THE CAPILANO REVIEW

lines stop
life
a book
unexpected shifts that

which has its own sweet logic

— byNichol, from *The Martyrology*, Bo(o)ks 7(VII) & $(10)_8$

The Capilano Review is published four times a year from Capilano College, 2055 Purcell Way, North Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada V7J 3H5.

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of The Canada Council, the Capilano College Humanities Division, the Capilano College Student Society, the Government of British Columbia through the B.C. Cultural Fund and Lottery revenues.

The Capilano Review is a member of the Canadian Periodical Publishers' Association and COSMEP. Microfilm editions and reprints are available from University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

We are always pleased to receive good material, especially from artists we haven't published before, but we cannot take responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts. Manuscripts should be submitted to the Editor, and must be accompanied by a self-addressed envelope and Canadian postage to ensure return.

Printed in Victoria, British Columbia, by Morriss Printing Company Ltd.

Second Class Registration Number 4593

ISSN 0315-3754

1987 (Date of issue April 1988)

THE CAPILANO REVIEW

Number 45 1987

CONTENTS

Gladys Hindmarch / TWO STORIES

THE WATERY PART OF THE WORLD

We reach Point Atkinson in the late afternoon. I've just dished myself a bowl of potato salad when I see through a porthole in the mess the shiny-white red-roofed lighthouse. I step on grey paper I put there moments ago to protect the mess deck from whatever might happen in port; they don't care, Puppi said, shore mechanics don't care if they tramp oil in or not, it's not their boat. I turn the brass knob. But before I step outside, I glance at the clean walls and ceiling, the shiny green table, the clean honey pot and chutney jar and sauce bottles, sparkling ashtrays, a blackboard that is really *black*. Nothing's going to stay this way long, but the clean order makes me feel good. I step outside to see the lighthouse which I saw perhaps before I could even speak, then again and again as a little girl and young woman on ferries to Vancouver.

I walk along the red deck and sit in the sun on a wooden box just outside the fidley. I take a bite of creamy, new potato salad, which tastes so good. West Vancouver homes and North Shore mountains on one side, distant university towers and green trees and huge sandbanks on the other. Everything is clear and sharp. Have a wee beer with that, lass? asks Jock from just behind me. I turn left and Jock's not there. I stand up and shout into the dark fidley to the pails, mops, and sinks: you in there? Aye, he says. But I, caught by the glare of white paint and sun, can't see where he is. His hand, then his upper body, comes out of the darkness holding a plastic glass of beer. Thought drinking was against *all* rules, I say over into his slightly red, close-shaven face. It's only apple juice, Jan, Jock says as he steps out of the fidley and I step back to my box. I sit down in the sun. Thanks, I say. I feel the fluted ridges of the glass then take a swallow of warm beer. Best juice I ever had, I say. It's

only half a one, Jock says, not to worry. I look up at his stubbleless face, so much younger without the grey. I imagine passing him on an escalator in Woodward's, wondering about him, about his energy, about what he does. I look at his dungaree shirt and *clean* coveralls and imagine him at thirty.

You off now? I ask. Not yet, lass, he says, but there's nothing to do till we dock. I take a sip of beer: my skin and hair all clean and warm in the sun, the potato salad and beer so good, the lighthouse beautiful (white so white, red so red); everything seems perfect. And what are you going to do when you get in? I ask Jock as he leans on the ladder. Go to the Legion with Mabel, he says, maybe quarrel a bit. Must be nice to have *two* nights off, I say, trying to ignore what he just said. Not the way the wife blathers, he says, been together forty years now and mostly we just fight. What about? I ask, what do you fight about after forty years? Nothing, he says, canna even remember what started the last one or what it was about — never do — they're always the same. I look at him. He's gotta be kidding. We drink, he says, dance (I imagine a fat lady shorter than Jock and the two of them foxtrotting belly to belly), quarrel a wee bit, more than a *wee* bit, love a little. You have any kids? I ask. No, he says, never had any, don't regret that either.

I want kids, I say, someday, not many, maybe two. Enjoy yourself first, he said, no sense rushing into marriage when most of them don't work out. I don't say anything more. I look out at Spanish Banks and the sea and the little sailboats gliding through muddy green water. I see the sand of the beach and cars moving between willow trees along the Spanish Banks Road. We slowly pass a yellow barge full of gravel heading in and a green barge full of woodchips heading out. Even without getting up, I can see streams in the water: wide bands of browny-green fanning out from the Fraser River amongst bluer, non-river strips of ocean water. I love that, I say to Jock, ever since I was a kid I've loved seeing that Fraser mud in the ocean. Sometimes I've seen it halfway to Nanaimo. One time I flew and I could see it even further. Jan, he says, you love many things. You should go around the world before you settle. Never can tell what might happen or who you'll meet. Go to Piraeus. Sail the Greek islands. The ocean is so clear you can see down a mile or more, and visit Egypt and Australia and Hong Kong. There is nothing, nothing like the smell and noise of sailing into Hong Kong. I might, I say, I just might ship out on a Norwegian freighter. I met a mate in Tahsis, you know, he said it's not impossible for me to get on. That so? he says.

After we chat about the possibility for a few moments, Jock leaves me to go into the galley. I stand at the rail and dream; I could sail on a Norwegian freighter and my travel and food would be free, or I could work here every run they give me and save up for a year. I love being right where I am now. The sun, when there is no barge in the way, reflects off the *Nootka* and ocean floor in such a manner that rays come up from below creating broken strips of light in the murky brown-green. I haven't seen enough of British Columbia to leave it. The mud here, good soil, is washed down from the interior, from places like Osoyoos and Summerland and Kamloops, brought down by the Thompson and Similkameen to flow into the Fraser to form part of the delta or to settle in the inlet or to drift out to the Gulf.

I feel like it's part of me and I want to merge with it, to swim among the particles in the ocean of everchanging water and light. We pass a green and grey freighter which is wider than we are long, a hundred and sixty-five feet according to Beebo. Six or eight of us wouldn't make one of her: Japanese? Russian? Greek? German? I can't see her name. She is floating high (without cargo) and is waiting, waiting for what? Grain? Salmon? Lumber? Sulphur? She's out on the edge of English Bay and Kitsilano Beach 'cause there's not room in the inner harbour for more than the freighters that are already loading or unloading or just waiting to load.

I think about Hong Kong and Bombay and Port Said; I'd love to see Cairo, Athens, Singapore, Rio de Janeiro. I look up at the centre of the Lions Gate Bridge coming towards us, not the actual centre but the centre of where we are which looks like the real centre coming out faster than the edges, and I hear the traffic whirring away and look straight up as we float under tons and tons of vehicles and steel. And I can smell them, or I can smell it, the city and Stanley Park; maybe it's all the people and all the fumes and all the trees and dust combined, but it's a smell I haven't had for days, a wonderful, particular, Vancouver smell. I am surrounded by it. I enjoy several breaths and then try to imagine the smell of other city-ports I've been in like New York or Montreal or Seattle or San Francisco. Can't. But I've always come from the land. I bet Jock and all of the men know the smell of each city, could recognize each with their nose.

Coming up on the north are triangular piles of yellow sulphur which were loaded in the gasfields of southwestern Alberta and

northern B.C., a byproduct that's become a product for something, loaded into railway cars in small towns and unloaded into piles here, piles that are larger than three-storey buildings, piles that are brighter yellow than anything else in the harbour, piles that will be loaded into ships' holds as cargo to be carried to where?... to be unloaded by more men to be used for what?

What are you dreaming about? says Hal. Loading, I say. I didn't hear him come. I didn't know he was here leaning over the rail just a few feet from me. He, like Jock, is clean-shaven and just-showered. Loading, he laughs with a mug of tea in his hand, loading? Sure, I say (he looks like a darker, slightly smaller James Dean wearing a green plaid shirt), why not? I thought you'd think of other things, he says. Like what? I reply looking right at him, right at the *married man*, Beebo said, *married man.* Like how you're going to spend your paycheque, Hal says, or what you're going to do when you get off. I look away from his wet lips. Kissy lips. Just-showered body in clean clothes. I don't have any plans, but I certainly won't tell him that. I stare at the sulphur piles and the boxcars from all over North America. There must be tons of sulphur — thousands of thousands of tons — in that huge bright pile, and the air doesn't smell of it at all.

Hal, I say. Uuh-huh? Do you have any idea where that stuff goes to? The sulphur? Yeah. I think it's used for chemicals to make plastics, he says, much of it goes to Europe for that. Then we buy it back, I say, in coffee grinders and kitchenware and such. I guess so, he says, but someone told me it's also used for fertilizers and explosives and pharmaceuticals. We smile. Well, that's one of the things I was thinking about, I say, about how the whole province, about how the workers of the prairies and us are just growing and loading and unloading and cutting trees and killing fish and harvesting grain and loading then unloading, always moving cargo elsewhere, waiting to do it or doing it, but all this energy, and for what? So we can buy a pill made in England or a car from Japan? Or sugar from Cuba? Sure, he says, what's wrong with that? Keeps us all working, doesn't it? Yes, I say, if you look at it that way. I do, he says.

He smiles. He takes a drag of his cigarette and broods. I'd love to touch his arms through his shirt which I am looking at in order to avoid his eyes. You didn't answer me before, he says. I don't know

what I'm going to do, I say as I cover what I'm feeling. Hal, let's go over there. He follows me starboard as we pass Pier A where the *Princess of Vancouver* always docks. I glance at it and Piers B & C where hundreds of immigrants who built the railway who farmed the delta who fished the ocean began their Canadian lives: more loading and unloading, beginning and beginning again. You know, I say to him, that's where we always docked when I was a child. I can see and smell the inside of that building even now. I remember how exciting it was to get outside of it, to be on the mainland and in the city. He smiles. Island girl in the big city.

Hal, I say, I think I'm going to ship out again. He flicks his cigarette butt into the bay. You know what I think about that, he says (black eyes into blue, I can't think at all, can you?), you should throw away your shipping book and forget this, just forget it. (I would love to run my tongue under the edge there, under the edge where the ribbing of his white undershirt touches his neck.) We both look right into each other. I wish, I wish life were more settled for me than it is. We both laugh a little. I was only trying to find out if you're coming for a beer with us, he says. Does everyone? I ask. Usually.

I want to hug him but don't. I look at the brick sugar refinery again, old bricks in a city that's mostly built of wood and concrete. What are you thinking about? he asks. I don't say you, I love the way you look. Sugar and golden syrup and bricks, I say, then hesitate. I was thinking about my uncle who has worked in that factory there for thirty years (we both look at the refinery as if my Uncle Frank is at this very moment looking out at us). I can't imagine what that feels like, I say, thirty years, but you couldn't last a month? No, I couldn't, he says. Wet kissy lips say.

Well? he says. Well? I say. We can see the company building, a cream and red warehouse sitting in the sun on a dock covered with crates and boxes of cargo. Well? he says, will you be coming for a beer? Sure, I say, thinking this is not the end, we'll be on land together before we part, all of us sitting around a beer table instead of a mess table, sure. At the Princeton, he says, want me to sign for your cheque? It's ready? Of course, he says, the Old Man radios the information in to the company office. I'm fetching everyone else's . . . how about yours? Sure, I say, totally pleased that I'll get it so soon, sure. You're in for a sweet surprise, he says as the *Nootka*'s engine stops. Huh? You'll probably earn more here in five days than you did on the CPR in two weeks. No kidding. Would I *kid* you? Hal says and chuckles. Not about that, I say. Gotta go, he says, I have to jump off the moment we tie up 'cause it's closing time at the office already. See you at the Princeton, I shout at Hal's back.

As the *Nootka* drifts into dock and Jock prepares to throw the line, I breathe air full of fresh salmon, look up at our lush North Shore mountains. Then glance down into the swirls in the harbour waters.

