

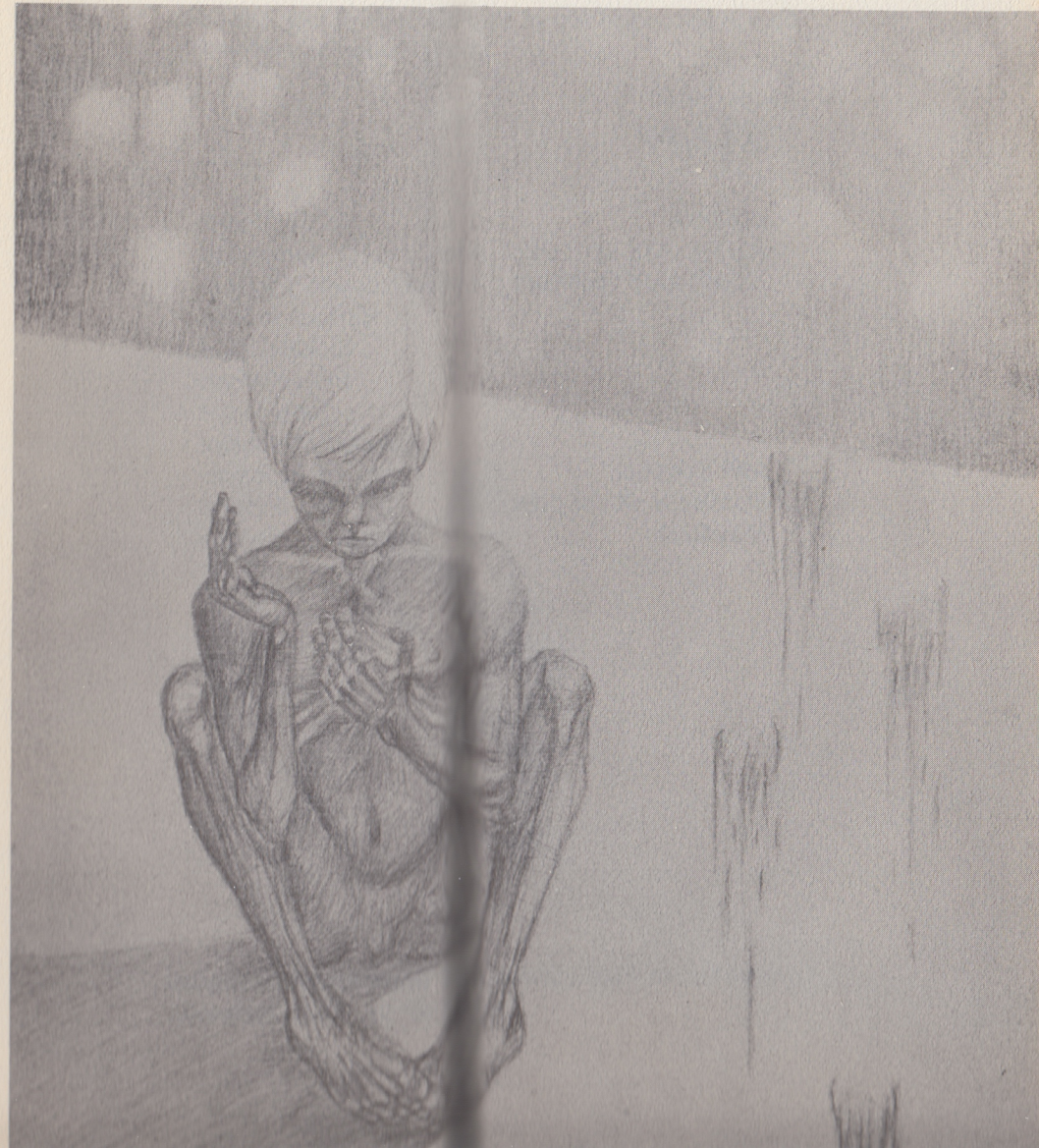
SOWER 1970

A HUNTER ALWAYS LOOKS BACK

Eyes shining like the morning of my first mistake
I haunt the hills with my sledge shoes
and burnt-out eyes
A two-penny nail sedately rising
from a peasant post
Makes a twisted grab
at my rusty arm.
Nothing in my pockets
nothing in my head
Nothing in my teacup
nothing to be said.
I was a boy once
in the summer
I would crucify butterflies on a plastic board
drink water from dirty hoses
it tasted better.
I would track wild dogs
with my Daisy elephant gun
(a hunter always looks back)
And here I am on this side of now
sitting on a broken fence
dividing one empty field
from another
The sky and the earth also empty
but then again —
there is something old here
that hides behind the night
and skips memories like stones
across hidden pools. . .
Something unseen scampers through the grass
(if only I had my elephant gun)
The air is full like a lazy balloon
drunk with the smell of thawing snow. . .
The night grows soft
and says nothing.

Eric Evans

SELF-DISCOVERY Pencil Dick Tobin



SOWER 1970

Volume XXV

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FOREWORD AND DEDICATION

The Sower is a symbol of hope. Because that is what life hinges on, the secret of the seed. To know how to live and be fruitful, to know how to die, and to know how to bring forth life again.

