

return of the sun

FALL-1996

nature series



GENESIS

ART & LITERARY JOURNAL

Cecil L. and Amy-Jeanne Sayre

in memory of

Richard Cross

GENESIS

ART & LITERARY JOURNAL

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POETRY

Things Mama Made

Katherine Ellison



Untitled, 3" x 4 1/2"
black and white photograph
Jennifer Baynes

Witches in the kitchen tile
watching mama make cherry pies
and homemade noodles,
deciphering my eight-year-old
doodles
on the memo pad by the phone.

Snakes around the crocheted afghan
watching mama make yellow dresses
in my size
hissing while I wipe my
eyes
and scream that I will never wear them.

Angels in the water stains
watching mama make flowers
out of thread
pausing as I want less, and want more,
waiting for me to find answers
in the wood grain of the bathroom floor.

When the Cicadas Come

Carol Durbin

Summer burned to Autumn with little notice.
The air was heavy even in the shade,
Full of humidity that clung to the flesh.
Days were severe and hung in time with a slowness
That comes so easily this time of year.
Ninety-five degrees mostly, with only hot wind
To break the monotony.
People wilted early in the day, clothes clinging
From sitting still in sweat.
Brows glistened slick from summer's wet.
Bodies limp from the onslaught of heat
Longed for evening and the end of relentless rays
So sleep could come.
As the sun set, the cicadas came
And their summer song filled the twilight.
The cicada's call was for night to fall
So the heat would go and mild breezes
Could accompany their song,
And my sleep.



Tires Dragging a Mirror

Jeff Ridenour

Thirty-five circus clowns
buried in concrete,
their pointy day-glow orange hats, a marker
of positions in a row.

Juggling Russian jesters
balanced three-high on dual triangular seats,
their bicycle tracks leaving two exact trails
of where they were.

A pasty-faced mime, perhaps
dragged by a red-lipped lizard lady,
his face rubbing the road to leave
a silent white line.

Treasure maps two to a trove,
pirate-plotted twenty paces an arrow scrawled
in thick inky white on grey parchment,
port, starboard, then port again.

Two short droids in medical scrubs, matching
hard hat heads to protect them
Hell fighting Angels decoding their hands
and squirting Lucifer's bane to extinguishment.

Food lines formed on left and right craving
infinite First presidents,
each has a carriage on standby, save one
headless soul, a victim of a cool hand.

Alert American druids guarding
their carpets of envious fur,
dark-tinged and rough-skinned
tangled crowns and lines of descent.

An armor-clad beat cop, heavenly
tall, cylindrical, and dull,
his badge a timetable of when one can
and cannot congregate on the side.

How Sweet

H. Suzanne Heagy

Lights flashing
stir a hazy memory of
the ferris wheels spinning
red green yellow in the night
I first followed
a handsome boy
full willing and ready.

We slipped through a slit
in the grid of chain link
put up to keep the moochers out,
to keep the hawkers in with their
raucous cries of 2 for a buck
try your luck
everyone's a winner.

And my guy told me it was
a waste of money for them prizes
but he rode me on the spider
spinning me sick in the dark
and fed me cotton candy bought
where priestly air married
the aroma of burnt sugar
with love.

Hitch Hiker

H. Suzanne Heagy

Belly up, back down on
scratch grass growing
in cracked black soil
where roots can't hold
it together.

No pitons needed to hold
on with fingers slipped inside the slashed handles
of the earth.

The sky above is blue
strewn with pearly clouds.

A high wind spins
the misty mellows
placid past my view
and twines the tether thinner
that holds me to
this Texas plain,
this crumbled dust

where riding,
I cling.

The Curtain

Carol Durbin

Oh Rapture,
This Curtain
In the woods.
Angel's gossamer veils
Mist the grass,
Golden in the dawn.
Rejoice this silent scene
Splendor to behold.
Such miracles born here
In this world of jade.
Crickets silence their song
As birds' voices now fill the air.
A grey spider
Dries her dewy legs
And tends her silken web,
Preparing to entangle
A morning meal.
Owl returns to nest to feed
Hungry nestlings.
Urgent breaks quickly
Devour mother's offerings,
Building feather and bone.
All are joys that surround us
Though at times we are
Veiled.



Three Graces, 5" x 11"
etching
Angela Stewart

Youngstown

William Chill

In the red-brown rust of steel valley

an Ohio town croons its past.

We pretended the loud-mouthed congressman with bad hair

would open our mills again. But secretly we knew we were all just fools.

So we know sip Genny from the draft, and listen for Republic's whistle or

Sheet & Tubes. Don't you know the last shift clocked out years ago?

Roaring blast furnaces in the forever past

left permanent red-orange in the night sky. No one ever thought the city would die.

Not the flannel-shirted steel workers in the flat-iron bar

not the cigar-smoking card players in the Elks Club and Moose

nor the double-breasted gangsters in the Purple Cow.

From the tavern-lined streets of South Avenue, to garlicky pizzerias and corner gyms

where well-muscled Italian boys hoist their iron

like Hemingway's Santiago lands his fish. It still goes on.

Still pounding away underneath the Friday night lights,

two high school teams wage an epic clash. It's more than just a game.

You can still make Polka crackle out of your AM radio

and eat famous hot dogs on Saturday afternoon.

Jay still works the counter and pays his bills with cash. Lots of onions please.

Moxie is still a way of life. Youngstown.

Bothersome

H. Suzanne Heagy

I must quell this irritation
with those who have never dreamed
in pointillism
delicate specks of yellow meshing blue
grass where dotted Swiss ladies stride
never defiled by waxy green
of color solid smeared inside
black borders.

Frail hightops
trip along sun-dappled trails.

all I need

Jeff Ridenour

all I need is a pen that rights
a brush that brushes
a shirt that fits
a person that loves.

sometimes the pen wrongs
the brush gets lost
the shirt shrinks
the person isn't there.

oftentimes the pen rights, but the paper is wrong
the brush brushes, but the hair is fitful
the shirt fits, but is dirty
the person loves but is ill.

mostly however,
I wrong the pen,
I lose the brush,
I shrink the shirt,
I am the person that isn't there.

Rush Hour

Mary Elizabeth Vespo

Off sounded the alarm
She shot out of bed
Blotching on the make-up
Lightening the dark bags
Noticing new gray hairs
Breezing by laundry
That still needed washing
Popping caffeine pills
Down with bitter liquid
Groaning as she ran by
The cluttered table
That held nagging bills
Then threw open the door
Crashing against brick
Frightening a squirrel
Sending sparrows into flight-
She flew to the car
Which still needed repair
Now ten minutes late
Spewing out gravel
Now rounding the bend
At fifty miles per hour

Then slamming to a halt
From the great, metal machine
 Ramming it in reverse
 But already boxed in,
 Cursing under her breath
 Puffing fire through the Camel
 Deep into her chest
 Cranking her window down
 When suddenly...
 She was smacked in the face
 By the freshness of Spring;
 The grass smiled peacefully
 In bright olives and greens.
 Birds soared without care
 In the blue, morning sky...
 She began to notice
 Faces around her,
 All held prisoners
 Some expressing anger
And still...

The soft wind played with her hair,
Running away with her cares
So she closed her heavy eyes
And lay back with a sigh
Enjoying the wind's caress,
Letting go of the stress...

Then she felt it creep
Her heart began to sink
She blasted the radio
But there was no sound
Just a burnt out fuse...
Once she had surrendered
But she hated to remember...
And for a moment she looked at
The face behind the make-up
There the frightened child
Screaming all the while
And now, there was no resistance
At the sight of this existence...
So much solitude and fear
And she brushed away a tear

When suddenly—

A sound blared from behind

And upright she sat

The cars had already moved

Beyond the rusty tracks

Now twenty minutes late

Shifting into second

Squealing her tires

Frightening a sparrow

A squirrel ran into hiding

Along with the child

That cried behind the make-up.

Owl

Carol Durbin

On silent wings
She steals through ancient trees.
She glides quietly
Carried along so effortlessly.
She scans the ground
For unsuspecting prey
That will feed the hunger
And take her to hunt again.
Piercing eyes fix on the unwary hare.
She sets her feathers,
Dropping,
Feathered lightning striking.
Talons tear, fur flies
As the hare raises to die.

Sometimes Ducks Resemble People

Kelly D. Snow

Black licorice fills a mouth
and the ducks have come north
where a murder is witnessed
as one duck makes use of
a powerful bill
to crush another's neck
suffocating and painful
as Wifey looks on
with reflective eyes
battered heart

Waffles at Denny's
and the ducks make their way
across the street
but lose Junior
to a speeding car
which instantly flattens
his little head, his body,
baby-fine feathers
Mommy looks back
with grief, relief

Sex steams beside spaghetti
but the ducks can't eat
not today
appetites gone but who cares
they have no feelings
and they don't miss
loved ones, companions
they exist for our pleasure
our annoyance
exploitation

Chinese take-out on stone steps
and Wifey wanders aimlessly
finding a scrap here
dodging a bullet there
and Mommy takes her babies
back across the street
hoping not to lose another
'cause she's a failure
raising duckies in
an apartment complex

A Mother's Wish

H. Suzanne Heagy

The day was windy, blowing, glowing yellow like the sun.
Waves broke in foaming crescents, surged swiftly to run
to where the sea was cooler, calmer, level like the plains
which farmers like my father tilled to make their daily gain.
We sat inside our cottage, watching through the salt-sprayed pane,
waiting for the sun to set, the moon to rise again.

