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The Lantern Vol. 45, No. 1, November 1978

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A collection of Poetry, Prose, and Photography composed for the Fall Term 1978 by the students of Ursinus College.

The Lantern, the literary magazine of Ursinus College, symbolizes the light shed by creative work. It is named after the top structure on Phahler Hall, which has the architectural design not of a tower or spire, but of a lantern.
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Special thanks to Allen Gerber
PATRONS

Mr. Leonard Ulan
Mr. Phillip Davis
Dr. George Storey
Mrs. Donald Bechtel
Dean Lee March
Dr. Richard Bozorth
Dr. John Wickersham
Here is the dance
Moon and stars
Smooth night wind
When I am alive
Will I remember Now
In a surreal Death
Inside of this time
This unremembered breathing
Breath exhaled in trance
Mystics with Vedic visions
Breath of Brahman Becomes
All of it that loves —

Phoro Erasmus

TO V.E.H.

A prince of the Noldor, of elven decent,
Thine grey eyes piercing my dark inner soul,
Posessing an ageless beauty and mystical light,
I am profoundly moved by the music of your spirit.

Lady F.

The hard fist of the North Country
wraps you about in it's distance from me.
Winter girds up his white shroud in preparation;
Great clock of seasons, of time, and of the years
Moving on and on as a river ocean-vast.
I watch, distraught, upon your picture
Wondering whether the gate I have opened
Shall remain so.

Phoro Erasmus
Early ridicule: just
too damned early
I was unprepared
unready
unsure
There was no
hardness
to be found in my skin.
Singed-out
good-for-a-laugh
no damned good
No laughter
none more hateful
Than smiles that weren't
yet were.
Teeth—no, fangs
Ripping, tearing
at me:
That girl—
oversized
in an outdated
grammar-school uniform.

Nowhere to hide—
new strategies
emerged
Defense needed.
desperately
The tears sank
and a new surface rose
gradually.
Laughter was changed
—redirected—
with, not at, me:
a convenient buffer.
I got quite funny
I got quite good
too damned good
Former ridicule
transposed into the key
of present joviality

But trapped
in a chord
a cacaphony
of sinister chuckling:
All my fault.

Quick and easy
one-two-three jokes
that tumble out
instead of
what I
really want to say
This barrier
between me
and you.
My fault
and I'm sorry.
You wait
and I struggle
Wrigting
suffocating, clutching
at this womb
I whimper
kick-screaming
Twisting
Craning to reach
that air
It's cold and new
and I scuttle
back into my
dark warm-chamber
Frightened, I wait.
Each new time
It's harder
I am confined
in my confinement
Lying-in
in this bed I've made
and I wish
You had forceps
But that won't do—
I've got to
free myself in time
And Time is the key
it's paramount
   a bastard
force unyielding
yet, a friend
That glass
in which
I see myself:
a fading shadow
leaving soon
With one purpose
one goal
one achievement
all important:
To stand naked
before you—
The ultimate chance.

Lisa Ungrady

Spectrum- October 6, 1978

The fanfare of twelve angels heralded his descent
into a chapel of rock where a faithful generation
answered to the cords of love's sweet instrument.
The scepter and word of the wandering magician
held them captive three hours in bliss,
bringing tears to the strongest eyes.
He drove them to the cliffs, then back from the precipice.
Then all was unplugged, a salute, then goodbye.

Martin Atreides
FINALLY SOMEONE LOOKS

Walking silent and slow, alone,
And expect that no one is watching me,
I turn and see you staring, lost in a fog.
It surrounds you, I can hear people laughing
And I know you are crying.

You turn away, you think I am laughing
But I wear a mask, like you
That causes confusion and misunderstanding,

The mask is painted with a smile
But underneath it, it is wet
For I too am crying.

I run after you, you run still
Further.

I try to tear away the mask
But it sticks
As I slip in my tears,
I look at you running
And wonder if I can stop you.

And if I can stop myself.

Strindbergesque

WINDJAMMER

Sleep with the stars
Visit the Martinique bars.
Behind the prison, of the lies
That are made under the sunny skies.
Where all the sighs are forgotten.
When all the beauty seems unwonten.
And suicide lovers are begotten,
With a silver love, so sharp,
It slashes all the pain away.

Stephen Saylor
BEREFT

A rhythmic beat of foreboding,
Like a cricket in the house
Disturbing sleep, from its secret place.

A small sound,
Magnified by dark silence,
Migraining the mind.

