?

Wanting to know,
what sound is,
a child wonders,
if, just for a moment,
they could hear,
would a rose
make a sound
of life?

In the distance.
The sky rumbles,
shakes the earth,
beneath your feet..

Will you place your ear,
to the ground,
to get a notion,
of thunder's sound?

Living in silence,
wondering what THEY hear.

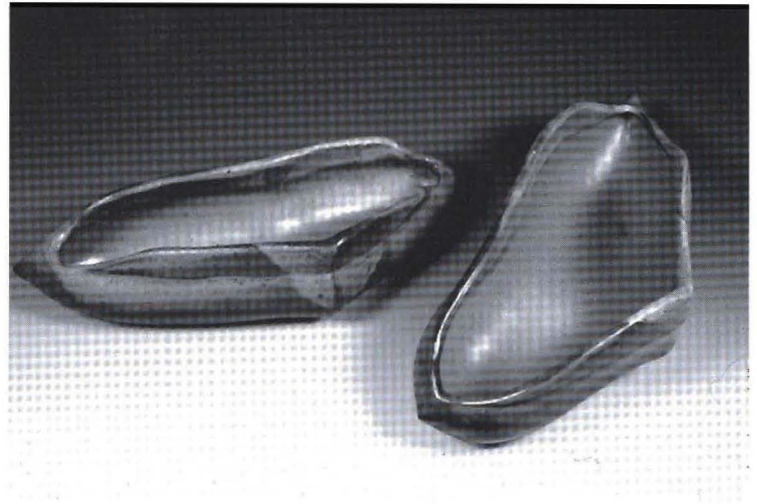
Does a flower,
make a sound,
of life?
Does a bird singing,
make a sound of joy?
Does the rain that falls,
make a sound of laughter?

Jenna Leon

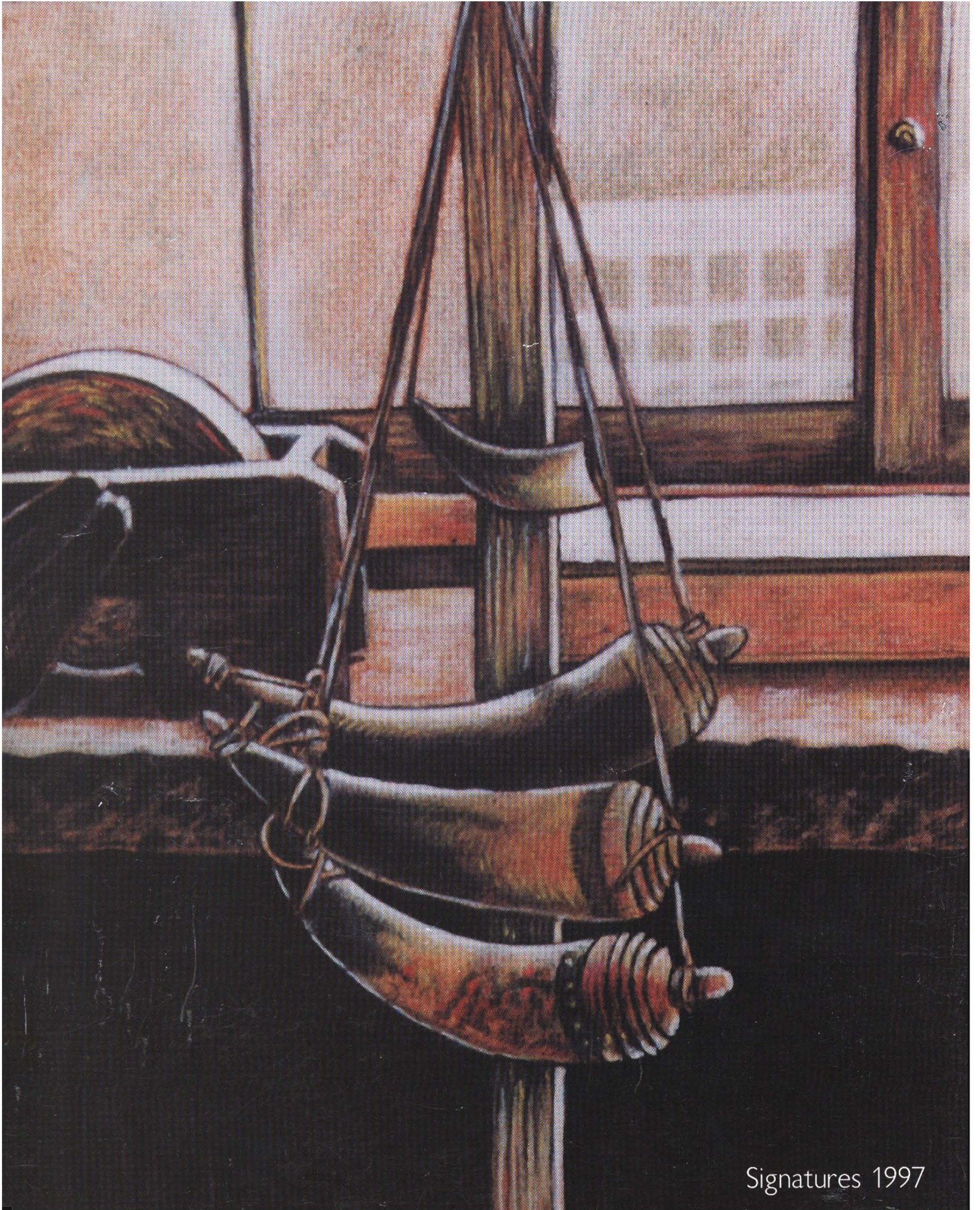


Neal Yanoff

Neal Yanoff



Ben Owens
Friends



Signatures 1997