The Mitre

Spring 1989
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Susan Sheridan
Jason Morton and Paul Alsop
Karen Verlinden and Jody Edwards
And especially the contributors...

Editorial

Many people suppose that poetry is something to be found only in books, contained in lines of ten syllables, with like endings: but wherever there is a sense of beauty, or power, or harmony, as in the motion of a wave of the sea... — there is poetry, in its birth.

— William Hazlitt
"On Poetry in General"

One hundred and seventy-one years later, Hazlitt’s definition of poetry still stands true, especially when applied to a student publication which encourages budding creativity. The 1989 Mitre contains a variety of poetic visions. Our selection was based on a concept of poetry similar to Hazlitt’s. Essentially, our choice was inspired by the natural and original qualities of the poetry, artwork and photography which aroused a feeling in us or created an impression on us rather than by established artistic dogma.

We, the editors of this ninety-sixth edition of The Mitre — Canada’s oldest university publication — are proud to continue this worthy tradition. We hope you receive as much pleasure from reading it as we did from producing it.

— The editorial staff
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Back cover
Silent Offering

Black birds flutter into the grey sky of winter, an old woman stands below them wrinkled and hunched, dressed in brown, ragged winter clothing. She extends her long, thin body up towards the sky. Her eyes glisten with wetness as she reaches upward, several small bread crumbs rest on her wrinkled flesh a gift for black birds, who have flown away.

Tears roll down her face, absorbed in the dry crevasses of her skin. With a slow meditative gesture she tilts her hand, the bread crumbs scatter onto the dirty, cracked pavement. The old woman slowly, painfully walks away, stumbling, crying dragging her belongings behind her frail body. Now she is completely alone.

Kristen Hutchinson

In the dark corners of my mind skeletons lie. Lying, waiting for the appropriate moment. A moment when they may rise and rattle. Rattling until my sanity is forever lost.

They haunt me such as none shall ever see. Seeing the ugliness that remains hidden. Hidden from the world, hidden from myself. My mind will never rest as long as the skeletons lie.

Stephanie Nickerson

Born the day the sun died he marched toward the ideas they held for ransom and later as he loved the woman of the dawn he screamed "Don't misunderstand my intentions just let me live". And they ignored him.

John Bood '78 (Alumni)
there are so many rooms to sit in the dark
smoking cigarettes drinking whiskey
I inhabit your bed tonight crosslegged
at the foot of it is it you
or your better judgment I trust
you know how gossip spreads
I am young beautiful perhaps
feel your eyes in the dark see the shadow
of your arm curving arc of cigarette
light burning to your lips
you had your dreams buried or forgot them
for a while I shouldn't be cynical
but you already have what every one of us wants
she was watering your garden this afternoon
wasn't she bathing your children I am still searching
he would be gorgeous young with eyes caught in stars
hair twined in the leaves of trees outside
the fire escape door summer green and rising
I will give you a seed feel it
pulling you down where you hid your dreams
creatures more wonderful than stars
save one vision for me I will carry it
throughout my journey
the window is growing light
your cigarette the last one is dying
I go to the escape door hear the trees
rush in the wind every one is older
than I am each from seed
still they cannot deny roots
everything has a grain of searching

Jennifer Dales
Artistic Sullenness

Sullenly creative —
Scratch of the pen
Now and then...
An indication of
Sullen Artistique

Clear the coal
Scratch the pen
Scribe a note
Now and then...
Skate away on Joni River
Skating away
Ian used to say...

Music to love by they'd say
hey hey
hey hey
The pain scratched my brain apart.

Jennifer Scurlock

Crying Moon

It was only yesterday when we chose our favorite song.
Today has come, but now I'm listening alone.
Did you do the right thing?
Did you really mean it?
Guess I did the wrong thing, being in your way until you needed someone too.

Did you do the right thing? Maybe you'll change your mind again.
Someone told you, "Fair is fair, but love is war."
A trip through your soul,
Stopped at your mind.
You could never give me something that you didn't want, or couldn't find.

Crying moon in wintertime raining ashes over pain.
February brings the snow that calls me back again.

So look to the sky this wintertime, turn to see the night go grey.
It was a laughing moon last wintertime that saw you... Walk away.

Carson Lutz
New Spaceship of Polygons

Up upon a spaceship of polygons
Squares roll by.
Circles take chopping strides.
And octagons are not to be seen.
Rectangles fit nicely in the corners,
While triangles are odd, and out of the place.
On this spaceship of polygons
Affairs cannot be termed as too social.

