

Susan McCracken

**Autumn Tree (All My Will)**

I am going down to a city at a crossroads;  
 I leave you these writings;  
 Decipher them as you can,  
 for I have other business.  
 Remembering the watch from my mother's window,  
 late at night, a tame goose wanting to fly south. . .  
 We lived, my friends and I,  
 in that other city-at-a-crossroads,  
 thousands of miles from the shadow;  
 raised our children and our gardens,  
 discussed philosophies,  
 and did some small part  
 of the good work,  
 constructing the new world  
 in the interstices of the old,  
 as in a tapestry, filling up the holes.  
 But where is the risen Atlantis?  
 I wait to see  
 fruit of our labors.  
 Now my parents are gone;  
 the baby I had then  
 is half-grown to a woman;  
 she looks at me  
 with eyes that ask me "why?"  
 —and I have no answers.  
 The love that was to  
 last a lifetime  
 has grown so old and worn  
 and gray,  
 and frayed around the edges,  
 like old paper. . . .  
 No needs me.  
 Here.  
 All my excuses are gone,  
 falling away  
 like leaves from an autumn tree;  
 I cajole the last few birds to stay,  
 awhile yet, on my branches.  
 But God gave free will  
 only to the animate beings;  
 a tree cannot decide  
 if it is to be  
 a sheltering house,  
 a bonfire,  
 or an old, rotten stump.  
 All my will I turn, now,  
 as the wild geese fly;  
 like salmon swimming upstream to spawn,  
 I'm going home to a place I've never been,  
 to a city at a crossroads.

Marie (Redbird) Parcell

Pintail ducks on an open bay,  
 Wings touching the tip of high tide.  
 A doe from the wood comes to greet the day. . .  
 On the water's edge lay a dead cod's hide.

The hole of a clam shows of its hiding,  
 The tracks of small birds chart narrow trails.  
 Two men in a boat hope they are biting,  
 Their skiff rolling gently to the tune of the gales.

A wet mist adds to an ocean spray,  
 A gull takes to air and is lost in the fog.  
 Broken bits of shell strewn in disarray,  
 Sand crabs crawl on a rotten log.

A light chilling wind bites my face,  
 But, I smile into it so as to look at this sea,  
 For all seems right, everything in place,  
 It is filled with life, and it has filled me.

Randy Becker

**Evening Caricature**

The sun  
 splashed golden  
 behind the oak.  
 Each burnished branch  
 a silhouette of iron.

(as though the oak  
 jumped through  
 the sky  
 Leaving the coarse, knobby  
 shape of dark bole and branches)

Red embers  
 in the western hills  
 fanned in summer  
 memory.  
 Evening: a pink-smoke smudge.

Venus (a diamond drop)  
 dangled off a corner  
 of the moon.

(Did she (with cunning impetuosity)  
 ever slide down that smooth  
 horn, boldly  
 hidden behind day's dazzling  
 light?)

In the glowing evening,  
 shadows stretched like  
 Pinocchio's nose  
 mocking the awesome forge  
 that cast their reasons. . .  
 and their being.

Gretchen Notzold



Kevin Shilts



Diane Eubank

## Cunningham's Lunch Counter

It was just like any other Saturday at Cunningham's lunch counter: slow, mingled with bursts of business. The football crowd had come and gone. Mr. Henrys, the druggist and owner, was sitting in the employee's booth. He had ordered his usual: a cheeseburger with everything and white milk. He was methodically eating his way through the sandwich after pushing all the newspapers and ashtrays and fingernail polish to one side.

All of the waitresses had jumped up from the booth and were now behind the counter busily polishing silverware and malted tins, or filling his ice water every time he sipped from it.

Vera was "on the floor." She took any customers while the other waitresses smoked and talked. This was an unspoken arrangement (developed over the years) at the lunch counter. Vera, being newly hired and also the youngest, had to prove herself.

Besides, Vera thought, she didn't smoke.

As she swept crumbs off the counter from some anonymous luncher, she chuckled. Mr. Henrys hadn't even looked at her today, after last night. That old man. Until last night, she really hadn't thought much about him. She just figured she'd keep out of his way and avoid trouble. He was always so straight-laced and strict. Around her, though, he seemed to ease up. Maybe because she was smaller... and younger than the rest of the waitresses.

But, last night, Mr. Henrys had caught a friend waiting for her at "close."

He wasn't her boyfriend but Brian was a boy and he had long hair and that was enough for Mr. Henrys.

