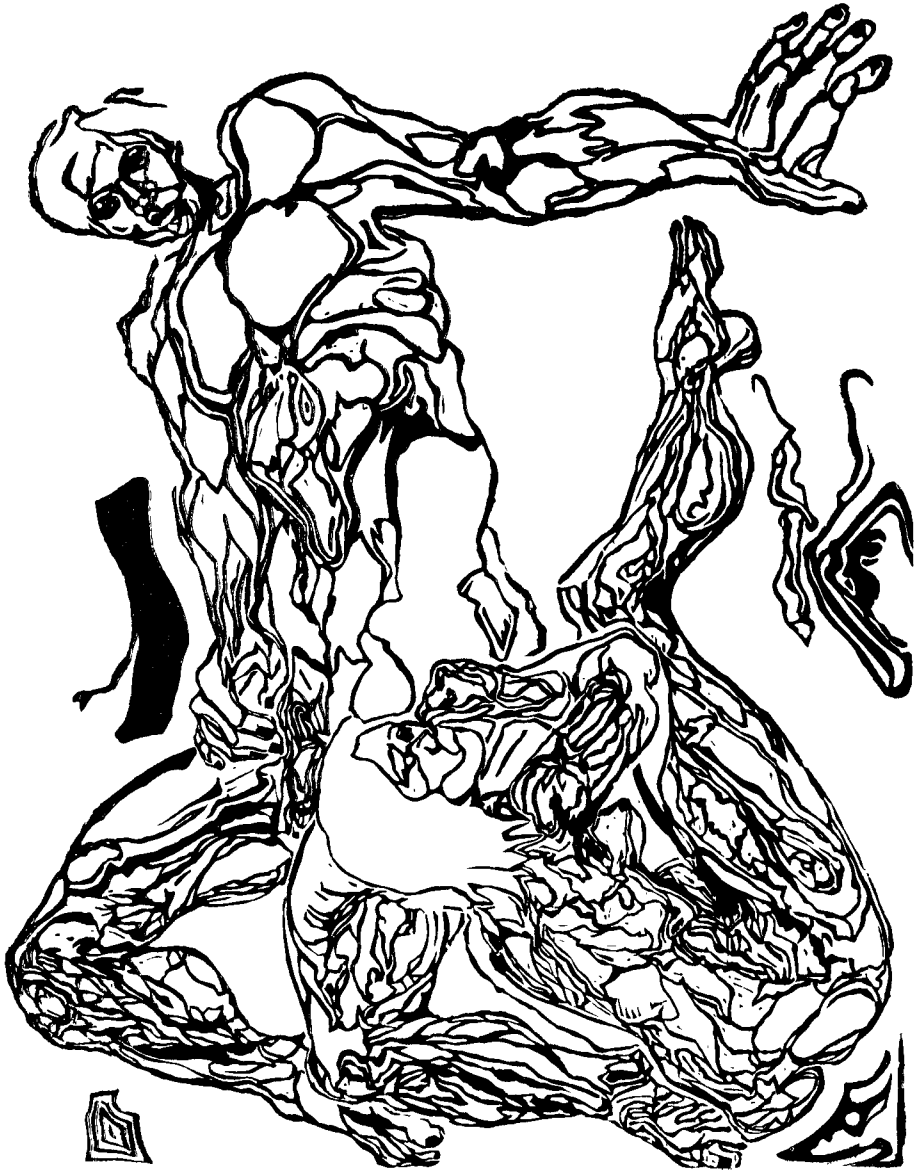


# CORNFIELD REVIEW 6

## 1981





# CORNFIELD REVIEW

*An Annual of the Creative Arts*

1981 Vol. 6

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Editor: David Citino

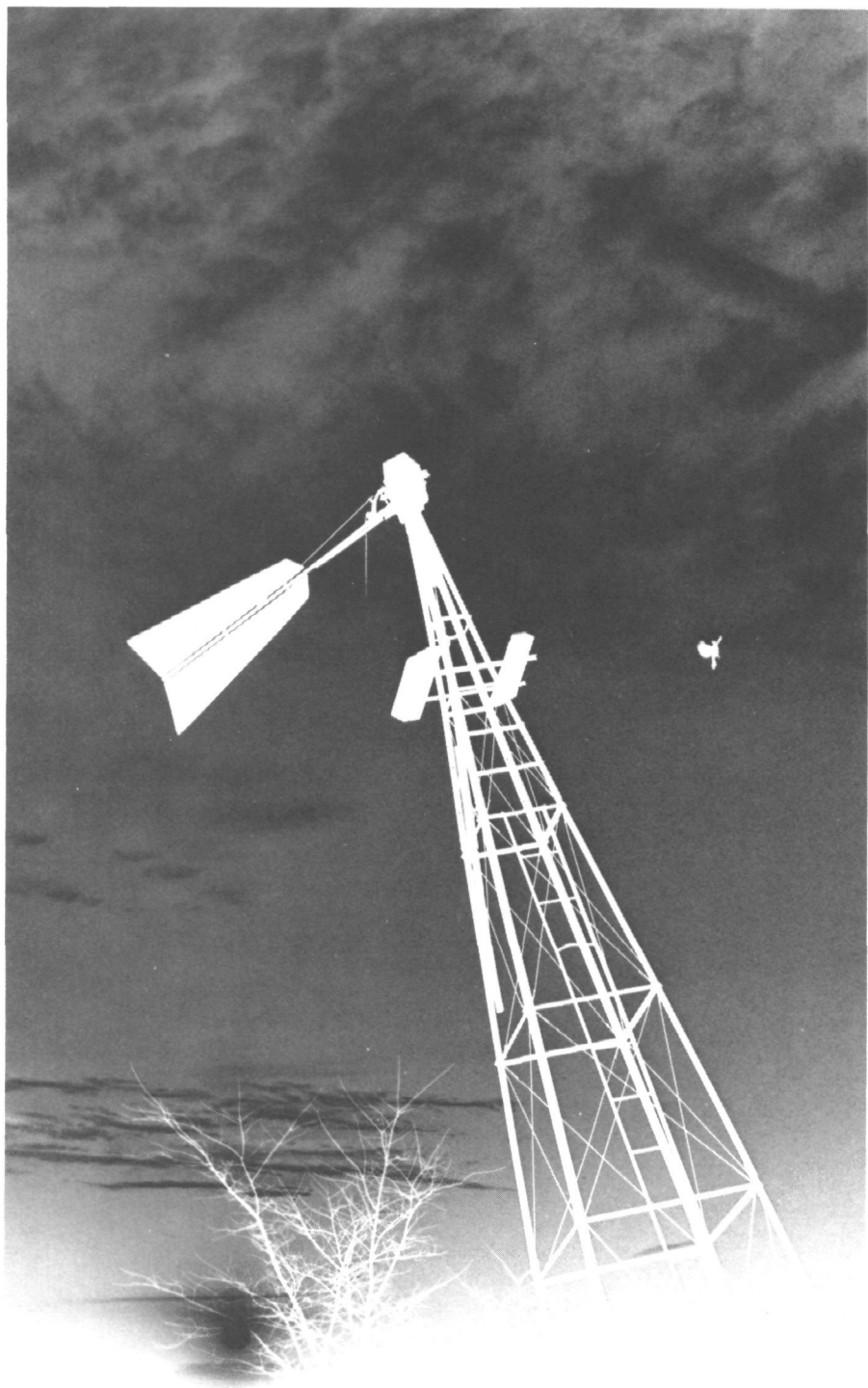
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## PETER WILD

