THE MITRE

1983-84
The Mitre

The Mitre is more than a tarnished tradition or keepsake of the past to be kept alive in the back pages of a year book. It is the voice and expression of writers, artists and photographers. It is with great pleasure that the staff assembled this year’s re-vitalized, independent publication. The Mitre is a literary and art magazine whose purpose is to showcase the accomplishments of students, ex-alumni and members of the community. I would like to thank all of the staff, writers, artists and supporters of the Mitre for making this year’s independent publication possible.

Steve Balkou

The Mitre - Staff

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and everyone from the Unfinished Poetry Workshop

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A poem by Wendi Hadd

FOR CODY

For you who watched the sun go down standing by my side smiling into the blinding light that was the sun and already planning to dance beneath the moon — this is all for you.

I asked you if you believed in God and you answered I must believe in someone so I’ll believe in you and falling stars both blaze quickly across my life.

You tossed a dime into the murky waters our forefathers had polluted beyond recognition and wished for me to find your way. Why wouldn’t you believe I followed you always?

I’m sorry if I disappointed you by stopping alongside the undesirables of my generation when you thought I would be/could be/ should be going places. I’m sorry for myself because I didn’t know the way.

I never did dance beneath the moon with you and now it’s too late if you can hear me as I watch the sun go down now I know you wanted to believe I believed in myself. It was you who blazed too quickly across my life, lighting up the world for a moment till I could see the beauty in the black earth. The beauty that turns the ponds into a wishing well.

Two poems by Karen Hornby

LOVE?

Once I stood trying to get a suntan through the window. Our bodies now lie stretched on the beach soaking in oil. You measure pleasure with your form fitting ruler. It contains big inches instead of little ones.

We are each other’s merchandise I’m your comfort, with warm milk to help you sleep at night; You are my entertainment, by memorizing the week-end paper’s guts.

We will stay this way until we no longer burn each other as we do...
MOTHER

I now feel like more of an extension,
Than a worldly individual.
Doesn't the saying go – as you grow older
You become your own self, an individual – ?
But as I grow and learn,
I realize I am simply a part of you.

We don’t need small talk, you set no rules.
And I abide by everyone of them.
You’ve read my diary without even putting on your glasses.
I’ve played it out for you everyday of my life.
You knew me before I recognized my reflection.
I’m behind by seventeen years, you’ve had quite a head start.

But I will learn, live out your years,
And soon we will be able to talk,
Replacing what we now send through our eyes.
You nurtured me, it’s my turn to feed you,
With my life.

FOR JAIME AND HEIDI

Of kites
the better beauty
is the union of
kite and string –

for even a kite needs a mooring

Two poems by Pierre Como
JOPLIN BLUE

well they are gone now sitting pretty
in vancouver island new jerusalem.

Gillian of the Garden
I remember her walking on
her fields of magic, magic,
footsteps springing flowers

and Laurie's smile
white august day-like
making the sun dance white.
out west, talking to and laughing with Gill

(and has anybody seen Janis,
Joan or Joann?)

these were my friends and
white vancouver's song is white.

mine is fucking blue

LONELY LAKE HAIKU

Listen! like loons
Laugh, cry a wild call, echoes
Sighing silent lake
Four poems by John Olsthoorn

TAKING PICTURES

taking pictures

taking pictures

at beautiful lady

'mais bela rosa'

she blushes

her tint

shows on prints

where

tfilm develops

and becomes

only another

memory
sometimes

i must i ought i should watch out for my inflated ego
   a condom leaky
in spring
left limp
after a frozen winter
somewhere on a side walk in lennoxville

IT'S JUST PASSED FRIDAY

It's just passed friday

right treezing rain clinging to the fence standing drunkenly
   a pale white puddle steaming paralysing
   a tense smile blowing bubbles into a beer
   cigarettes twirling and smoke
a tune playing strumming blades
of grass lying dying in the street
a moon the street lamp
FULL

full

the gin lauda gave suggests in tox i cation salt and pepper shakers sugar and milk containers miles away yet not in focus mouth slide eyes glare at another attempt hand cold unsteady topples bottle
One poem by Andrew Hewitt