He'd said, pretending not to notice Brian, "Those hippies, Vera, watch out for them, they're nothing but a bunch of fertilizer!" She laughed out loud, remembering. She couldn't believe he'd said that! How ridiculous!

But what really had cracked her up was when Brian said: "What me: fertilizer?" or "What me, fertilize her?" Mr. Henrys had glowered at them as they left. It was all Vera could do, not to crack up in front of Mr. Henrys.

So here he was staring into his hamburger. Oh well...

She busied the "Thin Man's" plate. She clipped his bag of chips back on the rack. He always left them. With a rag she cleaned up the last crumbs and coffee ring and then it was as though he'd never been there; just an empty naugahyde stool at a formica lunch counter.

Some how its sad, she thought, as she stared down the counter, past the row of stools at the drizzle outside: They come, they eat and then go. We whisk off the crumbs and its as though they never came. Some of them never even say a word—we have their coffee ready before they get settled on a stool. This lunch counter is just an anonymous parade of ghosts. The only real people are the waitresses.

Here comes another ghost, she thought, as a brittle dried-up woman struggled at the door. The wet wind flapped her

baggy, blue raincoat around her bony legs and autumn leaves swirled in as she cracked open the door.

She headed for the nearest stool at the counter and sat down. She opened her pocket book and took out a pack of Camels. Fumbling with the matches, she finally lit a cigarette and pulled the ash tray over close to her. Silently, she pulled puff after puff from the cigarette, scowling straight ahead.

Vera took out her pad and pencil and approached the woman. Smiling, she set a glass of ice water in front of her and said, "Can I help you, ma'am? We have a grilled cheese and bacon sandwich with chips for our special today." Vera waited while the woman finished her first cigarette and lit another one.

Scowling from the ashtray up at Vera, the woman mumbled in a cracked, gravelly voice.

"Excuse me," Vera said politely. "What did you want?" This woman does need help, Vera thought, noticing her smeared lipstick and disheveled hair. She looks like hell. She must have a hangover.

"Ah wanna wa-aw-wa," the woman said. She impatiently brushed a wet tangle of hair from her eyes and took another pull at her cigarette.

Vera shifted uncomfortably. What should she do? She couldn't understand this lady. She couldn't just ignore her. Ugggh, Vera groaned her breath.

"Ma'am, I'm sorry, I... I still didn't hear you." Vera's cheeks flushed red.

Very loudly the woman said, "Ah wanna wa-aw-wa." She crushed out her cigarette in short, quick movements and lit another one. Her reddened eyes snapped beneath her heavy brows.

Vera turned away. She walked back to the grill area. Behind the metal screen, Black Betty was smoking. She raised her eyebrows and slowly rubbed out her cigarette.

"Well, honey, what's de ole lady want?"

Vera was flustered. "I don't know what she wants. I..."

"Don't know? How come, honey?" Betty's eyebrows went up higher. The other waitresses left their booth and gathered behind the grill screen. (Anything different than business as usual was worth getting up for.)

"Well, I don't know what she's saying. I think she's drunk or got a hangover or something," Vera said. At that, all the waitresses peeked around the screen at her. There she was staring bloody murder into the ash tray.

"What did it sound like she said?" Rosemary asked.

"I don't know—do we have anything that sound like a wa-aw-wa?" Vera was feeling desperate. The look on that lady's face was...

"Maybe a Bromoseltzer!" Joy suggested. "Maybe she's saying 'I wanna Bromo?'"

Black Betty snuck a look around the screen.

"That woman sho looks lak she could use one!" she said.

"Yeah, I bet that's it!" Rosemary said. Vera was ready to agree to anything. So they took a Bromoseltzer out of the dispenser and together, unwrapped it from the foil packet and dropped it in a juice glass of water.

Vera ventured forth from the grill screen, the glass fizzing and foaming on the center of her tray. She set it down in front of the woman and timidly waited. The woman slowly flicked her cigarette at the mountain of ashes in the tray.

"Here you are," Vera said loudly "That'll be a dime, please..." Her voice trailed off as the woman glowered at her and urgently fumbled another cigarette from the pack and lit it. Puff after frantic puff she took, mumbling to herself.

Vera felt the woman's stare boring right through her. She shifted her weight. This is torture, she thought. So the lady doesn't want it; well, she sure didn't know what it was the lady did want.

When the woman looked down at the ashtray, Vera turned and walked back to the grill. The waitress' heads disappeared back behind it.

"Well?" they whispered, clustering around Vera. "What'd she say?" They clung expectantly to her.

"Nothing," Vera said, "Nothing." Dramatically, she turned away.