### *Lewis and Clark*

Here I am again in the little house  
with its pots and pans still jumbled in the kitchen  
behind the Mormon church, righteousness  
rising up across the alley from our patch of desert,  
a skyscraper blocking our view of the granitic Catalinas.

all day putting things away,  
taking them down again,  
I can hear him, sitting mouth agape  
painting in his studio while in the huge window  
the finches come to crack the seeds he throws out  
and the thin cactuses writhe thinner in the heat,  
the sputtering candles he puts into his paintings  
with the finches, fresh leaping hearts at their bases,  
hanging in every room of this pink adobe  
house with the sloping, dissolving walls.

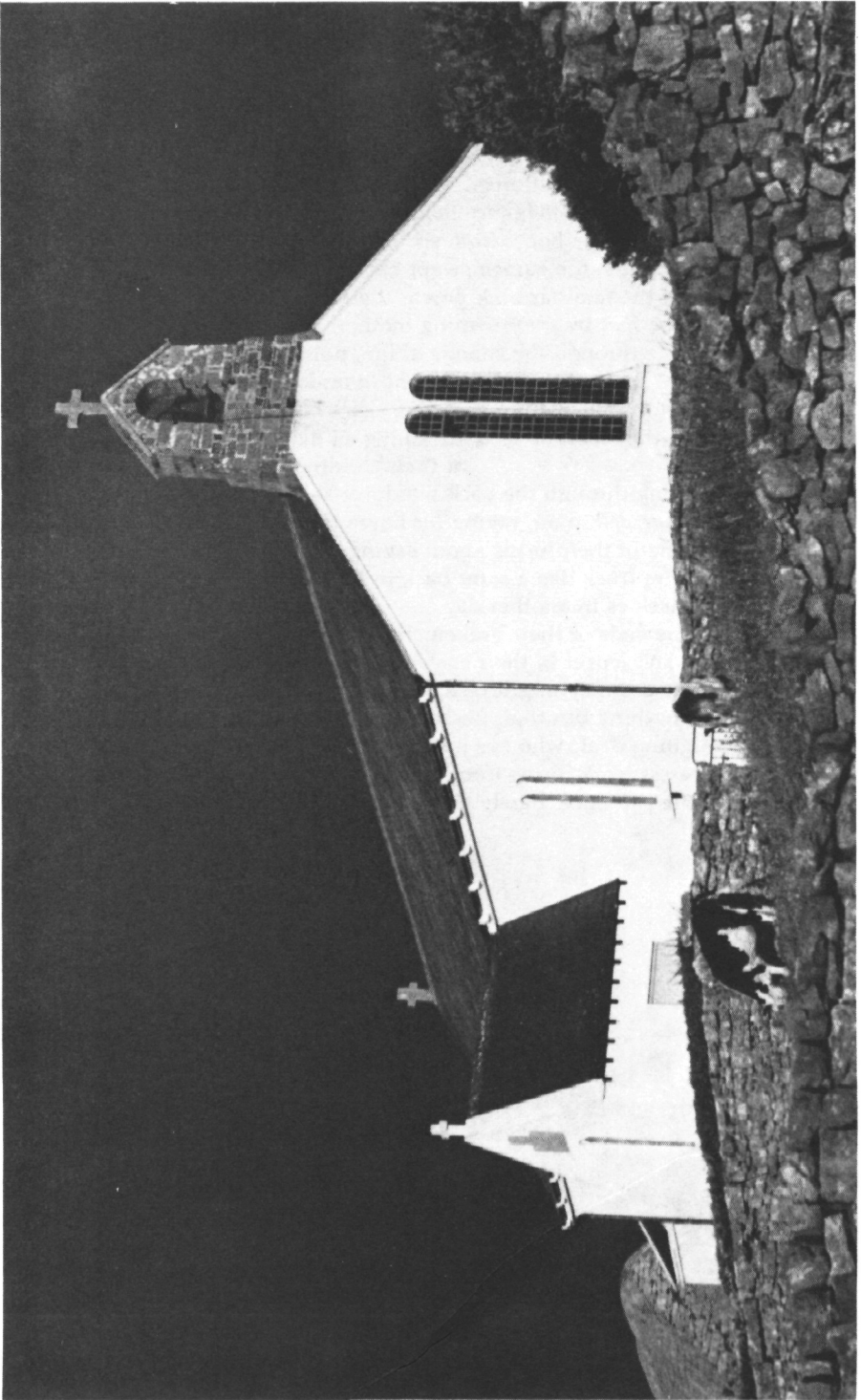
it might as well be Ft. Dix  
twenty years ago, tossed across the Atlantic  
to be mustered out at last like Jonah  
and stand bewildered, saved but marooned  
before a whole continent of grizzlies and dancing girls,

