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<td>47</td>
<td>&quot;The Modern Barbershop&quot;</td>
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Nocturnal

I remember that night
Lying on the warm hood of your car.
Heads resting on our hands and backs to one world,
Alert eyes peering into another.
We stared up at the sky for hours
Contemplating its vastness and our smallness.
The last strains of orange sunset
Had slipped from our view.
The only visible lights orbited a million miles away.
It's all so simple in the night.
India ink trees painted on black mountains
Splashed against a midnight blue sky,
Shadows on shadows.
What is the black beyond our fingertips?
Slipping my hand through the space between us
Just to feel your solidness.
Sometimes I lose your silhouette
In the inky black air.

Laura Hayden
Kate Reichard
Untitled
Lydia Volskis
"Scroll Book"
ceramic
Rodrick Rhodes
"The Golden goddess of the Sun"
pastel
Todd Slaubaugh
"One Way Street"
kwikprint
Karen Wilson
“Punch Ball I”
paper
I believed your vegetables,
tasted and shouted them
publicly.

CARROT!

LIMA!

Fresh and green
though the eyes of untimely death leered.
Who peeled
the onion skin?
What rough beet
sliced towards truth?
Why is my vocation
always butcher?
Todd Slaubaugh
"Far from Port"
pencil
Joyce Downer
"Interior view: Church"
marker
My grandfather swims

When I was new to the ocean
my first time, stroking
and fighting the continual swell,
he held me strong and braced
against wave and current.

My grandfather swims.
we are older and the
grey wetness that
holds the images
of my first stroking
swells deeper in a memory
he swims through never
feeling quite as strong
never getting quite so far.

My grandfather swims.
in a forgetfulness from
which he cannot be rescued,
he knows me still
but not by name.
daily the synapses
of his consciousness
breakdown in a stroking
grey
in his ocean
of memory.

Peyton Jackson
David Copley
"Aftermath"
Commonwear
NATIONAL FLAG WEEK

JUNE 8-14

Darin Dawdy
"Flag Day"
cut paper
Jill Rockne
"Elsa"
gouache
Rodrick Rhodes

"Fabulous Shoe Boat"
mixed media
Darin Dawdy
"Storm"
pen and ink
The People Who Live Below

From my cubicle I listen:
They're screaming again
He works for a chicken plant
She hates her life.

Slamming inside.
"We ain't got no money" she whines
Silence.
Door opens
"I just want to be happy" he cries
"To be together and enjoy our lives"

She gets into her white pinto
Mud on its sides
Pulls out of the gravel lot
Skid of the wheels
And "You're an idiot!"
Screech from his world.

Tamara K. O'Hearn
My Beatrice

I snapped your photograph -- you didn’t notice.
A white-rimmed memory care of Kodak.
   -all too flat.

With deliberate strokes, I sketched your face.
The traced emotion drew soft repose
   -but lacked your grace.

I wrapped your ease in silken rhapsody.
The music swayed to silent movements
   -but shed no warmth.

So I molded you in clay; Pygmalion reborn.
The sculpture soothed my frenzied touch
   -but took no breath.

And now I turn this quest to verse--
A semi-sonnet doomed to miss.
Your slippery traits slide through my words-
The phantoms tease, then flee the tryst.
   But I shall not withdraw my fight;
Elusive fires ignite my strife.

Ryan Lankford
Todd Slaubaugh
"Nude in Ink"
ink
Todd Slaubaugh
"By Myself"
Kwik print
Alicja Ozyjoyski
"Solitude"
watercolor collage
Betsy Purvis

"He Wonders If He, too, Might Have Made
a Similar Mistake"
pencil
Tom Thomas
“In Memory of John Denver”
papermaking/ mixed media
Looking for a Story  
(A generational poem)

1

There is so much to write about. 
At the Howard County Library
my thumbs hold on

to the water fountain; I could be anywhere
when I look up again.
The Washington Post this morning
overheard more bombing for Libya. Important
people, concerned friends in the world community
were discussing necessary violence.

Below, to the left, a little astronaut,
an eighth of an inch child turns
a stilled somersault in its own
primordial soup at the bottom
of the page. The last of a series,
"The Miracle of Life," this one,

December 22, 1988,
on the making of a human, how
one day is for arms, the next the brain,
how there is no rehearsal, to miss
is webbed wings
or a soft brown hole.

Scientists, they said, are beginning to behold
the true nature of life.
The little astronaut, excised and stamped,
looked like a breakfast spill,
like it should be spreading,
the wet worm sliding off the front page.
It looked embarrassed.

And still I read the article.
Those great scientists and their white coats
scurrying about what happens before anything
really happens, talking of miracles.
But another miracle is less exact, less computable,
less suitable to firm exaltation.
Those who, seventy or eighty-five years later, when there is finally time to consider their unmistakable soil, the lessons ripped out, as if wisdom was its own bread-soft and crinkled man, waving a checkered pennant back and forth in the glare of promise. The miracle is they would do it again.

II

What happened a week ago in Armenia is now old news. Even the truly soft, those grown curious about God or whatever they believed in, even they have stopped counting the cupped silences in the ground, the voices gone dark with soil. My father, a computer specialist for NASA was offered a job. It is necessary, in such cases in the future, to have a multi-national computer system for communication and relief. He was elated; that dark empire, and his counterpart, perhaps another man with longing and a good suit, a belt of soft security, a dark car. Children. And translation, different foods, a new form of subtlety, a chance to care for the incurable. After dinner I made the mistake: What happens to fifty thousand souls? An embryo inside turned counter clockwise, digging in the silence. I wanted to apologize.
I wanted to stop ruining
what I could not solve.
I wanted to hug his bald head and say
'go build your damn system.'