Drac R. D.
Ode To Fatness...

My Gawd she's fat.
Spilling over
Fountain of fat
Fountain of fat
Rat attar tat
Spilling over
Like the brim of a hat.

Chippity, Chippity, Chippity
Cokity, Coke, Coke,
Sippity, Sippity, Sippity
Smoke, Smoke, Smoke:
Fatso is a spilling
Allover the big fat floor
OOOPS!
Chippity, Chippity, Chippity
On the fatso fat floor
Fatso with her Gutso
Pickity, Picks, picks
Chippity, Chips, Chips
Up off the
Floor.

Jennifer Scurlock

Double Dactyl

Ibiddy Dibbidy
Ernest M. Hemmingway
drank too much alcohol
wrote about war.

Tripping the universe
whiskey, debauchery
never found happiness
shot himself dead.

Kristen Hutchinson
Phobia

A clean slice from the woman’s elbow
Like cutting through fruit flesh
Gilding, sliding in juicy moistness
She is the nasty french teacher
Plumb and lazy
A mass of ambulatory superfluous cushions

A clean slice from the elbow
Offering a slight resistance from ruptured cells
“The skin looks like an ant farm”
A multitude of black spots, pulsating
Moving around like an interior rash, struggling

A clean slice
Offers swarms of insects
Their little heads, little black bodies
Little legs quickly
Circulating through her conducts
Feeding themselves from the inside

She does not know
She may feel an itch here and there often
The elbow is far out of her reach
On one so large
The tingly sensation of being inhabited
Makes consciousness numb

I saw one single ant today
In the middle of winter
One ant crawling up my arm
One little ant

My mind coagulates
With thoughts of helpless attack
Like the elephant and the mouse
All from a schoolboy’s story

Valerie Buchanan
For Dr. Zhivago

Amid this maze of confusion,
There is one that stands out,
One so special, one so very special.
But this emotion must not be spoken of,
For it is unheard of,
Unappropriate.

Vast hallways of colossal strength
Separate them,
They are not to be together.
There are greater forces at work here,
Forces she controls,
Forces he does not understand.

He is sweating with rage,
He is confused, he does not understand.
There is so much to say, so much to hear,
Yet in her presence he is mute.
He is running as fast as he can
To stay where he is.

But she, so very special,
Does not notice.
She is above him, she is a different sort.
He knows.

He knows his love will never sear her soul.
Yet they both continue,
In this great beginning of life.

Hugh Scott

A Poem For Norman Mailer

I don't believe I am doomed. I want you to know this. That mushroom cloud that constantly looms up over your head because you believe in it is not going to ravage my dreams. Get that damned hateful look out of your eyes.

I am going to watch the sun rise everyday for the next fifty odd years, so take that murder of graveyard crows that follow you everywhere and set them free. Maybe they will stop those awful cawing sounds. They can't tell the future. Don't you know that you are going to believe yourself into one of those crows and while I light, one voice in a murmuration of starlings at dawn, you will fly over, laughing as if you knew something cruel, but you don't.

Jennifer Dales
**First Thoughts**

Not here, but in another land
With happy-eyed unicorns,
White with innocence,
And big green lily pads
Where Peter's little fairy
Sits waving her magic wand.
Big croaking bullfrogs with
Chocolate-brown spots
Hop along hoping to catch
The swooping birds from the sky.
Their huge wing span
Only shadowing the land
And then wiping it out of existence.

Betty Ann Bryanton

---

**HEARTbeat / ALWAYS**

By Lynn Benson
(To Michael)

As my arm lays
Across your chest
I feel your heart
Beat for always
That beat seems to show your never failing love and will to beat for always.

Your heart is constant like your love for me and once again I fall in love with you.

You are mortal I know but I can dream your heart will beat always.

As my arm lays across your chest I feel your love will beat always.

---
I Looked For You

in Jungian and Freudian squares and boxes,
in pastoral doodles of elk-kings
peeking around angular tree trunks.

I looked for you in rapids of withdrawal,
in the piscine breath of sleep
and in the violet breakers of awakening.

And did not find you,
not in wholeness nor on wailing sands.

• • •

I tried to call you to my waiting rooms of hours,
into various editions of the minute just passed,
to births and nuclear tests, televised.

I never have found you,
not in consumption nor in honest exile.

• • •

I took command of a cult of the senses to say
I had opened eyes that sagged in your mirror
and your beauties shone in the sand.

