

genesis



vol. 36

genesis

*--the origin or coming into being of anything:
development into being especially by growth or
evolution: the process or mode of origin
<the ~ of a book>*

genesis

Established 1972

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Cynthia Goodnight, Student Life and Diversity
English Department of the School of Liberal Arts, IUPUI
Western Newspaper Publishing Company, Indianapolis

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On the front cover: **Best of Art**
Body Issues #1, Silver Gelatin Print
Jessie Rae

On the back cover:
Self Portrait
Yi Sun

From the Editor's Desk:

Once again, *genesis* takes to the stage. This semester we are pleased to present a spectacular and provoking yet always entertaining offering of imagination from performance art to simple haiku. And as always, the choice of selections for this issue was both difficult and exciting.

The spring issue of *genesis* also represents our final curtain call as Senior Editors. To keep the spirit of creation alive, it is fitting that the old make way for the next new vision. Creating our own vision for *genesis* over the years has been an experience full of hard work, frustration, and a fair measure of satisfaction. We could not ask for more.

Thank you everyone.

Pat Harvey

Kimberly McClish

Senior Editors

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Best of Poetry

Sparks and the Ash

-Andrew Wright

My eyes shut in unintended sleep,
now open to the idea of a flamboyant death.

The Hamlet tree leans with open wounds.

More melodramatic than arboreal mortality

but less real than a spider in a dream,
the blood orange and gold-tipped

leaves disarrange in the wind.
shift in the green lawn chair and look

in the window. Drops of chai and cinnamon
fall from my lip because I gulp tea.

The rake leans against the frame.
I made prosy piles yesterday by the unraveled hose

and more by the hedges.
The old tree burned and sparked

I thought of both Mary and moving,
not distinctly but together.

She is tired of work, resents
my time

writing the hospice ash in notebooks
I gave her, then took back.

She asks 'are you served.'

when she works harder than I,
but I am not served well or at all.

She doesn't know I sleep late
to let the talent grow.

I was overlooked once
if Mary leaves before I do, once more.

The watch I gave her on a Tuesday spends time
on the table.

Mary is in my wallet. She looks like me.
I have pulled out all of my blond hairs.

I think I am her when I find one on my shoulder.
Traces of she and my mind blur,

follow September-fugues
into the tree to pull apart its blush.

I dissociate from Mary and Tuesday
and who I am with her, when my eyes are shut.

Dusk is dark too. I cannot see the difference.
She says impression is cognitive,

so I want to be tall.

Details of a Reflection

-Joshua Baratz

Beyond shirtless roughnecks with knife wound laden stomachs, beyond powerful plumage running down the back of necks, beyond long winding lines at the check cashing-liquor store on election days, we stood beyond the large darkly tinted window. Five o'clock was ripe for people watching. It was one of our daily rituals, and we were one of the lone catalysts of class in the frayed, slightly patched up pocket of Fountain Square.

On the outside *Bistro 635* was a symbol of elegance and rejuvenation. To the staff it symbolized a delicate balance between responsibility and back-of-the-house decadence. The restaurant stood out among the greasy grill at Peppy's, the Appalachian type setting of Bud's supermarket, and a variety of other businesses in Fountain Square. It was the neighborhood establishments' refined peer; a tall, skinny remodeled historical building wedged into Virginia Avenue with creased white tablecloths, shiny gold crumbers, crimson colored pinots, pecan encrusted trout and carpaccios of beef.

The deep, skinny dining room was decorated with the work of local artists, a wall length mirror, and a mantle lined with candles and backed by block glass. It was the kind of glass that emitted light with a very warped transparency. The walls were dark olive. This room, the main dining area, was an upscale haven situated between the kitchen and the downstairs wine cellar. When entering the restaurant a steep, narrow staircase presented itself and led to two small rooms upstairs that were reserved for bustling weekends and private parties. The small one towards the back had a shower in the closet. It was one of the last remnants of our owner's former second level residence.

Our job, as servers, of *Bistro 635* was to create an experience for the guests and, in return, ourselves. This was the goal no matter how polite or pompous they were. Ambiance was our ambition, and it was a rather easy task considering our setting. The restaurant was very unique to Indianapolis with its upscale urban feel. As servers we led diners through a tour of the menu, provided insightful information, friendly banter, and wine presentation as they relaxed on glossy black banquets or at quiet tables. Smooth jazz slowly seeped from the hidden speakers as they sipped wine. It was a divine environment for studies in human behavior and interaction. It became a lab of sorts. We dissected people, exposing the fraudulent and pretentious to our pleasure and contrasting them with the friendly regulars we'd come accustomed to on a nightly

basis. From the civilized, to the regulars, to the classless weekend-only diners we saw them all. To break the monotony servers must pool from the dusty catalogue of acting techniques that has become a requisite in the business, in order, to deal with people on such a consistent basis. The dining room staged our production. We were experts in elegance who were fiercely determined to create the most amount of excitement.

The kitchen was a melting pot of high jinx. It was painted bright white with a small stainless steel salad station, a reasonable sized main line for the preparation of hot entrees and starters, and a small dish tank. All of which served as perfect barriers for baguettes and an assortment of other foods that traveled well through the air. It was a ruthless zone that was spotless except for the electric olive oil stains on the ceiling (the glass containers were often filled too high and the oil shot out the top when the pour spouts were snapped on).

The banter in the kitchen was war like. It was a battlefield of Spanish-English barbs slung without resistance by an assortment of characters. There was the Hispanic dishwasher with a cocaine fetish, the Guatemalan line cook with a penchant for English insults, the sous chef tatted from wrist to back who sang lead vocals in a local hardcore band, and our wiry Chef who stood six foot eight and lived for practical jokes. We quickly desensitized ourselves to finding severed fish heads stuffed in drawers, learned that there is no such thing as "grackles" kept in dry storage, and that hot food was the top priority. We were professionals, but characters none-the-less.

Unrestraint traveled from the kitchen down the steep metal stairs to dry storage, and also out the back door for combat during heavy snowfalls. Ice fights were legendary, so were piling up paint cans outside the employee restroom while one conducted "paperwork." The scene was purely chaotic at times, yet sheltered by two swinging doors that led into the dining room. The swinging kitchen doors tried to contain our excessive emotions. More than once customers overheard high volume voices and fists pounding on stainless steel. The fact of the matter is that the business, at times, breeds contempt for the general public. We, as servers, sometimes acted out our frustrations through elaborate anger induced tirades in the kitchen. This was also one of the last places that word traveled, the word that our owner had arrived.

The presence of Pearson Gorge was intimidating. He had enjoyed twenty years of local celebrity and success as a fine dining pioneer and demanded perfection. The structure he put into place was proven, and the customers loved his product. But the moment his Pewter Suburban roughly strode up to the curb on Virginia Avenue everyone scrambled to pander to the minute details his arrival ensured would expose. We scrambled through the dimly lit restaurant spreading the word of "fathers" arrival. Our goal was to put everyone in the correct mindset

that one must be in, in order, to deal with the man. Without the correct amount of submissiveness and humor everyone was cooked. The kitchen and the wine cellar were the last to learn of his arrival.

The wine cellar was a cozy, candlelit step back into an almost medieval time period. There was a short carpeted staircase that led into the room. They echoed loudly every few minutes when a server hustled down to pick up drinks. It got to the point where the bartender could tell each server by the distinct sound of their footsteps. The cellar was walled with what appeared to be aged limestone, and in the right corner there was a dank sealed up coal chute. When it rained water leaked through, spread on the slate tiled floor, and intensely magnified the already musty aroma.

Kerosene filled candles lined the back stone wall and were affixed above three small tables. To the left sat a barrier with glass windows and a door that led into the cellar compartment. An assortment of wine bottles rested on black racks that sat flush with the stone. A small dehumidifier whirred while releasing a chilled breeze upon the selection of assorted wines.

The bar itself was constructed of aged, slightly abused wood. There were sporadic knots and indentations in the surface. There were four stools at the bar. Behind it the wall was made of gently rusted metal. This place was unlike any other in the city of Indianapolis. It was the perfect place to guzzle shift beers and down espressos. The atmosphere was very engaging. The place was in high demand on the weekends. Couples often dined at the corner table under the cover of darkness that permeated the cellar. There was one speaker, when seated at that table blared the whiny sound of wind instruments into the ear.

