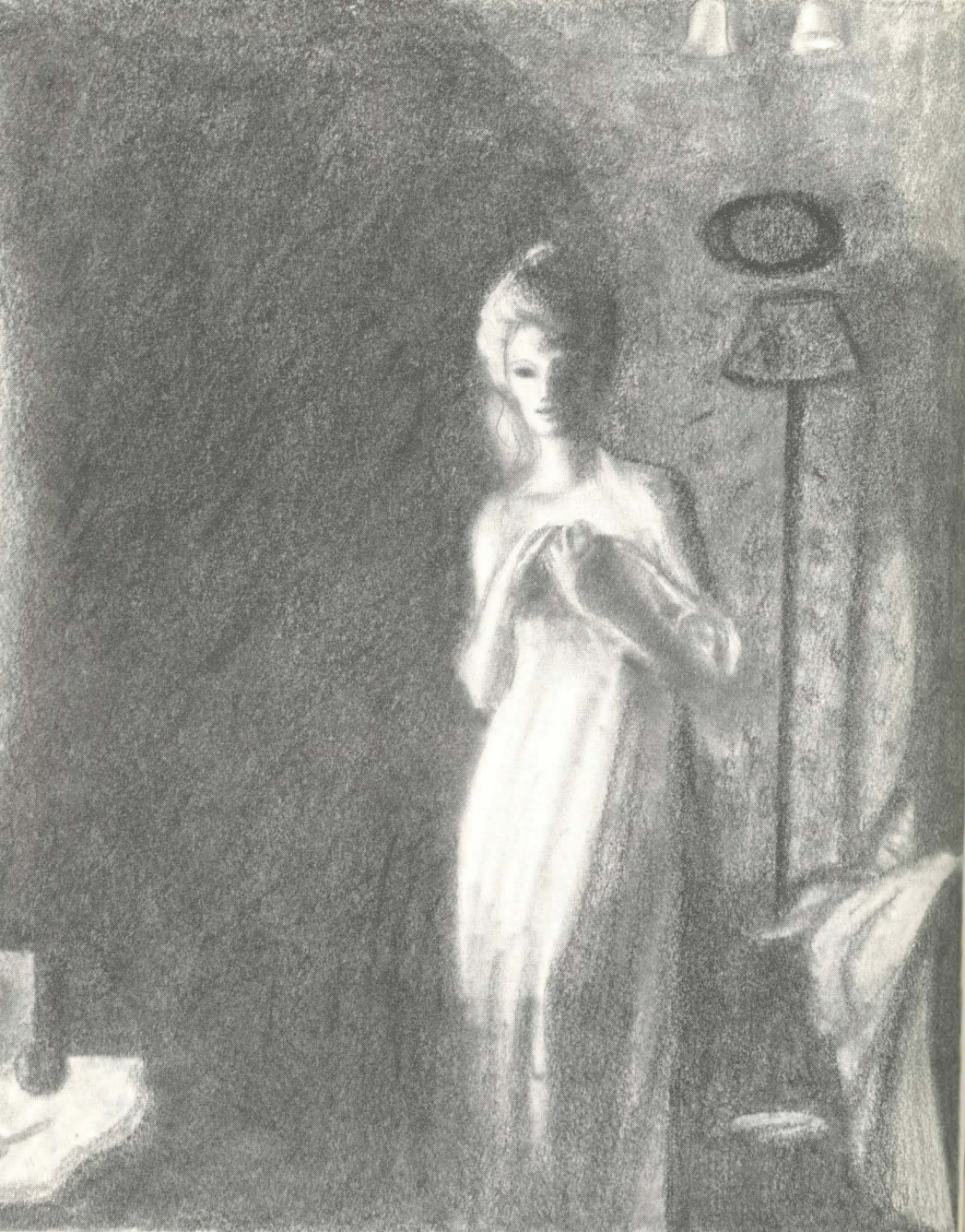


Absolute



Absolute is a magazine of original art and literature by the students, faculty and staff of South Oklahoma City Junior College. It is produced and printed at the college with the assistance of the Media Production department. Faculty advisor is Warren Neal.



Air

When you first came up
the family treehouse,
they said you had your head
in the clouds.

They helped you
build it.

Now you're celebrating.
It leaves you breathless.

