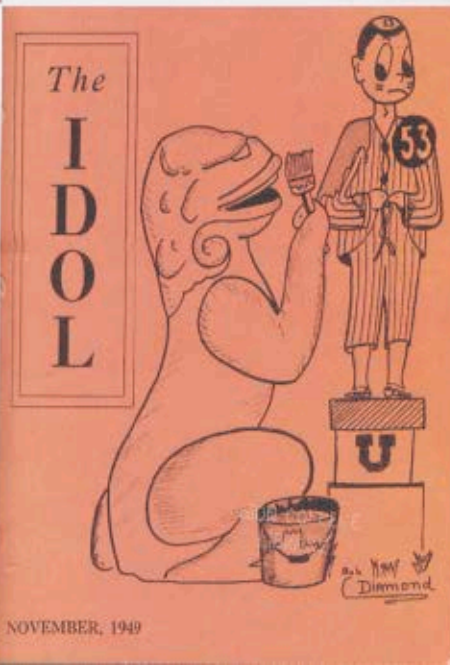
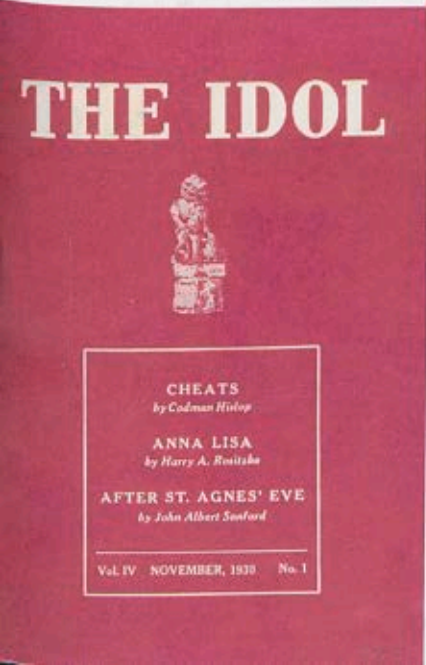
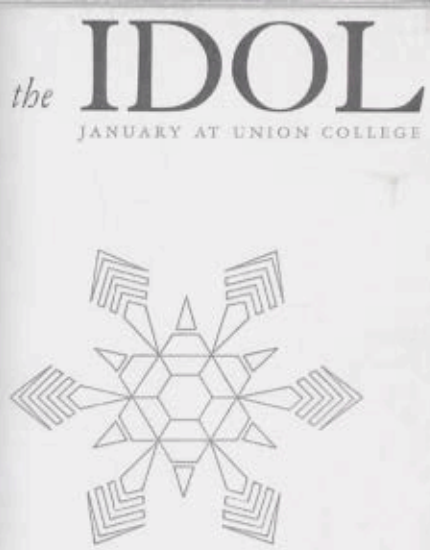


FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE
 "THE PIED PIPER OF BURMA"
 PRESENT AND FUTURE (College Building Plans)





EDOV
2004

Handwritten scribbles and signatures surround the text, including the name 'MRL' on the right side.

The Idol

Editors-in-Chief

Katharine Beck
Alexandra Waibel

Editors

Susan Beckhardt
Kyle Carey
Samantha Seide
Peter Sage
Emily Horsford
Peter Gorvitz
Michael Losure

Special Thanks

Capital Printing
Julianna Spallholtz
Special Collections



We are proud to present the 77th edition of The Idol, Union's only art and literary magazine. This year's cover emphasizes how The Idol has long been a part of the Union tradition, a tradition that we are delighted to pass along.



One of the benefits of a liberal arts education is that students have the opportunity to pursue academic interests that extend beyond their majors. The Idol strives to recognize the wide range of literary and artistic talents within the Union community, and to compile this creative energy.

Since a majority of this year's staff will be graduating in June, an important part of ensuring the Idol's continuation in future years is to seek younger members. In doing so, we have created a team with experience and freshness. While the wisdom and dedication of the seniors will be missed, they will leave behind a legacy of dedication and a standard of excellence. The future editors will use and expand upon this model.

Each Idol has its own personality, shaped from its staff and contributors. We would like to thank everyone involved in this year's edition.

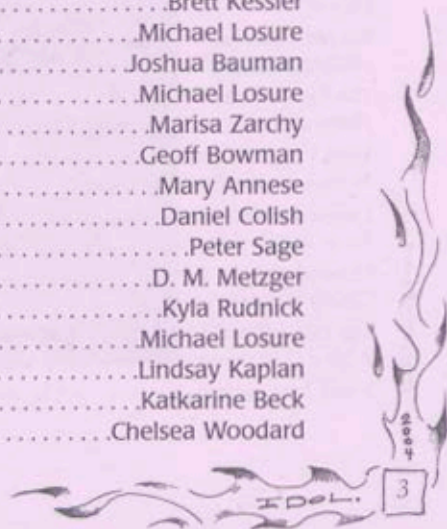
Sincerely,

Katharine Beck and Alexandra Waibel

Editors in Chief

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Franklin

I blink forcefully as the blackness clears and then fades
From the sides of my eyes.

The light above is blinding, emitting an ungodly white Halogen glow,
Piercing my new fragile consciousness.

Where am I, I curse myself quietly for being so cliché'd, you should
Have had a better line prepared.

My head is rushing, my brain swimming as if in a pool,
Heated too warm for the summer.

I begin to remember in flashes, quick clips of life captured then cut
Life flames of a movie fluttering to the cutting room floor.

A gunshot, single. A scream, but not my voice. My mind's eye shows me in
Midair, a grimace plastered on my face like a cheap suit.

The bastard shot me, a good old-fashioned double cross.

This realization leads me to attempt a quick sit up maneuver, which is Abruptly
Halted by sharp pain shooting through my side and careening across nerve-endings.

I emit a small yelp in protest and then collapse back onto the bed like a pile of cold,
Wet noodles tossed into the bottom of an empty garbage bag.

I feel woozy from the effort and glance down at my right arm, I.V. snugly
Embedded in my vein, a silent caretaker and lover nursing my broken body.

My head wanders off without the rest of my body, a morphine induced
Reality check. I try to piece together the wreckage of the previous night.

I had been double crossed, that much was true. But despite my best efforts the morphine
Drip and stabbing pain prevented my mind from wrapping itself around the reason.

Instead I drifted into a strange dream, floating past faces of people I'd never know,
Smiling and laughing, but I wasn't sure why.

The faces swirled and I felt sick in my dream; I wanted to vomit, to wash
Them all away and start fresh. But I felt stuck, and the laughing wouldn't stop.

