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the Promethean

A Forum for Literature and the Arts

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Contributors

- 3 The Editor / *From the Editor*
- 4 Byron H. Wilde / *Ten Minutes to Contemplation*
- 6 Mariah Hegarty / *September Morning*
- 7 Jason Moore / *Hugs and Kisses Shining Through*
- 7 Jason Moore / *This Day is to be Different*
- 7 Jason Moore / *Inner Struggle*
- 8 Randy Bush / *Georgie Bush, Shape-Shifter*
- 10 Robert Brake / *Professor Blowgut*
- 11 Byron H. Wilde / *Ferry of Misfortune*
- 12 Mariah Hegarty / *500 St. Canon City, Colorado*
- 13 Angela Vahsholtz / *Do Not Go Gentle*
- 15 April Williams / *She just wanted to be different...*
- 16 David Robert Falk / *Pumpkin Seeds and Gin*
- 17 Jeffrey Koehler / *Urban Essentials*
- 18 Shawn Hazel / *The Cube*
- 19 Randy Bush / *A.D. 33*
- 20 Lenore Edman / *Untitled*
- 21 April Williams / *Wind*
- 22 David Robert Falk / *Sonnet in a Storm*
- 23 Amy Westlund / *Letters From Abroad: Step In Tune*
- 24 REVIEW: *Wright on Watson's Shakespeare*
- 24 Walter Krueger / *The Meaning of Christmas in the Images of Advent*
- 26 Contributors



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From the Editor...

Welcome to the first issue of Concordia's literary journal, The Promethean. I could go on and say how much blood, sweat and tears went into the development of this journal, or how hard it has been to put out the first issue of a forum like this, but I won't. Instead, I'd rather focus on some of the work that has been submitted for your enjoyment this time around. Surprisingly enough, we have received submissions from a vast number of students on campus, students from other campuses, and faculty here and elsewhere.

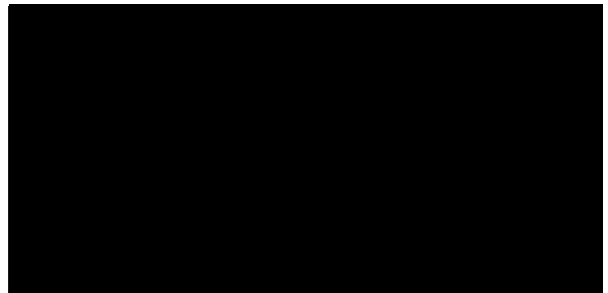
Since this is our first undertaking, the pieces that we received varied in theme--everything from politics to relationships, but many works, as I look with 20/20 hindsight, involved coming to grips with different sorts of feelings, be they anger, remorse, confusion, exhaltation, or even, (surprise) happiness.

I think everyone will find a little something that he/she will enjoy. We have a variety of poetry for all tastes, several "different" works of prose, a book review, an essay from Birmingham, England, and some interesting photographs.

Those of you who missed the deadline this time around will be interested to know that your works are being considered for our Winter issue, which should be published during the second or third week in March.

Last, I would like to take the time to thank the staff of the journal for the tons of material through which that they waded. We have constructed The Promethean as we have been flying, so to speak, which has made things difficult at times. The efforts of those evaluating the work have created the shape of this issue; we will now see the fruits of their decisions.

Once again, I hope that you will enjoy the works contained in these pages, and I encourage all of you to contribute works of your own.



Ten Minutes to Contemplation

By Byron H. Wilde

The accents never reveal the inner spectacle upon which so many wish to intrude. Never can one reveal the innermost ponderings to another. The odds of that supposed "kindred one" continuing to follow or lead, slide with every passing moment.

She is a sprinter; can she endure past the six-mile mark? Huh, my bets are against this possibility. Too bad the girl at the corner table smokes. Never mind that though. Mara doesn't smoke, she never smoked. She doesn't even desire marriage at any time--how do I know she thinks of me? Does she ever think of me? Ethics have faded to a nonexistent level, just like my bank account drops to nothingness, just as this country drops off into a clichesque pit of despair, unlike my hopes for the future. Can I move past the diversion that drive me into a frenzied existence?

"Coffee, sir?"

"No, just another double mocha."

This Project-- a Renaissance-- provides a haven for my sorrows, interrupts the doledrumatic drain of disdain, which Connelly suggests will never lead me home again. Huh.

The sky continues to be black, Dutch black, echoing the mood of the dismal "problem de jour." Should I pursue? We leave Sunday, but the exczema called "our agreement" dwindles. Can events change the direction of where we are turning towards? Growing old with her would be an interesting proposition, but her faithful nature (right) fails to match the Gardin. I ride that day in and day out, unlike her (Not that I'd really like to do so). Can anyone ever match the loyalty of my expectations, or are they too much to ask for? Maybe my satisfaction with one woman will have to remain superficial until one can come along and change my predicament.