They followed her, "Well, maybe, you should go ask, 'Is everything O.K.?' Rosemary said.

"If you want to, go ahead," Vera said. She went to the employee's booth and sat down.

For the next hour, Vera and the waitresses took turns peeking from behind the screen. The woman just sat hunched over her ashtray smoking. Finally, she got up and grasping her pocketbook, struggled through the door back into the wind.

Vera got up to bus her dishes. There was an empty pack of Camels crumpled in the brimming ashtray, a glass of water with two slivers of ice at the top and a juice glass full of cloudy, lukewarm liquid. A folded napkin with red lipstick marks was under the glass. Vera smiled grimly, "She may not have left a dime but she did leave a kiss!"

She put the dishes in the bus tray and went back to the booth.

"Well, did she leave a dime? Did she pay for it?" The waitresses eagerly asked. "Did she leave a tip?"

"No," Vera said and reached in her apron for a dime. "I'll pay for it."

Later that afternoon when the night shift was coming on, Vera was in the booth, laughing.

"And next time..." Vera said. The waitresses leaned toward her.

"What?" Theresa asked.

"Next time, I'm going tell 'em we're all out of it 'til they say something I do understand!"

Gretchen Notzold



**GONE**

Walls echo with the laughter  
Of contented space and time.  
Affection joined the consciousness  
That shared a peace of mind.

The loss of one that gave  
Abundance to nourish the soul.  
Turned laughter into solitude  
Warm winds have shifted cold.

Not from feelings changed or lost  
A begin that will not close.  
The existence cannot be denied  
Like a splendid winter rose.

© 1982  
Barbara Fore Williams

**The Night the Wind blew all the Leaves off the Trees**

That night  
the wind plunged through the tree tops  
and tumbled leaves  
end over end,  
top over bottom,  
stem over tip.

along the pavement  
and knocked the dark limbs naked.

Roared and rioted in the branches  
bent them North - combed them down . . .  
A thundering god or king  
plundering every supple limb  
every brittle, cracking thing  
in his whirling way

That night the world shook and shuddered and flapped  
in the way of the wind.

The river drew up in patternless peaks  
the moon splattered in the trough of every wave  
her silver shivering in the windy night.

The wind throttled the night's dark until it howled.

When, suddenly,  
while trying to capture the wind in words  
my tattered page ripped wildly off:  
a paper sail  
rattling on the wind.

Gretchen Notzold

**Water Poem**

They/we take  
the clear water  
from high mountain springs  
and send it  
through sewers,  
underground,  
through chemicals  
and garbage,  
to reach the sea.

Through all the mud  
I hardly know  
(through clothes  
and jokes,  
and radio)  
that which I saw  
shining on the mountain,  
at the sacred well.

I am sitting  
crying by the river,  
and you ask me  
"Why?"

Marie (Redbird) Parcell

**TO STAND ALONE**

Every day last year,  
Five days a week for nine months,  
I drove past them,  
Those two trees.

One green and living,  
The other scorched and dead.  
They, together, symbolized so much,  
Those two trees.

Age and youth, happiness and sorrow.  
Death and Life, love and hate.  
Each day symbolizing something different.  
I loved to see them,  
Those two trees.

On the first day back,  
After three wonderful months,  
A shock. The dead one was gone.  
Now only the living tree is left to stand alone,  
That one tree.

Laurel Larson

**renewal**

. . .good  
a lot of good . . .  
feeling . . .  
knowing peace.

a gift warmly given  
accepted . . .  
magnified and given back  
eyes . . . searching  
deeply . . . infinity  
exists there  
smiling . . .  
knowing peace.

Barbara Fore Williams, •



Kevin Shilts

**SAPPHIRE SUMMER**

Glittering, glancing, out of  
infinity  
Splendor falls on a mystical  
day.  
Sapphire skies with cotton  
clouds agraze  
Reflected on the mirror of  
the lake.  
The fragrance of the  
forest, incense sweet  
In holy mist, drifts  
through cathedral trees.

Along the lake, along  
the winding trail  
The singing troop has  
left a child behind.  
The sapphire summer  
calls on her to wait;  
To tarry by the sunlight-  
stippled lake  
Reflecting heaven's hue  
while song bird chant  
Their sweet sonata  
true.

But hush and listen  
for the still portent  
There, there up on the waiting  
other shore,  
Pale willow boughs like  
curtains made of lace  
Open; a painted birch  
canoe, glides swiftly oer the  
gleaming lake.  
The dripping of the painted  
paddle sheds  
crystal droplets of a  
rainbow's sheen.  
For this bright moment  
are as from the dead  
has found his tribal  
placing as in a dream.