At last the sky grew deeper blue with sparkles overhead.
The night was prime for journeying—my older sister led.
Armed with our trusty flashlight, we walked into the night
beside the roaring ocean, searched for treasures come to light.
Smooth pearly shells and drifted wood and dancing crabs we found.
And then we came upon a trench deep-veed into the ground.

We shine our light upon it and followed where it led
to where a great sea creature lay—she was a loggerhead.
My sister turned, she was afraid, I stayed her with a touch.
“Wait,” I said, “don’t run away. She’s just scared of us.”
Her nest was full of fresh-laid eggs; her fear to me was plain.
Her pleading eyes asked us to leave. Subdued, we walked away.



Woman with Child I & II, 11" x 15"
charcoal and gouache sketches
Angela Stewart

Organic Color Machines

Jeff Ridenour

a room with no door and all the bricks are the same

bricks

twelve high

twenty long

light grey

dark mortar

borders

that crisscross

checkerboard

pattern

on

six planes.

the six planes are the box with no door.

every dark mortar cracked border of every light grey brick is fitted airtight.

being in there.

a whisper in an ear, a dull murmur in the bones, a small windnoise.

Beethovenistic music that always starts low and

babylike

evolves into a mild orchestra.

sounds of love and joy resounding
on the other side

of one of the six light grey dark mortar-bordered sides.

they echo echo echo echo echo
they repeat they repeat they repeat they repeat they repeat
wave after wave of
sound sound
the volume gets louder

more HARSH

more rapidfastspeedpowerlifelovelongingtallmajesticroyalstillgreybutroyalgrey

the

dark grey dark mortar border walls Shake
in unison with the music

a

crescendo

walls buckle,collapse,and the dust settles.

Independence Day, 6" x 9", black & white photograph, **Olaf J. Olsen**

Blank Page

René L. Britt-Hartloff

You lie naked in front of me
I ponder your purity
My soul bared
I long to share my most intimate thoughts
Emboss upon you my desires
Engraved; never to be eradicated
My mark remains
Your creamy-white smoothness
Under my caressing touch
My pulse accelerates
Hand and temple moist with anticipation
I draw you near
Preparing to decimate your innocence
To sate my need, my Eternal need
To deflower the virgin page.



Hyperbole on a Grand Scale

Jeff Ridenour

I'm a vegan
Not really, but bear in mind,
I'm a vegan, and you can be too.
 Hard core.
 All the way
 No exceptions.
No ifs, ands, buts, or meat.
 I don't eat meat cause—

I'm a vegan, and you can be too.

 No meat.
 No chicken
 No pork.
 (meat is murder, dial V for vegan)
No ball park franks.
 No dairy.
 No fries with the chili burger 'cause—
 (say it along with me)
 diary+fries=fat=dead dairy cow from whence the fat came.

I'm a "vegan."

Not really, because bear in mind,
plants are alive, too.

Hard core.

All the way.

No exceptions.

No way, no how, no thing alive.

I don't eat plants 'cause—

Plants are alive, and that's murder too.

No apples.

No oranges.

No carrots.

(Baked potato is murder, dial V for vegan)

No sprouts.

No beans.

No Ceasar side salad 'cause—

(everybody join in)

growth+green=photosynthesis=live plant that is off limits.

I'm hungry.
Yes, really, but bear in mind,
I'm pure, and you should be too.

Hard core.

All the way.

No exceptions.

No cholesterol no lipids no love handles no bad breath no breath at all
'cause I eat nothing no carbohydrates no protein no vitamins no minerals
'cause rocks may possess a consciousness we don't know of no
fruit no fruit punch no punch 'cause no strength 'cause no food no water
'cause water is from the mother ocean that has microorganisms that are
sentient living things and therefore forbidden no nothing no nothing no
nothing no nothing no nothing no nothing no nothing no nothing no no no.

I'm no eater of living things,
yeah, really, and keep this in mind,
it's fun.

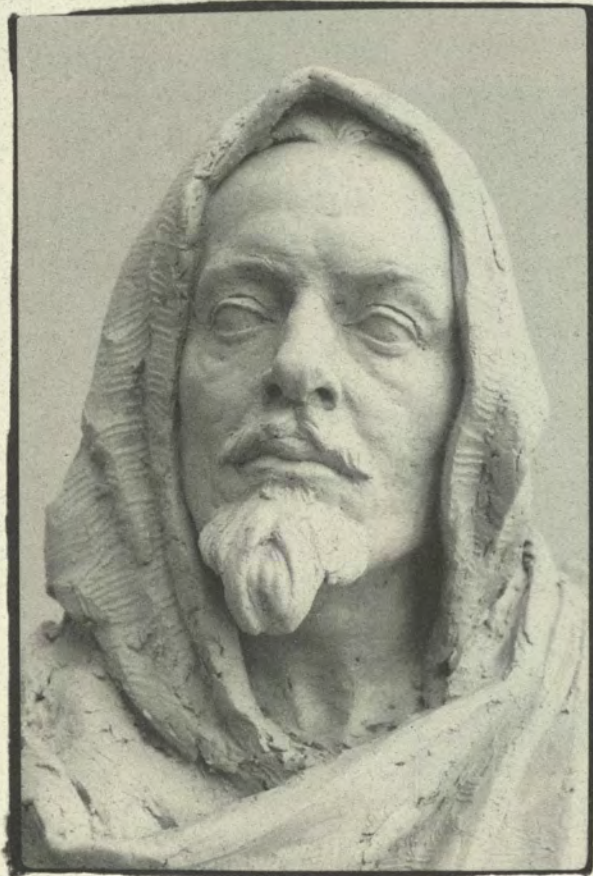
PORTFOLIO



Untitled, 12" high
clay

Sculptor

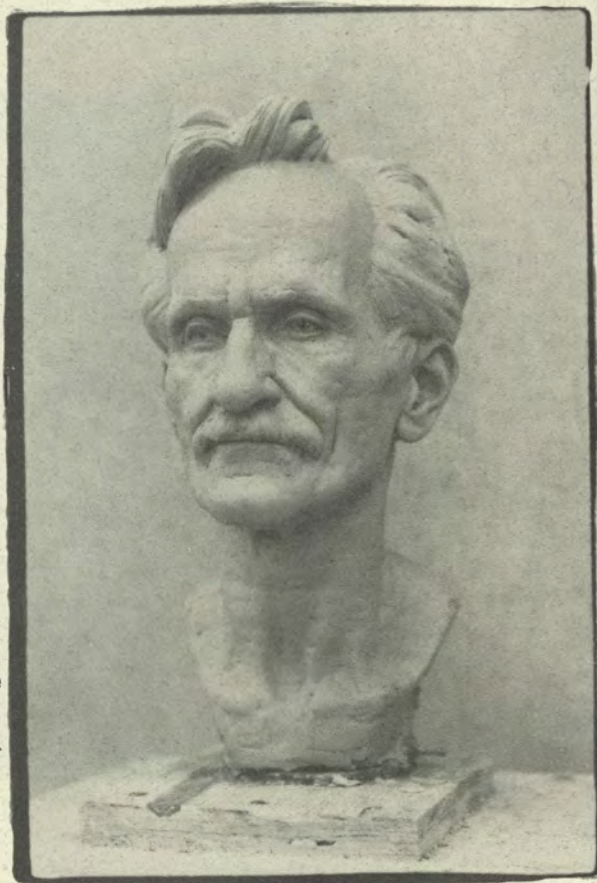
CASEY ESKRIDGE



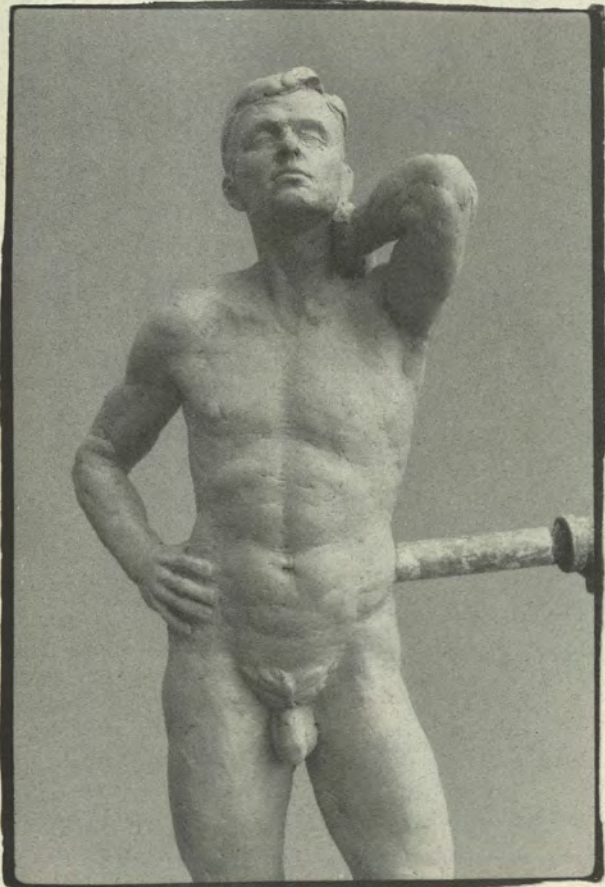
Nobleman, 21" high
clay

"With each new sculpture a relationship is formed between the subject and the medium, during the analysis and translation of information into another kinetic form."