DH Moore

A Sheperd's Dream Time

On the plain of hoary gods
a dead sea wilderness
of stars without winter.
Shepherd and son now
among stones and sparse
green, shadows of walls
once great separating
man and dream, capture
fading sun in amber

eyes. The gray shepherd, father
speaks to me, dreamsaver.
We stare down the long passage
of night to day. Silent
desert surrounds tales
as soft fog wraps a candle's flower
sifting through sands
mixed with gray-red-brown
surface of battles and wanderings
long gone, mothers and daughters
fade into nomadic hope
and prosperous wolves abound fat
on my father's keepers. In Absalom's mist

memories of ruined walls, slow rising
breathe life into moonlight. My father
is far away. The fire brushes
against old boots pushing
the cold back
into night. I rise
put more wood on, enter
the dark inside of him
as I walk away. Tin drums echo

the plain ablaze with the masses,
bodies strewn in heaps. Shivering
shepherds wander toward palms
and an empty spring. A thousand
eyes reflect fire, no breathing
stirs the ashes, twilight has been locked

in the sands. The son stalks
the fold. Sleep spills
into the old man's eyes. Far off
crevices descend deeper
into earth, ancient cities crumble
unseen, bloodstained stones lock faith
crying and praying
to a wall.

D H Moore

dancing on jade wysteria dreams
embrasser dans l'air du printemps
cinnabar nights impanena days
steaming loves beneath papyrus fans
'30's blues thrashing to '70's beats
we put on our wings we fly

enamoured of tai chi mentality
behind Gable facades—sun-ray lens
riding on the pulse of hot blood
we shake to Egyptian passion
but when the waves are gone
we put on our wings we fly

bowie

the day
softly, fog laden, dawns
lightens stiff, rumped, last night clothes
mingled on a sun dappled floor
the two who were one
sprawl
(a hard night's work for springs
arms tracking thighs and limbs fused)
still
a painted flower
on the weathered windowsill
nods to the morning sphere
time drifts on
then, in discomfort, an arm shifts
eyes peer through sleep
a pair of hands reach out
a new day born of night's replies

bowie

Death From The Inside
Phase VIII: Tracks of Eden

I went to Death
—And Death is shocking,
 Like gays,
 kissing in a public park—
And I asked,
 I asked if
Reality could be explained
 To a child.

And Death grinned.

Ronnie Willis

fragmented lover

I think (and maybe that's my problem)
that you (it's always you, not me)
can't find (can't you see your own nose)
what your (what is it you look for)
body (it's got to be for us)
says it (you might take note of it)
must have (try looking for yourself)

Maybe this is your problem (you think)
it's always me, not you (that I)
I can't see past my nose (can't find)
what am I looking for (what my)
why for the two of us (body)
maybe I should know it (says it)
my reflection tells me (must have)

Terry Lawson

Postcard From Limbo

Well, yeah, I guess—my doffed hat is sometimes repellent. I had a good time—impossible by present standards—I did real good.

I had a blood disease growing up—anemia and they thought it was leukemia—I took little white pills until I was sixteen. At seventeen me and two other guys finished in a dead heat for last place in our highschool 50 yard dash—three years later I won all the quick contests in my basic training company of 150—two years later one of my loser buddies from highschool put a bullet in his head after his wife left him—he survived, lost about sixty pounds of dead weight and became a regular bachelor scam...

Somewhat thinking this preamble precludes all distinctly repelling annoyances—still yet I had a good time.

I got out of highschool with D's and ample kissee-kissee— read *The Duty of Civil Disobedience* and later left the military with the highest test scores in the state of Oklahoma.

All this military magic has not translated into monetary gain yet—the bank makes inquiries as to the state of my health, the condition of their Gibson bass and yellow Buick—the Buick much needs a new valve stem and I am running fearfully low on cigarettes—painful bursitis of the hip has removed me from the labor roll call: again I seek

