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The Dilettante

Heather A. Riley

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The page is framed by a highly decorative border. The top and bottom borders are wide and feature a repeating pattern of stylized floral and scrollwork motifs. The left and right borders are narrower and consist of a vertical sequence of similar decorative elements. The central area is left blank, providing a space for the title.

The Dilettante

The Dilettante

Published and Edited
by Heather A. Riley
in cooperation with
Utah State University
Honors Department
1991

Editor's Note:

The printing of this book marks the end of a year of deliberating, searching, sifting, procrastinating and finally decision making. These pages include what I consider to be some of the finest work by young artists in Cache Valley. I must admit, I am rather in awe of my contributors. I have always been frustrated by the fact that I seem to have no outlet for my creative urges. Something always seems to get lost between my brain and my pen, So, my "consolation prize" is the opportunity to work with some artists whose talents I respect very much.

By publishing "The Dilettante" I hope to draw greater attention to these artists whose work I feel is deserving of greater exposure.

I want to thank my contributors for their work and for giving me the privilege of publishing it. I would also like to thank Dr. Joseph Morse for his patience and tolerance of my procrastination. Special thanks to Shayne, without whom this book would not exist; to Karen, for her valuable input, and to Brian for his gentle prodding and constant support.

Heather Riley

Table Of Contents

<i>In The Eyes</i> Dan Fliegel	1	<i>"Old Man in a Dry Season"</i> Woodcut Kristine Gunnell	15
<i>Those We'll Never Know</i> Dan Fliegel	1	<i>"Psyche"</i> Lance Clayton	16
<i>Untitled Etching</i> Gregor Sosnoski.	2	<i>The Nature of Woman</i> k. Willie.	17
<i>Landscapes, Journeys, and Boundaries</i> A Retrospective Dot Archibald.	3-7	<i>Mothers, Sisters, Sweethearts...</i> Dot Archibald.	18
<i>Untitled Lithograph</i> Gregor Sosnoski.	8	<i>Imposter</i> Dot Archibald.	18
<i>Untitled Silverprint</i> Shayne Christiansen	9	<i>The Burden of Sleep</i> Troy G. Passey	19
<i>Untitled Silverprint</i> Shayne Christiansen	10	<i>Raking Leaves in January</i> Troy G. Passey	19
<i>Untitled Silverprint</i> Shayne Christiansen	11-12	<i>"Remains"</i> Lance Clayton	20
<i>Zippo</i> Troy G. Passey	12	<i>"Opportunity"</i> Lance Clayton	21
<i>Give Me Back Your Eyes</i> Troy G. Passey	12		
<i>"Captains of Industry"</i> Woodcut Gregor Sosnoski.	13		
<i>"Woman in a Changing Season"</i> Woodcut Kristine Gunnell	14		

In The Eyes

We chat and sift through
disappointments, and as your
coffee grows colder
your fingers clench the cup.
We breakfast on prospects.
All this digging, to come up empty
now...is that fear there? Some might say this
work itself holds the meaning. Or
maybe it's found in your face,
weathered, pale, with a stubble that says you can
never return--a deep beard that holds
you here, and will only quit when you do.
There is a certain desperation--lonely, personal,
common--that shows through the eyes sometimes
and betrays all small talk,
even the serious stuff, with news
more immediate and telling than any
words can carry. At these times we
drift above our own voices, embarrassed
that they so seldom say
anything at all, and listen for a while
with our eyes as our words drone on.
The eyes share the secret, like lovers, of a union
our voices, the clumsy parents of our condition,
can never know.

Dan Fliegel

Those We'll Never Know

A spirit in my dream
became my wife, took an old lover's
form, wearing a blue dress.
Gone when I awoke.

Someone like me stands in
doorways sometimes, just out
of sight, leaving only
a scent of things undone, rich
like spring mud.

These ghosts are born
in every decision, each
one a life never given life,
faint echoes that linger as afterthoughts--
never quite there, or here,
abandoned to drown in air. I hear
their fading screams.