"The result is a three-dimensional recording of time, space, and thought. Each sculpture serves as an account in the process of its own creation."

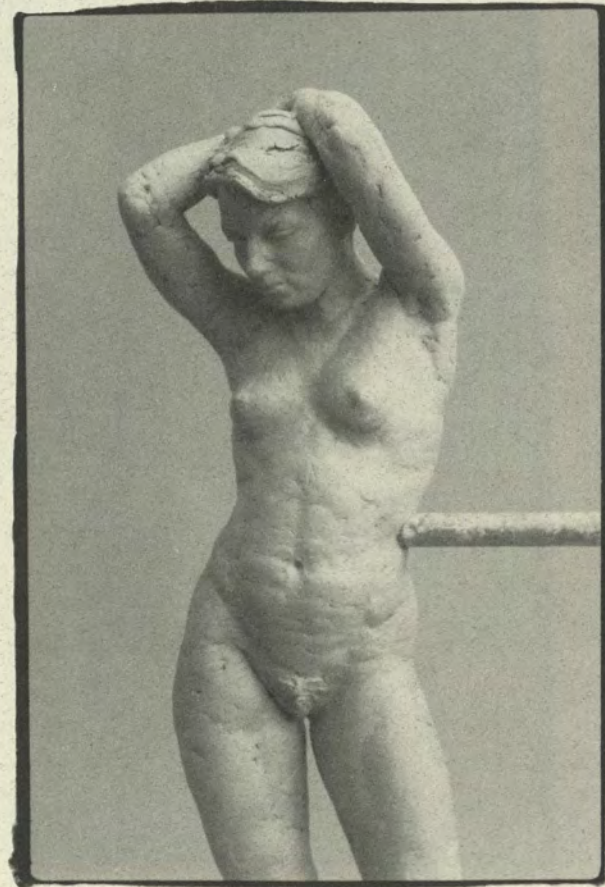


Marshal Walz, 12" high
clay

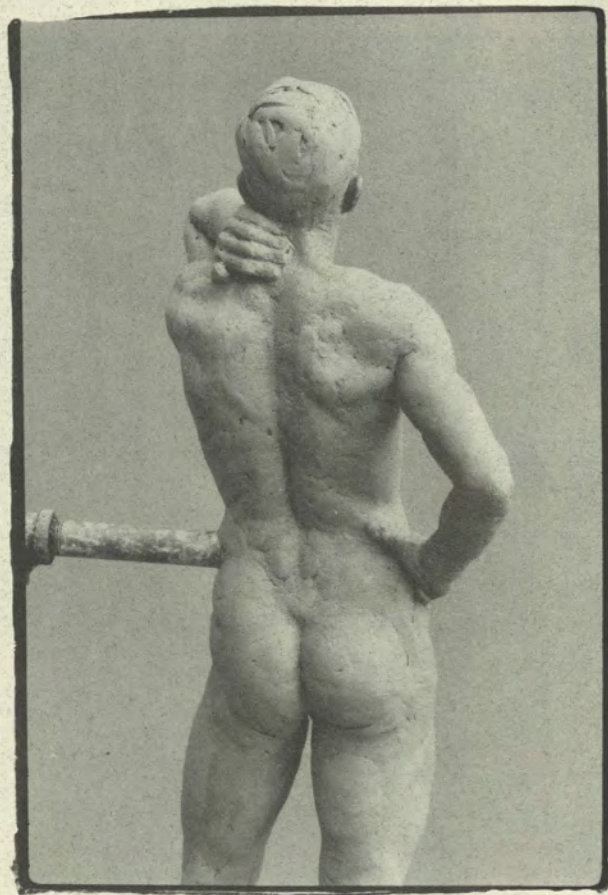
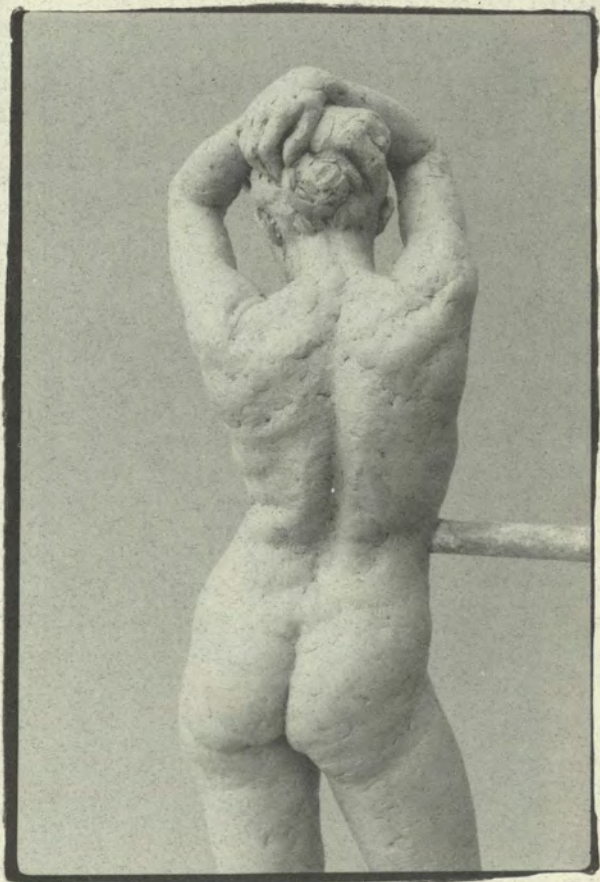


Male Nude, 28" high
clay

“These sculptures reveal a sense of truth, giving me understanding and harmony of creating something that occupies its own space. This helps me to understand my own place in the world, while sharing space between myself and the work.”



Female Nude, 26" high
clay



Sitting in Class with a Blank Look on my Face

René L. Britt-Hartloff

I sit here with a blank look on my face
That does not mean, however, there is nothing on my mind
I stare at you spewing forth output which I do not understand
How dare you assume I should know what a t-test is
AND, by the way, what the hell is a degree of freedom?
Why do you insist on making me the butt of the class
By implying I am stupid simply because I have never heard of Martin?
Are you unable to relate to me on a human level
Have you forgotten where you came from, when you were once
Naked clay with potential...
Am I not the one who has paid
 To be taught by you
 To learn
Why, then, do you expect me to already know?

Patrick's Blue Sailboats

Carol Durbin

A little dream
in a little white-blonde
laugh,
echoes insideoutside
past the thin
pen
horizon and into a slate
blue sky.
A little shadow
falls under
his chin and
the stormiscoming
the stormiscoming
it can't
be sailboats
blue
sailboats
forever.

A Fragile Life

Tracy Lynn Ingalls

Darkness and Silence surround her,
comfort her,
and she is not afraid.
In this place, there is no Fear.

Henry is here to watch over her
and protect her
with his one good eye,
his fur, matted down by countless tears,
and his right ear, barely hanging on by a thread.
He is her Hero
and her one true friend.

She drifts among her own thoughts,
her own Reality,
Unaware of the world outside.
She cannot hear beyond that closet door.
She cannot hear the Anger,
the cries,
the breaking glass.

They cannot get to her here...
Here she is safe.

The Man of Steel

David Frisby

Time's desire makes the will ill
Hostile opposition breaks out in a chill
The will desires to be silent and still
But suffering demands it cease not to feel.

This revenge of time upon the will
Inflicts punishment forcing it to kneel
And confess the guilty deed of craving thrills
That deny the meaning of life to be nil.

Time and time again the will must yield
And worship the law of time until
That devil called Gravity has it killed
So Death can make of it a meal.

"Is there not in all life itself
the need to steal and kill?"

Nietzsche

Thus Spoke Zarathustra

(3.12.10.29)

But then a Redeemer appears on a hill
Proclaiming a new house of knowledge to build!"
And a war to win and a sword to wield
If the destiny of the will is to get a fair deal.

"To achieve that destiny, question what is real
And then from Life her secret steal
And bind fate and fortune onto a wheel
and create out of being a spacetime field!"

Redemption is promised through the power of will
Victory is achieved when Gravity is killed
Eternity is postulated in a rapture of zeal
And Life receives an eternal sanction and seal.

The Moral of the Poem revealed:

"In this Poem there lies concealed

The teaching that Justice must be willed

If man on earth is not to be killed."

This English Pig

William Chill

If it wasn't for the strike I would have taken the train.
But this lumbering old bus is cozy all right.
I drifted warmly through the tunnels of sleep.
The engine hummed, people whispered, my head bobbed.

It was all so nice, but then like a bedside alarm
brakes squealed and it all stopped.
Pushing away the cobwebs,
I struggle to open my lazy eyes.

Camouflaged figures, faces blurred by clear plastic shields,
move silently together in a deadly wedge.
Guns at the ready, locked and loaded. What the hell?
I guess I'm here. Belfast.

A man late for an appointment, a mother with her packages,
and children laughing, existing together with this thing,
this drifting wedge. Patrolling tirelessly among their lives,
this arrogant wedge, it knows no bounds.

