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## WINTER

1983

Cover design by María Teresa Palasíts

*In the Key of Me*

WINTER

1983

# ***Idol***

**Union College  
Schenectady, NY**

*I want to tell you something about our country,  
Or my idea of it: explaining it  
If not to you, to my idea of you.*

Robert Pinsky  
from "An Explanation of America"

Mary M. Richardson

***Heaving Bridges in Moonlight***

*— after William Turner*

Your space engulfs me

A whorl of yellow like sun

The bridge dissolves, an ochre  
shadow of childhood

# David Neiblum



## Julie Baretz

### Untitled

Julio Larraz is a small temperamental Cuban.  
When we met I noticed his spotted Topsiders and recent Levis,  
whose red tab and bronze rivets seemed so aesthetically situated  
around indigo pockets.  
He is an artist  
and the gray in his beard has been etched in exquisitely.

We spoke comfortably in the gallery.  
The owner's daughter vanished amid woodcuts and monoprints  
and an exotic young woman sauntered out gracefully  
from behind masterpieces  
which had been so painstakingly arranged by the mother  
in one of her enraptured hours.  
He understood she had just arrived back from overseas —  
Could she tell him about the climate?  
And why is it that she feels so at home there?

One day the owner of the gallery  
brought the young woman to Julio's house  
on River Road;  
the mother wanted her daughter to see a portrait  
of a porcelain girl he had painted.  
The child in the picture sat quietly  
the strands of her hair formed fine, soft curls  
just like the daughter's.  
The mother admired the piece in the living room.

We crossed over to the studio,  
a room of wood grains and natural light  
where the pungent odor of paint thinner  
welcomed our pores  
and the tubes of color strewn around the room  
set the scene for the current piece.



The picture in the room's foreground showed  
the arc shaped window of a stucco house  
looking out over blue waters.  
The owner of the gallery found it  
aesthetically very pleasing to the eye;  
the contrast was excellent  
and the sense of space very fine.

Her thoughts returned  
to the invitations for the opening.

But the young woman felt seized  
by the sandy tint of the walls  
the geometric curve of the ceiling  
the trickle of urine that had made its way down  
from the window ledge to the floor  
but had long since evaporated,  
leaving behind a faint stain  
and a sordid odor.  
Was this not a home once deserted  
by a frightened Arab  
in an hour of desperation?

Was the water we saw from the window  
not the Mediterranean,  
the sea that named a homeland for her unusual features  
that no one in New York seemed to find attractive?  
How was it that the artist  
had painted this shard of heart?

**Maria Teresa Palasits**



**Mystery Traveler**



# Shawne T. McCord

Winner of 1983 Idol Poetry Contest

## Seurat's Red

Depth with dots  
The serenity of  
Long and thin  
Pale white skilled hands  
With red dots

Black mourning dress  
Really dark blue  
Seurat's teasing eyes  
Seeing a shaded collar  
With red dots

She's properly posing  
For a portrait  
After his death  
Plainly annoyed  
With red dots

Paint for nostalgia  
Grandchildren will want  
To see Grandma after  
The red death  
With red dots

"Why did Grandpa die, ma?"  
He followed a woman,  
Red, she was  
Her hair was orangey  
With red dots.

The kitchen chair  
Her arm leans on  
Was her only support  
Dear children, it was  
With red dots

She once painted  
His portrait years ago, in that red chair  
Dark blue eyes, fragile pale face,  
It's in the dust now  
The dust, the red dots.

**Bobbi Cohen**

## *The Passing*

Wind comes. Blowing along lighter objects—  
Spindly limbed old men with fragile bones.  
Sweet warm air. Lifts up papers, and  
Rolls spent cigarette butts out of it's path.

Children cuddle cozy stuffed animals.  
Sleeping under blankets whose existence  
They denied throughout the long summer.

Curtains dance in bare windows,  
Stripped of the cool apparel,  
Of tan and brown and white metal air conditioners.

Sweaters reunite with life-giving, long-forgotten air.  
After months of lonely darkness in exile  
In the depths of stuffy, breathless closets.

