

The Mitre Spring 1990



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The Mitre
Spring 1990



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Bishop's University circa 1890, just prior to the great fire which destroyed the entire campus. The following year, all buildings were rebuilt exactly according to the original plans with the exception of the Johnson building (which replaced the building on the far left).

Preface

In 1893, B. Watson, the first editor-in-chief of **The Mitre**, described the publication as being "a monthly magazine published by the students of Bishop's College and the boys of Bishop's College school". Many things have changed since those days when **The Mitre** was merely a fledgling literary publication. It is now released only on a yearly basis and up until the mid part of the twentieth century was put together by a large staff of distinguished students and professors.

This year's edition was put together and typeset by one person entirely on computer, yet its original purpose of providing a forum for the creative efforts of artists remains unchanged. Tradition meets modernity. The blending of these two forces usually results in the defeat of custom by the more efficient, and ruthless progress of technology.

Unfortunately, the preceding maxim also applies to **The Mitre**. The 1989 S.R.C., publisher of **The Mitre**, has exhibited a miserly shortsightedness in deciding that financial figures carry more weight than tradition. Subsequently, funds are to be curtailed while expectations for a best selling edition flourish. We have even been referred to as a "white elephant" by one critical member of the council (perhaps "red herring" or "albatross" would have trickled next from his fluent tongue). If I must keep to bestial epithets, I would prefer to describe **The Mitre** in terms of the mythological phoenix.

One day **The Mitre** will, or better yet, must experience a resurgence in popularity. Canada's oldest university literary publication deserves better than to simply be discarded as a financial investment gone bad or ignored as this years publisher has done (I have received more cooperation from the Business and Chemistry departments than I have from the SRC in putting this edition together).

I sincerely hope that this year's **Mitre** will contribute towards an increase in its popularity. Maintaining quality, not only in terms of the material that has been accepted, but also in regards to the overall finished product has been my main concern. It is up to you, the reader, to decide whether or not I have succeeded.

Peter Crowe

Episode in Quilali

The way the children look into the open coffin
argues well for the next episode:
they look at the victim killed by a land mine
which tore through the bus he was riding in,
with usual composure, perhaps a curiosity
not yet exhausted but nothing to interfere
with any call to necessary violence that may come--
certainly compassion won't interfere; the boy,
arms folded, looking and not particularly
concerned, is sufficient augury. The momentum
toward the right life will go on.

This was in Quilali, Nicaragua,
But it could go on anywhere, the premise
Is still good though confined at the moment
To Central America. Mr. Ernst Zundel of Toronto,
Canada, for instance, says the Holocaust
Is a hoax perpetrated by Jews to extort
Reparations from Germany.

It is hard not to throw up-- coffins and ovens--
but one must stick to one's last with eyes on the goal
here and there and thus prevent enlargement.
We can't go around hugging each other.

Valentine's Day 1988

Ralph Gustafson

Argument

Dolphins will leap, elephants sing,
When the world comes to its senses.
You care for these things? Song?
Elephants? Fax is the crux, not
Simplicities otherwise inefficient.

Ralph Gustafson

Harvest

The sickle swings in mysterious motion,
Silently decapitating forests of hay.
Mengele's baton efficiently flickers to the left,
Sweeping away another swathe of humanity.

Mass bundles of cyclical
Death.

Fling the chaff into the winnowing wind
As Daedalus plunges back towards
Red puddles of
Reality.

Peter Crowe

304 Soi Tubsuwani

The fan moves slowly, turning a shadow on the drab green walls. I'm living on a hard white cot and can touch all four walls from here. There are bars on the window that looks out into the hall. The cockroaches are as big as cats.

There are no noises from the Chana Songkram monastery beyond the balcony at the end of the hall. (The monks keep pretty much to themselves). I dream sometimes of heavy coats. I think of home when I stand at the fridge.

The Australian girl has an awkward laugh. It echoes in the lobby and the dog folds it ears back. The garbageman wears a suit and sandals.

We eat in the street. Jon says it's the cleanest food around. Washing it down with Mehkong whiskey kills the germs. "A thief to steal the poison," he says. Sometimes when it's hot we sit on the balcony over the sweatshops and watch the women at the sewing machines.

I began to live at 304 Soi Tubsuwani when I accepted a job teaching at the Crystal Language Centre. A man in a blue shirt who worked there picked me up on a motorcycle at the police booth, Asoke Din Daeng. I moved in that day.

I fell in love ten minutes away on Soi Cowboy, near the Shaggy Dean. Her name was Nonchawee, number thirty-four. We went for ice cream at the department store. She bought costume jewelry for a friend. When I left her at the airport I said, "I'll be back one day to take you home."

I miss her terribly. She said she was going to Australia. Her brother was bringing her violent cop ex-husband from Chang Mai. So we bought rings, explaining to her brother we were engaged. Jon said it would go badly. Her picture in my wallet is beginning to fade.

I bought a silver bracelet in a shop near the statue of Diogenese in Athens: When the man sold it to me he quoted Diogenese: Do not deprive me of that which you cannot give. Nonchawee now wears that bracelet. When I flew over the Gulf of Siam with the orange water below me, I thought of her brushing her hair back from her forehead and her costume jewelry. I will be back one day to sit under a slow fan and take her home. Even if home is 304 Soi Tubsuwani.