Sunday morning, I'm on the street.
Graffiti-lined walls tell me about the English,
those pigs.
From the top of the street it comes,
a green metal giant, crawling ever so closer.

Up on top protrudes a head.
His face shield is down
but we can look into each other's eyes.
His pink hands tense around an ugly black gun.

Since he is young he can only grin.
I start to grin but we both smile.
Back home his mother looks
into his empty bedroom and cries.
I look away.

He continues down the lonely streets.
His mother closes the bedroom door.
Perched atop this green giant he rides.
This English pig.

Price of Peace
6" x 9"
sepia tone
photograph,
Olaf J. Olsen



On the Fields of Verdun

William Chill

Gone is the sulfur smoke and deafening artillery, a rancid storm
of screaming and whines. Gone are the boys who had rudely become men.
Gone are the smells of futile human exchange,
of decaying flesh and greasy blood both German and French,
of mud and sweat and guts and excrement.

Today sweet green grass over the once dead earth. Blue sky replaces
the dark hopeless heavens. Freshly bathed visitors in bright new clothes
replace the bent grey figures in cloak and helmet.
But most of all, an endless sea of ugly stone crosses replace hopes of victory.
The perfect formation laughs like some kind of perverted joke.

A sinister arrangement of columns and rows.
Markers of ghosts who were dead before they had lived.
Inscriptions tell of unpronounceable French and German staccato.
Anonymous beings. I look for my name but it is everywhere.
We walk on but the stones never end.

We have had enough.
We leave the path and walk across the carefully mowed grass to quicken our escape.
An old bearded groundskeeper yells out to us. We must stick to the path.
He looks again and sees we are military men.

He nods his head and takes back his command.
Let him go in peace.
Let them choose their own way
out from the ghosts of their brothers.

Berlin 1988

William Chill

The Berlin I love was in 1988.

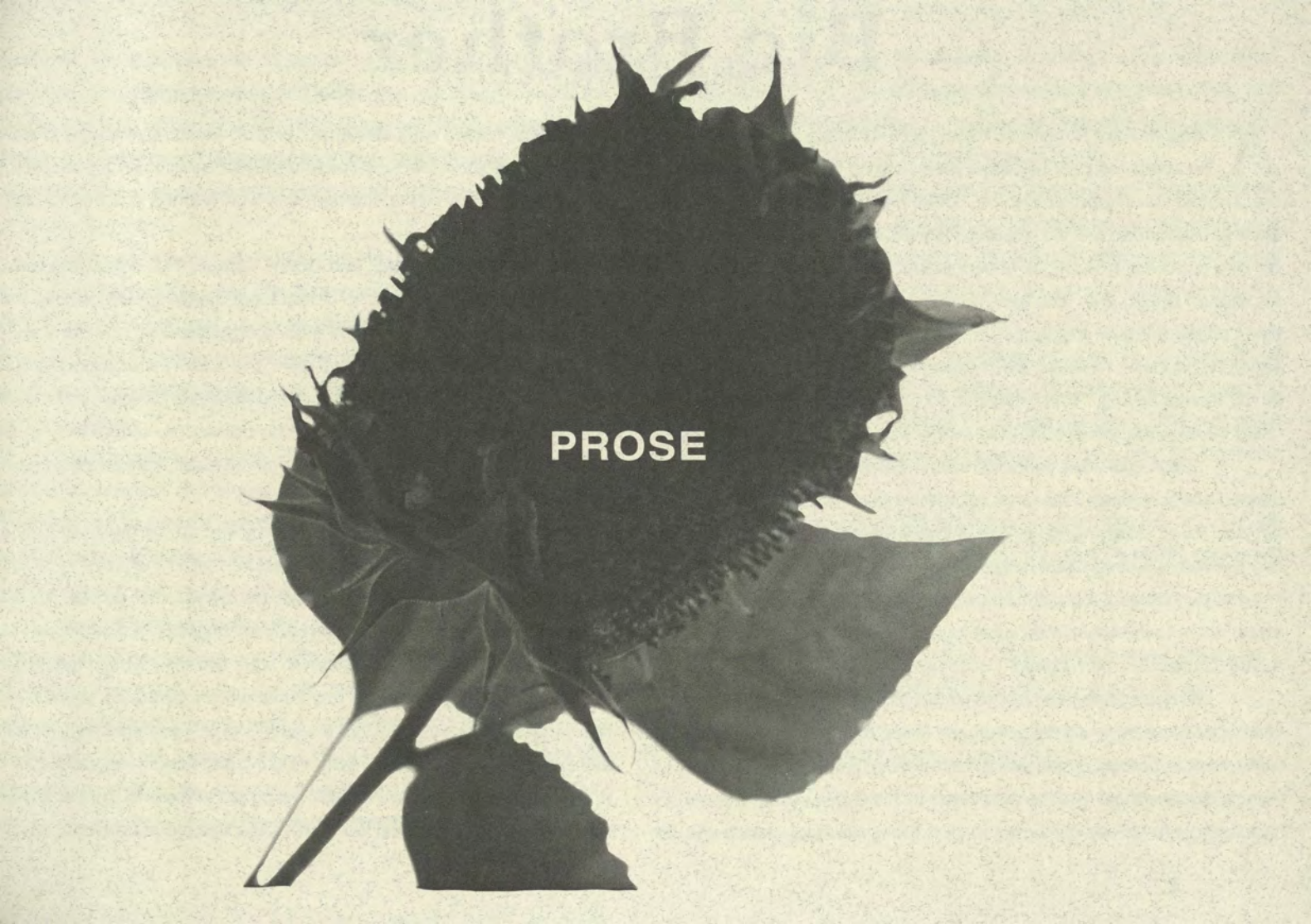
Weimar voyeurism and Heinrich Zille
carved by politics in a rude juxtaposition.

So much like a carnival show;
stepping right up to its colorful performers,
its pageantry of human oddities,
and games you cannot win.

I remember the students who dressed in black,
the pounding nightclubs, and American jazz that leaked
out of smoke-filled rooms.

We sat in beer gardens and pondered this fantasy of techno-decadence.

Berlin back then,
who could resist this merchant of intrigue—
A spy behind every corner, parties lasting all night,
a cold that no one thought would ever end.
I once asked Victory's Goddess atop Brandenburgs gate:
"Why is it I love this place?"
She opened her mouth and began to speak.
But just then, a bus grumbled by
and I missed her immortal words.



PROSE

Big Brother

STEPHANIE MEREDITH

As long as I can remember, my big brother Jason was there for me. He spent the past eighteen years looking out for me, protecting me, sometimes overprotecting me. There was not a single soul in that small southern town that did not absolutely adore that boy. He could charm his way out of the worst kinds of trouble and make all the old ladies think he was an angel. With one look from his sparkling blue eyes and one small dimpled smile, all the girls at Fairmount High School were captivated. As his sister, however, the choruses of 'oohs' that followed him, and all my friends saying, "Your brother is so good looking," made me sick. I could never understand what they saw in him, but that is another story.

Jason was three years old when I was born. Mama said he complained about having a little sister up until he saw me. Every family member and every close friend—which in that time and place was the same thing—always teased Jason about that. He would always reply, "I didn't know about babies. I thought if I had a brother he could play with me right away. When I saw Amy I knew what babies were like. I figured then that if a baby couldn't do me no good, I might as well have a sister."

With this comment I had to smack him on the back of the head. I never could create a worthy comeback to his mouth. I always knew he didn't mean it, though. Jason was always saying things, mostly around his friends, to make them think he didn't like me. Making fun of me was strictly his job, though. No one in Fairmount, or in the whole state of Alabama, for

that matter, teased Amy McKenzie, or they would have Jason to answer to. New kids soon learned this and stayed away from my brother, but occasionally there was a stubborn fool who had the need to find out for himself.

One such agitator was Donny Nichols. He moved into town all the way from Chicago, and he thought that made him the boss of everyone. He was bigger than all the other fourth graders in my class and we suspected he was a couple years older, too. Donny was about the dumbest person we had ever seen, so he counteracted his lack of smarts with his large fist. One day as I was walking home from school with my best friend Lizbeth, Donny decided to push me red-head-first into a mud puddle. Everyone knew he was gonna get it, then.

As I, with the help of Lizbeth, picked up my books and tried to regain my balance, a boy from my class ran off to the junior high where Jason always practiced basketball with his friends after school. When he came back with my brother, that city boy not only didn't run, he didn't have the common sense to keep his mouth shut. "So what if I shoved his baby sister," jeered Donny, "what is this dumb hillbilly gonna do about it!" As if that wasn't enough to say right in Jason's face—and after everyone had warned him several times already—Donny added an exaggerated, "Y'all" to make fun of the way we all talk. Jason stood there in front of this jerk, with all the calmness in the world. His face was expressionless, his body

perfectly still. His clear eyes staring straight at the forehead of the slightly smaller boy. Everything for miles and miles was still. Jason waited for Donny to stop ranting and shut up. Then Jason calmly and coolly raised his fist and knocked out the tyrant's right front tooth. Donny fell back in surprise, scrambled to get off the moist ground, and ran crying home to his Yankee city mama.

