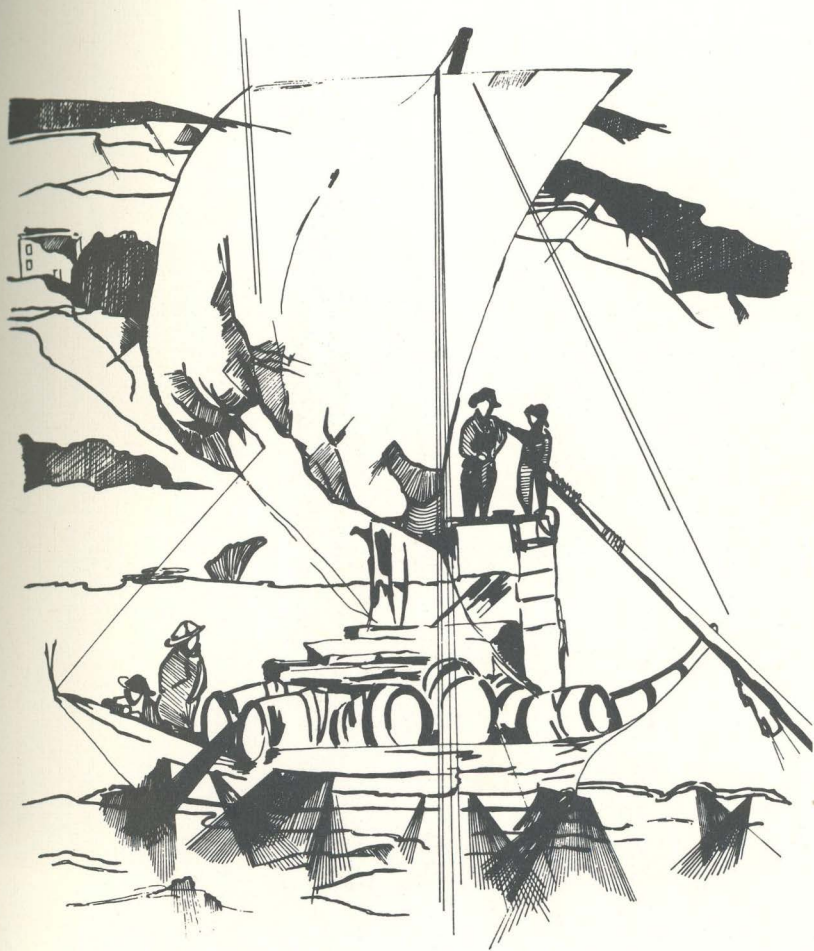
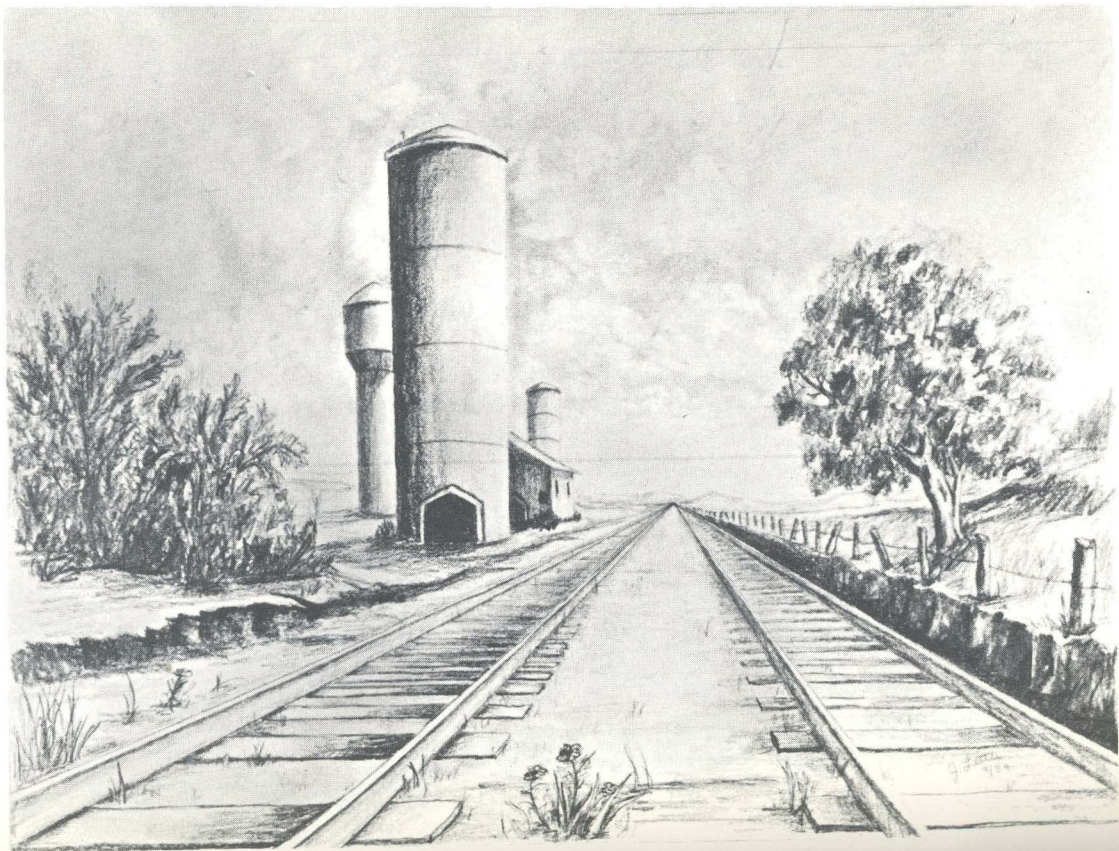


Absolute





“The true profession of man
is to find his way to himself.”

— Hermann Hesse,
quoted by Tolbert
McCarroll to provide
the epigraph for his
book, *Exploring The
Inner World* (Signet,
1974) . . .

Absolute

Spring 1985

Sponsored by the Institute of Communications and the Arts, **Absolute** presents a collection of original art and literature by students, faculty, staff, and friends of Oklahoma City Community College, 7777 South May Avenue, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 73159. — Printed at the college, the magazine is issued twice yearly, in the fall and spring.