The allure that the wine cellar held for guests was intense, but it was magnified ten fold for the staff. It was our sanctuary, a beautifully constructed piece of old charm that we were way too young to have had experienced. The liquids flowed freely from the bartender's heavy pours, and heavy handed drafts as we reclined in another time.

Our team was extremely unique, and so was the Bistro. We were a tight unit, one who felt privileged, and after time entitled to the restaurant. The style of the interior became our style, and we came to suck every ounce out of our experiences, taking advantage of all situations our employment presented.

The restaurant was a well crafted attraction that was perfect for private parties and promotional dinners. On one occasion *Bistro 635* celebrated the arrival of a wine known as Beaujolais from France. It is best when enjoyed young, and arrives every year on the last Thursday in November. We offered an all inclusive dinner for our guests. The wine was flown in overnight by the case load. We wore black berets to contribute to the atmosphere. A wiry gentleman traveled freely around

the main dining room, the upstairs area, and the wine cellar playing the mandolin. He sidled around the tables of four, in and out of the two tops, up the steep sets of stairs that led to the second floor, and down to the cellar level. It was an unusual scene, one that bred the feelings of unrestraint only experienced when put into costume.

The bar tender dwelled in the darkness of the cellar, becoming rather drunk in the evening hours. The whole staff sipped wine freely and sauntered around the Bistro with ease while we serviced our tables. Every guest was taken care of, enjoying themselves and the pleasures of all-the-wine one can consume. After the shift, already tipsy, we guzzled wine outside in the grubby alley that ran behind the restaurant. The air was crisp as it wisped through our light heads. The feeling was superb. It was the feeling of enjoyment, enjoyment at work.

There was a unique balance at *Bistro 635*. It was an atmosphere of fine dining elegance and back of the house decadence. It was a mixture that will never quite be recreated. It has forever soiled my future work experience. Never again will I be able to work a job that I do not thoroughly love. The building is intact but the restaurant has been defunct for months now; a product of our owner's over extension, the economy, and a plethora of other factors. The place was conducive to class, but we made it more than that. We devoured the ripe conditions and created an environment that transcended everything. Once or twice I've traveled down Virginia Avenue past the tall, slender building and seen my reflection in the dark tinted window, no longer watching others, but looking at myself in the reflection.

Aaron Braithwaite: Only recently completing my Associate in Science, Fine Art—Studio Concentration, I had decided to continue working towards my Bachelor of Art History at the Herron School of Art. I have always had a love for Art and I knew Art is what I would be called to do. Not only to study the history but also creating it as well. Sharing my experiences, good or bad, with people through my art is not only my goal, but believe it to be my purpose as well.



Bottle and Cloth still life
Conte Crayon on Brown Paper



Jeddah's Broken
Oil on Canvas



Pear Study
Oil on Canvas

Karen Mitchell wears many hats: wife, mother, legal secretary, college student and writer. She is a sophomore English major with the creative writing concentration. If Karen could be granted three wishes, she would ask for a printer that never runs out of ink or paper, the title of her favorite childhood book about Sirius the Dog Star whisking a young girl from her bedroom to visit a desert flower that opens only at night, and a pocket size Pachycephalosaurus.

Waiting at a Never-Ending Stoplight

The moon hangs
in the trees
an orange silk lantern
dangling from an
unseen wire
illuminating
tiny
silver
dragons.

Why I Didn't Finish My Poem

I sit at the kitchen table
one evening after work
scratching away in my
tablet, searching for the
right words to say.

My golden boy jumps up
on the table and says *Meow!*
in my face, as if to shout
Here I am! and lies down right
on top of my notebook, with a
ginger paw on my arm.

Okay, I'll take a break,
I sigh and scratch him behind
his fuzzy little ears.

Rolls of thunder rumble
through his long, slender body
as he stretches out like orange marmalade
spread on warm toast.

I study Tiger as I would great art,
his harvest moon eyes stare back at me,
jack-o-lantern headlights set on high beam.

I often wonder how other writers
who share their homes with cats
ever manage to write a single word.

Because, you see, that dog who likes to
eat homework didn't gobble up my poem.
My cat just decided to take a nap, and I
just couldn't bear to move him.

How to Work Second Shift (In an Institution for Developmentally Disabled Children)

It takes about five minutes in the unit before the stench of urine and feces stop bothering you. Check the lock on the refrigerator, they always run there first. Make sure every door, cabinet, and drawer is closed and locked. Check under the mattresses for doll parts and shredded toys that the nuns dropped off last month because they use them as weapons. Fill your pockets with candy. Tangy Taffy is a favorite and lasts the longest. Unlock the steel door and walk into the courtyard containing five identical gray one-story units. Head to the main road past the skeleton trees.

Stand in the cold with fifty other employees waiting for the two school buses to arrive. Listen to the overweight women in sweatpants talk about the Jerry Springer show. Don't stand too close because they douse themselves in cheap flowery perfume that makes your eyes water. Better than smelling like shit, they'll say. Smoke cigarettes with the ten other men who work the second shift. Compare scars and horror stories. Show them the bite marks on your left forearm that you think are infected. Listen to Joe tell how he single handedly put down Duane (the Butcher) last night. Roll your eyes because you've had to rescue Joe on more than one occasion. Whisper about the fat, lazy female trainers and refer to them as "The Sweatpants Mafia." Check out the cute college Newbie and place bets on how long she'll last. Your guess: ten days because she's petite. Wave goodbye to the administrators as they leave for the day. Give them the finger when they're out of sight.

The kids are at Horizons School for the Disabled during the day. They spend most of their time strapped to chairs or in the time-out room. The lucky ones (well-behaved) stack blocks or color cartoons. They always come home to the institution with wet or crappy pants. Men grab "the runners" by their collars and women help the ones that don't walk very well. Hold up a piece of Tangy Taffy and they'll follow you right into the unit.

Put dry clothes on the kids but don't use diapers, as it goes against their toilet training goal. Pass out Thorazine, Haldol, and Mellaril with gumdrop chasers. Unlock the video of *Cinderella* and play it on the TV behind Plexiglas. Turn the volume up over the screams. Half the kids will slip into a drooling zombie state on the plastic covered couches.

Grab Albert (the Spider) off the backyard fence. Last night he made it over and ran towards the highway. You caught him by the ankle just before he made it to the street.

Get the name of this week's trainee. She'll arrive thirty minutes late wearing a sorority sweatshirt and a ponytail, talking of her love for children. The Mafia women tell her to forget everything she learned in the two-week company training. They'll say something like, This is the real world. Those administrators don't know anything. They don't come back here.

You tell her to stick close because the kids aren't used to strangers and you never know what they'll do. She'll see the one female resident in the unit, Tina (the Hisser), under a table. Tiffany will approach her. She'll say, Hi! My name's Tiffany, what's yours? Then she'll talk slower, I'm Tiffany, Tiff-an-y. What's your name? Tina will start to hiss and growl and flail her arm out and try to scratch the Newbie.

You'll laugh with the Mafia women before you go over and say, that's Tina. She doesn't talk. Her family raised her in the kennel with the dogs. The state brought her here last year. She's been taught how to sit in a chair and use a spoon.

Matt (the Ripper) will run up and hit Tiffany in the face and latch on to her hair (the reason why you shave your head). Tiffany will scream and they'll both fall to the ground. Sit on top of Matt and push his face to the tile floor. Help Tiffany unweave her hair from Matthew's clutches (he'll get a good chunk of it). Unlock the staff bathroom for Tiffany so she can cry in private. She'll want to know what she did wrong. Tell her everyone gets beat up the first month.

The kitchen staff wheel in the food cart at six. Tell Tiffany to eat the Salisbury steak and Tator Tots because the meal is automatically deducted from her pay. She won't touch it, so you'll eat it. Patrol the dining room and encourage the kids to use spoons instead of their hands. Practice the Heimlich maneuver with Tiffany. Tell her about the five times you've used it. Point to Sean (Buddha) and tell her about last week when you had to Heimlich him for over a minute until everything from his mouth (and stomach) came out.