"Here's your mocha. Anything else?"

"Sure; could you bring a slice of Belgian Choco-

late Cheescake?"

Roses, dinner, compliments, empty promises can only be the essence of my relationships. But what if I find one who truly means something? In any case, that someone must win me over to the other side of life--the other side which I desire far too much. Maybe that is the problem--I desire loyalty, faith, love, romance far too much--expecting close to perfection in this sense while never receiving the same thing in return. A shirt, a tie, wow, can I contain my excitement? Emptiness does not satisfy me, which really is the ultimate embodiment in my split between Romanticism and Classicism. Is Quality what Robert Pirsig suggests it is? The moment where perception and awareness collide?

Quality is hardly recognizable in this era--facades and disdain rule the terrain--which ties into my problem with Mara.

"Enjoy your cheescake. Anything else?"

"No thank you. My compliments on the mocha though."

Nice smile. Back to Mara. She is Classical, Unbending, Bitter--wait--how can I digress into descriptions? It goes contrary to the non-judgmental nature. Yes, I enjoy her, sometimes, but what does this exactly mean? Nothing. She does not exhibit the appreciation that I exhibit for her. Once again, I am a yo-yo, moving up and down on her terms. Not anymore. One cannot continually do me wrong for a week and when a vacation comes, expect everything to fly as if a crash never occurred. Crap, in my reverie that smoker left. What a waste. Cancer, just like love. My ears wander around towards the gentleman at the counter. He'd rather have loved than never. Spare me the cliché-riddled diatribe which rots out all superficial events and people. Love does not exist. If love does exist, it only takes place in tragic form. After



her--I swear-- I shall never have "love" again.

To have love is to be in despair and turmoil. To never have love is also to be in turmoil and despair. One cannot win. A loner confined to my thoughts forever is what I am, grappling with too much awareness, too much criticism of Quality, and too much cynicism. To live without love eliminates and allows life with freedom, despite oppression at the government level and the business level. Empty rhetoric does no good--it gives me a sense of contempt for others.

"How is the cheesecake?"

"Wonderful as always. Thank you Sandi."

Where is genuine love--bad choice of words--rather, where is the genuine zest for a particular pursuit? Why should the clinking of coins be the only motivation for one's life?

The discussion across from me seems to spiral downward over the loss of a theatre. Why? Friday night will answer my questions. Maybe I will have more control over that than the events that occur

while I sleep, despite the fact that we probably sleep all the time anyhow, literally and figuratively. I wish someone would come along and make me realize my errors and wake me from my endless circle of exploitation. If only I could handle money as well as I handle women. I would probably wouldn't have to scrape to pay for this bill. Nothing like burnout. Wish I could just fade away.

I get up slowly. Nothing like a caffeine rush.

"Everything okay today, Mr. Joyce?"

"Yes, it was great. Matthew, please call me Matthew."

"Well, Matthew, we never see much of you anymore. You're in quick for a slice of dessert and coffee, and 10 minutes later your gone."

"Believe me, Sandi, I'd love to stay here much longer, but it's time to take care of business."

"And why would you like to stay longer?"

I laugh, nothing like flirtation.

"I like the ... decor."

Time to head back out into the rain.

September Morning

Sitting on the front step with
the butter-warm sun melting
gentle on my skin,
I eat yellow eggs and red summer tomatoes
from a cobalt blue plate.
My tea, steaming clear and brown
in a white china cup, waits at my feet.
There are not many of these mornings left.
The gilded hills and the cottonwoods across the
street,
hint almost imperceptibly at the change.
In the air I feel that unmistakable shift
signaling summer's final descent,
the wheel's turning again toward the dark.
Soon the days will flare like a torch,
flaming with the bittersweet brilliance
of another dying year...
But for now I settle myself deeper in this peace...
content to linger, embracing this moment
of summer's crowning while it lasts.

Mariah Hegarty

Hugs and Kisses Shining Through...

hugs and kisses shining through,
you say your feelings are only true.
I'd give you the world if you'd let me try,
but all you do is look and cry.

at your house i meet your dad,
it's nice to see who cares for you.
i thought he knew what we had,
he doesn't like things that are new.

you brought him a Boy of some color,
instead of a Man with any other.
you beg and plead that I'm bright,
but Mr. Finance is getting light.

you come to me blank and frown,
acting like death's tomorrow;
your expressions are causing me to drown,
Father's killed us with this sorrow.

Inner Struggle

half speaks of freedom,
Half speaks of power.
half lives for the future,
Half lives for the present.

half speaks of equality,
Half speaks of majority.
half cries with pain and cheating,
while the other Half does the beating.

half tells me to fight for equality,
Half tells me to join the majority.
with an inner struggle like this,
will i ever truly know bliss?

