

Utah State University

DigitalCommons@USU

---

Undergraduate Honors Capstone Projects

Honors Program

---

5-1991

## The Dilettante

Heather A. Riley

*Utah State University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/honors>

 Part of the [Arts and Humanities Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Riley, Heather A., "The Dilettante" (1991). *Undergraduate Honors Capstone Projects*. 366.

<https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/honors/366>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Honors Program at DigitalCommons@USU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Undergraduate Honors Capstone Projects by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@USU. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@usu.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@usu.edu).



The page is framed by a decorative border in an Art Nouveau style. The border consists of a wide top and bottom band with repeating floral and scrollwork motifs. The left and right sides are framed by narrower vertical bands, also featuring repeating decorative elements. The central area is plain white, providing a stark contrast for the text.

The  
Dilettante

# The Dilettante

Published and Edited  
by Heather A. Riley  
in cooperation with  
Utah State University  
Honors Department  
1991

## Editor's Note:

The printing of this book marks the end of a year of deliberating, searching, sifting, procrastinating and finally decision making. These pages include what I consider to be some of the finest work by young artists in Cache Valley. I must admit, I am rather in awe of my contributors. I have always been frustrated by the fact that I seem to have no outlet for my creative urges. Something always seems to get lost between my brain and my pen, So, my "consolation prize" is the opportunity to work with some artists whose talents I respect very much.

By publishing "The Dilettante" I hope to draw greater attention to these artists whose work I feel is deserving of greater exposure.

I want to thank my contributors for their work and for giving me the privilege of publishing it. I would also like to thank Dr. Joseph Morse for his patience and tolerance of my procrastination. Special thanks to Shayne, without whom this book would not exist; to Karen, for her valuable input, and to Brian for his gentle prodding and constant support.

Heather Riley

# Table Of Contents

<i>In The Eyes</i>		<i>"Old Man in a Dry Season"</i>	
Dan Fliegel . . . . .	1	Woodcut	
		Kristine Gunnell . . . . .	15
<i>Those We'll Never Know</i>		<i>"Psyche"</i>	
Dan Fliegel . . . . .	1	Lance Clayton . . . . .	16
<i>Untitled Etching</i>		<i>The Nature of Woman</i>	
Gregor Sosnoski. . . . .	2	k. Willie. . . . .	17
<i>Landscapes, Journeys, and Boundaries</i>		<i>Mothers, Sisters, Sweethearts...</i>	
<i>A Retrospective</i>		Dot Archibald. . . . .	18
Dot Archibald. . . . .	3-7	<i>Imposter</i>	
<i>Untitled Lithograph</i>		Dot Archibald. . . . .	18
Gregor Sosnoski. . . . .	8	<i>The Burden of Sleep</i>	
<i>Untitled Silverprint</i>		Troy G. Passey . . . . .	19
Shayne Christiansen . . . . .	9	<i>Raking Leaves in January</i>	
<i>Untitled Silverprint</i>		Troy G. Passey . . . . .	19
Shayne Christiansen . . . . .	10	<i>"Remains"</i>	
<i>Untitled Silverprint</i>		Lance Clayton . . . . .	20
Shayne Christiansen . . . . .	11-12	<i>"Opportunity"</i>	
<i>Zippo</i>		Lance Clayton . . . . .	21
Troy G. Passey . . . . .	12		
<i>Give Me Back Your Eyes</i>			
Troy G. Passey . . . . .	12		
<i>"Captains of Industry"</i>			
Woodcut			
Gregor Sosnoski. . . . .	13		
<i>"Woman in a Changing Season"</i>			
Woodcut			
Kristine Gunnell . . . . .	14		

## *In The Eyes*

*We chat and sift through  
disappointments, and as your  
coffee grows colder  
your fingers clench the cup.  
We breakfast on prospects.  
All this digging, to come up empty  
now...is that fear there? Some might say this  
work itself holds the meaning. Or  
maybe it's found in your face,  
weathered, pale, with a stubble that says you can  
never return--a deep beard that holds  
you here, and will only quit when you do.  
There is a certain desperation--lonely, personal,  
common--that shows through the eyes sometimes  
and betrays all small talk,  
even the serious stuff, with news  
more immediate and telling than any  
words could carry. At these times we  
drift above our own voices, embarrassed  
that they so seldom say  
anything at all, and listen for a while  
with our eyes as our words drone on.  
The eyes share the secret, like lovers, of a union  
our voices, the clumsy parents of our condition,  
can never know.*