With this in mind, I dedicate SOWER 1970 to the earth and to the clock — in the hope that it will not suffer **premature** burial.

Boyd Horst
Editor



Committee on Publications and Department of English
Dana College, Blair, Nebraska

TO NORMA

I saw spring blow in last night
on the tail of a winter cloud,
and I thought of a spring
I once watched
blow by
into
a summer storm.
Things are new now,
new grass
new rooms
new storms.
But the dew on the grass
is the same,
The smoke in the rooms
still stale,
And the storms
just as dark as before.
I like the storms.
They give me
something to tame,
someone to warm.
But when the wind
blows itself out
and the rain
trickles into dryness,
It's hard to turn the sky
and search
for another storm.
I saw spring blow in last night
and I wondered
what it meant to you.

James E. Black II

LYNN
Plaster
Nancy Blobaum



LES CONSOLATEURS

Je la vois dans vos yeux. . .
La peine.
Vous voulez parler, mais vous ne
pouvez pas. . .
Le silence.
Il serait bien simple de tourner —
de rentrer à ma maison tranquille. . .
Un pas.
Mais je ne rentre pas — je vais à
vous,
Car j'ai besoin d'un ami aussi. . .
Les consolateurs.

Cheryl Harris

THE STRANGE DEATH OF HARRY GARTH

A crashing sea smacked on the gray rocks; the heavy sigh of wind and sea at high tide swept in, and a tiny craft was landing. Waves rolled huge swells, breaking at angle to the face of the cracked stacks of rock of Pt. Logos. A figure in the boat rowed madly towards the gray teeth of shore. Waves gripped and rushed the boat forward. In an instant it disappeared in the heavy green hands, and reappeared, taking on water, reeling wildly.

The figure was that of a man. He ceased rowing and poised himself in the prow of the craft, strangely anticipating fate, facing the bleak gray cliff, the smacking turmoil of waves and rock only seconds away. He leaped.

A slight cracking sound marked the boat's hull hitting the coast. It shattered in a sudden and abrupt explosion as if slapped by a giant. The jetsam lingered in the sea as the tide flowed out and fell. Then the tortured sticks disappeared completely.

Harry Garth sank into the waves and helplessly tumbled forward like a rag doll. Abruptly, his chest was flattened by pain, and the sea turned to yellow fire. His veins twisted in their courses and spat sparks. Harry Garth's hands clenched the awful water, and he died. Then nothingness! What he was went limp and fell back from the submerged rock with the waves.

Within the high forehead of that stone sea-stack known as Pt. Logos, is a cavern. It is undermined by the sea. Its very floor is the sea. What was once a spout within the cliff that surged out at the cap of Pt. Logos is now a hole in the cave ceiling through which yellow sunlight is captured and diffused into a green haze by the sea and plays onto the smooth walls of the cave. Time has made the cavern hollow and formed a catacomb back into the cliff, and left a rim of rock around the falling and rising sea pool, which quiet and ancient footsteps found.

Gray-robed Phyllos sat in contemplation by the upsurging pool. Fragments and splinters of wood floated to the surface, gayly rolling and dancing in the emerald pool. The waters sank and in a moment surged up again. Very slowly he rose and gazed with lucent gray eyes into the

(more)

S&G
Woodcut
Randy Lamer



very center of the pool. In the gloomy depths a shape was sluggishly suspended between the tides. The next tide swelled up in the sides of the sparkling pool, and it bobbed on the surface in a ghastly roll. Phylos drew the nerveless form from the waters and placed it on a stone couch near the pool. A direct sunbeam drained itself onto the haggard face of what was once a man.

The spirit had not ascended yet. Sudden death was bad. Phylos worked quickly, making the most of gray serenity, and soon, with the ancient drugs working, made the man whole. Phylos smiled.

Harry Garth opened his eyes. An opening of light was shining overhead. He felt sleepy and strong and a strange peacefulness. The sea pool rose and fell. The light in the cave slowly dimmed as evening approached. Harry closed his eyes, wishing for a cigarette, but instead falling asleep.

They told him the strangest tales! All knew him, he recognized them, but all nameless, nameless! Scenes changed, hundreds and hundreds of scenes, all familiar, but continuity without time. All flashed before and then passed into a dreamless peace. Waves and waves and waves flowed off and out of him as a burden was released.

It was a sightless time. He knew he waited for something. Then slowly, slowly he sank into the void of himself, the nether nothingness of his real self, that could not be touched nor either reached. He sank. Slowly he rose again. The undulations became deeper until he could hear a low rushing sound, such as could be heard in seashells placed to the ear.

"I will return to you," he felt himself say and suddenly he was sucked down by unbearable force. Pain exploded in his chest and brain. He jerked raggedly as his guts squirted in all directions from his body. Harry Garth burst forth from his cracked body like a bubble; burst forth from the searing pain and darkness to a bright burning light that shimmered and seemed to be hotly cut from the black tent of night through which his spirit fled.