Dan Fliegel

Dan Fliegell, a native of Madison, Wisconsin,
is a senior majoring in English at Utah State.
Dan will miss Logan & many of the good people
here after leaving Logan following graduation.



Untitled Etching
Gregor Sosnoski

Gregor Sosnoski, a senior at Utah State University majoring in Fine Art with a printmaking emphasis says, "My true dream is to become a dancer. I simply love life and strive to become a better person, in turn making the world a little brighter."

LANDSCAPES, JOURNEYS, AND BOUNDARIES A RETROSPECTIVE

I was born in '27
From the beginning,
my skin didn't fit.
There was sand under it
or something.
I wanted to move around in it
loosely
instead I feel ill at ease
driven
irritable.

After I learned to read
I could change the world of primary colors
to muted fantasy
distant reality
spin a cocoon
to hide in.

In the 30's
I grew from babyhood
to adolescence
with all the attendant horrors.

School was a journey of little deaths,
minor triumphs of the mind,
major defeats of the flesh.

They called me the human encyclopedia,
the hairy ape. "Dainty."
When the ball hit the end of my finger,
I cried;
the jump rope went to fast.
Other kids flew on ropes,
hanging from the Maypole,
I ran into the pole
and broke out my two front teeth.

I wanted them to like me
but the didn't
I didn't know how to make them like me
i was either too much
or not enough.

The smartest kid in the class,
I never knew
when the gang would surround me
on the school yard,
jeering.

At home
I was a sissy
in a family of fishers and hunters.

I curled in my chair
absorbed in books.
In *The Princess and the Goblins*,
Curdie was my fantasy companion;
the princess' father, the king,
was my father in regal trappings,
and the beautiful grandmother in the tower
would sooth my hurts with sweet-smelling balm
plunging then in the fire painlessly.
Besides, she spun cobwebs out of moonbeams
and used the cobwebs to guide the princess home.

In my fantasy
I would heal without pain
hang on to gossamer cobwebs
and not stumble.
My father would take me up on his great white horse
(actually he did take me up on a steam engine once)
and I would be beautiful.
I knew I was a princess
when my yellow taffeta dress rustled
flaring in a graceful circle around my bare legs
but nobody else seemed to know.

(Many years later, in therapy,
I would put up signs,
"There are no goblins,"
to remind me that in real life
there are no kings or princesses,
there is no healing without pain.)

When my dad was outside
tending the farm,
I turned on the radio,
played Tchaikovsky and other flying music,
soared on my toes,
leapt from coach to chair,
let my arms float free.

At the beach,
we went to the pier
where the salt air
the rich acrid smell of asphalt in the sun,
the hypnotic rise and fall of deep green water,
the cool wind from the sea,
and the tall lovely boys
called to me.

"You bait your own hook.
You catch 'em, you clean 'em,
and don't you be watchin' the boys.
We're fishing," my dad said.

Dripping hunks of mussels
clinging to their shells,
rough black outside,
acrid orange within,
and slimy worms,
all of it had to go on the hook.

With family,
I was sullen,
uncooperative,
I wanted to be left alone
in my cocoon of fantasy.

I thought about the guns locked away
in the closet of my father's den.
They could take me away forever
from the nightmares and the loneliness.
But when I imagined myself dead
every one walked away.
No one would ever know the princess
not even me.

I'll never know
what mix of DNA and neurosis
kept me,
the daughter of a gentle man
and an independent mother,
small in my bed,
paralyzed,
waiting for The Hand
to come through the window
in a screaming crash of glass
and snarling curses,
to crush me in my bed.

When the nightmares began,
every rustle at the window
was The Hand.
The long hall from my room to Theirs
had a trap door
that would open and swallow me
if I tried to escape.

In my last major nightmare
as I entered puberty,
I dreamed I was standing at the turnstile
of a race track.
Everybody who went in
gave me two dollars;
every one who came out
had winnings of seventy dollars
and I had to pay them all.