She'll say, was he okay?

You'll say, he started eating his own vomit.

No way, she'll say.

Way, you'll say.

Change the wet kids after dinner and pass out more medication.

A Mafia woman and you take the Newbie and six kids to a park that is usually empty. You give piggyback rides to the kids you like and pull the other ones out of the trashcans. Remove the candy wrappers or cigarette butts from their mouths. Tiffany and the Mafia woman will sit on a bench and talk about the ups and downs of Mafia life. You chase the

kids around like a sheep dog. Pull one of your kids off a "normal" kid playing in the sandbox. Her parents will want your company's name and number so they can report you. They'll say, Why don't you keep a better eye on these monsters? They shouldn't be in public! But when they call the office the administrators will work on them so much that they'll end up donating money to the company.

You take the kids to Wal-mart to get a snack. The store will become quiet as the customers and employees stare at the kids. If you make eye contact with any of them their faces will turn red and they'll look at the ground. One customer will approach, usually a kind old lady, and pat one of the kids on the head. The kid will grab her coat and start screaming. Bend his fingers backwards until he lets go. The old lady will hurry away holding her chest and all the other customers will clear the aisles so you can pass. One of the kids will pull down a candy display while the others will scamper to the floor and stuff wrapped candy in their mouths. Pick them up and drag them out. The Wal-mart employees will hold the door for you and say, don't worry about it. We'll take care of it, no charge. The customers will giggle nervously as you leave.

It's shower time when you return to the unit. Line the kids up naked on the concrete floors. You hold the shower hose while one Mafia woman washes, another dries, and a third puts on pajamas. Save the autistic kids for last when there is no more hot water, they love the sensation of ice water and shake a lot. Pass out more medication and promise a snack to the ones who sit quietly. Break up a fight between Tony (the Thumper) and David (the Vampire). Put on latex gloves to clean up the blood. Tuck them in bed and kiss the ones you like on the forehead.

You'll get an emergency page over the intercom just as things quiet down in your unit. It will be from the mild teen unit. Tiffany will ask who's in the mild teen unit.

You'll say, mildly retarded big boys. You know, angry Gump tards.

She'll scowl at you and say that's not politically correct.

You'll tell her the only people who use correct terms are the people who have little or no contact with the short bus riders. The Mafia women will laugh.

The Newbie insists on going with you because she wants to see it all. You tell her the rules of the unit. Don't get cornered, use any method to prevent yourself from getting injured, try not to hit them where it will leave a mark. She'll look shocked and ask if the administrators know about this and you'll say, who do you think came up with the rules?

Joe, who bragged that day about putting down Duane (the Butcher), will have big bug eyes and ask you to do the restraint because his back hurts again. Duane will be punching the wall and pushing over

the table. Smile at him, not friendly, but like one of those menacing clowns in horror movies. He'll throw a few punches at you but he's slow. Move out of the way or block them. Let this go on for five minutes until Duane is sucking in deep breaths. Spin him around when he throws his next punch. Use your right arm and put him in a chokehold. Stick your left index finger in his left nostril and pull his head back. He'll scream as you pull him down to the floor. Roll him on his stomach and place your knee on the back of his neck (like the police do). Put your entire weight on that knee. Grab his arms and pull them towards the ceiling until you hear his high-pitched shrieks. Continue to do this until his body goes limp and he submits. Tell him if you have to come back you won't be so nice. Head back to your unit with the Newbie. She'll be trembling.

Tiffany will say something like, I never knew kids like this existed. I never knew a world like this existed.

You'll say, most people don't. Out of sight out of mind.

She'll ask you why you do this for a living.

You'll smile and say because it beats flipping burgers and besides, you love kids.

Tiffany will leave early because she's exhausted. She'll say she looks forward to coming back tomorrow. You bet the Mafia women five bucks she won't return.

Nikki Barker: She grew up in the woods and her shoes were off most of the time her first ten years of life. Each spring she resolved to herself that this would be the year she sailed away down the river on a homemade raft and live the rest of her life adrift on the mighty Mississippi, but she never built the raft. She spent the next ten years of her life searching for someone who would help her build her raft, some soul mate or guiding mentor to hold her hand and be a comfort by her side. She never found that person, and lost herself while she was looking. She will spend the next ten years attempting to find herself once again, and has read many good books, painted many interesting images and wrote many satisfying contemplations along her way.

Angry Bride
Acrylic



Thomas Crist is currently attending Junior level classes at Herron School of Art, majoring in painting and is a studio resident at the Bodner Building Gallery/ Studios located downtown.



For Lisa
Oil on Wood



Untitled
Oil on Wood

Untitled
Oil on Wood

Chi Sherman: Despite graduating in 2002, I still lurk around the IUPUI campus, much like a phantom in my own opera. I now change my mind every 3-4 seconds about what I want to study in grad school, which significantly influences the 6.3 seconds between decisions where to procure my M.A. I have to say that working at Hardees is beginning to sound more and more appealing.

on being mixed

brown beige grey neutral
white as parchment black as ink
dark light both all none

Lindy Arnold: is a single parent recently enrolled at IUPUI. She currently works in a sushi bar while pursuing a career in the Arts.

Why I Stay

Homage to Marilyn Kallet's poem, *Why I Wear My Hair Long*

I want to measure
every angle you own
with my finger the ruler

to wander over
the strength
of your arms

to ride the ripples
like small waves
across your torso

to circle your
curves like
a compass

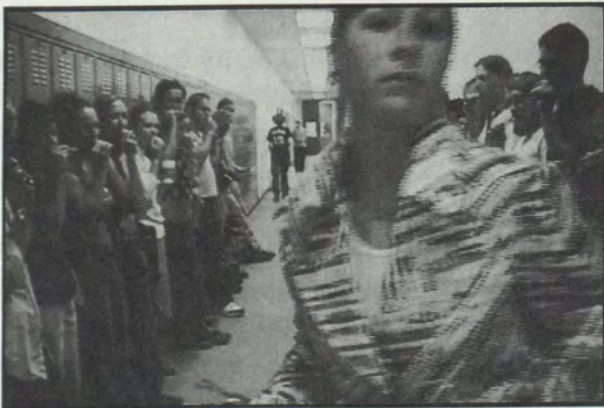
I want to thread my fingers
through your hair
while we sleep
intertwined.

Jessie Rae: I am twenty-one-years-old and this is my fourth year at IUPUI/ Herron School of Art. I am a double-major: a Senior in Photography and a Junior in Sculpture with Art History as my minor; I plan on graduating in December 2005. I have been mostly experimenting with performance art for about a year now. Some of my influences include Kiki Smith, Brian Priest, and Hugo Ball (as well as pretty much all of the Dada and Futurist performance artists). I am also in beginning poetry this semester with Terry Kirts and I absolutely love the connection between writing and visual art; I have been reading Rainer Maria-Rilke and Billy Collins lately as well as attending as many readings and lectures as I can (I loved Maurice Manning). I plan on going to graduate school after graduation, although I am still undecided where—possibly internationally. My favorite dessert is peanut-butter pie—yum! **Jessie Rae is also winner of "Best of Issue: Art "and featured on the cover.**



Like Father, Lost Daughter

Silver Gelatin Print documenting performance with salt drawings



Junkmail Tapdance
tap dance performance
with suit made of
shredded junk mail and
contact paper, kazoo
players



Kristin Baxter provided no biographical note.

A Simple Fan

It was a beautiful day in July. I was on my way to a Phish show all by myself. I had showered that day. I had left all of my glitter behind. I was stone cold sober, and wearing a bra. In fact, the only thing consuming my thoughts was that I had to be home and in bed by one in order to function the next morning. I had changed; I was no longer the person I once was. It had become totally clear to me that I had grown up.