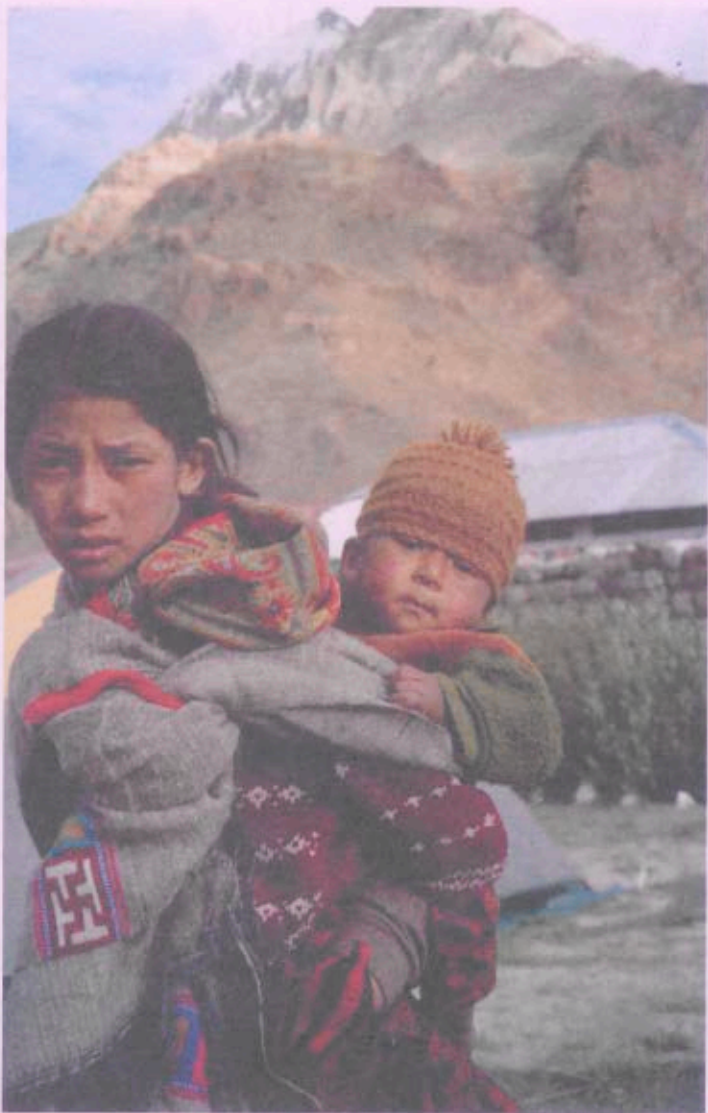
Then I began to cry, in my dream my tears fell and turned into pools of blood
As they hit the linoleum floor.

I woke up with a start and my pillow was damp with salty tears. I hadn't cried. In ten
Years. Damn this place and these drugs, I thought and contemplated tearing out the I.V.

I looked outside my window and noticed the dark night sky, light rain fell quietly like a
Child's footsteps on the windowsill.

The rain fell and I fell back into a deep forgivingly dream free sleep. My hands moved
With a slow peace on their own, knowing apart from my mind, what needed to be done.

It will have to wait, for now I am bedridden under the lights.



Kyla Rudnick

"Lossar, Himachal Pradesh, India"

Photograph

6" x 4"

Memorial Day

Fingers fumble around the keys
Gold or bronze?
Round or square?
The door balks but
Finally remembers.

My grandmother's antique
Oak chest is, as always,
In the corner by the stairs
A crocheted doily protecting
The smooth wood from
Dust that lightly coats
The blue glass hurricane lamp,
The silent pink conk shell
And the ivory-colored guestbook
That sits beside them, closed.

Hard-soled shoes are
Misplaced here as my
Footsteps echo while
Sleepy lids
Blinded by winter
Spring up and dust glistens
In the new streams of sunlight.

A creature of habit
I migrate to the kitchen.
The sink can only muster
Three drops of water,
I unpin a red plastic tack
Holding the calendar

Its featured lighthouse
I have never seen,
A shame to throw away
I think, discovering
Ice cream I once planned
To eat.

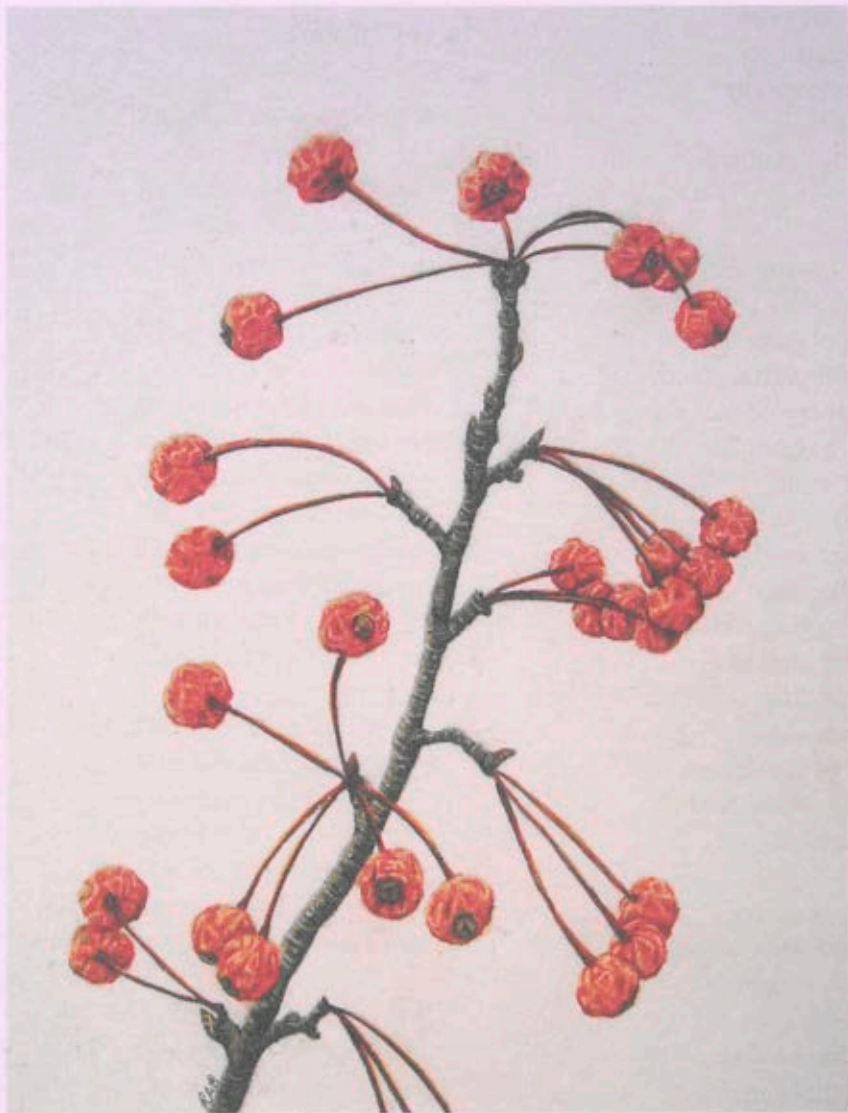
The glass door easily slides
Open onto the deck
Stripped bare of company:
Lazy chairs and potted plants,
Webber grill and scattered flip-flops,
Sandy towels hugging the railing
Will clutter it soon.

The cool garage smells like
Sea salt and varnish
As I sidestep rusting crab traps
Tangled fishing lines and
Neon boogie boards, sliding
Seasoned hands along
Deflated tires of the ancient
Black Schwinn whose wicker
Basket droops to the left.

I see it in a dusty corner
Unrolling it as I walk outside
Past overgrown shrubs
Back to the front step.
I place it below the door,
The season has begun:
Welcome.

