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THE DEVIL'S SHADOW
The grand first drawing of the Order had two parts, resembling a human shape, clearly distinguished from the other part, added by the



THE CANON 2004

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Editorial Statement:

The Canon accepts works from Dordt college students, faculty and staff. Each work should reflect truth in God's creation, and ultimately God himself.

In sensitivity to those who may be adversely affected by excessive violence, vulgar language, or sexually explicit content, The Canon will publish no piece containing such material, nor will it publish material that advocates illegal activities or promotes bigotry toward any race, sex, ethnic group, age group, or religion.

The Canon will also refuse any factual material that slanders a member of the Dordt community or is libelous.

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Front Cover Image:

D. Versluis, *Inside O'Brien's Barn I*

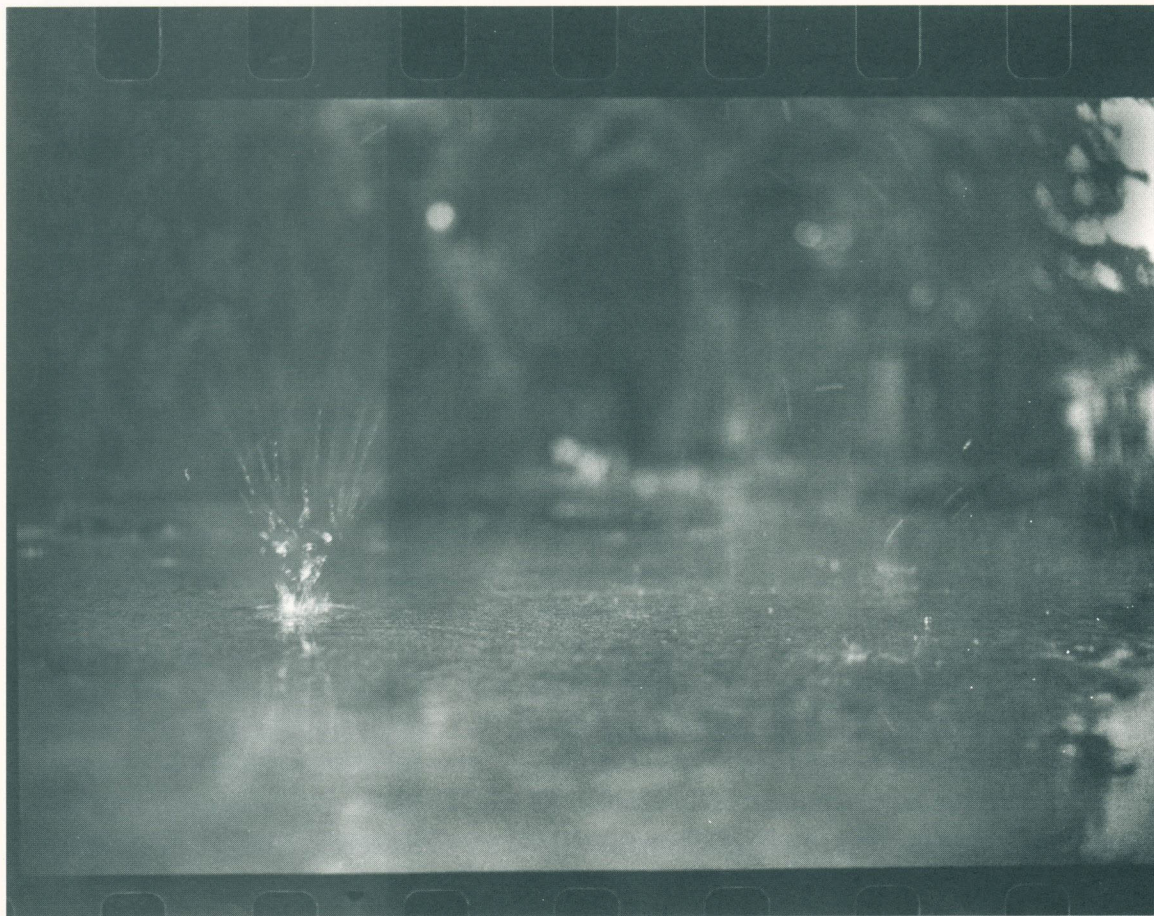
Sharyl Wielard
Rooted II . Black and White Photograph



A small town on a
sunny day amidst a
mourning winter is
a cave of wild bears waking
up after a winter-long nap,
wandering outside soaking
up the energy of a new start,
birds finding their voices thawed
as the notes are drip drip dripping
with a melody that had been
put in a winter frost's freezer,
and the snow finds itself pushed
to the side like leftovers on a
plate. Everyone is searching
for the good stuff, digging up
what has seemed to die—
Life outside of walls.