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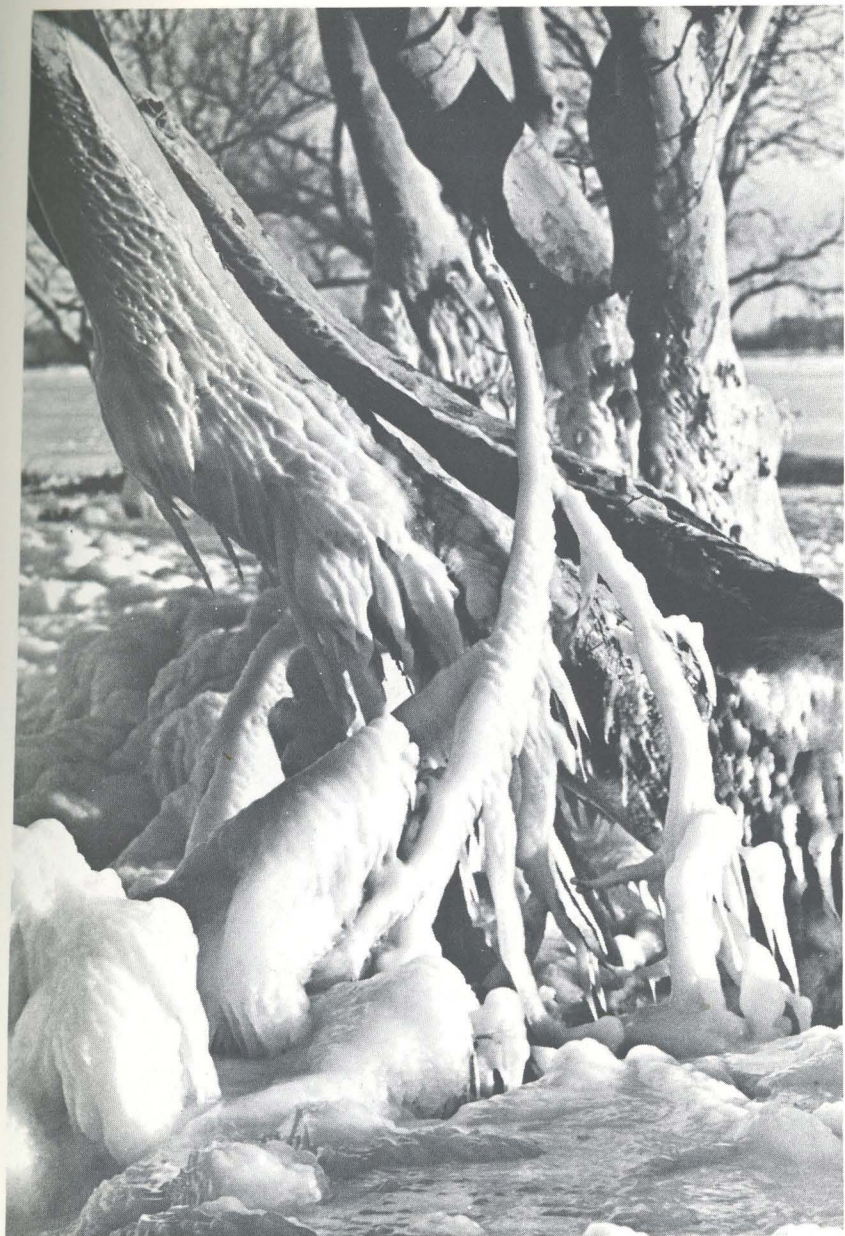
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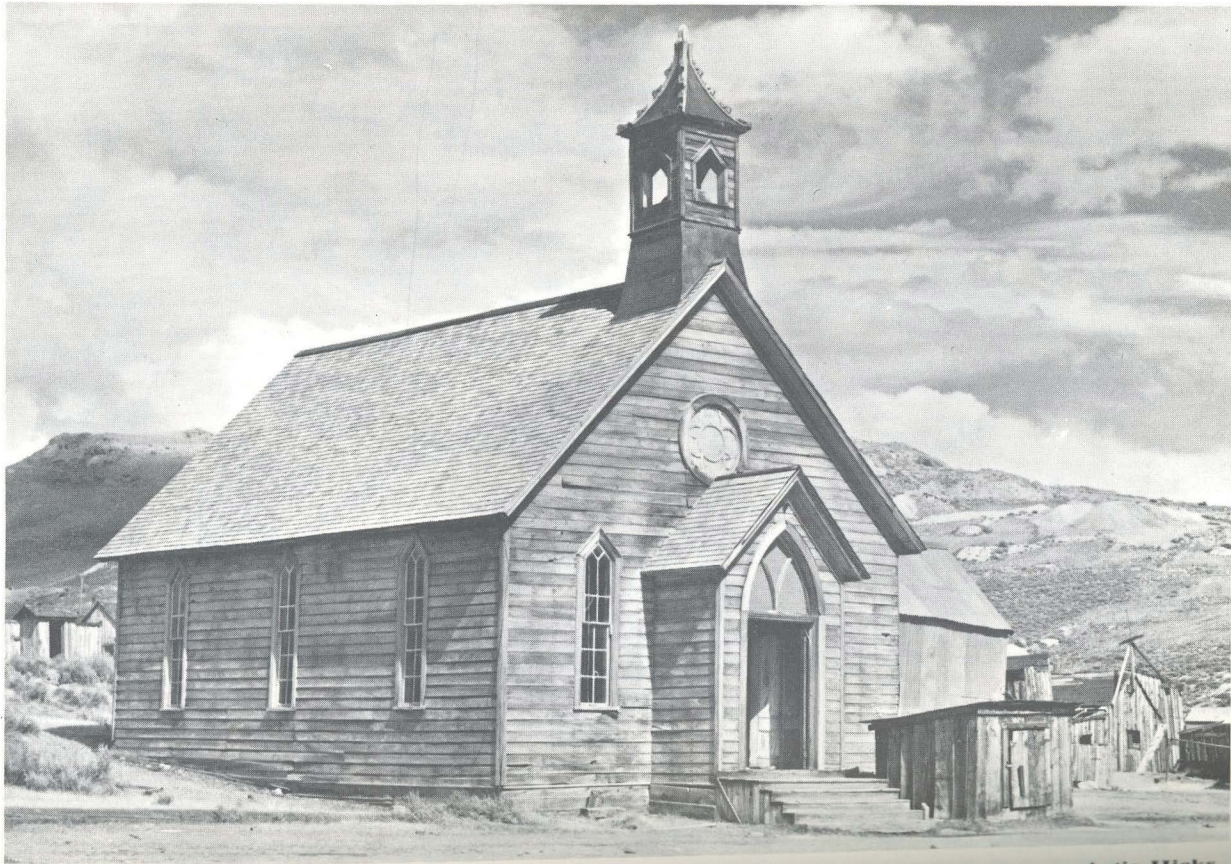
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— Pat Payne



Bodie, California

— Artie Hicks

Evangeline In The Moonlight

In a church garden
Surrounded by live oaks
And tombs of friends and others,
There, against the church wall,
Evangeline sits in bronze to watch
St. Martin's and the town
While she waits for her Acadian
Lover to come from afar.

“Oh, Evangeline!
Is love so good to you
That you will wait
Until the church walls fall?
Are the oak's green and acorn joys
So pleasing that you rest long hours in
Its shade listening to it sing?
Is the bright moon
So soothing for you that you
Can ignore the separation
Until he comes to shine
For you on a sunbright day
In the oak's cool shade?

“Oh, Evangeline!
Sit there placidly
Offering your self's patience
To the moon and to lovers
Shedding tears in their separation.”

— Richard Rouillard
June 1982

Trusting

Like a spider —
I've woven my web.
Each thread represents trust:
Delicate, flexible, but fragile.
A web of trust.
Sever the threads —
Surely I'll lose my orbit
And wander off into space.

—Lubayna Fawcett
29 September 1984

Anesthetic

Admiring your picture,
I recall the feeling of loving you.
Soon my face becomes wet,
tears acting like an anesthetic,
numbing the pain of our break-up.

— **Vicky Tartaglia**

Butterfly

Chasing all goodness
Bitter and sweet across time
Butterfly poet

— **Sarita Hines**
6 March 1985

You

I wish it would rain.

I'd love to walk in the rain and feel the droplets falling
upon my face.

I'd love to make love to you lying beside a fireplace
and listening to the rain.

In the winter, while the earth is covered with snow,
I'd like to throw snowballs at you and run with you through
the powdered rain.

In the spring, as the rain gently caresses the green grass
and the fresh new flowers,

I'd like to take your hand and walk with you down some quiet path.

In the summer I'd like for our hearts to feel the warmth
of our bodies and be cooled by a much-needed rain.

But . . .

It is autumn, my favorite time of the year, and I'm walking here
in this empty park with only the sound of the leaves
to break my solitude.

The trees should be ashamed of their nakedness, but they glare
boldly down at me.

I wish it would rain so rainfall would mix with the warmth
of my tears and thunder would roar as I scream!

I wish you were here so I could tell you I love you . . .



South Canadian

(For J.U.)

The cars drive through the sun.
Their shadows flash across my face.
I think, "Who'll be the one
to fill the heart of this empty place?"

There's water under the winter sand.
The river weaves through this wasteland
DAMNED!

Night is coming soon.
The last few hours of daylight
paint the sky the
colour
of your
hair.

White rose suckles at your breast;
forgive me if I come too near.
Sing a prayer for me, I'll do the rest;
I'll think of you when I am here.

— **Lance Dannan Bresee**

The Last Mile To Altus

Words form a cacophony
while oozing out of the T.V.
We're all trying to be free
planting our new seed.

let me dream tonight
tomorrow's fine
the aftermath of doing time;
turn me out and I'm alone
never to reach home

I hear your name from silent eyes.
I know your face, that's no surprise,
It's burned on my eyes
burned in the lines
burning my eyes.

The car was burning by the side of
the road. The police could find
no cause for the accident.

— **Lance Dannon Bresee**

One Burning Match

The city's heartbeat grows muffled,
outside,
and the street lights dazzle
with neon brilliance.

I sit alone in a coffee house —
“Ten minutes to closing . . .”
Where to next? Who cares — just don't stop.
If you stop you die.

The light overhead sways back
and forth, by a greasy airduct
on the ceiling.

My shadows fall across the table,
and I talk.
“Did you hear Marvin Gaye died last night?”
No answer.

I scream —
“Did you hear! Did you hear!”
The light sways back, silently, and forth.
My shadows still say nothing.

— Thomas Fahey

1983:
Marine casualties
in Beirut

Uncle Sam's tomcats
official observers de-
clawed and castrated.