TAHSIS: HOLDING MY BREATH TO JAPAN

This is my land, Vancouver Island, where I was born on the eastern side. We live on the edges of it, one huge green hill pressed up from the sea, mountains and mountains of timber on its top, the bottom joined to the mainland under the Straits of Juan de Fuca, Georgia, Johnstone, Queen Charlotte; the edges defined by blue and grey water, pockets of lakes, scratches of rivers.

I breathe the cut forest air as I walk between stacks of lumber at Tahsis. These creamy stacks are shorter than whales but were originally longer, giant Douglas Firs, just a few weeks ago standing upright with their branches out, needles, green short needles pointing, surrounded by air, feeling the sun and rain. And now they are planks, horizontal, lying on each other; only the bottom ones touch earth. My head turns to the grey sky: it's so low that I feel if three firs were placed on top of each other I could climb them and touch it. I skip through the maze of the largest lumberyard I've ever been in as I feel Hal's navy-blue jacket on my arms, his shape around me. I love it, so soft.

For the first time in my life, except for Port Alberni and Point No Point, I'm on the western side of the Island, blocked by an island, Nootka Island, held in by an inlet, Tahsis Inlet, but it's the West Coast I've been on these last three days, not the east of the west but the west of the west. Nothing out there but water between us and Japan, Coco said to me yesterday. I see myself crawling miles and miles holding my breath to Japan. I stop. Rest a moment. Place my hand flat against two pieces of thick wood. Will you be used for a house or to hold cement in for an ugly apartment? Become part of a dock, a huge shipping container? Stay in British Columbia or go to the Orient? Be taken by train hauled through the Coast Range the Cascades the Kootenays and Rockies to Saskatchewan? Or be carried on a Norwegian-flagged Greek-crewed vessel of an American-

owned Danish company to Europe? Will you be the same one piece of that much larger tree even one month from now or further cut, further cut, maybe one end a toy boat and an edge of you burned, thrown into a furnace to give heat and return to the earth and sky? A pulp mill: some of the cells which once joined these may already be paper. I lean over and touch my lips to one of the boards, then run.

In my ears, I feel the salt/forest air and hear machines: the winch and engine throb of the *Nootka*, the whines and shrill turnings of metal from inside the mill, and other ships, freighters, deep-sea, just down the harbour, loading, huge winches, loading, taking lumber away, and lighter sounds from stilted-yellow-empty-in-the-middle machines which move piles of lumber in their middles and make a swishing sound through the puddles. Men at work. All men. They are taking and carrying and bringing and lifting and driving and maintaining or repairing too, I suppose, because no lumber is being cut on Saturdays. Cleaning chains. Young men get work cleaning chains. I used to wish when I was defrosting a fridge and doing weekend chores that I were a boy, that I'd grow up to be a trucker or maybe be, like Smitty next door, a highrigger, or maybe a parachute tester, or maybe a fisherman—not a sports fisherman, but a fisherman fisherman. But I don't kill. I couldn't fish unless I was willing to kill and to gut.

I stop. I can't decide which way to go—to stay here amongst the lumberstacks just smelling fir and cedar or to go left along the paved road. I hesitate a few seconds, look at the unpainted mill to my right and the high rows of lumber piles in front of me and the about-to-rain sky above, then turn left. The edge of the yard is enclosed by a high metal net fence to stop stealing, I guess, but it seems silly: *metal poles* bent at the top in, metal poles freighted here by the *Nootka* to hold in pieces of dead forest which once belonged to all or did until there was a licence on a piece of paper from Victoria, a piece of paper made perhaps from pulp from this very land, and that piece of paper says, what does it say, I don't know, I've never seen one, yet it exists and gives title to companies, a right to cut. Then the men of British Columbia work: cruisers and riggers and whistle punks and fallers, buckers and chokermen and cat-drivers and boom-men, barkers and sawyers and tailers and green-chainers. And that's why lumber costs so much, or so the companies say, it's the labour, but my dad knows of a guy in Chemainus who got a percentage discount because he worked at the mill and it turned out cheaper for him to buy wood—cut

in Chemainus and maybe even loaded by him — through the catalogue, Eaton's or Sears of Edmonton or Calgary, and to pay the freight costs to bring it back from the prairies to build his home five miles from the Chemainus mill. He saved one hundred and twenty dollars by doing so; that I don't understand; that makes no sense to me.

I pass a V-roofed-attached-to-a-shed structure. There are cards in wooden slits: time cards, check-in and check-out. I cross the road which must be the main street 'cause there is a general store and a post-office up and over there. There aren't any houses along it, just a rectangular building up the hill almost straight in front of me, and over and up a larger hill to my left there is a *pink* church with a cross and a few recently built houses. The store must be closed. Or, here it is, Saturday afternoon, and no one except for a red-haired man is standing on the wooden platform, and there are no cars nor trucks nor station wagons in front of it. Odd. No cars or trucks on the road either, not like Ladysmith or Chemainus Saturdays with teenage boys in second-hand cars gunning up and down the main drag circling, slowing down, teasing, try to pick up girls. The man waves at me and I wave vaguely back and decide not to go there but to stick closer to the waterfront and visit one of the deepsea freighters if they'll let me.

The first one, Japanese, doesn't. The second, Norwegian, does. The officer, about my height and around thirty, speaks English and after I tell him I work on the *Nootka*, that little freighter right over there, we walk up a spotless gangplank that seems longer than our ship is wide, and he gives me a tour of the wheelhouse (all sorts of instruments), the galley (stainless steel — complete stoves and a separate grill), and a huge freezer stocked with full sides of pork, lamb, beef. Wow. Enough to live for weeks. He opens an empty cabin on the upper deck. I can't believe it: so light, clean, wooden, with a little desk and bookshelf and a bathroom. Are the crew's quarters like this? Almost the same, he says, but below deck; this is, how do you say, spare crew? Extra? more than you need? No, he says, the radio operator flew home because her father died and another will arrive to.... Replace or relieve her, I say, to take over. Yes, he says, relieve, replace. You have women operators? I ask. Certainly, he says, is it not so in Canada? Not so, I say, at least not on the west coast where the officers handle the radio-calls. Women, he says, make excellent operators — why not in Canada? Why not? I say, I don't know why — maybe that will change soon — there just

aren't many positions. Maybe it is because before you become an officer of any sort you must belong to a union where many men are already out of work. Why is that so? he asks. I don't fully know, I say, but Canada used to have a large deepsea fleet which was disbanded, broken up, after the war or during the battles between unions, and now those boats sail under the flags of other countries and use cheaper labour. That is too bad, he says, the situation is comp-li-cated? Complicated is right, I say, complex too. But women do not have the same opportunities as men? he says. Yes, I say, you understand English very well. He smiles with pride.

He takes me to a dining room where there are polished wooden tables all attached solidly to the wooden deck. On each, there is a basket of fresh bread and a carafe of wine. This is beautiful, I say, so airy and spacious. This is not like your *Nootka*? he asks, it is not the same? Not the same at all, I say, but I've been in Vancouver restaurants which aren't as uncluttered or well-designed as this. He takes the compliment personally. You would enjoy a glass of wine? he asks. I'd enjoy it, I say, but no thanks, I must go soon. Coffee? No thank you.

Your vessel, he says as I look out a large porthole towards her, it used to be a fishpacker? A fishpacker? I do not understand. He laughs slightly at my not understanding an English word. We built several like that in Norway, he says, I think it was o-rig-i-nally — is that how you say it? — built in Norway as a boat which takes the fish from the grounds to the canneries, like a mother ship. I don't know, I say, I'll find out. Find out? I will ask those aboard and perhaps one of them will tell me. Find out is an idiom? he asks. I guess so, I say, uum, I find out from you that the *Nootka* may have previously been a Norwegian fishpacker. I found out from you that radio operators are sometimes women. Discover. Learn. Come to know. Good phrase, he says, I find out that our dining room gives pleasure to our guest. That is right, I say. I found out that she likes our ship. Yes, I say. What other languages do you speak? he asks. Just English. Only English? no French or Spanish? I took French in highschool and two years Russian at university, but I can't say more than hello and good bye and yes and no in either. Why not? We don't get to use them, I say, we didn't even speak in the classes — mostly grammar drills and not even the most frequently used phrases. English grammar is most difficult, he says, but I am amazed, you rarely speak in class, why? Our classes were too big and most of us did not learn much. Everyone in Norway, he says,

learns some English and Danish; they are needed for commerce and travel. I could travel for a thousand miles north, east, and south, I say, and the main language would still be English. You should come to Europe, he says, see countries smaller than your province. Different peoples and cultures, they are exciting, no?

Yes, I say, I suppose. I've always been in school or working to earn money to go back to school. No holidays? Once across Canada to Montreal and Toronto and New York with my parents, I say, and to California with my professor and his family. A custom? he says. No, no, not a custom, I say, but many people my age have not seen our country. Not so in Europe, he says, but you work on the *Nootka*, why not here? On a Norwegian vessel? I ask. You would like to? I might . . . is that possible? Not impossible, he says. How? You would go to see the Norwegian Consulate in Vancouver and arrange an interview. If a Master agrees and you have a passport and the right papers, you might join as a cabin girl or officers' messgirl. Really? I say. Really, he answers in my intonation and we both laugh.

It might take several months, he says; the Consulate has to know you are of good character and have references. The Master has to need to replace (I smile at the word) someone. Thank you, I say, I really must go now. You are in Tahsis this evening? he says, you could return and meet our officers? No, I say, we go on. On? Sail — move to another port called Zeballos. It is a shame, he says, we could all practice our English and maybe you could begin Norwegian? I would love to, I say, but not by myself. It is much better with native speakers, he says, I find out, or I found out? You have found out, I answer, and thank you for everything. It has been my pleasure, he says.

Nancy Mattson / TWO POEMS

SNAPSHOT

In the first snap
shot in haste with a borrowed
lens your grin is loony
six tulips dawdle
in a vase of blurred
crystal pinwheels the world
is a grainy cartoon
after the flash you chewed
a petal to make me laugh

MAPS

I used to recognize signs
    stars
    gestures

The Flying Dutchman
made a pact with the devil
was doomed to sail forever
round and round the oceans
but one night a year, after midnight
he is allowed to go onshore
we met him in a restaurant
overlooking Otter's Rock
he plied us with cognac

I have forgotten several habits
    perception
    belief
    intelligence

In Newport we played pool
in a sailors' bar
the roof leaked
a pail caught the drips
After you won the game
    8-ball in the corner pocket
a woman with a shaved head
challenged you for ten dollars
you lost and bought her a draft

I remember there were voices
    true meanings
I lived in several times at once
    coalescing

The maps I follow
do not show deserts or rain
treacherous mountain trails
places the car will stall
where the brakes will fail
the beds we will make love in
which I will cry in

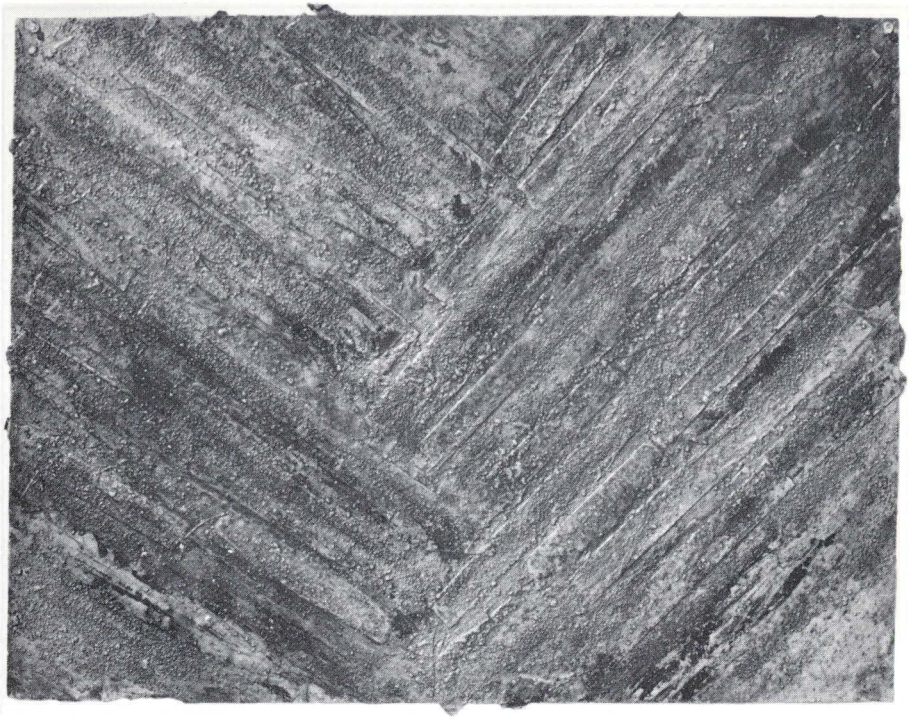
Roger Nash / FAMILY DISCUSSION

My father often thinks of us since he
was dead. Still dazed from the long-term
effects of his fatal heart attack,
he finds it hard to believe that our children
get born so undeservedly young, while he stays
slim and trimly defunct so late.