I looked for you in branches that creaked blue dust,
in sugar that softened my skin like oil,
and in lime that I also needed, later.

And I did not find you,
ever in oblivion nor in schools of fish.

A. Kizuk
(Faculty)
Acquaintance Acquired

Perfume scents
And compliments

Magic Eyes
Caressive thighs

Prompted laughter
Only after

We come together

The distance you so often put between us when we’re together is similar to the distance that exists now that we’re miles apart. Haunting me through my days and nights. A sphere in a different realm.

Arms unseen reach out joined by a voice within which echoes your name.

Untouched, your vision is narrow and your ears selective.

Repressed desire exposed, only to be masked and brushed off.

I hate you for underestimating me, for your tension and fear.

All results in the repression of myself and you don’t see the woman who may love you.

Just an awkward fool.
Heads Of Kings

Heads of kings
A bird that sings
Born to owe the land
Swords and knights
In broad daylights
Crushing beaks to sand
Merlin's ball
A white pitfall
Magic in his hand
Queen's distressed
Cousin confessed
Incest wedding band
Heads of kings.

Pat Meehan

In Foggy Rain

Words and Music
David O'Hare
James Brooks

There is a place, upon a hill;
Said stay away, we wandered still;
And that old man, the grave he came,
Still cries a tear, in foggy rain.

Just a boy of seventeen,
Still in school, and still in dreams.
His head held high, for liberty,
And wondered why, they could not see.

Show your colours, the old man said,
Then fell to dreams and lay in bed;
And all the while, going on outside,
The bullets rang, he paid no mind.

Just a boy of seventeen,
Still in school, and still in dreams.
His heart held high, freedom and peace,
And wondered if, the fighting would cease.

And he like an angel; like an angel, he was at peace,
And they like the devil; like the devil, they burned him down

(Solo)

So it came, upon the hill,
Were the old man sits and is crying still;
The foggy rain, it takes the town,
The flag still hidden, behing his frown.

Just a boy of seventeen,
Who died in peace, did he die in vain:
No want to fight, when rebels came,
And martyrs left, in foggy rain.
The Riddle Of Steel

She is cold and yet re-assuring to the touch.
Crude at birth but beautiful at maturity.
Feared, admired and also loved.
The soul of the Bushi and
The taker of her foes.
Glorified by many tongues for her power and agility.
Honour of the clan lies heavily on her shoulders.
She was born with time
Rode and survived through various legends
Stormbinger, Onduril and Excalibur are but synonyms
She held great power and shall re-assume her
Position after the third great mushroom cloud passes by.

G. Micheal Pretty
Betty in grey; did he come round today,
With a tear in his eye, and did he start to cry,
And what did he say.

Did he tell you his lies; of the trouble and the strife,
Did he make you believe, was he down on his knees.
Did he repent his lies.

Betty in grey; don’t heed what he says.
The hurting remains, and he’d do it again.
You know that he can’t change.

Do you recall how it feels, when the hurting pain steals
all the love from your heart, and the grace from your soul
Until he’s ready to mend, let’s forgive and be friends
oh you know how it feels.
And your sister and your mother, who knew all along
they pretend to believe it, just slipped on the stairs
But just like you,
they’re not that strong.

Love you more days older; let’s leave it all behind,
Just look into my eyes, tell me what goes by,
And what you find.

You’ll find that I love you, more then one can love you
and at times growing old,
I feel that I’m searching, the edge of a rainbow
for my pot of gold.

Betty in grey; don’t heed what he says.
The hurting remains, and he’d do it again,
You know that he can’t change.
The Voice Of Student Frustration

Your wanton use of such monotone
Will lead you to your death.
After I, student in search of mental stimulation.
Will stab you with my pen.
In your intestinal crest.

I need a joke
I need a lie
I need a radical scheme.
I need you, sir, to twist the facts,
And get me out of this dream.

Drac R. D.
Under and over. Under and over and under and over. Repetitive, meditative, the action was and her public mind was advancing at a quicker rate than she was. The movements became automatic, as if natural, as if in a hypnotic trance, as if instinctive... Even when she was forced to stop and launch once again, she did not cease the creative delirium. Her breathing patterns regulated and adjusted themselves to the steady rhythm she had established. Her limbs intuitively followed the movements of her ancestors. Her eyes remained open and saw alternatively the artificial blue liquid in which she was immersed and the eyes of others surrounding her on top. Down she would go again for the former seemed more inviting but she was always obliged to re-emerge. She could not pause; the animal drive was strong and she enjoyed allowing that part of her control with an inner knowledge that she was safe in its power. However, it would be obliged to relinquish the victory; the civilized could choose to halt at any time and would eventually be forced to, for proper functioning. She experienced the odd sensation of being affected by two climates at once. The elements which enveloped her cooled, soothed, relaxed and made her feel as light and soft as freshly laundered linen. Yet the drive was steaming, hard and heavy, made her face red and flushed.