Jason was always like that for me, ever since I was born. That's why it was so hard to say good-bye. Childhood had been so good that it hadn't occurred to me until I entered high school that it was someday gonna end. I guess it's like summer; on the first day, months of hot weather and freedom are ahead, and then what seems like just the next day, a new school year begins.

I was barely fifteen when Jason went away to war. He had just graduated high school and was so excited to leave this small town and go not only into the "real world" but to Europe. Everyone was so proud of my brother. Daddy had fought in the first Great War and Jason was real proud to get the chance to follow in his footsteps. I was the only unhappy one.

We had a going-away party that night before he left. I spent the entire time sitting on the back porch alone with the stars and the full moon. Tears gathered in my eyes as I thought about all the good times and how empty my world would seem without my big brother. I heard the screen door open behind me. I did not look up until someone sat beside me and softly whispered my name. I blinked my eyes, so as not to show that I had been crying, and looked up at my one and only advocate. Jason and I sat

there for an hour in silence. No bragging, no crying, no saying goodbye. We knew that growing up was a force much greater than either of us. I will always remember that moment for as long as I live. In words unspoken I gained eternal comfort in my brother's silent wisdom.

Early the next morning, I watched from the front doorway as Jason said goodbye to Daddy and Mama. He kissed her on the cheek and shook hands with him, then waved to me. He understood why I could not say what I felt. Jason got into his friend's car and with one last wave followed the tree-lined street.

Jason wrote frequently, or at least as often as he could, to us from France. He was sure, and so was everyone that knew him, that he, Private Jason Andrew McKenzie of Fairmount, Alabama, USA was going to beat the Germans—by himself, if necessary. That is why the letter was so unbelievable.

When I came home from school one day there was an open letter in the kitchen table. It was from Jason's commanding officer, addressed to Mama and Daddy. It read:

I regret to inform you that your son, Jason Andrew McKenzie, was killed early this morning, Friday, November 18, 1942 . . .

I couldn't read any more. I didn't want to.

Waiting for Jalen at the John K. Kellerman Memorial Center for Mental Health

MEGHAN HICKS

I had always hated the smell of hospitals, just like every other human being on the face of the earth, but I had never experienced the smell of the John K. Kellerman Memorial Center for Mental Health. It smelled shockingly of moldy books. Moldy books—not moldy bodies, or antiseptics, or strange strains of viruses deadly and rare.

The place looked weird, for another thing. It looked like a cross between a hospital and a middle school, with sterile halls but no gurneys, no nurses and doctors scurrying, and only a few patients, who all looked relatively, *physically*, well. For instance, when I had come up the front steps after parking my car in the lot, there was a teenage girl sitting on the steps in a hospital gown, her head shaved and her nose pierced, smoking a cigarette. As I walked past her, I shamefacedly expected her to grab for me, like a scrambled-faced witch in a haunted house, and let out a cackle and hold me hostage in exchange for her freedom. Or maybe a few more hours of television privileges. (They couldn't even put her in prison if she had done something like that—she was already committed, maybe already had committed some heinous crime that had convinced a judge to tuck her helpfully into the wings of the JKK Center for Mental Health.) But she had done no such thing; in fact, she ignored me as I stepped past her. I was more of a basket case than she was—that day, anyway.

I followed the signs to the patient discharge area, walking the narrow halls that I half expected to be lined with babbling idiots, crazies, more head-scrambled unfortunates. I had seen *Amadeus*. Even though I

knew that was eighteenth-century stuff, and a modern reproduction of it to boot, I had expected to be required to run some kind of gauntlet, to prove my psychological mettle in the face of the screamers and the comatose and the delusional. But I was the only one in the hallway, spared the company of the insane and even the ones who ran the joint, the nurses and psychiatrists and orderlies.

The discharge area was clean and sanitary, mostly white with touches of soothing mauve and mint green. It was decorated with paper cut-outs like those that would adorn the walls and bulletin boards of a first-grade classroom: ghosts and pumpkins and letters spelling “HAPPY HALLOWEEN.” One woman was running the discharge desk, a plump middle-aged woman in white scrubs and a mauve smock sprinkled with little cornucopias. They sure were ringing in the season in the discharge area.

I told her I was there to pick up Jalen Stewart, who was being discharged today, and I had imagined she would give me the third degree, asking, “What is the nature of Mr. Stewart’s psychosis?” and “Will Mr. Stewart be disturbed when he discovers you’re to pick him up?” Instead, she gave me a small, polite smile and handed me a clipboard full of forms. They were all legal documents, custody forms and medication forms and consent forms. When I had signed everything and initialed all the right boxes, I realized my engagement ring had turned upside down with the effort. She watched with curiosity as I turned it right-side-up on my finger. But she didn’t say anything about it.

"Please wait here while we get Jalen ready for discharge," she said in a friendly-professional manner. Not "Mr. Stewart," not "the patient," not "your loved one," but "Jalen." Did she know him? Had she personally witnessed his behavior? Had he come raving down to the discharge area, naked and smeared with shit, pursued by three muscular orderlies in white lab coats, screaming my name? I had no idea. Should I be embarrassed if he had? Would it be construed as my fault?

"Jalen's schizophrenia is entirely organic," the doctor had said to me that Monday morning, after the horrible weekend and ambulance ride and the battery of tests. "It is not caused by any psychological injury. He can't help what he's doing. So you mustn't blame yourself." But really, how the hell can you not blame yourself when one week your fiancé is a coherent, functional, normal twenty-four-year-old student, getting up every morning, feeding the dog, putting on clothes and driving to the hospital and planning a wedding, and the next week he's sliding, ranting about doctors out to fail him from medical school and screaming at people who are not in the room and finally crouching in the back yard shoving potting soil in his mouth?

It had been hard to cover up what was happening, since at a dinner party at my parent's home he had carried on for a full, uninterrupted thirty minutes about the intricacies of the health care system and how the CIA had specifically modeled it so that it eliminated the weakest links in the food chain: blacks and children. My father, his face red and concerned, had tried to interrupt him several times but Jalen wouldn't have it, sputtering and impassioned as he said, "No, don't try to stop me! Some-

body has to know the truth, and why shouldn't it be you, all of you? You know it's happening but I'm the only one with the balls to say it!" I was speechless. I didn't even try to offer my parents an explanation. I avoided them for days afterward, ignoring their phone calls and answering machine messages demanding that I come home, find him some help.

By the end of the week, toward Friday, it had gotten so that I couldn't even speak to him. He could no longer concentrate enough to hear me. Finally, I woke up early on Saturday morning to the sound of him stomping through the house, speaking loudly, his words a jumble through which I could only pick out a few snippets that made sense together. I went out into the living room and saw that he had pushed all the furniture up against the French doors, blocking the entrance to the patio where we were supposed to be having friends over for a barbecue that afternoon. He had placed the television precariously on top of the pile of furniture, pointed out over the patio, turned on and blaring CNN. All he wore was a pair of jeans and he was filthy and sweaty. It was almost comic, except that it was so scary.

"Jalen, what's going on here?" I asked, but I knew. I knew he was going crazy and I knew there was nothing I could do about it. If he had just suddenly come to his senses at the sound of my voice, snapped out of his awful spell, realized how wrong he was, everything might have been all right. But he couldn't even hear me. He was too involved in his conversation with those I could not see, talking about situations that could not exist, defending himself against accusations no one had made.

And so it had worsened until the potting soil incident later that

night, when I was afraid he was going to kill himself if I didn't do something. I had called the police and the ambulance and no one else.

It was the neighbors who told our friends. I could not call them to tell them not to come to the barbecue, and so they had shown up, knocking repeatedly on the door until Mrs. Jorgens next door opened her own door and said, "They're not home, kids. She had to take him to the hospital, he was going plumb nuts over there. Stacked up all the furniture, screaming and yelling, eating dirt in the back yard. It was a scene, I'll tell you that much."

The questions were like this: "Are you still going to marry him?"

"Is that stuff contagious? You could go crazy!"

"Come on, you don't want your kids to turn out like that."

"You know they'll never let him be a doctor now. It's such a shame."

"No offense, but I wouldn't want him to be my doctor."

"How is he supposed to pass the medical board with all those delusions? He doesn't know what's real and what's in his mind anymore."

And so on.

The discharge nurse came back through the doors and gave me another one of her professional smiles. "It's going to be just a couple more minutes. We're packing everything up." When I nodded absently and did not say anything, she said, "He's glad to be going home."

Glad. Going home. I wanted to ask her a million questions. What was he like now? What did he look like, what did he smell like? Was he still intelligent? Was he still sensitive and funny and sweet? Would we still

share our inside jokes, our references to things past like stickpins in the atlas of our time together? When he woke up in the morning would he still lean over and kiss me gently and put his forehead against my neck and sigh sleepily and say, "I don't want to get up. Let's stay in bed all day"? Would he be *normal* now?

But the doctor had already told me the answers to all those questions. "I don't know" and "I don't know" and "I don't know." And "There's no way to know." And another "I don't know." But I did get a "Although he'll need to be on medication for a period of time, his prognosis is positive, given that the onset of the psychosis was so rapid and the behaviors so extreme." That he had eaten potting soil was supposed to be good, apparently. It didn't make me feel much better.