Chris Maust

Droplet . Black and White Photograph





When the last leaf falls,
The music is not sad.
It is resigned and minor but
Shifting to hopeful themes as
Snow covers the still pink petals
Of late-summer roses.
Blinding blue skies turn clear and
Cold with the approaching hibernation of
Warmth. Green blood freezes red
Gold and the last leaf falls
With poignant, simplistic
Trust.
To see death as beauty
To see death as a forward motion
To see death not as a step backwards but as a progression
To rejoice in passing
To rejoice in conquered fears
To end life in order for it to be reborn
To taste the blood in our mouths
To hear the final bell toll
To feel our heart's descending dance
To know the lights of our eyes are darkened
And yet hope.

This is autumn, the descending dance
The tolling bell, the dimming soul
Of spring and life.
To think of even thousands
Of years
Between me and
The beginning mystifies even my
Imagination, stifles the
Word on my lips, instills
Awe
Amazement
Wonder at the lives lived between
Adam and myself. Thoughts about
People, distinct and specific,
Faces, names, and how each one
Is known by Him specifically
And distinctly.
Awe
Amazement
Wonder at the passionate embrace
Of humanity.

Voices – around me, hating and ridiculing;
Faces – beside me, glaring and laughing;
Evil, most everywhere – waiting to engulf –
All who have chosen to live a life for God.
The path and the agony – coming in from every angle;
The hurt and distress, in every corner of the world.
But wait... I look around me and see that it is God;
What's this? Angels surrounding me, protecting me from harm.
There's still pain, but I'm looking to the future.
There's still agony, but I can see an end.
There's still hurt that rages deep –
But empty threats are these.
For the Lord is ever empowering, giving strength to face the hardships,
And I can breathe once more and continue ahead.
Narrow, though the path;
How deep and wide the promises.

Helena Geels
Orchid Duet . Color Photograph





Jon Dykstra
In My Head . Acrylic . 2002

It's Wednesday night in a miserable computer cave
I sweat and look at the flat screen of my Compaq
And think,
Miss 1" margins/7 pages is the enemy, Mr. double-spaced is my friend
And I hate this
Screen
I hate (well, strongly dislike) you
Microsoft Word
Can I really hate a machine?
I guess so
Especially since you're mocking me
With your blank, pale, glaring white face

And
Your blinking cursor
Rhythmically telling me
"You can't write.
You can't write.
There's so much s p a c e.
There's so much s p a c e.
Try to fill it.
Try to fill it.
For your justifiably insane professor."

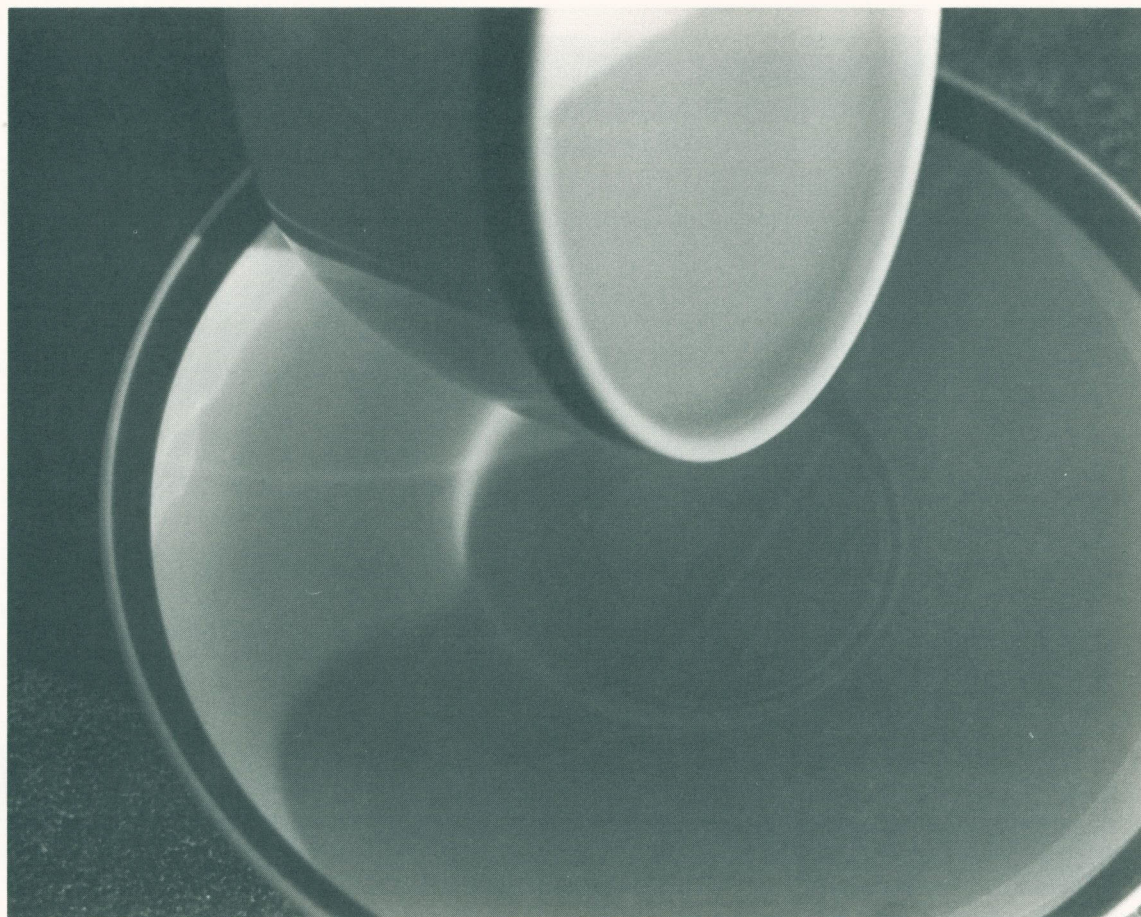
Ha Ha
Ha Ha Ha
HA!