The first time I heard Phish was during my junior year of high school. *Bouncing around the room* was being played on heavy rotation by a local radio station and I instantly loved it. My interest had been sparked, so that following summer I went to my first Phish show with my friends Brian and Holly. None of us knew what to expect, but at the same time we were all incredibly excited. When we arrived, the first thing we noticed was a huge line of people. Mostly everyone had long hair or dreads or some sort of shaggy look to them. Girls with hairy armpits were dressed in long, flowy dresses and patchwork skirts. Boys were dressed in pants with no shirts or Phish t-shirts from previous tours. Skinny dogs were everywhere, mostly running around on their own, but some were attached to their owners by a thin rope. Some women even had their children with them, all glittered up and running around barefoot. The scent of weed and patchouli filled the air. It looked like a bizarre sort of street fair and it turned out that it was named "Shakedown Street." Food was being served up; everything from grilled chees to burritos to beer could be found. In between the food vendors were people selling clothing, jewelry, art and pipes. This is how these people were able to stay on tour as I was later told. Drugs were abundant and no one was hiding that fact. I was constantly hearing, "Shrooms, who's got my shrooms?" and "Get your king bud here!" I had never seen Brian so bright eyed before. He immediately bought some acid and shoved it in his mouth. It was then that I noticed that everyone kind of walked around with this glaze covering their eyes. They were so messed up and loving every moment of it; I could not believe how uninhibited everyone seemed. The closer we became to the venue entrance, the more people I noticed holding one finger up. There were also others screaming, "Who's got my miracle?" I found out that the people holding a finger up needed a ticket for the show, and the people asking for a "miracle" wanted a free ticket. Most people never had any money for tickets, usually only drugs or something else for trade. That night we sat on the lawn, along with thousands of other "phans." We

danced and sang and had the time of our lives. The energy of the crowd was very intense and the phans were all so happy and friendly. I had fallen into a world where everyone was accepted no matter how different or strange you appeared to be. I walked out of that show as a completely reinvented person. An entire new world had been opened up for me and I loved it.

Phish had been on a break for a little over two years. Before the break, I had seen them every year for the past six years. It was not just one show per year; I had to see three shows in the spring, at least five shows during the summer, and three to four shows in the fall. I was so excited to finally see them again, I had to get tickets. My problem was that I had no one to go with, and in fact I did not even know anyone who listened to Phish. I had lost complete contact with my friends from high school, and everyone else was in California. I finally found a co-worker of mine, Bill, to get tickets with. Bill had listened to Phish for years, so I thought he would be a great person to go with. Getting tickets for a Phish show is extremely painful. For one, the tickets sell out very quickly, but this time around I was not on the ball. Fortunately, Bill had heard of a very discreet Ticketmaster location, and sure enough, when we arrived at eight in the morning, there were only three people waiting in line. We were able to get two nights worth of tickets, and even better, one of our nights was in the pavilion. Bill was excited, I was excited, Phish was coming to town.

My '84 turbo diesel Mercedes roared into the Verizon Center parking lot. I arrived alone, which was a very odd feeling. I was used to having a huge group of people with me and everyone would be ecstatic and wound up. I pulled up behind a blue blazer that had its back opened. A group of about six people surrounded the truck, drinking beers and passing a joint. As I got out of my car, I swear they were all staring at me; wondering what the hell I was doing there by myself. I immediately felt awkward and out of place, which really angered me. I had been to so many shows that I'd lost count, and I felt out of place? I smiled at the group, put my cell phone in my purse and headed straight into the middle of Shakedown Street.

Shakedown Street was as lively as I remembered it to be. With the exception of being disgustingly sober, nothing had really changed. People were still looking for mushrooms, burritos and grilled cheeses were everywhere, and the eyes of the passer-bys were glazier than ever. On the way down the line I ran into a friend from high school, Scotty. I was excited to see him, as it had been years, but Scotty really wasn't able to talk too much. He said something about balloons and then introduced me to a little girl named "Moon Girl." I began to ask where her parents were, but just then her dad stumbled onto the scene and introduced

himself. Freaked out, I excused myself, and headed towards the entrance of the venue.

I was supposed to meet Bill at six sharp. Since we had seats for the show, it was very easy to find him. There Bill sat with this shit eating grin, all messed up. In fact, Bill was so messed up that he couldn't even talk, which left me with this terrible anxious feeling inside. I decided to just sit there, take in the people, and wait for the show to start. Everyone looked like everyone else, not a single person stood out to me in the crowd. It was while sitting there that I noticed how funny the roles are that people play for a Phish show. Bill for instance, who worked as a retail manager, was wearing a dirty tie dyed t-shirt and very baggy pants. This man had never missed a shower in his life before and if he knew what his butt looked like in those pants he would have died. But then again, if he would have showed up in his button down and fitted pants, he would have been playing the wrong role. I even bought a new hat for the occasion. I guess I too wanted to take on a new persona, maybe be someone a little different: someone a little more "Phish" like.

Before a Phish show there is always the same mellow jazz music playing. I have noticed it in the past, but it has always been very far in the background. I have always been surrounded by friends talking and laughing; I have never taken the time to really listen to it. But this time was definitely different from the past times; the music was the only thing I had to listen to. It was me, messed up Bill, the music and thousands of other phans talking and laughing. This one place where I used to feel the most free and the most accepted was now making me feel like a complete outsider. Sadly enough, I was kind of devastated in a way.

Phish, comprised of Trey, Mike, Fish and Page, finally took to the stage around 7:30, and began the night with *Punch You in the Eye*. This overwhelming sensation took over my body and I began dancing and moving, it felt so great to see them again. I looked out on to the thousands of other phans, shaking their bodies, and I felt that same energy that I had felt during my very first show. I smiled at Bill, he tried to smile back; I was ready to have a great night. The rest of the first set included *Beauty of my Dreams*, *Gumbo*, *Divided Sky*, *Boogie on Reggae Woman*, *Carini* into *Magilla*, and *Possum*. I wrote down each song as it was played, as I had always done at previous shows. Phish has such an extensive song list that they can go years and years without playing a song. I was so excited to have heard *Boogie on Reggae Woman*; I hadn't heard it since '99.

During intermission Bill and I headed to the lawn to find his group of friends. After hiking through the massive sea of people, we amazingly found them sitting at the very top of the hill. It was a huge group of people and I instantly felt as if I was on a different planet. Some were giggling heavily, some were submersed into deep conversations,

and then there was the quiet bunch who just stared into space. They must have been on whatever Bill was on, and I couldn't help but think to myself how happy I was to be sober. I tried to start a conversation with a girl sitting next to me, but it was going nowhere. I had nothing in common with any of these people except Phish. I left to go grab a beer and decided not to go back to Bill and his drugged up friends. The rest of the night was going to be up to me and I was determined to have a good time. I eventually made it back to my seat only to find that it had been taken over by a group of seat jumpers. "Seat jumpers" were the guys that jumped into the pavilion as soon as the lights went down. Because of them I was left without a seat and feeling sickly alone.

Phish began their second set with *Split Open and Melt*, which gave me the motivation to roam around and find another spot. I finally found a fairly decent place in the middle of an aisle. There was a pole obstructing part of my view, but I closed my eyes and tried to dance. It was during the next song *Free* that I suddenly had the urge to leave. I had realized that I was in the middle of a Phish show, with no friends in sight, dancing just to dance and I felt nothing. I was uncomfortable, alone, and I wanted to go home. I made my way through the sea of phans, and tried with every muscle I had to smile.

On the walk out of the venue, I heard a song begin to play that I had been waiting eight years to hear live: *The Lizards*. I could not believe my ears. It was as if Phish was laughing at me, and they were giving their last shot to reel me back to the life I once knew. I turned around and started to run back in, but then I stopped. I heard part of the chorus, "and I'm never ever going back there, and I couldn't if I tried..." It was too late. I was never going back there and it was never going to be the same again. I slowly turned around and continued to walk towards the parking lot with *The Lizards* as my background music. It was then that I realized that I had forgotten where I had parked. I called Kevin just to feel not so lost and alone anymore, and after the longest fifteen minutes ever, I found my car; my car that had been blocked in by two other cars. Two guys happened to be walking by also looking for their car and they were kind enough to direct me out of the spot. After a few minor bumps I thought I was on my way, when I was flagged down by a guy asking me if I could give him a jump. I agreed to help him, and I swear his car took an eternity to start. He was a really nice kid, and I tried to be patient, but all I truly wanted to do was get back to my normal life as quickly as possible. After his car finally started, I found that I couldn't drive away because my car was stuck in a mud hole: the only mud hole in the entire parking lot. So here I was on the verge of tears, trying to get myself home, and I still couldn't leave. The kid and his friends already being dirty, volunteered to push my car, and with the help of some kitty litter from my trunk, I was free.