— G.K. Williams,
Oxford,
September 1983

1.

jogging thought

character what you
are Monday morning running
against a cold wind.

2.

survivor status

a mixed blessing
others — friends — had to die for
me to qualify.

— **G.K. Williams,**
London,
8 December 1982

Journey Beyond Time

The soul navigates
through treacherous climes
and reveals
direction of thought.

We must become
pilots of Destiny
before we can see
beyond the horizon.

Take flight into oblivion
and do not regret your wings —
there are those at ground-zero
who would willingly trade
their earth-bound feet.

Be glorious as you soar,
for there are eyes
upon you,
measuring the distance
between you and the Sun . . .

— **Wanda Lea Brayton**
12 July 1982



Young Buddhist Monk — China

— L. J. "Pete" James

A Fragment

If memories were like crabapple blossoms, they would shine pink against a blue sky, fade quickly, die, and float to oblivion on the gentlest wind.

But memories are like the roots, sometimes active, sometimes dormant, nurtured through Psyche's winters by the sap of human touches. Our memories spring with the spring.

— **Richard Rouillard**
18 April 1984

Thoughts From *The Notebooks Of Etienne Suson* . . .

Beauty is in the heart of the beholder.

Every lover loves someone. (Forgive my misquoting “Everybody loves a lover,” for this is untrue. Believe me. I know.)

Living may be hazardous to your health. (If it isn’t, you must lead a very *dull* life.)

Silence is leaden.

The key to good dancing is not simply to listen to the music, but to be *one* with the music.

Music can be used as a fine tuning device to determine one’s moods. It’s doubtful that it will completely change an unwanted mood, but it can help.

Never say goodbye to someone you love. Say *au revoir*, see you soon, etc. Goodbye is much too finite . . .

Problems never, but never, occur singularly; they always happen in large groups.

How content a man is with his life may be concluded by noticing his concept of time. If, to him, the day is long, he is unhappy. If the day is short, then he is satisfied.

A friend once told me, “Where you are is where it’s at.”
Something to think about, to be sure.

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A Classic Film: *Casablanca*

Palm trees sway, ceiling fans hum, and a deep, black, voice croons out the words to "As Time Goes By." This is the legendary *Casablanca*. Based on a play by Murray Burnett and Joan Allison, the 1943 film stars Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman.

French Morocco in 1941 is the setting for the story of a man's struggle between love and honor, between commitment and neutrality.

Bogart plays Rick Blain, a former mercenary for the loyalists in Spain and an arms salesman to Ethiopia. Rick says he doesn't stick his neck out for anyone; however, his past involvements label him a hopeless idealist. As the proprietor of a café-piano bar, Rick comes into contact with people from all over war-torn Europe who are waiting for exit visas to America. Ilsa, Rick's long lost lover (Ingrid Bergman), arrives in Casablanca. She is described as the most beautiful woman in Europe, and Bergman is perfectly suited for the role. Ilsa is married to a Czech freedom fighter (Paul Henreid), who has taught her the value of honor, but she is still in love with Rick; and the story's struggle keeps us wondering if Rick will claim the woman he loves, lose her a second time, or if he will ultimately choose a higher ideal.

Humphrey Bogart as the enigmatic Rick is worthy of the academy award he received for his performance. He delivers his lines expertly, going from aloof and dry, to heart-breaking passion with ease. In one scene Rick is asked what brought him to Morocco. "My health," he says. "I came here for the waters." "Waters, what waters?" his friend retorts. "We're in the desert!" "I was misinformed" is the reply.

Bergman is a natural for the part of Ilsa. Her facial expressions are stunning, and her eyes depict beautifully the mental anguish of her character.

Peter Lorre plays the quintessential “bad guy” Ugate — whining and wringing his hands like a cornered rat.

By today’s standards, the movie’s few special effects are mediocre, and the set unrealistic. In one scene Rick and Ilsa are driving down a Paris street in an obviously phony car with a poorly painted Arc de Triomphe backdrop. However, Director Michael Curtiz’ use of lighting is remarkable. His dramatic shadows and his sudden flashes of light make the black and white film more exciting than it would have been in color.

Casablanca’s story had long been a mystery to me; but forty years after World War II the story’s moral conflicts are still pertinent, and the stars’ performances are still brilliant.

— Nancy Zynda



Pottery

— Neal Bloomfield



Portrait Of An Artist:
A Biography Of Georgia O'Keeffe
By
Laurie Lisle

If you've ever stood at a window and wondered at the beauty of a rainstorm; if you've ever climbed a rocky hillock and stooped to touch red earth or a small cactus; if you've ever watched a foaming, frothy, just-for-a-half-a-day torrent fill an arroyo; if you've ever captured a smooth, black stone and carried it in your pocket for a time just because; if you've ever turned to look again at a gaunt, tortured cedar holding its own against a desert landscape, you'll like this book. That stubborn, spirited part of Georgia O'Keeffe that became one with the New Mexico hills comes across fully as strongly as O'Keeffe, the artist.

Portrait Of An Artist paints an almost painfully meticulous picture of America's foremost woman artist, Georgia O'Keeffe. Lisle contacted O'Keeffe, seeking her consent and collaboration in working on a biography. In her typical curt style, O'Keeffe rejected the idea but told Lisle "You are welcome to what you find." As you read the book, you come to realize what a concession that was, coming from this sensitive, proud, intelligent, stubborn, irascible, spirited, extremely gifted woman who has valued her freedom and her compulsion to create more than any society-imposed convention.

Born in 1887 in Wisconsin, Georgia O'Keeffe was a daughter of the land and always felt that kinship. The author would have us believe that O'Keeffe was precocious enough to be aware of and able to remember her surroundings and to have feelings of jealousy before she was one year old. Perhaps. However, the first chapters of this book are filled with speculation, making suspect the

credibility of some of Lisle's ideas about O'Keeffe's childhood. It is true that she was given a regal bearing and sense of self-worth by a mother of aristocratic lineage. Her striking features made her a favorite model for the portrait students at her art schools. For one who now is so private a person and who cares little for the public display of her art, she was extraordinarily popular with her classmates.

A quiet child, often alone by choice, Georgia soon learned to have things her own way and did not change as she grew older. As to fashion (braided hair, ribbons, and lacy dress), whatever the other girls did, she did not. She adopted the wearing of black clothing with touches of white, simple and plain, and did not deviate until she was in her nineties. She needed no one to entertain her, saying later, "I've never been bored." This inner strength was to sustain her and become the perfectionist attitude that drove her to paint and repaint a subject until she felt it satisfactorily expressed her emotions.

Resisting the urge to go to Paris that seemed to overwhelm all musicians, composers, architects, writers, and painters in the early 1900's, Georgia O'Keeffe preferred instead to remain in the United States and feel her way through her emotions to her own style of expression. "Not me," she stated firmly. "I had things to do in my own country." In 1953, she relented and visited Europe for the first time; and, thereafter, she traveled regularly and with much pleasure, bringing touches of the Orient and Hawaii into her painting.

O'Keeffe was a dedicated teacher of art for some years, inspiring her pupils to think in a different manner. For a time she taught in Texas, and it was there she became aware of the beauty of the plains country and the power of nature. There began her life-long love affair with the prairies. Lisle writes, "She speaks of the plains as her spiritual home." Oklahomans can understand as Lisle continues, "That was her country . . . with terrible winds

and a wonderful emptiness." There, too, her rebel, non-nonsense ways got her into trouble with school administrators more than once. Her refusal to use a controversial textbook presaged her quarrel with society — a quarrel that continued for most of her life. Finally, after several years of sporadically seeing and corresponding with Alfred Stieglitz, the commanding and demanding master of photography and exhibitor of avant-garde paintings, she gave up teaching and moved to New York City to be with this man, who became her inspiration to devote all her time to painting.

Quoting conversations with O'Keeffe's friends and using excerpts from her letters, the author has recounted in great detail every period of the artist's life: every showing of her paintings, her marriage to Stieglitz, her growth into a mature artist. The periods often overlap to tell a bit more about Stieglitz and other artists who moved through her life.

In 1917 O'Keeffe and her sister had stopped in Santa Fé on their way home from Colorado. It was then that she fell under the spell of northern New Mexico's environment. She later said that she "loved it immediately. From then on I was always on my way back." Disenchanted with New York City, she spent her summers in New Mexico and returned to the city in the winters to be with her husband until his death.