Well guess what Word
Man wins again
I have filled you up
I have deleted your petty obstacle
And I
WON!
Red ink A+
"Excellent voice! Persuasive prose!"



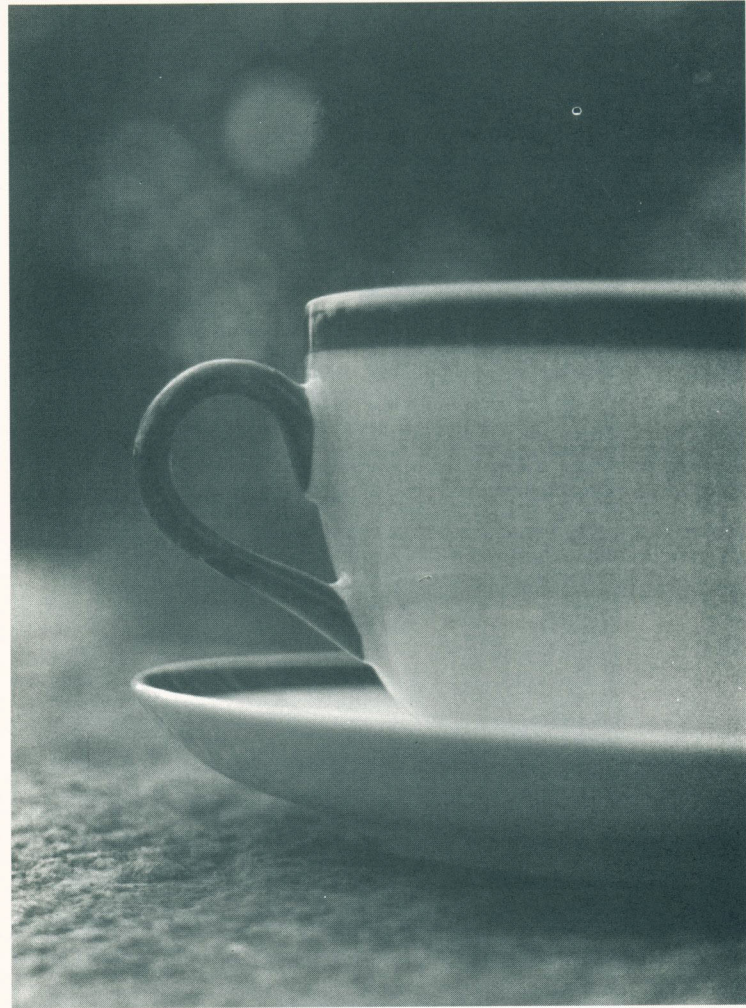
Roxanne Volkers . *Teacup & Saucer Study #1*
Black and White Photograph





Roxanne Volkers . *Teacup & Saucer Study #3*
Black and White Photograph

Roxanne Volkers . *Teacup & Saucer Study #4*
Black and White Photograph



The coffeeshop sounds
Were rhythmic and soothing
And reverberating with
Echoes of philosophy and
Young life spilling over
Coffee and chocolate steamers
While in my mind her
Words echoed louder and
Stronger of engagement for
He is the one and meanwhile
Flies keep buzzing around
My head avoiding my
Misunderstood swats and
I sit here alone in this
Ocean of people who all
Want what I want some
Hiding it better than others
And the noise of their illusions
Is breaking my ears
So I go.

Chris Maust . *Shelter* .
Digitally Altered Black and White Photograph



"Jordan, just deal the cards already!" Cal said. "I've got practice in 25 minutes, and we need to get this game finished."

"Don't worry, partner, this one won't last much more than one more hand," Jed replied. "I feel a big one coming on."

The guys rolled their eyes. Jed always felt a big one coming on.

"Whatever, dude. You'd need to shoot the moon to win in one hand. If anyone's winning in this hand, it's me and Jordan--we only need 100," Oscar said, wiping the sweat from his forehead. The modest breeze entering through the window of their apartment was little help against the late summer heat.

Jordan quickly shuffled once more and smoothly flicked the flimsy, tattered Rook cards around the table. Each card landed on the table and stuck, the thick September air keeping everything static. The four guys waited patiently for their cards--picking them up before all ten were piled on top of each other was bad luck.