She had come with two friends. They followed the same rhythm as each other, distinct from hers. She had started out slower, wanting to be thorough and affective in a constant and controlled effort. They stopped and talked occasionally. She was gaining ground on her number of lengths and never having felt competitive (and indeed even objected to the whole idea), she had trouble understanding this wild, uncontrolled part in her which made her fingers hush closer together like fins, her kicks stronger and her body more flowing, gliding. She did not know if she was trying to catch up with them or with herself; as if Pavlov’s dogs had suddenly transcended in her body. It was a thirst in search of quenching. Insatiable, it pulled and insisted the need of satisfaction. The level of simple intensity was such that the drawers of her subconscious seemed to fly open to send files blowing in her consciousness.

Her thoughts poured out at such an incredible rate, she had no chance of following them; like a computer shifting information on a slim and smooth square of plastic. She tried to concentrate because, in this moment, she felt quite certain that if she could gather all these thoughts on the patient paper, she could save the world. Civilization may not need salvation; perhaps evolution into our history was the solution.

She pulled herself out of the swimming pool and felt heavy and defeated.

Valerie Buchanan
Now is the cold war of our grim intent
Made glorious summer by this New York
sun.
And all the coverage lowering the house
In the deep bank of the Empire buried.

Now are our brows bound with victorious
wreaths,
Our broken hearts hung up till Christmas,
Our startled cries changed to secret
meetings,
Our revolutionary marches to drastic
measures.

Grim, twisted Nam has smoothed his
wrinkled front;
And now, instead of dropping bombs and
raising shields
To fight elected governments of fascist
adversaries.
He plots carefully in an oval chamber
To the luxurious plush of all this loot.

But I, that was not here to lay these bricks,
Nor made to look into the past;
I, that am cruelly angered and lack love's
travesty
To strut before a wasted, babbling press;
I, that am curtailed to this false proposition,
Cheated of future by disinterested nurture,
Defiled, unfortunate, sent to do my time
Into this bleeding world scarred; half
made-up.
And have so tamely become unthinkable
That fog surrounds as I hark to them—
That I, in this stagnant pin-cushion of ease,
Only want to further climb.
To see my shadow with a gun
And extend my own depravity.

And so, since I cannot move a lover
To ascertain these frail, star spangled days,
I'm determined to take a billion
And hate the strange ideas of other ways.

Plots I have laid, instructions dangerous,
Drunk with power and sky scraping dreams,
To set my brother's conscience and his Lord
In deadly opposition, one against the other;
And if this Lord is as true and just
As I am subtle, false, and treacherous,
This day should conscious be mowed down.

— About a paperback which says that G
Of all Earthly heirs the reaper shall be;
Die thoughts, down with my soul; here
clearance comes.


A Side
(A Modification of Richard III’s Speech*)

The Departure

While hues of yellow flicker against dark walls,
She curses her love with harsh words.
Whispering the sad song of separation;
The forgotten tears of foolish man
Caress the cheeks of his love.
With childlike gracelessness he attempts to pacify,
Correct irrevocable injury inspired by frustration.

Like the bursting of a great barrier,
Her mask of illusion shatters on his chest
They entwine, but she cries out at the searing pain.

A tossing, twisted, sweating guilt ridden sleep.
Dawn glimmers and brightens dark walls.
The car moves down a dirty, slushy road.
The Train.
"Immanual Kant was a real pissant"
The soft, hardness of her twisted smile.
A quick, whispered good-bye passes between them.

Returning, a pathetic fallacy causes the sky to frown.
Each second pulls her farther away from him,
But land, nor air, nor sea shall separate their hearts.

By R. A. McFaul
Absolutism

On a small black table
Stood a candle and its stand.

From nowhere a very small flame appeared
Clinging to the wick.
Growing to greatness, it breathed deeply.
As the flame did so, it became poised and confident
Of itself.

Once fully matured, it wondered
How it came to be and why, The flame guessed
It was the creation of a superior being of
Great moral values.

With the passing of time,
It began to question about its creator and
as quickly the flame had appeared, it disappeared.

G. Micheal Pretty