Half dreaming,
I stumbled to the living room
where my mother and father
were visiting with my uncle.
I was hysterical, sobbing,
terrified;
my mother was embarrassed.

I went to the bathroom,
vomiting,
trying to cough up the money.
Imagination added boundaries of fear
and I was never enough.

The 40's for me
was the hope of boys
who would see
the princess in me,
would tell me I was beautiful.

For me there was never anything
like my first love.
Beating out the boogie-woogie
at the school dance,
he caught me with a long glance,
looked at me laughing,
his tanned throat warm
against the open collar
of a white shirt.

He was a piano player,
a basketball star,
president of the student body;
his thick-lashed laughing brown eyes
were sexy
although I didn't know sex yet.

At this time, 1944,
kisses were reserved for the third date.
After that I didn't know the rules--
I was a late--developing
Scholarship Society member--
I knew he might want to touch my breasts,
instead he touched me,"down there"
with those long tanned graceful
piano playing fingers,
those hands that could make the hoop shots
from thirty feet out.

We parked under the acacia trees
in my front yard,
making out.
I didn't know it then
and wouldn't have cared
but I was lost forever.

I waited for him,
writing letters,
while I dreamed my college years away.

After two years
in the occupation army,
he came home from the Philippines.
He came home different,
his voice and his language rougher,
His sexual demands more imperative.
He wanted to get closer physically
but stay farther away.
Beer and pinochle with the boys
were his priorities;
getting married was something he had to do
to get what he wanted.
The boy was gone;
the man was not yet there.
I didn't know the difference
I was "in love."

In my wedding dress,
ready to go to the church,
i twirled before the mirror
saying. "Do I look beautiful?" " "
Embarrassed my mother said,
"You don't ever say that
about yourself!"

Leaving home,
driving away for our honeymoon,
I felt free
but not alone.
Three days later
I felt alone.
He wanted to go home, drink beer,
play pinochle--with the boys.

My fantasy--
that sand and the sea
bright blue skies
love
and beautiful me--
was not enough.

Adventure, finally
the City,
stars over Lake Michigan,
we trudged the streets of Chicago,
in a post-war housing shortage,
wide-eyed at the red-light district
on Halsted Street,
gaping at skyscrapers, and
looking for a place to live
so he could go to school on the GI bill.

Lake Michigan froze over that year--
10 below zero for two weeks--
the wind blew cold off the frozen lake.
I stayed in my Cocoon
housekeeping for our board and room;
wrapped in earmuffs and overcoat
he trudged to the Illinois Central,
took the train to school.

When school was finished,
I wanted my adventure.
I wanted to bicycle through Paris
in the springtime,
to see the Alps,
the changing of the guard,
to see Europe
now that the war was over.
He wanted to go home;
he had had his war and his adventure.

We were each bound
by our needs and fantasies,
mine for a larger world with him,
his for a smaller world
without me--
although he didn't say so then.
We never knew each other.

The 50's were
Better Homes and Gardens,
Good Housekeeping,
June Allyson,
Doris Day,
bright-faced scrubbed babies,
home-made bread--
I tried for it all
and missed.
He struggled to make a living,
came home drunk and discouraged.

He had John Wayne, Gary Cooper,
and Lucky Lager.
I had babies,
four of 'em.
The 50's seemed to last forever,
through babies,
bankruptcy,
and finally, divorce.

I remember the scenes--
inching through fog-laden night,
on my way to the hospital.
My oldest, an asthmatic,
gasping for breath,
needing adrenalin.

I sped 90 miles an hour
through stop lights
past policemen,
my third child in the seat beside me,
not breathing
hovering gray on the edge of death
from electrocution.

He was three,
out playing with the three-year old
across the street.
Unbeknownst to me,
they had a rabbit hutch
with wires across the base
plugged into the garage current
to keep the dogs away.

Most of all I remember
the night they told me,
"I don't love you any more.
I haven't for a long time."

I had always been a princess
in the castle of my mind
despite the evidence
of diapers and bankruptcy
but know my shining price was gone.