Katharine Beck





Rebecca Brittain
"Berries"
Colored Pencil
10" x 8"



Christina Duff
"All American"
9" x 9"

The Copyist

There was once a village high up in the mountains, far from Greece and Rome, and all the great centers of culture and enlightenment. But despite its isolation, it had all the art in the world.

Late one autumn a traveler lost his way, and came stumbling into the town, half dead from the cold and desperate for a place to stay. He was greeted graciously by the townspeople and immediately invited to lodge in the mayor's house for the night.

The town was quickly astir with rumors of the stranger, who had appeared so unexpectedly. No one knew what to make of him- a man in a fine suit, with clean fingernails and a slightly dreamy eye. The mayor of the town determined to find out more about this remarkable stranger, and when the ladies departed after dinner he began the questioning.

"So, you lost your way, did you?" The mayor began conversationally, "Where do you come from?"

"Paris."

"Where is that?"

"France."

"Where were you going, before you lost your way?"

"Vienna. In Austria."

"What are you going to Austria for?"

"To write."

"Wrongs?"

"Songs."

The mayor paused, startled. "Songs? Music?"

The stranger laughed. "Of course music. What other sort of songs have you heard?"

"But the song is already written down."

"I'm sorry?"

"The song has already been written down. Every family here has a copy. Surely in a town so reputed for culture as Vienna they too already have copies."

The stranger took mild offense at the assumptions of the mayor, but responded jocularly enough. "What do you take me for?" He began, "A mere transcriber of notes? A copyist? or maybe an arranger? No, no, my friend, I am a composer." He could not resist throwing in a slight boast, "In fact, my name is known throughout Europe as the most original and creative of my calling."

The mayor too began to take offense. "What do you take me for? You cannot be more than forty years old, if I have eyes to see. But the song is older than I am. My mother sang it to me when I was a baby, and her mother sang it to her. It has been around forever. Nobody knows who wrote it- if anybody wrote it- and now all at once you appear out of nowhere and try to claim credit for it?

Nonsense! The song is as old as the painting!"

"I am not trying to take credit for any song of yours, my dear fellow," the stranger attempted conciliation, "I doubt very much you are referring to one of my compositions. They are played by only the great orchestras of the continent, and generally require at least twelve violinists, six bassoons, and a conservatory-trained choir, all of which I doubt very much you have here. No, I claim no credit for any folk song from this town- my music is wholly new and original."

"But then how absurd to claim that you write music!" The mayor exploded, "The music has already been written; anything more can be nothing but vulgar imitation! That is like saying that because you have peeled a potato, it is suddenly a cantaloupe."

"Don't be a fool. My melodies, harmonies, and rhythms are all entirely different from those of your silly folksong. I can assure you that every note is wholly my own."

"But it is a song?"

"Of course it is!"

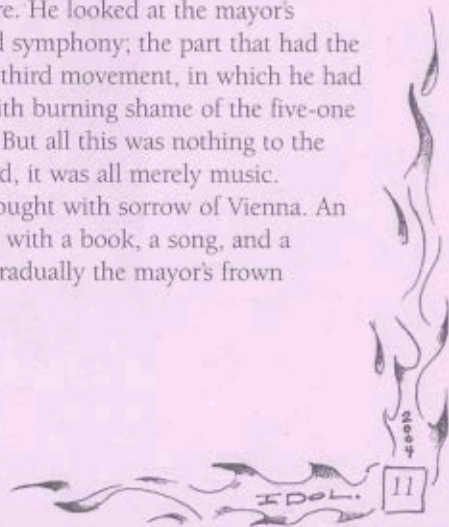
"Then you are like a pickpocket who claims that since he has had his own monogram embroidered onto a stolen handkerchief, it is rightfully his."

The stranger was growing more and more frustrated by the minute. He refilled his wine glass and began a new tactic. "You say all other music is only imitation, but there is so much beauty in it. What if you grow bored with your one tune? What then?"

"We will never grow bored with it. That is like saying that one could grow bored with sleeping- when you are not tired, then you do not sleep; when your ears are aching, you do not listen to music. Besides, one can do so much with one song. If we are sad we play it slowly; if happy, we play it fast. We dance to it and weep to it; marry to it and die to it. We have a book, a painting, and a song. What gluttony to suggest one people could require more! Next you will be telling me you have painted a new portrait, or written a new novel!"

The stranger put down his glass. He could not argue anymore. He looked at the mayor's complacent face, and thought of the thirty-fifth measure of his second symphony; the part that had the same rhythm as something of Beethoven's. And he thought about the third movement, in which he had once noticed a brief melodic quotation of Brahms. And he thought with burning shame of the five-one cadence lurking at the conclusion of every piece he had ever written. But all this was nothing to the mayor- a five-one cadence or a six-twelve, it did not matter; in the end, it was all merely music.

And the mayor looked pityingly on the poor copyist, and thought with sorrow of Vienna. An entire city of imitators, plagiarists, thieves. They could not be content with a book, a song, and a painting. Outside of the window, someone started to sing the song. Gradually the mayor's frown disappeared, and he softly began humming along.



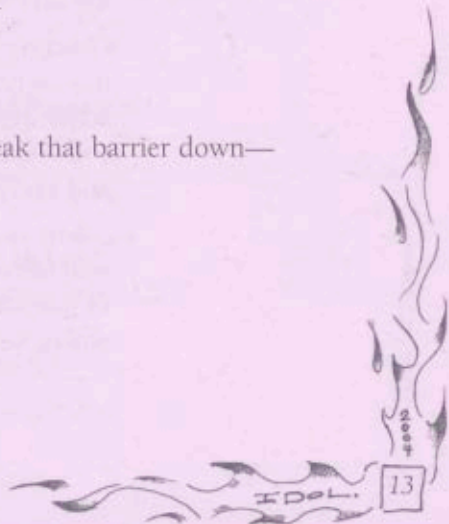


Mary Annese
"Flamenco"
Photograph
6½" x 4"

Camouflage

If I were to change colors
So I could blend in with the walls—
Like a chameleon who is never eaten
or a beetle that never dies
Wherever I went
To just be able to blend
And no one would notice
and all would be silent
No one would come
As if they actually did now.
So I guess a mask is not needed
To create an image of desperation
Because I am the color of the walls
And would like it to remain so—
But to have another become a wall
would be my dream come true.
For no matter what it seems to be
Something is always chosen over me—
Why then do I care?
Call me human I suppose
But walls have feelings too....
They're just waiting for someone to break that barrier down—
And help them start anew.

Stephanie Perry



The Fool, her Sun, and his Moon

The fool's feet make craters in the sand:
four thin toes, a plump thumb, a sandfoot
made for marveling at and measuring.

She traces her name over a sizeable stretch
of the shore, colonizing the land of "lily"
in the infinite universes below her feet.

Allowing her outstretched limbs to sink
into the warm, tranquil sand, she feels
a deep, tender unity with both the land
and the water, now creeping up the shore.

The sun scurries off into the distance,
and the moon draws close, swelling,
nearly bursting, with the soft, even
glow of natural light.