vocational stabilization. Dante accepted this similar crisis with casual aplomb—in a modern transposition of the surrealistic painting, *Dante's Inferno*, we find Ronald McDonald riding the puppet Lamb-chops bareback in no less than 32 different positions on a field of unharvested computer cards gently undulating under the spell of an adjacent chemical processing plant exhaust fan... Dante probably knew this world would come about—I got my revolver back from the police this afternoon, along with thanks, citizen H, for untimely assistance—a homicide witness awakens in protective custody and thanks his lucky stars he is still of the material world...Cops—I used to hate cops for busting pot smokers until I realized the cops hated the pot laws—the good ones wanted to be out busting real criminals and the bad ones wanted to get stoned. My hate has been replaced with disdain for the money corp that manages to keep the silly law in effect—they don't much enforce the law any more any way: fools pay \$40 an ounce for Columbian and idiots are afraid to say what their Hawaiian sets them back. I find greater spiritual reward in meditating on the origin of Christ...He probably would have favored deregulation of gas prices, wild anarchist that he was. As for me, well, yeah, my consternation is regatta: I hesitate at the edge of a chemical pool and then dive in head first, heels a-kicking. Some choice—the air is full of gamma rays and Kerr-McGee has the courts tied up in harassment suits. I hear the Chinese have emerged with an answer to Jane Fonda—a multi-million dollar epic entitled *The Okie Syndrome*. A subterranean meteor makes a surprise appearance on I-40 glowing in radioactive splendor, and CB buddies from Albuquerque to Memphis head for the nearest Radio Shack complaining that their squelch controls have all gone haywire. On farmlands surrounding the meteor, six foot tall flowers sprout up and head out across the countryside. ABC News is somewhat mystified. In a copyrighted newstory entitled "Loose Tango in Dallas", unbelievable eyewitness accounts and film footage indicate a mob of giant prancing sunflowers has overrun the Six Flags Over Texas amusement park and left a pile of strangely glowing molten stainless steel. What seems repellent to me is that we may never see the film due to political intervention from the American Garment Industry. They claim if we attempt even trade with 900 million Chinese we will become a China subsidy.

Probably true, probably true.

The following two poems are reflections on *The Turn of the Screw* by Henry James. Each poem explores a different aspect of that novella.

The Governess

To Bly
I am come...
To gentle grounds,
And the towered house
Quiet as our parsonage.
No trespass shall there be
Against us.

May I please him
Who puts me at the helm,
Holding habit firm and steady.
But,
He shall not know my capability...
Submitting to his favor.

No scandals, skeletons,
No strangeness,
Can rise to perturb us here.
As helmsman-governess
All reality I shall see as rational.
Life shall be smooth as these green lawns.
But how shall he remember me?

Quint

Mrs. Grose: "What is he like?"

The Governess: "I've been dying to tell you. But he's like nobody...
He gives me a sort of sense of looking like an
a c t o r . ' '

The Turn of the Screw

There is one without gender
Having each gender.
He has played all roles
Since creation.
Life and death are one to him.

An airy presence
Watches from the tower,
Stands vigilant
On the lake's far side,
Corporeality shed.
The manikin lady is dissipated
In whisps of rumor smoke.
The ungentlemanly shape
Is cast away in melodrama
Played on the village road
In costume borrowed
To beguile brotherly, sisterly innocence.

On afternoons of still imminence
The lake shimmers in sunlight.
How quiet the perfumed air,
How regular the blossom beds
Bordering smooth, shaded lawns.

Idly,
Cunningly,
He summons them.
They rise compliantly from play...

—Joyce Marks



Your shape deceived me.
At the double-take,
Double-taken.
Unaware.
With tidbits led silly
To the snare,
I,
Blinking,
Witnessed your transfiguration
To infernal scapegrace,
And bowed low,
And tried to admire your horns,
As you threw me a peanut.