This Day is to be Different

As he wakes, he feels an unknown feeling;
this day is to be different.
Since memory can recall he has been oppressed;
this day is to be different.
He works and expects to be beaten;
this day is to be different.
With the pain of each blow, he stares at freedom;
this day is to be different.
In tongue, they sing songs of freedom;
this day is to be different.
Death in face, he reveals the sacred chant;
this day is to be different.
"They run here and there, they are afraid, they are
cowards";
this day is to be different.
The soft caressing of the dap, lulls him to sleep;
this day is to be different.
A smile of infinity touches the mouth of a free
man;
this day was different.

All poems by Jason Moore

Georgie Bush, Shape-Shifter

By Randy Bush

1:29 a.m., Wednesday

Bush tossed his rumpled camel jacket onto the table and shook another smoke from the pack. Still mad as sour spit at Powell, he lit up, then fished a waxy quarter from his pocket.

"Heads he lives, tails he's Alpo."

"Georgie, is that you?" It was she, and she was awake.

"Mmmmm."

"Hey, what's that about? I know that voice."

"Go back to sleep."

"You've wakened me now, dear, and you know I can't sleep once I've been bothered. Anyway, I don't want to sleep, I want to know what's wrong. Did that Teddy--"

"Powell's what's wrong," he said, cutting her off and puffing out his cheeks. "Turns out he knew all along the old Project Blue Book was a fraud. If what the Firm says is true, he gave the order to *fry* an honest-to-God alien. Hell, an actual nuts and bolts Man-in-the-moon! Personally gave the order!"

He ground the cigarette into dirty flakes on the table and launched the butt at the wall. "What I don't know is why he was ever involved in the first place. But I will in the morning."

"Project what? I never remember--"

"Blue Book!"

"I thought that new immigration, free trade thing was supposed to--"

"Not Mexican aliens...for heaven's sake, Barbara, read the paper!"

"You're shouting at me, dear--"

"You're the First Lady. Broad One! Put some damn gas in the old cerebral furnace--"

"Georgie! A woman's hemispheres are all she

has in this world, and I won't have you or anyone else making light of them. I just won't hear of it. Now drop that cigarette--yes, I smell it--in the toilet and come on in here and tell me why my big Prezy-wezy's all angry and everything."

He stomped through the bedroom door and flipped the light out, sucking in to focus energy. She'd had it coming for days. His clothes were starting to tear. He grinned with pain and anticipation.

"What's that noise, Georgie? If it's what I think it is, you can march yourself right back out of here. I'm not at all in the mood for snakes or hippos or condors or anything else."

He stifled a giggle and slid toward the bed.

"Georgie...answer me! This is not funny."

Getting up onto the bed posed a problem, momentarily, but he found that by stopping every few seconds his slime could adhere to the satin, allowing him leverage.

"Why don't you answer? Turn on the light or I'll call for Jenny! George!"

Though the true shape called for vibration sensors instead of ears, he had sneaked some in anyway. Forget "purity of form." This would be too good to miss. If he'd only thought to turn on the recorder.

"Oh...what is that? What is that--oh! It's not funny, not at all! Jenny! Ugghh! Awful man! Awful, horrid...what is that? Slimy...A Slug! You're a slug, oh, no, no, not a sticky slug! Vulgar...oh, don't touch...no! Is that my heating pad stuck on your face--"

He rolled off the bed, laughing. A Kleenex and an aspirin bottle came with him, glued tightly to his

side. He squealed and howled like a moose in season.

"Stop it! Change back right now! Damn, damn, damn, damn! I just won't have it! You...you've ruined the Reagans' lovely satin quilt! It's ruined!"

11:17 a.m., Wednesday

"Mr. President?"

"Huh?"

"You were drifting, sir. And smiling."

"I was? Oh...sorry Jim. Remembered something humorous from last night. Where were we?"

"In the minutes from last week's staff advisory meeting?"

"And why was that again?"

"You wanted a listing of everything General Powell said. Why don't I do this alone, sir, and bring you the finished report later?"

"No. No, I want it now. Before lunch. That 'I'm in command' crap has gone far enough. I don't suppose you saw the Anderson column this morning?"

"No, not this morning, sir."

"More Blue Book garbage. And if he only knew what I know--I tell you Jim, we'd be finished. Credibility wise."

"Mr. President--George--that was so far in the past that--"

"Makes no damn difference, Jimmy. The public will demand an accounting and blame us for not unloading the instant we found out."

Bush stared out the window, brooding, and creased his tie with his fingernails. "There's some unpleasant business happening tonight. What is that?"

"You have a private dinner with the Iranian Ambassador, at seven-thirty, to discuss--"

"That's it. Now why can't Anderson squeak about the Ambassador's affair with that actress? What's her name?"

"Susan--"

"Yeah, yeah. I remember."