Stephen Harris

mania

His walls
are closing
in....
too quickly.
The
doctors
will be
glad to
see
him.

Betty Ann Bryanton

Dream Landscapes
of Gentle Repose

Dream landscapes in mind
rolling hills
tumbling down the mountainside.
running streams
floating through the country, wide
descending to their rise
sailors sailing to their sea.
See the present from another time
see it now from a foreign land
take my hand, lead me
beyond the forest
the damp, mossy ground.
Beyond the mountain folds
the sweet valley
of gentle repose.

Lindsay Petit

Listen

I'm one of the walking wounded;
You can tell by my trail
Of bloodied fingerprints.

Look for me,
My eyes are hollow.
They hold nothing.

Feel for me,
Touch me, hold me.

Forgive me,
I've said all this before.
I've yelled in empty rooms
Full of laughing people.

Elizabeth Bouchard



Perry Beaton

At the Twenty-first Century

The ozone layer around the earth punctured
By a can of aerosol! That's about it.
The end. We'll all fry. So says the report
Filed by the Agency. Antarctica
Has a big hole over it. She who lies
In the sun will get cancer...

Temporarily.
The heart's transplanted, the arm sewn on again,
Software will lick the problem. Man
Loves his neighbour with all his little heart.

Ralph Gustafson

Bulldog Blues

A hound
In the underground
A bark and a
Scrubbed toe holler.

Waters flowing
A little too fast
Under the bridge
Underground.

Under the mind
Of the basket weaver
We sit
and flip
sit and flip
As the accordion plays
Silently underground.

The dog curls up
Dabbing a tissue
To his eye.
Yes -
The dog too
Cries with us underground.

Much like a hound
Howling underground
Howling
At the blood lovers.

The old seadog
Who pets and wets
Pets and wets
While he tuts
Tuts, tuts,
As Bongo boy
Just a toy
Beats out a rug.

(cont.)

Virgin Mary sways
Hips here
Hips there
To the
Bongo go-go.
(Epilogue of the lazy poet)

Jennifer Scurlock

early morning hippie dribble

Morning Rain
Evening Thunder

Morning haze
Evening under

Droplets raining upon

a falling day.

Life rising from the roots

blossoming beyond.

Morning Shine
Evening Burn

Morning bliss
Evening return

Rays shining upon

a glowing day.

Life aspiring to the sky

i may fly.

Today

Lindsay Petit

Fabricating Spontenuity

Tell me how to love.
Give me each ingredient
In its proper measure
For the rest of your life.
Leave me not to think,
Let me do what you want.

I want to find love, not make it
But now I'm forcing for a place
For it to be.

Trying to pull out of your words
Something I cannot see.
Trying to stuff more into those lines
That I rehearse before I say.
It should be the right thing,
What I do.
But the gap between the "is"
And the "should"
Is as big as the
One between me
And you.

Derrick Karl Farnham

My Love

I wrote her name on a beach
But a wave washed up and erased it.

I carved her name on a tree
But the bark fell off.

I etched her name in marble
But the marble broke.

I placed her in my heart
And there, time kept her forever.

Pat Walsh

By Deaf Pat in the Doorway Straining

By deaf Pat in the doorway straining to see the butcher's boy, we saw a flea-bitten dog gnawing on a T-bone. The pavement was damp and our shoes wet as we made our way through Plaka to the market.

From her the grave markers seem to be church windows, both marking the medium through which the world is seen by old widows in black cloth. From this corner of the churchyard the stones reach far into the horizon.

The morning brings indifference to the buildings; and with the loss of the moon and the morning star, gone are the all-night restaurants and the skid-row prophets.

But Corrina recalls:

Sotto voice it began: Pardon me, sir; when I was a kid I knew this guy called Dawe. Joey Dawe. Dozens of others, don't get me wrong. I knew lots of people. Thought I was Jesus for a while. They told me to stop smoking. I could be Jesus, anybody could. Why not me? I'm in the mood. Do something for the poor this Christmas, that's what I'll do. Bastards talk about me. Say my voices aren't right. But it's not voices like Joan of Arc. It's the mind. We all have it. You know, it says things. No. Yes. Things. But I can hear a woman's voice if I want. Mmmmm. Holy Spirit. Spirit. I am ... a man of God. You a man of God? No? Doesn't matter, bastards'll get you too.

Dawe the ditcher, yes ma'am, and a dozen others. Clean fellow, Dawe. Oh, a rat catcher, fiddler, bag lady, 7-11 clerk, stable boy. Rose the waitress -- know them all. In the morning we would make it down to celebrate. Celebrate the morning, you know. Dozens of us. Cold as beer outside. Damn. Did that to my mind. Screwed me up. And all the pretty young nubile talk about me. I don't care. Look at them. Future, polyester, teflon mamas. They don't care. Follow me, follow me. You could be the first. Priests hold hands; we could hold hands and go down to the streets. You gotta go down a peg. Even Jesus went down a peg. Go right into the streets. Aw, hell.

Be a fisher of men. That's what we are. Beer and spirits. Spirits of men. Ha! Milk isn't our spiritual drink. Wine is. Spodecodee.

I'm expecting a friend. Dawe. Coming from Crete. Dawe the ditcher from Crete a million miles away. Probably walking somewhere looking at his things. He's got a red tape player, two cassettes, brown rug, old table, fireplace, gas cooker. Gonna miss that stuff Dawe. For what? For here? Comin' to meet ME. All the way from Crete.