In a newspaper:

The drowned body of Harry Garth was recovered from the sea off Pt. Logos. No details are yet known. . .

Phil Clausen

GLIMPSES OF TIME

And time continues; without a beginning
and without an end, it comes and it goes — forever.

Time — everchanging — newer than yesterday
and older than tomorrow, forever young, but forever aging.
Precise time — building upon the past
without confusion of haste.

Time, into whose century and year and day
and hour and minute and second I was born.
I was young, yet old — very, very old,
for time was already used to me.
I was nothing new.

Time, creating millions like me,
making us new every day,
but making us older by a day.

Time, forever hiding secrets,
secrets which are told only once,
and secrets which I anticipate with patience.

Time, an infinity of moments,
each moment a new secret revealed;
moments which I try to catch and save.

Time, forever being captured and forever escaping,
forever running in the same place — running continuously.

Steven K. Schou

THEY'RE THERE

They're there,
majestic and cold,
but beautiful, too.
I stare out my window
hours on end,
just looking
at these God-made wonders.
They're a part of me now,
in my blood, you might say.
They bring back memories,
of peace and love.
A time I'll never forget.
I'm leaving them now,
going farther and farther
until they slowly
fade
from
my eyes.

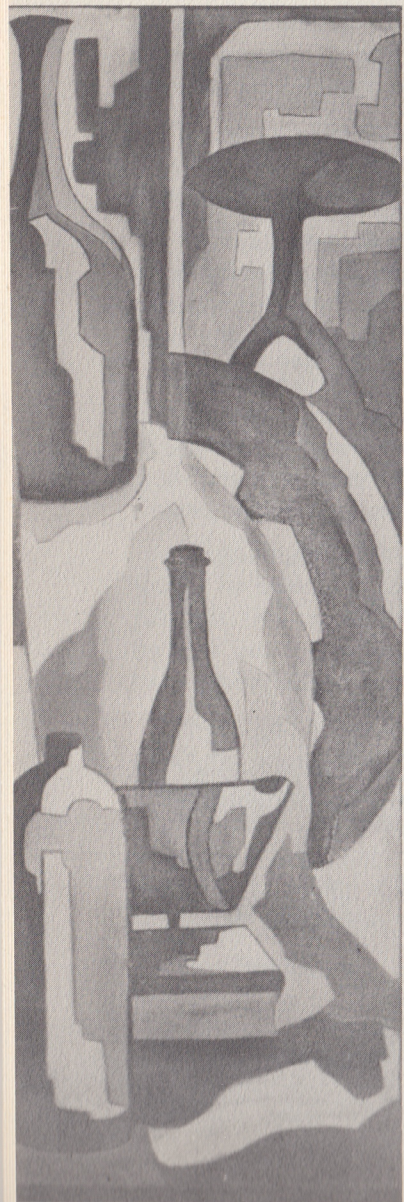
Lora Black

GREEN PUZZLE
Oil
Nancy Blobaum

7TH OF JULY

A silent whisper of wind builds up slowly,
Swiftly, magically, in a rising crescendo of sound,
With only the beating of drums for its music.
Indian drums, with a sacred message of life
And death, a message of hope and despair.
Softly they beat and then loudly
As exploding visions of grandeur join in the ritual song.
The deep rolling bass and the piercing soprano join
In a new syncopation of ancient elements,
Lighting the way and sounding a fanfare
For soft, gentle patters of life, almost inaudible
With the violent chorus singing allegro
While the soft pats thump away in a lazy andante.
The volume is raised and the patters and thumpings
Give way to a pounding as tempos are matched
And the music is raised to a new elevation.
Then it bursts forth, a violent forte of death
And destruction, a chilling performance that shatters
And pounds at the senses till fear leaves us numb.
Then silence.
A new rush of music is heard but the violent forte is gone,
Replaced now with soft recaps of patters almost forgotten.
Now with a slow decrescendo the music is gradually silenced,
And only dim flashes of light show its exit.
The performance is over.

Lowell A. Thomsen



THOUGHTQUAKE

I have seen days like this before
and never fully recovered
When the sun reaches down
with flat hands
and scratches my back
And I met a gnome
in a shaggy forest
who grinned at me
with knuckled teeth
I say
whatchadoin'
He say
smilin'
And I passed through the gate
that wasn't really there
Walking like a cloud
caught in a lake's sleepy eye
Through seas of whiskered grass
butterflies like smiles in the wind
skeltered trees
piles of petunias
warm robins
lilacs dazed in the valley
But suddenly I didn't know
and I turned
too quickly
around
To see the gate
that wasn't really there
wasn't there
and I didn't know
And some tiny white flowers
like misplaced stars
bent their heads
together
And they turned to me
and spoke
Setting my gaze a-glimmer
starswept
speechless
on a sea of wonder
upon a silver tongue

Eric Evans

SILENTLY THE SUN ROSE

Silently the sun rose
Across the mists of morning
When like sleeping ghosts they rest
Light upon the land
That melt away
Before the golden touch
And reveal the rich-wrought
Tapestry of life
Therein concealed.
So rises love each day
Across my shrouded vagueness
And its quiet vigil
Dissolves the sullen fogs
That obsess my troubled soul:
For love, like a spirit
Gently floating
Quiet waters o'er,
Haunts twilight
And fills the void
Between night and day
With visions
Of a gentler dawn.