I wasn't supposed to leave the show early that night; there were plenty of signs making that quite clear. I could have gone back to the show as soon as I realized my car was blocked in, or I could have just waited it out, but I had to get out of there. But I made the decision to leave and I never looked back. On the way home I had time to reflect on the concert. I had decided to give Bill my ticket for the next night's show during intermission. I asked him to "miracle" someone with it. I was no longer worthy, but some poor, barefoot, dirty soul was. I realized that Phish will always be Phish, playing the same Phish songs to the same Phish Phans. I was no longer phan, submerged into the entire culture that revolved around the band. I was just a simple fan who wanted to listen to Phish. I popped in my favorite Phish CD and drove on. It was at this moment when I realized that Phish Needed the Two year break to simply relax. I needed the break to grow up.

Joshua Baratz: Hip Hop sparked my love of words, poetry made everything else insignificant. **Joshua is also winner of "Best of Issue: Prose"**

Strawberry and Two-Star General

are dishwashers
of Guatemalan descent,
hardcore laborers
of the humid dish tank
wearing worn threads
of our language.
They work confined
to the acrylic white walls
and stainless steel
of low hourly wages,
soiled ceramic
and spotted silverware,
root vegetables, veal stock,
and monkfish heads.

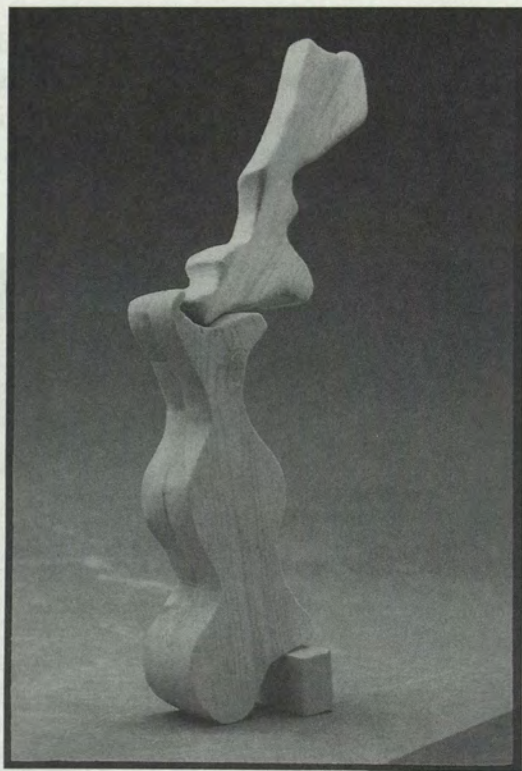
One has a gold star
on each front tooth,
the other a bright birth mark
on the right cheek.

We whistle
to make up for a lack of words,
play air trumpets
in tones layered with meaning.
Our actions are reduced to the black
and white of Charlie Chapin

Aireal Hall: I am a first year student at IUPUI Herron School of Art. I previously transferred from Vincennes University as a graphic design major. My goal is to complete the Visual Communications program at Herron and then further my education by receiving my Master's Degree.



Where is Peace?



Flight



Landing

Jennifer Neal: I am a senior Psychology major who writes for fun. I enjoy writing in many genres but favor short fiction.

Divine Intervention

Her eyes hurt. The sun bore a whole in her as if she were under a magnifying glass. Her clothing hugged her sweat drenched body in a never-ending embrace. The thickness of the air seemed to wrap around her like a boa constrictor squeezing the life out of her. New Orleans was not a town for the weak.

Walking down the street in the French Quarter, Kristin marveled at the sights. She happened upon a man standing on a rectangular wooden crate. His skin was the color of dark chocolate and smooth as porcelain. A shaved head sat atop broad shoulders. Clothing draped his large frame as if he were a mannequin dressed by a shop girl. She watched the man for signs of life. His chest was still as if all breath had left his body. A small child, standing close to him, glanced back occasionally at her parents for approval. She touched his hand and quickly jumped back, scared at the possible consequences, but none came. The man remained still. At his feet was a small cardboard box with some change and bills in it. Coins dropped from the hand of the father of the little girl. As they clanged into the box, the statue began to dance. The little girl let out a yelp of fear and ran back to her parents. Peeking out from behind her father's leg she grinned at the dancing man. The statue continued his dance for a few more seconds, and like a wind-up toy that has run down, he stopped. No movement, only stillness. The crowd moved on.

Kristin continued down the street. She approached a lone street musician sitting on a stool with his entire orchestra at his feet. A saxophone, a trumpet, a clarinet, and a trombone were arranged in a semicircle around his feet. His guitar was slung over his shoulder as he played the accordion sitting in his lap. A small crowd had gathered around the man and Kristin decided to stop. As she listened to the melody, the smell of coffee invaded her senses. She continued on and spotted a small café. Crossing the street to get some coffee, she was distracted by something out of the corner of her eye. She had stumbled upon the Saint Louis Cathedral in the center of the French Quarter. Her breath caught in her throat as she marveled at the size and beauty of the structure. She soon forgot about the coffee and found herself entering the park that led to the entrance. The park was no different than the street that led her here. Street performers were everywhere, with some using microphones to gain attention.

Walking on she spied a small black tent with one flap thrown back. To the side, a large wooden sign read, *Fortune Telling, Palm Reading, Tarot Cards*. It was too dark to see in the tent. Glancing back at the cathedral she decided to stop and investigate. She approached slowly and peeked inside, giving her eyes time to adjust to the darkness. A wrinkled hand beckoned her from the shadows to enter.

Kristin took a seat and looked around the interior of the small tent. A small round table, draped with bright purple cloth sat between her and the woman. A small candle illuminated the items on the table, a stack of tarot cards, a couple stones, and a short, jagged grayish stick which looked like a piece of bone. Glancing up slowly, Kristin surveyed the woman. She wore robes of bright purple and gold. Around her neck were burgundy beads with a small pouch attached at the bottom. Her neck and face were smooth and dark without a hint of wrinkles. Black braided hair with flecks of gray was piled high atop her head, secured with a purple wrap. A grin crept across her face as she looked me over and welcomed me into her realm.

"You have come with many questions," the woman said quietly.

"Yes...yes I have. I'd like to have my fortune told," Kristin stammered, fidgeting in her chair.

"Would you like your palm read or tarot cards, perhaps?"

"Tarot cards, I think...how much is that?"

"\$30 for a tarot card reading. Cash only."

"Okay," Kristin replied and began to fish for cash in her purse. She noticed her fingers were trembling as she pulled the money out and handed it to the fortune teller. The old woman took the cash and tucked it in the top of her robe.

"Alright, my child. Clear your mind of everything, except what you want to know. Consider this question and concentrate only on it, nothing else. Take this deck of cards and shuffle them as you think about your most desired knowledge."

Kristin took the cards, closed her eyes and began to shuffle, slowly at first as she formed her question and then faster as her concentration sharpened. The cards flowed easily from hand to hand as she focused all her energy. She continued shuffling for about a minute and a half when she opened her eyes and looked at the woman.

"Now, give me the cards and we will begin." The woman took the cards from Kristin's outstretched hand and began to lay them out on front of her, chanting quietly as she went. Kristin felt the heat and the old woman's voice lulling her into relaxation. When the woman finished laying out the cards, she set the remaining ones to the side and began.

"I see that you have had many opportunities. Many lovers have drifted in and out of your life...but no time...no time...you have lost your focus...too busy..." The woman continued on vaguely touching on

career and family obligations. Kristin listened intently, for something more specific.

The old woman paused for a closer look at the cards, her eyes suddenly widening. "What is this I see? Several men, surrounding you...pulling you...oh my God...my dear you must leave New Orleans today."

Kristin's jaw dropped as she stared at the fortune teller. "I just got here...what are you talking about?"

"I see dangerous men in your future...they want to hurt you. You must go...believe me!"