Slowly it finished and she looked on the great man. His shoulders curled round the pint glass on the table and a plume of smoke rose from the ashtray. He stared from out under his heavy eyebrows at the crowd, drew on his cigarette and was finished.

"I met a guy called Rob on York Street. We had a couple of pints. If you ever come to visit me, we'll find him. He's somebody everybody should meet," Corrina said.

"He recited this to me: 'It stems from gold dust, this accretion of cash and cloth. A tight weave,'" she said and left the air empty.

Stephen Harris

Lost in Thought

Lost in the memory
And escape of a silent
Beach at the mysterious
Time of dusk. Walking
Through the sharp edges
Of marram grass to meet
The peak of an assembly
Of well-formed dunes.
To be drawn by the
Enticing melodrama of
The falling night sky.
Slipping off the dune
On a venture to touch
The brilliant facades
Of orange and red.
Feeling the cold and wet
Of the tiny sand grains
Squish between the toes
Of my feet. Standing alone
In the piercing coolness
Of the natural ebb and flow
Of the eternal ocean.
To see and experience
One small piece of
Beauty in the
Grand scheme of nature.

Betty Ann Bryanton

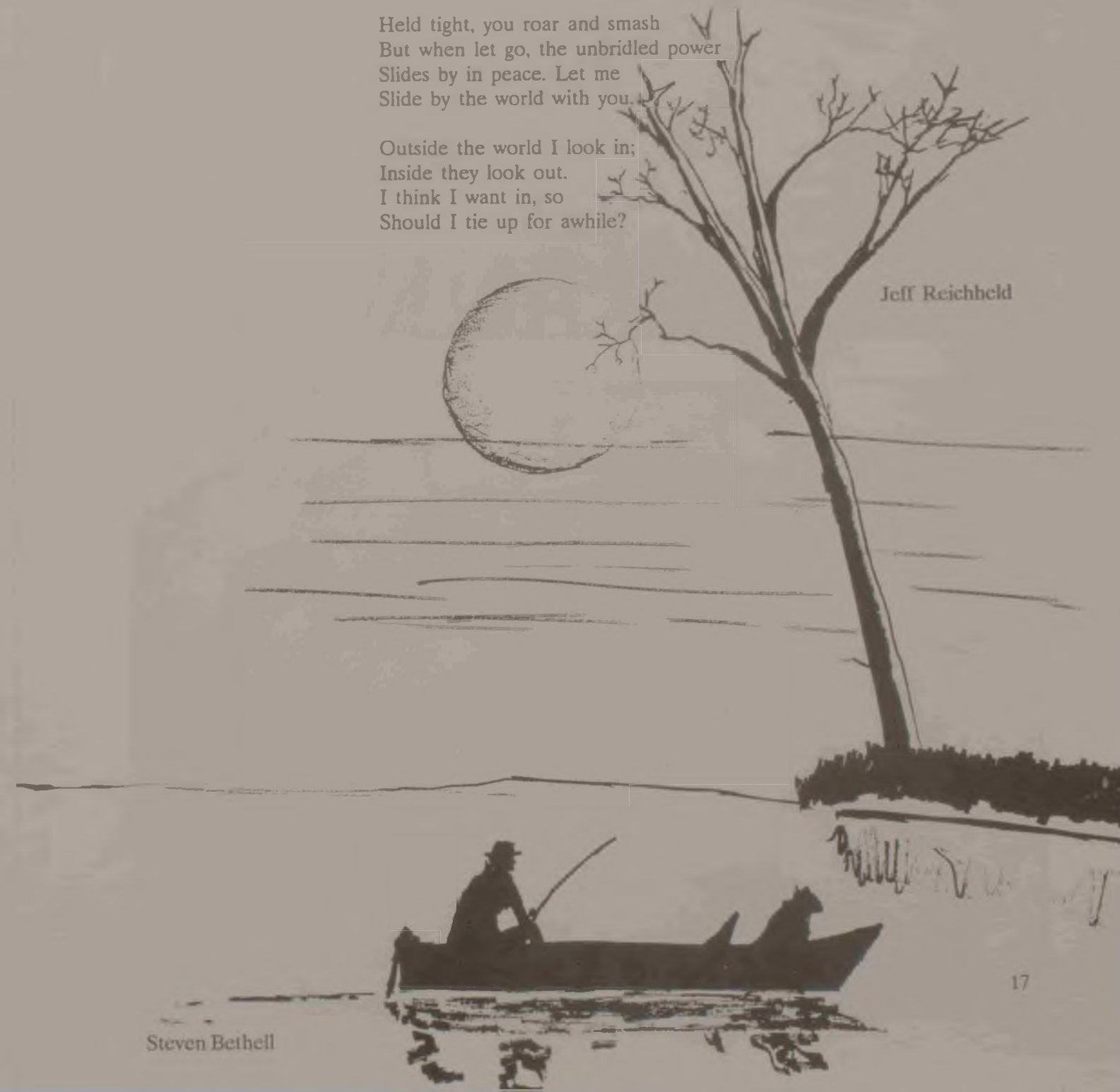
Untitled

River take me to your breast
Hold me safe and take me home;
Home to where waters stand still and clear
And we may drink in peace.