Craig Moran

LOVE ONE ANOTHER
Serigraph
John V. Nelson



HAIKU

At dawn the rising
Sun — chases fleeing moonbeams
To new horizons.

Nancy Davison

HAIKU

Heavenly rain fell
Quietly, quickly, leaving
The parched ground refreshed.

Thomas Campbell

HAIKU

Golden fields of grain
Swaying in mid-summer's breeze
Toss their weathered heads.

Thomas Campbell

CINQUAIN

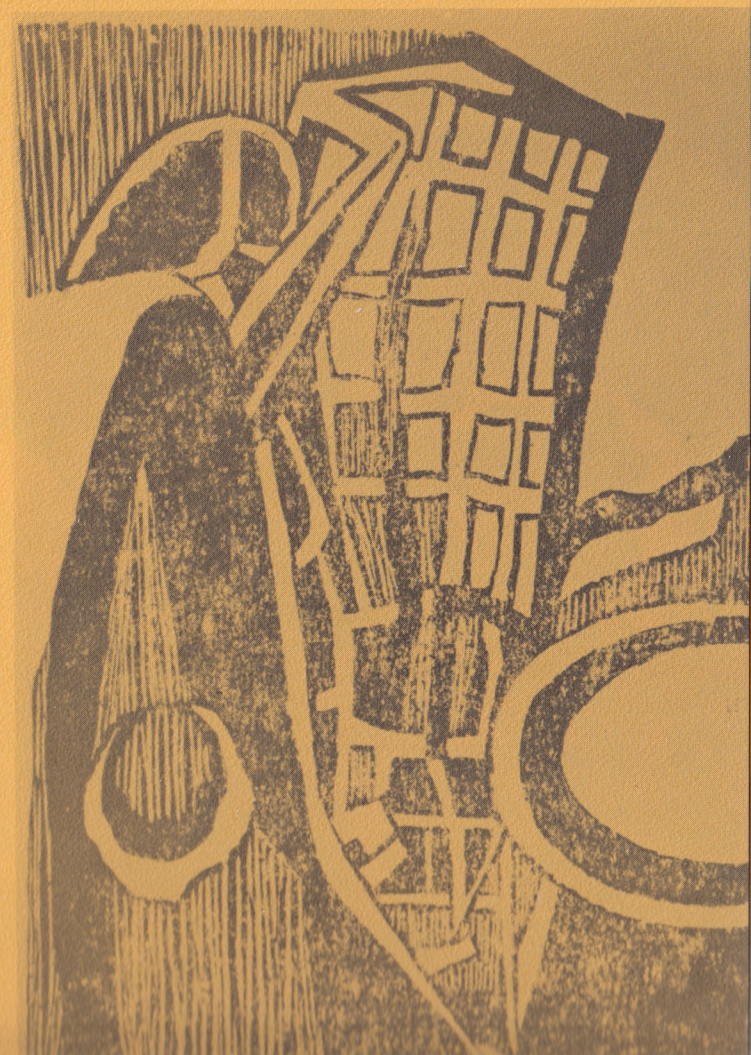
Leaves dance
In autumn's chill,
Tripping gayly about the
Earth's fading skirt of plaid, turning
To dust.

Thomas Campbell

WALKING BY A BOWER

The saddest sight of all is Fall's fast fading flower
A matted dry remain of Summer's life and power.
Who walks this earth of winning sin, strange men,
Must see the awful end of life begin,
For cold winds come with darts of ice
That none withstand, nor shelter can suffice. . .

