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The Lantern Vol. 45, No. 2, April 1979

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Keith Strunk, Kathy McSharry, David Hoag, Jeff Carlow, Lori Reinhart, Karen Sheldon, Jack Rosenfeld, Steve Kratz, Scott Watson, Chris Kile, Teri R. Clemmer, Lisa Ungrady, Robert Pfeiffer, Joanne McPhillips, and Martin Atreides

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Vol. XLV, No. 2
April 1979

A collection of Poetry, Prose, and Photography composed for the Spring Term, 1979, 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 Pfahler Hall, which has the architectural design, not of a tower or spire, but of a lantern.

Cover Photo: Jack Rosenfeld
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Dr. Peter Perreten
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Mrs. Katherine Kneas
Mr. H. E. Broadbent, III
Ada M. Fisher
William and Adele Robbins
Henry and June Pfeiffer
Mrs. Lillian Bahney
Philip Davis
Thomas P. Glassmoyer
A Runner’s Motivation

Running on the wet sand
Of a sun·bleached beach,
The shells cut my feet
But I take no heed,
They cannot wound me
As deeply as you have. . . .

The pounding of my feet,
The pounding in my head
Obscures the pounding
Of pain in my heart. . . .

Pound, pound
Slap, slap
Breathe in
Breathe out
Never again
Never again
Never again. . . .

WENDY

For A Little While

For a little while
Let go of fear
Speak directly from the heart
Set aside prudence
Touch where you will
Ask without restraint
Abandon yourself in trust
Receive every gift
Share the best you have

For a little while—
Before the world closes in
And false realities
Come back to separate us—
For a little while
Let faith
Let hope
Let love
Be unfettered.

GEDER
After I have said it;
rendering symptomatically
obtuse descriptions of my derangement
becoming quakingly frightened
of your reactions.

Grown pensive,
you will not speak,
though the touch of your hand
warms me.

All my night’s appointments are late.
As belated and far past an unrequited atonement
marking the moments of reflection.

Know me then,
as the abiding prisoner
who waits still upon your judgement.
Though it seems you will not judge.

Justice, sham and shambles;
slithers upon scales around you.
Tempts you to abdicate,
to embrace the sensuous
while still distant echoes remind
of Sibelius’ golden meshed
Swan white.

Dance under the stars this night
surrounded by elves and children
who never tire.
And all their laughter resounds;
As upon the unmoving pool
light has mysteriously paused
only for you and I.

VINCE
It's an honest bargain we've got, Darlin',
one that's been sealed with a kiss.
No more than I do my own,
do I pray for your way out of this.
So far we've met the Venitian exile,
and faced the sentence willingly,
tossed beneath the poets and the juvenile.
We wait on events, a mere moment in time,
to bring sight to our vision,
and more than gesture to this pantomime.
But tell me now, is this how you see it?
Is this bargain well made?
Can I believe this in you,
as you can believe it in me?
Or though always seeking bondage
will we regretfully be free?

MARTIN ATREIDES

Why do you shake me from my dream?
You're cold and sharp and yet you seem
To be the only one to trust
When my truth fades and turns to rust.
Why do you keep me here to fight
And work and sweat beneath your sight,
When nothing else is here but me?
You shine so bright that I can't see,
So please excuse me while I scream
For fears and years without a theme,
And look into my eyes and find
That I am very truly blind.

ANONYMOUS
Nameless

An old man walks the beach
He watches as the waves crash upon
the crevices of his tired mind.
He looks upon the water into emptiness.
The unknown awaits.
The fingers of the sea crawl up and
tickle his feet with persuasive gentleness.
He looks back at the old, decaying city.
He knows and loves the city.
He helped build the city.
Now the city doesn't even know his name.
He turns from the city and looks to the sea.
He walks from the city and towards the unknown.
Soon the old man and the sea are one.
The moon bathes the beach with a gentle
glow, and the sea washes a lone teardrop
upon the sand,
and it sparkles with its gladness.

KEITH STRUNK

A child is born.
An idea, many centuries old, is floating around
the world. Nobody notices the dusty, old idea and, saddened, it retires
to
lonely
obscurity.
The child, fresh and unafraid of dust, stumbles over the old
idea while he is playing.
The child dusts the idea off and makes it his own.
An idea is born.
A man dies.
An idea lives.
All is as it should be, I guess.

KEITH STRUNK
The drizzle disguises my malice,
And here from my archaic throne
He flickers into the corner of my eye.