Held tight, you roar and smash
But when let go, the unbridled power
Slides by in peace. Let me
Slide by the world with you.

Outside the world I look in;
Inside they look out.
I think I want in, so
Should I tie up for awhile?

Jeff Reichheld



Steven Bethell



Meagan Gaskell



Peter Crowe

The Woman Who Talked to Tortoises

sits by the mud stream
resting her eyes
on her arms.

all morning under the yellow sun
she has fed them
green stalks of the water plants
some ripening fruit from her knapsack
and now she is tired.

these ageless mounds of innocence
their grey purity
a domed halo in time

tentatively edge off
now undemanding
sated
with the knowledge
she has given them;

She watches
as quietly as they

heartbeats lengthening
to eons
of stars fracturing
into light/

their quiet incorruptibility
as much a desire
as a greed.

Noni Howard '71

Just around the corner, Jim

resting underground
painted statues all around
blue smoke raising the dead
throughout each and every head
who left many a village
to fulfil this pilgrimage
sleep will forget the night
morning will begin the fight
just around the corner, Jim
darkness is within sight
finished voyage
champagne upon the grave
bubbles float through the sky
find adventure in romance
throw your clothes to the ground
and dance.

Lindsay Petit

What One Man Sees

What one man sees,
Another hears.
Hopes, desires and dreams
All when placed under the brightest light
Retreat - and cower
For they are ashamed.

There is no place for peaceful dreams
Except in death.

I am in those shadows,
There with my dreams
But cannot find them.
It is dark.

I can not see
But hope you listen.

Andrew Kohnen

Untitled

Violins for the

Violation,

As well they should be playing.

Thunder in deaf echo.

Lightning in volatile flashbacks.

That crazy, hazy, haunting full moon.

The sacred temple no longer is.

A lock of soiled hair falls on a blind eye,

And that symphony becomes a requiem.

Valerie Buchanan



Kay Kinsman



Tyler Thomson

The Deer - Thanksgiving 1984, Petoskey, Michigan

1. The hunters stand
at the edge of the field,
guns ready.
Carefully covered in orange
we walk through the woods
looking for deer,
skirting fallen logs
and half-frozen marsh,
but we find only rabbit tracks
and an angry duck.

2. Out here it doesn't matter
that the house is small
and the neighbours
live across empty fields.
Running shoes slap asphalt
on the unlit road.
A stop sign looms out of the dark,
silhouetted against the grey glow
that is Petoskey.
Concentrate on the yellow thread.
Headlights mesmerize.
Faster now - why?-
then falling into the ditch.
The truck stops.
Huddled in the grass you wonder
if they can hear your eyes move.
The engine starts, then pulls away.
Scrambling out of the dirt,
feet crash against the pavement
air forces itself through your lungs
to reach the safety
of a neighbour's floodlight.

3. They saw the deer once:
standing and watching,
then turning and crashing
away through the brush.
The only gunshot
came too late.