Phil Clausen



CRASH
Woodcut
Kay A. Olsen

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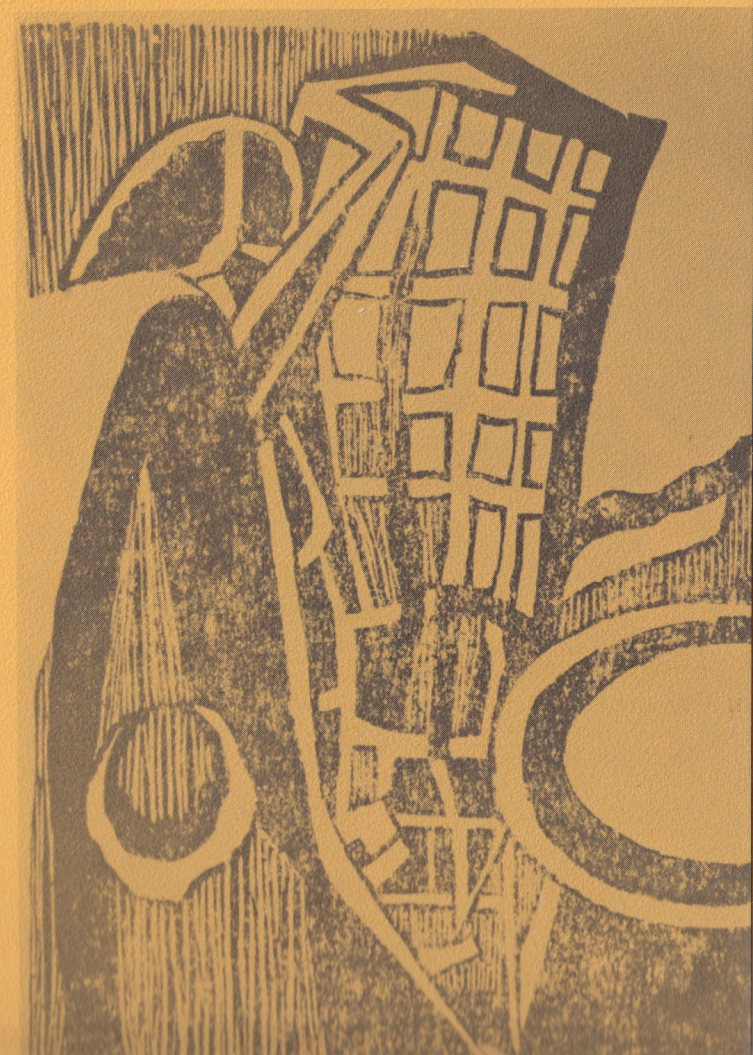
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Phil Clausen



CRASH
Woodcut
Kay A. Olsen

NOTHINGS

I heard nothing in her shrieking silence.
I saw nothing in her dewy eyes.
She asked me for nothing,
And that is what I gave her.
I could not hear the words she would not speak.

I was a self-assured young woman
Going out to save the world.
Friend to the lost, the poor, the black.
Headlines would testify to my compassion.
People would praise me for my good will.

I saw her in the hallway every morning —
But never really saw her.
She was not lost, poor, or black.
She would not speak for fear.
I would not speak because she didn't matter.

But she matters now. . . now that her blood stains the floor.
"Yes, it was I who stopped the flow of blood."
"Yes, five more minutes and it would have been too late."
Headlines testify to my compassion,
But my good will is worth little more than a damn.

Cheryl Harris

HAIKU

Concrete fish swimming
Through the garden shrubbery —
Life's cold illusions.

John Gebuhr

BEFORE HE LEFT, HE GAVE ME A PACK OF CIGARETTES

I only asked for one,
but he gave me twenty.
His destination was unknown,
he might have needed them
to calm his fears —
But he gave them to me,
twenty tubes of tobacco
wrapped in white paper,
one for each year of his life.
As I smoked them one by one
I wondered how many more he had left.

John Leitel

THE GIRL WITH THE GOLDEN HAIR

I walk alone.
Only my cigarette comforts me
As the icy wind whips through my body.
I dash it against the cold, hard ground
And light another.
A distant train whistle calls me
From somewhere out in the night.
But I hang my head,
And weep bitterly,
For the sake of the girl with the golden hair.

John Leitel

I AM THE WATCHER

Deep in the epitaph evening
of a stillborn waiting night
I pound the pavements of Market Street
dazed in its highway desolation
Sailors slip by
and catfish children
weeping widows
lost Levites in Levis
jealous zealots

I AM THE WATCHER
an intellectual orange
rolling through lives
round and ridiculous
Twilight train tales
free-fall fantasies
Yellow yesterdays in flight
like tattered sails in the wind
Polythene rain
from an electric God
Soul commotion
STOP lights
America and St. Crimson
riding lost legends
A lunatic's lonely eyes
gazing aghast upon his grave
dead men
scared men
mad men
scarred men

I perch upon the peak of night
and gaze into the crowded valley
Where shovelers stoop and scoop
the soil beneath a concrete shell
The earth's dark breast is bared
shining cold in the hungry night
The time is ripe for rape
there is no one to stop it
The gauntlet gallantly thrown
lies unseen unknown
in the gutter's clutter
stiff fingers reaching skyward
clawing the maddened air