"This is ridiculous," Kristin thought out loud as she rose to leave. As she reached for her bag, the old woman grabbed her wrist. Staring a whole through Kristin, the old woman hissed, "mark my words young lady, bad things will happen to you if you stay...go home NOW."

Wrenching her wrist away from the old woman, Kristin fled from the tent. Sun blinded her momentarily as she ran. She stumbled to a stop and let her eyes adjust to the sunlight. The doors of the cathedral slowly began to take shape before her as if a signal she should enter. Kristin decided to go inside and compose herself before continuing her tour.

An icy blast of air slapped her in the face as she stepped through the doors. To her left sat an older woman behind a pulpit-like desk with a sign that read *Information*. The woman smiled at her as she grabbed a pamphlet that was sitting on the desk and went inside.

Kristin's footsteps echoed with each step as she entered the sanctuary. Row and rows of empty wooden pews lined the main floor, hungry for worshippers to arrive. Ornate stained glass windows lined each wall like soldiers on guard. Kristin's eyes followed them from floor to ceiling, her breath catching in her throat as they reached the top. Angels flying through clouds of light blue covered the concave ceiling. With her eyes glued to the ceiling, she stumbled down the center aisle.

She stopped when she bumped into the steps to the altar. Her attention shifted to a gigantic painting hanging in front of her of Jesus. It seemed to call to her, pulling her closer and closer. She ascended the steps in a trancelike state, wanting to reach out and touch this lifelike painting. The textures were so rich, the colors begged to be touched.

As she lifted her hand toward the painting, she was aware of nothing else. The sanctuary no longer existed and the air was still. Nothing between her and Jesus. She reached forward towards His arm. As her fingers made contact with the canvas, she felt hands grabbing at her arms, pushing her to her knees. Kristin, realizing she probably wasn't allowed to touch the painting, was jerked back into reality. But reality faded again as she looked around to see several men squeezing her arms, pulling in opposite directions. Screams escaped her lips as she struggled to recognize her new surroundings. Dust filled her nostrils as

she fought for breath. The men pulled her forward, her bare feet dragging in the dirt. She looked down...where were her clothes...her bag...she was wearing what looked like a burlap bag, ripped around the bottom and dirty from the sand that filled the air.

The men pulled harder on her arms, stretching them to their full length at each side. She screamed in the faces of her captors as they tied her arms to a board. Another man secured her feet as she writhed in an attempt to free herself. She felt the rope go around her feet several times and then pulled tight. Her screeches turned to whimpers as she tried to make sense of what was happening to her. She saw the man to her left bend down to pick up something from the ground. Kristin could barely make it out with all the dust swirling around her until he brought it closer to her face. She howled in pain as the man took his first swing. Blood dripped on the sand make congealed red marbles. Unbearable pain surged through her body as her other wrist was secured. Barely conscious from this invasion of her flesh, she felt herself being lifted into the air. Another swing of the hammer near her feet. Slipping in and out of consciousness Kristin could barely hear the crack of her ankles as they were pinned to the board. Her head lolled from side to side as she tried to hold on to her new reality.

As her head fell to the side with a final breath of consciousness, Kristin glimpsed another person hanging to her left. Streams of blood covered His face, but Kristin recognized Him. It was the painting. It was Christ. She stretched her fingers to touch him as her eyes closed and consciousness retreated.

Feeling cool air on her skin, Kristin opened her eyes. She looked down and recognized her khaki pants and red blouse. The painting hung in front of her, still and lifeless. Standing up slowly she pulled her bag to her chest. She turned and walked away from the painting...away from the cathedral...away from New Orleans.

Remember

Characters:

RUTH STEINEM, 73, is a frail old lady with stooped shoulders and a cane. Her hair is thin and gray with a tinge of blue in just the right light. She used to be a professor in the English Department of the local university before her retirement several years ago. She has recently been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and is now living with her daughter and son-in law. Her health is in steady decline and she rarely gets out of bed anymore.

SHEILA ROBELARD, 50, is an energetic brunette with a pretty smile. She too is a professor in the English Department at the same university at which her mother used to work. She has two grown children, both live far away. She is having a difficult time dealing with her mother's illness. Her husband tries to help, but she is left to administer most of the care giving.

Setting:

Ruth's bedroom. Ruth is lying in bed with the quilt pulled up to her chin. She is dozing in and out of sleep when Sheila walks into the room.

SHEILA (calling quietly) Mom, it's time to wake up...Mom, wake up.

RUTH (stirring slowly) What?...Who is it?...

SHEILA It's me Mom, Sheila...it's time to take your medicine.

RUTH (slowly sitting up in bed) Oh, Sheila...I thought you were my daughter...she's always yelling at me, telling me to do this or do that.

SHEILA (shaking her head and chuckling) Mom, I am your daughter...and I'm not always bossing you around.

RUTH (looks at Sheila, at first with suspicion) My daughter...you don't look like my daughter...my daughter is away at school, she's going to be a teacher.

SHEILA (smiling gently) Yeah Mom, that's me, I am a teacher, remember? I teach at the university, just like you.

RUTH (pulling back the covers and sitting up) That's how I know you. I saw you in the hall the other day. (swings her legs over the side of the bed) I better hurry or I'll be late for my class.

SHEILA (moving to Ruth's bedside) Mom, lay back down, you don't teach at the university anymore, remember?

RUTH I don't?...well what do I do? I can't be a lay-about like all my students...

SHEILA You aren't Mom, you're retired and you live here with me. I take care of you now.

RUTH (crossing her arms) Well, you aren't doing a very good job of it if you're making me late for my class!

SHEILA Mom, it's alright...here, take your medicine.
(Sheila holds out her hand with the pills in it)

RUTH (taking the pills from Sheila) I'll take it, but stop calling me mom...the name's Ruth!
(Ruth pops the pills in her mouth)

SHEILA (hands Ruth the water glass) Okay, RUTH, here.
Ruth takes the glass of water and swallows her medicine. Sheila takes the empty glass back and sits it on the nightstand. She takes a seat in the chair opposite the bed.

RUTH I remember where I know you from.

SHEILA (looking surprised) You do?...where is that?

RUTH You used to live on our block...up on 116th street. You were one of my daughter's friends. I've known you since you were a little girl.

SHEILA (nodding her head) That's right, Ruth. You have known me since I was a little girl.

RUTH You were a noisy little girl...every time you'd come over it sounded like a circus had come to our house. Sometimes I wished you'd just go home!

SHEILA Is that right? Was your little girl noisy too?

RUTH No, she was an angel. She didn't like how noisy you were either, but you had dolls that she liked to play with so she always wanted you to come over. I didn't try to stop her because in those days, we couldn't afford too many toys.

SHEILA (leaning forward) What was your daughter like?

RUTH She was a beautiful child. She had long dark hair that we put in pigtails with ribbons of every color. Her smile lit up the room. She loved to read. We couldn't keep her in books. As soon as she got a new one, she'd finish it.

SHEILA That's strange for a child to enjoy books so much.

RUTH Well it is not! She was a smart girl...always has been. Like I said, we couldn't afford too many toys, but we always splurged on books for that child. She grew up to be a teacher you know. Teaches English...just like I do.

SHEILA She does? You must be so proud of her!

RUTH I am...she's my pride and joy...I just wish she'd come to see me sometimes. (yawns and lays back down)

SHEILA Well, I'm sure she loves you very much!

RUTH Yes, I know she does...she's such a good child. I worry about her though.

SHEILA Why is that?

RUTH Well, she just had her first child and is having trouble adjusting. You see she is still in school finishing her doctoral degree. The new baby is making it difficult to keep up with all of her school work.

(Ruth yawns)

SHEILA Oh, I'm sure she'll manage.

RUTH (perking up a bit) I'm going to visit her next week. She asked me to come stay with her for awhile to help out. I can't wait! It's my first grandchild, you know!

Sheila moves towards the bed, pulls the covers over her mother and sits down on the side

of the bed.

SHEILA I'm sure you'll do a fantastic job! Your daughter is lucky to have you.

(Sheila touches Ruth's hand)

RUTH Yes, I think so too!...(trembling slightly) I'm very cold.