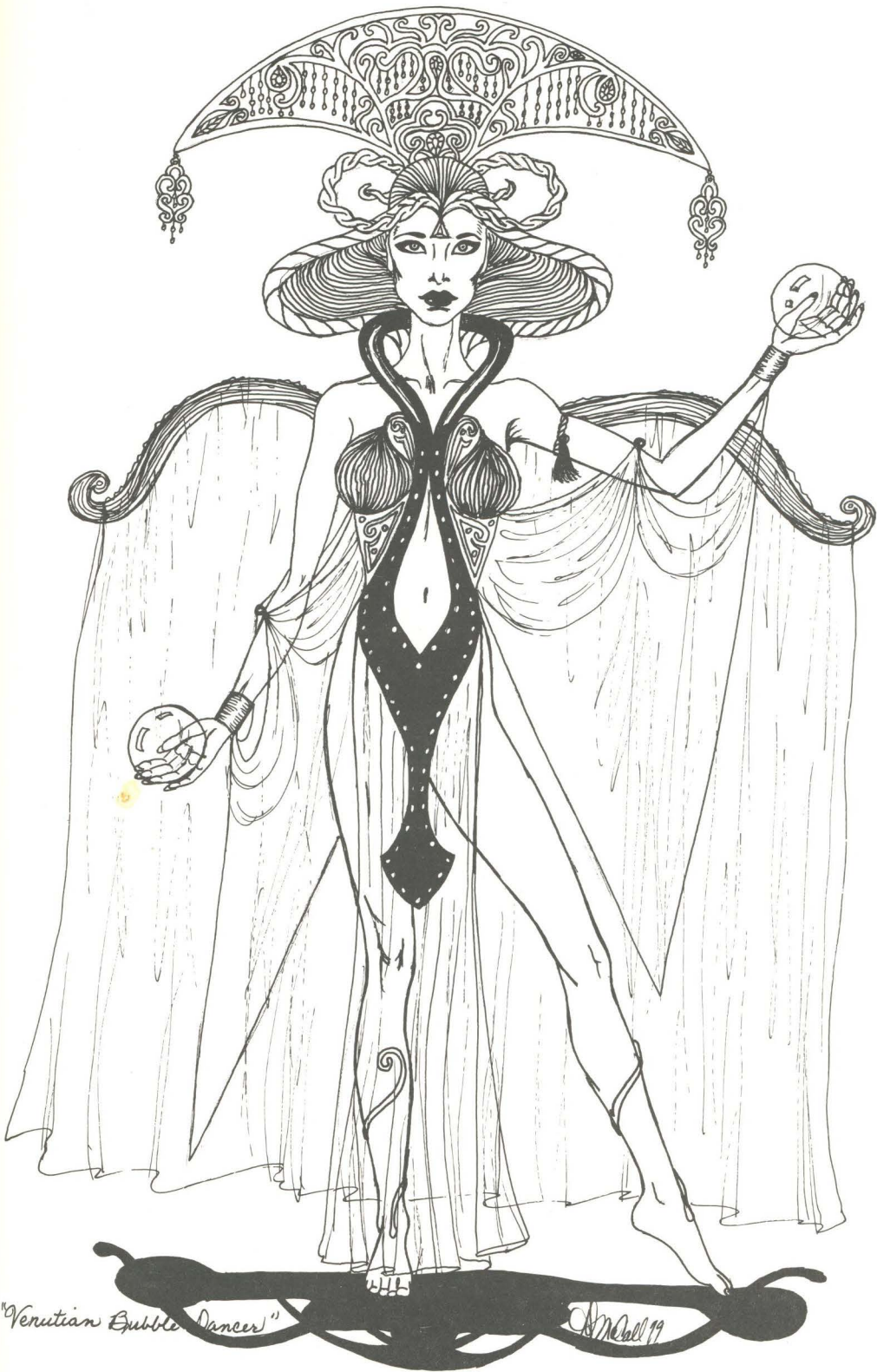
Joyce Marks

Transpositions

Rocking on your azure body
deep blue
invisible
turning to syrup
me rocking you rocking my
transparent body

 The moon is my mirror
Your body is my reflection
inside the darkness
 shimmering
One blood orchid blooms
just for you

Brooke Smith
October, 1979
Buenos Aires



"Verutian Bubble Dancer"

A. Macal 19

I Feel My Age

There was a time when mothers wore cloche hats
Their hearts were velvet pincushions, lace bordered.
They were sentimental,
But there was something of Mr. Murdstone in them.
One should be seen, but not heard.

I do not put much upon my plate at dinner,
And I eat it all,
Afterwards placing my knife and fork
Neatly together on the plate.
I have nearly forgotten
That one should not play on Sundays,
That only reading is permitted.

The war did not make me old,
It was played to me on newsreels and the radio:
An ancient game.
Our enemy remained distant.
The pity of it was father being away,
And grandma in her air raid shelter
While bombs fell, and doodle-bugs.