I do not see your face,
Your hand I cannot find.

Anonymous

WAITING

How did it get started,
This process
This waiting
This plan to meet?

It was less cerebral
And more a series of drops
That formed a stream
That became a flood
That overflowed marked routes.

Look out the window
Begin to dial a number
Weigh possibilities
Have sober second thoughts
Inspect the web like a spider.

The face
The hand
The voice
And suddenly, waiting is past,
Remote as childhood's worries
Erased like chalk on a slate
Comforted into present joy.

Anonymous

SOLITARY SEASON

Seems the breeze has found
This vital opening—
No other vantage point allows.
One free-winged delight,
With each new rustling,
Bears a fluent swell
To make one secretly soar.
It knows just when to slow
Before the soul is o'erflowed;
It knows as well when
Wanting finds it cold.

Kim Espenshade
drifting downstream
in a stolen canoe
i came upon a quiet pool
and an abandoned church
and having time for exploration i
walked through a doorway
around doors long since fallen.
old pine walls stood cracking and rotting;
leaves and dirt covered creaky floor boards;
arched air spaces hung on high
where stained glass windows
might have been.
cold and tired i
wrapped myself in a woolen blanket
in front of the crumbling oak altar
and closed my eyes to rest.
he must have been waiting for me
by that quiet pool
though i never felt his eyes.

when the panther came
he came in blackness
haloed white by the moonlight
with emerald eyes.
i shuttered helplessly and
said nothing.
he stood there breathing -
inhaling, exhaling,
and the rhythm was a mantra
and his skin was shimmering black
and warm and glistening.
hypnotized and laying on my side
at the hour of my death,
i turned away my head
and offered my neck to his jaws.

upon awakening
it was a beautiful morning to be alive
and sunrise surprised me
in rainbow colors
refracting blue, amber,
crimson, and violet
through the arched air spaces.
i swept out the church
with an old broom i found
and picked some wildflowers
to grace the alter.
i folded my woolen blanket
and left it by that alter
as a gift to whoever else
might chance upon
that abandonned church
with the beautiful
stained glass windows.

Bruce Dalziel

THE DIRTIEST JOKE

I glanced downward in order to confront my reflection
How fitting, thought I
But moved thoward a more Dignified reflector of images.
While others might produce a comb or lotion
I came up empty... except for,
Fot a question — What purpose?
The answers came, not strangers they,
Old friends(is that better?).
Yes, they have confronted, comforted
And concealed me, oblivious of what I am.
I have been described as a piece of meat, a conglomeration of atoms
a soul...

And worse.
I have read Keeton, Reiche, Gibran, Plato, Bellow and yes
even Vonnegut
Yet, I know not.
Somehow, somewhere I have passed it over
And stand — seemingly aimless — waiting
For the punchline...

Robert Francis Pfeiffer
THE MANNEQUIN FACTORY
(For Josef K. and the Art of Existential Grief)

I don't remember applying for the job; work simply began for me.

The Parts Room=
Rows of bald heads+
A table full of arms(left w/bending elbow joint)+
Torso work bench+
Wig Weaver+
etc.

The Costuming Dept.=
Evening gowns+
Shoes+
Makeup paints+
Misc.(cigarette holders, umbrellas,...)+
etc.

From the director's office, there were rumors of new innovations with greater diversity, but it has been several months now...

Gannon

ME

Cocaine eyes see "life beyond L.A."
Of flashy trashy summer nights
Fading like so many dimming lights
Sipping gin by the bay,
Trying to catch the very last ray,
OF WHAT?

Steven Saylor
When I am famous, many years
From this date in a future time,
Literary scholars will look
Through library records to see
What famous books that I did read.

Poe and Ibsen and Bertold Brecht
Volumes will all bear my name,
Stamped loudly onto the endflaps
By a machine years earlier
That records what books I borrowed.

They will try hard to analyze
The evolution of my thoughts
By building a chronology,
My first book first; my last book last,
Mapping my mental progression.

Discovering I read Shakespeare
Before I regarded Chaucer
Will mean I was a natural
Existential expressionist
Bending toward defeatism.

But wouldn't they be surprised to learn
I got those books to press a fern.

David Hoag
Dear John,

These past few days, I've looked at this paper,  
This paper from the president's office  
That says you died the other day.  
As I might have expected  
Almost everyone is showing little signs of reaction.  
Emotion is not popular at Ursinus.  
I'm sure some are upset,  
But for most of them, life goes on:  
They still throw food at the lunch table,  
And yell at the ugly people as they pass by Wismer  
And they still cheat on exams  
And lie.  
All has not changed.