"So, fellas, we're two weeks into the semester. Fill me in on the new crop of freshmen ladies," Cal said. "I've been so busy with soccer tryouts I haven't been able to play the field--if you know what I mean." He smiled mischievously.

"I've got this Gina chick in my intro to physics class that's smoking!" Jed exclaimed. "She's got this gorgeous light brown hair that..."

"You'll have to excuse Jed. Being a science nerd, his standards are a bit lower than the rest of ours," Jordan laughed. "He's so happy to have a girl in his class he'd fall in love with the bearded lady as long as she took physics!"

"Shut up, you guys all suck," Jed sunk back into his chair

and picked up his cards.

Oscar chuckled and looked out the window. "Well, while you two argue, I'm gonna check out this fine specimen passing by our window right now."

The four guys dropped their cards and fought to look out the window. A petite brunette strolled along the sidewalk in front of the apartment. The intense sunlight reflected off her shiny, shoulder length hair, making it sparkle. Her loose-but-still-figure-showing sweatpants and tight tank top seemed not sloppy, but calculatedly casual. Suggestive, but not slutty--perfect. The boys' heads slowly followed her along the sidewalk as if under a spell. She must have felt eight eyes transfixed on her, and she turned to look at them. Cal felt her eyes penetrate his, and she gave an awkward smile. Cal raised his hand as if to wave, but didn't. She turned and continued walking. As she rounded the corner, Oscar was the first to speak.

"I'd play cards with her! If you know what I mean," he said.

"That's her! That's Gina. See, I told you she was hot!" Jed gloated as the boys sat back down and continued to sort their cards.

"I'll have to give this one to you, Jed; your physics chick really came through," Jordan conceded. "Anyone know anything about her?"

"Well, besides being a gorgeous physics chick, I think she lives off-campus and she's from some podunk town in South Dakota--I think she said right near Brookings." Jed proudly rattled off this information as if he had known her for years instead of days.

"Hey Cal, aren't you from Brookings? You know this

chick?" Oscar said.

Cal did know her. He knew that she had always dressed suggestively but not sluttilly. He knew he had sat next to her in history, her finger twirling her auburn hair disinterestedly. He knew that his former best friend had knocked her up while knowing of Cal's crush on her. He knew she had had to take a year off to have the baby. He knew she had graduated a year behind her class. He knew she had lost all her friends. He knew he had left for college without saying goodbye. He knew he still loved her.

"Yeah, I know her. We went to the same high school."

"No way! You ever hook it up?" Oscar said, again wiping the sweat from his brow.

"No. Almost did once, but I chickened out."

"Why, dude, she is ridiculously hot!" Jed gushed. "Call her up now and put in a good word for me."

"I don't think so, sorry."

"C'mon, Cal. You call girls all the time, why is this one any different? Help a brother out!" Jed said.

"I'd feel awkward." Cal said. It was true. For all his feelings, he never let her know, and he had deserted her after the pregnancy.

"Dude, she looked right at you from the sidewalk--don't think I didn't notice," Jordan chimed in. "She's almost begging you to call her."

"Guys...you don't know...," Cal began. "I wouldn't have anything to say."

"Cal, you're a soccer stud, solid student, and you never have

any problems talking to the ladies," Oscar said. "Call her up, make us proud."

Cal looked at his cards. 1 and 14 in black, 1 and 14 green, plus 1, 14, 13, 12, 11 in red. He had all the cards. Shoot the moon. He smiled. "Maybe I'll call her later. Back to the card game. Jed, your bid."

"Ninety seven," Jed bid. The others shook their collective heads.

"One-oh-five," Oscar followed.

It was Cal's bid. He looked at his cards again. "I'm going alone."

The other three stared at him. "Are you crazy, dude? I hope you know what you're doing," Jed said.

"My friend, we are taking you down!" Jordan called.

"Trump's red. You want it slow or fast?" Cal teased.

"Better go slow, so when we take you down, it will be all the more glorious for us!" Oscar talked some trash.

Cal laid down all his cards. "How do like them apples? Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to go to practice."