I knew reality at childhood's end:
Belsen, Buchenwald. the innocent, grotesque, dead;
Detested now false Disney clouds and singing butterflies,
Sweet bluebirds in a tinsel forest;
Acknowledged the lies, the truths:
That dark iniquity has power and strength supreme,
And Snow White died of cyanide in an apple.

How cannily did Nature
Transform the fawn moth species to a dark one
Where factory smoke blackened the landscape;
The joke is on the pale originals,
Pecked niftily from blackened bark
Where mutants rest easy.

I feel my age...
I flutter over the oil spill,
Alight occasionally on cornflowers.
There is wreckage in the fields.
And wreckers.
It is a somber afternoon in the late millenium.
There is the muttering of the myriad wings
Fluttering,
Flying,
Flying in ever-decreasing circles,
Irresistably drawn to the flame.

Joyce Marks

to alison

morning round time
 echos
 our growing
 shattered star
 take the half
 that will not
 cry
touch the night
 whisper empty
 message
floats
 swinging on the sun
falling shadow
 feathers the dragonfly moon
 forest dreams
 melt
white tomorrows
 will dance red

Lauren Fitzgerald

 shadows of geranium
wishes
 circle your palm
 those stars in your eyes
 inside
 the day a cold rain
drips

Lauren Fitzgerald

mermaid

changing mountains

fly

through

thick wind

shy ankles

attach

soft rolling

stars

Lauren Fitzgerald

happy birthday 4

white icing on the cake

candles burn into warm puddles

sugar sprinkles like pink smiles

on a napkin

voices of red paper collect

small sounds from under the table

hot wax is blown cool

the plate comes forth

Lauren Fitzgerald

coyote

1

laugh in the wind
that smells of clouds
your tongue is sharp
like pretty gold nails
too many shadows
in your eyes
to reveal yourself
have gathered over years of an empty heart

2

once on your brown road
you tried to steal a bird song
filling all those caves
you climbed

and

climbed

through cemeteries
up the clouds
over blue air
snickering at gravity

all you received
was a handful of feathers
and a silenced wind

Lauren Fitzgerald

Group

The Judas hour drips away
As she speaks in monotone,
Waiting for hum of the god-voice
To keep the rythm going
To keep her chair from sinking into the floor,
She speaks, straining to see the words hit air,
Float into meanings,
Catch on whims and chairs,
Retarded child with blocks of wood
She pieces a picture
From wordy parts

Voices slither round her,
Creeping through her taught hair
Covering her face
Taunting a flicker in porcelain eyes
She hears her mind tear
As she inhales holy words fallen
From a crack in the winter sky.
And loves yet another god

Echoes of voices evoke the unmentionable;
Familiar Doppelganger
Up in the middle of the night
Eating bread like a zealot of Christ,
Scouring for pills and bourbon and unpaid bills;

Dreams of burial
In her newest burgundy,
Her body the wine
To fill a glass coffin;

Poppies in the land of death
Rubied and perfect,
Harbingers of promised peace
Unfolding like crib blankets
Upon her infant sleep.

But They tear the flowers bleeding from her head
Sopping her mind with fleshy petals,
Bread sucking escaped drippings

Stupor laden
Smiling
Storyless
She vomits words and words
Sniffing for the fragrance of approval
Scanning for the sanctuary of a cozy truth
Hoping for a taste of body and blood

Mary Ann Peters

Birthday

She fell with grace,
Old woman,
With grace of a brittle leaf,
In a polished restaurant
Wednesday
At two

And eaters of meat,
Servers of lifeless fish
Took note,
Forks mid-bite
Money mid-change

One man,
A Christian smelling of musk
Jumped up to help
Too late

She was down,
Soft and slow
She was down,
Knees yielding like water
Arms huddling from the fall
Body folded and stayed,
Still frame to last a lifetime,
Then stood
Unsmiling
To walk on

If only I had seen her
Young and unclothed,
Potent spirit in a firm flesh...

Before birth jarred the circles
Of her marriedness

Before war shared its cinders
And surprised solitary limbs

Before smog and arthritis
Forged into her malleable form

If only I had seen her
Before her scent turned
Secure as vintage books

Mary Ann Peters

Reincarnation

Part one

I captured your classic drift
A perfect rose for the stealer
of my heart

I moved along your outer boundaries
Across a plotted course measured
360 degrees by 360 degrees

This natural ability lets me
inspect the top of your scalp—
The power of astral projection
Is mine to use
As the time to move draws near.