**BAG**

A! Spadina and Queen, ruminin
on the fate of such persons like myself
clinging to subway grates for warmth
when here comes an old bag hop along
admonishin us with her beady eyes
to know our place. when up starts Jimmy Gimme

and snags her bah right from the crook of her elbow!
He’s off and she’s yellin and people are
starrin when some klutz, looks like her son,
starts chasin our Jim so he do
cars are hitting their brakes!

he’s away! slide Jimmy slid he makes it!

Three poems by Daniel Roy

**EAST ANGUS**

Grand tentant
Distingué
Distinguisse
Je suphoque
en écoutant cracher
la cheminez puante
Dumb-tare
ta laisse crever à petit feu
Hein Guess?
KEROUAC’S BLUES

There’s something
I can’t hide
It’s funny like the wind
That I’ve got in my mind
When the wind
was the wine

Côte de Brouilly

RUES EN GLAISE

Wellington, Worthington
Portland Dominion Walton London
Kingston
King
Queen
Two poems by Steve Balkou

MUNICIPAL PARK

Slick grass

curling,

the protruding ears

eyes move

in pale cycles

brush hair along the nape,

long fingers.

Abandoned

crutch

remind tissue explosion

that they are feet.

Only movement,

picks the skull

with delicate rodent consistency,

eating thought becoming hungry

on a park bench,

in the rain.
DISCIPLE

So often
i've felt
the cross near
to hand,
cast
eyes
upward.

It's cold and the snow is
through night as endless
spread
scan for light amongst the glass
stain pool bleeding saliueae

elusive stardust,
plunging
across the
city, my eyes
bear a prayer,
a barren sword
whispering
the scalpel lines
of neon
skyline drenched
with cement

so
I've
stood
on the earth
street
abandoned

desperate
for the
toot of
heaven
nailed
above

THE BEGUILED

Deep portrait of betrayal,
inflated complexities of life.
Bitter taste of loving one so shallow,
the empty silhouette stands so close

The excruciating pain of ignorance,
Naive within my simple ways,
The object falls from its pedestal,
A thing that I now fear

Deep pungent odors arise to the surface,
Attracting turbulent, mindless recollections,
Protective heart and mind reject,
Alien thoughts of him so near.

The illusive shadow creeps closer,
Its massive frame pressed up against the wall,
Acceptance casts its paralyzing gaze,
As death beguiles the unexpecting.
Three poems by Pierre Coulombe

**HAIKU**

Fragile crocus bud,
Slowly pokes through crusty snow,
Light comes, then soon goes.

---

**DES PASSANTS**

Salut à toi
Toi dont la démarche rapide et continue
Me rappelle
Qu’il me semble t’avoir vue hier déjà
Poursuivre le même mystère

Tu me salues, je te salue,
Nous nous saluons
Et nos yeux se croisent
Comme nos êtres,
En toute quiétude,
En toute stérilité
Mais nos pensées aussi se croisent
Comme une forte encaillure métallique
Et, malgré nos souvenirs qui se balancent
À l’autre bout d’un temps lointain et ténébreux,
Nous sommes liés pour l’éternité
Et jamais je ne te laisserai.
L'AUBE FÉMINISTE

Le sable est tombé,
Est tiède sous nos pieds,
La mer est morte en un sanglot
Les mouettes ailes s'élèvent derrière leurs cris.
Il n'y a que toi, saisie entre les crocs
De l'océan, du temps, de l'infini

Ne cherche pas la mer déchaînée
Toi qui cours les plages dévastées
Car son ressac peut t'emporter
Là où se meurent les destinées
Loin d'ici
    de mon cœur qui te cherche,
Loin
    de mon cœur qui se cherche