My father was completely fit until after
he died. He allowed nothing to be wrong with him.
It was improper of the room to disappear so suddenly.
He put it down to a bomb attack.
He wants us to know we are wrong about something,
and that he, as usual, couldn't help being right.

It's the dead miss the living, and should be pitied.
For the living have grown the most senseless and stiff.

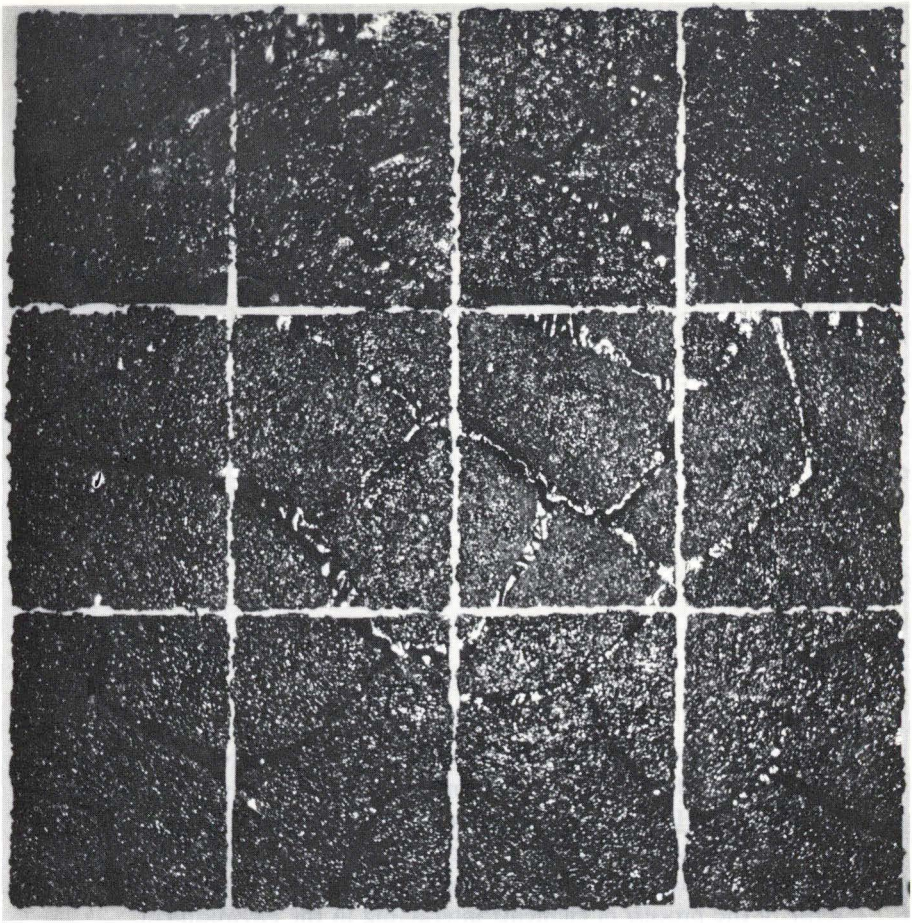
Joan Smith / LANDFORMS

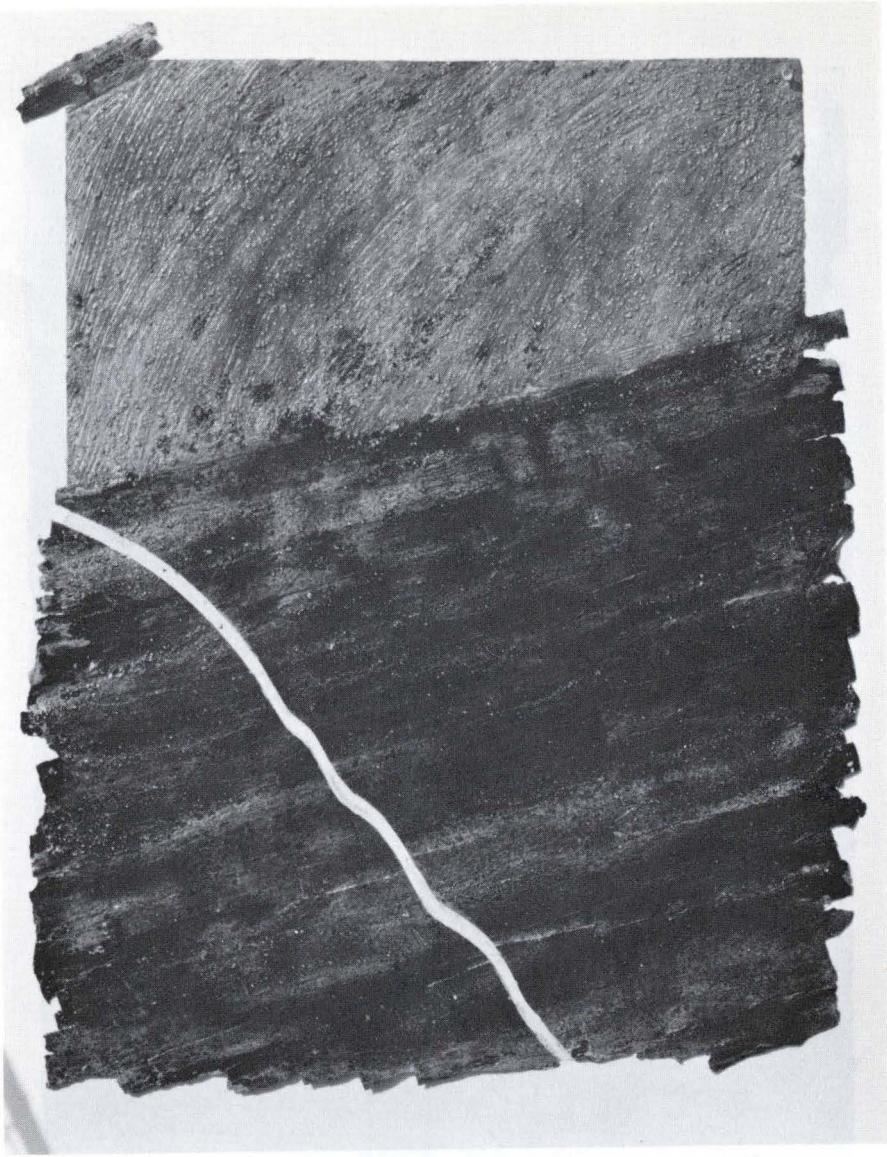


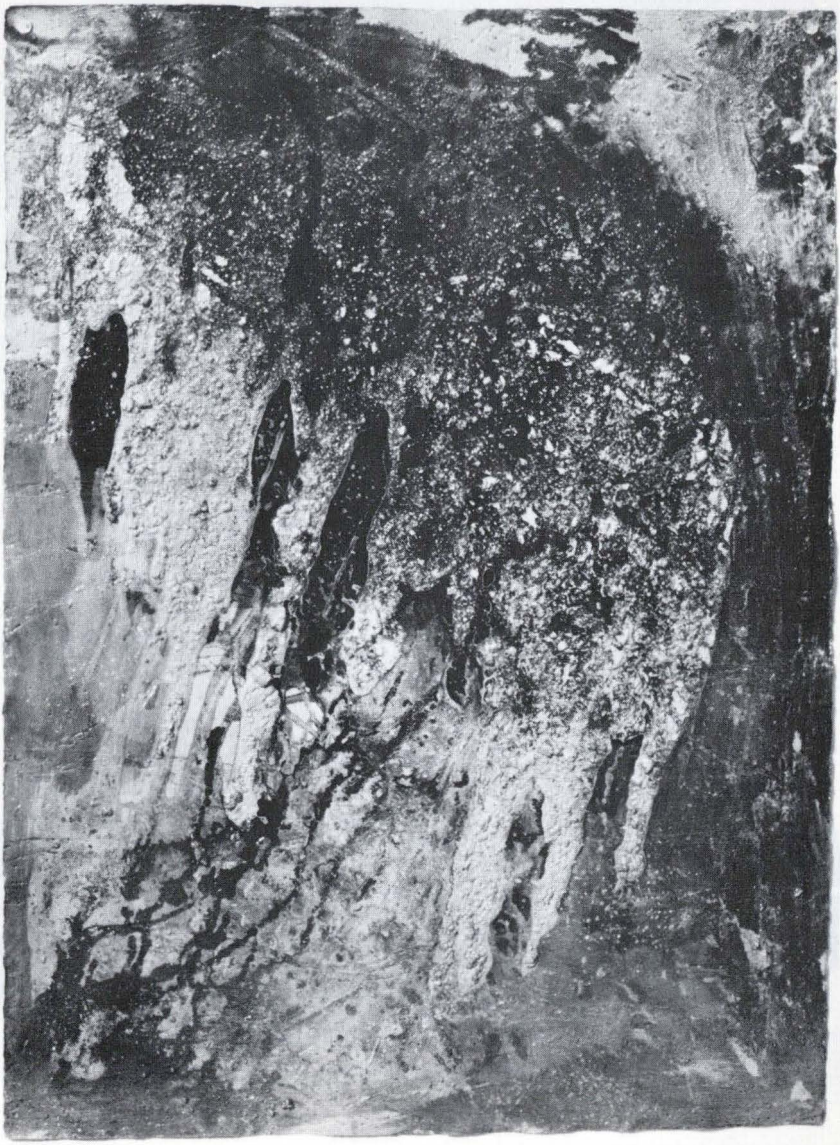
The body of work I have concentrated on the past three years has been inspired by aspects of time and change in the physical environment. I have spent considerable time in mountain landscapes, particularly in the Rockies, where I have experienced a growing fascination in the endless cycles of change. I try to convey a sense of the process of elements interacting in the environment: stratifying, eroding, crumbling, building anew. Although the forms themselves are of interest to me, it is these timeless processes which I find intriguing.