Jarring and strident is  
the cry of the loon!  
The vision fades. . .  
She startles from the  
scene,  
To be aware of sapphire  
summer day  
Re-echoed in the  
acquiescent lake  
That wants to be a glass  
Reflecting heaven.  
The child, enthralled,  
must still lift up her  
pack  
And trudge on past the  
beauty and  
the fragrance that  
surrounds  
The everlasting woods will call her  
back.

No, see the wise child  
far from laughing crowds  
Who finds upon the  
brightly written page,  
glittering sapphire,  
lovely summer days;  
from the winter years.

She lives again,  
within the Book of Days  
The radiant splendor  
of the changing sphere.

Betty Westby

**TO SIGMUND AND MARIBEL**

Subjugations to normality  
brings guarantees of sanity.

Speculations of conformity  
leads to absence of deformity.

Or so I've heard it said.  
But I'd rather be dead,

Than live with such obfuscation  
That leaves my soul in stagnation.

Michelle LeMay

**BEYOND TRANQUILITY**

the smoke sifts    the air becomes fine

And the senses rise  
in pithy stir  
to meet their innermost desires.

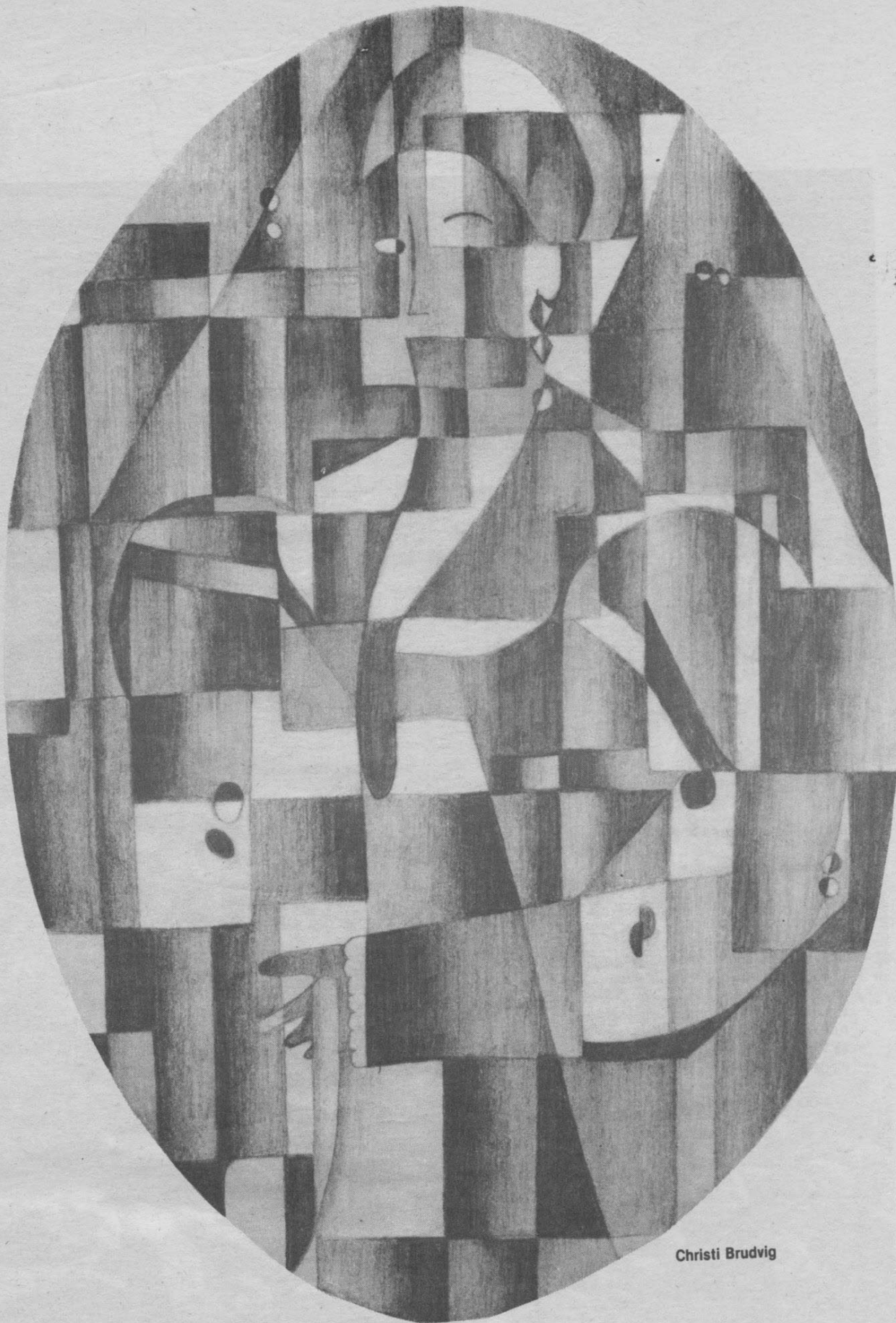
The destroyed, maimed  
the hidden and  
unconceived  
whirl in a tumult  
to an orgy of calm climax.