In this harsh country O'Keeffe, who sees "blue sky against green trees" and who wants "to paint in terms of my own thinking and feeling," has done her best work. This is where she sat on the rooftop to watch a moonrise, to see the shadows cradle hills and play deftly along rocky arroyos. This is where she lived simply, preferring black dresses and stark white or grayed walls in her home so there would be no distraction from her work. Her exterior was subdued, but "she thought in color the way others thought in words." Her canvases are her brilliantly colored thoughts. Her thinking is abstract; she is unable to

put her emotions into words — she must paint them. That, you will find, is her reason for painting — to put on canvas, as a writer uses words, her feelings about what she sees. A color functions as a word, a phrase, an expression. She once remarked about a certain picture she had painted, “That isn’t what I wanted.”

“What did you want?”

“Well, it wasn’t that.”

O’Keeffe’s philosophy is as interesting as her painting:

I don’t see why we ever think of what others think of what we do — no matter who they are — isn’t it enough just to express yourself?

I know I’m unreasonable about people but there are so many wonderful people whom I can’t take time to know.

Why paint something if you don’t love it?

I know what I’m going to do before I begin and if there’s nothing in my head, I do nothing.

Tulips so often die beautifully.

Maybe one takes one’s own world along and cannot see anything else.

It [a certain mountain] belongs to me. God told me if I painted it enough, I could have it.

I can’t understand people who want something badly but don’t grab for it. I grabbed.

In the magnificent fierce morning of New Mexico, one sprang awake, a new part of the soul woke up suddenly.

Lisle wrote that O’Keeffe “lived each moment to the fullest — not yesterday or today, but right now — aware precisely of everything about her, deliberate in her actions.”

The discerning reader of *Portrait Of An Artist* will forgive the mediocre writing and the peripatetic style of the first three chapters; they deal speculatively with the fun-loving young O'Keeffe. It's worth wading through them to get to the part which tells of the craggy hills and desert so dearly loved by the mature artist, O'Keeffe.

— **Naomi Christofferson**
28 February 1985



Rice Planting — China

— L. J. “Pete” James

Lines Written In October

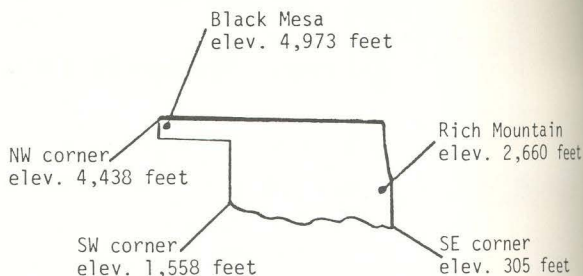
Wander among cerulean skies
Whose clouds the heart disproves
Whose shadow may mock sweet illusion
And make pause within each journey taken
Into his eyes.

Precious escape within a misled dream —
That which I sought to regain
Now reclaimed; then stolen back again.
Steal away now with me
Beyond clouds
After shadow
Past each pause.
Possess just one more journey
Into cerulean eyes.

— **Karol Kourtis**
October 1984

Ode To Rich Mountain

When the Choctaws talk from the top of Rich Mountain, you have to go all the way to the panhandle to find anywhere in Oklahoma where anyone can do any taller talking. Rich Mountain is 2,660 feet high, whereas parts of the panhandle, and all the rest of Oklahoma, lie below 2,660 feet.



Once, the 4,438 foot northwestern corner boys tried to take the floor, figuring they had plenty enough feet over the Choctaws to have a taller talk. But the 4,973 foot obstruction of Black Mesa caused them to be poorly heard, and that, and the south wind blowing in favor of the Choctaws, caused the Choctaw talk to be more clearly heard over more of Oklahoma during the whole of the time that the 4,438 foot northwestern corner boys tried to hold the floor.

Once, the 1,558 foot southwestern corner boys tried to take the floor. But they came up 1,102 feet short.

Once, the 305 foot southeastern corner boys claimed that they had borrowed 2,356 feet from Black Mesa, and with that claim competed for the floor, claiming that Black Mesa had been reduced to 2,617 feet, thereby unobstructing much of the talk of the 4,438 foot northwestern corner boys, which was now giving the Choctaw talk enough competition from the northwestern corner to give the southeastern corner boys a say. But the northwestern corner boys continued to be poorly heard, and the south wind continued to blow in favor of the Choctaws, and the southeastern corner boys came up 2,355 feet short. And when the Choctaws talk from the 2,660 foot top of Rich Mountain, you have to go all the way to the panhandle to find anywhere in Oklahoma where anyone can do any taller talking.

noon break

**lunch and a pint
in Turf Tavern's garden**

**chuckin' crusts
to local sparrows**

clustered chatterin'

beneath New College wall

**a world away
a decade past**

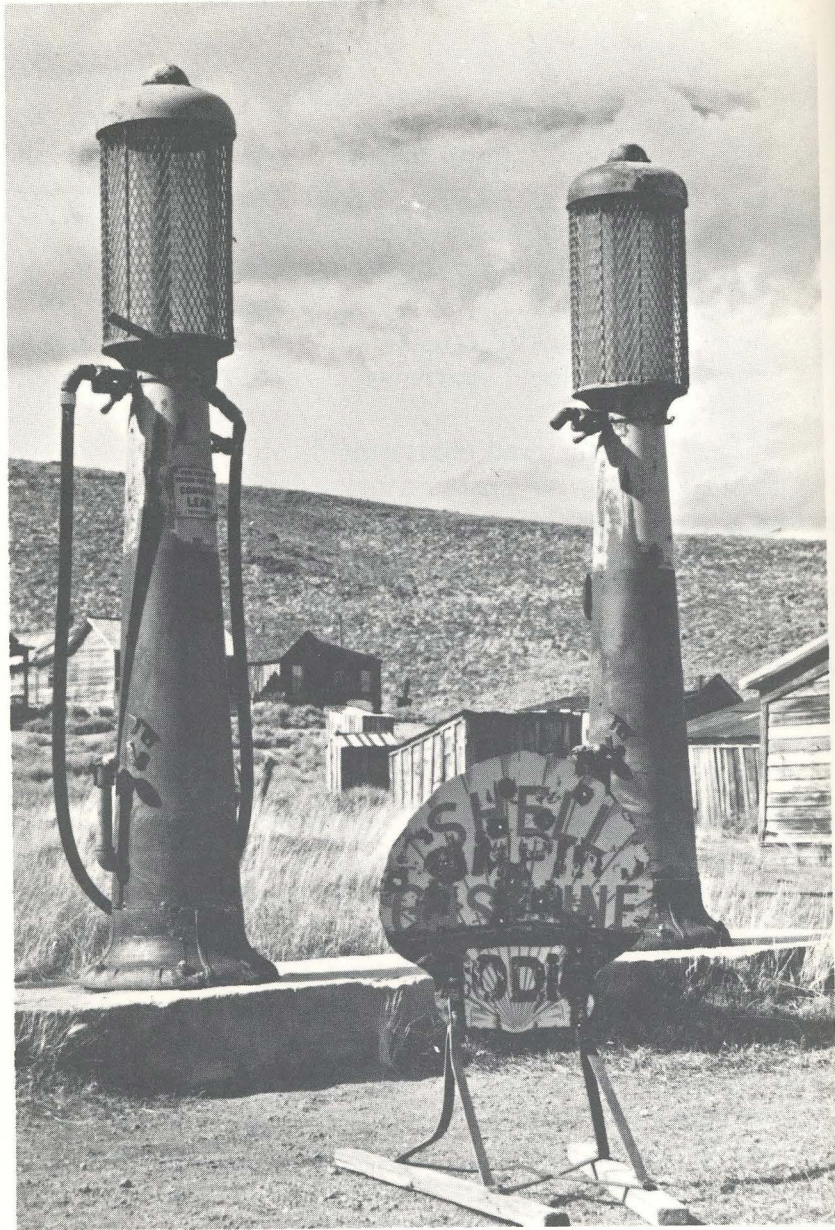
**armor columns
halted for chow**

**crews shirtless
rations warmin'**

and those children

beside the Thang Binh trail.