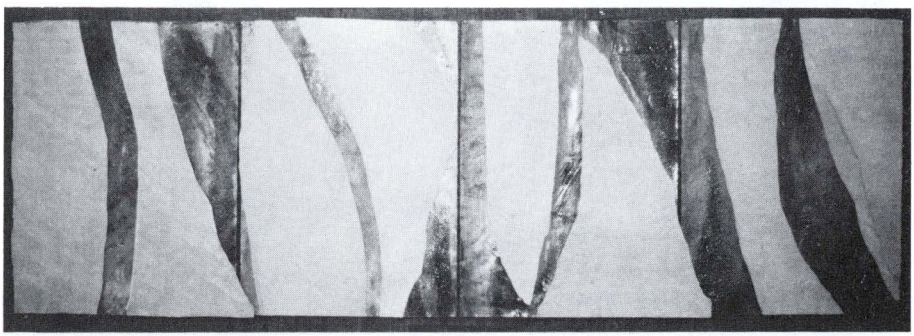
In works such as *Glacier*, *Strata*, *Silt*, and *Lava*, I mix, scrape, pour, mold and layer disparate, and sometimes recycled, elements to simulate specific processes and forms. I try to capture the vastness and universality of the subject matter by using minimal imagery, large textural areas and a scale larger than that of traditional prints. The raw and primitive work of artists such as Antoni Tapies and the size and enduring nature of some of the contemporary and ancient earth works has inspired me to cross the boundaries of printmaking and painting, and to use materials which are from, or remind me of, the natural environment.

—JOAN SMITH









IMAGES

PAGE

20 *Strata IV*, 1986, collaged paper, gesso, asphaltum, sand, varnish, 25″ x 34″.

22 *Delta*, 1986, collaged handmade paper, pulp, ink, graphite, gesso, varnish, 90″ x 88″.

23 *Delta* (detail).

24-26 *Strata/Blue Line*, 1986, collaged paper, gesso, asphaltum, sand, varnish, 32″ x 72″ (triptych); 32″ x 24″ (each panel).

27-30 *Silt I*, 1986, collaged print, Pollyfilla, gesso, acrylic paint, sand, asphaltum, varnish, 30″ x 120″ (polyptych); 30″ x 22″ (each panel).

31-32 *Blue Strata/Red Line*, 1986, collaged paper, gesso, asphaltum, sand, varnish, 32″ x 72″ (triptych); 32″ x 24″ (each panel). 2 panels shown.

33 *Glacier I*, 1986, collaged collograph print, gesso, acrylic paint, 30″ x 88″.

34-35 *Lava II*, 1987, collograph print and handmade paper collage, 30″ x 44″ (diptych).

All photographs by Joan Smith.

Margaret Witzsche / RECENT WORKS

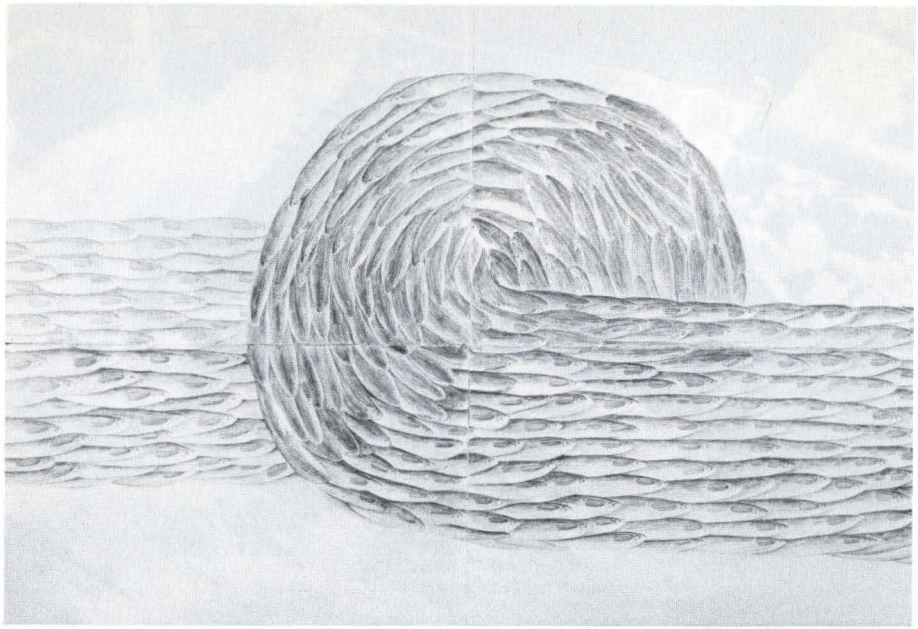
The white of the river
is possibly the last white
the pure, wet white.

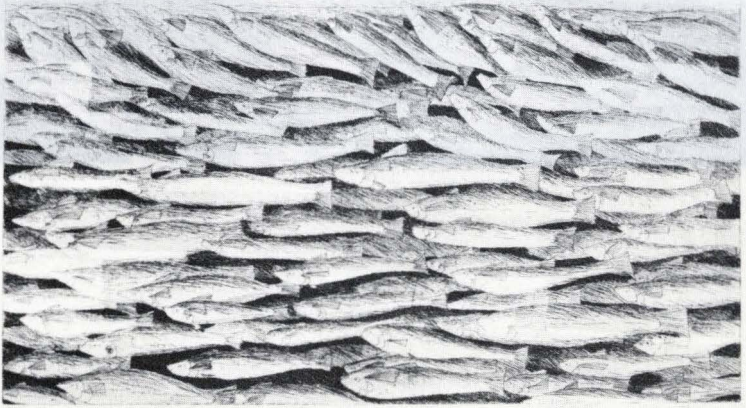
You lie on your front on a flat stone
and the spray cleaves
the back of your eyes
where the lustral flame reddens.
(any oil is vapour)
(the water is vapourized, a soup)

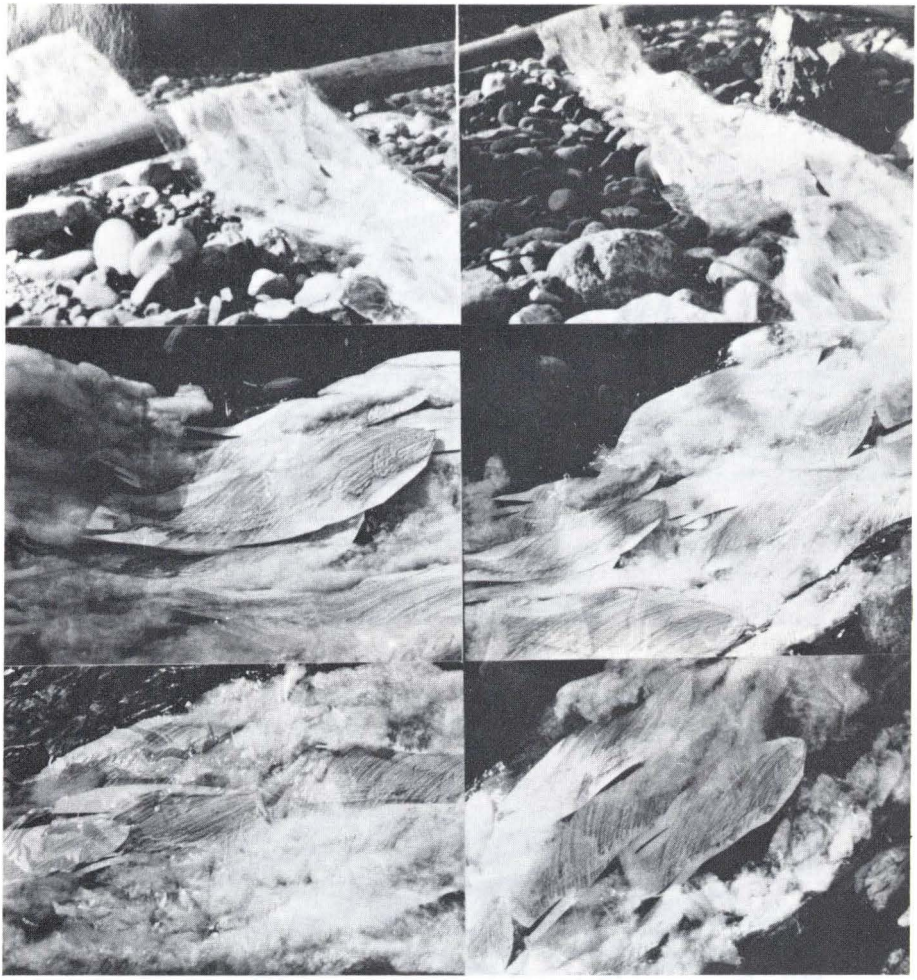
rattle the stones under the river-water with your hands
make your hands separate
from the glossy edges of your brain
put that part of you into the water
let it speak with fish
cling to the mucous sides of fish
to the thin line.
Let fish understand it.

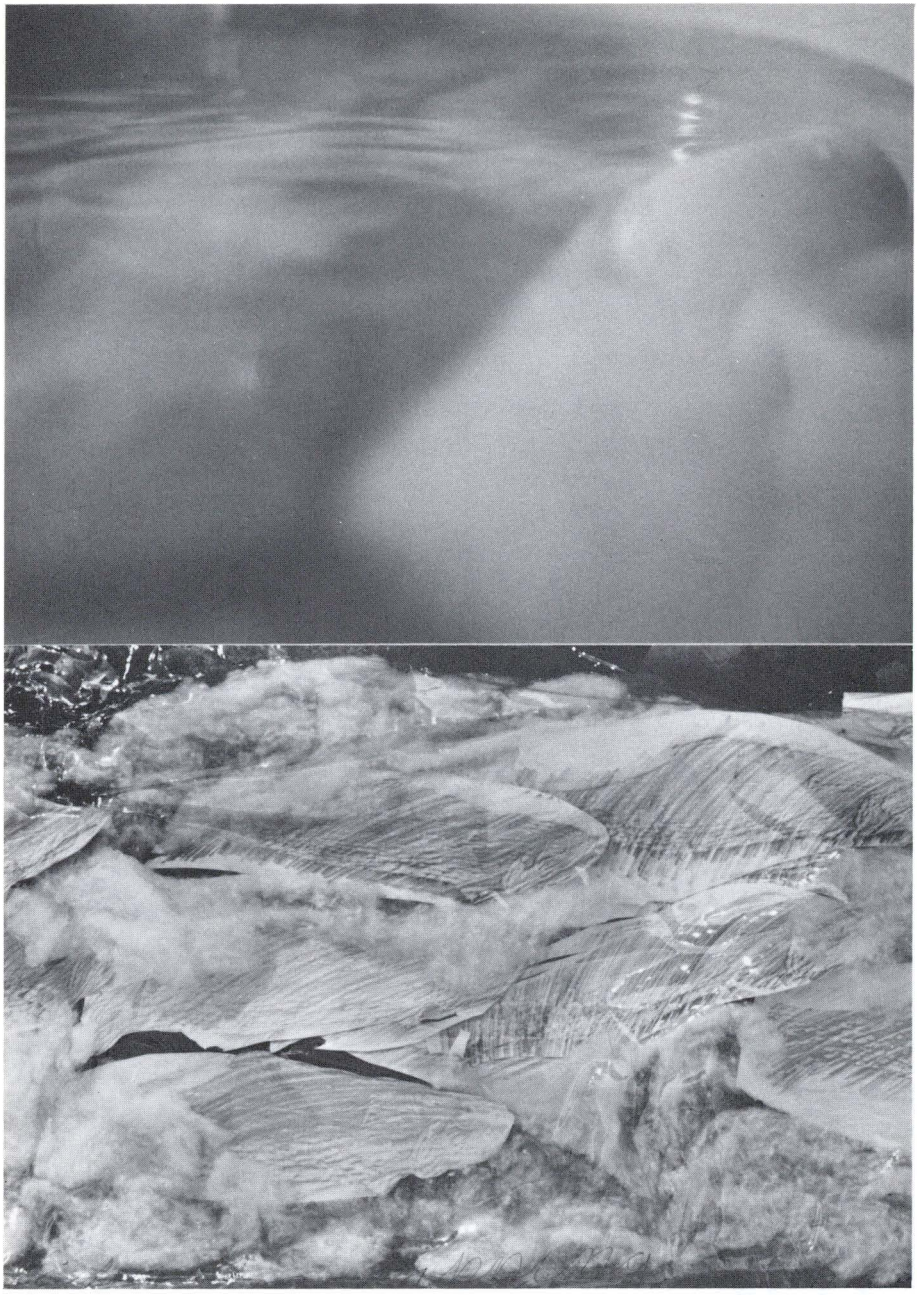
Someday, maybe the white of rivers will flume over-land
to where the water is thick and grey.
You will be there on your stone
your hands will be rainbows
your arms and your eyes, the agate-white of mourning.