*Dan Fliegel*

## *Those We'll Never Know*

*A spirit in my dream  
became my wife, took an old lover's  
form, wearing a blue dress.  
Gone when I awoke.*

*Someone like me stands in  
doorways sometimes, just out  
of sight, leaving only  
a scent of things undone, rich  
like spring mud.*

*These ghosts are born  
in every decision, each  
one a life never given life,  
faint echoes that linger as afterthoughts--  
never quite there, or here,  
abandoned to drown in air. I hear  
their fading screams.*

*Dan Fliegel*

*Dan Fliegell*, a native of Madison, Wisconsin, is a senior majoring in English at Utah State. Dan will miss Logan & many of the good people here after leaving Logan following graduation.



Untitled Etching  
Gregor Sosnoski

*Gregor Sosnoski, a senior at Utah State University majoring in Fine Art with a printmaking emphasis says, "My true dream is to become a dancer. I simply love life and strive to become a better person, in turn making the world a little brighter."*

## LANDSCAPES, JOURNEYS, AND BOUNDARIES A RETROSPECTIVE

I was born in '27  
From the beginning,  
my skin didn't fit.  
There was sand under it  
or something.  
I wanted to move around in it  
loosely  
instead I feel ill at ease  
driven  
irritable.

After I learned to read  
I could change the world of primary colors  
to muted fantasy  
distant reality  
spin a cocoon  
to hide in.

In the 30's  
I grew from babyhood  
to adolescence  
with all the attendant horrors.

School was a journey of little deaths,  
minor triumphs of the mind,  
major defeats of the flesh.

They called me the human encyclopedia,  
the hairy ape. "Dainty."  
When the ball hit the end of my finger,  
I cried;  
the jump rope went to fast.  
Other kids flew on ropes,  
hanging from the Maypole,  
I ran into the pole  
and broke out my two front teeth.

I wanted them to like me  
but they didn't  
I didn't know how to make them like me  
i was either too much  
or not enough.

The smartest kid in the class,  
I never knew  
when the gang would surround me  
on the school yard,  
jeering.

At home  
I was a sissy  
in a family of fishers and hunters.

I curled in my chair  
absorbed in books.  
In *The Princess and the Goblins*,  
Curdie was my fantasy companion;  
the princess' father, the king,  
was my father in regal trappings,  
and the beautiful grandmother in the tower  
would sooth my hurts with sweet-smelling balm  
plunging then in the fire painlessly.  
Besides, she spun cobwebs out of moonbeams  
and used the cobwebs to guide the princess home.

In my fantasy  
I would heal without pain  
hang on to gossamer cobwebs  
and not stumble.  
My father would take me up on his great white horse  
(actually he did take me up on a steam engine once)  
and I would be beautiful.  
I knew I was a princess  
when my yellow taffeta dress rustled  
flaring in a graceful circle around my bare legs  
but nobody else seemed to know.

(Many years later, in therapy,  
I would put up signs,  
"There are no goblins,"  
to remind me that in real life  
there are no kings or princesses,  
there is no healing without pain.)

When my dad was outside  
tending the farm,  
I turned on the radio,  
played Tchaikovsky and other flying music,  
soared on my toes,  
leapt from coach to chair,  
let my arms float free.



At the beach,  
we went to the pier  
where the salt air  
the rich acrid smell of asphalt in the sun,  
the hypnotic rise and fall of deep green water,  
the cool wind from the sea,  
and the tall lovely boys  
called to me.

"You bait your own hook.  
You catch 'em, you clean 'em,  
and don't you be watchin' the boys.  
We're fishing," my dad said.

Dripping hunks of mussels  
clinging to their shells,  
rough black outside,  
acrid orange within,  
and slimy worms,  
all of it had to go on the hook.

With family,  
I was sullen,  
uncooperative,  
I wanted to be left alone  
in my cocoon of fantasy.

I thought about the guns locked away  
in the closet of my father's den.  
They could take me away forever  
from the nightmares and the loneliness.  
But when I imagined myself dead  
every one walked away.  
No one would ever know the princess  
not even me.