III

How do we do it,
those coming after everything
not within sight, history
laughing into our ribs
out of books of life and death,
pages stained with cause?
The older ones tell us it is the small things,
the way butter almost melts on toast,
frost on the window, a name
inscribing the cold.
They forget the cruel phallic trick though,
that absurdly we must come back
to those things after great pain.
Whatever that is.
This one, myself, desperately in need
to praise, tried to strangle my life,
live stupidly on the street,
become the beast slurping blindly
through the wet hallways of a city.
And already, when once it was,
it is not quite enough
to pass things at the table,
pull bread apart, reach across,
stroke another palm.
IV

If we could deface anyone's walls
it would be about what we might be.
We'd write: The enemy is the future,
the future sucks,
Fuck the future!
But there is no Department of the Future.
There are no Chicago policemen pacing
that leering city.
And even if there were,
and we ran at them with clubs,
they would disappear, white on white,
a phantasmagorical Fellini nightmare,
leaving us hurling ourselves
with judo-inertia stabbing
the relaxed nothing.
Or they would grab our flailing
wrists and have us
dancing in the mud,
mouth to grueling mouth,
a homosexual trick,
laughing and crying in the wreckage.

V

We will keep coming back to ourselves.
History will teach us to learn to forget.
We will get up from this table
and keep looking, under things, into cracks,
and vomiting,
until we become so self-sick
that life might seem worth our own drama.
Or we will slip through the white hole of the moon.

Daniel Villasenor
Italy

I crowd onto the beach
among Arabs who don't use towels
when they lie down.
Across the blue Mediterranean lies Italy.
Kamel asks me what's on my mind.
In the shallow, waveless water, a man,
skin brilliant with white sand, dives.
Emerges brown again.

Stuart Gunter

Nancy Gottheimer
Untitled
silverprint
Temperate Winds

Sitting on sandstone atop the hollow
I listen to the staccato calls of a hawk
circling high.

Scissortails flit across the mesquite below.

My arms feel a flannel shirt being blown
by warm winds.

This is as close as I’ve been

Andy Arnold
Susan Phillips
"Fear of Flying"
pen and ink
The reeds
lacerate
my hands
Sacrifice
I'll join
my rushes
like fine
threads

Wife your
hands are
sand that
scratches
Mama stop
Baskets!!
Thousands
Beautiful
Salable

To create
you
we become
invisible
No family
hindering
Obsession
will kill

Irene Gammon
Rodrick Rhodes
"Panic"
marker
Missy Martin
"Self Portrait"
cut paper
Long Meter XAXA

Sinning with his Indonesian mistress
breeds anxious maggots in the saved soul
of Pastor Adams, yet he won't know
denial when he religiously removes her stole.

Saturday night his love is drunk,
and his lust hungers to destroy a vow
or two, to tear, chew, digest
what a previous promise would not allow.

Sunday morning blinds the eyes
of tired Adams. He suits and shaves
and arrives at church to preach on Moses,
who changed sticks to snakes and parted waves.

Just as pastor, you wax hypocrite.
Soaring on a transcendental high,
though still a sinner, you curse the blackbirds
that dare disrupt your cerulean sky.

Birds, clouds, lilting leaves
will constantly impede your futile quest
for perfection, but first your own soul
will wisely bid you, like the pastor, to rest.

Irene Gammon
Ben Rose
Untitled
silverprint
The Thinning

I think I am learning to be thinner,
the flesh watered down by the absurdity,
walking still, but without shoulders
or the weight of any body part.
I feel like I am beginning
to allow the instruments of the world
(like the trees and their winter wrists)
to carve into me,
the way they always have,
the way all things alive bend down
toward their dense beginnings.
Air is extending,
the ground has more respect.
Silence is welling.
I am becoming less afraid
of hollowing out those incomprehensible bones,
the gentle whistle of air between them,
the chill of the quiet acceptance.

Daniel Villasenor
DANCER IN WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK

Remember the girl who danced
in Washington Square Park?
I've seen her lately dancing barefoot
beneath stone arches
Moving always to the Echo of a
single flute.

She dances still in my memory
Dressed in shafts of light
She floats pale yellow above my head
And into my eyes
she sends knowing smiles.

They laugh at her
-scarf sailing in her hands
They call her lunatic
-music jingles from her feet.

Still she only smiles -content in their ignorance.
But in her eyes I see a Peace so deep
it is only found in the core of the sun.

Janice O'Rourke
Melanie Miller
"Knowledge"
ink/colored pencil
Joyce T. Downer
Graphic Designer

Joyce Downer
"Self Promotion"
marker
The Woman Inside

There is inside me a woman
   who strokes the heads of her fevered children
And walks belly-round and naked in
   pale sunlight.

There is inside me a woman
   who speaks quickly with her hands
and moves the crowds with her smile.

Strength moves in circles about her frame
Like the wind that sends her skirt dancing
   through her thighs.

Inside me there is this woman
Whose eyes whisper hope and faith
   in gentle blues
   and a simple tear.

   Janice O'Rourke
windthoughts

I was with the wind yesterday.

Sitting on the dock, spreading my hair for
the sun to turn crimson.

Working under coat and clothes and skin to
carese my heart with gaunt, wintry fingers.

Singing through the bamboo, knocking the
skeletal stalks together to generate a pulse.

Defacing the clouds to form faces of
gargoyles never seen on this world.

Toni Geoly
Betsy Purvis
"The Modern Barber Shop
(I Wouldn't Live Here if You Paid Me)
pencil
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