to do what Lewis and Clark did,  
starved, lost for years, but steady, writing it all down  
as best they could, making sense for Jefferson  
the clinician, the flashes of an earthly kingdom,  
or what they did, houses burned, their raped  
women bleeding on the snow behind them  
as they escaped from Nauvoo, then gritting their teeth crossed  
the sandy, innumerable rivers to make the deserts indeed bloom  
among the mirages, using that pain  
to grow a heaven all around waiting  
for them in death, just beyond their fingertips,  
where they stand arms akimbo on their glass planets  
watching for their children still in their nightclothes  
to shoot up, fall down, worship them.

*Beethoven*

They don't simply run off  
like executives abandoning their wives and children  
to live in Samoa, sit in their shorts  
gloating as the garish tourists ignore their finger paintings.  
more intelligent they come home from school one day  
to see the curtains gone, the garage swept bare, or worse stand  
among the junk of the familiar back porch, their beanies  
still spinning, to be met by the frowning mother  
since morning gone through the change of life, pointing a broom at them  
saying one word, "Away," or wake at night in mid air pitched  
from the second story, blamed for someone else's bad dream;  
in picnic grounds they look up after frolicking all day  
  at their children  
driving off, grinning through the back windows as they wave.  
and so stunned they gallop on, raving for hours through the woods  
          with that flame in their heads about saving sheep for some farmer  
or one seat on a fire truck like a saint back in his niche,  
only to find themselves in another day  
again dragging the ends of their broken chains,  
becoming looser and looser in their coats which  
in a last noble gesture they might take off,  
          standing in nothing but their flesh throw down for fate,  
like Beethoven going deaf, who has just finished  
          his greatest work, turns from the keyboard  
          to stare at the audience, barely able to hear it this far away.









## JOAN COLBY

*The Lonely Hearts Killers:*  
*Raymond Fernandez & Martha Beck*

Irresistable charm. He can  
mesmerize with words.  
They plunge from the page  
into the blue veins of widows  
ooze into pale blue ink.  
These women's hands  
describe ovals in the air,  
fly to him like homing birds.

One of the first,  
an obese nurse named Martha,  
recognizes his genius.

They make a pair:  
his comeon's  
her greed.  
O Love and Money.

He marries the lonely widows.  
She slams them with a hammer  
into a final solitude. They bury  
victims in cellars of rented houses,  
count the fleeced life-savings,  
go to the cinema  
where Cary Grant cocks a suave eye  
and Barbara Stanwyck murmurs throatily.

A psychiatrist might tell us  
Raymond's problem dates  
from a shipboard accident  
and Martha's from being raped  
at 13 by her brother.

About the victims?  
Somebody died on them. They were  
lonely. Explanations, like reasons,  
come after the fact. The act  
of kissing the plump lady,  
bashing her head in.

Eating popcorn while the black and white  
figures prance and prattle. Which life is real?

She's crazy about him.  
He loves her back, all 280  
voluptuous pounds.

The police are waiting  
when they return from the movies  
laughing, gobbling chocolate kisses.

She gives the scandal sheets a treat:  
her overactive glands drove her  
into his arms. Twenty other women  
fell just as hard, but forever.  
Some of their bones exhumed, others  
vanished. There's proof enough.  
They get the chair.

She knows he loves her.  
He knows she's been true.  
Jerk and blaze  
in one last intimacy  
all they've been through,  
now each lonely  
heart shudders and fails.  
Witnesses button their overcoats  
walk to their cars.  
    Rain falling on Sing Sing.

O Lonely Hearts.



## ELIZABETH STEALEY

### *Advice for My Daughters*

Make sure you fit.  
Find a man with a large nose, always  
keeping in mind  
the size of yours. Tickle  
his nose with a feather to learn  
how hard he can sneeze, and  
how often.

Count the hairs on his body.  
Hair on the head means he's smart enough  
to make money. If he's  
sparsely covered elsewhere,  
he'll always need you  
to keep him warm.

Look into his eyes  
seven different times when he doesn't know  
you're looking. Add up  
what he's revealed.

After doing all this, stand naked together  
before a mirror at midnight on St. Agnes' Eve.  
If you can keep from touching until  
a faint light fills the room and mist  
soft as moth wings surrounds you,  
you'll know  
you've chosen well.