I had cleaned up the living room by myself, pulling the television down off its perch first. As I peeled away the layers of couches, tables, lamps, and rugs, I couldn't cry. I couldn't hate him, or feel sorry for him, or feel sorry for myself, or *even cry*. All I wanted to do was get past it, to have him be normal again. But as I called him at the hospital once a week, listening to his slurring words and his rambling, incoherent sentences. I had started to wonder if that would be possible. I wondered if I still loved him, if the person I had fallen in love with and had agreed to spend the rest of my life with was dead.

The nurse came back through the door and my heart started to beat loudly. I swallowed two or three times and watched as she stood holding the door open, looking through it to the right, down the hall where he must be shuffling his feet, making his way to the door. In another mo-

ment he emerged slowly, but more quickly than I expected, his foot first, encased in a tennis shoe, and then a leg, and then his whole body standing in the doorway. She touched his arm and guided him through the door, and when he was through she let it close behind her. She held the small white trash bag containing his belongings in one hand as she used her other hand to direct him toward me.

He looked at the ground as he walked. Gone was the confident stroll, the heads-up walk of the brilliant young doctor-to-be. His hair had grown longer over a month and stuck out in the front. He had told me over the phone that he had grown a beard, but it was gone now and his face looked very smooth and childish. He wore his clothes differently: his jeans looked too baggy, his jersey shirt was buttoned all the way up to his throat, and the snaps at the sleeves of his jacket were closed. Frankly, it appeared that like his sense of style had escaped him, and I reminded myself that *that was by no means the greatest tragedy here.*

He didn't look at me for a long time, and I just stood there considering him for a while, my heart beating wildly, while I waited for him to say something. The discharge nurse had returned to her desk, pretending to shuffle some papers, to give us a little privacy. I thought I might say something, but I could never decide what to say, and I was a little scared, convinced he might relapse into his schizophrenic behavior if I said the wrong thing. Nothing like this had ever happened to him before me. His mental capacities had never been compromised until he had been with me.

Suddenly he extended his hand, never lifting his eyes as he reach for my left hand. I looked down at him touching me, and then back up to

his face, wondering what he could be thinking, what he might do. His eyes were still luminously blue, the corners still smooth and turned down a little in the way that made him still look sort of sad even when he was happiest. He seemed to be trying to smile. He turned my hand over in his, so that it was palm down. Then with his left hand he gently touched the diamond on my engagement ring.

"You're still wearing it," he said slowly, but his voice was exactly the same as before. I felt my throat constrict with tears I would not shed in front of him—not right now.

He looked up into my face, his blue eyes meeting mine. I wasn't sure of everything I saw through the haze of medication and residual abnormal psychology—intelligence, sweetness, sensitivity, passion, *normalcy*—but I knew he had not completely changed. Certain properties of who he had been before and who he had been during the schizophrenia had canceled each other out, but there was still someone there.

"I thought you might have stopped wearing it," he said quietly, his eyes making the statement a question.

"No," I told him, and then smiled. "Not yet."

And he smiled back at me.

I had expected to be required to run some kind of gauntlet, to prove my psychological mettle in the face of the screamers and the comatose and the delusional.

God Junkfood and Mrs. Martin: Reflections of a Sceptic

JANEALE E. GIVENS

The heavy air of the converted gym stuck to us like a pair of wet jeans. It was a sultry July noon and there was a gym full of stinky, sticky K through sixth graders to prove it. I wasn't anybody special in this VBS (Vacation Bible School) crowd, just another kid in dire need of our daily snack of cupcakes and Kool Aid. No carrot sticks and juice for us: this was 1979.

We stirred restlessly on the wooden bleachers, muddled sluggishly through renditions of "Climbing Sunshine Mountain" and "Deep and Wide." All I could think about was my growling stomach and the thick smell of B.O. and pre-lunch bad breath that pervaded the air. As I watched the dust flakes flutter across the beams of hot sunlight peeping through the windows, Mrs. Martin—a middle-aged mother who wanted to contribute more than just the chocolate cupcakes that awaited us in the kitchen—strode nervously toward the middle of the ancient floor signaling story time.

Here it comes, I thought, another story about Jesus and me fishing for men or something. But immediately my eyes shifted from the beads of perspiration on her face, visible even to me midway up the bleachers, to a familiar yellow sack in her left (maybe it was her right) hand. A bag of potato chips! Clearly, this was going to be a story of a different kind. Mrs. Martin had pulled out her big guns flashing this bag of salty sustenance at a crowd of famished elementary children. She meant business, and need-

less to say, she had our attention.

"Boys and girls," she began, "today we're going to talk about faith. F-A-I-T-H. Can anyone tell me what that means?" she paused. Hell yeah, especially if the reward was going to be that bag of chips, I thought. Memory fails me here, but probably some zealous knower raised his hand to reveal the answer. And probably Mrs. Martin accorded him his due praise and continued. At any rate, my attention was focused on that bag. What in the world did potato chips have to do with faith? Enthralled, I joined the others in listening to Mrs. Martin tell her story.

Looking back, I'm pretty sure that Mrs. Martin had sat in front of the TV the night before desperate for a story to use at VBS the next day. She was probably munching on some Ruffles watching "Three's Company" when the idea hit her. But I didn't think of that then. I was too flabbergasted by what she was suggesting. "Boys and girls, if you just have enough faith in God, he will do anything you ask. Take one of these chips. Now, we all know how greasy they are. But, let's say you didn't want all that icky grease. If you believe, God will take it out. You could say "God, please take the grease out of this potato chip," and he will—if you believe he will. Remember that boys and girls."

It was a lot for me to comprehend then, but I certainly believed her. After all, I was only five years old and I couldn't believe that an adult would lie to a five year old. It was inconceivable. So I took Mrs. Martin's

story home with me and kind of forgot about it for a while.

The story was resurrected when, one day I was eating my lunch which, as it was, consisted primarily of potato chips. From a far corner of my mind, the dormant thought roared forth like a bear jerked from its slumber: Mrs. Martin's story, the potato chips. I went over the narrative in my mind, and made a decision. Like Mrs. Martin, I too, was disgusted with the grease in my potato chips. I was simply going to take her advice and submit my request to God. "Please, God, take the grease out of my chips." Anxiously, I popped one into my mouth, and was more than a little surprised when I withdrew my fingers and noticed the glint of frying oil on my thumb. Confused, I reviewed the story again and decided my first try had probably lacked a little conviction and enthusiasm. God had to know that I had faith in Him. Earnestly, I began, "Please, please, pretty please, God, I believe you can take the grease out of my chips. Please get rid of it." I selected another chip from the pile and confidently tossed it onto my tongue. What?! Still greasy! I wondered what went wrong. I did what I was told. Mrs. Martin said to believe and dammit I did. Why were they still greasy?

I'm not sure how long I sat there at my mother's pink and white kitchen table jamming crumbling chips down my throat, pondering my failure, if the failure was indeed mine. I had done my part, I believed. Maybe it was God's fault. Maybe He just didn't feel like removing grease that day. Maybe all the other VBS kids had asked the same thing and He had just gotten tired of doing it. Or maybe God had more important things to do than go around sucking grease out of a five year old's chips. How was I

supposed to know? All I knew then was disappointment.

I never asked anyone why my pleas for a greaseless snack were ignored, because there was a chance that I had done something wrong—didn't use the magic word, perhaps. Years passed before I realized that blame belonged less to God than to Mrs. Martin. At the malleable age of five, I never questioned her authority. I simply believed her. Now, I realize that Mrs. Martin had no right to speak for God. As if He seriously intended to siphon grease from anyone's chips.

But I didn't consider that then, instead, I pigeonholed the memory into a seldom-visited recess of my mind (located quite near my subconscious) where things like embarrassments or disappointments are stored. Over the years, when I had to open this linen closet of my mind, I would do so briefly and timidly so as not to disturb any of its residents.