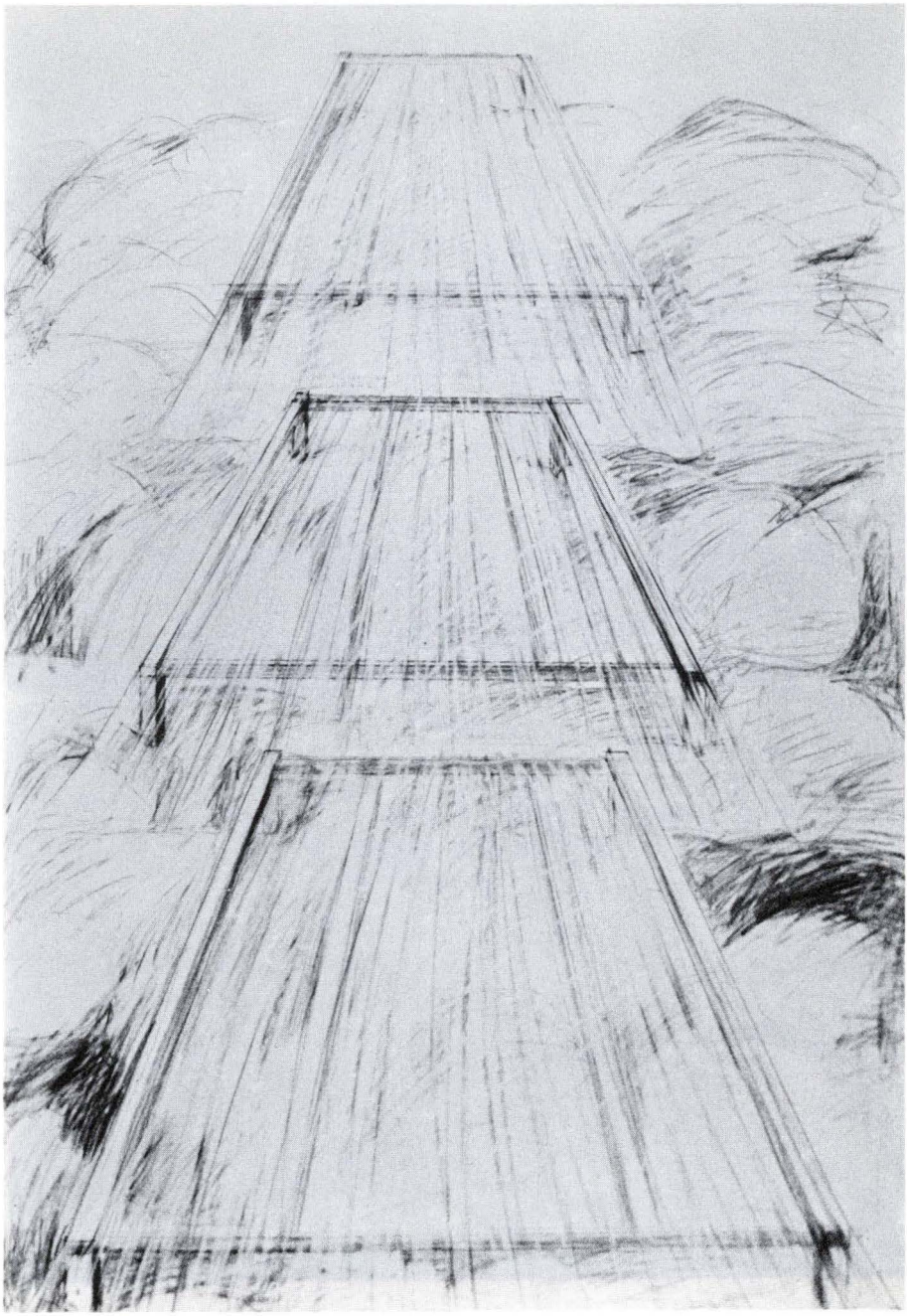
MARGARET WITZSCHE

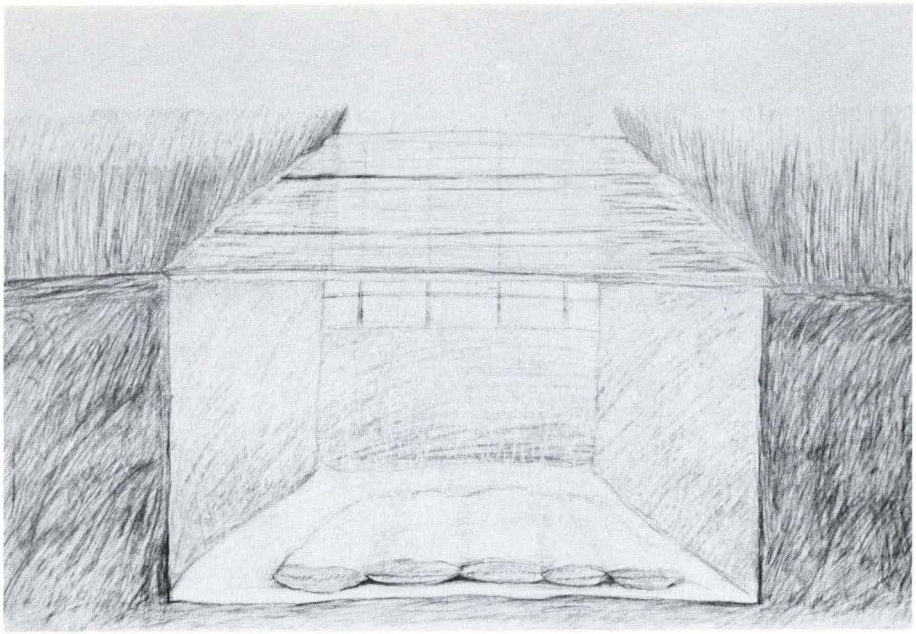


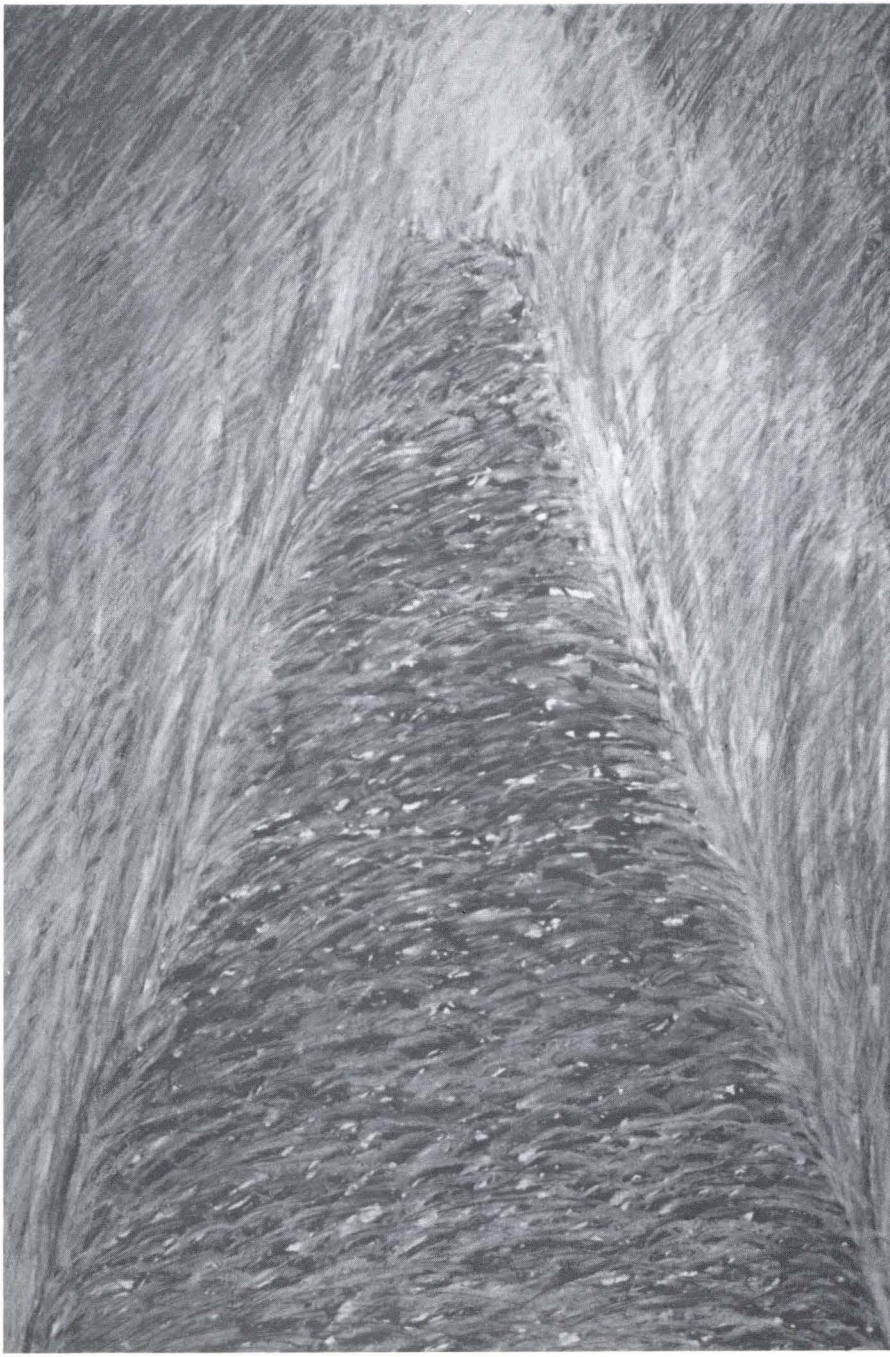












SURVIVAL DEVICE

The edges of this house
fraught with tangled vines and showy panes
tear at the last sweetness of her form.
(She loves it, the enclosing, frail structure.)

In her other house
she lived with flames
which cursed and billowed
put sparks like black stars on her flesh

The new home is many sided, close fitting.
It endears her,
holds her safe, lets her see outside.
She moves within her house
from wall to wall, sometimes
holds her hands against her face.
She watches new, pale flames issue into the atmosphere,
into the vines
the sweet, graceful world.

MARGARET WITZSCHE

IMAGES

PAGE

39 *The Cry of the Fishes Caught in Eddies*, 1983, pencil, crayon and graphite, 44″ x 60″.

39 *Fish Dreaming of Stars*, 1985, etching and relief, 22″ x 30″.

40 *River III*, 1987, Kodachrome prints of plastic river and graphite fish taken at Lynn Creek, 5″ x 4″.

41 *River IV*, 1987, Kodachrome prints, 5″ x 7″; cartoon for a larger work.

42 *Fish Ladder*, 1986, graphite on paper, 40″ x 26″.

43 *Possible Greenhouse Effect: Cutaway Section*, 1986, graphite on paper, 26″ x 40″.

43 *Fallout Shelter: Protective/Survival Devices*, 1986, graphite on paper, 26″ x 40′.

44 *Bed I*, 1987, oil stick on paper, 40″ x 26″.

45 *Tent: Igniting/Protecting*, 1986, Kodachrome prints, 5″ x ″; four of a series of seven.

46 *Protective/Survival Devices I*, 1986, Kodachrome prints, 7″ x 10″; cartoon for a larger work.