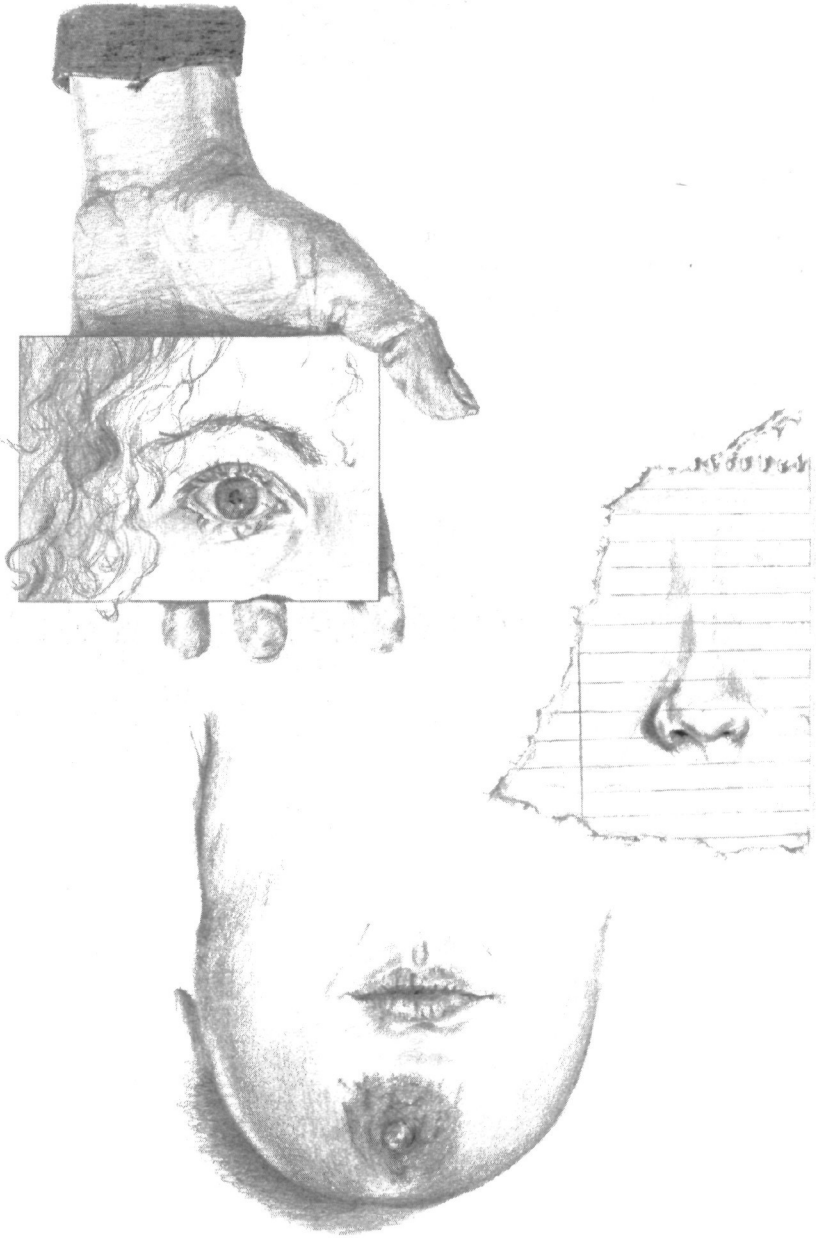
*Barking to Wake God*

After God made trees and creeping things,  
he mixed his spit with dust, spent a whole day shaping  
a woman and a man. Weary in his bones, he left them  
under a banyan tree and slept.

That night a snake, jealous  
of the care God took,  
unhinged his jaws  
and swallowed them.

When God woke he found his work gone. Weeping,  
he made them again. He also made a dog,  
breathed life into it, set it to guard  
the images. Darkness brought the serpent;  
the dog's barking woke God,  
drove away the intruder. With dawn's mist  
surrounding the clay figures, God blew  
his spirit into them.

Today at the moment of darkness, dogs remember  
their duty and howl to wake God. Older, he sleeps  
more heavily now. The snake  
comes unafraid  
to carry the woman or man away.



## SCOTT CAIRNS

### *My wife jumps crazy*

My wife jumps crazy into bed, still wet  
and shaking from the shower.  
In a very little while  
she'll be warm enough to dress, dry enough  
to move through a cold room. But now,  
she is cold and shaking, eager  
for the warmth of arms and legs together,  
the warmth of close breath.  
And I am glad for cold mornings, glad for the simple  
shock of waking, and for the occasional gift  
of a cold and shaking woman getting warm.