He sees nothing now, not even me
As I rest within inches of him.
But does he see something:
Black? White? Memories?

Does he see my balsam wood glider,
Broken in his hand?
My tears sinking far into my face,
Running slowly down to my lip.

He beckoned and silenced my anguish,
With tall tales of the gliders we would fly someday,
With the creatures we might sever in two,
Or the animated villains we were sure to encounter.

Here among the peeling wallpaper that surrounds
The fading florals that cover the chairs,
The strong scent of cauliflower escapes from its
Dirty cooking pot, and devours us alone.

His facial lines appear engraved in his porous skin,
Yet they do not tell of any great knowledge
Or age-old wisdom that this ancient man must possess.
Instead, too much SSPS Red Label Whiskey
Drown years of addiction to the state lottery.

Before me, still crowned with a seedy baseball cap,
He sits alone.

KATHY McSHARRY
The gray blue sky shines cloudy;
The wind fits freely as a glove.
The fahrenheit's too low for comfort,
And the sun never shines from above.

What is the reason for sunshine
When darkness is all you can see.
I can't really think of tomorrow
For today is all I believe.

My head reels around like a cyclone,
Too busy to stop for a while.
The disorganized world stands a fixed
On its theories and thoughts of denial.

So what is the reason for sunshine,
When darkness is all you can see.
I can't really think of tomorrow,
For today is all I believe.

W. P.
We Must Remain Liberal Minded

When did we ever talk to cleaning people?
As they wiped up the world with sponges
And pine scented cleaner diluted in
Two parts water with one part cleaner.
Armed with buckets and brushes,
Brooms and baskets,
They surround us, dressed in
Cheaply made blue uniforms
So that we may spot them from a distance.

What they have to say
Seems not important to us;
Let them go tell it to a dirty toilet
As they wipe it out.

Maids and janitors
Are not our social class,
They only clean glass
Which we dirty
With supposed clean fingers,
As they clean
With dreaded dirty fingers.

We never wonder what it’s like
To be known only by the fact
That the total worth of an individual
Lies in the knowledge of
How to clean stains from carpeting
And remove cast iron chewing gum
Stuck under chairs.

They clean up
What we cannot tolerate.
They surround themselves with intolerables
While we wish we could clean them up
And throw them away
In a sanitary fashion,
Killing germs at the same time.

They always steal, too.
Don’t they?

Yes, I’m certain.

DAVID HOAG

my intentions aren’t to change you
my feelings are real and true
love can be so very strange
even the surest things can change

don’t plan your life too far in advance
don’t base it on just one romance
life’s too short to be all arranged
even the surest things can change

i may be wrong or possibly right
i’ve thought about it many a night
feelings can be so very strange
even the surest things can change

life and times so often crazy
all the goals have gotten hazy
life can be so very strange
even the surest things can change

JEFF CARLOW
Solstice of Paradise

Children wandering aimlessly along sparkling silver streams,
stepping from one stone to the next,
ocasionally falling in and enjoying it.
Old men in their fishing hats sit baiting their lines
while they smoke smelly cigars and talk about the Dodgers.
Lying with a closed book in an open field
all under a sky as blue as a robin’s egg
dreaming of nothing and everything
while the sun pours forth warm contentment.
The smell of freshly cut plush green grass
followed by a sudden shower and
lazy front porches armed with squeaking screeendoors and
creaking rocking chairs.
Windows thrown wide open, the velvet breath of evening
carelessly drifting lace curtains that whisper in the night.
Gazing up at the man in the moon who hides behind
tall trees of cool emerald green.
Humid air and crickets making for drowsy, sleepless nights.
Bleached dry docks, and brand new bikes,
Bee stings and dog bites,
There’s nothing quite like summer days and summer nights.

LORI REINHART
Sunset

The silent sky with stains of sunset streaks
And gray black smoke in clouds above descends
Behind the grasping arms of mauve clad peaks
Seen far ahead. I walk, surrounded all
With chills of dew sent secrets night defends
In echoes heard of rhythmic cricket’s calls;
Above I see a lonely falcon pass:
A shadow sketched against a growing star.
The draining day descends the hour glass,
As night with silent hands upends the grains
To start their journey down behind the far
And distant necks engraved in hilled terrains.
The darkness knocks upon the door of fear
As spirits greet with necromatic cheer.