I was undefined, desolate
in a gray landscape
of dead dreams.

I cried and danced
and tried to make it happen again,
looking for anyone
who would tell me I was beautiful.
I couldn't tell myself anymore,
I knew no one would believe me.

In the 60's and early 70's,
I lived a montage,
a kaleidoscope of experience.
Drugs invaded a still unsophisticated
Southern California,
and our family way of life.
Nobody knew anything about them.

*My beautiful children
were long-haired, scruffy, and sullen,
part of the counter-culture
that was taking away the fabric of my dreams,
although I tried to hide
in self righteous complacency.*

*Vietnam
Vietnam
Vietnam*

*On the homefront,
a ragtag of guerilla warfare hippies
countered polished regiments
of redcoat mentality--
a battle that erased straight lines
of tradition
and led me into a maze,
a quantum physic of reality.*

*I became a quasi-social worker
a Vista Volunteer
a bewildered spectator-cum participant
on an unfamiliar landscape--
all my boundaries were gone,
my planned journey was over,
my cocoon was crushed and empty.*

*Ours was a nuclear family,
bombed out by alcoholism,
drug addiction,
and insanity,
but never death,
although at times
i would have welcomed it,
I thought.*

*Soon my children were gone,
angry, their final judgement
the same as mine--
I had never been enough,
not for their father,
not for them,
not for myself.*

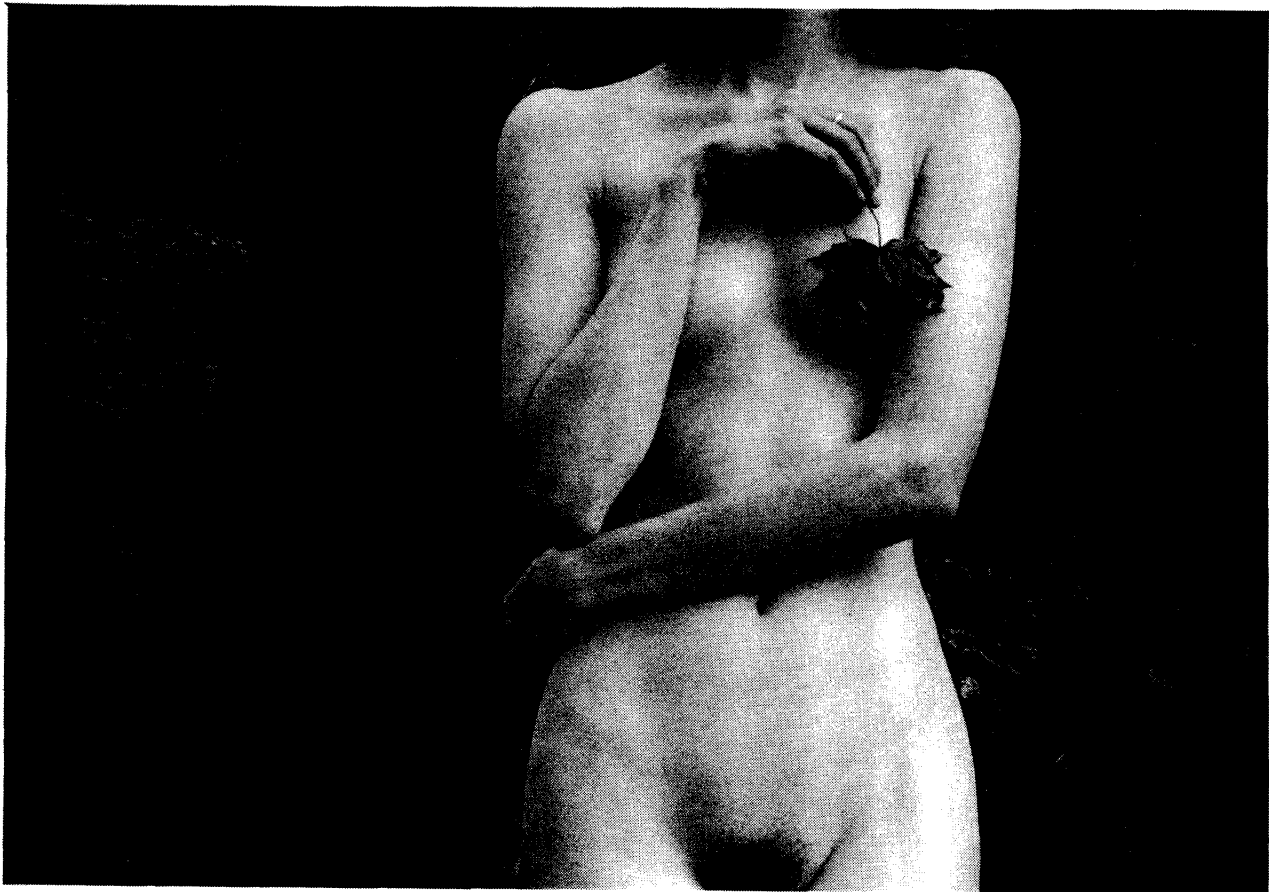
*I faced the gray landscape
a second time
and survived it.
Sometimes I have thought
that would be my epitaph.
But tonight, lying in my bed,
watching the clock winking 3 a.m.,
a heating pad perched on one arthritic hip,
I pull the quilt up close
and think about my life,
so hopeless at times,
then piece by piece
almost at random,
restored to me.
It fits me now.*