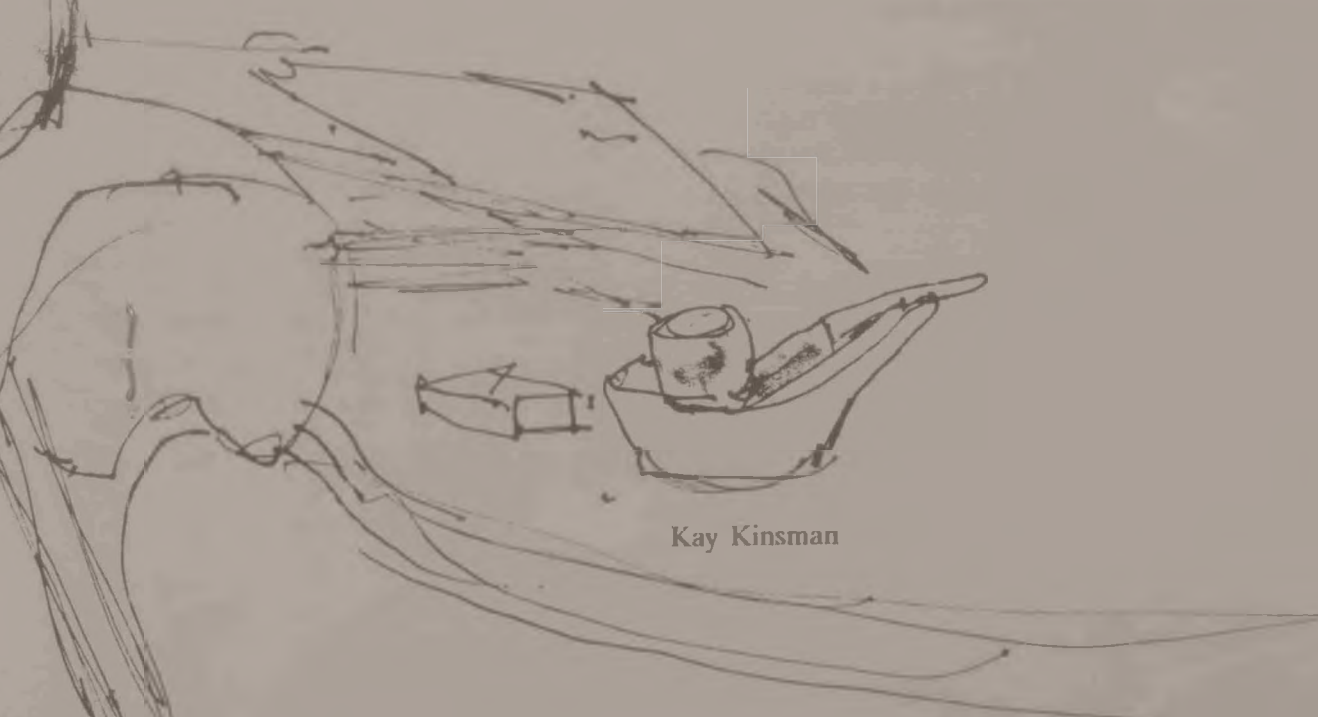
Alix Kroeger



Untitled

He told me of some animal
Tracks in the snow
That he saw.
They went across
The ice and stopped
Where the water
Started.
I did not understand.
It was going too
Fast to stop
And so it died.
He laughed.
Now he is dead.
And still
I do not understand.

Derrick Karl Farnham



Kay Kinsman

Basho's shame

"The skylark
Sings in the field:
Free of all things?" -

Rubber tires
Burn and then seep:
Back to the earth.

Acid rain
Eats copper roofs:
Now they are green.

Javex waves
On plastic beach:
Throw it away.

The Haiku
With the skylark:
Sang in the field.

Jennifer Scurlock

Prostitute

The bright, borrowed face
of the moon

Must share herself

With any curbside puddle.

Dr. G. Englebretsen

Winter Poems

I

He was the white man
A fever, a wind,
A wilderness
I wanted to explore.

I found a jungle
That swallowed me whole.
It left me tangled,
Shaken and cold.

II

I feel a cold conviction.

Another winter comes
Another wind will prowl
Between white canyon walls.

Elizabeth Bouchard



Peter Crowe



Martin Gagel

Fantasy in Blue

What is it
to have you here
inhabiting your body
on my bed

held in the azure water
of an amber cloud
floating inside the perimeters
of this moveable space.

What i want to know about
are the words here and
my.

You are neither mine
nor here

Yet you persist
beyond, a reasonable doubt.

i want to know about persisting
and about doubt
which keeps us human.

i also want to know about
the lights behind your eyes
the ones of warning
before the car crashes
and language vanishes
forever.

i have a problem with language.

i want to hear words like
always and forever
and mean them.

i want to put these words
in poems
and believe them.

(cont.)

but mostly i would like
a message
that you've brought back
from the dark river
this dream of flesh
this moment
that passes between your lips
like a blade of grass.
i want to know
if you held on

or let go.

Noni Howard '71

Clay

We are all but the tiniest Adam,
Forever locked in our garden.
Come, let us see you dance!
I cannot dance, say we,
I need someone to dance with
to share my misery.

The sun had set and brought my Eve.

So dance did we before Ourselves
to hide our misery.

We did look down and saw us dance
And smiled so craftily.
We did look so very hungry,
So gave ourselves an Apple tree with fruit upon its boughs.

The Sun came up and startled Eve.

We came upon that Apple tree
And saw that two were gone.
Our hand felt full, and opened
spied a core.

Andrew Kohnen



Meagan Gaskell

Noreen Flaherty

Strict Discipline

Shaking in the Bombay Sun

Staring down the Barrel of a Gun

Did time

Whitely, walking above the line

Dreams consuming the nights

Descending to Ungodly heights

Falling down to the floor

Man, is this arm sore.

Lindsay Petit



Tyler Thomson

Found In a Station of the Metro

I dreamt about the bombs again last night. The missiles came streaking over the horizon, red and green and blue, not at all scary. They were rather festive in fact. I felt sad when I woke up. I didn't want to go out in the cold.

But I managed to pry myself out of bed and here I am, bright young city girl on the go, scribbling away in a serious looking notebook. I hope people will think I'm preparing for a meeting. Actually I've decided to use the time on this long dreary metro ride to try and write again. What I really should do is move closer to the Agency but I just don't have the energy. However, I don't have to worry about work for another thirty minutes so I'll write about something pleasant.

Let's see, I used to love the metro. When I first moved here, I would stare down the tunnel waiting for the dull rumble that presaged its coming, and the first swaying glimpse of its headlight. I held my breath when it came out of the darkness because it seemed to be coming straight at me in a sleek blue rush of metal. And the sound of the car as it pulled out of the station was a high and haunting tone that tore at my heart. I thought "that's what a whale would sound like". The stations reminded me of underwater caverns, connected by narrow channels. The gray stone walls always seemed to be dripping and I could almost hear the echoes of trapped waves. It reminded me of a poem I'd loved in college, "the apparition of these faces/ petals on a wet black bough".

I was fascinated by the city then. It had pulled me across eighty miles of highway; in buses, cars, and rides that I'd hitched. At first I'd gone in with my friends, later I went alone. Coming in over the bridge at twilight always thrilled me. The tall buildings, inflamed by the setting sun, blazed against the dark mountain. The people were just as brilliant. In one night, sitting on a terrace downtown, I could meet more people than I would in a lifetime in my village. It was all so exciting and glamorous then.

But I must stop living in the past. I have to focus on the here and now. Where am I? Oh yes, De La Savanne station. What a beautiful name for a grey box perched over the Decarie expressway. It conjures up images of tawny beasts speeding across the plains, sending up sprays of dry, red dirt. I started a poem in college with that image. I called it "Across the Vast Savannah" but I never finished it because I decided that I couldn't write about something I'd never seen.