SHEILA Would you like me to get another blanket for you?

RUTH (smiling faintly) You'd do that for me?

SHEILA Of course I would (pats Ruth's hand)...I've got to make up for all those years of being annoying.

Sheila gets up from the bed and grabs a blanket from the closet. She spreads it over the bed.

RUTH What are you going to tell my class?

SHEILA (sitting again on the side of the bed and taking her mother's hand) I'll tell them you were very tired and needed to take a nap.

RUTH I'd never accept that excuse from one of my students.

SHEILA That's okay, you're the teacher and whatever you say goes!

RUTH (yawning and pulling the covers to her chin) That's right...okay...what did you say your name was?

SHEILA It's Sheila.

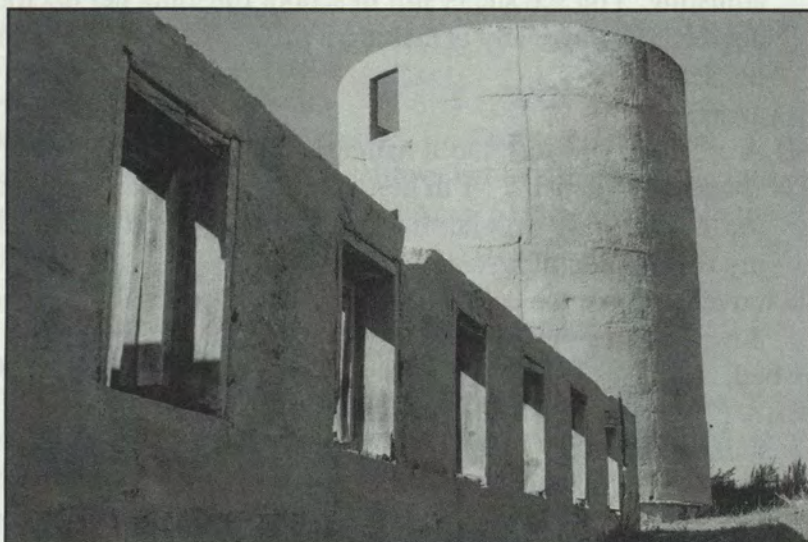
RUTH Oh...that's just like my daughter's name!

SHEILA Is that right?

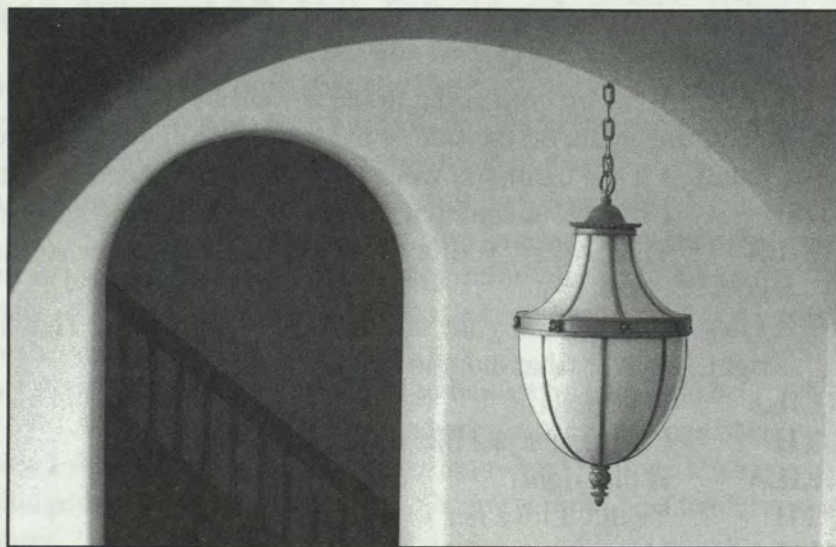
RUTH Yeah...I love her so much.

SHEILA I love you too, Mom.

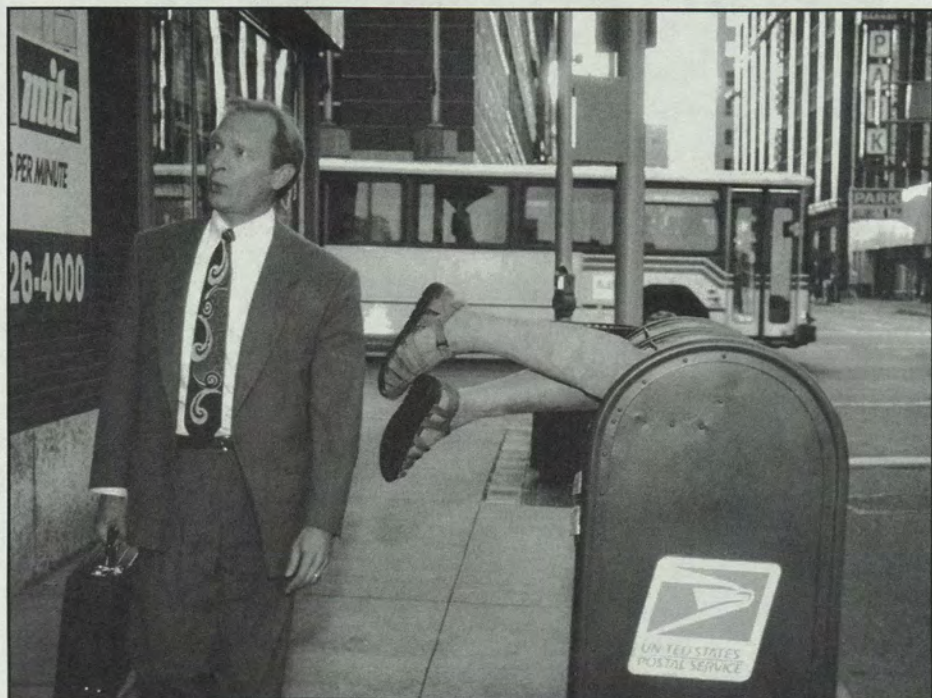
Cindy Wagner, a photo-based multimedia artist, is currently a senior at Herron School of Art at IUPUI studying Fine Art Photography and pursuing minors in Anthropology and Art History. She holds an AS Degree in Visual Communications from Ivy Tech. Her work has won several awards and has been seen in group and solo exhibitions in Indiana.