**— G.K. Williams
Oxford
25 September 1981**



Bodie, California

— Artie Hicks

Coming Home

She started the motor of her blue, dented, sunbleached Chevy and carefully backed out of the parking space. It always took a while for the interior of the car to warm up, so she left her gloves on while she concentrated on the rush-hour traffic and cautiously made her way to the highway. By the time she reached the on-ramp to the throughway, she could feel the heat; and once on the highway, she managed to take the gloves off, one at a time, by carefully getting hold of the tip of each glove with her teeth and sliding her hand out of the shell. Friday, she thought. Another day and week are over. Her body felt tired, but her spirit soared. She felt good about herself. She looked into the rear-view mirror to check the traffic, but the rush hour onrush had thinned, so she relaxed and let her thoughts wander while her hands automatically guided the car home.

I have grown, she thought with a smile, grown from a childish, dependent wife into a strong adult. The amazing thing was not the growth itself but that it had happened all within the last year, when she was forty-four years old.

It had started when her youngest child had moved out. For weeks she had felt unexplainably lost. She had moped around the house, rearranging the furniture again and again, cleaning already clean cabinets until she realized that the housework was just a filling of her time. "Why am I so unhappy?" she had thought. "What is wrong with me?" The answer had come with such power that it had stunned her: all my reasons for being are gone!

For years her days had been filled, being a wife and mother. But with the children gone, just being a wife wasn't enough. "Who am I?" she had asked herself. "Mother? Wife? Homemaker? Am I anyone with value of my own right, outside the family? I have roles, always roles. Who am I? I don't know, I don't know!" Her soul screamed, because the emptiness frightened her. Then there was silence.

She remembered even now how she had sat on the brown chair in the kitchen, shaking, staring at the coffee cup on the table in front of her. She had sat there for a long time. When her husband had come home, she had asked him, "Who am I?" And, jovially, he had answered, "You are my love, my wife, the mother of our children!" He had not understood why the fear and confusion in her eyes would not go away. She had felt alone, horribly alone.

That night sleep did not come. She had felt like a hunted, cornered animal — scared and threatened. In the dark she was waiting. Passively, miserably waiting. Waiting for someone to give her answers to questions she, seemingly, could not answer herself. And then the realization had hit her that all her life she had been waiting, always waiting for someone else to act. She had felt paralyzed. She had thought she might never breathe again. In these moments of terror there came slowly from deep within her the recognition that an answer would never come from anyone but herself. "Only I myself can give the answer I'm searching for," she had thought. "I am the only authority over me!"

Ever so slowly in those long, lonely hours of that night she had started to create herself. Listening to the emotions, questions and feelings within, she had begun to make a being that would finally be real. She had painfully become a person, a self. Before exhaustion had completely overcome her, she was born again, not as a role but as a human being.

The consequences of that night changed her future. When she told her husband that she would find work outside the home, he had been annoyed. "Who is going to keep the house clean? Who is going to make my dinner?" "We both will," she had answered, and she again smiled, remembering the shock on his face.

Work away from home was gratifying. "I can do it!" she had thought; "I can stand on my own!" The money she earned had given her an exhilaration never felt before. In the past her husband had given her household money, but for

anything extra, anything for herself, she had to ask. Not that he ever withheld it, but it had been humiliating and degrading to have to ask. She now realized what fear had come out of that dependency, fear of being financially abandoned.

The money she earned changed that. Slowly her confidence in herself had grown, until at last she had become emotionally strong, psychologically independent.

She laughed out loud, remembering how hard her husband had tried to push her back into a role. "Darling, you don't really like to work; why don't you just stay home!"

"What do you think I've been doing all those years?" she had answered him. "Did you really believe that staying home was freedom from working? I've labored from six to ten, seven days a week, year after year. More than full-time work and full-time parenting, I got full-time blame when things went wrong!"

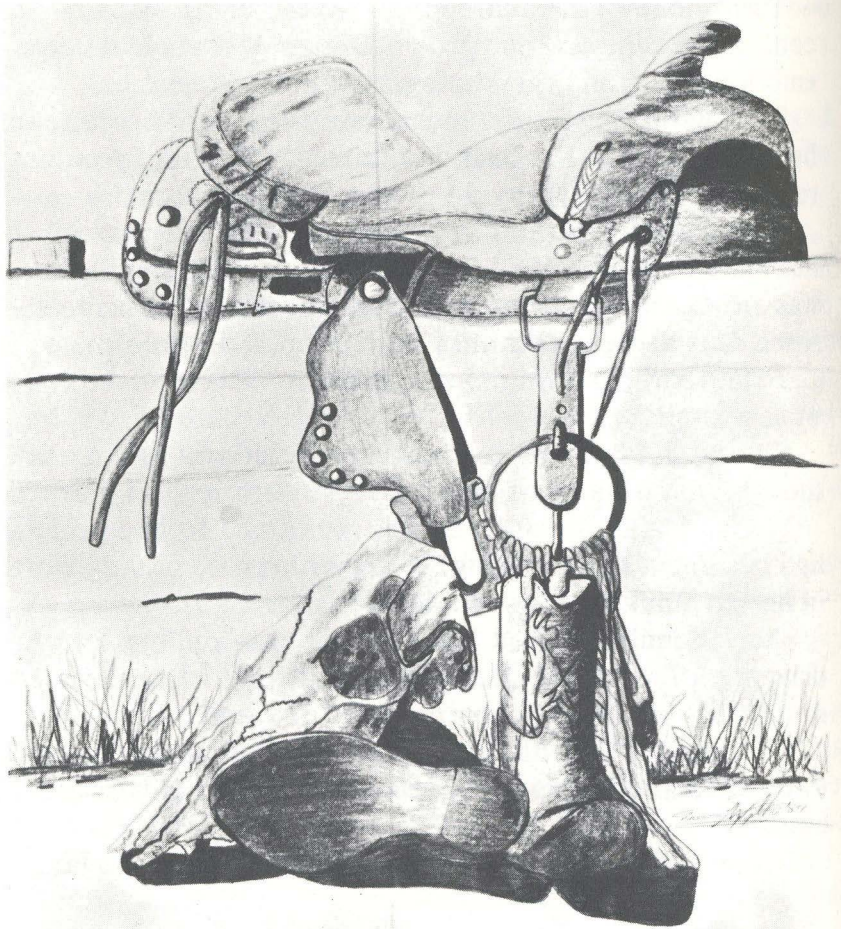
No, he had never realized her position, never really thought about her problems, always taken her for granted.

Yes, she had grown during the past year. In one year she had become a human being: aware of herself, finding worth in herself, making her own decisions.

She suddenly realized that her car was pulling into her driveway. She turned the car key and listened to the dying roar of the motor. "Who are you?" it seemed to ask.

"I'm Karen," she thought. "Woman, human being, glad to be alive and loving every second of it. I'm alive and I'm home."

Gently she opened the car door and went into the house.



— Tammy Watkins



— Kent Johnson

The Memory Writer

It came in today — the new machine. It's supposed to be like the old-fashioned lie detector, I guess, because we will all have to use it to keep our jobs. It will tell the Bosses all kinds of things about us that even we ourselves do not remember. That somehow seems unfair to me: to be held accountable for things I don't recall in my past. But those are the new rules; if the Bosses find anything morally objectionable in our past, out the door we go.

Needless to say, everyone in the office is full of dread. Our hands sweat as we come in the door in the morning; by noon, our feet are cold and our hands tremble. Will it be our turn sometime today? Those who have had to use the machine and are still here have very little to say. They behave as though they are . . . are what? . . . shamed perhaps? I'm not sure, but no one has returned from the machine with good, happy feelings. What could be there in the past of the friends at work that is so dismaying? For that matter, what about those who are no longer among us? Good heavens, what could they have done? Perhaps it is better that I don't know.

But then, why does anyone need to know the intricate details of our past? We do our jobs today — what do our yesterdays have to do with our todays? I know, I know, the child is father of the man, but does not the man that we are tell about the child that we were? Who are the Bosses anyway, to determine the rights and wrongs of our lives, to look so coldly, so dispassionately at the choices we made? Who made them the judges of our past? For this kind of test, we need daily preparation from the day we are born. Who can really pass such a test?

Today, it is my turn. I have thought so long about this that I guess I am no longer afraid. I cannot defend the things I have done in the past that I knew were wrong when I did them; and those that I did unknowingly, well, I cannot condemn myself for those though I can be heartily sorry. Perhaps the Bosses will find room in their hearts to condemn me for those things as well; but if they do, I feel that that would be the judgment on them and not on me. Yes, I am able to face my past and the things that I will find out today. When I put my hands on the memory writer, I cannot be afraid for what I will uncover. I will return from this test with satisfied feelings if not good, happy ones, for I am satisfied with my life, both past and present, and not even the Bosses can take that from me. I am . . . yes, I guess that's all that can be said: I am.