The innocent pastimes of the beast  
become the hideous pleasures of man.

The breath of peace  
stings your sight  
with tiny barbs  
that melt and mingle  
within the human reservoir of limitlessness.

And towards the end of all dreams  
beauty, and fulfillment—  
lies the final unveiling of truth.

Pam Cline



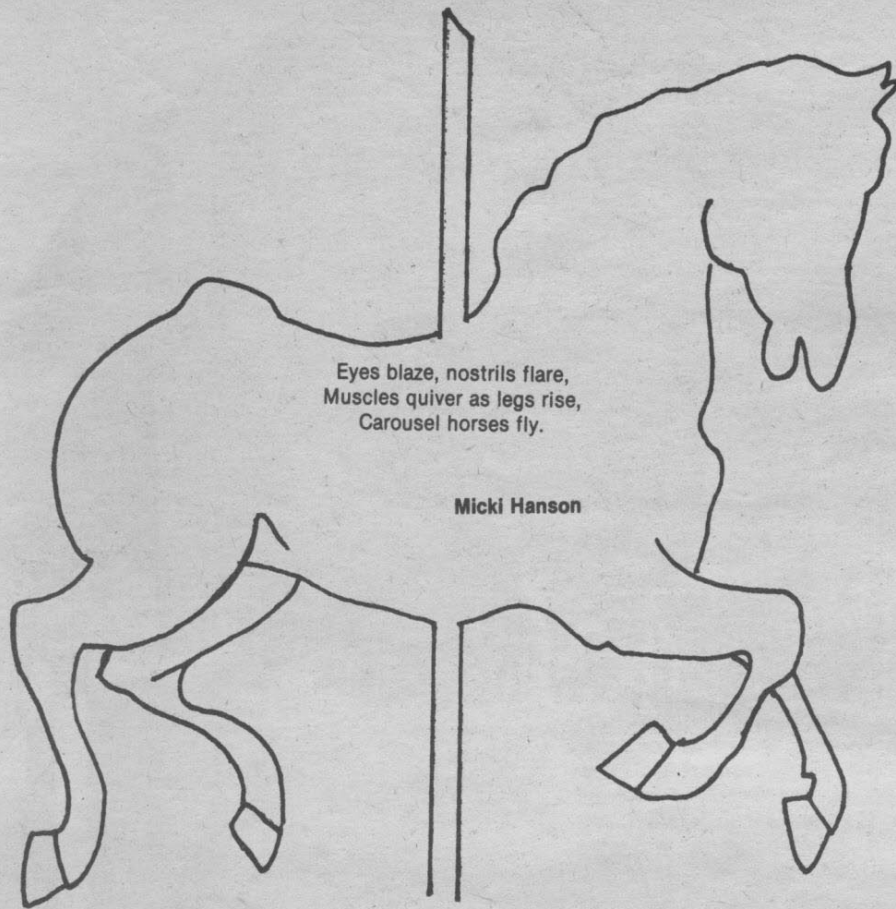
Christi Brudvig

When it was time to remember  
the promises made while changing a mind  
to think like your own,  
you forgot.  
Who remembers such talk?  
If half the words spoken  
weren't relieved by excuses  
and found better uses;  
What would happen to the lie  
when it came time to die  
in the realms of truth?  
Who remembers a lie?  
Only to those promised and to those lied  
have the memories of such talk  
cried for mercy of forgetfulness.  
But, who remembers mercy?

Linda Hahn, 1967

The weary hours  
come to an end  
I lay down  
hoping to be revived.  
My mind races  
as my body tells  
of its aches.  
I look lonely  
my spirit has been taken...  
Why is this  
happening earlier  
everyday?

Diana Davis



Eyes blaze, nostrils flare,  
Muscles quiver as legs rise,  
Carousel horses fly.