DAVID HOAG

One More Love Poem For An Imperiled Society

Or: At This Moment It Has Been So Long Now

You’re all out there, Pamela Brown to Ruby Tuesday,
Eleanor Rigby to the Harlem Gypsy, innocent in a child’s way,
then older, becoming puzzled at snickering schoolyard remarks,
awakening in dark set tournaments, held for cruel and kind prizes
then surprise at the disguise happiness and its false son take
when they distribute the gains, half empty, half full,
which leave you resigned, the martyred passive fool,
such becoming by necessity of your own blood’s cause,
then forgotten, just forgotten in a from now to then pause.

MARTIN ATREIDES
A Poor Winter Poem

Dangling urchin,
child of gutter slush
and dirt in the wind,
washes your car,
pumps your gas,
serves your burger,
goes in at seven,
works till midnight,
as those before him,
his fathers and theirs,
who hammered the mines,
netted the fish,
worked the press;
a century then
is a century now,
generations one to the next,
in which the masses children,
born with empty mouths,
guess for a while
about the silver spoon,
ever knowing what it is
that it really is,
giving up that guess
as years get older,
and the con gets bolder,
and after being fed lies
in cheap magazines
that are not cheap,
and on TV shows that are,
run down by media influence,
twisted, shaped, wrongly led
in a mind game,
a money game,
with rules that change
as need demands,
a predetermined end,
a brutality without sense,
cruelly passes over,
forgetting beginnings innocence.

MARTIN ATREIDES
Enfolding the world in his translucent cloak, the Enchanter has returned. All is softened, romantic seen through his cloak's misty haze.

Once more the age of chivalry
The noble knight mounts his steed to challenge the giant, monolithic (a megalopolis — transformed).

City lights in their enchantment seem each a star,
and I seem no longer an Aldonza Lorenzo.

KAREN SHELDON
A Parody

To economize or not to economize; that is the question
Whether 'tis nobler to rise with the cost of living,
Than be defeated by the fifty-cent dollar,
Or to take arms against a sea of credit
And by economizing end it. To bank; to save;
No more; and by this saving to say we end
The monthly bill and the thousand stock companies
That man is heir to. 'Tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished. To bank; to save;
To save: no chance to spend, ah, there's the rub,
For in all our saving, what dreams may come,
When we have thoughts of infinite luxury,
Must give us pause. There's the respect
That makes fools of those who'd buy a Mercedes.
For who in all can afford 15,000 plus tax and options,
A new fur coat, wall to wall carpeting,
A swimming pool, a Da Vinci, silver and gold.
Who suffer the electric bill and scowl at
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare billfold? Who would depressed, bear
To grunt and sweat under the income tax,
But still the hope of better jobs to come.
The prophecy of unions from whose wrath
No tax payer can evade, bewilders the mind,
And makes us rather pay the bills we have,
Than dream of fortunes we may never see.
Thus success does make spenders of us all,
And thus the invaluable need to economize
Is averted by the impulsiveness of thought
And the enterprises of avarice and supremacy.
With this regard, our wills turn awry,
And keep us trying to buy the future.

JACK ROSENFELD
State Hospital

The heavy metal door swings shut;
The odor quickly comes:
Detergent, urine, sickness scents
All rising from their cells.
I pass the twisted faces all
Confusion peering forth;
The medicated babbled chants
Begin to call to me.
They cry for help, for love, for light;
The nurse moves on unmoved;
He quickly flicks his keys in doors
And laughs as screams retreat.
A door marked “b” is where we stop;
I’m told that he’s inside.

I see his face, with lidded eyes
That strain to see through clouds;
A twitching smile begins to light,
A gurgle utters forth.
Like puppies in a kennel pound
The cell begins to stir;
A high pitched whine is heard to chant
“They’re here . . . they’re here . . . they’re here!”
They rush to peek and see my face;
The nurse like master shouts,
“Get back!” and beats the bars and laughs.
He lets me in the cell
And calls, “Ten minutes, watch yourself.”
“I’ll come and get you then.”

And I wonder if I can keep my sanity until then.

DAVID HOAG
Long Distance Love

A lonely boy who toured the world
And sent his dreams across the sea
Though many a land his thoughts unfurled
He knows there's just one place to be.

A wandering King without a Queen
When hundreds of miles came in between
Can't keep his mind on the war at hand.
He longs to return to his love and land.

Across all time, across all space,
The hour won't matter, not even the place.
Thoughts of you will see me through.
Our long distance love will have to do.

