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The Canon, [1972-73]: Volume 3, Number 1

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ITEM NO. 1—

Lately the comment has often been made that art must entertain. Dordt English Lit students have revealed that they read books for enjoyment. The “Beacon”, voice of Northwestern College, criticized the movie “Little Big Man” for being too philosophical, calling for more entertaining movies. Don Mclean’s famous “American Pie” lamented the death of music (“...the day the music died.”) wishing for the good old days when music was entertaining.

What do items one and two have to do with each other? After all you can’t please everybody so Mick Jagger backed by driving rock Madison Square Gardens in New York for the duration of the concert. His latest song “Garden Party” he sings into a frenzy with a hard-biting-violent-time, space and insight). For example, the Stones, the only sixties group still playing, drive their audiences mad with their phrenetic sounds of the Stones. “Why don’t you just have to please yourself.” As an artist may be a frustrating one, realizing a distinction between entertainment and art, listening to all music as an instrument to release frustration. In some ways the artist sings what he believes, what he experiences, what he feels, what he lives. (I realize this is horribly simplistic—I plead for forgiveness due to lack of time, space and insight). For example, recently Ricky Nelson performed at Madison Square Gardens in New York where he was boo’d off the stage. In his latest song “Garden Party” he sings: “I learned my lesson well—you can’t please everybody so just have to please yourself.” As an artist he will sing himself, even if he is the only appreciative listener.

Many North Americans do not recognize a distinction between entertainment and art, listening to all music as entertainment. To me this is doing injustice to the artist, twisting his work to suit one’s desires or simply ignoring it. Often-times an artist will attempt to record his work and the recording engineer will suggest instrumental arrangements to make the piece commercially competitive. When it is released it has already been twisted. Though the lot of an artist may be a frustrating one, we should reserve our tears for this de-teriorating civilization of ours—she hungers and thirsts for an escape, turning and twisting reality so that she may be entertained.

—Helen Blankeskpoor

ITEM NO. 2—

The Rolling Stones have returned to England after completing their most successful North American tour. The Stones, the only sixties group still playing together, drove their audiences mad with a hard-biting-violent-time-soul blues style. The stage antics of Mick Jagger backed by driving rock held fans like puppets on a string for the duration of the concert.

What do items one and two have to do with each other? After all, the phrenetic sounds of the Stones isn’t exactly anyone’s idea of relaxing, forget the week-gone-by, Saturday night music. Nevertheless, the Stones gained popularity first of all as entertainers. Many North Americans do not recognize a distinction between entertainment and art, listening to all music as entertainment. To me this is doing injustice to the artist, twisting his work to suit one’s desires or simply ignoring it. Often-times an artist will attempt to record his work and the recording engineer will suggest instrumental arrangements to make the piece commercially competitive. When it is released it has already been twisted. Though the lot of an artist may be a frustrating one, we should reserve our tears for this deteriorating civilization of ours—she hungers and thirsts for an escape, turning and twisting reality so that she may be entertained.

—Syd Heelema
EDITORIAL

Sue Meyers

THE CANNON is the literary mouthpiece for Dordt students, faculty, and alumni. The staff is composed of six editorial members, general members, and a faculty advisor. The staff is not closed, anyone desiring to help may come in at any time.

Our general purpose this year is to get you excited about writing. We don't print just anything, but we want to get a large selection of literature printed. Our focus this year will be primarily literary—short stories, poems, plays, and the like.

The criteria for accepting an article is whether or not it is God-glorifying. An article must also be interesting enough so that the majority of students can enjoy it.

Some of the more specific types of art we hope to include this year are cartoons, children's stories, music, expository writing, faculty pointers on writing, student opinion, and book reviews.

We hope to work closely with the Fine Arts Festival committee and share materials. We are mainly supported by the Student Activities budget, local townspeople and student writing. So get moving!

immigrants
rugged planks of wood
partially draped with a bedspread
tablecloth and rugs

surrounded them
while the lantern tossed shadows
across the faces of the young couple
seated upon apple crates
watching their child peacefully
sleeping content
in the old bathtub

acres of flat black land
awaiting the hungry plough sharp disc
and seeds of grain

lay before him
as he drove the tractor from dawn till dusk
thinking of his young wife
milking cows baking bread
and their child cheerfully
playing unaware
with the farmer's big dog

endless hours of labour
attempting to satisfy the farmer's incessant demands

occupied them
as their hopes for the future
slowly replaced memories of family
and friends left behind
while they prayed earnestly
trusting childlike
in the guidance of God

j. medendorp

CLOUDS

Shiftless
Going nowhere
The gray, the white, the pink
Rotundas.
Lolling mountains
Sprawl, crawl, wander
Back and forth in God’s sky
Thundering, drenching—harmless
Creatures of the blue.

- Tina LaBrenz
Okay, kids! This is it! I was excited thinking to myself as I rose to lead my twenty-five four-year-old students to the platform. I glanced a peek over my shoulder at the audience. "Oh my word!" There must have been five hundred people crammed into that little church auditorium. Anxious parents and grandparents squirmed to see their child in grandeur.