— Cara Diehl

Empty Pages

Too many empty pages
Are tattooed on my walls.
You've turned my time to footsteps
And left me halls to fill.
The window has grown dusty
Mist infiltrates my day.
The ledge won't hold your flowers
And shadows walk the sill.
Time is had for having.
My entry has no key.
The cracks in my foundation
Are the hinges of your will.

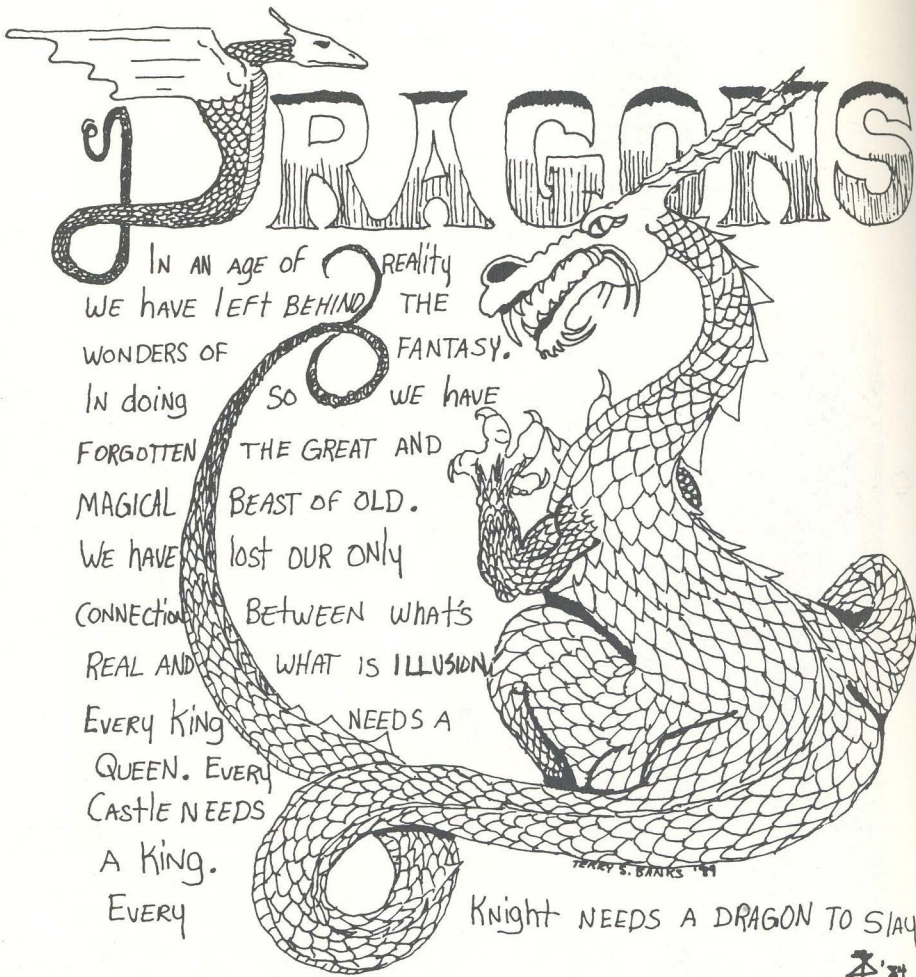
— **Neal Risenhoover**
30 January 1985



Old German Castle

— Neal Risenhoover

DRAGONS



IN AN AGE OF REALITY
WE HAVE LEFT BEHIND THE
WONDERS OF FANTASY.
IN DOING SO WE HAVE
FORGOTTEN THE GREAT AND
MAGICAL BEAST OF OLD.
WE HAVE LOST OUR ONLY
CONNECTION BETWEEN WHAT'S
REAL AND WHAT IS ILLUSION.
EVERY KING NEEDS A
QUEEN. EVERY
CASTLE NEEDS
A KING.
EVERY

KNIGHT NEEDS A DRAGON TO SLAY!

本 24

Cervantes' creation of Don Quixote has resulted in one man's contribution to all the lovers of the world of literature. Cervantes' introduction of this particular form of story-telling entertainment provided a model for the novel as we know it today. The author's keen ability, wit, and genius are portrayed in Don Quixote's abstract ideology combined with Sancho's realism as the author allows his characters to journey from one episodic adventure to another.

Establishing no criteria for moral judgment, Cervantes' narration is clearly objective, thus allowing the slightly-mad Knight and his Squire a free rein in this picaresque novel to "rectify, right and redress" the wrongs of their world as they see them. And, in spite of occasional bouts of bedlam and chaos, Cervantes manages to bring this odd couple full circle in a process of growing, learning, and maturing.

Our introduction to the character of Don Quixote tells us he was "one of those gentlemen who consumes three-quarters of his income . . . the remainder [being] spent on velvet breeches, and slippers of the same stuff for holidays, and a suit of good, honest homespun for weekdays . . . [He was] gaunt-featured, an early riser and a devotee of the chase." (Part One, p. 15) The fact that Don Quixote is past his prime does not deter this brave, somewhat insane Spaniard. For example, his battle with the windmills is an act of absolute bravery and an endorsement of his willingness to "enter into fierce and unequal battle with them . . . one knight alone attacks you!" (VII, p. 43).

This delightful hero will attack anything or anyone that, to him, represents wickedness, especially if directed at "maidens, widows, orphans or distressed persons," social injustice, or untruth. (VIII, p. 56) Don Quixote is the epitome of courage. And, though few battles are won in his attempt to reform the world, he appears to be satisfied with the effort.

The enlistment of Sancho Panza adds a new dimension to the narrative and brings a parallel to Don Quixote's characterization. By comparison, Sancho is an ignorant but practical peasant who is initially portrayed as an absolute pacifist. Though at first Sancho refuses to participate in Don Quixote's battles and is frequently found standing on a "hillock watching his master's mad escapade, and tearing his beard and cursing the unlucky hour and moment when he first met him" (XI, p. 73), Sancho also stands ready to provide comfort and care for the "bruised and belaboured" aging warrior. (VI, p. 39) Sancho's characterization provides a degree of reality and sanity that Don Quixote usually ignores as the two of them sally off in search of another confrontation with evil-doers. During this period of his life, Sancho begins a time of enlightenment and education as he struggles to follow in Don Quixote's footsteps. Their markedly different personalities begin to merge and blend as their relationship grows.

Cervantes' *Don Quixote* would appeal to anyone at any age in life; and as Aubrey Bell asserts, the novel would probably be enjoyed if read three times in the course of a lifetime. *Don Quixote* will appeal to idealistic youth who dream of improvement through change from one social structure to another. Then the book can be enjoyed, again, during a reader's mature years, when the need for change is still acknowledged, but less so due to the individual's growing somewhat lethargic and mellowing with the years. Finally, later on, it should be read simply to recall an old friend and watch once more, in our mind's eye, that tall, lanky and lean figure atop Rosinante — the Gentle Knight able to ignite our imagination one last time!

References in this review are to *Don Quixote of La Mancha*, by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, translated and edited with an introduction by Walter Starkie, New American Library, 1957.

— Donna Wisdom
March 1985

Life Here

There must be more
While living here
Than closed doors
And poisoned air.
Robot food
Made of chemicals.
Plastic wood
That kills the termites.
Crowded days
And lonely nights.
Songs without meanings,
And love without feelings.
Artificial sun.
Artificial rain.
They have taken away the fun.
Give it back to me again!
Mother Nature
Is the latest victim of
Cold blooded murder.
Even she can't find love.
There must be more
While living here.
Give it back to me again!

— Betty Johnson

Dancer

Pinked dancers
in frilled leotards
whirl their endless pirouettes
across the floor.

Like most girls
I once wished to be
a ballerina.

How I envied
her satin shoes
and slim thighs,
classic eliteness
and rhythmic abandon.

To Stravinsky's
Firebird Suite

I would make
clumsy turns
around my room.

My black play leotard
became a tutu
rustling at my hips
as I kicked and bent.

Only a glance
in the full-length mirror
could make me believe
that this was just make-believe.

— Jana Cossairt

A butterfly feels no pain.
When caught it will
tear away from its
own wings,
falling to the ground
a writhing caterpillar
trying to fly
after its time.

— **Jana Cossairt**

What Is A Poem?