A life apart from you would be
A task too hard for me to bear.
Like a ship adrift upon the sea,
A stormy life too rough to dare.

But if the days ahead look pale
And where I'll be is hard to say,
Just like a ship my dreams will sail.
To be with you so far away.

Across all time, across all space
The hour won't matter, not even the place.
Thoughts of you will see me through
Our long distance love will have to do.

Though many a day has come and gone,
I'll never get used to them lasting so long.
A sadder feeling I never knew
Than the way I feel apart from you.

The time, the place, the day, the year
Will never make you any less dear.
And though I long to be holding you,
Our long distance love will have to do.

STEVE KRATZ
The ID

A cold November day,
Too soon for snow, yet too cold anyway,
Blows across the brown grass hill.
A single tree, barren
Of leaves and fruit,
Stands at the crest of the small hill,
Watching over the railroad tracks.

The child sits beneath it,
With the carriage of his sister
Who is both sleeping,
And not quite eleven months.

Parents are at home,
Sleeping;
It’s no trouble sending the other one out
To baby sit his sister.

The child makes humming noises
At the buzzing insulators
On the wires above the tracks.
And he makes train noises
Towards the speeding engine
Visibly approaching from the horizon.

He has a dime and a nickel
To place on the tracks,
So that they will be squashed
When the massive engine
Presses over them.

As the train approaches the last
Bend before the tree and the child,
He quickly runs down the little hill
To the tracks
And puts his change on the rails.

Returning quickly,
So that he can wheel
His sister’s baby carriage
Onto the tracks
Before the train arrives.
While the whistle blows,
He stands flaccid on the hill
Watching the screeching train
Bat the carriage high in the air.

When it has passed,
The child steps down to pick up
His coins.
And walks home,
Disappointed that
The dime must have been lost.

DAVID HOAG

Cereal Art

Here waved the flag of modern art's salute:
A flag with orange border, yellow field—
A blazing sky encasing oil-dipped sun;
With parlor-fragrant tears and marching beat.

And blackness now a hole in golden sand
Where certain kinds of bees arrive in swarms;
They crawl and slip and deeper fall, alive,
Becoming crumbs that blister and crisp in heat.

They're cereal, suffocating boxed in grey;
Outside a skinny gramma naps, her knitting hands asleep in lap on rocking-chair
While alligator shoes awake her feet.

With rattle, crackle, pop and snap and creak,
Escaping off the cereal box she creeps.
And through her sheet of night all pressed and neat
She glides away in faithful humming sleep.

SCOTT WATSON
Feet wedged firm in the clay which forms him,
Fist held high in empty defiance
Against the unforgivable, inevitable, uncompromising Word,
Mouthing curses at the eternal and praise for the ephemeral,
Building castles of dust which shine brightly but briefly,
He stands alone 'fore the storms of chaos.
His clay is worn in the woeful wind
Which is Entropy; and yet, when clay is gone
And dust is scattered 'cross the deeps of space
Something remains, Something endures . . .
Not in defiance, but in deathless hope
For salvation from empty, empty hands
And lust to leave marks on running water . . .

CHRIS KILE
Stepping Stones

On a beautiful tranquil night,
The moon aglow of dauntless white,
The sky adorned with crimson light,
The stars are dancing, sparkling bright.
I heard then,
I think that's when . . .
I heard a voice softly whisper,
"You're okay; yes, you're all right!"
Encouraging words of wisdom speaking,
How do you know what I am seeking?
How do you know where I should go?
What makes grass green?
What makes me grow?
Why can't I say what I feel?
These words of love I keep concealed.
Deep inside and far away,
I find these words so hard to say.
Slow down a bit!
What did you say?
You say you'll help me along the way—
But the decision is mine and mine alone.
Life is a river with stepping stones.

TERI R. CLEMMER
Message To The Populace

I'm sitting here tonight pretty
Mellowed out. Not because I've
Been drinking or anything like that—
It's just that it's late on
A Friday night; my roommate's
Home for the weekend and I'm
Kind of bored, so I thought I'd
Just talk to you, since I guess you've
Been acquainted with this feeling
On occasion. At times like this one
Tends to get rather pensive. It's really
Strange—the effect this place can have
On you. It's a strange kind of
Loneliness. In spite of the fact that
Everybody here knows everyone else, one
Still gets the impression that they are one
Face in the crowd. It may be
That I'm the only face in the
Crowd that gets that feeling, but
In case you do, too, just remember that
Someone is out there to sympathize with you,
In that respect, at least, you're
No longer lonely.