Everyone was lining up quite nicely. "Now just a little more to the center. There! Perfect!" But the children were more attracted to the audience than to following these next whispered instructions: "Now everybody keep your eyes on me and sing just as loud and just as pretty as you can." Did they realize the impact of this? I would know very soon. One glance at the pianist and she was off to a good cheerful start. While the introduction vaguely registered in my nervous mind, I felt a last minute reaction, little Mitchie spoke right up. "Teacher, I have to go potty!" Completely unashamed and obvious to the situation, he stared blankly at me for response. There was a general response of chuckles, drawn breaths, and even out bursts of laughter. As to my reaction, I can not be accountable for it, nor can I completely recall it. I motioned somehow to Mitchie to wait just a minute and made an earnest effort to complete the song, but the drive was severed. The shade of my face must have become very warm and my voice waved to the end of the chorus of "I'm in the Lord's Army". Sometimes in God's work we march through the valley of exasperation.

Whatever Happened to the Good Old Days?

**Ducks**

Yesterday
The ducks came back, Mother
And I saw them sitting on the beach shore
But when I ran nearer
They honked
And swam away

I would feed them some bread
But they are more wild than before
I would sit quiet near them
But they are more afraid this year
I would stroke them softly
But they get angry with my hand

Today
The ducks were gone, Mother
And I think they were just visiting an old home
But do not stay
Because Johnny
Smashed ten eggs last year

Jane Vreeman

**Editorial...**

**IS THE CANNON DEAD?**

The Cannon is not dead. A nasty rumor had spread that the Cannon had died. That the Cannon had been melted down into iron, to be reworked into something new. That rumor is false. The Cannon is loaded, ready to fire.

To say that the Cannon is without problems would be self delusion. A Cannon cannot fire unless it has ammunition. Dordt's Cannon is running low. Last year several issues that should have appeared never did. There wasn't enough "ammunition." Thus year the Cannon could face the same problems. Unless there are some people on campus who aren't too busy or too proud or too humble, as sometimes the case is, to sit down and write us a poem, or a short story, or an essay, or a play, or draw us a cartoon, or do a pencil sketch for us. For us? No, not really for us. The Cannon was established to encourage young Christian writers to publish their wares as part of their Christian communal responsibility. If you are going to submit something, don't do it for our sake... do it for the Lord.

-Sue Meyers
-Karl Neerhof
DREAMS
She stands in the dim shadowed doorway
of the basement bedroom
trying to reorganize her time-worn mind
cluttered by years of worrying waiting
of heavy hopes run down by disappointments
there must be something to say in the late afternoon.

She fingers through gray brittle hairs
and straightens her rounded shoulders
standing before her girl.
You’re still wanted here you still belong
she says even though Annie has moved
the old oak drawers
and your books are up in the attic now.
Her thin frame quivers in the silence of
intentions not understood.
I did keep your favorite picture up on the wall
in the very same spot the little girl in pink ribbons.

A filter of light reflects on the white hardness
of three suitcases filled heavy
with a world of young dreams
a sharp metallic click
and the cold key gives the answer
to the last home vacation.

Klaaske De Groot

O Lord, again I turn and see Your hand
Beneath me as I vainly sink in fear;
With haughty mind, Your voice refused to hear,
I sought to join with mankind’s foolish band,
The sacred doctrines nourished a thousand times
Grew cold and bitter-tasting on my tongue;
The Psalms and hymns, which joyfully I’d sing
Now seemed a dragging, senseless string of Rhymes.
Struck down by Wisdom infinitely clear
Weak faith by sorrows, death, and sickness tried;
Deserting friends, whose “truth” I found, had lied,
He gave me Truth, new life, forgiveness dear.

Kathy Bol

FREEDOM FIGHTER
I really cannot quite remember why
I once believed that only I should bind
the shifting elusive borders of my
freedom. Mine was a muted undefined
rebellion. Scorning flaming flamboyant
gestures, I carefully wove thistled walls
of daily routines around defiant
reckless dares and spinning thoughts and windfalls
of whirling endless possibility
till it hurt to move. With paralyzed hopes
of closing open wounds, I begged to be
loosened. Then God unwound my brambled ropes
gently (annointing time to heal each pain)
and bound me loosely with a daisy chain.