I'll never know  
what mix of DNA and neurosis  
kept me,  
the daughter of a gentle man  
and an independent mother,  
small in my bed,  
paralyzed,  
waiting for The Hand  
to come through the window  
in a screaming crash of glass  
and snarling curses,  
to crush me in my bed.

When the nightmares began,  
every rustle at the window  
was The Hand.  
The long hall from my room to Theirs  
had a trap door  
that would open and swallow me  
if I tried to escape.

In my last major nightmare  
as I entered puberty,  
I dreamed I was standing at the turnstile  
of a race track.  
Everybody who went in  
gave me two dollars;  
every one who came out  
had winnings of seventy dollars  
and I had to pay them all.

Half dreaming,  
I stumbled to the living room  
where my mother and father  
were visiting with my uncle.  
I was hysterical, sobbing,  
terrified;  
my mother was embarrassed.

I went to the bathroom,  
vomiting,  
trying to cough up the money.  
Imagination added boundaries of fear  
and I was never enough.

The 40's for me  
was the hope of boys  
who would see  
the princess in me,  
would tell me I was beautiful.

For me there was never anything  
like my first love.  
Beating out the boogie-woogie  
at the school dance,  
he caught me with a long glance,  
looked at me laughing,  
his tanned throat warm  
against the open collar  
of a white shirt.

He was a piano player,  
a basketball star,  
president of the student body;  
his thick-lashed laughing brown eyes  
were sexy  
although I didn't know sex yet.

At this time, 1944,  
kisses were reserved for the third date.  
After that I didn't know the rules--  
I was a late--developing  
Scholarship Society member--  
I knew he might want to touch my breasts,  
instead he touched me,"down there"  
with those long tanned graceful  
piano playing fingers,  
those hands that could make the hoop shots  
from thirty feet out.

We parked under the acacia trees  
in my front yard,  
making out.  
I didn't know it then  
and wouldn't have cared  
but I was lost forever.

I waited for him,  
writing letters,  
while I dreamed my college years away.

After two years  
in the occupation army,  
he came home from the Philippines.  
He came home different,  
his voice and his language rougher,  
His sexual demands more imperative.  
He wanted to get closer physically  
but stay farther away.  
Beer and pinochle with the boys  
were his priorities;  
getting married was something he had to do  
to get what he wanted.  
The boy was gone;  
the man was not yet there.  
I didn't know the difference  
I was "in love."

In my wedding dress,  
ready to go to the church,  
i twirled before the mirror  
saying. "Do I look beautiful?" "  
Embarrassed my mother said,  
"You don't ever say that  
about yourself!"

Leaving home,  
driving away for our honeymoon,  
I felt free  
but not alone.  
Three days later  
I felt alone.  
He wanted to go home, drink beer,  
play pinochle--with the boys.

My fantasy--  
that sand and the sea  
bright blue skies  
love  
and beautiful me--  
was not enough.

Adventure, finally  
the City,  
stars over Lake Michigan,  
we trudged the streets of Chicago,  
in a post-war housing shortage,  
wide-eyed at the red-light district  
on Halsted Street,  
gaping at skyscrapers, and  
looking for a place to live  
so he could go to school on the GI bill.

Lake Michigan froze over that year--  
10 below zero for two weeks--  
the wind blew cold off the frozen lake.  
I stayed in my Cocoon  
housekeeping for our board and room;  
wrapped in earmuffs and overcoat  
he trudged to the Illinois Central,  
took the train to school.

When school was finished,  
I wanted my adventure.  
I wanted to bicycle through Paris  
in the springtime,  
to see the Alps,  
the changing of the guard,  
to see Europe  
now that the war was over.  
He wanted to go home;  
he had had his war and his adventure.

We were each bound  
by our needs and fantasies,  
mine for a larger world with him,  
his for a smaller world  
without me--  
although he didn't say so then.  
We never knew each other.

The 50's were  
Better Homes and Gardens,  
Good Housekeeping,  
June Allyson,  
Doris Day,  
bright-faced scrubbed babies,  
home-made bread--  
I tried for it all  
and missed.  
He struggled to make a living,  
came home drunk and discouraged.