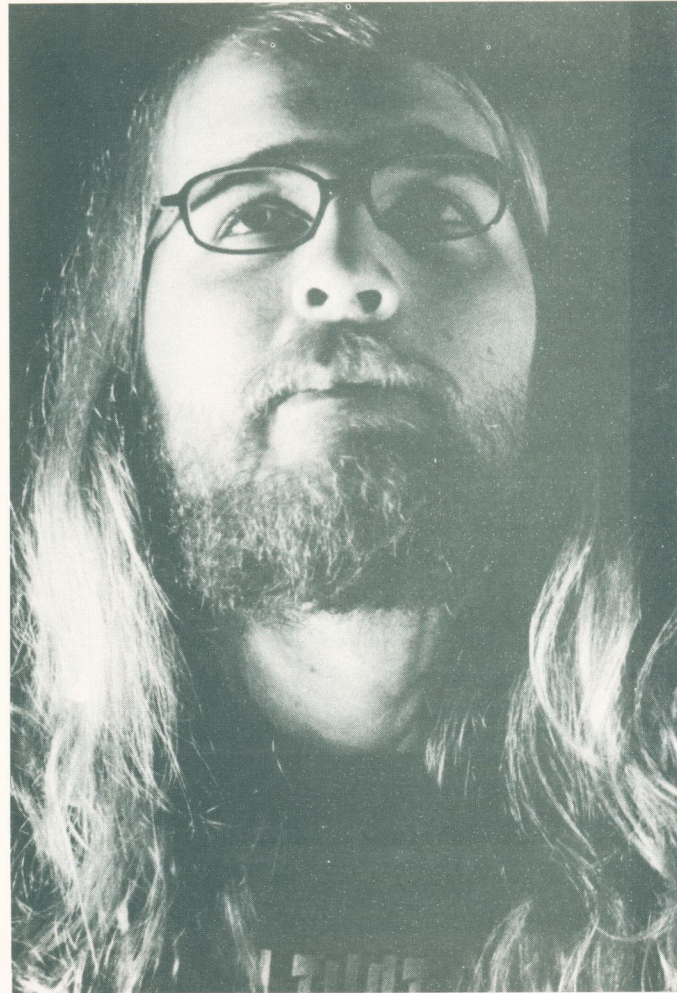
He stood up from the table and walked to his room. But instead of grabbing the black Adidas duffel bag that held his cleats and shin guards, he picked up the phone and dialed the switchboard. He got the number from the receptionist and wrote it on a Post-It. He hung up the phone, then redialed it--8-4291. A female voice answered.

"Hello?"

"Hey, this is Cal Benson. Is Gina there?"

With every passing mile
I feel like pieces of me,
Somehow forgotten in the
Rush of it all,
Slowly seep into my skin,
Under my arms
And down to my toes.
My house is full with familiar
Sounds and memories,
Restored to me at once.
I've entered a place
Long sought-after,
Where we can laugh about
The purities of our past
And just be
Without any traces of
Realizing who we are.
They are beautiful;
And I'm resting in the pieces
Of You in me once again.

Beka Schreur . *Danny*
Black and White Photograph



The air rests silent
amid the frenzied fists,
my eyes close
and picture fear disguised in your eyes
as echoes from those precious moments
linger in my ears.

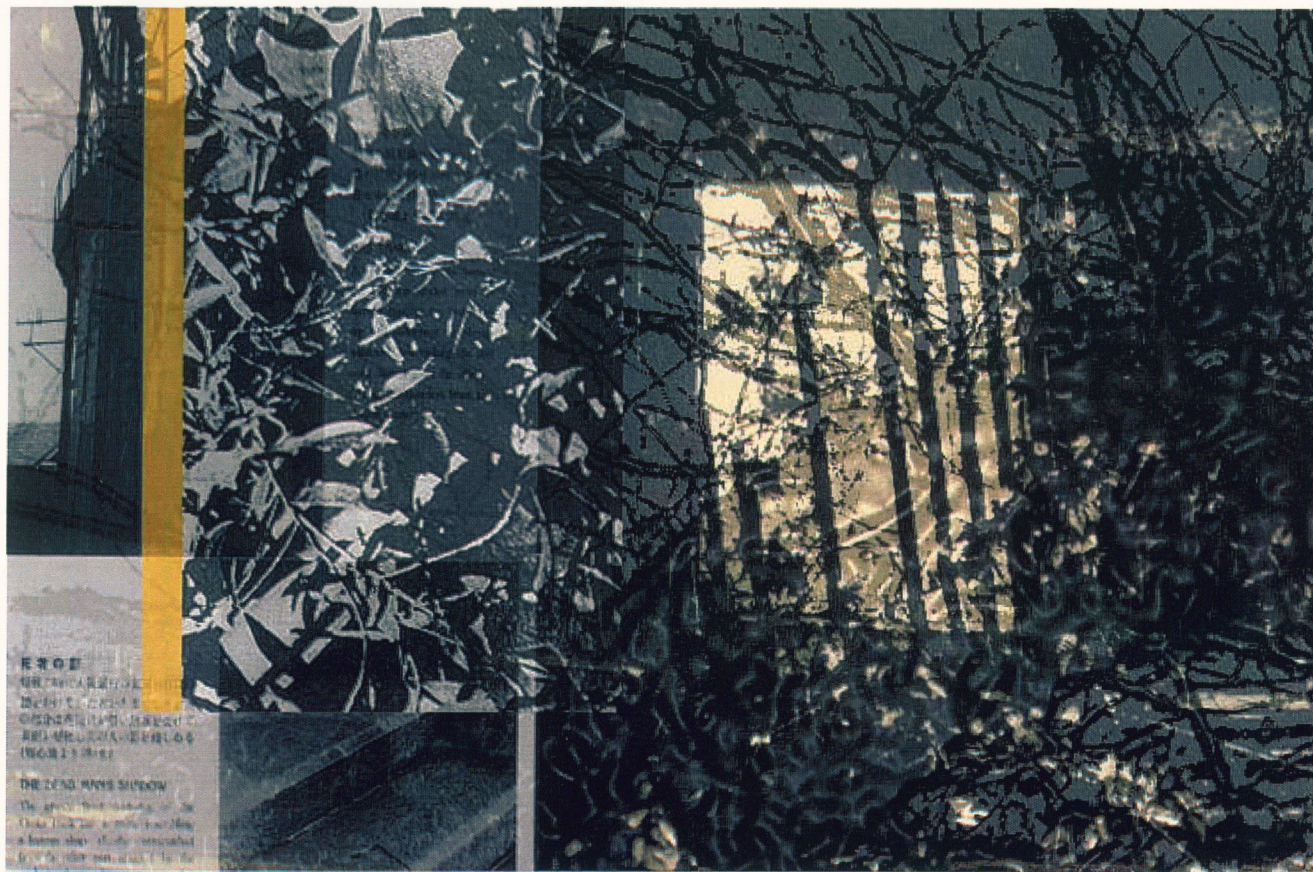
The air rests silent
as my fingers tremble
tracing delicate patterns
across your sweat-drenched brow
You reach for me
and draw me close
to whisper one
Lonely
Word
“Why?”