7:49 p.m., Wednesday

"So good to see you, Mr. Ambassador. And you're looking well."

"Yes! And you, my friend."

"Your Tehran trip agreed with you, then."

"Always, Mr. President. The nation of Allah is heaven on Earth, after all."

"After all," Bush laughed, "I imagined heaven to be a Judeo-Christian concept--"

"A concept borrowed from the true faith, I am afraid."

Bush smiled and nodded. "I believe I'm aware of Muslim thought along these lines--"

"Ah. So. Then you also--"

"Excuse me, Mr. Ambassador. I'd like to shut out the lights for a moment. I have something important to show you."

The ambassador glanced around the room. No need to worry. The Executive mansion was possibly the safest place in America. "An unusual request, my friend, but since you are the source...I say yes. Okay."

"Thank you, Mr. Ambassador, that's awful nice. You've gotta promise not to tell, now." He flipped the light out and sucked in to focus energy. The ambassador'd had it coming all year. Bush's clothes were starting to tear. He grinned with pain and anticipation.

"What's that noise, Mr. President?"

Professor Blowgut

Lo, I beheld Professor Blowgut,
Professor of Public Speaking,
Raise high his elephant-snout,
And from between his lips
(Six ounces apiece)
Give vent to a voice
Whose very sound was
Accomplished murder.

I was impressed.

Robert Brake

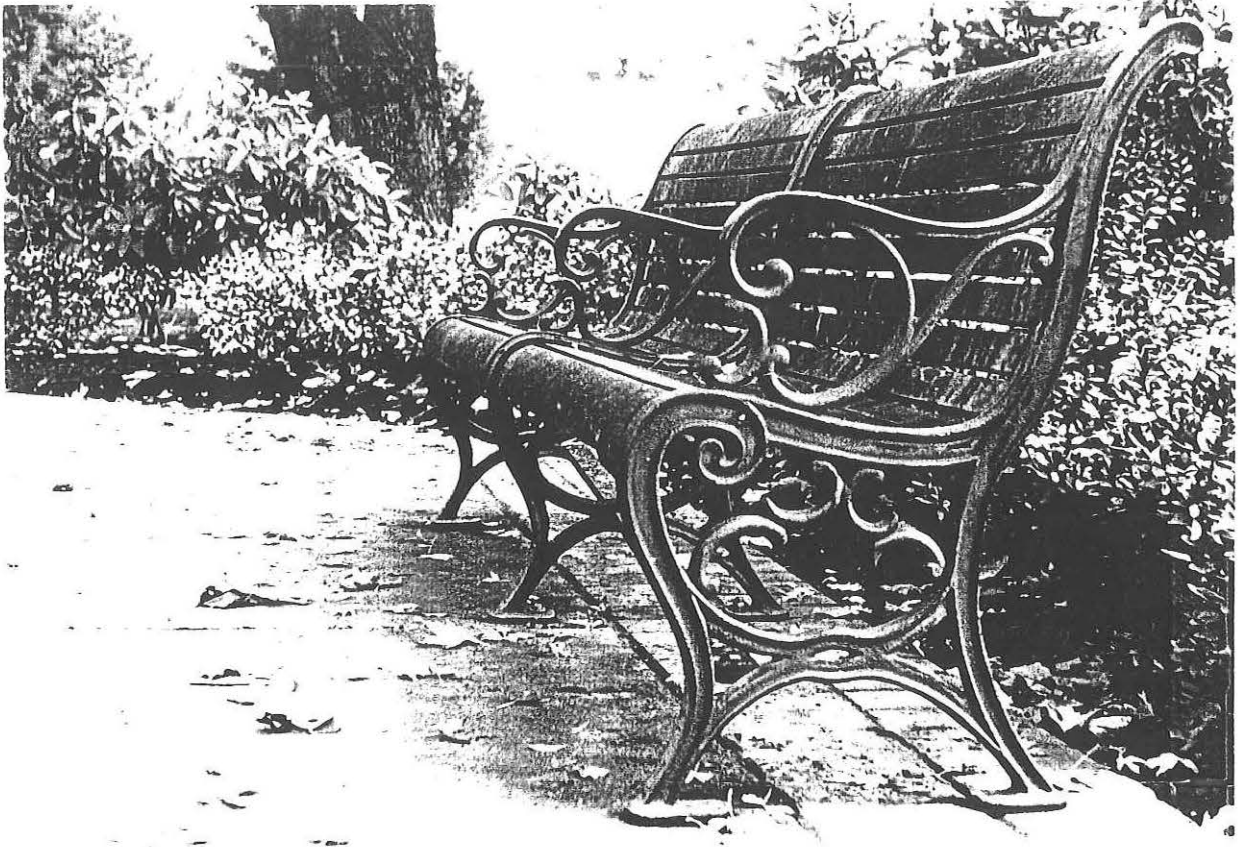


Ferry of Misfortune

Posing
 still life
moves slowly
towards
 the gaping fortune
provided by
 the springs of
Construction.
 Rocks jutting
towards
the Luxuries
 single out
the blue
 Sky
 overhead,
Greeting the wind
 To which
the Invitation was
 not extended.
The ferry
exits
 the harbour,
to the excitement
 of many,
yet,
 the One
wonders
if the Misfortune and pain
would ever
 allow him
to feel
At Home again.