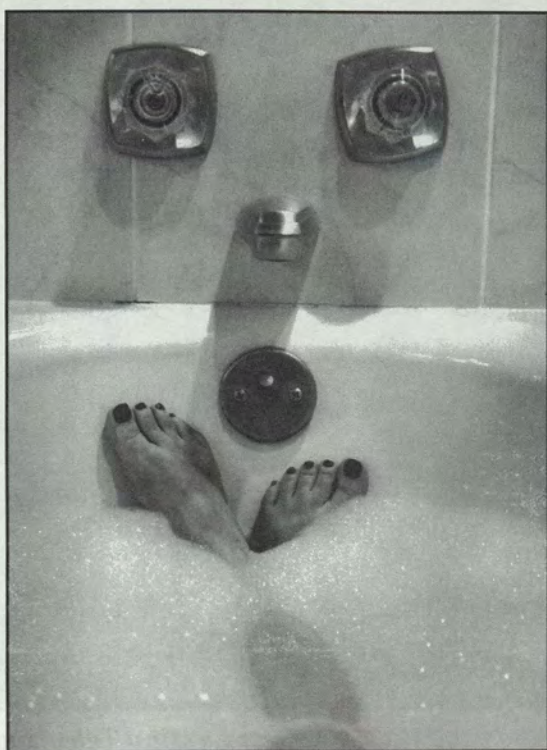
Beauty in Ugliness



Still Life 38,274,160



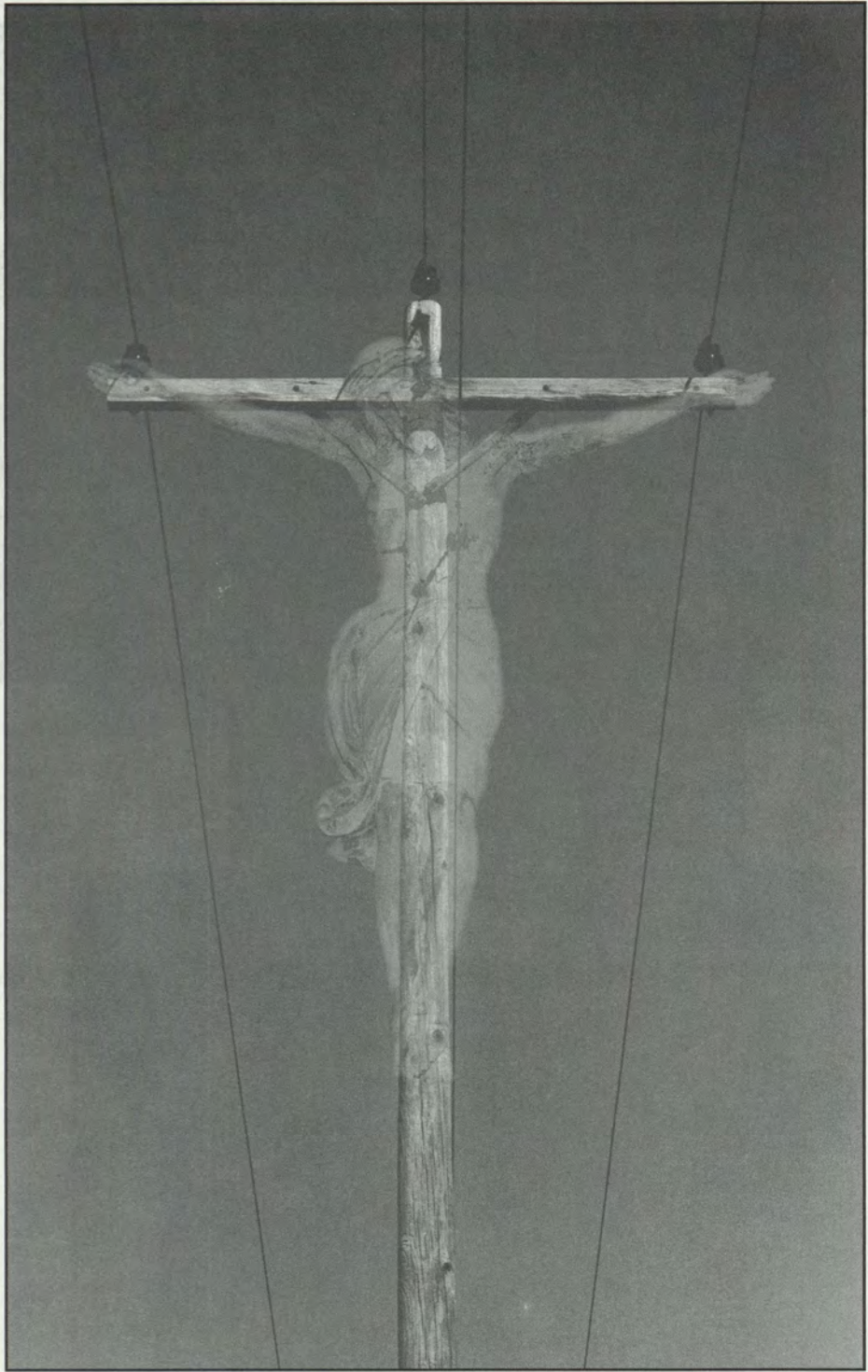
City Life



Company in the Tub

Christ, Wagner, a photo-based multimedia artist, is currently a member of

the



Manifest Destiny Telephone Christ

Christ, Wagner, a photo-based multimedia artist, is currently a member of

Andrew Wright is a Liberal Arts student with a music minor.

Andrew is also winner of "Best of Issue: Poetry."

Weary Exits

I saw no sun behind
your shape. as you eclipsed,
you ceded my worth
to the last page of a book
I hold it now, tearing

out my mistakes.
chapters on fear folded
twice, in front pockets
to hold the taste of your bite.

you could think faster than I
and tangle me in vines,
spur of the moment memories.

I cannot say with a knuckled jaw
they were angry years.
and they continue
with your habit of just coming
by.

It was dark when you left.
The sun who burned me
gave me light,
and I was good company with my lies.
Yesterday, the crick in my neck
straightened
so I became a stranger to my step,
familiar with the street at eye level.
traffic light affection
from your successors
with plastic faces never felt
like you.

we were sympathy in its loneliest form.
The shoe but its foot
just a little big.
the shadow was blue
behind your shape.
I saw the same blue
in your eye hollows.
Mine were red.

The King of Glory Cross

Tonight is black and clear,
and the street glows,
yellow from porch lights.

My neighbor's dog is a chained
shadow to the elm.
The man is more of a lock

than a key. Above, dark branches bend
across the felt sky like spider legs dancing
the strut to the fly.

Above the yellow glow
and between the scratch branches,
a steeple, white, lit from ground
looks like the barb on wire.

Servitude

I.

Who is more vulnerable
the butterfly or its worm? The caterpillar
hides on bark or under leaves, free
to be long and ugly. In the cocoon,

everything is liquefied, even the organs.
Dormant cells awaken and
The worm is no safer with wings
and a coy flight pattern, but
he can stand to be admired.

II.

I stood in front of a blind man,
neither interested in the brooms for sale
nor sharing the corner.
A woman walked towards him
and shuffled her feet.
He faced her, they exchanged
the broom and money.
She looked at me, and went.
He rubbed the quarter in his fingers
to know that it is a quarter
and not a *what?*

Who takes him to the corner
and tells him it is the same time
as yesterday.
Would he feel the cool air
of the morning and know
dawn's chill from overcast an noon
or hear the garbage trucks
and become distrustful?

He moved the brooms
to his open arm.

Could he tell me the last look
on his mother's face before she
died, and worse, if he substituted
this detail with the sound of her last breath,
would he say she coughed
life out of her lungs or that it seeped
from her with the same energy as the sewer,
yards away.

I stepped back.
He said *Good Evening*, nervous
when I didn't respond,
but it is better that he did not feel like
a fool greeting oblivion
and have it answer with foreknowledge.

III.
I kicked a stone. He heard me walk away. I saw
the mustard stain on my shirt
when I got home.

Nobodies and the Band

A voice on sulfur steam
In the city, the vibrato
tracks of the El

The knell of the toll
with nickel permits
a bell, gate and road

The joint percussions
on the bridge that wake
post-it people in accords

Coffee shops' dreary
java cup brass
and espresso crack in jackets

A fugue among stoops
from building C
that 3G is a whore

A murmur of the desks and chairs
and file reports
walk 4th avenue North

Talk penny business
with five o'clock women
hope to last an hour

Choke cymbal brakes of
dance suite transit
red line moves Bach and Rosa's grandson

Nobodies dirge in the park
cart cans and boxes
bottles and glass

Paper trash
serenades cracks
of worn thin side-walk beds.

At the Brink of the Street

Erika lived between the Longs and the Hayes,
a short pedal down Winding Way
past red doors and orange brick,
through a suburban autumn,

in a tall two-story
pallid sallow and chestnut
with hazel trim and door.
Broken pieces of her driveway wandered to mine.

A canopy of walnut leaves
muffled the house in dusk
and disbanded grass to patches.
The angular roof made the Spidels uneasy.

Erika's voice was lost among four
like her, and one on the way.
The addition of liable years
drove her father crazy.

Wind and falling nut percussions
scored his descent measured in restive nights.
Mr. Watt's lights were green
and uneven on the walls.

Kitchen light burned our eyes on carpool mornings.
The grey mini-van was a pocket of exhaust.
Her mother never spoke to us directly.
She held the glaze of a still-frame.

I looked at fire in the rear-view mirror
and closed signs on wet streets.
Erika stared passed us.

We were the chatter that fades from the foreground

when reading a book.
She, a product of sternness and lunacy,
carried her phantom corner to class,
gave me a bread crumb smile.

Yi Sun: I am a freshman at Herron School of Art. My major is Visual Communication. The portrait featured on the back cover is my F101 Photoshop project. The subject matter is I, myself. The Photoshop project is based on more than 30 close-up shots, and then several are manipulated in order to get different results and feelings. It is an experimental experience. I really enjoy doing it.