Dot Archibald

*Dot Archibald is graduating with a MA in
English and plans to begin working on a
creative writing PhD in Oklahoma next fall.*

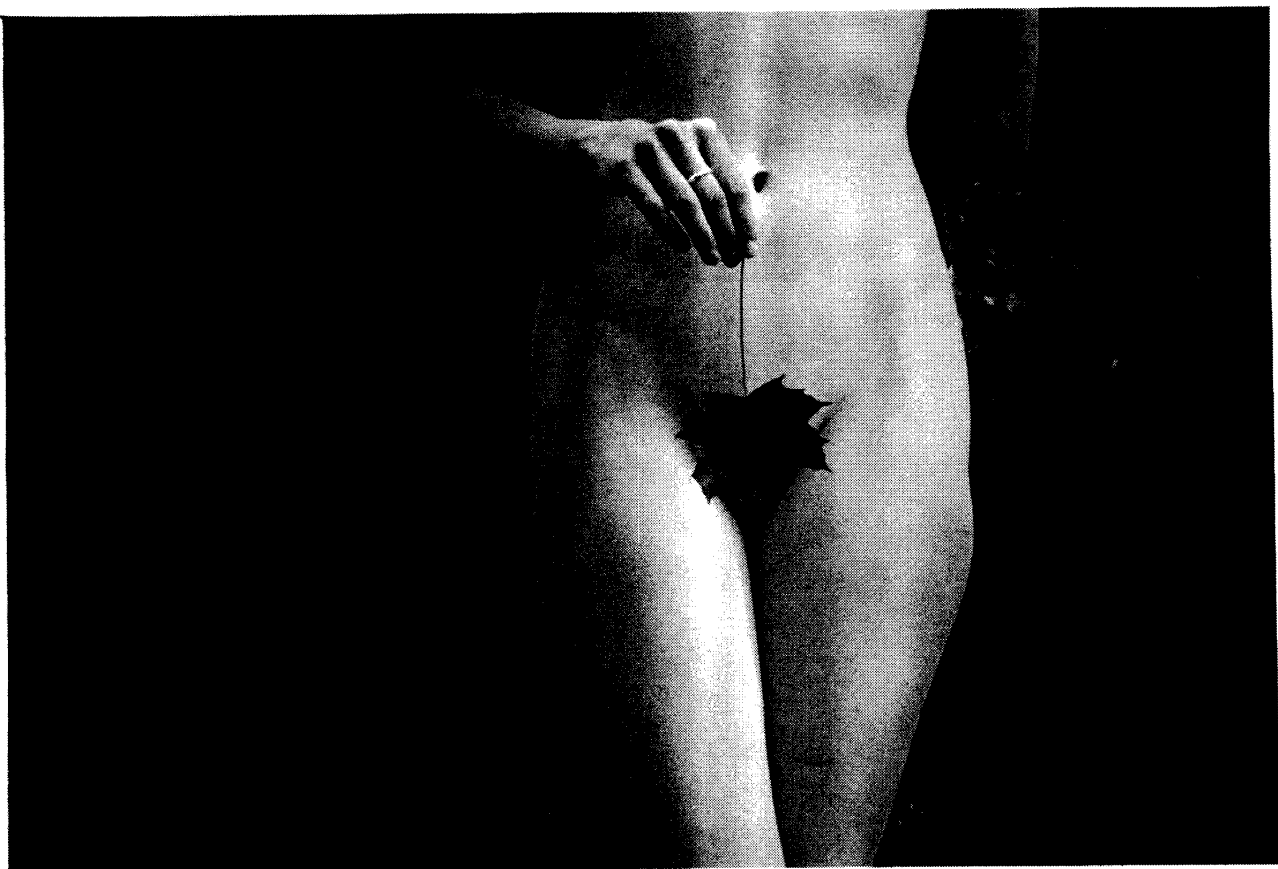


Untitled Lithograph
Gregor Sosnoski



Untitled
Silverprint
Shayne Christiansen

Shayne Christiansen is a sometimes student at Utah State University when not in Asia teaching English. Shayne is studying Photography with an emphasis in archaic processes.



Untitled
Silverprint
Shayne Christiansen

Untitled
Silverprint
Shayne Christiansen





zippo

i quit at the rail,
toss my cigarettes
into the canal, empty

my pockets, pour out
my schoolbag; books,
pens, lifesavers,

sheets of paper, everything.
this must be my first
breakdown. i stand

next to myself, watch things
sink or spin away, white petals.
i point at the water,

my finger the long hooded
bone of the x-mas ghost.
--this is my life, i say.

i feel strung
together by the holes
in my life. i imagine

me, floating
face down under
this rail, stiff and frozen,

limbs tucked to chest, body
clenched like a fist,
gentle spin. i see

the silver smear
of my zippo under water
the colour of bad teeth.

i reach down,
my arm submerged,
stretching into

a dim river
of ice cubes.
i am my own metaphor.

Troy G. Passey

give me back your eyes

you sit brushing
your hair straight down one hundred