ANONYMOUS
shall I recall midweek’s golden sun descent
i stooping beside the lake
shimmering rays slanting across the water of the lake transfixed
beneath the stunted, shrubby tree that figure that was myself
gone far upon imagining’s road
the church bells tolling
chiming that it was six o’clock
what a song was in the bells
rise and fall of melody
enunciation within daylight’s final passage
did i then have a song sprung inside of me
that all told me impossible
improbable song that discouraged me
evening comes
i am in such abnegation to existence’s imperative
i seem to have grown older
but so confused
little discerning good and bad
inside of me vaster than a cosmos of its own devising
inklings, forebodings that another hand fits inside of mine
as a glove wrought of skin stretched
for the wearer’s comfort
but it is the glove that must endure the cold

VINCE

Photo: LORI REINHAR
Therefore Must We Yearn

It's much too still now, Jack.
We're waiting for you
Your great chair by the fire,
The empty tankard,
And I.
The silence is waiting, too.
Waiting to be filled
Just once more
With the roar, the boast,
The chide, the jest.

Age and loneliness have had their way,
Conquering the man that was:
Your faults recede
Against a relief of past play
And affection—
A life written in bright colors
And punctuated with a bellylaugh.

Hal's ascension meant your rejection.
You knew it had to be.
Yet, even in knowing, the pain remained—
The memory of a reign.
King, though of a tavern, is king still.

Your throne stands empty.
A coffin is full.
The bill is paid.
Paid with what only you could give.
Surely there was love in it.
Come back, Sir John.

LISA UNGRADY
Anticipation

Suspended animation sought.
I cannot bear
These menial tasks
Of taking notes,
    eating, talking,
    drinking, sleeping . . .
I want to scream,
"Get on with Life!"
I think only of what’s to come
Unable to force it from my consciousness
Happiness becomes pain
When just out of reach. . . .

My soul impatiently seeks escape
    as on a spring day
But I am confined
    to this temporal plane
And can only endure the passage of time
Hoping it won’t lead to disenchantment. . . .

KAREN SHELDON
Their eyes followed the four corners of a sky
which left the sun without sight.
Towers of brick and crude mortar marked
the edges of existence for them,
surrounding and mocking them like a band of vicious
schoolboys teasing and kicking at the schoolyard scapegoat.
They had been made numb by the mighty clutch of steel, smoke, and greed
which left them with little more than smouldering dreams.

Trudging along sweating streets and green alleyways,
they think of nothing, feel nothing,
their breath breaking like steam against the thick but weak air.
Lean homes stand one against the other,
their decaying sides crusted with the tainture of civilization.
Biting his lip, one of them stops,
staring at the grey, moldy walls of the city,
but hunger reminds him that he must go on,
while the rest look on and call him a fool.
Such fools make for themselves a place in history books.

LORI REINHART
Dregs

When all the cups have been measured,
The volumes distilled and discarded,
What was the meaning of those toasts and promises?

A good time was had by all they say,
And quickly comes the collapse and fall
A veil shadows the eyes as the fog rolls on by
Toss and turn your life away.
Let it hide you from the pain and survive for a while
Life's too short

Of course it wears off,
But not away
You knew that before, but
It helps us all be Someone else . . .
For a little while.

Sure I can handle it
Woke up somewhere desolate once,
Twice, an eternity
Found a letter from her yesterday,
Said I was destroying everything around me,
Said I had a Problem,
Said I needed help.
Took the kids and all.
Need one bad. . .

Can't keep on like that forever,
Toss and turn your life away.
What's life anyhow?
The job, a long time ago
Not doing much these days
Wandering around the back streets

ROBERT PFEIFFER
Band of Devils

Band of devils sit on my side.  
Christ, I work to keep them there.  
They keep one hand out for money,  
They taught me how to share.  

Band of devils sit on my side.  
When they sing I have to dance.  
They keep one hand on a bottle,  
They keep the other down my pants.  

And they can hurt you  
if you bug them.  
And they have knives  
and they steal.  
And they can beat you  
if they don’t need you;  
It’s their convenient way to feel.  

Band of devils sit on my side.  
Christ, you know we have a ball.  
All night long they rape me,  
They say I love it all.  

Band of devils sit on my side.  
They’re too fun for me to shake.  
I don’t complain about how mean they are,  
I just give before they take.  

JOANNE McPHILLIPS
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