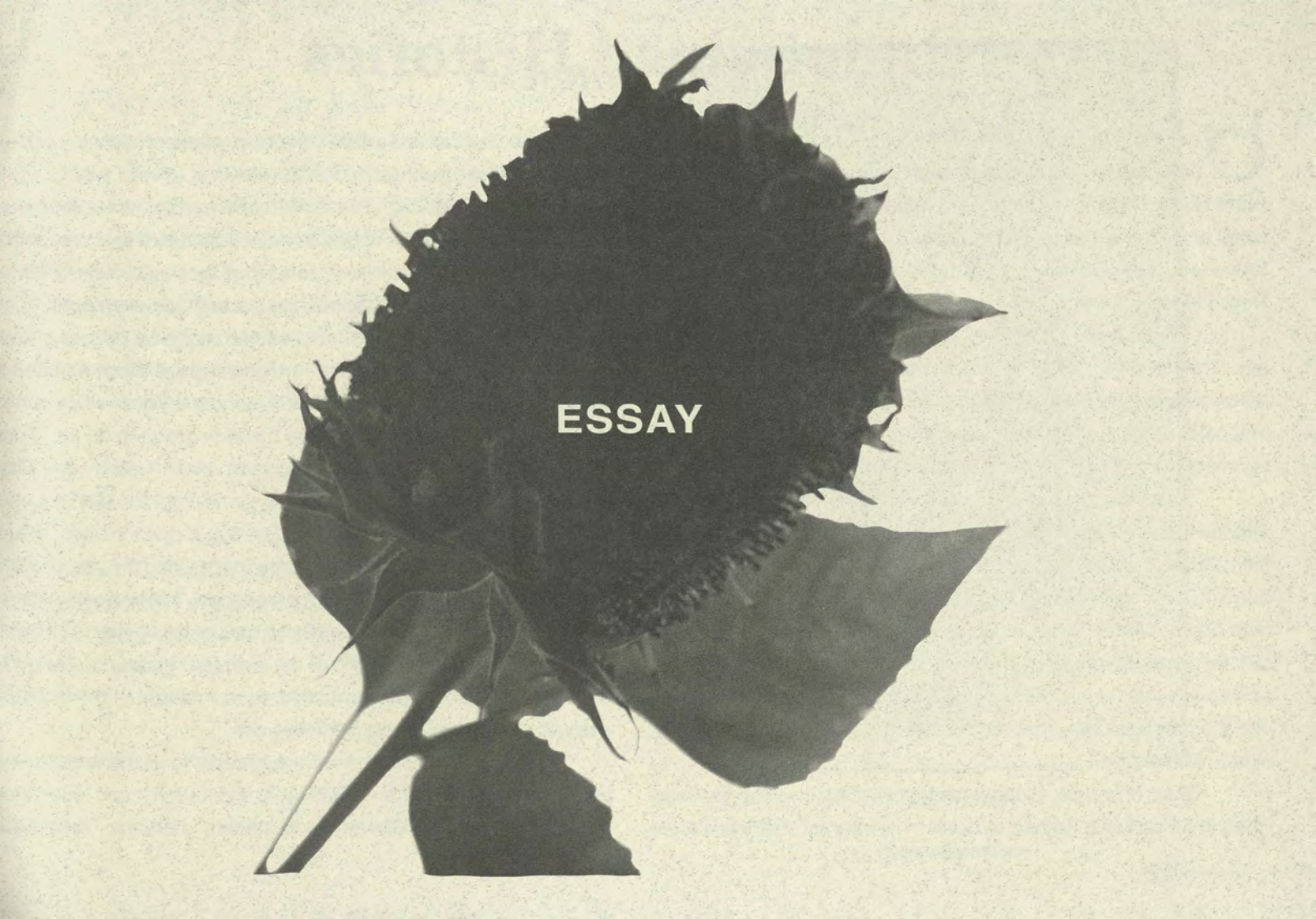
But like any closet that runs out of shelf space, things tend to pile up from time to time. When this happens, the housekeeper of my mind makes it her task to clean out that closet. And it must have been during one such round of spring cleaning when the memory of that junkfood fiasco was swept along with the memories of other shameful incidents (like the time a prepubescent prankster snatched from my overnight bag a pair of dainty flowered underpants and flung them onto the gleaming bald head of a middle-aged basketball spectator during the third quarter) into the garden of my mind where Adult Attitudes and Values would grow. And where the soil is rich and fertile for nurturing the kernels of distrust and cynicism.

Some years later when it was time for me to walk through that garden in order to Find Myself, I stumbled upon the roots of a large tree. Now I don't have proof, and I'll probably never know the whole truth (the subconscious is a mysterious place), but I'm pretty sure the seedling of doubt and mistrust that was planted in the garden of my mind years earlier by Mrs. Martin has exploded into the sequoia of skepticism that flourishes there now. The swaying branches of this monstrous tree make me suspect motives, doubt stories, question rules. And it is the shade of this tree that, during the formation of other more estimable characteristics such as patience, confidence, and trust, screened them from light and crippled their fruition.

Even now I may be sitting docilely in a classroom listening to a professor prattle about the infallibility of evolution, or lounging in front of the TV witnessing a gushing testimonial about the life-changing ingredients of Mr. Clean, and that's when it happens. The branches of that tree pound against my forehead in a kind of mental slam dance, and I am once more in the febrile gymnasium, listening to Mrs. Martin. And the branches hiss and stir in a wind that forces me to hear the difference between what they are saying and the easy utterances of Mrs. Martin: my greasy chips versus her endless possibilities.



*No carrot sticks and juice for us,
this was 1979.*



ESSAY

Intertwined Histories

DAVID TOWNSEND

One of the most comprehensive public relations campaigns undertaken by a group of people was the establishment of Black History Month by African-Americans. Every February, Americans across the nation pay tribute to black history. Carter G. Woodson, who is known as the father of black history, launched Negro History Week on 7 February 1926.

For fifty years, Negro History Week was celebrated annually. Then in 1976, during the nation's Bicentennial, the commemoration was expanded to a month to allow more time for programs and celebrations, and it was named Afro-American History Month to reflect the growing African awareness among black Americans.

It is important that we understand the historical climate that led to the establishment of Negro History Week. Up until that time, "black history" had been synonymous with slavery, the underlying implication being that blacks had since made no significant contributions. Truth is, slavery and freedom have been the central points of reference in America's history, with the common perception that the history of black Americans begins with slavery and the prevalent view that blacks contributed little to American or world civilization.

This, of course, ignores the fact that rich civilizations flourished in Africa while Europe was still in its infancy, that there were

black explorers, conquerors, inventors, mathematicians, and scientists before, during, and after slavery. From blacks came America's first clock in 1754, by astronomer Benjamin Banneker; the world's first blood plasma from Dr. Charles Drew; the world's first successful heart surgery, performed by Daniel Hale Williams; and numerous other accomplishments and achievements.

In these perilous times, when color and culture sharply clash, it is important that white Americans know black Americans, and equally important that black Americans know white Americans. But there is little inclination by each group to do so. There are too many white Americans for whom black history, and Black History Month, are regarded in the same light as Martin Luther King's birthday—"a black thing." But black history does include white Americans. Our histories are intertwined by the blood of slavery and our mutual quest for freedom. Black Americans already know the accomplishments and achievements of white Americans. It is in the fabric of the standard history of this country. It is no wonder our black children are caught in the throes of despair—they don't know who they are.

Black History Month communicates to all the amazing accomplishments of African-Americans, and further it and lends them the strength and courage and role models to dream. Yet the fact

that few whites know the history of black people is a mistake. Knowing the history and accomplishments of a people is an important step toward resolving the issue of race in this country. I'm not suggesting that the learning of black history by white Americans would bring about a quick and decisive end to racism, but such learning is a critical support in building a bridge between the two Americas: a bridge of knowledge and respect that spans the gulf of ignorance and disdain.

Knowing the history and accomplishments of a people is an important step toward resolving the issue of race in this country.



Anitra, 16" high
clay
Casey Eskridge

In Dedication to

GARY M. KENDALL
1957–1996

Gary's interest in poetry and art had much to do with his interest in other writers and artists and their aspirations for recognition, success, and their need for community support. For himself, Gary was interested in "preserving the event," most often with photographs, but also with his own poetry, drawings, and paintings. He sought out writers and artists from across the country, and as a result of his reputation as a book collector, he was able to meet and correspond with nationally known writers.

His love of books is evident in his collection of signed first editions, which is one of the finest collections of contemporary literature in the area. His own writing captures family history and contemporary culture. As an artist, his ability to see the unusual juxtaposition of found objects was unique and a trademark of his work and environment. And he collected, in a precious and generous way, the people he found interesting. The people were often juxtaposed with his many trips—trips arranged to find something, to meet someone, and most importantly, to share with someone who would not have seen or gone without his inspiration.

The following two poems are examples of Gary's documentation of his own family and its rituals. Both poems tell two stories at one time. The Farm House Poem captures a peaceful day in the farm house and also casts a shadow of his illness which is referred to in the poem as "current events."

In the conclusion of the poem called, Aunt Eloise, the memory is that the child looked into the eyes of the people left behind. He says, "...they were not empty." In the final days of Gary's life, he drew us to his eyes, just as he had always drawn us to his camera. His poetry serves as a map of what was to come, of what was in his eyes—the lens—all along. Few people have asked us so persistently and gracefully to "see" what goes on, and to pay attention to each other.

Elizabeth Krajeck, *genesis* Guest Writer

The Farm House Poem

The air was crisp in the morning,
linoleum floors and chrome chairs
protected from current events.
Breakfast was big
pancakes or eggs and
morning-glories were still closed.
By lunch the hummingbirds
would be feeding.
The old feet would shuffle
across the kitchen floor.
After lunch Papaw asleep on
the porch would snore
with his mouth open wide.
We three sat close together
on the step, watching the flies
buzz around his mouth.
We waited for long periods
of time to pass for his
mouth to close like a
Venus fly trap and catch one.
The Shell Pest strip hung from
the corner with dead bugs
attached. And dying ones too.
With our backs to the ground

gravity pressing us hard to the hill
we watched the clouds form and move,
while our kites sang in the wind.
The open space was ours.
Evening special was Ed Sullivan
during intermission I raced to
the bathroom. In a hurry
I zipped myself in the process.
Everyone was in the bathroom.
Through tears they were fuzzy.
We missed a bit of
Ed Sullivan that night.
I wouldn't wear jeans for
many years afterwards.
I drew a picture of the
Alamo and gave it to Mimi.
I was so proud to purchase
this very small nativity set
all plastic and give it to Mimi
she put it on her dresser.
She was filled with love
and proud comments and hugs.
Linoleum floors and chrome chairs
protected from current events.