She does a dance of moonlight salvation,
praising the cloak her moon dons tonight:
"How flattering that frock is, dear moon,"
she says with a stagnant, simple smile.

Greeting her old friend, she asks the moon
to join her in signing deeds to sand,
acquiring her land. "You should grab it now,
you see, it's quite the commodity,
and everyone wishes for more of it."

Silent and listening intently, the moon
watches over the fool-child, now engaged
in pirouettes and sand patties: a tea party
among seaweed and abandoned crab homes.

Overhead, the sun marches back to his hearth,
and the moon takes her place in the background,
her gentle brilliance waning under the intensity
of the sun: the change of guards is complete.

The fool stretches tall, arms waving and enticing
the approaching guest. The ball of scorching
heat shines down with unrequited vengeance,
scalding the pearl-pink skin of the tender-toed
little fool, much better matched with the cool,
watery light of her moon.

She retreats to the shelter of a large slab of rock,
lifted to provide a canopy to those in need of shade.
The little girl buries her nose in the cold, moist
sand and swears she hears a "szz."

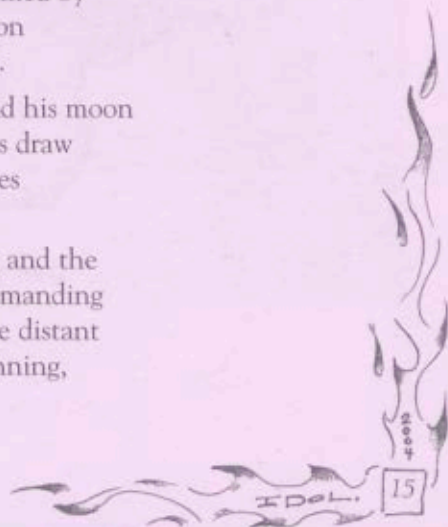
Listening to her heart, the fool forgave the sun
for his blistering stare and the bubbles cropping
up on her once smooth plane of skin, drawing parallel
lines of logic between owning land and sunburns.

Rather enjoying the sensuous smile formed by
the little girl's lips, he merely decided on
autographing her body, making her his.

As the story of the fool and her sun and his moon
fades from its nest in my mind, my eyes draw
open to experience the scene that stages
this little, dancing fool.

I hear the constant battle of the waves and the
sand, a borderland clash in territory demanding
to be shared. I see the horizon meet the distant
land in a union where each has a beginning,
but the end to both is the other.

Beck Rourke





Joshua Bauman
"Don't Steal My Treasure"
Ink
8" x 6"



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BAK

Brett Kessler
Untitled
Print
7" x 9"

Phone Call in February

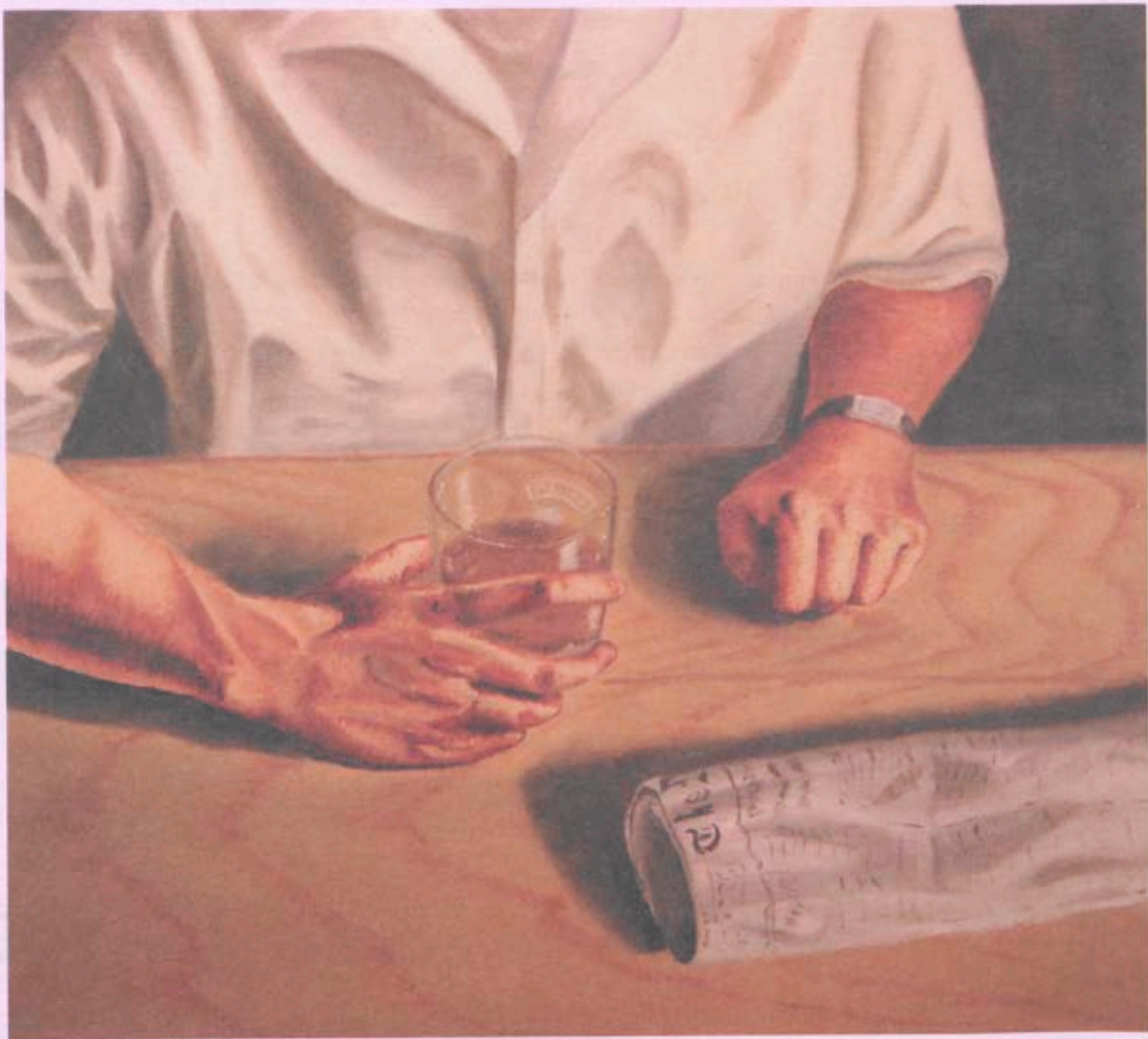
What can you make of this?
Sick, Sullen, Serious.
Maybe it's in a book,
take a look.
Tired before I start
extract this hook,
The flesh was never raw.
Vacancy of the heart,
that's what you saw.
I can't even feel these words,
Shrouded, Slippery, Stoic.
Sorry for pretending,
The performance sucked anyway.
—and you knew it.
Blew it.
Deal with it cause I won't.
Maybe you'll come across the costume—
Sudden, Surreal, Staged.
I wasn't even labeled.
Given an appeal,
strange, nothing real,
Pieces of verbal litter thrown around.
I wish you could comprehend this volume.
Welcome you to a dense forest of tangled sound.
Go ahead, call me on it.
Save your minutes for a local call.
They'll come in herds—let them fall.
Sick, Sudden Slippery.
Parts of my number.
The vastness of options.
Choke on this confusion,
blame it on a cold, taken hold.
At least you have something
—responsive and bold.
This is when I agree,
Let me flee—
back into the yellow pages.
They always think I'm new—they're right.
What can you make of this emptiness tonight?