Buildings yawn in blind alleys
sailors slip by

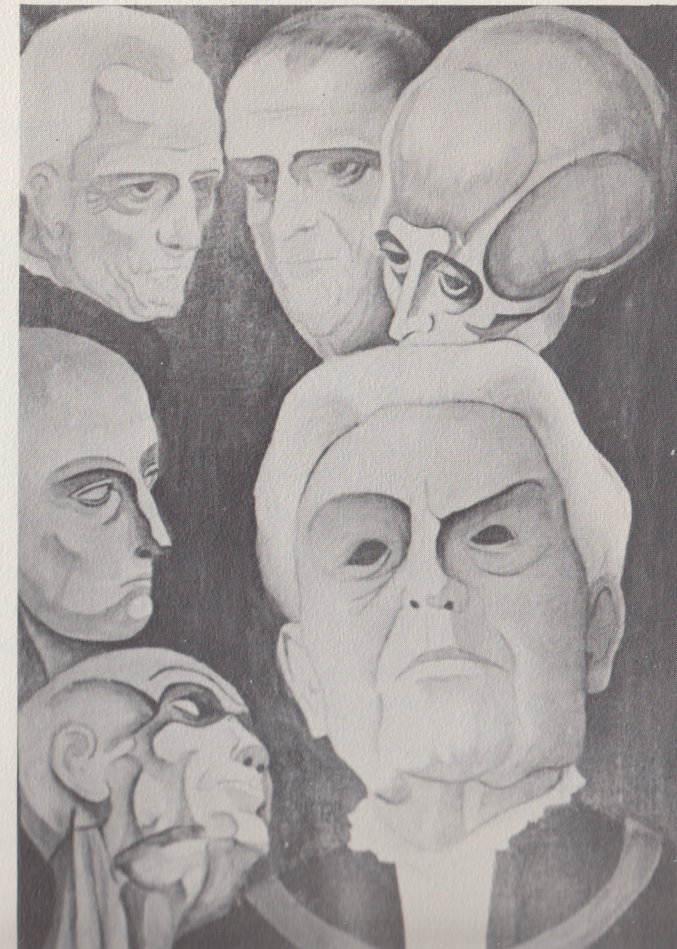
Eric Evans

DER NAMENLOSE

Ja, so bin ich
oft und immer ausgegangen,
und nie hab' ich das Wissen,
dass ich hab' gesucht, gefunden.
Nur einen Traum habe ich gefunden,
nur einen Traum habe ich geliebt;
also am Ende weiss ich:
dass man nichts wissen kann,
und man kann auch nichts tun;
man kann ja nur sein,
und er findet Freiheit nur im Tod.

Walter Wolff

DR. FAUSTUS
Oil
John Prouty



DEATH IS AWESOME

Death is awesome.
We are his creatures
With laughing faces.
When we think ourselves to be in the
midst of life,
He dares to weep
In the midst of us.

from the German of
Rainer Maria Rilke
by Mary Louise Henneman

THAT IS THE WAR!

"Surely, Mother surely, that is the war
When high in the tower the bells ring,
When we hear deep sounds of our new victory,
And again new significant glory.
When the band is playing in the town square,
And when all the people listen,
And when it goes through the ranks,
Just like the distant forest rustling.
Isn't that truly the war, my mother,
When the proud German banners fly
And when all men are glad
And when we don't go to school?"
The mother pondered — the mother was silent.
Then she softly said this to the young boy.
"My child, that is the war
When all over the land mothers weep.

from the German of
Ph. Schaffert
by Mary Louise Henneman

POÈME

Je voudrais aller en Afrique,
Mais je préférerais rester en Amérique.
La vie est bien en belle France
Où tant est plein de la romance.
Mais dans la terre de la liberté
On peut faire ce qui lui plaît.
Pourquoi préféreriez-vous la paix
Du pays en retard et étranger
Quand vous pouvez faire la guerre
Dans la terre de votre père?

R. F. Andersen

STARS & STRIPES

Serigraph
Diann Sellon



ARENA

Clash steel and end another life!
The sounding of this city madness
Rings on a gladiator's cursed knife,
See, Nero, there the tensions subside.
Clash steel and end another life!

Phil Clausen

A NICE UGLY BOY GOES TO WAR AND IS SERVED UP

He was something like your height
but the face like a plate of potatoes
was mashed in the fight
reducing him to tomatoes.

Phil Clausen

ANOTHER ARENA, SOMEWHERE IN THE CITY

The hands are hollering for more!
An arena's sighing sides are full of dull eyes
Grinning past horror, at the lion men.
But the fighting fat lions
Are seen as men again
Screaming, laughing and dying
On the blood-waxed office floor;
But the lions do not rise again. . .
They are men.

Phil Clausen

VINH LONG

The town and surrounding area of Vinh Long was quite unlike any place I had visited before in my own country, or in a foreign country. The first thing that differed from the usual, for me at least, was the appearance of the people — full-grown men and women had a build like high school sophomores.

The town or village is located in a highly agricultural area, so there is no industry there, only small struggling shops. The unthinking ravages of war unfortunately did not pass by this little town, for everywhere there are reminders it passed this way.

On the Catholic church and the Buddhist temple there are the marks of bullets like violent heresies thrown against the church, leaving superficial scars on these faiths. Some of the buildings in the town, the brick and plaster ones, have great gaping holes in their sides and roofs black from fire, as if some gigantic fire-breathing monster had struck in the night. There are also huts made from palm fronds and bamboo still unchanged, like fossils of a lost era.

There is also a crude hospital in this town which is more like a butcher shop than a place of healing. Young and old alike are cramped together in one room and in common beds, like some grotesque menagerie, groaning and coughing as if pain and misery were an orchestra. The flies that inhabit this place are like tiny messengers carrying from room to room, and drinking-cup to drinking-cup, parcels of disease.

At night the view of the town changes. No longer can you see the bodies of war machines flying overhead like swarms of gigantic locusts; at night these are distinguished only by red and green lights, blinking lights like the colors of Christmas. Sometime during almost every night the sky explodes into a gigantic fireworks display — continuous streams of tracers rain down like red water from a garden hose and from the ground comes a reply in like manner. The sounds of the display are like a child setting off a string of firecrackers and like a man using a motor-driven saw to cut down a tree at the same time. Then suddenly the display is quiet.