times, staring past your reflection
in the mirror. your

eyes seem locked
somewhere far

away. i lie naked
in bed, listen

to the snow pile up
outside, pretend not

to care. you sit looking
through yourself, your

eyes, glazed and frozen
your hand stops brushing,

floats at your side. i
want to catch the stiff

thread of your vision
with my hands. wind

your eyes around my fore
arms like a rope, tell

you i understand your absence
although i don't. your stare

travels further
than i dare go. i

stretch out of bed,
creep behind you, curve

my hand across the line
of your sight. you do not

blink. "just a moment". your whisper
jumps the void of our distance.

i am left, waiting for your scattered return.

Troy G. Passey

Troy Passey is a senior majoring in English at Utah State University. He enjoys reading and writing poetry.

\$*STRIKE?!\$
wHy, I'll hire hAlf The



WoRking cLAss tO
KILL
ThE otHer hAlf*

"Captains of Industry"
Woodcut
Gregor Sosnoski



"Woman in a Changing Season"

Woodcut

Kristine Gunnell



"Old Man in a Dry Season"

Woodcut

Kristine Gunnell

Kristine Spindler Gunnell recieved her BFA degree from Utah State University where she was named Outstanding Student in Printmaking. Kristine is currently working on her MFA at Utah State. Her work has been included in many regional and national art exhibitions.