Part two

Don't get me wrong
My dearest Miss Long
I was once a dragster
On the streets of Hong Kong
I see
Chocolate manchus
outside my window
And I do believe it is
Eastertime in China.

Part three

Were you surprised to see me?
Standing outside that New England
shop window?

I touched your hand as we
both observed the intercourse
Of our frozen breath escaping
into stellar space...

Was the lady so wrong to
interrupt that intimate luncheon
we shared then?

She wanted a legal dose of heroin
But the term drug addiction
Is so false,
so misleading,

For are not all drugs in truth,
in fact

Addicted to humanity?

Part four

Don't get me wrong
My dearest Miss Long
*The galaxy is full of
dead fools now*
*And some of the living
Are preparing to sacrifice
their children*
*To the great winepress
of the wrath of God.*

Part five

Creation

And the natural processes
of literature:

Have we both stolen from
some forgotten Palestinian poet?

Or was it only I

*Who borrowed a penny or two
of*

Emotion

*Hoping to change my reflecting
lover from noncommitted civility
into crazed
worshipper?*

Two

things you shouldn't do—

Steal the soul of a Palestinian
poet, and

Bet on your horse if you ain't
seen the other one.

Part six

Many ladies wearing empire dresses
walk toward a shop door

One stumbles and falls, twisting
her dress around in a mess.

The other ladies stand by the door
and say, "Come on, let's go in."

The fallen lady gives them the good
eye and says, "Can you just wait
until I get my shift together?"

Your classic drift kind of
catches me that way.

Your bobby sox, your blue jeans,
your satin underwear—

All subject to the laws of clean
laundry.

Part seven

An arbitrary number: why
stop here?

Is this the house from your
childhood that you spoke of?

Well, you may match wits
with those who live there

Now

You can show them

Where your bed once was,

Where their chest is

now

You can encourage them to

vote your ticket, but even in the

dusty apex of your wildest dreams

You'll never find the

soldier

Who moved from Shadow

number One-Thirtynine.

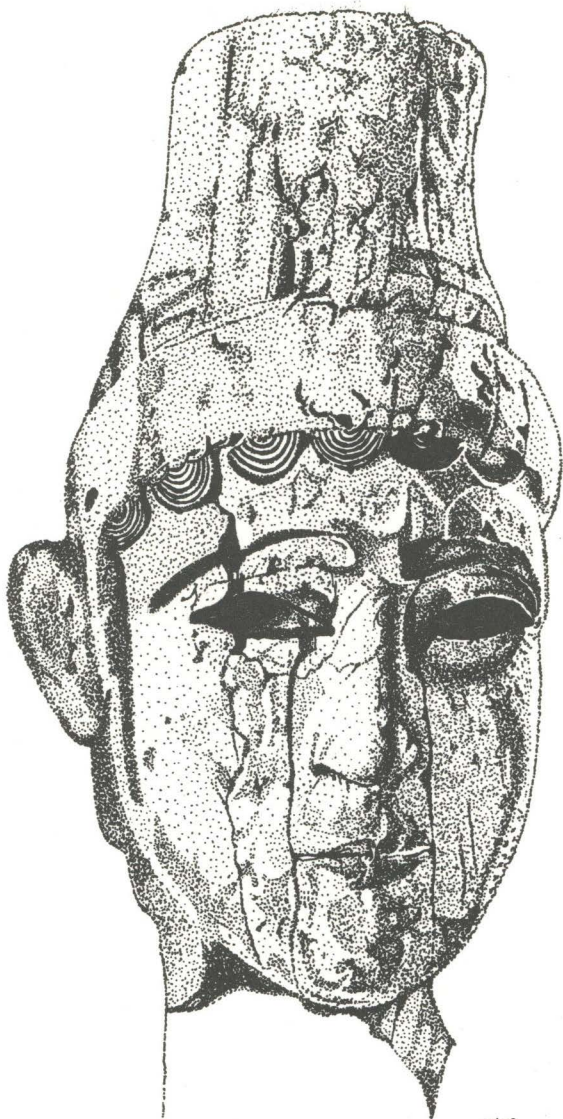
W. D. Housden

Mrs. Smith told Mr. Smith one day,
“I am the vessel of an immaculate conception.
When I was recently confined in Women’s Prison
An angel came to the window bars and softly said:
‘Your womb is the vessel of pure innocence
And you will bear a child.’
And it is so,” she said.