Byron H. Wilde





500 Orchard St. Canon City, Colorado

The streetlight cast a halo in the snowy silence.
I remember the deep velvet of the dark
outside the circle and the tiny white specks
swirling and falling straight at my upturned face,
as if I was enclosed in one of those miniature
glass worlds that came in Christmas stockings,
and someone had turned it upside down.

Mariah Hegerty

Do Not Go Gentle

By Angela Vahsholtz

By the time the train pulled into Vancouver, it was dark. For the past hour and a half I'd been looking at blackness, searching for I don't know what, but finding only myself and the seats around me reflected in the window's darkness. Finally, I saw Dad, waiting for me outside the well-lit station just like he said.

"Welcome home, Alex," he said in a big, broad way. He slapped me on the back the way he used to do when I'd finished a high school cross country race, then took my backpack.

"Thanks, Dad. How's everything?"

"Your mother's cooking pumpkin pies and you sister's at the show. I saved the leaves in the yard for you to rake--figured you'd miss that at school."

"Yeah, they blow 'em off the campus with these ghostbuster packs. You wouldn't even know it was fall except for the smoke in the air. Hey, how's Nanny?"

By this time we were in the car, heading home. My grandmother had broken her hip in June, and had had to go a retirement home because of it. I had gotten a letter from Mom a couple of weeks before, telling me that Nanny was really beginning to get weird. I guess she'd packed her bag one night and walked out the door before the night nurse caught her. When she was finally found in her nightgown and Sunday hat, Nanny said she was on her way to Iowa; it was threshing time, and her father needed her.

Dad put away his "welcome home" voice and got pretty serious. "It's not so good, Alex. Last week, Nanny tried to break into Sylvia's room with a butter knife because she thought her father was trapped inside. The night nurse caught her again and asked that we put her in a nursing home right away. She's at Whispering Pines now."

"What does Nanny think about this?" I couldn't

stand to think of my grandmother lying in bed all day watching an elevated television, exercising by walking the halls in her nightgown.

Dad shook his head. "She doesn't even know what's going on." His voice cracked a little and I looked away, searching out a black window once again.

I remembered all the Sunday dinners we used to have after church, when Nanny would sit and tell stories about the old days. She told us about her father, a Norwegian ship captain who became a farmer when he emigrated to Iowa. She told us how he used to let her hitch up the horses to harvest and plow, and how the neighbors used to talk about her because of it. I remembered how, when my sister and were little, she used to put us on her knee and sing and find candy the Nyssa had left us behind the ears.

Her lap was always such a mystery; even though she was very fat, her stomach was hard as a rock. I asked Mom about it once, and she told me it was because Nanny wore a corset, whatever that is.

Anyway, I just couldn't figure how Nanny could go to a nursing home without even putting up a fight. I thought of all the years she had lived by herself after Grandpa died, killing moles, making cookies and doing her wash on the back porch in an old-fashioned washer with a wringer. She even painted the house. She vowed she'd never leave her old farmhouse until she died in it.

Dad pulled into the driveway and we were home. I got out of the car.

"Hey, where'd that sweater come from?" -- again in his big, broad voice.

"Erika knitted it for me when she was in Spain last summer. She was so homesick she made three of them, but only one fits me."

"She did a nice job," Dad said. "When do we

get to meet her?"

"I don't know, Dad. We're just friends, you know?"

We walked to the door, past where the sumac tree used to be. That was so weird last summer -- how Nanny broke her hip at the same time the tree started dropping its leaves in June. It hadn't even blazed out in red and gold as it always had done in the autumn. It had just sort of shriveled up. "Don't lose your leaves! Dig down deep and find green somewhere!" I had wanted to scream.

But it was bare by the end of summer. Dad had taken it away after I left for school. Now I entered the house to the smell of pumpkin pie.

The next day was Thanksgiving, and after I went to church with the family, I visited Nanny alone. My parents had decided not to bring her home from Whispering Pines, even though it was a holiday.

I walked into her room and was hit with air that smelled like old fish sticks. I walked over to her bed. "Happy Thanksgiving, Nanny," I said.

She reached out her hand and said, "Hello. Now who are you?"

My God, her hand looked like a bird claw. So fragile... "I'm Alex, Nanny, your grandson."

She began to cry. "I want to go home. Papa needs me. Who's going to take care of the horses?"

"I brought you some of Mom's pumpkin pie. Would you like some?"