46 *Untitled*, 1986, Kodachrome prints, 40″ x 43″.

All photographs by Margaret Witzsche.

bpNichol / THREE POEMS
from *THE MARTYROLOGY*
Bo(o)ks 7(VII) & $(10)_8$

SAW

faces of grandparents
great grandparents

mist connections

opportunities

knocks
of life

disconnectedness of flesh

four generations &
we no longer know them

bodies we came out of
distant as other planets

translated

heavenly

pray to of
gone nova or
imploded

years mass
dwarf into this inaccurate noun 'family'
the definite names lost
only the verb remains
everything conveyed in accurate words

WAS

●

certain myths:
we will be happy
know happiness
arrive at some point of inner truth &
never know unhappiness again

then:
keeping an appointment made months ago
you discover lacunae
(which is what you fear/feared) or
some final (or partial) absence
the unplanned closure of what you had imagined as

part of the point of
sudden caesura
the heart attacked (the spine)
lines stop
life
a book
unexpected shifts that

which has its own sweet logic
heart beat nar rate

(cosis, cissus
whale tales of
rators & their ilk)'s
controlled

sudden as a word you are part of
MA
PA } E ternity
taking your turn
endless in that temporal sky
no dove but

(in the dream the three (two?) lives were like choices made sense part of some writing made while on the journey that did not go as intended

man story
in the labyrinth from the dream
manstor why? (03/09/86)

everything the confusion
of purchase, choice & packaging nothing fit neither the destination nor the timetable nor
(swirl of snow
beyond the lit window
not memory nor any feeling of absence
presence rather gathers you in
holds you all in a night's longing
away from you the recognition
whatever the loss endured in the full giving
i is lead to "i loves you"
the words mean are

(life you take it on
like a mask
like am ask you to is))

) as an ending and

(intheheatoftheaugustsunthehorizonwa^{v}er$_{s}$

couplesin clumpson thehot beachsand

waveswaveraswesavoursun

arise dill
out of the garden a rose and those dafodils and cosmos

) absolute and present

a. Be!
b. See?!
c. ?

d e f g
h i j k l m n o p
q r ST u v
w x y z

rev { elations / olutions

ch ch ch ch
angels
in the wings

widen at every stage

terrible and wonderful
the beating rhythms of the strange seizures
play o play
across the skin
i is in
love
    the body of
heart beating
the tongue
        sings
its terror its
belief
grief & passion &
all you have ever known
will never know
is faith is
the face & being of the beloved
here, in this world words are
of
beat in rhythm with
the angel's wings
thinking even at the end of speaking

Nov 85 thru May 86

●

the waste of my words & works. the worth.
a balance. something to be said for history.
everything dissolves in time
or vanishes, goes unseen, unheard, unsaid,
inappropriate to another space or head
confronting its own struggle with its body
's decay.

buildings turning to dust around us.
Via Principe Amedeo in the morning sunlight.
sky blue. we crossed Via Roma, Palazza Reale in the distance.
four centuries in a glance. that dance. that man's
folly or triumph. her dis. her grace. sunlight in the piazza.
our bodies, our sounds, words, this page, even as you read,
even as your vision, your life — uneven, even — fade, fades.

Torino
May 7th 1987

Bruce Whiteman / from *THE INVISIBLE WORLD IS IN DECLINE* Book IV, Part 5

The heart cries out for gods and is forced to make do with history. The world shines with an epistemological lustre as though the brain's fire were reflected in a tarnished mirror. The paleolithic lust that inspires the neuro-anatomist compensates hardly at all the even more ancient needs of the blood. Begin with the body, which is old enough. Its knowledge is recoverable. Its erect carriage is the primal image of displacement. It is at odds with the horizon. It trifles dangerously with the clasp of earth. It wants to be ejected from gravity's garden. The child's hardscrabble for verticality initiates its grief. The perpendicular hoist of the brain picks up the body like an insect. It wriggles in confusion and fear, and takes refuge in the abstract geometry of rationality. Like a clumsy bird the head flies slowly over the ground in its misapprehension that the horizon will not recede indefinitely. It wants what is invisible and out of reach. It never gives up.

A time comes when the world appears grey under the shadow cast by the strange destiny of the heart. It looks the embodiment of plagiarism elevated to a fine art. The martial heart takes pleasure in massing its troops whose obedience is honed and perfect. If the sun doesn't rise at the heart's command it is only that that particular miracle has not yet been contaminated. There are suns enough at its beck and call, this master of impeccable tactics, generalissimo of a grey world. What the body forgets isn't worth the pains of intelligence. The heart huddles inside it and issues its directives, turning the visible world inside out for arcane reasons. It wreaks havoc out of a weird and impermanent motivation. Convinced of its privileged knowledge it sets out to make over the untidy world in its own image. It wants to ransom everything the eyes see — a tangled garden with monuments to the dead in varying states of ruin — in exchange for solipsistic certainty. There is no one to say no, for the heart knows it speaks on behalf of the mute isolate world, or the world will be content not to speak at all.

The heart's Aristotelian certainties count for something. Everything begins with such unscientific assuredness. Love founders when the heart can no longer measure itself. Like a lizard on a wall, drowsy with sun and frozen by the smell of a predator, it is unsure which way to turn. The shadow grows larger and assumes an instinctually recognizable shape. Under the walls of flesh and muscle the heart pumps hard and makes crazy. It was sure of the sun and the sun has disappeared. The photosynthetic world of leaf and flower is gone like a dream. It dreams everything but blood and its dark coming and going, its alchemical change of colour. Love and certainty count on the heart's unselfishness. The visible world is out there like a star.

At the margin of skin is the flesh of the world, the flesh of the beloved. Beyond all thought and the autonomic ebb and flow of the body's fluid architecture a flower blossoms on the heart's account. Spring arrives like a fish forcing its way home upstream, and the grey oppressive sky opens up its 100 million mile tunnel for the heliotropic flowers. The upright thrust of the body begins to make sense. The head wobbles on its thin stalk. Its ambient lust for light carries it over the ground, lambent and dedicated like a seeker after My Lady of the Stars. That is desire, that is voluntary movement, that is the instant map the heart makes of the garden it carries the body through.

The head grows large like a pumpkin left forgotten in the garden, overgrown and rotting. Birds and insects feed on its orange skin, the brown mush inside. In time no one can rescue it from flesh's fate, its headlong fling at compost, its decline. The gentle indifferent world countermands self-consciousness as ineluctably as a change of weather, as imperceptibly as the irridescent glow on a nameless insect's wing. Named things stay fixed in the head and preserve it like frost, like wax, but it cannot name itself with any certainty or illuminate the black point from which the gorgeous visible world starts out and to which mistakenly it seems to return — trickster, recidivist. The head decays amidst late flowers and the instinctual stirring in a bird's blood that drives it south.

History is a house built to keep the body warm. It walks from room to room, fragrant with heat, slack and somnolent and surrounded by cement. The sky outside is blue or black, the wind rises and falls, the sun lights up half the world at a time. In a low room the austere power of artificial light keeps periwinkle and primula in bloom past their season. All the cabala of intimacy and the consecrated silence of the upper rooms cannot eradicate the body's half-articulate wish to unbolt the door and rush outside. Its physiological destiny is to be cold and homeless.

No, time is light. The pure Devonian sun that bathed the shallow sea where ammonites died and purified into stone; the white Greek sun that made Longus' skin tingle as he sat naked in an open field imagining the unsallow hearts of Daphnis and Chloe; the pale filtered afternoon light that fell slantwise on William Harvey's dark oak table where in 1627 he sat day after day writing in chancellery hand the manuscript of *De motu cordis et sanguinis*; the imperceptibly muter sun that shines on the lavendar and rosemary where bees steal sweet yellow powder and prepare for their instinctive dance. The heart has to trust to the history of light when its own instinctive involute manoeuvrings fail. The narrative of the blood is otherwise a conspicuous and hopeless story, the red and blue romance an ancient one, its denouement predictable. Time is light as the heart *in extremis* discovers, pumping open and closed like a butterfly's wings, at rest on a hot white stone.

Closure is the heart's peril. The bare authentic skin is seemingly as close as you get. It is easy for the body to close down on itself when the world seems a simple object in limitless space. It wears clothes with deep pockets in which to carry its images, and the invisible heart can secrete its tortured muscular shape behind a thin cloth dark enough to absorb the light. The skin at which all the information of the sensible world slows up is the heart's agent of terror, the beautiful deterrant, the white reflecting glass of hesitation. The choice for clarity is its own. Then the flood of light in the inner body is love, is the touch of the other inside.

Ellie Scott /
ONE NIGHT IN SMELTERVILLE

LOU

It was Friday night when they came into Smelterville. I watched them from a stool at the end of the bar. That great big man; a tall, leggy blonde with nice bazooms; and a delicate, dark haired lady wearing a black hat. No one knew them. They sat in a booth and the blonde told a story. They were too young for me. I like them older, more experienced, not so likely to collapse and cry afterward. I turned back to my beer.

HELEN

I was surprised when Roger said he'd like to pick up his cousin. I'd been looking forward to going out with him, and I thought we'd be alone. We drove to a small white house. She was standing in the doorway holding a baby and wearing a black hat that shaded her face. An older woman came and took the child, held the screen open and squinted at us.

ROGER

Lisha was trying to turn the kid's face toward me. It was hard to look at them. Helen said, "What are you looking at?" and I wanted to say my whole life.

Lisha said something into the dark of the house and her mother appeared at the door. After our mothers found out Lisha was pregnant, they cried for a month. I couldn't stand to see my own mother hunched over and miserable because of something I'd done, so I quit dropping by. Lisha is my first cousin. The family was furious when they found out we'd made a baby together. I wound up promising I would stop seeing Lisha. There's too much pressure around here. Weird pressure.

I thought we could do all right someplace where nobody knew us. "We could go to New Orleans," Lisha said, all excited. She always talked about going there to live. Mardi Gras. Wrought iron railings on big, white houses. Lisha liked to wear sequins and black lipstick. She'd fit right in with the spirit of Mardi Gras. I don't care where I live, just so it doesn't take too much energy.

We did stop seeing each other for a while. I nailed baseboards in condominiums for twelve hours a day trying to keep from thinking about it. I smoked pot, took speed and ate Tums to get through each day. But at night my thoughts echoed like the sound of a chair scraping across the floor in an empty room.

Nobody told me when the kid was born. It seemed like someone would have mentioned it. I was eating my lunch on a patch of grass out at the project when I read it in a newspaper. It was like catching a two-by-four between the eyes. I went to the hospital because I figured I might never see the kid otherwise.

She looked strange through the green glass of the nursery. She didn't cry or move. I asked the nurse if the baby was okay. "You fathers are all alike," she said. But she leaned over the baby for a moment as if she were listening for the baby's breathing.

Lisha was sleeping when I got to her room. She had dark circles under her eyes. I looked at her red polished fingernails, her plastic hospital bracelet. She didn't know I was there.

At Duke's bar that night I pretended nothing happened. But I got real drunk and spent a bundle on cocaine. I can't seem to save money anyhow.

A couple months later, we started seeing each other on the sly. Last week her mother caught us coming out of a bar, so I made up a story about how I was in love with a gal named Helen. She ran the office for the construction business where I work. She seemed sweet and even-tempered. What the hell? As long as I had her along, I figured I could pick up Lisha anytime I wanted.

LISHA

Roger keeps saying that he'll save his money but he'll never change that much. I can't stand this life. I tend to sober up when I would least like to. I was real stoned when they came for me. I'd made a special trip to the store for black stockings. It was imperative that I dress in black that night. I'd been in mourning for my mind for about a week.