Mr. Smith knew that it *was* so.
Her pregnancy was confirmed by the doctor who advised:
“You are well within the time limit for abortion.
Under the circumstances perhaps you should consider it.”
But Mrs. Smith bore her child
Because it was undefiled by the lust of Mr. Smith
And therefore represented her very own most spiritual aspect,
Untainted by his great attachment to her.
Mrs. Smith hoped that she might be sainted, enshrined,
Or at least get on TV.

After a routine confinement
The child was not inconvenient to nurture
And Mr. Smith, in some bewilderment,
Happily assisted in feeding and clothing it.

The following year Mrs. Smith became the vessel
Of a child conceived connubially,
Bearing within its cells the history of all life
Since form evolved from chaos and darkness,
Bringing forth miraculously,



Ugnaitic Sculpture

R McCall '79

when the sun dies

a planet orbits out of sync
listless elliptical movement
or circular
with intense effort even triangular
opportunities for future rectangles

disoriented brainstem
limbs without purpose
activity
act

carefully honed instruments sounding in the dark
music without song.

Karen Kamm
January, 1980

Mrs. Smith told Mr. Smith one day,
“I am the vessel of an immaculate conception.
When I was recently confined in Women’s Prison
An angel came to the window bars and softly said:
‘Your womb is the vessel of pure innocence
And you will bear a child.’
And it is so,” she said.

Mr. Smith knew that it *was* so.
Her pregnancy was confirmed by the doctor who advised:
“You are well within the time limit for abortion.
Under the circumstances perhaps you should consider it.”
But Mrs. Smith bore her child
Because it was undefiled by the lust of Mr. Smith
And therefore represented her very own most spiritual aspect,
Untainted by his great attachment to her.
Mrs. Smith hoped that she might be sainted, enshrined,
Or at least get on TV.

After a routine confinement
The child was not inconvenient to nurture
And Mr. Smith, in some bewilderment,
Happily assisted in feeding and clothing it.

The following year Mrs. Smith became the vessel
Of a child conceived connubially,
Bearing within its cells the history of all life
Since form evolved from chaos and darkness,
Bringing forth miraculously,

In the lightning and rolling of the oceans,
Our first ancestors.
But Mrs. Smith, comprehending not the grandeur of the occasion,
Nor acknowledging the chain of all existence
Reposing in her unborn infant's cells,
Said to Mr. Smith: "I'll call the clinic in the morning."
He was unhappy, because it was *his* child,
And he had never killed a fly
And said he would have used a condom had he known
That he would be consenting to the murder
Of his helpless offspring
By an act that demonstrated inability
To deal nobly with consequences;
For killing children cannot be considered noble,
Nor convenience an extenuating circumstance,
Nor even the population explosion,
Poverty,
Hunger,
Neglect...
For events beget events,
And with paroxysms, contractions forcible,
Through the narrowed isthmus of unfeeling,
Desensitized Mind,
Into the world leaps
Unthinking Chaos.

Joyce Marks

**My Song
or
Beat Me Daddy, Eight to the Bar**

You did some fancy pickin'
on my heart strings
You played some hellacious
chords on my body

You were the melody
I was the harmony

We only sang your song
I asked you to write a song for
me
It was in the wrong key

I wrote my own song
You didn't like the arrangement

We sang your song
Till you found someone with a
better voice
Someone who loved to sing
your song

I didn't sing for a long, long
time

I met someone who could sing
my song

Now, I am the melody
He is the harmony

He wants me to sing his song
It's out of my range
I wrote a song for him
He doesn't like it...

To F. Bear
or
There's a man who comes to see
Me..only to sleep on my living room floor

Like a feral child
You watch from the shadows
I know you are there
 I can see your eyes
 barely breathing.

Curious
 wanting
 to know
 wanting
 to hope

I sit in the clearing
 very still
I'm afraid
 of you
You're a wild creature
able to hurt
 without knowing

Will I move
 too quickly?
Will you run from me
 in fear?

I want us to be friends,
 Bear
two lost in the woods
 one wild
 one tame

I will sit very still
 and wait...

—Rebecca
August 79