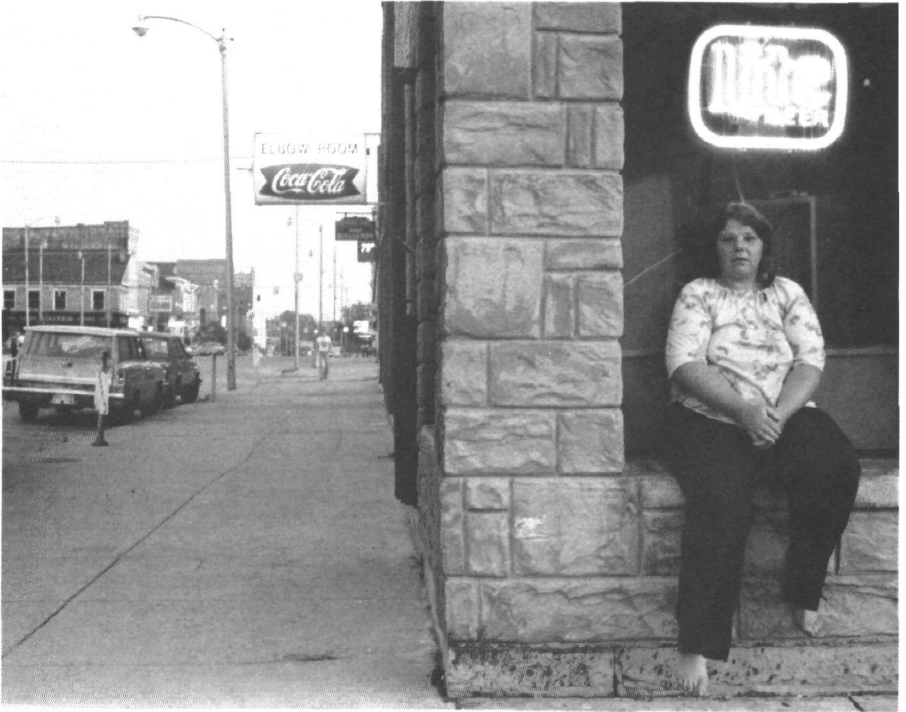
### *You Say Kalaloch*

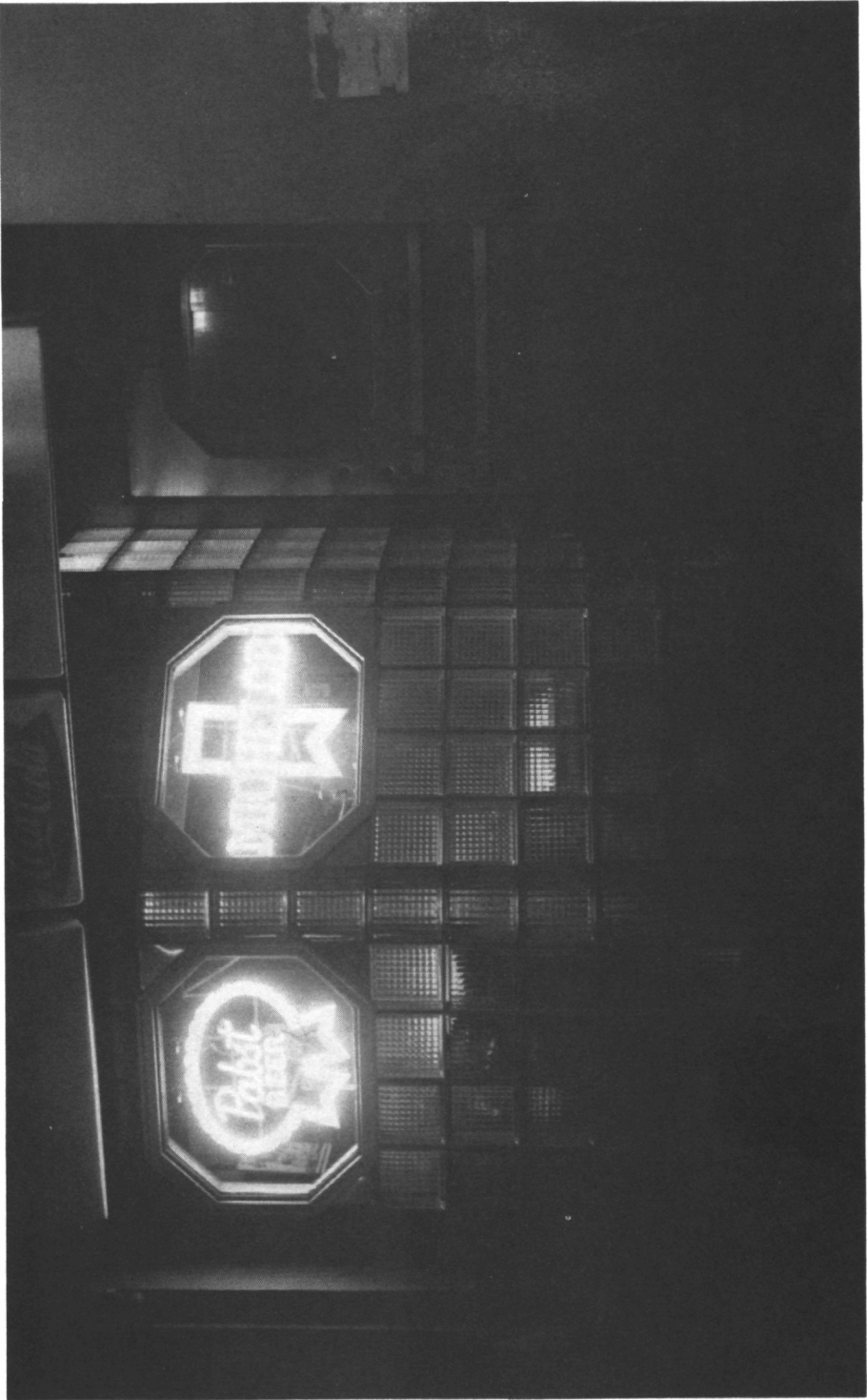
You say it, *Kalaloch*, and the word  
holds your tongue like a lover. You know  
the chafe of sand, the rough touch  
of south wind. Whole years  
would discover you still wandering this beach,  
a woman in worn clothing, only a little mad.  
*Was it here I found the raven, here  
the swollen dog?*  
The tiny black snails  
are good to eat; you can boil them  
in a coffee pot, pluck them steaming  
from their shells, taste the sea  
rising in the meat.  
You know this place, have grown  
familiar with its taste, its salt  
smell. You have brushed its sand  
from your wet body, rubbed sand  
from your brown skin. Even as you  
turn away you carry *Kalaloch* in your hair.













## LEONARD TRAWICK

### *Bats*

Though now we never kiss, and scarcely touch,  
We grew up close, sister and brother.  
Remember the old Plymouth's prickly seats?  
Our endless sagas of the deeds of Wunks?  
And the bats that would get in on summer nights?—  
"Perfectly harmless," Daddy said. Still,  
The one we knocked down had needle teeth;  
We knew they came from caves and haunted houses,  
And turned up somehow in *Hansel and Gretel*,  
Dark flaps among the cakes and frosting;  
They never bumped, like birds or moths—  
They saw when nothing else could see.  
In a pitch black room you only sensed them swooping.