I'd intended to buy a wreath for Roger, like the kind you take to

funerals to lay on the coffin. I was going to hang it off the hood ornament of his car. A wreath of carnations, roses and evergreens. But they were too expensive. So I bought a black rose instead and pinned it on my collar. It was going to be hard to tell him my plans. He would cry, argue, and then he'd try suicide. We'd been there before. That's how we ended up with a baby.

I handed her to Mama and walked down to the car. The blonde opened the door for me on her side. I knew Roger brought her so Mama would feel better. Roger would do almost anything to avoid upsetting people.

"You must be Helen," I said, as I got in the car. The way she nodded, she seemed shy or maybe ashamed of something. She was well-built but plain. Should have learned how to put on mascara. "I'm Lisha," I said, "and I'm proud to meet you." She wouldn't look me in the eye. I wondered what Roger had told her.

HELEN

Roger's shiny hair hangs over his shoulders like a cape, and his beard comes down as long in front. Lisha looked like Roger, only smaller and without all that hair. Roger leaned over the steering wheel so he could see around me. Something, the way he looked at her.

Then he started driving fast, in and out of traffic, squealing around corners. "Hey, Roger," she said, "we want to live, don't we?" He looked at her for a long time, considering he was driving. He slowed down. She stared out the windshield and blinked when buildings came up. "Jesus," she said, "you're scaring me."

"I'm not speeding now," he said. He parked the car in front of a tavern somewhere out in the sticks. It was called the Lighthouse, even though the nearest coast was three hundred miles away. There was a huge pile of coal slag beside the parking lot and the air was filled with grit. From the car we could see a handwritten sign on the door that said, "No Freaks, Creeps or Dingbats."

"Roger, do you think you might qualify?" I was referring to his hair and meant it as a joke. But no one laughed.

ROGER

Lisha opened the glove compartment and took the baggie out. "Where'd you get the money for this?" She was real irritated.

"I work," I said.

"You're supposed to be saving the money," she said.

"Why don't you get a job and help out?" I asked.

"Who'd take care of the baby?"

That question must be hundreds of years old and she looked so strained, wasted, I was sorry I brought it up. I wanted to hug her, but there was Helen, between us. I got the glass and razor out from under the seat and took the baggie from her.

Helen held the glass level. I stretched the coke with baking soda and Lisha and I took a snort. Helen watched. Then she surprised me and said she'd try it. Afterwards, I dusted what was left on the glass carefully back into the baggie and put everything away.

I was feeling fine. That damn black hat blocked my view of Lisha's face, but I could see she was stoned. "Where'd you get the money for the stuff you've been into?" I asked her.

LISHA

The juke box had rainbow lights at the side, "Delta Dawn, what's that flower you have on?" I danced with Roger, draped myself over him, loving the feel of his body, his hair drifting in waves around my face. If I could only spend my life buried in that hair. I ran my hands over his shoulders, trying to memorize the way his muscles lay beneath his skin, trying to fill my fingertips.

LOU

The two women seemed to be competing for the big man's attentions. Clearly, he was fascinated by the small one, indifferent to the big blonde. I decided it wouldn't hurt to buy the table a round. I went over and started the introductions. "You're not from this area," I said, after everyone told me their names.

"Actually, I was born in Korea," Roger said.

The one called Lisha laughed. I pulled a chair up beside Roger and sat down. He was a real handsome man. Beautiful hair.

"You two are cousins?" Helen asked, looking at Roger and Lisha.

Lisha's eyes seemed out of focus. She lit a cigarette. Roger drank the rest of his beer. They didn't answer the question.

"They don't dance like cousins," I said.

"How are you related?" Helen asked.

"Our mothers are sisters," Roger said.

I put my hand down on his knee, pretending it was an accident.

He was so attractive and I don't mind boys now and then, though I do like them smaller. Roger slapped my hand away so hard he knocked my chair over.

HELEN

The little man got up, put the chair right and sat down again. No one said anything for a long time. Little streams of sweat ran out of Roger's hair and down the side of his face.

"I'll buy another round," Lou said. He took a roll of bills out of his pocket, shakily peeled off two and then he started to move away.

Roger put his hand down on Lou's. "Sit down and keep your hands to yourself," he said. "I never meant to hurt you."

I couldn't stand the tension so I looked away. One wall leaned in and was braced with two-by-fours. Crooked booths surrounded a dance floor covered with ragged linoleum. Large holes in the floor had been randomly patched with pieces of wood. "What a dump," I said.

"I spend a lot of time here," Lou said.

"I feel sorry for you," I said.

Lou waved his hand at Roger and Lisha. "If your mothers are sisters, you're not supposed to be fucking each other."

Lisha laughed. "They're gonna put us in jail."

"That's incest," I said.

"Yeah," Lisha said, and giggled. "Mama tells me that all the time."

"What's going on here?" I asked Roger. The cocaine, the yellow light fading behind nicotine stained windows made me feel as if I was watching a movie. Roger tried to pull Lisha up by her wrists, as if he wanted her to dance. Lou was smiling at me and I didn't want to be left alone with him so I said, "No, Roger. C'mon, you haven't danced with me once. I'm your date. Remember?" He was being an ass.

"I have to go to the bathroom," Lisha said.

Roger and I danced. The floor seemed to billow and slant, the walls tilted in and out. When I loosened the collar on my blouse, I noticed that Roger was looking at me. Something in his eyes dared me. I unbuttoned my blouse, pulled it off and pitched it toward the bar. Some guy picked it up. There was whistling. A crowd of men appeared on the edge of the dance floor. They stamped their feet, clapped and cheered. I wiggled out of my jeans.

LISHA

In the ladies room an old lady in a blue crocheted dress stood behind the door. When I came out of the toilet cubicle, she was still there. "I'm sorry," I said. "I thought you already used the toilet."

"I have," she said. "I was waiting for you."

That stopped me. Why would she wait for me? Her dress made concentric circles on her big, cinched-up breasts.

"You have beautiful hair," she said. She put her hand on my hair and stroked it. Then she let her hand rest on my breast.

I pushed it away. "Let's go out to the bar and talk." I said. She still didn't move. "I'll buy you a drink," I said. She didn't move. "I don't want you touching me."

When she edged toward me, I grabbed her arm and tried to pull her away from the door. She pulled back and I lost patience. I hit her hard in the eye and pushed her head against the towel dispenser. She leaned over the sink in pain. I threw the door open and stepped out.

ROGER

I knew somehow that she was going to do it. She threw her clothes all over, big breasts bouncing. The guys moved closer and closer. The circle kept getting smaller and smaller. I said, "Helen, let's go and have a little beer. Aren't you thirsty?"

She was sweating like a horse, kicking her legs high. The crowd of guys watching were squirreling. One of them stepped forward and put his hands on her breasts. Where the hell did Lisha go? I took the guy's hands off Helen. "What did you have in mind?" I yelled at her. I nodded toward the men coming closer. She bolted for the door. I followed.

Helen slid behind the wheel and I tossed her the keys. I was going back to find Lisha. But the men coming out of the bar weren't friendly. If Helen got away, they'd beat the shit out of me. Helen pulled out. As the car went by, I opened a back door and dragged myself inside.

LOU

I sat at the table alone, thinking they were gone when Lisha appeared. She didn't have her hat anymore. She came over and sat down. I couldn't believe my luck. She must have seen Roger leave

with Helen. I folded the blonde's bra and put it down in the middle of the table. "Did you see that?" I asked.

She unpinned the squashed black rose bud in her lapel. "Do you have a car? I need a ride home."

"Maybe they'll come back."

She laid the rosebud on the table. "I'd rather not be here."

We got in the car and drove a few miles. She told me what road to get on and then she stopped talking. The headlights sliced through darkness. "Why don't you come over here and sit by me?" She glared. I lit a cigarette. I couldn't see what she was so uptight about. "I should get a little attention for driving you home."

"Stop the car," she said, "let me out."

"If you'll sleep with your cousin," I said, "seems like you're not too picky." I pulled over because she had the door open.

"Bastard," she said, as she slammed it.

I watched her walk along the road until all I could see was the big white collar on her dress. Then I pulled out and passed her, tried to spray gravel on her. It was dark, isolated. I could do what I wanted. I could hit her a couple of times, just hard enough so she wouldn't run off screaming.

I put the car in reverse and careened back up the road. She must've seen me coming because she ran like a deer. By the time I got to where she left her shoes lying on the road, I couldn't even see her white collar bobbing around in the darkness.

HELEN

I drove that rattley old car so fast, it fish-tailed and spewed gravel. I don't know why I took my clothes off. My bra flew across the room like a bird. The air flowing over me, felt so cool. But you can't do things like that.

The road was bumpy and curvy. Roger leaned over the seat to tell me he thought we should slow down. "You want to go to jail for indecent exposure?" he asked. He was real drunk. After a while, he stopped talking. I started feeling cold.

"Hey, Rog," I said. "Can I have your shirt?" He didn't answer. "Where do you live?" I pulled over and got in the back seat with him. He seemed to be out but he would not let me take his shirt. When I tried to unbutton it, he clutched at it. I got his wallet out of his back pocket, then I found a gritty blanket in the trunk and draped it over my shoulders.

All I could do was drive to the address on his driver's license and pray that it was current. I turned the heat as high as it would go. When I got to the house I thought was his, I pulled into the driveway and double-checked the address.

It was a struggle, getting Roger out of the back seat. He leaned on me. I staggered and clutched at the blanket with one hand. I wanted to get him up the steps. I planned to ring the doorbell and drive away before anyone saw me. A bunch of dogs barked. Then the door opened and a tall, white haired woman said, "Who are you?"

"My name is Helen," I said. "This," I lifted an arm and shook the blanket, "has nothing to do with him." I waited for her to say something. "Tell Roger I have his car," I said. I adjusted the blanket. I was trying to seem dignified but the fringe on the blanket tickled the backs of my calves.

LISHA

I slid through the dirt in that field. I ran until I couldn't anymore, stumbling over rocks and thistles in my black stockings. Then I sat behind a tree and tried to listen. I heard a car. That bastard. I saw headlights moving down the road and realized I'd run a long ways. He couldn't even walk this far, much less run fast enough to catch me.

I walked all night, looking at the moon and watching the wind blow through the leaves in the dark. You can hear it and you see changes of texture more than you see motion. I didn't want to get on a road because Lou probably knew where I'd come out.

When it started to get light, I walked back to town to call Mama. She said she'd feed the baby and come to get me. She sounded discouraged and unhappy.

LOU

I drove to the road Lisha would've come out on, parked the car in some brush and waited. I can't keep waiting. I'm fifty-three years old. I leaned against the fender and listened for her. The mating calls of a million bull frogs filled my head.

LISHA

When I got in the car, Mama said, "What happened to you?

Where've you been all night? How did you get so dirty? Where are your shoes? Are you all right?"

"Roger and his date left me." I looked at the baby, strapped in her seat.

"Maybe he's trying to tell you something," Mama said, "You can't keep on."

The baby smiled at me. I stroked her cheek. "You don't know if this baby's okay," Mama said. "She may have bad genes. You don't know."

"Dammit, would you quit saying that? I want to scream when you say that."

"You need to face reality," she said.

"That's another thing you can quit saying. I can't stand it."

"Look at you," she said. "Another baby. Your tears are making mud on your face." She dropped us off and went to work.

I took a shower and then sat on the bed and held the baby. She tried to pick up the flowers on my bathrobe. "We don't have a chance," I told her.

HELEN

Roger came for the car a few days later, then I never saw him again. The bartender in Smelterville mailed my purse. He said I could have a job out there dancing anytime. There were several guys who asked about me. I thought someone should drop a bomb out there and level it, leaving no survivors, not even a pillar of salt. I'll never sniff coke again. I've been frightened ever since that night. I wish I could forget it ever happened.