Z. A. Lazovik

She's harshly grinning that fake smile, that "I'm the perfect Miss America contestant,
look at me, look at me kinda smile,
The smile that sounds like a horrible fire alarm, the one that makes the moisture in
my eyes freeze over and shatter out falling onto my shoes...
...Her shoes...shoes...they go on your feet, they stand between you and the ground,
you and the bottom, you and the earth.
The tongue to her left shoe was missing.
Or maybe it was caught under her foot, laces creating little diamond-shaped hills of
white thick tube sock where it had bunched.
And her hair was bunched under that fuzz coming out the ends framing her round
face like a lion's mane does,
Her legs crossed, she giggled some more, some more, more, o god, more and shook
that tongueless shoe of hers so daintily in the air that she shook me.

Samantha Seide





Peter Sage
"Hands"
Oil/Canvas
22" x 24"



Rebecca Brittain

"Leaf"

Pen & Ink

8" x 10"

Tell Me

I am a woman- So, tell me what that means...Is it part of me? Is it my identity? Is it my problem? Is it causing problems? Just tell me!

What do I have to do? What do I need to know? What should I say? All because I'm a woman, these are my questions?! Tell me the truth!

What is a woman? Weak, feminine, maternal, passive, shy, chaste, inferior, emotional...Is that a woman? Strong, assertive, independent, outspoken, sexy, rational...Is that a woman? Do I have to be all of these? just one set of these? a combination of these?- To be a woman? Is my choice being the stereotype or is my choice being the deviant? Is that good or bad? Is that even a choice at all?! Just tell me how to be a woman!

Am I a woman living in a man's world? Or am I a woman in my own world? Do I live in a socially constructed reality or am I living my own reality? Some one tell me how it is...

Fine! I'll do it myself. I'll figure it out on my own. I'll decide. After all, I am a woman.

Is it tough living in a "man's world"? you ask. Perhaps. Am I meant to agree with men? Do not question their authority- It won't turn out well. Am I supposed to speak up- Have a voice- Be heard? Well, why not?! Anyone who doesn't like it can kiss my...Oh, right- Don't swear- It's not very ladylike. Let me apologize, blush, curtsy and go back into the shadows of the silence and oppression with all the other women. Sorry- Excuse me- Didn't mean to offend...Actually, never mind- I take it back- I want to- I want to get some attention! I'll tell you a few things...

I
D
D
I
You know what- I am emotional- I'm such a girl, right? Not really- I've just decided to feel things- Learn things that structure my opinions and move me. I am not going to take "No" for an answer- I will find out, discover, learn and become enlightened. Why? Because I am a woman- I am human- I deserve to know- It is my right to know. I say-Tell me more.

Ignorance isn't my bliss. I've seen it- Done it- Heard it- Been it...This is it!

"They" say: Be a wife and mother. Am I meant to don an apron and conform to the bare-foot and pregnant role?! Tell me, is that all I have to offer? Not even close! I'm learning what I want- I will make my own way- I will support myself and anyone else who may need it. No, I'm not writing off my eggs quite yet- They may play a role in my life- In bringing a new life into this world. But if I do- That child will know all the opportunities available- Right there, at her fingertips. I can do it all- I can live the full life. "They" can't tell me I won't!

"They" say: Women are victims. Raped- Sexual assaulted- Physically, mentally and emotionally abused- Mugged- Drugged- Pushed down and oppressed. How does that make me feel? I'm afraid; I'm angry; I'm saddened; I'm confused...Can I feel all that at once? Maybe, since I'm that emotional woman. No! How else should I feel? You can't tell me that there is a right or wrong way to feel!

"They" say: Women should be thin, beautiful, Barbie-like. The only women who achieve the Barbie-look are made from as many artificial materials as that damn doll! Well then, exercise to lose that extra-weight! Not working? Stop eating- Throw up your food- You know every mouthful will just go straight to your butt, hips, thighs...Nothing's skinnier than a skeleton, right? What? It's unhealthy to do that? You could die?! Well, then, get it liposuction-ed out; get a nip here and a tuck there; implants in your breasts; collagen in your lips; botox in your forehead. Dangerous?! No- A little unneeded surgery, unnatural objects in your body, poison injected- Harmless! What have we come to?! Women are objects for men to look at, touch, play with and discard at their leisure?! And women are willing to go to any lengths necessary to fulfill the impossible requirements of ideal, ageless beauty? No! That's ludicrous- I'm upset, enraged, indignant! I say- Hell no! This is my body, my temple- I will cherish it; I will accept it; I will not be told to change my appearance by anyone! Have I had doubts, concerns, insecurities? Of course- I'm too bony; my boobs are too small; my mouth is too big...But, I got over it- Changed for the better- More emotionally than physically. Don't tell me you've had those thoughts too?

"They" say: Women- Beware of HIV/AIDS! It's a problem, an issue, a worry, an epidemic- your responsibility...Wait? What?! Yes, women should protect themselves against HIV/AIDS and if she is promiscuous enough to get it- Stop ALL physical, sexual contact! She's an outcast, a disease- the disease! She's a social leper- infectious- contagious- dangerous. So, not only are

we supposed to be the ones taking all the precautions (since men can't be trusted- is that it?) BUT we should also quarantine ourselves if infected?! HIV/AIDS- It's scary- It's a reality. Getting tested and waiting for those results could be the most emotionally-taxing days of your life. What if it's negative? Celebrate? Sigh of relief? Just one out of the dozens of other times you will be tested over your lifetime? What if it's positive? Give up- Crumple- Mourn- Die?! Why should your life end while other people get to go on their merry way? It's not a death sentence- Don't stop living while you're still alive! It's not over until your heart stops beating and you take that last breathe. There are experiences to come- don't miss them- I won't miss out on life...Don't tell me it's over! I'll tell you when it's over! ME- because I am a woman.

"They" say: Breast cancer is a woman's issue. Not always. But women get it- Many women are diagnosed- Many have chemotherapy; radiation; mastectomies- Many die. Don't lose hope though. I've seen it- I've seen women succumb to the diagnosis and announce: "I'm dead." But, I've also seen women who accept the cancer- treat it, fight it- Live with it. You may be faced with your own mortality but it's all the more reason to LIVE each day with passion, veracity and conviction. And you are entitled- Feel what you want- Get mad at God, yourself, the disease- Cry, mourn, weep- Open your eyes and see the world in a different light. Embrace life- Love yourself- Forgive others...Keep going! Breast cancer is every one's issue- It's my issue. Tell me something I don't know.

I will accept my mortality; I will live well; I will laugh often (even in the worst of times); I will appreciate every moment I am blessed with...I have- I do- I will. A wise woman once wrote, "Because I could not stop for Death, He kindly stopped for me" (Emily Dickenson). Nothing- No one- will stop me in my pursuit of happiness, experience, life. Even death will be on my terms...