Micki Hanson

MICKI

**ANCIENT VOICES**

I walk down ancient paths,  
Past ruins tall and silent,  
Grim with the years of decay.

I journey into yesterday,  
Hearing echoes from the depths of time,  
Voices shrill and faint, crying for release.

The wind whispers to me,  
Telling me tales of glory and triumph,  
And of death and loss.

I cross the threshold of a weathered hall  
Where joy and laughter were kings,  
But now cold and dark are ruling there.

Mist shrouds the fallen city in bleak despair,  
Choking out life, and blocking all light,  
Creating silence out of the night.

The streets are bare and empty,  
Except for the shades and ghosts of men,  
Who wait for the worlds ending.

The chill moon breaks through the fogs,  
But it brightens nothing,  
It's light is sickly and pale,  
A corpse light for the dead city.

I walk away from that ancient place,  
Wondering in what far distant time,  
Someone will walk through my city,  
Asking, why we are gone.

David Mintz

**At the Glassblower's Shop**

Free from watchful eyes,  
sparkling back  
I am running through magic glass kingdom  
on to blue pony carousel  
finery, pomp and shine  
round and up and down and round again  
to adventure on crystal ship sailing  
sleek and bold  
wind tunneled through to bow  
ruffling my hair  
as I leap to red dancer pirouette  
elegance and grade

—DO NOT TOUCH—

but I have lived there.

Donna Gianoulis

**THE MARTEL**

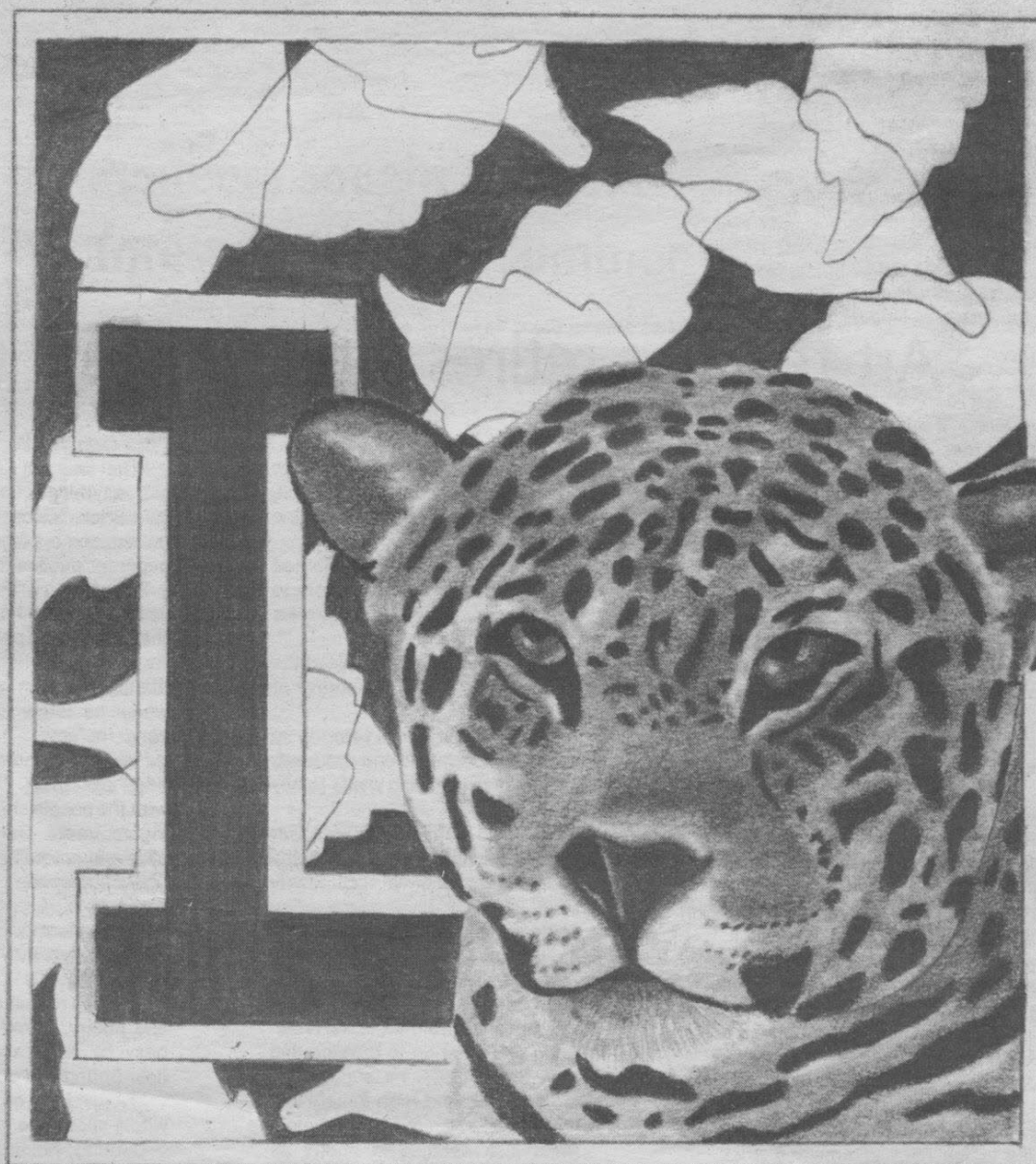
A sapped tree, like an altar, and sacrifice  
bound, adhered, debarked and laying lifeless;  
Both are victims felled by the Martel's price.