Next stop, Villa Maria. Let's see. It sounds like the coastal home of a Spanish Grandee. He's very stern and morally upright. I think perhaps, he has a wayward daughter who is in love with the man who takes care of his boats. They think that their love will be enough to sway the Grandee. Hopeless Romantics. I used to be an idealist too. When I was at college I thought that I could change the world. So I went into psychology to help people. Now I work on ways of fooling consumers. Which is probably just as well considering how successful I have been in helping myself.

Lionel-Groulx. This place is so creepy. I have only the vaguest notion of where I actually am. In practical terms, yes I know I am one stop west of Atwater, one stop south of St-Henri, but I'd be lost if I had to go up to the surface. The station can be so empty at times, so full at others. When two trains pull in at the same time it's like being caught in a riptide - people hurl themselves across the platform in a desperate lunge to make their connection.

Here's something interesting. A pamphlet on the floor from one of those religious groups which is always praying for the end of the world.

And there will be signs in the sun and the stars
and upon the earth dismay among the nations
in perplexity at the roaring of the seas and the waves
men fainting from fear and the expectation
of the things which are coming upon the world.

Revelation. Reminds me of my bomb-dream. A good choice of text. Play upon people's fears of nuclear annihilation and environmental catastrophe and you're sure to make a few new converts. I wish I could believe in something as simplistic as a god to solve all of the world's problems. I have to find other ways of dealing with my anxieties.

George Vanier, Lucien l'Allier. I see...two bearded French-Canadian brothers, honored for their stodgy deeds to the city. Bonaventure. A small city in Southern California. Square Victoria. Well, I can't imagine this as anything but straitlaced, with stuffy Victorian row houses, and stuffy Victorian row husbands.

Place D'Armes. No. No name-game here. Funny. You think you've gotten over something and then it sneaks up on you. I was only seeing him for a few months, or was it weeks? We had such a wonderful time though. Meeting here, in this station. All the little Chinese restaurants we discovered. The beauty of Old Montreal. The long rambling walks, laughing and talking about everything. All the cliché scenes. And of course, the tear-jerker ending.

Champs de Mars. Military pomp. The Parade Grounds in winter. A stone angel in the center of a field, a soft grey sky, a few flakes of snow. Soldiers marching around and around, growing cold, but still marching. The cold of the hands that hold the rifles, the lips that play the coronet. Snow a bit harder, stinging. Faces red and raw, eyes watering. Still they march around and around the grounds.

Berri. This is where I usually get off but I think I'll play hooky today. I haven't called in sick in a year. Why not today? They don't really need me. I'll get off and tramp around Prince Arthur. Have a real breakfast at a real restaurant. I really haven't been eating well lately.

Sherbrooke. I saw the soldiers again. They came down into the station to warm themselves. Silently they filled the stairways, and spilled down the escalators. Their eyes were stung red and I felt they were waiting for me to get off. So I didn't.

Mont-Royal, Laurier, Beaubien, Jean-Talon, Rosemont, Jarry, Cremazie. Cemeteries, mountains of roses, ashes in urns. Sometimes its better not to let the imagination go. How long have I been holding mine in?

Sauvé. Saved.

Henri Bourassa. The terminus. I wish I never had to get off. I'd like to Bill Bailey, the guy who rode the Boston subway forever because he didn't have a nickel to get off.

Waiting on the other side of the station for the return trip. Time for a few more notes. I remember a poem I started for him. "Blue metal rush/ your eyes drive me/ back against the wall". I never finished it because we broke up. Well, there's no point thinking of that, I hear the train coming now.

Elizabeth Bouchard '84

Catholic on the Weekends

The Cathedral
That impressively imposing structure.
We stand just inside its entrance
Entranced
Looking...
Me at her
Her up to...
The ceiling
Supported by even more than those historical
Building blocks
And what they bring with them.
She is very Catholic now.
I see no desire for the love of before
Nor would I try to bring it about.
All of what we had called love
Earlier this very week
Is now transformed.
I look to her
And she looks to...
It, is there.
But does It come into us
Or do we put It out there.
From the outside in or from the inside out?
Our loving will never be the same
It is dirty now.
Until we leave here.
Until our week ends.
Until our weak ends.

Derrick Karl Farnham

Viva Quixote!

- Cervantes' Dream

It is said
That Quixote preyed upon hostile,
Ephemeral windmills
In utter ignorance
Of their benign reality.

At least he had the courage to attack his own demons
Without turning to
Guns,
Gods,
Freud,
Or soap operas.

Our bubbles of illusion must be lanced first
Before we can pop his.

Peter Crowe



Untitled

Yorrick; the most celebrated skull in history.
Hamlet's friend, and confidante.
Old William knew that to address poor Yorrick
Would ensure eternal fame for his young Dane.
Hamlet the young,
Hamlet the mad.
Friend and confidante to a skull,
Like Romeo, bent on self-destruction
But with the excuse of saving Denmark.
Young fool, save yourself!
Life is more fun than
Death.