Why? Because I am a woman. Living well is what being a woman means- Striving through adversity- Breaking down walls- Leaping over obstacles. I have my problems, but they are mine- Mine to deal with, struggle with- Mine to overcome. Tell me I am a woman and I'll tell you: So what?



Katharine Beck
"Coral"
Color Photograph
6" X 4"

Random Girl in Random Pub on Random Day

Mr. Stone and I
Went drinking last night
There was a twenty first party
That led from club to club to here
On a solemn wood floor
With loud beats but no dancing shoes

And I see you in a corner
like a blonde dunce with a quirky smile
I wish I were a lion then
I'd pounce on that conversation
Killing you with a witty line
But sarcasm is all I have
And the room is flashing
As time runs out

I wish I knew why
You remind me of someone
I never met
Someday you'll feel the same
Once I find my talent
Till then I'll just drink my Guinness
And be content with loneliness.

Life

You wake up one morning and what's to keep you going if not the snoring of your boring
life then the breathing from next to you

I'll tell you what she's a nut

She's with you and keeps on going and going even though you're slowing she is a
knowing what to do to keep the loving going between you two for showing

But is it really going?

It was a blast but not it's time to crash and let the past just dangle in the mass

She's a prize sure it's your demise but you keep on going because you know what's good

For you:

The loving and the hugging she just keeps on showing you.

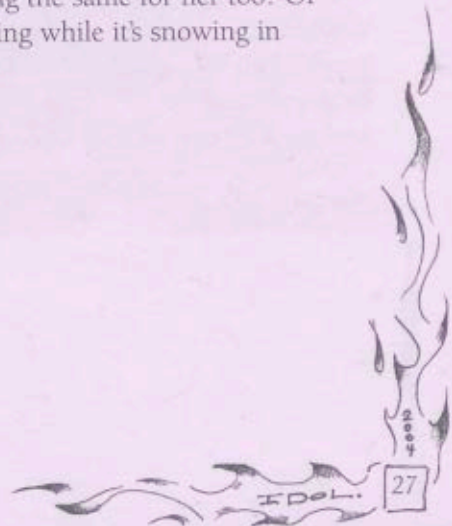
The world revolves and you're still small but she keeps you in her arms like someone
truly involved with you.

Because she is great because she does not have hate she stays and lays wait for you her
true lover.

If not evening then what's the singing for? To keep her going and rowing through the
snowing that just keeps on going

She is there for you she will die for you but will you go on doing the same for her too? Or
just lie in bed one morning wondering what's to keep you going while it's snowing in
the boring morning? It's her snoring.

Dan Parmet



Hamlet—in Limericks

Old Hamlet cashed in his career
When poison was poured in his ear.
His powers diminished,
But he wasn't finished—
At midnight he still would appear.

The counselor was hiding unseen
While Hamlet conversed with the queen.
His thoughts were erroneous—
Didn't know 'twas Polonius,
And stabbed without care through the screen.

They found her a little too late—
Sparking this endless debate:
Poor Ophelia, so gentle! —
Was her death accidental?
Did she take her life or did fate?

The Rosencrantz-Guildenstern pair
Would have done well to beware.
Young Ham thought them suited
To be executed—
And nobody else seemed to care.

In front of the eyes of the palace
The kind dropped a pearl in a chalice.
Though not his design,
The queen drank of the wine:
She died by mistake, not by malice.

Young Laertes wasn't too wise
In joining the kind and his lies.
He set up the boys in
A plot filled with poison—
But Laertes met his demise.

The kind, who was steeping in sin,
Was killed not by kind, but by kin.
Confession and praying
Once saved him from slaying
But Hamlet at last did him in.

The castle was covered in gore
But hell was still hoping for more
When a double-edged dagger
Caused Hamlet to stagger
And join with his friends on the floor.



Alexandra Waibel

"Tin Cans"

Watercolor

7½" x 9½"

Pendulums

The pendulum
Absconds the Mason-Dixon
Only to be towed
To its southern plantation

Long emphatic strides
Chronicle its history
While quick violent paces
Enslave its future
And ensure its demise-

It may migrate north
Through January
But gravity throws
It back to its sweltered sanctuary;

The truculent wrecking soul
Dances provocatively from pole to pole

Each stubborn march
Is quickly halted
By a frenzied retreat,

But the exigent swinging
Slows its momentum
While the thrown pendulum
Head butts each extreme.
Over the hill
And under the guillotine
The beady headed giraffe,
Like a scathing epitaph,
Defies physics
And gains velocity,
Complying with civics
And imploding in atrocity.

Michael Montesano



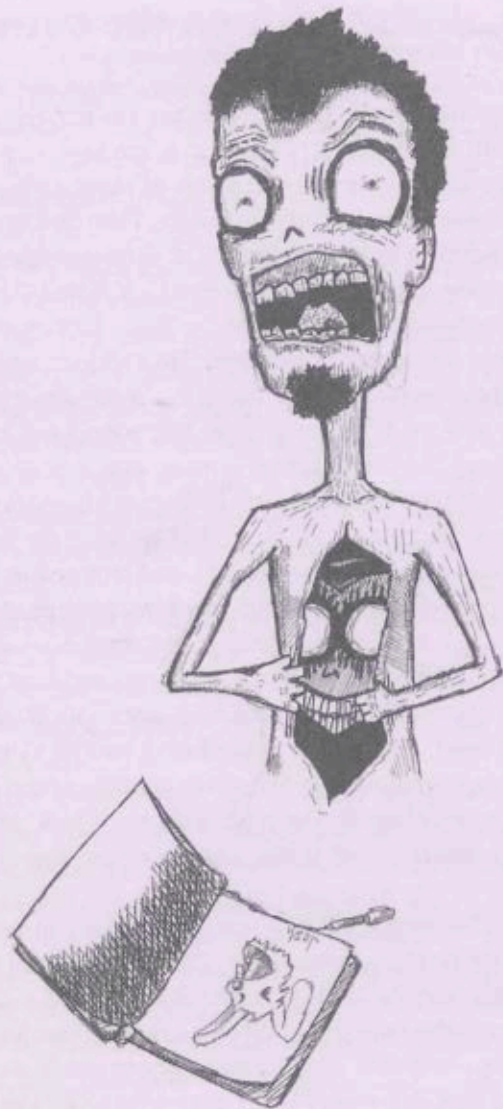
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BAK

Brett Kessler
Untitled
Etching
4" x 4"



Michael Losure
"Red Ball in Winter Light"
Oil on Canvas
50" x 40"



Joshua Bauman
Let Me Out
Ink
8" x 6"

An excerpt from "Fruit on the Bottom"

People said Jack had an angry face. Well, people usually just thought he looked angry, or said so if they thought it worthy of conversation, but it was Jack who liked to blame it on the structure of his face. The corners of his lips had a way of resting a bit lower than the center, and his brow was most comfortable when slightly furrowed. This, and the way he usually walked in long purposeful strides, tended to imply an element of unpleasantness in his thoughts. And while he was apt to walk a few steps ahead of his mind - it usually caught up to him at about the point where awkwardness could no longer be avoided - he was usually wandering through thoughts that were neither unpleasant nor unhappy. He had long ago given up trying to mold his features into casual happiness because the resulting forced smile was more disconcerting than pleasant, but often wondered how many times this concession had turned away potential hellos. At the moment, sitting in a booth across from an eccentrically but carefully dressed woman of a similar age to his own modest years, Jack found himself sincerely hoping that his happiness, however nervous, had breached the wall of his unlucky features. Last time they had spoken she had been smiling, but as all conversation had stopped in deference to the entrance of their menus a few minutes before, he was unsure of her current mood.