"Psyche"
Lance Clayton

Lance Clayton is a native of Logan who has studied at Westminster College and the University of Utah. Currently, Lance is working for Rosenberger Productions, Inc. of Salt Lake City, Utah.

The Nature of Women

Dear Moon,
How I wish
you were an enigma,
a mysterious spirit
pulling on me as the sea,
dripping your ectoplasmic IV
to my cold hollow veins,
but *pauvre* friend,
woman like me,
man poked and scraped
your luminous milk skin
forced himself into your cavernous wounds
to know your true nature.
He defined you,
left you tired and quaking.
 I am alone.
 I am alone.

k. Willie

Karen Willie is pursuing a masters degree
at Utah State University.

MOTHERS, SISTERS, SWEETHEARTS...

Mourn them. Mourn them.
Speak now, you voiceless women,
now, before those laughing invincible boys
are gone forever
leaving behind them
the empty words of politicians
and a star in your window.

Somewhere on the sand
they will cough out their lungs,
in great gouts of snot
mingled with tears,
and their young tender thighs
will quiver beneath the needle
that takes away pain and fear

or, beneath a burning sun,
sand dragging at their heels,
killing machines
will turn their flesh to blisters
and they will kill
some other mother's son.

All this so
old men can hold onto
power in the boardrooms,
the wheel of a Lamberghini,
and the smooth marbled limbs
of their young whore-wives.

Mourn them. Mourn them.
It fades to a whisper now
mourn them, mourn them.

Dot Archibald

IMPOSTER

for Ken Brewer

"What's it feel like
coming back to school,
an old lady like you?"
one of the kids asked me.

It's like riding on the top
looking over my shoulder.

Sometimes
I crouch in the corner
singing minority songs
"fat ole ugly woman
what you doin here?"
Feeling sorry for myself.

Other times,
I ride that pale horse of defiance
straight to the bottom of the ocean.
"Why they trying to make me
do it their way? I won't."
Mad at the world.

Then I see it--
I got the "They" disease--
they gonna catch me,
they gonna find me out,
they know I don't belong.
Paranoia.

So I say to myself,
"Hey, old lady,
maybe you belong here,
maybe you don't--
you here--
keep walkin."

Dot Archibald

the burden of sleep

*i stand across the street
from your apartment at four a.m.*

*i wish somehow in your sleep
you might feel me here,*

*get out of your dreams,
glide like a ghost to your dark dark window.*

*these winter night rains
melt the snow.*

*they bite at me, fill me with a
gentle and remote longing for march.*

*the sidewalk and street lie
wrapped in thin ice.*

*i wait awhile, smoke a cigarette,
this night seems dead,*

*except for rain
and me, and*

*the reflection of a naked branch
crying in the dark ice on the street.*

*no invisible thread exists between us.
i cannot pull you to me in the night,*

*wind the wisp of your body around me.
i cannot yell at you with my mind,*

*cause you to leap
from the grasp of your sleep.*

*as i fade down the street, trying not to slip,
i hear a whisper behind me in my ear,*

*i whirl around, lost in a circle, to
see you blind as still and silent as the black stone.*

Troy G. Passey

raking leaves in january

colour bleeds from life in january

*leaves lie scattered
and sticky on the grass.
they ride on my shoes,
drop on my floor.
kafka carries them on his fur,
inside he wrestles them
from his coat*

blue drains from the sky

*i did not rake the autumn.
winter buried the leaves
properly for awhile.*

*no rain has come, then gone,
turned the snow to clear blood
poured into the open wounds
of the frozen ground.*

*i walk across the detritus of my lawn,
the detritus of my rooms.
leaves lie broken and crumbled
in the vacuum of my apartment.*

leaving grey then black

*i cannot rake the leaves
from my apartment floor.
to rake away the detritus of my life
would rake away myself.*

*i wish i could spit out
the broken bits of my life
like teeth, and rake them away.*

then nothing at all

Troy G. Passey



"Remains"
Lance Clayton



"Opportunity"
Lance Clayton

"Printed on Recycled Paper"