That was when, already ten and twelve,  
We had to share one double bed because  
The only place the family found to live  
Was two rooms rented in the gingerbread  
Cottage of Miss Victoria De Love,  
Two-hundred-pound masseuse,  
To whose house trailer in the back  
We'd hear assorted visitors walking  
Under our window late at night:  
That left the front bedroom for daughter Geraldine,  
Who spent her days in negligee with radio,  
And every month shoved us a suicide note—  
Mama would get the ipecac and phone Victoria.

Our guinea pigs, who squealed and mated furiously  
(Mating I knew all about from school),  
Victoria didn't mind, because, she said,  
They scared off rats; maybe they did,  
But we found pregnant Cleopatra  
Under the house minus her head.  
Once I heard Geraldine laugh, "So the boy  
And girl sleep together, eh? La, la, la!"  
And then at breakfast you kept yapping about a dream—  
You said I chased and tried to kiss you naked,  
And went on so till Mama said "Enough,"  
And Daddy, "Maybe we should get bunk beds,"  
And suddenly the air was full of bats.

## R. MARK LAWRENCE

### *Welcome to the Club*

"Say," the accountant observed as  
We stepped into the panelled lift  
Of the Columbia Club and rose,  
"You aren't wearing a suitcoat, are you?"  
"We'll get him one," winked the lawyer toying  
With his heavy watch chain and charms.  
"Just policy, man," he smiled. "No problem."

With the tailored gray club tweed  
Pulled over my shrugging green sweater,  
I ordered what they ordered  
And worried about which fork to use.

They spoke of securities and shelters  
And dissected the new council appointee  
Over vichyssoise. I answered bored questions  
About my schooling, responded vaguely  
About my plans, and, from the latticed, leaded  
Windows above the city, watched happy  
Ragged children skating in the twilit park  
Below.

## GARY PACERNICK

*Elie Wiesel*

I sat in the dark watching this man  
who had survived the death camps  
speak of undying Jews who gave history  
to the world light streaming from his eyes  
his words small white birds with bloody  
wings hovering in the sacred house above  
the ark his bony fingers point to memories  
of what men had done to men in the  
name of one sick man we Jews have never  
inflicted our suffering on others but we have  
made something of it hope promise a chant  
when I despair I turn to history  
and I find not yesterday but today men and  
women of today Cain and Abel of today  
Joseph of today Job of today they are  
my friends he speaks out of darkness  
this frail man words that light the mind  
WE JEWS ARE ONE.