Is a poem a page full of words
With phrases, rhythms, and rhymes?
Is it a thought, a dream, or a feeling
that comes hand-in-hand with time?
Does it have meaning, or is it just “there”
When you dream of things to come?
Or — is it a question? Please tell me, my friend,
For my dreams are almost done.

— Angela Faulkner

A Poem

(To Angela)

“What is a poem?” you ask.
You set me at thought:
It’s easier to think, I think,
Of what it is not.

Does a poem need length or unity?
Must it be abstract,
Real, or imaginary,
Or simply based on fact?

A poem is versatility and clarity
And briefness of words,
Without rhyme or reason
Yet worth being heard.

A poem is someone’s way of saying
“I love you,” and
It’s someone else’s way of saying
“I love you, too.”

So, you ask, “What is a poem?”
Why don’t you see?
A poem is anything
You’d like it to be.

— **Janice Bates Faulkner**

First Love Ballet

Didn't we have a grand ol' time,
twirling and dancing and laughing —
to Mozart's theme,
to "Howdy Doody,"
and you didn't know
the difference, or care —
things were so simple then.

Now you dance to another tune,
a simple tune
enlarged by life —
and when you do your pirouette
I won't be there to grasp your hand
or catch you when you stumble.

There is no return
from that ethereal stance —
you dance to your own tune,
a new and old tune;
you dance
to the tune
of heartstrings.

— Janice Bates Faulkner

A Message Of Thanks

(For My Mother)

She was young then, slim of body
and fair of face.

Her red hair had not yet been
assaulted by the grey of age.

Only the hands showed signs of
poverty's punishment.

When you left her, she knew a fear
she had not yet imagined.

I was left to attend to her, and
I was as afraid as she.

We both should thank you, not
for your going,

But for the change in our lives
that forced closeness.

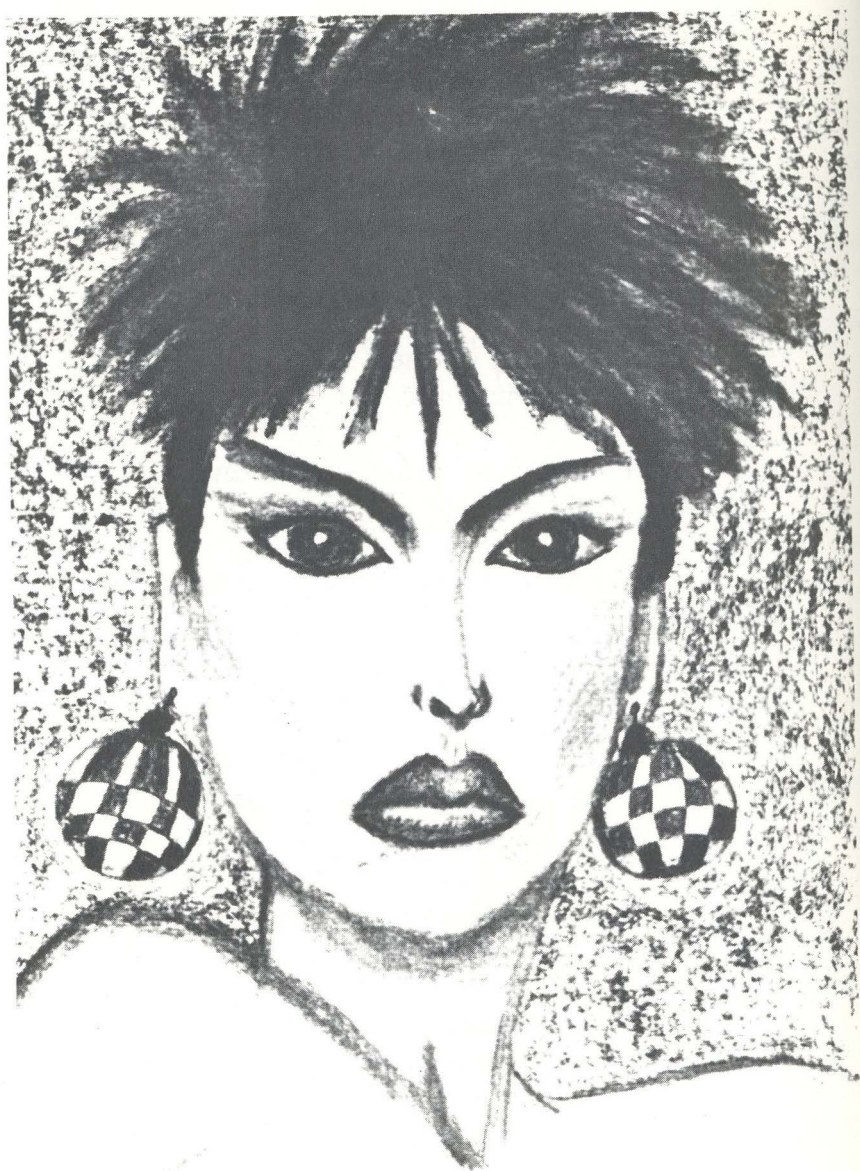
I got to watch her germination,
to me a kind of rebirth.

She had always been a seed
trying to split the soil.

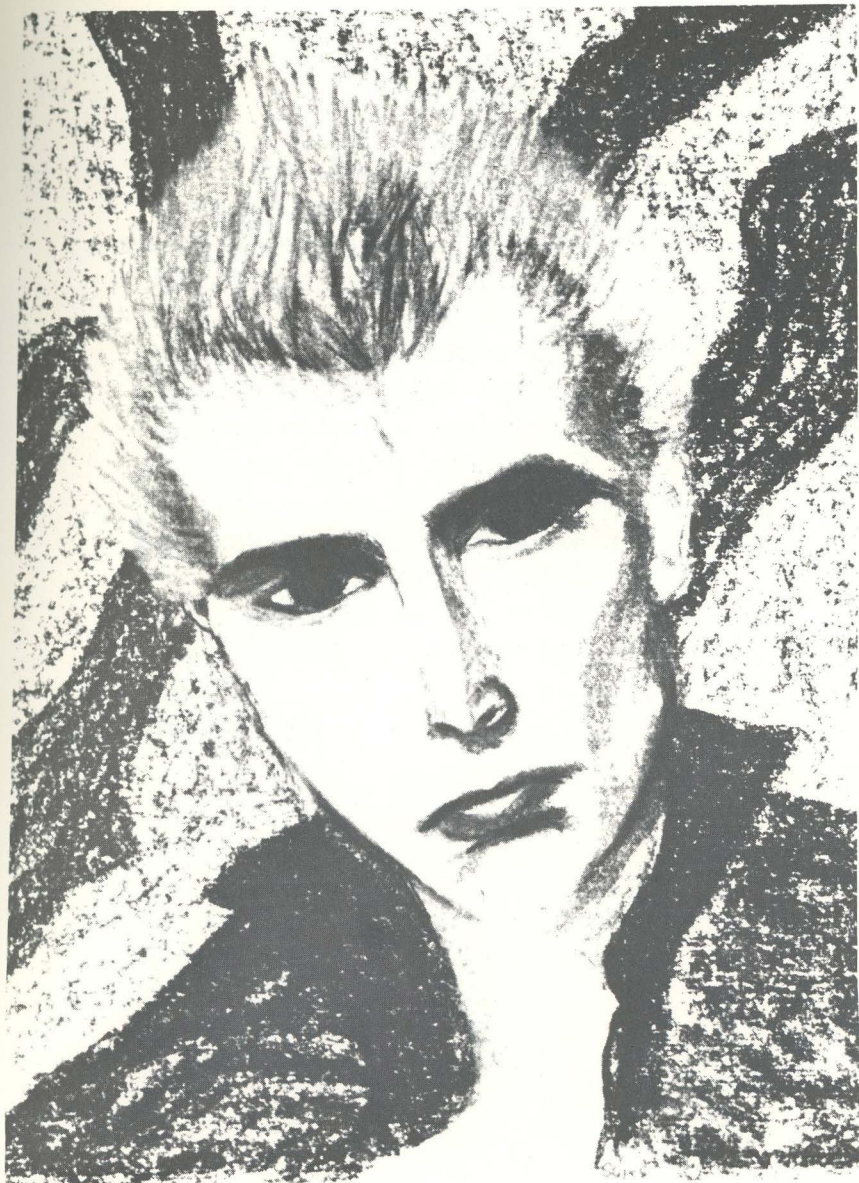
How she grew!
How she blossomed!

I wish you could know her now.