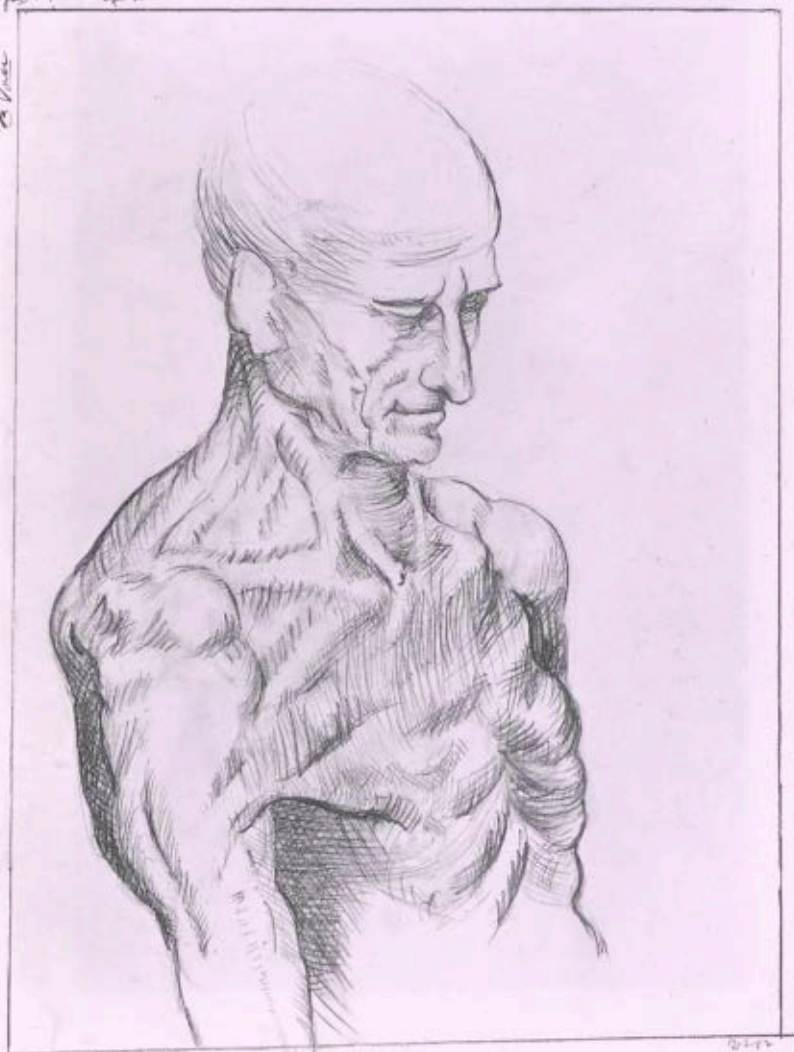
Colors sing out in change,  
They catch the eye,  
They grasp the imagination.  
Green is hauled down off it's throne  
By invincible steel hands  
Thinking not at all of it's

lingering,  
flickering,  
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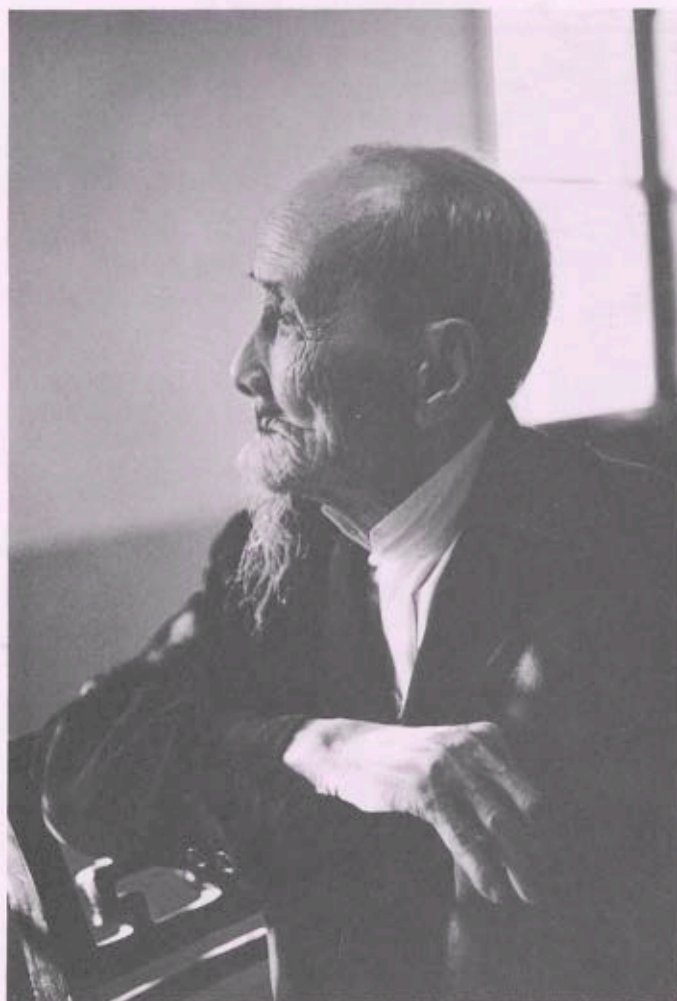
# Mary M. Richardson

pl. 203  
posterior head & neck - (see p. 104)

B. Vase



**Phuoc Le**



**Ong Noi**





**Marcy Wilder**

## ***Remembrances of A Childhood Dream***

The day I hugged the frog it went  
Soft in my hands like M&M's  
And I cried with delight as  
The eyes went smush between my fingers  
While the head dropped off on cool red hinges  
Waving in the wind.