That tree, roots gasping, expired by the flood  
of winterkill now caters, serving earth's food  
by borers and mulchers, denatured wood.  
Upon that tree, holes foaming, retired by  
springkill's fresh death, growing potential past;  
this living hollow clamors for dropped blood.

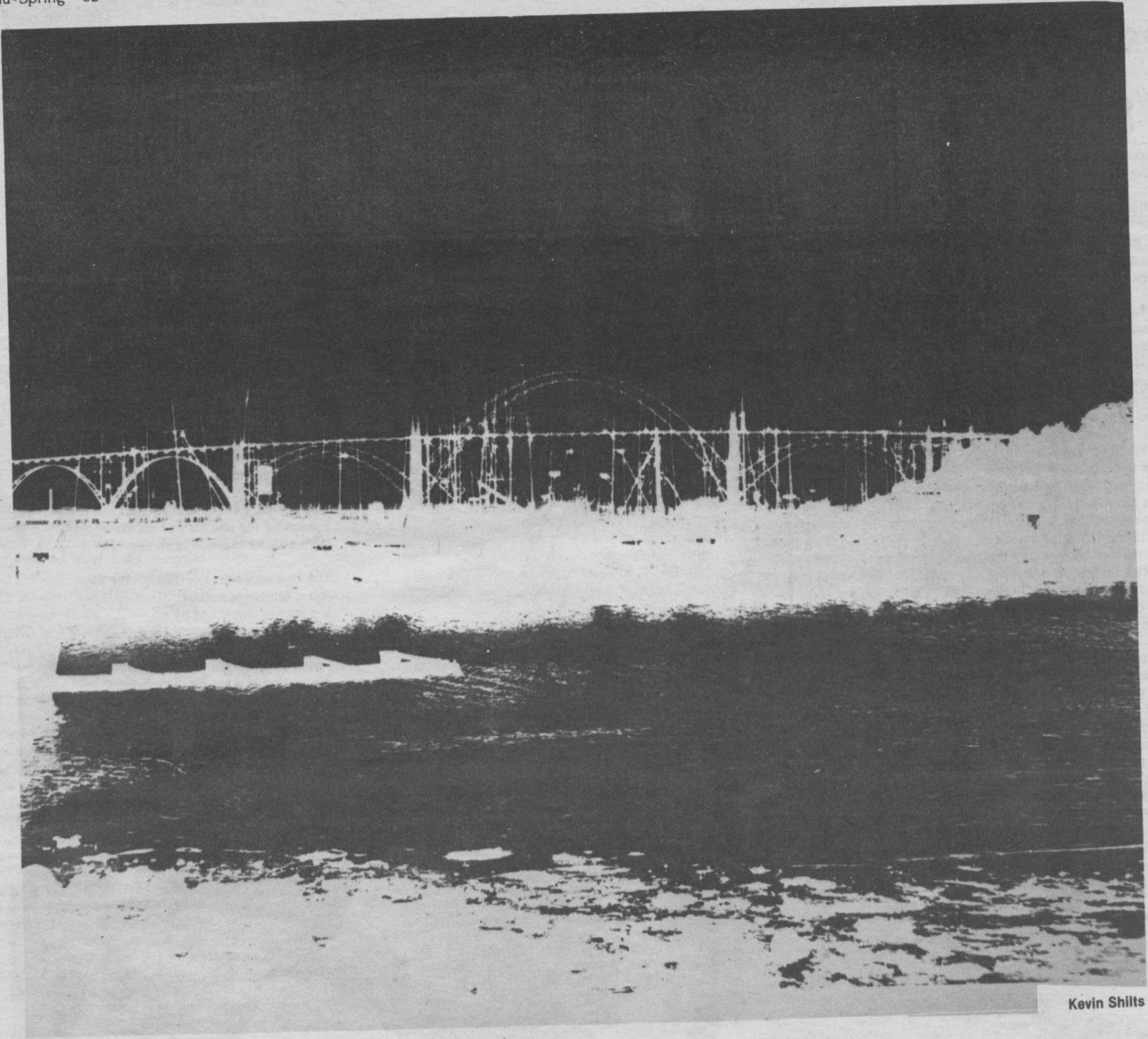
It befits that bark to bark, and living  
to dead joins as resourceful, universal  
laws of nature's economic cycling.  
Whereas, young young pups consume the vast bounty  
of earth and sea; this ignored bag of skin  
pays in hammered blood, and spurting fece.