PENSEE POUR UN REBEL

Rappelez-vous du moment, du jour,
De l'année,
Un geste qui sûrement vous a marqué
Comme, sans doute, Satan lui-même l'eut été.
Le geste s'est posé
Sur des sourires d'agonies
Et des destins s'en virent changés

Rappelez-vous du moment de tristesse
Ou toute l'amertume de l'existence s'est échue sur le rebel
Comme l'écume d'une mer de tempête
Rappelez-vous de ces cris qui forçaient les portes de l'âme
Et tornaient avec vos coeurs éprouvés

Ce jour-là, une longue dague penettra
Gorge frêle d'un agneau
Sur le highway silencieux de l'abattoir.
One poem by Ann Rose

VICTORY

June in an Eastern capital
The children are playing
in an empty garden where
cedars once grew many
echoes of their crystal
taughtering soft
throughout the city.
Though the children
have their secrets
on the highroads and the alleyway
They do not weep
for Palestine
why must it end this way?
Silence before destruction
A magenta sky darkening
The streets lay torn
by rivers of crimson.

In June the soldiers came
from the southern borders
riding chariots of iron
across the desert sands
Though they bring the
condemn not the blind
following their star
The blackbirds came
flying across the
southern borders
of a desert land
Angels of death
They descended

Thus came victory — — unexpected, sudden, sweet

But wait, other sights still oppress the mind:
In a house a red tricycle kicked aside.
A soldier swings a radio like a lasso above his head.
A Persian carpet blooms suddenly beneath an officer's desk.
Banias village bulldozed, no stone on stone, silent.
Just six days to change a nation's soul?

Two poems by Michael Benazen

JUNE 1967

We watch like excited extras in someone else's war.
A motorbike explode the peace of early morn,
Soon, over the Golan hills, tiny planes swoop like hornets,
Puff balls of black smoke burst above the grey-green slopes,
Mechanized columns move slowly forward,
And we become a part of history.

Later, the fighting over, we passed
Two youths forever sprawled beside their gutted half-track.
An empty village, straddling a cool swift stream,
Charred bunkers, disabled tanks, disordered contents of
abandoned suitcases,
And then, Syrian headquarters, a colossal wreck, squatting
above the dusty plain.
Thus came victory — unexpected, sudden, sweet.

But wait, other sights still oppress the mind:
In a house a red tricycle kicked aside.
A soldier swings a radio like a lasso above his head.
A Persian carpet blooms suddenly beneath an officer's desk.
Banias village bulldozed, no stone on stone, silent.
Just six days to change a nation's soul?
MAY DAY

Outside
trees quivering
river running high
adolescents sport with ball
revealing their firm pale flesh to spring sun
furtively scouting the acquiescent other sex.

Inside
I sit darkly in my office
scanning their papers for thought — —
O cruel May day in which
I make judgments on my fellow man
subduing present desire for future recompense.

So
I think of you
river lady, marooned in your house
above the tumultuous flow of spring — —
I am not the one to rescue you in my canoe
Nor are you Rapunzel, who lowered her hair.

May-October 1982
CHANT FOR SACRIFICIAL RATS

Laboratory rats
Have been raised since birth
To look forward to
The Ultimate.
They go willingly to death
Accepting any high priest
(Even me
Squeamishly,
Repugnantly,
Holding death
But wanting
Life.)
Rats have religion
They will be born again
In published data tables.

But maybe
my rats
are atheists.

CROW

“Coal is not black.” — Zen koan

You’re black as coal to me.
A darkened speck in drizzling winds
And yet, in sunlit closeness
you’re a rainbow bird
With hungry reds and calm blues.
All the colors of the world’s imagination
are resting in your greasy feathers.

I’d much rather see you from a distance —
a sooty, black bastard
with a stunning lack of
redeeming features.
Two poems by Elizabeth Bouchard

SHADOWS

Wall bisected by
Shadow patterns
Distorted by passing lights
They twist and dance
And then return
To calm geometry

THERE ARE NO MORE JEWELS

Who took my love?
It would not leave just on it's own.