It's one of those cold and clear  
But sunny days today.  
And while the leaves slowly turn  
The tiniest bit yellow and red  
I wonder who you were,  
If perhaps I met you,  
If perhaps I asked if  
I could see Newsweek after you  
At one time, and perhaps  
You smiled and said yes.  
I wish I had known  
You were going to die  
And then I would have not bothered you  
And let you finish the Newsweek,  
Your last one.

I look across at the cold stone buildings  
And wonder why last week I didn't see  
Death stalking over neatly trimmed lawns  
Which they cut every three days.  
We are always looking for the signs, yet I saw  
None there; not in the trees or in anyone's faces.  
Death came almost sullen and silent,  
Afraid to make an appearance.
It seems that the death of someone that you didn't know
Is really more painful
For you can examine closer,
Without emotion
Or at least with a different kind of emotion.

Under your dry heap of dirt
That will soon be covered with snow
And then Spring and then still later
A stone with your name,
Under all that
I wish you could hear me crying.

Yet we go on.

Zolaesque

Who said the sound of laughter is nice?
The kid on the playground with the nickname of Fatty?
The first-year teacher with an unfriendly class?
The true believer surrounded by cynics?
The sound of laughter can be like the taste
Of water to a drowning man:
Cold;
Flat;
And deadly...

Viewpointer
Throwing back her hair
she laughs, tensly forced
as an actress on a rainy night
when the crowd was thin;
a stage laugh, almost more true
than a sweet smile, yet we
cannot believe it.

Worried hands, crossed by years of
this constant play-acting
waive as the crowd leaves
and leaves again. She stands
alone in the theater
as the crowd busies with punch
and cigarettes at the back of
entrance, hiding, shielding
themselves from her.
She stands alone.

Running through lines
with an oversexed girl
who's career will end
in a drunken pregnancy,
she tries that final
line for all its effect
but it won't fit here.

They sit through the final act
dreaming of screwing their wives
laughing as she trips over a line,
it's a difficult line, made for
tripping.

In dying footlights, alone
she runs through the scene
once more; the eternal once more,
as the wives are home on their backs
vowing not to go theatering again.

Sartresque
DON'T LET THE COLD BECOME YOU

Don't let the cold become you,
It's only the dry parched land.
The squirrels pop up from the ground
And sense the cold, just like you.
Too long the seasons, without your laughter.
Too deep the valley, without your smile.
In the sky stood the castle of your feet.
But your strength is there, hidden,
Behind a wall which you built
From the broken dreams; to you it is real,
Now what will it take to explode the fears?
When I leave, promise to continue on... to
The joys of love, which you still can experience,
The ferris wheels that keep life spinning,
And through the silent, lonely nights.
For the darkness is not really empty.
It holds a secret, a whisper, a memory:
Whatever you want, you can have,
Whenever you need, you will find.
The need is that which beckons the snow
To warm the new roots of spring.
Your light hair is blowing among the trees
Which shelter the heart of a swallow,
Gliding over the landscape,
Searching for that one special clam,
But everywhere stretch the sands of time
Disappearing into the sea.

Jack Rosenfeld
SISTER

The baby within her babbles and bawls,
Stands up, sits down, smiles and crawls,
Coming and cooing at another's calls.

Her hopeful preschooler hops and wiggles —
Searching for glee in communal giggles —
Switches a pussycat tail and wriggles.

A skittery kindergartner showing off her stuffies
Presents goodies stuck in a bucket to toughies.
Surely all this effort is enough — please?

Grade shcool cruelty gleams through the taunts
Of the wallstanders lined up where she flaunts
Solidarity in sorority is all she wants.

Her rowdy junior high morning song
Shrills in the dining room sudden and strong,
Celebrating the great victory: "See, I belong!"

High school flirtation joins oddly with flashing,
Flattering, partying, drinking, and re-hashing
All the pieces of the past she's now thrashing.

The woman within her must be wincing.

Anonymous
(The setting is a luxurious ballroom occupied by a variety of socialites.)
(Enter the Three Brothers. CHICO begins a sales pitch, in a heavy Italian accent, for "quality timepieces," while HARPO displays an array of watches on his coat lining. GROUCHO seats himself on the lap of an aged, but well preserved, coquette. They have obviously come for the ladies.)