— Linda J. Myers



— Debra Stipes



— Debra Stipes

Heart Murmurs

I walked along the street today
and thought of country lanes.
The street was all clean-swept of leaves
by last night's first spring rains.

The cold street hurries raindrops on;
the lanes hold puddles long.
Gray streets are hurried in the morn.
Green lanes meander on.

Oh, would that I could be once more,
in fact, within my lane.
I'd shut my ear to siren song
and never leave again.

— Naomi Christofferson

Untitled

The deer waited at the edge of the woods,
Still, silent, dark-eyed, watching,
Not easily noticed from this distance.

I moved cautiously nearer the window.
An almost imperceptible lift of its head —
And it melted into the woods.

It waited there again, sniffing at the apple.
Careful not to track the snowy field,
I had gone the long way round.

Refusing my offering, it dipped its head
And was gone.

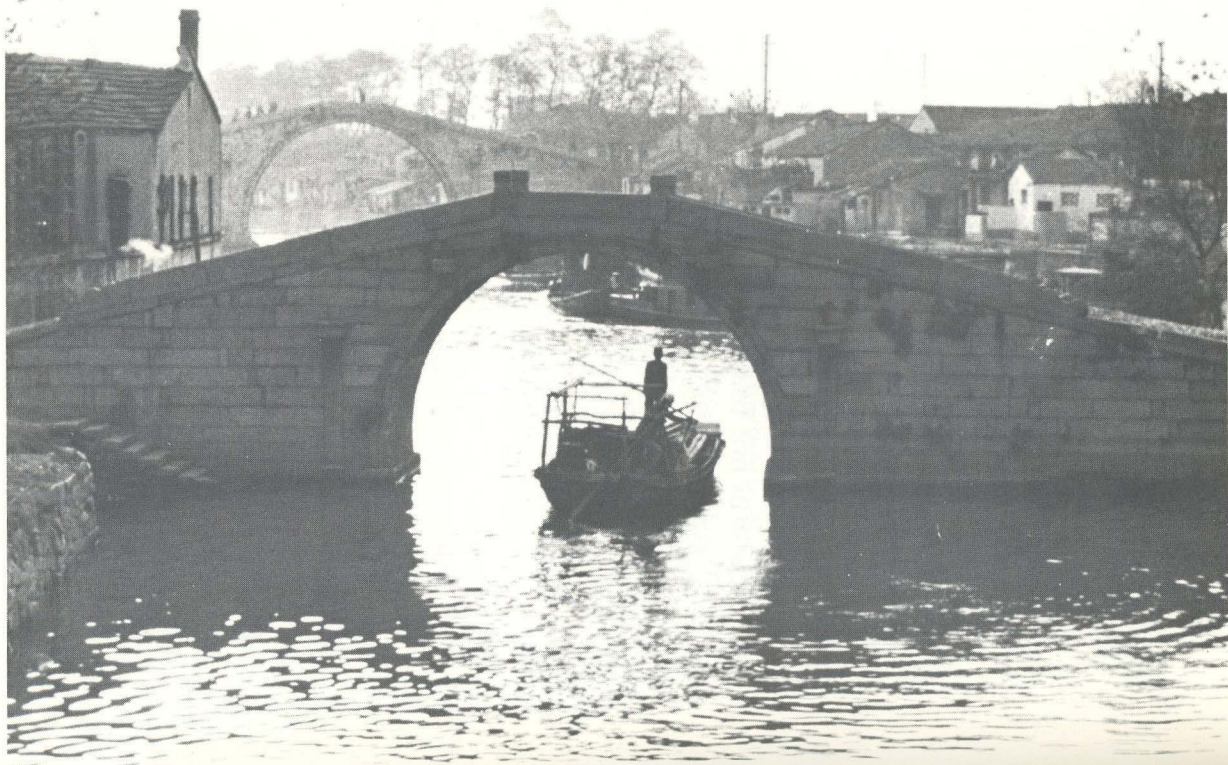
I offered again and again.

Across the dandelioned field I watched,
Always behind my window.

The deer, too, watched with luminous eyes,
Waiting for my movement
So it could fade away.

It comes no more to the edge of the woods.
I watch and wait behind my window.

— Naomi Christofferson



Grand Canal — China

— L. J. "Pete" James

It Is Saturday

It is Saturday

in America's heart:

there are green fields, a game,
white and blue shirted boys playing, shouting,
orange nets taut on the goals,
flags waving red at the corners.

The ball, hard driven by a mate, slaps his thigh,
skews away from the indifferent goal.

A shout across the soccer field,

Coach calling:

“Next time, Jerry, get out of the way.”

Not mean, the low chuckles of everyone
say that such things happen to each of us —
sometime.

Beyond his laughter,

his apology,

his game chagrin,

the fifteen year old's face is drawn

by another tension —

the terror of the Mad Cells

invading and filling his young blood with death.

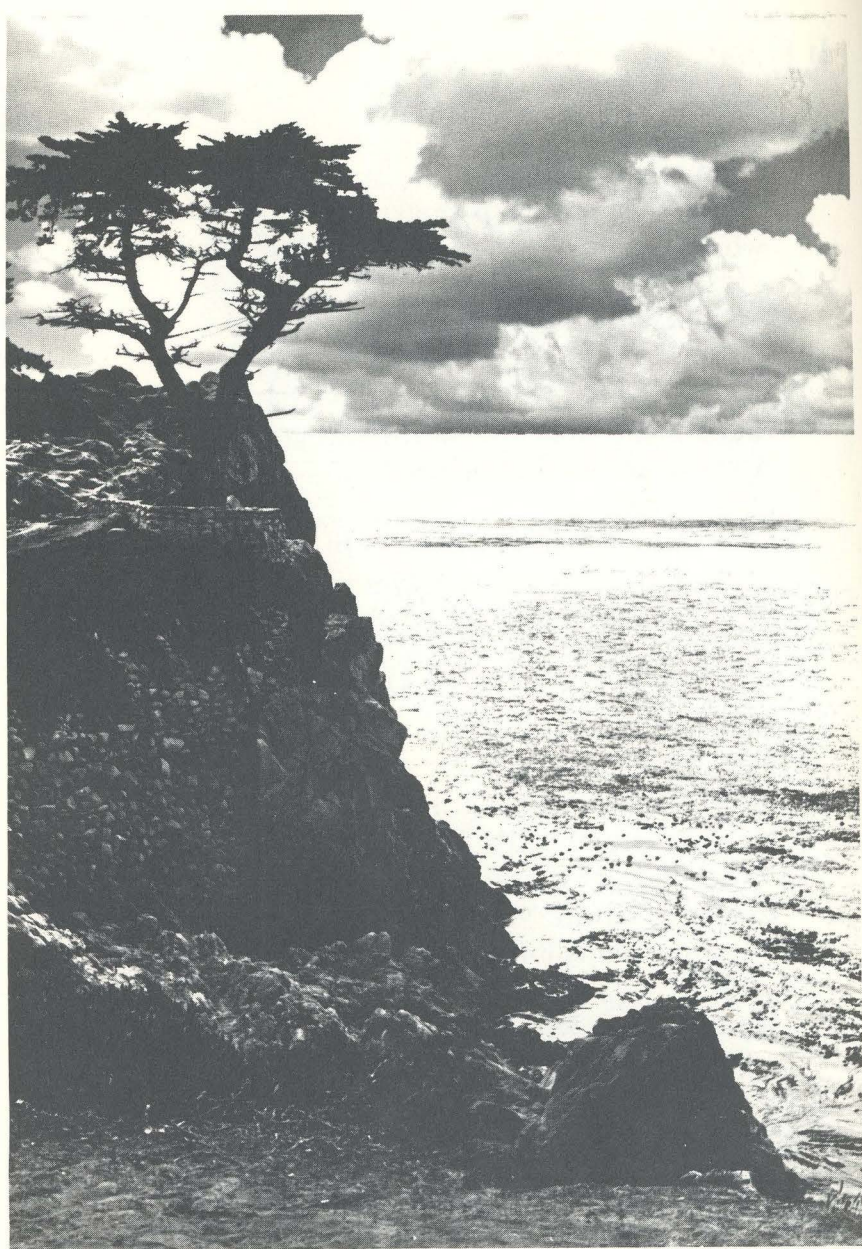
He calls out,

“I was watching the ball,

but I couldn't get out of its way.”

Saturday's saddest truth.

— Clay Randolph



California Coastline

— Artie Hicks