He had John Wayne, Gary Cooper,  
and Lucky Lager.  
I had babies,  
four of 'em.  
The 50's seemed to last forever,  
through babies,  
bankruptcy,  
and finally, divorce.

I remember the scenes--  
inching through fog-laden night,  
on my way to the hospital.  
My oldest, an asthmatic,  
gasping for breath,  
needing adrenalin.

I sped 90 miles an hour  
through stop lights  
past policemen,  
my third child in the seat beside me,  
not breathing  
hovering gray on the edge of death  
from electrocution.

He was three,  
out playing with the three-year old  
across the street.  
Unbeknownst to me,  
they had a rabbit hutch  
with wires across the base  
plugged into the garage current  
to keep the dogs away.

Most of all I remember  
the night they told me,  
"I don't love you any more.  
I haven't for a long time."

I had always been a princess  
in the castle of my mind  
despite the evidence  
of diapers and bankruptcy  
but know my shining price was gone.

I was undefined, desolate  
in a gray landscape  
of dead dreams.

I cried and danced  
and tried to make it happen again,  
looking for anyone  
who would tell me I was beautiful.  
I couldn't tell myself anymore,  
I knew no one would believe me.

In the 60's and early 70's,  
I lived a montage,  
a kaleidoscope of experience.  
Drugs invaded a still unsophisticated  
Southern California,  
and our family way of life.  
Nobody knew anything about them.

*My beautiful children  
were long-haired, scruffy, and sullen,  
part of the counter-culture  
that was taking away the fabric of my dreams,  
although I tried to hide  
in self righteous complacency.*

*Vietnam  
Vietnam  
Vietnam*

*On the homefront,  
a ragtag of guerilla warfare hippies  
countered polished regiments  
of redcoat mentality--  
a battle that erased straight lines  
of tradition  
and led me into a maze,  
a quantum physic of reality.*

*I became a quasi-social worker  
a Vista Volunteer  
a bewildered spectator-cum participant  
on an unfamiliar landscape--  
all my boundaries were gone,  
my planned journey was over,  
my cocoon was crushed and empty.*

*Ours was a nuclear family,  
bombed out by alcoholism,  
drug addiction,  
and insanity,  
but never death,  
although at times  
i would have welcomed it,  
I thought.*

*Soon my children were gone,  
angry, their final judgement  
the same as mine--  
I had never been enough,  
not for their father,  
not for them,  
not for myself.*