Jeff Reichheld



Me

Let’s talk about us, shall we -

That is me and you

you and I

or only me

Me, myself and I

The truly unified Trinity

We; you and me

or the Royal one:

We, the queen says meaning i

Me Me Me

Mi Mi Mi

A sign of the times - the M - generation

Me, all of my body parts

all of us

the world, the couple

the one.

Summed up in the wide we

or the easy eye, I, aye.

I would like to take a stroll away

I would like to talk for all of us (and me)

and say oui, ‘we’ for a day.

Valerie Buchanan

Judgement

A chill breeze swept across the beer terrace. It was the Monday of a long weekend and the sombre, overcast sky foreboded rain. All but the bravest tourists had deserted the choppy lake and wind blown beach. Some had retreated to the beer patios of the restaurants, but most had packed up their cars and headed home: work started at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

I didn’t mind. I’d been serving alcohol to obnoxious customers all weekend long and it was time for a cold beer or two myself. Christine and Jeff seemed of a similar mind. Reclining on white plastic chairs around the uneven table, we made plans for the upcoming week. Play tennis Tuesday - no Thursday, waterskiing Tuesday - we could get so-and-so’s boat. There was an urgency about the planning; autumn and school were approaching with alarming speed. Huge black clouds were amassing offshore, preparing to assault the town. I frowned and remarked that the day had begun beautifully; the weather forecaster had promised sun and high temperatures.

I regarded an approaching figure with amusement. He was threading his way through the tables, occasionally staggering into a chair. Overweight, unkempt, bearded, and dressed in black leather, he sported a cap proclaiming: "Whisker rides 25 cents". He paused - swaying precariously and spilling his drink -to offer a loan of a quarter to an attractive blonde.

I indicated the character to my friends, noting Christine’s wry smile. Jeff seemed puzzled and left us without explanation. I regarded Christine, my gaze traveling up and down her tanned body. I fought down my rising desire and reminded myself that she was presently "involved" with someone. I knew her boyfriend; his face flashed briefly before my mind, and I despised his weaknesses. I had a sudden desire to hurt him. The vehemence of my thoughts surprised me.

I looked up as Jeff ushered the drunken, bearded man over to our table. I shook his grimy hand. "Hi there," he growled, "just call me 'Destruction'!" He let loose with a demonic roar that drew the attention of the entire restaurant. We would soon be all to familiar with that laugh.

It seemed that he and Jeff were childhood pals. Jeff was the younger of the two by several years and "Destruction" had apparently been quite a corrupting influence on him some years ago. It was hard to imagine two people turning out any differently: Jeff the clean-cut university scholar and "Destruction", the presumably unemployed, alcoholic miscreant. However, this did not impede their recollection of fond boyhood memories that included peering through keyholes, breaking windows with slingshots, and smoking cigarettes. I stifled a yawn not really because I was bored, but because reminiscences were supposed to be tiresome. The wind was getting stronger, slowly whipping the lake into a boil.

"Hey - what d’you call ten thousand niggers jumping across the Amazon?... Night!"

I choked on my drink. The man roared and I glanced about nervously. I could feel the hot flush of embarrassment in my cheeks; Jeff and Christine seemed equally uncomfortable. I wondered at my indignation, though the other day Jeff and I had criticized one of the cooks behind his back for being prejudiced, while at the same time hypocritically mocking his homosexuality. However, "Destruction" was not only a bigot, but embarrassingly loud about it.

After three more jokes and increased attention from the surrounding tables, our waiter Randy sauntered over and asked "What do you call ten thousand niggers sitting over at that table?... A fight."

"We’ll be quiet," Jeff promised. He urged his friend to calm down and tried to divert his attention from racist jokes, saying "hey Rob, I was talking to Gerry Holmes about you a while ago. He said that you did some time in jail..."

For the first time since he had arrived, the man became deathly serious. The drunken, jovial face became hard and his black eyes flattened. There was an intelligence in the stare and a disquieting brutality.

"Yeah. Some guy, he raped my sister. He got a couple of months, a slap on the wrist. I went after him."

"Isn’t it ridiculous?" I interrupted, "they say that a mere one in ten sexual assaults are brought to justice. I mean, half aren’t reported and then there’s the humiliation of the trial..." One was expected to be incensed by such things. But statistics were hard to sympathize with. "Oh I brought him to trial all right," Destruction assured us.

His features softened for a moment. "She suffered - my sister did- he beat her. She was in the hospital for two weeks. And she's never been the same since... probably never will." I was surprised at this show of emotion on his part. Of course he loved his sister, like anybody else. But I feared him. Christine covered her mouth with her hand. I remembered Christine telling me about how she had been engaged once, but the man had beat her.

The man's feature twisted into an evil sneer once again. "but not him, oh no. He got off easy. So I got him. I waited for him in the bar he always goes to, down on highway 6. He showed up one night. When he left, he stepped into an alley to piss... so I broke a beer bottle."

I gripped the sides of my chair, listening with morbid fascination to the description of his brutal revenge. His words evoked images of jagged glass tearing through the man's face and chest; dark red blood gushed from the wounds and he screamed. "Two hundred and seventy three stitches it took to put him back together. I carved him... like a pig."

He stopped, caught up in the vivid memory. What looked like remorse crossed his features. After a time he looked up. "My parents hadn't talked to me in a long time. But when I was in jail (I served a lot more time than that maggot) they said that if I needed anything, just to ask them. I'm doing really well now; I got a loan and I have my own Mack truck. I'm doing short runs, keeping close to home; my wife Julie and I have a baby on the way, you know."