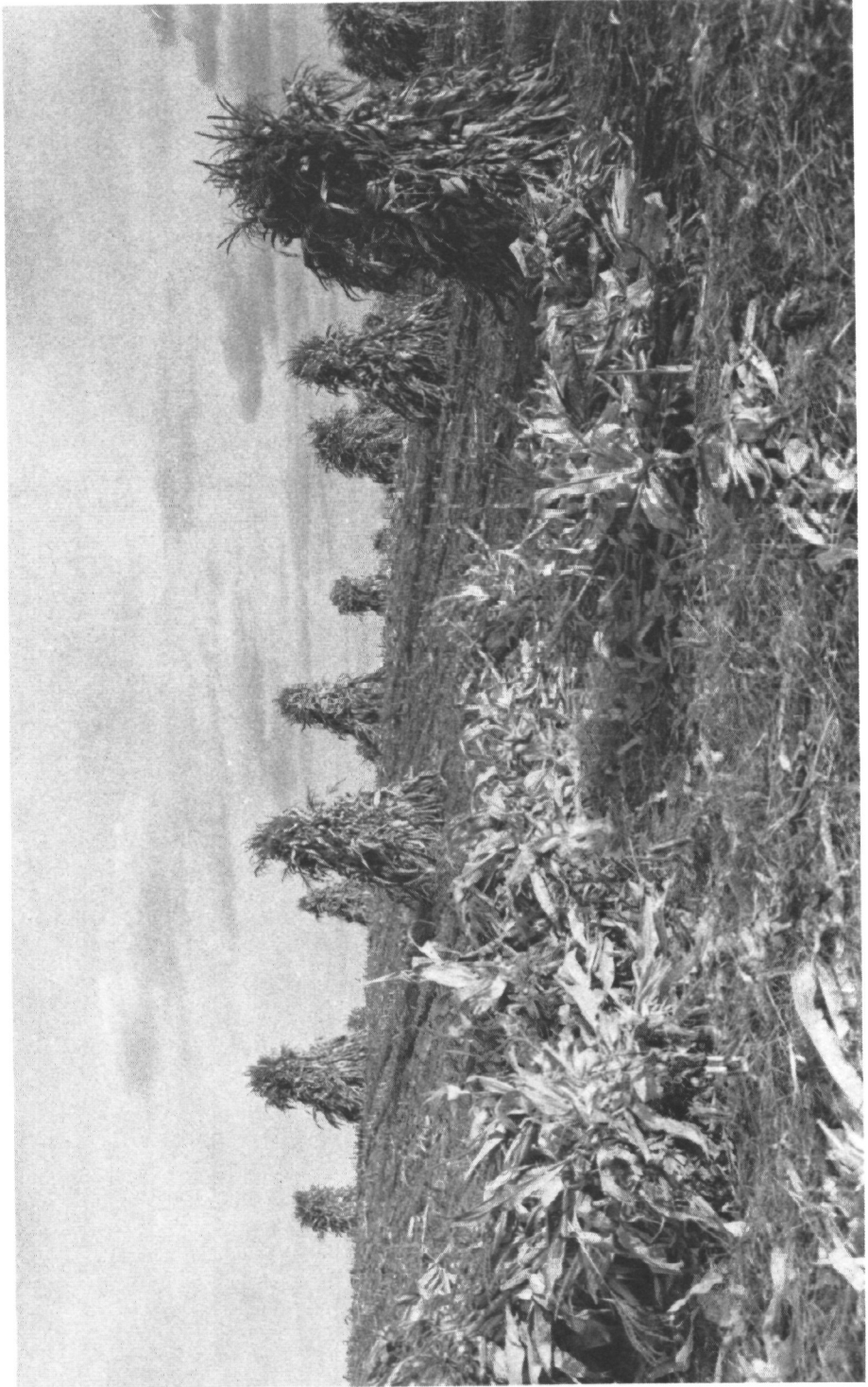
## NANCY JO RINEHART

*Smoke*

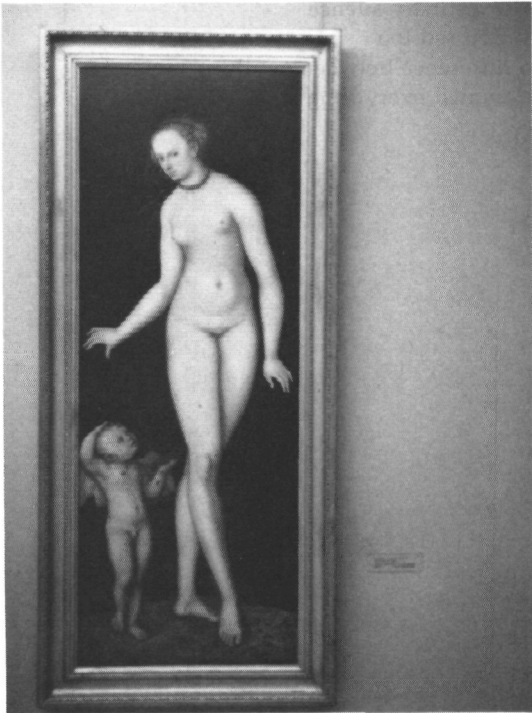
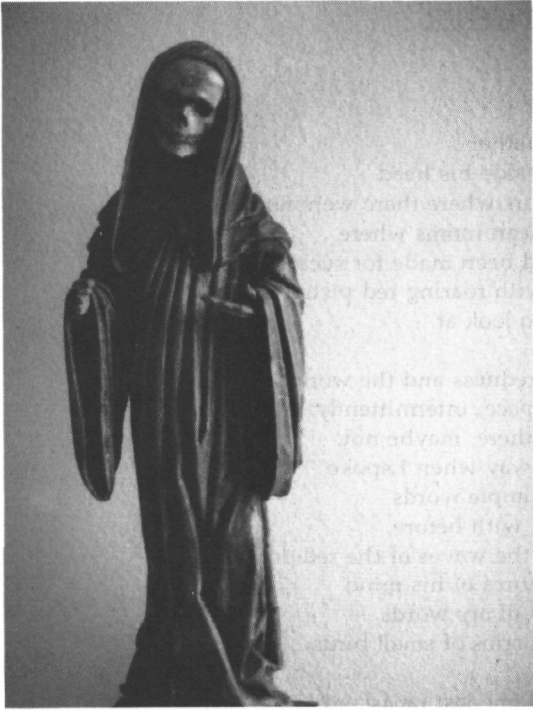
The smoke from the prison towers  
Carried you to me  
With all your frustrations  
And hopes,  
And I felt the letter  
Burn in my pocket.  
The towers have frightened me  
Always,  
As the thought of you  
Frightens me  
Now.











## GRACE BUTCHER

### *Stroke*

What killed my father  
was the blood inside his head  
forcing open doors where there were none,  
splashing into clean rooms where  
no provision had been made for such a thing,  
confusing him with roaring red pictures  
he didn't want to look at.

Between all the redness and the world  
lay only a dim space, intermittently.  
Maybe I was in there, maybe not.  
Tears got in the way when I spoke  
all the lost and simple words  
I never bothered with before.  
Maybe between the waves of the red ocean  
beating at the shores of his mind  
came the sounds of my words  
like wind-blown cries of small birds.

I hope there was one last far island  
where he could stand and listen  
in some clear white ordinary silence  
before that sky turned red too  
and there was no difference between anything anymore  
and a red wind slammed everything shut.

# KARL PATTEN

*For a Milliner*

1

My father lives dying  
Slowly in a metal bed.

He wants to be working,  
Wants to bend over his table

Or turn to his machine,  
Deft fingers sewing together

One last high fashion hat  
For a proper Bostonienne.

2

Ten years of paralysis  
Have forced his hands

Into his mind—there's nothing  
To *do* there. So the horses

Of his childhood snort, ramp,  
Rear, break harnesses,

Race flailingly off down  
The unpaved streets, and prance

At the seaside, scattering  
Sand, green girls, mothers,

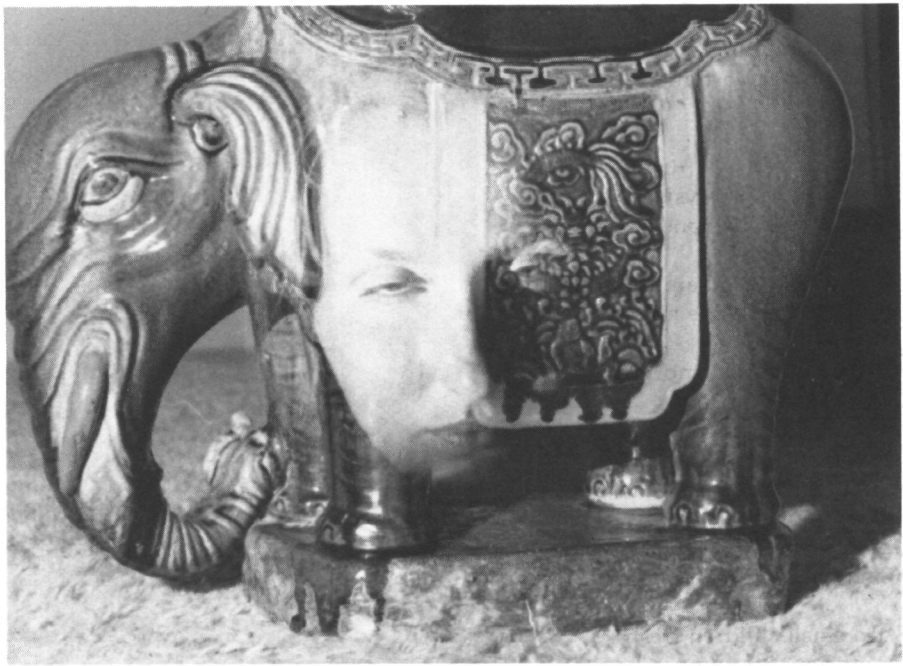
And small children fresh  
From sepia tintypes.