"It's too early for pumpkins. If Papa's in the field and Mama's not feeling well, who's going to take care of the horses? They're so thirsty."

"Do you want some water, Nanny?" I handed her a glass, and she raised the edge to her purple lips, sipped a little and dribbled it down her chin. I took a tissue to wipe her face, then used it to wipe my own eyes. I had had no idea that she was so gone, even

from Mom's letters.

As I watched, she rolled to her side and shut her eyes, quickly falling asleep.

Sitting there seeing her, I remembered the old sumac. This time I wanted to scream at Nanny, "Don't lose your leaves! Dig down deep and find green somewhere!"

I thought of a place where the trees could remember my grandmother when she was still young and strong and knew who she was. Leaving the piece of pie by her bed, I quickly walked out of the nursing home, got into the car, and drove to Salmon Creek.

After parking, I took a new trail that wandered through the woods close to her old house, where my dad grew up. He told me the salmon used to run so thick in the stream that he and my uncles could easily spear one with a pitchfork. They used to go skinny dipping there after bucking bales, and I always envied them for that.

I headed toward the wide, open meadow through which Salmon Creek cut. In those quiet gray lowlands, Nanny's spirit would be close.

But as I followed the trail through the woods, uprooted trees and bulldozed earth surrounded me. In a few places, raw wood glared out where construction had begun. It seemed that the trail had been created more as a marketing gimmick for some developer than as an actual greenbelt. I hated coming home--every time I did, something else was destroyed.

Then I came out of the woods to see Salmon Creek, a shallow silty stream. A beer can lay half submerged in its muck. Only mud-suckers could survive in that water now. Lifting my eyes from the sight, I saw thick hordes of houses standing on the ridge above, watchful of anyone who might even think about stripping down and running naked like a stag through the meadow.

I turned quickly and walked away.

She just wanted to be different...

she just wanted to be different
to laugh while everyone was
weeping
to stand while everyone was
sitting
conform...

he just wanted to be special
to give while everyone was
taking
to smile while everyone was
hating
conform...

they just wanted to be unique
to sing while everyone was
wailing
to create while everyone was
destroying
conform...

you just wanted to be original
to heal while everyone is
hurting
to live while everyone is
dying
conform...

April Williams

Pumpkin Seeds and Gin

Autumn brings a harvest of friends
On a cold dark night.
winter may finally be coming...
Coming like some dark secret
That your mother never told you...

Warm gin and pumpkin seeds feel just about
right.
Orange ceilings don't understand.
When I say attack Mongolia, I mean it!
Busted brothers congregate on the gray porch.
(I wonder if they sense the hopelessness
That sinks into my heart when I see the flag...)

I wonder if politics are too political.
I wonder if enough voices scream
The exact same thing,
At the exact same time,
Will Washington be brought to its knees in
shame?

It does seem as if the fall is about here.
My skin detects a chill in the air.

I'm leaving some place warm and safe
For the cold of the night.

So much for my ideas of the fall...
Man falls
The world falls
You fall...
Orange intestines cry out from dead pumpkins
Like the dead of a thousand tribes,
And as winter approaches,
I sit in a dark room and eat the seeds
That will carry on their race.
Gin flows like the blood of some worlds'
Brave soldiers.
In America, Wars...
In America, Wars...
In America, when wars grow tiresome,
We just pass the chips...
And put the board game away...

David Robert Falk

Urban Essentials

1. Money
2. Car
3. Face like a mask
4. Apartment
5. Sense of doom

Jeffrey Koehler



The Cube

By Shawn Hazel

Now there were two men walking towards a large city. They were both morally upright and had strong leadership abilities. They carried with them a crystal cube. The sunlight danced off its edges with blinding colors.

As they traveled down the dirt road, they came upon a man who was seated, his eyes looking straight ahead. Surrounding him were sheep who busied themselves by eating the green plants of the field.

The two men kneeled at each side of him.

"Sir," said the second man, "what color is this cube?" He held it in front of him.

The light danced and played on each corner and edge. "It is crimson, like lamb's blood," replied the man.

"I see," replied the second man as he took it to heart.

The first man responded, "No, it is translucent."

Further down the road, the two men came upon a woman selling buttercups.

The first man asked, "What do you see in this cube?"

Peering into its crystalline depths, she said, "I see gold, like the rays of the sun, and the petals of my flowers."

The second man nodded and agreed with the woman. The two men breathed in the buttercup's

fragrance, thanked the lady, and continued down the road.

Now, when they came very near to the city, the two men crossed the path of a juggler dressed in a multicolored robe. The robe complemented the energy of his display.

The men asked the juggler what he saw in the cube.

Without stopping his juggling, he surveyed the cube, taking in each corner, and every detail. Smiling, he said, "It is the color of the rainbow." His juggling changed to an arc that rounded gracefully in the evening sun.