A cardboard box, a tree, and a sacrifice  
bound adhered, debarked and laying lifeless.

Joel Fontanos



Penny Mogan



Kevin Shilts

## Art teacher retires after 13 years (but not from art)

By Denise Waldron  
Staff Writer

"As my two eyes make one vision, so is my goal in life, to make my vocation and avocation one," quoted LBCC art instructor Jim Brick from Robert Frost's "From Two Tramps in Mudtime."

Sitting in Brick's office crowded with art and mementos of his past 13 years of teaching at LBCC, it's easy to see that art is more than just a hobby or profession for Brick. It is the center of his existence.

"Most of my life centers around living," said Brick, "I think the whole idea of a creative existence is statements of one's own involvement with life."

"I've been very lucky to make a living at something I love," said Brick. Brick plans to continue his involvement with art after he retires from teaching at the end of this term.

In the time since he first began at LBCC, he has seen many changes develop.

"When I first taught at the college it was being held downtown in the old Elks Lodge Bar," commented Brick, "And it had a bick black and white checkered floor that found it's way in-

to some of my paintings."

"I've influenced a lot of students for better or worse," said Brick, "most saw art as a hobby, but a few were very gifted."

Over the years, Brick has attributed the improvement of his own work to the necessity of having to explain things to his students.

He also feels that the people at the college have been very supportive of his art work.

"I generally just hang a painting up and some one comes along and takes it down off the walls and wants to buy it," said Brick.

He has sold many watercolors over the years that deal mainly with the Oregon coast and other scenic landscapes.

Aside from the paintings that he sells, Brick also works with oil paintings in the style of cubism.

Over the years he has taught classes ranging from art history, cartooning and painting to drawing and design. Before LBCC, he taught for 12 years at Springfield High School and for two years in Bremmerton, Wash.

Brick also dabbles in poetry as well. He recently had pieces performed in the LBCC Readers Theatre,

"Our Own Voices."

"That was the first time I had ever had anything published like that," said Brick. "Occasionally I have submitted some pieces to the school paper for publication too."

Brick began writing poetry about 15 years ago when he thought of things that he couldn't paint but could write. He is now in the process of completing his fifth volume of poetry, which he refers to as his own personal therapy.

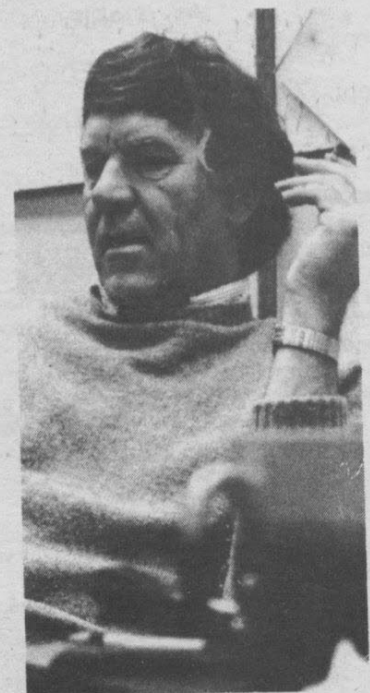
"Writing is more active than painting," said Brick. "Painting is passive with the people sitting and also seeming to freeze. But poems are more alive and not just a snap shot."

Brick described his cartooning as snap shots of characters around the campus. Most he compared to stars of their own movies waiting to be discovered.

After his retirement, besides his art and poetry, Brick will make himself busy by remodeling his old house near Springfield and gardening.

"I'll just keep on trying to enjoy the whole show," he said smiling.

Quoting Robert Frost again, he said: "I can't think of a place it's like to go better."



Jim Brick