When the next day starts, all else begins anew, and yet the same as the day before. I know the pattern of Vinh Long's day and night are hard to change; but why is Vinh Long like a pawn to be sacrificed in the chess game of the world?

Eldon Wulf

ALONE

It was so lonely looking.
All bare of leaves.
The branches were snow covered
to blanket it in cold.
Standing — never moving,
The tree stood in the middle of the field
like the last of a great race.
It clung onto life,
but life had left it.
And the tree — had only to know it.

John Larsen

STILL-LIFE WITH FORM #1

It was a Monday morning, gray and oppressing. A new secular toil-week had begun, following the cloud-pregnant night that had watched Sunday quietly die into humdrum. He stepped out of his ancient, black Volkswagon and paused as the ball of a wrecking crane made the bricks of a nearby building become as if amorphous sand falling in a slow-motion sigh. They made no dust, the dampness would not permit it. That, at least, was one thing.

He walked east, always watching expressionless sunglasses of passing people glaring a cold, hard reality in retrospect against him and into his brain. He reached the bus stop and waited. At twelve forty-five the big city bus pulled away from the curb. At twelve forty-five and a pause, he was under its wheels.

Walter Wolff

A WAY

A soft, mellow light glowed through the stained-glass windows of the old country church. The evening air was cold and crisp, and every star known was visible. Inside the church a young priest knelt in one of the front pews and recited his office. He was only 28 and already he had been given his own parish. His congregation was composed of pious farmers with large families and a few students who went to the college in town. He had a lot of responsibility for a priest with so little experience. He had lived on a farm like most of his parishioners, and knew the habits and customs of these people. He was sure of himself and knew that with the help of God all difficulties and problems would be overcome.

During his period of silent meditation the heavy oak door of the church opened, and a gust of rich country air rushed in. Delicate, slow footsteps grew closer and louder, and a young Oriental girl knelt down across the aisle from him. She had long, thick, black hair that draped over her shoulders and down most of her back. Her eyes were closed, and her eyelashes rested upon her high cheekbones. Her smooth cream colored skin glowed with the chill of winter, and a peaceful almost angelic countenance spread across her face as she whispered her prayers.

After many minutes of motionless devotions the silent ivory-shaded girl rose and slipped back into the night. The young priest was all alone once more. He had been staring unconsciously at the mysterious young girl and when he closed his eyes he could see her once more. He blushed at this phenomenon and tried to erase it from his mind. He wasn't worried. It would fade out of his thoughts eventually. He rose and blew out the candles on the altar and returned to his empty rectory and bed.

The night passed slowly. Sleep would not come, and he kept seeing the image of the girl in his mind. He was confused and upset. Never had the thoughts of any girl stayed with him so long. That was one of the reasons he had entered the seminary. No girl had ever interested him, and no girl had ever taken an interest in him. He had been shy and afflicted with the common teenage problem of acne in high school, and his looks had embarrassed him. He had always wanted to be a priest, though, ever since he could remember. That had been his goal. The night was half over, and the thought of early Mass reminded him that he must get some sleep. He said the 'Our Father' several times until sleep finally silenced him.

The next day was clear and cold, and all the windows in the rectory were etched with elaborate and complicated ice designs. As the young priest prepared for early Mass he tried to guess how many people would be in attendance. On weekdays very few ever came to Mass, and it had become a game of his to guess the number that would be there, and if he were right, he would reward himself with an extra piece of coffee-cake, or, if he were wrong, he would write a letter to some forgotten friend.

(more)

Morning Mass was his favorite time of day. The people who were there really wanted to be there, and the love and devotion they showed filled him with sincere joy. The Mass began, and the priest praised God with all his soul, but his mind was distracted. The young girl was kneeling in the same place she had been the night before, and he watched her as he said Mass. She was wearing a long blue cape that hung out into the aisle. Her movements were smooth and graceful and looked like a madonna on a holy picture.

After Mass she followed the young priest into the sacristy and waited silently in the corner until he had finished disrobing. When he turned, there she stood, and for a long embarrassing moment words wouldn't come to him.

"May I help you?" the young priest asked with a stutter of surprise.

"I would like to become a Catholic," she answered with a soft French accent.

"Well, I can give you instructions on Wednesday nights at 7 o'clock." He went to the shelves behind him and found some dusty old bound volumes and handed them to her. "Here are some books you might like to look through before you come."

"Thank you, Father. I will come. Goodbye."

This would be his first convert. For the next two months on Wednesday nights he sat and discussed religion with the devout, intelligent young woman. She was from Thailand, and her father was a wealthy importer. She had come to America to study and gain knowledge about life, but she felt life without a God is meaningless. She spoke very little about herself and remained very quiet and reserved throughout their meetings. The young priest had never known anyone like her before, and everything about her captured his attention.