I was having a hard time recovering from the shock of his story and didn't notice his ramblings much. But strangely enough, "Destruction" did not seem to revolt me any longer. There was a certain dignity and honesty in his aspect that I hadn't noticed.

Before leaving, I shook his hand firmly, saying "good to meet you Rob".

Rain came down upon me and I walked upright, relishing its cleansing coldness on my body. Heading towards the troubled lake, I considered every passing stranger's face with interest.

Paul Ciufo

A Hooker

A crooked plant stares me down

from deep inside a cavernous corner
the leaves reaching
for a glimmer in a passing night

Lindsay Pctit

Buried Alive

Saying goodbye forever,
Twice, then three times.
Fear, Shame, Regret, Guilt and others
Are not felt until there is no reason to feel.
Realizing that it is them that go
For us and what we owe.
They understand. It's what they want.
In their end is the beginning
Again and again.
Yin and then yang and you're in again.
Not to look for death in the unending night
But for hope in the dawn,
Seeking one eternity in the cyclical.
But that's over.
We deny,
They deny,
And we slowly bury them.
Filling their graves with the dirt from ours.
Never able to be near in deaths dream kingdom.
They just take the dirt that life covers them with.
They just die.
But we...
We have to make them dead.
They say goodbye...
They say goodbye...
They say goodbye...
And then we cry.

Derrick Karl Farnham

Poems for Kinkajous

i

You are absolutely wild
and you know it

and because of that
you must be the centre of attention

thirty feet in the air
or right in front of me.

But without the protective foliage
you are as clear as the next branch

a black hole of energy
a brown slur grazing
the moon.

ii

why would i want to turn
primitive
live in the red eyes in the dark
facing me
as I write this poem?

You have the answers,
i don't.

Perhaps
it has something to do with
trust
and a blind sword

not hanging
but resting quietly
in my right hand.

iii

a dream of open spaces, a waterfall
Kinkajous don't explain
themselves
they are a fact
that nature does accept

the jungle/ as we/
must bury our lies.

in wet nights
of dripping vines
their tawny breathing
sweet hiss
rustling the boughs
fangs and infra-red eyes
grazing your lunar throat

hoping to find a heart
still beating

the one you are looking for/

iv

You must feel powerless
between escapes
from my bloodied hands

but then who wouldn't.

we all dream
of evading capture
even for a moment

a dream of open spaces, a waterfall
some trees
in the not so distant future

no voice saying

you must
you must
(cont.)

Late into the Day

Two black figures stride the beach, seen between the roof and the balconies of the houses facing. They move toward the long green grass marking the mouth of the stream. They step aside to let the yellow VW van pass.

Behind, the shepherd's voice cracks and whips the sheep along; sometimes as if in pain, sometimes as if forcing Momma into the oven. With their bells tinkling, the sheep sound like martinis being stirred. There is a beauty in nature.

The shepherd's eldest son has taken the muffler off his two-stroke motorcycle. The louder he is, the cooler he thinks he is. He thinks he's as cool as cannons and a jet engine in a closet.

The shepherd's youngest, five year old Spiro, is being constantly berated by his banshee mother. I'd rather a bullet pierced my ear than her voice. She yells at him to inhale, exhale, inhale. "Spiro! Spiro! Scooby Doo!" Then she'll get up and move him from the precarious three inch drop from the patio to the plush, chicken infested lawn. I guess she Scooby-Dooed him. Then: "Spiro! Scabie Sassamonga!" which might be: "Spiro! Refrain from thinking in German!" What a mother. Baseball, Mom, and a brick cream pie.

And the mad dog. The pitifully near-blind creature on the one foot chain that sits in its doghouse all day two feet below my window. It is a tireless barker. I'd let it go but I might end up in a Greek prison by some absurd law prohibiting kindness to animals. The dog has more diseases than a Tangiers whorehouse.

These are surround-sounds; the day's unholy noises. Passing time here is as noisy as the harem's honeymoon.

And when the moment of silence is finally come, the gentle Cretan spring air is pounded by the strains of Run DMC in the universally classic scene of the shepherd's teenage daughter doing homework next to a blasting stereo. I think, "Doesn't anyone play the spoons anymore?"

O! Cafenion my home. Here there is familiar and comfortable noise. Mia, bira, parakalo. Efharisto, Stefani, more mou. Yessir, here we go again.

And the coffee comes in the morning, the magi's gift. It could enliven Lazarus. Sweet and strong, it courses through our systems until sleepmouth leaves us and we can speak. There is not much to say in the morning except to accept another day. It is a subtle conversation and as naive as the light at this time of day.

With a quiet, saccharine misgiving, we savour the last of the morning's conversation, bent finally upon the prospect of quitting each other's company until afternoon returned us to our places. There still remained, in the fading tone of morning's naiveté, a straining towards action, towards an act worthy of our combined desire for movement.

But we were exhausted by simply being awake.

And we waited for a great white whale to surface that we might pursue it; or for the Lissithi windmills to grow tentacles and dragon's teeth; or for a son of Cain to emerge from the crags and mist across the distant moor to draw our attention from age rusted scabbards. Not today. Today we share drinking stories, reveling with mirth in the mead halls. And we laughed until late into the day.

Stephen Harris



T h e E n d