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SPRING

The plow bit into the solid black earth. Each bite glimmered with a glorious black fluorescense in the sunshine. The stalwart geometric fences were boasted of new wild roses and water weeds eager to compete for moisture. Martin Bakker, overalled and dusty, moved up and down methodically on his seat as his tractor empowered the glowing plow. His whole being felt the energetic impact of spring. Hinting playfully of coming summer warmth, the cool wind persistently ticked his neck, the wispy gray hairs under his visored cap, and over his Feed jacket. With every bite, the surge of the plow bottom became the surge of Martin's love for his farm. The mysterious smell of open soil mixed with the heady smell of the cattle manure spread on the neighbor's field settled comfortably in the air. Over the hill, Martin could see populars, Russian olives and ash trees, shyly showing their budding leaves. Even the tiny clouds, teasing the sun, whispered "spring." Martin stood up on the tractor seat to stretch. This was the kind of day when he should say, "Rejoice. This is the day the Lord hath made." His own thought lashed him sharply. Martin watched the path of the plow; a man had to plow straight and that took years of experience and concentration. "Don't care, don't care." Martin cringed. Johnnie had to care. He and Jennie had been reading the Bible to him since he was three. Together they had never missed church services. Johnnie had always done well in Sunday School. Why, just last year, a man in the stockyards had really been touched with a spiritual problem. What's wrong, Martin? You're not going to let Martin from finding her nest. The wind had come up and sassiively picked up bits of soil and threw them up. Martin wanted to demand, "God, what is it? How can your land shout your greatness and even slap me in the face and how can I still not pray?" Martin knew Jehovah. Why was Spring and all of life swirling around so blatantly? God, he couldn't be down. Each step on Martin's long walk was clumsy over the plowed land. As he looked down, Martin could see the secrets of winter all caught up in the soil. Roots and plant growth and seeds had merged wondrously into the black richness. Martin thought of the roughness of the land and the tiny seeds that would somehow break through. Somehow it angered him to be bombarded with this miracle now.

As Martin climbed off the tractor, the gulls flew up in perfect geometric designs of body and wings on a blue sky. Up ahead a heather colored bird was pretending to be wounded to keep Martin from finding her nest. The wind had come up and sassily picked up bits of soil and threw them up. Martin wanted to demand, "God, what is it? How can your land shout your greatness and even slap me in the face and how can I still not pray?" Martin knew he was a Christian. Why was Spring and all of life swirling around so blatantly? God, he couldn't be down. Johnnie had said, "Dad, the way I see it, I got to be cocky to be in God's world. Well, hang it up. I'm scared and mixed up. You would never understand." Martin could still hear Johnnie's words. "Dad, I'm no Christian. I do the things a Christian should do, but I get down. I'm a heel if I'm a Christian; I get uptight." Uptight, uptight, Martin wanted to tear off his jacket, his workshoes, his socks. Johnnie had said, "Dad, the way I see it, I got to be cocky to be in God's world. Well, hang it up. I'm scared and mixed up. You would never understand." Scared, Mixed up. Never understand. Martin's eyes filled. Suddenly the land seemed to draw long black lines under Martin's every word and action. "Christian"—shouted the wind. As he reached the hill, Martin stumbled and fell.

Martin lay childishly sprawled on the black earth. The rough clouds hurt his abdomen and thighs. Pebbles of soil dug into his face. The air was still. Spring had a quieter voice for a minute. Martin was alone. Opening his eyes, Martin saw blackness. The smell of the soil oozed through his nostrils. Martin's hands were grimy and his nails capped with black ridges.
I WORKED IN THE BAKERY

I worked in the bakery today

two dozen glazed donuts

one Dutch almond raisin loaf

three dozen hot cross buns.

I said to me, “Be nice”, when I heard

“Don’t squish my buns . . .

7¢ is too much for a donut . . .

my apple coffee cake was gooey inside . . . ”

And I marked my bun-packing record to

two dozen in fifty seconds.

I hated my job with sticky children on my

clean glass case,

red-rouged Mrs. V. pinching raisin buns,

Mrs. M. wanting prices on every roll . . .

But then the old man with dusty striped overall

shuffled in and

I gave the proper line, “May I help you?”

but no response from his deep gray eyes.

Then he pointed to his mouth and shook his head,

smiled,

and pointed to the crusty almond patties

with three thick fingers capped with grimy nails.

I gave him three in a bag and rang the

cash register to 19¢.

His head was down so I touched his arm lightly

and placed the slip in his huge hand.

He smiled a no-teeth smile and dropped a grubby

quarter on the counter.

I gave the old man change and impulsively

wrote “Thank you, sir” on a paper

Then he almost laughed, low and rough, and

took the paper; he wrote clumsily in crude letters,

“God bless you, Girlie”.

—Helen Blankespoor

TO THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA
(Revelation 21:6)

I seem to see

a light wind
tickling the green

willow leaves

And gently nudging
ever-moving, always-changing

indentations

into a liquid mirror

Reflecting

some distant source

doing orange light—
a giant yolk.

I give audience
to the fingers of green

as to the rustle

of a silken garment.

Performing a waltz

with the wind

and transmit-
ing their joy to their roots

They give call
to the shoots of green

and the water

and earth to join;

Calling the sun
to break

the eggshell-silence

and pour out its song

And now I see

the four and more

in unity

partaking of The Eternal Feast.

—MO

CHRISTIAN POLITICS?

Read what these books say

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>Non-Member</th>
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Insight, Authority, and Power — Peter Schouls — 1.55 1.95
Worship and Politics — Albert F. Gedmitis — 2.20 2.75
The Christian Idea of the State — Herman Dooyeweerd — 1.00 .85
Scriptural Religion and Political Task — H. Evan Runner — 1.00 1.25
The Christian Philosophy of Law, Politics, and the State —
E. L. Hebden Taylor — 10.65 12.50
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