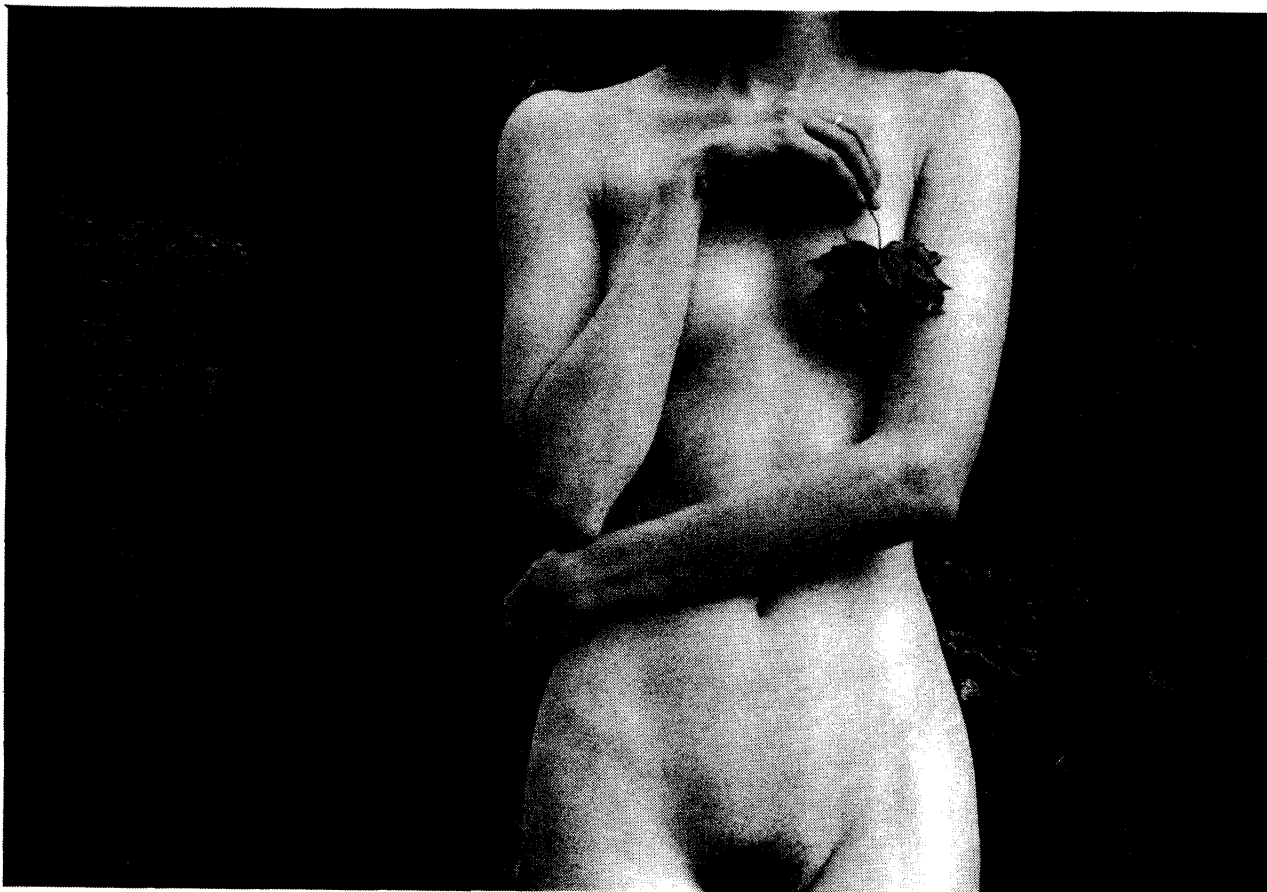
*I faced the gray landscape  
a second time  
and survived it.  
Sometimes I have thought  
that would be my epitaph.  
But tonight, lying in my bed,  
watching the clock winking 3 a.m.,  
a heating pad perched on one arthritic hip,  
I pull the quilt up close  
and think about my life,  
so hopeless at times,  
then piece by piece  
almost at random,  
restored to me.  
It fits me now.*

*Dot Archibald*

*Dot Archibald is graduating with a MA in  
English and plans to begin working on a  
creative writing PhD in Oklahoma next fall.*