(Or class consciousness intending those "bag ladies")

On the city streets, those old, shopping bag ladies scare me. Their concerns are too moderate and counterrevolutionary, still husband thoughts with thin belts and baggy pants.

Why don't they unionize?!!

They are too independent. Strong. Former champions of those butcher shop circles.

Back on the street, only those Sneaky Pete children prevent this angry breath from congesting my lungs.

Gannon
FLEETING LOVE

You exuded what mattered in me —
The Goodness
And from you
I extricated the same
But could we maintain this tension
Indefinitely
Or is the energy needed to sustain such divinity
Too great
So that we shall slip
Back
To a more balanced existence
Of
Mediocrity ...

Karen Sheldon

Music of Spain
Pastoral with wind's song
Magical as cathedrals
Where are the first voices
That gave it life
Gone away in time
And time is frightening
Surging passionately between us
I miss your hand
I miss the words you spoke
To me the short-long time ago
To me that you should return
Bringing your peace again
Again to teach your serious laughter
To one who never knew —

Phoro Erasmus
(a selection of happy poems)

can we have the last dance tonight
and tomorrow
and the day after that?

can we hold each other
together
tightly, with bear hugs and
gently spoken whispers of love
while the band plays on?

and then,
when the final song is over,
can we still dance
to the music
that we know by heart?

for hours
we'll swirl and spin
and keep each other from falling;
and, light years later,
we'll look up
to find that we only imagined the band
and that the crowded dance floor
was really only the empty room
where we
—magically—
harmonized.

P.A.R.
STERLING ST. JACQUES

Fashion - Beauty and clothes are all the Passion - Style and flashin - Halston, Klein will wine and dine, on all the action. While a ruby eyed model's look and stance sell the attraction of the latest - Fashion.

P.S. I'm not so beautiful cried the fashion model, but go ahead and photograph away the truth.

Steven Saylor

WINTER, VERSE II

Unceasingly, Silently
It falls.
Soft as a whisper
Heaven Spun Satin-silver
Gliding thru the Skirts of Light
of lamp posts,
Thru the highway traveling headlights.

The dream-dust of Children
The mark of winter-coming
The frozen breath of Northern Clouds.

Michael Voyack
AVENTURE CHEZ LE PSYCHIATRE

Contrastes étincelés brûlent mes yeux
Mes émotions atteignent
L'Extase et
Le Découragement
Sans rien au milieu

Le psychiatre me dit
"Modération"
Brouillant, il n'y a pas de contrastes
Sur cette terre
Seulement la médiocrité
D'émotion
Gris sur gris

Constante constamment
La vie est dans une
Modération entière
L'Apathie et l'Ennui sont sa
 Progéniture

Le psychiatre me dit
"Vivez"
Le balancier arrêté
De mes émotions
Commence encore à
Se balancer

Contrastes étincelés

Jennie Reichert
FOR MARYA

She's a wood-nymph dancing in movements old
'Fore Pan first trilled his sylvan call,
Blending the rhythms of sinew and sound
For bloodshot eyes who couldn't care less
For the quicksilver flow of muscle and bone.
Why do you dance for these blank-brained fools,
Who reek of beer and secret lusts,
In smoke-drowned bars, when there are still
Green forests where the breeze is clear
(Not brown), the earth is soft and filled
With life, of which the Urb has none?
Do you really LIKE the fast life, Dancing Sun?

Chris Kile

THE NIGHT TRAIN

Shapes of darkness pass the windows
And feeble lights illuminating nothing.
Ceaseless beat of wheels on steel,
Squealing to a stop in a mercury-bright island
With an unseen name; a passenger boards,
And the beat resumes on its destined way.

Chris Kile
SEPTEMBER GOLDENROD

by Ted Lis
A RUDE AWAKENING

The spectre stood invisible in the sight of my blinded eyes. With his magnificent banner he unveiled a world of sleeping ignorance, a world I had never come to know. But somehow it all felt so real, so familiar, as if I had been there before and had seen it all. Leading me into a room without walls, he carefully guided me through secret passageways and locked closets. People I had known and recognized pressed tightly against the crumbling space. But somehow they were different, not as I had remembered them. Perhaps it was the masks that they wore upon their faces. Checking my judgement, I turned to glance at them once more, Filled with bewilderment and realizing that I no longer could turn back, I began to follow the spectre more nearly, only to find that now I was neither lost nor confused. I had viewed the truth.

Lori Reinhart
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