3

He dies weeping, his mind  
Strewn with pins, feathers

And felt, a band of leather,  
And the horses running

Like a sewing-machine  
That can't be stopped.





## SUSAN FROMBERG SCHAEFFER

### *Dream: The Oranges*

The dream was full of oranges  
Which burned so brightly in the trees  
They seemed to have burned through

From deep beneath some other sky.  
The foliage was green and lush.  
Ebony and brown were the monkeys

And their white teeth startled  
With the blinding glare of skulls.  
Nevertheless,

Out of the thick ferns  
A lizard struggled up

And cast his shadow on a rock,  
And cast it in the shadow-shape of man,  
Small and wriggling and brown,

And the lizard saw the shadow  
And was insulted, and went back down.

Tricks of light the oranges play,  
So the lizard said.  
He knew there were no such things as men,

And the man, who saw it all,  
As the storm winds rose  
And the red leaves

Leaped from the trees like flames,  
Agreed it was a trick  
And stood before the huge orange of the sun

And cast no shadow.  
Yet the shadow of his wife  
Flickered on the rock before him

And the shadow of her trailing veil,  
Rising in the wind,  
And the shadow of his child,

And the wind blew them off.  
And blew hundreds of oranges down  
So that he seemed to stand knee-deep



In the sun hatchery of the galaxies.  
And the sun said,  
All that you should do

You should do at night,  
A wedding in the park,  
The bride in moonlight,

The bride's gown blue,  
The flower girl,  
All giving births at night,

All medicines at night for each sick child  
All dying should be done at night  
For the eye of the sun is a mean eye

It burns what it sees  
Your shadow is black ash  
And it will burn that

Again if it can  
It is a restless eye  
It sees nothing twice,

And as it spoke,  
The sun balanced on the horizon's edge,  
And one by one,

The dark trees silhouetted there  
Took fire and the fire spread  
And the man saw his shadow rise

Like a bright ash in the hot fire's air  
And the voice of the lizard, accusing him,  
And the world

Came to an end.

# NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

## CR 6

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**STEVE ASHCRAFT** is a student at OSU Marion . . . . . **GORDON J. AUBRECHT, II** is associate professor of physics at OSU Marion. He spent last year in Germany on a grant from the Humboldt Foundation . . . . . **GRACE BUTCHER**, associate professor of English at Kent State's Geauga Campus, writes a monthly column for *Rider*, a motorcycle magazine. Her new book, *Before I Go Out on the Road* (Cleveland State University Poetry Center), is available directly from her . . . . . **SCOTT CAIRNS** is from Tacoma, Washington. He's a student in the MFA program at Bowling Green State University . . . . . **JOAN COLBY** is in her fifth year as Writer-in-Residence for the Illinois Arts Council. Her recent books are *Dream Tree* (Jump River Press) and *Blue Woman Dancing in the Nerve* (Alembic Press) . . . . . **CHERYL DODDS** is a student at OSU Marion . . . . . **PAUL HAUBERT** is a student at OSU Marion and president of the Student Senate . . . . . **R. MARK LAWRENCE**, former *Cornfield Review* assistant editor and OSU Marion student, is currently on the Columbus Campus. He's an English major . . . . . **EDWARD LENSE** teaches at the Columbus College of Art & Design. His writings and photography have appeared in several magazines. He recently returned from a trip to Ireland and Scotland . . . . . **GARY PACERNICK** teaches at Wright State University, edits *Images*, and is working on a study of contemporary Jewish-American poets . . . . . **KARL PATTEN**, co-editor of *West Branch*, teaches at Bucknell University. He has recently completed work on a manuscript of poems . . . . . **CRAIG PHILIPS** is an OSU Marion student . . . . . **NANCY JO RINEHART**, former student on the Marion Campus, is teaching in area schools. She's the Waldo correspondent for the *Marion Star* . . . . . **GLENN ROTHMAN**, associate professor of art at OSU Marion, is a resident of Delaware. His work has appeared before in *Cornfield Review* . . . . . **SUSAN FROMBERG SCHAEFFER**, of Brooklyn, N.Y., is a poet and fiction writer whose work has been widely published . . . . . **PHIL SHIRLEY**, former OSU Marion student, is currently attending classes on the Columbus Campus . . . . . **ELIZABETH STEALEY** is the mother of two girls, Jennifer and Rachel, and an English major at OSU Marion . . . . . **LEONARD TRAWICK** teaches at Cleveland State University, where he edits *The Gamut*, a new magazine . . . . . **PETER WILD**, of Tucson, Arizona, is author of the soon-to-be-published *Pioneer Conservationists of Eastern America*, a prose work. . . . . **CINDY WILLETT** is a student on the Columbus Campus of OSU . . . . . **STAN WILLIS**, a senior at OSU majoring in photography/cinema, is a former Navy photographer and an ex-newspaper photographer . . . . **ILSE YODER** lives in Marion.