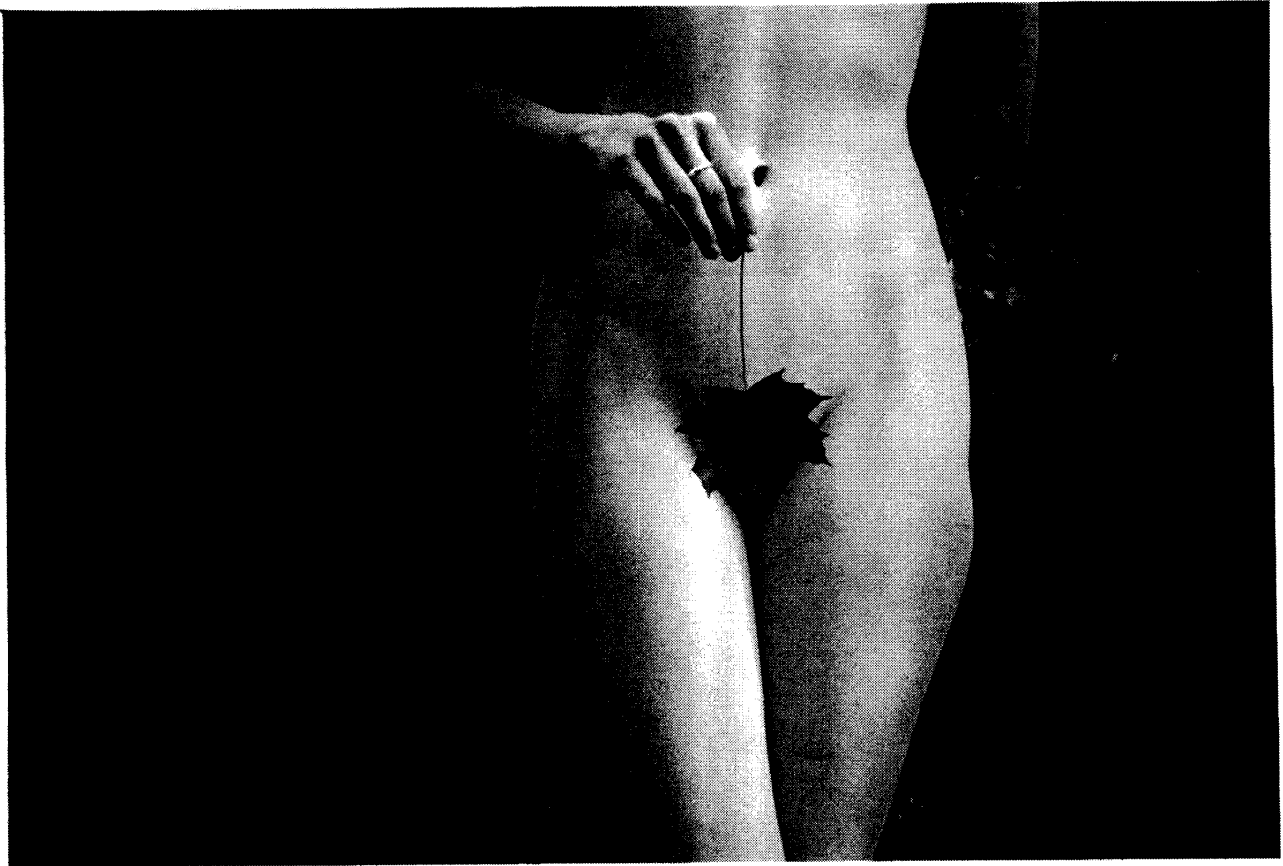


Untitled Lithograph  
Gregor Sosnoski



Untitled  
Silverprint  
Shayne Christiansen

*Shayne Christiansen* is a sometimes student at Utah State University when not in Asia teaching English. Shayne is studying Photography with an emphasis in archaic processes.



Untitled  
Silverprint  
Shayne Christiansen

Untitled  
Silverprint  
Shayne Christiansen







## zippo

i quit at the rail,  
toss my cigarettes  
into the canal, empty

my pockets, pour out  
my schoolbag; books,  
pens, lifesavers,

sheets of paper, everything.  
this must be my first  
breakdown. i stand

next to myself, watch things  
sink or spin away, white petals.  
i point at the water,

my finger the long hooded  
bone of the x-mas ghost.  
--this is my life, i say.

i feel strung  
together by the holes  
in my life. i imagine

me, floating  
face down under  
this rail, stiff and frozen,

limbs tucked to chest, body  
clenched like a fist,  
gentle spin. i see

the silver smear  
of my zippo under water  
the colour of bad teeth.

i reach down,  
my arm submerged,  
stretching into

a dim river  
of ice cubes.  
i am my own metaphor.

Troy G. Passey

## give me back your eyes

you sit brushing  
your hair straight down one hundred

times, staring past your reflection  
in the mirror. your

eyes seem locked  
somewhere far

away. i lie naked  
in bed, listen

to the snow pile up  
outside, pretend not

to care. you sit looking  
through yourself, your

eyes, glazed and frozen  
your hand stops brushing,

floats at your side. i  
want to catch the stiff

thread of your vision  
with my hands. wind

your eyes around my fore  
arms like a rope, tell

you i understand your absence  
although i don't. your stare

travels further  
than i dare go. i

stretch out of bed,  
creep behind you, curve

my hand across the line  
of your sight. you do not

blink. "just a moment". your whisper  
jumps the void of our distance.

i am left, waiting for your scattered return.