The gates of the city were only a stone's throw away. Before they entered the city, both men turned towards each other.

"The juggler is the most correct," said the second man. "All colors are contained within the cube; each person saw the color and proclaimed it."

"No," said the first man. "The cube is clear; light is all that colors the cube."

At this, they parted ways, each to proclaim what he saw in the cube.

The cube was set upon a pedestal in the town square. Each person would gaze into it and make his or her judgement. Many followed the second man, few the first.

A.D. 33

I saw you. I
Watched and heard the
Empty lungs and
Ruined voice wheezing
History's greatest truth
"It," you said,
"It...is...finished!"
And it was.
And that moment of
Ending became the
Moment of all
Beginning and of
All hope.
Sin's claws were ripped
From Creation's throat,
And that moment of
Death became the
Birth through which hope
Entered the world.
Yet dearly bought, this
Heart's desire, with
Blood and pain and grief
Like fire,
With darkest blackness,
Deepest stain,
This Lord, this Lamb, this
Man was slain.

Randy Bush

Flashes of water fell at my face
The black stem of the fern like your hair
Switch-back waterfalls and pools and puddles
Interrupt the rocky hillside
Grey stones like your eyes and black clear water
Give way to rust colored cliffs and forest moss
Look closely at the crisscrossing browns
Backed by innumerable shades of green

Lenore Edman



Wind

Wind

If she were an element
she would be the wind
she would always be there
sometimes subtle
sometimes fierce
she would see the dawn of the
ages
she would be part of the
eternal harmony
the ancient ones started
each generation continues
she would take your breath away
and replace it with
a warm gentle breeze
and she would remain
she would blow across the
face of an indian
preparing for battle
in a war
structured by religious and moral
beliefs
she would sail into a town
and breeze past
a woman
burying her husband
and she would take the tears
and blow them away
she would storm into a field
where a man
was being killed
for the color of his skin
and she would blow
with her the guilt of the ages
and drop it on their
backs
and take with her
the cries of justice
ripped from a
dead man's
mouth

April Williams

Sonnet In A Storm

A lonely hand, in autumn rain,
Is chiseling a tombstone vein.
Cutting deep,
It carves new words,
It etches out the pain.

Sing me a sonnet
In a storm,
Whisper my name till
The cold air grows warm.
Play with the words
That roll from my tongue.
Sing me a sonnet
That's never been sung.

My gray dreams fade
In winter shade,
And this parade
Has somehow laid
My heart exposed
To cooling chill,
To changing will.
But I can feel
I love you, still...

Sing me a sonnet
In a storm,
Whisper my name till
Night is morn.
Chisel new words
On the outskirts of time.
Sing me a sonnet
Sing me a dream
Sing me a melody
On the wind.
Take your hand,
In autumn rain,
And brush away the pain.

David Robert Falk

Letters From Abroad: Step In Tune

By Amy Westlund

Whatever in the world could have possessed me to uproot myself from the warmth and security of my friends and family to fly half way around the globe and plunge myself into a completely unfamiliar environment? This question has been at the tip of my tongue and the bottom of my soul since the day I arrived in England.

I was suddenly in the Twilight Zone: no one from my new school met me at the airport in London, the bus ride to Birmingham--normally a two hour jaunt-- took me **four** hours, and I discovered that the room I am to live in for the next nine months is smaller than the shoebox that Concordia calls a dorm room. Yet, the most frustrating experience I encountered was the loss of my hard-earned self-confidence and independence in less than a day's time. So what possibly could have motivated such self annihilation?

It was time.

I've often wondered what it must be like for the unborn child, who is probably just getting a handle on life inside the womb, to be then suddenly thrust into a world of unfamiliar sights and sounds. It must be so comfortable in there during that ninth month; he/she is nearly developed, all of his/her basic needs are systematically cared for, and then suddenly that's no longer enough. That child has outgrown life and home as he/she has known it, and somehow he/she just senses that it is time to move on.

It's a shame, really, that we cannot appreciate what a great achievement we have reached at birth, so that we may be proud of ourselves. It is just something unconscious--nature working its art. I suppose it's a good thing after all that we don't know what we are doing, since I suspect that some of us would be afraid to take the plunge.

Now, like a newborn, I find myself in a new world and a life which is frightening, yet exhilarating, at the same time. There's no going back now, and after the initial shock, I've spanked myself, so to speak, taken a deep breath, and accepted the challenge. I feel like I am experiencing a sort of rebirth, but this time I am fully aware of what I am accomplishing. I also have a new appreciation for the many exchange students who flock to campuses all across the United States. I wish everyone could do something like this--if not for the cultural awakening, then at least for the opportunity to learn something about him or herself.