The air rests silent
as fog burns away
with the morning sun
to warm my face
I look upon your body
stretched out for all to see
and wonder
“Why, why was it me?”
Silence consumes me,

as night robes the land
Forgot the dreams
Of heroes in immortal state
For here lies eternity
clasped by deaths bonds
and that which is fleeting
now lies upon the ground
Yet this is eternal;
My brother
whom I love.

The sun bleeds crimson across the sky
while I muse among the muddled foliage
as violent iron parcels report nearby
to conspire amongst themselves
and prevent escape
I sit amongst these would-be heroes
and take the offered drag
“To calm the nerves” the other says
and tips his hat
in typical Doughboy manner
I smile and turn,

face forward and try to forget
that today might be the last day
to see these men
who fall upon my land.
Faint whispers of ideology
dance through the air
for sweetest voices mingle
and light upon cream faces fair
Soft leaves rustle to suffer passage
for gentle caresses
slender blades bow to low ground
as silent feet trespass
and do not shirk
that to which they be bound
The marbled sunset ripples
as gentle breezes whisper in my ears
sweetened tears bleed
along my weathered face
caught up in tiny pools
among the age-worn hollows
of my feeble hands.
I ponder lines of men,
and question that which brought me here:
The missteps of a father
endure in the son.





Sonja Eenigenburg
Bulbous Flight . Acrylic on Canvas

It was St. Patrick's Day. I remember because of the balloons, green and gold, sailing above us. It was a beautiful day for a parade. But instead of following the crowds to the celebration on the Thames, we were stretched out in the cool grass that wound along the Serpentine in St. James Park. People were everywhere, exulting in the warm weather, the sunshine, and the holiday. I don't think we discussed anything significant, or discussed anything for that matter. What I do remember is the feel of the sun on my face; I remember pulling up grass and tossing it in the air; I remember watching the people all around me, people just like me, feeling the sun warm their skin, laughing with friends. I must have seen thousands of people that afternoon--thousands walking, jogging, pushing prams, holding hands, laughing, reading, kissing, playing football, throwing a Frisbee, sleeping, feeding geese, listening to music, sleeping, flirting, on cell phones, on bikes, in wheelchairs, on roller blades, on skateboards, in crowds, by themselves. And yet there was something that tied us all together. We shared a moment together, a moment of sunshine, a feeling of peace, a sense of timelessness, luxury, and freedom.