Troy G. Passey

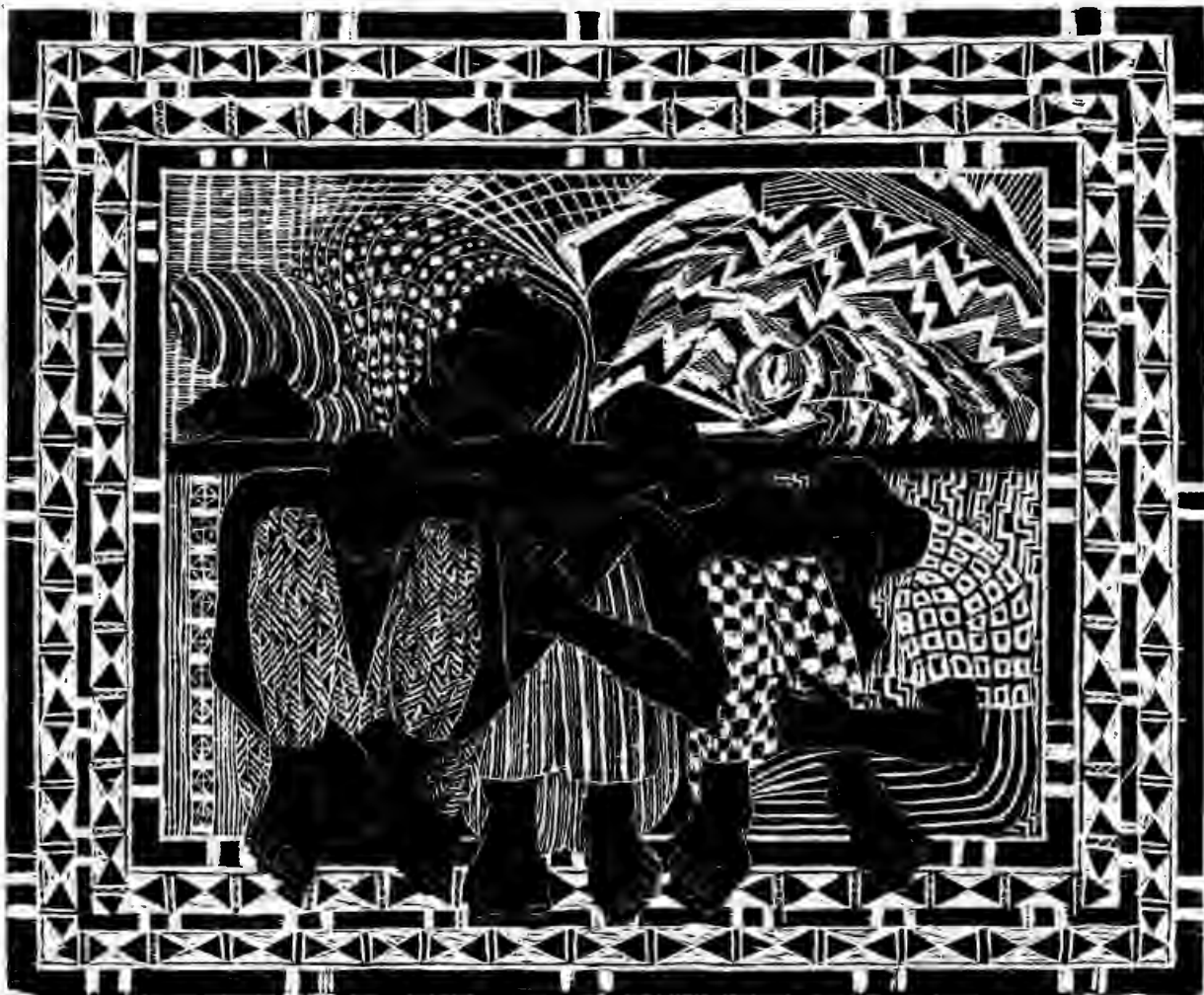
Troy Passey is a senior majoring in English at Utah State University. He enjoys reading and writing poetry.

**\$\*STRIKE?!\$**  
**wHy, I'll hire hAlf The**



**WoRking cLAss tO**  
**KILL**  
**ThE otHer hAlf\***

"Captains of Industry"  
Woodcut  
Gregor Sosnoski



"Woman in a Changing Season"  
Woodcut  
Kristine Gunnell



"Old Man in a Dry Season"

Woodcut

Kristine Gunnell

*Kristine Spindler Gunnell* recieved her BFA degree from Utah State University where she was named Outstanding Student in Printmaking. Kristine is currently working on her MFA at Utah State. Her work has been included in many regional and national art exhibitions.



"Psyche"  
Lance Clayton

*Lance Clayton* is a native of Logan who has studied at Westminster College and the University of Utah. Currently, Lance is working for Rosenberger Productions, Inc. of Salt Lake City, Utah.