Aunt Eloise

She would give me those hugs that crushed me,
like an orange squeezed for juice.

Wet and slobbery kisses were placed upon my reluctant face.

Now I see it was a need, for the both of us, she was fulfilling.

“Whose boy are you?” she would ask, slipping her hair behind her ears.

“Whose boy are you?”

“Aunt Eloise.”

She wore those flower print cotton dresses soft to the touch,
and her skin smelled strongly from a bath in talcum powder.

Her glasses looked like cat eyes

with little rhinestones shinning in the corners.

“Whose boy are you?” she would ask, pushing her glasses up her nose.

“Whose boy are you?”

“Aunt Eloise.”

She nervously sucked on her bottom lip.

Oh, she knew how to read and watched Jeopardy.

And SWAT got a fly on the first try.

500 rummy was her card game—duces wild.

She doodled on the score pad when it wasn't her turn,
making these smiling creatures like flowers with a face in the middle.

“Whose boy are you?” she would ask, between gulps and burps of her
favorite drink, Coca-Cola.

“Whose boy are you?”

“Aunt Eloise.”

Sunday, the short weekend over,
we would take her back to where she lived on West Washington Street,
the place surrounded by the big black fence,
and black iron bars on the windows.

Mom said Aunt Eloise was a nervous person
and needed a nurse to watch her.

Once I went up the dark stairs to her ward.

“Whose boy are you?” she asked in front of her friends.

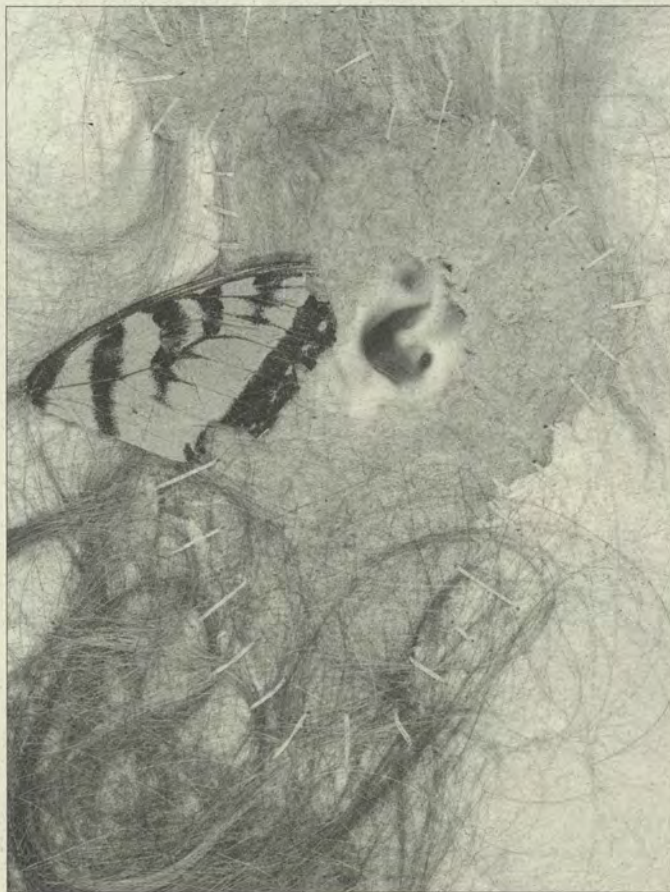
“Whose boy are you?”

“Aunt Eloise.”

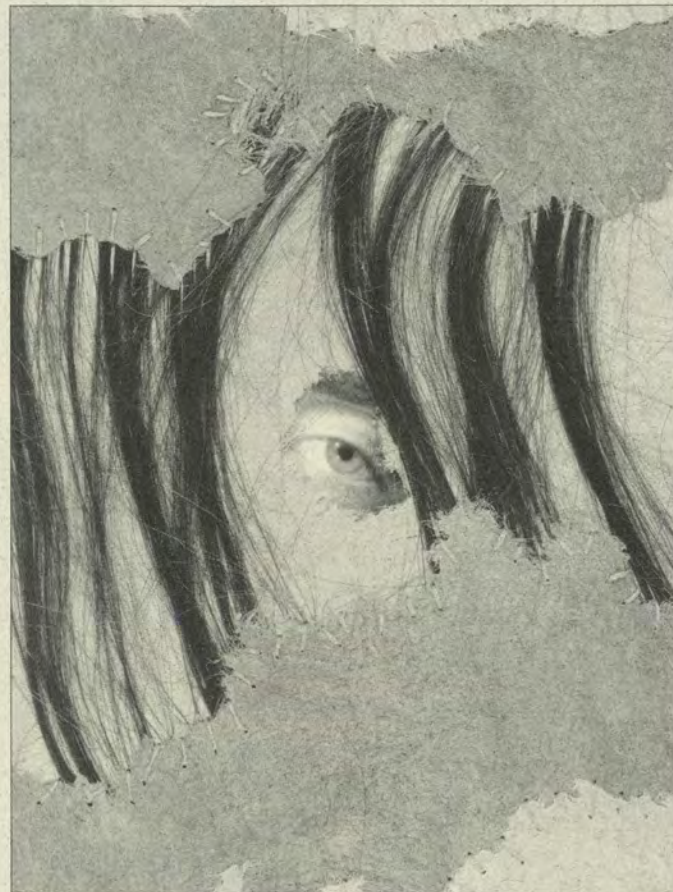
Everyone stared.

The doors locked when we left.

It was their eyes that hurt me: they were not empty.



Wing Song, 4" x 6"
mixed media collage



Indiana Harricane, 4" x 6"
mixed media collage

Gary M. Kendall

CONTRIBUTORS

Jennifer Baynes—BFA graduate from Indiana University. She currently lives and works in Indianapolis.

René L. Britt-Hartloff—Co-Senior Editor of *genesis*. This is her third issue in which she has been published. She would like to thank Lynette and Arianna for being patient (and quiet) while she works.

William Chill—Originally from Youngstown, OH, he has a BS in physics from Purdue University and served in the U.S. Army during the final days of the Cold War. Currently a Herron School of Art sophomore.

Carol Durbin—"I'm a geology major who happens to love writing poetry"

Katherine Ellison—A junior English major at IUPUI. "I would like to be a physicist, a chemist, a botanist, a geologist, or a truck driverist. She has been published previously in *genesis* and *The Fine Print*.

Casey Eskridge—1996 ART AWARD winner in *genesis*. Vincennes University graduate currently attending Herron School of Art. "Sculpture has made itself my life."

David Frisby—A husband in-love, father in-deed, citizen in-law, and student in-fact, chaotically is as if in-xs of a god who dances in a ring that encircles time in-between the events of the noon and midnight of eternity.

Janeale E. Givens—Senior English major minoring in political science.

Jack C. Hartigan—Visual artist living and working in Indianapolis. Photographer of all uncredited photographs contained in this issue. Special thanks to *Partners Photography* for the use of their studios.

H. Suzanne Heagy—English major attending IUPUI. "Writing is to me as breathing without it, I would suffocate." Previously published in *The South Carolina Writers' Workshop Anthology* in 1995–1996, and *Lynx Eye: A Scribblefest Literary Publication* in Los Angeles.

Meghan Hicks—1996 PROSE AWARD winner in *genesis*. Senior English major. Second publication. Last semester writing student. Badass. Goal:

finding a job that both nurtures my love of creative writing and pays a hell of a lot.

Tracy Lynn Ingalls—A sophomore English major at IUPUI. This is her first publication.

Gary M. Kendall—Herron School of Art student, Writers Center of Indianapolis member, former Art Editor of *The Flying Island* literary magazine, cover artist for *genesis*, fall, 1989, employee in the human resources dept. of Ameritech for 19 years and previous winner of the Arts Indiana Magazine Postcard Series.

Stephanie Meredith—A sophomore English major focusing on historical fiction writing. "My favorite eras to work with are 1920 and 1960, because I feel there is so much to explore."

Olaf J. Olsen—Full-time sophomore photography major at the Herron School of Art. Part-time interpreter for the deaf community. Awards include Best Cover for *genesis*, fall, 1995 from the Indiana Collegiate Press.

Jeff Ridenour—1996 POETRY AWARD winner in *genesis*. "When people ask me what I write, I tell them I am working on the Great American Satire. I then ask if I can interview them for this work. That usually does the trick."

Kelly D. Snow—A twenty-eight year old sophomore majoring in secondary education and mother of one four-year old boy. Goal: to become an anthropologist.


Angela Stewart—Herron School of Art BFA graduate, currently employed as an Exhibit Fabricator for the Conner Prairie Living History Museum.

David Townsend—Senior year of studies at IUPUI, planning to attend IU School of Law in 1997.

Mary Elizabeth Vespo—A thirty-three year old sophomore attending IUPUI and seeking a degree in elementary education. "My poem *Rush Hour* is about looking within, perhaps at things we would really rather not look at."



Self Portrait, 5" x 7", solarized black and white photograph, **Gary M. Kendall**



semiannual art and literary journal devoted to publishing literary works of imaginative and critical writing in the areas of fiction, drama, essay, poetry, criticism, and various forms of visual artworks within the IUPUI system.