While he was teaching her all about love of Christ and love of one's neighbor, he found himself falling in love with her. He prayed to God constantly that the thoughts and feelings he had toward her would stop, but they kept getting stronger. He was torn between his love of God and his love for this woman. His mind was in complete disorder. It isn't natural to stop a man from loving a woman the way he did. It just isn't right. But then he wasn't just any man. He was a priest.

Never had he felt so lost and helpless before. There was no one to talk to, no one to turn to, no one who would understand or help him find an answer. His emotions and most sincere feelings were crushing him. Where was God and His soothing counsel? When life and nature pressured him even God had forsaken him. What good is life if it must be so cruel and futile? All reason for living vanished in his grief and loneliness, and in his despair the young priest killed himself.

Katie Hines

SNOW

I watched the ash as it parachuted from my cigarette to the floor in an almost slow motion effect. Thousands of thoughts passed through my mind, but no solutions seemed possible. Only reasons why it was everyone else's fault came to view. I was in one of those moods that I wanted to show everyone that things weren't so bad, they could still be worse.

Outside we were having one of the worst blizzards the Midwest had seen in years, holding me prisoner in the college from which I had been expelled. But, was going home to tell my parents I was also in debt and had to get married any better?

I awoke from my thoughts to notice the large wet spot of saliva developing where my roommate snored against his nearly gray filthy sheets. His grubby habits were sickening. I reached to the bottom of my laundry basket for the nearly new 357 Smith and Wesson I owned. In the drawer was a self-modeled silencer I made on the lath at work last summer, and a bag of several thousand target loads. I chuckled at how simple it would be as I lowered the loaded pistol to just above his left ear. I noticed the dirty underwear and socks on the floor, a piece of month-old apple pie on the desk, and pop leaking out from under his wastebasket.

The nearly inaudible report produced an electrifying, flinching effect through his whole body, and his head burst like a clay pigeon in flight. Concentric rings of blood quickly overshadowed the wet saliva stain and dripped down the sheets to the floor.

I carried the revolver and the bag of shells as I went to awaken the housemother and answered her greeting with another shot from my pistol. With her passkey I entered every room, looking first for a light under the door.

The snow outside was nearly two feet deep, and the wind filled my tracks to the other dorms in as fast as I walked. Few lights were on, and I waited several minutes for someone to let me into the other buildings. With the weather conditions and a fresh semester starting, most people were in bed. I met almost no one in the halls or lounges.

It was hard to believe things were over so fast. I walked from the last building into a beautiful, fascinating sunrise, and the snow glistened with flame. The wide, flat stretches of unbroken whiteness were intriguing, and there were no ugly snow angels or trails of footprints to be seen.

A Student

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Joseph Langland Award for Prose

Götterdämmerung by Walter Wolff

Joseph Langland Award for Poetry

Masks by James E. Black II

Hal Evans Cole Award for Excellence in the Arts

Lynn by Nancy Blobaum

Self-Discovery by Dick Tobin

Kaj Munk Award for Translation

Death is Awesome

Rainer Maria Rilke Translated by Mary Louise Henneman

GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG

Her lips are invitingly red. I would kiss them. When I reach to touch them, they disappear into the mist that hangs like an ice-wall in the Russian cold. They were but a dream, an illusion. Everything is dream or illusion, except the all-present cold. It is the only reality, everywhere and all the time. Even the mid-day sun is an illusion, frozen source of light alone. . .no warmth, no warmth. Klaus, who studied at Tübingen before the War, jokes about the cold and says that if God exists at all, He cannot be as omnipresent as the cold. Klaus always laughs when he is with us; but, once, when we were crossing Poland behind the tanks an eternity ago, I was walking beside him...he was weeping. I asked him what was wrong. "I have killed a man today," he sobbed. Steinkopf, who smells and thinks like an Esel, broke in, "A man? That was only a Jew." Klaus didn't look up and answered, "Not him. I mean myself." No one dared to speak. We silently followed the tanks. The ground crunched beneath our boots. We often stumbled.

The cold, the cold. If it would snow, the change, at least, would be something. But it is too cold to snow. Everywhere the cold, and, to the east, the Russians.

Soon the Red Tide will break against us. Our frozen tanks and guns will be helpless targets, our men as children fed to the Molech of Russian cannon. Yes, we will die; even now, we are beaten. Yet they shall die with us; but, it is of little use, each day ten living take the place of one fallen...while we bleed weaker and our Fatherland pales.

Once, when I was still young, I went to a performance of **Lohengrin** at Bayreuth. That madman, Hitler, was there with his cronies. I watched them. The music transformed him. He lived in some egocentric super-reality too blind to see fat, stupid Goering asleep and Himmler outrageously drunk. The fool! Doesn't he know that he is destroying Germany in his quest for an impossible Superman? Why must we die because one man is without a self?

No, these questions are not for me or anyone to ask, their answers come too late. The die is cast, our fate settled. Come the spring, I and my world shall be no more. Then, at least, I'll no longer mind the cold.

Walter Wolff

TEARS

A wedding is always a funeral.
An old life has been left behind.
I cry at both weddings and funerals
For fear of the new life they find.

Judy C. Brooke

NEGATIVES
Woodcut
John V. Nelson