There were pictures on the menus. Normally Jack would not eat in such a place, but she had suggested that they come here, and now the same pictures that Jack usually associated with poor food and worse atmosphere firmly held his attention; they were big glossy carefully composed pictures of rich food, gleaming and glistening and all vying for attention with a luster that simply could not be matched by whatever actually found its way, inevitably soulless and dead by comparison, to its place on the table in front of Jack. In both an effort to curb the menu's visual assault and because he felt it was probably past time, Jack decided to say something to his date.

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But Jack didn't know what to say. He had trouble speaking in general, since even when words did somehow manage to form in his mind, they rarely found their way down the heavily censored path to his mouth, but it was harder still because he didn't know much about Anna. She worked in or near the same building as he did, or else had some other reason for frequenting his cafeteria, but he didn't wish to speak about work, and wasn't sure where else that knowledge could lead him. He wasn't really sure why he was eating dinner with her, besides of course that she had asked him to, but he couldn't imagine why she had done that. And with that thought, his eyes snapped to hers, quite possibly the last place he wanted them

to be, for it forced the awkwardness of his silence. Or it would have, save that her eyes idled somewhere to the left of him, the discovery of which gave him the rare moment of permission to indulge in the stillness of her expression without any pressure to excite it. She wasn't beautiful by conventional standards, but something about her face, perhaps just its unfamiliarity but most likely something more, something in the abundant curves that seemed both harsh and infinitely gentle, gave her face an energy that at once pulled his eyes to her and pushed them around her features.

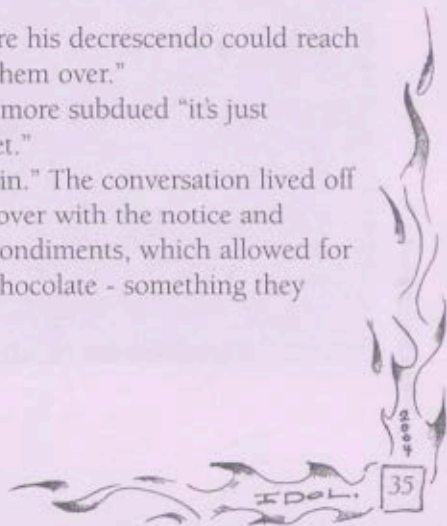
It is always awkward to be caught staring. Jack didn't quite know when Anna's eyes had shifted to greet his own, but he did know that they expected some verbal accompaniment to his gaze, one which must come before his eyes could look away. With nothing to say, he simply allowed the small noise produced by the parting of his lips to break the silence. It was Anna who spoke first, asking softly, "what are you thinking?" An easy question, one with an infinite number of appropriate answers – truthful or crafted as necessary; it didn't matter – but a question which, nonetheless, left Jack thoroughly without an answer. The fringes of his mind had been busy, perhaps the reason his main thought process – an attempt to find a conversation – had been so unsuccessful, but now even his side thoughts seemed to flee from the pressure of required speech.

"I like these glasses." Surprised and slightly bothered that his mouth had made a decision and then left him to deal with it, he reached for his water and sipped, realizing as he did so that he wasn't thirsty. "They're just heavy enough," he continued, trying to find some justification, "that they feel right, you know? They're real glass... not plastic or so light you can't tell... which kind they... are..."

"I can definitely appreciate a heavy glass," Anna spoke before his decrescendo could reach its awkward silence, "you don't have to worry about knocking them over."

"Yeah!" answered Jack in a staccato that he followed with a more subdued "it's just awkward when the waitress comes back and your table is all wet."

Anna laughed. "I usually try to cover that up with my napkin." The conversation lived off of the glasses for awhile more before falling ill, only to fully recover with the notice and subsequent discussion of the dessert menu tucked behind the condiments, which allowed for an impassioned analysis of the merits of chocolate versus non-chocolate - something they decided was the only important classification of sweet.



The arrival of their food brought with it disappointment, for Jack's plate did indeed hold something quite different than the photograph, and also the sort of silence, emphasized by the interrupting scratch of fork on plate, that all too often comes with careful chewing and attention to manners. When Jack heard a telltale intake of breath, he was grateful to look up and listen, but when Anna spoke, and said "So why do you think I asked you out tonight?" his eyes suddenly found great interest in the salt shaker. And then the pepper shaker and then a particularly interesting grain of wood that lured his eyes to the edge of the table and let him drip down, and only then, amidst the subtly reflective tiles of the floor, did he notice that one of the lights was going out. In the corner behind Anna it stuttered off and on, fitfully trying to hold onto life in a way that would be callous to ignore. And so he watched it.

"Do you realize you're holding your breath?" A gentle rippling in her voice drew his eyes to a grin that he already knew to expect. "I was just wondering," she said with words that seemed to wink as much as her eyes smiled. Jack's first breath since the question felt palpably good, in a way that something so familiar rarely does, and any feelings of injustice left to make way for the redness filling his ears.

The rest of the evening went well for Jack, especially when the arrival of dessert reinvigorated the earlier chocolate debate, but the date didn't extend much past dinner and awkwardness of the goodbye still filled Jack's thoughts as he climbed into bed a few hours later. He lay on his back of course, since any other position seemed to invite a cloudiness not suitable for lasting thought, and atop two pillows, since less would annoy his neck and more would risk pushing his feet over the edge of the bed; in the same way that he would always need at least the protective covering of a sheet, regardless of how hot his room could get, any limb that crept over the edge of his mattress elicited such feelings of discomfort - no longer fears with teeth as they had been in his early years, but still some measure of prickling - that he couldn't possibly fall asleep. And so he lay for quite some time, all limbs safely accounted for atop his bed, dwelling on things that had and hadn't been said, making adjustments to the conversations with the hope that it would inspire a smarter performance next time, and even daring to speculate on how possible next time might go.



Marisa Zarchy
Untitled
graphite
6½" x 5½"

Special Delivery

Straight from the front, that's how you came
In a box, torn body, wet with maim.
Your arm, left arm, left somewhere muddy
While the other was ripped, and quite bloody.
Once held guns, young love, dead friends and more
We'll never know the last (a dirty French whore).
Your left leg's intact, that's good to see
This kind of thing happens often, quite sadly.
Your khaki ain't khaki that's for sure
(Your guts just spilled out onto the floor)
Where should be intestines there's blood, more mud.
A tourniquet attempted...messy...ugh!
Your face sickly white, a frozen shock.
The shell stopped time, a tragic clock.
Your hair, gentle curls, girls loved to touch,
Now look away ghastly ever so much.
Your body is nothing, mangled crap
Tossed in a room with a number we slap,
And wonder why you are at the rear
When more of you is at the front than here.