LISHA

It wasn't just that Roger left me and took off with Helen. It wasn't just that Lou knew ways to hurt me. It wasn't just my mother or that lady in the blue dress in the bathroom. It was the whole night in an empty field listening to the wind and watching the trees, thinking about Roger and me and the baby and her salvation.

I packed everything I could into a brown suitcase and went to the bank. The money I withdrew had originally been put there for my college education. I went to the bus depot and studied the maps on the walls. I bought a ticket to Milk River, Montana, because I liked the sound of it and no one would guess I'd gone there.

ROGER

I figured she went to New Orleans so I went there and spent six months looking for her. Every day I went into grocery stores and beauty shops and showed her picture to people. When every cent was gone. I hitchhiked home. Now I think she's in San Francisco so I'm trying to save my money.

LISHA

I got a job as a waitress in the only restaurant in town and rented a room from a widow who takes care of the baby. The baby is very beautiful and very tall for her age. Sometimes, when I look in her eyes I see the same changes of texture the wind makes when it blows through the leaves in the dark. There's nothing wrong with her genes.

The widow asked me once why I never got married and I said I didn't need it. I sleep with the bartender now and then. When I think about Roger, I make myself remember Smelterville. It's a matter of learning to recognize what is threatening in the world.

Sometimes at night I sit in the restaurant after it's closed. The Pepsi machine glows red. Outside, snow falls softly through the circles of light from the street lamps. Beyond that, the whole world is dark.

I dream of a handsome trucker coming through here one night. He is very tall, has long, beautiful hair. But he is not Roger. He has to be a stranger, someone I have never met before. He will pull his truck up in front of the darkened restaurant, leave the motor running and knock on the door.

Gail Harris / TWO POEMS

BUT MY SISTER, MY SISTER

how she became a bald-headed nun
and floated down the Mississippi
in every dream I had.
My sister in a horse and buggy
driving the whole team over a cliff
and her collarbone
that mended miraculously in a week.

We sat at the foot of the steps
beside the little elm
hating that photographer with the chin
that disappeared into his neck.
You should join a circus, you freak
my sister muttered under her breath
but we smiled for mummy and daddy
though inside our mouths our tongues
had shrivelled like salted slugs
at the thought of his lecher's eye
magnified by the lens
upon us in our schoolgirl's dress.

SHE RODE THE RIVERBOAT, I RANG THE BELL

Everywhere little steps led
To where we could not see.
It was a heartening journey, not like
The Magi's at all. Faces at every corner
Turned out to greet us, and Life's
Gardener, all trimmed and clipped to perfection,
Waved his green wand and re-seeded us.
She swung her legs up over the side, and dangled
Her long toes in the water that fled down river
To where it met the Mississippi.
I couldn't tell if she was weeping or laughing
When the ticket-boy told her
Our trip was nearly over. She clutched
My hand so tightly, though, I reminded myself
To look the next day for bruises.
They were there, too, but didn't matter,
For all that day was like a pale blue and yellow welt,
With the riverboat gone from our lives, with
Her hands spreading the jam
Calm, as if none of it had happened.

Judith Copithorne / SEVEN POEMS

INTERFACE

What do you want to delete?

This.

Too late you just pressed
the forever key.
This will last forever but
you can press
the ignore key and then expose the user friendly happiness function
and you won't remember or ever mind that the great default typing
mode in the universal modem has placed a mouse in all our mailboxes.

UNTITLED

To get
down

You are
too strong
I can't
wait for you

This has
gone on
too long
and you
don't
know

UNTITLED

I don't have time
for language
only a need
of it
Words enter
through a
split in the head

What happens
when I read
those poems
is not
explainable

His words
galvanize
A little truth
does that
too

UNTITLED

August 4, 1987,
Yew Street, Vancouver

Summer turns into
the future,
events repeat
themselves,
friends fit more firmly
into the world,
lovers are clear
again,
birds sing
slight songs
in a spiral of time
carried on the
turning of light in
the alder trees.

MOVING

1.
I'm still tied up
in old shoes and thread
and books, piles of books
and words from the books,
from the past and the
ideas inside these
and people:
people it took
twenty years to meet,
or I never met,
words said and
unsaid.

2.
I put dusty books in boxes
old pains pass electric
currents through my
bones. This literate
life we lead; a fantasy
illuminating the other
life and obscuring it
fatally.

BOOKCASES

In the dust
of these cases,
jammed between
books, piled
like old leaves
around particular
writers, I find
poems.

SETTLE DOWN

Matter of fact, the act, the tact, mundane,
explain, I woke up late and wrote:
my fate, after the act, not early but
necessary, bounty of sleep, tryptophan,
lots of seeds and cottage cheese, the
easiest thing, a poem waiting,
magic words, fancy dreams,
reams, seems, relax, facts,
a basic thing, common sense,
on the shelf, by your self

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

GLADYS HINDMARCH teaches at Capilano College. The two stories included here will be published this year as part of *The Watery Part of The World* by Douglas & McIntyre.

NANCY MATTSON has published a number of poems on Finnish themes in several journals and magazines since 1985. Her most recent work is entitled "The Maria Poems." She lives in Edmonton.

ROGER NASH's second collection of poems, *Psalms From the Suburbs*, was published by Quarry Press in 1986. He won first prize in *Prism*'s 1985 poetry contest. His poems, short stories, and translations have been published in a variety of literary magazines in Canada, the US, and the UK.

JOAN SMITH received her BFA from UBC in 1984, and is currently working in the Art Institute programme at Capilano College. She had her first solo exhibition at the Crown Gallery in February 1988, and is preparing for other exhibitions in 1988 at the Burnaby Art Gallery and at the Richmond Art Gallery.

MARGARET WITZSCHE graduated from ECCAD in 1981, and is presently working in the Art Institute programme at Capilano College. She has been in various group shows, and is preparing for her first one person show at the Burnaby Art Gallery in the fall of 1988.

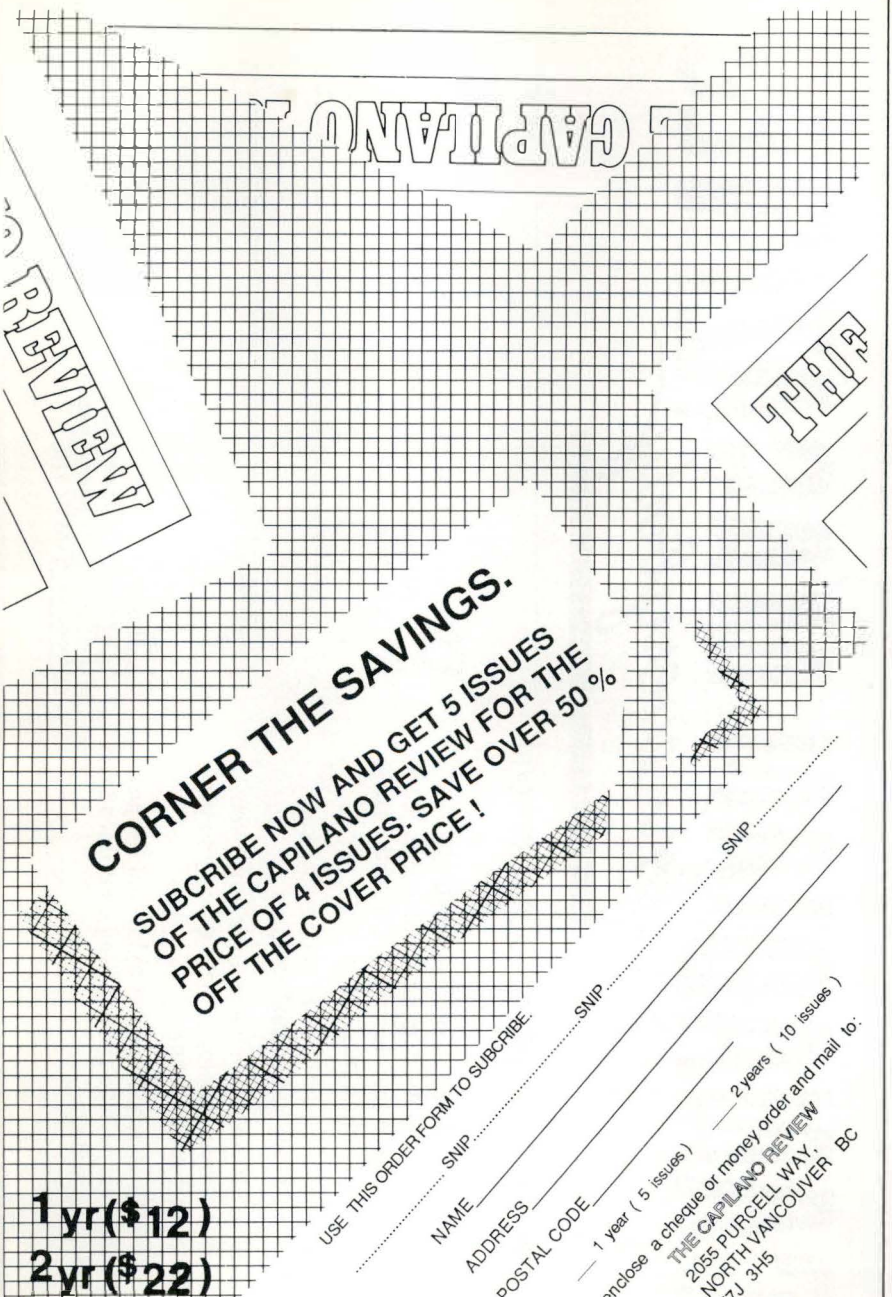
bpNICHOL's *The Martyrology*, Book VI, was published last year by Coach House Press. Books VII and VIII are near completion, and Books IX and X are in progress.

BRUCE WHITEMAN, who lives in Montreal, has been working since 1981 on *The Invisible World Is In Decline*, a long prose poem of which Book I was published by Coach House Press in 1984.

ELLIE SCOTT, formerly from Crow's Nest Pass, Alberta, now lives in Washington State. Several of her stories have been published in *New Delta Review*, *Other Voices*, and *Phoenix* within the last year.

GAIL HARRIS is a performance poet living in Victoria. Her first book was published by Coach House in 1986; a new performance piece, *Lady Ambivalence and her Small, Secret Mansion*, will appear soon as a chapbook from artdog press before premiering as part of Theatre BC's Festival in May 1988.

JUDITH COPITHORNE's most recent book, *A Light Character*, was published by Coach House Press in 1985. She lives in Vancouver.


CAPILANO
REVIEW
THE
CORNER THE SAVINGS.
SUBCRIBE NOW AND GET 5 ISSUES OF THE CAPILANO REVIEW FOR THE PRICE OF 4 ISSUES. SAVE OVER 50 % OFF THE COVER PRICE !
1 yr ($ 12)
2 yr ($ 22)
USE THIS ORDER FORM TO SUBCRIBE
SNIP
NAME
ADDRESS
POSTAL CODE
1 year (5 issues)
2 years (10 issues)
enclose a cheque or money order and mail to:
THE CAPILANO REVIEW
2055 PURCELL WAY,
NORTH VANCOUVER BC
V7J 3H5

CANADIAN MAGAZINES *for everybody*

Now, 221 publications to choose from!

The new 87/88 Canadian Periodical Publishers' Association catalogue is the one source that describes 221 of the latest and best Canadian magazines.

There's an incredibly wide variety of topics, points of view and special interests.

They're all yours to choose from when you get our current catalogue with its easy-to-use detachable order form.

Fill in the attached coupon today and for just $2 (to cover postage and handling), we'll send you our new catalogue.

Please send me the new 87/88 CPPA catalogue. I enclose my cheque for $2 to cover postage and handling.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ PROV. _____ POSTAL CODE _____

Canadian Periodical Publishers' Association

2 Stewart Street,
Toronto, Ontario
M5V 1H6

THE CAPILANO REVIEW

$5.00

ISSN 0315-3754