Did some gypsy steal our soul?
Did some vagabond leave with
our love under his sleeve?
Did we lose it in the tall grass
by the side of the road?
A shiny toy for a minah bird
Did the wind string our feathers in It's tail?

All I know is that there no more
jewels hiding in our flowers.
ONCE AGAIN WITH CLARITY

I didn’t anyone ever tell you
that dreams are for children
and imaginings are
as imaginings are
don’t think otherwise, kid
you’ll break your own heart.

Illusions are just dreams
you wished were real
you make your own, kid
no one to blame but yourself
by dropping out in the beginning
you never have to see the end
happy-endings are for children
you’ll break your own heart.

Each time your smile fades quicker
and you vow not to be fooled again
dreams die hard, kid
you keep breathing life into them
hopeful expectant as a child
until the sad realization dawns in your eyes
You’ll never give up
You’ll break your own heart.

didn’t anyone ever tell you
be tough, kid
Trust only in yourself
don’t let people play their games with you
they’ll make you cry every time
they’ll break your heart.
They have imprisoned you in bread lines
while bleeding the milk from your cheeks
as colour from a rose
They offer you statues and winter,
the frozen peace of water cannons
as they encircle your parks with machinery, posts and wires.

Now you must find other plaza’s, churches
to place your flowers, and hide your flags and cards, like hankies, white placards of solidarity and sorrow.
I asked the trapper
If he thought it was cruel
To kill the beavers.
He said it wasn’t.
They destroyed
That, he said, was a good reason
To kill them.

I asked the trapper
If he thought we should kill people.
They too destroy,
I found it strange
That he didn’t have an answer
Because I had expected him to say
That people are not animals.

THESE WORDS

Always I have used words
attaching to them an almost sacred value!

I have shared them expecting something in return
depended upon them to ease the pain,
twisted them to suit my purpose

I have used them to define my-self-reality
only to watch disillusioned
as they grew dusty dull and dead in time.

Words too often misunderstood
too often insensitive to the truth of silence
of quiet determined action, of love.

...like: These words: my moment’s meaning
my soul’s blood flow in time
bridging my need and your indifference

These words: my sacrificial thought dream
This bastard child of ink and rhyme,
mine to cherish, yours to ignore

These words: bear the only witness
left. Where once was love between us.
LOVE AFFAIRS

[short and sweet as a haiku]

moment of gold.

NOW THAT I'VE FOUND YOU
WILL EVER
EYE
DISCOVER THE OTHER
RAINBOW'S END?

say it with

PASSION’S CUT FLOWERS
QUICKLY DIE
LOVE
ROOTED IN FRIENDSHIP
BLOOMS AGAIN

perhaps no more

IN COMMON
FLAKES OF EACH OTHER’S
DEAD SKIN
BENEATH OUR FINGERNAILS.

YOUR CAR IS RUNNING

As I hug you
my thoughts jump you
and tumble you to the ground.

We've barely just met
and your car is running

Two poems by J. L. P. May/78
SEPT/77

You’re wrestling with your chain
all alone
on a white mat of snow
contently, I close the drapes.
UNTITLED

“"They taught us to dissect a cat today”
he said,
opening the cupboard door
“"They showed us platysma,
trapezoids, & glottis
white matter, gray matter,
dorsolateral sulcus...”
he reached for a pear
and proceeded to slice it
in quarters
“"We fractured here,
severed there;
pushed ante & poste &
right out of norly –
biting into the fruit,
little drops of juice
slithered down his chin.
"" freed the eyeball
from the orbital rim,
turned it over & watched it spin.
he wiped his mouth,
cleaned his hands:
But once it was over,
and we’d had all our fun,
they wouldn’t show how,
we could fix it, together.
he frowned
“"Smudged-grey ash it was,
with pale green eyes.
It didn’t flinch
When we cut its flesh –
in fact, it wouldn’t move at all.”"