Mary Annese

"Damas"

Black & White Photograph

5" x 7"

The Farther We Go

The Farther We Go, The Closer We Are

The Farther We Go, The Closer We Are

The Farther We Go, The Closer We Are

The Farther We Go, The Closer We Are

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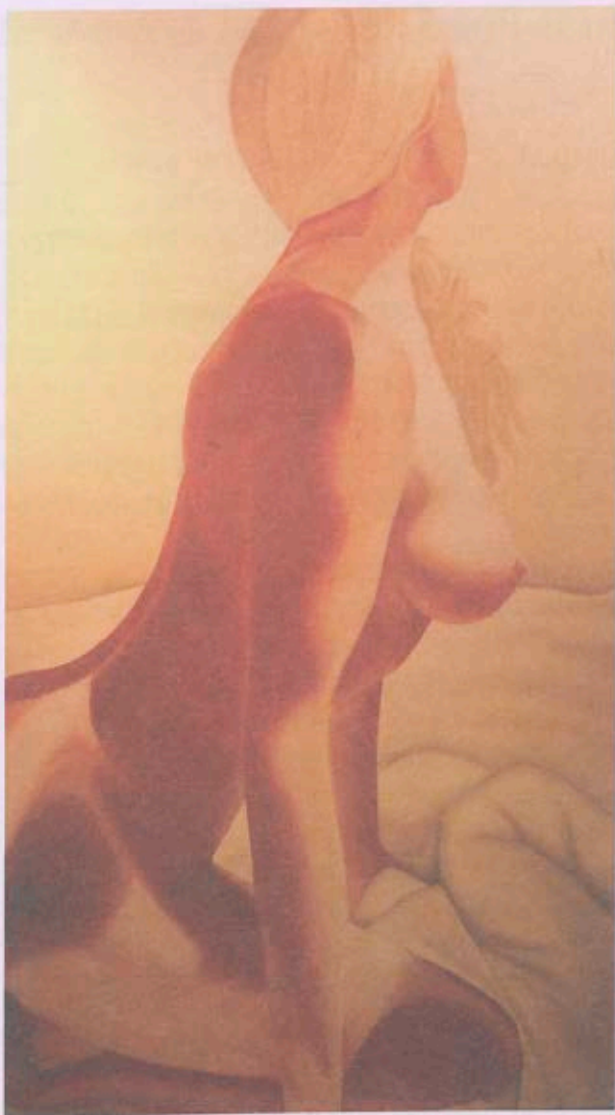
The Farther We Go, The Closer We Are

The Farther We Go, The Closer We Are

The Farther We Go, The Closer We Are

(are we there yet?)

Daniel Colish



Peter Sage

"Emma"

(Transcription of a Pastel) Oil on Canvas

66" x 36"

The Dream is For Sale — From the Elvis Birthday Chronicles

SEND AWAY FOR THE DREAM...THE KING'S
RANSOM...NOW CAN BE
MAIL-ORDERED. THE DREAM IS ON THE LINE!!
ELVIS BLACK LEATHER TEE
KING OF ROCK AND ROLL WALLPAPER
BORDERS THAT NO ONE WILL SEE
68 ONE NIGHT WITH YOU SPECIAL
STUDED WATCHES...COMPLETE ELVIS
MAGNET SETS WITH TCB
VISORS...HOLOGRAPHIC ALOHA FROM
HAWAII!!
SEND AWAY FOR THE DREAM
ELVIS, THE KING, THE MAN, THE GOD, THE
MUSIC TOTE. KING TOTE
YOU CAN ROCK IN GUITAR MAN BOXERS
AND MUSIC VEST FROM ELVIS IN MEMPHIS
A CROSS STITCH KNIT STAINED GLASS
PEACOCK WINDOW ON LONELY STREET...
FAME AND FORTUNE...FRAME AND
MOUNTED STUCK IN AN ELVIS PILLOW
SHAM...PORTRAIT ON AN AFGHAN
TCB LEATHERETTE...LOVE ME TENDER 14
KARAT GOLD CHARM WITH A ROCK A
HULA POODLE SKIRT
SEND AWAY FOR THE DREAM.....TOLL
FREE

BLUE SUDED SHOES JUKEBOX PLATE
ELVIS FOREVER WALKING SKATES
PINK LEATHER VEST AND FANNY PACK
WITH LITTLE GIRLS COTTON PANTIES
ELVIS SHOT GLASS IMPERSONAL LIFE
POCKET BOOK
HE TOUCHED ME...BONJA...FIREWORKS
JUMP SUITED FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH
ALHOA AND ALTERNATE ALHOA FROM
HAWAII
CRYSTAL ELVIS TANK...ELVIS LIGHTS
BABY TANKS...TANKS FOR THE MEMORIES
SNED AWAY FOR THE DREAM...OR YOU
CAN ORDER THE DREAM ONLINE AT
FOLLOW THE DREAM DOT COM...
\$10 BUCKS EXTRA THE DREAM WILL BE
OVERNIGHTED.

D. M. Metzger



Grey Haze

I watched the sun begin to slowly set.
A loud familiar sound, a memory
Of days, the sand, slowly
Slipped through a crack, I didn't try to catch it.
A deserted beach, almost complete.
A few birds swooped over me, squawking at
Nothing. I could feel my heart pound.
The air flowed through my body, a shiver
Simmered down my spine. Suddenly,
The gust of wind began to push me down.
My feet flew up, the bright glare from the sun
Vanished.
Shells, glass, and rocks cascaded across my back.
I do not know how long I lay there still.
A dense haze had layered. So deep,
And mysterious to me, unfamiliar.
A bright flame caught my eye, the light shot straight
Stabbing a hole through murk gathered above.
A dark cloud stirred, a smoke so thick, so deep-
Then grow and grow, a maze of nothingness.
Two paths, one-dark, vague, cryptic, uninviting-
The other one was similar to the first, but familiar.
I felt like I had traveled down this path before.
Two paths to choose from, leading to nowhere,
Or will one guide me back?
So many questions, not enough answers.
A shout, a jumble, noise that crashed what was
Once silent. Lack of sleep began to pull
My eyes- I must find somewhere I can rest.
The distant sound of birds, bells, laughs, a new
Born day. Take me there, it is time for me to laugh, too.
I hope when I wake up, a light will shine,
Leading me back to reality, pull
And lure me from this deep hazed state of mind.

Lindsay Kaplan



Katharine Beck
Untitled
Oil on Canvas
12 x 18

Gossamer

I remember mornings by the water
Concentric circles spiraling
From trembling lilies

And I waited

The sound still fresh in my ears
Running feet tossing the gravel
Any direction

It was you

Raining light on the wall
A shower of stars falling from
The magnolia tree

My stars seemed to fall
One by one

So yesterday I daydreamed
Under a willow's mint-colored veil
My skin is so white, so lonely

You said you'd come back

So what if I spend the day
In gardens, under swinging trees
Hope is such bright-feathered company

Even when it's filmy;

When it's foolish

Chelsea Woodard





יחזקאל