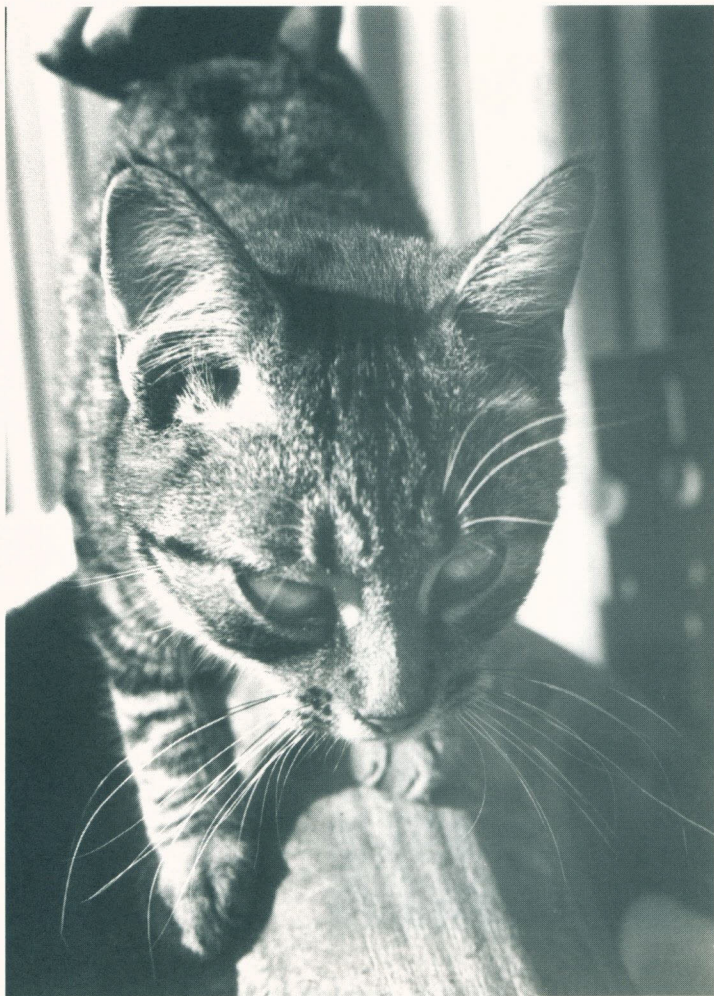
I don't know how a park can instill these feelings. Maybe it's not the park in and of itself. Maybe it's an attitude that a person brings when they come to a park, the idea that you can't walk under a canopy of green, that you can't smell the lilacs blooming or watch ducks skim the surface of the water and not feel a sense

of relaxation and rest. I think there is something wholly spiritual to green spaces, particularly in the middle of the noise and busyness of a city the size of London. There is something in the openness that ministers to thirsty souls. I think that probably most of the people that I saw that afternoon in St. James Park didn't understand what exactly it was that drew them there. Sure, there are the tangible attractions: the space, the water, the people, the freedom, the openness. But beneath all that something deeper is calling. It's not something that people can put their finger on. It's what drives us to see rugged mountains, sparkling lakes, untamed wilderness. There's a desire for God that pulls us into the natural world. That may be too simplistic, but it's a desire for that freshness that comes with the sun-warmed breeze, that comes from stepping out of the stale office air into the shelter of the open air.

I don't think people could live in a city this size if they didn't have parks. There has to be a break, a pause from the concrete, steel, and neon. Most people attribute this need to the freedom that we once had long ago when we were little more than animals roaming in the wilderness. Some may even recognize a spiritual need for tranquility in the hustle and bustle of life. Few will ever realize that it's even more, that it's God calling us to feel the freedom in the natural world around us, calling us to hear his voice in the sun-warmed breeze and to see his face in the green haven of the outdoors.

God unsheathed a morning
And wielded visions
Resplendent in glass gossamer dress.
Sunsparks dance along
The trees lined up like glittering figurines
With branches dripping silver;
And fields are shimmering seas of diamonds,
One wave glistening into another.
I sense my tongue is also frozen.
Aspiring to dazzle up praise,
I only lisp a flickering reflection
Of what I see.





Chris Maust . *Pirate With One Eye*
Black and White Photograph

Here in Iowa the air is colored. People in New York always looked at me funny when I tried to explain how the air can be that electric-pea green color before a tornado, or pale shimmering blue early in the morning, or dense purple at twilight. Today is one of those precious, rare days when the air is golden. The fields are the deepest shade of greens and the sky is a resplendent blue. When the air is golden, it is perpetually Five P.M., and the temperature is always perfect for driving with the windows down instead of using the air conditioning.

I can see the air, more than any other time, when I am driving on this road. I love this road. It sums up the entire world that I know in its long, rolling, infinite stretch of gray. The beauty of the rows and rows, all planted alongside the road with purpose, fills me with a sense of belonging. I know that no strange or frightening thing lurks unbidden behind the next hill; there are no prowling bears or wild elephants—only agriculture broken by lazy rivers and groves of friendly trees.

This agriculture—these fields—just spring up out of the earth. Willa Cather once wrote a picture of a black plow silhouetted against the crimson orb of the setting sun. It was supposed to be (as my English professor once said) “a testimony of how industrialization has conquered this land.” In the obscurity of a classroom that philosophy of seeing the Midwest made sense to me. But now, driving down this road, I find no truth of it in my heart. I have a deep intimacy with this bit of the Earth, and it does not complain of any sort of indented imprisonment. This soil benevolently rolls and spreads, birthing

corn and beans as naturally and as willingly as it bears my Oaks and Maples and Elms that cluster along the wide, shallow rivers. Conquered by farmers and industry? No such thing—this ground is jolly and patient, quietly reminding even the most determined field planter of its endurance and existence. The curve of a hill, even with the terraced mounds wrapped around it like the rings of Saturn, goes against every row of structure and method and order.

I love this road because I know where it goes. The small curve that climbs the lazy hill by the apple orchard always catches me off guard—why, I’m not quite sure. But right there, at the very root of the curve and the base of the hill, I can catch blue sky mixed with wild apples and adventure. It drives me almost crazy. When the air is golden and the road is wide, and all I see is Blue hemmed in with Green, my soul makes its re-acquaintance with me. It clamors and threatens to rupture with contentment for where I am, and in the same breath intensely longing to see what is over the next hill.