My self-confidence has bounce back quickly and I am looking forward to the year ahead, but what's more, I have taken a risk and survived. But it does not take a year in Europe to achieve this. It is the faith in yourself (conscious or not) which allows you to try something new--from food to lifestyles. So what are you waiting for?

Isn't it time?

Book Review

Shakespeare's Early History Plays: Politics at Play on the Elizabethan Stage. By Donald G. Watson. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990. xi-xii + 177pp. \$30.00

It is always pleasing to read a lively and persuasive argument which invites us to reconsider established and sometimes stale theories about Shakespearean drama, even if that argument ultimately fails to change our minds. Such is the effect of Donald G. Watson's thoughtful and engaging study of the Yorkist cycle of Shakespearean histories. Watson's thesis--that Shakespeare fundamentally is an ironist in his historical composition--is not new; in the 1920s, W.B. Yeats asserted the same point in particular reference to *Henry the Fifth*. Watson, however, is representative of but a few contemporary critics in his suggestion that an ironic point of view and political ambivalence inform the whole Yorkist tetralogy.

Watson's contention, underscored by his suggestion that Shakespeare redefines conventional theories of history in the Tudor era by a deft manipulation of perspective in the Yorkist histories, is inventive and sometimes compelling. However, Watson does not convince us that Shakespeare ever acts as more than an occasional ironist; no ultimately irresistible evidence is offered by which we might reach the conclusion that Shakespeare is substantially dedicated to the erasure of Elizabethan political and religious orthodoxies. Even less are we persuaded that it is Shakespeare's purpose to invest his historical drama with no small measure of ambiguity and an existential point of view hardly characteristic of late sixteenth-century drama or other Shakespearean plays. Watson's analysis advances some interesting theories, to be sure, but we are rather more informed about the author who advances these theories in this book than we are about Will Shakespeare's inten-

tions in his early histories. Read thus, Watson's book offers us some perhaps unexpected insights; after all, as Oscar Wilde once said, criticism is just another mode of autobiography.

Daniel L. Wright

On A Final Note...

The Meaning of Christmas in the Images of Advent: Christmas Chorale 1992

By Walter Krueger

On the first weekend in November, stores will deck their halls with tinsel and glitter. On the first weekend in December, the Concordia College Choir again presents its annual Christmas Chorale. Do we truly welcome this yearly expectation of His coming? Lessons will be read, bells rung, carols sung.

The deeper mysteries of Christmas are best explored in a setting removed from daily routine, such as the beautiful, candlelit sanctuary of Saint Michael's Lutheran Church located at Northeast Twenty-Ninth and Dekum. Concordia's Christmas Chorale has become a twenty-eight year old tradition. The story is both timeless and compelling. Retreat with us to Christmas!

Amid the flickering candlelight and the quietness of the moment, images of Advent soon appear. Way back in the dim recesses of Genesis, God made a covenant. In that covenant, all nations are blessed through the Messiah who would be born from

Abraham's seed. How God so loved the world, we ponder!

Soon the harmonious and soothing sounds of the choir change to the shrill trumpet cry of the prophet herald, another image of Advent. "Behold your king comes to you! Make straight a highway in the desert." There are deserts in Judea and deserts in our lives, we reflect. How is God to be born among us today? Will the glory of the Lord reveal itself with earth-shattering light and splendor? Or, is the glow an inward one, the light of renewed hope? In the quietness, we meditate. "Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors," comes an echo from the wilderness.

What about that great and promised day of the Lord? We watch and wait for it, but how much longer? We pray for it, but are we prepared? How hard it was for all ten young ladies to have enough oil in their lamps! Another Advent image unfolds. We, the Church, also await a Bridegroom! It's time we were ready and prayed "Come, Emmanuel, Come."

Mary, the "handmaid of the Lord," portrays another rich picture of Advent. How well she knew the meaning of God-with-us! Mother-love best knows the personal sacrifice and inconvenience demanded for in birth. Yet, her soul magnified the Lord, and her spirit rejoiced.

Though earth be it coldest, and night its darkest, the flower is alive, the promise is growing. The pure, the spotless rose is blooming even at deepest midnight hour. Innocence aglow in a world of sin!

Yet, the season is not without earthly splendor of a kind. The traditional Eastern visitors present quite a sight for us. The masters of their own halls, the Magi made extended travel plans to follow a star only to find themselves in a lowly stable! We, the masters of our own halls, give up domestic comfort to see, to hear, to ponder on this night. We softly tap our feet with the eternal pulses, and we absorb the

rhythm of "Christ-among-us." How merrily the bells are now ringing! We hear the Christmas angels!

So, let there be Christmas! Let there be fond, familiar images of shepherds and angels, of mangers and holy birth. It takes no less than an Advent journey each year to ensure that Christ is born not only in Judean wilderness, but once again in our hearts this year. Greet the infant King with holly and ivy, merry bells and sweet singing in the choir! Good Christian friends, rejoice!

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