The day I bit the goat she cried  
It ain't easy growin' up on chicken feed  
Or anything else because even though  
They tell you it won't melt in your hands like a frog  
It does — like the plastic spoon in a cup of hot  
Chocolate, too hot so you squeal like a pig.

The day the nightmare ends was sad,  
It was a very sad thing or perhaps  
It was a mad thing like a misshapen spoon,  
But I suppose it all goes back  
To my summer at Camp Tamerack  
With that frog's head waving on its hinges.

## *Standing Outside Baldor's*

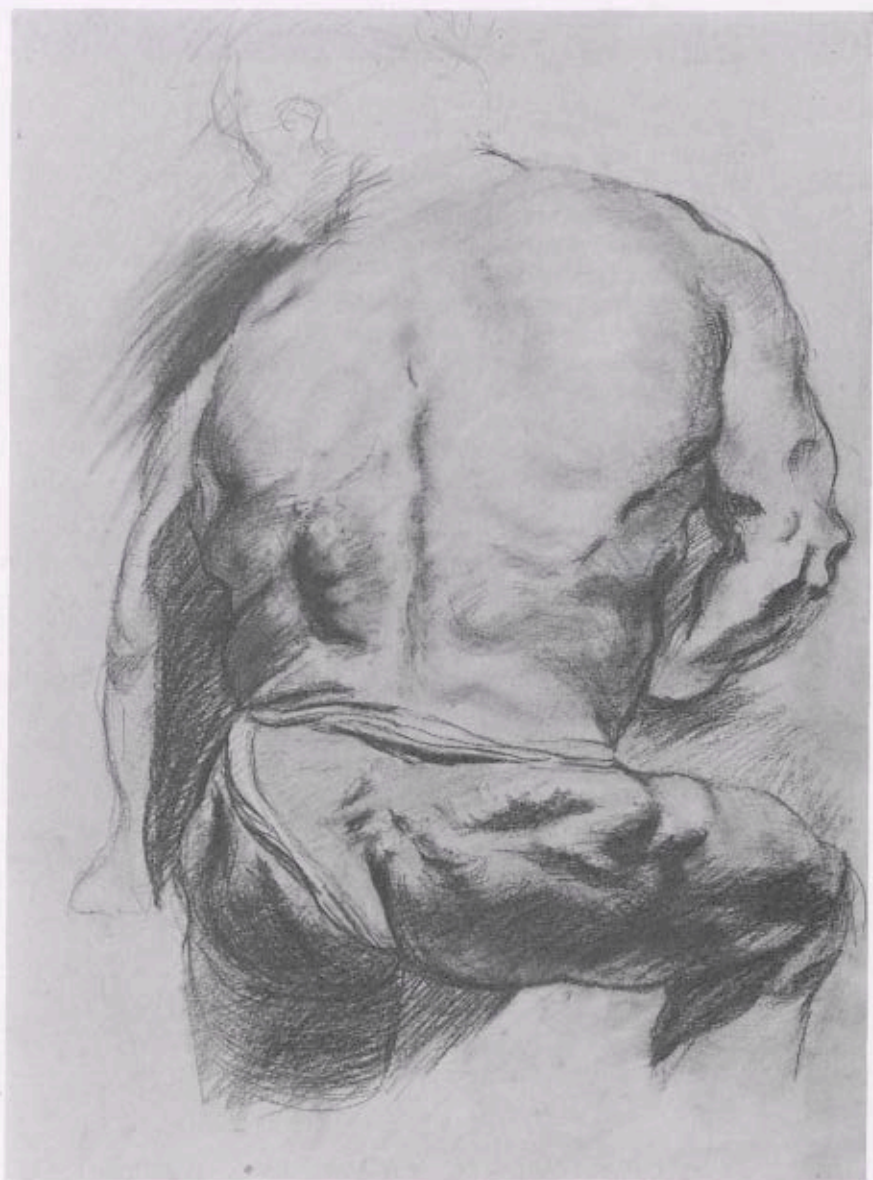
It seems it was at Baldor's bar  
I saw myself in the window  
And you stood next to me,  
and we wanted to sit down  
Maybe have some capuccino  
But we didn't feel like it.

No wonder grown-ups called us world-weary:  
We'd buy Godiva chocolates  
And save them in cardboard drawers,  
the ones we found outside  
with the posters we put up  
to hang on the cinder-block walls.

In the next room we laughed because  
The weatherman was fat, and bald,  
and wore glasses and he didn't know  
That you can't see rainbows  
On an old set like ours

Black and white, it didn't matter  
We made our own rainbows  
And didn't have to talk  
About the weather, or  
cinder-block dreams or anything  
If we didn't want to.

**Mary M. Richardson**



**David Neiblum**



**Dunes**

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