## *The Nature of Women*

*Dear Moon,  
How I wish  
you were an enigma,  
a mysterious spirit  
pulling on me as the sea,  
dripping your ectoplasmic IV  
to my cold hollow veins,  
but pauvre friend,  
woman like me,  
man poked and scraped  
your luminous milk skin  
forced himself into your cavernous wounds  
to know your true nature.  
He defined you,  
left you tired and quaking.  
    I am alone.  
    I am alone.*

*k. Willie*

*Karen Willie* is pursuing a masters degree  
at Utah State University.

## MOTHERS, SISTERS, SWEETHEARTS...

Mourn them. Mourn them.  
Speak now, you voiceless women,  
now, before those laughing invincible boys  
are gone forever  
leaving behind them  
the empty words of politicians  
and a star in your window.

Somewhere on the sand  
they will cough out their lungs,  
in great gouts of snot  
mingled with tears,  
and their young tender thighs  
will quiver beneath the needle  
that takes away pain and fear

or, beneath a burning sun,  
sand dragging at their heels,  
killing machines  
will turn their flesh to blisters  
and they will kill  
some other mother's son.

All this so  
old men can hold onto  
power in the boardrooms,  
the wheel of a Lamberghini,  
and the smooth marbled limbs  
of their young whore-wives.

Mourn them. Mourn them.  
It fades to a whisper now  
mourn them, mourn them.

Dot Archibald

## IMPOSTER

for Ken Brewer

"What's it feel like  
coming back to school,  
an old lady like you?"  
one of the kids asked me.

It's like riding on the top  
looking over my shoulder.

Sometimes  
I crouch in the corner  
singing minority songs  
"fat ole ugly woman  
what you doin here?"  
Feeling sorry for myself.

Other times,  
I ride that pale horse of defiance  
straight to the bottom of the ocean.  
"Why they trying to make me  
do it their way? I won't."  
Mad at the world.

Then I see it--  
I got the "They" disease--  
they gonna catch me,  
they gonna find me out,  
they know I don't belong.  
Paranoia.

So I say to myself,  
"Hey, old lady,  
maybe you belong here,  
maybe you don't--  
you here--  
keep walkin."

Dot Archibald



## *the burden of sleep*

*i stand across the street  
from your apartment at four a.m.*

*i wish somehow in your sleep  
you might feel me here,*

*get out of your dreams,  
glide like a ghost to your dark dark window.*

*these winter night rains  
melt the snow.*

*they bite at me, fill me with a  
gentle and remote longing for march.*

*the sidewalk and street lie  
wrapped in thin ice.*

*i wait awhile, smoke a cigarette,  
this night seems dead,*

*except for rain  
and me, and*

*the reflection of a naked branch  
crying in the dark ice on the street.*

*no invisible thread exists between us.  
i cannot pull you to me in the night,*

*wind the wisp of your body around me.  
i cannot yell at you with my mind,*

*cause you to leap  
from the grasp of your sleep.*

*as i fade down the street, trying not to slip,  
i hear a whisper behind me in my ear,*

*i whirl around, lost in a circle, to  
see you blind as still and silent as the black stone.*

Troy G. Passey

## *raking leaves in january*

*colour bleeds from life in january*

*leaves lie scattered  
and sticky on the grass.  
they ride on my shoes,  
drop on my floor.  
kafka carries them on his fur,  
inside he wrestles them  
from his coat*

*blue drains from the sky*

*i did not rake the autumn.  
winter buried the leaves  
properly for awhile.*

*no rain has come, then gone,  
turned the snow to clear blood  
poured into the open wounds  
of the frozen ground.*

*i walk across the detritus of my lawn,  
the detritus of my rooms.  
leaves lie broken and crumbled  
in the vacuum of my apartment.*

*leaving grey then black*

*i cannot rake the leaves  
from my apartment floor.  
to rake away the detritus of my life  
would rake away myself.*

*i wish i could spit out  
the broken bits of my life  
like teeth, and rake them away.*

*then nothing at all*

Troy G. Passey



"Remains"  
Lance Clayton



"Opportunity"  
Lance Clayton

*Printed on Recycled Paper*