So I drive westward—heading into the sun, watching the gray and yellow of the highway pass, in lines that go forever and dashes that will make me seasick if I try to capture and hold them in my eye. Hills are dangerous things. They seduce me with the promise of adventure just over the next crest—“keep going” they whisper. I wonder if and what great things are hidden behind the next one. These hills entice me to seek out the unbidden and frightening things in life, like prowling bears and wild elephants.

While forests fail to frame the fields of the farmer
And there are no immaculate mountains that
Measure majesty in my mind
Nor oceans to obsess over in observation,
I stand blessed as
Numerous stars spill out of
the shadows of the sunset
In the spacious skies that surround me.

Reading

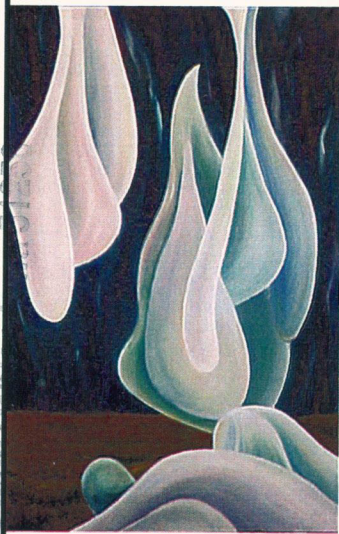
Letters or numbers, if there were a choice.
Dream the classics, poetry and novels
Or reason problems, and understand gravity?
Your head numbers; my heart letters.
Both are necessary parts of Knowledge;
As one we read the Creation.

Orpah Schiebout



...nor oceans to obsess over in observation...

...to see death as beauty
to see death as a forward motion...



...wandering outside soaking
up the energy of a new start,
birds finding their voices thawed
as the notes are drip drip dripping
with a melody that had been
put in a winter frost's freezer...

...I only lisp a flickering reflection...

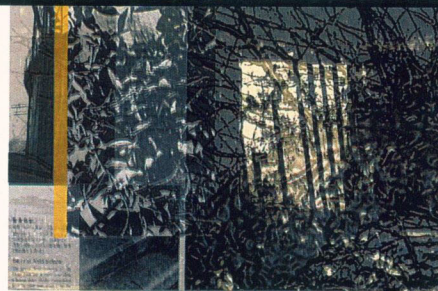
...and I'm resting in the pieces
of You in me once again...



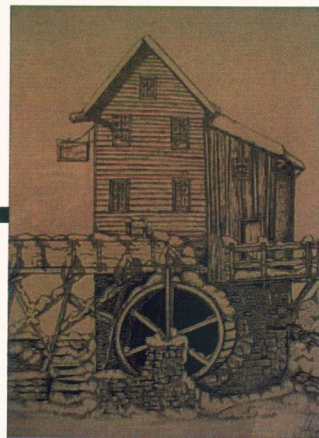
...the beginning mystifies even my
imagination, stifles the word
on my lips, instills awe, amazement...

...the space, the water, the people, the freedom...

...the trees lined up like glittering figurines
with branches dripping silver...



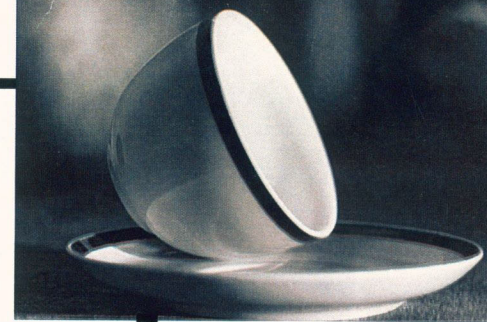
...echoes of
philosophy
and young
life spilling
over...



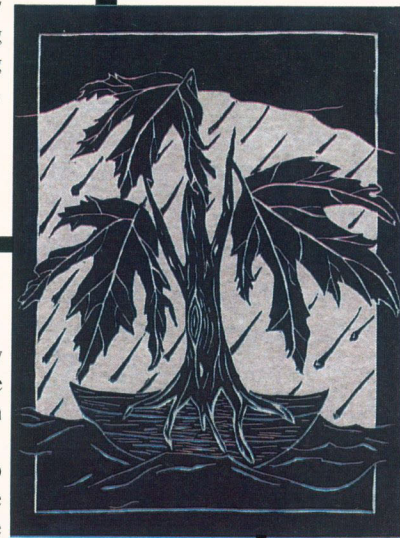
narrow
though the
path

how deep
and wide
the
promises

...your head numbers; my heart
letters...



I have boldly filled you up
I have deleted your petty obstacle



...soft leaves
rustle to suffer
passage
for gentle
caresses
slender blades
bow to low
ground
as silent feet
trespass...

...numerous stars spill out of the shadows of the
sunset in the spacious skies that surround me...

